CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

~ AGENDA ~

WORKSHOP

Council Chamber 312 S Mildred Street, Ranson WV 25438
www.ransonwv.gov

July 22, 2025	8:30 P.M.	Council Chamber

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Council Orientation

1.. Elected Official Resources
Emails.pdf

2.. Roles and Responsibilities for Council
Roles and Responsibilities.pdf

3.. West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings
WV Open Meeting Act and Executive Sessions .pdf

4.. West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings - Frequently Asked Questions
Meeting Requirements .pdf

5.. Roberts Rules of Order Reference Guide
Roberts Rule of Order.pdf

6.. Difficult Situations in Council Meetings
How to Handle Difficult Situations in Council Meetings.pdf

7.. 2025 City Council Meeting Schedule
Council Calendar.pdf

8.. Ordinance Overview

9.. Resolution Overview

10.. The West Virginia Ethics Act
The Ethics Act .pdf

11.. Public Employee Recognition And Retirement Guideline
Public Employee Recognition Retirement Guideline.pdf

12.. Invoice Processing & Bill Pay Processing
Ranson Invoice Approval & Bill Pay Process 7.21.2025.pdf

13.. FY 2026 General Operating Budget
FY 2026 General Operating Budget .pdf

14.. FY26 Capital Improvement Budget
Capital Improvement.pdf

15.. Ranson Comprehensive Plan 2024 - 2034
Ranson Comprehensive Plan .pdf

16.. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

17.. City of Ranson Employee Handbook
Employee Handbook.pdf

18.. 2025 Ranson Holiday Calendar
Holiday Schedule.pdf

IV. Adjournment

AGENDA ITEM 1.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Elected Official Resources

Newly Elective Officials Resources of Emails

- Ordinances
- West Virginia Code
- West Virginia Municipal League

ATTACHMENTS:

Emails.pdf

RANSON
AT THE CENTER OF OPPORTUNITY.

Welcome to the team! We're excited to have you on board and look forward to the contributions you'll bring to our organization. As you begin your journey with us, you'll find helpful resources and information below to support your transition and ensure a smooth start in your new role

Newly elected official:

- City email address to be used for official City business
- Business cards
- Mailbox
- A key card will be given to you for access to the building
- W4, Direct Deposit, I9

Resources:

- Ordinances- https://library.municode.com/wv/ranson/codes/code_of_ordinances
- Link to the website for the WV Code- https://code.wvlegislature.gov/
- Link to the West Virginia Municipal League- https://www.wvml.org/

WVML will be holding their 2025 Annual Conference in Morgantown on August 4th-7th. If any of you would like to go and participate, registration ends Friday July 11th. If you are interested, please let us know at your first Council Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 2.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Roles and Responsibilities for Council

ATTACHMENTS:

Roles and Responsibilities.pdf

Roles & Responsibilities for Council

Community Governments are established for the following purpose:

1. Provide good government to residents;
2. Development and maintain safe municipalities;
3. To provide services, products and facilities required or allowed by this or any other enactment or considered by Council to be necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality.

Specifically, Councils are responsible for:

1. Evaluating and approving the plans, policies and programs of the town;
2. Approving the bylaws and resolutions of the town; and
3. Ensuring the powers, duties and functions of the community government are appropriately carried out.

Council Roles and responsibilities:

1. Attend Council meetings and vote on issues
   - Prepare, read information, talk to people, attend, vote & make decisions.
   - Authority – lies with the entire Council. Debate decisions internally and then "speak with one voice"

2. Represent the Public
   - Understand the issues and what people want
   - Consider what is in the best interest of all the people
   - Speaking up for people at meetings or when dealing with other governments or agencies
   - Doing what you said you would do when you were elected or appointed.

3. Make decisions
   - Listen and talk to community people
   - Gather information by talking to the Mayor and experts
   - Review relevant reports, documents, articles
   - Think – take time to reflect about the decision
   - Make the decision based on what has been heard and what has been learned
   - Support the decision of the group after it is made

4. Make Policies/Bylaws/Resolutions
   - Council decisions are made formal and/or legal by passing policies, bylaws and resolutions.

5. Consider a Vision, Strategic Plan and Budget
   - Approve a vision
   - Approve a strategic plan
   - Approve the town Budget
   - Approve any Capital Investment Plan
   - Approve other Plans that help the community government meet community goals

Role of the Mayor/Chief

- Act as Chief Executive Officer
- Act as city manager
- Act as the Head of the Council
- Chair Council meetings
- Attend all other meetings of organizations connected with the town
- Act as the main representative of the Council

Relations Among Members of Council

- To be effective, Council members need to work together as a team. Principles for working together can include:
- Listen to and respect the views of others
- Ask appropriate questions of other members
- Attend meetings with an open mind
- Speak about the issues, not the person
- As required, agree to disagree
- Speak with one voice – respect and support decisions once they are made.

A Few Things for Councils to Keep in Mind

- Set your rules for operating as a Council and help each other follow these rules.
- Focus on the future – the big picture – of where you want your organization to go.

Relations between Council and Staff

- Council sets the broad direction and policies and the Mayor is responsible for implementing that direction/policies and carrying out day to day operational matters

Things to **AVOID** as a Councillor:

- Prescribe the day to day operations of the Mayor
- Interfering with the daily operations of the town employees
- Require Council approval on operational issues
- Insufficient Council training & development
- Not speaking with one voice
- Not focusing on the long term desired results
- Not working with the media
- Too many meetings
- Too many committees
- Not enough interaction with the community
- Doing the staff's work
- Wanting to know everything that is going on in the town
- Not recognizing that Council has the power/authority to advise and consent on policies presented to them

Conclusion

- Mayor & Council play important roles in your community
- To be effective, it is important that Council members understand their role, their responsibilities, and their relationships with others in order to be effective and have an impact on the people and the community they serve
- Effective Leadership is Key to Good Governance

AGENDA ITEM 3.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings

ATTACHMENTS:

WV Open Meeting Act and Executive Sessions .pdf

West Virginia Ethics Commission
Committee on Open Governmental Meetings

The Open Meetings Act and Executive Sessions
Q&A

Introduction: The Open Meetings Act defines "executive session" as "any meeting or part of a meeting of a governing body which is closed to the public."[1] While an executive session is closed to the public, a government agency must still comply with the Open Meetings Act by properly noticing its meetings and sufficiently describing on its agenda the matters that will be considered.

Question: If an item is expected to be discussed in an executive session, must the public agency list that item on its agenda?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What items may be discussed in an executive session?

Answer: The Open Meetings Act lists the items that may be discussed in an executive session. Common topics for executive sessions are the purchase or sale of real estate or personnel matters affecting a specific employee versus a group of employees. A link to W. Va. Code § 6-9A-4, containing the statutory exceptions for executive sessions, is here.

Question: What are the requirements for describing or listing an item on an agenda that may be discussed in an executive session?

Answer: The agenda item must be descriptive enough to reasonably place the public on notice of the particular item that is being discussed or voted upon. Discussions relating to that item may occur outside the presence of the public in an executive session, but the agenda item must still describe with specificity the topic being discussed.

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[1] W. Va. Code § 6-9A-2(3)

Examples of agenda items that comply with the Open Meetings Act are:

- "Consider and vote on hiring a new street supervisor"
- "Consider and vote on hiring a new street supervisor (executive session pursuant to the personnel exception in the Open Meetings Act is anticipated)"

Examples of agenda items that do not comply with the Open Meetings Act are:

- "Personnel"
- "Property" or "Real estate transaction"

Question: What is a common misconception about agenda items relating to executive sessions?

Answer: Some public agencies mistakenly believe that agenda items such as the examples in the preceding question or other items like "executive session to meet with agency attorney" or "executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to W. Va. Code § 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A)" are okay. The Open Meetings Act, however, requires more.

Question: What should the members of a governing body, such as a city council, county commission, state board, or other public agencies, do when they reach an agenda item that may be discussed in an executive session because it meets one of the exceptions in the Open Meetings Act?

Answer: When the public agency reaches the agenda item/topic that qualifies for an executive session, the public agency may only convene an executive session if a majority of the members present vote to convene an executive session. If the agenda item states, "Consider and vote on hiring a new street supervisor," a proper executive session motion would be, "I move that we go into an executive session to discuss this agenda item pursuant to the personnel exception in the Open Meetings Act," or "I move that we go into an executive session to discuss this agenda item pursuant to the personnel exception in the Open Meetings Act at W. Va. Code § 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A)."

Question: May a governing body take official action in an executive session?

Answer: The general answer is "no." Any vote on the issue being discussed in an executive session must occur in public. There are limited exceptions. For example, the Open Meetings Act states that a governing body may approve the settlement of a lawsuit in executive session, but the governing body must report the terms of the settlement and enter the settlement agreement into its minutes within a reasonable time after the settlement is concluded. W. Va. Code § 6-9A-4(b)(11).

A board of education may also deliberate and decide student disciplinary actions in an executive session unless the student requests an open meeting. Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 1999-05.

Question: Must a governing body vote on a matter discussed in an executive session in the open portion of the meeting if it involves an employee? What about the privacy rights of employees?

Answer: The Open Meetings Act does not shield the names of public officials or public employees from disclosure when a *motion* is being made that directly impacts them. The Committee has ruled, however, that the name of an employee does not have to be included in the *agenda*. An agenda item may, therefore, state: "Consider and vote on terminating a teacher at Northside School." Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 2000-12. If a motion is made after the executive session to terminate the teacher, the motion must contain the teacher's name. The Committee discusses other rules governing privacy rights in Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 2018-02. Agencies should consult with their attorneys on whether any other laws implicate the privacy rights of an agency's employee. Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 2009-05 discusses the right of an employee to request an open meeting.

Question: What if we are considering hiring a new employee and it is unknown whether the employee will accept the job?

Answer: At times, more general motions are appropriate, particularly when a public agency does not know whether the candidate being considered is going to accept the position. In those instances, it would be appropriate to make a motion such as, "I move that we offer the position to the candidate we discussed in executive session, and if he or she declines to accept the position, that we offer the position to the next candidate discussed." The governing body should make it clear to the public that the name of the candidate who accepts the position will be disclosed within a reasonable period after the candidate has the opportunity to inform his or her present employer.

Question: How does a governing body end an executive session?

Answer: A governing body should follow its procedural rules. Normally, a member of the governing body may make a motion that the governing body end the executive session and reconvene in an open session, or the decision may be made by consensus.

Question: Does the Open Meetings Act ban a member of the governing body from tape recording the executive session?

Answer: No, but the governing body may adopt a rule banning it. Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 2021-01

Question: Is everything that is said in executive session confidential?

Answer: The Open Meetings Act does not make information discussed during executive sessions confidential; nor does it create an executive session privilege. Other rules and laws may create a duty of confidentiality. Open Meetings Advisory Opinion 2022-01. Public agencies may also adopt a rule establishing that executive session discussions are confidential unless disclosure is required by law such as a court order.

Question: Does a governing body have to take minutes in an executive session?

Answer: No. The Open Meetings Act does not require governing bodies to take minutes in an executive session.

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Issued April 4, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 4.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings - Frequently Asked Questions

ATTACHMENTS:

Meeting Requirements .pdf

COVERED AGENCIES AND MEETINGS

What agencies are covered?

The Act covers any administrative or legislative unit of state, county or municipal government including any subunit (e.g. committees) authorized by law to exercise some portion of executive or legislative power. The Act does not apply to courts or private organizations that receive government funding.

What is a governing body?

Two or more members of a public agency who have the authority to make decisions for, or recommendations to, the public agency on policy or administration is considered a governing body.

What is a meeting for purposes of the Open Meetings Act?

A "meeting" covered by the Act is a convening of a quorum of a governing body or subcommittee in order to make a decision or to deliberate towards a decision. Meetings may be held by telephone conference or other electronic means, such as video conference. In these instances, governing bodies must ensure that all their members can hear, and be heard by, each other and any media or member of the public present at the meeting.

When a quorum of a governing body discusses matters that would require official action by the governing body, then this is a meeting. If this discussion takes place outside the confines of a public meeting—whether in person, by telephone, email or other telecommunication means — it is an illegal meeting.

What gatherings are not meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act?

General discussions among members of a governing body or committee on issues of interest to the public in a social, educational, training, informal, ceremonial or similar setting, so long as there is no intent to conduct public business or for the discussion to lead to official action, are not gatherings subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Adjudicatory proceedings, on-site inspections, political party caucuses, and discussions on logistical and procedural methods to schedule and regulate a meeting are also not matters covered by the Open Meetings Act.

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NOTICE and AGENDA

How much advance notice of a meeting is necessary?

Public notice of the meeting and the agenda must be made available in advance of a meeting to the public.

Every public agency should establish rules for giving advance notice of all regularly scheduled and special meetings. W.Va. Code § 6-9A-3. In addition, the Open Meetings Committee of the West Virginia Ethics Commission, through the issuance of Advisory Opinions, has established rules which establish how much advance notice is required.

Calculating days for purposes of the Open Meetings Act

In calculating days of notice, do not count the day of the meeting, weekend days or legal holidays. Half-day holidays are not legal holidays for the purpose of calculating days. State agencies, however, have additional obligations for posting a meeting notice with the Secretary of State's office.

Time requirements for posting a meeting notice

- **State agencies** - State agencies must file a notice of any meeting with the Secretary of State at least five business days prior to the date of the meeting.
- **Other governing bodies** - Notice must be given in a reasonable manner. When a governing body meets in accordance with a fixed schedule, such as the second and fourth Monday of each month, it may comply with the meeting notice requirement in the Act by annually posting notice of the date, time, and place of these regular meetings or regular committee meetings for the coming year, and keeping this notice posted throughout the year.
- **Regular meetings** – For governing bodies which do not have a fixed schedule for meetings, these bodies may comply with the Open Meetings Act by posting a notice three business days in advance of the meeting.
- **Special meetings** - When a governing body meets on an irregular schedule, or needs to meet before the next regularly scheduled meeting to address matters that do not involve an emergency, these are considered special meetings. Notice must be posted two business days in advance of the meeting.

Although state agencies may conduct a special meeting, i.e., a meeting held between regularly scheduled meetings, due to the more restrictive language in the Open Meetings Act the agency must provide the meeting notice to the Secretary of State at least five business days prior to the date of the special meeting. State agencies may not call an emergency meeting for a subject that is not a true emergency. Failure to file a timely notice of meeting with the Secretary of State's Office does not constitute an emergency.

What must a notice include?

Notice must include the date, time, and place of the meeting. For special meetings or emergency meetings, the notice must state the purpose of the meeting.

Time requirements for posting an agenda

- **Regular meeting** - three business days before the meeting.
- **Special meeting** - two business days before the meeting.
- **Emergency meeting** - as soon as practicable prior to the meeting.

Where/how to post an agenda?

A governing body complies with the Act by posting its meeting agenda for each regularly scheduled meeting in a public place at its central office and by having copies of the agenda available there during regular business hours.

In addition, it may distribute agendas to the news media by mail or email. The agenda also may be posted on the governing body's website if it has one. While additional dissemination to the public and the media is encouraged, failure to provide an agenda by such additional means will not invalidate an otherwise proper public meeting.

What about governing bodies which meet weekly?

For governing bodies which meet weekly, the agenda may be made available two business days before the meeting.

May an agenda be amended?

Yes. The agenda may be amended up to two business days before the meeting. If an agenda is amended, it must be reposted in the same manner as the original agenda was posted. The only circumstance under which a governing body may amend an agenda *during* a meeting is if a true emergency arises.

How specific must an agenda be?

Agendas must give reasonable notice to the public of what issues will be discussed. A matter requiring the governing body to take official action must be listed on the agenda. For example, "filling position of office manager" would be sufficient. Using vague headings such as "old business," "new business" and "personnel matters" is clearly insufficient. The public should also be given notice of significant additions or changes to the agenda. Each governing body should have rules on how such notice will be given.

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EMERGENCY MEETINGS

What is an emergency?

Governing bodies should exercise caution when calling an emergency meeting. Ordinarily, an "emergency" involves an unexpected situation or sudden occurrence of a serious nature, such as an event that threatens public health and safety.

Every unexpected or sudden event does not constitute an emergency. For example, employing an attorney to assist the governing body does not constitute an emergency. Likewise, acting on a questionable bill for legal services does not constitute an emergency.

Is immediate action required?

When in doubt as to what constitutes an emergency, consider what consequences could occur if the governing body does not act immediately. If it can wait days without significant adverse consequences, then a special meeting should be called instead. Or, call the Ethics Commission to discuss the situation with staff. To satisfy the terms of an emergency meeting exemption, not only must a matter involve an emergency, the governing body also must be required to take immediate official action in response to the situation.

For example, if a flood were to contaminate a town's water supply, the council may be required to approve various actions to protect public health and restore the system to safe operation.

Must a notice or an agenda be posted?

For an emergency meeting, the notice must be posted as soon as practicable prior to the meeting. The notice must set forth the reason for, and purpose of, the emergency meeting. Similarly, governing bodies that wish to add emergency matters to their meeting agenda must post an amended agenda which includes the emergency item. The amended agenda shall further explain the facts and circumstances which warrant adding the emergency item to the agenda.

In the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action, a state agency may file an emergency meeting notice with the Secretary of State at any time prior to the meeting. The emergency meeting notice shall state the date, time, place and purpose of the meeting and the facts and circumstances of the emergency.

Are written minutes required for an Emergency Meeting?

Yes. The explanation for the emergency must be repeated and set forth in the written minutes of the meeting.

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MINUTES

Should minutes be prepared?

The Act requires that written minutes of all open meetings be available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting.

The minutes must include:

- The date, time and place of the meeting.
- The name of each member of the governing body present and absent.
- All motions, orders, resolutions, ordinances and measures proposed, as well as the name of the person proposing each action and the disposition of the matter.
- The results of all votes, including roll call votes by member name, if such votes are conducted.

When must meeting minutes be made available to the public?

Meeting minutes should usually be made available to the public one business day after the public body's next regular meeting. If, at that meeting, the public body makes material changes to the draft minutes, then, in the absence of compelling circumstances, the approved minutes should be made available no later than three business days following the meeting.

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EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

When may a governing body go into an executive session?

A governing body may go into an executive session for any of the reasons set forth in the Open Meetings Act at W.Va. Code § 6-9A-4. Some common grounds for going into an executive session are to discuss personnel matters or pending litigation; to consider matters involving the purchase, sale or lease of real property, or to plan or consider an official investigation. A governing body must attempt to segregate the non-exempt portions from the exempt portions of its meeting unless segregation would make a coherent discussion impossible.

How do you convene an executive session?

A member of the governing body must make a motion to go into executive session. The motion must state in plain language the grounds for convening an executive session.

For example, a member may state that he or she is moving to go into executive session based upon the personnel exception. It is not necessary to cite the specific code provision. A governing body may go into executive session to discuss only matters that appear on the meeting agenda.

Must the agenda state that the governing body will go into executive session?

No. In fact, a governing body may not decide in advance of a meeting that it will go into executive session. The agenda may indicate that it is *anticipated* that a matter may be discussed in executive session, but the governing body may only go into executive session by a majority vote of the members present.

The agenda item must be descriptive enough to put the public on notice of the nature of the matter being discussed regardless of whether it will be discussed in an open session or executive session.

For example, an agenda item to discuss pending litigation may read, "Discuss pending lawsuit of Smith v. Jones with legal counsel." Once again, generic agenda items such as "Discuss pending litigation" are too vague to adequately put the public on notice as to the matter to be discussed.

May a governing body vote on matters in executive session?

No. Votes may not be taken in an executive session. A governing body may only vote after it reconvenes in an open session.

One exception is that a governing body may vote to give its attorney settlement authority in an executive session. The fact that a governing body has authorized its attorney to engage in settlement negotiations and/or has set a settlement range is not required to be disclosed. If a settlement is reached, then the settlement agreement, including the amount, becomes a matter of public record.

Is a governing body required to take minutes for an executive session?

No. The decision of whether or not to take minutes for an executive session lies within the discretion of the governing body. The governing body may want to seek the advice of legal counsel concerning whether minutes should be taken. If a governing body decides to take minutes in an executive session, the Act does not require the disclosure of such minutes to the public.
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ADVICE and ADVISORY OPINIONS

Who may get informal advice?

The Ethics Commission will provide informal advice ONLY to a governing body, or a member of a governing body, who is subject to the Open Governmental Meetings Act and who seeks advice and information as to whether an action or proposed action violates the Act.

How to obtain an Advisory Opinion?

Any governing body, or a member of a governing body, who is subject to the Open Governmental Meetings Act may request a formal Advisory Opinion as to whether an action or proposed action violates the Act. Requests must be in writing. Written Advisory Opinions are issued by the Ethics Commission's Committee on Open Governmental Meetings. Any such person or entity who acts in good faith reliance on the Opinion has an absolute defense in any civil suit or criminal prosecution for actions taken on the Opinion unless the Committee was willfully and intentionally misinformed as to the facts. Other governing bodies and members who rely on Advisory Opinions also have an absolute defense in civil and criminal proceedings for actions based upon the Opinions as long as the underlying facts and circumstances surrounding the action were the same or substantially the same as those ruled upon in the Advisory Opinions.

Click here to view **Open Meetings Advisory Opinions**
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ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

How is the Act enforced?

The Ethics Commission has no role in enforcing the Act and does not investigate complaints of alleged violations.

The circuit court in the county where the public agency regularly meets has jurisdiction to enforce the Act upon civil action commenced by any citizen of this state within 120 days after the action complained of was taken or the decision complained of was made. The circuit court is empowered to compel compliance or enjoin noncompliance with the Act and to annul a decision made in violation of the Act. An injunction may also order that subsequent actions be taken or decisions be made in conformity with the Act.

It is a violation of the Act for a governing body to hold a private meeting with the intention of transacting public business, thwarting public scrutiny and making decisions that eventually become official action.

Citizens filing such civil actions should be advised that other requirements of the West Virginia Code, including at least 30 days' notice of the suit to the state executive branch agency and the Attorney General, may be required. This summary is of the Open Meetings Act's provisions only.

Penalties for violating the Act

The Open Meetings Act provides that "[a]ny person who is a member of a public or governmental body required to conduct open meetings ... and who willfully and knowingly violates the ... [Act] is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall

be fined not more than five hundred dollars ... [A] person who is convicted of a second or subsequent offense ... is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than one hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars.

A public agency whose governing body is adjudged in a civil action to have conducted a meeting in violation of the ... [Act] may be liable to a prevailing party for fees and other expenses incurred by that party in connection with litigating the issue of whether the governing body acted in violation of this article, unless the court finds that the position of the public agency was substantially justified or that special circumstances make an award of fees and other expenses unjust.

Where the court, upon denying the relief sought by the complaining person in the action, finds that the action was frivolous or commenced with the primary intent of harassing the governing body or any member thereof or, in the absence of good faith, of delaying any meetings or decisions of the governing body, the court may require the complaining person to pay the governing body's necessary attorney fees and expenses."

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are committee meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act? Do committee meetings need to be noticed?

Yes. All sub-units of a governing body, regardless of size, must follow the Open Meetings Act. This includes regular, standing and *ad hoc* committees.

Are work sessions subject to the Open Meetings Act?

Yes. The term "work session" is frequently used by governing bodies to describe a meeting in which the members of the governing body or committee discuss a project or review a budget but do not plan to take official action during the session.

May citizens and the media record meetings?

Yes. Governing bodies may adopt rules governing the placement of recording equipment. Governing bodies may not prohibit citizens or the media from using equipment necessary for recording a meeting unless it is to prevent undue interference with the meeting. Ordinary use of such equipment alone may not be declared to constitute undue interference with a governing body's meetings.

Does the Open Meetings Act require that meetings be recorded by the governing body?

No. However, governing bodies should check their enabling legislation or local ordinances to determine whether recording is required pursuant to statute or rule.

Are governing bodies required to allow members of the public to speak at a meeting?

No. The purpose of the Open Meetings Act is to allow citizens to observe the governing body for purposes of promoting transparency. Governing bodies are encouraged to have a public comment period. A governing body may adopt rules which impose restrictions upon public comment periods such as the amount of time which will be allocated to each speaker. A governing body may not require members of the public to register to speak more than 15 minutes before the meeting begins.

Do items that will only be discussed, but not voted on, need to be on the agenda?

Yes. This is a common misconception. If a matter is to be discussed at a meeting, the agenda must list and sufficiently describe it, even if it will not be voted on until a later meeting.

May items be added to the agenda during a meeting?

Not usually. If a citizen or a member of the governing body raises a matter during a meeting which is not on the agenda, the item may not be deliberated or voted on at the meeting. OMAOs 2007-12 and 2011-03 explain how to handle issues that may arise during a comment period. For example, members of a governing body may ask questions of the speaker and discuss logistical issues among the board members, such as placing the matter on a later agenda.

The only exception is if the item is an emergency. In that case, the governing body must follow procedures for emergency meetings and agenda items.

When must meeting minutes be made available to the public?

Meeting minutes should usually be made available to the public one business day after the public body's next regular meeting. If, at that meeting, the public body makes material changes to the draft minutes, then, in the absence of compelling circumstances, the approved minutes should be made available no later than three business days following that meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 5.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Roberts Rules of Order Reference Guide

ATTACHMENTS:

Roberts Rule of Order.pdf

Appendix B – Robert's Rules of Order Examples of Motions

TO DO THIS:	YOU SAY THIS:	MAY YOU INTERRUPT THE SPEAKER?	DO YOU NEED A SECOND?	IS IT DEBATABLE?	CAN IT BE AMENDED?	WHAT VOTE IS NEEDED?	CAN IT BE RECONSIDERED?
ADJOURN MEETING	"I move that we adjourn"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
CALL AN INTERMISSION	"I move that we recess for . . ."	NO	YES	NO	YES	MAJORITY	NO
COMPLAIN ABOUT HEAT, NOISE, ETC.	"I rise to a question of privilege"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
TEMPORARILY SUSPEND CONSIDERATION OF AN ISSUE	"I move to table the motion"	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO *1
END DEBATE AND AMENDMENTS	"I move the previous question"	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	YES *2
POSTPONE DISCUSSION FOR A CERTAIN TIME	"I move to postpone the discussion until . . ."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
GIVE CLOSER STUDY	"I move to refer the matter to committee"	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES *3
AMEND A MOTION	"I move to amend the motion by . . ."	NO	YES	YES *4	YES	MAJORITY	YES
INTRODUCE BUSINESS	"I move that . . ."	NO	YES	YES	YES	MAJORITY	YES
THE MOTIONS LISTED ABOVE . . .		**. . . ARE IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE**					
PROTEST BREACH OF RULES OR CONDUCT	"I rise to a point of order"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE *5	NO
VOTE ON A RULING OF THE CHAIR	"I appeal from the chair's decision"	YES	YES	YES	NO	MAJORITY	YES
SUSPEND RULES TEMPORARILY	"I move to suspend the rules so that . . . "	NO	YES	NO	NO	2/3	NO
AVOID CONSIDERING AN IMPROPER MATTER	I object to consideration for this motion"	YES	NO	NO	NO	2/3 *6	YES *7
VERIFY A VOICE VOTE BY HAVING MEMBERS STAND	"I call for a division" or Division!"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
REQUEST INFORMATION	"Point of information"	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO VOTE	NO
TAKE UP A MATTER PREVIOUSLY TABLED	"I move to take from the table. . ."	NO	YES	NO	NO	MAJORITY	NO
RECONSIDER A HASTY ACTION	"I move to reconsider the vote on . . ."	YES	YES	YES *8	NO	MAJORITY	NO

AGENDA ITEM 6.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Difficult Situations in Council Meetings

ATTACHMENTS:

How to Handle Difficult Situations in Council Meetings.pdf

HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS IN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Situation 1: A speaker talks about multiple topics and continues past the formal or informal time limit.

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3. ***Acknowledging the person's goals and feelings.*** Even when the council disagrees with the speaker's opinion or argument or is unable to address the citizen's concern, recognizing the person's frustration, anger, or anxiety may help provide relief fro someone with many apparently disconnected concerns.

4. ***Clarifying how a citizen can have her or his concern addressed.*** Individuals and groups often believe that it is entirely up to the council or staff to solve the problems they bring before the council. But as the council clarifies what a speaker wants, it can suggest perhaps several ways of addressing the problem. Pointing out several options helps people understand that their concerns have been heard and that they do indeed have influence. The following statement might be helpful: "Ms. Jordon, your concern is that people are driving too fast through your neighborhood and endangering children. Let me suggest a way to address your concerns under existing city policy. Our policy allows citizens to request additional police cruisers in the area at particular times, as you suggest. Another policy provides for crossing guards at either end of the street, since going and coming from school places the greatest number of children on the street. A

Neighborhood Watch group in your area also provides parents and other adults on the sidewalk to watch the children at certain times of the day. Finally, we can ask the transportation department to check on traffic flow and see whether the timing of traffic signals around your neighborhood contributes to people driving too fast down your street." (Editor's Note: The Texas Open Meetings Act provides that a councilmember may respond to an inquiry at a citizen comment session in one of three ways. The councilmember may: (1) make a statement of specific factual information given in response to the inquiry or recite an existing policy in response to the inquiry; (2) direct the person making the inquiry to visit with staff about the issue; or (3) deliberate only to the extend of deciding whether to place the subject on the agenda for a substantive discussion at a subsequent meeting. Further, attorney general opinion JC-169 (2000) concludes that when the governing body, prior to the meeting, is aware or should be aware of the specific topics that may be discussed at the meeting, those items should be individually posted).

5. ***"Reality-checking."*** When a speaker asks for a particular action, the council can help that person understand that it may not be able to grant the request by reminding him or her that there may well be serious objections from other citizens if it does so.

6. ***Reminding the speaker.*** The council should again state its time limits for public comment and (when appropriate) which matters can and cannot be discussed publicly. The speaker should be asked to understand the council's need to address other agenda topics or give other citizens a change to speak.

7. ***Offering the speaker a way to be more involved.*** Perhaps the council can connect the speaker with a group—among the city's many formal and informal committees, task forces, neighborhood associations, and other organizations—that addresses at least one of the person's complaints.

But some speakers may still continue past the time limit, or repeat points, or bring up new topics. At that point, telling them they must stop is usually considered appropriate. Still, treating such people firmly but courteously shows respect for them and helps build confidence throughout the city in its local government officials.

Situation 2: A large group of people attend, express strong views and feelings, and demand action.

The presence of a large group of angry citizens can be stressful for council members. This kind of gathering can be anticipated when the issue is important, when the number of pre-meeting telephone calls increases, or when group leader says they are organizing their supports to attend the meeting and press their concerns. How should an agitated group like this be handled?

It is important to allow extra time at the meeting for this kind of situation. By reconsidering which business is essential and which agenda items it can handle quickly or defer, the council can sometimes revise the agenda to accommodate the group(s) of citizens who wish to share their view on an important issue.

One option is to ask that a single speaker address the council. When a single speaker presents the group's concerns before the council and audience, everyone can hear the same general concerns and information. Often, agitated citizens' groups gain some degree of satisfaction simply by venting their feelings in an official setting. The council can help to accommodate their desire by suggesting that the group offer a few high-energy, articulate people to speak on the group's behalf.

Depending on the specific situation (for example, what the nature of the issue is, who is affected, and whether the situation involves great risk), it may be necessary to agree on some short-term steps and schedule another meeting devoted solely to the problem. This meeting might take the form of a public hearing; it might lead to the formation of an advisory group; or it might result in some other approach.

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Probably the most difficult situation a councilmember can face is a personal attach in a public setting. Sometimes the lime between defending a policy or a decision and defending oneself is very thin. Personal attacks must be dealt with, but as constructively as possible. The presiding officer, while acknowledging the person's underlying concern, should tell the offending speaker that she or he has crossed the line of acceptable speech. Still, the council needs to remember that unless the person is using obscene language or "fighting words," the speaker's remarks attacking one or more council members, while uncomfortable to the council, may be constitutionally protected free speech.

Five strategies can be helpful in this situation:

1. ***Taking a deep breath***. This old piece of advice still makes good sense. Harsh personal criticism causes stress. Stress automatically causes the body to bring up its defenses. Muscles tighten, palms become sweaty, and breathing rate increases. These physiological changes are natural, understandable, and useful in preparing for fight or flight. But unless the speaker threatens physical harm and the councilmember actually wants to flee, the body's reaction may cause the councilmember's verbal response to be unnecessarily defensive. Taking the time to breathe deeply helps counteract the fight-or-flight syndrome and focuses attention on analyzing what the person is saying rather than on immediately defending oneself.

2. ***Summarizing***. (See sidebar.) One way to disarm an upset person is to summarize his or her strong, critical views. The target councilmember will not agree with the speaker, but summarizing the remarks so as to reflect the dept and the strength of

the speaker's feelings will help the councilmember control his or her own emotions. If possible, another councilmember should make the summary, for two reasons. First, the councilmember being criticized or attacked gains more time to prepare a response. Second, summarizing helps determine whether the attack arose from a perceived malfeasance on the part of the entire council or on the part of only one councilmember.

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SUMMARY

People on city councils face citizens' comments and criticism in many public meetings. Encouraging citizens to share their views in a constructive way helps rebuild trust in public institutions. Local government officials are on the front lines of improving civic engagement in their cities. Helping citizens—including harsh critics—feel welcomed and valued is an important way to create and maintain trust in public service and preserve its legitimacy.

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You may think we can raise or lower taxes at will. It's more complicated that that. Our streets are old and in desperate need of repair. Now I don't like raising taxes, but in order to provide streets that are safe for our citizens, I thought a temporary one-cent increase was the best that could be expected.

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AGENDA ITEM 7.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: 2025 City Council Meeting Schedule

ATTACHMENTS:

Council Calendar.pdf

Council Calendar 2025

January

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

October

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

November

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

AGENDA ITEM 8.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Ordinance Overview

An ordinance is a local law enacted by a municipal corporation through the appropriate governing authorities. It establishes general, uniform, and permanent rules of conduct concerning the municipality's corporate powers. The adoption of an ordinance typically involves two readings before the municipal council. The first reading serves as the initial consideration by the council. Following this, a public notice is issued—usually published in a local newspaper for two consecutive weeks—announcing a public hearing. During the public hearing, community members have the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns before the ordinance proceeds to its final reading and potential adoption.

ATTACHMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 9.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Resolution Overview

Resolutions are used in a variety of formal proceedings and are typically adopted by a majority vote of the city council. Unlike ordinances, resolutions often require only one reading and can take effect immediately. They are commonly used for internal matters, such as adopting personnel policies, approving budgets, or declaring public property as surplus. While resolutions do not carry the same legal weight as ordinances, they represent official actions of the council and must be supported by clear reasoning and appropriate follow-up measures.

ATTACHMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 10.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: The West Virginia Ethics Act

ATTACHMENTS:

The Ethics Act .pdf

The Ethics Act

A Code of Conduct for Public Servants

West Virginia Ethics Commission
210 Brooks Street, Suite 300
Charleston, WV 25301
(304)558-0664 Fax (304)558-2169
Toll Free (866)558-0664
Email: ethics@wv.gov Website: ethics.wv.gov

What is the Ethics Act?

The West Virginia Governmental Ethics Act (W. Va. Code §§ 6B-1-1 through 6B-3-11) is a code of conduct to guide public officials and public employees in avoiding conflicts between their personal interests and their public responsibilities. The term "public official" includes a public servant volunteer, which is "any person who, without compensation, performs services on behalf of a public official and who is granted or vested with powers, privileges, or authorities ordinarily reserved to public officials."

Who is covered by the Act?

The code of conduct established by the Act applies to all full-time and part-time public servants (public employees, elected and appointed public officials) who serve in the legislative, judicial and executive branches of state, county and municipal governments and their respective boards, commissions and agencies. It also applies to "public servant volunteer," which are persons who, without compensation, perform services on behalf of a public official and who are granted or vested with powers, privileges, or authorities ordinarily reserved to public officials.

What is the Ethics Commission?

The West Virginia Ethics Commission was created to administer the Ethics Act. It is comprised of nine part-time citizen members appointed by the Governor and approved by the West Virginia Senate. The Commission is supported by a staff of five full-time and two part-time employees.

What does the Commission do?

The Ethics Commission is responsible for enforcing the Ethics Act and advising public servants regarding the Act.

Many questions from the public can be addressed by staff over the phone ((304)558-0664). Staff also may be contacted by email at **ethics@wv.gov**.

Some questions require consideration by the full Commission at its regular monthly meeting through the issuance of a written Advisory Opinion.

The Commission's Committee on Open Governmental Meetings answers questions from governing bodies and their members, and provides Advisory Opinions on the meaning and application of the Open Meetings Act .

The Committee on Standards of Conduct for Administrative Law Judges answers questions from ALJs and provides Advisory Opinions to them which interpret the Code of Conduct for state Administrative Law Judges. It also rules on complaints filed against ALJs.

The Ethics Commission is also responsible for the registration and reporting of lobbyists; the processing of Financial Disclosure Statements, and the collection of disclosures of interested parties to contracts.

Minimal Ethical Standards* Established by the Act

**Agencies may impose stricter rules of conduct than those set forth in the Ethics Act.*

Private Gain

The basic principle underlying the code of conduct created by the Ethics Act is that those in public service must use their positions for the benefit of the public and not for their own private gain or for the private gain of another.

For example:

- Public employees and public officials may not use their agency's supplies or equipment for personal projects or activities.
- Public employees and public officials may not work on personal projects or activities during work hours for which they are paid by their government employer.
- Public employees and public officials may not use subordinates to work on personal projects or activities during work hours or compel them to do so on their own time.

Nepotism

The Ethics Act prohibits "nepotism," which is favoritism shown or patronage granted in employment or working conditions by a public official or public employee to relatives or persons with whom the public official or public employee resides. "Public official" and "public employee" include all elected and appointed public officials and public employees, whether full- or part-time, in state, county, municipal governments and their respective boards, agencies, departments and commissions and in any other regional or local governmental agency, including county school boards. The term "public official" includes a public servant volunteer, which is "any person who, without compensation, performs services on behalf of a public official and who is granted or vested with powers, privileges, or authorities ordinarily reserved to public officials."

"Relative" means spouse, mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter, grandmother, grandfather, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law or daughter-in-law.

A public agency, including its officials and employees, must administer the employment and working conditions of a relative of a public employee or a public official or a person with whom the public official or employee resides in an impartial manner. To the extent possible, a public official or public employee may not participate in decisions affecting the employment and working conditions of his or her relative or a person with whom he or she resides. If he or she is one of several people with the authority to make these decisions, others with authority shall make the decisions.

A public official or public employee may not directly supervise a relative or a person with whom he or she resides. This prohibition includes reviewing, auditing or evaluating work or taking part in discussions or making recommendations concerning employment, assignments, compensation, bonuses, benefits, discipline or related matters. This prohibition does not extend to matters affecting a class of five or more similarly situated employees.

If a public official or public employee must participate in decisions affecting the employment, working conditions or supervision of the public official or public employee's relative or a person with whom the public official or public employee resides, then:

- An independent third party shall be involved in the process. A public official or public employee may not use a subordinate for the independent third party unless it is an elected public official who may not lawfully delegate the powers of his or her office, *e.g.,*, county assessor or county clerk, and
- The public official or employee shall exercise his or her best objective judgment in making the decision, and be prepared to justify his or her decision.

Gifts

The Ethics Act provides that public officials and public employees may not solicit a gift unless the solicitation is for a charitable purpose, and the charitable purpose must be one from which they and their immediate family members derive no direct personal benefit. (However, see the exceptions set forth below.)

Public officials and employees may not directly solicit a subordinate for any gift even if the gift is for a charitable purpose. The Ethics Act's prohibition against solicitation of gifts does not apply to solicitation of political contributions.

The Ethics Act prohibits public officials and public employees from accepting gifts from lobbyists or any person whom the official or employee knows or has reason to know is doing or seeking to do business of any kind with his or her agency; is engaged in activities which are regulated or controlled by his or her agency; or has financial interests which may be substantially and materially affected, in a manner distinguishable from the public generally, by the performance or nonperformance of his or her official duties.

Notwithstanding the general prohibitions set forth in the prior two sections against public officials and employees accepting gifts, the Ethics Act provides that the following types of gifts **may** be accepted by public employees or public officials from lobbyists or others:

(A) Meals and beverages of any dollar value may be accepted if the person purchasing the meal is present. Otherwise, public officials and employees may accept meals and beverages totaling $25;

(B) Ceremonial gifts or awards which have insignificant monetary value;

(C) Unsolicited gifts of nominal value or trivial items of informational value are permissible if the value of any one item, or a combination of items from the same source, given to a public official or employee does not total more than $25 in one calendar year;

(D) Reasonable expenses for food, travel and lodging of the official or employee for a meeting at which the official or employee participates in a panel or has a speaking engagement. A public official or employee **may not** accept expenses for amenities at the event such as free golf or spa treatments unless they are part of the room package for all guests staying at the hotel.

Reasonable expenses for food, travel and lodging for one guest to attend may be accepted;

(E) Gifts of tickets or free admission extended to a public official or public employee to attend charitable, cultural or political events if the purpose of such gift or admission is a courtesy or ceremony customarily extended to the office and the tickets are given by the sponsor of the event. Free tickets to sporting events may only be accepted if the ticket is $25 or less and the ticket is given by a sponsor of the event. If the price of entrance is greater than $25, an official may accept the ticket only if it is incidental to the conduct of official or ceremonial duties;

(F) Gifts that are purely private and personal in nature, or

(G) Gifts from relatives by blood or marriage or a member of the same household.

Selling to Subordinates

Although they may choose to buy from a supervisor, a public servant may not personally solicit (in person, by phone or by personal letter) private business from subordinates who the public servant directs, supervises or controls. Solicitations directed to the public at large for sale of property which the public servant is not regularly engaged in selling are permitted.

Voting*

A public official may not vote on a matter in which she, or an immediate family member, has a financial interest or matters involving a business with which she or an immediate family member is associated.

Legislative voting is governed by a separate provision in the Act which permits voting by Legislators after a ruling from the presiding officer in their chamber regarding a potential conflict is obtained.

See **Voting Provisions of the WV Ethics Act Guideline for detailed information.*

Private Interests in Public Contracts, Purchases and Sales

A public servant may not have a financial interest in any contract, purchase or sale over which his or her public position gives him or her control. The public servant's spouse, dependent parents or dependent children also may not have such an interest unless the total value of the contracts, purchases or sales is less than $1,000 in a calendar year. The Commission has authority to grant an agency a hardship exemption from this provision.

This provision applies only to:

(1) those contracts which one's job gives him authority to award or control, and
(2) those purchases and sales he or she is authorized to make or direct others to make.

Part-time appointed officials (except those covered by W. Va. Code § 61-10-15) are not subject to this prohibition provided they recuse themselves from considering and acting on such matters consistent with the provision regarding voting.

Use of Name or Likeness Using Public Funds

This section of the Act is commonly referred to as the "trinkets statute" and provides that public officials, their agents, or anyone on the public payroll may not place the official's name or likeness on trinkets and other places paid for with public funds in violation of the section's limitations and prohibitions. This section is set forth in W. Va. Code § 6B-2B-1 through -6.

This section of the Act provides limitations and prohibitions on the use of public officials' names or likenesses on "trinkets," advertising, vehicles, table skirts, banners, websites and social media if these items are paid for with public funds.

The statute does not prohibit a public official's name and likeness on educational materials or any official record, official report, letterhead, document, certificate or instructional material issued in the course of his/her duties as a public official. Other official documents, such as fax cover sheets, press release headers, office signs and envelopes may include the public official's name, but not his or her likeness.

Licensing and Rate-Making

A public employee or official may not take official action on a license or rate-making matter affecting an entity in which she, or the members of her immediate family, own or control an interest of 10% or greater. In addition, unless he or she files a prior written public disclosure with his or her agency, a public employee or official may not take official action on a license or rate-making matter affecting a person to whom the entity in which he or she has an interest has sold goods or services totaling more than $1,000 during the preceding year.

Changing Jobs

Full-time public employees and officials may not: (1) seek employment with, (2) be employed by or (3) seek to purchase from, or sell or lease real or personal property to, any person or business:

(a) that has a matter before the agency on which they are taking, or a subordinate is known to be taking, regulatory action, or
(b) that had, within the preceding 12 months, a matter on which they took, or a subordinate is known to have taken, regulatory action.

The Ethics Commission has authority to grant an exemption from this prohibition.

Conflicts of Interest: Employment

Full-time public employees and officials may not take personal regulatory action on matters affecting a person:

(a) by whom they are secondarily employed, or

(b) with whom they are seeking employment or have an agreement concerning future employment.

Dual Compensation

No public employee or official may receive compensation from two sources in state, county or municipal government for working the same hours except under certain limited circumstances. Persons who are allowed to make up time missed with a governmental employer to perform the duties of another governmental position are required to maintain specific time records. Their employers are required to submit these records to the Ethics Commission on a quarterly basis.

Private Pay Prohibited

Full-time public employees and officials may not accept private pay for providing information or services which are within the scope of their public duties. They cannot sell, even on their own time, services which their public position requires them to provide.

Limitations During and After Governmental Service

Confidential Information: Public employees and officials may not, during or after governmental service, knowingly and improperly disclose confidential information acquired through their public positions or use it to further the personal interests of themselves or of another person.

Prohibited Representation: The Ethics Act requires a public servant to obtain his or her agency's consent before he or she represents a client in a matter in which he or she is or was substantially involved on behalf of the agency. This applies both during and after the person's governmental service.

The prohibition applies only to those matters in which the public servant was personally involved in a decision-making, advisory or staff support capacity. It does not apply to legislators or legislative staff.

Limitation on Practice: Certain public employees and officials are prohibited from representing persons before the agency which they serve during their employment or service and for one year after the termination of their employment or service. This is referred to as the "revolving door prohibition."

This prohibition applies only to elected and appointed public officials and full-time staff attorneys and accountants in agencies authorized to hear contested cases or make regulations.

This prohibition applies to representation in contested cases, regulation filings, license or permit applications, rate-making proceedings and in efforts to influence the expenditure of public funds. It does not apply to legislators or legislative staff.

The Ethics Commission has authority to grant an exemption from this prohibition.

Lobbying: The following public officers or employees may not, during or for one year after the termination of their public employment or service, be allowed to register as lobbyists:

(1) Members of the Legislature;

(2) Members of the Executive Department as referenced in article VII, section one of the Constitution of West Virginia (Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor, Treasurer, Commissioner of Agriculture and Attorney General);

(3) Will and pleasure professional employees of the Legislature under the direct supervision of a member of the Legislature;

(4) Will and pleasure professional employees of members of the Executive Department under the direct supervision of the Executive Department officer and who regularly, personally and substantially participate in a decision-making or advisory capacity regarding agency or department policy;

(5) Members of the Supreme Court of Appeals;

(6) Secretaries of the Departments of Administration; Environmental Protection; Health and Human Resources, Military Affairs and Public Safety; Revenue; Transportation; Commerce, and Veterans' Assistance; and

(7) Heads of any state departments or agencies.

For County Public Servants Only

Certain county personnel are also subject to W. Va. Code § 61-10-15, which is a criminal statute containing a similar, but more comprehensive, prohibition regarding contracts. The Ethics Commission is responsible for advising public servants about this statute but has no role in its enforcement.

W. Va. Code § 61-10-15 applies to:

(1) elected county officials (including sheriffs, county commissioners and school board members),

(2) appointed county officials (those who serve on county boards, commissions, authorities and agencies), and

(3) public school superintendents, principals and teachers.

It does not apply to other county workers.

W. Va. Code §61-10-15 prohibits these county employees and officials from having personal financial interests, directly or indirectly, in a contract, purchase or sale over which their public position gives them "voice, influence or control." The prohibition extends to their spouses, those whom they support, and businesses in which they have an ownership interest or by which they are employed.

The Ethics Commission has authority to grant exemptions to a county agency based upon documented hardship.

W. Va. Code §61-10-15 imposes strict limitations on nepotism in employment. County officials may not hire their spouses or dependent family members.

There are certain very specific exceptions to this statute. Contact the Ethics Commission with questions.

Complaints

The Ethics Commission and its Probable Cause Review Board investigate and resolve violations of the Ethics Act. Any citizen who is aware of a violation of the Act may file a written complaint with the Commission. In addition, the Commission itself may initiate a complaint if it receives credible evidence of a material violation of the Act.

Complaints are first reviewed by the three-member Probable Cause Review Board to determine whether the allegations in the complaint, if taken as true as they are required to be at that stage, would constitute a violation of the Ethics Act. The Review Board dismisses complaints which allege trivial or inconsequential violations without an investigation.

Complaints which allege violations of the Ethics Act, and which are not trivial or inconsequential violations, are investigated. After an investigation is completed, the Review Board may either dismiss the complaint or issue an order finding that there is probable cause to believe that the person against whom the complaint was filed violated the Ethics Act. The matter will then proceed to a public hearing or be resolved through a settlement, or "conciliation," agreement.

Persons found guilty of a material violation of the Act may be publicly reprimanded and fined up to $5,000 per violation. The Commission also may order restitution and reimbursement to the Ethics Commission for its costs of investigation and prosecution. It also may recommend that the person be terminated from employment or removed from office.

It is a violation of the Ethics Act to give false and misleading information to the Commission or to procure or induce another person to provide false information to the Commission. If the Commission finds by clear and convincing evidence that a complaint was made in bad faith, it may issue sanctions against the person who filed the complaint.

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Revised June 8, 2018

AGENDA ITEM 11.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Public Employee Recognition And Retirement Guideline

ATTACHMENTS:

Public Employee Recognition Retirement Guideline.pdf

West Virginia Ethics Commission

Public Employee Recognition and Retirement Guideline

The West Virginia Ethics Commission finds that recognizing public employees and honoring the departure of dedicated public officials and employees serves the public purpose of promoting morale by acknowledging achievement. Subject to the limitations below or as authorized by other laws, the expenditure of public funds for these purposes does not violate the Ethics Act's prohibition against the use of office for private gain.[1] In addition, an employee being recognized or an employee or public official departing his/her public position due to retirement, transfer, resignation, or completion of his/her employment or term of office may accept gifts from co-workers and subordinates that are given voluntarily.

Who is a "public employee or official?"

The term "public employee" includes full-time and part-time public employees who serve in state, county, or municipal government. "Public officials" are elected or appointed officials who serve in state, county, or municipal government. The term "public official" also includes a public servant volunteer, which is "any person who, without compensation, performs services on behalf of a public official and who is granted or vested with powers, privileges, or authorities ordinarily reserved to public officials."[2]

Appreciation events and mementos: monetary limits and rules

Events recognizing a public employee or the retirement or departure of a public employee or public official may include a gathering with food, beverages, entertainment, and/or the presentation of a gift or memento of service to the public employee or official or his/her spouse and/or dependent(s). The head of an agency, an elected official, or an appointed board is responsible for determining whether public funds should be used for this purpose.

The Ethics Commission finds that the expenditure of public funds for events or mementos recognizing employees or for departing employees or officials does not

[1] W. Va. Code § 6B-2-5(b).
[2] W. Va. Code §§ 6B-1-3 (j)(k) and (l).

violate the Ethics Act if an agency expends no more than a total of $25 per employee per fiscal year. This amount may be allocated between one or more events, gifts, or activities. An agency may allocate more than $25 to recognize one or more employees, in lieu of expending up to $25 per employee per fiscal year, so long as the expenditure on any one employee does not exceed $100 and the total amount expended for this purpose during the fiscal year does not exceed the sum of $25 per employee.

- Recognition ceremonies may be conducted on government premises or at an off- site location.

- Public employees and officials may contribute any amount of their personal money for food, beverages, and entertainment for the event.

- Public employees and officials should not accept gifts or services for an event valued at over $25 per year from a person or entity with a matter before the departing public employee or official or his or her subordinates.

- Public employees and officials may plan an event, solicit contributions for a gift and/or meals, and prepare and send invitations to an event in accordance with this guideline while on their public employer's time. Any such activities must be of limited duration and may not negatively impact the mission of the public agency.

It is permissible to use a de minimis amount of public funds above the $25 per employee amount to include public officials in public employee recognition events. For example, if a public agency uses public funds for a year-end luncheon, it does not violate the Ethics Act for the public agency to use a de minimis amount of public funds to include public officials, such as city council members or county commissioners, in the event.

Retirement plaques and/or commemorative items

In addition to the expenditure of public funds authorized above, the head of an agency or governing body may authorize the use of public funds not to exceed $100 to purchase a plaque or other commemorative item for a public employee or official who is retiring from public service. This does not establish or confer an employee benefit. The head of an agency or its governing body must determine whether any such expenditure is consistent with fiscal responsibility and whether to use appropriated funds for this purpose.

What constitutes permissible mementos or commemorative items?

For purposes of this guideline and the Ethics Act, permissible mementos or commemorative items include gift cards, apparel, plaques, or other items. Public agencies may only purchase gift cards and other items if the laws governing public agency expenditures authorize the expenditure of funds for this purpose and if the agency properly accounts for the purchases and distributions of the items.

Solicitation of gifts/contributions from public employees and public officials

The following requirements apply to the solicitation of gifts and contributions from public employees and public officials for a recognition, departure, or retirement gift or event:

- A public employee or official may not solicit a gift from which he or she may personally benefit.

- Supervisors may not solicit their subordinates for a contribution.

- Requests for contributions, if made, should be disseminated in a general announcement to all employees. Announcements should clearly convey that participation is voluntary and free of coercion and that employees may contribute less than the recommended amount or nothing at all. Reasonable reminders are permissible. Supervisors should not sign or distribute these requests to their subordinates.

Solicitation and acceptance of gifts from certain entities

The Ethics Act restricts public employees and public officials from soliciting and/or accepting gifts from:

- Lobbyists; or
- Any person whom the official or employee knows or has reason to know:
  (A) Is doing or seeking to do business of any kind with his or her agency;
  (B) Is engaged in activities that are regulated or controlled by his or her agency; or
  (C) Has financial interests which may be substantially and materially affected, in a manner distinguishable from the public generally, by the performance or nonperformance of his or her official duties.

Public employees and public officials may not solicit these persons or other persons[3] to contribute to an event or to a gift to recognize a public employee or a departing public employee or public official. If one of these persons/entities wishes to make a voluntary contribution toward a gift, the person/entity may contribute no more than $25. If a government agency receives "anonymous" gifts valued over $25 for which the donor cannot be identified, the agency must reject the gift, donate it to charity, or use the gift for a public purpose related to the government agency's mission.

Public employees and public officials must comply with the Ethics Act gift rules. The Ethics Act Gift Guideline may be reviewed here.

[3] Other persons do not include other public officials and public employees who are afforded the opportunity to contribute to the event in the manner prescribed in this guideline.

General

An agency must have express or implied authority to expend money for the purposes stated in this guideline. This guideline establishes monetary limits and rules for purposes of complying with the Ethics Act. The guidance does not supplant other laws authorizing public agencies to recognize employees, such as laws authorizing agencies to implement employee recruiting or retention programs or to give an employee a salary increase based on exemplary performance or tenure.

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Issued April 4, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 12.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Todd Wilt, Finance

ITEM TYPE: COUNCIL BUSINESS

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Invoice Processing & Bill Pay Processing

ATTACHMENTS:

Ranson Invoice Approval & Bill Pay Process 7.21.2025.pdf

City of Ranson

Office of Finance

312 South Mildred Street
Ranson, West Virginia 25438-1621
Phone (304) 724-3880 | Fax (304) 728-8579
Email: bandrews@ransonwv.us

Kenneth Suits - Mayor

Council Members:
Jaden Bound
Andy Colandrea
Tommy Custer
Herbert McDaniels
Stephanie Fagan

Finance Department Invoice Processing and Bill Pay Details

Ranson's Finance Department is responsible for the City accounts' payable function and maintains this function with a series of internal controls as recommended by the State Auditor's Office. Below is a summary of the procedural steps for bill payment:

- The City Manager has been delegated ultimate authority to approve budget expenses and execute purchasing/contract acquisitions identified through the annual budget preparation process. The City Manager coordinates with the Finance Director to review regular recurring expenses and potential new expenses/budget requests as part of building the budget proposal annually.
- All vendors for the City of Ranson are required to provide a W9 and confirm licensing status prior to any invoice expense payment. Additionally, all vendors are required to issue itemized invoices that clearly detail each item of expenditure for proper multi-party approval.
- Once an invoice is issued for a City expense, the invoice is reviewed by Finance staff for legitimacy and then the department head(s) associated with the expense obligation (if applicable). After thorough review, the department head(s) sign the invoice as approved for payment.
- The approved invoice is then logged into the Requisition system to generate a purchase order request. The purchase order request will reflect vendor name, requesting department, estimated delivery date, general ledger expense line code, description for expense, quantity, and a note option for more detail if necessary.
- The Requisition system generates a detailed register listing all purchase order requests; on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week, accounts payable staff submit the requisition register to the Finance Director with copies of all associated invoices for review. The Finance Director confirms all PO details are correct, each invoice has been approved by the appropriate individual, and the requisition requests are within the budgeted amount for the fiscal year. If any discrepancies are identified, the invoices are held for further review before the PO is approved for release.
- After the requisition requests have been approved by the Finance Director, final purchase order sheets are generated to accompany the invoice record and the check is printed for bill payment. The City Manager reviews each individual purchase order packet, then provides final approval on the PO via signature. Once the PO is signed, the City Manager signs the check as an authorized signatory; the Finance Department will coordinate a second signature on the check(s) with the additional authorized signatories.
- The payment is then mailed or made available for vendor pick up. The check stub is attached to the completed purchase order packet and filed in the AP records for future audit review. All AP records are kept for a minimum of 6 years after fiscal year end.

AGENDA ITEM 13.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: FY 2026 General Operating Budget

ATTACHMENTS:

FY 2026 General Operating Budget .pdf

RANSON

AT THE CENTER OF OPPORTUNITY.

