CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
AGENDA • JULY 9, 2026

Commission/Board Meeting **COUNCIL CHAMBERS** **6:00 PM**

101 E Washington Street, Charles Town, WV 25414

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

: **2026-1675:** Charles Town Board of Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes - June 11, 2026
June_2026_Meeting_Minutes_DRAFT.docx

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

: **2026-1676:** Jefferson Memorial Park Pool Update

: **2026-1677:** Pool Operations Discussion
poolstaffavailasof7-8.docx

: **2026-1678:** Liberty Street Parcel (next to 414 W. Liberty Street) Discussion - Possible Executive Session

: **2026-1679:** Public Private Partnership Between Charles Town and Ranson Community Garden Discussion
MOUCharlesTownParksRansonCommunityGardensDRAFT.docx

: **2026-1680:** Clean Parks Initiative
Clean Parks Locations.docx

: **2026-1681:** Parks Master Plan
2026-02-10 Maint Yard-Skate Park Concept Site Plan 3.pdf
Comprehensive-Plan-Final-Reduced.pdf
Executive-Summary.pdf
JCPRC_Master Plan_Main Rep.pdf
KimelyHornEst2023.pdf
UGB_Future_Bike_Ped_Improvements.pdf
UGB_Future_Land_Use_25Yr.pdf
UGB_Future_Transportation_Improvements.pdf
Wayfinding Sign Designs - 8-31-23 - Charles Town (1).pdf
West End Revitalization Master Plan.pdf
UGB_Future_Land_Use_10Yr.pdf

: **2026-1682:** Pickleball Courts Grand Opening

: **2026-1683:** Happy Retreat Bridge Dedication

: **2026-1684:** Charles Town Parks and Recreation Maintenance Plan

CTown P&R Maintenance Plan - Content Guide - Draft - Apr 2026.pdf

4. NEW BUSINESS

: **2026-1685:** Skatepark Bridge Vandalism
Skate Park Bridge Vandalism.docx

: **2026-1686:** Trail Maintenance at Happy Retreat
HRTrailMaintenance.docx

: **2026-1687:** Manager's Report
ManagersReport.docx
PotoEdGDGCIP.pdf

: **2026-1688:** Park Updates: Happy Retreat, Evitts Run Park, Willingham Knolls, Skate Park, Jefferson Memorial Park, Craighill Estates, Other Parkland, Public Comment

5. ADJOURNMENT

6. NOTICE: The Public May View the Meeting Live by Clicking on the Event Link at:

https://www.charlestownwv.us/government/agendas_minutes.php

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1675: Charles Town Board of Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes - June 11, 2026

Board will review minutes report from last meeting for approval.

ATTACHMENTS:
- June_2026_Meeting_Minutes_DRAFT.docx

City of Charles Town
Parks and Recreation Commission Report
June 2026
June 11, 2026 / 6:00 PM / City Hall

I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM

Persons Present:

Commissioners Present: Alden Roth, Elizabeth Ricketts, Nick Zaglifa, Trudy Roth, Mike Slover, Kevin Derr, Steven Galleher

Staff: Gavin Bailey

Guests: Matt Ward, Nancy Schafer

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2026-1600: Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve May 14, 2026 minutes with amendments: A. Roth

Motion to approve May 21, 2026 special meeting minutes: A. Roth

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2026-1588: Jefferson Memorial Park Pool Update

Staff provided an update on the Jefferson Memorial Park pool project.

No Action.

2026-1589: Pool Operations Discussion

The Board discussed admissions pricing, swim lessons, and staffing challenges.

Motion: to cancel swim lessons this year

Motion: M. Slover; 2nd: N. Zaglifa

Unanimous

2026-1590: Liberty Street Parcel (next to 414 W. Liberty Street) Discussion - Possible Executive Session

Motion: to direct staff to contact the real estate broker

Motion: E. Ricketts; 2nd: S. Galleher

Unanimous

2026-1591: Public-Private Partnership Between Charles Town and Ranson Community Gardens Discussion

Motion: to remove the item from the table

Motion: E. Ricketts; 2nd: K. Derr

Unanimous

The Board discussed proposed amendments to the MOU, including:

- Section 1 (Parties): Separate "City" and "Board" to clarify roles
- Section 4 (Authorized Activities): Change "City" to "Board"
- Replace "City" with "Board" throughout, except in Section 9 (Liability)
- Section 3 (Scope): Remove redundant second sentence
- Clarify appendix to note east side of Evitts Run by the skatepark

Staff was directed to create edits and present the revised MOU at the next board meeting.

2026-1592: CLEAN Parks Initiative

Matt Ward reintroduced the CLEAN Parks project to the Board. The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) has been completed. Contracts with WV Rivers, Blue Ridge Watershed Coalition, and Fisherman's Hall have been executed. Staff and Mr. Ward are drafting the Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Board discussed holding a special meeting for CLEAN Parks, potentially on-site. Staff was directed to provide the Board with previous master planning information, including the previous estimate, the comprehensive 2040 plan, the strategic plan, Evitts Run Corridor maps, West End information, and the Kimley-Horn land swap maps. Staff will circulate the land swap map to the Board.

The goal for the next meeting is to reach a firm decision on the scope to include in the RFP.

No Action.

2026-1593: FY2027 Budget

Staff presented an updated budget with edits that were discussed in last session.

Motion: to pass the budget as presented

Motion: M. Slover; 2nd: S. Galleher

Unanimous

2026-1594: Happy Retreat MOU Special Meeting

The Board directed staff to explore signage options for Happy Retreat, including directional signage to the bridge and to Happy Retreat, and to price out options. Staff was directed to clarify what events require two certificates of insurance at Happy Retreat and to inquire about their events. Staff will ask Maintenance Director Jim Wysong about mulch being moved from Happy Retreat and provide updates in next month's Manager's Report.

No Action.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

2026-1595: Parks Master Plan

No Action.

2026-1596: Pickleball Courts Grand Opening

The Commission discussed plans for a ribbon cutting ceremony in the near future and a tournament in the fall.

No Action.

2026-1597: Happy Retreat Bridge Dedication

The Commission expressed a preference for a weekend dedication and a desire to plan sooner rather than later. The item will be revisited in July.

No Action.

2026-1598: Manager's Report

Staff was directed to check trash receptacles at Jefferson Memorial Park, relocate bins that are close to the road, and determine whether additional pickups or additional cans are needed.

No Action.

2026-1599: Park Updates: Happy Retreat, Evitts Run Park, Willingham Knolls, Skate Park, Jefferson Memorial Park, Craighill Estates, Other Parkland, Public Comment

Nancy Schafer thanked the Parks Manager for assistance with an issue she had previously voiced. Another member of the public, Mary, raised concerns about bikes, scooters, and e-bikes on sidewalks and park paths. President Roth reported that core-boring is being conducted at Willingham Knolls. Mr. Zaglifa reported seeing increased use of the Augustine Trail.

No Action.

V. ADJOURNMENT: 8:27 PM

VI. NEXT MEETING: July 9th, 2026 at 6PM

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1676: Jefferson Memorial Park Pool Update

Board will receive updates on the pool construction.

ATTACHMENTS:

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1677: Pool Operations Discussion

Board will discuss operations at the pool

ATTACHMENTS:

- poolstaffavailasof7-8.docx

	requested hours	Last Day	Notes
Jonathan Hartzell	40+	9/14/2026	
Gavin Lambert		7/25/2026	
Hannah Broomall		9/7/2026	has band tues and thurs, sometimes fri when school starts (Aug 17th)
Alexa Stone		9/7/2026	waiting on email
Zane Lambert	40+	9/7/2026	Vacation 7-26 to 8-9
Ryan Dewett	20	8/4/2026	
Spencer LeFebvre			assumed no availability
Torren Ehrin	30	9/7/2026	out from 17th of July to 28th
Naveah Scott		9/7/2026	
Amelia Stone		9/7/2026	have
Rob Arront	15-20	9/7/2026	Open availability
Harlow Chandler	25	9/7/2026	goes to school aug 17th

	Day														
	Monday		Tuesday		Wedsnday		Thursday		Friday			Saturday		Sunday	
Staff	845-1230	1230-515	845-1230	1230-515	845-1230	1230-515	845-1230	1230-515	845-1230	1230-515	615-1015	845-1230	1230-515	845-1230	1230-515
Jonathan Hartzell	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Gavin Lambert	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Hannah Broomall	n	y	n	y	n	y	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y
Alexa Stone	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Zane Lambert	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Ryan Dewett	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	n	y
Spencer LeFebvre															
Torren Ehrin	n	n	y	y	n	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Naveah Scott	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y - until 9	y	y	n	y
Amelia Stone	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Rob Arront	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Harlow Chandler	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	n	y	y	y	y	y

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

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SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1678: Liberty Street Parcel (next to 414 W. Liberty Street) Discussion - Possible Executive Session

Board will discuss possible procurement of the lot next 414 W. Liberty Street. Because this pertains to a real estate purchase, the board may go in executive session.

ATTACHMENTS:

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1679: Public Private Partnership Between Charles Town and Ranson Community Garden Discussion

Board will review for approval a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the board of Parks and Recreation and the Ranson Community Gardens.

ATTACHMENTS:

- MOUCharlesTownParksRansonCommunityGardensDRAFT.docx

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

and

RANSON COMMUNITY GARDENS

THIS Memorandum of Understanding, made this _____ day of _____ 2026, by and between CITY OF CHARLES TOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, a municipal board which derives its authority from the City of Charles Town, hereinafter called the "Board " and RANSON COMMUNITY GARDENS, hereinafter called the "RCG," collectively referred to as the "Parties."

WITNESSETH

In consideration of the mutual covenants and conditions hereinafter set forth, it is agreed as follows:

1. Purpose: The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to improve park cleanliness and safety, enhance trail accessibility, and protect the ecological health of the Evitts Run corridor through a partnership with the Ranson Community Gardens to conduct limited and defined stewardship opportunities.

2. Scope: The partnership applies to the section of forested park land along the east side of Evitts Run adjacent to the Charles Town Skatepark, as described in Appendix . The Board retains full ownership, policy authority, and oversight of the property.

3. Board Responsibilities:

    a. The Board will provide access, subject to prior written approval from the Parks and Recreation Manager, to RCG to conduct various trail maintenance activities, including litter and debris clen-up, tree planting and selective underbrush clearing on the Evitts Run Corridor.

    b. The City Parks and Recreation Manager will respond to requests from RCG to perform the various activities in writing. An acceptable response will include the following: 1) Written permission to perform the requested activity; or 2) A written confirmation that the request has been received but requires approval from the City Parks and Recreation Commission before permission may be granted. Any written permission or confirmation may be provided via e-mail.

4. Ranson Community Gardens Responsibilities:

    a. RCG will perform trail maintenance, litter and debris clean-up, tree planning, and selective underbrush clearing from the Evitts Run Corridor.

b. RCG agrees to obtain written permission from the Board prior to conducting any activities by submitting a written request outlining 1) the proposed activity, 2) the expected volunteer participation and supervision plan, 3) the anticipated timelines for completion, and 4) any materials and supplies to be used. Permission may be obtained via an e-mail request to Parks and Recreation Manager, Gavin Bailey, at gbailey@charlestownwv.us.

c. RCG agrees that it will not undertake any activities prior to receipt of written approval from the Parks and Recreation Manager, which approval may be granted via e-mail communication.

d. Any activities authorized under this MOU would not include construction of permanent structures, use of heavy equipment, or removal of mature trees without express Board authorization.

e. RCG will comply with all applicable City policies and regulations.

f. RCG will supervise all volunteer activities and ensure complete site cleanup following all activities. RCG agrees to immediately report any safety concerns or incidents to the Parks and Recreation Manager.

g. All activities are anticipated to be conducted on a volunteer basis, and no direct city-funding has been allocated to support the activities authorized herein. Any funding for materials, supplies, or other incidental costs require the approval of the Board prior to any expenditure.

h. Prior to conducting any activity on Board owned property, RCG agrees to have any and all volunteers working on a project, execute a City of Charles Town Volunteer Waiver and Release of Liability Form.

5. Term and Termination: This MOU shall commence on the date written above and shall continue for a term of one year. The agreement may be automatically renewed in year increments for total of two (2) additional years.

a. Either party may terminate this Agreement, in whole or in park at any time before the date of termination by providing thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.

b. The Board may immediately suspend or terminate this Agreement if the Partner fails to comply with authorization requirements, conducts unauthorized activities, creates safety or environmental hazards, or violates City of Charles Town policies or regulations. Upon termination, the Partner shall immediately cease all activities and remove any materials or equipment from park property.

6. Indemnification: RCG will indemnify and save harmless the City of Charles Town, its officers, agents, servants, and employees from and against any and all suits, actions, legal proceedings, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, and attorneys' fees

resulting from a willful or negligent act or omission of RCG, its officers, agents, servants, and employees in the performance of this Agreement; provided, however, that RCG shall not be liable for any suits, actions, legal proceedings, claims, demands, damages, costs, expenses, or attorneys' fees arising out of a willful or negligent act or omission of the City, its officers, agents, servants, and employees.

7. Compliance with All Laws: RCG shall faithfully comply with all laws, ordinances, and regulations Federal, State, or local which may be applicable to the operations to be conducted hereunder.

8. Governing Law: This MOU shall be governed by and constructed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of West Virginia.

9. Entire Agreement: This Agreement represents the entire integrated agreement between Contractor and Client and supersedes and replaces all of the terms and conditions of any prior agreements, arrangements, negotiations, or representations, written or oral, which have not been specifically incorporated by reference herein with respect to this Agreement. This Agreement may be changed, modified or altered only by written agreement of the parties.

Signatures

City of Charles Town Parks and Recreation	**Ranson Community Gardens**
By:_____	By:_____
Attested: _____ Town Clerk	Its:_____

Appendix – Scope



Section of park land where this MOU applies is outlined in the Orange bordered polygon.

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1680: Clean Parks Initiative

Board will discuss the Clean Parks Initiative

ATTACHMENTS:

- Clean Parks Locations.docx


490
485
480
435


490
490
490
490


214
218
220
303 STE 100
306
418
416
415
413
319
220
222
104
316
321
110
313
317
130 UNIT 6
130 UNIT 10
130 UNIT 22
114
400
323
321
130 UNIT 44
130 UNIT 46
410
123
130
130 UNIT 54
130 UNIT 58
414
125
20m
60ft
130 UNIT 64
416

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

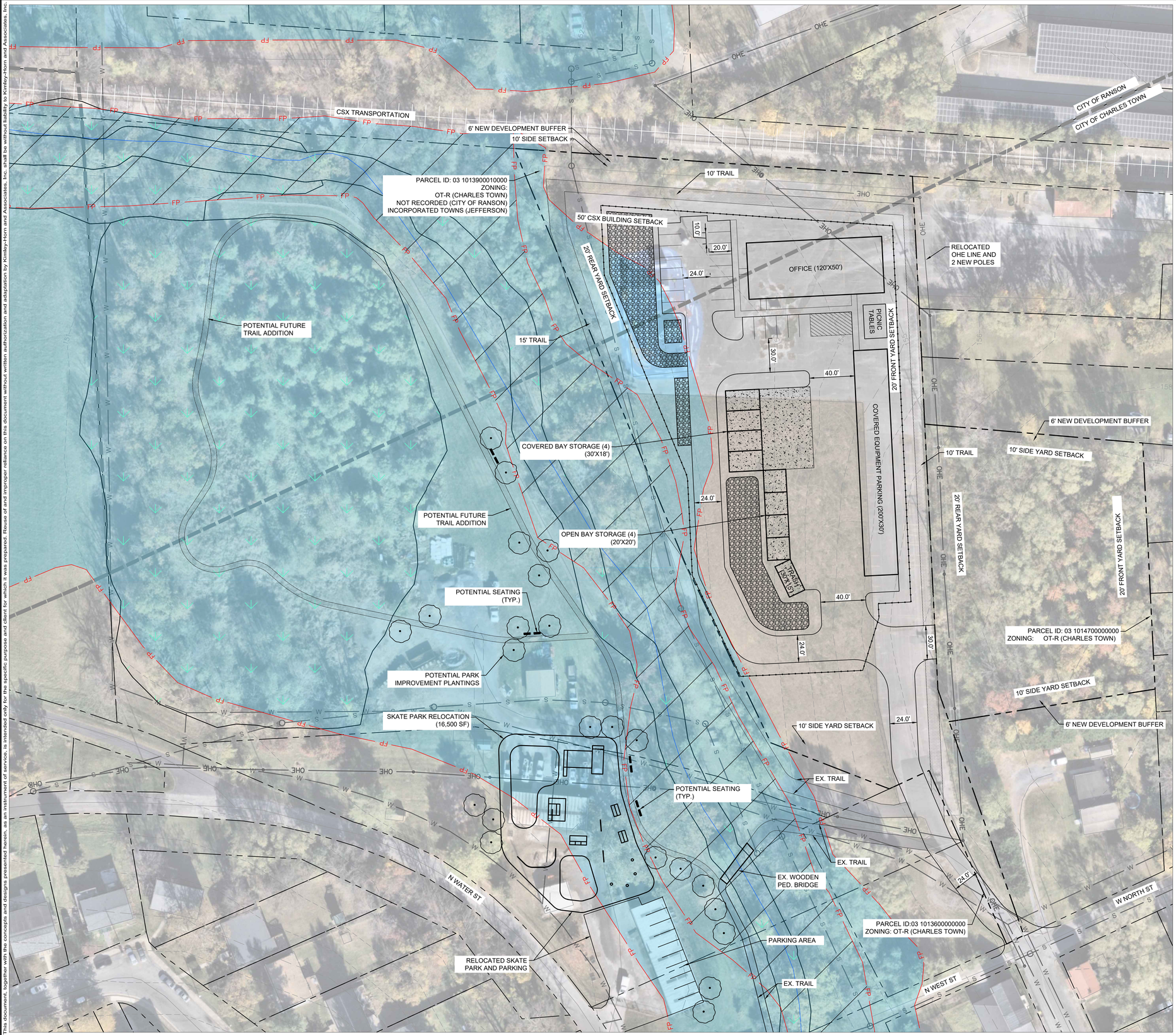
2026-1681: Parks Master Plan

Board will discuss park master planning by reviewing previous master planning that has been done in the past.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 2026-02-10 Maint Yard-Skate Park Concept Site Plan 3.pdf
- Comprehensive-Plan-Final-Reduced.pdf
- Executive-Summary.pdf
- JCPRC_Master Plan_Main Rep.pdf
- KimelyHornEst2023.pdf
- UGB_Future_Bike_Ped_Improvements.pdf
- UGB_Future_Land_Use_25Yr.pdf
- UGB_Future_Transportation_Improvements.pdf
- Wayfinding Sign Designs - 8-31-23 - Charles Town (1).pdf
- West End Revitalization Master Plan.pdf
- UGB_Future_Land_Use_10Yr.pdf

This document, together with the concepts and designs presented herein, as an instrument of service, is intended only for the specific purpose and client for which it was prepared. Reuse of and improper reliance on this document without written authorization and adaptation by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. shall be without liability to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.



NORTH

GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET
0 20 40 80

LEGEND

- PROPERTY LINE
- COUNTY/CITY JURISDICTIONAL LINE
- STREAM
- ROAD CENTERLINE
- TRAIL
- FLOOD RISK AREA
- WETLAND
- POND
- FLOODWAY
- 100 YR FLOODPLAIN
- 500 YR FLOODPLAIN

SITE DATA

LOCATION:	CITY OF CHARLES TOWN, WV
ZONING:	SITE 1: OT-R (OLD TOWN RESIDENTIAL) (CHARLES TOWN) NOT RECORDED (CITY OF RANSON) SITE 2: OT-R (CHARLES TOWN) SITE 3: OT-R (CHARLES TOWN) NOT RECORDED (CITY OF RANSON)

*GOVERNMENT OFFICE BUILDING USE IS NOT PERMITTED IN OT-R DISTRICT.
*GOVERNMENT OFFICE BUILDING USE IS PERMITTED IN OT-MUC DISTRICT.

WATERSHED:	EVITTS RUN
PARKING REQUIRED:	3.3 SPACES PER 1,000 SF GFA = 20
PARKING PROVIDED:	22

NOTES

1. PARCEL INFORMATION AND DATA PER JEFFERSON COUNTY GIS.
2. THE SOURCE OF THE BASE AERIAL IMAGERY IS NEARMAPS..
3. WETLAND INFORMATION DATA PER NWI WETLANDS MAPPER GIS.

No.	REVISIONS	DATE	BY

Kimley»Horn
© 2026 KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
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KHA PROJECT 110845006
DATE 02/11/2026
SCALE AS SHOWN
DESIGNED BY ARW
DRAWN BY ARW
CHECKED BY ARW

CONCEPT SITE PLAN
SITE 3

POTENTIAL SITE SELECTION:
PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY
PREPARED FOR
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN WEST VIRGINIA

SHEET NUMBER



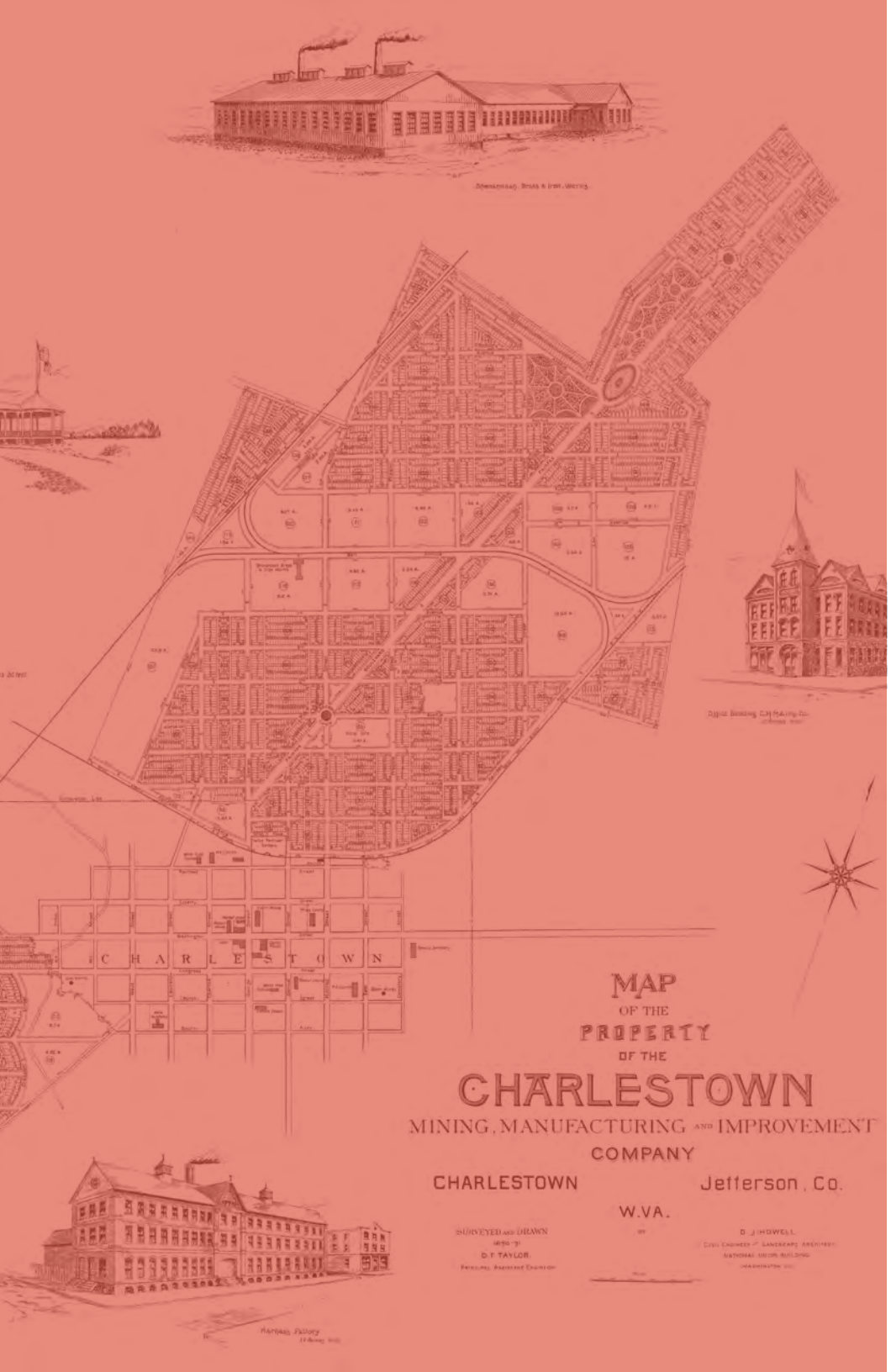






Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

February 2018



hip

(hĭp) also **hep** (hĕp)

adj. **hip·per**, **hip·pest** also **hep·per** or **hep·pest** *Slang*

1. Keenly aware of or knowledgeable about the latest trends or developments.

2. Very fashionable or stylish.

City of Charles Town: Previous Plans & Studies

Brancing in Native Nursery Program Feasibility Study and Business Plan, 2017. Eastern Panhandle Planning and Development Council Region 9.
http://anyflip.com/ocqe/paxo

C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan, 2016. City of Charles Town.
http://anyflip.com/ocqe/ceth/basic

Charles Town - Ranson Collaboration Strategy, 2015. City of Charles Town and City of Ranson.
http://charlestownwv.iqm2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=1617&MeetingID=1320

Charles Town Transportation Study, 2014. City of Charles Town and Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Official_Transportation_Plan_4-23-14.pdf

Charles Town West End Master Plan and Brownfields Reuse Strategy (Draft), 2015. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/CTWEP_Report_Complete.pdf

Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study, 2011. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.
http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69_466536d4b0d5430cbffdb24010776ab1.pdf

City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan, 2006. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Comp_Plan_Final_January_19_2010(2).pdf

City of Charles Town Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2014. City of Charles Town.
http://anyflip.com/ocqe/zznu/basic

City of Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016. City of Charles Town.
http://anyflip.com/ocqe/ceth/basic

City of Ranson / City of Charles Town Brownfields Area-wide Plan. City of Charles Town and City of Ranson.
http://ransonrenewed.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Ranson-Charles-Town-Area-Wide-Plan-Final.pdf

City of Ranson Comprehensive Plan, 2012. City of Ranson.
http://ransonrenewed.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/RansonCompPlan_2012_Adopted-Reduced.pdf

Construction Plan for the Evitts Run Green Infrastructure Park Project, 2014. City of Charles Town.
http://online.anyflip.com/ocqe/wrqa/mobile/index.html

Direction 2020: HEPMPO Long Range Transportation Plan Update, 2014. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.
http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69_cdc7ccf7c64341418e3c642d62f7593c.pdf

Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2014. Jefferson County.
http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-plan

EPTA Five Year Transit Development Plan, 2015. Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority.
http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69_e79f9d9079cf4cb3b06920ca6281a960.pdf

Evitts Run Park Master Plan, 2015. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Park_Master_Plan.pdf

Happy Retreat Community Forestry Plan, 2015. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/08_CTWEP_AppD_HR_Comm_Forestry_Plan(1).pdf

Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board Annual Report, 2015. Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board.
http://jefferson.wvfp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/12/2015_Ann_Rpt_for_web.pdf

Jefferson County Parks Master Plan, 2016. Jefferson County.
http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/home/showdocument?id=12094)

Source Water Assessment: Cave Quarter Estates. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.
http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/get.cfm?id=3301904

Source Water Assessment: Charles Town Water Department. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.
http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/get.cfm?id=3301905

Source Water Protection Plan, 2016. Charles Town Utility Board.
http://www.ctubwv.com/default/assets/File/Charles%20Town%20%20PUBLIC%20SWAP%20UPDATED_6-22-2016.pdf

Urban Tree Canopy and Goals, 2011. Jefferson County.
http://www.cacaponinstitute.org/Forestry/Forestry_PDFs/Jefferson%20Co%20UTC%20Goal%20&%20Plan%20Final%20Approved%202011-11-03.pdf

Wastewater Strategic Plan & Ten Year Wastewater Capital Plan, 2015. Charles Town Utility Board.
http://www.ctubwv.com/default/assets/File/2015%20Sewer%20Strategic%20Plan-Final%20April%2022,%202015.pdf

City of Charles Town: Programs & Regulations

City of Charles Town Design Review Standards for Historic Overlay Districts. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Charles_Town_Historic_Overlay_District_Design_Review_Standards_-_Final.pdf

City of Charles Town Façade Improvement Program. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Facade_Improvement_Program_-_Final_Amended.pdf

City of Charles Town Zoning & Subdivision/Land Development Ordinances. City of Charles Town.
http://www.charlestownwv.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={34313FF3-04F6-4C95-804B-64C2358325ED}&DE={E59EA5F4-F2CF-402D-99F1-25D2C2714F3B}

HEPMPO Transportation Improvement Program. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.
http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69_dfee0566b65341bc8e86592e1c8418be.pdf

Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance. Jefferson County.
http://www.co.jefferson.id.us/use_images/planning_zoning/ZoningOrdinance2008-07.pdf

West Virginia Source Water Assessment and Wellhead Protection Program. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.
https://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/

Other Works Cited

Building Healthy Places Toolkit, 2017. Center for Active Design.
https://centerforactivedesign.org/buildinghealthyplacestoolkit
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Table of Contents

1 Letter from the Mayor

2 Introduction to the Planning Process

12 Community Profile

26 A Vision for Downtown Charles Town

40 Growth and Land Use

78 Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability

96 Mobility, Accessibility and Connectivity

122 Image and Identity

136 Quality Public Services

150 Environmental Stewardship

166 Plan Implementation

181 Appendices



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Letter from the Mayor

On behalf of the City of Charles Town, the Planning Commission, and our many community partners, who participated extensively in its development, I am pleased to share the Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 - Comprehensive Plan. This comprehensive plan is a "blue print" for the future of our city and articulates the vision of the community as to what we want Charles Town to become in the future.

The Comprehensive Plan promotes a "Downtown First Focus" strategy for all areas of economic and community development. The plan recognizes the significance of Downtown Charles Town as not only the heart of the City and center of Jefferson County government, but also recognizes it as the State of West Virginia's eastern-most gateway to the Baltimore–Washington metropolitan area; which is the most educated, highest income-earning statistical area in the United States.

This plan provides a framework for the City to guide growth, encourage new investment, affordable housing, an environmentally sustainable economy, increased connectivity, expanded Arts and entertainment, and a more equitable future of all our citizens. As a community we cherish our historic downtown and this plan protects our City's historic character while encouraging new growth and development throughout Charles Town's Urban Growth Boundary.

We are at a pivotal moment in Charles Town's history. The planning decisions we make today will decide our community's future. While the future holds many unknowns, I am confident the citizens of Charles Town will rise to any challenge. Becoming an Arts community, revitalizing our downtown, preserving our history and encouraging new development just doesn't happen, it happens because we make it happen. And for those who say Charles Town can't, we say we can and we will!

I hope you will work with us to make this plan a reality.

Sincerely,

Scott Rogers
Mayor of Charles Town
August 2017



Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 1: Introduction to the Planning Process



A comprehensive plan is "... a plan for physical development, including land use, adopted by a governing body, setting forth guidelines, goals, and objectives for all activities that affect growth and development in the governing body's jurisdiction."

West Virginia Code, §8A-3

Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Process

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 (Historically Hip 2040) is the City of Charles Town's Comprehensive Plan developed under the authority of the West Virginia Code (§8A-3). The plan serves as the City's official policy guide for short- (0-4 years), mid- (5-10 years) and long-term (11-20 years) decision making related to future land use, growth and development, and resource preservation within the City's existing political jurisdiction and its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). *Historically Hip 2040* is an "implementable plan" created using the "5 Keys for An Implementable Comprehensive Plan".

Through the leadership of the City's Department of Community Development, the City organized and convened an ad-hoc Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to help guide the comprehensive planning process. The CAC members consisted of City and county residents representing various community interests who provided unique insights into critical issues related to land use and zoning, multimodal transportation, community and economic development, cultural and historic resources, housing, public utilities, and governance. Furthermore, the CAC afforded the planning process a strong grass-roots approach and will help champion the plan's successful implementation.

5 KEYS FOR AN IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1. **Focus the plan** on relevant, real community issues
2. **Organize the plan** the way local officials and citizens think
3. **Devise** practical and workable recommendations
4. **Recruit partners** and **create capacity** to implement the plan
5. **Get local ownership** of the plan and commitment to implement it

Source: *Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, "Creating an Implementable Plan: Principles and Keys", 2016.*

At the onset of the planning process, the CAC was instrumental in identifying real issues affecting the Charles Town community and obtaining public input and validation of the issues through the development and administration of a public survey (**Appendix A**). This public engagement process resulted in the creation of the planning framework, shown in **Table 1**, to begin organizing the plan in a way that is relevant and logical to local officials and citizens alike. As shown, the key issues (or focus areas) were categorized into seven comprehensive plan "themes" and each theme was cross-referenced with the comprehensive plan elements specified by the West Virginia Code (§8A-3).

The CAC continued its public engagement process by convening a series of public meetings that included focus group discussions with property owners and the general public. The meetings began with an information session on the comprehensive planning process and the key issues and trends effecting the City's growth and development. Breakout sessions were then held to facilitate a meaningful and purposeful dialogue centered on the key comprehensive themes listed in **Table 1**.

Comprehensive Planning Themes	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	WV Code § 8A-3-4 Elements
Downtown	• Downtown First Focus • Reinvest and Revitalize • Cultural and Historical Identity of the City • Events, Festivals and Farmers Market • Charles Town Now • Cultural and Historic Preservation • Entertainment (Live) • Historic Resources (Opera House, Zion Church, CW Hall, Happy Retreat, Fishermen's Hall) • Jefferson County Museum	• *Economic Development* • *Renewal and/or Redevelopment* • *Recreation*
Growth and Land Use	• Future Land Use • Connectivity • Annexation Policy • Water/Sewer/Gas • Rural to Urban Transect • Urban Growth Boundary	• *Preferred Development Areas* • *Rural*
Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability	• Blighted and Vacant Properties • Code Enforcement • Accessory Dwelling Units and Tiny Houses • Affordable and Attainable Housing	• *Housing* • *Safety*
Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity	• Connectivity to Downtown from all points within the City • Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility (Trail Network, including Washington Heritage Trail) • Parking • Transportation and Circulation • Wayfinding/Historical Signage • Complete Streets • Accessory Dwelling Units • Casino/Race Track	• *Transportation* • *Recreation*

Table 1: City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan Framework

Comprehensive Planning Themes	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	WV Code § 8A-3-4 Elements
Image and Identity	• Historic Landmarks Commission and Design Review Standards • Cultural and Historic Preservation • Arts and Cultural District (Building C*Town) • Community Character and Design • Beautification • Gateways • The Grand Idea: Historically Hip Charles Town	• *Community Design* • *Historic Preservation*
Quality Public Services	• Charles Town Library • Intergovernmental Cooperation – Jefferson County PSD Acquisition Plan Implementation • Technology and Telecommunications • Recreation • Parks and Recreation (Evitts Run Park, Jefferson Memorial Park, Willingham Knolls Park, Charles Town Skate Park) • Charles Town Police • Jefferson County Schools • Public Sewer and Water (Charles Town Utility Board) • Vocational Education • Fire/EMS, Emergency Management	• *Infrastructure* • *Public Services* • *Safety*
Environmental Stewardship	• Green Infrastructure • Green Infrastructure Initiatives • Brownfield Redevelopment (Evitts Run/West End Master Plan) • Branching In Native Nursery • Water Quality (Chesapeake Bay, Stormwater Management and MS4)	• *Environmental* • *Conservation* • *Natural Resource Use*
Implementation	• Prioritization • Funding and Capital Planning • Partnerships	• *Finance*

Table 1 Continued: City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan Framework

Additionally, the CAC met with the volunteer Downtown organization, Charles Town Now, to identify specific and distinct issues facing Downtown merchants and business owners. A survey was designed and administered specifically for the Charles Town Now membership to help them prioritize their issues and define a vision for the Downtown. This vision is reflected in the Goal Statement for Downtown as specified on the following pages.

"To create an implementable comprehensive plan, implementation – not preparation – of a comprehensive plan must be the target, the end."

Source: *Denny Puko, Pennsylvania Governor's Center for Local Government Services*

The CAC utilized the results from the above public engagement process to then formulate a new vision statement for the City supported by specific goal statements for each of the final comprehensive plan themes.



Figure 1: Charles Town Citizen's Advisory Committee Public Engagement and Walking Tour *(Photos courtesy of Michael Baker Intl. Inc.)*

Charles Town's Vision Statement for 2040

The City of Charles Town is a community that offers an exceptional quality of life for all residents by:

- Promoting access to jobs and livelihoods;
- Providing well-planned, safe and secure neighborhoods;
- Delivering quality public services;
- Preserving and promoting its unique history and cultural heritage for residents and visitors alike to enjoy; and
- Stimulating a business-friendly culture that embraces innovation and encourages entrepreneurship, business development and growth.

Key Themes and Goals

Seven key themes were brought forth as critically important to achieving Charles Town's Vision for 2040 and they serve as the Plan's overall goals:

- Downtown Charles Town
- Growth and Land Use
- Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability
- Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity
- Image and Identity
- Quality Public Services
- Environmental Stewardship

These themes highlight and reinforce the major concerns the plan seeks to address and the issues raised by the public. Their goal statements are expressed in the following sections.

Downtown Charles Town

Downtown Charles Town will be the heart of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. Downtown Charles Town will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and learning.

Growth and Land Use

The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability

The City of Charles Town will promote and encourage economic development activities that capitalize on community assets, support the needs of present and future residents, and strive to ensure a sustainable and diverse economic base.

Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity

The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for all citizens by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

Image and Identity

The City of Charles Town will be known as a national destination offering a wealth of heritage tourism resources, entertainment attractions, and support services including high-quality and unique dining, lodging and entertainment venues, and extensive outdoor recreation opportunities.

Quality Public Services

The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Environmental Stewardship

The City of Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development, and redevelopment.

The following sections of *Historically Hip 2040* provide an in-depth discussion of each of the above themes that defined a series of objectives supporting their respective goal statements. The Implementation Plan section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines practical and workable recommendations along with key partners to spearhead and support their implementation. Additionally, the Implementation Plan identifies a timeframe for achieving all recommendations and potential sources of funding as may be necessary to finance their completion.

Historically Hip 2040 provides the City of Charles Town with a clear vision and roadmap for its near- and long-term success as a livable community whose center of activity is its Downtown connected to well-planned, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and supported by quality public services. Thriving centers of commerce will provide sustaining employment and a solid tax base for the City's financial well-being, making Charles Town a community of lasting value worthy of preservation and continued investment.



West Washington Street, Downtown Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau

Relationship to the 2006 Comprehensive Plan

Charles Town's *2006 Comprehensive Plan* was prepared during the peak of the City's growth period and its future population growth trends and land development opportunities assumed continued and sustained growth in the regional and national economy. However, the Great Recession of 2008 occurred and resulted in the loss of wealth, significant cutbacks in consumer spending, and the significant reduction in U.S. employment. As a result, the City along with many communities throughout the U.S. experienced a significant slowdown in their economies and the projected continuation of the pre-recession growth never materialized. For instance, the City's *2006 Comprehensive Plan* projected the City's population would be 12,096 in 2015, but the current population is estimated to be 5,723 according to the 2015 American Community Survey.

Additionally, in 2015 the Jefferson County Commission adopted the *Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide* titled *Envision Jefferson 2035*. This plan recognizes Charles Town's proposed UGB and establishes a future land use policy prioritizing growth and development to occur within the UGBs and Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs) where public services exist and to preserve the county's rural areas for agriculture and low density rural development that is not dependent upon public services, such as sewer and water.

To this end, the City's elected officials and staff determined that the Charles Towns' 2006 plan was not a valid blueprint for the City's future and determined the need to prepare *Historically Hip 2040* to set the course for the City's future growth and development vision based on current realities.

Relationship to the Capital Improvement Program

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance on the need to manage growth and development and to continue investment in the City's physical infrastructure. *Historically Hip 2040* recommends enhancing the City's capital improvement planning and budgeting process by implementing more explicit ties between the comprehensive plan and the development of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as well as the establishment of priorities among various potential capital investments. In addition, for each recommended action in *Historically Hip 2040*, the Implementation Strategy section identifies whether capital dollars are required to implement that action. There are approximately 11 such actions where the need for capital funds is recommended.

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Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 2: Community Profile



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Charles Town Today

Charles Town has a long, rich history dating back to its founding in 1786. The Washington family had significant land holdings in the Eastern Panhandle during Colonial times. Charles Washington, the youngest brother of President George Washington, donated the four corners of the George Street and Washington Street intersection to the City for public use. The County Courthouse, City Hall, Charles Town Post Office, and Charles Washington Hall were later built on this land and to this day they serve as a historic focal point for the community.

Today, the City of Charles Town is home to approximately 5,723 residents and boasts a rich history with prominent historical sites and cultural assets. The City is located in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and is in proximity to the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area. Because of this proximity and the availability of the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train service, Charles Town is an attractive home for commuters where the cost of living is about 30% lower than similar DC suburbs in northern Virginia (NOVA) and Maryland. Additionally, commuters can reach Dulles International Airport, Baltimore, and Washington, DC, in under 90 minutes. Significant regional transportation improvements make commuting more convenient and the extension of the DC Metrorail to Dulles Airport, and in the near future, Leesburg, may result in additional commuters exploring Charles Town as a place to call home.

A Changing Market

Since the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Charles Town's population has increased by 47 percent. In 2011, nearly 60% of adults had at least some college education, and 30% held a bachelor's degree or higher. Job growth between 2003 and 2013 rose to 13%, due especially to growing economic sectors such as hospitality, information technology, transportation, and educational services. To review these recent socioeconomic trends, the following demographic and market overview is a summary of a more detailed market assessment conducted early in the planning process.

The market assessment examined demographic trends in Charles Town, the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and Jefferson County to form a better understanding of Charles Town's competitive position within the adjoining markets. It identifies the key issues that the community is facing and creates a foundation based on quantitative data to assist with future land use and planning objectives.

The market assessment presents current figures alongside 2020 demographic projections to document anticipated shifts within the City and UGB. While projections can be made beyond this 5-year timeframe, the level of accuracy in which market potential can be assessed would be reduced. Market data for this overview were obtained from ESRI Business Analyst, a nationally recognized provider of demographic and market data.

Population Growth

A key factor in measuring the depth of a retail or commercial market is assessing the trends in population – as population represents the consumers of goods and services that could be offered in the city and the larger region, as well as a local workforce that could potentially be tapped to fill job openings.

The City of Charles Town is projected to experience an 8.8% increase in population between 2015 and 2020 while the UGB is projected to increase by 8.6% (see **Table 2**). Population growth rates in the City and the UGB exceed growth rates in both Jefferson County and the state.

Based on Woods and Poole population data, Jefferson County is projected to increase by approximately 36% between 2015 and 2030. West Virginia at a statewide level is projected to increase by 5% during the same time period, demonstrating that projected growth is concentrated in the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area. As a comparable, Howard and Frederick counties (Maryland) are projected to grow 20.3% and 38.4% respectively during the same 15-year period. See **Figure 3**.

Even with its relative proximity to the National Capital Region, Jefferson County's population is not expected to grow at the same rate as other similar suburban counties to the south and west (e.g. Frederick County, VA and Stafford County, VA). One possible explanation is denser population centers in Jefferson County lack a direct transportation connection to jobs, services, and amenities found in DC and other communities surrounding the nation's Capital.

As shown in **Figure 4,** counties located in the Baltimore - Washington, DC metropolitan area are projected to experience high levels of population growth between 2015 and 2040. Jefferson County is projected to grow by 20 percent during this time-period, an increase of approximately 67,800 new residents.

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020 (Estimate)	% Change 2015-20
Charles Town	3,230	2,907	5,259	5,723	6,512	8.8%
Charles Town UGB	N/A	7,570	10,666	11,584	13,633	8.6%
Jefferson County, WV	36,145	42,190	53,498	56,914	62,674	6.4%

Table 2: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2020
Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

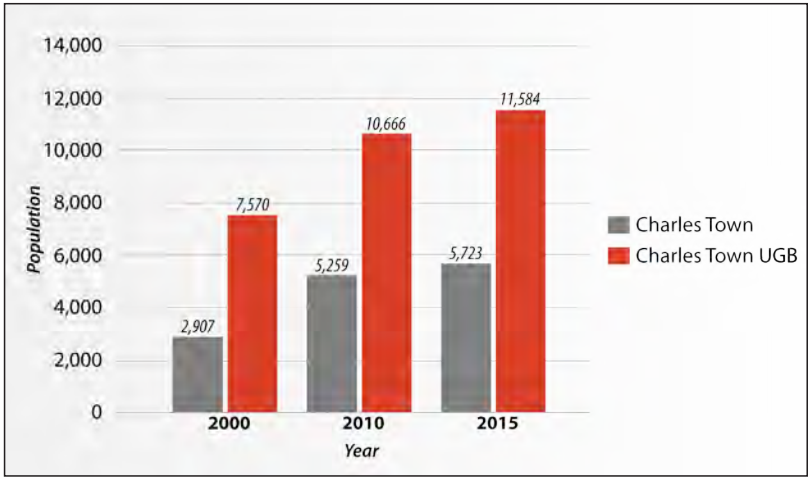


Figure 2: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2015
Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

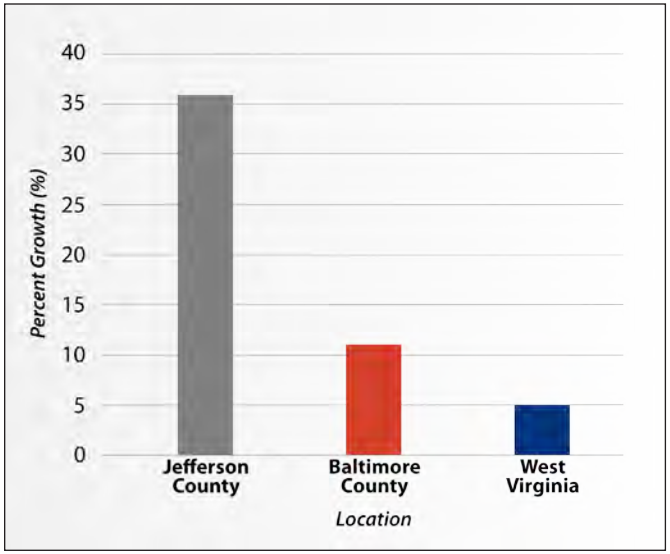


Figure 3: Regional Population Growth, 2015 - 2030
Source: Woods and Poole, 2014

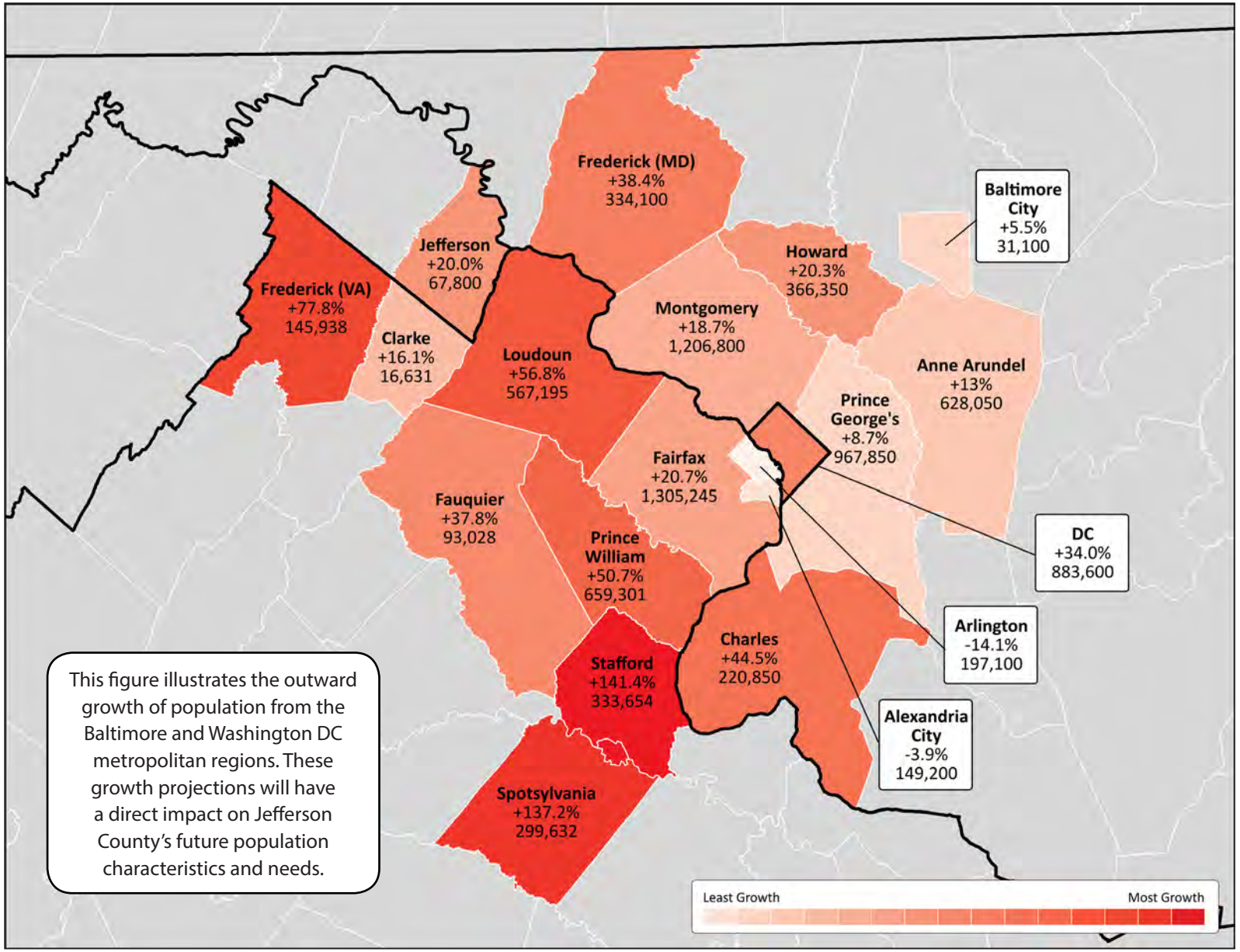


Figure 4: Washington DC Metro Region Population Growth by County, 2015-2040
Source: US Census Bureau, UVA Cooper Center, and Maryland Department of Planning

Educated Workforce

Compared to other communities in West Virginia, Charles Town and its surrounding region is well educated. Nearly 30 percent of residents age 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is 10 percent higher than the statewide average, as depicted in **Figure 5**. Higher education is demonstrated to provide economic benefits in terms of annual earnings. Residents with high educational attainment typically have increased disposable income and, particularly for Millenials, may desire high quality housing and amenities in the Downtown.

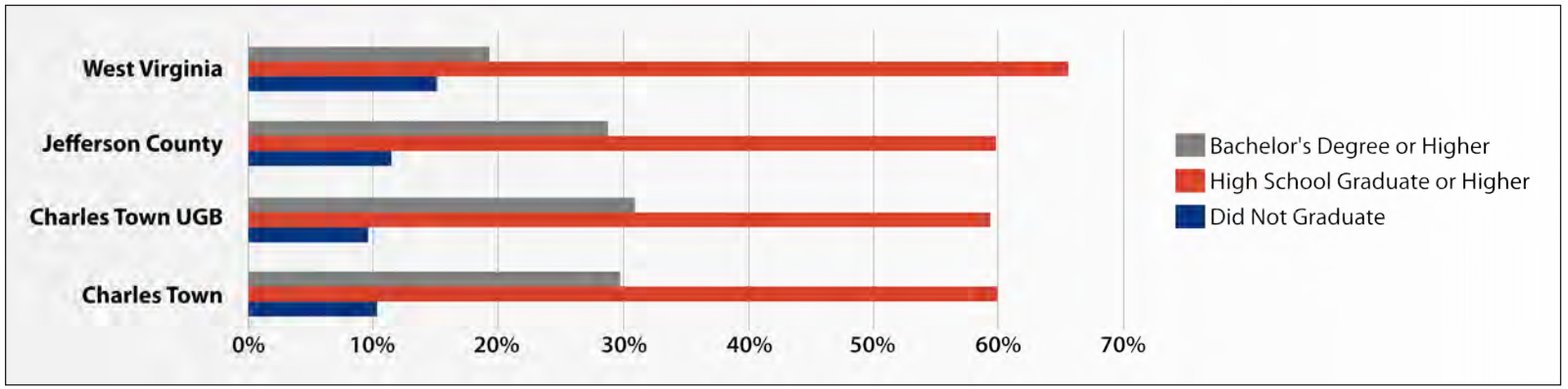


Figure 5: Educational Attainment, 2016
Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

Housing Trends

Housing is a central component of livability and quality of life. People spend more time in their homes than anywhere else and as a result, housing affordability, availability, and accessibility are critical to a community's wellbeing. Since 2000, average household and family sizes in Charles Town have been growing steadily (shown in **Table 3**). Growing household and family sizes within the City suggest a demand for single family dwelling units. Data compiled in 2016 for properties within Charles Town indicates that a majority of parcels (72.3%) within the City contain single family homes.

Housing tenure compositions within the City favor homeownership, with 59% of occupied housing units belonging to homeowners in 2015. Nearly 40% of housing units within the City were constructed between 2000 and 2009. Median home values for Charles Town properties are significantly higher than the state average ($266,353 in 2015, compared to $123,440 for West Virginia). By comparison, Jefferson County's median home value was $294,770 in 2015, demonstrating Charles Town housing

	2000	2010	2015	2020 (Estimate)
Average Household Size	2.26	2.57	2.58	2.62
Average Family Size	2.95	3.19	3.28	3.30

Table 3: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2020
Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

stock is more affordable than the County average. In theory, these housing metrics are favorable for Charles Town as a desirable community. However, the lack of a diverse housing inventory coupled with higher-than-statewide average home values makes it difficult for less educated individuals with lower earning potential and for seniors with fixed incomes to access affordable housing.

Economy and Industry

Overview

According to the *2014 Charles Town Economic Development Strategic Plan*, the Charles Town zip code is projected to add nearly 1,500 new jobs in the 10-year period between 2013 and 2023. The plan also includes a comprehensive overview of workforce characteristics within the City and its larger laborshed (which includes Jefferson County and its contiguous counties in West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia). Currently, the accommodation and food services industries (e.g., hospitality) are the leading sectors for the City, accounting for 24% of its available employment.

The largest employer in this industry is the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. Located just outside of Charles Town's city limits, the establishment is one of the busiest thoroughbred tracks in the country and is the largest employer in Jefferson County. Although Charles Town does not benefit directly from property taxes, the casino's position as an employer, a draw for tourism, and source of income to the City through track receipts has positively impacted Charles Town physically and financially. Currently, an extremely competitive environment as a result of nearby casinos in Maryland (Anne Arundel County, Downtown Baltimore, and MGM National Harbor) may make it increasingly difficult for the Hollywood Casino to attract visitors from nearby metropolitan regions. This has adversely affected industry growth and revenue generation for Charles Town.



Hollywood Racetrack and Casino, Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Information and professional, scientific, and technical services are two industries that are strong in the labor shed and are projected to continue to grow. These industries present an opportunity for Charles Town to capture related companies looking for small office space in a walkable Downtown location with easy access to Baltimore and Washington, DC. American Public University[1] is one example of a thriving Downtown employer and accounts for the high number of employees in the colleges, universities, and professional school industry.

Job Gains and Losses

Employment data obtained through the U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies provides quantitative insight into which industries have gained or lost jobs over the most recent 15-year period. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Jefferson County gained a total of 742 jobs between 2010 and 2015. Shown in **Figure 6**, the Accommodation, Food Services and Drinking Places, and Educational Services industries had the highest employment gains. Conversely, the Performance Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related industries reported the highest job losses. Employment data verifies that increased competition from nearby casinos are having a negative impact on the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races.

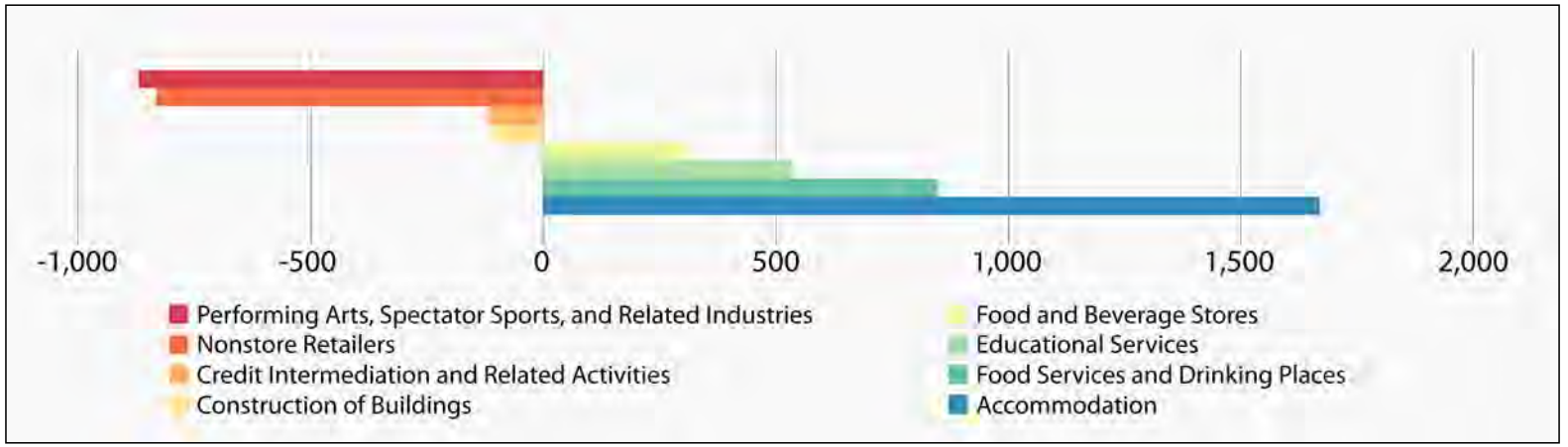


Figure 6: Jefferson County Top Employment Gain/Losses by Industry (2000 - 2015)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

[1] http://www.apus.edu/



The Inn at Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Industry Projections

WorkForce West Virginia is a state government agency responsible for overseeing the state unemployment insurance program, as well as a network of workforce development services. Funded through the U.S. Department of Labor, WorkForce West Virginia also provides industry projections for the state's seven Workforce Investment Areas (WIA).

Charles Town is located in WIA 7, which is comprised of Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Mineral, Hampshire, Hardy, Grant, and Pendleton Counties. Based on West Virginia Industry Projections for 2012-2022, WIA 7 is projected to realize the highest job gains, by percent change, in Ambulatory Health Care Services (39% growth), Wood Product Manufacturing (27% growth), and Administrative and Support Services (18% growth). By net gain, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is projected to have the highest employment growth (3,747 net new jobs), followed by the Ambulatory Health Care Services (1,819 net new jobs) and the Government sector (1,092 net new jobs). The full set of industry projections can be found at: *http://lmi.workforcewv.org/LTprojections/LTIndustryProjections.html*.

The Health Care and Social Assistance sector has been rapidly increasing across the country, and Jefferson County and WIA 7 follow this trend with large increases in employment in the sector. In fact, employment in Health Care and Social Assistance has been steadily increasing since 2001, suggesting potential increased demand for corresponding medical, laboratory, and medical office space.

Retail Market Potential

A retail gap analysis was performed during the development of the City's 2014 Economic Development Strategic Plan. The results of this analysis are also useful to better understand local retail market expansion and development opportunities. It is important to realize that market conditions and consumer spending patterns and trends are constantly changing and are particularly being influenced by the significant shift over the past several years to online shopping. However, niche and specialty products and services unique to the greater Charles Town and Eastern Panhandle Region provide greater opportunities to capture existing and new consumers to the City's retail industries. The City's 2014 Economic Development Strategic Plan can be found on the City's webpage.

Commuting Patterns

The U.S. Census Bureau provides data on inflow and outflow labor characteristics of a municipality. That is, the data shows the number of non-resident workers employed within the municipality (inflow) and how many resident workers are employed outside of the municipality (outflow). Interior flow refers to residents living and working within the same municipality.

Based on 2014 data, the City of Charles Town has approximately 3,212 primary jobs located within the City. Of these jobs, 233 are both employed and live in the City; 2,979 workers are employed in the City but live outside; and 2,450 live in the City, but work outside of the City. **Figure 7** provides a visual representation of the labor inflow/outflow in Charles Town.

The data shows that Charles Town is neither a net importer nor exporter of workers. Rather, the inflow and outflow of workers is relatively neutral, and 7% of the workforce in the City is comprised of City residents.

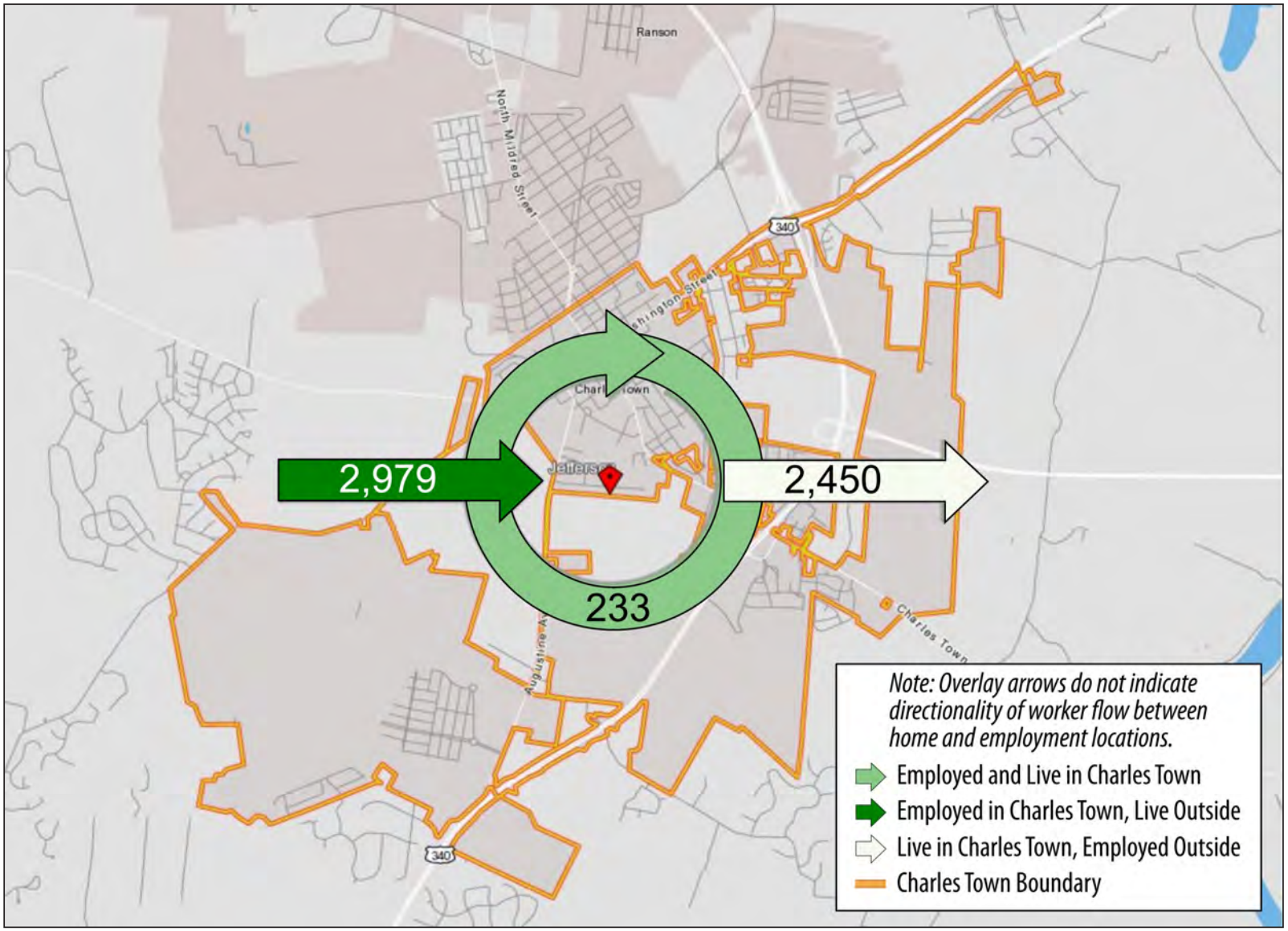


Figure 7: City of Charles Town Commuting Patterns, 2014
Source: Census Bureau - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics

Employment Clusters

Figure 8 shows employment is densely concentrated in Charles Town's Downtown district. The City's largest employment nodes are situated along or just off of East Washington Street in the Downtown area.

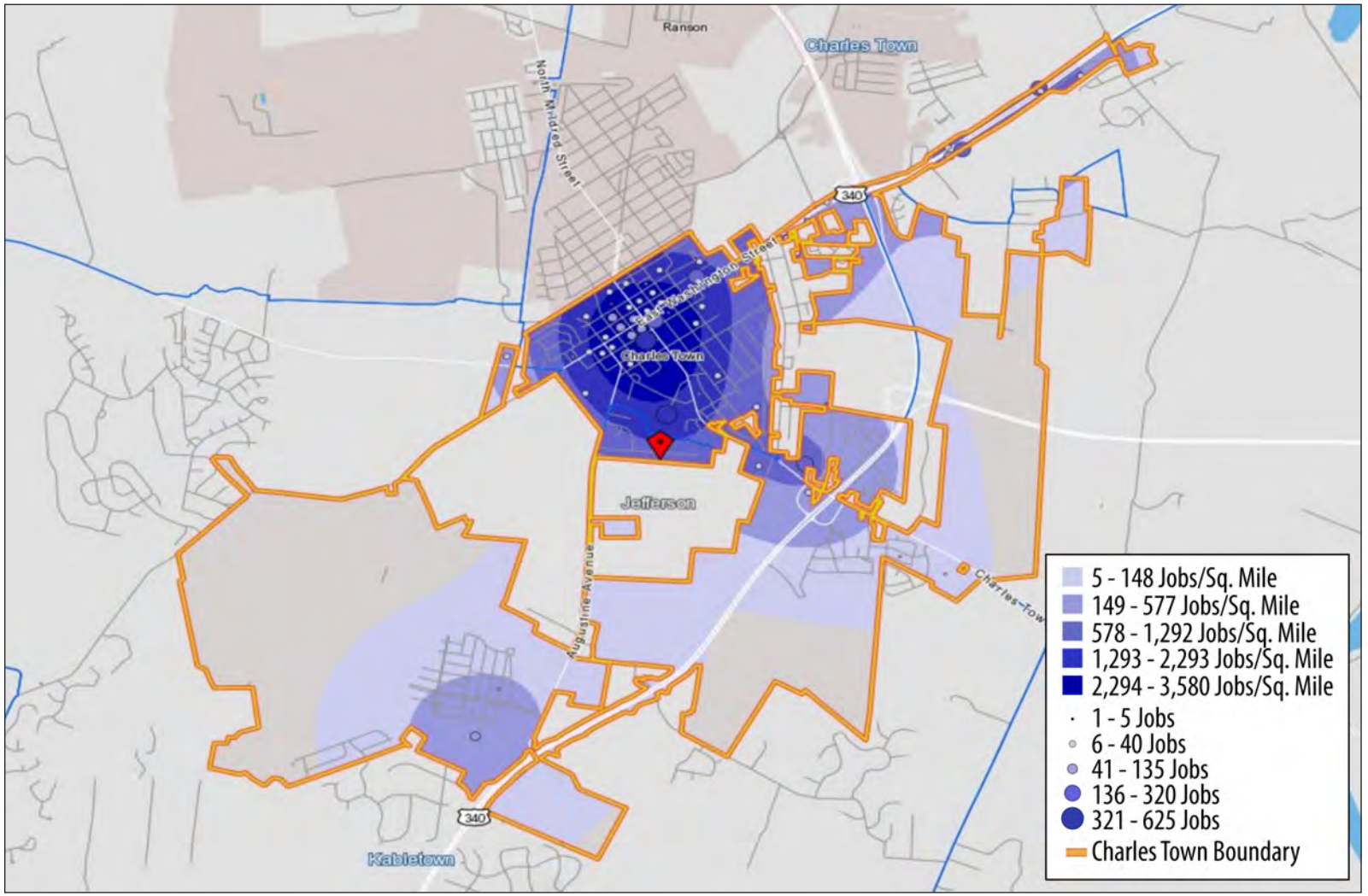


Figure 8: City of Charles Town Employment Clusters, 2014
Source: Census Bureau - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics

Analyzing the Trends

Like many small cities, improving the Downtown district is a core ingredient to attracting and supporting residential, business, and tourism growth. The population and employment trends projected for the next decade suggest Charles Town has an opportunity to leverage positive growth to improve its Downtown and strengthen its employment base.

Residential Housing

Charles Town has become an attractive home location for families, boasting affording housing prices but still located within commuting proximity to the Washington DC and Maryland markets. These competitive advantages have led to steady population growth between 2000 and 2010 (increasing by 80%), and the City is expected to add an additional 750+ new residents between 2015 and 2020.

In line with population growth, the number of rental occupied housing units is projected to trend upward, increasing from approximately 920 units in 2015 to more than 1,000 units by 2020, which is a 10% increase. This population growth may offer the City an opportunity to encourage second floor building conversion to rental properties in the Downtown. Adding residential units along Washington Street and the surrounding street network would have a positive impact on local businesses, increasing foot traffic and consumer spending.

Industry and Employment

Charles Town witnessed positive economic growth between 2005 and 2010 driven by the tourism industry at Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. New hotels added jobs to the accommodations sector within the city limits and the casino was a source of income to the City. However, as shown in the employment trends, competing casinos in the mid-Atlantic region have had an adverse impact on Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. The number of jobs in the tourism sector are now back to 2000 levels.

Moving forward, projected growth in the healthcare industry could provide new jobs for Charles Town. By net gain, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is projected to have the highest employment growth in the county (3,747 net new jobs between 2012-2022), followed by the Ambulatory Health Care Services (1,819 net new jobs).

The Need to Plan

Charles Town's ongoing growth and related development implications make planning for the City's future a critically important undertaking. This update to the Comprehensive Plan provides an integrated planning approach for addressing the key issues unique to Charles Town and outlines specific policies and strategies for achieving the desired vision for the community.

This Comprehensive Plan aims to:

- Provide a framework for consistent and predictable land use decision-making for property within the Charles Town UGB;
- Develop a plan for more sustainable growth patterns;
- Better connect areas within the UGB to the City's historic Downtown core; and
- Incorporate ideas from members of the public who participated in the *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan* update.



Charles Town Comprehensive Plan CAC, Visioning Exercise
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 3:
Downtown Charles Town



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International



Downtown Charles Town: Goal Statement

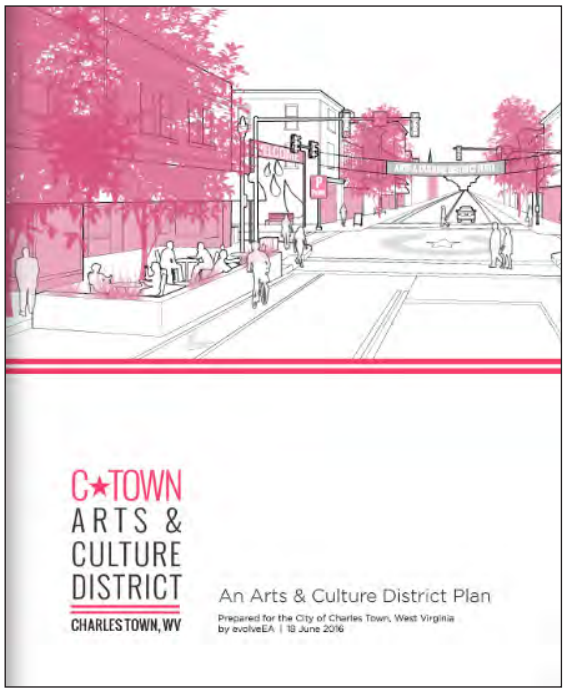
Downtown Charles Town will be the heart of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and learning.

Objectives:

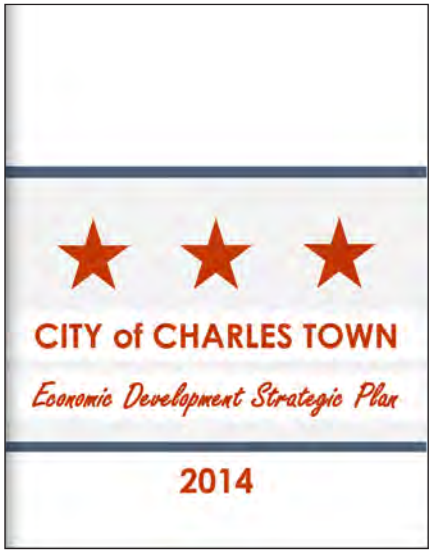
- Increase economic vitality through Downtown and neighborhood revitalization.
- Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation and technical assistance.
- Provide attractive storefronts occupied with a variety of appealing retail and service businesses.
- Create and maintain a clean, well-lighted, and inviting appearance day and night throughout the Downtown.
- Preserve and protect the Downtown's architecture that offers visual appeal and a quality experience in history and culture.
- Develop and create Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit the community.
- Promote adaptive reuse of and investment into Downtown properties that strengthens the mix of uses within multistory structures.

Downtown First Focus

Downtown Charles Town is the historic, functional, and symbolic heart of the City of Charles Town. It serves as an iconic and powerful symbol for the City and contains quintessential landmarks, distinctive features, and unique neighborhoods. It lies at the nexus of the Jefferson County regional roadway network that makes it easily accessible and provides a desirable small town, low cost-of-living alternative to Northern Virginia (NOVA), the National Capital Region (NCR), and the Baltimore and Frederick, Maryland metropolitan regions. The roadway networks leading to Charles Town includes the major state routes of 51, 340, 9, 115, and Augustine Avenue.



Charles Town is the seat of government for Jefferson County and it serves as the hub for the region's wealth of irreplaceable historic, cultural, and natural resources. According to the *Historic Charles Town Walking Tour*, Downtown Charles Town itself hosts 77 attractions, including cultural and historic resources, government and institutional facilities, small town America streetscapes, and unique architecture. Located within a few miles drive outside of Downtown exists a host of historic, cultural, and natural resources including Washington-family history, Civil War sites and battlefields, African-American Heritage sites, Lewis and Clark and abolitionist John Brown historic sites, the Appalachian Trail, The Journey through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway, and a host of other venues and attractions.



Given this critical mass of attractions, in 2016, the City formally designated the Downtown area as the "Charles Town Arts and Culture District," which is the City's strategy for growing and sustaining its diversity of arts and cultural amenities as a centerpiece to its Downtown economic development strategy. In 2014, the City prepared an *Economic Development Strategic Plan* to establish a blueprint for the City's community and economic development success.

The plan is guided by the following principles that emphasize the importance of the City's Downtown and the need to leverage the City's heritage tourism assets as essential elements to its overall economic success:

- **Place:** Creative Destinations
- **Brand:** Identity and Marketing
- **Programming:** Cultural Planning and Events
- **Organizations:** Organizational Capacity

Future Land Use Plan

A healthy, vital, and growing Downtown Charles Town is essential to the City's overall sustainability, quality of life, and future economic competitiveness. The Future Land Use Plan outlined in Section 4 of this Comprehensive Plan recognizes the Downtown as the urban core. Its connectivity and accessibility to and within the Downtown from all parts of the City's existing and future land use is imperative to sustaining and growing the Downtown's economic competitiveness in the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle region. The Downtown symbolizes the City's image and identity and upholding and strengthening these elements can only be achieved through effective urban design approach that is in part accomplished through the City's historic preservation and building and property code enforcement policies.



Figure 9: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company Master Plan for Charlestown, WV

The City's Future Land Use Plan recognizes the importance of Downtown's diversity and density of uses ranging from public, institutional, and mixed used commercial in the Central Business District area, supported by vibrant, well-maintained, and walkable residential neighborhoods that have maintained the traditional urban grid development pattern.

The continued success, increased vibrancy and sustainability of the entire Downtown is predicated upon the urban grid development approach that facilitates higher densities, a range of uses and housing types that fosters an attainable, sustainable, and livable community. Furthermore, the success of Downtown is also dependent upon the City championing Smart Growth Principles as defined in the Growth and Land Use section. Part of the balance is considering the impact of various types of development, planning for development that is consistent with Smart Growth Principles, and maintaining design guidelines as adopted by the City Council. The best practices in the industry indicate that Smart Growth Principles help preserve community resources, support dense development that does not put a strain on current service provision and provide predictable development guidelines for developers considering the area.

The City's historic growth patterns, beyond the Downtown area, have occurred in contrast to the City's historic master plan envisioned by Charles Washington and further expanded upon by the *Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Master Plan* illustrated in **Figure 9**. Instead, the City's more recent growth patterns have occurred through greenfield annexations to the City that have largely developed as suburban subdivisions dominated by low to medium density single-family detached residential lots aligned along curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. The exception is the neo-traditional neighborhood of Huntfield. These suburban residential developments are located in proximity to the City's major transportation corridors (Routes 51, 340,

Augustine Avenue, etc.), but they lack interconnectivity with neighboring developments or multimodal connectivity to Downtown. The Future Land Use Plan embraces the City's Downtown and envisions greater and stronger connectivity with its existing suburban neighborhoods and a more measured and strategic growth pattern within its UGB.

"In order for Charles Town to thrive in the next 10-20 years, it must finally commit its resources and energy to creating an economically vibrant and viable historic downtown business district. If the downtown is allowed to continue to stagnate or decline, Charles Town will lose its identity and sense of place."

Source: *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

Downtown - Stepping Outside the Boundaries and Expansion

The commonly agreed upon boundaries of the Downtown are often West Street to the west, Congress to the south, Liberty or North Street to the north and Samuel or Mildred to the East. As with any boundary, there are exceptions and others may believe it to be slightly different based on their point of view. Regardless, the concept of the Downtown area needs to be broadened as Charles Town grows and redevelopment opportunities appear. There will be a time when all the existing non-residential real estate is at its highest productive value and vacancies will be limited. This could allow for further expansion of the Downtown area.

There may be opportunities for the extension of the Downtown based on the form and character currently found in the Downtown, such as size, height, density, multi-story mixed use structures, build to lines or up to the property line with sidewalks, and a large building footprint on the lot.

Areas that are suitable for increased use and expansion of the Downtown include:

- Maximize redevelopment opportunities of underutilized sites along the Liberty Street corridor;
- Revitalization the South West Street / Augustine Avenue corridor including the Hill Dale Shopping Center; and
- Revitalization and redevelopment of underutilized properties situated between East North Street and CSX Railway and considerations for maximizing future opportunities related to urban development and railway transportation (e.g., transit oriented development).

Charles Town Now Goals

- To support our Downtown as a regional arts, entertainment, and shopping focal point which will support Main Street merchants, businesses and area artists.
- To provide an economic engine for the local economy which will promote local business and community charities.
- To periodically bring together the entire area in a festive community based event which will promote diversity, understanding, and tolerance while promoting community

Downtown Investments and Future Opportunities

Through the diligent efforts of the City in collaboration with Charles Town Now, Charles Town is maturing into a vibrant Main Street community focusing on organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Organized in November 2011 from the City's Merchants' Association, Charles Town Now is comprised of business and property owners, as well as institutions and organizations having a vested interest in the revitalization, growth, and success of Downtown and the City as a whole.

Together, the City and Charles Town Now have collaborated in making the following signature investments in Downtown:

- **Charles Washington Hall** – $4 million renovation of this 1870 building owned by the Charles Town Building Commission. The newly renovated Charles Washington Hall will serve as a multi-use public space serving as the Downtown anchor to the $10 million, 1.5-mile Ranson-Charles Town Green Corridor roadway that will ultimately extend to the Potomac Market Place shopping center on WV Route 9 via North George St. to Fairfax Boulevard in Ranson, WV.
- **Streetscape Improvements** – $3.2 million invested in streetscape improvements in the Downtown and along East Washington Street. The improvements included new sidewalks and pedestrian crossings.
- **Building Façade improvements** – $18,000 awarded to business owners for façade improvements to properties in Downtown. Funded by the City, this program is anticipated to be an annual grant to property owners in the Historic Overlay District. **Figure 10** illustrates the building façades to Jones Insurance buildings before and after improvements.

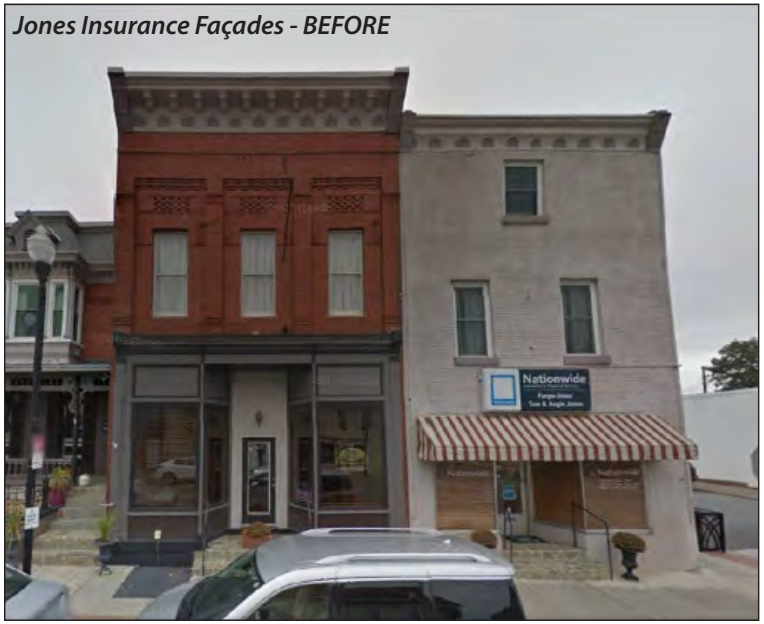




Figure 10: Improvements to the Jones Insurance Building Façade
Source: City of Charles Town Planning Department, 2016

In 2016, the City and Charles Town Now partnered in completing a *Walkability and Connectivity Study* that provides:

- an accurate inventory and assessment of the current state of existing sidewalks within Downtown Charles Town and identifies key corridors and trail connections to connect residents and visitors with Downtown;
- a resource roadmap and implementation strategy for future walkability improvements; and
- an initial framework for the City's Wayfinding Signage Program

Among other priority improvements, the *Walkability and Connectivity Study* leverages the vision established by the City's *Arts and Culture District Plan* by increasing pedestrian safety, mobility, and accessibility in the Downtown through specific design standards for Washington and Charles streets. While current sidewalks along West Washington and North Charles Streets provide for safe and easy movement of pedestrians, these streets are still predominantly car oriented with wide travel lanes. Reducing the width of the travel lanes will allow for the streets to become more pedestrian oriented with wider sidewalks (**Figures 11 and 12**). Increasing sidewalk widths will activate public spaces resulting in an increase in commerce for businesses. In addition, wider sidewalks create safer places for pedestrians to walk and provide opportunities to liven the streetscape by providing space for sidewalk cafes and artist display, and increase outdoor seating for pedestrians and Downtown shoppers alike. The complete study can be found at: http://anyflip.com/ocqe/ceth.



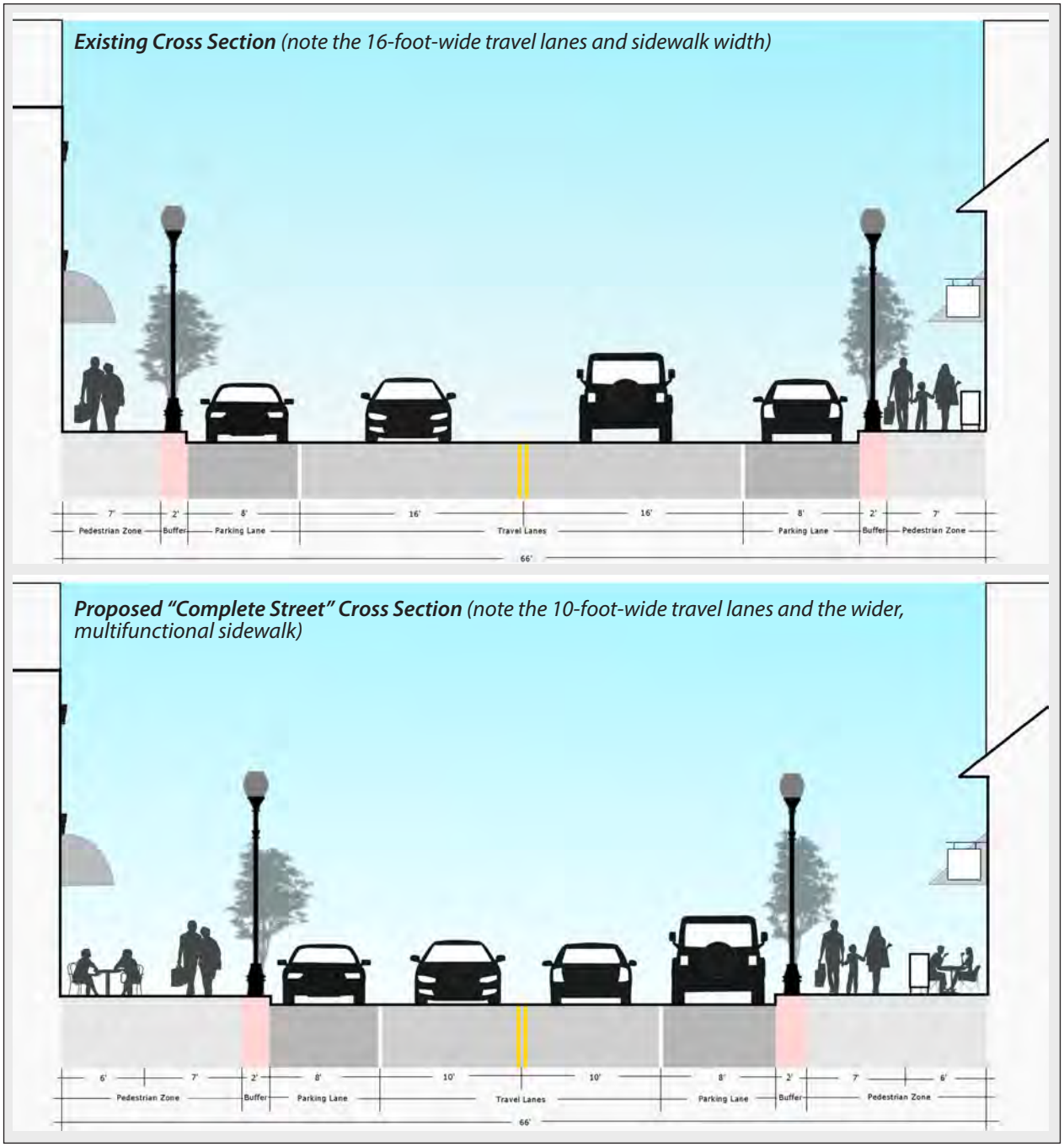


Figure 11: Washington Street "Complete Streets" Design
Source: Michael Baker International

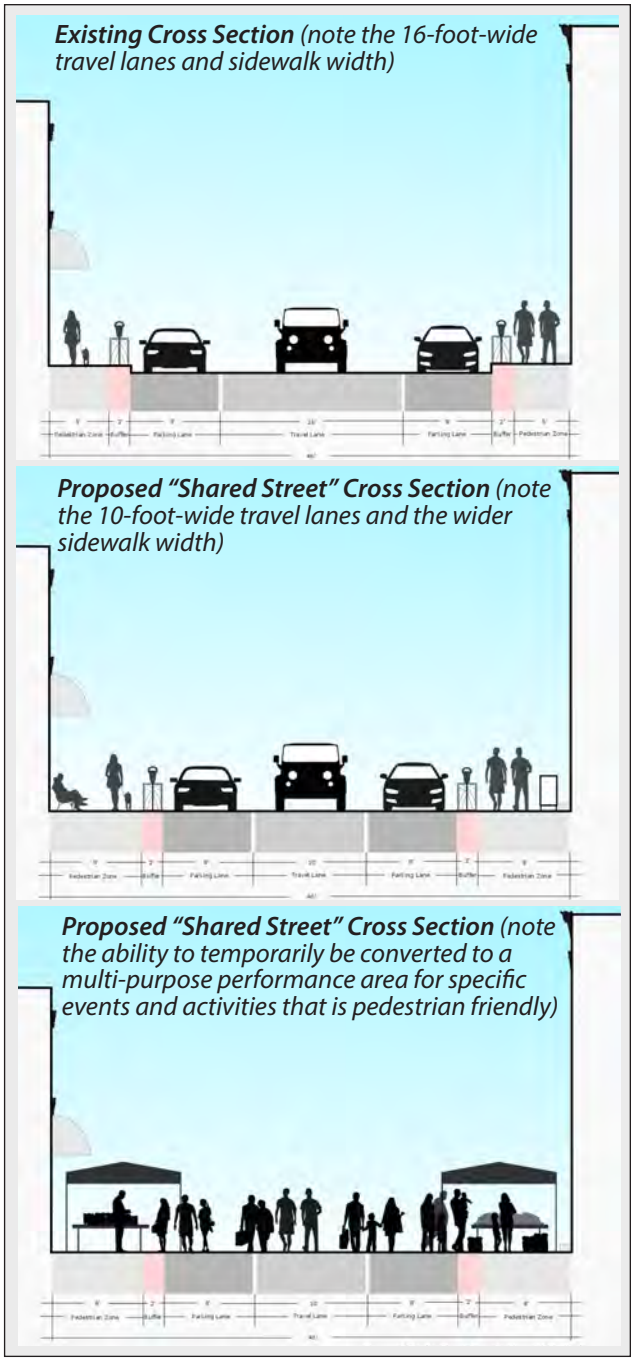
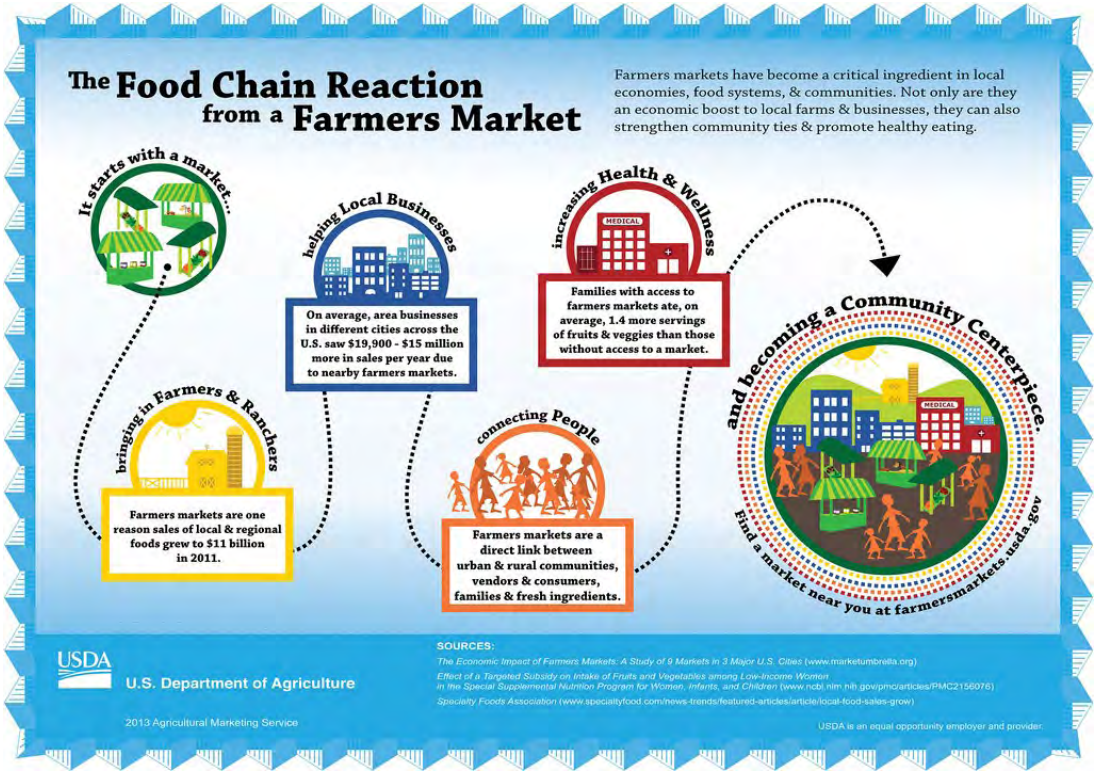


Figure 12: Charles Street "Shared Street" Design
Source: Michael Baker International

Charles Town Farmers Market

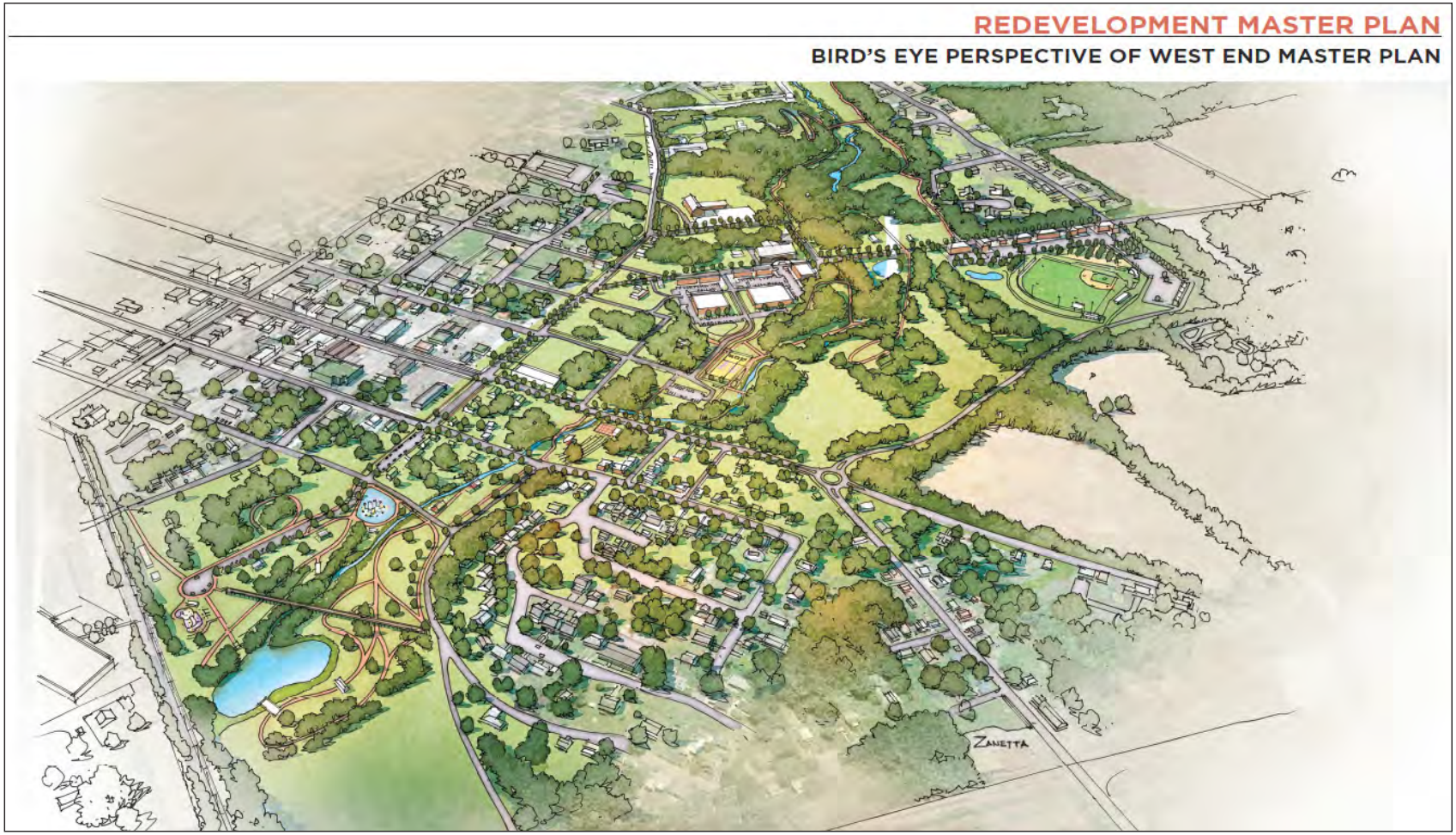
The Charles Town Farmers Market is a seasonal, weekly Downtown gathering of farmers, consumers, bakers, children, musicians, artists, athletes, non-profits, business owners, City and town representatives, and interested citizens. It serves as a communal place to shop, relax, visit, talk, connect, eat, and enjoy Charles Town's arts and culture, and highlights the community's agricultural abundance and talented artisans. The Farmers Market contributes to Charles Town's sense of place and greatly contributes to the City's economic well-being and provides a strong foundation for a healthy community. Specifically, the market provides opportunities for small farmers and businesses to sell their products, and they help meet the growing demand for locally produced food and community sustainable agriculture.

The success of the Farmers Market supports the continuation of the rural agricultural environment in Jefferson County that many residents of the City have said contributes to the small town character of Charles Town. According to the USDA, farmers markets have become a critical ingredient to local economies, food systems, and communities. Not only are they an economic boost to local farms and businesses, they can also strengthen community ties and promote healthy living as shown in the following illustration.



Proposed West End Master Plan

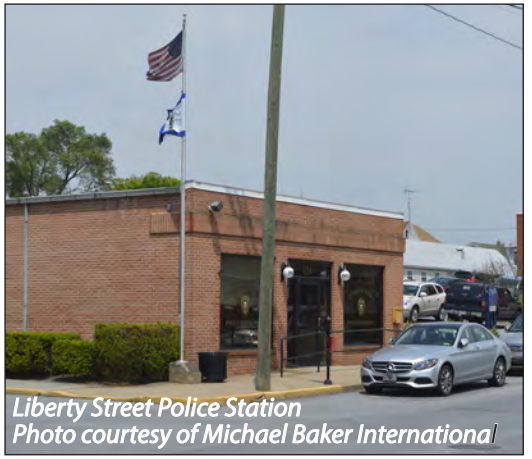
Another important element to increasing the vibrancy and growth of Downtown and promoting the City's overall economic success is the City's effort to achieve the proposed 2015 Charles Town West End Master Plan and Brownfields Reuse Strategy (West End Master Plan) vision for brownfield and neighborhood revitalization. Drafted and presented to City Council in 2015, the West End Master Plan, which is a broad sweeping concept plan, provides a comprehensive revitalization strategy that includes a collaborative effort to repurpose existing brownfield sites, reinvest in existing neighborhood housing and infrastructure, improve stormwater management, enhance Evitts Run Park, and create multimodal connections that increase accessibility to Downtown and with surrounding neighborhoods and communities. City Council is currently identifying a capital budget strategy to determine the plan's implementation viability. The *West End Master Plan* is available on the City's website at: http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/CTWEP_Report_Complete.pdf.



Liberty Street Police Department Adaptive Reuse

As the City plans for the relocation of the police department, a reuse strategy for the current facility located at 114 W. Liberty Street will need to be considered. One reuse strategy to consider is how the site, which is owned by the City's Building Commission, could be used to enliven Liberty Street and continue to serve the citizens of Charles Town.

The City Building Commission and City Council should consider commissioning a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station property. The study's findings could then be used by the Building Commission to idenitfy highest and best reuse options and long-term ownership that align with the Goal Statement for Downtown and the overall Vision of this Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the study and reuse options could also serve as the basis for soliciting competitive proposals from interested entrepreneurs.



Liberty Street Police Station
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International





Former American Public University System's Trefry Technology Center at 661 S. George St., Charles Town, WV. that is being renovated to serve as the new location for the City's Police Department.
Photos courtesy of APUS

Density Creates Vibrancy

The City envisions the Downtown as a vertical, mixed use commercial environment whereby first floors are occupied by restaurants and retail businesses, second floors are occupied by business services (finance, insurance, real estate, etc.), and third floors serve as residential units. However, Charles Town's Downtown is largely comprised of commercial properties that have yet to achieve their true mixed use potential and, moreover, lack the residential density necessary to foster a vibrant and sustainable Downtown.

The "critical supply" of shopping, eating, and entertainment venues is currently lacking, but greater demand is also necessary to enable the sustainability of expanding supply to ultimately achieve a more diverse set of amenities and experiences in Downtown Charles Town. The retail market profile discussed in the Community Profile section of this document indicates that there is a demand for eating establishments in the City.

"The majority of [downtown] apartments are being snatched up by young, unmarried professionals and empty nesters, a trend that started about 20 years ago and continues today. Most are seeking a lifestyle that gives them easy access to parks, restaurants, entertainment, art and culture within an easy walking distance."

Source: *Rapid Growth Media: http://www.rapidgrowthmedia.com/features/downtownapartmentboom2.aspx*

"Downtowns throughout North America are making a major contribution to the bottom line of their municipalities. In most cases downtowns serve as the engine for local economies. However, downtowns are much more than a profit center to cities. They also represent the image and character of a city to the rest of the world. Downtowns are unique in that they are typically the only neighborhood that belongs to and is shared by everyone in the region."

Source: *Rapid Growth Media: http://www.rapidgrowthmedia.com/features/downtownapartmentboom2.aspx*

In addition to the public investments outlined above, an increasing number of property owners are beginning to realize this potential and are reinvesting in their buildings to increase their value and mixed use potential. Such investments are focusing on new entrepreneurial ventures that include breweries, coffee shops, a bakery, and new restaurants, as well as new residential spaces. These investments are in direct support of the public's strong desire to have a greater number of shopping, eating, and entertainment options available in Downtown and business hours that extend into the evenings and weekends. Collectively, these investments are building momentum and confidence back into Downtown and are key to creating the "critical supply" and demand opportunities for sustainability.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Downtown, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in **Section 10, Implementation Strategy**:

Ongoing

- Continue to maintain the City's database of blighted and vacant structures and prioritize those structures that are most detrimental to the Downtown's revitalization efforts.
- Continue to fund, administer, and promote the *Charles Town Façade Improvement Program*.
- Utilize the City's market analysis information to identify, attract, and retain prospective businesses that meet the Downtown's market demand needs.
- Continue the City's seasonal flower planting and seasonal decorating activities within Downtown.
- Continue to administer and enforce the City's *Design Review Standards*.
- Incentivize building and property owners to provide restaurant and retail space on street level floors, and business services and residential on the upper floors.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Implement a wayfinding signage program.
- Create a marketing campaign promoting incentives for employees, workers, and visitors.
- Establish a small business, low interest loan fund and provide technical assistance training to perspective loan recipients.
- Become a nationally-certified Main Street community to leverage business retention and recruitment and other necessary technical and financial assistance needs.
- Replace the City's Downtown amber-colored streetlights with cleaner and brighter, energy efficient LED lights.
- Build and strengthen an online presence for Downtown Charles Town through a more effective website and greater utilization of social media tools.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Implement the *West End Master Plan*.
- Implement the walkability and accessibility improvements identified in the City's *2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study*.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station property.

Long-term (11-20 years)

- Undertake a small area plan with conceptual architectural details that encourages the expansion of the Downtown area.

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 4: Growth and Land Use



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Growth and Land Use: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) while maintaining a vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives:

- Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the future land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.
- Promote adaptive reuse of and investment in Downtown properties that strengthens the mixed use concept within multistory properties.
- Utilize the City's annexation policy to provide areas for future growth, preserve critical green space, and expand the City's tax base.

Managing Our Growth

Growth and land use are often the primary components of a comprehensive plan because they establish the general physical characteristics of a community. The land use plan is a policy statement that decision makers must rely on to guide future actions. It provides the necessary foundation upon which all other elements are based. Included in the land use plan is a future land use map and related policies and strategies for guiding growth and development patterns through 2040. The previous *Charles Town Comprehensive Plan* was completed in 2006, during the economic peak of the early 2000s. The policies included in the document anticipated significant and continued growth. Furthermore, while the 2006 Plan was amended in 2009 to reflect the adoption of the UGB, no future land use map was developed for the unincorporated area (land that is governed by the jurisdiction of the County). Now, ten years later, the Comprehensive Plan must be updated to reflect a more stable growth reality and defined boundary to which the City can grow.

With this update, Charles Town has the opportunity to plan proactively for future growth and land use issues within its UGB. In recent decades through the annexation process, suburban-style commercial strip plazas, as well as isolated, low-density suburban developments have dominated the City's landscape. This has occurred even though there is a renewed interest in walkable, dense traditional neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and a mixture of land uses. This land use pattern is also a defining feature in the unincorporated area of the UGB.

This section of the plan includes the following:

- an overview of Charles Town's historic growth patterns;
- existing land uses and zoning designations; and
- annexation policies that have defined Charles Town's current landscape.

Each component plays a vital role in the future land use plan that was developed through extensive discussions with the Comprehensive Plan's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Charles Town Now, property owners, and the general public. Also, the Future Land Use Plan encompasses various Smart Growth Principles, specifically by encouraging a mixture of land uses within the UGB, creating more walkable and livable neighborhoods by directing higher density development towards the existing Downtown core, and making development decisions more intentional (predictable), fair, and cost effective.

Charles Town - A History of Land Use Planning

Charles Town's West End 1750-1786 [2]

Before Charlestown was founded in 1786 by Charles Washington, the community had its beginnings circa 1755 as a small community settlement on the west end along Evitt's Run. This location was also along a transportation route connecting Harpers Ferry and Winchester, VA and it served as a vital stop along the transportation route, as the creek provided a resting place for travelers and a place to water horses. What is now North Street today, was the main transportation route through the community. As part of the larger effort to establish a village around the Evitt's Run Creek, a mill was established along the creek and North

2 Mark Reinhart, "Charlestown's West End in the Lifetime of Charles Washington". Jefferson County Historical Society, Volume IXXVII, December 2011

Street. When Charles Washington formally platted what is today Charles Town, he moved the main thoroughfare from North Street to Washington Street. Since the Evitts Run Creek area had the elements of a budding community, the west end of Charles Washington's platted community was the first areas to see active expansion and improvements

1786 – Civil War Era

In 1786, Charles Washington platted the 80 acres adjoining his now historic Happy Retreat Estate (circa 1780) and laid out the streets of "Charlestown" naming many of them after his brothers and one after his wife, Mildred. He donated the four corner lots at the intersection of George and Washington Streets for public buildings of the town and county, provided the town became the seat of the county in the event that additional area was separated from then Berkeley County, VA for the formation of a new county. The Corporation of Charles Town was officially chartered by the Virginia General Assembly in 1787. Jefferson County was later formed in 1801 and Charles Town became the county seat of government and the four corner lots were ultimately occupied as town and county public uses Charles Washington had envisioned.

Circa 1890 – 1910

In 1890, the notable Confederate horse artillery commander Robert Preston Chew and his business associates formed the Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company (CMM&I) and in 1891 established its headquarters in then "Charlestown" (today's Ranson City Hall building). Using 850 acres of land purchased from the Ranson family, CMM&I commissioned D.G. Howell, a Washington, D.C. landscape architect and civil engineer, to design a master plan for Charlestown. However, CMM&I fell on hard times in 1893 and relinquished its presence in Charles Town. They sold their headquarters building to the Charles Town Board of Education. As a result, CMM&I's master planned community was never achieved as envisioned, except in the area that was to become Ranson. While the western portion of Charles Town never developed as shown in **Figure 13**, the concept of a connected community on grid patterned was preferred.



Figure 13: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company Master Plan for Charlestown, WV

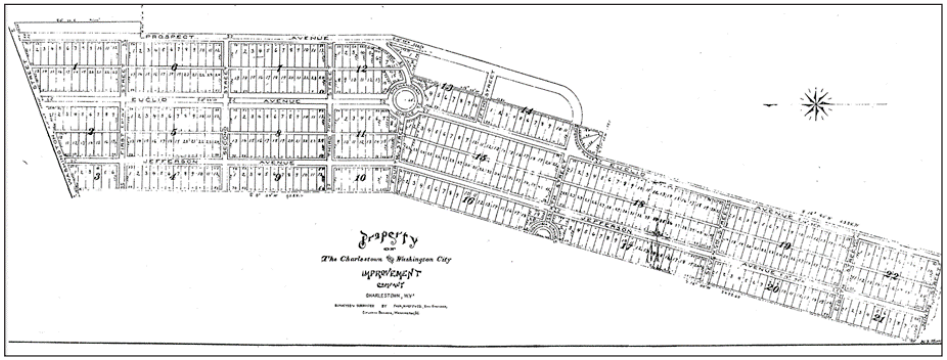


Figure 14: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company's Master Plan for Charlestown's East Side Neighborhood

During this same period, a development plan for the eastern side of Charles Town was created as presented in **Figure 14**. This development includes the north/south streets of Jefferson, Euclid, and Prospect Avenues that exists today. Much of this plan was built as depicted, with the notable exception of the traffic circle. Some of the east/west streets exist and others are "paper streets", meaning they are platted, but not constructed. While this area has remained in the jurisdiction of the county, the urban grid pattern form was designed anticipating they would connect to the City and eventually be incorporated into the City.

Circa 1910 – 2000

In 1910, the Corporation of Ranson was created when a faction of Charles Town residents decided to form their own town and seceded from the City. Ranson's growth was largely based on the railroad and manufacturing industries. Charles Town's growth was predominately fueled by its Downtown business district and surrounding residential neighborhoods, with limited supporting industrial development. As shown in **Figure 15**, Ranson grew according to the master plan that was developed in 1891. This concentrated, medium to high density growth pattern continued through much of the 20th Century and each cities' population growth increased steadily through the 1990s.

Circa 2000 – 2010

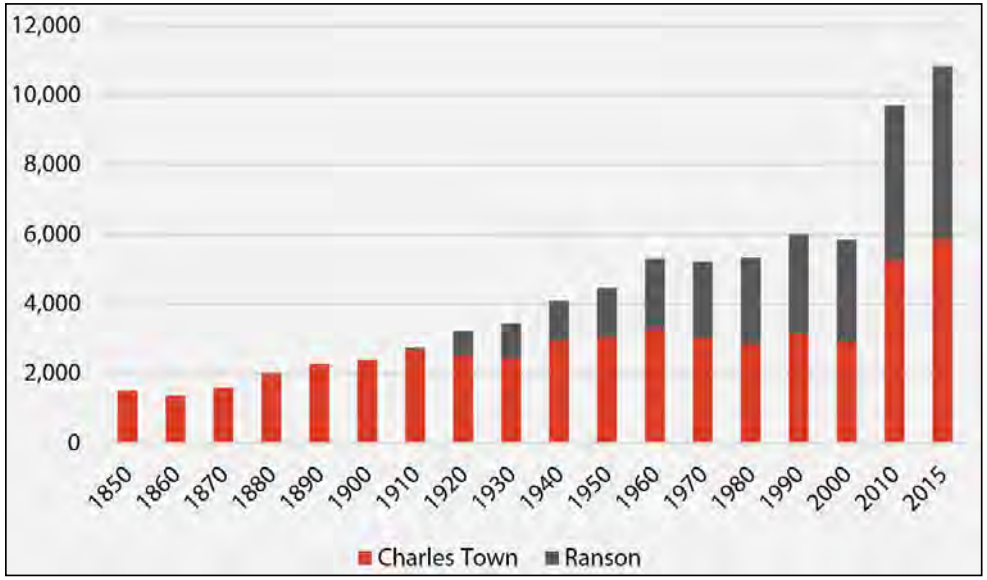


Figure 15: Absolute Population Growth Charles Town and Ranson, 1850 - 2015
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

During this period, Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County became inundated with new citizens and growth. Charles Town and Ranson's population and land development patterns grew substantially during this period. While Jefferson County had been part of the Baltimore-Washington, DC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the County was considered a distant community of DC, Northern Virginia, and Maryland. Post-2000, Jefferson County was no longer considered a distance community but became an option for commuters.

Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County were not adequately prepared with a vision of where and how each community would grow. The amount of growth that occurred came at an astonishing rate. Land development regulations were not adequate for the scope and the amount of development. Schools, roads, sewer, and water capacity was quickly maxed out and required needed improvements. It was during this time Charles Town and Ranson went from small communities with a slow growth rate to rapidly growing communities, both in the context of population and significant physical growth. While the towns were still semi-rural in nature, the population explosion caused them to take on additional suburban characteristics.

The land development patterns during this period were decentralized, medium to low density development patterns dominated by single family detached subdivisions and auto-oriented commercial centers were located outside of the Downtown. Such growth patterns were facilitated through the annexation of unincorporated territory into municipal corporations as enabled through the *West Virginia State Code (Chapter 8, Article 6)* and greatly contributed to the City's respective sprawling and disjointed land use patterns. Moreover, Charles Town's growth and development during this period occurred under an outdated zoning ordinance and there was no standalone subdivision and land development ordinance. The zoning ordinance was void of any

specific subdivision and land development standards, except a loose combination of standards found in the Zoning Ordinance, Codified Ordinances, and limited and non-specific standards prescribed under the State Code.

The building locations and densities illustrated in **Figure 16** demonstrates how the annexation process has caused the City's developed land area to greatly expand beyond its historic Downtown core and surrounding traditional residential neighborhoods to now include outlying suburban-style residential and commercial uses. This lower-density, disconnected development pattern extends along and within the vicinity of Old Route 340 (Augustine Avenue), the Route 340 Bypass, and South George Street. Additionally, the annexation process has caused Charles Town's growth pattern to occur in a "leap frog" manner. This pattern has diminished the connectivity to and integrity of the historic Downtown core. The impacts of this outward and disconnected growth have resulted in a more automobile reliant population and nearly makes it impossible to walk to the Downtown or a neighborhood store.

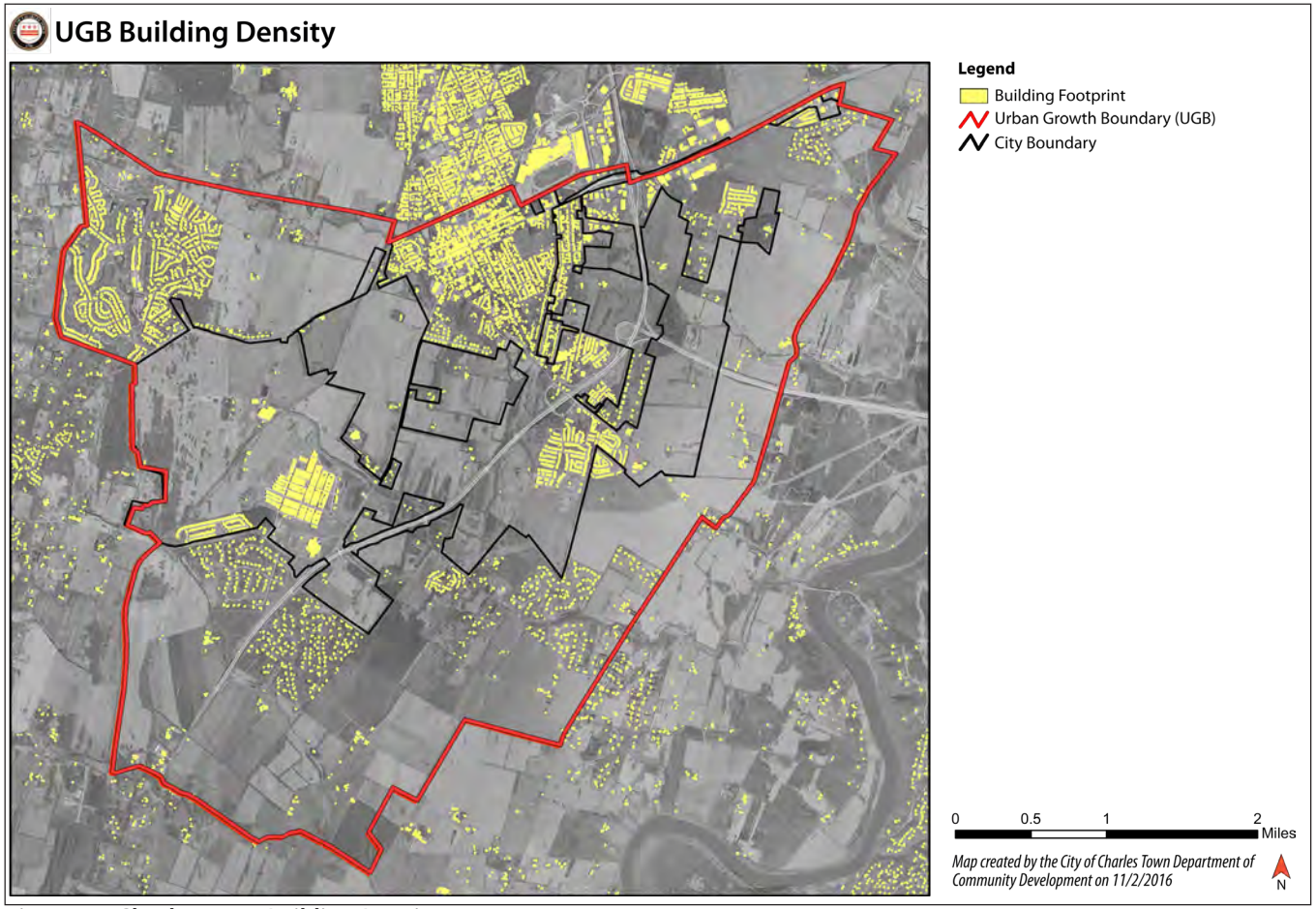


Figure 16: Charles Town Building Density
Source: Jefferson County GIS

In addition to unplanned land development, the City's annexation policy has led to the inconsistent provision of utilities within the UGB. While most properties located within the City limits are served by the Charles Town Utility Board's public sewer and water systems, there are several neighborhoods located within Charles Town and the UGB serviced by the Jefferson County Public Service District. Utility rates across Jefferson County vary significantly. Charles Town and Ranson are currently attempting to equalize utility rates for customers by proposing an asset acquisition for utility services. [3]

Additionally, the City's rapid residential growth of the 2000s underscored the need for more balanced growth whereby city services (police, utilities, and public works) were now needed well-beyond the City's traditional compact, mixed-use Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The cost of these services is paid through the City's revenue sources, which are comprised of taxes (including property ad valorem tax and business and occupation licenses and permits), as well as video lottery gaming from the casino. However, as casino revenues diminish, the cost of providing city services must be supported by tax or other revenues.

Strengthening Charles Town's financial position through greater economic development in both its Downtown and UGB is essential to support future growth and development. Furthermore, investing the City's finite tax dollars must also be done wisely to ensure existing infrastructure is well-maintained to avoid costly and potentially unaffordable cost burdens in the future that will ultimately weaken Charles Town's position in the regional economy and marketplace.

According to the Smart Growth Network:

> *"Paying for new infrastructure for development on the fringes of a community—while neglecting buildings and infrastructure in which the community has already invested—is not fiscally prudent, but it is often how communities grow. Increasingly, however, communities are realizing that this approach undermines their efforts to strengthen downtowns and improve existing infrastructure."*

As such, there needs to be a symbiotic relationship between the Downtown, older neighborhood core, and new developments where neither one is forfeited at the expense of the other.

Cost of Community Services

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association has conducted numerous cost of community services (COCS) studies that examine the relationship of municipal and school district revenue and expenses associated with various land use categories, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and farmland/open space. The revenues and costs generated by each of these different land uses are entered into a formula, the outcome being expressed as a ratio, showing the tax and non-tax revenue generated by that land use compared to the expenses incurred by that land use. A ratio greater than 1.0 suggests that for every dollar of revenue collected from a given category of land, more than one dollar is spent on municipal services. A ratio less than 1.0 is read as a net profit for the municipality. Nearly all of the studies that have been undertaken show that the ratio for residential land is above 1.0, signifying that residential land results in a net drain on local government budgets. On the other hand, the ratios for the other two land use categories (commercial/industrial and farmland/open space) are usually well below 1.0, representing a net tax gain for the municipality.

