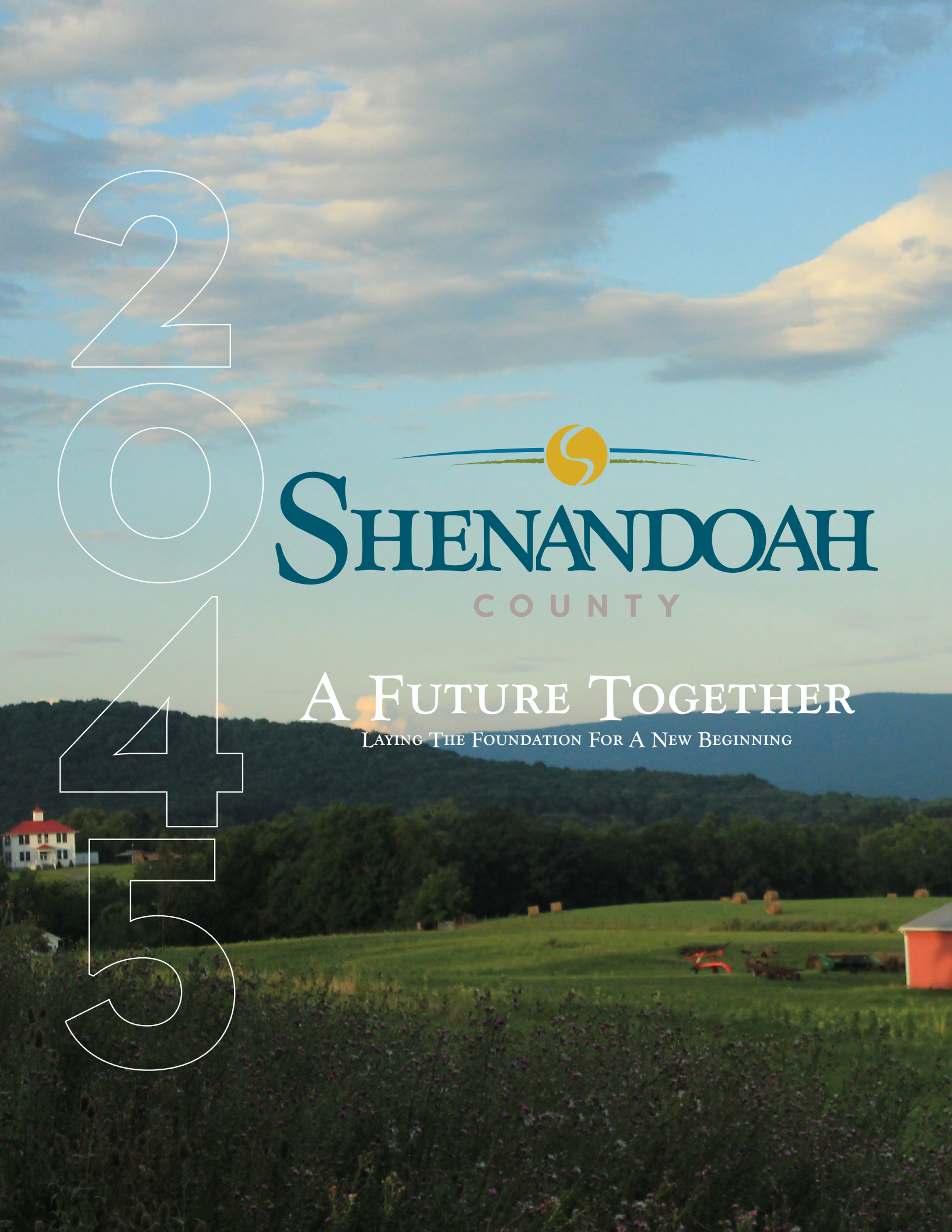

2040

SHENANDOAH COUNTY

A Future Together

Laying The Foundation For A New Beginning

Prepared by the County of Shenandoah
Shenandoah County Community Development Department

Abstract: This publication contains the Shenandoah County Planning Commission's recommendations for the physical development of the County to 2045. Also included in this report are methods of implementing the plan proposals in accordance with the Code of Virginia.

2024 CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

Joan Comanor, District Board Chair

LORD FAIRFAX SWCD SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
We work with the people who work the land.

Adopted by:

Shenandoah County Planning Commission
Gary Lantz, Chairman
August 1, 2024

Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors
Dennis Morris, Chairman
September 10, 2024

SHENANDOAH COUNTY

BE INSPIRED

Forward By CAC Chairman Vito Gentile

February 21st, 2024

To the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors and the residents of Shenandoah County,

For five years the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) sought input from County residents by multiple avenues for public outreach. In 2019 and 2020, the CAC sought initial public input from an on-line survey to assess what residents liked about the County and any improvements deemed necessary. In late summer and early fall of 2021, public meetings were held throughout the County to explain the legal requirement for a Comprehensive Plan, to review the existing 2025 Comprehensive Plan, and to solicit public input for a newly revised Plan, Shenandoah 2045. At the various stages of the 2045 Plan development, with the newly prepared Vision Statement for 2045 and the subsequent development of Plan Goals and Objectives, the public was engaged again at various events during the summers of 2022 and 2023, to create additional opportunities for input, awareness and public consensus. In late summer and early fall 2023, County staff and relevant citizen organizations had the opportunity to offer recommendations for the strategies and actions to achieve the goals and objectives developed and vetted earlier. In the final months of 2023 and early 2024, the CAC along with County staff worked to edit and finish a final draft of Shenandoah 2045 now submitted for consideration and Board approval.

Vito Gentile, Chairman, Citizens Advisory Committee & Founding Member

Throughout public outreach, Shenandoah County residents consistently stated they valued the open, rural and agricultural character of the County and wanted the County to remain so in the future. As growth and development occurs it should be directed to the towns where public services are available ensuring the continued rural and agricultural character of the county. They value public education to fully prepare our students for the jobs of the future, and hope the county will attract more well paying jobs so our young people can remain here to enjoy our quality of life and can afford to raise their families here as did their parents before them. Residents also value our natural resources here and believe we must act as good stewards of the land, water, historic and cultural resources and the natural beauty with which we are so gifted.

The Vision Statement for Shenandoah 2045 describes Shenandoah County as a unique place to live and work with a great quality of life which promotes appropriate growth but limits growth (by size and location) so that agriculture and open, green spaces remain predominant. The County will be a responsible steward of its special character and natural resources so we may continue to live and grow in a collaborative and friendly community that is healthy and vibrant. It is with this Vision Statement and the considerable input received during the many occasions for public outreach and consensus that the CAC has prepared the Comprehensive Plan for Shenandoah 2045 in accordance with the applicable Virginia Code and, we believe, in the best interests of all of our county residents.

Vito Gentile, Chairman, Citizens Advisory Committee

SHENANDOAH COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION

Resolution Of The Planning Commission Of Shenandoah County Approving Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Planning Commission, in collaboration with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), has diligently worked over the past five years to develop the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens Advisory Committee, a group of 13 dedicated residents from the six electoral districts of Shenandoah County, played a crucial role in engaging the community and gathering input from over 2,500 residents through surveys, public meetings, and community events; and

WHEREAS, this extensive public involvement ensured that the plan reflects the diverse voices and needs of Shenandoah County's residents, with a focus on preserving the county's unique rural character and promoting future prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" plan outlines a shared vision that emphasizes protecting our natural resources, supporting local businesses, and maintaining the rural and agricultural heritage that is central to our community's identity;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Shenandoah County Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" comprehensive plan and recommends its adoption by the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors.

****

APPROVED BY THE SHENANDOAH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
AUGUST 1, 2024

Gary Lantz, Chair & District 2

Deborah Keller, Vice Chair & District 5

Mark Dotson, District 1

Thomas Miller, District 3

Todd Steiner, District 4

Eunice Terndrup, District 6

Dennis Morris, Board Representative

SHENANDOAH COUNTY

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SHENANDOAH COUNTY ADOPTING SHENANDOAH 2045: A FUTURE TOGETHER

WHEREAS, the Shenandoah County Planning Commission, with substantial contributions from the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), has developed the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" comprehensive plan over the past five years; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens Advisory Committee, consisting of 13 dedicated residents representing the six electoral districts of Shenandoah County, actively engaged the community, gathering input from over 2,500 residents through surveys, public meetings, and community events; and

WHEREAS, this thorough public engagement has ensured that the plan embodies the diverse voices and needs of Shenandoah County residents, prioritizing the preservation of the county's unique rural character and promoting future prosperity; and

WHEREAS, the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" plan presents a unified vision focused on safeguarding natural resources, bolstering local businesses, and upholding the rural and agricultural heritage central to our community's identity, providing a strategic framework for guiding development and decision-making over the next twenty years;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors hereby endorses and adopts the "Shenandoah 2045: A Future Together" comprehensive plan, committing to the vision and goals established therein for the benefit and future of Shenandoah County.

****

ADOPTED BY THE SHENANDOAH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Dennis Morris, Chair & District 5

Joshua Stephens, Vice Chair & District 1

Steven Baker, District 2

David Ferguson, District 3

Karl Roulston, District 4

Timothy Taylor, District 6

Executive Summary

We heard from over 2,500 individuals since 2020.

Nearly 900 respondent opinions from the 2020-2022 Survey.

Nearly 100 people at 2021 District Information Sessions.

Nearly 800 people at 2022 Community Collaboration Sessions.

Nearly 800 people at 2023 Community Review Sessions.

50 years ago, Shenandoah County stood at a similar moment that we do today. Housing appeared in our rural areas and locals and new arrivals alike came together to develop the County's first Comprehensive Plan, a north star which guided the implementation of zoning and subdivision rules on how land can be used and the ways we invest in our community.

For the past five years, we took a different path than most communities. We didn't start writing right away, instead we listened. This document, Shenandoah 2045, grew from what we heard. It's not just any plan, it's the heart of our community, put to paper after years of conversations in a resident driven process.

This Plan, although mandated by the state, offers great benefits to our community. It's not a law, but a north star for our future. It outlines a vision that respects our past while looking forward to a prosperous future. Across its 11 chapters, the plan covers everything from housing to transportation, the environment, and economic development. Together with the Action Plan, it serves as a dual tool: the Report outlines our big ideas and concepts, while the Action Plan provides the steps to make these a reality.

Key takeaways include:

- Preserving our water resources.
- Valuing our land and countryside.
- Enhancing community connectivity.
- Investing in quality education.
- Ensuring dependable public services.
- Learning from our past to inspire the future.

This plan is a blueprint for a Shenandoah County that remains true to its roots while embracing the changes necessary for a thriving future.

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Our North Star

We've dedicated five years to crafting a plan that aligns with our collective goals. The Comprehensive Plan we've developed is a strategic, forward-looking document meant to serve as a road map for the growth and development of our locality. Initiated in 2019 and finalized in 2024, this plan builds upon the foundation laid by our previous 2005 Comprehensive Plan.

While not a set of regulations, this plan holds significant importance as it serves as our community's North Star for the future. It is intended to provide guidance to our staff and elected officials as they navigate decisions impacting our community. Serving as a visionary document, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the long-term aspirations for Shenandoah County, ensuring that each decision made contributes to our shared objectives.

Looking ahead 20 years, the plan encapsulates our community's vision and outlines strategies to achieve our goals. These strategies are rooted in our community values, emphasizing sustainable growth and the preservation of our unique character. The ultimate aim is to create a more vibrant and flourishing future for Shenandoah County.

Organization

This plan is one of five documents that guide the County.

1: Comprehensive Plan

An aspirational visionary guide made from two documents:

The Report

This document summarizes 5 years worth of reports, meetings, workshops, and conversations into a succinct, big idea focused document.

The Action Plan

The Action Plan lays out the vision for each chapter, goals to accomplish that vision, along with objectives, strategies and actions.

2 & 3: Zoning & Subdivision

Specific rules that can be enforced on how land is used.

4: Capital Improvement Plan

Five year financial plan for new buildings and equipment.

5: Budget

Annual plan on how to finance County operations.

Why have a comprehensive plan?

Each locality in the State of Virginia is required to have a Comprehensive Plan per Section 15.2-2223 of the Virginia Code which states: "The Comprehensive Plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities."

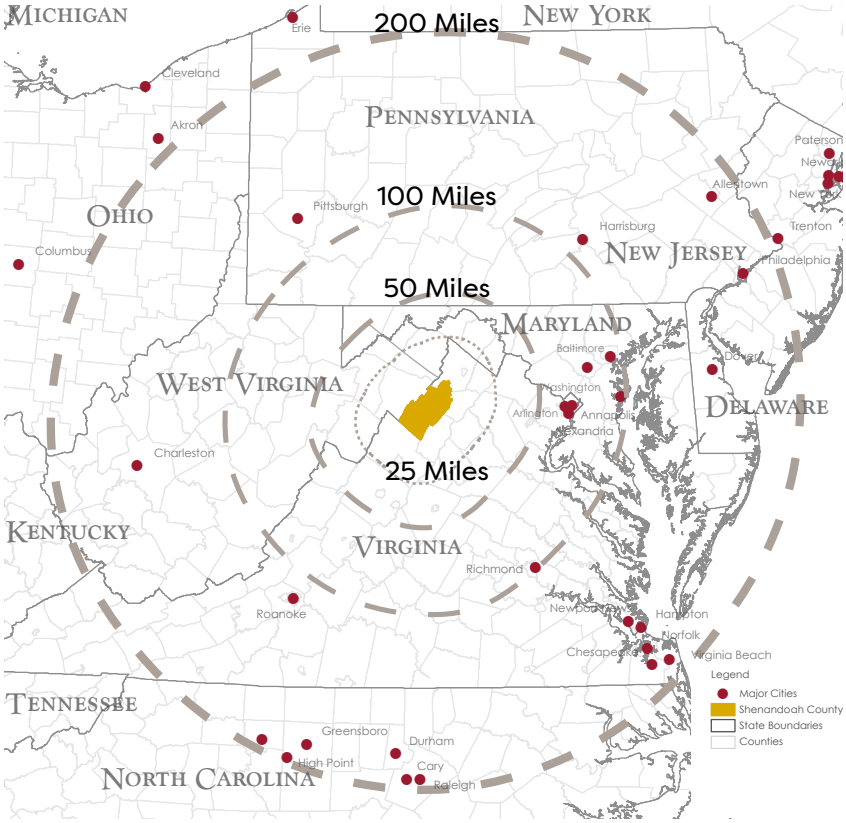
The State also recognizes that community development is an process that is ever changing and for this reason requires Comprehensive Plans to be reviewed every 5 years and significantly updated every 20 years. Due to our last major re-write coming in 2005, the county is due for a significant update. This led us to where we are today for Shenandoah 2045, our most recent Comprehensive Plan.

We rely on our comprehensive plan in order to garner funds to repair roads, bridges, and sidewalks and in order to justify grants for improvements to major public services be it personnel or buildings like:

Where is Shenandoah County?

Shenandoah County is a uniquely shaped county of 508.1 square miles with six separate municipal Town's strategically located along Route 11 like a string of pearls and various villages and hamlets like scattered jewels. While the focus from previous comprehensive plans have loosely aligned over the years, this plan will again show our commitment to keeping Shenandoah County rural, while working closely with the Towns to ensure strategic growth and development continue into the future.

The County provides critical services to town and county residents. These efforts include the two most notable services public safety and public education. Library services, building safety, and an active recreation system are additional resources. As such the Comprehensive Plan reflects the collaboration and regional efforts across our localities as crucial to planning.



We're not alone

Shenandoah County's vision for 2045 is intricately connected to various plans, policies, and ordinances. This comprehensive strategy integrates data, ideas, and recommendations from numerous existing plans, studies, and strategic documents relevant to the region. The Plan not only serves as a valuable resource but also plays a pivotal role in shaping and guiding future updates to land development regulations. Decisions on zoning, capital improvements, transportation projects, and initiatives related to environmental and historic resource protection will be significantly influenced by the content and insights provided in the Plan.

While the Plan provides a vision for the future, ordinances such as ZONING and SUBDIVISION ordinances provide reinforcement to ensure the Plan is upheld and implemented.

The Plan also provides details on long or short term infrastructure needs of the community, yet the financing of these improvements can be found in a CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN which is a long range unfunded budget for improvements the locality seeks to make.

In the context of Shenandoah County, our vision for the future, encapsulated in the comprehensive plan for 2045, actively considers multiple plans, planning studies, and initiatives. This approach is aimed at fostering coordination with ongoing initiatives within the region. The formulation of this plan takes into account various existing plans and studies that contribute to its development.

These include, but are not limited to:

Locally Specific Plans:
- Shenandoah County Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Keister Park Master Plan

Town Comprehensive Plans
- New Market
- Mount Jackson
- Edinburg
- Woodstock
- Toms Brook
- Strasburg

Regional Plans:
- Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Management Plan
- Regional Water Supply Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Regional Plan

State Plans:
- Virginia Outdoors Plan
- VDOT Six Year Improvement Plan
- Improve 81 Plan

Crafting The Plan

In 2019 the CAC began its review of the Housing Chapter and noted more housing was being built outside of Town boundaries and public infrastructure areas consistently. Concepts were considered for agrihoods and small communities, then members realized that places like that already existed with our towns, villages, and hamlets.

The year this plan was supposed to launch, 2020, the world changed and there was an opportunity to reflect on the upcoming effort. The team developed the community survey, district information sessions, collaboration sessions, and review sessions with the community to ensure to represent the true focus for our future.

The CAC introduced 6 new chapters: Water Resources, Agricultural Forestal And Geological Resources, Education, Health, Emergency Services Infrastructure and Technology, and Recreation. These focused chapters were previously housed in the Natural Resources and Community Facilities chapters which covered everything from public safety to sanitary districts to education. Providing clarity and vision for these specific issues became important for the community and the CAC recognized that shift.

The plan was developed to be action oriented. One where a new employee, a community group, or someone looking from afar could clearly see what we are about and how we plan to get there. And it is through that *how*, that we show a willingness and commitment to create the future we seek.

We created a vision for Shenandoah 2045, but also a vision for each chapter. Each chapter has a set of goals, supported by objectives. It is in the details of the Strategies within the objectives and Actions for how to accomplish each strategy that the document grew. To the right are the chapters and a summary of their visions.

Chapter I: Historical, Cultural, & Scenic Resources

These resources will be preserved and researched to be made readily available to the public.

Chapter II: Water Resources

Water is finite and we will work to ensure quality and quantity of it with suitability/sustainability.

Chapter III: Agricultural, Forestall, & Geological Resources

Priority on protecting and properly utilizing these resources intrinsically and economically.

Chapter IV: Economic Development

Public & private sectors collaborate for a supportive business environment and workforce readiness.

Chapter V: Housing

Everyone will have access to adequate housing.

Chapter VI: Community Services And Facilities

Easy access to county services and facilities, in person or online, to satisfy their personal/business needs.

Chapter VII: Education

All will have chance to a well-rounded education with applied learning and performance skills.

Chapter VIII: Health

All must have access to affordable health care within 15 minutes from home by combination of private & public.

Chapter IX: Emergency Services, Infrastructure, & Technology

Provide an integrated, responsive, and secure technology environment for exceptional county services.

Chapter X: Recreation

Access to natural resources for recreational pursuits shall be sustained and expanded.

Chapter XI: Transportation

Have quality transportation systems that are safe, efficient, and modern systems built for the 22nd century.

Who will use the plan?

In order for the Plan to be a success, we need to build A Future Together with a variety of stakeholder groups that helped to create and inform the plan. These groups involved in a community-wide adoption of the plan include elected officials, departments and agencies, developers and investors, community organizations, conservation organizations, and the public. In order for this plan to be a success we need the continued support and use of the plan by these stakeholder groups to ensure A Future Together.

Elected Officials

Elected leaders are key to upholding the plan as they must commit to the plan's goals and objectives. It's vital they adopt and consistently apply the plan in land use and policy decisions, leading the way in realizing the vision to ensure responsible, community-focused growth.

Departments & Agencies

Department and agency leaders should know the plan well, aligning their strategies and actions with its recommendations. Their involvement in systematic planning and area-specific initiatives is crucial for the plan's implementation.

Developers & Investors

Developers and investors should refer to the plan for land use, connectivity, and development guidance. It offers insights on preferred development forms and community-building, crucial for growth that aligns with our community's character and rural heritage.

Community Organizations

Community organizations should actively engage in strategies and advocate for the plan's recommendations. Their involvement is crucial in implementing actions as part of community-led initiatives which helps to ensure community-driven progress.

Conservation Organizations

Conservation groups are crucial for the plan's environmental goals, especially in strategies involving our precious water and land resources. The plan helps guide where their work is needed and provides recommended actions to support their ongoing work in the community.

Public

Residents of Shenandoah County are essential to the success of Shenandoah 2045. Staying informed and involved, assisting in strategy implementation, and providing feedback ensures the plan remains relevant and meets the community's evolving needs.

A Community Built Plan

SURVEY

For the past 20 years the Citizen's Advisory Committee has helped guide the future of Shenandoah County by preparing updates to the Comprehensive Plan. They are more commonly known as the CAC and are a group of 13 residents of Shenandoah County with two members from each of the six Electoral Districts of the County and one Planning Commission Member and are appointed by the Board of Supervisors.

In starting public engagement the CAC was determined to have as many members of the public involved throughout the process from the very beginning so it could be a community built plan.

We did this through surveys, public meetings of various kinds, radio outreach, invited speaking engagements, and through regularly scheduled meetings.

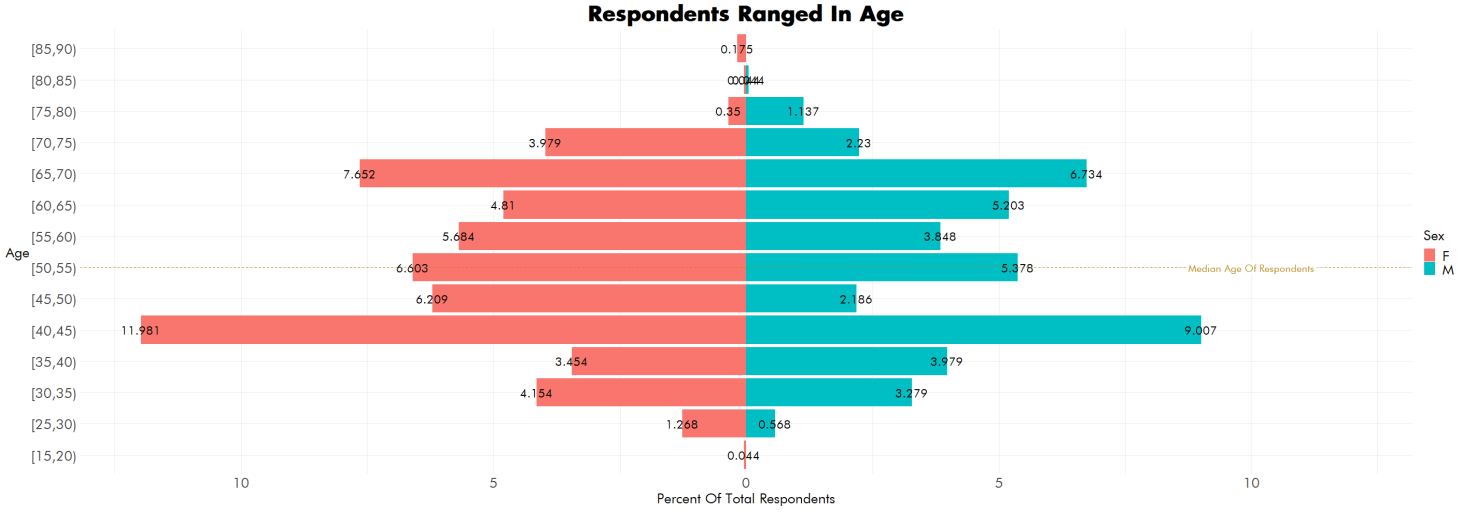
The first efforts focused on a community survey to capture as much information about the right direction for our future from as many people we could. In total, 336 individuals took the Community Survey and based on their household data responses they represented 970 people in Shenandoah County from various parts of the County and from a variety of backgrounds and personal identities.

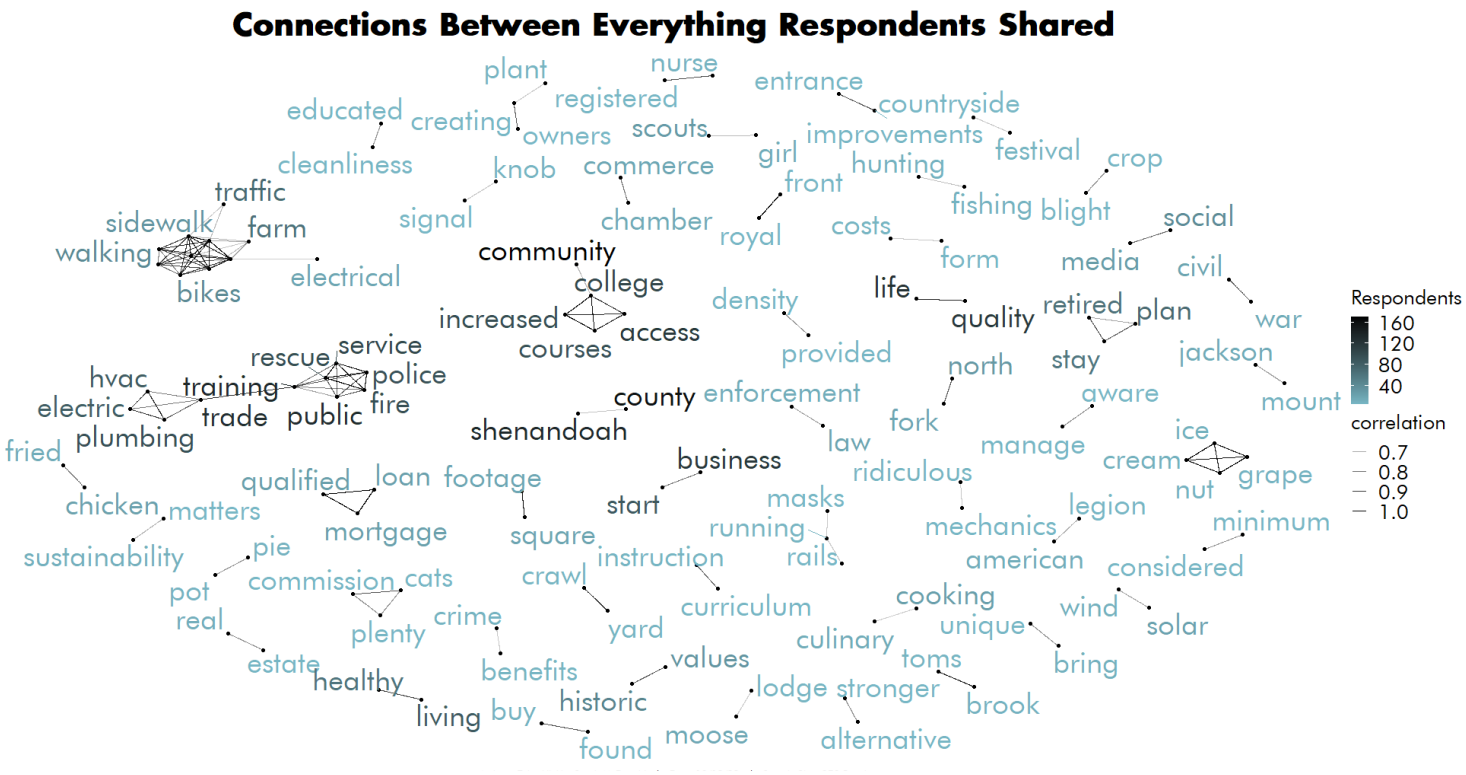
When the CAC began the process of developing the Community Survey they knew that they could benefit from the data gathered from the survey while they were out in the community collaborating with and engaging people face to face. The concept of a Community Survey was developed at the CAC meeting where the group agreed to take on the task of a complete Comprehensive Plan rewrite. A draft of the survey was sent out to the public in the winter of 2019 into the start of 2020 and comments received from the public on the layout of the survey, questions asked, and questions that should be asked were taken into account by the CAC and the survey was updated to reflect the comments from the public.

This means that not only was the survey developed by citizen members of the public with the CAC, but individuals from across the County had a say in what the survey should cover and what it should ask to ensure a clear picture of the future was achieved. We looked at this information from the surveys in several ways, the cumulative count of certain words when people were asked to write as well as the connections between words written.

Most frequently used words by respondents on the survey were community, roads, Shenandoah, trade, & training.

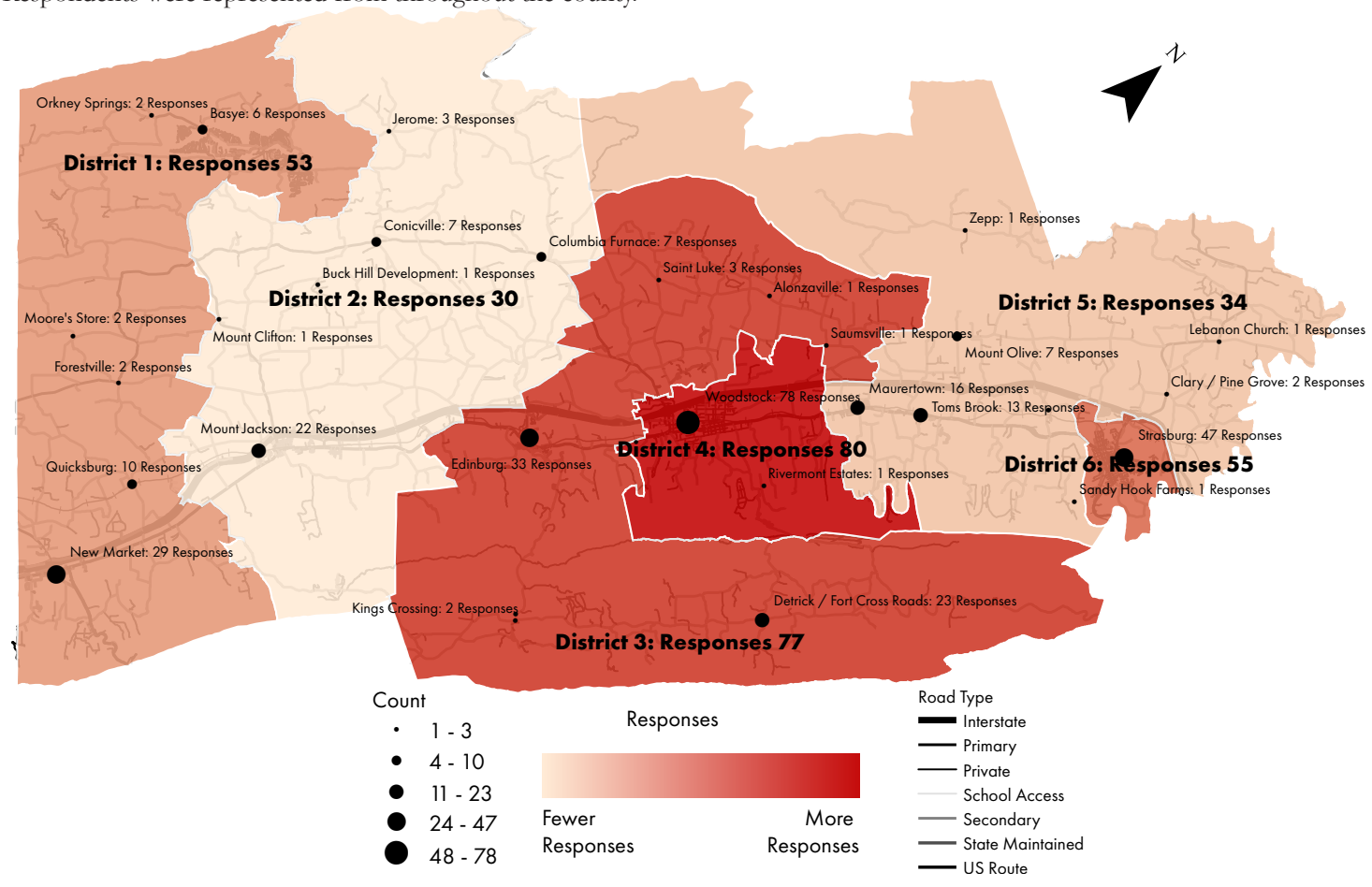
Age varied between men & women who took the survey.





The connections between those words is also revealing. We see connections to community college - access-increase-courses, trade and training for career public safety and the specific trades.

Respondents were represented from throughout the county.



DISTRICT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Over 100 people attended one of the 11 District Information Sessions that were held in the fall of 2021 between September 29th and November 30th. Participants were asked to write the things they loved/liked the most about the County on a yellow sticky note and what to improve on a pink sticky note. Below are the top ideas:

Mt. Hermon

Virtual

- RURAL / NATURAL BEAUTY
- SENSE OF COMMUNITY
- SMALL TOWN FEEL
- FARMING

- STATE ROADS / I-81
- SCHOOLS
- NEW BUSINESSES
- THINGS TO DO

Participants were asked to sort their ideas into the chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, Vision Statement, and a section for new ideas or a new chapter for the Plan. These themes collectively reflect a community that values its cultural heritage, is committed to environmental stewardship, and seeks sustainable development that preserves its rural and agricultural identity. The feedback also emphasized the desire for economic growth, job opportunities, and community infrastructure improvements, particularly in areas such as transportation and community resources.

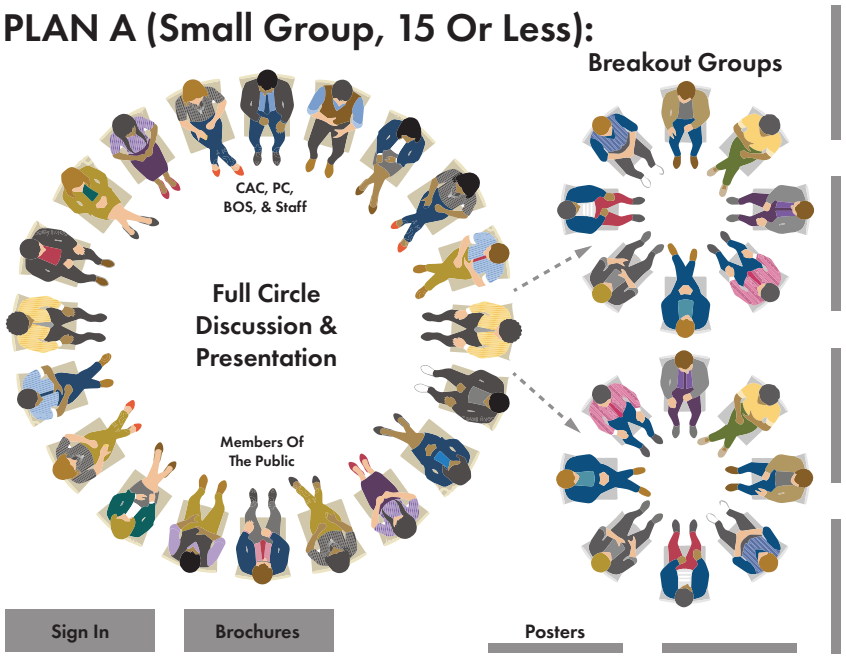
Information gathered on Chapter I: History, demonstrates the importance of local and family history as well as the traditions of the areas. At the same time it demonstrates the need to promote and support historic preservation and broadcasting information on the history of marginalized populations such as Native Americans.

The ideas provided for Chapter II: Natural Resources, shows that the rural beauty, natural landscape, outdoor activities, agriculture, and our water resources are the most cherished natural aspects of the County. The ideas also show that the largest concerns for our

New Market

Woodstock

Fort Valley



CAC created a layout and how to guide to help organize the meetings.

Mount Jackson

Strasburg

natural resources revolve around the preservation and protection of the resources we cherish, reducing the amount of pollution in our waterways, and increasing access points to waterways.

Results for Chapter III: Land Use reveal that agriculture, rural / natural areas, and natural public land such as the National Forest are the most important aspects to the County. The results also reveal that the loss of farmland through development and the need to have visually appealing lands are of the utmost concern for the County.

Comments for Chapter IV: Economic Development detail that residents love small businesses, tourism, and downtown activity. The comments also detail that citizens would like to see more job opportunities in the County with a specific focus on industrial jobs, support the ability to have products grown, processed, and sold in the County, and to develop more public private partnerships to support small business creation and job growth.

Ideas for Chapter V: Population cover the strong sense of community, small town feel, and friendly people in the community as aspects people love. While at the same time it details that people are concerned about how the County can be more welcoming to outsiders, to support growth in the Towns, and to find ways to keep young people.

There were no positives noted for Chapter VI: Housing, yet the improvements included the need for more affordable housing, allowing and promoting new types of housing, and promoting housing specific for different ages.

The comments on Chapter VII: Community Resources reveal that people love community organizations such as churches and libraries and things for kids to do in nature like hiking, while people would like to see more community centers specifically an auditorium, investment in public schools, better Internet, and more places to eat.

Chapter VIII: Transportation received comments showing that citizens like rural roads in certain areas while others like the resources in the Towns such as ShenGO. The comments also show that citizens are most interested in seeing I-81 and State Routes safer, routes for bicyclists safer, and ShenGO coverage and information is increased.

Information for Chapter IX and Chapter X affirm that growth should occur in the Towns and where people already live.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION SESSIONS

Since we were only able to engage 100 people in 2021, we decided to change strategy and go to the people in 2022. Nearly 800 people attended one of the 14 Community Collaboration Sessions that were held in the spring and summer of 2022 between May 14th and Sept 1st. Participants were engaged at five existing community events and festivals and nine tours where people live. Below are the top ideas heard from these Sessions and Walking Tours:

- DOWNTOWN VALUE
- USE AND LOOK OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS
- PUBLIC SPACE
- ACCESSIBILITY AND SIDEWALKS

This word cloud shows the importance of supporting existing and adding new businesses, as well as desires for river access and housing.

Strasburg Mayfest

Toms Brook Walking Tour

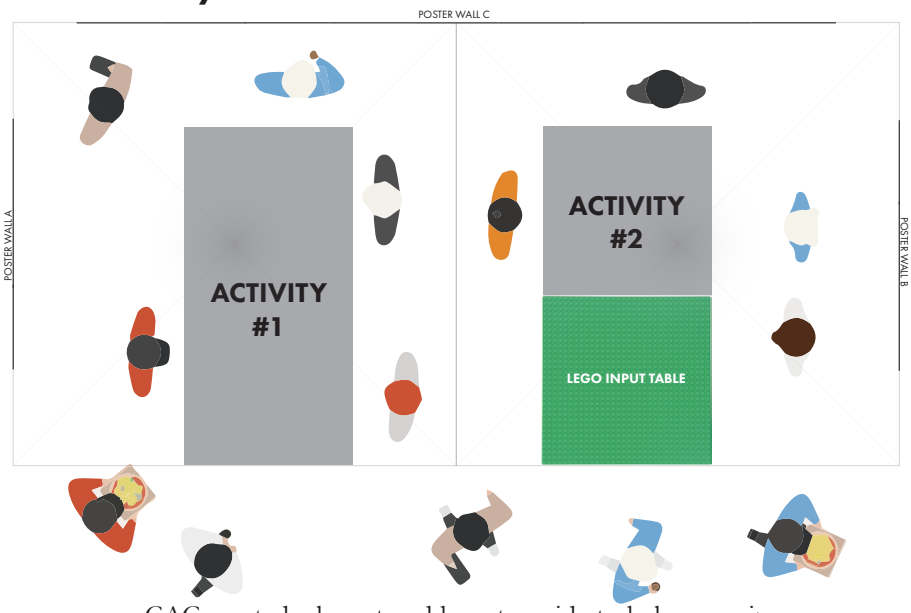
Participants were asked to sort their ideas into different posters including the existing chapters, potential new chapters, and some major projects that could occur in the future. The information helps answer many questions held previously including the main question from the previous report, "Where will the new jobs, housing, and improved resources go and how can the location of that growth help to protect the natural resources everyone enjoys?" The answer this report responds with is that majority of the growth should occur in the existing Towns, some growth in the existing villages, and more limited to no growth in the rural and open space areas of the County.

Data on each chapter reveals the following statements:

1. Historic resources and sites such as the battlefield and buildings should be protected.
2. Development of any kind should not disrupt farmland and the rural character should be protected.
3. We should support the growth of new and existing small businesses for a local economy.

Woodstock Artfest

Community Collaboration Session Event



CAC created a layout and how to guide to help organize engagement.

Mount Jackson Walking Tour

Fort Valley July 4th Parade

New Market Crossroads Festival

4. Housing should be affordable in a variety of types such as apartments, shared housing and senior living.
5. We should increase river, trail, and park access as well as support new restaurants and invest in our schools.
6. Transportation investments should improve safety and access for all methods, and ShenGO is a great asset.

In addition to the chapters we heard the following statements on future projects:

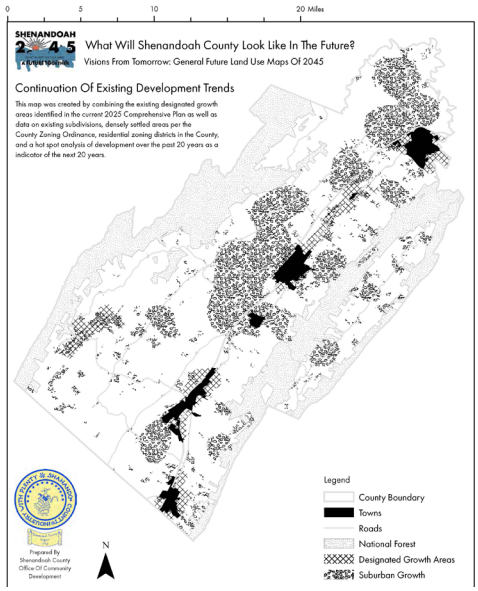
1. River and creek access should be improved for all, including ADA, along with water quality.
2. Major community facilities serving the entire County should be centrally located.
3. There is little to no support or opposition for Corridor H being built in Shenandoah County.
4. Development should occur in the Towns, where people already live and resources already exist.
5. A new school should be built before 2045, there is concern on the current elementary school sizes.
6. Alternate routes from Rt 11/I-81 in the event of wrecks or major events on Rt 11 and I-81 should be clear.
7. Towns and villages should capitalize on the rail trail with amenities and business opportunities.
8. There should be a unified effort to connect, expand, and improve recreational amenities through the County.

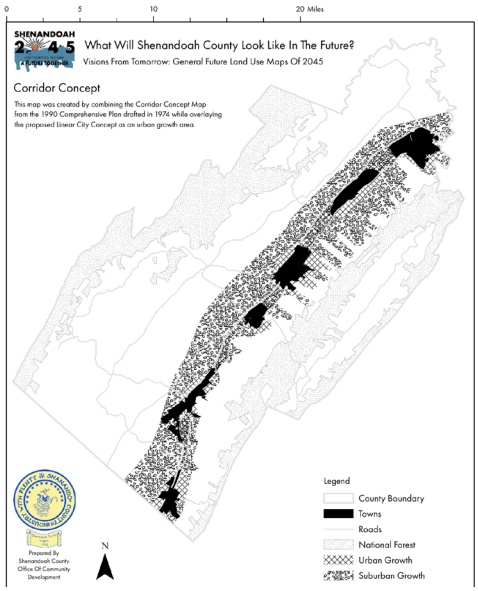
At the Walking Tours there were common themes of why downtown is so successful:

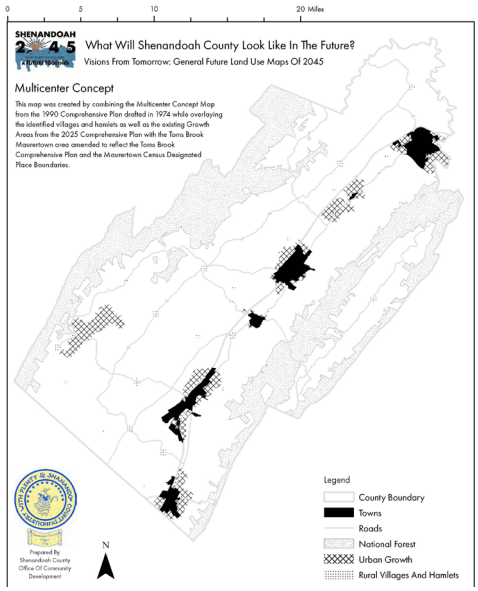
1. Human scale buildings and facades with matching characteristics and a sense of enclosure on the street.
2. Mix of private and public space as well as a mix of uses and times of day/week so people are always there.
3. Downtown is valuable such as being a tax asset, encourage and promote infill and art where appropriate.

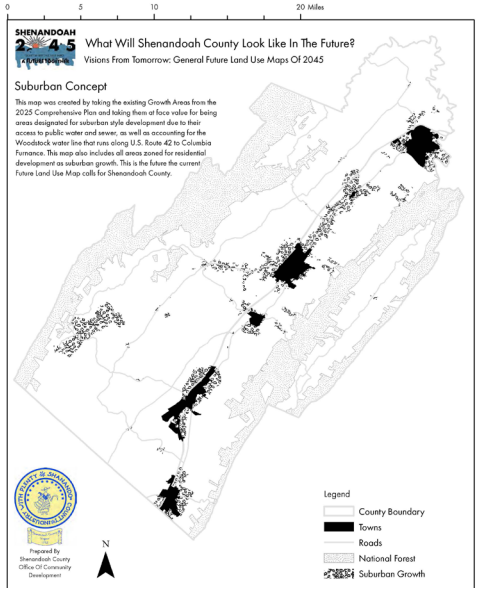
While this summary attempts to cover everything we heard, we encourage you to read more in the full report. As we look the future we must ask, "What should we implement or encourage first?"

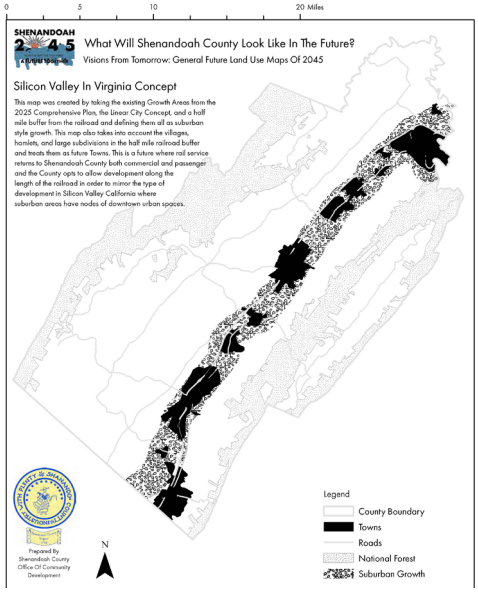
Scenario Planning And Co-Creation

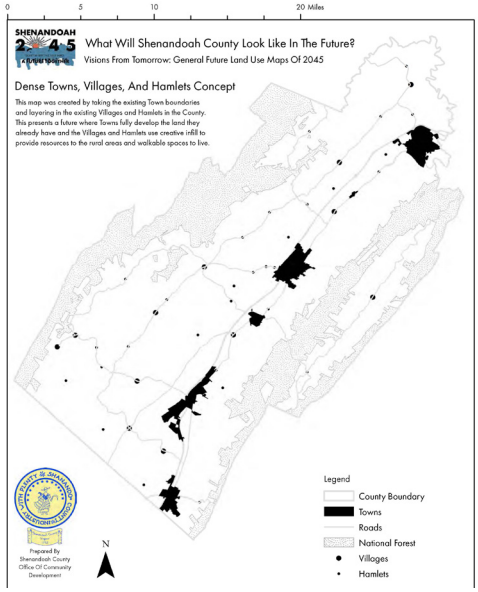


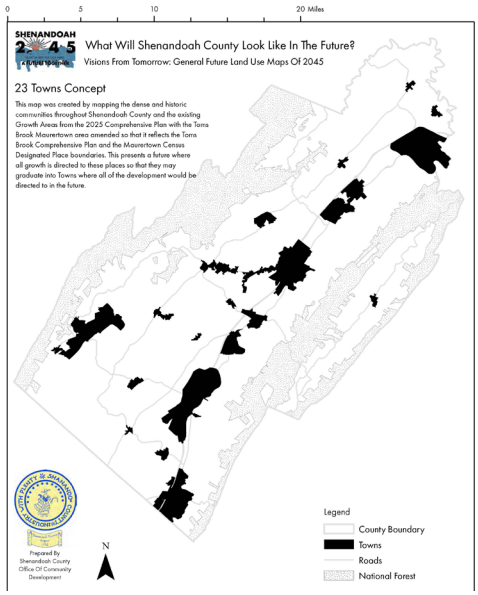


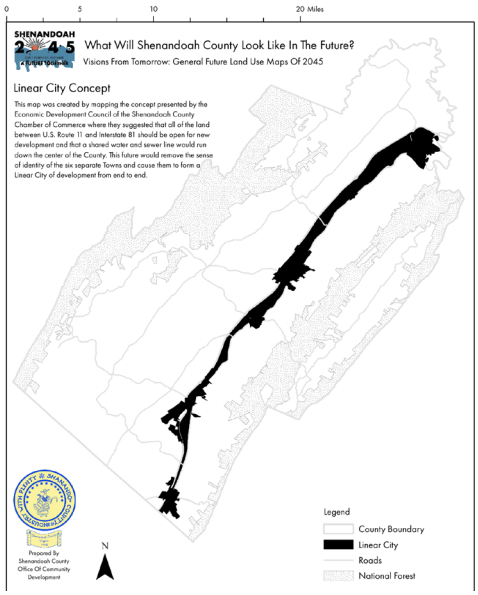


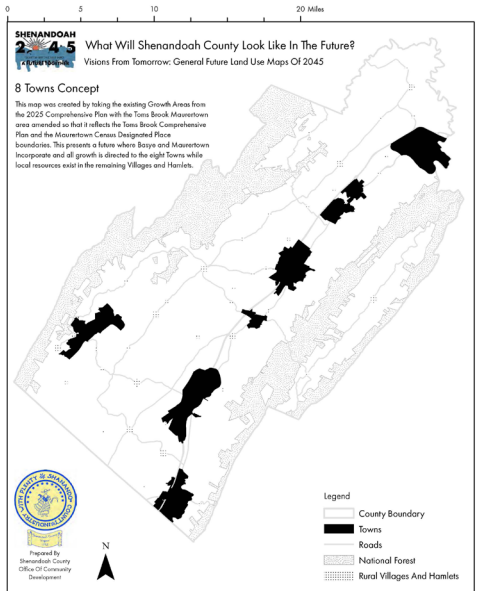










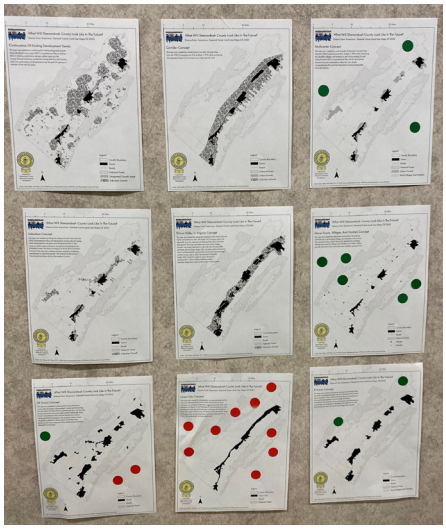


These 9 maps helped the CAC and the public in 2022 and 2023 in setting the vision for the county.

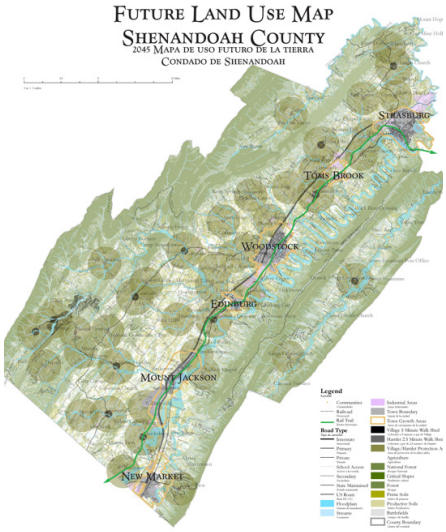
In August of 2020 the CAC split into two person teams to tackle the six chapters of the 2025 Plan that were identified as key: History, Natural Resources, Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities and Resources, and Transportation. Chapter groups met one on one and with County Departments and local organizations to solicit ideas for chapters.

Following the Community Collaboration Sessions and close of the Community Survey in September 2022 the CAC met that fall to craft a new vision statement, overarching challenges, set the new chapter layout, and each chapter group crafted their own chapter vision statements, goals, and objectives. These draft chapters were fleshed out that winter and then reviewed on a case by case basis through the spring then reviewed by the public at the Community Review Sessions.

Also in the fall of 2022 the CAC reviewed nine maps, shown to the left, and based on public feedback which reflected the desire to retain our rural charm selected the Dense Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to strike a balance with conservation and growth. These maps were also reviewed at the Community Review Sessions and the public agreed. In the summer and fall of 2023 the Economic Development Council of the Chamber of Commerce worked with staff and CAC to map potential business/industrial sites while prioritizing preserving productive agricultural soils by identifying sites with poor soils, little historical/cultural significance, and close to highways. These actions ensured public involvement and co-creation through the process.



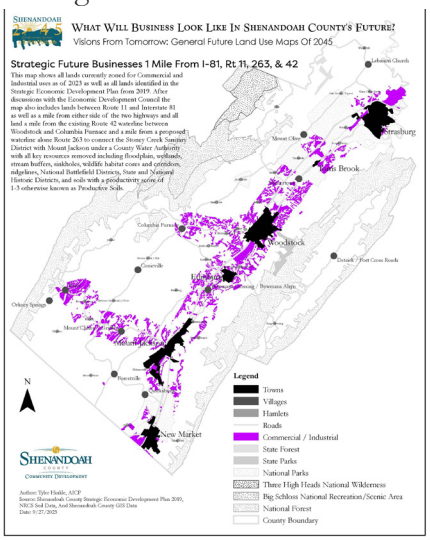
CAC considered balanced plans.

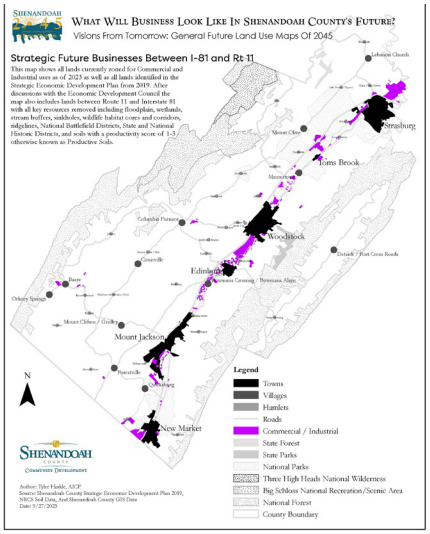


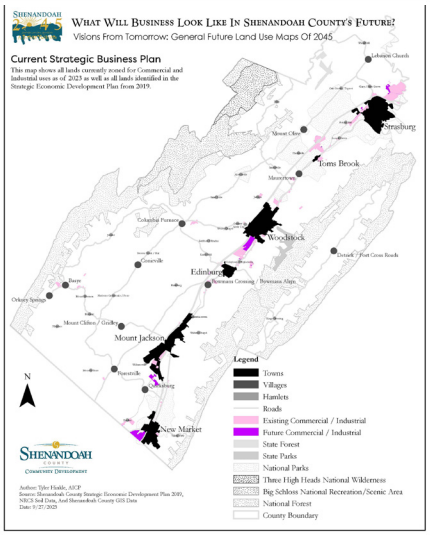
Community Review Sessions map.

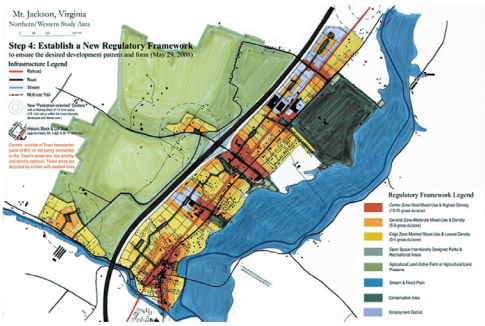
CAC met monthly to craft the plan.

These 3 maps helped the CAC and EDC in 2023 identify key business/industry sites while limiting residential areas.

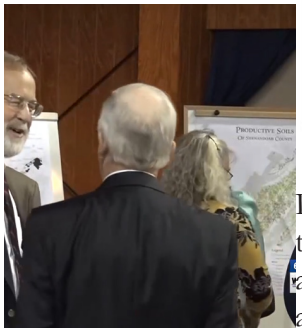








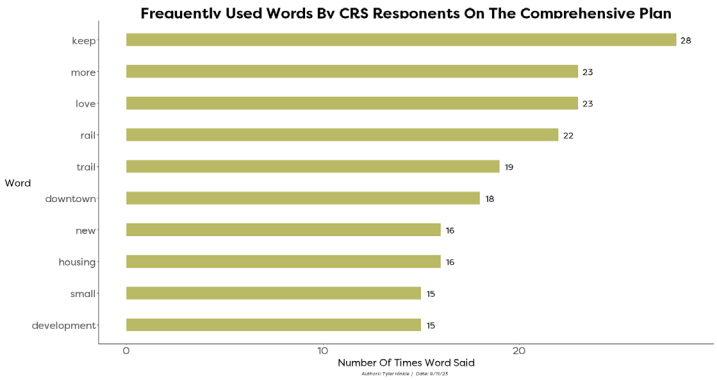
Street master plans and transects like Mount Jackson's developed by Galvin Architects in 2008 help guide development and focus on form rather than use.

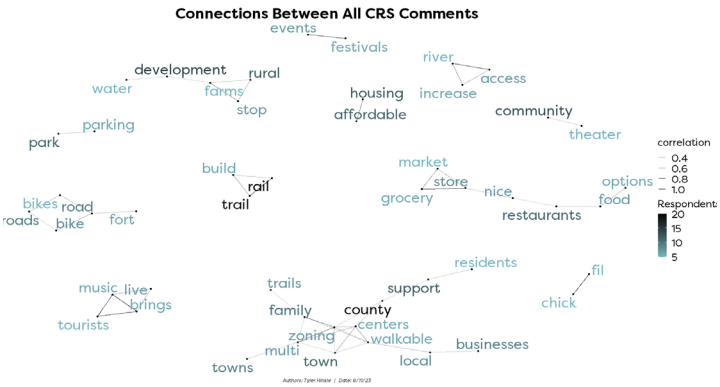


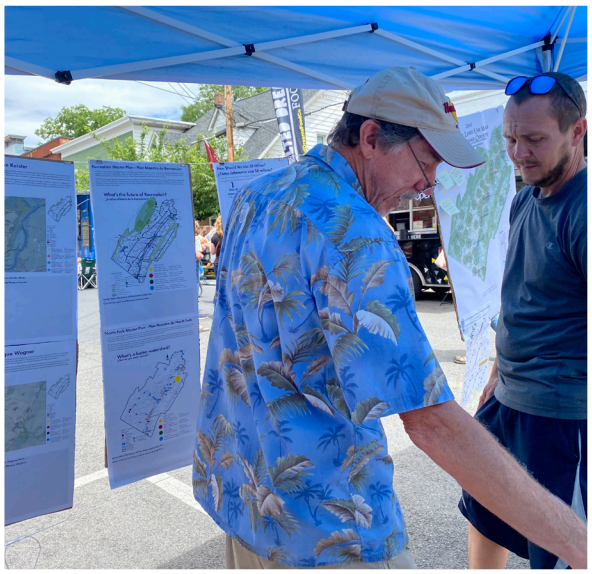
Productive farm soils were used to identify areas to protect for agriculture and to identify poor soil areas for future business sites.

COMMUNITY REVIEW SESSIONS

Nearly 800 people attended one of the 5 Community Review Sessions that were held in the spring and summer of 2023 between May 6th and July 22nd. Participants were engaged at five existing community events and festivals. Below is a word cloud showing the most frequently used words, also visualized in a bar chart below the word cloud. We also ran a word web analysis, seen at the bottom, to see the overall connected narratives from all engagement results:







Woodstock Artfest

Fort Valley July 4th Parade

Participants were asked to sort their ideas into different posters including the proposed chapters and some major projects that could occur in the future. The information helps answer many questions held previously including the main question from the previous report, "What should we implement or encourage first?" The answer this report responds with is that the draft of the new Comprehensive Plan is supported by the public but there is a desire for more emphasis on protecting agricultural and forestall land, promoting a variety of affordable types of housing, making safe trails and bus routes, and supporting more development like downtown in more places.

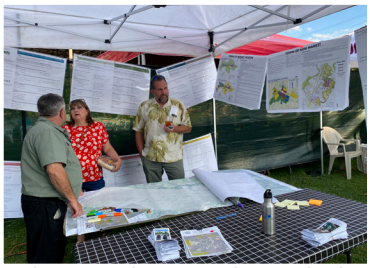
Data on each chapter reveals the following statements:

1. Protect historic assets and use as a model for future development, but avoid too restrictive requirements.
2. Water is a precious resource and will determine future development, we must plan for future water sources.
3. Protect prime farmland, we need to protect our natural green spaces and support our agricultural

Mount Jackson Big Band Bash

CAC created a layout and how to guide to help organize engagement.

Strasburg Front Porch Fridays



Orkney Springs Music Festival

Public comments from event

producers.

4. The right industry can bring tax revenue and jobs, we should also focus on revitalizing downtowns.
5. Housing should be habitable, affordable, secure, and near amenities through zoning and county guidance.
6. We need a community that supports seniors, hosts music events, and has a variety of authentic restaurants.
7. Schools are overcrowded at Central and Strasburg, need proper space and amenities for quality education.
8. Support victims, of domestic abuse, have birthing options, care for the disabled, retain employees, and aging in place.
9. Better cell service in our downtowns and more community and government involvement in software.
10. Increase river access, railroad looks awful should be a trail, and need more park space for families and dogs.
11. Reduce speed in villages, gravel roads unsafe, love ShenGO, and need to alleviate interstate traffic.

Overall respondents want a rural, walkable, affordable, interesting, and friendly community all can call home.

While this summary attempts to cover everything we heard, we encourage you to read more in the full report. As we look the future we must ask, "How can we empower departments and agencies to implement this vision?"

Hearing School Students' Ideas About The Plan

Discussion With County Business Leaders

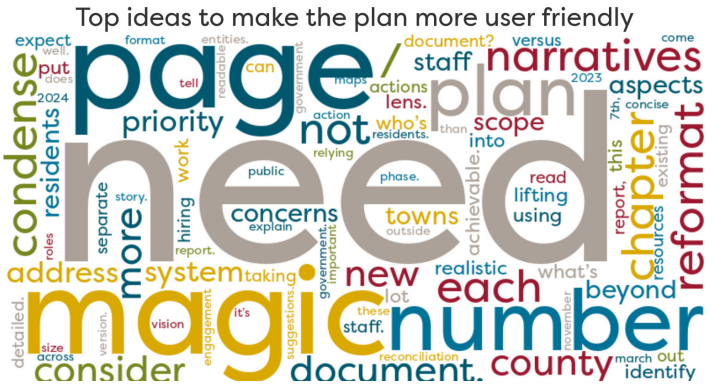
RECONCILIATION

Planning Commissioner Mark Dotson called the series of joint meetings between the Citizens Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors a, "Reconciliation Period", where the ideas from the public and CAC were reviewed for what was reasonable for the Planning Commission and Board.

Following the release of a draft on March 7th and over a month of review, on April 24th the CAC hosted the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors per the request of the Planning Commission at their April 4th meeting. The meeting began open discussion on what could be done to make the plan more user friendly. Although the most common statement said was there was no magic page number, when presented with three options of how to reformat the plan the group agreed to the option with the least amount of pages as it was easier to compare strategies.

April 25th the Planning Commission's joint workshops began with the first hour devoted to layout with revisions including font color, changing recommended actions to potential, changing stakeholders to 1-2 Lead Stakeholders, and changing Timeframe End to Timeframe/Priority and replacing the years with the time frame and abbreviation of the timeline title as well as allowing for asterisks to be added for priority items.

With the layout resolved the joint group were able to work through chapters one through three on April 25th, chapters four and five on April 26th, chapter eleven on May 2nd, chapters six through eight on May 9th, and chapters nine through eleven on May 10th. There were a median of 19 edits per chapter and reviews typically lasted two hours per chapter.



Top Five Ideas On Edits Needed:

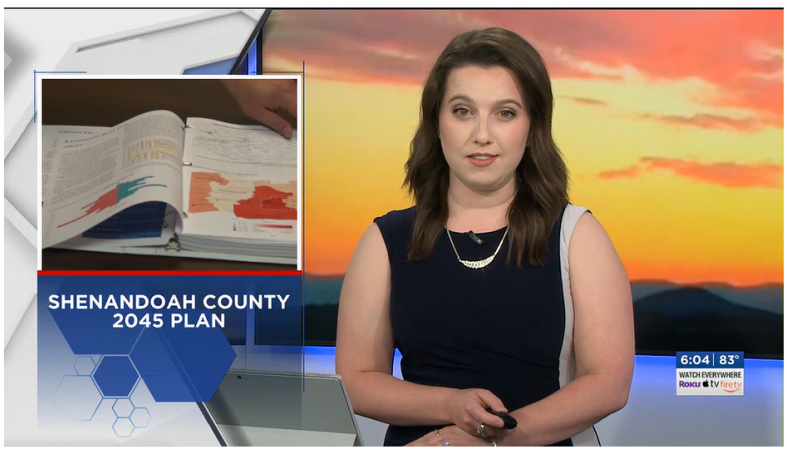
1. There is no magic page number (6)
2. We need narratives for each chapter (3)
3. We need to condense / reformat (3)
4. We need a priority system (2)
5. The plan should not address aspects beyond the scope of the County (2)

Table of edits from reconciliation workshops.

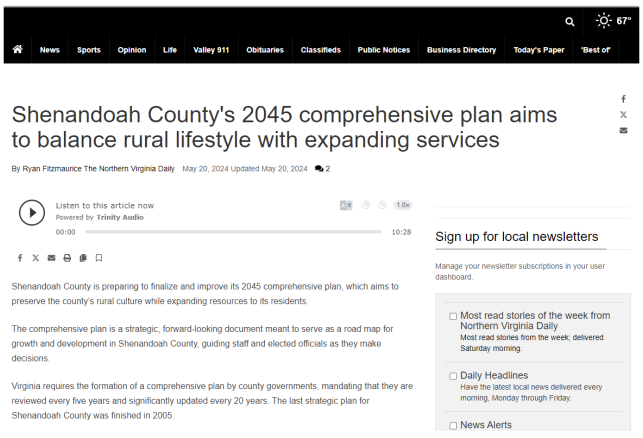
		Goals					
		1	2	3	4	5	Total Edits
Chapters	1	1	3	1	5	1	11
	2	1	12	13	6	7	39
	3	10	4	2	X	6	22
	4	1	8	4	2	4	19
	5	5	4	2	3	1	15
	6	1	5	7	6	6	25
	7	5	3	5	5	2	20
	8	3	2	1	5	6	17
	9	4	9	5	6	9	33
	10	3	6	4	2	2	17
	11	4	2	2	5	4	17
	Median	3	4	4	5	4	19

Shenandoah County putting final touches on 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Published: May. 22, 2024 at 11:49 PM EDT



The Northern Virginia Daily



Local news outlets provided coverage of the meetings.

April 25th, 2024 joint meeting between members of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and Citizens Advisory Committee with County Staff to review Chapters 1-3 as part of the reconciliation phase.

On June 6th, 2024 at the Planning Commission meeting, staff provided a revised version of the plan based on feedback from the prior three months from appointed and elected officials as well as members of the community. Members of the Planning Commission and Board set a public hearing date for August 1st with a final review taking place June 26th at the CAC meeting.

At the June 26th joint CAC meeting with the Board and Planning Commission, attendees shared minor changes such as grammatical errors, spelling, rewording to ensure the flow is better, and points of clarity to make the document more digestible by the public. Updates were shared from community group comments which mirrored the minor edits and points of clarity the group shared. Attendees expressed how proud they were of the work. "I think we've done what's best for Shenandoah County for now and for the next 20 years." shared CAC Chair Gentile.

Final Review with the June 26th CAC Meeting

Partnering with Town of Woodstock to engage students on the Town's Plan

We directly heard from over 2,500 people and engaged thousands more

Our survey laid the groundwork for all the data to help generate what is most valued and what needs improvement in our community. With nearly 1,000 people represented through the survey the additional meetings helped lead to our conclusions for visioning and goal setting.

Turn up the Radio

Since October 2021, The Valley Today's Janet Michael hosts us. Tune in here: https://shorturl.at/QOX4t

Did you know?

In addition to public meetings, pop-ups, surveys, social media, radio shows, news articles, TV interviews, and other engagement methods we also sent out post cards and notes in public engagement letters encouraging residents to become involved.

Catch us on TV

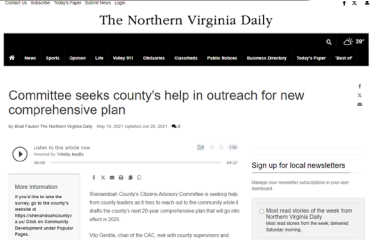
Local TV news channel WHSV TV 3 has videos on our engagement and involvement process including the empowering conversations through the fall of 2023.

Did you know?

During our walking tours members of the public noted the value of our downtowns and how proud locals are of them. A lot of the discussions involved ideas of seeing vacant buildings brought back to life and ways for it to be easier and more pleasant to work, live, and visit downtown.

Grab a newspaper

The Northern Virginia Daily has done a series of articles capturing the CAC's years of engagement.



Inform
2021-2022

After learning from speakers on government operations, the CAC geared up for in-person public engagement in fall 2021. From September to November, they held 11 District Information Sessions, seeking input on the existing plan and desired improvements. Simultaneously, staff initiated a monthly radio show with The Valley Today to raise awareness and promote involvement. With just 102 participants, the CAC adapted its approach to reach a broader audience.