FY 2026
General Operating Budget
Approved March 18th, 2025

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/22	Actual 6/30/23	Actual 6/30/24	Approved Budget Revised 3-18-2025 FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/24	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
001.298.100	Assigned Fund Balance (PR YR CARRYOVER)	$ 3,084,805	$ 2,438,841	$ 2,015,058	$ 4,881,368	$ 4,881,368	$ 2,500,000	-48.78%
001.301.100	Ad Valorem Tax Current Year	$ 1,357,858	$ 1,846,345	$ 1,629,919	$ 1,620,230	$ 1,077,783	$ 1,743,738	7.62%
001.303.100	Gas and Oil Severance Tax Current Year	$ 10,024	$ 31,595	$ 55,538	$ 20,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000	0.00%
001.304.100	Utility Tax	$ 245,628	$ 252,609	$ 274,500	$ 250,000	$ 126,626	$ 250,000	0.00%
001.305.100	B&O Tax	$ 2,343,240	$ 2,493,950	$ 3,658,226	$ 3,250,000	$ 1,079,246	$ 2,750,000	-15.38%
001.306.100	Wine and Liquor Tax	$ 82,510	$ 83,196	$ 79,692	$ 75,000	$ 17,741	$ 70,000	-6.67%
001.307.100	Animal Tax	$ 1,255	$ 1,258	$ 1,212	$ 1,250	$ 1,118	$ 1,250	0.00%
001.308.100	Motel Tax	$ 609,912	$ 639,195	$ 643,878	$ 450,000	$ 237,006	$ 500,000	11.11%
001.320.100	Fines, Fees, and Court Costs	$ 508,848	$ 472,925	$ 403,031	$ 400,000	$ 200,716	$ 400,000	0.00%
001.321.100	Parking Tickets	$ 230	$ 230	$ 350	$ -	$ 170	$ -	0.00%
001.325.100	Business Licenses	$ 21,724	$ 22,613	$ 25,029	$ 25,000	$ 14,477	$ 25,000	0.00%
001.326.100	Building Permits Fees	$ 84,182	$ 131,371	$ 541,577	$ 1,000,000	$ 499,214	$ 750,000	-25.00%
001.326.102	*Zoning Permits - Rolled Into Permit Fees Revenue starting in FY25*	*$ 2,650*	*$ 5,400*	*$ 23,450*	$ -	$ -	$ -	*0.00%*
001.328.100	Franchise Tax	$ 61,682	$ 55,579	$ 50,449	$ 45,000	$ 11,648	$ 45,000	0.00%
001.329.100	Rental Registration	$ 4,410	$ 1,080	$ 4,800	$ 1,500	$ 920	$ 1,000	-33.33%
001.330.100	IRP Fees	$ 83,004	$ 75,577	$ 105,238	$ 85,000	$ 32,202	$ 80,000	-5.88%
001.335.100	*Private Liquor Club Fees - Rolled Into License Revenues*	*$ 7,415*	*$ 5,210*	*$ 6,120*	$ -	$ -	$ -	*0.00%*
001.353.100	*Planning Commission Fees - Rolled Into Permit Fees Revenue*	*$ 118,353*	*$ 64,611*	*$ 104,017*	$ -	$ -	$ -	*0.00%*
001.365.100	Federal Grants	$ 84,993	$ 78,770	$ 25,721	$ -	$ -	$ -	0.00%
001.369.100	Contributions from Other Funds (Sales Tax)	$ 1,575,000	$ 1,600,000	$ 1,700,000	$ 500,000	$ 350,000	$ 1,000,000	100.00%
001.369.101	Contributions from Other Funds (ARPA)	$ -	$ -	$ 2,327,745	$ 8,800	$ -	$ -	0.00%
001.374.100	Payroll Reimbursement	$ 44,095	$ 53,284	$ 64,741	$ 42,000	$ 13,902	$ 25,000	-40.48%
001.380.100	Interest Gained on Investments	$ 406	$ 1,382	$ 32,658	$ 30,000	$ 17,362	$ 25,000	-16.67%
001.382.100	Refunds & Rebates	$ 25,712	$ 23,867	$ 18,153	$ 30,000	$ 18,007	$ 25,000	-16.67%
001.383.100	Sale of Fixed Asset	$ 210	$ 10,570	$ 4,689	$ 20,000	$ 17,700	$ 5,000	-75.00%
001.386.100	Insurance Claim	$ 39,785	$ 25,626	$ 24,404	$ 15,000	$ 9,991	$ 5,000	0.00%
001.389.100	Accident Reports	$ 5,180	$ 5,100	$ 4,420	$ 5,000	$ 2,996	$ 5,000	0.00%
001.399.100	Miscellaneous	$ 2,275	$ 1,216	$ 5,513	$ 3,000	$ 1,175	$ 1,000	-66.67%
001.399.102	Miscellaneous - Yard Sale Fee	$ 305	$ 180	$ 315	$ 250	$ 105	$ 250	0.00%
001.399.103	Miscellaneous - Fingerprint Fees	$ 225	$ 610	$ 280	$ 250	$ 125	$ 250	0.00%
REVENUES	Grand Total	$ 10,405,915	$ 10,422,188	$ 13,830,725	$ 12,758,648	$ 8,631,597	$ 10,227,488	-19.84%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
409 - Mayor's Office								
001.409.101	Mayor Salary	$ 12,000	$ 12,000	$ 12,000	$ 12,000	$ 6,000	$ 12,000	0%
001.409.104	Mayor FICA	$ 918	$ 918	$ 918	$ 960	$ 459	$ 960	0%
001.409.214	Mayor Travel	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,000	$ -	$ 2,000	0%
001.409.226	Mayor Insurance Bonds	$ 100	$ 100	$ 100	$ 100	$ -	$ 100	0%
001.409.230	Mayor Contracted Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.409.341	Mayor Departmental Supplies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.409.568	Mayor Contributions	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
	Total	**$ 13,018**	**$ 13,018**	**$ 13,018**	**$ 16,560**	**$ 6,459**	**$ 16,560**	**0%**
410 - City Council								
001.410.101	City Council Salary	$ 50,400	$ 60,000	$ 60,000	$ 60,000	$ 30,000	$ 60,000	0%
001.410.104	City Council FICA	$ 3,856	$ 4,590	$ 4,590	$ 4,800	$ 2,295	$ 4,800	0%
001.410.214	City Council Travel	$ -	$ 807	$ 75	$ 2,000	$ -	$ 2,000	0%
001.410.230	City Council Contracted Service	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.410.341	City Council Departmental Supplies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
	Total	**$ 54,256**	**$ 65,397**	**$ 64,665**	**$ 67,800**	**$ 32,295**	**$ 67,800**	**0%**
Mayor, & Council Budget Summary	**Personnel Costs**							
	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 67,274	$ 78,415	$ 77,683	$ 81,860	$ 38,754	$ 81,860	0%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 2,500	0%
	Total	**$ 67,274**	**$ 78,415**	**$ 77,683**	**$ 84,360**	**$ 38,754**	**$ 84,360**	**0%**
	Total - Mayor, Council	$ 67,274	$ 78,415	$ 77,683	$ 84,360	$ 38,754	$ 84,360	
412 - City Administration Office								
001.412.103	City Administration Salary (4 FT employees)	$ 295,718	$ 348,330	$ 191,478	$ 243,000	$ 114,375	$ 333,000	37%
001.412.104	City Administration FICA	$ 24,544	$ 27,683	$ 15,486	$ 19,750	$ 9,136	$ 26,000	32%
001.412.105	City Administration Insurance	$ 52,369	$ 39,514	$ 35,368	$ 61,000	$ 30,099	$ 94,000	54%
001.412.106	City Administration Retirement	$ 23,871	$ 26,629	$ 18,656	$ 29,500	$ 11,275	$ 33,500	14%
001.412.108	City Administration Overtime	$ 18,455	$ 7,665	$ 2,504	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.412.211	City Administration Phone	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,250	$ 294	$ 1,500	20%
001.412.214	City Administration Travel	$ 372	$ 889	$ 924	$ 5,000	$ 2,992	$ 4,000	-20%
001.412.220	City Administration Ads/Legal Publications	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 2,500	0%
001.412.221	City Administration Training	$ 2,595	$ 1,341	$ 1,038	$ 2,500	$ 40	$ 2,500	0%
001.412.222	City Administration Dues and Subscriptions	$ 3,563	$ 3,232	$ 1,416	$ 3,500	$ 1,543	$ 3,500	0%
001.412.223	City Administration Professional Services	$ 5,808	$ 154,824	$ 76,400	$ 25,000	$ 1,508	$ 25,000	0%
001.412.226	City Administration Insurance and Bonds	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 250	$ 8,134	$ 250	0%
001.412.230	City Administration Contracted Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 20,000	$ -	$ 20,000	0%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
001.412.341	City Administration Supplies and Materials	$ 3,084	$ 3,704	$ 3,919	$ 5,000	$ 2,485	$ 5,000	0%
001.412.343	City Administration Gas Oil Tires	$ 81	$ 106	$ 122	$ 500	$ 219	$ 500	0%
001.412.345	City Administration Uniforms	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,500	$ 238	$ 2,000	33%
001.412.353	City Administration Computer Software	$ 11,693	$ 8,467	$ 46,963	$ 32,500	$ 13,021	$ 32,500	0%
	Total	**$ 442,152**	**$ 622,384**	**$ 394,273**	**$ 452,750**	**$ 195,359**	**$ 585,750**	**29%**
City Administration Budget Summary	**Personnel Costs**							
	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 414,957	$ 449,821	$ 263,491	$ 355,000	$ 173,258	$ 488,750	38%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 27,195	$ 172,563	$ 130,782	$ 97,750	$ 22,102	$ 97,000	-1%
	Total - City Administration	$ 442,152	$ 622,384	$ 394,273	$ 452,750	$ 195,359	$ 585,750	
416 - Police Judge's Office								
001.416.103	Police Judge Salary (2 Magistrates 1 Prosecutor)	$ 26,861	$ 23,612	$ 23,612	$ 25,000	$ 12,212	$ 25,000	0%
001.416.104	Police Judge FICA	$ 2,055	$ 1,806	$ 1,806	$ 2,000	$ 934	$ 2,000	0%
001.416.211	Court Building Phone	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000	100%
001.416.213	Court Building Utilities	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000	100%
001.416.215	Court Building Repairs/Maintenance	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	100%
001.416.219	Court Building & Equipment Rentals	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 3,500	100%
001.416.223	Police Judge Professional Services (John Dorsey)	$ 4,313	$ 5,063	$ 4,113	$ 7,000	$ -	$ 7,000	0%
001.416.226	Police Judge Insurance and Bonds	$ 200	$ 200	$ 200	$ 300	$ -	$ 300	0%
001.416.341	Court Building Supplies & Materials	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,000	100%
	Total	**$ 33,428**	**$ 30,681**	**$ 29,731**	**$ 34,300**	**$ 13,146**	**$ 51,300**	**50%**
Police Judge's Office Budget Summary	**Personnel Costs**							
	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 33,428	$ 30,681	$ 29,731	$ 34,300	$ 13,146	$ 34,300	0%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 17,000	100%
	Total	**$ 33,428**	**$ 30,681**	**$ 29,731**	**$ 34,300**	**$ 13,146**	**$ 51,300**	**50%**
	Total - City Attorney & Police Judge	$ 33,428	$ 30,681	$ 29,731	$ 34,300	$ 13,146	$ 51,300	
424 - Contributions								
001.424.568	*Contributions - Dispersed*							
	Annual Contr. - PANTRAN	$ 15,000	$ 15,000	$ 15,000	$ 15,000	$ -	$ 15,000	0%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
	Ranson Bus Route Funding Contribution	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 200,000	100%
	Annual Contr. - Independent Fire Dept	$ 14,000	$ 14,000	$ 14,000	$ 19,000	$ -	$ 19,000	0%
	Annual Contr. - Citizen Fire Dept.	$ 9,000	$ 9,000	$ 9,000	$ 14,000	$ -	$ 14,000	0%
	Mini-Grant Program	$ 98,000	$ 97,340	$ 96,277	$ 54,703	$ -	$ 50,000	-9%
	2023 Ranson Community Distr. Program	$ -	$ -	$ 721,770	$ 65,538	$ 54,779	$ 10,800	-84%
	Annual Contr. - Charles Town Library	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000	$ -	$ 5,000	0%
	Annual Contr. - Jefferson County P&R Fireworks	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 5,000	$ -	$ 5,000	0%
	Community Sponsorship	$ -	$ 200	$ -	$ 9,703	$ 3,100	$ 5,000	-48%
	Total	**$ 136,000**	**$ 135,540**	**$ 856,047**	**$ 187,944**	**$ 57,879**	**$ 323,800**	**72%**
435 - Regional Development Authority								
001.435.222	Region 9 Planning & Development Council Dues	$ 1,645	$ 2,975	$ 4,445	$ 5,150	$ 5,107	$ 9,400	83%
	Total	**$ 1,645**	**$ 2,975**	**$ 4,445**	**$ 5,150**	**$ 5,107**	**$ 9,400**	**83%**
Planning and Zoning								
001.437.103	Planning & Zoning Salary (7 FT)	$ 316,845	$ 303,279	$ 358,750	$ 354,000	$ 176,241	$ 486,000	37%
001.437.104	Planning & Zoning FICA	$ 25,167	$ 23,980	$ 27,789	$ 29,000	$ 13,859	$ 39,000	34%
001.437.105	Planning & Zoning Insurance	$ 52,933	$ 49,679	$ 59,058	$ 75,000	$ 36,851	$ 134,000	79%
001.437.106	Planning & Zoning Retirement	$ 27,260	$ 25,208	$ 30,004	$ 42,500	$ 15,428	$ 45,500	7%
001.437.108	Planning & Zoning Overtime/Extra Help	$ 2,632	$ 1,201	$ 1,000	$ 5,000	$ 544	$ 5,000	0%
001.437.110	Planning & Zoning Fringe Benefits	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 250	$ 250	$ 750	200%
001.437.211	Planning and Zoning Telephone	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,000	$ 494	$ 2,000	0%
001.437.214	Planning & Zoning Travel	$ 1,471	$ 1,476	$ 489	$ 2,000	$ 672	$ 3,000	50%
001.437.217	Planning & Zoning Vehicle Repair	$ 148	$ 174	$ 35	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.437.218	Planning and Zoning Postage	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,000	$ -	$ 1,000	0%
001.437.220	Planning & Zoning Legal Publications	$ 1,158	$ 2,558	$ 2,109	$ 4,000	$ 898	$ 4,000	0%
001.437.221	Planning & Zoning Training	$ 5,660	$ 3,475	$ 4,293	$ 7,500	$ 1,383	$ 10,000	33%
001.437.222	Planning & Zoning Dues and Subscriptions	$ 2,149	$ 880	$ 345	$ 1,500	$ 100	$ 1,500	0%
001.437.223	Planning & Zoning Professional Services	$ 214,425	$ 201,444	$ 333,550	$ 400,000	$ 184,082	$ 400,000	0%
001.437.226	Planning and Zoning Insurance & Bonds	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 125	$ -	$ 250	100%
001.437.230	Planning & Zoning Contracted Services	$ 1,569	$ 784	$ 181	$ 1,000	$ 237	$ 1,000	0%
001.437.238	Planning & Zoning Refund of Deposits	$ 3,495	$ 4,864	$ 615	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.437.341	Planning & Zoning Supplies and Materials	$ 4,285	$ 8,344	$ 5,874	$ 8,500	$ 1,039	$ 10,000	18%
001.437.343	Planning & Zoning Gas, Oil, Tires	$ 2,711	$ 1,668	$ 1,751	$ 2,500	$ 771	$ 2,500	0%
001.437.345	Planning & Zoning Uniforms	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 3,500	40%
001.437.353	Planning & Zoning Computer Software	$ 10,060	$ 10,445	$ 7,025	$ 13,000	$ 3,243	$ 13,000	0%
	Total	**$ 671,967**	**$ 639,460**	**$ 832,868**	**$ 951,875**	**$ 436,092**	**$ 1,162,500**	**22%**

Planning & Zoning Budget Summary	**Personnel Costs**							
	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 424,837	$ 403,348	$ 476,601	$ 508,375	$ 243,173	$ 714,000	40%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 247,130	$ 236,112	$ 356,267	$ 443,500	$ 192,919	$ 448,500	1%
	Total Planning and Zoning, Building Insp.	$ 671,967	$ 639,460	$ 832,868	$ 951,875	$ 436,092	$ 1,162,500	
Elections								
001.438.101	Elections Salary	$ 4,650	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.438.220	Elections Advertising	$ 331	$ -	$ -	$ 750	$ -	$ 750	0%
001.438.230	Elections Contracted Service (Poll Workers)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 35,250	$ 23,163	$ 7,000	-80%
001.438.341	Elections Supplies and Materials	$ 1,627	$ -	$ -	$ 1,750	$ -	$ 1,750	0%
	Total	**$ 6,607**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 37,750**	**$ 23,163**	**$ 9,500**	**-75%**
City Hall								
001.440.103	City Hall Salary (4 FT employees)	$ 198,059	$ 208,374	$ 250,954	$ 270,000	$ 124,669	$ 270,000	0%
001.440.104	City Hall FICA	$ 15,667	$ 16,331	$ 19,563	$ 22,250	$ 9,937	$ 21,500	-3%
001.440.105	City Hall Insurance	$ 25,583	$ 25,751	$ 37,732	$ 50,500	$ 19,633	$ 72,000	43%
001.440.106	City Hall Retirement	$ 13,795	$ 14,053	$ 19,304	$ 32,500	$ 10,663	$ 27,000	-17%
001.440.108	City Hall Overtime / Extra Help	$ 1,052	$ 7,240	$ 294	$ 5,000	$ 553	$ 5,000	0%
001.440.211	City Hall Telephone	$ 21,265	$ 31,686	$ 21,396	$ 25,000	$ 10,050	$ 25,000	0%
001.440.212	City Hall Printing	$ -	$ -		$ 7,500	$ 2,072	$ 7,500	0%
001.440.213	City Hall Utilities	$ 16,242	$ 16,304	$ 16,619	$ 25,000	$ 7,565	$ 25,000	0%
001.440.214	City Hall Travel	$ 414	$ -	$ 707	$ 1,500	$ -	$ 2,000	33%
001.440.215	City Hall Maintenance / Repair Building & Grounds	$ 1,311	$ 948	$ 9,659	$ 20,000	$ 9,561	$ 15,000	-25%
001.440.216	City Hall Maintenance / Repair Equipment	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.440.217	City Hall Vehicle Repair	$ 150	$ 18	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.440.218	City Hall Postage / Meter	$ 5,989	$ 5,444	$ 7,010	$ 8,000	$ 2,369	$ 7,000	-13%
001.440.219	City Hall Building and Equipment Rents	$ 8,873	$ 8,540	$ 11,827	$ 11,000	$ 4,112	$ 11,000	0%
001.440.220	City Hall Advertising / Legal Publications	$ 4,038	$ 5,534	$ 1,965	$ 5,000	$ 2,080	$ 5,000	0%
001.440.221	City Hall Training	$ 125	$ -	$ 2,141	$ 5,500	$ 160	$ 2,000	-64%
001.440.222	City Hall Dues and Subscriptions	$ 2,100	$ 225	$ 2,206	$ 10,000	$ 1,971	$ 10,000	0%
001.440.223	City Hall Professional Services	$ 85,530	$ 101,121	$ 84,760	$ 125,000	$ 29,129	$ 100,000	-20%
001.440.224	City Hall Audit Costs	$ 29,540	$ 29,540	$ 8,994	$ 109,500	$ 64,476	$ 40,000	-63%
001.440.226	City Hall Insurance and Bonds (Liability & Workers Comp)	$ 221,033	$ 224,769	$ 257,742	$ 291,500	$ 210,459	$ 298,500	2%
001.440.230	City Hall Contracted Services	$ 124,212	$ 125,732	$ 125,643	$ 200,000	$ 86,598	$ 110,000	-45%
001.440.232	City Hall Bank Charges	$ 17,494	$ 26,356	$ 45,584	$ 50,000	$ 22,593	$ 50,000	0%
001.440.236	City Hall Refunds	$ 154,687	$ 1,117	$ 278	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.440.237	City Hall Other Taxes/Fees (BC Rents)	$ 178,950	$ 64,352	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.440.341	City Hall Supplies and Materials	$ 16,438	$ 8,084	$ 9,727	$ 36,000	$ 6,990	$ 30,000	-17%
001.440.343	City Hall Oil and Gas	$ 453	$ -	$ 303	$ 500	$ 59	$ 500	0%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
001.440.345	City Hall Uniforms	$ -	$ -	$ 462	$ 2,000	$ -	$ 2,000	0%
001.440.353	City Hall Computer Software	$ 37,166	$ 62,992	$ 46,397	$ 130,000	$ 48,411	$ 130,000	0%
001.440.570	City Hall Miscellaneous Fees	$ 6,727	$ 1,483	$ 1,154	$ 2,000	$ -	$ 2,000	0%
	Total	**$ 1,186,891**	**$ 985,995**	**$ 982,423**	**$ 1,446,250**	**$ 674,108**	**$ 1,269,000**	-12%
City Hall & Elections	**Personnel Costs**							
Budget Summary	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 479,839	$ 496,518	$ 586,052	$ 673,750	$ 375,913	$ 696,000	3%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 713,659	$ 489,477	$ 396,371	$ 810,250	$ 321,359	$ 582,500	-28%
	Total	**$ 1,193,498**	**$ 985,995**	**$ 982,423**	**$ 1,484,000**	**$ 697,272**	**$ 1,278,500**	-14%
	Total - City Hall & Elections	$ 1,193,498	$ 985,995	$ 982,423	$ 1,484,000	$ 697,272	$ 1,278,500	
001.444.566	*Contributions to Others Funds*							
	Municipal Capital Improvement	$ 1,021,012	$ 2,053,791	$ 1,500,000	$ 2,317,178	$ 965,123	$ 649,380	-72%
	CARES Fund	$ 1,083,296	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
	Municipal Stabilization	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,062,136	$ 337,603	$ -	-100%
	Total Contributions	**$ 2,104,308**	**$ 2,053,791**	**$ 1,500,000**	**$ 3,379,314**	**$ 1,302,726**	**$ 649,380**	-81%
001.699.000	Contingencies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,260,865	$ -	$ 1,022,748	-19%
	Total	$ 2,104,308	$ 2,053,791	$ 1,500,000	$ 4,640,179	$ 1,302,726	$ 1,672,128	
General Government	**Personnel Costs**							
Budget Summary	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 1,420,335	$ 1,458,783	$ 1,433,558	$ 1,653,285	$ 844,245	$ 2,014,910	22%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 987,985	$ 898,152	$ 883,420	$ 1,354,000	$ 536,379	$ 1,147,500	-15%
	424 - Contributions - Dispersed	$ 136,000	$ 135,540	$ 856,047	$ 187,944	$ 57,879	$ 323,800	72%
	435 - Regional Development Authority	$ 1,645	$ 2,975	$ 4,445	$ 5,150	$ 5,107	$ 9,400	83%
	444 - Contributions to Other Funds	$ 2,104,308	$ 2,053,791	$ 1,500,000	$ 3,379,314	$ 1,302,726	$ 649,380	-81%
	699 - Contingencies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,260,865	$ -	$ 1,022,748	-19%
General Government	**Total Expenditures**	**$ 4,650,272**	**$ 4,549,240**	**$ 4,677,470**	**$ 7,840,558**	**$ 2,746,336**	**$ 5,167,738**	-34%
	Total	$ 4,650,272	$ 4,549,240	$ 4,677,470	$ 7,840,558	$ 2,746,336	$ 5,167,738	
700 - Police								
001.700.103	Police Salary (19 FT Officers, 2 FT Admin, 1 Contract Consultant)	$ 1,142,546	$ 1,205,271	$ 1,365,231	$ 1,574,950	$ 786,019	$ 1,705,000	8%
001.700.104	Police FICA	$ 100,324	$ 107,777	$ 122,559	$ 140,950	$ 68,603	$ 142,000	1%

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
001.700.105	Police Insurance	$ 207,745	$ 222,561	$ 278,835	$ 352,500	$ 172,268	$ 442,000	25%
001.700.106	Police Retirement	$ 102,154	$ 110,947	$ 124,964	$ 179,250	$ 70,312	$ 163,500	-9%
001.700.108	Police Overtime / Extra Help	$ 122,221	$ 152,478	$ 178,689	$ 175,000	$ 77,954	$ 150,000	-14%
001.700.110	Police Fringe Benefits	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 4,750	$ -	$ 4,750	0%
001.700.211	Police Telephone	$ 3,979	$ 10,456	$ 5,070	$ 7,500	$ 2,593	$ 7,500	0%
001.700.212	Police Printing	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.700.213	Police Utilities	$ 14,140	$ 13,968	$ 16,577	$ 17,500	$ 5,976	$ 22,500	29%
001.700.214	Police Travel	$ 3,289	$ 4,548	$ 1,405	$ 10,000	$ 3,159	$ 10,000	0%
001.700.215	Police Maintenance / Repair Building	$ 700	$ -	$ 445	$ 12,500	$ 655	$ 2,500	-80%
001.700.216	Police Maintenance / Repair Equipment	$ 1,038	$ 1,755	$ -	$ 1,500	$ -	$ 1,000	-33%
001.700.217	Police Vehicle Maintenance	$ 26,097	$ 19,150	$ 8,497	$ 35,000	$ 10,819	$ 25,000	-29%
001.700.218	Police Postage	$ 254	$ 475	$ 404	$ 1,000	$ 53	$ 1,000	0%
001.700.219	Police Building and Equipment Rents	$ 4,233	$ 3,946	$ 4,540	$ 5,000	$ 2,342	$ 5,000	0%
001.700.220	Police Advertising / Legal Publication	$ 330	$ 279	$ -	$ 750	$ -	$ 750	0%
001.700.221	Police Training	$ 6,375	$ 3,152	$ 5,163	$ 10,000	$ 4,258	$ 10,000	0%
001.700.222	Police Dues and Subscriptions	$ 435	$ 340	$ 1,057	$ 1,500	$ 150	$ 1,500	0%
001.700.223	Police Professional Services	$ 7,535	$ -	$ -	$ 30,000	$ 20,468	$ 25,000	-17%
001.700.226	Police Insurance and Bonds	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 200	$ -	$ 200	0%
001.700.230	Police Contracted Services	$ 16,696	$ 10,517	$ 35,235	$ 35,500	$ 12,570	$ 30,000	-15%
001.700.233	Police Investigation Fees	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,000	$ -	$ 1,000	0%
001.700.235	Police Remittance of Fees Collected	$ 126,230	$ 97,723	$ 97,933	$ 102,000	$ 39,348	$ 100,000	-2%
001.700.236	Police Refunds	$ 336	$ -	$ -	$ 1,000	$ -	$ -	-100%
001.700.237	Police Building Commission Rent	$ 31,579	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
001.700.341	Police Supplies and Materials	$ 19,439	$ 14,275	$ 26,180	$ 30,000	$ 7,880	$ 25,000	-17%
001.700.343	Police Gas Oil Tires	$ 61,350	$ 51,830	$ 52,584	$ 72,000	$ 34,069	$ 75,000	4%
001.700.345	Police Uniforms	$ 6,821	$ 7,722	$ 8,045	$ 12,000	$ 4,874	$ 12,000	0%
001.700.353	Police Computer Software	$ 15,411	$ 10,727	$ 11,478	$ 31,000	$ 25,250	$ 31,000	0%
001.700.570	Police Misc. Expense	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 6,800	$ -	$ -	-100%
	Total	**$ 2,021,259**	**$ 2,049,897**	**$ 2,344,892**	**$ 2,851,650**	**$ 1,349,620**	**$ 2,993,700**	5%
704 - Crossing Guards								
001.704.103	Crossing Guards Salary (0 Employees)	$ 14,375	$ 13,171	$ 19,179	$ 8,625	$ 7,408	$ -	-100%
001.704.104	Crossing Guards FICA	$ 1,100	$ 1,008	$ 1,467	$ 665	$ 567	$ -	-100%
001.704.570	Crossing Guards Misc.	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0%
	Total	**$ 15,475**	**$ 14,179**	**$ 20,646**	**$ 9,290**	**$ 7,975**	**$ -**	-100%
Public Safety	**Personnel Costs (PD & Crossing Guards)**							
Budget Summary	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 1,697,286	$ 1,820,935	$ 2,098,970	$ 2,448,890	$ 1,188,005	$ 2,619,450	7%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 339,448	$ 243,141	$ 266,568	$ 412,050	$ 169,590	$ 374,250	-9%
Public Safety	**Total Expenditures**	**$ 2,036,734**	**$ 2,064,076**	**$ 2,365,538**	**$ 2,860,940**	**$ 1,357,595**	**$ 2,993,700**	**5%**
750 - Streets								
001.750.103	Streets Salary (10 FT employees)	$ 469,637	$ 486,649	$ 557,539	$ 653,000	$ 295,808	$ 658,000	1%
001.750.104	Streets FICA	$ 37,923	$ 39,937	$ 44,678	$ 53,600	$ 23,968	$ 52,000	-3%
001.750.105	Streets Insurance	$ 121,357	$ 128,553	$ 153,064	$ 187,000	$ 81,660	$ 229,000	22%
001.750.106	Streets Retirement	$ 40,946	$ 44,219	$ 50,733	$ 78,500	$ 26,158	$ 66,000	-16%
001.750.108	Streets Overtime / Extra Help	$ 15,687	$ 9,275	$ 12,644	$ 22,500	$ 6,597	$ 15,000	-33%
001.750.110	Streets Fringe Benefits	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	$ 2,250	$ 2,500	0%
001.750.211	Streets Telephone	$ 6,397	$ 6,072	$ 3,748	$ 6,750	$ 2,850	$ 6,750	0%
001.750.213	Streets Utilities	$ 8,512	$ 7,377	$ 8,736	$ 12,500	$ 3,717	$ 10,000	-20%
001.750.214	Streets Travel	$ 240	$ -	$ -	$ 2,500	$ -	$ 1,000	-60%
001.750.215	Streets Maintenance / Repair Building	$ -	$ -	$ 1,278	$ 5,000	$ 1,320	$ 5,000	0%
001.750.216	Streets Maintenance / Repair Equipment	$ 15,263	$ 8,910	$ 8,783	$ 15,000	$ 2,484	$ 15,000	0%
001.750.217	Streets Maintenance / Repair Vehicles	$ 17,528	$ 4,089	$ 6,573	$ 22,500	$ 1,350	$ 20,000	-11%
001.750.219	Streets Building and Equipment Rents	$ 4,833	$ 3,246	$ 2,408	$ 5,000	$ 777	$ 5,000	0%
001.750.221	Streets Training	$ 774	$ -	$ 319	$ 2,500	$ 73	$ 2,500	0%
001.750.222	Streets Dues	$ 118	$ 132	$ 92	$ 500	$ -	$ 500	0%
001.750.223	Streets Professional Services	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 500	$ 167	$ 500	0%
001.750.226	Streets Insurance and Bonds	$ 250	$ 250	$ 250	$ 300	$ -	$ 300	0%
001.750.230	Streets Contracted Services	$ 122,231	$ 132,215	$ 179,065	$ 200,000	$ 61,975	$ 200,000	0%
001.750.341	Streets Supplies and Materials	$ 58,079	$ 80,170	$ 41,542	$ 60,000	$ 17,283	$ 60,000	0%
001.750.343	Streets Gas Oil Tires	$ 27,502	$ 29,282	$ 26,485	$ 30,000	$ 14,756	$ 30,000	0%
001.750.345	Streets Uniforms	$ 1,608	$ 2,534	$ 5,607	$ 5,000	$ -	$ 5,000	0%
001.750.353	Streets Software	$ 6,673	$ 5,065	$ 3,969	$ 7,000	$ 1,428	$ 7,000	0%
	Total	**$ 955,558**	**$ 987,975**	**$ 1,107,513**	**$ 1,372,150**	**$ 544,621**	**$ 1,391,050**	**1%**
751 - Street Lights								
001.751.213	Street Lights - Utilities	$ 85,589	$ 99,007	$ 115,301	$ 135,000	$ 58,168	$ 125,000	-7%
	Total	**$ 85,589**	**$ 99,007**	**$ 115,301**	**$ 135,000**	**$ 58,168**	**$ 125,000**	**-7%**

Streets & Transport	**Personnel Costs**							
Budget Summary	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 687,408	$ 711,417	$ 824,515	$ 1,002,400	$ 436,442	$ 1,027,800	3%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							

Account Number	Description	Actual 6/30/2022	Actual 6/30/2023	Actual 6/30/2024	Approved Budget FY2025	Actual thru 12/31/2024	Approved Budget FY2026	Year Changes (%)
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 353,739	$ 375,565	$ 398,298	$ 504,750	$ 166,347	$ 488,250	-3%
Streets	**Total Expenditures**	**$ 1,041,147**	**$ 1,086,982**	**$ 1,222,814**	**$ 1,507,150**	**$ 602,789**	**$ 1,516,050**	**1%**
	Total - Streets & Streetlights	$ 1,041,147	$ 1,086,982	$ 1,222,814	$ 1,507,150	$ 602,789	$ 1,516,050	
900 - Parks & Recreation								
001.990.100	Parks & Recreation Pass through Hotel Tax	$ 301,188	$ 320,093	$ 352,114	$ 225,000	$ 118,503	$ 250,000	11%
001.900.568	Parks & Recreation Operational Contribution	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 100,000	$ -	$ 50,000	-50%
	Total	**$ 301,188**	**$ 320,093**	**$ 352,114**	**$ 325,000**	**$ 118,503**	**$ 300,000**	**-8%**
	Total - Parks & Recreation	$ 301,188	$ 320,093	$ 352,114	$ 325,000	$ 118,503	$ 300,000	
901 - Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)								
001.990.100	CVB Pass through Hotel Tax	$ 301,188	$ 320,093	$ 352,114	$ 225,000	$ 100,981	$ 250,000	11%
	Total	**$ 301,188**	**$ 320,093**	**$ 352,114**	**$ 225,000**	**$ 100,981**	**$ 250,000**	**11%**
	Total - CVB	$ 301,188	$ 320,093	$ 352,114	$ 225,000	$ 100,981	$ 250,000	
Cultural & Recreation Budget Summary	**Fixed Costs**							
	Pass-Through Tax Transfer	$ 602,375	$ 640,186	$ 704,227	$ 550,000	$ 219,484	$ 550,000	0%
	Total - Parks & Recreation and Cultural & Recreation	$ 602,375	$ 640,186	$ 704,227	$ 550,000	$ 219,484	$ 550,000	
General Fund Budget Summary	**Personnel Costs**							
	Salary, Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Uniforms, Workers Comp	$ 3,805,028	$ 3,991,134	$ 4,357,043	$ 5,104,575	$ 2,468,692	$ 5,662,160	11%
	Operations (Commodities & Services)							
	Utilities, Fuel, Telephone, Repairs/ Maintenance, Rents, Training & Travel, Postage, Printing, Ads, Contracted Services, Materials, etc.	$ 1,681,172	$ 1,516,858	$ 1,548,287	$ 2,270,800	$ 872,316	$ 2,010,000	-11%
	424 - Contributions - Dispersed	$ 136,000	$ 135,540	$ 856,047	$ 187,944	$ 57,879	$ 323,800	72%
	435 - Regional Development Authority	$ 1,645	$ 2,975	$ 4,445	$ 5,150	$ 5,107	$ 9,400	83%
	444 - Contributions to Other Funds	$ 2,104,308	$ 2,053,791	$ 1,500,000	$ 3,379,314	$ 1,302,726	$ 649,380	-81%
	699 - Contingencies	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 1,260,865	$ -	$ 1,022,748	-19%
	900 - Contributions to Cultural & Recreation	$ 602,375	$ 640,186	$ 704,227	$ 550,000	$ 219,484	$ 550,000	0%
	Total	**$ 8,330,528**	**$ 8,340,483**	**$ 8,970,049**	**$ 12,758,648**	**$ 4,926,202**	**$ 10,227,488**	**-20%**
	General Fund Revenues	**$ 10,405,915**	**$ 10,422,188**	**$ 13,830,725**	**$ 12,758,648**	**$ 8,631,597**	**$ 10,227,488**	**-20%**
	General Fund Expenses	**$ 8,330,528**	**$ 8,340,483**	**$ 8,970,049**	**$ 12,758,648**	**$ 4,926,202**	**$ 10,227,488**	**-20%**
	Balance (Overage)	**$ 2,075,387**	**$ 2,081,705**	**$ 4,860,676**	**$ -**	**$ 3,705,396**	**$ -**	

AGENDA ITEM 14.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: FY26 Capital Improvement Budget

ATTACHMENTS:

Capital Improvement.pdf

CITY OF RANSON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND APPROVED BUDGET
FY 2026

	FY25 BUDGET APPROVED 3-18-2025	*BALANCES THRU 12-31-2024*	*FY 2026 APPROVED BUDGET*	*Notes*
Carryover Balance	$ *8,488,226*	$ *8,488,226*	$ *8,000,000*	*Anticipated fund balance at 6/30/2025*
201.345.000 FSPS Developer Fees	$ -	$ *208,000*	$ -	ALL FSPS DEVELOPER FEES COLLECTED ARE REMITTED TO RBC
201.348.100 Special Assessments - Sidewalk Funds	$ -	$ -	$ -	
201.350.100 City Service Fees	$ 300,000	$ 150,439	$ 300,000	Collections tied to new home development volume
201.365.100 Grants	$ 29,000	$ 29,100	$ -	
201.369.100 Contributions from Other Funds	$ 2,242,178	$ 965,123	$ 600,000	Annual Contribution From General Fund TBD
201.376.000 Table Games Income	$ 175,000	$ 80,776	$ 175,000	Monthly Table Game Distributions
201.380.100 Interest Income	$ 70,000	$ 41,433	$ 70,000	Interest rcvd on Capital Accounts
201.381.200 Demo Reimbursements	$ 6,500	$ 6,500	$ -	
201.397.100 Video Lottery Income	$ 600,000	$ 247,744	$ 600,000	Monthly Video Lottery Distributions
TOTAL REVENUES	***$ 11,910,904***	***$ 10,009,341***	***$ 9,745,000***	
EXPENDITURES				
201.975.459 GENERAL GOVERNMENT CAPITAL EXPENSES				
Bank Charges	$ 175	$ 102	$ 200	Monthly banking fees
Computer Replacement Program (201-975.459.001)	$ 180,000	$ 44,469	$ 50,000	Standard computer/phones/IT equipment replacements for all depts.
Condemnation of Properties (201-975.459.002)	$ 15,000	$ -	$ 25,000	Demolition of dilapidated properties
Replacement Vehicle (201-975.459.003)	$ 55,000	$ -	$ -	
Total - General Government	***$ 250,175***	***$ 44,571***	***$ 75,200***	
201.976.459 PUBLIC SAFETY CAPITAL EXPENSES				
3 Patrol Vehicles (201-976.459.001)	$ 135,000	$ 127,224	$ 168,000	3 Vehicles at $46.6K a piece + 20% for impending tariff expense
Equipment for Patrol Vehicles (201-976.459.002)	$ 75,000	$ 51,259	$ 75,000	Associated Equipment for Vehicle Additions
Three In-Car Camera Systems (201-976.459.002)	$ 20,000	$ 19,369	$ 37,500	Associated Equipment for Vehicle Additions
Three CAD units (201-976.459.002)	$ 10,000	$ -	$ 10,000	Associated Equipment for Vehicle Additions
E-Ticketing (201-976.459.003)	$ 8,000	$ -	$ 8,000	Equipment replacements and/or additions
Radios (201-976.459.003)	$ 15,000	$ 2,836	$ 15,000	Equipment replacements and/or additions

Radars (201-976.459.003)	$ 7,500	$ 7,500	$ 7,500	Equipment replacements and/or additions
Tasers (201-976.459.003)	$ 15,000	$ -	$ 15,000	Equipment replacements and/or additions
Electronic Fingerprint Machine (201-976.459.004	$ 30,000	$ 10,200	$ -	
Crash Reconstructor Equipment (201-976.459.004)	$ 29,500	$ 29,250	$ -	
Exterior Storage Building at PD (201-976.459.005)	$ 10,000	$ 7,416	$ -	
CAD Tablet Replacements x5 (201-796.459.004)	$ 16,500	$ -	$ -	
Existing Police Dept Improvements (201-976.459.005)	$ -	$ -	$ 100,000	Upgrades to existing Police Dept building, converting court room space into additional offices and addressing HVAC deficiency
New Police Department Building (201-976.459.005)	$ 750,000	$ 28,954	$ 750,000	Phase 1 cost estimated $1.0M (design, construction prep) split over FY25 & FY26; land acquisition completed for cost of $605K, and FY25 design expenses estimated at $125K
Total - Public Safety	***$ 1,121,500***	***$ 284,008***	***$ 1,186,000***	
201.977.459 STREET & TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL EXPENSES				
Street Construction & Repairs				
5th Avenue Streetscape (201-977.459.016)	$ 1,300,000	$ -	$ 1,300,000	Rolling over FY25 budget alottment to FY26; total project estimated $2.8M
Stormwater Engineering/Repairs				
SWM/Engineering & Construction	$ 50,000	$ -	$ 50,000	Miscellaneous SWM expenses
Stormwater Management/Engineering (Mildred) - Design (201-977.459.012)	$ 200,000	$ 132,346	$ 300,000	Estimated FY26 cost for continuing design services and Right-of-Way acquisitions associated with project
Stormwater Management/Engineering (Mildred) Construction Phase (201-977.459.012)	$ 1,250,000	$ -	$ -	Doubtful that project will break ground in FY26 due to design and ROW process.
Miscellaneous Other Capital Projects				
City Hall Roof (201-977.459.011)	$ 20,000	$ -	$ 20,000	Attic Insulation improvements, project needs rebid and may commence in FY2026
Trifecta Place (201-977.459.013)	$ 500,000	$ 19,246	$ 500,000	FY25 budgeted improvement is to convert Trifecta Place property into future Court Building. Need design & engineering for official constructions plans, as well as feedback from PD on court building vision. Anticipate renovations/construction will commence in FY26.
PW Capital Budget Items				
Street Preservation (Asphalt Overlay) (201-977.459.001)	$ 350,000	$ -	$ 300,000	Recurring annual repaving expense allotment
Alley Construction & Preservation (201-977.459.002)	$ 100,000	$ 4,700	$ 50,000	Recurring annual alley expense allotment
Sidewalk & Curb Replacement (201-977.459.003)	$ 75,000	$ 62,237	$ 100,000	Recurring annual sidewalk/curb expense allotment

Street Design/Engineering (201-977.459.004)	$ 50,000	$ 13,969	$ 50,000	General street design expenditures
Street Light Replacement (201-977.459.005)	$ 75,000	$ 14,761	$ 75,000	General street light replacement costs
FORD Trucks (201-977.459.006)	$ 75,000	$ 69,462	$ 138,000	FY26 budget request for 1 replacement truck, 1 additional truck - 2 F150s; + 20% for impending tariff expense
Large Dump Truck (201-977.459.008)	$ -	$ -	$ 126,000	To replace aging dump truck + 20% for impending tariff expense; may purchase in FY25, if so will remove line alottment with first FY26 revision
Equipment (201-977.459.009)	$ 75,000	$ 8,140	$ 75,000	General Equipment purchases over $5K
Improvement to Public Works Yard (201-977.459.010)	$ 400,000	$ 104,502	$ 150,000	Allotment for PWY improvements (bathrooms, office space and equipment, garage)
Total - Streets & Transportation	***$ 4,520,000***	***$ 429,363***	***$ 3,234,000***	
201.979.459 PARKS & RECREATION CAPITAL EXPENSES				
Civic Center Improvements (201-979.459.001)	$ 40,000	$ 22,900	$ 40,000	Allotment upgrades
Flowing Springs Trail (201-979.459.008)	$ 600,000	$ 6,763	$ -	Anticipate completion of trail in FY25, waiting on DoH notice to proceed. Could rollover funds to FY26 if needed.
Marcus Fields Improvements (201-979.459.002)	$ 50,000	$ 4,326	$ 815,000	FY26 alottment includes pending artificial turf grant project at Marcus Fields. Total esimated project cost is $1.54M, with 50% grant match if awarded. Additional funding requested is for fence at MF ($65K estimated cost)
Total - Parks & Recreation	***$ 690,000***	***$ 33,989***	***$ 855,000***	
Contingencies	$ 5,329,229	$ -	$ 4,394,800	
TOTAL EXPENSES	***$ 6,581,675***	***$ 791,932***	***$ 5,350,200***	
REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	***$ 5,329,229***	***$ 9,217,409***	***$ 4,394,800***	

AGENDA ITEM 15.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Ranson Comprehensive Plan 2024 - 2034

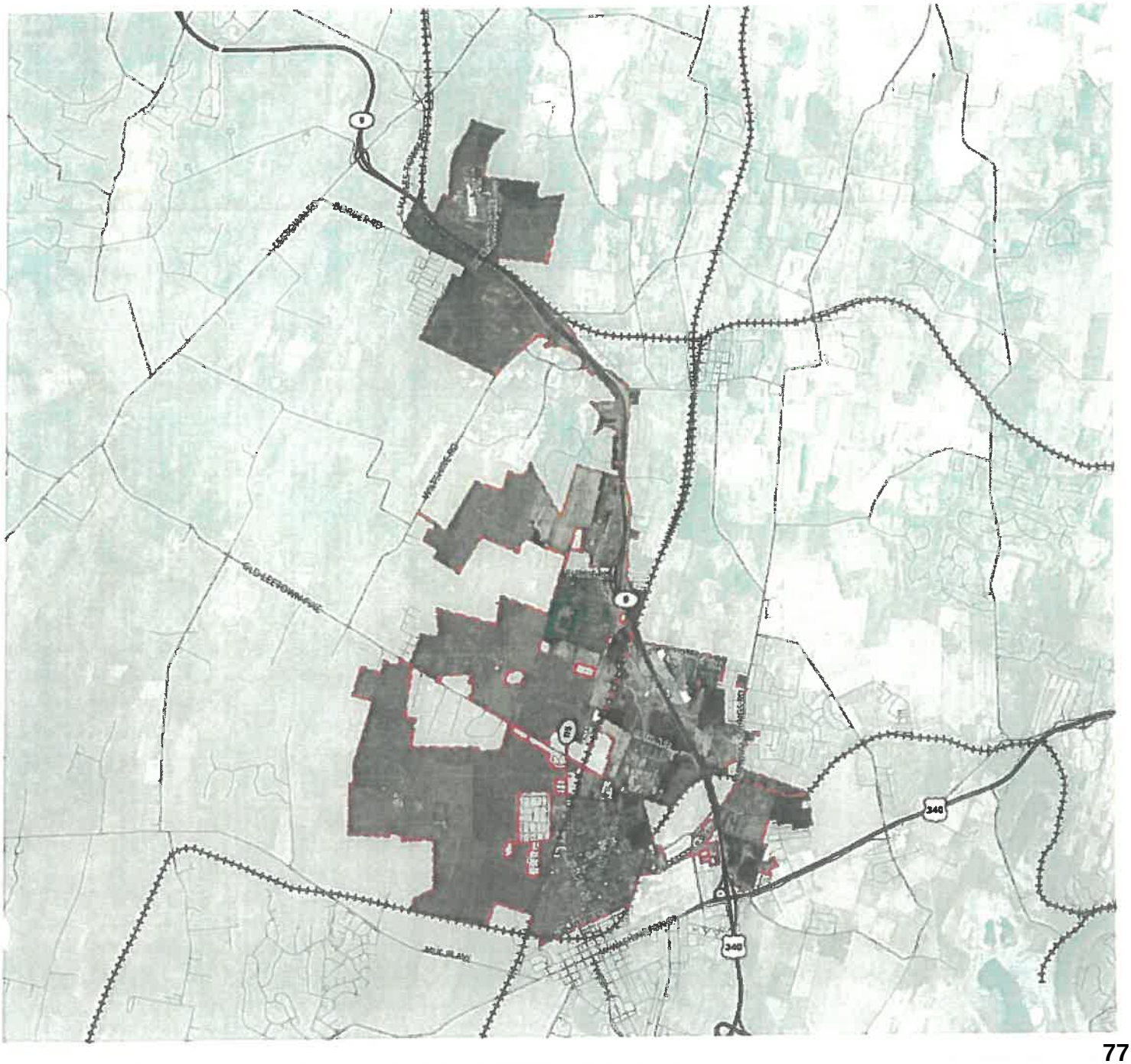
ATTACHMENTS:

Ranson Comprehensive Plan .pdf

PLAN 2034

RANSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024-2034

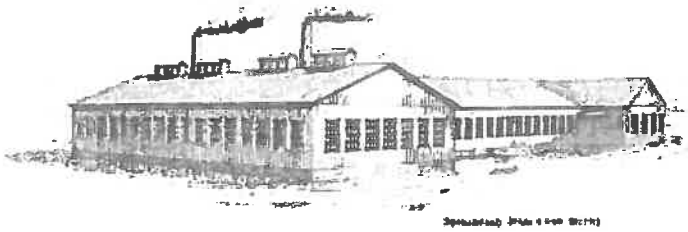
RANSON

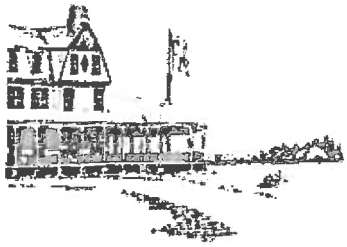




"Hotel Pourbaix"



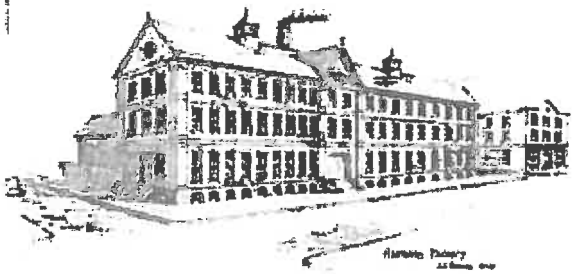






MAP
OF THE
PROPERTY
OF THE
CHARLESTOWN
MINING, MANUFACTURING AND IMPROVEMENT
COMPANY

CHARLESTOWN Jefferson, Co.
W.VA.



Front Cover: Ranson aerial 2023, ©UrbanFootprint ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap
Front end sheet: Map of the Property of the Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company, 1890-91, D.F. Taylor, Library of Congress
Back cover: Ranson and surrounding context, May 3, 2023, UrbanFootprint

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RANSON ADOPTING AND ENACTING THE 2024-2034 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Ranson is committed to fostering a dynamic community that offers opportunities for residents and visitors alike, and aims to be a well-balanced environment for both living and working and in doing so desires to promote sustainable economic development, transit, and community livability through focused and strategic planning efforts; and

WHEREAS, the City Council in late 2022 expressed its intent to update its comprehensive planning document, last revised in 2012, with the aim of creating a guiding document and roadmap to achieve and strategically plan for the aforementioned goals; and

WHEREAS, City of Ranson has conducted numerous public meetings, workshops, and engagement events to involve city officials, residents, and the business community in the exploration of ideas and actions, contributing to the formulation of the 2024-2034 Ranson Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, consistent with W. Va. Code § 8A-3 et seq. the Ranson Planning Commission after holding a public hearing regarding adoption of the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan, recommended approval of the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan to the City Council during the January 8, 2024 meeting of the Planning Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF RANSON, that the City of Ranson officially adopts the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan as presented, recognizing it as a significant tool that delineates a broad spectrum of issues, initiatives, studies, projects, and programs for consideration by various entities, both in the short-term and the long-term.; and

LET IT BE FURTHER ORDAINED THAT the Ranson City Council directs the City Manager to undertake all required and suitable measures, in accordance with W. Va. Code Chapter 8A, to conclude and implement the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan; and

LET IT BE FURTHER ORDAINED THAT this Ordinance shall take effect upon enactment.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RANSON ADOPTING AND ENACTING THE 2024-2034 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

First Reading: February 06, 2024

Public Hearing: April 09, 2024

Second Reading: April 09, 2024

Enacted this 9th day of April 2024

Keith D. Pierson
Mayor

ATTEST:

Darla Armstrong
City Clerk

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CORPORATION OF RANSON

Mayor
Keith D. Pierson

First Ward
Herbie McDaniel

Second Ward
Andy Colandrea

Third Ward
Mike Anderson

At Large
Amanda Stroud

At Large
Ken Suits

At Large
Tommy Custer

City Manager
Todd Wilt

IMAGES, GRAPHS, AND MAPS

Front Cover: Ranson aerial 2023, ©UrbanFootprint ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap D

Front end sheet: Map of the Property of the Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company, 1890-91, D.F. Taylor, Library of Congress D

Back cover: Ranson and surrounding context, May 3, 2023, UrbanFootprint D

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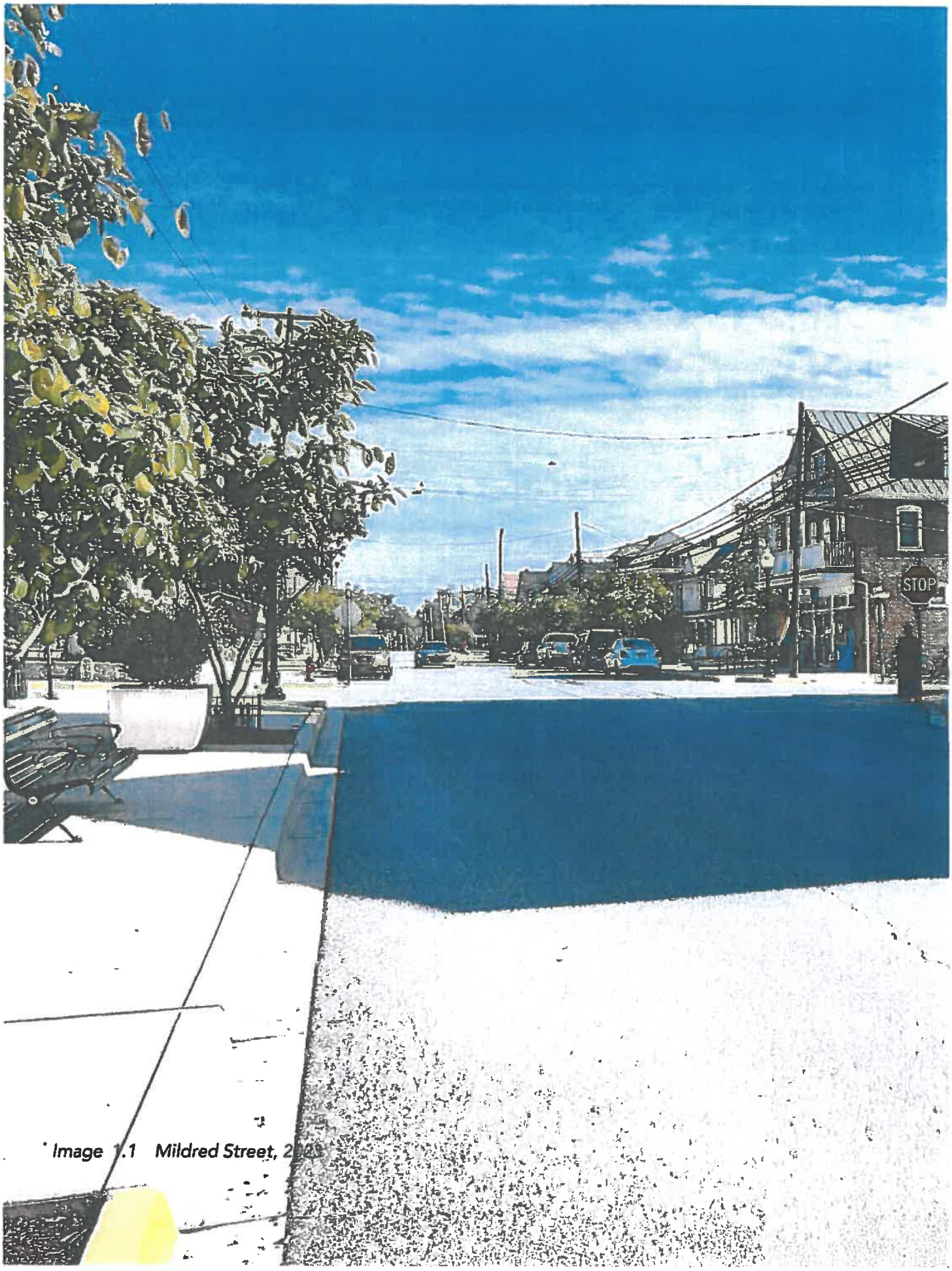


Image 1.1 Mildred Street, 2020

1

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Plan 2034, the comprehensive plan that provides a roadmap for the future of Ranson, West Virginia. This plan aims to address the diverse needs of the community and ensures that Ranson continues to be a city of prosperity and vibrancy. It seeks to uphold the commitment to the welfare of residents and the sustainable use of resources, while providing a clear vision for Ranson's development over the next ten years.

Plan 2034 is a response to both the community's immediate needs and collective long-term aspirations. It outlines a set of shared goals and specific actions for areas including land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, public services, rural and recreation areas, economic development, community design, preferred development areas, renewal and redevelopment, financing, and historic preservation.

Integral to the development of Plan 2034 has been an inclusive and comprehensive community engagement process. Residents, business owners, and local stakeholders have shared their perspectives and insights, and their input has been vital in shaping this plan.

This plan also recognizes the importance of the relationship with the neighboring city of Charles Town. Many of the actions laid out in this plan involve close collaboration with Charles Town, as that cooperation is key to addressing shared challenges and opportunities, along with the recognition of Ranson's place in the Washington DC region.

Plan 2034 is a living document that reflects a commitment to adaptability and continuous improvement. It is anticipated that it will evolve over time as the needs and circumstances of the community change.

The future of Ranson is exciting and everyone is invited to join in shaping this vision into reality. Together, the community can create a thriving and resilient Ranson that future generations will be proud to call home.

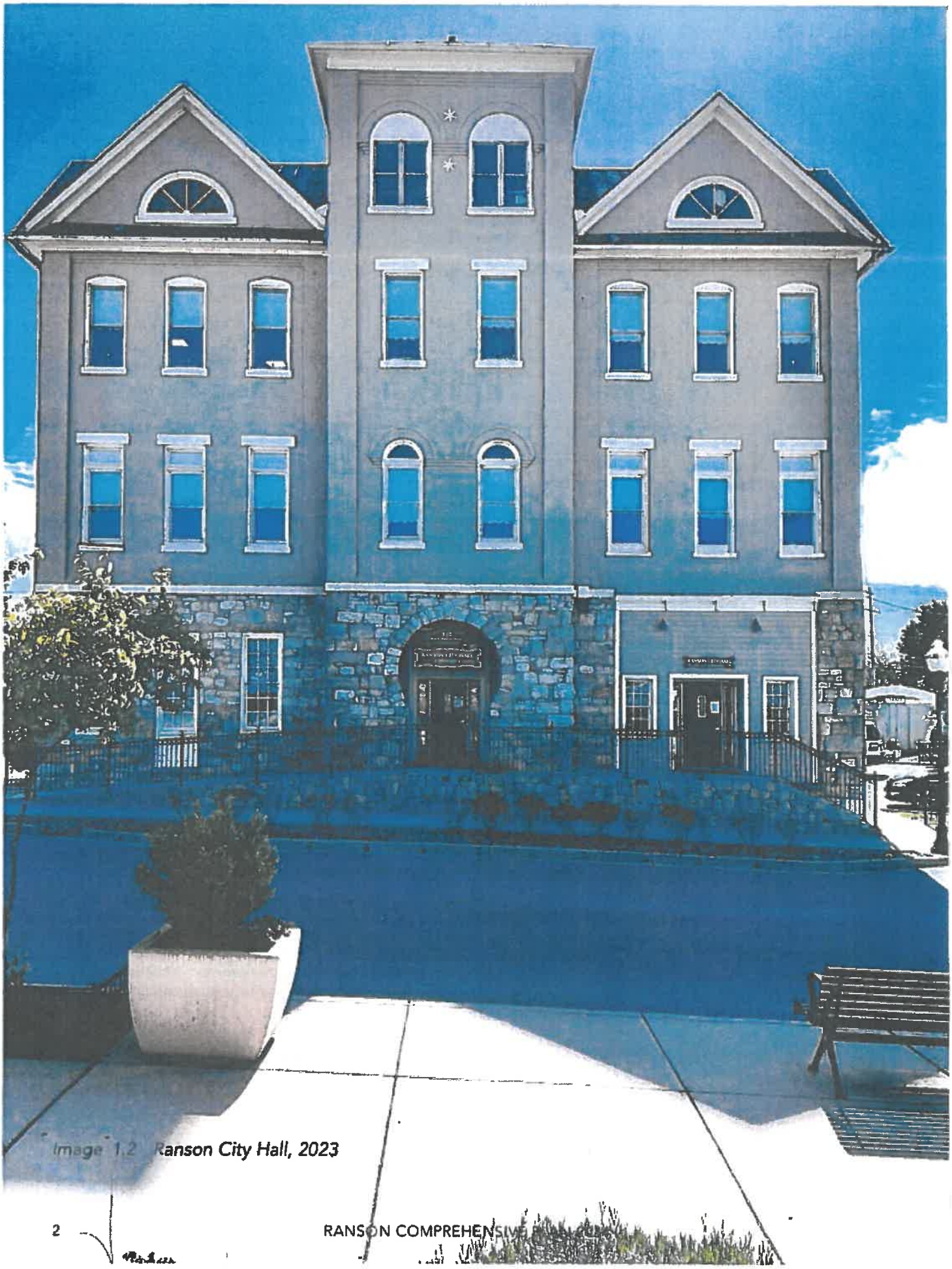


Image 1.2 Ranson City Hall, 2023

HISTORY

Throughout its existence, Ranson has epitomized a spirit of reinvention, rising from its industrial roots to the dynamic city it is today. Established near the end of the U.S. Industrial Revolution, the city gets its name from the Ranson family, the original owners of the 850-acre tract bordering Charles Town. This parcel would eventually become an economic development hub, managed by the Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing & Improvement Company. The Company first opened its doors in 1891 at what is now the corner of Third Avenue and Mildred Street, a location that over time transitioned from an office to a school, and ultimately to Ranson's City Hall.

The dawn of the 20th century saw a flourishing Ranson, fueled by the booming times in the Shenandoah Valley. The community transitioned into an independent town, incorporated on October 15, 1910. Thanks to its open embrace of innovation and investment, Ranson welcomed factories and new residents alike, and by 1950, its population swelled to nearly 1,500.

However, as the national post-WWII economy began a slow shift from heavy industry to what is now known as the "knowledge economy," Ranson proved its resilience once again. Its prime geographic location and visionary leadership positioned the city as an attractive choice for individuals seeking the tranquility of a small town, while maintaining convenient access to the global political and economic nexus of Washington, D.C. By 2000, the population had grown to 2,951, and today it has almost doubled to 5,549.

The closure of significant industries, including AB&C Corporation, Dixie Narco, and the Kidde Foundry, marked the end of Ranson's traditional industrial period. However, the potential for a more diverse economic base presented itself. Hollywood Casino, although located just outside the city limits, became a significant revenue contributor, enabling Ranson to expand its budget for projects directly benefiting its citizens.

In the early 2000s, with the prospect of continued growth and development, Ranson's City Council took proactive steps to secure a sustainable tax base for future decades. The city expanded its boundaries, annexing several thousand acres, now ripe for commercial, residential, and agricultural investment, as envisioned by this comprehensive plan.

Ranson enjoys the beauty of its surrounding rural landscapes, now recognized for their invaluable contribution to the quality of life and local food production. Ranson has not been hesitant in retrofitting to emerge as a more well-rounded community, boasting its own historic residential neighborhoods. This narrative of adaptation and evolution is the cornerstone of Ranson's past and the beacon lighting the way to its future.







Images 1.3 - 1.7 Ranson Public Workshop, 2023





COMMUNITY VISION

In May of 2023, this process reached out to the people who live, work, learn, and play in Ranson, to understand their vision for a shared future.

Through online surveys, mapping exercises, round table conversations, and a public workshop, insights were shared into where policies and projects should focus over the next decade.

The response was enlightening and indicative of a passion for Ranson's potential.

One powerful sentiment emerged: 58% of the community voiced that a vision of **"A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, A REGIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION, AND NEW QUALITY OF LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE, LIKE IMPROVED SIDEWALKS, STREETS, AND PARKS,"** aligns perfectly with their hopes for Ranson's trajectory.

This striking consistency connects to the same vision language that shaped Ranson's last comprehensive plan.



RANSON

LAND USE

How we grow.

The opposite of growth is none and no community wants that. But how ... fundamental question. Some forms of gro... choices, opportunities, and quality of life; ... le them.

Planning for growth means reconciling the realities of today with the aspirations of tomorrow. How can growth best serve us in the present while appealing to the wants and needs of our city's future residents and businesses?



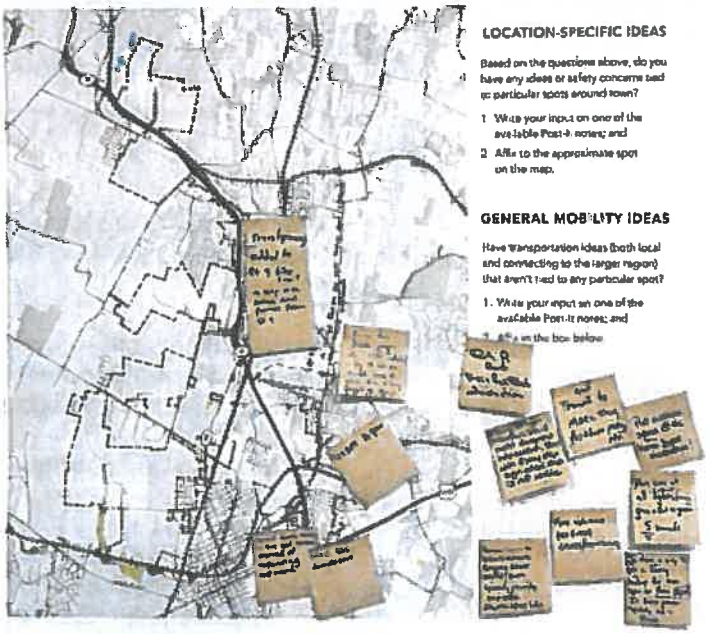
RANSON

TRANSPORTATION

How we move.

How people get around changes over time. Technologies change, preferences change. Sometimes we build our communities around one form of mobility at the expense of others, hindering this natural evolution of behavior.

When you travel around Ranson, what challenges do you face? Would you like to walk or bike more? Are there safety issues? What mobility improvements should be prioritized by the city?



LOCATION-SPECIFIC IDEAS

Based on the questions above, do you have any ideas or safety concerns tied to particular spots around town?

1. Write your input on one of the available Post-it notes; and
2. Affix to the approximate spot on the map.

GENERAL MOBILITY IDEAS

Have transportation ideas (both local and connecting to the larger region) that aren't tied to any particular spot?

1. Write your input on one of the available Post-it notes; and
2. Affix on the box below.

RANSON

CITY SERVICES

How we provide.

Safe, clean and well-maintained streets and parks are perhaps the most prevalent evidence of city services in action. How is Ranson measuring up? Do residents receive good value in exchange for taxes paid?

Comprehensive planning determines how we invest our resources in the future. Should we make changes to existing city services? Provide new offerings? What about parks and recreational amenities?

VALUE FOR THE DOLLAR

Do the residents of Ranson receive good value in exchange for the taxes paid? If yes, place a green sticky dot in the box below. If no, place a red sticky dot.

HOW TO IMPROVE

Are changes required for existing city services? Are new services necessary to address changing circumstances? Write your thoughts on Post-It notes and add to this box.



PARKS & RECREATION

Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. Add a green dot for agree; a red dot for disagree.

Ranson has sufficient parks to serve residents.

Ranson has sufficient recreational programming to serve residents.

Ranson has sufficient walking/biking/exercise trails.

Ranson has sufficient facilities for youth sports.

Ranson has sufficient playground equipment in proximity to residences.

RANSON

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

How we preserve.

Rich history is embedded in the fields and forests of the Shenandoah Valley. That's the Ranson we're fortunate to call home. What examples of local culture make us unique? What's deserving of environmental protection?

Care for our natural and historical resources is an investment in that which makes Ranson special. How can we maintain and build our local economy yet still preserve our most lasting and valuable assets?

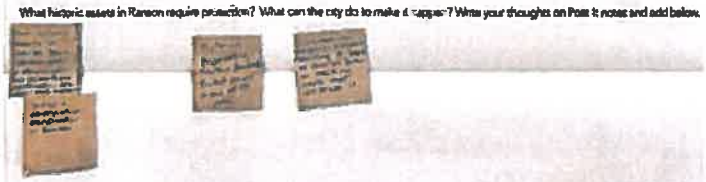
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

What natural assets in Ranson require protection? What can the city do to make it happen? Write your thoughts on Post-it notes and add below.



HISTORIC ASSETS

What historic assets in Ranson require protection? What can the city do to make it happen? Write your thoughts on Post-it notes and add below.