Source: *Pennsylvania Land Trust Association. Cost of Community Services. http://conservationtools.org/guides/15-cost-of-community-services-studies*

3 Martinsburg Journal. "Residents experience annexation side effects."
Access online http://content.journal-news.net/?p=637676/Residents-experience-annexation-side-effects.html. December 21, 2016.

Circa 2010 – Present

Immediately following the adoption of the City's *2006 Comprehensive Plan* and realizing the need for improved land use regulations, Charles Town officials and City staff commenced drafting a new zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development standards, which were adopted in 2012. These regulations provided the City with a solid foundation to better manage its land use and development. Also, the regulations included design standards to encourage connectivity, accessibility, and mobility with the Downtown. Furthermore, the *2006 Comprehensive Plan* established the City's proposed UGB, which provides a stronger foundation for a more sustainable growth and development pattern.

According to §8-6-4a of the West Virginia Code, Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) are:
"an area around and outside the corporate limits of a municipality within which there is a sufficient supply of developable land within the boundary for at least a prospective twenty-year period of municipal growth based on demographic forecasts and the time reasonably required to effectively provide municipal services to the identified area."

During the development of the *2008 Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance*, the County and the City of Charles Town worked jointly to develop a land use planning tool referred to as the County Townscape Boundary. When the West Virginia Code was amended in 2009 to allow for the creation of UGBs, Charles Town formally requested that the County Commission approve this draft boundary as their UGB and reflect it on the County Zoning Map. The draft boundary was approved by the County Commission through the July 2011 amendment to Jefferson County Zoning and Land Development Ordinance.

The *2015 Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan* (*Envision Jefferson 2035*) establishes the County Commission's official policy on future land use as specified by the Future Land Use Guide. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide expects all future suburban and urban type uses to be located within the designated UGB areas (Charles Town and Ranson), as well as the specifically designated Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs), and preserve the remaining unincorporated areas of Jefferson County as low density rural landscapes and hamlets.

As such, the future land use and growth considerations for Charles Town must include all properties within the UGB (**Figure 17**). A general recommendation of this plan is to encourage new developments where infrastructure exists and better coordinate any significant land use changes with property owners and the general public, particularly within the UGB. Specific strategies for future land use will be addressed in later sections.

Charles Town's Annexation Policy Purpose Statement

"To guide annexation decisions in a manner that preserves the character of the community, the quality of life of its citizens, and the fiscal health of the locality. Charles Town's vision is to create a dynamic City with a logical growth boundary that defines a designated growth zone for Jefferson County, a greenbelt of protected land at the boundary, and well-designed neighborhoods and business areas within the boundary that enhance the established character of the community. This policy provides guidance to citizens, landowners, developers, and other local government officials in Jefferson County on the considerations that will guide and govern Charles Town annexation decisions."

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Charles Town Urban Growth Boundary

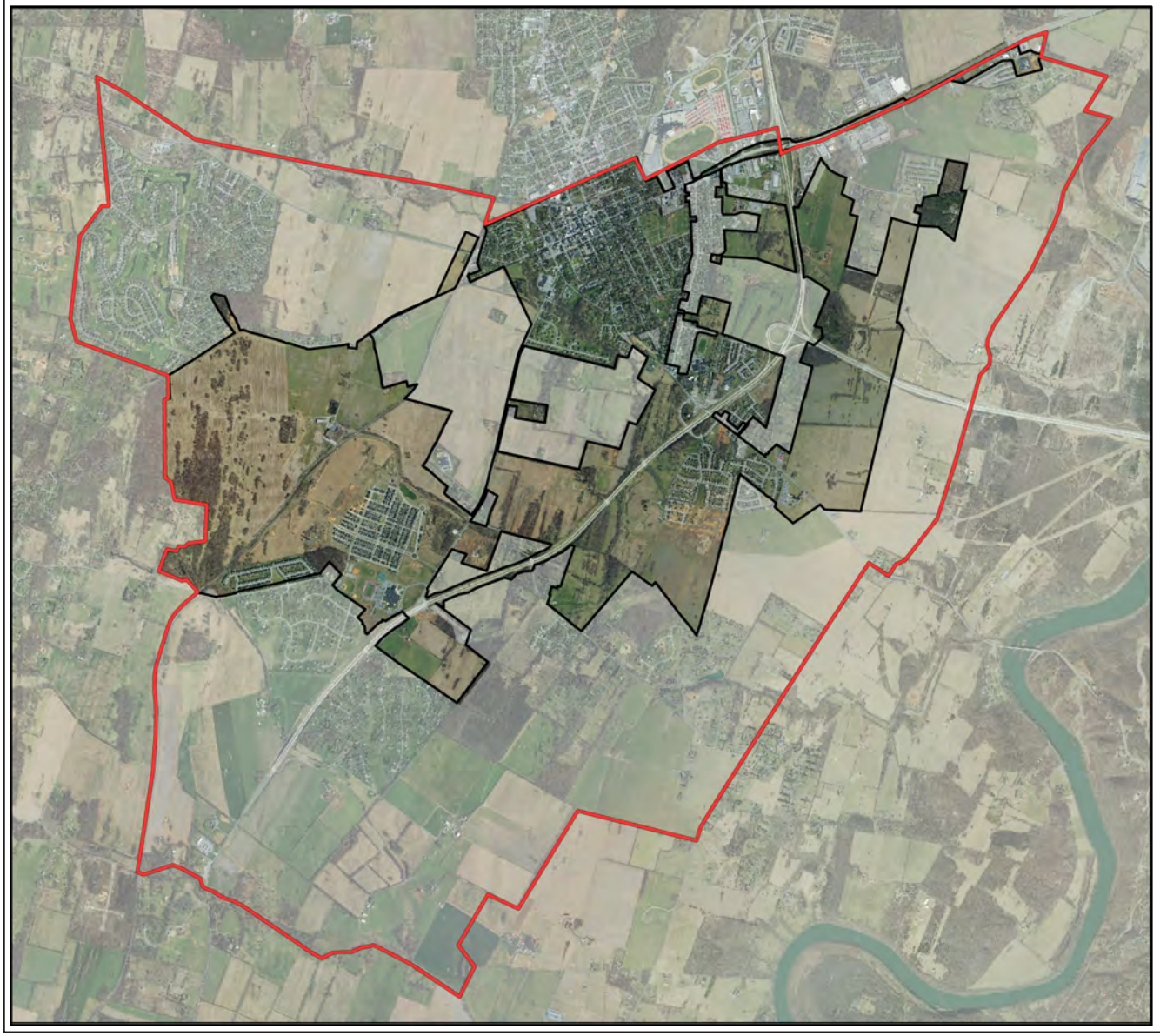


Figure 17: Charles Town Urban Growth Boundary
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

Existing Land Use Planning and Regulatory Environment

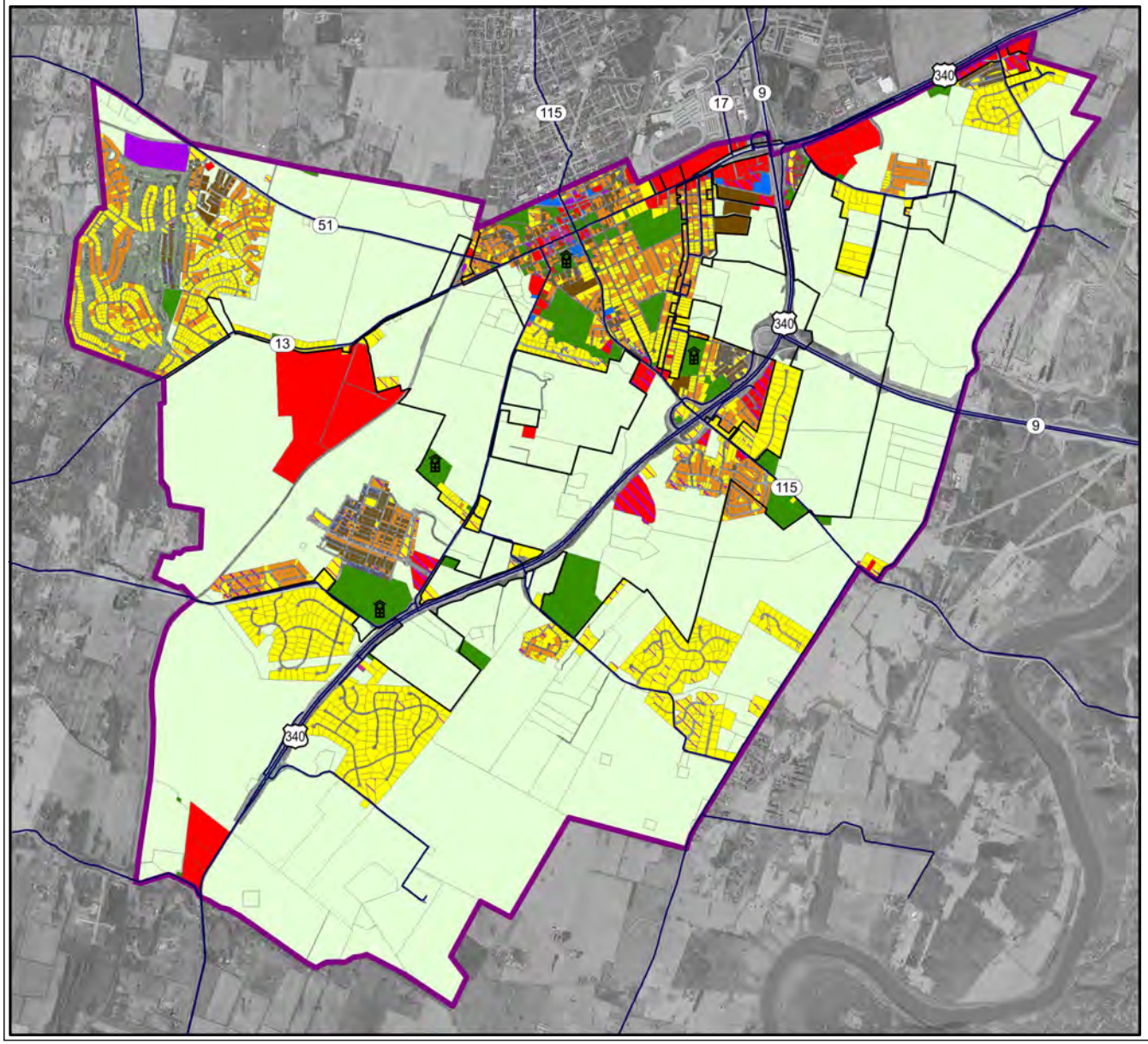
Existing Land Use and Zoning

Defining and mapping Charles Town's existing land uses and growth patterns is also essential to further understand the specific types of uses comprising Charles Town's urban transect and to determine its future land use and growth management policies. For the area contained within the City's UGB, existing land uses have been inventoried using both digital aerial imagery and windshield survey techniques, and were categorized based on the classification system depicted in **Figure 18** and shown in **Table 4**. These land use types are found in almost every transect zone, which are discussed in more detail on page 56. However, their densities and intensities vary depending upon their location. For example, agriculture and open spaces dominate the T1 Natural and T2 Rural zones, while the highest concentrations of residential uses occur in the City's T3 – T6 zones (Suburban, General Urban, Urban Center and Urban Core zones, respectively) with increasing density accordingly.

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Rural/Agriculture	8,010	72.0%
Low Density Residential	1,106	9.9%
Medium Density Residential	342	3.1%
High Density Residential	143	1.3%
Mixed Residential/Commercial	7	0.1%
Golf Course	170	1.5%
Commercial	597	5.4%
Office	22	0.2%
Industrial	36	0.3%
Public/Quasi Public Land	353	3.2%
Vacant	342	3.1%
TOTAL	**11,128**	**100%**

Table 4: City of Charles Town UGB Existing Land Use
Source: City of Charles Town 2016

UGB Existing Land Use



Existing Land Use Classifications

- Industrial
- Industrial Vacant
- Commercial
- Commercial Vacant
- Office Building
- Mixed Residential / Commercial
- High Density Residential
- High Density Residential Vacant
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential Vacant
- Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential Vacant
- Rural / Agriculture
- Golf Course
- Public / Quasi Public Land

Additional Map Elements

- Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- City Boundary
- Public School

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development on 11/2/2016

N

Figure 18: UGB Existing Land Use
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

As noted previously, there is land within the City's UGB that is under the jurisdiction of the county. The result is that there are two different governing bodies planning for development within the UGB. As such, there are two Zoning Ordinances regulating land development within the City's UGB. The *City of Charles Town Zoning Ordinance* and *Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance*. This multi-jurisdictional patch work has resulted in both governing bodies having their own distinct zoning districts, each with their own guidelines for approved uses, bulk and area regulations, and parking standards.

Figures 19 and 20 on the following pages depict the existing City and county zoning regulations governing land uses area within the UGB. In **Figure 19**, over 80 percent of the City's jurisdictional land area is residentially zoned, and approximately 79 percent of this area is zoned for Neighborhood Residential. The remaining 15 percent of land is composed of General and Neighborhood Commercial (12 percent) and Old Town Mixed Use Commercial (3 percent). In **Figure 20**, county zoned lands within the UGB are largely zoned Rural and Residential Growth representing 46% and 35%, respectively). As shown in **Table 5**, over 51 percent of the combined City and county lands within the UGB are zoned for residential uses while less than one third (31.2 percent) of the total UGB area is zoned for rural/agriculture uses.

Zoning	Acreage	Percentage
Rural (county)	3,431.56	31.2%
Public/Quasi-Public (county)	73.84	0.67%
Residential (city)	3,044.52	27.65%
Residential (county)	2,604.83	23.66%
Commercial (city)	561.80	5.10%
Industrial/Commercial (county)	1,294.52	11.75%
TOTAL	**11,011.07**	**100%**

Table 5: Zoning Classifications (City and County) within the UGB
Source: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

This update to the Comprehensive Plan did not occur in a vacuum. Many previously completed and ongoing planning efforts have laid the groundwork for the City as it works towards its unified future vision. The Plans reviewed in this section come from a variety of sources and represent the local and regional building blocks to be leveraged for managing future growth.

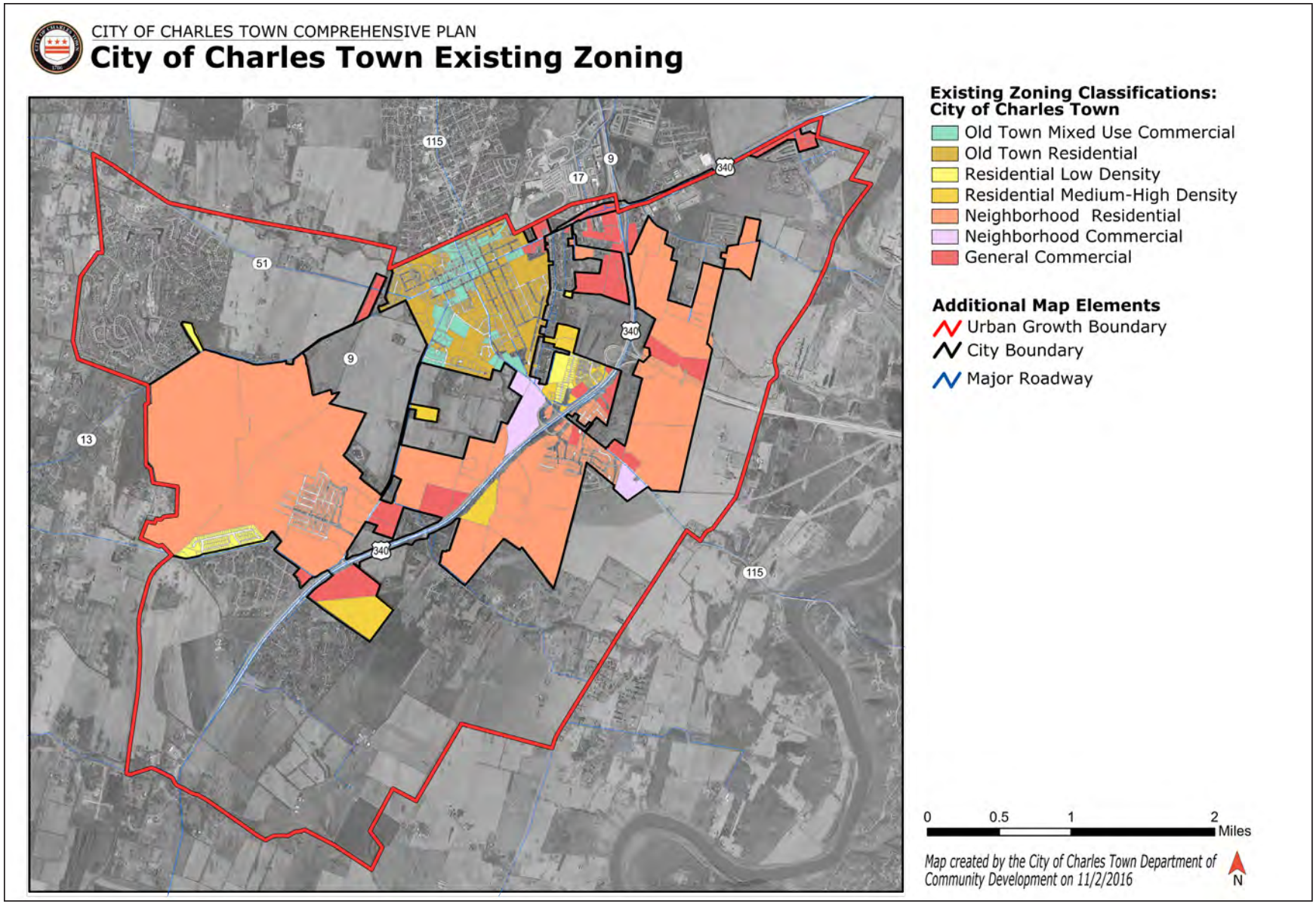


Figure 19: City of Charles Town Existing Zoning
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

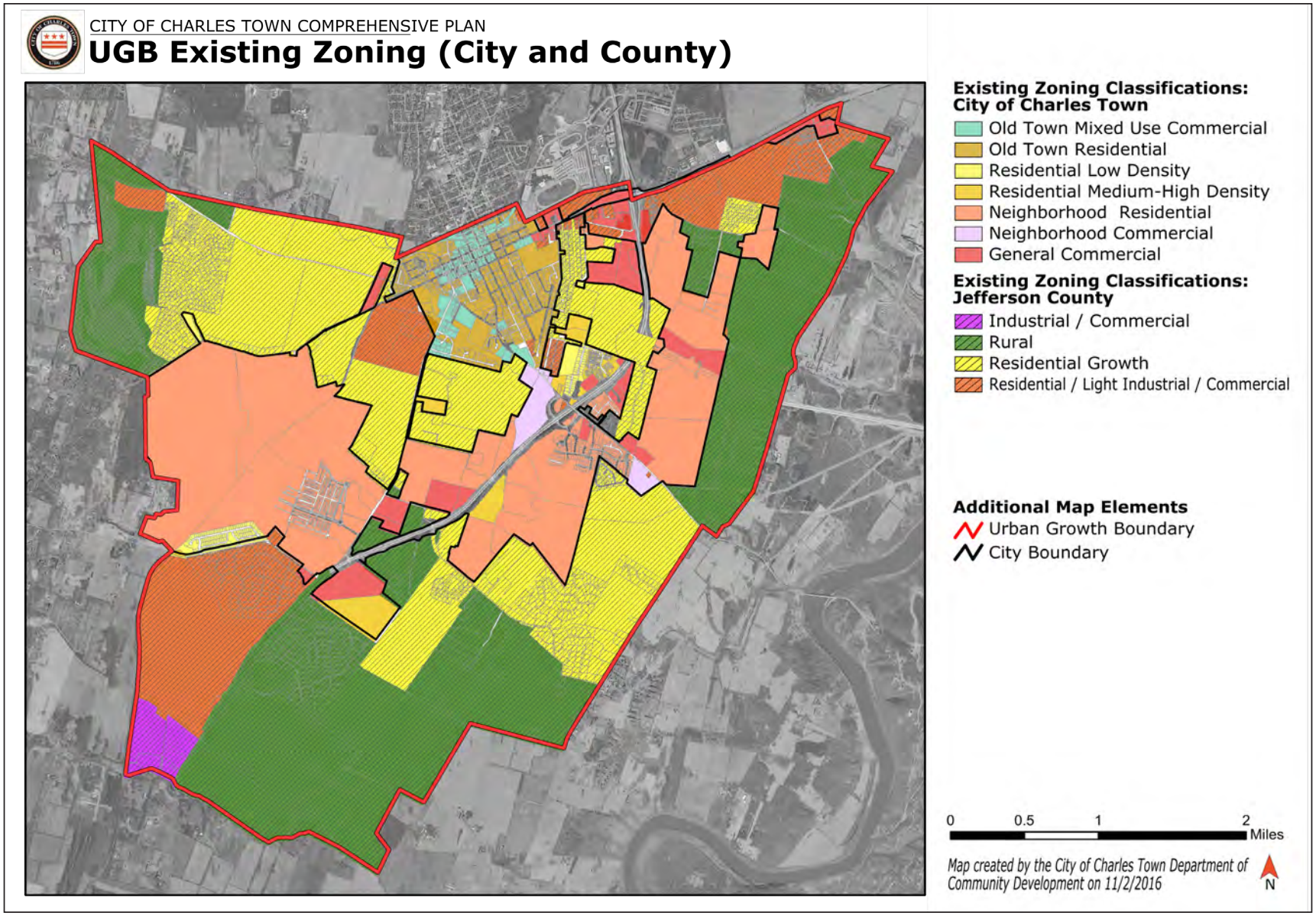


Figure 20: UGB Existing Zoning (City and County)
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

In 2012, Charles Town enacted its very first *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)*, which establishes the City's standards for the subdivision and physical development of land within the City's legal jurisdiction. The SALDO defines the design standards that private land owners and developers must follow when making physical improvements to property including public streets and roadways, parking lots, utilities, stormwater management facilities, sidewalks and trails, and lighting among physical elements associated with residential and non-residential development. The Subdivision Ordinance is a regulatory tool that determines how the community will look as it develops.

Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan

In 2015, Jefferson County approved the *Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide* [4]. Many of the Plan goals, objectives, and implementation strategies align with Charles Town's desire to prioritize infill development and redevelopment, increase the density of development, and adaptively reuse existing buildings to better utilize existing land resources. Further, the 2035 County Plan recognizes the disconnect between Downtown urban centers and the rural areas that surround them.

Envision 2035 addresses this disconnect in detail:

> *"Due to annexation and changes in building practices across our Country since World War II, there is less delineation between downtown areas and the rural areas of the community. This is due to suburban residential and highway commercial development patterns with individual access and parking along major corridors leading from traditional downtowns. With the approval of Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and Preferred Growth Areas (PGA) as a part of Envision Jefferson 2035,* ***an opportunity exists to work with the municipalities to create and implement a series of design principles that reflect the nature of the existing communities, while ensuring an appropriate transition between town and country inside the UGBs and PGAs****."*

With the adoption of the Charles Town UGB in 2010, the City confirmed its leading role in proactively and intelligently planning within a designated growth area.

City of Ranson 2012 Comprehensive Plan

In 2012, the City of Ranson adopted a new comprehensive plan that set a vision to "*Maintain the quality of life and the community for the citizens within the Urban Growth Boundary of the City of Ranson by enhancing development, revitalizing 'Downtown Ranson,' recognizing and protecting the natural resources, encouraging economic growth, and providing new community facilities.*" The plan sets priorities to focus on infill development over outward expansion and defines specific growth sectors within its UGB and preservation of rural areas that include villages and hamlets on the fringes of the UGB. This future land use strategy is consistent with Charles Town's future land use presented in this plan.

4 http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-plan

Charles Town West End Master Plan

The *West End Master Plan* was initiated in 2015 primarily to address viable reuse options for several of the City's key brownfield properties located within the West End neighborhood. In order to determine the best reuse strategies for the targeted brownfield sites, an effort that looked at the larger context was required. The Plan considered the needs of the entire West End neighborhood, as well as specific opportunities for the Evitts Run corridor and portions of the Downtown. The Plan integrates land use, transportation, and economic development elements to create a small area plan and brownfield reuse strategy.

The most significant aspects of the Plan include:

- addressing brownfields through the creation of parks and greenways;
- making key infrastructure improvements, including complete street upgrades and integrated stormwater management techniques; and
- promoting economic development through infill housing, suburban retrofitting, and existing historic resources.

More information regarding the *West End Master Plan* can be found in this Plan in the Downtown Charles Town Section.

"Parks, natural areas, and scenic landscapes also have great economic value. Protected open space increases the property values of nearby homes and attracts tourism and recreation. Working lands like farms and ranches support local economies, strengthen the tax base, and provide food. Preserving and restoring environmentally important areas such as wetlands helps protect drinking water from pollution, reducing the need for costly water treatment infrastructure."

Source: *Smart Growth Network*

Building Blocks for Growth and Land Use

Urban-to-Rural Transect

Defining Charles Town's urban design framework is essential to understanding its dynamic and diverse landscape that transitions from a densely built Downtown district to low density and agricultural rural areas located within the City's UGB. A geographic cross-section, or transect, is commonly used in planning to illustrate a municipality's landscape. This transect shows the built environment (e.g., building) and physical elements supporting a community's population and economy. Defining a community's transect helps municipal leaders understand current landscape patterns and provides a framework to plan for and guide future land uses ranging from Natural (Transect Zone 1, T1) to Urban Core (Transect Zone 6, T6). A template transect is illustrated in **Figure 21** below. **Figure 22** depicts Charles Town's transect extending from its T1 Natural Zone to its T6 Urban Zone.



T-1 Natural: T-1 Zone consists of lands approximating or reverting to a wilderness condition, including lands unsuitable for settlement due to topography, hydrology or vegetation.

General Character: Natural landscape with some agricultural use
Building Placement: Not applicable
Frontage Types: Not applicable
Typical Building Height: Not applicable
Type of Civic Space: Parks, greenways



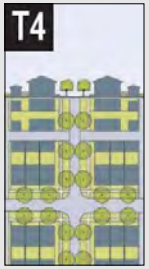
T-2 Rural: T-2 Zone consists of sparsely settled lands in open or cultivated states. These include woodland, agricultural land, grassland, and irrigable desert. Typical buildings are farmhouses, agricultural buildings, cabins, and villas.

General Character: Primarily agricultural with woodland & wetland and scattered buildings
Building Placement: Variable setbacks
Frontage Types: Not applicable
Typical Building Height: 1- to 2-story
Type of Civic Space: Parks, greenways



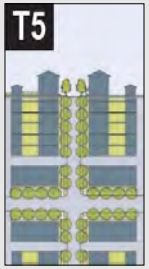
T-3 Suburban: T-3 Zone consists of low density residential areas, adjacent to higher zones that have some mixed use. Home occupations and outbuildings are allowed. Planting is naturalistic and setbacks are relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions.

General Character: Lawns and landscaped yards surrounding detached single-family houses; pedestrians occasionally
Building Placement: Large and variable front and side yard setbacks
Frontage Types: Porches, fences, naturalistic tree planting
Typical Building Height: 1- to 2-story with some 3-story
Type of Civic Space: Parks, greenways



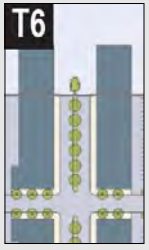
T-4 General Urban: T-4 Zone consists of a mixed use but primarily residential urban fabric. It may have a wide range of building types. Setbacks and landscaping are variable. Streets with curbs and sidewalks define medium-sized blocks.

General Character: Mix of houses, townhouses and small apartment buildings with scattered commercial activity; balance between landscape and buildings; presence of pedestrians
Building Placement: Shallow to medium front and side yard setbacks
Frontage Types: Porches, fences, dooryards
Typical Building Height: 2- to 3-story with a few taller mixed use buildings
Type of Civic Space: Squares, greens



T-5 Urban Center: T-5 Zone consists of higher density mixed use buildings that accommodate retail, offices, rowhouses and apartments. It has a tight network of streets, with wide sidewalks, street tree planting and buildings set close to the sidewalks.

General Character: Shops mixed with townhouses, larger apartments, offices, work place and civic buildings; predominantly attached buildings; substantial pedestrian activity
Building Placement: Shallow setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street defining a street wall
Frontage Types: Stoops, shopfronts, galleries
Typical Building Height: 2- to 5-story with some variation
Type of Civic Space: Parks, plazas, and squares, median landscaping



T-6 Urban Core: T-6 Zone consists of the highest density and height, with the greatest variety of uses, and civic buildings of regional importance. It may have larger blocks; streets have street tree planting and buildings are set close to wide sidewalks. Typically only large towns and cities have an Urban Core Zone.

General Character: Medium to high-density mixed use buildings, entertainment, civic and cultural uses. Attached buildings forming a continuous street wall; highest pedestrian and transit activity.
Building Placement: Shallow setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street defining a street wall
Frontage Types: Stoops, dooryards, shopfronts, galleries and arcades
Typical Building Height: 4-plus story with a few shorter buildings
Type of Civic Space: Parks, plazas, and squares, median landscaping

Figure 21: Urban-to-Rural Transect Zone Descriptions
Sources: SmartCode Version 9.2



Figure 22: Charles Town Transect
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

SmartCode

To support the concept of the rural-to-urban transect, SmartCode is a zoning tool that is used to determine types of land development patterns that should occur within each transect. SmartCode is a form-based code that encourages sustainable development through a mix of uses, diverse housing options at all income levels, open space preservation, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that reduce automobile dependency. In other words, SmartCode focuses more on the form, or physical style or look, of a new development or existing neighborhood rather than strictly on use.

A Place for Everything

The SmartCode and transect seeks to rectify the inappropriate intermixing of rural and urban elements known as sprawl. For example, the transect eliminates the "urbanizing of the rural," such as office towers in an otherwise rural environment that is anticipated to remain rural. Equally damaging, the "ruralizing of the urban" is also eliminated, such as the undefined, vacant open space in the urban core.

Source: *DPZ & Co.*

Conventional zoning historically has focused on use, which has led to separate building developments for residential, industrial, retail and commercial, and office. Zoning systems across the nation have, accordingly, also resulted in a car-dependent culture and land-consuming sprawl. The principals of SmartCode, outlined below, emphasize a new, form-based approach to land development that emphasizes walkability and complete neighborhoods to reduce sprawl.

SmartCode Overview

In total, SmartCode has six transect zones (T-zones) that progress from rural areas (T1) to urban areas (T6). The zones ensure that neighborhoods offers a full diversity of building types, transportation options, and civic spaces. Zoning categories are based on whether an area's character is urban or rural, or somewhere in-between. In accordance, land use patterns are based on the proper location of development along the rural-to-urban transect. SmartCode emphasizes co-locating multiple uses to create walkable neighborhoods and emphasizes the design of buildings. SmartCode takes into consideration the sustainability of infrastructure. For example, SmartCode seeks to minimize new development in rural zones to avoid costly public water and sewer to be extended to those locations.

SmartCode as an Overlay Option

From a municipal planning perspective, SmartCode streamlines zoning, subdivision ordinances, urban design standards, and the infrastructure requirements development process. This results in a predictable and timely land development process for new construction, ultimately assisting the development community in the approval process. It is important to remember, however, that the SmartCode model is not exclusively an off the shelf product that is ready to go for adoption. The codes and standards for the transects must be calibrated to each community to reflect local character and form.

One way to implement the SmartCode is to have the code as an overlay across the whole city. This would allow the development community to use the SmartCode overlay as an option and not a requirement (much the same way a Planned Unit Development proposal is an optional overlay). It would allow property owners to retain their existing zoning designations. As described above, the ordinance would feature transect zones and form-based development regulations. Various incentives could be consolidated under the new code.

Applying SmartCode to Charles Town

To guide future land use planning for the City of Charles Town, SmartCode "Community Types" have been applied to the UGB areas. The intent of these Community Types is to define land use, density, streets, parks types, and patterns for four distinct community development pattern types.

The four community types are based on the rural-to-urban transect, identified for Charles Town.

- Old Town
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
- Gateway
- Hamlet

These Community Types are characterized in the following sections and their respective density and intensity features are overlain on Charles Town's 10- and 25-year future land use scenarios as introduced and described in the Future Land Use Plan for Charles Town.

Old Town Charles Town

The Old Town pattern recognizes and preserves the existing Downtown and contiguous residential neighborhoods within the City characterized as having smaller lots, smaller setbacks, traditional grid street pattern and access by street or alley. The intent of preserving this pattern is to further enhance business vitality, increase walkability and transit accessibility, provide employment opportunities for residents close to home, and ensure the appearance and effects of buildings and uses are harmonious with the traditional neighborhood character of the area.

- **Transportation:** Direct access to these more urban neighborhoods is via well-connected thoroughfares of various street types, and specifically anchored by a main street corridor with sidewalks, curbs, and pedestrian-scaled lighting and signage.
- **Parks:** Parks, including 'Plazas,' are a civic space designed for public use and commercial activities in the more urban Transect Zones. These are generally paved and spatially defined by building frontages when in urban transect areas. 'Squares,' are also a civic space, and are located at an intersection of important streets and designed for unstructured recreation and civic purposes.
- **Parking:** Parking lots should be designed as plazas with the paving not as detailed as typical parking lots.
- **Built Form:** The Old Town development pattern includes mostly smaller lots with freestanding and attached buildings forming complete neighborhoods as found in historic Charles Town. The entire range of housing is found here, these includes large and small homes set close to streets and parkways to small lots with detached homes and attached homes and businesses.

Figure 23 illustrates the development characteristics of Old Town.



Figure 23: Old Town Charles Town Development Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

Also known as Neighborhood Units, these are complete, freestanding neighborhoods in the countryside. Located adjacent to major transportation corridors, these are less urban in character than Old Town Charles Town, which is an assemblage of several neighborhoods sharing a substantial center and Main Street. **Figure 24** illustrates the TND development characteristics.

- **Transportation:** Within the TND communities, the transportation network is an interconnected system comprised of boulevards, avenues, neighborhood streets, and alleys with pedestrian and other motorized and non-motorized transportation linkages that include sidewalks and defined pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and public transportation bus stops.
- **Parks and Greenspace:** Park types include sports fields, which are open areas specifically designed and equipped for large-scale structured recreation. Such fields should be confined to the edges of neighborhoods, as their size is disruptive to the fine-grained network. Playgrounds for children can be incorporated into greenspace without disruption to the urban fabric. Greenspace is a medium-sized public space available for unstructured recreation, circumscribed by building facades, its landscape consisting of grassy areas and trees, naturalistically disposed and requiring only limited maintenance.
- **Built Form:** This development pattern includes a mix of attached, small, and large lots with both freestanding and attached buildings from the edge to the center. The mix of housing includes a few large, private homes setback very far from roads to more detached and attached buildings in the more urban centers on streets with alleys. These are assembled form a range of housing from fewer multiple-acre lots to more small lot detached and attached homes.

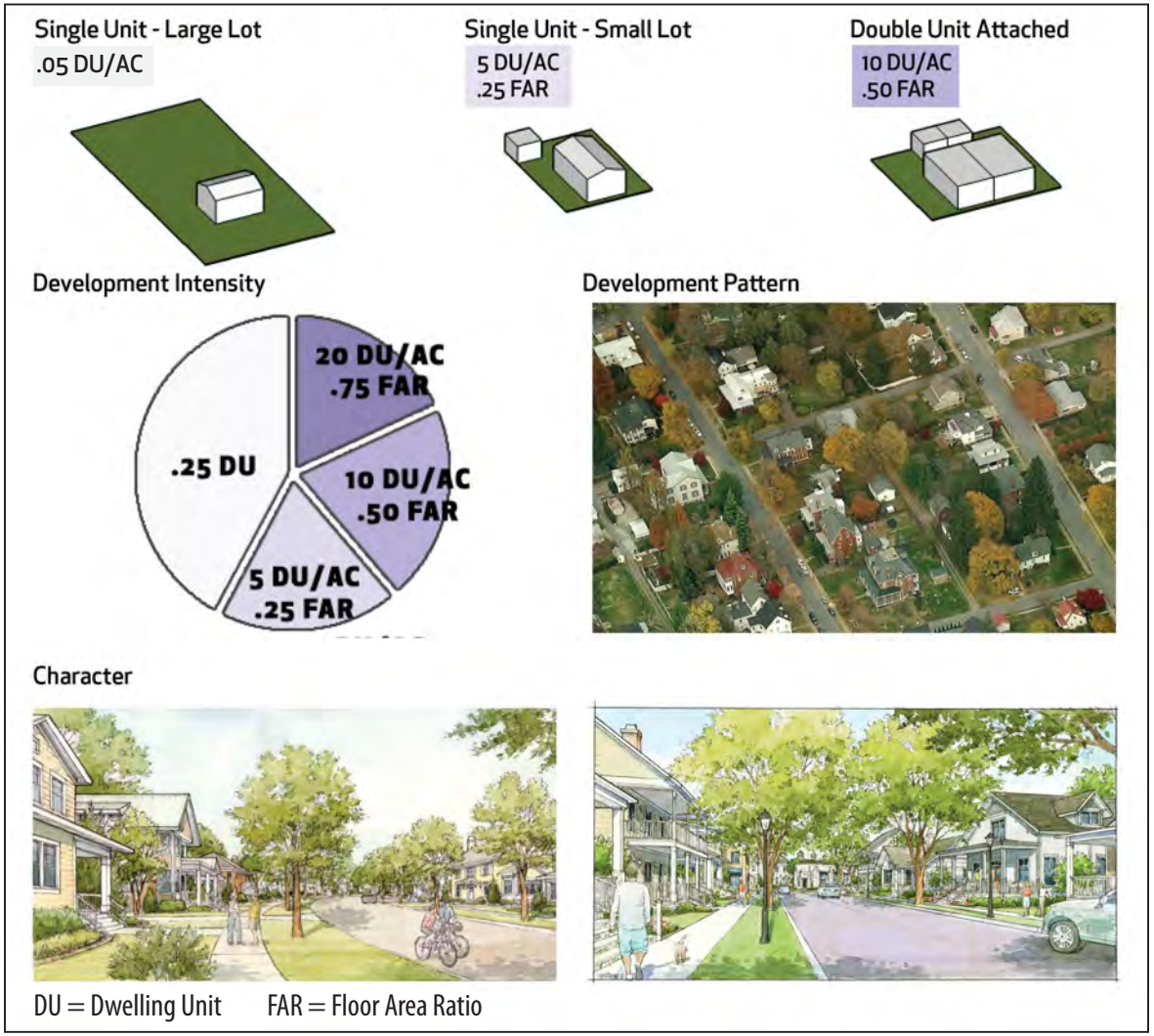


Figure 24: TND Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

Gateways

Also similar to the patterns and character of Old Charles Town, Gateways are an assemblage of several neighborhoods sharing or extending from a new substantial development center adjacent to the traditionally identified core of Charles Town. Its neighborhood structure has a strong core supported by the surrounding region.

Gateways are envisioned to be located along the City's main thoroughfares (e.g. Route 340, Augustine Avenue, etc.) serving as entry points to the City's Old Town area. Gateways provide the initial image and impression of the City and, therefore, should be sensitively designed to uphold and reinforce Charles Town's small town, historic character. Additionally, Gateways design should provide land use and access management controls to ensure smooth transitions between community types and mitigate traffic congestion issues that are typical of suburban, auto-oriented commercial developments located along highways. **Figure 25** illustrates the Gateway development characteristics and **Figure 26** depicts example gateway community designs.

- **Transportation:** Within Gateways thoroughfare types include parkways, streets, and boulevards, designed for high vehicular capacity and equipped with slip roads buffering sidewalks and buildings. Also, avenues act as a short distance connectors between communities and are usually contain landscaped medians and formal rows of trees. Gateways should also provide wayfinding and other directional and orientation information to the motorist to provide a sense of arrival to the community and guide their way into the Downtown.
- **Built Form:** The Gateway development pattern includes mostly smaller lots with freestanding and attached buildings forming complete neighborhoods as found in historic Charles Town. The entire range of housing is found here, this includes large and small homes set close to streets and parkways to small lots with detached homes and attached homes and businesses.

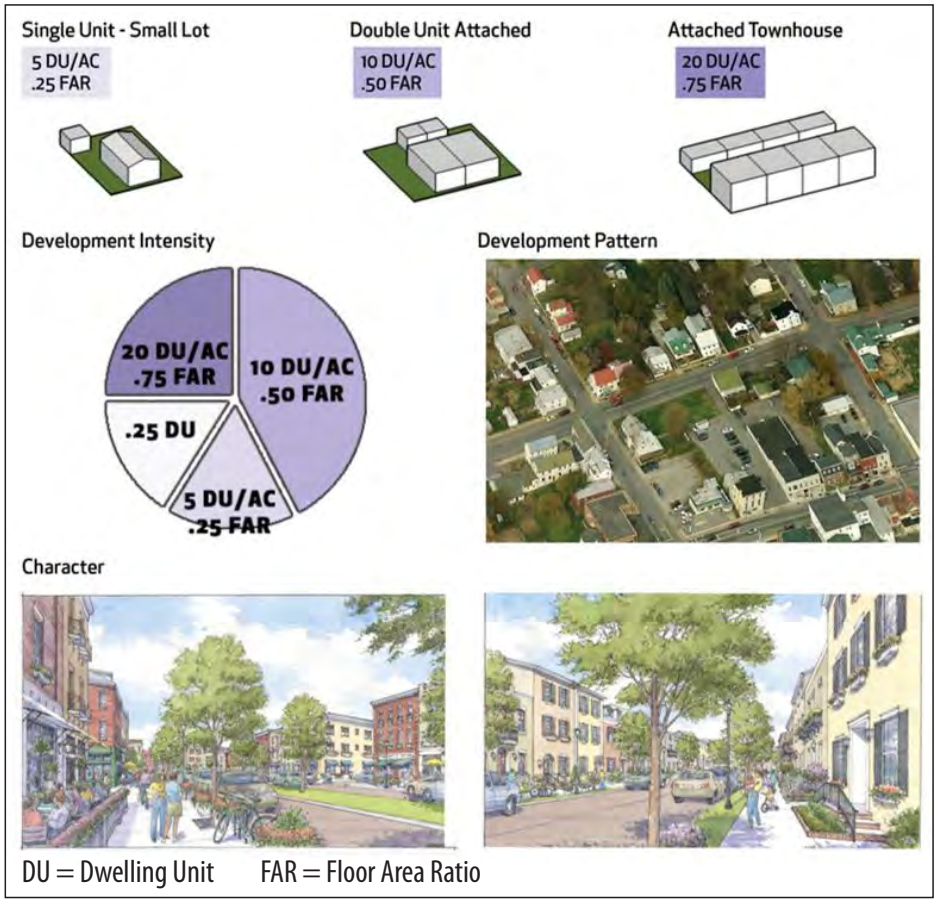


Figure 25: Gateway Development Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

Gateway Community Design Example 1



The multiway boulevard segment unifies historic blocks on the east with new infill developments on the west.

Gateway Community Design Example 2



Mixed use commercial development fronting a boulevard.

Traditional Suburban Commercial Strip (to be avoided)



The image above is representative of a typical suburban commercial corridor along a four-lane highway. Zero design standards have led to big box commercial and out-parcel developments with vast expanses of surface parking lots have created access management issues and a severe lack of mobility and connectivity with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Figure 26: Example Gateway Community Designs
Sources: Midtown Commons Crestview Station, FTS Cities, and GoogleEarth

Hamlet

Hamlets are rural neighborhoods in the making, standing free in the countryside. Located furthest away from transportation and water and sewer connections, hamlets consist of mostly agricultural, countryside, or natural lands with a few homes and fewer businesses beyond working agriculture (see **Figure 27**).

- **Transportation:** Access to these more rural areas are mostly via thoroughfares with soft shoulders, with few lights and signs and no alleys or service lanes. Thoroughfare types include parkways, a highway designed in conjunction with naturalistic landscaping, including medians, and a road, which is a local rural and suburban thoroughfare of low-to-moderate vehicular speed and capacity.
- **Parks and Greenspace:** Open space types include grasslands and wooded lands interspersed by lineal riparian-buffered streams. These open spaces are sparsely inhabited and are uncultivated. Farmlands are an area of particular value for the cultivation of crops or the raising of livestock.
- **Greenbelts:** Greenbelts are defined as a network of interlocking open spaces that separate urbanized areas and community types. Greenbelts may contain environmental and agricultural preserves, golf courses, parks, and playing fields. Regional parks are large open areas available for recreation, usually located at a neighborhood edge, and fronted by buildings. Their landscape comprises paved paths and trails, some open lawns, trees, and open shelters, all naturalistically disposed and requiring limited maintenance.
- **Build Form:** This development pattern includes mostly very large lots with freestanding buildings surrounded by agriculture and natural lands. The mix of housing includes farmsteads, working agricultural facilities, large, private homes setback very far from roads and parkways. These elements form a range of housing from multiple-acre, to quarter-acre to very few small lot detached homes (to include farm worker housing). Agriculture-oriented commercial is low intensity that ranges from .25 lot coverage to .50 lot coverage freestanding in the landscape.

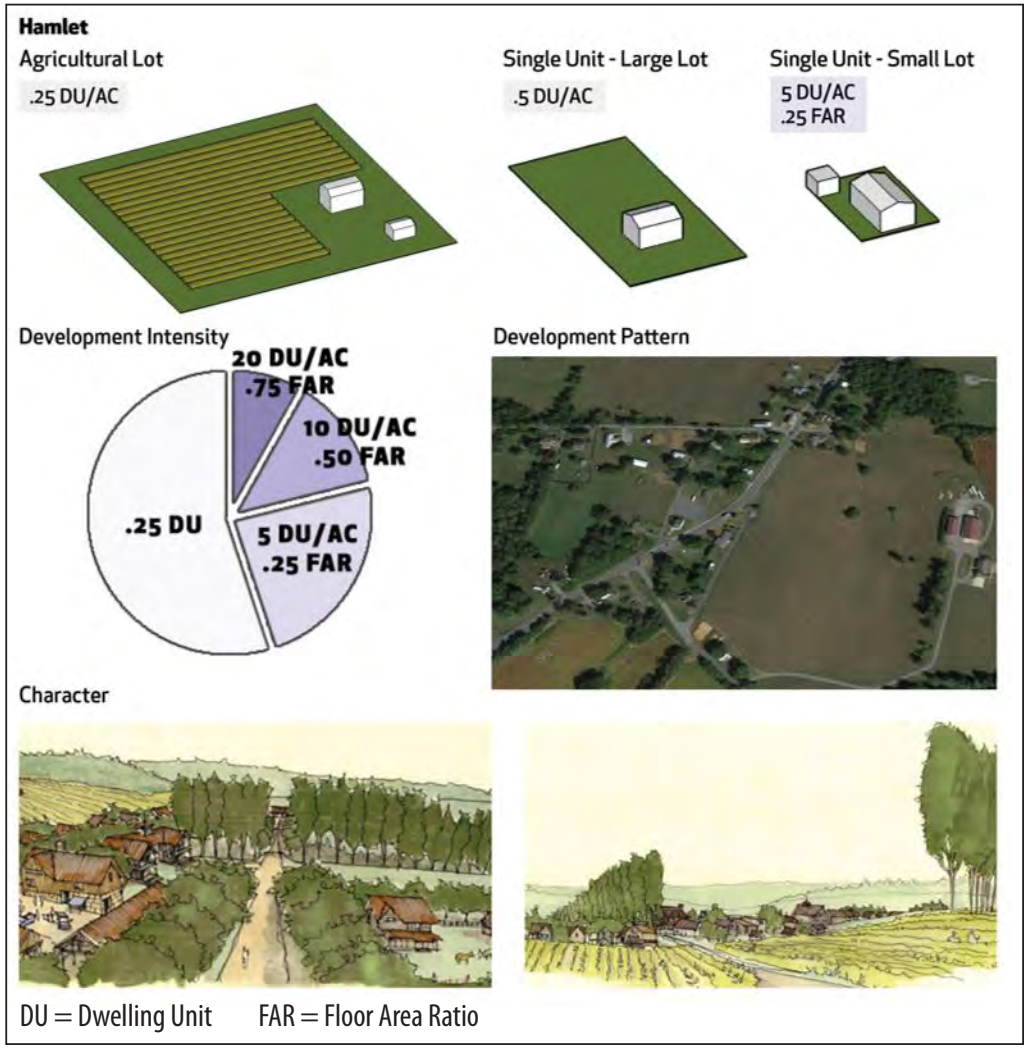


Figure 27: Hamlet Development Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

Future Land Use Plan for Charles Town

A primary component of the Charles Town Comprehensive Plan is a Future Land Use Plan, which provides a framework defining the City's future growth and development patterns, types, and intensities. Moreover, the Future Land Use Plan establishes the basis for the City's Zoning Map and the various zoning districts delineated thereon and further defined within the Zoning Ordinance.

Charles Town's Future Land Use Plan is composed of two Future Land Use Maps (FLU) depicting 10-year and 25-year growth scenarios within the UGB (**Figures 28 and 29**). The 10-Year FLU Map builds upon the City's existing land use patterns and offers a generalized guide for development and agricultural lands within its UGB. Because all land contained within an UGB is considered for future land development, the 25-Year FLU Map is a broader depiction of intended uses for the Comprehensive Plan's horizon year of 2040 and, therefore, does not include an agricultural element. Both FLU Maps are neither existing land use maps nor zoning maps, but serve as a reference for future zoning determinations.

Public Infrastructure

The Future Land Use Plan is also a key determinant of public infrastructure needs and requirements, such as roads, schools, transit, water and wastewater, and public services, such as police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS). The greater the amount of development the plan permits in a particular area, the more infrastructure and resources are required. To meet the City's growth and development needs, such infrastructure and services must be expanded and continually maintained at the taxpayers' expense. Therefore, developing a financially sustainable land use plan and growth management strategy is imperative for the City's fiscal well-being and the quality of life it provides to its residents, employers, and visitors.

Regional Coordination

Above all, Charles Town must continue to communicate with the public, Jefferson County, Jefferson County Public Service District, Jefferson County Schools, Hagerstown-Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Ranson, and other municipalities in Jefferson County. This will encourage a coordinated approach to land use planning and implementation, as well as the provision of public services and other planning needs will be achieved. This also includes, but is not limited to, the coordination of new transportation infrastructure for properties adjacent to the City and developing compatible community and economic development strategies with the City of Ranson and Jefferson County.

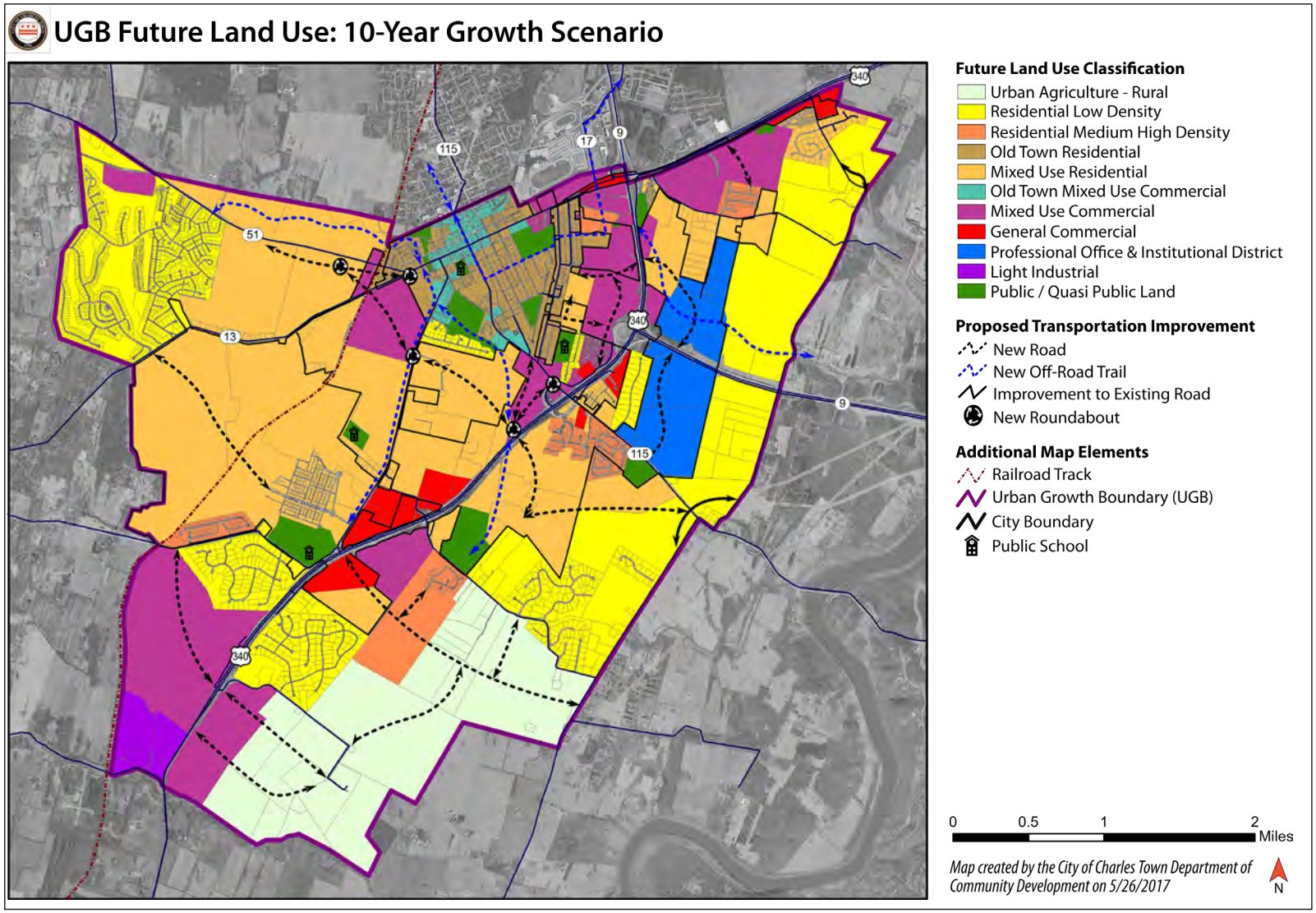


Figure 28A: UGB Future Land Use 10-Year Growth Scenario
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

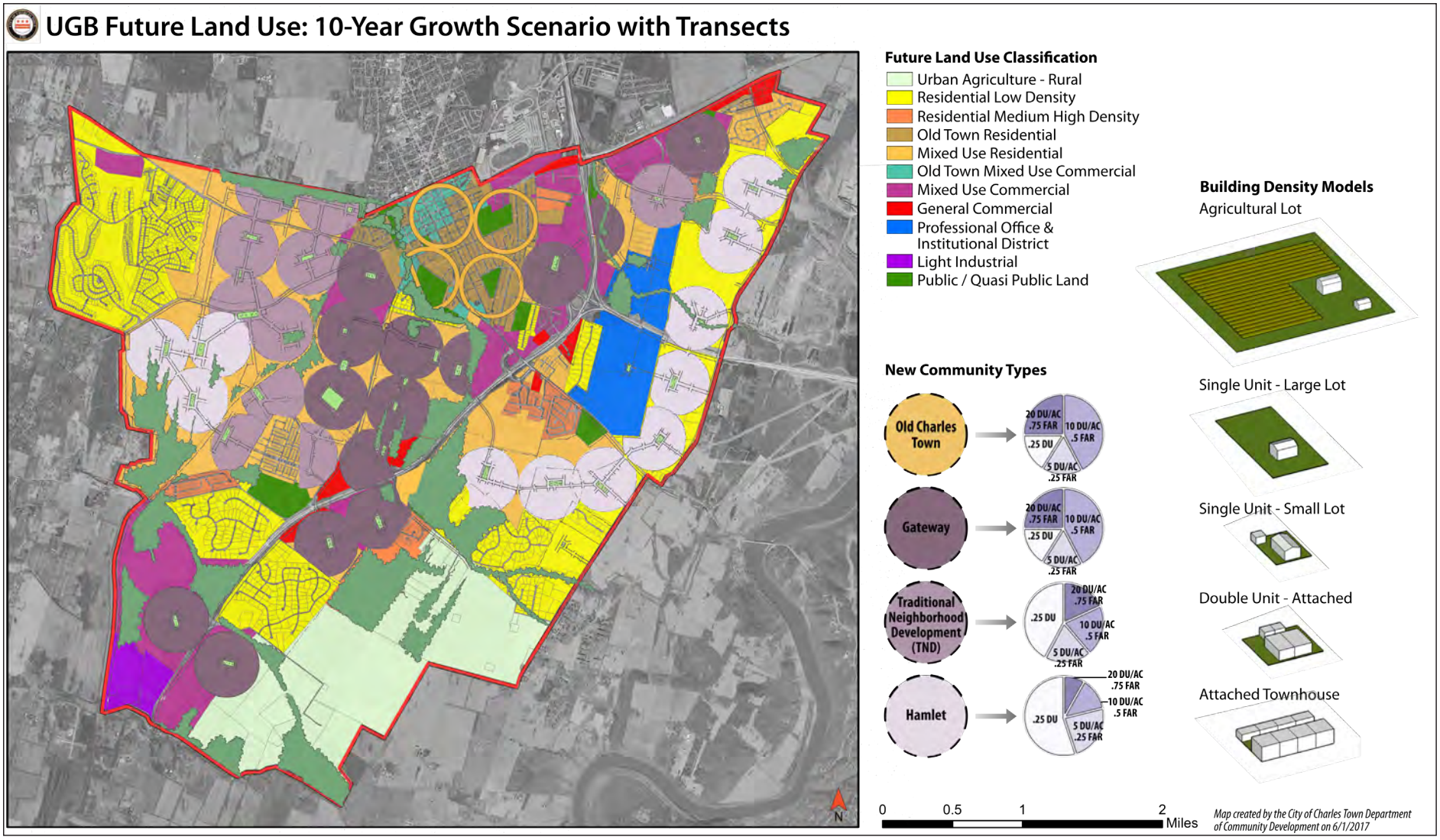


Figure 28B: UGB Future Land Use 10-Year Growth Scenario with Transect Community Types
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

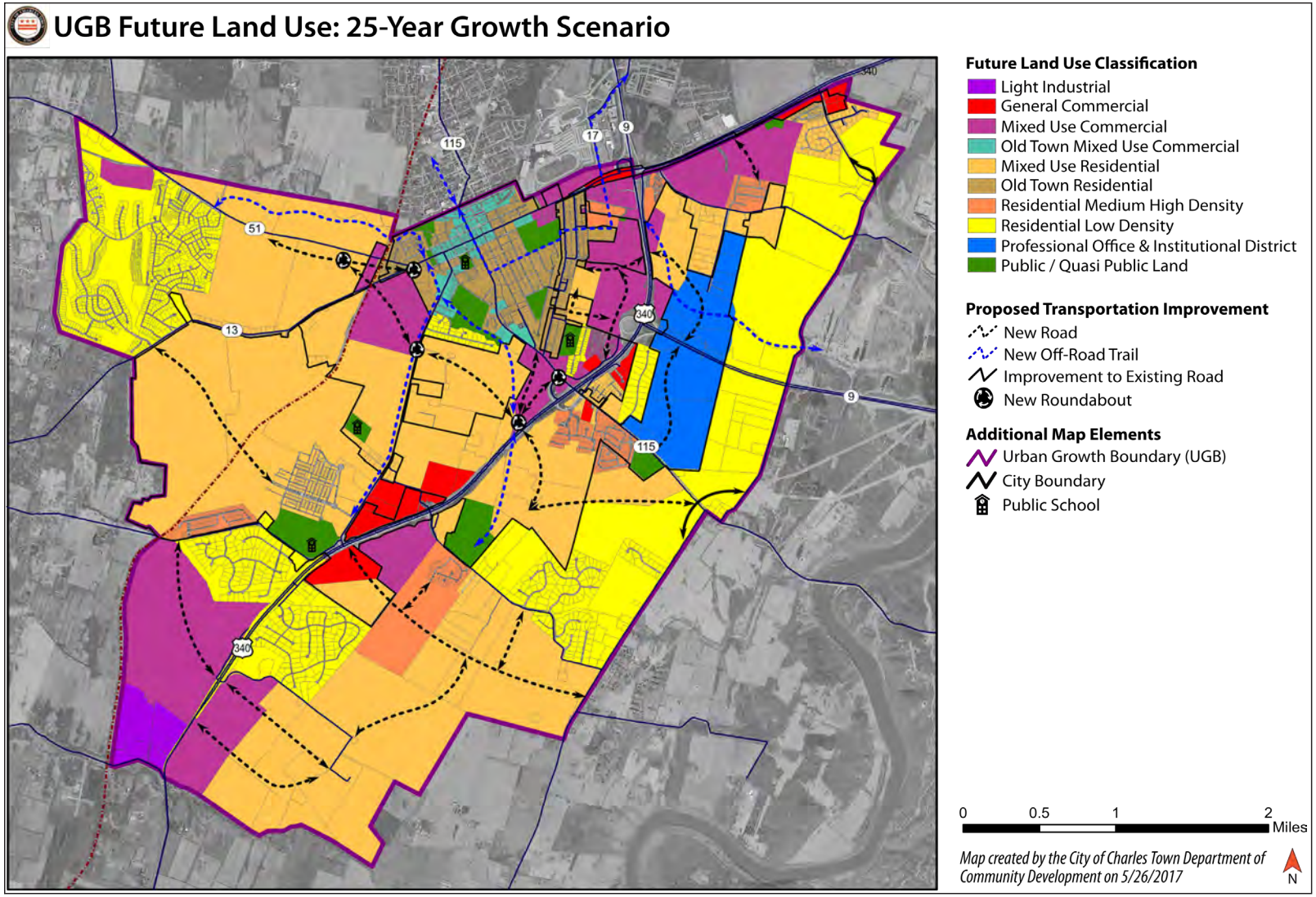


Figure 29A: UGB Future Land Use 25-Year Growth Scenario
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

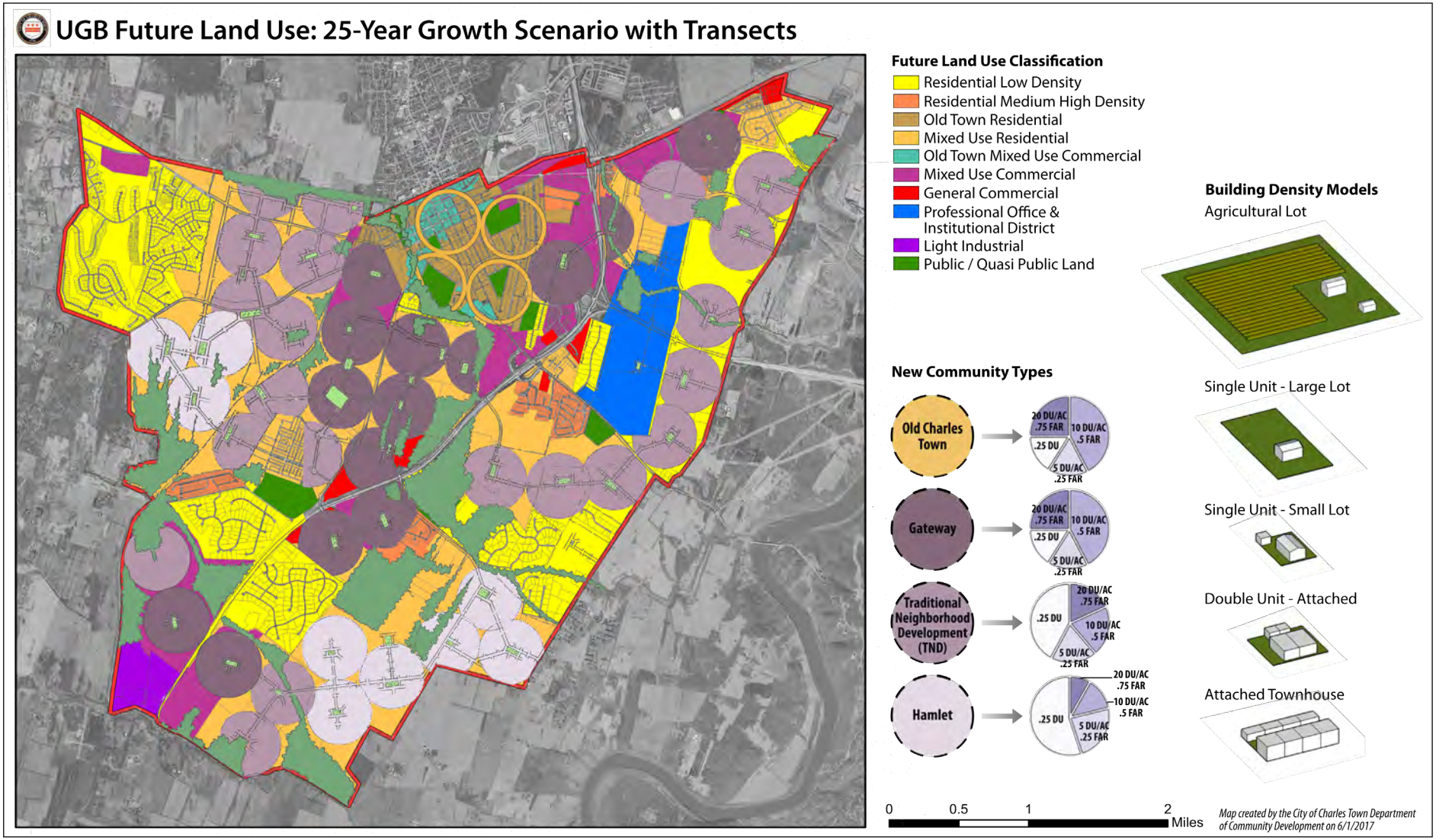


Figure 29B: UGB Future Land Use 25-Year Growth Scenario with Transect Community Types
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

Definition of Future Land Use Categories

Charles Town's Future Land Use Map contains eight color-coded districts that express policy objectives on future land uses throughout the City, as described in the following sections. Implementation of these land use categories will require amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

Agriculture

Charles Town's charming, historic Downtown and safe residential neighborhoods, coupled with its rural countryside, make the City a truly great place to live, work and play. Scenic views of its agricultural lands, rolling hillsides and mountains, and pastoral open spaces is what makes the City so inviting for people of all ages. During the public participation process for the development of this plan, the public consistently noted the small town feel and the rural surroundings were important to them. Preserving the City's agriculture and open spaces is indeed a priority going forward to not only bolster the community's small town image, but to preserve and strengthen the community's agrarian opportunities by promoting value-added agricultural and artisan entrepreneurs.

It is important to note that while the City respects the urban growth policies of the *Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan*, it also promotes and encourages agricultural land uses. To support this initiative, the City has a policy to allow traditional agriculture and to also promote urban agricultural goals.

"From 'amber waves of grain' to 'purple mountains' majesty,' natural landscapes help define the character of our nation and our communities. Whether it's a community garden in a busy neighborhood; a scenic river where people fish, kayak, or hike along the banks; or a 'pick your own strawberries' farm, people care about conserving recreational, scenic, working, and environmentally valuable lands."

Source: *Smart Growth Network*



Examples include:

- you pick operations – produce, pumpkins, tree farm, etc.;
- family activities – corn mazes, petting zoo, etc.;
- on-site farmers markets;
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA);
- equestrian activities; and
- on the farm distilleries and breweries or other value-added operations.

The City's agriculture future land use category is designed to provide for and preserve the agricultural and rural use of land, while accommodating very low-density residential development generally associated with agricultural uses. This use classification is also designed to facilitate local food production, improve community health, and provide local opportunities for agriculture-based entrepreneurship and employment. It promotes cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around the city and region. Urban agriculture involves animal husbandry, aquaculture, agroforestry, urban beekeeping, and horticulture.

The City's 10-Year Future Land Use Plan envisions the agricultural land areas located on the southern and eastern fringes of the UGB will remain in productive agriculture use. These areas lack the transportation and public sewer and water infrastructure necessary to support their immediate development and the investments borne by private developers to make such improvements will likely make any medium to high density development financially infeasible. Therefore, the City's 25-Year Future Land Use Map foresees the potential for these areas to develop as rural hamlets comprised of clustered, mixed use residential areas designed to uphold the rural, agrarian landscape and provide opportunities to value-added agriculture and artisan economic development opportunities as described previously. In this scenario, the landowner has the ability to cluster much of their density rights and retain a sizable portion of their farm land for agricultural uses.

Residential Districts

Residential Low Density

The Residential Low Density District is shown in pale yellow in the Future Land Use Maps. The areas designated as Residential Low Density are generally located along the perimeter of the UGB, farthest away from the Downtown core. These areas are generally characterized by single family houses constructed on lots typically ranging from 0.5 to 2 acres per unit. This land use type on average consists of larger single family lots with a fair amount of building separation. The purpose of this land use designation is to provide for locations for low density residential development through a variety of housing types. These locations serve as transitional areas from the City's rural and largely undeveloped areas located within its UGB. These areas could be served by private wells and septic systems. Like the agricultural future land use category, clustering of the low-density rights is also encouraged and permitted here.

Old Town Residential

The area on the Future Land Use Maps shown in light brown is designated as Old Town Residential. Properties with this future land use classification are located in the City's historic Old Town and are within close walking distance of the Downtown. The primary function of the Old Town Residential future land use is to recognize and preserve the existing older residential neighborhoods within the City that are characterized as having smaller lots, smaller setbacks, traditional grid street pattern and access by street or alley. The preservation of the Old Town residential neighborhoods are vital to promoting interaction among activities located within the entire Old Town District that includes the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial area. The purpose of such interaction is to further enhance business vitality, reduce vehicular traffic, increase access to and the use of transit services. Also, it can provide employment opportunities for residents close to home, ensure the compatibility among and between residential and Downtown Commercial Uses, and ensure the appearance and effects of buildings and uses are harmonious with the traditional neighborhood character of the area.

Mixed-Use Districts

The Future Land Use Plan supports and promotes the Smart Growth Principle of mixed land uses that are comprised of varying intensities and densities of mixed income livable communities where people choose to live, work, and play.

The plan's mixed use districts include:

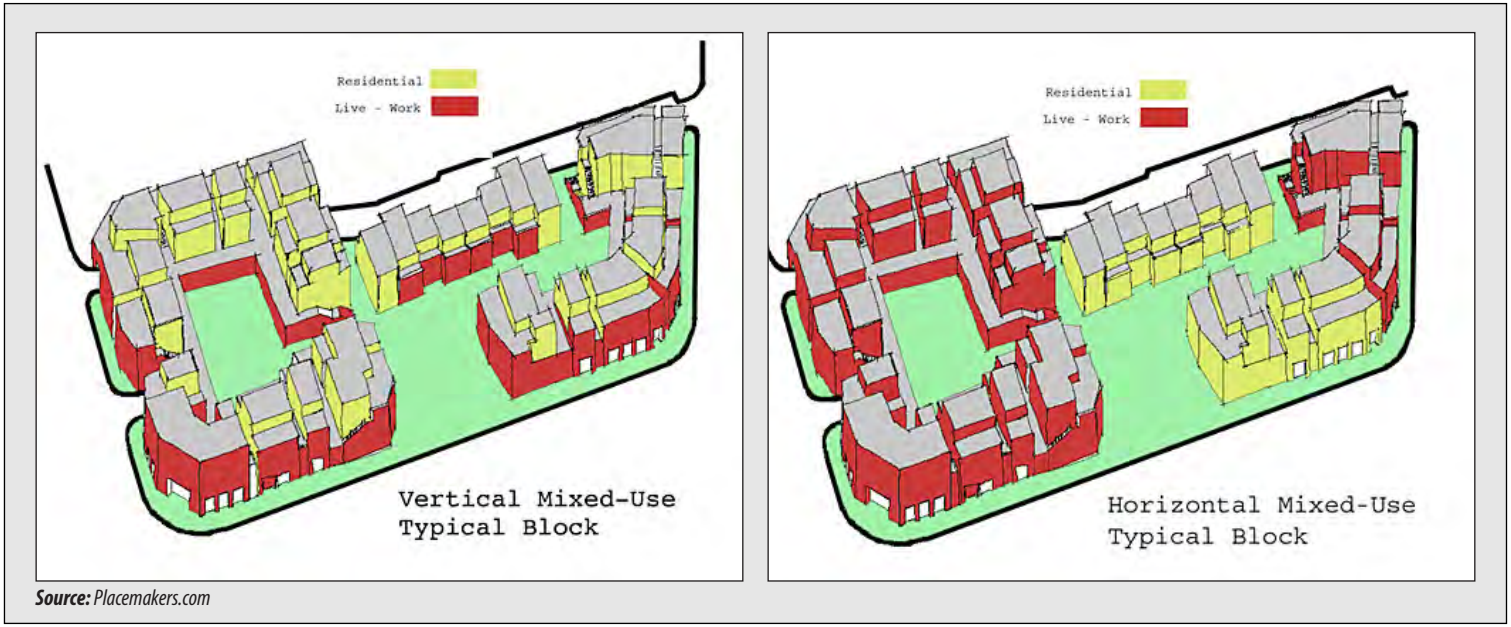
- Mixed Use Residential,
- Old Town Mixed Use Commercial, and
- Mixed Use Commercial



Source: *https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/codes-support-smart-growth-development*

Mixed Use Residential

Mixed-Use Residential Future Land Use categories are intended to provide for a mix of housing types and sizes (e.g. tiny houses), as well as related services and uses, including compatible and supporting commercial uses and office services. Regarding the mixing of uses, residential uses are predominate and non-residential uses are secondary, supporting the needs of the residential uses. Areas classified as Mixed Use Residential are a continuation of Charles Town's existing zoning category of Neighborhood Residential District and by extension, the non-residential uses would be similar to that of the Neighborhood Commercial zoning category. The Future Land Use Map envisions a higher intensity and density of uses oriented near Downtown to provide for greater walkability, accessibility, and mobility between Downtown commerce and surrounding neighborhoods.



Source: *Placemakers.com*

The City's Huntfield mixed use development is a great example of a traditional neighborhood style development that includes a range of housing types and configurations situated upon a grid street network with well-placed and designed parks and open spaces. In many ways, this is predicated upon the development pattern of Old Town Charles Town's existing residential layout. This development was a negotiated process between the original developer and the City. While it is too early to speculate, if the development continues as planned, it could be a model for the City to be emulated in other locations and could become as historically notable as prior plans shown previously. Encouraging and promoting this type of residential development and providing multimodal connections to Downtown and neighboring schools, parks, and trails will increase the City's livability and vibrancy.



Greenbridge Master Plan – This community redesign by GGLO turned a car-centric suburban space in King County, Washington into a walkable, bike-able greenway. Part of an affordable housing site, Greenbridge makes it easier for pedestrians to travel around the community and the addition of community gardens improves access to fresh and local foods.
Source: https://centerforactivedesign.org/greenbridgemasterplan

Old Town Mixed Use Commercial

The purpose of the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial Future Land Use designation is to recognize the diversity of existing Downtown uses and to provide for a wide range of residential and commercial office, restaurant, hospitality, and retail services within in the Downtown. This land use designation intends to strengthen Charles Town's urban core, contribute to its historic character, minimize impacts on adjacent land uses, and be well connected to existing and future land uses located within the UGB. Downtown Charles Town is characterized by typical main street components found in the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial land use.

Mixed Use Commercial

Mixed Use Commercial Future Land Use plans provide for necessary commercial uses of a convenient nature within residential areas. These plans encourage the formation and continuance of stable, healthy, and compatible environments that are located to provide nearby residential areas with convenient shopping and service facilities, reduce traffic congestion, and avoid the development of strip malls. The non-descript "anywhere USA" look and feel of strip malls are not desired. This is similar with the Old Town Mixed Use (see page 72) which anticipates buildings pulled up to the front of the street and is a much more pedestrian centric environment. Compatibility and integration with residential character of the area surrounding the mixed use commercial zone shall be of primary consideration. The City prefers vertical mixed use commercial development over horizontal mixed use development. However, in situations where horizontal mixed use development is proposed, greater attention to multimodal connectivity and accessibility will be imperative.



Example mixed use commercial development
Photo courtesy of jfj-art.com

Commercial and Industrial Districts

Professional Office/Institutional

Professional Office/Institutional Future Land Uses are included to enhance the work place environment by providing for the establishment of offices, medical and other institutional uses, limited accessory services for workers' convenience and public space. It is intended to promote attractive office development projects which are compatible with one another, as well as with adjoining residential areas. A medium to high density residential option is available when such can be achieved through innovative design and include significant natural resource protection. This future land use district is specifically designated to incentivize economic development opportunities and diversify the City's economy and strengthen its tax base to support its critical infrastructure and public service needs.



Professional office/campus setting, American University Washington College of Law Campus
Photo courtesy of American University

General Commercial

The purpose of the General Commercial Future Land Use classification is to provide locations for businesses of a more general nature that may not be found in a neighborhood and can be served with adequate water, sewer, gas, and electric service. The businesses proposed in this Comprehensive Plan update include retail, wholesale, and some light processing operations. These uses tend to be very auto centric. It will be important for the Charles Town community (residents, visitors, and investors alike) to strongly consider the City's small town, historical significance of building and site design. New commercial development should strongly consider and be encouraged to deliver commercial products that uphold the City's small town and historical character and encourage walkable communities.



Context sensitive designed AutoZone
Photo courtesy of Investcorecommercial.com



Context sensitive designed Dunkin Donuts
Photo courtesy of Retailrestaurantfb.com

Light Industrial

Light Industrial Future Land Uses intend to provide locations for light manufacturing uses that are not as extensive as those provided elsewhere in Jefferson County and can be adequately served by public or community utilities. Light manufacturing is composed of processing or assembly of previously processed materials. This land use shall only be located where denoted on the Future Land Use Map and may be considered when annexations of county zoned properties that contains this designation.

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Growth and Land Use, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Ongoing

- Continuously examine and where appropriate implement Best Management Practices for land use planning concepts.
- Promote and incentivize new development investments in the Old Charles Town and Gateway Community Types where urban infrastructure exists to readily support revitalization and infill development.
- Ensure development in City's proposed growth areas and redevelopment/development of the Old Town occurs in congruent fashion.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.
- Implement agricultural value added categories in a new agricultural zoning district as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan (10-year).
- Examine and implement zoning districts that achieve the desired goals of the Future Land Use map.
- Create small area plans for Downtown Charles Town, US 340 East Gateway, US 340 South Gateway area.
- Employ the City's Home Rule and annexation policy to strategically manage the City's future growth within the Urban Growth Boundary, and increase economic development opportunities.
- Develop land development standards that preserve critical green space will not impacting development rights.
- Adopt and administer the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) amendment (IRC Appendix Q) specifying requirements for tiny houses on foundations.

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Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 5: Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will be a community where all of its residents can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and, in turn, encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

Objectives:

- Utilize the City's limited resources in efficient and innovative ways, and foster revitalization.
- Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives.
- Implement a City Housing and Redevelopment program to proactively and effectively address the City's blighted and abandoned properties.
- Collaborate with Charles Town Now to develop a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use Downtown.
- Preserve, promote, and market the City's Heritage Tourism assets including its emerging C*Town Arts and Culture District.

Building a Foundation for Charles Town's Vibrancy and Sustainability

Charles Town is well positioned to grow as a regional destination for heritage tourism. As a historic community surrounded by well-received destinations located in proximity to and economically influenced by the National Capital Region, the City of Charles Town has the makings of a true regional destination. To achieve this, the City will need to harness this energy and sustain it over the long term for nearby residents and visitors to acknowledge the City as a worthwhile investment.

Creating a Vibrant Downtown

The cornerstone to building the foundation of Charles Town is the revitalization of the City's Downtown and adjoining historic neighborhoods. As expressed in the Vision for Downtown, the Downtown area is the historic, functional, and symbolic heart of the City, and continued public and private investments are vital to the City's overall vibrancy, sustainability, and well-being.

"Charles Town is stuck in the past--we need innovation & creativity. Think ethnic restaurants, a bookstore, coffee shop, art centers/community spaces, quality boutiques, etc. Places people want to be."

Source: *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

One method for enlivening Downtown is a close management of underutilized, blighted, and vacant properties. While Charles Town does not suffer from wholesale vacancy and blight, there are a couple dozen properties of concern at any given time. It is important to provide the necessary resources to track and remediate blight as it can have a damaging effect on streetscape aesthetics, property values, citizen morale, and overall identity of a place. These issues can contribute to residents feeling unsafe on certain streets, which can steer potential patrons away from nearby businesses. Moreover, vacant and blighted properties also negatively contribute to the City's image and identity. That said, vacancy is a natural part of the real estate market and it is impossible to completely eliminate it. The City should continue to maintain a reasonable understanding of its vacancies via its Vacant Structures Board and Vacant Structures Registry.

Another common source of urban blight is the insufficient enforcement of municipal codes. The *Codified Ordinances of Charles Town* provide a solid framework for City officials to manage the growth of the entire City (not just Downtown) and any changes to the current historic fabric. When effectively enforced, the City's building codes ensure that its building structures are safe, inviting, and consistent with the historic character of the area. One significant barrier municipalities often encounter is enforcement. More recently, the fair and equal application of the code compliance program and associated fees which has resulted in greater compliance. In smaller municipalities, there is often not a dedicated code compliance officer and the task of code compliance becomes a secondary task for other administrative officials. Currently, this is the primary barrier to a successful code compliance program for the City. These barriers often allow structures or parcels to fall out of compliance for an extended period of time. This not only allows for the deterioration of structures, but it can also cause the owners of delinquent properties to devalue the importance of the code.

Regarding underutilization, there are opportunities to work with Charles Town Now and property owners to encourage greater utilization of structures in the Downtown. There are some structures that have upper floors that go unused or the time of vacancy seems to be fairly long. As noted in the Downtown Vision and discussed in detail, there are opportunities for improvements which may include the construction of multi-story commercial structures that are in keeping with form and compatibility of that which currently exists. For example, the conversion of surface parking, expansion of the Downtown along the corridor of West to Augustine Streets to Hill Dale Shopping Center, and the railroad area north of the Downtown may be project opportunities.

Creating a Livable City

Charles Town must distinguish itself in the marketplace as a community that is not only a great place to visit, but also a great place to live, work, and foster diverse economic development opportunities. Another key to Charles Town's vibrancy and sustainability is its livability, which considers a number of community factors and characteristics to arrive at an overall livability score. According to AARP:

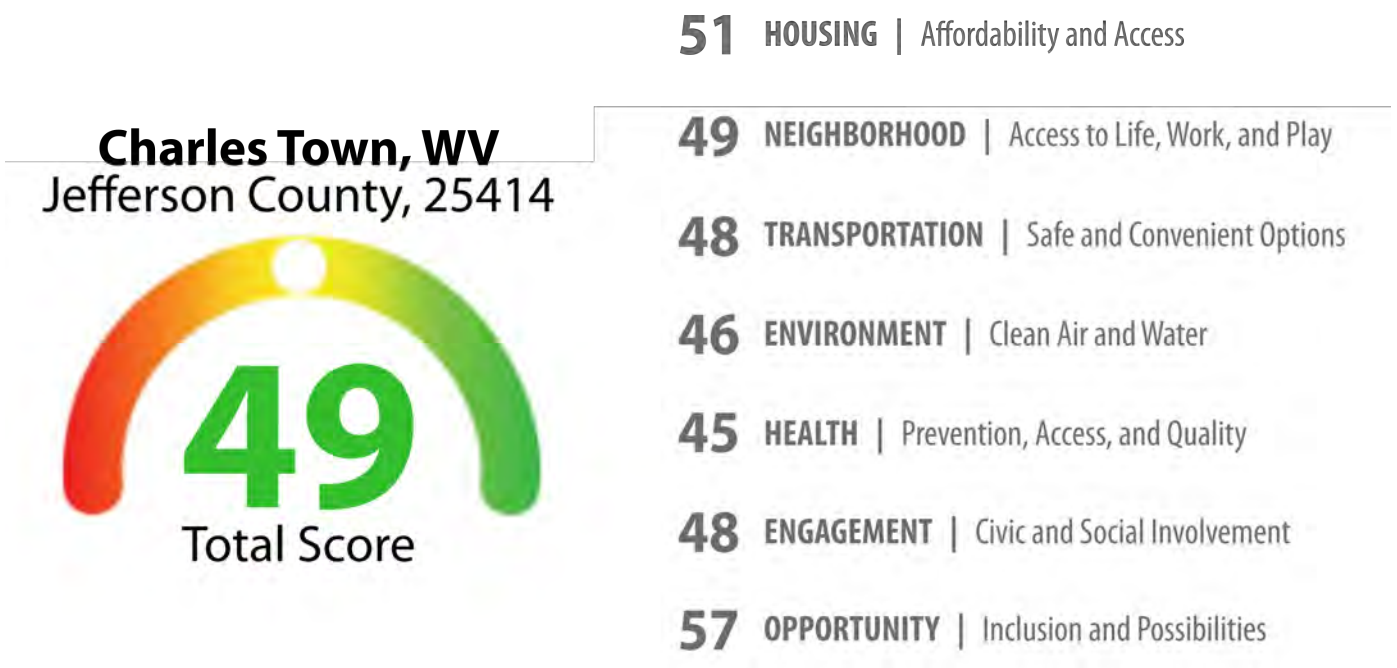
According to AARP:

> *"A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life. Furthermore, livability is about realizing values that are central to healthy communities: independence, choice, and security. Livable communities help residents thrive, and when residents thrive, communities prosper."*

Measuring livability is challenging because people desire different qualities and characteristics when searching for places to live and work. AARP's *Livability Index* provides a particularly fair and balanced assessment of Charles Town's livability score based on seven major livability categories as presented in this section (it should be noted that these livability categories are not focused solely on seniors). The index gives higher scores to communities with diverse features that help people of all ages, incomes, and abilities. It is important to not just look at the "Total Score" exclusively, as the seven livability factors are significant in their own right. For example, a community could have high scores on housing and transportation, but be ranked low on health and opportunity and have an averaged "Total Score" 50 or higher, but the "Total Score" by itself would not reflect the wellbeing of the community. A higher score is credited with having a better community and a lower score represents opportunities for improvement.

Charles Town's livability index score of 49 falls within the average range of 34 – 66, which is where most communities in the nation fall. In comparison, nearby Shepherdstown, WV, and Leesburg and Winchester, VA, have scores of 50, 57 and 55, respectively. A comparison of each community's livability score is illustrated in **Figure 30**.

Charles Town outperforms its competing communities on the livability category of housing and measures up on the categories health and opportunity, but has room to improve with respect to neighborhood, transportation, environment, and engagement. Marked improvements in these areas through the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan will increase Charles Town's livability and overall vibrancy and sustainability. Furthermore, the City should use these categories as its performance measures by viewing the current scores for each element as benchmarks to measure improvements going forward.



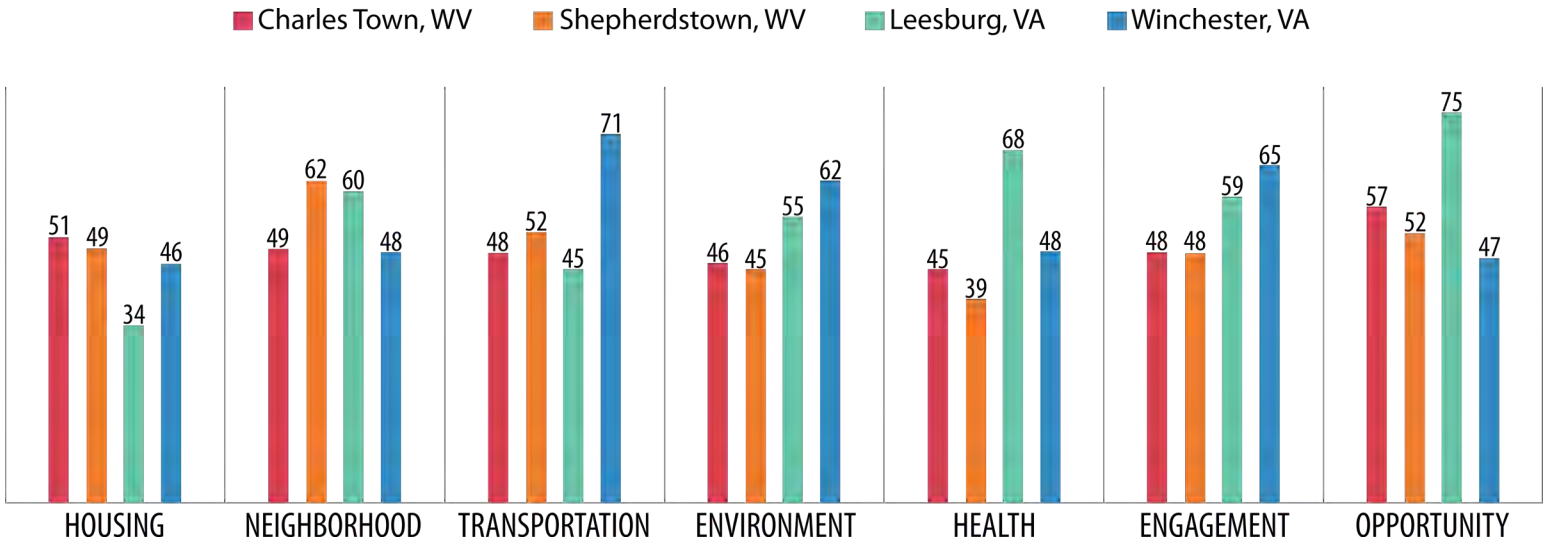


Figure 30: Livability Index Comparisons
Source: AARP Livability Index. https://livabilityindex.aarp.org

Charles Town outperforms its competing communities on the livability category of housing and measures up on the categories health and opportunity, but has room to improve with respect to neighborhood, transportation, environment, and engagement. Marked improvements in these areas through the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan will increase Charles Town's livability and overall vibrancy and sustainability. Furthermore, the City should use these categories as its performance measures by viewing the current scores for each element as benchmarks to measure improvements going forward.

Creating Financial Sustainability

A stronger and more diverse economic base is not only essential to creating a more vibrant and livable community, it is also crucial to offset the City's shrinking video lottery and table gaming revenue, which comprise over 23 percent of the City's annual budget. This is even more critical to providing the necessary funding to support the Downtown and neighborhood revitalization initiatives and to strengthen its financial position to sustain the growth and development envisioned in this plan.

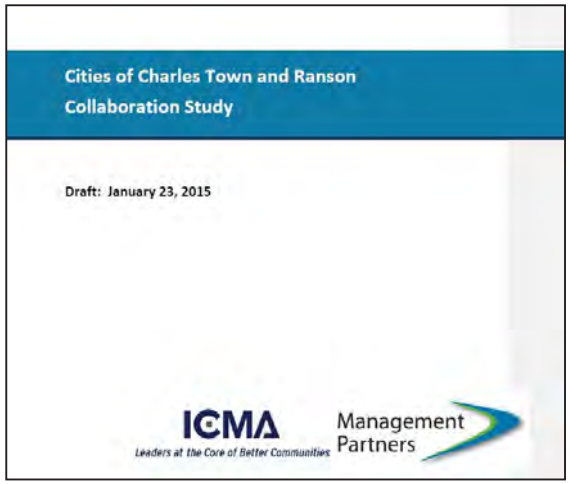
In addition to investing in the revitalization of Downtown, the City's Future Land Use Map envisions new commercial nodes of development within the UGB, as well as opportunities for professional office and institutional uses that leverage planned investments by the West Virginia University Healthcare System. The existing Jefferson Medical Center facility in Ranson is expected to expand where it is currently located. In turn, Charles Town believes that WVU's investments will leverage additional investments from the private sector, bringing skilled and well-paying jobs to further diversify and grow the local economy. Opportunities for WVU to have research and development facilities in this area that supports the WVU Healthcare Systems is conceivable.

Supporting the City's vision for the professional office and institutional future land use is the Martin Prosperity Institute's Cities Project focusing on the role of cities as the key economic and social organizing unit of global capitalism. The institute's *Venture Capital's Leading Industrial Clusters* report uses detailed data from Thomson Reuters to examine geographic clusters of venture capital investment and startup activity across five leading industries: software, biotechnology, media and entertainment, medical devices and equipment, and information technology services. It identifies the leading metro areas for venture capital investment where such investment is clustered.

The report includes the following findings:

- **Software is the leading industry, attracting nearly $12 billion, roughly a third of all venture investment (36.2 percent)**. Together, the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor accounts for $2.7 billion dollars, 23 percent of venture capital investment in software.
- **Biotechnology is second with $5.7 billion, 17.3 percent of total investment.** Biotechnology investment is clustered in three broad regions, including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a combined $2.3 billion in investment representing roughly 40 percent of the sector's total.
- **Media and entertainment is third with $3.2 billion, 9.5 percent of total investment.** The Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor is the nation's second leading cluster with $764 million, representing roughly a quarter of all venture investment in this sector.
- **Medical devices and equipment is fourth with $2.3 billion, 7.1 percent.** Venture capital investment in medical equipment spans three main clusters including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a total of $550 million in investment representing nearly a quarter of the industry total.
- **Information technology services is fifth with $2 billion, 6 percent.** Venture investment in information technology and services is concentrated in two broad clusters including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a total of $604 million in investment representing 30.4 percent of the industry total.

A common theme among all five industry sectors is the predominance of the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor. Given Charles Town's proximity to the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area, all of the above sectors present opportunities for Charles Town's future economy and its diversity. Moreover, the biotechnology, medical equipment and information technology services sectors are well-aligned with WVU's R1 Research classification by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.



Strengthening Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration is also another opportunity for the City to strengthen its vibrancy and sustainability. The *2015 Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study* jointly commissioned by the cities of Charles Town and Ranson identified opportunities for collaboration in service delivery. The report identified 15 recommendations and potential total annual combined savings of over $1 million; $562,200 for the City of Charles Town and $535,000 for the City of Ranson. Such savings could be reinvested into the City's capital improvement program to leverage substantial improvements in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Charles Town Building Blocks

Charles Town has an existing unique, vibrant urban character. In particular, the City's Downtown is emerging as a growing and active central core for the region, serving as the Jefferson County seat with a high concentration of cultural and historic resource attractions that are supported by a growing base of locally-owned businesses and entertainment venues, festivals and events, and other amenities as described below.

Community Events and Festivals

Community events and festivals are critical to the sustained growth and vitality of a local economy. They create a sense of community, invite tourists and guests to enjoy spending time and money in the City, and encourage residents to be creative and invest in their own community.

Charles Town already has many long established annual events such as the Charles Town Farmers Market every Saturday throughout summers, the Charles Town Heritage Festival – rebranded as Charles Town's West Virginia Fest, the Charles Town Car Show, and the Jefferson County Juneteenth Celebration. The growth of these festivals and the addition of new ones will keep the residents and visitors of Charles Town engaged.

> **"The Charles Town community has envisioned a future that celebrates arts & culture. The strategic plan will help the community grow and sustain a robust arts & culture district. The "C*Town Arts & Culture District will grow through an arts-based real estate strategy, activating its core with vibrant places and activities that attract people to experience the arts."**
>
> ***Source:*** *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

In 2016, Charles Town established the "Charles Town Arts and Culture District" which places an emphasis on growing tourism and local economy through arts, festivals, and branding. The district was officially announced by Mayor Peggy Smith during the opening ceremonies for the Charles Town's West Virginia Fest on June 18, 2016.

Regional Attractions

The City is also home to Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races, a gambling casino and thoroughbred track. While the track and casino are situated adjacent to City limits, their proximity to Downtown makes them a worthy anchor to leverage investment from their visitations. Charles Town Races has become one of the busiest thoroughbred circuits in the country with notable events including the Charles Town Classic and the West Virginia Breeders Classic. Supportive events on race days could draw the spirit of the race from the park and into the streets. Additionally, Hollywood Casino has live entertainment at the indoor Event Center. The Event Center offers concerts that have a regional draw and help make Charles Town an entertainment venue for the region.

Farmers markets are great assets to cities that promote civic engagement and community building. The Charles Town Farmers Market currently takes place on Saturdays weekly between April and October. During the event, a block of street is closed to traffic and stands are erected for use by local farmers and artisans to sell goods and services. The market has been a staple in Charles Town since 2006 and continues to grow in popularity.

Many cities have been able to find permanent homes for farmers markets to keep them running year round. This can be accomplished with a larger investment in the rehabilitation of an unused building, or more inexpensively by covering a municipal parking lot as was recently done in Washington, PA. Changes and improvements to Charles Street as proposed in the Downtown Section of this Plan could allow for a pedestrian friendly street that could host the farmers market.

Entertainment

Live entertainment in the City is seen as a valuable asset that has room for growth. Currently, the City is home to the Old Opera House, which offers a full season of community theater works as well as classes in acting, dance, and voice. 2016 saw the addition of the Craft Beer & Music Festival at Happy Retreat, creating an atmosphere where local entertainment is enjoyed in a relaxed comfortable environment.

The establishment of easily rentable concert and event spaces can go a long way toward making a city feel vibrant and inviting. The second level of the newly renovated Charles Washington Hall could make for an excellent event space. Additionally, conceptual improvements to Evitts Run Park includes an outdoor amphitheater in the block bordered by Liberty and Washington Streets. Hosting regular outdoor events in this space would add to the spirit of community and promote local arts to those who may not be actively seeking entertainment.



Event at Charles Washington Hall
Photo courtesy of Suzanne Malesic

Cultural and Historic Resources

The City of Charles Town is blessed with a number of historic assets, most of which are centralized around Washington and George Streets. While the entire Downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are a few buildings of note including the Jefferson County Courthouse, Charles Washington Hall, Charles Town City Hall, and Fishermen's Hall. Outside of the Downtown are a number of historic assets from the legacy of President George Washington and his family. Many of these assets are included on the Washington Heritage Trail including Zion Episcopal Church, St. George's Chapel Ruins, and the nearby mansions of Happy Retreat, Harewood, Cedar Lawn, Claymont Court, and Blakeley. Additionally, Charles Town is surrounded by a plethora of cultural and historical resources relating to the Civil War, John Brown, Lewis and Clark, African-American Heritage, and Washington Family History.

The annual Jefferson County African American Culture and Heritage Festival showcases the historical and cultural significance of the African American community in Jefferson County, with vendors and live entertainment, as well as tours of historic landmarks significant to African American history in Jefferson County, Charles Town, and Ranson.

These assets form a very accessible cluster of rich heritage in a relatively small area. This lends itself well to heritage tourism, a large and growing industry that has been fostered in nearby Harpers Ferry. Connecting tourists to these assets with trails and interpretive signage, as well as cross promotion with nearby tourist destinations will allow for residents and visitors alike to form a complete picture of the City's rich and important history.

Cultural and Historic Preservation

Charles Town staff manages the citizen-comprised Historic Landmarks Commission, a board of the City tasked with reviewing any new construction, rehabilitation or demolition project proposals within the Historic Overlay District to determine appropriateness. Codified in Charles Town's municipal code, this commission's approval is required before any work can begin. One common concern is the financial burden that historic preservation can place on a developer, however there are grants, loans, and tax credits for historic preservation projects. Protecting and preserving historic assets requires additional cost and research, but a governing body such as the Historic Landmarks Commission helps make the task more manageable. Any town that has historic resources derives its identity from those resources. As such the maintenance, protection, and preservation of those resources equates to the protection and preservation of Charles Town's identity.

As property is annexed into the UGB, historic resources will be added to the City's inventory. There may be large tracts of land that have a historic house on the property or historic outbuildings, such as barns and a spring house. When development occurs on those properties, the historic resources should be protected as community amenities. It is important to remember that a resource's surrounding is an important part of its context. In protecting and maintaining the character of the resource, retaining a portion of the context, generally open space, is important. For the retention of these resources, amendments could be made to the open space standards and/or density bonus standards as incentives to ensure such protection.



Fishermen's Hall
Photo courtesy of City of Charles Town

An additional resource that often aids in the redevelopment of historic districts is a Form-Based Zoning Code. Form-Based code allows for cities to set a desired form for new development (scale, materials, massing, etc.) as opposed to the use of the building established under the currently adopted Euclidean zoning code. Neighboring Ranson utilizes a version of Form-Based Code called SmartCode which also incorporates a transection from urban to rural land use types to apply to plots. The Growth and Land Use section provides a more in-depth discussion of the SmartCode and its application in land use regulation.

Jefferson County Museum

The Jefferson County Museum is located in the center of Downtown Charles Town inside the Charles Town Library at Washington and Samuel Streets. The museum offers visitors and residents a look at the long history and culture of Jefferson County, including exhibits on Early Settlements, the John Brown Raid, Civil War, multiple exhibits on the artworks, goods, and services created by local men and women throughout the county's history. The museum has artifacts of national significance, including a letter from George Washington and the wagon that transported John Brown as a prisoner. The museum is an invaluable asset to the community and should be widely promoted.

Museums are amenities that are not only sought out by visitors, but also enrich the lives of local residents. They provide learning opportunities, as well as instill pride in the places they reference. Additional galleries, museums, and educational landmarks should be encouraged in new developments.



Jefferson County Museum
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Happy Retreat


Happy Retreat
Photo courtesy of Charles Town Now

Happy Retreat is the home of Charles Washington, the founder of the City. In 2014, the Friends of Happy Retreat (FOHR) purchased the Happy Retreat property (~two acres) and the City separately purchased the adjoining 10 acres that includes access to Evitts Run, which is a critical connectivity and open space element envisioned in the *West End Master Plan*. The FOHR are exploring the house as a public resource for education, enjoyment, and economic development through heritage tourism. The FOHR are currently in the process of restoring the house and working toward implementing their vision. This resource has the opportunity to become a great cultural and educational amenity for the community. The property, via the City owned land, connects to Evitts Run and across the creek, is another City park. Opportunities for a walking bridge to connect the two sides of the creek exists.

Housing Needs for the Future

As Charles Town grows as a more popular and diverse City, it is important to seize opportunities that will establish a balance of various housing types. Towards that end, the City should make a particular effort to realize opportunities for flexible and affordable housing.

As Charles Town grows in popularity, it is expected that property values and housing costs will grow similarly. The inclusion of affordable housing within the City will become an increasing priority. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) are one unique way to promote affordable and diverse housing options. ADUs are small residential units for lease typically found in garages, barns, or guest houses. To be considered an ADU, the unit may accompany or stand alone as a primary residential property on a plot of land. Further, the primary residential use is occupied by the property owner. ADUs create an opportunity to provide affordable, Tiny Houses that cater to the needs of Baby Boomers, college students, veterans, young professionals, or anyone else who may not require additional living space or long term housing commitments.

Affordable Housing

Can generally be defined as decent, safe and sanitary shelter, of adequate size so as to not cause overcrowding, and does not require any more than 30% of a household's annual gross income.

Workforce Housing

Typically determined as affordable to households earning between 60% and 120% of the Median Income

Source:US Department of Housing and Urban Development

ADUs should be recommended or promoted in renovation and new construction projects in the City, to promote affordable and diverse housing options. In addition to utilizing ADUs, federal funding resources, such as those available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and/or West Virginia Housing Development Fund, exist to promote the construction of new affordable housing units. A balanced assortment and civic discussion on the importance of this mix are necessary to maintain a stable, diverse and growing Charles Town.

In conjunction with a discussion of the SmartCode in the Growth and Land Use Section of this plan, the SmartCode is able to encourage a mix of uses with housing, diverse housing options at all income levels, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that reduce automobile dependency. For those with less economic resources, the ability to rely on their vehicle less results in less maintenance costs and repairs. The ability to eliminate the need for a vehicle significantly increases purchasing power on other goods. A variety of housing choices allows residents various types of places to reside at various price points. Opportunities for new and infill developments that incorporate affordable housing in mixed uses, higher densities, and traditional neighborhood design elements will be incentives to be examined. A City Housing and Redevelopment Agency that encompasses code compliance, vacant structures, new construction, rehabilitation of structures, renter assistance and a variety of other afford housing options could be create to assist these endeavors.

Traditionally, a neighborhood housing and redevelopment agency held a negative connotation. In certain communities and locations, that is not always the case. For Charles Town, the ability for a housing and redevelopment agency could be a positive and beneficial component of community development. For a growing City with innovative tools obtained during the Home Rule Program and the typical Code Compliance aspects faced by most communities, Charles Town has the ability to create a housing and redevelopment agency that is proactive, addresses existing housing and infill in the urban core, and involved in new development arrangements in "greenfield" areas.

Exploring the non-traditional side of a housing and redevelopment agency, it is possible for the City to partner with a developer to create communities based on some of the fundamental principles:

- Pre-World War II development pattern (grid pattern and connected communities);
- Open space amenities within walking distance of every house;
- Right size the utility lines so that future developments do not have to upsize existing lines; and
- Right size the roadway infrastructure.

The important role of the City in this arrangement, is the developer and a City have a different model and pro-forma. If the City is able to participate in the development arrangement where it matters for the municipality, such as infrastructure, open space and general layout, this allows the free market participants to market, develop, and build houses. In this role the City can provide stability throughout the development process to the private market. The private investors understandably have a model to achieve a profit of the highest value possible with reasonable cost necessary to develop a community and have a return on investment within a reasonable period of time. The City's model looks at the long-term maintenance and operations costs once the developer has left. The City has to maintain the streets, roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater infrastructure, any parks that may have been dedicated to the City and public safety. By developing new communities that meet the developer's economic needs and the long-term interests of the public sector, there is an opportunity to forge a public-private partnership between the City and private developer to create a more livable community through diverse neighborhood styles and price points for residents. The ability for the City to participate is found in the Home Rule Authority that was granted in the community enhancement districts.

As previously discussed, the housing and redevelopment agency is a great opportunity to assist in the future layout of the City, but there are as many important opportunities to improve the existing fabric of the City. The housing and redevelopment aspects are a combination of tools and each are as instrumental as the other, reinforcing one other. As with the enhancement districts for new developments, the City could partner with private developers or non-profit entities to construct housing that serves the needs of both workforce housing and affordable housing. This would enable and encourage infill development.

The following is a list of aspects to consider as being the interest of a housing and redevelopment agency:

Housing

- Workforce housing and affordable housing
- Owner occupied and non-owner occupied options

Rental Registration

- Inspection of rentals to establish a minimum level of safety and quality
- Ensure B and O taxes are paid

Code Compliance

- Maintenance of structures
- Correction of property violations
- Accountability

Vacant Structures Board

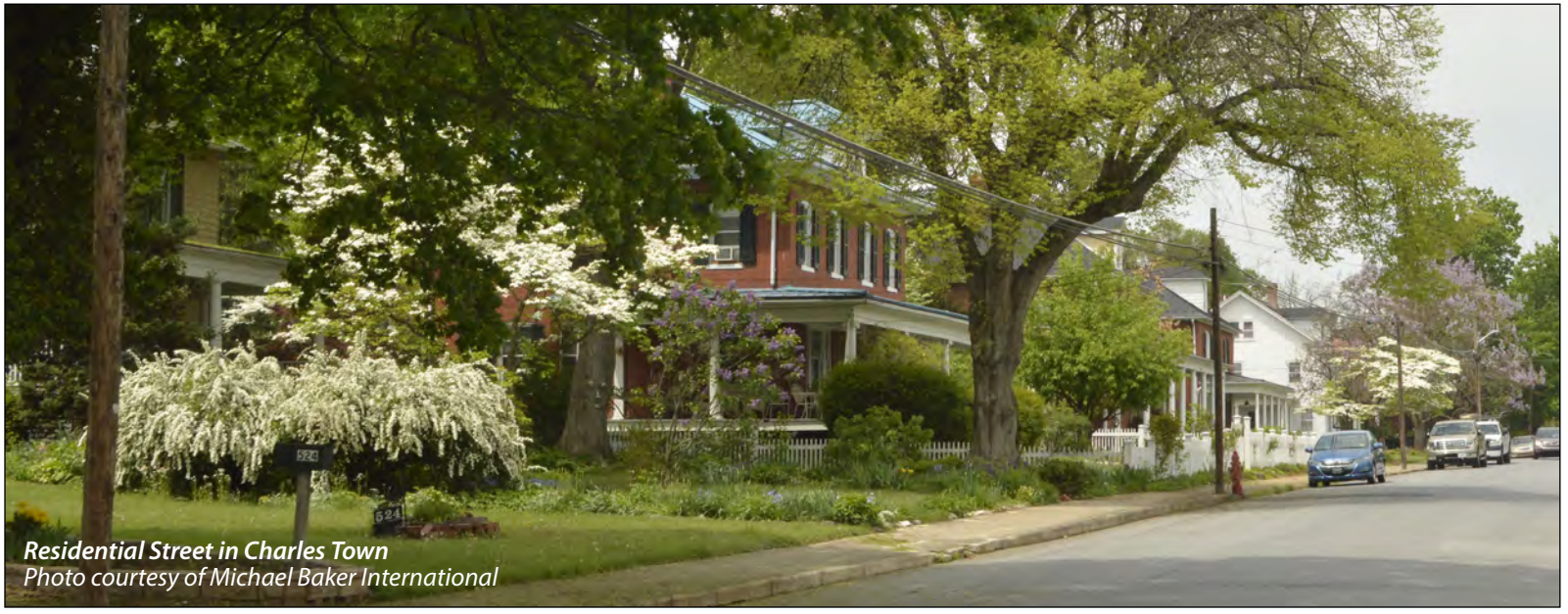
- Eliminate chronic vacant structures, and vacant and inhabitable structures

Improvements and investment in neighborhood infrastructure

- Improvements of adequate water pressure
- Installation of hydrants and street lights
- Improvements to sidewalks and, where missing, installation of new sidewalks

Coordinate with county, state, and/or federal organizations that have compatible missions

Harnessing these various aspects together can improve the quality and affordability of housing in the existing core of Charles Town. It is possible that the City could acquire land, particularly in the urban area core, retain the property under City ownership and the homes will be available for residents who are below the median income where the ability to find affordable or workforce housing is challenging. The opportunities for success are great and achievable if these elements are properly utilized, resulting in a vibrant, sustainable, and livable community for all residents.



Residential Street in Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Bring It Together to Achieve Success

Strengthening Charles Towns' vibrancy, sustainability, and livability will take a holistic approach from concentrating investments into Downtown and contiguous neighborhoods, strengthening its financial position and diversifying its economy. Taking measured steps to make the City a livable and healthy community for people of all ages will be the goal and objectives outlined on the following pages provide a clear vision for the City to become a more vibrant and sustainable community and specific steps moving forward are outlined in the Implementation Section of this plan. In doing so, there will be an opportunity for a cross section of society to be a member of the Charles Town community.



Source: *Center for Active Design, https://centerforactivedesign.org, 2017*

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Ongoing

- Use AARP's seven major livability categories to benchmark and measure the City's performance relevant to meeting and servicing the needs of its current and future population.
- Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to maximize the community-based utilization of Charles Washington Hall and to strengthen the revitalization of Downtown and Old Town neighborhoods.
- Implement the recommendations outlined in the *Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study, and C*Town Arts* and *Culture District Plan*.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Strengthen Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration as recommended by the 2015 *Collaboration Study* commissioned by Charles Town and Ranson. Among other multi-municipal service efficiency opportunities, collaboration initiatives could be used to strengthen Charles Town's code enforcement efforts and build capacity for a joint economic development organization as recommended in the City's 2014 *Economic Strategic Plan*.
- Encourage reinvestment and where appropriate redevelopment of the City's existing commercial shopping plazas (i.e., Somerset Village and Hill Dale) and work with the existing property owners to create a vision and redevelopment concept plan.
- Partner with West Virginia University, Jefferson County, Charles Town's State and Federal Congressional Delegation, and the Federal Government to identify economic development initiatives that leverage the University's R1 Research classification.
- Collaborate with the City of Ranson to create a joint Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Collaborate with Charles Town Now and Downtown property owners to maximize the full mixed-use potential of building structures in the Downtown.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy.



Downtown Charles Town Sign
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 6: Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International



Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for all citizens by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

Objectives:

- Provide convenient and affordable access to goods, services, jobs, and recreation for all residents and visitors.
- Create well-connected, safe, and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks.
- Strengthen the walkability of Downtown Charles Town through improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities, and reduced volumes of through truck traffic.
- Implement complete streets design in all existing and new street and road design.
- Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.
- Continue to support and increase City residents' access to public transportation services.

Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity in Charles Town

Efficient and reliable movement within a city is vital to its growth and success. Accessible transportation—affordable, safe, and extensive circulation between activity centers—supports a mobile workforce, regional tourism, local business, and overall community health. A well-developed network of multimodal transportation options benefits citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by removing barriers to jobs, accessing important goods and services, and engaging in community activities. For Charles Town, increasing mobility, accessibility, and connectivity around the Downtown area, residential areas, and nearby commercial centers will make the City a better place to live, work, and play.

The existing transportation network within the City of Charles Town encompasses a variety of modes—a road network capable of handling vehicular and freight traffic, access to a regional public transportation system, and infrastructure geared for non-motorized transportation, like multiuse trails and sidewalks. Additionally, air and rail transportation modes are important elements of the regional transportation system, each with its own benefits and limitations.

This Comprehensive Plan element reviews the foundations of the City's transportation system and deficiencies in that system that inhibit mobility, accessibility, and connectivity within Charles Town's UGB and beyond. It also identifies critical transportation connection opportunities and sets forth a future direction for multimodal accessibility improvements.

Understanding Downtown Charles Town: A Walking Tour

The best way to understand the existing strengths and challenges of promoting mobility and connectivity is to experience it firsthand. For this reason, and in line with the "Downtown first" focus, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) completed a walking tour of Downtown Charles Town to observe existing infrastructure and look for opportunities for improvment.

Through the walking tours, each CAC member was assigned a "role" of a specific type of community member and asked to share their experiences through answering six questions:

1. What are your general impressions of Charles Town?
2. Do you feel safe and comfortable during your walk? Why?
3. What positive elements make you want to be in Charles Town?
4. What negative elements would stop you from staying long or visiting at all?
5. What is missing that you need?
6. What is already here that you would use the most?



Pedestrian Activity along George Street
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Roles were designed to cover various age ranges, mobility levels, and main travel purposes (i.e., work versus leisure).

In summary, the following comments were developed as themes:

- Traffic, especially truck traffic through Downtown during the day is an issue.
- Sidewalks in Downtown are generally in good condition and are comfortable to walk.
- Outside of the immediate Downtown area, the condition deteriorates and does not encourage people to walk to other amenities, such as Evitts Run Park.
- People felt safe walking. Bicycling did not seem to be as comfortable and safe and most people would not bicycle around Downtown Charles Town.
- In the evening hours, there was a lack of activity of all types.

Information gathered from the walking tour was used throughout multiple themes. The input gathered through the activity was a foundational element for the objectives to improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity throughout Charles Town.



Accessibility Challenges along W. Liberty Street
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Foundations for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity

Charles Town has a well-established transportation system upon which to build. With a robust street network, the elements are in place for a successful multi-modal transportation network to provide opportunities for all residents of Charles Town.



Downtown during the Walking Tour
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International



Evitts Run during the Walking Tour
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Travel Characteristics: A Portrait of Charles Town

As shown in **Table 6**, Charles Town, like most suburban municipalities in America, is heavily auto-oriented. In fact, according to the *2015 American Community Survey (ACS)* estimates, 87 percent of those traveling to work drive, with nearly 70 percent driving alone. Furthermore, less than 7 percent of the total of those traveling to work use a form of transportation other than driving. Extending the logic of this analysis to the average citizen in Charles Town, the vast majority of travelers drive to their destinations every day.

Assuming that this trend continued for the foreseeable future, investments focused on alternative modes of transportation must be aimed towards meeting the people where they live, and making walking, bicycling, or using public transportation as easy as walking to the driveway to get in a car. While most people will need to use an automobile to commute to work and accommodate larger bulk retail purchases, the ability to make some trips by walking or biking should be strongly factored into the City's transportation network. This is more possible when developments are designed in such a way as to have a corner store for general items of necessity.

Subject	Charles Town, WV - 2015 Estimate		
	Total	Male	Female
Workers 16 years and over	2,249	1,234	1,015
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK			
Car, truck, or van	86.90%	84.40%	90.00%
Drove alone	*69.10%*	*69.50%*	*68.60%*
Carpooled	*17.80%*	*14.80%*	*21.40%*
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	3.00%	4.90%	0.70%
Walked	3.20%	2.80%	3.80%
Bicycle	0.30%	0.60%	0.00%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Worked at home	6.50%	7.40%	5.50%

Table 6: Means of Transportation for Charles Town Workers 16 Years and Over
Source: American Community Survey, 2015

Street Network

The ability of a roadway network to safely move people and goods to a desired destination has wide-reaching impacts and is an important factor in land use decisions. The activity centers where people work and play must be efficiently accessible. Additionally, the layout and design of the roadway network impacts the ability of local and county governments to provide services. Charles Town's street network consists of a variety of street types that serve various types of travel.

As indicated in the Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, there are five main functional classifications within Charles Town:

- Primary Street
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Neighborhood Center Street
- Neighborhood Street

These classifications as assigned to streets in Charles Town are illustrated below in **Figure 31**. In line with the roadway classifications, US Route 340, State Route 9, and State Route 51 are the major thoroughfares for the City and its surrounding areas and carry some of the highest traffic volumes, according to the *2014 Charles Town Transportation Study*.

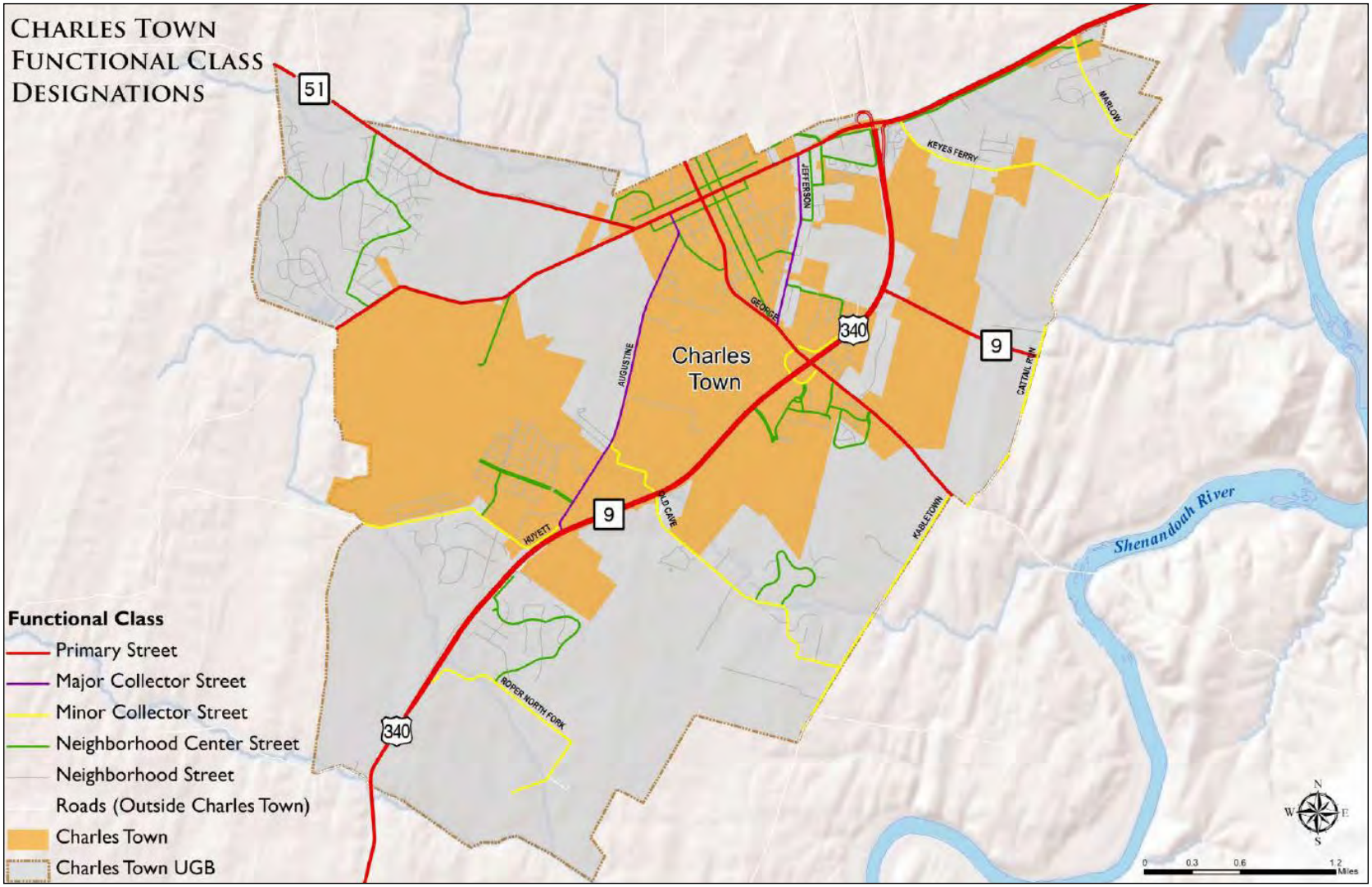


Figure 31: Charles Town Functional Roadway Classifications
Source: FHWA Functional Roadway Classifications

Sidewalk Network

Walkable communities are experiencing a resurgence in America and are becoming highly desirable features. With new generations desiring to live a less auto-focused lifestyle and the baby-boomer generation downsizing, there is demand for affordable urban areas that are walkable. Walkable communities allow residents to complete most daily activities within a convenient walk of their home in a way that is safe, comfortable, and interesting. Walkable communities encourage sidewalks to be used as "outdoor living rooms" with a seamless connection between businesses and the public realm. The ultimate goal for walkable communities is to enable residents to live their lives in the way they choose, and with the option of doing so without a car. This lifestyle choice is not statement against the automobile, but a desire to walk to shops, services, and entertainment without having to get in the car, drive a short distance only to look for a parking space. Regionally, new developments are being built in Virginia and Maryland that serve this lifestyle. In other locations, people are returning to the authentic fabric of the traditional Downtown.