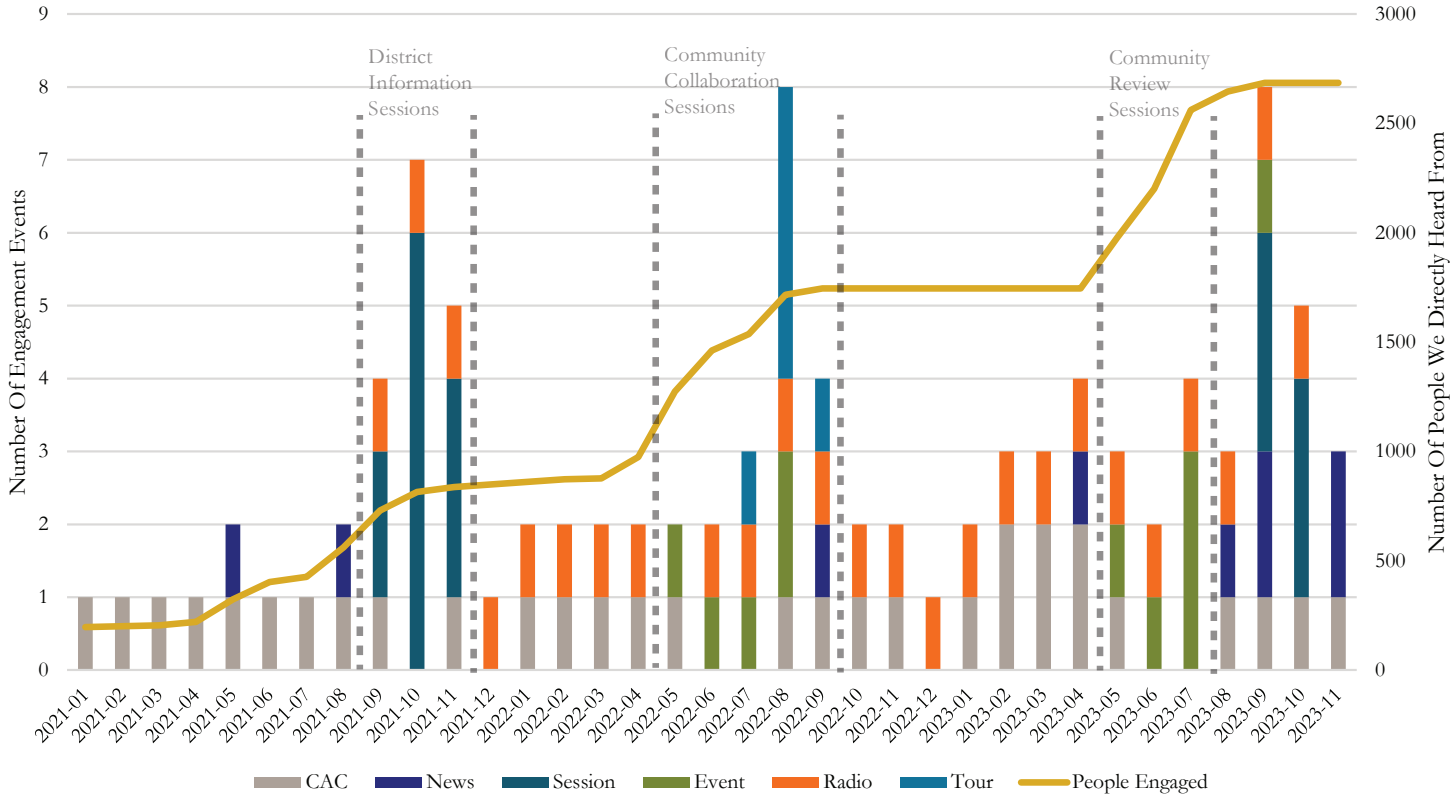
Collaborate
2022-2023

As the group prepared for round two of engagement, they briefed Ruritan, Rotary Clubs, Chamber of Commerce, and more on the process and early findings. May to September, they engaged 800 people at 5 festivals and 9 walking tours. September, the survey closed with 970 opinions, plus 50 from a high school survey. This, along with talks with organizations and departments, shaped the Plan's Vision, Chapter Visions, Goals, and Objectives in the fall.

Empower
2023-2024

2023 started with CAC reviewing and editing their draft which from May to July, was used for feedback as they engaged 800 individuals at 5 festivals. This, along with reports and seven public workshops that occurred throughout the fall, shaped the strategies and actions that were further refined through discussions amongst the CAC, Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and stakeholders key to implementation of the plan.

We Heard From Over 2,500 People And Engaged Thousands More



Based On Public Feedback, What's The Vision?

Our Vision for 2045 is to strictly adhere to the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan in order to maintain the rural aspects and the character of Shenandoah County so it continues to be –

1. A responsible steward conserving, preserving, and protecting our environmental, recreational, historic, cultural, and scenic resources for residents and visitors; and

2. A unique place to live with responsible policies, public services, and quality education that enhance the quality of life and promotes appropriate growth within and limits growth outside our towns, villages, and hamlets so that agricultural areas and other open green spaces remain a predominant feature of the landscape; and

3. A great place to work encouraging entrepreneurship, innovative and appropriate businesses and industries with a versatile trained workforce and varied jobs that pay a competitive wage; and

4. A collaborative community that continues to work with private and public entities to ensure Shenandoah County is healthy and vibrant.

A Community Driven Vision

Unlike communities that hire consultants, the vision statement for the year 2045 was crafted in October 2022 by the Citizen's Advisory Committee based on all of the public input they had heard. The vision statement went public that December and after a year of public input and review, the vision statement was found to be in line with the public's vision for the future.

Since 2005, the County has also maintained a list of overarching challenges that were identified as being potential road blocks to implementing the Plan. While past Plans identified accountability as the lowest concerning issue, this Plan identified it as the number one issue for the future. Following accountability to the Plan is the overarching thread of suburban sprawl and how it impacts the rural nature of the County.

Comprehensive Plans are a balancing act, finding the right way to make sure everyone is heard, their needs are met, and a general agreement can be found. We foresee ten major challenges we will struggle to balance:

1. Accountability.
2. Stopping suburban sprawl to protect the view and access to the natural beauty that attracts people here.
3. Protecting our water resources while promoting growth.
4. Providing accessible quality public education and community resources built for the 22nd Century while the population lives in a low-density setting.
5. Growing a local economy along with similar outside businesses in a market with neighboring growth centers.
6. Promoting and protecting farming as an occupation while encouraging tourism-based farming.
7. Providing a transportation system built for the 22nd Century.
8. Addressing the decline of participation in civic and community organizations and services.
9. Providing a County that is healthy, affordable, and livable for people of all backgrounds, ages, and incomes.
10. Promoting community-based redevelopment while preventing gentrification.

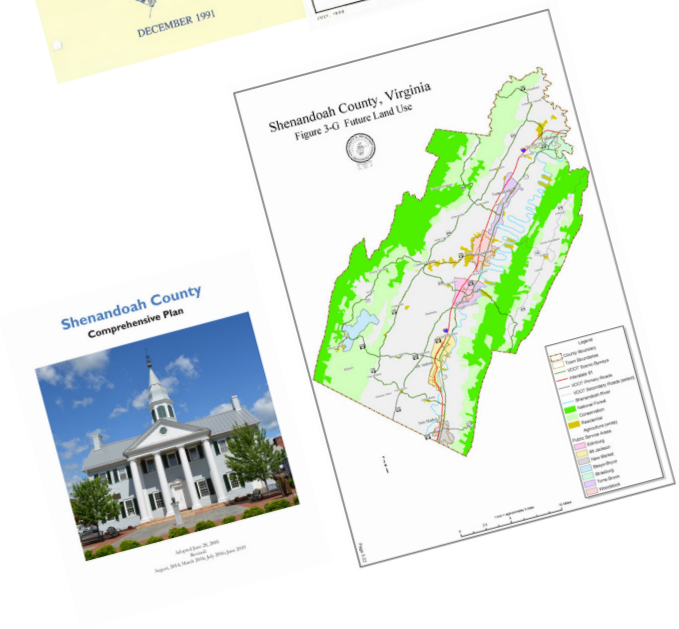
This Isn't Our First Plan

Shenandoah County has been actively planning for its future since 1973, five years before the State of Virginia made it a requirement that all localities, including counties, cities, and towns, adopt and keep a current comprehensive plan for their future.

Adopted November 13, 1973, the County's first Comprehensive Plan was developed with the Virginia Division of State Planning and Community Affairs Office. The Plan was split into two parts a Report which detailed statistical analysis and a Plan which provided a future land use map seen to the right and recommended policies to implement the Plan. The Plan states, "The primary goal of Shenandoah County is to improve public health, safety, convenience, and welfare, and to plan for the future development of the County." The plan called for growth in the six towns and twelve villages.

Adopted December 10, 1991, the second Plan was developed by a citizen committee of nearly 40 individuals. Since the first Plan, a zoning ordinance was adopted in 1978 and development did not cluster around the villages and towns as they had planned due to the advancement in private water and sewer technology, so the villages were planned to be abandoned. The Plan also had seven goals including rural nature, environmental quality, growth to the Towns, economic development in public service areas, affordable housing, improved public services, and integrating land use with transportation planning.

Adopted June 28, 2005, the third plan involved three initial public meetings then staff crafted the Plan. 12 citizens assisted in editing chapter by chapter which was then taken to six public meetings with one in each district. This Plan called for a standing committee to consistently review and provide edits to the Plan as well as grade the Board on whether their actions were in compliance with the Plan. This committee is known as the Citizens Advisory Committee, or CAC, and since 2005 they updated four of the ten chapters. In 2008 the CAC was involved in the Community Planning Project which reduced zoning allowances to protect the rural nature of the County. While preparing to update the housing chapter in 2019 the CAC considered the role of villages and hamlets in the County's development, this led to historical research and the start of the 4th Plan.



The Story Of Shenandoah County

200 million years of erosion of the Appalachian mountains which formed 370 million years ago, formed the streams by our communities and our rich soils.

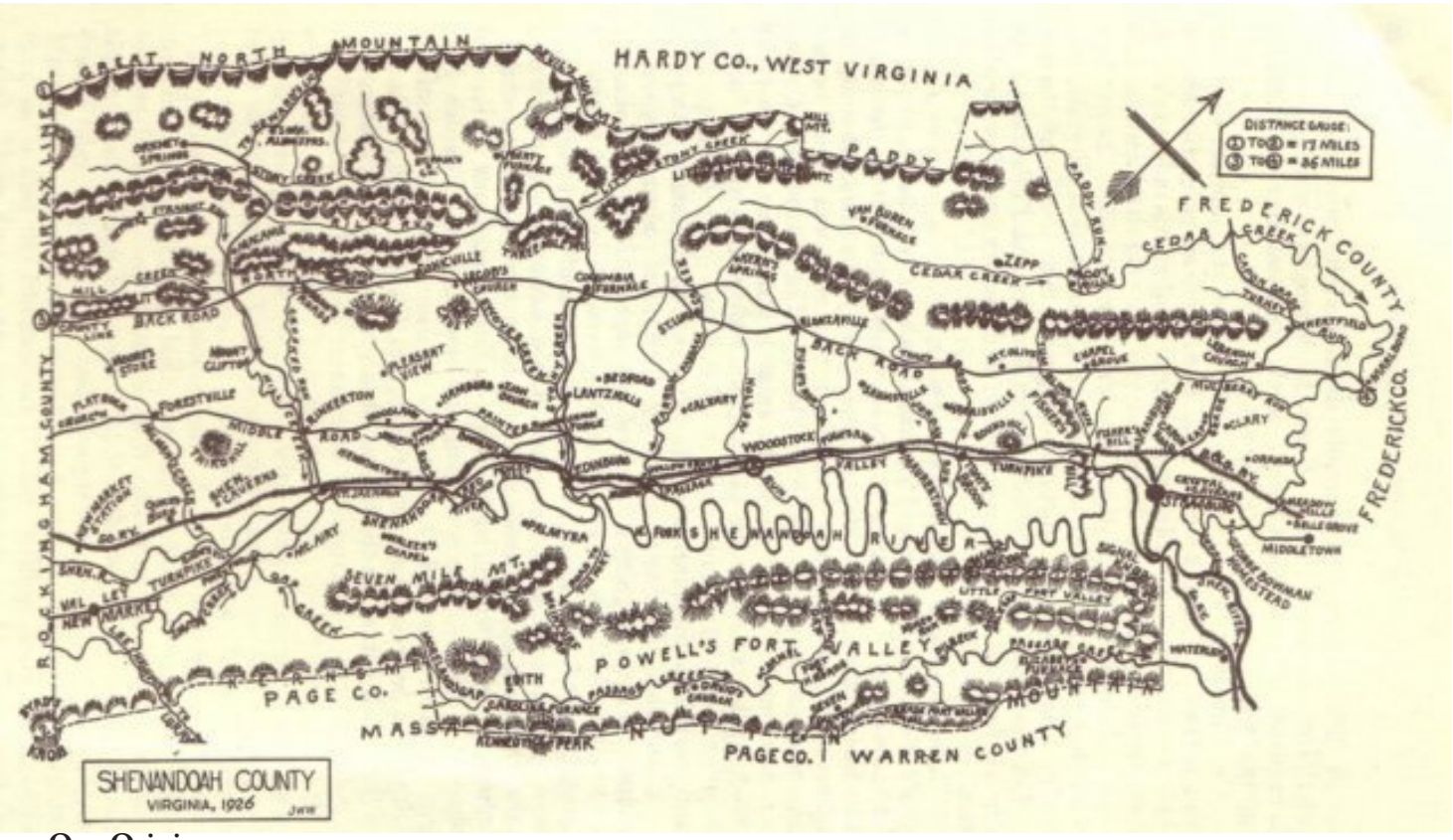
Route 11 is based on the Great Trail developed by the first human inhabitants who arrived around 15,000 B.C.E. they had villages and mound temples until a mid-1600 indigenous war.

In the 17th and 18th centuries European settlers built connected communities, attached dwellings, and multi-use structures similar to their home communities.

The communities were markets for the plantation economy including grains, hemp, and livestock as well as the timber that fueled iron furnaces and the Confederacy during the Civil War.

The railroad connected places in the 1860's and in the 1890's the Dinky line enhanced mining while a tourism economy began to flourish with visits to the vistas and springs.

In 1907 the iron industry collapsed and its lands became National Forests and the Dinky line was turned back over to private property owners.



Our Origins

Humans first arrived to Virginia around 20,000 to 15,000 B.C.E with the first humans to discover Shenandoah County arriving around 15,000 B.C.E. Around 8,000 B.C.E. they had mound temples similar to the Ohio River Valley, showing they had organized civilization and religion. Route 11 is based on the Great Trail developed by these first inhabitants and had villages and mound temples until an indigenous war that occurred in the mid-1600's.

Colonial Settlements and Dunmore County:

In the 17th and 18th centuries Scots-Irish, Swiss, and French settlers built connected communities, attached dwellings, and multi-use structures similar to their home communities and even named certain communities after their home places such as Strasburg being named after Strasbourg, France. The land that is now Shenandoah County was originally part of Frederick County, the area later became Dunmore County in 1772, named after Virginia's royal governor, Lord Dunmore. However, Dunmore's allegiance to the British crown during the Revolutionary War led to tensions, and in 1778, the Virginia General Assembly renamed the county Shenandoah. During this period, the region primarily thrived on agriculture, with settlers establishing farms along the fertile lands of the Shenandoah River.

The Civil War And Gilded Age:

In the 19th century, Shenandoah County witnessed significant growth and development. The agricultural plantation economy expanded, and the arrival of the railroad in the mid-1800s facilitated trade and transportation. The county, like much of Virginia, faced the challenges of the Civil War, and due to four major battles and the burning of local farms by Sheridan the County faced a period of rebuilding in the 1870's yet certain resorts and farms were never rebuilt. In the 1890's the Dinky railroad enhanced iron mining and allowed for the creation of company communities like Columbia Furnace and Liberty Furnace. By the late 1870's a tourism economy began to flourish with visits to springs such as the Orkney Springs Hotel. Wealthy tourists began building dwellings for seasonal homes, local stores closed as larger retail stores opened.

The Depression And The World Wars

The early to mid-20th century brought further transformation to Shenandoah County. In 1907 the iron industry collapsed and much of their lands became George Washington National Forest. The introduction of new technologies, including electricity and improved transportation, altered the way of life for residents. Agriculture remained a vital aspect of the economy, but diversification occurred with the growth of industries and businesses. This was a period of reorganization as VDOT was created and took over maintenance of County roads which led to some being removed, relocated, or widened. Maps serve as evidence of a culture change as village town halls as well as hamlet and smaller settlement community names fell off maps.

Post World War II And The Suburban Age

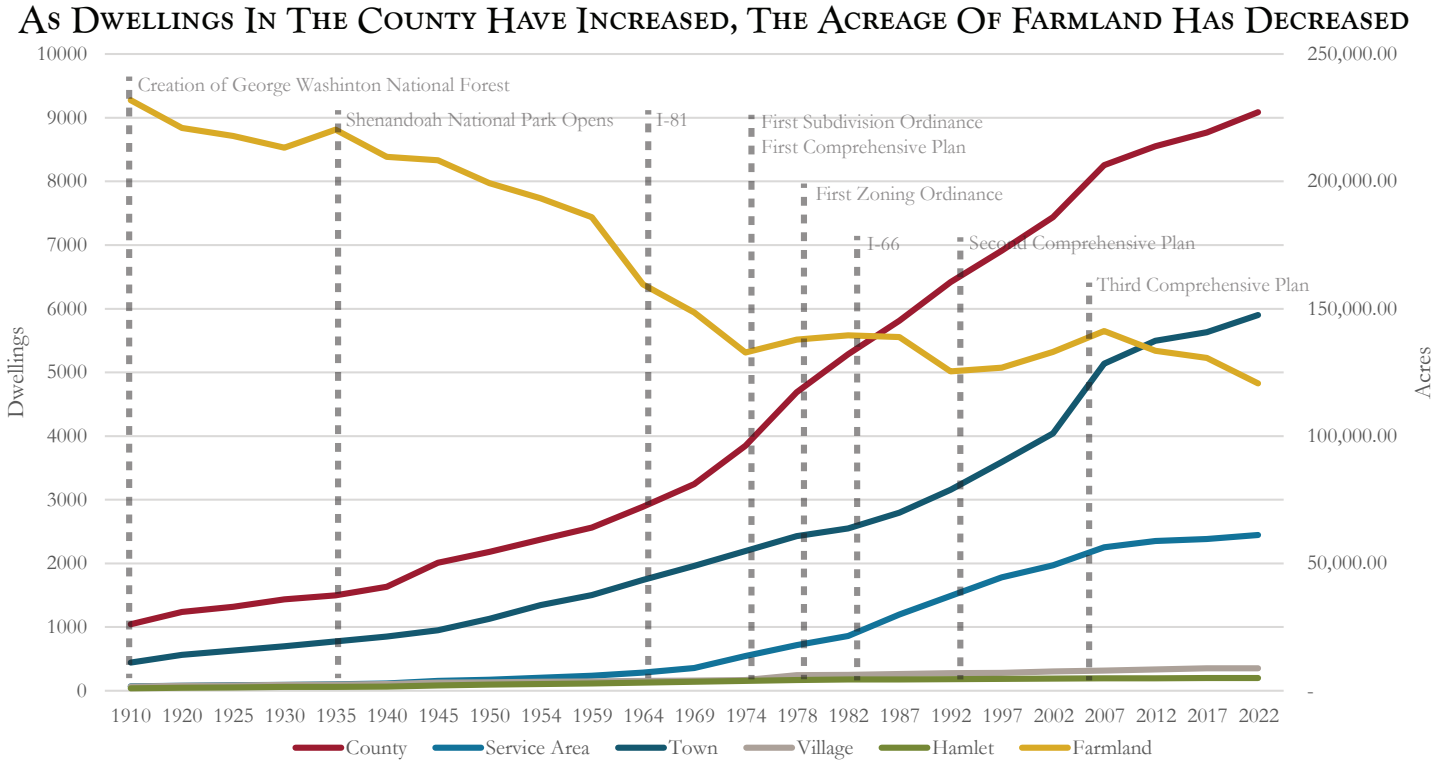
The period following World War II was marked with a continuous trend of individuals moving to the County both for primary residence and for vacation homes away from the nation's capitol. Due to the improvement and reorganization of roads by VDOT in the 1930's as well as Interstate 81 in the 1960's, it became increasingly easy for someone to buy farms in the County and develop housing on them. The tension in this growth and farmland loss can be seen in the chart below which shows that while housing increases outside of Towns, villages, and hamlets occur, farmland continues to be lost. While the work of each plan from the first in 1973 to the most recent 2005 Comprehensive Plan has focused on limiting the loss, the struggle has been inevitable as the housing continues to grow outside those proposed growth and development areas. The lines each show growth occurring more in the Service Areas and County locations than within the Towns or Villages or Hamlets, the traditional places of growth.

Great Recession And An End To Suburbanization

The Community Planning Project or CPP of 2008 was an attempt to wrestle the issues of existing lots in Shenandoah County that could be built on in the rural areas and grapple with the issue of subdivisions being allowed with little regulation compared to the Towns. This concern was tied to the housing bubble and sale of sub-prime mortgages which allowed for a proliferation of suburban housing to be built across the nation. The CPP identified that if trends had continued, the County would have been projected to lose up to a quarter of its agricultural land to residential development within the next 20-40 years. This shift would have been driven by market demand and existing zoning regulations, potentially leading to the creation of 35,000 to 40,000 new rural residential lots. These concerns were tied to the impact that thousands of additional wells and septic systems could have on the County's water resources.

Due to the work by the CPP the County updated its subdivision and zoning ordinances to limit the density of lots in the rural areas and the frequency of the division. In addition the County worked with three of the six Towns to develop annexation agreements to ensure they were on the same page with where and how development could occur. Yet even with these measures in place more than 50% of housing is built outside of Towns, Villages, and Hamlets year after year as they occur sight unseen while developments in Town face scrutiny on their impact to public services such as water or schools.

A B C



D E F

De-suburbanization And A New Beginning

Since 2019 we have seen an active support of placing important rural lands into conservation easements ensuring they remain rural forever, increasing opportunities for farmers to protect their farms from development, and reducing loopholes and methods for developers to develop in rural areas. This fourth Comprehensive Plan seeks to implement the vision the County had 50 years ago, to invest in our community the way our ancestors did through both protecting our agricultural and rural areas while also promoting and increasing growth in the places people already live: our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Did you know?

Data shows that as dwellings in our community increase, the farmland acreage has decreased. This is one of the fundamental items we seek to change, we must be able to increase our resident population in our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets while sustaining our farmland. As you can see beginning with the first comprehensive plan our locality has worked to increase housing while limiting farmland lost. It is an effort we will continue.

A

VDOT reorganized County roads following the Great Depression to increase speed as the FHA guided new housing and development to rural areas of the Country. With Interstate 81 built in the 1960's subdivisions and commercial facilities rapidly began to appear in the County including places like Basye and Leisure Point.

B

As family farms declined large scale agriculture increased in viability and employment of migrant workers led to a new Latinx population in the 1970's which aided in the expansion of apple and poultry industries.

C

Developer plans for rural subdivisions sparked concerns on suburban sprawl which led to the 1972 Subdivision Ordinance, 1973 Comprehensive Plan, and 1978 Zoning Ordinance. At the same time industries began shifting overseas and those from the post WWII era left.

D

Interstate 66 and subdivisions built in the 1980's led to the 1991 Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural and Forestall Districts, and a major drought led to the Water Resources Advisory Committee. While the 1991 Plan sought preservation, it abandoned the villages in the 1973 plan and directed growth to subdivisions and sprawl around Towns.

E

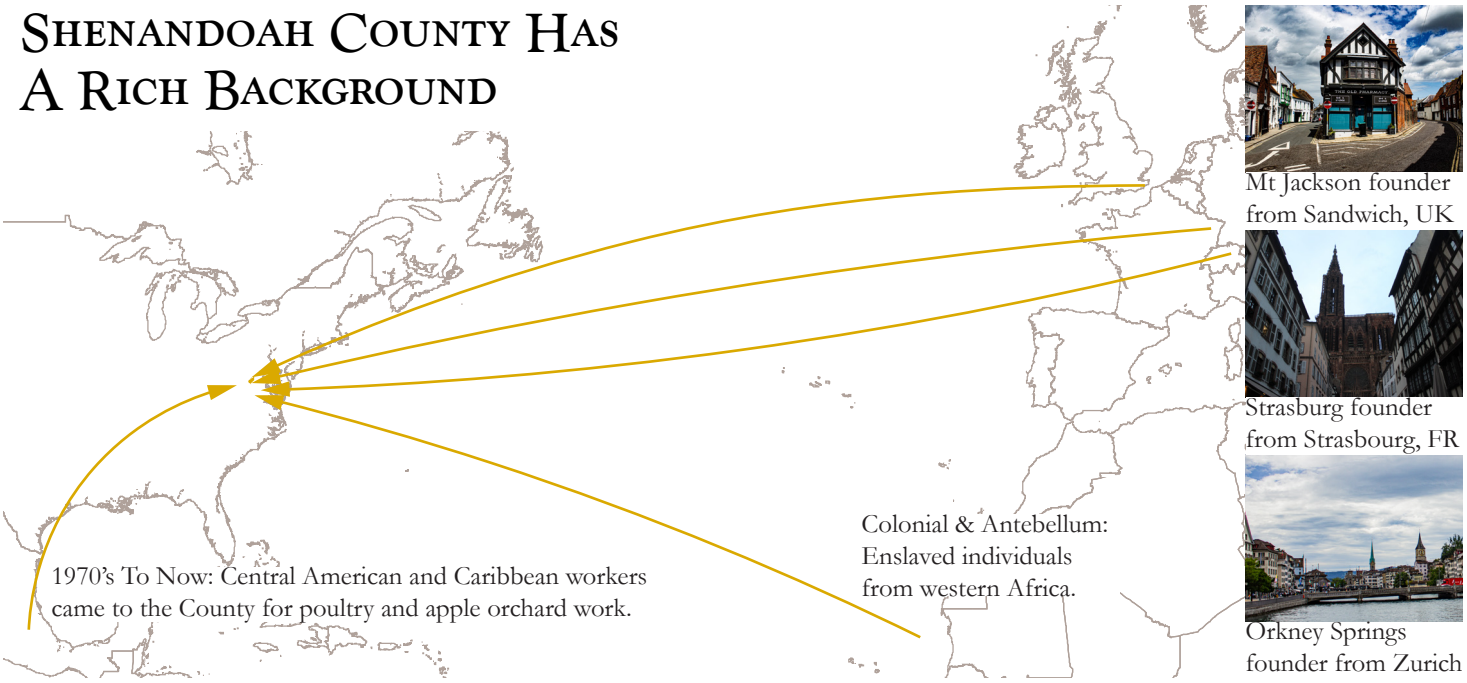
Continued suburban housing development led to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, Conservation Easement Authority, Citizen's Advisory Committee, and the subsequent Zoning Update with the 2008 Community Planning Project.

F

Today the number of dwellings occurring in the County still outpace those in the Towns with it being easier to build in County than our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Who Is Shenandoah County?

Shenandoah County Has A Rich Background

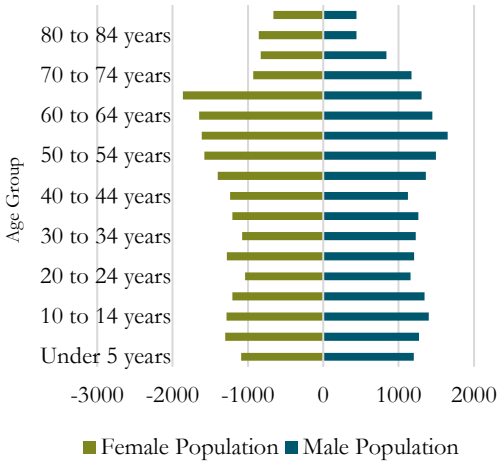


Mt Jackson founder from Sandwich, UK

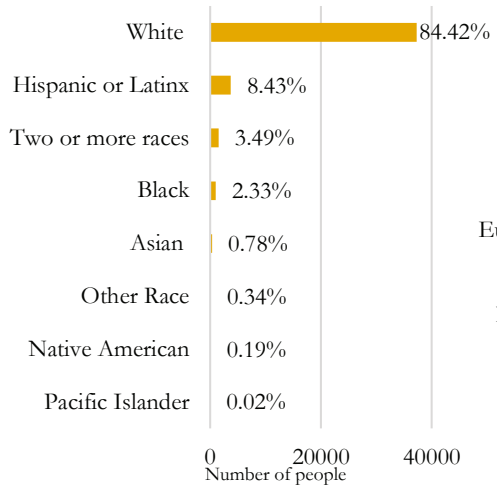
Strasburg founder from Strasbourg, FR

Orkney Springs founder from Zurich

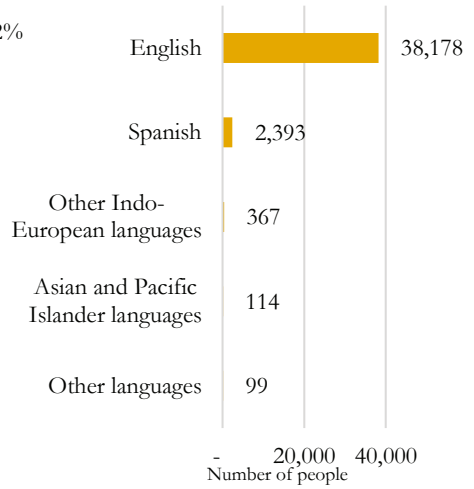
Age Groups



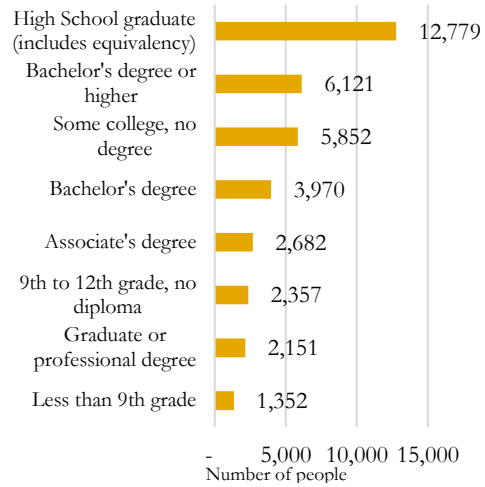
Race & Ethnicity



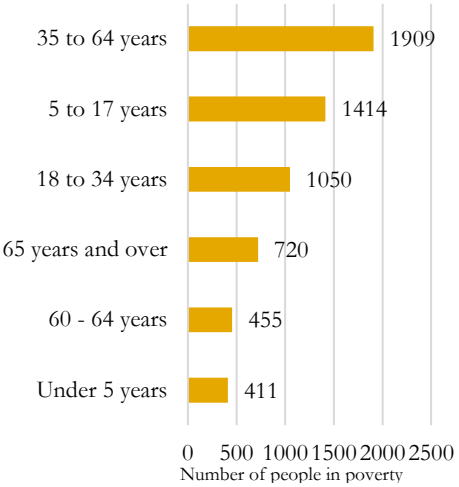
Languages Spoken



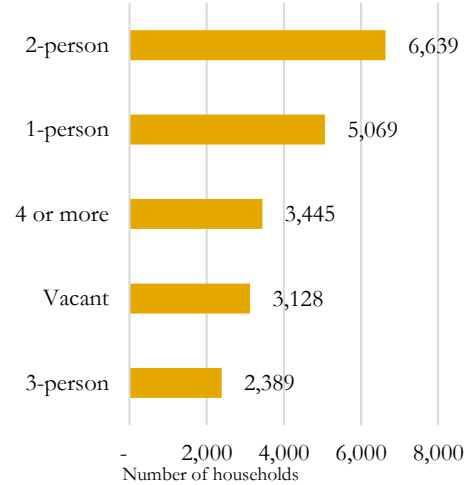
Education Level



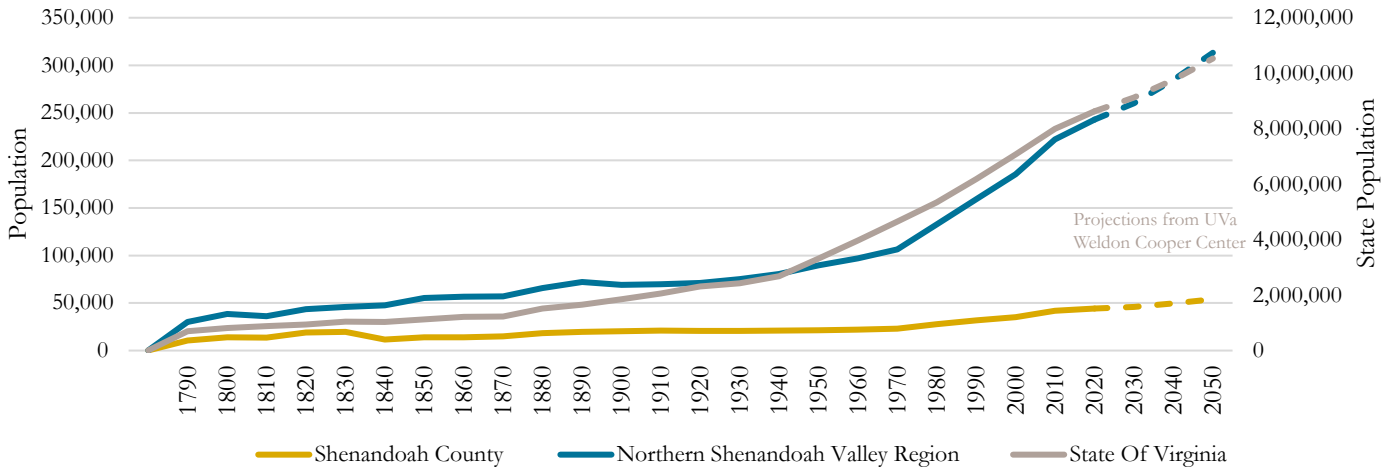
Poverty By Age Group



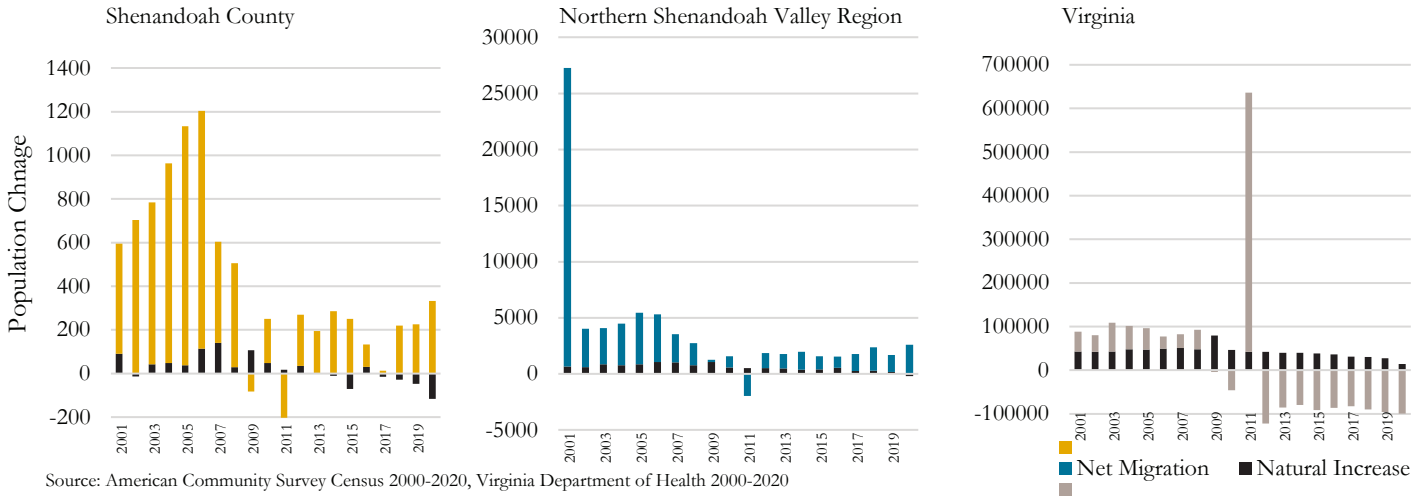
Household Size



Shenandoah County Doubled Its Population Between 1970 and 2020

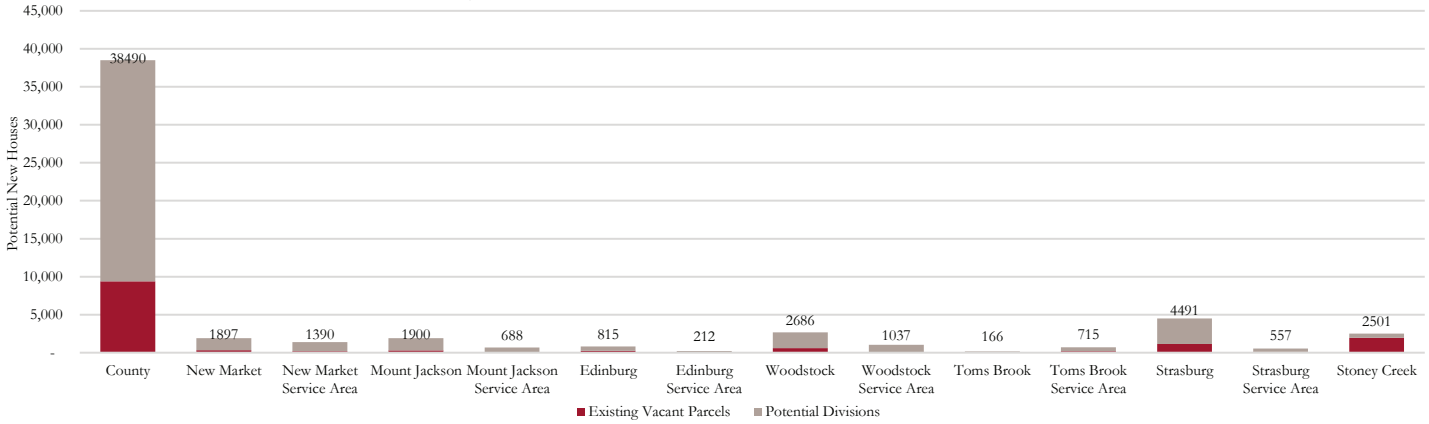


In Order To Grow We Attract New Residents



Source: American Community Survey Census 2000-2020, Virginia Department of Health 2000-2020

Due To Zoning, Most Potential New Housing Could Be In Rural Areas



Shenandoah County has always been a place for individuals to move to and call home, but within the past fifty years the population has more than doubled with majority of the growth coming from new arrivals. The population is aging with the current largest age group turning 70 by 2045, which is a population that would frequent places of worship, volunteer, or have been farmers. As this population ages out we may see changes in the community. Who will be our future farmers or community volunteers? Our workforce is largely in poverty and many individuals live alone or cannot afford a house. The places where new housing could occur are in areas away from jobs or resources due to zoning allowances meaning people are priced out of living here and residential use on rural land may increase.

What does it mean to be Rural?

In 1973, 1991, 2005, and today we consistently ask this question. In the early 2000's the CAC attempted to address this by providing a definition which is summarized below:

- Physical and visual attributes such as working farms, with large tracts of open, undeveloped land.
- A landscape dominated by farm fields, open pasture and cropland, scenic mountains and ridges, and large tracts of woodland.
- Large tracts of undeveloped land for rural recreation.
- Residential development does not dominate the landscape.
- Clean air, clean rivers and streams.
- Clean edges to villages and towns.
- Suburban development patterns are not present.
- Historic sites and landmarks are preserved.
- Service areas, with public water and sewer available, are compact yet retaining the small town atmosphere.
- Cooperative planning between the towns and county.

If We Are Rural, What Is Suburban?

Suburbanism is the futon of development, it tries to be a bed and tries to be a couch but no matter what its uncomfortable. Likewise suburbs attempt to provide urban amenities while also allowing low density development and space with large lots and wide, fast roads. Suburbs have:

- Single family zoning as the largest land use.
- People don't live where they work, commuters.
- Roads designed just for cars with many cul de sacs.
- Strip malls and large surface parking lots.
- Monotonous "cookie-cutter" design.
- Highways with fast food and homes adjacent.
- Wealthy and poor people live in different areas.

What is urban? Is it skyscrapers?

What pops into your mind when you think of urban places? Do you see skyscrapers, futuristic cities with green buildings or flying cars, or do you think of the areas we just discussed, the suburbs?

The Urban Form Exists In All Sizes.

Urban places range in all sizes from small hamlets to large cities. Urban does not mean skyscrapers, strip malls, suburbs, flying cars or anything above. Urban spaces are your downtowns where you can walk to the coffee shop or bar and just down the street is a park or local store. Urban places are:

- Diverse with many different uses at varied times.
- Balance of residential and commercial spaces.
- Layers of architecture from many decades.
- Buildings close together, public & private space mix.
- A market where crops and products are sold.
- Where locals and strangers meet.

"Bring people together and they create a collective surplus of enjoyment; bring buildings together and collectively they can give visual pleasure which none can give separately.

One building standing alone in the countryside is experienced as a work of architecture, but bring a half dozen buildings together and an art other than architecture is made possible.

In fact there is an art of relationship just as there is an art of architecture. Its purpose is to take all the elements that go to create the environment: buildings, trees, nature, water, traffic, advertisements and so on, and to weave them together in such a way that drama is released."
-Gordon Cullen, Townscape 1961

The clean edge of a community with a rural landscape helps create a sense of Here and There. This is here, that is there.

Communities serve as market places for food and products grown or made in open working lands like farms or forests.

A community tends to have a blend of fabric with some structures built recently and some built decades ago.

Communities have a good blend of public and private spaces, including internal and external spaces like plazas or marquees.

Eyes love details. Buildings with detailed facades and breaks are more visually pleasing than monotonous flat buildings.

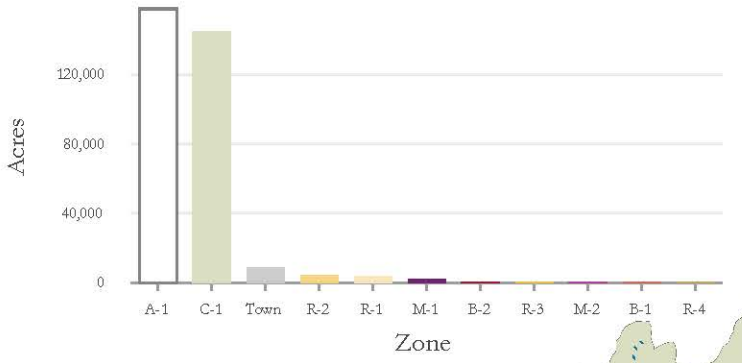
Streets should feel like an outdoor room, enhancing that sense of hereness with closure through taller buildings and trees.

Communities have places to live, places to work, and third places where people spend time inbetween like cafes or parks.

Interesting places aren't grids or cul de sacs, they intrigue you with reflected vistas, making you wonder what's over there.

Current Zoning
Of Shenandoah County

Majority Of The County Is Zoned Rural



Wheatfield
Lebanon Church
Oranda
Clary
Oak Grove
Zepp
Strasburg
Fishers Hill
Mount Olive
Locust Grove
Harrisville
Toms Brook
Saumsville
Maurertown
Alonzaville
Saint Luke
Jadwin
Columbia Furnace
Calvary
Woodstock
Jerome
Readus
Lantz Mill
Swover Creek
Fort Valley
Crossroads
Conicville
Taylortown
Edinburg
Bowmans Crossing
Basye
Orkney Springs
Mount Hermon
Hudsons Crossroads
Hamburg
Hawkinstown
Kings Crossing
Macanie
Hepners
Mount Clifton
Walkers Chapel
Mount Jackson
Williamsville
Moores Store
Forestville
Quicksburg
Borden
New Market
Valley View

N

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Legend

- C-1
- A-1
- R-1
- R-2
- R-3
- R-4
- B-1
- B-2
- M-1
- M-2
- Town Zoning
- Floodplain Overlay
- Stream Buffer Overlay
- Old Valley Pike Overlay
- Roadways
- County Boundary

Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

Zoning segregates a community into different areas, each with specific rules for what can be built or done there. It ensures that residential areas, businesses, and public spaces are located in appropriate places for a well-functioning community. A zoning map is a visual tool that shows these divisions clearly, helping residents and builders understand where different types of buildings and activities are allowed. It's a way to plan and manage the growth of a community and what that growth looks and feels like, and Shenandoah County has done this since 1978.

Zoning District Descriptions

C-1 Conservation
Focuses on conserving lands near the National Forest, with limited allowances for development and a 15 acre density on divisions.

A-1 Agriculture
Prioritizes agricultural uses and activities, allowing for farming, livestock, and dwellings with a 10 acre density on divisions.

R-1 Low-Density Residential
Intended for single-family homes on larger lots, promoting low-density neighborhoods with ample open space.

R-3 High-Density Residential
Supports higher density residential developments, such as townhouses and apartment complexes, to accommodate more residents.

B-1 Local Business
Serves local retail and service needs, catering to the daily needs of nearby residential areas with small-scale businesses.

M-1 General Industrial
Designated for heavier industrial uses including manufacturing, processing, and warehousing, with considerations for environmental impacts.

Floodplain Overlay District
Aims to mitigate life and property loss from floods by regulating and preventing development in flood-prone areas.

Old Valley Pike Overlay District
Ensures U.S. Route 11 remains a safe, scenic byway for local and tourist travel with guidelines on screening and access to new development.

RR-C Rural Residential-Conservation
Intended for single-family homes on large 10 acre lots, allowing low-density housing in forested areas. Currently there are no areas zoned for this district.

RR-A Rural Residential-Agriculture
Intended for single-family homes on large 3.5 acre lots, allowing low-density housing in open agricultural areas. Currently there are no areas zoned for this district.

R-2 Medium-Density Residential
Allows for a broader range of housing types, including single-family and duplexes, aimed at creating moderate-density living areas.

R-4 Rural Growth Residential
Encourages residential growth in designated rural areas, supporting a mix of housing types while maintaining rural aspects.

B-2 General Business
Facilitates a wide range of commercial uses, from retail to services, accommodating larger-scale business operations.

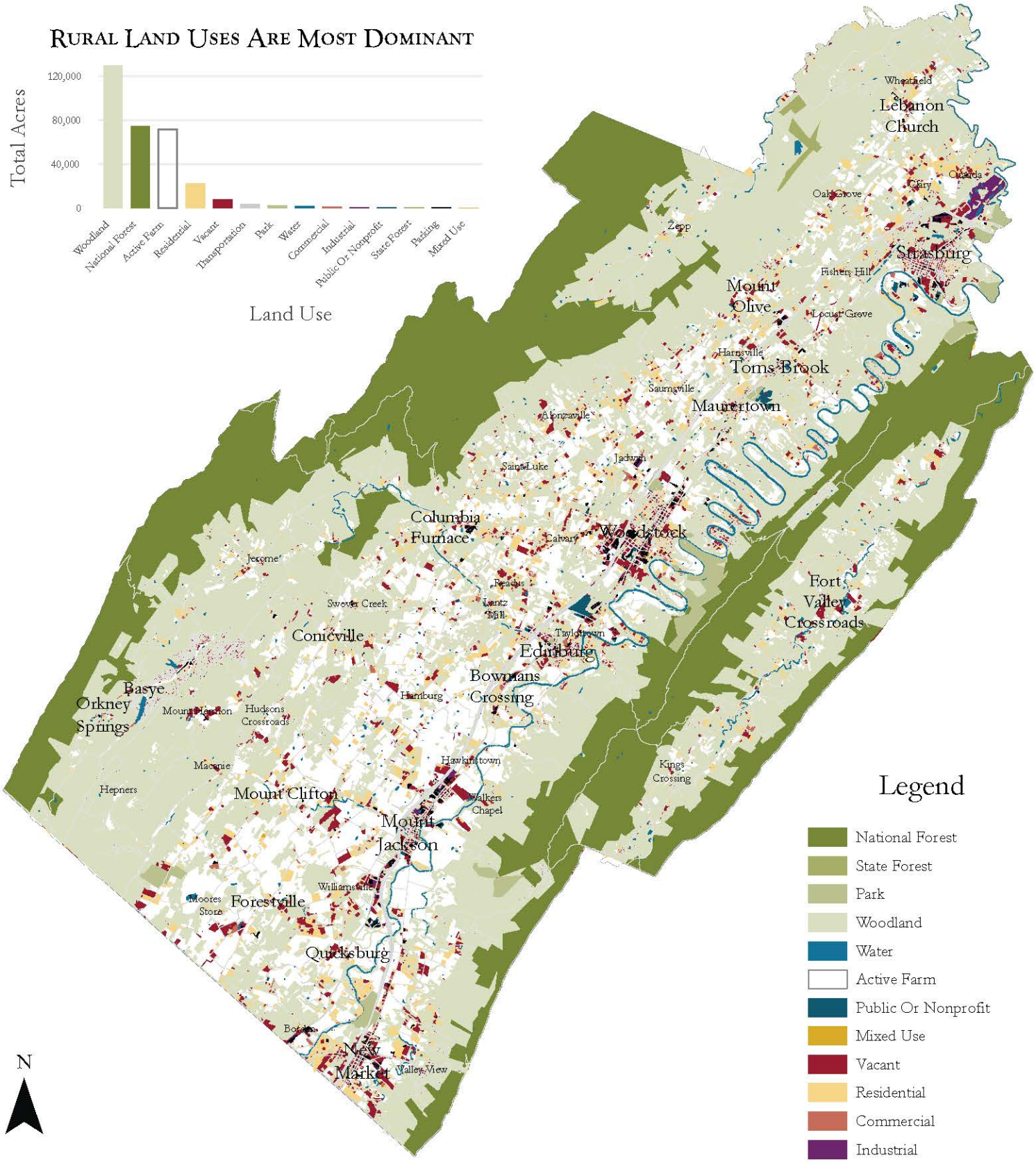
M-2 Limited Industrial
Focuses on light industrial uses with less environmental impact, promoting cleaner industries and technology-based businesses.

Stream Buffer Overlay District
Maintains a 100-foot buffer along streams to reduce pollution, stabilize banks, and preserve wildlife habitats, with specific exceptions allowed.

Town Zoned Areas
Each of the six incorporated Towns manage their own zoning districts which total 44 separate districts with many using similar standards.

Current Land Use
Of Shenandoah County

Rural Land Uses Are Most Dominant



Legend

- National Forest
- State Forest
- Park
- Woodland
- Water
- Active Farm
- Public Or Nonprofit
- Mixed Use
- Vacant
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Transportation
- Parking
- Roadways
- County Boundary

Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

A current land use map shows how land in a community is being used right now. It's like a snapshot that captures where homes, shops, parks, and other places are located. For us this is the greatest test as to whether the County is rural and while we do note that rural lands make up most land, the common thread impacting the rural character is residential development as the chart shows 22,000 acres of land are lawns being mowed compared to 76,000 acres in active agriculture. This chart only shows information on land outside of Towns, so these residences are suburban.

Use Descriptions

National Forest
These lands are owned and managed by the National Forest Service and are part of George Washington National Forest.

State Forest
These are lands managed by the Department of Forestry of the State of Virginia and include Devils Backbone State Forest.

Park
These are lands owned by Towns, County, State of Virginia, or National Park Service and are operated as public parks.

Woodland
These are forests larger than two acres identified using satellite imagery. Locations of homes removed an acre buffer from forests.

Water
These are lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, and other water bodies that were identified with satellite imagery.

Active Farms
Lands which are zoned A-1 or C-1 and receive land use taxation benefits, which means they are actively being used for farming.

Public Or Non-Profit
These are lands owned by a government or non-profit entity including churches, ruritan clubs, and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation.

Mixed Use
These areas could be zoned a variety of aspects, but were found to have a residence and a business on the property.

Vacant
These are lands not actively being farmed or used for other uses and have no structures on them currently.

Residential
These are lands with homes, apartments, or other types of dwellings on them. The structures may be occupied or vacant.

Commercial
These are areas zoned business or commercial and have businesses on them. This means they have a commercial structure on the property.

Industrial
These are areas zoned for industry, including mining or quarrying, and are actively being used for such uses.

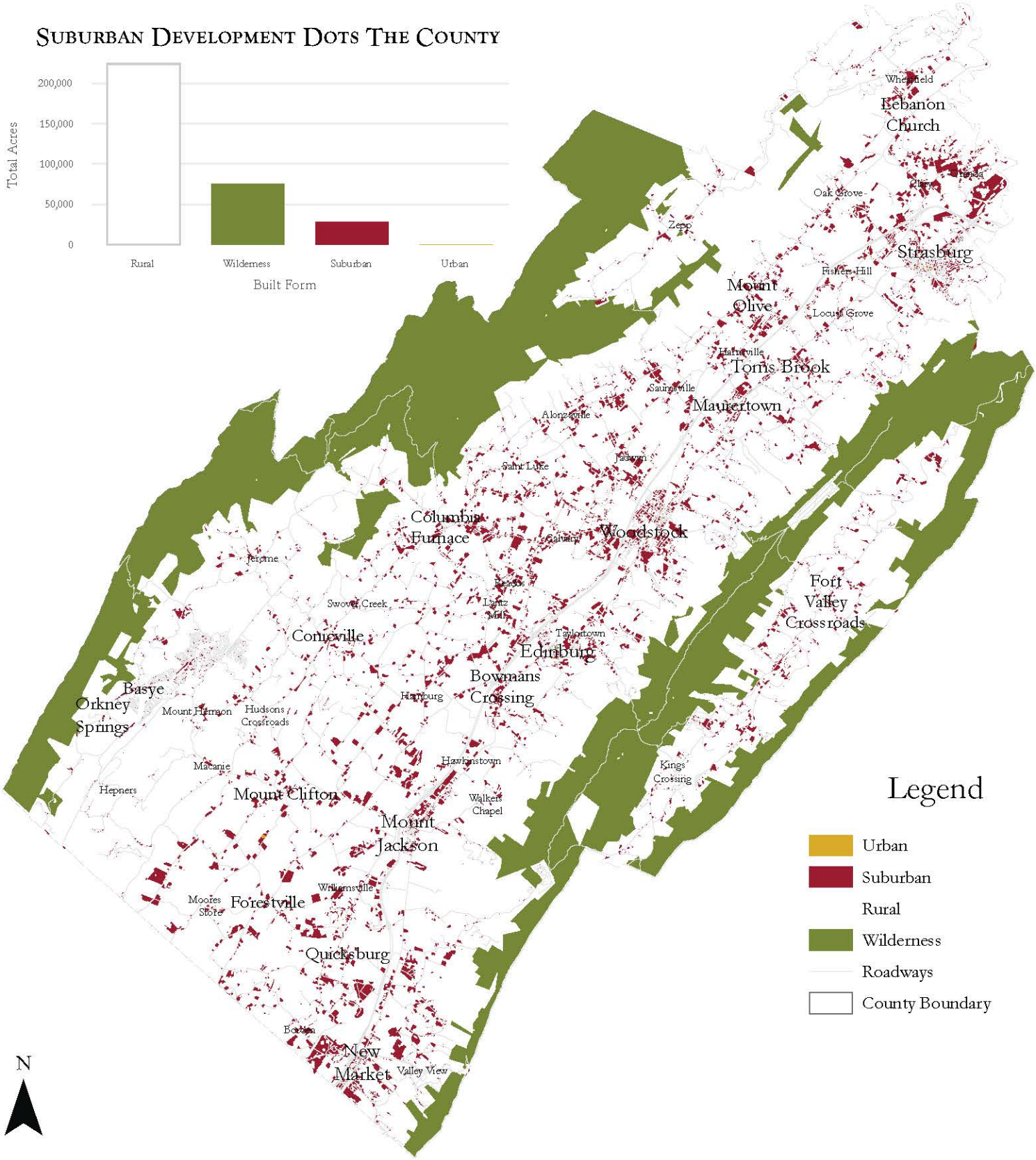
Transportation
These are roadways that are not other active uses, areas include Interstate 81 and other public rights of way.

Parking
These are impervious areas that are used for surface parking lots of automobiles for businesses, residences, or other structures.

Current Built Form

Of Shenandoah County

Suburban Development Dots The County



Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

Built Form Descriptions

Urban
These are our downtowns, the places where an apartment is over the coffee shop or restaurant.

Suburban
These are places where single family homes reside, the gas stations and fast food options, and the factories.

Rural
These are forests, farms, vacant lands, and our public parks. These lands have a few structures on them.

Wilderness
These are our National and State Forests, places where no one lives and no structures exist.

The Common Thread

For sixty years Shenandoah County has been wrestling with one common thread which weaves throughout time: Suburbanization. This is clear through the excerpts from each of the three past plans:

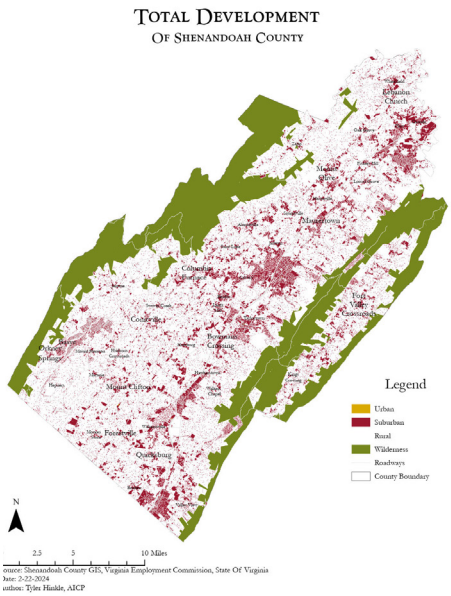
1973: Through development controls and community cooperation, this concept (of focusing growth to Towns and Villages) will help the County to provide services for its residents more economically and to maintain an environment of conserved open space and agricultural lands.

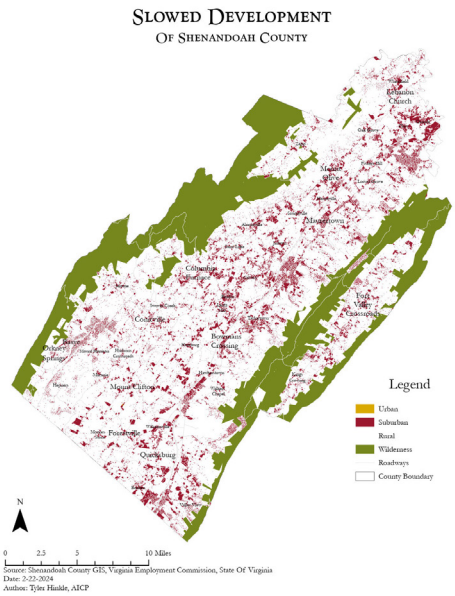
1991: Goal 1: Retain the rural and open-space character of the unincorporated area of the County.

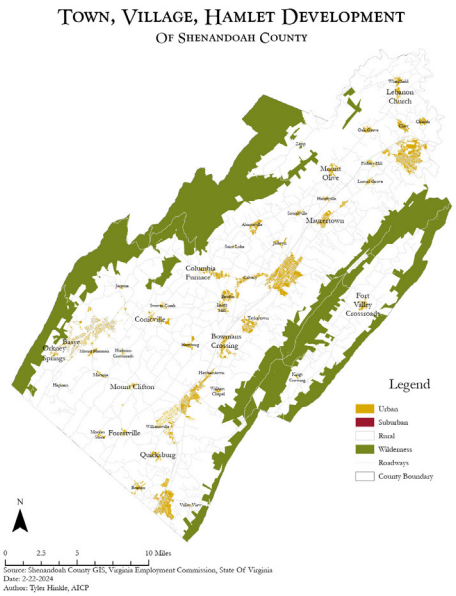
2005: In the year 2025, Shenandoah County is and will be a primarily rural community that: protects its natural resources (and) directs its growth to the towns ensuring its open, agricultural character.

This common thread remains with us even after three plans and various zoning changes due to existing platted lots in the rural areas as well as the allowance for one house for every ten acres in our rural areas and the difficult process to build a home in our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets. Today there is the chance to close this thread which has been a shadow over the community for over half a century so future generations can enjoy a County like today. To everything there is a season, a time to plan, and a time to act. That time is now, and while the emphasis on the loss of rural land due to suburbanization has always been a concern, the greater threat is the loss of a sense of community and place. This means that the solution to this common thread is not to cut all development off entirely but rather to rethink the form that development takes so we build more places for people.

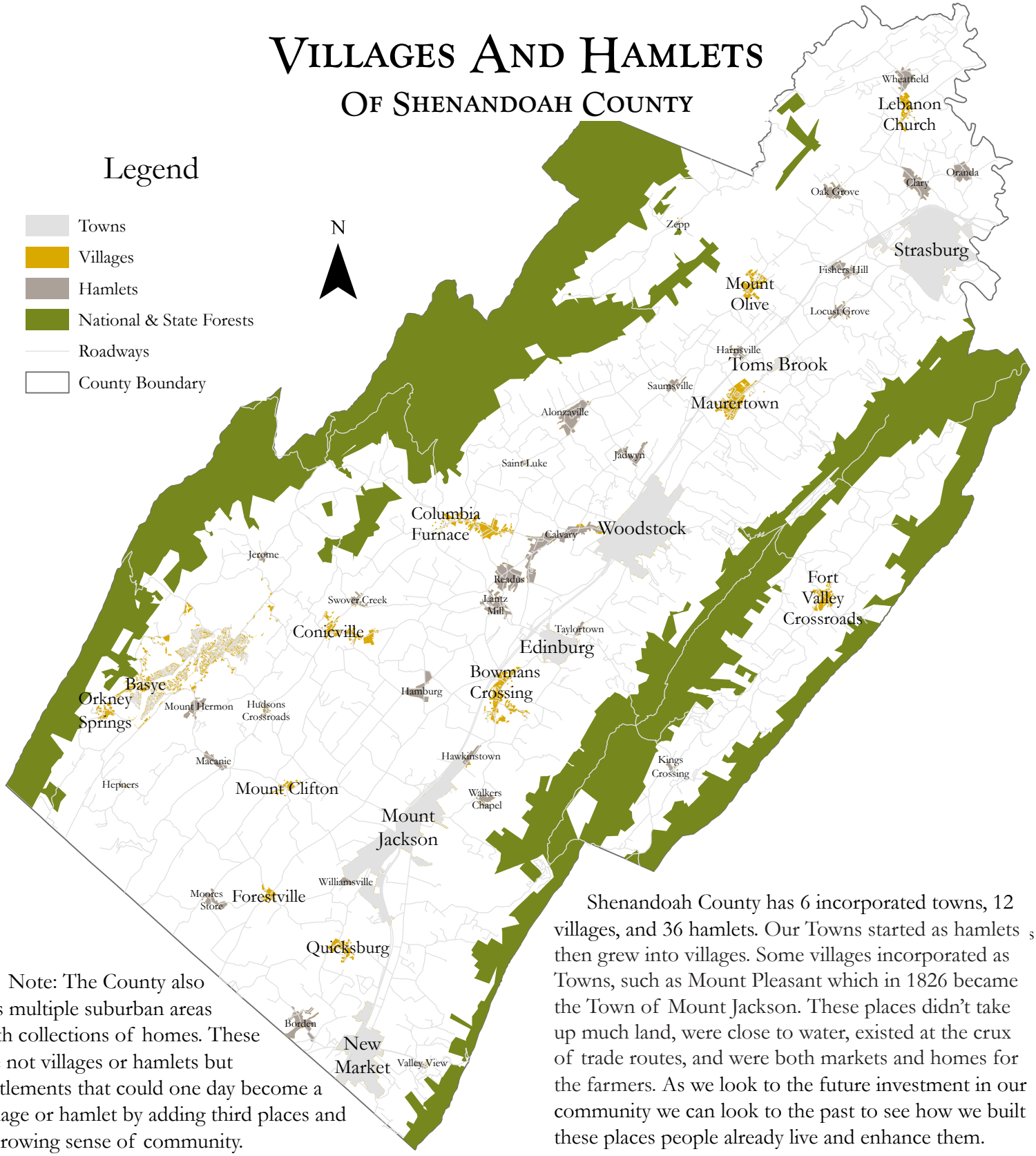
That vision, that aspiration, takes making hard decisions and in a timely manner as there are three potential futures that could occur. To the left all potential divisions and existing parcels are developed, the center divisions are limited but existing parcels are built on, and the right we invest in our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.







Villages And Hamlets
Of Shenandoah County



Note: The County also has multiple suburban areas with collections of homes. These are not villages or hamlets but settlements that could one day become a village or hamlet by adding third places and a growing sense of community.

Shenandoah County has 6 incorporated towns, 12 villages, and 36 hamlets. Our Towns started as hamlets s then grew into villages. Some villages incorporated as Towns, such as Mount Pleasant which in 1826 became the Town of Mount Jackson. These places didn't take up much land, were close to water, existed at the crux of trade routes, and were both markets and homes for the farmers. As we look to the future investment in our community we can look to the past to see how we built these places people already live and enhance them.

Settlement — Hamlet — Village — Town

Isolated collections of homes or businesses

Homes and a third place, but weak sense of community

Homes and third places with a sense of community

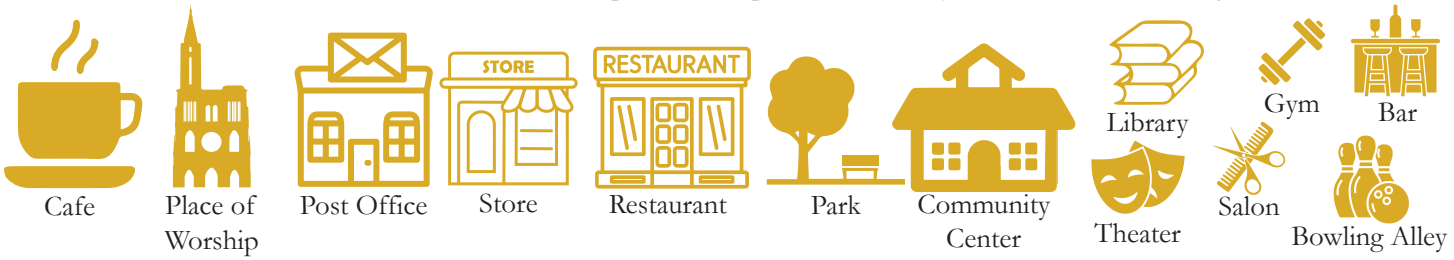
Homes, third places, and multiple neighborhoods

What Are Villages and Hamlets?

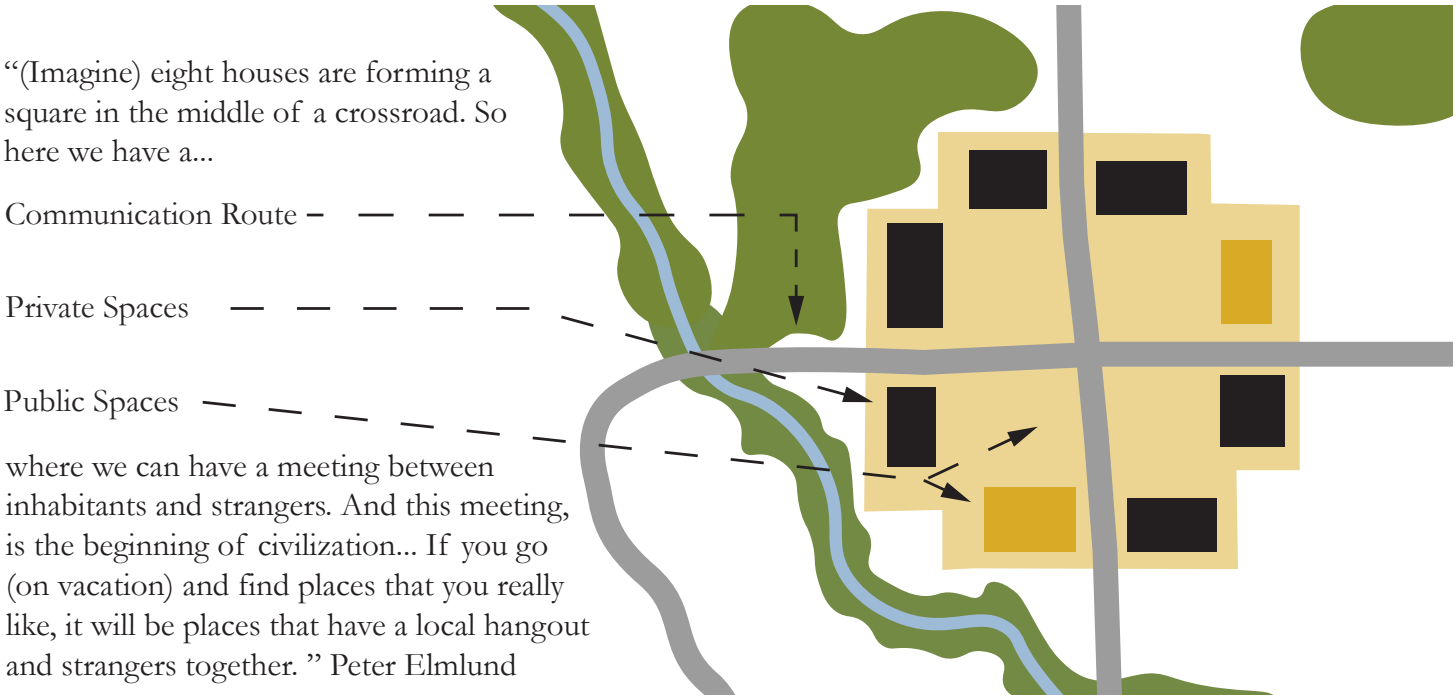
A VILLAGE is an established neighborhood standing free in the countryside. The strong center of a village can usually be attributed, not to the population, but to its location on a transportation corridor and presence of more than one third space.

A HAMLET is a neighborhood in the making. Standing free in the countryside, by virtue of its location away from transportation, the hamlet has a weak center not due to its population but the lack of multiple third spaces or a strong sense of community.

