A North Star For Departments & Agencies

2045

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 department or agency 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 2–3):
Understand why this handbook helps you and the Plan's vision statement.

Who Uses the Plan (pgs 4–5):
Discover the role departments and agencies play in implementation.

Implementing Local Strategies (pgs 6–7):
An overview on the strategies in the Plan and how you can implement them.

Future Land Use Map (pgs 8–9):
A visual representation of planned land uses over the next 20 years.

Aligning With The Plan (pgs 10–11):
Explanation of how the Plan can be used to project future needs.

Collaborating with Others (pgs 12–13):
Examples of how to collaborate with other departments and agencies.

Engagement & Transparency (pgs 14–15):
Ideas on how to engage the public and keep them updated with progress.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

Your Role in using the Plan:

As leaders of Shenandoah County's departments and agencies, your dedication to the Shenandoah 2045 Comprehensive Plan is essential in making this vision a reality. Through collaboration, your actions directly shape the community, supporting every goal of the Plan—from preserving our unique landscapes to enhancing services and enriching the lives of our residents. How you can take action to fulfill the plan's vision:

Implement Local Strategies:
Each department and agency is responsible for strategies in the Plan. Begin by reviewing your assigned items to understand your role. Use the FLUM to prioritize infrastructure improvements for Towns, Villages, and Hamlets.

Align Future Initiatives with the Plan:
Each department and agency plays a vital role in Shenandoah County's future by using the Plan as a tool to guide improvements and justify funding needs. Aligning with the Plan supports efforts to secure local funds, grants, and developer contributions through capital impacts.

Foster A Future Together:
Collaboration across departments, agencies, and organizations allows us to make the most of limited staff and resources, avoid duplicated efforts, and expand our impact. By working together, we streamline efforts, improve service delivery, and tackle projects that no department could do alone.

Enhance Engagement and Transparency:
Engage the community with clear, accessible information about public services, projects, and improvements. Prioritize responsiveness and transparency in all communications with residents, reflecting the values of Shenandoah 2045's community-driven vision.

Your Next Steps:
1. Review Plan Objectives relevant to your department's responsibilities.
2. Collaborate with community partners to align on initiatives.
3. Report progress regularly to support Plan goals and accountability.

Implement Local Strategies

Each department and agency has a vital role in turning Shenandoah 2045's vision into action. This section explains how to identify your specific responsibilities in the Plan and provides guidance on applying strategies to support the unique needs of Shenandoah County's towns, villages, and hamlets. By focusing on these communities and using planning tools like the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), you can ensure meaningful, impactful investments.

Key Instructions

1. Identify Your Department or Agency's Responsibilities
   - Start by reviewing your custom excel file, which includes all of the strategies associated with you to make it easier to track what to work on in this five year period and to report items when completed. If you don't have one, reach out to Community Development.
   - You could also use the appendix or search by relevant keywords to quickly find sections that mention your department or area of expertise in either the paper or pdf versions of the plan.

2. Tailor Strategies to Local Needs
   - Apply these strategies in ways that address the unique characteristics and requirements of our towns, villages, and hamlets. Whether your focus is on infrastructure, services, safety, or economic development, align your actions with the needs of these communities.
   - Don't limit yourself to the text of the Plan. The Plan is a vision not a complete how to manual so use your expertise and knowledge to find solutions to issues/opportunities addressed and new that arise.

3. Use the Future Land Use Map to Prioritize Investments
   - The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is a valuable tool that highlights areas prioritized for public and private investment. Use it to guide decisions on where to focus infrastructure improvements, service expansions, and other initiatives.
   - Emphasize projects in towns, villages, and hamlets, to support long term benefits from investment and efficient use of resources.
   - You can find a copy of the FLUM on the next set of pages, but also online with an interactive map you can zoom in with at ShenandoahCountyva.us/Future

1. Identify Strategies	2. Prioritize	3. Collaborate	4. Plan	5. Act	6. Report
Using the custom excel file, identify all items tasked to your agency or department.	Using the timeline, FLUM, and the department or agency's needs.	Check with other departments and agencies, especially those assigned.	Plan how to tackle the strategy together.	Work to implement each task you planned out.	Report when a strategy is completed to show progress.

Example:

The Community Development Department is tasked with simplifying the permit and zoning processes for small businesses in towns and villages (Strategy 4.4.3) to promote vibrant local commerce.

Example Implementation Steps:

1. Coordinate with Economic Development and all six Towns to outline the current process and what could improve.
2. Talk with local businesses and business prospects on the current process.
3. Make zoning amendments identified as key to enhance the process.
4. Offer a streamlined online permit application with clear steps, fast response times, and dedicated support for businesses.
5. Monitor new business openings and economic impacts to show the benefits of permit streamlining, supporting future funding.
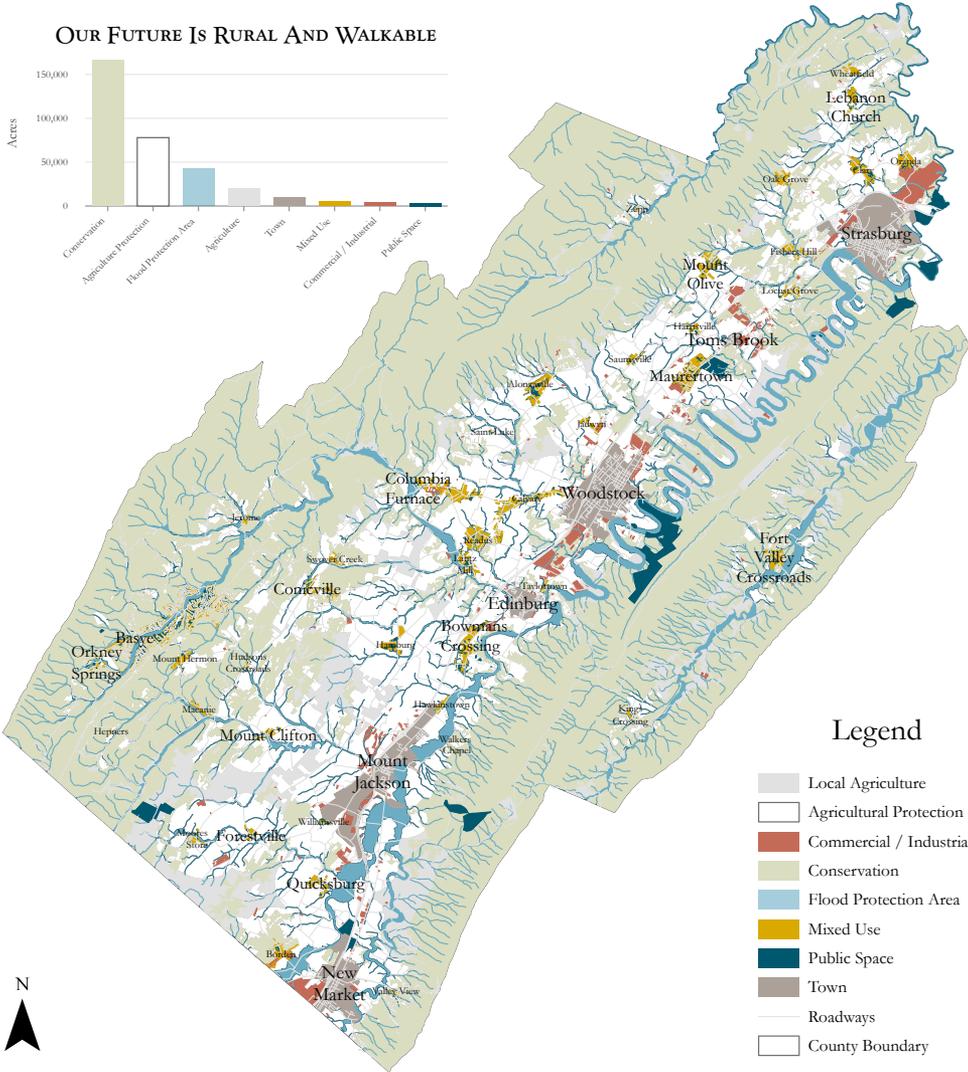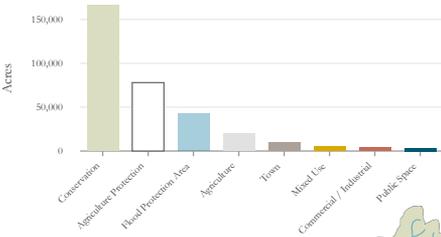
Actionable Steps:

1. Review Your Assignments in the Plan
   • Locate and understand your department's responsibilities in Shenandoah 2045. Your custom excel file should make this easy.

2. Focus on Priority Areas Using FLUM
   • Identify growth areas in the Future Land Use Map to guide your investment and development choices.

3. Coordinate Across Departments & Agencies
   • Collaborate with others to prevent overlap in services and collaborate for service delivery.

4. Report on Progress and Outcomes
   • Regularly update progress to demonstrate alignment with Shenandoah 2045's goals and track the impact of your work.

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

Bar chart titled "Our Future Is Rural And Walkable" with y-axis "Acres" (0 to 150,000) and x-axis categories: Conservation, Agriculture Protection, Flood Protection Area, Agriculture, Town, Mixed Use, Commercial / Industrial, Public Space.

Map of Shenandoah County showing future land use.

Legend

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

0   2.5   5   10 Miles

N

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.

Align Future Initiatives with the Plan

When planning new initiatives, programs, or projects, departments should use the following checklist to assess alignment with Shenandoah 2045 goals. This worksheet helps ensure that initiatives support the community's long-term vision and strengthen cases for funding, grants, and community partnerships.

#	Question	Yes	No
1	Does the initiative support the goals, objectives, and strategies in the Plan?	Proceed	Reconsider.
2	Is the project area prioritized on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)?	Proceed.	Reconsider.
3	Will this project expand capacity?	Proceed.	Reconsider.
4	Will it improve quality of life for residents?	Proceed.	Reconsider.
5	Will this project leverage partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, or other departments?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
6	Can the initiative be used to justify funding through grants, local funds, or developer impact fees?	Proceed.	Reconsider.
7	Does the project address community feedback or documented needs?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
8	Will this project have measurable impacts on economic vitality, health, or public safety?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
9	Adequate infrastructure & public services?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
10	Does the initiative include plans to improve transportation, connectivity, or infrastructure?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
11	Can the initiative adapt to future community needs or challenges as outlined in the Plan?	Proceed.	Reconsider, if not possible then proceed.
12	Aligned with most questions?	Add to CIP and seek funding.	Reconsider.

How To Get Funding:

To secure funding for projects or improvements, start by checking if your initiative is already included in the Comprehensive Plan, as this can provide strong justification. Key funding sources like the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and the Service Improvement Plan (SIP) prioritize projects that align with Shenandoah 2045's goals. The CIP is a five-year financial plan for larger, long-term investments like new facilities, infrastructure upgrades, and major equipment. The SIP is focused on enhancing or expanding services to meet community needs, such as staffing, program expansion, or operational improvements. If your project isn't already in the Plan, don't worry! As long as it supports the County's vision, it can still be proposed for the CIP or SIP. Use the questions below to help ensure your project aligns:

Guiding Questions

This section provides department-specific questions organized by theme, offering each department guidance on how to connect their work with Shenandoah 2045's broader goals.

1. Public Services (Community Services, Health, Education)
   ☐ Will this project meet rising demands or expand access to public services (libraries, health, education)?
   ☐ Does it strengthen the quality or accessibility of existing services for all residents?

2. Safety and Emergency Response (Sheriff, Fire & Rescue, Emergency Services)
   ☐ Does the project enhance safety, emergency response, or public health?
   ☐ Will it improve communication infrastructure (e.g., broadband for emergency services)?

3. Financial and Administrative Efficiency (Treasurer, Administration)
   ☐ Does this initiative optimize resource use or improve financial transparency?
   ☐ Will it help attract or justify funding for critical projects?

4. Infrastructure and Environment (Public Works, Landfill, Parks & Recreation)
   ☐ Does this project promote sustainability, such as waste reduction or energy efficiency?
   ☐ Will it protect or enhance natural resources, like parks, water quality, or open spaces?

5. Economic Vitality (Economic Development, Tourism)
   ☐ Will this project support local businesses, job creation, or tourism?
   ☐ Does it enhance Shenandoah County's appeal as a place to live, work, or visit?

6. Community Development and Housing
   ☐ Is the project aligned with areas on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM)?
   ☐ Does it address housing needs or contribute to vibrant, accessible communities?

Foster A Future Together

Making Shenandoah County's future a reality is a shared effort. By collaborating across departments, agencies, and organizations, we make the most of limited staff and resources, prevent duplicated efforts, and broaden our impact. Working together, we streamline projects, enhance service delivery, and address initiatives that no single department could achieve alone.

Key Benefits of Collaboration:

- Maximize Limited Resources
  Coordinating efforts allows departments to pool staff, equipment, and funding, making projects possible that would otherwise be out of reach. For example, Strategy 8.3.3 tasks Social Services and the County Sheriff with addressing domestic violence together.

- Eliminate Redundancies
  When departments stay connected, they can see what others are working on, avoiding overlap and duplicated work. For instance, Strategy 4.4.1 tasks Community Development and Tourism & Economic Development to work with Towns to create a unified and streamlined permitting process.

- Expand Project Impact
  Joint efforts lead to more comprehensive solutions. For example, Strategy 10.1.5 directs Shenandoah County Public Schools and Parks & Recreation to work together so local residents and students both benefit from new facility investments.

- Boost Innovation and Problem-Solving
  Working with multiple departments brings diverse perspectives that inspire new solutions. For example, Strategy 8.2.7 encourages Social Services and Virginia Cooperative Extension Office to work together assist households with financial planning and security.

Example of Successful Collaboration:
In line with Shenandoah 2045's goals, Community Development coordinated with the Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, Tourism & Economic Development, and the Health Department to implement a short term rental monitoring and permitting system that allows all organizations to track the progress of permitting and provide input.

Example of a table found in the Action Plan.

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

Steps to Foster Collaboration Across Departments:

1. Identify Shared Goals in Shenandoah 2045
   Review the Plan to see where your department's strategies overlap with other departments. This can reveal opportunities for joint projects.

2. Schedule Regular Check-Ins with Other Departments
   Hold periodic meetings or check-ins with key departments to share progress, discuss upcoming projects, and identify opportunities.

3. Establish Points of Contact in Each Department
   Designate a collaboration liaison in each department to serve as the go-to person for cross-departmental communication. This helps streamline coordination and ensures accountability.

4. Use Shared Tools and Resources
   Make use of shared resources like project management software, centralized funding, and equipment pools to streamline collaboration.

5. Document and Report on Collaborative Outcomes
   Track the results of collaborative projects and report on these outcomes, showing how teamwork has helped meet the Plan's goals more efficiently.

Actionable Reminders for All Departments & Agencies:

1. Review the Plan for strategies that involve departments and agencies.
2. Schedule Regular Coordination Meetings to stay aligned with teams.
3. Use Shared Tools like an email chain to keep everyone informed.
4. Document Outcomes to track progress and highlight collaboration.

Enhance Engagement and Transparency

Effective communication with the public involves thoughtful planning and transparency. It's essential to strike a balance—sharing updates that matter without overwhelming residents with excessive information. Departments should know when and how to report completed strategies and tailor communication levels to fit the significance of each project or update.

Reporting Completed Strategies

- Report Through the Online Google Sheet
  Once a strategy assigned to your department is completed, update the online tracking Google Sheet with the specific strategy number (e.g., Strategy 4.1.2). This keeps a record for Shenandoah 2045 progress and helps Community Development compile county-wide achievements.

- Reach Out to Community Development
  If the update requires clarification or further detail, contact Community Development directly to ensure accurate reporting and alignment.

Levels of Public Information

1. Basic Updates (Routine Changes)
   For internal changes, office hours, or new department meetings, communicate with minimal public detail. A brief note in department updates suffices, but state any strategies being progressed (e.g., "Completed Strategy 8.2.1 related to using data to inform actions").

2. Moderate Updates (Departmental Improvements)
   Share more detailed information on moderate projects, like facility upgrades or new programs. Use tools like social media posts or community newsletters to report on progress, mentioning strategy numbers for context (e.g., "Consider these water conservation strategies including rain barrels, cisterns, and reducing water usage. Shenandoah 2045 Strategy 2.5.1").

3. Full Updates (Significant Projects or Milestones)
   Provide comprehensive information for major projects or milestones that significantly impact the community. Use public dashboards, press releases, and community meetings for these updates. Highlight completed strategies, budget details, and timelines to maintain transparency (e.g., "Opening a new public park— Shenandoah 2045 Strategy 10.2.4 completed.").

Examples by Level of Public Information:

Basic Updates (Routine Changes)

- Internal News Bulletins: Use brief bulletins on the department's website or internal newsletters to state completed strategies.

- Email Updates: Send concise email notes to relevant staff or partner agencies to keep them informed.

Moderate Updates (Department Initiatives)

- Social Media Posts: Share progress on platforms like Facebook or X with a quick highlight and a link for more information.

- Community Newsletters: Include updates in a monthly or quarterly newsletter distributed digitally or in print.

- Infographic Flyers: Create visual flyers showing before-and-after snapshots of the project and distribute them at community centers or libraries.

Full Updates (Major Projects or Milestones)

- Press Releases: Issue detailed press releases to local media for significant projects, including background, strategy numbers, and community impact.

- Public Dashboard: Maintain an online dashboard with project timelines, costs, and milestones, accessible from the county website.

- Community Forums and Open Houses: Host in-person or virtual meetings where residents can learn about project milestones, ask questions, and provide feedback.

- Video Updates: Create and share short video segments explaining project benefits and progress. Include interviews with staff or community members to personalize the message.

- Dedicated Project Webpages: Build specific web pages for larger projects with comprehensive information, including FAQs, progress photos, and community benefits.

Actionable Reminders for All Departments & Agencies:

1. Log Completed Strategies promptly in the shared system.
2. Tailor Public Updates according to project importance.
3. Select the Right Tools for communication to avoid information overload.
4. Engage the Public with feedback opportunities during major updates.

A Community Built Plan

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.
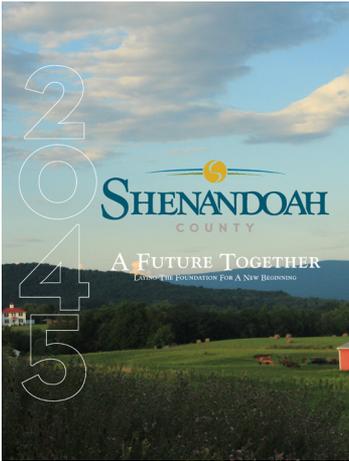
The Action Plan

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.
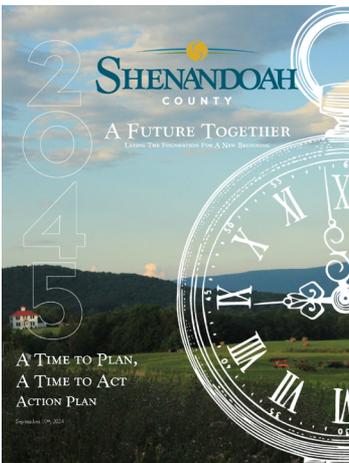
Tools On The Website

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.
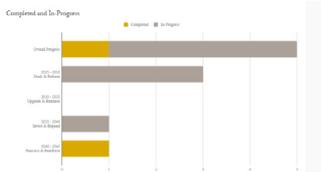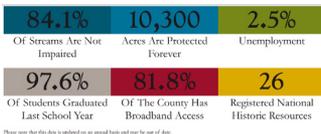
An Ancestral Solution To A Common Thread

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 our 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 Zweibrecken, GER

Strasburg founder from Strasbourg, FR

Toms Brook founder from Steinweiler, GER

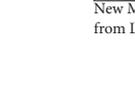Conicville & Orkney Springs founders from Zurich, Switzerland

New Market founder from London, UK

Mt Jackson founder from Sandwich, UK

Edinburg founder from Hanover, GER
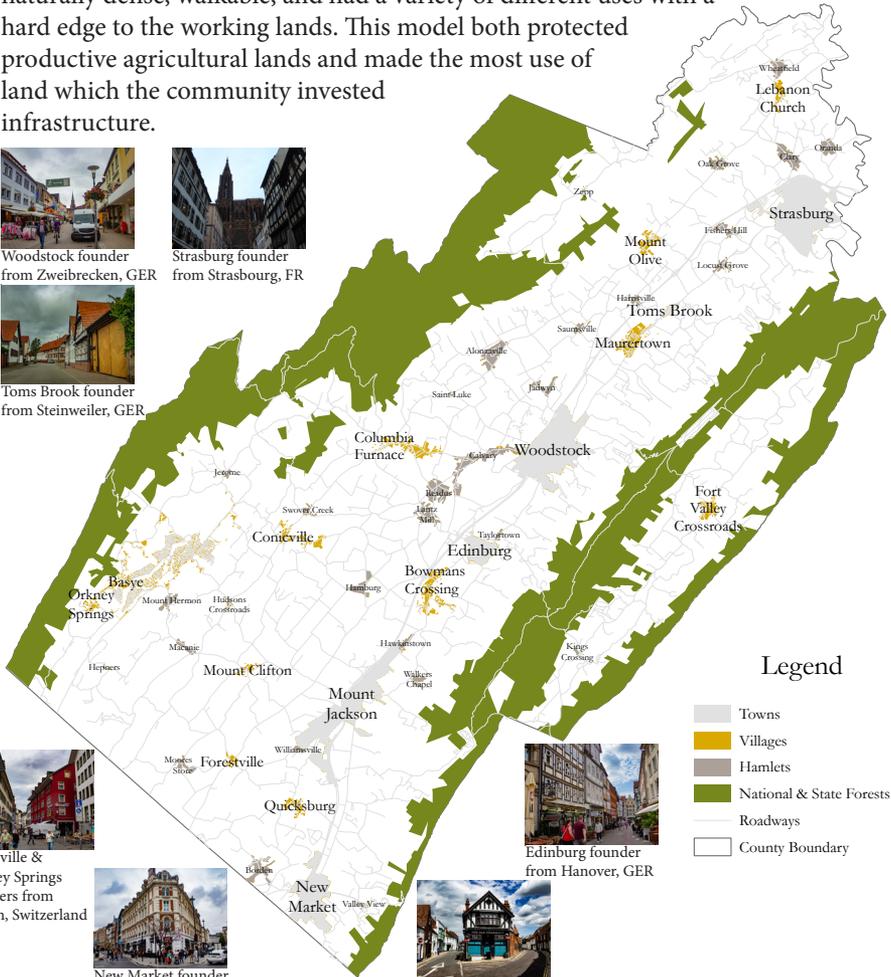
Legend

- Towns
- Villages
- Hamlets
- National & State Forests
- Roadways
- County Boundary

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

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:

Cafe Place of Worship Post Office Store Restaurant Park Community Center Library Gym Bar Theater Salon Bowling Alley
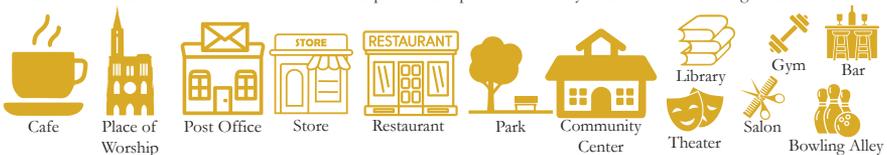
"(Imagine) eight houses are forming a square in the middle of a crossroad. So here we have a...
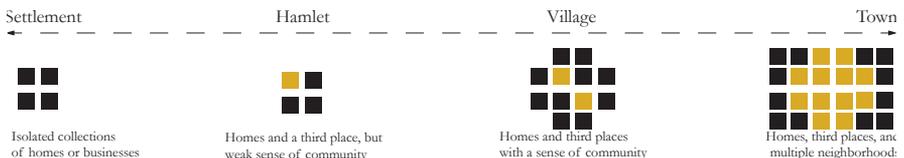
Communication Route

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
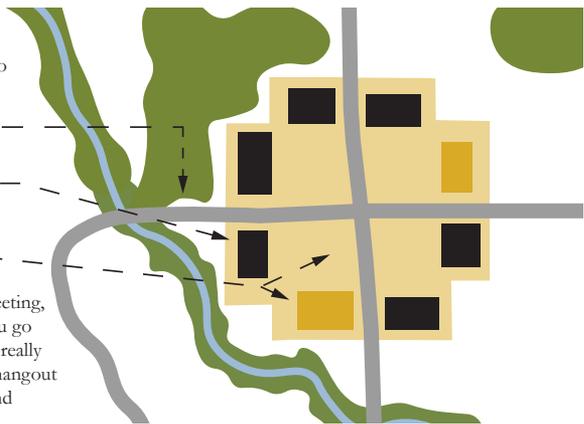
Shenandoah County has 6 incorporated towns, 12 villages, and 36 hamlets. Our Towns started as hamlets then grew into villages. Some villages incorporated as Towns, such as Mount Pleasant which in 1826 became the Town of Mount Jackson. These places didn't take up much land, were close to water, existed 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.

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 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 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	I.	Reform Codes
B.	Community Action	II.	Conduct Studies
C.	Lasting Infrastructure	III.	Invest Today

A.	Maximizing Land Productivity	I.	Reform Codes
B.	Small Town Feel	II.	Invest Downtown
C.	Preserving Our Landscapes	III.	Protect Farmland

A.	Personal Freedom	I.	Reform Codes
B.	Culture Of Physical Activity	II.	Enhance Connections & Spaces
C.	Community Connectivity	III.	Community Programming

A.	Evolving Education Infrastructure	I.	Quality Infrastructure
B.	Community Opportunities	II.	Early Childhood Development
C.	Workforce Readiness	III.	Bridge Education & Workforce

A.	Integrated Service Delivery	I.	Update County Systems
B.	Health & Safety	II.	Reduce Healthcare Barriers
C.	Dependable Infrastructure	III.	Future Infrastructure

A.	Study First, Act Next	I.	Conduct Studies
B.	Data-Driven Decisions	II.	Integrate Data
C.	Be Inspired	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 acronymns 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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town@shentel.com	540-984-8521
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ljgcurrie@yahoo.com	540-436-8000
wcoggsdale@strasburgva.com	540-465-9197
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swhitesides@countylib.org	540-984-8200
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See Community Development	
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