To promote a prosperous Downtown, sidewalk infrastructure is vital to allow pedestrians to maneuver easily throughout the City. Establishing a walkable community starts with connecting residents to Downtown and providing an economical alternative to driving. As part of a *Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study* completed in August 2016, an inventory of existing sidewalks gaps and conditions within the Old Town area of the City was completed and is illustrated in **Figures 32 and 33** on the following pages.

Overall, sidewalks are present and in generally fair condition in the Downtown area, which support walkability and the Downtown-first focus. Once leaving the immediate historic Downtown area, sidewalk condition deteriorates significantly or sidewalks do not exist at all. Making improvements to those sidewalks encourages residents that live around Downtown to walk instead of drive. This action reduces the need to find a place to park and allows Charles Town to retain parking space for those traveling from a distance too far to walk. The Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study area should be expanded to cover all areas of the City.



Deteriorating Sidewalk in Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

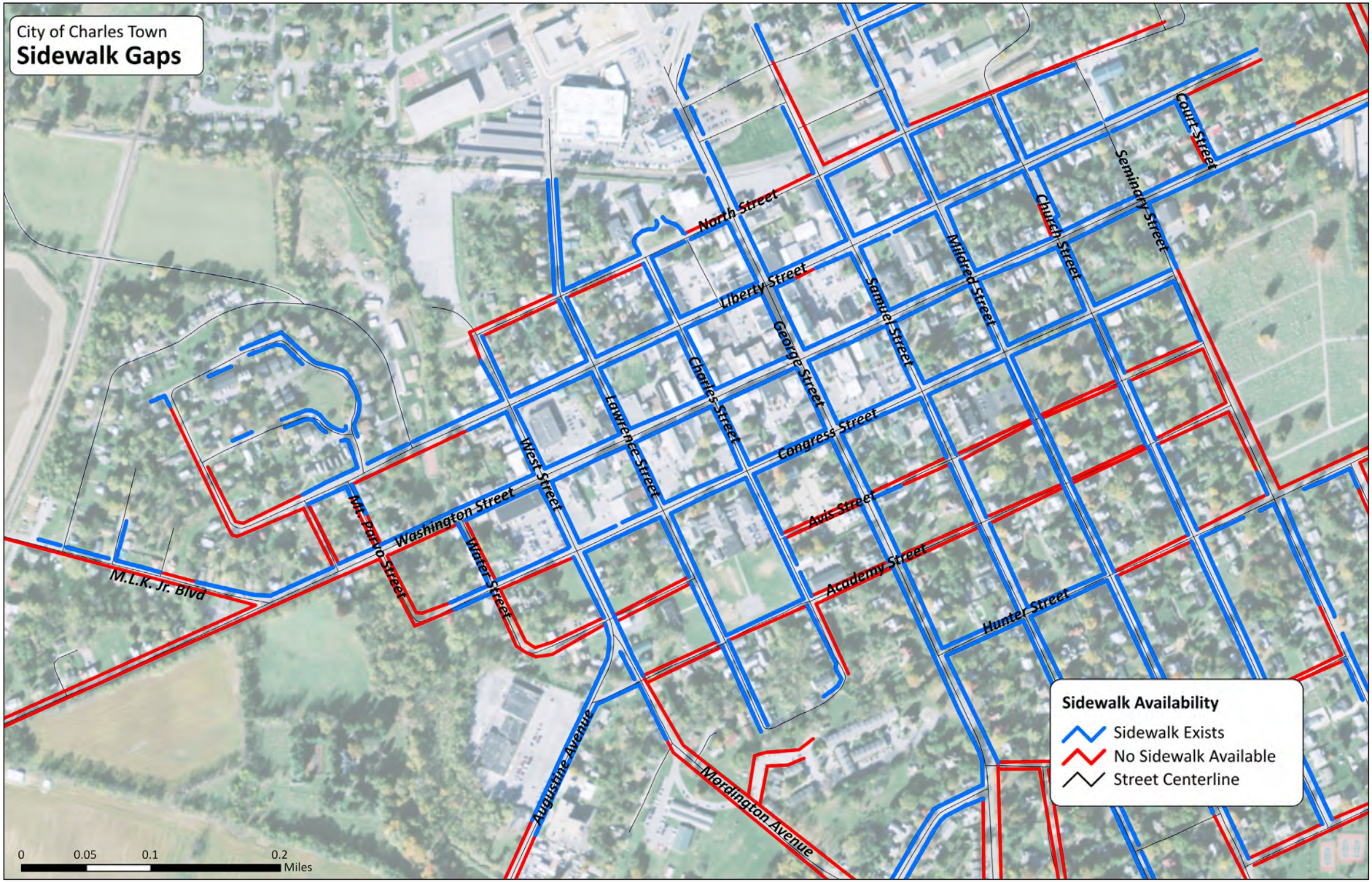


Figure 32: Charles Town Sidewalk Gaps
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016



Figure 33: Charles Town Priority Sidewalk Conditions
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

Regional Bus Services

Charles Town residents are serviced by the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA), which operates fixed-route, off-route (flex), and demand-responsive public transportation services throughout Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. During the week, Charles Town is served by the Orange Line and Charles Town Circulator. On weekends, EPTA does not provide fixed-route service to Charles Town.

The Orange Line provides service to Harpers Ferry and the VA Medical Center in Martinsburg where riders can transfer to the Blue Line, which provides access to Downtown Martinsburg and other connecting bus lines. The Orange Line provides scheduled service in Charles Town and Ranson at designated bus stop locations Monday through Saturday (**Figure 34**).

The Charles Town Circulator provides local service to Downtown Charles Town, shopping centers, the Casino/Racetrack, as well as some residential areas. The Charles Town Circulator stops periodically throughout the day. The current schedule of the EPTA service in Charles Town does not operate on regular headways (i.e., every 30 minutes). Because of this, the system may be confusing for some riders to understand and makes it difficult to use for those who aren't daily riders.



EPTA Paratransit Bus
Photo courtesy of HEPMPO

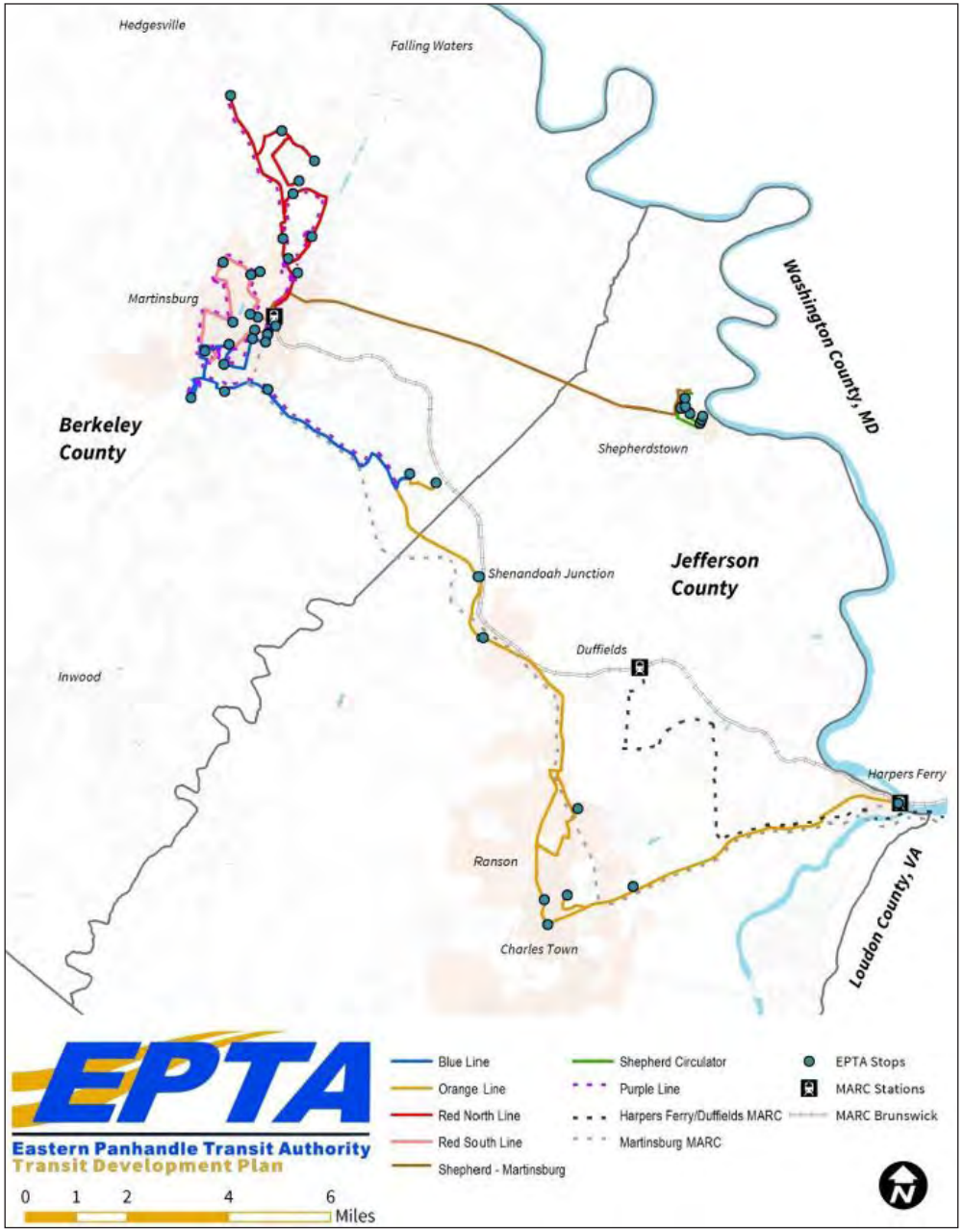


Figure 34: EPTA Transit Service and Designated Bus Stops
Source: EPTA Transit Development Plan, 2016

Finally, the limited sidewalk network outside of the Downtown provides few opportunities for transit users to reach destinations beyond the bus stop. **Figure 35** illustrates 5- and 10-minute walksheds from existing EPTA Orange Line designated bus stops in Charles Town and Ranson. This limited mobility utilizing public transit, combined with the small area of walkability surrounding existing transit stops, promotes the auto-centric nature of Charles Town and limits options for those who can't, or don't, drive.

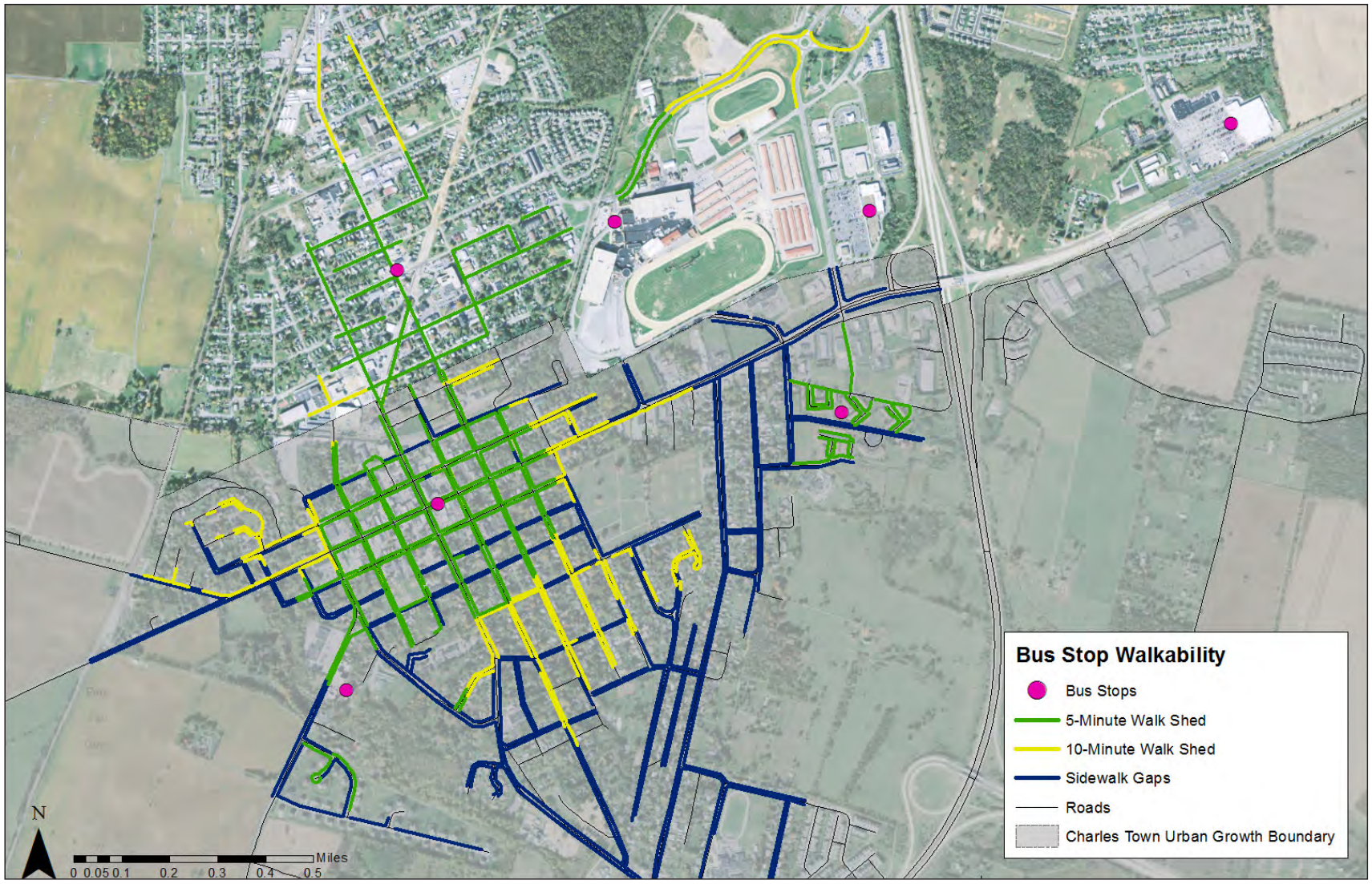


Figure 35: Charles Town Priority Sidewalk Conditions
Source: Michael Baker International

Passenger Rail

Charles Town is located in a rail-rich area of West Virginia that has access to two passenger rail services: the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train Brunswick Line and Amtrak's Capital Limited Service operating between Washington, DC and Chicago. The City is in proximity to three train stations, identified below in **Table 7**, that provide access to one or both of these passenger rail services. Access to the three stations provides multiple options for access to residents of Charles Town, including by connection with bus transit.

Station Location	Passenger Rail Line	Connecting Services	Parking Spaces
226 E. Main Street Martinsburg, WV	MARC Brunswick Line Amtrak Capital Limited Line	EPTA Blue and Red Lines	81
5057 Flowing Springs Road Duffields, WV	MARC Brunswick Line	None	295
120 Potomac Street Harpers Ferry, WV	MARC Brunswick Line Amtrak Capital Limited Line	EPTA Orange Line	98

Table 7: Passenger Rail Stations Serving Charles Town
Source: Michael Baker International

As identified earlier in the plan, the City of Charles Town has a relatively lower cost of living as compared to the National Capital Region. This fact, coupled with good access to passenger rail makes the City an attractive choice for those who work in the Washington, DC metropolitan region but desire a lower cost of living.

Opportunity for Passenger Rail Downtown

Bisecting Charles Town, east to west, is an existing CSX freight rail line that connects to the MARC passenger rail line in Harpers Ferry, WV. Although the feasibility has yet to be examined or determined, there exists the possibility of rerouting the existing CSX freight traffic to the existing Norfolk Southern line on the east side of Ranson and reusing the CSX line as an extension of the MARC passenger line to Downtown Charles Town and Ranson. Such a stop in Downtown Charles Town would result in a transit-oriented development (TOD) pattern and be a boost to the area. Presumably, such a stop would be on North Street between Mildred and Church where the railroad company has additional space were a stop could be located. A passenger rail transit stop located in the urban core, with commuters having the ability to walk from home to the train would benefit both Charles Town and Ranson. There would be opportunities to increase the Transect Zone (discussed in the Growth and Land Use Vision of this Plan) or the density and mixed used options around the train station.

Building Blocks for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity: Downtown First Focus

Discussed throughout this Comprehensive Plan is the recurring theme of a Downtown First focus. The historic, cultural, residential and economic activities throughout Downtown serve as the symbolic heart of Charles Town. In order to truly realize the full potential of Downtown Charles Town for residents and visitors alike, the City must fully embrace the improvement of mobility, accessibility, and connectivity.

Mobility represents more than movement, it is the ability for a person to travel to where they want to go in the way in which they want to get there. Mobility is highly variable, it is a personal choice and can have many different definitions throughout the community. To fully achieve mobility, a place must be accessible. Accessibility allows people of all walks of life, regardless of ability, to freely travel to, enter, and exit their destination. Accessibility rises above legal requirements when it is recognized as a key component of a livable community that works for all its residents. Finally, connectivity allows people to easily move throughout the City in a direct way. Connectivity also has roots in redundancy, and the ability to travel different routes and in different ways to reach the same destination is critical to keeping Charles Town moving.

Charles Town has a solid foundation on which to continue to build a transportation network that promotes mobility, accessibility, and connectivity for all. Chares Town and the region at large have made a concerted effort over the past several years to place an emphasis on improving transportation resources and connections. Focusing on implementing these plans should be a key priority for Charles Town moving forward.

Building Blocks: Street Network

2014 Charles Town Transportation Study

The *2014 Transportation Study* for the City of Charles Town provides data, analysis, and project recommendations for inclusion in the City's Comprehensive Plan update. The plan was developed using a combination of data sources, previous studies, stakeholder input, and technical analyses conducted both for the City's study and the *Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*.

The study specifically recommended 24 improvements to the roadway network as illustrated in **Figure 36**. These improvements include new roadway construction, improvements to, or reconstruction of existing streets to ensure their long-term viability and increase capacity where needed, and intersection improvements to enhance safety. The study recognized the inherent interrelatedness, particularly through transportation, of Ranson and Charles Town and how projects in one jurisdiction naturally impact the other.

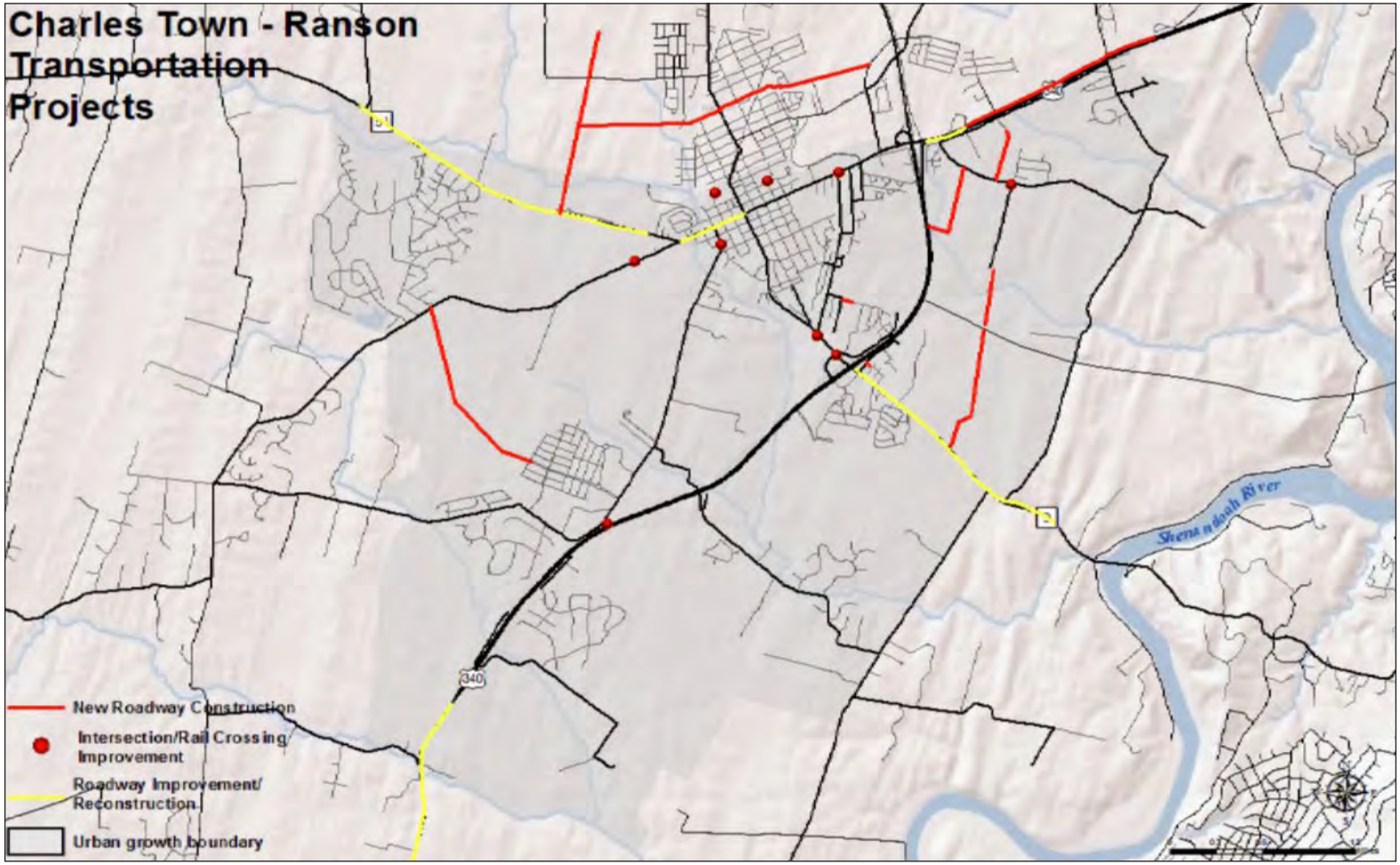


Figure 36: Charles Town – Ranson Transportation Improvement Projects
Source: HEPMPO 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Existing Roadway Improvements

In addition to the improvements identified through the 2014 *Transportation Study*, as development occurs on State Routes, improvements to those roads may be needed or required. The cost of such improvements would be borne by the developer where the development has frontage along the street or road. These requirements are beyond regular volume capacity improvements needed based upon the impact during peak hours. One solution to such an issue is the application of a transportation development fee, which is discussed in Building Blocks: Policy and Implementation.

Outside of capacity improvements and reconstruction of roadways that have met the end of their design-life, there as several roads that have significantly compromised vertical alignments and will also need improvements. These compromised alignments, such as the intersection of WV 115 and Cattail Run Road, pose a safety risk to the traveling public and where improvements to horizontal alignments can be accomplished, they should also be improved.

Grid Network

Much of the existing network of streets in Charles Town are based on the original historic layout designed by Charles Washington and his successors in a primary grid pattern. Grid patterns maximize the effectiveness of the transportation network by allowing multiple ways to get to a single point and providing the shortest possible distance between two points. Traffic is dispersed across the entire grid – rather than confined to the identified arterial streets.



City of Charles Town Street Grid Network
Photo courtesy of Google Earth 2017

More recently, additions to the street network have been based on decisions dictated by property boundaries, the timing of development, and individual development plans. There was no master plan to guide subsequent street patterning or to ensure that, when infill occurs, streets between various developments meet. This is perhaps best characterized by the abundant use of curvilinear street design.

The use of curvilinear street patterns, characterized by cul-de-sacs, limits by its nature the connectivity of neighborhoods and directness of travel. It pushes local traffic onto higher classification roadways with generally one-way-in one-way-out design and limits the ability to find alternative routes. Furthermore, it creates artificially long travel paths as part of its design.

For example, for a person living in house 1 to visit house 2, their path of travel is much farther using the existing curvilinear street network (blue line) rather than if the streets connected in a grid-like pattern (orange line), see **Figure 36**. The ability for reasonable travel becomes more even untenable between different developments. A person traveling between points 1 and point 2 (red line) in **Figure 37** has a long distance to travel due to curvilinear streets (green line) not joining developments.





Figure 36 and 37: Connectivity Analysis between Development Types
Source: Michael Baker International

Again, using the grid pattern concept, the red line shows a connection between developments and the distance would be much shorter than the distance presented in green. It is important to remember this is not just about vehicle travel, but neighbors and children walking to friends' homes.

Grid pattern streets are efficient in that when a street is congested or a street is obstructed due to an emergency, going over one block alleviates the pressure being applied to particular area. The grid pattern is more walkable and expandable. This creates connections and a sense of community among the developments, and any future redevelopment or increase in density is completed best on a block-by-block basis.

In light of the above discussion, curvilinear streets can be an acceptable design approach based on topography and site layout for new developments provided they are designed with connectivity in mind and with reasonable block lengths that promote walkability. In fact, a technical study conducted on the residential street pattern compares the benefits of both the curvilinear street and grid street design approaches, and further details the benefits of a hybrid street design approach that makes it possible to create communities that are efficient, viable, livable, healthy and highly marketable. [5] Cul-de-sacs, due to their size, are very inefficient use of land and resources, consume a significant amount of asphalt and time to plow during snow storms, reduce walkability, exacerbate congestion, and reduce overall mobility.

5 Canada Mortgage and Housing Company. Research Highlights Socio-economic Series 75, Residential Street Pattern Design. 2002. Accessed online at https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html

Existing Roadway Improvements

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, the Downtown First focus and the grid network concept were discussed at length and a series of future transportation connections.

Depicted in **Figure 38** below are three main purposes:

- connect existing or new suburban developments to Downtown Charles Town;
- fill-in existing gaps in the grid network; and
- establish primary streets for new grid networks in undeveloped areas.

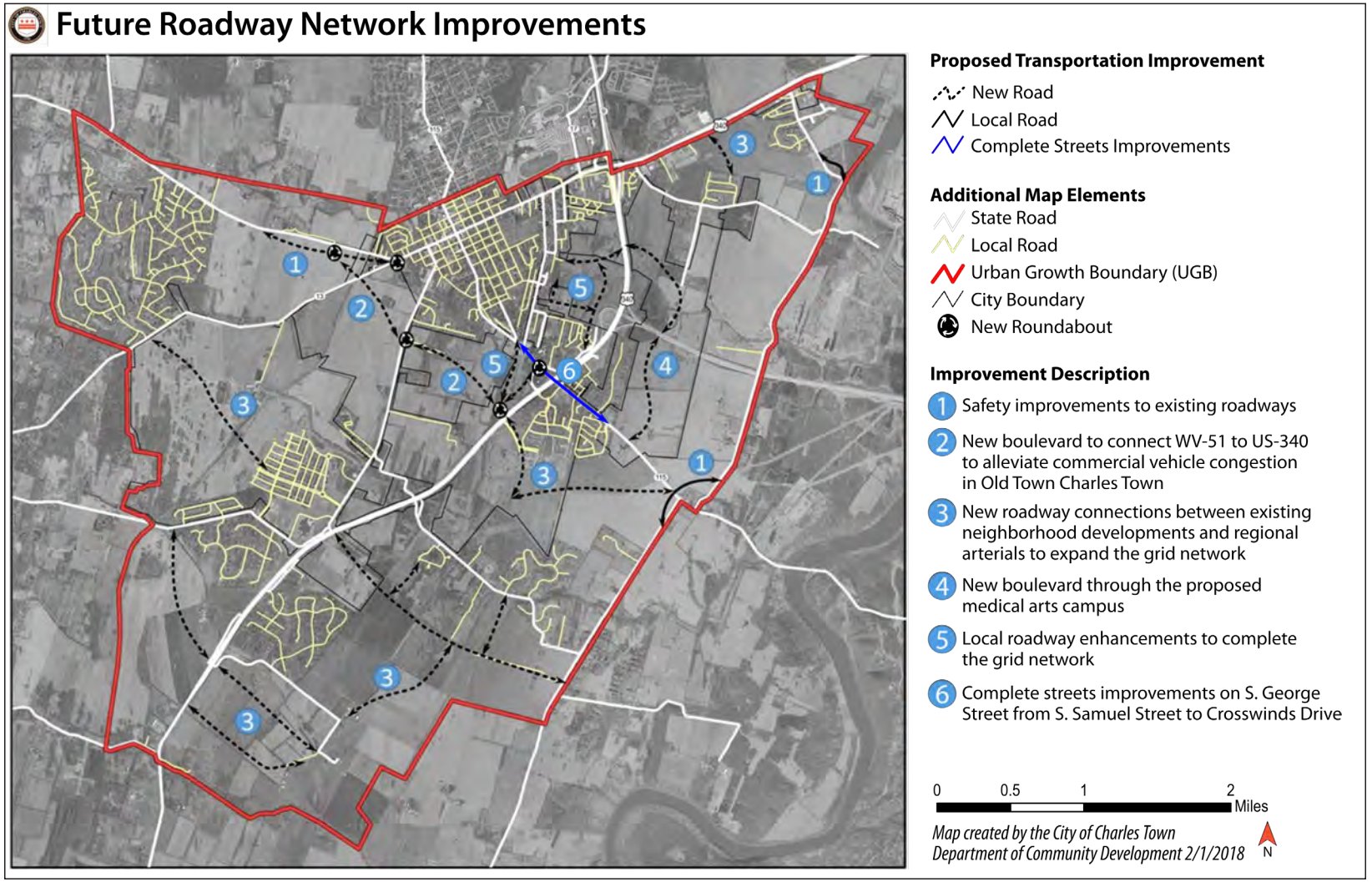


Figure 38: Future Roadway Network Improvements

Building Blocks: Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks

2016 Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study

The *Walkability and Connectivity Study* completed by the City of Charles Town in August 2016 identified sidewalk gaps and the areas with the poorest overall sidewalk conditions requiring improvement. Based on this analysis, a short list of eight priority segments were identified for investment. These segments represent areas in most need of investment due to the condition and importance to the sidewalk network.

"[We] want to be able to walk EVERYWHERE in Charles Town. We are a small community, there is no reason to have to drive everywhere."

Source: *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

The sidewalks in Charles Town are largely the responsibility of the individual land owner. Those responsibilities include maintenance, repair, and replacement, as necessary. The City must work alongside landowners to find ways to improve these priority sidewalk investment areas, and continue to improve the walkability of Charles Town (see **Figure 39** below).

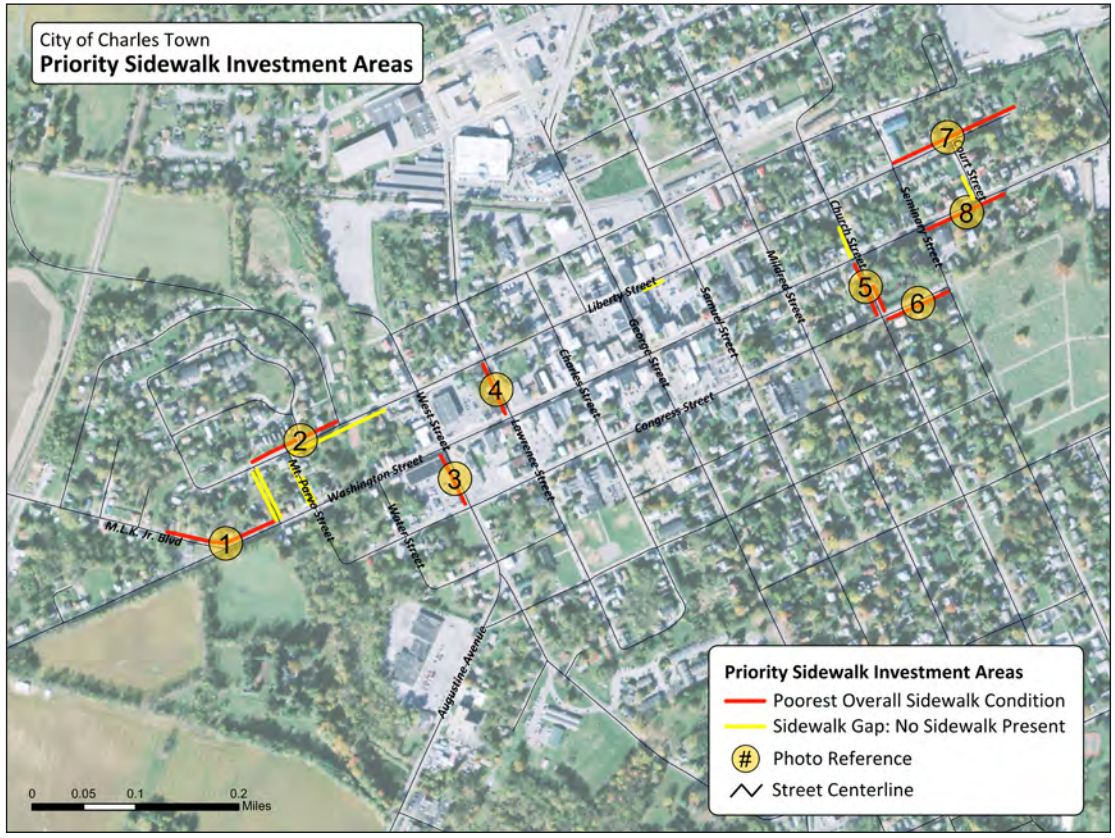


Figure 39: Priority Sidewalk Investment Areas
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

The plan also identified opportunities to improve the trail network which would improve the overall connectivity of Charles Town through non-vehicular means. These trail improvements have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan through the future bicycle and pedestrian connections map (**Figure 39**).

New Development Sidewalk Requirements

To ensure the future of the walkability of Charles Town, a requirement should be enacted that mandates all new developments to install sidewalks at the time of initial construction. This approach, combined with grid network development style, will promote communities that are desirable for all residents.



Huntfield Development Residential Street in Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, Charles Town's relationship with the natural environment was routinely cited as a top asset to the community and a reason that many people choose to live here.

Combining this desire to provide access to natural resources with the Downtown First focus, a series of future bicycle and pedestrian connections (shown in **Figure 40**) were identified which would connect:

- existing or new suburban developments to Downtown Charles Town;
- existing parks and recreational resources; and
- regional bicycle and pedestrian assets, such as the Route 9 Trail.

Evitts Run Improvements: Not to be overlooked, a discussion of a trail connection path along the Evitts Run is highlighted in the Downtown Vision Section of this Plan.

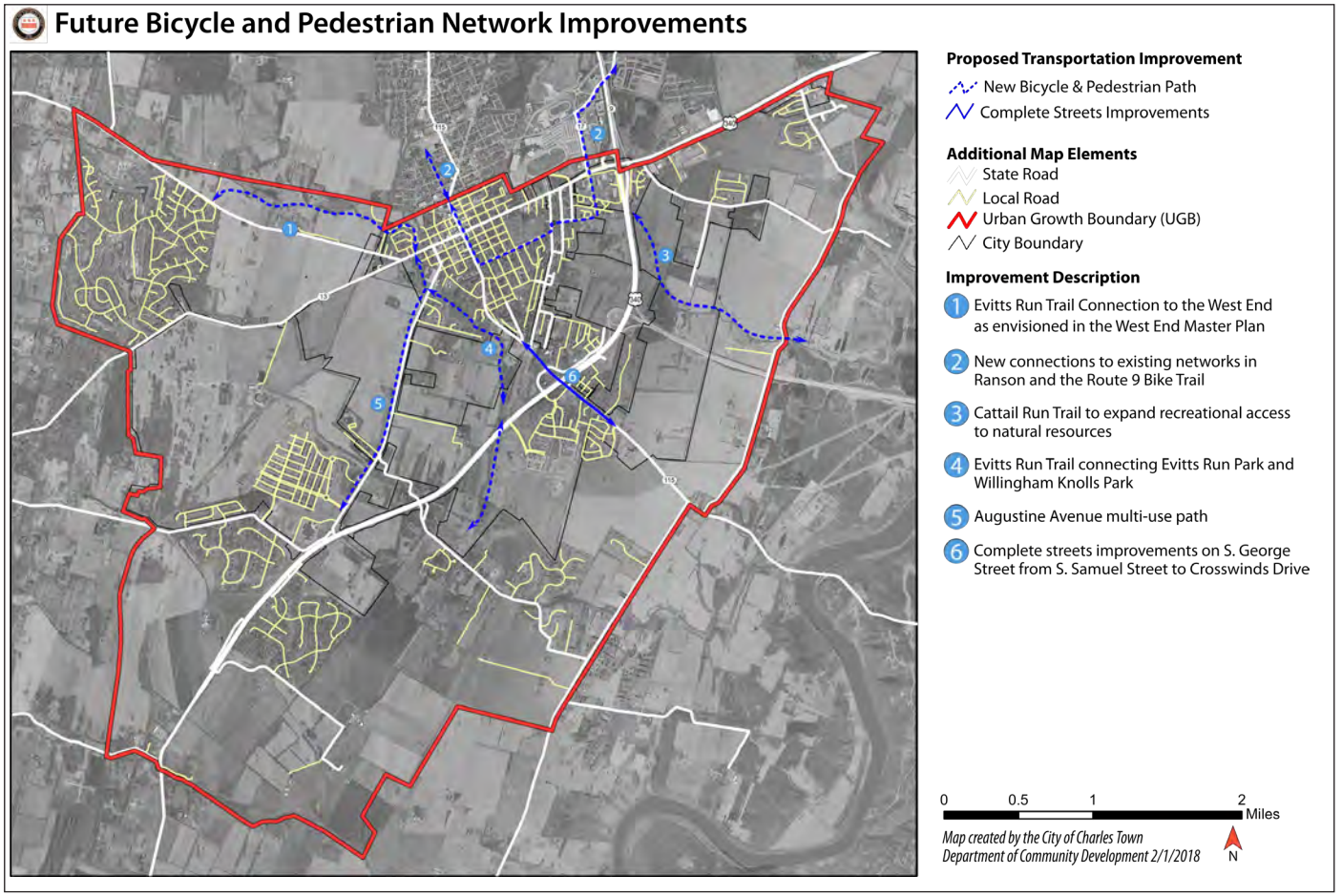


Figure 40: Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Improvements

Building Blocks: Wayfinding

The *2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study* identified a preliminary wayfinding program that is highlighted by vehicular and pedestrian and bicyclist signage. A wayfinding signage system (see **Figures 41 and 42**) for Charles Town should be organized to direct visitors and residents to major attractions and destinations, regardless of their transportation mode. Signage should be strategically located along priority routes that connect to areas of high activity. In addition to navigation, the signs can alert newcomers to the presence of these attractions and encourage "pedestrian propulsion", or some element of the street that entices one to walk farther than originally intended. Fortunately, the City has many points of interest located in its Downtown that are within walking distance.

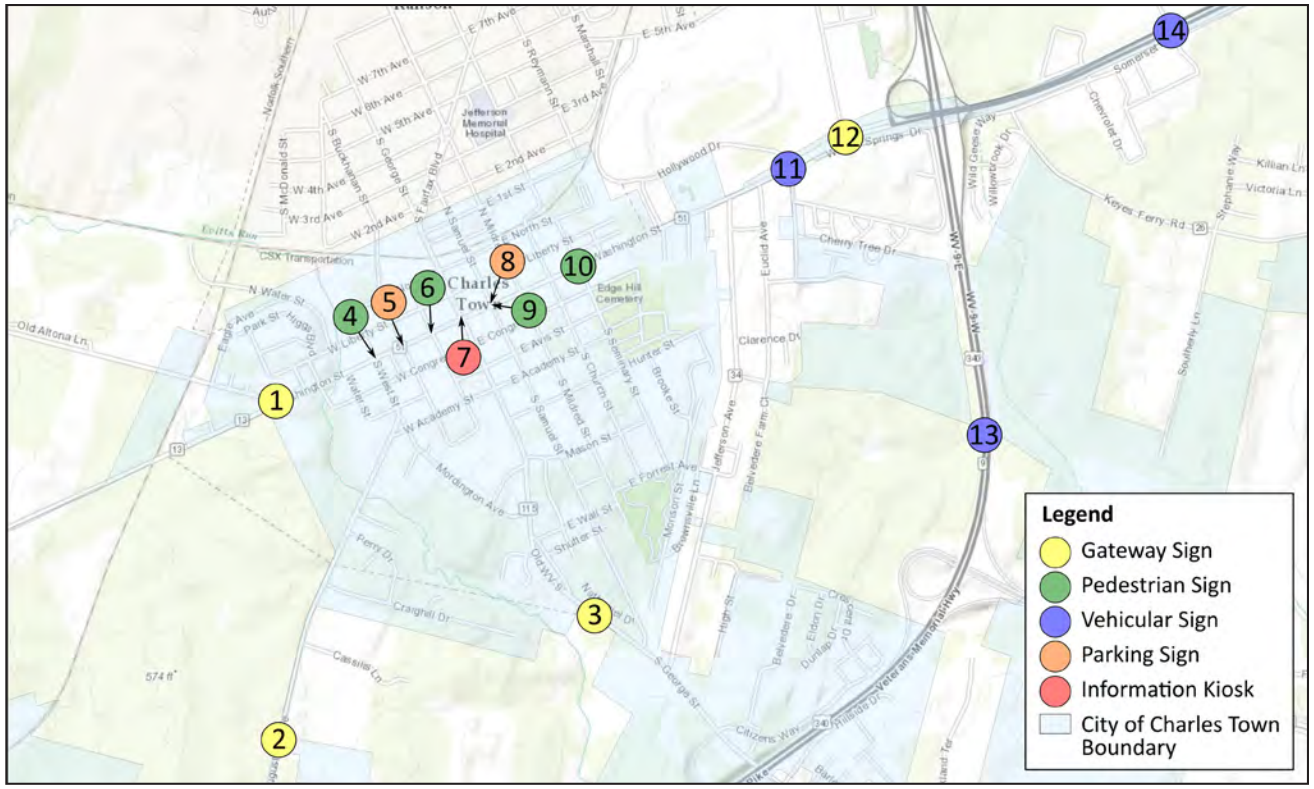


Figure 41: Charles Town Wayfinding Signage Placement Plan
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016



Figure 42: Charles Town Wayfinding Signage Designs
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

Building Blocks: Complete Streets

Charles Town is currently vehicle-focused with wide travel lanes, sidewalk gaps, and limited trail connections. The City has the opportunity to achieve greater mobility and accessibility for all residents and visitors by creating a network of **complete streets**. Complete streets integrate and balance people, land use, and multi-modal transportation into the street design so that all people can utilize and enjoy the space. Street designs are not one size fits all, but instead should be unique to its context.

The Downtown streets should be designed to support pedestrian mobility and active public spaces. Reducing travel lane widths reduces vehicular speeds and allows for the streets to become more pedestrian oriented. Wider sidewalks promote active public spaces and increase commerce for businesses by creating safer places for pedestrians to walk, allowing for storefronts to expand onto the sidewalk, and increasing outdoor seating options. On some streets, such as Charles Street, creating a "shared street" by raising the roadway to the same height as the sidewalk allows for a continuous surface. This creates a pedestrian only space when the road is closed to traffic.

Outside the Downtown, streets should be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and accessibility to Downtown Charles Town and surrounding areas. Design should include safe and visible crossing opportunities and use of landscaping as a buffer zone between pedestrians and bicyclists and vehicular traffic. These streets should allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists through wide sidewalks or separate trails.



Example of Small Town Complete Street Design in Russellville, Arkansas
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Building Blocks: Policy and Implementation

2012 Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

The *Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* provides design standards for any new public or private streets. These design standards are specified for defined functional street types according to the level of service they provide or are intended to provide. Amendments to this document may be needed in accordance with best practice standards or the principles of SmartCode.

2011 Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study

In 2011, HEPMPO completed a study for a proposed transportation development fee for the cities of Ranson and Charles Town. The study was developed as a result of the significant growth projections through the *HEPMPO LRTP: Direction 2035*. The need for a transportation development fee was identified due to limited state funding available for highway improvements and the anticipated growth outpacing the available transportation infrastructure.

The fee structure was developed to be:

- legally and technically defensible;
- financially constrained;
- related to "real" project needs;
- fair and consistent; and
- simple to administer.

The study developed and employed a methodology to determine transportation improvements that would be required at full "build-out" of both Charles Town and Ranson, identified costs associated with these improvements, and estimated the total cost per unit of development (by land-use type) that would use the transportation improvements. The scale of improvements identified as necessary exceeded the available funding for transportation projects. One way in which to fund these improvements is to apply a transportation development fee at the time of construction.

Transportation development fees are typically collected at the time of building permit application and can be collected for individual developers. The fee structure identified through the study included options for credits based on improvements made by developers to reduce the impact on the transportation network. These credits would reduce the total transportation development fee applied per unit.

If the transportation development fee is not applied, the cost of the transportation improvements necessary for development of Charles Town and Ranson will need to be funded at the local and county level through some other type of revenue generation method, including taxes, fines, fees, and unique revenue generating partnerships with the private sector.

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity, it is recommended that Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Ongoing

- Continuously consult EPTA on all initiatives pertaining to public transportation service initiatives within the Charles Town and Ranson service area.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Implement the recommendations contained in the *Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study.*
- Ensure the City's land development regulations include appropriate standards for the placement and construction of transit bus stops and shelters.
- Amend the City's *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to ensure all land developments are required to include sidewalks to increase the City's pedestrian connections and accessibility needs.
- Communicate the City's Comprehensive Plan to HEPMPO and ensure the plan's vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation improvement recommendations are considered for inclusion into the HEPMPO's LRTP.
- Prioritize the City's transportation improvement projects, and secure the necessary local, state, federal, and private funding for their successful implementation.
- Consider implementing a transportation development fee.
- Amend the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to include Complete Streets design standard details and requirements for their use and application.
- Collaborate with EPTA to identify new transit stops within the City and ensure all existing and future transit bus stops are ADA accessible.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Secure the necessary easements to achieve a trail linkage to the Shenandoah River via Cattail Run.
- Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open space, and infrastructure.
- Work with the City of Ranson, Jefferson County, WVDOH, and HEPMPO to determine alternative routes (as specified in the Comprehensive Plan) to reduce through traffic flows in the Downtown.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the viability of creating a MARC station stop in Downtown Charles Town via the existing CSX line between Charles Town/Ranson and Harpers Ferry.

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 7: Image and Identity



Downtown Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Image and Identity: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will protect, enhance, and reinforce its historic, small town character and "sense of place" through high quality urban design and development standards that protect existing assets and investments, and create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods that all people want to live, work, and play.

Objectives:

- Improve the quality of new development and ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Charles Town's streetscapes and public spaces.
- Support the preservation of historic buildings throughout the City and its UGB.
- Improve the appearance of existing commercial facilities to revitalize existing businesses and stimulate the development of new business.

Charles Town's Changing Image and Identity

Charles Town is a historically-rich community founded by President George Washington's brother Charles Washington in 1786 and chartered by the Virginia Assembly in 1787. With a population just above 5,000, the City is a quintessential rural American town nestled within the lush and bucolic Shenandoah Valley. It is the seat of government for Jefferson County and serves as the focal point of commerce for area residents, businesses, and farming community.

"Charles Town has good bones - Downtown COULD be great, if historical buildings are maintained/ updated. There's small town charm potential."

Source: *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

Charles Town has a wealth of heritage tourism assets and its proximity to established destinations like Harper's Ferry, Frederick, Antietam National Park, and other historically-rich communities such as Leesburg, VA makes it a popular tourist destination. Additionally, its proximity to the Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD metropolitan areas coupled with an affordable living environment make Charles Town a primary area for growth and commerce.

Although the City has grown considerably since its founding, the gridded street pattern and resilient urban framework of Downtown and its surrounding Old Town residential neighborhoods remains a testament to Charles Washington's vision. Moreover, the City provides a sense of place within its ever growing and changing landscape as discussed and illustrated in the Growth and Land Use section. However, like many rural American towns and cities, Charles Town's more recent suburban growth and development patterns have begun to erode. Its small town image, identity, and sense of place that is so important to its sustainability, livability, and vibrancy are changing. Understanding these challenges impacts strategic thinking about the City's future growth opportunities. Future scenario envisioning and dedicated planning can ensure that such growth in its historically-rich residential neighborhoods will be beneficial to the entire community.



George Street in Downtown Charles Town
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Building Blocks: Urban Design

A key strategy to sustaining Charles Town's small town image, identity, and sense of place is the application of sound urban design principles and standards. Urban design addresses a wide range of issues, including historic preservation; visual impact of new development; compatibility of new development with the existing community; natural landscape; perceptions of image; and identity and character within a community. The City has already implemented a number of design standards and policies as outlined below. A more comprehensive approach to the application of urban design must be considered in the context of smart growth for small rural towns like Charles Town. This will be discussed later in this section.

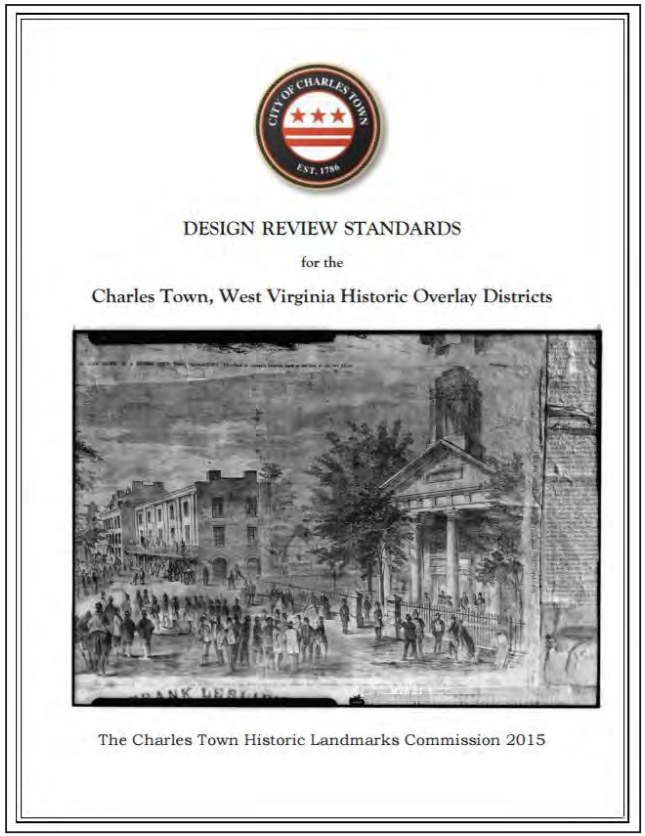
Design Review Standards for the Historic Overlay District

Charles Town currently has Design Review Standards that are maintained, amended, and reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). The HLC has a set of principles that are used to determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness is awarded on all new construction, demolitions, and exterior alterations to structures within Historic District Overlays.

These principles include:

- safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving a historic district, including areas, sites, landmarks, structures and buildings, which reflect elements of Charles Town's cultural, social, economic, political and/or architectural history;
- stabilize and improve property values in the historic district;
- foster civic beauty;
- strengthen the local economy;
- promote heritage tourism; and
- promote the use of the historic district for the education, pleasure, and welfare of Charles Town citizens and the State of West Virginia

There are opportunities to extend the boundaries of the Historic District Overlay from the Downtown Charles Town central business district to include more of the City's residential neighborhoods around Downtown. As more property types are added to the overlay, it may become necessary to amend the design standards to incorporate design features for a more diverse set of buildings.



Land Development Design Standards

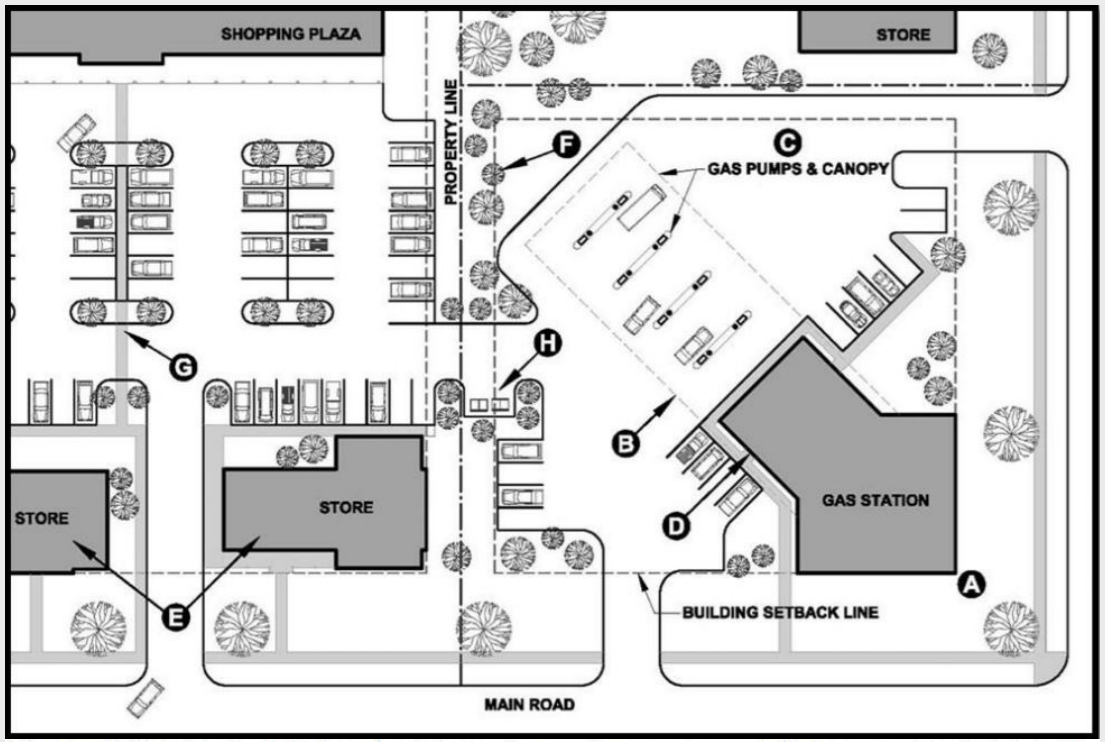


Figure 1323.01B: Redefining the Edges. Corner Lots are especially important in defining the Street. Special attention shall be paid to bringing the Building mass all the way out to meet the corner. Large shopping plazas shall also attempt to infill the front of their Lots with new commercial space to take advantage of the road frontage.

(A) Corner lots should try to place as much building mass near the intersection as possible to help anchor the lot and take advantage of the high visibility.

(B) Gas station canopies should be designed as an integral part of the station architecture whenever possible. This can allow for a visual or even physical connection which provides shelter between the vehicle and the building.

(C) Alternative gas station layouts include placing the pumps near the rear of the lot while having the convenience store out in front near the street.

(D) When it is not feasible to place the building entry directly on the front façade, attempts should be made to ensure that it is still readily visible and faces the main road or internal street.

(E) Older shopping plazas set back far from the street can benefit from developing the land at the front of their lot. This helps to define the street character and allows for more "one-stop" shopping and shared parking opportunities.

(F) Provide trees and other landscape screening to shield large parking areas from adjacent lots.

(G) Large parking lots are encouraged to provide landscaped islands and walkways which help to break up the visual expanse of blacktop and encourage safe pedestrian travel areas

(H) Some developments may benefit from having a shared access to a common dumpster location which both neighboring properties can use.

Figure 43: Charles Town Commercial Urban Design Standards Example
Source: Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

In addition to the Historic Overlay design standards, the City's *Zoning Ordinance* includes design standards for the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial (OT-MUC) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning districts that are to be appropriately incorporated into applicable subdivision and land development applications pursuant to the City's *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance*. These standards require Traditional Neighborhood Development site planning and design for new residential construction. Such design contributes to Charles Town's historic character, upholds and reinforces the pedestrian scale and walkability of neighborhoods, and deemphasizes travel by automobile. The design standards also specify building orientation and site planning practices requirements for commercial and mixed-used commercial development which reinforce Charles Town's traditional urban grid and sidewalk system by maintaining a consistent building edge behind the right-of-way/parcel lines. Additionally, the standards include design requirements for pedestrian circulation and pedestrian amenities. Opportunities exist to strengthen these standards and their application.

Façade Improvement Program

Charles Town has an ongoing Façade Improvement Program that provides 50/50 match grants up to $5,000 to building owners within the Historic Overlay District. The Charles Town's Façade Improvement Program was designed as an effort to improve and enhance the overall look and experience of Downtown Charles Town. The program is intended to assist property owners and/or tenants within the Charles Town Historic Overlay District (HOD) in beautifying and rehabilitating property fronts. The ultimate purpose is to attract both customers and prospective business owners while serving as a tool for revitalization of the Downtown area. This program is managed by the City of Charles Town's Historic Landmarks Commission.

Beautification and Gateways

Charles Town doesn't have a formal beautification program. However, citizens and clubs continuously demonstrate community pride through the City's seasonal beautification of Downtown that consists of the Public Works Department's planting colorful potted flowers during the growing season to the hanging of festive Christmas lights and decorations. Additionally, the Dolley Madison Garden Club annually maintains vibrant flower gardens in the Evitts Run Park that accentuate the park's natural beauty and greatly enhances the enjoyment of this public space.



Dolley Madison Garden Club Flower Garden in Evitts Run Park



Wall Mural - Downtown Charles Town

The City's recent creation of the "C*Town Arts & Culture District" will also contribute to its beautification efforts through the creation of community wall murals and "art alleys" in the Downtown. Such art alleys could further highlight the vibrancy and interest in the proposed expansion of Evitts Run Park as envisioned in the *West End Master Plan*. In fact, the City's first wall mural project was commissioned in 2016.

Research shows that beauty is one of the top three factors in creating community attachment or loyalty. Community beautification focuses on increasing the vibrancy and vitality of residential areas, public spaces, streets, and highways to promote community pride. It also includes environmental beautification involving planting flowers, trees, and other decorative flora.

A community's appearance has a significant impact on the mental impression that is formed by the person experiencing or visiting it for the first time. Depending upon the route taken, first time visitors to Charles Town may indeed form either negative or positive impressions of the City. Their impression could lead to decisions such as extending their visit, returning in the future, sharing their perceptions with family and friends, and perhaps relocating to the community. A pleasant community appearance adds to home values, helps attract business investment, and improves the health and livability of neighborhoods and the City overall.

Community Character and Design

C★TOWN ARTS & CULTURE DISTRICT
CHARLESTOWN, WV

Charles Town already has a distinct character and established cultural center in its Downtown area. The Washington Heritage *C*Town" Arts & Culture District Plan* calls for highlighting those features through simple and tactical streetscape improvements that highlight these details through design. New signage, design branded pavement, new benches, etc., are just a few of the recommendations. These improvements can be made sequentially over time.

Charles Town has the opportunity to engage local artists in the design and construction of new infrastructure improvements. Encouraging murals, pop-up shops, and temporary works of tactical urbanism can help members from across the community join in on the changes.

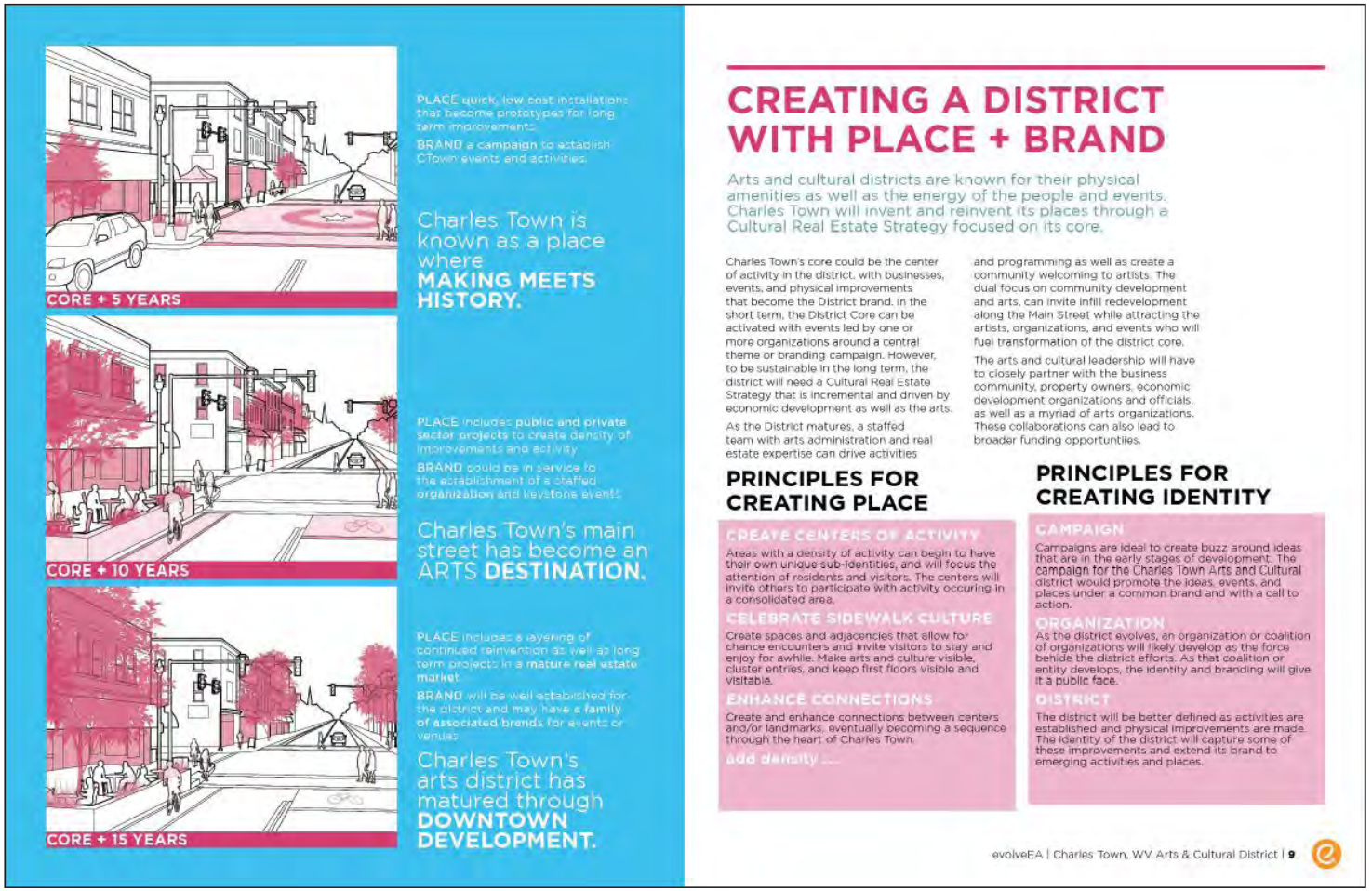


*Figure 44: Charles Town's C*Town Arts & Culture District Plan*

Gateways

Charles Town has four main gateways, entering and exiting the historic districts along Washington and George Streets. The *C*Town Arts & Culture District Plan* recommends gateway signage along East and West Washington Street near Charles Town Races and Evitts Run Park, respectively. Additional gateway opportunities exist by entering the City from the north along N. George Street, and entering the City from the south near the intersection of S. George Street and Jefferson Ave.

The East Washington Street gateway presents the biggest challenge to the City's image and identity. It is mostly due to the heavy concentration of commercial strip development occurring along the U.S. 340 corridor that leads into East Washington Street at the City's boundary with Jefferson County. The lack of site development and urban design standards has produced a hodge-podge of single use commercial establishments. The majority of which have their own access driveways to U.S. 340/East Washington Street creating an environment that is not pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, the City's past efforts to improve the sidewalk infrastructure within its jurisdictional limits notwithstanding. In the future, improvements to the City's eastern gateway should extend to at least Flowing Springs Way.

The Grand Idea: Historically Hip Charles Town

Charles Town already has many assets that make it Historically Hip, but few outside of the City are aware of those resources. The ultimate goal is to change the perceptions of visitors and nearby residents regarding the culture and assets of Charles Town.



Griggs House
Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Building Blocks: Community Assets

Arts & Cultural District (Building C*Town)

In June 2016, the Pittsburgh-based Architecture and Consulting firm evolveEA completed the *C*Town Arts & Culture District Plan* for the City of Charles Town. The plan outlines a series of branding and design features for Downtown Charles Town to establish the area as a tourist and commercial destination under the name C*Town Arts & Culture District. The City has adopted the plan and began the process of establishing the district with a kickoff event during the opening ceremonies of the first annual West Virginia Fest on June 18, 2016. In the future, more of these events will accompany targeted design improvements to public infrastructure in the Downtown area to formally establish the C*Town Arts and Culture District over the following 15 years.

Cultural and Historic Preservation

Charles Town has a number of historic and cultural assets that are well positioned to be leveraged. In addition to the municipal Historic District Overlay in Downtown, Charles Town has three more National Register Historic Districts within city limits. They are Downtown Charles Town Historic District, Old Charles Town Historic District, and South Charles Town Historic District (**Figure 45**). These three districts contain a total of 665 contributing structures of historical and cultural importance. In order to leverage these assets, a culture of awareness needs to be fostered through Citywide discussions on these structures and their historic significance. With a public consensus on the significance of various structures, the task of utilizing both public and private resources to support the preservation of these structures becomes more palatable.

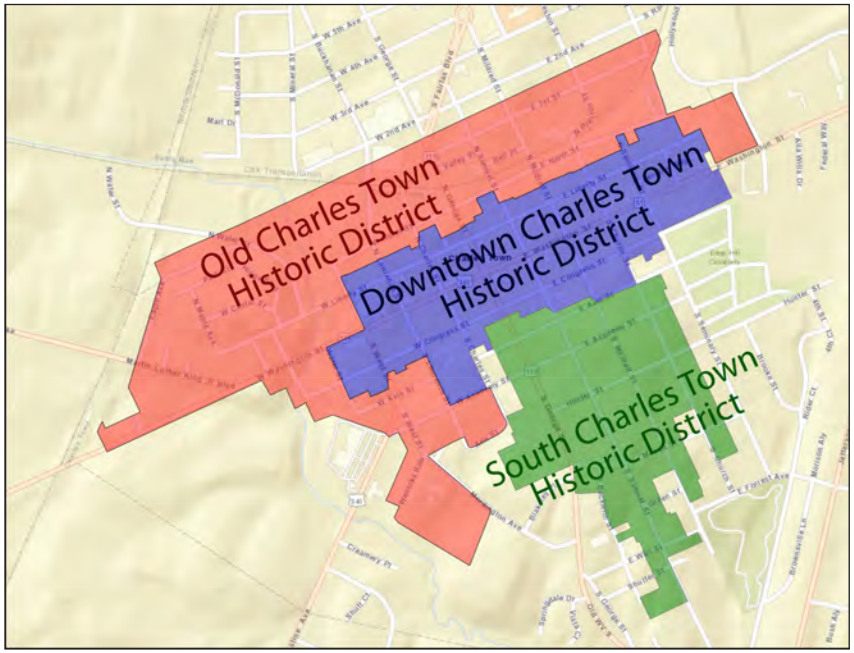


Figure 45: Charles Town Historic Districts
Source: City of Charles Town



Historic Marker
Source: Michael Baker International

Needs for the Future

As envisioned by this Comprehensive Plan, the City of Charles Town desires to strengthen and emphasize its identity as exemplified by the Downtown and its traditionally designed and compact Old Town neighborhoods. This plan's Downtown First Focus approach emphasizes the need to reinvest in the City's existing infrastructure and neighborhoods, and encourage new growth and development (including infill) within its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Also the plan advocates a traditional neighborhood design structure that promotes walkability, connectivity, and a diverse mix of commercial uses and residential types that withstand the test of time.

To accomplish this vision the City must embrace good urban design principles and standards which epitomizes Charles Town's historic, small town, rural character as well as creates a sustainable and livable City. Embracing the principles and standards will create a framework that: supports a growing and diverse population; attracts and retains a skilled workforce; achieves greater efficiency in the use of land; and leads to a more diversified economy.

To reiterate, design standards should address a wide range of issues, including: the visual impact of new development; compatibility of new development with the existing development; natural landscape; perceptions of image; and identity and character within the Charles Town community.

"Good design is not optional. The quality of the physical environment – attractive streets, buildings, parks, and open space – has a direct impact on the city's economy, the sustainability of its neighborhoods, and the successful stewardship of its unique natural and cultural resources. The community expects the highest level of excellence in building design, streetscapes, pedestrian amenities, preservation of special places, and enhancement of community distinctiveness."

Source: *City of Roanoke Urban Design Manual*

According to the *Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan, Envision Jefferson 2035*:

> *Design and form guidelines are standards that aim to maintain a level of quality and architectural character, addressing features such as building facades, orientation, setbacks, public spaces, and/or landscaping. The goal is to address form-based standards, including building height and size elements, highlighting the building's context within its surroundings, rather than only zoning classifications. While the primary focus is on the size, scale, and shape (massing) of buildings in relation to one another, there is also a desire for an appropriate mix of uses. It will continue to be desirable for the style of the new structure to take its inspiration from its surroundings. The important factor of community design is that massing is in keeping with the area in which it is designed.*

Conservation Design Development



The above image shows low density, large lot, single family, detached residential greenfield development in Charles Town. Zoning and land development site layout and design standards are encouraged to achieve development styles that accomplish the same densities, but preserve the city's small town identity and rural viewsheds. The examples below compare an identical development site, but from different development perspectives.

To be avoided (traditional site layout):

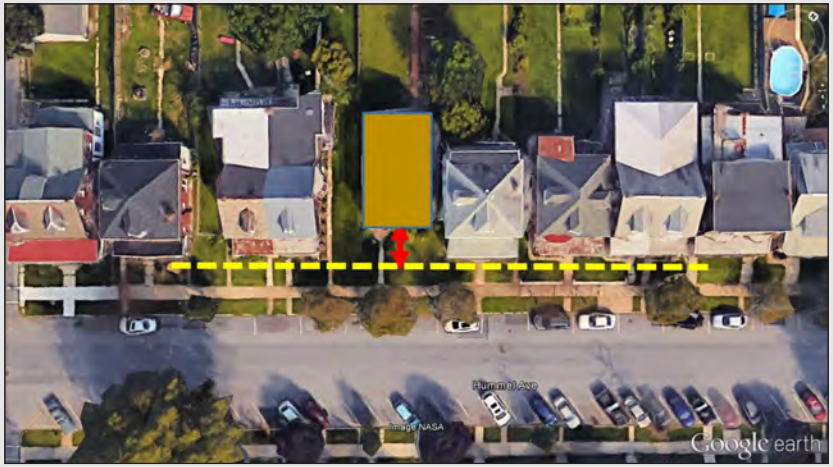


To be encouraged (better site design approach):



Figure 46: Conservation Design Approach
Source: http://www.greenerprospects.com/PDFs/CSD_Overview.pdf

Maintaining Alignment, Rhythm, and Spacing Development



The yellow dashed line in the above image illustrates the building setback line for a typical urban residential neighborhood. As illustrated, the shaded structure's setback is not consistent with the other building setback and disrupts the alignment and rhythm of the streetscape. The illustration further explains how new infill housing setback standards should conform to ensure compatibility with existing housing on the block.

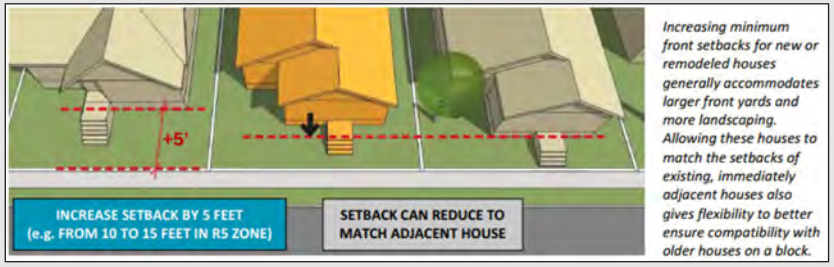


Figure 47: Development Setback Consistency

Traditional Neighborhood Infill Development



The above image shows a traditional residential infill development project in Carlisle, PA. The area enclosed in the yellow box was the former site of the Carlisle Hospital. After its demolition and relocation, the Carlisle community revised the zoning to allow traditional neighborhood development that upholds the surrounding residential neighborhood's design, scale, and massing that includes rear-loaded garages accessed by alleyways. The left image below shows a modern designed house placed between traditional neighborhood homes, while the right image demonstrates a mores consistent neighborhood design.

To be avoided: ***To be encouraged:***





Figure 48: Urban Residential Infill Development

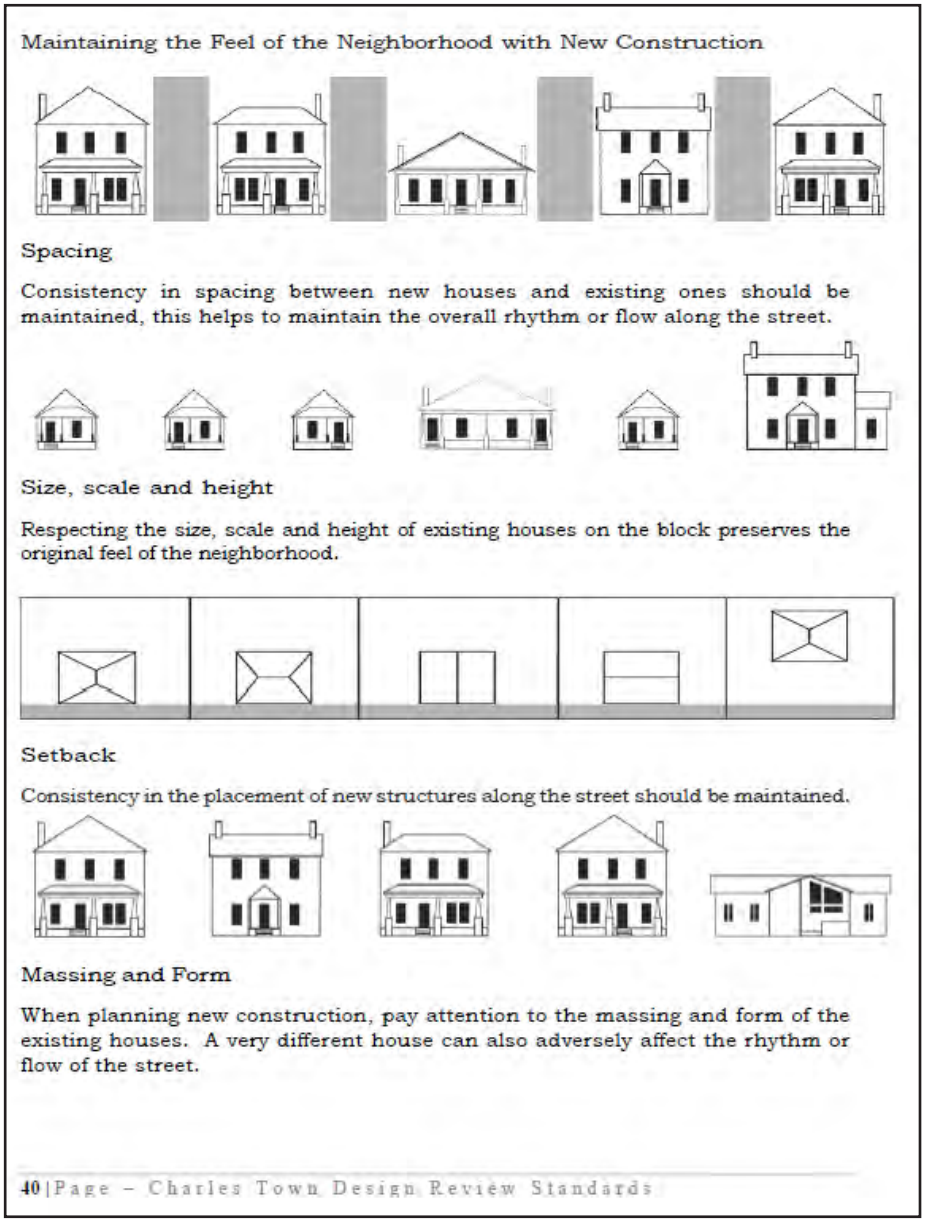
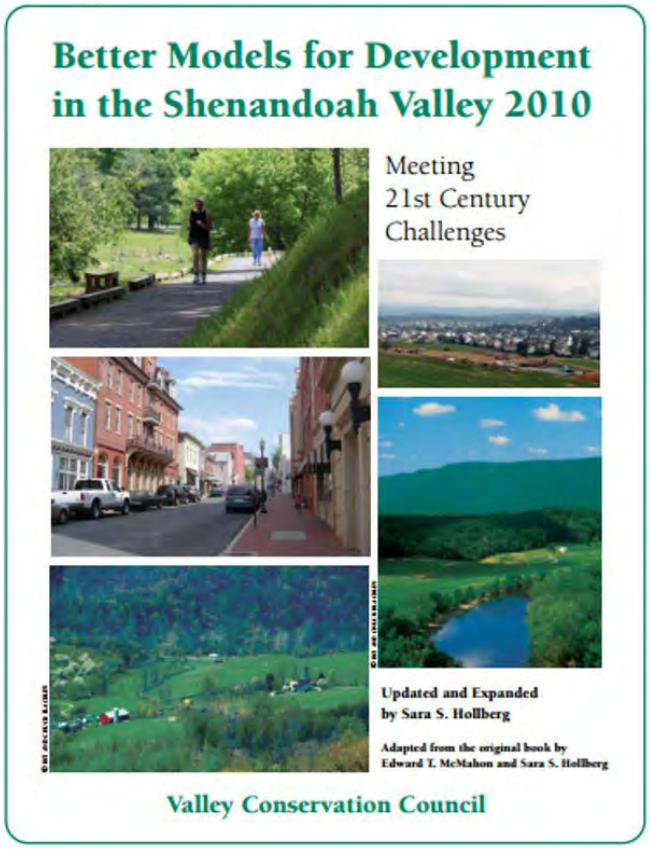


Figure 49: Charles Town's Design Review Standards



Urban design standards may address the following elements:

- architectural detailing
- building style and form
- building height
- building orientation
- building materials
- building setbacks
- circulation lighting
- grading
- landscaping
- lot dimension
- parking
- pedestrian and vehicular access
- preservation of natural and cultural features
- public and open spaces
- signage
- site amenities
- streetscape design

The City must consider a more comprehensive approach to its urban design standards, in light of the City's Historical Overlay District design standards and those detailed in its Zoning Ordinance. This ensures the above mentioned elements are specific to the form and function of its Downtown, Old Town neighborhoods, gateways and commercial centers, and new greenfield development opportunities within the UGB.

As discussed in the Growth and Land Use section, the SmartCode provides a form-based approach to zoning emphasizes form, function and design of land uses, and deemphasizes the focus on specific use types. Among other design resources, the Valley Conservation Council's *Better Models for Development in the Shenandoah Valley* is a very relevant publication that "encourage[s] communities and the private sector to achieve true community development, where projects fit into an overall vision that takes into account fiscal, environmental, quality of life, and economic objectives." [6]

6 Hollberg, Sara S., Better Models for Development in the Shenandoah Valley 2010. Valley Conservation Council. Retrieved online: http://www.valleyconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Better-Models-for-Development.pdf

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Image and Identity, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Ongoing

- Continue to support and work with the Dolley Madison Garden Club to expand upon the City's landscaping and flower garden initiatives within the Downtown and gateways.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Review the *Charles Town Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to identify opportunities to incorporate conservation subdivision design principles and standards as recommended by published practitioner Randall Arndt.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.
- Partner with Charles Town Now to promote clean streets and sidewalks, properly designed signage, facade improvements, placemaking, art and beautification projects to present an appealing image to residents, visitors, tenants and investors to the Downtown.
- Expand the City's current Historic District within the Old Town areas to protect and preserve additional historic resources.
- Implement appropriate regulations and standards to preserve historic buildings and properties located within the City's undeveloped areas that often include historic homestead and farmstead properties and buildings. Such properties and buildings should be protected from new development and/or integrated into the proposed land development plan.
- Promote, encourage, and incentivize the redevelopment of the Hill Dale Shopping Center into a vibrant new commercial mixed use center that is supportive of the West End neighborhood and Downtown revitalization. The mixed use center should serve as an additional hub and anchor connecting mixed use residential development with Downtown.
- Promote, encourage, and incentivize the redevelopment of the Somerset Village Shopping Plaza into a vibrant mixed use Town Center.
- Develop design review standards that are appropriate to the context of new developments in the Old Charles Town area not covered by a historic overlay district.

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 8: Quality Public Services



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Quality Public Services: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives:

- Ensure the delivery of quality, adequate, and affordable public water and sewer services through intergovernmental cooperation.
- Continue to provide a high quality and well-trained police force to meet the City's law enforcement and protection needs.
- Support the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers.
- Promote the sustainability of the Charles Town Library to ensure its continued provision of quality museum and library services.
- Continue to provide diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities, and open natural spaces.
- Continue to support the provision and delivery of quality public education services and increase access to vocational educational opportunities.

Building Blocks for Quality Public Services

Quality public services are the foundation of strong growing cities. Clean and economical drinking water and efficient wastewater treatment is central to a city's ability to provide for its residents. Residents require well-run and responsive law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and fire departments. Families expect investments in schools, libraries, community meeting spaces, and recreational opportunities. Proper implementation of technology and telecommunication capabilities can increase the efficacy of public services and provide opportunities for growth. The City of Charles Town recognizes the importance of not just maintaining, but improving and upgrading its public services to exceed the needs of residents. By ensuring that public services are effective, Charles Town will have the standing required to attract new residents, tourists, and economic investment.

Public Safety

Fire/EMS

Two volunteer fire/EMS departments serve the City of Charles Town. The Independent Fire Company's designated territory is the northern part of Charles Town, encompassing the Downtown. Independent Fire Company has approximately 50 active members and responds to an average of 1,300 service calls per year. The southern part of Charles Town is serviced by the Citizens Fire Company. This company has over 70 volunteers and typically responds to more than 2,000 service calls per year. The designated territories of each department within the City are shown in **Figure 50**. Both departments service significant areas of Jefferson County.

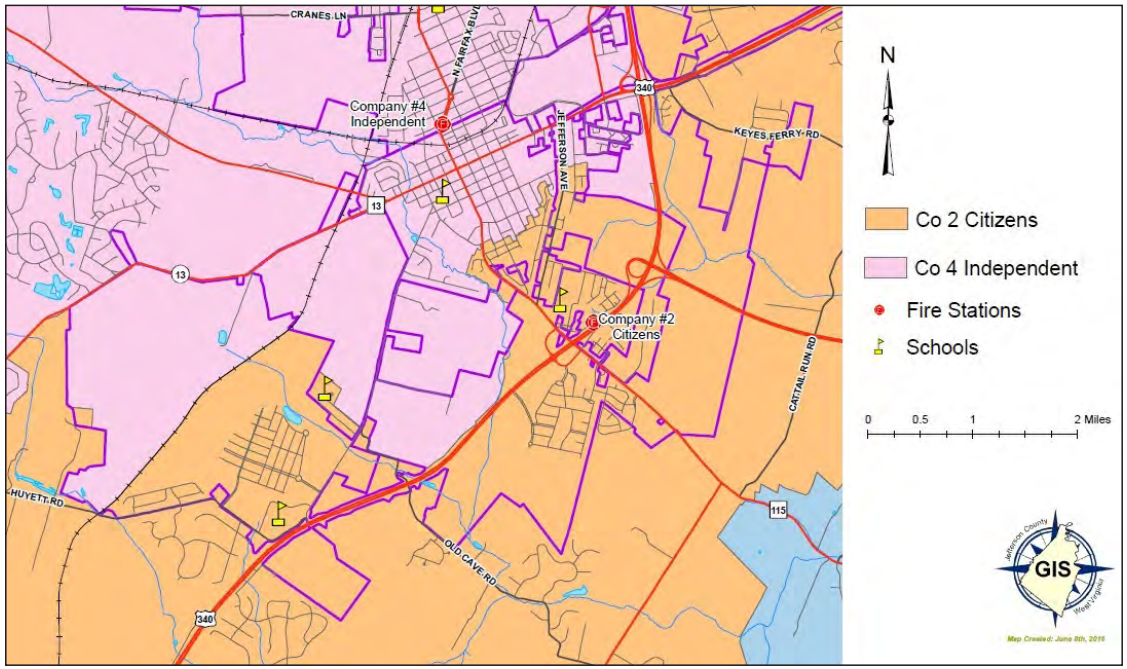


Figure 50: Fire/EMS Responsibilities within the City of Charles Town
Source: Jefferson County, 2016

These volunteer fire departments function independently of City governance and are funded primarily through their own fundraising initiatives. Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County provide only minimal support to local fire departments. Jefferson County does support a separate entity, the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency, which hires emergency response staff and provides emergency medical and fire suppression assistance across the county, in combination with local volunteer fire departments. Jefferson County has enacted an annual $40.00 residential fee and an annual $85.00 commercial fee to support the EMS services. Recently, the residential fee has been reduced from $40.00 to $35.00, which was publicly and greatly debated.

The reduction of this revenue specific EMS fund does not advance the effort to promote quality public services. At times, these two local fire departments struggle with volunteer recruitment and fundraising enough to adequately equip themselves. However, the operation of these departments is much too expensive for Charles Town and Ranson to fund, and providing additional City funding could endanger the departments' ability to solicit donations from the public. Nonetheless, the City of Charles Town stands behind its volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel and recognizes the essential lifesaving services they provide. The City will continue its support for both fire departments and encourage residents to support them as well.

Charles Town Police Department

Charles Town's Police Department provides for the safety and well-being of all residents, visitors, and businesses within Charles Town. The department currently operates out of the police station located at 114 West Liberty Street and has 18 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees on staff. This includes a chief, a captain, two lieutenants, three sergeants, four corporals, four patrolmen, several part time crossing guards, a parking meter attendant, and an administrative assistant. The City is in the process of relocating the police department to 661 South George St., which provides a more modern facility that is centrally located to the department's service area.

The Charles Town Police Department has an annual operating budget of approximately $1.65 million. The City of Ranson also has its own police force, which is comprised of 16 FTE employees with annual operating budget of approximately $1.344 million. In comparison, Charles Town's and Ranson's police departments' annual operating budgets respectively represent approximately $314 and $272 of per capita expenditures. The cities' joint-commissioned *2015 Collaboration Study* provided an extensive evaluation of their respective police departments (among other City department functions) and evaluated opportunities for intergovernmental collaboration to achieve greater efficiencies in their respective law enforcement staffing and equipment, and ultimately overall cost savings.

In light of the collaboration opportunities, Charles Town is committed to ensuring that is police department resources and law enforcement capabilities are right sized based on the City's population.

Recreation

The City of Charles Town recognizes the importance of recreational opportunities in maintaining a good quality of life for residents. Parks and community green space increase the ability and desire for residents to engage in physical activity, improving community health and wellness. Developing a park in a neighborhood can also increase the value of nearby properties while decreasing city stormwater management costs.

Charles Town parks are operated by the City of Charles Town Parks and Recreation Commission (CTPR) and maintained by the City. The City established CTPR in 2005, and it, along with the City, work hand-in-hand but are distinct entities. CPTR has its own program-based employees that are responsible for the operation of the public pool and seasonal tennis programs. The City provides administrative, financial, and maintenance support to CTPR and a management services agreement is being drawn up to formalize this arrangement and provide proper oversight. Regarding programming, there may be opportunities to partner with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation.

The CTPR operates the park systems summarized in **Table 8** and illustrated in **Figure 51**. These systems are located within the City's existing jurisdictional corporate limits.

At this time the CTPR has not developed a parks and recreation master plan, however, the City's *Evitts Run Revitalization Master Plan* provides a series of detailed expansion and improvement recommendations for Evitts Run Park, as well as repurposing opportunities for the Charles Town Skate Park. The CTPR will need to consider future parks and recreation needs based on the Future Land Use Plan and needs of the population. For example, the Comprehensive Plan Community Survey indicates the general public's interest in the availability of volleyball courts, tennis courts, and water features (splash pads) among other recreational facility amenities as listed in **Figure 52**. These and other amenities will need to be considered, prioritized, and funded (via a Capital Improvements Plan) in the future as demand and funding availability warrant.

City of Charles Town Parks and Recreation Commission

Mission:

It is our mission to enhance and unify our community by providing diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities and open natural spaces that serve the needs of our citizens and visitors.

Values:

We believe that parks and recreation opportunities are an essential component of a strong and vibrant community. Quality parks, recreational facilities and programs strengthen community pride and sense of place, promote health and wellness, contribute to a healthy economy and preserve natural and cultural resources.

Source: *City of Charles Town, 2016*

Charles Town's Parks and Recreation Commission should collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the *2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan*. Such facility improvements could serve to help meet the City's park facility programming needs. Doing so could eliminate duplication of resources and create greater efficiencies in the City's and County's capital investments.

Park	Location	Size	Type	Features/Amenities
Charles Town Skate Park *(future improvements planned in the West End Revitalization Plan)*	102 Maple Avenue, Charles Town, WV	~1.5 Acres	Active	Half-pipe, quarter pipe, grind rail, bank rail, stairs, picnic table, and other equipment with a steel riding surface; the park is usable for skaters of all levels. Two benches and a picnic table also provide seating for spectators.
Evitts Run Park *(future improvements planned in the West End Revitalization Plan)*	W. Liberty Street (between N. West and N. Water Streets), Charles Town, WV	~2 Acres	Active	Regulation basketball court; a second multi-use court; play structure and other playground equipment; benches, picnic tables, and an outdoor grill; and one pavilion.
Happy Retreat/Craig Hill Estates	Craig Hill Estates and Happy Retreat, Charles Town, WV	23 Acres	Passive	Hard-surface walking trail, plus gravesites of Charles Town's Founder, Charles Washington, and his wife, Mildred.
Jefferson Memorial Park	S. Mildred Street and Morrison Street, Charles Town, WV	11.6 Acres	Active	Hard-surface walking trail, three tennis courts, two basketball courts, two playground areas, four pavilions, a Veteran's memorial, and an outdoor public swimming pool
Willingham Knolls Park	Old Cave Road near the intersection of Rt. 340, Charles Town, WV	66 Acres	Passive	Hard-surface walking trail, benches and footbridges over Evitts Run

Table 8: Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission Park Resources
Source: Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission, 2017



Figure 51: City of Charles Town Public Park Facilities
Source: City of Charles Town Department of Community Development, 2016

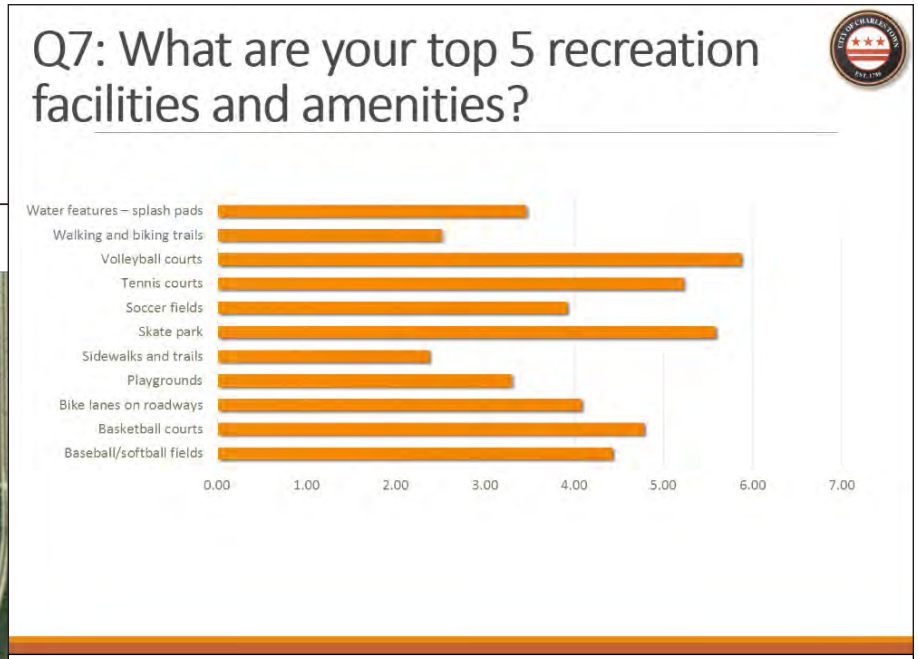


Figure 52: Charles Town Community Survey: Top 5 Recreation Facilities/Amenities
Source: Charles Town Comprehensive Plan Community Survey, 2016

Water and Wastewater Services

Water and wastewater utility providers can have a significant impact on their community and the environment. Service rates must be economical so that not too large of a burden is placed on residents, but maintaining and operating water and wastewater treatment facilities can be an expensive proposition. Additionally, these water and wastewater operations must be conducted with great care in order to meet strict health, engineering, and environmental regulations.

The Charles Town Utility Board recently completed a *Source Water Protection Plan* for its water treatment facility in May 2016. This plan emphasizes the need for the Board to work with local farming regulatory and advisory agencies to raise awareness about nutrient and land management issues to reduce nutrient runoff and water non-point source pollution. The Board would also like to strengthen its relationships with the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) and the WV Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR) and work with them to ascertain methods to identify and reduce contamination sources. Generally, the Board also sees a need to raise awareness among the general public about the importance of protecting drinking water supplies and increase the involvement of residents in the development of source water protection plans.

Charles Town Utility Board

The Charles Town Utility Board was created in 1998 by the Charles Town City Council to supervise, manage, and control the operation of the city's waterworks and sewage system. The Charles Town Utility Board systems provide water and wastewater service to Charles Town residents, residents in Ranson, and surrounding areas in Jefferson County. The Board currently operates the Charles Town Water Treatment Facility, which withdraws water from the Shenandoah River. This facility has the capacity to store 4.0 million gallons of treated drinking water per day and currently treats and produces an average of 1.68 million gallons per day. The Board also operates three wastewater treatment plants (WWTP): Tuscawilla WWTP; Willow Spring WWTP; and Charles Town WWTP. These WWTP's have a combined average daily flow of 2.35 million gallons and total annual flow of 858 million gallons. The WWTP's total available treatment capacity is 0.75 million gallons, which equates to approximately 4,166 additional households.

Additionally, the Board released, in April, its *2015 Wastewater Strategic Plan* and *Ten-Year Wastewater Capital Plan*. This plan examines the future wastewater needs of the Board's service area, determines needed upgrades, and provides implementation recommendations. These recommendations included additional actions to reduce nutrient loads in treated wastewater, continuing growth related capital projects, and evaluating the Willow Spring WWTP for possible closure. The Board has made a preliminary assessment that the Willow Spring WWTP is superfluous because there is available treatment capacity at both the Charles Town WWTP and Tuscawilla WWTP. The Willow Spring WWTP also has limited expansion potential because of its discharge location along Cattail Run. Furthermore, this WWTP regularly exceeds its discharge limits on copper and zinc, resulting in permit violations.

Three sewer utilities provide wastewater treatment services to Charles Town, Ranson, and the immediate surrounding areas of Jefferson County. The service providers are the Charles Town Utility Board, the Ranson Sewer Department, and the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD). On November 2016, Charles Town and Ranson presented a preliminary sewer reorganization plan to the Jefferson County Commission. The plan proposes that the Charles Town Utility Board and the Ranson Sewer Department divide and acquire the existing Jefferson County PSD assets and debt. This plan would reduce the redundancy and inefficiency that occurs under the current ownership system. In May 2017, the Jefferson County Commission held a Public Hearing and voted to dissolve the Jefferson County PSD and have Charles Town Utility Board take over the assets and debt. This process has been approved and the proposed reorganization and consolidation is supported by the Comprehensive Plans of Jefferson County, Ranson, and Charles Town. *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040* continues to support the consolidation of the three service providing entities.

Education

Jefferson County Schools

High quality schools are fundamental to long term economic growth in an area. Schools educate and prepare the youth of today to be contributing citizens and the economic drivers of the future. Families also place a high value on being located in a good school district when relocating or buying a home. The City of Charles Town is fortunate to be served by Jefferson County Schools and its exemplary staff. The Jefferson County Schools includes two high schools, four middle schools, eight elementary schools serving grades K-5, one primary school serving grades K-1, and one intermediate school serving grades 3-5. The specific schools that cater to the Charles Town area are Washington High School (its service area can be seen in **Figure 53**), Charles Town Middle School, Wright Denny Intermediate School, Page Jackson Elementary School, Harpers Ferry Middle, and Driswood Elementary.

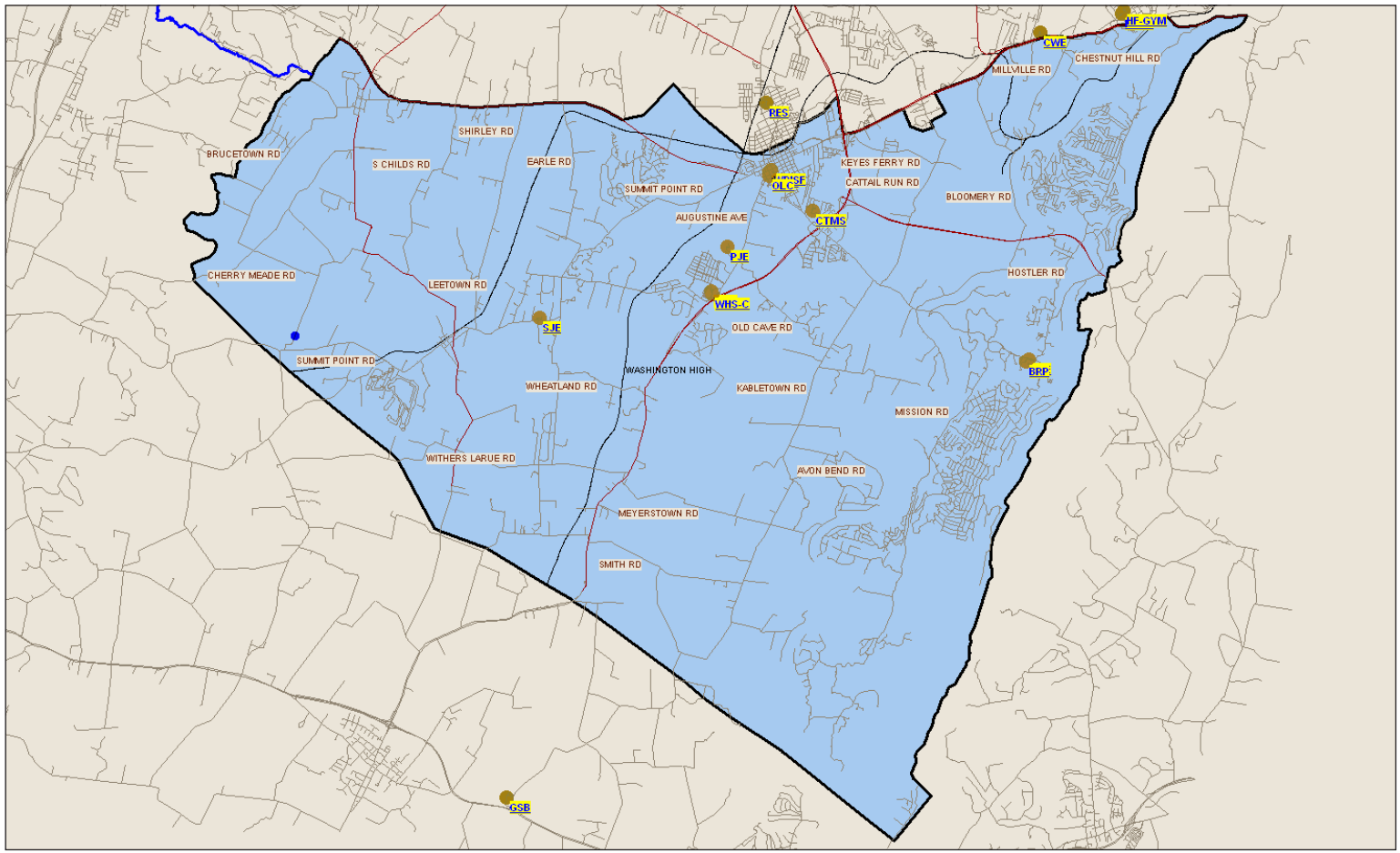


Figure 53: Washington High School District Map
Source: Jefferson County Schools, 2016

A major issue that the Jefferson County Schools must overcome in the coming years is student enrollment growth. At a Jefferson County Schools Board of Education meeting in September 2016, the current superintendent of the district, Dr. Bondy Shay Gibson, gave a presentation on projected student growth and related planning efforts. She stated that the projected 2027 student enrollment will be more than 10,000 students and that district schools will reach their maximum capacity by 2024 if this growth rate continues. The Board of Education must take steps to expand its capacity while maintaining the same level of educational quality.

Another long term project is the schools' goal of increasing the use of technology in the classroom and making computer access more readily available to students. The long term goal is to have a device for every student and teacher. More immediate projects Jefferson County Schools hopes to address in the 2017-2018 school year include a redistricting plan and to prepare an update of the schools' transfer policy. Charles Town would like to strengthen its relationship with Jefferson County Schools in the future and assist the Board of Education, its staff, and its students whenever possible. A city can only be as strong as its local schools.

To that end, Charles Town supports that existing schools remain in the urban core and are not vacated by the school district.

The following schools are within the Charles Town UGB:

- Page Jackson Elementary;
- Charles Town Middle School;
- Wright Denny Intermediate School; and
- Washington High School.

As growth occurs in the UGB all of these schools will be able to serve a population that can walk to the schools. The Growth and Land Use and Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity sections of the Comprehensive Plan provide a unified vision for future land use and multimodal connectivity throughout Charles Town. This vision encourages the increased use of pedestrian and bicycle transportation modes to reduce the reliance on motorized transportation to access Downtown Charles Town, as well as various other destinations such as schools, parks, shopping, etc. As such, there is the opportunity to provide safe environments and pathways that encourage the City's school-age children to walk and bike to school, thereby increasing their healthy and active lifestyles.

Vocational Education

Vocational education is a valuable element of the education system and prepares students to transition directly into a trade, craft, or professional support positions. It is greatly appreciated by students, employers, and local stakeholders. Jefferson County Schools have a multifaceted approach to providing vocational education to its students. At Washington High School, instructors are provided in agricultural science, business and marketing, and family and consumer science programs. Students can take a concentration in one of these areas through a series of courses. Examples of these courses include Agricultural Equipment and Repair, Companion Animals, Natural Resources, and Equine Science in the agricultural concentration or Accounting, Business Computer Apps, and Desktop Publishing in the business and marketing concentration. The family and consumer science concentration includes courses such as Food and Nutrition, Careers in Education, Parenting Strong Families, and Applied Design: Housing and Interior Design. Washington High School also offers the opportunity for students to become certified Microsoft

Office Specialists through the Microsoft Imagine Academy. Additionally, the James Rumsey Technical Institute is the designated Area Technical School for Jefferson County Schools. James Rumsey offers technical and vocational education opportunities for high school students and adult learners. It has 18 high school programs in which students can participate and earn credits. With the rapidly changing economic forces in the world today, vocational education will be of increasing importance. Charles Town recognizes this importance and will seek to encourage these vocational programs and their students.

Charles Town Library

The Charles Town Library is a privately endowed library that serves Jefferson County. The library is free to individuals who live or work in Jefferson County. Libraries are a wonderful community resource, and the Charles Town Library serves the City of Charles Town well. The library fosters the love of reading and learning by providing free educational events and book clubs for people of all ages. It also provides the public with access to the internet and to books for reference or recreation purposes.

The Charles Town Library is the only private nonprofit library in Jefferson County, and it is also the largest library in Jefferson County. The Charles Town Library's director estimates that the library should be serving about half of the county's population due to its location and size. However, the library often struggles with funding. In 2005, 2010, and 2015, county voters approved the Board of Education Excess Levy, which provides funding for public schools and libraries within the county. The county expects to give each library $62,500 in 2016 using these funds. However, the Charles Town Library's status as a private nonprofit has prevented it from receiving this funding from the county. The Charles Town Library does receive allocations from the Jefferson County Commission, the City of Charles Town, and the City of Ranson each year. In 2015, the City of Charles Town contributed $10,000 and the City of Ranson contributed $5,000 to the library.

The library director believes that the county needs to look at additional ways that it can support the Charles Town Library. The City of Charles Town would like to support the Charles Town Library as much as possible and assist the library in identifying and pursing ways to achieve additional funding or become eligible for excess levy funds. In order to achieve the desired goals of the Charles Town Library, the Library Board should develop a strategic plan for its future financial sustainability.



Charles Town Library
Source: Michael Baker International

Technology

Technology and Telecommunications

New technology is continually being developed that can make city services more efficient. It is the city's duty to its residents to make investments in this technology so these benefits can be realized. For example, a variety of technological advances have been made in the area of police services. The City's *FY 2015-2018 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* anticipates that the City will implement a number of upgrades in this area. These upgrades includes a new police record management system, new in-car computers, and improved mobile data capabilities. The City would also like to implement an e-ticketing system. However, the highest priority technological improvement is an exchange server which will allow for direct data backup with the recently replaced server at the Police Department and allow mobile email to be utilized by department staff. The combination of all of these upgrades would allow officers to write reports, check the status of licenses, and complete a majority of their traditional office work in the field. By allowing officers to complete more work in the field, the department can increase its coverage capabilities and its visibility in the community without hiring additional officers. The total cost of these upgrades is expected to be approximately $340,000 spread over five years.

Furthermore, Charles Town is in the process of deploying a cloud based server system across city services. This system will give the City increased flexibility and scalability with regards to technological resources and data access. It should also be an improvement in cost-effectiveness and reliability over the City's current system. Additionally, this upgrade will allow increased collaboration with Ranson, as the remote access capabilities of this new server system will allow the two cities to work together and share responsibilities without a need to physically consolidate. This could enable certain aspects of the *Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Collaboration Study* to be carried out, such as the sharing of planning and zoning strategies or accounting and finance responsibilities.

In addition to the above technology improvements, the City should also continue to make improvements to its web-based applications and services to provide the public greater access to information and create greater efficiencies in doing business with the City (e.g., online bill payments, submission of applications, etc.). These improvements could also create greater efficiencies for City staff by reducing the manual intake and processing of payments, applications, etc. and also increasing accuracy of information.



City of Ranson Gateway Signage
Source: Visitor Inquisitor

Intergovernmental Cooperation with the City of Ranson

As previously indicated, the cities of Charles Town and Ranson jointly commissioned the *2015 Collaboration Study* evaluating the municipal operations of both cities to identify opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration in eight distinct areas including parks and recreation, public works, public utilities, and police services. This study provides a solid foundation for the cities to achieve greater efficiencies in the provision and delivery of quality public services for their respective residents.

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Quality Public Services, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Complete the consolidation of the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD) into the Charles Town and Ranson Public Service Districts, respectively.
- Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the City's Policy Chief to ensure the Police Department is well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.
- Continue to financially contribute to the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers to help them maintain and meeting their annual operating and capital equipment needs.
- Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the Jefferson County Emergency Services City's Policy Chief to ensure the Police Department is well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.
- Encourage the Charles Town Library Board to develop a strategic plan that includes a strategy for its financial sustainability. The plan should then serve as a blueprint for the City's continued financial support of the Library's continued services.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the *2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan*.
- Reevaluate the consolidation and cost efficiency recommendations outlined in the January 2015 *Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study*.
- Develop a City-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan that establishes specific park facility improvement and capital budgeting needs.
- Communicate the Comprehensive Plan to the Jefferson County Schools and advocate that the use of existing school facilities be maximized to support the accessibility to and connectivity with the City's core urban neighborhoods.



Jefferson Memorial Park
Source: Michael Baker International

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 9: Environmental Stewardship



Source: Michael Baker International



Environmental Stewardship: Goal Statement

Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development, and redevelopment.

Objectives:

- Assist Jefferson County with achieving targeted reductions in sediments and nutrients to achieve the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load attainment goals.
- Continue to implement the City of Charles Town's joint brownfield reclamation and redevelopment efforts with the City of Ranson.
- Protect the supply and quality of groundwater and surface water.
- Maximize the preservation of permanent natural areas within new developments.
- Preserve the City's agricultural lands in coordination with the future land use map and objectives to strengthen the City's urban agricultural opportunities and access to fresh foods.
- Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.

Environmental Building Blocks and Community Assets

Charles Town acts as the confluence of multiple natural and political environments. The City is the county seat for Jefferson County, which is bordered by other West Virginia counties and Virginia and Maryland. The cities of Charles Town and Ranson also share a unique and close relationship, jointly pursing some brownfield redevelopment and greenway construction strategies. The area around the City also encompasses the headwaters of several perennial streams, such as Cattail Run, Evitts Run, and Bullskin Run. These small bodies of water flow west to east and discharge into the Shenandoah River, a major tributary of the Potomac River. Furthermore, the City limits encompass urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods. This diverse setting leaves the City with a lofty responsibility to be a good steward of both its natural environment and its residents.

Charles Town Greenprint

As illustrated in **Figure 54**, approximately 18 percent of the City's jurisdictional land area is comprised of forested areas that are represented on the map by the dark green tree cover areas. Comparatively, tree cover represents over 16 percent of the total land area contained within the UGB. As illustrated, these forested areas exist in dense concentrations within the City's Old Town area and in areas beyond. Such heavy concentrations not only provide habitat for wildlife, but trees in general provide a host of environmental and health benefits. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, trees help clean the air, contribute to our health, provide oxygen, clean drinking water, provide shade to lower surface and air temperatures, save energy, and increase property values.

The *2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan* establishes specific tree canopy goals to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate nitrogen and sediment loading into local streams and tributaries within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The plan outlines specific goals for the City of Charles Town including a goal to increase the City's tree canopy by one percent (i.e., approximately 48 acres).

The City is currently collaborating with the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council to determine the feasibility of creating a native nursery (via a public and private partnership) within the City to achieve the following objectives:

- provide a sustainable and affordable supply of native trees and shrubs;
- promote local environmental stewardship to mitigate growth and development impacts on the region's air and water quality;
- reduce the use of non-native plant species and the proliferation of invasive plants, and diversify and strengthen wildlife habitat;
- promote the use of native plant species through education and information; and
- provide technical assistance to the general public regarding the planting, growing and maintenance of native landscapes.

The City recognizes the importance of trees and has enacted a Tree Ordinance under Section 1104.01 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Charles Town. The ordinance creates and establishes a Tree Board, which among other powers and duties granted therein, is required to maintain a Tree Master Plan that includes the identification of the City's Landmark Trees. However, the City's Tree Board is not currently active and the opportunity exists to create a Tree Master Plan to further capitalize on and develop a strategy for the maintenance, protection, and where appropriate, the expansion of its tree resources.[1]

1 Arbor Day Foundation. Tree Facts. Retrieved online at https://www.arborday.org/trees/treefacts/.

Should the native nursery concept prove successful, the City would have an even stronger foundation upon which to build and strengthen its Tree Ordinance objectives. Moreover, the preservation of the existing forested areas must be considered as land development proposals are submitted to the City for greenfield development opportunities. Ensuring the City's land use regulations are sensitive to the preservation of existing trees and forested areas will help protect and grow the City's overall greenprint (**Figure 54**).

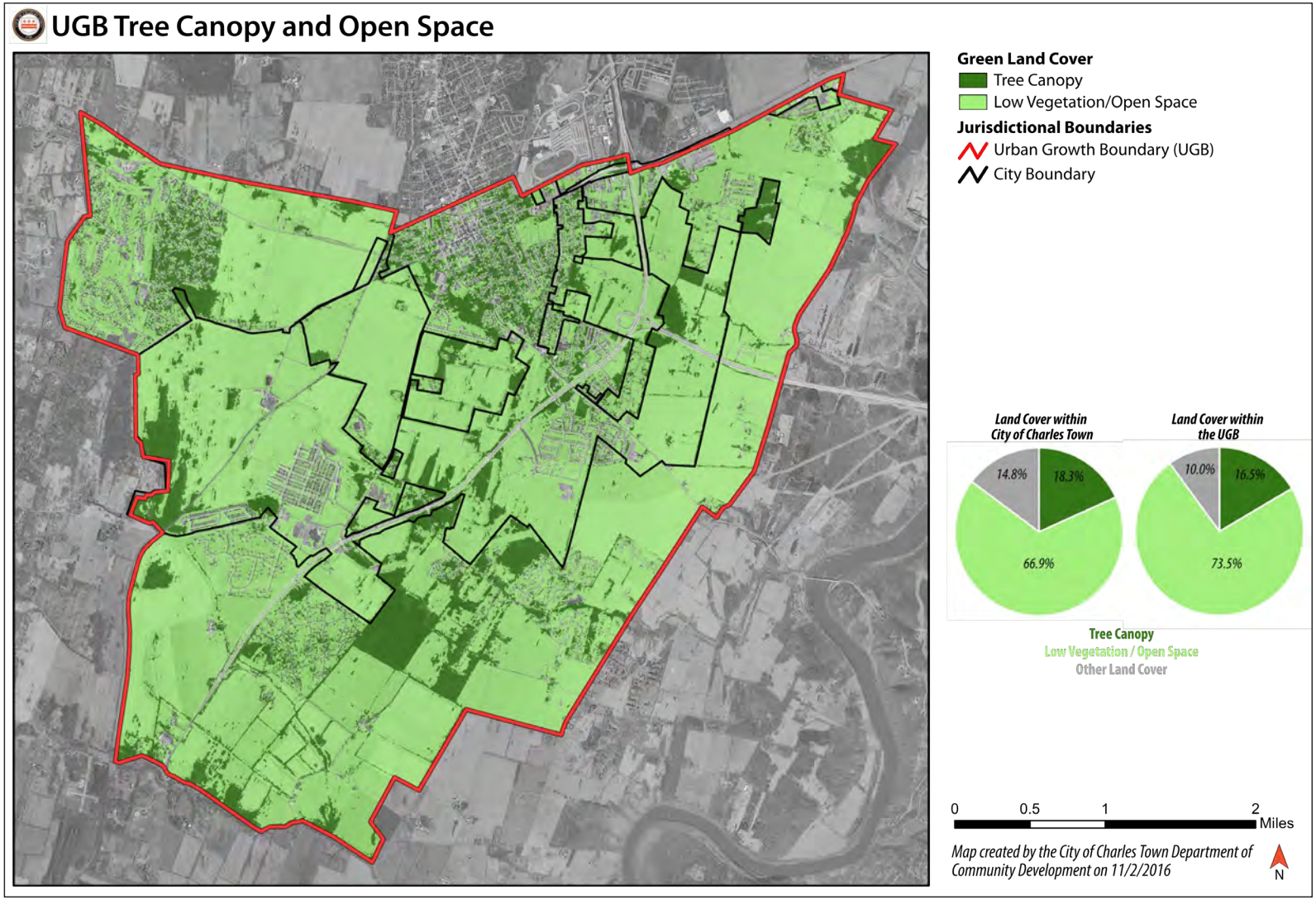


Figure 54: Tree Canopy and Open Space within the Charles Town UGB
Source: Chesapeake Bay Land Conservancy, 2016

Brownfields to Greenways

Charles Town still bears the imprints of its industrial past. The City was shaped by large employers, such as Dixie-Narco, and growth spurred by the energy produced by the Supertane manufactured gas plant. However, changing technology and economic forces have left these sites abandoned and contaminated by their former uses. These brownfield sites sit vacant and currently do not add value to the City. They can be perceived as unsightly to neighboring residents and the City loses out on the potential economic and community value of these properties. This has led the City of Charles Town to make redeveloping of these brownfield properties a priority. Since 2005, collaboratively, Charles Town and Ranson have made significant improvements in the assessment and reuse of brownfields. It is not just environmentally responsible to clean up and rehabilitate these sites, but would result in improved community quality of life and long term economic growth opportunities.

> **"There's a lack of green open spaces in the city, sidewalks, and bikeways."**
>
> ***Source:*** *Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident*

This focus on brownfield development led the City to invest in the creation of the *West End Master Plan*, which was released in July 2015. This plan was partly funded through assistance from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and focuses on addressing brownfields and development in the City's West End neighborhood, as well as portions of the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The most significant aspects of the plan involve the redevelopment of brownfields through the creation of parks and greenways, key infrastructure improvements, and economic development promotion. More information on the *West End Master Plan* can be found in the Downtown Vision of this Plan.

The development of greenways and recreation areas, as discussed in the *West End Master Plan*, is one of the most viable ways to reuse brownfield spaces and improve neighborhoods in a safe and relatively inexpensive manner. The construction of parks and greenspaces does not typically involve significant intrusive soil work and should not disrupt any contamination or environmental caps. Furthermore, no developer needs be enticed to invest in the properties if a greenway or park is constructed. Most importantly, greenways and recreation areas are highly valued by City residents. These areas improve the quality of life of residents, providing them with space to relax and play, while also improving the aesthetics and image of the City. Such amenities are features that do well in other communities. These attributes can be community amenities that help to encourage a prospective resident to locate in Charles Town.

Dixie-Narco Brownfield and Charles Town Public Works Brownfield

The former Dixie-Narco site along W. North Street provides an ideal spot for brownfield redevelopment and reuse. The Charles Town Skate Park was opened in 2008 at the site, but the skate park only utilizes a small area on the property. The *City of Ranson/ City of Charles Town Brownfields Area-Wide Plan*, was released in December 2012. It proposed uniting the West End Park in the City of Ranson with the Charles Town Skate Park, the Charles Town Public Works Brownfield, the Dixie-Narco Brownfield, and the current Evitts Run Park in Charles Town to create a large park and greenway (**Figure 55**). The new park would have a stream walk, sporting and recreation facilities, a dog park, and pavilions.