A First Place is our home. A Second Place is our workplace. Third places are where you find locals and strangers like a:

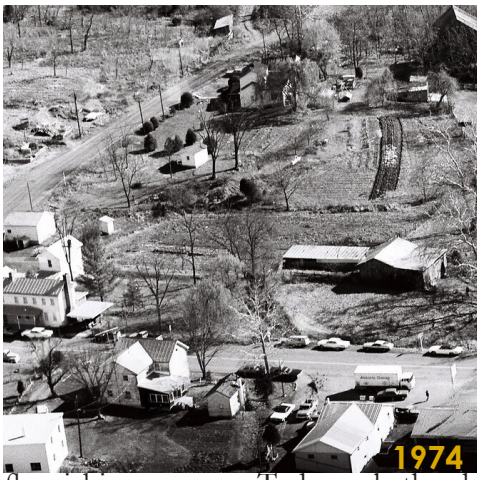


"(Imagine) eight houses are forming a square in the middle of a crossroad. So here we have a...



where we can have a meeting between inhabitants and strangers. And this meeting, is the beginning of civilization... If you go (on vacation) and find places that you really like, it will be places that have a local hangout and strangers together. " Peter Elmlund

Forestville is an example of what was a flourishing village. In this image from 1940 the community had a town hall, store, mill, church, and a school.



Today only the church and school buildings are used, yet the school is now a community center. On Sundays the church invites street parking in the center of the village.

What are the 6 BIG IDEAS?

Our Six Big Ideas are the framework for Shenandoah 2045. These are core aspects of all chapters of the Action Plan and cover a variety of topics from land use to the economy and more. This framework helps facilitate all partners and stakeholders in the big picture vision we as a community have for the next twenty years.

A CONCEPT is a step down from a BIG IDEA and outlines the general approach we want to take to making the vision of the Plan a reality. These are the core values that will guide us based on the goals and objectives of the Action Plan.

A PROPOSAL is a step down from a CONCEPT and generally outlines how we could realistically implement the vision of the plan. These are the general ways we can implement the vision for the future based on the specific strategies and actions from the Action Plan.

BIG IDEA

We respect that WATER IS LIFE. We are committed to cherishing our water for the next generation. Knowing that clean and abundant water is finite but also vital for health, agriculture, economic growth, and overall well-being.

LAND IS VALUABLE to us. We keep our countryside beautiful and productive, balancing growth with preservation. Thriving farms, bustling downtowns, and scenic landscapes ensures land for generations to enjoy.

Our community is ACTIVELY CONNECTED. We've nurtured a community reflecting our values and actively connected with the places we live and work through streets, trails, and a variety of programming for a healthy life.

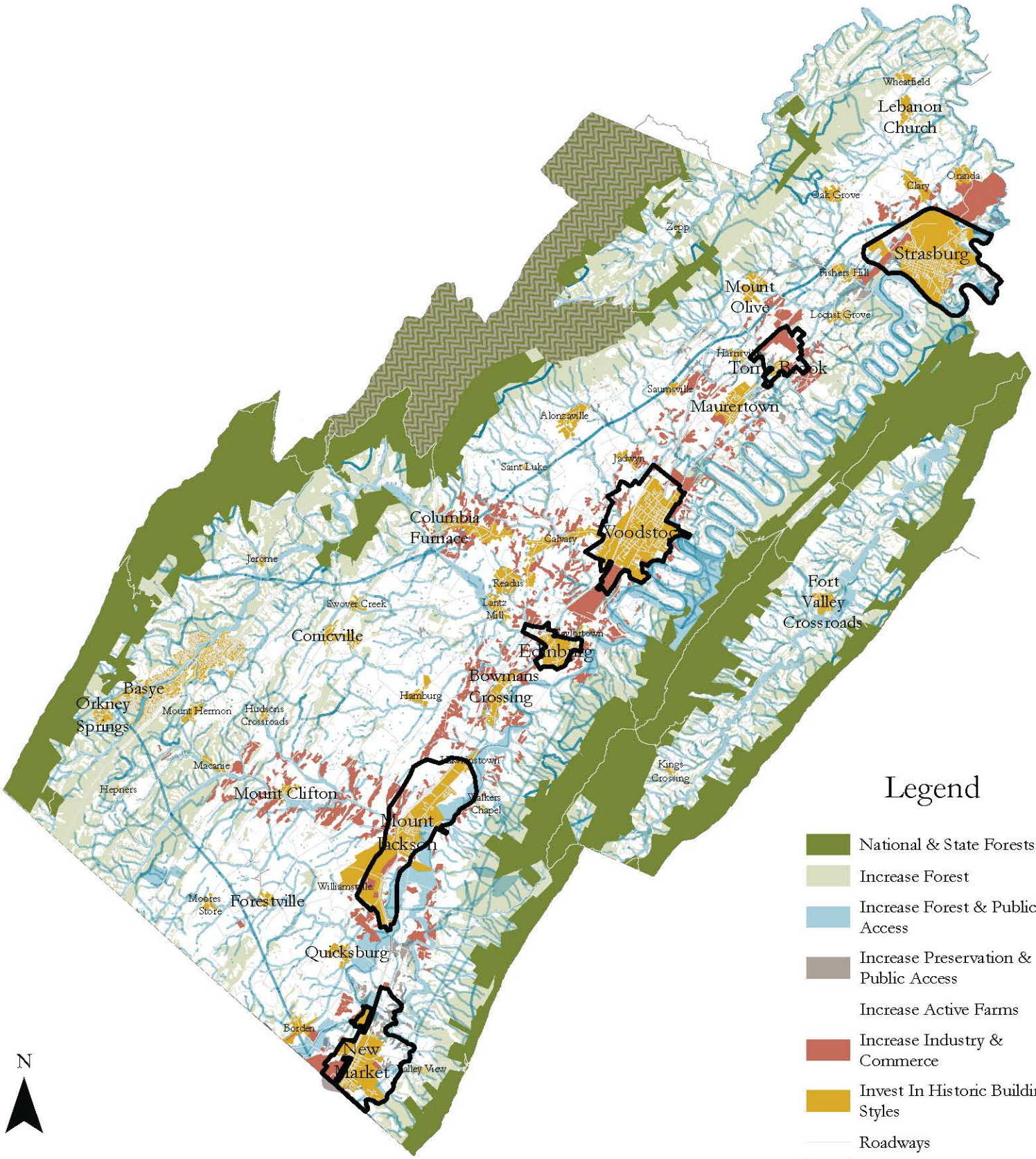
We invest in the next generation and our workforce with QUALITY EDUCATION. Education is the key to the next generation being prepared for the future and ensuring our workforce is versatile with market shifts.

We pride ourselves on DEPENDABLE SERVICES. Healthcare, public safety, and infrastructure are our backbone. Every resident feels supported and valued with these dependable services.

Our community believes THE PAST INSPIRES THE FUTURE. We cherish our history and learn from it. By combining old lessons with current knowledge, we make wise plans to create a better tomorrow.

CONCEPT	PROPOSAL
A. Next Generation Foundation B. Community Action C. Lasting Infrastructure	I. Reform Codes II. Conduct Studies III. Invest Today
A. Maximizing Land Productivity B. Small Town Feel C. Preserving Our Landscapes	I. Reform Codes II. Invest Downtown III. Protect Farmland
A. Personal Freedom B. Culture Of Physical Activity C. Community Connectivity	I. Reform Codes II. Enhance Connections & Spaces III. Community Programming
A. Evolving Education Infrastructure B. Community Opportunities C. Workforce Readiness	I. Quality Infrastructure II. Early Childhood Development III. Bridge Education & Workforce
A. Integrated Service Delivery B. Health & Safety C. Dependable Infrastructure	I. Update County Systems II. Reduce Healthcare Barriers III. Future Infrastructure
A. Study First, Act Next B. Data-Driven Decisions C. Be Inspired	I. Conduct Studies II. Integrate Data III. Style Guide

Long Range Change
Of Shenandoah County



Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

We acknowledge that many of the hopes and desires of the community will take a long time to accomplish. But if we work backwards we can make improvements today that set us up for long range changes in the future. Consider this map the distant future, perhaps 2072 or even 2145, generations from now. The foundation we are laying for that future generation is one of investing in our existing communities, building on the heritage of our ancestors, and protecting the rural and agricultural way of life so that generation can enjoy the same County we do today.

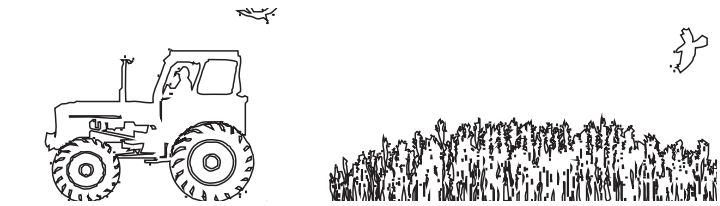
Change Descriptions

National & State Forests
These are the forested lands of the National and State Forests, we expect these lands to continue being an asset to our community into the far future both recreationally, ecologically, and for the natural resources they contain.

Increase Forest
These are areas 100 acres or more already covered in forest canopy. We want to ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the scenic forests, have places to hunt, and ensure wood products can be sourced locally

Increase Forest & Public Access
These are sensitive areas such as floodplains, wetlands, and places where utility easements run through the County as these are places where additional forest canopy could be added as well as parks and public trails.

Increase Preservation & Public Access
These lands were integral in our history from ancient burial mounds of Native tribes to Civil War Battlefields and Big Schloss National Scenic Area. We want to protect these areas and increase public access to them.



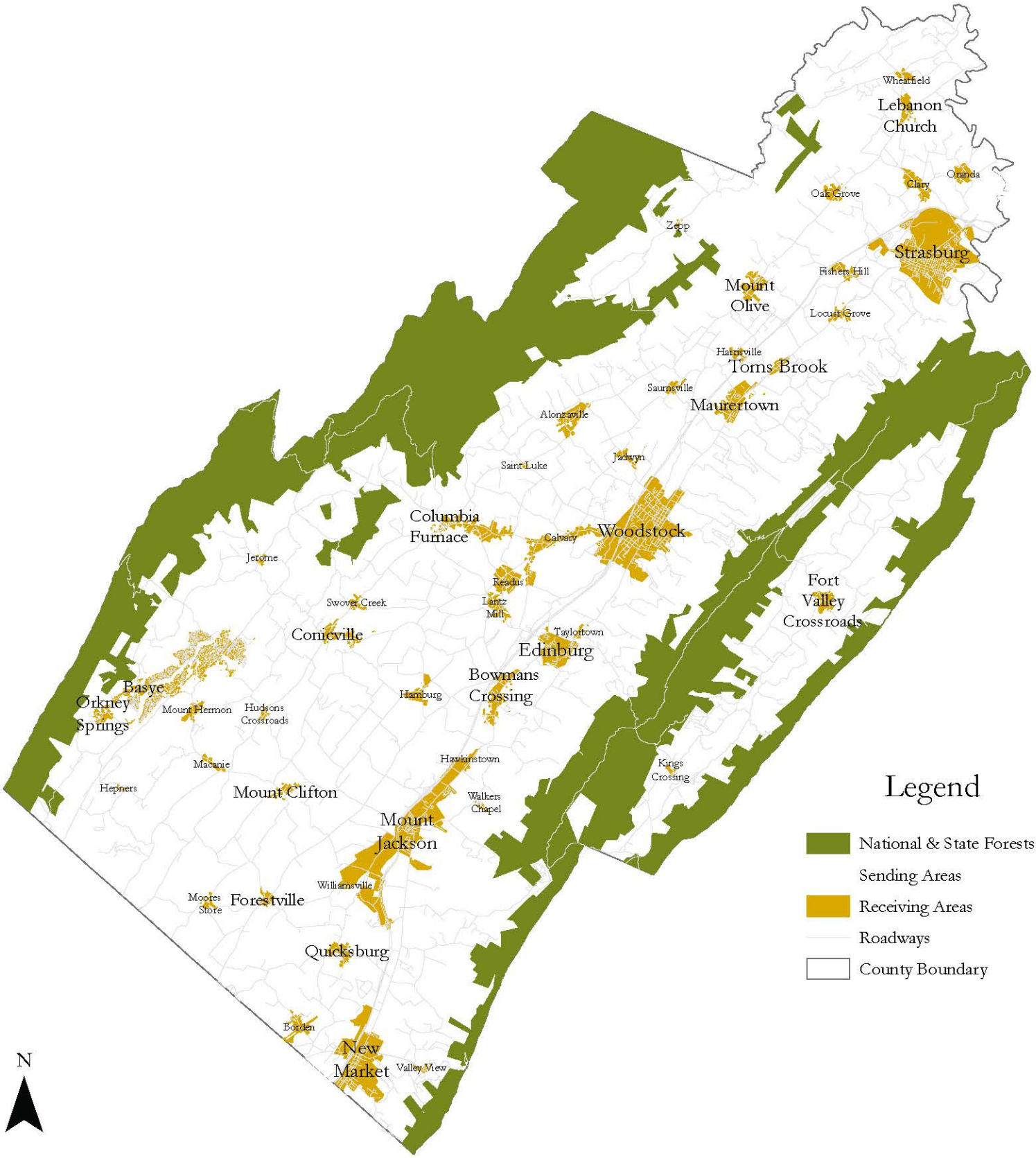
Increase Active Farms
These are lands with rich productive agricultural soils that may be active today or vacant farms. As the next generation of farmers joins the workforce we want to ensure these lands continue to be actively farmed.

Increase Industry & Commerce
These lands are the least productive soils in the County and are within a mile of I-81 and Routes 11, 42, and 263. We want to ensure the next generation have space for industry and businesses to enter the community.

Invest In Historic Building Styles
These are the hearts of our community, our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets. We want to invest in them the way we have for generations with a variety of housing types, quaint shops and stores, and a welcoming atmosphere.

Transfer Of Development Rights

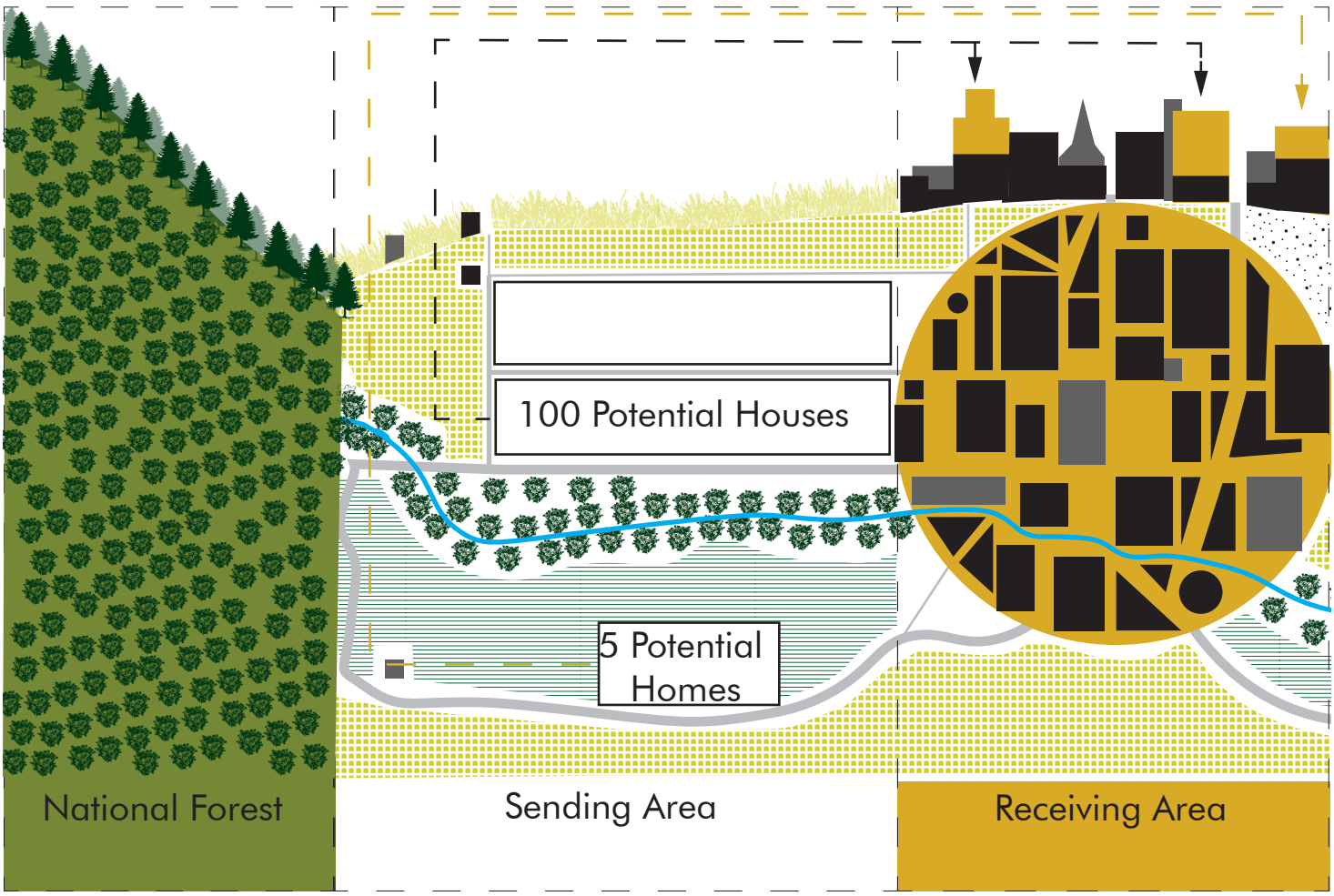
Of Shenandoah County



Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

A step down from our long range change map is a very general Transfer of Development Rights map. In short, this map shows areas we want to see protected for future generations, or sending areas, and the areas we want invested in, or receiving areas. State Code section § 15.2-2316 allows localities to adopt a transfer of development rights program. Such a program would allow for private developers to buy development rights from sending areas and use them in receiving areas. This would simultaneously allow for areas we want invested in to be developed at its highest and best use while also permanently protecting the areas we want protected with conservation easements.

Descriptions



Sending Areas

The "Sending Area" is a place where the land is kept in its natural or agricultural state, meaning it's where you'll find open fields, forests, or farms, rather than buildings or factories. People who own this land can sell something called "development rights" to others who want to build more in different places. This means they agree not to turn their green spaces into urban areas, helping to keep the environment healthy and ensuring that some lands stay open and natural. These areas are ensured to be protected by placing lands where rights were sold into permanent conservation easements.

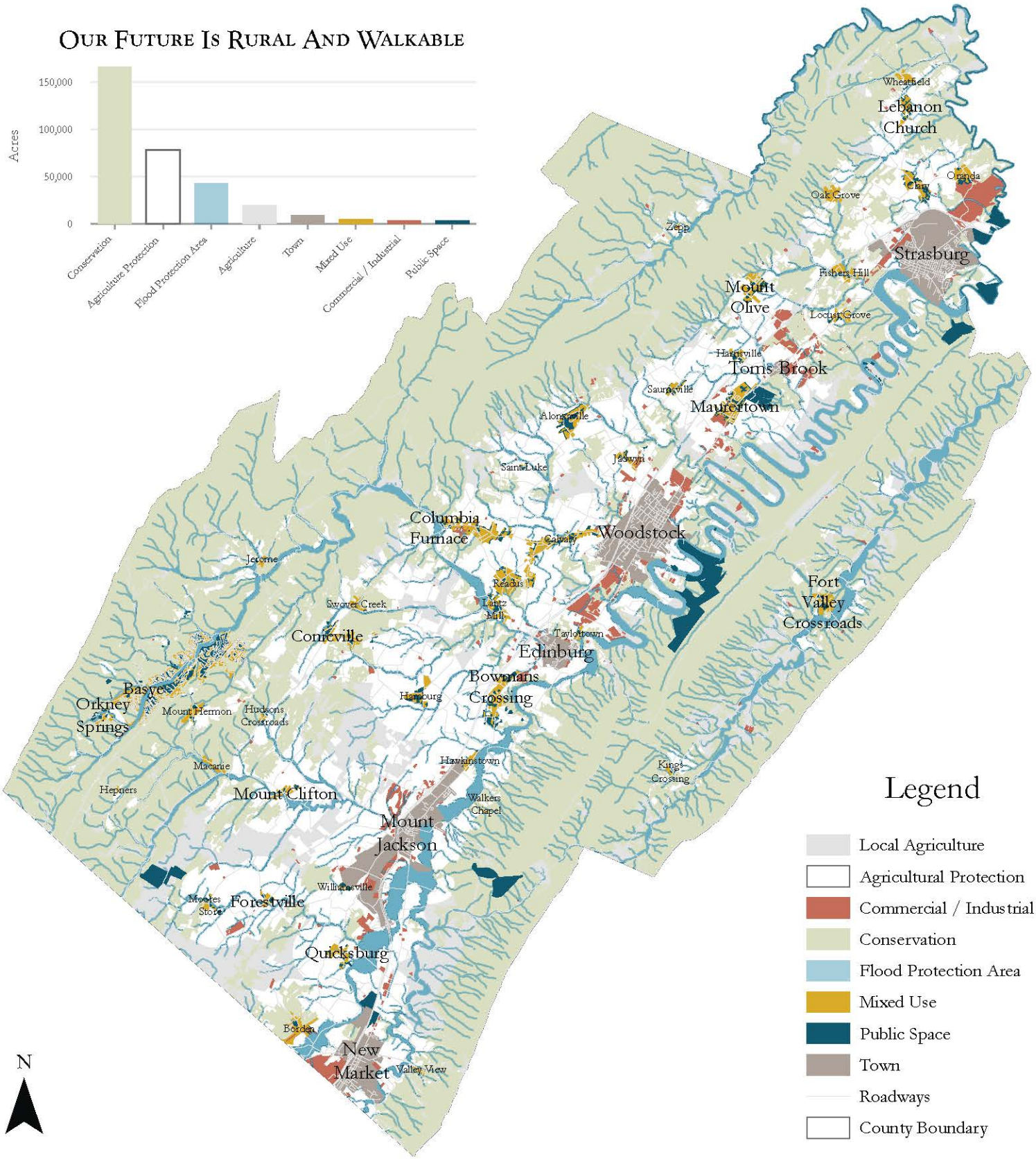
Receiving Areas

The "Receiving Area," on the other hand, is where those development rights are used. These are our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets where there is more demand for building houses, shops, or offices. By buying development rights from the sending area, developers can build more in the receiving area than usually allowed. This helps out communities grow in a more controlled and planned way, ensuring that we have enough green spaces left while also providing the buildings and spaces we need for living.

Future Land Use Map

Of Shenandoah County

Our Future Is Rural And Walkable



Legend

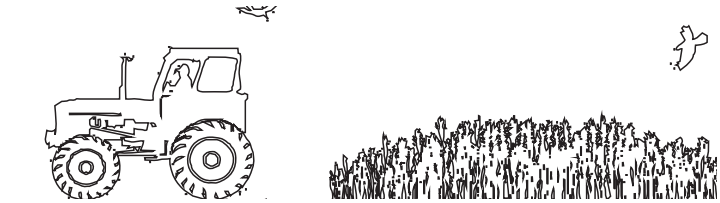
- Local Agriculture
- Agricultural Protection
- Commercial / Industrial
- Conservation
- Flood Protection Area
- Mixed Use
- Public Space
- Town
- Roadways
- County Boundary

Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

A Future Land Use Map is a plan showing how a community aims to use its land in the next 20 years. It's like a dream for what the community wants to become, marking out places for new homes, businesses, parks, and more. Our map puts an emphasis on the main aspect we heard from the public: keeping Shenandoah County rural. We do this with four different zones to protect natural resources and promote agriculture. We also ensure we are rural through diversifying the tax base with spaces for industry and commerce while investing in our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Use Descriptions

Conservation
These are forested lands including the National and State Forests but also 100 acre or more tracts of forest throughout the County conserved for scenic appeal, rural homes, and the creation of wood related products.



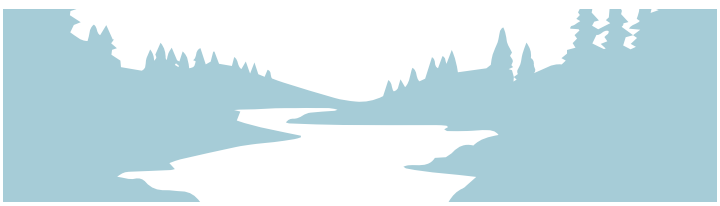
Agricultural Protection
Imagine open fields with cows, crops, apple trees, and other agriculture. These lands are just outside Towns, Villages, and Hamlets and the most productive places for agriculture. We want to keep it that way.

Local Agriculture
These are farms far away from any settled place with soils that may not be the best for farming. But these areas make for excellent larger scale operations as well as the homesteader who might want to live in the countryside.

Commercial / Industrial
These lands are either already being used for commercial or industrial purposes or have been identified as key sites due to poor agricultural soils, close proximity to existing businesses, or access to public water and sewer.

Mixed Use
Imagine your favorite downtown, a quaint street with various shops, places to eat, or even the quiet residential street with your neighbors on their front porches waving at you as you walk by. We want that experience here.

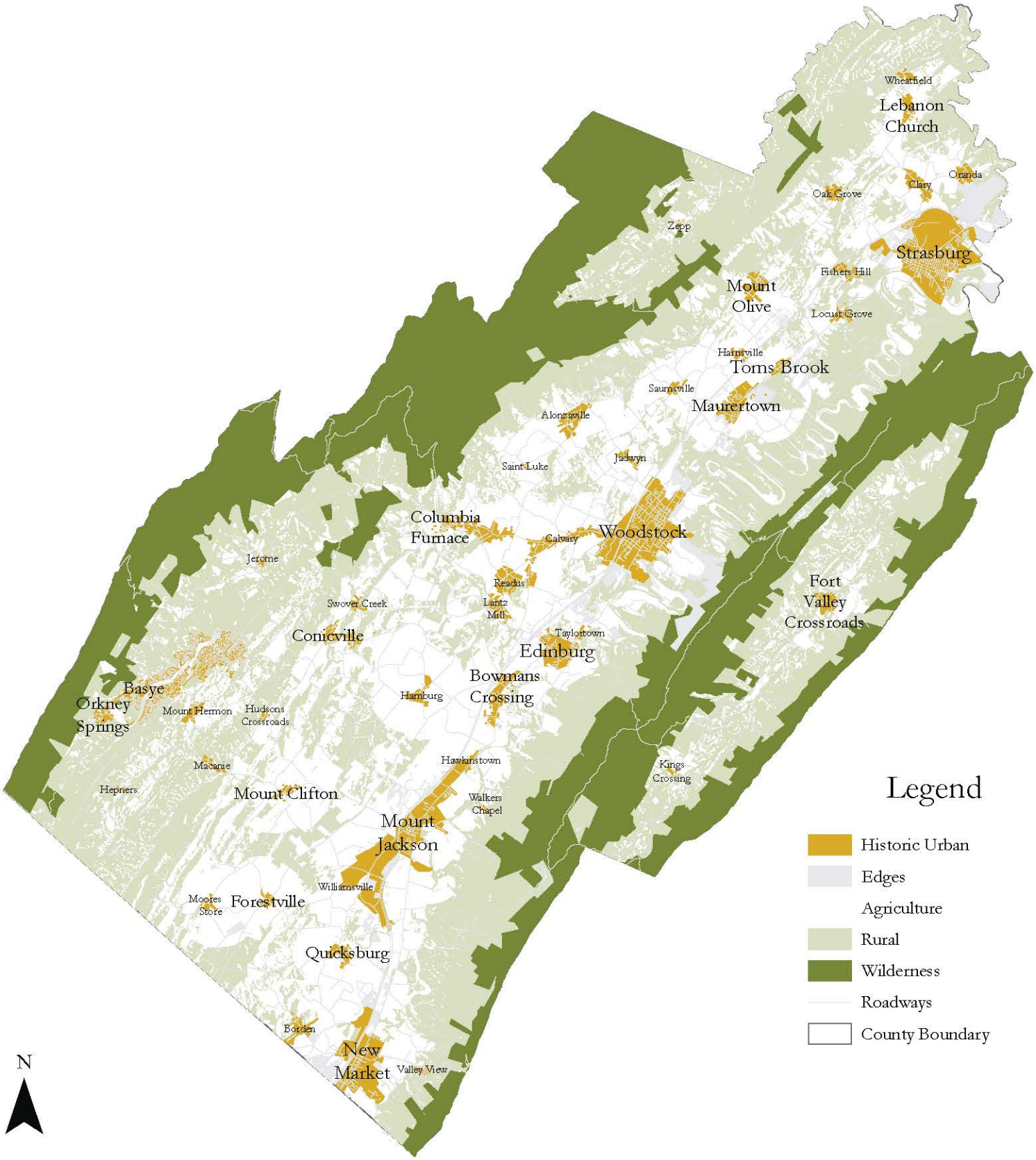
Public Space
These are your parks, schools, government centers, but also your semi-public third spaces like churches, Ruritan Clubs, and other non-profits where you can enjoy the outdoors or the comradery of community.



Flood Protection Overlay District
These are lands listed on FEMA floodplain maps, in the breach area of dams, and 100 feet from streams. These areas make for great agricultural fields, parks, and other uses that don't invest in new structures due to flooding.

Future Built Form

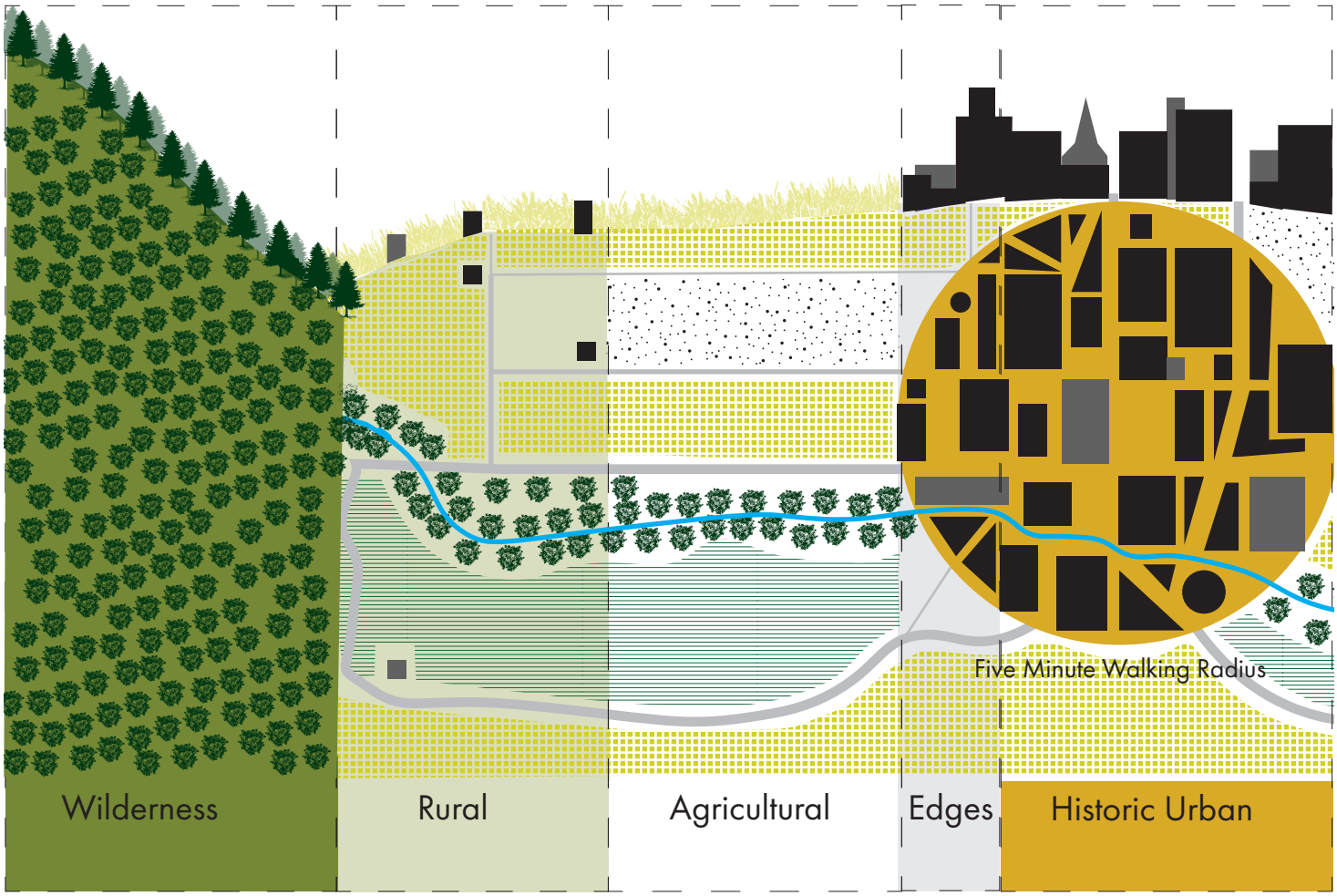
Of Shenandoah County



Source: Shenandoah County GIS, Virginia Employment Commission, State Of Virginia
Date: 2-22-2024
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP

A Future Built Form Map outlines the shapes and sizes of buildings and structures planned for a community in the future. It visualizes the architectural vision, showing different heights and sizes of buildings and how they'll fit together in the landscape, guiding the development towards a rural future that builds on our historic charm.

A New Rural Transect



Wilderness areas
These are National and State Forests, lands where no one lives other than the wildlife. These areas will always provide lumber and recreational enjoyment for generations.

Edge areas
Edges are both found outside of our multiuse areas and out in the countryside. They are the places where large parks, businesses, and industries reside in order to be close to the workforce but outside our historic areas to ensure the preservation of their quaint character and charm with a clean edge to farms.

Rural areas
These lands house rural families, farms, and forested areas. Everything from the homestead to the large farm can be found here.

Historic urban areas
From the Hamlet of Hamburg to the Town of Strasburg, these places are rich with the history of European settlers who brought their way of building here. We want to build on this history and grow and invest just like our ancestors with corner stores, downtowns, and a range of housing types.

Agricultural areas
These lands are just outside our historic urban areas and edge areas. These open spaces are where our crops, livestock, and other agricultural activities take place with less homes to ensure the right to farm.

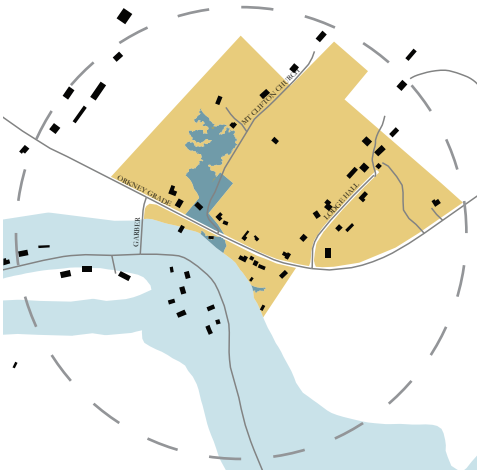
The Future Won't Happen Overnight

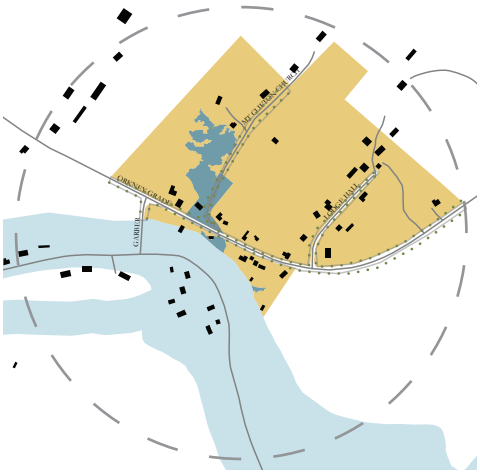
The village of Mount Clifton, four miles west of Mount Jackson, traces its roots back to the mid-19th century when George Hammon and his sons founded the village, originally known as Gridley. The community thrived on the Howard's Lick Turnpike, blossoming with institutions like the Mt. Clifton Mill (1813), the first Mt. Clifton School (1852), the Mt. Clifton Post Office within the store (1850), and the Mt. Clifton Methodist Church (1884). Over time, the vibrancy waned; the post office closed in 1900, and by the mid-1940s, the mill and school ceased operations, followed by the store and finally the church in 2020. Today, most structures are abandoned or demolished, marking the end of an era. The path to revitalizing Mount Clifton involves reforming regulations for new uses, investing in infrastructure to lure private investment, and promoting this private investment. This process, aiming to breathe life back into the village, requires time, effort, and a shared vision for its future.

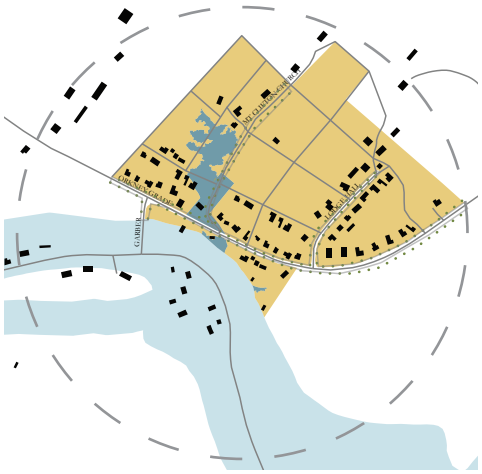
Remove regulatory barriers, update guidelines, and identify infrastructure funding sources.

Implement improvements such as sidewalks, street trees, and utilities.

Private investment occurs the same time as additional public improvements.







Comprehensive Timeline

2025 - 2030 Study & Reform

We start by studying changes to keep our land, water, and communities safe and beautiful and invest properly. This includes zoning and other reforms on how land can be used to protect our farms, nature, and water. We're studying ways to help our community grow, so we set ourselves and the next generation up for success by having the information we need to act while responding to existing needs.

2030 - 2035 Upgrade & Enhance

During this phase, we concentrate on upgrading existing infrastructure and buildings, enhancing the quality of living and working environments across our county. Efforts will be directed towards modernizing our educational facilities, roads, and public spaces, ensuring they meet the community's needs. Additionally, we aim to support our local economy by fostering job creation in key sectors.

2035 - 2040 Invest & Expand

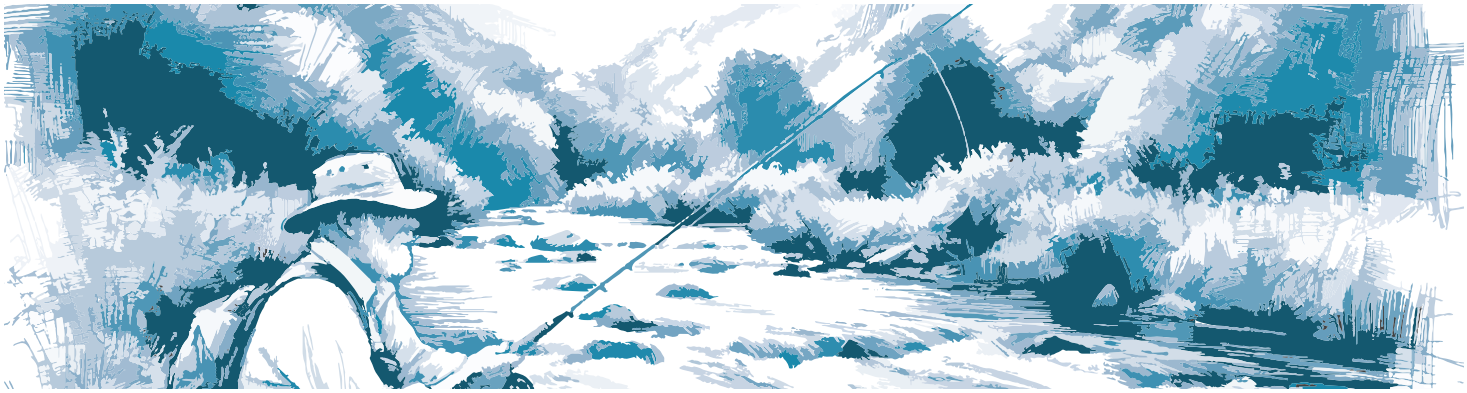
During this phase, we're focusing on building new infrastructure to better serve our community. This includes adding connections like trails and streets, utilities, and facilities that will make us stronger. We're also expanding the services we provide, making sure they're more dependable for everyone. This effort is about more than just growth; it's about enhancing our way of life, and preparing for the next generation.

2040 - 2045 Reassess & Reinforce

As this plan nears its end, we enter a crucial phase of reassessment and reinforcement. This period calls for a collective reflection on our achievements and the challenges ahead, ensuring our infrastructure and services are robust and reliable. It's a time for the community to come together, redefining our goals for the next two decades. We'll focus on strengthening the foundation laid so we are ready for the future.

2045 - 2072 Plan & Aspire

Beyond this plan, as we move from 2045 to 2072, we approach a significant milestone: the 300th anniversary of Shenandoah County's founding. This period represents the start of a new beginning, where we, as a community, will have laid the groundwork for future prosperity. It's a time for collective visioning, preparing for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. They will be ready because of our work today.



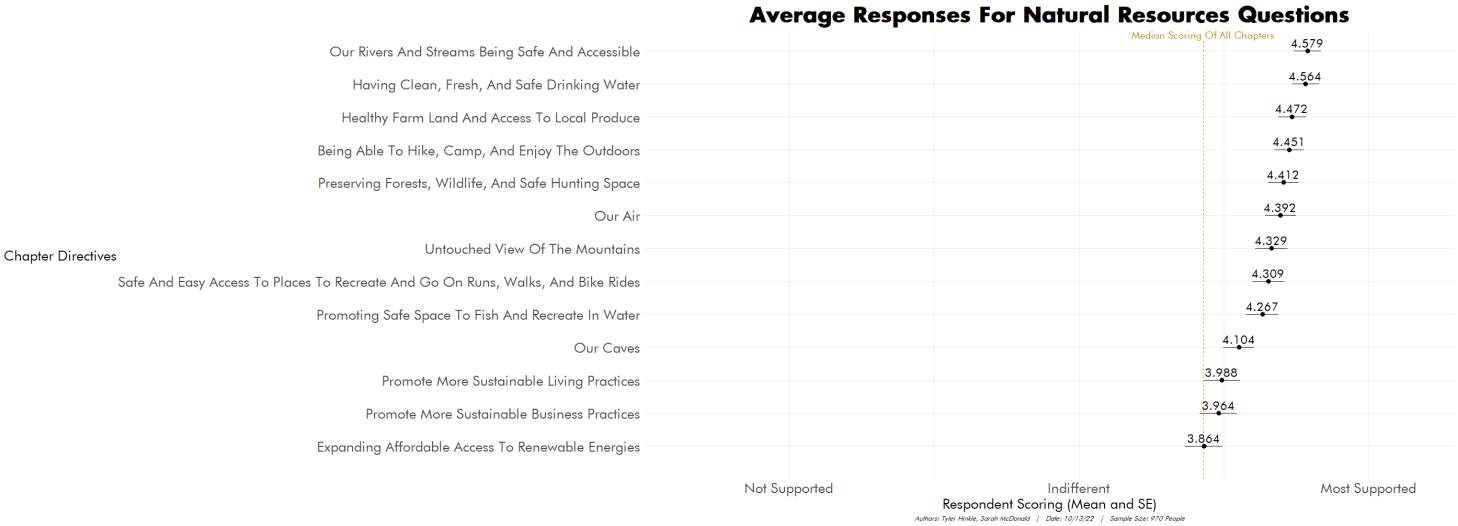
"We should be recognizing the importance of protecting and enhancing our water resources - both the North Fork surface waters and groundwater resources - for our communities' viability in the future."
-64 year old male from Edinburg

Water Is Life

We respect that WATER IS LIFE. We are committed to cherishing our water for the next generation. Knowing that clean and abundant water is finite but also vital for health, agriculture, economic growth, and overall well-being. Water is an aspect that crosses all chapters from water quality and quantity both for the environment and consumption, to our bridges, recreational water access points, and the historic significance of our streams.

It's difficult to understand the true capacity we have from a groundwater basis due to our karst topography, meaning we have a lot of caves and sinkholes, so we may need to conduct studies and better understand where we are to know where we can go in the future.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to water. Aspects that stand out relate to public partnerships, training, and developing new resources for the local community to benefit.



Throughout our public engagement we consistently heard from the public that water is the most crucial aspect for our future, as seen in the above chart above from the community survey shows the aspects related to water.

Concept A: Next Generation Foundation

We're making plans to keep our water clean and safe for everyone, now and for our children and their children's children. This means identifying how much water we have, making sure it's good to use, and looking after the places where water comes from, like rivers and underground wells so the next generation also has safe and clean water.

Concept B: Community Action

Everyone in our community can help look after our water. This includes learning about why water is important, sharing tips on how to use less water, and community groups work together with private and public partners on projects to clean up our rivers and streams or improving the places we live and work.

Concept C: Lasting Infrastructure

We're building and fixing things to make sure we all have clean water whenever we need it. This includes updating our facilities for future needs, identifying new water sources, fixing old pipes, and making sure our sewer systems meet and exceed regulation so our water stays clean and safe. We want to ensure we invest in infrastructure that lasts.

Proposal I: Reform Codes

The community identified important aspects to protect like our wells, floodplains, sinkholes, wetlands, and streams and we can do this through code updates. This will help us define how land can be used to help protect our water. This may include identifying where development occurs to protect these resources and allow appropriate growth.

Proposal II: Conduct Studies

We're going to study our water to understand more about potential new sources, the cost and feasibility of new infrastructure or enhancing existing systems, and the best ways we can protect our water resources. This will ensure we only invest or take action after we better understand our situation and find the most cost effective action.

Proposal III: Invest Today

We should be continuing to invest to improve our water systems and the environment around them to avoid more expensive problems later. We as a community can start to benefit from these investments in water systems, public education, stream restoration, and more with the creation of new jobs, parks, and places to call home.

"In the year 2045, from the top of a mountain I want to look out and see farmland and small towns with attractive housing options."
-49 year old female from New Market

Land Is Valuable

LAND IS VALUABLE to us. We keep our countryside beautiful and productive, balancing growth with preservation. Flourishing farms, bustling downtowns, and scenic landscapes ensures land for generations to enjoy. Land and how we use it impacts every chapter as it is where we build our homes, where we invest in new businesses, where our historic downtowns thrive, and the productive soils we farm.

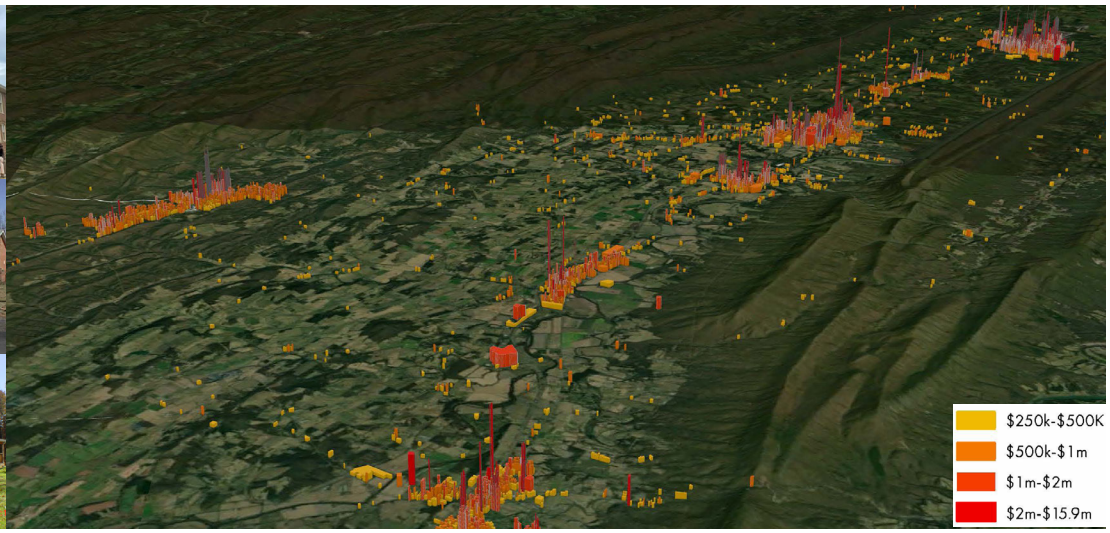
Unlike a Town or a City, Shenandoah County will never be able to annex more land. We have to ensure the land we are using is being used appropriately and with the best return be it ensuring productive farmland continues to be actively farmed to supporting additional businesses and housing in areas we've invested infrastructure.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to valuable land. Aspects that stand out relate to development, supporting the community, and programs and our Towns.

Most Value
$11M/ Acre
Woodstock
Lofts

Mid Value
$373K / Acre
Mount Jackson

Least Value
$8K / Acre
New Market
Gap



In the 2022 walking tours we discussed the value of our downtowns using a tool called value per acre where we divide the assessed value by the parcel acreage to see which parcels are the most tax productive. Without labels you can clearly see our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets have the highest values in their downtowns versus their suburbs.

Concept A: Maximizing Land Productivity

This concept focuses on getting the most value out of each piece of land, from our historic Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to our productive farming soils. As farms determine which crop to plant based on the return they can make per acre, we should determine the investment and development we allow based on the return it can provide.

Concept B: Small Town Feel

Keeping the unique charm of our towns, villages, and hamlets is crucial. This means growing our communities in ways that enhance, not overwhelm, the characteristics that make each place special. It's like making sure our downtowns stay lively and welcoming, places where the community thrives together.

Concept C: Preserving Our Landscapes

This concept is about protecting the scenic beauty and agricultural land that define Shenandoah County. It involves making deliberate choices to conserve open spaces and ensure our farms can continue to provide for us, just as they have for generations. It's about holding onto the views and lands that tell the story of our community.

Proposal I: Reform Codes

Adjusting our zoning and subdivision codes will help us protect and enhance the "Small Town Feel" and the beauty of our landscapes. Based on community feedback we want to ensure productive soils are used for farming, we support the growth of our local economy, and the Town, Village, or Hamlet you call home.

Proposal II: Invest Downtown

Investing downtown means putting money and effort into making our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets better. We can fix up buildings, make streets nicer, and add things everyone can enjoy, like parks and Wi-Fi spots. These investments should attract private investment which will help diversify the tax base and housing options.

Proposal III: Protect Farmland

Protecting farmland is about keeping our countryside open so it can keep feeding us and staying beautiful. We're planning to use special areas and tools like conservation easements to protect these lands, making sure they are not lost to development. We do this while supporting growth in the appropriate places.

"In 2045, downtown I would want to see a community that is structured to fit its geographic location. I would want to see locals flourish and live in a place that is connected, warm and safe. I would want to see a community that is connected and growing strongly."

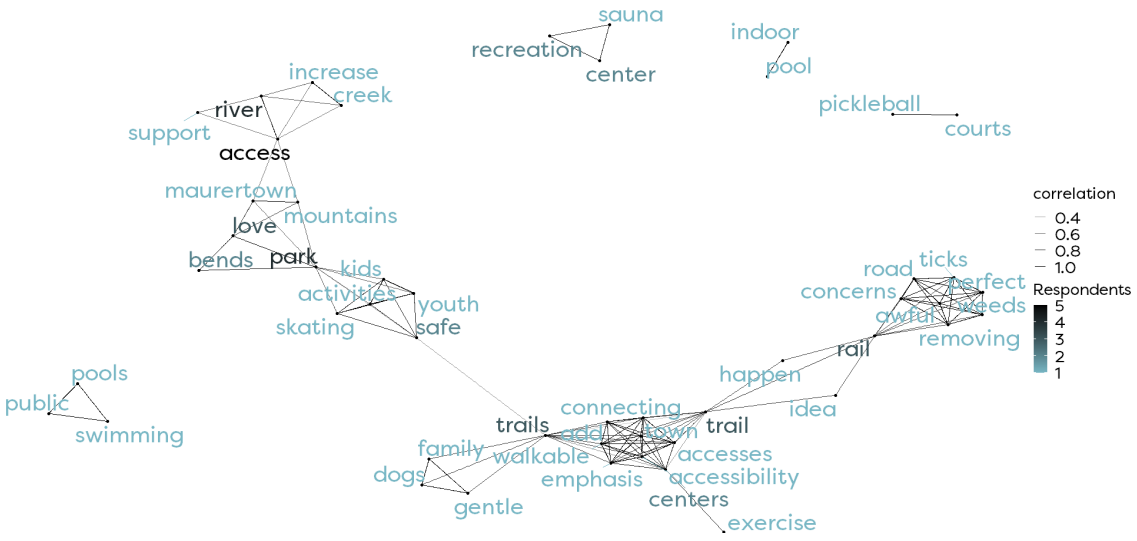
-27 year old from Strasburg

Actively Connected

Our community is **ACTIVELY CONNECTED**. We've nurtured a community reflecting our values and actively connected with the places we live and work through streets, trails, and a variety of programming for a healthy life. From regional trails and connected streets to healthy ways of living our entire plan is all about increasing activity and connectivity throughout all of our communities so we can improve the quality of life for everyone.

In the past our ancestors walked, biked, or took a horse anywhere which made physical activity a regular part of life. We're trying to get back a part of that by ensuring we invest in spaces and places built for people and there are options for active and healthy lifestyles.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to being actively connected. Aspects that stand out relate to community workshops, public and local programs, and resources like trails.



This is a word web, it shows how related different words are based on how often they are used in sentences or statements together per each individual engaged. This chart shows aspects related to recreation and physical activity from the 2023 Community Review Sessions.

The above word web starts to weave common narratives including improvements on public swimming pools and indoor pools, recreation centers, pickle ball courts, dog parks, and increasing river access and trails with walkable streets so our parks, businesses, schools, and homes are all connected in safe and active ways.

Concept A: Personal Freedom

This concept is about laying out and building street and path networks that provide options for everyone to walk, bike, and move around. It connects our homes, schools, parks, and shops, making our community more united and accessible. Investing in these trails and streets gives back the personal freedom to choose how you move.

Concept B: Culture Of Physical Activity

We want to bring back the natural way of living actively, like our ancestors who walked and biked everywhere. This concept encourages us to include more movement in our daily life, whether it's going to work, playing in the park, or visiting friends. It's all about making activity a fun and normal part of every day.

Concept C: Community Connectivity

This idea focuses on creating public spaces that bring us closer, from green parks to cozy cafes and lively community centers. These places become spots where we meet, share stories, and build strong relationships. It's about feeling at home everywhere in our community, making it a connected, warm place for everyone.

Proposal I: Reform Codes

We're changing our zoning and subdivision codes to make sure new places we build or fix up are conducive for all forms of transportation. This means setting standards for blocks and streets with street master plans, expanding what people can use their land for in our communities, and ensuring development matches our character.

Proposal II: Enhance Connections & Spaces

This proposal is about making our walking and biking paths and all ways of getting around better and creating more open spaces. We plan to make routes to schools, parks, and downtown areas safer. This may include setting standards and creating more crosswalks, bike lanes, parks, and signs to help everyone move safely and enjoyably.

Proposal III: Community Programming

We plan to continue ongoing efforts by Parks and Recreation Staff to grow programs that encourage everyone to get moving and stay healthy. From outdoor fitness classes to fun events in our parks and downtowns that get people up and out of the house. It's a way to make sure there's always something happening.

"My vision for the future of the County involves a funding priority placed on education. Resources for education and adequate, forward thinking educational facilities has been lacking."
-39 year old female from Woodstock

Quality Education

We invest in the next generation and our workforce with QUALITY EDUCATION. Education is the key to the next generation being prepared for the future and ensuring our workforce is versatile with market shifts. While we heard from middle school students to senior citizens we consistently heard the need to build a future for the next generation and the only sure way we can is investing in quality education services and facilities.

Our County has gone through cycles of change with the delivery of education from the one room school house, to four room village/town schools, to town schools, and now the three campus model from the 1960's. We have to prepare for the next change as our newest schools will be 50 years old in 2045.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to education. Aspects that stand out relate to public education, creating and providing local programs, and investing in the future.

Throughout public engagement we consistently heard that education of our children and our workforce is the greatest key to our future. In the community survey we asked about key values and the number one value was, "I think students should receive an education that prepares them for a well paid job or post-graduate education."

Concept A: Evolving Education Infrastructure

Reflecting on our history from one-room schoolhouses to the current three-campus model, we recognize the need to evolve our education facilities to meet future demands. This concept involves investing in modern, adaptable learning environments that can grow and change with new teaching methods and technology.

Concept B: Community Opportunities

This concept is about bringing schools, businesses, and the whole community together to offer more chances to learn and grow. We're not just talking about classes for kids; we're including opportunities for everyone including adults to learn new job skills, speak English or other languages, mentorships, internships, and night classes.

Concept C: Workforce Readiness

This concept focuses on ensuring our workforce is agile, skilled, and ready for market shifts. By integrating vocational training, technology education, and critical thinking skills into our education system, we're preparing students and adults alike for the future of work. Programs will adapt to industry demands and economic trends.

Proposal I: Quality Infrastructure

Temporary learning trailers that we have relied on for over a decade are not conducive for a quality delivery of education, we need to examine ways to invest in permanent infrastructure for the next generation. With our newest schools turning 50 in 2045, we want to ensure there's a plan for the next 50 years so we're set up for success.

Proposal II: Early Childhood Development

We want to better support the first five years of a child's life as these years are crucial for the rest of their lives. We want to ensure our children have access to programs that support social, cognitive, emotional, and physical growth, ensuring every child receives a solid foundation for future learning.

Proposal III: Bridge Education & Workforce

Enhance educational curriculum by integrating technology and business studies, preparing students for high-demand careers. This initiative aims to equip students and the current workforce with the skills for immediate employment or further education, ensuring an adaptable workforce that we can retain through gainful opportunities.

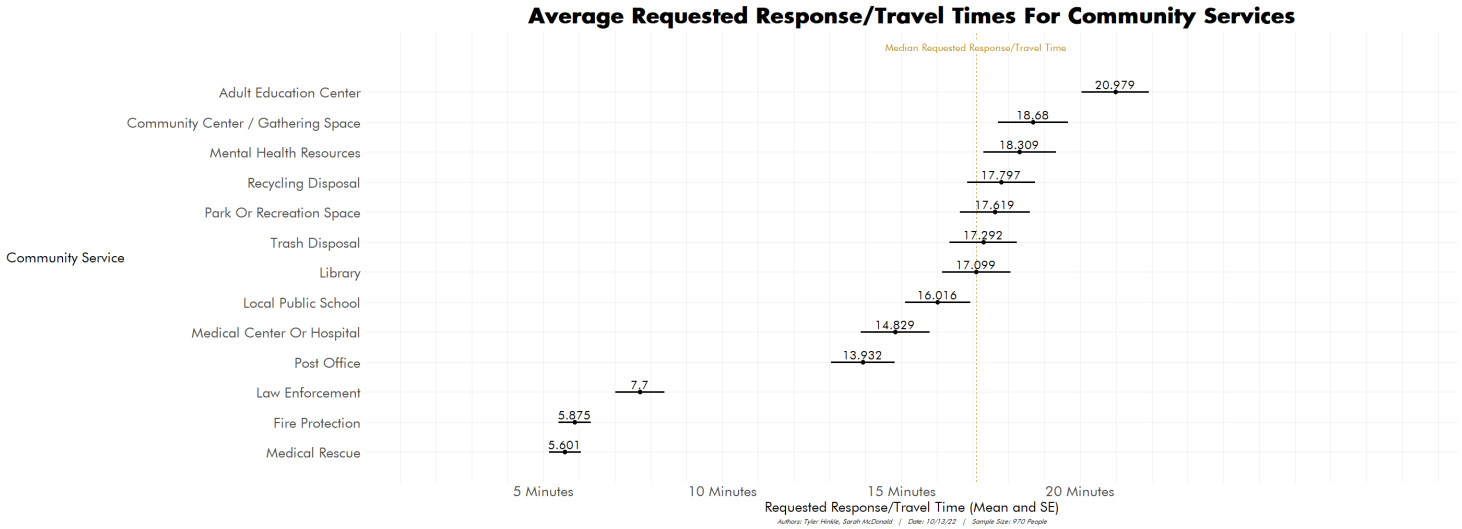
"The greatest challenges we will face in the year 2045 will be supporting our essential workers as well as safety, supporting fire / rescue and police, security and other public service jobs."
-51 year old female from Maurertown

Dependable Services

We pride ourselves on DEPENDABLE SERVICES. Healthcare, public safety, and infrastructure are our backbone, making every resident feels supported and valued. Community services cross all chapters from being able to depend on the County having the landfill open, responding to emergency calls, ensuring housing and businesses we use are properly constructed, being able to see a medical professional, and having a library to read at.

Our community has a mix of publicly and privately funded and directed services that could be coordinated to create strength through redundant and resilient systems. We have to weave all these parties together and understand the role we all play so we can be dependable to our community.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to community services. Aspects that stand out relate to health with key services like mental health, local community support, landfill, and libraries.



Community survey respondents were asked about the response time and travel time for certain community services and the top aspects were medical, fire, and law enforcement response time then proximity to post offices, hospitals, schools, libraries, and further out would be specialized health services and community centers.

Concept A: Integrated Service Delivery

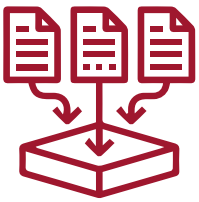
Ensuring all services, from emergency response to library access, are seamlessly coordinated and accessible to every resident, leveraging both public and private partnerships. This integration extends to digital services, ensuring that internet and cellular connectivity are considered foundational to service delivery.

Concept B: Health, Safety, & Security

Maintaining robust public safety measures is foundational to the community's well-being. Incorporating the latest in digital technology, equipment, and training to enhance these services ensures that help is always just a call or click away and there are options when seeking private care for additional health and safety needs.

Concept C: Dependable Infrastructure

Highlighting the importance of solid physical infrastructure alongside cutting-edge digital connectivity, including reliable internet and cell service, to support education, healthcare, and emergency services effectively. This dual focus ensures that every resident can access critical services both physically and digitally.

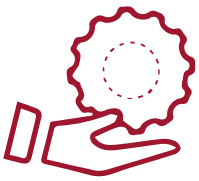


Proposal I: Update County Systems

County information systems do not work as well as they could with each other and require valuable staff time to manage cumbersome data. We can better maximize our current workforce through updating systems to communicate between each other including for permitting, payments, emergency services, and public information.

Proposal II: Reduce Healthcare Barriers

The plan sets a goal to make critical medical services available 24/7 across the County, including access to clinics in strategic locations. Potentially partnering with towns and healthcare providers, we seek to reduce healthcare barriers by supporting a network of services that ensures all residents have access.



Proposal III: Future Infrastructure

The County plans to develop a comprehensive strategy for integrating new and emerging technologies This includes training facilities for emergency service responders and law enforcement, fast and reliable internet and cell service, enhancing convenience sites, and other County services.

"History should be true and as accurate as possible involving diversity if possible as we are so much more than just a sliver of history. We are also very much a part of creating Shenandoah County's history today so we should focus on the NOW as much or more than the past."

-26 year old female from Bowman's Crossing

The Past Inspires The Future

Our community believes THE PAST INSPIRES THE FUTURE. We cherish our history and learn from it. By combining old lessons with current knowledge, we make wise plans to create a better tomorrow. Across all chapters of our plan we have recognized the need to better study and understand our situation before investing public funds, but also to consistently use data and information to guide every day decision making to be informed.

Our County has a rich history and we consistently heard from the public on the need to learn from the past to better inform our future. To invest in our future we have to invest in understanding our past and present with studies, reports, and better systems to interpret data.

This word cloud shows the most frequent terms used in the Action Plan related to history and information. Aspects include using data to inform plans for the future, looking at our history, and developing local resources.

The word web above shows input from the 2023 Community Review Sessions on historical information including looking at historic building styles, gaining a better understanding of our history and what is going on right now through public forums.

Concept A: Study First, Act Next

Before we make any major decisions we will take a close look at what's going on right now and what happened in the past. This means doing studies and collecting information to make sure we understand everything from the past to the present so we are informed when we make decisions that prepare us for future success.

Concept B: Data-Driven Decisions

When we decide what to do for our community, we don't just guess; we use facts and figures. This is about making choices based on solid information, like how many people use a service or what kind of businesses are growing. It helps us best use our resources and make sure we're ready for whatever the future brings.

Concept C: Be Inspired

Our county's history isn't just stories from the past; it's a treasure chest of lessons for tomorrow. While we may look back at how our ancestors solved problems, it's important to build for today's challenges and tomorrow's opportunities. It's about respecting our roots and using wisdom to make our future brighter.

Proposal I: Conduct Studies

We're going to better understand the location of all our historical, natural, and built resources and the best options we have for investing in new or enhancing existing infrastructure. These studies will be updated so they are always resources for guiding public and private investments in the most effective way in our community.

Proposal II: Integrate Data

We want to make the best decisions and we can only do that if we understand where we are through more accessible data. We can do this with updating and integrating systems, focusing on key staff positions, and utilizing the data to guide public decision making and identifying issues that were invisible prior.

Proposal III: Style Guide

As new investment is made in our community we want to make sure our codes and guidelines ensure new development has context with our historic charm. We can do this with code updates, examining pattern books, pre-approved building plans, and identifying incentives to restore existing buildings.

SHENANDOAH COUNTY

A Future Together

Laying The Foundation For A New Beginning

2040

A Time to Plan, A Time to Act

Action Plan

September 10th, 2024

Acknowledgements From 2019 To 2024

District	Board of Supervisors
1	Joshua Stephens
2	Steven Baker
3	David Ferguson
4	Karl Rouston
5	Dennis Morris
6	Timothy Taylor
Former Board Members	John "Dick" Neese (Passed 2020)
	Bradley Pollack
	Richard Walker
	Conrad Helsley

District	Planning Commission
1	Mark Dotson
2	Chair Gary Lantz
3	Thomas Miller
4	Todd Steiner
5	Vice Chair Deborah Keller
6	Eunice Terndrup
Board Rep	Dennis Morris
Former Planning Commission Members	Joshua Stephens
	Kathleen Curtis (Passed 2021)
	Timothy Taylor

County Staff
County Administrator **Evan Vass**
Deputy County Administrator **Mandy Belyea**
Shenandoah County Sheriff: **Tim Carter** | Fire Chief: **Tim Williams**
Director Of Tourism And Economic Development **Jenna French**
Director Of Community Development **Lemuel Hancock**
Virginia Agricultural Extension: **Robert Clark**
Building Official **Tim Ferguson**
Zoning Administrator **Brenna Menefee**
Erosion and Sediment Control Administrator **Jason Smith**
Community Development Technicians **Summer Andes & Mary Dellinger**
Associate Planner **McKenzie Allen**
County Planner **Tyler Hinkle**

Former County Staff
Community Development Coordinator **Mark Griffey**
Planning and Zoning Specialist **Emily Carrol**
Associate Planner **Clara Schweiger**
Community Development Technician **Chad Milgrim**

Agricultural & Forestal District Advisory Committee

Chair Philip Bowman	Douglas French
Vice Chair Joan Comanor	Bobby Clark
Pieter Greeff	Kathy Black
David Zirkle	Steve Baker

Shenandoah County Conservation Easement Authority

Chair Delila Hockman	Joshua Stephens
Vice Chair Douglas French	Deborah Keller
Kelly Watkinson	William Wine (Former)
Marla Mooney	

Shenandoah County Economic Development Authority

Chair Jay Winkfield	Michael Koontz
Vice Chair Vincent E. Poling	Abby Walters
Mike Funk	Beverly Butterfield

Shenandoah County Water Resources Advisory Committee

Chair Gary Lantz	Vito Gentile
David Ferguson	Mike Ashley
Patrick Felling	Mary Gessner
Joan Comanor	Seth Coffman

Economic Development Council Of The Chamber Of Commerce

Chair Justin Pence	William Holtzman
Vice Chair Aaron Bushong	Jeff Manning
Sarah Cohen	Dexter Mumaw
Dennis Dysart	Kelly Sager
Jim Guisewhite	Keith Stephens

Farm Bureau: Chuck French **| Battlefield Foundation:** Keven Walker
Historical Society: Barbara Adamson | **Response:** Beth Ogle
Alliance For Shelter: Katie Furneisen | **VA Wilderness:** Mark Miller
CCC Legacy: Joan Sharpe | **Alliance For Shenandoah Valley:** Kim Woodwell
National Forest: Mary Yonce | **Seven Bends State Park:** Thomas Stevens

District	Citizens Advisory Committee
1	Chair Vito Gentile
	Seth Coffman
2	Vice Chair Mike Liskey
	Jacob Bowman
3	Jon Bennet
	Gloria Carlineo
4	Laura Bennett
	Jessica MacDonald
5	Rochelle Dornatt
	Joseph Bayless
6	Scott Terndrup
	Sarah Mauck
PC Rep	Todd Steiner
Former CAC Members	Bradley Swank
	Tony Durso
	Stephen Curtis
	Peggy Boston
	Katie Freakley
	Kevin Rooney
	Delila Hockman
	John Adamson (Passed 2021, Historic Barns Program)
	Joshua Stephens

Town Staff
New Market Town Manager **Nathan Garrison**

Mount Jackson Town Manager **Olivia Hilton**
Mount Jackson Assistant Town Manager **Greg Beam**

Edinburg Town Mayor **Daniel J. Harshman**

Woodstock Town Manager **Aaron M. Grisdale**
Woodstock Deputy Town Manager **Michelle S. Bixler**
Woodstock Urban Designer & Neighborhood Planner **Jill Jefferson**
Woodstock Director Of Marketing & Events **Katie Mercer**

Toms Brook Town Mayor **Lisa Currie**

Strasburg Town Manager **J. Waverly Coggsdale III**
Strasburg Assistant Town Manager **Mellanie Shipe**
Strasburg Planning And Zoning Administrator **Brian Otis**

Former Town Staff
New Market Town Manager **Todd Walters**
New Market Town Manager **Buster Nicholson**
New Market Town Planner **Meghan Rupkey**
Mount Jackson Town Manager **Kevin Fauber**
Mount Jackson Town Manager **Neil Showalter** (Passed 2023)
Mount Jackson Planning And Development Director **Erick Moore**
Woodstock Urban Designer & Neighborhood Planner **Lemuel Hancock**
Strasburg Town Manager **Wyatt Pearson**
Strasburg Planning And Zoning Administrator **Lee Pambid**

Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission Staff
Executive Director **Brandon Davis**
Principal Planner **Taryn Logan**
Senior Project and Operations Manager **Karen Taylor**
Strategic Planner **Ashley Shickle**
Senior Planner **Amanda Kerns**
GIS Coordinator **Emma Rusnack**

Former Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission Staff
Principal Planner **John Madera**
Regional Planner / GIS Coordinator **John Crockett**

University Of Virginia Students

Shenandoah Rail to Trail Study 2022

Caroline Gaenzle	Meredith Hoos	Brian Kusiak	Molly Nealon
Ansley Heller	Naitong Hu	Samantha Lewis	Yuning Ye

Shenandoah County: Flood And Drought Adaptation Strategies 2021
Chris Barber Schyler Vanderschaaf Mae Hovland

Visioning Infill in Woodstock, Virginia 2021
Harrison Premen Kyle Kelly Jinzhao Chen

Proposal For a Master Plan On The North Fork Of Shenandoah River 2020
Anna-Beth Lawler Kevin Kask Maria Tahamtani Tyler Hinkle
David Brotman (Former FNFSR Director)

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"There is a time for all things; a time to preach and a time to pray, but those times have passed away; there is a time to fight, and that time has come!"

