

A NORTH STAR FOR
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATIONS

2014


SHENANDOAH
COUNTY

A FUTURE TOGETHER
LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A NEW BEGINNING

YOUR ROLE IN OUR
COUNTY'S FUTURE

QUICK REFERENCE

This handbook provides everything you need to succeed as a community organization in Shenandoah County. After hearing from over 2,500 people and engaging thousands more we as a community have a Plan for action to make our future a reality. Here's what you'll find:

General Layout and Vision of the Plan (pgs 4–5):

Understand why this handbook helps you and the Plan's vision statement.

Who Uses the Plan (pgs 6–7):

Discover the role community organizations play in implementation.

Engaging in & Advocating for Strategies (pgs 8–9):

An overview on the strategies in the Plan and how advocate for them.

Future Land Use Map (pgs 10–11):

A visual representation of planned land uses over the next 20 years.

Community-Led Initiatives (pgs 12–13):

Learn how you can take action now with implementing the Plan.

Collaborating with Others (pg 14):

Examples of how to collaborate with organizations, departments, & agencies.

Engagement & Advocacy (pg 15):

Ideas on how to engage the public and rally support for implementation.

Public Engagement & General Layout of the Plan (pgs 16–17):

Overview on the engagement that made this plan and the overall framework.

Tools to Use the Plan (pgs 18–19):

Access the resources needed to utilize the plan effectively.

Towns, Villages, and Hamlets (pgs 20–21):

Information on what and where these places are and their planned futures.

Six Big Ideas (pgs 22–23):

An outline of the county's six foundational concepts.

The 11 Chapters & the Future (pgs 24–25):

An overview of the 11 chapters and the five year implementation periods.

Key Terms and Contacts (pgs 26–27):

A glossary of important terms and a directory of key contacts.

WHY THIS HANDBOOK MATTERS TO YOU

We understand our mutual need: we both want to help our community.

For you, that means serving others—whether it’s providing shelter, supporting youth programs, or improving access to local services. For the County, it means empowering organizations like yours to thrive, addressing community needs, and fostering collaboration to build a stronger future.

So how can we make a bigger impact together?

This handbook is the answer.

By following the guidance in these pages, you’ll find practical ways to align your efforts with Shenandoah County’s vision, strengthen your impact, and create lasting change. Together, we can ensure Shenandoah remains a vibrant, connected, and supportive place to live.

Why This Handbook Matters:

- **Save Time:** Access clear guidance to focus your resources where needed.
- **Strengthen Collaboration:** Maximize your impact & reduce redundancy.
- **Serve Smarter:** Identify strategies and tools to tackle local challenges.
- **Build Community Support:** Align your initiatives with County priorities to earn backing from residents and stakeholders.

Why It’s Worth Aligning with the Plan:

By aligning your organization’s efforts with the Comprehensive Plan, you can:

- **Strengthen Your Reach:** Focus on areas where resources and services are most needed—towns, villages, and hamlets.
- **Earn Community Buy-In:** Build trust and support for your initiatives by addressing shared goals.
- **Unlock Resources:** Gain access to funding opportunities, partnerships, and county support for aligned projects.
- **Foster Long-Term Change:** Ensure your efforts contribute to a healthier, more resilient Shenandoah County.

Every action your organization takes plays a role in shaping the future of Shenandoah County. Together, we can create a brighter future for everyone who calls this place home.

THIS PLAN IS OUR NORTH STAR

The Shenandoah 2045 Comprehensive Plan is our community's north star, guiding us to the future.

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.

Our Greatest Challenges Over The Next 20 Years:

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.

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 stakeholders that helped to create and inform the plan.



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 character and rural heritage.



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.



THE 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.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Your Role in using the Plan:

As community organizations, your active involvement in Shenandoah 2045 is crucial for implementing the Plan's strategies and advocating for its recommendations. Your participation helps ensure that community-led initiatives drive progress, making Shenandoah County a place where residents thrive. Through collaboration and strategic action, you play a key role in implementing the Plan. How you can take action to fulfill the plan's vision:

Engage in and Advocate for Strategies:

Community organizations should review and engage with strategies outlined in Shenandoah 2045 that align with their mission. Advocate for these recommendations to build support and momentum within the community.