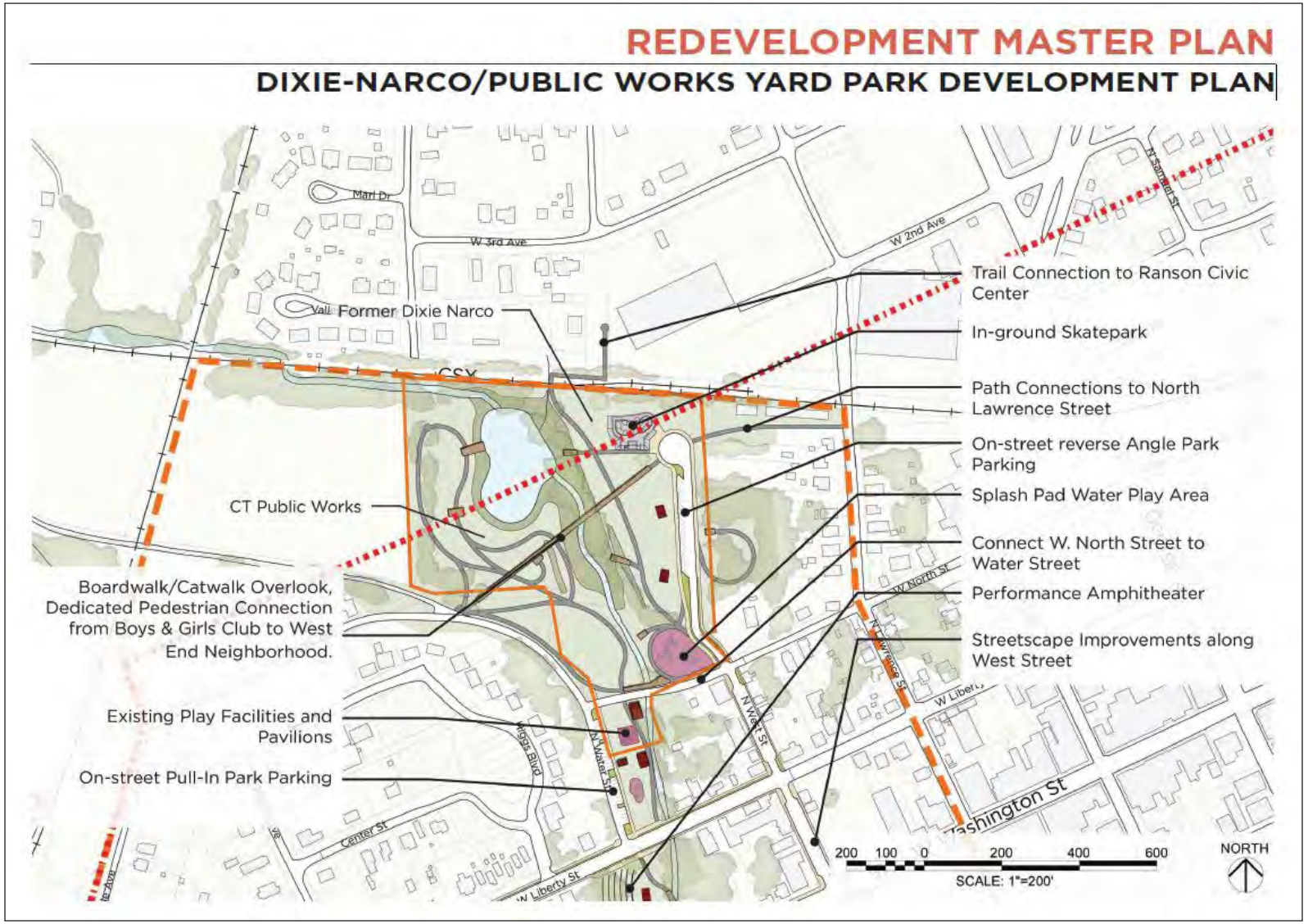


Figure 55: Dixie-Narco/Public Works Yard Park Development Plan
Source: Charles Town West End Master Plan, 2015

Supertane Brownfield

Evitts Run Conservancy

Evitts Run Conservancy is a municipal non-profit formed with the goal of transforming brownfields and vacant parcels along Evitts Run into a greenway, with multiple parks, trails, green infrastructure, and recreational opportunities. The non-profit has been acquiring land that fits this profile and is the current owner of the Supertane brownfield. The Conservancy will likely retain ownership of the land, but lease it to the Charles Town Parks and Recreation Board. The mission of the Conservancy, the redevelopment of brownfields, and the construction of greenways also support another one of the City's environmental stewardship goals: water quality protection.

The brownfield formerly occupied by the Supertane manufactured gas plant, shown in **Figure 56**, also holds much potential for development as a park amenity. The Supertane facility operated for nearly a century, closing down in 1954. Manufactured gas plants produced gas by heating up coal and oil. This gas was stored and piped to surrounding areas where it could be used for lighting, cooking, or heating. Unfortunately, this process also produced hazardous byproducts, and the resulting coal tar has been especially problematic during the remediation of former manufactured gas plant sites. Clean up of these sites is expensive, but Charles Town has received funding assistance from the USEPA to carry out the Supertane remediation. The site's contamination also prevents any intrusive development, making its reuse as a park amenity desired. The park's remediation design, shown in **Figure 57**, proposes a naturalized area traversed by a multi-use trail and a separate nature trail. A park at the Supertane site could potentially synergize well with the adjacent Hill Dale Shopping Center too, by increasing public visibility of both sites and providing a single area for both commercial and recreational activity.



Figure 56: Supertane Brownfield Birds-Eye View
Source: Bing Maps



Figure 57: Supertane Park Plan
Source: City of Charles Town Supertane EPA Revolving Loan Fund, 2016.

Green Infrastructure and Water Quality Protection

Stormwater Management

Addressing Charles Town's brownfield properties is a significant step in improving water quality in Evitts Run and other local watersheds. The remediation of contaminated sites ensures that contaminants will not migrate into nearby waterbodies. Building greenways on brownfield and vacant sites will reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and increase the stormwater management capacity of the City. Improving stormwater management will address flooding and water quality issues with Evitts Run. Recreational facilities will be designed to heavily incorporate green infrastructure features. Such improvements are not only limited to area's along Evitts Run, brownfields and recreational areas, but are to be integrated throughout the City to improve water quality. Where there are no existing stormwater controls, green infrastructure improvements could assist in managing this situation. Green infrastructure is gaining popularity for its aesthetic appeal and ability to improve water quality.

Green infrastructure encompasses a variety of stormwater design techniques, including:

- **Green Walls** - Walls covered in vegetation with a growing media (e.g. soil) supported on the wall face. These walls can reduce stormwater runoff from buildings and absorb additional precipitation.
- **Bioswales** - A gently sloped drainage course that supports vegetation. They are designed to maximize water storage, increase water absorption, and trap pollutants. **Figure 58** depicts a bioswale.
- **Rain Gardens** - A vegetated depression that gives stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces the opportunity to be absorbed.
- **Planters Boxes** - A space with maintained plants and vertical walls. These boxes absorb runoff from impervious urban surfaces and are ideal in dense urban areas or as streetscaping features.
- **Permeable Pavement** - Paved surface that allows infiltration of, stores, and/or treats rainwater. **Figure 59** shows an example of permeable pavement.



Figure 58: Bioswale on Fairfax Blvd., Ranson, WV
Source: Michael Baker International



Figure 59: Permeable Pavement
Source: EPA, 2016

The City of Charles Town will interweave these green infrastructure elements into the construction of parks and the overall urban design of the Downtown. This will enable the City to better manage its stormwater, decrease the amount of runoff from contaminated sites and impervious surfaces, and increase rainwater absorption in the City. The resulting improvements in water quality should make the City successful in its goal of assisting Jefferson County to reducing sediment and nutrient loads within local waterbodies and achieving the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Load attainment goals. A preliminary construction plan for the Evitts Run Green Infrastructure Park Project was released in September 2014. This project is redesigning the site of Evitts Run Park and implement green infrastructure features such as wetland areas, infiltration ponds, swales, and rain gardens. This would improve local water quality and help fulfill the City's regulatory requirements under its MS4 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Projects like these will also help fulfill the City's obligation to current and future residents to improve the health of local water resources.

Additionally, these green infrastructure improvements will contribute to the City's low impact development (LID) approach. Charles Town intends to implement LID solutions during urban revitalization and redevelopment efforts. LID techniques break from traditional stormwater management practices that focus on efficiently conveying water away from a site, and instead seek to maximize the infiltration of stormwater. The benefit of this approach is reduced runoff, which leads to improved water quality, a healthier Chesapeake Bay watershed, and less severe flooding. This can be accomplished through previously mentioned green infrastructure techniques. **Appendix B** provides a more comprehensive overview of the LID approach.

Green infrastructure will also contribute to the City's goal of being a modern and hip City while maintaining its historic roots. Greenways gives pedestrians and visitors the opportunity to enjoy the City free from cars and city streets. Vegetation that accompanies planter boxes, green walls, and rain gardens can add color and life to otherwise dull paved areas. Permeable pavement can add a distinctive look to streets, sidewalks, or parking lots. Green infrastructure is not just about water quality, it is also about quality of life.

Low-Impact Development (LID) is a term used in Canada and the United States to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to manage stormwater runoff. LID emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features to protect water quality. This approach implements engineered small-scale hydrologic controls to replicate the pre-development hydrologic regime of watersheds through infiltrating, filtering, storing, evaporating, and detaining runoff close to its source.

Source: *Larry Coffman et al; Prince George's County, Maryland. Department of Environmental Resources (PGDER) (June 1999). Low-Impact Development Design Strategies; An Integrated Design Approach (Report). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA 841-B-00-003.*

Source Water Protection

The West Virginia Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAP) encompasses both the wellhead protection and surface water source water assessment efforts. The state's implementation of the wellhead protection program began in the early 1990s, as part of West Virginia ground water protection strategy. This protection strategy was extended to surface water sources with the 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments. The Act require states to develop and implement a Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) program designed to evaluate the vulnerability of public drinking water systems to possible sources of contamination, and encourages states to work with these systems in developing protection and management plans.

Wellhead protection required under Section 1428 of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act was established to protect ground water resources from contamination and forms the cornerstone of the Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Program. For more information, please visit: http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/swapfactsheet.pdf

The goal of the WV SWAP is to prevent degradation of source waters which may preclude present and future uses of drinking water supplies to provide safe water in sufficient quantity to users. The most efficient way to accomplish this goal is to encourage and oversee source water protection on a local level.

The Charles Town Utility Board has a current Source Water Protection Plan (2016) that meets the requirements of the West Virginia Code. The plan describes what Charles Town Utility Board has done, is currently doing, and plans to do to protect its source of drinking water.

Rural Identity and Natural Resources

Charles Town prides itself on connecting the greater Baltimore - Washington D.C metropolitan area with the scenic beauty and rural identity of West Virginia. Additionally, agriculture has historically played a significant role in the local economy of Charles Town. Many of Jefferson County's most historic estates were constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries and encompassed vast areas of the areas landscape. Although the original scale and size of these estates have since been reduced considerably in size, many of the original historic homesteads still exist and their legacy should be preserved and where possible integrated into the City's future land use scheme as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan. This is discussed in the Growth and Land Use Section. The goal is to celebrate the City's small town identify that includes its rural and natural landscapes located on the outer fringes of its UGB. Furthermore, the goal is to support the community's existing farming community and encourage the sale and consumption of locally-produced foods and agricultural products.

Farmland Protection

There are many acres of farmland within Charles Town and the UGB. Moving forward, it will be important for the City to further its relationship with the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board so the City can align its farmland protection strategy with other local farmland protection efforts. The creation of county farmland protection programs is authorized and encouraged by the state of West Virginia. The mission of these programs is to protect productive agricultural lands and maintain the viability of local agriculture. According to the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board's *2015 Annual Report*, the Board was created in 2000 and currently protects 4,028 acres on 40 farms. The Board protects farmland by assisting farm owners with the creation of conservation easements for their property and providing incentives to do so. These easements are voluntary legal agreements between landowners and the board that permanently protect the agricultural and scenic qualities of the property. The landowners still retain ownership of the property. However, the property becomes subjected to restrictions on any future real estate, commercial, or industrial development. Conservation easements are a powerful, long term, tool to protect farmers, agricultural lands, and the farming way of life in and around Charles Town. The City will support the mission of the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board and encourage Charles Town landowners to consider conservation easements that align with the Future Land Use Map.



Source: Michael Baker International

Natural Resources

The City's conservation efforts must go further than just conserving farmland. Charles Town can take action to ensure that its soil, land, water, wilderness, and air are protected for future generations. This requires the City to partner with various organizations, state/federal agencies, and its residents. Some important allies to consider in natural resource conservation could include the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Virginia Division of Forestry, the United States Forest Service, West Virginia University Extension, the City of Ranson, the West Virginia University Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, and Friends of Happy Retreat. The City must strengthen these relationships and continue to coordinate conservation initiatives so that they can have the maximum desired impact.

One recent conservation initiative has made use of the City's relationships in an important way. The development of the Happy Retreat Forest and the Happy Retreat Forest Community Forestry Plan involved the City, the Friends of Happy Retreat, the WV Division of Forestry, and several other groups. The purchase of the Happy Retreat Mansion property by the Friends of Happy Retreat and the Happy Retreat Forest property by the City of Charles Town was a significant victory in the protection of the City's natural and historic resources. Both properties could have been purchased by private individuals or developers, but conservation partnerships allowed a plan for public protection of the properties to be realized. The Happy Retreat Forest is the largest tract of forested land within Charles Town, as shown in **Figure 60**. According to the Happy Retreat Community Forest Plan, the 10 acre property is covered by a full stand of mature trees, some more than 100 years old. Now that the City owns the forest it can be fully utilized by the public and the habitat provided by the forest can be protected. The property is also instrumental in helping the City expand its urban tree cover and meet its goals under the *Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plans and Goals*. This plan encourages Charles Town to increase its tree canopy by one percent (i.e. 48 acres) by 2030 and expand canopy coverage and the riparian buffer along streams such as Evitts Run.

The unique and irreplaceable Happy Retreat properties also fit seamlessly into the City's vision for a Citywide network of recreation areas and a greenway spanning across the City. As shown in **Figure 59**, the Happy Retreat Forest, along with the brownfield properties, will allow this vision to be realized. As the City implements its plan to turn these brownfields into recreational resources, it can also begin to seamlessly connect these properties into a larger greenway. This greenway will not only provide recreational enjoyment for residents and visitors, but also help protect the City's natural resources for years to come. The greenway would also follow Evitts Run, protecting it and improving the stream's water quality.

Additionally, the City would like to encourage the use of alternative and renewable energy sources. Renewable energy puts less strain on air quality and natural resources than traditional energy sources. The City can encourage transitions to alternative energy by discussing the topic with residents, building owners, and local utilities. The City will also consider using alternative energy in its own activities and services when the opportunity arises. A model of alternative energy use in Charles Town is the American Public University System (APUS) and their parking facility at 393 N. Lawrence Street. The parking facility is equipped with solar panels that provide a significant amount of energy to the adjacent APUS Finance Center and to charging stations for electric and hybrid vehicles. This type of project shows the potential for alternative energy to be integrated into existing infrastructure.



Figure 60: Evitts Run Conservation and Revitalization Plan
Source: Charles Town West End Master Plan, 2015

Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Environmental Stewardship, it is recommended that Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

Ongoing

- Continue to enforce and administer the City's Stormwater Management regulations to include the utilization of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Design (LID).
- Continue to examine locations that may be abandoned or blighted that qualify for brownfield reclamation.
- Continue to monitor and as needed require remediation of leaking underground storage tanks.
- Continue to advance the implementation of the *West End Master Plan*.

Short-term (0-4 years)

- Implement the Branching in Native Nursery program as detailed in the *2017 Feasibility Study and Business Plan*.
- Implement the recommendations outlined in the *2016 Source Water Protection Plan*.
- Collaborate with the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to identify agricultural land owners that have an interest in participating in GAP to further support and promote locally grown and purchased foods.
- Reactivate the Charles Town Tree Board.

Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Implement the recommendations of the *2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan* for the City of Charles Town.
- Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure as identified and supported by *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040*.
- Consider creating a joint Stormwater Management Enforcement program with Ranson in preparation for the cities' future Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) designations by West Virginia DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Long-term (11-20 years)

- Achieve the ultimate revitalization program as detailed in the *West End Master Plan*.



Willingham Knolls Park
Source: Michael Baker International

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Section 10: Implementation Strategy



Source: Michael Baker International

Introduction

To support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Goal Statements, this Implementation Strategy features implementation strategies for each of the 35 objectives that were identified under the seven theme areas. These strategies outline a tactical approach for advancing Charles Town's 2040 vision by specifying tangible action steps that can be taken to ensure progress over the next 20 years. In addition to implementation strategies, this chapter also identified key partners that the City may collaborate with to support implementation. Partners include local, county, and state entities, as well as qualified consultants who offer expertise in specific areas of need. The Implementation Strategy also identifies possible sources of funding that may be considered to support the implementation of each strategy. Such sources includes the City's Capital Improvement Plan, which would require the City to identify specific sources of revenue (tax dollars) and/or state, federal or private investments over a multi-year funding period.

A targeted timeframe for the completion of each implementation strategy is also outlined in this chapter. The timeframes include short-term (0-4 years), mid-term (5-10 years), long-term (11-20 years), and ongoing, and prioritize the implementation items that can be advanced in the near-term. Finally, the Implementation Strategy identifies funding resource opportunities for each strategy, identifying City, county, state, and other resources that may be available to off-set implementation costs.

The Implementation Strategy should be used by the City Planning Commission and staff to continuously monitor and measure progress on each strategy. The Planning Commission should also report annually or periodically to the City Council on the implementation process and progress made towards achieving the strategies and how they relate to the attaining the Comprehensive Plan goals and vision. The Planning Commission's report to City Council should also provide recommendations on strategies that need to be programmed in the City's Annual Operating Budget and Five-Year Capital Plan, and identify the priority implementation work tasks for the following fiscal year.

Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town

Goal Statement: Downtown Charles Town will be the center of Charles Town and the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
3.1 – Increase economic vitality through Downtown and neighborhood revitalization.	3.1.1 – Implement the *West End Master Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• Sustainable Strategies DC • Private Property Owners • Partnership for Affordable Housing • West Virginia Housing Development Fund	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	3.1.2 – Implement the walkability and accessibility improvements identified in the City's *2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study*.	• City of Charles Town	• WV Department of Highways • Private Property Owners	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	3.1.3 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property, and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy and/or private use, either by sale or lease. The reuse strategy should consider the building's relationship to Downtown revitalization and economic development opportunities.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Building Commission • Non-Profit Organizations • Businesses	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• USDA Local Food Program • USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant • WV Governor's Community Participation Program • Private if a sale/lease
	3.1.4 – Continue to maintain the City's database of blighted and vacant structures and prioritize those structures that are most detrimental to the Downtown's revitalization efforts.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	3.1.5 – Undertake a small area plan with conceptual architectural details that encourages the expansion of the Downtown area by the development and redevelopment of new infill by promoting additional mixed use vertical building as identified in this Plan. Ensure the conceptual architectural details are supportive of the Historic Overlay District Design Guidelines.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Long-term (11 - 20 years)	• Private Investment • Public/Private Investment
3.2 – Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation, technical and financial business assistance, and overall improvements to the business climate and Downtown business environment.	3.2.1 – Implement a wayfinding signage program consistent with the recommendations outlined in the City's *2016 Walkability Study*.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• WV Small Cities Block Grant Program
	3.2.2 – Create a marketing campaign promoting incentives (loyalty cards, discounts, special promotions) to Downtown employers and workers, as well as visitors to Jefferson County (Charles Town Races, Harpers Ferry, etc.).	• Charles Town Now	• Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau • Businesses	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Charles Town Now • WV Small Cities Block Grant Program

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: Downtown Charles Town will be the center of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
3.2 – Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation, technical and financial business assistance, and overall improvements to the business climate and Downtown business environment.	3.2.3 – Establish a small business, low interest loan fund and provide technical assistance training to perspective loan recipients on business planning and budgeting. More information is available from the U.S. Small Business Administration at https://www.sba.gov/starting-business/finance-your-business/loans/sba-loans	• Charles Town Now	• Local Financial Institutions • WV Small Business Development Center	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• SBA Basic 7(a) Loan Program • SBA Certified Development Company • (CDC) 504 Loan Program • SBA Microloan Program • Nonprofit community based lenders
	3.2.4 – Become a nationally-certified Main Street community to leverage business retention and recruitment, market analysis, fundraising, vision and strategic planning, property development and other necessary technical and financial business assistance needs.	• Charles Town Now	• CIty of Charles Town • West Virginia Department of Commerce	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • CTN annual fundraising
3.3 – Provide attractive storefronts occupied with a variety of appealing retail and service businesses.	3.3.1 – Continue to fund, administer and promote the Charles Town Façade Improvement Program to Downtown property and business owners.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Property owners	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	3.3.2 – Utilize the City's market analysis information to identify, attract and retain prospective businesses that meet the Downtown's market demand needs. Update the analysis on a regular basis.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
3.4 – Create and maintain a clean, well-lighted and inviting appearance day and night throughout the Downtown.	3.4.1 – Continue the City's seasonal flower planting and seasonal decorating activities within Downtown.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Dolley Madison Flower Club	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget • In-Kind Services Partnerships
	3.4.2 – Replace the City's Downtown amber-colored street-lights with cleaner and brighter, energy efficient LED lights.	• City of Charles Town	• Potomac Edison	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* • Potomac Edison
3.5 – Preserve and protect the Downtown's architecture that offers visual unity and a quality experience in history and culture.	3.5.1 – Continue to administer and enforce the City's Design Review Standards for Charles Town's historic districts (Downtown Charles Town, Old Charles Town, and South Charles Town).	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Historic Landmarks Commission	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
3.6 – Program and promote Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit areas residents, visitors, industry, and the university community.	3.6.1 – Implement the *C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan.*	• City of Charles Town	• C*Town Creative Council • Charles Town Now • Jefferson County Arts Council • Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: Downtown Charles Town will be the center of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
3.6 – Program and promote Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit areas residents, visitors, industry, and the university community	3.6.2 – Build and strengthen an online presence for Downtown Charles Town through a more effective website and greater utilization of social media tools.	• Charles Town Now	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Charles Town Now Budget
3.7 – Promote adaptive reuse of and investment into Downtown properties that strengthens the mix of uses within multistory properties by promoting first floor retail and restaurants uses, second floor business services and third floor residential.	3.7.1 – Encourage and incentivize building and property owners to provide restaurant and retail space on street level floors, and business services and residential on the upper floors.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Private property owners and realtors	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget

Section 4 – Growth and Land Use

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
4.1 – Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the Future Land Use Plan.	4.1.1 – Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.	• City of Charles Town	• Qualified Technical Consultant	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.2 – Continuously examine and where appropriate implement Best Management Practices for land use planning concepts.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.3 – Implement agricultural value added categories in a new agricultural zoning district as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan (10-year).	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.4 – Examine and implement zoning districts that achieve the desired goals of the Future Land Use map.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
4.2 – Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.	4.2.1 – Place a priority on promoting and incentivizing new development investments in the Old Charles Town and Gateway Community Types where urban infrastructure exists to readily support revitalization and infill development.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 4 – Growth and Land Use *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
4.2 – Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.	4.2.2 – Create small area plans for Downtown Charles Town, US 340 East Gateway, US 340 South Gateway area and Rt 9. A small area plan is any plan that addresses the issues of a portion of the City. Small area plans can cover three different geographic scales -- neighborhood, corridor, and district regardless of the size of the area. Small area plans cover a specific geography that often has a cohesive set of characteristics. In addition to the above locations, criteria for prioritizing small area plans may include the following: • Evidence of disinvestment and deteriorating housing • Significant change is occurring or anticipated • Public facilities and/or physical improvements need to be addressed • Opportunities for substantial infill or redevelopment are present • Opportunities arise to influence site selection, development or major expansion of a single large activity generator • Transit station development opportunities	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years) and Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.2.3 – Ensure development in City's proposed growth areas and redevelopment/development of the Old Town occurs in congruent fashion.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
4.3 – Utilize the City's annexation policy to provide areas for future growth, preserve critical green space, and expand the City's tax base	4.3.1 – Employ the City's Home Rule and annexation policy to strategically manage the City's future growth within the Urban Growth Boundary, and increase economic development opportunities.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.3.2 – Develop land development standards that preserve critical green space while not impacting development rights.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

Section 5 – Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will be a community where its residents of all ages, abilities and incomes can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and in turn encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
5.1 – Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives and promoting strategic economic development opportunities within the City's Urban Growth Boundary.	5.1.1 – Implement the recommendations outlined in the *Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study*, and *C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Jefferson Arts Council and allied organizations	Ongoing	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* • WV Governor's Community Participation Program • City Annual Operating Budget
	5.1.2 – Encourage reinvestment and where appropriate redevelopment of the City's existing commercial shopping plazas (i.e., Somerset Village and Hill Dale) to create more vibrant centers of commerce and strengthen the City's financial position. The City should work with the existing property owners to create a vision and redevelopment concept plan for each plaza demonstrating how they may be transformed into a more livable and walkable urban environment.	• City of Charles Town	• Property Owners • Jefferson County	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program • Small Cities Block Grant Fund • Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
	5.1.3 – Partner with West Virginia University, Jefferson County, Charles Town's State and Federal Congressional Delegation, and the Federal Government to identify economic development initiatives that leverage the University's R1 Research classification and maximize the Professional Office and Institutional future land use proposed by this Comprehensive Plan.	• City of Charles Town	• West Virginia Unviersity • Jefferson County Development Authority • State and Federal Congressional Delegation	Short term (0 - 4 years)	• USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program • Small Cities Block Grant Fund
	5.1.4 – Collaborate with Charles Town Now and Downtown property owners to maximize the full mixed-use potential of building structures in the Downtown. Such efforts should begin with a comprehensive inventory and conditions assessment of existing buildings located within Downtown Charles Town. The inventory and assessment should then be used to identify each building's optimal reuse potential and develop a cost estimate to address any identified code deficiencies to better position the building in the market place. Charles Town Now should then promote the availability of such properties on its website. Consider the City of Missoula's downtown inventory as a model: https://www.missouladowntown.com/about/downtown-building-business-inventory/	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Business Owners	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • USDA Business Development Grant Program
	5.1.5 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy. The reuse strategy should consider the building's relationship to Downtown revitalization and economic development opportunities.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Building Commission	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• USDA Local Food Program • USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 5 – Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will be a community where its residents of all ages, abilities and incomes can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and in turn encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
5.1 – Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives and promoting strategic economic development opportunities within the City's Urban Growth Boundary.	5.1.6 – Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to maximize the community-based utilization of Charles Washington Hall and to strengthen the revitalization of Downtown and Old Town neighborhoods.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Building Commission • Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	5.1.7 – Implement the *Charles Town Economic Development Plan*, update and amend as necessary.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
5.2 – Utilize the City's limited resources in efficient and innovative ways, and foster revitalization to create and promote a vibrant, attractive, prosperous and healthy community for present and future generations.	5.2.1 – Strengthen Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration as recommended by the *2015 Collaboration Study* commissioned by Charles Town and Ranson. Among other multi-municipal service efficiency opportunities, collaboration initiatives could be used to strengthen Charles Town's code enforcement efforts and build capacity for a joint economic development organization as recommended in the City's *2014 Economic Strategic Plan.*	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	5.2.2 – Use AARP's seven major livability categories to benchmark and measure the City's performance relevant to meeting and servicing the needs of its current and future population. Consider using AARP's Livability Fact Sheets as a means to inform City officials, property owners, developers, and investors about various means to creating a livable city: http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/documents-2014/Livability%20Fact%20Sheets/AARPLivabilityFactSheetsCollection.pdf	• City of Charles Town	• Property owners • Developers/investors	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
5.3 – Implement a City Housing and Redevelopment program to proactively and effectively address the City's blighted and abandoned properties.	5.3.1 – Consider creating a Housing and Redevelopment Agency to address the City's needs pertaining to housing assistance, rental registration, code compliance, vacant structures board reporting, neighborhood revitalization, and interagency coordination.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
5.4 – Collaborate with Charles Town Now to develop a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use downtown that serves as the civic hub to the greater Charles Town community.	5.4.1 – Implement the recommendations outlined in the *Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study,* and *C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan*. Expand upon the concepts of the *Walkability and Connectivity Study* to other areas of the City and implement a sidewalk improvement program. Development of trails and pathway plan within a Master Parks and Recreation Plan and implement the goals of the plan.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • C*Town Arts Council • Jefferson Arts Council and allied organizations • Parks and Recreation Board	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 6 – Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
6.1 – Provide convenient and affordable access to goods, services, jobs and recreation for all residents and visitors regardless of socio-economic status, physical ability, or age through a balanced, multimodal transportation system.	6.1.1 – Communicate the City's Comprehensive Plan to the Hagerstown Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) and ensure the plan's vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation improvement recommendations are considered for inclusion into the HEPMPO's *Long Range Transportation Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• HEPMPO • EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	6.1.2 – Prioritize the City's transportation improvement projects, and secure the necessary local, state, federal and private funding for their successful implementation. Ensure all federal funding is programmed through the HEPMPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.	• City of Charles Town	• HEPMPO • EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* • HEPMPO Long Range Plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
	6.1.3 – Consider implementing a transportation development fee as recommended by the *2011 Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study*.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson • Jefferson County • HEPMPO	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
6.2 – Create well-connected, safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks that support the City's future land use vision.	6.2.1 – Implement the recommendations contained in the *Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study* and expand its scope to neighborhoods throughout the City.	• City of Charles Town	• HEPMPO	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	6.2.2 – Secure the necessary easements to achieve a trail linkage to the Shenandoah River via Cattail Run.	• City of Charles Town	• Private Property Owners • WV Land Trust	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• Conservation easement agreement with private property owner(s)
	6.2.3 – Amend City's *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to require additional interconnectivity within and between developments that support motorized and non-motorized connections.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
6.3 – Strengthen the walkability of Downtown Charles Town through improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities, and reduced volumes of through truck traffic.	6.3.1 – Implement the recommendations contained in the *Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study*.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	6.3.2 – Work with the City of Ranson, Jefferson County, WVDOH and HEPMPO to determine alternative routes (as specified in the Comprehensive Plan) to reduce through traffic flows in the Downtown.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson • Jefferson County • HEPMPO • WV Department of Highways (WVDOH)	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• HEPMPO Long Range Plan and TIP
6.4 – Implement complete streets design in all existing and new street and road design.	6.4.1 – Amend the City's *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to include Complete Streets design standard details and requirements for their use and application.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 6 – Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
6.5 – Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure that also affords City residents' access to regional outdoor recreational amenities including the Shenandoah River and Appalachian Trail.	6.5.1 – Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure as identified and supported by *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• Property Owners • West Virginia Land Trust	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• West Virginia Land Trust • Land and Water Conservation Fund
6.6 – Continue to support and increase City residents' access to public transportation services.	6.6.1 – Collaborate with EPTA to identify new transit stops within the City and ensure all existing and future transit bus stops are ADA accessible.	• City of Charles Town	• EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	6.6.2 – Ensure the City's land development regulations include appropriate standards for the placement and construction of transit bus stops and shelters.	• City of Charles Town	• EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	6.6.3 – Continuously consult EPTA on all initiatives pertaining to public transportation service initiatives within the Charles Town and Ranson service area. This includes communicating the City's Future Land Use Plan to EPTA to ensure the information is appropriately considered for the Authority's Five-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) update. Additionally, the City should ensure that all major subdivision and land development plan applicants are required to consult EPTA on bus transit facilities and accessibility improvements within the proposed development project.	• City of Charles Town	• EPTA • Private Developers	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	6.6.4 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the viability of creating a MARC station stop in Downtown Charles Town via the existing CSX line between Charles Town/Ranson and Harpers Ferry.	• City of Charles Town	• HEPMPO • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) • CSX • MARC	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• HEPMPO Technical Assistance • Region 9 Technical Assistance

Section 7 – Image and Identity

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will protect, enhance and reinforce its historic, small town character and "sense of place" through high quality urban design and development standards that protect existing assets and investments, and create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods that people of all ages and abilities want to live, work and play.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
7.1 – Improve the quality of new development and ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods relative to their form, design and function.	7.1.1 – Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
7.2 – Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Charles Town's streetscapes and public spaces.	7.2.1 – Partner with Charles Town Now to promote clean streets and sidewalks, properly designed signage, facade improvements, placemaking, art and beautification projects to present an appealing image to residents, visitors, tenants and investors.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Now • Property owners	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • Charles Town Now
	7.2.2 – Continue to support and work with the Dolley Madison Garden Club to expand upon the City's landscaping and flower garden initiatives within the Downtown and Gateways. Begin by identifying locations for new and improved landscaping and flower bed plantings along with appropriate signage welcoming residents and visitors to Charles Town.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Charles Town • Dolley Madison Garden Club	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
7.3 – Support the preservation of historic buildings throughout the City and its Urban Growth Boundary.	7.3.1 – Expand the City's current Historic Districts and Historic Overlay District within the Old Town areas to protect and preserve additional historic resources.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	7.3.2 – Implement appropriate regulations and standards to preserve historic buildings and properties located within the City's undeveloped areas that often include historic homestead and farmstead properties and buildings. Such properties and buildings should be protected from new development and/or integrated into the proposed land development plan.	• City of Charles Town	• WV Archives and History Commission (State Historic Preservation Officer)	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
7.4 – Improve the appearance of existing commercial facilities to revitalize existing businesses and stimulate the development of new business.	7.4.1 – Promote, encourage and incentivize the redevelopment of the Hill Dale shopping center into a vibrant new commercial mixed use center that is supportive of the West End neighborhood and Downtown revitalization. The mixed use center should serve as an additional hub and anchor connecting mixed use residential development with Downtown.	• City of Charles Town	• Jefferson County • Hill Dale Shopping Center Owner	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant • Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)* • Small City Block Grant Fund • Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
	7.4.2 – Promote, encourage and incentivize the redevelopment of the Somerset Village Shopping Plaza into a vibrant mixed use Town Center that is supportive of and integrated into new active living and professional office and institutional development as envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.	• City of Charles Town	• Somerset Village Shopping Plaza Owner (i.e., Kentlands Foundation)	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant • Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	7.4.3 – Develop design review standards that are appropriate to the context of new developments in the Old Charles Town area not covered by a historic overlay district and new developments.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 8 – Quality Public Services

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
8.1 – Ensure the delivery of quality, adequate and affordable public water and sewer services through intergovernmental cooperation to support the City's Future Land Use Plan and economic development objectives.	8.1.1 – Complete the consolidation of the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD) and Ranson Public Service Districts into the Charles Town Utility Board.	• Charles Town Utility Board	• City of Charles Town • City of Ranson Sewer Department • Jefferson County Public Service District • Jefferson County Commission	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• Charles Town Utility Board Capital Budget
8.2 – Continue to provide a high quality and well-trained police force to meet the City's law enforcement and protection needs.	8.2.1 – Communicate the Future Land Use Plan to the City's Police Chief to ensure the Department is informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's budgeting and training programs.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Police Department	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	8.2.2 – Reevaluate the consolidation and cost efficiency recommendations outlined in the *2015 Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study.*	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
8.3 – Support the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service providers' to ensure their respective staffing and equipment capabilities are appropriately improved with the City's growth.	8.3.1 – Continue to financially contribute to the local volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers to help them maintain and meet their annual operating and capital equipment needs.	• City of Charles Town	• Citizens Fire Company • Independent Fire Company	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	8.3.2 – Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the Jefferson County Emergency Services and City's Police Chief to ensure both are well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.	• City of Charles Town	• JCESA • City of Charles Town Police Department	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
8.4 – Promote the sustainability of the Charles Town Library to ensure its continued provision of quality museum and library services.	8.4.1 – Encourage the Charles Town Library Board to develop a strategic plan that includes a strategy for its financial sustainability. The plan should then serve as a blueprint for the City's continued financial support of the Library's services.	• City of Charles Town	• Charles Town Library Board	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
8.5 – Continue to provide diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities and open natural spaces that serve the needs of the City's citizens and visitors.	8.5.1 – Develop a Citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan that establishes specific park facility improvement and capital budgeting needs. The master plan should consider all City-owned facilities and identify future space needs based upon the Future Land Use Plan and any annexations.	• City of Charles Town	• Parks and Recreation	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	8.5.2 – Collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the *2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

* May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

Section 8 – Quality Public Services *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
8.6 – Continue to support the provision and delivery of quality public education services and increase access to vocational educational opportunities.	8.6.1 – Communicate the Comprehensive Plan to the Jefferson County Schools and advocate that the use of existing school facilities and new school facilities be maximized to support the accessibility to and connectivity with the City's core urban neighborhoods. Vacating existing urban facility should be strongly discouraged.	• City of Charles Town	• Jefferson County Board of Education	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
9.1 – Assist Jefferson County with achieving targeted reductions in sediments and nutrients to achieve the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load attainment goals	9.1.1 – Continue to enforce and administer the City's Stormwater Management regulations to include the utilization of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Design (LID).	• City of Charles Town	• Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) Chesapeake Bay Technical Assistance	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	9.1.2 – Consider creating a joint Stormwater Management Enforcement program with the City of Ranson in preparation for the cities' future Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) designations by West Virginia DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Such designations will require each City to develop and administer a comprehensive Stormwater Management Program pursuant to the requirements of their respective National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) Chesapeake Bay Technical Assistance	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	9.1.3 – Implement the recommendations of the *2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan* for the City of Charles Town.	• City of Charles Town	• Jefferson County Commission • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Commission (Region 9) • Jefferson County Public Schools • Cacapon Institute • West Virginia Divion of Forestry	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget • National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
9.2 – Continue to implement the City of Charles Town's joint Brownfield reclamation and redevelopment efforts with the City of Ranson.	9.2.1 – Continue to advance the implementation of the "Charles Town West End & Evitts Run Creek Revitalization Plan" and achieve the ultimate revitalization program as detailed in the *Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Long-term (11 - 20 years)	• U.S. EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund • National Fish and Wildlife Foundation • Private Sector
	9.2.2 – Implement the Branching In Native Nursery program as detailed in the *2017 Feasibility Study and Business Plan*.	• City of Charles Town	• Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9)	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City of Charles Town • National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
	9.2.3 – Continue to examine locations that may be abandoned or blighted that qualify for brownfield reclamation.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) • U.S. EPA	Ongoing	• U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Commission (Region 9) Technical Assistance
	9.2.4 – Continue to monitor and as needed require remediation of leaking underground storage tanks.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Ongoing	• U.S. EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund
9.3 – Protect the supply and quality of groundwater and surface water.	9.3.1 –Implement the recommendations outlined in the *2010 Source Water Protection Plan*.	• Charles Town Utility Board	• City of Charles Town • WV Department of Health and Human Services (DHHR) • Ranson PSD • Jefferson PSD • Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development County (Region 9)	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• WV DHHR Wellhead and Source Water Protection Grants

Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship *(Continued)*

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

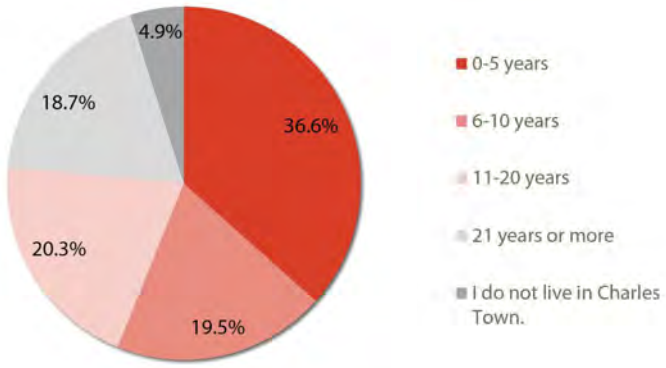
Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
9.4 – Maximize the preservation of permanent natural areas within new developments.	9.4.1 – Review the *Charles Town Zoning Ordinance* and *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to identify opportunities to incorporate conservation subdivision design principles and standards as recommended by published practitioner Randall Arndt (http://www.greenerprospects.com/PDFs/CSD_Overview.pdf).	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	9.4.2 – Reactivate the Charles Town Tree Board.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
9.5 – Preserve the City's agricultural lands in coordination with the future land use map and objectives to strengthen the City's urban agricultural opportunities and access to fresh foods.	9.5.1 – Collaborate with the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to identify agricultural land owners that have an interest in participating in GAP to further support and promote locally grown and purchased foods. Identify and confirm these owners' commitment to participating in GAP and determine if the property qualifies and merits being included in the Jefferson County Farmland Protection program.	• City of Charles Town	• Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition • Private Property Owners	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget

Appendix A: Public Survey Results

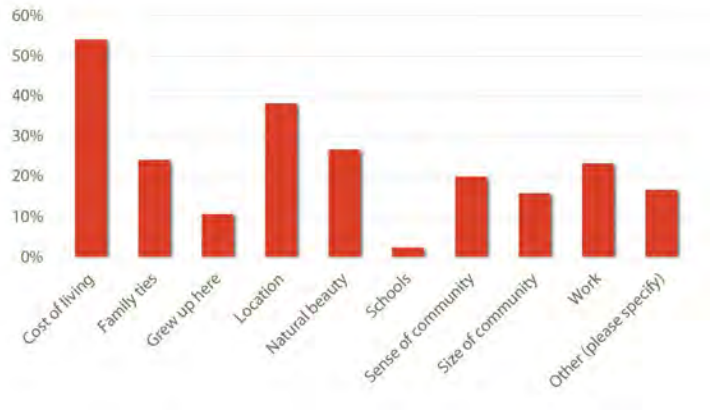
As part of the *Historically Hip 2040* update, the City prepared public surveys to gain broad input about specific community issues and concerns. Survey respondents were also tasked with sharing their ideas on what would make Downtown Charles Town a more desirable destination. The survey was available for one month, from October 2016 to November 2016, and the survey link was disseminated via multiple sources to Charles Town residents. Hard copy surveys were made available to those who did not want to use the online link. In total, 136 individuals completed the public survey.

The following pages provide a summary of the public survey responses by question.

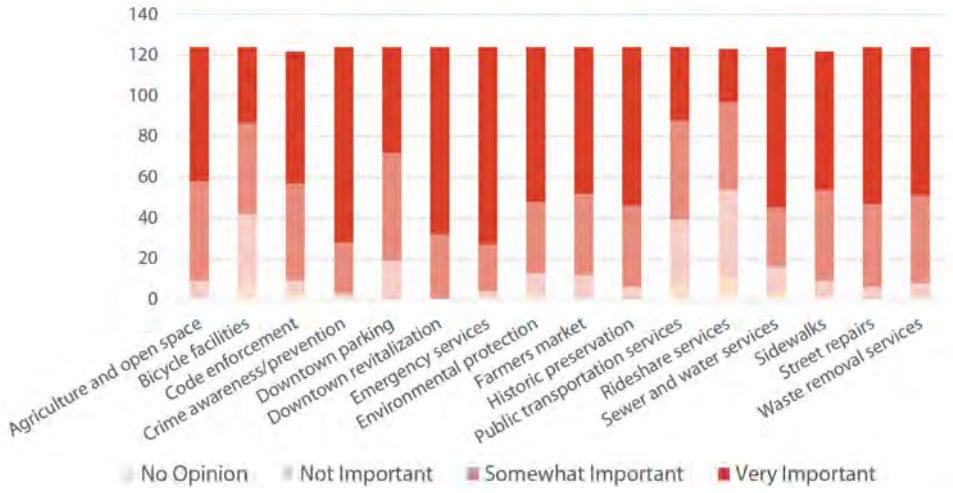
Q1: How long have you lived in Charles Town?



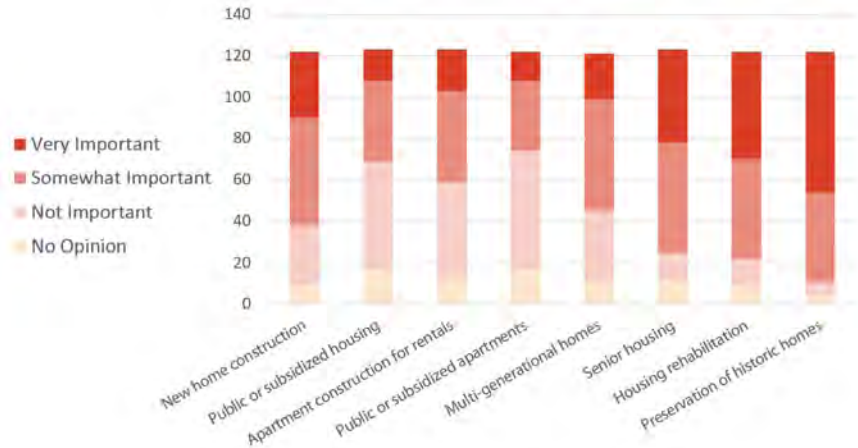
Q2: Why did you move to Charles Town?



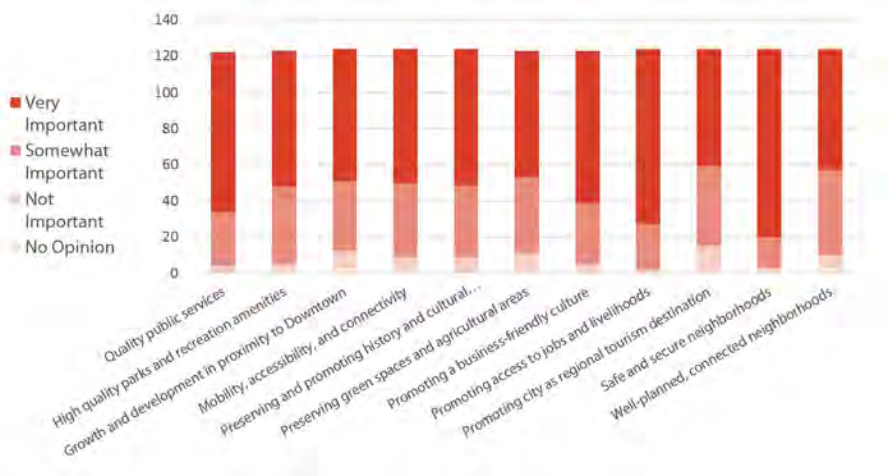
Q3: Importance of community facilities/services in Charles Town



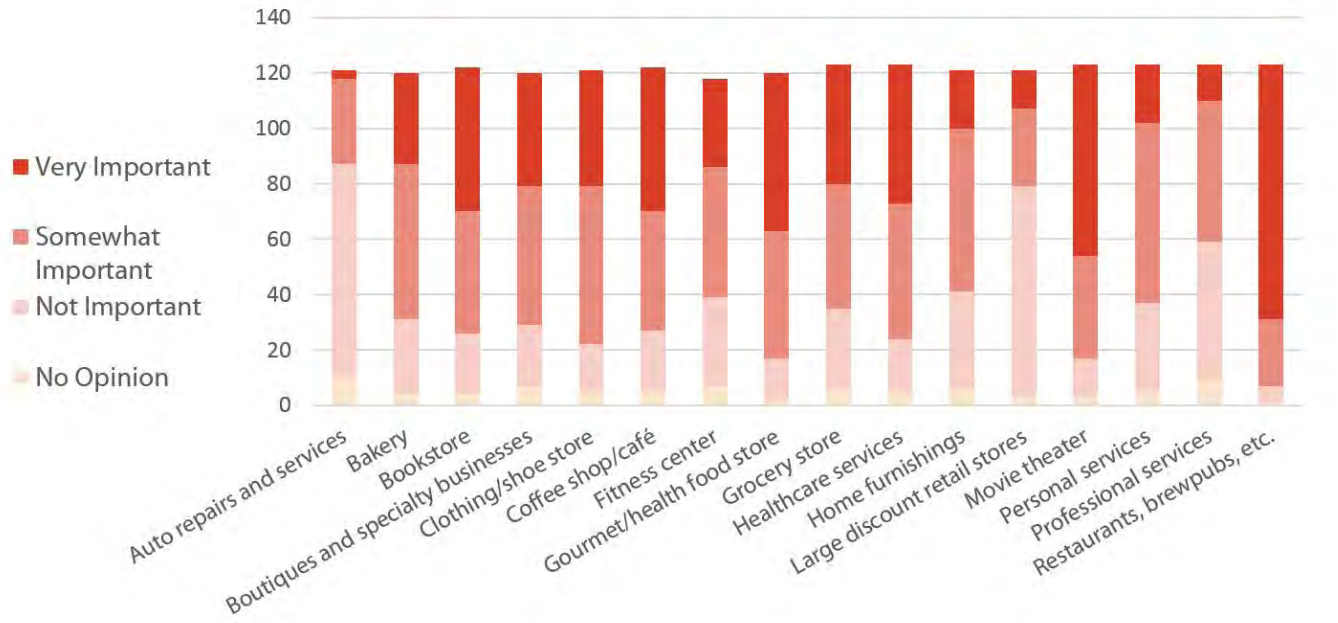
Q4: Housing needs in Charles Town



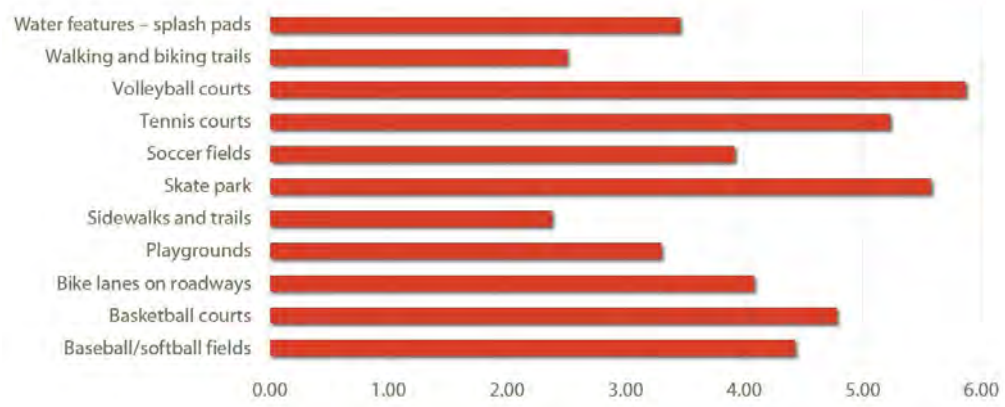
Q5: Importance of community planning initiatives



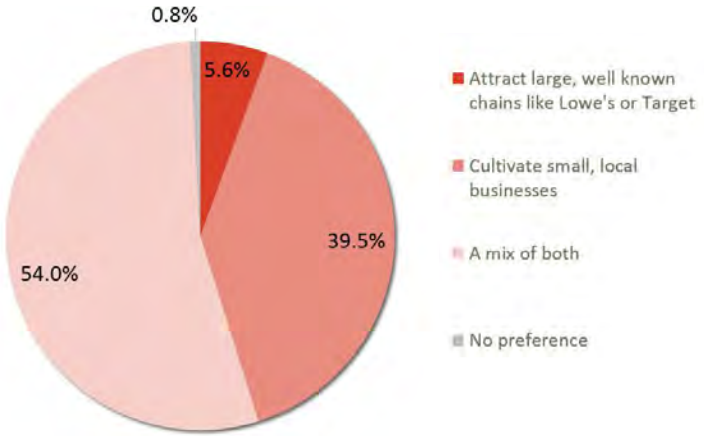
Q6: What kinds of businesses would you like to see more of in the City?



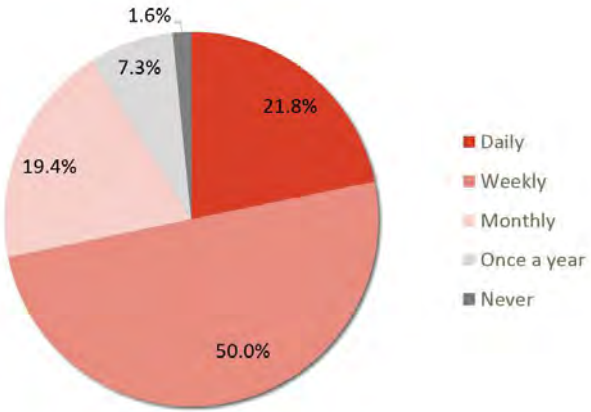
Q7: What are your top 5 recreation facilities and amenities?



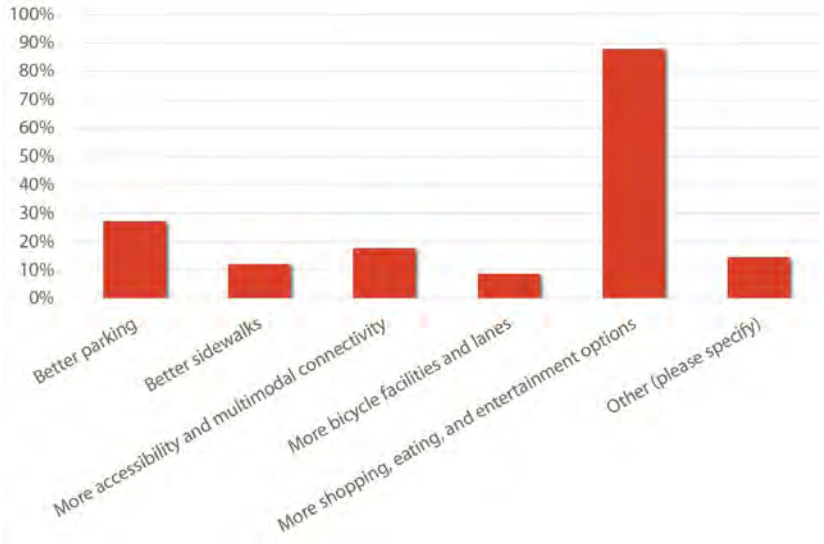
Q8: What type of commercial development would you like to see?



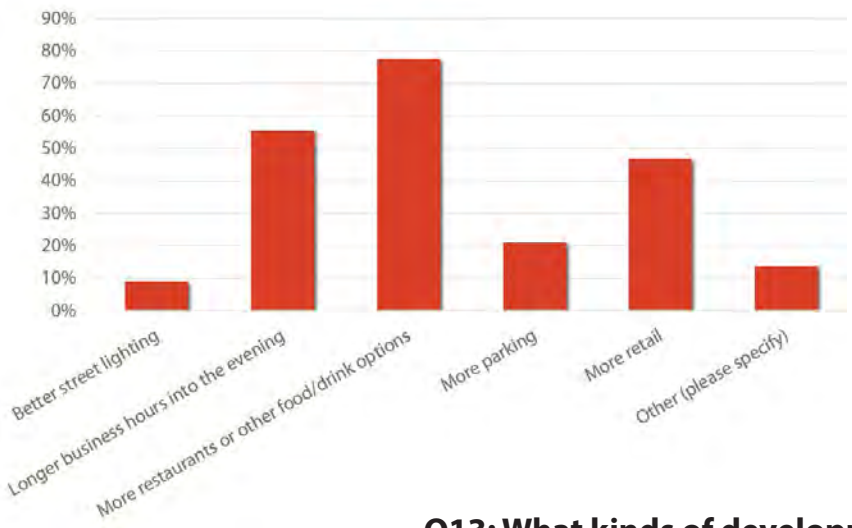
Q9: How often do you visit Downtown Charles Town?



Q10: What would increase your visitation to Downtown Charles Town?



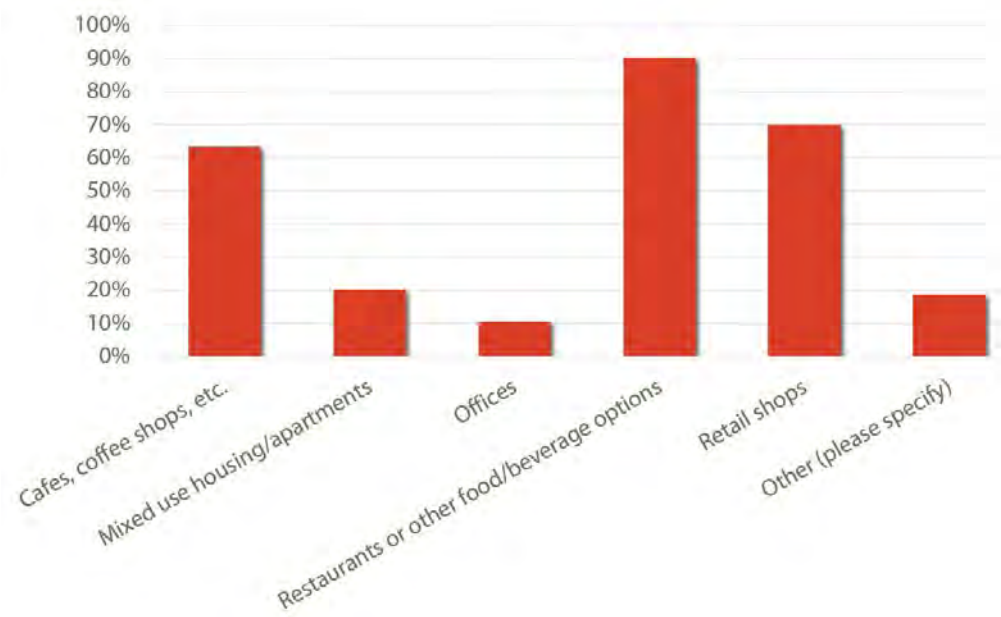
Q11: Would you be more likely to visit Downtown if it had...?



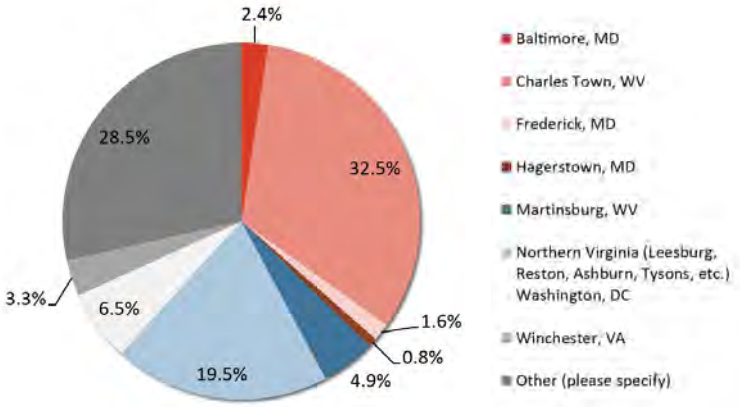
Q12: What is needed in Downtown to increase your interest and patronage?

- *Better support for small businesses*
- *Greater variety of dining and shopping options, including a movie theater and book store*
- *Cultural programs and arts education*
- *Festivals and music venues*
- *More parking*
- *Longer hours of operation, weekend hours*

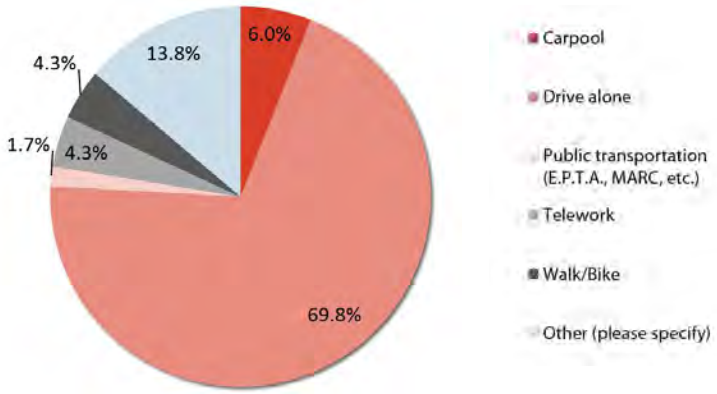
Q13: What kinds of development would you like to see Downtown?



Q14: Where do you work?



Q15: How do you travel to work?



Q16: What are your thoughts on the future of Charles Town in the next 10 - 20 years?

- *Heritage tourism and cultural activities*
- *Revitalization of older neighborhood*
- *Greater diversity of shops, restaurants, retail (especially for teens and young adults)*
- *Small, local businesses and boutiques*
- *More career-oriented jobs*
- *Family-friendly activities and destinations*
- *Public sculptures, public benches, public space where people can meet up and hang out*
- *Better/more extensive sidewalks*

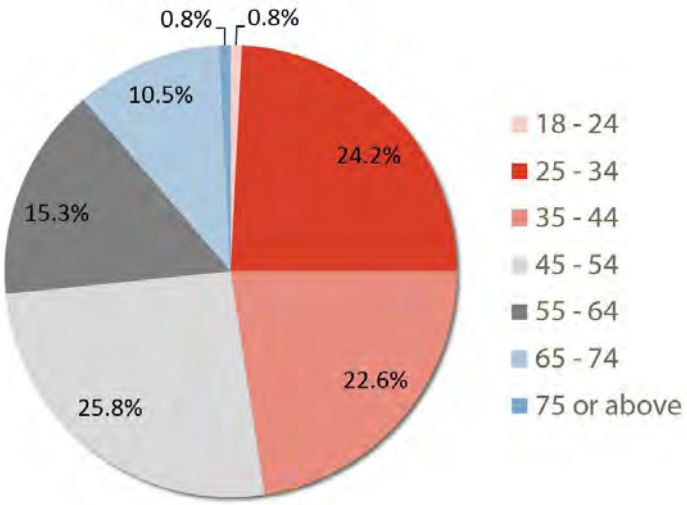
Q17: What do you think are the City's greatest challenges?

- *Education*
- *Job creation*
- *Attracting new/younger residents*
- *Heroin epidemic*
- *Insufficient infrastructure (natural gas lines, cell phone service, public restrooms)*
- *Preserving Charles Town's small-town character*
- *Excessively high lease rates that deter new businesses*
- *Lack of cooperation with Ranson*
- *Vacant buildings*

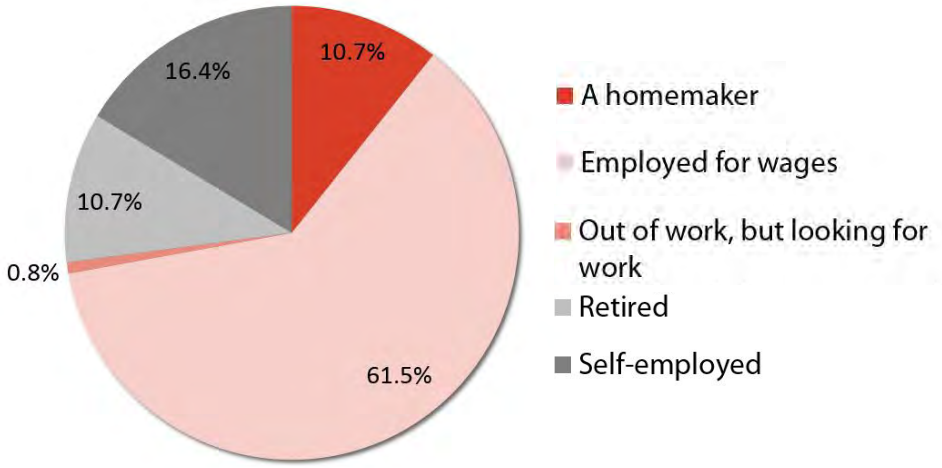
Q18: What do you think are the City's greatest strengths?

- *History and cultural heritage*
- *Beautiful historic architecture*
- *Natural beauty*
- *Proximity to larger cities*
- *Low cost of living*
- *Small-town charm*

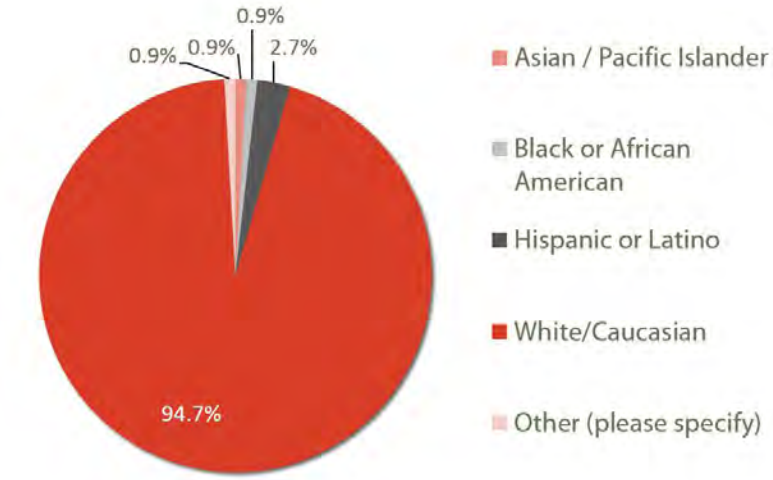
Q19: What is your age?



Q20: Are you currently...?



Q21: What is your ethnicity?



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Appendix B: Low Impact Development (LID) Approach

What is Low Impact Development (LID)?

LID is an alternative method of land development that seeks to maintain the natural hydrologic character of the site or region. The natural hydrology, or movement of water through a watershed, is shaped over centuries under location-specific conditions to form a balanced and efficient system. When hardened surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops are constructed, the movement of water is altered; in particular, the amount of runoff increases and infiltration decreases. This results in increased peak flow rate and volume, and pollution levels in stormwater runoff. LID designs with nature in mind: working with the natural landscape and hydrology to minimize these changes. LID accomplishes this through source control, retaining more water on the site where it falls, rather than using traditional methods of funneling water via pipes into local waterways. Both improved site design and specific management measures are utilized in LID designs. LID has been applied to government, residential, and commercial development and redevelopment, and has proven to be a cost-efficient and effective method for managing runoff and protecting the environment.

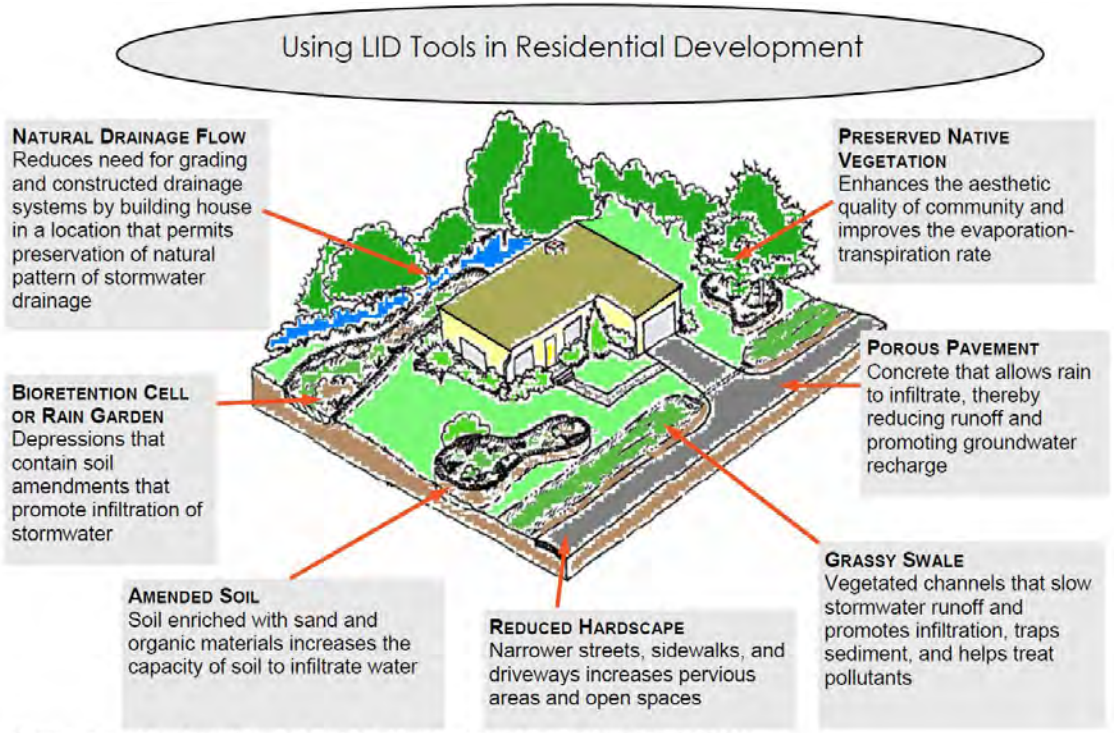


Diagram adapted from Prince George's County Maryland Low-Impact Development Design Strategies

Traditional vs. LID Stormwater Management

Historically, in the U.S., the motto for stormwater management has been **"conveyance:"** move water away from the site where it falls as quickly and efficiently as possible. Traditional management tools include street gutters and curbs, pipes, and canals to remove water from the developed areas. To receive this increased volume, creeks and rivers are re-shaped and lined with concrete. Detention ponds, some with water quality filtration devices, regulate discharge to reduce peak flow impacts on receiving waters. For the most part, these practices reduce flood impacts, but do not completely address water quality, and aquatic and riparian habitat degradation issues.

In contrast with the traditional approaches, the guiding principle of low impact development approaches is not conveyance; it is **"source control and infiltration"**. LID techniques seek to maximize the area available for infiltration so that runoff volume and pollutant concentrations are reduced. This is achieved through a variety of site design and engineered infiltration techniques. Site design techniques include locating open spaces in low-lying areas to serve as a detention/retention basin and avoid development on permeable soils to promote infiltration and groundwater recharge. Engineered techniques include the use of grassy swales, bioretention cells, and porous pavement.

LID Benefits

Water Quality
- Contributes to groundwater recharge through infiltration
- Improves surface water quality
- Protects stream and lake quality from large volumes of polluted runoff

Meets Clean Water Act Requirements
- Source control reduces the pollutant level and volume of runoff entering a water body, complying with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and anti-degradation policy;
- This also aids in complying with 401 certification requirements

Flood Control
- Reduces frequency & severity of floods
- Reduces peak flow volume & velocity

Habitat Protection
- Preserves stream & riparian habitats
- Preserves regional trees & vegetation
- Reduces eroded sediment loading into streams & lakes

Community Value
- Increases aesthetics and recreational opportunities in protected riparian habitats
- Increases land value by having a cleaner environment
- Increases public/private collaborative partnerships

LID Challenges

Lack of Information
- Many municipal planners, consultants and the general public are unfamiliar with the benefits of LID practices and how to utilize them in different environments.

Inflexible Regulations/Ordinances
- Existing rules often lack the flexibility to implement LID solutions

Maintenance
- Some LID tools require maintenance by homeowners and local public works departments to function properly

Presence of Contaminants
- Use of filtration practices can threaten groundwater quality if high levels of soil contaminants are present.



Stormdrain leading to bioretention cell

Roof runoff drains to grassy swale

www.main.nc.us/riverlink/content/12chap/chap12.htm

Economic Issues

The **economic benefits** of LID include:

- Reduced costs of stormwater infrastructure, including curbs and gutters
- Reduced stormwater utility fees
- Increased land value
- Decreased spending on current and future environmental conservation programs

Specific cost savings vary on a case by case basis. There can be **additional costs**:

- Higher installation costs for certain soil types and gradients
- Increased landscape maintenance costs

Issue	Savings
Higher Lot Value	$3000 more per lot
Lower Cost Per Lot	$4800 less cost per lot
Enhanced Marketability	80% of lots sold in first year
Added Amenities	23.5 acres of green-space/parks
Recognition	National, state, and professional
Total Economic Benefit	Over $2,200,000 added to profit

The above table, from **Gap Creek residential subdivision,** Sherwood, AR, illustrates the financial benefits of using LID methods. *Tyne & Associates, North Little Rock, AR*

Clay Soils/Limited Space

The combination of clay soils and small lot sizes can work well together. As clays are naturally less pervious, less engineering and land is required to achieve predevelopment infiltration rates. Use integrated stormwater management techniques, a combination of traditional and LID approaches. Significant stormwater runoff reduction can still be achieved.

Local Codes Aren't LID-friendly

Revise local codes & ordinances to support use of LID techniques. Check out the Center for Watershed Protection's website for suggested guidelines (www.cwp.org/COW_worksheet.htm).

Don't know what would work and where

Educate planning & public works staff. Numerous references are available on the use of LID in a variety of settings (see Online References).

Hercules has modified stormwater management guidelines that fit LID principles, city codes that allow administrative approval for LID projects, and limited street lengths.

Contra Costa incorporated LID measures into their Standard Urban Stormwater Management Plan (SUSMP) for new development (http://www.cccleanwater.org/construction/nd.php). **Sacramento**, likewise, is publishing their own design manual in Fall, 2006 that includes LID measures.

San Diego has new parking standards for intensive commercial zones that include smaller parking spaces and driveways, plus new guidelines requiring reduced imperviousness for parking spaces.

Santa Monica encourages LID by requiring that all new developments and substantial remodels submit an "Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan", and reduce projected runoff for the site by 20%. The city recommends LID technologies.

LID as a Re-design Strategy

Retrofit a Parking Lot to increase permeability. Over sixty-five percent of impervious areas are associated with "habitat for cars". Using porous pavement in parking lots is a simple way to increase infiltration and reduce runoff. When the US Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. needed to repave its parking lot, they used porous pavers. They also added bioretention cells to the landscaped areas and disconnected downspouts. The re-design did not alter the amount of parking spots, but reduced peak runoff and pollution, thus protecting and helping to restore the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.



Porous pavement covers about 1/3 of each parking space in the D.C. Navy Yard parking



LID street design: vegetated swales, no curbs, and narrower streets promote infiltration of stormwater.

Alter street design to increase infiltration. In a landmark project in Seattle, the Street Edge Alternative or SEA project involved building vegetated swales, bioretention cells, and narrower streets without curbs to promote an effective drainage and filtration system. The system reduced peak runoff for the 2 year flood event by 98%, and is capable of conveying the 25 year flood event. The local watershed provides spawning habitat for endangered salmon. The project was so successful that similar ones are being planned throughout the city.

Replace lawns with rain gardens. Rain gardens are small bioretention cells landscaped with plants, trees, and grasses. They are a particularly good way for individual homeowners to enhance their landscaping while protecting water quality. By planting easy-care native wildflowers, hardy perennials and grasses, attractive gardens can be constructed that have the added environmental benefits. More information on rain gardens is available at: http://www.healthylandscapes.org/raingarden.htm. Information on plants compatible for use in a California rain garden is posted at: http://www.bbg.org/gar2/topics/design/2004sp_raingardens.html.



Rain garden in a small backyard that collects runoff from roof and patio.

LID as a Design Strategy

LID is more than a collection of engineered tools. It is a comprehensive design technique incorporating site planning and integrated management measures.
LID design principles include:

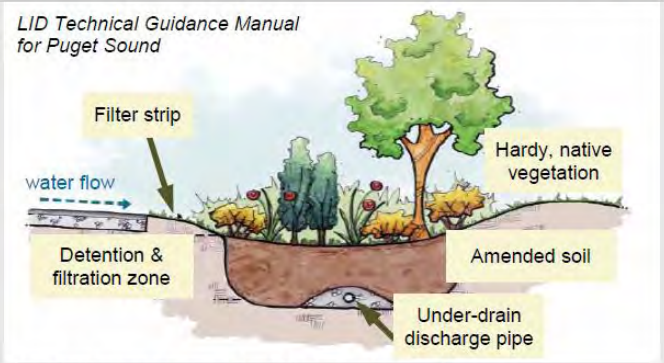
- Extensive site assessment of hydrology, topography, soils, vegetation and water features;
- Higher density, clustered housing, preserving open spaces to facilitate infiltration and protect habitats;
- Street layout that minimizes road length and width, calming traffic while allowing safe access of emergency vehicles.

LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound



In this example, LID design reduces imperviousness by changing the cul-de-sac design, reducing street width and lot size, and instead clustering houses around common green spaces that also serve as infiltration sites and preserving natural features.

Examples of LID



Basic Components of a Bioretention Cell
To see how to engineer bioretention cells with the proper gradient and components visit:
www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/epa03/biospec.htm



Rain Gardens and grass swales between houses are used at Douglas Ranch, Granite Bay, CA to catch and filter runoff from roofs and driveways before entering a local stream.

Examples of LID



Curb Cuts permit stormwater to flow into grassy swales to reduce roadway contaminants that flow into nearby waterways. They can also be used in *existing* landscaped areas.



Hollywood Driveways have a dividing strip of grass in order to reduce the amount of impervious surface. Another way to reduce driveway space is to share one with a neighbor.

Online Resources

Low Impact Development Center	www.lowimpactdevelopment.org
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	www.epa.gov/owow/nps/urban.html
Stormwater Manager's Resource Center	www.stormwatercenter.net
National NEMO Network	www.nemonet.uconn.edu
LID Urban Design Tools	www.lid-stormwater.net
National Association of Home Builders	www.toolbase.org/index-toolbase.asp
California Stormwater Quality Association	www.cabmphandbooks.com

Prepared by Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment & the California Water & Land Use Partnership (CA WALUP)
Written by E. Ruby & D. Gillespie, student interns, OEHHA. For more information contact Barbara Washburn: bwashburn@oehha.ca.gov.

CA WALUP is an educational program for land use decision makers addressing the relationship between land use and natural resource protection. The CA WALUP is a Charter Member of the National NEMO Network. CA WALUP website: http://cawalup.usc.edu



Historically HIP Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Executive Summary

February 2018

INTRODUCTION

Historically HIP Charles Town 2040 is the City of Charles Town's new Comprehensive Plan developed under the authority of the West Virginia Code (§8A-3). The plan serves as the City's official policy guide for short- (0-4 years), mid- (5-10 years), and long-term (11-20 years) decision making pertaining to future land use, growth and development, and resource preservation within the City's existing political jurisdiction and its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

At the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan, Charles Town promotes a strategic Downtown First focus for all areas of economic and community development over the next 25-year horizon, recognizing the historical importance of the Downtown district. The Plan identifies opportunities to leverage Charles Town's historical urban fabric to improve livability and economic competitiveness for the City and UBG.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

About the Comprehensive Plan Process and Final Document

The creation of the Comprehensive Plan was directed by the City's Department of Community Development under the leadership of the City's Planner. To support the year-long planning effort, Charles Town also organized a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to guide the planning process and to provide local input during plan development. This committee met 7 times over a 12-month period, and was instrumental in identifying core issues affecting the Charles Town community. In addition, the CAC, in partnership with the City and consultant team, organized and facilitated several opportunities for community involvement to obtain public input and validation on the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan features seven chapters that comprise the primary plan elements. These chapters are organized by topical focus area and outline Charles Town's 2040 goals and objectives for each.

In summary, these chapters include:

- *Downtown Charles Town*
- *Growth and Land Use*
- *Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability*
- *Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity*
- *Image and Identity*
- *Quality Public Services*
- *Environmental Stewardship*

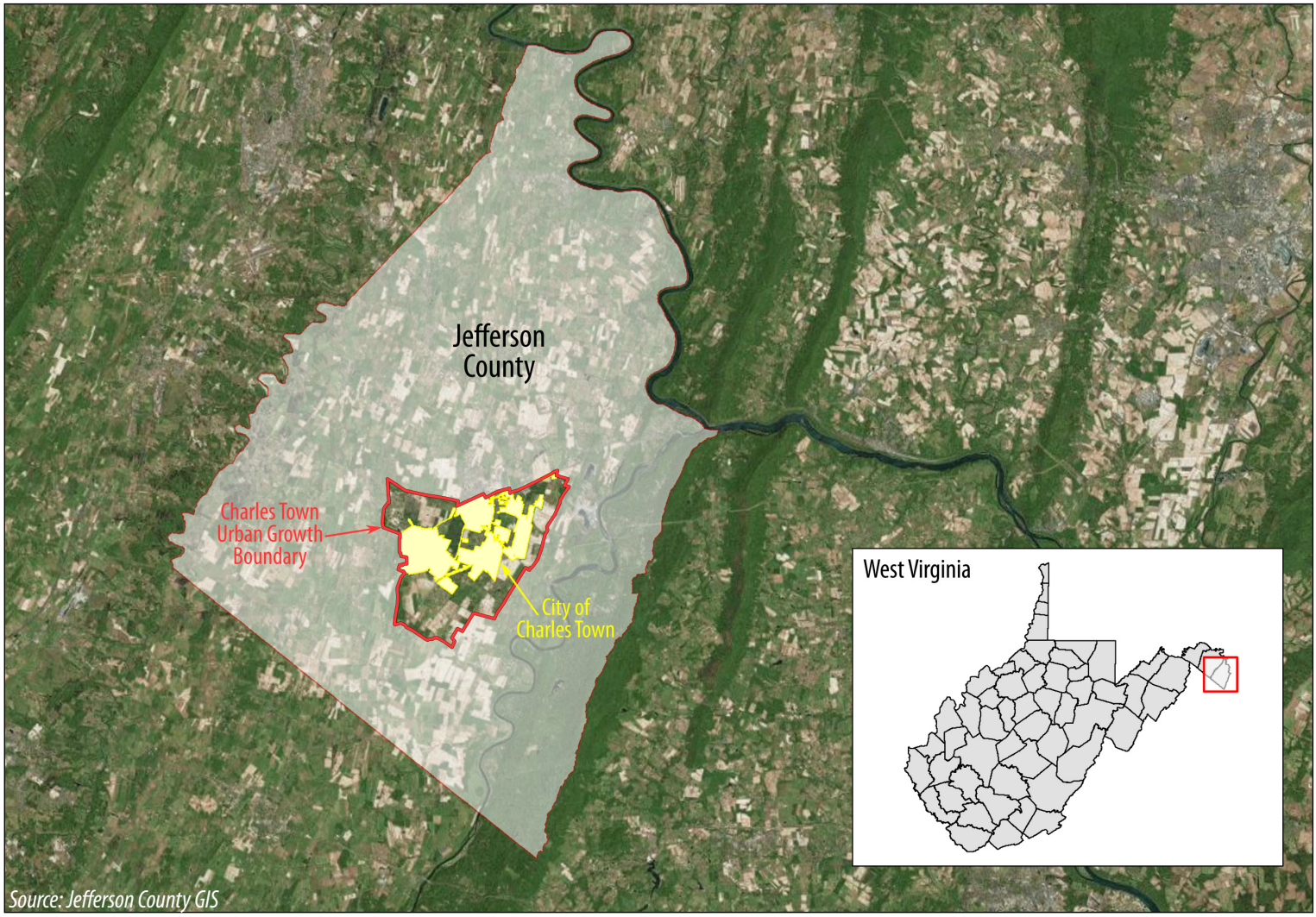
A comprehensive plan is "...a plan for physical development, including land use, adopted by a governing body, setting forth guidelines, goals, and objectives for all activities that affect growth and development in the governing body's jurisdiction."
West Virginia Code, §8A-3


Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Charles Town is home to approximately 5,723 residents and boasts a rich history with prominent historical sites and cultural assets. The City is located in Jefferson County, part of the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, and is in close proximity to the Baltimore and Washington, DC metropolitan areas. With a cost of living about 30% lower than similar metropolitan areas, Charles Town is an attractive home for residents commuting to northern Virginia and Maryland for work. A summary of key demographic and socioeconomic trends is presented below.

Population 2015



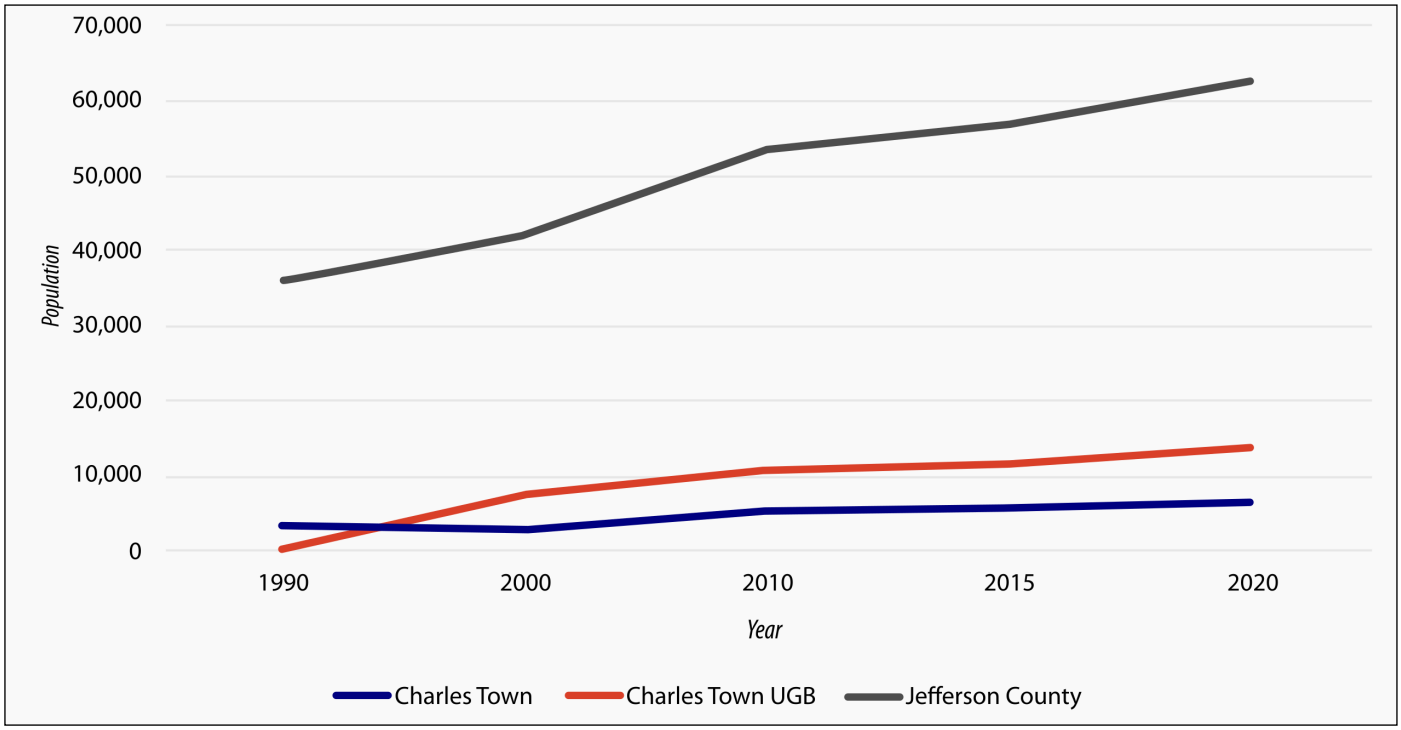
Source: Jefferson County GIS

	City of Charles Town		UGB		Jefferson County	
	2015	2020	2015	2020	2015	2020
Population:	5,723	6,512	11,584	13,633	56,914	62,674
Total Households:	2,186	2,459	4,455	5,237	21,278	23,520
Median Age:	40.4	40.2	39.6	39.6	39.9	40.4
Median Household Income:	$55,130	$61,774	$62,543	$70,931	$63,928	$71,580
Percent Owner-Occupied Housing:	52.0%	51.7%	61.7%	60.9%	67.0%	64.9%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Population Growth

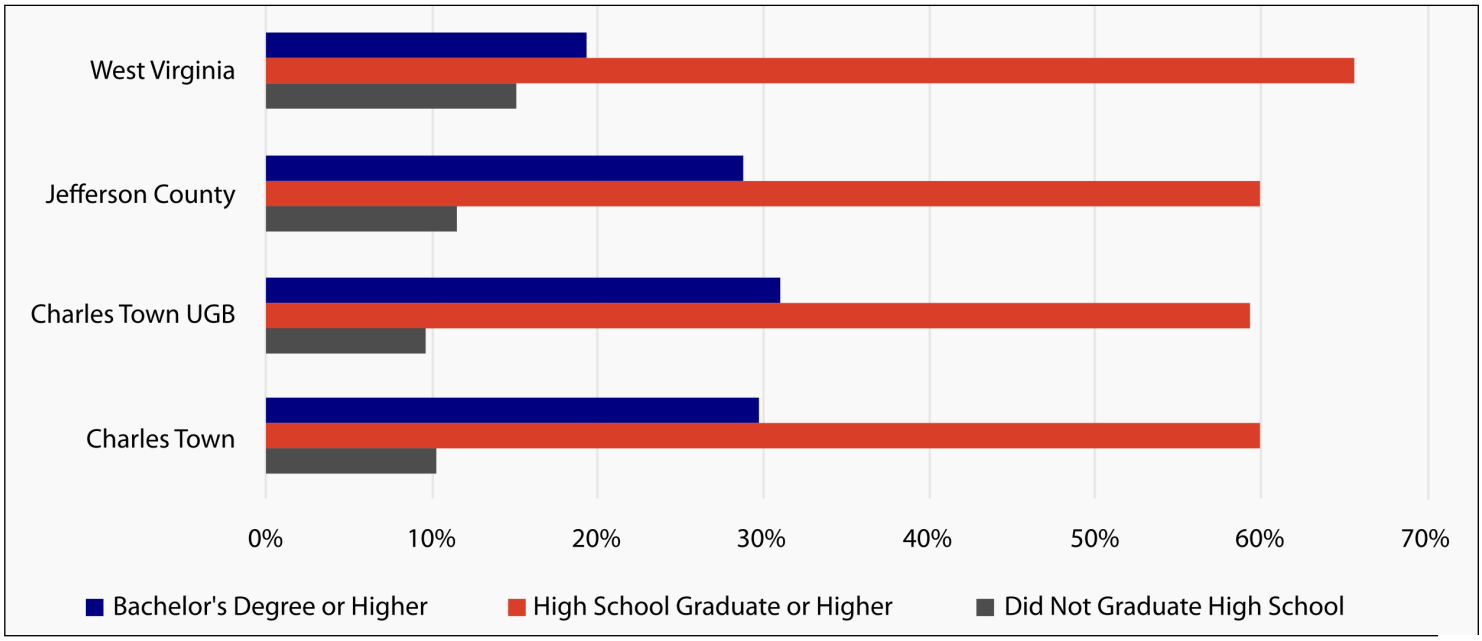
The City of Charles Town is projected to experience an 8.8% increase in population between 2015 and 2020, while the UGB is projected to increase by 8.6%. Population growth rates in the City and the UGB exceed growth rates in both Jefferson County and the state. Based on statewide projections, Jefferson County is projected to increase by approximately 36% between 2015 and 2020. West Virginia at a statewide level is projected to increase by 5% during the same time period, demonstrating that projected growth in the state is concentrated in the Baltimore and Washington, DC metropolitan areas.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Educational Attainment

Compared to other communities in West Virginia, Charles Town and its surrounding region is well educated. In 2016, nearly 30% of residents age 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or higher, which is 10% higher than the statewide average. Higher education is demonstrated to provide economic benefits in terms of annual earnings. Residents with high educational attainment typically have increased disposable income and, particularly for Millennials, may desire high quality housing and amenities in the Downtown.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Housing

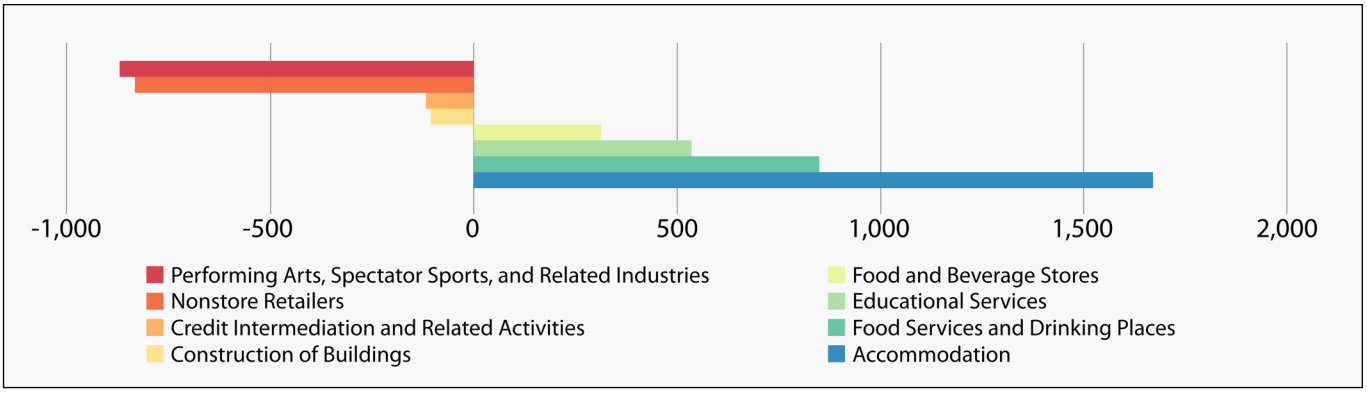
Median home values for Charles Town properties are significantly higher than the state average ($266,353 in 2015, compared to $123,440 for West Virginia). By comparison, Jefferson County's median home value was $294,770 in 2015, demonstrating that Charles Town housing stock is more affordable than the County average. In 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 10.2% of housing units in the City limits are vacant, compared to 7.5% in the UGB. While consistent with County trends (9.1% vacancy in Jefferson County in 2015), vacant housing units represent an opportunity for redevelopment to improve existing housing stock, particularly in the Downtown.

	City of Charles Town		UGB	
	2015	2020	2015	2020
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	52.0%	51.7%	61.7%	60.9%
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	37.9%	35.5%	30.8%	28.7%
Vacant Housing Units	10.2%	12.8%	7.5%	10.4%
Total Housing Units	2,433	2,820	4,817	5,848

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Employment

According to the *2014 Charles Town Economic Development Strategic Plan*, the Charles Town zip code is projected to add nearly 1,500 new jobs in the ten-year period between 2013 and 2023. Currently, the accommodation and food services industries (e.g., hospitality) are the leading sectors for the City, accounting for 24% of its available employment. Employment by industry data is available at the county level. In total, Jefferson County gained 1,479 new jobs between 2000 and 2015. The chart below depicts the greatest job gains and losses in Jefferson County from that same time period.



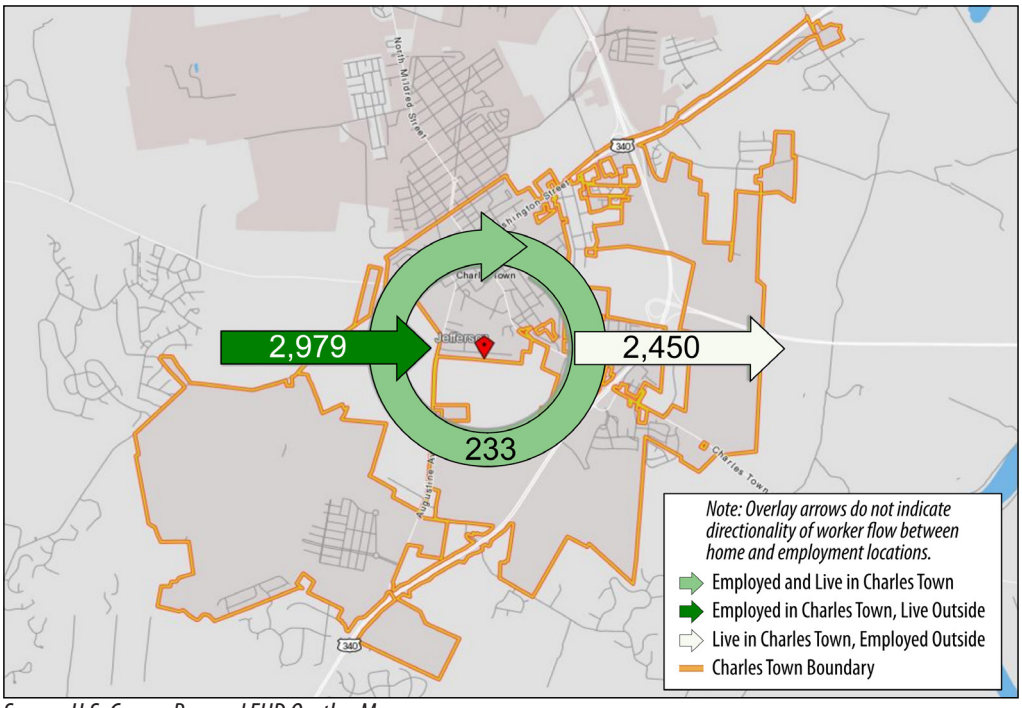
Source: US Census Bureau



Photos courtesy of Michael Baker International

Commuting Patterns

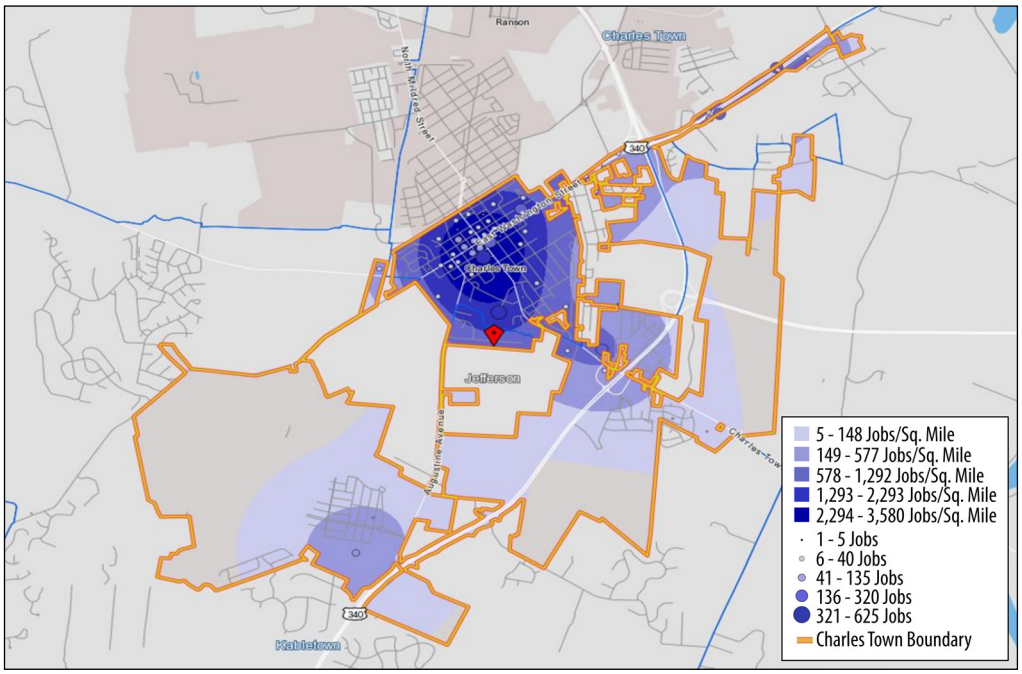
Based on 2014 data, the City of Charles Town has approximately 3,212 primary jobs located within the City. Of these jobs, 233 workers are both employed and live in the City; 2,979 workers are employed in the City but live outside; and 2,450 live in the City but work outside of the City. The data shows that Charles Town is neither a net importer nor exporter of workers. Rather, the inflow and outflow of workers is relatively neutral, and 7% of the workforce in the City is comprised of City residents.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau LEHD On-the-Map

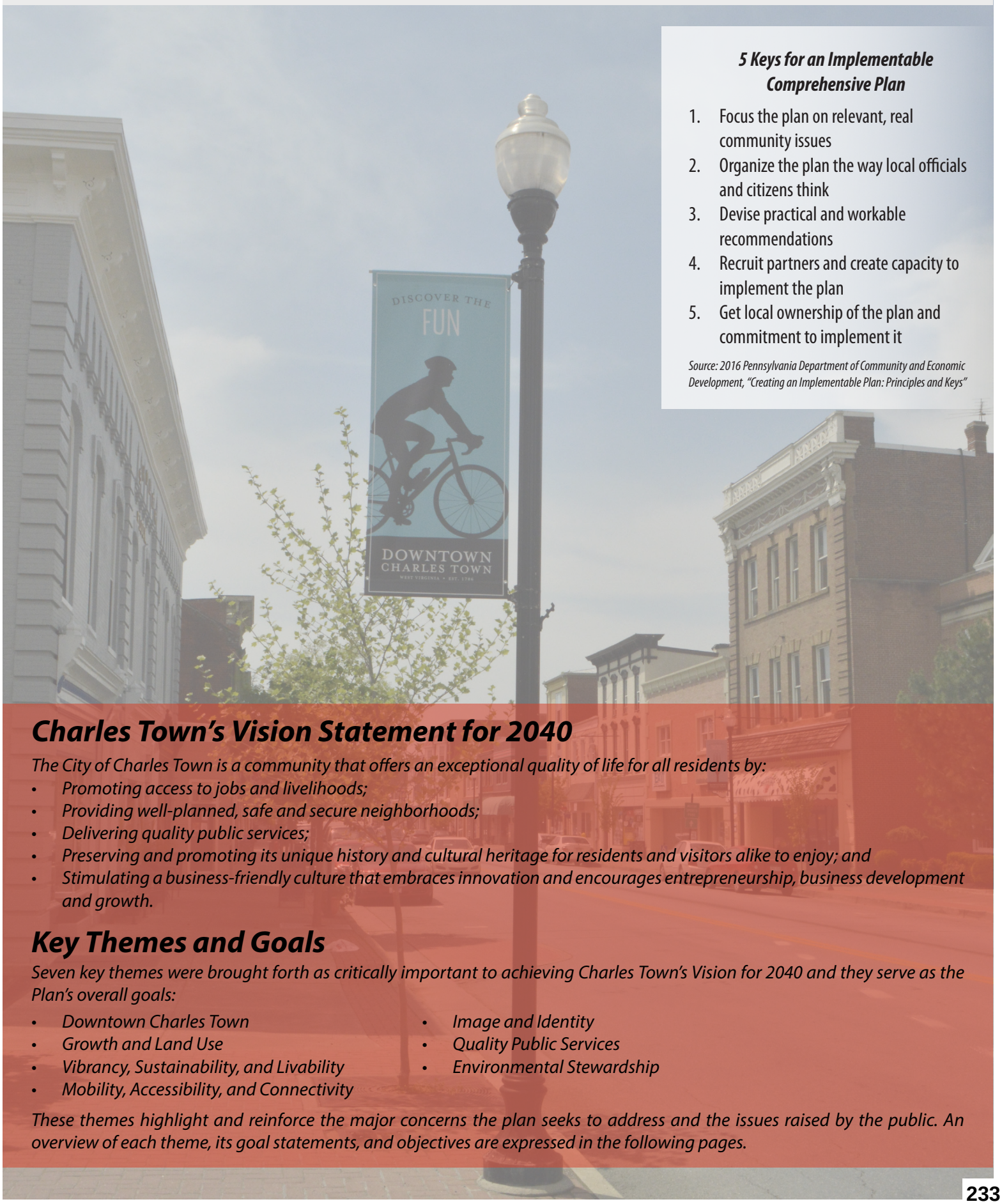
Employment Clusters

Shown below, employment is densely concentrated in Charles Town's Downtown district. The City's largest employment nodes are situated either along or just off of East Washington Street in the Downtown area.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau LEHD On-the-Map

PLANNING FRAMEWORK



5 Keys for an Implementable Comprehensive Plan

1. Focus the plan on relevant, real community issues
2. Organize the plan the way local officials and citizens think
3. Devise practical and workable recommendations
4. Recruit partners and create capacity to implement the plan
5. Get local ownership of the plan and commitment to implement it

Source: 2016 Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, "Creating an Implementable Plan: Principles and Keys"

Charles Town's Vision Statement for 2040

The City of Charles Town is a community that offers an exceptional quality of life for all residents by:

- *Promoting access to jobs and livelihoods;*
- *Providing well-planned, safe and secure neighborhoods;*
- *Delivering quality public services;*
- *Preserving and promoting its unique history and cultural heritage for residents and visitors alike to enjoy; and*
- *Stimulating a business-friendly culture that embraces innovation and encourages entrepreneurship, business development and growth.*

Key Themes and Goals

Seven key themes were brought forth as critically important to achieving Charles Town's Vision for 2040 and they serve as the Plan's overall goals:

- *Downtown Charles Town*
- *Growth and Land Use*
- *Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability*
- *Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity*
- *Image and Identity*
- *Quality Public Services*
- *Environmental Stewardship*

These themes highlight and reinforce the major concerns the plan seeks to address and the issues raised by the public. An overview of each theme, its goal statements, and objectives are expressed in the following pages.

DOWNTOWN CHARLES TOWN

Goal Statement:

Downtown Charles Town will be the center of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and learning.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

A healthy, vibrant, and growing Downtown Charles Town is essential to the City's overall sustainability, quality of life, and future economic competitiveness. Throughout the Comprehensive Plan, Charles Town recognizes the Downtown as its urban core. Its connectivity and accessibility to and within the Downtown from all parts of the City's existing and future land use is imperative to sustaining and growing the City's economic competitiveness in the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle region. The Downtown symbolizes the City's image and identity and upholding and strengthening these elements can only be achieved through effective urban design approach that is, in part, accomplished through the City's historic preservation and building and property code enforcement policies.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Increase economic vitality through Downtown and neighborhood revitalization.*
- *Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation and technical assistance.*
- *Provide attractive storefronts occupied with a variety of appealing retail and service businesses.*
- *Create and maintain a clean, well-lighted, and inviting appearance day and night throughout the Downtown.*
- *Preserve and protect the Downtown's architecture that offers a quality experience in history and culture.*
- *Develop and create Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit the community.*
- *Promote adaptive reuse of and investment into Downtown properties that strengthens the mix of uses within multistory structures.*



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

GROWTH & LAND USE

Goal Statement:

The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) while maintaining a vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Growth and land use are often the primary components of a comprehensive plan because they establish the general physical characteristics of a community. The land use plan is a policy statement that decision makers must rely on to guide future actions. It provides the necessary foundation upon which all other elements are based. Included in the land use plan is a future land use map and related policies and strategies for guiding growth and development patterns through 2040. The previous Charles Town Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2006, during the economic peak of the early 2000s. The policies included in the document anticipated significant and continued growth. Furthermore, while the 2006 Plan was amended in 2009 to reflect the adoption of the UGB, no future land use map was developed for the unincorporated area (land that is governed by the jurisdiction of the County). Now, ten years later, the *Historically HIP Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan* reflects a more stable growth reality and the defined UBG boundary to which the City can grow.

The chapter outlines a detailed overview of Charles Town's historical growth from the Civil War Era through the 2010 Census and 2015 demographic estimates. The Plan also provides an overview of existing land use and zoning regulations and ordinances in the City and outlines more recent planning documents that guide land use in the City.

At the core of the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines a new approach to land use using a new urban design framework based on a SmartCode zoning policy and Smart Growth Principles. While conventional zoning focuses on use, which leads to separate building developments for residential, industrial, retail, commercial and office uses, and ultimately urban sprawl, SmartCode is a new, form-based approach to land development that emphasizes walkability and complete neighborhoods. SmartCode zoning categories are based on whether an area's character is urban or rural, or somewhere in between. In accordance, land use patterns are based on the proper location of development along the "rural-to-urban transect".

Based on SmartCode and Smart Growth Principles, the chapter presents the City's new Future Land Use Plan, which provides a framework to define the City's future growth and development patterns, types, and intensities. Charles Town's Future Land Use (FLU) Plan is composed of two Future Land Use Maps depicting 10-year and 25-year growth scenarios within the UGB.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the future land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan.*
- *Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.*
- *Promote adaptive reuse of and investment in Downtown properties that strengthens the mixed use concept within multistory properties.*
- *Utilize the City's annexation policy to provide areas for future growth, preserve critical green space, and expand the City's tax base.*

VIBRANCY, SUSTAINABILITY, & LIVABILITY

Goal Statement:

The City of Charles Town will be a community where all of its residents can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and, in turn, encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Charles Town is well positioned to grow as a regional destination for heritage tourism as well as a preferred community for a wide range of households and families. As a cornerstone for enhancing Charles Town's vibrancy, sustainability, and livability, the Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of creating a vibrant Downtown and increasing the livability of the City based on a number of factors. In addition, the Plan outlines steps to enhance financial sustainability by diversifying the local economy and capitalizing on opportunities to enhance regional attractions, locally-owned businesses, entertainment venues, and festivals and events.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Utilize the City's limited resources in efficient and innovative ways, and foster revitalization.*
- *Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives.*
- *Implement a City Housing and Redevelopment program to proactively and effectively address the City's blighted and abandoned properties.*
- *Collaborate with Charles Town Now to develop a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use Downtown.*
- *Preserve, promote, and market the City's Heritage Tourism assets including its emerging C*Town Arts and Culture District.*


Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

MOBILITY, ACCESSIBIITY, & CONNECTIVITY

Goal Statement:

The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for all citizens by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Efficient and reliable movement within a city is vital to its growth and success. Accessible transportation—affordable, safe, and extensive circulation between activity centers—supports a mobile workforce, regional tourism, local business, and overall community health. A well-developed network of multimodal transportation options benefits citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by removing barriers to jobs, accessing important goods and services, and engaging in community activities. For Charles Town, increasing mobility, accessibility, and connectivity around the Downtown area, residential areas, and nearby commercial centers will make the City a better place to live, work, and play.

This Comprehensive Plan chapter is built upon two key studies – A *2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study* and a *2014 Transportation Study* – to evaluate the street and sidewalk networks in the City and to outline opportunities to enhance mobility, accessibility, and connectivity. The Downtown First focus is discussed at length and a series of future transportation connections were identified for three main purposes:

- Connect existing or new suburban developments to Downtown Charles Town;
- Fill in existing gaps in the grid network; and
- Establish primary streets for new grid networks in undeveloped areas.

Other topics in the chapter include future bicycle and pedestrian connections, wayfinding, complete streets, regional bus service, and passenger rail.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Provide convenient and affordable access to goods, services, jobs, and recreation for all residents and visitors.*
- *Create well-connected, safe, and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks.*
- *Strengthen the walkability of Downtown Charles Town through improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and reduced volumes of through truck traffic.*
- *Implement complete streets design in all existing and new street and road design.*
- *Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.*
- *Continue to support and increase City residents' access to public transportation services.*

IMAGE & IDENTITY

Goal Statement:

The City of Charles Town will protect, enhance, and reinforce its historic, small town character and "sense of place" through high quality urban design and development standards that protect existing assets and investments, and create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods where all people want to live, work, and play.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Charles Town is a community rich with history that was founded by President George Washington's brother Charles Washington in 1786 and chartered by the Virginia Assembly in 1787. With a population just above 5,000, the City today is a quintessential rural American town nestled within the lush and rural Shenandoah Valley of West Virginia. Although the City has grown considerably since its founding, the urban fabric has been preserved in the Downtown and its surrounding traditional residential neighborhoods remain a testament to Charles Washington's vision. However, like many rural American towns and cities, Charles Town's more recent suburban growth and development patterns have begun to erode the image of the community.

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that Charles Town's small-town image, identity, and sense of place is critically important to its sustainability, livability, and vibrancy. Accordingly, the Plan outlines several strategic planning initiatives that can reinforce the importance of Charles Town's historic Downtown and reenergize a Downtown Focus that will promote growth while embracing the historically rich residential neighborhoods that will be beneficial to the entire community. The plan focuses on land development design standards, a façade improvement program, beautification and gateway enhancement, and community character and design.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Improve the quality of new development and ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods.*
- *Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Charles Town's streetscapes and public spaces.*
- *Support the preservation of historic buildings throughout the City and its UGB.*
- *Improve the appearance of existing commercial facilities to revitalize existing businesses and stimulate the development of new business.*



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES

Goal Statement:

The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Quality public services are the foundation of strong growing cities. Clean and economical drinking water and efficient wastewater treatment are central to a city's ability to provide for its residents. Likewise, responsive law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and fire departments are critical to the safety and wellbeing of residents while high quality schools, libraries, and recreational opportunities are just as critical to support community's school-age children and families.

The City of Charles Town recognizes the importance of not just maintaining, but improving and upgrading its public services to exceed the needs of residents. Accordingly, the Comprehensive Plan identifies strategies to support the City's Fire, EMS, Police, Water, and Wastewater services and implement technology upgrades for a range of City departments. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan discusses recreation (public parks) and the Jefferson County School system.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Ensure the delivery of quality, adequate, and affordable public water and sewer services.*
- *Continue to provide a high quality and well-trained police force to meet the City's law enforcement and protection needs.*
- *Support the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers.*
- *Promote the sustainability of the Charles Town Library to ensure its continued provision of quality museum and library services.*
- *Continue to provide diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities, and open natural spaces.*
- *Continue to support the provision and delivery of quality public education services and increase access to vocational educational opportunities.*



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Goal Statement:

Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development, and redevelopment.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

Charles Town acts as the confluence of multiple natural environments. The area around the City encompasses the headwaters of several perennial streams, such as Cattail Run, Evitts Run, and Bullskin Run. These small bodies of water flow west-to-east and discharge into the Shenandoah River, a major tributary of the Potomac River. Furthermore, the City limits encompass urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods. This diverse setting leaves the City with a lofty responsibility to be a good steward of both its natural environment and its residents.

In the context of environmental stewardship, the Comprehensive Plan discusses the City's greenprint, brownfields redevelopment projects, green infrastructure, and water quality protection initiatives. In addition, the Environmental Stewardship chapter also outlines strategies to protect and preserve Charles Town's rural identify and natural resources, outlining considerations for farmland protection and natural resources to ensure soil, land, water, wilderness, and air are protected for future generations.

To support the goal statement and address key challenges and opportunities discussed throughout the chapter, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the following objectives:

- *Assist Jefferson County with achieving targeted reductions in sediments and nutrients to achieve the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load attainment goals.*
- *Continue to implement the City of Charles Town's joint brownfield reclamation and redevelopment efforts with the City of Ranson.*
- *Protect the supply and quality of groundwater and surface water.*
- *Maximize the preservation of permanent natural areas within new developments.*
- *Preserve the City's agricultural lands in coordination with the future land use map and objectives.*
- *Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.*



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Goal Statements, an Implementation Strategy features a list of next steps for each of the 35 objectives that were identified under the eight theme areas. These strategies outline a tactical approach for advancing Charles Town's 2040 vision by specifying tangible action steps that can be taken to ensure progress and implementation over the next 20 years. In addition to implementation strategies, this chapter also identified key partners that the City may collaborate with to support implementation. Partners include local, county, and state entities, as well as qualified consultants offer expertise in specific areas of need.

A targeted timeframe for the completion of each implementation strategy is also outlined in this chapter. The timeframes include short-term (0-4 years), mid-term (5-10 years), long-term (11-20 years), and ongoing, and prioritize the implementation items that can be advanced in the near-term. Finally, the Implementation Strategy identifies funding resource opportunities for each strategy, identifying City, county, state, and other resources that may be available to off-set implementation costs.

The Implementation Strategy will be a living tool that the City can use, refine, and update through implementation.

Example Implementation Strategy Matrix

Section 4 – Growth and Land Use

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
4.1 – Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the Future Land Use Plan.	4.1.1 – Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.	• City of Charles Town	• Qualified Technical Consultant	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.2 – Continuously examine and where appropriate implement Best Management Practices for land use planning concepts.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.3 – Implement agricultural value added categories in a new agricultural zoning district as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan (10-year).	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.4 – Examine and implement zoning districts that achieve the desired goals of the Future Land Use map.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	• City Annual Operating Budget
4.2 – Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.	4.2.1 – Place a priority on promoting and incentivizing new development investments in the Old Charles Town and Gateway Community Types where urban infrastructure exists to readily support revitalization and infill development.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	• Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Conclusion

Historically HIP Charles Town 2040 provides the City of Charles Town with a clear vision and roadmap for its near- and long-term success as a livable community whose center of activity is its Downtown. The Downtown First focus will ensure the urban core of Charles Town is connected to well-planned, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and is supported by quality public services and thriving centers of commerce that provide sustaining employment and a solid tax base for the City's financial well-being. Charles Town is a community of lasting value worthy of preservation and continued investment.



Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International



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JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

2026 MASTER PLAN

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Table of Contents

i	*Executive Summary*
2	*Jefferson County's Parks Today & The Future*
6	*Key Recommendations*
10	*Recreation Opportunities*
26	*Organization, Management, & Budget*
44	*Shaping Parks & Recreation Facilities for the Future*
74	*Investing in Parks & Recreation - Implementation and Action Plan*
104	*Appendix A: Assessment of Existing Facilities*
140	*Appendix B: Comprehensive Trail System*
160	*Appendix C: Model Park Master Site Development Plan Scope of Work*

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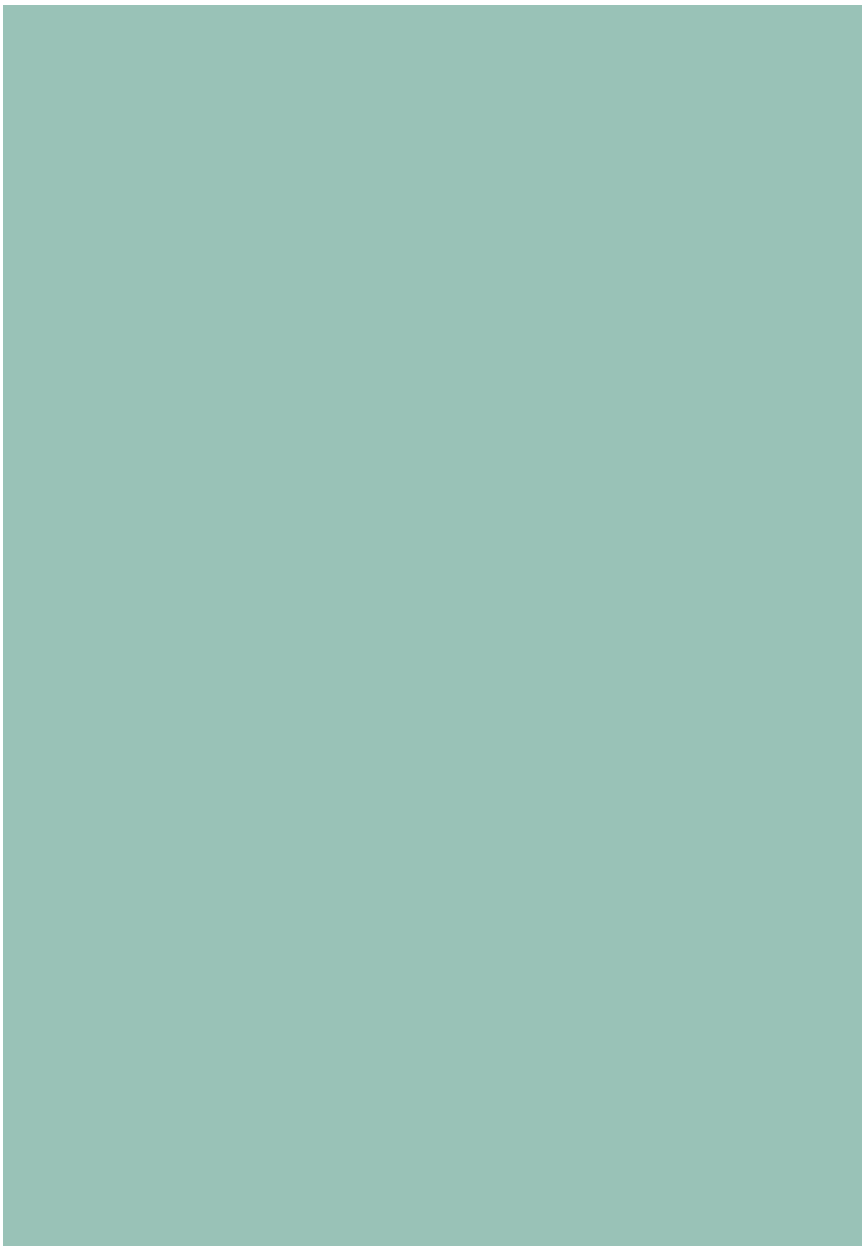
JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

executive summary



JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
executive summary

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE

Imagine living, working and recreating in a place that has riches of small cities and towns within a few minutes of pastoral farmlands, scenic rivers, majestic mountains, greenways, wonderful history and beautiful parks. Everyone has the ability to hike, bike and walk in all types of places. You have the opportunity to enjoy and participate in diverse and varied forms of recreation, from the most active of team sports to a self-guided hike, a nationally significant historic experience, a casual bicycle ride, or reflective lounging with family and friends and taking-in a post card river view. Every family in Jefferson County has easy access and the full ability to enjoy a place with beauty that Thomas Jefferson said, "is worth a trip across the Atlantic." Parks and recreation play an important role in successful communities. The ability to provide a diverse set of parks and recreation experiences and opportunities is a barometer of success for a high-quality parks system, but more so, the measure of a vibrant and desirable community where people will want to live, work, and invest.

Jefferson County has the potential to be a community that is a most-desirable place from a parks and recreation standpoint, and to benefit from its locational advantages of abundant and beautiful natural spaces and major metro areas with a very competitive cost-of-living.

Jefferson County Parks & Recreation plays an important role in….