General Peter Muhlenburg January 21, 1776

A Time to Plan, A Time to Act

Action Plan

September 10th, 2024

While the organizations or projects mentioned in this document reflect the diversity of efforts within our community, they do not constitute an official endorsement by Shenandoah County or the Board of Supervisors. This document remains a flexible guide, allowing the County to take necessary actions to achieve its vision and goals.

Chapter 1:

Historical, Cultural And Scenic Resources

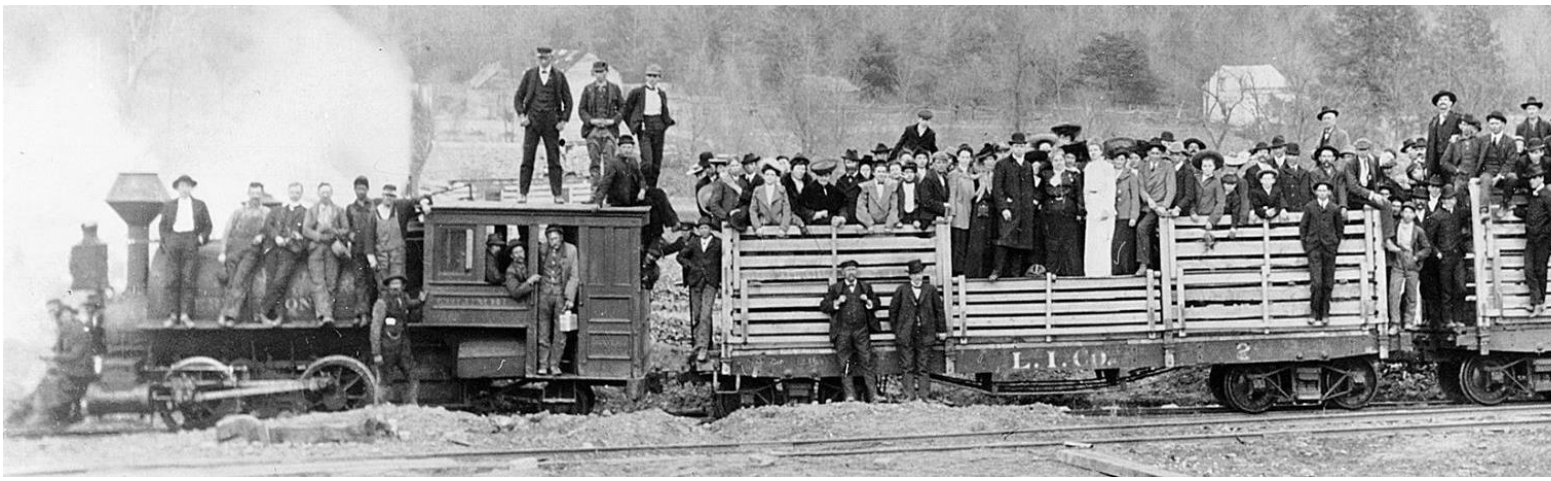


Photo of the Dinky Railroad which operated from Edinburg to Liberty Furnace from 1890 to nearly 1910 by the Columbia-Liberty Iron Co.

Vision:

The vast historic, cultural and scenic resources of Shenandoah County shall continually be preserved, researched, documented, archived and objectively interpreted, providing educational resources made readily available to the public.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
The county's historical, cultural, and scenic resources play an important role in Shenandoah County being a great place to work, live, recreate, and thrive. Retaining and enhancing our community's character and sense of place requires preservation and objective historically accurate interpretation of those resources.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 1 is organized into five goals to cover all aspects of our resources. It opens with a map depicting the historic, cultural, and scenic resources in our community from important landmarks to former roads and historic structures.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 1 was written balancing the importance of private property rights and preserving the county's historical, cultural, and scenic resources. The intent in writing this chapter was to develop ways to support private landowners to restore and protect these valuable assets for future generations as once they're lost, they're lost forever. The chapter aims to maintain the unique character and beauty of the county while building on our local charm. By documenting and preserving these resources, the plan seeks to provide educational opportunities, support heritage tourism, and foster community pride. Additionally, the chapter focuses on protecting important landscapes and restoring historic buildings, learning from the ways our ancestors built and shaped our communities to ensure that these traditions and knowledge are passed down and appreciated. As you read this chapter, consider how the history of the county impacts you—from how old your home is, the views you see, the name of your local community, or your ancestors—as you are part of the county's living history.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 1.1
Information and educational opportunities will be readily available.

Goal 1.2
The protection of important lands and landscapes as well as opportunities for public enjoyment of them will increase.

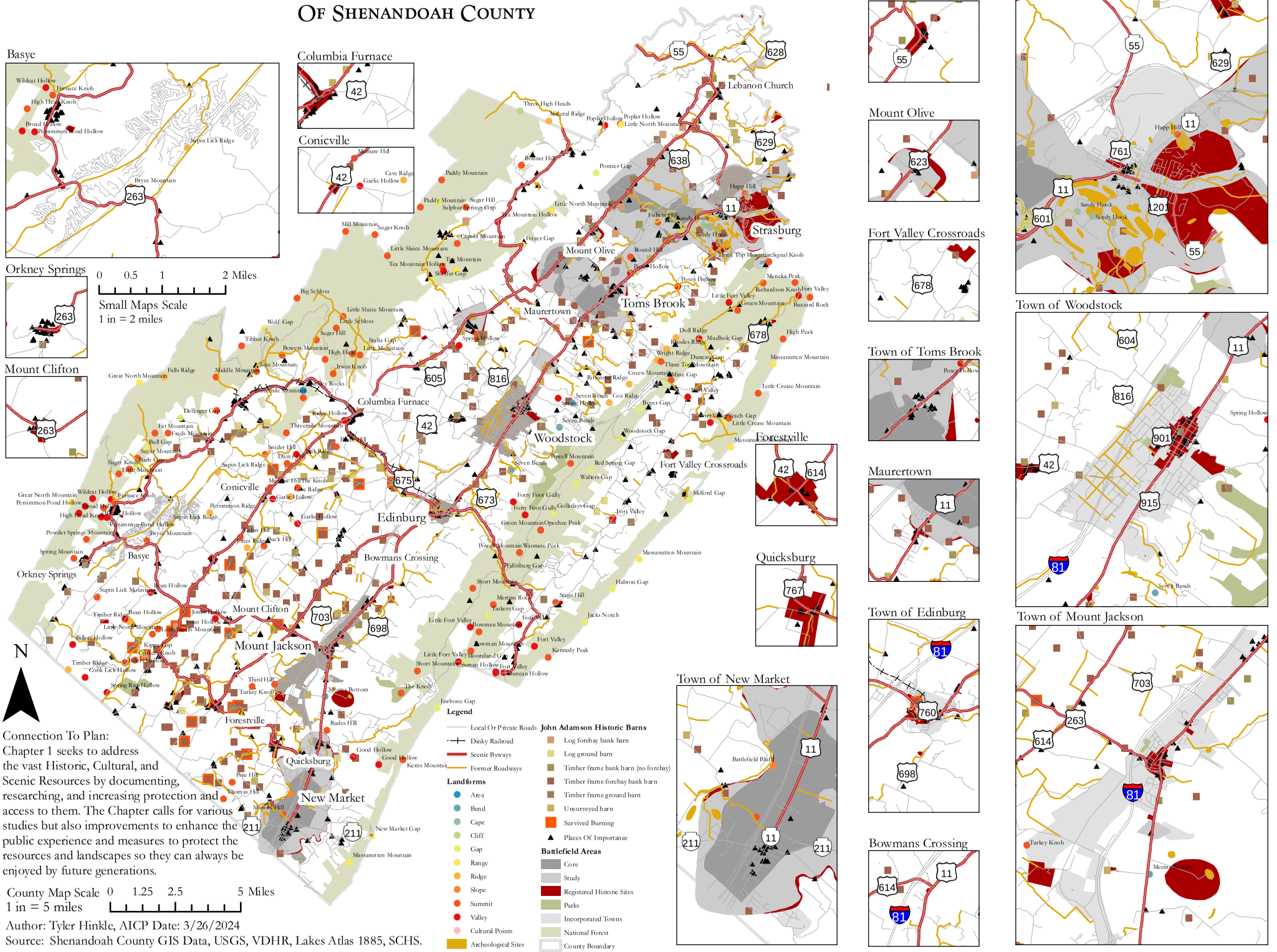
Goal 1.3
Important historic buildings and structures will be renovated, restored, and protected and used as models for future development.

Goal 1.4
Artifacts, archeological sites, and other historical and cultural assets will be protected for future generations.

Goal 1.5
The County will be the destination for Heritage Tourism.

Historic, Cultural, & Scenic Resources

Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 1 seeks to address the vast Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources by documenting, researching, and increasing protection and access to them. The Chapter calls for various studies but also improvements to enhance the public experience and measures to protect the resources and landscapes so they can always be enjoyed by future generations.

County Map Scale
1 in = 5 miles
0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 3/26/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, USGS, VDHR, Lakes Atlas 1885, SCHS.

Goal 1.1 Information and educational opportunities will be readily available.

Objective 1.1.1: Records updated

Records and documentation on all historic resources will be updated and shared with the public. Historical resources includes: Native American village sites, enslaved peoples sites and cemeteries, battlefield areas, and structures significant to the formation and story of Shenandoah County.

Objective 1.1.2: Supporting Archives

The County Archives will be supported, funded, and staffed so they are easily accessible by all.

Objective 1.1.3: Digital information

Digitize documents and records for increased accessibility and preservation, as well as conduct interviews to document the oral history of the County, ensuring that important historical and cultural resources are available to all.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Land records, historic documentation, and historical archives will be identified, reviewed and updated accordingly with their respective record keeping entities within the county.	1. Identify all existing historical reports that are outdated and in need of an update, including the 1995 Historical Survey of the County, as well as new studies that should be conducted. 2. Reach out to local universities and colleges on research opportunities and fieldwork. 3. Consider a plaque program for structures on the State and National Historic Registries.	Community Development, County Library	2025-2030 S&R
2. Digitize and make publicly accessible all deed records, minutes, and courthouse records.	1. Consider a volunteer system for anyone in the community as well as school classes and students to assist in scanning and digitizing records in a format that could be useful for OCR. 2. Publish the digitized and OCR processed deeds, minutes, and other documents online for public use and continue to maintain it. 3. Identify all deeds that have racially restrictive covenants and georeference and map deeds. 4. Georeference all plats and create historical plat maps of the County.	Community Development, County Library	2025-2030 S&R
3. Achieve and maintain Certified Local Government status with the Virginia Department of Historical Resources. This designation opens the door for grant funding for many aspects such as studies, testing archeological sites, rehabilitating buildings, and drafting design guidelines.	1. Complete all necessary requirements to achieve and maintain DHR CLG Designation. 2. Study staff capacity and add a Historic Preservation And Design Planner to the SIP, part of their job responsibilities should include coordination with all historical societies and museums. 3. Consider a Historical and Architectural Review Board (HARB). HARB must administer its ordinance and work as an advocate for preservation in the locality. 4. Support each Town in becoming a CLG, or for the County to serve on their behalf.	Community Development, County Library	2030-2035 U&E
4. Consider a County Archives Department.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Director of County Archives to the SIP. 2. Conduct a thorough needs assessment to determine the requirements for County Archives. 3. Develop and implement archival policies and procedures. 4. Include a County Archives Building in the CIP.	County Administration, County Library	2030-2035 U&E
5. Expand digitization and storage efforts to make archival materials accessible online and in person, ensuring a broader audience can explore the county's history.	1. Develop a prioritization plan for digitizing archival collections. 2. Invest in the necessary infrastructure, such as high-quality scanners and digital storage. 3. Collaborate with local schools and universities to involve students in the digitization process. 4. Promote the online availability of digitized archival materials through marketing and outreach.	County Library	2035-2040 I&E
6. Capture the lives of individuals with ties to the County before they are gone by conducting interviews.	1. Consider an oral history interview program for anyone to sign up for or submit interviews. 2. Conduct interviews with Native, Black, Latinx, Asian, Women, Immigrant, Religious, Farm individuals and communities as well as former government officials/employees and others.	County Library	2035-2040 I&E
7. Digitally capture existing Towns, Villages, and Hamlets in a 3-d model and recreate former communities and key places in 3-d models for future generations to learn from.	1. Develop a digital twin of Shenandoah County using ESRI technology or NERFs. 2. Continuously identify and digitally recreate existing and former Towns, Villages, and Hamlets. 3. Organize workshops and demonstrations to showcase the 3-D models.	Community Development, GIS Department	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 1.2 Protection of important lands & landscapes and opportunities for public enjoyment of them will increase.

Objective 1.2.1: Viewpoints, landscapes, and viewsheds protected

Areas for scenic and historical viewpoints and their scenic landscapes and viewsheds will be continuously identified and protected throughout the county.

Objective 1.2.2: Access increased

Where feasible, the County may work to assist partners or secure on their own, trails, pull offs, signage, facilities, and public access areas in key areas.

Objective 1.2.3: Development considers historic context

Review of development proposals will consider the impact on surrounding Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Areas that allow for view from vehicles or for pedestrians will be actively sought and coordinated with VDOT, Towns, zoning, and other organizations to allow for safe viewing areas.	1. Develop and maintain a comprehensive map of all desired viewing locations per the Plan. 2. Implement informational signage at each pull off. 3. Collaborate with local churches to explore opportunities for public access to their belfries. 4. Partner with tall structure owners to make overlooks accessible. 5. Amend zoning regs to include outdoor viewing areas on structures that exceed a certain height or proposed to be the tallest in a community.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
2. Battlefield Core Areas, Ridgelines, Altitudes, Critical Slopes, Scenic By-ways, key viewsheds, and gateways to Towns, Villages, and Hamlets can be protected with zoning, easements, and other tools.	1. Actively place such lands into conservation easements. 2. Consider creating an agricultural protection zoning district for such lands to encourage agricultural/silviculture production by limiting new structures and removing dwelling units as a use. 3. Host public meetings and hearings to gather input from property owners and organizations. 4. Adopt new zoning ordinances that are viable for adoption.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Documentation of historic resources will be cross-referenced and reviewed before any action will be taken that would affect the integrity of said resources.	1. Project sites will be reviewed for historic resources during review. 2. Consider review for demolition permits for structures in State/ National Historic Registry. 3. Consider amending the zoning ordinance to require Historical, Cultural, And Scenic Resource Impact Analyses, Viewshed Impact Studies, or VCRIS review for uses that pose a threat.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
4. Actively seek trail access easements along identified trail corridors.	1. Develop a plan for an interconnected series of heritage trails based on various histories including the CCC, Civil War, Iron Industry, and other historical periods in the County. 2. Collaborate with local land trusts and conservation organizations to create a standardized template for incorporating public access provisions in easements. 3. Once trail segments are in the public domain, support the development.	Community Development, CEA	2040-2045 R&R
5. Support the expansion and improvement of State Parks, National Parks, National Recreation Areas, and National Scenic Areas.	1. Support every Town and Frederick County, Virginia and Hardy County, West Virginia in including proposed National Recreation / Scenic Areas, such as Big Schloss, in their plans. 2. Adopt a resolution of support for the establishment of National Recreation / Scenic Areas, such as Big Schloss, and encourage all Towns and Counties surrounding to do the same. 3. When a proposed easement falls within a Core or Study area of a Battlefield, contact appropriate resources on public access. 4. Support grant applications for increasing and improving access. 5. Support updating/creating preservation and interpretive trail plans.	Board Of Supervisors, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A
6. Consider interpretive signage and facilities acknowledging various histories in the County including the Revolutionary War, Civil War, CCC, 1914 American Chestnut blight, iron furnaces, construction of I-81, and other periods.	1. Map and catalog all signs and info they have and their condition. 2. Support the creation of educational materials with information. 3. Identify gaps for signage or information and coordinate with partners. 4. Support the efforts of Conservation Legacy with their interpretive center at the Forest Service Office and consider signage throughout the County including CCC roads and fire towers.	County Library, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 1.3 Encourage important historic buildings and structures to be renovated, restored, and protected and used as models for future development.

Objective 1.3.1: Structures protected

Historic buildings and structures will be protected and renovated.

Objective 1.3.2: Incentivize restoration and support adaptive reuses

Connect landowners to incentives for renovating, restoring, reusing, and protecting historic buildings and structures.

Objective 1.3.3: Pattern Book to inform development

A Pattern Book of key architectural styles and the quality of materials used in historical construction in the community will be developed and continuously updated.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Amend County zoning regulations and work with Towns to amend Town zoning regulations to support adaptive reuse then identify and market historic structures suitable for adaptive reuse.	1. Conduct a review of existing Town and County zoning to identify barriers to adaptive reuse. 2. Adopt specific amendments that allow for more flexibility in repurposing historic structures. 3. Develop a guide that outlines building and fire code exemptions for historic renovations. 4. Develop or contract out the services for an online scraping service to pull historic properties for sale and market them for historic restoration and adaptive reuse. 5. Collaborate with local real estate professionals to actively promote historic structures.	Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Landowners of historic buildings and structures will be aware of regulations and incentives for renovation, restoration, and protection as well as the option to open sites for public use or information.	1. Identify all key target sites including state and national historic structures as well as former post offices, motels, schools, barns, and other public or semi-public buildings. 2. Consider a program to protect and restore historic barns. 3. Create an informative pamphlet or digital resources explaining the regulations and incentives. 4. Consider an informational packet with information on regulations, incentives, and the application process. 5. Host informational workshops and seminars for landowners, contractors, and developers.	Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
3. Develop how to guides for renovating historic buildings and share with appropriate landowners.	1. Research real-life case studies to include in the guides to illustrate successful renovation. 2. Develop user-friendly how-to guides for renovating historic structures. 3. Organize workshops and seminars, offer one-on-one assistance, and actively promote the availability of these guides through local media, community events, and real estate professionals.	Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Ensure the protection and enhancement of historic resources like the Covered Bridge in Meems Bottom.	1. Conduct a thorough structural assessment of historic structures. 2. Develop a comprehensive historical documentation of structures. 3. If needed, consult with the landowner on options to bring the land into public domain. 4. Install educational signage near the historic structure and organize periodic clean-up days.	Community Development, Town of Mount Jackson	2030-2035 U&E
5. Consider local historic zoning districts with guidelines on major alterations or new construction.	1. Host public meetings and hearings to gather input from property owners and organizations. 2. Make all uses by right and remove any uses that would be seen as inappropriate. 3. Adopt an overlay zoning ordinance for the historic districts and have resources online.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E
6. Consider a façade grant program for the local historic zoning districts.	1. Create clear guidelines and eligibility criteria for the façade program. 2. Consider a budget and allocate funds for the façade grant program through local government or seek external funding sources such as grants, donations, or partnerships with local businesses. 3. Monitor and track the progress and success of façade restoration or renovation projects.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Devleopment	2035-2040 I&E
7. A Pattern Book could be developed for the Battlefield Areas, Villages, Hamlets, and Towns including provisions for manufactured housing.	1. Apply for CLG, DHR, NPS, and other grants to finance the development of pattern books. 2. Compile a comprehensive collection of visual references, including photographs, drawings, and architectural plans of historical structures, employ graphic designers or architects. 3. Adopt the Pattern Books.	Community Development, County Library	2030-2035 U&E

Goal 1.4 Artifacts, archeological sites, and other historical and cultural assets will be encouraged to be protected for future generations.

Objective 1.4.1: Artifacts and sites identified

Artifacts, archeological sites, and other historical and cultural assets will be continually identified and documented.

Objective 1.4.2: Museums and displays

Artifacts, archeological objects, and other historical and cultural assets belong in museums and displays so they may be viewed, interpreted, and researched.

Objective 1.4.3: Resources and former communities and cultures protected

Archeological resources, artwork, including paintings, sculptures, and other forms of visual art, will be identified, documented, and protected for future generations so they can learn about former native and black communities, enslaved peoples, and other cultures past and present in the community.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Development will be discouraged from occurring on top of cemeteries, burial, and archeological sites.	1. Gather all data on the location of cemeteries in the County and add to County GIS system. 2. Consider an ordinance prohibiting disturbance of cemeteries, burial, and archeological sites. 3. Check properties for such sites when zoning permits are reviewed.	Community Development, GIS Department	2025-2030 S&R
2. Develop and maintain a list of all artifacts in the County.	1. Consider a county-wide database or digital platform for cataloging artifacts, making it accessible to historians, researchers, and the public. 2. Collaborate with local historical societies, museums, and private collectors to document and catalog their artifacts in a regularly updated centralized database.	County Library	2030-2035 U&E
3. Owners and curators of pieces of historic and cultural significance will be strongly encouraged to share these items for documentation purposes and to take responsibility for their upkeep and security.	1. Consider a communication and outreach campaign to inform owners and curators about the benefits of documenting and sharing their historical and cultural items with the public. 2. Provide resources and assistance to help them preserve, protect, and maintain these items. 3. Recognize and celebrate owners and curators who actively contribute to the community's historical and cultural preservation efforts.	County Library	2030-2035 U&E
4. Earthworks and artifacts from former native communities will be identified, documented, and preserved.	1. Landowners with earthworks created by native communities will be contacted to ensure the sites are not disturbed and to develop partnerships with landowners. 2. Actively seek conservation easements and land purchases with artifact preservation and public access provisions on lands with Native American artifacts for future Native American Parks. 3. Develop Native American Archeological Park Preservation and Interpretive Access Plans.	Community Development, CEA	2035-2040 I&E
5. Create a community-based historical and cultural asset identification program.	1. Develop a public awareness campaign to encourage community members to report and document artifacts, archeological sites, and other historical and cultural assets. 2. Consider a system for collecting and cataloging reports from the community. 3. Train volunteers and local historians to assist with asset identification and documentation.	County Library	2035-2040 I&E
6. The history and cultural heritage of historically Black communities will be identified, documented, and preserved.	1. Research and map all amenities and communities existing and those lost or destroyed. 2. Map all racially restrictive covenants in the County to better understand areas where the historically Black community was excluded from.	Community Development, GIS Department	2040-2045 R&R
7. The history and culture of enslaved peoples will be identified, documented, and preserved.	1. Research and document the history and culture of enslaved peoples in the County. 2. Preserve and protect historic sites and structures associated with the history of slavery and recognize the history of slavery in Shenandoah County.	Community Development, County Library	2040-2045 R&R
8. Support space to showcase and store important artifacts, archeological objects, and other historical and cultural assets and records of them.	1. Showcase historical artifacts and artwork in every County building. 2. Support the ongoing upkeep of existing community historical societies and museums. 3. Support the establishment of museums including one for the CCC, interpretive centers at future Battlefield Parks and Native American Parks, and a Discovery Museum	General Properties, County Library	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 1.5 The County will be the destination for Heritage Tourism.

Objective 1.5.1: Support local & enhance destinations

Enhance destinations and support local events, artisans, crafters, and restaurants as they are anchors for the identity of Shenandoah County and its Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Objective 1.5.2: Package experiences

Make it easier for individuals to visit heritage tourism events, sites, and venues by providing a space where experiences can be packaged or planned together.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Develop a Shenandoah County specific branding campaign.	1. Create a campaign to promote locally produced products and items. 2. Encourage businesses and artisans to use the campaign logo on their products. 3. Develop a dedicated section on the County website featuring the products. 4. Organize branded product showcases and events.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. A tourist brochure, mobile app, and website page will be developed to provide the top hits of scenic places to visit in the County.	1. Develop a history focused travel brochure. 2. Showcase Inspiration Points, related to historical events, online. 3. Support the enhancement of Shenandoah Stories by integrating interactive maps with GPS functionality into the website and mobile app.	Tourism and Economic Development, County Library	2025-2030 S&R
3. Promote local artisans and crafters as well as related education	1. Consider a local artisan and crafters directory on the County website. 2. Organize local artisan and craft fairs or markets. 3. Support access to affordable studio or workshop spaces for local artisans. 4. Develop a mentorship program connecting experienced local artisans with emerging talents. 5. Support the development of souvenirs and merchandise specific to certain histories.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Library	2030-2035 U&E
4. Encourage patronage of local restaurants and promote farm-to-table practices.	1. Develop a "Dine Local" campaign to promote local restaurants. 2. Connect local restaurants with local farmers and producers to source fresh, local ingredients. 3. Consider a "Local Ingredient Certified" program for restaurants.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Create engaging interpretive experiences.	1. Collaborate with historians, educators, and local artists to create exhibits at heritage sites. 2. Develop and maintain audio guides, mobile apps, or self-guided tours. 3. Support the development of books, articles, music, documentary films, series, and/or podcasts on and in the County.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Library	2035-2040 I&E
6. Develop ties to sister, twin, and ancestral communities with our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets and implement improvements, events, and activities to embrace that relationship.	1. Recognize twin communities (have the same name). 2. Recognize ancestral communities (places where their founders came from). 3. Consider Sister Communities with each Town, Village, and Hamlet. 4. Support the development of a directional sign that lists each community. 5. Support the development of a park with innovative art and designs. 6. Support digital or AR connections between the communities.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Library	2040-2045 R&R
7. Create thematic heritage trails specific to certain histories with recommended roads to travel and sites to visit.	1. Gather relevant information that would be beneficial to tourists. 2. Post the information on the internet. 3. Summarize the information into a brochure.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Library	2040-2045 R&R
8. Support the production of books, articles, music, films, television series, and/or podcasts in the County.	1. Organize regular workshops and training sessions for local writers, filmmakers, and content creators. 2. Consider a local grant program that provides financial support for individuals or groups interested in producing cultural content within the county. 3. Create or designate spaces for film production, writing workshops, and podcast recording.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Library	2045-2072 P&A

Chapter 2:

Water Resources

Photo of one of the iconic Seven Bends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Vision:

Shenandoah County will be a good steward by recognizing water is finite and will work to ensure good quality and quantity of this resource, while protecting its suitability/ sustainability for all uses and healthy living aquatic ecosystems.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Through our plan, our County may allow and provide a safe and healthy place to live, work and recreate in, on or around water while also providing healthy water to drink and consume, whether in the towns or rural areas.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 2 is organized in five goals to cover various aspects of water resources. It begins with a map showing an overview of the county's water resources, including streams and their impairment sources, wetlands, dam break inundation areas, and public access sites.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 2 was written to address the critical importance of water resources, balancing the need for water quality and quantity with sustainable use and protection. The intent in writing this chapter was to develop strategies that support both public and private efforts to manage and conserve water resources for future generations. This includes protecting surface and groundwater, ensuring sustainable water use, and maintaining the health of aquatic ecosystems. By documenting and preserving these resources, the plan seeks to provide educational opportunities, support environmental stewardship, and foster community involvement. Additionally, the chapter focuses on innovative water management practices and infrastructure improvements to ensure resilience against droughts and floods. As you read this chapter, consider how water impacts your daily life—from the water you drink, to the rivers you enjoy, to the role of water in our local agriculture and industry—as we all play a part in protecting this vital resource.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 2.1
Groundwater resources will be protected.

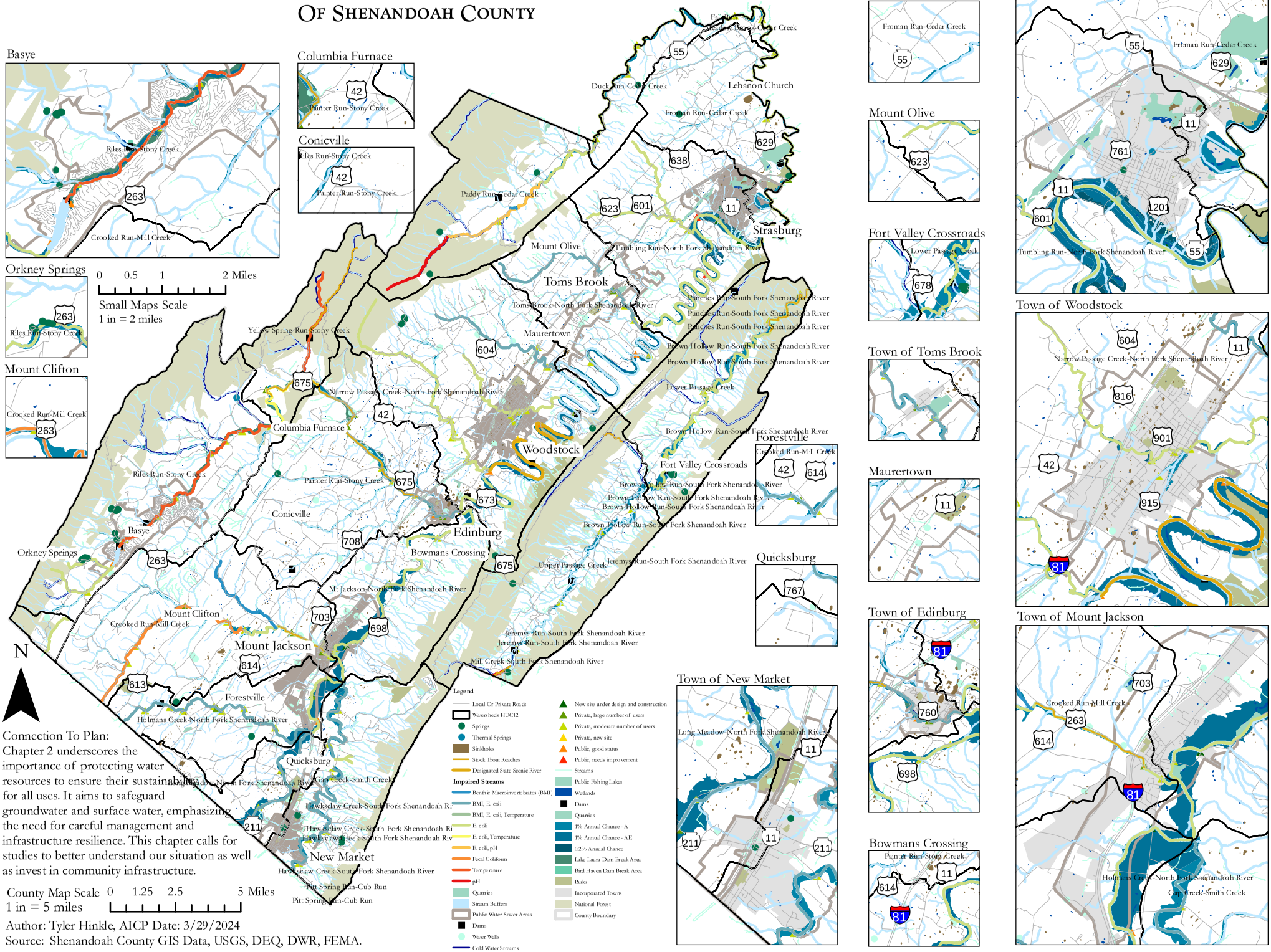
Goal 2.2
Surface water resources will be protected.

Goal 2.3
Our infrastructure will support adequate recreation and consumption of water.

Goal 2.4
Information on the water resources of the County will be readily available.

Goal 2.5
Resilient planning for emergencies.

Water Resources
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 2 underscores the importance of protecting water resources to ensure their sustainability for all uses. It aims to safeguard groundwater and surface water, emphasizing the need for careful management and infrastructure resilience. This chapter calls for studies to better understand our situation as well as invest in community infrastructure.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 3/29/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, USGS, DEQ, DWR, FEMA.

Goal 2.1 Groundwater resources will be protected.

Objective 2.1.1: Protect sinkholes, well recharge areas, and limit fractures

Sinkholes and areas integral to communal groundwater recharge will be protected while new fractures are limited.

Objective 2.1.2: Safe wells and wastewater disposal

Wells will be protected to ensure safe drinking water and all wastewater, septic systems, and alternative sewage systems will be properly maintained and in alignment with agricultural best management practice standards.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Discourage filling of sinkholes and address existing sinkhole efforts with remediation and in alignment with agricultural best management practice standards.	1. Post a sinkhole layer to the County public GIS website with information on remediation. 2. Enact an ordinance that prevents the pollution and fill of sinkholes and setback from them. 3. Update zoning permit review forms so property owners report any sinkholes on their land and a sinkhole GIS layer is reviewed by staff. 4. Develop educational materials for the public and local schools on sinkholes. 5. Require landowners to clean out sinkholes as terms of conservation easements. 6. Connect landowners to LFSWCD for support and resources.	Community Development, GIS Department	2025-2030 S&R
2. Promote regular well water testing for contaminants and pollutants, providing resources and incentives for residents to participate.	1. Launch an educational campaign to inform property owners about well installation. 2. Consider a program that provides financial incentives for regular well water testing. 3. Establish zoning standards mirroring Health Department standards for structure setbacks from wells.	Community Development, Health Department	2025-2030 S&R
3. Follow recommended pumping and maintenance recommendations for conventional and alternative septic systems.	1. Continue offering a program to treat septage including pump and haul at waste water treatment plants. 2. Foster education efforts about proper septic maintenance and consider enacting an ordinance that requires pumping of septic tanks a minimum of once every five years or at time of sale. 3. Foster education efforts about proper maintenance of alternative waste water treatment systems and consider enacting an ordinance that requires alternative septic systems maintained per VDH.	Community Development, Health Department	2025-2030 S&R
4. Increase infiltration and water quality at groundwater recharge areas.	1. Create maps of all lands within the recharge areas of public wells. 2. Consider zoning amendments to reduce impacts to groundwater recharge areas. 3. Engage landowners in well recharge areas for infiltration improvement.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Consider shared water and/or wastewater treatment systems in our Villages and Hamlets.	1. Determine the status of water/ waste systems in each Village and Hamlet. 2. Conduct feasibility studies and implementation plans for each Village and Hamlet on the best option including but not limited to connecting wells, package water and/or wastewater treatment plants, wastewater gardens (on average there needs to be 2.5 to 4 square meters of space per person's waste being treated), the creation of a Sanitary District, Special Service District, or other methods to finance improvements.	Community Development, Health Department	2025-2030 S&R
6. The concept of removing fracking as a use allowed in Shenandoah County may be evaluated.	1. The Board of Supervisors will maintain its previous statement on discouraging fracking in the National Forest and recommend Towns make a similar resolution. 2. Develop feasibility options for banning fracking then adopt the ban.	Board of Supervisors, County Administration	2030-2035 U&E
7. Eliminate residential and commercial straight pipes through working with landowners to install proper wastewater disposal systems.	1. Map all remaining straight pipes. 2. Engage landowners on the ability to improve their wastewater systems. 3. Apply for grants to support transitioning landowners to proper wastewater systems.	Community Development, Health Department	2035-2040 I&E
8. Consider and implement a Septic and Well Assistance Program (SWAP).	1. Consider a SWAP program under WRAC in partnership with LFSWCD. 2. Identify properties that need assistance to repair failing onsite sewage (septic) systems, replace straight pipes, replace privies, replace inadequate private wells, and abandoning unused wells. 3. Apply for the VDH's Septic and Well Assistance Program Grant and implement it.	Community Development, Health Department	2035-2040 I&E
9. Increase staffing in Health Department office so attention can be paid to maintenance of alternative systems.	1. Study staff capacity and add a dedicated County Employee responsible for overseeing compliance of septic systems, including both conventional and alternative systems to the SIP. 2. Develop training programs for environmental health inspectors.	Board Of Supervisors, Health Department	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 2.2 Surface water resources will be protected.

Objective 2.2.1: No impaired streams

Support state and local efforts to delist, restore, and prevent future listing of all streams listed as impaired by DEQ.

Objective 2.2.2: Protection from flooding and protection of headwaters, sensitive waters, and springs

Residents, businesses, and visitors will be protected from flooding and headwaters, sensitive waters, and springs will be protected to prevent flooding and improve water quality.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Consider regulation on spreading biosolids to protect water resources and the health of citizens.	1. Study the impact biosolids have on the landfill as they are being sent there. 2. Study impacts then draft a resolution on the Board's stance on biosolids, then adopt it. 3. Suggest that each Town adopts a similar resolution.	Board of Supervisors, County Landfill	2025-2030 S&R
2. Flood control dams in the County will be properly maintained and damage from them will be mitigated with an Overlay zoning ordinance.	1. The Emergency Action Plan will be updated as required. 2. Study the feasibility for and adopt a Dam Break Inundation Area Overlay zoning ordinance for Bird Haven, Lake Laura, Woodstock Reservoir, and other identified dams not including farm or residential ponds. 3. Improve communication systems to notify the public of flooding.	Community Development, Emergency Operations Center	2025-2030 S&R
3. Update the floodplain ordinance and map.	1. Determine appropriate uses that should be allowed in the floodplain. 2. Consider provisions to restrict materials and/or uses that could leach/runoff into our surface water resources. 3. Consider provisions to restrict dwellings, new buildings, and fill as activities and uses. 4. Add floodplain mapping to the CIP, and study and update floodplain maps. 5. Include a Drainage Master Plan in the CIP and develop such a plan.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
4. Explore measures to reduce flooding damage and increase community resilience.	1. Identify all headwaters, sensitive waters, and springs using GIS noting if publically accessible. 2. Consider identified areas for conservation easements, parks, and trails. 3. Promote reforestation and the planting of native vegetation.	Community Development, GIS Department	2030-2035 U&E
5. Support efforts to make all streams fishable and swimmable.	1. Support and enhance awareness of agricultural best practices. 2. Ensure enforcement of stream buffer ordinances. 3. Determine the fishability and swimability of each stream and the causes of impairment. 4. Support reporting algal blooms or hypoxia per VDACS. 5. Collaborate with USGS to consider additional algal bloom monitoring stations. 6. Monitoring and enforcement data could be reported to the BOS. 7. Evaluate the viability of taking on Stormwater review responsibilities. If viable, study staff capacity and add a Stormwater Administrator and/or a Stormwater Inspector to the SIP.	Community Development, WRAC	2035-2040 I&E
6. Evaluate the rest of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and its tributaries as a Scenic River.	1. Request DCR to study the rest of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and its tributaries to see if any meet the minimum criteria. 2. If any meet minimum criteria, seek Scenic River designation. 3. Determine if parts of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River watershed meet the eligibility criteria for Wild and Scenic River designation. If they do, then seek designation as a National Scenic River.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 2.3 Our infrastructure will support optimal recreation and consumption of water.

Objective 2.3.1: Improved public access points, blueways, and greenways

There will be an interconnected accessible system of blueways and greenways by expanding and improving boat launches and fishing locations and ensuring proper maintainance.

Objective 2.3.2: Prevent degradation

Ensure that public access to surface waters does not degrade surface waters or harm private landowners.

Objective 2.3.3: Upgrade utility infrastructure and grow where infrastructure exists

Upgrade utility infrastructure, promote growth where infrastructure exists, and make the best use of existing infrastructure before building additional pipe or new facilities.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Coordinate with DWR and VDOT to ensure that when bridges are replaced/repaired, public access is included in the design.	1. Ensure that increased access is included in engineering plans, or that an explanation of why access could not be improved is included in the design package. 2. Host a meeting on public water access directly following the VDOT bridge public meeting. 3. Provide a resolution of support for the improvement of water access.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Negotiate for public water access when conservation easements are reviewed.	1. Share a map of desired access point areas with local land trusts so they are aware. 2. Amend CEA easement terms to encourage provisions for public access to waterways. 3. Identify and map potential blueways (water routes) and greenways (land routes). 4. When reviewing potential easements, inform the land trust if within an identified area.	Community Development, CEA	2025-2030 S&R
3. We will continue to support and enhance the stocking by DWR of our public waters.	1. Collaborate with DWR to identify public waters with potential for stocking. 2. Support the clean-up of stocked water areas. 3. As landowners who volunteer their lands for stocking pass away or move, ensure that the public access is not lost through public access easements, land purchase, or land donations.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
4. Evaluate existing user conflicts and work to reduce them including through educational programs to raise awareness on preserving surface waters and respecting private property rights	1. Consult with landowners around downstream public and informal access points on nuisances. 2. Conduct an assessment of nuisances or issues that affect surface waters. 3. Develop and implement specific plans for reducing or remediating the identified nuisances. This may involve clean-up events, invasive species removal, and pollution control measures. 4. Develop educational materials, including brochures, pamphlets, online resources, and signage, on surface waters and respecting private property rights.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
5. Improve the formal DWR and informal access points, as well as dam portage areas.	1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing DWR access points for improvements. 2. Improve DWR access points to be ADA and Handicap accessible, inform users on water quality and safety, signage, picnic tables, wildlife safe trash cans, and bike and vehicle parking. 3. Assess and post a public map of all existing informal access points. 4. Engage owners on portage. Dam owners are legally required to provide it.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2035-2040 I&E
6. Support the enhancement of the Town and Sanitary District water and sewer capabilities.	1. Collaborate with each provider to assess where water and sewer capabilities can be enhanced. 2. Develop a comprehensive plan in coordination to improve water and sewer capabilities, which may include upgrading existing systems, expanding service areas, and implementing modern technology for efficient operations. 3. Seek funding and grants to support the enhancement of each system.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
7. Evaluate viability of a single water and waste authority to be known as the Shenandoah Water and Waste Authority after zoning protections are put in place to prevent suburban sprawl.	1. Conduct a preliminary feasibility study including current conditions of systems, areas for consolidation and an evaluation of existing debt obligations. 2. If feasible, develop a operational plan and map to prevent suburban sprawl, guidelines for the extension of water and sewer lines, and consider stringent criteria to protect our rural character. 3. If feasible, consider utility lines under the Shenandoah Valley Rail Corridor and Routes 42 & 263. 4. If feasible, consider utilizing reservoirs, quarries, catchment basins, dams, and wells for water.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 2.4 Information on the water resources of the County will be readily available.

Objective 2.4.1: Conduct studies

Conduct groundwater and surface water studies to better understand the quality, quantity, and location of such resources.

Objective 2.4.2: Public education

Information on improving and protecting our water resources will be readily available to everyone.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Add identified studies to the CIP and conduct them so we better understand our water resources.	1. Map every well in the County with information on each well's depth and the date drilled, and wells that went dry. 2. Support the mapping through GIS of all water, sewer, and stormwater pipes in all Towns, villages, hamlets, and other communities in the County. 3. Support updating the 2011 Northern Shenandoah Regional Water Supply Plan, 1980 Water Supply Plan, and the 1977 Groundwater Study. 4. Determine the current volume of ground and surface water needed per user group. 5. Determine the amount of water upstream and Shenandoah County localities are permitted to withdraw.	Community Development, Health Department	2025-2030 S&R
2. Consider defining the roles of WRAC.	1. Consider the role of WRAC, including serving as a Water Resources Authority Council to support stream restoration, well/sewer enhancement, tree plantings, and other practices. 2. Pass a Tree Ordinance designating WRAC as the County's Tree Board. 3. Allocate a percentage of Erosion, Sediment, and Stormwater fees to fund WRAC's work. 4. Support efforts for a local Shenandoah County Conservation Corps program.	Community Development, Board Of Supervisors	2030-2035 U&E
3. Increase information for the public to learn about active techniques in use to improve water quality and water conservation practices.	1. Amend application packets to require expected water usage of a project's mature stage to provide information during decision making and raise awareness of water usage. 2. Create informative signage alongside low impact development practices. 3. Create informative brochures, pamphlets, and digital materials. 4. Develop a county website or online portal dedicated to water resources education. 5. Integrate water resources education into school curriculums. 6. Organize community-wide water conservation demonstrations and workshops.	Community Development, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
4. Support the establishment and long-term operations of a Shenandoah Watershed Heroes program in Shenandoah County and in the greater Shenandoah River Watershed.	1. Allocate funding towards the establishment and long-term operation of the program. 2. Provide letters of support to regional watershed programs. 3. Share information on the Shenandoah Watershed Heroes Program on County social media and website. 4. Provide space for Shenandoah Watershed Heroes materials to be stored and picked up at County buildings.	Community Development, WRAC	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 2.5 Resilient planning for emergencies.

Objective 2.5.1: Water reserves and aquifer storage / recovery systems

Support adequate water reserves to prepare for times of drought.

Objective 2.5.2: Implement water-efficient technologies.

Encourage the adoption of water-efficient technologies and practices in households, businesses, and agriculture to reduce water usage and increase water conservation.

Objective 2.5.3: Monitor water usage.

Develop a system for monitoring water usage in the county and make data-driven decisions about how to allocate water resources during times of drought.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Support the conservation and development of water storage systems.	1. Connect landowners with access to rain barrels, cisterns, etc. 2. Support the development of ponds that are equipped to be dry hydrants. 3. Provide technical and financial assistance for conservation and advanced water storage solutions.	Community Development, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
2. Support the development of integrated stormwater storage systems.	1. Encourage the use of green infrastructure such as bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavements to enhance the infiltration of stormwater. 2. Consider requiring new developments to include stormwater capture and reuse systems. 3. Foster private public partnerships to fund and build large-scale stormwater storage facilities. These facilities could allow stored stormwater to be used for non-potable uses such as irrigation, industrial processes, or firefighting.	Community Development, WRAC	2035-2040 I&E
3. Consider programs to encourage and incentivize water efficient technologies and practices.	1. Implement rebate programs to install water-efficient appliances and fixtures, such as high-efficiency toilets, showerheads, faucets, and irrigation systems. 2. Provide support for the development and adoption of advanced irrigation systems that minimize water waste, such as drip irrigation and soil moisture sensors. 3. Encourage or mandate regular water efficiency audits for businesses to identify opportunities for water savings and require the implementation of recommended changes.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
4. Evaluate the potential to recharge groundwater reserves with treated water from wastewater treatment plants.	1. Conduct a feasibility study of the treated water from wastewater plants to ensure it meets the required quality standards for groundwater recharge and method of injection. 2. Identify wells/lands that are a safe distance from pyrite and other issue related deposits.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A
5. Integrate water usage monitoring with drought response plans to ensure that during times of water scarcity, resources can be allocated and restrictions can be implemented based on solid data.	1. Formulate detailed drought response protocols that use water usage data for decision-making. 2. Facilitate collaboration across different government departments for drought management. 3. Implement training programs and conduct simulation exercises to prepare for drought response.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A
6. Upgrade public water infrastructure with smart water technologies that can detect leaks, manage water pressure, and optimize water distribution to reduce losses and improve overall water efficiency.	1. Perform an assessment of existing water distribution systems to identify upgrade needs. 2. Install smart meters/ sensors throughout the water system for monitoring and leak detection. 3. Implement a data analytics platform to process information from smart technologies.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A
7. Create a public portal where water usage data is regularly reported and updated.	1. Design and set up an interactive online portal for water usage data. 2. Integrate data visualization tools within the portal for easy interpretation of water usage. 3. Launch an outreach campaign to promote the portal and gather community feedback.	Sanitary District Office, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A

Chapter 3:

Agricultural, Forestal, And Geological Resources

Photo of the Mount Airy Farm with a view of The Knob of Seven Mile Mountain in the background.

Vision:

Shenandoah County will be a good steward by placing a high priority on protecting and properly utilizing its agricultural, forestal, and geological resources, recognizing the irreplaceable value they have both intrinsically and economically for this county.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Shenandoah County is a primarily rural and agricultural county by design. We will continue to promote prosperous and efficient means of growth in agricultural and forestal dynamics while maintaining a proper balance of its natural geological resources.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 3 is organized into four goals addressing agricultural, forestal, and geological resources. Each goal opens with an associated map showing an overview of that sections related resources from soils to caves or wildlife corridors.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 3 was written to highlight the importance of balancing the protection and use of agricultural, forestal, and geological resources. The intent behind this chapter is to support sustainable practices that benefit both private landowners and the community. This includes promoting productive agricultural lands, protecting forests from conversion, and responsibly utilizing geological resources. The chapter aims to maintain the county's rural character and ensure the long-term viability of these resources. By documenting and preserving these areas, the plan seeks to provide educational opportunities, support local economies, and foster environmental stewardship. Additionally, the chapter emphasizes the need to protect wildlife habitats, manage invasive species, and encourage sustainable agricultural practices. As you read this chapter, consider how these resources impact your daily life—from the food you eat, the forests you enjoy, to the geological features that shape our landscape—as you are part of the county's living heritage as people and the next generation are our greatest agricultural resources.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

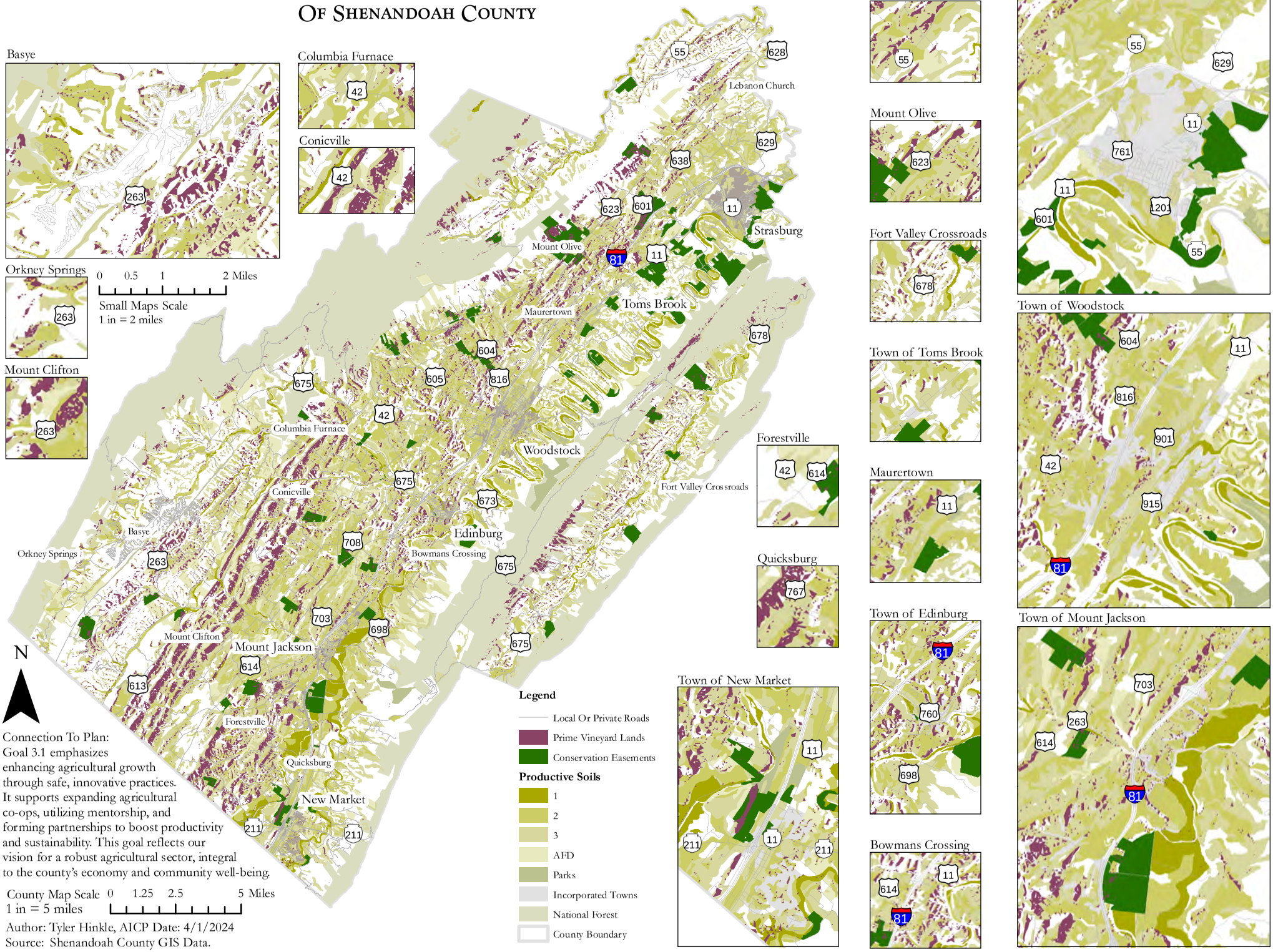
Goal 3.1
Agriculture as a way of life and its activities will continue to thrive sustainably and efficiently.

Goal 3.2
Protect forested areas throughout the county from conversion to other uses.

Goal 3.3
Geological resources will be balanced between use and preservation.

Goal 3.4
Wildlife will be protected for enjoyment and hunting for future generations and sustainable ecosystems.

Agricultural Resources
Of Shenandoah County



Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 3.1 Agriculture as a way of life and its activities will continue to thrive sustainably and efficiently.

Objective 3.1.1: Productive lands and healthy soils

Productive agricultural lands and healthy soils should be protected to be used for crop production and animal agriculture.

Objective 3.1.2: Incentives to farming for this generation and the next generation

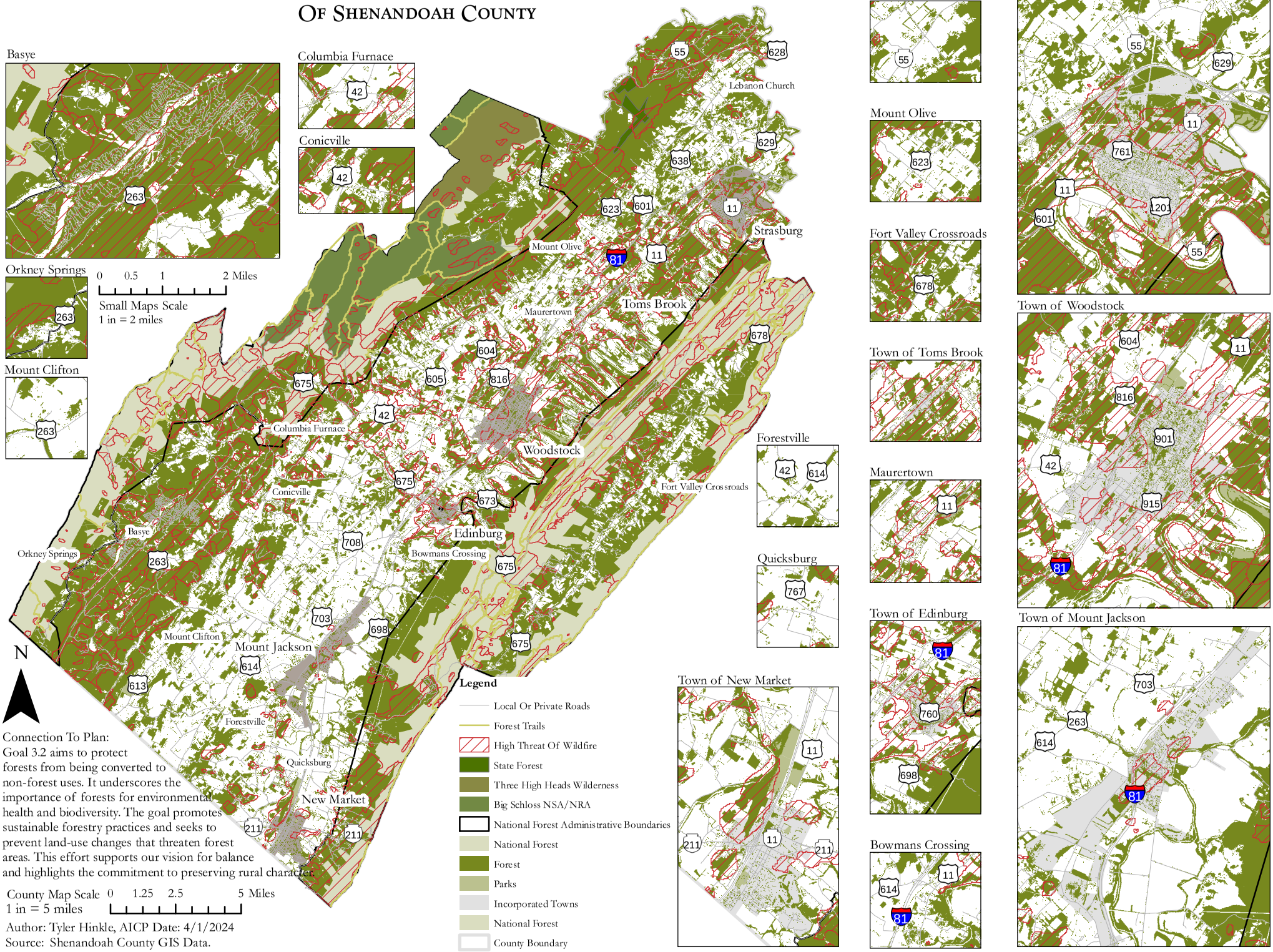
Continue to provide financial incentives to farming and farmlands so future generations can continue farming.

Objective 3.1.3: Local foods & agribusiness

Promote locally grown foods to be consumed locally and existing and new agriculturally related businesses and industries to invest in our community.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Champion agriculture and recognize remarkable farms.	1. Track agricultural laws and trends and provide updates to farmers. 2. Develop a campaign to recognize agricultural leaders in various categories. 3. Partner with 4H, FFA, SCPS, and VCE to support educational programs. 4. Support fairs and farmers markets to encourage participation. 5. Promote programs that connect retiring farmers with new farmers. 6. Encourage programs that recognize excellence in agriculture.	Tourism and Economic Development, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
2. Protect the right to farm through limiting uses that could infringe on farms, protect agricultural lands from development, and keep productive agricultural lands in agricultural uses.	1. Consider reductions in density in the A-1/ C-1 districts to maintain current built out density or standards for impervious surface and clustering of buildings in a designated area. 2. Map productive agricultural lands including orchard/vineyard lands. 3. Consider creating an agricultural protection zoning district. 4. Support 'Right to Farm' provisions that protects farms including new adjacent home setbacks. 5. Implement the USDA Land Evaluation & Site Assessment (LESA) system as a numeric tool to find less productive soils, which are suitable to be removed from agricultural use.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Support local farmers in adopting new and emerging practices including but not limited to autonomous agriculture, controlled environment (indoor) agriculture or large greenhouses, and aquaculture.	1. Consider adopting an industrial agriculture style zoning district to remove restrictions and enable industrial agricultural operations, including indoor agriculture, in key locations that are not productive soils and noted on the Future Land Use Map. 2. Continue to prepare and share information on emerging agricultural products/equipment. 3. Consider guidelines for the selection of aquaculture sites and its operations.	Community Development, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
4. Continue being a model to farmers by using the land at County owned farms for demonstration and research purposes to educate county farmers.	1. Study staff capacity and add an Agricultural Director to the SIP. 2. Create a master plan for the County Farm and County Park, noting that none of the 159 acres should be dedicated to non-farm uses unless it is best for the future of County residents. 3. Consider establishing new County farms or areas on County owned lands. 4. Continue VCE work on leasing farms and educational programs. 5. Support experimental crops, innovative farming, and soil improvement.	VCE, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
5. Continue a suite of options including lower tax rates (i.e. Land Use taxation and no machinery tax on farm equipment) on eligible ag lands.	1. Pass a resolution to ensure ongoing practices and inform about benefits. 3. Consider a tax credit for farmers who utilize productive agricultural lands. 4. Consider eliminating annual filing for land use tax rate for parcels enrolled in AFD or APZ. 5. Consider further reductions in the land use tax rate for parcels in easement, AFD, or APZ.	Board of Supervisors, Commissioner Of Revenue	2030-2035 U&E
6. Place priority on safety, food production, processing, distribution, manufacturing of byproducts, and marketing that enable local food to be consumed local and integrated.	1. Allow canneries, food processing, and related uses as by-right in B2/M1. 2. Apply for a grant to consider a commercial community kitchen for startup. 3. Consider an incubator program on food production, processing, and byproduct manufacturing, with mentorship and technical assistance. 4. Make community gardens, farmers markets, and greenhouses by-right. 5. Support farmers markets in underserved areas and share guiding practices.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the retention, expansion, and creation of producer co-ops in region.	1. Create a network hub that connects co-op members to share resources. 2. Set up a fund dedicated to providing seed money for co-ops. 3. Pair new co-ops with successful, established ones to provide guidance.	VCE, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
8. Encourage the use of food grown in the County, and within a 100 mile radius.	1. Sponsor countywide campaings on local foods like a Fairgrounds event. 2. Work with local businesses to offer fresh match incentives programs. 3. Develop a website to share producer stories and connect with consumers. 4. Support the expansion of the Buy Fresh Buy Local program.	VCE, Tourism and Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A

Forestal Resources
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 3.2 aims to protect forests from being converted to non-forest uses. It underscores the importance of forests for environmental health and biodiversity. The goal promotes sustainable forestry practices and seeks to prevent land-use changes that threaten forest areas. This effort supports our vision for balance and highlights the commitment to preserving rural character.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 3.2 Protect forested areas throughout the county from conversion to other uses.

Objective 3.2.1: Educate landowners and plant trees

Educate owners of woodland and the community on how to better manage their forests to reach their goals and the benefits of planting more trees.

Objective 3.2.2: Protection from wildfires and invasive species

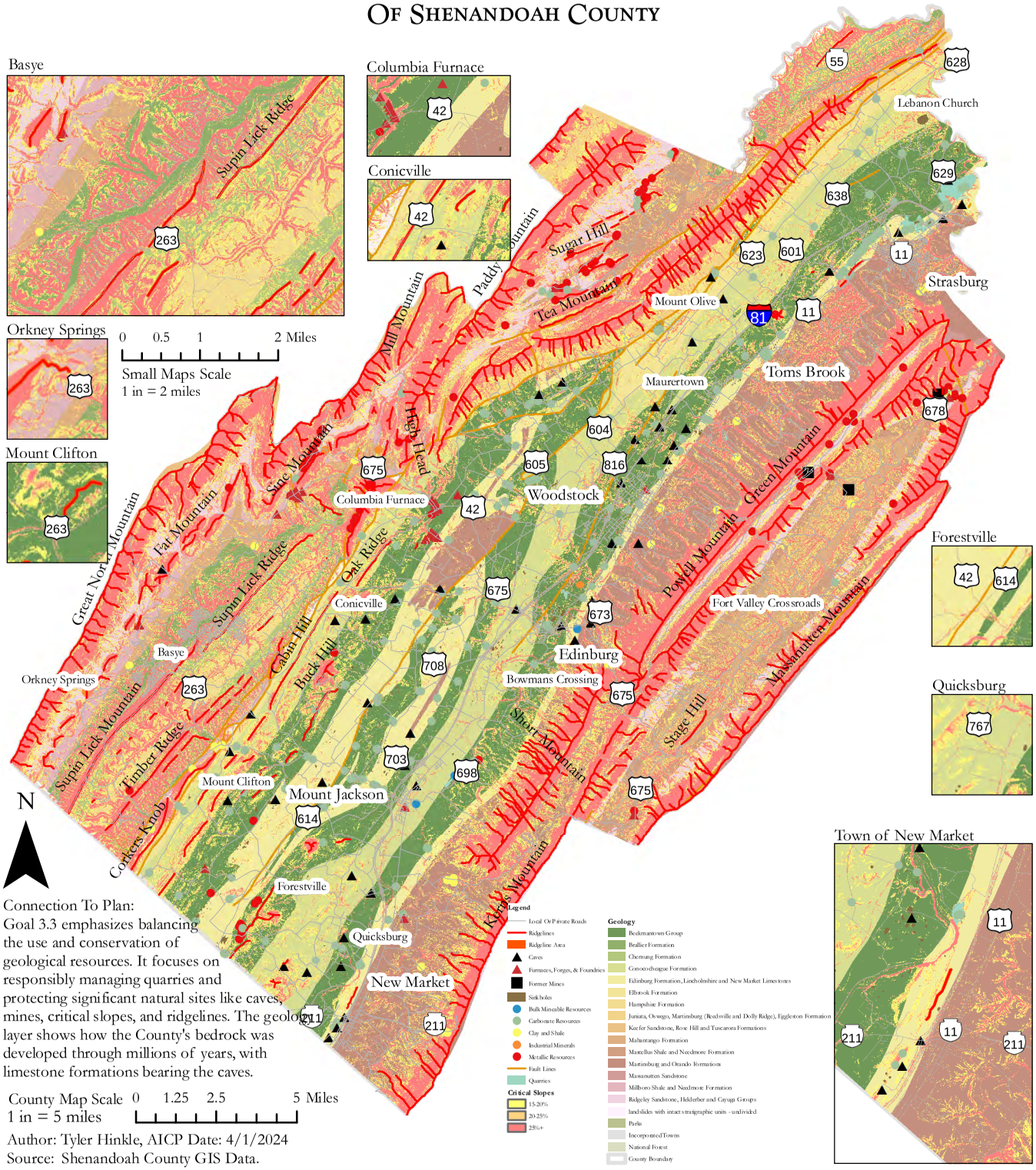
Protect residents from wildfires and our forests from invasive species.

Objective 3.2.3: Support Additional Public Forests

Where appropriate, support the establishment of additional lands for State and National Forests as well as County Forests.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Assist all Towns, Villages, and Hamlets with native tree planting projects and green infrastructure including planting of the American Chestnut.	1. Map land cover including the tree cover and set a goal for percentage of tree cover. 2. Identify areas that are barren, grassed, or impervious as potential planting areas. 3. Consult with park plans and identify any proposed tree plantings that should be done now. 4. Facilitate neighborhood tree planting programs and low impact development practices. 5. Identify riparian buffers for replanting in order to improve storm water management. 6. Plant street trees in the entrance corridor, to make more human-scale Streetscape. 7. Duplicate Woodstock's "Tribute Trees" or "Plant a Tree" programs. 8. Prioritize tree planting in areas with highest percentages of impervious surfaces. 9. Reduce impervious surfaces by identifying which businesses (buildings between 10k and 50k sqft and above 50k sqft) surpass required off-street parking spaces and add green infrastructure. 10. Transform large parking lots by dividing with large landscaped islands.	Community Development, WRAC	2025-2030 S&R
2. When land is developed, developers will be encouraged to retain existing vegetation and plant native species and remove any invasive species.	1. Adopt landscaping requirements to require native plants and minimize removing vegetation. 2. Work to update E&S control regulations to encourage native plants. 3. Offer workshops for developers and landscapers on identifying and safely removing invasive species and on selecting and planting native species.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Identify areas prone to wildfires and limit the number of homes at risk.	1. Conduct a GIS analysis identifying areas that have qualities that put them at risk of wildfires. 2. Consider zoning to restrict new housing on areas that are risk-prone. 3. Identify homes at risk and support implementing FireWise practices. 4. Organize volunteer days to help clear brush and create defensible spaces. 5. Conduct wildfire drills in high-risk communities with evacuation maps.	GIS Department, SCFR	2025-2030 S&R
4. Promote the Virginia Department of Forestry and the services that they offer to private landowners.	1. Coordinate with DOF to host a Woodland Management Workshop. 2. Create informative brochures and a dedicated webpage highlighting the services offered by the Virginia Department of Forestry, specifically tailored to private landowners.	Community Development, WRAC	2030-2035 U&E
5. Support the use of local wood to develop products and amenities.	1. Consider a certification program for wood sourced from local forests. 2. Encourage partnerships between local foresters, artisans, and manufacturers. 3. Partner with schools/colleges to offer training programs. 4. Foster cooperative management among small woodland owners.	VCE, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
6. Evaluate the benefits of establishing a County Forest program.	1. Study staff capacity and add a County Forester to the SIP. 2. Consider the benefits of a variety of types of County Forests and lands. 3. When landowners seek to donate land and it is not beneficial for economic development or recreational purposes, have the land be gifted to the CEA for a County Forest.	Board of Supervisors, VCE	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the expansion of Devils Backbone State Forest and additional State Forests, where appropriate.	1. Identify adjacent or nearby lands suitable for the expansion of Devils Backbone State Forest. 2. Collaborate with the DOF to identify and assess areas for new forests. 3. Turn over any eligible lands from the County Forest Program to DOF.	Community Development, VCE	2045-2072 P&A
8. Support the expansion of George Washington National Forest, where appropriate.	1. Identify adjacent or nearby lands suitable for the expansion of GWNF. 2. Connect NFS and landowners interested in selling or donating land. 3. Turn over any eligible lands from the County Forest Program to NFS.	Community Development, VCE	2045-2072 P&A

Geological Resources
Of Shenandoah County



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Connection To Plan:
Goal 3.3 emphasizes balancing the use and conservation of geological resources. It focuses on responsibly managing quarries and protecting significant natural sites like caves, mines, critical slopes, and ridgelines. The geology layer shows how the County's bedrock was developed through millions of years, with limestone formations bearing the caves.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Lebanon Church
55

Mount Olive
623

Fort Valley Crossroads
678

Town of Toms Brook

Maurertown
11

Town of Edinburg
81
760
698

Bowmans Crossing
11
614
81

Town of Strasburg
55
629
11
761
11
1201
601
55

Town of Woodstock
604
11
816
901
42
915
81

Town of Mount Jackson
703
263
614
81

Goal 3.3 Geological resources will be balanced between use and preservation.

Objective 3.3.1: Quarries as assets

Quarries will be leveraged as assets in a safe and efficient manner.