Support and Implement Community-Led Initiatives:

Take the lead in implementing actions that reflect the Plan's goals, such as educational programs, social services, stewardship projects, or local improvements. Your leadership in these initiatives strengthens community ownership and aligns efforts with Shenandoah 2045's objectives.

Collaborate with Departments and Partners:

Work alongside departments, agencies, and other community partners to maximize the impact of your projects. Collaboration helps streamline efforts, pool resources, and address community challenges that require joint solutions, amplifying the reach of your work.

Enhance Engagement and Advocacy:

Promote transparency and community participation by sharing updates on your organization's projects and their impact. Engage residents through workshops, events, and public forums that inform them about ongoing work and gather their feedback.

Your Next Steps:

1. Review the Plan for strategies that match your organization's goals
2. Partner with local departments and organizations to coordinate efforts
3. Advocate for support to build momentum for shared projects.

ENGAGE IN AND ADVOCATE FOR STRATEGIES

Community organizations are powerful voices for change. By advocating for strategies outlined in Shenandoah 2045, you can inspire local officials to take meaningful action and generate momentum for projects that benefit your community. This section guides you on how to effectively advocate for these recommendations, support local officials in their efforts, and build grassroots support to advance the Plan’s vision.

Key Steps for Advocacy

1. Understand the Strategies You Support
 - Identify strategies in Shenandoah 2045 that align with your mission. Review the Plan’s Table of Contents, use keyword searches, or check the appendix to find strategies that focus on key issues.
2. Engage the Community to Build Support
 - Host public forums, workshops, or informal gatherings to educate residents about the strategies and their benefits.
3. Communicate with Local Officials
 - Schedule meetings with elected officials or attend town council sessions to advocate for specific actions and inform them.
4. Draft letters of support or resolutions such as the model below:

Resolution of Support for Implementing Strategies in Shenandoah 2045

WHEREAS, Shenandoah County’s Comprehensive Plan, Shenandoah 2045, provides a shared vision and actionable strategies for addressing community needs and promoting local solutions that fit local needs;

WHEREAS, [Org Name] recognizes the importance of Strategy [#] in advancing [specific community need];

WHEREAS, [Org Name] has engaged with community members, gathered support, and is committed to collaborating to ensure the successful implementation of Strategy [#];

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that [Org Name] formally requests that [Local Governing Body] adopt and prioritize Strategy [#] as outlined in Shenandoah 2045;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that [Org Name] will provide ongoing support, advocacy, and resources to assist in implementing this strategy to benefit Shenandoah County.

Which Chapters should you review?

Organization Type	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Historical societies, cultural orgs											
Event planners											
Environmental/conservation groups											
Religious orgs											
Agricultural/environmental orgs											
Community orgs											
Rotary/Ruritan/Lions Clubs											
Business/workforce associations											
Housing non-profits, foundations											
Food banks											
Social service groups											
Educational orgs, youth/PTAs											
Health, wellness orgs											
Emergency prep groups, tech orgs											
Scouts, youth orgs, rec groups											
Transportation/access orgs											
HOAs/POAs											