+ Improving the health and well-being of residents of all age groups throughout the County;
+ Advancing Jefferson County's economic development opportunities;
+ Supporting real estate values and the continued re-investment in neighborhoods;
+ Educating the population;
+ Promoting tourism and supporting jobs and business, of all scales and sizes;
+ Facilitating social engagement that forms a strong sense of community identity; and
+ Putting forward a compelling perspective that parks and recreation are not a luxury in communities that want to be economically competitive in the 21st century.

COUNTY CONTEXT

Realizing that challenges exist and opportunities are un-tapped, the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) undertook this planning effort to develop a game plan for moving ahead to ensure that Jefferson County's parks system is fully serving the community, including the population across the entire county. This plan looks ahead but is grounded in the here and now, understanding that the needed resources to realize the vision will take time to garner.

WHY NOW?

Jefferson County has experienced growth and is poised to potentially experience greater growth. County and community leaders understand that quality-of-life aspects are an important component of economic development and for maintaining a community where property values are stable and continued investment occurs. See: "The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space: How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line", Trust for Public Land (1999), *www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benfits_EconBenef_Parks_OpenSpaceL.pdf.*

Despite a lull in growth since the economic downturn of the late 2000s, incremental growth in Jefferson County is picking up and the time is ripe to act in order to be ahead of growth and best shape the parks system for maximum positive community value, environmental protection, community connectivity, parks and recreational development, and support for human health and well-being, before it is too late or much more costly to do so!

JEFFERSON COUNTY'S PARKS SYSTEM HAS BOTH OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

It's Rich with Resources: Jefferson County is rich with resources that can support the creation of a parks and recreation system that would make communities across the nation envious. There are national parks, dedicated natural resource protection areas, two major scenic rivers, historic towns and cities, and access to internationally recognized multi-state trail systems including the Appalachian Trail and the C&O Canal Towpath Trail. These resources, however, do not replace the community value of a quality Jefferson County parks system. These resources support the potential for a county system to become greater than most counties of comparable size and character across the nation.

It Fulfills a Vitally Important Community Need: A county parks system fills a specific niche in a community that would otherwise be unmet. Its parks provide the types of major recreational facilities and experiences that individual municipalities alone cannot provide. Conversely, it is much more able to serve the specific needs of its community when compared to the national role the National Park Service can provide. This notion is referred to in this plan as "thinking county-wide."

Not Connected: While Jefferson County has some important hiking, pedestrian and bicycle trails including the Appalachian Trail, the C&O Towpath, the Route 9 Trail and others, there is a fundamental lack of trail connections within many communities as well as to Jefferson County park and recreational resources. Charles Town and Ranson are not connected by trails to Bolivar and Harpers Ferry or Shepherdstown. No communities or neighborhoods have trail access to Sam Michael's Park or James Hite Park, and many other connectivity gaps remain throughout the county.



However, Jefferson County Parks have Evolved Versus Being Planned: This park system evolved into its current state mostly without significant planning and often based on happenstance decisions. Therefore the size, type, and location of some of the parks are purely a function of what land was available at a particular time or because of donations of properties. As a result, some of the parks are not located to best serve the population or have physical factors to support the best uses.

It is "Present" but Lacks "Presence:" Parks evolved with limited planning or resources at the site specific level, sometimes resulting in parks that are inefficiently configured, have limited amenities, are difficult to maintain, and lack the fundamental characteristics of a high-quality park. Many of the parks lack landscape plantings and design elements that are integrated into the most publicly utilized portions of the parks, resulting in a high utilitarian feel and bare experience for the park user.

Parks and Recreation is a Public Service not a Business: The Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission as a public agency is becoming overly revenue driven. The commission must remember it functions as a public service. All public parks and recreation departments are trying to generate more revenue but they do not forget their root mission. This master plan clearly shows that JCPRC is already recovering approximately double the national average in operating costs. In contrast it spends about 1/10th what other comparable departments spend on maintenance and is significantly understaffed based on the current size of the system and the services it provides. The commission needs to go back to the basics and utilize this master plan to define its actions and decision making process to ensure that it is functioning in a manner consistent with the greatest public good.

Start with the Basics: Overall, Jefferson County's parks fundamentally have quality and conditions issues to overcome in order to create a logical and functional county-wide parks system. This means that many of the parks need the most basic improvements like drainage, circulation, parking, signage, and support facilities like restrooms or concession stands. Great parks are not created without a plan. Most of the parks have never been properly master planned and facilities have been added with, at most, an evaluation of where to locate a specific facility, without considering the full potential of the entire park in which the facility will be located.

WHAT IS A SYSTEM-WIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN?

This system-wide master plan explores the options for the development of parks and recreation facilities and programs throughout the Jefferson County-owned system. It considers existing and potential park users, county conditions, municipal recreation, cultural needs, opportunities, and the overall potential desires of the Jefferson County community. The process for developing the vision for the system, and supporting policy recommendations, emphasized robust citizen input to develop a path forward that targets existing and likely future community needs. This document, as referenced specifically within Element 3 of the Jefferson County, West Virginia, Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, as adopted by act of the County Commission on January 14th, 2015, serves as Jefferson County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan under the auspices and in support of, the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan.

FUNDING RESOURCES

JCPRC has had solid success in obtaining grants to support projects and programs in Jefferson County. This Master Plan contains a "Resource Roadmap" that builds on that success, outlining more than a dozen sources of grant funding and support that could be sought by JCPRC, along with strategies and recommendations for how Jefferson County can be most competitive for these resources. This report also recommends that Jefferson County should establish more proactive policies for requiring and encouraging land developers to contribute to new and improved park and recreational facilities, particularly trail connections.

It must be noted, however, that the level of capital and operating resources that would be needed to achieve the recommendations in this plan – between $16 million and $23 million for capital projects alone – cannot be supported just by grant funding. Jefferson County and its citizens need to consider a levy or other fee-based campaign that could raise these resources from the people of the community. This plan discusses the approach to such a community campaign to raise resources for a wonderful park and recreation system envisioned in this master plan.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION 2026 BLUEPRINT

To achieve the long term vision of this plan, the following key goals and initiatives have been identified for the next 10 years.

An effective system-wide master plan...

+ Defines the vision and the role the Jefferson County's park system plays within the community's overall parks and recreation needs;
+ Establishes a mission for how management structures and capital improvements are shaped for the extended future, with an emphasis on what should be the focus for the next 10 years;
+ Establishes a framework for how the vision can be achieved via policies, actions, and projects;
+ Determines the major funding resources and advocacy actions needed to achieve the vision;
+ Defines operational and management parameters for today and all future decision-making;
+ Establishes a general guidance and policy tool for decision-making as implementation occurs and to address future unforeseen conditions; and
+ Enables Jefferson County to be competitive for grant funding for parks and programming improvements.

The recommendations in this system-wide master plan report are for guidance in decision-making; the plan is not the letter of the law. The master plan includes a clear vision for what can be achieved in Jefferson County and the key next steps. Multiple parties will be involved in making many future decisions, and many partnerships are needed; therefore the plan can serve as common reference for all parties, as step-by-step decisions are made. As each major project is advanced through detailed planning and design, public engagment should be integral to the process.



Goal #1 - Enhance the user's experience in all of Jefferson County's parks through basic amenities, comfort facilities, and landscape upgrades.

In order for park visitors to have a great park visitation experience there must be a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system. This includes basic amenities such as restroom facilities, access to drinking water, and, in parks with active sports recreation facilities, concession facilities. All of the JCPRC parks should have uniform branding elements which convey that each park is part of the JCPRC park system and is clean and safe. Successful branding extends well beyond the information provided and the look of an entrance sign; it includes a broad set of components that are consistent park-to-park ranging from benches, signing, pavilions (architectural "style"), lighting, restroom facilities, etc. The branding standards should also establish an ecology-based approach to landscape management based on regional plant communities that governor landscape management and plantings with the parks to establish richer landscape experience in the parks that today are predominantly mowed-turf intensive. At the conclusion of this effort, park visitors will have confidence in knowing that when visiting any park in the Jefferson County park system, they will be provided with quality facilities, basic services, and code compliant facilities. James Hite Park especially requires basic amenities to serve the large number of park visitors now using the recreational fields. Sam Michael's Park, however, is the one exception to this recommendation, although it could benefit from comprehensive system signing and additional landscape improvements.

What will it take to achieve this goal? To ensure a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system a uniform set of amenity and landscape design standards should be developed and then systematically implemented in each park. JCPRC should be the leader of this effort, develop the standards, systematically implement the improvements park by park, and ensure that consistency is maintained.

What are the financial resources needed? $2M to $3M ranging from $250K to $750K per park, depending on the size of the park and the facilities required.

Timeline: This effort can start in year 1 and will likely take 3-6 years to implement the base improvements throughout the system.





Goal #2 - Create a 100 Mile "Jefferson Connectivity" Trail Network (starting by connecting the C&O Canal Towpath, the Appalachian Trail, and the Harpers Ferry National Park trail network to Sam Michael's Park, the Route 9 Trail, and the Cities of Ranson and Charles Town.)

Residents are clamoring for more trails and greater interconnectivity between parks, schools, and neighborhoods. Trails are investments that pay multiple dividends since they are recreational facilities unto themselves as well as serving a larger role in enhancing overall connectivity to a wide range of uses and activities. Jefferson County is well served with major regional and larger trail facilities such as the C&O Towpath and the Appalachian Trail. Jefferson County only needs to provide the critical connections to potentially link Jefferson County neighborhoods and parks directly to a large swath of the Mid-Atlantic region and major destinations such as Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh. Trails were one of the top facilities requested for expansion by the public through the entire planning process. A great trail system doesn't happen overnight, but Jefferson County already has a solid basis for creating a truly world class trail network with potentially 100-miles of dedicated trails. Trails have one of the highest participation rates of any recreation facility and are also incredibly effective economic development tools. As infrastructure investment is planned, it should include the appropriate trail facilities and connections required to make Jefferson County a truly connected community.

What will it take to achieve this goal? A dedicated Trail Development "Champion" staff person within Jefferson County government focused on advancing the planning, design, and construction of trail segments and reviewing all plans, whether public infrastructure or private development to ensure that all trail connectivity opportunities are capitalized and no critical connections are lost.

What are the financial resources needed? Trail projects can be costly, but incremental trail segments can be achieved at relatively low costs, especially if critical segments are achieved through the codification of trail construction requirements as a part of the typical land development process. $1M would support a major effort to expand out from the existing trails and parks as a visible effort to advance this Jefferson County-wide connectivity goal.

Timeline: This effort can start immediately through the coordination work as private land development plans are submitted and reviewed for approval. It will likely take 10 years or longer to establish the key linkages described.



Goal #3 - Design and implement a grand vision for Sam Michael's Park that elevates the park to a true county-scale and "the premiere" park facility for Jefferson County (100+ acres).

Thinking as a county park system means that parks should be larger and more comprehensive than what has historically been provided. Premier parks should have facilities that will serve broad community needs and are at a scale that individual cities and towns cannot likely provide, such as amphitheaters, gyms, and other larger format facilities.

What will it take to achieve this goal? Sam Michael's Park needs a truly comprehensive master plan that takes into account all of the opportunities within the current site and to explore the opportunities to acquire adjacent land which in some manner can be directly connected to the existing park.

What are the financial resources needed? $75K for master planning; $3M to $5M based on land value to have a significant impact on expanding the size and caliber of Sam Michael's Park.

Timeline: This effort should start within the first 2 years and then be implemented incrementally over the next 10+ years. It is critically important that a comprehensive site master plan be developed for Sam Michael's Park before any additional major capital improvements are made. This effort should consider some of the special facility opportunities/recommendations proposed in Chapter 5 of this master plan.



Goal #4 - Increase public access to Jefferson County's unique and bountiful waterways by permanently protecting waterfront properties for the public benefit.

Natural resources are often the aspect of a community that influences what makes a parks and recreation system unique and special. In this regard, Jefferson County is truly blessed with riches, especially with its waterways and major historical and cultural attractions, many of which occur along or near them. With the Potomac River, the Shenandoah River, and the Opequon Creek, Jefferson County is literally surrounded on three sides with waterways as well as having important water corridors running through it, such as the Evitts Run Creek, Flowing Springs Creek, and Cattail Run Creek. Despite the presence of these assets and a national treasure in Harpers Ferry National Park, surprisingly little of the waterway frontage is actually publicly accessible. Efforts to increase public access to the rivers and creeks with the county will greatly enhance the recreational opportunities of the residents, expand Jefferson County as a tourism destination, and protect valuable natural resource areas in this Chesapeake Bay watershed.

What will it take to achieve this goal? As with the creation of county-wide interconnected trail network, it is important to have a staff person in Jefferson County government specifically focused on creating a comprehensive inventory and tracking the status of waterfront properties. The goal of this initiative is to consider a series of land acquisition criteria and then actively pursue a property-by-property strategy for obtaining public access rights, permanently protecting natural resources and habitats and strategically planning support facilities to provide greater access to water-based recreation.

What are the financial resources needed? Open space preservation can be costly if outright, fee-simple purchasing of land is sought. The plan proposes that a palette of open space preservation tools be utilized including improved ordinances, easements, gifting/ estate planning, conservation incentives, and land acquisitions. A dedicated fund should be established and cultivated to generated on-hand resources needed to potentially respond to open space preservation opportunities as they arise. $1M to $2M in seed funds for open space preservation should be a goal.

Timeline: This is a long-term effort, however, outreach to property owners is important to determine donations, easements, and the potential for fee-simple acquisitions, over time. Ultimately, this effort will be continual until all or a significant amount of the waterway frontage is addressed.



Goal #5 – Plan and construct an aquatics facility in partnership with the Jefferson County Schools System and fulfill a long-standing community desire for recreational aquatics, safety training, and water-based health and well-being activities in Jefferson County.

The need for a full service indoor aquatics facility is highly apparent and was by far the most commonly expressed desire in terms of new facilities, throughout the community outreach aspect of this plan's preparation. Modern aquatic facilities are costly to construct, maintain, and manage. If planned and designed properly they can serve as important destination and revenue generators to aid in their financial operation.

What will it take to achieve this goal? Partnerships are important to many of the recommendations in this plan, but none more so than the undertaking of the creation of a high-quality modern aquatics facility. The JCPRC cannot and should not create a facility on its own but instead should explore a partnership with Jefferson County Schools which also needs a facility. Creating a jointly constructed facility could create a path to overcome the financial barriers that otherwise exist. It would also ensure the maximum utilization by the community of a public funded facility is achieved. This effort is just one of several opportunities identified in this plan to strengthen the partnership between Jefferson County Schools and JCPRC in order to optimize recreational facilities to their maximum community benefit.

What are the financial resources needed? $50K for a feasibility study; $7M to $10M for construction based on the size and complexity of the facility as well as other support facilities beyond a traditional tank pool, such as spray pools, or other amenities. The partnership would support the shared cost of insurance, operation, maintenance, and regulatory compliance based on costs evaluated during the feasibility study stage.

Timeline: This effort should start within the first 2 years to undertake the full feasibility analysis of a joint aquatics facility. Years 3-6 for fund raising and years 6-9 for final design and construction.



Goal #6 - Plan for growth by acquiring the necessary land to create another county level park (100+ Acres) within the next twenty years.

Even with the modest growth projected in *Envision Jefferson 2035*, the Jefferson County's Comprehensive Plan prepared in 2015, there will be a substantial increase in population over the next 20 to 30 years in Jefferson County. An important value of a comprehensive planning effort, whether broadly considered or topic specific, is to ensure that as community population and demographic changes occur, Jefferson County is well prepared for those changes. Based on project population growth with the targeted growth management areas within the Comprehensive Plan, there will be a need for additional parkland. Since Jefferson County's parks are already considered under-sized by typical county level standards, it is suggested that lands specifically adjacent to existing parklands should be given a priority in order to build upon existing resources. An example area that may represent an opportunity to link multiple properties is in the Leetown Park Planning District. If lands and easements could be acquired that link Leetown Park, James Hite Park, and the Jefferson County Fairgrounds Complex, a county-scaled park "complex" could be established.

What will it take to achieve this goal? JCPRC staff, in conjunction with other Jefferson County departments and commission staff should be researching opportunities to strategically acquire lands for future park spaces. It is important to start now in order to be prepared to have new parks on line in the next 10 to 20 years.

What are the financial resources needed? $2M+ based on land values.

Timeline: This is a long-term effort, however, outreach to property owners surrounding the larger existing Jefferson County parks should start now to determine if there are opportunities to acquire strategically valuable lands that could connect to, or directly expand, the size of existing parks. Long-term options on properties might be able to be secured within years 5-8 with the ability to acquire within years 8-10.



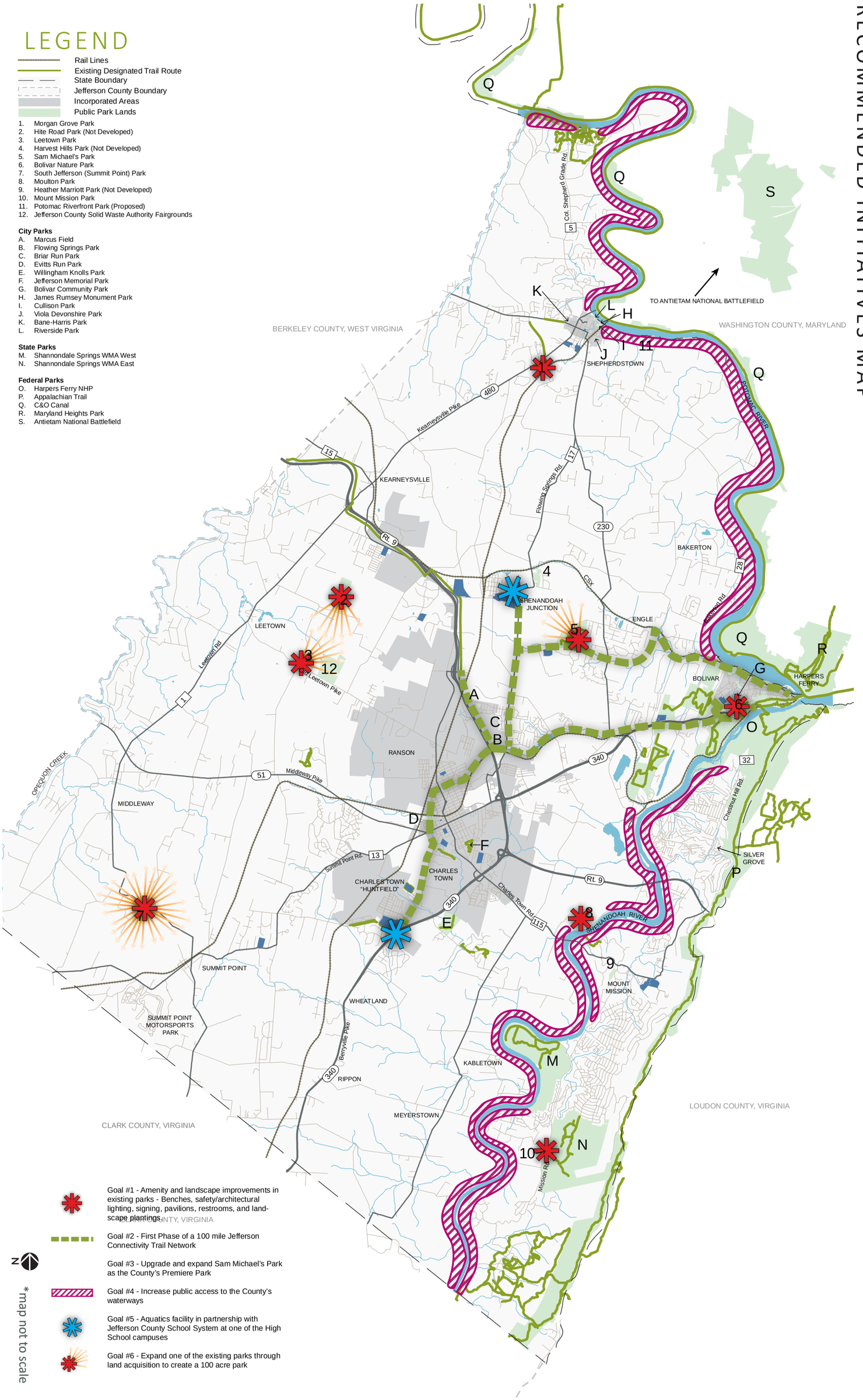
Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management, operations, and programming actions to achieve the vision of this plan.

Although not as exciting to many as physical projects, the fact is, a great park system is not achievable without equally high-quality management and operations. The master plan makes extensive recommendations on ways to build upon the management and operations structures that exist to improve the quality of what exists today, in order to better serve residents. This can be achieved through the provision of additional and enhanced programs, especially utilizing expanded facilities developed as a part of this plan, and to be prepared to efficiently serve a growing system.

What will it take to achieve this goal? JCPRC staff, in conjunction with elected officials, need to commit the necessary staffing, budgetary, and policy resources to foster the JCPRC's management and organizational growth.

Timeline: This system-wide master plan provides the basis for many of the management and operation procedures and protocols needed to implement the plan. Actions needed to implement the plan can start immediately and in fact the JCPRC staff have already begun to enact many of the recommended procedures.

Using this master plan as a guide, Jefferson County's community leaders can continue their efforts and leverage momentum to position this area as the region's and state's top-tier opportunity for commerce, recreation, tourism, smart growth, urban revitalization, and high-quality-of-life living.


LEGEND
Rail Lines
Existing Designated Trail Route
State Boundary
Jefferson County Boundary
Incorporated Areas
Public Park Lands
1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds
City Parks
A. Marcus Field
B. Flowing Springs Park
C. Briar Run Park
D. Evitts Run Park
E. Willingham Knolls Park
F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park
State Parks
M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East
Federal Parks
O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield
BERKELEY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND
CLARK COUNTY, VIRGINIA
LOUDON COUNTY, VIRGINIA
TO ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
SHEPHERDSTOWN
KEARNEYSVILLE
LEETOWN
RANSON
MIDDLEWAY
SUMMIT POINT
SUMMIT POINT MOTORSPORTS PARK
WHEATLAND
CHARLES TOWN "HUNT FIELD"
CHARLES TOWN
RIPPON
MEYERSTOWN
KABLETOWN
SHENANDOAH JUNCTION
ENGLE
BAKERTON
BOLIVAR
HARPERS FERRY
SILVER GROVE
MOUNT MISSION
POTOMAC RIVER
SHENANDOAH RIVER
OPEQUON CREEK
Col. Shepherd Grade Rd.
Kearneysville Pike
Leetown Rd
Old Leetown Pike
Middleway Pike
Summit Point Rd.
Flowing Springs Rd.
Charles Town Rd
Berryville Pike
Mission Rd
Fairfax Rd
Chestnut Hill Rd.
CSX
Rt. 9
340
480
230
51
115
Goal #1 - Amenity and landscape improvements in existing parks - Benches, safety/architectural lighting, signing, pavilions, restrooms, and land-scape plantings
Goal #2 - First Phase of a 100 mile Jefferson Connectivity Trail Network
Goal #3 - Upgrade and expand Sam Michael's Park as the County's Premiere Park
Goal #4 - Increase public access to the County's waterways
Goal #5 - Aquatics facility in partnership with Jefferson County School System at one of the High School campuses
Goal #6 - Expand one of the existing parks through land acquisition to create a 100 acre park
N
*map not to scale

JEFFERSON COUNTY SYSTEM-WIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN

Jefferson County's parks today & the future

01

jefferson county's parks today & the future

PARKS AND RECREATION – A KEY COMPONENT OF COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Jefferson County, West Virginia, is a recreation mecca. Home to national, state, and local treasures, the county is rich with opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the great outdoors and experience culture and heritage. These treasures include Harpers Ferry and C&O Canal National Parks, the Appalachian Trail; important historical sites; the Potomac River and Shenandoah River; state wildlife management areas; places to hunt, fish, hike, and ride bicycles and horses; a county-wide parks and recreation system; charming towns and cities with close-to-home parks; and educational institutions from kindergarten through university that serve as community recreation venues. In addition to public recreational opportunities, many private recreation businesses support participation in outdoor recreation, cultural, and historic activities. In fact, tourism is a driving force behind the economy in Jefferson County. In 2015, Yahoo named Harpers Ferry as the number one fall destination in the United States.

Today, Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) is a provider of recreation services to the residents, and to a lesser extent, visitors to the county. Through this plan JCPRC will be the primary provider of recreation services, including aiding Jefferson County's residents in achieving greater health and wellness. JCPRC believes that only through a bold and well defined vision can everyday living in Jefferson County be filled with activity and recreational engagement for all ages, interests and abilities.

This master plan is the long-range plan for the county's parks, recreation, and open space resources. It provides JCRPC with a defined path forward for improving parks and recreation services in a manner that emphasizes what makes Jefferson County great. It also expands Jefferson County's economic potential, while preserving what makes it an attractive and exciting place to live, work, and play!

Vision

By the year 2025: Jefferson County will offer an exceptional setting in which to live, work, invest, and visit. The park system and its beauty will be a part of daily life and shape the character of Jefferson County. Access to the great outdoors will be conveniently available for nature-based recreation; there will be close-to-home parks for active recreation; and the trail system will connect recreational cornerstones, historical destinations, and open space for recreation and transportation.

Sound ecological stewardship and vibrant recreation opportunities will make Jefferson County renown as a destination with "lots to do" in a pristine environment yet close to metropolitan life. The park system will be sustainable, well-maintained, and safe and meet the needs of individuals, families, and the county's communities. Aware of its value to their lives, residents will be proud stewards and supporters of an extraordinary park and recreation system.

Based on its role in a thriving county economy and a very desirable quality-of-life in Jefferson County, the park system will be fiscally sustainable through support from a mix of public and private resources and collaborative partnerships to contribute to the renewal of the human spirit and a strong sense-of-place unique to Jefferson County.

Mission

Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission

Mission in Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Why Does JCPRC exist?

JCPRC exists to provide places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment. Its mission is to take a leadership role in harnessing resources for the purpose of planning, developing, implementing, evaluating, and operating a county-wide system of parks, recreation, conservation areas, and trail opportunities for people who live, work, and visit here.

Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission Guiding Statements

The vision, mission, and values are the guiding statements for the JCPRC. These statements will be connected to the work of the organization through annual budgets, work plans, capital improvement program, and the ten-year implementation plan. Progress toward achieving the vision set forth in the plan will be evaluated at an individual, organizational, commission, and community level. The guiding statements are as follows:

Action Statements

The Action Statements identify how JCPRC performs its work.

Sustainability - Meet park and recreation needs by balancing environmental, economic, and equity concerns to ensure that the Jefferson County parks and recreation system thrives for many generations far into the future.

Environment - Sustain and enhance parklands, waters, and forests.

Economic - Develop short-term and long-term financial stability of the park system.

Equity - Provide residents with the opportunity to improve their quality-of-life and well-being through outstanding parks and recreation services that are suited to their respective needs.

Visionary Leadership - Recognize the need for ongoing leadership and collaboration in achieving excellence.

Responsiveness and Innovation - Anticipate and thoughtfully respond to the diverse needs of Jefferson County's communities, continually seeking ways to better deliver park and recreation services.

Independence and Focus - Focus on obtaining and providing the resources necessary to accomplish its mission and form effective, responsible partnerships while maintaining its independence.

Applying the Statements

This plan embraces innovation. It also communicates that ongoing learning and community outreach and research are required to provide the best park and recreation services to Jefferson County residents and visitors. The success of this vision is tied to the commitment of the County Commissioners, the JCRPC, its employees, and its partners, and to the value the community places on maintaining and improving the Jefferson County's park system. As the plan is implemented, residents and park visitors can look forward to an exciting future in which services are continually evaluated and improved to ensure that needs are met; facilities are maintained and renewed as new ones are created; connection with the natural environment is strengthened; sustainable practices are expanded; and parks and recreation is a highly valuable economic asset.

Providing parkland and preserving and protecting open space will be a fundamental part of Jefferson County's overall decision-making process in terms of all relevant aspects of policies and regulations, especially those that impact land development, development expansion, smart-growth, and infrastructure.

JCPRC not only provides a service to its residents in the form of parks and recreation facilities and programs, it also provides greater value to Jefferson County as a whole by making it a more attractive place to live, work, and play, therefore increasing its economic competitiveness.

HOW DOES JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMPARE?

A valuable tool to evaluate how JCPRC is functioning today, is to compare key physical, management and financial aspects against national standards, or a system with comparable factors. As the table below shows, JCPRC has an exceptionally high Cost Recovery Rate, yet its Maintenance Budget per Park Acre is extremely low, when compared to typical parks and recreation agency equivalencies, such as the amount of park acreage and population. This comparison is meant only as one tool to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of Jefferson County's parks and recreation system and how these aspects and factors support the Vision and Mission of JCPRC for the future.

Jefferson County by the Numbers

	JCPRC	Typical Parks and Recreation Agency Equivalent to Jefferson County* and its Facilities
Square Miles	209	18
Population in 2015	56,482	43,511
Number of County Parks	10	24
County Park Acreage	409	564
Acres Per 1,000 Residents	7.17	9.5
Parks & Recreation Budget	$1,013,611	$2,137,279
Per Capita Budget	$17.95	$76.44
Ratio of Parks and Recreation Budget to County Operating Budget	3.3%	5%
Cost Recovery Rate	53%	29%
Full Time Employees	6	41
Maintenance Employees	1 FTE and 6 PT Seasonal	22
Maintenance Budget Per Park Acre	$558	$3,764 - 6,476

*National Recreation and Park Association. (2015) Field Report. (Ashburn, VA)

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

key recommendations

02

key recommendations

This master plan covers diverse aspects of Jefferson County's parks and recreation system. The master plan identifies specific recommendations that support the implementation of the Parks and Recreation 2026 Master Plan. These recommendation should be considered as the underlying aspects that will drive the master plan's implementation.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Implement a Program Management Plan

Develop and implement a Program Management Plan that focuses on identifying and meeting the needs of customers of the JCPRC as the driver in program planning rather than focusing on what programs to offer.

Monitor and Track Program Performance

Use the formulas and guidelines recommended in the plan to develop the Program Management Plan including program standards, high quality customer service, benefits and outcomes, cost recovery, and program life cycle.

Develop and Implement a Strategic Promotional Program

This program will increase public awareness about parks and recreation opportunities and the benefits that JCPRC brings to the economy, the environment, and the health and welfare of the citizens.

Perform and Regularly Update the Management Impact Statement

Use the Management Impact Statement in determining when to add new major programs, programs that require significant financial support, and programs that have ramifications for staffing.

Recognize that the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission Cannot be All Things to All People

Limitations of staff and budget require the JCPRC to focus on programs and services that matter most to the public, conserve the environment, contribute to Jefferson County's economic vitality, and help to sustain the long-term financial viability of public parks and recreation. The JCPRC should always be thinking at a "county-scale" when making decisions related to programs and facilities.

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Operate with a "County-scale" Mindset on All Actions Related to Parks and Facilities

Thinking like a county park system means that parks should be larger and more comprehensive than what has historically been provided. This approach means that some of the existing smaller facilities, such as Bolivar Nature Park, may be more appropriately run at the municipal level, freeing up the JCPRC to expand and improve its larger facilities. JCPRC staff and its board should visit other model county level systems to see comparable systems and examples of "best practices."

Formalize and Implement System-wide "Base" Improvements

To ensure a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system, first and foremost, a uniform set of landscape design standards should be developed. These standards should established a set palette of consistent park amenities including benches, signing, pavilions (architectural "style"), lighting, etc. These standards should also establish an ecology-based approach to landscape management based on regional plant communities, which should governor landscape management, i.e. limit turf and mowing to high-use areas, as well as set plant material lists, exotic/invasive removal, etc. All of the parks should have some consistent elements that brand them as part of the JCPRC park system. Successful branding extends well beyond the information and look of the entrance sign; it includes a broad set of components that are consistent park-to-park.

Elevate the Quality of Parks through Site Specific Park Master Plans

Historically, there has been a limited site specific park master planning occurring as a formal process. This has resulted in parks that lack cohesive and coherent organization and utilization of lands. Parks are not only about sports. Great parks are not just about how many active sport facilities can be crammed onto a tract of land, but considers the balance of needs of all age groups, interests, and a park's role in the overall county system. In all cases, parks should be master planned with an emphasis of evaluating the management and maintenance implications on the JCPRC to ensure that any investments made can be sustained in a high-quality manner for the long-term.

Optimize School Facilities for the Full Recreation Benefit of County Residents

Some of Jefferson County's highest quality recreation facilities are located on school properties. In many cases these facilities are off-limits to the general public. JCPRC and the school district established a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to begin the process of partnering and sharing of facilities. JCPRC should take the lead on defining pilot efforts to deploy the MOU to ensure that it is mutually effective and sustainable.

Expand the Reach of Recreation Facilities and Recreation Opportunities Through a County-wide Trail System

Trails were one of the top facilities requested for expansion by the public through the entire planning process. A great trail system doesn't happen overnight, but Jefferson County already has a basis for creating a truly world class trail network with potentially 100-miles of dedicated trails. Trails have one of the highest participation rates of any recreation facility and are also incredibly effective economic development tools. The master plan proposes a series of proactive techniques for implementing a county-wide trail system with the key recommendation of establishing a dedicated Trail Development Coordinator which, ideally, is based in the County's Office of Planning and Zoning. This will ensure that as each new land development and infrastructure investment is planned considering parks and recreation needs and includes the appropriate trail facilities and connections.

MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND BUDGET

Increase Partnerships

Leverage resources through partnerships with the Jefferson County Board of Education, private businesses, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), the National Park Service, the Potomac Audubon Society, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and others.

Add Staff Positions

Add a new position for Program Development and Special Events within JCPRC. The goal of this position should be to generate revenue through special events and through development of partnerships and sponsorships. The JCPRC should also add a new position of Facility Manager to manage scheduling, rentals, use, promotion, and coordination with maintenance. As stated above, the JCPRC should collaborate with the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning on establishing a shared a Trail Development Coordinator position to plan the county-wide trail system, review land development projects, to promote inter-connected trail linkages, and to prepare grant applications for trail acquisition and development. The JCPRC positions should be elevated to include a "Cabinet" level positions for major functions such as parks, recreation programs, development, and marketing (customer service). The goal should be to enable the Director's position to become 60 percent outreach, 20 percent administration, and 20 percent program and facility development including park planning.

Enhance Financial Management

Develop a Revenue Policy Manual that identifies the JCPRC's revenue philosophy, fees and charges goals, and cost recovery. It should also include revenue producing facilities, financial assistance goals, guidelines for programs and services, gifts, fund-raising events, friends' organizations, county allocations, compulsory resources such as a future bind levy, and how all revenues are accounted for and presented for the purposes of accountability, AND decision-making.

Formalize and Implement Consistent Maintenance Management Protocols

Recognize that current maintenance management accomplishes a great deal with an undersized budget and staff. Establish park maintenance quality standards to ensure efficient allocation of resources where the need is greatest. Work towards the standards recommended in this plan of additional staff and per acre budget for park maintenance. Add maintenance management components for sports turf, natural resources, and maintenance. Align fees with actual maintenance costs. The maintenance management program should be formalized to ensure that the system is in place for weather management, staff, JCPRC, and county government changes.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

recreation opportunities

03

recreation opportunities

The creation of program opportunities focuses on the direct provision, facilitation, and promotion of recreation opportunities within Jefferson County, as well as providing goals and recommendations for the future.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Jefferson County, is a recreation mecca. Home to national, state and local treasures, the county is rich with opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the great outdoors and experience culture and heritage. These treasures include Harpers Ferry National Park; the Appalachian Trail; important historical sites; nationally significant rivers; state wildlife management areas; places to hunt, fish, hike, and ride bicycles and horses. There is a county-wide parks and recreation system; charming towns with close-to-home parks; and educational institutions from kindergarten through the university level, that serve as community recreation venues. In addition to public recreational opportunities, many private recreation businesses support participation in outdoor recreation, cultural, and historic activities. In fact, tourism is a driving force behind the economy in Jefferson County. In 2015, Yahoo named Harpers Ferry as the number one fall destination in the United States.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION'S MAJOR ROLE IN RECREATION

The JCPRC has three distinct roles in recreation in the 209 square mile county. These include providing facilities for self-directed recreation; facilitating recreation provided by other community-based organizations; and offering organized scheduled programs, activities, and events. All three of these roles are essential to a high quality parks and recreation system.

Self-Directed Recreation

The majority of recreation opportunities experienced in Jefferson County are those in which people enjoy the great outdoors. Outdoor recreation participation highlights include:

+ About 49.2 percent of the U.S.A. population participated in an outdoor are recreation at least once in 2013;
+ Almost one-quarter of all outdoor enthusiasts participated in outdoor activities at least twice per week;
+ Running, including jogging and trail running, was the most popular activity among Americans when measured by number of participants and by number of total annual outings;
+ Walking for fitness is the most popular crossover activity. In 2013, 53 percent of outdoor enthusiasts also walked; and
+ The biggest motivator for outdoor participation was getting exercise.

Interest in participation in outdoor recreation varies throughout one's lifetime. It is important for recreation program planners to understand these changes in order to provide the kinds of opportunities that people would enjoy at various life stages as well as for the purpose of target marketing. Table 3.1 presents outdoor activities of the most interest according to age group to help the JCRPC with targeting programs to all age groups.

As described in the parks and recreation facilities assessment aspects of this plan, the JCPRC offers a wide range of facilities for people to enjoy on their own including places to walk, run, and get fit; playgrounds; ballfields; game courts; a dog park; picnic areas with pavilions; a camp ground; natural areas for de-stressing and experiencing nature; and an indoor recreation center with a fitness room, gym, walking area, and activity rooms. It is estimated that about 80 percent of recreational participation is self-directed. Making people aware of the extensive recreation opportunities throughout the county is an important aspect of the role of the JCPRC.

Facilitating Recreation Provided by Community-Based Organizations

The JCPRC devotes a considerable amount of time to facilitating the recreational opportunities offered by other community-based organizations. Sports leagues are the majority of the providers with whom the JCPRC works on a regular basis. There are approximately nine sports leagues in the county, many of which depend upon the use of Jefferson County's athletic facilities and their amenities such as restrooms, parking, and water fountains in addition to the facility scheduling and coordination provided by the JCPRC. Other organizations such as the Jefferson County

Table 3.1. Outdoor Activities of Most Interest by Age Group			
Ages 6-12	**Ages 13-17**	**Ages 18-24**	**Ages 23-34**
Swimming For Fitness	Camping	Camping	Swimming for Fitness
Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Bicycling
Bicycling	Bicycling	Bicycling	Camping
Running/Jogging	Working Out with Weights	Hiking	Hiking
Basketball	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights	Working Out with Weights
Fishing	Hiking	Running/Jogging	Running/Jogging
Hiking	Running/Jogging	Backpacking	Working Out with Weights
Soccer	Shooting	Working Out Using Machines	Backpacking
Swimming on a Team	Trail Running	Climbing	Canoeing
Working Out with Weights	Fishing	Trail Running	Trail Running
Ages 34-44	**Ages 45-54**	**Ages 55-64**	**Ages 65+**
Hiking	Swim for Fitness	Bicycling	Swimming for Fitness
Swimming for Fitness	Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Birdwatching/ Wildlife Viewing
Camping	Bicycling	Camping	Working Out Using Machines
Bicycling	Hiking	Hiking	Hiking
Working Out with Weights	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights	Fishing
Working Out Using Machines	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing	Fishing	Bicycling
Running/Jogging	Working Out with Weights	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights
Canoeing	Canoeing	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing	Fitness Classes
Backpacking	Fishing	Canoeing	Camping
Rafting	Backpacking	Fitness Classes	Golf

Board of Education; Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts; and families and social groups use county parks and recreation facilities for a wide range of activities such as sports; running races; special events; family reunions; weddings; and other celebrations. The JCPRC also assisted Charles Town in providing swim lessons. While the commission once directly provided the swim lessons, the arrangements changed regarding aquatics programs. The Charles Town Recreation Board now provides the lessons while the JCPRC handles the administration of the summer program including registration. The JCPRC does not charge any fee for this service. The JCPRC schedules events offered throughout the year by other groups. This includes providing customer service, scheduling coordination, and facility maintenance to provide an excellent experience by those using county facilities.

Organized Programs and Services

The JCPRC provides programs and services year round in: aquatics; arts and crafts; athletics; camps; cheer and gymnastics; dance and fitness; day trips; martial arts; and special interest programs for learning and lifelong enrichment. Table 3.2 presents the inventory of programs by program category offered by the JCPRC in Fiscal Year 2014-15. Table 3.2 also shows that the JCPRC offered 219 different programs with a total of 715 sessions. Some of the programs were so popular that people were wait-listed due to lack of program space. Aquatics had the highest number of unserved residents.

Who Participates in JCPRC's Organized Programs?

The majority of the participants in the JCPRC's organized programs are children age 12 and under and females of all ages.

Where Are the Programs Located?

The majority of the organized programs are held in Sam Michael's Park and the Community Center. This is the hub of the county's parks and recreation services and operations. The JCPRC management team has expressed concern about the need to provide more services throughout the county and is exploring ways to address this need.

How Are the Programs Supported?

The JCPRC charges fees for participation in the organized scheduled programs. The fees cover the direct expenses of instructor wages or fees. The JCPRC also generates approximately 54 sponsorships for programs and donations for programs in the last fiscal year ranging from $5 to $2,000. The Fireworks and Movie Nights were the two major sources of revenue from donors.

How Are Programs Planned and Managed?

Table 3.2. Organized Program Inventory FY 2014-15

Program	Number of Programs	Number of Participants	Number of Sessions Offered	Number on Waitlist
Aquatics	11	161	20	50
Arts & Crafts	42	661	94	18
Athletics	31	628	100	19
Camps	45	1,222	123	32
Cheer/Gymnastics	17	626	91	3
Dance/Fitness	14	344	107	4
Day Trips	3	63	3	4
Martial Arts	9	295	75	0
Special Events	21	984	39	0
Special Interests	26	278	63	7
TOTALS	219	5,262	715	137

The JCPRC offers three program seasons that correspond with the school year: fall, winter/spring and summer. The recreation staff develops the program guide for each season. The program guide serves as the basis for program planning for the impending season. There is no formal planning or evaluation process in place. The orientation of program planning is providing programs in the Sam Michael's Park area of the county with an emphasis on children under 12 and females. No formal evaluation system is in place for recreation programs. Programs are advertised in the program guide, on the website, and through social media.

What Is the Commission's Staffing Capacity for Recreation Programs?

The JCPRC has limited staff for planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluation of organized, scheduled programs. The Director, Assistant Director, Marketing Coordinator, and even front desk personnel all pitch in with respect to programs and services. The Assistant Parks and Recreation Director has the most significant responsibility for organized programs. There is no dedicated recreation program coordinator on staff.

OTHER RECREATION PROVIDERS

Jefferson County is fortunate in having major organizations, both public and commercial, that provide parks and recreation programs and services. They offer important opportunities for partnerships in the delivery of recreation services for people who live, work, and visit here. These include the following:

National Organizations

The National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy have major sites in Jefferson County.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park - Harpers Ferry and Bolivar are two tiny 19th century villages, side-by-side, which lie at the eastern-most point of West Virginia, bordered by the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park surrounds both towns, providing visitors with tours, museums, hiking, and biking trails --- all within easy walking distance of the living history villages. Today, the majestic beauty of the two rivers and the cliffs surrounding Harpers Ferry draw visitors from all over the world. The Appalachian Trail goes through the heart of town. Boutique shops offer a variety of beautiful items for our visitors and local eateries can satisfy the palate. Local outfitters can help with rafting, tubing, or kayaking trips. As the eastern gateway to West Virginia, Harpers Ferry beckons visitors from near and far.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy Visitors' Center in Harpers Ferry is the physical and psychological midpoint of the Appalachian Trail being approximately 1,000 mile north and 1,000 mile south from the trail's terminal points. Consequently, it is a major destination for hikers.

National Conservation Training Center - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works diligently at its National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) located north of Shepherdstown, to become a home for inspiring conservation excellence through learning and collaboration. They are committed to "conservation through learning"—building and sharing knowledge among Service professionals and their many partners who work to conserve and manage fish and wildlife resources. The National Conservation Training Center supports the mission of the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service in five critical ways:

+ **Home and Heritage** (*http://training.fws.gov/history*): NCTC serves as the physical and virtual "home" of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where the history and heritage of the SService are preserved and shared;
+ **Training for the Mission** (*http://training.fws.gov/courses*): NCTC provides exemplary training and professional development tailored to support Service employees and conservation partners in accomplishing the agency's mission;
+ **Youth in Conservation** (*http://training.fws.gov/topic/youth/*): NCTC helps the Service engage, educate, and employ the next generation of conservationists who reflect our diverse society, ensuring that our natural resource legacy is left in capable hands;
+ **Partnerships**(*http://training.fws.gov/programs/*): NCTC helps solve urgent conservation challenges, such as climate change, by bringing together diverse partners representing multiple points of view; and
+ **Sustainability**(*http://training.fws.gov/campus/nctc-is-green.html*): NCTC is a national leader in the conservation community for its state-of-the art facility and green practices.

NCTC could potentially be a critical partner for advancing conservation efforts, parks, recreation, and stewardship in Jefferson County. One of the NCTC's core objectives, as shown in their strategic plan, specifies:

> *Increase the number of partner organizations using the NCTC facility. Evaluate the partnerships analysis and implement a marketing plan to increase the number of new partners using the facility for training and special events, while maintaining priority for service employees.*

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

The 1,361-acre West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management area is located in the southeastern part of Jefferson County. Near Shannondale Springs is the home to For the Love of Children (FLOC). The Outdoor Education Center has been giving many children the opportunity for hands-on learning through a variety of activities. Expert staff runs day-long to week-long programs, and summer camps where people of all ages are free to learn and grow. FLOC's programs have grown to include youth development, professional and organizational development, adventure programming, facility rental, and retreats and trainings - all serving clients' needs.

Additionally, the Outdoor Education Center has also been able to establish a highly successful After School Program, Leaders In Action, in two local Jefferson County middle schools. The Outdoor Education Center continues to grow and serve the local and regional schools, non-profits, businesses, and municipalities.

JEFFERSON COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATIONS

Related county and municipal recreation providers in Jefferson County include the following:

+ **Jefferson County Board of Education** - Jefferson County Schools offer facilities for community recreation and sports. The use of school facilities for public recreation falls under the purview of the principal of each school. Jefferson County Schools has sponsored an Adult and Community Education Program for over 30 years. The program has grown to over 100 classes per session. A great variety of choices is offered for lifelong learning for all members of the community. The program also provides members of the community, who do not have children enrolled in the school system, a chance to use school facilities. The courses offered each session are based on community needs and interests. Individuals, as well as business and industry, use the occupational and educational training courses such as computer application classes. Special interest classes are also offered in several areas, including arts and crafts, and fitness. Tuition is based upon the instructor's fee, the cost of supplies or textbooks needed, and, at times, the cost of using facilities other than school buildings. Two full sessions and a summer mini-session are held each year, allowing Adult and Community Education to run year-round.

+ **Jefferson County Libraries** - There are three public libraries in Jefferson County. They are the South Jefferson Library located in Summit Point; the Shepherdstown Library, and the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library.

+ **Jefferson County Senior Center and the Jefferson County Council On Aging (JCCOA) Jefferson Center** - The Anna Mae Reedy Senior Center is located in Ranson. The mission guides JCCOA in supporting and providing services to Jefferson County Older Adults. JCCOA helps older adults to remain independent and to stay in their homes as long as possible. They are a non-profit agency dedicated to community outreach and committed to enhancing the quality-of-life for older adults through social, health and wellness, education, nutrition, recreation, and various other supporting programs.

  - The JCCOA Jefferson Center opened in 2010 to provide day habilitation, pre-vocational, and supported employment services to adults with disabilities. The center is currently providing services to 21 individuals with a ratio of 1 instructor to 1-6 customers. The center is open Monday-Friday from 9am-3pm and provides a very active training schedule. Individuals are learning functional academics, health, safety, communication, social, and job readiness skills. Individuals are also learning how to access their community resources by going to the local library, participating in dances and other activities at the Senior Center, and buying their lunches in the community. Community activities are also brought into the center such as line dancing instructors, service dog visits, and community volunteers who

provide craft classes. The center has also started a Special Olympics group and has taken on contract work, such as bulk mailing for the Circuit Clerk, promotional brochures for the Bloomery Distillery Plantation, shredding for Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, and water bottle design and labeling for Senator Herb Snyder.

+ **Incorporated Towns -** Charles Town and Ranson offer municipal parks and recreation services. As small communities, their programming is limited. Bolivar and Shepherdstown offer close-to-home recreation facilities and attract many visitors traveling to the area for Heritage Tourism.

  - **The City of Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission** (CTPR) was established in 2005 by the City of Charles Town Council. CTPR currently owns and operates three city parks, open daily from dawn to dusk, for public use and enjoyment. Aquatics programming is provided at the community pool in Jefferson Park with support from the JCPRC. The city has also planned a major expansion of its park system to include a linear trail along Evitts Run, from the Ranson Civic Center, south to the recently acquired Happy Retreat property, which is the historic former home of Charles Washington. This effort includes creating a new park on the city's former public works yard, a reservoir, a small park and natural area on the former Supertane site, south of Washington Street.

  - In 2004, the **Ranson City Council** authorized the creation of the Parks and Recreation Commission to resolve a serious deficiency in parks and recreational opportunities within the City of Ranson. The city did not have any public parks prior to 2004. In the subsequent years, and with the help and hard work of many people, the City of Ranson now has multiple parks and many assets for citizens and visitors to enjoy.

  - The **Town of Bolivar** has two recreation facilities: Bolivar Children's Park, and the Bolivar Community Center, which is available to rent for activities and events.

  - **Shepherdstown** has six parks, including a new park under construction. A seven member Parks and Recreation Board serves in an advisory capacity to the town on parks and recreation concerns. The Board has a Facebook page in which they solicit ideas from the community on parks and recreation improvements. Currently, comments for improvements included a skate park, an amphitheater, and more baby swings in Morgan's Grove Park.

PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

+ **Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau** - The Bureau's mission is to promote the economic development of Jefferson County through tourism. In fulfillment of their mission, visitor bureaus typically rely on extensive parks and recreation opportunities to draw tourists, especially visitors making overnight stays. In order to promote parks and recreation facilities for tourism, they must be of high quality design and construction and maintained in premier condition.

+ **Shepherd University** - Shepherd University is an important source of public recreation support. Shepherd University offers the use of its facilities to the greatest extent possible for public recreation. The University is an important partner in aquatics by providing use of its indoor pool for the competitive swim teams. However, the University is limited in its capacity due to its own demands on its pool, thus limiting other swim teams to use the pool only three hours weekly.

+ **Museums** - The Jefferson County Museum is located in historic downtown Charles Town and shares a building with its partner organization, the Charles Town Library. Since its founding in 1965, the museum has been dedicated to fostering the understanding and love of history. The museum is committed to the acquisition, preservation, and exhibition of objects of historical value and of relevance to the county and the region. The historic Shepherdstown Museum is located in the Entler Hotel. In 1983 the Historic Shepherdstown Museum was founded to preserve and display artifacts, furniture, and historic documents that might otherwise have been lost.

+ **Sports Leagues** - There are approximately nine sports leagues in Jefferson County. It is anticipated that leagues for rugby and lacrosse will be formed in the near future.

+ **Potomac Valley Audubon Society** - The Society offers a wide range of programs and activities that are aimed at promoting greater understanding and appreciation of the natural world for youth, adults, and families such as field trips to natural areas, summer camps, monthly lectures, school programs, and many others.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION PROVIDERS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

+ **Outdoor Recreation Outfitters** - The tremendous outdoor recreation features of Jefferson County have stimulated economic development in the form of businesses related to outdoor recreation, these include outfitters, bicycle shops, eateries, bed and breakfasts, and hotels. They offer white water rafting, zip-lining, hiking, camping, tours, bicycle, and boat rentals, etc.

+ **River Riders Adventure Park** - The park offers white water rafting, tubing, Zip Line Canopy Tours, Aerial Adventure Parks, kayaking, canoeing, stand up paddle boards, mountain biking, and fishing adventures on the beautiful Potomac River (class I-III) and the Shenandoah River.

+ **Bloomery Plantation Distillery** - The Bloomer Plantation Distillery offers tours and programs. It is an important tourism venue.

+ **Hollywood Casino and Thoroughbred Horse Racing Track** - The casino is a major tourist attraction. Revenues generated from the casino and the overnight stays in hotels provide support for Jefferson County operations, including a portion of the JCPRC budget.

+ **Golf Courses** - One golf course is located in Shepherdstown: Cress Creek. Two golf course are located in Charles Town: Sleepy Hollow and Locust Hill.

STRENGTHS

Jefferson County is an outdoor recreation heaven. There are very few counties blessed with the quality, variety, and extent of outdoor recreation opportunities available here. People travel from all over the world to visit here and experience, the heritage, culture, recreation opportunities, and scenic beauty of the area.

The JCPRC offers programs year round with 650 offered in 2015. Given the organizational nature of Jefferson County with its four small towns, the JCPRC serves as the main provider of public parks and recreation countywide for the people who live, work, and do business here. The JCPRC offers about 219 programs annually with a total of 715 sessions. Nearly 5,300 participants signed up for the JCPRC's programs in Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015. Another 137 people were on the waiting lists for several programs, mainly in aquatics and camps. The programs are targeted largely to children under the age of 12 and adult women. Special events serve people of all ages including families. The JCPRC is fortunate in having an indoor recreational facility complete with a full gym, activity rooms, a small fitness center, and the extensive grounds and facilities of Sam Michael's Park in which the Community Center is located.

Although the focus of the JCPRC appears to be on programs because of the pressure to generate revenue, the JCPRC also serves in the important role of both providing recreation opportunities for people to engage in on their own and facilitating the provision of recreation programs, activities, and services provided by other community based organizations. The vast majority of recreational use in the county is through self-directed recreation such as walking, bicycling, enjoyment of nature, and recreation in the great outdoors including water-based recreation such as paddle sports.

CHALLENGES

The challenges listed below are intended to foster the evolution of the JCPRC into higher levels of program and service delivery as well as customer satisfaction. The JCPRC operates with a lean staff and limited resources. Just managing the day-to-day operation with its high demands precludes strategic medium and long-term planning. While the JCPRC is faced with a limited staff, it has also experienced expensive employee downtime due to health issues and part-time seasonal employees. Consequently, staff have pitched in to provide support as a whole rather than on the primary function of their respective jobs. For example, front desk staff helps with pre-school programs and marketing helps with programming.

Revenue Generation

The main challenge regarding programs is the revenue driven nature of JCPRC operations. As Jefferson County financial support for JCPRC has been steadily decreasing, the pressure to raise revenues has been increasing. The main source of revenues for JCPRC is programs. JCPRC has been growing the number of programs and increasing revenues but it is still important to remember that parks and recreation is an essential public service that benefits the county economically, socially, environmentally, and in health and wellness. Not all programs and services can, nor should, generate revenue.

Information and Public Awareness

The major factors that prevent participation in programs and use of facilities appear to be the lack of information provided for citizens, the type of facilities located in county parks, and the perception of parks being "too far away." While the JCPRC publishes a recreation guide several times a year, it is not mailed directly to households or businesses. The website and Facebook page serve as the primary source of promotion of programs and services. While the JCPRC pays an annual fee for newspaper advertisements, this type of advertising is passé and the newspaper actually needs the JCPRC for its human interest and news features to attract readership, thus this mutual benefit should cancel out the need to pay for advertising. The parks do not have a comprehensive signage system with quality kiosks that would help to identify the parks as well as create a positive image for the countywide parks and recreation system. The JCPRC has been innovative in using videos on the website to convey information to website visitors.

Evaluation and Customer Satisfaction

No formalized system is in place for evaluation and determination of customer satisfaction. Developing standards and methods for evaluating programs and customer satisfaction and implementing these standards should be an important priority because it will facilitate the JCPRC's movement into a higher level of service. The key is to consider evaluation and customer satisfaction as a system and a component of program planning and management. Various techniques can be used such as surveys, participant evaluations both during programs and upon completion, focus groups, interviews with participants as well as non-participants, and comment opportunities on the website. Obtaining testimonials during the evaluation process is one key aspect of successful advertising.

Program Planning and Life Cycle

Programs should be planned two seasons ahead. This is essential for advertising, introducing new programs and, most importantly, securing sponsorships. At present programs are planned following the creation of the program guide which does not allow sufficient time for advertising and no time for pursuing sponsorships. This is not in line with how businesses typically make their budget decisions on important functions such as sponsorships.

Program life cycle is not a formal part of program planning, but could be a valuable component of programming for the JCPRC. By addressing where programs are in their life cycle, the JCPRC would be able to adjust programs to give them new life, add new programs, and terminate programs that have outlived community interest. For example, connecting children with nature is a major nationwide goal but the JCPRC only provides very limited nature based programs. Some significant partners exist in Jefferson County that could join forces with the JCPRC to address this important program area. There appears to be major interest in special events. Perhaps abandoning certain low response, or time-consuming programs, to focus on special events would be a sound programming strategy. Consideration should also be given to securing a program coordinator with a specialty in special events, which could also tie with revenue generation and sponsorships.

Staff Capacity

A major limitation in county programs and services is staff capacity. While there is a total of eight full-time employees who are responsible for every aspect of parks and recreation, from building management to program implementation, there is no single recreation coordinator. The Assistant Director serves as the primary program planning staff member, while the Director also works in programming probably beyond the extent normally required of that position. Office and marketing staff also work on programs. A Director should not spend more than 20 percent of her/his time on programs unless it is a one or two person department in a small town, but in the case of the JCPRC the Director exceeds this time allotment.

Location

While the JCPRC offers recreation opportunities throughout Jefferson County via its parks and recreation facilities that are well distributed, about 80 percent of the programs are offered in Sam Michael's Park. The JCPRC would like to be able to offer programs in locations throughout the county.

A major limitation is the lack of access to Jefferson Schools' facilities. Permission to use school facilities is decentralized with permission to use facilities granted or not granted to varying degrees by school principals. Getting more access to the schools could help to create community hubs that would reduce the need for additional recreation facilities.

Policies

The JCPRC has historically operated without polices governing the development and use of sports facilities. Consequently, significant donations of time and money by community-based organizations into county facilities have come with certain expectations regarding ownership and use. Some of these informal agreements regarding expectation of use of fields based upon the group's investment go back decades and have not taken into consideration the fact that county parks belong to the public estate and must serve the overall good of the community, not only the interest of a limited organization. That said, partnerships and public private investment are crucial, as the government cannot do all that citizens would like to do. Consequently, managing partnerships, joint capital improvement projects, and public-private financing is crucial.

OPPORTUNITIES

The history, beauty, environmental resources, the rivers and mountains, combined with Jefferson County's planning to preserve open space and scenic rural character offer the potential for Jefferson County to have a premier parks and recreation system. Programs and events are important to the economy and often are among the top reasons businesses decide to locate or expand in an area. Focusing on program development and expansion is a prime objective of JCPRC and this needs to continue.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals and recommendations emerged through the planning process and will help to advance recreation experiences that address significant social, economic, and environmental issues. Specific initiatives and actions to meet these goals are spelled out in the Implementation and Action Plan section of this master plan document and include:

- Providing quality recreation programs and opportunities that are responsive to community needs;
- Improving health and wellness through recreation;
- Making recreation opportunities available to people of all means equitably;
- Connecting children to nature and foster conservation and stewardship of our natural resources;
- Fostering opportunities for lifelong learning and enrichment; and
- Ensuring financial sustainability for recreation programs and services.

New Roles and Responsibilities

JCPRC is largely perceived as an operation that focuses on organized, scheduled programs. However, JCPRC actually delivers recreation opportunities in multiple ways. The three main ways that JCPRC offers recreation opportunities are through organized programs, for the public and other groups to utilize, and by partnering with other community based organizations to provide programs and services.

There will be times when the JCPRC will be best suited to be the "**provider**" of a program, service, or facility. In those cases, JCPRC will align its resources to deliver the specific programs or services to attain desired outcomes. At other times, JCPRC is better suited as an "**enabler / facilitator,**" either by initiating and then transferring a program or service to another to operate, or by contracting out for services after having set standards for service delivery that are then met by community partners. Finally, JCPRC conducts "**outreach through partnerships**" with other agencies to provide facilities, programs, and services based upon the availability of assets or resources. Partnerships allow for shared resource use and are developed, by contract or agreement, to satisfy a desired outcome that may be easier for another provider to deliver. JCPRC is engaged in discussion with the Board of Education Superintendent about the community use of schools for recreation. This would be an important new way to expand public recreation opportunities through optimum use of existing facilities and resources.

As a direct provider, facilitator, or through community partnerships and outreach, JCPRC will consider the most effective, efficient, and expedient delivery of services to Jefferson County. This model of delivery provides a sustainable framework from which to operate.

New Processes

JCPRC has been evolving from focusing much of its attention on meeting immediate needs of constituents in a cafeteria style of programming into more of a systematic program management plan. JCRPC management is focusing on a strategic planning approach for the delivery of services that would be based on outcomes rooted in a solid program philosophy, and designed with a revenue management plan geared toward the challenge of meeting public recreation needs equitably, while providing for the financial sustainability of the JCPRC.

Program Management Plan

JCPRC will move toward Benefits-Based Programming consistent with JCPRC Board's desire to show outcomes of the programs as well as financial returns on the investment of resources in programs, services, and facilities. This will help JCPRC to make its case that parks and recreation is an essential public service as well as demonstrate its financial recovery efforts along with equitable access for people of all means.

Benefits-Based Programming is based on the idea that programmers will take a developmental approach in creating recreation activities and programs. The premise is that through recreation experiences, the potential exists for addressing significant issues (social, economic, environmental) while still being an enjoyable recreational experience. Benefits-Based Programming, then, is an outcome-oriented approach that focuses on producing identified benefits for participants as a result of their participation. Table 3.3 presents the outcomes and benefits desired for Jefferson County's recreation programs and services for the four major target groups of citizens.

Program Organization

Currently Jefferson County has ten core areas, as indicated in Table 3.2. The recommended number of divisions within JCPRC's overall recreation program function is between five and ten. Some of the JCPRC categories could be combined to align with new goals of focusing on health, wellness, and fitness; connecting people with the outdoors; and lifelong learning. In addition to these core areas, a main function in the future is to help to advance tourism through facilities, trails, and recreation opportunities, as an economic engine in Jefferson County.

Program Cost Recovery Philosophy and Policies

JCPRC has been working toward financial sustainability through a mix of revenue sources. A main source of the revenues is program fees and charges. Having a sound cost recovery philosophy with polices to match is critical to JCPRC's financial control, providing equitably priced programs, and identifying the core program areas, facilities, and services. The cost recovery philosophy must match JCPRC's mission "to provide safe public parks and year round recreational activities for the citizens in the Jefferson County community." Underlying this mission statement is a commitment to children and youth regardless of means; building a sense of community; fitness and wellness; connecting people to nature; and advancing tourism as a means to create and sustain a vibrant economy in Jefferson County.

The proposed pricing plan is set forth in Table 3.4. JCPRC Proposed Cost Recovery Modes. Generally the public is in support of users paying fees for programs and services that benefit the individuals while preferring to see tax dollars support facilities.

Cost Recovery Rate Explained

The Cost Recovery Rate reflects tax and non-tax support of the program. For example, the cost recovery rate of programs in Mode 1 is 0 (zero) percent, meaning that it is totally subsidized with tax dollars. Programs in Mode 2 have a cost recovery rate of 20 percent. Therefore, 80 percent of the program fee is supported by tax dollars while 20 percent comes from user fees.

Program Cost Setting Guidelines for Revenue Generating Programs (Modes 2,3,4, & 5)

The three levels of costs of programs include:

+ Direct Costs – Instructors, program leaders, program supplies or materials, room rental etc.;
+ Program Administration – Staff salaries, office equipment such as software and computers etc.; and

+ Institutional Costs – Total costs to operate JCPRC such as heat, lighting, building expenses, maintenance etc.

Table 3.5 presents the Model Budget Format for an individual program and the ideal percentages for each cost line item.

This Model Budget Format can be used for the core program areas too. All the programs within those core areas would be totaled in each line item shown in the chart. By looking at the budget for the Core Division, JCPRC will see which program areas are performing well financially and where adjustments could be made to meet goals. The third way this can be used is to include the totals for all programs for recreation overall. This would be an indication of how programs, rentals, etc. are performing overall.

One cautionary note regarding adjustments in this chart based upon consultant experience is that when adjusting the financial components, it is wise not to reduce promotional costs. Cutting advertising is usually counterproductive because research shows that one of the main deterrents to participation in recreational activities and the use of parks is that people don't know about the opportunities that exist.

Parks and recreation departments across the country have a tremendously wide range of cost recovery, ranging from 10 to 85 percent. Research shows that Oglebay Park in Wheeling, WV may very well be the only self-sustaining public park system in the country. This success is rooted in tourist-based facilities while it does offer public recreation opportunities to those who live nearby. This should be food for thought for JCPRC with all of the scenic, natural cultural, and outdoor recreation resources available in Jefferson County.

PROPOSED JCPRC PROGRAM STANDARDS

As JCPRC moves towards the development of a formalized Program Management Plan, the following factors should be priorities in guiding program planning:

+ **Quality** – This is the most important priority. JCPRC should resist adding program just to increase revenues if quality suffers;
+ **World Class Customer Service** – JCPRC's customers want information, answers to their questions and resolution of their problems. The amount of time the phone is ringing in the Community Center is testimony to this fact;
+ **Speed** – We live in a world where everything is expected instantly. It is important to be able to "rev-up" to provide customers with what they want when they want it as much as possible;
+ **Innovation** – Set up a goal of offering 30 percent new programs or services every year. This means eliminating programs that are outdated;
+ **Flexibility** – Offer programs in different formats, locations, duration, and times; and
+ **Cost** – Make public parks and recreation programs affordable while working toward financial sustainability.

PROGRAM EVOLUTION GOALS

It is important for JCPRC to grow its programs in a way commensurate with staff capacity, partnerships, and facilitating offerings by other providers. It is to be expected that JCPRC will offer new programs AND have program cancellations. If JCPRC does not have cancellations, that means they are not trying hard enough with new programs – something that is not in the staff vocabulary! If cancellation rates are low, JCPRC could be losing out on a bigger market. The following are guidelines for growing the programs:

+ 70 – 90 percent of the programs should be "old" courses;
+ 10 – 30 percent of the programs should be "new" courses;
+ For old programs, an acceptable cancellation rate is up to 13 percent;
+ For new programs, an acceptable cancellation rate is 30 – 5 percent; and
+ For all programs in JCRPC, an acceptable cancellation rate overall is 15 percent.

Based upon the needs assessment and findings of the public participation process, there are multiple elements that should be considered in growing the programs.

Table 3.3 JCPRC Program Outcomes & Benefits for Target Markets

Youth Program Outcomes		Family and Community Outcomes
• Develop and/or improve health, motor, and social skills • Provide opportunities to be successful • Improve self esteem and self worth • Encourage creativity through art and performance • Provide opportunities to learn about culture and heritage of Jefferson County • Encourage situations that enhance decision making skills • Create an environment that reduces loneliness and isolation • Provide safe after-school developmental opportunities • Provide or facilitate assistance that improves grades • Offer productive alternatives that reduce self-destructive / anti-social behavior • Create opportunities to improve leadership qualities • Foster stewardship through opportunities to engage our unique environment • Create opportunities that promote volunteerism		• Provide opportunities for neighbors to interact, communicate, and bond • Create opportunities to connect families • Offer alternatives to less productive activities • Promote neighborhood and community involvement • Create a sense of place for Jefferson County • Promote cultural and ethnic understanding and harmony • Provide opportunities that promote community pride • Foster opportunities for community integration
Adult Program Outcomes		**Senior Adult Program Outcomes**
• Provide opportunities to improve health, wellness, and fitness • Create an atmosphere that reduces stress • Provide opportunities to be successful and to deliver a sense of accomplishment • Create situations that deliver satisfaction and improve one's feeling of worth • Foster stewardship through opportunities to engage our unique environment • Provide opportunities for self-exploration • Promote ethnic and cultural understanding • Provide programs that promote social interaction • Create opportunities that promotes volunteerism		• Enhance and/or improve health and wellbeing • Improve fitness and mobility • Build confidence in one's abilities, promote independence, reduce dependence • Promote social interaction and help to reduce loneliness and isolation • Provide opportunities to be successful and improve self-esteem • Create opportunities that enhance life satisfaction • Foster an atmosphere that helps to reduce stress • Promote ethnic and cultural understanding • Improve one's feeling of self-worth through volunteerism • Engage our unique culture, heritage, and environment through exploration and education

+ **Continue to focus on children and families** until more staff resources are available.

+ **Focus on identifying and meeting the needs of customers of the JCPRC as the driver in program planning rather than focusing on what programs to offer.** By identifying the needs of the customers first, the programs and support services will fall logically into place.

+ **Focus reporting on outcomes and benefits rather than input and features of programs.** That is, rather than reporting on numbers of programs alone, monitor and track the outcomes and benefits of the JCPRC's work with the citizens.

+ **Consider securing a new staff position that would focus on special events, revenue development, and partnerships.**

+ **Decide on what the core programs the JCPRC should be offering.** This could include health and fitness, nature and stewardship, youth development, and special events, or some other variations that the JCPRC feels make sense. These core areas should be the heart of recreation opportunities in Jefferson County.

+ **Develop and implement the program management plan using the recommendations described here.** Create an annual work plan for recreation programs with revenue goals based upon the formulas provided in this Master Plan. Consider taking a "re-building year" for programming. This means deciding which programs could be eliminated in order to focus on developing a program management plan; maintaining the same schedule as the previous year with no new additions and perhaps some reductions in programs; and striving to create a program management plan in which the JCPRC is planning two seasons ahead. This would need to be phased-in by taking the re-building year, then planning most of the programs one season ahead and then in the next year or two, two seasons ahead. Defining an annual work program will help with time management, accountability, revenue generation, sponsorships, and partnerships that may be beneficial. Forming a technical support committee of related recreation providers will be valuable in order to develop a program management plan that takes in to consideration other providers. This will help to reduce duplication of services; provide services where there currently may be a gaps; reduce costs; and potentially generate more revenues. Obtaining the wisdom and advice from national caliber organizations is a rare and invaluable opportunity

+ **Develop and implement a formal evaluation system.** Use the information from the evaluations to enhance quality and to plan programs in the public interest. Include securing testimonials in the evaluations in order to promote the JCPRC.

+ **Develop and implement a strategic promotional program.** The program guides are developed with major time and effort but are not mailed. While we are moving into the social media age, the hard copies of the program guides continue to be valuable to parks and recreation departments for programming as well as image enhancement and increasing public awareness.

+ **Review the organizational structure and staffing in order to ensure adequate staffing in terms of functions and numbers.**

+ **Position programs and services to align with tourism goals.** This is especially important for special events and advancing the economic development goals of the county.

+ **Recognize that the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission cannot be all things to all people.** Limitations of staff and budget require the JCPRC to focus on programs and services that matter most to the public and help to sustain the long-term financial viability of public parks and recreation.

Table 3.4 JCPRC Proposed Cost Recovery Modes			
Mode	**Description Mode**	**JCPRC Facilities, Programs or Services Examples**	**Recommended Cost Recovery Rate**
Mode 1: Mainly community benefit	Basic level of parks and recreation that benefits the citizens at large. Costs are usually supported by tax dollars.	JCPRC's ten parks. Administration and support of parks and recreation through JCPRC.	**0%**
Mode 2: Considerable community benefit with some individual benefit	Programs, facilities, and services that promote health & wellness, connect people to nature, and provide recreation skill development with a focus on introducing people to various recreational interests at the beginner level. Fees are based on a specified percentage of direct and indirect costs offset by both a tax subsidy for the community benefit and participant fees for the individual benefit.	Summer camps, school holiday programs, beginner classes such as learn to swim.	**20%**
Mode 3: Equally beneficial to the community and individuals	Rentals, tournaments, leagues, classes, programs or workshops that are of the intermediate level, rentals and exclusive use, community based organization events	Pavilion rentals, day camps, sports leagues, classes, Intermediate Gymnastics, sports fields. Art Show and races.	**50%**
Mode 4: Considerable individual benefit with some community benefit	Trips, leases, specialty camps, Drop-in babysitting or child care	Advanced Ninjas, soccer camp, Best of NY Trip	**150%**
Mode 5: Mainly individual benefit	Organized parties, permitted services, concessions, vending, private lessons, private enterprise use of parks.	Snack bar in community center, private enterprise sponsored races and festivals, filmmaking, weddings, private lessons	**200%**

Table 3.5 Model Budget Format for a JCPRC Recreation Program

Item	Description/Definition	$ Amount	% of the Cost	Ideal Percentage
Income	Total amount generated by the program	$_____	% _____	**Always 100%**
Promotion	What it costs you to advertise the program. Generate this number by examining the costs of brochures, fliers, time on social media.	$_____	% _____	**10-15%**
Production	Instructors, materials, administration, rental space costs etc.	$_____	% _____	**40-50%**
Direct Costs	The total cost of promotion and production	$_____	% _____	**60%**
Operating Margin	This is the amount of money that is left after you deduct Direct Costs from Income.	$_____	% _____	**40%**

Note: An operating margin of 40% is ideal. If it is higher than 40%, the JCPRC is doing well. If it is lower, this is where the JCPRC can adjust its costs and expenses. If under 40%, JCPRC can increase its fees or decrease its costs or a combination of both.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

organization, management, & budget

04

organization, management, & budget

Organization, Management, and Budget aspects focus on the fundamentals needed to achieve, operated and manage a parks system that meets the community's vision for the future.

ABOUT THE JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

The JCPRC functions within the framework of the enabling legislation set forth for counties by the State of West Virginia as shown in Figure 4.1.

In 1970, the Jefferson County Commission established the Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission. The Commission operated as a county department until 2006 when the county re-configured the JCPRC as an adjunct operation. In 2015, the JCPRC obtained its status as a private non-profit 501-C-3 organization under the codes of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The JCPRC operates under the auspices of an 11 member Board. The JCPRC has six full-time staff and 96 part time and seasonal staff. JCPRC manages 10 parks with 409 acres of parkland and offers 580 programs attended by more than 8,000 residents. The JCPRC operates with funds derived from a mix of public and private resources including an allocation from Jefferson County, a portion of the hotel tax, revenues from program fees and charges, grants, gifts, sponsorships, and rentals. As county funding has been decreasing, JCPRC has been working toward generating revenues from non-tax sources.

JCPRC BOARD

The purpose of the JCPRC Board is to advise the Jefferson County JCPRC regarding all matters affecting the parks, parks facilities, and recreation budget. The JCPRC Board is empowered to appoint and advise the JCPRC Director in all matters affecting: parks and recreation facilities; land and services; policy; programs; finances; acquisition and disposal of lands and properties related to the total community recreational services; facility development; facility maintenance; and long range planning. The board members elect their President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They meet monthly to discuss and advance parks and recreation programs, facilities, and services. They provide recommendations to Jefferson County Commission on parks, recreation, trails, open space, and the management and support mechanisms required. The JCPRC Board can form advisory committees to aid in the administration and business of the JCPRC Board, for example the undertaking of the development James Hite Park.

JCPRC Board Responsibilities

- Supervise and regulate parks and recreation programs
- Oversee park planning, maintenance, and improvements
- Expend funds
- Interpret parks and recreation operations to the public
- Cooperate with Jefferson County schools and community organizations
- Represent JCPRC at official occasions
- Make full and complete reports to the Jefferson County Commission, as requested
- Serve as advisors in development of the annual operating and capital budgets

THE JCPRC MISSION

The current mission of the JCPRC is to provide diverse year round opportunities by creating and providing recreation, leisure, and community services necessary to promote and improve the overall quality-of-life for the citizens of Jefferson County.

Responsibilities

JCPRC is responsible for the following:

- Identifying recreational needs for the diverse community;
- Working with the JCPRC Board to develop programs and activities that take advantage of recreational assets in Jefferson County;
- Coordinating recreational program staff, service providers, and seasonal staff resources;
- Coordinating all rental and reservation activities for all park and recreation facilities (e.g. pavilions, ballfields, parks, and Community Recreation Center);

Figure 4.1 West Virginia Enabling Legislation for County Parks and Recreation Commission

The legislation of the West Virginia Code §7-11-2 enables Jefferson County to have a *Parks and Recreation Commission.* Any parks and recreation commission created by a county court pursuant to the authority of this article shall be a public corporate body with perpetual existence and a corporate seal. It shall be known as the (name of county) county parks and recreation commission. The commission shall have the power and authority to receive and control any gift, federal grant, other grant, donation and bequest or devise; to exercise the right of eminent domain if an order of the county court authorizing exercise of the right as to any proposed acquisition is first made and entered; to take and hold title to any real or personal property, whether such property be located wholly within or partly within and partly without the county; to receive all operating and capital funds appropriated by the county court to the commission; to receive all income and other funds, whether in cash or check, received by the county court and derived from properties and facilities devoted to park and recreational uses and under the control of said commission; to receive all receipts from income producing park and recreational properties and facilities under the control of the commission; to deposit, invest, manage and disburse, all such funds, income or receipts, including the interest or income earned thereon or therefrom; to borrow money and execute and deliver negotiable notes, mortgage bonds, other bonds, debentures and other evidences of indebtedness therefor, and give such security therefor as shall be requisite, including giving a mortgage or deed of trust on the properties or facilities under the control of the commission or assigning or pledging the gross or net revenues therefrom; to raise funds by the issuance and sale of revenue bonds in the manner provided by the applicable provisions of article sixteen, chapter eight of this code, it being hereby expressly provided that for the purpose of the issuance and sale of revenue bonds, the commission is a "governing body" as that term is used in said article sixteen; to establish, charge and collect reasonable fees and charges for services or for the use of any part of the properties or facilities under its control, or for both services and such use; to sue and be sued; to contract and be contracted with; to obtain one or more insurance policies affording coverage for loss of or damage to the properties and facilities under its control and affording public liability coverage for the legal liability of the commission, its officers, agents and employees; to adopt bylaws governing the operation of the commission and specifying the powers and duties of its officers; and to do any and all things which may be necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this article.

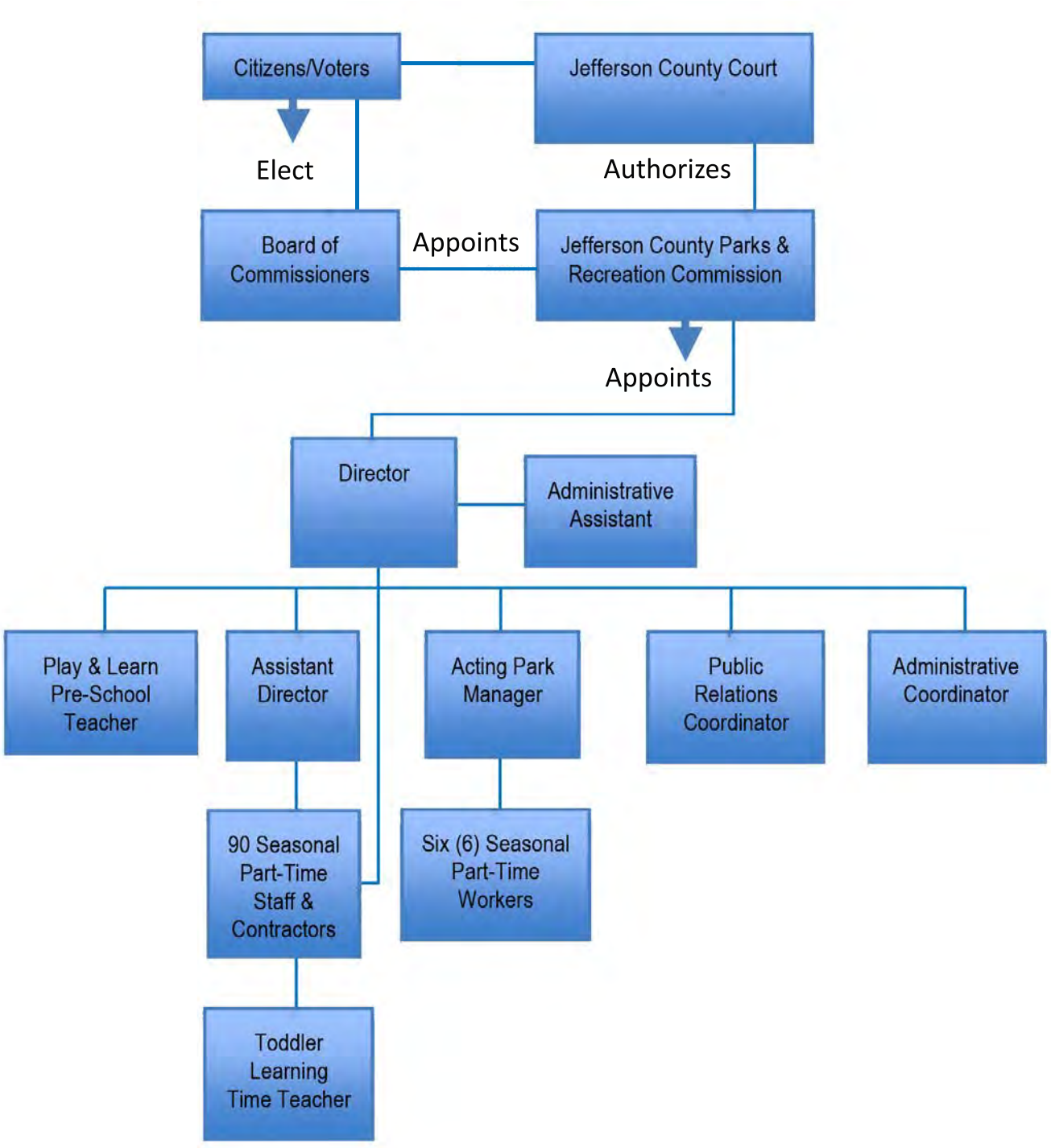
Any such county court is hereby empowered and authorized to transfer to any such commission all such funds or income, as provided for in the preceding paragraph of this section, and such county court may require a blanket surety bond covering those individuals authorized to sign checks on behalf of the commission in a penal sum not in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars.

The commission may incur any proper indebtedness and issue any obligations and give any security therefor which it may deem necessary and advisable in connection with carrying out any of its purposes. No indebtedness or obligation incurred by the commission shall give any right against the county or any member of the county court or any member of the commission. No indebtedness of any nature of the commission shall constitute an indebtedness of the county or the county court or be a charge against any property of the county. The rights of creditors of the commission shall be solely against the commission as a corporate body and shall be satisfied only out of property held by it in its corporate capacity.

Without in any way limiting the generality of any of the other provisions of this article, the commission may, in connection with obtaining moneys or property for its purposes, enter into any agreement with any person, including the federal government, or any department, agency or subdivision thereof, containing such provisions, covenants, terms and conditions as the commission may deem advisable.

The commission shall be exempt from the payment of any taxes or fees to the state or any subdivision thereof or any municipality or to any officer or employee of the state or of any subdivision thereof or of any municipality. The property of the commission shall be exempt from all municipal and county taxes. Bonds, notes, debentures and other evidences of indebtedness of the commission are declared to be issued for a public purpose and to be public instrumentalities, and, together with interest and income thereon, shall be exempt from taxation.

FIGURE 4.2 - JCPRC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



- Coordinating all concession activities related to the park facilities;
- Managing volunteers interested in supporting the parks;
- Planning, designing, and constructing parks and recreation facilities, including trails;
- Maintaining parks and recreation facilities;
- Coordinating parks and recreation with other providers such as the towns and school district;
- Promoting parks and recreation to increase public awareness and participation; and
- Providing professional support to the JCPRC Board in developing policies, procedures, rules, and regulations for the park facilities.

RELATED COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

The Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning, Jefferson County Schools, and the public libraries have closely aligned functions to parks and recreation.

The mission of the Office Planning and Zoning is to provide a healthy, pleasant environment for those who live, work, and visit Jefferson County, by blending the unique natural and built resources of the county with quality, sustainable development that ensures responsible and sound growth. The office welcomes community based problem solving and public/private cooperation that assists the community in implementing standards, which create a positive impact, and achieves its ultimate vision.

The three public libraries in Jefferson County provide important close-to-home recreation services. They are located in Harpers Ferry, Bolivar, and Shepherdstown. Charles Town has a private library.

Jefferson County Schools offer the potential for major collaboration and partnerships in providing both facilities and services to citizens county-wide and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been established between the JCPRC and Jefferson County Schools.

JCPRC STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Figure 4.2 shows the organization of the JCPRC, including staff.

The **Director** is charged with managing all aspects of recreation programs and services. This includes planning, directing, operating, and controlling all operations to accomplish the directives of the JCPRC Board and coordinating with Jefferson County Commission.

The **Assistant Director** oversees programming. This position plans new programs and oversees the sports leagues.

The **Temporary Park Manager** is responsible for planning, directing, and controlling the maintenance of all 10 parks composed of 409 acres. The Temporary Park Manager advises on park planning, supervises six part-time seasonal workers, coordinates volunteers, and provides support for major events and all programs.

The **Administrative Coordinator** works the Director on the JCPRC's financial management, budgeting, purchasing, analysis, and reporting.

The **Public Relations Coordinator** manages advertising and promotion. This staff person is responsible for all print and social media.

The **Administrative Assistant** is responsible for the production and management of all administrative materials for the JCPRC, providing information to the public in a responsive, accurate, and timely manner. This staff person serves as the initial frontline contact for the public to JCPRC. This is the "go to" position for the public to call. This position also includes supporting function programming such as registration and program management.

Seasonal Staff – JCPRC has 90 seasonal and part-time recreation leaders, instructors, and six seasonal park maintenance workers. In addition, JCPRC contracts with instructors for specialized programs such as sports camps, sports programs, and instructional programs.

PARK AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

Public parks and recreation systems have a broad set of mandates. These mandates are related to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizenry. Trends and issues that have impacted parks and recreation include legal requirements, potential litigation, risk management, the aging of the population, custodial care issues of youth participants, obesity as the number one public health issue, protection of open space, need to generate alternative revenue sources, increasing participation in sports, life-time leisure interests beyond sports alone, natural resource conservation, and planning and formalizing management/ information management systems.

Policy and Operating Procedure Development

Parks and recreation agencies are required to develop policies, procedures, and guides that contribute to the professionalism and accountability of public services in this area. Striking the right balance between spending the time on developing useful policies and procedures and not wasting efforts on policies and procedures without a significant public benefit is crucial, especially in a small department such as JCPRC.

Important policies to develop include:

+ Naming of Parks and Facilities and Donor Recognition;
+ Revenue Management; and
+ Gifts.

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT

Maintenance management is the most expensive part of a public parks and recreation system. Park maintenance supports a variety of uses including self-directed use by people on their own time, enjoying their preferred activities, organized use by sports leagues and tournaments, and special events staged by major community based organizations. The park maintenance in Jefferson County is quite remarkable. The parks consistently look safe, clean and ready to use. The Temporary Park Manager is responsible for planning, directing, controlling, and evaluating park maintenance. This staff person has a staff of only six part-time seasonal employees. They are responsible for ten parks covering 409 acres across 209 square miles. This includes a community recreation center, special use facilities such as the Grove in Sam Michael's Park, the campgrounds, and the new sports complex for soccer at James Hite Park. The Temporary Park Manager is involved in planning and constructing new facilities and renovating existing ones. This is all accomplished with a budget of $558 per acre, in contrast to national averages that is more in the realm of $8,000 – 9,000 per acre. This is done with only a staff of one full time and six seasonal part time workers instead of the 20 workers normally found maintaining systems of comparable size.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The most effective means to reduce exposure to liability is through the establishment of a formalized maintenance management program. At present, park maintenance is conducted based upon past practices without a formalized maintenance management program. A maintenance management program would set forth in writing the policies and procedures to plan, direct, control, evaluate, monitor, and report all actions regarding park maintenance. Written and filed documentation either manually or through a computer software program serves as the municipal record regarding the action taken on park maintenance as well as what remediation was done to correct problems in the parks. A formalized maintenance management system provides information that can be helpful when making decisions related to staffing, fees and charges, partnership agreements, and allocation of human and financial resources. A formalized system facilitates transitions through the inevitable changes in management, personnel, elected, and appointed officials.

MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS

In this time of economic challenges, decreasing county tax revenue sources, and increasing accountability at all levels of government, decision-makers, staff, and citizens alike expect efficient and effective operating systems. The following analysis includes the strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding parks and recreation management.

Management Strengths

Accomplishments – The JCPRC secured its private non-profit status as a 501-c-3 organization. It operates as an independent parks and recreation organization, thereby being able to raise funds that are tax deductible for donors.

Commitment to Organizational Capacity – The JCPRC operates within a framework of trying to create organizational effectiveness that could potentially provide better public service despite being a county-wide system with a small staff.

JCPRC Board Support – The JCPRC Board members provide support and engage in activities to advance the mission of the JCPRC and support its activities.

Maximizes Resources – The JCPRC management does a "lot with a little." The staff of six provides a full array of programs and services, along with outdoor recreation facilities in 10 parks and year round recreation in the Community Center. They plan, manage, and implement about 600 programs annually.

Park Maintenance – The parks are well maintained with a safe, clean, and ready to use appearance. The staff preforms a yeoman's job with the resources available in terms of staff and budget.

Staff Commitment – The staff works many more hours than the standard "9:00 – 5:00" workweek. They work evenings, weekend, and holidays to provide the public with important recreation opportunities.

Pursue Partnerships – The management team actively pursues partnerships for the purpose of advancing public recreation. The small size of the staff limits this outreach but building partnerships is an important function within the capacity of what they are able to do.

Management Challenges

Optimal Organization - Throughout major staffing changes, JCPRC has not been able to organize in an optimal manner given the high demands that force attention on immediate and urgent needs instead of medium and long term planning.

Leadership and Positioning – Since the focus is on the immediate and the urgent, there has been a leadership vacuum to position JCPRC as an essential public service and making the case for the value of JCPRC to Jefferson County's economic, environmental, and social vibrancy. The focus has been on "surviving" not "thriving" out of compelling circumstances.

Major Partnerships – Collaboration with Jefferson County Schools and the Towns of Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, Ranson, and Charles Town need to be cultivated, put into place, and sustained over time. These five entities operate independently now.

Cost Recovery - The pressing need for the JCPRC to recover costs, its limited staff, and budget given the level of responsibility, are driving the organization toward cost recovery as its major focus instead of a vision, mission, and values for long term sustainability.

Planning for Impact of Major Facilities -Planning to operate, fiscally support, and maintain major facilities and a program needs to be formalized and put in to place. The Temporary Park Manager needs to be part of the process.

The following conditions emanate from the major challenges identified above.

Decreasing Resources – Management has become more revenue-driven as a result of budget decreases from Jefferson County. Demands to generate revenue to become more self-sustaining drive operations.

Small Staff – The JCRPC operates a county parks and recreation system. The existing staff provides a skeleton operation. Tasks that are important, that are left undone due to the small staff include: trail planning and development; park planning; systems development such as a formal maintenance management system; projection of maintenance costs with facility development plans; more partnership development and fundraising; program planning that is two seasons ahead; social media management; and other functions.

Wide Service Area – The JCPRC has a service area of 209 square miles. Due to limitations in staffing levels, JCPRC is not reaching all areas of Jefferson County.

Expectations and Mission – It appears that a mix of people and organizations perceive JCPRC as the main provider of parks and recreation in the county. This has led to JCPRC essentially functioning as a "local" park system with smaller parks and numerous programs. JCPRC needs to function as a true county parks and recreation system offering parks, programs, services, and support county-wide with an emphasis on outdoor recreation and trail connections.

Organizational Development – The JCPRC has experienced organizational changes in recent years without concurrent organizational development planning. Due to extreme daily pressure, the management team has been unable to take a step back to figure out optimal ways of operating, staff development plans, board roles, responsibilities, operations, and training.

Program Management Plan – The JCPRC operates by planning programs each season, without a program management plan. A program management plan would help JCPRC grow its programs, eliminate programs beyond their life-cycle, and enable the JCPRC to focus on core program areas that would empower the program operations.

"Brain Trust" information and procedures could be lost – Operations are mainly carried out in the minds and traditional unwritten operating procedures of staff and management. Formalizing operations through written workload cost tracking and other information systems need to be put into place to optimize current operations, provide information for informed decision-making, and facilitate continuity throughout future changes in staff and management.

Lack of formal written park maintenance management system – No system is in place to plan, direct, control, and evaluate park maintenance. Without a formal written system, responding to emergencies, urgent requests, and individual demands is the norm and is more expensive than routine task performance. Workload and equipment cost data is not available on which to base decisions and allocate resources effectively.

Park planning is not a designated function with defined parameters and requirements – Park planning has been undertaken informally, without the involvement of key stakeholders, a public participation process, and professional consultants early enough in the project. Major park projects have not addressed the long-term responsibility for maintenance, programming, financial and human resources, potential partners, or alternatives to traditional support by JCPRC.

Communication tends to be fragmented and disjointed – No formal communication system is in place. The practice of responding immediately to urgent requests is ingrained in the JCPRC's culture. While excellent public service is admirable, this practice of accommodating immediate demands has a downside. The downside includes the cost of dropping everything to provide an emergency response. The result of deferring or abandoning scheduled work, good will is lost due to conflicting information and responses. While the intent by all involved in accommodating the public is rooted in a desire to serve the community well, the community will be better served by having formalized systems in place.

There is no overall program plan for the JCPRC – While programs are offered and advertised, there is a lack of organization. Certain tools that are needed, but have not yet been put into place, include an overall program management plan, policies for fees and charges, an evaluation system, and an information data base. Figuring out how best to serve identified client groups could be facilitated through timely data collection, analysis, and the implementation of public involvement strategies.

Determining best use of staff time for programs – Having staff evaluate where the demands on their time lie may help to generate innovations in programming and customer service.

Management Opportunities

The support of elected and appointed officials and the general citizenry is an important factor in a successful parks and recreation system. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan has offered a fresh look at the current operating structure and ways to improve it for the future. Several major areas should be considered in future management enhancements, including:

+ The JCPRC should serve as "the convener" to establish a collaboration among the Jefferson County Schools and the Towns of Charles Town, Ranson, Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry for public parks, recreation, and trails. Together these entities could provide a higher level of service countywide for less cost than anyone could provide on their own.

+ Create an optimal organizational structure by obtaining the services of an Organizational Development expert to work with the JCPRC management, staff, and Board to assess current operating methods, consider revisions in the organizational structure, and staffing. It should also put in place a newly optimized structure and the training for management, and the JCPRC staff to work toward success in a new operational framework. The development of training materials for new staff and Board members should be included.

+ Focus on core functions and programs by determining the core functions and programs upon which the JCPRC will focus. The JCPRC and its staff cannot do everything. Doing a few things well and to a high quality is key to success.

+ Consider changing the organizational structure to reflect major functions within parks and recreation rather than staffing positions. Grow the staff within these functional areas. Which could be: Recreation Services; Parks and Facilities; Community Awareness; and Operational Support. The Director should never have more than seven people reporting directly to their position.

+ Develop an Annual Work Program for the JCPRC as a whole and drill down to an annual work program with goals and expectations for each staff member. Do quarterly "check-ins' to determine progress and where adjustments need to be made to match changing needs and opportunities. It would also serve as the tool for employee evaluation. Employee evaluations should include immediate feedback that is supportive and corrective, as well as a formal annual evaluation. It is important to recognize ongoing good work for each and every person in order to foster ownership and pride in work and accomplishments.

+ Create a team to assess, document, and promote the impact of the JCPRC as an essential service. This could include a university, county economic development, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, visitors bureaus from the cities and towns, realtors, local businesses and so on. Include in this planning for sports tourism and how to establish the required facilities and services through JCPRC parks.

+ Formalize Maintenance Management as a system for implementation and computerization. Consider using an electronic software system that would allow management and staff to input data in real time, as system that utilized technology such as iPads. Four distinct areas of maintenance could be addressed in the formalization of a maintenance management system: Parks; Recreation Facilities; Natural Resources; and Trails. By organizing maintenance into these areas, decision-making regarding staffing, financing, training, setting priorities, and partnerships could be enhanced and presented to substantiate budget support.

+ JCPRC must plan for the management impact of major new facilities and programs. This would include taking into account staff, labor, and budget as well as partners and revenue sources to offset costs. Use the Management Impact Statement shown in Figure 4.3 to plan for all new major projects and programs. If the JCPRC is unable to support the improvement long term or for its life expectancy it should not undertake the project.

+ Consider staffing changes for efficiency, streamlining, and growing the system through several staffing related actions:

  - Configure the Director's time to be 70 percent outreach and towards positioning the JCPRC as an essential public service; 20 percent on department functions such as park planning, programming, and trails etc., and 10 percent on administration.

  - Add new positions:

    - Development Director/Special Events Coordinator - The focus of this position would be on revenues generation. This should occur immediately.

    - Trails Planner/Coordinator - This position should ideally be added and housed in the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning. It could perhaps be a shared position between JCPRC and the Office of Planning and Zoning. By housing this position in the Office of Planning, the Trails Planner could be the first line of contact in new developments in order to secure important linkages for the future Jefferson County Trail network.

    - Additional positions to consider include a Facilities Manager and a Program Coordinator.

  - Define the roles and responsibilities of the Assistant Director. This should primarily be programming for now but evolve into more work in park planning, fundraising, etc. as additional staff are added.

+ Incorporate natural resource management as a function of maintenance and park and recreation planning and continue to integrate natural resource management with overall community planning.

+ Invest in JCPRC's biggest expenditure; its employees. A five-year employee development plan should be established for parks and recreation management, staff, and the Board. Consider setting a goal of allocating 1 percent of the respective operating budget annually for training and phase in increases to 1.5 percent then 2 percent over the next ten years. Keeping up with JCPRC's software, social media, maintenance workload cost tracking, other trends, regulations, and all aspects of the field is an important investment.

+ Focus on information management to track information about programs, services, and all aspects of management will help to enhance planning, decision-making, and the allocation of resources. Facts and figures at hand will provide a solid basis for making informed decisions, increasing customer convenience, and decreasing staff time. Annual reports should continue to be produced. These reports are crucial to creating a framework for decision-making. They help to document trends, program life cycles, community needs, and interests in order to allocate resources most effectively. This should include all functional areas such as parks, programs, administration, maintenance, and financing. Cost centers for parks, types of recreation facilities, problems such as unscheduled repairs and vandalism, should be established. This will provide information for setting fees and charges, negotiating partnerships, establishing guidelines for public use of parks and recreation facilities, purchasing equipment, and developing alternatives that might reduce costs or provide better public service.

JCPRC BUDGET

The JCPRC provides crucial services and facilities that contribute to the Jefferson County economy, improves the quality-of-life, and preserves the scenic character of the area. The JCPRC's budget comes from a combination of investment from public and private resources. The purpose of the financing assessment is to review how the financial aspects of parks and recreation are supported, managed, and directed toward meeting community goals, with

Figure 4.3 MIS - Management Impact Statement

Purpose

+ **To assess the impact of a proposed project in terms of capital and operating costs, including capital cost, human resources required for operations, maintenance costs including labor, equipment, materials, supplies and cyclic repair, and the effect of on other parks and recreation facilities and services.**
+ **To use this information to make an informed decision about moving ahead with the proposed project.**

Method

Determine:

+ **Capital cost of proposed project.**
+ **Operating costs for proposed project or program. Include:**
  - **Number of staff hours required**
  - **Cost of staff hours in salary, wages, benefits and payroll taxes.**
  - **Cost of materials and supplies.**
  - **Utility costs.**
  - **Miscellaneous costs.**
+ **Impact on other facilities and programs should the proposed project be undertaken.**
  - **Will the project/program require funds needed for other facilities or services?**
  - **Will the project/program require staff time needed for other facilities or services?**
  - **How will the project impact the quality of services that JCPRC has set as a goal?**
+ **Revenue Sources or Other Means of Support**
  - **County funds – additional appropriation**
  - **County funds – within current budget**
  - **Grants**
  - **Gifts or donations**
  - **Non-tax funds to be generated for the project/ program through fees, charges, sponsorships, partnerships, and/or other means.**

Decision-Making

Based upon the above information should the JCPRC allocate the resources to move ahead with this project or program?

respect to the JCPRC's resources as well as support from alternative means such as fees and charges, rentals, grants, gifts, and donations.

Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Budget

The two major areas to be considered in financing are operations and capital improvements.

- The operating budget supports the daily operation of parks and recreation, with the largest category being personnel covering salaries, wages, and benefits. The JCPRC operating budget is funded through the hotel and motel tax, which is an allocation of the county's general fund, user fees and charges, grants, and sponsorships.
- The capital improvement budget is used for improvements that cost more than $10,000 and last more than five years. Such improvements include park and recreation facility development, purchase of major equipment such as trucks, or the rehabilitation of existing facilities. It also includes land acquisition. Typical ways to fund capital improvements include county funds, grants, gifts, fundraising, donations, bond issues, partnerships, and loans. Detailed recommendations to fund capital improvements are described in the Chapter 6 of this master plan document, however, it is important to note a major limitation in the JCPRC's current ability to utilize Jefferson County impact fees. As the JCPRC knows well from its own deliberations and its presentations to the Jefferson County Commission, the Jefferson Office of Impact Fees has created a methodology for disbursement of impact fee revenues that, in short, is badly restricting the ability of the JCPRC to construct basic, needed improvements to Jefferson County parks. The Jefferson County system has mandated that there must be a ratio of fee revenue spent on land acquisition vis-à-vis land improvement. Because land improvement at many Jefferson County parks can be very expensive, JCPRC is now in a position that it must buy more lands before it can improve the parks it has already established. As a result, there is currently $80,000 in unused parks and recreation revenue sitting frozen in the local impact fee accounts that is badly needed to provide improvements in existing parks, such as restroom facilities, as well as other site improvements such as new building facilities, competitive play athletic fields, etc. that would greatly improve the quality and utilization of the parkland Jefferson County already owns.

Table 4.1 JCPRC Operational Revenues FY2011-2012 through FY2015-2016

	2015 – 2016 Budgeted	2014 – 1015 Actual	2013 - 2014	2012 - 2013	2011 - 2012
Hotel/Motel Tax	247,500	270,497	224,509	231,542	**256,915**
Audit Fees	0	0	10,000	5,000	0
P-Card Rebates	3,000	2,617	2,336	2,374	181
County Commission Staff Allocation	249,111	249,329	270,789	222,041	210,056
Hite Road Project Manager	0	0	0	65,000	0
Impact Fee Reimbursement	0	4,000	69,148	0	0
Park Use	110,000	70,480	143,570	57,757	54,344
Community Center Use	0	23,501	25,571	28,802	32,122
Programs	375,000	380,897	354,243	391,625	356,026
Concessions & T-Shirt Sales	18,000	18,348	12,148	20,794	22,347
Banner/Sponsorship	5,000	3,795	2,950	1,410	2,035
Donations	51	0	391	530	114
Scholarship Fund	2,500	43	5,000	3,000	2,925
Grant Work	36,910	3,394	15,450	15,551	34,614
Interest	338	4,059	1,370	823	1,007
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	50	211
Fringe Benefits Income	0	5,103	6,807	1,701	0

Table 4.2 JCPRC Parks and Recreation Expenditures FY2014-2015					
	2015 – 2016 Budget	2014 – 2015 Actual	2013 – 2014 Actual	2012 – 2013 Actual	2011 – 2012 Actual
Recreation					
Administration & Programming					
Commission Salaries	216,850	206,436	230,435	222,791	216,340
Commission Benefits	32,750	32,910	31,363	34,194	31,000
Worker's Compensation	36,984	25,816	16,329	25,256	22,244
Program Staff Compensation	80,910	79,443	98,705	97,144	94,860
Community Center Payroll	31,102	34,278	56,669	50,270	52007
Payroll Expenses	74,500	70,991	71,957	71,552	77,314
Brochure Printing	10,000	9,763	11,668	2,729	3,152
Program Supplies	47,000	59,058	61,752	72,138	59,510
Community Center & Facilities Supplies	5,000	11,963	5,779	6,934	4,770
Swimming – Jefferson Park	0	596	3,725	3,945	5,294
Transportation	5,000	7,495	5,345	4,648	3,015
Insurance	45,000	60,459	46,540	15,100	20,742
Public Information Ads	9,225	11,703	9,177	10,853	3,337
Concessions	11,500	5,664	2,183	5,301	1,477
Cost of Goods Sold	8,000	16,752	10,330	12,197	18,614
Office & Facility Expense	38,700	47,033	35,338	14,910	19,188
Cell & Telephone service	1,100	791	59	617	1,400
Bad check and Bank feed	0	251	398	385	946
Audit Fees	5,000	5,000	8,740	4,520	21,230
Dues	500	449	555	764	150
Continuing Education	5,000	449	2,164	1,575	1,049
Bookkeeping	3,000	0	300	1,300	4,600
Background Check	2,000	863	1,797	505	265
Pre-School	35,200	25,917	25,502	2,788	3,697
Unencumbered expenses	0	0	57,441	72,017	-
Other	0	0	8,077	1,300	1,212
Total Administration & Programs	**704,301**	**709,050**	**802,328**	**735,733**	**656,113**
Parks Maintenance					
Salary (Full-Time)	43,500	42,168	42,168	60,705	59,455
Benefits (Full-Time)	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Worker's Compensation (Full-Time)					
Seasonal Maintenance Staff Compensation	97,500	82.136	70,034	69,357	67,248
Equipment Maintenance	11,000	47,266	10,502	11,975	9,687
Park Expenses & Maintenance	139,650	527,012	138,372	72,332	39,429
DMV Checks	50	50	20	5	37
Fuel	10,000	4,899	9,048	4,749	6,804
Electric	1,110	1,110	1,005	877	813
Grants		285,000	31,683	45,054	25,480
Total Parks Maintenance	**309,310**	**996,141**	**309,332**	**271,554**	**215,453**
TOTAL	**1,013,611**	**1,705,191**	**1,111,660**	**1,007,287**	**871,566**

Table 4.3 JCPRC Grants Secured 2012-2015

Grant	Award	Park/Program	Year
Land & Water Conservation Fund	$90,000	Moulton Park	2012
Land & Water Conservation Fund	$200,000	James Hite Park/Soccer Fields	2012/2015
Let's All Play National Inclusion Grant	$7,000	Summer Play Camps: Aides fir children with disabilities	2012
CommuniTree Fall Grant	$1,200	Sam Michael's Park Dog Park	2013
Eastern WV Community Foundation	$1,200	Summer Play Camps/Garden	2013
Let's All Play National Inclusion Grant	$6,000	Summer Play Camps: Aides fir children with disabilities	2013
Community Participation Grant	$20,000	Jefferson County Community Center/Storage Addition	2013
Land & Water Conservation Fund	$80,000	Sam Michael's Park: Picnic Pavilion & Handicapped Play Equipment	2013
Land & Water Conservation Fund	$60,029	South Jefferson Park: Expansion & replacement of play equipment	2015
CommuniTree Spring Grant	$1,200	South Jefferson Park: 16 Trees	2014
Chesapeake Bay Community Grant	$10,000	Sam Michael's Park: 100+ Trees	2014/15
Community Participation Grant	$4,000	Jefferson County Community Center/Program Equipment	2014
Community Participation Grant	$6,000	Veteran's Memorial Pavilion: Medallions & Plaques	2014
USTA	$1,500	Tennis Program Supplies & Equipment	2015
Eastern Area Health Education Grant	$40,000	James Hite Park: Trail	2015
TOTAL	$531,329		

Operating Budget

The operating budget includes both revenues and expenditures as reported in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Table 4.1 shows the revenues while Table 4.2 presents the expenditures.

Grants

Table 4.3 presents the grants that the JCPRC Director obtained as of mid-year 2016. As shown in the table, the grants were for a wide range of JCPRC purposes ranging from support for children with disabilities to trees, tennis equipment, trails, and ballfields.

Capital Budget

The JCPRC invests in parks and recreation improvements annually. A new five year capital budget was established in 2015. A summary is provided on Table 4.4. The JCPRC funds the capital budget with 15 percent of the hotel tax, up from 10 percent in the previous four years, county allocations, and grants. In 2015-2016 that percentage equates to $37,125. The Director has been very successful in securing grants to improve the parks or build a new park such as James Hite Park, which recently received an $31,000 to be matched and allocated for constructed picnic pavilions in James Hite Park.

Major Findings

The following list presents major findings of the analysis during the analysis phase of the master planning process. The JCPRC staff have been working on modifying the budget format for several years in order to best serve and inform the JCPRC's administration and Board.

+ A review of the Jefferson County Budget shows major significant downward trends in revenues from the loss of the impact fee and decreases in casino revenues. The Fiscal year 2015-16 county budget is $21,459,488.
+ The JCPRC's budget of $1,013,329 for fiscal year 2015-16 is about 4.7 percent of the county budget. However, if the non-tax revenues were not included in the ratio, then the JCPRC would have about 3.3 percent of the county budget. Nationwide the average is about three percent and public parks and recreation departments with highly regarded systems have five percent or greater of their jurisdiction's budget.
+ While the ratio of the county budget is positive, another benchmark shows a less favorable comparison. Jefferson County invests $17.95 per capita in public parks and recreation. The nationwide average is $76.41. This discrepancy supports the finding that the county budget is austere.

Table 4.4 JCPRC Capital Improvement Budget 2016-2020

PROJECT NAME & DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	PRIOR ALLOC, SOURCE	CURRENT REQUEST FY 2015	CURRENT ALLOC, OTHER SOURCES	EXPECTED FIVE-YEAR FUTURE PROGRAM REQUESTS				
					FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Hite Road Park Development	$1,000,000	$600,000	$400,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintenance Vehicle	$35,000	0	0	0	$35,000	0	0	0	0
Mowing Equipment	$32,500	0	$32,500	0	0	0	0	0	0
Park System Master Plan	$85,000	$63,750	$21,250	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	$1,152,500	$663,750	$455,765	0	$37,016	0	0	0	0

+ The JCPRC raises 53 percent of its budget from non-tax sources such as fees and charges and property rentals. This is very positive, as a more typical rate is about 35 percent. Most notable is that this percentage also covers the maintenance budget. Many departments do not include maintenance in this comparison as maintenance skews revenues to be a lower percentage of the budget.

+ The maintenance budget was $319,371 in fiscal year 2014 – 2015. With a total of 571.93 acres of parkland to maintain, the JCPRC spends about $558 per acre. This is an extremely low per acre cost. The national average is more in the $8,000 per acre range. In fact, $558 per acre is more consistent with the rate for the maintenance of unimproved nature based parks. If one were to reduce the more typical cost of $8,000 by 75 percent, the dollar figure would be $2,000, resulting in a maintenance budget of $1,143,860 annually. Currently the JCPRC operates with one full-time maintenance position and several seasonal part-time employees.

    - While these figures alone are disconcerting, the opening of James Hite Park further complicates matters with its additional 119 acres. While the park has a master plan, planning for maintenance was not included in that planning process despite the fact that over the next 40 – 50 years 70 – 80 percent of its cost will be for maintenance. Furthermore, the development of this site includes maintenance intensive facilities such as soccer fields which require a sports turf management program to be properly maintained. The annual cost of maintaining a soccer field ranges from $9,000 upwards to tens of thousands of dollars per field. The higher costs are associated with tournament quality facilities and facilities used for sports tourism. In these cases, the investment in maintenance has a return in the form of tourism and the spending in the local economy that sports tourism generates in the form of overnight stays, money spent of food, shopping, and related recreation. Sports tourism is a major component of the tourism program in recreation based counties elsewhere simply because sports are powerful for promoting economic development.

Budgetary Assumptions

Based upon the public outreach findings, review of JCPRC's budget, revenues, and trends in the Jefferson County budget and policy, the following assumptions can be made:

1. County residents will support programs, services, and facilities that they believe worthy of investment.
2. The JCPRC needs an adequate, reliable funding mechanism to ensure the sustainability of its facilities and programs.
3. The JCPRC must continue in cost recovery mode.
4. The JCPRC needs to adopt a cost recovery policy as shown in the Programs section of this master plan to acknowledge that different programs and services have different cost recovery potential. Some services require full public support, while other programs that benefit unique individuals with specialized services or facilities will generate revenues.
5. It is essential to secure maintenance funding in conjunction with park development to ensure that Jefferson County has high quality facilities that people want to use.
6. To improve or expand service level, the JCPRC must continue to seek innovative practices, management efficiencies, partnerships, and trade-offs.
7. The JCPRC must take advantage of its private non-profit 501-c-3 status to raise revenues. A dedicated staff person in the form of an experienced, connected Development Director with expertise and a proven track record needs to manage this effort.
8. Further reductions in county fiscal support jeopardize operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to create a more stable and sustainable financial framework through short-term and long-term actions, JCPRC needs to continue to change the way it does business by:

1. Leveraging resources;
2. Increasing department efficiencies;
3. Evaluating alternative management or disposition of land and facilities; and
4. Seeking additional revenue streams.

1. Leverage resources.

Cooperating with other agencies to leverage resources is of great importance to the JCPRC. With only 409 acres in 10 parks, the JCPRC parks system is relatively small. Due to limitations in funding for land acquisition and the facilities that are already in place in other park and recreation related organizations, collaborating with other organizations makes sense. JCPRC will leverage resources in the following ways:

Cooperate with Jefferson County School - The JCPRC and the school district have mutual goals related to providing facilities and programs for youth in the community. This can be built upon with the recently adopted MOU between the two entities.

In preparation for collaboration under the new MOU, the JCPRC Director and the Jefferson County School Superintendent have been engaged in discussions related to joint facility use, programs, and the Adult Evening School.

Work with other government agencies - The JCPRC needs to work with the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning in sharing a staff person to oversee the planning and development of trails to create a county-wide trail network.

Partner with other providers, businesses, and community based organizations - The JCPRC has developed working relationships with several outside sources including:

+ Ranson Parks & Recreation;
+ Charles Town Parks & Recreation;
+ FLOC – The Outdoor Education Center;
+ Two River's Treads;
+ Elegant Events;
+ Jefferson rentals;
+ Izaak Walton League;
+ Local fire fighters from all departments;
+ Jefferson County Sheriff's Department;
+ Shepherd University Sports Coaches;
+ Freedom's Run; and
+ CommuniTree.

Other partnerships to tap include the National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the USDA.

2. Continue to increase JCPRC efficiencies.

The budget shows how the management team scrutinizes all expenditures. They have reduced some expenditures significantly, such as office supplies. Major changes related to food service and the concession area will further these efficiencies. Offering meals as part of youth camps will help to increase revenues through additional fees. Removing the concession service will also result in new efficiencies by eliminating staff time for services that fail to cover costs.

3. Evaluate alternative management or disposition of properties.

Some of JCPRC's parks are small and more evocative of a small local park system rather than a county-scaled agency. Consideration of how to manage and maintain them could lead to other partnerships that will help care for these sites with less money and time. Specific alternative management options include:

+ Naturalizing areas to reduce mowing would serve to increase the nature-based scenery and resources so treasured by the residents, as well as significantly reducing maintenance costs.
+ Re-evaluating agreements on the management of parks, such as Morgan's Grove, ballfields and sports complexes, and future trails, could spur the reduction of costs, capture a higher level of service, and produce maintenance for less cost.

+ The future maintenance of the James Hite Park sports facility should be addressed and determined now that the first phase of development is completed and the public has access to the park.

4. Seek additional funding streams.

Given trends in Jefferson County reductions in impact fees, it is unlikely that the JCPRC will receive the annual budgetary support it did in the past. An additional 1 percent sales tax for parks and recreation should be considered.

Promoting county-wide special events and activities could also help generate specific revenues. These must be county-scale events. One possibility could be the expansion of the Christmas Light Show. Since the show is already of outstanding quality, improving it could help make it a major show that would draw people from surrounding cities, such as Frederick, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. This would require sponsorships, partnerships, and volunteers. Activities and programs in the dog park are likely to generate substantial income (either in its current or new location). Also a review of the art show agreement is warranted since the fair is held in a county park. Another event that could generate substantial financial benefits is a Brew Fest or a Wine Fest.

Sports tourism has major potential to help the JCPRC as well as for Jefferson County's overall economic vibrancy. Although park and recreation agencies are the engines of tourism, their central role in generating the economic impact emanating from tourists is not widely recognized by taxpayers or elected officials. Sports tourism is growing dramatically, and events such as tournaments, competitions, dances, cheerleading, and other activities generate overnight stays. For example, softball tournaments that do not require an overnight stay generate spending of about $55 per day for youth and $100 per day for adults in the local economy. Tournaments that generate overnight stays bring in several thousand people, resulting in the direct spending of several million dollars per major tournament.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

shaping parks and recreation facilities for the future

05

shaping parks & recreation for the future

Parks and Recreational Facilities are the infrastructure backbone of a great parks system and include not only parks, but greenways, trails, natural resources areas, and other community destinations.

SHAPING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Jefferson County is wealthy in some recreational resources and in other areas it is under-served or untapped in terms of its potential. The county has large expanses of open space which are conducive to nature-based recreational activities such as hunting or fishing.

Looking to the future, Jefferson County wants to promote economic development yet maintain its rural characteristics that attract people to the county, while enhancing the recreational opportunities and amenities for residents. This includes meeting and exceeding basic needs in a way that establishes Jefferson County as a leader in recreation. By doing so, the county will retain existing businesses, attract new employers, and add to the quality-of-life for all residents. Enhancing the existing recreation facilities, strategically adding new parks for people to use throughout their lifetime, providing quality maintenance, and tying it all together with a Jefferson County greenway and trail network will serve the people of Jefferson County, not only today, but for generations far into the future.

The challenge will be to do it right, especially within the current funding limitations. Jefferson County has limited resources and has never undertaken a truly comprehensive approach to providing parks and recreation facilities and programs to its residents. This master plan offers Jefferson County the opportunity to take a step back and develop a realistic and achievable plan for the next ten years to establish quality facilities that will be durable, safe, attractive, accessible, and desirable places to enrich the lives of the citizens into the future.

ASSESSMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The purpose of the parks and recreation assessment is to determine if recreation needs are being met and to project how the system should change to meet the present and future recreation needs, especially for facilities that are part of a county-level system. Existing public facilities throughout Jefferson County have been analyzed to determine how they may be improved or expanded, and what changes must be made to comply with current safety and accessibility standards.

Service areas were developed to determine if citizens in all parts of Jefferson County have access to parks. Connections between parks, schools, historic areas, cities, designated growth areas, and other destinations were explored. The analysis of parks and recreation facilities was based on seasonal fieldwork, evaluation of existing conditions and service areas, and expressed community needs and interests.

Five Factor Assessment

Six factors guided the assessment of Jefferson County's park and recreation facilities including:

1. **Amount of parkland;**
2. **Location and distribution of facilities;**
3. **Connections between parks;**
4. **Type of recreation facilities; and**
5. **Condition.**

Map 5.1 shows the location of existing parks and recreation facilities in Jefferson County. An inventory of parks and recreational facilities within Jefferson County and the cities and towns is provided on Table 5.1 (located at the rear of this chapter).