Objective 3.3.2: Protect caves, fossils, former mines, and iron furnaces

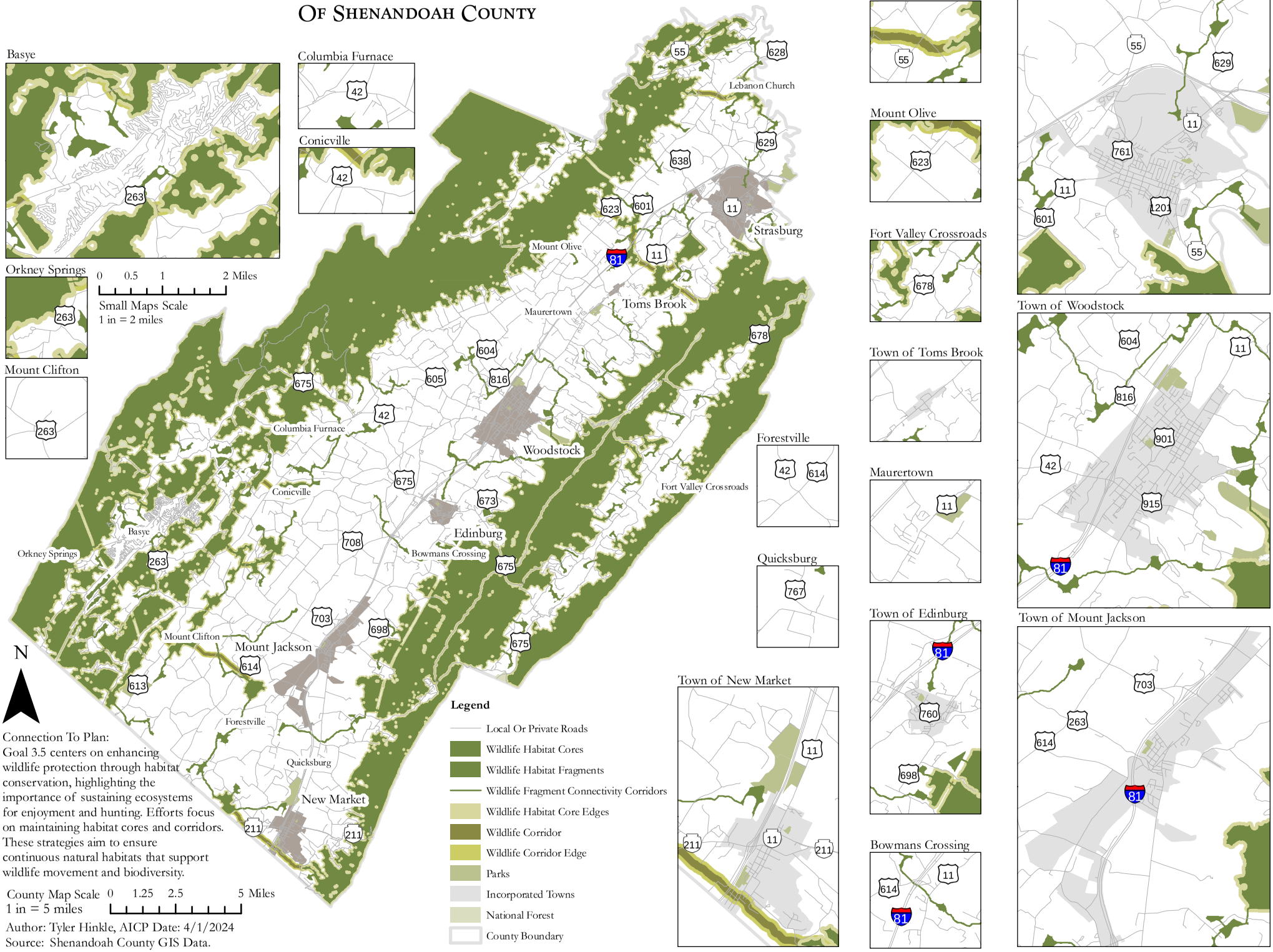
Caves, fossils, former mines, and iron furnaces will continue to be protected from degradation and where appropriate opened to the public, and preserved in museums and displays.

Objective 3.3.3: Be aware of fault lines

Landowners living on fault lines will be made aware of the risks and responsibilities they hold and attempts will be made to limit impacts to fault lines.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Conduct studies to identify all geological resources in the County.	1. Map quarries, caves, fossil and mineral deposits, mines, and iron furnaces using GIS. 2. Assess the status of each quarry in terms of operational, decommissioned, or abandoned. 3. Assess the biodiversity and conservation status of the caves and former mines.	Community Development, GIS Department	2025-2030 S&R
2. Consider a mining and extraction resource zoning district to accommodate the expansion of existing quarries and limit additional quarries.	1. Conduct a zoning analysis to determine the most suitable areas for a mining and extraction resource district, consider environmental impact, proximity to residential areas, and accessibility. 2. Discuss with the community and quarries on expansion of existing and limitations on new.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Limit development on known fault lines.	1. Update zoning regulations to restrict certain types of development on and near fault lines. 2. Create a fault line overlay map that can be used by planners and the public. 3. Work with local and state government agencies to develop a risk management plan. 4. Develop pamphlets detailing the risks associated with living on or near fault lines.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
4. Work with the owners of former quarries and quarries that are decommissioned to repurpose them into recreational uses and/or water supply reservoirs as the need and opportunity arises.	1. Work with the Towns of New Market, Mount Jackson, Toms Brook , and Strasburg to open Half Moon Beach and Towns' neighboring quarries to public access or water usage. 2. Share the location of all former quarries of interest for public service with all land trusts. 3. When easements with former quarries are reviewed, include public service provisions.	Community Development, CEA	2030-2035 U&E
5. Integrate quarries, caves, fossil and mineral deposits, former mines, and iron furnaces into local historical tourism initiatives.	1. Integrate them into local historical tourism marketing materials and campaigns. 2. Support interpretive trails, tours, and signage that link them to other amenities. 3. Partner with local schools and historical societies to develop educational programs.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Educate owners of wild caves, fossil and mineral deposits, former mines, and iron furnaces about their importance and encourage protecting them.	1. Create a guidebook and informational materials for landowners. 2. Develop partnerships with local museums and educational institutions to create exhibits. 3. Implement a certification for those who participate in training and commit to protection.	Community Development, County Library	2035-2040 I&E
7. Enhance the public experience with caves and former mines.	1. Support the expansion and continued operation of public caverns. 2. Support the reopening of caverns for public enjoyment. 3. Develop signage to educate hikers of the history of caves. 4. Support additional efforts on awareness on caves and former mines.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Wildlife Habitat Resources
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 3.5 centers on enhancing wildlife protection through habitat conservation, highlighting the importance of sustaining ecosystems for enjoyment and hunting. Efforts focus on maintaining habitat cores and corridors. These strategies aim to ensure continuous natural habitats that support wildlife movement and biodiversity.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 3.4 Wildlife will be protected for enjoyment and hunting for future generations and sustainable ecosystems.

Objective 3.4.1: Protect wildlife habitat cores and corridors

Important wildlife habitat cores and corridors as well as their edges are encouraged to be protected from development and enhanced for greater functionality with plantings and pollinator plants.

Objective 3.4.2: Support access to hunting and fishing

Support access to hunting and fishing through private and public programs.

Objective 3.4.3: Protect endangered and threatened species

Endangered and threatened species will be protected from development and other human intervention that could be detrimental to the species.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Promote private land conservation initiatives.	1. Map wildlife habitat cores and corridors and develop an outreach strategy for easements. 2. Identify endangered species and map their habitats to guide conservation efforts. 3. Utilize Federal and State funding on Wildlife Credits and related funding. 4. Launch a recognition program for private landowners who protect wildlife habitats.	Community Development, CEA	2025-2030 S&R
2. Enhance local zoning to protect wildlife habitats.	1. Review and update zoning with provisions for wildlife habitat cores and corridors. 2. Consider zoning amendments to require environmental impact assessments. 3. Create a standardized impact assessment protocol such as using DCR tools. 4. Consider zoning regulations to include impact assessments on rare and endangered species.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Enhance access to public lands for hunting and fishing.	1. Map current public lands available for hunting and fishing and where access can be improved. 2. Evaluate County Forests and public lands as locations for public hunting and fishing.	Community Development, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
4. Encourage private developers to include pollinator plantings and innovative building designs to accommodate local species.	1. Offer incentives such as density bonuses through zoning or expedited permitting for private development projects that include pollinator habitats and wildlife-friendly designs. 2. Publish a set of best practices and guidelines.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Work with local parks, VDOT, and County Convenience Sites to plant polinator habitats.	1. Identify key canidate sites for plantings. 2. Apply for grant funding. 3. Implement plantings with educational signage.	Community Development, General Properties	2025-2030 S&R
6. Include pollinator plantings and innovative building designs to accommodate local species in new public buildings and at existing facilities.	1. Develop a landscaping policy for public buildings that requires the inclusion of native pollinator-friendly plants in garden and green space designs. 2. Partner with local wildlife organizations to design and install birdhouses, bat boxes, and other habitat features on public building grounds. 3. Install pollinator gardens at existing public buildings and parks.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E

Chapter 4:

Economic Development

Photo of a country store, Korean market, and boba tea business in a former gas station outside of the Hamlet of Clary.

Vision:

A comprehensive and collaborative partnership among all public and private local, regional, and statewide economic development entities to provide current and future Shenandoah County businesses an environment to thrive and grow; and to ensure current and future County residents with the opportunity to benefit from economic growth through personal gain and enhanced quality of life.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Maintain the rural integrity of Shenandoah County while ensuring it as a great place to work through the development of creative workforce development opportunities and supporting existing local and future target industry and business sectors including the growth of agribusiness.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 4 is organized around five goals to foster economic development in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing main streets, mixed use Towns/Villages/ Hamlets and areas for business/industry including zoned areas, strategic sites with utilities, and long-range sites.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 4 was written to support balanced economic growth that benefits both businesses and the community. The intent of this chapter is to develop strategies that encourage entrepreneurship, attract new industries, and support existing businesses. This includes enhancing workforce development, improving infrastructure, and fostering a welcoming environment for businesses to thrive. One of the key goals is to make downtowns the most active, profitable, and invested-in areas, recognizing them as economic engines. The chapter aims to create a strong economic foundation that maintains the county's rural charm while promoting job creation and sustainable development. By documenting and implementing these strategies, the plan seeks to provide educational opportunities, support small business growth, and foster community pride. As you read this chapter, consider how economic development impacts your daily life—from job opportunities and local businesses to the services and amenities available in your community—as we all contribute to the county's economic vitality.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 4.1
Students and the local workforce will have the opportunity to be prepared for well-paid employment or further training / education.

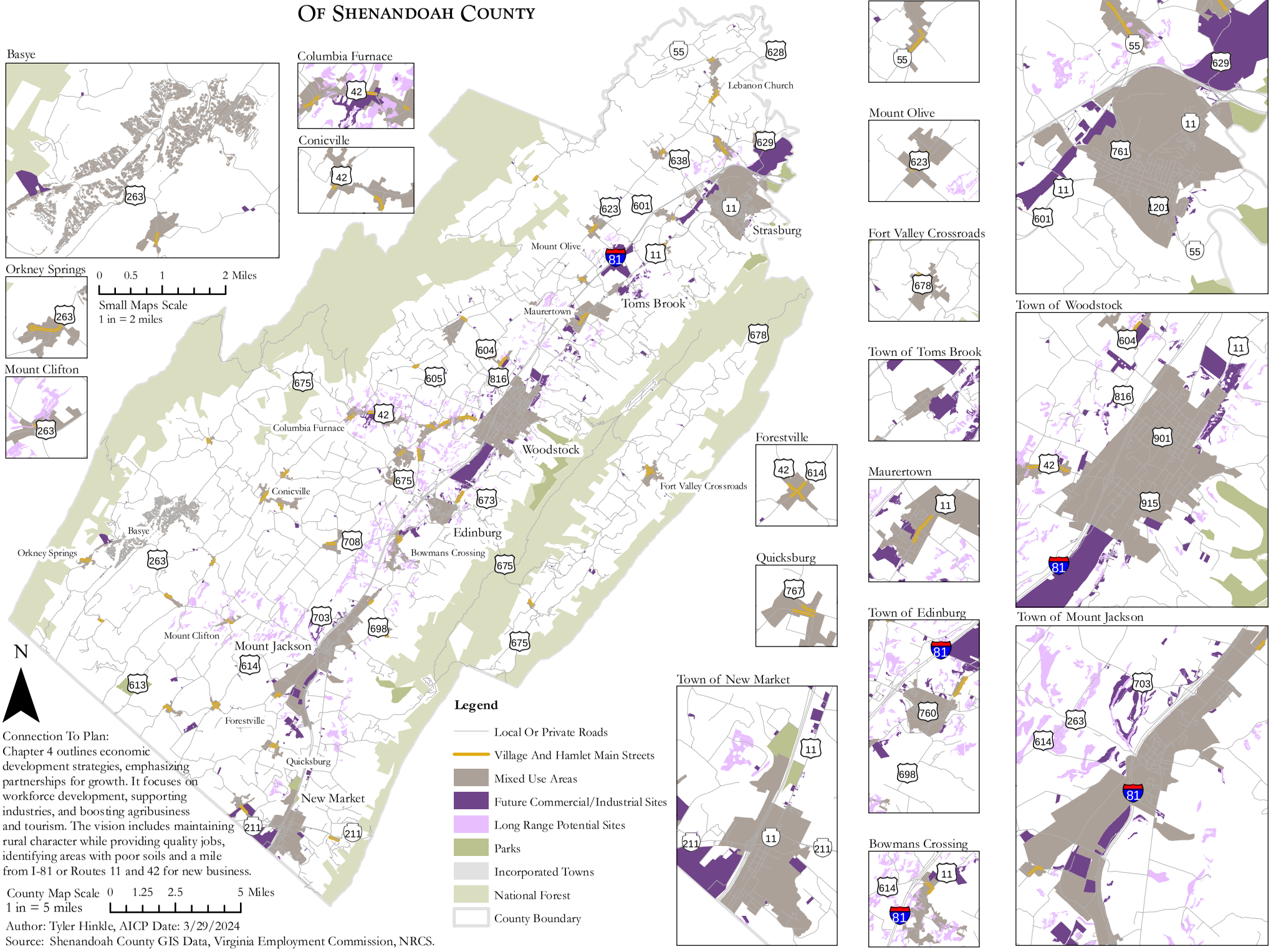
Goal 4.2
We will be the destination for agribusiness, hospitality, and tourism opportunities.

Goal 4.3
Attract and retain key target industries and businesses.

Goal 4.4
Foster a welcoming environment that will attract and retain employment opportunities and capital investment.

Goal 4.5
Downtowns will be the most active, profitable, and invested in areas for small businesses.

Economic Development
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 4 outlines economic development strategies, emphasizing partnerships for growth. It focuses on workforce development, supporting industries, and boosting agribusiness and tourism. The vision includes maintaining rural character while providing quality jobs, identifying areas with poor soils and a mile from I-81 or Routes 11 and 42 for new business.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 3/29/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, Virginia Employment Commission, NRCS.

Goal 4.1 Students and the local workforce will be prepared for well-paid employment or further training / education.

Objective 4.1.1: Information on options and improve fluency

Information on options for employment, training, and mentoring will be clear and available for new skills and languages.

Objective 4.1.2: Increase mentorships and spaces

Students, residents, visitors, and employees will have the opportunity to serve as mentors and mentees for a range of skill opportunities with accessible space in Towns and Villages.

Objective 4.1.3: Vulnerable populations

There will be a pathway for vulnerable populations to be prepared for the workplace.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Cosponsor the annual business survey with the Chamber of Commerce.	1. Consider a fixed consistent date (i.e. week) that the survey will be released annually. 2. Work with the Chamber and industry roundtables to refine questions and expand awareness. 3. Share general results of the survey with roundtables, partners, and the community. 4. Use results of survey to prioritize retention/expansion visits and actions for the year.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Ensure there are spaces in Towns and Villages for education and workforce development.	1. Conduct an assessment of spaces in towns and villages to determine locations and needs. 2. Provide preference to improving spaces on existing or proposed public transportation lines. 3. Secure funding through grants, partnerships, or community donations to equip spaces. 4. Partner with internet service providers to install or upgrade capabilities.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Provide a pathway for new immigrant adults to be prepared for the workplace.	1. Offer language classes and cultural orientation sessions. 2. Provide assistance to recognize the qualifications and skills brought from home countries. 3. Create networking events to connect with employers and resources.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
4. Provide a pathway for formerly incarcerated adults to be prepared for the workplace.	1. Work with correctional facilities and reentry programs to offer job training and certification. 2. Develop mentorship programs for formerly incarcerated with mentors. 3. Organize job fairs that connect formerly incarcerated with employers.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
5. Provide a pathway for disabled adults to be prepared for the workplace.	1. Partner with organizations to develop tailored job readiness programs. 2. Consider workplace accommodations and assistive technology in training facilities. 3. Create internship and job placement programs.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
6. A database of employment, training, and mentorship opportunities will be developed and maintained.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Workforce Development Manager to SIP. 2. Identify and collaborate with businesses, educators, and trainers. 3. Career fairs will be supported/expanded and partner with organizations. 4. Create a system of distributing info out to those with no internet.	Tourism and Economic Development, Board of Supervisors	2030-2035 U&E
7. High school students and the public will have the opportunity for satisfactory completion of a meaningful workforce job shadowing experience, mentorship, or apprenticeship, to be completed prior to graduation.	1. Develop a program that pairs professionals with those seeking mentorship. 2. Consider local branches of senior adult mentoring programs. 3. A database of professionals interested in mentoring will be maintained and updated each year. 4. Collaborate with local businesses and industry professionals to develop job shadowing, mentorship, and apprenticeship programs for high school students.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
8. Expand the opportunities to learn new skills.	1. Students will achieve proficiency in life skills including but not limited to time management, personal health care, home and car repairs, interviewing and negotiation of benefits, the free market, the benefits of continuing education, and the difference between a job and a career. 2. Continue priority courses and expand Triplett Tech or other vocational provider opportunities in AI, Coding, 3D Printing, Quantum Computing, and similar technical skills. 3. Increase the number of opportunities for language learning including satellite campuses of Skyline Literacy and New Bridges in Woodstock and workplace training.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 4.2 We will be the destination for agribusiness, hospitality, and tourism opportunities.

Objective 4.2.1: Support agricultural character and productive enterprise

Foster a community that supports our productive agricultural character, and productive enterprise so we continue to be an attractive place for tourists to visit and landowners to farm.

Objective 4.2.2: Market and invest in the Shenandoah County Brand with recreation, tourism, and hospitality

Develop and carry out a cohesive and effective marketing strategy to promote the County's brand as having unique agricultural, hospitality, recreation, and tourism offerings.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Development proposals will be reviewed based on how they fit, or do not fit, into our productive agricultural character.	1. Consider rezonings based on the current use and soil productivity. 2. Industrial/commercial proposals will consider local sourcing of products and raw materials. 3. Implement a scoring system for development proposals that quantitatively assesses their compatibility with agricultural character and prioritizes agricultural land preservation.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Support the ability for the full production process of agricultural products to take place within the County.	1. Apply for a grant to consider a commercial community kitchen for startup businesses. 2. Evaluate/ encourage ag-enterprises for processing, distribution and sale of local products. 3. Consider an industrial agriculture zoning district to enable industrial agricultural operations, including indoor agriculture, in key locations without productive soils.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Market lands for sale that are productive for grape or hops production to potential or existing wineries, breweries, and distilleries.	1. Create an inventory of lands suitable for viticulture/hops/orchards. 2. Launch a marketing campaign to attract and expand viticulture and brewery businesses. 3. Develop a scraping tool that pulls properties for sale with productive lands to showcase.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. County and town officials to market larger destination venues such as town festivals and the Yard Crawl.	1. Create a centralized events calendar that features major local festivals. 2. Implement joint advertising campaigns with local businesses to highlight attractions/events. 3. Develop themed itineraries that include destination venues and festivals.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. County leadership will play an active role in supporting the growth and expansion of agribusiness opportunities.	1. Study staff capacity and add a director of agriculture to the SIP to manage agritourism, support innovative agriculture, new products, new production opportunities, and more. 2. Partner with regional partners to expand the infrastructure needed for 4IR technologies. 3. Develop a comprehensive agribusiness support program.	Board Of Supervisors, VCE	2035-2040 I&E
6. County and town will collaborate to market experience packages/trails like the Spirit Trails.	1. Consider an official "Recommended Bike Roads" map to divert bikers to safe roads. 2. Develop trail packages that bundle recreation, dining, & accommodations. 3. Enhance website/app with maps and resources for trails and amenities.	Community Development, Tourism And Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the development of lodging and food trucks along bike routes.	1. Identify and assess locations along bike routes considering attractions. 2. Develop guidelines and incentives for establishing lodging. 3. Coordinate with event organizers to consider areas for food trucks. 4. Encourage overnight rentals in key areas walkable or bikeable to amenities.	Community Development, Tourism And Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
8. Continue supporting the outstanding efforts of staff in marketing Shenandoah County as a destination to visit.	1. Allocate resources for ongoing professional development and training of staff. 2. Measure and analyze the effectiveness of current marketing campaigns. 3. Increase collaboration to create a unified and diverse representation.	County Administration, Tourism And Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A
9. Leverage Partnerships to Amplify the County's Brand.	1. Study and engage in broader marketing initiatives like regional tourism. 2. Partner with businesses to create bundled deals and packages. 3. Consider postcards/artwork & branding campaign as well as hospitality training	Tourism And Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 4.3 Attract and retain key target industries and businesses.

Objective 4.3.1: Market sites, ensure readiness, have relevant targets, and support our assets for highest and best use

Industrial and Business Parks, and future industrial and business land designated on the Future Land Use Map, will be ready and marketed to valuable employers within target sectors.

Objective 4.3.2: Retain assets and have infrastructure that enables expansion in strategic locations

Support retention of existing businesses and industry and develop and promote specialized infrastructure or business parks that are tailored to the needs of specific industries or sectors with future industrial and commercial development will be targeted to a mile from I-81 and Rt 11 and all land between them, or a mile from Routes 42 and 263 per the FLUM while preserving productive farmland per LESA.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. County and town officials will collaborate with stakeholders to decrease the number of vacant industrial and commercial parcels.	1. Consider amending zoning to direct growth to vacant parcels. 2. Inform the public on the new, more supportive zoning rules. 3. Create a property assemblage book highlighting the top (5-10) properties. 4. Enhance and market the County's comprehensive property and asset database.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Work with property owners with lands listed for future industry/ business in FLUM to identify development barriers.	1. Outreach to property owners to understand existing investment priorities. 2. Continue dialogue with owners, catalytic parcels, on a regular basis. 3. Create a prospectus, with property ownership, concepts, and incentives. 4. Consider PPP investment strategy to create additional pad-ready sites.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Work to develop necessary infrastructure for future industrial and business parks ie entrances, roads, or utilities.	1. Set standards with clawback for incentives per jobs, taxes, location, sector. 2. Set performance per: above av wage, jobs, and workforce programs. 3. Consider TIF, real property tax millage, and joint County/Town efforts. 4. Define contributions to site dev, acquisition, building; and infrastructure. 5. Support competitive wages/incentives for industrial ag jobs.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Maintain a welcoming environment by retaining and assisting business expansion.	1. Build industry roundtables in a number of different market areas. 2. Create a comprehensive list of all businesses and enhance outreach efforts. 3. Facilitate regular training and development programs.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
5. Establish regulations and incentives that direct growth to areas listed on the FLUM.	1. Pursue infill, redevelopment, and brownfield development on lands with public water/ sewer before green fields or the extension of water/sewer. 2. Remove development barriers in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
6. Create investment strategy to develop two (2) pad-ready sites.	1. Develop a funding plan to create two pad ready sites. 2. Consider a cost-revenue agreement between the Towns and County on investment.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Continue to identify trends that assist in targeting and expanding industries and businesses that align with goals.	1. Evaluate and improve industries/businesses per Triple Bottom Line. 2. Identify emerging trends, or blue oceans (uncontested markets) businesses/industries and be aware of red oceans (contested markets). 3. Ensure that the SEDP continues to be relevant and useful.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
8. Providing critical info needed by businesses to survive and thrive.	1. Provide info to Stage 2 companies how to reach maturity ($50 to $100 million in receipts). 2. Organize financial / growth strategy workshops and mentors program. 3. Partner with financial institutions to provide investment/lending options.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
9. Seek to retain/recruit those who (1) pay a competitive wage, (2) benefit tax base, (3) stewards of natural resources, and (4) offer flexible hours.	1. Identify and engage with employers to understand needs and challenges. 2. Create a recruitment package that highlights the benefits of relocating. 3. Attend industry conferences and trade shows to network with potential employers.	Tourism and Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A
10. Increase marketing for Manufacturing/Production, IT & Communications, Hospitality & Tourism, Agribusiness, and Healthcare.	1. Develop industry-specific marketing materials for each target industry. 2. Create 'Market Fundamentals', 'Infrastructure', 'Incentives', and 'quality of life' cut sheets. 3. Create a 'testimonial' booklet with experiences of existing business leaders. 4. Develop a target industry cluster component on the website.	Tourism And Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A
11. Align zoning and EDA acquisition with FLUM and productive vineyard/ hop/ orchard lands.	1. Downzone any existing industrial/commercial areas not aligning FLUM. 2. Support rezoning of areas reflected on FLUM as industrial/commercial. 3. Develop a plan to inform landowners about FLUM & EDA tools.	Planning Commission, Tourism and Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 4.4 Foster a welcoming environment that will attract and retain employment opportunities.

Objective 4.4.1: Clear permitting process & new technologies

Ensure there is a clear and easy to understand permitting process throughout the County and welcome new entrepreneurs, businesses, and industries using new technologies.

Objective 4.4.2: Quality of life & supportive environment

People will want to work here because of a high quality of life from a supportive environment that encourages entrepreneurship, growth of small businesses, and quality staff.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Work with Shenandoah County permitting agencies, including the six Towns, and develop an easy to understand and simple permitting process.	1. Consider a maximum review period and remove duplicative paperwork. 2. All jurisdictions create a concurrent review process. 3. Consider administrative approvals for projects that fall below threshold. 4. Study staff capacity and add a development ombudsman to the SIP to learn each development process to work with any real estate investor. 5. Develop how to guides for working one's way through permitting process.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Amend zoning that is too burdensome or unequal to similar businesses/industries in the same or similar zoning.	1. Consider increasing the building height in industrial/commercial districts. 2. Consider uses should be listed as by-right, SUP, or not allowed per SEDP. 3. Consider joint zoning with interested Towns or similar zoning ordinances for consistency.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Implement a proactive community engagement and education initiative.	1. Hold a town hall meeting to discuss accomplishments and ongoing efforts. 2. Develop a 3-part 'Economic Development 101' series with SCPS. 3. Annually host expert panelist discussions on economic development.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Activate engaged citizens in community outreach and implementation.	1. Recruit and train community advocates to be vocal supporters. 2. Identify and train business ambassadors for each of the target sectors. 3. Develop a formal business mentor program, such as SCORE.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
5. Fund economic development commensurate with outcome expectations.	1. Right-size' implementation expectations to funding and staffing levels. 2. Increase funding for entrepreneurial & business recruitment efforts. 3. Increase funding to accommodate more proactive asset development.	Board of Supervisors, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
6. Enhance strategic relationships with local, regional, and statewide implementation partners.	1. Create an understanding of economic development roles for the County and each Town. 2. Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to define their role in economic development.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
7. No public employee will be paid lower than the annual competitive wage and private employers will be encouraged to pay a competitive wage.	1. Maintain annual competitive wage metric including housing, transportation, and other. 2. Adequately fund staff needs so all County Staff are paid a competitive wage. 3. Recognize employers who commit to competitive wages / other practices.	Board of Supervisors, County Administration	2030-2035 U&E
8. Invest in our quality of life so businesses and industries invest in us.	1. Facilitate connecting local restaurants, grocery stores, and food banks to local food sources. 2. Support childcare availability within walking distance of employment sites.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
9. Increase support to small business growth and development.	1. Provide small business development programs and center in the County. 2. Ensure every Town and Village has access to business incubator spaces. 3. Create info packets to assist entrepreneurs on entrepreneurial concepts.	Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
10. Be prepared to welcome new ideas and technologies.	1. Support staff with research to prepare permitting for future technology-based industries. 2. Invest in infrastructure that would allow for technology-based businesses. 3. Increase marketing to businesses addressing supply chain drag, 4IR technologies, & startups.	County Administration, Tourism and Economic Development	2040-2045 R&R
11. Implement comprehensive staff support and development programs.	1. Create a professional development plan for each staff member. 2. Consider a program that supports the physical and mental health of staff. 3. Implement a feedback system that allows staff to share their experiences and suggestions.	Board Of Supervisors, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 4.5 Downtowns will be the most active, profitable, and invested in areas for small businesses.

Objective 4.5.1: Public & Private investment

There will be public investment in water, sewer, sidewalks, lighting, facades, and removing barriers which will enable and support private investment in our downtowns.

Objective 4.5.2: Key amenities, events, and activities downtown

Create a sense of community and engagement in downtown areas by coordinating and facilitating public events and activities, and the siting and establishment of key amenities.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Support the ability for events and festivals to be held in the downtowns of our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	1. Streamline the permit process for hosting events and festivals in downtown areas, making it more user-friendly for organizers. 2. Offer logistical support and guidance for event organizers, including information on public safety, waste management, and facility use. 3. Support strategic locations for the Yard Crawl so foot traffic is limited to downtowns and areas designed to be walkable with designated parking areas.	Community Development, Tourism And Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Adopt form-based codes for the villages and hamlets and share ideas with Towns to allow a variety of uses while still regulating appearance.	1. Organize workshops to introduce form-based codes and gather input. 2. Draft and adopt the form-based code ordinance, focusing on flexibility of use and character. 3. Provide technical assistance and resources to town officials including model ordinances.	Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Ensure Voluntary Agreements for developments consider improvements in downtowns per community needs.	1. Develop a guide on incorporating community projects into Voluntary Agreements. 2. Create a list of downtown projects that could be funded with Voluntary Agreements. 3. Organize community forums to discuss desired improvements and potential partnerships.	Community Development, Tourism And Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Consider an Event Coordinator to coordinate the setting of dates for all events to ensure overlap and competition does not occur, create a database of all events in the County, and a database of all vendors that event holders can pull from.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Event Coordinator to the SIP with experience in community event planning and vendor management. 2. Build a comprehensive digital event calendar that is publicly accessible and allows for easy coordination and scheduling. 3. Create a centralized vendor database that includes local businesses, artisans, and service providers who can be tapped for various events.	Board of Supervisors, Tourism And Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Consider various programs to enhance walkability and aesthetic appeal in the villages and hamlets.	1. Design and implement a façade grant program guidelines, including eligibility criteria. 2. Consider special service taxation districts in interested villages/hamlets. 3. Redesign downtowns to be pedestrian oriented. 4. Design and implement mural and public art programs in each Town, Village, and Hamlet.	Community Development, Tourism And Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
6. Have more activities for people of all ages and backgrounds in our downtowns.	1. Coordinate with senior centers and community orgs to host activities for the elderly, such as outdoor exercise classes, cultural walks, and hobby clubs. 2. Partner with local schools, libraries, and family centers to create child-friendly events. 3. Organize cultural events that celebrate Spanish-speaking communities. 4. Offer multilingual event information and signage for accessibility.	Tourism And Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the siting of lodging opportunities.	1. Explore the potential of a small-scale (approximately 10-25 room) ultra-luxury inn or other small-scale high-end accommodations. 2. Amend downtown zoning to allow small-scale lodging by-right. 3. Support Towns in amending their Zoning downtown to encourage a hotel.	Tourism And Economic Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
8. Support new restaurants, businesses, and entertainment opportunities.	1. Update zoning to allow all uses the public desires downtown. 2. Conduct market research to identify the demand for various amenities. 3. Partner with local real estate agents to identify potential locations.	Tourism And Economic Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
9. Support businesses to extend their hours or be open over the full weekend.	1. Survey local businesses to understand the challenges and opportunities related to extending hours or being open on weekends. 2. Develop a campaign to encourage and support businesses in extending their hours, possibly including a 'Shop Local Late' event. 3. Partner with business associations to create incentives for extending hours.	Tourism And Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Chapter 5:

Housing

Examples of pre-approved housing plans from South Bend, Indiana.

Vision:

Everyone has access to adequate housing.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Access to adequate housing across all population demographics (such as age, disability or mobility issues, location, employment and income) within the county is essential to having a life-long home for all residents to achieve the vision of a unique place to live and a great place to work.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 5 is organized around five goals aimed at improving housing availability, affordability, and quality in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing areas for the Transfer of Development Rights which allows farms to sell housing rights to Towns/Villages/Hamlets.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 5 was written to address the critical need for diverse and affordable housing options while preserving our rural open and working lands through focusing investment to our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets. The intent of this chapter is to develop strategies that support both the creation of new housing and the improvement of the existing housing stock. This includes promoting a mixture of housing types, removing barriers to affordability, and ensuring housing for all ages. The chapter also aims to prevent individuals becoming unhoused and support quality low-income housing. Efforts are made to save historic buildings and utilize vacant ones, emphasizing the importance of locally driven redevelopment and building off our historic character and charm. As you read this chapter, consider how housing impacts your daily life—from the affordability and condition of your home, whether your friends and family can afford to live here, or if the firefighter or teacher has options available for them to afford—as we all play a role in Shenandoah County's housing.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 5.1
Information on affordable housing and housing overall will be made publicly available.

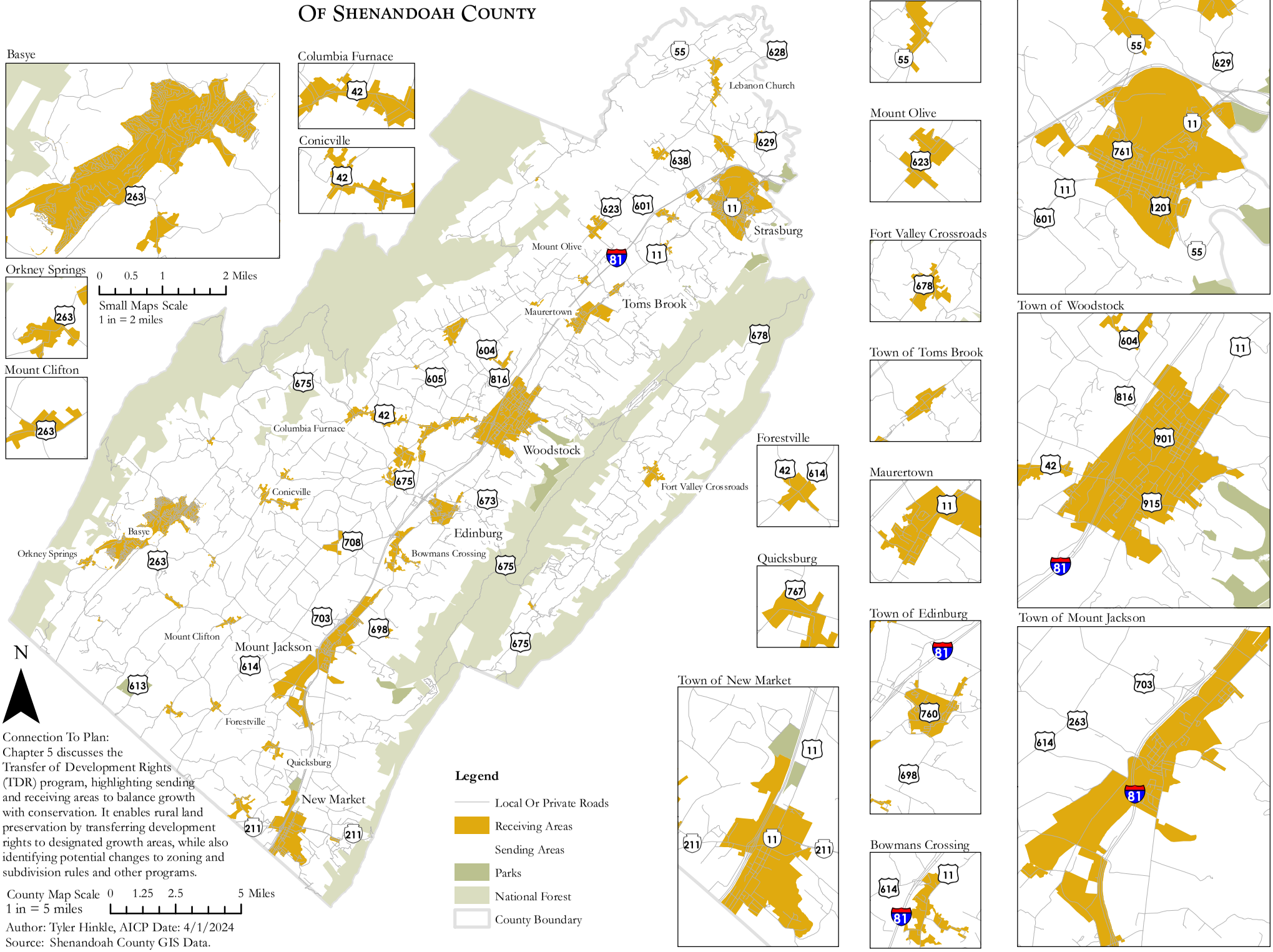
Goal 5.2
Housing will be equally available to all income levels, ages, and backgrounds.

Goal 5.3
Residential growth will occur in the towns, villages, and hamlets per the Future Land Use Map.

Goal 5.4
All residents should have decent, safe and sanitary housing in good repair.

Goal 5.5
Encourage preservation of historic buildings and utilize vacant ones.

Housing
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 5 discusses the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, highlighting sending and receiving areas to balance growth with conservation. It enables rural land preservation by transferring development rights to designated growth areas, while also identifying potential changes to zoning and subdivision rules and other programs.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 5.1 Information on affordable housing and housing overall will be made publicly available.

Objective 5.1.1: Understand affordable housing

To better understand the term "affordable housing" and the relationship of type of housing availability to affordability, the County needs to understand the population and inventory.

Objective 5.1.2: Staff & data support

Staff will be provided support and data to inform elected officials when changes and demands in the regional and local housing market may impact affordability.

Objective 5.1.3: Updating ordinances & Building plans

The County should continually review and update ordinances to add inventory and keep an updated set of pre-approved building plans.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Regularly review and update ordinances.	1. Propose amendments to zoning that support affordable housing, like density bonuses, reduced parking requirements, and streamlined approval processes for affordable projects. 2. Regularly review and update tax code ordinances on housing affordability and development. 3. Regularly review and suggest updates to building code ordinances.	Community Development, Commissioner Of Revenue	2025-2030 S&R
2. Support existing surveys and data systems.	1. Support the efforts of the Point In Time Count And Survey. 2. Increase participation of service providers, including government units that provide direct assistance, in the Homeless Management Information System.	Board Of Supervisors, Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. An up-to-date definition of affordable housing will be maintained.	1. Local agencies/organizations will provide input on the definition. 2. Compare HUD definition to the statistics per ALICE, the Red Brick Report, and other data. 3. Include information on rent reasonableness where multiple housing options must be found. 4. Attention will be paid to specific industry groups including public servants.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. An up to date dataset on individuals and households at risk of becoming unhoused will be maintained.	1. Work with local and regional agencies to periodically assess the extent (and subsequent changes) of residents who are "at risk" for unhoused or home insecurity. 2. Collect/ analyze data released from the unhoused point in time count conducted each year.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Update the Red Brick Housing Report every five years.	1. Gather data on housing preferences and affordability thresholds of different populations. 2. Partner with local universities or research institutions. 3. Integrate the report online so everyone can view the data in real time.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. The public will have access to information on the count and location of affordable housing in the County.	1. Add to the CIP a Housing Inventory Quality Study and keep it updated every five years. The Study will include information on the number of vacant homes, their location, size, aspects such as HVAC and sanitation, and the status and quality of the structure itself and rehabilitation. 2. Create an interactive online map of affordable housing units that includes details on unit size, affordability criteria, and contact information for availability inquiries.	Board Of Supervisors, Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Develop a library of pre-approved building plans including options for manufactured housing.	1. Conduct a market study to determine which house types will do best. 2. Commission the design of a range of building plans for various types. 3. Create a streamlined process for builders who use pre-approved plans. 4. Consider plans of a diverse preferences including historical eras.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
8. Consider a Housing Authority in collaboration with the six towns.	1. Form a steering committee with representatives from each of the six towns to guide the establishment of the Housing Authority, ensuring all local interests are considered. 2. Hold public workshops to involve the community in the process. 3. Per State Code, request a referendum for making a Housing And Redevelopment Authority.	Board Of Supervisors, Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
9. Consider a Housing Department	1. Study staff capacity and add a Housing Director to the SIP with the task of coordinating with all officials, agencies, and Towns as well as developing strategies to solve housing crisis issues. 2. Consider a monitoring system to keep track of rent restricted deeds and compliance to them. 3. Study staff capacity and add a Housing Enforcement Officer to the SIP for compliance.	Board Of Supervisors, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 5.2 Housing will be equally available to all income levels, ages, and backgrounds.

Objective 5.2.1: Remove barriers to affordability and increase workforce housing

Identify and remove barriers that limit the affordability of housing including on a industry or employment specific level.

Objective 5.2.2: Inclusive development for all incomes, ages, and housing types

To avoid gentrification, development and redevelopment efforts will be inclusive of the existing population as well as the entire population with a mixture of housing types.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Zoning should be updated to promote a mixture of housing types.	1. Update zoning to regulate the density of units and not the style of housing in order to address population concerns while providing flexibility in design. 2. Ensure the mixure of housing types allowed includes tiny homes and manufactured housing. 3. Offer incentives for developments that include a mix of housing types and income levels. 4. Develop inclusive zoning, requiring a percent of housing to be affordable.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
2. Development proposals that include middle housing types should be preferred.	1. Develop a scoring system that gives preference to middle housing types. 2. Provide developers with clear guidelines and examples of preferred middle housing types.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Study and better understand the impact vacant building owners and rental users such as short term rentals hold on housing affordability and availability.	1. Conduct a study on how vacant buildings and short term rentals impact access, affordable housing, and quality of life for community character. 2. Implement a permitting system for rentals to ensure compliance. 3. Incentivize conversion of second homes and investment properties into long-term rentals.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Enable the development and improvement of housing for all ages.	1. Conduct a study on features required for seniors & those with disabilities. 2. Identify suitable locations for assisted living facilities and senior resorts. 3. Amend zoning to allow middle housing types such as lofts, condos, and townhomes.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Leverage public-private partnerships for housing development.	1. Identify land best suited for workforce housing development. 2. Structure PPP agreements that include affordable housing as part of development deals.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
6. Support the creation of community land trusts (CLT) separate from the County to preserve affordability.	1. Research and identify potential locations that would benefit from a community land trust for long-term affordable housing solutions. 2. Identify non-profits or interested individuals to start CLT programs. 3. Educate the community about the benefits of land trusts and how they can participate.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Consider a Housing Trust Fund and use it as a match for grants, the State Trust Fund, and other sources for the development of affordable housing.	1. Outline how parties can donate and developers can voluntarily contribute during permitting. 2. Consider criteria for the use of matches to ensure funds increase affordable housing. 3. Amend zoning to allow for greater densities if funding/ land is allocated to the Fund.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
8. Facilitate employer-assisted housing programs.	1. Engage with employers to develop employer-assisted housing initiatives. 2. Develop a toolkit for employers that outlines workforce housing solutions.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
9. Support housing partners who address common barriers such as mortgages, background checks for rentals, and utility costs.	1. Support guidelines for housing providers outlining acceptable use of background checks. 2. Support homeownership assistance programs (ie down payment assistance or counseling). 3. Support advocacy groups to work with utility providers to reduce costs.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
10. Identify communities like Southwood in Albemarle County (ie trailers), that could benefit from similar redevelopment.	1. Identify all communities that might benefit from redevelopment. 2. Contract a local builder to be the project manager. 3. Develop a community engagement plan that includes workshops, surveys, and forums to involve residents in the redevelopment process, ensuring their needs/ concerns are addressed.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
11. Develop a workforce housing plan.	1. Conduct a study of industries/ employment to determine needs per sector. 2. Collaborate with employers to understand housing challenges. 3. Create a strategic plan to develop housing that is affordable for workers in key industries.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 5.3 Residential growth will occur in the towns, villages, and hamlets per the Future Land Use Map.

Objective 5.3.1: Density and infill

Residential growth will be dense and involve vacant lots and empty buildings before building on greenfield sites to reduce the impact on our rural lands.

Objective 5.3.2: Transfer of development rights and a sense of place

Development rights in rural areas of the County should be encouraged to be transferred to Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to make them attractive places to live, work, socialize, and visit.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Support Town and Village expansion of existing multiuse zoning districts to increase the number of apartments or housing units above storefronts.	1. Survey commercial/residential districts as areas for multi-use developments. 2. Offer incentives for creating housing units above storefronts. 3. Implement a streamlined approval process for converting upper floors of commercial buildings into residential units or the bottom floors of residential buildings to commercial.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Amend regulations and support Town amendments to ensure multistory buildings follow design standards and façade guidelines.	1. Draft design façade guidelines that encourage aesthetically pleasing multistory buildings. 2. Allocate funding for training for local planning staff and HARB. 3. Organize design competitions to encourage innovative architectural solutions.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Support upzoning of existing residential lands for a base of 30 dwelling units per acre or more for density needed to support public transportation.	1. Support provisions that allow an increase in density in exchange for a percentage of units being permanently affordable. 2. Amend zoning to allow a base of 30 dwelling units per acre in residential/multiuse zones.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
4. Consider a Transfer of Development Rights program under the Conservation Easement Authority.	1. Consider a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program with increased density and a TDR bank. Ensure lands with rights sold are placed into permanent conservation easements. 2. Work with all Towns to adopt the program. 3. Develop an outreach plan to educate landowners about the benefits.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Support private individuals as they upkeep and maintain lands seen from public spaces.	1. Develop a 'Community Beautification Grant' program. 2. Organize 'Community Clean-Up Days' to help beautify public spaces. 3. Offer workshops on landscaping, maintenance, façade improvement, etc.	Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
6. Incentivize infill housing development.	1. Offer tax incentives or fee waivers for developers who undertake infill. 2. Create a fast-track permitting process for infill development projects. 3. Launch a marketing campaign that highlights the benefits of infill. 4. Maintain a map of all vacant properties in the downtowns for infill.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
7. Extend public utility options to all vacant properties in downtowns of Towns, Villages, and Hamlets so they are pad ready for infill.	1. Conduct an infrastructure assessment to identify the status of utility services. 2. Develop a cost-sharing program that encourages PPP's. 3. Prioritize utility extensions based on potential for development impact and readiness.	Community Development, Sanitary District Office	2030-2035 U&E
8. Increase access to shelters for the unhoused or at risk population.	1. Collaborate with non-profits and social services to create shelters. 2. Support the 'Housing First' initiative to prioritize stable housing for the unhoused. 3. Support the coordinated outreach program that connects at-risk individuals with services/ shelters, working proactively to assist unhoused.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
9. Enhance public spaces for community engagement.	1. Create community-centered public spaces such as parks, plazas, and pedestrian zones. 2. Partner with local artists and cultural organizations to introduce public art installations, performances, and interactive experiences in town centers. 3. Implement wayfinding signage and accessibility improvements. 4. Support neighborhood events as they build a sense of community.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
10. A Pattern Book could be developed for the Battlefield Areas, Villages, Hamlets, and Towns including provisions for manufactured housing.	1. Apply for CLG, DHR, NPS, and other grants to finance pattern books. 2. Compile a collection of visual references, including photographs, drawings, and plans of historical structures, employ designers/ architects. 3. Adopt the Pattern Books.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E

Goal 5.4 All residents should have decent, safe and sanitary housing in good repair.

Objective 5.4.1: Quality low-income housing and improving deficient housing

Promote the development of mixed-income communities so low-income residents have access to safe, decent, and affordable housing and support the improvement of deficient housing.

Objective 5.4.2: Prevent crisis and house those in crisis

Prevent individuals and families from entering the unhoused assistance system and assist those in crisis of not having housing or on the verge of losing decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Partner with landlords to ensure access to affordable housing.	1. Explore the need for a landlord contingency fund to mitigate real and perceived concerns. 2. Develop a 'Good Landlord' program that offers educational resources and certification including site habitability requirements. 3. Consider incentives to those who rent at or below HUD established FMR.	Community Development, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
2. Prevent evictions by convening with housing providers to address issues.	1. Support access to funding on eviction prevention in the County. 2. Delay or prevent evictions, condemnations, or zoning violations. 3. Develop a mediation program to find solutions before eviction begins.	Community Development, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
3. Support reducing deficiencies in the adequacy of the current housing stock.	1. Identify deficiencies in housing through a survey and prioritize by urgency. 2. Develop partnerships with contractors and trade schools on upgrades. 3. Launch a "Fix It First" campaign that provides resources to homeowners.	Community Development, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
4. Support the establishment and creation of additional Community Development Corporations in the County.	1. Engage community leaders and organizations that have the capacity and interest in establishing Community Development Corporations (CDCs). 2. Utilize the Housing Trust Fund to support local CDCs.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. The County may identify available programs to assist homeowners to upgrade existing housing inventory deemed inadequate.	1. Conduct a study to identify all existing housing inventory deemed inadequate due to lack of running water, inadequate wastewater removal and sanitation, bathroom and kitchen. 2. Compile a resource guide detailing all home improvement programs. 3. Partner with non-profits and service orgs to facilitate the app process.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Explore the establishment of an Acquire, Renovate, Sale program with the tax sale system to reintroduce tax delinquent, vacant, deficient housing into the market.	1. Create a clear set of guidelines for the Acquire, Renovate, Sale program, detailing the process, eligibility criteria, and roles. Ensure that properties acquired are not currently occupied. 2. Assign a portion of the housing and revenue to be utilized for unhoused rehousing.	Community Development, County Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, County Sheriff	2030-2035 U&E
7. Support the development of permanent supportive housing and thermal shelters in each Town, Village, and Hamlet.	1. Conduct a study on demand for permanent housing and thermal shelters. 2. Support developing permanent supportive housing and thermal shelter projects. 3. Ensure that supportive housing include wraparound services.	Community Development, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
8. Facilitate community-based housing improvement initiatives.	1. Support the establishment of local housing improvement coalitions. 2. Offer mini-grants to neighborhood associations for small-scale community-driven housing. 3. Develop a volunteer skills bank where local tradespeople offer services.	Community Development, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
9. Support the rapid rehousing of individuals and families who are unhoused.	1. Support the ongoing Rapid Re-Housing program. 2. Support funding sources for the Rapid Re-Housing program. 3. Consider partnerships with property managers to secure housing options.	Community Development, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
10. The County may work with organizations to connect individuals in crisis to existing organizations and programs.	1. Create an navigable online resource hub that lists services and programs. 2. Delay or avoid seeking zoning violations for unhoused individuals. 3. Implement a community outreach program to proactively identify and assist individuals.	Community Development, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
11. Connect appropriate agencies with individuals in need who are at risk of becoming unhoused.	1. Support the centralized intake system that connects at-risk individuals. 2. Train staff to identify signs of housing instability and refer resources. 3. Explore becoming a participating jurisdiction for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance funding so it is local and no longer from Winchester.	Community Development, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
12. Partner with Veterans Association Medical Centers.	1. Provide information on the HUD VASH vouchers & benefits to veterans. 2. Collaborate with the VA to consider a local office or visiting schedule.	Community Development, Social Services	2045-2072 P&A
13. Prevent becoming unhoused.	1. Review best practice models for discharge plans and determine if realistic. 2. Develop relationships with advocates on how they discharge. 3. Adopt a resolution stating opposition to making being unhoused illegal.	Community Development, Social Services	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 5.5 Encourage preservation of historic buildings and utilize vacant ones.

Objective 5.5.1: Incentive programs.

Provide incentives to property owners to rehabilitate historic buildings and reuse vacant properties for residential, commercial, and community purposes.

Objective 5.5.2: Remove unnecessary regulations and conduct outreach and education

Consistently review and remove regulations that prevent our downtowns and historic structures from being renovated and reused and create public outreach and education programs.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Identify and market historic structures suitable for adaptive reuse.	1. Amend County zoning to support adaptive reuse and support Towns. 2. Develop or contract out the services for a scraping service to pull historic properties for sale and market for historic restoration and adaptive reuse. 3. Develop marketing that highlights the benefits of adaptive reuse.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Inform landowners of their options for adaptive reuse.	1. Conduct a comprehensive survey to identify historic structures in need of restoration/reuse. 2. Create guides that outline the benefits of restoration and reuse. 3. Consider a program to assist property owners in the app process for grants.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Facilitate investment in redevelopment.	1. Consider an investment fund specifically targeted at revitalizing buildings. 2. Work with banks and financial institutions to provide low-interest loans. 3. Host investment workshops to connect investors with opportunities. 4. Provide resolutions in support of Town grant applications. 5. Review and streamline county and town processes for redevelopment.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Examine and implement exemptions to the building and fire code to incentivize renovation of historic structures while retaining a level of safety.	1. Convene with architects, preservationists, fire safety experts, and building code officials to assess and recommend exemptions and modifications. 2. Develop a clear and comprehensive document or guide that outlines the exemptions.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Maintain a database of all properties that could be renovated.	1. Develop an online interactive map of all properties available for renovation. 2. Organize workshops to discuss the status of properties. 3. Collaborate with real estate professionals to ensure database is up-to-date.	GIS Department, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Promote public participation in preservation projects.	1. Launch a 'Preservation Ambassador' program to engage local volunteers. 2. Create a "This Place Matters' campaign to highlight significant but underutilized buildings. 3. Organize 'Open House' days where the public can tour historic properties.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Facilitate community-based redevelopment projects.	1. Collaborate with community development financial institutions to provide targeted investments in neighborhood revitalization projects. 2. Consider a 'Community Reinvestment Fund' that supports community groups and non-profits in their efforts to rehabilitate historic and vacant properties for community use. 3. Launch a 'Matching Fund' program where the county matches funds raised by the community for the restoration and adaptive reuse of landmarks.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
8. Consider establishing local tax incentives to encourage the renovation of historic structures.	1. Convene with local government officials, tax experts, and representatives from historical preservation organizations to assess the feasibility of local tax incentives for renovation. 2. Explore various tax incentive models, such as property tax abatements, tax credits, or exemptions, to determine which incentives are most suitable. 3. Develop clear eligibility criteria for property owners to qualify for these incentives, ie property age, significance, or renovation project scope. 4. Consider a system for property owners to apply for and receive these incentives, including a timeline for application, approval, and disbursement.	Community Development, Commissioner of Revenue	2035-2040 I&E
9. Promote vacant property reuse incentives.	1. Develop a vacant property tax abatement initiative that reduces property taxes for a period of time following the rehabilitation and occupation of previously vacant buildings. 2. Offer a one-time renovation grant for property owners to convert vacant properties into residential or mixed-use spaces. 3. Implement a façade improvement program that provides funding assistance for the exterior renovation of vacant and historic properties to enhance streetscape aesthetics.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Chapter 6:

Community Services And Facilities

Renderings of the proposed expansion and renovation of the Shenandoah County Library in Edinburg.

Vision:

County residents shall have easy access to community services and facilities – in person or online – in order to satisfy their personal, family or business needs.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Community services are a major element in day-to-day living in the County, where residents use or interact with community services and/or use community facilities in their normal routines every day. Making certain they have access to those resources – in person or online – is vital to ensuring the County is a great place to live and work.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 6 is organized into five goals that focus on improving community services and facilities throughout Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing the level of service coverage across the County for post offices, grocery stores, libraries, and convenience sites.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 6 was written to address the essential needs of community services and facilities, balancing accessibility and quality. The intent in writing this chapter was to develop strategies that support the maintenance and improvement of public services, such as libraries, waste management, and community centers. Shenandoah County may be small and rural, but it is overseen by an engaged and active county government which endeavors to bring needed services to all its residents. That means investing in technology, like an interactive website, and attracting or recruiting businesses to round out the community's quality of life with more grocery stores and recreation opportunities. The county will do this by hiring the appropriate staff to upgrade county operations and expand research and strategic planning among its departments. As you read this chapter, consider how access to services like libraries, trash disposal, and public spaces impacts your daily life and contributes to the overall well-being of Shenandoah County.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 6.1
Public information will be clearly shared with and be accessible to all the public.

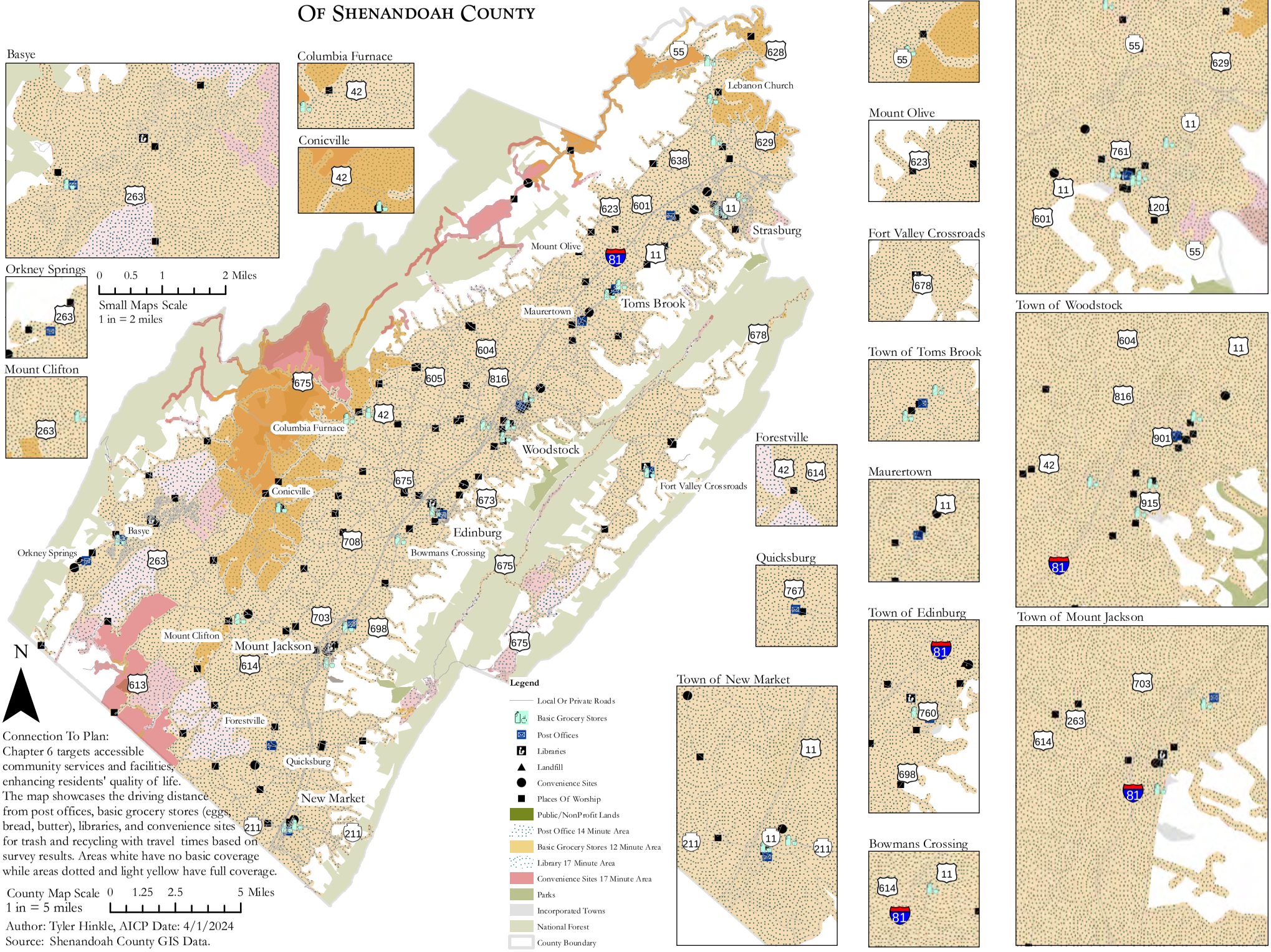
Goal 6.2
Our communities will have robust Capital Improvement and Service Improvement Plans and will use a diverse range of funding sources.

Goal 6.3
Support and encourage/recruit services that benefit the public.

Goal 6.4
Provide quality trash and recycling services throughout the County.

Goal 6.5
There will be library services and public or privately owned semi-public gathering spaces in every Town and village.

Community Services And Facilities
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 6 targets accessible community services and facilities, enhancing residents' quality of life. The map showcases the driving distance from post offices, basic grocery stores (eggs, bread, butter), libraries, and convenience sites for trash and recycling with travel times based on survey results. Areas white have no basic coverage while areas dotted and light yellow have full coverage.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 6.1 Public information will be clearly shared with and be accessible to all the public.

Objective 6.1.1: Comprehensive public information strategy

Develop and implement a comprehensive public information strategy that identifies information to be shared, the methods for sharing that information, and the target audience.

Objective 6.1.2: Regular training and education

Provide regular training and education for government staff on effective communication strategies and best practices and multilingual capabilities.

Objective 6.1.3: Public spaces

Expand access to open spaces, or agoras, both physical and digital for the public to openly discuss and provide feedback on information and ongoing events and projects.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Consider a Public Affairs Department.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Public Affairs Officer to the SIP. 2. Contract a consultant to devise a plan for communications on County policies and actions. 3. Initiate a cross-department public affairs strategic plan. 4. Post and advertise vacant positions of volunteer or appointed boards and commissions.	Board of Supervisors, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
2. Bring Shenandoah County permitting systems into the 21st century and allow for online permitting and payment options.	1. Include a new permitting system to replace AS-400 in the CIP and fund it. 2. Develop an online permitting platform that is user-friendly, secure, and adept. 3. Train county staff on the new system and ensure there is technical support available.	Board of Supervisors, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
3. Implement ongoing professional development.	1. Encourage staff to obtain certifications in communication-related fields. 2. Consider a mandatory training program that covers effective communication strategies. 3. Consider a communications mentorship program.	County Administration, Human Resources	2025-2030 S&R
4. Create a multi-platform communication plan.	1. Design a comprehensive communication plan that details platforms to share public info. 2. Develop a content calendar that schedules regular updates and informational releases. 3. Implement an audit of current public information tools and strategies. 4. Create informational materials in multiple languages.	County Administration, Human Resources	2030-2035 U&E
5. Update County data systems to reflect open data standards.	1. Review current data systems and adopt open data standards that promote transparency. 2. Launch an open data portal where residents can access and interact with county data. 3. Provide training for county staff on managing data systems.	IT Department, County Administration	2030-2035 U&E
6. County facilities and offices will have employees who can speak multiple languages.	1. County employment will take into consideration ability to speak multiple languages. 2. For languages not otherwise spoken by County employees, County employees will have access to a translator service to enable communication with non-English residents. 3. Develop and provide ongoing language training for current staff. 4. Invest in translation technology, such as software or apps, that can assist staff translation.	County Administration, Human Resources	2030-2035 U&E
7. Consider Physical Public Forum Spaces.	1. Create a calendar of regular public forum events addressing various topics. 2. Set up mobile forum units that can travel to different neighborhoods. 3. Consider third space related uses by-right in zoning. Third spaces are where locals and strangers meet including cafes, places of worship, stores, resturants, parks, salons, bars, etc.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 6.2 Our communities will have robust Capital Improvement and Service Improvement Plans and will use a diverse range of funding sources.

Objective 6.2.1: Updated and consistent CIPs and SIPs

The County will maintain current and thorough Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Service Improvement Plan (SIP) that will be coordinated with each Town and the School Board.

Objective 6.2.2: Funding & public-private partnerships

Seek a variety of funding sources and encourage the use of public-private partnerships (PPP) to fund public facilities and services.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. The CIP will be updated every 2 years.	1. Convene a Town and County joint planning committee, Shenandoah Towns And County Committee (STACC) with representatives from the Towns, County Administration, County Social Services, SCPS, Sanitary District Office, and Community Development departments to draft the Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) and Service Improvement Plans (SIP). 2. The CIP will include a list of expanded or new buildings that should be built to satisfy growth, listed in order/priority based on the Facility, Equipment Inventory, & Quality Study. 3. The CIP will align with the SCPS and Town CIPs. 4. The CIP will include LOS Standards for all assets and equipment. 5. Consider residential units above new public buildings and offer to employees.	County Administration, SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
2. Long range items that exceed the five year framework will go into a 30 year Long Range CIP (LRCIP).	1. The LRCIP will be updated every five years with the Comprehensive Plan. 2. The LRCIP will identify all improvements listed in the Comprehensive Plan. 3. Items from the LRCIP will be removed as they are added to the regular CIP.	County Administration, SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
3. Develop a SIP, written jointly by the Towns and County Social Services and Human Resources departments.	1. Ensure the SIP includes healthcare, childcare, being unhoused, hunger, level of service standards, and proposed staff positions for longer range planning and update every 2 years. 2. Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify service gaps and staff capacity. 3. The SIP will include LOS Standards for employment and service coverage.	Human Resources, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
4. Utilize fiscal, capital, and service impact models.	1. Contract out the development of Impact Models, accounting for maintenance costs. 2. Implement Impact Models to understand the implications of both CIP and SIP initiatives on the county's budget and resources and how development impacts capacity and LOS.	Community Development, Human Resources	2025-2030 S&R
5. Increase capacity for grants.	1. Study staff capacity and add a permanent County grant writer and grant manager to the SIP to persue/prepare legal agreements for/manage grants. 2. Provide regular training and professional development opportunities for staff.	Board of Supervisors, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
6. Implement strategies of land value capture to ensure benefits of private investments are captured for improvements.	1. Conduct a study to identify areas with potential for land value capture. 2. Consider a framework for Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs). 3. Utilize STACC to coordinate public improvements with upcoming private developments.	Community Development, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
7. Create long-term arrangements with institutions to pay for development or services using private money.	1. Develop a plan by which PPPs can by integrated into the CIP process. 2. Identify potential private partners with a track record of successful PPPs. 3. Consider a legal and financial framework for PPP agreements that protect county interests.	Community Development, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
8. The Facility and Equipment Inventory and Quality Study will be updated every 2 years opposite that of the CIP.	1. Allocate dedicated staff or resources to manage the Facility, Equipment Inventory, and Quality Study to ensure it is comprehensive and current. 2. Implement an asset management system to continuously monitor facilities and equipment.	County Administration, General Properties	2030-2035 U&E
9. Diversify the sources of various taxes and the types of taxes that fund improvements.	1. Conduct a review of the current tax structure to identify opportunities. 2. Develop a policy for bonds and identify projects that benefit from financing.	County Administration, Commissioner of Revenue	2030-2035 U&E
10. Identify ways to augment and support the non-profit and charitable partners who supply the bulk of social services.	1. Create a database of non-profit/ charitable orgs on services and capacity. 2. Consider a grant program for financial support to non-profits and charities. 3. Facilitate networking and training events to strengthen charitable partners.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 6.3 Support and encourage/recruit services that benefit the public.

Objective 6.3.1: Have strategic development and increase retail, restaurant, grocery, and entertainment opportunities.

Development and investment will occur in strategic locations and we will grow and retain local retail, restaurant, grocery, and entertainment options while limiting further chains.

Objective 6.3.2: Have a robust volunteer networt. Support our animal shelter.

Ensure we continue to have a thriving network of volunteers in the community. Also support the ongoing work and expansion of the animal shelter.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. New development will strategically be located within a 12 minutes drive from a basic needs grocery store/restaurant; within a 14-minute drive from a post office or medical center; and within a 17 minutes drive from a library, trash and recycling disposal site, or park.	1. Conduct a geographic information system (GIS) analysis to map current access times. 2. Align zoning and development approval processes with the strategic goal of ensuring new developments meet the access requirement.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
2. Encourage the development of locally owned stores and restaurants and discourage incentives to attract or expand chain stores and restaurants unless they align with community values.	1. Make drive-through a special use permit use in B-2 and remove elsewhere. 2. Provide opportunities for local stores/ restaurants to expand. 3. Provide information to stores/ restaurants of local farms to source from. 4. Conduct community surveys to gauge demand for specific chain restaurants and their potential impact on local dining options. 5. Consider criteria that chain restaurants should meet to align with community values, such as local sourcing, walkable design, and healthy food options.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Improve animal adoption and care programs.	1. Launch an awareness campaign to promote animal adoption. 2. Partner to provide low-cost health care or spay/neuter services. 3. Create an online platform for potential adopters to view available animals. 4. Conduct an assessment of current facilities to identify areas for improvement in the CIP. 5. Support locating an ASPCA or SPCA to augment existing facilities.	Animal Shelter	2030-2035 U&E
4. Attract diverse restaurants to the Towns and Villages.	1. Ensure they are by-right uses in downtowns of Towns and Villages. 2. Develop a marketing package on benefits of opening high-end restaurants. 3. Consider incentives like density bonuses, streamlined permitting, or grants.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E
5. Ensure each Town and Village has access to grocery store services proportionate to their size with preference to local options over chains.	1. Engage with grocery providers to discuss expansion plans and incentives. 2. Host forums to understand residents' needs and preferences for groceries. 3. Develop a support program with marketing, management, and planning. 4. Consult with local grocery owners to expand their offerings/times. 5. Survey to determine the level of support for various big box stores. 6. Prepare a cost-benefit analysis to understand the economic impact of large chain stores.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
6. Support the siting of a daycare facility in all Towns and Villages.	1. Consider childcare is a by-right use similar to churches and schools. 2. Conduct a needs assessment for childcare services in Towns and Villages. 3. Engage with potential providers and offer incentives for establishing a daycare facility.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the Chamber of Commerce in organizing a volunteer network.	1. Develop a program that pairs mentors with individuals in similar fields. 2. Launch an online volunteer matching platform. 3. Partner with schools, religious institutions, and civic orgs to promote it. 4. Study staff capacity and add a Volunteer Coordinator to the SIP.	Tourism And Economic Development, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
8. Consider a local branch of an organization that assists senior adults with mentoring oppportunities.	1. Reach out to organizations and determine feasibility for a branch program. 2. Recruit and train senior adults in mentoring, and match them with schools or mentees.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
9. Support the ability for villages to seek Town status once the population reaches 2,000 if the residents choose.	1. Identify villages nearing the threshold and proactively engage with them. 2. Craft guidebook that can be customized for each village considering town status, to ensure consistency and compliance with requirements. 3. Petition the State Legislature to consider a Charter for the new Town.	County Administration, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 6.4 Provide quality services for trash and recycling throughout the County.