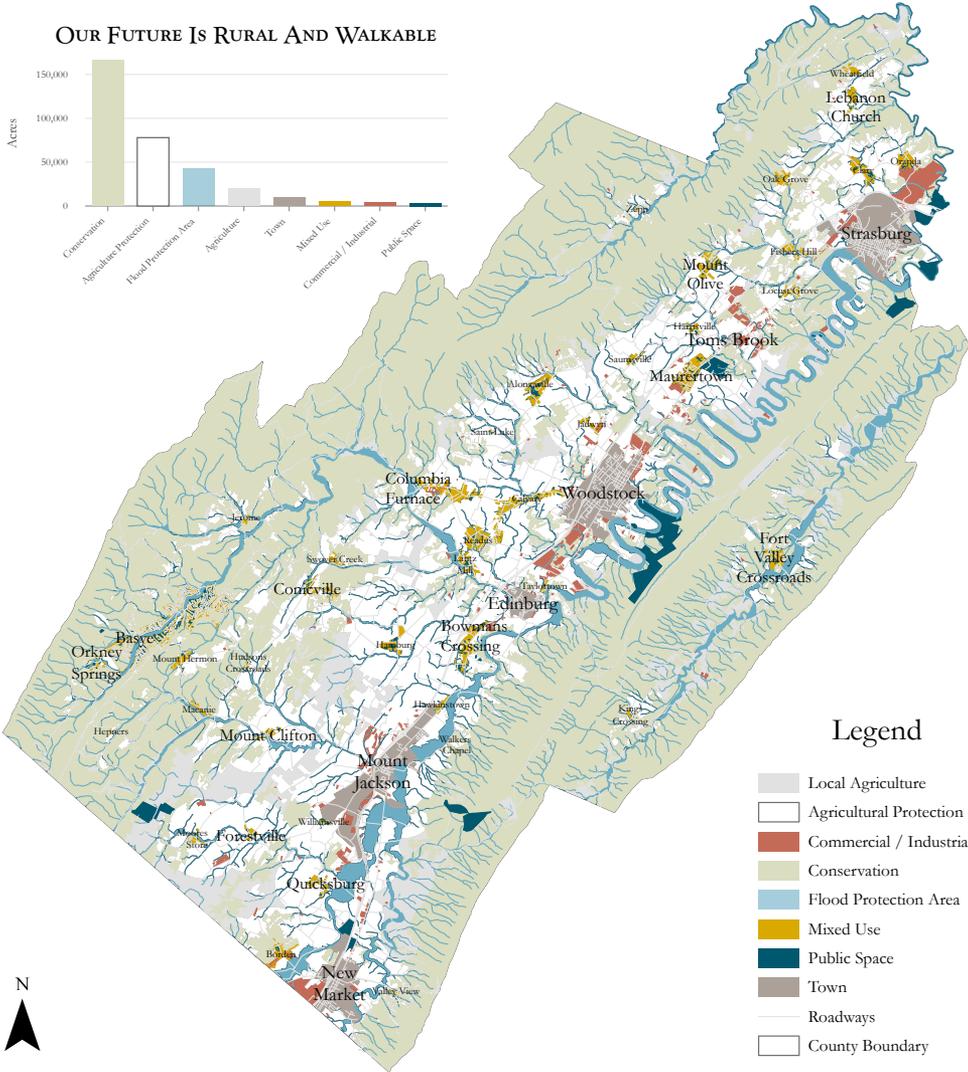
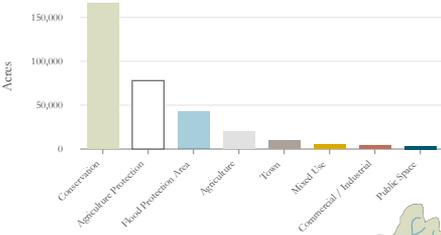
Example of a table found in the Action Plan.

Strategy	Potential Actions	Lead Stakeholder	Timeframe / Priority
1. Improve library services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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

A Future Land Use Map shows how a community plans to use its land over the next 20 years. It outlines spaces for homes, businesses, parks, and more, reflecting the community's vision. In Shenandoah County, the focus is on staying rural, with four zones to protect natural resources and promote agriculture. We also support industry and commerce, while investing in our Towns, Villages, and Hamlets to diversify the tax base. Service provisions are most available in Towns with the villages of Basye, Orkney Springs, and Maurertown following.

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

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.



SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES

Community organizations are vital to the success of Shenandoah 2045. By leading initiatives aligned with the Plan’s goals—such as educational programs, social services, stewardship projects, or local improvements—you ensure community-driven progress and strengthen local ownership of Shenandoah County’s future. This section provides guidance on how to identify opportunities, align efforts, and take action.

