



# *H*AMPSHIRE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Hampshire County Planning Commission  
Assisted by West Virginia University Extension Service

Approved by County Commission on October 13, 2009

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## **PURPOSE**

West Virginia counties are authorized by State Code Chapter 8A, Article 3 to prepare comprehensive plans. The purpose of preparing a Comprehensive Plan is to; (1) promote the coordinated development of land and improvements to meet the future needs of the county; (2) achieve sound planning to assist the governing body in preserving quality of life and enhancing that quality of life to adapt to the future needs of the county relating to economic, physical, or social changes; (3) promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of county residents; and, (4) promote efficiency and economy during the development process.

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy guide for the Hampshire County Planning Commission and the Hampshire County Commission as they assess the location, character, and extent of future development. Plan policies and recommendations are to be implemented over time through a variety of decision-making actions including subdivision of land, and the location and construction of public infrastructure improvements, among other things. The Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan was developed in response to growing concern that the myriad of future land use decisions affecting the county's lands should be made in a coordinated and responsible manner to capitalize on the county's geographic location and its desirable physical features.

The Comprehensive Plan shall set forth goals and objectives to allow an informed decision making process, ensure consistency in government, and coordinate the various arms of the local government. It will create conditions positive for vital resources, reduce resource waste relating to haphazard development and sprawl, preserve historic landmarks and other resources, and promote a sense of community character and identity. It will promote the most efficient utilization of available resources, coordinate development into well planned communities, and advocate cost-effective development of facilities and services.

Hampshire County's Comprehensive Plan includes a set of goals, objectives, and strategies that apply to the unincorporated areas of the county.

### **Goals**

Goals are the broadest expressions of a community's desires and give direction to the plan as a whole. Goals are concerned with the long term, and often describe ideal situations that would result if all plan purposes were fully realized. Since goals are value-based, their attainment is difficult to measure.

## **Objectives**

Objectives are specific statements that carry out a plan in the short term. Objectives are measurable benchmarks that can be used to assess incremental progress in achieving the broader purposes expressed in the goals.

## **Strategies**

Strategies are result-oriented actions that can assist a community to achieve its objectives, meet its goals and realize its long-term vision for the future.

# **P**ROCESS

The comprehensive planning process for Hampshire County initially began in 1990 with the preparation of a community development plan. In 1995, a second attempt at drafting a Comprehensive Plan was made. The current planning process was initiated in January 2000 with the establishment of the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Hampshire County, like many other growth communities in the United States, is experiencing stresses from development of all forms, affecting its natural resources, and placing strains upon its ability to provide community services and public facilities. While some benefits from development are certainly achieved, the increasing demands placed upon the county for utilities, transportation, infrastructure, and services must be considered. The affects of development upon traffic congestion and flooding caused by run-off and erosion must be considered, as well.

Faced with the prospect of continued development and the need to conserve, better utilize, and increase resources, while at the same time promoting economic prosperity, the Hampshire County Commission appointed the Comprehensive Plan Blue Ribbon Panel in August 2002 to develop a Comprehensive Plan to help guide county growth for the next twenty years.

To complete the Plan, the County Commission contracted the professional planning services of Benatec Associates. Working with the Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan Blue Ribbon Panel, Benatec facilitated a series of meetings and interviews, focusing on the development of a long-term community vision, goals, and objectives. Much of the original data collected by the Planning Committee has been incorporated into the Plan and supplemented with more recently available Census data, as well as information from other relevant sources.

In 2007, the Hampshire County Commission decided to undertake the responsibility of updating the Comprehensive Plan with the cooperation of the Hampshire County Planning Commission and the West Virginia University Extension Service. The goal was to address the county's escalating growth and

the completion of numerous objectives in the then current plan. The process began with community meetings in Romney and Capon Bridge to obtain viewpoints from the entire county to ensure that the great diversity of the county was taken into account. County residents were encouraged to voice their recommendations for the plan because this was an opportunity for them to help shape the county's future and their help was crucial to this endeavor. Local, county, and state entities were also contacted for information and recommendations that would assist in the update of the plan.

In January 2009, a group of community stakeholders were gathered for a day-long summit to review, modify, and enhance the draft version of this Comprehensive Plan. The stakeholders came from local civic groups, government officials at the county, state, and federal levels, utility companies, local banks and businesses, fire and police departments, school board members, infrastructure, healthcare and development committee members, and almost all standing county committees or commissions. The discussion was facilitated by experts in the area of architecture or public policy. The Planning Commission had developed the tagline "Country Living by Choice" to help focus the overall Comprehensive Plan.



## ***R*EGIONAL SETTING**

Hampshire County is located in the Potomac Highlands of the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, between the western Maryland panhandle and the Winchester, Virginia metropolitan area. Both of these areas play key roles in the socio-economic trends of Hampshire County.

Hampshire County covers 642 square miles of diverse topography, including mountainous slopes and river valleys. The major streams run from south to north: Mill Creek, The South Branch of the Potomac River, Little Cacapon River, North River, and The Cacapon River provides for beautiful scenic areas, necessary drainage, and natural habitats for wildlife. The lowest point of elevation is 510 feet above sea level where the Cacapon River crosses the line of Hampshire and Morgan Counties. The highest point of elevation is 2,997 feet on Nathaniel Mountain. Hampshire County has two incorporated towns, Romney and Capon Bridge, and seven magisterial districts: Bloomery, Capon, Gore, Mill Creek, Romney, Sherman, and Springfield.

## ***P*HYSICAL LAND CONDITIONS**

### **Geology**

Hampshire County is situated in the Valley and Ridge Province of West Virginia. Geographically, the county is divided into three general regions: a southeastern part of parallel ranges drained by the Cacapon River and its tributaries, a northwestern part drained by the South Branch of the Potomac, and an area between drained by the Little Cacapon River. Surface water is characteristic of a trellis drainage pattern mostly following the strike of the structural valleys. Mountain ranges of resistant bedrock material and valleys along less resistant rocks strike at N 30° E. Soils and in-stream alluvial material originate from colluvial material delivered to the valley from upslope processes.<sup>1</sup>

There are three strata types in the county: sandstone, shale, and limestone. In general, the deposits are thicker and coarser toward the southeast, and thinner, finer, and more calcareous toward the northwest. This indicates that sediments were derived from the southeast and moved toward an open sea to the northwest.<sup>2</sup>

### **Floodplain Areas**

Historically, flooding has been part of the South Branch of the Potomac River's nature resulting in flood-adapted habitats, floodplain forests, and scour bars. The

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

map on the following page illustrates the boundaries of the 100-year floodplain areas in the county.

The earliest recorded flood on the South Branch of the Potomac River occurred in the fall of 1878 when a hurricane came ashore in South Carolina and then tracked up the east coast, causing widespread flooding in the Potomac watershed. This event was recorded by local and regional weather agencies using gauges and reflects the beginnings of assessments of phenomena that affect development. Since the turn of the twentieth century, there have been several regional floods causing devastating damage.

Flooding in the South Branch of the Potomac River occurs in cycles that fluctuate in frequency and magnitude. Many floods occur in spring after heavy rainfall lasting several days. The situation can be exacerbated by rapid snowmelt and frozen ground that prevents runoff from being absorbed. This combination of factors was responsible for the January 1996 flood event. Periodic inundation benefits the natural systems and agriculture in the river valleys. Learning the rivers' natural cycles can help river communities maintain the natural and cultural resources the rivers have to offer, maximize profits, and prevent loss of property and life.<sup>3</sup>

In response to the flood of November 1985, the Hampshire County Commission adopted the County Floodplain Ordinance in August 1987. The floodplain ordinance was a prerequisite for the county to continue its eligibility and participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

### **Existing Land Use**

The Existing Land Use Map (Map 1) and the Subdivision Map (Map 2) illustrate the county's land development patterns. The vast majority of the county is forested land. Productive agricultural land is found adjacent to the major watercourses and on the rich valley floors. Urbanized areas are evident along the major roadways.

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<sup>3</sup> Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

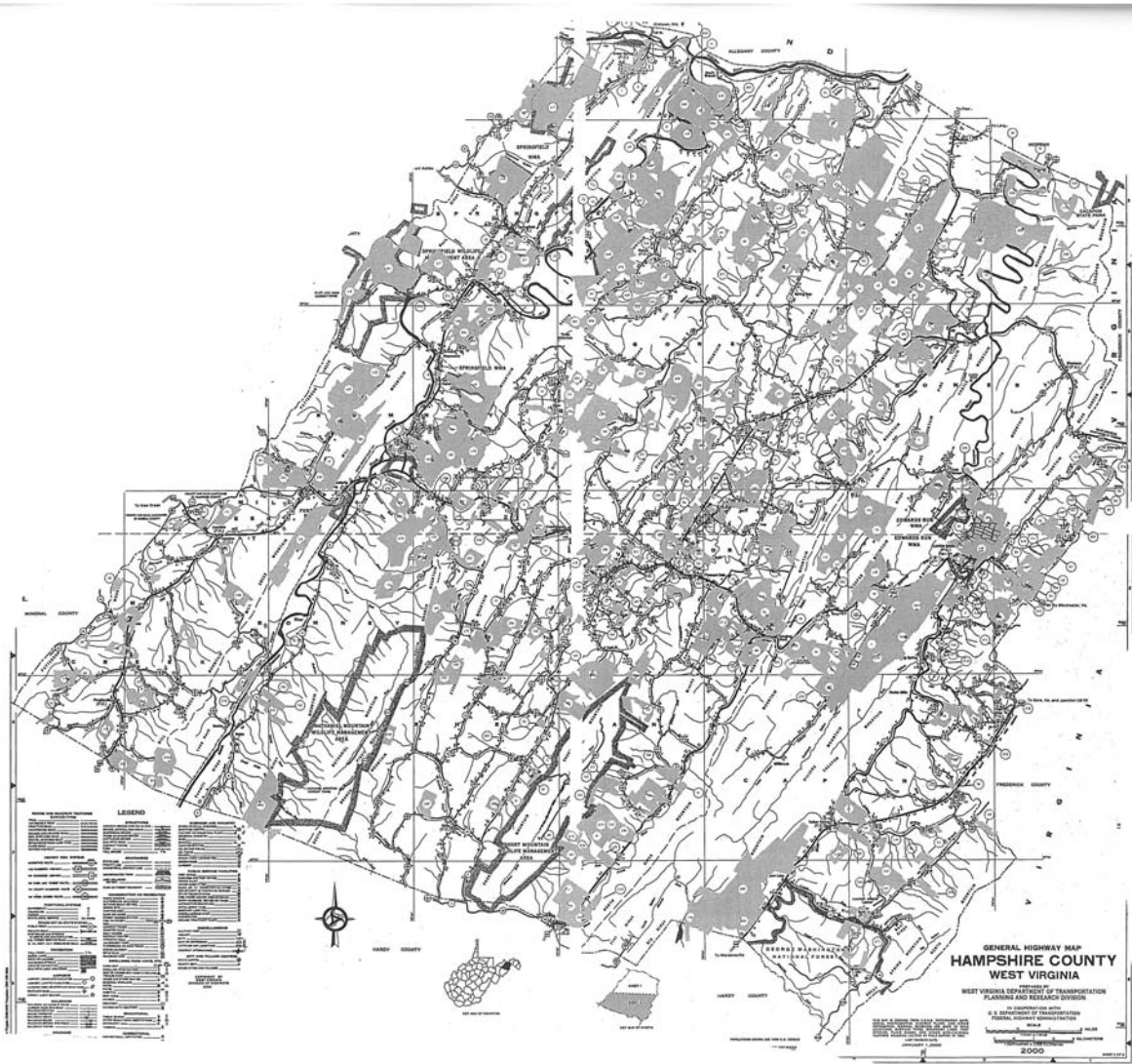


## Map 1. Existing Land Use Map



Source: Canaan Valley Institute (July 2001).

## Map 2. Subdivision Map



## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

### Population & Households

Hampshire County is greatly influenced by the surrounding counties, and even more by the counties in Maryland and Virginia than those in West Virginia. This fact was confirmed by the federal Office of Management and Budget, when it created a new metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in Winchester, Virginia which includes Hampshire County. The new MSA is based on, among other things, population shifts and commuting patterns uncovered in the 2000 census.<sup>4</sup> As a result, it is more logical to analyze and compare trends in Frederick County, Virginia and Allegany County, Maryland and compare them with trends in Hampshire County, than it would be to compare trends in neighboring West Virginia counties to Hampshire. (Winchester and Frederick County data has been combined because they are treated as separate counties in Census Bureau statistics due to Virginia's system of independent cities.)

Hampshire County residents closely identify with Allegany County and Frederick County in their social interactions, shopping patterns, college and university selections, employment opportunities, and for health care needs. The mountainous terrain in the county has limited road improvements, leaving residents with only a few major roads across the county. Residents from Romney can drive eastward to Winchester, Virginia in 40 minutes, while northern county residents find it more practical to drive to Cumberland, Maryland. In both cases, these social and economic patterns have created the existing conditions that define Hampshire County today.

County population trends from 1950 to 2000 illustrate a steady but small increase in residents in Hampshire County (Table 1 and Figure 1). By comparison, Winchester and Frederick County experienced explosive growth between 1970 and 2000 when the population increased by 90 percent. During this period, Allegany County leveled off at slightly below 75,000 residents, after falling from a peak of 89,556 in 1950. As a result, the population of Winchester-Frederick County went from having just over half as many residents as Allegany County in 1970 to having more residents in 2000.

The most recent population estimates show that these trends have continued since the last decennial census. Hampshire County is estimated to have seen a steady population increase totaling 11.8 percent between 2000 and 2007. Alleghany County once again saw small population decline, falling 3.1 percent over the seven years. Meanwhile, the growth in Winchester-Frederick County continued unabated with a nearly 19 percent jump in population since 2000.