Objective 6.4.1: Quality convenience sites, landfill, and services

The County will provide quality and safe convenience sites and a central landfill for the disposal of trash and recycling.

Objective 6.4.2: Reduce non-trash and clean up littered areas

Reduce the amount of recyclable, reusable, and compostable items from entering the landfill and clean up dump sites, waterways, roadsides, and other areas of litter.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Review use of convenience sites on an annual basis to determine their continued feasibility and determine whether changes are needed, e.g., closures, relocations, or additional site acquisitions.	1. Map current usage patterns to identify areas of high demand and potential for new sites. 2. Develop a multi-year plan for the maintenance, upgrade, and potential expansion of convenience sites based on usage data and community feedback. 3. Install energy-efficient lighting and cameras at key convenience sites. 4. Include Goodwill/ Salvation Army or related donation dropoffs at each site. 5. Include composting dropoffs at each site. 6. Replace all mowing areas with pollinator friendly plants to reduce maintenance costs. 7. Assess the feasibility of rainwater harvesting systems at convenience sites for landscaping.	Landfill, General Properties	2025-2030 S&R
2. Restrict the use of plastic bags.	1. Conduct a study whether a plastic bag tax or requiring paper bags is merited in the County. 2. Install bins at convenience sites, landfill, government buildings, and key private businesses. 3. Work with local companies such as Trex on ensuring the bags are reused or repurposed.	Landfill, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
3. Encourage bulk recycling including but not limited to tires and PV panels.	1. Consider removing the fee for tires and have all tires be sent to the bulk pick up. 2. Consider the reuse of shredded tires for aspects like trails or athletic facilities. 3. Consider policies and tipping fees for the disposal or recycling of PV panels at the landfill.	Community Development, Landfill	2025-2030 S&R
4. Landfill Facility Enhancements.	1. Evaluate the current state of landfill equipment and infrastructure. 2. Develop a long-term strategic plan for landfill expansion, considering diversion efforts. 3. Revamp landfill entrance to allow traffic moving in both directions. 4. Redesign trash disposal at landfill to allow the public to dump “regular” trash outside the gates of the landfill, removing the need to enter the main landfill area.	Landfill, County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
5. Waterway and roadside maintenance.	1. Collaborate with organizations for waterway cleanups and monitoring. 2. Continue the ‘Adopt a Road’ program and consider an 'Adopt a Stream' program. 3. Develop a reporting app to quickly inform authorities about littered areas needing attention. 4. Organize community cleanup days, providing support to volunteers.	Community Development, Landfill	2025-2030 S&R
6. Divert reusable items such as furniture to be resold or donated to those in need.	1. Consider a resale store at the landfill to offset the costs with the resale of items reclaimed. 2. Donate resale items to local resale stores such as Goodwill. 3. Consider local composting sites to divert compostable materials out of the landfill. 4. Distribute information to local religious organizations, event organizers, restaurants, grocery stores, and other related organizations with compostable materials on how they can collect their compostable materials to be gathered by the composting group formed.	Landfill, County Administration	2030-2035 U&E
7. Service diversification and improvement.	1. Explore company partnerships to offer specialized recycling services. 2. Conduct a study for special taxation district based trash/recycling services. 3. Ensure trash/recycling pick up businesses are allowed by-right in zoning.	Community Development, Landfill	2030-2035 U&E
8. Public spaces revitalization.	1. Involve artists in transforming dump sites into gardens or art installations. 2. Work with scout groups and schools to adopt parks for maintenance. 3. Consider penalties for illegal dumping and promote awareness and effectiveness of the laws.	Tourism And Economic Development, Landfill	2035-2040 I&E
9. Support the addition of bulk pick up services in Towns.	1. Assess the community needs for bulk pick up services. 2. Plan and publicize a pilot bulk pick up day to gauge participation. 3. Evaluate the pilot program and consider a bulk pick up schedule.	Landfill, County Administration	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 6.5 There will be library services and public or privately owned semi-public gathering spaces in every Town and village.

Objective 6.5.1: Town, village, and social halls

Support existing and new Town and Village Halls and as community-based groups dwindle, social halls that remain open should be supported while those that close are reused.

Objective 6.5.2: Quality library services

Invest in the expansion of the resources and size of existing libraries, bring library services to more remote areas of the County, and encourage free little libraries.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Improve library services.	1. Upgrade technology and collections, including computers, internet access, and new books. 2. Evaluate the need for and feasibility of providing downloadable and/or streaming access. 3. Renovate and optimize the physical space of the library to accommodate more patrons. 4. Add the Library expansion to the CIP and consider funding it.	County Library, Board of Supervisors	2025-2030 S&R
2. Integration of free little libraries into community planning.	1. Include free little libraries in the County's community planning and development projects. 2. Encourage new housing developments to incorporate free little libraries. 3. Map all existing and planned free little libraries to identify areas of need.	County Library, Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Work with social hall landowners to maintain the structures through financial efforts.	1. Encourage social hall landowners to organize fundraising events. 2. Support placing such lands into conservation easements to provide revenue for renovation. 3. Encourage landowners to apply for Virginia Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. 4. Connect all social halls so they may build off each other's assets using a data clearinghouse.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Allow the social hall to be converted into a new or accessory use.	1. Adopt a Public Spaces Zoning District which outlines the types of by-right uses that would be allowed at semi-public and public spaces including third place uses and festivals. 2. Allow for rental housing and multifamily housing to be a by-right use in Public Spaces.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E
5. Consider PPP's for social halls as village and hamlet public community centers.	1. Identify potential locations for new Village Halls in underserved areas. 2. Develop criteria for identifying social halls suitable for PPP for community centers including potential for multiuse spaces. 3. Consider allocating funds or identify financial strategies for acquiring and renovating social halls including PPP agreements or non-profit partnerships.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Consider additional ways residents can access library services.	1. Coordinate with school librarians to consider a system to request library materials for delivery. 2. Develop partnerships with community centers in remote areas to host pop-up library services. 3. Implement a book-by-mail program to deliver and return library materials.	County Library, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
7. Mobile library services expansion.	1. Assess the demand for mobile library services in underserved areas. 2. Identify and secure funding sources for the purchase or upgrade of a mobile library vehicle. 3. Consider a regular schedule for the mobile library, ensuring it visits each remote area.	County Library, ShenGO	2035-2040 I&E
8. Establishment and support of shared community resource libraries.	1. Launch shared community resource libraries for tools and equipment, allowing residents to borrow items needed for home improvement projects, gardening, and other activities. 2. Set up community pantry boxes at the same or separate locations as the little libraries, where residents can share non-perishable food items and household goods. 3. Organize community workshops and volunteer events for the construction and stewardship of these shared resource libraries.	County Library, VCE	2035-2040 I&E
9. Encourage County residents to construct roadside shelters at which books can be shared for free.	1. Consider micro-grants (<$100) to residents to cover some of the costs. 2. Organize workshops on building and maintaining free little libraries. 3. Partner with businesses and organizations to sponsor free little libraries.	Board Of Supervisors, County Library	2035-2040 I&E
10. Town Hall maintenance and expansion.	1. Assess Town Halls to identify needs for maintenance and expansion. 2. Develop a funding strategy for maintenance and expansion and add them to the CIP. 3. Upgrade existing meeting spaces with AV equipment and internet access.	Community Development, County Administration	2040-2045 R&R

Chapter 7:

Education

Photo of a Shenandoah County Public Schools Bus.

Vision:

All residents will have the chance to attain a well-rounded education that encompasses applied learning and performance skills to ensure fulfilling careers and contribute to the civic and economic progress of our community.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Supplying appropriate educational facilities will ensure the County can provide all levels of education to develop skills within our community. Further, by providing quality educational opportunities we can assure that the County may be a great place to live and work.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 7 is organized around five goals aimed at enhancing educational opportunities and facilities in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing current district boundaries, areas within 17 minutes of schools, and Town service areas as general potential future school sites.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 7 was written to ensure all residents have access to quality education, from early childhood through adulthood. The intent of this chapter is to develop strategies that support the modernization of educational facilities, the professional development of educators, and the expansion of vocational and technical training. The chapter emphasizes the importance of public education in fostering a well-rounded, skilled workforce. Shenandoah County may be small and rural, but it is overseen by an engaged and active county government dedicated to bringing educational excellence to all its residents. This involves investing in modern facilities, incorporating technology in the classroom, and building partnerships with local businesses to enhance learning opportunities. As you read this chapter, consider how education impacts your daily life—from the skills you acquire to the opportunities available—as we all contribute to the county's educational success.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 7.1
All public education facilities will be up to date and have adequate space and equipment.

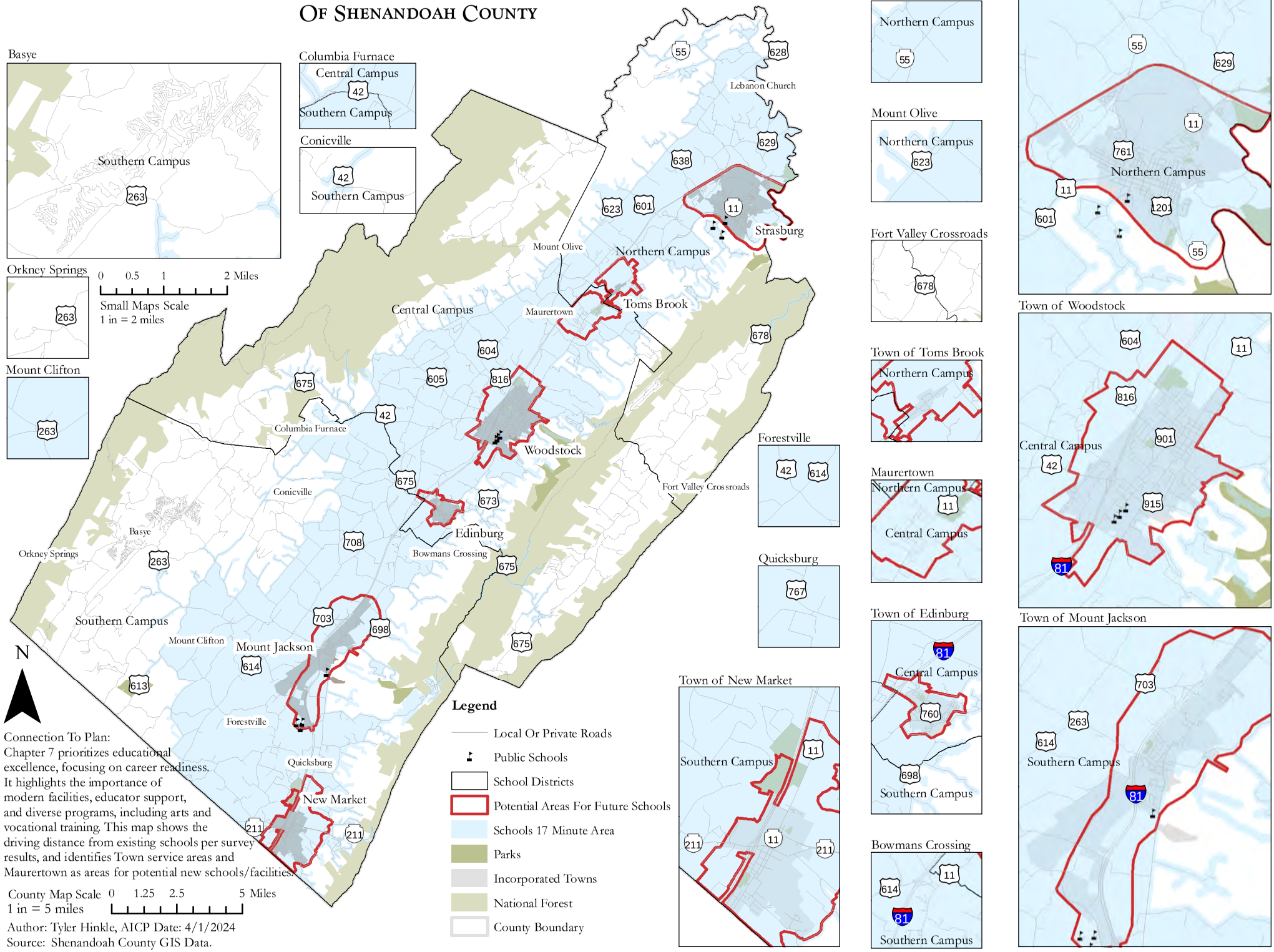
Goal 7.2
Support our educators to ensure our residents continue to have access to quality instructors and staff.

Goal 7.3
We will support and promote the arts in all its forms and provide high-quality arts education opportunities for all residents.

Goal 7.4
We will support and promote technical, vocational, and critical education and training opportunities for all residents.

Goal 7.5
We will provide a strong foundation for all students by supporting education at a young age in Shenandoah County.

Education
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 7 prioritizes educational excellence, focusing on career readiness. It highlights the importance of modern facilities, educator support, and diverse programs, including arts and vocational training. This map shows the driving distance from existing schools per survey results, and identifies Town service areas and Maurertown as areas for potential new schools/facilities.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 7.1 All public education facilities will be up to date and have adequate space and equipment.

Objective 7.1.1: Renovate facilities and adequate equipment

Modernize and renovate facilities and ensure adequate equipment to replace worn out items and reshape space to meet current requirements.

Objective 7.1.2: Expand with the population and remove temporary spaces

Address overcrowding and ensure schools are of adequate size to provide for the safety of students and provide outdoor play areas, bus loading/unloading, parking, and cafeterias.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Ensure each school has enough busses, activity busses, sports facilities, and school equipment.	1. Review similar localities and based on local needs establish level of service standards. 2. Assess the current availability and condition of all assests then develop maintenance plans. 3. Develop a plan for renovation or new facilities, add to CIP.	SCPS, School Board	2025-2030 S&R
2. In conjunction with facilities studies, acquire funding and resources to expand space as necessary to meet modern capacity recommendations including those identified in Goals 7.3 and 7.4.	1. Monitor student enrollment and population growth including all permitted housing. 2. Monitor school capacities and begin planning for space needs when capacity reaches 80%. 3. Evaluate the size/future needs with private school and home school populations in mind. 4. Conduct space utilization studies every 5 years and evaluate former schools for renovation. 5. Examine a second elementary and middle school in Strasburg north of the River. 6. Examine a second elementary and middle school in Woodstock. 7. Build an elementary school to maintain an acceptable school capacity.	SCPS, Board Of Supervisors	2025-2030 S&R
3. Space and resources for diverse populations including English Language Learners, Pre-School, and Alternative Education	1. Add an English Learner Welcome Center to the CIP. 2. Study staff capacity and add a bilingual clerical position, credit recovery staff at each high school, and ELL staff to the SIP at each school/campus. 3. Consider adding an Alternative Education School to the CIP.	SCPS, School Board	2025-2030 S&R
4. Transition from temporary to permanent spaces.	1. Set a policy on how long temporary structures can be utilized prior to expansion. 2. Ensure temporary spaces are not included in capacity studies as they are temporary. 3. Assign at least the same sqft, if not more, of temporary spaces to the CIP for expansion.	SCPS, School Board	2030-2035 U&E
5. Office and specialty professional space.	1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of current office space usage and future needs. 2. Implement a office space allocation guideline based on staff size/needs. 3. Renovate or reconfigure existing spaces to optimize office space. 4. Renovation included in 7.1.1 will include a Student Services space for outside mental health.	SCPS, School Board	2035-2040 I&E
6. Ensure accessibility and equipment for disabled students.	1. Audit all school facilities to identify current barriers for disabled students. 2. Implement Universal Design principles in all constructions/renovations. 3. Collaborate with special education professionals to identify required adaptive equipment.	SCPS, School Board	2040-2045 R&R
7. Enhance the experience of riding on the bus so it is more attractive to ride the bus.	1. Conduct a survey among students on improving the bus. 2. Install Wi-Fi on buses for students to complete homework en route. 3. Train bus drivers in student engagement and conflict resolution.	SCPS, School Board	2040-2045 R&R
8. Request and obtain the appropriate funding to modernize and renovate all facilities to current standards that allow the division to meet the learning and operational needs of the division.	1. Create a facilities renovation plan including space for disabled students and office space. 2. Renovate transportation facility to allow space for maintaining buses. 3. Renovate maintenance facility to include space for storage and records. 4. Renovate Triplett Tech to include lab and classroom space. 5. Create additional road access at each campus for safety/security measures 6. Renovate all three high schools to include adequate space for fine arts, career and technical classrooms, a swimming pool, and auditorium. 7. Renovate or build a new School Board Office to house department spaces.	SCPS, School Board	2045-2072 P&A
9. Security infrastructure assessment.	1. Create and implement a physical security plan for the school system. 2. Utilize Student Access Card system on school buses and school facilities. 3. Install interior barriers and card access control for all doors in renovations. 4. Consider a physical security system for the School Board Office.	SCPS, School Board	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 7.2 Support our educators to ensure our residents continue to have access to quality instructors and staff.

Objective 7.2.1: Professional development and career preparation professionals

To retain instructors and staff and allow them to grow, they should have access to professional development opportunities. There will be professionals available to guide students.

Objective 7.2.2: Continue a supportive work environment with regionally competitive salary and benefits

Support and commend instructors and staff through a supportive work environment and regionally competitive salaries and benefits that are relevant to the time and appropriately.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Request funding for professional development to recruit and retain highly qualified instructors.	1. Provide adequate work days and funding for professional development. 2. Consider funding for college coursework and compensate mentor teachers. 3. Provide a transparent career path for instructors and staff.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
2. Recognition and incentives for professional growth.	1. Institute an awards program to recognize professional advancements. 2. Implement a salary increase or bonus system to recruit/retain quality staff. 3. Consider a 'Teacher of the Year' or 'Staff of the Year' program with additional benefits.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
3. Support and encourage ongoing education.	1. Offer paid sabbaticals for staff to pursue further education or research projects. 2. Provide on-site professional development days where instructors can attend workshops. 3. Encourage staff to present at professional conferences and cover associated expenses.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
4. Initiate education-business partnership programs.	1. Launch an "Adopt-a-School" program inviting local businesses to collaborate on projects. 2. Organize networking events and forums for educators and business leaders. 3. Consider a community service program and lessons that incorporate community issues. 4. Collaborate with landlords to offer affordable housing or discounts for employees.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Ensure SCPS obtains/retains quality instructors / staff while meeting state/federal requirements.	1. Continue to collect salary and benefits data from surrounding school divisions. 2. Ensure salary and benefits are competitive and meet state and federal requirements. 3. Consider additional benefits such as wellness programs, child care assistance, and more.	SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
6. Increase capabilities to meet the health, discipline, and safety needs of all students, guardians, & staff.	1. Study staff capacity and add Deans of Students, Supervisor of Alternative Programs, bus aides on all buses, Director of School Safety, and crisis management employees to the SIP. 2. Purchase and implement the Remind app in all schools for two-way communication. 3. Invite guardians to visit the school for projects and open houses. 4. Maintain a positive relationship with the Sheriff's Office to retain an SRO in each school 5. Continue to provide support and improvements for a variety of alternative programs such as ReStart, Bridge, Make-A-Change, and Alternative Suspension Center that address student discipline and aberrant behavior. 6. Continue to communicate the expectations of behavior and the consequences of misbehavior through the Student Code of Conduct.	SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
7. Identify and create career preparation opportunities for instructors and staff throughout the community.	1. Continue to facilitate Career Technical Education Advisory Boards. 2. Encourage and promote teachers to attend career development events. 3. Develop business and industry tours for teachers, staff, administrations and counselors	SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
8. Enhance college and career resource centers.	1. Develop well-equipped resource centers in schools with college and career planning tools. 2. Schedule regular sessions with students to utilize these resource centers. 3. Organize college/career fairs with diverse range of institutions/industries.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R
9. Foster industry partnerships for student advancement.	1. Consider partnerships to create a bridge between schools and workforce. 2. Set up a mentorship program that pairs students with professionals in their field of interest.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 7.3 We will support and promote the arts in all its forms and provide high-quality arts education opportunities for all residents.

Objective 7.3.1: Artistic centers and access to arts education

Provide space for artistic performances and shows and expand existing and implement new opportunities for arts education.

Objective 7.3.2: Partner with outside organizations and market events

Partner with outside organizations to increase access to courses, performance spaces, and programming and market ongoing and new events in and around the community

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. To have funding available to upgrade all Fine Arts classrooms to provide learning environments that are conducive for each fine arts program.	1. Per the Facility Study, add to the CIP then purchase and install acoustical panels. 2. Per the Facility Study, add to the CIP and update lighting and sound systems in current performing arts areas including cafetoriums and gymatoriums.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
2. Accessible arts education for all.	1. Design inclusive arts programs that cater to diverse communities. 2. Offer scholarships or sliding scale fees to ensure low-income participate.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
3. A centrally located major auditorium and performance venue will be constructed to seat 1,000 to 5,000 or more individuals. Private sector and County/Town.	1. Per the Facility Study, add a County auditorium to the County CIP or consider PPP options. 2. Initiate a feasibility study for a centrally located auditorium. 3. Seek partnerships with private sector investors and explore funding opportunities for the construction of the auditorium.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Have more activities for kids in our downtowns.	1. Partner with local schools, libraries, and orgs to create child-friendly events. 2. Designate safe, child-oriented zones during larger downtown events. 3. Launch an annual children's festival with entertainment, crafts, and interactive learning.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Support and enhance existing event efforts.	1. Study staff capacity and add an Event Coordinator to the SIP. 2. Build a comprehensive digital event calendar that allows for coordination and scheduling. 3. Create a centralized vendor database that includes local businesses, artisans, and providers.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Acquire funding to support marketing and public relations.	1. Continue communication on the website, social media, and Friday Update 2. Continue to promote and seek students/ teachers for a multimedia production program 3. Do PSAs at all events for non-athletic events throughout the division.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Support the expansion of the arts and arts related businesses.	1. Create a County theater and arts association. 2. Implement a grant program to provide financial assistance to artists and art businesses. 3. Host annual arts festivals and markets to promote local artists.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
8. Acquire funding, staffing, facilities, and support structures to expand arts education.	1. Partner with community organizations to showcase student work 2. Engage with the local communities, parents, students, and arts organizations for input on preferences and requirements for arts education. 3. Host fine arts nights at each of the schools throughout the school year. 4. Offer summer arts camps for students of all ages. 5. Partner with Parks and Recreation to offer fine arts courses for residents. 6. Allocate resources for the acquisition of art supplies, musical instruments, and technological tools to facilitate hands-on learning experiences for students. 7. Consider community art centers to serve as hubs for arts education and cultural enrichment, making art resources and classes more readily available.	SCPS, Parks and Rec	2035-2040 I&E
9. Dedicated space for moderate auditoriums seating 300 to 1,000 individuals will be available at every high school.	1. Per the Facility Study, add high school auditoriums to the CIP or consider PPP options. 2. Assess current high school auditorium capacities and identify schools needing upgrades. 3. Secure funding for the renovation or construction of auditoriums to meet seating capacity.	SCPS, Board Of Supervisors	2035-2040 I&E
10. Dedicated space for minor auditoriums seating 50 to 300 individuals will be available at every school.	1. Per the Facility Study, add school auditoriums to the CIP or consider PPP. 2. Evaluate the existing infrastructure of schools to identify potential small auditorium spaces. 3. Plan and allocate budget for the construction or adaptation of spaces.	SCPS, Board Of Supervisors	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 7.4 We will support and promote technical, vocational, and critical education and training opportunities for all residents.

Objective 7.4.1: Additional classrooms, courses, and higher education opportunities

Additional classroom space and courses will be provided for Career and Technical Vocation education and higher education opportunities for all residents.

Objective 7.4.2: Continued workforce outreach

Continued development of Workforce Outreach.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Develop or renovate buildings one for the Arts, Healthcare, Massanutten Regional Governors School, and other needs.	1. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the specific needs and resources required. 2. Per the Facility Study, add the buildings to the CIP, consider PPP options and renovating existing buildings.	SCPS, Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Partner with skill based organizations.	1. Share information on career assistance orgs through Triplett Tech. 2. Form partnerships with trade schools and apprenticeship programs. 3. Study staff capacity and add a Workforce Development Manager to the SIP. 4. Develop a database of employment, training, and mentorship opportunities. 5. Consider utilizing existing buildings as sites to host night school classes.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Improve and expand Triplett Tech	1. Renovate Triplett Tech as stated in 7.1.1 to include lab and classroom space for additional career and technical education courses. 2. Renovations to include flexible learning spaces for welding, technology education classrooms, greenhouses, and outdoor learning spaces 3. Make Triplett Tech a ShenGO stop to coincide with evening classes.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
4. Request and provide funding for adult education courses.	1. Continue to offer Electricity as an evening training opportunity for residents. 2. Develop an evening adult education program that meets business and industry needs. 3. Create recreational specialty classes for community interests and needs.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Provide access to, and develop ongoing programs to provide instruction in using, emerging tech like coding, 3D printing, AI, and VR.	1. Launch after-school clubs for students to learn programming languages. 2. Partner with local tech companies and community colleges to offer workshops. 3. Consider a tech demo space and certification programs.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Increase ELL (English Language Learner) course offerings and other offerings to assist vulnerable populations in community and workforce education programs.	1. Assess the current demand for ELL programs and expand accordingly. 2. Study staff capacity and add bilingual instructors to the SIP. 3. Partner with local businesses to offer on-site ELL courses. 4. Provide English Learner GED classes and English classes for residents.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Develop partnerships with universities to offer accredited degree programs to residents.	1. Identify online higher education institutions interested in partnering with the county. 2. Negotiate agreements that provide residents with discounted tuition rates.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
8. Attract a small university to locate in the County.	1. Conduct a feasibility study to identify potential partners and locations. 2. Develop incentive packages, including tax breaks and grants, to attract institutions.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
9. Provide learning opportunities for residents to access world languages.	1. Provide world language classes to educators and community members. 2. Provide opportunities for world language classes and online learning. 3. Create a full Spanish immersion kindergarten program at each elementary school. 4. Start a program where students can learn English and Spanish simultaneously in Elementary School. The City of Harrisonburg's program can serve as a model.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R
10. Provide educational opportunities for residents in the career and technical field and higher education.	1. Create scholarship funds for residents seeking to enroll in high education. 2. Collaborate with Community Colleges to expand Dual Enrollment. 3. Collaborate with Community Colleges to keep higher education costs reasonable and advocate for state and federal financial aid programs to support students. 4. Collaborate with ShenGO to provide transportation to Laurel Ridge Community College.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 7.5 We will provide a strong foundation for all students by supporting education at a young age.

Objective 7.5.1: High-quality early childhood education programs for all with seamless transitions

Strive for all children to have access to high-quality early childhood education programs that promote social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development for all including from low-income families, children of color, children with disabilities, and children with limited English proficiency for seamless transition to elementary school.

Objective 7.5.2: Guardians, partnerships, and healthy policies and practices

Provide opportunities for guardians to engage in their children's education, consider partnerships to promote early literacy development, and promote policies and practices that support the well-being and healthy development of young children.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Acquire funding to obtain quality trained instructors.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Board Certified Behavior Analyst for the Preschool program to the SIP. 2. Add Registered Behavior Technicians to the SIP for behavior programs. 3. Allocate funds for Preschool staff to participate in professional development each year.	SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
2. Acquire funding to make preschool accessible to all children in SCPS.	1. Joint application with SCPS for early childhood education to target most in need. 2. Increase Early Childhood Special Education/Virginia Preschool Initiative classrooms. 3. Designate space for Head Start within SCPS and support its expansion. 4. Add a Preschool Center to the CIP (2 and 3-year-old classrooms, Child Find, and staff). 5. Provide two paraprofessionals in the SIP for every Preschool classroom in SCPS.	SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
3. Family literacy programs.	1. Implement family literacy programs that encourage reading and storytelling at home. 2. Organize book drives and provide free books to families to build home libraries. 3. Host family reading nights at schools and community centers to promote literacy.	SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
4. Partnerships with public libraries.	1. Form partnerships with libraries for early literacy programs and reading. 2. Launch a 'library card sign-up month' to encourage access to resources. 3. Organize library tours and storytelling for children and their families.	SCPS, County Library	2030-2035 U&E
5. Strengthening household financial security.	1. Provide workshops on budgeting, saving, and financial plans for guardians. 2. Create a resource guide that includes info on financial assistance programs. 3. Implement a county-wide initiative to promote competitive wages. 4. Support a home visitation program to provide support to new parents.	Social Services, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
6. Community partnership programs.	1. Provide resources and workshops on how to support children's learning. 2. Create community-based learning opportunities beyond the classroom. 3. Implement a mentorship program like SCORE with the Chamber.	SCPS, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. Organize collaborative activities for parent and guardian involvement in their children's education.	1. Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to offer an informational scholarship night. 2. Provide funding for parenting education classes with topics to include effective parenting strategies, communication skills, and resources to support their children's education. 3. Provide funding to offer free child care during parenting classes and events. 4. Provide opportunities for parents to access academic resources, libraries, and tutoring. 5. Consider guardian-child playgroups to foster social skills and early learning through play.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R
8. Consider a transition plan for preschool to elementary school.	1. Continue to update/monitor the SCPS Preschool to KG transition plan. 2. Continue the SCPS Inclusion Action Team that meets monthly in order to share resources. 3. Offer upcoming KG students an opportunity for a week-long prep camp.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R
9. Develop community relationships that support and promote early literacy.	1. Continue the work of the SCPS Inclusion Action team, Early Childhood Coalition of Shenandoah County, Region 4 meetings and Local Unified Early Childhood meetings 2. Continue providing free books to all for Child Find and screenings. 3. Consider a partnership with Moms in Motion to assist families.	Social Services,SCPS	2045-2072 P&A

Chapter 8:

Health

Photo of Shenandoah Memorial Hospital in Woodstock.

Vision:

County residents will have access to affordable health care through a combination of private and public providers but where services are scarce, emergency services will be no less than 15 minutes away.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Health care is central to residents' quality of life. Good health care reflects the Comprehensive Plan's call for "policies and public services that enhance the quality of life" and provides the building blocks to a well-trained workforce and stable community.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 8 is organized into five goals aimed at improving health care accessibility and quality in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing the location of medical facilities and areas within 15 minutes of them to highlight areas to promote investment.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 8 was written to prioritize the health and well-being of Shenandoah County residents, recognizing the need for accessible and affordable health care. Though the county does not own or operate its own health facilities, it partners closely with local health care providers, from health systems to independent practitioners. The intent in writing this chapter was to develop strategies that ensure residents have cradle-to-grave health options at accessible locations and affordable prices. The chapter aims to support physical and mental health, emphasizing the importance of partnerships with health care providers to deliver comprehensive services, including birthing services and nursing home care. In the next 25 years, families who live in Shenandoah County will be able to take care of all their health care needs within the county. As you read this chapter, consider how health services impact your daily life—from the availability of nearby clinics to the quality of care at local hospitals—as we work together to ensure the health of our community.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 8.1
The County will be known for its healthy lifestyle.

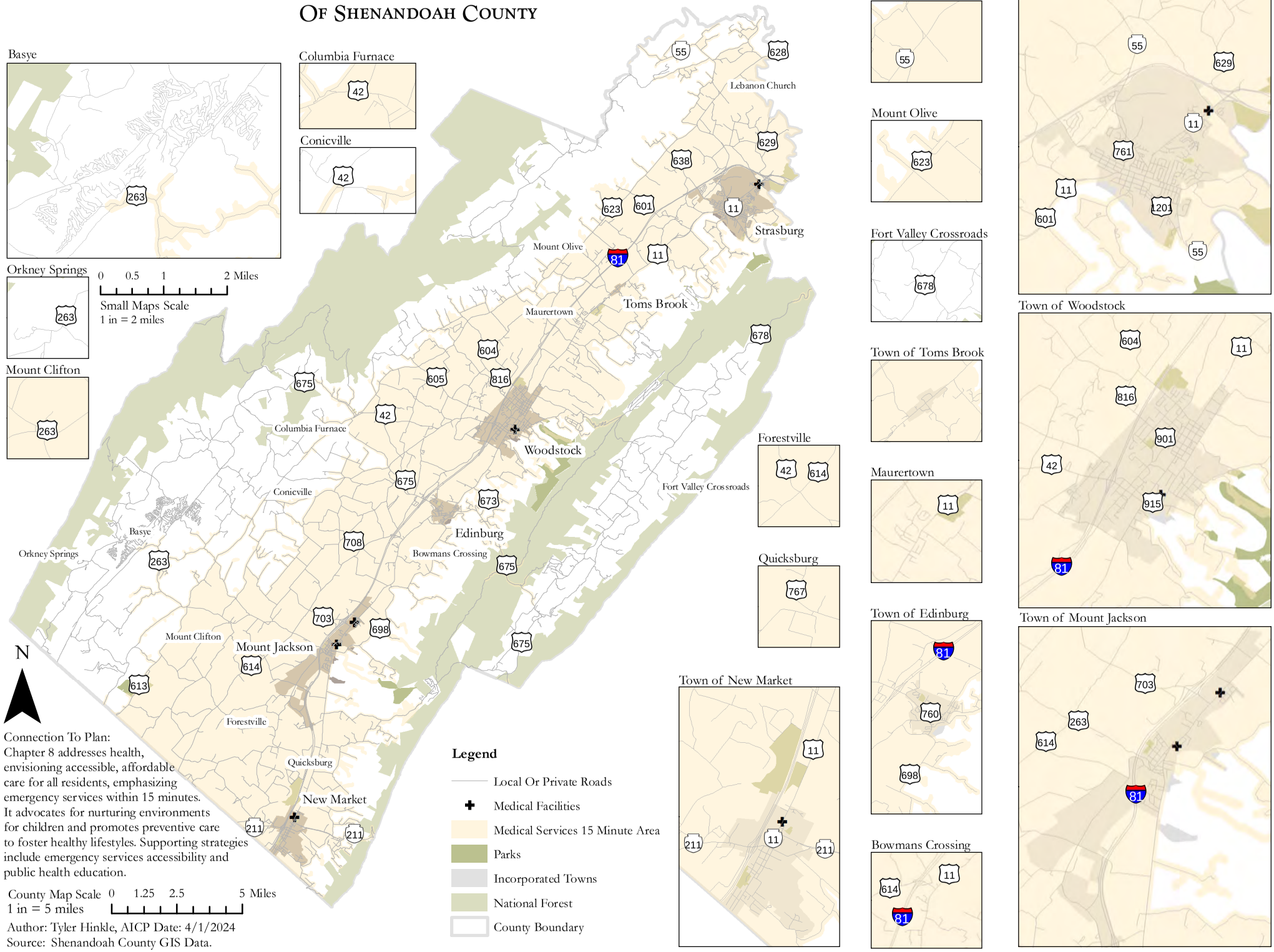
Goal 8.2
Children will grow up in safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

Goal 8.3
Critical medical services will be available 24/7.

Goal 8.4
Access to medical care will be accessible and affordable to all.

Goal 8.5
Mental health services are readily available, including those for addiction services.

Health
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 8 addresses health, envisioning accessible, affordable care for all residents, emphasizing emergency services within 15 minutes. It advocates for nurturing environments for children and promotes preventive care to foster healthy lifestyles. Supporting strategies include emergency services accessibility and public health education.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 8.1 The County will be known for its healthy lifestyle.

Objective 8.1.1: Preventative care and basic needs met for all

Emphasize prevention as central tenet of health care including financial security, reducing negative health outcomes, and increasing access to healthy foods for all residents and visitors.

Objective 8.1.2: Culture of accessible physical activity

Create a community-wide culture of accessible physical activity and outdoor recreation, promoting regular exercise and healthy lifestyle habits to improve overall health and well-being.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Reduce occurrences of diabetes, obesity, smoking and other preventable chronic diseases.	1. Partner to form support groups that help patients achieve health goals. 2. Offer community-based health education workshops focusing on prevention. 3. Limit the use of smoking in areas that can lead to secondhand smoke. 4. Ensure addiction help services are readily available.	Valley Health, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
2. Limit residential development from around Interstate 81 and other major nuisance causing areas like quarries and mines by at least 1,000 feet.	1. Implement sound barriers between existing residential and commercial areas and I-81. 2. Develop strict zoning to maintain a 1,000 foot buffer zone to I-81. 3. Develop green spaces and parks as natural barriers to pollution and noise.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Support the opening of a gym in Downtowns of Towns and Villages.	1. Ensure gyms are allowed by-right in the downtowns of Towns and Villages. 2. Identify locations and funding sources for a new gym in underserved areas. 3. Partner with existing gyms to offer community days with free access.	Community Development, Parks & Rec	2025-2030 S&R
4. Create partnerships with non-profits and health providers to do public outreach on the benefits of preventive care and healthy living.	1. Consider collaborations to offer educational workshops on preventive healthcare. 2. Partner to create informative resources on healthy lifestyle choices. 3. Sponsor health fairs that provide free screenings and consultations to promote awareness.	Valley Health, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
5. Stress healthy eating, exercise, and preventive care regimens.	1. Create a county marketing plan that highlights the benefits of healthy living. 2. Organize community events focused on healthy eating. 3. Launch a public health campaign promoting regular health check-ups and screenings.	Tourism and Economic Development, Valley Health	2030-2035 U&E
6. Organize events for kids and the youth to become excited to be involved in physical activity.	1. Collaborate with local schools and youth organizations to develop after-school programs. 2. Host annual youth sports days with a variety of activities. 3. Create mentorship programs that pair youth with local athletes or coaches.	Parks & Rec	2030-2035 U&E
7. Support the expansion of healthy food options.	1. Work with food banks to source a diverse range of healthy options. 2. Support the expansion of SNAP benefits and related programs at farmers markets, local grocery stores, and other locations. 3. Encourage the use of food grown in Shenandoah County, and within a 100-mile radius of the County, used in cafeterias, restaurants and stores. 4. Identify food insecure populations and map their locations.	VCE, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
8. Expand public transportation availability and accessibility.	1. Consider new and enhanced public transportation routes. 2. Consider passes and allowing for low income individuals to ride for free.	Community Development, ShenGO	2030-2035 U&E
9. Consider a Poverty Reduction Manager, tasked to reduce residents living in poverty via private market and existing public services.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Poverty Reduction Manager to the SIP. 2. Conduct a survey to identify the needs of families in poverty and develop programs. 3. Develop partnerships with employment agencies to create job opportunities.	Board Of Supervisors, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
10. Promote ongoing community engagement in physical activities.	1. Develop a county-wide calendar of physical activity and wellness events. 2. Implement 'active commute' programs to encourage walking, cycling, or other activity. 3. Consider challenges that track physical activity, like step competitions.	Tourism and Economic Development, Parks & Rec	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 8.2 Children will grow up in safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

Objective 8.2.1: Support parents and guardians and supportive communities

Change social norms to support parents and positive parenting and supportive community environments for children to grow up in.

Objective 8.2.2: Strengthen and expand resources and stop ongoing abuse or neglect

Strengthen and expand resources and services for at-risk children and families, children have a right to environments which are not abusive or neglectful.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Use data to inform actions.	1. Implement a county-wide data collection system to track incidents of child abuse/neglect as well as those who are unhoused or at risk. 2. Analyze data trends to identify high-risk areas or populations within the county. 3. Undertake a community needs assessment on the needs of children in the community. 4. Create an inter-agency task force to analyze the needs assessment and make an action plan.	Social Services, SCPS	2025-2030 S&R
2. Preschool enrichment with family engagement.	1. Launch community-based preschool programs that include strong family engagement. 2. Provide resources and workshops for parents on early childhood development. 3. Offer family-centered activities that strengthen the bond between children, their parents, and the school environment, such as family literacy nights and parenting seminars. 4. Make childcare facilities a by-right use in zoning.	SCPS, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Expanding educational and mental health resources for families.	1. Implement community-based workshops that educate families about child development, positive parenting practices, and coping strategies for stress and adversity. 2. Expand access to quality mental health services for children and families. 3. Launch a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood education. 4. Increase funding for early intervention programs aimed at at-risk children and families.	SCPS, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
4. Family-friendly work policies.	1. Encourage flexible work schedules, telecommuting options, and on-site childcare. 2. Advocate for childbirth parental leave policies for mothers and fathers. 3. Consider a recognition program for businesses that implement family-friendly policies.	County Administration, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
5. Enhanced primary care.	1. Train primary care providers in early detection and reporting of child abuse and neglect. 2. Integrate routine screening for signs of abuse or neglect into pediatric and family healthcare. 3. Consider a referral system for at-risk families for supportive services. 4. Support accessible, evidence-based parent training programs on discipline and stress. 5. Support therapeutic services for those who experienced abuse/neglect. 6. Support intervention programs for at-risk youth on social skills and positive behaviors.	Social Services, Valley Health	2035-2040 I&E
6. Support the work being done by Child Protective Services.	1. Increase funding for CPS to ensure they have adequate resources. 2. Offer training for CPS staff on the latest research and best practices. 3. Improve the collaboration with CPS, law enforcement, and legal system. 4. Support foster care services so that every child has a safe, stable, and nurturing home.	Social Services, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
7. Strengthening household financial security.	1. Consider workshops on budgeting, saving, and financial planning. 2. Create a resource guide that includes info on financial assistance programs. 3. Implement a county-wide initiative to promote competitive wages.	Social Services, VCE	2035-2040 I&E
8. Parenting skill and family relationship approaches.	1. Offer community-based parenting workshops that cover a range of topics. 2. Initiate support groups for parents and guardians. 3. Integrate evidence-based parenting into schools, health centers, and orgs.	Social Services, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
9. Enhancing protective services and support for at-risk children.	1. Partner with healthcare providers to offer screenings for children. 2. Consider mentorship programs that connect at-risk youth with positive role models. 3. Create emergency response funds to assist families facing sudden crises.	Social Services, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 8.3 Critical medical services will be available 24/7.

Objective 8.3.1: Emergency medical services, urgent care, birthing, and building capacity

Emergency medical response will strive to be available within 15-minutes, urgent care will be available 24/7, and capacity expanded including reproductive and pediatric health care.

Objective 8.3.2: Care for domestic violence victims

Victims of domestic violence (women, men, and children) are entitled to receive immediate rescue and attention, including access to emergency health care and shelter services.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Encourage the establishment of urgent care clinics in the towns and major villages.	1. Partner with Towns to attract a viable provider to consider urgent care centers. 2. Support urgent care facilities to have access to necessary medical equipment and staff. 3. Conduct a feasibility study for mobile urgent care units to serve remote areas.	Community Development, Valley Health	2025-2030 S&R
2. Distribute information with contact information for all emergency providers.	1. Create comprehensive emergency contact info pamphlets, including suicide hotline. 2. Launch an online portal with all emergency contact information easily accessible.	Social Services, Valley Health	2030-2035 U&E
3. Initiate public education and awareness campaign on the problem of domestic violence, steps to prevent crisis situations, and how to access emergency assistance.	1. Work with appropriate providers to increase information efforts. 2. Consider a hotline that provides information and immediate assistance to those affected. 3. Educate county staff, including law enforcement and school faculty and personnel, to recognize battered, abused, or bullied persons. Teach them of the victims' special social dynamics and best practices to manage any situation.	Social Services, County Sheriff	2030-2035 U&E
4. Expand access to methods of pregnancy prevention, including education, to reduce the number of teen pregnancies.	1. Partner with schools and community organizations to enhance sexual education. 2. Support increasing the availability of contraceptives and family planning services. 3. Launch a public awareness campaign targeting teens and young adults.	Valley Health, SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
5. Support the use of helicopter medevac with regional hospitals.	1. Consider designated helicopter landing zones in strategic locations for medevac. 2. Train local emergency services and hospital staff in protocols for medevac. 3. Secure funding for helipad infrastructure at identified locations.	EOC, Valley Health	2035-2040 I&E
6. Encourage the establishment of "minute clinic" style services at existing pharmacies, local schools, and existing medical facilities.	1. Partner with local pharmacies to assess the viability of adding clinic services. 2. Consider the integration of health services within school facilities. 3. Work with healthcare providers to evaluate expanding services at their current locations.	Valley Health, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the expansion of Sentara and Valley Health Centers.	1. Support Sentara and Valley Health Centers in conducting a needs assessment for expansion of services and facilities. 2. Advocate for the health center at regional healthcare planning meetings.	County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
8. Shenandoah Memorial Hospital will provide emergency medical services.	1. Collaborate with SMH to optimize emergency response and protocols. 2. Invest in training and equipment for first responders to handle a wide range of emergencies. 3. Implement a public awareness campaign on services available at SMH.	EOC, Valley Health	2040-2045 R&R
9. Partner with Response and other shelter providers to ensure domestic violence victims receive appropriate care.	1. Consult for input on additional supportive actions the county can take. 2. Secure additional, enhanced forensic tools to assure victims, especially rape victims, have access to the full range of criminal investigations. 3. Identify and secure additional funding sources, such as grants or community donations, to support the services provided by shelters and domestic violence response organizations.	Valley Health Social Services	2045-2072 P&A
10. Support the expansion of the Shenandoah Memorial Hospital.	1. Collaborate with Shenandoah Memorial Hospital for areas for expansion. 2. Assist in the application process for grants and funding. 3. Facilitate community outreach and input on hospital expansion plans.	County Administration, Valley Health	2045-2072 P&A
11. Bring obstetrics, maternity and pediatric health service to the panoply of health care services available in the county.	1. Create a task force to consider maternity and child-centered healthcare. 2. Assess needs for pediatric services and develop a plan to attract services. 3. Engage with healthcare facilities to assess adding a maternity wing.	Valley Health, Social Services	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 8.4 Medical care will be accessible and affordable to all.

Objective 8.4.1: Access to cancer treatment and free/community clinics

Expand and improve affordable opportunities for cancer treatment and provided by free / community clinics.

Objective 8.4.2: Aging in place and shelter is health care

Promote access to safe, affordable, and stable housing for all residents and improve the experience for individuals who choose to age in place or assist them in finding new housing.

Objective 8.4.3: Strategic development

Development of new housing will strategically occur within a 15-minute drive from a permanent medical or hospital facility.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Development of informational packets and handouts.	1. Create and distribute comprehensive guides to free and low-cost health services. 2. Reformat and expand detailed county website pages on health services. 3. Provide informational brochures at all government buildings.	Valley Health, Social Services	2025-2030 S&R
2. Increase density in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets within a 15-minute drive from a physical medical or hospital facility.	1. Conduct a comprehensive review of current zoning in relation to healthcare facilities. 2. Collaborate with town planners to identify potential areas for increased residential density. 3. Modify local ordinances to incentivize developers to build higher-density housing. 4. Increase medical facilities in Towns and Villages and ensure they are allowed by right.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Improve overall cancer treatment capabilities at Shenandoah Memorial Hospital.	1. Explore the ability to bring a permanent MRI to SMH. 2. Assess current cancer treatment facilities and equipment at SMH and improvement areas. 3. Partner with regional cancer centers to provide advanced training for SMH staff. 4. Support implementing a visiting oncologist program to provide expert care on-site.	Valley Health, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Clinics will be open at reasonable times and readily accessible.	1. Toggle/expand hours at the clinic so there are opportunities for early morning and late day. 2. Evaluate the potential for weekend clinic services to increase accessibility. 3. Work with ShenGo operator to make the clinic stop a routine stop on the route. 4. Consider a volunteer program to assist those with disabilities or without access to transport.	Valley Health, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Open more clinic locations and support mobile clinic units.	1. Research the most feasible locations for new clinics. 2. Identify areas and partners in Towns and Villages that are of local interest for future clinics. 3. Conduct an analysis of opening additional clinic locations. 4. Support the use of mobile clinic units in outlying areas.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2035-2040 I&E
6. Recognize that housing is healthcare and support access to safe, affordable, and stable housing for all.	1. Work with CDCs/ organizations to connect individuals in crisis to support programs. 2. Support the rapid rehousing of individuals and families who are unhoused. 3. Support permanent supportive housing in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. Evaluate the benefits of establishing a rural check in service for those who choose to age in place.	1. Conduct a feasibility study on the implementation of a rural check-in service. 2. Pilot a rural check-in program in select communities with aging individuals. 3. Develop a volunteer network to support the rural check-in service.	County Sheriff, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
8. Support the expansion of Meals on Wheels.	1. Partner to raise funds and expand the reach of Meals on Wheels. 2. Recruit and train additional volunteers to meet the increased demand for meal delivery. 3. Explore opportunities for meal customization to cater to dietary restrictions. 4. Support siting a local seniors first location.	Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
9. Support methods for elderly needs including but not limited to groceries and medication.	1. Collaborate with local grocery stores to create affordable grocery delivery options. 2. Consider a community-supported grocery shuttle service. 3. Implement a subsidized grocery delivery program for low-income elderly residents.	Social Services	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 8.5 Mental health services are readily available, including those for addiction services.

Objective 8.5.1: Living near mental health resources

Housing options are available within an 18-minute drive of a permanent mental health care facility.

Objective 8.5.2: Access throughout County

Mental health intake offices are accessible to all throughout the day and the County.

Objective 8.5.3: Collaborating with employers

Collaborate with regional employers to encourage the use of sick and medical leave for mental health problems.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Incentivize developers to build near mental health care facilities.	1. Analyze mental health facility locations to identify areas lacking access. 2. Advocate for the development of new mental health facilities in underserved areas. 3. Include mental health facility access in the criteria for approving new housing. 4. Realtors can emphasize proximate health care options for potential home buyers.	Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Expand on-site, walk-in intakes to all day, every day across the county.	1. Extend walk-in intake hours at mental health facilities to provide full-day service. 2. Implement a rotating staff schedule to ensure intake availability for extended hours. 3. Consider mobile intake units to reach underserved areas during peak hours. 4. Partner with community centers and clinics to offer off-site intake services. 5. Introduce a 24/7 hotline to assist with intake during non-business hours. 6. Publicize the existing suicide hotline number and contact information. 7. Ensure clinics are able to provide a range of services including for ADHD.	Valley Health	2030-2035 U&E
3. Clinics will be readily accessible.	1. Work with ShenGo operator to make the clinic stop a routine stop on the route. 2. Provide disabled patients with options for public transportation. 3. Consider a volunteer program to assist those with disabilities or without access to transport. 4. Support improving a Northwestern Community Services site in the County. 5. Encourage telehealth options for mental health services.	Valley Health, VDH	2030-2035 U&E
4. Develop employer partnerships to promote mental health awareness and support.	1. Engage with major employers in the region to share best practices for supporting employee mental health, including the acceptance of mental health days. 2. Collaborate with the local chamber of commerce to develop guidelines for businesses to support mental health days. 3. Explore the feasibility of a county-wide pledge or certification for businesses that support mental health days, creating a network of 'mental health aware' employers.	Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
5. Shenandoah County government could set a precedent by stating that its employees are allowed to use sick and medical leave for mental health issues and can take a mental health day.	1. The County may review and revise HR policies to formally include mental health as a valid reason for sick and medical leave, ensuring that employees feel supported in taking time off for mental health reasons. 2. Launch an internal campaign to destigmatize mental health issues within the workplace and educate employees on the importance of mental health days. 3. Provide training for managers and HR personnel on how to handle requests for mental health leave sensitively and confidentially.	Human Resources	2040-2045 R&R
6. Enhance the experience at public schools through policies and capacity for mental health services.	1. Reevaluate the criteria for perfect attendance awards to exclude absences due to mental health, thereby prioritizing student well-being over perfect attendance. 2. Introduce educational sessions for students and parents to emphasize the importance of mental health and when it is appropriate to stay home from school. 3. Replace perfect attendance awards with recognition for students who demonstrate understanding and support for mental health initiatives. 4. Study staff capacity and add mental health professionals for each school to the SIP.	SCPS	2040-2045 R&R

Chapter 9:

Emergency Services, Infrastructure, And Technology

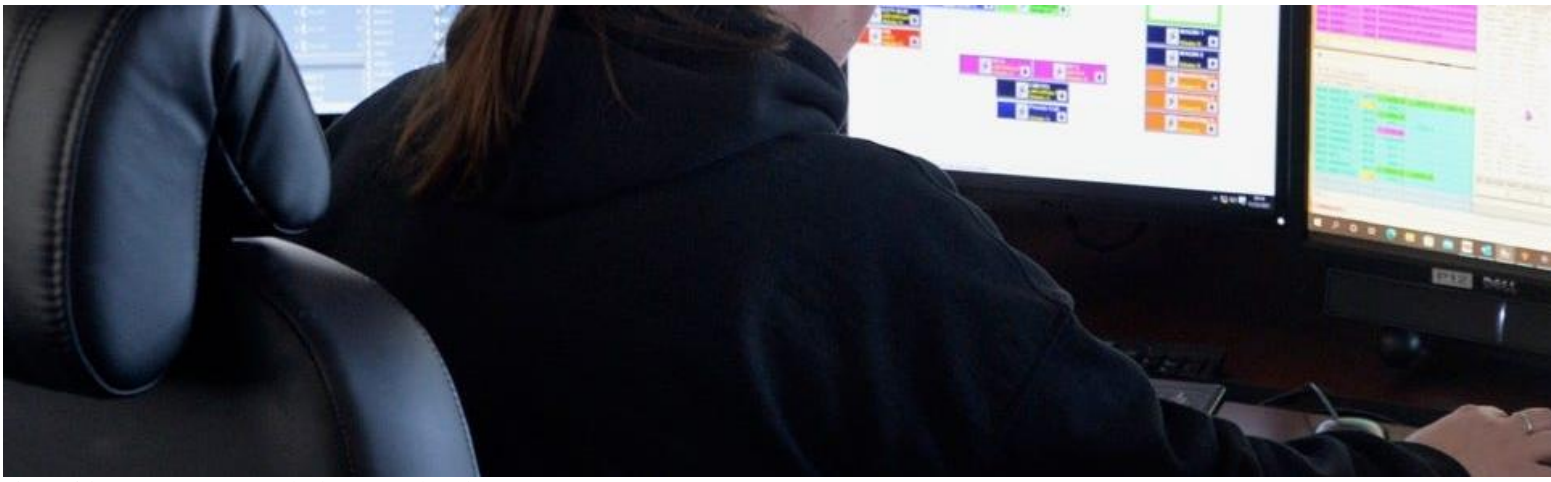


Photo of the Emergency Communications Center in action.

Vision:

Provide an integrated, responsive, and secure technology environment that advances and supports exceptional county services, support, innovation, and resident care.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
Reliable and effective emergency services, infrastructure, and technology are necessary to protect our constituents and conserve local environmental, recreational, and cultural resources. An interconnected and modern infrastructure promotes private and public collaboration.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 9 is organized into goals that focus on enhancing emergency services, infrastructure, and technology in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing service areas, telecommunication towers, transmission lines, and areas being invested in for broadband.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 9 was written to address the critical need for advanced emergency services and modern infrastructure. The intent of this chapter is to develop strategies that ensure the county is prepared for various emergencies while leveraging technology to improve overall service delivery. This includes investing in state-of-the-art equipment for fire and rescue services, enhancing law enforcement capabilities, and ensuring robust communication networks. The chapter also aims to foster public-private partnerships to drive technological innovation. In the next 25 years, Shenandoah County plans to build a resilient infrastructure that can withstand natural disasters and technological challenges, positioning itself as a leader in emergency preparedness and technological integration. As you read this chapter, consider how emergency services and infrastructure impact your daily life—from the reliability of first responders to the effectiveness of communication networks—as we all benefit from a secure and well-prepared community.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 9.1
Shenandoah County may lead the State in the adoption and implementation of 4th Industrial Revolution Technologies.

Goal 9.2
We will invest in infrastructure for the 22nd century.

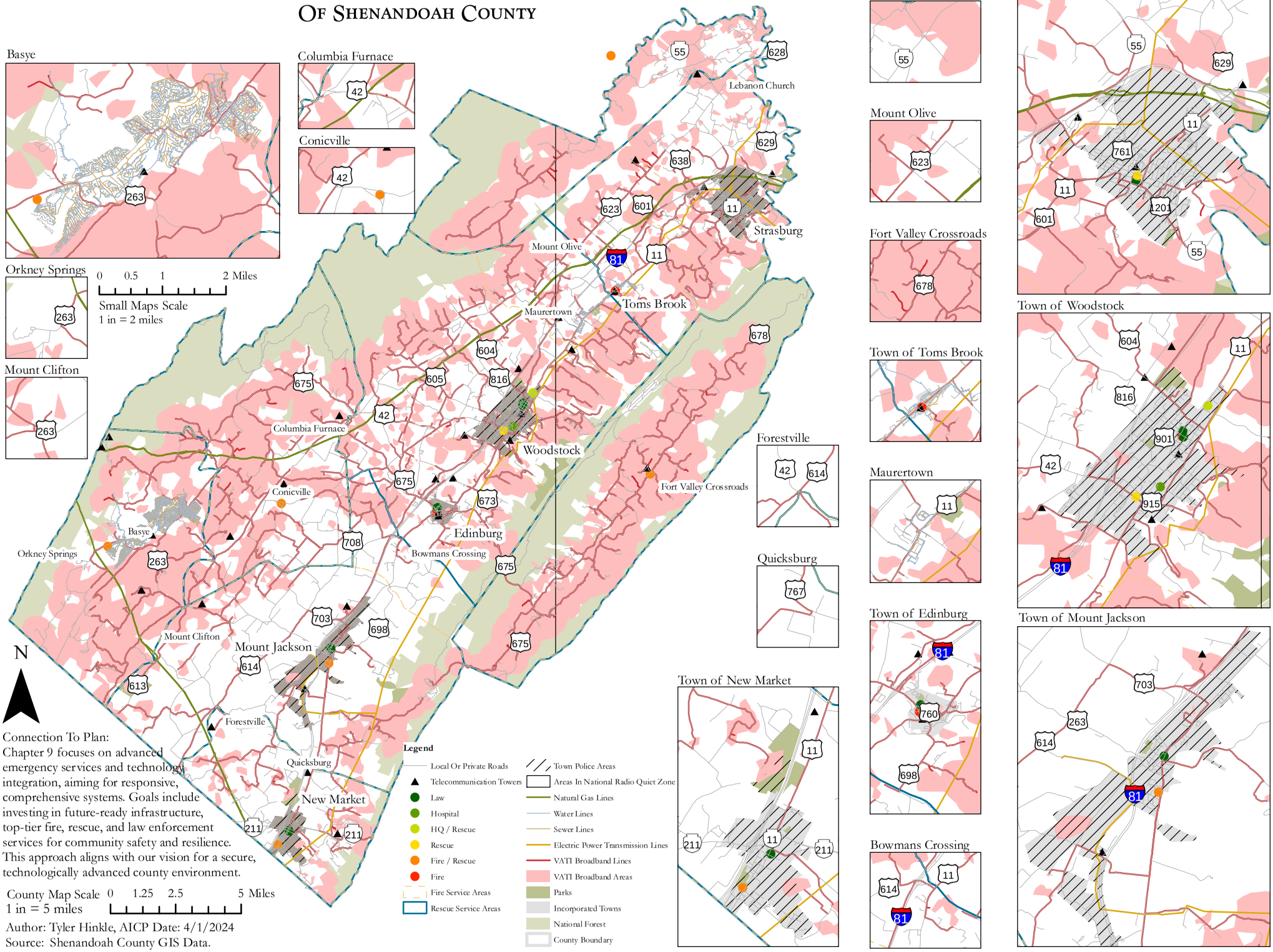
Goal 9.3
Fire and Rescue Services will be the best in the State.

Goal 9.4
Law Enforcement Services will be the best in the State.

Goal 9.5
The County will aspire to be carbon neutral.

Emergency Services, Infrastructure, And Technology

Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 9 focuses on advanced emergency services and technology integration, aiming for responsive, comprehensive systems. Goals include investing in future-ready infrastructure, top-tier fire, rescue, and law enforcement services for community safety and resilience. This approach aligns with our vision for a secure, technologically advanced county environment.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 9.1 Shenandoah County will lead the State in the adoption and implementation of key technologies including 4th Industrial Revolution Technologies.

Objective 9.1.1: Comprehensive integration plan

County leadership will develop a comprehensive plan to integrate and encourage investment of key technologies including 4IR technologies into infrastructure and agriculture.

Objective 9.1.2: Modern IT standards & educational programs

There will be modern, uniform IT standards, as well as a centralized authority to mitigate cybersecurity vulnerabilities across the county government enterprise as well as public education.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Strengthen cybersecurity measures.	1. Perform an audit of the county's IT infrastructure to identify vulnerabilities. 2. Create and enforce a robust cybersecurity policy including regular updates and patches. 3. Conduct regular training sessions for county employees on IT best practices.	IT Department, Emergency Operations Center	2025-2030 S&R
2. Create a task force to identify and implement key and 4IR technologies, improved processes, and data standards.	1. Assemble a diverse task force of tech experts, business leaders, and gov't representatives. 2. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of current county infrastructure and technology. 3. Develop and implement a pilot project to integrate 4IR technologies in a selected sector.	IT Department, Emergency Operations Center	2025-2030 S&R
3. Encourage and assist in the establishment of innovation hubs digitally and physically to spur discussion on key and 4IR technologies.	1. Support the establishment of a SmartShenco organization. 2. Identify locations for innovation hubs as centers for 4IR tech development. 3. Develop a grant program to fund startups focused on 4IR technologies.	IT Department, Emergency Operations Center	2025-2030 S&R
4. Consider Shenandoah as a key and 4IR technology-friendly zone.	1. Streamline permitting processes for businesses with 4IR technologies. 2. Provide incentives for companies that invest in 4IR infrastructure and jobs. 3. Consider an open data portal so its easier for organizations to utilize data.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Consider a Chief Information Officer position, serving as the enterprise architect.	1. Study staff capacity and add a Chief Information Officer to the SIP. 2. Study staff capacity and add a County Data Analyst to the SIP. 3. Consider placing GIS Department, EOC, and IT Department under CIO.	Board Of Supervisors, County Administration	2030-2035 U&E
6. Consider public-private partnerships to foster key and 4IR technology integration.	1. Increase County staff fluency with 4IR Tech through specialized training. 2. Identify industry partners interested in collaborating on 4IR tech projects. 3. Create incentives for private companies to invest in 4IR technology projects.	IT Department, Emergency Operations Center	2035-2040 I&E
7. Attract R&D investments in key and 4IR technologies to the region.	1. Create a competitive grant program for businesses investing in R&D for 4IR technologies. 2. Host industry conferences and seminars to showcase the county as an attractive location	Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
8. Create awareness among the County's residents about the community and personal benefits and potential of key and 4IR Technologies and encourage their participation and support growth of sector.	1. Launch a county-wide campaign to highlight success stories of local 4IR initiatives. 2. Host annual 4IR tech fairs to showcase innovations and how they benefit the community. 3. Develop an online portal with resources, tutorials, and forums dedicated to 4IR education and collaboration.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E
9. Provide access to, and develop ongoing programs to provide instruction in using, emerging technologies such as 3D printing, AI, and Virtual Reality.	1. Partner with local tech companies and community colleges to offer workshops on 3D printing, AI, and virtual reality. 2. Consider a tech demo space at public libraries where residents can experience new technologies firsthand.	Tourism and Economic Development, IT Department	2035-2040 I&E
10. Support technological literacy through one-on-one sessions; explore feasibility of providing regular time for workforce development.	1. Integrate technology literacy modules into adult education programs. 2. Offer tech coaching sessions at community centers to bridge the digital divide. 3. Collaborate with local businesses to identify skills gaps and develop training programs.	Tourism and Economic Development, SCPS	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 9.2 We will invest in infrastructure for the 22nd century.

Objective 9.2.1: Resilent & smart infrastructure ensuring energy independence and redundancy

Ensure infrastructure lasts by being resistant to damage from natural disasters or other emergencies, implementing new technology and systems to improve efficiency, and create backup systems and redundancies in the electric grid including energy generation and storage facilities to prevent power outages and reduce dependence on external energy producers.

Objective 9.2.2: Invest in latest FCC cellular & internet standards

End the digital divide by ensuring all Shenandoah County residents have access to the latest FCC regulated communications technology and broadband internet services.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Lead the implementation of cellular improvements countywide including in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	1. Identify areas with inadequate coverage and develop a plan to enhance. 2. Work with the Towns to streamline the approval processes for new communications infrastructure. 3. Consider emergency call boxes in key spots throughout parks and the National Forest.	Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
2. Ensure broadband is available countywide including in every community.	1. Conduct a comprehensive survey to identify areas with inadequate broadband coverage. 2. Work with broadband providers to extend infrastructure to underserved.	Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Invest in new software and tech to improve the efficiency/ effectiveness of government services and functions.	1. Conduct audit of software/technology to identify improvements. 2. Invest in cloud solutions to enhance data storage, access, and collab. 3 Pilot AI programs in select government depts to streamline processes. 4. Offer training for government employees on AI apps and data analytics.	IT Department, EOC	2030-2035 U&E
4. Work with utility companies to underground all overhead all utilities where feasible.	1. Partner with utility companies to create a phased plan for burying overhead cables, prioritizing areas with the high risk of weather disruptions. 2. Require that whenever cables are replaced they are buried. 3. Launch a public awareness campaign about the timeline and benefits.	Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Expand broadband access in the community by providing mobile hotspots.	1. Deploy mobile hotspot lending programs in libraries and community centers. 2. Partner with educational institutions to distribute hotspots to students.	County Library, SCPS	2030-2035 U&E
6. County emergency services should run on the fastest technology.	1. Add to the CIP that all County public safety towers will be equipped with 5g technology. 2. Secure funding then implement the improvements.	County Administration, EOC	2030-2035 U&E
7. Support tech infrastructure, digital education, and more.	1. Develop a county-wide digital twin platform for infrastructure projects. 2. Secure funding for digital education initiatives to increase literacy.	Community Development, IT Department	2035-2040 I&E
8. Determine and keep a running calculation on the actual energy needs and demands of the County.	1. Conduct an energy audit for current usage and future demands. 2. Develop a dynamic energy needs assessment tool that can be updated. 3. Create a public report detailing energy consumption, peak demand times, and efficiency.	IT Department	2035-2040 I&E
9. Advancing infrastructure and planning for resilience and independence.	1. Develop a county-wide resilience plan including grid enhancements 2. Plan for microgrids and energy storage with incentives like zoning or partnerships. 3. Consider solar panels over gov't buildings and parking areas in the CIP. 4. Identify existing fallout/emergency vaults and determine repairs and needs. 5. Set up a resilience fund to support maintenance and repair of utilities.	County Administration, EOC	2035-2040 I&E
10. Support the enhancement of hydroelectric facilities.	1. Evaluate the efficiency/ status of dams and benefits of small hydroelectric systems. 2. Perform a cost analysis of restoring the dams to energy generation.	Community Development, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
11. Encourage measures to detect and prevent gas leaks, and improving the physical infrastructure of the pipelines to reduce risks and make the public aware.	1. Collaborate with companies to upgrade aging pipelines with modern, durable materials. 2. Encourage advanced monitoring systems for early detection of leaks or pressure drops. 3. Consider zoning regs to require new dwellings to be set back 3,280 feet from gas transmission lines.	County Administration, EOC	2035-2040 I&E
12. Study healthy competition to incentivize internet access improvements.	1. Engage with multiple internet service providers to discuss the County. 2. Explore incentives that can attract new providers and upgrades. 3. Support public ownership of infrastructure for free market competition.	IT Department, EOC	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 9.3 Fire and Rescue Services will be the best in the State.

Objective 9.3.1: Comprehensive prevention and response program

Leadership will develop and implement a comprehensive fire prevention and emergency response program for the community.

Objective 9.3.2: Increased training, certification, equipment, collaboration, and capabilities

Increase the number of trained and certified firefighters and medical responders, upgrade equipment, increase collaboration, and expand range of response capabilities.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. The County will update its zoning and building standards to ensure all new structures and renovations of existing structures ensures that they are safe for efficient fire and rescue service while ensuring walkable and historic development.	1. Update the zoning ordinance to require all new and the renovation of existing industrial and commercial buildings to have radio service capabilities including internal antennaes. 2. Ensure there is funding to retain quality building inspection and fire marshal staff. 3. Work with the fire marshal to develop standards that allow for more narrow streets, more stories, middle housing, and other aspects to support historic character in development.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
2. Review, enhance, communicate, and implement a comprehensive emergency response plan for the county.	1. Conduct a thorough review of emergency response to identify improvements. 2. Collaborate with emergency services, local government, and community organizations to draft a detailed emergency response plan. 3. Include funding for regular training for emergency personnel and public workshops.	SCFR, EOC	2030-2035 U&E
3. Enhancement of fire prevention measures including for wildfires.	1. Launch a public education campaign to raise awareness about fire prevention and safety. 2. Incentivize smart fire detection and suppression technologies in private structures. 3. Develop plans for evacuation in the event of wildfires as well as mitigation methods. 4. Organize and facilitate regular fire drills in schools, hospitals, and high-risk areas.	SCFR, EOC	2030-2035 U&E
4. Enhance mutual aid agreements.	1. Review/update mutual aid agreements and protocols with near counties. 2. Set up a database of resources available from within and neighboring areas.	SCFR	2030-2035 U&E
5. Development of an ongoing certification program for emergency responders.	1. Partner with colleges and fire academies for certification curriculum. 2. Implement a mentorship program connecting experienced with new. 3. Consider incentive program to encourage participation in certification.	SCFR	2035-2040 I&E
6. Implement a regular upgrade schedule for firefighting equipment.	1. Conduct an annual review of all equipment to identify items for upgrade. 2. Include the regular upgrade of equipment in the CIP. 3. Engage with suppliers to ensure access to the latest firefighting tech.	SCFR, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
7. Enhance personal protective equipment for first responders.	1. Upgrade personal protective gear to meet the latest safety standards. 2. Set up a system for regular inspection and replacement of PPE.	SCFR	2035-2040 I&E
8. Consider and maintain a dedicated training facility to ensure firefighters and emergency responders have access to the latest training and equipment.	1. Identify and allocate funding in the CIP for the construction or refurbishment of a training facility at the landfill dedicated to firefighters and emergency responders. 2. Train for fire suppression, rescue operations, and medical care. 3. Partner with equipment manufacturers and technology firms to supply the training facility.	SCFR, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
9. Improve hazardous materials handling and natural disaster response measures.	1. Invest in training for first responders in hazardous materials incidents. 2. Acquire state-of-the-art protective gear and equipment for hazards. 3. Update the emergency response plan to include protocols for all disasters. 4. Enhance the stockpile of supplies and ensure they are readily available.	SCFR	2035-2040 I&E
10. Increase medical emergency preparedness.	1. Collaborate with hospitals and health orgs for medical surge capabilities. 2. Consider mobile medical units ready in case of mass casualty incidents. 3. Conduct community-wide health emergency simulations to identify gaps.	SCFR, Valley Health	2035-2040 I&E
11. Expansion of emergency medical response training.	1. Integrate advanced emergency medical training into the curriculum. 2. Offer specialized courses on handling a wide range of emergencies. 3. Coordinate with professionals to provide clinical experience.	SCFR	2040-2045 R&R
12. Modernize rescue vehicles and apparatus including EV capabilities if feasible.	1. Assess the fleet for functionality and safety, and plan for phased replacements in the CIP. 2. Explore funding options for new rescue vehicles. 3. Implement a maintenance program to extend the life of existing vehicles.	SCFR	2040-2045 R&R

Goal 9.4 Law Enforcement Services will be the best in the State.