RANSON VISION:

A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, A REGIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION, AND NEW QUALITY OF LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE, LIKE IMPROVED SIDEWALKS, STREETS, AND PARKS

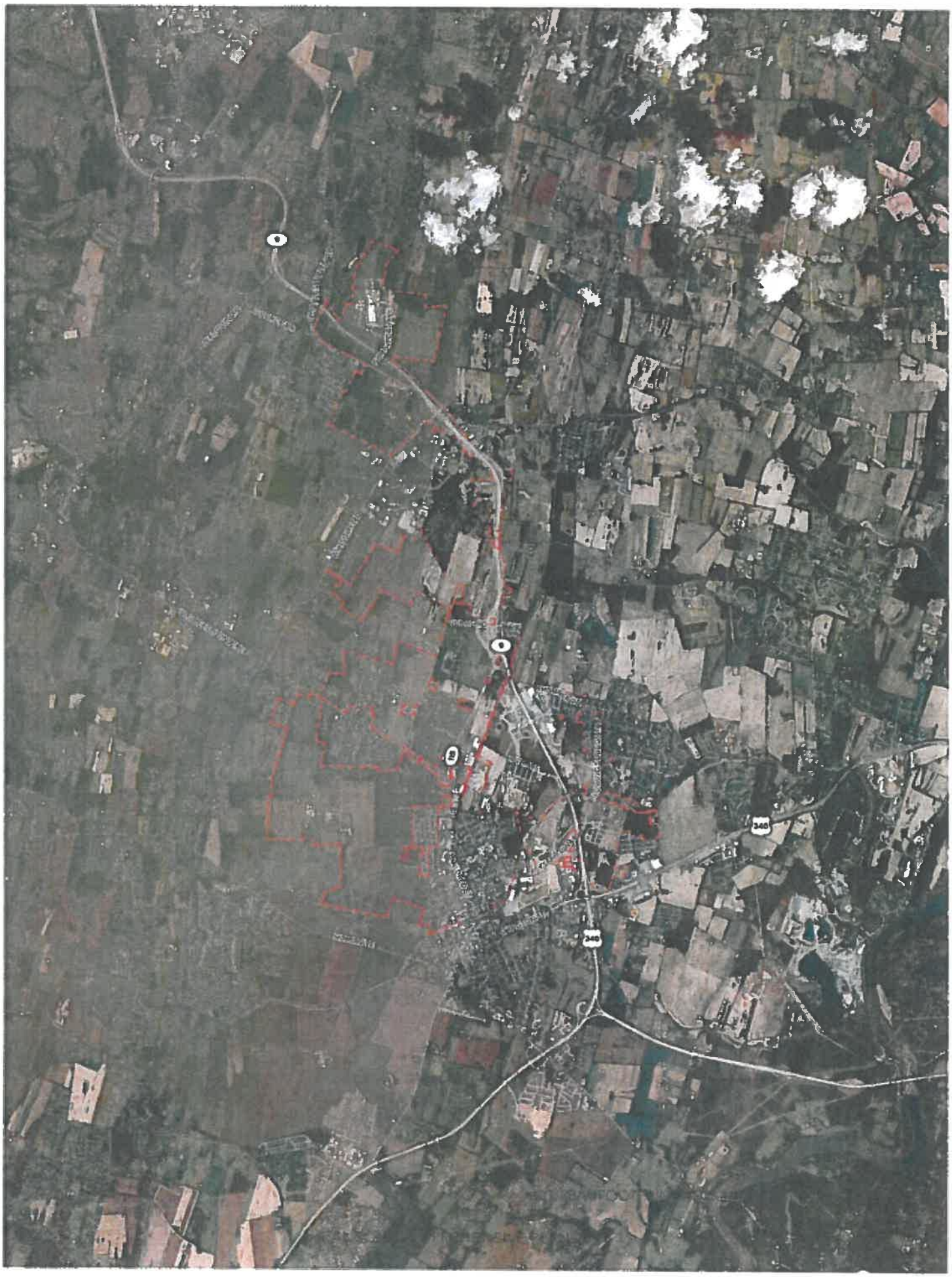
While the collective goals remain largely unchanged, it's clear that the shifting social, political, and economic environment of the past decade necessitates new strategies to attain them. The path forward is not a simple refurbishment of the past; it requires a holistic examination of the current landscape. In the words of one insightful community member, the new plan "needs a holistic look at how things have changed."

The feedback received from the Ranson community underscores a need for integrated, strategic planning. The choices made in one area, such as transportation infrastructure, directly impact the ability to achieve other goals, like housing diversity and affordability. These connections are seen throughout the community: the interplay between high-performing schools, cultural and recreational amenities, and economic growth; the mutual influence of regional jurisdiction, municipal government, and local enterprises. As one workshop participant noted, "It takes all of us as a village to try to work together."

Over the years, Ranson and the surrounding communities have capitalized on the proximity to Washington DC and its robust global economy. Recent years have seen Ranson's population growth outpace both Jefferson County and the state. The challenge now is how to enhance Ranson's identity as a tranquil, affordable alternative to the fast-paced, high-cost lifestyle of the DC metro area.

Despite the growth, over 80% of Ranson's workers commute to jobs outside of town. In survey responses, 31% of expressed the need for more local job opportunities. Economic development that offers higher-paying jobs, coupled with quality-of-life improvements such as enhanced infrastructure, parks, and greenspace, emerged as a shared priority. One participant commented, "I would put good paying local jobs and infrastructure as equally important ... The goal should be to attract businesses with higher paying jobs to the area."

The purpose of this plan is to take these discussions, these ideas, these aspirations, and translate them into tangible, actionable strategies. In implementing this plan, the community will collaboratively refine these ideas and assess emerging priorities for feasibility. This is the shared direction for Ranson, a community-driven pathway towards a future everyone can all be proud to call home.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2

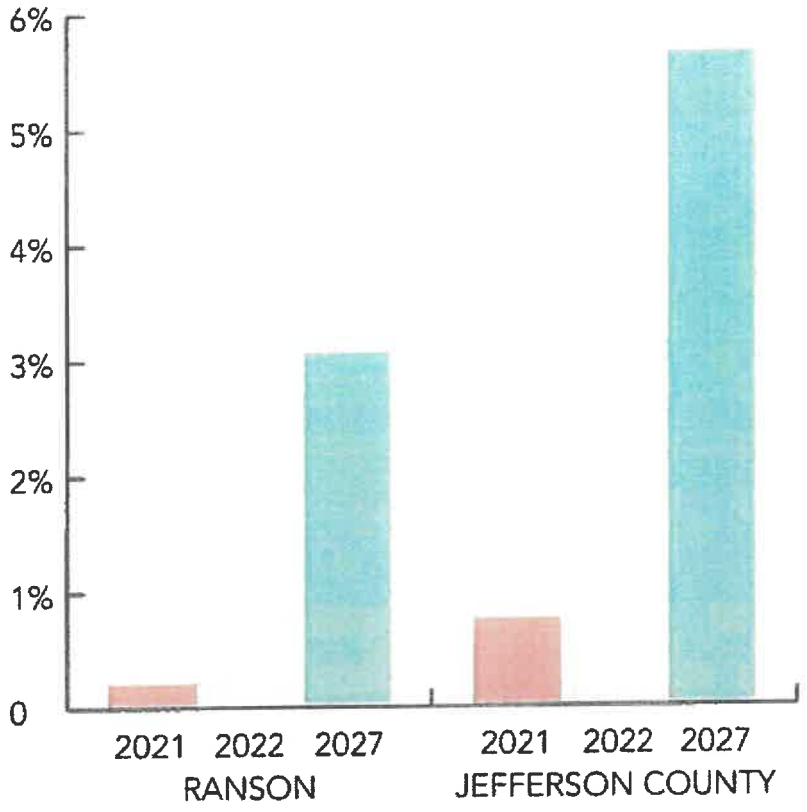
DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of Ranson, currently standing at approximately 5,549 individuals, has been on an upward trajectory for the last two decades. This steady increase in the number of residents is a testament to the city's appeal and the successful strategies it has implemented to foster growth and development. As with any city, the factors contributing to this consistent growth are multifaceted and include elements like economic opportunities, quality of life, amenities, and the city's ability to attract and retain residents of varying age groups and backgrounds.

In terms of economic opportunities, Ranson has been successful in offering jobs and entrepreneurial prospects that have attracted individuals and families to relocate to the city. The quality of life in Ranson, characterized by its small-town feel coupled with urban conveniences, green spaces, and community-centric activities, contributes to its appeal. The amenities offered by the city, ranging from essential services to recreational and cultural outlets, have enhanced its attractiveness as a place to live.

Ranson's strategic efforts in attracting a broad demographic spectrum, from young professionals to retirees, have played a significant role in its population growth. Programs and initiatives aimed at retaining young professionals, providing affordable housing options, and fostering a vibrant community life have made Ranson a desirable place to call home for many.

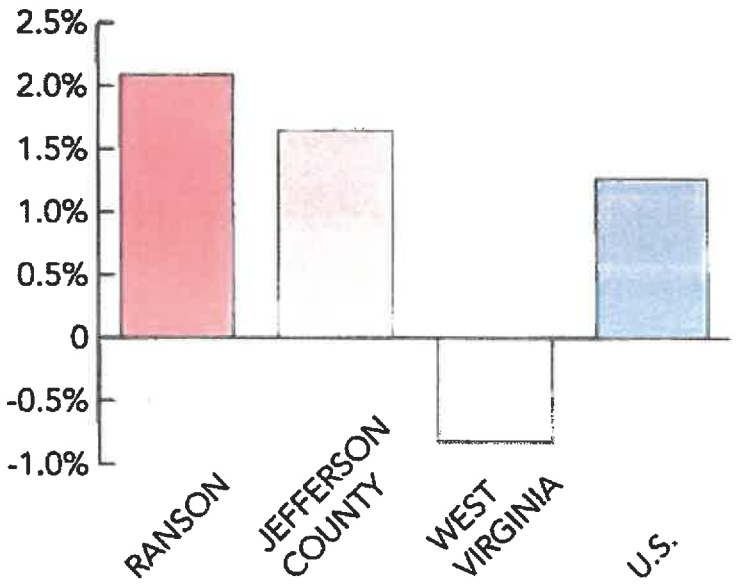
Moving forward, projections suggest that the trend of incremental growth is likely to continue in the near term. These predictions align with broader expectations for Jefferson County, which is also anticipated to witness an influx of residents through 2027. Such regional growth underscores the broader appeal of the area, with its strategic location, robust economy, and vibrant community life, and requires comprehensive planning to manage this projected growth.



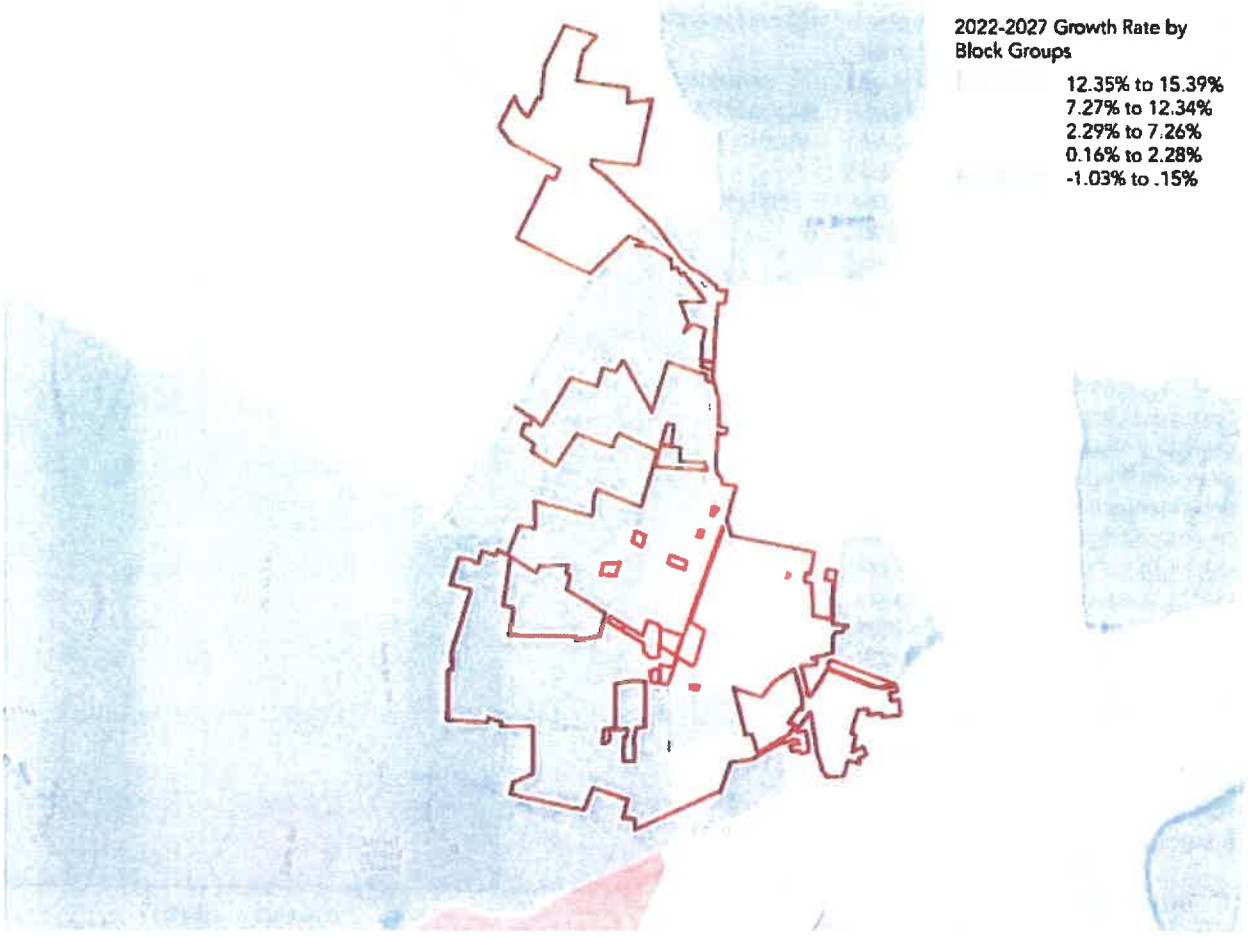
Graph 2.1 Ranson Population Change (Source: Esri, Esri-U.S., BLS, ACS, Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2017-2021)

Growth in the West Virginia panhandle has been slow and steady over the last two decades, outperforming the national average. This trend is projected to continue for another four years, in spite of the overall decline in the population of West Virginia as a whole.

The growth trend in rural areas of Jefferson County is also anticipated to continue, particularly southwest of downtown Charles Town. Because of Ranson's regional proximity to the cultural, business, and shopping resources of Washington D.C., supportive policies should enable the ongoing measured growth trajectory.



Graph 2.2 Percent Change in Population 2020 – 2022 (Source: US Census, ESRI)



Map 2.1 Projected Population Change 2022 – 2027 (Source: ESRI, US Census)

AGE

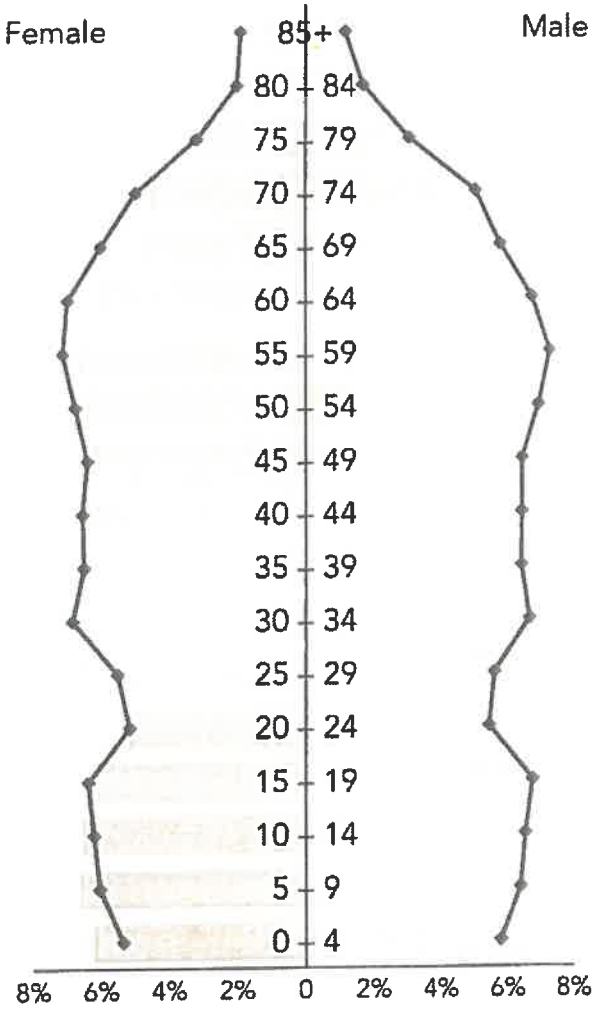
The city of Ranson boasts a noticeably younger demographic profile when compared to the broader Jefferson County, with each age group showing a slight tilt towards youthfulness. This trend is particularly apparent among young professionals within the 30 to 40 years old age bracket. This group is noticeably more populous in Ranson, surpassing the corresponding figures in not just Jefferson County, but also the entire state of West Virginia.

Such a robust presence of young professionals suggests that Ranson possesses certain appealing qualities that resonate with this demographic. It might be the city's proximity to job opportunities, the small-town feel blended with urban conveniences, or the presence of a vibrant community life. Recognizing this demographic strength, the Ranson Refined initiative will actively develop strategies aimed at not just retaining these young professionals, but also facilitating their transition into the working cohort, and eventually, into retirement. The objective is to create a city that supports its residents at every stage of their lives.

MEDIAN AGE 37.5

Conversely, Ranson's population within the retirement age range, specifically between 55 and 74 years old, is lower than that in Jefferson County. This discrepancy serves as an indicator of certain potential shortcomings within the city's offerings, particularly for the retirement demographic.

While Ranson is successfully attracting a younger demographic, there are opportunities to improve its appeal for older residents. Such improvements could involve strengthening health care services, developing more shopping facilities, enhancing public transportation, and increasing housing options. These initiatives could make Ranson more appealing to retirees as well as contribute to creating a more inclusive, age-friendly city that caters to the needs of all its residents, irrespective of their age.



Graph 2.3 Age Comparison (Source: US Census Bureau, Esri)

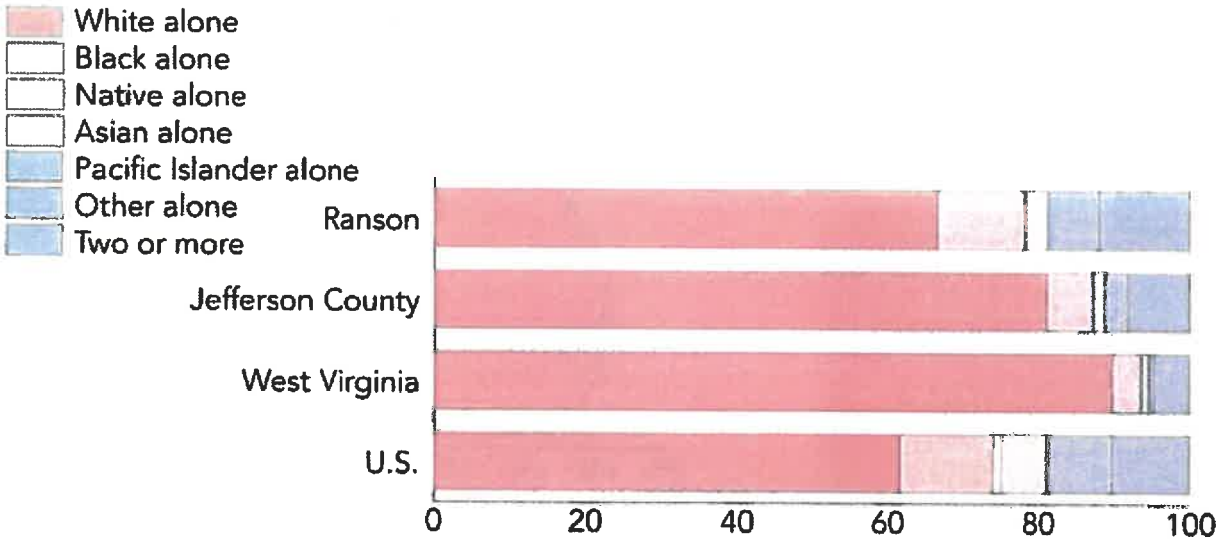
RACIAL COMPOSITION

Ranson demonstrates a uniquely diverse racial composition when compared to the broader landscapes of Jefferson County and the State of West Virginia. The city's African American population accounts for approximately 11.5% of the total population. In contrast, the corresponding figure in Jefferson County is 6%, while at the state level, the Black population constitutes just 3.5%.

Such figures point to a significant degree of racial diversity in Ranson, which is not commonly found in the wider region. In fact, the racial composition of Ranson resonates more closely with the demographic makeup of the entire United States, rather than the predominantly white demographics that characterize both Jefferson County and West Virginia. This diversity enriches the social and cultural fabric of Ranson, contributing to its unique charm and appeal.

This increased level of diversity in Ranson compared to the county and state may be influenced by a range of factors. Its proximity to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, with its inherent diversity, and the presence of job opportunities that might attract a more diverse workforce could be contributing factors. It also might suggest a higher level of racial integration and inclusivity, as the city seems to be a more welcoming environment for ethnic minorities compared to its surrounding areas.

These demographic trends are not static due to economic development, migration patterns, and shifts in social attitudes. This diversity is a strength, fostering a culturally rich community with varied perspectives, experiences, and skills. Embracing and enhancing this diversity is essential for the city's growth and development.



Graph 2.4 Racial Comparison (Source: US Census Bureau, Esri)

POPULATION & EMPLOYMENT

5,549	2,235	2.48	37.5	$77,222
Population	Households	Avg Size Household	Median Age	Median Household Income

$217,134	84	179	61
Median Home Value	Wealth Index	Housing Affordability	Diversity Index

AT RISK POPULATION

575	798	62
Households With Disability	Population 65+	Households Without Vehicle

POVERTY AND LANGUAGE

14%	269
Households Below the Poverty Level	Households Below the Poverty Level

POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

5,732	178	2,164
Daytime Population	Total Businesses	Total Employees

Image 2.2 Population and Employment Summary (Source: Esri, ACS, Esri-Data Axle, Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2017-2021

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Ranson household income is lower than Jefferson County as a whole. Fourteen percent of the households in Ranson earn less than $20,172 per year for a household of three.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
RANSON $77,222
JEFFERSON CO. $92,832

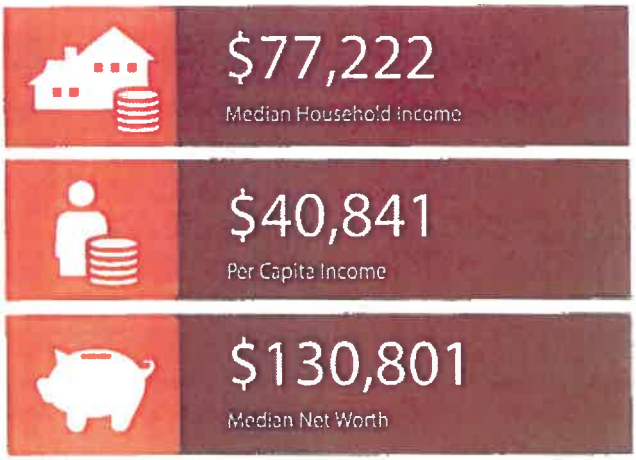
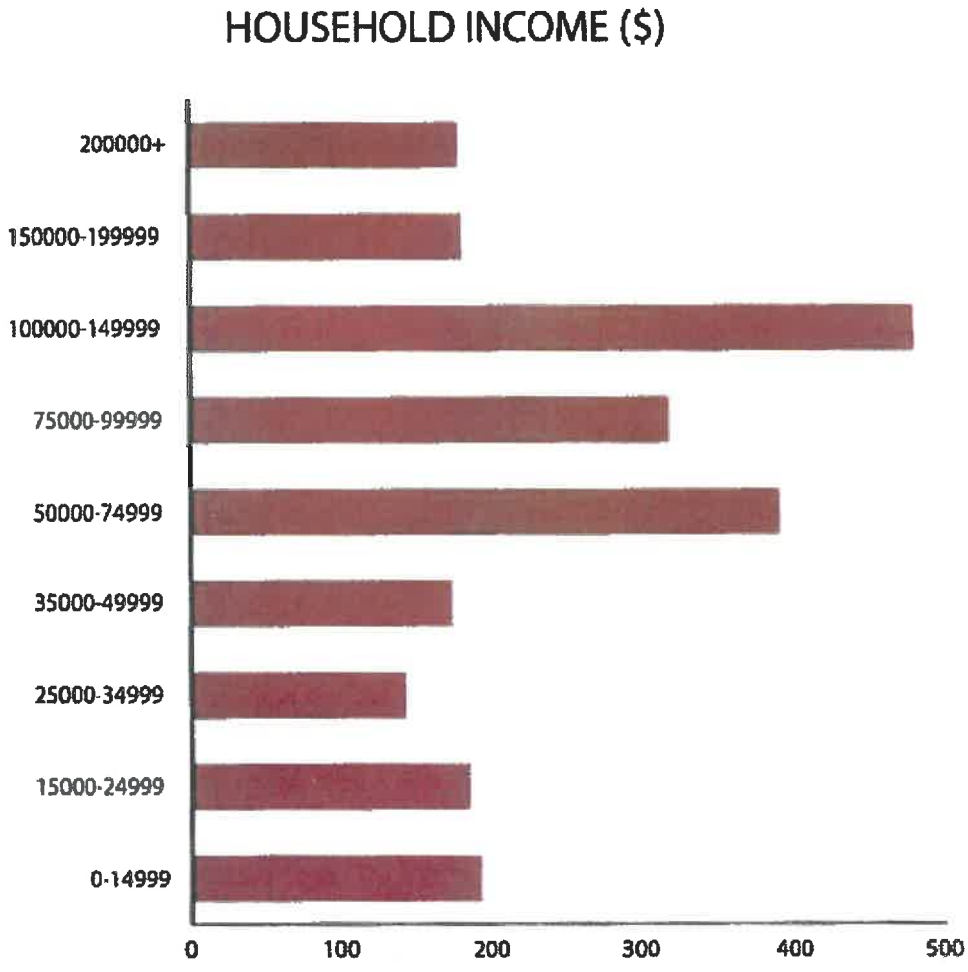


Image 2.3 Income Summary (Source: Esri 2022, 2027)



Graph 2.5 Income Range per Household (Source: US Census Bureau)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment in Ranson reveals intriguing trends when analyzed against the backdrop of the broader county and state statistics. The US Census and ESRI forecasts for 2022 shed light on these dynamics.

A significant 92% of Ranson residents aged 25 and above have obtained their high school diplomas. In contrast, West Virginia's overall high school graduation rate stands at 84%. This disparity underscores that Ranson outstrips the state level in terms of secondary education attainment by a substantial 8 percentage points.

Possible factors driving this higher attainment might include the quality of the local school system in Ranson, the accessibility of educational resources, or a community-wide emphasis on the significance of secondary education. Higher rates of high school graduation could potentially result in a broader availability of skilled workers, lower unemployment rates, and increased civic participation.

The narrative changes, however, when it comes to higher education statistics. Around 24% of Ranson's residents have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, contrasting with 34% of Jefferson County residents who have achieved the same level of education. This contrast suggests a notable gap in the progression from secondary to tertiary education within Ranson. It also points to potential areas of focus, such as encouraging post-high school education, enhancing access to tertiary education, and fostering ties with local colleges and universities.

Comparisons with the state-level data present a mixed picture. High school graduation rates in West Virginia are roughly on par with Ranson's at 41%. Nonetheless, in the arena of higher education, Ranson trails slightly with the state average of 22% having a bachelor's degree or higher. These comparisons reaffirm the importance for Ranson to continually invest in its educational framework and, particularly, bridge the gap to higher education.

These findings offer valuable context for policymakers, educators, and community leaders in Ranson. By harnessing this data, they can make informed decisions about educational policies, programs, and resource distribution to help the city cultivate a robust, well-educated community.

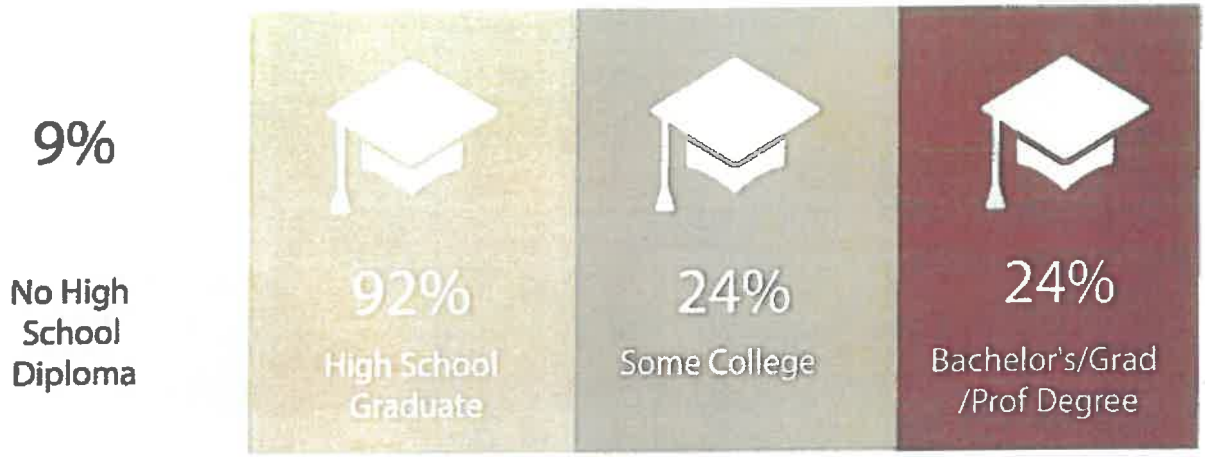
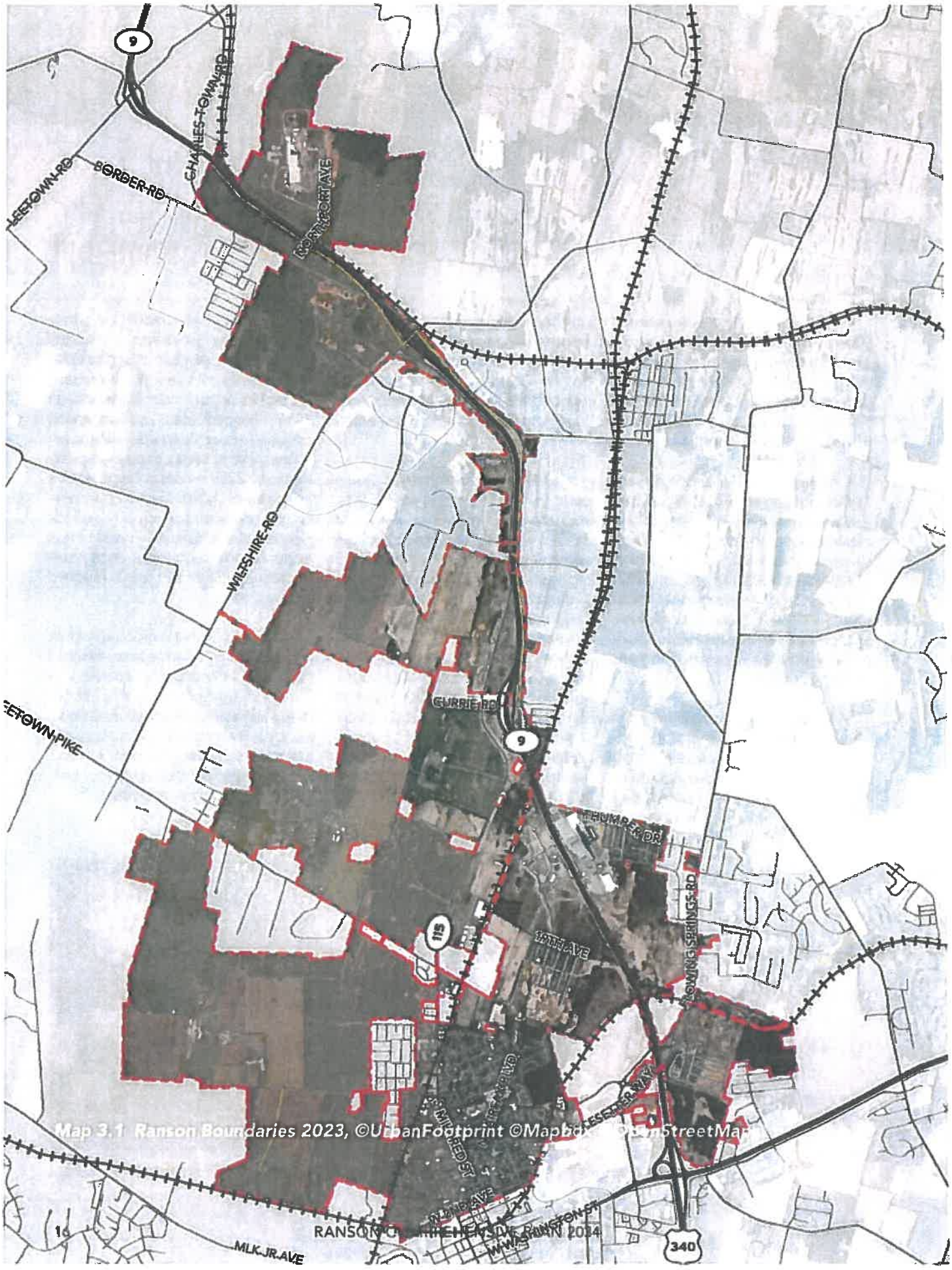


Image 2.4 Educational Attainment Summary (Source: US Census, ESRI forecasts for 2022)



Map 3.1 Ranson Boundaries 2023, ©UrbanFootprint ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap

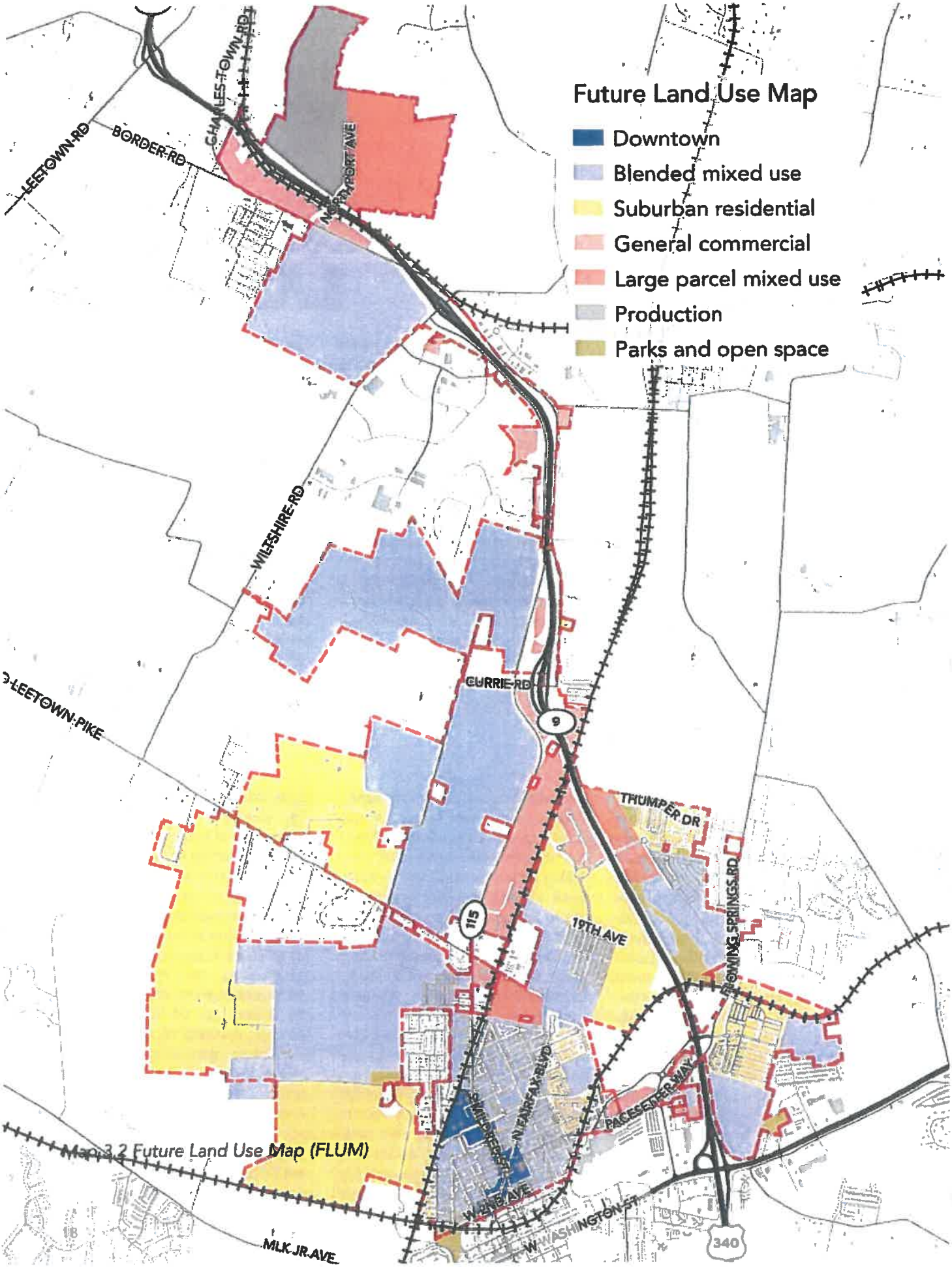
3

LAND USE

Land use planning plays a pivotal role in shaping the physical environment and the character of the city, impacting all facets of life in Ranson. This chapter sets the current state, goals, and programs for the general distribution, location, and suitable uses of land in the community. This overview of land use patterns addresses both existing and proposed. Various types of land uses are explored, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, educational, public, historic, conservation, transportation, and infrastructure. It's crucial to the shared vision that every type of land use respects and contributes positively to the city's unique character and identity. Population density and building intensity standards are also addressed in this chapter. These standards are designed to ensure a balanced and sustainable urban environment, fostering social interaction while preserving open spaces. This chapter discusses the approach to managing growth and decline. Recognizing that population changes significantly influence land use patterns, it takes into account the future population growth discussed in Chapter 2 and propose strategies to adapt to these changes. This chapter identifies constraints to development, such as flood-prone and subsidence areas, and set out strategies to mitigate risks associated with these issues. The city's commitment is to facilitate development while ensuring the safety and well-being of residents and the integrity of the natural environment. The Land Use chapter of Plan 2034 offers a roadmap for sustainable development and the preservation of Ranson's unique character. Through proactive planning and careful management of land resources, Ranson's aim is to create a vibrant, resilient community where all can thrive.

CURRENT STATE

Ranson's land use patterns are a reflection of the city's evolution from a small rural settlement to a thriving small town. The current land use distribution includes a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and public lands, interspersed with areas dedicated to recreational and conservation use. Agricultural lands lie predominantly on the periphery, preserving the rural heritage and providing a buffer between urban and rural lands. Residents are proud of the Ranson's educational facilities and have committed lands for public and educational uses. Recognizing the responsibility to the past, lands of historical significance are conserved and maintained, adding to the unique small town character. Transportation and infrastructure lands, crucial to the functioning of the city, are well-distributed, providing vital connectivity and services. However, like many small cities, Ranson faces challenges such as managing population density, balancing growth, and mitigating constraints to development like flood-prone and subsidence areas. Drivable, single-use parts of town are governed by zoning districts that are use-based. Walkable, mixed-use parts of town are governed by zoning districts that are form-based, organized by the rural-to-urban spectrum called the transect, which is governed by the Ranson SmartCode. Both types of zoning have been modified since they were first introduced, and both need further development to effectively implement the vision and goals of Plan 2034. Ranson's goal, as reflected in this comprehensive plan, is to enhance each zone based on its unique characteristics, while promoting the right balance of development and conservation. Each part of Ranson, from its rural outskirts to the heart of Old Town, should have a clear role and vision, and contribute to the city's overall character, diversity, and vibrancy. In doing so, Ranson can better manage its growth while preserving the small-town charm cherished by its residents.



Map 3.2 Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for Ranson is a strategic instrument designed to inform upcoming zoning decisions. It is not a zoning map, but rather signifies the anticipated distribution, intensity, and pattern of development and redevelopment for the next 10 years. It should be used to identify where different types of development should be prioritized in the future.

Ranson's development over the past century reflects diverse architectural and development practices. The mixture of uses in the Downtown district are characterized by small lots with one and two-story buildings that accommodate a mix of uses on various floors of a building, or various buildings on the same lot. This stands in contrast to the Large Parcel Mixed Use and big box retail outlets located along Highway 9. Similarly, residential patterns have shifted from the historic homes found in the downtown district to the suburban neighborhoods that have been developed in the more recently annexed lands.

Recognizing these distinct characteristics, Ranson's Future Land Use Map is not classified strictly by residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Instead, it is organized into context areas like Downtown, Blended Mixed Use, Suburban Residential, General Commercial, Large Parcel Mixed Use, Production, and Parks and Open Space. Policies suitable for the Old Town (a combination of Downtown and Blended Mixed Use districts), with its walkable, compact, mixed-use layout, will differ from those for newer suburban residential areas. Thus, the context areas on the FLUM allow the city's planning to acknowledge these variations.

MIXED USE CONTEXTS

The Downtown and Blended Mixed Use sections of Ranson are envisioned to be walkable, compact, mixed-use areas, encapsulating the small town feel of Ranson. Envisioned as places enabled by the principles of the SmartCode, these sectors will be characterized by their integration of commercial and residential uses, efficient public transportation options, and diverse urban form. This approach fosters a sense of community and promotes sustainable urban living

DOWNTOWN

The Downtown character area encompasses the areas marked by historic parcels as small as 22' x 100'. These smaller parcels and buildings are often more financially accessible for small scale redevelopment and adaptive reuse. The Downtown facilitates public parking along the streets rather than in private lots, supporting civic, commercial, and residential uses harmoniously combined.

The Downtown category represents development that is dense, varied, and walkable. It encourages multiple compatible uses, either mixed horizontally across a site or vertically within individual buildings, prioritizing the form of development over the specific uses. Rehabilitation and re-use of existing historic structures in Downtown should allow for upper-story residences in mixed-use buildings. Such mixed-use development should contribute to public amenities like parks, plazas, sidewalks, and landscaping, all aiding in creating a walkable and cohesive neighborhood. The historic Old Town includes both Downtown and the Blended Mixed Use context discussed on the next page.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

T4, T4O, T5L, T5

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Mixed-use buildings
- Multi-family dwellings
- Retail, offices, service
- Restaurants and pubs
- Public buildings

SECONDARY USES

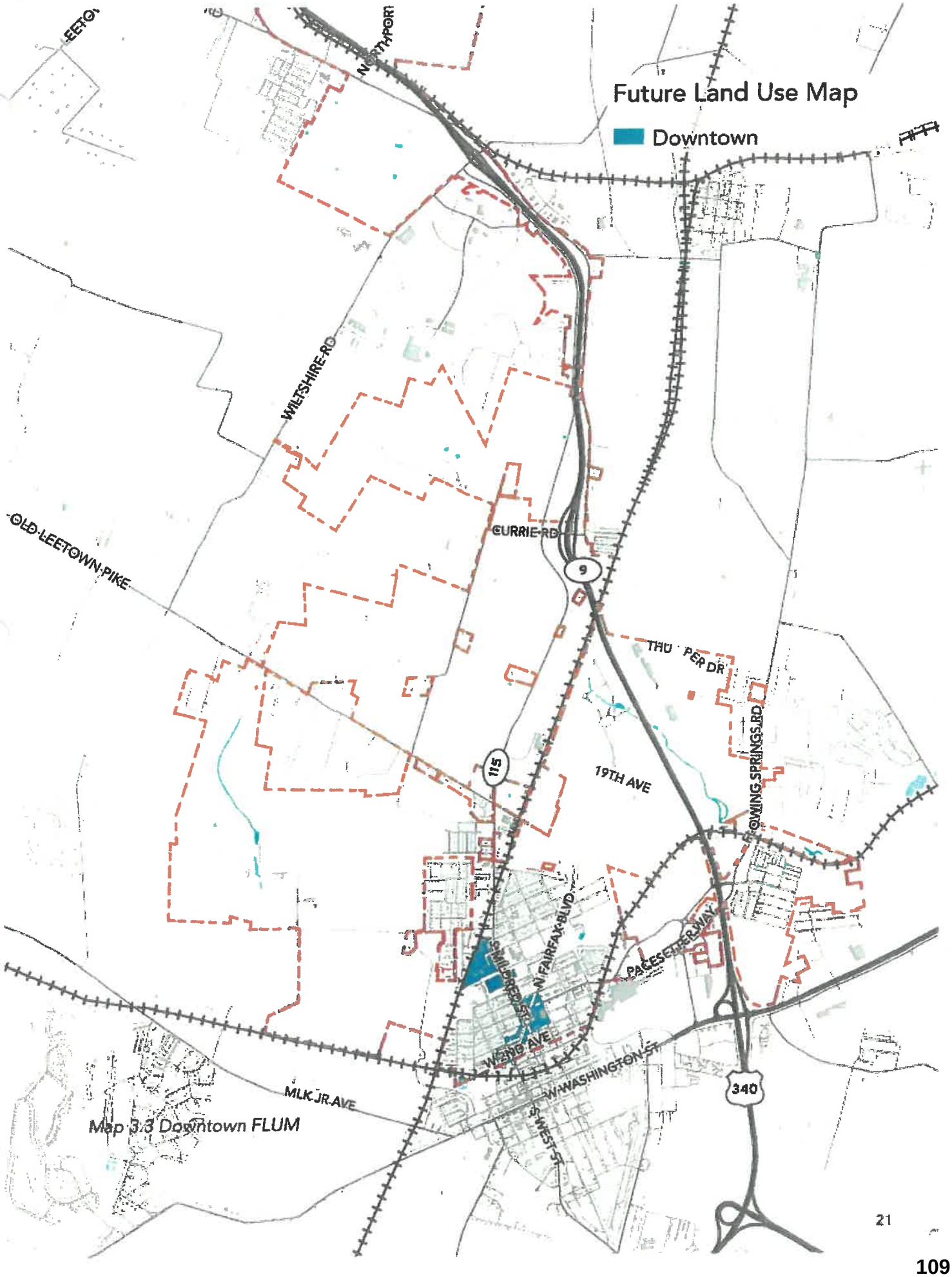
- Duplexes
- Townhouses
- Single family dwellings
- Hotels
- Schools
- Places of worship
- Cultural uses
- Parks



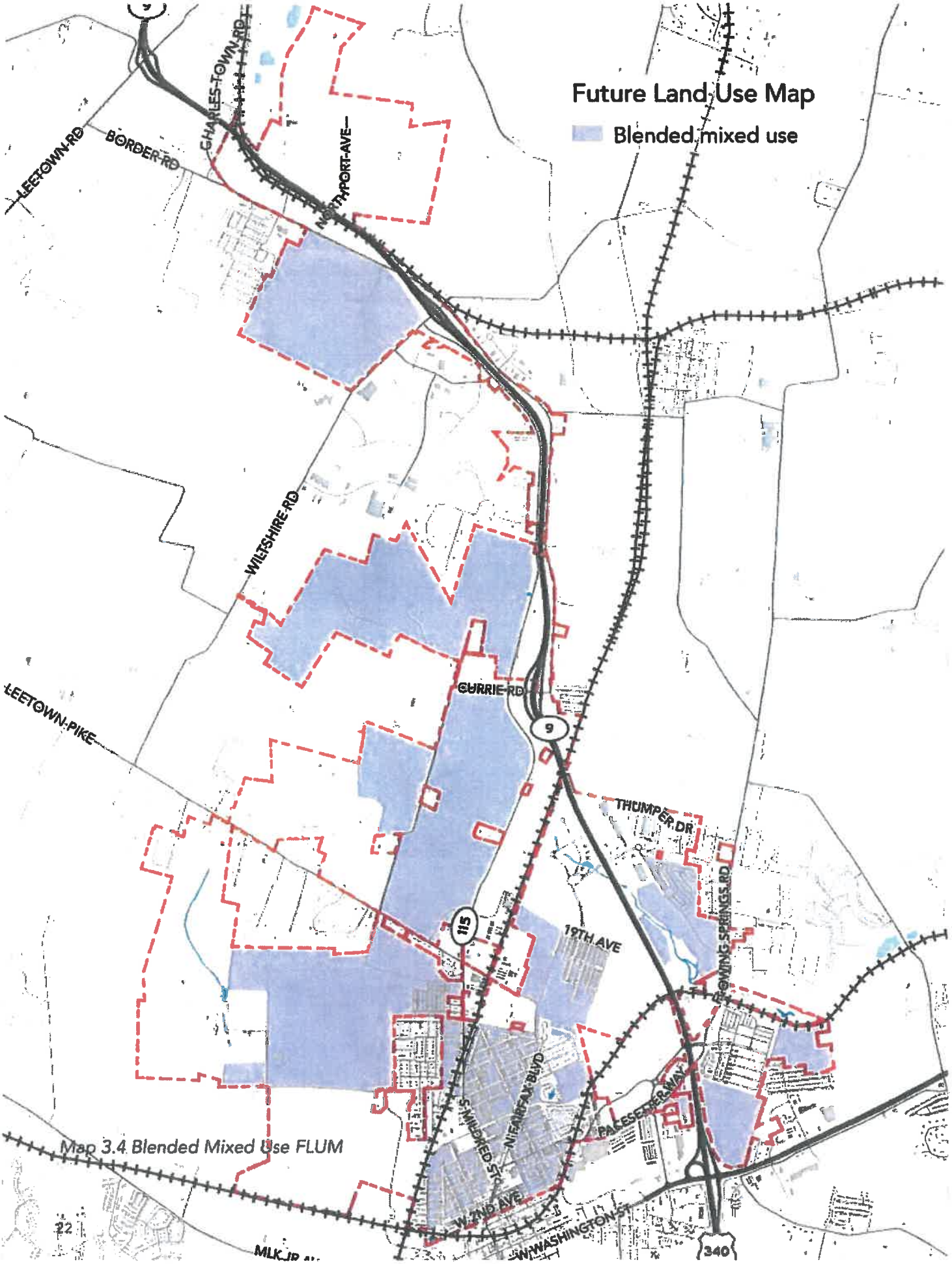




Images 3.1-3.3 Downtown, 2023



Map 3.3 Downtown FLUM



Map 3.4 Blended Mixed Use FLUM











Images 3.4-3.8 Blended Mixed Use, 2023

BLENDED MIXED USE

Ranson's Blended Mixed Use context is modeled after the historic neighborhoods of Old Town. These neighborhoods are lined with a variety of residential types: single-family homes, two-family dwellings, triplexes, and townhouses. This eclectic mix of housing types contributes to the vibrant community, where neighbors know each other, and the streets are alive with activity.

A distinct feature of these neighborhoods is the abundance of sidewalks, fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment. Lined with street trees, these sidewalks provide a serene canopy of shade, a charming backdrop to the rows of houses adorned with front porches. These porches, a classic characteristic of Ranson's historic homes, serve as social connectors, encouraging neighborly interaction and community engagement.

Intermingled with the residential area, neighborhood commercial establishments add to the charm and convenience of the Blended Mixed Use. Coffee shops, restaurants, and other local businesses dot the landscape, allowing residents to access essential services without venturing far from home. The blend of residential and commercial uses within these neighborhoods not only contributes to the walkability of the area but also promotes a sense of community, making the Blended Mixed Use a cherished part of the city's fabric.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

T3, T4, T4O, T5L

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Single family detached
- Duplexes
- Triplexes
- Townhomes
- Small apartment buildings

SECONDARY USES

- Accessory dwelling units
- Home occupations
- Schools
- Places of worship
- Cultural uses
- Cafes and coffee shops
- Small footprint retail
- Parks

USE BASED CONTEXTS

The Suburban Residential, General Commercial, and Large Parcel Mixed Use contexts, in contrast, will be managed under a conventional use-based zoning districts, defining more segregated zones for specific functions. Suburban Residential areas will be primarily for living spaces, ensuring quiet, single-use residential. General Commercial areas will house a mix of retail, services, and office spaces, while the Large Parcel Mixed Use areas will cater to substantial commercial establishments that require more extensive land, such as shopping centers or large-scale retail operations.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Ranson's Suburban Residential context comprises single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments built in a suburban style, reflecting the architectural trends that were popular in the period following the mid-20th century. These areas of Ranson, largely developed post-1950, echo the national movement towards suburban living and carry a uniform character because of similar street layouts, sidewalks, and residential setbacks.

These neighborhoods are often defined by larger lot sizes and setbacks, broad streets, cul-de-sacs, and restricted connectivity. Such design elements often reduce the walkability of the area, encouraging reliance on automobiles. However, the future vision for these areas in Ranson is one of enhanced diversity. Future development should aim for a compact, integrated pattern that includes a blend of residences, schools, parks, and recreational facilities. This more balanced approach will encourage more active forms of transportation, such as walking or biking, and foster a sense of community within these suburban areas.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

R-7, R-6

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Single family detached
- Duplexes
- Townhomes
- Apartment buildings

SECONDARY USES

- Accessory dwelling units
- Home occupations
- Schools
- Places of worship
- Cultural uses
- Parks

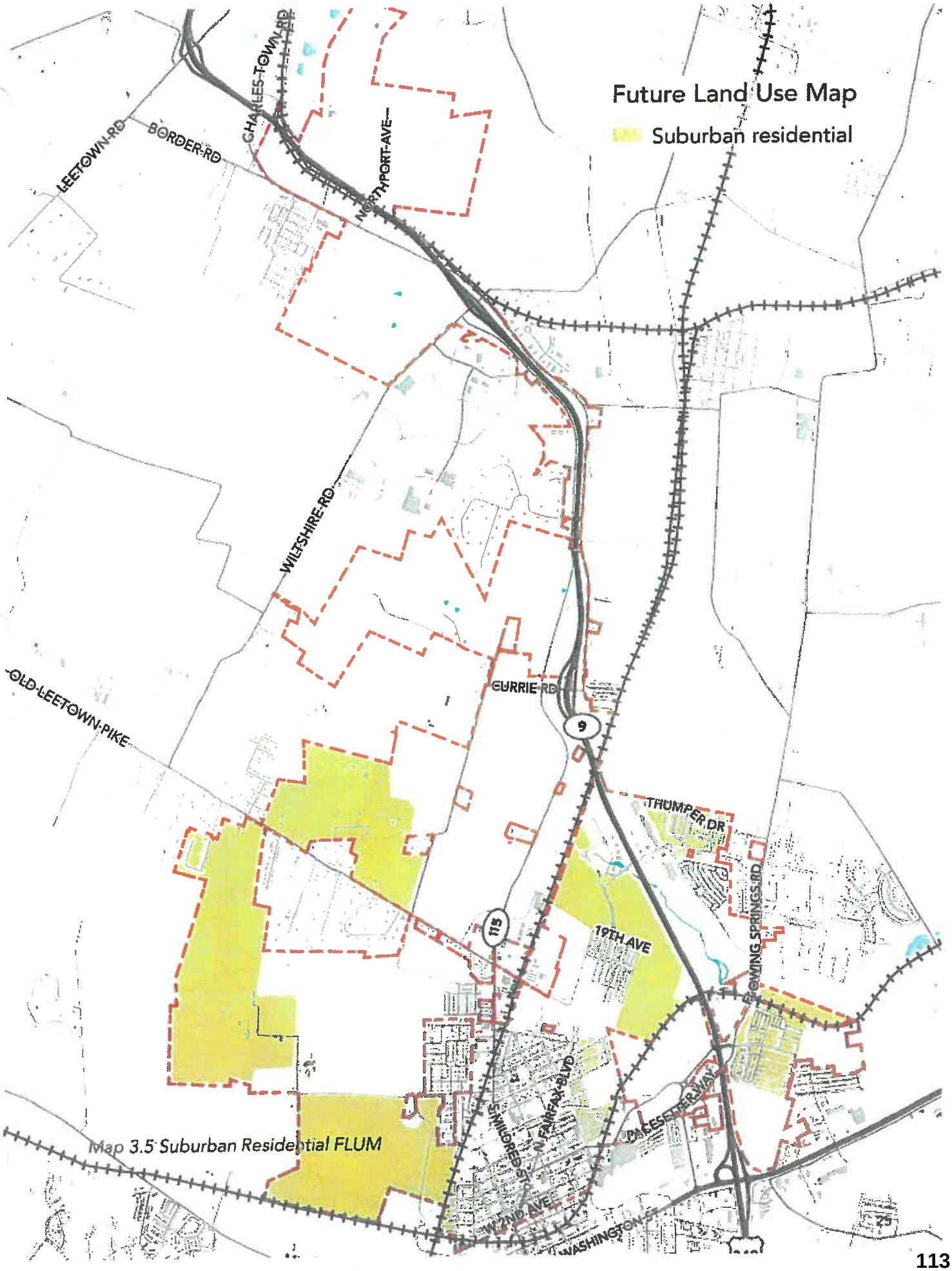




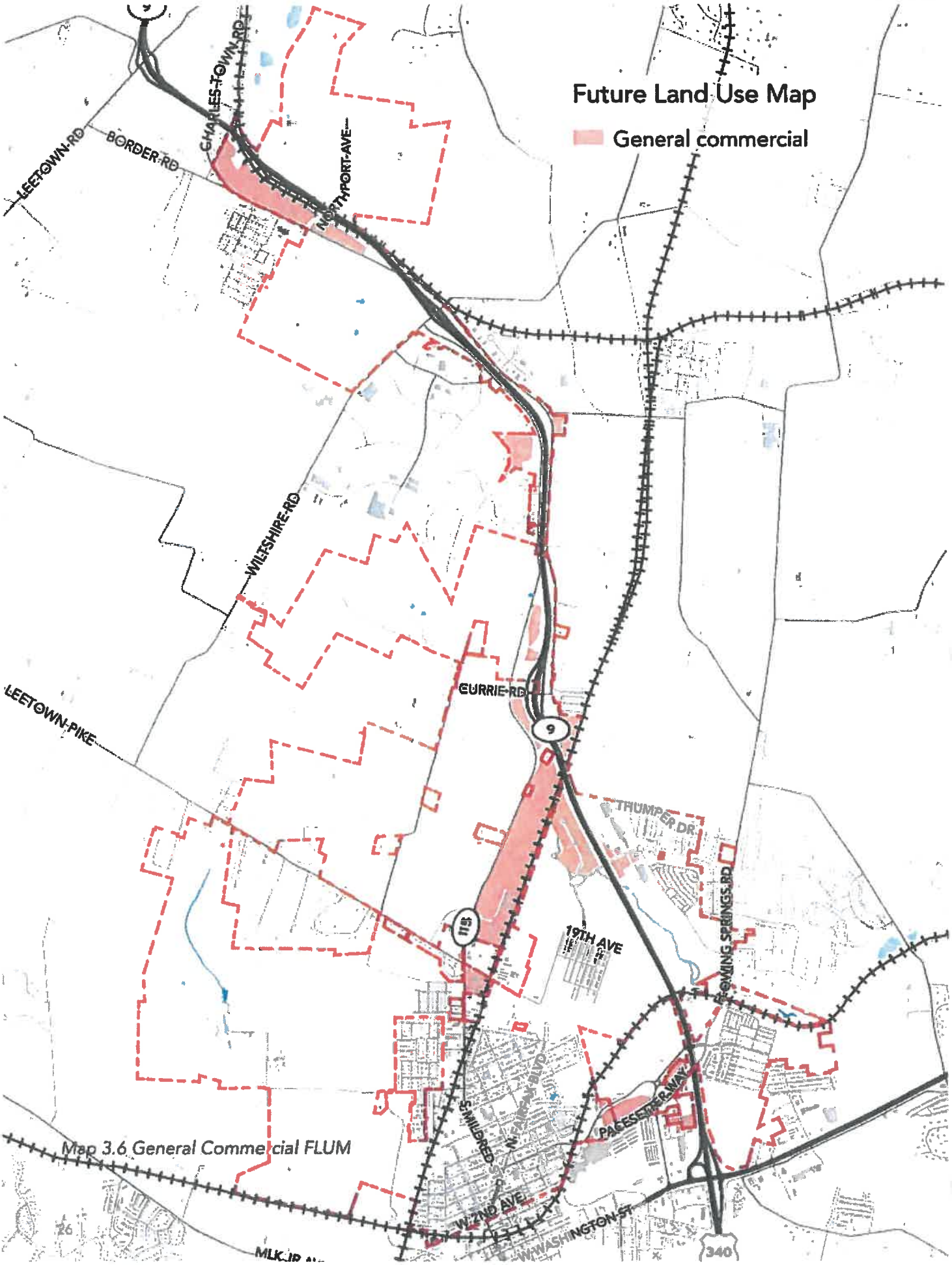




Images 3.9-3.12 Suburban Residential, 2023



Map 3.5 Suburban Residential FLUM



Map 3.6 General Commercial FLUM







Images 3.13-3.15 General commercial, 2023

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

The General Commercial category applies to areas along Ranson's main arteries that meet the day-to-day commercial needs of nearby neighborhoods. This category encompasses a broad range of uses, from general retail and service industries to automotive services, institutional spaces, and offices. Due to the higher traffic volumes generated by these uses, it is essential to manage highway access strategically to minimize disruptions to traffic flow and ensure pedestrian safety.

Historically, these areas are designed to cater primarily to motor vehicles, featuring large setbacks to accommodate ample parking. Over time, some sectors that were originally part of Ranson's Old Town have transitioned into this more suburban commercial context. Moving forward, such changes should be discouraged during redevelopment, as they lead to an increase in impervious surfaces, hinder pedestrian and cyclist accessibility, and contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The future vision for these areas encourages a more balanced approach that enhances walkability, reduces environmental impacts, and fosters a stronger sense of community.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

HC, TND districts, T5

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Retail
- Offices
- Service
- Restaurants
- Pubs
- Gas stations
- Automotive repair

SECONDARY USES

- Schools
- Places of worship
- Cultural uses
- Artisanal manufacturing
- Parks

LARGE PARCEL MIXED USE

The Large Parcel Mixed Use designation, is similar to the General Business context but on a larger scale, and is located along the Highway 9 corridor and N Mildred Street. This category is designed to function as a regional commercial nucleus, attracting customers from a service area extending five miles or more. Due to the nature of these uses, they tend to generate high volumes of vehicle traffic, necessitating ample highway access and parking facilities. Structures within this category are typically larger, reflecting the intensity and scope of the operations housed within.

Within Jefferson County, the Potomac Town Center caters to a market radius of nearly 10 miles. This spans an estimated population of 110,000 people across 42,000 households, with an average household income of $105,000. To illustrate the center's broad reach, consider the findings from a market study conducted by Gibbs Planning. The study reported that the Kohl's department store within the center attracts around 67,000 patrons annually, some of whom journey from locations as distant as Martinsburg.