National

The National Park Service owns and manages the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and the C&O Canal National Historical Park which combined includes several thousand acres of preserved lands within Jefferson County that are directly accessible from Jefferson County. The parks are

MAP 5.1 EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

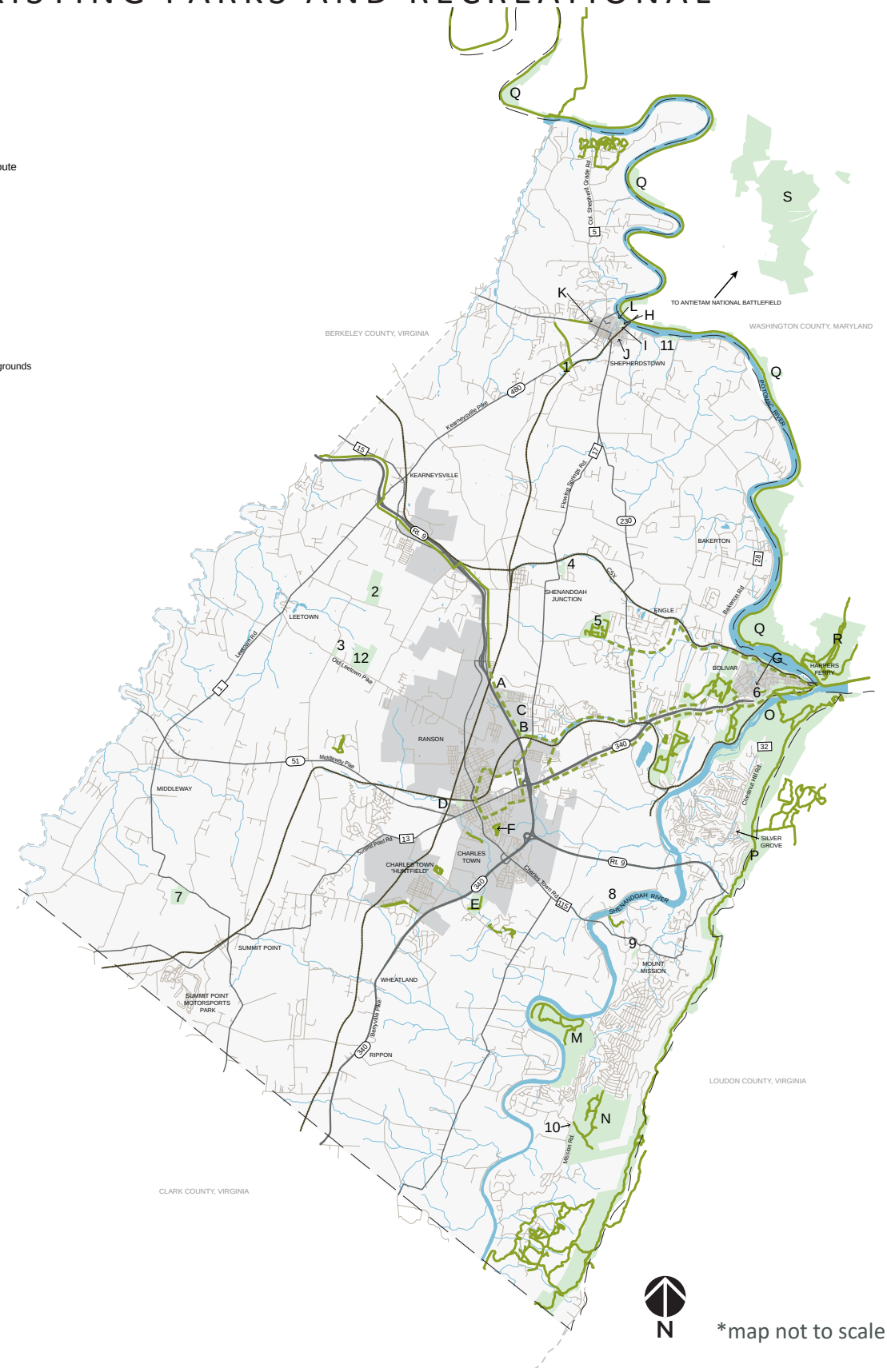
A. Marcus Field
B. Flowing Springs Park
C. Briar Run Park
D. Evitts Run Park
E. Willingham Knolls Park
F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield



estimated to attract an estimated 250,000 or more visitors each year. Jefferson County has also petitioned Congress and the National Park Service to extend the Antietam National Battlefield into Jefferson County, to include several large parcels located along the Potomac River, south of Shepherdstown.

The U.S. Fish and Wild Service maintains its National Conservation Training Center in the northern portion of Jefferson County. The facility is not open to the general public, but does support community educational activities and has extensive facilities for gatherings, training, and education that could benefit the JCPRC system.

State

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) owns and manages the 1,361 acre Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area which is located in the southeastern section of the county, east of the Shenandoah River. This facility is mostly dedicated toward wildlife habitat, hunting, and fishing. Camping is not permitted.

City and Town

City and town parks play a critical role in providing parks and recreation opportunities to Jefferson County residents. In many cases these facilities are the closest to home recreation facilities that provide for the daily needs of the citizenry. They range in size from .2 acres (Viola Devonshire Park in Shepherdstown), to 32.85 acres (Flowing Spring Park in Ranson), and Willingham Knolls Park (Charles Town), which are both mostly undeveloped naturalized areas. There are numerous city and town-owned parks within Jefferson County. An inventory of these facilities is listed in Table 5.1.

PARK FACTOR 1: AMOUNT OF PARKLAND

Jefferson County owns an estimated 409 acres of parkland, of which, approximately 376 acres are true "improved and accessible" public parkland. This include the 117 acres being added by James Hite Park. Determining what amount of parkland is "ideal" for Jefferson County requires considering several factors.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has moved away from a purely number of acres per population approach of determining parkland needs. Many municipalities, especially in the mid-Atlantic region, follow a standard for comprehensive park and recreation planning that is less formula-based and more community specific. Based on socioeconomic and demographic shifts, increases in populations, cultural changes in the types of sports activities pursued, and the increased awareness of natural resource preservation, there is a need for a comprehensive review of not only the acreage of parks and recreation facilities but also the types of facilities provided. The latest park, recreation, open space, and greenway guidelines released by the NRPA are based on a "systems approach" to community facility planning at its core. This approach presents an alternative premise which states that every community has its own unique blend of social and economic characteristics that define it. Each community must be considered on an individual basis in order to tailor the most appropriate range, quantity, and quality of recreational facilities within fiscal limits. These guidelines specifically address the following:

- **Environmental Trends** such as connecting people to nature, creating the next generation of park stewards, pollution reduction, habitat preservation, protecting disappearing resources such as wetlands and forests, reducing greenhouse effects, etc.
- **Social Trends** that focus on the importance of wellness activities and desire to maintain diverse cultural heritage as well as the continued introduction of new recreational activities.
- **Economic Trends** in which parks and recreation is positioned as an economic engine while, at the same time, acknowledge the struggle to fund parks and recreation at appropriate levels.
- **Demographic Trends** such as the aging population, changes in household sizes, family composition, as well as the growth of minority populations.

Applying these consideration to Jefferson County especially supports the need for more park facilities that are diverse. Conservation and appropriate public access to environmental areas with natural resources, such as the rivers, via trails is especially important. The broad range of recommended amounts of parkland is especially driven by the dramatic increase in recent years, nationally, in organized sports like soccer and lacrosse. If even modest projected population growth occurs within Jefferson County, by 2035 there will likely be a need for additional parkland that is equivalent to approximately 110-125 percent the current size of Sam Michael's Park. This may be further compounded when

taking into account exponential growth in active sports and the need for large format recreation facilities. The amount of overall parkland that is needed is also impacted by the desire of the community to greatly increase the network of county-wide and feeder trails. Creating such trails, however, does not necessarily mean that Jefferson County needs to own all of the land required to achieve such a true trail network. It could be achieved through a coordinated effort within the traditional land development process.

In the end, it is beneficial for Jefferson County to be strategically looking to acquire lands adjacent to existing parks to make those parks more county-scale and diversified. This means parks consisting of multiple hundreds of acres. Lands along major waterways should always be considered for acquisition in order to create public access points to valuable regional natural resources. Even though county residents have proximity access to the C&O Canal Towpath which parallels the Potomac River, this facility is located in Maryland. Establishing key greenway corridors, including corridors along waterways and also between parks and neighborhoods should be pursued as well. Trail acquisitions may be in the form of access easements to create public access without necessitating outright land purchases.

PARK FACTOR 2: LOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION PARKS

Just as the amount of park acreage is important, so are the types of parks available and their public accessibility. Different types of parks provide different recreation opportunities for people who live, work, and visit Jefferson County. Table 5.1 shows the range of park facility types available in each park, both county and city or town-owned.

Counties typically provide regional parks for resource-based passive recreation or preservation of historic and cultural resources. County parks are complemented by municipal/ city neighborhood, community, and athletic complexes. Most of Jefferson County's public parks would most accurately be classified as neighborhood parks or athletic complexes, with the one exception of Sam Michael's Park, which is the largest and has the greatest mix of passive and active recreational facilities. As James Hite Park is developed it has the potential to be comparable to Sam Michael's Park if a mix of passive and active facilities are developed within the park. The rest of the parks are small, less than 15 acres, with limited facilities. Unless they provide a very unique recreational experience, parks of these size are not typically the purview of a county parks system. The parks in Jefferson County primarily provide active recreation facilities with a few support related facilities such as pavilions and barbecue pits.

Jefferson County Schools'-owned property are, in most cases, only fulfilling very limited needs for active recreation and passive use such as playgrounds. Some Jefferson County Schools' facilities are locked, such as the running tracks, to prevent non-school use. As a result of this limited role that public school lands currently provide to the broader public, the evaluation of existing park service areas organized in this master plan places limit emphasis on school properties. However, publicly owned Jefferson County Schools' properties could play a much greater role of serving Jefferson County residents' overall recreational needs. School lands could serve as close-to-home recreational and community hubs. A partnership in the utilization of school facilities would support JCPRC's role as a county-wide recreation system, focusing on nature based and special use facilities connected by a trail network and with county-wide programming, yet reduce the need to construct new facilities to meet current and projected needs.

Map 5.1 illustrates the locations of the parks throughout Jefferson County and their service areas. In the case of a county-wide system, the applicable size of service areas can vary. It was commonly mentioned by the public that some of the parks, "Seem to be in the middle of nowhere." If a 10-minute drive criteria is applied (a common measure of convenience accessibility) as the broadest service area capture, it shows that much of Jefferson County's population is served by a park. This analysis doesn't account for the size of the actual parkland and the mix of available facilities in most cases, which realistically might reduce the practical attraction of a particular park for someone driving to it as a destination.

From a county-wide perspective it is helpful to subdivide Jefferson County into park planning districts. The boundary of the districts approximately reflect functional circulation of the community, including physical barriers to facility access, as well as aspect of neighborhood identity and association with developed activity centers. The Park Planning District Map 5.2 shows how Jefferson County could be subdivided into planning districts, and how those districts align with existing parks and recreation facilities as depicted on Map 5.3 Park Service Areas. These park planning districts can also aid in determining that a base level of services and facilities are provided throughout Jefferson County.

The analysis of the park locations shows:

- Recreation land is not evenly distributed throughout Jefferson County; however the distribution, especially if school sites are included in the evaluation, responds to existing population concentrations and targeted growth areas.
- Parks and recreation facilities, especially city and town-owned, are primarily concentrated in the core of Jefferson County.
- Charles Town and Ranson, combined, serve as the primary population center for Jefferson County and have traditionally been the community, activity, and commercial center as well. Many Jefferson County residents, especially those located in the southern two-thirds of the county, travel to Jefferson County's core for services and activities, including recreation activities. This is supported by the transportation network of Routes 9 and 340, which makes the county core highly accessible by car from all areas within Jefferson County.
- The southern portion of Jefferson County will likely continue to look towards Virginia for a portion of its recreation needs, based on proximity.
- Jefferson County Schools could play an important role in providing recreation opportunities, especially in some of the less dense areas of Jefferson County and to supplement the need for active recreational facilities. Currently these facilities are mostly off-limits to the general public during non-reserved times.
- The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park serves as both a major tourist destination and as a major regional park which supplements the supply of parkland provided by Jefferson County and its cities and towns.

PARK FACTOR 3: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Trails and greenways provide passive recreation opportunities and green corridors of protected open space. Easy access to trails facilitates exercise and fitness, as well as safe linkage to connect neighborhoods and communities. Connecting the parks of Jefferson County with trails and greenways will add to the livability and quality-of-life for citizens. Trails offer tremendous opportunity to boost tourism. Counties with major trail networks such as York and Allegheny in Pennsylvania have experienced significant economic growth including the development of new businesses and increased tourism that results in substantial spending in the local communities.

The analysis of the existing trails, park accessibility, and connections shows:

- Most of the county-owned facilities have very limited accessibility beyond vehicular access, even by residents that are in very close proximity. This is mainly due to the fact that the parks are located in primarily agricultural areas or as a result of adjacent developments not being planned or designed to accommodate connections to the parks.
- Jefferson County has made strides to improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the county, especially within recently approved land development plans.
- Many of the parks in the cities and towns are accessible by sidewalk networks and traditional streets that are more supportive of bicycle traffic.
- Most rural roads serving Jefferson County's parks have no accommodation for pedestrian or bicycle uses, including adequate shoulders, even those within target growth areas.
- Jefferson County's creek and river corridors represent major linear corridors that could become the framework for a robust greenway and trails network, connecting residents to parks and natural resources.

PARK FACTOR 4: TYPE OF RECREATION FACILITIES

Recreation facilities should be provided within a community to meet the demands of individuals, community groups, and organized leagues. There are opportunities, however, to fill gaps, meet unmet needs, and to further diversify the system. The Parks and Facilities Inventory is provided on Table 5.1 and the location of playgrounds throughout Jefferson County is depicted on Map 5.6. In general, Jefferson County provides a fairly diverse set of active and passive recreation options.

For the larger, more capital intensive facilities such as a swimming pool, ice rink, or expansion of the Sam Michael's Park Community Recreation Center, it may be prudent to undertake dedicated feasibility studies to determine their full need, along with other design parameters required to most effectively create such a facility in Jefferson County. A feasibility study would address items such as: optimal size; preferred location; special design attributes, need for supporting facilities (restrooms, storage, utilities, equipment, etc.); as well as the operation, management, and maintenance impacts to ensure fiscal sustainability. A feasibility study should also identify level-of-magnitude costs, potential financing, phasing, partnerships, ownership structure (if other than JCPRC), and funding opportunities.

In some cases the accommodation of new facilities may require the re-configuration of existing facilities. The introduction of any new facility, major facilities especially, should only be done after a master plan is established for the entire area of a respective park to ensure that capital investments are made in a matter that makes the most long-term sense for the JCPRC. This will also insure that near-term investments do not preclude future long-term build out potential in existing or future parks.

The following list represents the key recreational and park programming element needs that were identified through this planning effort. These are presented in no specific order.

Amphitheater - Amphitheaters can greatly vary in size and complexity. Depending on the size of the facility, use can range from facilitating a small gathering to serving as a venue for a major regional event. Studies performed to construct facilities in Morgan's Grove Park and Sam Michael's Park illustrate the range of facilities that are possible. Cost aside, the size, location, and design can also dramatically impact the viability and utilization of a facility and therefore its sustainability. It appears that Jefferson County could support a large, more revenue intensive



Amphitheaters that are designed to sensitively capitalize on their landscape context can become major regional attractions and support economic and tourism development goals.



Aquatics do not exclusively mean tank pools. Themed spray pads can fulfill an important community desire for summer play facilities, and are less expensive to operate and manage.



High-quality architecture can dramatically elevate the attractiveness and sense of awareness of the landscape in a great public park.



Jet plazas can provide unique and simple park attractions, especially as a part of a mix of play facilities such as environmental and landform play areas.

and revenue generating facility, which could serve both its resident population and compliment Jefferson County's larger tourism development goals. Jefferson County should first evaluate the revenue and financial structure of such a facility before undertaking any additional efforts to locate and construct a large venue amphitheater.

In the interim the current band shell at Sam Michael's Park is in need of significant repair or replacement. This facility serves as a significant revenue generator and if improved, could potentially increase income. Although requiring capital, replacing the current facility is a project that could be considered a deferred maintenance expenditure and justifiable until the more comprehensive evaluation (including an economic an operational assessment) of a regional events amphitheater is performed in tandem with the preparation of a master plan for Sam Michael's Park.

Aquatics Facilities - Aquatic facilities were universally identified as the top facility type requested by the public. With the exception of the small and outdated pool at Charles Town's Jefferson Memorial Park and the facility at Shepherd University, Jefferson County lacks indoor and adequate outdoor aquatics facilities. Due to cost and complexity of creating a major aquatics facility, whether indoor or outdoor, it is not likely that Jefferson County would be able to construct and sustainable operate such a facility. Therefore the most logical, and likely the most viable approach is for Jefferson County to partner with the School District. This partnership would include undertaking a comprehensive feasibility to determine the ideal, sustainable, and cost-effective aquatic facility or facilities to be constructed in Jefferson County. The feasibility study would also address a pathway forward for a partnership agreement between the two entities to advance the project, including raising capital, if deemed viable.



Quality camping facilities should have on-site, nearby amenities.



The trend in play area design is moving away from "off-the-shelf" play equipment and towards site inspired, unique play experiences.



Camping areas should be designed to be attractive and functional.



Locally-inspired environmental features can be a play area design theme.

Camping – Outdoor recreation is a major draw in Jefferson County. Although there are private camping facilities, there is an opportunity to provide additional facilities in alternative locations that meet local and visitor needs, and do not directly compete with private facilities. In addition, Jefferson County's camping facilities could extend the reach of existing parks and increase programming opportunities around major natural resource areas. Moulton Park is an example of a location where JCPRC provides such facilities focused on meeting a demand partially generated by the draw of the Shenandoah River. Ordinances are in place to prohibit camping in municipalities mainly near the Appalachian Trail so this constraint should be addressed with the local governments. An example of a camping area with quality amenities is:

https://www.hipcamp.com/nc/land-share/snaggy-mountain/apple-orchard-tent-camping

Creative Play/Destination Play Area (Large) and Nature Playscapes – The existing children's play facilities in Jefferson County are generic and consist of off-the-shelf play equipment from the typical equipment providers. Although these facilities clearly fill a need, Jefferson County should consider creating a larger, more intensive, inter-generational play area. A recent trend has been to create creative play areas with over-arching design themes that are informed by the local environment and/or community identity. When done properly these facilities are able to serve not only younger generations but also function as socializing venues for parents, grandparents, etc. In order for these facilities to be successful they must have nearby amenities including, restrooms, sufficient parking, trails, signing, seating, lush landscaping, and ideally comfort elements such as concession stands/cafés.

Equestrian Park – Specialty facilities are increasingly becoming focal points of successful park systems. In many cases, specialized facilities, such as an equestrian park, are created as a partnership between a lead entity, (non-profit or for-profit entity), a parks departments, and potentially a tourism bureau, and/or an economic development corporation. In the case of Jefferson County, there is a group leading an effort to create an equestrian park. Such a facility would fit well with the broader aspects of what Jefferson County is known for, such as its highly scenic, agricultural landscapes, and historical tourism. JCPRC should not necessarily take the lead on the development of such a facility. It should explore partnerships that would take the lead role in the creation of an equestrian park and exploring opportunities for joint programming within a constructed facility. Montgomery County, MD Parks has a potential model for a public equestrian park called the Woodstock Equestrian Special Park, which can be seen by accessing the link below:

http://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks_facilities_directory/woodstockequestriansp.shtm

Dog Park – A dog park is located at Sam Michael's Park. This facility has a devoted user group and clearly fills a need. However, it does have some fundamental flaws. Most notably it does not provide separate facilities for large and small dogs, as recommended by the American Kennel Club. The facility also lacks double-gated entries to keep dogs from escaping and to facilitate wheelchair access, as well as seating areas. In addition, the current facility takes up a disproportionately large amount of space in the epicenter of Sam Michael's Park and is located on land that is suitable for other recreational field facilities that have much more constrictive design constraints. It is recommended that



Great dog parks are more than a fenced-in area.



Disc golf courses provide an opportunity to engage participants in the full extent of park sites, in a relatively low-impact manner for an active sport.

the facility be relocated to another location in the park, or ideally be part of an expansion of the park itself. In addition to this facility, additional dispersed dog parks could be supported in Jefferson County. One suggestion is to move it to county-owned land on or near Leetown Park, which is still located in the core of the County.

Disc Golf – Disc golf has become a very popular sport for all age groups. Successful models for disc golf course in urban, suburban, and rural communities exist throughout the U.S. They are often designed to overlap with broader open space within parks. It is recommended that a Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) regulation compliant course be developed so tournaments can be held. This would require approximately 4,500 linear feet of course for an 18-hole facility. Multiple disc courses in the county would facilitate tournaments, which would help promote sports tourism. A group called LoCo Disc Golf Club is an organized disc golf sports group that organized and created a course in Loudon County and could be looked to for advice and *support: http://www.locodiscgolf.com/*

Additional information about disc golf course is available on the Disc Golf Association's website: *http://www.discgolf.com/*

A model facility for Jefferson County is located at Moraine State Park in Butler County, PA: *https://www.visitbutlercounty.com/attractions/lakeview-disc-golf-course*

Fitness Center (Outdoor) – Providing outdoor health and wellness facilities to serve a broad sector of the population is a growing trend. These outdoor facilities consist of gym equipment grouped together to promote socialization and programming. These facilities are especially popular with the older population and could be beneficial in Jefferson County due to evidence of aging in place population numbers. Implementation of this type of facility could also help address obesity, which is the number one health issue according to the U.S. Surgeon General. If created, this facility should be located adjacent to the creative play/destination play area.

Football (Premiere level) – There was a great deal of discussion at this planning effort's "sports forum" about the need for higher quality football facilities in Jefferson County. All of the existing field facilities suffer from poor construction quality, especially related to grading and drainage. When the new fields are ready for use at James



Outdoor gyms are increasingly popular, especially as a component of parks with balanced approaches to active and passive facilities.



Ice rinks could be used as a way to promote year round recreation in county parks.



Skating tracks are a new approach to providing outdoor ice skating in a more exciting format than a traditional rink.

Hite Park, the burden of over-use on existing fields will be decreased, but, based on demand, Jefferson County could support a dedicated multi-use field that meets football playing regulations. In order to maximize year-round use, the return on investment, and lower maintenance costs, it is recommended that a synthetic turf field with lighting be constructed.

Ice Rink (Outdoor) – Expanding off-seasonal recreational opportunities is important in the county. An outdoor ice rink could increase the winter utilization of one Jefferson County's parks. It could be a traditional rink or skating track. The use of synthetic skating surfaces is becoming more common and may be worth considering. Encouraging a skating track could increase tourism, which is a main goal of this master plan.



Properly designed and constructed sports fields are critical investments and provide the safest play and the greatest longevity.



The best way to serve all of the population of Jefferson County is to find ways to maximize the utilization of existing facilities.

Indoor Recreation Facilities – There is a great need for additional indoor recreation space. The interior facilities at Sam Michael's Park should be expanded to include another gym, a larger fitness center, an indoor track, and additional activity rooms. The assessment of the ability to accommodate the expansion of the facility should be done at the same time as a master plan is created for the entire Sam Michael's Park. This recommendation is consistent with recommendations made in Jefferson County's 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

Lacrosse – Interest in organized lacrosse is growing in Jefferson County, which is consistent with trends in the mid-Atlantic region. Jefferson County should pursue options to create a multi-purpose field large enough to support competitive lacrosse. At the Sport Forum held for the preparation of this master plan, South Jefferson Park was identified as one location for such a facility. This would likely require the acquisition of additional, adjacent land to support the introduction of a lacrosse facility, which requires 1.5 to 2 acres of dedicated field and support area. More information is available at: *http://www.uslacrosse.org/*

River Access and Water-Based Facilities – Water-based activities are very popular in Jefferson County, and there is a strong desire for water access. Increasing access to, expanding opportunities on, and diversifying uses at the edge of the county's waterways would greatly enhance recreation opportunities. Water-based recreation would help to advance tourism initiatives.



People are naturally attracted to water and providing simple but well designed and constructed facilities creates a high return on investment.

Running Track – Both Washington and Jefferson High Schools have competition level outdoor running tracks. Gaining some level of public access to these facilities should be discussed with the school district. There is also a potential need for an additional public track facility. This facility could be integrated into another competition level field facility, such as a football facility.

PARK FACTOR 5: CONDITION

Each park site was viewed during the tour of facilities and subsequent fieldwork. Generally, the parks appear clean. Some of the sites suffer from inadequate infrastructure and focus on underlying conditions, such as improper drainage facilities, poor lighting, etc. Most of the parks have evolved over time, as needs arose, and were not formally master planned. The findings of the facility inventory for each park have similarities that relate to accessibility and the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the safety guidelines of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and recommendations to enhance the users experience through the addition of convenience facilities such as benches, grills, picnic tables, restroom facilities, etc. Specific findings of site observations and recreation opportunities include the conditions of turf, equipment, signing, and structures, as well as the overall functionality of the parks. Some conditions increase park maintenance requirements. Park master planning and consideration of any changes in facilities need to have substantial input from the Temporary Park Manager and the maintenance team. The following are the key observations related to park conditions.

Inconsistent Routine Maintenance - Several of the municipal parks have inconsistent maintenance. This is likely from a combination of inadequate design, construction issues, and limited time available from the small maintenance staff.



The overall quality of facilities varies significantly throughout the system.



Quality turf management is an important part of park maintenance.



There are fundamental infrastructure improvements needed throughout the Jefferson County parks.



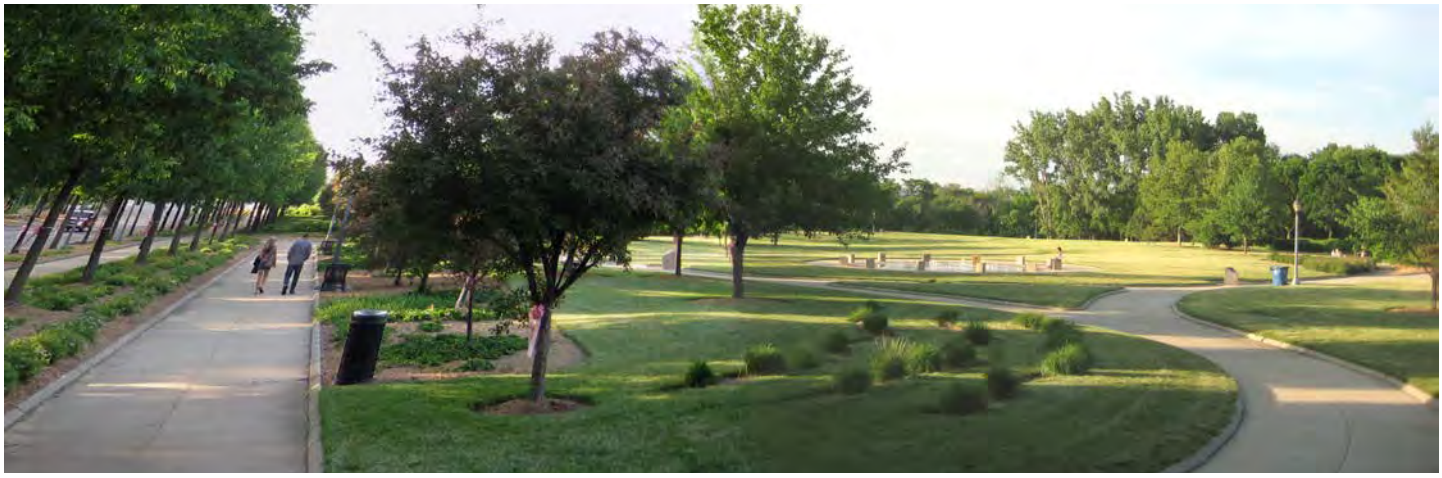
The utilization versus cost of maintenance of facilities should be evaluated to determine their long-term value.

Ballfields exist which have large areas with bare turf, suffer from compacted soils, and poor drainage. These facilities are impossible to maintain properly despite the efforts of the crews that apply band-aided solutions to try to overcome underlying construction quality problems. Each park should be evaluated for its specific maintenance needs and uniform maintenance standards, based on industry standards, should be adopted.

County Parks Lack "Park-Like" Settings - Most of the developed portions of Jefferson County's parks have a utilitarian aesthetic. All of the parks need landscape improvements to make them more attractive and "park-like." Each park has issues related to the layout and the functionality of facilities. Overall design logic is lacking. Good design could aid in creating strong civic interaction and pride in the parks, as well unifying the parks into one cohesive system. An improvement initiative should also include developing a System-Wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual. Having high-quality, well designed and uniform fixtures such as benches, lighting, signing, etc. is cost effective, efficient, and improves the perception of the overall park system. By doing projects jointly with Jefferson County Schools and at a county-wide level, a value-added component could be gained through efficient long term maintenance and management.



Rural parks should be treated with the same design care as urban parks. This includes providing the complete package of amenities from active sports fields, quality materials, extensive landscape plantings, high-quality architecture, site fixtures, etc.



The uniform treatment of facilities, such as paths and plantings, can provide the visual impact of high-quality and a well-cared for park.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

System-Wide Recommendations

The following are overarching recommendations focused on reinforcing the system-wide aspects of the county-wide parks and recreation facilities. Reference Map 5.7 for the location of some of the proposed recommendations.

1. Ensure that all Jefferson County parks are safe, well maintained, and meet a uniform high-quality standard.

Trends and Findings

+ ***Existing facilities have inconsistent levels of investment, quality, and amenities.***
+ ***The current condition of parks is not a function of poor maintenance, but of improper and/or poor construction, lack of thorough planning, or inadequate design.***
+ ***There is a lack of consistency in site amenities, fixtures, elements, etc. There is no sense of an overall "county brand" for the parks system.***

1. Develop a System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.
2. Add restroom facilities.
3. Add pavilions.
4. Ensure that all facilities meet current safety standards and ADA compliance .
5. Implement more intensive improvements, such as grading and drainage, ideally after master plans for each park are prepared.

2. Think in a county-scale manner when considering all aspects of parks and recreation facility management, development, and expansion.

Trends and Findings

+ ***Current park facilities are scaled more to a municipal level.***
+ ***JCPRC should be looking at serving the needs of Jefferson County residents and providing facilities that the individual cities and towns cannot provide.***
+ ***County parks and recreation facilities and trails should both serve residents and function as a major tourism draw and for economic development.***

1. Explore the feasibility of developing special use facilities that will have county-wide appeal, such as a regional trail connections, aquatics facilities, an amphitheater, equestrian parks, etc. These facilities could be incorporated into Jefferson County's system, either through special use feasibility studies or individual park master plans.
2. Include special event space, especially in Sam Michael's Park for uses such as major festivals, the seasonal light show, weddings, performances, races, etc.
3. Continue to expand a few strategic parks to elevate them to the size and level of a true county park facility. Recommended parks for this approach are Sam Michael's Park, James Hite Park, and South Jefferson Park.
4. Incorporate the rich history of Jefferson County and region into parks through interpretative signs and displays, heritage trails, community celebration areas, etc.
5. Develop a comprehensive greenway network that connects park sites, historic sites, regional environmental resources, watercourses, open space, residential neighborhoods, cities, schools, and community destinations.
    - Develop greenways to provide safe convenient travel between points of interest, while providing for hiking, bicycling, and walking.

- Explore the creation of greenways and trails through land acquisition, easements, and use of existing rail, road, and utility rights-of-way.

6. Target acquisition and development of parkland to meet needs for expanded facilities, especially adjavent to existing parks.

7. Develop and implement a plan to maximize public riverfront and creek access, water-based recreation, and education. Build upon existing resources near the riverfronts and creek corridors.

    - Seek additional parkland to provide greater public access to the Potomac River and the Shenandoah River for recreation. Land should be contiguous to existing riverfront park parcels and trail connections. Jefferson County already has the makings of a riverfront park system with Moulton Park, Harpers Ferry and the C&O Canal National Parks, and the pending addition to the National Park System with the expansion of Antietam Battlefield National Park into the county. Connections and infill parks between these sites should be developed to provide convenient access to the river with support facilities typically found at a trailhead (restrooms, parking, boat docks, trail/river map signs, etc.). Contiguous parcels to these sites should be sought to expand the linear opportunities along the river and to eventually connect the sites, creating major greenway/blueway corridors.

Highlights of Why the Riverfronts are Key Opportunities

The Potomac and Shenandoah riverfronts have only begun to achieve their full recreational potential in Jefferson County. The rivers add to the scenic and historic qualities of Jefferson County and provide opportunities for recreation, environmental education, and interpretation of the culture and history of Jefferson County. Jefferson County and its communities should embrace the rivers and provide expanded access to its shores for residents and visitors. The following are suggestions and opportunities to embrace the rivers and all they have to offer.

+ ***Maximize on these lands near the rivers that are already in public ownership.***

+ ***Give them a presence and identity as riverfront parks by tying them together thematically through trail connections, and a public identity and promotion system. The parks are already providing some access to the rivers but they only represent a small example of the full potential.***

+ ***Seek additional land for public access. Consider acquisition of land, as well as access easements. These efforts should be an outgrowth and high priority of a formal county system-wide policy for land acquisitions and donations.***

+ ***Develop as many river access points as possible with facilities to meet community need and to tap community opportunity. Master plan the areas incorporating facilities that may include:***

    - ***Boat ramps and docks;***
    - ***Stabilized fishing locations;***
    - ***Restrooms;***
    - ***Benches and picnic facilities;***
    - ***Signs that provide information about the culture and history of the area;***
    - ***Trails that parallel the river along the dike system and shoreline that connects to a regional trail system;***
    - ***Trails and boardwalks that explore the ecosystem of the river, adjacent wetlands and shoreline;***
    - ***Lighting for trails in the urban area, benches, trash receptacles and landscaping; and***
    - ***Create public spaces for viewing the river and holding community events.***

+ ***Develop paralleling and feeder trails along, and to, the rivers and creeks to turn the community towards the watercourses. Provide open visual access to the rivers and creeks from the trails and seating area for viewing.***

+ ***Explore public/private partnerships, such as leases for restaurants, canoe/paddler outfitters, and/or boat rentals, at appropriate locations and in a sensitive manner to promote supporting amenities and create economic development possibilities.***

+ ***Develop a comprehensive wayfinding sign system that will guide residents and visitors to greenway/blueway opportunities.***

+ ***Work with Jefferson County Schools to identify the types of environmental education opportunities that would enhance the school curricula for those located in close proximity to greenways/blueways.***

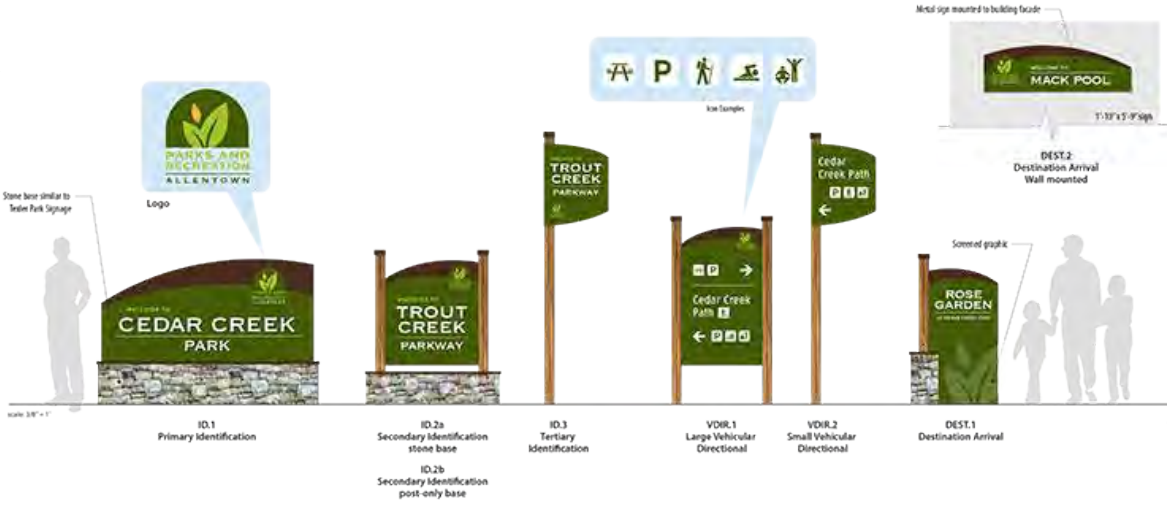
+ ***Work with neighboring counties on the Potomac River, the Shenandoah River, and the Opequon Creek corridors to extend public access regionally.***

3. Improve and maximize the function, convenience, and aesthetics of parks through thoughtful planning and design.

Trends and Findings

- ***The quality of park facilities varies significantly. This should not be confused with daily maintenance which the JCPRC does well, but instead is a function of the level of investment made in the construction of infrastructure and facilities.***
- ***All of the parks suffer from a lack of comprehensive planning that ensures that parklands are used to their maximum benefit, their layout is efficient and functional, and that the parks enhance and capitalize upon the natural resources available.***
- ***Jefferson County's system has a mix of active and passive facilities, but individual parks could provide a better balance of both. High quality design will ensure that parks serve the widest population of park users and to provide diverse park experiences throughout the county.***

1. Complete master plans for each park and greenway incorporating public participation as part of the planning process. The master plans should evaluate the functional relationships within existing parks, determining if facilities should be removed, added, renovated, or moved to maximize the use of each park site. Master planning is an important means to address management issues through park design and aligning facilities with recreation trends and current and projected community needs. Park sites should be designed to provide order to facilities and activity areas. The suggestions in the park assessments outlined as an Appendix to this plan and this system-wide master plan should be incorporated into applicable park planning efforts. The master plans should include operation and management strategies as well as a phased cost estimates that outlines the anticipated development costs. A model park master planning scope of work is provided in Appendix C of this document.
2. Provide walking trails in parks and to park facilities, especially connected to adjacent existing or future developments. Trails are enjoyed by all segments of the population and are highly desired recreation facilities. ADA accessibility laws and regulations require appropriate accessibility to recreation facilities and activity areas. Jefferson County should require multi-use trails within, and to, new developments. They should also require connecting those trails to existing and planned park and recreation facilities nearby. This policy action could be one of the most effective means of expanding community accessibility within the county and to other parks and recreation facilities, and potentially at the lowest costs.
3. Enhance park sites by making them comfortable and convenient to use by adding consistent and uniform benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, bike racks, restrooms, and other convenient facilities, as appropriate. Provide benches near playgrounds, in shaded locations, and at other activity areas for adults to sit and watch park activities.



A comprehensive signing system can have a major impact on the perception of quality from the visitor's perspective and greatly enhance the visitor's experience. This example shows all of the potential sign types needed for a typical public park system, including trails, historic interpretation and arboretum sites. (City of Allentown Parks and Recreation System Comprehensive Signing System, copyright, SGA, Inc.)

4. Add uniform system-wide signing and branding at each park to identify the park as well destination within the park. A signing system includes not only uniform entrance signing but internal facility signing, trailblazers, kiosks, regulatory interpretative signing, and donor recognition. Utilize a standard vocabulary of sign materials and design to unify and promote the park opportunities within Jefferson County while noting ownership of each site. JCPRC currently has matching arrival signs at most parks, this system could be the basis for a complete signing system.

5. Develop a high quality county-wide map that illustrates the location of parks, trails, and greenways in Jefferson County for residents and visitors.

6. Provide facilities for teens such as skate parks, parkour, climbing walls, bicycling, sand volleyball courts, and basketball courts. While organized sports have grown in recent years, current national trends show that younger generations are also looking for broader options for un-programmed activities.

7. Provide facilities for lifetime recreation/leisure pursuits such as trails, volleyball courts, tennis courts, and picnic pavilions.

8. Consider the needs of aging populations. Make facilities pedestrian friendly, convenient to use, and provide sitting areas in the shade.



4. Optimize school facilities for community recreation.

Trends and Findings

+ ***Schools currently provide limited recreation opportunities beyond scheduled and programmed events. After school operation facilities are generally closed off from the public.***

+ ***Schools are currently primarily focused on scholastic athletic needs, yet opportunities exist to expand the type and amount of facilities to serve a broader community audience, especially in locations that are underserved by park facilities.***

+ ***Creating after hours and seasonal access to outdoor school facilities could represent a dramatic and immediate increase of facilities available to the Jefferson County community.***

+ ***Work with Jefferson County Schools to create "Community School Parks" that would serve as community hubs for people of all ages year round during non-school hours.***

1. Undertake a pilot partnership project with Jefferson County Schools to enhance one school site into a Community School Park. Strive to make the school grounds more campus- or park-like. Add amenities such as:
   - Entry plantings and shade trees;
   - Walking paths;
   - Picnic shelters or pavilions;
   - Park benches and tables;
   - Playground/play area improvements; and
   - Gardens to grow food and provide nutrition programs to cultivate lifelong healthy living through nutrition and active lifestyles.

2. Target the enhancement of additional schools as regional community parks – school sites within park planning districts least served by parks or with the greatest population concentrations.

5. Work with the Jefferson County and city visitor bureaus in the promotion of county park resources and trails to expand the tourism and economic development potential and draw residents, business, and visitors to Jefferson County.

Trends and Findings

+ ***Parks, trails, recreation facilities, and cultural heritage areas are crucial to tourism.***
+ ***Trails and other facilities influence overnight stays in hotels and contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. Trails will actually increase park use.***
+ ***Parks and recreation is a powerful economic development tool because it draws tourism and more.***
+ ***The citizens of Jefferson County believe that recreation related improvements could help to further revitalize the cities and towns.***
+ ***This step would align with Jefferson County's economic development recommendations in its 2035 Comprehensive Plan.***

1. JCPRC should work with the Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) to identify incentives for the specified target private providers of recreation-based tourism on an annual or semi-annual basis. This could be a shared position with JCPRC.
2. Actively market potential "priority" projects/facilities to private and non-profit providers for signature facilities such as an equestrian park, amphitheater/ performance venues, etc.
3. Use the land development process to secure parkland, linkages, and recreation funds.
4. Work with Jefferson County's Farmland Protection Board and the Historic Landmarks Commission to protect important lands for agricultural (character), scenic beauty, vistas, and historical preservation/ protection.

6. Partner with the School District on the development of aquatics facilities and programs in Jefferson County.

Trends and Findings

+ ***Aquatic facilities and programming were the highest priority requested facilities needed in Jefferson County.***
+ ***Jefferson County's 2035 Comprehensive Plan also recommends exploring the feasibility of an indoor aquatic center that includes a competition pool with diving apparatus for students and swimmers of all ages.***

1. Undertake an Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study.
   - Perform detail facilities needs and programming analysis.
   - Determine partnership opportunities and policies.
   - Evaluate high school sites for feasibility and preferred location.
   - Include a Facility Operation and Management Plan as a part of the feasibility study.
   - Develop level-of-magnitude costs and potential phasing.
   - Include a funding and financing strategy.
2. Prepare a model cooperative operational agreement.
3. Work on county, city and town zoning and subdivision ordinances to discourage the construction of small pools in individual residential developments (often referred to as "bird baths" by community and civic leaders) that often end up not being constructed after the development is completed because the home owners associations do not want to assume the financial cost of maintenance and upkeep.
4. Supplement a tank pool with small splash pad facilities at JCPRC's larger parks.

7. Implement a Comprehensive Trail Planning, Development and Management Program

Trends and Findings

- ***Increased accessibility to existing resources and destinations can be achieved through smaller measures.***
- ***Trails are the most used and least expensive (based on a level of utilization) recreation facilities.***
- ***Trails can be a major tourism attractions.***
- ***Trail implementation in other counties demonstrates the need for dedicated staff. It is too big of a responsibility for the additional responsibility to just be added to an existing staff position.***

1. Establish a new dedicated position in Jefferson County's office of Planning and Zoning focused on trail development, funding, coordination, design, construction, and management.
2. Utilize the comprehensive trail routing plans provided in on Maps 5.4 and 5.5 as well as in Appendix B of the plan as a **guidance** document for creating trail linkage between parks, other destinations, and neighborhoods.
3. All of the cities and targeted growth areas within Jefferson County should have comprehensive sidewalk systems that connect residential and commercial areas with schools, parks, and other public lands.
4. Use the land development process to create multi-trail linkages, permanent easements, and interconnected bicycle/pedestrian networks.
5. Ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included in all transportation improvements along identified trail routes and feeder networks.
6. Strive to create a 100-mile trail loop within the county. This would create a special facility unique to Jefferson County that could be used to advance tourism and bicycle events that will generate revenue. Include scenic and historic destinations along the route along with a mix of scenery including water views, woodlands, towns, etc .

MAP 5.2 PARK PLANNING DISTRICTS

LEGEND

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

A. Marcus Field
B. Flowing Springs Park
C. Briar Run Park
D. Evitts Run Park
E. Willingham Knolls Park
F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield



MAP 5.3 PARK SERVICE AREAS

LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- 10 Minute Driving Distances
- 5 Minute Driving Distances
- 1/2 Mile/10 Minute Walking Radius
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

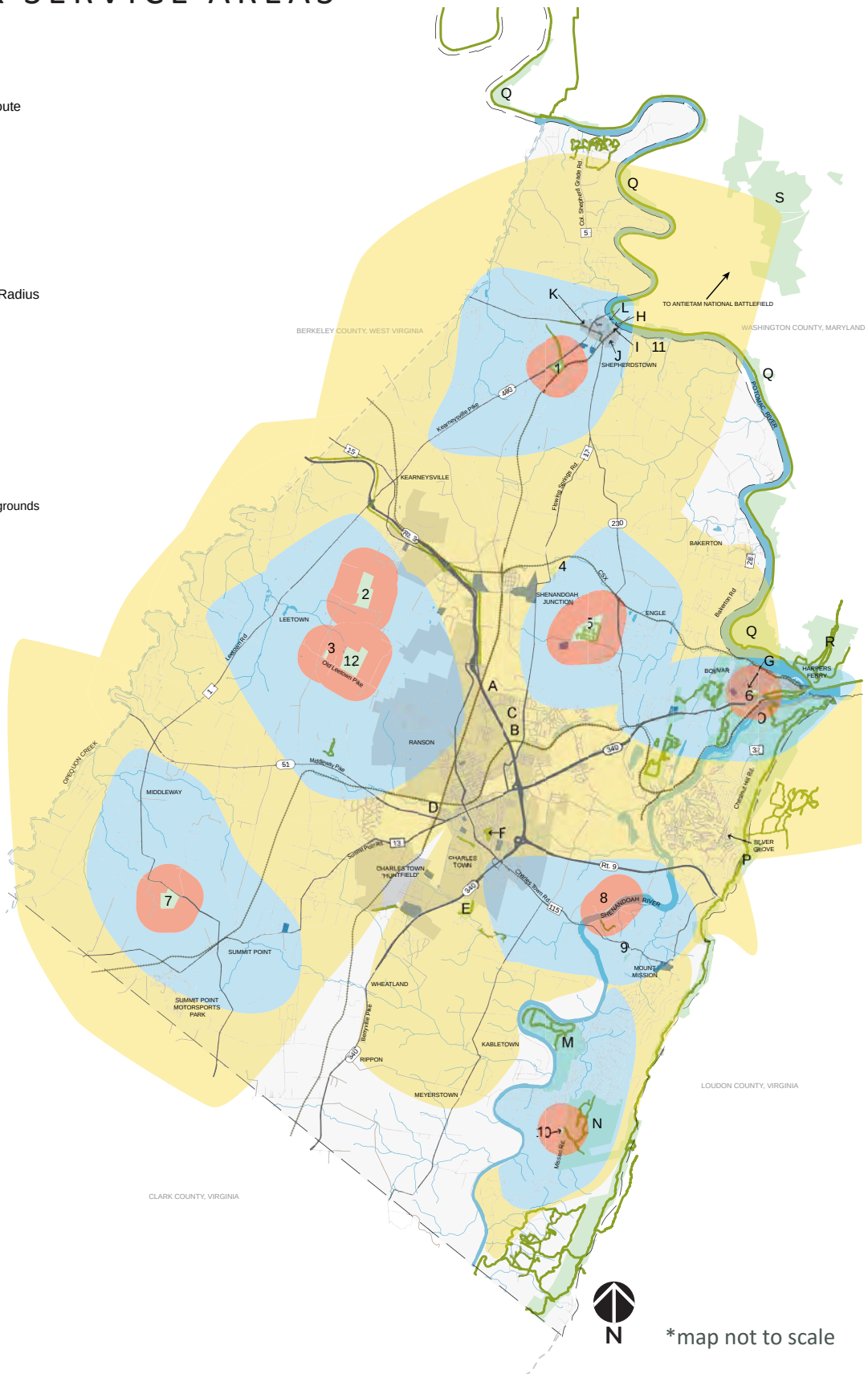
A. Marcus Field
B. Flowing Springs Park
C. Briar Run Park
D. Evitts Run Park
E. Willingham Knolls Park
F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield



MAP 5.4 PROPOSED TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- Proposed Dedicated On-Road Route
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Route
- Proposed On-Road Portion of a Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- American Battlefield Protection Program
- Greenway Corridors (Recreation/Conservation)
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
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H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield



MAP 5.5 TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

WITH HISTORIC BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION AREAS DEPICTED

LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- Proposed Dedicated On-Road Route
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Route
- Proposed On-Road Portion of a Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- American Battlefield Protection Program
- Greenway Corridors (Recreation/Conservation)
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

A. Marcus Field
B. Flowing Springs Park
C. Briar Run Park
D. Evitts Run Park
E. Willingham Knolls Park
F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield



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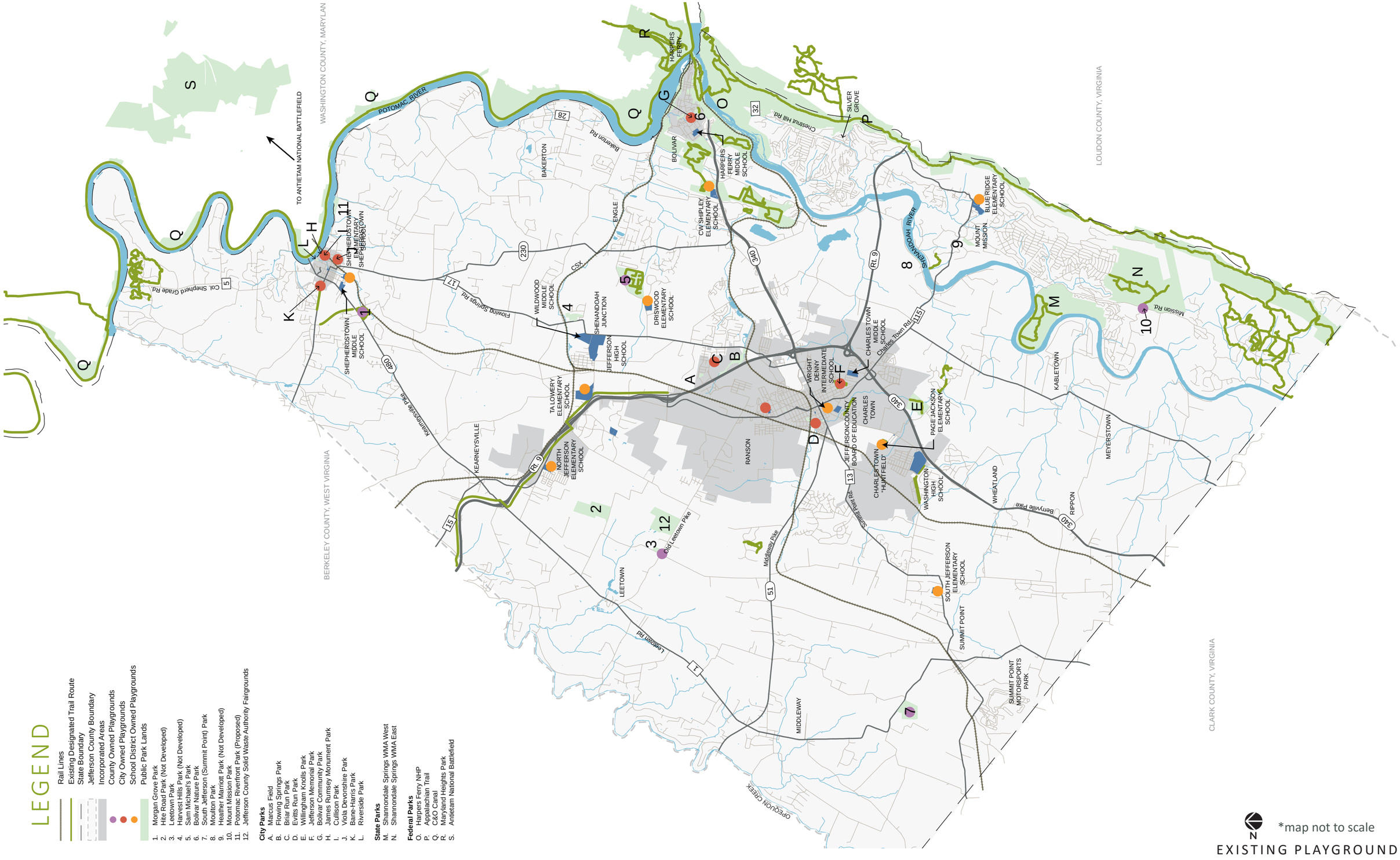
MAP 5.6 EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS



LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- County Owned Playgrounds
- City Owned Playgrounds
- School District Owned Playgrounds
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
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City Parks

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F. Jefferson Memorial Park
G. Bolivar Community Park
H. James Rumsey Monument Park
I. Cullison Park
J. Viola Devonshire Park
K. Bane-Harris Park
L. Riverside Park

State Parks

M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

O. Harpers Ferry NHP
P. Appalachian Trail
Q. C&O Canal
R. Maryland Heights Park
S. Antietam National Battlefield

N

*map not to scale

EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS

MAP 5.7 PROPOSED PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN - 2025

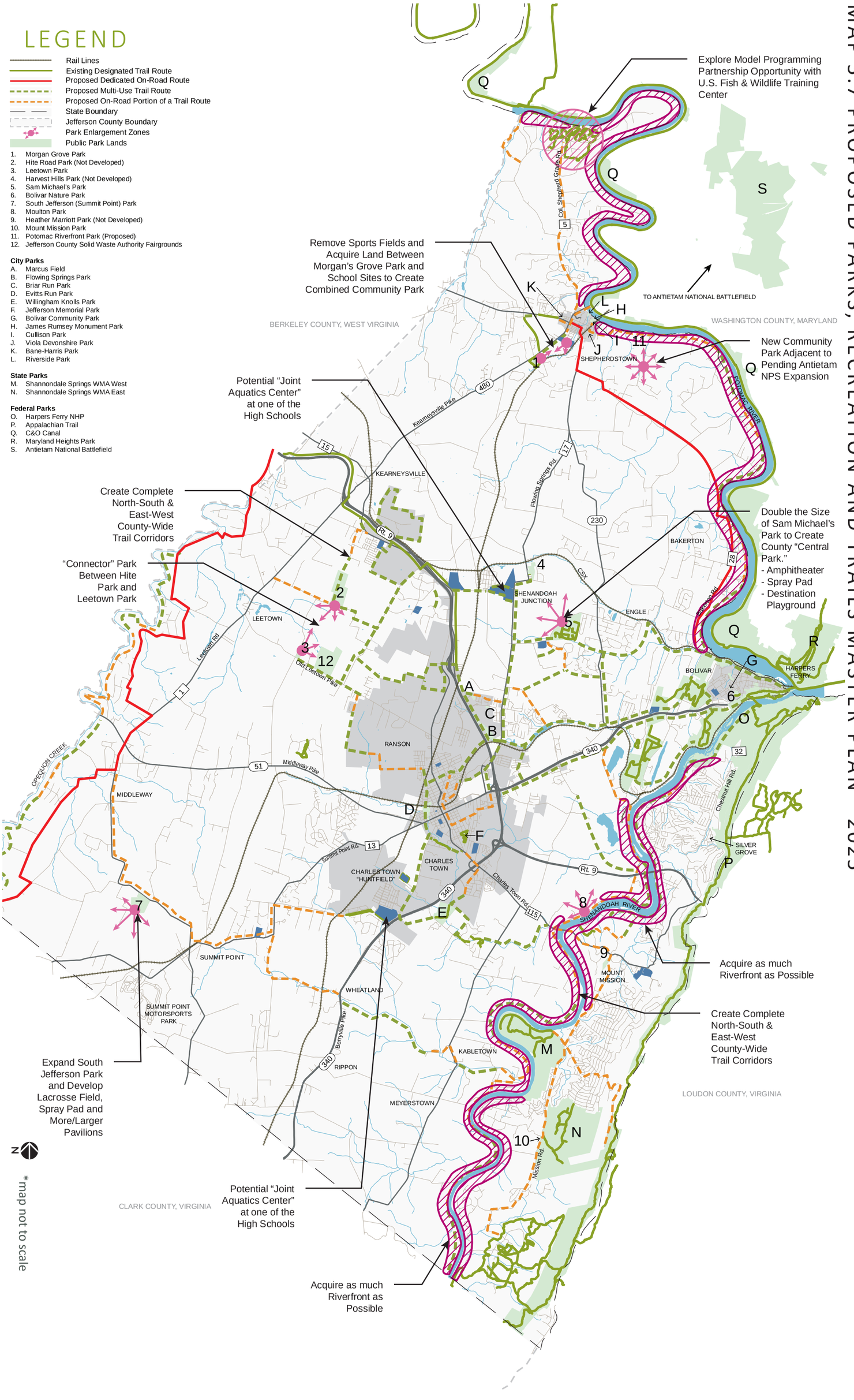

TABLE 5.1 JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

Jefferson County Parks & Facilities Inventory

		Jefferson County Parks										Shepherdstown						Bolivar	Harpers Ferry			City of Ranson			City Of Charles Town			
		Morgan's Grove Park	Leetown Park	Sam Michael's Park	Bolivar Nature Park	South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park	Moulton Park	Mount Mission Park	James Hite Park (In Construction)	Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)	Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)	Viola Devonshire Park	Bane-Harrison Park	Cullison Park	James Rumsey Monument Park	Riverside Park	Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)	Bolivar Community Park	Harpers Ferry Band Stand	Childrens Park	1007 Washington Street	Briar Run Park	Flowing Springs Park	Marcus Field	Jefferson Memorial Park	Evitts Run Park	Willingham Knolls Park	**Totals**
	Acreage:	26.69	10.43	137.86	6.78	72.57	3.06	1.85	117	22	11	0.2	0.47	3.39	1.55	1.59	16.57	0.86	0.31	0.17	0.17	1.35	32.85	3.43	10.95	14.97	73.86	**571.93**
Active Recreation Facilities																												
T-ball																												**0**
LL Baseball - 60’				2/1L		1L																						**2+2L**
Baseball -90’				1		2																						**3**
Softball		1	2L			3		1																				**5+2L**
Soccer full size		2		1		1																			1			**5**
Practice Area		4		1		4																						**9**
Volley Ball Courts		1		1		1		1																	1			**5**
Misc. Courts																				1								**1**
Football field																								1				**1**
Basketball				3.5		1.5		0.5				0.5	1												2	1		**6.5**
Horseshoe Pits		2	1	2				2																				**7**
Tennis			2			2																			3L			**4+3L**
Playground		1	2	2		1		1				1	1	1						1		2			2	2		**17**
Swimming pool																									1			**1**
Roller Hockey																												**0**
Exercise trail		1												1														**2**
Consession Stand		1	2	3		1		1																1				**9**
Biking Trails																												**0**
Passive Recreational Facilities																												
Passive open space		√		√		√								√	√				√		√		√		√	√	√	**11**
Picnic Tables		23	7	100	2	6		14				2	2	2	1					1		2		4	28	14		**208**
Pavilion		1L	1	5		1		1											1						3	2		**14+1L**
Barbecue Pits/Grills		4	1	2			11	2				1	1												1	2		**25**
Benches		9	7	14	2	8	9	1				2	4	2					3	3	5	4		2	25	5		**105**
Paths/walkways		1			1							1	1	1	1	1				1	1	0.5			1	1	1	**12.5**
Support Facilities																												
Security Lighting				Limited				Limited																		Street		**3**
Facility Lighting																								√	√			**2**
Drinking water			2	2		3															1				3			**11**
Security Cameras															1													**1**
Equipment shed		2	1	2																				1				**6**
Restrooms		1	1	3		TBD		1																	2	1		**9**
Trash receptacle		5	10	16	1			2				2	4	2	1							2		7	19	4	2	**77**
Parking Spaces		5-2H.C	2 H.C.			Gravel	Gravel	Gravel				Street	Street	2+2HC	4+1HC	Gravel				Street	Street	4 on Street		61+5HC	Street	12+2HC	Gravel 50?	**138+14HC**
General Utility Ratings																												
Pedestrian access			√	√	√							√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√		√	√	√		**15**
ADA access		√	Limited	√			√	Limited				√	√							√	√	√		√	√	√	√	**14**
Existing use																												

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

investing in parks and recreation - implementation and action plan

06

investing in parks & recreation - implementation & action plan

The Implementation & Action Plan includes a list of priority initiatives that inform and include capital improvements and the strategies for financing them, including grants, bonding, and other capital sources.

ACTION PLAN

The vision for parks and recreation in Jefferson County fosters active, healthy living, and environmental conservation. The work performed in preparation of this master plan is based upon extensive public engagement. It is essential to maintain momentum in moving ahead with the master plan's implementation. It will take many steps to achieve the community's vision of having a premier county-wide parks and recreation system. While some of these steps are major, many others are smaller and can readily be undertaken successfully now, such as the incremental facility and infrastructure upgrades in most of the county's parks. Every incremental success, no matter how small, will advance the vision for the future. Demonstrating success with projects that meet public needs and working to increase public awareness about them can have a domino effect in creating more public support and more success that further advances the vision for parks and recreation. The intent of this Implementation and Action Plan is to set forth a course of action that is pragmatic and achievable and that also allows for bigger initiatives, should the opportunities emerge.

The next steps can be challenging, but it is possible to meet those challenges in this community that treasures its parks and recreation system. Many recommendations have strong public and partner support and can be accomplished despite the current regional and national economic challenges. The recommendations in this plan include a broad range of program, policy, management, and financing actions. They also include capital improvements to improve and expand parks, recreation facilities, trails, and methods to increase protected open space. Among these recommendations, priorities for implementation include the actions that have public support or timely interest from partners, plant seeds for the future opportunities, and create capacity for operating a successful parks, recreation, and open space system well into the future.

The implementation schedule sets forth the time frame for the actions that Jefferson County and the JCPRC will undertake over the short, medium, and long term through 2026. The schedule is organized according to the major goals of the plan.



A strategic Implementation and Action Plan can result in small and large scale successes. In each case, project implementation should be recognized as another positive achievement towards the JCPRC's overall park system vision.

Goal #1 - Enhance the user's experience in all of Jefferson County's parks through basic amenities, comfort facilities, and landscape upgrades.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	James Hite Park – Parking improvements, restrooms/main pavilion, and major utility investments (water supply/wastewater treatment).	$1,650,000	✓		
	James Hite Park – Extensive Canopy Tree/landscape plantings, site lighting, pavilions, signing.	$250,000		✓	
	Sam Michael's Park - Replace existing band shell facility	$75,000 - $100,000	✓		
	South Jefferson Park – Site drainage improvements/field upgrades, new bleachers and dugout repairs, vinyl coated field fencing, parking lot improvements.	$250,000	✓		
	South Jefferson Park – Extensive canopy tree/landscape plantings, safety lighting and signage.	$75,000		✓	
	Leetown Park - Site drainage improvements/field upgrades, new bleachers and dugout repairs, concession building repairs, retaining wall replacements, vinyl coated field fencing, parking lot improvements	$75,000	✓		
	Leetown Park – Restroom/concession building upgrades, ADA compliance upgrades, parking lot improvements, tennis court resurfacing, new benches, canopy tree/landscape plantings, safety lighting and signage.	$150,000		✓	
	Moulton Park – Parking lot, boat ramp, river's edge stabilization with soft-engineering, benches and signing.	$50,000			✓
	Mount Mission Park – Parking lot improvements, ADA accessibility compliance upgrades, site drainage improvements/field upgrade, basketball court resurfacing, benches, safety lighting.	$70,000	✓		
	Morgan's Grove Park – Parking lot improvements including drainage and asphalt paving, benches, lighting and signing.	$100,000			✓

Goal #2 - Create a 100 Mile "Jefferson Connectivity" Trail Network starting by connecting the C&O Canal Towpath, the Appalachian Trail, and the Harpers Ferry National Park trail network to Sam Michael's Park, the Route 9 Trail, and the Cities of Ranson and Charles Town.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Trail Route Engineering Feasibility and Preliminary Engineering for R.O.W. determination.	$60,000	✓		
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Final Engineering and Surveying.	$130,000	✓		
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Right-of-way Acquisition.	Mostly through existing public R.O.W or proposed land development.		✓	
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Construction.	$500,000		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Final Engineering and Surveying.	$60,000		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Mostly Ranson or Charles R.O.W. or on-road		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Construction.	$500,000		✓	
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Final Engineering and Surveying.	$150,000	✓		
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Mostly public R.O.W	✓		
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Construction.	$750,000		⇨	⇨
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park - Final Engineering and Surveying.	$225,000			✓
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park – Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Could be easement within CSX R.O.W.			✓
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park - Construction.	$1,000,000			⇨

Goal #3 - Design and implement a grand vision for Sam Michael's Park that elevates the park to a true County-scale and "the premiere" park facility for Jefferson County (100+ acres).

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Remove dog park and fencing.	$10,000	✓		
	Undertake a comprehensive site master plan.	$75,000	✓		
	Tree/landscape plantings, site lighting, pavilions, signing.	$300,000		✓	
	Phase I Master Plan major capital projects.	$1,000,000 - $2,000,000 TBD determined based on site master plan findings.		✓	
	Land acquisition.	$1,000,000			⇨

Goal #4 - Increase Public Access to the county's unique and bountiful waterways by permanently protecting waterfront properties for the public benefit.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Negotiate preservation and public access easements/agreements.	Staff time and legal review.	✓		
	Land acquisition.	TBD		⇨	⇨

Goal #5 - Plan and Construct an Aquatics Facility in Partnership with the Jefferson County Schools System and fulfill a long-standing community desire for recreational aquatics, safety training, and water-based health and well-being activities in the county.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Aquatics feasibility study.	$50,000	✓		
	Architectural design and site engineering.	$750,000	✓		
	Construction.	$7,000,000 to $10,000,000		✓	

Goal #6 - Plan for growth by acquiring the necessary land to create another county level park (100+ Acres) within the next twenty years.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Evaluate nearby parcels for park viability, size, and ownership status.		✓		
	Initiate discussion with owners of potential property owners.			⇨	
	Negotiate acquisition purchase option agreements.			⇨	
	Fundraising and partnership for property acquisition.				✓

Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇨ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Develop and implement a three to five-year program management plan. + Create a program mission statement rooted in the foundation of JCPRC limited staff and resources. + Assume the roles of facilitator, direct provider, and provider of facilities for self-directed recreation. + Identify customers. + Build a customer data base and their needs. + Establish four core areas of programs: health and fitness; connecting people with the outdoors; lifelong learning; and tourism support. + Establish quality standards for programs. + Establish a formula for pricing programs and cost recovery rates, including fee splits with contractors. + Establish guidelines for class sizes with respect to cost recovery and staffing. + Continue to focus on youth and family programs for 2017-2018. + Begin to add services to adults and active seniors 2018-2021. + Create and evaluation system that will cover every program offered.	Staff Time	✓	⇨	⇨
	Plan and implement the Lifelong Learning Adult Evening School program area.	JCPRC working in partnership with the JC Board of Education. Seek School District funding to plan and launch the program. Future revenue generator.			
	Develop and implement a promotional program to increase public awareness about JCPRC. + Begin to catalog the benefits of parks and recreation in Jefferson County. + Phase in strategic implementation of promoting the benefits of the value of JCPRC's work and impact on the community.	Staff Time. Potential contract of $20,000 – 25,000 for assistance. Seek assistance of Shepherd University and the University of WV in studies of benefits of parks and recreation			

Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.					
Status **C- Completed** **IP – In Progress**	**Project Key** **✓ Start Project** **⇨ Continue Implementation**	**Cost/Source/ Responsibilities**	**2017-2019**	**2020 -2024**	**2025 - 2026+**
Organization and Management					
	Establish JCPRC in the role of convener of parks and recreation providers countywide. + Hold a summit of providers to present this county master plan. + In the summit, explore comments on the plan and participant perspectives on how the group can continue to work together in the future. + Create three specific action steps for the group to undertake with designated roles, responsibilities and time lines.	Staff time plus summit expenses for food and materials. Estimate: $500.			
	Develop an annual work program prior to budget season. Use a JCPRC team based approach to ensure the involvement and participation of all staff.	Staff time.	✓		
	Create an organizational structure reflecting major functional areas rather than staffing positions including: Recreation Services, Parks and Facilities, Community Awareness, and Organizational Support.	Staff time.			
	Add positions to JCPRC staff:		✓	⇨	⇨
	+ Chief Development Officer/Special Events Coordinator.	$55,000 to $73,000 salary and benefits; phased in partial cost recovery anticipated			
	+ Facilities Coordinator and Manager.	$55,000 to $73,000 salary and benefits; with partial cost recovery expected through fees, rentals and sponsorships	✓	⇨	⇨
	+ Lifelong Learning Coordinator.	$55,000 to $73,000 salary and benefits; with cost recovery expected through lifelong learning fees and expanded services		✓	⇨
	+ Trails Planner/Coordinator.	$55,000 to $73,000 Shared positions with Jefferson County Planning staff		✓	⇨
	Evolve the position of Director to be 70% outreach, partnership building and advocate for benefits of JCPRC; 20% administration and 10% services. Include function of Park Planning.	Staff Time with support for JCPRC	✓	⇨	⇨
	Create a staff time tracking system in order to gauge where staff time is being spent for distinct programs, services and tasks. Use this information as eh basis to deciding about types and numbers of programs, fees and charges, and streamlining operations. It is not to be used as an employee performance indicator. It is to be used for JCPRC to determine how they are going to use limited staffing and the nature and extent of services to be offered.	Staff time. Create a staff team to set up and review the effort.	✓		
	Evaluate and further define the roles and responsibilities of the Commission members. Consider planning and holding a board retreat facilitated by an outside expert. The goal of the retreat would be to settle on roles and responsibilities and an annual work program for year 1 following the retreat.	Staff time and outside contractor. $5,000 – $10,000.			

	Consider retaining planning professionals including parks and recreation planners and landscape architects to be available on an as-needed basis to support departmental operations and initiatives.	Set an annual budget. Start with $1,000- $1,500/ month to start and see how it works.			
Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.					
Status **C- Completed** **IP – In Progress**	**Project Key** **✓ Start Project** **⇨ Continue Implementation**	**Cost/Source/ Responsibilities**	**2017-2019**	**2020 -2024**	**2025 - 2026+**
Organization and Management					
	Formalize the maintenance management system:	Staff time. Potential $20,000 – 25,000 for outside assistance in workload cost-tracking and computerized real time reporting. Consider university assistance.		✓	⇨
	+ Develop a maintenance management plan including a turf management plan for Hite Road Complex. Use this as basis to set polices on field use fees and concessions.	Staff time. Consider outside contractor to help develop a sports turf management program. $15,000 – 20,000.	✓	⇨	⇨
	+ Incorporate natural resource management and trail management as JCPRC expands system.	Staff time. Seek Training from NPS and the U.S. Forest Service.		✓	⇨
	+ Phase in addition of maintenance staff working toward ratio of one worker per 20 acres of parkland.	Additional salary of $45,000 - $50,000 per worker.		✓	⇨
	+ Develop a Management Impact Statement for each major park addition or improvement to document the resources required for maintenance and to plan the allocation of resources and setting fees accordingly.	Staff time	✓	⇨	⇨
	Conduct an information needs assessment for the department and create an Information Management Plan to ensure that the right information gets to the right person in a timely manner including staff, county officials and other key stakeholders.			✓	⇨
Budget and Financing					
	Continue to work with a mix of tax and non-tax resources. Continue to generate a cost recovery rate of 53%, which is 1.82 times the national recovery rate.	53% non-tax sources and 47% taxes	✓	⇨	⇨
	Work toward increased support from Jefferson County working toward an annual per capita investment of about $38.	$1.3 million additional	✓	⇨	⇨
	Phase in increased support for park maintenance. Work toward a budget of $4,000 per acre on average yearly.	This would mean phasing in the maintenance budget from about $310,000 to about $1 million and included in the line item above.		✓	⇨
	Develop a Revenue Policy including a philosophy on cost recovery, policing on pricing, field and facility use fees.	Staff time	✓	⇨	⇨
	Develop a gifts and donations policy. Strive to create an endowment for the maintenance of all major gifts for facilities or major programs.	Staff time		✓	⇨

CAPITAL PROGRAMMING ELEMENTS

The implementation section of this plan focuses on capital improvements that are organized into two key categories. The first category focuses on detailed policy documents, developing strategic site-specific master plans, and construction documents to prepare for implementation. The second category focuses on actual construction activities that are informed by the activities performed in the first category. This system-wide master plan is a first step in a logical and informed process of determining values, needs, vision, goals, priorities, and actions. The undertaking of the specific actions should be informed by the direction of this document and the process used to prepare it, while also focusing on much greater detailed evaluations and creative processes (or beta-testing in the case of procedural and policy initiatives) in order to develop specific capital allocations and improvements. Furthermore, site specific activities are informed by the identified needs for certain types of facilities/programs, such as aquatics, and major regional facilities that need to be considered as park site master plans are developed for each park.

In addition, a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is provided to address the **most immediate needs** to provide a "safe, clean, and ready to use experience" in the parks. This level of improvement is focused on targeted upgrades to meet the **most critical improvements** that cannot wait until park specific site master plans are developed. Ideally, these improvements will be of value even after a site master plan is developed and will not preclude the best use or layout for a particular park in the future.

The information in the following matrix should be viewed as a summary framework that itemizes major recommendations and elements in the master plan for policy, staffing, and development. It uses a phased approach and is meant to serve as reference for capital programming. As funding is available, as needs change in the community, or as opportunities present themselves, the sequence of development may change, especially for sub-components or steps of each recommendations.

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Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects

Item #	Facility/ Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders / Partners	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
A	System-wide	System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.	Near Term	JCPRC - Potential partners: cities, sports groups, environmental groups, tourism directors, NFW, and NPS.	$30K for System-wide Manual	- Select system-wide palette of park amenities, including benches, lighting, trash receptacles, signing, branding, fencing, active sports elements (nets, bleachers, goals, etc.), park regulations, etc. - Develop model system-wide plant lists focused on regional native and ecological diversity principles and typical applications. - Develop removal of invasive species and stabilization of appropriate re-planting policies and procedures. - Potentially establish native plant nursery in partnership with another lead entity/volunteer group. - Retain on-call arborist for large tree removal and management. - Develop policies to limit mowed turf to areas of maximum benefit, promote meadow/pollinator plantings.
B	James Hite Park/Leetown PPD	Re-evaluate James Hite Park Master Plan Based on Actual Phase I Construction and Findings of this System-wide Parks Master Plan and Undertake Construction Documents for Large Pavilion.	Near Term	JCPRC	$80K DD, CD, & CA /$500K Pavilion Construction	- Determine location for combined restroom facilities and pavilion. - Develop Construction/Bidding Documents for restroom facilities and pavilion. - Develop a Operation and Management Plan for the park before any additional facilities are added. Could be done in conjunction with System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.
C	High School Sites	Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study.	Near Term	JCPRC and School District	$50K	- Perform detail facilities needs and programming analysis. - Determine partnership opportunities and policies. - Evaluate high school sites for feasibility and preferred location. - Include facility Operation and Management Plan. - Develop level-of-magnitude costs and potential phasing. - Prepare model cooperative operational agreement. - Include funding and financing strategy
D	Sam Michael's Park/Charles Town/Ranson PPD	Master Plan Sam Michael's Park.	Near Term	JCPRC	$75K	- A master plan for this park should be developed which reflects the location and needs of current facilities. - The effectiveness and functionality of current facilities, such as the dog park, should be evaluated to determine potential changes/modifications in the context of the System-wide Master Plan and current park needs/vision. - The potential to introduce new facilities including: destination playground, spray pad and amphitheater should be included as a part of the master planning effort. - The relocation of the dog park, potentially to County-owned lands adjacent to Leetown Park, should be studied. - Opportunities to expand the park through future acquisitions to create a large county-level park should be considered. - Additional trail connections linking the park to existing and future development within the park service area, as well as connections to a future park at Harvest Hills and Jefferson High/Wildwood Middle school sites, should be considered.

Key: Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years

Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects

Item #	Facility/ Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
E	Leetown Park/ Leetown PPD	Master Plan Leetown Park.	Near Term	JCPRC	$65K	- A master plan for this park should be developed, which focuses on addressing the condition of existing facilities (such as poor drainage conditions, undefined circulation/parking and the overall mix of facilities. This master plan should explore the opportunity to integrate and link adjacent County-owned lands into a large, more comprehensive facility. - The relocation of the dog park from Sam Michael's Park should be considered on adjacent County-owned lands. - Opportunities to create pedestrian and bicycle connections to James Hite Park should be explored as well as other trail linkages shown in Appendix B - Comprehensive Trail System routing plans.
F	Mount Mission Park/Sheperdstown PPD	Master Plan Mount Mission Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	$55K	- This small park is in a location that is under-served with parkland so JCPRC should consider keeping the park for the near future and upgrading it. - Evaluate the former church property for adaptive reuse as an indoor facility. - The master plan should explore opportunities to transfer ownership to a partner in the future.
G	Bolivar Nature Park/Harpers Ferry/Bolivar PPD	Master Plan Bolivar Nature Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC in Partnership with Bolivar	$35K	- This park is in a location to serve an important role in the Bolivar/Harpers Ferry/NPS/Appalachian Trailhead area. It is however, really too small to be a County park and should be transferred to another entity. - JCPRC should lead a master planning effort with partners, with the possible goal of determining the best ownership strategy for the park for the future.
H	Morgan's Grove Park/ Sheperdstown PPD	Master Plan Morgan's Grove Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	$60K	- Address long-term ownership issues with the park as a condition of performing the master plan. - Remove active sport facilities and emphasize the park's design as a primarily passive facility.
I	South Jefferson Park/Summit Point/Kabletown PPD	Master Plan South Jefferson Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	$75K	- Determine location for restroom facilities and pavilion. - Evaluate opportunities to expand park through strategic acquisitions of adjacent lands.

Key Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years

Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects

Item #	Facility/Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
J	Moulton Park/ Summit Point/ Kabletown PPD	Master Plan Moulton Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	$30K	- Determine preferred mix of facilities to be located in the park. - Evaluate opportunities to expand the park through strategic acquisitions of adjacent lands along the riverfront and across Bloomery Road. - Consider removing camping from the park unless the park grows in size.
K	Heather Marriott Park/Mount Mission/Ridge PPD	Master Plan Heather Marriott Park.	Long Term	JCPRC	$75K	- This undeveloped park could serve as a vital expansion of parkland within the Mount Mission/Ridge Park Planning District which is under-served with parkland.
L	Harvest Hills Park/North Port/Shenan-doah Junction PPD	Master Plan Harvest Hills Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	$75K	- This undeveloped park could serve as a vital expansion of parkland within the core of the County.
M	Formerly Proposed Potomac Park/ Sheperds-town PPD	Coordinate with NPS on Antietam NP Expansion onto lands in Jefferson County.	Near Term	JCPRC/ County Planning Staff	Staff Time	- Ongoing coordination with Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission.
N		County-wide Trail Standards Manual.	Near Term	JCPRC/ County Planning Staff	Staff Time	- Establish official facility standards for trail facilities, to be especially utilized by private developers as incremental trail development occurs within. Standards should be connected to new land development projects.
O		Land Acquisitions and Donation Acceptance Policy.	Near Term	Historic Landmarks Commission/ JCPRC	Staff Time	- Establish a formal written policy for land acquisition and land donations. - Determine land designation policies for assigning the future value to the system for each parcel. - Determine future and long-term land management protocols for “land banking” parcels for future park development. - Formalize a policy for disposition of property that does not fit the vision of the JCPRC system.
Key	Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years					

RESOURCE ROSTER FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

This section of the report provides recommendations on a strategic approach to raising and utilizing funds to support JCPRC's priority projects, programs and initiatives. This section also provides information on target funds that could advance your efforts.

Unfortunately, many traditional sources for parks and recreational funding have been eliminated or greatly reduced over the past decade, and there are very few grant sources available from the public sector, philanthropy, or Jefferson County corporations/businesses that could provide significant funding amounts for large capital projects, staff, or maintenance costs. Typically, a community will need to use bonding or other local capital financing strategies for the build-out and development of these types of projects, and their long-term maintenance. Also, some projects can incorporate revenue strategies which generate usage, rental and event fees, such as events centers, amphitheaters for music/theatric events, or recreational facilities.

In this context, JCPRC should consider grant funding and strategic investments as seed and planning resources that can be used to support and justify local capital financing campaigns that can cover the larger costs of capital projects, staff and long-term maintenance.

This section provides a brief overview of the targeted projects and funding needs identified in this report based on substantial consultations with the public, key stakeholders, and the JCPRC Board of Directors; a set of strategic recommendations for how JCPRC can position itself to be most competitive and successful on its funding objectives; and a summary of potential public, private, and philanthropic sources of funding that could be available for JCPRC's key initiatives.

OVERVIEW OF JEFFERSON PARK & RECREATIONAL NEEDS

This report provides recommendations on priority staff, programmatic, planning, and capital projects for JCPRC to pursue, including:

SEVEN KEY GOALS/INITIATIVES

The report identifies seven projects that could produce major, game-changing capital improvements to the County-wide park and recreational system, totaling $16-$23 million overall, in 2016 dollars. These include:

1. System-wide upgrades to **amenities, such as comfort facilities, infrastructure improvements and enhanced landscaping at existing parks,** at cost of $2 million to $3 million;
2. 100-Mile **Jefferson Connectivity Trail Network**, at initial cost of $1 million;
3. Expansion of **Sam Michael's Park** into a premier facility, including with the addition of a amphitheater, pavilions, and potential expansion, at the cost of $3 million - $5 million;
4. **Jefferson County aquatics facility**, at the cost of $7 million to $10 million;
5. **Increased public waterway access project**, at initial cost of $1 million to $2 million;
6. Land acquisition and development of amenities for a second **County-Level Park**, or a major expansion of existing park such as James Hite Park, at initial cost of $2 million; and
7. Institution of a strong parks and recreation **management system**.

STAFF & EQUIPMENT RESOURCES

+ This report recommends the establishment of new positions including "Director of Program Development & Special Events", a "Facilities Manager", and a "Trail Development Coordinator"
+ Estimate of $220,000 annually for salary and benefits for all three positions (in 2016 dollars)
+ $35,000 for an additional maintenance vehicle and $32,500 for additional mowing equipment

PROGRAMS & PLANNING

This report recommends key next steps to support system-wide planning and management, drastically increased maintenance budgets, more detailed park master plans, feasibility studies, and collaboration with other entities, including:

- $30,000 for a System-Wide Design Standards & Landscape Manager Model
- $30,000 for a County-Wide Trail Standards Model
- $50,000 for an Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study
- $515,000 in near- and medium-term park master plans for James Hite Park, Sam Michael's Park, Leetown Park, Mount Mission Park, Morgan's Grove Park, South Jefferson Park, Mouton Park, Marriott Park, and Harvest Hills Park
- An increase in the annual maintenance budget to $1,150,000 (an increase of ~$820,000 annually)
- Collaboration with the Jefferson County Board of Education, schools, the Jefferson County Planning Department among others, on sharing costs for staff and facilities, and national park and federal agency partners located in the County.

KEY STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO FUNDING & FINANCING

Jefferson County and the JCPRC should consider a strategic approach to planning, implementing, and justifying its efforts to secure local and other sources of funding for its priority parks and recreation initiatives:

Framing the Projects

1. FUNDING SUCCESS IS BASED ON PARTNERSHIPS & OUTREACH:

Parks & rec systems that focus on building robust partnerships with its public users, the broader general public, influential community leaders, and key organizations will be the most successful in raising funds for improvements and expansions. Such support will improve your success rate on applications for grant funding from state, federal, private sector and philanthropic funders. Such public support is also the critical foundation of any efforts to seek expanded local funding for parks, such as through increased County budget allocations, or public parks levies. This overall Master Plan recommends a number of approaches to improved JCPRC partnerships in the community and with key organizations including the school system. This Plan calls for additional JCPRC staff, so that the Parks & Recs Director can spend more time on the important role of partnership building and community outreach. It may also be valuable for JCPRC to consider launching a "Friends of Jefferson County Parks" type campaign, using a small membership fee (perhaps $10 per year), social media, influential local spokespeople, and outreach to key customer groups such as JCPRC users, soccer families, and other such groups to build a base of support for future fundraising efforts, and a revenue mechanism to support fundraising campaigns and other costs.

2. ONE BITE AT A TIME:

The sheer size of the needs for Jefferson County parks and recreational upgrades, programming and maintenance could seem overwhelming, but your goals can be pursued in the same way as one eats an elephant – one bite at a time. Each project is really a series of phases, and each phase requires resources to pursue. These phases include: conceptual planning phases, public engagement, preliminary design and engineering, final engineering and permitting, construction bid documentation, construction, operations, programming, and maintenance. As you progress through these phases, you can build additional public support, local governance support, and support from key funders that can help you build momentum for later bites of the project. Focus on what kind of resources, support, staff, volunteers, and momentum you must utilize in order to get to and through the next bite of the project. Grants and contributions to JCPRC are typically easier to obtain to catalyze earlier stages of concept design, public engagement and engineering, and programmatic development, and typically harder for construction, operations and maintenance (which are also very costly in relation to available grant resources).

3. LAYERS / FOCUS AREAS:

Every parks & rec project also has layers. Each project can have a variety of focus areas. A "park" or "recreational" project could be considered a watershed protection project, a stormwater and green infrastructure project, an urban forestry project, a trails project, a childhood education and development project, a recreational project, a tourism project, a public arts project, a festival project, a public health project, a sports project, a project to support

economically distressed citizens – or any and all of these combined, depending upon the specific project or initiative. The point is that each of these layers of a park and recreational project may have different sources of grants or other resources available to support them, which should frame your thinking about where you will seek funding, how you will shape your project to be competitive for that funding, and how you will approach the funding agencies to pitch your project.

4. CONFIRM COSTS:

Once JCPRC has identified the focus areas and phases of each priority project, it is important to create estimates of probable costs for each component and phase of these priorities. It is difficult to plan for, budget, or ask the County or the public for funding if you have not clearly defined the costs for the projects you seek to pursue. For instance, if JCPRC identifies James Hite Park improvements as a key priority, and delineates key phases of that project to include the extension of water/sewer utilities to the property, bathroom facilities, and concession facilities, JCPRC must then identify the costs of each of these components. With clear estimates of costs, JCPRC can better match funding sources to priority needs, and persuade funders to support your requests.

5. ASSESS CAPACITY TO SERVICE DEBT:

Park and recreational projects are often funded through local levies and bonding, and can also be funded by low-cost loan financing tools, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Communities Facilities Program loans. JCPFC should consider working with a financial professional to conduct an assessment of JCPRC's capacity to service debt to support capital building and maintenance projects. For instance, debt that is used to create sports fields at Hite Road Park could be serviced at some level through sports user fees, tournaments, and sports tourism. Financing for a Sam Michael's Park pavilion could be supported at some level by events, concessions, or rental fees. Typically, it is difficult to make a convincing case for funding by saying, "If we build it, they will come". But it can be convincing to convey that, "If we build it, they will come and, if they come, they will pay, and we have done a professional assessment of how much they will likely pay – so here is the amount you should support for financing."

There are firms that specialize in sports and recreation finance, with services including cost and revenue projection, fee study and development, and financial analysis for new or improved parks, sports and recreation facilities. JCPRC could consider procurement of such an expert firm. The cost of retaining such a firm truly depends on the scope of effort you seek. If JCPRC can work with internal County personnel on the structuring of a levy/bond effort, and assessment of what it would cost to service such debt, the costs of outside consulting can be reduced.

Below are some examples of some of the best reputed firms in these areas:

Ballard*King & Associates

- *http://www.ballardking.com*
- Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
- B*K forms a consulting team that provides a variety of pre-and post-design services for clients who are considering construction of a sports, recreation, aquatic, or wellness facility.
- Premiere firm that evaualtes the feasibility of public aquatic recreation facilities including performing analysis of operating cost & revenues, capital generations, funding, and project partnering.

Sports Facilities Advisory / Sports Facilities Management (SFA/SFM)

- *www.sportadvisory.com/index.php/Portfolio*
- *One of leading firms in nation focused on financing and business plans.*
- *Based in Clearwater, FL*
- *Services include feasibility studies, recreation center feasibility and business plans, offer financing options, planning, design, funding, and management, tools to assess feasibility, design, plan, fund, open, and manage community recreation and tourism venues.*

Sports Management Group

- *http://sportsmgmt.com/projects/community.html*
- *Berkeley, CA*
- *Work all over U.S.*
- *Services emphasis on strategic planning support, policy manuals and facility maintenance programming.*

Johnson Consulting Group

- *http://chjc.com/*
- *Offices in New York, Chicago, and California*
- *Huge portfolio all over the nation, including tourism and entertainment projects: http://chjc.com/past-project-experience/*
- *Firm specializing in serving public- and private-sector clients in North America including state, county, and municipal governments, sports franchise owners and teams, convention and visitors bureaus, asset and portfolio managers, financial institutions, private-sector developers, and universities and colleges.*

6. BRIEFING SHEETS, RENDERINGS & OUTREACH MATERIALS:

Once you have conducted initial concept planning or preliminary engineering, it is very valuable to use your professional consultants to create briefing sheets, brochures, conceptual drawings, artists' renderings, web pages, and other outreach materials. These materials are critical to working with the public, funders, elected officials, and other key stakeholder to create a vision for a park and recreational project, and to project the outcome of the effort to fund the initiative. These materials can be distributed to customers, users and supporters, via the internet and social media campaign, in funding pitch packages, and in grant applications.

FUNDING SOURCES TO CATALYZE PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Following are known sources of funding to support park and recreational planning, design, and programmatic design phases of your priority projects.

1. **Land & Water Conservation Fund:** As JCPRC knows well from several successful efforts to secure LWCF funding, the West Virginia Department of Commerce provides annual grants using federal LWCF funding, on a 50/50 reimbursable grant basis, for a wide variety of high-quality public park and recreational projects, and parks/rec support projects. Grants average $75,000 each, but can go as high as $250,000. This fund could be used for nearly all of the parks planning and construction projects recommended in this report. See *www.wvcommerce.org/people/communityresources/infrastructure/landandwaterconservationfund/default.aspx.*

2. **National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance:** The National Park Service annually awards packages of expert technical assistance to units of local government and parks departments to, among other activities, plan trails and greenway projects and systems, build recreational tourism plans, support youth involvement in conservation and recreational opportunities, and build partnerships to support projects. Jefferson County may have a competitive advantage for this assistance, given its proximity to the National Park Serviced headquarters, and the key role of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in this community. JCPRC should consider applying for this NPS assistance for the development of the multi-use trail network recommended in this report. Deadline is June 30 each year. See *www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm.*

3. **USDA Community Facilities Funds:** USDA will provide loans and grants (Jefferson County does not have the demographic/economic distress to be highly competitive for grant funds) that can provide lower-cost and subsidized finance for community facilities including park and recreational projects, community centers, festival event facilities, and similar projects. These loans can be for up to $10 million and for terms of up to 40 years, if reliable repayment streams can be confirmed. This could be a solid source for any big capital project, such as the Sam Michael's Park, Hite Road, multi-use trail, and/or aquatic facilities projects. See *www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-programhttp://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program* and the West Virginia office at *www.rd.usda.gov/wv*.

4. **Transportation Alternative Program Grants:** The WV Department of Transportation provides annual "TAP" grants of up to $200,000 on a 50/50 reimbursable matching basis for, among other kinds of projects, multi-use, pedestrian and bicycle trails. See *www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm* and *www.transportation.wv.gov/highways/programplanning/planning/grant_administration/transportationalternativesprogram/Pages/default.aspx.*

5. **WV Division of Highways, Surface Transportation Priority Funds:** The State of West Virginia receives very substantial levels of "STP" funding each year from the U.S. Department of Transportation for a variety of road, bridge, and other surface transportation projects – including multi-use, pedestrian and bicycle trails. While these funds can be difficult to wrest from State DOTS (particularly WV DOT, which is essentially broke), it is possible to secure these funds with a well-conceived project that has high public support, backed by strong advocacy.

6. **Benedum Foundation:** One of the few major charitable foundations which funds West Virginia projects is the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation based in Pittsburgh, which spends 50% of its annual funding in West Virginia. Two focus areas for Benedum funding are community develo9pment and health promotion. Benedum generally does not fund capital construction projects. If JCPRC can articulate how its major parks and parks/rec tourism projects (e.g., festivals) can empower local people and improve their lives, JCPRC could potentially obtain planning and programmatic development grants for these planning efforts. Grants can be for up to $500,000, typically on a 50/50 matching basis. See *www.Benedum.org.*

7. **Kaboom!:** Kaboom! is a national non-profit organization in Washington, DC that provides grants for community-engaged playground design, playground equipment grants, and innovative/creative playground equipment grants to municipal park entities. See *www.Kaboom.org.*

8. **Coca Cola Foundation/NRPA:** The Coca Cola Foundation is providing grants to local communities to improve park and recreation facilities and improve access to physical activity, with focus areas in spots facilities, teen wellness initiatives, outdoor fitness equipment, and similar initiatives. See *www.coca-colacompany.com/our-company/the-coca-cola-foundation.*

9. **CitizInvestor:** CitizInvestor is a crowdfunding service that helps a local community design a crowdfunding campaign for local projects, often including parks and recreational projects. CitizInvestor takes a small cut (6-7%) to organize your local crowdfunding campaign. It is adept and highly successful at funding projects in the $5-$15k range, and can also organize larger campaigns for up to $50,000 with more effort. See *www.CitizInvestor.com.*

10. **Urban & Community Forestry Grants / CommuniTree:** As JCPRC knows from its successful efforts to secure these grants in the past, the WV Division of Forestry can provide state and U.S. Forest Service funding to support tree planting campaigns which can be part of park landscaping initiatives. These programs can provide free or subsidized trees, technical assistance for community forestry development efforts, and grants for forestry projects. JCPRC can begin efforts to secure additional resources through communication and collaboration with the WV State Forester and the State regional forestry contact for the Eastern Panhandle. Grants are typically due July 1. See *www.cacaponinstitute.org/Forestry/CTree.htm#Application_Materials.*

11. **WV Governor Community Partnership Fund:** As JCPRC knows from its successful efforts to secure these grants, the Governor's, Community Partnership Fund is essentially an earmarking fund for local delegates and senators that can provide grants of between $5,000 and around $50,000 for well-supported local projects.

12. **Appalachian Regional Commission:** Although multi-use trails are not a primary focus of ARC funding, the federal agency has provided grants under its "asset-based economic development" grant funding category for the development of multi-use trail systems that enhance a local economic development strategy – which could definitely apply to JCPRC efforts. See *www.arc.gov/grants*, and reach out to the ARC representative in West Virginia, housed at the West Virginia Development Office (Mr. James Bush at the time of this writing).

13. **Natural Capital Investment Fund:** An affiliate of the Conservation Fund and based in Shepherdstown, WV, Natural Capital is an investment and loan fund providing resources to rural communities in a nine-state region, including West Virginia, for a variety of sustainable local initiatives that can include heritage and recreation-based tourism and land conservation, which could apply to JCPRC riverfront preservation and recreation initiatives, or multi-use trails deployment. The Appalachian Regional Commission gave Natural Capital a large grant in summer 2016 to form a program to provide more funding for community activities in

the region. See *www.conservationfund.org/what-we-do/natural-capital-investment-fund/our-approach-and-impact.*

14. **Green Infrastructure Resources:** Jefferson County communities are going to come under increasing pressure, and have increasing opportunities, to design and deploy resources including raingardens, tree-planting, riparian buffers and similar "green infrastructure" facilities to protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. If JCPRC intends to further develop Moulton Park or new riverfront park and recreational resources, it may be able to obtain grants from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, the WV DEP (through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund "Green Reserve" set-aside program), or other funders for green infrastructure projects that can double as natural areas, green spaces, landscaping projects, and environmental education centers in Jefferson County parks.

15. **Local Institutions:** Although many local institutions seem to be struggling with their own resource levels at this time, certain entities may be able to provide reasonable matching grants for park and recreational planning by the JCPRC to improve the quality-of-life and tourist and investment potential in Jefferson County. These entities could include Hollywood Casino, the American Public University System, the National Park Service, Wal-Mart and others. To succeed with these funders, JCPRC should develop a very specific project, leverage other funding, and seek gap-filling investments from senior leadership in these institutions.

16. **West Virginia Tourism Division, Matching Advertising Partnership Program:** JCPRC may be able to obtain matching marketing dollars, on a 50/50 reimbursement basis, from the West Virginia Division of Tourism's "Matching Advertising Partnership Program" or "MAPP", which provides grants of up to $10,000 for advertising of programs, projects and locations that attract tourism to West Virginia. This could be a good source for festival and event programming by JCPRC and its park users. See *https://gotowv.com/industry-information/mapp/.*

17. **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, National Park Service:** The National Park Service provides approximately 25 grants of up to $450,000 each for outdoor recreation projects that provide benefit to economically distressed citizens and families. Each state, which in this case means the WV Department of Commerce, can submit up to two (2) recommended projects each year, which puts those projects into the national competition for grant award. The challenge for JCPRC will be to demonstrate that the project provides a significant benefit to economically distressed citizens and neighborhoods, which is a focus for this NPS program. To begin the process of seeking selection by the State of West Virginia for this grant, which is typically due in the spring each year, contact the Land and Water Conservation Fund officials at the WV Department of Commerce, see *www.wvcommerce.org/people/communityresources/communityrevitalization/LandAndWaterConFund/default.aspx.*

LOCAL FUNDING

As mentioned at the outset of this funding and implementation section, the core strategy for the Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission should be to make the case for, and organize for, a strategy to secure local financing resources for the betterment of County parks and recreation resources. Without this additional local "skin in the game", Jefferson County will have a difficult time matching grant funds, conducting significant capital construction projects, fulfilling staffing and maintenance goals, and accomplishing your key future goals.

Local funding can be boosted in three significant ways:

1. **Flexible Use of Development Impact Fees:** As JCPRC knows well from its own deliberations and its presentations to the Jefferson County Commission, the Jefferson Office of Impact Fees has created a methodology for disbursement of impact fee revenues that, in short, is badly restricting the ability of the County to construct basic, needed improvements to County-wide parks such as James Hite Park. Using a "Level-of-Service" approach and "cash flow methodology" to charging and disbursing impact fees which were created locally but are not required or specified by state or local code, the County system has mandated that there must be a ratio of fee revenue spent on land acquisition vis-à-vis land improvement. Because land improvement

at major County parks can be so expensive, JCPRC is now in a position that it must buy more lands before it can improve the parks it has already established. As a result, there is $300,000 in unused parks and rec revenue sitting frozen in the local impact fee accounts.

Thus, for instance, James Hite Park is now a cleared, graded, essentially empty 119-acre park with an only an entrance road, parking lots, stormwater management and perimeter trail – but no other facilities whatsoever. There are soccer goals and painted fields that were funded and installed by the local recreational soccer league. These soccer fields support nearly 1,000 players plus their families on numerous days throughout the year, without any bathroom facilities, concession facilities, or other improvements. Yet, there is a fund of $300,000 sitting in the Parks & Recreational account of the County's impact fee resources, which cannot be spent on any aspect of James Hite Park improvements unless JCPRC buys more parkland (which, in turn, may sit fallow because available fees may be restricted from supporting improvements under the County's impact fee methodologies).

In June 2016, the County Commission directed County staff overseeing the Office of Impact Fees to assess this issue and determine whether a more flexible, solution-oriented approach could be adopted that would allow funds sitting in the parks and recreational accounts to be needed to provide needed upgrades and amenities on county-wide parks that lack them. JCPRC should seek to provide more proactive and organized input to County staff and elected officials, backed by the involvement of citizens from the local sports recreational leagues who are suffering the impacts of these funds being barred from use. JCPRC should work with County staff to find a methodology for parks and recreation fee disbursements that ensures that we are following state and local law mandates that impact fees serve the citizens who paid these fees, without locking them away inflexibly from the very uses that could serve these citizens.

2. **Development Dedication of Facilities, Particularly Trails & Riverfront Lands:** As land is developed in Jefferson County, there are opportunities to create park and recreation facilities that benefit both the specific development and the broader community – especially multi-use trails or riverfront/riparian lands. And, if particular lands are developed that could contribute to broad trail networks, without considering how the trail might be part of the development planning and implementation, such opportunities could be lost.

   JCPRC should consider working with partners such as the Hagerstown-Eastern Panhandle MPO and local municipalities to establish a map with targeted future trail systems and links, which can then be used to inform local planning, zoning and development officials about the need for development dedications, proffers, or requirements for set-aside of lands or easements for such trails when particular lands are moved into development. JCPRC can ask county and city development authorities to review their codes and policy positions to determine whether and how they could establish development donation, dedication, or incentive programs to encourage or require landowner and developer dedication of these trail or other recreational facilities. In some cases, land developers may be favorable to such dedications, because they may seek to improve the future value of their own projects, or the broader community quality-of-life. There may also be permissible tradeoffs of density or other development rights in exchange for the dedication and/or construction of trail or recreational facilities. For instance, in recent years parks and multi-use trails were created or pledged at Craighill Estates, Norbourne Glebe, Huntfield, Fairfax Crossing, Briar Run, and Shenandoah Springs. Given that the cost of purchasing lands or easements for regional trail or riverfront open space systems can be very expensive, such approaches to developer dedications in Jefferson County could drastically reduce the costs of these recreational facilities.

3. **Local Parks & Recreation Fee Levy:** Perhaps the most important approach to funding Jefferson County parks and recreational improvements, particularly for the large capital projects identified as high priorities in this master plan, is to seek citizen approval of a local parks and rec bond levy. A bond levy would enable the County to obtain and service municipal bonds that can be used on major capital projects. We note that, across the nation, local parks and recreation funding campaigns are usually highly successful, because local citizens are willing to pay for parks. Like the 78% positive vote for the Excess School Levy in Jefferson County in 2015, if local citizens know what they are paying for and believe

that it is worthy, they will vote for tax and fee levies to support these priority initiatives. We note that more than 85% of local park levies, ballot initiatives and referenda across the United States have been passed over the past decade. In the cast of Jefferson County, some of the major proposed improvements to park facilities could also be revenue generators for not just JCPRC, but for the community as a whole. For instance, the creation of a better amphitheater at Sam Michael's Park could support additional musical and theatric events that could provide revenue. An aquatics center could generate revenues from users. A James Hite Park with concession, bathroom and lighting facilities could draw sports tourism that could be an economic boon to the County through hotel and hospitality spending.

We also suggest that the JCPRC explore a relationship with the Trust for Public Land *(www.tpl.org)*, which runs a "Conservation Finance Center" which provides direct technical assistance to local governments to research park funding initiatives, and to compose ballot initiatives and campaigns to raise this local public funding. See *www.tpl.org/services/conservation-finance.* The Trust for Public Land has already achieved significant conservation, parks and recreation victories in Jefferson County, including the saving and preservation of Murphy's Farm and the Schoolhouse Ridge Battlefield site.

In this context, we recommend that JCPRC and its supporters work with the public, community organizations, sports leagues, JCPRC users, the Jefferson County Commission and other stakeholders to develop a public campaign to support a 2017 ballot measure for a dedicated, 5- to 10-year parks and recreational levy fee in Jefferson County. There are several potential keys to success on such a levy effort:

+ **Define the Deliverables:** Do not base the campaign on a vague "we need to improve our parks" justification. Identify specific initiatives, such as trails, aquatic facilities, Sam Michael's Park upgrades, James Hite Park improvements, staff and programmatic improvements, and so on. Clearly define what the levy would pay for and produce – what are taxpayers paying for, and how will it benefit them?

+ **Major Public Engagement:** Be prepared to engage and motivate a cadre of volunteers and supporters to reach out to the public, key organizations, and key constituencies to explain and support the parks levy, using professional brochures, social media, and marketing tools. Again, it would be valuable for this purposes, and many other reasons, to launch and build a "Friends of the Jefferson County Parks" campaign.

+ **Community Leader Engagement:** Identify the top group of local elected officials and influential parties who need to be engaged early and often, including the Jefferson County Commissioners, Jefferson County staff, business leaders, tourism development leaders, and recreational league leaders. There are also leaders within the network of local library and arts communities who may be seeking county levy support for their own goals. Convene these local influential leaders and stakeholders early and often to talk about the campaign's goals, to discuss their questions and concerns, and to enlist their support and leadership.

+ **Crunch the Numbers:** JCPRC and its allies should thoroughly understand, and be ready to convey, how the levy works in practical action. For instance, we know that the Jefferson County Schools excess levy passed in late 2015 is raising $19 million per year for five (5) years, and that the excess levy rate is 45.9-cents per $100 of assessed property value. With a median house value in Jefferson County (in 2016) of $260,000, the median assessed value for taxation purposes would be $156,000. At the school levy rate, a median-value household would pay $716 per year, or around $60 per month, to support the overall $19 million annual need. In the case of JCPRC costs, this Master Plan recommends a range of $16-$23 million in total project costs for the seven key initiatives – with a midrange value of about $19 million total (that is, Parks & Rec would not need $19 million each year over five years, just once). Thus, an approximate levy rate for a median household for a JCPRC levy would be about one-fifth of the school levy rate, or about $144 per year or $12 per month. This kind of information is critical to moving a levy campaign forward. Clear and explainable information on the financing approach will inspire confidence in voters that the levy is money well spent.

+ **Use Professionals:** Again, it is important to engage professional support for your local financing efforts, such as park and recreational consultants, professional

marketing consultants, the Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance Center, and similar support. JCPRC's Board of Directors should also consider whether a levy campaign can and should be run by the Board, or should be conducted by an independent organization, such as a Political Action Committee, which can raise and expend funds for these purposes without entanglement with day-to-day JCPRC operations.

In addition to a parks/rec levy which would be imposed as taxes or fees on property owners, JCPRC should explore other funding opportunities with its allies and Jefferson County leadership, including:

+ **Restoration of Parks & Rec Impact Fees:** It is unreasonable to ask existing citizens to pay more fees for parks and recreational improvements, when new growth and incoming future residents do not bear their fair share of park and recreational upgrades to meet the needs of this expanding growth. JCPRC should explore adding a ballot provision to the parks levy measure that asks votes whether they support a restored development impact fee for parks and rec.

+ **Parks & Recreation Funds from a new Jefferson County Sales Tax:** In 2015, the cities of Charles Town and Ran son, together with 19 other West Virginia cities, obtained the "home rule" authority to apply a 1% sales tax within their jurisdictions, which is already providing hundreds of hundreds of thousands of dollars each to these local municipalities. Although West Virginia counties have not yet taken advantage of the opportunity, state law will allow counties that have fulfilled the requirements of the Local Powers Act (including Jefferson County) to impose sales taxes in a similar way as home rule cities do. This could be a significant source of revenue for the scarce Jefferson County budget and, with collaboration with the public and the Jefferson County Commission, the JCPRC could potentially obtain a meaningful portion of such new resources for its parks and recreational priorities.

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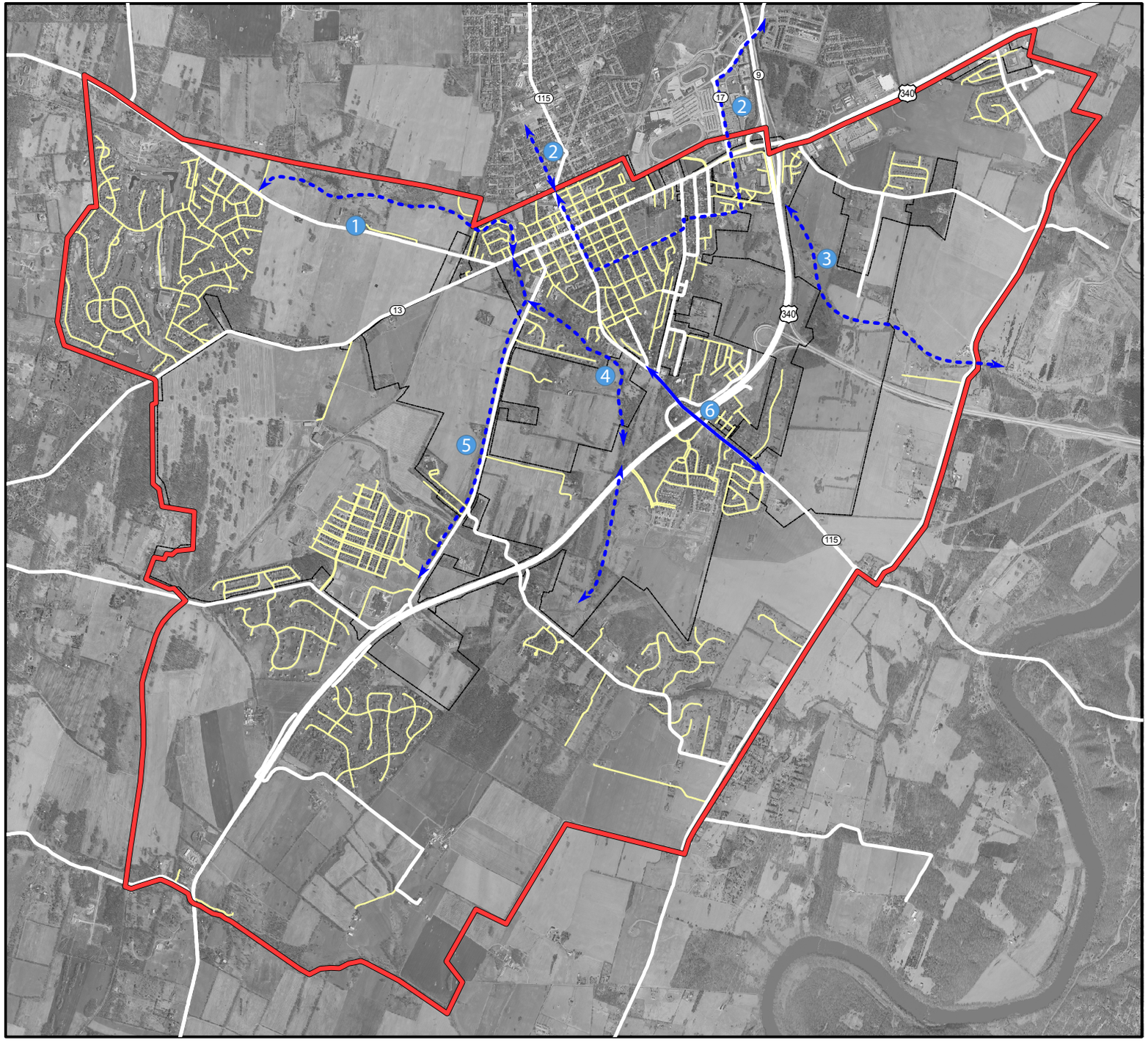
Master Park Plan

Task No.	Description	TASK TOTAL	Kimley-Horn								
			Labor Category	Project Manager	Architect/ Engineer I	Architect/ Engineer II	Architect/ Engineer III	Junior Architect/ Engineer I	Junior Architect/ Engineer II	Marketing/ Graphic Designer	Project Admin	KH LABOR Total
			Rate	$262.00	$212.00	$165.00	$144.00	$122.00	$109.00	$115.00	$96.00	
1	**Task 1 - Project Start Up**	$9,108		6	4	4	18	14	0	0	18	$9108
	Project Start Up	**$9,108**		**6**	**4**	**4**	**18**	**14**	**0**	**0**	**18**	**$9108**
1	Project Administration	**$5,082**		4	2	2	16	8				$5082
1.1	Project Kickoff Meeting	**$1,810**		2	2	2	2	2				$1810
	Meeting Notes and Action Items	**$488**						4				$488
	Invoicing, Accounting, and Finance	**$1,728**									18	$1,728
2	**Task 2 - Research and Inventory**	$17,192		22	4	12	10	48	0	8	4	$17,192
	Research and Inventory	**$17,192**		22	4	12	10	48	0	8	4	$17,192
2.1	Guiding Documents Data Review	**$2,058**		2		2	4	2			4	$2,058
2.2	Demographic Analysis	**$1,940**		2	2		2	2		4		$1,940
2.3	Parks and Facilities Evaluation and Inventory	**$7,450**		8		6		32		4		$7,450
2.4	Level of Service and Comparison Analysis	**$5,220**		8	2	4	4	12				$5,220
	QA/QC	**$524**		2								$524
3	**Task 3 - Public Involvement**	$22,822		18	8	18	50	48	0	0	4	$22,822
	Public Involvement	**$22,822**		18	8	18	50	48	0	0	4	$22,822
3.1	Virtual Stakeholder Interviews (6)	**$3,376**		4			6	12				$3,376
	Meeting notes and action items	**$864**					6					$864
3.2	Virtual focus groups (2)	**$3,088**		4			4	12				$3,088
	Meeting Notes and Action Items	**$576**					4					$576
3.3	Community Meeting	**$5,830**		4		6	6	24				$5,830
3.4	Statistically Valid Online Survey	**$2,038**		4		6						$2,038
3.5	Needs and Priorites Assesment	**$4,970**		2		6	24					$4,970
	QA/QC	**$2,080**			8						4	$2,080
4	**Preliminary Plan Development**	$30,722		28	14	28	52	48	0	18	4	$30,722
	Preliminary Plan Development	**$30,722**		**28**	**14**	**28**	**52**	**48**	**0**	**18**	**4**	**$30,722**
4.1	Virtual Vision and Implementation Workshop	**$5,544**		8		8	8	8				$5,544
	Meeting Notes and Action Items	**$532**					2	2				$532
4.2	Order of Magnitude Estimate of Probable Construction Cost	**$3,000**			6		12					$3,000
4.3	Strategic Plan	**$3,104**		4		4	8	2				$3,104
	Revisions based on City Comment	**$862**				2	2	2				$862
	Produce FINAL Strategic Plan	**$1,632**		2			6	2				$1,632
4.4	Draft Preliminary Plan Document	**$7,998**		8		8	8	8		18	4	$7,998
4.5	Public Open House	**$6,354**		6		6	6	24				$6,354
	QA/QC	**$1,696**			8							$1,696
5	**Task 5 - Final Concept Plan**	$28,470		20	10	34	54	30	0	32	4	$28,470
	Final Concept Plan	**$28,470**		**20**	**10**	**34**	**54**	**30**	**0**	**32**	**4**	**$28,470**
5.1	DRAFT Master Parks Plan Document	**$11,002**		8	2	12	24	8		18		$11,002
	Revisions based on City Comment	**$2,796**		2		4	8			4		$2,796
	FINAL Master Parks Plan Document	**$5,008**		2		8	12	8		4		$5,008
5.2	In Person presentations (2)	**$6,492**		8		8	8	12		4		$6,492
	Meeting Notes and Action Items	**$244**						2				$244
	Deliverable Package	**$1,232**				2	2			2	4	$1,232
	QA/QC	**$1,696**			8							$1,696
	Subtotal Labor	**$108,314**		94	40	96	184	188	0	58	34	$108,314
	Direct Expenses (mileage, printing, etc.)	$10,722										$-
	Estimated Expenses (Mileage, Tolls, travel expenses, Printed Documents, Public Meeting Materials, etc.)	**$10,722**										
	PROJECT TOTAL	$119,036										$108,314

Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Improvements



Proposed Transportation Improvement

- New Bicycle & Pedestrian Path
- Complete Streets Improvements

Additional Map Elements

- State Road
- Local Road
- Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- City Boundary

Improvement Description

1. Evitts Run Trail Connection to the West End as envisioned in the West End Master Plan
2. New connections to existing networks in Ranson and the Route 9 Bike Trail
3. Cattail Run Trail to expand recreational access to natural resources
4. Evitts Run Trail connecting Evitts Run Park and Willingham Knolls Park
5. Augustine Avenue multi-use path
6. Complete streets improvements on S. George Street from S. Samuel Street to Crosswinds Drive

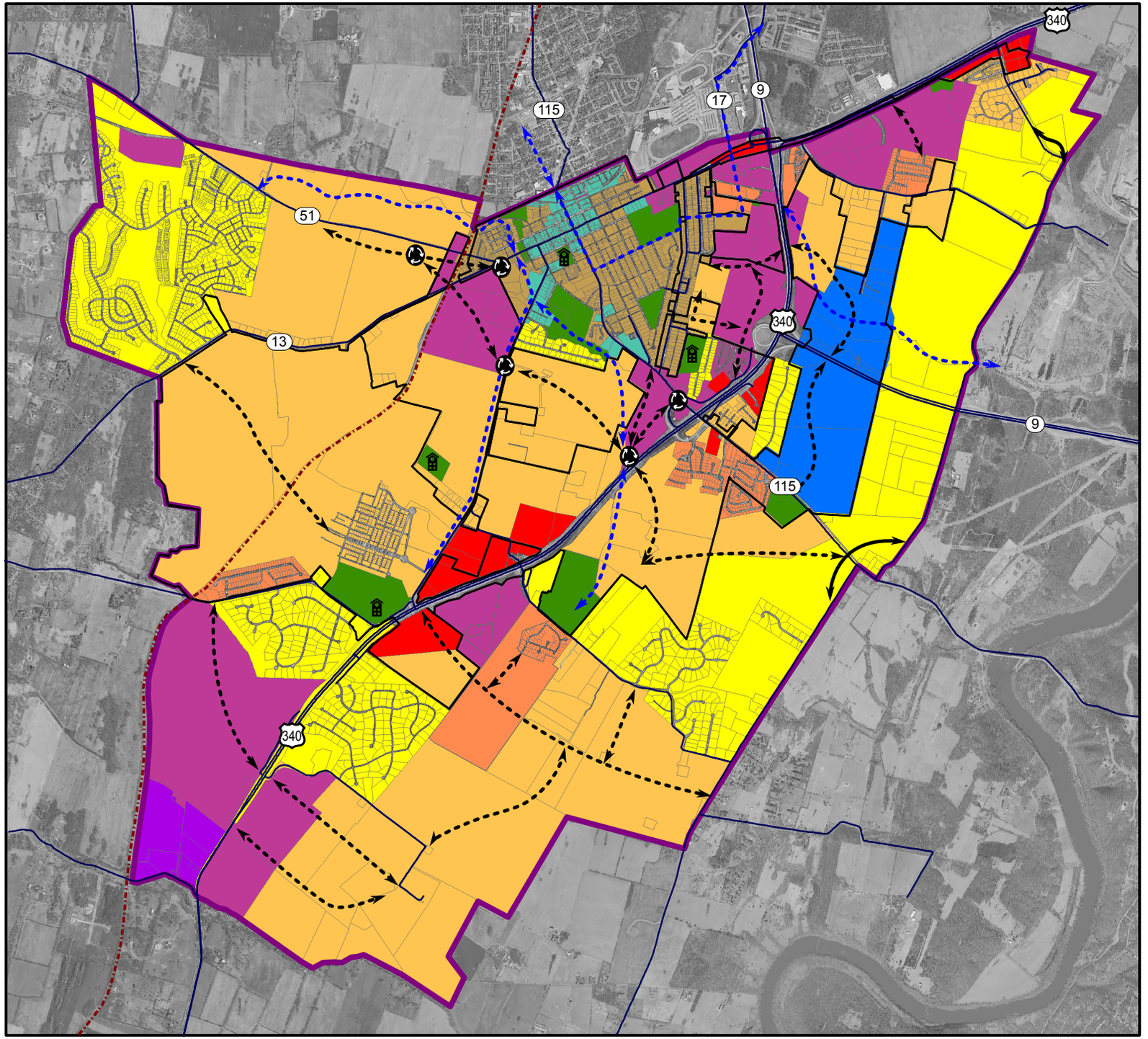
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

N

Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development 2/1/2018

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

UGB Future Land Use: 25-Year Growth Scenario



Future Land Use Classification

- Light Industrial
- General Commercial
- Mixed Use Commercial
- Old Town Mixed Use Commercial
- Mixed Use Residential
- Old Town Residential
- Residential Medium High Density
- Residential Low Density
- Professional Office & Institutional District
- Public / Quasi Public Land

Proposed Transportation Improvement

- New Road
- New Off-Road Trail
- Improvement to Existing Road
- New Roundabout

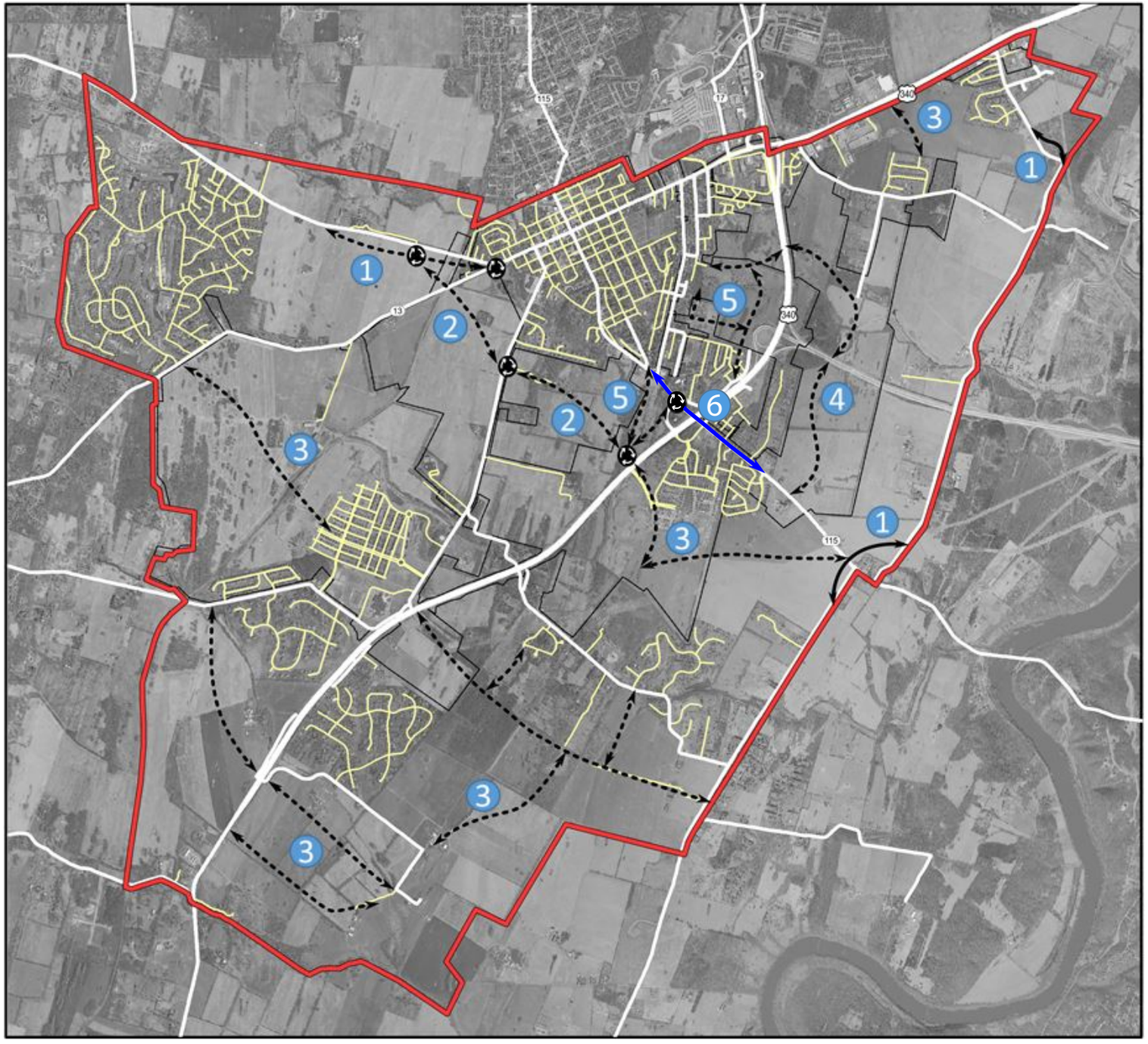
Additional Map Elements

- Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- City Boundary
- Public School

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development on 5/26/2017

Future Roadway Network Improvements



Proposed Transportation Improvement

- New Road
- Local Road
- Complete Streets Improvements

Additional Map Elements

- State Road
- Local Road
- Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- City Boundary
- New Roundabout

Improvement Description

1. Safety improvements to existing roadways
2. New boulevard to connect WV-51 to US-340 to alleviate commercial vehicle congestion in Old Town Charles Town
3. New roadway connections between existing neighborhood developments and regional arterials to expand the grid network
4. New boulevard through the proposed medical arts campus
5. Local roadway enhancements to complete the grid network
6. Complete streets improvements on S. George Street from S. Samuel Street to Crosswinds Drive

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

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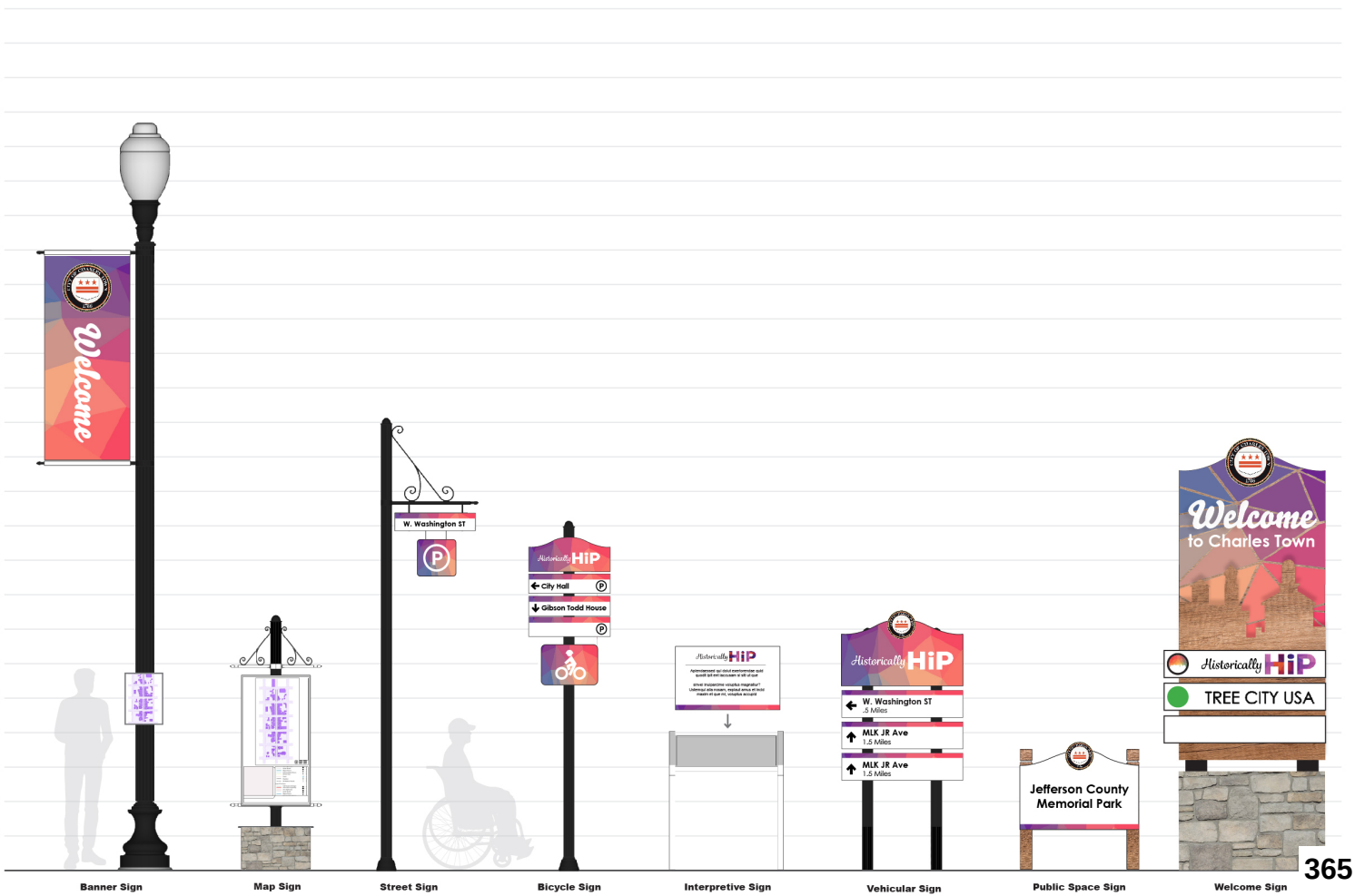
Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development 2/1/2018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Historically HiP
City Hall
Gibson Todd House
Historically HiP
W. Washington ST
.5 Miles
MLK JR Ave
1.5 Miles
MLK JR Ave
1.5 Miles
Jefferson County
Memorial Park
Welcome
to Charles Town
Historically HiP
TREE CITY USA
Banner Sign
Map Sign
Street Sign
Bicycle Sign
Interpretive Sign
Vehicular Sign
Public Space Sign
Welcome Sign

Gmail **Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com>**

Wayfinding Signs Documentation?