Objective 9.4.1: Increased training, certification, equipment, and capabilities

Increase the number of trained and certified law enforcement officers, invest in advanced technology and equipment, and enhance the ability to respond to and investigate crimes.

Objective 9.4.2: Community policing and address substance abuse

Develop and implement community policing strategies to improve relationships between law enforcement and the community including addressing substance abuse.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Increase law enforcement training and professional development opportunities.	1. Provide incentives for officers in education or training courses. 2. Partner with local academies to offer regular training sessions for officers. 3. Set up an internal mentorship program to prepare junior officers.	County Sheriff	2025-2030 S&R
2. Modernize police equipment and technology.	1. Evaluate current technology and equipment to identify gaps and needs. 2. Plan in the CIP for the procurement of updated equipment incl EV's. 3. Train law enforcement personnel in the use of new technology.	County Sheriff	2025-2030 S&R
3. Enhance crime investigation tools for law enforcement.	1. Acquire advanced forensic analysis tools for the investigation unit. 2. Partner with technology firms for investigation software. 3. Consider ongoing training for investigative personnel on new tools.	County Sheriff	2025-2030 S&R
4. Consider a shooting range for training purposes.	1. Study if a shooting range feasibility as gov't owned or developed with a PPP, add to CIP. 2. Consider a zoning process for shooting ranges including only by SUP.	County Sheriff	2025-2030 S&R
5. Implement a continuous education program for law enforcement officers.	1. Consider in-person and online continuous education opportunities. 2. Collaborate with other counties and states to participate in joint training exercises.	County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
6. Improve officer safety and response capability, including specialty units.	1. Invest in protective gear that meets modern safety standards. 2. Upgrade communication devices for reliable field communication. 3. Pursue national law enforcement accreditation. 4. Implement an asset tracking system for all police equipment.	County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
7. Ensure mental health counselors are available 24 hours a day to support our law enforcement as they try to help individuals in the community.	1. Ensures mental health professionals are integrated within the law enforcement response. 2. Train officers in mental health first aid and crisis intervention strategies. 3. Create a system for quick deployment of social service counselors when needed.	County Sheriff, Social Services	2035-2040 I&E
8. Consider partnerships and mutual aid with other law enforcement agencies and orgs to share resources.	1. Organize regular inter-agency meetings to discuss shared challenges/efforts. 2. Develop a shared resource pool for critical equipment/personnel. 3. Review and update mutual aid agreements and protocols with neighboring counties.	County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
9. Expand the department's outreach and education efforts to inform the community about crime prevention and safety.	1. Organize workshops on safety, crime prevention, and law enforcement. 2. Launch a community liaison program to maintain open communication. 3. Initiate school-based programs to educate youth on law enforcement roles.	County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
10. Support the enhancement of Animal Control services.	1. Develop specialized training programs for Animal Control officers. 2. Invest in modern equipment for humane handling. 3. Implement education initiative about responsible pet ownership and wildlife interaction.	Animal Control, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
11. There will be liaison relationships with local and federal law enforcement entities to enhance intelligence gathering regarding threats.	1. Develop a dedicated unit within the Sheriff's office for intelligence gathering regarding threats. 2. Implement regular training sessions on public reporting threats. 3. Strengthen cybercrime investigation and prevention measures.	EOC, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
12. Collaborate with healthcare providers to enhance substance addiction treatment services.	1. Increase access to addiction treatment, recovery services, and education. 2. Support law enforcement with tools and training for handling substance-related cases.	Social Services, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
13. Form a task force to combat the opioid epidemic and support affected families.	1. Create a task force to address the opioid crisis through outreach. 2. Promote safe drug disposal methods to prevent medication misuse. 3. Enhance support for families affected, including counseling.	Social Services, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E
14. Develop training programs to aid recovery and reduce substance abuse recidivism.	1. Consider job training / employment programs for individuals recovering. 2. Consider a network of support groups for ongoing addiction recovery. 3. Partner with pharmacies to expand access to overdose-reversing meds.	Social Services, County Sheriff	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 9.5 The County will aspire to be carbon neutral.

Objective 9.5.1: Reduction plan, renewable energy solutions, and new development to be walkable

The County may implement a climate reduction plan, guide renewable energy solutions, and ensure new developments are designed in a way that prioritizes pedestrian access and safety.

Objective 9.5.2: Smart grid system and energy efficient public buildings

The County may implement a smart grid system and promote energy efficient buildings.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Define carbon neutral and consider a climate footprint assessment.	1. Consider a climate footprint assessment and add it to the CIP. 2. Determine if existing forested and vegetation areas offset the footprint. 3. Identify key sectors contributing to the county's climate footprint and ways to reduce it. 4. Disallow the use of equipment in future businesses i.e. smokestacks.	Community Development, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
2. Promote modes of transportation that do not rely on motorized vehicles, such as walking, cycling, and public transit.	1. Implement a bike-sharing program in key areas to promote cycling. 2. Develop and expand a network of dedicated bike lanes and walking trails per Chapter 11. 3. Organize events such as 'Walk to Work' days and cycling workshops.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Ensure safe and efficient pedestrian traffic in new developments.	1. Integrate traffic calming measures in new development areas. 2. Plan for and install adequate street furniture, like benches and shade trees, to make walking more comfortable and appealing.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Design new developments for pedestrian accessibility.	1. Develop design guidelines for developments that prioritize pedestrian pathways, green spaces, and street layouts conducive to walking. 2. Work with developers to include pedestrian-friendly features. 3. Require new developments to connect to existing pedestrian networks.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E
5. Set reasonable targets for reduction and be a model for private businesses.	1. Set policy for county employees to telecommute and flexible hours. 2. Promote energy efficiency measures within county infrastructure. 3. Consider hybrid, electric, or non-gasoline/diesel fuel when purchasing new vehicles.	County Administration, Human Resources	2035-2040 I&E
6. Foster community engagement and education.	1. Expand info on carbon sequestration for forestry and soil practices. 2. Foster community-wide tree planting and preservation initiatives. 3. Organize community challenges and incentives for waste reduction.	Community Development, WRAC	2035-2040 I&E
7. Define and implement a smart grid system.	1. Add a feasibility study/plan to the CIP for a county-wide smart grid. 2. Support upgrading electrical substations with smart technology to improve efficiency. 3. Support smart meters to provide real-time usage data. 4. Support demand response programs to balance load and reduce strain. 5. Offer incentives/education for early adopters of smart grid tech.	Community Development, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
8. Large scale energy generation shall not be placed on productive soils, and will be directed to brownfields, parking lots, and rooftops.	1. Consider incentives to encourage all new structures to be built with solar panels on roofs. 2. Carefully review large scale energy facilities related to productive soils. 3. Create an expedited permit process for new constructions that include solar panels.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
9. Require all new and support existing public buildings to have solar installed on their roofs and over their parking areas.	1. Conduct energy audits for public buildings to assess energy savings. 2. Work with state legislators and regulators to allow solar on capped landfill cells. 3. Amend policies to require solar installations on new public buildings. 4. Evaluate and add to CIP solar installations on public buildings /parking.	Community Development, County Administration	2035-2040 I&E
10. Leverage technology for energy management.	1. Install advanced energy management systems in county buildings. 2. Train facilities staff in the use of energy management technology. 3. Evaluate the potential of smart building technology for efficiency. 4. Develop an educational campaign about energy conservation practices.	County Administration, General Properties	2035-2040 I&E
11. Promote energy efficiency in buildings.	1. Conduct energy audits of all county buildings to identify opportunities. 2. Implement an ongoing maintenance program on energy efficiency. 3. Invest in retrofitting county buildings with energy-efficient lighting, HVAC, and insulation. 4. Consider standards that new County buildings use LEED Standards. 5. Provide zoning incentives like density for construction projects that meet LEED standards.	County Administration, General Properties	2035-2040 I&E

Chapter 10:

Recreation

Photo of the Shenandoah County Park in Maurertown.

Vision:

Access to natural resources for recreational pursuits shall be sustained and expanded.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
To improve and enhance the quality of life a robust menu of recreational opportunities should be part of services provided to residents and visitors. Whether outdoors or indoor recreation facilities, recreation is a reason people enjoy living in and visiting Shenandoah County.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 10 is organized into five goals that focus on expanding and improving recreational opportunities in Shenandoah County. It begins with a map showing the National, State, and local parks, recreation areas, water access sites, and trails and potential areas for new trails.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 10 was written to enhance recreational opportunities, contributing to the overall quality of life for residents. The intent of this chapter is to develop diverse recreational facilities and programs that serve all community members. This includes building new recreation centers with public pools and enhancing existing facilities. A vibrant county means offering various entertainment opportunities, ensuring residents can enjoy both work and leisure here. The establishment of a regional trail is a key goal, promising significant economic benefits from businesses catering to its users. Additionally, the chapter emphasizes creating engaging outdoor activities, promoting health and wellness, and fostering community pride. As you read this chapter, consider how recreational opportunities impact your daily life—from enjoying local parks and trails to participating in sports and fitness activities—as we all contribute to making Shenandoah County a lively and enjoyable place to live .

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 10.1
There will be indoor recreation centers for public use.

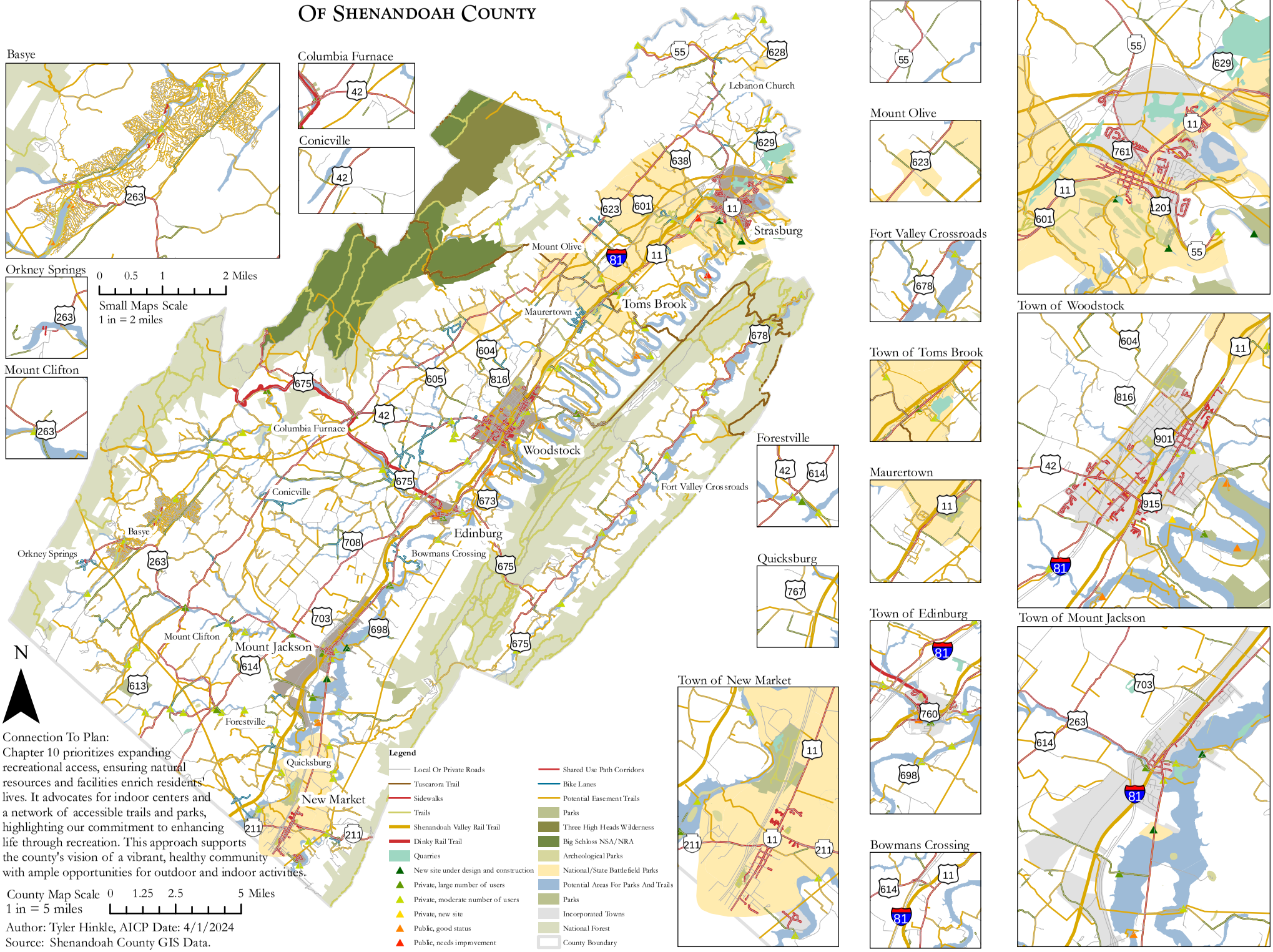
Goal 10.2
There will be a system of interconnected trails and parks throughout the County that are accessible to all.

Goal 10.3
The most popular regional trail in the state.

Goal 10.4
The North Fork will be healthy, free of contamination and support interconnected swimming, boating, and fishing access throughout.

Goal 10.5
The County will be an attractive and safe place for all residents and tourists alike to visit and recreate.

Recreation
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Chapter 10 prioritizes expanding recreational access, ensuring natural resources and facilities enrich residents' lives. It advocates for indoor centers and a network of accessible trails and parks, highlighting our commitment to enhancing life through recreation. This approach supports the county's vision of a vibrant, healthy community with ample opportunities for outdoor and indoor activities.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 4/1/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data.

Goal 10.1 There will be indoor recreation centers for public use.

Objective 10.1.1: New and existing centers to be accessible

Indoor recreation centers, including indoor pools, should be up-to-date and located in areas and constructed in a way that they are easily accessible to all residents regardless of age, ability, or income level.

Objective 10.1.2: Local gyms and small or specialty centers

Support the development of locally owned gyms, fitness centers, and specialty indoor recreation centers such as bowling alleys, climbing gyms, trapeze parks, ice rinks, and other centers.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Update the 2000 Master Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Plan with the Towns and NSVRC.	1. Add the update to the CIP, noting the key aspects to focus attention on. 2. Collaborate with the Towns and NSVRC to identify LOS mismatches and expansion needs. 3. Ensure the plan aligns with National, State, and private parks, forests, facilities, and trails. 4. Include plans for all current and future County and Town parks, forests, facilities, and trails.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
2. Streamline permitting process for specialty centers..	1. Review and streamline the county permitting and zoning process for specialty recreation centers. 2. Create a guide detailing the steps to open a specialty recreation center in the county.	Tourism and Economic Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
3. Offer incentives to encourage the development of smaller centers.	1. Design a package of incentives for entrepreneurs to open small gyms and fitness centers. 2. Create a streamlined application process for local business owners.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Enhance marketing for specialty recreation centers.	1. Collaborate with existing specialty centers to create a joint marketing initiative. 2. Develop an online directory of specialty recreation centers.	Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Indoor recreation centers at public schools or other public indoor centers will be available for use for a fee that covers maintenance.	1. The County may add a maintenance funding clause to their agreement with SCPS. 2. Develop a fee structure and booking system for indoor recreation centers. 3. Create a maintenance and upgrade fund sourced from the usage fees.	SCPS, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
6. The county shall maintain its existing and may consider adding additional indoor recreation centers including indoor pool facilities at all facilities.	1. Identify potential locations and assess community needs for indoor recreation centers. 2. Add the centers to the CIP, include a gymnasium, public meeting space, sauna, and a state-of-the-art indoor swimming pool with the centers to be accessible to all. 3. Develop a comprehensive plan including design, amenities, and budget for the centers. 4. Explore PPP opportunities for the development of these facilities. 5. Support New Market's renovation of its former school facility. 6. Support the renovation of the former school facility in Mount Jackson.	County Administration, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
7. Ensure indoor recreation centers are ADA compliant and accessible to all.	1. Audit all indoor recreation centers to ensure they meet ADA compliance standards. 2. Add necessary modifications to make existing public centers ADA compliant to the CIP. 3. Ensure public tranportation routes include stops at recreation center sites. 4. Consider routes connecting residents to indoor recreation facilities outside the County.	SCPS, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
8. Attract and support specialty recreation businesses.	1. Identify potential local and regional investors interested in specialty recreation facilities. 2. Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the county as an attractive location.	Tourism and Economic Development	2035-2040 I&E
9. Community engagement for fitness center development.	1. Organize community forums to identify what residents want in local gyms and centers. 2. Connect mentors with individuals looking to start fitness-related businesses. 3. Provide assistance in developing a business plan to businesses wishing to start centers.	Tourism and Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 10.2 There will be a system of interconnected trails and parks throughout the County that are accessible to all.

Objective 10.2.1: Accessibility and connectivity

Improve access to all and connectivity between all parks and trails with trails along easement lines, County Parks and simplified local park/trail management.

Objective 10.2.2: Shenandoah National Recreation Area

Support the establishment of a Shenandoah National Recreation Area and improve the amenities contained to shine a light on the remarkable and unique recreational values of our region including improving and considering new state parks and enhancing the Tuscarora and similar trails.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Re-examine use of Alms House tract and surrounding lands for park expansion.	1. Add to the CIP a County Park and Farm Master Plan per Chapter 3. 2. Include a review of the "Alms House" tract to evaluate the highest and best use of the land including suitability for park expansion including trails through agricultural areas.	Parks and Rec, VCE	2025-2030 S&R
2. Consider support for a regional trail along the Norfolk Southern Rail Line . This does not preclude a rail w/ trail if found viable by Virginia, or other uses.	1. Pending decision by stakeholders, update the plan if necessary. 2. Advocate for funds to assist in the development of the trail. 3. Consider a connecting trail to New Market including access to the North Fork. 4. Consider connecting trails to the Edinburg Mill, CCC Museum, and Basye.	Community Development, Board of Supervisors	2030-2035 U&E
3. Enhance Tuscarora trail access.	1. Coordinate with the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. 2. Develop and distribute maps and promotional materials. 3. Install directional signage and info kiosks at key entry points.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
4. Open the Keister Park to public use.	1. Work with NPS to update the Keister Park Master Plan, add to CIP. 2. Consider picnic areas and primative hiking trails to open the park. 3. Construct an entrance with the VDOT Recreational Access Fund.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
5. Support the enhancement, expansion, and creation of new State and National Parks.	1. Work with Seven Bends and New Market Battlefield State Parks to expand and enhance the Parks. 2. Support regional trails in becoming State or National Parks. 3. Support the expansion/improvement of SNP and Battlefield Parks. 4. Support SNP as a UNESCO World Heritage Site per Criteria VII.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
6. Enhance connectivity to and through the National Forest and all National, State, County, and Town parks.	1. Expand public transit to National/State/County/Town parks. 2. Support the connection of Towns to the National Forest. 3. Support the enhancement of mountain biking, ATV/OHV, and equestrian trails as well as camping areas. 4. Support parking at Kennedy Peak, Wolf Gap, Tibbet Knob.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
7. Support the enhancement of the CEA and PRAB as a Joint Recreation Authority to encourage all towns work with under one Authority and to increase access.	1. Begin having regular joint meetings between the CEA and PRAB. 2. Contract with a conservation easements and recreational improvements attorney. 3. Explore other funding sources to finance the CEA. 4. Develop an agreement outlining maintenance responsibilities. 5. Evaluate the current usage and demand for extended pool hours.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2035-2040 I&E
8. Support the improvement of Town, Village, and Hamlet Park networks.	1. Amend Town and County code to require developers to provide right of way and park land for greenways when land is developed. 2. Acquire additional rights of way or land with easements for greenways and connecting trails and parks.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
9. Petition Congress for the establishment of Shenandoah National Recreation Area.	1. Form Shenandoah National Recreation Area Committee (SNRAC). 2. Adopt a resolution of support for Shenandoah National Recreation Area and National Recreation / Scenic Areas, such as Big Schloss, and recognizing their national significance. 3. Encourage each Town in the County to adopt a similar resolutions. 4. Include all parks, forests, areas, & trails in submission to Congress.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2040-2045 R&R
10. Consider trails along easements for transmission / electric lines, pipelines, broadband and internet, water and sewer, former roads, and other easements.	1. Develop a GIS database of all public rights of way and develop a priority plan of areas to connect including a specific plan to address the heritage of the Columbia/Liberty Iron Company line. 2. Engage in discussions to gain permission for public trail access. 3. Create and install signage and amenities for public use along the trails.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2045-2072 P&A
11. Create a development plan for Wagner Park.	1. Add to the CIP a Master Plan for Wagner Park, per bequeathment. 2. In the plan consider area for an experimental/demonstration farm.	County Administration, Parks and Rec	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 10.3 The most popular regional trail in the state.

Objective 10.3.1: Stakeholder inclusion and service access

Engage all stakeholder groups in trail development, location, and prioritize local businesses in service provision along the trail.

Objective 10.3.2: Trail connectivity and user experience

Enhance trail connections and user safety, integrating scenic and recreational features across the region for an enjoyable experience.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Identify the best plan for the trail.	1. Prepare for decision by stakeholders on future use of County rail corridor. 2. Work with stakeholders to identify the plan for the trail.	County Administration	2025-2030 S&R
2. The development review process should be shortened for businesses looking to locate at key stops on the trail.	1. Consider overlay zoning district for business uses in core trail points in villages and hamlets. 2. Ensure uses such as grocery stores, cafes, and local restaurants are by-right uses. 3. Inform potential entrepreneurs about the benefits and processes of opening businesses. 4. Support the establishment of bike and repair businesses, local restaurants and breweries, public bathrooms, dog watering stations, vendors and food trucks, along the trail.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Consider overlooks, benches, dog parks, signage, repair kits, angled trash cans, performance areas, and more.	1. Identify panoramic points along the trail and assess as overlooks. 2. Support a series of safe, accessible overlooks with informational signage. 3. Coordinate with local artists and historians to integrate cultural elements.	Parks and Rec, Community Development	2025-2030 S&R
4. Protect and enhance areas along the trail.	1. Support a tree-planting plan that includes native species selection, locations, and care. 2. Consider rezoning areas around the trail to Agricultural Protection Zoning. 3. Support conservation easements that protect the viewshed from the trail.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2025-2030 S&R
5. Use trail design and signage to maximize the ability to direct trail users to recreational bodies of water if feasible.	1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of current trails to identify potential access points. 2. Support and install informative signage that guides users to water access. 3. Create detailed maps and digital resources that highlight trail-to-waterway connections.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
6. Work with regional partners in linking the trail to the C&O Canal towpath and support connecting to US BR 76.	1. Partner with regional trail organizations to develop a unified signage and wayfinding system that guides users. 2. Consider rest stops and information kiosks at strategic points. 3. Advocate for state and federal support in bridging trail gaps.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2035-2040 I&E
7. The county shall consider a working task force.	1. Consider a working task force led by the joint CEA and PRAB JRA. 2. Include a diverse range of stakeholders on the taskforce. 3. Distribute a survey to collect preferences on trail access and regulations. 4. Support ideas for the design, development, and improvement of the trail. 5. Consider a special service overlay district to finance additional services.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2040-2045 R&R
8. Support Warren, Front Royal, Rockingham, Broadway, and Harrisonburg in linking the trail to SNP and the AT.	1. Initiate discussions with local officials to develop a joint plan for trail linkage. 2. Support applications for grants aimed at inter-regional trail enhancements. 3. Conduct feasibility studies for the required infrastructure and impacts.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A
9. Support WV to connect the West Fork Rail Trail to the American Discovery Trail and connections to Rockingham and Shenandoah Counties.	1. Engage with West Virginia trail authorities to explore the extension of the West Fork Rail Trail towards the American Discovery Trail. 2. Support a comprehensive trail map that includes the proposed connections. 3. Support applications for grants aimed at inter-regional trail enhancements.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A
10. Ensure we have the most safe and secure trail in the region.	1. Evaluate the potential for downcast lighting and reflectors along the trail. 2. Support and implement a safety plan for the Trail. 3. Consider a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between local emergency services, law enforcement, and trail management to outline roles. 4. Set up emergency call stations at regular intervals along the trail.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2045-2072 P&A

Goal 10.4 The North Fork will be healthy, free of contamination and support interconnected swimming, boating, and fishing access throughout.

Objective 10.4.1: Healthy river

Reduce pollution source points to upgrade the health of the river to provide safe swimming, boating and fishing.

Objective 10.4.2: Enhanced accessibility

Expand river and stream access points, develop portage sites around dams and along trails, and collaborate with landowners to repurpose water-filled quarries for recreational use.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Consider clear guidelines and regulations for public access to surface waters. These regulations should ensure that public access points are well-maintained, with designated parking areas, trash disposal facilities, and restroom facilities.	1. Collaboratively develop a set of guidelines that new access points must adhere to. 2. Determine the fishability and swimability of each stream and the causes of impairment. 3. Develop informational forms and packets on how the public can determine whether a stream is safe for fishing or swimming and distribute in the community.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
2. Coordinate with DWR and VDOT to ensure that when bridges are replaced/repaired, public access is included in the design.	1. Ensure that increased access is included in engineering plans, or that an explanation of why access could not be improved is included in the design package. 2. Host a meeting on public water access directly following the VDOT bridge public meeting. 3. Provide a resolution of support for the improvement of water access.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
3. Negotiate for public access when conservation easements are reviewed.	1. Share a map of desired access point areas with local land trusts so they are aware. 2. Amend CEA easement terms to include incentives for public access to waterways. 3. Identify and map potential blueways (water routes) and greenways (land routes). 4. When reviewing potential easements, inform the land trust if within an identified area.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
4. Enhance recreational opportunities at repurposed quarries.	1. Develop guidelines for safely repurposing quarries as recreational areas. 2. Implement safety measures, such as life-saving stations and clear signage. 3. Explore partnerships with local businesses and recreational organizations to develop amenities like picnic areas, fishing docks, and hiking trails around repurposed quarries.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
5. We will continue to support and enhance the stocking by DWR of our public waters.	1. Collaborate with DWR to identify public waters that have the potential for stocking. 2. Support the clean-up of stocked water areas. 3. As landowners who volunteer their lands for stocking pass away or move, ensure that the public access is not lost through public access easements, land purchase, or land donations.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
6. Evaluate existing nuisances and work to reduce them including through educational programs to raise awareness on preserving surface waters and respecting private property rights	1. Consult with landowners around downstream public and informal access points on nuisances. 2. Conduct an assessment of existing nuisances or issues that affect surface waters. 3. Develop and implement specific plans for reducing or remediating the identified nuisances. This may involve clean-up events or formal agreements. 4. Develop educational materials, including brochures, pamphlets, online resources, and signage, on surface waters and respecting private property rights.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
7. Improve the formal DWR and informal access points, as well as dam portage areas.	1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing DWR access points for improvements. 2. Improve DWR access points to be ADA and Handicap accessible, inform users on water quality and safety, signage, picnic tables, wildlife safe trash cans, and bike and vehicle parking. 3. Assess and post a public map of all existing informal access points. 4. Engage landowners on portage. Dam owners are legally required to provide portage.	Community Development, Parks and Rec	2035-2040 I&E

Goal 10.5 The County is an attractive and safe place for all residents and tourists alike to visit and recreate.

Objective 10.5.1: Engaging and inclusive recreational programs

Engage the public with diverse and rewarding recreational programming, and actively promote inclusion in all activities and recruiting outdoor event planners.

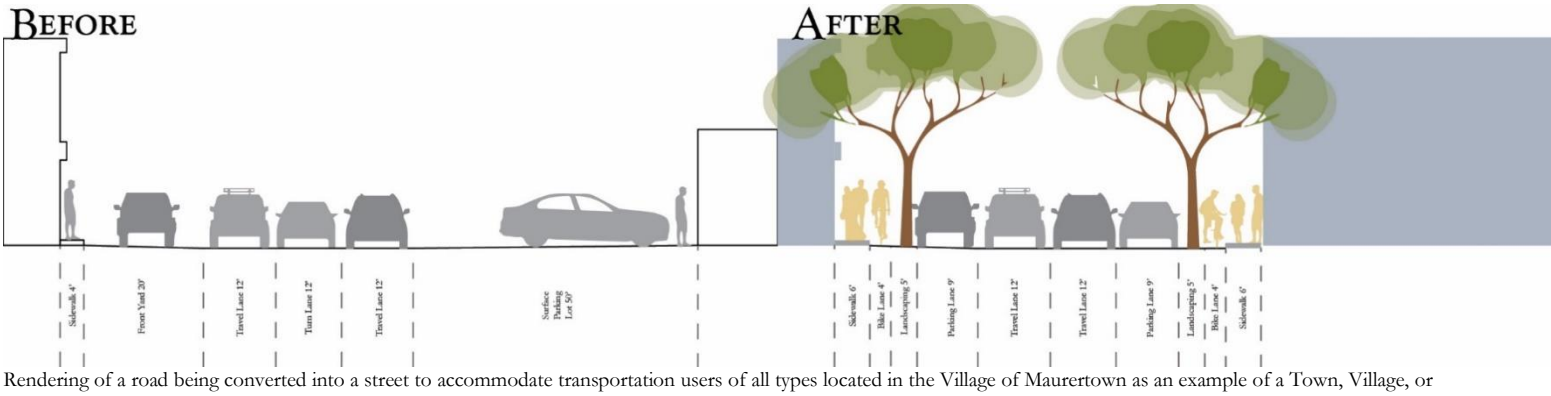
Objective 10.5.2: Support youth and adult sports

Provide resources and support for youth and adult sports programs to encourage healthy physical activity and community involvement among young people and adults.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Annually review programs which are in demand and continue offering or increasing their availability.	1. Implement a program review process to assess participation rates and satisfaction. 2. Collect qualitative data from participants to understand the demand for each program. 3. Adjust program offerings based on feedback and participation trends.	Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
2. Enhance funding and facilities for youth sports programs.	1. Identify potential grants and funding sources dedicated to youth sports and apply to increase the financial resources available. 2. Collaborate with local schools and community organizations to improve and expand the use of existing sports facilities for youth programs. 3. Organize annual community events to raise awareness and additional funds for youth sports initiatives.	SCPS, Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
3. Expand adult sports leagues and fitness programs.	1. Survey community members to determine interest in different types of adult sports leagues and fitness programs. 2. Partner with local gyms, sports clubs, and community centers to provide venues and resources for adult sports activities. 3. Organize seasonal sports leagues for adults with a variety of sports such as soccer, basketball, and softball. 4. Organize annual community sports tournaments that encourage adult participation, such as tennis, golf, or swimming competitions. 5. Develop a series of wellness and fitness workshops focused on adults, including nutritional seminars, exercise classes, and mental health sessions.	Parks and Rec	2025-2030 S&R
4. Continue to publish quarterly catalogs of programs and send to all county residents.	1. Develop a comprehensive content plan for the quarterly program catalogs. 2. Ensure distribution channels are effective in reaching all county residents. 3. Incorporate an online version for easy access and environmental sustainability.	Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
5. Actively support inclusion in events and activities.	1. Work with partners to generate access to recreational activities to the disadvantaged. 2. Include communities of color and ESL in planning and outreach for programming. 3. Organize inclusive events for diverse community engagement.	Tourism And Economic Development, Parks and Rec	2030-2035 U&E
6. Develop partnerships to provide diverse sports opportunities.	1. Form partnerships with local sports clubs to offer a wider range of sports activities. 2. Work with community leaders to consider mentorship programs linking young athletes with experienced coaches and players. 3. Coordinate with neighboring counties to participate in inter-county youth sports leagues for expanded competition and exposure. 4. Create a calendar of sports events and encourage businesses to sponsor and support. 5. Consider a county-wide sports day for adults to promote physical activity and community bonding through a variety of sports and recreational activities.	SCPS, Parks and Rec	2035-2040 I&E
7. Reach out to bike groups, runners, etc., to convince them to use Shenandoah County for bike races, triathlons, scavenger hunts, soccer tournaments and similar widely attended events.	1. Host brainstorming sessions with local outdoor clubs, travel agents, and other appropriate stakeholders to create a list of events that would work well in the County. 2. Develop a plan based on the brainstorming outcome to pursue these events/activities to choose Shenandoah County as their event base. 3. Market the County to attract more groups to host events here.	Tourism And Economic Development, Parks and Rec	2045-2072 P&A
8. Support Shenandoah County as being the destination for outdoor events.	1. Develop marketing materials highlighting the County as a location for outdoor events. 2. Offer incentives to event organizers who choose Shenandoah County for their events. 3. Create a digital platform dedicated to showcasing upcoming outdoor events.	Tourism And Economic Development	2045-2072 P&A

Chapter 11:

Transportation



Rendering of a road being converted into a street to accommodate transportation users of all types located in the Village of Maurertown as an example of a Town, Village, or Hamlet.

Vision:

Residents will have quality transportation systems that are safe, efficient, and modern systems built for the 22nd century.

Relationship Of The Vision To The Comprehensive Plan:
To be a great place to live and work we will have a multimodal transportation system that supports our rural character for decades to come. To achieve this, we will be responsible stewards in our transportation investments by collaborating with private and public partners.

Chapter Organization:
Chapter 11 is organized into five goals that aim to improve transportation infrastructure and services throughout Shenandoah County. It begins with maps showing the existing infrastructure then provides information on the Virginia Six Year Improvement Plan. The Chapter provides assumptions and metrics to help identify the improvement needs in the community including safety areas identified by VDOT and highly traveled areas. The Chapter outlines priority improvements for the first ten years then breaks into the five goals with associated maps.

Summary Of The Chapter:
Chapter 11 was written to address the critical need for a comprehensive and connected transportation network. The intent of this chapter is to develop strategies that enhance road safety, reduce congestion, and improve accessibility for all residents. This includes creating an interconnected system of pedestrian and bike networks, supporting tourism and economic development through improved transportation, and promoting shared transportation options. The county aims to maintain its rural charm while ensuring that transportation infrastructure meets modern standards. By documenting and implementing these strategies, the plan seeks to enhance the quality of life, support local businesses, and foster community engagement. As you read this chapter, consider how transportation impacts your daily life—from the safety of your commute to the convenience of public transit—as we all contribute to the county's transportation future.

By the year 2045 the following Goals and Objectives shall be completed through the Strategies and Actions herein detailed:

Goal 11.1
There will be safe roads for all users with less congestion.

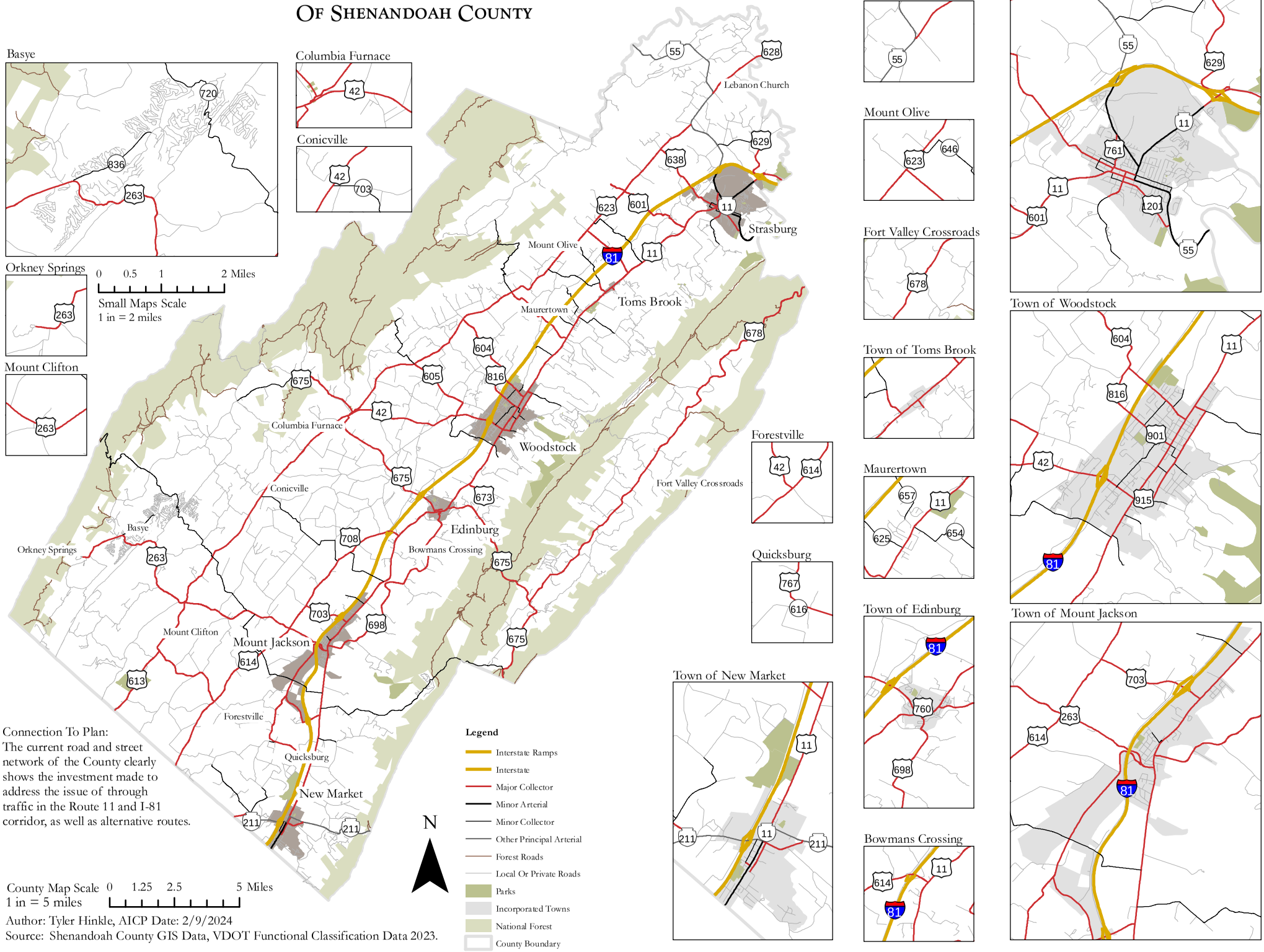
Goal 11.2
There will be an interconnected system of safe pedestrian and bike networks throughout the County.

Goal 11.3
Street systems will be complete, safe, and connected for all.

Goal 11.4
Our transportation system will support tourism and economic development.

Goal 11.5
Shared transportation will be a viable option for traveling around and through the County.

Current Road And Street Network
Of Shenandoah County

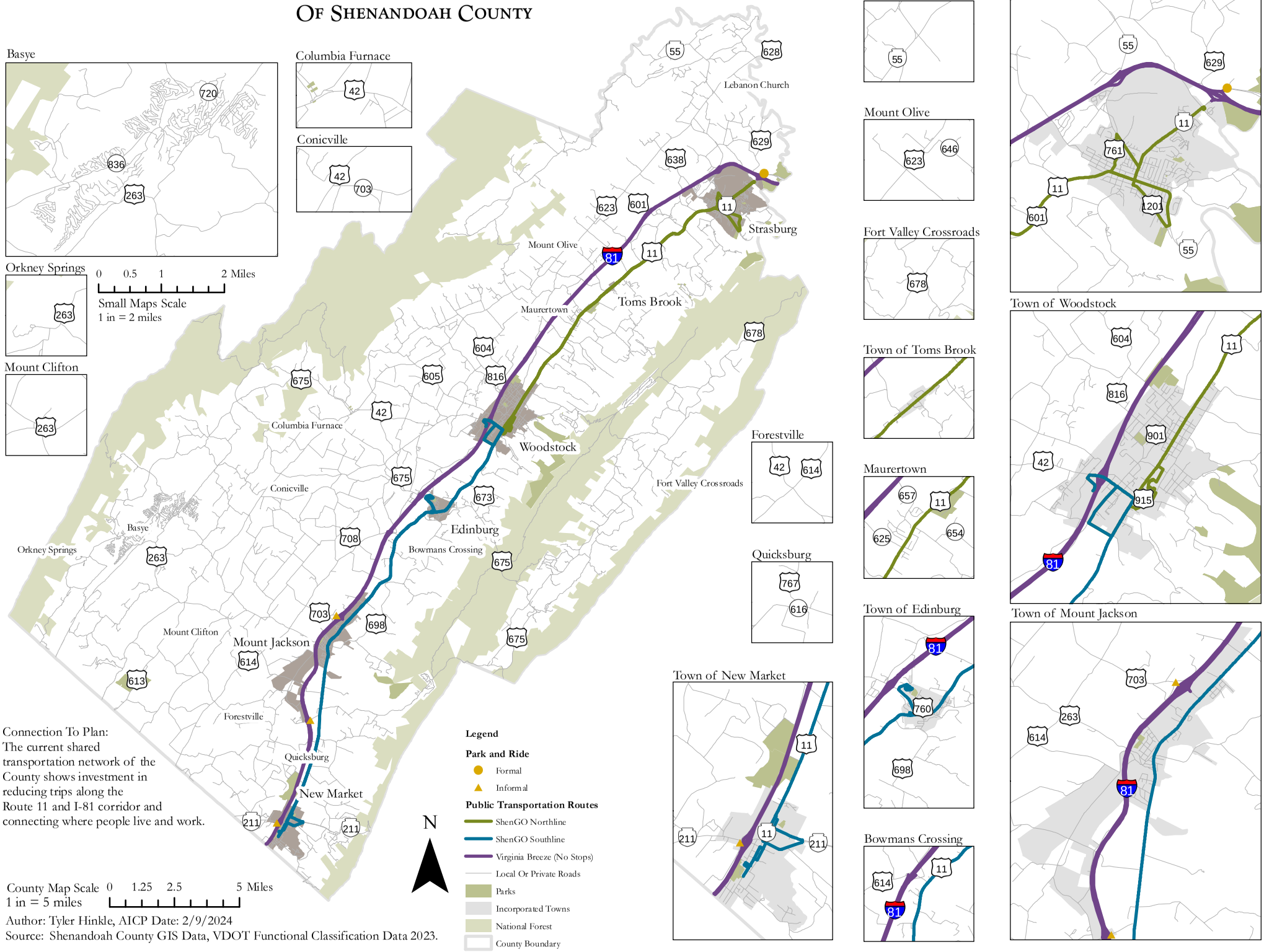


Connection To Plan:
The current road and street network of the County clearly shows the investment made to address the issue of through traffic in the Route 11 and I-81 corridor, as well as alternative routes.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Current Shared Transportation Network
Of Shenandoah County

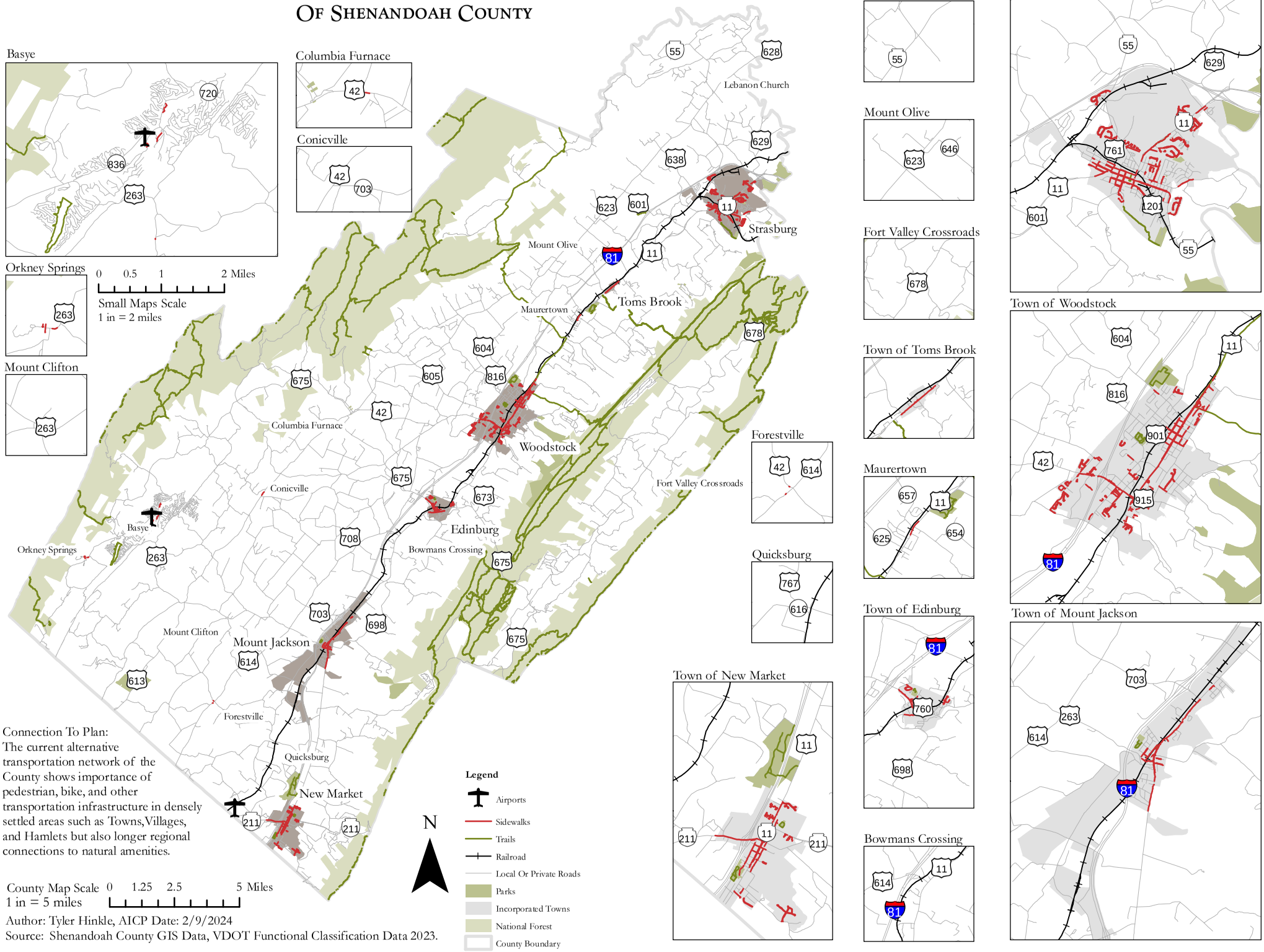


Connection To Plan:
The current shared transportation network of the County shows investment in reducing trips along the Route 11 and I-81 corridor and connecting where people live and work.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Current Alternative Transportation Network

Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
The current alternative transportation network of the County shows importance of pedestrian, bike, and other transportation infrastructure in densely settled areas such as Towns,Villages, and Hamlets but also longer regional connections to natural amenities.

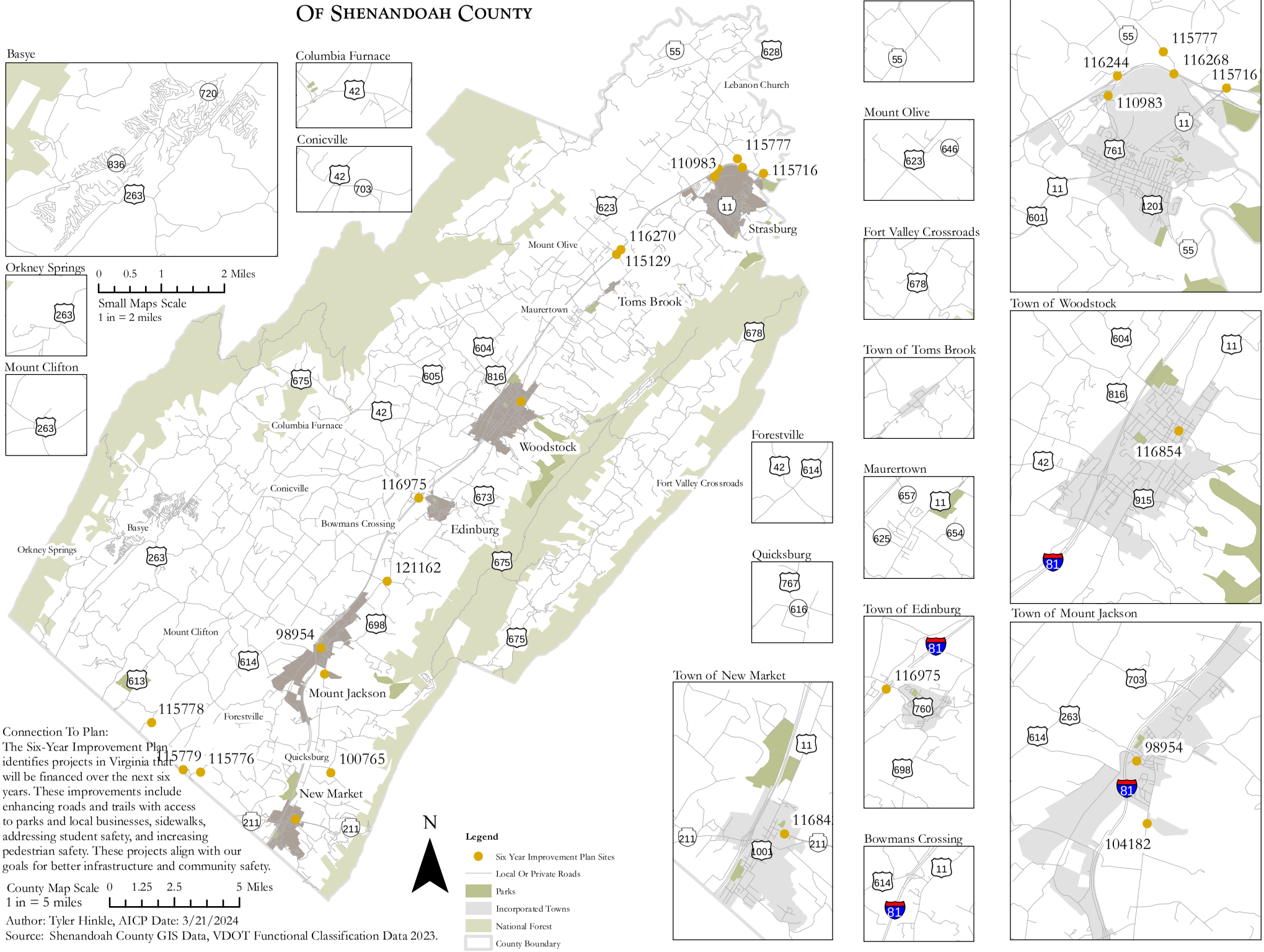
Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024

Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Current Six Year Improvement Plan FY 2024 – FY 2029 Projects

UPC	Description	Road System	Estimate (In Thousands of Dollars)	FY24	FY25-29
115129	#Smart20 I-81 Exit 291 Northbound Ramp Widening	Interstate	$782	$211	$195
116244	#I81 CIP Sb Exit 296 Extend Acceleration Lane (Id #51)	Interstate	$449	$0	$0
116268	#I81 CIP Sb Mm 296 To 299, 3-Lane Widening (Id #50)	Interstate	$121,082	$53,547	$36,952
116270	#I81 CIP Nb Exit 291 Extend Acceleration Lane (Id #46)	Interstate	$1,078	$0	$0
116975	#Sgr21vp Edinburg Resurfacing Plant Mix Schedule (Pm-8m-21)	Interstate	$2,530	$0	$0
104182	#Sgr19vb - Bridge (Fed 16958) Rt 11 Over North Fork of the Shenandoah River	Primary	$7,627	$0	$0
116842	Route 211 Lee Highway Sidewalk	Primary	$350	$321	$0
110983	Rt.55 - Upgrade Flashing Lights and Add Gates	Rail	$409	$0	$0
T26942	Fy28 Shenandoah County Rural Rustic Roads Projects	Secondary	$625	$0	$659
121194	Fy27 Shenandoah County Rural Rustic Roads Projects	Secondary	$722	$0	$700
122212	Countywide - Transportation Services	Secondary	$1,157	$117	$583
115778	South Middle Road - Rural Rustic	Secondary	$416	$214	$202
115779	Switch Back Road - Rural Rustic	Secondary	$291	$0	$291
115776	Ridge Road - Rural Rustic	Secondary	$392	$0	$0
100765	Bridge Replacement Route 620 Over Smith Creek Va Str 6351 Fed Id 17119	Secondary	$1,766	$0	$0
115716	#Smart20 Oranda Road Park And Ride Expansion	Secondary	$2,808	$651	$1,285
115777	Timberlake Road - Rural Rustic	Secondary	$485	$485	$0
98954	#Sgr17vb - Br & Approach Replace - Rt 698 Over Mill Creek	Secondary	$2,260	$0	$0
121162	#Sgr23vb Rte. 707 Bridge Over N. Fork Shenandoah River (17254)	Secondary	$8,496	$511	$6,528
T28039	FY 29 Shenandoah County Rural Rustic Roads Projects	Secondary	$1,150	$0	$980
117035	FY 26 Shenandoah County Rural Rustic Roads Projects	Secondary	$825	$0	$941
116854	Rte. 11 Main Street Bike Ped Connections	Primary	$1,639	$135	$0

Six Year Improvement Plan
Of Shenandoah County



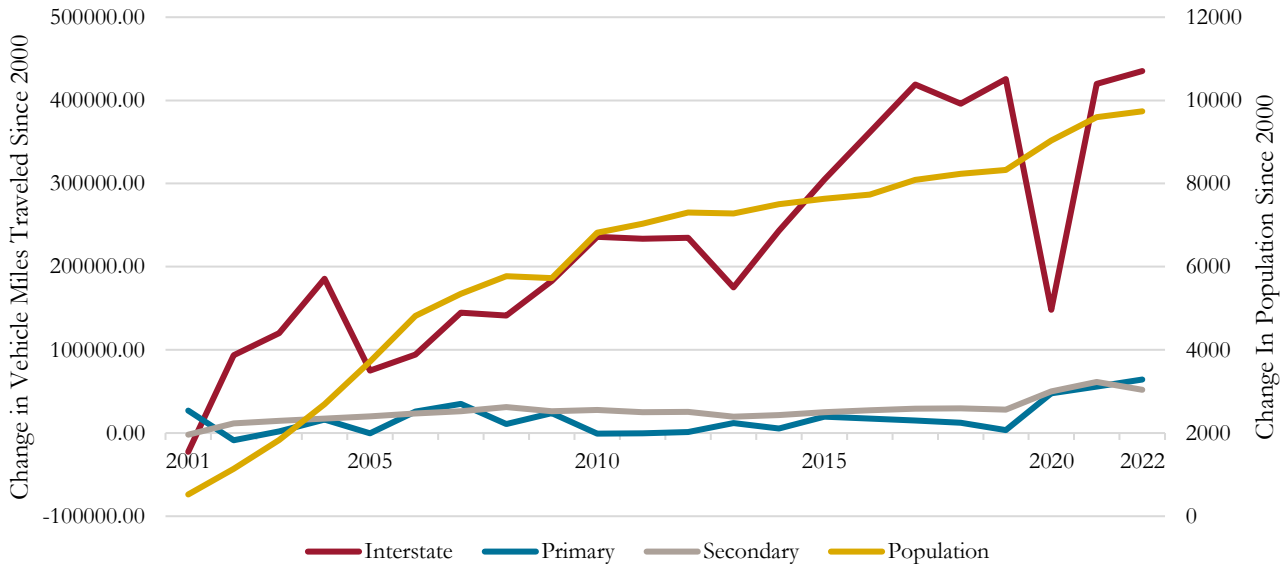
Connection To Plan:
The Six-Year Improvement Plan identifies projects in Virginia that will be financed over the next six years. These improvements include enhancing roads and trails with access to parks and local businesses, sidewalks, addressing student safety, and increasing pedestrian safety. These projects align with our goals for better infrastructure and community safety.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 3/21/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Assumptions

In our projections for Shenandoah County up to 2045, we anticipate that the relationship between population growth and vehicle trips will remain consistent. This means as the population grows, the number of vehicle trips will also increase proportionally, a trend clearly illustrated in the "As Population Increases, Traffic Continues To Increase" line chart. Based on data from the UVa Weldon Cooper Center, we predict a population of 51,603 by 2045. Since 1975, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in the county have increased significantly, by 253.08%. This rise is most pronounced on Interstate 81, where there has been a 377.25% increase, far outstripping the 82.39% increase on primary roads. This disparity is further illustrated in the two pie charts, "Vehicle Miles Traveled" and "Total Miles Of Road," and the "Interstate Traffic Vastly Outweighs Local Traffic" line area chart, highlighting the predominance of Interstate traffic.

Traffic Continues To Increase With The Population

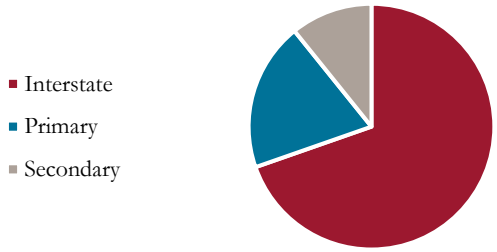


Source: VDOT Historic Traffic Counts 2001-2022, Census Bureau

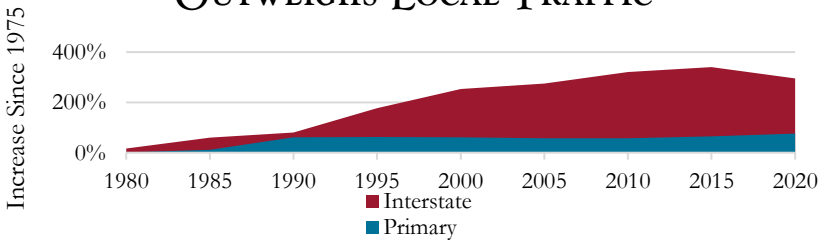
The impact of Interstate 81 is substantial, accounting for 70% of all traffic, compared to 20% from primary roads and 10% from secondary roads. While we can't influence national issues such as Interstate 81 traffic, we can propose local improvements to reduce VMT locally and support alternative transportation. This includes the ongoing debate around the proposed Corridor H, which has faced consistent local opposition since 1990, reaffirmed by the Board of Supervisors' 2022 resolution against its construction in Virginia. Enhancing the Page Valley railroad or providing other automobile transport options are preferred alternatives for managing the challenges of Interstate 81.

We also assume that car accidents will continue to occur in the same locations they have historically and may increase in frequency as the population and associated vehicle trips increase. However, we anticipate a reduction in local vehicle trips as we focus growth on towns, villages, and hamlets, aiming to counteract the higher traffic typically generated by more suburban or isolated

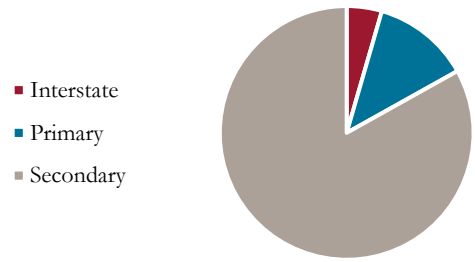
Vehicle Miles Traveled



Interstate Traffic Vastly Outweighs Local Traffic



Total Miles Of Road



Source: VDOT Historic Traffic Counts 1975-2020

development patterns. The "Traffic Is Tied To Where Development Occurs" combination chart underscores this point, showing that currently, 90% of vehicle trips originate from County areas, with 2.3% from Service Areas, and 7.7% from Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

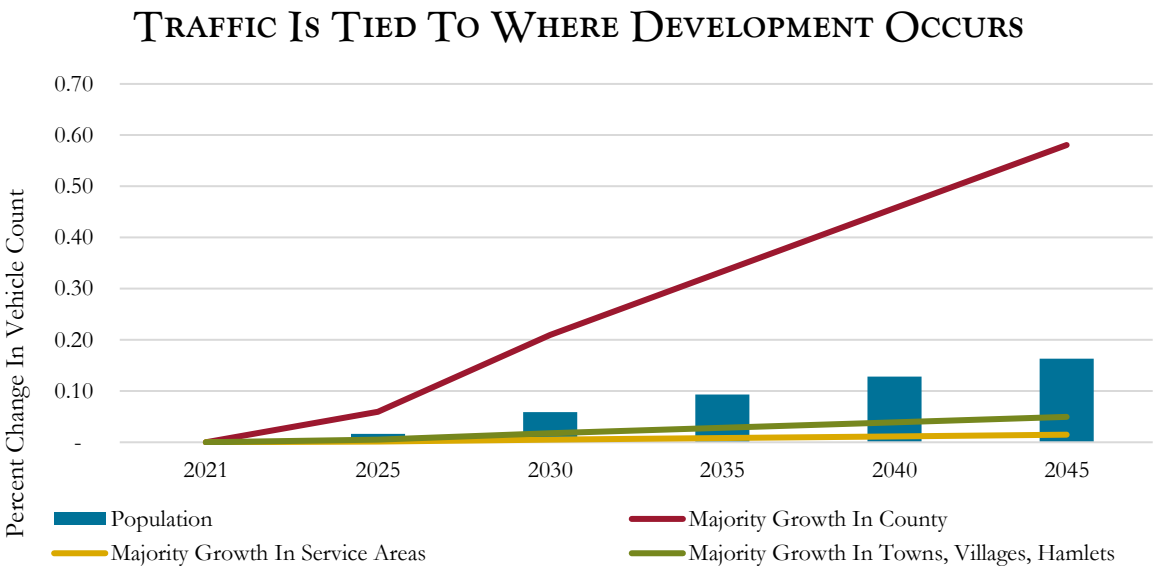
We anticipate that the trend of Shenandoah County attracting primarily commuters and retirees will continue. This assumption is based on the current demographic makeup of the county, where these two groups form the majority of the population. Commuters often require efficient routes for daily travel, while retirees may prioritize accessible transportation options.

We foresee an increased use of local roads and transport infrastructure for tourism and recreational activities. The proposed regional trail is also a key element in this shift, encouraging more residents and visitors to opt for cycling and walking. Improvements include enhancing rural roads to better serve the needs of tourists, local residents, and the agricultural community.

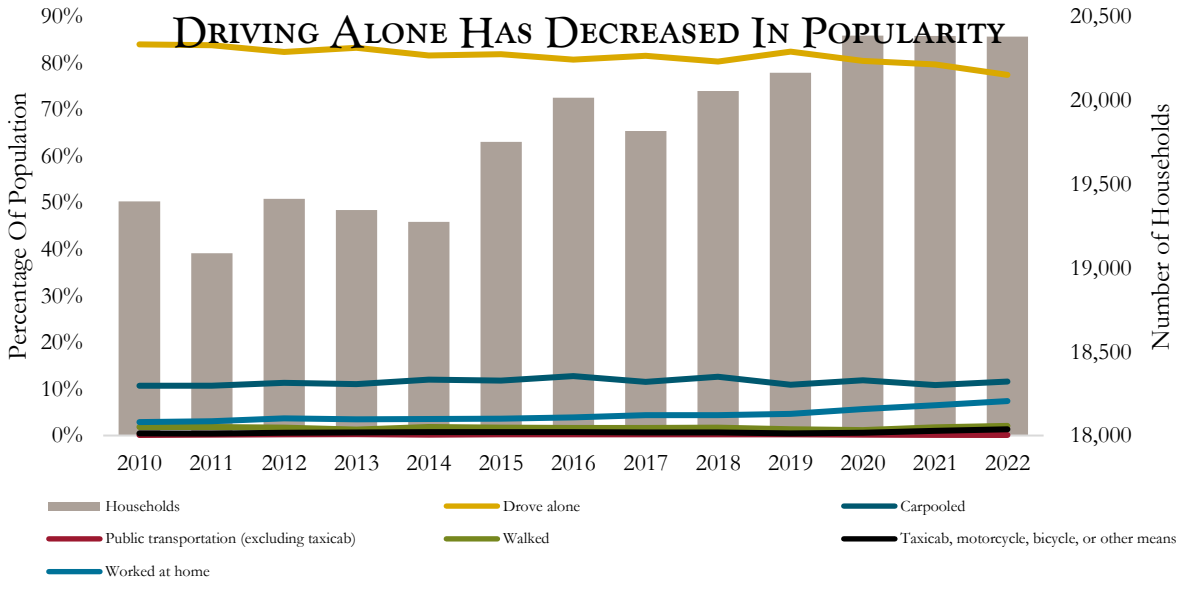
As the population ages and the costs of private transportation rise, we expect a shift towards shared transportation options. This trend aligns with the popularity of the ShenGO public transportation route. This move towards non-motorized transportation is reflected in the "Driving Alone Has Decreased In Popularity" chart, signals a changing transportation attitude.

The proposed zoning changes aim to cultivate traditional community structures, which inherently support reduced reliance on automobiles. This approach encourages the development of walkable, bike-friendly communities with integrated public transit options, reducing the overall need for extensive automobile transportation infrastructure. However, the anticipated increase in activity within these denser communities will require thoughtful traffic management, including calming measures and potentially reduced speed limits.

In conclusion, our approach is not just about managing the growth of traffic but transforming the nature of how we move. By focusing on enhancing a variety of transportation options, from public transit to biking and walking paths, we aim to address the diverse needs of our changing population. This strategy is about creating a more connected, accessible, and livable community.