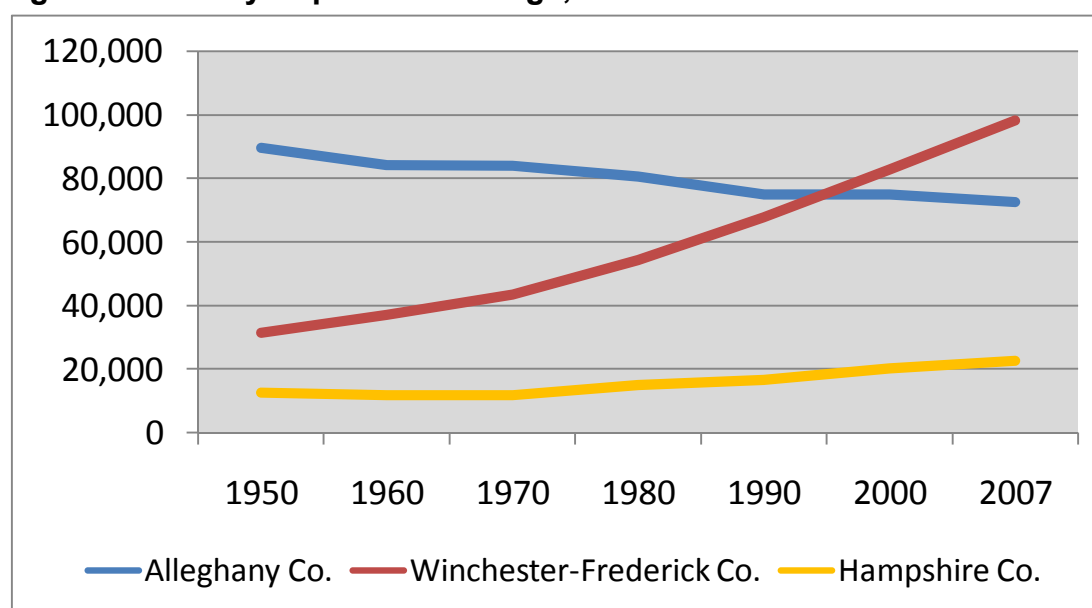
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<sup>4</sup> Jim Ross, "Huntington Metro Area Shrinks," *The Herald-Dispatch*, Huntington, WV. June 12, 2003: online.

**Table 1. County Population Change, 1950-2007**

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007
Allegany Co., MD	89,556	84,169	84,044	80,548	74,946	74,930	72,594
Winchester-Frederick Co., Va.	31,378	37,051	43,536	54,367	67,670	82,794	98,310
Hampshire County	12,577	11,705	11,710	14,867	16,498	20,203	22,577

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

**Figure 1. County Population Change, 1950-2007**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The population of Hampshire County in 2007 was one year younger than the rest of the state and slightly younger than Allegany County, but three years older than that of Winchester-Frederick County, based upon the American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau (Table 2). Related to that, residents younger than 20 years accounted for nearly 25 percent of the total population in Hampshire County, slightly more than the state but less than Winchester-Frederick County. The county also had a moderately smaller 25-44 age cohort, which generally comprises the prime labor force, than Winchester-Frederick County. The average household size was larger in Hampshire County, especially in comparison to the state or Allegany County.

Household type and size illustrates the domestic situation of a community with higher average household size often indicating more children. Communities with larger households often must consider more family-oriented planning and educational services, as well as school facilities. Larger households can demand larger houses and often include more children who require specific social and educational services.

Hampshire County falls in between Winchester-Frederick County and Allegany County in several key demographic characteristics: family households, married

couples, school-age children, labor force availability, elderly citizens, and median age. Each of these characteristics impacts some aspect of the comprehensive planning process, from housing choice and school facilities to water and sewer service.

Other Census Bureau estimates show these same trends. The population of Hampshire County was 23.0 percent children (persons under age 18), 14.4 percent seniors (persons age 65 and over), and 62.3 percent working-age adults (persons age 18-to-64). As a result, Hampshire County had a greater proportion of children in its population than the surrounding counties and the state as a whole. The county also had a smaller proportion of working-age adults when compared to the neighboring counties.

**Table 2. Population & Households, 2007**

	Allegany County	Winchester- Frederick Co.	Hampshire County	West Virginia
Total Population	72,661	96,510	22,189	1,808,787
Average Household Size	2.26	2.60	2.64	2.39
Total Households	29,305	36,570	8,364	496,360
% Family Households	59.5%	68.2%	70.8%	67.2%
% Married Couples	49.0%	52.5%	55.5%	52.1%
% Under age 20	23.0%	29.9%	24.7%	24.1%
% Age 25-44 Years	25.9%	29.8%	27.2%	26.2%
% Elderly, 65 & Older	17.9%	12.3%	14.3%	15.4%
Median Age (Years)	39.7	36.3	39.3	40.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Note: Median Age for Winchester-Frederick County represents a weighted average of figure for Winchester (35.7) and Frederick County (36.5).

## Population Projections

Population projections available from West Virginia University's Regional Research Institute estimate the population for future dates. They illustrate plausible courses of future population change based on assumptions about future births, deaths, international migration, and domestic migration. The projections included below were developed using interregional cohort component projection methods. This is a standard cohort component projection method, except that it uses in-out county-to-county migration rates instead of county net-migration rates.

The most recent projections were developed in 2005 using the Year 2000 average birth and death rates (Table 3). The "Short Term" projections use the 1995-2000 in-migration and out-migration rates. The "Long Term" projections average the 1985-1990, 1995-2000, and 1995-2000 for the Long Term projections.

Both the short-term and long-term WVU RRI projections for Hampshire County show continued population growth for the county. The gains are somewhat higher under the short-term projections because it reflects recent increases in internal net migration. This explains the 3,300 difference seen in the 2050 projections between the short-term model (30,628 – an increase of 51.6 percent from the 2000 Census) and the long-term (27,306 – an increase of 35.2 percent from the 2000 Census). It is worth noting that these changes may make the short-term model more accurate because the 2007 Census population estimate exceeds the WVU RRI's population projection using the long-term model.

**Table 3: County Population Projections**

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Short Term	23,109	24,405	25,598	26,686	27,606	28,370	29,078	29,811	30,628
Long Term	22,023	22,889	23,722	24,481	25,108	25,620	26,121	26,671	27,306

*Source: West Virginia University Regional Research Institute.*

Regardless of the methodology, the key point is that the county's population is projected to continue its steady increase over the coming decades, averaging a net increase of between 132 and 188 persons annually. While these numbers are estimates of future population levels based on sound methodology, they are estimates. Significant and unforeseen circumstances could cause fluctuations in the estimates, but they remain the most reliable predictors of future population levels for the purpose of planning. One factor that may alter the future population on the county is a large number of second homes being built or purchased by people from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area who are nearing retirement age and are planning to retire to Hampshire County.

### Age Structure

The distribution of age cohorts in Hampshire County is important for many planning applications as citizens of different ages have different needs. Education, social services, recreational facilities, and a host of other services and facilities must be considered for the various age groups. Also, commercial and industrial establishments locate to areas where the demographic makeup would prove profitable and/or where a skilled labor force is available to meet their needs.

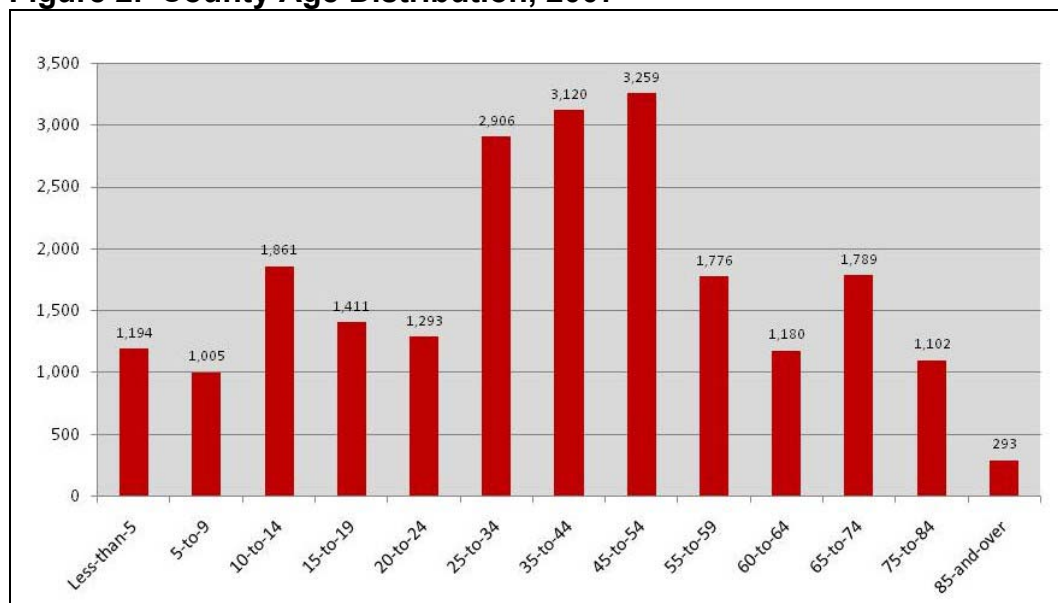
In 2007, according to the American Community Survey, more than 19 percent of county residents were between the ages of 5 and 19, inclusive (Figure 2). This school age cohort represents almost one-fifth of the total population. The 20-24 age group was among the smallest age cohorts, presumably because many in this group were attending school outside the area.

Following trends elsewhere, the 25-54 age cohort comprised the largest constituency at nearly 42 percent of the population. Residents in this age range

generally are beginning families, buying homes, and actively participating in the labor force.

Over 14 percent of county residents were 65 years or older in 2000, representing about one in every six residents. This high number of senior citizens will continue to increase in the following years as the large groups of younger cohorts age.

**Figure 2. County Age Distribution, 2007**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

## Housing

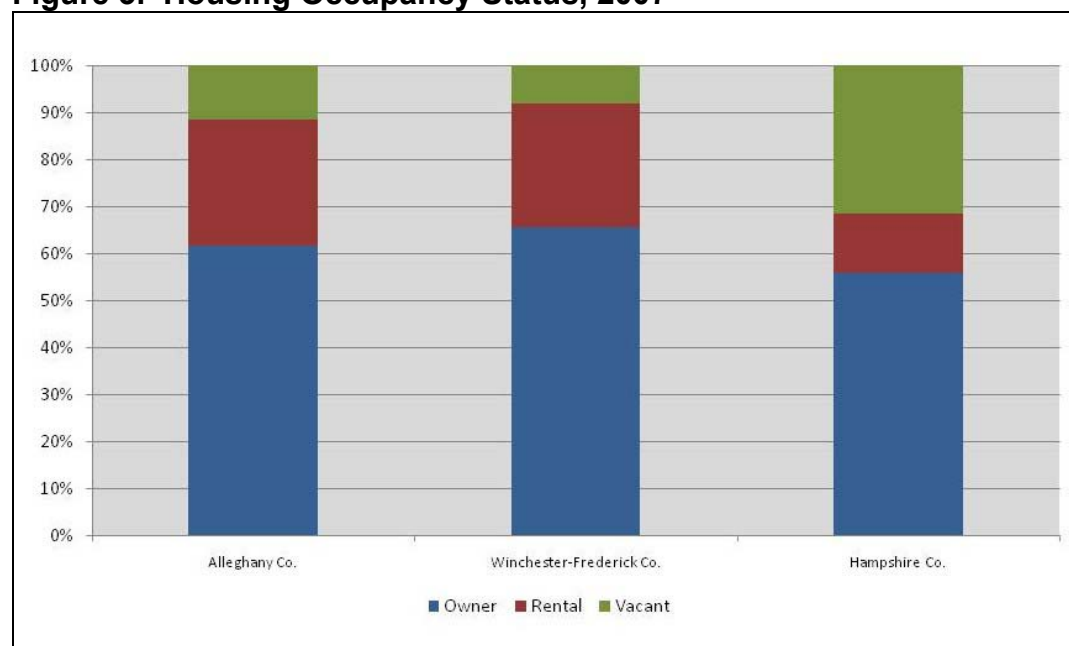
Housing occupancy is described in several ways by the Census Bureau. First, all housing units are classified as either occupied or vacant. In 2007, occupied housing units accounted for 68.5 percent of the total housing stock in Hampshire County (Figure 3). All occupied housing units were classified as either renter-occupied or owner-occupied, with the latter providing the rate of homeownership. The county homeownership rate in 2007 was nearly 82 percent, moderately higher than the state rate of almost 75 percent (calculated as the percentage of owner-occupied homes of all occupied homes).

Finally, the Census classifies all vacant housing units as: for rent; for sale; rented or sold but not occupied; for seasonal, recreational or occasional use; for migrant workers; and all others. The vast majority of the vacant housing units in Hampshire County are for “seasonal, recreational, and occasional use” (Figure 4). However, the share of such housing units has dropped roughly 9 percentage points to just under 70 percent of all housing vacancies between 2000 and 2007. However, this appears to be the result of an increase of over 1,000 housing units in the county (to 12,212 from 11,185) and a corresponding increase in the number

of vacancies (to 3,848 from 3,230). Furthermore, two other types of types of vacant houses more than doubled during the seven-year span: the number of units listed as for sale only (to 250 from 116) and classified as “other vacant” (to 659 from 285) doubled. Meanwhile, the proportion of vacant housing units in Alleghany County, Maryland, and Frederick County, Virginia that were for seasonal or recreational use remained about the same (data was not available for Winchester, Virginia. to combine with Frederick County).

The county’s convenient location to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area combined with its scenic vistas, lower land costs, and lower taxes have made Hampshire County one of the most attractive destinations for second and vacation homes. A 2003 article in *The Washington Post* analyzed this trend.<sup>5</sup> It stated that West Virginia had the second-highest increase in housing classified as seasonal in the U.S., trailing only Hawaii. West Virginia also continues to be the second-fastest growing state for second homes. The completion of Appalachian Corridor H to the south of Hampshire County through Hardy County is expected to further increase the demand for land and second homes in the region.