5 messages

Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com> Tue, Jun 16, 2026 at 8:00 AM
To: Alissa Meeks <ameeks@charlestownwv.us>, ecook@charlestownwv.us

Good morning ladies,

Happy Tuesday! First of all, thank you both for all your hard work to pull off another fantastic WV fest. Well done!

Question for you. Do we have some finalized documentation regarding Charles Town's new wayfinding sign design / strategy? If so, could I have a copy of the latest?

Parks & Rec is hoping to start preliminary discussions about parks master planning in July and leading up to that, I'm trying to source as much relevant documentation as possible. Doing my best to ensure we start our conversation off within the context of greater Charles Town planning. =)

Thanks in advance.
Cheers,
Kevin Derr
Vice President, Charles Town Board of Parks & Recreation
304-885-9966

Elizabeth Cook <ECook@charlestownwv.us> Tue, Jun 16, 2026 at 1:56 PM
To: Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com>, Alissa Meeks <AMeeks@charlestownwv.us>

Hi Kevin,

Thanks for reaching out! I have attached the wayfinding design that has been approved for implementation. Now, some things will change a bit due to regulations at the state level, which has been part of the hold up for implantation. (Though we are under construction now!)

Regarding signage for the parks, the larger parks signs will be in phase 2/3. We do have plans for all parks to have entry signage.

If you need smaller signs for the parks (maybe mile markers, or other informative signs), I am able to design those, and Vital Signs can make them. I would ask that we keep everything consistent with the mosaic themed color scheme. If you look at the Hip Sips Signs, the mural dedication sign, and our Welcome banners you will get an idea of the direction we are going as far as branding.

Happy to discuss further!

Liz

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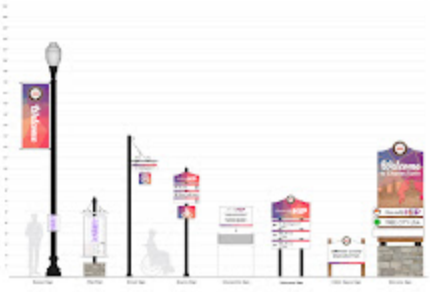
Beware - This email comes from outside the City of Charles Town.



Wayfinding FinalAugust 31 2023 Charles Town Mockup-01.jpg
694K

Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com> Tue, Jun 16, 2026 at 4:46 PM
To: Elizabeth Cook <ECook@charlestownwv.us>
Cc: Alissa Meeks <AMeeks@charlestownwv.us>

Thanks Liz! This is exactly what I was looking for. Is there a specific implementation plan with rough dates or anything? I'd love to have that info for the Parks & Rec board to reference as well. And I agree with you. I think it would be best if we kept a consistent branding look across all the city spaces. =)

Cheers,
-Kevin
[Quoted text hidden]

Elizabeth Cook <ECook@charlestownwv.us> Tue, Jun 16, 2026 at 4:56 PM
To: Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com>
Cc: Alissa Meeks <AMeeks@charlestownwv.us>

I wish I could give you an estimate. Production takes around 12 weeks or so for signs. We are only in phase one, and under construction as we speak. Ideally I would like to have these signs in production by next fall, but, that is just my personal hope. Alissa is out, but she may have more to add as far as timeline.

I am sorry I cannot give a more definitive answer.

[Quoted text hidden]

Kevin Derr <kevinaderr@gmail.com> Tue, Jun 16, 2026 at 4:57 PM
To: Elizabeth Cook <ECook@charlestownwv.us>

No worries. Thanks for the extra info!

Cheers,
-Kevin
[Quoted text hidden]



CHARLES TOWN WEST END MASTER PLAN
AND BROWNFIELDS REUSE STRATEGY

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN
CHARLES TOWN, WV
APRIL 2015

DRAFT
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A project of this scope and magnitude could not be realized without the engagement, support, and commitment of many individuals. It is also important to acknowledge the vision and leadership of those that assisted in the preparation of this plan. The participants that played a role in the project, including government, institutional and community leaders, are too numerous to list; however, primary project stakeholders included:

- **City of Charles Town staff, boards and committees;**
- **Leadership of the City of Charles Town Mayor, Manager, and Council for working with the project team and offering their insight and perspectives; and**
- **Residents and business community leaders in Charles Town and the region for cooperating with these endeavors, and their willingness to share information on the study.**

This project was funded in part by a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Prime/Environmental Consultant

Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC

3159 Coco Road

Elkview, WV 25071

Master Planning/Landscape Architecture

Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates, Inc.

102 E. Main Street - The Penn Building

Suite 300

Somerset, PA 15501

Funding Specialists

Sustainable Strategies DC

500 New Jersey Avenue, NW, 6th Floor

Washington, DC 20001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
Vision & Themes	1.1
Plan Approach & Framework	2.1
Redevelopment Master Plan	3.1
Cost Analysis	4.1
Appendix A - Ballpark Site Feasibility Analysis	A.1
Appendix B - Site Analysis Mapping	B.1
Appendix C - Roundabout Case Studies	C.1
Appendix D - Happy Retreat Community Forestry Plan	D.1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The History - Why Prepare this Plan?

This planning effort was initiated primarily to address viable reuse options for several of the city's key brownfield properties located within the West End neighborhood, specifically the former Dixie-Narco/ Maytag complex, the city's public works yard and the former Supertane property. In order to determine the best reuse strategies for these properties an effort which looked at a larger context was required,. It need to consider the needs of the entire West End neighborhood as well as the specific opportunities for the Evitts Run corridor, which includes each of the above mentioned brownfields properties.

What is a Neighborhood Master Plan and Brownfields Redevelopment Strategy?

The master plan is focused on a defined area that includes the city's West End neighborhood as well as portions of the downtown and some of the surrounding context on both the east and south sides of the West End. The project boundary was defined based on the prevalence on known or perceived brownfield properties and the reach of Evitts Run.

In order to promote reuses that are context sensitive and do not conflict with the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods, the city took the lead on undertaking the preparation of this master plan for the West End and surrounding areas, partly through an effort funded by the United States Environmental Protection (EPA) focused on addressing environmental aspects of the three key brownfield sites.

The plan integrates land use, transportation, and economic development elements to create a comprehensive master plan and brownfields reuse strategy. The master plan considers site specific redevelopment and neighborhood improvements, including broader infrastructure needs required to attract and support private investment.

What are the Plan's Limitations?

The recommendations in this document are purely for guidance in decision-making; the plan is not the letter of the law. The decision-makers include multiple parties and therefore the plan should serve as common reference for all parties, as step-by-step decisions are made.

The reuse plans developed for the key brownfields site and surrounding targeted improvement areas within the overall project area illustrate one potential build-out scenario for the public and private properties based on priorities expressed by the community and city leaders. The proposed physical layouts depicted on the plans were developed in conjunction with input from multiple parties and represent the feedback provided. Ultimately though, the final configurations of the reuse plans will change as the level and detail of design progresses. So why is this effort important? By developing a likely reuse scenario for each of the key brownfield sites and surrounding areas it allows the city and other public agencies to fully understand the real physical and economic constraints and opportunities of each property and their relationships with surrounding neighborhoods.

The master plan is not a plan that can necessarily lead directly to bricks and mortar building. Although it does focus on key next steps, especially for the former Supertane property, it is a plan that organizes an overall strategy with priorities to establish a focused next steps game-plan to advance individual elements and recommendation, especially for public infrastructure. It also provides context within which decision-making can occur over time, including for opportunities or issues that might arise that could not be anticipated at the time this plan was developed. The plan also outlines the strategic next steps for the key priority projects which may include performing the detailed design and engineering required to fully fund, permit and construct physical improvements.

In addition to short-term and more immediately implementable recommendations, a master plan of such magnitude will inevitably also result in a series of recommendations that require further evaluation. In the vast majority of cases, the next steps require determining specific details through a design and engineering process, together with a process to secure financing and other resources for implementation. These steps will determine how a project should be realized, its functional refinements, and the exact specifications needed to advance towards construction.

What are the most significant aspects of the plan?

Due to the complex nature of all of the inter-related factors and considerations needed to develop an economically viable and physically construct-able list of improvements, an extensive analysis of varied topics was required. The outcome of this comprehensive analysis led to a specific list of high priority actions which creates a roadmap for what needs to happen first. This includes determining who is needed to lead each effort and a potential strategy for how to undertake each action.

The planning process identifies and then further defines the following issues as they relate to the future end uses to be developed in the targeted reuse areas:

1. Address Brownfields through the Creation of Parks and Greenway

The master plan provides specific recommendations for the reuse of key brownfields properties including:

Former Supertane Property: The master plan shows how public park and infrastructure uses as well as vegetation restoration can be integrated into the environmental engineering control for this site. The base work for this effort is funded, yet the city will need additional resources to achieve the full reuse vision for the site.

Former Dixie-Narco/Maytag Property: For several years the city has been exploring options for how to reuse this former parking lot property as a real public park amenity, including having it designated as one of the key properties in the U.S. EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Plan for the cities of Charles Town and Ranson. This master plan advances initial concepts developed previously into a specific reuse layout that includes recreational uses that are appropriate for the site as well as complement an overall Evitts Run Greenway strategy that creates a series of inter-connected parks, recreational facilities, trails, and public spaces along the entire portion of Evitts Run in the West End neighborhood.

Supertane Site Park Reuse Plan - Perspective View with Engineering Controls





Dixie-Narco/Public Works Yard Park Development Plan - Perspective View

2. Make Key Infrastructure Improvements

Complete Street Improvements: The master plan provides a long list of potentially desirable transportation improvements with an emphasis of creating "complete streets." This means that public streets should be constructed with a full complement of infrastructure to serve multiple modes, including vehicular, bicyclists and pedestrians. As part of achieving a highly walkable community, investment in completing and improving sidewalks throughout the study area should be paramount and should include an investment in creating desirable and attractive streetscapes which include safe crosswalks, lighting, street trees and other pedestrian and bicyclist amenities. Of all of the recommended transportation improvements, the proposed projects along WV Route 51/W. Washington Street, Augustine Avenue, and Martin Luther King Boulevard should be considered as the highest priority.

Integrated Stormwater Management Strategies Starting with the Public Works Yard: Through the U.S. EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Plan and additional funding and technical support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a focused effort was made towards creating a large stormwater management pond and Evitts Run streambank restoration on the public works yard property. Preliminary design for this project has been completed. Additional funding is needed to complete final engineering, permitting and construction should be pursued.

As part of transportation improvement efforts, including new streets and existing street upgrades, the design of streets should include integrated stormwater management and run-off pre-treatment facilities to remove contaminants. Achieving stormwater management compliance should be done as seamlessly as possible with the design of streetscapes. For example, "rain gardens" and other features should be integrated into the overall design of streets and other open spaces, rather than be "added on" frills that do not fully function with the intent and needs of an overall, project, site, or facility. Redevelopment sites especially, provide the opportunity to implement designs which include a holistic approach to stormwater management rather than a series of solutions that only address site specific concerns and less than ideal retro-fit features. Stormwater management should employ a "big picture" approach to insure maximum effectiveness and to achieve a greater sense of public amenity as well as aesthetic improvements through landscape and green techniques.

3. Promote Economic Development

Institute a Housing Strategy for Both Rehabilitation and New Infill: Although the master plan makes no specific physical housing improvement project recommendations, it provides a series of policy and program recommendations to support the rehabilitation of existing housing stock and the promotion of new infill housing. The character of the neighborhood is very much related to the type, scale, orientation and mix of housing types. Signs of well maintained housing exist throughout the West End, yet there are numerous older structures that need repair and improvements. The city should promote the rehabilitation of existing structures over demolition as much as possible, including through programs that attract homeowners to properties to undertake rehabilitation. In addition, there are numerous vacant parcels located throughout the West End neighborhood that could support new infill housing units. Similar incentive programs which promote owner occupancy and the creation of structures which are context sensitive and complimentary to the historic character of the neighborhood and the city as a whole should be promoted.

Promote Improvements at the Hilldale Shopping Center: The Save-a-Lot food store is one of the most prized businesses in the West End neighborhood and the entire downtown. Overwhelming support exists to maintain this business and a retail anchor in the area. The Hilldale Shopping Center as a whole, however, is under performing with significant vacancies. The master plan proposes some infrastructure improvements including a new street that would connect the park along Evitts Run, through the center and create a true intersection at the entrance to the shopping center. Creating an urban streetscape along Augustine Avenue and on the proposed street through the core of the center would allow the Save--a-lot to remain and for a retrofit of the center into a more urban format retail complex. This approach would allow for several new small retail pad buildings to be located along the Augustine Avenue frontage. A proposed restaurant site is also proposed at the southern end of the center which provides an opportunity to create an outdoor dining deck with vistas and overlooks of the Evitts Run corridor.

Capitalize on the Wealth of History and Historic Resources: African-American history is very notable in Charles Town, highlighted by the restored Fisherman Hall, the Tollgate House, and the Star Lodge #1 F&AM to name a few. The history of the West End neighborhood is also important in the context of significant regional history. Methods to preserve and interpret this history as part of the overall historical story of Charles Town and the region should be pursued, both in terms of education and economic development. The formation of a special historic district (locally or as a national landmark designation) should be explored especially along Augustine Avenue, West Street, W. Washington Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The historical aspects of the area could be used as inspiration for unique streetscaping, banners, gateway treatments and interpretative signing and support a broader goal of attracting private investment and improving the quality-of-life for residents.

Happy Retreat is the home of Charles Washington, younger brother of George Washington and founder of the City of Charles Town and therefore represents significant direct historical importance to the city. The story of the property can be linked to the broader historical story of Charles Town and its importance to local, regional and national history. Happy Retreat was built on land Charles inherited from his older half-brother, Lawrence Washington. In 1780 Charles and his wife Mildred moved from Fredericksburg to Happy Retreat where he had built the two wings separated by a breezeway. Two additional buildings on the property of historical significance include a stone kitchen and smokehouse which predates the residence and an octagonal wooden powder house, similar to one at Mount Vernon, that was later used as a school house. Working with a non-profit group, Friends of Happy Retreat, the city has an agreement with the current owners to acquire the property. The outcome of the partnership would yield 10-acres of protected open space for the city and the house and two-acres would be owned by the non-profit for historic preservation, interpretation, and events.

The location of Happy Retreat along the Evitts Run corridor provides an excellent opportunity for the greenway to have a major anchor on the southern end, within city limits. The graves of Charles and his wife Mildred have been located on the south side of Evitts Run which flows along the back boundary of the Happy Retreat property which further ties together the historical significance of the site to the area as well as to the linear greenway/park. The city should continue its efforts to complete the purchase of the property and once acquired proceed with connecting the site to the greenway, via a multi-use trail connection. In addition, the conservation and restoration of 10 acres of naturalized woodlands at Happy Reteat presents an opportunity to improve the environmental quality of the Evitts Run watershed, mantian wildlife habtiat, promote environmental education, and enhance the historical context of the house and grounds. Appendix D of this document attaches a Community Forestry Plan for the Happy Retreat Forest that was developed through a robust stakeholder and public input process over the past year.

Determine the Full Feasibility of Creating a Minor League Ballpark Close to Downtown: A very preliminary feasibility study of various sites was performed as part of this master planning effort. A summary preliminary findings for each of the potential sites is presented in Appendix A of this document. Some sites, such as the former Dixie-Narco/Maytag site were determined to be less feasible due to fundamental physical constraints, such as parcel shape and size. Although the master plan illustrates the most viable physical option located south of Evitts Run on Augustine Avenue, this is based solely on physical considerations and not economic feasibility. The recommended next step from this effort is the evaluation of the sites considered most viable, in much more detail as part of Comprehensive Ballpark Economic and Site Feasibility Study that takes into account broader cost/benefits including determining the ideal size of the facility to meet community needs as well as opportunities for multi-uses to be integrated into the complex.

What to do next? - How to Advance the Master Plan

As stated by several participants at March 2015 community workshop, "This plan is a bit overwhelming and lot to digest!" The way to achieve real results and successful outcomes relies on the prioritization of projects and the strategic allocation of resources, and then attacking each piece of the puzzle in a systematic and well thought-out manner.

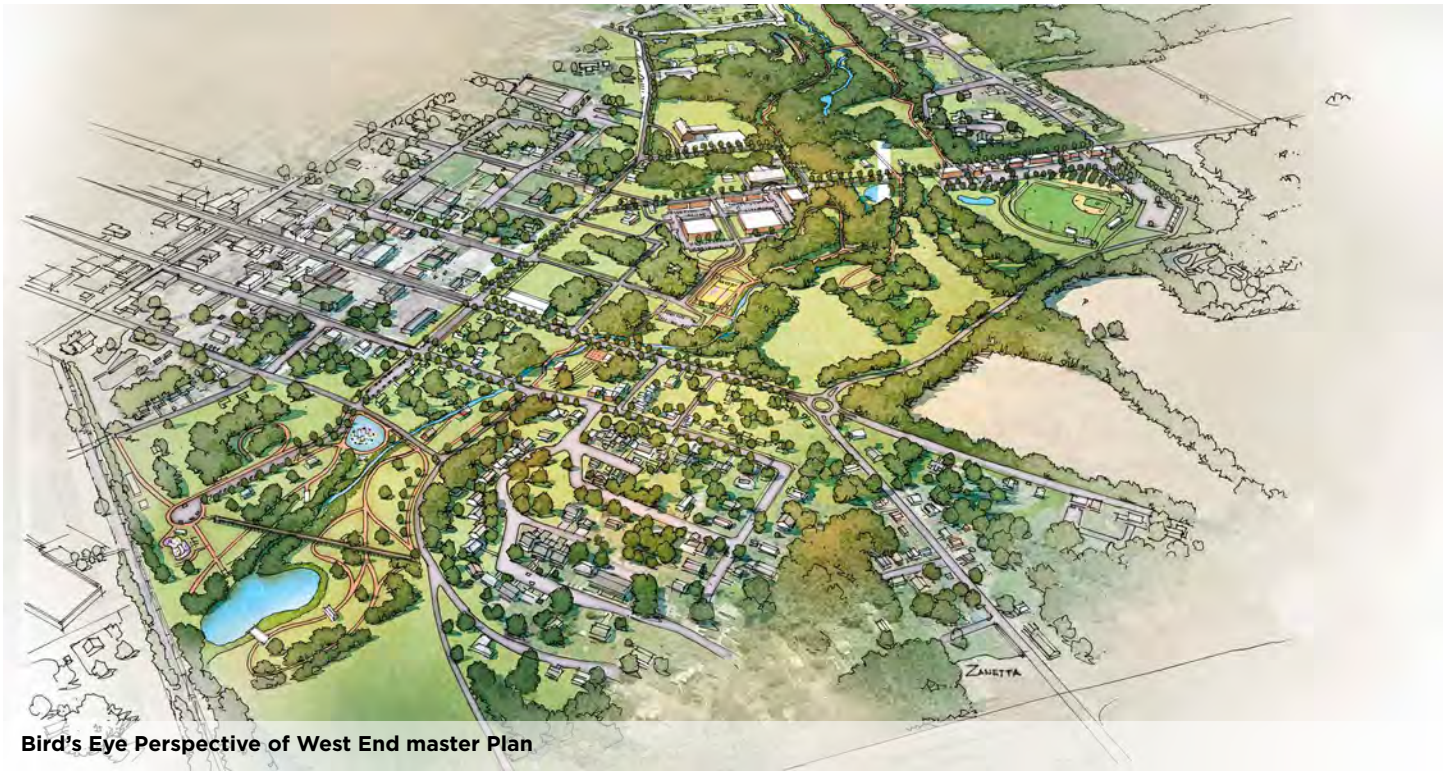
For the West End Master Plan and Brownfields Reuse Strategy, the priority actions can be grouped into these distinct categories:

Policies and Procedures – These activities, such ordinances modifications, housing code review and design guidelines, infrastructure upgrade policies and plan development, review and coordination with developers can primarily be undertaken as a part of the normal procedures of the city and require relatively limited special financial resources and technical

support to accomplish. These activities are important because they ensure that as each incremental action is taken they are consistent with the plan and, at the very minimum, ensure that no action precludes the ability to implement the priority recommendations.

Economic Development Partnership Building and Actions – These actions require a combination of staff time from the city and partnering state and federal agencies to leverage the required resources needed to obtain funding to advance major infrastructure investments as well as promoting a development conducive environment to support private investment and to overcome current market hurdles. Funding resources to support the remediation of sites and the rehabilitation, restoration of existing structures and the construction of new buildings will be required. Funding sources which support the rehabilitation of existing housing stock and construction of new infill housing will also be needed to provide potential seed capital and low-interest financing to further incubate private neighborhood investment.

Major Capital Projects – These include the capital intensive activities required to design, engineer, permit and construct major physical improvements including transportation, stormwater and utility infrastructure and parks/public spaces.



Bird's Eye Perspective of West End master Plan

A Strategy for Obtaining Resources for Charles Town's West End Projects

Form a "Resources Team": The city should form an informal "Resources Team" that convenes a small group of key persons to guide and oversee the process of establishing community priorities and advocating for resources.

Confirm Priority Projects: The City and its Resources Team should identify the community projects and initiatives from this master plan that are the city's highest priorities, best prepared for seeking resources, and most fundable.

Identify the Right Funding Opportunities: Sustainable Strategies DC will provide a seperate "Resource Roadmap" report with recommendations on the best options for funding the city's priority community revitalization projects including those identified in this West End Master Plan. The cost of projects, the costs of its components, and the cost of the next immediate phases will drive the city's consideration of which sources of funding will be most important to pursue at any particular point.

Organize Stakeholder Support: Having community, business, non-profit, political, regional, and citizen support for your key projects will not only provide momentum on those projects and make them stronger, this stakeholder support is critical to winning federal and state resources.

Coordinate with State and Federal Agency Officials: For the city's highest priority projects, it is very important for Charles Town to maintain and cultivate relationships with state and federal agencies, at both the management and program levels and in both Washington, DC and in regional offices. All federal funding is routed through federal agencies (although congressional influence on those agencies is still critical) so coordinating with them early provides the best opportunity to build support for the city's projects.

Charles Town Revitalization Roundtable: One effective approach to build support and partnerships is to organize a forum in the community that will bring top federal and state leaders, congressional officials and the community together to boost coordination on your projects and resources for their implementation. A "Revitalization Roundtable" can involve community presentations, site tours, and discussion sessions with funders about the best approaches, and coordination on next steps for action on the city's projects. With all of the work the city has done in this area in the last few years, there are many existing relationships to build upon to undertake the recommendations in this master plan.

Pursue Grant Funding Following the Prepared Strategy: When the time to draft and submit a grant application arrives, Charles Town will be ready and competitive by following the steps outline above.

Seek Non-Funding Agency Support Too: Non-funding support from state and federal officials, which could include requests for consideration on regulatory issues, legislative issues, program funding levels, grant implementation challenges, coordination with key partners, and other strategic implementation issues, is also important.

Celebrate Success! It has been said that "nothing succeeds like success," and that is certainly true when it comes to obtaining funding. The community should always be looking for opportunities to celebrate success, thank your agency and political supporters, hold groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings, cultivate media coverage, send newsletters, and spread the word in other ways.

1

VISION AND THEMES



Planning Process, Public Engagement, and Project Themes

At the commencement of the project, city leaders and stakeholders agreed that this project must be focused on developing a realistic action plan for the West End. With U.S. EPA brownfields funding for targeted brownfields properties along the Evitts Run corridor along with public/private partnership investments or other grants, the city has an opportunity to make significant positive changes in the West End neighborhood. Like many communities, the city is recovering from significant changes in the city's core over the last few decades as a result of the closing or downsizing of several industrial sites such as the Dixie-Narco/Maytag complex and the overall economic slowdown. It was clear that any plan focused on the redevelopment and revitalization of the city's West End neighborhood must be far-looking, yet firmly based in the realities of today. The West End Master Plan lays out a plan in a phased approach that incorporates the city's vision, and complements the diverse, vibrant and historical setting, while addressing fundamental issues of available resources to achieve real results.

Developing a successful urban revitalization and brownfields redevelopment plan requires an understanding of physical characteristics, market factors, and buy-in from the community, including residents, business owners and property owners. From the outset, public involvement has been a key factor in forming the basis of the recommendations provided in of the plan, and based upon the magnitude of reinvestment and transformation that may occur, city officials wanted to ensure that "tangible" outcomes were based on broad community desires for the West End neighborhood, downtown, and redevelopment of targeted brownfield parcels.

The planning process employed a strategy of inclusiveness, transparency, education, careful design, and commitment to identifying real and implementable actions. Over the course of the planning process initiated in November 2014, public, private, and civic leaders were brought together to provide a vision and prioritize the numerous elements needed to achieve the vision. The over-arching intent was to create a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the West End neighborhood focused on the Evitts Run Corridor and the redevelopment of several brownfield sites. Taking an approach that is complementary to the overall economy of the city, redevelopment strategies are fully interconnected with the surrounding context so that redevelopment sites are mutually beneficial rather than competing. The visioning process utilized several keys steps to gather input, explore opportunities, and solidify recommendations to achieve these results.

A two-day community visioning workshop was held on November 11th and 12th, 2014. This intense, time compressed series of work sessions with community and key stakeholder engagement provided the opportunity to engage on multiple topics and quickly shape the parameters of a desired redevelopment strategy. Sessions also informed the public about remedial actions proposed for the sites. The effort started with a publicly advertised field walk of the West End neighborhood with elected officials, city staff, the project team, and the public. This was followed by a series of sessions focused on specific topics, such as parks, economic development, environmental concerns, historic/cultural resources, etc., while other sessions were intended to gather and provide general information.

The intent of the two-day workshop was to gather interested stakeholders together to efficiently inform the planning process and lead to expedited and well-informed decisions. The intense planning process allowed for real-time "ground-proofing" of ideas, forming consensus and building on the momentum and enthusiasm for the project. In this case, the intense interaction also fostered a creative design environment of discovery for city staff, planners, and community participants.

The community visioning process included two highly-interactive community engagement workshops. The first was held on November 12th and the second was held on December 3rd, 2014. At each workshop community participants were asked to break-out into workgroups. Each workgroup was given a series of five visioning questions along with a series of color-coded dots and maps of the study area to record their responses. Both events were very well attended and the planning team obtained valuable insight related to the issues, opportunities, and desires of the community regarding future improvement considerations for the study area and the city as a whole.

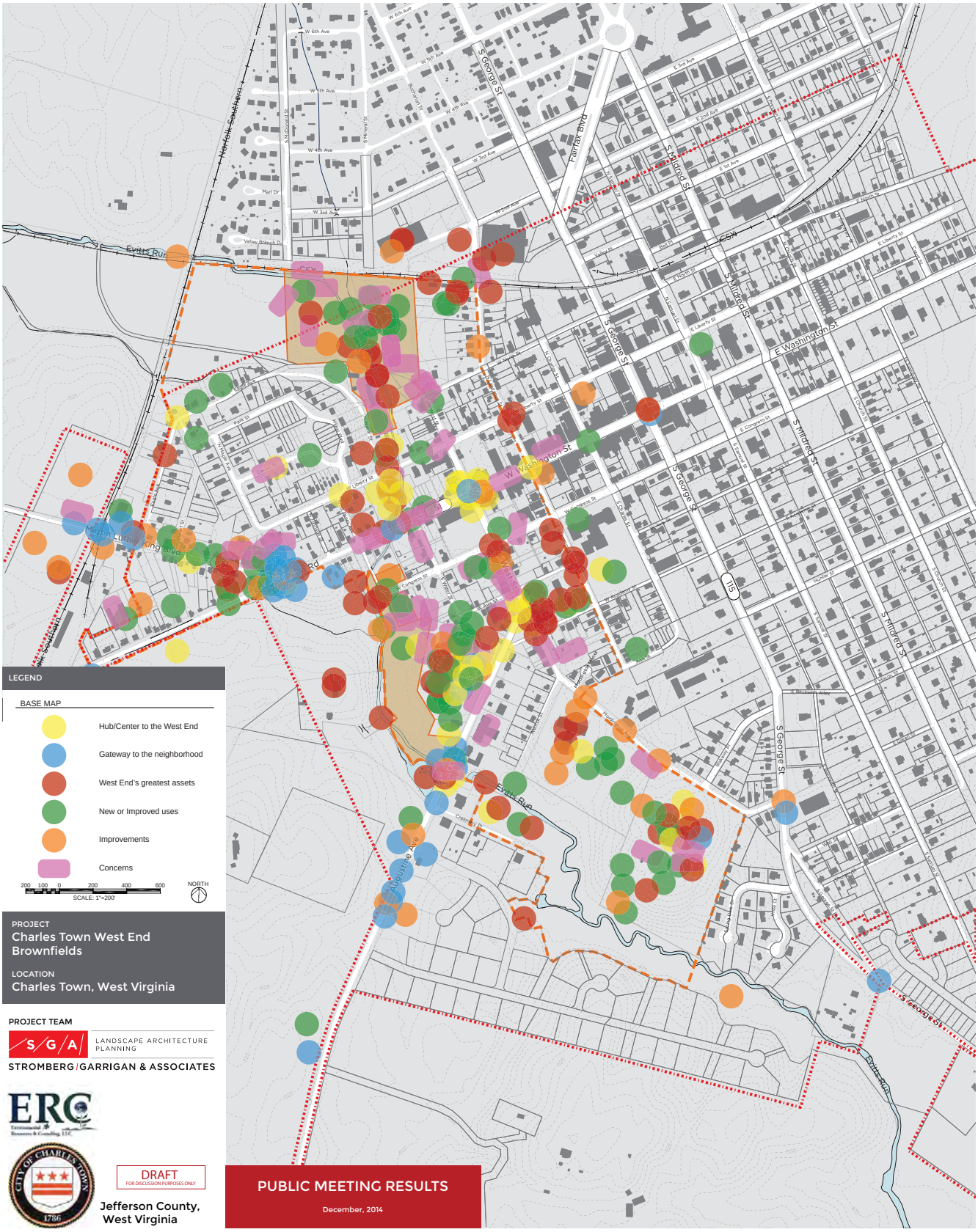
A public presentation of the draft plan recommendations and question and answer session was held at Fisherman Hall on March 23rd, 2015.





The community participated in various activities that defined issues and opportunities, shaping the redevelopment recommendations.





Example mapping results from public workshop activities

Project Themes

Utilizing the feedback received through the various community engagement activities, the following key project themes were identified. These themes were used to guide decision-making and to shape the plan's recommendations.

- **Build upon recent successes to move to the next level of economic vibrancy –** The city has made great strides in the past few years on improving the overall functionality and aesthetic value of the downtown. Now is the time to build upon those investments to support public-private partnerships and leverage significant investments in property improvement and redevelopment activities in the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown, especially in the West End neighborhood.
- **Evitts Run is an "untapped asset" –** With the completion of the first phase of Evitts Run Park, the community will see the benefit in creating a community greenway of parks and public amenities laid out in a phased approach.
- **The targeted brownfields sites play a key role in promoting community revitalization –** The brownfield parcels along the Evitts Run corridor are strategically located to serve as major drivers to support larger community revitalization, if their reuse is well thought-out and connected to their context.
- **"Connectivity" across a variety of community elements is essential –** Connectivity as a theme applies to a broad set of actions, from the need to provide a setting which allows for a high-level of multi-modal transportation choices, to opportunities to "layer" multiple functions on a single site. Examples of this strategy might include a parking area that also serves as an environmental remediation "cap" or a park area that also provides flood management storage.
- **History is an important community and economic asset –** Historical significance in Charles Town is not an abstract notion. It is a real and tangible element that can be engaged through a variety of means to further enhance the uniqueness of Charles Town and its sense of place. It can also serve as one component of a larger robust economic development strategy for the entire town, including the West End neighborhood, the downtown, and as an anchor for the region's major visitor attractions.
- **The plan will guide the determination of economic next steps for the West End neighborhood and downtown –** The plan defines specific uses and supporting parameters that fit within the desire to create a unique and vibrant downtown, yet all recommendations are complementary with the broader economic realities of the city and region.

2

PLAN APPROACH & FRAMEWORK

Placemaking and Brownfields Redevelopment as an Overall Approach to Neighborhood Revitalization

The proposed revitalization and redevelopment strategy follows broad "placemaking" principals and recommends a potential build-out based on physical assessment of the study area, context, and the overall intent to create high quality-of-life neighborhoods surrounding a vibrant mixed-use downtown. This strategy supports the goal of transforming the city into a regional commercial, cultural and social activity hub.

The West End Master Plan's fundamental approach prioritizes the creation of "places" over parcel-by-parcel "developments." The foundation of this idea is the desired outcome that both public and private activities should result in the creation of highly desirable places that mesh seamlessly with the surrounding context as they are expanded. This includes connecting to existing residential neighborhoods and the city's long-established downtown. The creation of successful places is a function of a thoughtfully considered mix of uses, location, design and supporting infrastructure systems; working together to form economically vibrant and sustainable building blocks of an overall town. As the city grows, new development should feel like an expansion of the historic, well-established and highly functional pattern of the city versus an old town ringed by suburban development with little physical, functional or social connection to the core.

Great places are not easily formed. They are not created by policy alone, but rely on strong partnerships between many public-sector partners, at all levels of government, combined with private land owners and the development and business communities. The reuse and redevelopment strategies presented for the targeted brownfield properties consider all aspects of the placemaking equation; however, they focus especially on those aspects that can be readily defined and shaped by the public sector. These components of the framework can serve as the skeleton upon which each private sector action can connect. In some cases, the division between public and private sector activities are well defined. However, in many cases they are a function of inter-related aspects which, when combined, add up to a result that is greater than the sum of the individual pieces. This process serves the objective of forming truly great places that elevate Charles Town's reputation as an attractive and desirable community to live, work, and play.

Several key planning and design principles provided the framework for decision-making and were informed by the principles outlined below. As decision-makers face questions that are not answered through this planning process, keeping these key principles in mind can keep Charles Town moving on track toward the community's vision for its West End, its downtown, and future expansion beyond its current limits.

Local character builds regional economies – Unique assets and local character make a place distinctive. Keeping investments circulating at home and attracting new resources grows the economy and firmly reinforces the city's role as a regional economic hub. In the case of Charles Town, Evitts Run is a local and regional asset, so building upon and enhancing this valuable resource is fundamental to a viable revitalization approach.

Strong core communities make strong foundations – While the plan outlines choices for living, working, shopping, and playing in a variety of contexts, it also recognizes that downtown and its adjacent West End residential neighborhoods comprise the community's vital center. Economic and civic life thrive where a critical mass of citizens can comfortably walk to a variety of destinations. Infrastructure investment brings the highest returns where the design encourages compactness. Policies should encourage safe, attractive, and accessible neighborhoods and downtown living and investment whenever possible.

A place for everything & everything in its place – There are time-tested models for appropriate development approaches in a range of environments, from the most rural lands, through suburban neighborhoods, to the center of a town. Planning strategies should acknowledge those separate environments and maximize choices compatible with the broader goals of connectivity and sustainability. In Charles Town, uses for which there may be a market demand may not be appropriate in physical form to establish an overall urban environment. Such uses should be discouraged to protect and enhance the overall character of the redevelopment, building on an urban form as a way of making Charles Town's West End and downtown a distinct setting. Doing so will diversify the development options within the city and attract development that would not otherwise locate in Charles Town.

Affordable living includes housing, transportation, energy, recreation, and shopping – True community affordability depends upon leveraging value across the full array of housing, transportation, energy, recreation, and retail/commercial sectors. Infrastructure investments and development policies should employ strategies that balance affordable options for a variety of family sizes, incomes and life cycle stages.

Green infrastructure supports sustainable communities – Natural systems deliver hard-to-measure but crucial services for neighborhoods, the economy and the broader environment. Canopy trees provide stormwater management, shade, and natural habitat. Well-designed stormwater/flood management networks retain concentrated rainwater during storm events, provide valuable open spaces and maximum local replenishment of aquifers. Infrastructure investments and development policies should protect, reinforce and build on natural systems and utilize the most sustainable practices at all scales of implementation.

Neighborhoods are the building blocks – Walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of communities - Residents and visitors should be able to walk to their daily destinations in safe, appealing environments. The master plan should only recommend improvements which further enhance the West End neighborhood's accessible, walkable and connected neighborhood character.

Private buildings and public infrastructure work together to shape public space and to build community character – People walk more when the walk is safe, comfortable and interesting. Small blocks create a resilient and interconnected street system. Private buildings shape the look, feel, and function of public space through the way they relate to streets, sidewalks, parks, and other buildings. High-quality parks and public spaces create the social centers of neighbors and provide venues for community gathering, enhancing the sense of community identity and potential economic drivers.

Working together creates bigger opportunities – The neighborhoods in the West End are connected economically, environmentally, and historically with the larger community. They form the core of the broader Jefferson County area and offer models for desirable, sustainable development. With coordinated planning, linked transportation, shared services and economic development, the city can further enhance its role in the region and bolster the economic vibrancy of the downtown and the West End neighborhood.

These plans were developed through input received from the public along with involvement from community and civil leaders. The exercise of developing a potential layout of future buildings, public spaces, and support facilities for the nearer term redevelopment areas is valuable because it aids in determining which aspects of the overall plan, such as proposed street alignments, stormwater/flood management areas and public space locations are most advantageous for both the broader context of the downtown and site specific redevelopment.

Master Plan Framework

The following is an overview of all of the major plan elements which serves as the framework of the West End Master Plan. A detailed description of how each element is achieved in the plan is provided in Chapter 3.

Economic and Community Development

There is a desire to promote a mix of development types, including commercial/retail, housing, and civic uses to improve the overall vibrancy of the West End neighborhood as well as to expand the economic opportunities within the city.

New mixed-use redevelopment should be promoted along Augustine Avenue especially at the Hilldale Shopping Center. The location of context-sensitive mixed-use development which complements the overall character and building form of the city is desirable. With the introduction of new development, cherished existing anchors, such as the Save-a-Lot should be enticed to stay, improve and ideally expand.

Happy Retreat can serve as another cultural, civic and economic anchor in the community. The presence of such a significant historic site in the city is an asset. The city's efforts to lead a strategy to make this facility a cultural, economic and social hub fits well with the overall intent of the plan. The plan provides a pedestrian connection between the facility and the overall Evitts Run Greenway, making it another key destination along the corridor.

Ways to improve existing housing and the promotion of contextual new infill housing should be promoted. Opportunities exist to construct new, context-appropriate infill housing of varying types and densities throughout the West End neighborhood. Infill on single lots to partial blocks, depending on the availability of land, should be promoted. Existing housing stock, even the most modest in size, should be considered first for rehabilitation versus demolition, since smaller, but high-quality, housing stock serves an important affordable housing need within the community.

A series of interconnected public park improvements along Evitts Run as a greenway could attract additional economic development investments in the West End neighborhood and the downtown. Increasing access to and along a greenway would not only increase the community's awareness of the resource, it can also serve as a setting for new private investment in terms of housing and commercial uses which front onto or otherwise capitalize on the attractive aspects of Evitts Run and the varying landscape conditions.

The future of the car dealership site should be confirmed with the current owners. Although not currently identified as a redevelopment issue, this facility is located at the very strategic intersection of Washington and West Streets. As an active business it is hoped that the business will remain and thrive in its current location; however, current trends show that many similar facilities relocate to larger lots in suburban locations. Outreach to the current owner by the city's economic development leaders should be performed to assess the future of this facility and work with the property owner should they move, to attract a use which can serve as a major West End retail/commercial anchor that promotes the pedestrian-oriented aspects of Washington Street as the city's "main street."

Brownfields and Environmental Quality

A fundamental driver of this entire West End neighborhood plan is the desire to address long-lingering vacant and underutilized brownfields properties which at a minimum represent an untapped community resource and at worst pose a potential risk to community health.

The Supertane site's remediation and future reuse as a public park facility can support an overall greenway approach to the Evitts Run Corridor and also support a redevelopment strategy for the Hilldale Shopping Center. The reuse of the Supertane site as a public park addresses site-specific needs to create an engineered "cap" on the site for environmental health and safety reasons. A design that links the Supertane site to the Hilldale Shopping Center site allows residents and visitors to better engage with the future park and surrounding neighborhood. Currently, the Supertane site and the Hilldale Shopping Center are underutilized due to their lack of visibility. Linking the two sites potentially opens up new possibilities for both sites and their relationship to the surrounding neighborhood.

The Supertane site's remediation will improve the water quality of Evitts Run. Addressing potential contamination migration from the site will ensure that potential negative effects from the site cannot impact off-site resources such as Evitts Run.

The remediation and reuse of the former Dixie-Narco/Maytag Parking Lot and the City of Charles Town Public Works Yard as a public park and a large-scale stormwater management facility will address major flooding, water quality issues and aid in supporting future redevelopment in the watershed. Both of these brownfield sites have environmental contamination/legacy issues which can be readily addressed and make the sites more suitable for new public park facilities.

The clean-up and reuse of several smaller brownfields sites will address potential contamination issues and support overall neighborhood-wide community enhancement goals. Although much of the focus of this master planning effort is focused on the major targeted brownfield sites, a number of smaller brownfields were identified which if addressed, could support reuse which would be in a manner more consistent with overall community goals for the West End neighborhood.

Stormwater Management

Charles Town's West End neighborhood and the entire Evitts Run watershed suffer from a lack of proper stormwater management facilities. Antiquated infrastructure and/or inadequate storage capacity pose a risk to existing properties and limit the ability to attract new investment to the area.

Improved stormwater management and run-off pre-treatment within the Evitts Run Watershed will improve the quality of the stream as well as the broader Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Subject to increased demands of the city to address stormwater management compliance requirements as a result of EPA MS4 and Chesapeake Bay TMDL regulatory requirements, improvements along the Evitts Run Corridor will not only help the city meet these regulatory requirements, but also improve the environmental quality of Evitts Run and the surrounding area.

Increased stormwater management detention capacity on the public works yard site will reduce potential flooding impacts down-stream. Evitts Run Creek has a long history of flooding, erosion, and environmental impacts from upstream industries. Providing increased stormwater detention capacity at this key location where the creek splits between its primary course to the west and the smaller feeder tributary from the West End of the City of Ranson, allows it to reduce the potential for flooding impacts to down-stream properties.

Integrating green infrastructure such as permeable paving, flow through planters, raingardens and structural soil cells into the design of new projects will provide an incremental and site-specific approach to improving stormwater management conditions in the city. Much of this infrastructure will not be completely hidden, but will be incorporated into the design of parks, public spaces and the overall urban design aspects within the downtown.

Parks and Recreation

Public parks provide the setting for communities to come together for informal gatherings, formal events, festivals or passive/active recreational uses. Parks that are designed to be engaged with their context become treasured assets and serve to form community entity and sense-of-place.

A series of inter-connected parks along the Evitts Run Corridor have the potential to become something greater than the sum of their parts. Through the creation of a continuous multi-use trail which roughly parallels the creek, the Evitts Run Greenway could provide a vast array of recreational experiences and activities. It could also serve as a conduit that links neighborhoods, the downtown, and beyond. A connection that continues to Ranson's Civic Center, West End Park, and trails to the north and east, ultimately connecting to Flowing Springs Park and the multi-use trail along Route 9.

A redeveloped Supertane site can replace a brownfield site with an active park facility to serve the local neighborhood and act as one of several recreational destinations along the Evitts Run Greenway. The reuse of this contaminated site as a park amenity is not only possible, but desired since the design incorporates hardscaped and hardcourt facilities can serve as the remedial solution to address contamination issues.

The former Dixie-Narco/Maytag site and the Charles Town Public Works Yard, combined, could become a major park for the West End neighborhood and the city as whole. These two sites can become a second major park in the city, complementing Jefferson Memorial Park in the southeastern section of the city, this park would serve the northern and western neighborhoods with a facility that provides a broad range of passive and active recreation activities and facilities.

Transportation

The plan proposes a series of multi-modal transportation improvements which directly supports reuse and redevelopment activities and also enhances the overall transportation options for Charles Town's residents and visitors. The following highlight the transportation related aspects that the plan incorporated to support redevelopment in the West End neighborhood.

The existing street grid of the city provides the basis for a sound transportation network. Creating a connected network of street and thoroughfares that extends the city's existing street grid and block structure to and through redevelopment and targeted brownfield sites can serve as a framework to link new development with surrounding neighborhoods and the overall transportation framework of the city.

Street and thoroughfare typologies should be determined in relation to both multi-modal transportation needs and urban design guidelines for the uses and buildings that front onto them. Employing a "complete street" approach to the design of all streets and thoroughfares will provide the maximum opportunity for a balanced benefit to all modes. Ensuring that streets are constructed to include the appropriate number and limited widths of travel/parking lanes, bicycle and pedestrian facilities as well as supporting streetscaping and green infrastructure elements such as street trees, landscaping, street fixtures, flow-through stormwater planters, etc. will support the redevelopment goals outlined in this plan.

Strategic intersections within the study area should receive special design consideration. Improving key intersections along major streets and thoroughfare corridors into and exiting the West End neighborhood and the downtown area ensures that maximum transportation connectivity (for all modes) is achieved along with mitigating future impacts to the transportation network as new developments are constructed.

Transportation infrastructure decision-making should consider multi-modal needs, including current and future transit services. Maximizing interconnectivity and providing transit-supportive elements such as transit shelters and stop locations, or at a minimum adequate space for future facilities, ensures that full transit mobility is not precluded now or in the future. Reinforcing the potential for future transit service with support facilities, especially along Washington Street, West Street/Augustine Avenue will further emphasize these corridors as key spines of the city and aid in attracting more local users into the West End neighborhood and the downtown.

Area-wide traffic safety and traffic calming strategies should be considered for new and existing streets as they are designed. While transportation efficiency is a goal, it should not be performed at the cost of safety. Existing streets and thoroughfares should be evaluated to determine the need to "calm" traffic to an appropriate speed. This is especially important at the intersection of W. Washington Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. Traffic calming devices such as curb bump-outs at corners and at mid-block crossings, chicanes and traffic roundabouts should be considered as part of the palette of options to create a stronger sense of a balanced environment between pedestrian, bicyclist and motorists.

Roundabouts are one potential traffic management device that the city should consider. The plan proposes a roundabout at the intersection of Washington Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard. One resource and case study to reference when considering the application of roundabouts is the City of Blacksburg, VA's website. The following was taken from Blacksburg's website and advocates the merits of such devices:

The Value of Roundabouts – The following are 20 reasons outlined by the City of Blacksburg, VA (see: *http://www.blacksburg.gov/Index.aspx?page=1274)* as to why communities should considered constructing roundabouts:

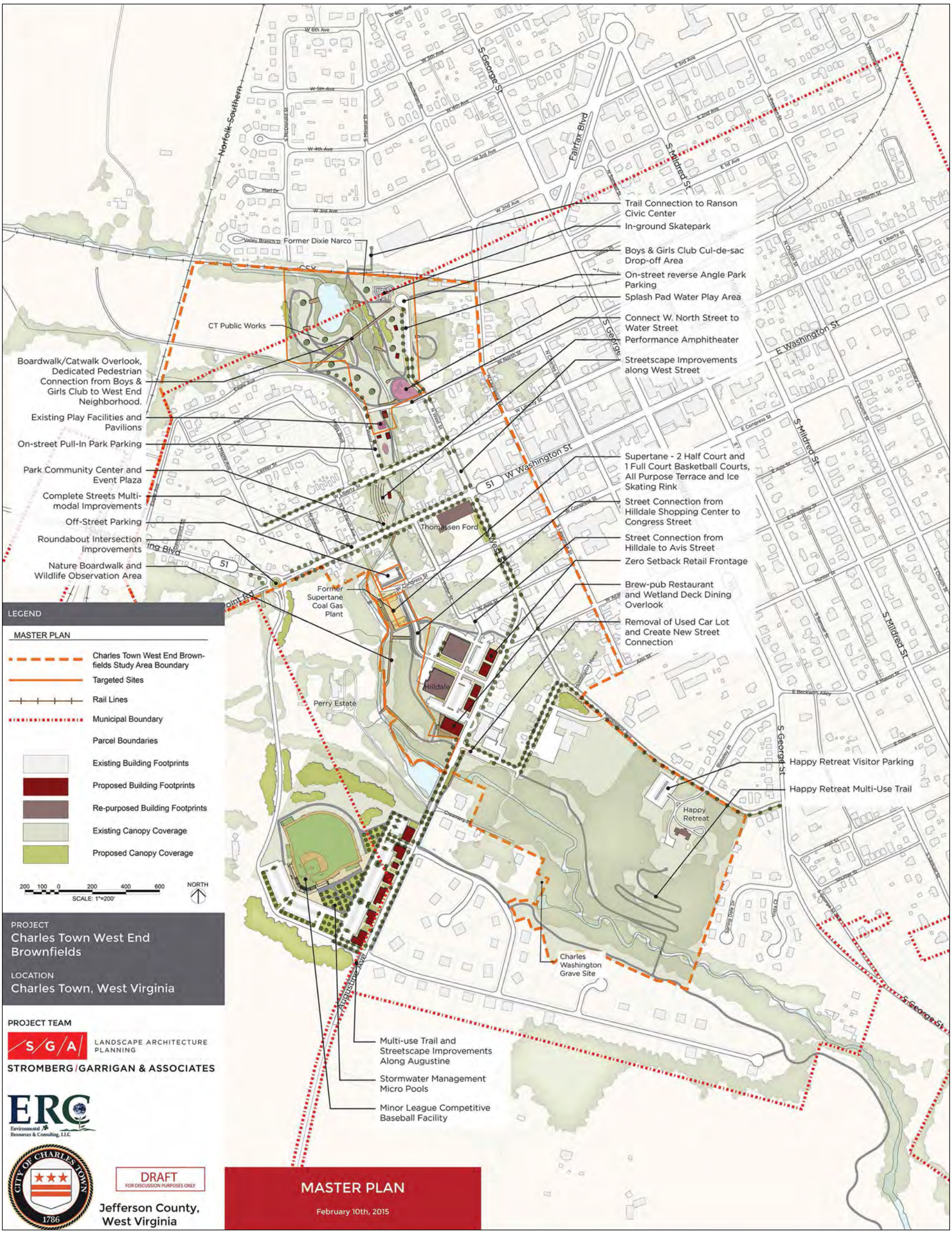
1. Reduce fatalities up to 90% (Source: FHWA)
2. Reduce injury crashes 76% (Source: FHWA)
3. Reduce pedestrian crashes 30-40% (Source: FHWA)
4. Greatly reduces the severity of injuries sustained in crashes
5. Reduce greenhouse gases (carbon footprint) and toxic emissions
6. Reduce gas consumption
7. Reduce queue lengths (in many instances)
8. Creates a pedestrian/child/older/bike/skate-friendly intersection
9. Promotes a stronger sidewalk network, with friendly nodes (intersections)

10. Preserve/enhance/celebrate local character and community context while accommodating motorized traffic flow (Context Sensitive Solution)
11. Provides a storm-proof intersections that continue to operate after hurricanes and tornadoes
12. Supports the principles of Smart Growth and Active Living
13. Provides 20-30% increase in capacity during peak hours (in many instances)
14. Creates a gateway to a district, such as business district or residential neighborhood
15. Replaces "no-man's lands," and seas of asphalt, with beauty
16. Allows sidewalk conversations among pedestrians or sidewalk cafe patrons or persons sitting on benches
17. Revitalizes a depressed district
18. Creates a roundabout corridor with safe, efficient access management
19. Creates a scenic corridor with speed management
20. Perfectly complements a road diet project

Pedestrian and bicycle trail connections should be constructed to provide dedicated interconnections between schools, parks and commercial / employment centers and the downtown. The city has begun to emphasize the need to create dedicated bicycle and pedestrian trails. Providing multi-use paths along new streets and through parks, public spaces and interconnected stormwater management greenways provides the opportunity to create an armature for neighborhoods and commercial areas to connect, via adjacent sidewalks, bike lanes and shared lanes. In addition to the creation of dedicated trails along a proposed Evitts Run Greenway, consideration should be given to the creation of strong bicycle and pedestrian feeders that connect neighborhoods and converge on the Evitts Run Greenway and the downtown, as well as key cultural anchors within the West End neighborhood, such as Fisherman Hall, Happy Retreat, Charles Washington's Grave site, etc.

3

REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

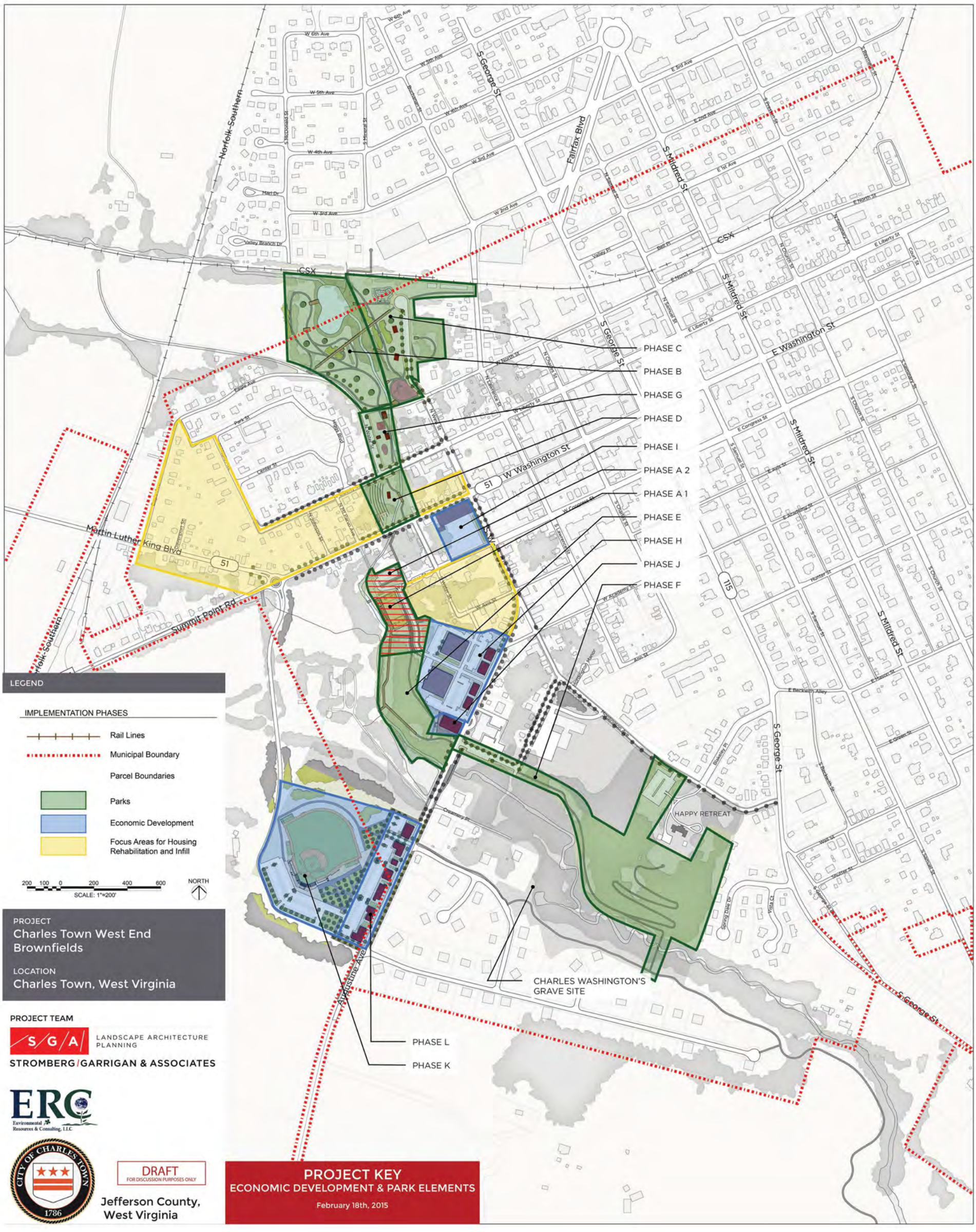

Trail Connection to Ranson Civic Center
In-ground Skatepark
Former Dixie Narco
Boys & Girls Club Cul-de-sac Drop-off Area
On-street reverse Angle Park Parking
Splash Pad Water Play Area
CT Public Works
Connect W. North Street to Water Street
Performance Amphitheater
Boardwalk/Catwalk Overlook, Dedicated Pedestrian Connection from Boys & Girls Club to West End Neighborhood.
Streetscape Improvements along West Street
Existing Play Facilities and Pavilions
On-street Pull-In Park Parking
Supertane - 2 Half Court and 1 Full Court Basketball Courts, All Purpose Terrace and Ice Skating Rink
Park Community Center and Event Plaza
Street Connection from Hilldale Shopping Center to Congress Street
Complete Streets Multi-modal Improvements
Thomassen Ford
Off-Street Parking
Street Connection from Hilldale to Avis Street
Roundabout Intersection Improvements
Zero Setback Retail Frontage
Nature Boardwalk and Wildlife Observation Area
Brew-pub Restaurant and Wetland Deck Dining Overlook
Former Supertane Coal Gas Plant
Removal of Used Car Lot and Create New Street Connection
Hilldale
Perry Estate
Happy Retreat Visitor Parking
Happy Retreat Multi-Use Trail
Happy Retreat
Charles Washington Grave Site
Multi-use Trail and Streetscape Improvements Along Augustine
Stormwater Management Micro Pools
Minor League Competitive Baseball Facility
LEGEND
MASTER PLAN
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Targeted Sites
Rail Lines
Municipal Boundary
Parcel Boundaries
Existing Building Footprints
Proposed Building Footprints
Re-purposed Building Footprints
Existing Canopy Coverage
Proposed Canopy Coverage
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
MASTER PLAN
February 10th, 2015

BIRD'S EYE PERSPECTIVE OF WEST END MASTER PLAN



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PARK MASTER PLAN PROJECT KEY

[ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PARK PHASING ELEMENTS]



Economic Development and Park Project Phasing - DRAFT

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Description
A 1	near term	Former Supertane Site - Remediation and environmental closure	• Parcels 212, 5, and a portion of 14.2 require implementation of Remedial Action Work Plan (AWP) • Full design and engineering through the construction of an environmental cap, regulatory "closure" of site contamination, and stormwater mitigation infrastructure. • Full design and engineering of park amenities. • Determination of park amenities that may become part of the environmental cap and what amenities will need to be implemented as a separate parallel effort under A2.
A 2	near term	Former Supertane Site - Park improvements	• Design, engineering and construction of 2 half court basketball courts, one full size basketball court, all-purpose activity/fitness terrace, synthetic skate rink seasonal installation, 26 space parking lot at the terminus of Congress Street • Removal of S. Mt. Parvo Avenue vehicular access from Washington St. to Congress St. • Conversion of S. Mt. Parvo Avenue to a multi-use ped/bike promenade, activity courts entrance plaza and drop-off area, and observation boardwalk overlook along Evitts Run. • Phase 2 of A2 - Hilldale Shopping Center rear access road and pedestrian walkway connection to Congress St. Stepped retaining wall planters and activity courts side seating and lounge area.
B	near term	Charles Town Public Works Yard - Remediation and Park/stormwater infrastructure improvements	• Conduct further environmental assessment and develop a remedial action work plan (AWP) for the Public Works Yard. • Determine Public Works Yard relocation strategy. • Continue to refine and prepare finalized engineered drawings for the Evitts Run alignment relocation and stormwater mitigation strategy and pretreatment infrastructure. • Develop a refined and clearly defined park site master plan for the Public Works Yard property. • Ped/bike circulation network, observation decks and terraces, wildlife observation stations, and passive recreation lawn areas.
C	near term	Former Dixie-Narco Site remediation, park and Boys & Girls improvements	• Conduct further environmental assessment and develop a remedial action work plan (AWP) for the Former Dixie-Narco/Maytag parking lot property. • Develop an asphalt removal and reduction plan for the property. • Extend West Street to Boys and Girls Club property and create a drop-off/turn around at the proposed terminus of West Street. • Provide curb cut and small parking area to re-orient Boys and Girls Club front entrance to West Street extension. • Remove or discourage Boys and Girls club access at Lawrence street adjacent to the CSX crossing to remove safety concerns related to the at-grade crossing. • Provide on-street reverse angle parking along West Street extension. • Upgrade and expand skate equipment to an in-ground dedicated skate area. • Create a large passive and active recreation green overlooking Evitts Run below, the recreation green is anchored by two large picnic pavilions and a large developmental play area/water play area at the intersection of North Street and West Street. • Create multi-use trail network and connection to Ranson Civic Center via the CSX underpass.

Economic Development and Park Project Phasing - *Continued*

D	mid term	Liberty/Washington Streets anchor block park performance area	• Upgrade park amenities and create a park performance area that creates a gateway anchor to the West End and the commercial/retail area along Washington Street. • Removal and relocation full court Basketball to Supertane property. • Reuse of small commercial building as a parks indoor picnic pavilion/meeting hall that could also function as a performance box office and retail area during performance events. • The small commercial building would be anchored by a paved urban plaza/terrace that would have built in seating and water jet area for unstructured water play and gathering space. • The seating of the paved urban plaza would extend into the park in the form of a large amphitheater with a stage. • The large amphitheater would have a secondary function as a social gathering and lunch picnic space that would over look Evitts Run and the planting of the native plantings of the garden club below that follow the edges of the Run.
E	near term	Evitts Run Nature Park area	• Portions of parcel 14.2 beyond the former Supertane site, remediation and environmental closure. • Evitts Run Wildlife observation area is an extension of multi-use trail and boardwalk established in Supertane phase A1 and A2. The focus of this area is habitat creation, species diversity, and the preservation of the wooded wet area along the eastern edge of Evitts Run. • The multi-use trail will have two routes through this area. The first route will be a trail that is graded into the embankment along the Hilldale Shopping Center property. The second route would be the extension of a multi-use boardwalk trail that extends from the boardwalk on the Supertane property to Augustine Avenue. • The observation boardwalk will have observation terraces, seating areas and environmental education components. The boardwalk should be developed in a manner that highlights this wooded wet area but is also sensitive to stream hydrology and wooded wet area conditions.
F	mid term	Happy Retreat Multi-use Trail connector	• Multi-use trail connector from Augustine Avenue to the Happy Retreat property. • The trail should focus on historical and environmental education, interconnecting Fisherman Hall and other historically and culturally significant buildings/sites along West Street and S. Augustine Avenue through the natural areas of Evitts Run to Charles Washington's Grave site and the Happy Retreat estate.
G	long term	Water Street park access and amenity upgrades	• Long-term replacement and upgrade strategy should be developed for the on-street parking, pedestrian safety and ADA access upgrades along Water Street. • The Water Street segment of Evitts Run Park/Greenway should also consider facility, amenity and ADA access upgrades to existing park pavilions and playground areas.
H	mid term	Hilldale Shopping Center development and access upgrades	• The strategy for the Hilldale Shopping Center is focused on preserving the Save-a-Lot as a retail anchor grocery store and building off the viability of this downtown grocery store. • The redevelopment strategy increases access and exposure by removing the outdated central section of the retail strip mall and re-orients 12,000 sf. of small format retail with a "zero" setback frontage along Augustine Avenue. • The strategy calls for the preservation of the two larger box retail anchor building footprints but introduces a new perpendicular street with additional retail frontage that creates a West End commercial town square configuration and promotes multi-modal access and strong pedestrian connection along S. Augustine Avenue providing a walkable commercial center for the West End neighborhood.

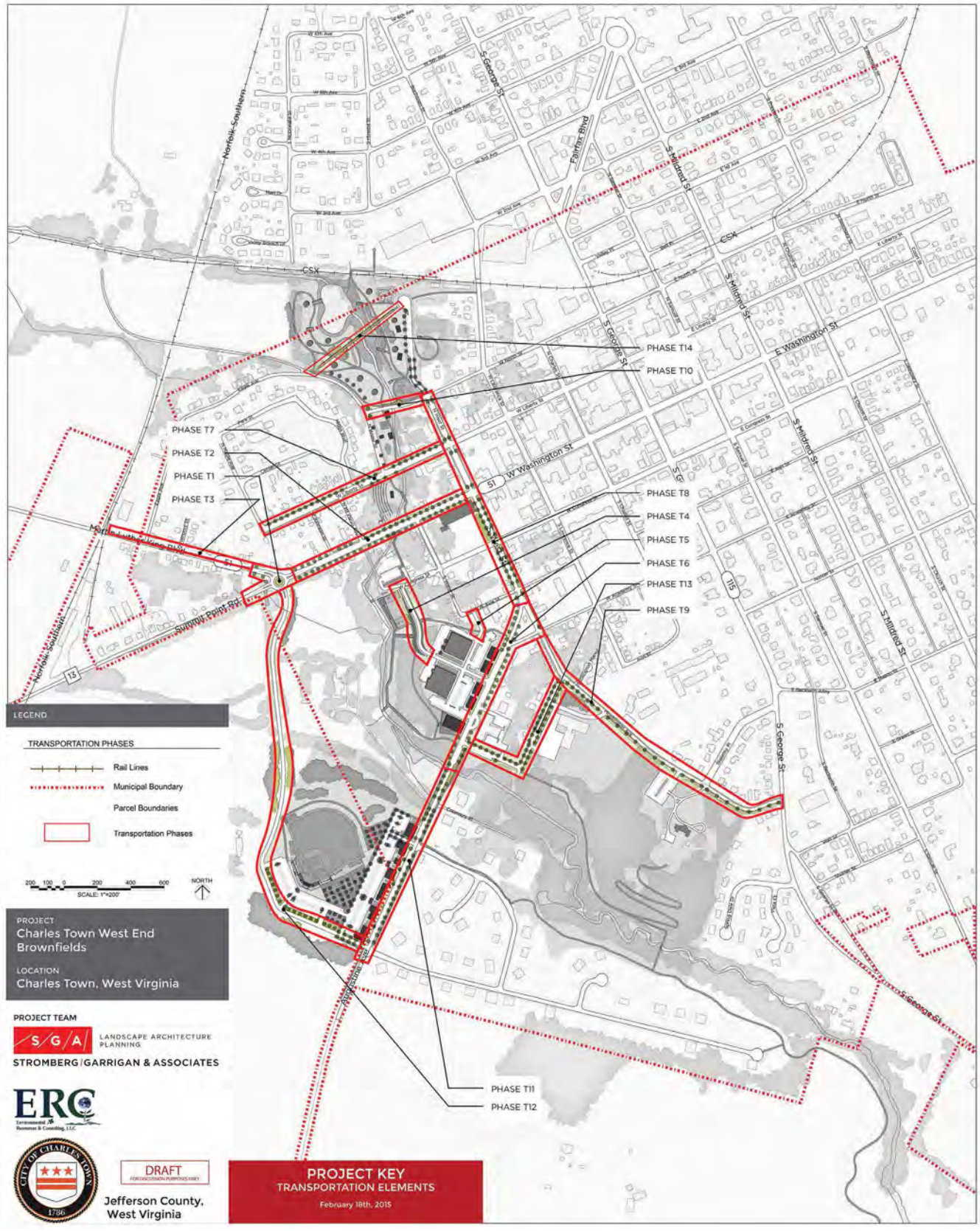
Economic Development and Park Project Phasing - *Continued*

I	long term	Long-term reuse strategy for Ford Dealership property	• Consider a long-term reuse strategy for the Ford dealership property that preserves the zero-setback retail anchor building at the corner of Washington Street and West Street, should the dealership decide to relocate in the future. • The focus should be on preventing greenfield and suburban strip shopping retail format development at this key intersection and downtown node and promote downtown retail redevelopment.
J	long term	Brew-pub gateway/ destination anchor restaurant	• Establish a reuse of the former bank property that creates a destination node along the proposed Evitts Run Greenway and Trail network that also provide a gateway to the West End neighborhood and Charles Town that acts as a social anchor for the Hilldale Shopping Center. • The brew pub restaurant could have a large overlook dining deck that would be elevated between the large existing trees and view the Evitts Run wildlife observation area with long views towards the reflection pond and the Augustine Avenue stone bridge.
K	long term	Potential Charles Town Cannons competitive play/ events complex	• A very preliminary feasibility study of various sites was performed as part of this planning effort. A summary preliminary findings is presented in Appendix A of this document. • Some sites, such as the Dixie-Narco/Maytag site were determined to be less feasible due to fundamental physical constraints such as parcel shape and size. • Although the plan illustrates the most viable option from a site layout perspective, which is the site located south of Evitts Run on Augustine Avenue, this is base solely on physical considerations and not economic feasibility. • The recommended next step from this effort is to evaluate the sites considered most viable in more detail as part of comprehensive ballpark economic and site feasibility study. This study should take into account broader cost/benefits including cost for acquiring land, determining the ideal size of the facility to meet community needs, opportunities for multi-uses to be integrated into the complex and if a private/public partnership strategy might be the most effective approach to develop a complex.
L	long term	Sport complex retail/ restaurant frontage along S. Augustine Avenue	• This recommendations is tied to recommendation K focused on a competitive play/events complex. • The opportunity to tie adjacent retail/commercial development into an overall complex should be explored as part of a comprehensive ballpark economic and site feasibility study which considers potential public/private partnership opportunities included leverage private commercial development.

M	long term	Housing Rehabilitation and Infill	**The City should focus efforts on a Housing Rehabilitation Financing Program** The city should consider a homeownership initiative to support homeowners in Charles Town. Critical to such an initiative should be the stabilization of the building stock and tax base in the West End. It is recommended that the city establish a program that provides a variety of financial incentives that can be used to attract homebuyers and improve existing housing stock. A homeowner loan program is recommended. The goal of a homeowner loan program would be to attract additional homebuyers to the city through the provision of funds for desired improvements (such as roof repairs, exterior painting, and kitchen and bathroom upgrades, etc.). **An example of a Homeowner Loan Program might include:** • Up to $5,000 forgivable loan to a homebuyer of single-family dwelling in the core area. • No income limits. • Available only to homebuyers who occupy the home. • Cover costs associated with repairs and upgrades to the exterior and interior of the property, (such as windows, paint, roof, porch, sidewalk, etc.) • Distributed on approval of construction invoices. • Loan money cannot be used toward down payment (loan program could potentially require a $5,000 match by the homeowner to improvements they make to the property). • Minimum property condition standards must be met. • Remainder of loan can be used to upgrade interior amenities (such as kitchen and bathroom upgrades, etc.) • Contractor and scope of work must be approved by Borough code enforcement department • Construction must be completed within 180 days of closing. **Recommended Loan terms follow:** • 7 year at 0% interest rate. • 1/7 of loan amount forgiven each year. • Upon re-sale of home, remaining balance of the loan may be repaid or transferred to the new owner. • Upon conversion to a rental unit, remainder of loan must be repaid in monthly payments at 8% interest. The city should work with local financial institutions to develop and promote programs that provide low-interest mortgage financing for property owners desiring to rehabilitate their properties, especially in the West End. The city could inform these institutions of the overall improvement strategy for the city so as to enhance their willingness to make mortgage financing available. A provision of this program should be that improvements to exterior appearance of a building be consistent with the historic standards or renovation guidelines for the city. A home rehabilitation program that includes a combination of a below market interest rate loan and a grant would be the most desirable incentive to existing property owners. The city should provide a listing of these resources to prospective homebuyers, Realtors or property owners of specific properties identified for needed repairs. A model for such a program is available from the Borough of Pottstown, PA website: *http://pottstown.org/index.aspx?NID=117*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PARK MASTER PLAN PROJECT KEY

[TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS]



Transportation Phasing - DRAFT

2/18/2015

Map Key #	Priority	Project	Description
T1	near term	W. Washington Street and Martin Luther King Blvd. roundabout	• Requires ROW acquisition, traffic feasibility study, and historical impact assessment. • Development of a 3-leg roundabout to receive a fourth roundabout leg at a later date. • Priority pedestrian access and safety upgrades and roadway design that reduces design speed of road to 25 mph.
T2	near term	W. Washington Street Streetscape	• Streetscape improvement project that prioritizes and promotes pedestrian access and safety upgrades. These upgrades include installing sidewalks on both sides of Washington street where feasible and widening existing sidewalks; removal of S. Mt. Parvo vehicular access; clearly defined and striped on-street parking areas; ADA accessibility upgrades, reduced travel lane width to promote reduced vehicle speed, on-street stormwater management infrastructure and locate street trees where feasible. • Establish mid-block crossing at Evitts Run park to promote park connectivity and improve trail access.
T3	near term	Martin Luther King Blvd. Sidewalk improvements and safety upgrades	• Address poor pedestrian safety conditions along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard from the Norfolk Southern at-grade railroad crossing to the intersection of W. Washington Street. • Traffic calming techniques should be implemented including narrowing of travel lane widths landscape bump-outs and tight street tree spacing. Priority should be placed on installation of sidewalks where feasible. • Pedestrian sidewalks should be generous in width promoting a walkable community that includes safety features, ADA accessibility and techniques that prioritize a pedestrian connection to the retail corridor along W. Washington Street.
T4	near term	Hilldale Shopping Center/ Park Service road	• The Hilldale Shopping Center/park service road provides a strong linkage between the first phase of Evitts Run Greenway/Supertane park improvement project phase and the recommended redevelopment/revitalization scenario for Hilldale Shopping Center. • The Hilldale Shopping Center/park service road also can provide a secondary road connection that would balance and distribute traffic volumes coming to and from the Hilldale Shopping Center.
T5	mid term	Hilldale Shopping Center Development Connector to W. Avis Street	• Much in the same way as the Hilldale Shopping Center/park service road the Hilldale Shopping Center/W. Avis Street connector that can provide an additional secondary road connection to further balance and distribute traffic volumes coming to and from the Hilldale Shopping Center.
T6	near term	Augustine Streetscape improvements Segment A	• Augustine Avenue segment A focuses on streetscape improvements that upgrades and expands pedestrian connections from West Street to the Evitts Run Bridge. • The streetscape project should focus on sidewalk improvements that strengthens pedestrian connections from Fisherman Hall to the Senior housing facility and the Hilldale Shopping Center. • The streetscape improvements should include street trees, opportunities for seating, clearly defined pedestrian crossings that meet ADA accessibility requirements and interpretative design themes.

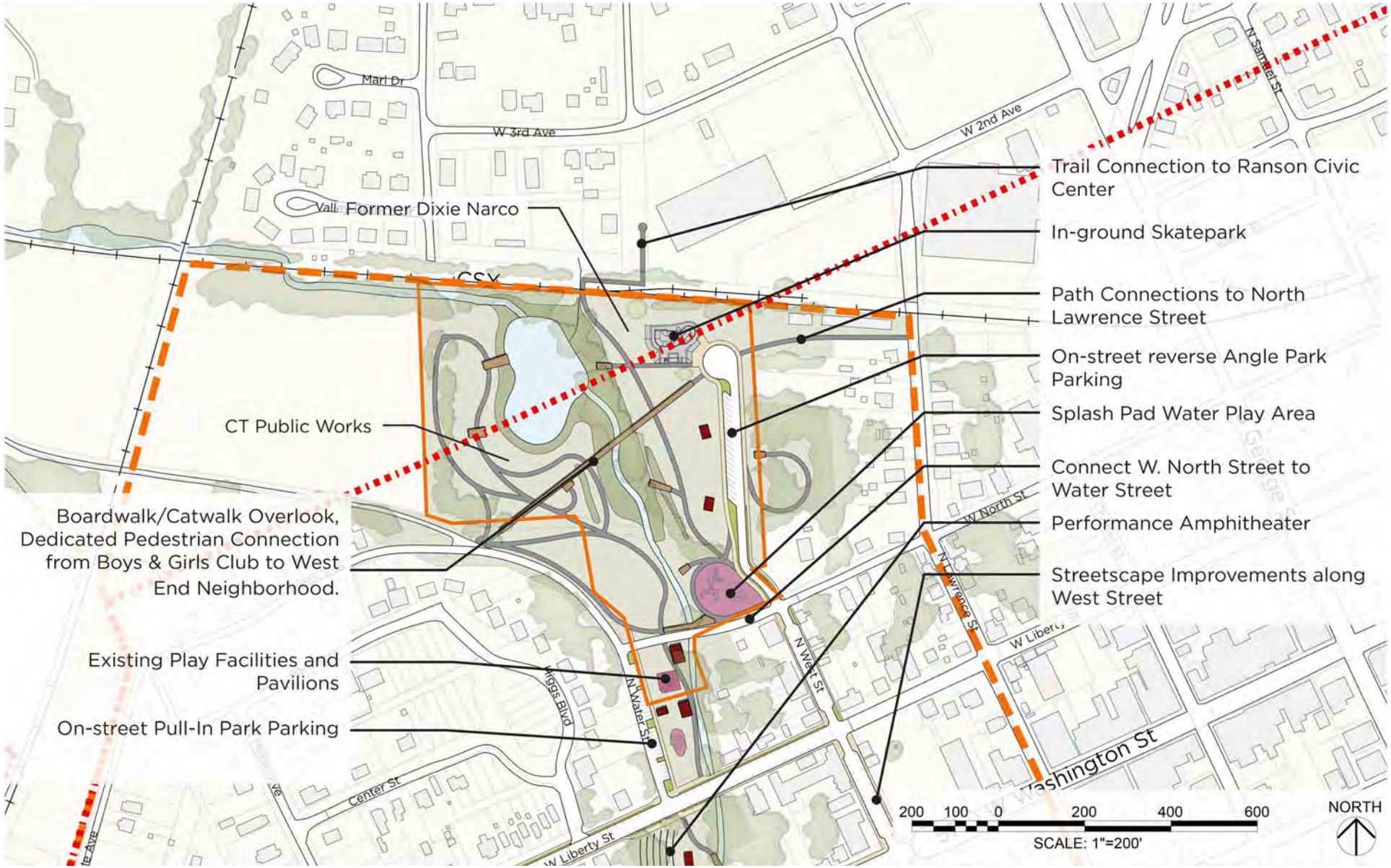
Transportation Phasing - *Continued*

T7	mid term	Liberty Street Streetscape improvements and pedestrian safety upgrades	• Liberty Street is a low traffic opportunity that could provide a strong pedestrian connection from the West End neighborhood to the Charles Town commercial corridor. • Liberty Street should be considerably upgraded to include the widening of any existing sidewalks and the expansion of the sidewalk system to extend the length of Liberty Street. • The sidewalks should include safe pedestrian crossing opportunities, traffic speed calming/reduction techniques including narrowing of travel lane width and landscaped bump-outs. • Liberty Street streetscape improvements should preserve existing residential curb cuts and provide clearly defined areas for on-street parking.
T8	long term	West Street Streetscape improvements and pedestrian safety upgrades	• West Street was the historical commercial district for the African American community of Charles Town. The streetscape improvements along West street should consider the history as an inspiration for design themes and respond to the historical context of West Street but a the same time respond to the modern pedestrian and ADA accessibility amenities. • The streetscape improvements along West Street should establish a sense of place and identity that is consistent with the history of West End neighborhood but further promotes the return of retail/mixed-use viability of the West Street historical commercial district.
T9	mid term	Mordington Avenue/Happy Retreat street improvements and multi-use trail	• The current roadway cross section of Mordington Avenue does not include sidewalks or a dedicated pedestrian walkway. • Upgrades to Mordington Avenue should be a “complete streets” approach that includes dedicated pedestrian sidewalks and safety features, design speed reduction/traffic calming, and the addition of multi-use trail paralleling Mordington Avenue to dramatically increase the multi-modal connectivity from Happy Retreat and the Board of Education property to West Street.
T10	long term	W. North Street extension over Evitts Run to Water Street	• One of the expressed desirable outcomes from the public meeting process was to provide increased vehicular and pedestrian connectivity from the West End neighborhood residential area to the commercial downtown of Charles Town. • The extension of W. North Street over Evitts Run to Water Street would provide a secondary, low traffic, vehicular connection distributing local citizen traffic volumes off of Washington Street.
T11	long term	Augustine Avenue streetscape improvements Segment B and multi-use trail connector	• Extension of streetscape improvements from the Augustine Avenue stone bridge beyond the proposed ballfield complex and commercial area. • The proposed streetscape improvements include, design speed reductions/traffic calming, the introduction of sidewalks and on-street parking, street trees and on-street stormwater bio-retention landscaped areas, and a multi-use trail connector that extends to Huntfield.
T12	long term	Perry Street Connector/ Boulevard from proposed W. Washington Street/MLK Blvd. roundabout to Augustine Avenue	• A full traffic study should be performed for the area that includes W. Washington St./MLK Blvd. roundabout, Washington Street, S. West Street segment and Augustine Avenue to determine the need to provide a secondary connector road to redistribute truck traffic loads away from commercial sections of Augustine and West Streets. • This street connector will require ROW acquisition through the Perry Estate and careful consideration should be made to prevent large bypass traffic that circumvent the commercial areas of Augustine Avenue and S. West Street. • The removal of all regional traffic flow could unintentionally create a commercial dead zone in the West End neighborhood commercial area.

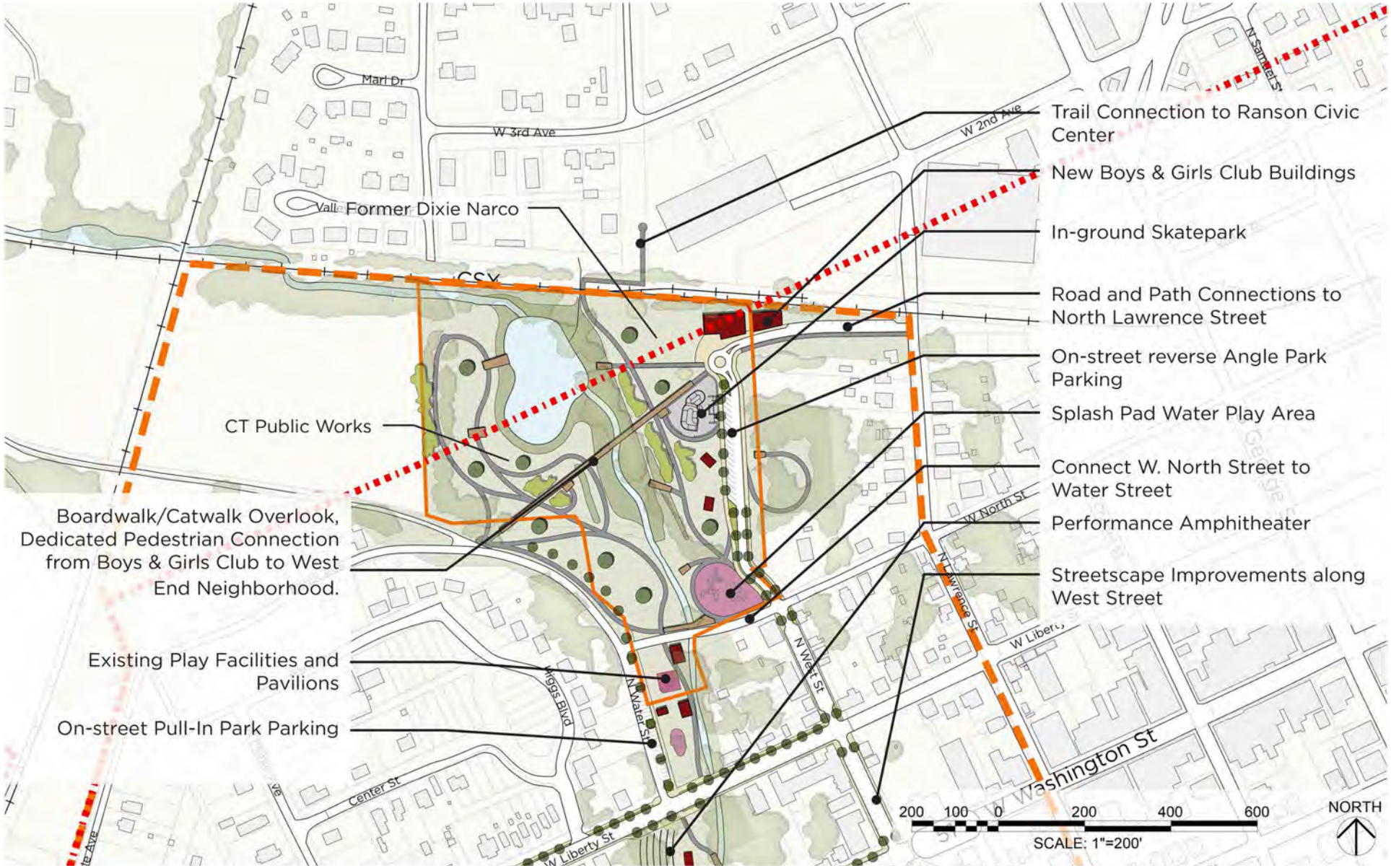
Transportation Phasing - *Continued*

T13	long term	Evitts Run Park, Board of Education site, and senior housing facility "complete streets" service road	• Requires ROW acquisition and the environmental assessment, potential remediation and closure of the Bobby's used car property. • This service road connector also requires a stop signal study to determine if a stop sign is needed along Augustine. • The service road will improve access and upgrade connectivity to the senior housing facility and the Board of Education complex. • The service road will also provide on-street parking for multi-use trail and Evitts Run park as well as include pedestrian amenities to residences along Warick Street.
T14	long term	Pedestrian boardwalk/nature walkway from Boys & Girls Club facility to the West End neighborhood residential area at the intersection of Water Street and Eagle Avenue.	• One of West End community's concerns expressed during the public meetings was to greatly improve and upgrade the pedestrian connections from the West End neighborhood residential areas to the downtown, greater Charles Town and Ranson. • One of the vital connections that could be made that provides a safe and highly visible route was to provide a grand walkway that is solely dedicated to pedestrian circulation from the West End neighborhoods west of Evitts Run, through the Evitts Run Park on the former Dixie-Narco/Maytag property to the Boys & Girls Club facility. From there pedestrians can utilize the pedestrian sidewalks along low traffic streets and the Evitts Run park multi-use trail network to connect to other parts of Charles Town and Ranson to the north. • Although a long term transportation improvement, every effort should be made to provide a safe pedestrian connection for families of the West End community to the Boys and Girls Club facility.

DIXIE-NARCO/PUBLIC WORKS YARD PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN



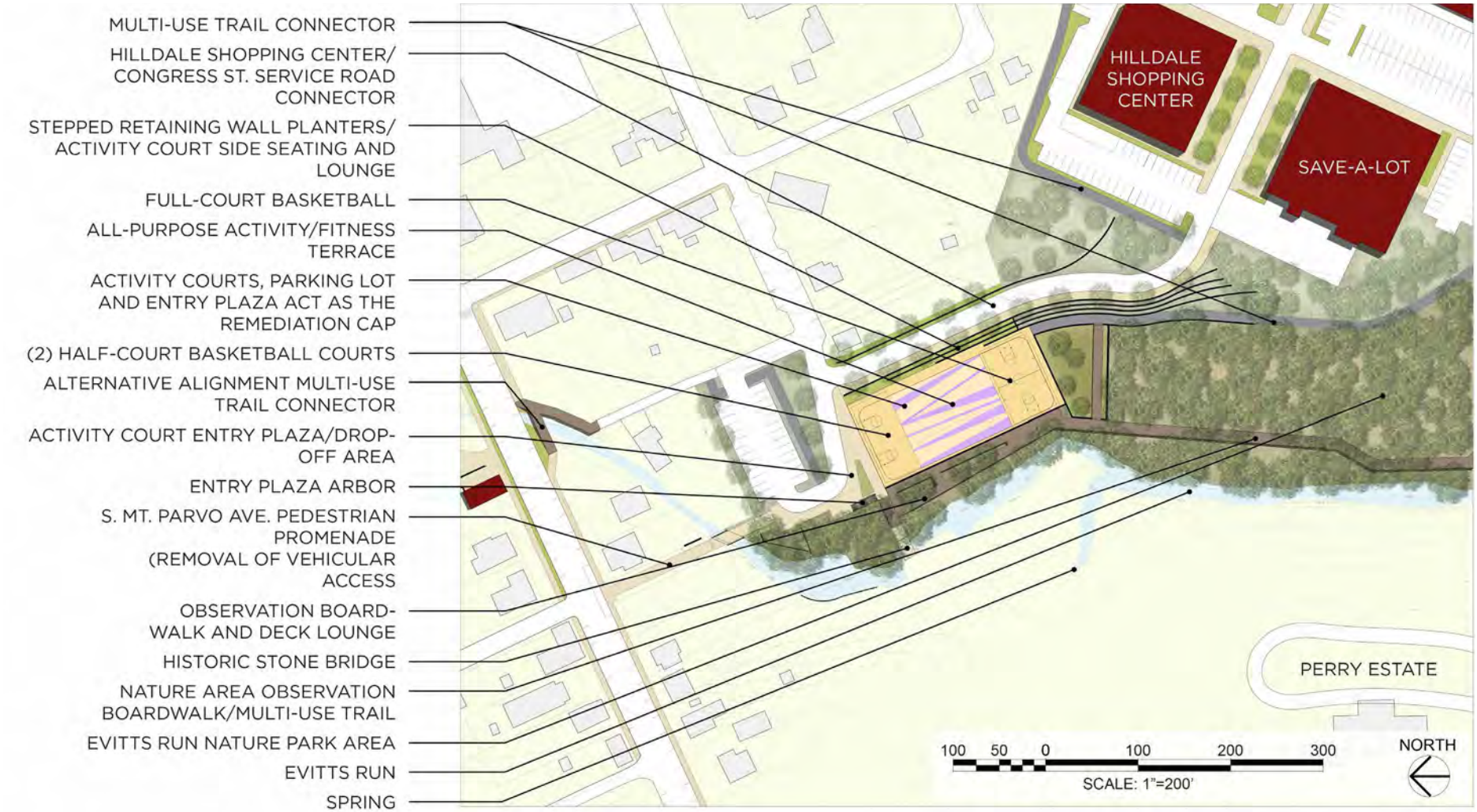
DIXIE-NARCO/PUBLIC WORKS YARD PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN
[ALTERNATIVE LAYOUT]



DIXIE-NARCO/PUBLIC WORKS YARD PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - PERSPECTIVE VIEW



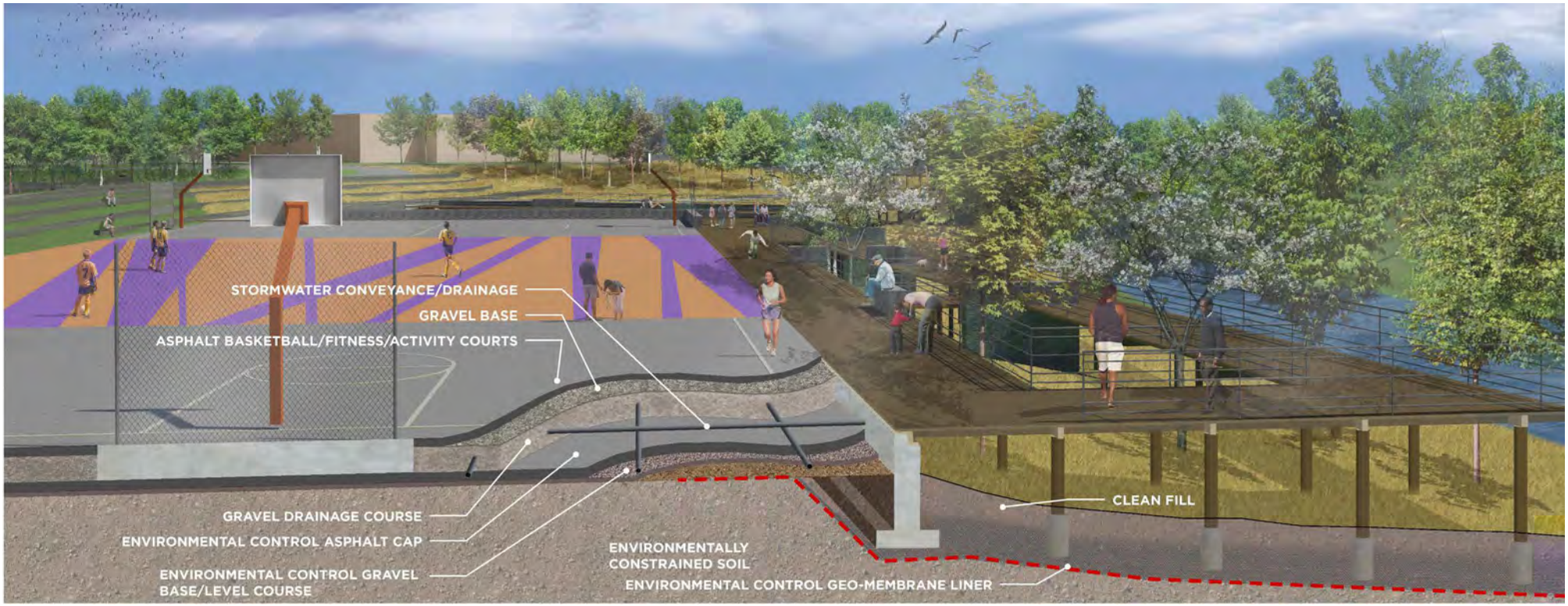
SUPERTANE PARK PLAN

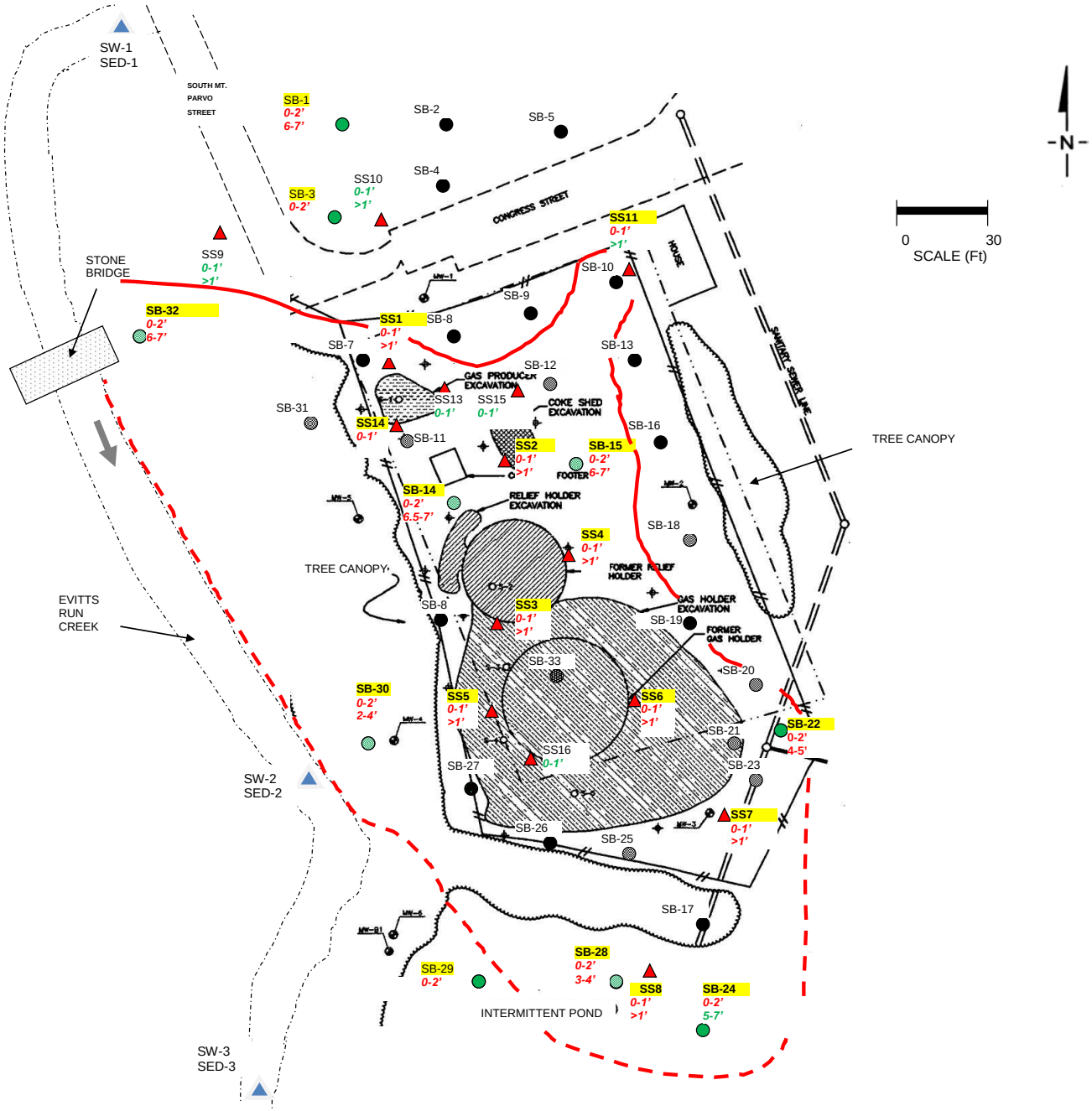


SUPERTANE SITE PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - PERSPECTIVE VIEW



SUPERTANE SITE PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN - PERSPECTIVE VIEW WITH ENGINEERING CONTROLS





LEGEND

- Fence line
- Roadway
- Sewer line
- Site boundary
- Stream
- Estimated extent of soil with concentrations exceeding De Minimis Standards. Dashed line indicates uncertain extent based on lack of data

SS-1 — Past TRIAD sample location

Soil boring location

SB-22 0-2' 4-5' — Soil boring and soil sample(s) collected for laboratory analysis. Boring IDs with yellow highlighting indicate locations with one or more concentration exceeding a de Minimis Standard. Red sample depth indicates one or more concentration exceeds a de Minimis Standard. Green sample depth indicates all concentrations are below the Standards. Yellow highlighting identifies sample locations with at least one sample result exceeding de Minimis Standards for Residential land use.

Textured fill identifies sol borings with stained soil and petroleum odor.

Surface Water and Sediment Sample Location

FIGURE No. 6

Soil with Concentrations Exceeding WV Residential de Minimis Standards
Former Supertane/Charles Town Coal Tar Site

Prepared for:
Ward & Associates on behalf of the Perry Family

SITE ASSESSMENT REPORT
AUGUST 2011

Prepared by:
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
March 2014

Remedial Alternatives Analysis Summary
Supertane Site (developed in 2010)
Charles Town, West Virginia

Remedial Technology	Vendor	Assumptions	Advantages	Disadvantages	Capital Cost	O & M Cost (2010 dollars)	Schedule
Capping with Asphalt	Jefferson Asphalt	Assumes a 4-inch gravel base and 1.5-inch asphalt cap. Assumes little to no grading. Requires some geotechnical data be collected (for compaction purposes)	Technology has been proven at thousands of sites	Requires long term groundwater monitoring to ensure contaminants are no longer migrating. Requires annual inspection.	$0.9 to 1M	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	3 months (plus 3 years groundwater monitoring)
Dig and haul	Remediation Services, Inc.	Soil would be managed at an off-site location. Assumes de-watering to remove and remediate soil to a depth of eight feet below existing grade. Assumes acceptable hydraulic conditions.	Technology has been proven at thousands of sites.	Off-site soil hauling and disposal. Odor and airborne particulates must be managed. May not address contaminants contained in bedrock.	$2.3M	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	3 months (plus 3 years groundwater monitoring)
Solidification/ Stabilization	Soils would be stabilized/ solidified using a shallow soil mixing process. Soils would be blended with a binding reagent (e.g., cement, fly ash) in situ using a large auger system. Soils would remain in-place. Assumes no vertical barrier system would be necessary.	Less costly than dig and haul remedy. Mitigates ongoing migration of contaminants to groundwater due to seasonal rise and fall of the water table.	Technology has been effective at other MGP sites to date.	Odor and airborne particulates must be managed. May not address contaminants contained in bedrock.	$0.7 to 1M	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	3 months (plus 3 years groundwater monitoring)

Ex situ thermal desorption	Nelson Environmental	Soil is excavated, treated, and placed back on-site.	No off-site soil transportation and disposal/ treatment.	Odor and airborne particulates must be managed. May not address contaminants contained in bedrock.	$2M	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	3 months (plus 3 years groundwater monitoring)
In situ thermal desorption	Terra Therm	"Level 2" heating to 100 degrees C. Steam stripping of volatiles and enhanced DNAPL recovery. Will achieve limited reduction of contaminant concentrations and DNAPL in shallow groundwater and bedrock up to 250 feet bgs.	No off-site soil transportation and disposal/ treatment. Limited DNAPL recovery from the saturated zone in the overburden and bedrock. Achieves shallow and bedrock groundwater contaminant reduction.	Requires more intensive groundwater monitoring program to ensure contaminants are not mobilized off-site. May not address contaminants contained in bedrock.	$4.7 to $5.1M	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	1 to 1.5 years (plus 3 years monitoring)
Surfactant-enhanced in situ chemical oxidation	VeruTek and Regenisis (Plume Stop Colloidal Biomatrix)	Proprietary technology which may not have the proven track record that the other remedial technologies have.	No off-site soil transportation and disposal/ treatment.	May be used in conjunction with another technology presented herein to reduce groundwater contaminant concentrations	Awaiting quote	$90,000 (based on $30,000 per year for three years)	3 months (plus 3 years groundwater monitoring)

Notes:

1. *The costs are based on remediating soil totaling 12,910 cubic yards (19,400 tons), which represents soil from zero to eight feet below existing grade within the entire fenced site boundary. The depth to groundwater, depth to bedrock, and the feasibility of de-watering will determine the actual soil volume which would be remediated.*
2. *Monitored natural attenuation (MNA) would be required for the contaminants in groundwater that would remain with all remedies. Three years of MNA and semi-annual groundwater monitoring are assumed.*
3. *All remedial strategies would require planning, permitting and regulatory approvals which are not included in the Schedule.*

4

COST ANALYSIS

Evitts Run Park/Eco. Development Phasing LOM Costs - DRAFT For Discussion Purposes Only - Not for Distribution

[SEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PARK PHASING ELEMENTS PROJECT KEY ON PAGE 3.4]

2/18/2015

Project Key #		Design Budget	Construction Budget	Total	Notes
A1	Former Supertane property - Remediation and environmental closure	$80,000.00	$800,000.00	$880,000.00	Does not include stormwater management, wetland mitigation, streambank/floodplain restoration
A2	Former Supertane property - Park improvements	$150,000.00	$1,500,000.00	$1,650,000.00	Does not include synthetic skate rink
B	Charles Town Public Works Yard - Remediation and park/stormwater infrastructure improvements	$125,000.00	$1,250,000.00	$1,375,000.00	Does not include Stormwater retention pond and Evitts Run Streambank restoration - see "Downstream Strategies" documents for more detail
C	Former Dixie Narco/Boys & Girls Club remediation and improvements	$500,000.00	$5,000,000.00	$5,500,000.00	
D	Liberty/Washington anchor block park performance area	$260,000.00	$2,600,000.00	$2,860,000.00	
E	Evitts Run nature park area	$200,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,200,000.00	
F	Happy Retreat multi-use trail connector and visitor parking lot	$83,000.00	$830,000.00	$913,000.00	A significant component of this expense is a trail bridge/crossing over Evitts Run
G	Water Street park access and amenity upgrades	$90,000.00	$900,000.00	$990,000.00	
H	Hilldale shopping center development and access upgrades	$-	$-	$-	Part of private development cost
I	Long-term reuse strategy for Ford Dealership property	$-	$-	$-	Part of private development cost
J	Brew-pub gateway/destination anchor restaurant	$-	$-	$-	Part of private development cost
K	Potential Charles Town Cannons competitive ballpark/events complex	$1,500,000.00	$15,000,000.00	$16,500,000.00	Is the development of the competitive ballpark being publicly funded, privately funded or both?
L	Sport complex retail/restaurant frontage along Augustine Avenue	$-	$-	$-	Part of private development cost
M	Housing rehabilitation and infill	$-	$-	$-	
	TOTALS	**$2,988,000.00**	**$29,880,000.00**	**$32,868,000.00**	

Transportation Phasing LOM Costs - DRAFT For Discussion Purposes Only - Not for Distribution

[SEE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS PROJECT KEY ON PAGE 3.9]

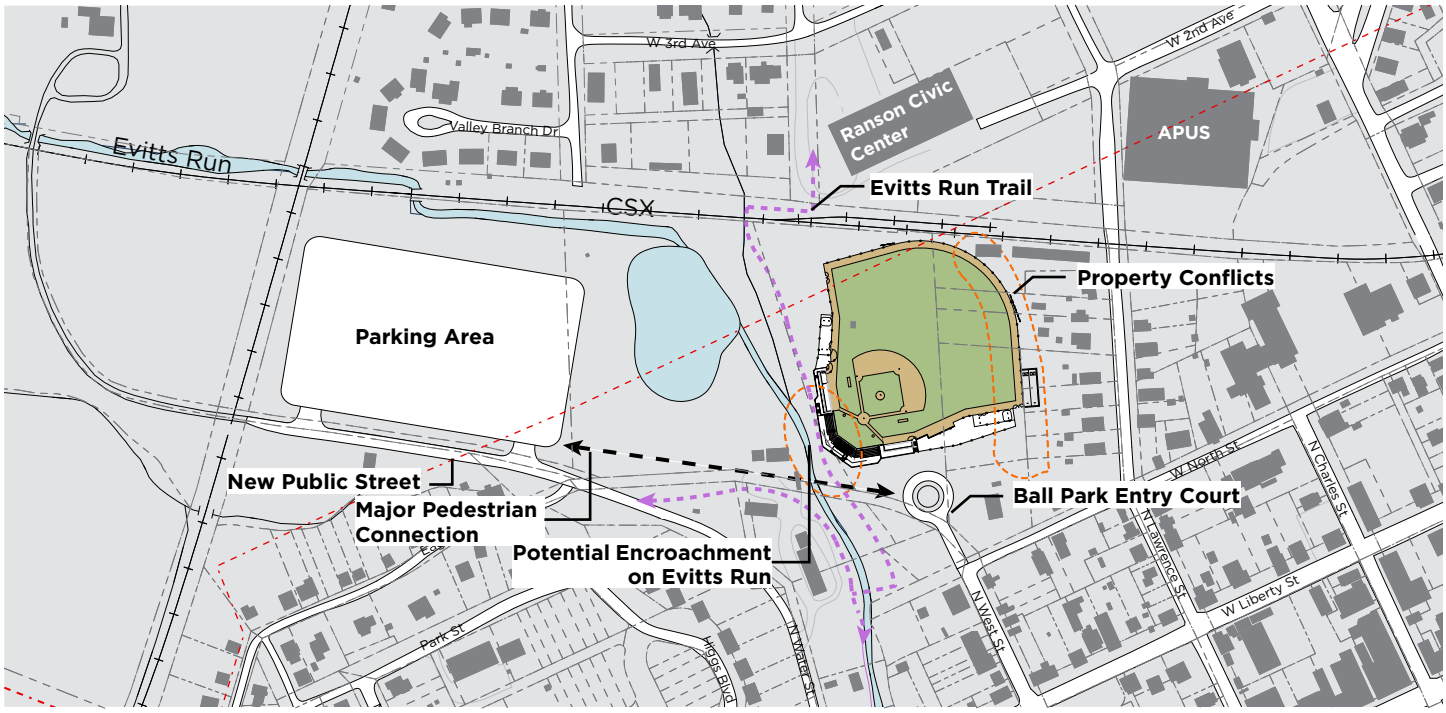
2/18/2015

Project Key #	Description	Design/Eng. Budget	Construction Budget	Total	Notes
T1	Washington/MLK roundabout	$200,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,200,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Requires a traffic study
T2	Washington Street Streetscape	$250,000.00	$2,500,000.00	$2,750,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T3	MLK Sidewalk improvements and safety upgrade	$75,000.00	$750,000.00	$825,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T4	Hilldale/Park Service road	$50,000.00	$500,000.00	$550,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Potentially requires a stop sign warrant study at Augustine Ave.
T5	Hilldale Development Connector to W. Avis Street	$10,000.00	$100,000.00	$110,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T6	Augustine Streetscape improvements Segment A	$350,000.00	$3,500,000.00	$3,850,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Potentially requires a traffic and stop sign warrant study.
T7	Liberty Street Streetscape improvements and pedestrian Safety upgrades	$150,000.00	$1,500,000.00	$1,650,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T8	West Street Streetscape improvements and pedestrian safety upgrades	$200,000.00	$2,000,000.00	$2,200,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Potentially requires a traffic and stop sign warrant study.
T9	Mordington Avenue/Happy Retreat Streetscape improvements and multi-use trail	$100,000.00	$1,000,000.00	$1,100,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T10	W. North Street extension over Evitts Run to Water Street	$120,000.00	$1,200,000.00	$1,320,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
T11	Augustine Streetscape improvements Segment B and multi-use trail connector	$300,000.00	$3,000,000.00	$3,300,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Potentially requires a traffic and stop sign warrant study.
T12	Perry Street Connector/Boulevard from proposed Washington/MLK roundabout to Augustine Avenue	$550,000.00	$5,500,000.00	$6,050,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Requires a comprehensive multi-road traffic study. MLK, Washington, West and Augustine
T13	Evitts Run Park, Board of Education, and Senior housing facility complete street service road	$160,000.00	$1,600,000.00	$1,760,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition. Potentially requires a stop sign warrant study at Augustine Ave.
T14	Pedestrian Catwalk/walkway from Boys & Girls club facility to the West End residential area at the intersection of Water Street and Eagle Avenue.	$220,000.00	$2,200,000.00	$2,420,000.00	Does not include ROW acquisition
	TOTALS	**$2,735,000.00**	**$27,350,000.00**	**$30,085,000.00**	

A

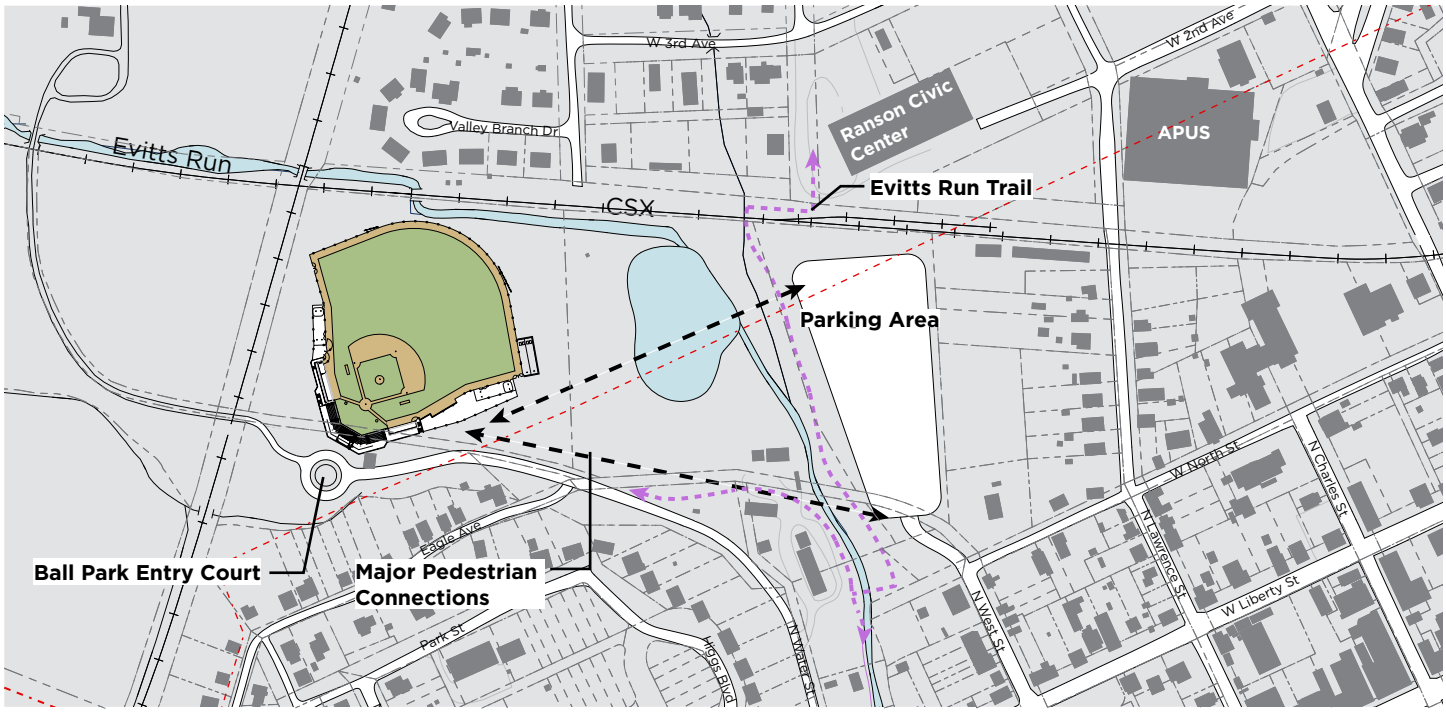
APPENDIX A
BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



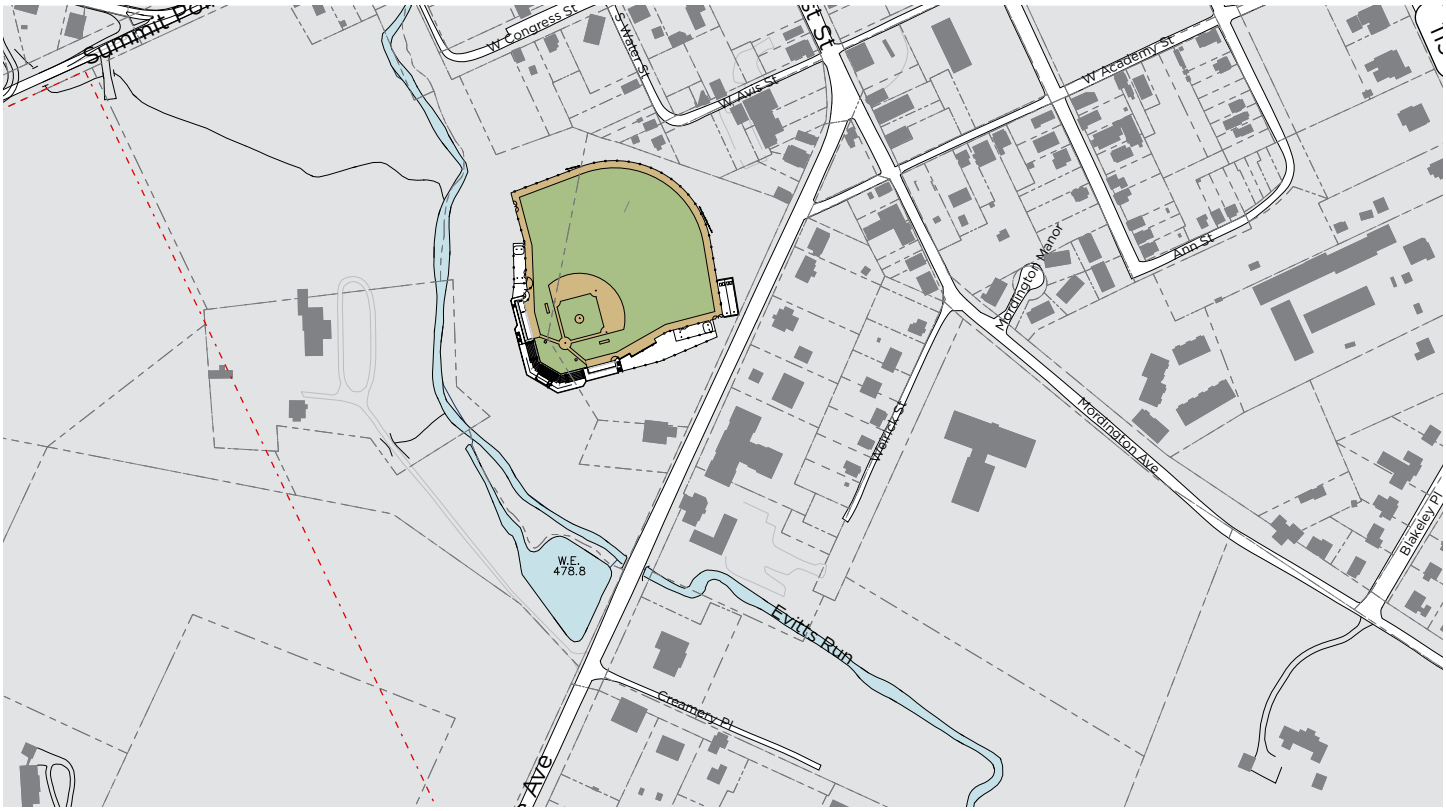
	Alternative A – Dixie Narco Site + Kable Property
Functionality	• Regulation-sized ballfield will not fit on the site, especially in the proper orientation without requiring the acquisition of all or portions of multiple parcels along Lawrence Street. • Major "built" aspects of ballfield behind home plate would be very close to Evitts Run and would likely encroach on the stream in its existing location. • Site topography would require a significant amount of fill, including in the stream AE flood zone to create level field.
Parking Strategy	• A new parking area would need to be created on the Kable property. This new larger impervious surface would be created on an area that is not well drained, therefore requiring filling and significant storm conveyance. • A limited amount of ADA and convenience parking could be provided immediately adjacent to the ballfield. • A large stormwater management facility would be required in addition to the proposed stormwater pond as part of the public works yard restoration/stormwater management strategy.
Context Compatibility	• Ballfield would be literally in the rear of residential properties unless the properties were acquired and raised.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Close proximity to downtown core. • Creates major anchor along Evitts Run Greenway. • Close to APUS campus.
Other Considerations	• City already owns the former Dixie-Narco/Maytag and public works yard sites. • Would require the acquisition of numerous additional parcels.