Key Instructions

1. Identify Relevant Strategies in Shenandoah 2045
 - Review the Plan to find strategies aligned with your organization’s mission. Use the Table of Contents or search keywords in the digital or print version to quickly locate sections relevant to your focus, such as health, education, or environmental efforts.
 - The appendix may also provide a summary of strategies by topic to guide your search.
2. Tailor Strategies to Community Needs
 - Adapt the Plan’s strategies to reflect the specific needs of Shenandoah County’s towns, villages, and hamlets. While the Plan sets the vision, use your organization’s expertise to design solutions that fit these goals and address local resident issues.
 - Be proactive—develop creative ideas that fit within the broader goals of Shenandoah 2045, even if they aren’t explicitly listed in the Plan.
3. Leverage the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)
 - Refer to the FLUM to guide where your initiatives will have the most impact. Prioritize areas like towns and villages to align your projects with long-term development plans.
 - Access the interactive FLUM online at ShenandoahCountyva.us/Future for detailed views.
4. Collaborate for Greater Impact
 - Partner with other organizations, county departments, and local businesses to share resources and expertise. Collaboration amplifies the reach and success of your initiatives.

Examples:

Strategy 2.5.1 – Support the Conservation and Development of Water Storage Systems.

Relevant Organizations: Conservation groups, Scouts, environmental orgs.

- Install a rainbarrel or rain capture system and host demonstrations.
- Share information on and use water conservation practices.

Strategy 3.2.1 – Assist Towns, Villages, and Hamlets with Native Tree Planting Projects.

Relevant Organizations: Scouts, Ruritan Clubs, environmental non-profits, gardening clubs.

- Plant a tree or more and encourage others to plant trees.
- Organize a tree planting event and share information on the program.

Strategy 4.5.1 – Support Events and Festivals in Downtowns.

Relevant Organizations: Event organizers, Rotary Clubs, local businesses, religious orgs.

- Post fliers and share information online about local events.
- Sponsor, host, and/or organize local events.

Strategy 5.2.5 – Leverage Public-Private Partnerships for Housing Development.

Relevant Organizations: Housing non-profits, foundations, business groups, faith-based orgs.

- Consider adding an accessory unit or to your property and renting it out.
- Advocate for local incentives and projects that provide affordable housing.

Strategy 6.5.2 – Integration of Free Little Libraries into Community Planning.

Relevant Organizations: Libraries, Scouts, Ruritan Clubs, foundations.

- Build and install free little libraries at your site or in neighborhoods and parks.
- Organize book donation drives to stock the libraries with diverse reading options.

Strategy 8.1.7 – Support the expansion of healthy food options.

Relevant Organizations: Food banks, religious organizations, foundations.

- Conduct a fresh food donation drive to be provided to the food bank.
- Share information on recipes that incorporate healthy foods.

Strategy 10.5.2 – Enhance funding and facilities for youth sports programs.

Relevant Organizations: Sports leagues, gyms, community center, Rotary/Ruritan/Lions Clubs.

- Sponsor or help organize donations for sports teams and share info for sign ups.
- Partner with gyms or fitness instructors to offer free community fitness classes.

Actionable Steps:

1. Collaborate with County Departments: Work with relevant departments to align your efforts with Shenandoah 2045 goals.
2. Engage Volunteers: Mobilize community members to participate in projects that align with the Plan's strategies.
3. Use Social Media and Newsletters: Promote your initiatives, highlight completed strategies, and invite community participation.

COLLABORATE WITH DEPARTMENTS AND PARTNERS

Building Shenandoah County’s future is a shared effort. By working alongside departments, agencies, and other community partners, community organizations can maximize the impact of their projects. Collaboration helps streamline efforts, prevent duplicated work, and address community challenges that no single organization could tackle alone.