**Figure 3. Housing Occupancy Status, 2007**



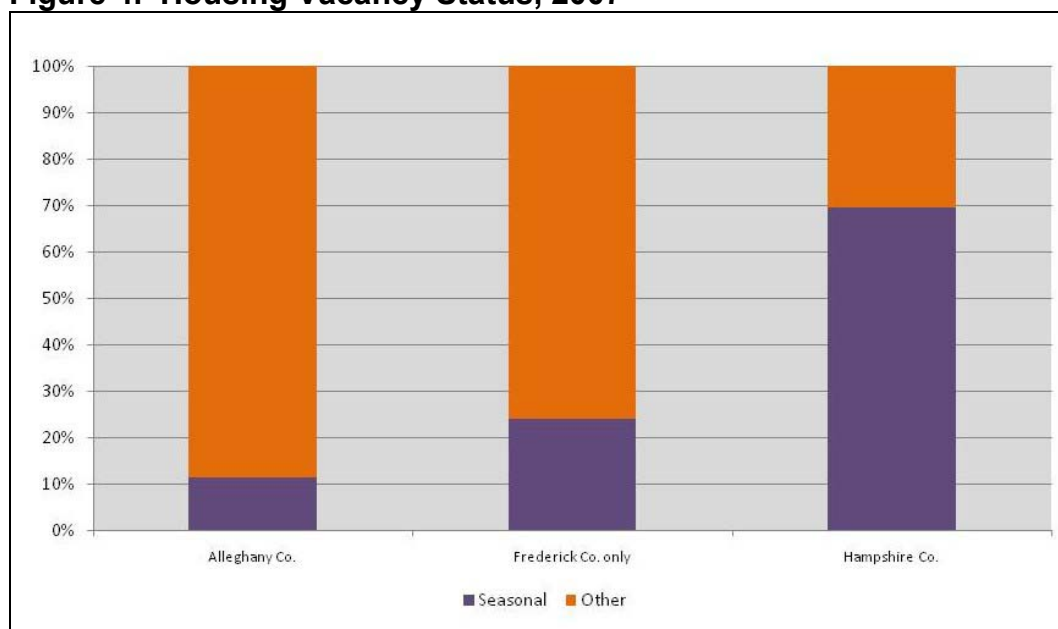
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

<sup>5</sup> Sandra Fleishman, “Heading for the Hills: West Virginia, Far From the Big City, Draws Buyers of Second Homes.” *The Washington Post*, April 19, 2003. F-01.



New housing starts have averaged approximately 259 units annually from 2000-2007 (Figure 5). Using this number to calculate the net in-migration of new residents would reveal an expected increase of approximately 644 residents annually, based on the 2000 persons-per-household rate of 2.49 in the county. With an average annual net increase in population of only 370 persons from 1990-2000, the only explanation for the disproportionately higher number of new housing starts compared with the net in-migration of new residents is the seasonal home buying activities undertaken by residents of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and elsewhere.

**Figure 4. Housing Vacancy Status, 2007**

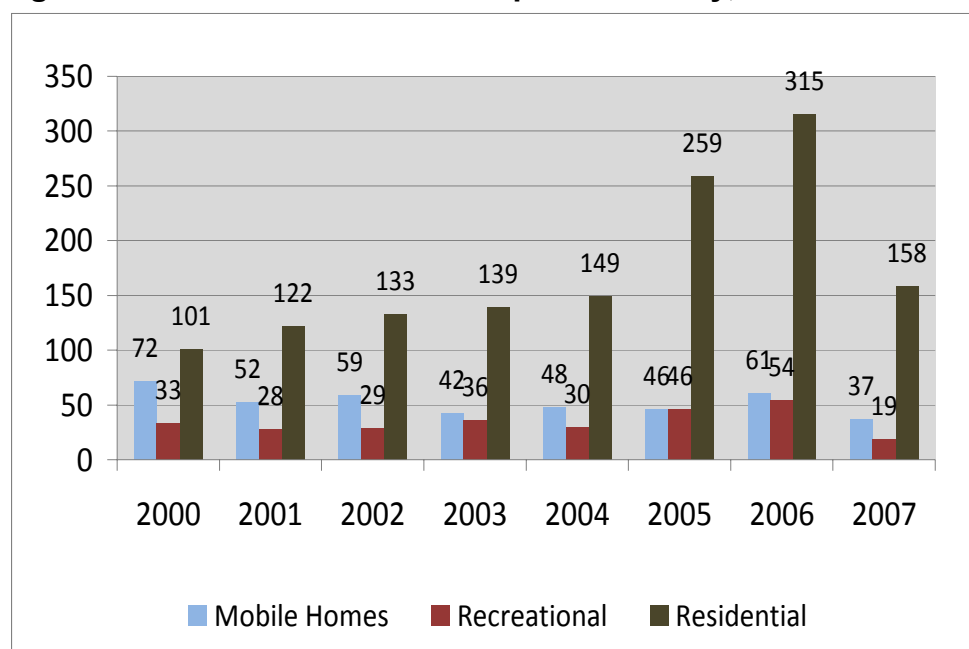


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

## Housing Type

Housing type distribution remained almost virtually unchanged since the last decennial Census, according to the 2007 American Community Survey. More than three quarters (76.6 percent) of housing units were single-family (one-unit) detached houses. The second most popular housing type was the manufactured mobile home at 19.6 percent of the housing stock.

In 2000, the Census showed that nearly three out of every four housing units in Hampshire County are single-family, detached structures. The second most popular housing type was the manufactured housing unit, or mobile home, which comprised over 22 percent of the housing stock.

**Figure 5: New Residences in Hampshire County, 2000-2007**

Source: Hampshire County Planning Office.

## Education

Education plays a critical role in the economic viability of a community. Business and industry analyze regional demographics when searching for new locations and plant expansions. They scrutinize the level of high school and college graduates, the quality of local schools and the availability of worker-readiness programs.

In the 2007 period, according to the American Community Survey, Hampshire County had 77.0 percent of its adults (age 25 and over) with a high school diploma but only 10.0 percent with a bachelor's (college) degree or higher. This represented a seven percentage point increase in high school graduates but a one percentage point drop in college graduates.

The educational attainment levels were lower than what was found in both Alleghany County (84.3 percent and 15.1 percent) and Winchester-Frederick County (83.2 percent and 23.9 percent). It was also lower than the statewide averages as West Virginia had 81.0 percent of adults with a high school diploma and 16.9 percent of adults with a college degree. It should be noted that only eight states have a smaller proportion of high school graduates than West Virginia and no state has a smaller proportion of college graduates.

This is important because studies have consistently shown a correlation between education and earnings. Nationally, a person without a high school diploma could have expected to earn an average \$16,234 in 2001. The high school diploma was worth \$24,885, an associate's degree \$33,644, a bachelor's degree \$48,892, a master's degree \$63,205, a professional degree \$96,779 and a doctorate degree \$86,036.<sup>6</sup>

Hampshire County has gained a reputation for having quality schools, all of which have received full approval status and accreditation by the State Board of Education. Students have consistently bettered the national norm on various tests, including the SAT-9 Test. The district has been at the forefront of computer technology for more than a decade.<sup>7</sup>

Total enrollment of students is an important statistic for a community because education funding is based on the number of enrolled students. Also, high or increasing enrollments demand larger, newer and costly facilities. The 2007-2008 enrollment for the county school system was approximately 3,800. This represented an increase of over 200 students from five years earlier.

The enrollment was spread through nine schools (with a technical center also serving county students). The six elementary schools had a total of 1,790 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5. Two of the schools had enrollments under 200 while two others housed more than 400 students. The two middle schools combined had just under 900 pupils in grades 6 through 8. One middle school served less than 400 while the other served more than 500. The county high school had 1,100 students in grades 9 through 12.<sup>8</sup>

## Employment

Total employment in Hampshire County grew by 9.8 percent to 4,153 between 2001 and 2007, according to Workforce West Virginia (Figure 6). Employment in just the private sector showed similar gains and was 2,782 in 2007.

Gains were seen over the period in employment in the majority of sectors: construction, trade, transportation, and utilities (wholesale trade and retail trade subcategories), information, financial activities, education and health services, leisure and hospitality, other services, and government. These offset losses seen in natural resources and mining (especially agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting), manufacturing, and in some subcategories of trade, transportation, and utilities (especially transportation and warehousing).

More moderate and less uniform growth was seen in the county's employment base between 1995 and 2001. Total employment grew by 3.1 percent to 3,783 during the period. However, private sector employment fell by 4.1 percent to

<sup>6</sup> Jim Ross, "W. Va. Ranks as Least Educated," *The Herald-Dispatch*, Huntington, WV. June 24, 2003: online.

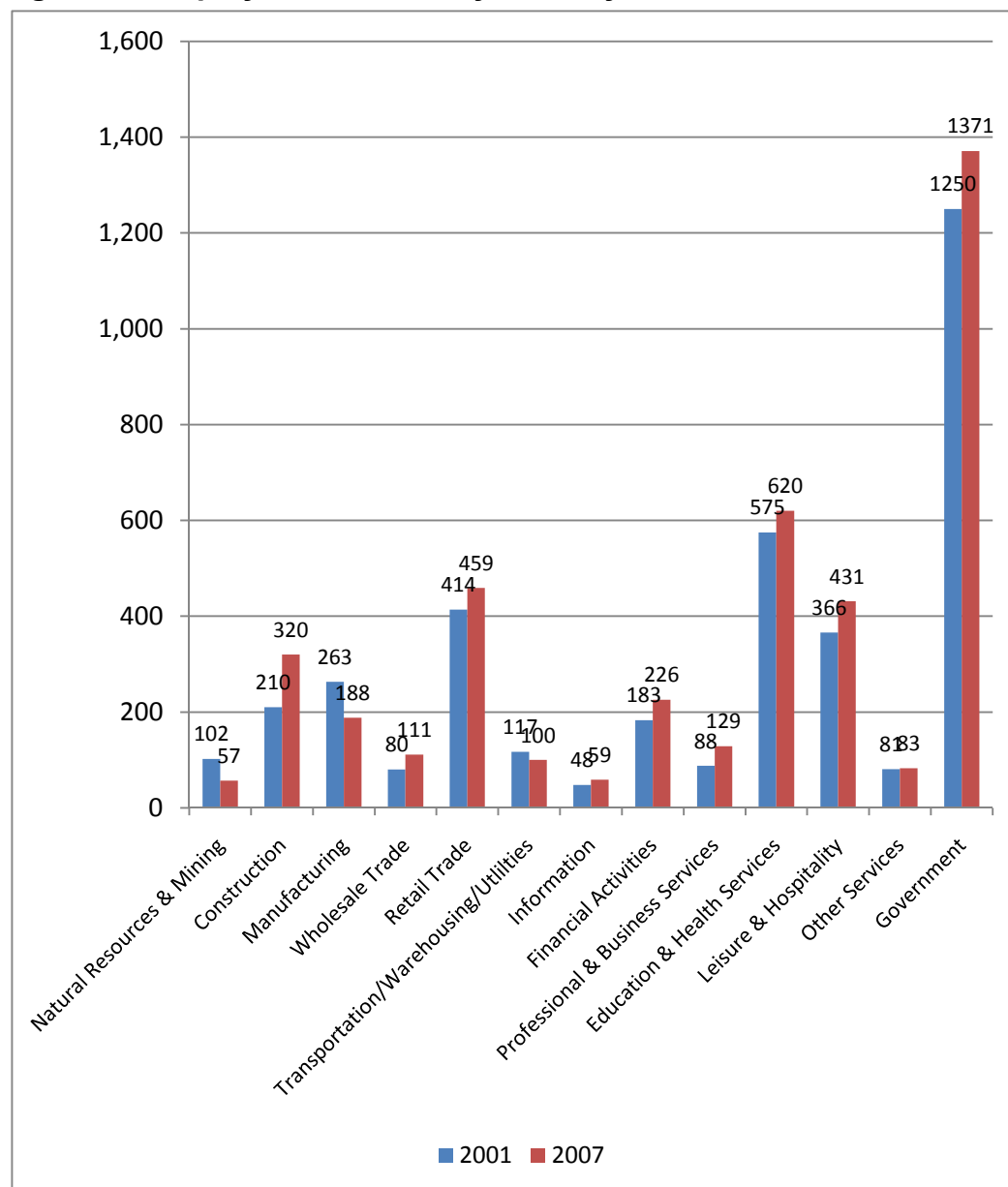
<sup>7</sup> Hampshire County Board of Education, memo dated May 24, 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Hampshire County Schools website, [boe.hamp.k12.wv.us/](http://boe.hamp.k12.wv.us/), accessed July 16, 2008.

2,533 at the same time. The sectors that saw employment gains included construction, manufacturing, and government.

A change in how the employment data is collected – the move to NAICS (North American Industrial Classification System) from SIC (Standard Industrial Classification) system – makes it cumbersome and impractical to compare sector level county employment data between these periods. (NAICS is available for 2001 and after, while SIC data is available for 2001 and before).

**Figure 6. Employment Trends by Industry, 2001-2007**



Source: Workforce West Virginia.

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## Commuting Patterns

Analyzing commuter travel patterns is important for community planning because commuting patterns indicate where people work and how far people must drive to get there. Commuting time is the best criterion for assessing commuter travel patterns. The average commute length is usually dependent on the distance from home to work, but poor traffic management, inefficient highways, traffic delays, speed limits, and a host of other factors also affect commuting time.

The two most important commuting characteristics in Hampshire County are the travel patterns (where workers travel for employment) and the length of time spent commuting. The commuting time for county residents has decreased slightly in recent years. Estimates from the American Community Survey for 2007 show an average commuting time of 37.6 minutes in Hampshire County, compared to nearly 40 minutes in 2000. This was still more than 10 minutes more than the average commute statewide of 25.3 minutes.

The long commuting time for county residents has several implications. First, it indicates that there are not enough jobs close to where residents live to satisfy the employment needs of the population. Because Hampshire County is entirely rural, people are forced to commute longer distances to reach their place of work.

The lack of urbanized areas in closer proximity to residents exacerbates this dilemma as cities offer more employment opportunities. Much of the county labor force is employed outside of the county, further increasing average commuting times. In 2000, the county had a deficit of 3,792 jobs. Of the 8,390 Hampshire County residents who worked outside the home, 3,638 worked inside the county while 4,521 worked elsewhere. Meanwhile, only 960 workers traveled into the county for employment. In other words, even if every job in the county was held by a county resident, 45 percent of the workforce would still have to leave Hampshire County to go to work.

Overall, nearly 57 percent of the workforce left the county for employment and more than 45 percent of the county labor force traveled outside West Virginia for employment. The most common destination was Winchester-Frederick County, Virginia, where more than one-out-of-every three county residents worked (2,881 persons or 34.3 percent of the workforce).

This pattern will continue as long as Hampshire County remains rural. If commercial and industrial development is located in Hampshire County, more jobs will be generated in closer proximity to where residents live.

## Unemployment

Unemployment rates in the region reflected the proximity of Hampshire County to major employment centers. The average unemployment rate in the county for 2008 was 4.2 percent, up slightly from the 2007 rate of 4.0 percent, according to

Workforce West Virginia. This was lower than the average statewide unemployment rate of 4.3 percent, the average unemployment rate of 4.4 percent for Winchester-Frederick County, Virginia,<sup>9</sup> and the average unemployment rate of Alleghany County, Maryland of 5.3 percent.<sup>10</sup>

From 2000 to 2008, the county's average annual unemployment rate has ranged between 3.3 percent and 5.0 percent. It was below the corresponding state unemployment rate each year. Also important to note is that there is seasonality to the county's unemployment rate. The rate is higher during the late autumn and winter months and lower during the late spring to early autumn period.

## Income

Households with sufficient disposable income for purchasing goods and services are vital to the economic viability of a community. The amount of local spending in a community affects both the type and the amount of products and services available in a community.

In 1999, the median household income for Hampshire County residents was \$31,666 (Table 4). This was equivalent to 107 percent of the state income level but only an estimated 74 percent of neighboring Winchester-Frederick County, Virginia. The percent of households receiving wage and salary income is higher among households with individuals who have achieved higher education levels. This is evident in Winchester-Frederick County where 20 percent of adults (age 25-and-over) have college degrees. Also, fully 81 percent of households have wage and salary income and only 2 percent of households receive public assistance. Hampshire County's self-employment income rate is slightly lower at 11 percent of all households. County households receiving public assistance income equaled that of the State.

The most recent statistics show that income for county residents continues to rise. The median household income in Hampshire County in 2007 was \$36,071, but it was slightly less than the state's median household income of \$36,088 (Table 5). This also represented a decline in real dollar terms compared to 1999 county median household income (\$31,666 in 1999 was equal to \$39,410 in 2004).<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, the county poverty rate has been relatively stable. It stood at 16.8 percent in 2007, up slightly from 16.3 percent in 1999. (It had fallen as low as 14.0 percent in 2004). The county poverty rate was lower than the state poverty rate of 17.7 percent, however.

<sup>9</sup> "Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment: Quick Search," Virginia Workforce Connection. [www.vawc.virginia.gov/analyzer/qlabforcedata.asp?cat=LAB&session=LABFORCE&subsession=99&areaname=Multiple%20County/City](http://www.vawc.virginia.gov/analyzer/qlabforcedata.asp?cat=LAB&session=LABFORCE&subsession=99&areaname=Multiple%20County/City)

<sup>10</sup> "Employment, Unemployment, and Unemployment Rate by Place of Residence," Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation. [www.dlir.state.md.us/LMI/laus/index.shtml](http://www.dlir.state.md.us/LMI/laus/index.shtml)

<sup>11</sup> Calculated using Bureau of Labor Statistics' CPI Inflation Calculator: [data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl](http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl)

**Table 4. Type of Income by Household, 1999**

	Median Household Income	% With Earnings	% Receiving Public Assistance Income	% Receiving Social Security Benefits	% Receiving Supplemental Security Income	% Receiving Retirement Income	% Persons Below Poverty Level
Allegany Co., MD	\$30,821	68.3%	2.6%	37.4%	5.0%	23.4%	14.8%
Winchester-Frederick Co., VA	\$43,027	84.0%	1.9%	25.2%	3.2%	17.5%	8.1%
Hampshire Co.	\$31,666	74.9%	4.3%	33.4%	5.3%	21.9%	16.3%
West Virginia	\$29,696	70.6%	4.0%	33.9%	6.9%	22.0%	17.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Median Household Income for Winchester-Frederick County represents a weighted average of figure for Winchester (\$34,335) and Frederick County (\$46,941).

**Table 5. Type of Income by Household, 2007**

	Median Household Income	% With Earnings	% Receiving Cash Public Assistance Income	% Receiving Social Security Benefits	% Receiving Supplemental Security Income	% Receiving Retirement Income	% Persons Below Poverty Level
Allegany Co., MD	\$35,453	67.8%	2.0%	38.9%	4.8%	26.2%	14.6%
Winchester-Frederick Co., VA	\$56,356	84.5%	0.9%	25.4%	2.3%	18.3%	9.4%
Hampshire Co.	\$36,071	73.4%	1.5%	34.5%	5.4%	22.9%	16.8%
West Virginia	\$36,088	70.4%	2.2%	35.7%	6.9%	23.7%	17.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey.

Note: Median Household Income for Winchester-Frederick County represents a weighted average of figure for Winchester (\$43,760) and Frederick County (\$61,114).

## Conclusions

The demographic analysis provided within the Comprehensive Plan reveals several important implications for planning. These implications serve as the basis for the goals, objectives, and strategies developed to assist Hampshire County in achieving its long-term vision. Based on the demographic analysis, the following conclusions can be made:

- The county is frequently inundated with flash floods causing varying degrees of property damage. Strict enforcement of floodplain management regulations can prevent some of the damage and maintain the county in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program.

- Residents younger than 20 years of age account for more than 27 percent of the total population in Hampshire County and comprise the school-age population. This trend will continue to demand a response in the form of new school facilities, as student population growth has outpaced projections.
- The county's population is projected to continue its steady increase over the next 20-22 years, averaging a net increase of approximately 145 persons annually. However, this number will be far outpaced by the rate of new housing construction expected to occur.
- Hampshire County's percentage of housing units classified as seasonal, recreational or occasional use is the second-highest in the state at 80 percent. How this type of housing is regulated within the county's subdivision ordinance should be evaluated for effective land management practices.
- Only 11 percent of county residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. Nationally, a high school diploma earned only 33 percent of the income earned with a bachelor's degree in 2001.
- In 2000, the average commuting time for a county resident was 40 minutes and 45 percent of the labor force traveled outside the county and state for employment. This high degree of commuting over long distances for lengthy periods contributes to traffic congestion, higher incidences of vehicular accidents, and less time for family and community activities, among other things. It also demonstrates that higher tax-generating commercial and industrial properties are not located in Hampshire County.
- Income levels in the county reflected a healthy employment center located outside of Hampshire County.



## LAND USE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW

This element of the Comprehensive Plan provides guidance on future land use in Hampshire County. It includes a brief description of existing conditions and focuses on key planning priorities. Land use should be evaluated in conjunction with all the other plan elements, particularly transportation, community facilities, and open space.

## VISION

A long-term community vision was developed for the Comprehensive Plan to provide county leaders, residents, property owners, and others with a guiding concept of what Hampshire County should become in twenty years. A vision lays the groundwork for the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Plan.

In response to the comments, public input, interviews, and public meetings conducted for this planning process, the following vision will guide the Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan:

***Hampshire County is a community where the rural countryside is preserved by encouraging future growth and development to existing communities served by adequate infrastructure systems, which can support a diversified regional economy for a thriving population, which enjoys a high quality of life within a sustainable environment for current and future residents.***

## PLANNING CONTEXT

Hampshire County occupies approximately 642 square miles, of which less than 8 square miles is residential property. Over 98 percent of the total land in the county is farm or forest. According to a 2000 Landsat Photo, the county land use or land cover could be categorized into the following categories:<sup>12</sup>

- Forest land 79.6 %
- Farmland 18.9 %
- Urban 0.3 %
- Non-urban residential 0.9 %
- Water 1.3 %

<sup>12</sup> Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

With so few residential communities located within such a vast area, extension of water and sewer lines is costly and difficult to accomplish at times due to the rugged terrain and soil composition. The primary urbanized areas in the county can be found along the major thoroughfares such as US Route 50 and WV Route 28 and at their intersection. Small commercial centers can be found along these roadways, consisting of one or more retail or service establishments, to serve the local population. The distribution and location of growth in recent years has not always assured efficient delivery of public services as the development pattern has been widely dispersed. Evaluation of the county subdivision regulations for best land management practices may improve this situation.

Contributing to the landscape are managed or preserved lands, which are publicly owned and permanently protected. These include the Nathaniel Mountain, Short Mountain, Fort Mill Ridge, and Edwards Run Wildlife Management Areas. The designation of these federal and state parcels will ensure their protection and existence as open space for public use.

The continuing seasonal home buying trend is significant for Hampshire County on several levels. First, it has generated interest in the county as a place to live, play, and invest. At specific times of the year (i.e., weekends, holidays, summertime), the influx of these seasonal homeowners brings with it an influx of spending for food, gas, supplies, home furnishings, equipment, recreational activities, etc. Second, some of the owners of these approximately 2,600 vacation homes pay Class III property taxes, which are double the amount paid by Class II (owner-occupied) properties. As a result, these vacation homeowners pay twice the rate of property taxes than year-round county homeowners, but they generally do not require the same level of public services that year-round residents require. In other words, to some degree, the seasonal homeowners support the cost of public services for the year-round population.

The greatest physical impact of this trend is the subdivision of land to accommodate the seasonal homebuyers. Almost without exception, these subdivisions are not located in close proximity to electric, water and sewer service, requiring the lot owners to spend several thousands of dollars for digging wells, installing on-site septic systems, and extending and burying electric lines. While the development activity is welcomed by most, care must be taken to protect the very elements which attracted the seasonal homebuyers to Hampshire County in the first place: wide open spaces, thousands of acres of forestland providing privacy, rugged terrain, miles of beautiful waterways, and beautiful scenic areas. Preservation of these natural resources for future generations can be accomplished without stifling their economic contributions.

## **Future Land Use Plan**

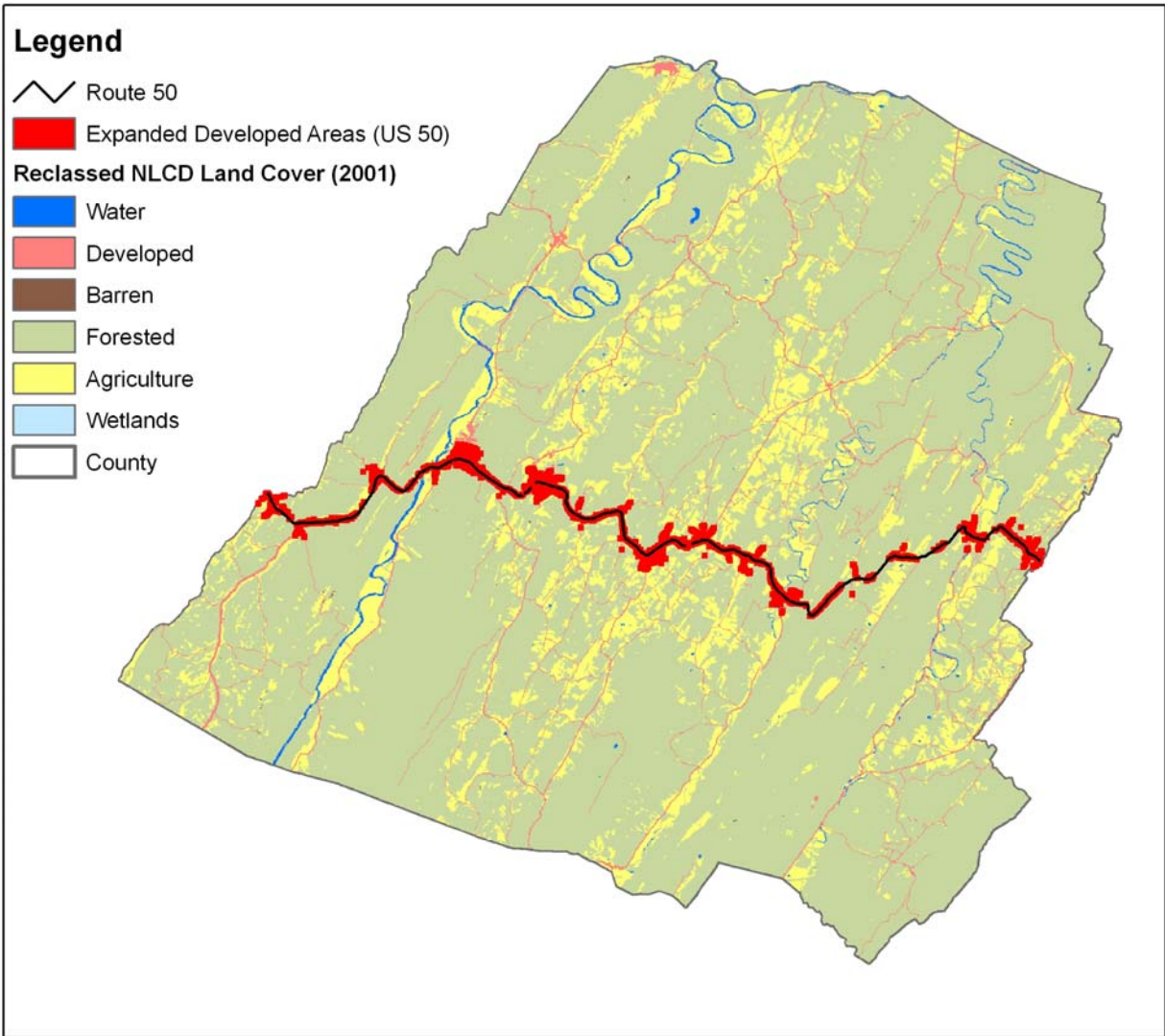
A Future Land Use Map (Map 3) was developed as part of the comprehensive planning process. Based on anticipated growth and development patterns, as well as the vision, goals, and objectives established during the process, land use projections were made for Hampshire County. A map summarizing these projections is included on the following page.

The Future Land Use Plan anticipates Hampshire County land uses in 2020 and beyond. Due to the extent of federally-designated floodplain areas, the floodplain map was used as the base information for the map. The vast majority of the county will remain forest (dark green) even when the number of approved subdivisions is considered because the density of development will remain relatively low.

Due to the planned construction of Appalachian Corridor H through Hardy County to the south, the most intense development pressures could be expected to occur along the three primary thoroughfares providing direct access from Corridor H north to Hampshire County. These areas also should be considered for planned infrastructure extensions as denser development in these locations would make the extensions more cost-effective to finance.

Likewise, existing communities, which can be thought of as “Village Centers,” are locations where denser development could be expected to occur with adequate infrastructure in place to provide the necessary public services. Many of these are located along the US Route 50 corridor, which is outlined in red-orange on the map.

Map 3. Future Land Use Map



# **GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES**

## **Goals Statement**

Retain the rural character of the county by preserving natural, scenic, and open space resources; enhancing the tax base in appropriate locations; and assuring the continued desirability of the county as a place to live, work and play.

## **Objectives**

- Identify growth areas, which are logical extensions of existing concentrations of development in the Romney, Augusta, Capon Bridge, Rio, Purgitsville, Yellow Spring, and similar developed areas, and insure that they have appropriate access and can be efficiently served by infrastructure systems.
- Encourage new development in the county in existing communities and growth areas.
- Discourage development in areas not suitable for on-site sewage disposal and which cannot feasibly be served by publicly owned waste management.
- Encourage proper utilization of creek valleys, open areas, and steep slopes as open space.
- Encourage compact business development patterns along Corridor H Areas of Influence located in Hampshire County. Of particular concern are WV Route 259 north from Wardensville to Yellow Spring, Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area, and US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgitsville area to Rada.
- Recognize the variety of housing needs of county residents.
- Encourage a variety of housing densities and attractive residential housing types in appropriate areas, consistent with the natural resources, service constraints and existing character of the county.
- Encourage retention of dwelling units within commercial areas to provide for mixed and continued use of these areas.
- Encourage suitable, attractive, and compatible commercial and office uses at appropriate locations, consistent with existing land use patterns, support services, and the transportation systems.

- Work to retain existing and attract new desirable businesses in the county, and foster the viability of commercial areas in the county through revitalization efforts and streetscape improvements.
- Encourage the maintenance and improvement of existing residential areas and housing stock through appropriate land use controls and enforcement policies and programs.
- Plan land uses and densities in a manner that preserves open land, manages traffic, maintains the quality of life in the area, and creates manageable tax structures.

### **Strategies**

- Develop and adopt a countywide policy in collaboration with the public service districts, which describes and enforces the boundaries of water and sewer service extensions in these areas. (6-12 months)
- Encourage property owners to take full advantage of easements which regulate land use, e.g., agriculture, open space, and timber management. (6-12 months)
- Develop and adopt a countywide growth management policy that identifies growth areas where the county will direct new development. New infrastructure systems should be emphasized in the growth areas so as to avoid rural sprawl development patterns. (12-18 months)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to include access management for new development, cluster developments, minimal development standards for large-lot subdivisions, and the requirement of restrictive covenants for all new subdivisions that will make the maintenance and installation of capital improvements the responsibility of the developer and/or future property owners within the subdivision. (18-24 months)
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational and other uses, with the goal of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use. (24-36 months)

### **Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Charge appropriate service/permit/application fees for new and existing activities.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.

## **T**RANSPORTATION OVERVIEW

The Transportation Plan Element identifies key transportation issues facing the county and the established goals, objectives and strategies for those issues.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

Hampshire County is a very large county that connects the three eastern panhandle counties of West Virginia to the rest of the State. Only two counties in Virginia, Frederick and Clarke, separate Hampshire from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. There are no interstate highways located within the county; the closest interstate highways are Interstate 68, Interstate 70, and Interstate 81. I-68 is located north of Hampshire County in Maryland and has its eastern terminus at I-70 in Hancock, Maryland. Meanwhile, I-81 is located east of the county and connects Winchester, Virginia, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Hagerstown, Maryland (where it intersects with I-70), and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Within the county, US Route 50 is the major east-west corridor, traveling over the Allegheny Mountains in typical curvilinear and steep fashion for 34.05 miles. US Route 50 is one of the last remaining non-interstate transcontinental highways in the country. It connects Ocean City, Maryland with Sacramento, California (the original western terminus was San Francisco until the 1964 California highway renumbering). The basic alignment of the roadway follows some of the historical route of the Northwest Turnpike, which was originally developed in the late 1700s to connect eastern and western Virginia.<sup>13</sup>

The West Virginia Division of Highways recently conducted a Traffic Operation and Safety Study of US Route 50 through Hampshire and Mineral Counties to evaluate and address the inadequacy of US Route 50 to accommodate traffic demands and to provide recommendations for improving traffic operation. The in-depth study included review and analysis of traffic volumes, accident reports, speed limits, design criteria, operational characteristics, infrastructure location and size, and geometric configuration to establish a framework for future improvements.

Accident records on US Route 50 from 2000 to 2005 were reviewed to determine common causes. During that time, 801 injuries and 22 fatalities occurred during 1,069 accidents. There were 1,964 vehicles involved in these accidents and 653 of the accidents involved multiple vehicles. Only two of the ten segments of the roadway studied operate at an acceptable level of service (LOS). Several improvements were recommended in the study, all totaling \$31.6 million with 95 percent of the improvements recommended for Hampshire County.

<sup>13</sup> Wilbur Smith Associates, "Traffic Operation and Safety Study, Route 50, State Project No. X229-H-1.00 00, Mineral and Hampshire Counties." West Virginia Division of Highways. February 6, 2002.



Recommended major improvements include curve realignments, construction of climbing lanes, construction of continuous turning lanes, improving sight distance, and installing guardrails with shoulder improvements.

Other primary thoroughfares include WV Route 28 from Springfield through Romney and on to Purgittsville, County Road 7 from Augusta south into Hardy County, WV Route 29 from north of Sideling Hill in Paw Paw to Rio, and WV Route 259 from High View through Yellow Spring and on to Wardensville. The roadways located in closer proximity to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area are at high risk for overcrowding, higher accident rates, and inadequate levels of services if the seasonal home buying trends continue unabated.

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES**

### **Goals Statement**

Plan for a circulation system comprised of road, transit, and pedestrian facilities, which will allow safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian travel throughout Hampshire County.

### **Objectives**

- Coordinate land use and road improvement policies.
- Preserve and improve the capacity of the existing roads within the area as future development occurs through cooperative efforts with developers and WVDOT.
- Assure adequate access management occurs along major road corridors such as US Route 50, and the Corridor H Areas of Influence located in Hampshire County to minimize the number of access points to the road system. Of particular concern are WV Route 259 north from Wardensville to Yellow Spring, WV Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area, US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgittsville area to Rada, and US Route 50 east of Romney and in the Capon Bridge area.
- Facilitate pedestrian circulation within the community business areas through such means as benches, landscaping, and other pedestrian amenities.
- Preserve the natural scenic quality of Hampshire County while providing sufficient transportation systems consistent with the county's present and long-term needs.
- Work with WVDOH to improve State roads and bridges.

- Provide for better regulation of road construction in subdivisions within the county.
- Encourage the development of residential subdivisions, which incorporate trails linking residential areas to open spaces, and recreation resources located within or adjoining such developments.
- Determine the merits of and appropriate locations of park and ride facilities and other multi-modal facilities.
- Ensure progress is made within five years on Right-of-way acquisition to ensure road improvements can be pursued after future development occurs.

### **Strategies**

- Work with the County Transportation Committee to advocate for the implementation of the road and safety improvements recommended in the WV DOH plans on US Route 50 within the next five years. (6-12 months)
- Advocate for a WVDOH study to evaluate the feasibility of designating and developing park and ride facilities near major intersections and well-traveled commuter routes. (12-18 months)
- Advocate the need for priority improvements to the West Virginia Department of highways and to the West Virginia Governor. (12-24 months)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to incorporate minimum standards for road access, driveways, and curb cuts. (18-24 months)
- Conduct a corridor management study of the US Route 50 corridor to determine the highest and best use of land and to evaluate the need for development standards such as access management. (24-48 months)
- Request a study of the road system in the county by the Division of Highways, with particular attention paid to identifying areas of county responsibility and improperly abandoned roads by county or state officials. (36-60 months)

### **Fiscal Considerations**

- Seek local funding to enhance WV DOH road improvement projects.
- Pursue Federal appropriations and special legislation for improvements on US Route 50 and US Route 220.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.

## **E**CONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

This element of the Comprehensive Plan provides guidance on improving the economic viability of the county. Without the establishment of a strong, diversified economic base, Hampshire County will not be able to implement many of the strategies recommended in the Plan, as well as create and retain jobs while enhancing the overall quality of life.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

Hampshire County is a special place that offers a high quality of life. Yet, the county also has its share of economic challenges that must be addressed if it is to increase its tax base, create job opportunities for its residents, provide services to all segments of the population, and support its schools, parks, infrastructure and cultural amenities.

Many reasons for the county's current economic viability are not found within Hampshire County. With approximately half of the labor force traveling outside the county and the state for employment, the county does not have the financial benefit of a strong non-residential tax base. Furthermore, because these members of the labor force must commute daily through and around the county to get to their jobs, the county must tolerate the negative impacts of the long, daily commuting habits: traffic congestion, pollution, increased vehicular accidents, longer drive times, etc.

The Hampshire County Development Authority is the primary economic development agency for the county whose goal is to promote and implement initiatives to create job opportunities and enhance the local tax base. The Authority's primary projects are the build-out of the Hampshire County Development Park at Romney and the development of the new Capon Bridge Tech Park. The Authority is targeting smaller, higher-skill employers that would find the rural environment of Hampshire County attractive and conducive to a higher quality of life than that found in more urbanized areas.

The seasonal home buying activity must be considered in the context of its contribution to the local economy. Most of the homes being built in the larger lot subdivisions are second homes that are taxed at Class III rates, which is twice the rate of Class II properties (owner-occupied as a primary residence). Tourism can be one of the cleanest industries and has a multiplier effect on a community's economy. West Virginia tourism is a growing industry and has become one of the top income producers for the economy. Tourism can also take many forms such as bed & breakfast inns, arts and crafts shows/festivals, sports events, and museum attractions.

A study completed for the West Virginia Division of Tourism in 2005 reported \$239.4 million of total direct travel spending in the eight-county Potomac Highlands region in 2004. Spending had increased each year since 2000. For Hampshire County, travel spending totaled \$22.5 million, resulting in 290 jobs, \$3.9 million in business earnings, and \$14,000 in local tax revenue.<sup>14</sup>

A similar study published in 2001 reported that the region had the third-highest person-trip volume in the State at 940,000. This accounted for a 14.3 percent share of West Virginia travel during 2000. Visitors to the Potomac Highland area were predominantly in the age group of 35-54, had an average household income of \$54,010 and traveled with their family for getaway weekends. Their top activities were visiting parks, hiking/bicycling, entertainment, and skiing. They stayed an average of 3.78 days in a hotel/motel and spent an average of \$70 each day, the second-highest among West Virginia regions. Peak travel months were January, July, and August. West Virginians accounted for the highest share of the region's travelers (22 percent), followed by Virginia (19 percent), and Maryland (18 percent).<sup>15</sup>

Together, this information shows a healthy market for tourism and tourism-related activities in Hampshire County.

The character and quality of county life continue to be priority issues for Hampshire County residents. Quality of life issues such as rural design, parks, schools, and public services are also priorities for businesses and their employees. Preserving and enhancing these aspects of the county will enable it to retain existing businesses and residents, as well as appeal to new businesses and residents who share the quality of life priority.

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES**

### **Goals Statement**

Sustain and enhance the economic vitality of the county, while maintaining the rural character.

### **Objectives**

- Enhance the quality of life in Hampshire County through economic mobility.
- Encourage appropriate re-use of vacant and underutilized properties.

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<sup>14</sup> Dean Runyon Associates. "Economic Impact of Travel on West Virginia," West Virginia Division of Tourism. June 2005.

<sup>15</sup> D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd, "2000 Year End Overnight Leisure Travel Report," West Virginia Division of Tourism. August 2001.

- Support programs and efforts to promote economic development in the county and to retain, replace, and increase jobs for county residents.
- Encourage additional, appropriate commercial and industrial development areas along the Corridor H areas of influence located in Hampshire County. Of particular concern are Route 259 north from Wardensville to Yellow Spring, WV Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area, and US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgitsville area to Rada.
- Encourage linkages to major open spaces such as the South Branch of the Potomac River, North River, Little Cacapon River, and Cacapon River, and the regional transportation system, to increase the attractiveness of the region as a residential and business location.
- Facilitate pedestrian access to community businesses where appropriate.
- Foster county and business community cooperation in promoting economic development, community attractiveness, and activities and events.

### **Strategies**

- Collaborate with the Central Hampshire Public Service District to develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan. (6-12 months)
- Actively participate in collaborative marketing efforts with the Hampshire County Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and the West Virginia Development Office. (6-12 months)
- Participate in the Potomac Highlands Entrepreneurial Forum and provide technical assistance to potential entrepreneurs in Hampshire County. (6-12 months)
- Actively promote ongoing and established festivals and encourage additional community festivals. (6-12 months)
- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in development-related activities. (6-12 months)
- Target employers who are interested in locating/expanding to a rural environment within easy commuting distance to a major metropolitan area and are interested in diversifying the employment opportunities needed for long-term economic vitality and stability. Identify businesses that are not detrimental to the natural resources of Hampshire County. (12-18 months)

- Develop a comprehensive infrastructure initiative for cable, phone, internet, and other technology based infrastructure. (12-24 months)
- Develop the infrastructure that is needed by targeted employer groups. (12-24 months)
- Encourage creation of business base to support other business, such as food service, recreation facilities, outlet shops, rental properties, and other amenities. (12-24 months)
- Develop Hampshire County into a local provider of high quality agricultural goods, thereby stimulating the local economy. (12-24 months)
- Support efforts to protect and promote existing tourism-related activities. (12-24 months)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to include land development requirements for single parcel developments and incorporate requirements for interconnecting linkages between non-residential and residential uses and between adjacent commercial uses to provide greater pedestrian accessibility. (18-24 months)
- Develop entrepreneurial opportunities involving the increasing population of seniors/elderly for health care, home care, and extended residential care. (18-36 months)
- Pursue the development of additional senior centers to more efficiently cope with ever increasing needs for the services provided throughout Hampshire County by the existing providers. (24-36 months)
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other uses, with the goal of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use. (24-36 months)
- Conduct a corridor management study of the US Route 50 corridor to determine the most appropriate use of land and to evaluate the need for development standards such as access management. (24-36 months)
- Encourage and establish a local community college and technical schools. (24-36 months)

### **Fiscal Considerations**

- Develop funding mechanisms (e.g., tax increment financing) to encourage desirable economic development.
- Utilize grants and low-interest loans
- Support efforts to create a revolving loan fund to enhance development efforts and opportunities.
- Seek other appropriate funding sources for further economic opportunities from state, regional, and national sources.
- Use existing revenue streams.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES OVERVIEW

Community facilities are the institutions, services, agencies, land, and other properties intended for general use, for the benefit of the community as a whole. Community facilities and public services are those minimum facilities and services the county provides for the common good. The quality of public facilities contributes to the county's quality of life. Ensuring that community services and facilities are phased with the demand or need is a major growth management component.

The county's community facilities must be carefully coordinated with land use and transportation plans to coordinate the provision of services with anticipated revenues, growth, and the county's ability to pay. Where possible, the current and future needs should be addressed through existing facilities and the expansion thereof. Where this is not possible, new facilities can be used to manage growth. By identifying where public schools, water or sewer lines, and other improvements should be constructed, the county can encourage development in appropriate areas and discourage development in inappropriate areas. "Appropriate" is meant to be consistent with adopted county policies. Coordination of county land use, transportation and community facilities development is the key to providing equitable, efficient and cost-effective government services for current and future county residents and property owners.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

### Water & Sewer Service

The extension of public sewer and water service to an un-served area of the county is usually a harbinger of development. The county must therefore effectively communicate its growth management proposals to the local public service districts to avoid conflicts in goals and objectives. Certain areas of the county may ultimately require water and/or sewer service due to public health concerns or other state mandated orders, even though a conflict in planning philosophy may result. The overriding factor for all decisions must remain the public health, safety, and welfare. In the event of such conditions, appropriate secondary planning strategies must be crafted to alleviate unexpected conflicts. Ideally, the local public service districts should communicate to the county when extensions of service are proposed within its boundaries and probable development concerns must be fully evaluated prior to a final decision.

One public service district provides water and sewer service to Hampshire County: Central Hampshire PSD. The PSD's extension plans are generally guided where population density is sufficient to feasibly support the extension of service and where public health concerns are noted. The water extension plans



for the Greenspring Valley include a \$2.1 million upgrade for the combined Greenspring/Springfield facility. Greenspring is an unprotected spring source and, according to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, under the influence of surface water run-off. The planned upgrade will include filtration to mitigate this problem. Longer range plans call for the construction of a water line extension up Goldsboro Road off of WV Route 28. Additional plans involve the extension of sewer service to Springfield, which is being driven by the increasing residential and commercial densities in the PSD's service area. Design plans and funding mechanisms are currently in place.

Short-term plans for Central Hampshire PSD include the extension of water service 15 miles east on US Route 50 to Pleasantdale Acres and three miles up Heidi Cooper Road. This \$3 million project would provide service to 300 new households. The PSD is also considering expansion of its service area boundaries to include the planned new Capon Bridge Tech Park and the area east of Capon Bridge.

Central Hampshire PSD has also turned its attention to several problem areas in the county where private wells and on-site septic systems are posing real or potential public health hazards. First, the old Romney landfill on WV Route 28 is of serious concern due to the fear of infiltration into local wells. Second, North River Valley is the location of several subdivisions that are comprised of 2-acre lots with on-site septic systems constructed on shale. Shale is unstable for septic systems over time and these subdivisions will eventually need both water and sewer service extended to their locations. Third, Golden Acres is a 1960s subdivision consisting of quarter-acre lots constructed with on-site septic systems on soil that is not suitable for septic development. It is also suspected that many of the septic systems were unpermitted when constructed. These three circumstances will more than likely require water and sewer service extensions within five to ten years.

## **Schools**

The Hampshire County Board of Education consolidated its school facilities in the 1960s. As a result, ten schools located on eight campuses exist today to serve the children of Hampshire County. Building maintenance and facility improvements have historically been financed through excess levy funds. Passage of a \$3.74 million school bond issue in 1998 has financed improvements to address many of the health, safety, and overcrowding conditions at six elementary and two junior high schools. New construction under the bond issue will also eliminate a portion of the portable classrooms utilized throughout the county.

Despite the efforts of the Board, there remain numerous health, safety, and operational problems. New additions must be constructed to serve the increase in student population and to replace all remaining portable structures. Continued

growth in the county has increased the bus fleet, which has outgrown its current small, one-bay facility. Maintenance operations are located in a former school structure with potential historical significance and, therefore, cannot be expanded to address the system's growth. Administrative offices are housed in an undersized building.

The Board has identified the need for continued financial assistance from the State School Building Authority in order to attain an aggressive capital improvement program (Table 6). The following list is a summary of the costs required to bring existing school facilities up to current standards.

**Table 6. Required School Facility Improvements**

School	Improvement
Augusta Elementary (upgrade)	\$ 328,000
Grassy Lick Elementary (to be closed)	\$ 0
New elementary (new)	\$ 4,338,300
John J. Cornwell Elementary (addition)	\$ 711,400
Romney Elementary (addition)	\$ 676,400
Slanesville Elementary (upgrade)	\$ 142,400
Springfield-Green Spring Elementary (addition)	\$ 323,700
Capon Bridge Elementary (none needed)	\$ 0
Capon Bridge Middle (new)	\$ 8,087,700
Romney Middle (new)	\$ 8,859,000
Hampshire High (addition)	\$ 2,098,100
Board Office (none needed)	\$ 0
County Purchasing Office	\$ 30,000
County Maintenance Building	\$ 473,500
Bus Garage (new)	\$ 1,058,100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 27,126,600</b>

Source: Hampshire County Schools.

## Public Safety

Law enforcement staffing levels in Hampshire County are a compromise between community expectations, the need to provide other services, and available revenue. Citizens rightfully demand the highest levels of economy and efficiency from their governmental operations. A look at staffing levels of the Hampshire County Sheriff's Department reveals there are a total of 16 deputy sheriffs available for law enforcement duties in the county. This equates to less than 1 deputy for every 1,400 residents. Factoring into the equation the 11 West Virginia State Police officers stationed in the county and it increases to less than 1 official for every 830 residents. This level could be much lower during summer months, peak travel, and holiday weekends when out-of-state homeowners reside in their Hampshire County homes.

Staffing is important on a number of levels for law enforcement agencies. Services and activities provided to a community have a direct relationship to staffing levels: How quickly patrol units can respond to calls for service; What

cases can receive investigative attention; How much time can be spent on localized community problem solving, like traffic and drug enforcement, etc.

### **Public Health**

The Hampshire County Health Department plays a vital role in the review and approval of the subdivision of land. Lots created through the subdivision process generally require approval from the Health Department for septic suitability and wells. Approval is also required before the Planning Department will approve and issue building permits. While the responsibility for obtaining Health Department approval for septic suitability and wells lies primarily with the owner or prospective buyer of a lot, the county does have a public health interest in requiring that the lot owners or buyers achieve proper septic disposal.

### **Solid Waste**

Hampshire County is a member of the Region VIII Solid Waste Authority, which also includes the counties of Grant, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton. The Authority was constituted over twenty-five years ago to address the municipal solid waste needs of these counties.

The Authority originally provided solid waste disposal service at two landfills: one located just north of Romney and a second one located south of Petersburg in Grant County. In the early 1990s, new, more stringent and costly landfill construction standards and operational requirements caused the Authority to construct transfer stations on the sites of the landfills, and to transfer locally collected solid waste to approved sanitary landfills located in Thomas, West Virginia. The Authority currently ships approximately 27,000 tons of solid waste annually from the Region VIII transfer stations to the Tucker County landfill. Of this total amount, the Authority estimates that approximately 9,000 tons of solid waste is shipped out of Hampshire County on an annual basis.<sup>16</sup>

According to the Region VIII Solid Waste Authority, recycling has been a difficult process to accomplish for several reasons. First, the relatively small waste stream produced by the five counties in the region is spread over a vast geographic area. This increases the logistics of establishing such a program and financing the collection and transportation of the recyclables. Second, the unstable recycling market and the distance of these markets from the Region VIII counties are disincentives for professional recyclers to establish local businesses, including within Hampshire County. United Disposal, the only certified solid waste hauler in Hampshire County, does perform some recycling activities.<sup>17</sup>

In 2002, the West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board (SWMB) commissioned a comprehensive plan for the state. According to the plan, “the

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<sup>16</sup> West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2002.

<sup>17</sup> West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2002.

demographics of an area, including geography, population, economic base, income, land use, and available transportation routes, determine both the waste that is generated in an area and the options available to manage that waste.”<sup>18</sup>

The study explained that for a low-density county such as Hampshire, where the population density in 2000 was slightly more than 31 persons per square mile, the waste stream will be small. Furthermore, if little industry exists in the county, the waste stream will be comprised primarily of residential rather than commercial and industrial waste. As a result, management options such as markets for recyclables and construction of disposal facilities will be very different than in more urbanized areas.

For the purpose of waste management, the SWMB divided the state into seven zones, or “wastesheds.” Hampshire County is included in Wasteshed E, as are Pendleton, Hardy, Grant, Mineral, Jefferson, Morgan, and Berkeley Counties. Solid waste planning involves the prediction of future solid waste management needs. To estimate these needs, tonnage projections based on four pounds-per person-per day rate, which was calculated in a 1997 waste characterization study completed for the SWMB, were combined with population projections prepared by the West Virginia University Regional Research Institute, current as of 2002. Using these data, the SWMB projected that Hampshire County would require landfill capacity to properly dispose of approximately 1,307 tons of solid waste each month by 2005, which equates to 15,684 tons annually. This represents an estimated 75 percent increase in solid waste created by county residents today.

The projected monthly landfill tonnage capacity is projected to increase to 1,544 tons by 2025, or slightly more than a 100 percent increase over current tonnage shipped to Tucker County (Table 7).

**Table 7. Projected Monthly Landfill Tonnage Capacity Requirements**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Hampshire Co.	1,307	1,380	1,438	1,493	1,544

Sources: West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2002 and West Virginia University, Regional Research Institute, 2002

Pursuant to State Code, each solid waste authority is required to develop and implement a Comprehensive Litter and Solid Waste Control Plan to help reduce the solid waste management problems in West Virginia. West Virginia Code establishes an integrated waste management hierarchy on which the authorities’ plans must be based. This hierarchy includes, in order of preference, source reduction, recycling, reuse and materials recovery, and landfilling. The Region VIII Authority completed and submitted its Comprehensive Plan to the state in which the primary management technique identified was to continue transferring the solid waste generated in Hampshire County to the Tucker County landfill, which has been identified as having “unlimited” capacity to expand.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2002.

<sup>19</sup> West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2002.

# **G**OALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

## **Goals Statement**

Encourage essential facilities and services to meet the existing and future needs of residents consistent with the financial capabilities of the county.

## **Objectives**

- Continue to evaluate the need and opportunity for additional, expanded or improved community services and facilities and plan for the efficient and economical provision of those services and facilities.
- Encourage proper maintenance and upgrading of county infrastructure.
- Review proposed developments to ensure that required infrastructure facilities are constructed.
- Encourage adequate and proper self-management of subdivisions.
- Support community-wide activities, events, and resident participation in government.
- Encourage communication and cooperative efforts among county government, the Board of Education, community organizations, residents, and businesses to assure the continued vitality of the area.
- Investigate opportunities for cooperation between the county and the Board of Education in providing and making available facilities and programs to area residents.
- Adequately manage stormwater, soil erosion, and sedimentation within five years.
- Assure that the scale of development in the area is consistent with the capacity of the area's infrastructure and fiscal capacities.
- Coordinate sewer and water planning with land use policies.
- Encourage cooperation among the county's fire companies to address fire protection needs within two years.
- Encourage proper management of solid waste within three years.

## **Strategies**

- Collaborate with the Central Hampshire Public Service District to develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan. (6-12 months)
- Actively support the efforts of the Board of Education to finance the necessary upgrade and new construction projects identified in its ten-year facilities plan, utilizing a myriad of revenue sources such as state development money, assistance from developers, and local matches. (6-12 months)
- Help facilitate the plans set forth in the Hampshire County Board of Education's 10-year plan. (6-12 months)
- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in providing community facilities and services. (6-12 months)
- Actively support and advocate for the planning and construction of a new high school in the eastern end of the county within ten years, utilizing state and local monies. (12-18 months)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to include best land management practices and related approaches, procedures, and information. (18-24 months)
- Develop and adopt a countywide growth management policy that identifies growth areas where the county will direct new development. New infrastructure systems should be emphasized in the growth areas so as to avoid rural sprawl development patterns. (24-36 months)

## **Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Charge appropriate service and related fees for new and existing activities.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.
- Support efforts of external entities to find appropriate financial resources (i.e., Board of Education bond issues).

## **I**NFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW

County infrastructure is provided or administered by various entities; public water and sewer by Central Hampshire Public Service District, and the towns of Romney and Capon Bridge, and telecommunications, data transmission, and other infrastructure is through a plethora of other entities.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

Infrastructure is important in the County Planning in the aspect of situating the various types of land use throughout the county. Large densities of people should be centered on the more developed infrastructure networks and likewise, lack of infrastructure should reflect a more rural setting.

## **G**OALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### **Goals Statement**

Allow Hampshire County access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, safe transportation, and quality low cost telecommunications and other needed infrastructure.

### **Objectives**

- Facilitate the county infrastructure committee to ensure its progress and vitality into the future.
- Pursue water and sewer projects to benefit currently un-served and under-served areas of the county, or areas that may need served due to health or quality issues.
- Work jointly with state, federal, and private entities to promote and develop high speed and wireless forms of data transmission and telecommunication through the county.

### **Strategies**

- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in providing infrastructure and related services. (6-12 months)

- Undertake an aggressive approach to the development of high tech, high speed, and wireless data transmission and telecommunications through government and private sector joint ventures thus creating economic development possibilities while providing low cost service to the general public. (12-18 months)
- Ensure water and sewer projects are actively pursued in development and funding to guarantee projects reach construction. (12-36 months)
- Commingle projects for cost benefit in funding opportunities and construction feasibility. (12-36 months)

**Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Charge appropriate service/application/permit and related fees for new and existing activities.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.



## **N**NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES OVERVIEW

This section of the Plan focuses on the importance of preserving a sense of the county's rich historic past and its valuable natural resources. In order to preserve these features within Hampshire County, it is important to keep in mind the goals and objectives contained within this section when evaluating a development proposal, including subtle changes to historic and natural resources.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

### **Natural Resources**

Hampshire County is abundant in its natural resources; timber, water, clean air, and wildlife are the most dominate. These all need to be addressed as the county moves toward its future, ensuring that they are both utilized and maintained for future generations.

### **Publicly Owned and/or Managed Lands**

Accounting for a moderate amount of the forestland in Hampshire County are four state and one federal Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). These lands are publicly owned and managed and their natural beauty and wildlife habitats contribute significantly to the quality of life in Hampshire County. The outdoor activities available in the WMAs also contribute to the local economy as people from across the region travel to Hampshire County to enjoy hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, and bird watching.

Edwards Run WMA (397 acres) is located two miles north of Capon Bridge on County Road 15. The area primarily consists of low hills with steep slopes covered in an oak-hickory forest plus approximately 17 acres of scattered clearings and brushy areas. White-tailed deer and turkey hunting is excellent and squirrel, grouse, rabbit, and quail hunting opportunities are numerous. A section of Edwards Run and a 2-acre lake provide angling for trout, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, bluegill, and channel catfish.

Fort Mill Ridge WMA (217 acres) is located two miles southwest of Romney off of US Route 50. The area is located primarily on a ridge that ranges in elevation from 680 to 1,100 feet. The forest consists mainly of hardwood with some pine. The primary game species are deer and squirrel and fishing for warm water species is available in the South Branch of the Potomac River on the east side of the area.

Nathaniel Mountain WMA (10,675 acres, part of which is located in Hardy County) is accessed via County Road 10 just east of Romney. Nathaniel, Piney,

and Big Mountains dominate the area, ranging from 1,000 to 3,050 feet, and the forests are primarily mixed oak-hickory and Virginia pine. White-tailed deer, turkey, and squirrel are abundant, and black bear also inhabit the area. Fishing for native brook trout is available on Mill Run, a steep mountain stream which tumbles over a seven-mile course to join the South Branch of the Potomac River, one of West Virginia's most productive smallmouth bass fisheries.

Short Mountain WMA (8,005 acres) is located near Augusta on WV Route 29 and near County Roads 10, 7, and 53. Two mountain ridges form a long horseshoe-shaped basin, nearly all of which is covered in mixed oak and Virginia pine. Hunting for turkey, deer, squirrel, and ruffed grouse is available. One-half mile of North River crosses the area and is stocked with trout.

Wardensville WMA (55,327 acres) is located in both Hampshire and Hardy counties and is accessed via WV Route 259 and County Road 16. Oak-hickory forest predominates on the mountainous terrain, which provides hunting for turkey, bear, deer, squirrel, and grouse. Trout Pond (2 acres), Rock Cliff Lake (16 acres), and 61 miles of streams provide fishing for trout, while Cacapon and Lost Rivers provide smallmouth bass, rock bass, and redbreast sunfish fishing. Camping is available at Trout Pond, Rock Cliff Lake, Wolf Gap, and Hawk recreation areas. Wardensville WMA is owned by the U.S. Forest Service.<sup>20</sup>

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES**

### **Goals Statement**

Protect, preserve and enhance the natural and scenic resources of Hampshire County for current and future generations, and provide for physical access by county residents for recreational and educational uses. Identify, preserve, and enhance the historic, architectural, and cultural resources of the county.

### **Objectives**

- Protect and retain water resources within the County to assure the quantity and quality of surface and groundwater for recreational use, wildlife habitats, fire protection, and water supply. Of particular concern will be the South Branch of the Potomac River, North River, Little Cacapon River, and Cacapon River, their tributaries, wetlands and floodplains, and the steep slopes draining into the rivers and creeks.
- Protect groundwater and surface water from pollution and excessive withdrawal.

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<sup>20</sup> West Virginia Department of Natural Resources website.

- Protect and manage woodlands within the County.
- Protect the steep slopes within the County.
- Protect watersheds for Central Hampshire PSD, Capon Bridge municipal water supply, and Romney municipal water supply.

### **Strategies**

- Improve programs focusing on management of sewage and solid waste. (12-18 months)
- Programs focusing in stabilization of water corridors and floodplain restoration. (12-18 months)
- Protection incentives for maintaining existing large blocks of forested areas. (12-24 months)
- Implement timber resource management in new subdivisions in forested terrain. (12-24 months)
- Encourage participation on conservation easements pertaining to particular land use, i.e., timber, agriculture, open space, and special flood hazard areas. (12-24 months)
- Develop agriculture into local grown/local base utilizing the existing high quality products being currently produced throughout the county. (12-24 months)
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other uses, with the goal of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use. (18-24 months)
- Conduct a comprehensive county-wide water resource study. (24-36 months)
- Work in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies to ensure water quality management practices are implemented. (36-60 months)

### **Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Charge appropriate service and related fees for new and existing activities.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.
- Support efforts of external entities to find appropriate financial resources (i.e., natural resources grants).

## **H**ISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERVIEW

This component of the Comprehensive Plan is administered by the Hampshire County Historic Landmarks Commission, which was created in 2007 by the Hampshire County Commission. This Commission is responsible for the preservation of historic places throughout Hampshire County.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

In relation to planning, the Historic Landmarks Commission is essential to preservation of the past identity of the county. Hampshire County is experiencing growth that in many ways affects the previous characteristics of the area. Increased growth not only demands existing forested and agricultural lands for new subdivisions and commercial entities, but the influx of residents also impact social services and the rural nature of the community. In reaction to these changes the Historic Landmarks Commission, along with other county entities, feel it is imperative to implement a proactive approach to retain the heritage that the county is so proud of and deeply rooted in.

### **Local History**

Prior to settlement by the Europeans, Native Americans of Shawnee, Mingo, Tuskarora, Huron, and Cherokee heritage resided in Hampshire County. The first European settlement occurred around 1730 with the arrival of Dutch and German immigrants. The earliest settlers were the VanMeters and Formans, the latter of which settled near the present town of Springfield sometime before 1735. Job and John Pearsall built their homes near the present site of Romney in the 1730s. By the 1740s, many settlers had migrated to the area, attracted by cheap, fertile land. By 1748, about 200 people had settled in or near Pearsall's Flats (now Romney).

By an act passed in 1753 and taking effect May 1, 1754, the Virginia House of Burgesses partitioned the counties of Frederick and Augusta and formed the new county of Hampshire. In October 1777, the Burgesses responded to concerns of citizens from the western areas of Augusta and Botetourt Counties, separating portions of these two counties and adding the severed parts to Hampshire. This extended the boundaries of Hampshire to include all of the present-day counties of Mineral, Hardy, and Grant and portions of Morgan and Pendleton in present-day West Virginia. This was an area of about 2,800 square miles with a population estimated at 3,000 to 4,000 people.

Prior to 1754, the regional seat of government was at what is now Old Fields, West Virginia, but was relocated to what became Romney sometime prior to 1762. Before December 1762, Lord Fairfax sent surveyors to the intersection of two trails in Hampshire County to lay out a town. On November 12, 1762, a petition for a town of fifty acres laid off by Lord Fairfax at Pearsall's Level was

introduced in the House of Burgesses. After three readings, the bill was passed and then signed by Governor Francis Fauquier. As a result, Romney was established on December 23, 1762. The articles incorporating Romney indicate that the town was laid out in 100 lots. The town was laid out in a square, five blocks deep and five blocks wide, or 25 blocks bisected by four streets. Each block was divided equally into four lots, each being about one-half acre.

During the Civil War, Federal armies bent on denying the South Branch of the Potomac's agricultural bounty to Confederate forces occupied Hampshire County. In 1861, the courthouse in Romney was moved to Piedmont (now in Mineral County, WV) to be closer to Federal territory. Politically and ideologically, the county was divided between northern and southern sympathies. Generally, the eastern two thirds of the county was pro-Confederate while the western one third was pro-Union in sentiment. The county provided men and material to both sides, raising substantially more units for the South than for the North.

After the Civil War, the price exacted for Hampshire County's role in the war was the loss of its western third, which became Mineral County, taking from Hampshire County the lion's share of the county's industrial resources. In addition, reconstruction policy disenfranchised all former Confederate soldiers or participants. This policy effectively drained the county of its leadership and talent, causing the disenfranchised to leave for states and regions friendlier to their status.

Hampshire County became a destination point for hunters and adventurers in the late 1890s and early 1900s with improved rail access through the South Branch Valley. Cheap mountain land and relative ease of travel lured many of the newly wealthy to the South Branch and the Monongahela Valleys of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Before the mid-point of the twentieth century, many camps and cabins could be seen dotting the landscape of Hampshire County from the Trough to Largent, WV.<sup>21</sup>

### **Properties Listed on the National Register**

According to the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, 11 sites within Hampshire County are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and remain intact:

- Capon Springs and Farms, unincorporated hamlet, off WV 259
- Sloan-Parker House, east of Junction on US 50
- Literary Hall, Main and High Streets, Romney
- Wilson-Woodrow-Mytinger House, 51 W. Gravel Lane, Romney
- Gibson-Wirgman-Williams House, off CR 8, Romney
- Scanlon Farm, CR 5/4, Three Churches Run Road

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<sup>21</sup> 2000 Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, 2000-2020.

- Kuykendall Polygonal Barn, CR 8
- Washington Bottom Farm, WV 28
- Old District Parsonage, High Street, Romney
- Hampshire County Courthouse, High Street, Romney
- Capt. David Pugh House, CR 14 & CR 23/4, Hooks Mill

## **G**OALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### **Goals Statement**

Recognize, protect, and preserve the historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts in Hampshire County.

### **Objectives**

- Make a survey of, and designate as historic, landmarks, buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts which constitute the principal historical and architectural sites which are of local, regional, state, or national significance.
- Prepare and publish a register of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts.
- Certify and appropriately mark landmarks.
- Establish guidelines for care and management of the certified landmarks.
- Educate the general public on the importance of preservation of landmarks.
- Seek and accept gifts, bequests, endowments, and funds to accomplish goals.
- Encourage the preservation, protection, and enhancement of historic and architectural resources and their context.
- Support the efforts of local historic preservation groups to restore historic and cultural resources important to the county.

### **Strategies**

- Continue to inventory historical events, sites, structures and related resources. (6-12 months)
- Identify, preserve, and use the historical resources for future generations, including structures, artifacts, sites, and oral tradition. (12-24 months)

- Work in cooperation with landmark property owners to ensure the engagement of preservation activities and that landmarks are allowed to be designated and protected. (12-18 months)
- Work in cooperation with the Hampshire County Planning Commission to ensure adequate surveys are conducted prior to the development of land. (12-18 months)
- Pursue professional services to conduct a complete and comprehensive survey of Hampshire County. (24-36 months)
- Develop educational programs designed to instill the importance of preservation and the benefits that can be obtained on a county wide basis. (24-48 months)

### **Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.
- Pursue gifts, grants, and in-kind contributions.



## **R**ECREATION OVERVIEW

The Hampshire County Parks and Recreation Department is determined to provide recreation and enjoyment to individuals of all ages. This is accomplished through a myriad of activities and programs. It operates four parks and works in conjunction with numerous community based groups to provide leisure opportunities utilizing facilities not currently owned by the department. The Hampshire County Parks and Recreation Department also wishes to pursue cooperation with other entities, such as the Convention and Visitors Bureau, to promote tourism throughout Hampshire County.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

Recreation and Parks are essential in the physical and mental health of a community. Leisure time is needed to rest and relax the human body from the everyday rigors of life; therefore, providing these services is required for a prosperous and thriving county. Planning is necessary in the endeavor for the proper location of these facilities to best suit the needs of county residents.

## **G**OALS, OBJECTIVES, & **S**TRATEGIES

### **Goals Statement**

Provide leisure opportunities to the residents of Hampshire County in an unobtrusive and cost effective manner.

### **Objectives**

- Acquire land and construct parks and facilities in currently unserved areas.
- Expand the activities and programs currently offered by the Department.
- Increase revenues to broaden and improve the Department.
- Develop Hampshire County into a recreation and leisure destination.

### **Strategies**

- Query residents to investigate wanted leisure activities. (6-12 months)

- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in recreation and tourism activities. (6-12 months)
- Support efforts to enlarge staff utilizing all resources possible; volunteers, seasonal, part-time, and full-time. (12-18 months)
- Supplement activities being undertaken by the Board of Education. (12-18 months)
- Pursue innovative initiatives for increased leisure opportunities through the county. (12-24 months)
- Integrate a driving tour program for all eras of Hampshire County history to promulgate interest in preservation and tourism of the rich history of Hampshire County. (12-24 months)
- Work with private sector to establish support businesses to embellish the tourist industry in Hampshire County. (12-24 months)
- Support efforts to protect and promote existing recreation and tourism-related activities. (12-24 months)
- Utilize existing trail system on Nathaniel and Short Mountains for tourism and recreational opportunities. (18-36 months)
- Develop tourism through Civil War Trails program. (18-36 months)
- Utilize the draw of the Potomac Eagle to attract tourists as a destination for extended periods of time with the development and information distribution about Hampshire County's other tourism opportunities. (18-36 months)
- Undertake advertising campaign to attract tourists to Hampshire County, concentrating on the D.C. Metropolitan and Pittsburgh areas. (18-36 months)
- Develop recreational facilities in the eastern portion of Hampshire County. (24-36 months)
- Develop and utilize the recreational opportunities on the Cacapon and Potomac Rivers to mirror those encountered on the South Branch of the Potomac. (24-36 months)
- Ensure leisure opportunities for all Hampshire County residents within close proximity to both residential and work locations. (24-36 months)

- Acquire land for future expansion of the Hampshire County Parks Department, utilizing subdivision regulations and land purchases. (24-48 months)
- Work in conjunction with the planning of subdivisions through the Planning Commission to ensure recreational opportunities for new planned developments. (24-48 months)

**Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.
- Support efforts of external entities to find appropriate financial resources (i.e., recreation facilities construction grants).
- Create traditional and innovative measures for increased money flow for facilities improvements, expansions, and program development (e.g., fund-raisers, auctions, pavilion rentals, and special event fees).
- Pursue bestowments for park and facility property and additional assets.
- Work in conjunction with local, county, state, and national entities to develop revenue flow for the increased development of the Department (e.g., grants, gifts, and low interest loans).

## **E**DUATION OVERVIEW

Education plays a critical role in the economic viability of a community. Business and industry analyze regional demographics when searching for new locations and plant expansions. They scrutinize the level of high school and college graduates, the quality of local schools, and the availability of worker-readiness programs.

In 2007, Hampshire County's high school graduation rate was 86.3 percent. The percentage of students in that graduating class continuing post secondary studies was 71 percent; 32 percent to four-year colleges and universities; 27 percent to two-year colleges; and 12 percent to trade technical or business schools. This is important because studies have consistently shown a correlation between education and earnings. Thus, it is not surprising that the county had a lower median household income than the state as a whole in 2007 (\$36,071 for the county compared to \$36,088 for the state), when it had a lower adult (age 25 and over) educational attainment level compared to the state. Overall, 77 percent of Hampshire County adults had high school diplomas and 10 percent had college degrees, compared to 81 percent and nearly 17 percent, respectively, for the state.

All Hampshire County Schools have received full approval status and accreditation by the WV Board of Education. The majority of students have performed at mastery level or above on the WESTEST. The district is committed to 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning skills and remains in the forefront with technology. At Hampshire High, the attendance rate for 2007-2008 was 95 percent or higher. The number of dropouts as of January 2008 was 34.

Education funding is based on the number of enrolled students. High or increasing enrollments demand larger, newer, and costlier facilities. In 2003, the total enrollment was 3,566 students; by 2007 it had increased to 3,618 students.

The quality of education and the progressive role it pursues within a community often projects the overall vitality of the area; therefore, having an educational system committed to 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning is essential for the overall strength of the county.

## **P**LANNING CONTEXT

Education is vital to planning relative to the demographics of the county. Education plays a major role in economic development, as businesses are attracted to areas with a proficient educational system.

## **G**OALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### **Education Major Improvement Plan 2000-2010 Goals and Objectives**

- To provide adequate instructional space for a growing student population.
- To make all facilities handicapped accessible.
- To improve comfort, operation, safety, and health of all facilities.
- To correct all board of risk management, health department and environmental findings; comply with all code requirements.
- To purchase land for facility expansion or relocation.
- To enhance the maintenance and custodial care of all facilities.

### **Education Facilities Plan 2000-2010 Goals and Objectives**

- All students will have equal educational opportunities at all sites.
- All schools and each classroom will be wired and cabled for computers, technology, and the Internet. At least one computer lab will exist at each school site.
- Libraries/media centers/computer labs are available at all school sites. These facilities are accessible for students and the public beyond the instructional day and year.
- Schools in Hampshire County will be organized in the pre-kindergarten through grade 5, grade 6 through grade 8, and grade 9 through grade 12 format.
- Every school facility should have designated, specially designed areas for physical education and fine arts classes.
- Adequate numbers of classrooms designed to meet the educational needs of all special education students will be provided in each school facility. Special education students are provided educational and therapeutic services and available facilities must not inhibit the delivery of these services.

- Alternative educational programs, transitional programs, and in-school suspension programs are available to students at all grade levels. Space must be provided for these services.
- Adequate facility space is available at every school site for individual and group counseling, parent conferences, administrative work offices, teacher planning/work, storage, and health services.
- Science lab facilities are available at all middle and high school sites.
- Technology education (vocational exploration) is provided at all middle schools.
- Pre-school classroom facilities are available at all elementary school sites.
- Adequate kitchen and dining areas are available at all school sites.
- An aggressive preventive maintenance program is in place for all existing school facilities. All safety and health regulations will be studied and implemented.
- Parent resource centers and adult education services are available.
- Elementary and middle school students will receive extended blocks of instructions in Reading/English/Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Available facilities do not inhibit the provision of the best instruction for every student.
- Adequate space should be available for appropriate outdoor recreational facilities and for safe delivery of students and supplies.

**Fiscal Considerations**

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities.
- Explore impact/development fees to augment existing revenue streams.
- Support efforts to find appropriate financial resources (i.e., Board of Education bond issues).

## APPENDIX 1: STAKEHOLDER REVIEW

In January 2009, a group of community stakeholders gathered for a day-long summit to review, modify, and enhance the draft version of this Comprehensive Plan. The stakeholders came from local civic groups, government officials at the county, state, and federal levels, utility companies, local banks and businesses, fire and police departments, school board members, infrastructure, healthcare, and development committee members, and almost all standing county committees or commissions. The discussion was facilitated by experts in the area of architecture or public policy. The Planning Commission had developed the tagline “Country Living by Choice” to help focus the overall Comprehensive Plan.

During the meeting, an overview of the current Comprehensive Plan was presented. Then a discussion on the plan’s tag line, “Country Living by Choice,” was discussed.

Stakeholders were divided into three groups – Green, Red, and Blue – to discuss issues of importance to the county. The groups then reported back and evaluated what had been suggested and what the community valued. The following list is the “Top 10” values or items.

### Top 10 Goals / Areas of Importance

1. Conservation and Preservation of Hampshire County
2. Infrastructure Plan for the County
3. A New High School on the Eastern Side of the County
4. Nature and Parks / Recreation
5. Farm and Timber
6. Tourism
7. Seniors
8. Clustering – Land Use
9. Job Creation / Workforce / Tech Training
10. Government / Civic – Coordination / Communication

The discussions from the individual groups – and how they relate to the “Top 10,” as well as to the plan document – are below.

## GREEN GROUP

### 1. Have children stay in Hampshire County (NINE)

- Have affordable housing/property, rental housing
- Be able to making a living here/have jobs/generate revenue
- Density where infrastructure will handle

*How is this addressed?*

- Support programs for economic development
- Encourage appropriate industrial and commercial development
- Target employers interested in rural environment

Affordable housing is not addressed in this document.

## **2. Agriculture remains valued in Hampshire County (FIVE)**

- Base of all good things (open space, rural, etc.)
- Includes forest lands (apple orchards could be brought back if not built upon)
- Build on traditional agriculture – add modern marketing

*How is this addressed?*

- Determine necessity of new land use regulations to preserve agriculture and forest land
- Retain rural character while pursuing economic development
- Encourage conservation through land easements

## **3. Proactive development (EIGHT)**

- Consider services/needs
- Put infrastructure into place
- Not have to play catch-up
- Education (related to benefits of such an approach)
- Density where infrastructure will handle

*How is this addressed?*

- Develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan
- Develop infrastructure needed to attract targeted employers
- Develop high speed/wireless internet in cooperation with state and federal entities

## **4. Pay attention to resources (ONE)**

- Look at what the resources will sustain
- Tailor growth to limits of resources
- (Include soils to a greater extent)
- (Include topographic examination)



*How is this addressed?*

- Manage storm water, soil erosion, and sedimentation within five years
- Protect ground and surface water, woodlands, steep slopes, watersheds
- Implement timber resource management
- Conduct water resource study
- Encourage conservation through land easements
- Incentives for protecting blocks of forested lands
- Programs for floodplain restoration

## **5. Compliance and Enforcement (TEN)**

- Ensure follow-through
- Specify penalties in regulations

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **6. Infrastructure (TWO)**

- Explore underground utilities
- Mandate underground utilities in new developments

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **7. Planning Education (TEN)**

- Define quality of life → Foundation (of efforts)
- Make the plan a living document – not a “shelf” document
- Revisit the plan
- Continuously obtain public input

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **8. Resources appropriate – non-consumptive recreation (FOUR)**

- Attract people from metro areas
- Diversified economic development activities
- Be able to reuse/use differently (when done with activity – limit permanent land change)
- Maximize historical and agricultural tourism

*How is this addressed?*

- Ask residents about their recreational goals
- Support efforts to enlarge recreational staff
- Expand programs offered by Parks and Recreation Department
- Acquire land for construction of new parks
- Publish a register of historic sites

## **9. Connectedness (TEN)**

- Relate plan to other needs (e.g. Office of Emergency Services)
- Include/incorporate/discuss contingency planning

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **10. Senior housing (SEVEN)**

- Place near hospital (or healthcare facilities/services)
- Stages of care/continuum of care offering (from independent living to skilled care)
- Density where infrastructure available
- Appropriate services
- (Special needs/geriatric medical services will be required)
- (Improved quality of care desired)

*How is this addressed?*

- Pursue senior healthcare, homecare, and extended residential facilities

# **BLUE GROUP**

## **1. Infrastructure (TWO)**

- Hard – roads, water, sewer
- Soft – social services

*How is this addressed?*

- Allow Hampshire County access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, safe transportation, and quality low-cost telecommunications and other needed infrastructure
- Collaboration with the Central Hampshire Public Service District to develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan; describe and enforce the boundaries of water and sewer service extensions in these areas

- Coordinated land use and road improvement policies
- Preserve and improve the capacity of existing roads
- Assure adequate access management occurs along major road corridors
- Social services are mentioned briefly

## **2. Wellness Facility within 15 minutes of every resident (FOUR)**

- Partner with other entities
- Add to regulations for new developments

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **3. Second High School (THREE)**

- Add to comprehensive facility plan

*How is this addressed?*

- Actively support and advocate for the planning and construction of a new high school in the eastern end of the county within 10 years, utilizing state and local monies

## **4. Commissioners Take Responsibilities / Ownership (TEN)**

- Get involved early in planning

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **5. Parks within 30 minutes of all residents (ONE)**

- Gap analysis
- Look for places with best qualities

*How is this addressed?*

- Managed or preserved lands that are publicly owned or protected
- Provide leisure opportunities to the residents of Hampshire County in an unobtrusive and cost effective manner
- Develop recreational facilities in the eastern portion of Hampshire County

## **6. Cultural Tourism (SIX)**

- Assign Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) as lead organization
- Plot and protect historic sites
- Seek grants
- Create map / network “driving tour”

*How is this addressed?*

- Identify, preserve and enhance the historic, architectural and cultural resources of the county
- Recognize, protect, and preserve the historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts in Hampshire County
- Publicly owned and managed lands
- Utilization of grants and low-interest loans; support efforts to create a revolving loan fund to enhance development efforts and opportunities
- Utilize trails – Civil War related and those on Nathaniel and Short Mountains
- Utilize Potomac Eagle rail line

## **7. Planning Coordinator (TEN)**

- Hire county manager – grant writing
- Coordination of groups / services

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **8. Establish Farm Markets within 30 minutes of all residents (FIVE)**

- Use WVU extension agent

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **9. Driveway Recycling Pickup (ONE)**

- Operated by county

*How is this addressed?*

This is not directly addressed.

## **10. Public Transportation (ONE)**

- Expand PVT A
- See Appalachian Regional Commission for funds

*How is this addressed?*

- Advocate for a WV Department of Highways study to evaluate the feasibility of designating and developing park and ride facilities near major intersections and well traveled commuter routes

## **RED GROUP**

### **1. Sewer and water facilities to be developed in accordance with the Chesapeake Bay Initiative (TWO)**

*How is this addressed?*

- The Chesapeake Bay Initiative is not outlined or mentioned in the plan but listed under the Infrastructure section
- The objective: pursue water and sewer projects to benefit currently unserved and underserved areas of the county or areas that may need served due to health or quality issues
- The strategy: ensure water and sewer projects are actively pursued in development and funding to guarantee projects reach construction

### **2. Make Hampshire County a major exit on the information superhighway (TWO)**

*How is this addressed?*

- The objective (found in the Infrastructure section): work jointly with state, federal, and private entities to promote and develop high speed and wireless forms of data transmission and telecommunication throughout the county
- The strategy: undertake an aggressive approach to the development of high tech, high speed, and wireless data transmission and telecommunications through government and private sector joint ventures, thereby creating economic development possibilities while providing low cost service to the general public

### **3. Infrastructure for a high school in Capon Bridge area (THREE)**

*How is this addressed?*

- The objective: a high school in the Capon Bridge or eastern end of the county area is briefly addressed in the Community Facilities section of the plan

- The strategy: actively support and advocate for the planning and construction of a new high school in the eastern end of the county within ten years, utilizing state and local monies
- If it is needed, there should be a plan of its location, and the needed updates and additions to the infrastructure of the Capon Bridge area should be addressed

#### **4. Identify and target industrial areas (EIGHT)**

*How is this addressed?*

- The Economic Development and Land Use sections address this in the objectives: encourage additional appropriate commercial and industrial development areas along the Corridor H areas of influence located in Hampshire County
- Of particular concern are WV Route 259 north from Wardensville to Yellow Spring, WV Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area, and US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgitsville area to Rada
- The strategy: determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas appropriate for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other uses, all consistent with the principle of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use

#### **5. Enhance or create a “destination” attraction for the creative community and tourism (SIX)**

*How is this addressed?*

- Tourism to Hampshire County is mentioned in the Economic Development section but the current or future attractions are not clearly mentioned
- Weekend getaways seem to be the biggest current attraction, but with planning and development the natural resources, such as the rivers, public lands, and mountainous beauty, along with local history, could be developed to attract more tourists

**6. Establish communities around public facilities, “clustered developments,” encourage walkable communities, minimize carbon footprint (EIGHT)**

*How is this addressed?*

- In the Economic Development section under Strategies: update the county subdivision regulations to include land development requirements for single parcel developments and incorporate requirements for interconnecting linkages between non-residential and residential uses and between adjacent commercial uses to provide greater pedestrian accessibility (18-24 months)

**7. Establishment of (attract and encourage) active adult and assisted living communities (SEVEN)**

*How is this addressed?*

- Develop additional senior centers
- Pursue senior health care, home care, and extended residential facilities

**8. Enhance and support education at post high school level – technical training (NINE)**

*How is this addressed?*

- Establish a community college and technical schools

**9. Encourage development of agriculture and timber products (FIVE)**

*How is this addressed?*

- The Natural Resources section of the plan outlines the need to protect and manage woodlands within the county by implementing timber resource management in new subdivisions in forested terrain
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas appropriate for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational and other uses, all consistent with the principle of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use within two years (18-24 months)

**10. Identify most important natural and historic resources first, apply conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs) and build around them (ONE)**

*How is this addressed?*

- Recognize, protect, and preserve the historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts in Hampshire County
- The Hampshire County Historic Landmarks Commission is responsible for the preservation of historic places throughout Hampshire County. Hampshire County is abundant in its natural resources; timber, water, clean air, and wildlife are the most dominate. Work in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies to ensure water quality management practices are implemented.
- Wildlife Management Areas

**11. Create a vision of Hampshire County that enhances natural beauty and use as economic drive of growth (ONE)**

*How is this addressed?*

- Addressed in the Economic Development section
- Foster county and business community cooperation in promoting economic development, community attractiveness, and activities and events
- Target employers who are interested in locating/expanding to a rural environment within easy commuting distance to a major metropolitan area and are interested in diversifying the employment opportunities needed for long-term economic vitality and stability
- Identify businesses that are not detrimental to the natural resources of Hampshire County
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas appropriate for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational and other uses, all consistent with the principle of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use



## **A**PPENDIX 2: INFORMATION SOURCES

Canaan Valley Institute

D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd.

Dean Runyon Associates

Hampshire County Board of Education (Hampshire County Schools)

Hampshire County Planning Commission

*The (Huntington, WV) Herald-Dispatch*

United States Census Bureau

West Virginia Division of Natural Resources

West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board

West Virginia University

Wilbur Smith Associates

Workforce West Virginia

*The Washington Post*