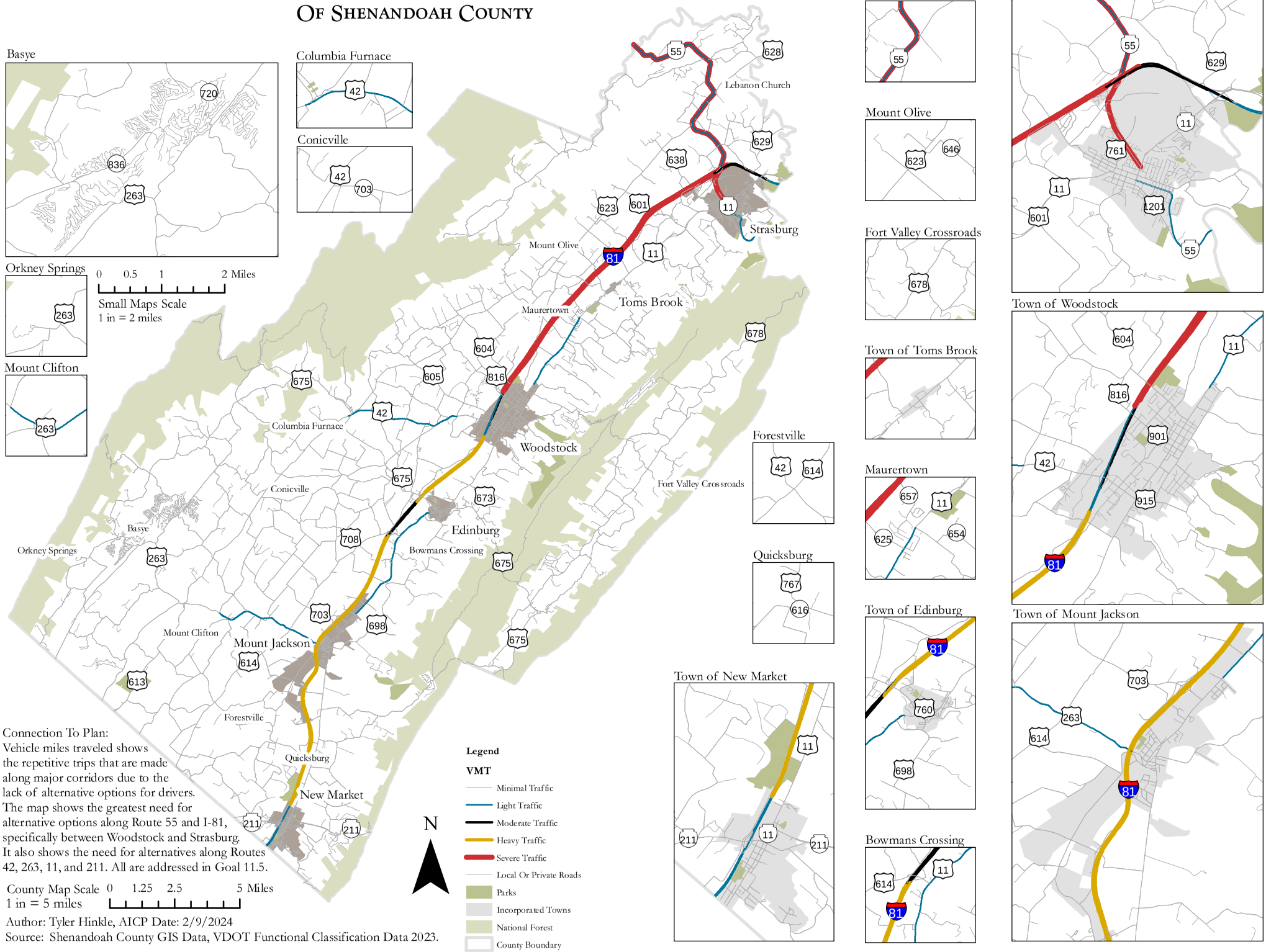


Source: VDOT Traffic Counts were used to develop averages for different areas of the County then tied to population projections by the UVa Weldon Cooper Center to project potential future traffic based on new housing in each area assuming the relationship



Source: American Community Survey Mode Of Transportation To Work 2010-2022

Vehicle Miles Traveled
Of Shenandoah County

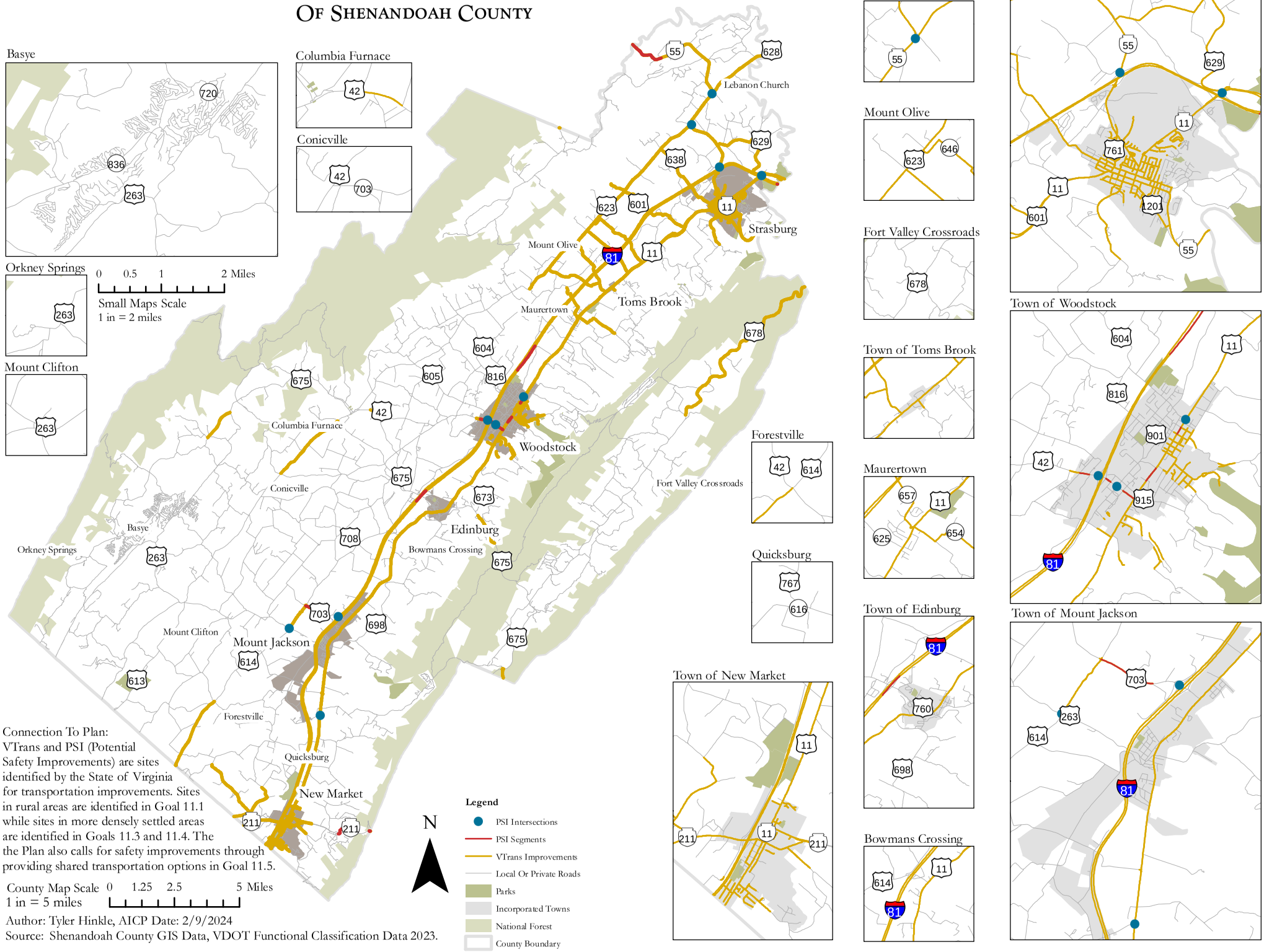


Connection To Plan:
Vehicle miles traveled shows the repetitive trips that are made along major corridors due to the lack of alternative options for drivers. The map shows the greatest need for alternative options along Route 55 and I-81, specifically between Woodstock and Strasburg. It also shows the need for alternatives along Routes 42, 263, 11, and 211. All are addressed in Goal 11.5.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

VTrans Needs And PSI Locations
Of Shenandoah County



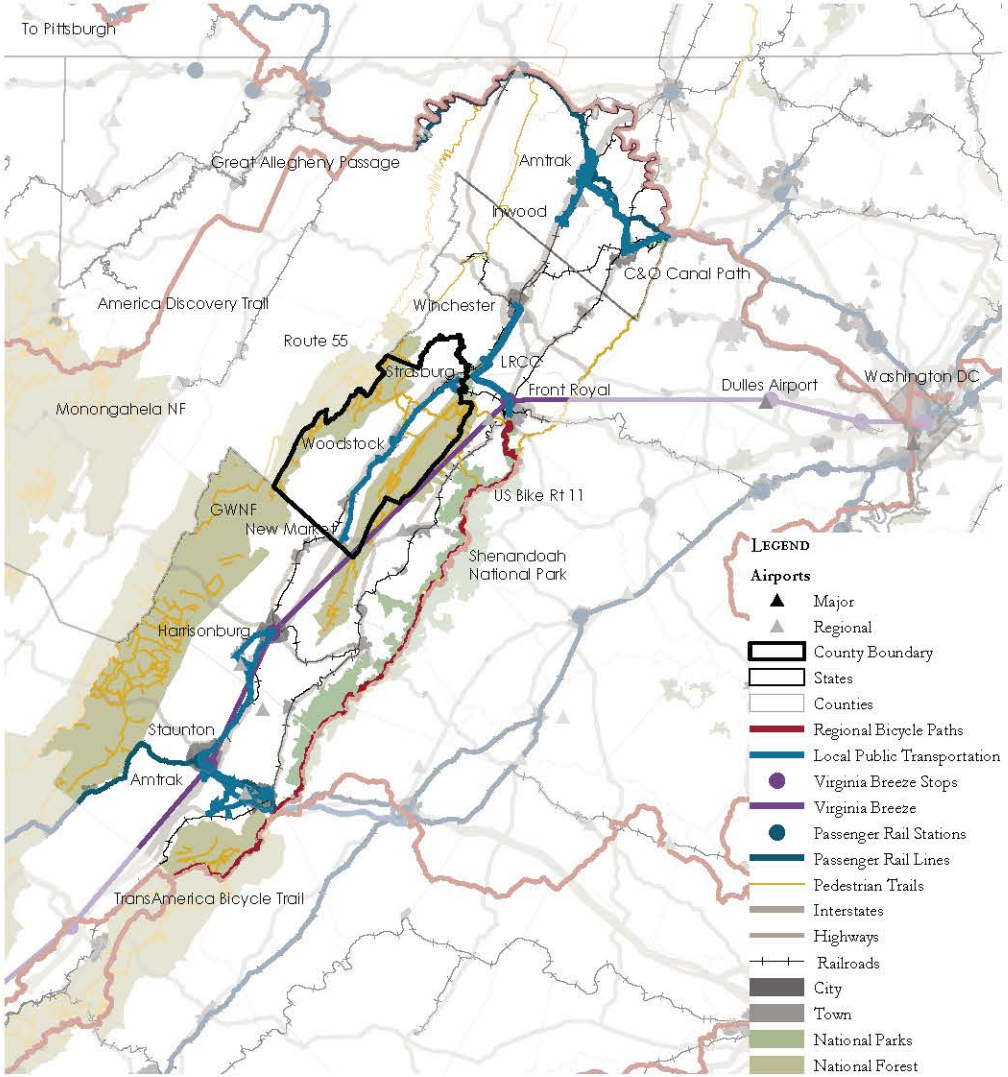
Connection To Plan:
VTrans and PSI (Potential Safety Improvements) are sites identified by the State of Virginia for transportation improvements. Sites in rural areas are identified in Goal 11.1 while sites in more densely settled areas are identified in Goals 11.3 and 11.4. The the Plan also calls for safety improvements through providing shared transportation options in Goal 11.5.

County Map Scale
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Existing Regional Transportation Corridors

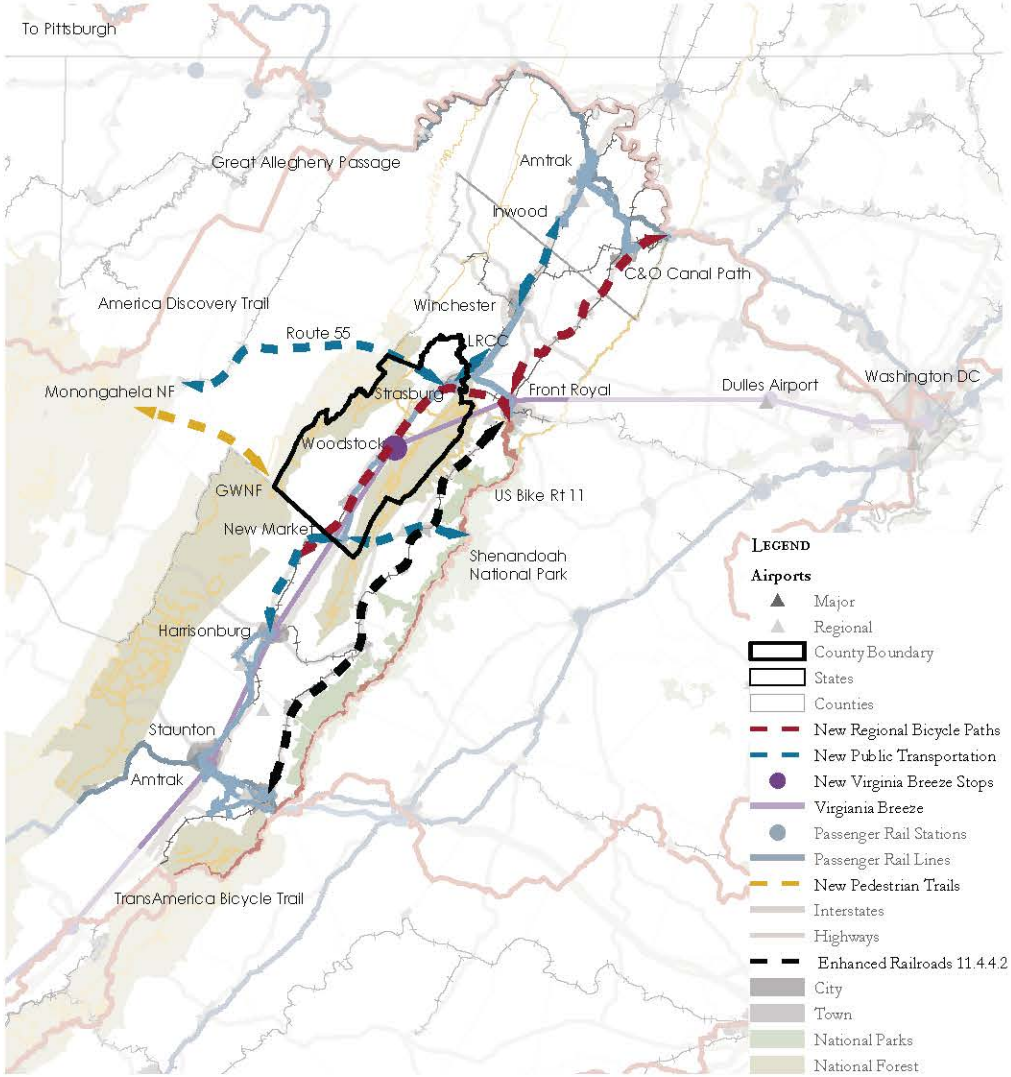
Of Shenandoah County



Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 1/16/204 Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, FHWA, VDOT, US Bike Routes, Esri, USDOI, NPS.

Identified Regional Connections

Of Shenandoah County

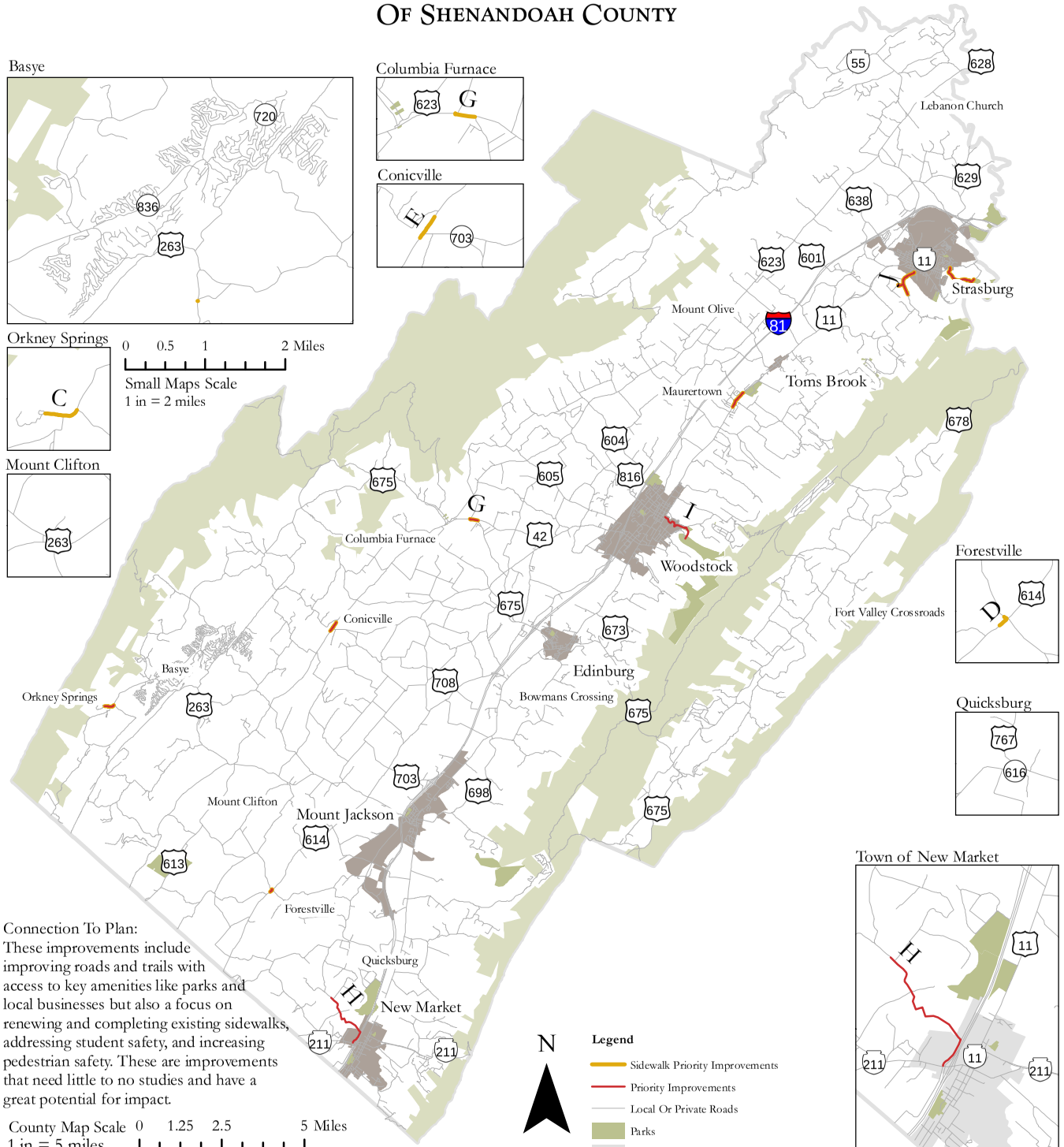


Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 1/16/204 Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, FHWA, VDOT, US Bike Routes, Esri, USDOI, NPS.

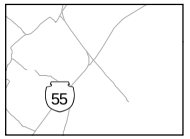
2025-2035 Priority Improvements:

Task	Estimated Length	Estimated Width	Associated Strategies	Estimated Cost
A. Widen Pouts Hill Road (Route 634) and add a sidewalk along it from the intersection with Route 635 to the entrance of Keister Park.	5,800 Feet	Additional 2 Feet of Pavement for Road 6 Feet Sidewalk	11.1.7	$5M
B. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Village of Maurertown from Fehr Lane to the County Park and add a crosswalk across Route 11 and a midblock crosswalk in front of the US Post Office on Route 11.	2,900 Feet Sidewalk 50 Feet Crosswalk (x2)	6 Feet	11.2.3 11.3.5	$4.7M
C. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Village of Orkney Springs along 263 from Shrine Mont Circle to Happy Valley Road.	1,600 Feet Sidewalk	6 Feet	11.2.3	$2.3M
D. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Village of Forestville along Route 42 from the bridge over Holman's Creek to St Marks Church.	605 Feet Sidewalk	6 Feet	11.2.3	$804,000
E. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Village of Conicville along Route 42 from Jerome Road to 300 feet south of the intersection with Conicville Road.	1,705 Feet Sidewalk	6 Feet	11.2.3	$2.2M
F. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Hamlet of Saumsville along Jadwyn Road from the intersection with Saumsville Road to 505 feet south.	505 Feet Sidewalk	6 Feet	11.2.3	$732,000
G. Extend and replace the sidewalk in the Village of Columbia Furnace from Racetrack Road to Stoneburner Road and add a crosswalk in front of the County Store.	1,305 Feet Sidewalk 50 Feet Crosswalk	6 Feet	11.2.3 11.3.5	$1.9M
H. Consider a connecting trail from the potential Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail to New Market including access to the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and Battlefield State Park.	10,400 Feet	10 Feet	11.2.5.2	$7.3M
I. Support the connection of Woodstock to Seven Bends State Park with a shared use path.	6,700 Feet Path 300 Feet Bridge	10 Feet	11.2.4	$5M
J. Install a pedestrian bridge along Holiday Street adjacent to Strasburg over the North Fork of the Shenandoah River with a shared use path to connect all three schools to the bridge.	5,100 Feet Path 600 Feet Bridge	6 Feet	11.1.11.1 11.2.8.4	$5M

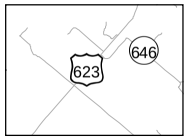
Priority Improvements
Of Shenandoah County



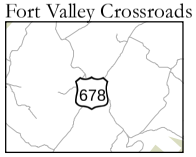
Lebanon Church



Mount Olive

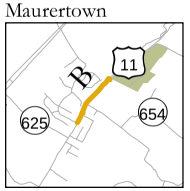


Fort Valley Crossroads

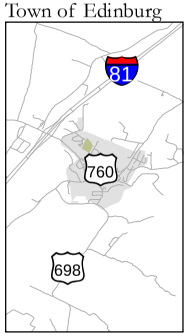


Town of Toms Brook

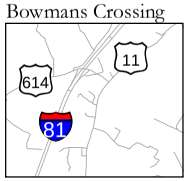
Maurertown



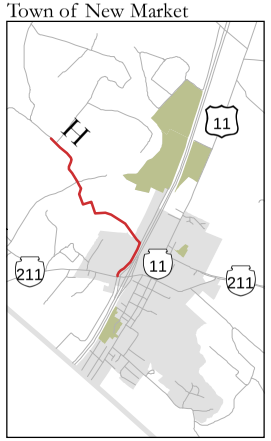
Town of Edinburg



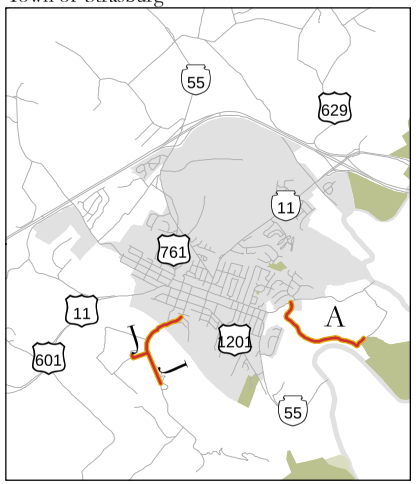
Bowmans Crossing



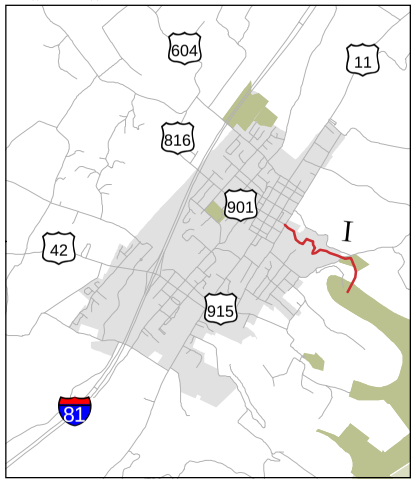
Town of New Market



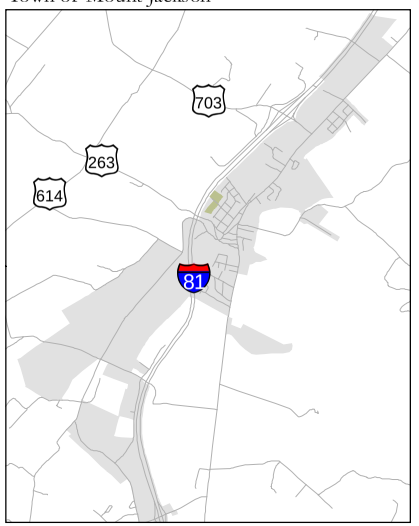
Town of Strasburg



Town of Woodstock



Town of Mount Jackson

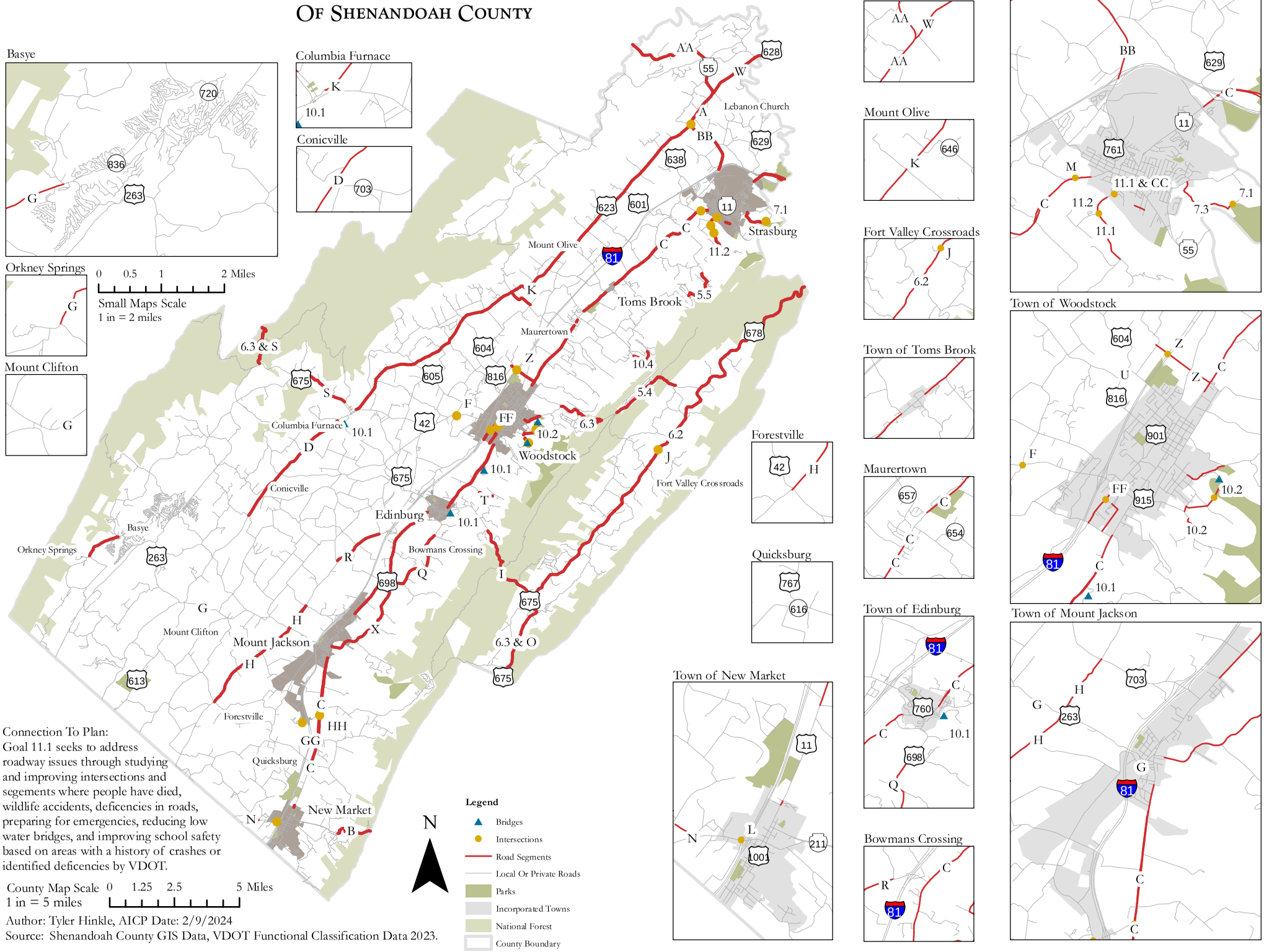


Connection To Plan:
These improvements include improving roads and trails with access to key amenities like parks and local businesses but also a focus on renewing and completing existing sidewalks, addressing student safety, and increasing pedestrian safety. These are improvements that need little to no studies and have a great potential for impact.

County Map Scale 0 1.25 2.5 5 Miles
1 in = 5 miles

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 3/21/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Proposed Roadway Improvements
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 11.1 seeks to address roadway issues through studying and improving intersections and segements where people have died, wildlife accidents, deficencies in roads, preparing for emergencies, reducing low water bridges, and improving school safety based on areas with a history of crashes or identified deficencies by VDOT.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Goal 11.1 There will be safe and efficient roads for all users with less congestion.

Objective 11.1.1: Zero deaths, roads improved, safe school access, and address low water bridges

There will be zero pedestrian, vehicular, or other transportation related human deaths and deficiencies on roads, school access, and low water bridges will be improved and reduced.

Objective 11.1.2: Prioritize smart strategic improvements over road widening

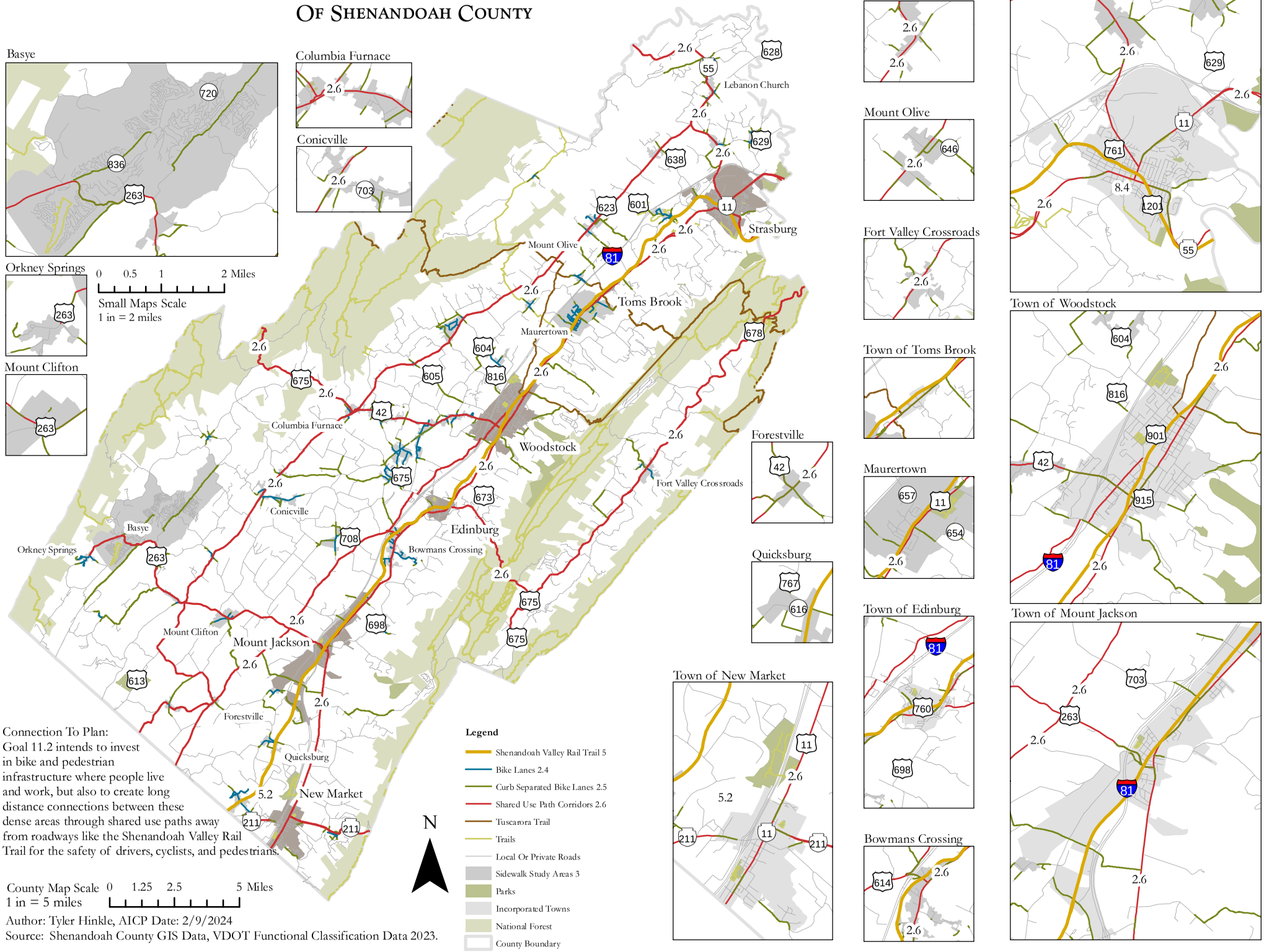
In the event of emergencies there will be a clear alternative route for Rt 11 and I-81. Rt 55 will be strategically improved instead of implementing Corridor H in the County.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Utilize VDOT data for decision making and support enhancements to the data.	1. Ensure VDOT data is utilized when reviewing SUP's, ZMA's or others. 2. Support VDOT efforts to further document and project issues and needs on roadways.	Community Development, VDOT	2025-2030 S&R
2. While trails for bikes and pedestrians are being built out, official "Recommended Bike Roads" will be designated with signage notifying drivers.	1. Collaborate with local cycling groups to identify and map out bike roads. 2. Install signage along these routes to alert drivers to the presence of bicyclists. 3. Raise awareness and increase education on how to pass bikes and pedestrians	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2025-2030 S&R
3. Areas around villages and hamlets should have a posted speed no greater than 35 mph and 25 mph within them.	1. Request VDOT to decrease speeds in and around the villages and hamlets. 2. Implement traffic calming to reduce the design speed of the spaces. 3. Install speed monitoring devices and signage to inform drivers of the reduced speeds.	Community Development, VDOT	2025-2030 S&R
4. Animal related crashes will be reduced.	1. Conduct a study on hotspots for wildlife-vehicle collisions and migration. 2. Educate the public and raise awareness for wildlife crossings. 3. Develop an implementation plan for the construction of wildlife crossings.	GIS Department, VDOT	2030-2035 U&E
5. Key gravel roads will be prioritized for paving, while other key gravel roads are protected with a heritage road program.	1. Have 100 feet of any gravel roads paved that converge with paved roads. 2. Change zoning on Rural Rustic Program roads to limit VTPD to 2,500. 3. Consider a Heritage Road Program where residents can opt out of paving. 4. Continue to assess roads and bridges for potential addition to the State System.	Community Development, VDOT	2030-2035 U&E
6. Enhance safety on roadways with road maintenance issues, improving shoulders, reflectors, guardrails, and pull-off areas.	1. Identify/ install pull offs along primary roads & reccomended bike roads. 2. Reflectors should be evaluated for above roads including Fort Valley Rd. 3. Evaluate guard rails along key mountain crossings. 4. Work to have roads cleared of any loose gravel and potholes filled.	Community Development, Tourism and Economic Development	2030-2035 U&E
7. Study and improve Pouts Hill Road and install an accessible entrance to Keister Park.	1. Apply for the VDOT Recreational Access Fund Grant to install an entrance. 2. Study Pouts Hill Road for safety and pedestrian and bike improvements. 3. Secure funding and install identified improvements to Pouts Hill Road.	Community Development, Parks and Recreation	2030-2035 U&E
8. Instead of widening Route 11 through all downtowns to four lanes as the NSVRC Report suggests, connect key roads/ streets.	1. Evaluate connecting key roads/streets to divert emergencies and traffic from downtowns. 2. Consult with the public to determine which connections are viable. 3. Apply for funding and implement the connections.	Community Development, All Towns	2035-2040 I&E
9. Strategically improve Rt 55 instead of Corridor H due to its political, economic, and environmental impacts.	1. Establish plan to address Rt 55 as alternative to Corridor H, add to CIP. 2. Consider a public transportation line along Rt 55 and into Hardy County. 3. Consider locations for park and ride facilities along Rt 55 and Hardy Co. 4. Where appropriate, consider turning lanes or shoulder improvements.	Community Development, NSVRC	2035-2040 I&E *Priority*
10. Upgrade and enhance low water bridges.	1. Identify all low water bridges requiring improvements including publicly owned and identified Stoney Creek Rd. (Rt. 675) (UPC 97282), and Chapman Landing Rd. (Rt. 672). 2. Support new bridges at Hollingsworth and Lupton Entrances to Seven Bends State Park. 3. Evaluate interested private bridges to be brought into the public domain. 4. Work with private communities to develop alternative routes out.	Community Development, VDOT	2035-2040 I&E
11. Improve access and circulation at all schools.	1. Support Strasburg's pedestrian bridge on Holiday Street in Strasburg. 2. Support Town applications for SmartScale or other transportation grants.	Community Development, All Towns	2035-2040 I&E

Studies To Be Conducted

	Study To Be Conducted	Rational	Fatal Crashes	Crashes Since 2018
A	Intersections of Back Road, Route 623, and Hockman Road, Route 623, with Rt 55.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2021)	18
B	Along Rt 211 from Route 834 to the Page County Line to improve safety.	Addressing areas where people died.	2 (2017, 2022)	62
C	Along Route 11 between Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	Addressing areas where people died.	9 since 2018	265
D	Along Route 42 from Route 711 to Route 779 to and safety inside and around the village of Conicville and hamlet of Swover Creek.	Addressing areas where people died.	2 (2015, 2019)	44
E	Along Mill and Cemetery Roads.	Addressing areas where people died.	2 (2021, 2023)	6
F	Intersection of Sheetz Mill Road, Saint Luke Road, and Route 42.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2022)	10
G	Along the entirety of Rt 263 including Alum Springs to Happy Valley.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2020)	4
H	Along South Middle Road between Route 263 and Mount Jackson Road.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2018)	33
I	Along Edinburg Gap Road between Fort Valley Road and Mash Lane.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2022)	27
J	Intersection of Fort Valley Road and Seven Fountains Road.	Addressing areas where people died.	1 (2020)	2
K	Along Back Road between Villages and Hamlets.	Addressing areas where people died.	4 since 2018	77
L	The intersection of Route 305 with Route 211 .	NSVRC Report: the intersection is close to the interstate entrance/exits.		8
M	Improve the intersection of Green Acres Road, Route 639, and Route 11.	The intersection was noted as having poor geometric alignment of approach leads to difficulty for right turns to southbound US 11.		16
N	Route 953 from Route 211 to the Route 728 .	The NSVRC Report noted road deficiencies.		8
O	Route 675 from Route 678 to Page County may be evaluated to be improved.	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		15
P	Route 614 from Route 42 to Route 263 .	The NSVRC Report noted road deficiencies.	1 (2017)	33
Q	Route 698 from Route 822 to Route 707 .	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		4
R	Route 614 from Route 707 to Route 693 .	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		6
S	Wolf Gap Road from Columbia Furnace to the West Virginia Line.	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		30
T	Route 673 from 0.53 miles east of Route 11 to dead end .	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		1
U	Route 676 from Route 816 to Route 604 .	The NSVRC Report noted road deficiencies.		23
V	Route 600 from Route 623 to Route 652 .	The NSVRC Report noted road deficiencies.		1
W	Route 628 from Frederick County Line to Route 55 .	NSVRC Report noted lanes 11' wide.		25
X	Route 698 from Route 707 to Mount Jackson .	There are a high number of deer related crashes on this segment. The NSVRC Report noted that the existing lanes are 10 feet in width.		7
Y	Identify existing roads that could be used to divert traffic in the event of an emergency on Rt 11 and/or I-81 including the cost of signage.	Alternatives to Route 11 and Interstate 81.	NA	NA
Z	Consider the potential benefits and consequences of developing the second interstate exit for Woodstock and how it could address ongoing safety and traffic issues.	The NSVRC Report noted that the existing roadway network cannot accommodate long term growth and that a local study recommended that a new I-81 interchange be constructed north of the town.	NA	NA
AA	Along Route 55 from Route 623 to Frederick County evaluated to be improved.	Addressing safety issues along Route 55 rather than Corridor H.		37
BB	Along Route 55 from Interstate 81 to Route 623.	Addressing safety issues along Route 55 rather than Corridor H.	2 (2018, 2021)	26
CC	Conduct a feasibility study a new bridge near the Sandy Hook bend of the river.	Safe school access.		0
DD	Route 648 from Strasburg to Route 788.	Safe school access.		1
EE	Intersection of Route 42 and Susan Avenue.	Safe school access.		9
FF	Intersection of South Ox Road and Falcon Drive.	Current intersection configuration can't accommodate long term growth.		2
GG	Intersection of Caverns Road and Stonewall Lane.	Congested during drop off /pick up.		2
HH	Intersection of Caverns Road and Route 11.	Identified as a PSI intersection.		11
II	Entrance ramp on Interstate Exit 269 southbound.	Numerous crashes and public request for FHWA to examine.		31

Proposed Bike And Pedestrian Improvements
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 11.2 intends to invest in bike and pedestrian infrastructure where people live and work, but also to create long distance connections between these dense areas through shared use paths away from roadways like the Shenandoah Valley Rail Trail for the safety of drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Goal 11.2 There will be an interconnected system of safe pedestrian and bike networks throughout the County.

Objective 11.2.1: Connected & safe multimodal networks to priority destinations and schools

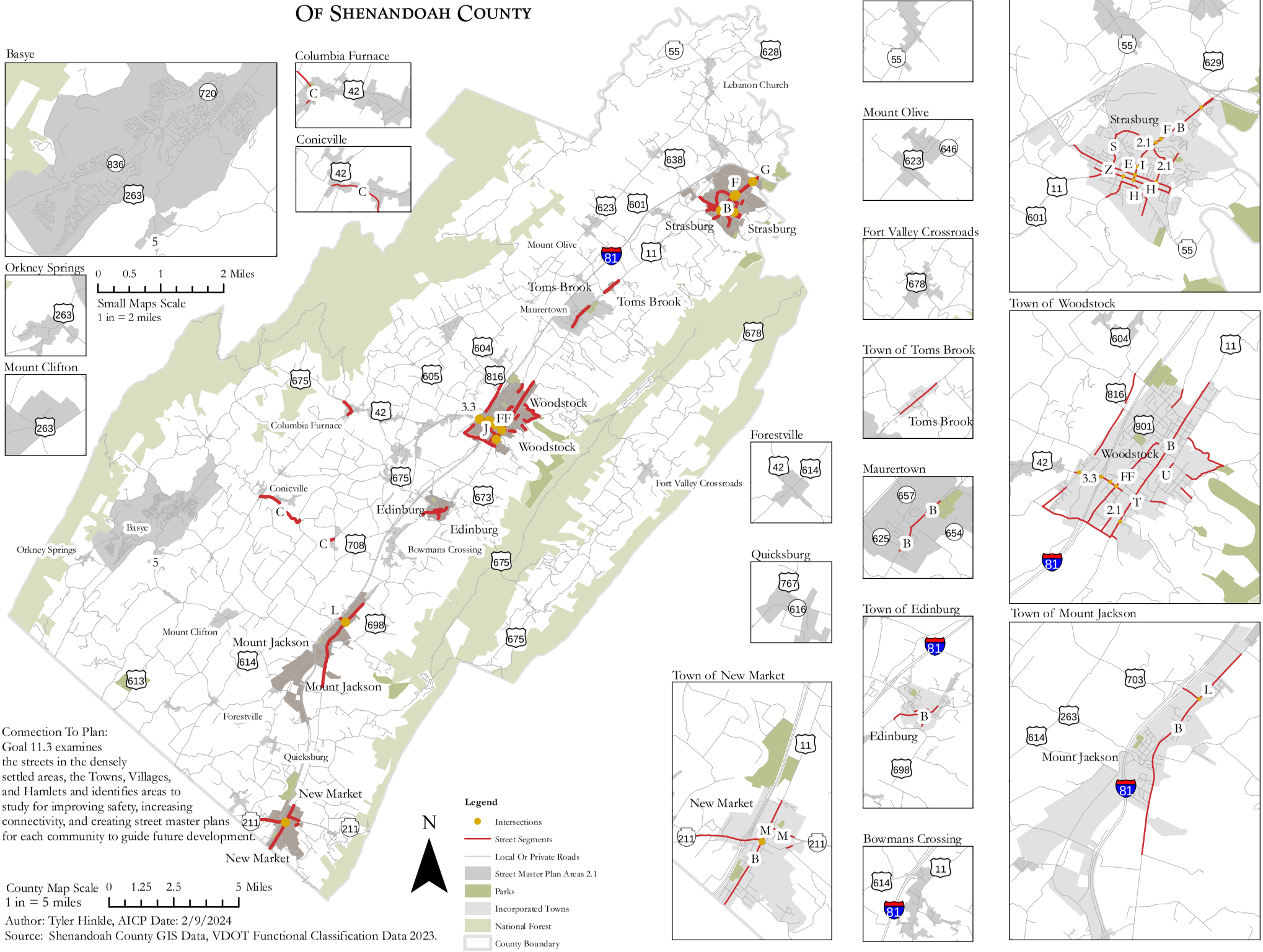
Sidewalks, shared paths, bike lanes, and shared street networks within and between Towns, Villages, and Hamlets will be safe and interconnected to major destinations and schools.

Objective 11.2.2: Trails along easement lines and public space amenities

There can be trails along access easement lines and public space amenities including signs, crosswalks, bike parking, and benches in key strategic locations.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Update zoning and subdivision requirements to require sidewalks, shared use paths, bike lanes, and shared streets to be installed or for right of way to be dedicated at key times.	1. Review the County and all Town zoning and subdivision ordinances to determine at which stage in the development process right of way and/or construciton be required. 2. Consult with developers and the community on what are reasonable standards to hold. 3. Update codes and provide model codes for Towns to be able to use.	Community Development, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
2. Conduct a Bike-Pedestrian Master Plan / Needs Assessment with engineering and construction costs included.	1. Contract out the Plan/Assessment, including project costs. 2. Determine design speeds and use to decide the best treatment method. 3. Create shared streets for roads with designed speed of 20 mph or less. 4. Develop painted bike lanes for roads with a designed speed of 25 mph. 5. For 30-35 mph design speeds, develop curb-separated bike lanes. 6. For 40 mph or more design speeds, develop shared use paths.	Community Development, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
3. Sidewalk networks within Towns, Villages, and Hamlets will be interconnected where possible.	1. Map out areas in the community lacking sidewalk infrastructure. 2. Prioritize connecting downtowns, medical & community centers, parks, and schools.	Community Development, All Towns	2030-2035 U&E
4. Support the connection of Woodstock to Seven Bends State Park and Strasburg to Fishers Hill Battlefield with separated multiuse trails.	1. Perform a feasibility study for potential routes for the multiuse trails. 2. Initiate a dialogue with landowners along the proposed routes. 3. Design a plan including rest stops, signage, and emergency access points.	Community Development	2030-2035 U&E
5. Consider support for a regional trail along the Norfolk Southern Rail Line . This does not preclude a rail w/ trail if found viable by Virginia, or other uses.	1. Pending decision by stakeholders, update the plan if necessary. 2. Advocate for funds to assist in the development of the trail. 3. Consider a connecting trail to New Market including access to the river. 4. Consider trails to the Edinburg Mill, CCC Museum, and others. 5. Consider a connecting trail to Basye. 6. Consider a connection to Fisher's Hill Battlefield as part of its trails.	Community Development, All Towns	2030-2035 U&E
6. Consider trails along easements for transmission / electric lines, pipelines, broadband and internet, water and sewer, and other easements.	1. Engage in discussions to gain permission for public trail access along easements. 2. Map out potential trail routes and assess for safety and environmental considerations. 3. Create and install signage and amenities for public use along trails.	Community Development, All Towns	2035-2040 I&E
7. Ensure a welcoming and safe experience for pedestrians and cyclists.	1. Audit areas needing signage to alert drivers of peds/bikes. 2. Update regulations for bike racks and benches in new developments. 3. Revise the parking ordinance to allow for a parking payout program. 4. Implementing flashing crosswalks for improved pedestrian safety. 5. Install secure and weather-protected bike racks/lockers and benches.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2035-2040 I&E
8. Develop and maintain walking and biking paths to schools.	1. Consider a trail along the Norfolk Southern Rail Line. 2. Identify the routes to schools and develop shared use paths. 3. Collaborate with schools to incorporate these routes into their plans. 4. Support a pedestrian bridge on Holiday Street in Strasburg. 5. Implement traffic-calming measures around school zones.	Community Development, SCPS, All Towns	2035-2040 I&E

Proposed Street Improvements
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 11.3 examines the streets in the densely settled areas, the Towns, Villages, and Hamlets and identifies areas to study for improving safety, increasing connectivity, and creating street master plans for each community to guide future development.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Goal 11.3 Street systems will be complete, safe, and connected for all.

Objective 11.3.1: Street master plans

Update the County's and Towns' policies and requirements to ensure that new streets built are designed to accommodate all users including street master plans.

Objective 11.3.2: Safe streets for all

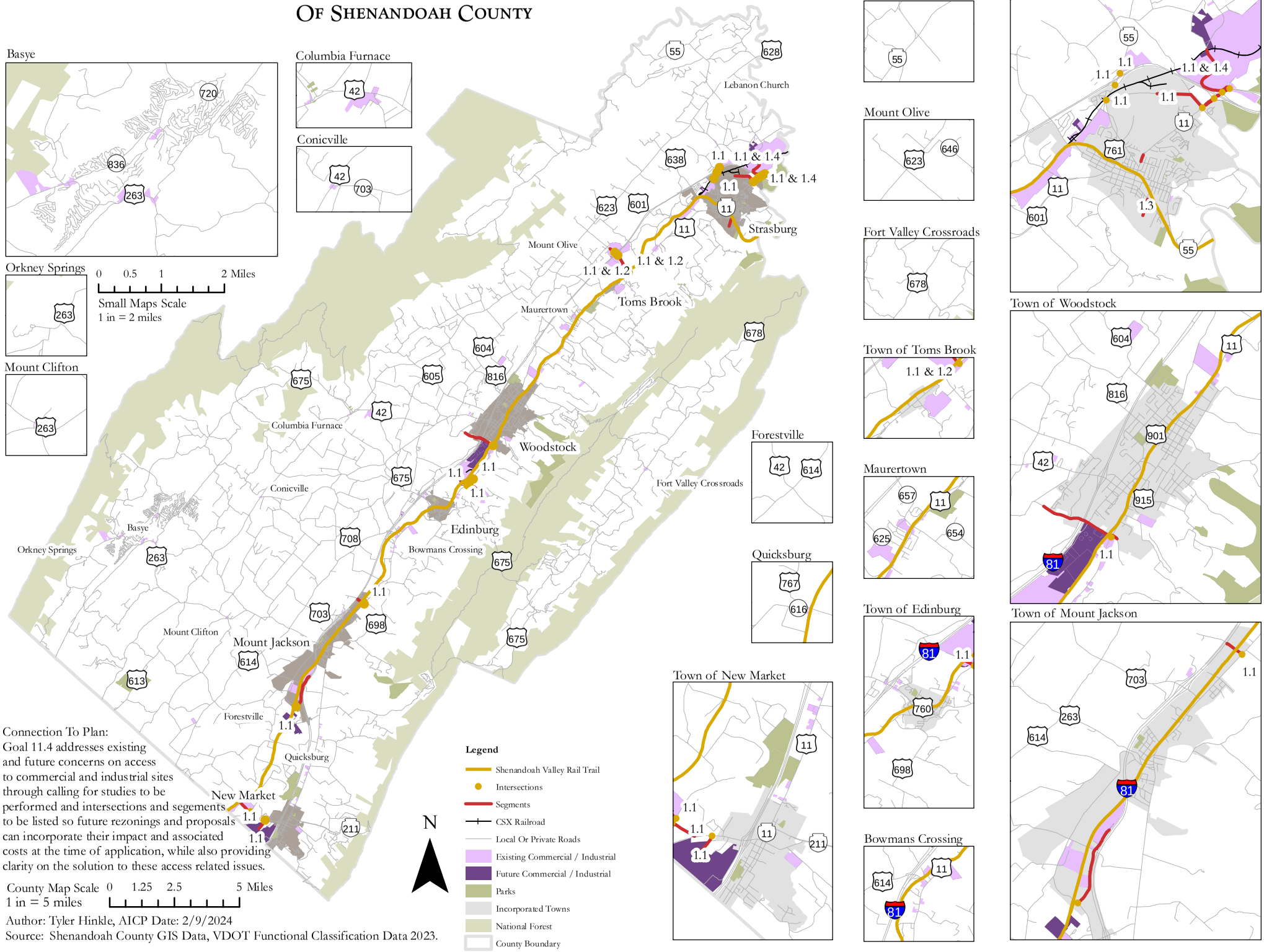
Ensure our streets are safe for all users with road diets and traffic calming, multimodal infrastructure, lighting, crosswalks, seating, and parking to improve the experience on the street.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Review existing County and Town standards on subdivision and zoning requirements and how they impact street layouts and connectivity.	1. Review the County and all Town zoning and subdivision ordinances to determine what blocks, streets, and the relationship buildings have to each in current code. 2. Consult with developers and the community on what are reasonable standards to hold. 3. Update required codes and provide model codes for Towns to be able to use.	Community Development, Planning Commission, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
2. Work with Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to adopt street masters plans by identifing gaps in street networks and other connections the community desires.	1. Develop alternative future maps of what street networks could look like in each place. 2. Consult with community members on gaps in their street networks and most desired. 3. Develop a map connecting areas with vehicular or bike/pedestrian streets/alleys. 4. Ensure proposed growth areas follow similar patterns and blend with existing layout. 5. Host a public workshop to solicit feedback and ideas from the public then adopt.	All Towns, Community Development, VDOT	2025-2030 S&R
3. Conduct studies and improve safety along streets so they function more as streets and less as roads.	1. Reduce speed limits per Strategy 11.1.2. 2. Per Strategy 11.3.2, adopt street master plans with each Town, Village, and Hamlet. 3. Support Woodstock's efforts to redesign Route 42 to reduce traffic and enhance the pedestrian and bike experience.	Community Development, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
4. Assess and improve appropriate downcast street lighting while protecting dark skys.	1. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of current street lighting in all residential areas within Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to identify zones with inadequate lighting. 2. Develop a phased implementation plan to install downcast street lighting where needed, prioritizing areas with higher pedestrian and cyclist traffic. 3. Consider zoning standards to outdoor lighting protecting dark skys.	Community Development, All Towns	2030-2035 U&E
5. Improve and install crosswalks where appropriate with improvements such as high-visibility markings, adding pedestrian signals, and extending crossing times.	1. Identify crosswalk need locations in every Town, Village, and Hamlet, including Mt Hermon from the community center to the church. 2. Upgrade crosswalk visibility and safety features. 3. Integrate pedestrian signals at busy intersections. 4. Extend crossing times at pedestrian-heavy zones.	Community Development, All Towns, VDOT	2030-2035 U&E
6. Improve and install space for public seating for leisure, play, and shared transportation stops.	1. Update regulations to mandate bike racks and benches in new developments. 2. Create a fund for the implementation of bike racks and benches. 3. Install secure bike parking and benches.	Community Development, Planning Commission, All Towns	2030-2035 U&E
7. On-street parking will be available in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.	1. Enhance on-street parking in towns and villages. 2. Develop parking management strategies. 3. Improve parking safety and accessibility.	Community Development, All Towns	2040-2045 R&R

Studies To Be Conducted

	Study To Be Conducted	Rational	Fatal Crashes	Crashes Since 2018
A	Study and perform a road diet along Route 211 from the intersection with Plains Mill Road, Route 953, to the intersection with Route 11.	Increasing safety for all users along the roadway.		66
B	Study and perform a road diet along Route 11 in each Town and Village to improve safety.	"		15
C	Study and perform road diets within villages and hamlets.	"		4
D	Intersection of King Street and Holiday Street, in Strasburg.	The NSVRC Report called for these segments to be widened to four lanes, street parking to be removed, and signals added but alternative improvements such as street master planning, traffic calming, roundabouts, traffic light timing, and road diets to increase the types of users on the street should be studied and implemented instead.		7
E	Intersection of Route 11 and Route 55, in Strasburg.	"		5
F	Intersection of Route 11 and Shopping Center Road, in Strasburg.	"		8
G	Intersection of Route 11 and Radio Station Road, in Strasburg.	"		10
H	Intersection of King Street and Massanutten Street, in Strasburg.	"		3
I	Intersection of North Massanutten Street and East Washington Street, in Strasburg.	"		5
J	Intersection of Route 11 and Lora Drive, in Woodstock.	"		3
K	Intersection of Route 11 and Route 42, in Woodstock.	"		71
L	Foodlion intersection and along Route 292 from Route 11 to Interstate 81 in Mount Jackson.	"		11
M	Intersection of Route 11, Route 211, and East Old Cross Road, Route 1002 in New Market.	"		10
N	Along Massanutten Street in Strasburg.	"		32
O	Along South Holiday Street, Route 648, in Strasburg.	"		4
P	Along North Eberly Street in Strasburg.	"		0
Q	Along Washington Street, Route 635, in Strasburg.	"		13
R	Along Orchard Street in Strasburg.	"		2
S	Along Route 761 or Capon Street in Strasburg.	"		14
T	Along Route 670 or East Reservoir Road in Woodstock.	"		8
U	Along Water Street in Woodstock.	"		19
V	Along Hoover Road, Route 605, in Woodstock.	"		22
W	Along Water Street, Route 760, in Edinburg.	"		1
X	Along Old Cross Road, Route 1002, in New Market.	"		16
Y	Along Queen Street, Route 1201, in Strasburg.	"		8
Z	Along Ash Street in Strasburg.	"		7
AA	Intersection of Crim Drive and East Washington Street as well as all of Crim Drive, in Strasburg.	"		0
BB	Intersection of South Ox Road and Falcon Drive, in Woodstock.	"		2
CC	Along Lee Street in Woodstock.	"		3
DD	Along Lupton Road, Route 667, and French Woods Road, Route 668, in Woodstock.	"		5
EE	Along Cemetery Road, Route 758, in Woodstock.	"		2
FF	Along South Ox Road and Massanutten Heights, in Woodstock.	"		19
GG	Along Palmyra Road, Route 1419, in Edinburg.	"		0
HH	Along High Street, Route 1402, in Edinburg.	"		0

Proposed Economic Development Improvements
Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 11.4 addresses existing and future concerns on access to commercial and industrial sites through calling for studies to be performed and intersections and segements to be listed so future rezonings and proposals can incorporate their impact and associated costs at the time of application, while also providing clarity on the solution to these access related issues.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Goal 11.4 Our transportation system will support tourism and economic development.

Objective 11.4.1: Remove barriers to growth for agriculture, industries, businesses, and downtown

Collaborate with VDOT and private landowners to reduce access barriers to agriculture, industry, and business sites per the FLUM and businesses and new residences in downtowns.

Objective 11.4.2: Connect airports, rail, safe freight transport, and energy for transportation

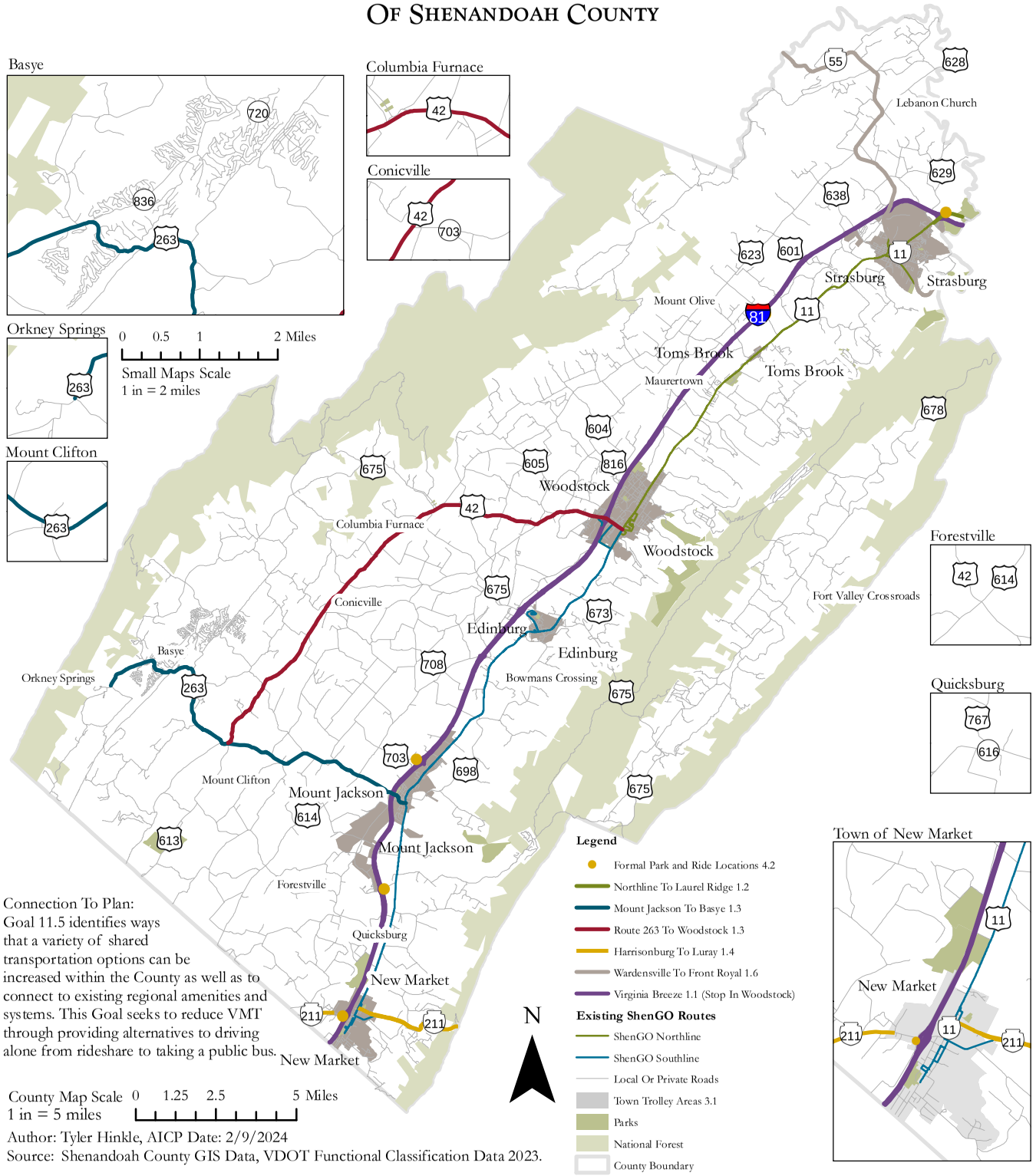
Support new connections to nearby airports and rail stations, ensure freight is transported safely and there is adequate energy sources for transportation throughout the County .

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Enhance access to business parks and industrial zones.	1. Conduct a traffic flow analysis for every existing and proposed business and industrial zones to identify access issues and project future needs. 2. Improve Mount Olive Road into the Toms Brook Business Park and the two I-81 intersections nearby. 3. Improve Aileen Avenue, Route 1207, in Strasburg, current lanes are 11'. 4. Improve Oranda Road with two turn lanes and signalize the two I-81 intersections on Rt 11 nearby .	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
2. Consider removing parking requirements, allowing for exemptions, or setting parking maximums.	1. Revise existing parking requirements to allow for flexible use of space. 2. Explore the possibility of parking exemptions for certain types of businesses or developments that contribute to the downtown's vitality. 3. Consider implementing parking maximums to discourage excess vehicle use and promote walkability in downtown districts. 4. Consider limiting downtown/dense areas to small freight transportation.	Community Development, Planning Commission, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
3. Determine uses that the community wishes downtown and make them by-right.	1. Consider removing SUP requirements or VDOT review requirements on businesses, residential projects, and other uses in downtowns. 2. Consider removing VDOT review in the renovation of an existing structure/entrance. 3. Petition the State Legislature to adopt new standards that encourage walkable multimodal spaces in downtown areas to remove barriers.	Community Development, Planning Commission, All Towns	2025-2030 S&R
4. Explore an Airport Overlay Zoning Ordinances to limit the disruption to the approach zones to the Basye and New Market Airports.	1. Engage with airport management and nearby residents. 2. Consider guidelines within the approach zones to prevent structures that pose hazards. 3. Explore an Airport Overlay Zoning Ordinances tailored to each airport.	Community Development, Planning Commission	2030-2035 U&E
5. Work to extend public transportation service south to Amtrak in Staunton, and north to Amtrak in Martinsburg.	1. Implement Strategies in 11.5 to connect to Laurel Ridge Community College and Harrisonburg. 2. Gauge demand and efficient transit routes to the Amtrak stations. 3. Consider additional options to optimize connections.	Tourism and Economic Development, Community Development	2035-2040 I&E
6. Consider acquiring any abandoned, slated to be abandoned, or airports for sale.	1. Conduct a survey of existing airport facilities to determine status/value. 2. Develop a cost-benefit analysis for the acquisition/maintenance. 3. Create a strategic plan for the potential use of acquired airports.	Tourism and Economic Development, EDA	2045-2072 P&A
7. Support Towns in growing to 5,000 people to manage their streets and setting standards amenable to downtowns.	1. Support projects in existing Town boundaries to increase pop to 5,000. 2. Support zoning/ subdivision amendments that allow density in Towns. 3. Support Town infrastructure needs to handle more residents and density.	Board of Supervisors	2045-2072 P&A
8. Support the enhancement of freight services in the region.*	1. Designate corridors for safe truck freight areas and not recommended. 2. Support enhancing freight rail capabilities. 3. Consider grants to upgrade rail lines/facilities for efficiency and safety. 4. Support the enhancement of the Virginia Inland Port.	Community Development All Towns	2045-2072 P&A
9. Ensure reliable energy supply and promote alternative energy fueling stations.	1. Consider a reserve energy supply for emergency vehicles. 2. Encourage the establishment of fueling/charging stations. 3. Consider amending zoning to encourage electric chargers.	Community Development, F&R	2045-2072 P&A

* Rail uses/connections to other parts of the state and beyond will not be in conflict with a future trail along the Norfolk Southern Rail Line.

Proposed Shared Transportation Improvements

Of Shenandoah County



Connection To Plan:
Goal 11.5 identifies ways that a variety of shared transportation options can be increased within the County as well as to connect to existing regional amenities and systems. This Goal seeks to reduce VMT through providing alternatives to driving alone from rideshare to taking a public bus.

Author: Tyler Hinkle, AICP Date: 2/9/2024
Source: Shenandoah County GIS Data, VDOT Functional Classification Data 2023.

Goal 11.5 Shared transportation will be a viable option for traveling around and through the County.

Objective 11.5.1: Expand public and shared transportation

Expand access to public transit and other forms of shared transit including the potential for connections to passenger rail service.

Objective 11.5.2: Encourage transit-oriented development

Encourage mixed-use development near transportation hubs in Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Petition for a Virginia Breeze stop to be added at Woodstock at an existing ShenGO stop.	1. Engage with Virginia Breeze bus services to explore the feasibility of adding a new stop at Woodstock. 2. Coordinate with local ShenGO stops to assess the best location for integration with Virginia Breeze services. 3. Develop a proposal including potential ridership numbers and community benefits to present to Virginia Breeze for consideration.	Community Development, NSVRC	2025-2030 S&R
2. Extend and enhance ShenGO Service.	1. Consider extended hours, rapid morning/evenings, and Sundays. 2. Consider extending service to Laurel Ridge Community College. 3. Consider extending ShenGO service along Route 42 and to Basye. 4. Consider extending ShenGO service along 211 to connect Harrisonburg, Broadway, Timberville, Luray, and Shenandoah National Park. 5. Consider extending ShenGO service along Route 55 and into Hardy County, WV.	Community Development, NSVRC	2030-2035 U&E
3. Support the establishment of Town trolleys to provide services throughout each individual Town.	1. Conduct a feasibility study considering routes, stops, and frequency and how it could allow for the main ShenGO service to speed up its service by hitting central stops. 2. Engage with the town council and community members to gain support and insights. 3. Source funding and develop an implementation plan for the new trolley service.	Community Development, All Towns, NSVRC	2030-2035 U&E
4. Study the benefits and consequences of shared tranportation services other than ShenGO.	1. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the most suitable transportation services. 2. Improve existing informal and formal park and ride facilities while installing new facilities where needed including along Route 55 into West Virginia. 3. Consider private shared shuttles and minibuses throughout the County and region. 4. Consider the establishment of sharing programs like Zipcar, Bird, or E-Bikes. 5. Consider ride sharing services to increase the mobility of tourists and locals.	Community Development, All Towns, NSVRC	2030-2035 U&E
5. Incentivize public transportation use.	1. Develop a unified transportation app that offers rewards and incentives. 2. Work with transportation providers to offer reduced fares during off-peak hours. 3. Formulate partnerships with private transport companies to offer discounts.	ShenGO, NSVRC	2035-2040 I&E
6. Foster mixed-use development near public transit.	1. Assess sites near public transit hubs for mixed-use development opportunities. 2. Update zoning regulations to facilitate mixed-use development in designated areas.	Community Development, Planning Commission, All Towns	2035-2040 I&E
7. Support the enhancement and expansion of passenger rail service in the region.*	1. Consider a resolution advocating the restoration of pre-1970 passenger rail levels on the national level. 2. Petition the State to adequately fund the DRPT to similar levels as VDOT. 3. Petition the State to consider a unified payment, management, and operation service.	Board of Supervisors, All Towns	2045-2072 P&A

* Rail uses/connections to other parts of the state and beyond will not be in conflict with a future trail along the Norfolk Southern Rail Line.

Glossary & Index

Acronym	Definition	Acronym	Definition
4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution	NFS	National Forest Service
AFD	Agricultural and Forestal Districts	NSVRC	Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission
ALICE	Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed	OCR	Optical Character Recognition
APZ	Agricultural Protection Zoning	P&A	Plan And Aspire
AS-400	Application System/400	PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
CEA	Conservation Easement Authority	PV	Photovoltaics (Technology in solar panels)
CIP	Capital Improvement Plan	PRAB	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
C&O	Chesapeake and Ohio (referring to Canal towpath)	R&R	Reassess And Reinforce
DHR CLG	Department of Historical Resources Certified Local Government	S&R	Study And Reform
DOF	Department of Forestry	SCFR	Shenandoah County Fire and Rescue
EDA	Economic Development Authority	SCPS	Shenandoah County Public Schools
EL	English Learner	SEDP	Strategic Economic Development Plan
EOC	Emergency Operations Center	SIP	Services Improvement Plan
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute	SMH	Shenandoah Memorial Hospital
EV	Electric Vehicle	SNP	Shenandoah National Park
FLUM	Future Land Use Map	SRO	School Resource Officer
GIS	Geographic Information System	SUP	Special Use Permit
GWNF	George Washington National Forest	TIF	Tax Increment Financing
HUD VASH	Housing and Urban Development Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing	U&E	Upgrade And Enhance
I&E	Invest And Expand	VDH	Virginia Department of Health
KG	Kindergarten	VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
LFSWCD	Lord Fairfax Soil and Water Conservation District	VCE	Virginia Cooperative Extension
LRCC	Laurel Ridge Community College	VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
NERFs	Neural Radiance Fields	WRAC	Water Resources Advisory Committee

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
811 COMMERCE ROAD
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA 24401-9029
www.VirginiaDOT.org

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner

5/21/2024

Lemuel Hancock
Shenandoah County
600 North Main Street, Suite 107
Woodstock, VA 22664-1855

Dear Mr. Hancock:

In accordance with the Virginia Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations, 24VAC30-155, the Shenandoah County proposed Comprehensive Plan transportation chapter update was submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for review on February 27, 2024. VDOT Staunton District Planning has evaluated the updates to the transportation chapter of the plan for conformity with Chapter 729 regulations of state code 15.2-2223. Chapter 729 requires that locality Comprehensive Plans include four principle elements; an inventory of the existing transportation network, planning assumptions that will influence the transportation network, an existing and future needs assessment, and recommendations addressing those needs. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan must be consistent with VTrans, the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), and the selected location of state highways set by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. In this case, consistency is defined as inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan of significant new, improved, or relocated highway projects on roadways with a functional classification of major collector or higher. The submittal was found to be in conformance with Chapter 729 requirements. We would like to mention the following, however:

- The General Assembly and the Commonwealth Transportation Board have allocated partial funding for a future trail on the Norfolk Southern owned corridor from Broadway to Front Royal. Please include a note in the rail-related recommendations that rail uses/connections to other parts of the state and beyond will not be in conflict with a future trail on that corridor.

Finally, I ask that you arrange to have VDOT's official comments from this letter included in the locality's official public records (meeting minutes, staff report) and to have this document placed in the official file for the Comprehensive Plan. Once the transportation chapter update is officially adopted by the city, VDOT requests that you forward a digital copy to us for our records.

Sincerely,

Shane McCabe

Shane McCabe
Assistant District Planner
Staunton District Planning

cc:
Adam Campbell, VDOT
Brad Reed, VDOT
Ed Carter, VDOT
Arthur Boyce, VDOT