This catagory incorporates light industrial uses that are compatible with large format commercial uses. Multi-family residential may be a secondary use and the HC zoning district should be updated to reflect this.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

HC, new LI (Light Industrial) district

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Regional retail center
- Strip commercial
- Office
- Warehousing
- Logistics
- Data centers
- Light industrial
- Restaurants and pubs
- Gas stations

SECONDARY USES

- Schools
- Places of worship
- Parks
- Residential

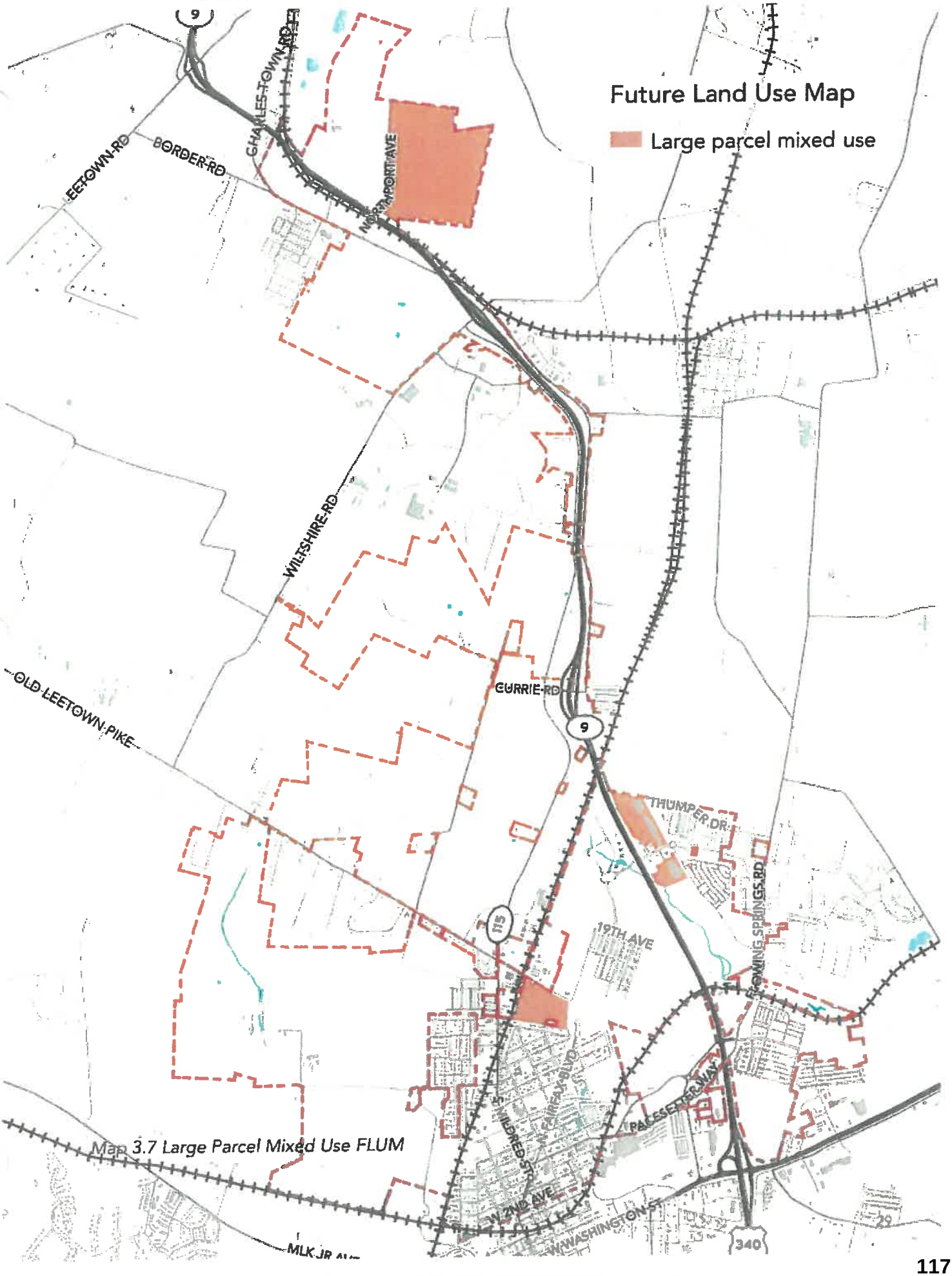




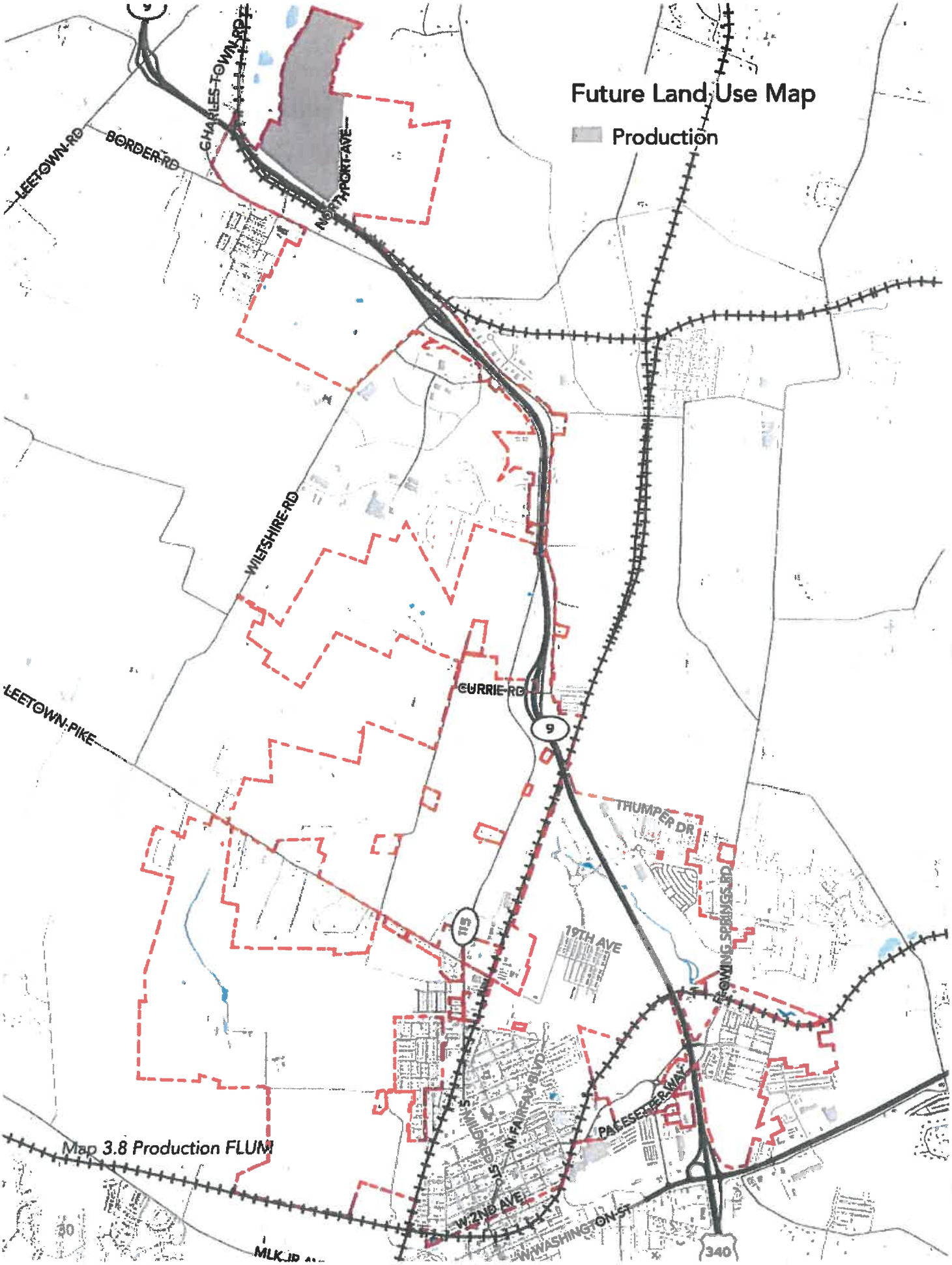




Images 3.16-3.19 Large Parcel Mixed Use, 2023



Map 3.7 Large Parcel Mixed Use FLUM



Map 3.8 Production FLUM







Images 3.20-3.22 Production

PRODUCTION

Historically, Ranson was established as a hub for manufacturing activity, and remnants of this legacy remain with several properties still zoned for industrial use. These areas are intended for a broad spectrum of industrial functions, from heavier, traditional manufacturing to more contemporary, environmentally-friendly, high-tech industries.

Activities such as general and heavy manufacturing were a staple of the local economy. However, these industries often had substantial environmental impacts and were a source of disruption for local residents. Issues like noise pollution, particulates, vibrations, smoke, dust, gas emissions, odorous substances, and radiation were prevalent, often extending beyond the confines of the industrial sites.

In recent years, the emphasis has shifted towards embracing cleaner industries that minimize environmental impacts and disruptions to the surrounding area. New light industrial ventures should be developed or retrofitted in areas with suitable infrastructure, including access to water, sewer, stormwater management systems, transportation networks, and telecommunications services. This approach aligns with Ranson's commitment to sustainable growth by broadening uses for jobs with stronger wage bases while preserving its industrial roots.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

I, A new Light Industrial (LI) district should be created through a zoning update for future use.

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Light manufacturing
- Logistics operations
- Data centers
- Warehousing
- Wholesaling
- Distribution
- Research laboratories and other limited impact activities, such as data centers and digital infrastructure contractors

SECONDARY USES

- Parks

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks and Open Space category is pivotal in ensuring that Ranson retains a healthy balance of green spaces amongst urban development. These spaces can be either urban or suburban, providing areas for relaxation, recreation, and the preservation of local ecosystems. The chapters on Recreation and Economic Development seek to grow the Parks and Open Space footprint over the life.

This designation encompasses current parks, conservation areas, and sports fields, as well as areas slated for future park development. These spaces, whether owned by the public, semi-public entities, or private parties, are viewed as vital natural resources and recreational amenities. Their purpose extends beyond providing sports and recreational options to residents, to preserving essential green space.

Possible expansions of existing parks and open spaces could involve connecting to regional trail systems or preserving the green areas adjacent to community development centers. The preservation and expansion of these green spaces play a crucial role in stabilizing neighborhoods.

New neighborhood parks or 'pocket parks' should be designed with flexibility to support spontaneous uses and could include community gardens, children's playgrounds, and dog parks. These parks might serve temporary functions or potentially be permanently acquired by the city to expand the existing network of parks and open spaces.

RELATED ZONING DISTRICTS

All districts

CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

- Active and passive parks
- Sports fields
- Playgrounds
- Multi-use trail
- Urban agriculture
- Conservation areas

SECONDARY USES

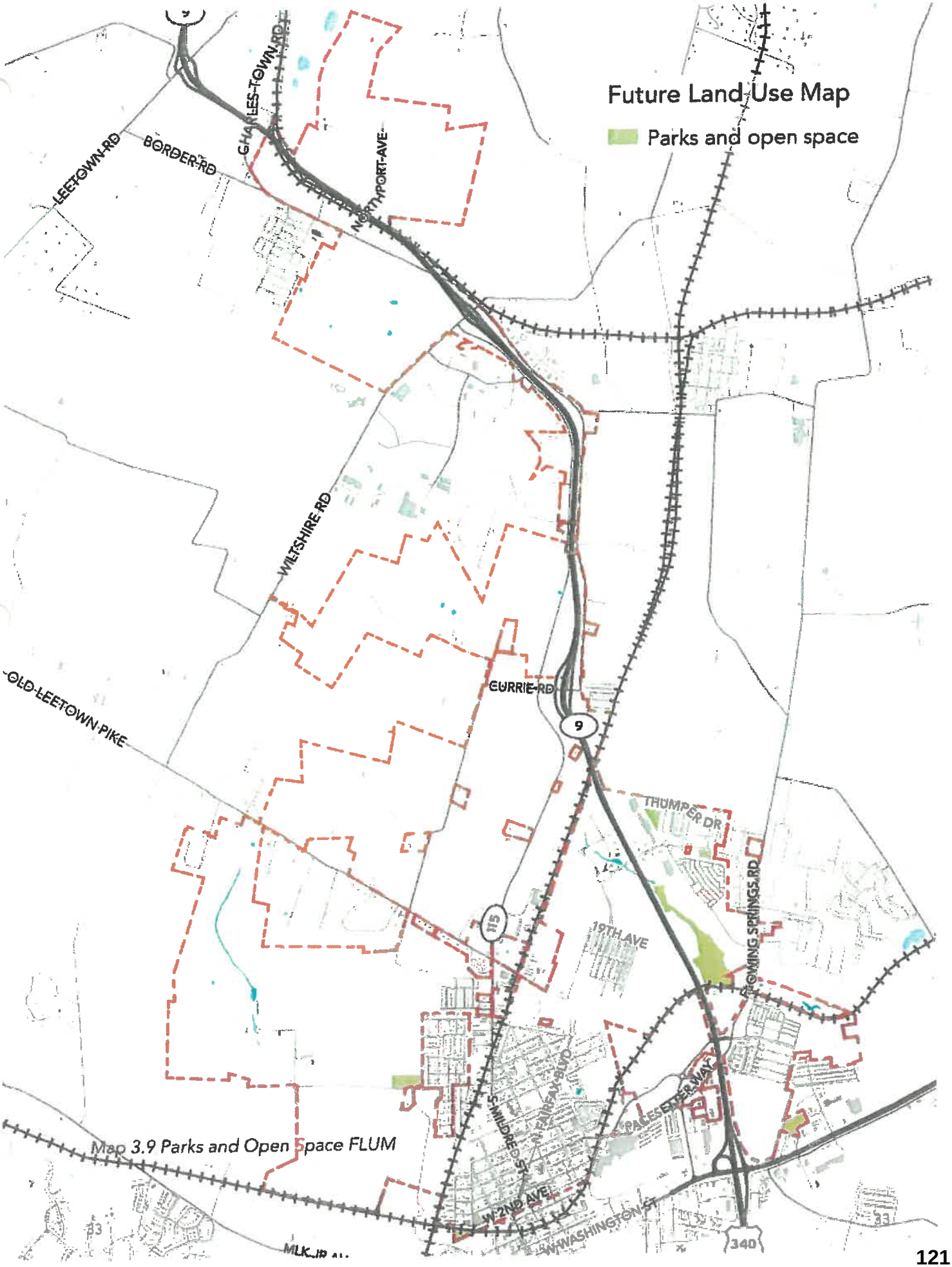
- Restrooms
- Parking lots
- Accessory structures







Images 3.23-3.27 Parks and Open Space, 2023



Map 3.9 Parks and Open Space FLUM

ZONING

A city's zoning ordinance is an important regulatory document that influences the character, location, and scale of development in the community. The City of Ranson adopted its existing zoning ordinance April 17, 2012. The ordinance reflects both common 20th century zoning practices as well as 21st century best practices in zoning. It has some districts that are focused on use as well as other districts focused on the form of the buildings and the interface with the public realm.

The residential districts account for a large portion of the city's acreage. RR, R-6, R-7, and T3 total almost 39% of the total city area. The predominately residential zones including NCX, T4, and T5L make up over 55% of the city's land area.

SUMMARY OF DISTRICTS

USE BASED DISTRICTS

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

RR RURAL RESERVE. This annexation district with a minimum lot size of three acres is the lowest density of the districts with the most restricted uses. Other than houses, it permits farms, schools, parks, places of worship, bed and breakfast inns, and utility uses. This district holds the most land area of any in Ranson at 1,385 acres.

R-7 SINGLE-FAMILY DISTRICT. The R-7 district is described as low to medium density and permits a 7,000 square foot lot, but still requires a 60-foot lot width. R-7 duplicates the RR uses. Only 30 acres are currently zoned R-7.

R-6 SINGLE-FAMILY DISTRICT. The highest density is the R-6 district at a 6,000 square foot lot area. R-6 duplicates R-7 uses and also permits golf courses, libraries, and senior housing. 94 acres are zoned R-6.

NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. The HC district is the standard suburban commercial zone for Ranson. It applies to the parcels on highways and major thoroughfares. The built form standards are flexible and the uses include most retail, service, office, and lodging uses. This is a large district of 196 acres.

I INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT. The I district applies to 32 acres split between the north side of Old Town and North Ranson. It includes most manufacturing and fabrication uses and also permits warehousing and construction yards. Buffers are required along residential districts.

FORM BASED DISTRICTS

TRANSECT DISTRICTS

T1 NATURAL. This district applies to lands preserved from development but is not currently mapped in Ranson.

T2 RURAL. This district is similar to the Rural Reserve district and applies to 141 acres associated with the Clay Hill Farms master plan on Currie Rd. This is a subdistrict permitting reduced setbacks and greater uses of T2O.

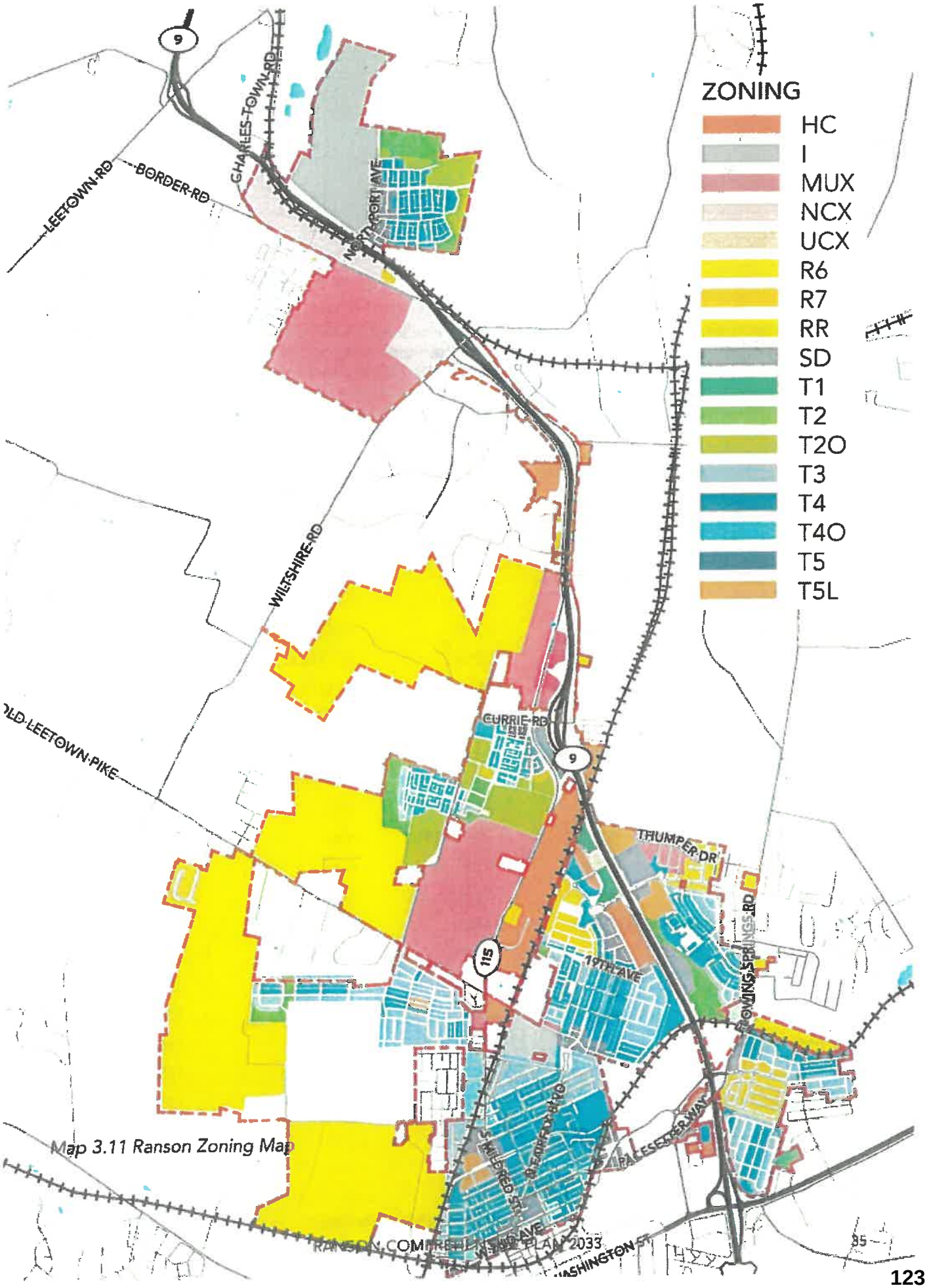
T3 SUB-URBAN. This is a low density residential district permitting home occupations. It includes a little over 300 acres of land.

T4 GENERAL URBAN. This district is primarily blended density residential with some neighborhood commercial. T4O is a sub district permitting more residential uses. Together they occupy 678 acres.

T5 URBAN CENTER. This district is a higher density mixed-use area accommodating a broad range of uses. It also has a T5L subdistrict limiting allowable commercial uses. The district occupies 185 acres.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

These districts are no longer available for rezoning requests and were a precursor to Chapter 19A. There are three districts and they include almost 760 acres.



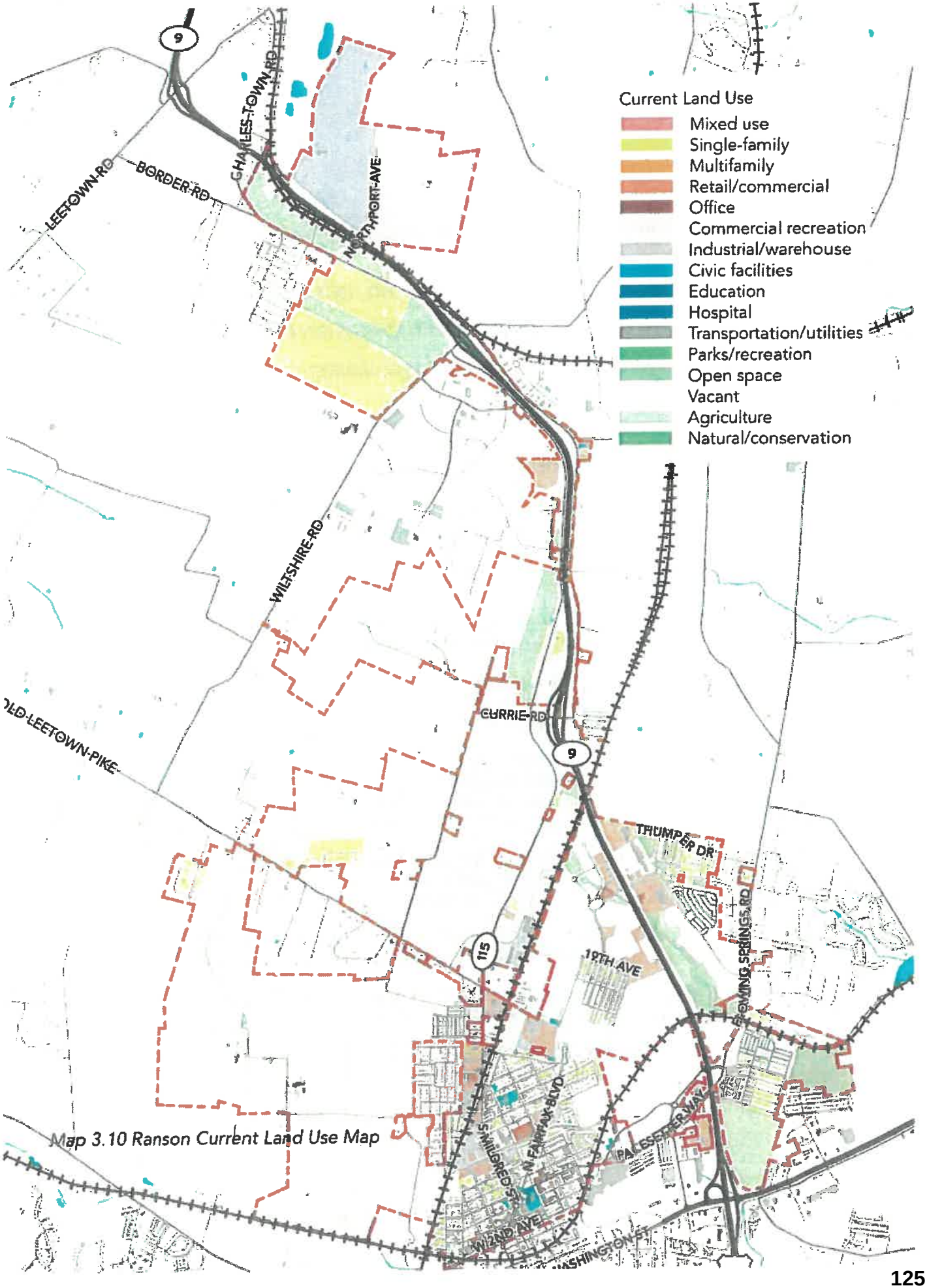
Map 3.11 Ranson Zoning Map

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The current use of land in the City generally aligns with the zoning designation. The local land use patterns exemplify the history of an industrial workforce town evolving into a suburban bedroom community for the Washington metro region. There has been substantial growth in suburban commercial development along Hwy. 9 over the last 20 years. There has also been a proliferation of both single family detached housing and townhouses throughout the region, likely due to the housing affordability of the area in comparison to the metro.

DISTRICT	HEIGHT	FRONT SETBACK	LOT SIZE	LOT WIDTH
Use based districts				
RR Rural Reserve	40 ft.	50 ft.	3.0 acres	200 ft.
R-7 Single Family	35 ft.	25 ft.	7,000 s.f.	60 ft.
R-6 Single Family	35 ft.	25 ft.	6,000 s.f.	50 ft.
HC Highway Commercial	80 ft.	N/A	2,500 s.f.	25 ft.
ID Industrial	50 ft.	N/A	18,750 s.f.	150 ft.
Form based districts	100 ft.	25 ft.	n/a	n/a
T2	50 ft.	50 ft.	10 acres	N/A
T2O	48 ft.	18 ft.	n/a	40 ft. - 96 ft.
T3	36 ft.	20 - 30 ft.	n/a	50 ft. - 150 ft.
T4	48 ft.	18 ft. max.	n/a	20 ft. - 96 ft.
T5	80 ft.	12 ft. max.	n/a	20 ft. - 150 ft.
TND districts - retired	100 ft.	n/a*	n/a	n/a
Single family detached	n/a	10 ft.	6,000 s.f.	50 ft.
Duplex	n/a	10 ft.	7,000 s.f.	30 ft.
Townhomes	n/a	5 ft.	1,600 s.f.	18 ft.
Rowhomes	n/a	5 ft.	1,360 s.f.	16 ft.
Multifamily	n/a	20 ft.	16,000 s.f.	125 ft.
Commercial, industrial	n/a	20 ft. max.	4,000 s.f.	125 ft.

Table 3.1 Ranson Zoning District Summary



Map 3.10 Ranson Current Land Use Map

LAND USE GOALS

PROMOTE BALANCED, CONTEXT-SENSITIVE GROWTH THAT RESPECTS RANSON'S UNIQUE COMMUNITY CHARACTER.

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE RANSON'S NATURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES.

OPTIMIZE LAND USE TO SUPPORT EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

ENCOURAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH A VARIETY OF TYPES OF HOUSING OPTIONS.

SAFEGUARD THE COMMUNITY AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS.

ENSURE A FAIR, TRANSPARENT, AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

LAND USE ACTIONS

DEVELOP A JOINT LAND USE PLAN WITH CHARLES TOWN: Collaborate with the neighboring city to address shared challenges and opportunities.

CONSIDER ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS: Introduce amendments allowing light industry while protecting against heavy industry pollution and updating the SmartCode to reflect current best practices in flexibility and ease of use.

ENCOURAGE WORKFORCE HOUSING: Promote a range of attainable housing options in proximity to local jobs and enable naturally occurring affordable housing formats like cottage courts. This action is accomplished through zoning code amendments and incentives. See the explainer in Chapter 3 Housing.

STRENGTHEN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS: Ensure that approved development plans are enforced and delivered as agreed; consider increasing levels of performance bonds or other developer warranty obligations until work is complete.

HIRE SKILLED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TEAM MEMBERS: These hires will streamline the development review process, ensuring it is fair, transparent, and inclusive.

SIMPLIFY THE DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS PROCESS: Expedite review processes and reduce response times to permit applications.

CONDUCT A FLOOD-PRONE AND SUBSIDENCE AREA STUDY: Identify and mitigate risks associated with these development constraints.

LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Develop a Joint Land Use Plan with Charles Town	City Planner, Legal Department	2025-2027	Municipal Funds
Consider Zoning Code Amendments	City Planner	2025-2027	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants
Encourage Workforce Housing	City Planner, City Council	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants
Strengthen Development Agreements	Planning Department, City Council	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, Federal & State Housing Grants
Hire Skilled Community Development Department Team members	City Planner, City Council	2025-2028	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants
Simplify the Development Approvals Process	Planning Department, Legal Department	2023-2025	Municipal Funds
Conduct a Flood-Prone and Subsidence Area Study	Planning Department, Public Works	2025-2027	Federal & State Environmental Grants, Municipal Funds

This matrix will help guide the implementation of Land Use goals, ensuring a coordinated approach to managing the city's land resources. By setting clear responsibilities, timelines, and identifying potential funding sources, this fosters transparency, accountability, and community involvement in the land use planning process.







Images 4.1 - 4.5 Ranson Homes, 2023





4

HOUSING

Housing plays an essential role in shaping the quality of life for Ranson's residents, both present and future. Recognizing the diverse needs of the community, this chapter outlines the comprehensive strategies and actions to ensure residents have access to affordable, safe, and well-maintained housing. The overarching vision is to cultivate a vibrant housing landscape that respects the city's historic charm while embracing contemporary housing trends and innovations.

Ranson must build upon the foundation of the current housing landscape, while also ensuring that the community can anticipate and accommodate future housing needs, including those of major local employers. This calls for the creation of diverse housing types, including smaller workforce housing, rental options, and both attainable and affordable homes. The community must also strive to rehabilitate and improve existing housing and convert underutilized buildings into residential units, maximizing land use efficiency and enhancing the city's vibrancy.

Ranson's housing strategies not only focus on the physical aspects of housing but also acknowledge the procedural challenges in housing development. The city aims to streamline the development approval process, ensuring fairness, transparency, and timeliness. This comprehensive approach to housing forms an integral part of Ranson's sustainable growth strategy, contributing to an evolution as a resilient, inclusive, and thriving city.

CURRENT STATE OF HOUSING

Ranson is home to a diverse population that includes healthcare professionals, families, seniors, and individuals with various incomes and needs. Currently, the housing stock is dominated by single-family homes and townhouses, with a growing demand for smaller workforce housing and rental units.

Given the significant employment sector represented by the Jefferson Medical Center and its associated clinics, as well as Rockwool, the demand for affordable and proximate workforce housing is a critical regional issue. Unfortunately, the current housing market, coupled with developmental challenges and the inflation rate, makes meeting these needs a significant concern.

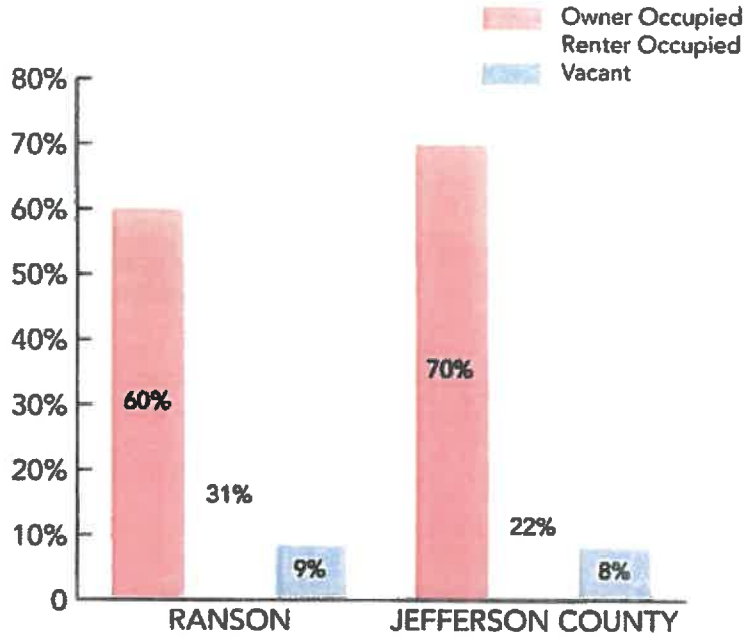
OCCUPANCY

In Ranson, according to the projections made by ESRI for 2022, homeowners comprise the majority of the housing market. Specifically, around 60% of the dwellings are owner-occupied. This rate suggests that a significant portion of Ranson's residents have invested in the city's real estate market, laying down roots and building their futures within the community.

At the same time, a sizable percentage of the city's housing is renter-occupied, accounting for 31% of homes. This statistic points to a flexible segment of Ranson's population, possibly comprising individuals and families who may be in transitional phases of their lives, such as young professionals, students, or those preferring the flexibility and lesser responsibilities that come with renting.

Vacant homes make up the remaining 9% of the dwellings in Ranson. While vacancy rates can sometimes indicate economic issues, they can also reflect a natural churn in the housing market or seasonal variations, especially in areas with a significant amount of vacation or secondary homes.

For comparison, the rates in Jefferson County, while similar, show slight variations. The county's ownership rate stands a bit higher at 70%, indicating a larger proportion of long-term residents committed to their community. In contrast, the county's renter population is slightly smaller, representing 22% of dwellings. The vacancy rate in the county is slightly lower than in Ranson, at 8%. Tracking these figures over time can reveal trends and shifts in the housing market.



Graph 4.1 Housing Tenure Comparison (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2022)

HOUSING VALUE

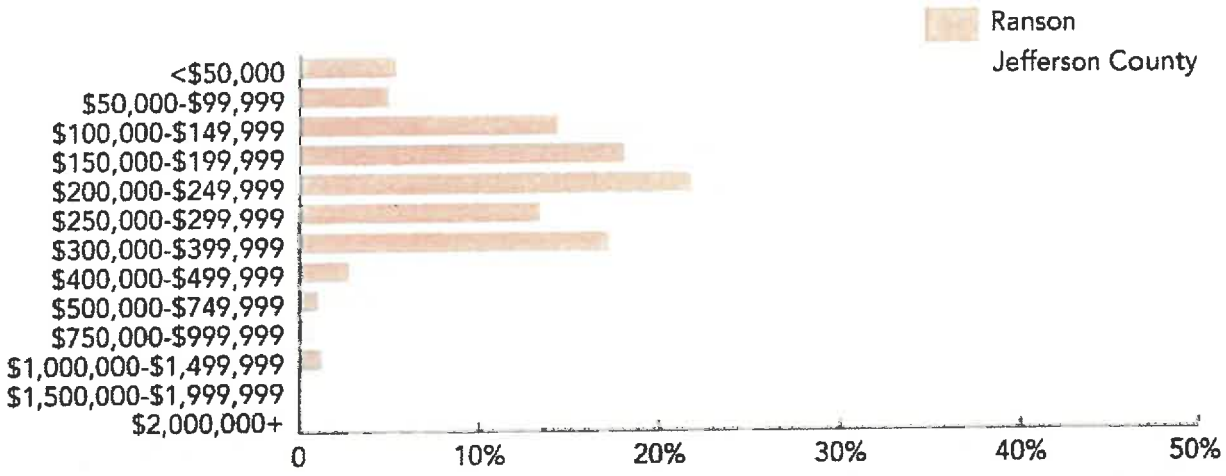
An analysis of Ranson's housing market and income statistics provides a deeper insight into the city's economic structure and living standards. Central to this analysis is understanding the median home value and median household income, key indicators of a city's economic health and the financial well-being of its residents.

In Ranson, the median home value currently stands at $217,134. This figure offers a snapshot of the city's real estate market, providing a middle ground for home values and signaling the affordability of housing for the average citizen. Comparatively, these housing costs in Ranson are relatively more affordable than in other parts of Jefferson County, as illustrated in the housing value comparison graph below.

On the income side, the median household income in Ranson is $77,222. This figure suggests a reasonable level of economic stability among residents. Median household income, being the point at which half the households earn more and half earn less, can provide a more nuanced picture of a community's overall economic health than just average income. It's a useful tool for gauging the economic capacity of the average family in Ranson.

However, a key consideration in understanding these figures is the proportion of household income that is consumed by housing costs. For an average household in Ranson, housing costs account for 36% of their income. This percentage slightly exceeds the standard threshold for housing affordability, which is typically defined as housing costs that do not exceed 30% of a household's gross income. The implication here is that while housing in Ranson is relatively less expensive than in other parts of Jefferson County, some families may still be experiencing housing cost burdens.

Affordable housing is a fundamental building block of a healthy community, and understanding these dynamics can help in making more informed policy decisions and initiatives aimed at ensuring housing affordability for all residents.



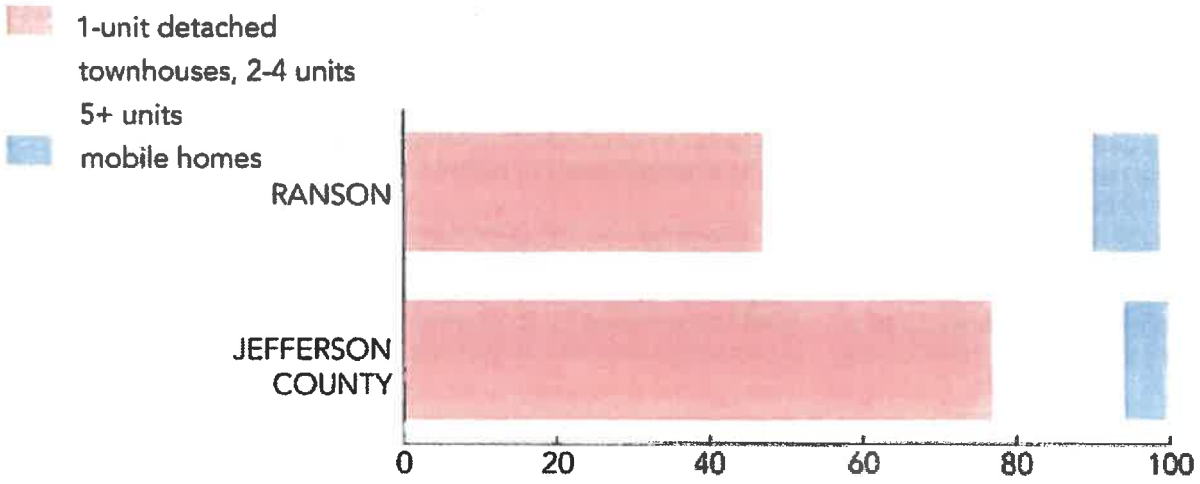
Graph 4.2 Housing Value Comparison (Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2020, Esri forecasts for 2022)

MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE COMPARISON

RANSON	JEFFERSON COUNTY
$217,134	$303,298

HOUSING TYPES

Almost half of Ranson's housing is in the form of single-family detached units, significantly less than Jefferson County. Ranson has a healthy number of multiple family housing types of townhomes, twins, triplets, and quadruplets, which are considered the "missing middle" or medium density housing. Missing middle housing is generally found in historic neighborhoods, or in new communities building townhouses. These types of housing are an excellent way to provide attainable housing without negatively impacting the character of a neighborhood. Additional missing middle housing could help reduce the cost of housing as a percentage of household income from the current 36% to the affordable 30% of gross household income.



Graph 4.3 Housing Type Comparison (Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2020, Esri forecasts for 2022)



Image 4.6 Residential Street in Ranson, 2023

HOUSING GOALS

SIMPLIFY AND EXPEDITE THE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS.

IMPROVE AND INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

INCENTIVIZE WORKFORCE HOUSING OPTIONS IN PROXIMITY TO LOCAL JOBS.

ADDRESS SUBSTANDARD HOUSING AND REHABILITATE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.

ENCOURAGE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF BUILDINGS INTO HOUSING.

HOUSING ACTIONS

SIMPLIFY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS: Streamline the process to encourage more housing development and reduce time to permit.

ANALYZE PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS: Conduct a comprehensive study of current and projected housing needs, including the need for affordable and universally accessible housing.

PROMOTE "MISSING MIDDLE" HOUSING: Encourage development of housing types that fall between single-family homes and larger apartment complexes to increase housing diversity and affordability. This will likely require a zoning update.

ADDRESS SUBSTANDARD HOUSING: Addressing and improving substandard housing in a small city requires a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders, policies, and resources.

ENCOURAGE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF BUILDINGS: Introduce incentives and zoning flexibility to encourage the conversion of existing buildings into residential units.

The following pages provide some pointers on the last three actions, along with an implementation matrix of who's responsible for what, by when.

PROMOTE MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

The term "Missing Middle Housing" refers to a variety of housing types situated between single-family detached homes and mid-rise to high-rise apartment buildings. These include duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments, and cottage courts. Ranson's housing strategy should consider the incorporation of these overlooked, yet essential, housing types. Promoting Missing Middle Housing, especially cottage courts, can bring a multitude of social, economic, and environmental benefits, addressing housing affordability issues, providing more diverse housing options, fostering community connection, and minimizing environmental impacts.

Cottage courts consist of a series of small, detached structures arranged around a shared courtyard. Often, these cottages range from 700 to 1,200 square feet, promoting efficient use of space and a compact form of development. With their shared open spaces, cottage courts encourage a sense of community among residents while also providing a degree of privacy within each individual home.

A study by the Terner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley points to the potential of cottage courts and other missing middle housing types in addressing the housing affordability crisis. According to the study, these housing types, due to their smaller size and shared infrastructure, can provide cost-effective housing options for a broad range of households, including young professionals, small families, and retirees. (Terner Center for Housing Innovation, UC Berkeley, 2022)





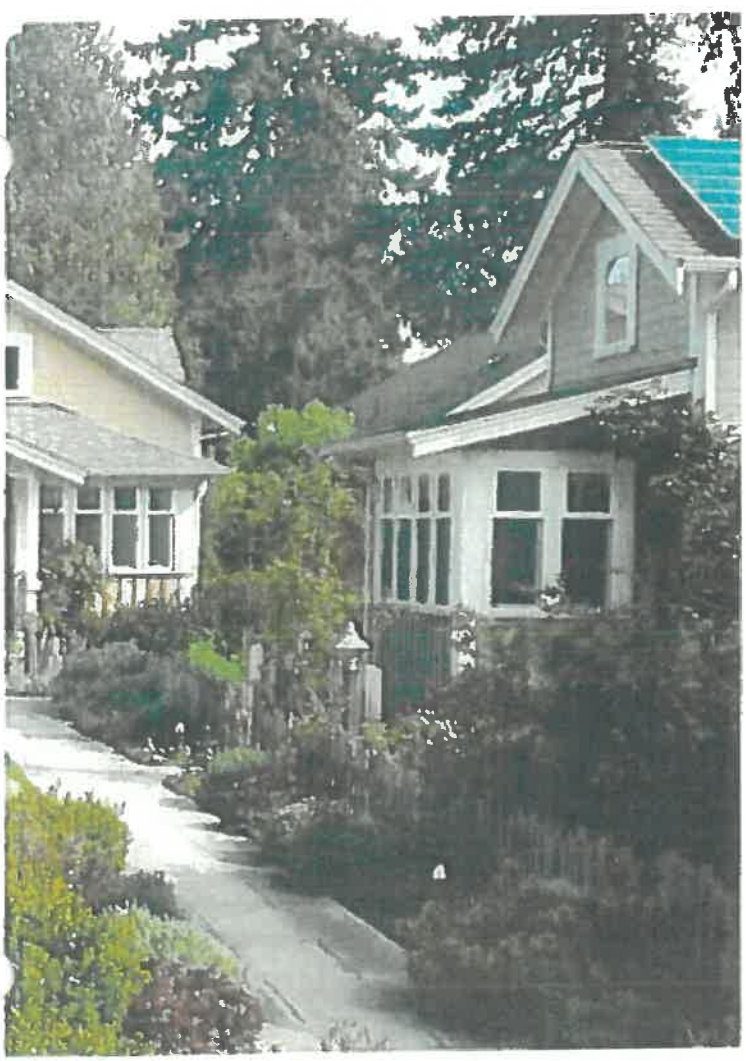


Beyond affordability, cottage courts foster strong social connections. The design inherently promotes community interaction through the shared courtyard. A report from Virginia Commonwealth University emphasizes the importance of such social infrastructure in improving mental and physical health, reducing isolation, and enhancing overall quality of life. (Kim et al., 2021)

From an environmental perspective, cottage courts exemplify sustainable design principles. The smaller homes in these developments typically have lower energy consumption compared to larger single-family homes. Their compact design encourages land-use efficiency, which can help preserve green spaces and reduce land consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The economic advantages are equally compelling. A recent study revealed that neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, including cottage courts, tend to have greater resilience during economic downturns and housing market fluctuations. (Chakraborty & McMillan, 2020)

Promoting Missing Middle Housing, particularly cottage courts, will require a multi-faceted approach that includes modifying zoning regulations, offering development incentives, and educating the community about the benefits of diverse housing options. With careful planning and effective policy strategies, Ranson can introduce cottage courts and other Missing Middle Housing types, fostering a more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient community.







Images 4.7 - 4.11 Cottage Courts

SINGLE FAMILY MASSING STUDY FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS

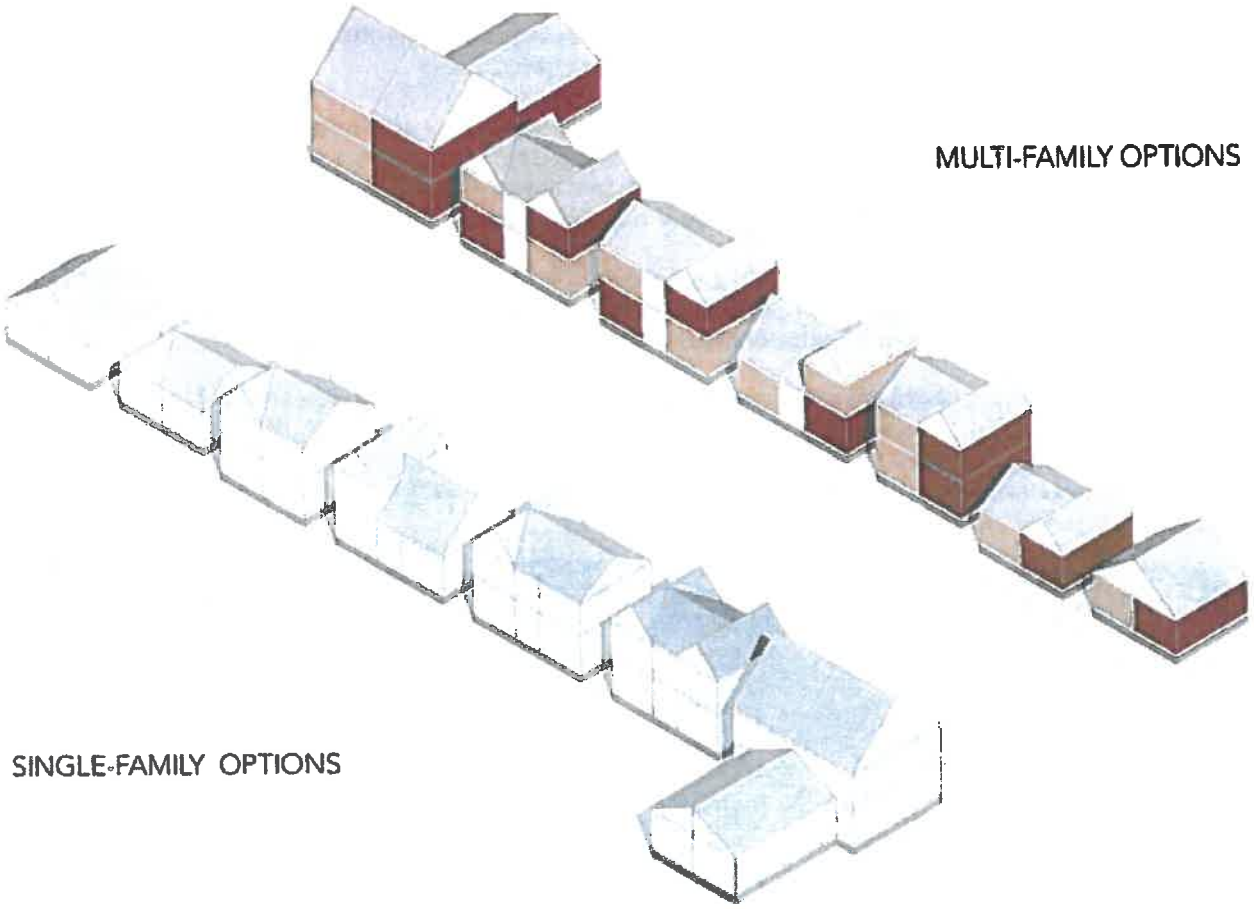


Image 4.12 Massing Study

The concept of "Missing Middle Housing" offers an innovative approach to residential development in Ranson. This approach allows duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to be designed in a way that mirrors the aesthetic of single-family homes, seamlessly blending into the existing neighborhood context. The depicted block showcases this flexibility, allowing for the development of a diverse mix of single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes.

Adopting policies that promote a mixture of these dwelling types not only offers flexibility to adapt to market fluctuations, but also facilitates the creation of affordable housing options. As neighborhoods evolve, the precise mix of these unit types will be dictated by market demand at the time of development, an aspect that's challenging to predict today. However, the flexibility inherent in the design allows for a variety of configurations, meaning that the buildings seen in the massing study could also materialize as larger single-family homes.

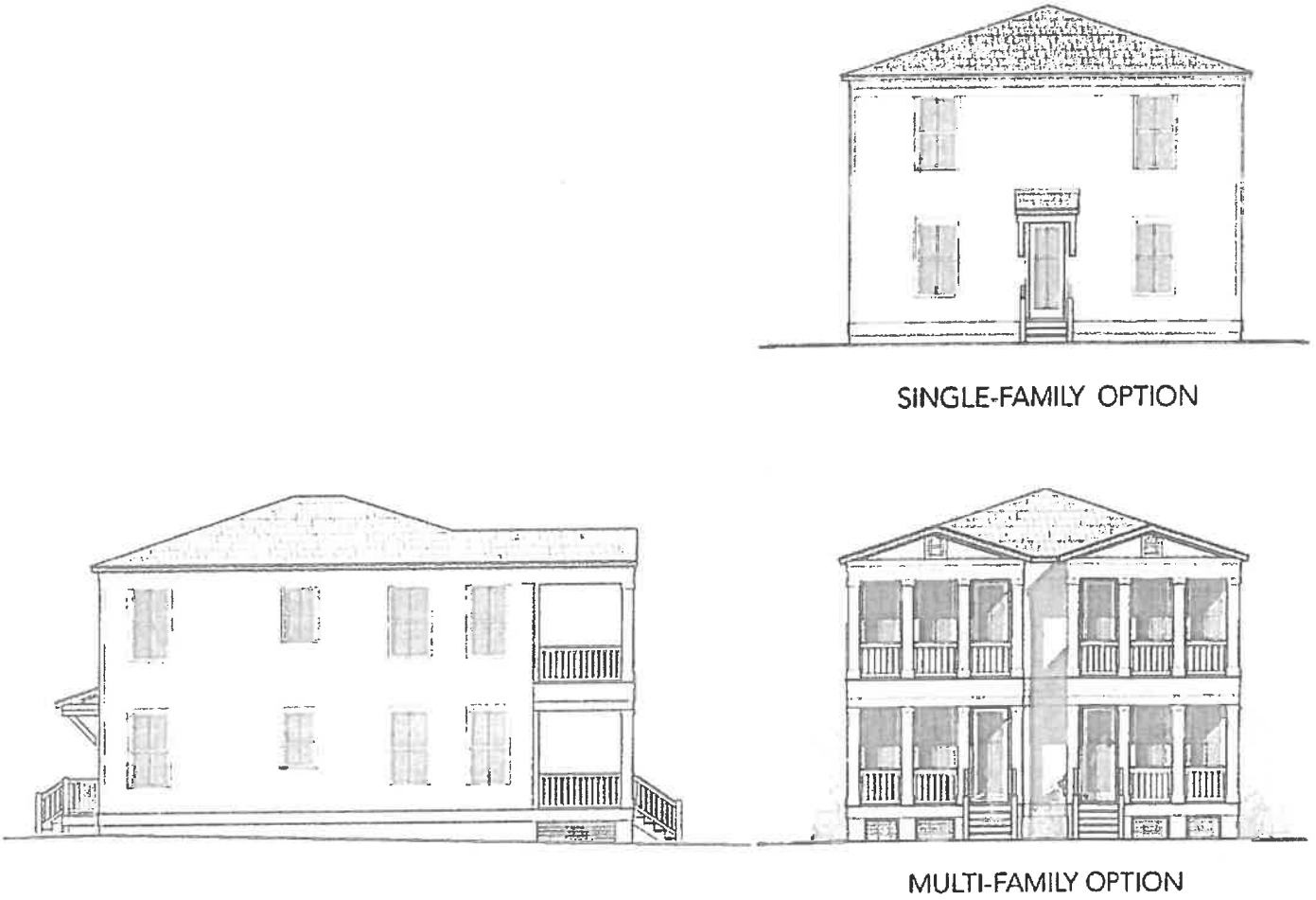


Image 4.13 Elevation Study

An example of this is a fourplex design that harmoniously coexists with the massing of neighboring single-family residences. It demonstrates the potential for nimble, responsive planning that can adjust to market changes and successfully drive development. Such buildings are simple, flexible, and replicable. This format opens the door to owner-occupiers who could live in one unit while renting out the others, providing an accessible entry into property management. This model brings stability to rental housing and helps maintain affordability in Ranson's housing market. Designed to fit into a standard 50 by 100-foot lot, these buildings maintain neighborly relations with a variety of other dwelling types.

ADDRESS SUBSTANDARD HOUSING

Addressing and improving substandard housing in a small city requires a comprehensive approach involving various stakeholders, policies, and resources. Strategies to consider include:

1. Establish and enforce housing codes: Enforce housing codes that outline minimum standards for housing conditions, such as structural integrity, safety, and sanitation.

2. Create a landlord registry: Implement a system that requires all landlords to register their properties with the city. This enables better oversight and tracking of rental properties, making it easier to identify and address substandard housing conditions.

3. Conduct regular inspections: Establish a proactive inspection program to regularly assess rental properties for compliance with housing codes.

4. Implement a complaint mechanism: Set up a mechanism for tenants and community members to report substandard housing conditions. Promptly investigate complaints and take appropriate actions.

5. Create incentives for landlords: Develop programs that provide financial incentives or tax breaks to landlords who invest in improving their properties to meet housing standards.

6. Offer technical assistance and education: Provide training programs and resources for landlords to improve their understanding of housing regulations, maintenance practices, and tenant rights. This can help landlords meet their responsibilities and reduce substandard housing conditions.

7. Condemnation and demolition as a last resort: If efforts to improve substandard housing fail, establish clear procedures for condemnation and demolition of unsafe structures.



Image 4.14 Room for [illegible]ement, 2023

Addressing substandard housing requires a sustained commitment from the local government, collaboration with community members, and the allocation of resources. Regular monitoring and evaluation of implemented measures are crucial to track progress and make necessary adjustments along the way.

Investments in improving housing conditions can yield significant economic, health, and social benefits. For instance, research by the National Bureau of Economic Research has demonstrated that for each dollar invested in lead paint hazard control, the return can range from $17 to $221, underlining the significant return on investment from improvements such as increased cognitive abilities, higher lifetime earnings, and tax revenues, not to mention the cost savings in areas such as healthcare, special education, and criminal justice. (Gould, 2009) As Ranson continues to evolve and grow, these considerations should underscore the potential advantages of addressing substandard housing, thereby contributing to the city's vision of creating a thriving, resilient, and inclusive community.

ENCOURAGE ADAPTIVE REUSE

Introduce incentives and zoning flexibility to encourage the conversion of existing buildings into residential units. These may include:

1. Relaxed Zoning Laws: Ranson could allow mixed-use development or residential use in all commercial zones. Density limits could be increased to allow more residential units in a given area.

2. Tax Incentives: Tax breaks or credits can be provided to property owners who convert their existing buildings into residential units. This can be in the form of property tax reductions or income tax credits.

3. Streamlined Permit Process: To encourage conversion, the permit process should be streamlined for conversions, making it easier and quicker for owners to get the approvals they need.

4. Waiving or Reducing Fees: Some fees could be waived or reduced, such as impact fees or permit fees, for projects that involve converting existing buildings into residential units.

7. Flexible Building Codes: Depending on the condition of the existing buildings, the city might consider allowing flexibility in building codes for conversion projects. This would not mean sacrificing safety, but rather adapting to the unique circumstances that often arise when converting older or unconventional spaces into living quarters. This is usually achieved through the adoption of the Existing Building Code.

8. Density Bonuses: If a property owner agrees to include a certain percentage of affordable units in their project, the city could offer a density bonus, allowing them to add more units than normally permitted.

The adaptive reuse of buildings can help meet housing demands and invigorate local neighborhoods. Such measures can foster a vibrant, inclusive, and adaptive community in Ranson.

A study by Rutgers University indicated that rehabilitation of old buildings and their adaptive reuse led to a higher return on investment than new constructions in the same area. This was attributed to factors such as lower construction costs, higher occupancy rates, and increased attraction of investments. (Hanka et al., 2009) According to a report by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, reusing buildings can yield significant cost savings of between 10-20% compared to new constructions. The same report suggests that adaptive reuse projects can potentially achieve net operating incomes up to 15% higher than those of new builds, in part due to the unique character and appeal these buildings provide, which can command higher rents. (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2017)



HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Simplify Housing Development Review Process	City Planner, Legal Department	2025-2026	Municipal Funds
Analyze Projected Housing Needs	City Planner	2025-2026	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants
Promote "Missing Middle" Housing	City Planner, City Council	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants
Address Substandard Housing	Planning Department, City Council	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, Federal & State Housing Grants
Encourage Adaptive Reuse of Buildings	City Planner, City Council	2025-2028	Municipal Funds, State Housing Grants

Plan 2034 recognizes that housing is a critical aspect of the community's health and well-being. Ranson's commitment is to make housing more affordable, accessible, and varied in type to meet the diverse needs of residents.







Images 4.16 - 4.20 Ranson Homes, 2023



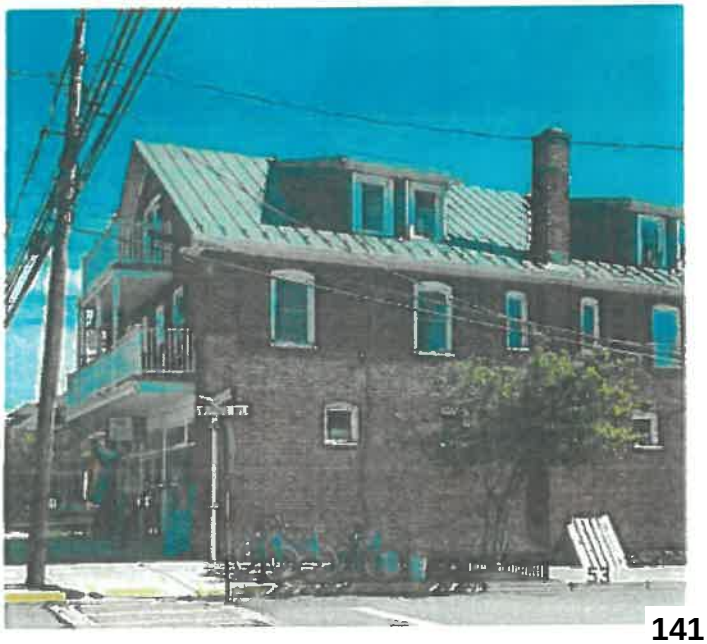




Image 5.1 Fairfax Sidewalks (Image Credit: Google Earth)

5 TRANSPORTATION

Ranson is committed to mobility and connectivity. Transportation is instrumental in ensuring the seamless flow of people, goods, and services within Ranson and beyond. Local vision is to develop a robust, interconnected, and multimodal transportation system that is resilient, sustainable, and aligned with land use goals.

Ranson recognizes the increasing demands on transportation infrastructure due to growth and development. This chapter focuses on strategies to upgrade and expand the transportation network, offering safe and convenient options for vehicular, pedestrian, cycling, and public transit. From sidewalk construction and crosswalk installation to the integration of green infrastructure for stormwater management, the aim is to create a transportation network that serves everyone, promotes healthy lifestyles, and is respectful of the natural environment.

An efficient and integrated transportation system requires a focus on the procedural aspects. Ranson strives to streamline the transportation development review process, making it fairer, more efficient, and transparent. As the city moves toward a future of sustainable mobility, it is committed to leveraging public input and fostering collaboration among various stakeholders. The transportation vision is a testament to Ranson's commitment to sustainable development, community well-being, and ongoing resilience.

CURRENT STATE

Ranson is positioned to be a regional hub for commerce and community. However, the transportation network, while serviceable, is increasingly feeling the strain of growth and development. With expensive, difficult challenges ranging from transportation constraints around new communities to difficulties in crossing the Route 9 bypass and the railroad tracks near the new school site, the city is aware of the need for more interconnected, multimodal, and resilient transportation infrastructure.

Ranson's geographical location on the edge of a where the US Federal Government still considers its employees to be living in the DC Metro Area adds a unique dimension to the transportation context. This not only reflects Ranson's connectedness to the broader region but also influences local commuting patterns and transportation demands.

Ranson is serviced by the MARC Train's Brunswick Line, offering direct rail connections to Washington D.C., making it an ideal location for federal employees and others who commute to the capitol for work. The journey from Ranson to Union Station in Washington, D.C. takes approximately two hours by train.

For those who prefer to drive, Ranson is roughly 70 miles from downtown D.C., a commute that, depending on traffic, can take anywhere from 1.5 to 2 hours. Ranson's residents have accessibility to the three major airports of the D.C. Metro Area: Washington Dulles International Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, and Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. These airports are approximately 50, 70, and 90 miles away respectively, each offering numerous domestic and international flights.

This connectivity to the D.C. Metro Area expands employment opportunities for Ranson's residents, enriches cultural and recreational offerings, and broadens economic development potential. Yet, it also challenges Ranson to manage the demands of commuting and regional travel on local transportation infrastructure. Balancing these considerations is central to these transportation planning efforts.

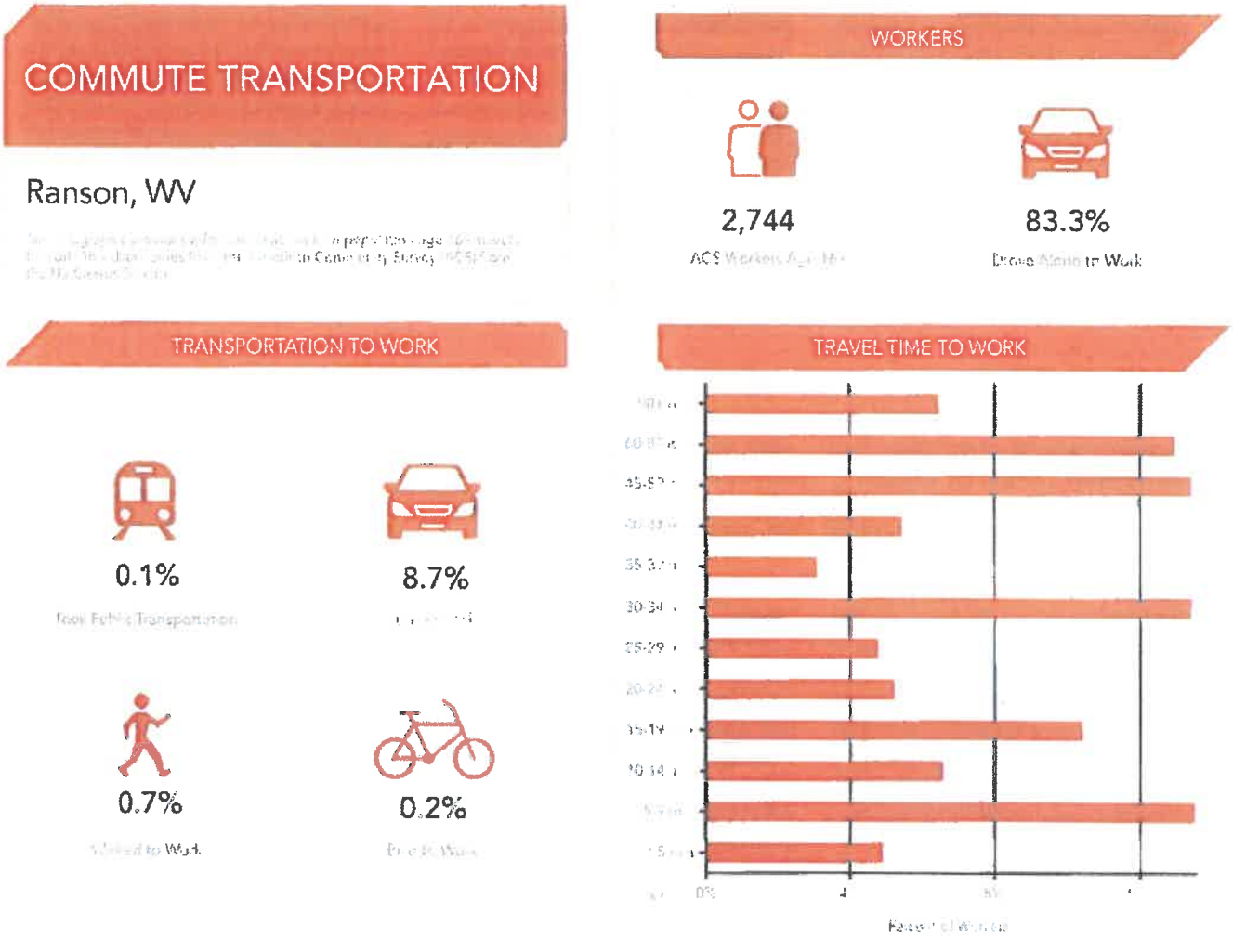
COMMUTE

The commuting patterns in Ranson significantly affect the city's infrastructure. These patterns not only demand resources from the city's transit systems, but also have far-reaching impacts on environmental sustainability, quality of life, and household affordability.

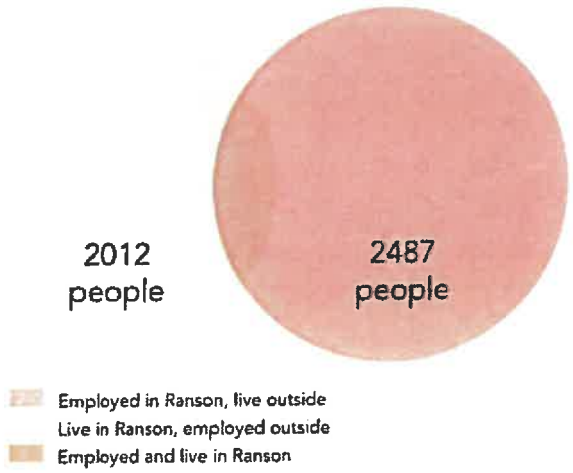
Ranson's commute time statistics shed light on these factors. Of the 2,744 residents commuting to work, the majority, 83.3%, drive alone. This high proportion signifies an area for potential improvement, as reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips could lead to less traffic congestion and better air quality.

Only a small fraction, 8.7%, carpool, while fewer still, 0.7%, walk to work. Cycling and public transportation reflect just 0.2% and 0.1% of commuting residents choosing these modes, respectively. These statistics indicate potential areas for enhancement in promoting active and public transport modes.

These commuting trends provide valuable insights for shaping policy decisions and infrastructure development. The aim is to foster more sustainable commuting practices, promoting alternatives to single-driver vehicles, and ultimately enhancing the overall quality of life in Ranson.



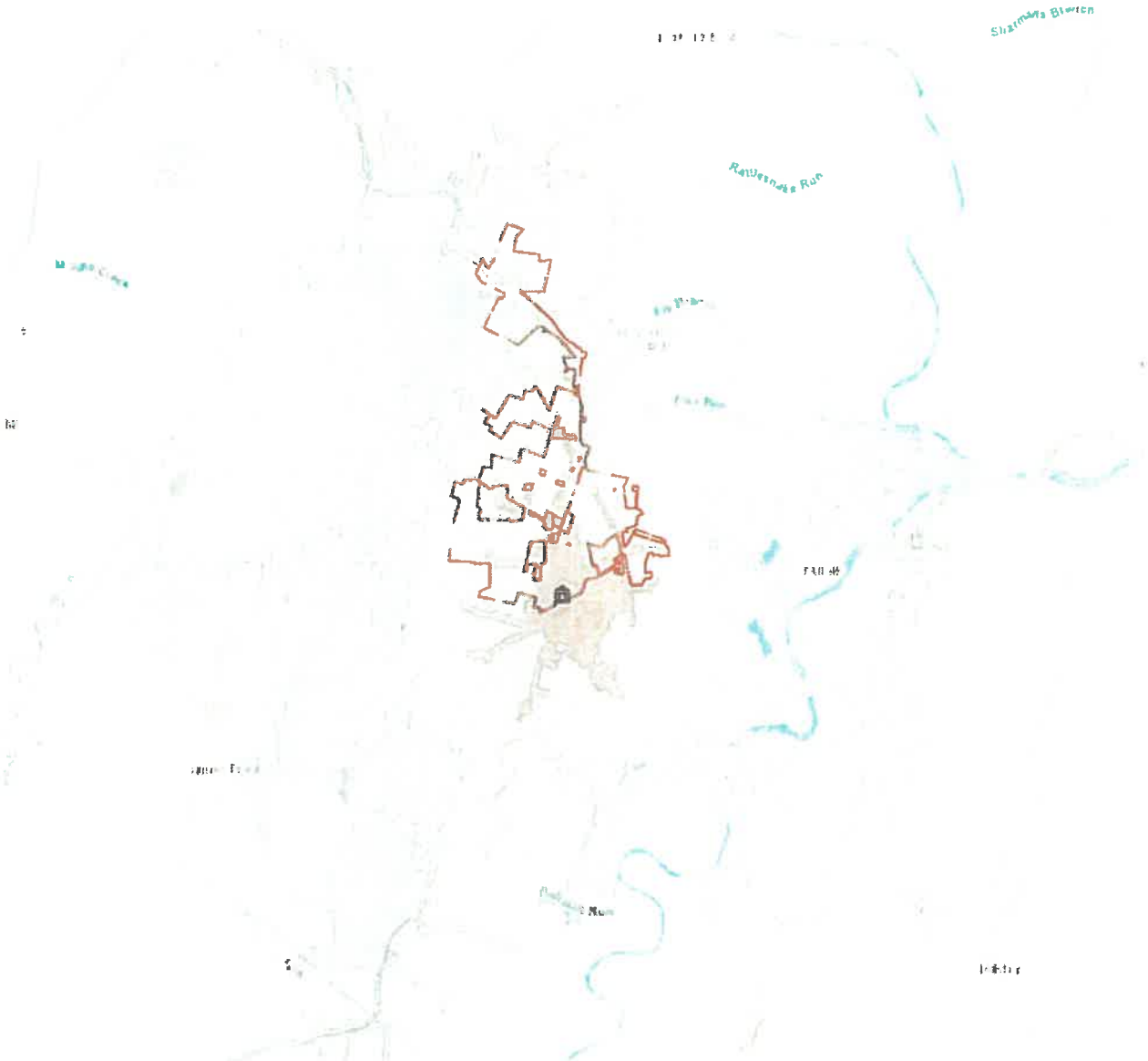
Graph 5.1 Commute Transportation (Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 – 2021)



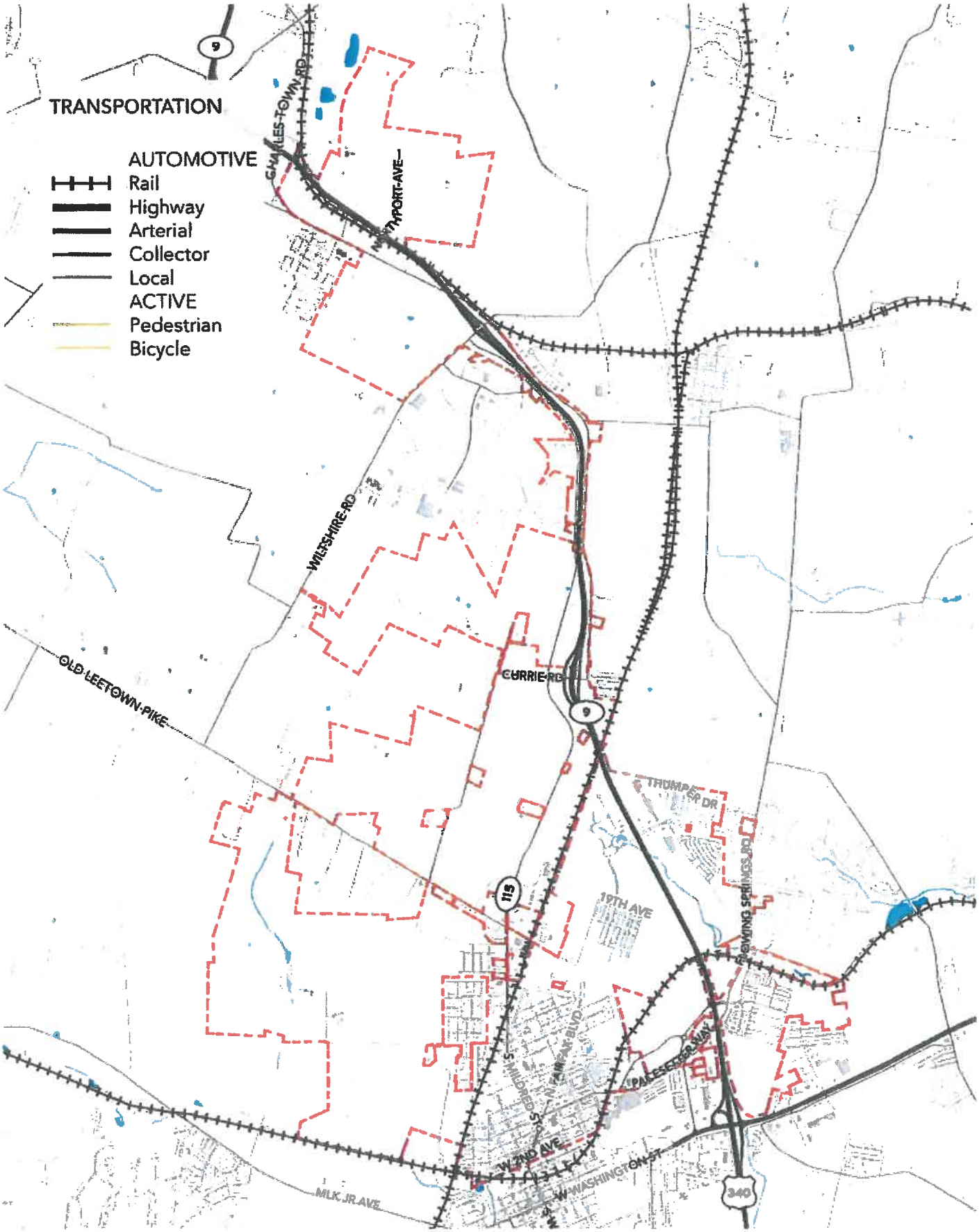
The percentages of people who come to Ranson for work and those who leave for work are fairly balanced. Very few both live and work in Ranson, as can be seen in the graph on the left. Most jobs are located to the southeast of Ranson and many commute over an hour to work, underlining Ranson's role as both a residential hub and a provider of employment opportunities for its surrounding regions.

The five, ten and fifteen minute drive times to downtown Ranson from the surrounding area shows a Ranson-centric transportation network.

Graph 5.2 Live and Work in Ranson (Source: US Census)



Map 5.1 Drive time of 5, 10, 15 minutes to downtown Ranson (Source: Esri Business Analyst)



Map 5.2 City Transportation (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap, Map Box)

TRANSPORTATION GOALS

IMPROVE AND EXPAND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.

MAINTAIN AND UPGRADE VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN, AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE.

PROMOTE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND TRAIL CONNECTIVITY: EXPAND THE NETWORK OF SIDEWALKS, BIKE LANES, AND TRAILS.

IMPLEMENT GREEN AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING.

FOSTER TRANSPORTATION CONNECTIVITY TO MAJOR CITY FEATURES, INCLUDING POTOMAC MARKETPLACE AND GETTING ACROSS THE RAILROAD TRACKS TO THE WEST AND ACROSS ROUTE 9 TO THE EAST, JEFFERSON MEDICAL AND THE NEW RANSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

WORK WITH PARTNERS TO ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE AND ACCESSIBILITY.

IMPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS, ENSURING FAIRNESS AND EFFICIENCY.

TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

UPGRADE STREET INFRASTRUCTURE: Continuously maintain and upgrade existing streets to accommodate growth.

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY: Prioritize sidewalks, crosswalks, and cycling amenities, focusing on safe routes to schools, important community destinations like Jefferson Medical, and other key areas for the expansion of sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails. Continue to work on providing a trail connection across Hwy. 9 on N. Fairfax Blvd.

MANAGE STORMWATER: Incorporate green infrastructure into transportation planning to manage stormwater runoff and protect floodplains.

ASSESS LOCAL NEEDS: The city should first identify specific areas that need improvement. This should include sidewalks and bike lanes, etc.

UPDATE THE CIP: The city needs to update its capital improvement plan (CIP) outlining the proposed improvements, including a cost estimate and timeline for completion.

ENHANCE PUBLIC TRANSIT: Collaborate with Eastern Panhandle Transportation Authority (EPTA) to expand service hours and routes to better serve residents, particularly hospital employees and the aging population. Add a circular route to Ranson/Charles Town area.

MAXIMIZE LOCAL FUNDS: The city should ensure it's using local funds effectively, potentially matching them with state and federal funds to make the most of every dollar.

IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCES: The city should identify potential sources of state and federal funding. For federal funding, potential sources could include the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Department of Transportation (DOT), or the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. At the state level, check for grants or funds available through the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

APPLY FOR GRANTS AND FUNDING: Once potential funding sources have been identified, the city should prepare and submit grant applications. These applications should clearly articulate the need for the project, how it aligns with the goals of the funding organization, and the expected benefits. Additionally, the city should work with its state and federal representatives to advocate for its needs.

TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Upgrade Street Infrastructure	Department of Public Works	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, State & Federal Grants
Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity	Department of Public Works	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, State & Federal Grants
Manage Stormwater	Department of Public Works, City Planner	Ongoing	Municipal Funds, State & Federal Grants
Enhance Public Transit	City Planner, EPTA, City Council	2025-2030	Municipal Funds, State & Federal Grants

Plan 2034 recognizes the importance of an integrated, sustainable, and resilient transportation system that caters to all modes of transport and serves the growing community. As Ranson continues to strive towards these goals, it remains committed to the principle of community engagement and public input in shaping the transportation future of Ranson.



Image 5.2 Highway 9 at North Fairfax Boulevard, 2023

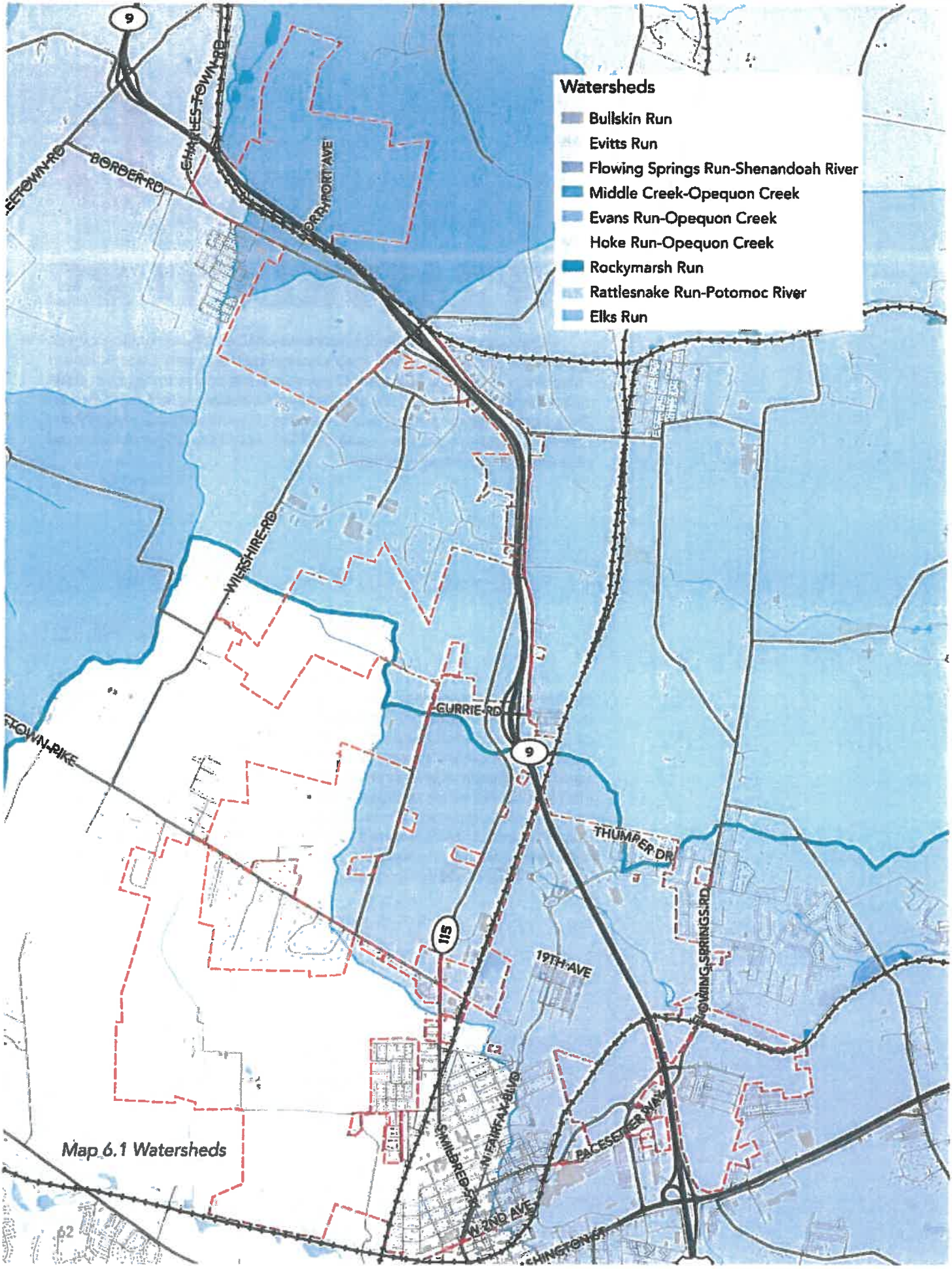
6

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is a critical backbone of the city, fueling the city's growth and prosperity. This chapter considers the current state of infrastructure, sets forth goals for its improvement, and proposes actions to achieve these goals. These goals and actions echo the voice of the community that envisions a vibrant downtown, safe neighborhoods, and an improved quality of life, facilitated by a robust and efficient infrastructure network.

CURRENT STATE

Ranson's existing infrastructure encompasses a wide range of services, including water, sewer, stormwater management, electricity, telecommunications, and waste management. The development of sustainable infrastructure goals and actions will give Ranson the opportunity to be a leader in the WV Panhandle in the sustainable and responsible use and management of resources. Ranson benefits from storm and sanctuary sewers and municipal water service. Ranson must be proactive in managing its storm water to prevent the degradation of the Shenandoah River, and thus, the Potomac River. However, Ranson is grappling with the challenges of aging infrastructure and increasing demands for improvement and expansion.



Map 6.1 Watersheds

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Ranson is located in the Potomac and Shenandoah River watersheds which collectively flow to the Chesapeake Bay. The sub-watersheds for the northern portion of Ranson include Rockymarsh Run and Elk Branch, with the southern portions draining to Flowing Springs Run, Cattail Run and Evitts Run. With the exception of the Evitts Run watershed, Ranson is located within the upper reaches of all the noted drainage sheds and is not greatly impacted by stormwater originating outside of its municipal limits.

Localized flooding in Old Town is common for larger rain events, but quickly drains and is more of a short-term hazard than a hazard to property. However, a large portion of the southwest section of Old Town is located within the 100-year flood plain and could be subject to damaging floods. The city is planning a new stormwater facility west of North George Street and south of West Beltline Avenue.

Stormwater management planning in Ranson demonstrates cutting edge advancements along the green streets of Fairfax Boulevard and Northport Avenue, with curb cuts, rain gardens, and bioswales. New development in greenfield areas are required to have where water quality and quantity measures. These sorts of stormwater management best practices should be encouraged on an ongoing basis.

Should Ranson transition into a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community, it will find new developments are partially prepared to comply with fresh regulations, owing to their existing facilities that meet some of these new requirements. In contrast, Old Town's lack of stormwater infrastructure may leave it ill-equipped to satisfy these new requirements, likely necessitating significant investment in infrastructure. Given the constraints in both Old Town and the neighboring Charles Town, a unified utility for the two cities could represent the most efficient strategy.

The intent of all stormwater infrastructure is to enhance water quality and to mitigate the impact increased impervious surfaces have on the rate at which stormwater is discharged. Together these will reduce flooding, and improve water quality into the Potomac River, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. The State of West Virginia is a formal partner in the Chesapeake Bay cleanup through the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, committing Ranson to reduce sources of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment. United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps and charts show that water quality in West Virginia's tributaries to the Potomac River is also generally trending in the right direction. (West Virginia Division of Water and Waste Management, n.d.)

Stormwater planning in the Old Town area is impacted by the existing drainage patterns and topography. Major outfalls are:

- West Ranson outfall under Norfolk Southern Railway, ~600 acres
- Evitts Run Outfall for Old Town Ranson, approximately 950 acres
- Evitts Run drainage area through Charles Town
- Flowing Springs Run Outfall

PUBLIC WATER

The public water system, utilized for residential consumption, commercial applications, and firefighting, requires an overarching objective of reliable water delivery. This necessitates management strategies that aim to decrease water loss associated with leaks and promote efficient water usage among consumers.

Two public water utilities serve Ranson: West Virginia American Water Incorporated and the Charles Town Utility Board. These entities cater to the existing developed areas, while most of the annexed territories lack water infrastructure, with the exception of Fairfax Crossing, Potomac Marketplace, Briar Run, which are served by West Virginia American Water. Consequently, extending water services to these areas would place significant demand on the existing system, necessitating a phased implementation that ensures consistent pressures and flows for current consumers.

The Charles Town Utility Board is the owner, operator, and maintainer of the public water system that caters to the Old Town area. It operates a single water treatment plant situated east of Charles Town on Route 9, which sources water from the Shenandoah River for treatment and distribution. The river can adequately supply raw water for future development, but the treatment and distribution infrastructure will necessitate expansion. This expansion may involve constructing additional water tanks for system pressurization. West Virginia American Water, a private utility, serves the Flowing Springs Development District. It owns the water system that caters to the majority of annexed areas in the City of Ranson. Traditionally, the expansion of the water distribution system has been spearheaded by private developments and scaled to meet their requirements. However, Ranson now requires a strategic approach to extend public water into the Urban Growth Boundary cost-effectively, focusing on properties in close proximity to existing main lines and the Old Town area.

DRY UTILITIES & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Dry utilities consist of power and communication infrastructure. In Ranson, these utilities are primarily owned by large private entities and are part of extensive infrastructure networks. These companies include Potomac Edison (Electricity), Frontier (Internet, phone, television), Shentel and Comcast (Internet, television). Waste management services, encompassing residential garbage collection and recycling, are furnished by Apple Valley Waste. Meanwhile, commercial garbage collection is handled by both Apple Valley Waste and Waste Management.

In the Old Town district, most utilities are aerial, positioned on poles, whereas newer developments feature underground utilities. The city strongly advocates for the progressive relocation of these utilities underground as part of the redevelopment process. For waste management, both residential and commercial sectors depend on regular collection schedules, recycling programs, and waste disposal strategies to maintain cleanliness and environmental sustainability.

SANITARY SEWER

Charles Town Utility Board acquired the assets of the City of Ranson Sewer System in 2018 and the Jefferson County Public Service District in 2019. The wastewater treatment and collection systems of the consolidated regional utility serve growth and help meet future capital needs. In addition to the system wide improvements, planning is underway for expansion of The Charles Town Waste Water Treatment Plant within the next ten years to provide additional capacity to cater to the projected growth of Ranson. According to the Charles Town Utility Board 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, the plant capacity maximum 3-month average daily flow basis currently varies from 71% to 95%. (Charles Town Utility Board, 2021)

Charles Town Utility Board has been proactive with plant upgrades, predicting that the planned enhancements will support Ranson's near-term growth. Ranson should collaborate closely with the utility board, ensuring that upgrades align with growth projections.

Optimizing the use of the current treatment capacity at the wastewater treatment plant can decrease the demand for infrastructure upgrades. If new developments utilize less water and produce less wastewater, the existing capacity can support additional homes and mixed-use developments. Ranson can spearhead initiatives to reduce wastewater use and collaborate with the wastewater treatment plant to decrease groundwater infiltration into pipes, which impairs capacity.

With the implementation of regulations for Chesapeake Bay expected in 2024, Ranson should advocate for its residents and businesses. These federal regulations are unfunded mandates and should be executed in a practical and cost-effective manner.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

ASSURE THE ORDERLY EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURE: SET TARGET LEVELS AT WHICH INFRASTRUCTURE SHOULD BE USED BEFORE IT IS EXTENDED AND INVESTIGATE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF EXTENSIONS.

COORDINATE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING WITH UTILITY COMPANIES THAT SERVICE THE CITY. CONSIDER INNOVATIONS IN CONSOLIDATING SERVICE DELIVERY WHERE FEASIBLE.

DEVELOP COST SHARING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS. ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES, RESIDENTS, AND UTILITY COMPANIES TO SHARE THE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURAL UPGRADES AND EXPANSIONS, POTENTIALLY THROUGH PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODELS OR COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENTS.

UPGRADE AND EXPAND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: DEVELOP NEW PARKS, GREEN SPACES, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND ENHANCE EXISTING ONES.

IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT: UPGRADE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO MINIMIZE RUNOFF AND MITIGATE FLOODING RISKS.

INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIONS

DEVELOP AN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN prioritizing infill development adjacent to existing infrastructure, decreasing the expense to the city to fund extensions of the grid.

ESTABLISH NEW PUBLIC UTILITIES if designated by the State of WV as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community as required to support the sustainable and responsible delivery of infrastructure to residents.

PREPARE REVENUE BONDS to finance infrastructure improvements including stormwater.

DEVELOP A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT NETWORK: Focus on upgrading stormwater management systems and incorporating green infrastructure.

COLLABORATE WITH CHARLES TOWN UTILITY BOARD: Support wastewater treatment plant capacity expansion to meet Ranson's projected growth.

COLLABORATE WITH CHARLES TOWN UTILITY BOARD AND WEST VIRGINIA AMERICAN WATER: Implement a phased expansion plan for public water systems, focusing on enhancing water service availability in annexed lands and areas within the Urban Growth Boundary, as well as the maintenance and upgrading of existing water lines.

OPTIMIZE DRY UTILITIES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: Implement strategic improvements, including the underground relocation of utilities, promotion of alternative energy sources, enhancement of high-speed internet access, and the advancement of sustainable waste management practices.

The following pages provide some pointers on some of the actions, along with an implementation matrix of who's responsible for what, by when.

DEVELOP A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT NETWORK

A stormwater management network utilizing green infrastructure will address current and future regulatory requirements and foster resilience in both new developments and existing areas of concern. This is aligned with compliance requirements set forth by state and federal laws under the Clean Water Act. Ranson should partner with Charles Town, Jefferson County, and public utilities to establish uniform standards for lands within shared drainage basins, which will help reduce per capita stormwater impacts.

Through innovative site design and conservation of natural vegetation, it's possible to reduce stormwater volume and enhance its quality by limiting runoff. New developments should incorporate rain gardens, permeable pavements, and green roofs to replicate natural hydrological processes, hence reducing runoff volume and treating the initial, typically most polluted, runoff. Furthermore, the use of stormwater ponds or constructed wetlands for storing and treating excess runoff will also be required.

Adopting this comprehensive strategy will help decrease runoff volume, improve water quality, and lessen the impact on natural water bodies. To foster urban infill in Old Town, it's proposed to establish the planned municipal stormwater facilities. This approach will help offset the impact of increased runoff from development and promote denser urban infill by leveraging green on-site and off-site stormwater management facilities, rather than resorting to suburban style detention ponds with heavily engineered catch basins.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implement a Stormwater Management Program to satisfy the components of the West Virginia Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan. If the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection designates Ranson as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4), create a Stormwater Utility District to fund and manage stormwater facilities within Ranson. Consider a combined utility district in coordination with Charles Town.

Regularly review stormwater regulations to ensure parity to those of Jefferson County. Partner with Charles Town and Jefferson County to create a Stormwater Utility Board tasked with implementing watershed-based stormwater management practices.

Advocate for the integration of stormwater management facilities within public right-of-way street designs. Explore opportunities for water reuse as a component of stormwater planning. Encourage creative storage and use of stormwater runoff from buildings and paved surfaces in landscaping, beautification, parks and community gardens.

Develop a stormwater management plan for Old Town to address existing and future drainage challenges due to infill and redevelopment. This plan should emphasize managing stormwater through a hybrid system of pretreatment, detention and conveyance facilities to achieve better results than traditional piping-only approaches. Detention should be permitted at the scale of the block, rather than required parcel by parcel in T5 and T4O.

Develop a Capital Improvement Program to plan for the expansion of stormwater infrastructure. Develop a fee structure for implementation of Stormwater Management Capital Projects that will reduce flooding, improve water quality, and manage regional stormwater detention and flood control.



Image 6.1 Ranson slotted curbs, 2023

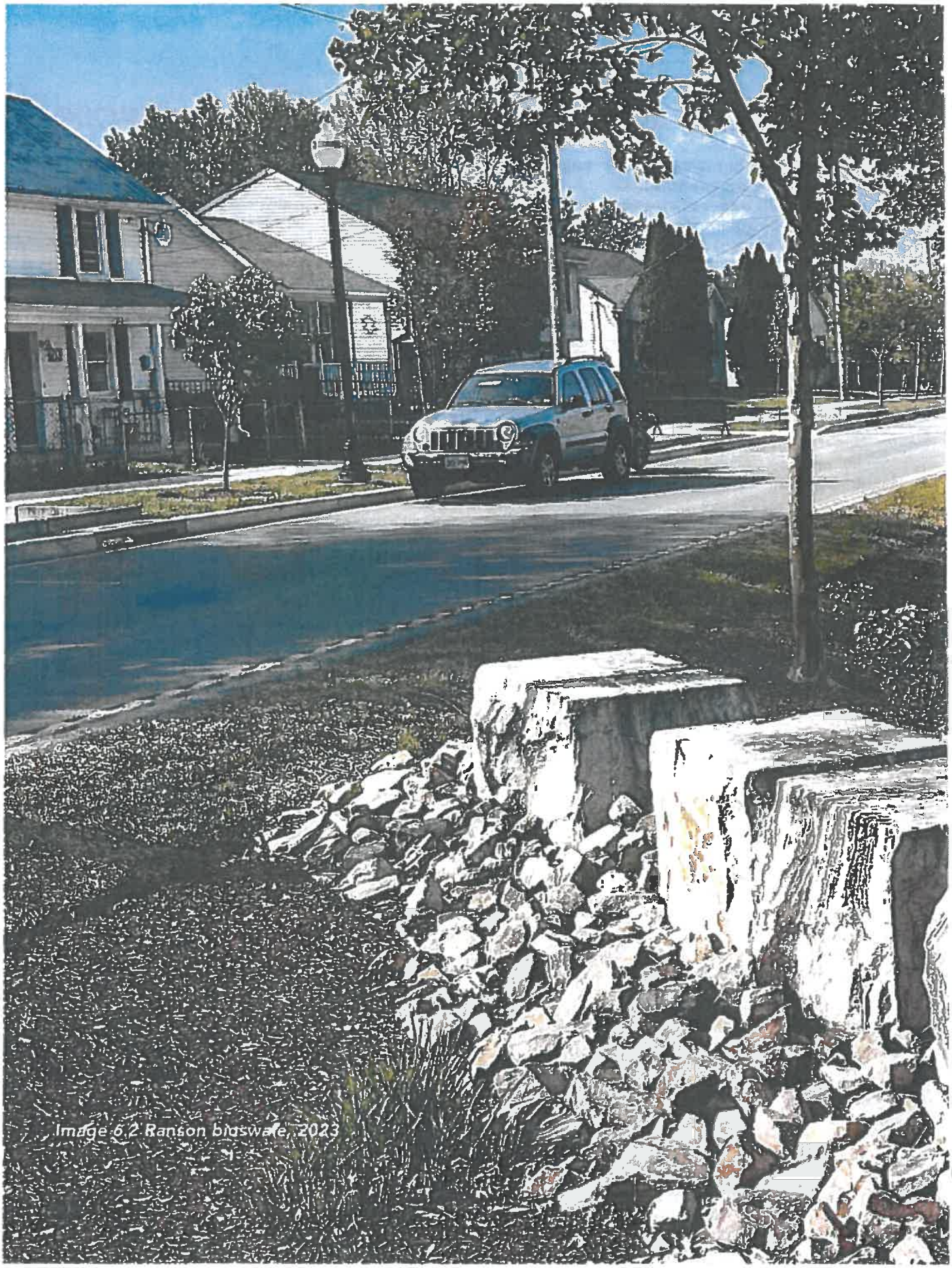
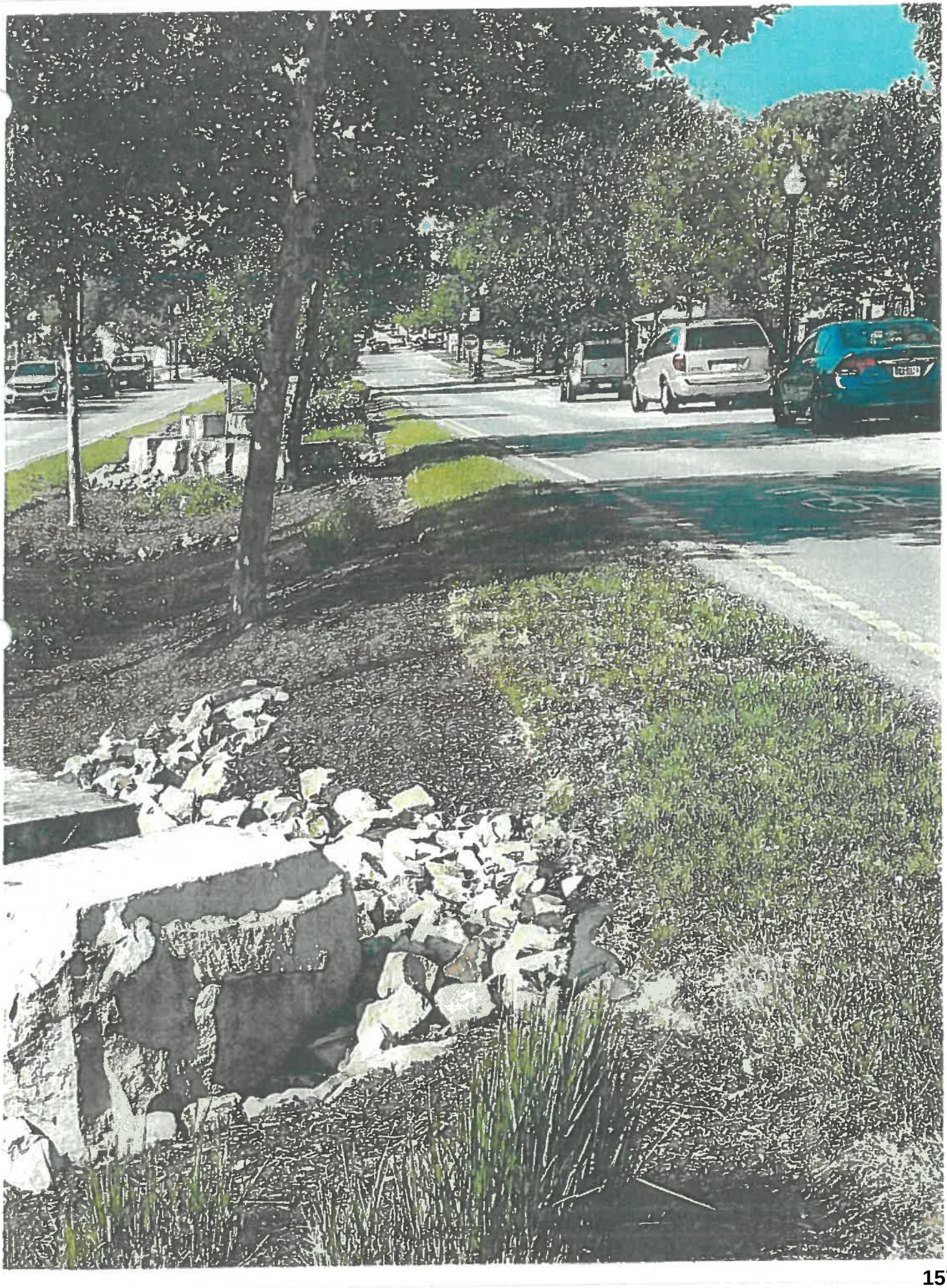


Image 6.2 Ranson bioswale, 2023



COLLABORATE WITH WEST VIRGINIA AMERICAN WATER AND CHARLES TOWN UTILITY BOARD

GOALS

Cooperate with Charles Town Utility Board and West Virginia American Water to ensure that Ranson's evolving redevelopment and new development needs are adequately met and to consolidate service delivery where economically feasible.

Ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Restrict the system's outward expansion to sustainable levels.

Collaborate with all users to promote efficient water usage.

ACTIONS

Implement design guidelines and incentives that allow stormwater usage and water reuse within the building envelope.

Implement policies that reduce municipal water usage.

Cooperate with Charles Town Utility Board and West Virginia American Water to minimize water loss through leaks.

Provide incentives for stormwater and greywater use.

Protect critical public infrastructure from potential security threats.

Collaborate with Charles Town Utility Board and West Virginia American Water to prepare for infill development on brownfield parcels.

Collaborate with Charles Town Utility Board and West Virginia American Water to formulate a long-term plan for extending water services into the annexed lands and areas within the Urban Growth Boundary.

In partnership with Charles Town Utility Board and West Virginia American Water, assess the need for additional water towers in the developed areas to maintain suitable system water pressure.

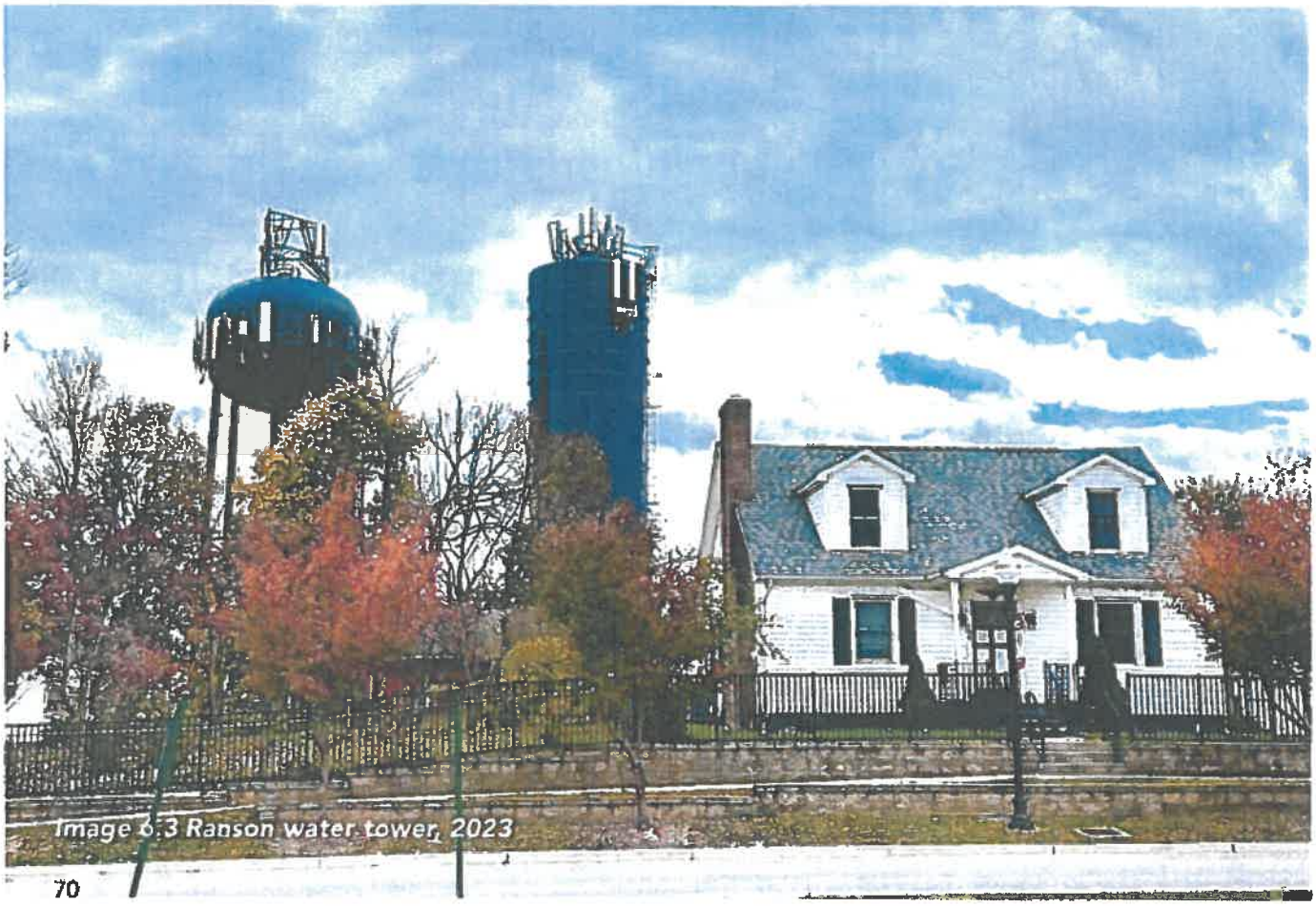


Image 6.3 Ranson water tower, 2023

COLLABORATE WITH CHARLES TOWN UTILITY BOARD

GOALS

Support the expansion of Charles Town's Waste Water Treatment Plant and continue to enhance its transmission capacity for Ranson, to meet Ranson's projected growth.

Ensure the sanitary sewer infrastructure is available for future growth by promoting system efficiency through meticulous phasing, system layout design, and conservation.

ACTIONS

Advocate for Ranson citizens to ensure Chesapeake Bay policies are reasonable and actionable.

Comply with state and federal legal requirements.

Establish design guidelines for constructing sanitary sewer infrastructure, coordinated with all public utilities.

Implement design guidelines and incentives for reusing gray water.

Work with Charles Town Utility Board to ensure capital improvement fees are adequate for maintaining and expanding sewer infrastructure.

Encourage all users to minimize their wastewater generation.

Implement policies to reduce the City's wastewater generation.

Collaborate with Charles Town Utility Board to decrease groundwater infiltration into sanitary sewer lines.

Connect homes currently served by drainfields to the sanitary sewer system.

Protect critical public infrastructure from potential security threats.

Collaborate with public utilities to:

Map existing sanitary infrastructure.

Monitor pump station capacities.

Develop a long-term plan for expanding sanitary sewer services to annexed lands and areas within the urban growth boundaries. Coordinate the system layout and phasing with growth in collaboration with public utility providers.

Implement a beneficial Capacity Improvement Fee structure.

Prepare for the development of brownfield parcels.

Develop a Capital Improvement Program to facilitate planned expansion of sanitary sewer infrastructure.

Install dual plumbing for all new public parks and landscape projects anticipating future water recycling or reuse infrastructure for irrigation.

Prioritize the following specific projects:

Develop a replacement/ improvement plan for the Forest Avenue pump station. Review the cost-benefit of connecting this area to the Fairfax Crossing development via gravity sewer.

Relocate the Fourth Avenue pump station and redirect flows to increase the capacity of the sewer trunk line in Ranson.

Review the feasibility of installing a gravity line from Mildred Street to Ranson Gateway.

OPTIMIZE DRY UTILITIES AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

GOALS

Implement strategic improvements, including the underground relocation of utilities, promotion of alternative energy sources, enhancement of high-speed internet access, and the advancement of sustainable waste management practices.

Collaborate with Potomac Edison to bolster the electrical grid in commercial zones, catering to the needs of high-tech businesses requiring multiple electricity sources.

Reduce electrical demand via energy-saving design practices and alternative energy generation.

Work with service providers to expand high-speed internet access for both business and residential customers.

Improve the visual appeal of streetscapes through strategic placement of dry utility infrastructure.

Ensure effective and efficient waste management services for both residential and commercial sectors, promoting recycling and sustainable waste disposal methods.

ACTIONS

The Public Works Department and the City should mandate that new dry utilities, including meters, are installed underground in rights-of-way—preferably in rear alleys and lanes. This allows residents to maximize the usage of their lots.

Coordinate design standards with utility companies, including the positioning of lines and surface transformers, as well as utility pedestals.

Formulate policies promoting the generation of alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power, on municipal and individual properties.

Promote and enhance digital access through continued investment in digital infrastructure.

Ensure that waste management services, including residential and commercial garbage collection and recycling, are consistently efficient, reliable, and sustainable.

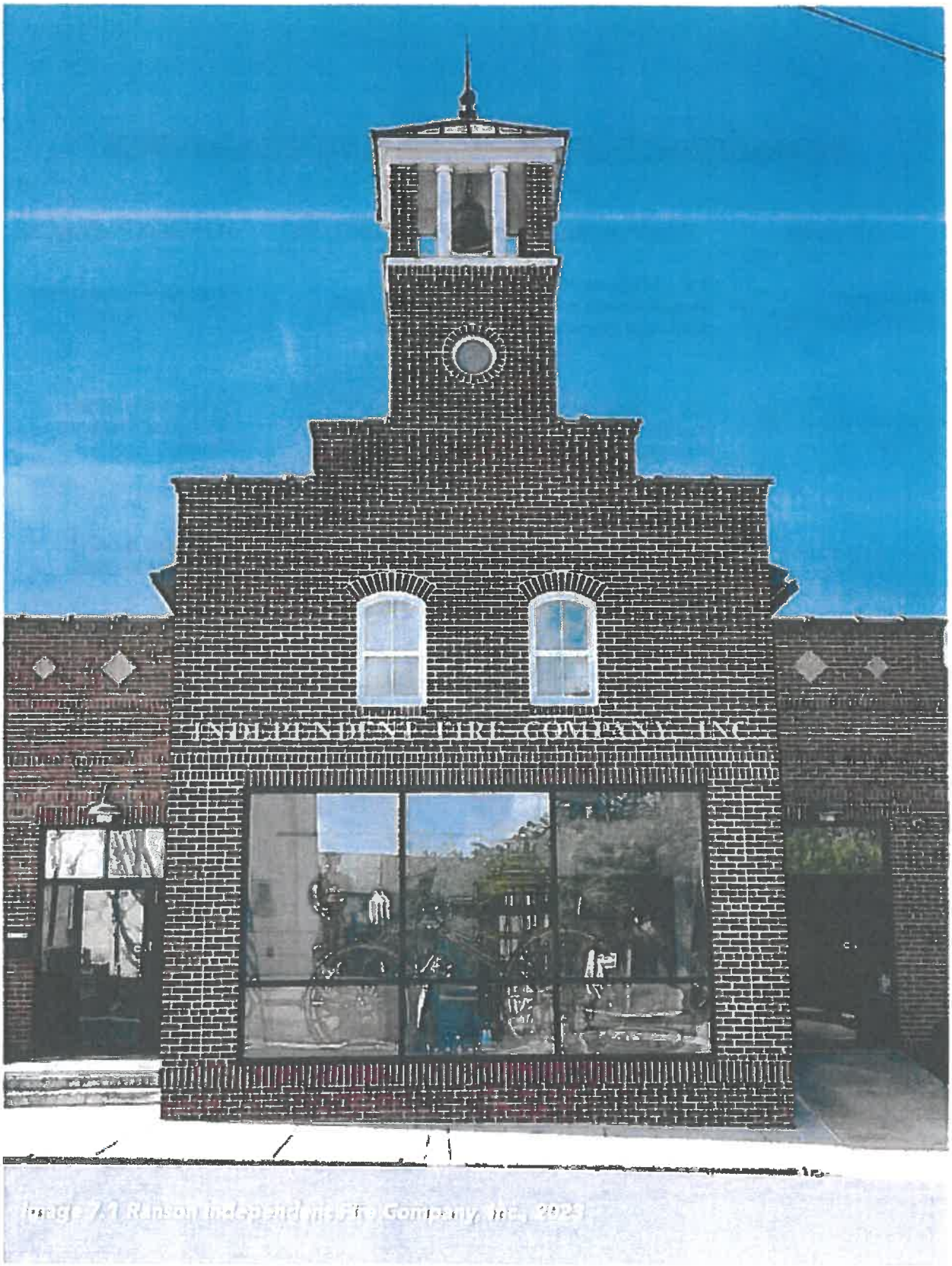
Promote recycling and waste reduction efforts among residents and businesses through education and incentive programs.

Partner with waste management providers to explore innovative waste disposal solutions and improve waste management services across the city.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Develop an Infrastructure Plan	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department	2025-2029	Municipal Funds, State & Federal Grants
Establish new public utilities	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department	If designated by State of WV as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Prepare revenue bonds to finance infrastructure	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department	If designated by State of WV as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Develop a Stormwater Management Network	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department	2025-2027	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Collaborate with Charles Town Utility Board	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department and utility providers	ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants, utility providers
Optimize dry utilities and waste management systems	City of Ranson Public Works in collaboration with City Planning Department and utility providers	ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants, utility providers

Through diligent planning and community engagement, the city aims to bridge the existing gaps in infrastructure, prepare for future demands, and ultimately, create a thriving and connected community that provides a high-quality life for all residents. Ranson is committed to building a city that is not just about places, but about people. The voices of residents drive decisions and actions, and together, will make Ranson a city that everyone can call home.


INDEPENDENT FIRE COMPANY, INC

7

PUBLIC SERVICES

Public services form an essential part of the community's infrastructure, directly impacting the quality of life of residents and shaping Ranson's character. Public services encompass a broad range, including police and fire services, health care, cultural and historical preservation, community services, social programs, and education. This chapter evaluates the current public services landscape, outlines future goals, presents actionable steps to achieve these goals, and details an implementation matrix, thereby setting the course for a safer, healthier, and culturally vibrant Ranson.

CURRENT STATE OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Ranson is served by a range of public services, from emergency response and healthcare facilities to educational institutions and social service organizations. However, as population grows and the needs of the community evolve, it's necessary to evaluate the efficacy of these services, and where needed, propose improvements and expansions.

The police department, fire department, and emergency services are dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure city. In health care, while residents have access to in-town clinics and hospitals, including the Jefferson Medical Center, availability of specialty services and preventive health programs can be improved. The educational landscape is served by local schools and nearby universities, but there's a need for increased focus on vocational and technical education. In terms of cultural and historical services, there is a constant need to maintain and enhance efforts in preserving the rich heritage. As for social services, an aging population and economic disparities present ongoing challenges.

SCHOOLS

Ranson students attend four physical schools within city boundaries, where 2,736 students, from the elementary to high school level, acquire their education. These institutions, each with its unique educational approach, cater to the individual needs of the student populace, providing a comprehensive and quality education that prepares them for their future. In addition, the American Public University System is a completely online university, serving a diverse student body of over 3,000 full-time learners. This institution provides an accessible, flexible, and high-quality educational option for those who may not be able to engage with traditional, on-site academic structures. Additionally, some properties are located in areas that fall within the districts of five elementary schools outside of Ranson. Ranson supports a broad range of educational pathways, catering to the evolving needs of its residents.

SCHOOL	STUDENTS
Ranson Elementary	276
Wildwood Middle School	419
Charles Town Middle School	678
Jefferson County High School	1363
American Public University System (Exclusively online): Full time	3,062
American Public University System (Exclusively online): Part time	45,236

Table 7.1 City Schools (Source: City of Ranson, Jefferson County, West Virginia)



PUBLIC SERVICE GOALS

STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY SERVICES: ENHANCE POLICE, FIRE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES TO ENSURE SWIFT AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE IN TIMES OF CRISIS.

EXPAND HEALTH SERVICES: IMPROVE ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE, INCLUDING PREVENTIVE AND SPECIALTY SERVICES.

IMPROVE LIBRARY SERVICES: FOSTER ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICES FOR RANSON'S RESIDENTS.

PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY: SUPPORT JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AS THEY STRENGTHEN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EXPAND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES.

PRESERVE CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE: ENHANCE EFFORTS IN PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE CITY'S RICH HISTORICAL HERITAGE.

ENHANCE SOCIAL SERVICES: IMPROVE SOCIAL SERVICES TO CATER TO THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY THE AGING POPULATION AND ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACTIONS

UPGRADE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFRASTRUCTURE: Invest in modern equipment and technology for police, fire, and emergency services.

PARTNER WITH HEALTH PROVIDERS: Establish partnerships with healthcare providers to improve access to a range of health services.

EXPAND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: Collaborate with educational institutions to expand vocational and technical education opportunities.

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHARLES TOWN LIBRARY: Enhance access to library services for Ranson residents.

ESTABLISH A SHARED LIBRARY SYSTEM WITH JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOLS: Collaborate with state and local entities to establish an equitable, legal means for sharing facilities.

PROMOTE HERITAGE PRESERVATION: Support initiatives that promote cultural and historical heritage.

STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SERVICES: Invest in social services infrastructure and partner with nonprofits and social service providers to cater to the diverse needs of the community.

ALIGN STAFF RESOURCES: Adjust the city staffing levels to meet the objectives and requirements outlined in this comprehensive plan.

The following pages provide some pointers on some of the actions, along with an implementation matrix of who's responsible for what, by when.

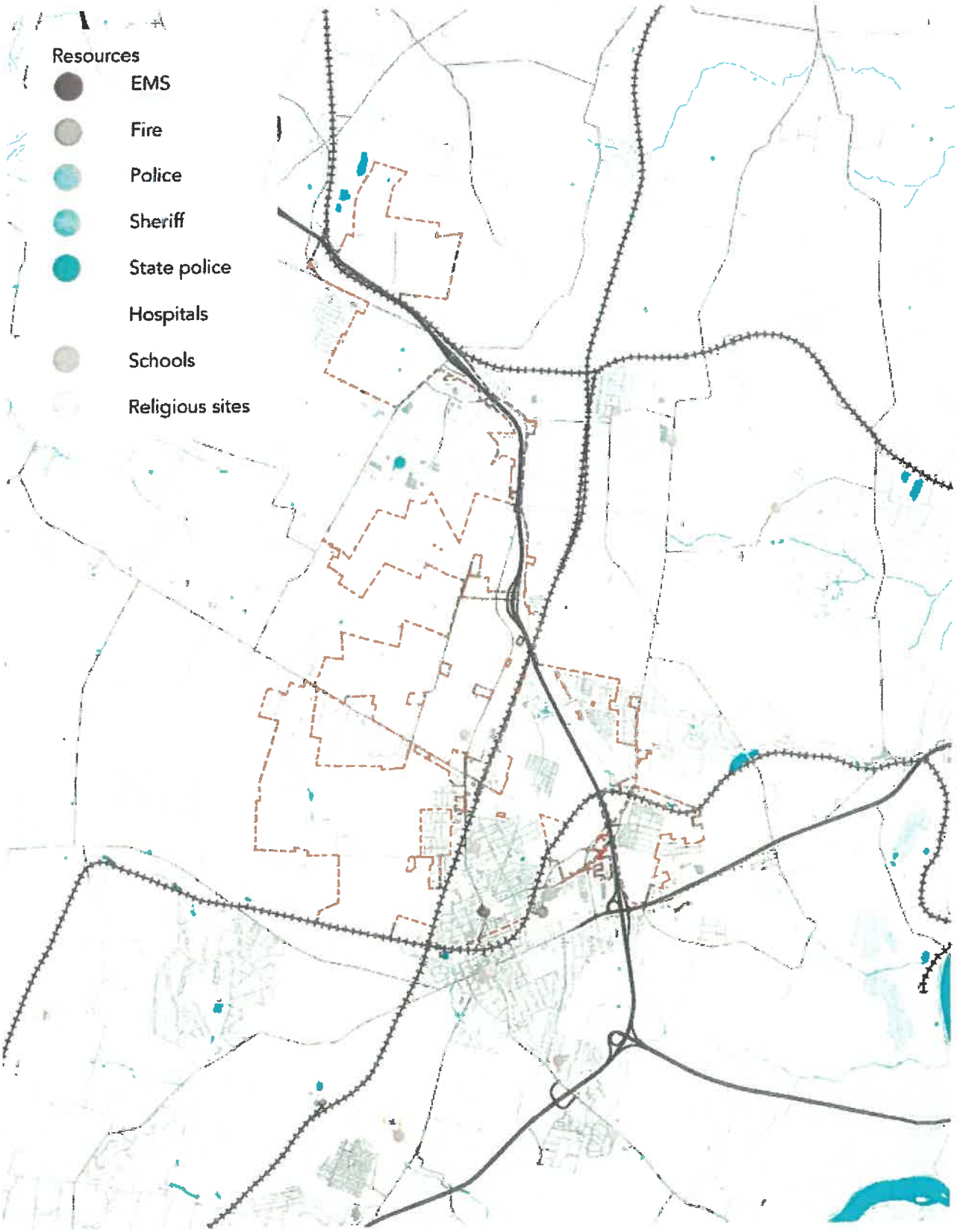
PUBLIC SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Upgrade Emergency Response Infrastructure	City of Ranson Public Safety Departments	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Partner with Health Providers	City of Ranson, Local Health Providers	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State Funding, Private Funding
Expand Educational Programs	City of Ranson, Local School District, Higher Education Institutions	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Funding, Private Funding
Promote Heritage Preservation	City of Ranson, Cultural and Historic Preservation Societies	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants, Private Donations
Strengthen Social Services	City of Ranson, Social Service Providers, Nonprofit Organizations	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Funding, Private Donations

The public services provided and maintained are reflections of the commitment to the well-being of Ranson's residents. The city aims to work in partnership with residents, organizations, and surrounding communities to improve the quality and reach of services, thereby ensuring a better and more secure future for all who call Ranson home.



Image: Ranson Elementary School, new facility under construction, 2023



Map 7.1 City Resources (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap)

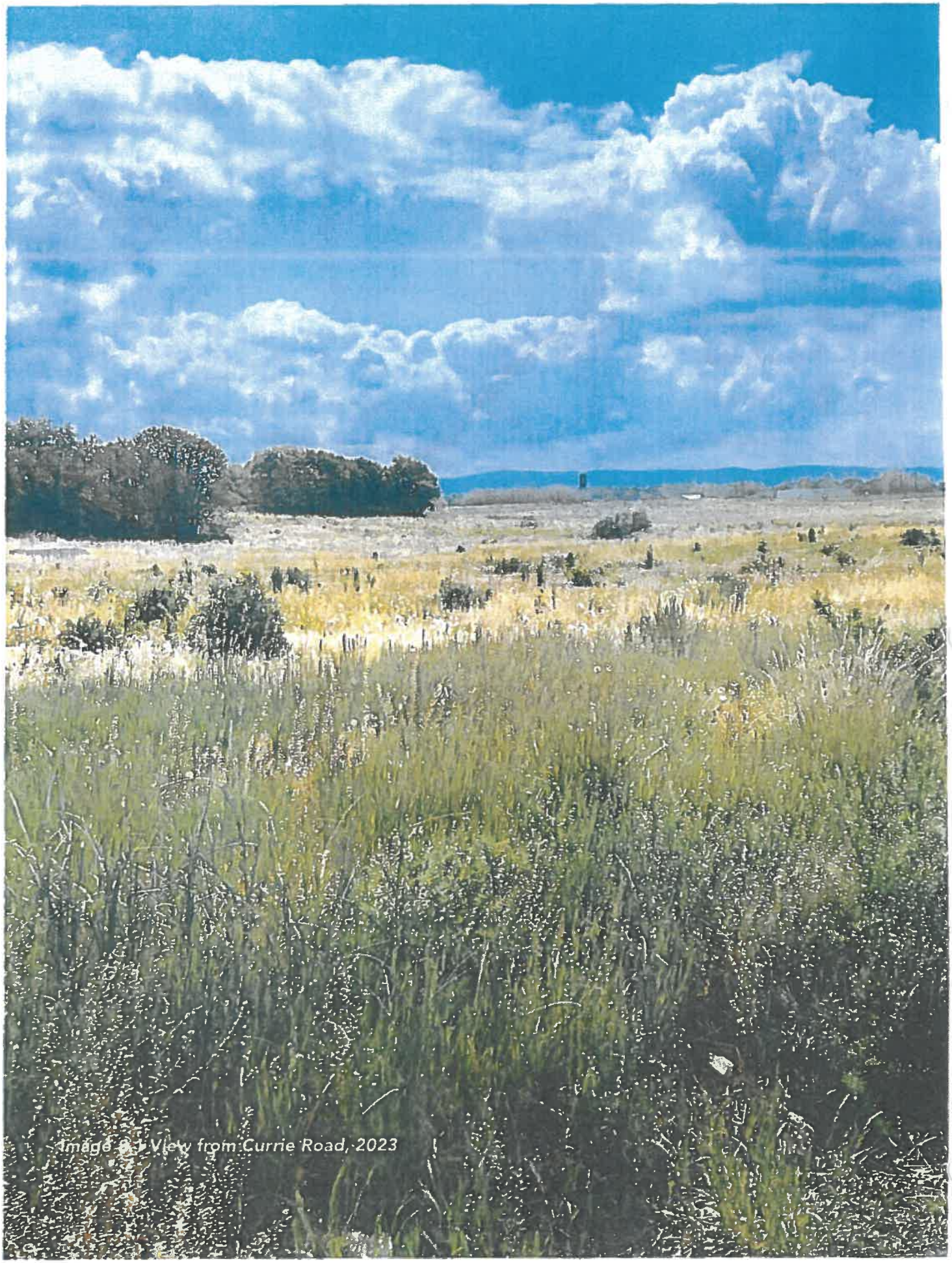


Image 8.1 View from Currie Road, 2023

8

RURAL LANDSCAPE

Ranson's rural lands and their conservation form a fundamental pillar of community identity. The balance between urban growth and rural preservation has been a guiding principle in Ranson's development, underpinning the commitment to sustainable growth and environmental stewardship. In this chapter, the current state of Ranson's rural lands is addressed, including goals for preserving and managing these lands, and actionable steps towards achieving these goals.

CURRENT STATE

Ranson is blessed with vast rural expanses, showcasing diverse natural landscapes including forests, farms, and pristine watersheds. These lands form a critical buffer between urban developments, providing essential ecosystem services, preserving local biodiversity, and offering opportunities for recreational activities and tourism. Yet, they face the ongoing pressures of urban expansion, resource extraction, and climate change.

Ranson is situated in an area rich with natural assets and rural beauty. The city itself serves as a gateway to a larger rural landscape characterized by its diverse features. To the east is the scenic Shenandoah River, a natural asset that brings tranquility and recreational opportunities to the area. Its watershed, a critical resource, sustains local wildlife and contributes to the health of the region's water supply.

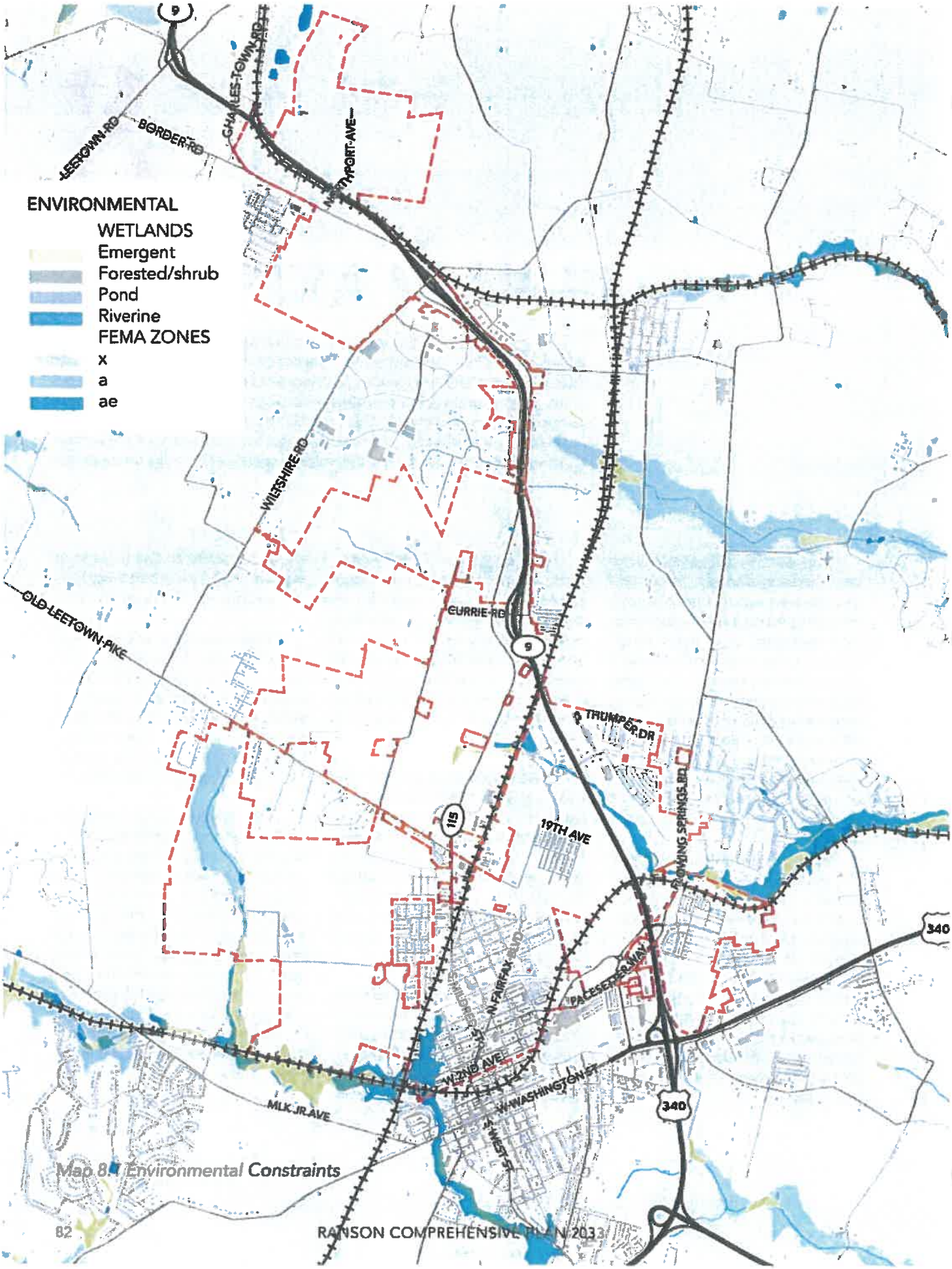
The Evitts Run Creek watershed courses through the edge of the city. This creek, apart from being a picturesque waterway, is crucial to the local ecosystem and serves as a habitat for a variety of species. It's a testament to the intricate connections between the city and the rural spaces that surround it.

Bordering Ranson to the east, is the rolling Blue Ridge Mountains. The mountain range is part of the larger Appalachian Mountains, a remarkable feature that stretches along the eastern part of the country. The mountains frame the landscape and provide a stunning backdrop to the city.

In terms of farmland, Ranson is neighbored by numerous farms that are part of the county's agricultural heritage. These farms, many family-owned, produce a wide range of crops and livestock that contribute to the local food supply, and reflect the agricultural traditions of the community.

There are also vast expanses of undisturbed forestlands that extend beyond the city's boundaries. These forests are home to a variety of wildlife and plant species, offering a rich biodiversity that contributes to the overall ecological health of the region.

Collectively, these rural landscapes form a protective buffer around the city, offering a sense of retreat from urban life. They serve as a vital source of the community's identity, contribute to the quality of life in Ranson, and represent a connection to the land that many residents hold dear. The challenge moving forward is to balance the demands of growth with the desire to maintain and enhance these precious rural assets.



Map 8.1 Environmental Constraints

RURAL LANDSCAPE GOALS

PRESERVE RURAL CHARACTER: UPHOLD THE INTEGRITY AND BEAUTY OF THE RURAL LANDS, MAINTAINING THEIR DISTINCT AESTHETIC AND CULTURAL VALUE THAT CONTRIBUTES TO RANSON'S SMALL-TOWN FEEL.

PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES: SAFEGUARD WATERSHEDS, WOODLANDS, AND FARMLANDS, WHICH ARE INTEGRAL TO THE LOCAL ECOSYSTEM, ECONOMY, AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE RURAL GROWTH: MANAGE GROWTH IN RURAL AREAS TO ENSURE ANY DEVELOPMENT IS HARMONIOUS WITH RURAL CHARACTER, ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY, AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY.

FACILITATE RURAL RECREATION: ENHANCE ACCESS TO RURAL LANDSCAPES FOR RECREATION, WHILE PRESERVING THEIR NATURAL ATTRIBUTES.

RURAL LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

DEVELOP RURAL PRESERVATION POLICIES: Establish comprehensive land use policies to preserve the rural character of Ranson and its surrounding countryside.

PROMOTE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES: Foster partnerships with conservation groups to safeguard key rural areas and promote biodiversity.

IMPLEMENT SMART GROWTH STRATEGIES: Ensure any rural development adheres to sustainable and environmentally-friendly principles, focusing on preserving open spaces and natural resources.

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN RURAL RECREATION FACILITIES: Designate and manage public rural lands for recreational activities that do not compromise their natural beauty.



Image 8.2 View from President's Point Avenue, 2023

RURAL LANDSCAPE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Develop Rural Preservation Policies	City of Ranson, Planning Department	2025-2026	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Promote Conservation Initiatives	City of Ranson, Conservation Groups	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants, Private Donations
Implement Smart Growth Strategies	Planning Department	Ongoing	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants
Develop and Maintain Rural Recreation Facilities	City of Ranson	2023-2026	Municipal Budget, State and Federal Grants

Rural lands not only represent residents' connection to the natural world but also act as a safeguard against uncontrolled urban expansion. By committing to a balanced approach between urban growth and rural preservation, the city can ensure that future generations of Ranson residents will continue to enjoy the rural charm and natural beauty that are cherished today.



Image 8.3 View from Currie Road, 2023

9 RECREATION

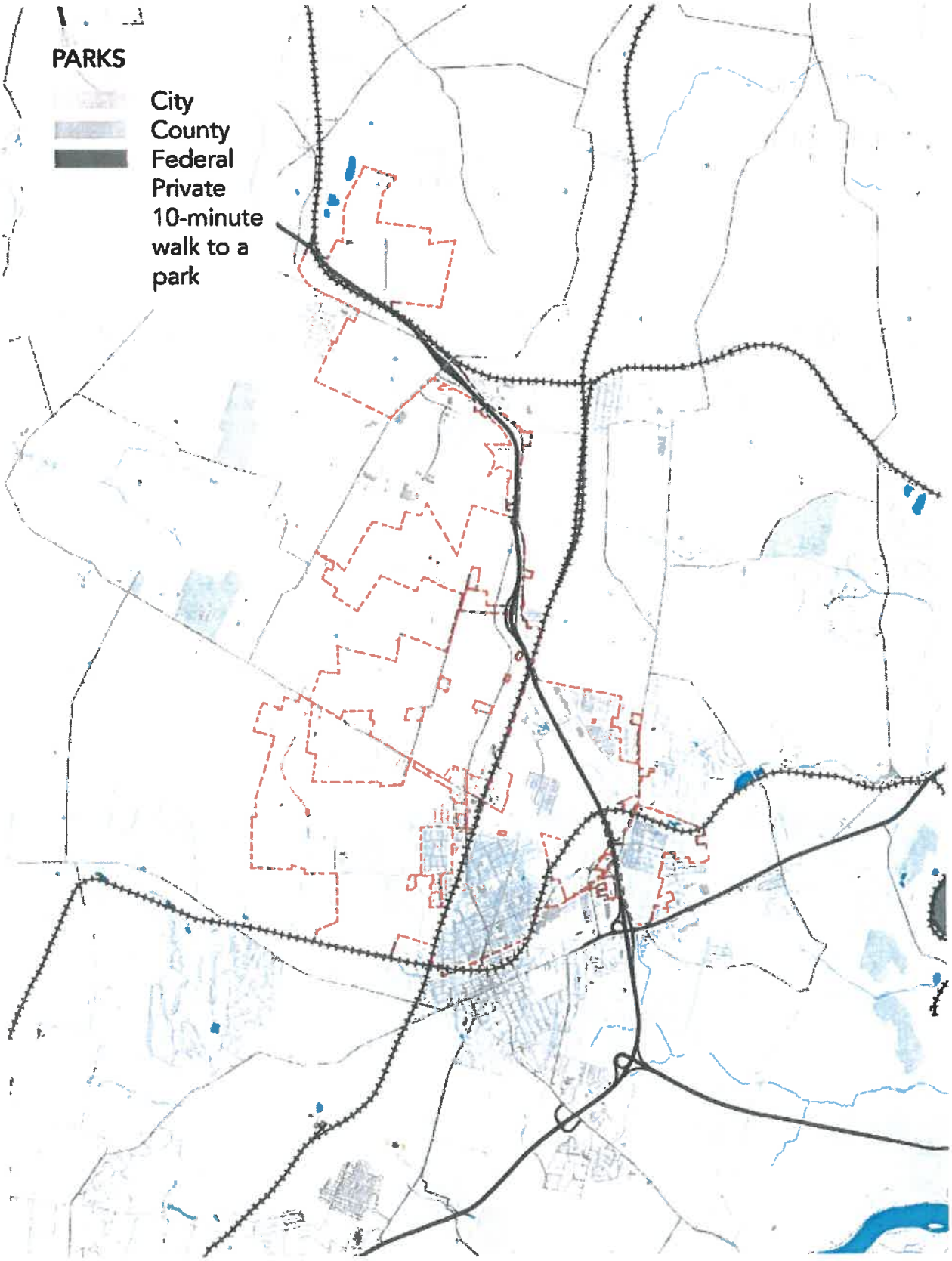
The Recreation chapter aims to align the recreational and tourism opportunities with the land use framework within the area. It outlines a strategy to identify lands suitable for recreational activities and tourism, as well as setting robust goals, plans, and programs. By intertwining the natural assets, cultural richness, and historical context of the area, the strategy seeks to provide a beneficial and enjoyable environment for both residents and visitors. In essence, this chapter is a roadmap for a healthier, more connected, and vibrant community in Ranson.

CURRENT STATE

Recreation in Ranson is multi-faceted, with different venues offering a variety of experiences to residents of all ages. The Ranson Civic Center, offering 40,000 sq. ft of space, is the town's central hub for community activities. After major renovations in 2010 and 2018, it continues to serve as an essential part of the community. The Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) further enhances recreational offerings at the Sam Michael's Park Community Center. Various parks include Fairfax Crossing Park, Lancaster Circle, Marcus Field, Crane's Lane, West End Park, Lance - Slusher Park, Briar Run Park, and Flowing Springs Park. Together, these green spaces cover 46.26 acres. The parks offer a wide range of amenities, including playgrounds, picnic tables, seating, football and soccer fields, basketball and tennis courts, a stadium, bleachers, trails and wildlife viewing locations. However, less than half of residents live within a ten-minute walk to a park, suggesting an area for improvement.



Image 9.1 Charles C. Marcus Field, 2023



Map 9.1 Parks (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap)

RANSON RECREATION FACILITIES

PARK	AMENITIES	ACRES
Fairfax Crossing Park	Playground	0.46
Lancaster Circle	Picnic table, seating	0.2
Marcus Field	Football field, stadium	3.8
Crane's Lane	Bleachers, football field, soccer field	5
West End Park	Basketball court, bleachers, playground, picnic tables	2
Lance - Slusher Park	Basketball court, playground, tennis court	2.5
Briar Run Park	Green, picnic, playground	2.6
Flowing Springs Park	Trails, wildlife viewing	29.7
	TOTAL	**46.26**

Table 9.1 City Facilities (Source: City of Ranson, Jefferson County, West Virginia)



Images 9.2 - 9.9 Ranson Recreation Facilities, 2023





Images 9.10 & 9.11 Ranson Community Gardens 2023

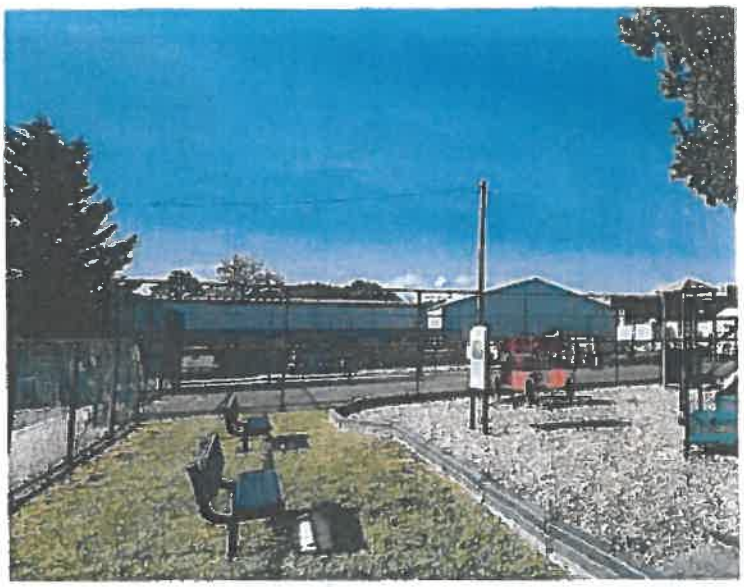












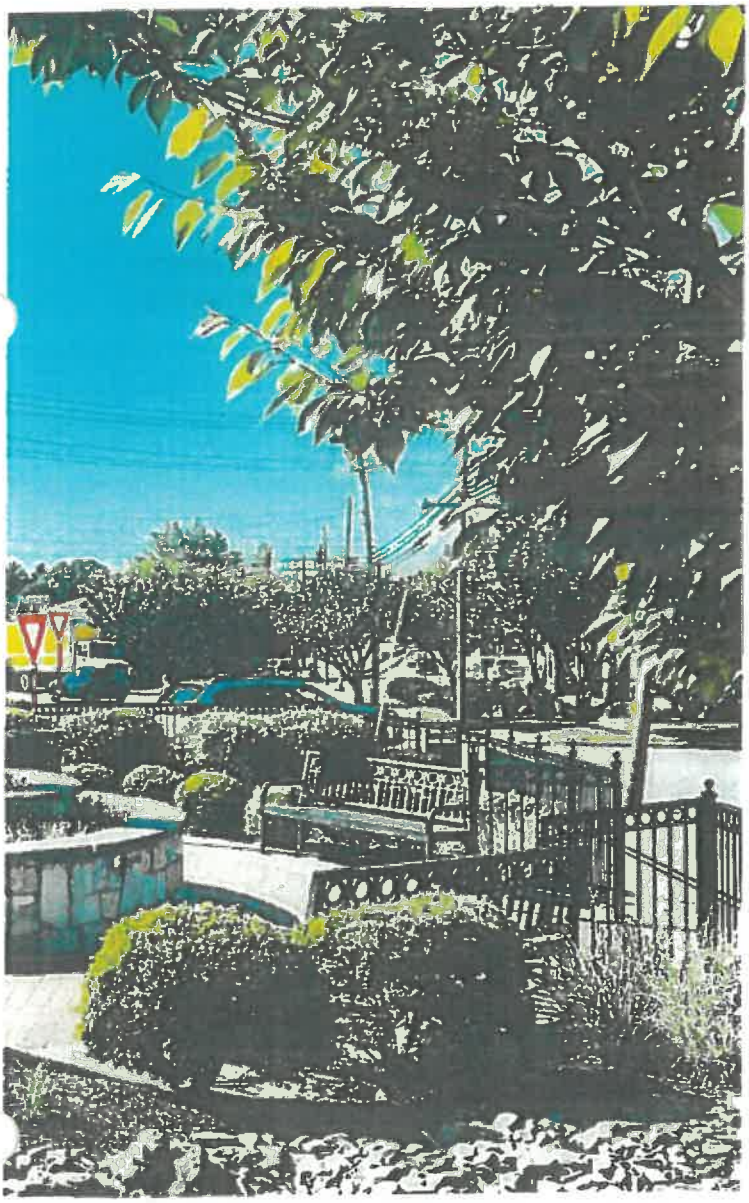
















Images 9.16 - 9.23 Ranson Recreation, 2023

RECREATION GOALS

ENHANCE COLLABORATION BETWEEN RANSON AND CHARLES TOWN TO AVOID DUPLICATION OF RESOURCES AND EFFORTS AND TO PROMOTE SHARED INITIATIVES IN RECREATION.

EXPAND PARK FACILITIES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN UNDERSERVED AREAS TO ENSURE MORE RESIDENTS HAVE EASY ACCESS TO PARKS.

DEVELOP A SPORTS COMPLEX ADDING MISSING AMENITIES WITHIN THE REGION.

WORK TOWARDS THE BRANDING OF RANSON AS A HISTORICALLY FARMING COMMUNITY BY ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY GARDENING.

RECREATION ACTIONS

IMPROVE COORDINATION BETWEEN RANSON, CHARLES TOWN, AND JEFFERSON COUNTY to specialize park amenities and rank priorities.

DEVELOP A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK: Identify suitable locations for new parks and recreational facilities, and plan improvements for existing spaces.

WORK WITH DEVELOPERS TO SET STANDARDS for new parks and encourage payment in lieu for developers who can not provide quality parks.

EXPLORE FUNDING AND FEASIBILITY FOR A SPORTS COMPLEX featuring amenities that are not currently offered within the region.

PARTNER WITH RANSON COMMUNITY GARDENS to encourage community gardening and consider adding additional gardens.



RECREATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Improve coordination	Ranson City Council, Charles Town City Council, Jefferson County Parks & Rec	Ongoing	Municipal budget
Develop a Green Infrastructure Network	City Planners, Jefferson County Parks & Rec	Ongoing	Grants, Municipal budget
Work with developers for new parks	City Planners, Developers	As development occurs	Development fees
Explore funding for a sports complex	Ranson City Council, Jefferson County Parks & Rec	2027-2030	Grants, Municipal budget, Public-private partnerships
Partner with Ranson Community Gardens	Ranson City Council, Ranson Community Gardens	Ongoing	Grants, Municipal budget

The focus of these goals and actions is to use the existing recreation resources efficiently, ensure more residents have easy access to parks, and improve the variety and quality of recreational activities. This strategy will help foster a vibrant, healthy, and connected community in Ranson





Image 10.1 Ranson City Hall, 2023

10

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic wellbeing of a community is a cornerstone of its overall prosperity and quality of life. Economic development can significantly elevate living standards, create employment opportunities, and provide the necessary infrastructure for a sustainable and vibrant community. For Ranson, the role of economic development in shaping its future is essential. The town is an integrated part of a broader community that includes Charles Town and a regional trade area that reaches out to an approximately 8 to 10-mile radius.

Economic development is a crucial aspect that allows Ranson to generate a prosperous local economy, delivering job opportunities, boosting investment, and enhancing overall quality of life. But economic development is more than a mere numbers game. It is a nuanced, multifaceted process that impacts every aspect of life - from schools and local businesses, to the safety of neighborhoods and the state of natural surroundings. In a community of Ranson's size, every action taken towards economic development has a tangible impact.

Firstly, economic development matters because it brings jobs and income to local residents. The task, albeit challenging in a community of 5,500, is to attract new businesses, foster the growth of existing ones, and provide support for aspiring entrepreneurs. This generates diverse employment opportunities and brings economic vibrancy to town. A thriving local economy can attract new talent, which enhances the dynamism and diversity of the community.

Secondly, economic development drives investment in Ranson. As local businesses flourish, they reinvest in facilities, equipment, and services, stimulating further economic growth. This growth contributes to Ranson's tax revenue, which can be reinvested in essential public services, such as education, infrastructure, and public safety – services that directly benefit each one of local residents.

Thirdly, economic development enhances local quality of life. A healthy local economy means a vibrant social scene, with thriving local businesses, restaurants, and entertainment venues that make Ranson a more enjoyable place to live. It also supports key amenities like parks, community centers, and libraries, which are the bedrock of small-town life.

Fourthly, economic development supports shared environmental goals. By promoting sustainable industries and practices, and investing in eco-friendly infrastructure, Ranson can stimulate economic growth while also safeguarding the environment.

However, achieving these benefits requires a strategic and inclusive approach. As a small town, Ranson must capitalize on its unique characteristics and consider the needs and aspirations of all local residents. Recognizing Ranson's place within the broader regional and global economy can help the benefits of economic growth be equitably distributed.

This chapter navigates these complexities by delving into Ranson's economic strengths and weaknesses, and strategizing for future growth and development. This is a roadmap for making Ranson more prosperous, resilient, and inclusive.

Ultimately, the goal is to demonstrate that economic development is not merely about the bottom line; it's about the health, vitality, and future of the town and its people. Economic development is a communal effort, one that requires the active participation of business owners, workers, community leaders, and residents who care about the future. Because when Ranson invests in the economy, it invests in the community, and in a town of this size, every investment counts. Together, the community can ensure Ranson continues to thrive.

CURRENT STATE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

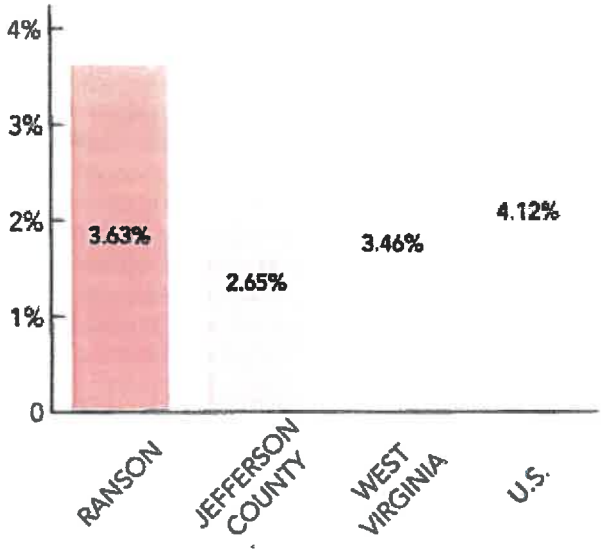
Ranson, coupled with Charles Town, presents a unique market area offering both small-town charm and a spectrum of retail opportunities. The combined cities offer a thriving retail scene with 2 million square feet of local specialty stores and large national brand retailers, making it a community shopping destination for residents and visitors alike.

The Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races is a significant regional attraction, welcoming 1.5 million visitors annually, which further drives the local economy. Ranson sits within a vibrant $500 million retail market area comprising 110,000 people, 42,000 households, and 2 million annual visitors, presenting considerable potential for additional retail and restaurant businesses.

Ranson has a diverse economy shaped by a blend of local, regional, and national businesses, with a significant contribution from the hospitality sector due to its many hotels. The retail scene varies from the historical main street ambiance in Charles Town to the large national retailers present in Ranson. While the two cities are proud of their current economic standing, they also recognize the need for continued evolution and growth. Ranson leadership is aware that the reputation for business friendliness from the previous local leaders could be improved, and stands ready to address this challenge head-on.

WORKFORCE

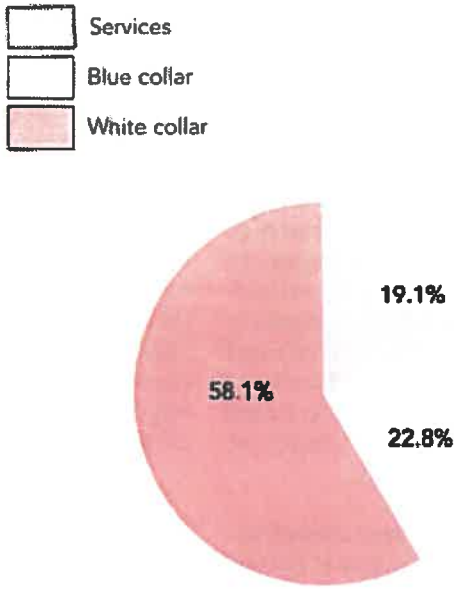
3,051 people over 16 years of age in Ranson are in the workforce. The unemployment rate is 3.63%, which is higher than Jefferson County and the State of West Virginia but less than that of the U.S. as a whole.



Graph 10.1 Unemployment Comparison (Source: U.S. BLS; Esri forecasts for 2022)

SECTORS

Employment for Ranson residents is largely in the professional and administrative sectors and a little over half of that falls within the white collar industry.



Graph 10.2 Employment by Industry (Source: US Census, ESRI Forecasts for 2021)

RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

The full retail market analysis prepared by Gibbs Planning Group is found in the appendix.

MARKET ANALYSIS SUMMARY

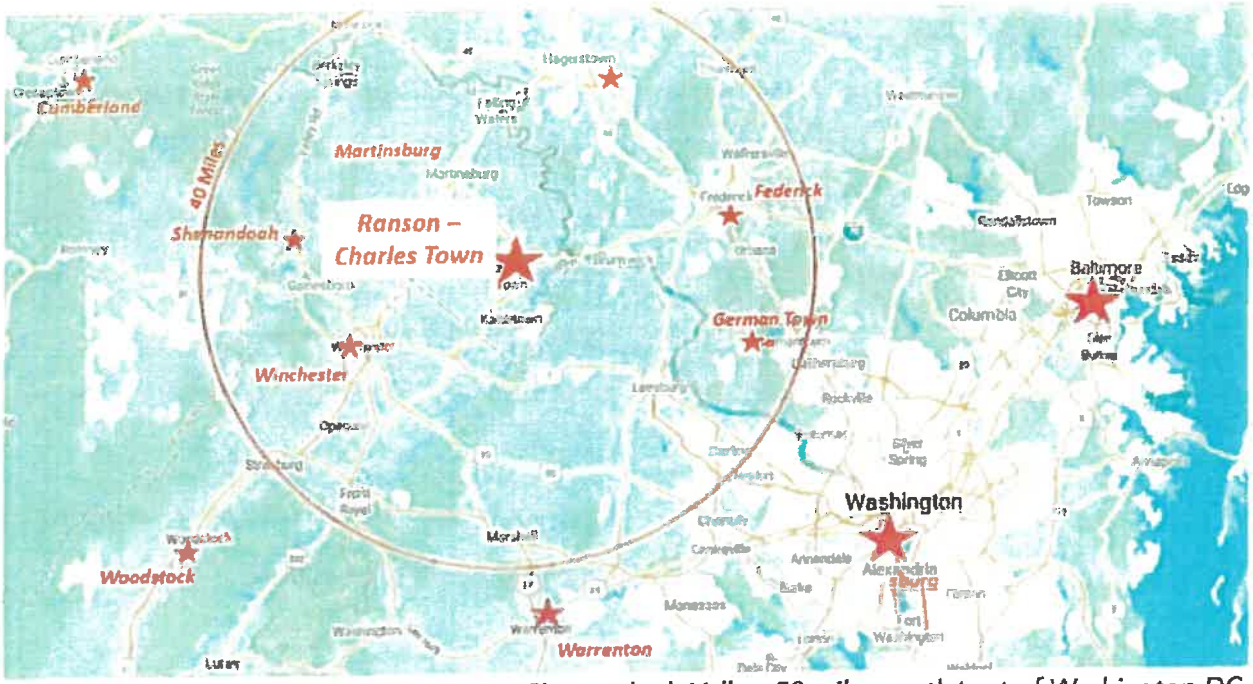
Ranson is located in West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, 50 miles northwest of Washington DC. The area is seated within a vibrant $500 million retail market area of 110,000 people, 42,000 households and 2 million yearly visitors. The Gibbs study projects the City of Ranson has the market potential to support up to 135,000 square feet (sf) of total new retail business growth by 2026. This retail would equate to 35 new or expanded businesses, potentially generating $60 million in new total annual sales.

The projected new retailers include 100,000 sf of retail goods and services totaling 20 new stores offering apparel, a small grocery, a boutique pharmacy, home furnishings, sporting goods, and other specialty stores.

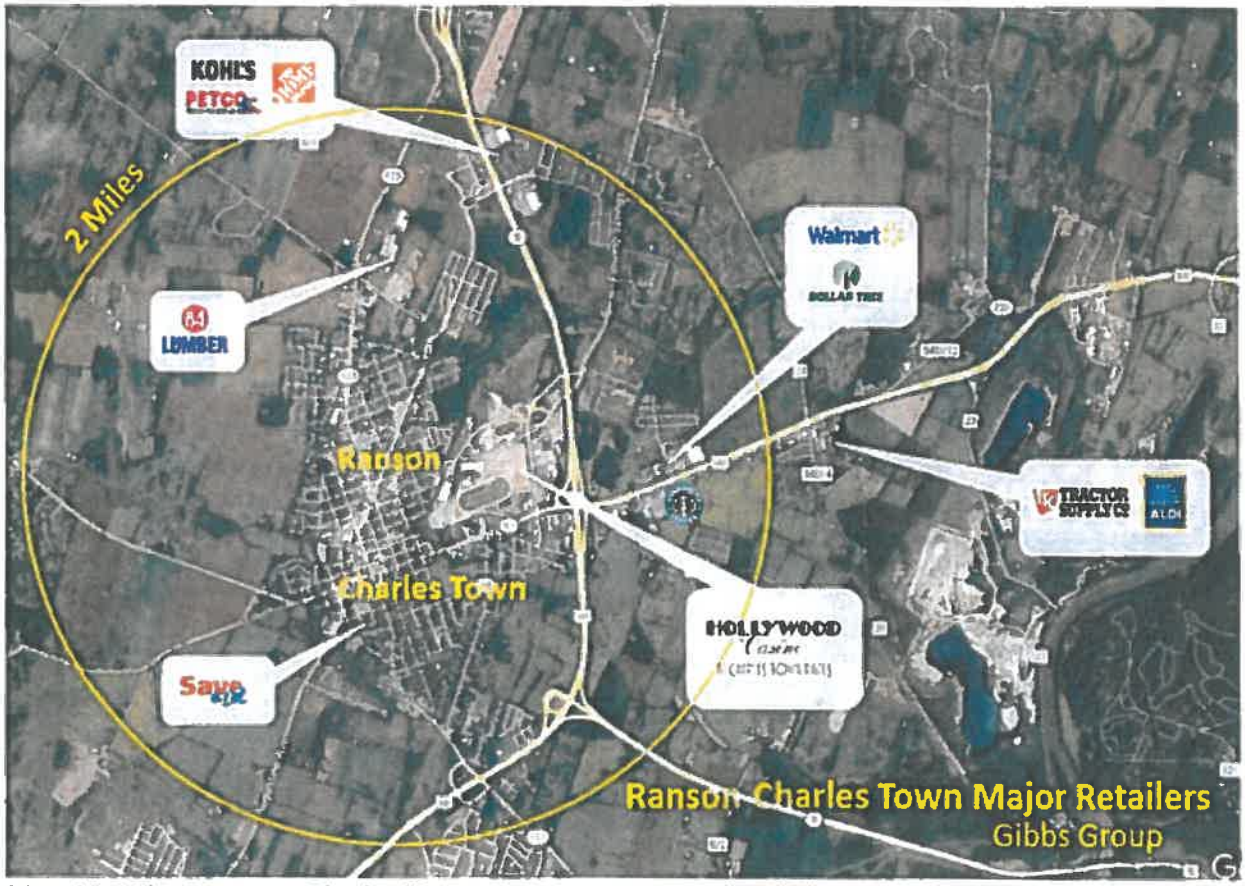
By 2026, this analysis also estimates that Ranson will also have a demand for 35,000 sf of new or expanded restaurants including up to 15 pubs, restaurants, and specialty food and beverage businesses.

Summary of the Ranson's retail and restaurant projected 2026 demand:

- 22,000 sf Apparel, Jewelry, Footwear, Dept. Store Goods
- 6,000 sf Books, Gifts, Electronics
- 27,000 sf Specialty Grocery – Gourmet Foods
- 6,000 sf Furniture, Art, Lighting
- 5,000 sf Sporting Goods
- 30,000 sf Specialty Foods & Services
- 34,000 sf Restaurants
- 5,000 sf Other Retail Businesses
- 135,000 sf Total Retail & Restaurants – 35 Stores & Restaurants



Map 10.1 Ranson is in West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, 50 miles northwest of Washington DC.

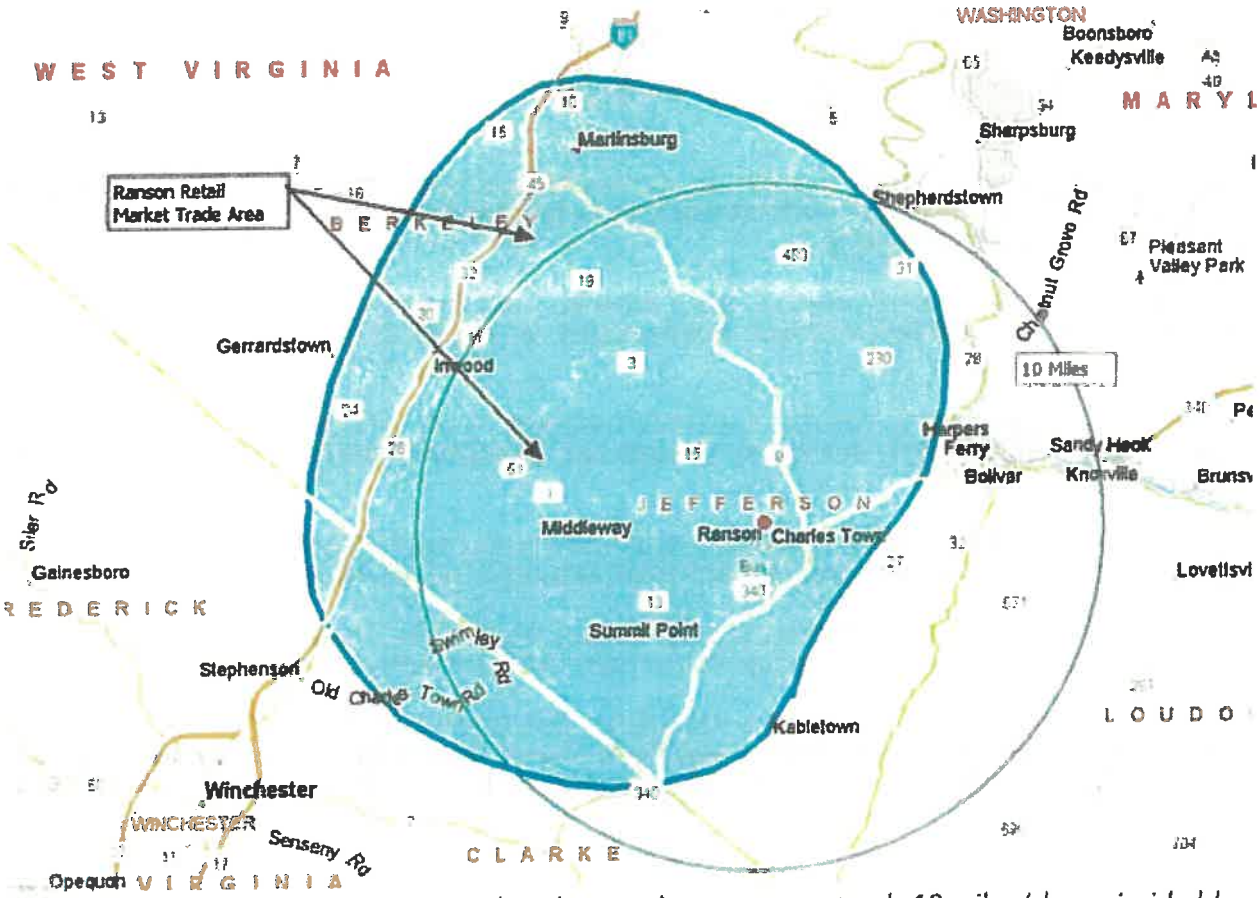


Map 10.2 The Ranson – Charles Town area is a community level shopping destination with over 1 million sf of local and national retailers.

8 TO 10 MILE RETAIL CATCHMENT AREA

Located in the historic West Virginia Shenandoah Valley, Ranson, and its sister city, Charles Town, are community shopping destinations of 8 to 10-mile retail market catchment areas. The cities have a combined 2 million sf of local specialty stores and a dozen large, national brand retailers including Kohl's, Home Depot, Save A Lot, Tractor Supply and Walmart. The Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races serves as a major attraction, entertaining 1.5 million visitors annually. Gibbs Planning Group market study found in the appendix addresses the following issues:

- What are the current and potential new retail market trade areas for the Ranson community?
- What are the population, demographic and lifestyle characteristics of the Ranson market trade areas, currently and projected for 2026?
- How much new or expanded retail and restaurant businesses are supportable in the City?
- What retail sales volumes can be achieved by the new supportable retailers?



Map 10.3 Ranson's estimated trade – catchment area extends 10 miles (shown inside blue boundary). The market area includes 110,000 people, 42,000 households with $105,000 average household incomes.

RETAIL MARKET TRADE AREAS

As part of this analysis, Gibbs Planning Group projected Ranson's existing and the potentially expanded retail market trade areas. This analysis is based on existing shopper household locations, vehicular access, strength of retail competition and residential growth patterns, analysis of other shopping districts and other factors.

The retail trade – catchment – trade areas include the consumer market where Ranson has a significant competitive advantage because of access, design, minimal competition, land use, roadways, and geography.

This analysis estimates Ranson's retail expenditures from the trade area's residents currently account for approximately 60% of Ranson's overall retail sales. The balance of its store sales is estimated to come from the area's visitors and workers located 4 to 8 miles from the City.

The full retail market study is in the appendix.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES: ASSIST LOCAL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS IN THEIR GROWTH, DIVERSIFICATION, AND INNOVATION EFFORTS TO INCREASE THEIR MARKET REACH AND COMPETITIVENESS.

EXPAND RETAIL AND RESTAURANTS: ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 35 NEW RETAIL AND RESTAURANT BUSINESSES, AS PROJECTED IN THE RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS.

PROMOTE JOB CREATION: FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT THAT STIMULATES JOB CREATION, PARTICULARLY IN GROWTH SECTORS, TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT AND ENHANCE THE TOWN'S PROSPERITY.

ENHANCE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: PROMOTE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING TO PREPARE THE WORKFORCE FOR EMERGING AND HIGH-DEMAND JOBS.

BRAND AND PROMOTE RANSON: IDENTIFY AND PROMOTE THE UNIQUE IDENTITY OF RANSON TO DRIVE TOURISM AND NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY: FOSTER A RESILIENT, DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL BUSINESSES AND ATTRACTING HIGH-TECH AND CLEAN, GREEN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES AND A COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAM: Design a program to provide financial, technical, and educational support to local businesses and entrepreneurs through Ranson's CVB staff and in collaboration with Charles Town.

RETAIL AND RESTAURANT EXPANSION INITIATIVE: Implement an initiative to attract and support the establishment and expansion of retail and restaurant businesses, in alignment with the retail market analysis.

JOB CREATION STRATEGY: Develop a strategy to stimulate job creation in growth sectors through incentives, partnerships, and investments.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: Establish a program to provide skills development and training opportunities for residents, targeting emerging and high-demand occupations.

RANSON BRAND MANAGEMENT: Write a marketing plan to promote Ranson and attract new visitors, residents, and businesses.

ESTABLISH THE RANSON BUSINESS TEAM OR NEW BUSINESS OUTREACH PLAN to direct new businesses and provide information about the process. Consider ways to incentivize redevelopment, including making zoning and building permits more flexible.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Local Business Support Program	Ranson City Council, Ranson CVB staff	2025-2027	Hotel Revenue, Municipal budget, state and federal grants
Retail and Restaurant Expansion Initiative	Ranson City Council, Charles Town City Council	Ongoing	Municipal budgets of both towns, State Economic Development Funds
Job Creation Strategy	Ranson City Council	2025-2027	Municipal budget
Raise awareness for Ranson	Ranson City Council, Local businesses, Event organizers	Ongoing	Sponsorships, Vendor fees, Municipal budget
Write a marketing plan	Ranson City Council, Marketing consultant	2025-2027	Municipal budget, Potential grants
Establish Ranson Business Team	Ranson City Council, Jefferson County Economic Development Authority	2025-2027	Municipal budget
Incentivize redevelopment	Ranson City Council, City Planners	Ongoing	Municipal budget, Development fees
Feasibility study for community college	Ranson City Council, Local colleges, State Education Department	2027-2029	State and federal grants, Municipal budget

The economic development strategy aims to make Ranson a thriving hub of commerce and culture, capable of supporting current residents and future growth. The city aims to strike a balance between maintaining the city's unique identity and making room for new businesses and development, ensuring a diverse, vibrant, and sustainable economic future for Ranson.

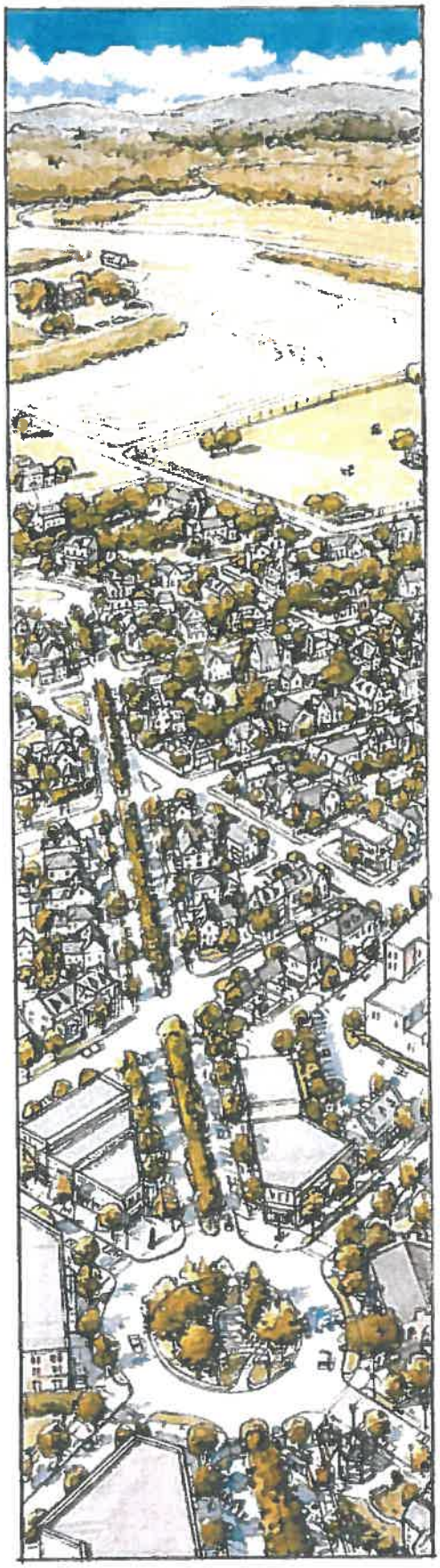


Image 11.1 The Ranson transect changes its nature as it moves from Old Town to the rural countryside. Community design is most effective when it respects this local context.

11

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Community design contributes significantly to the charm and identity of a place. In the case of Ranson, its small-town allure and strong sense of community have created a unique character that calls for careful preservation and enhancement. Community design, incorporating elements of architecture, landscapes, and infrastructure, serves as a crucial tool in fostering social interaction, driving environmental sustainability, and enhancing the overall well-being of residents.

Through careful planning and design, the vision for Ranson is one of vibrancy, resilience, and inclusivity. This chapter articulates the current state of community design in Ranson, the goals that underpin its future, actions for achieving these goals, and an implementation matrix to ensure the successful realization of this vision.

CURRENT STATE OF COMMUNITY DESIGN

Ranson's distinctive charm is punctuated by some infrastructure gaps, particularly within Old Town's sidewalk network. Addressing this not only elevates safety but also fortifies the town's accessible and adaptable mobility framework.

In envisioning the forthcoming decade, Ranson's community design strategy will integrate an expanded view of transportation, transcending traditional walkability and embracing diverse transit modes, thereby crafting an environment where pedestrians, e-scooters, and bicycles coexist harmoniously.

To support these transportation alternatives, a robust biking infrastructure is essential, comprising dedicated lanes and secure parking spots, which encourage residents and visitors to opt for greener, health-conscious transit options. The inclusion of strategically located charging stations for electric vehicles and alternative transit modes punctuates the commitment to a sustainable future.

Simultaneously, a practical and judicious expansion of bus transit, with strategically located, clear, and accessible bus stops, will serve as crucial nodes in the network of varied transit options, offering practical and sustainable choices to all inhabitants.

Public spaces, embodying both functional and aesthetic values, will act as community catalysts, facilitating communal activities while honoring Ranson's architectural and cultural heritage. Collaboration with Charles Town fosters a path for collective growth, allowing both towns to blossom through mutually beneficial ventures and amenity sharing.

Ranson's community design extends beyond mere aesthetics, encompassing an inclusive, safe, and engaging environment where its historical roots intertwine with a future of connected, sustainable living. Balancing cherished traditions with innovative growth, the strategy aims to forge a future where each resident experiences a seamless blend of convenience, mobility, and cultural resonance, ensuring that Ranson evolves while respectfully nodding to its past.

COMMUNITY DESIGN GOALS

PRESERVE SMALL-TOWN CHARACTER: GUIDE GROWTH AND URBANIZATION WHILE MAINTAINING THE CHERISHED SMALL-TOWN CHARM OF RANSON.

REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN: FORGE A FUTURE-FOCUSED OLD TOWN THAT SERVES AS THE CULTURAL, COMMERCIAL, AND SOCIAL HEART OF THE CITY, CURATING A HARMONIOUS MIX OF PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, AND ALTERNATIVE MOBILITY DEVICES LIKE E-SCOOTERS, WITH STRATEGIC CHARGING STATIONS AND EXPANDED BUS SERVICE.

PROMOTE MOBILITY: ENHANCE THE PEDESTRIAN, CYCLIST, AND SCOOTING EXPERIENCE THROUGH AN IMPROVED NETWORK OF SIDEWALKS, TRAILS, AND PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH THE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK.

COMMUNITY DESIGN ACTIONS

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN: A collaborative strategy should be developed involving local businesses, residents, and city staff to rejuvenate Mildred Street, creating a downtown for Ranson.

ACTION STEPS

CONVENE STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS: Schedule a series of meetings involving Mildred Street businesses, local residents, and city staff to discuss their vision for Mildred Street.

DRAFT A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN: Appoint an expert, either from staff or a consultant, to draft a detailed redevelopment plan based on stakeholder input and best urban planning practices.

DESIGNATE MILDRED STREET AND S FAIRFAX BLVD SOUTH OF LANCASTER CIRCLE AS DOWNTOWN RANSON: Use signage, public art, and streetscape improvements to define and celebrate this area as the heart of Ranson.

IMPLEMENT BUSINESS INCENTIVES: Offer tax breaks or grants to encourage businesses to move to or remain in the Mildred Street area and enhance their storefronts.

See the Transportation chapter for goals and actions involving active transportation networks and sidewalk improvements.

COMMUNITY DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Downtown Revitalization Plan	Ranson Planning Department, Downtown Businesses	2025-2030	City Budget, Community Development Block Grants

Community design, at its core, is about creating a place where people feel they belong and are proud to call home. For Ranson, community design is an essential tool to guide its growth while preserving its unique identity. It's about creating a city that meets the needs of its residents, respects its history, and looks forward to a vibrant and resilient future.

12

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation remains a critical component in maintaining the identity and character of Ranson. The city, though incorporated just a century ago, is home to structures that echo an era long past, resonating with the rich history and culture that the region embodies. Emphasizing the importance of preserving the city's historic sites, structures like the 3rd Avenue and Mildred Street examples of the American mercantile stand as unique witnesses to Ranson's history. Their preservation is paramount to maintaining the unique character they lend to Ranson as the city continues to evolve and grow.

CURRENT STATE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Over the years, the Jefferson County Historical Landmarks Commission has identified an array of historic properties within Ranson's urban growth boundary. These include the Charles Town Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company Building (current City Hall), Charles Town Races, Tackley Farm, and the Media Farm, among others. All of these form an integral part of the city's historic fabric, contributing to its character and charm.



Image 12.1 Mildred Street, 2023

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS

SAFEGUARD HISTORIC STRUCTURES: AN IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IS TO PROTECT THESE HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND CONSIDER INNOVATIVE WAYS TO REPURPOSE THEM, IF NECESSARY. THIS INCLUDES SAFEGUARDING THEM FROM DEMOLITION AND ASSEMBLING THE RESOURCES REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN THEIR INTEGRITY IF REUSED.

PRESERVE HISTORIC URBAN FABRIC: CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES IS CRUCIAL. OFTEN, PRESERVING AN ENTIRE STREET OR DISTRICT THAT BEARS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE IS AS IMPORTANT AS PRESERVING INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACTIONS

DATABASE OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES: Develop a comprehensive database of historic properties within the urban growth boundary and employ legal tools to preserve them. They should be designated as contributing buildings to the historical and cultural heritage of the city.

SUPPORT JEFFERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL LANDMARKS COMMISSION (JCHLC): Extend active support to JCHLC in their efforts to complete the JCHLC database, further strengthening the preservation initiative.

PROTECTION IN ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS: All applicable ordinances and regulations should incorporate provisions for protecting historic sites and structures. Though heavy-handed preservation requirements can cause public backlash, combining common-sense preservation requirements with incentives often garners popular support.

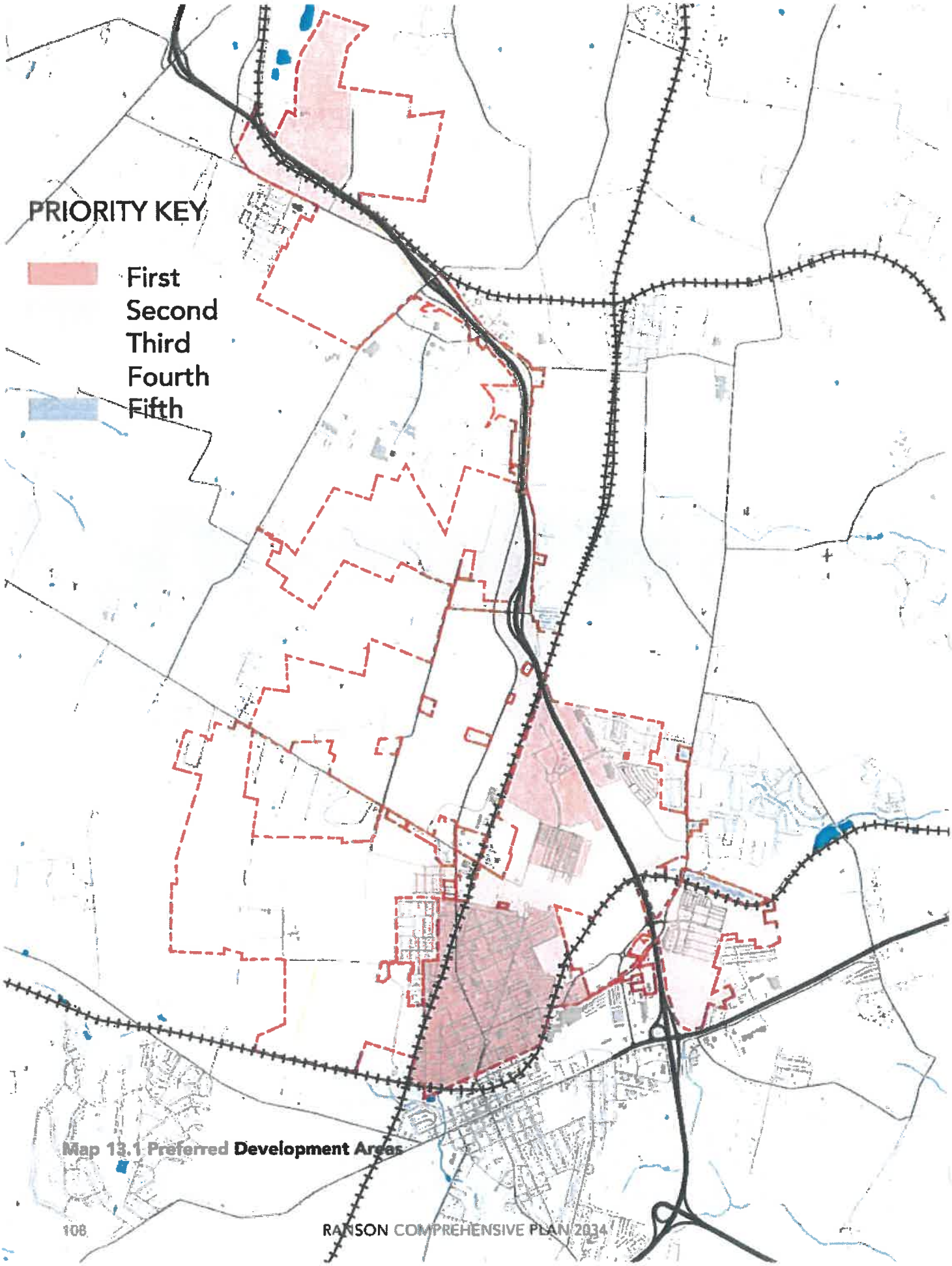
EVALUATE NEW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: Assess new development projects considering their relationship and potential impact on historic properties. The Zoning Ordinance should be revised to ensure new development is compatible with existing development in older areas. Sensitive historic properties might require the city to consider overlay zones to prevent potential impacts across property lines, particularly around farms.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMELINE	FUNDING SOURCES
Database of Historic Properties	Ranson Planning Department, JLCLC	2025-2027	City Budget, State Historic Preservation grants, Federal Historic Preservation Funds
Support Jefferson County Historical Landmarks Commission (JCHLC)	City Council & Planning Department	Ongoing	City Budget, JCHLC funds, grants, and private donations
Protection in Ordinances and Regulations	City Council & Legal Department	2025-2026	City Budget
Evaluate New Development Projects	Planning Department	Ongoing	Application and licensing fees from developers



Image 12.2 Ranson Visitors Center, 2023



Map 13.1 Preferred Development Areas

13

RENEWAL, DEVELOPMENT & FINANCE

PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

As Ranson embarks on a path of economic development and expansion, a key component in this journey is identifying and prioritizing development areas within the community. These areas play an instrumental role in shaping the urban landscape, directing growth, preventing sprawl, and promoting well-designed and coordinated communities.

Preferred development areas are characterized by the presence of existing infrastructure, accessibility to transportation networks, and the potential for infill development or redevelopment. Identification of these areas helps to maximize the impact of investment, leverage existing assets, and minimize negative environmental effects.

EXISTING LAND USE AND FUTURE GROWTH

Ranson's current land use pattern reveals a community that is predominantly residential, with commercial and industrial zones primarily located along main transportation corridors. Parks, green spaces, and other public use areas are interspersed throughout the city, adding to the livability of Ranson.

As the city grows, there's a desire to manage this growth responsibly, focusing on areas conducive to sustainable development. The future land use map of Ranson suggests several areas that are poised for growth and development. These areas are closely aligned with existing infrastructure, with easy access to utilities and transportation, making them ideal for infill development and redevelopment. This chapter builds off the future land use map, prioritizing where city investments are made in infrastructure and economic incentives are considered for development and redevelopment.

IDENTIFYING PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

In Ranson, strategic development in areas with pre-existing infrastructure provides a compelling economic advantage, promising both immediate gains and long-term financial prudence. With the rising number of residential rooftops in the city, there is a significant potential to support more retail and services as outlined in the economic development chapter, as well as clean green industries.

1. OLD TOWN

Old Town is more than just a historical gem; it's an economic treasure trove waiting to be tapped. Leveraging its established commercial activity and infrastructure means the city can avoid starting from scratch. By promoting mixed-use development here, Ranson can ensure a continuous stream of revenue from diverse sources such as retail, housing, and office spaces. Additionally, capitalizing on Old Town's charm can elevate its status as a tourist hub, ensuring a steady influx of external spending.

2. WV-9 CORRIDOR

The WV-9 corridor, with its prime visibility, is regionally well-connected, making it a magnet for businesses. Developing this area means the city can capitalize on attracting businesses without incurring substantial initial infrastructure costs. Building on the bustling and retail hub here can significantly boost the city's tax revenue, all while leveraging the existing road networks and utilities.

3. NORTH

The northern section of Ranson, divided by WV-9, is a canvas of opportunity, primed with foundational infrastructure. To the west, land is zoned for compact, mixed-use development, meaning the city can swiftly approve projects, attracting investments and creating vibrant neighborhoods. On the east, thanks to the infrastructural groundwork laid by Northpoint Avenue, Ranson stands poised to elevate its employment metrics. Focusing on light industries and warehousing here can result in a steady revenue stream, with the added benefit of generating jobs.

By channeling development efforts into these areas, Ranson can effectively maximize its return on investment. The immediate benefits come in the form of reduced initial costs, given the existing infrastructure. In the long run, the city saves substantially on maintenance and upgrades, as rejuvenating existing structures often proves more cost-effective than building anew. Furthermore, with development concentrated in these areas, Ranson can ensure efficient utility use, streamlined public services, and bolstered property values, driving economic growth in a sustainable and fiscally responsible manner.

INCENTIVES AND ENCOURAGEMENT

For these preferred development areas, a variety of incentives may be used to encourage sustainable growth. These could include tax increment financing, opportunity zones, low-interest loan programs, and streamlined permitting processes.

These strategies, used judiciously, can help spur development in areas where market forces alone might not be sufficient. They can also ensure that development adheres to high standards of design and community compatibility, supporting Ranson's vision of preserving its small-town feel while welcoming growth and prosperity.

Through strategic identification and utilization of preferred development areas, Ranson can direct its growth in a manner that balances economic development with the community's character and values. By focusing development within these areas, the city is well-positioned to limit sprawl, promote well-designed and coordinated communities, and stimulate a vibrant, sustainable future.

RENEWAL & REDEVELOPMENT

Ranson is a community that has experienced significant change over its history, evolving from a small industrial town into a vibrant residential and commercial community. Like any dynamic and evolving community, Ranson has areas that are experiencing decline. However, these challenges also present opportunities for community renewal, revitalization, and redevelopment.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL AND REDEVELOPMENT

Identifying these areas is only the first step towards renewal. It sets the stage for strategic planning and intervention, as Ranson embarks on an ambitious journey of community revitalization. The overarching goal is to transform these areas into vibrant, safe, and economically thriving parts of the community.

Ranson's industrial past offers a unique opportunity for redevelopment. These areas, with their existing infrastructure and rich history, are primed for a resurgence. Revitalization efforts could involve adaptive reuse of old industrial buildings, providing a blend of entertainment, commercial, and public spaces that promote economic growth while preserving the historical integrity of the area.

Similarly, underutilized commercial corridors present an opportunity for revitalization. With strategic investment and planning, these corridors can become more vibrant, attracting businesses, jobs, and patrons.

THE WAY FORWARD

Ranson is committed to promoting an environment of revitalization and renewal. This commitment includes exploring potential funding mechanisms, such as grants, loans, and public-private partnerships, which could help facilitate redevelopment in these areas.

The process of revitalization also requires strong partnerships with residents, business owners, and stakeholders. Engaging the community in this effort will ensure redevelopment plans are responsive to local needs, aspirations, and the community's unique character.

Through targeted renewal and redevelopment efforts, Ranson has the opportunity to breathe new life into its underutilized and declining areas. By doing so, the city will not only eliminate these challenged areas but will also create more vibrant, livable, and economically robust communities for the benefit of all its residents. Specific actions are not listed here as they are included within the preferred development and future land use chapters.

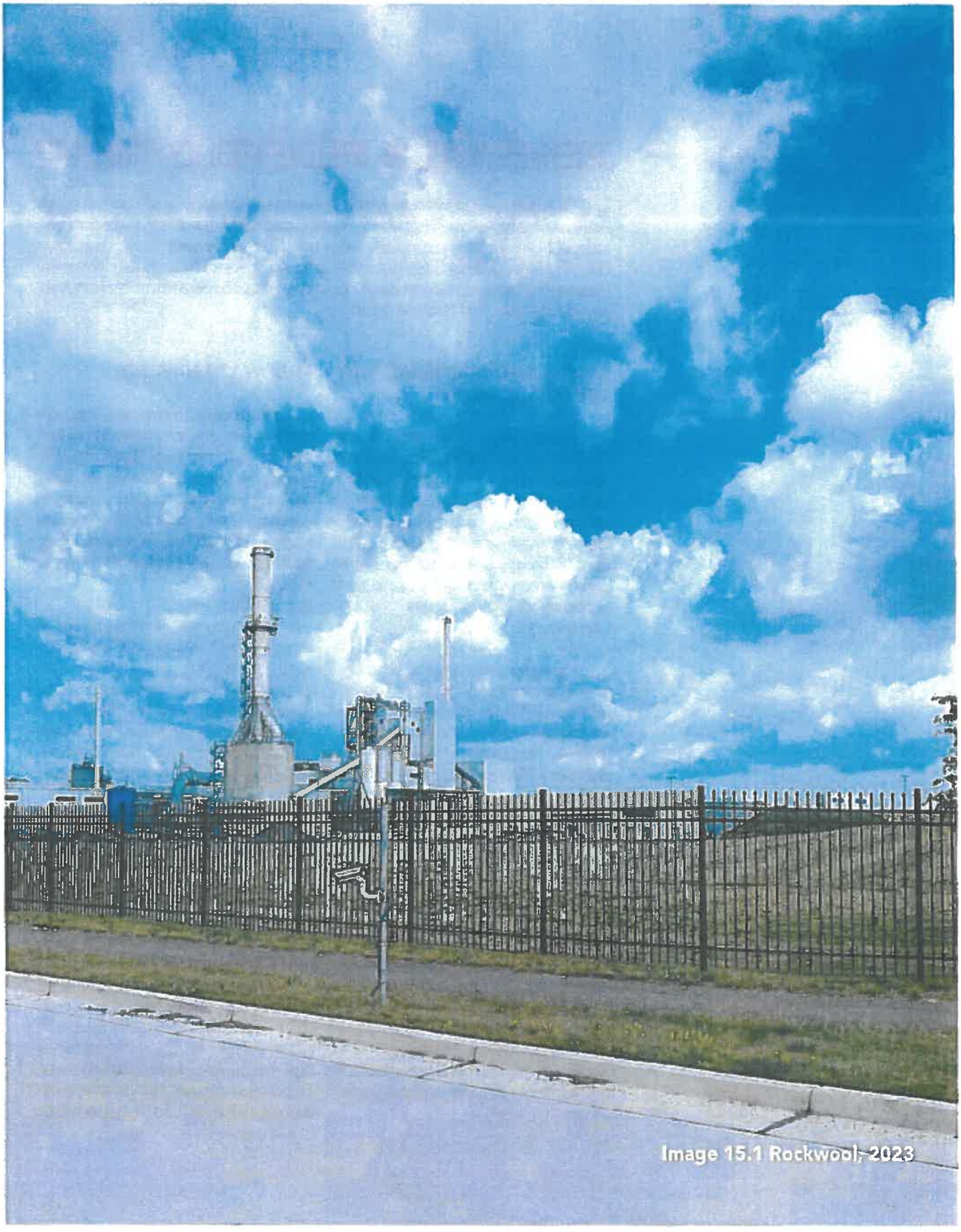


Image 15.1 Rockwool, 2023

FINANCING

The comprehensive plan for the City of Ranson represents a vision for the community's future. Achieving this vision necessitates careful consideration of financial resources and strategic financial planning. This chapter outlines the recommended short and long-term financing plans that will support the goals, objectives, and components of the comprehensive plan.

SHORT-TERM FINANCING

Short-term financing mechanisms are key for initiating and maintaining momentum in the early stages of plan implementation. Potential sources include:

GENERAL FUND ALLOCATIONS: A portion of the city's general fund can be allocated annually towards the execution of plan components. The allocations can be used for both operational costs and capital projects.

GRANTS: Federal, state, and private grants offer a significant source of short-term funding. The city should pursue grants relevant to various aspects of the comprehensive plan, such as economic development, community design, and urban renewal.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING: TIF is a public financing method used for redevelopment and community improvement projects. It uses future gains in taxes to finance current improvements.

BOND ISSUANCE: Short-term bonds can be issued to raise capital for specific projects. These bonds are typically paid back over a relatively short period.

Ranson's comprehensive plan is a roadmap to a vibrant and sustainable future. Its execution requires significant financial resources. However, by diversifying funding sources and strategically planning for both short and long-term financial needs, Ranson can successfully implement its comprehensive plan and achieve its vision for the future.

LONG-TERM FINANCING

Long-term financing strategies provide the stable, ongoing funding necessary for the implementation of the comprehensive plan's more significant and long-term initiatives. These may include:

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: The CIP is a long-term plan for infrastructure and capital projects. CIP can earmark funds for projects identified in the comprehensive plan and spread the costs over several fiscal years.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: PPPs can leverage private sector resources for public projects, distributing the costs, and benefits among both public and private entities. These partnerships can finance significant projects like downtown redevelopment or infrastructure improvements.

LONG-TERM BONDS: Bonds can also provide long-term financing. Infrastructure and municipal bonds can provide substantial funding for capital projects and are paid back over a more extended period.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS: Special assessment districts can be established to fund improvements in specific areas of the city. Property owners in these districts pay an additional tax used to finance improvements within the district.

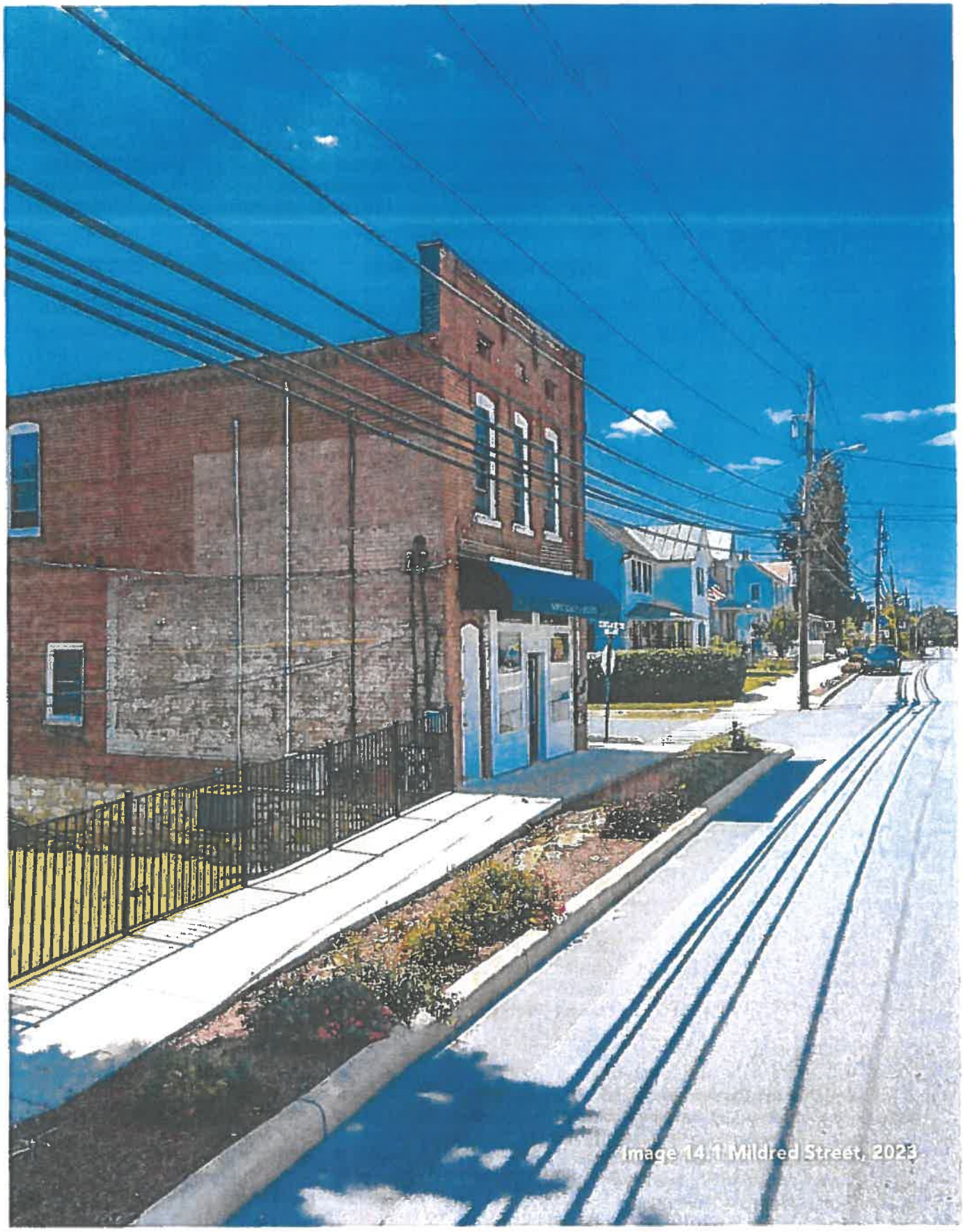


Image 14.1 Mildred Street, 2023

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APPENDIX

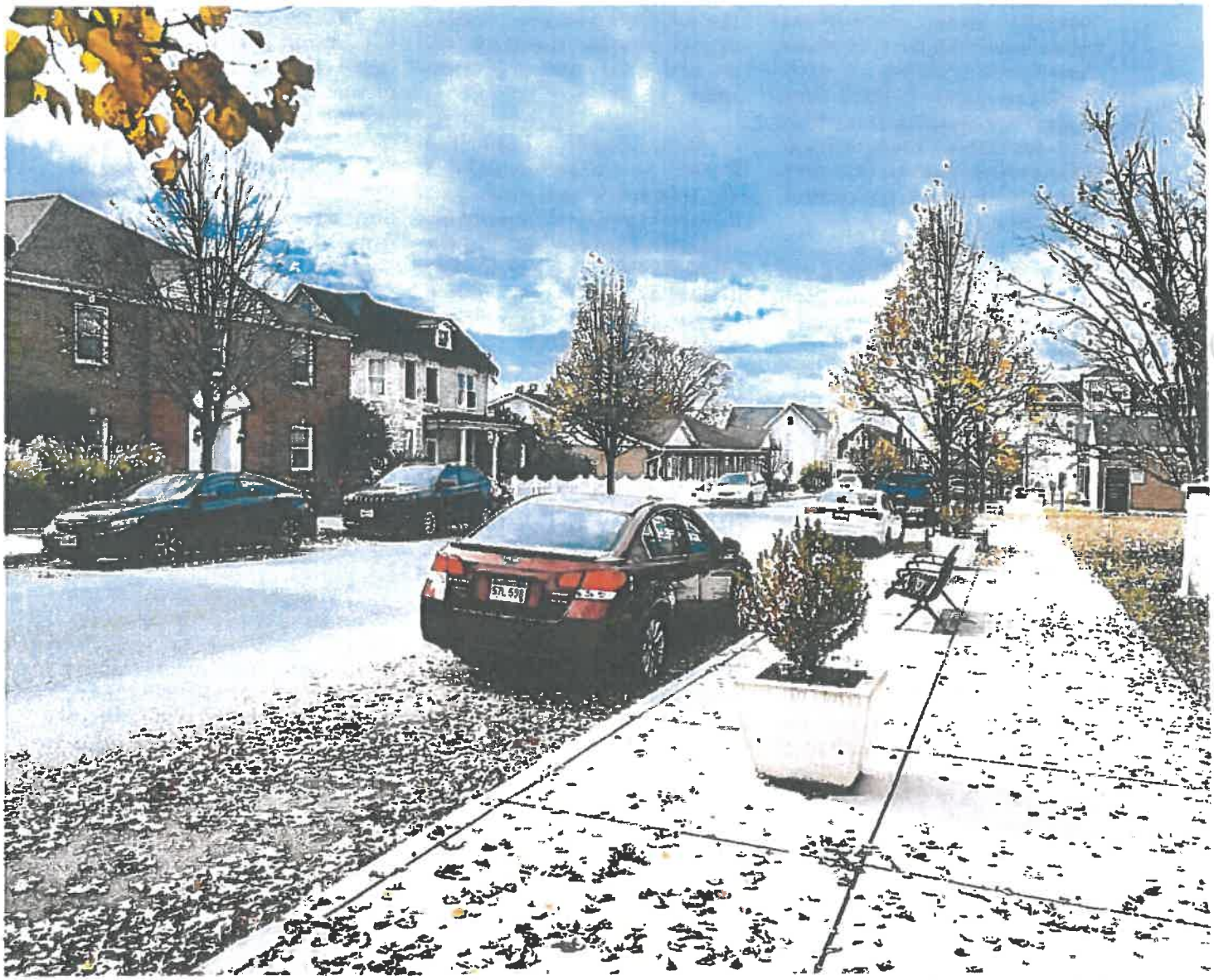
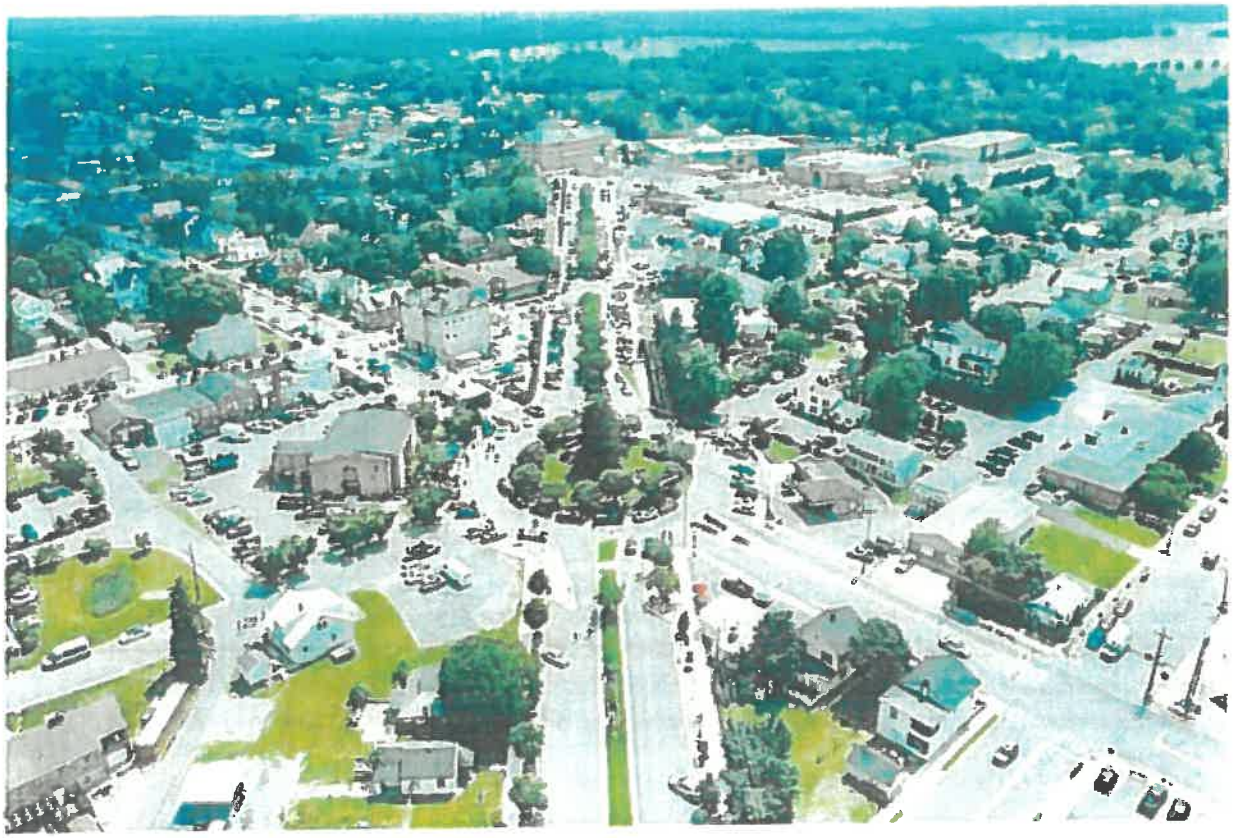


Image 15.1 East 3rd Avenue, 2023

Ranson, West Virginia

Retail Market Analysis



Prepared for:

City of Ranson, West Virginia

Prepared by:

Gibbs Planning Group

June 12, 2023

RANSON

AT THE CENTER OF OPPORTUNITY

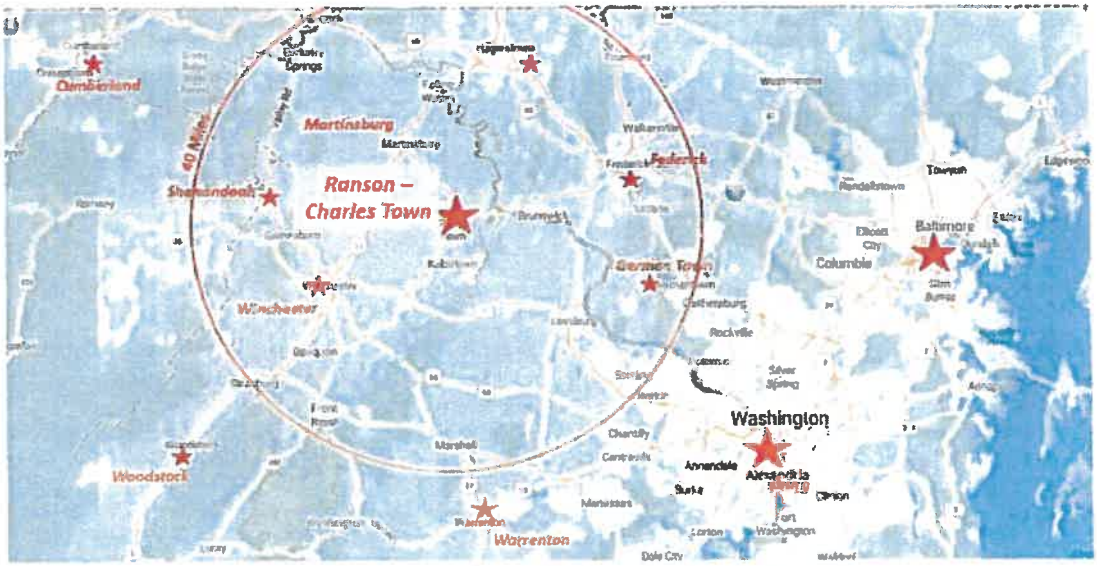


Figure 1: Ranson is located in West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, 50 miles northwest of Washington DC.

Summary

The City of Ranson and its surrounding areas are seated within a vibrant $500 million retail market area of 110,000 people, 42,000 households and 2 million yearly visitors. This study projects the City of Ranson has the market potential to support up to 135,000 square feet (sf) of total new retail business growth by 2026. This retail would equate to 35 new or expanded businesses, potentially generating $60 million in new total annual sales.

The projected new retailers include 100,000 sf of retail goods and services totaling 20 new stores offering apparel, a small grocery, a boutique pharmacy, home furnishings, sporting goods, and other specialty stores.

By 2026, this analysis also estimates that Ranson will also have a demand for 35,000 sf of new or expanded restaurants including up to 15 pubs, restaurants, and specialty food and beverage businesses.

Below, summary of the Ranson's retail and restaurant projected 2026 demand.

22,000 sf Apparel, Jewelry, Footwear, Dept. Store Goods
6,000 sf Books, Gifts, Electronics
27,000 sf Specialty Grocery – Gourmet Foods
6,000 sf Furniture, Art, Lighting
5,000 sf Sporting Goods
30,000 sf Specialty Foods & Services
34,000 sf Restaurants
5,000 sf Other Retail Businesses
135,000 sf Total Retail & Restaurants – 35 Stores & Restaurants



Figure 2: The Ranson – Charles Town area is a community level shopping destination with over 1 million sf of local and national retailers.

Background

Located in the historic West Virginia Shenandoah Valley, Ranson, and its sister city, Charles Town, are community shopping destinations of 8 to 10-mile retail market catchment areas. The cities have a combined 2 million sf of local specialty stores and a dozen large, national brand retailers including Kohl's, Home Depot, Save A Lot, Tractor Supply and Walmart.

The Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races serves as the region's major attraction, entertaining 1.5 million visitors annually.

Gibbs Planning Group, Inc. (GPG) has been retained by the City of Ranson, as a subconsultant to PlaceMakers Planners to research the City's potential to support additional or expanded retail and restaurant businesses by 2026.

The GPG addressed the following issues in this market research:

- What are the current and potential new retail market trade areas for the Ranson community
- What are the population, demographic and lifestyle characteristics of the Ranson market trade areas, currently and projected for 2026
- How much new or expanded retail and restaurant businesses are supportable in the City
- What retail sales volumes can be achieved by the new supportable retailers

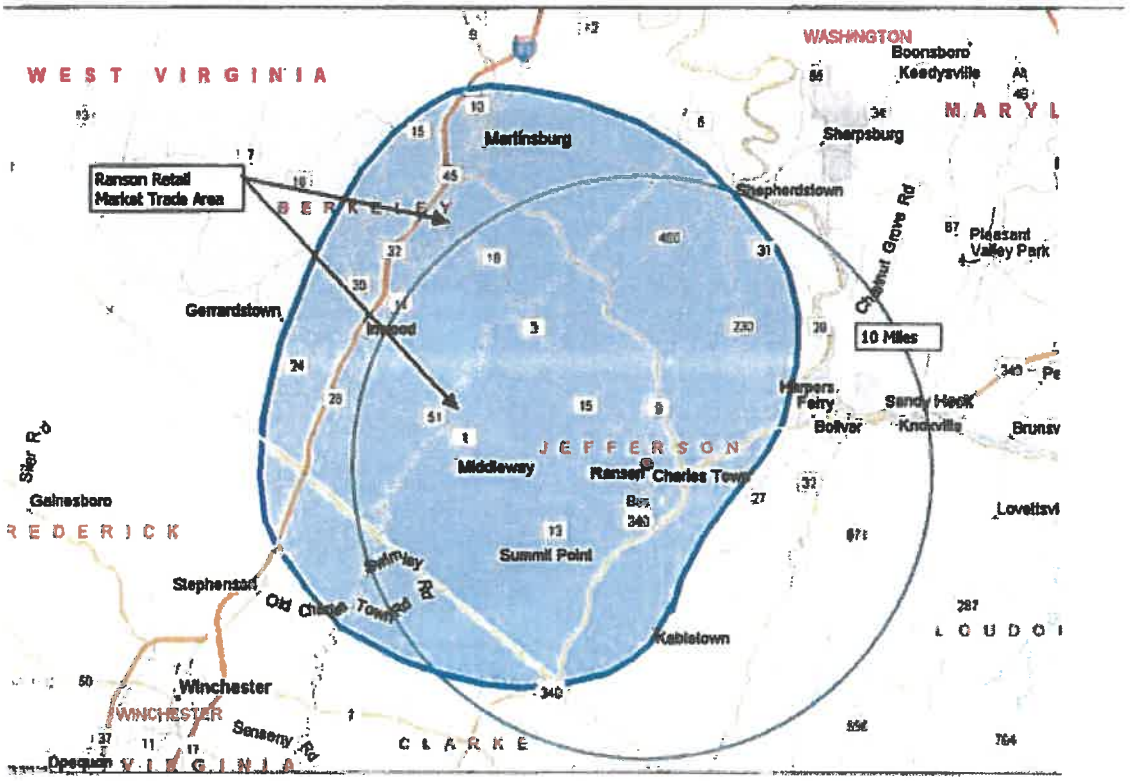


Figure 3: Above, Ranson's estimated trade – catchment area extends 10 miles (shown inside blue boundary). The market area includes 110,000 people, 42,000 households with $105,000 average household incomes.

Retail Market Trade Areas

As part of this analysis, GPG projected Ranson's existing and the potentially expanded retail market trade areas. This analysis is based on existing shopper household locations, vehicular access, strength of retail competition and residential growth patterns, analysis of other shopping districts and other factors.
The retail trade – catchment – trade areas include the consumer market where Ranson has a significant competitive advantage because of access, design, minimal competition, land use, roadways, and geography.

This analysis estimates Ranson's retail expenditures from the trade area's residents currently account for approximately 60 % of Ranson's overall retail sales. The balance of its store sales is estimated to come from the area's visitors and workers located 4 to 8 miles from the City.

Retail Market Demand

Ranson's convenient location, rapid growth, favorable demographics, and its existing regional shopping destinations generate an opportunity to create a demand for 135,000 sf of new or expanded stores and restaurants. Overall, the demand could be absorbed with 30 new retail stores and 15 restaurants.

Below is a summary of the City of Ranson's 2026 demand for new or expanded commercial businesses.

16,200 sf Apparel: Children's, Men's, Women's clothing focused on athletic, casual, business casual, and resort wear, equating to 3 to 5 new or expanded stores.

Retail Market Demand (Cont.)

3,600 sf Books & Music: 1 to 2 service-oriented book and music stores specializing in specific categories such as children's, design, home, non-fiction, vintage music, string instruments.



Figure 4: By 2026, GPG projects the City of Ranson's potential demand for up to 135,000 sf of new retail and restaurant space equating up to 30 stores and 15 restaurants.

3,000 sf Electronics, Computer & Phone Stores: 1 to 2 small stores specializing in designer appliances, personal computers, electronics, accessories, and cell phones. Stores offering excellent customer service and knowledgeable staff.



Figure 5: By 2026, The City of Ranson will support 20,000 sf additional stores & shoe stores and a 3,000 sf bookstore.

6,300 sf Home Furnishing Stores: 2 to 5 small to medium sized stores offering art, lamps, furniture, textiles, rugs, beds, chairs, tables, and focused on new construction or renovated housing and home offices in the greater Ranson region.

4,500 sf Footwear, Handbags, Leather: 1 to 2 service-oriented moderately upscale priced shoe stores specializing in athletic, children's, women's, or men's shoes. Also, national brand stores specializing in handbags and leather accessories with designer labels.

1,600 sf Jewelry & Fine Gifts: 2 to 3 jewelry stores offering excellent customer service, designer jewelry, watches and fine gifts orientated to young professionals and families.

4,600 Sporting Goods, Hobbies: 1 to 2 retailers specializing in recreational goods, golf, racket sports, primary educational sports, college and secondary sports, athletic shoes, and apparel.



Figure 6: Ranson can support 5-7 specialty food stores such as bakeries, coffee, ice cream and 27,000 sf of specialty foods.

4,400 sf Breweries & Pubs: 2 to 3 small breweries, bars or pubs specializing in hand- crafted alcoholic drinks. Pubs should offer casual prepared foods, hand crafted beverages and live music complementing their brands.

8,600 sf Specialty Foods: 5 to 7 local or regional branded coffee, ice cream, baked good shops. Stores should offer indoor and outdoor table seating and personable staff.



Figure 7: By 2026, Ranson could support 2 to 5 stores specializing in department store types of goods including cosmetics, handbags, kitchen utensils-foods, flat wear, linens, and gifts.

2,400 sf Pharmacy & Beauty: A boutique, service-oriented, specialty pharmacy offering compounding, apothecary, cosmetics, and health care products.

27,000 sf Gourmet Foods Market: 1 to 3 food markets offering select baked goods, fish, meats, produce, organics, prepared foods, beers, wines, and flowers. To better compete with the area's larger supermarkets, the grocery should specialize to become the "best in class" in a food or beverage category.

Retail Market Demand (Cont.)

6,600 sf Full-Service Restaurants: 2 to 4 local or regional sit-down restaurants offering excellent service, well designed restaurants, each focused on a various food category, such as breakfast, burgers, deli, family, Italian, Mexican, pizza, steaks. Most, but not all businesses should offer beer, wine and/or spirits.

8,600 sf Fast-Casual Restaurants: 4 to 6 moderately priced specialty restaurants offering counter, self-service lunch, and dinner meals. Venues should focus on a single category such as bagels, burgers, chicken, sandwiches. tacos, pizza, subs. Some of the restaurants should be national franchise brands with proven service and food quality. Drive-through windows, home delivery and curb-side pick-up should be accommodated as much as possible.

Figure 8: Ranson 2026 Retail & Restaurant Demand for New or Expanded Businesses

Retail Category	2023 Mkt. Demand / Spending	Projected 2026 New Sales	Proj. Sales / SF / YR	New Store Size	No. New Stores
Apparel & Accessories	$44,900,000	$5,400,000	$330	16,200 sf	5
Book & Music Stores	$4,000,000	$1,100,000	$300	3,600 sf	1
Electronics, Phone & Appliance	$16,200,000	$2,400,000	$800	3,000 sf	1
Florists & Garden	$4,700,000	$700,000	$400	1,600 sf	1
Furniture, Art, Lamps, Textiles	$21,900,000	$3,800,000	$600	6,300 sf	3
Gourmet Food Market	$108,100,000	$13,800,000	$500	27,600 sf	1
Jewelry & Fine Gifts	$6,800,000	$900,000	$500	1,600 sf	1
Pharmacy & Beauty	$14,400,000	$1,400,000	$550	2,400 sf	1
Footwear, Leather, Handbags	$13,000,000	$1,800,000	$400	4,500 sf	2
Specialty Foods -Dairy, Meats, Produce	$65,500,000	$12,200,000	$400	30,300 sf	3
Sporting Goods & Hobby Stores	$15,000,000	$2,100,000	$450	4,600 sf	1
Retailer Totals	**$314,500,000**	**$45,600,000**	**$475**	**101,700 sf**	**20 Stores**
Restaurants					
Breweries & Pubs	$17,000,000	$2,700,000	$600	4,400 sf	2
Full-Service Restaurants	$19,400,000	$2,400,000	$350	6,600 sf	3
Fast-Casual Restaurants	$39,100,000	$5,000,000	$350	14,200 sf	5
Bakery, Coffee, Deli, Ice Cream	$17,400,000	$3,500,000	$400	8,600 sf	5
Restaurant Totals	**$92,800,000**	**$13,400,000**	**$425**	**33,800 sf**	**15 F & B**
Retailer & Restaurant Totals	**$407,300,000**	**$59,000,000**	**$462**	**135,500 sf**	**35 Stores**



Figure 9: Illustrations of Ranson's Master Plan, prepared by PlaceMakers, Planners.

Study Assumptions

The projections of this study are based on the following assumptions:

- No other major retail will be developed within the defined Ranson trade areas through 2026.
- The Ranson-Inland Empire region's economy will stabilize at normal or above normal ranges of employment, inflation, retail demand and growth.
- New Ranson retail development will be planned, designed, built, leased, and managed per the best shopping center industry practices of the American Planning Association, the International Council of Shopping Centers, and Urban Land Institute.

Figure 10: 2022 Ranson 2022 Demographic Characteristics

2022 Demographic Characteristics	City of Ranson	5-Mile Radius	10-Mile Radius	15-Mile Radius	Ranson Trade Area
Population	5,600	35,000	50,000	135,000	110,000
Households	2,300	15,000	20,000	50,000	42,000
Average Household Income	$95,000	$121,500	$117,000	$119,000	$105,000
Median Household Income	$77,000	$91,500	$90,000	$89,000	$80,000
Household Incomes $100,000 +	800	6,000	8,000	25,000	16,000
Household Incomes $200,000 +	150	1,700	2,000	6,500	3,500
Median Age	37.7	38.0	38.6	38.8	40.2
Owner Occupied Housing Units	1,500 Units	10,000 Units	15,000 Units	40,000 Units	20,000 Units
Renter Occupied Housing Units	750 Units	3,200 Units	3,600 Units	12,000 Units	6,000 Units

Methodology

To estimate the amounts and types of additional retail businesses supportable in the City of Ranson, GPG defined its market trade area based on remote sensing, geographic considerations, existing shopping center, residential and employment concentrations. Population consumer expenditures and demographic characteristics of Ranson's trade area residents, students and workers were also collected by census tracts from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, CoStar, Placer and ESRI.

Research Methodology (Cont.)
GPG projected retail market trade area of the gross consumer expenditure (business sales-supply) by retail category, less the current existing retail sales (supply) by retail category, GPG projected the potential net consumer expenditure (gap) available to support new retail businesses.

The net potential captured consumer expenditure (gap) was equated to potential new retail development sizes by business categories based on published industry standards, consultations with commercial real estate professionals, and GPG's in-house data resources. Spending and sales forecasts were qualitatively adjusted to fit Ranson's characteristics, urbanism, and demographics.

Overall, GPG projected the City's new supportable retail development will capture approximately 5 to 20 percent of Ranson's existing retail spending leakage to areas outside of the City.

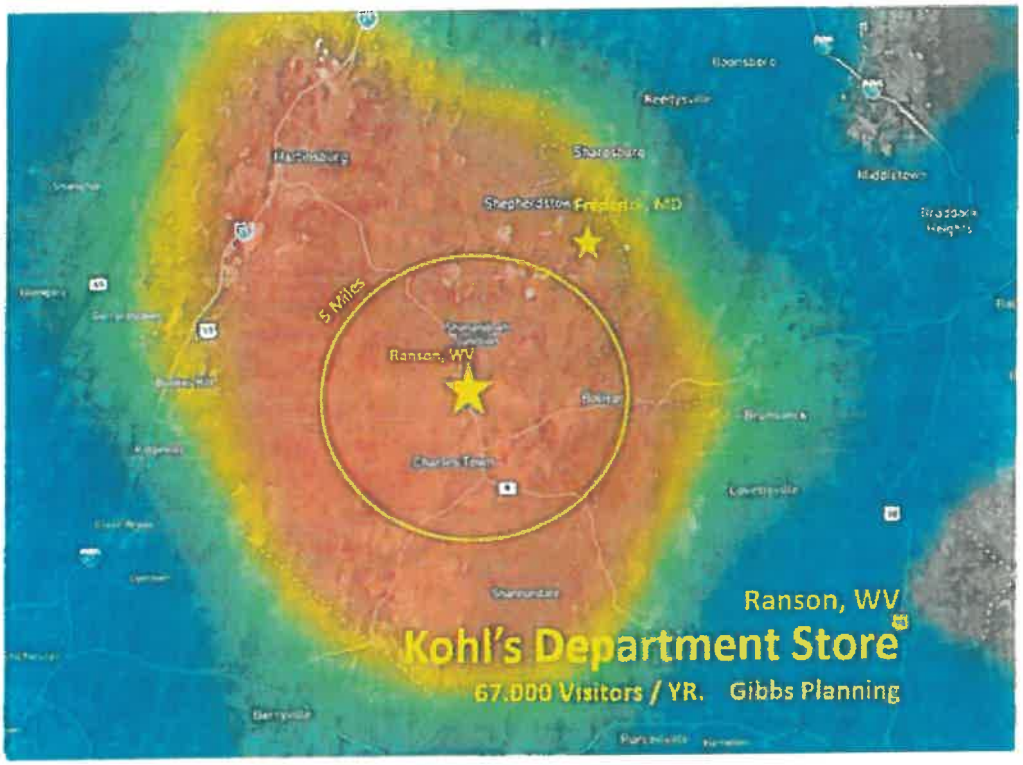


Figure 11: Illustration of Ranson Kohl's department store's shoppers' residences. Source Placer.ai

Limits of Study
The findings of this study represent the Gibbs Planning Group's best estimates for the amounts and types of retail businesses that could be supportable in the City of Ranson by 2026. Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in this study reflects the most accurate and timely information possible and is believed to be dependable.

It should be noted that the findings of this study are based upon accepted market research and business standards. It is possible that the study site's surrounding area could support lower or higher quantities of retailers and restaurants yielding lower or higher sales revenues than indicated by this study, depending on numerous factors including respective business practices and the management and design of the new commercial development.

Limits of Study (Cont.)

This study is based on estimates, assumptions and other information developed by GPG as an independent third-party research effort with general knowledge of the retail industry, and consultations with the client and its representatives. This report is based on information that was current as of June1, 2023, and GPG has not undertaken any update of its research effort since such date.

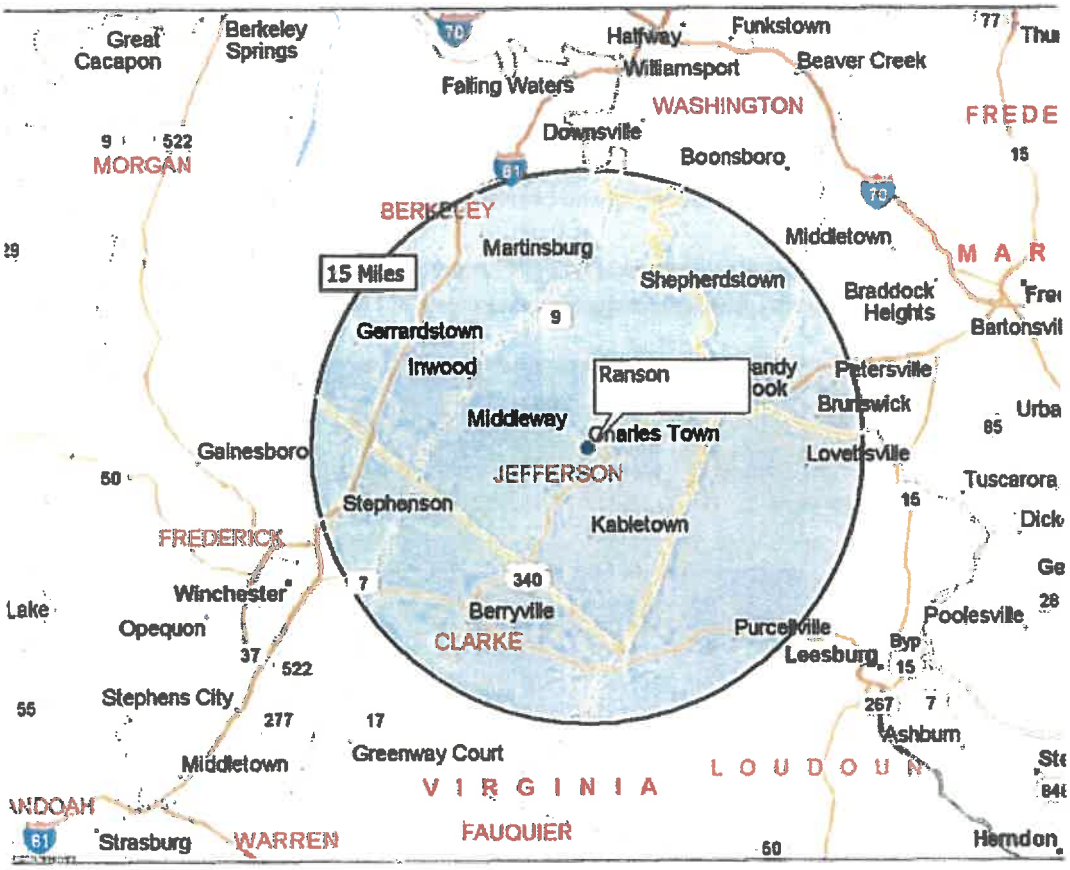


Figure 12: Map of 15 Mile Ranson radius. 135,000 people, 50,000 households with a $119,000 average income live within 15 miles of Ranson- Charles Town.

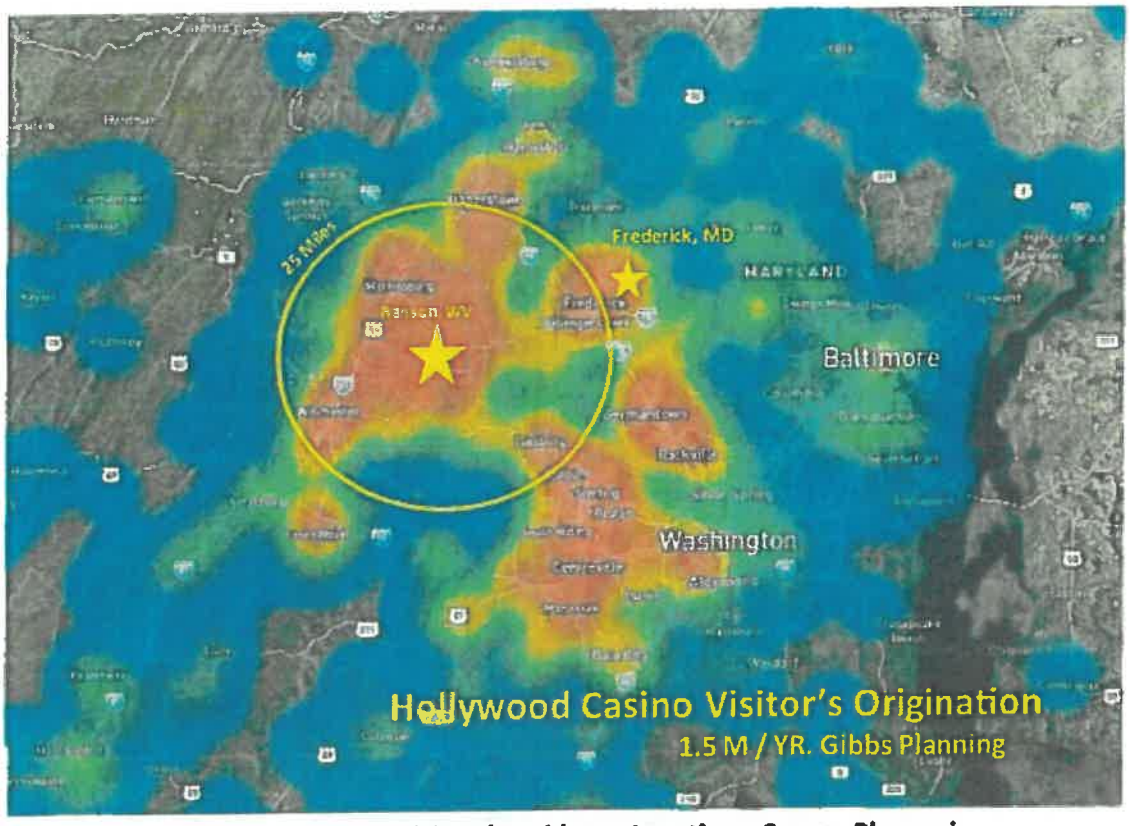
Actual results achieved during the period covered by our market analysis may vary from those described in our report, and the variations may be material. Therefore, no warranty or representation is made by the GPG that any of the projected values or results contained in this study will be achieved.

This study ***should not*** be the sole basis for designing, financing, planning, and programming any business, real estate development, or public planning policy. This study is intended only for the use of the City of Ranson for general land use policy and is void for other site locations, real estate developers, or organizations.

End of Study



Ranson Market Place Shopping Center's visitors' residence locations, Source Placer.ai



Hollywood Casino Visitors' Residence Locations Source Placer.ai

esri

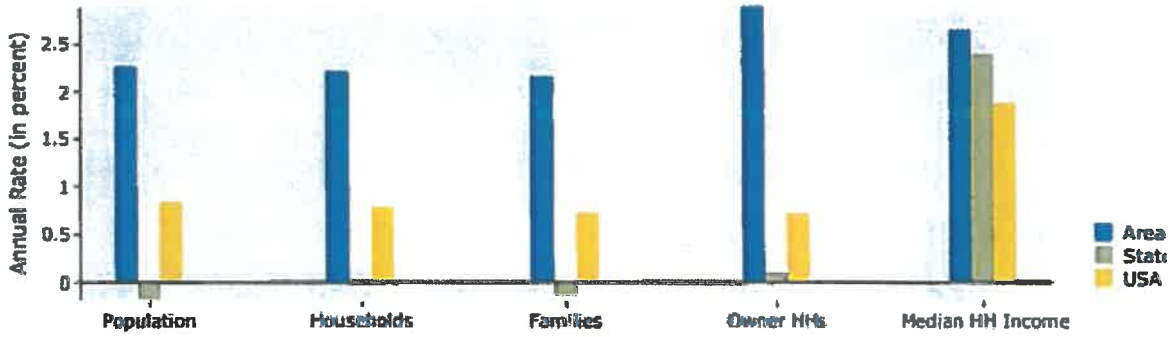
Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

Ranson, WV 5, 10, 15 Mile Rings
Ranson, West Virginia
Ring bands: 0-5, 5-10, 10-15 mile radii

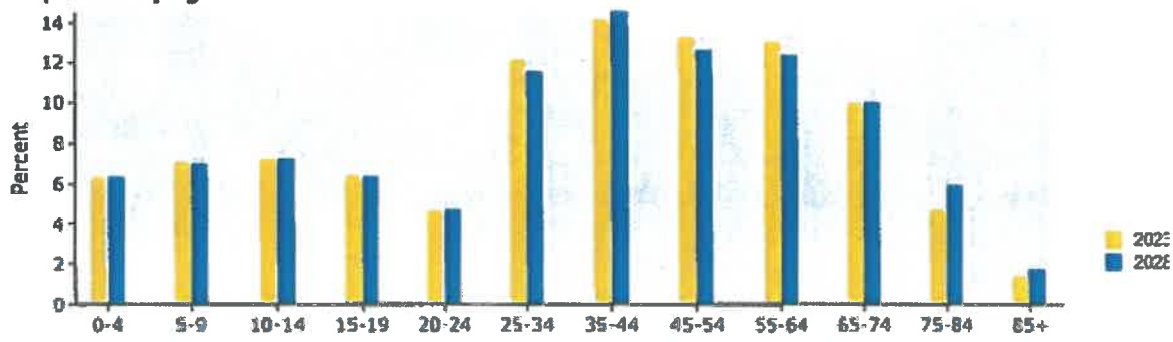
Prepared
Latitude: 39
Longitude: -77

0 - 5 mile

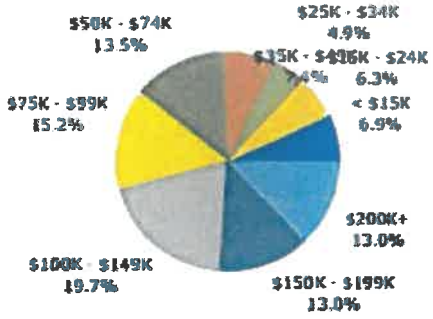
Trends 2023-2028



Population by Age



2023 Household Income



2023 Population by Race

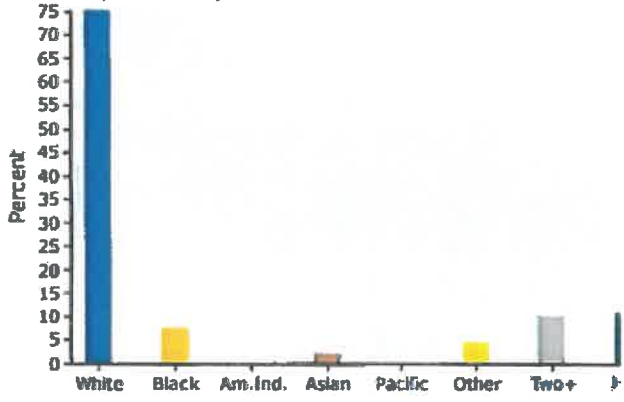




Image 15.2 East 3rd Avenue, 2023



RANSON
Refined

WWW.RANSONREFINED.COM

AGENDA ITEM 16.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) serves to establish a framework for collaboration and outline the intentions of two or more parties before a formal agreement is finalized. While not typically legally binding, an MOU helps clarify mutual expectations, responsibilities, and goals, acting as a roadmap for future negotiations and partnerships. It is a preliminary step toward a formal contract, promoting alignment on key objectives and facilitating transparent communication. Though not legally enforceable, a memorandum reflects the shared intentions and expectations of the parties involved.

ATTACHMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 17.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: City of Ranson Employee Handbook

ATTACHMENTS:

Employee Handbook.pdf



City of Ranson, West Virginia
Employee Handbook

Adopted: June 9, 2025

Effective: July 6, 2025

C

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Introduction

Welcome to the City of Ranson!

Whether you are a new hire or a long-standing member of our team, this employee handbook is an essential resource designed to ensure everyone has a clear understanding of the City of Ranson's policies, expectations, and values. We are grateful for your contributions to our community and are excited about the opportunities ahead.

The City of Ranson takes pride in being a leader in municipal government, both locally and throughout the great state of West Virginia. As the "Center of Opportunity," we are committed to fostering a welcoming, vibrant community. Your contributions will help us achieve our shared goals and maintain the high standards that make this an outstanding place to live, work, and grow.

The policies outlined in this handbook apply to all city employees, including those in departments such as police, public works, and parks and recreation. Please review this handbook carefully and sign the acknowledgment form at the end to confirm that you have read, understand, and agree to its contents. This handbook serves as a guide to the basic rules, expectations, and guidelines governing your employment. It replaces any previously issued handbooks or policy statements related to the topics discussed herein. The City of Ranson reserves the right to interpret, revise, or supplement the provisions in this handbook at any time.

While this handbook provides valuable guidance, we recognize that no document can cover every situation or answer every question. If you have questions about any aspect of your employment or our policies, please don't hesitate to reach out to your direct supervisor. Additionally, we welcome and encourage suggestions for how we can continue to improve as an organization. Whether you're new to the team or a long-time employee, your insights and ideas are invaluable in helping us serve the community more effectively.

Thank you for your commitment to the City of Ranson. We are proud to have you as part of our team and look forward to continuing to work together to achieve our shared goals.

All the best,

Todd Wilt
City Manager

The City of Ranson

Ranson, West Virginia, officially incorporated in 1910, has a proud history rooted in innovation, industry, and community development. The city's origins date back to 1890 when the Charles Town Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company purchased 850 acres of farmland from the Ranson family to create a new town adjacent to Charles Town. Guided by the vision of civil engineer D.G. Howell, the land was meticulously planned, setting the foundation for the vibrant community that exists today.

Named in honor of Dr. James Ranson, a local dentist and farmer, the city quickly grew into an industrial hub during the early 20th century. Businesses such as the Goetz Saddlery, Shenandoah Brass and Iron Works, and the Vulcan Road Machine Company attracted workers and residents, while landmarks like the Hotel Powhatan and later St. Hilda's Hall for Girls highlighted the community's blend of progress and tradition.

In 1936, the City of Ranson purchased the former Charles Town Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company building to serve as its town hall—a role it continues to fulfill today. Over the decades, Ranson has grown steadily, with strategic annexations and the development of residential and commercial areas shaping the city into a thriving center of activity.

Today, Ranson proudly stands as "The Center of Opportunity," a welcoming and vibrant community dedicated to providing exceptional services to its residents and businesses. With its deep-rooted history and forward-thinking vision, Ranson continues to be an outstanding place to live, work, and grow.

About This Handbook

This handbook contains policies and information about employment with the City of Ranson, WV (also referred to as 'the City' throughout this handbook). This handbook, and the policies and procedures contained herein, supersede all prior policies, practices, oral or written representations or statements regarding the terms and conditions of employment with the City.

State and federal statutes and regulations covering civil service Police Department employees and rules issued by the respective Police Civil Service Commission shall take precedence over any conflicting provisions in this Employee Handbook.

- Your employment at the City is on an at-will basis. This means that either the employee or the City may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.
- Nothing in this employee handbook or any City employment policy or practice creates or is intended to create an employment contract, express or implied.
- No enforceable duty or obligation of the City with respect to employment is created unless made in writing and signed by the City Manager.
- Nothing in this statement is intended to interfere with, restrain, or prevent concerted activity as protected by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).
- In the event that any provision of this handbook is deemed to be contrary to any law, such provision shall be voided.

Questions regarding the handbook should be addressed to the employee's immediate supervisor or the City Manager.

Equal Opportunity & Fair Treatment

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The City of Ranson complies with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities and acts in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The City does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

The City will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship.

Guidelines:

- Unless the need for accommodation is obvious, the employee or applicant is responsible for informing the immediate supervisor that accommodation is necessary to perform assigned job functions.
- A request is deemed sufficient if the employee or applicant claims and describes a disability and identifies the disability-related limitation(s) or workplace barrier(s) that need to be accommodated.
- The City will provide the employee with written confirmation of the accommodation request.
- The City may request, and the employee will provide medical documentation that demonstrates evidence of disability, the resulting functional limitations and the need for reasonable accommodation.
- The immediate supervisor and the employee requesting reasonable accommodation shall engage in an interactive process to identify an effective accommodation to allow the employee or applicant to perform the essential functions of the job. All decisions regarding requests for accommodation will be communicated in writing to the requesting employee or applicant.

Contact your immediate supervisor with questions or requests for accommodation.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The City is an equal opportunity employer. It provides equal opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, citizenship, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions), sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, genetic information, service in the military, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local laws and ordinances.

EEO and other fair employment notices are posted at City workplaces. These notices summarize the rights of employees to equal opportunity employment and lists the names and contact information of various government agencies that may be contacted if an employee believes they have suffered unlawful discrimination.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.

Equal & Fair Treatment

The City is committed to creating and maintaining a workplace in which all employees have an opportunity to participate in and contribute to the success of the City and are valued for their skills, experience, and unique perspectives.

As such the City encourages and enforces a work environment that includes:

- Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees and members of the public.
- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives.
- All employees have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.
- All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other City sponsored and participative events.

Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employees who believe they have been victims of discrimination should contact their immediate supervisor or the City Manager immediately.

Employment Relationship

Background Check

Employment offers may be contingent upon receiving a satisfactory background check. Background checks may include verification of Social Security number, prior employment, personal & professional references, and education requirements.

Some positions may require further background searches including criminal, credit, drug screening, physical, and motor vehicle. Any potential employee / promotion / transfer may be required to complete a background authorization form and work with the City to complete the search promptly.

Guidelines:

- Final review will include the following considerations of any criminal history.
  - The nature of the crime and its relationship to the position.
  - The time since the conviction.
  - The number of convictions.
  - Whether hiring, transferring, or promoting the applicant would pose an unreasonable risk to the citizens and employees of the City.
- The City determines the type of background check that is necessary for any final candidate's application.
- All information collected during the background check process, whether public information or not, will be shared on a "need to know" basis only.
- All final decisions are made by the City.

Employment Classifications

The City classifies its employment positions in accordance with all relevant state and federal legal requirements. The classification defines the City's employee benefit plan eligibility.

Fair Labor Standards Act Job Classifications

All employees are designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws:

Exempt - Exempt employment positions are typically paid on a salary basis and are not eligible to receive overtime pay.

Nonexempt - Nonexempt employment positions are paid on an hourly basis and are eligible to receive overtime pay for overtime hours worked.

Job Classifications

The City has established the following categories for both nonexempt and exempt employees:

Full-Time Employees - A full-time employee is an employee who is regularly scheduled to work 30 or more hours per week. Full-time employees are entitled to all benefits as defined in this Employee Handbook unless otherwise specified.

Part-Time Employees - A part-time employee is an employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours. Regular part-time employees are eligible for some of the benefits offered subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program as outlined in this Employee Handbook.

Seasonal Employees - Seasonal employees are full- or part-time employees employed for seasonal work. The employee is notified at the time of hire that the employment is seasonal and temporary. Seasonal employees are not entitled to accrue or receive any benefits described in this Employee Handbook.

Employment of Relatives / Partners

Due to potential for perceived or actual conflicts, the City will hire or promote relatives / partners of elected officials or persons currently employed only if candidates will not be working directly for or supervising a relative / partner as outlined in the WV Ethics Act.

If employees who marry or live together do work in a direct supervisory relationship with each other, the City will attempt to reassign one of the employees to another position for which the employee is qualified, if such a position is available.

Employee Privacy

It is the City's goal to respect the individual privacy of its employees and at the same time maintain an orderly, safe and secure workplace. When issues of disorder, safety and / or security arise, employees may be requested to cooperate with an investigation. The investigation may include the following procedures to safeguard the City and its employees: searches of personal belongings, searches of work areas, searches of private vehicles on City premises, and the like. Failure to cooperate with an investigation is grounds for termination. Providing false information during any investigation may lead to discipline, including termination.

Under the provisions of the West Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), every citizen has the right to inspect or copy any public record, unless specifically exempted. Employees should not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any material on City property.

Video Surveillance

As part of its security measures and to help ensure a safe workplace, the City has positioned video cameras to monitor various areas of its facilities. Video cameras will not be used in private areas, such as restrooms & locker / dressing rooms.

Workweek

The workweek for purposes of compensatory time and / or overtime pay begins Sunday at 12:00 a.m. and continues through Saturday 11:59pm.

The City operates seven days a week and individual schedules will vary to cover all needs, based on the department. Schedules will be known in advance and all meal and break times will be reasonably designated in accordance with West Virginia law.

Due to the nature of the work of the City, there will be times when employees will be scheduled to work hours outside of their normal scheduled hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays. All employees are expected to support these events and activities as a vital part of their job responsibilities. Ample notice will be given to plan schedules accordingly, when feasible.

Paycheck

City employees are paid biweekly on Fridays. Paychecks are preferred to be directly deposited into the employee's checking and / or savings account, set up by the employee upon hire.

In the unlikely event of a pay error, promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of your immediate supervisor so that adjustments can be made promptly. It is the responsibility of every employee to review their pay stub to ensure its accuracy and to resolve errors in a timely manner.

Time Keeping

The City must keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate costs, employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all of the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Guidelines

- All employees must accurately record the time they begin and end their work.
- They must also record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons.
- Nonexempt employees will not clock in more than 7 minutes before their regular starting time or 7 minutes after their regular ending time unless overtime pay has been approved.
- In the event of an error in reporting time, employees must immediately report the problem to the immediate supervisor.
- Time missed in increments of more than 15 minutes must be submitted to the time keeping system for purposes of accounting.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with any time records may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Overtime & Compensatory Time

Employees may be required to work overtime as needed to support the City and its residents. In order to maintain high-quality public service, certain job assignments may include the essential responsibility of being available for occasional overtime and after-hours work.

The City will pay time and a half per hour to nonexempt employees with hours actually worked (excluding leave and vacation) exceeding 40 hours of work time in a workweek.

Guidelines:

- All overtime must be approved prior to an employee's working overtime.
- Employees who fail to obtain approval prior to working overtime may be subject to discipline.
- Sick Leave, Compensatory Time Off, Holiday Time Off, and Bereavement Leave do not apply toward work time for purposes of determining overtime pay.
- The work week begins at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday morning and ends at 11:59pm on Saturday night.
- Essential & Civil Service employees that are called back to perform job-related duties outside of the standard working schedule shall be credited with a minimum of three (3) hours of work time. Should the time needed exceed three hours, the employee will be paid for the number of hours they actually work.
- Except in cases of emergency, no non-exempt employee shall be required to work more than sixteen (16) hours, continuous or intermittent, in a twenty-four (24) hour period.
    - A 24-hour period is measured starting at the beginning of the employee's regularly assigned work start time.
    - Emergency situations requiring work in excess of these standards, the employee shall be compensated for the excess work time at a rate of double the employee's normal wage.
    - Hours compensated at double the employee's normal wage shall not qualify for weekly overtime.

Compensatory Time

Instead of pay for overtime worked, the City, at the discretion of the City Manager, may grant compensatory time off to employees. Compensatory time off is granted at the rate of one and a half times the amount of overtime worked.

- Compensatory time may be used as soon as it is earned and can be redeemed in increments of no less than 15min.
- The City encourages the benefits and use of all time off and therefore employees may accrue compensatory time year to year, to a maximum of 80 hours. Compensatory time follows a fiscal year schedule (July 1 – June 30).
- Compensatory time earned beyond the 80-hour cap will immediately be paid out.
- Employees may request a compensatory time drawdown to have accrued compensatory time paid out in their next scheduled paycheck, limited to twice a year, once in June & once in November.
- Compensatory time is computed at the employee's base rate of pay at the time of payout.
- Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for all earned and accrued compensatory time at the employee's regular rate of pay at the time of termination.

Job Performance

Communication between employees and supervisors or managers is very important. Discussions regarding job performance are ongoing and often informal. Employees should initiate conversations with their supervisors if they feel additional feedback is needed.

Generally, formal performance reviews are conducted annually. These reviews include a written performance appraisal and discussion between the employee and the immediate supervisor about job performance and expectations for the coming year.

Merit Increases are based on performance reviews, budgetary approval, and outlined by the city compensation plan. Cost of living adjustments are considered annually and if approved by the governing body will be implemented with the first full pay period of the fiscal year.

Access to Employee File

To the extent allowed by the West Virginia Freedom of Information Act, employee records maintained by the City are considered confidential. As required by law, some records relating to medical issues and internal investigations are maintained in separate files. For purposes of this policy, an employee file includes records related to performance and training as well as other records used for hiring, promotion and disciplinary decisions. The employee file does not include any reference checks, medical records or investigation files.

Employees may request access to their file by submitting a request to the City Manager in writing. Upon receipt of the written request an appointment to view the file during normal office hours will be scheduled. Employees are not permitted to remove any documents from the file but, if desired, may provide a written response to documents in the file. Written responses will be attached to the original document in the employee file. Employees may also submit a written request for copies of documents in their employee file.

Termination of Employment

As an at-will employee, you may resign employment at any time, with or without notice or cause. A voluntary termination of employment occurs when an employee submits a written or verbal notice of resignation, including intent to retire, to the employee's immediate supervisor. Voluntary termination of employment also occurs when an employee is absent from work for three consecutive workdays and fails to contact their immediate supervisor, which is considered job abandonment.

Guidelines:

- If possible, written notification of resignation is requested to be submitted at least two weeks before the final day of employment.
- All employees are expected to return any property provided by the City.
- Employees who leave in good standing with proper notice may be considered for rehire and in such a case, will follow the normal application and hiring processes.
- Employees who are involuntarily terminated for cause or who resign in lieu of termination are ineligible for rehire.

- In addition, employees who resign without providing adequate notice or who abandon their job will not be considered for rehire.

As an at-will employee, the City may terminate your employment or reduce work hours at any time, with or without cause.

Final Pay

- An employee who resigns or is discharged will be paid through the last day of work, plus any unused leave as outlined in this handbook, less any outstanding agreements the employee may have with the City, in compliance with West Virginia State law.
- Final paychecks for all employees, regardless of the type of termination, will be paid on the regularly scheduled pay cycle.
- Employees who resign will receive 100% of their annual leave as outlined by this handbook.
- In cases of an employee's death, the final pay due to the employee will be paid to the deceased employee's estate or as otherwise required under West Virginia State law.

Health Insurance

- Medical, dental and vision insurance coverage terminates on the last day of the month in which the employee separates employment or is separated.

Employees will be eligible to continue health insurance benefits through COBRA at their own expense.

Safety

Commitment to Safety

The City is committed to protecting the health and safety of our employees. The City complies with all current occupational health, safety and environmental laws and shall act promptly to rectify any existing or reported unsafe conditions or safety concerns.

All employees have the opportunity and responsibility to contribute to a safe work environment by using commonsense rules, safe practices, and by notifying management when any health or safety issues are present. All employees are encouraged to partner with management to ensure maximum safety for all.

Guidelines:

- Any workplace injury, accident, or illness must be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of the severity of the injury or accident.
- In the event of an emergency, notify the appropriate emergency personnel by dialing 911.
- An incident report must be completed immediately (before the end of the shift or within 24 hours of the event) for each safety and health incident that involves the employee or that the employee witnesses.
- Failure to report such an infraction may result in employee disciplinary action, including termination.
- Employees are expected to conduct themselves and handle equipment and materials in such a manner as to avoid accidents.
- Employees are also responsible for observing all safety rules and to report unsafe working conditions to their supervisors immediately.

Inclement Weather & Liberal Leave

All employees are expected to make reasonable efforts to get to work safely. If this is not possible, please follow the guidelines as listed below.

Guidelines:

- Some employees are designated as Public Safety / Essential Personnel and will be required to work and should contact their immediate supervisor about scheduling.
- Administrative employees must advise their immediate supervisor as soon as possible if they are unable to report to work due to inclement weather. Regardless of whether the City offices are open or closed, it is each employee's decision as to whether it is safe to report to work.
- The closing of administrative offices is decided by the City Manager and can vary depending on safety conditions and the needs of the City.
- Depending on the nature of the work and job description, employees that fall under the Ad Hoc Remote Work Policy may choose to work from home.
    - If an employee who falls under this policy prefers to take the day off, the employee may request approval and use any available accrued leave to cover the day.

- Time absent from work due to inclement weather is not counted as hours worked when computing weekly overtime.
- Emergency Administrative Leave may be announced and granted by the City Manager during inclement weather. Guidelines for this policy are outlined in the Time Off & Leaves section of this handbook.

Liberal Leave

Liberal Leave is announced and granted by the City Manager. It authorizes all employees, except those designated as emergency service/essential personnel, to use their own leave to cover a period of missed work without obtaining prior approval from their supervisor.

- All employees should notify their immediate supervisor to determine the type of leave to be applied.
- Employees may use annual leave, sick leave, compensatory leave, or leave without pay (if no other leave balances are available) during the time liberal leave is in effect.
- Unless otherwise notified, if liberal leave is declared prior to beginning of business, it extends from 6:00 A.M. on the day declared until 12:01 A.M. the following day. If declared later in the day, it is in effect until 12:01 A.M. the following day.
- Emergency service personnel are required to report for work or to secure approval from their supervisors before not reporting to work.

Smoke and Vape Free Workplace

To provide a safe and healthy work environment, the City maintains a smoke and vape-free workplace. Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited on City property, in City vehicles, at assigned work locations, and during offsite events while representing the City. Smoking is defined as the "act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind." Vaping refers to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs and e-cigars.

Any employee found violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Drugs / Alcohol Usage

Alcohol and drug misuse pose a threat to the health and safety of employees and to overall security. For these reasons, the City is committed to the elimination of drug and alcohol use and misuse in the workplace. This policy is intended to satisfy the West Virginia Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Act and the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988.

It is unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use a controlled substance in the workplace. Reporting for work or performing assigned duties impaired by or under the influence of a controlled substance, defined as either testing positive for a detectible level of an illegal drug or alcohol beyond the limit allowed for operating a motor vehicle, is strictly prohibited.

This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed or over-the-counter medications. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about the medication's effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and they must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their immediate supervisor.

Prescription and Legal Medication Usage Guidelines

Whenever employees are working on City premises or are conducting city-related work offsite, they are prohibited from:

- Taking prescribed drugs contrary to the instructions of the prescribing physician.
- Taking prescribed drugs that adversely affect the employee's ability to perform their duties safely and effectively.
- Taking over the counter (OTC) drugs contrary to usage indications or dosage instructions.
- Taking OTC drugs that adversely affect the employee's ability to perform duties safely and effectively.

Prescribed medication(s) must be carried in a container labeled by a licensed pharmacist and/or the employee must be prepared to produce the container if asked.

Medical Marijuana

West Virginia allows the use of Medical Marijuana, and the City will follow the guidelines prescribed by West Virginia State law, including:

- The City will not discharge, refuse to hire, or otherwise discriminate solely based on an individual's status as a certified medical cannabis patient.
- The City may discipline an employee for being under the influence of medical cannabis when the employee's conduct falls below the standard of care normally accepted for that position.
- The City is not required to take any action that would violate federal law.
- Employees are prohibited from using medical marijuana in the workplace or while on break at work, and paraphernalia related to medical marijuana is also prohibited from being present in the workplace.

In compliance with federal and state regulations, civil service employees are prohibited from participating in any medical marijuana program.

Required Testing

The City may require as a condition of continued employment a fitness for duty evaluation, blood test, urinalysis or other drug/alcohol testing of an employee with reasonable suspicion that the employee may be using or under the influence of drugs or alcohol in violation of this policy.

Required Testing Guidelines:

- The collection of urine, blood, hair or saliva sample and subsequent testing of a collected sample for drugs or alcohol shall be performed at an off-site professional medical facility, with due care provided to ensure the privacy of the employee and the proper and documented chain of custody of the sample. Test results shall be reported to the employee and the City Manager.
- Under no circumstances will the employee referred to testing be allowed to drive themselves to the testing facility. A member of management must transport the employee or arrange transportation.
- An employee required to leave work for a fitness for duty evaluation will remain off work until the results are received.
- Employees with a negative test result will be paid for time lost at their prevailing wage.
- At the sole discretion of the City Manager, random testing for a 12-month period may be required as a condition of continued employment for employees who have been found to have violated this policy or have been charged with DUI, possession or sale of illegal drugs or unlawful possession or sale of legal drugs.

Drug testing requirements may include:

- **Pre-employment** – Some employees must pass a drug test before beginning work or receiving an offer of employment. These applicants will be informed of this requirement during the hiring process. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification of further employment consideration.

- **Reasonable Suspicion** - Employees are subject to testing based on, but not limited to, observations of apparent workplace use. Reasonable suspicion includes, but is not limited to, unusual or unexplainable behavior, slurred speech, difficulty in maintaining balance, odor of alcohol or illegal drug(s) or the informed judgement of the supervisor. The referring supervisor shall provide the City Manager with a description of the facts establishing reasonable suspicion. When reasonable suspicion testing is warranted, the Department Manager and / or City Manager will meet with the employee to explain the observations and the requirement to undergo a drug and / or alcohol test within two hours, within reason. Refusal by an employee will be treated as a positive drug test result and could result in immediate termination of employment.

- **Vehicle Accidents** – An employee operating a city vehicle resulting in an accident-causing death, serious bodily injury or destruction of city property shall be required to submit to a fitness for duty evaluation at the sole discretion of the City Manager.

- **Random** – Civil Service employees may be required to submit to random drug testing as outlined in the Civil Service policies & procedures.

Employee Assistance

Employees are encouraged to voluntarily seek help for drug or alcohol addiction before becoming subject to discipline or termination under these policies. Such employees will be allowed to use accrued leave, may be placed on a leave of absence, may be referred to treatment providers or otherwise accommodated as required by law. While participation in a recovery program may not be a basis for employee discipline, use of a recovery program will not be a defense for violation of this policy.

Inspections

The City reserves the right to inspect all areas of its premises (including vehicles & equipment, whether located on city property or elsewhere) for drugs, alcohol or other contraband. Employees may or may not be asked to cooperate in inspections of their work areas that might conceal a drug, alcohol or other contraband, and a search may be conducted either in or outside the employee's presence. Employees who possess such contraband or refuse to cooperate in such inspections are subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Disciplinary Actions

- The City reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action for drug use, sale or distribution while on or off city premises.
- All employees who are arrested, convicted, plead guilty to or are sentenced for a crime involving an illegal drug are required to report the conviction, plea or sentence to their immediate supervisor. The City will determine the impact to safety based on the nature of the crime and the nature of the job.
- If there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of any drugs or alcohol, under no circumstances will the employee be allowed to drive. Transportation home and / or to a safe location will be arranged for the employee.
- Employees who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
- Law enforcement personnel may be notified, as appropriate, when criminal activity is suspected.

Anti-Harassment & Discrimination

The City strives to create and maintain a work environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency and respect. The environment of the City should be characterized by mutual trust and the absence of intimidation, oppression and exploitation. Unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

All employees, regardless of their position, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who violates this policy and any leader who knowingly allows and / or tolerates such actions.

Prohibited Conduct

Discrimination It is a violation of this policy to discriminate in the provision of employment opportunities, benefits or privileges; to create discriminatory work conditions; or to use discriminatory evaluative standards in employment if the basis of that discriminatory treatment is, in whole or in part, the person's race (including hairstyle/texture), color, national origin, age, religion, disability status, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information or marital status.

Harassment Any kind of harassment will not be tolerated. Appropriate and immediate action will be taken in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy. For purposes of this policy, harassment is any verbal or physical conduct designed to threaten, bully, intimidate or coerce an employee, co-worker, or any person working for or on behalf of the City.

The following examples of harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Comments that are offensive or unwelcome regarding a person's protected status, including epithets, slurs and negative stereotyping.
- Distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material that ridicules, denigrates, insults, belittles or shows hostility, aversion or disrespect toward an individual or group because of a protected status.
- Willful and repeated use of cell phones, computers, and other electronic communication devices to damage, harass or threaten.

Sexual Harassment Sexual harassment occurs when there are unsolicited and unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors. Verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is also sexual harassment if it:

- Is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Is used as a basis for an employment decision.
- Unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or otherwise offensive environment.

The following examples of sexual harassment are intended to be guidelines and are not exclusive when determining whether there has been a violation of this policy:

- Innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, lewd remarks and threats.
- Requests for any type of sexual favor.
- Verbal abuse or "kidding" that is oriented toward a prohibitive form of harassment, including that which is sexual in nature and unwelcome.
- Distribution, display or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters and cartoons that are sexually suggestive or show hostility toward an individual or group because of sex.
- Suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, staring, whistling or obscene gestures.
- Content in letters, notes, facsimiles, e-mails, photos, text messages, and Internet postings; or other forms of communication that are sexual in nature and offensive.

- Unwelcome and unwanted physical contact, including touching, tickling, pinching, patting, brushing up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, and forced sexual intercourse or assault.

Courteous, mutually respectful, pleasant, noncoercive interactions between employees that are appropriate in the workplace and acceptable to and welcomed by both parties are not considered to be harassment, including sexual harassment.

Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships

The City strongly discourages romantic or sexual relationships between a supervisory employee and an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that person, because such relationships tend to create compromising conflicts of interest, bias, favoritism, intimidation, coercion or the appearance of such improprieties.

If any employee enters into a consensual relationship that is romantic or sexual in nature with an employee who reports directly or indirectly to that employee, the parties must notify the City Manager immediately. Once the relationship is made known, the situation will be reviewed with discretion and confidentiality, and the next steps will be determined.

Retaliation

No hardship, loss, benefit or penalty may be imposed on an employee in response to:

- Filing or responding to a bona fide complaint of discrimination or harassment.
- Appearing as a witness in the investigation of a complaint.
- Serving as an investigator of a complaint.

Lodging a complaint will in no way be used against the employee or have an adverse impact on the individual's employment status. However, filing groundless or malicious complaints is an abuse of this policy and will be treated as a violation.

Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations are treated confidentially to the extent possible, and information is disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis. The identity of the complainant is usually revealed to the parties involved during the investigation, and adequate steps will be taken to ensure that the complainant is protected from retaliation during and after the investigation. All information pertaining to a complaint or investigation under this policy will be maintained in secure files.

Grievance Procedure:

- Step 1: The employee should discuss any grievance with their immediate supervisor as soon as possible after an incident has occurred and an investigation will immediately be conducted.
    - During the investigation all safety concerns will be immediately addressed, appropriate interviews will be conducted, and if it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

- Step 2: If the employee is not satisfied with this decision, then a formal written grievance should be submitted to the City Manager. The grievance must be specific, stating the problem or complaint and steps taken for resolution. The City Manager will select a committee of two Department Directors to review the grievance and find a solution.

- Step 3: Most complaints should be resolved before they reach this stage. However, if an employee continues to be dissatisfied with responses after thoroughly exhausting all avenues available in steps 1 and 2, they may re-submit their complaint to the City Manager who will make a final decision.

- Civil Service employees should consult the Civil Service policies & guidelines for detailed information on the grievance procedure.

- If the grievance is against the City Manager and / or the Chief of Police, the grievance should be filed with the Mayor. The Mayor will work with the City Council as a committee to review the grievance and find a solution.

- If the grievance is against a City Council Member, the Mayor, and / or any other City appointed official, the grievance should be filed with the City Manager. The City Manager will work with the City Council as a committee to review the grievance and find a solution.

Alternative Legal Remedies

Nothing in this policy may prevent the complainant or the respondent from pursuing formal legal remedies or resolutions through local, state or federal agencies or courts.

Workplace Violence

The City is committed to providing a safe workplace for all employees. To ensure this and to reduce the risk of violence, the City has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Workplace violence in any form is not permitted, tolerated or condoned.

The City does not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against employees. Employees are prohibited from making threats or engaging in violent activities. This list of behaviors provides examples of conduct that is prohibited:

- Causing physical injury to another person.
- Making threatening remarks.
- Displaying aggressive or hostile behavior that creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person or subjects another individual to emotional distress.
- Intentionally damaging employer property or property of another employee.
- Committing acts motivated by, or related to, sexual harassment or domestic violence.
- Also refer to the Anti-Harassment & Discrimination Policy.

Reporting Procedures

Any potentially dangerous situation must be immediately reported to either Emergency Services, immediate supervisor, and / or the City Manager. Reports can be made anonymously, and all reported incidents will be documented and investigated. Reports or incidents warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately, and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. All parties involved in a situation will be counseled, and the results of the investigation will be discussed with each of the persons involved. The City will actively intervene at any indication of a possibly hostile or violent situation.

Guidelines

Although the City does not expect all employees to be skilled at identifying potentially dangerous persons, employees are expected to exercise good judgment and to inform their immediate supervisor and / or the City Manager if any employee exhibits behavior that could be a sign of a potentially dangerous situation. Such behavior may include:

- Discussing weapons or bringing them to the workplace.
- Displaying overt signs of extreme stress, resentment, hostility or anger.
- Making threatening remarks.
- Displaying irrational or inappropriate behavior.

Dangerous / Emergency Situations

- Employees who have received extensive training to handle dangerous / emergency situations should refer to those guidelines and the response personnel that are managing the scene.
- Employees who have not received extensive training in dangerous / emergency situations:
    - If confronted or encountered by an armed or dangerous person you should not attempt to challenge or disarm the individual. Remain calm, make constant eye contact, and listen to the individual. If emergency services and / or an immediate supervisor / City Manager can be safely notified of the need for assistance without endangering the safety of the employee or others, such notice should be given. Otherwise, employees should cooperate and follow the instructions given.
    - If in the vicinity of an armed or dangerous person (and have not been noticed) you should immediately leave the vicinity if it can safely be accomplished. Once safety has been reached, contact appropriate authorities immediately. If you cannot safely leave the premises, find a place to hide until it is safe to relocate.

Enforcement

Any employee determined to have committed such acts will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Non-employees engaged in violent acts on City premises will be reported to the proper authorities and fully prosecuted.

Workplace Guidelines

Attendance

Each employee is crucial to the successful completion of the City's daily business, and all employees are important members of the team. The team does its best when employees are present. Absenteeism and tardiness cause a disruption of services to the public and may place an undue burden on co-workers.

Maintaining an acceptable attendance record and being punctual in reporting to work and returning from break is a condition of employment. All time off should be authorized in advance whenever possible. Employees are required to discuss any late arrivals or absence with their immediate supervisor, or designated person, before the employee's shift starts.

When this is not possible (e.g., illness), employees must notify their immediate supervisor prior to the start of their shift each day to explain the absence from work, unless previous arrangements have been made (e.g. extended illness). If this is not done, it may be determined to be an unauthorized absence and grounds for disciplinary action.

When returning to the office, all time-off requests must be submitted into the time-keeping system to account for any hours missed.

Dress & Appearance

An employee's appearance is a direct reflection on the image of the City. It is important to project a professional image to the City's customers, visitors, and coworkers. All employees are expected to dress in a manner consistent with good hygiene, safety, and appropriate to the setting. Any apparel provided by the City is to be worn for work purposes only, it is not to be worn for personal use off the clock.

Guidelines:

- Clothing with offensive language, inappropriate content, political in nature, and torn / damaged material is prohibited.
- Consider the workplace setting and the work being performed and wear clothing:
    - With safety in mind (i.e. – outside temperature, physical activity, duration and location).
    - Appropriate to the setting – Administrative employees should wear business casual attire while all other employees should wear clothing assigned to them according to the uniform expectations of the role.
- Practice good hygiene and minimize use of natural / artificial scents.
- An employee may be asked to leave the premises to change their clothing.
- Non-exempt employees will not be compensated for any work time missed because of failure to comply with designated workplace attire and grooming standards.
- Upon termination, any apparel provided by the City will be returned.

Any questions about these guidelines should be discussed with the immediate supervisor.

If an employee's dress and / or appearance needs to be addressed – it will be done in private and will point out the specific areas to be corrected. If the problem persists, the normal corrective action process will be followed.

Uniforms

The City provides uniforms for employees that are required to wear them. This allows City employees to be easily identified as such in the community. City provided uniforms are considered City property and are to be returned in the event of termination of employment or anytime on demand.

Upon issue, City uniforms become the responsibility of the employee for maintenance and care. In the event a uniform needs repair or replacement, employees will be required to return the uniform in exchange for a replacement. While normal wear and tears are expected, excessive damage or loss of City uniforms may result in disciplinary action.

Some job positions require specific safety related attire; an example would be steel toe boots. These approved employees shall receive an annual uniform allowance to purchase job-related attire. The allowance amount is determined annually during the budget process. This allowance is classified as a taxable fringe benefit and will be distributed at the start of each fiscal year.

Outside Employment (Moonlighting)

The City generally permits employees to engage in outside employment, provided such employment does not conflict with their duties or obligations to the City. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that any outside job or business activity does not interfere with their City responsibilities. Employees with questions about a specific outside role or activity should consult with the City Manager in advance.

Guidelines:

- Outside employment must not compete with, conflict with, or compromise the City's interests, nor adversely affect an employee's performance or ability to fulfill City responsibilities.
- Employees may not solicit or conduct outside business during City work hours.
- City resources, including but not limited to vehicles, uniforms, tools, equipment, or facilities, may not be used for any outside employment unless express prior approval has been granted by the City Manager.
- Outside employment may not be used as an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, or failure to meet City expectations.
- If outside employment is determined to negatively impact the City in any way, the employee may be asked to terminate such employment.

If any outside work activity causes or contributes to job-related issues or conflicts with City obligations, the employee will be asked to discontinue the outside employment and may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with City policies.

Solicitation

Solicitation could be considered disruptive to employee productivity and could create an uncomfortable or even harassing situation. Therefore, in general, the City does not permit selling, soliciting and / or the distribution and posting of materials on City property. Any exception to this policy will need to be reviewed and approved by the City Manager.

Computer, Email, & Internet Usage

The use of internet and e-mail is necessary in the workplace, and employees are encouraged to use the Internet and e-mail systems responsibly.

Guidelines:

- In general, use of the City's technology systems and electronic communications should be job-related and not for personal convenience.
- All technology (hardware and software) provided is the property of the City.
- Every employee is responsible for the content of all text, audio, video, or image files that the employee places or sends upon City equipment and / or over the City's internet and e-mail systems.
- All data created on the City system is considered public record and can be requested by any member of the public under the West Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- All internal and external emails, voicemails, text messages, electronic communications, and other data created, transmitted, or stored using city systems are the property of the City. These communications are considered public records and may be subject to inspection, disclosure, or legal discovery in accordance with applicable laws.
- Employees should be aware that such records must be retained or destroyed only in compliance with the City's adopted records retention policies.
- City internet may not be used to transmit, retrieve or store any communications or other content of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing or pornographic nature.
- Disparaging, abusive, profane, or offensive language and any illegal activities are forbidden.
- The City reserves the right to examine, monitor and regulate e-mail, other electronic communications, directories, files and all other content, whether onsite or offsite, without permission or advanced notice.
- Any employee who abuses the organization's provided access to e-mail, the Internet, or other electronic communications or networks, including social media, may be denied future access and, if appropriate, further disciplinary action may be taken.
- The City's identity and sender contact information will be attached to all outgoing e-mail communications, which should reflect appropriate workplace language and conduct.

Equipment:

- Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the City, will be maintained by the employee.
- The City accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.
- Equipment supplied by the City will be maintained by the City and is to be used for City business purposes only.
- Upon termination of employment, all City property will be returned to the City, unless other arrangements have been made.

Ad-Hoc Remote Work

The role of the City is to be an active resource for the community. To facilitate this, the City expects employees to work in person at their designated facility and / or office. For some positions, the City believes that remote work is a flexible resource that can benefit both the employee and city in ad-hoc arrangements.

Ad-Hoc Arrangements

- Ad-hoc arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the City and must be approved in advance by the City Manager. These approvals are made as needed and with no expectation or commitment for an ongoing arrangement.
- Ad-hoc arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as business need, inclement weather, special projects or City travel.
- Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the City and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.
- Outside of basic office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary, the City will not supply home office resources.
- Reimbursement for City-related expenses that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job will be paid by the City and should be approved before purchase.
- Employees will be required to accurately record all hours worked.
- Employees are expected to ensure the protection of proprietary City and customer information accessible from their home office.
- Remote work is not to be viewed or used as a substitute for family care arrangements. The City expects employees to make appropriate family care arrangements such that family care does not interfere with work obligations. These arrangements should be flexible in the event that the employee is called into the office with limited notice.
- Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location during City time are only covered by the City's workers' compensation policy if they occur within the scope of employment.

Cell Phone Use

Personal Cell Phones

While at work, employees are expected to exercise discretion in using personal cell phones. Excessive personal calls during the workday can interfere with productivity and be distracting to others. Employees are encouraged to make any personal calls during non-work time when possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of this policy. The City will not be liable for the loss of personal cellphones brought into the workplace.

Personal cell phones used to conduct City business are subject to all policies, procedures, and laws that govern the work of the City.

City Cell Phone

The City issues individual cell phones to some employees who are required to be in close contact with City management or other employees.

City Cell Phone Guidelines:

- Employees are required to always be professional and conscientious when using City phones.
- Employees are expected to keep personal use of City issued phones to a minimum.
- The City enforces a zero-tolerance policy on improper cell phone use while driving. Employees must use a hands-free system if a call is necessary while operating a vehicle.
- Any charges incurred for personal use are the responsibility of the employee. Failure to pay incurred costs may result in a deduction from the employee's payroll check.
- Misuse of cellular phone privileges is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Purchasing Card

All purchases made in the name of the City must be made in compliance with the purchasing policy established by the State of West Virginia. Under no circumstances should personal purchases be charged to the City. Any purchase(s) made in the name of the City without proper authorization will not be tolerated and the employee may be held personally liable for the payment of the purchase. Under no circumstances should the City's tax exemption number be used for personal purchases. All employees that have been designated as a Purchasing Card (P-Card) holder, are required to follow the guidelines as outlined by the WV State Auditor's Office.

https://www.wvsao.gov/purchasingcard

The P-Card process is managed internally by an approved Agency Coordinator. Within the framework provided by the state guidelines, the Agency Coordinator has final authority and oversight of the program. Including approvals, restrictions, and / or revocations.

City Vehicles, Driver Responsibilities & Safety

Before driving any vehicle on behalf of the City, an employee must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Provide a valid driver's license appropriate to the vehicle that is being operated.
- Confirm an acceptable driving record through a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR).
    - Off duty violations will be considered in this policy, especially if the driver is considered 'at-fault.'
    - MVR will be checked at time of hire and annually thereafter.

Copies of these items will be kept on record and employees must provide updated documents as they are renewed and have them in their vehicles while working for the City.

Guidelines:

- In most scenarios, employees should not use City vehicles for personal use.
- If employees are requested / required to use their personal automobile for City business, it will be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage rate at the time of travel.
- Any work-related travel using a personal vehicle must be approved by the City Manager.

Safety Guidelines

- All employees are responsible to exercise care, obey all traffic rules and regulations prescribed by law, ensure that seatbelts are worn, follow all operating instructions and safety standards and guidelines, and use every safety measure possible to prevent accidents.
- The City is not responsible for any traffic violations or parking tickets acquired by violation of city ordinance, state or federal laws regarding personal driving habits and are considered the employee's responsibility.
- Employees may only use cell phones in hands-free mode while driving. Destination coordinates must be entered prior to operating the vehicle. As best practice, cell phone use while driving should be avoided whenever possible.
- The City will provide safe and reliable transportation to authorized drivers, and the resources for properly maintaining these vehicles. It is each driver's responsibility to ensure proper vehicle maintenance checks, exercise defensive driving habits, maintain a good driving record, and adhere to the safe driving expectations.
- Employees assigned vehicles are responsible for ensuring regular maintenance checks are completed and any concerns / issues are reported to the immediate supervisor and / or Public Works.
- It is expected that all vehicles will be maintained in safe operating condition.
- Employees whose licenses are revoked or suspended are to notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible.

Accident Reporting

- Obtain medical attention for any injured person(s) as soon as possible.
- All vehicle accidents that occur in the course of City business must be reported to the immediate supervisor as soon as possible, regardless of fault or extent of injury or property damage.
- Employees are required to immediately report all damage, crashes, altercations and moving violations that occur during work-related activities if they are driving on City business.
- An employee operating a city vehicle resulting in an accident-causing death, serious bodily injury or destruction of city property shall be required to submit to a fitness for duty evaluation at the sole discretion of the City Manager.
- If driving your own vehicle, personal insurance coverage for vehicles is primary. The employee is responsible for liability (bodily injury and property damage to others), as well as any damage that occurs to the personal vehicle including any associated deductible.
- Employee injuries sustained in vehicle accidents while working for the City are covered under Worker's Compensation.

Driver Conduct

Employees driving City vehicles are expected to behave in a way that positively represents the City. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Exhibiting "road rage" in the form of aggressive driving.
- Not obeying traffic laws.
- Yelling or cussing at other drivers or pedestrians.
- Throwing trash out the window.
- Playing music with explicit language that could be overheard by others.

Employees are responsible for the safety of the public and their fellow employees. Employees will be subject to immediate termination for the following conduct while conducting City business:

- Failure to report an accident and / or the severity of the accident.
- Driving with a suspended, revoked, or restricted driver's license.
- Driving without insurance.
- Driving while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances.
- Failure to maintain an acceptable driving record, confirmed through a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR).

At any time, and without reason, the City may disqualify any employee from operating any motor vehicle within the City's fleet. Exceptions to this policy can only be made by the City Manager and / or City Police Chief. Failure to comply with this policy could be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Travel

Travel is defined as transportation, lodging, meals and incidental expenses associated with conducting City business or professional development. Employees who travel are considered ambassadors of the City and as such, shall maintain professional behavior. Attendance may be required by the City or requested by individuals.

The City will reimburse employees for pre-approved and authorized travel expenses incurred while on City business and / or related travel when the expense is reasonable and necessary in the performance of City business.

Guidelines:

- Any requested travel must be submitted for approval in writing to the immediate supervisor and include relevant information such as dates, hours, location, cost, expenses, purpose, and justification for attendance.
- Each person traveling at City expense is required to exercise sound and prudent judgment when arranging for, and incurring travel expenditures. All decisions prioritize cost-effectiveness and fiscal responsibility.
- Travel expenditures must not exceed approved spending and should follow IRS per diem guidelines unless otherwise approved.
- Expenses incurred during travel must be incurred by the employee only and outside of meal per diems must be backed by documentation. Examples are receipts, invoices, and mileage reports.
- It is the traveler's responsibility to retain all receipts for travel and hotel expenses and to report these expenses accurately.
- Travel expense reports must be filed in the same fiscal year as the travel occurred and within ten (10) business days of the return from traveling. All receipts must be included with the expense report and submitted for final approval.
- Requests for per diem allowances must be submitted to the Finance Director ten (10) business days before the approved travel.
- The City of Ranson's Insurance Provider covers the employee and the rental vehicle while traveling on City business only.

Per Diems

- Typically, meals and incidental expenses while traveling are provided through per diem rates. P-Cards should not be used in lieu of the per diem allowance.
- No matter the length of travel, meal per-diems are only applicable for approved travel activities as outlined in this policy.
- No receipts are necessary for full or partial day per diem. The amount per diem will be calculated based on the IRS guidelines at time of travel.
- Reimbursement of costs may not be more than the per diem for meals unless otherwise approved.
- Employees may request payment of per diem before or after travel. Regardless of the actual per diem expenses incurred, all employees traveling will receive the IRS per diem rate.
    - Should the travel activity change from the original request, pre-paid per diems must be reimbursed to the City.

Transportation & Lodging

- City vehicles will be used for all travel, whenever possible.
- If an employee uses their personal vehicle, the employee will be reimbursed for mileage only at the IRS rate in effect at that time.
    - The IRS mileage rate includes variable costs such as gas, oil, and general maintenance, as well as the fixed costs such as insurance, registration, and depreciation.
- Mileage reimbursement shall not be paid for travel between City facilities.
- Transportation should be shared by employees traveling together whenever possible and the most economic options should always be considered first.
- All other forms of transportation will be discussed and approved on a case-by-case basis.
- Lodging should be booked in advance and arranged on a single occupancy basis, unless employees agree to share a room. Sharing a room is not required.
- If the event has designated lodging, it should be the primary consideration. Alternative accommodation should be evaluated based on proximity, safety, and overall cost effectiveness.

Personal and Non-Allowable Travel Expenses:

City resources will not be used to process personal and non-allowable travel arrangements and expenditures. Some examples include:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expenses, such as laundry, haircuts, valet service, and in-room services such as movies and video games.
- Expenses for any social or recreational activities, such as golf, tours, movies, etc.
- Commuting between home and the primary work location.
- Any funds or personal belongings lost or stolen.
- Other expenses not directly related to City business travel.

Employees are expected to follow this travel policy to the best of their ability. Failure to adhere to these guidelines or abuse of travel privileges may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you have any questions or need clarification, please reach out to your immediate supervisor.

Employee Conduct

Code of Ethics & Business Conduct

Ethics Act

The City expects all employees to conduct business with integrity and to comply with all applicable laws in a manner that excludes considerations of personal advantage or gain. Each employee of the City is considered a 'public servant' under the law and therefore is held to the standards of the West Virginia Ethics Act.

The basic principle underlying the Ethics Act is that those in public service must use their positions for the public's benefit and not for their own private gain or the private gain of another. Some examples of an employee using their position for personal gain include:

- Using City supplies or equipment for personal projects or activities.
- Working on the employee's personal projects or activities during work hours or compelling others to do so on their own time.
- Having a financial interest in any contract, purchase or sale over which the employee's public position gives control; this also applies to the financial interest of a spouse, dependent parents or children, or any business in which the employee has an ownership interest as outlined by the Ethics Act.
- Accepting gifts unless it fits into an exception as outlined in the Ethics Act.

For the full Ethics Act please click HERE - https://code.wvlegislature.gov/6B-1/

Conflict of Interest

The City recognizes and respects each employee's right to privacy and to engage in personal activities outside the scope of their employment. Each employee also has an obligation, however, to refrain from activities that conflict with or interfere with the City's operations. The City reserves the right to determine when an activity conflicts with its interests and to take whatever action is necessary to resolve the conflict, up to and including termination of employment.

No employee of the City, or a member of the employee's immediate family, or any business in which the employee is associated shall have financial interest, direct or indirect, in any contract with the City.

Examples of activities that might cause a conflict of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Accepting gifts, excessive or unusual entertainment, or other favors from interested persons. Some exceptions apply as outlined by the West Virginia Ethics Act.
- Maintaining financial interest in an outside concern from which the City purchases goods or services.
- Accepting personal compensation for job-related speaking engagements, consulting services or other activities.
- Participating in activities unrelated to the City during normal business hours.
- Representing the City in any transaction in which the employee or a member of the employee's family has a substantial interest.

- Acceptance of other employment or contractual relationships that will affect the employee's independence of judgment in exercise of official duties.
- Use of or attempted use of the employee's official position to secure benefits, privileges, exemptions or advantages for themselves or others which are different from those available to the general public.
- The use for private gain or advantage of the City's time, facilities, equipment or supplies, uniform, prestige or influence of City employment.
- Engaging in any activity in the conduct of City business which would violate any local, state or federal law.
- Supervising family members or closely related persons.

Determining whether a conflict of interest exists is not always easy to do. Employees with a conflict-of-interest question are encouraged to speak to their immediate supervisor before engaging in any activity, transaction, or relationship that might give rise to a conflict of interest. Employees or the City Manager may seek an advisory opinion from the West Virginia Ethics Commission regarding conflict-of-interest concerns before engaging in otherwise suspect transactions.

Business Conduct

Employees are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and behavior at all times. This policy establishes standards of behavior that must be met by all employees. If standards are not met, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. In cases where a breach of the policy involves a breach of any law, then the relevant government authorities or the police may be notified. These standards include:

- Compliance with all City policies, procedures, rules, regulations, and contracts.
- Devotion of the employee's entire time, attention, and skill during normal working hours to successfully perform the employee's duties.
- Honesty and fairness in all dealings and to treat others with courtesy and respect.
- To work in a safe and compliant manner, and to observe all workplace conduct, health and safety rules and responsibilities.
- Refraining from any discriminatory, bullying, or harassing behavior.
- Immediately disclosing any potential, perceived, or actual conflict of interest.
- To not engage in conduct, whether during or after work hours, that causes damage or potential damage to City property and / or reputation.

Recordkeeping

The City will create, retain, make public records, and dispose of any City records as part of its normal course of business in compliance with all regulatory and legal requirements. All employees are expected to ensure that records are true, accurate and complete. Any manipulation of data to improperly influence, manipulate, or mislead City records will be grounds for progressive discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Media Inquiries

From time to time, employees may be approached by reporters and other members of the media. In order to ensure that the City speaks with one voice and provides accurate information, all media inquiries should be directed to the City Manager and / or Mayor.

- An employee will make every effort to collect the name(s) and contact information of the individual(s) seeking information and / or comment.
- No employee may release any information or personal opinion about the City or its operations to the media without prior approval.

FOIA Inquiries

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provides the public with the right to request access to records from any government agency. Agencies are required to disclose any information requested under FOIA unless it falls under an exemption which protects interests such as personal privacy, national security, and law enforcement.

- All FOIA requests should be submitted directly to the City Clerk.

Confidentiality

During employment, it is common to come into contact with or receive knowledge or information about citizens, suppliers, contractors, government agency representatives, and / or other employees. Unless this information is publicly known, it is considered to be confidential information. Such information will not be disclosed to any other employee, contractor, supplier or public without a valid business purpose and proper authorization.

Workplace Conduct Standards

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the City expects employees to follow these rules of conduct while on City premises, attending City functions or otherwise performing work-related activity.

In addition to maintaining and enforcing this policy to protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization, the City complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations concerning employer / employee rights and obligations.

Though it is not possible to list all forms of behavior that are unacceptable in the workplace, the following are examples of behavior that would be considered infractions. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This list is not intended to be exhaustive:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of City property or the property of a fellow employee.
- Willful destruction of City property or the property of a fellow employee, vendor, and / or citizen.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.

- Failure to report personal criminal charges regarding violence, fraud or other misdemeanor or felony charges brought against the employee.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Inability to work well with others.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment.
- Using excessively abusive, threatening or obscene language and / or gestures.
- Sabotaging another employee's work.
- Making malicious, false and harmful statements about others.
- Publicly disclosing another employee's private information.
- Unauthorized disclosure of proprietary or confidential information.
- Falsifying city records or reports, including time records.
- Gambling, in all forms, on City premises.
- Unsatisfactory job performance; Failure to perform assigned tasks.

Nothing in this policy is intended to, nor should be construed to limit or interfere with employee rights as set forth under all applicable provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, including rights to organize and engage in protected, concerted activities regarding the terms and conditions of employment.

Open Door

The City encourages an open and honest atmosphere in which employee concerns and complaints receive a timely response. If a situation occurs in which an employee believes that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, the employee is encouraged to communicate this through the grievance process as outlined in the next policy. The employee may discontinue the process at any time.

Employees are encouraged to follow this sequence to answer any questions they may have and / or to call attention to any conditions that may seem inequitable or concerns. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint in a reasonable manner.

Grievance

Grievance is an oral or written complaint of an employee relating to their employment, including but not necessarily limited to disciplinary actions, application of policies & procedures, harassment, discrimination, and perceived acts of retaliation. The intent of the grievance procedure is to fairly and thoroughly investigate and resolve employee concerns regarding allegedly improper or unfair application of City employment policies.

<u>Grievance Procedure:</u>

- Step 1: The employee should discuss any grievance with their immediate supervisor as soon as possible after an incident has occurred and an investigation will immediately be conducted.
    - During the investigation all safety concerns will be immediately addressed, appropriate interviews will be conducted, and if it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

- Step 2: If the employee is not satisfied with this decision, then a formal written grievance should be submitted to the City Manager. The grievance must be specific, stating the problem or complaint and steps taken for resolution. The City Manager will select a committee of two Department Directors to review the grievance and find a solution.
- Step 3: Most complaints should be resolved before they reach this stage. However, if an employee continues to be dissatisfied with responses after thoroughly exhausting all avenues available in steps 1 and 2, they may re-submit their complaint to the City Manager who will make a final decision.

- Civil Service employees should consult the Civil Service policies & guidelines for detailed information on the grievance procedure.
- If the grievance is against the City Manager and / or the Chief of Police, the grievance should be filed with the Mayor. The Mayor will work with the City Council as a committee to review the grievance and find a solution.
- If the grievance is against a City Council Member, the Mayor, and / or any other City appointed official, the grievance should be filed with the City Manager. The City Manager will work with the City Council as a committee to review the grievance and find a solution.

Civil Service employees should consult the Civil Service policies & guidelines for further detailed information on the grievance procedure.

Progressive Discipline

The progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent the recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues.

The following steps are suggested. Each step should be documented in the employee's file. The City reserves the right to combine and / or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense.

Step 1 - Informal Discussion

When a performance problem is first identified, the nature of the problem and the action necessary to correct it should be thoroughly discussed with the employee and the immediate supervisor.

Step 2 – Written Warning

If a private informal discussion with the employee has not resulted in corrective action, following a thorough investigation, the immediate supervisor should meet with the employee and review the problem, permit the employee to present information regarding the problem, advise the employee that the problem must be corrected, inform the employee that failure to correct the problem will result in further disciplinary action that may include discharge, and issue a written notice to the employee.

Step 3 – Final Written Warning

If satisfactory performance and corrective action are not achieved under Steps 1 and 2, the immediate supervisor and / or a department head will meet with the employee to review any additional incidents or information about the performance, conduct or attendance issues as well as any prior relevant corrective action. Clear consequences will be outlined for continued failure to meet performance or conduct expectations.

Step 4 – Administrative Leave

Some performance, conduct or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. In this case, the City Manager may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.

In the event that disciplinary action includes administrative leave without pay, the City will collect from the employee the cost of benefits that would have otherwise been earned during that period.

Step 5 – Termination

While all efforts will be made to support employees, grievous actions or failure to improve performance and / or behavior can result in termination of employment.

Behavior that is illegal is not subject to progressive discipline and may result in immediate termination. Such behavior may be reported to local law enforcement authorities. Similarly, theft, substance abuse, intoxication, fighting and other acts of violence at work are also not subject to progressive discipline and may be grounds for immediate termination.

Documentation

The employee will be provided with copies of all progressive discipline documentation. The employee will be asked to sign copies of this documentation attesting to the employee's receipt and understanding of the corrective action outlined in the documents. Copies of the documents will be placed in the employee's official file.

Civil Service Appeals

Employees governed by Civil Service laws may appeal a corrective action either under this section or through the appeal procedures outlined in Civil Service laws. However, they may not pursue both options.

Social Media

Social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and coworkers around the world. However, the use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. Because public confidence in City services and clarity regarding City policy is of utmost importance, and to avoid confusion regarding official policy, employees shall not post personal comments regarding City policy, operations or issues upon public media.

Social Media Guidelines:

- Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, as well as any other form of electronic communication.
- Ultimately, the employee is solely responsible for what the employee posts online.
- Before creating online content, the employee should consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Conduct that adversely affect the employee's job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects the City's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- Avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, or that might constitute harassment or bullying.
- Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Using Social Media at Work

- Refrain from using social media while on work time unless it is work-related.
- Do not use City email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Freedom of Speech

The City is committed to the right to freedom of speech as protected by the United States Constitution. Nothing in this policy is intended to:

- Restrict the freedom of employees to engage in their personal involvement in community activities.
- Affect individual employees' rights to express personal opinions on City or non - City actions and policies.
- Restrict employees from commenting on matters of public concern.

When speaking or writing as a citizen, an employee should be accurate, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that the employee does not speak for the City.

Prohibited Political Activity

City employees may participate in lawful political activities. Participating in these activities must be conducted on the employees' own time and should in no way suggest City endorsement or support.

The following activities are prohibited from being performed while on-duty:

- Demonstrating.
- Counting or recounting votes.
- Circulating petitions.
- Soliciting votes or contributions at any time in any working area of a City facility or otherwise interrupting the workday with these solicitations.
- Conducting or participating in opinion polls.
- Fundraising.
- Using City equipment or resources for making, copying or distributing political materials or messages.
- Harassment of co-workers, customers or vendors regarding political preferences.
- All other activities not considered part of the employee's normal duties.

Political Candidacy

City employees are prohibited from being a candidate in an election or be appointed by the City Council for a position on the Ranson City Council or any board or committee of the City.
All other political candidacy ambitions should be discussed with the City Manager to ensure there are no issues under the WV Ethics Act or any other laws or rules & regulations governing municipal employment.

Time Off & Leaves of Absence

Holidays

The City observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- West Virginia Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Half-day Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Half-day New Year's Eve

In Addition:

- Any day on which an election (municipal, primary, and general) is held.
- Any days or partial days which may be granted by the Governor of West Virginia, the President of the United States, or the City.

Guidelines:

- Paid holidays are available for both regular full & part-time employees as outlined in this policy.
- When a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. Whan a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday.
- Paid holidays will not be considered as time worked for the purpose of overtime calculations.
- Holidays covered under this policy will be paid at the employees' current base rate of pay and will reflect their regularly scheduled hours (ex. 8-hour shift, 10-hour shift, etc.).
- All regular part-time employees scheduled to work an average of 20 hours or more per week on a continuous basis will receive 4 hours holiday pay for each holiday provided.
- Holidays will not be paid to employees on any type of unpaid leave.
- Holidays falling within an approved scheduled vacation will be recorded as a holiday.
- If an employee is called back in to work during the 24-hour period of a holiday covered under this policy they will be paid at a rate of one and one-half times regular pay or given compensatory time as outlined in the Overtime & Compensatory Time Policy.

Premium Holiday Pay

Due to the nature of the work, some employees may be required to work during a holiday. Nonexempt employees scheduled to work on a recognized holiday shall receive an additional premium pay for any hours worked during the defined 24-hour period of a holiday.

- Premium pay is equal to one and one-half times the current base rate of pay and will reflect the employees' regularly scheduled hours (ex. 8-hour shift, 10-hour shift, etc.).
- This is the maximum pay offered and cannot be combined with any other type of pay, including overtime.

On-Call / Emergency Call Back

Due to the nature of the work, some employees may be required to return as representatives of the city outside of normal working hours. While not an exhaustive list, examples include appearing in court or addressing unforeseen and / or emergency situations.

An employee who is called back to work outside the employee's normal work schedule will be paid for the time worked or a minimum of three hours, whichever is greater. Time worked while on call will be calculated at the employee's regular rate of pay. Overtime compensation is applicable only when the total hours worked exceed 40 hours in the workweek.

Emergency call-backs that occur during paid holiday leave will be paid at time and a half as outlined in the Holiday policy.

Annual Leave

The City recognizes the importance of employees having the opportunity to have leisure time and attend to nonwork matters. The City provides annual leave to full-time employees for this purpose, and employees are encouraged to take time off during the year in which this benefit is provided.

Part-time and seasonal employees are not eligible for annual leave.

The City attempts to grant requested annual leave for the period requested by the employee. However, the City must always maintain adequate staffing to meet its operational needs. Therefore, whenever possible, time off must be scheduled in advance and with prior approval of the employee's immediate supervisor.

Annual leave is earned based on employment status and the length of service to the City.

Years of Service	Hours per Pay Period	Hours per Year
0 – 4	4	104
5 – 9	5	130
10 – 14	6.5	169
15+	8.5	221

Annual Leave Guidelines:

- Employees grandfathered into this policy will remain at the higher annual leave accrual bracket that benefits the employee until the current policy offers greater benefits, at which point they will transition to the current policy.
- Annual leave can be requested as soon as it is earned, as outlined in the schedule above.
- Employees may accrue unused annual leave up to a maximum of 240 hours.
- Employees may take annual leave in increments as small 15 minutes.
- Annual leave is computed at the employee's current base rate of pay.
- Annual leave will be included in the calculation of overtime, meaning that any time taken as annual leave will count toward the total hours used to determine eligibility for overtime pay
- Unpaid leave taken beyond the employee's paid allotted annual leave must have prior approval of the City Manager.
- Annual leave shall not accrue if an employee is on unpaid leave, including short-term & long-term disability resulting from a non-work-related injury or illness.
- Employees may request an annual leave drawdown to have accrued annual leave paid out in their next scheduled paycheck, limited to twice a year, once in June & once in November. Requests outside this time frame may be considered and approved by the City Manager.
- Upon termination of employment, employees will be paid for all earned and unused annual leave up to the 240-hour maximum.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is a benefit available for full-time employees and accrues at 4 hours of sick leave per pay period, beginning with the employee's date of hire. Sick leave can be requested as soon as it is earned. The purpose of sick leave is to provide employees with compensation continuance in authorized circumstances.

Guidelines:

- Sick leave may be used for an employee's personal illness, medical quarantine, well-care and medical and dental appointments.
- Sick leave may also be used for the illness, medical quarantine, or preventive care of a member of the employee's immediate family; including the employee's spouse, children, parents, and any individual residing in the same household with whom the employee has a close personal relationship.
- An employee using sick leave shall notify their immediate supervisor of the absence and the qualifying circumstance at the earliest opportunity. Failure to provide timely notice may result in denial of sick leave for the period of unreported absence.
- Sick leave pay is computed at the employee's current base rate of pay.
- An employee may carry forward an unlimited amount of accumulated sick leave.
- If the employee is on leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), sick leave and annual leave must be used initially as part of the FMLA leave.
- An employee who has a sick leave absence of 3 (three) consecutive workdays is expected to turn in a statement from the employee's physician releasing them to return to work.

- If sick leave is unavailable, annual leave may be used in its place.
- Sick leave can be used in increments of 15 minutes.
- Sick leave shall not accrue if an employee is on leave without pay, military leave, or any other authorized absence (exclusive of annual leave), for more than 15 cumulative working days in any one-month, sick leave credit is not earned for that month.
- Employees are not paid for unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

Emergency Administrative Leave

Emergency administrative leave is announced and granted by the City Manager. It is paid leave granted to all employees. This time is not charged to any employee leave balances.

- Unless otherwise notified, if declared prior to beginning of business, administrative emergency leave extends from 6:00 A.M. on the day declared until 12:01 A.M. the following day.
- During emergency administrative leave, emergency service /essential personnel are required to report to work or to secure approval from their supervisors before not reporting to work. If an employee so designated cannot report to work and the supervisor has been appropriately notified, emergency administrative leave shall be granted upon department approval.
- Employees who are not designated as emergency service / essential personnel are not required to report to work during periods of emergency administrative leave.
- Employees already on scheduled leave (including leave without pay) are eligible for emergency administrative leave if declared during the period of scheduled leave.
- If the City opens offices late:
    - Employees who do not report to work at the announced adjusted time are not eligible for emergency administrative leave during the hours the offices are open.
    - Employees who do report to work late may combine annual or compensatory leave and emergency administrative leave to cover the hours missed.

Family & Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 is designed to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities by allowing them to take reasonable unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons. The Act also seeks to accommodate the needs of employers and promote equal employment opportunity for men and women.

Eligible employees may be granted up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per rolling calendar year under the Family and Medical Leave Act, for one or more of the following reasons:

- The birth and care of a newborn child of an employee.
- Placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care.
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) with a serious health condition.
- When the employee is unable to report to work or perform essential job functions because of a serious acute or chronic health condition.

- Any qualifying exigency due to an employee's spouse, child or parent being on covered active duty (or having been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the armed forces.

FMLA Guidelines:

- Employees are eligible for FMLA leave without pay if they have worked for the City for at least 12 months and worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months and after they have used all earned / accrued annual leave and sick leave.
- When possible, an employee is expected to give a 30-day notice of the need to take FMLA.
- Employees must provide medical certification that intermittent or temporary leave is medically necessary.
- Any unpaid leave must be approved by the City Manager.
- Employees are expected to provide periodic reports to their immediate supervisor during the FMLA leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.
- Employees requesting FMLA leave for medical appointments must make reasonable efforts to schedule the leave so as not to unduly disrupt City operations.
- A leave of absence to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury may be entitled to up to 26 weeks in a single 12-month period measured forward from the date an employee first takes that type of leave.
- If eligible, FMLA does not have to be taken in a single block and can be used intermittently. Intermittent FMLA means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule.
- Intermittent FMLA leave may be taken whenever *medically necessary* to care for a seriously ill family member or because the employee is seriously ill and unable to work.
- Time taken off work due to pregnancy complications can be counted against the 12 weeks of FMLA leave.
- While on unpaid leave, annual leave and sick leave benefits will not accrue, and holidays will not be paid.

The City will maintain group health insurance coverage (including dental, vision and life insurance coverage) for an eligible employee for the duration of the FMLA leave of absence as if the employee continued in employment.

- The employee will be responsible for paying the employee's portion on any benefits that are not paid by the employer.
- It is the employee's responsibility to make arrangements with the City for payment of the monthly premium while on leave of absence.
- Failure to pay premiums on a timely basis will result in termination of the policy for the employee.
- Employees who do not return to work from FMLA leave will be required to reimburse the City for any premiums it paid to maintain health coverage for the employee during the FMLA leave.

Returning from Leave

- A medical certification of ability to return to work and perform essential job functions will be required.

- Upon return, an employee will be restored to the employee's original job *or* to an equal job with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment.
    - Key employees (as defined by the Act) may be denied job restoration if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial harm or interference with City operations.
- Employees who fail to return to work by the expiration date of their leave will automatically be separated from employment.
- Should an employee wish to extend a leave of absence, a written request explaining the reasons must be submitted to a director prior to the expiration date of the original leave.

Parental Leave

The City will provide up to 400 hours of paid parental leave to eligible employees for up to 12 months following the birth of an employee's child or the placement of a child with an employee in connection with adoption or foster care. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the employee to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted / placed child. This policy will run concurrently with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) policy, as applicable.

Eligibility

- Employed with the City for at least 12 months (the 12 months do not need to be consecutive).
- Worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the date the leave would begin.
- Be a full-time, regular employee.
- In addition, employees must meet one of the following criteria:
    - Have given birth to a child.
    - Be a spouse or committed partner of a woman who has given birth to a child.
    - Have adopted a child or been placed with a foster child (in either case, the child must be age 17 or younger). The adoption of a new spouse's child is excluded from this policy.
- Appropriate documentation (medical certification, adoption records, etc.) will be required to support eligibility.

Guidelines:

- Paid parental leave will be computed at the employee's current base rate of pay.
- When possible, an employee is expected to give 30-day notice of the need to take paid parental leave.
- Paid Parental Leave is available on a continuous, intermittent, or reduced schedule basis. Intermittent or reduced schedule paid parental leave requires supervisory approval.
- Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Therefor paid parental leave will be counted toward the 12 weeks of available FMLA leave per a rolling 12-month period.
- In no case will the total amount of leave—paid or unpaid—exceed 12 weeks during the rolling 12-month FMLA period.

- The fact that a multiple birth, adoption or placement occurs (e.g., the birth of twins or adoption of siblings) does not increase the 10-week total amount of paid parental leave granted for that event.
- After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave can be compensated through employees' available accrued sick and / or annual leave. Any remaining FMLA leave will be unpaid.
- The City will maintain all benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period. The eligible employee's share of the premium, if any, will be deducted from their pay in accordance with normal practice.
- If a City holiday occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay; however, such holiday pay will not extend the total paid parental leave entitlement.
- Upon termination of the individual's employment at the City, they will not be paid for any unused paid parental leave.

Returning from Leave

- If the paid parental leave is due to the employee giving birth, a medical certificate of ability to return to work and perform essential job functions will be required.
- Upon return, an employee will be restored to the employee's original job or to an equal job with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment.
- Employees who fail to return to work by the expiration date of their leave will automatically be separated from employment.
- Should an employee wish to extend a leave of absence, a written request explaining the reasons must be submitted to an immediate supervisor prior to the expiration date of the original leave. Leave extensions must be approved by the City Manager.

Bereavement Leave

Any employee who wishes to take paid bereavement leave due to a qualifying death should notify the employee's immediate supervisor as soon as possible. If an employee leaves work early on the day they are notified of the death, that day will not count as bereavement leave.

In addition to paid bereavement leave, an employee may request additional time off as necessary. Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence.

Guidelines:

- Employees are allowed up to three (3) consecutive days off from regularly scheduled work duties in the event of the death of the employee's spouse, child, parents, brother, and sister, grandparents, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or relative living in the same household.
- In circumstances not explicitly covered under the standard bereavement leave policy, the city manager retains the discretion to evaluate and approve additional bereavement leave requests on a case-by-case basis.

Military Leave

The City supports the military obligations of all employees and grants regular, full-time employees leaves for uniformed service in accordance with applicable federal and state laws. Any employee who needs time off for uniformed service should immediately notify their immediate supervisor and provide the City with an official copy of the orders requiring active service at their earliest convenience.

Upon return from military service, return to work will be supported as outlined by the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and any other applicable federal and state laws. Failure to report for work within the prescribed time after completion of military service will be considered a voluntary termination.

Jury Duty / Court Leave

Service on a jury when called is a necessary and important civic responsibility and the City recognizes this by granting paid time off consistent with the law.

Guidelines:

- If summoned for jury duty, the employee should forward a copy of the notice to their immediate supervisor as soon as practical.
- The City will compensate the employee for the time served on a jury, the employee's salary less the amount received as jury duty pay.
- At the end of the jury duty, jurors receive a voucher from the Court advising of the amount paid during jury service. This voucher must be turned in to the immediate supervisor upon return to work.
- When an employee is released from jury service, temporarily or permanently, the employee should contact their immediate supervisor who shall determine whether or not the employee should return to complete the remaining hours of the workday.
- This policy applies to jury duty only and does not apply to other court appearances.

Time Off to Vote

The City recognizes that voting is a right and privilege. In almost all cases, employees are expected to vote either before or after work. If extenuating circumstances make this impossible, arrangements can be made with the immediate supervisor for unpaid time off to vote.

Discretionary Personal Leave

Discretionary Personal Leave provides full-time employees with limited paid time off each fiscal year for personal matters that are not otherwise covered by existing leave types but require absence from a full work shift.

Each employee is eligible for up to three (3) full shifts of Discretionary Personal Leave per fiscal year, based on their regularly scheduled shift length (e.g., three 8-hour shifts or three 10-hour shifts).

Guidelines:

- This leave must be used in full-shift increments.
- Cannot exceed three total shifts per fiscal year.
- Does not carry over year to year.
- It is not bankable, transferable, or payable upon separation from employment.
- Does not count toward overtime calculation.

Examples of appropriate use include, but are not limited to:

- Legal or court appointments requiring a full day.
- Additional bereavement time for extended family or longer services.
- Civic responsibilities such as voting.
- Emergency childcare issues.
- Religious observances.
- School registration, conferences, or meetings.
- Home buying, such as closings or inspections.

Leave requests should be made in advance whenever possible and are subject to immediate supervisor approval based on operational needs.

Benefits

Medical & Life Insurance

The City provides medical, dental, vision, and life insurance coverage for regular full-time employees and families. Upon employment, each regular employee is given detailed information about available programs provided by the City's insurance carriers.

- Benefits start on the first day of the month following the hire date and terminate on the last day of the month of termination.
- The sharing of premium costs between the City and the employee is at the discretion of the City Council on an annual review basis.

For full details of all available medical benefit programs visit:

- Medical – PEIA – peia.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx
- Life Insurance – Lincoln Financial Group – lincolnfinancial.com/public/individuals/products/lifeinsurance
- Dental – MET Life Insurance – metlife.com/insurance/dental-insurance
- Vision – VSP Vision – vsp.com

Employee Sponsored Programs

The city offers a variety of employee-sponsored programs designed to support the diverse needs and interests of our workforce. Participation in these programs is entirely voluntary and funded by the employee. Upon hire, all regular full-time employees receive detailed information about the available programs, allowing them to make informed decisions based on their personal and professional interests.

Each program is managed by its respective plan administrator, as outlined below. Employees interested in taking advantage of these additional benefits must coordinate enrollment with the City payroll department prior to finalizing participation.

- Voluntary Life Insurance; available for both the employee and a dependent – Lincoln Life – lincolnfinancial.com/public/individuals/products/lifeinsurance
- Supplemental Insurance – Aflac – https://www.aflac.com/individuals/products/default.aspx
- Christmas Club – Jefferson Security Bank – https://www.jsb.bank/personal/christmas-club

Short Term Disability

The short-term disability benefit provided by the City is an employer-funded plan providing income replacement for employees unable to work due to non-work-related injury, illness, or other qualifying condition(s) as may be determined by the plan administrator. The City pays the entire premium for this employee benefit.

Eligibility

- An employee may be eligible to receive short-term disability benefits on the first day of disability due to accidental injury and the fifteenth consecutive day of disability due to sickness if the employee has exhausted all sick leave.
- The actual granting of disability insurance benefits is at the discretion of the third-party insurance company. Refer to the insurance carrier's summary plan description for full governing details.
- Employees may use vacation, sick time or compensatory to cover the fifteen (15) day waiting period.
- An employee receiving workers' compensation or disability pay under any state or federal plan is ineligible for this benefit.
- To be eligible for continued disability benefits, the employee must not engage in outside employment and is expected to avoid activities that may delay recovery and return to work.

Guidelines:

- The employee must provide medical certification of the disability that includes the start and expected end date of the disability.
- The short-term disability benefit payment is 66.6% percent of the employee's base weekly wages or salary calculated on average earnings in the previous six months.
- The benefit may be paid for a maximum of 26 weeks per calendar year. Payments are made on a regular schedule as determined by the plan administrator. The benefit is taxable income.
- The City will continue to pay health, dental, vision, life, short long-term disability insurance premiums while the employee is on short-term disability for a maximum period of 26 weeks. An employee on short-term disability will still be responsible for their portion of insurance premiums.
- An employee being paid short-term disability benefits is not eligible to accrue annual leave, sick leave, or holiday pay.
- A medical certification of the ability to return to work and perform essential job functions will be required prior to return to work from short term disability.
- Should an employee wish to extend a leave a written request explaining the reasons must be submitted for approval. All extended leaves must be approved by the City Manager.

The plan administrator is Lincoln Financial Group. For full details of the program visit lincolnfinancial.com/public/individuals/products/lifeinsurance

Long-Term Disability

The City provides all regular full-time employees with a Long-Term Disability Insurance (LTD) policy. The LTD plan is an income replacement benefit which provides financial protection for the employee and their family by paying a portion of their income while they are disabled.

Eligibility:

- All active, regular, full-time employees are eligible for this benefit and subject to the requirements of the plan administrator.
- Coverage eligibility will start on the first day of the month following the employee's start date. Should the employment date be the first of the month, coverage will then begin on the date of employment.
- The actual granting and governing of disability insurance benefits is at the discretion of the third-party insurance company. Refer to the insurance carrier's summary plan description for full details.

Long Term Disability Guidelines:

- Employees will not be entitled to long-term disability payments until they have used up all accrued sick leave, annual leave and compensatory time.
- The monthly benefit is 60% of an employee's pre-disability earnings. Some disabilities may not be covered or may have limited coverage under this plan.
- If an employee becomes unable to perform the essential functions of their position, and is receiving long-term disability benefits, the City may terminate the employment relationship in accordance with applicable laws and policies.
- An employee receiving LTD benefits is not eligible to receive or accrue any other City employment benefit.
- While an employee is disabled, the employee may be eligible to receive benefits from other sources. If so, the LTD provider may offset the employee's LTD benefit by the amount the employee is eligible to receive from other sources.
- Some exclusions and limitations to this policy do exist – please refer to the summary plan document for full details.

The plan administrator is **Lincoln Financial Group**. For full details of the program visit lincolnfinancial.com/public/individuals/products/lifeinsurance

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The City provides confidential and voluntary assistance through its employee assistance program (EAP) to all employees and an immediate household family member who may be faced with challenges of financial concerns, legal issues, alcohol or drug problems, marital problems, illness of a family member, emotional worries, childcare problems, etc. The City pays the entire cost of this employee benefit.

Guidelines

- This program is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- EAP counselors are available to assess short term issues and develop a plan for resolution.
- There is no charge to use the services of the EAP and the counselors will make every effort to coordinate referrals for ongoing treatment with the employee's health insurance coverage as well as within their ability to pay.
- In most cases an EAP visit that is urgent or cannot be scheduled outside of work will be treated similar to other doctor's appointments. Refer to City sick leave and attendance procedures.
- Participation is strictly confidential and does not jeopardize job security / promotion opportunity.
- Information given to the EAP counselor may be released to the City only if requested by the employee in writing.

The plan administrator is Lincoln Financial Group. For full details of the Employee Connect program visit:

- GuidanceResources.com - (username: LFGSupport / password: LFGSupport1)
- Download the GuidanceNow^{SM} mobile app
- Call 888-628-4824

Tuition Reimbursement

The City believes in the importance of continual professional development opportunities that increase employees' skills and enhance their contributions to the organization.

Full-time regular employees are eligible for reimbursement for education programs and associated costs that are approved by the City Manager.

Guidelines:

- It is the employee's responsibility to seek out the courses and other training mediums that will enhance their career development and are in line with the City's mission of public service.
- Tuition reimbursement is an opportunity to help offset the costs of educational courses as part of a degree-seeking program that will assist the employees in performing their essential job functions and increase the employee's contribution to the organization.
- Other certificate and training programs may be considered for partial or and / or full reimbursement with approval from the City Manager.
- Employees must request approval for tuition reimbursement before the start date of the proposed class. The request must include applicable course of study, purpose, job relevance, cost, dates, and the name of the institution / source of training.
- This is a reimbursement program. The participating employee is responsible for timely payment of tuition and fees to the host institution.
- The ultimate approval for tuition reimbursement requests is with the City Manager.

Tuition Reimbursement Process:

- Upon satisfactory completion of the coursework, the employee must provide documentation to support completion and payment to receive reimbursement.
- For degree programs, a grade of C or above will be awarded 50% reimbursement of tuition paid. Any grade less than a "C" is not eligible for reimbursement.
- A pass / fail course is 50% reimbursable if passed successfully.
- The maximum reimbursement amount will be $5,000 per fiscal year.
- The amount does not roll into the next fiscal year and is forfeited if not used.

Payback Requirements:

As a matter of record and fair compensation for public funds expended, employees accepting the terms of this policy will be required to sign a written agreement to remain employed by the City for two years from the date of the educational reimbursement. If the employee initiates a termination from the city within that time frame, they will be required to refund a monthly prorated amount to the organization.

Years of Service

The City values the contributions, knowledge and experience of long-term employees. In appreciation of this dedicated service, the City recognizes employees as they reach milestone anniversaries.

Guidelines:

- All full-time active employees become eligible for the $500 years of service cash supplement in the year in which they complete five years of service.
- An additional $250 will be added to this years of service supplemental payment every five years.
    - Example – At 5 years of service an employee receives $500, at 10 years of service receives $750, and so on.
- This annual supplement is paid at the end of the calendar year.

Workers' Compensation

Any injury sustained by an employee in the performance of work for the City is covered by Worker's Compensation Insurance. The City pays the entire premium for this employee benefit.

This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, worker's compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period.

Guidelines:

- If an accident or injury occurs on the job, if possible, an employee must notify their immediate supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence.
- Any accident, no matter how small, must be reported and an injury report completed.
- Along with the injury report, other forms may be required from the Workers' Compensation Insurance and will be completed and returned to the City for immediate submission.

- When ready to return to work after filing a workers' compensation claim, the employee must submit a doctor's medical release certifying the ability to perform essential job functions.
- The City will return an injured employee to work as soon as possible. Temporary job modifications or alternative positions may be based on the employee's medical condition, including any restrictions from the attending physician. These modifications are intended to support recovery and facilitate a timely return to full duty.

Workers' compensation benefits are not provided for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational or social activity sponsored by the City.

Retirement

The City is genuinely appreciative of the service given by each and every employee and is committed to ensuring that employees have some financial security during retirement.

401(a) Plan

- All full-time employees of the City are eligible to enroll in a 401(a) plan.
- The City contributes 5% of the current base income to each employee's plan per pay period.

457(b) Plan

- In addition to the 401(a) Plan, all full-time employees of the City are eligible to participate in a 457(b) plan.
- Employees who choose to participate can elect how much of their salary they want to contribute to the Plan and to direct the investment of their professionally managed funds.
- The City will match up to an additional 5% of base income contributed by the employee.
- All employer contributions are tax deferred until withdrawal, as well as the taxes on any investment earnings from these contributions.

Guidelines

- Retirement benefits and contribution rates are subject to change with appropriate City Council action.
- Employee contributions are fully vested, while employer contributions vest at a rate of 20% per year.
- Employees can borrow against their plan(s) balance under certain limited circumstances. This limited borrowing is managed by the company offering the retirement plan options and all details surrounding this option can be found through the plan summary document.
- Plans are subject to federal law and requirements and restrictions of the plan administrator.
- Upon termination:
    - Employees receive the full value of their contributions and earnings, along with the vested portion of employer contributions.
    - Both plans are eligible to be rolled over into an IRA or another qualified, pre-tax plan.

The plan provider is John Hancock Investments. For full details visit https://www.jhekitpdf.com/ (Contract Number 102257 / Access Number 237600). For account enrollment and payroll deferral elections, employees must coordinate with the City payroll department to finalize changes.

Employee Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook of the City of Ranson, West Virginia (City) and agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies in the handbook.

I understand that the handbook and all other written and oral materials provided to me are intended for informational purposes only. The handbook, City practices, and other communications do not create an employment contract or term. I understand that the policies and benefits, both in the handbook and those communicated to me in any other fashion, are subject to interpretation, review, removal, and change by the City at any time without notice.

I further understand that I am an at-will employee and that neither this document nor any other communication shall bind the City to employ me now or hereafter and that my employment may be terminated by me or the City without reason at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

_____

Employee's Name in Print

_____

Signature of Employee

_____

Date Signed by Employee

A Signed Copy Will Be Placed in Employee's File

AGENDA ITEM 18.

City Council Workshop Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong

ITEM TYPE: PRESENTATION

AGENDA SECTION: Council Orientation

SUBJECT: 2025 Ranson Holiday Calendar

ATTACHMENTS:

Holiday Schedule.pdf

Holiday Calendar 2025

January

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

October

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

November

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

New Years Day	January 1, 2025
Martin Luther King	January 20, 2025
Presidents Day	February 17, 2025
Memorial Day	May 26, 2025
Ranson City Election	June 3, 2025
Juneteenth	June 19, 2025
West Virginia Day	June 20, 2025
Independence Day	July 4, 2025
Labor Day	September 1, 2025
Columbus Day	October 13, 2025
Veterans Day	November 11, 2025
Thanksgiving	November 27, 2025
Lincoln Day	November 28, 2025
Christmas	December 25, 2025