Key Benefits of Collaboration:

- **Maximize Limited Resources**
Collaborating allows organizations to share existing tools, funding, and expertise, enabling projects to be completed more efficiently.
- **Eliminate Redundancies**
Coordination between partners ensures efforts are not duplicated, preventing wasted time and resources.
- **Expand Project Impact**
Partnerships enable initiatives to address multiple goals, such as blending community engagement with educational programming.
- **Boost Innovation and Problem-Solving**
Different organizations contribute unique ideas, resources, and skills that together lead to innovative solutions.

Steps to Foster Collaboration Across Partners:

1. **Identify Shared Goals in Shenandoah 2045**
Review the Plan to find overlapping objectives with other organizations or departments and agencies.
2. **Schedule Regular Check-Ins with Others**
Reach out to identify how to collaborate then regularly check in.
3. **Share Tools and Resources**
Use joint tools like meeting spaces, communication platforms, or grant funding opportunities to maximize efficiency.

ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

Effective communication with the public requires thoughtful planning and transparency. Sharing updates on your organization’s projects and their impact keeps residents informed while fostering trust and participation. Tailor communication to fit the significance of each project, ensuring updates are meaningful without overwhelming your audience.

Levels of Public Information

1. **Basic Updates (Routine Changes)**
For minor changes like office hours or internal updates, consider:
 - Internal Bulletins: Brief announcements in newsletters or website.
 - Email Updates: Notify relevant staff and partners of completed strategies (e.g., “Completed Strategy 8.2.1 related to using data to inform actions”).
2. **Moderate Updates (Departmental Improvements)**
For improvements like facility upgrades or new programs, consider:
 - Social Media Posts: Highlight progress with visuals and a link for more information.
 - Community Newsletters: Share updates in newsletters to reach a wider audience.
 - Infographic Flyers: Create clear before-and-after visuals for distribution at public spaces.
3. **Full Updates (Significant Projects or Milestones)**
For impactful projects, provide comprehensive information. Tools include:
 - Press Releases: Announce major milestones with detailed context.
 - Forums: Host events to share updates and gather feedback.
 - Public Dashboards: Maintain an online platform with timelines, budgets, and milestones (e.g., “Completed Strategy #.#.# ...”)

Actionable Steps for Effective Communication

1. **Log Strategies:** Regularly update completed strategies in the system.
2. **Tailor Updates:** Share the right level of information to suit the project.
3. **Engage Residents:** Use tools like workshops and forums to invite feedback.
4. **Maintain Transparency:** Provide clear, accessible updates to foster trust.

Note: Let the office of Community Development know when you have completed a strategy so they can keep track of which aspects of the plan have been implemented.

A COMMUNITY BUILT PLAN



INFORM
2021-2022



COLLABORATE
2022-2023



EMPOWER
2023-2024

How Was The Public Involved?

The comprehensive plan was created with extensive input from over 2,500 community members, local businesses, and stakeholders over a five year process with early preparation beginning in 2019. Engagement included a survey garnering 970 opinions, four years of in-person engagement over over 30 events and meetings, a monthly radio show, and numerous mailing and social media campaigns. This Plan reflects our shared vision for Shenandoah County's future, aiming to balance growth with preservation. Unlike communities that hire consultants, the Plan was crafted by the Citizen's Advisory Committee, a group of 13 County residents, based on all of the public input they had heard, discussions with staff, and collaborative reconciliation meetings between the CAC, PC, and BOS.

Why Have A Plan?

Each locality in the State of Virginia is required to have a Comprehensive Plan per Section 15.2-2223 of the Virginia Code. We also rely on our 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 and ensure our community's voice is heard.

How Does The Plan Interface With Other Aspects?

Shenandoah County's vision for 2045 is closely linked to various plans, policies, and ordinances. The Plan outlines the vision for the future, while zoning and subdivision ordinances ensure its implementation. Additionally, the Plan details the community's infrastructure needs, with the financing outlined in a Capital Improvement Plan, which is a long-range, unfunded budget for desired improvements.

Is This Our First Plan?

Shenandoah County has been actively planning for its future since 1973, and this is our fourth comprehensive plan.

Does This Tie Our Hands?

No, not financially or politically but it is a guide for us as we move into the future.

A PLAN FOR ACTION

CHAPTER VISION

GOALS

1

2

3

4

5

OBJECTIVES



STRATEGIES



ACTIONS



Nearly 250 years ago a man stood up in a church a few blocks down from the County Government Building. He told his congregation that to everything there is a season, a time to pray and a time to fight. We as a community in adopting this plan accept the truth that there is a time to plan and a time to act, and that time is now. Our action plan seeks to make this belief a reality through taking large ideas from very general vision statements and narrow them down through goals and objectives to strategies and detail oriented actions as seen in the diagram to the left.

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.

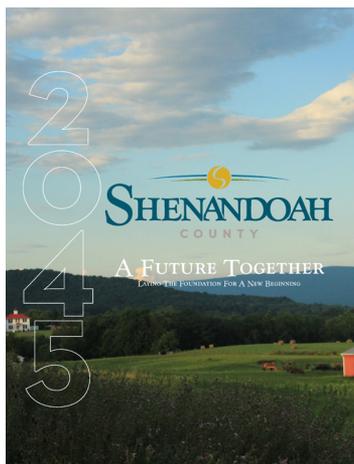
4: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Five year financial plan for new buildings and equipment.

5: BUDGET

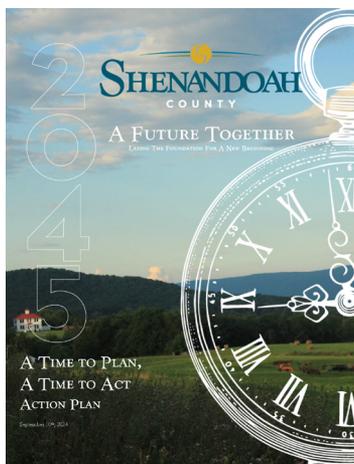
Annual plan on how to finance County operations.

TOOLS TO USE THE PLAN



The Report

The *Shenandoah 2045 Report* is a strategic tool for anyone looking to act in the county by providing a comprehensive vision for Shenandoah County's future. It sets out the community's long-term goals and values, such as balancing growth with the preservation of rural and agricultural character. No matter your background, The Report helps you understand the overarching priorities of the county and ensures your projects align with community expectations. You can use the report to inform your proposals, validate decisions, and demonstrate that your actions support the county's long-term vision. It serves as a guiding document to keep projects on track with broader community goals, making it useful for planning, investment, and collaboration.



The Action Plan

The Action Plan is a hands-on guide for taking concrete action in Shenandoah County. For those looking to implement projects—whether in infrastructure, business, or community services—this document breaks down the broad vision of the report into specific, actionable steps. If you are involved in executing a project, the Action Plan provides clear goals, strategies, and timelines to follow, ensuring that your actions contribute directly to county priorities. It gives you the roadmap for implementation, such as the exact strategies to improve housing, transportation, or environmental sustainability. This tool allows you to move from planning to action, ensuring that your efforts are aligned with County visions and making it easier to measure success.

Tools On The Website

The Toolkit (This document!)

There are five other documents just like the one you are looking at right now! We have broken the Comprehensive Plan down into digestible parts based on the user groups. You can choose to consume the information either in a static print version like this, or check out our more dynamic online storymap. Either way we hope these documents make it easier for us to build A Future Together and act.



The Policy Map

The policy map takes all of the maps from The Report and The Action Plan and puts them in one accessible and interactive space. It also provides each chapter's maps and information in individual formats with extra data that did not fit into the Comprehensive Plan such as dynamic data updated regularly from the Census Bureau so its easier to base decisions on adopted maps and updated data.



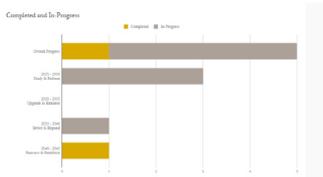
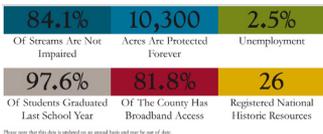
The Data Dashboard

The data dashboard serves the role a traditional comprehensive plan would serve in many communities, which is being a report on multiple data points. The difference in the dashboard and a static report document is this is updated regularly by various sources including the Bureau of Labor Statistics and VDOT. Examine data per chapter or larger land use data in the main data dashboard.



The Progress Tab

Our number one concern for the future was to hold ourselves accountable. We hope to do this and keep everyone updated with our progress tab which has key indicators for each big ideas as well as a progress chart showing the status of implementation. Note that this information is expected to be updated annually so there may be some tasks completed that have not made it onto our progress tab yet.



AN ANCESTRAL SOLUTION TO A COMMON THREAD

For sixty years Shenandoah County has been wrestling with one common thread which weaves throughout time: Suburbanization. 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. We find that solution by looking to the past to help us with the present.

When our ancestors first stepped foot in Shenandoah County they laid out their new communities based on where they came from. These places were naturally dense, walkable, and had a variety of different uses with a hard edge to the working lands. This model both protected productive agricultural lands and made the most use of land which the community invested infrastructure.



Woodstock founder from Zweibrücken, GER



Strasburg founder from Strasbourg, FR



Toms Brook founder from Steinweiler, GER



Conicville & Orkney Springs founders from Zurich, Switzerland



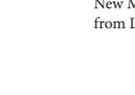
New Market founder from London, UK



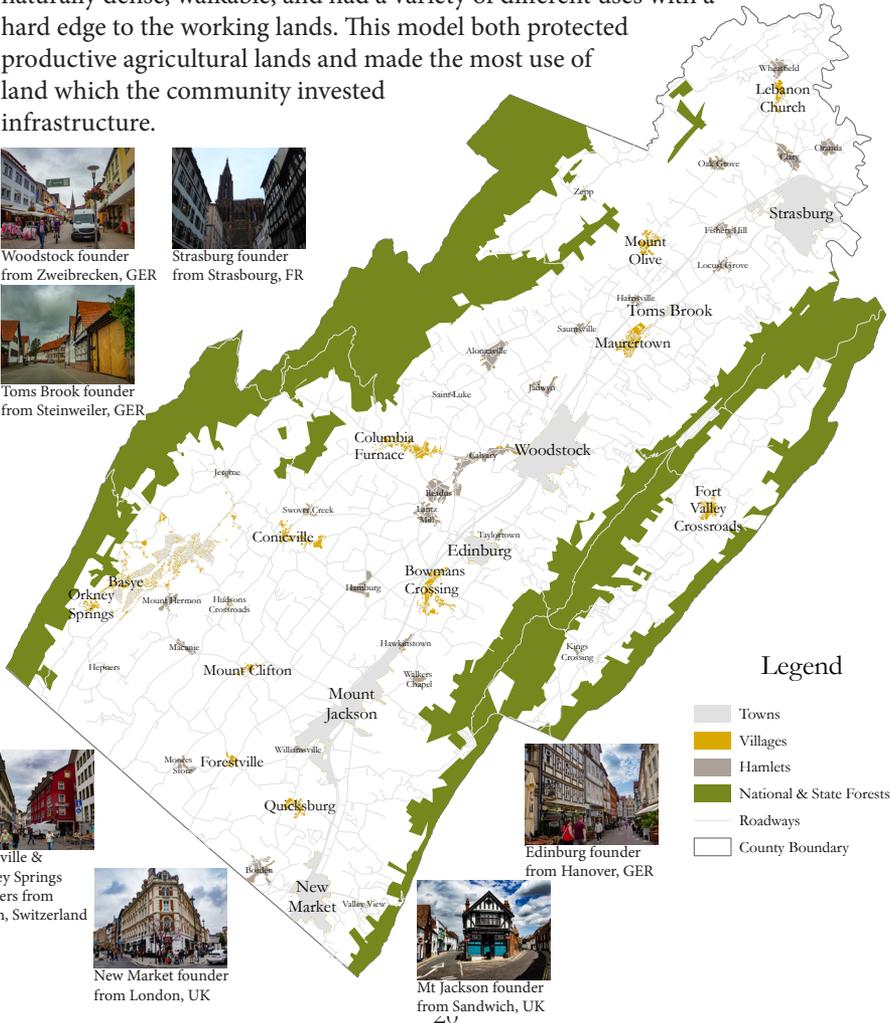
Mt Jackson founder from Sandwich, UK



Edinburg founder from Hanover, GER



Woodstock founder from Zweibrücken, GER



Conicville & Orkney Springs founders from Zurich, Switzerland



New Market founder from London, UK



Edinburg founder from Hanover, GER



Mt Jackson founder from Sandwich, UK

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:



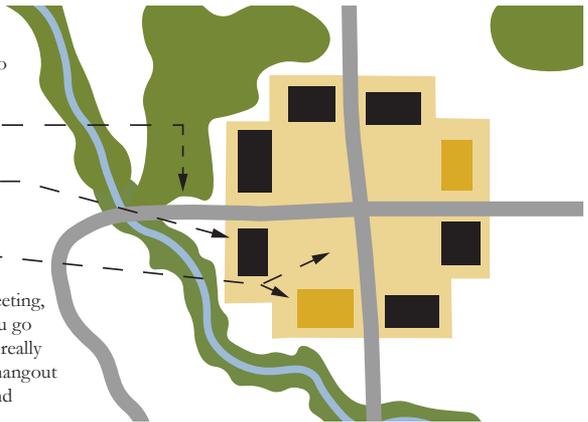
“(Imagine) eight houses are forming a square in the middle of a crossroad. So here we have a...”

Communication Route —

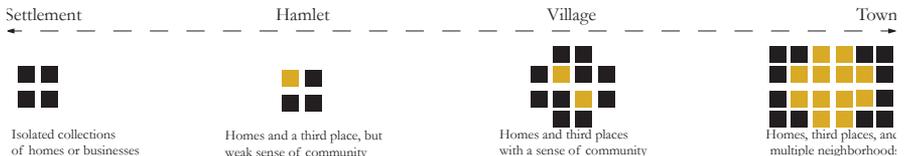
Private Spaces —

Public Spaces —

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



Shenandoah County has 6 incorporated towns, 12 villages, and 36 hamlets. Our Towns started as hamlets 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.



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.



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 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 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

The Action Plan is split into eleven chapters, a summary of them is below:

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.

THE FUTURE WON'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT

We respect that change takes time. Our action plan is split into time periods with acronyms associated with the periods explained below. We do this as we understand that improving our community is not just one action but a sequence of actions that build off of each other with each making life slightly better.

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. We will focus on modernizing our educational facilities, roads, and public spaces, to meet the community's needs. We also 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 all. This is about enhancing our way of life, and preparing for the future.

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. 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 future challenges and opportunities.

KEY TERMS & CONTACTS

Acronym	Full Name
All Towns	New Market Mount Jackson Edinburg Woodstock Toms Brook Strasburg
BOS	Board of Supervisors
CA	County Administration
CD	Community Development
CL	County Library
CLG	Certified Local Government
CLUM	Current Land Use Map
COR	Commissioner Of The Revenue
CT	County Treasurer
DHR	Virginia Department of Historic Resources
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FLUM	Future Land Use Map
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GP	General Properties
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technologies
Landfill	County Landfill
NSVRC	Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission
P&R	Parks and Recreation
PC	Planning Commission
SCPS	Shenandoah County Public Schools
SD	Sanitary Districts
SS	Social Services
TED	Tourism and Economic Development
VCE	Virginia Cooperative Extension Office
VDH	Virginia Department of Health
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation
VH	Valley Health

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