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



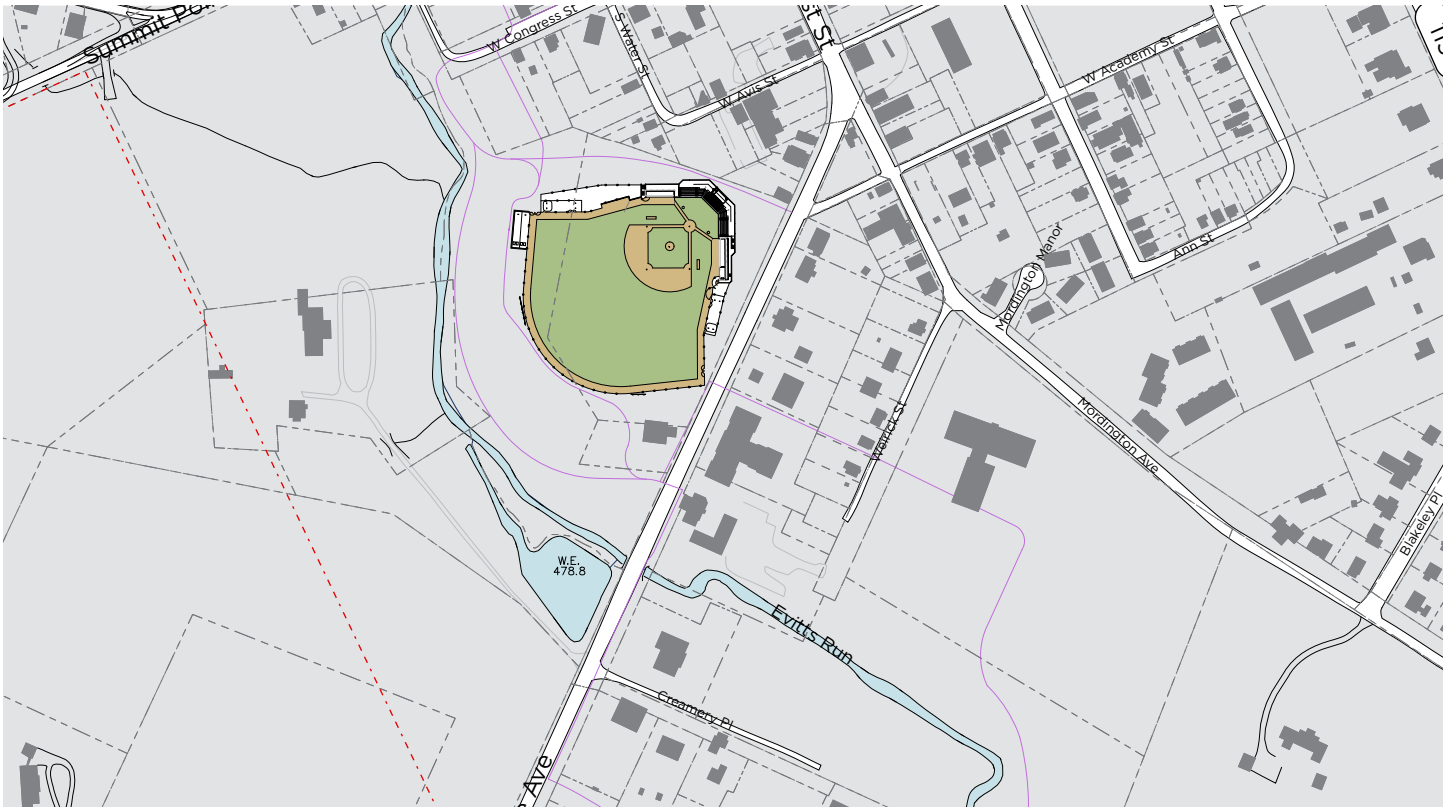
	Alternative B – Kable Property + Dixie Narco Site
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield would fit on the property in the proper orientation. • Site has a known drainage problem, so extensive fill and under-drainage would be required to provide a property turf field. • A stormwater management facility would be required (although likely small than Alternative A) in addition to the proposed stormwater pond as part of the public works yard restoration/stormwater management strategy.
Parking Strategy	• The former Dixie-Narco/Maytag site would be utilized for surface parking lot. • A limited amount of ADA and convenience parking could be provided immediately adjacent to the ballfield.
Context Compatibility	• Location is somewhat hidden from the core of downtown. • Two sides of the ballfield would be bordered by freight railroad lines so impacts to adjacent uses would be limited. • Access drive to Kable property would need to be modified.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Within walking distance of the downtown core, but less convenient than Alternative A. • Creates major anchor along Evitts Run Greenway. • Close to APUS campus.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of a portion of the Kable property. • City already owns the former Dixie-Narco/Maytag and public works yard sites.

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



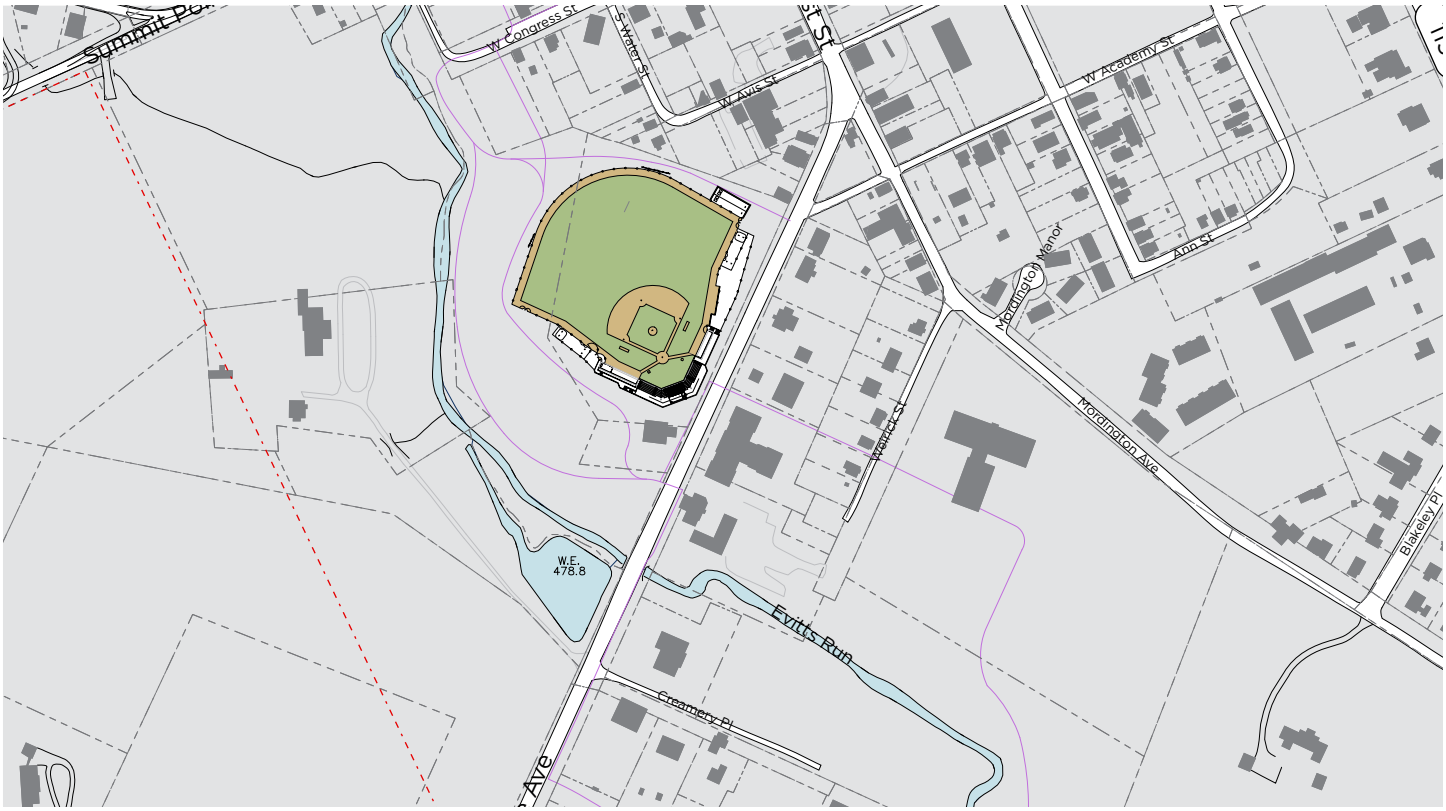
	Alternative C.1 – Hilldale Shopping Center Site
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield with the ideal orientation has major encroachments on Evitts Run and adjacent wetland areas. • Bulk of site is flat and is conducive to a ballfield use. The site would require some fill in the rear. • A stormwater management facility would be required since the redevelopment of the shopping center would require that new development meet current stormwater regulations.
Parking Strategy	• A limited amount of ADA and convenience parking could be provided immediately adjacent to the ballfield. • Off-site parking would be needed.
Context Compatibility	• The outfield would be near rear and side of yards of a limited number of existing residential properties along S. Water Street. • Recreation use would be replacing a commercial use so the reuse should be equal or less impactful.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Within walking distance of the downtown core. • Creates major anchor along Evitts Run Greenway. • Retail/restaurant use could be located adjacent to the facility to create a leveraged economic asset that would take advantage of ballfield, Evitts Run Greenway and vehicular traffic along Augustine Avenue.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of the Hilldale Shopping Center property.

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



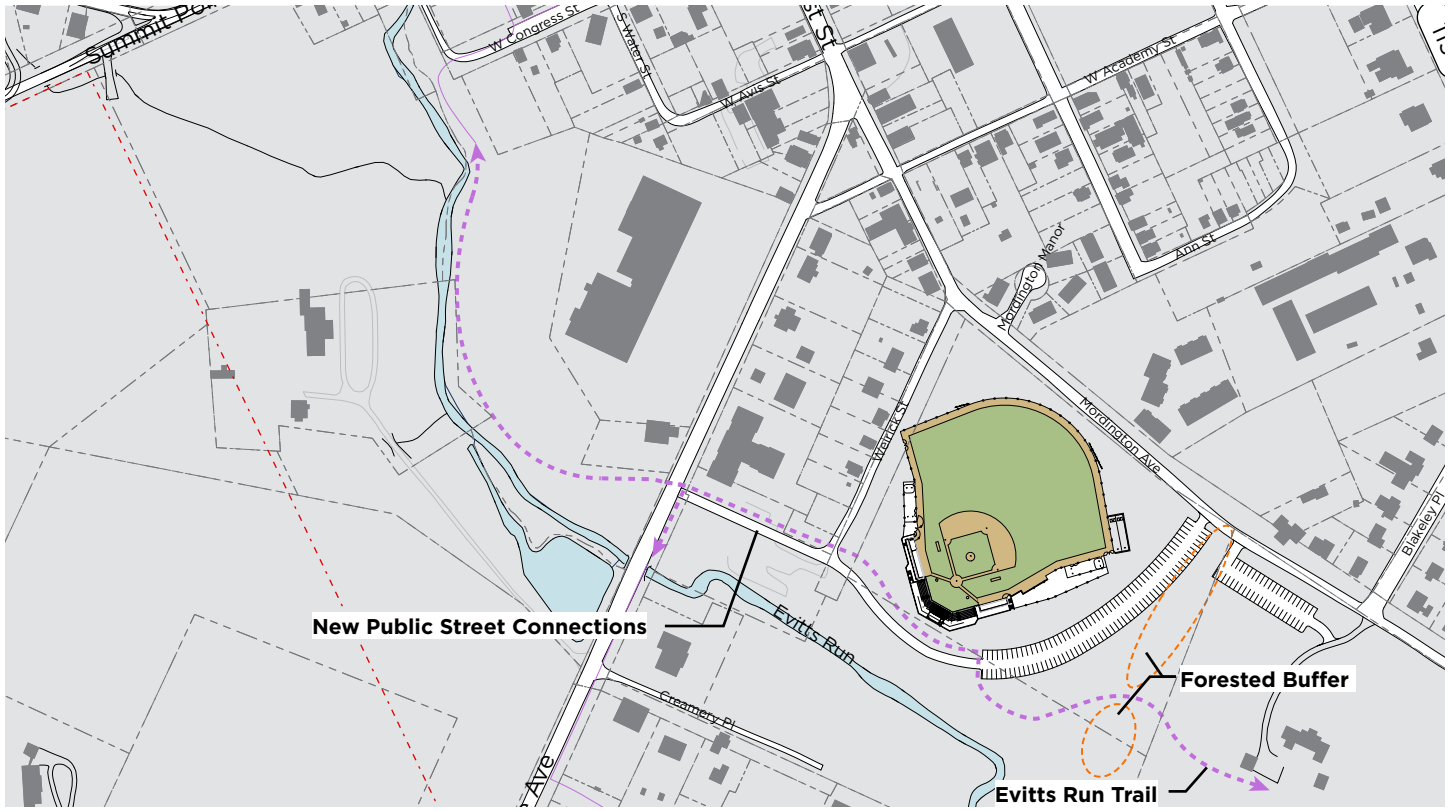
	Alternative C.2 – Hilldale Shopping Center Site
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield with the less-ideal but still functional orientation has some encroachments on Evitts Run and adjacent wetland areas. • Bulk of site is flat and is conducive to a ballfield use. Would require some fill but less than Alternative C.1. • A stormwater management facility would be required since the redevelopment of the shopping center would require that new development meet current stormwater regulation.
Parking Strategy	• A limited amount of ADA and convenience parking could be provided immediately adjacent to the ballfield. • Off-site parking would be needed.
Context Compatibility	• The grandstand would be near rear and side of yards of a limited number of existing residential properties along S. Water Street. • Recreation use would be replacing a commercial use so the reuse should be equal or less impactful.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Within walking distance of the downtown core. • Creates major anchor along Evitts Run Greenway. • Retail/restaurant use could be located adjacent to the facility to create a leveraged economic asset that would take advantage of ballfield, Evitts Run Greenway and vehicular traffic along Augustine Avenue.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of the Hilldale Shopping Center property. • Location of 24" sewer interceptor through the site.

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



	Alternative C.3 – Hilldale Shopping Center Site
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield with an non-regulation orientation. May not be acceptable for regulation play. • Some encroachments on Evitts Run and adjacent wetland areas. • Bulk of site is flat and is conducive to a ballfield use. Would require some fill, more than Alternative C.2 but likely less than Alternative C.1. • A stormwater management facility would be required since the redevelopment of the shopping center would require that new development meet current stormwater regulation.
Parking Strategy	• A limited amount of ADA and convenience parking could be provided immediately adjacent to the ballfield. • Off-site parking would be needed.
Context Compatibility	• The outfield would be near rear and side of yards of a limited number of existing residential properties along S. Water Street. • Grandstand would front onto Augustine Avenue creating a strong architectural front to the complex. • Recreation use would be replacing a commercial use so the reuse should be equal or less impactful.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Within walking distance of the downtown core. • Creates major anchor along Evitts Run Greenway. • Retail/restaurant use could be located adjacent to the facility to create a leveraged economic asset that would take advantage of ballfield, Evitts Run Greenway and vehicular traffic along Augustine Avenue. Grandstand and former bank site could be combined to create inter-connected restaurant opportunity.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of the Hilldale Shopping Center property.

APPENDIX A - BALLPARK SITE FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS



	Alternative D – Board of Education Site
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield will fit on the property in the proper orientation. • Bulk of site is flat or gently rolling and is conducive to a ballfield use. May require some fill along the south (Evitts Run) side of the property. • A stormwater management facility would be required since the redevelopment of the site would require that new development meet current stormwater regulation.
Parking Strategy	• Parking could be provided on-site and could be linked to on-site parking at Happy Retreat. • Opportunity to share parking facilities between ballfield and Happy Retreat as long as events are not scheduled simultaneously.
Context Compatibility	• The third base line would be along Weirick Street with the fronts of existing residential properties across the street. • Recreation use would be replacing an office and recreation use so the reuse should be equal or less impactful. • Would eliminate existing soccer field.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Within walking distance of the downtown core. • Could connect to Evitts Run Greenway with additional feeder connections to trail along the opposite side of the stream. • Opportunity to link facilities with Happy Retreat, yet visually buffer the use.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of the Board of Education property.

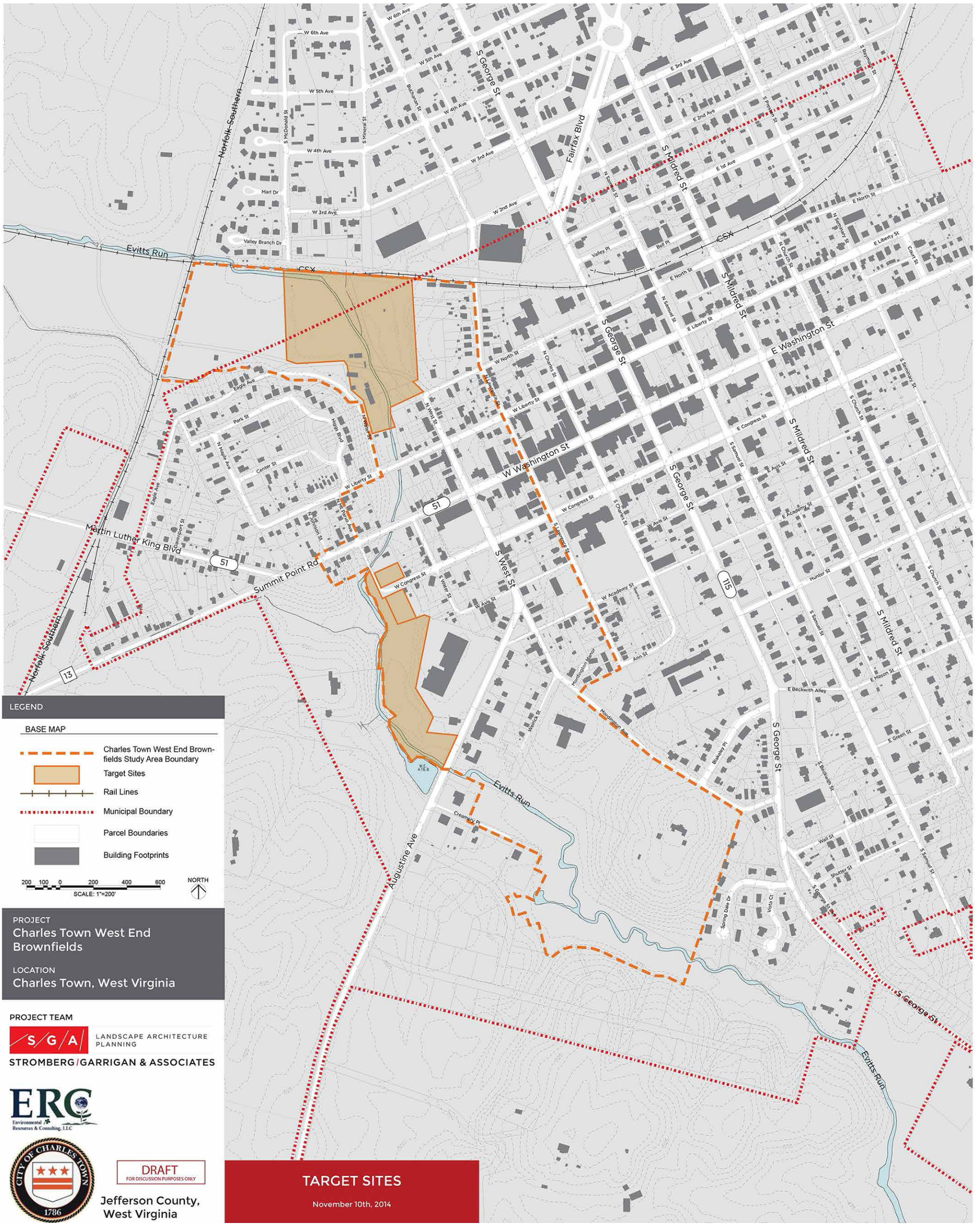


	Alternative E – Perry Farm Property
Functionality	• Regulation sized ballfield will fit on the property in the proper orientation. • Bulk of site is flat or gently rolling and is conducive to a ballfield use. Level site could be created by utilizing cut and fill from on-site resources. • A stormwater management facility would be required but could be integrated into a park-like amenity and linked to Evitts Run Greenway.
Parking Strategy	• Parking could be provided on-site.
Context Compatibility	• Currently farmland so would not be impacting adjacent uses with the exception of existing farm house complex and large estate property. • Facility could be densely buffered to create a park-like setting along Evitts Run, with a feeder trail to the greenway and provide a visual buffer to estate property.
Community/ Economic Impact	• Further away from the downtown core than any of the other alternatives. Could be connected to developed area via multi-use trail along Augustine Avenue. • Could connect to Evitts Run Greenway and serve as an anchor with multi-use trail connection along Augustine Avenue.
Other Considerations	• Would require the acquisition of a portion of the portion of farm property. • Ability to capitalize on Augustine Avenue.

B

APPENDIX B
SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING

APPENDIX B - SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING



LEGEND

BASE MAP

- Charles Town West End Brownfields Study Area Boundary
- Target Sites
- Rail Lines
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Boundaries
- Building Footprints

200 100 0 200 400 600

SCALE: 1"=200'

NORTH

PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields

LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia

PROJECT TEAM

S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES

ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786

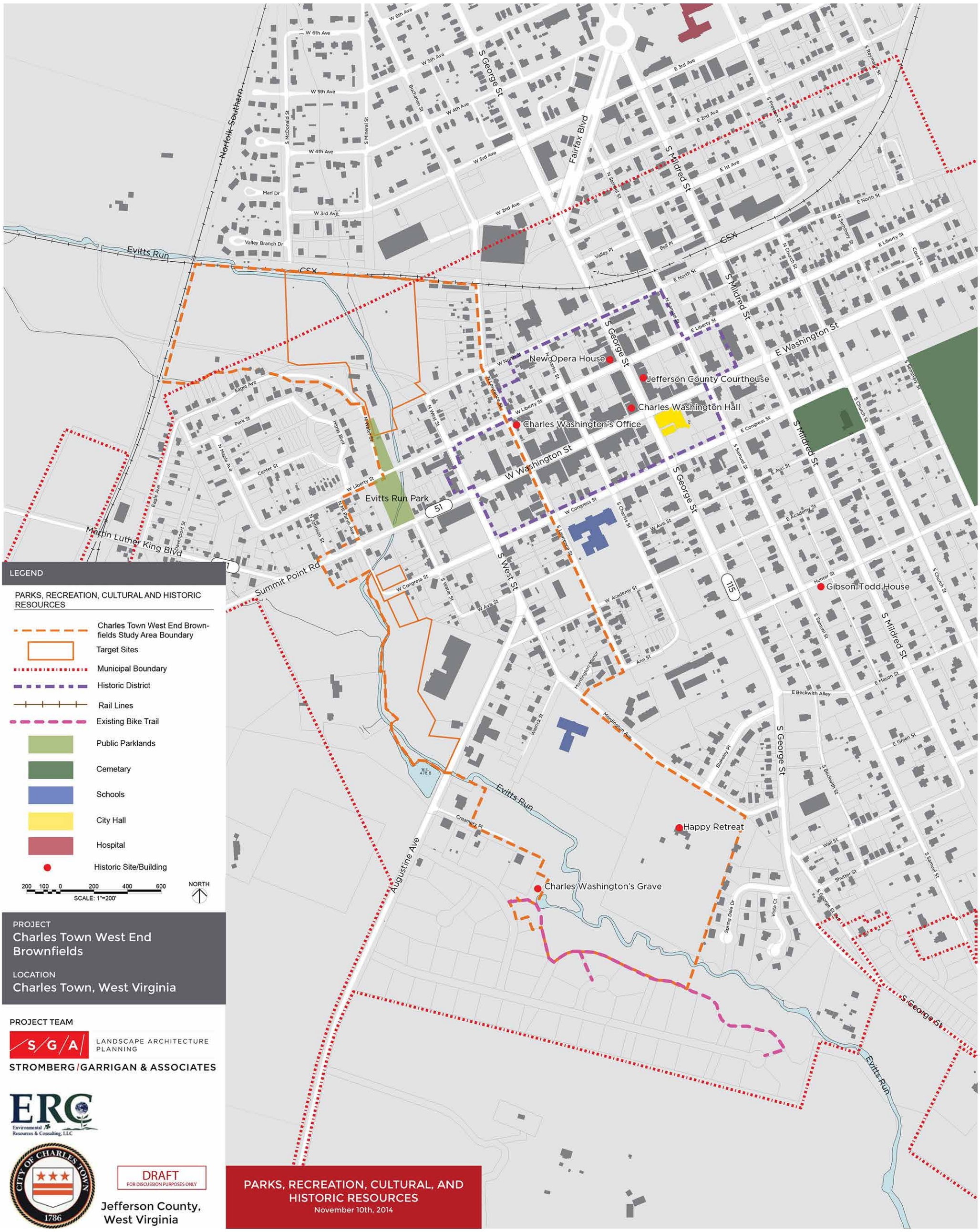
DRAFT
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Jefferson County, West Virginia

TARGET SITES

November 10th, 2014

APPENDIX B - SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING



LEGEND

PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
- Target Sites
- Municipal Boundary
- Historic District
- Rail Lines
- Existing Bike Trail
- Public Parklands
- Cemetary
- Schools
- City Hall
- Hospital
- Historic Site/Building

200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'

NORTH

PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields

LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia

PROJECT TEAM

S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES

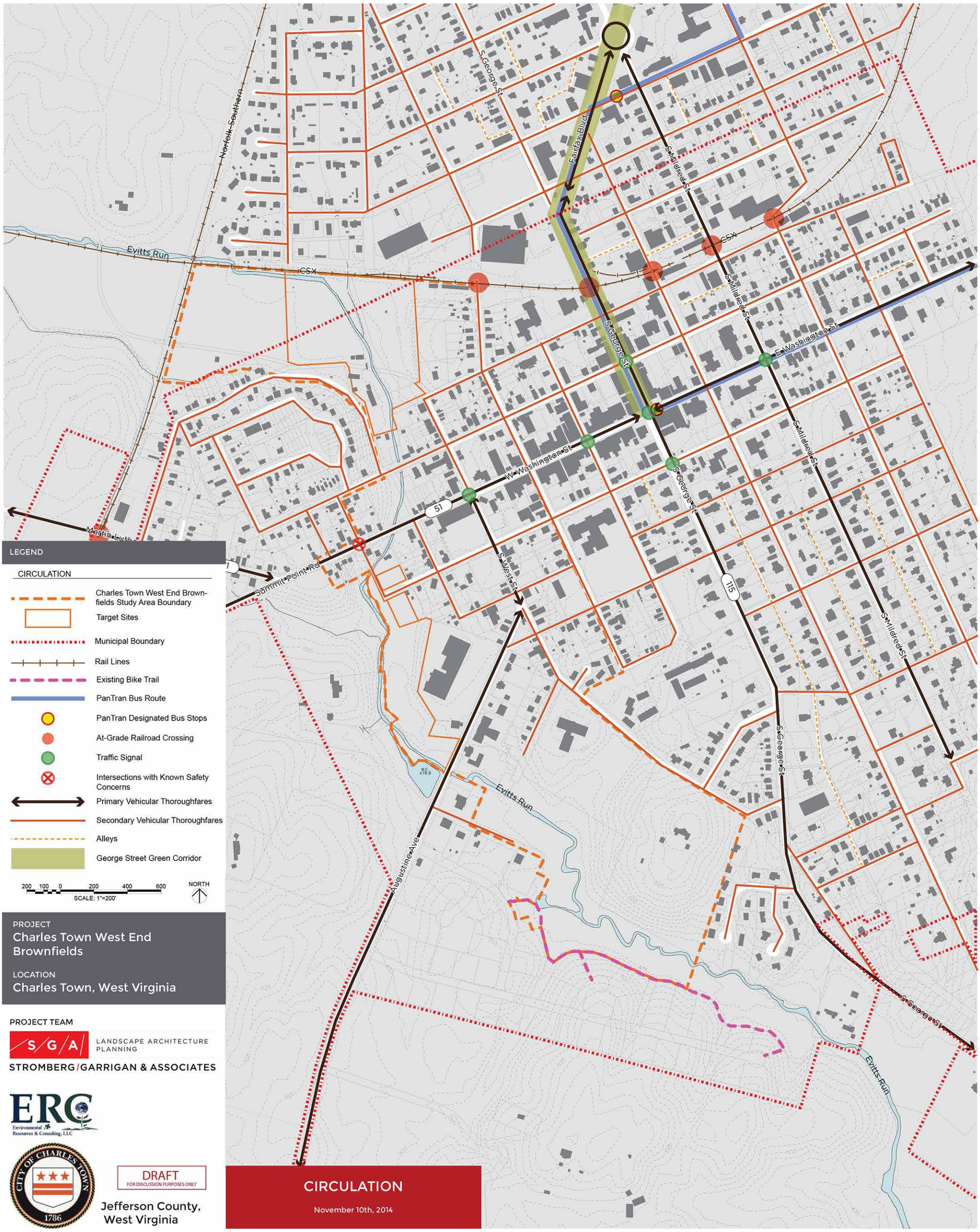
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786

DRAFT
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY

Jefferson County, West Virginia

PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES
November 10th, 2014


Norfolk Southern
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
CSX
Evitts Run
E Washington St
W Washington St
51
Martin Luther
Summit Point Rd
S West St
115
S George St
Augustine Ave
W.E. 478.8
LEGEND
CIRCULATION
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
Rail Lines
Existing Bike Trail
PanTran Bus Route
PanTran Designated Bus Stops
At-Grade Railroad Crossing
Traffic Signal
Intersections with Known Safety Concerns
Primary Vehicular Thoroughfares
Secondary Vehicular Thoroughfares
Alleys
George Street Green Corridor
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
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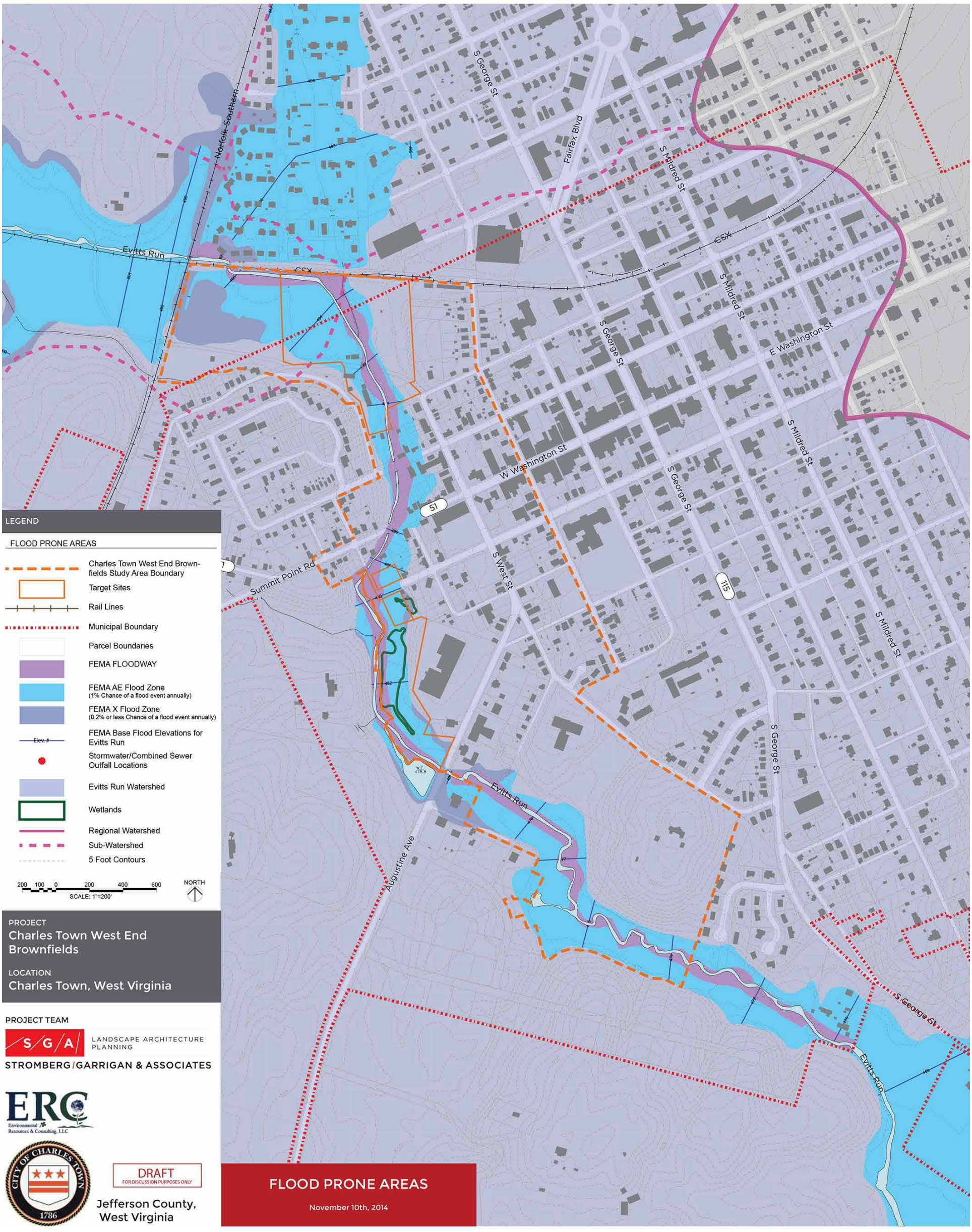
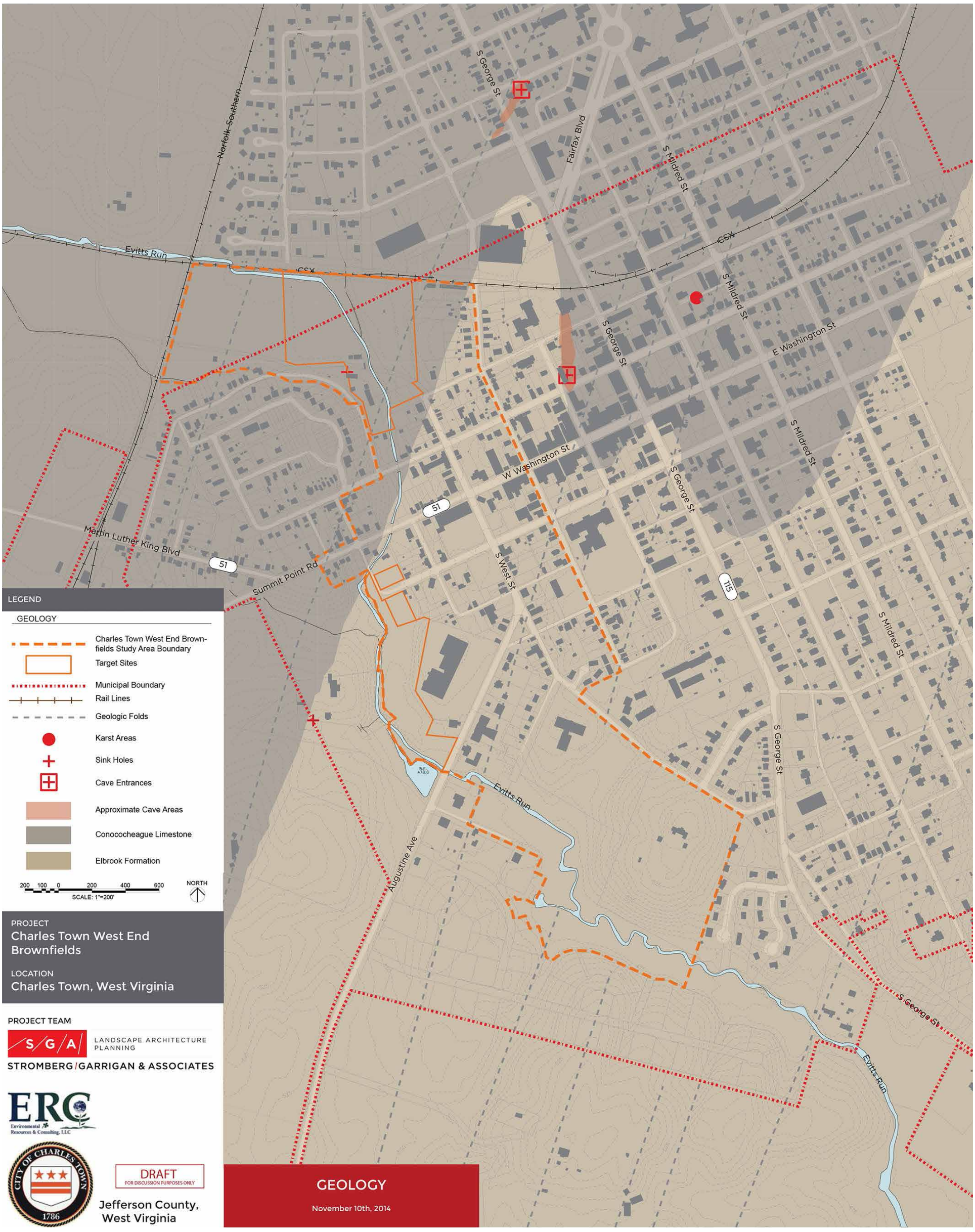
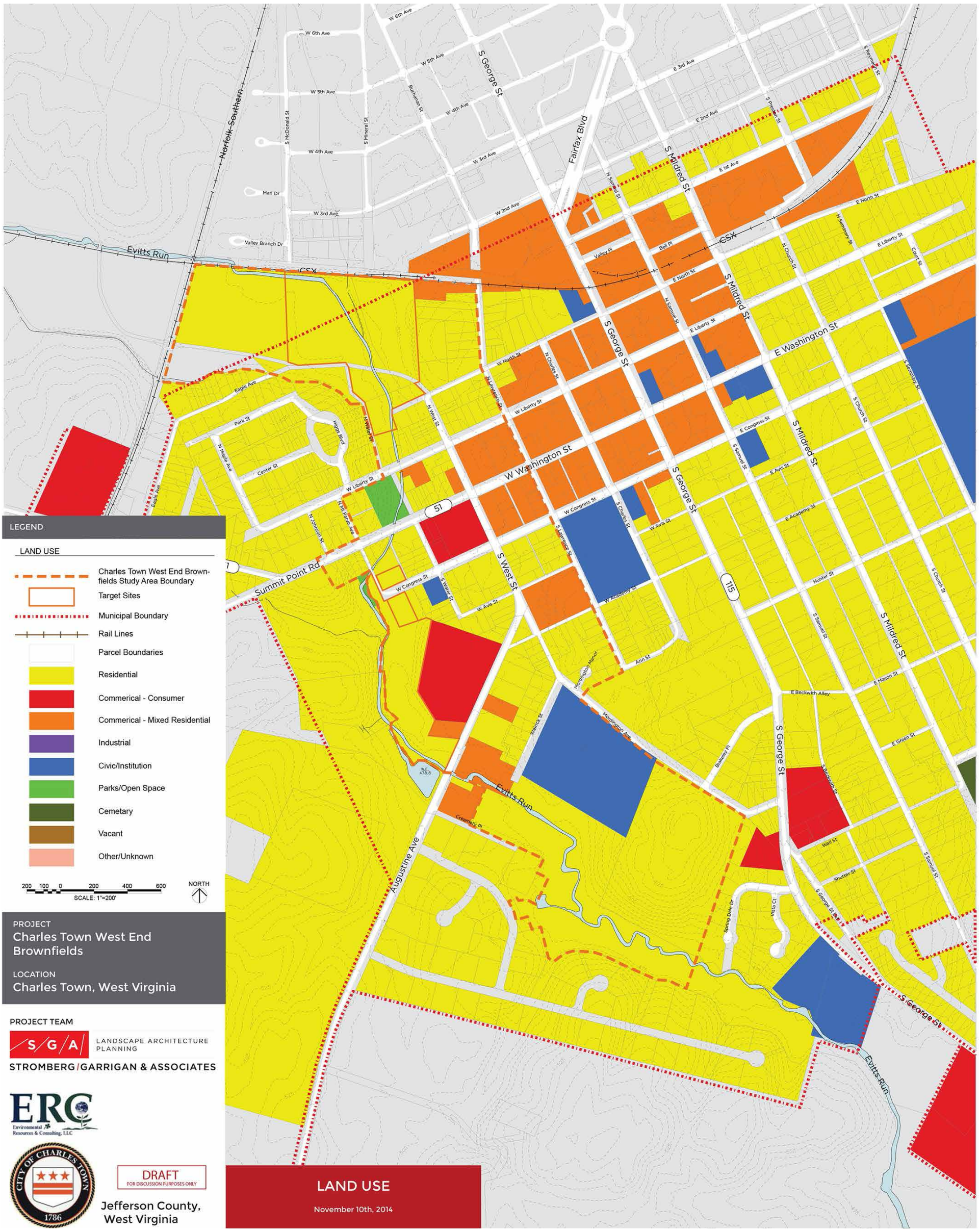
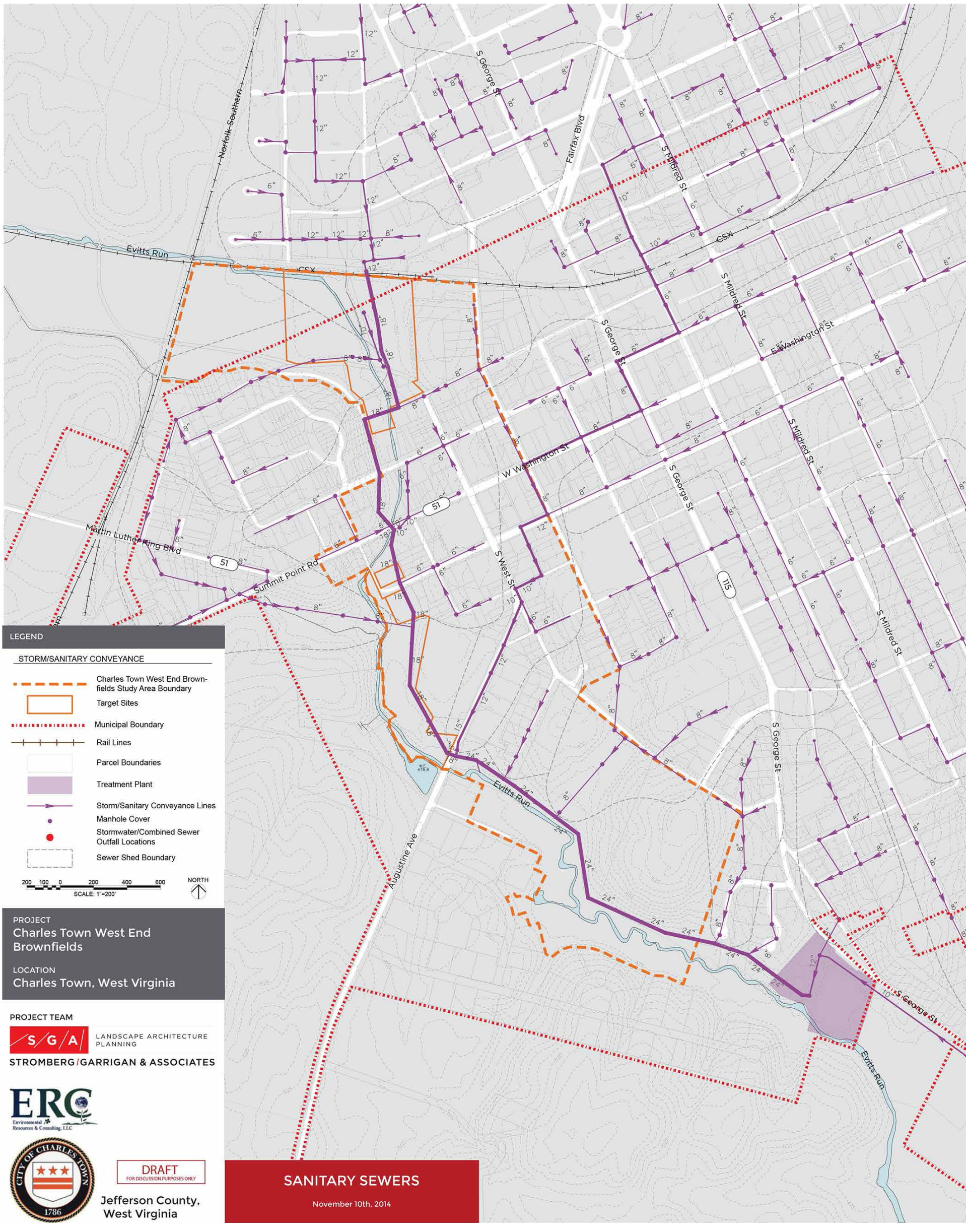
Jefferson County, West Virginia
CIRCULATION
November 10th, 2014

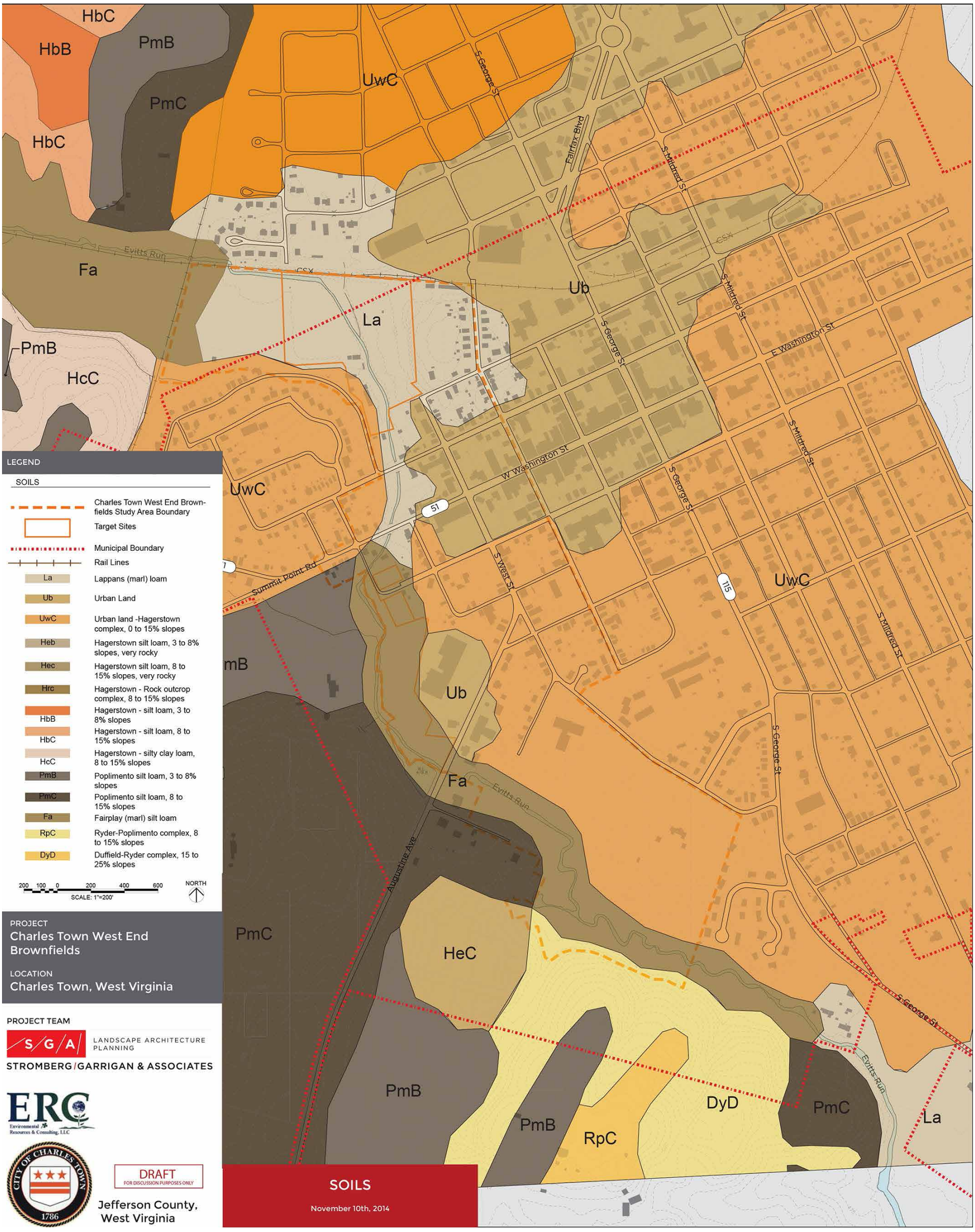

Norfolk Southern
Evitts Run
CSX
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
E Washington St
W Washington St
51
115
Summit Point Rd
S West St
Augustine Ave
LEGEND
FLOOD PRONE AREAS
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Rail Lines
Municipal Boundary
Parcel Boundaries
FEMA FLOODWAY
FEMA AE Flood Zone
(1% Chance of a flood event annually)
FEMA X Flood Zone
(0.2% or less Chance of a flood event annually)
FEMA Base Flood Elevations for Evitts Run
Elev. #
Stormwater/Combined Sewer Outfall Locations
Evitts Run Watershed
Wetlands
Regional Watershed
Sub-Watershed
5 Foot Contours
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC
Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT
FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
FLOOD PRONE AREAS
November 10th, 2014

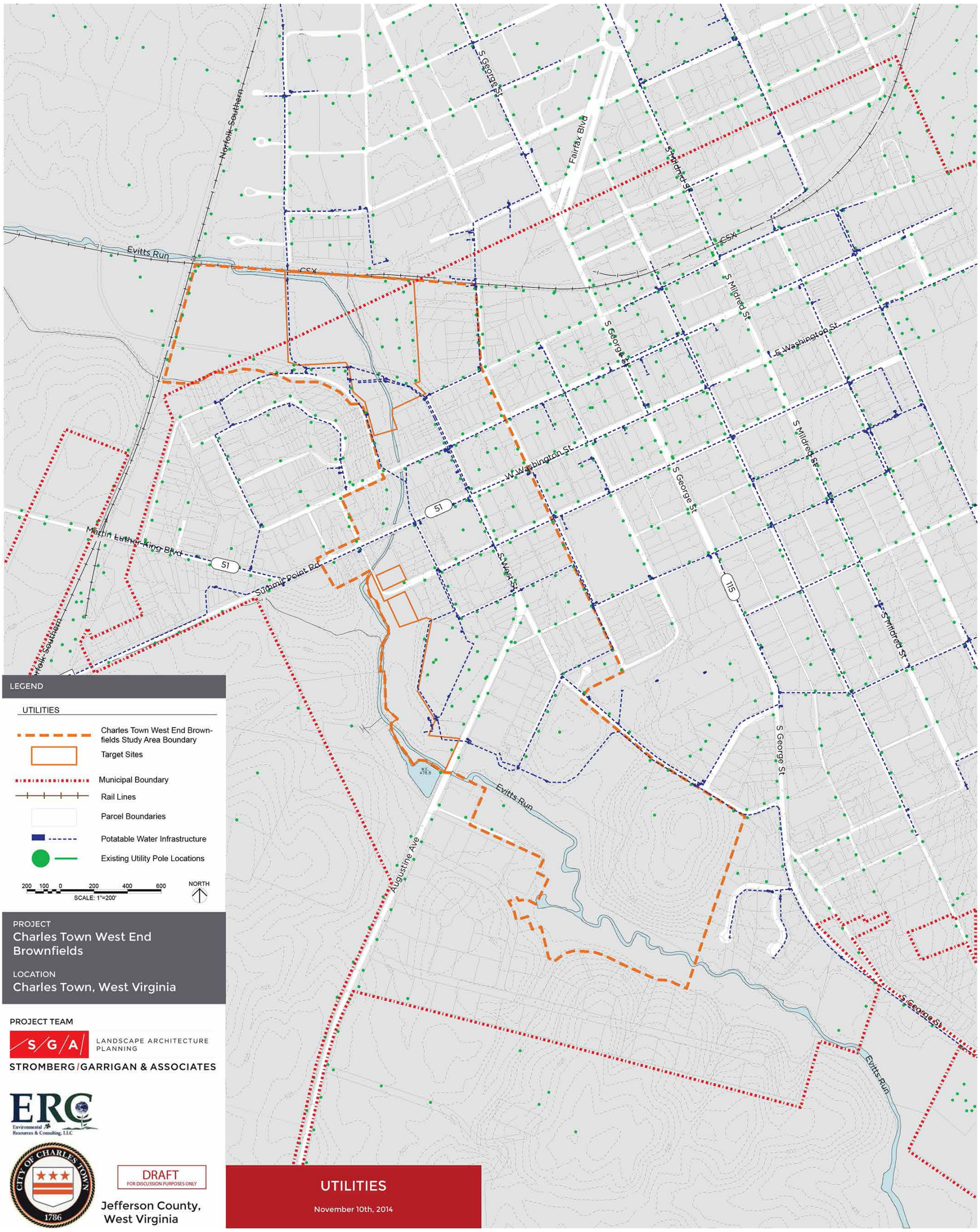

Norfolk Southern
Evitts Run
CSX
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
E Washington St
W Washington St
Martin Luther King Blvd
Summit Point Rd
51
115
S West St
Augustine Ave
W.E. 478.8
LEGEND
GEOLOGY
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
Rail Lines
Geologic Folds
Karst Areas
Sink Holes
Cave Entrances
Approximate Cave Areas
Conococheague Limestone
Elbrook Formation
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
GEOLOGY
November 10th, 2014

APPENDIX B - SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING




Norfolk Southern
Evitts Run
CSX
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
W Washington St
E Washington St
Martin Luther King Blvd
Summit Point Rd
S West St
Augustine Ave
51
115
LEGEND
STORM/SANITARY CONVEYANCE
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
Rail Lines
Parcel Boundaries
Treatment Plant
Storm/Sanitary Conveyance Lines
Manhole Cover
Stormwater/Combined Sewer Outfall Locations
Sewer Shed Boundary
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
SANITARY SEWERS
November 10th, 2014


HbC
HbB
PmB
PmC
HbC
UwC
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
Evitts Run
CSX
Fa
La
Ub
PmB
HcC
E Washington St
W Washington St
51
Summit Point Rd
S West St
115
UwC
mB
Ub
Fa
Augustine Ave
PmC
HeC
PmB
PmB
RpC
DyD
PmC
La
LEGEND
SOILS
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
Rail Lines
La Lappans (marl) loam
Ub Urban Land
UwC Urban land -Hagerstown complex, 0 to 15% slopes
Heb Hagerstown silt loam, 3 to 8% slopes, very rocky
Hec Hagerstown silt loam, 8 to 15% slopes, very rocky
Hrc Hagerstown - Rock outcrop complex, 8 to 15% slopes
HbB Hagerstown - silt loam, 3 to 8% slopes
HbC Hagerstown - silt loam, 8 to 15% slopes
HcC Hagerstown - silty clay loam, 8 to 15% slopes
PmB Poplimento silt loam, 3 to 8% slopes
PmC Poplimento silt loam, 8 to 15% slopes
Fa Fairplay (marl) silt loam
RpC Ryder-Poplimento complex, 8 to 15% slopes
DyD Duffield-Ryder complex, 15 to 25% slopes
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
SOILS
November 10th, 2014


Norfolk Southern
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LEGEND
UTILITIES
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
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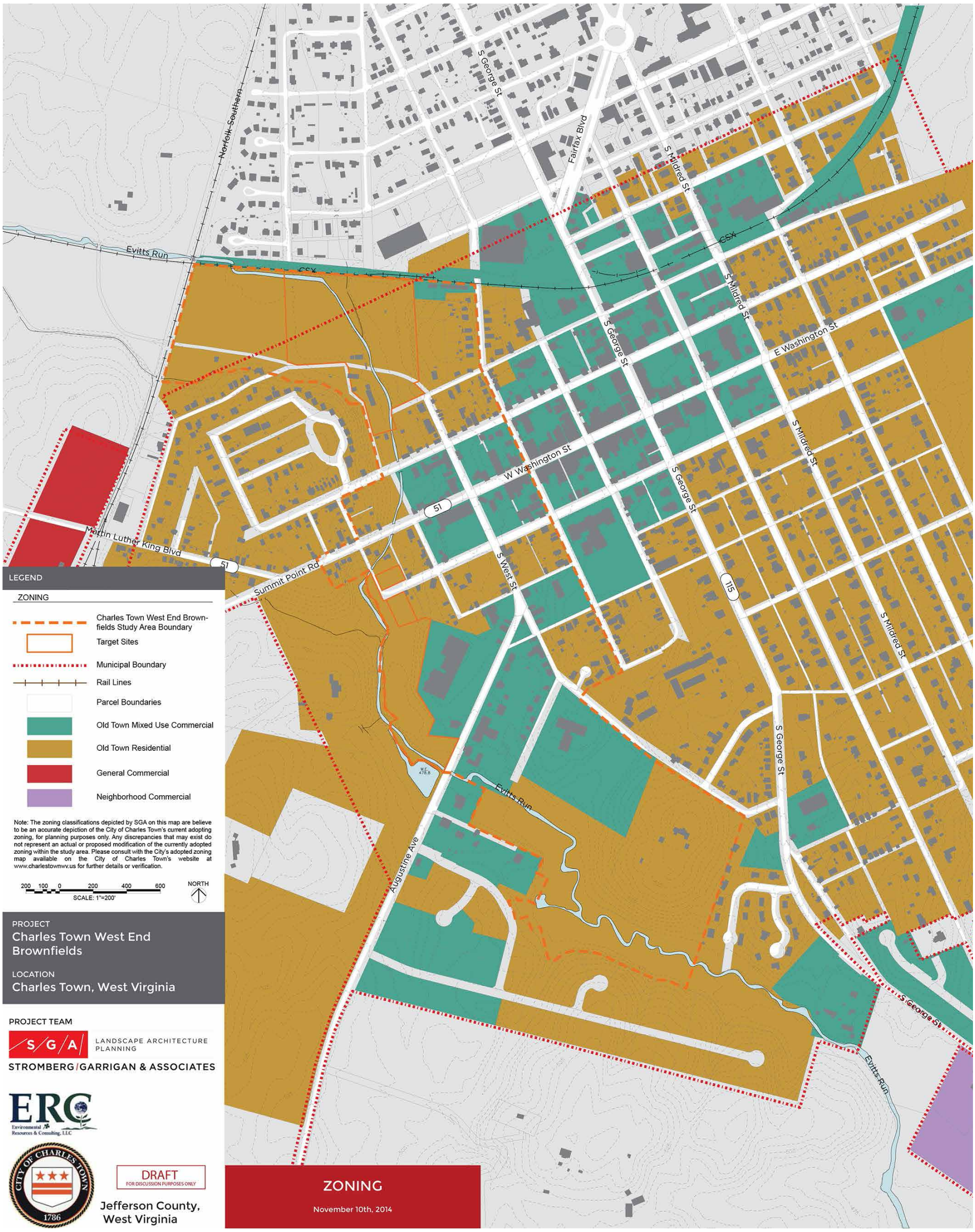
Parcel Boundaries
Potatable Water Infrastructure
Existing Utility Pole Locations
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
UTILITIES
November 10th, 2014


Norfolk Southern
S George St
Fairfax Blvd
S Mildred St
CSX
Evitts Run
E Washington St
W Washington St
51
Martin Luther King Blvd
Summit Point Rd
S West St
115
Augustine Ave
LEGEND
ZONING
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
Rail Lines
Parcel Boundaries
Old Town Mixed Use Commercial
Old Town Residential
General Commercial
Neighborhood Commercial
Note: The zoning classifications depicted by SGA on this map are believe to be an accurate depiction of the City of Charles Town's current adopting zoning, for planning purposes only. Any discrepancies that may exist do not represent an actual or proposed modification of the currently adopted zoning within the study area. Please consult with the City's adopted zoning map available on the City of Charles Town's website at www.charlestownwv.us for further details or verification.
200 100 0 200 400 600
SCALE: 1"=200'
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
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CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
ZONING
November 10th, 2014


Charles Town Skate Park
Evitts Run Park
Jefferson Memorial Park
To Willingham Knolls Park
LEGEND - CONTEXT AERIAL
AERIAL
Charles Town West End Brown-fields Study Area Boundary
Target Sites
Municipal Boundary
400 200 0 400 800 1200
SCALE: 1"=400
NORTH
PROJECT
Charles Town West End Brownfields
LOCATION
Charles Town, West Virginia
PROJECT TEAM
S/G/A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE PLANNING
STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC Environmental Resources & Consulting, LLC
CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY
Jefferson County, West Virginia
CONTEXT AERIAL
November 7th, 2014

APPENDIX B - SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING



C

APPENDIX C
ROUNDABOUT CASE STUDIES

Roundabouts

Popularity of this type of circular intersection has only recently begun to increase within the United States. Prior to the FHWA publication "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide" there were no existing national guidelines to assist transportation professionals and engineers in developing and implementing roundabouts. Roundabouts also provide a number of advantages over traditional signalized stop controlled designs. These advantages include the following:

Increased Safety

- Roundabouts have fewer vehicle-vehicle conflict points than conventional four-leg intersections (8 vehicle-vehicle conflict points in a roundabout vs. 32 vehicle-vehicle conflict points in a conventional intersection).
- Roundabouts require vehicles that are entering or exiting to travel at lower speeds in a single direction, providing overall safer conditions.
- The geometric layout of a roundabout eliminates hazardous conflicts such as left-turn, head-on, and right-angle crashes. Roundabouts have been shown to reduce fatal crashes by 90 percent, injury crashes by 75 percent, pedestrian crashes by 30-40 percent, and bicycle crashes by 10 percent. These decreases are due to the entry angle being reduced from 90 degrees to 60 degrees, lower speeds, and the elimination of vehicles traveling in opposite directions.

Traffic Calming

- Reduced vehicle speeds in roundabouts have a traffic calming effect.

Increased Capacity/Reduced Delay

- During peak periods roundabouts typically carry 30 percent more vehicles than comparable signalized intersections.
- Roundabouts do not require yellow and red signal intervals, resulting in higher capacity and lower delays than signalized intersections, particularly during off-peak periods.
- Vehicles are able to enter roundabouts from each leg simultaneously.

Environment & Aesthetics

- Roundabouts can lower noise and air pollution through reductions in the number of acceleration/deceleration cycles and vehicle idling
- Fuel consumption is reduced.

Reduced Maintenance

- Roundabouts are self-regulating, whereas a signal requires periodic adjustments to its timing sequence.



Morgantown, WV
Photo Credit: Kim Carr, WV LTAP



Linglestown, Dauphin County, PA
Photo Credit: PennDOT



Spring Grove, York County, PA
Photo Credit: PennDOT

D

APPENDIX D
HAPPY RETREAT COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN



HAPPY RETREAT FOREST
COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN

The City of Charles Town, WV has been working with the WV Division of Forestry, the non-profit Friends of Happy Retreat (FOHR), several other organizations and the general public to create a plan for the conservation and management of 10-acres of mature forestland located at the "Happy Retreat" estate of Charles Washington, town founder and brother of George Washington. This forestland, which is the largest and last remaining tract of significant forest acreage in the entire municipal jurisdiction, is under threat of intensive development. It is also a centerpiece of a broader initiative to conserve, restore and use lands along the shore of the Evitts Run Creek in Charles Town for recreational, nature, and economic development purposes. This document represents the culmination of years of planning and a robust community engagement effort to protect the Happy Retreat Forest for future generations.

This Happy Retreat Community Forestry Plan examines and makes recommendations on the following:

- ✓ A description of the Happy Retreat Forest property;
- ✓ Objectives for the Happy Retreat Forest;
- ✓ Community benefits to be achieved from the establishment of the Happy Retreat Forest;
- ✓ Community involvement process for development and implementation of the Happy Retreat Forest plan;
- ✓ Implementation strategies for achieving the Happy Retreat Community Forest Plan;
- ✓ Plans for further improvements at the Happy Retreat Forest;
- ✓ Planned public access to the Happy Retreat Forest; and
- ✓ A description of the long-term use and management of the property.



THE "HAPPY RETREAT FOREST"

Description of Property: The Happy Retreat estate is located in Charles Town, WV, the county seat of Jefferson County in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, which is part of the fast-growing Baltimore-Washington DC Metropolitan Statistical Area. Charles Town is located approximately in the middle of Jefferson County, and Happy Retreat is located in the west end of the community, just outside of its central business district and the original neighborhoods laid out by Charles Washington in the 1780s. This property was first surveyed by a young George Washington in 1750, and we encourage you to watch this short video about Washington's time in the region (including the words from Washington's 1747 diary in which he speaks rapturously of the trees he found in this place. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE48fcfJbxs. Charles and his wife Mildred Washington are buried on (what is now) an adjacent property that is a municipal park. Happy Retreat is located immediately adjacent to the Evitts Run Creek, the only waterbody in Charles Town and a tributary of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers, which flow to the Chesapeake Bay (Charles Town is part of the Bay watershed and TMDL water pollution cleanup area). The land also includes an area of less than an acre that is a wetland, adjacent to the Evitts Run Creek.

The entire Happy Retreat estate is 12.2 acres, and includes the historic mansion of Charles Washington and other historic outbuildings. The Happy Retreat Forest is the section of this property at the west and south of the Happy Retreat mansion, composed of 10 of the 2.2 acres of the total estate. Under the arrangement with the private sellers of the land, the Friends of Happy Retreat will purchase the mansion and other buildings on a 2.2 acre parcel that is not related to this forestry plan and that will not involve USFS funding, while the City of Charles Town is under contract to purchase in fee simple a 10-acre parcel of the Happy Retreat estate that is nearly totally covered by forest.

Current Land Uses: The 10-acre Happy Retreat Forest has been forested and in a natural state for 100+ years, with no roads, structures, utilities, or other improvements. It is the largest tract of forested land anywhere in Charles Town's 5.81 square miles, which is urbanized and growing.

Forest Type and Vegetative Cover: The Happy Retreat Forest is covered by a full stand of undisturbed, mature trees, some 100+ years in age. These consist of deciduous Appalachian hardwood trees including oak, hickory, locust, black walnut, maple, and Osage orange. The forest is disturbed, especially in the shrub layer, by invasive plants and vines.



Zoning and Land Regulations: The Happy Retreat Forest property is zoned Old Town Residential (OT-R) under the City of Charles Town zoning code and standards. This means that, by-right, landowners may pursue development including single family, duplex, apartment, and church uses and, by special exception, may pursue development including condos and townhouses, group homes, university/college for professional and management development, training center, museum, or bed & breakfast uses.

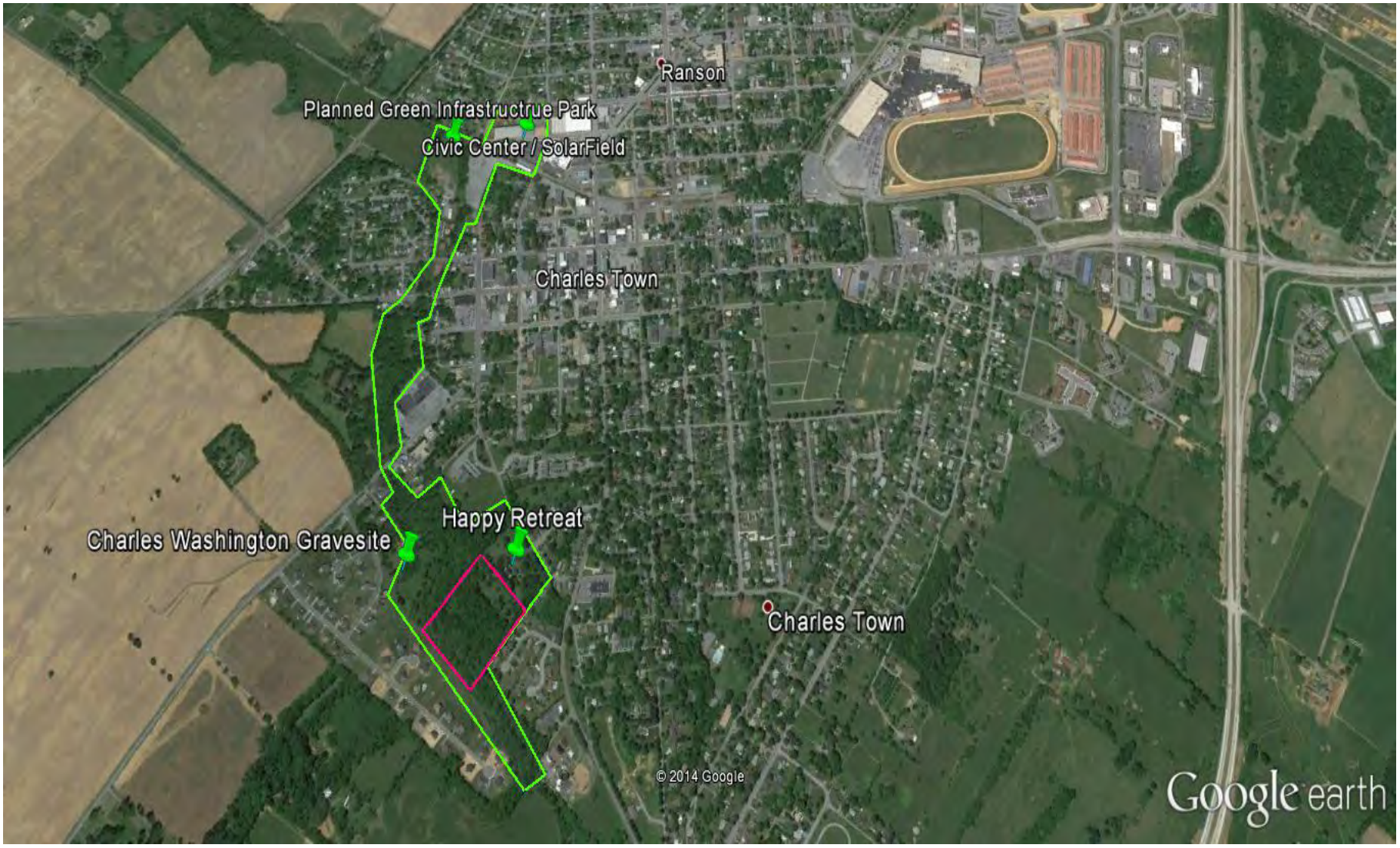
The zoning code permits these uses at high density on "Net Buildable Area", which is determined by subtracting wetlands, riparian buffers, floodplain area, sinkholes, public rights-of-ways and

easements, private streets and access corridors, and areas dedicated to stormwater management, from gross lot area. Based on the review of the Charles Town Planning & Zoning Director, and an appraisal and analysis of highest and best use, it is estimated that Net Buildable Area at Happy Retreat under the law could produce intensive development of up to 25 separate lots with significant single-family, townhouse, condo, and multi-family residential development.

Threats to Conservation by Non-Forest Uses: Given the by-right zoning and buildable area at Happy Retreat and, more alarmingly, the high desire of the private landowners to maximize land sale price and their stated willingness to sell the property for intensive development, this forest is at high risk. The Happy Retreat estate is surrounded on all sides by development. The family has been trying to sell the property since 2000 and, with the death of the Gavin elders in 2010 and 2011, the heirs have been undertaking an extensive effort to sell the property that has been hindered only by the real estate downturn in our area, particularly for expensive properties. As our residential market has picked up and the family has dropped the price of the property to a third of their original asking price, the Gavin heirs have now been receiving increased inquiries via their real estate broker and, in late 2014, firm offers. The lower sales price, the threat of loss of this forest and historic estate, and other circumstances (primarily the approach of splitting the mansion from the forest so that the City did not need to maintain the house) produced the political will in Charles Town to find the resources to obtain this property. Thankfully, Charles Town entered into a land sales contract with the Gavin estate in the last week of 2014, after a December 17 City Council voted to provide $175,000 in match funding for the purchase, and authorized staff to seek other sources of funding to complete the $350,000 purchase. But the sellers insist that the transaction be closed in 2015, or they will again seek sale on the market.

See the Google Earth image below for a map of the Happy Retreat Forest and the broader Evitts Run Creek revitalization initiative, in the context of downtown Charles Town and surrounding neighborhoods.

EVITTS RUN CREEK REVITALIZATION PROJECT AREA / HAPPY RETREAT FOREST CONSERVATION PROJECT AREA



Objectives for the Happy Retreat Community Forest:

The objectives of the Happy Retreat Forest project are to:

1.) Preserve the largest remaining forested area in the community.

2.) Enable the critical purchase of the overall Happy Retreat estate.

3.) Complete the Evitts Run revitalization initiative in this underserved area of the city, which will provide a continuous green space, walking trail, streamside access, and opportunities for park, recreational, natural area, and environmental education activities for citizens and visitors of all ages.

4.) Provide, for the first time since the founding of this city and nation, public access to this Happy Retreat forest resource.

5.) Protect and expand the inadequate urban tree cover in Charles Town and the Jefferson County region. The "Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plans & Goals" established by the community in 2011 in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, the WV Division of Forestry, the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Cacapon Institute has set a goal to increase Charles Town's tree canopy by 1% by 2030 (to 22%, requiring 48 more acres), and called for "increasing tree canopy coverage along key riparian buffers within watersheds that contain primary streams that directly enter the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers, such as Evitts Run." *See* www.jeffersoncountywv.org/uploads/planning/UTC_Final%20Approved%2011%203%2011%20%28Read-Only%29.pdf at p. 14. Charles Town's ability to reach these goals will definitely depend on its ability to acquire and maintain the Happy Retreat Forest.

Community Benefits of the Happy Retreat Forest Plan: The conservation of the Happy Retreat Forest will have multiple benefits that are considered at the highest level of priority for the community). These community benefits will include the following economic benefits, environmental and clean water benefits, stormwater management, and wildlife habitat preservation, environmental and forest-based experiential learning, recreational benefits, and replicable models of effective forest stewardship:

- ✓ **Forest and Habitat Preservation:** These trees have been at Happy Retreat for 100+ years. The conservation of the Happy Retreat Forest will conserve a mature hardwood forest that is the last remaining forest of this size anywhere in the city, and one of Charles Town's only significant wildlife habitats.
- ✓ **Historic Preservation & Heritage Tourism:** This Forest is essential to the broader project to buy the entire Happy Retreat estate, so that the land can be used as a natural and recreational area, and the Washington Family mansion can be used as a heritage center for the community and region. Happy Retreat was built in 1780 by Charles Washington, who founded the city and helped shape the westward expansion of America, as George Washington and other significant figures met to plan the expansion of canals, infrastructure, and federal installations. The Happy Retreat center will be used as a space for recreation and enjoyment of nature, heritage tourism, community festivals and events, museum exhibitions, and the potential home of the George Washington Institute of Living Ethics. *See* www.HappyRetreat.org. As heritage tourism is one of the most economically prosperous industries in Charles Town and Jefferson County, the Happy Retreat Forest project will help boost this sector.



- ✓ **Community Park & Recreational Development:** The City of Charles Town and the municipal non-profit the Evitts Run Conservancy have acquired most of the riparian lands bordering the Evitts Run Creek within the city limits, with the Happy Retreat Forest land the last remaining piece to obtain. These creekfront properties are slated to become a park, recreational, nature preserve, and environmental education corridor. Charles Town recently held a series of community planning charrettes for this Evitts Run Creek revitalization project, working together with some of the region's best park, ecological, and land use planning experts. This overall Evitts Run effort will culminate in the first quarter of 2015 with a master plan for the preservation and use of the Evitts Run corridor for community benefit, including a final version of this Happy Retreat Community Forest Plan. Charles Town is underway now with a major initiative to design a continuous, streamside walking, hiking and biking pathway along the Evitts Run Creek, which will include a recreational trail through the Happy Retreat Forest up to the historic Washington estate. Note also that the Evitts Run Creek in the immediate area of the Happy Retreat Forest is one of the best trout fishing streams in the region, and is regularly stocked by the WV Department of Natural Resources.



See the colored and labeled maps below for a view of how the conservation of the Happy Retreat Forest fits into the broader conservation and revitalization plan for the Evitts Run Creek corridor.

Access to Nature in an Economically-Distressed Neighborhood: The area of Charles Town surrounding the Happy Retreat project area is the most economically-distressed and underserved area of the city, with 8.8% unemployment, 20.1% of people with disabilities, 13.4% living in poverty, and where 27% of people are minorities – all significantly higher than the surrounding area. One top priority of this forest and open space conservation project is to provide access to nature and recreation for the residents of this distressed section of the community, which is why the Jefferson County NAACP and the African American Community Association are strong and active partners in this endeavor. Indeed, the headquarters of the African American Community Association and NAACP, the historic and now-restored Fisherman Hall, is located within a few hundred, walkable yards from the Happy Retreat estate and Forest, on the same street. *See, e.g.* http://www.wvcommerce.org/travel/travelplanner/listing/Fisherman-Hall/5713/default.aspx. Further, the Happy Retreat Forest project will be a direct benefit to the Boys & Girls Club of Jefferson County, which is the main community service organization for economically disadvantaged and at-risk youth in the region; the Boys & Girls Club is located on the Evitts Run directly upstream from the Happy Retreat Forest, and will be accessible by a planned Creekside walking path between these two community assets.



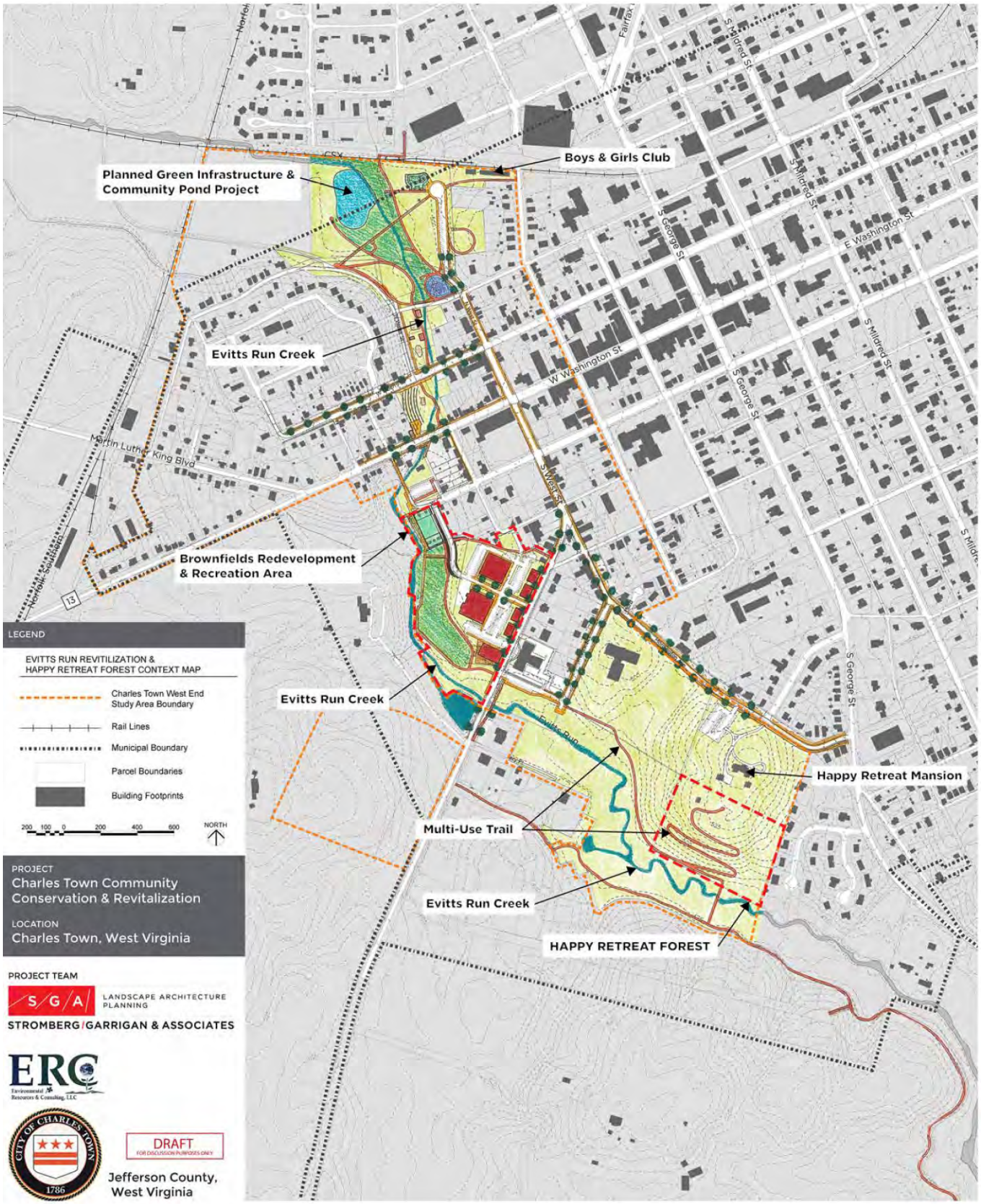
- ✓ **Brownfields Revitalization:** The land acquired by the City on the Evitts Run Creek immediately upstream of the Happy Retreat Forest includes a number of polluted and long-closed factories, dumps, and former industrial areas. These revitalization of these brownfields is a major initiative by Charles Town in partnership with the WV Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. EPA, which has provided $900,000 in grant funding, leveraged with $250,000+ in private resources for the cleanup and reuse of these lands as community recreation and ecological preservation areas. *See* http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/E32240278E0695DF85257D350054D0E1. All of this is well underway and highly complementary with the Happy Retreat project, which will provide a preserved forest and nature area anchoring one end of the brownfield revitalization corridor.
- ✓ **Watershed Protection & Stormwater Management:** One of the brownfields targeted for revitalization just upstream on the Evitts Run from the Happy Retreat Forest is slated for a major community pond project that will function as a green infrastructure / stormwater management facility together with raingardens, bioswales, and urban tree planting. This work was funded by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay Stewardship program, to help Charles Town control stormwater pollution impacting the Evitts Run Creek, Shenandoah River, Potomac River, and Chesapeake Bay. Preserving and increasing the urban tree canopy in Charles Town is critical to this watershed effort, as the USFS National Priority Planting Index has found that Jefferson County (where Charles Town is located) ranks in the highest PPI percentile and among the highest priority counties for urban canopy improvements in the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed. Charles Town has already



commenced a tree planting and native landscaping project just upstream of the Happy Retreat Forest on the Evitts Run, which will complement the preservation and stewardship at Happy Retreat. Further, the Happy Retreat Forest is directly on this Evitts Run Creek and a wetlands area, and the preservation of the Forest will protect those water quality values.

- ✓ **Environmental Education:** Charles Town will continue to use the Evitts Run corridor, and the Happy Retreat Forest, as a center for environmental education on clean water, clean energy, brownfields revitalization, public health and forest conservation, through partnerships with the K-12 school system, collaboration with the Jefferson County Watershed Coalition, teaming with the Boys & Girls Club, and expanding use of environmental education kiosks and signage on these lands. We also note that this Evitts Run corridor also includes the largest solar energy facility (and electric vehicle charging center) in the entire State of West Virginia.

Relationship of Happy Retreat Forest to the Broader Evitts Run Conservation & Revitalization: For much of Charles Town's long history, we have neglected and abused the Evitts Run Creek. The Evitts Run corridor stretching between the northern border of Charles Town down through Happy Retreat has brownfields including a dead manufacturing complex, a former dump, and a contaminated former manufactured gas plant. The Creek is so overgrown at most locations that there is no water access for the public, and much of this land has been in private hands. Now, Charles Town has established the municipal non-profit the Evitts Run Conservancy, and acquired almost the entire riparian area within the City. Charles Town acquired nine acres immediately across the Creek from the Happy Retreat Forest, and worked with partners to restore the Charles & Mildred Washington Gravesite located there, as well as and construct a walking/biking patch along the Creek on this acreage. In 2014, Charles Town acquired another six acres on the Creek in the area between the Happy Retreat Forest and downtown. And Charles Town holds title to the existing Evitts Run Park and key waterside brownfield areas north of downtown that are slated for green infrastructure and recreational access. As Mayor Peggy Smith says, the "crown jewel" of this overall Evitts Run Creek conservation and revitalization initiative will be Happy Retreat, which is threatened, yet now under contract, but in need of resources. See the attached maps for a view of the context of the Happy Retreat Forest initiative.


Planned Green Infrastructure & Community Pond Project
Boys & Girls Club
Evitts Run Creek
Brownfields Redevelopment & Recreation Area
Evitts Run Creek
Multi-Use Trail
Evitts Run Creek
Happy Retreat Mansion
HAPPY RETREAT FOREST
W Washington St
E Washington St
S George St
S Mildred St
Martin Luther King Blvd
Norfolk Southern
CSX
Fairfax
S Wesley St
Evitts Run
LEGEND
EVITTS RUN REVITILIZATION & HAPPY RETREAT FOREST CONTEXT MAP
Charles Town West End Study Area Boundary
Rail Lines
Municipal Boundary
Parcel Boundaries
Building Footprints
200 100 0 200 400 600
NORTH
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STROMBERG/GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
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CITY OF CHARLES TOWN 1786
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Jefferson County, West Virginia


Happy Retreat Mansion
10 - Acre Happy Retreat Forest
Multi-Use Trails
NORTH
HAPPY RETREAT FOREST MAP
Charles Town Community
Charles Town, West Virginia
S G A
STROMBERG GARRIGAN & ASSOCIATES
ERC
DRAFT
Jefferson County
West Virginia

Community Involvement: The entire County, State, and region will benefit from the preservation of Happy Retreat, the conservation of its forest, and its role in the overall Evitts Run revitalization initiative. Charles Town itself has 5,000+ residents who, along with the adjacent City of Ranson's 5,000 citizens, have been in close collaboration on this overall Evitts Run strategy, and who will be the direct and closest beneficiaries of this Happy Retreat Forest conservation initiative. This project is centered in the poorest Census tract, with the highest percentage of minorities, in Jefferson County (Tract 9725.05), and the new access to nature for these 2,500+ citizens will be a major benefit to the community.

The Happy Retreat Forest project is the culmination of 15 years of robust, community-driven planning about the revitalization of the community. Starting with an EPA Brownfields planning grant in 2000 (and continuing with seven more EPA brownfield grants), Charles Town and its partner city Ranson have convened a comprehensive community process that has included four major charrettes, more than a dozen community meetings and workshops, more than a dozen City Council public discussions, web site outreach, and other engagement.



The public engagement process became even more intense when the City of Charles Town sponsored the creation of the non-profit Friends of Happy Retreat (www.HappyRetreat.org) to build community support for the preservation of the Happy Retreat property, and as FOHR commissioned public outreach campaigns, surveys, and public events. The conservation and public use of Happy Retreat emerged as a high-priority issues over the course of 2014, as the potential threat to the property became more apparent. Thus, two of the public charrettes took place recently in November and December 2014, and involved direct discussion and a site tour with a variety of citizens and community groups on the preservation of Happy Retreat and its forest. These charrettes involved the Mayor, City Manager, all of the City Council members, more than a dozen community organizations (listed below), and more than 50 engaged citizens. All of these activities were publicly advertised in the press, and covered extensively by the media. It was during this 2014 period and these community discussions that the preservation of the Happy Retreat forest as a public park and natural area emerged as a reality. The Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission held a public hearing and the preservation of the Happy Retreat 10 acres, as did the Charles Town Historic Landmarks Commission. These considerations included specific collaboration and analysis of the preservation of trees for aesthetic, stormwater management, and recreational purposes, and produced the Happy Retreat Community Forestry Plan included with this application.

Key Organizations Supporting the Happy Retreat Forest Project: All of the following organizations have been directly involved in this project, and strongly support the preservation of Happy Retreat and its forest:

- ✓ **City of Charles Town** – Will purchase, own, utilize and maintain the Happy Retreat Forest
- ✓ **Friends of Happy Retreat** – will purchase, own, utilize and maintain the Happy Retreat estate, under the leadership of its President (and direct descendant) Walter Washington

- ✓ **WV Division of Forestry** – has been asked to provide forest steward planning and technical assistance for Happy Retreat Forest and surrounding Evitts Run green spaces
- ✓ **Evitts Run Conservancy** – will own and maintain Evitts Run corridor properties for public access (but not the Happy Retreat Forest)
- ✓ **Jefferson County NAACP** – will ensure that under-served citizens of Charles Town's west end are engaged in implementation of Happy Retreat conservation initiative
- ✓ **African American Community Association of Jefferson County** – will likewise ensure citizen engagement
- ✓ **Discover Downtown Charles Town** – will encourage merchant and small business involvement in the use of the Happy Retreat Forest
- ✓ **Jefferson County Watershed Coalition** – will continue to support the protection of the Evitts Run Creek and Chesapeake Bay watershed on and around the Happy Retreat Forest
- ✓ **Jefferson County Historic Society** – Will support historic interpretation, celebrations, and research on the Happy Retreat estate
- ✓ **Charles Town Historic Landmarks Commission** – will help celebrate and protect the heritage of the Happy Retreat estate
- ✓ **Jefferson Arts Council** – Will foster arts and cultural events on Happy Retreat estate
- ✓ **Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau** – will promote heritage tourism for Happy Retreat
- ✓ **Shepherd University** – is considering the establishment of the Happy Retreat mansion as the home for the George Washington Institute for Living Ethics
- ✓ **American Public University System** – Located on the Evitts Run Corridor, APUS's President and CEO is a major supporter of the Happy Retreat project, and the Chairman of the Happy Retreat Leaders Council (sponsors and patrons)
- ✓ **Claymont Society for Continuous Education** – based at the largest Washington Family estate in America, Claymont Court, will help educate the public about the heritage of these lands. See www.Claymont.org.
- ✓ **Boys & Girls Club of Jefferson County** – will foster use of Happy Retreat Forest for recreation and environmental education for youth and underserved families.

IMPLEMENTING HAPPY RETREAT COMMUNITY FOREST OBJECTIVES –
The plan is as follows:

1.) **Action #1:** Acquire the Happy Retreat Forest
   a. *Use $175,000 in funding committed from City Council, and $175,000 from potential USFS Community Forestry Program grant*
   b. *Create backup plan for acquisition funding if CFP grant is not awarded, including private donors or bank loans*

   Timeframe: Summer 2015

2.) **Action #2:** Confirm City determination to maintain the Happy Retreat Forest in fully forested state
   a. *Pass City Council resolution affirming commitment to keep in forested state*
   b. *Consider deed restriction prohibiting removal of Forest*

   Timeframe: Summer/Fall 2015

3.) **Action #3:** Assess and inventory beneficial trees and challenges to their health, maintenance, and potential for public use and enjoyment
   a. *Work with Charles Town Tree Board volunteers and local garden clubs and Scouting organizations*
   b. *Request technical assistance from the WV Division of Forestry, including potential Forest Stewardship resources*
   c. *Consider procuring expert forest/tree consulting firms to assist process*

   Timeframe: Late 2015/Early 2016

4.) **Action #4:** Develop plan for control and eradication of invasive and exotic plant species and vines from Happy Retreat Forest
   a. Utilize fire, mechanical, biological, and chemical means to establish invasive exotic species control.
   b. Utilize appropriate means to minimize exotic plant reinvasion following spoil removal.
   c. Coordinate invasive exotic plant control activities with adjacent landowners and on City-owned Evitts Run riparian forested lands to minimize re-infestation from untreated areas outside project boundaries.

   Timeframe: 2016

5.) **Action #5:** Connect the Happy Retreat Forest to the broader Evitts Run Creek Revitalization Corridor for habitat, water quality, recreation, aesthetic and other goals.
   a. Direct land use planning consultants to consider the Happy Retreat Forest in context of broader community conservation and revitalization initiatives
   b. Prioritize investments in trail, biking and walkability connections along Evitts Run corridor and to key community assets and hubs
   c. Connect through maps, marketing and outreach materials, tourism outreach and other information
   d. Connect through wayfinding and interpretive signage, and educational kiosks

   Timeframe: 2015-2019

6.) **Action #6:** Establish, refine and implement maintenance plan
   a. *Work with the WV Division of Forestry, the U.S. Forest Service, and other communities to identify best practices for maintenance, and for financing maintenance costs*
   b. *Consider established Park & Recreation fees as source for Forest maintenance*
   c. *Consider new tools such as a Community Enhancement District bonding approach for maintenance*
   d. *Consider training for public works and parks/rec staff in forest management and maintenance skills*
   e. *Consider potential collaborations with Jefferson County and the City of Ranson*

   Timeframe: 2016

7.) **Action #7:** Continue to engage the public in the use and conservation of the Happy Retreat Forest
   a. *Collaborate with stakeholder organizations to inform and engage the public on Happy Retreat Forest*
   b. *Provide web-based, social media, traditional media, and newsletter reports on progress and activities at Happy Retreat Forest*
   c. *Keep the representatives on the City Council informed about activities, progress, and issues at the Happy Retreat Forest*

   Timeframe: Ongoing

Plans for Improvements at Happy Retreat Forest: There are no plans envisioned or expected for any construction or improvements on the Happy Retreat Forest land, including no expectation of any new or expanded roads, utilities, or structures – Charles Town seeks to keep it a forest. However, Charles Town does intend to evaluate, design and hopefully install a nature trail with interpretive and educational signage from the Charles Washington Grave park area and the broader Evitts Run Corridor, up through the Forest, to the back of the Happy Retreat Mansion, to ensure public access and enjoyment of this forestland.

There are no structures on the Happy Retreat Forest property, and so there are no issues with respect to utilization or demolition of structures.

Plan for Public Access to Happy Retreat Forest: The City of Charles Town and its Parks & Recreation Commission will own and manage the Happy Retreat Forest, and hold it in forest and public park use in perpetuity. The Happy Retreat Forest will immediately abut both the Happy Retreat mansion, and Charles Washington Park (the 9 acres of land and gravesite acquired a decade ago). The intent is to place parking and visitor center facilities on the 2 acres owned by the Friends of Happy Retreat (which is providing a permanent right to public access to those lands), and to establish a walking path in the Forest that connects to the broader Evitts Run walking/biking path system which is already partially built, and planned for expansion.

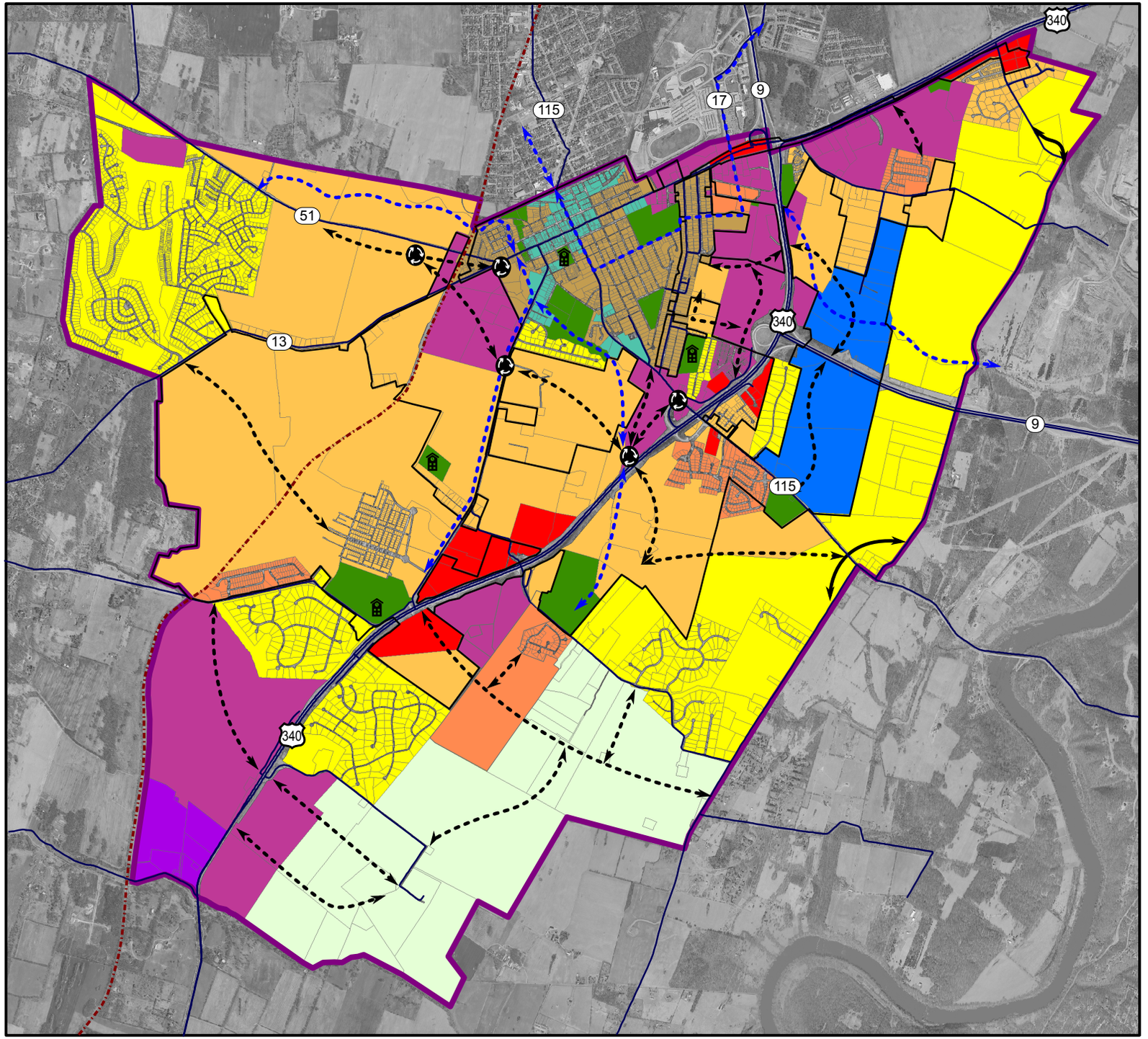
Long-Term Use and Management: Again, the long term use of the Happy Retreat Forest will be to keep it in its full forested state, with expert management to remove invasive species, vines and harmful understory, and to connect this natural area to the Happy Retreat mansion and the broader revitalization and use of the Evitts Run Creek corridor. The City of Charles Town and its Parks & Recreation Department will manage the Forest in collaboration with the WV Division of Forestry and key stakeholder organizations. Maintenance will be undertaken by the City of Charles Town and its Parks & Recreation Department using a dedicated fee collected from taxpayers for Parks & Rec, through City General Funds, and potentially through grants and bonding for the overall improvement of the Evitts Run Corridor.

The people of Charles Town and the many friends of Happy Retreat thank you for your support and consideration!

For more info, contact Charles Town City Manager David Mills at DMills@CharlesTownWV.us or 304.725.2311, x8

CITY OF CHARLES TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

UGB Future Land Use: 10-Year Growth Scenario



Future Land Use Classification

- Urban Agriculture - Rural
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium High Density
- Old Town Residential
- Mixed Use Residential
- Old Town Mixed Use Commercial
- Mixed Use Commercial
- General Commercial
- Professional Office & Institutional District
- Light Industrial
- Public / Quasi Public Land

Proposed Transportation Improvement

- New Road
- New Off-Road Trail
- Improvement to Existing Road
- New Roundabout

Additional Map Elements

- Railroad Track
- Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
- City Boundary
- Public School

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development on 5/26/2017

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1682: Pickleball Courts Grand Opening

Board will discuss planning a pickleball grand opening event.

ATTACHMENTS:

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1683: Happy Retreat Bridge Dedication

Board will discuss planning a bridge dedication event for the bridge at Happy Retreat.

ATTACHMENTS:

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
Department: Board of Parks and Recreation
Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1684: Charles Town Parks and Recreation Maintenance Plan

Board will discuss the adoption of a parks maintenance plan. This item was tabled at the May Parks and Rec Meeting.

ATTACHMENTS:

- CTown P&R Maintenance Plan - Content Guide - Draft - Apr 2026.pdf

Charles Town Parks & Recreation Maintenance Plan
- Content Guide -

1. Authorization: The Charles Town Board of Parks & Recreation has directed the Charles Town Parks Manager to draft a comprehensive parks maintenance plan.

Along with that directive this document has been issued from the board, to the Parks Manager in order to provide guidance on what items should be covered in the Charles Town Parks & Recreation Maintenance Plan. That document must include the below mentioned items, but it is not limited to those items.

2. Intent: To have a consolidated, comprehensive document that covers and guides the who, what, when, where, and why for all maintenance at Charles Town Parks.

The Charles Town Parks & Recreation Maintenance Guide would be:

- The authoritative SOP guiding regular and ongoing maintenance by Parks and City staff
- Valuable resource of information for Charles Town Board of Parks & Recreation to review when making decisions about budget, contracts, master planning, etc.

It is intended to be a living document, updated regularly by Parks Management, operating under the direction of the Charles Town Board of Parks & Rec. A resource that can be passed along from manager to manager, ensuring uninterrupted strategic maintenance of the Charles Town parks system.

3. General Maintenance To Be Documented & Prescribed:

- Mowing / trimming
- Regular Tree maintenance (arborist, stick/limb clean up)
- Brush/other rough clearing / maintenance
- Shrub maintenance
- Mulching (landscaping & play areas)
- Regular equipment inspections
- Snow removal (roads, parking, paths)
- Path maintenance
- Trash removal
- Watering
- Treatments (pest, fertilization, other)
- Disaster response (storm cleanup)
- Pool (Note: The pool will probably require a full SOP itself. That could be included in this document, or this document might directly link to the Pool SOP for maintenance related tasks. However, insofar as the *Parks & Rec Maintenance Guide* includes a high level table or schedule of regular maintenance tasks, pool related maintenance should be noted).

DRAFT

4. Plan Should Include:

- Aerial maps with clearly marked paths, landscaped areas, equipment, etc
- Contract details (who is responsible, scope of work, frequency, costs, points of contact, links to relevant documentation (signed contracts, MOU's etc.))
- High level schedule / table for regular inspections, maintenance, contract renewals etc.
- System for keeping ahead of contract renewals, INS expirations, etc.
- Lists of relevant partners & contractors and their contact information
- Summary table showing general general main schedules, responsible parties, and links to more info.

Example A: Table showing parks, general maintenance, responsible parties, etc.

	Mowing & trimming	Mowing Cost	Mowing Frequency	Mowing Contract Expiration	**Mulching**	Mulching Cost	Mulching Frequency
Evitts Run Park	ABC mowing	Annual contract, $4k	1x week, Mar - Oct	5/1/2030	CTown Maint	$2 cubbed yard, about $2000 for both play grounds	1x yr
Jeff Memorial	123 mowing	$300 per visit	1x week, Mar - Oct	1/1/2028	Chips Mulch Services	$2 cubbed yard, about $5000 for both play grounds, Another $500 for landscaped areas	1x yr

Example B: A calendar or table tracking routine maintenance.

	Grounds	**Equipment**	**Pool**	**Contracts**	**Other**
Feb	Arborist walk through (all parks)	Inspect: -bridges -pavilions		Review all mowing contracts, present to board	
Mar	Check mulch at: -playgrounds -andscaped areas -mulched paths Trim landscaped shrubs	Inspect: -playgrounds -trash receptacles -water stations -bathrooms	See Pool SOP: -Spring Cleaning -Pool deck equipment -Concessions equipment -Start advertising for staff	Finalize mowing contracts	FOHR events tag up
Apr	Cut back growth from walking paths Weekly mowing starts		See Pool SOP: - Pool systems check		
May	Clear undergrowth from play spaces along Evitts run creek (Willingham, Evitts Run, Happy Retreat)		See Pool SOP: -Routine daily, weekly, monthly operations maint.		

DRAFT

DRAFT

Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
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Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1685: Skatepark Bridge Vandalism

Board will discuss solutions to the consistent cases of vandalism at the skatepark bridge.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Skate Park Bridge Vandalism.docx







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101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
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Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1686: Trail Maintenance at Happy Retreat

Board will discuss the state of trail maintenance at Happy Retreat.

ATTACHMENTS:
- HRTrailMaintenance.docx







Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
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Category: Report
Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1687: Manager's Report

Board will receive a report updating the board on various items from the parks and rec manager.

ATTACHMENTS:

- ManagersReport.docx
- PotoEdGDGCIP.pdf

- **Illegal Dumping at Evitts Run Park, Willingham Knolls Park**

Decals have been placed at Evitts Run and Willingham Knolls Park and have stood up to the heat. I have not had time to keep track of their trash levels super consistently, but I have had no complaints as of yet. Two people were caught by city staff dumping at Evitts Run before the decals were placed and police gave them a warning earlier in June.

-






NOTICE
No Pubiic Dumping
Park Patrons Trash ONLY


NOTICE
No Public Dumping
Park Patrons Trash ONLY





Happy Retreat MOU Special Meeting

I have not had the bandwidth to work on directional signage or the COI situation.

Chet used some of the mulch, and what wasn't used was either spread out (there wasn't much according to Jim) or binned and disposed of.

Spoke to Richard Seckinger at WV fest about CBP billing them. Nothing has been sent and I have asked CBP to send over the invoice to his email address twice.

Pickleball Update

Broken pickleball net has been fixed – either a faulty weld or a weld that gave way from overtightening of the net was the cause. The cranks to tighten the nets are no longer on site.



Pickleball paddle rack has been reinstalled at courts.



Willingham Knolls Park

Potomac Edison is doing work in their Gore-Doubs-Goose Creek Improvements Project (See attachment.) I had a concerned citizen reach out about the whole thing. She was concerned about a broken section of fence on old cave. I checked with the city lawyer and discovered that everything is above board.



Google Street View of damaged fencing - 2024

ENERGIZE 365

Gore-Doubs-Goose Creek Improvements Project

Frederick, Clarke and Loudoun counties, Virginia
Jefferson County, West Virginia

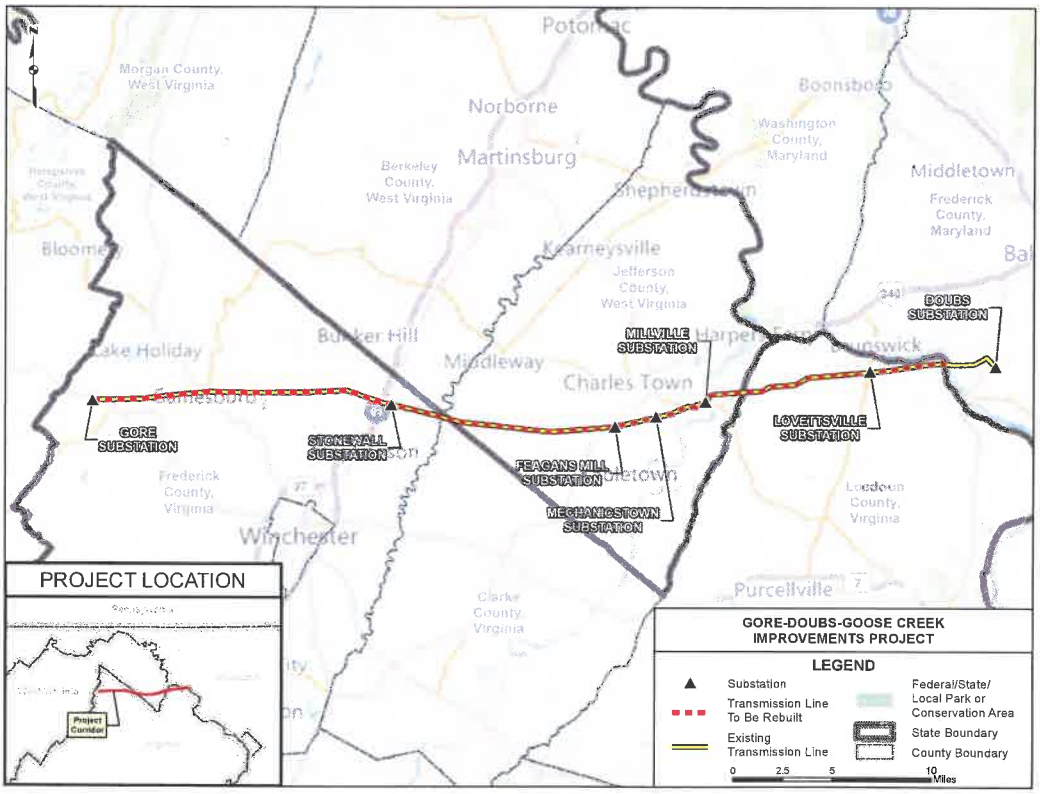
Project Overview

Potomac Edison has been awarded a project by regional transmission organization PJM Interconnection to upgrade its transmission lines in Virginia and West Virginia. The project will primarily utilize existing transmission rights of way, minimizing environmental and community impacts.

Potomac Edison will upgrade approximately 44 miles of an existing 138-kV transmission line to create a double-circuit line with 500-kV wires and 138-kV wires. Starting outside of the Gore Substation in Frederick County, Virginia, the work will utilize an existing right of way that traverses east through Frederick County (17.9 miles); Clarke County, Virginia (0.2 miles); Jefferson County, West Virginia (15.4 miles); and Loudoun County, Virginia (10.5 miles).

Potomac Edison will also build two new 138-kv lines between the Stonewall Substation in Clear Brook, Virginia, and the proposed Woodside Substation nearby.

The project will continue east to the Doubs Substation in Frederick County, Maryland, and then south through Montgomery County, Maryland, toward Dominion Energy's Goose Creek Substation in Virginia. For information about that scope of work, please see the related fact sheet at www.firstenergycorp.com/about/transmission_projects/maryland.html



Potomac Edison's project is related to work that was awarded by PJM to NextEra Energy Transmission, which will construct approximately 105 miles of 500-kV transmission line between Greene County, Pennsylvania, and Frederick County, Virginia. NextEra will also be responsible for constructing the Woodside Substation.

For more information about NextEra's project, please visit www.nexteraenergytransmission.com/midatlantic-resiliency-link.html

Continued

PotomacEdison
A FirstEnergy Company

Benefits

The project will enhance transmission system reliability, accommodate growing demand for electricity by residential and commercial customers, and facilitate the connection of new generation sources. It is one of multiple projects that was awarded in late 2023 by PJM, the grid operator for 13 states, after PJM solicited proposals to address the growing demand for electricity in its territory. The projects will enhance the flow of electricity across the system for all customers and help address the impact of recent power plant retirements in PJM's service territory.

Approvals

Potomac Edison plans to file applications in 2025 with the State Corporation Commission in Virginia and the Public Service Commission of West Virginia seeking approval for the project. In addition, Potomac Edison will obtain all required permits and authorizations from federal, state and local agencies prior to construction.

Preconstruction Activities

Potomac Edison is currently conducting preconstruction activities along the transmission rights of way. To ensure compliance with environmental regulations and complete necessary surveys, our personnel may be seen driving or walking the property, taking measurements, placing boundary flags and occasionally obtaining soil and/or vegetation samples. Some larger geotechnical boring equipment may be used to obtain underground samples. Company representatives will work to keep nearby landowners updated on the project.

Easements

The project will primarily utilize existing transmission rights of way to minimize impacts to landowners, the environment and the community. Potomac Edison plans to acquire new rights of way for the proposed 138-kV lines between the Stonewall and Woodside substations. Potomac Edison also plans to acquire new rights of way around the Stonewall substation as well as the Feagans Mill and Millville substations in Jefferson County.

In some limited areas, the rights of way may need to be expanded to establish required clearances around the transmission lines. Potomac Edison will contact landowners directly to discuss the additional easements required as well as temporary rights necessary to facilitate construction such as access routes, tree clearing and laydown yards.

Permitting

Detailed wetland, stream and other environmental and historical evaluations have been conducted along the existing transmission line corridor in coordination with appropriate governmental agencies. Potomac Edison will obtain all permits required by local, state and federal agencies prior to construction.

Preliminary Project Timeline

Summer 2025	Public information meetings
Fall 2025	Virginia State Corporation Commission and Public Service Commission of West Virginia applications
2027	Construction begins
2030	Project complete and in service

Contact

Please reach out to our dedicated hotline at 888-311-4737 with questions or email us at transmissionprojects@firstenergycorp.com.

About Energize365

Energize365 is a multi-year grid evolution program focused on transmission and distribution investments that will deliver the power FirstEnergy's customers depend on today while also meeting the challenges of tomorrow. With planned investments of $26 billion between 2024 and 2028, the program will create a smarter, more secure grid that will meet and exceed reliability targets and accommodate electric vehicles, the electrification of homes and businesses, and clean energy sources.

About Us

Potomac Edison serves about 285,000 customers in seven counties in Maryland and 155,000 customers in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. The company owns and operates 1,200 miles of transmission lines in Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia and has decades of extensive experience in constructing, operating and maintaining transmission facilities that enhance the reliability of the transmission system. For additional information about our transmission projects, please visit firstenergycorp.com/transmission.

COMM10512-07-25-CV
Produced by FirstEnergy's Communications and Branding Department

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Board of Parks and Recreation
101 East Washington Street
Charles Town, WV 25414

Meeting: 07/09/26
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Initiator:

SCHEDULED

AGENDA ITEM (ID #)

2026-1688: Park Updates: Happy Retreat, Evitts Run Park, Willingham Knolls, Skate Park, Jefferson Memorial Park, Craighill Estates, Other Parkland, Public Comment

Board will discuss any other updates to the parks and be open for public comment.

ATTACHMENTS: