CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

~ AGENDA ~

SPECIAL MEETING

312 South Mildred St
Ranson, WV 25438
www.ransonwv.gov

April 9, 2024 | 7:00 P.M. | Council Chamber

MEETING REGISTRATION:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84899758573

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

i. **CALL TO ORDER**

ii. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

iii. **CITIZENS PRESENTATIONS/PETITIONS**

iv. **CITY MANAGER/ STAFF REPORT**

v. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR**

vi. COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing - A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code
   Legal ad Chapter 19 section 2 and section 11industrial District.docx

2. 2024-355 A Resolution Consideration of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

   Ordinance 2024- 355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11 - 2nd Reading Final
   Ordinance 2024-355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11 (02)March 4, 2024 Planning Commission Recommendations and March 5, 2024 Council Recommendations 3222024.docx
   Ordiannce 2024- 355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11.docx 1st reading March 19 2024

3. Public Hearing - 2023-2033 Ranson Comprehensive Plan
   Legal ad for comprehensive plan 2023-2033 372024.docx

4. Resolution -# 2024 03 Resolution of the City of Ranson City Council Adopting the

City of Ranson 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan

Ranson_Comp_Plan_Draft_231208 (2).pdf

Ordinance Adopting 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan 2nd reading.docx

vii. ADJOURNMENT

AGENDA ITEM vi.1

City Council Regular Meeting Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong, Community & Economic Development

ITEM TYPE: Presentation

AGENDA SECTION: COUNCIL BUSINESS

SUBJECT:

ATTACHMENTS:

Legal ad Chapter 19 section 2 and section 11industrial District.docx

LEGAL NOTICE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
CITY OF RANSON

Ranson City Council will hold a public hearing on April 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at Ranson City Hall, 312 S. Mildred Street, Ranson, WV. The purpose of the public hearing to accept the ORDINANCE OF THE RANSON CITY COUNCIL AMENDING CHAPTER 19 ZONING, SECTION 2 DEFINITIONS AND SECTION 11 INDUSTRIAL DISTICT OF THE RANSON MUNICIPAL CODE

Copies are available for inspection during office hours 8:00 – 4:00 at City Hall
All persons are invited to attend and make comments. If you cannot attend but wish to comment, you may write to the following address prior to April 9, 2024: City of Ranson, Attn: City Clerk, 312 S. Mildred Street, Ranson, WV 25438 or email cityclerk@ransonwv.us Written comments received prior to April 9, 2024, will be provided to the Ranson City Council, and inserted into the official record.

AGENDA ITEM vi.2

City Council Regular Meeting Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong, Community & Economic Development

ITEM TYPE: Presentation

AGENDA SECTION: COUNCIL BUSINESS

SUBJECT:

Council discussed vary issues with Amending Chapter 19 Zoning , Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code.
Requested the changes to be written in an ordinance to be considered and recommended from the Planning Commission to the Ranson City Council. Recommendation was considered by the Planning Commission on March 4, 2024. Recommendations are written and presented in an Ordinance for Consideration of 1st reading.

ATTACHMENTS:

Ordinance 2024- 355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11 - 2nd Reading Final
Ordinance 2024-355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11 (02)March 4, 2024 Planning Commission Recommendations and March 5, 2024 Council Recommendations 3222024.docx
Ordiannce 2024- 355 Chapter 19 Industrial Section 2 and 11.docx 1st reading March 19 2024

A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

WHEREAS, the Ranson City Council, after hearing from the public regarding industrial development, desires to limit future heavy industrial development and uses in favor of light industrial development and uses as defined herein; and

WHEREAS, after considering the proposed amended ordinance text, pursuant to Rason Municipal Ordinance Chapter 16 – Planning and Development and Chapter 19 – Zoning, and consistent with West Virginia Code 8A-7-8(a), the Ranson Planning Commission, during the March 4, 2024, meeting, found that the proposed text amendments as described herein are consistent with the currently adopted Ranson Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, City Council finds that the proposed amendments are in the best interests of the community and are reflective of the will of the people.

NOW THEREFORE, Ranson City Code Chapter 19 - Zoning, Section 2 Definitions and Section 11 – Industrial Districts are amended and reenacted as follows:

Chapter 19 – ZONING

Section 19- 2 – Definitions

Subsection 2 – Specific Definitions

For the purpose of interpreting this chapter, certain words and terms shall be interpreted as indicated below. All other words used in this chapter shall have their customary dictionary definitions.

(1) *Word interpretation.*

a. The word "person" includes a firm, association, organization, partnership, corporation, trust, family, and company as well as an individual.

b. The word "lot" includes the words "plot" and "parcel."

c. The word "building" includes the word "structure."

d. The word "shall" is always mandatory and not merely directory.

e. The word "may" is permissive and not mandatory.

f. The words "used" and "occupied" include "intended, arranged, or designed to be" used or occupied.

g. The word "city" shall mean the City of Ranson, a municipal corporation in the State of West Virginia.

h. The words "ordinance," "regulations," and "requirements" unless otherwise explained, mean this official zoning ordinance of the City of Ranson, West Virginia.

i. The words "map," "zoning map," and "official zoning map" shall mean the official zoning map of the city.

j. References to "city council," "planning commission," "board of adjustment," or similar official board shall mean the corresponding public body of municipal government in the city.

(2) *Specific definitions.*

Accessory building or use: A nonattached building or use clearly incidental to a principal building or use, serving or contributing to the principal building or use, subordinate in area, extent and/or purpose to the principal building or use, and located on the same lot as the principal building or use. The term "accessory buildings or uses" includes the terms "garages," "storage sheds," "playhouses," and "swimming pools."

Artisan Manufacturing is the shared or individual use of hand-tools, mechanical tools, and electronic tools for the manufacture of finished products or parts including design, processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, and packaging of products, as well as the incidental storage, sales and distribution of such products. Typical artisan manufacturing uses include, but are not limited to electronic goods, food, and bakery products; beverages; printmaking; household appliances; leather products; jewelry and clothing/apparel; metal work; furniture; glass or ceramic production; paper manufacturing.

Automobile service station: A business providing gasoline, oil, grease, tires, batteries, accessories, minor maintenance, and related services.

Boardinghouse: A building where, for compensation, lodging with or without meals for nontransient persons is provided.

Building: Any structure having a roof supported by columns or by walls designed for shelter, housing, enclosure of persons, animals, property or business activity.

Building height: The vertical distance from the highest point of the building, excluding spires, antennas, and any other specific exceptions in the "General provisions" section of this chapter.

District: A zoning district is an area within the city in which the zoning regulations are uniform.

Duplex: A residence designed for or occupied by two families only with separate housekeeping and cooking facilities for each.

Dwelling, multi-family: A dwelling containing two or more dwelling units, including apartment houses, townhouses, condominiums and duplexes.

Dwelling unit: A building or portion thereof providing complete living facilities (bathroom, kitchen, sleeping quarters) for one family.

Family: One or more persons occupying a single dwelling unit, provided that unless all members are related by blood or marriage, no such family shall contain over five persons.

Family care home: A home with support and supervisory personnel that provides room, residential care and habitation services in a family environment for not more than six resident handicapped persons.

Fence: Any permanent partition, structure, or gate erected as a dividing marker, barrier, or enclosure, including hedges or living bushes or shrubs, encircling either wholly or any portion of any area. See section 16-179 for fencing standards.

Frontage: All the property abutting one side of a street, measured along the street line.

Garage, private: An accessory structure to a dwelling designed for the storage of family motor vehicles in which no business, occupation, or service is conducted.

Home occupation: Work for compensation conducted within a dwelling by a person or family residing therein. Home occupations are extensions of traditional home-making activities and crafts or professions which are generally only headquartered in the home and do not customarily have regular hours for the public. Customary home occupations include, but are not limited to, dress making, seam stressing, cooking and baking, quilting, hairdressing, music instructing, renting (but not more than one room to boarders), insurance salespersons, accountants, bookkeepers, consultants, and manufacturers' sales representatives.

Hotel: A commercial structure and business in which sleeping accommodations are provided, including customary accessory uses, if they are a physical and integrated

part of the principal use. The term "hotel" includes the terms "motel" and "tourist home."

Industrial District is a category which provides for the location of industrial uses that are able to be performed in such a manner as to control the external effects of the process, such as smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration, odor, etc. Uses within this category, other than outside storage, shall be conducted within an enclosed building. Generally, industrial uses involve materials that have previously been prepared, or raw materials that do not need refining. These uses do not create a noticeable amount of noise, dust, odor, smoke, glare, or vibration outside of the building or on the site in which the activity takes place.

Lot: A parcel of land intended as a unit for transfer of ownership or for development or both.

Lot, corner: A lot abutting a street on two intersecting sides of the lot.

Lot depth: The average distance between front and rear lot lines.

Lot frontage: The distance between the two side lot lines as measured along the street right-of-way.

Lot width: The distance between side lot lines measured at the front building line.

Mobile home: A factory-assembled, movable dwelling designed and constructed to be towed on its own chassis, comprised of frame and wheels, to be used without a permanent foundation and distinguishable from other types of dwellings in that the standards to which it is built include provisions for its mobility on that chassis as a vehicle.

Nonconforming lot: A lot which does not conform to the district regulations in which it is located.

Nonconforming structure: A building, mobile home, wall, fence, sign or other structure which does not conform to the regulations of this chapter.

Nonconforming use: A use of land and/or structure which was a conforming use prior to the effective date of the ordinance from which this chapter is derived.

Permitted use: A use permitted by right in a district, not subject to approval as a special exception nor prohibited in the district.

Principal building or use: The principal purpose for which the lot or the main structure thereon is designed, arranged, intended or used.

Restaurant, drive-in: A food service establishment whereby food is dispensed directly over the counter and consumed in the vehicle or served directly to customers in vehicles.

Right-of-way: An area dedicated to and/or maintained by the city, chartered public utilities, or the state for the placement of roads and/or utilities.

Setback: The minimum required distance between the lot line and the building line.

Shopping center: Two or more commercial establishments planned and constructed as a single unit with off-street parking and loading facilities provided on the property.

Special exception: A proposed special use which the board of adjustment must review to determine whether that use is compatible with authorized uses.

Street: A dedicated and accepted public right-of-way for vehicular traffic which provides the principle means of access to abutting properties.

Structure: Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires more or less permanent location on the ground, or which is attached to something more or less permanently located on the ground. Among other things, the term "structure" includes the terms "buildings," "manufactured housing," "walls," "fences," and "signs."

Variance: A device which grants a property owner relief from certain provisions of a zoning ordinance to relieve such owner from a particular hardship; in particular, relief from dimensional requirements.

Yard: A required open space on the same lot with a building or structure unoccupied and unobstructed from the ground upward except by trees, shrubbery, landscaping features, or other exceptions specified in this chapter.

Yard, front: A yard from the front line of the principal building to the street right-of-way or front property line extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, rear: A yard from the rear line of the principal building to the rear lot line and extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, side: A yard from the side-line of the principal building to the side lot line and extending from the front yard to the rear yard.

Chapter 19 – ZONING

Section 19- 11 – Industrial Districts

(a) The intent of the industrial district zone is to provide for wholesale and warehousing uses as well as those industrial uses that include fabrication, artisanal manufacturing, assembly or processing of materials that are in refined form and that do not in their transformation create smoke, gas, odor, dust, noise, vibration of earth, soot or lighting to a degree that is offensive when measured at the property line of subject property.

Area and Dimensional Regulations.

Development Standards for Industrial Districts	
Setbacks	
Front	30 ft minimum
Side street	30 ft minimum
Side	25 ft minimum
Rear	25 ft minimum
Building dimensions	
Maximum Height	50 ft or 5 stories max.
Lot Coverage	50% max.
Landscaping	
Buffers	A 50 ft landscaped buffer abutting residential districts.

1. Any activity storing materials outdoors shall construct a fence to screen the ground-level view from any public right-of-way or of any residential or retail use. Materials shall not be piled or staked higher than the opaque fence.
2. All outdoor electrical, plumbing, and mechanical equipment must be located behind the primary structure or concealed from street view with a screen or wall. These facilities may encroach into setbacks.
3. Loading and service areas. Building orientation shall be such that loading, and service areas do not face the street right-of-way, except in the case of double frontage lots, where such areas must be located in a rear or side yard which faces the right-of-way. All loading and service areas shall be screened from view from off the premises. Where the site abuts a residential or retail use, the building wall facing such lots shall not have any service door openings or loading docks oriented toward the residential or retail use.

4. Performance Standards.

   All industrial district users shall conform to the following performance standards being compliance set forth and outlined regulations by the West Virginia Environmental Protection. Any violation of these standards is a violation of the Zoning Ordinance.

   a. Noise or vibration. No noise or vibration, other than related to transportation activities and temporary construction work, shall be discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   b. Radioactivity. No activity shall result in the emission of radioactivity in any amounts.

   c. Electrical disturbance. No activity shall cause electrical disturbance adversely affecting the operation of any equipment other than that of the creator of such disturbance.

   d. Inflammable or explosive materials. No inflammable or explosive materials shall be produced, used, stored, or handled unless provided at all points with adequate safety devices and procedures against hazards of explosion and all equipment and devices for fire prevention and firefighting approved by the local Fire Department and or West Virginia Fire Marshall.

   e. Air pollution. No air pollution or smoke shall be produced, which is in violation of the requirements of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

   f. Glare or heat. No direct or sky-reflected glare or heat shall be produced which is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   g. Odorous gases. No emission of any odorous gases or matter shall occur in quantities that are discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   h. Dust, dirt, or particulate matter. No discharge into the air of any dust, dirt or particulate matter shall occur from any activity or from any products stored on the building site that is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   i. Liquid contaminants. No discharge into any public sewer, private sewage disposal system, stream, or into the ground of any liquid contaminants or materials of such nature or temperature which contaminates any water supply, interferes with bacterial processes and sewage treatment, or in any way causes the emission of dangerous or offensive materials shall occur.

   j. Adjacency. Manufacturing uses in ID shall be subject to a 50-foot separation in place of the required setback. The separation shall be landscaped with

shade trees, understory trees, and evergreen shrubbery to provide a visual and sound barrier.

Section 2. (Uncodified in published ordinances).
(a) Savings Clause. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable, and if any clause, sentence, word, section or provision is declared void or unenforceable for any reasons by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect any portion of the Ordinance other than said part or portion thereof.

(b) Repeal. All ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

(c) Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

First Reading: March 19, 2024

Public Hearing: April 09, 2024

Second Reading: April 09, 2024

Enacted this 9th day April 2024

_____

Keith D. Pierson
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Darla Armstrong
City Clerk

Affix City Seal:

ORDINANCE #:2024-355

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Automobile service station: A business providing gasoline, oil, grease, tires, batteries, accessories, minor maintenance, and related services.

Boardinghouse: A building where, for compensation, lodging with or without meals for nontransient persons is provided.

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Family care home: A home with support and supervisory personnel that provides room, residential care and habitation services in a family environment for not more than six resident handicapped persons.

Fence: Any permanent partition, structure, or gate erected as a dividing marker, barrier, or enclosure, including hedges or living bushes or shrubs, encircling either wholly or any portion of any area. See section 16-179 for fencing standards.

Frontage: All the property abutting one side of a street, measured along the street line.

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Home occupation: Work for compensation conducted within a dwelling by a person or family residing therein. Home occupations are extensions of traditional home-making activities and crafts or professions which are generally only headquartered in the home and do not customarily have regular hours for the public. Customary home occupations include, but are not limited to, dress making, seam stressing, cooking and baking, quilting, hairdressing, music instructing, renting (but not more than one room to boarders), insurance salespersons, accountants, bookkeepers, consultants, and manufacturers' sales representatives.

Hotel: A commercial structure and business in which sleeping accommodations are provided, including customary accessory uses, if they are a physical and integrated part of the principal use. The term "hotel" includes the terms "motel" and "tourist home."

Industrial District is a category which provides for the location of industrial uses that are able to be performed in such a manner as to control the external effects of the process, such as smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration, odor, etc. Uses within this category, other than outside storage, shall be conducted within an enclosed building. Generally, industrial uses involve materials that have previously been prepared, or raw materials that do not need refining. These uses do not create a noticeable amount of noise, dust, odor, smoke, glare, or vibration outside of the building or on the site in which the activity takes place.

Lot: A parcel of land intended as a unit for transfer of ownership or for development or both.

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Mobile home: A factory-assembled, movable dwelling designed and constructed to be towed on its own chassis, comprised of frame and wheels, to be used without a permanent foundation and distinguishable from other types of dwellings in that the standards to which it is built include provisions for its mobility on that chassis as a vehicle.

Nonconforming lot: A lot which does not conform to the district regulations in which it is located.

Nonconforming structure: A building, mobile home, wall, fence, sign or other structure which does not conform to the regulations of this chapter.

Nonconforming use: A use of land and/or structure which was a conforming use prior to the effective date of the ordinance from which this chapter is derived.

Permitted use: A use permitted by right in a district, not subject to approval as a special exception nor prohibited in the district.

Principal building or use: The principal purpose for which the lot or the main structure thereon is designed, arranged, intended or used.

Restaurant, drive-in: A food service establishment whereby food is dispensed directly over the counter and consumed in the vehicle or served directly to customers in vehicles.

Right-of-way: An area dedicated to and/or maintained by the city, chartered public utilities, or the state for the placement of roads and/or utilities.

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Variance: A device which grants a property owner relief from certain provisions of a zoning ordinance to relieve such owner from a particular hardship; in particular, relief from dimensional requirements.

Yard: A required open space on the same lot with a building or structure unoccupied and unobstructed from the ground upward except by trees, shrubbery, landscaping features, or other exceptions specified in this chapter.

Yard, front: A yard from the front line of the principal building to the street right-of-way or front property line extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, rear: A yard from the rear line of the principal building to the rear lot line and extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, side: A yard from the side-line of the principal building to side lot line and extending from the front yard to the rear yard.

Chapter 19 – ZONING

Section 19- 11 – Industrial Districts

(a) ~~Purpose. This district is designed to provide areas for light industry. primarily for manufacturing and processing industries and their accessory uses, for supporting or related storage, transportation, and distribution activities, for commercial activities with high intensity characteristics, and for certain supporting activities for the convenience of the concentrated employee population.~~

(a) The intent of the industrial district zone is to provide for wholesale and warehousing uses as well as those industrial uses that include fabrication, artisanal manufacturing, assembly or processing of materials that are in refined form and that do not in their transformation create smoke, gas, odor, dust, noise, vibration of earth, soot or lighting to a degree that is offensive when measured at the property line of subject property.

~~(b) *Permitted uses—Manufacturing and fabrication.*~~

~~(1) Air conditioning and heating equipment.~~
~~(2) Apparel and clothing~~
~~(3) Auto parts and accessories.~~
~~(4) Bakery and food products.~~
~~(5) Bedding and carpets.~~
~~(6) Beverages, including bottling.~~
~~(7) Boats.~~
~~(8) Books.~~
~~(9) Business machines.~~
~~(10) Candy and confections.~~
~~(11) Carbon and battery products.~~
~~(12) Dairy products.~~
~~(13) Drugs, medicines, cosmetics.~~
~~(14) Electrical appliances and electronic equipment.~~
~~(15) Farm implement and equipment sales and repair, feed and fertilizer.~~
~~(16) Furniture.~~
~~(17) Glass, ceramics and tile.~~
~~(18) Hardware and housewares.~~
~~(19) Ice.~~
~~(20) Industrial supplies and equipment.~~
~~(21) Insulation and wallboard.~~
~~(22) Leather products.~~
~~(23) Light machine tools.~~
~~(24) Monument works.~~
~~(25) Musical instruments.~~

(26) Optical goods.
(27) Paper products (finished).
(28) Plastic products.
(29) Pottery porcelain.
(30) Precision instruments and jewelry.
(31) Recreation and sporting goods.
(32) Signs.
(33) Soap, detergents.
(34) Textiles and cordage.
(35) Trucks, trailers and mobile homes.
(36) Watches and clocks.
(37) Brass foundry.

(c) *Permitted uses—Processing activities.*

(1) Coffee, tea, spices.
(2) Dry cleaning and laundry plants.
(3) Grain and seed plants.
(4) Printing, engraving, publishing.
(5) Medical cannabis grower/processor; provided that the city zoning administrator finds the following conditions have been demonstrated by the applicant:

a. Applicant is properly licensed with city and state.

b. Applicant has been issued a state permit under W. Va. Code § 16A-6-1-1 et seq. and related regulations of the state to lawfully grow, process and/or manufacture medical [cannabis].

c. Applicant must submit detailed floor plan and location map demonstrating full compliance with W. Va. Code § 16A-8-2 and related regulations of the state.

d. Copy of an any adjustment or waivers of prohibition, if any, including conditions for this waiver granted to the applicant from the commissioner of the bureau for public health pursuant to W. Va. Code § 16A-8-2(b)

(d) *Permitted uses—Supporting, intensive or large-area commercial activities.*

(1) Auction sales.

(2) Building materials, storage and sales.

(3) Communication towers and antennas.

(4) Contractor's offices and storage yards.

~~(5) Freezer lockers.~~

~~(6) Machine and welding shops.~~

~~(7) Plumbing, heating, and electrical supplies and repair.~~

~~(8) Public works, public safety, governmental and public utilities.~~

~~(e) *Permitted uses—Special exceptions.*~~

~~(1) Acid chemicals, and allied products manufacturing and storage.~~

~~(2) Bulk storage of petroleum products, provided such uses are properly buffered, located at least 300 feet from residential and related structural uses, and at least 1,000 feet from other bulk storage facilities.~~

~~(3) Industrial equipment and machinery repair and servicing.~~

~~(4) Pesticide and herbicide production.~~

~~(5) Stone and gravel work.~~

~~(6) Little league park to be permitted as a special exception in Block 129 of the Industrial District (ID).~~

~~(7) Reserved.~~

~~(f) *Reserved.*~~

~~*(g) Apiaries and bees.* Apiaries and bees, upon finding that all requirements and best management practices are followed as defined in section 4-28~~

Area and Dimensional Regulations.

Development Standards for Industrial Districts	
Setbacks	
Front	30 ft minimum
Side street	30 ft minimum
Side	25 ft minimum
Rear	25 ft minimum
Building dimensions	
Maximum Height	50 ft or 5 stories max.
Lot Coverage	50% max.
Landscaping	
Buffers	A 50 ft landscaped buffer abutting residential districts.

1. Any activity storing materials outdoors shall construct a fence to screen the ground-level view from any public right-of-way or of any residential or retail use. Materials shall not be piled or staked higher than the opaque fence.
2. All outdoor electrical, plumbing, and mechanical equipment must be located behind the primary structure or concealed from street view with a screen or wall. These facilities may encroach into setbacks.
3. Loading and service areas. Building orientation shall be such that loading, and service areas do not face the street right-of-way, except in the case of double frontage lots, where such areas must be located in a rear or side yard which faces the right-of-way. All loading and service areas shall be screened from view from off the premises. Where the site abuts a residential or retail use, the building wall facing such lots shall not have any service door openings or loading docks oriented toward the residential or retail use.
4. Performance Standards.

   All industrial district users shall conform to the following performance standards and compliance set forth and outlined regulations by the West Virginia Environmental Protection. Any violation of these standards is a violation of the Zoning Ordinance.

   a. Noise or vibration. No noise or vibration, other than related to transportation activities and temporary construction work, shall be discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   b. Radioactivity. No activity shall result in the emission of radioactivity in any amounts.

   c. Electrical disturbance. No activity shall cause electrical disturbance adversely affecting the operation of any equipment other than that of the creator of such disturbance.

   d. Inflammable or explosive materials. No inflammable or explosive materials shall be produced, used, stored, or handled unless provided at all points with adequate safety devices and procedures against hazards of explosion and all equipment and devices for fire prevention and firefighting approved by the local Fire Department and or West Virginia Fire Marshall. ~~Independent Fire Department.~~

   e. Air pollution. No air pollution or smoke shall be produced, which is in violation of the requirements of the ~~West Virginia Department of Environmental Management.~~ West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

   f. Glare or heat. No direct or sky-reflected glare or heat shall be produced which is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

g. Odorous gases. No emission of any odorous gases or matter shall occur in quantities that are discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

h. Dust, dirt, or particulate matter. No discharge into the air of any dust, dirt or particulate matter shall occur from any activity or from any products stored on the building site that is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

i. Liquid contaminants. No discharge into any public sewer, private sewage disposal system, stream, or into the ground of any liquid contaminants or materials of such nature or temperature which contaminates any water supply, interferes with bacterial processes and sewage treatment, or in any way causes the emission of dangerous or offensive materials shall occur.

j. Adjacency. Manufacturing uses in ID shall be subject to a 50-foot separation in place of the required setback. The separation shall be landscaped with shade trees, understory trees, and evergreen shrubbery to provide a visual and sound barrier.

Section 2. (Uncodified in published ordinances).
(a) Savings Clause. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable, and if any clause, sentence, word, section or provision is declared void or unenforceable for any reasons by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect any portion of the Ordinance other than said part or portion thereof.

(b) Repeal. All ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

(c) Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.

A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

First Reading: March 19, 2024

Public Hearing: April 09, 2024

Second Reading: April 09, 2024

Enacted this 9th day April 2024

_____
Keith D. Pierson
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Darla Armstrong
City Clerk

Affix City Seal:

ORDINANCE #:2024-355

A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

WHEREAS, the Ranson City Council, after hearing from the public regarding industrial development, desires to limit future heavy industrial development and uses in favor of light industrial development and uses as defined herein; and

WHEREAS, after considering the proposed amended ordinance text, pursuant to Rason Municipal Ordinance Chapter 16 – Planning and Development and Chapter 19 – Zoning, and consistent with West Virginia Code 8A-7-8(a), the Ranson Planning Commission, during the March 4, 2024, meeting, found that the proposed text amendments as described herein are consistent with the currently adopted Ranson Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, City Council finds that the proposed amendments are in the best interests of the community and are reflective of the will of the people.

NOW THEREFORE, Ranson City Code Chapter 19 - Zoning, Section 2 Definitions and Section 11 – Industrial Districts are amended and reenacted as follows:

Chapter 19 – ZONING

Section 19- 2 – Definitions

Subsection 2 – Specific Definitions

For the purpose of interpreting this chapter, certain words and terms shall be interpreted as indicated below. All other words used in this chapter shall have their customary dictionary definitions.

(1) *Word interpretation.*

a. The word "person" includes a firm, association, organization, partnership, corporation, trust, family, and company as well as an individual.

b. The word "lot" includes the words "plot" and "parcel."

c. The word "building" includes the word "structure."

d. The word "shall" is always mandatory and not merely directory.

e. The word "may" is permissive and not mandatory.

f. The words "used" and "occupied" include "intended, arranged, or designed to be" used or occupied.

g. The word "city" shall mean the City of Ranson, a municipal corporation in the State of West Virginia.

h. The words "ordinance," "regulations," and "requirements" unless otherwise explained, mean this official zoning ordinance of the City of Ranson, West Virginia.

i. The words "map," "zoning map," and "official zoning map" shall mean the official zoning map of the city.

j. References to "city council," "planning commission," "board of adjustment," or similar official board shall mean the corresponding public body of municipal government in the city.

(2) *Specific definitions.*

Accessory building or use: A nonattached building or use clearly incidental to a principal building or use, serving or contributing to the principal building or use, subordinate in area, extent and/or purpose to the principal building or use, and located on the same lot as the principal building or use. The term "accessory buildings or uses" includes the terms "garages," "storage sheds," "playhouses," and "swimming pools."

Artisan Manufacturing is the shared or individual use of hand-tools, mechanical tools, and electronic tools for the manufacture of finished products or parts including design, processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, and packaging of products, as well as the incidental storage, sales and distribution of such products. Typical artisan manufacturing uses include, but are not limited to electronic goods, food, and bakery products; beverages; printmaking; household appliances; leather products; jewelry and clothing/apparel; metal work; furniture; glass or ceramic production; paper manufacturing.

Automobile service station: A business providing gasoline, oil, grease, tires, batteries, accessories, minor maintenance, and related services.

Boardinghouse: A building where, for compensation, lodging with or without meals for nontransient persons is provided.

Building: Any structure having a roof supported by columns or by walls designed for shelter, housing, enclosure of persons, animals, property or business activity.

Building height: The vertical distance from the highest point of the building, excluding spires, antennas, and any other specific exceptions in the "General provisions" section of this chapter.

District: A zoning district is an area within the city in which the zoning regulations are uniform.

Duplex: A residence designed for or occupied by two families only with separate housekeeping and cooking facilities for each.

Dwelling, multi-family: A dwelling containing two or more dwelling units, including apartment houses, townhouses, condominiums, and duplexes.

Dwelling unit: A building or portion thereof providing complete living facilities (bathroom, kitchen, sleeping quarters) for one family.

Family: One or more persons occupying a single dwelling unit, provided that unless all members are related by blood or marriage, no such family shall contain over five persons.

Family care home: A home with support and supervisory personnel that provides room, residential care and habitation services in a family environment for not more than six resident handicapped persons.

Fence: Any permanent partition, structure, or gate erected as a dividing marker, barrier, or enclosure, including hedges or living bushes or shrubs, encircling either wholly or any portion of any area. See section 16-179 for fencing standards.

Frontage: All the property abutting one side of a street, measured along the street line.

Garage, private: An accessory structure to a dwelling designed for the storage of family motor vehicles and in which no business, occupation, or service is conducted.

Home occupation: Work for compensation conducted within a dwelling by a person or family residing therein. Home occupations are extensions of traditional home-making activities and crafts or professions which are generally only headquartered in the home and do not customarily have regular hours for the public. Customary home occupations include, but are not limited to, dress making, seam stressing, cooking, and baking, quilting, hairdressing, music instructing,

renting (but not more than one room to boarders), insurance salespersons, accountants, bookkeepers, consultants, and manufacturers' sales representatives.

Hotel: A commercial structure and business in which sleeping accommodations are provided, including customary accessory uses, if they are a physical and integrated part of the principal use. The term "hotel" includes the terms "motel" and "tourist home."

Industrial District is a category which provides for the location of industrial uses that are able to be performed in such a manner as to control the external effects of the process, such as smoke, noise, soot, dirt, vibration, odor, etc. Uses within this category, other than outside storage, shall be conducted within an enclosed building. Generally, industrial uses involve materials that have previously been prepared, or raw materials that do not need refining. These uses do not create a noticeable amount of noise, dust, odor, smoke, glare, or vibration outside of the building or on the site in which the activity takes place.

Lot: A parcel of land intended as a unit for transfer of ownership or for development or both.

Lot, corner: A lot abutting a street on two intersecting sides of the lot.

Lot depth: The average distance between front and rear lot lines.

Lot frontage: The distance between the two side lot lines as measured along the street right-of-way.

Lot width: The distance between side lot lines measured at the front building line.

Mobile home: A factory-assembled, movable dwelling designed and constructed to be towed on its own chassis, comprised of frame and wheels, to be used without a permanent foundation and distinguishable from other types of dwellings in that the standards to which it is built include provisions for its mobility on that chassis as a vehicle.

Nonconforming lot: A lot which does not conform to the district regulations in which it is located.

Nonconforming structure: A building, mobile home, wall, fence, sign or other structure which does not conform to the regulations of this chapter.

Nonconforming use: A use of land and/or structure which was a conforming use prior to the effective date of the ordinance from which this chapter is derived.

Permitted use: A use permitted by right in a district, not subject to approval as a special exception nor prohibited in the district.

Principal building or use: The principal purpose for which the lot or the main structure thereon is designed, arranged, intended, or used.

Restaurant, drive-in: A food service establishment whereby food is dispensed directly over the counter and consumed in the vehicle or served directly to customers in vehicles.

Right-of-way: An area dedicated to and/or maintained by the city, chartered public utilities, or the state for the placement of roads and/or utilities.

Setback: The minimum required distance between the lot line and the building line.

Shopping center: Two or more commercial establishments planned and constructed as a single unit with off-street parking and loading facilities provided on the property.

Special exception: A proposed special use which the board of adjustment must review to determine whether that use is compatible with authorized uses.

Street: A dedicated and accepted public right-of-way for vehicular traffic which provides the principle means of access to abutting properties.

Structure: Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires more or less permanent location on the ground, or which is attached to something more or less permanently located on the ground. Among other things, the term "structure" includes the terms "buildings," "manufactured housing," "walls," "fences," and "signs."

Variance: A device which grants a property owner relief from certain provisions of a zoning ordinance to relieve such owner from a particular hardship; in particular, relief from dimensional requirements.

Yard: A required open space on the same lot with a building or structure unoccupied and unobstructed from the ground upward except by trees, shrubbery, landscaping features, or other exceptions specified in this chapter.

Yard, front: A yard from the front line of the principal building to the street right-of-way or front property line extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, rear: A yard from the rear line of the principal building to the rear lot line and extending across the full width of the lot.

Yard, side: A yard from the side-line of the principal building to side lot line and extending from the front yard to the rear yard.

Chapter 19 – ZONING

Section 19- 11 – Industrial Districts

(a) ~~Purpose. This district is designed to provide areas for light industry. primarily for manufacturing and processing industries and their accessory uses, for supporting or related storage, transportation, and distribution activities, for commercial activities with high intensity characteristics, and for certain supporting activities for the convenience of the concentrated employee population.~~

(a) The intent of the industrial district zone is to provide for wholesale and warehousing uses as well as those industrial uses that include fabrication, artisanal manufacturing, assembly or processing of materials that are in refined form and that do not in their transformation create smoke, gas, odor, dust, noise, vibration of earth, soot or lighting to a degree that is offensive when measured at the property line of subject property.

~~(b) *Permitted uses—Manufacturing and fabrication.*~~

~~(1) Air conditioning and heating equipment.~~
~~(2) Apparel and clothing~~
~~(3) Auto parts and accessories.~~
~~(4) Bakery and food products.~~
~~(5) Bedding and carpets.~~
~~(6) Beverages, including bottling.~~
~~(7) Boats.~~
~~(8) Books.~~
~~(9) Business machines.~~
~~(10) Candy and confections.~~
~~(11) Carbon and battery products.~~
~~(12) Dairy products.~~
~~(13) Drugs, medicines, cosmetics.~~
~~(14) Electrical appliances and electronic equipment.~~
~~(15) Farm implement and equipment sales and repair, feed and fertilizer.~~
~~(16) Furniture.~~
~~(17) Glass, ceramics and tile.~~
~~(18) Hardware and housewares.~~
~~(19) Ice.~~
~~(20) Industrial supplies and equipment.~~
~~(21) Insulation and wallboard.~~

(22) Leather products.
(23) Light machine tools.
(24) Monument works.
(25) Musical instruments.
(26) Optical goods.
(27) Paper products (finished).
(28) Plastic products.
(29) Pottery porcelain.
(30) Precision instruments and jewelry.
(31) Recreation and sporting goods.
(32) Signs.
(33) Soap, detergents.
(34) Textiles and cordage.
(35) Trucks, trailers and mobile homes.
(36) Watches and clocks.
(37) Brass foundry.

(c) *Permitted uses—Processing activities.*

(1) Coffee, tea, spices.
(2) Dry cleaning and laundry plants.
(3) Grain and seed plants.
(4) Printing, engraving, publishing.
(5) Medical cannabis grower/processor; provided that the city zoning administrator finds the following conditions have been demonstrated by the applicant:

a. Applicant is properly licensed with city and state.

b. Applicant has been issued a state permit under W. Va. Code § 16A-6-1-1 et seq. and related regulations of the state to lawfully grow, process and/or manufacture medical [cannabis].

c. Applicant must submit detailed floor plan and location map demonstrating full compliance with W. Va. Code § 16A-8-2 and related regulations of the state.

d. Copy of an any adjustment or waivers of prohibition, if any, including conditions for this waiver granted to the applicant from the commissioner of the bureau for public health pursuant to W. Va. Code § 16A-8-2(b)

(d) *Permitted uses—Supporting, intensive or large-area commercial activities.*

(1) Auction sales.

(2) Building materials, storage and sales.

~~(3) Communication towers and antennas.~~

~~(4) Contractor's offices and storage yards.~~

~~(5) Freezer lockers.~~

~~(6) Machine and welding shops.~~

~~(7) Plumbing, heating, and electrical supplies and repair.~~

~~(8) Public works, public safety, governmental and public utilities.~~

~~(c) *Permitted uses—Special exceptions.*~~

~~(1) Acid chemicals, and allied products manufacturing and storage.~~

~~(2) Bulk storage of petroleum products, provided such uses are properly buffered, located at least 300 feet from residential and related structural uses, and at least 1,000 feet from other bulk storage facilities.~~

~~(3) Industrial equipment and machinery repair and servicing.~~

~~(4) Pesticide and herbicide production.~~

~~(5) Stone and gravel work.~~

~~(6) Little league park to be permitted as a special exception in Block 129 of the Industrial District (ID).~~

~~(7) Reserved.~~

~~(f) *Reserved.*~~

~~*(g) Apiaries and bees.* Apiaries and bees, upon finding that all requirements and best management practices are followed as defined in section 4-28~~

Area and Dimensional Regulations.

Development Standards for Industrial Districts	
Setbacks	
Front	30 ft minimum
Side street	30 ft minimum
Side	25 ft minimum
Rear	25 ft minimum
Building dimensions	
Maximum Height	50 ft or 5 stories max.
Lot Coverage	50% max.

Landscaping	
Buffers	A 50 ft landscaped buffer abutting residential districts.

1. Any activity storing materials outdoors shall construct a fence to screen the ground-level view from any public right-of-way or of any residential or retail use. Materials shall not be piled or staked higher than the opaque fence.
2. All outdoor electrical, plumbing, and mechanical equipment must be located behind the primary structure or concealed from street view with a screen or wall. These facilities may encroach into setbacks.
3. Loading and service areas. Building orientation shall be such that loading, and service areas do not face the street right-of-way, except in the case of double frontage lots, where such areas must be located in a rear or side yard which faces the right-of-way. All loading and service areas shall be screened from view from off the premises. Where the site abuts a residential or retail use, the building wall facing such lots shall not have any service door openings or loading docks oriented toward the residential or retail use.
4. Performance Standards.

   All industrial district uses shall conform to the following performance standards. Any violation of these standards is a violation of the Zoning Ordinance.

   a. Noise or vibration. No noise or vibration, other than related to transportation activities and temporary construction work, shall be discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

   b. Radioactivity. No activity shall result in the emission of radioactivity in any amounts.

   c. Electrical disturbance. No activity shall cause electrical disturbance adversely affecting the operation of any equipment other than that of the creator of such disturbance.

   d. Inflammable or explosive materials. No inflammable or explosive materials shall be produced, used, stored, or handled unless provided at all points with adequate safety devices and procedures against hazards of explosion and all equipment and devices for fire prevention and firefighting approved by the Independent Fire Department.

   e. Air pollution. No air pollution or smoke shall be produced, which is in violation of the requirements of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Management.

f. Glare or heat. No direct or sky-reflected glare or heat shall be produced which is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

g. Odorous gases. No emission of any odorous gases or matter shall occur in quantities that are discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

h. Dust, dirt, or particulate matter. No discharge into the air of any dust, dirt or particulate matter shall occur from any activity or from any products stored on the building site that is discernible without instruments at any point on a lot line of the building site.

i. Liquid contaminants. No discharge into any public sewer, private sewage disposal system, stream, or into the ground of any liquid contaminants or materials of such nature or temperature which contaminates any water supply, interferes with bacterial processes and sewage treatment, or in any way causes the emission of dangerous or offensive materials shall occur.

j. Adjacency. Manufacturing uses in ID shall be subject to a 50-foot separation in place of the required setback. The separation shall be landscaped with shade trees, understory trees, and evergreen shrubbery to provide a visual and sound barrier.

Section 2. (Uncodified in published ordinances)

(a) Savings Clause. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable, and if any clause, sentence, word, section or provision is declared void or unenforceable for any reasons by any court of competent jurisdiction, such declaration shall not affect any portion of the Ordinance other than said part or portion thereof.

(b) Repeal. All ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

(c) Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.

A Resolution of the Ranson City Council Amending Chapter 19 Zoning, Section 2 Definitions, and Section 11- Industrial District of the Ranson Municipal Code

First Reading: March 19, 2024

Public Hearing: _____, 2024

Second Reading: _____, 2024

Enacted this _____ day _____, 2024

_____
Keith D. Pierson
Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Darla Armstrong
City Clerk

Affix City Seal:

AGENDA ITEM vi.3

City Council Regular Meeting Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong, Community & Economic Development

ITEM TYPE: Presentation

AGENDA SECTION: COUNCIL BUSINESS

SUBJECT:

ATTACHMENTS:

Legal ad for comprehensive plan 2023-2033 372024.docx

LEGAL NOTICE
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
CITY OF RANSON

Ranson City Council will hold a public hearing on April 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at Ranson City Hall, 312 S. Mildred Street, Ranson, WV. The purpose of the public hearing to accept the following: 2023-2033 Ranson Comprehensive Plan.

Copies of the 2023-2033 Comprehensive Plan, are available for inspection during office hours 8:00 – 4:00 at City Hall or on the City's Comprehensive Plan website at Ransonrefined.com under the tab Project Diary. All persons are invited to attend and make comments about the Comprehensive Plan. If you cannot attend but wish to comment, you may write to the following address prior to April 9, 2024: City of Ranson, Attn: City Clerk, 312 S. Mildred Street, Ranson, WV 25438 or email cityclerk@ransonwv.us Written comments received prior to April 9, 2024, will be provided to the Ranson City Council, and inserted into the official record.

AGENDA ITEM vi.4

City Council Regular Meeting Request for Action

TO:

FROM: Darla Armstrong, Community & Economic Development

ITEM TYPE: Resolution

AGENDA SECTION: COUNCIL BUSINESS

SUBJECT:

Second Reading Resolution 2024-03 Adopting the City of Ranson 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan. First reading was passed at the February 06, 2024 Council meeting.

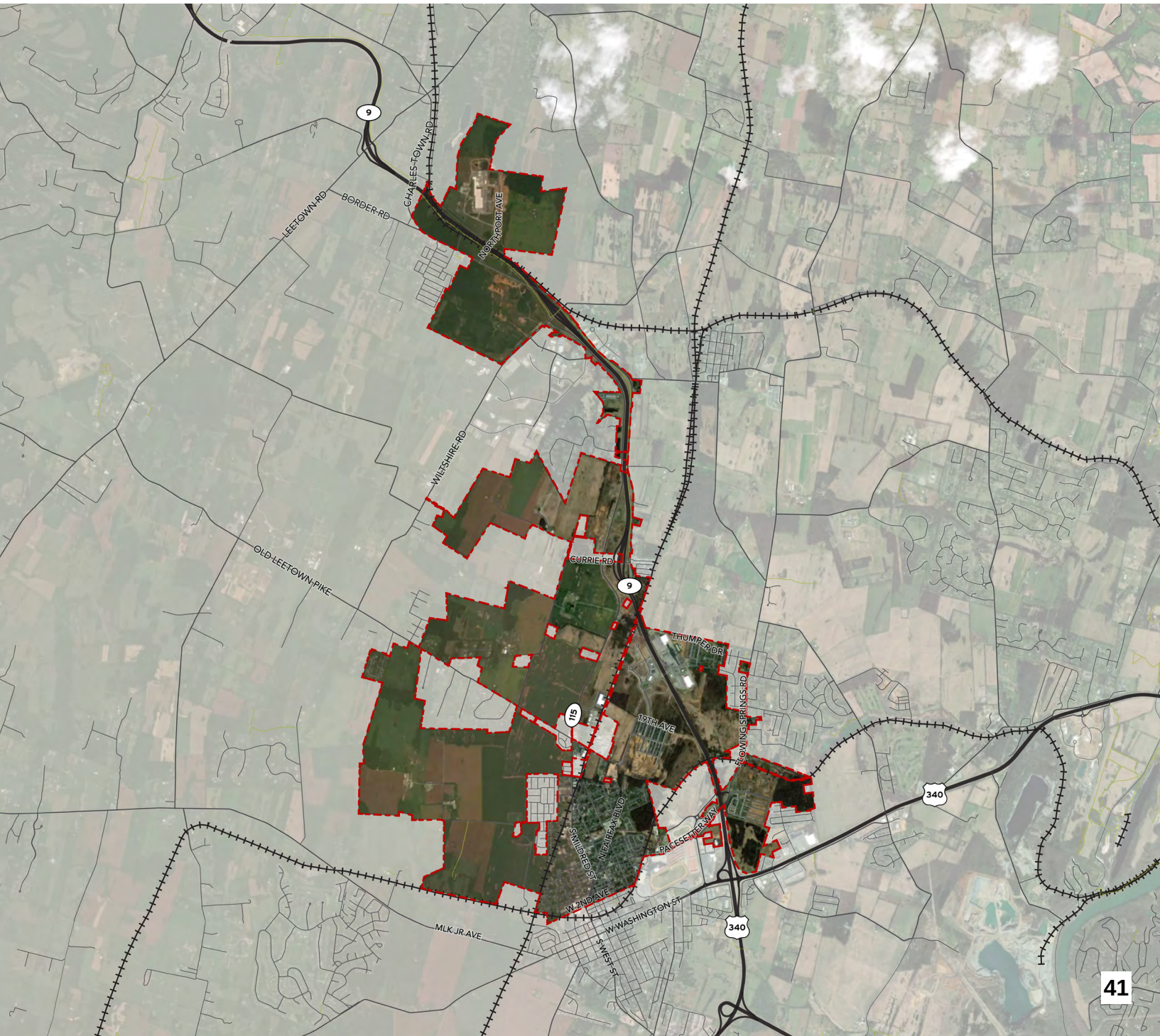
ATTACHMENTS:

Ranson_Comp_Plan_Draft_231208 (2).pdf
Ordinance Adopting 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan 2nd reading.docx

PLAN 2034

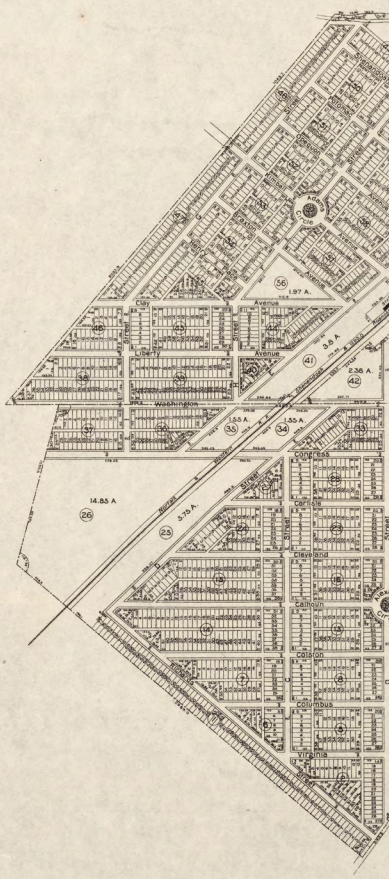
RANSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2024-2034

RANSON Refined

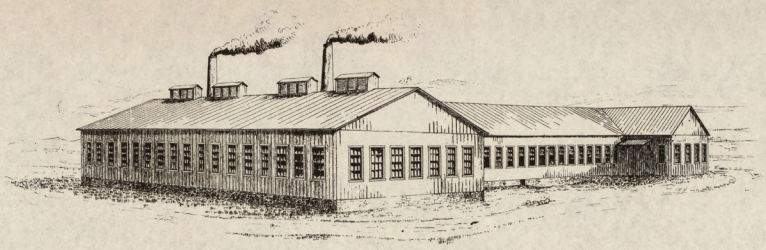




"Hotel Powhatan"
Baldwin & Pennington, Archts.



2012-589612



Shenandoah Brass & Iron Works.





Office Building C.M.M.& Imp. Co.
J.C. Holmes Archt.

Note:
All alleys 20 feet.

Corporation Line

C H A R L E S T O W N

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

CHARLESTOWN Jefferson, Co. W.VA.

SURVEYED AND DRAWN
1890-91
D. F. TAYLOR.
PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT ENGINEER

BY

D. J. HOWELL
CIVIL ENGINEER & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
NATIONAL UNION BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C.



Harness Factory
J.C. Holmes Archt.

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PURCHASE
GEOGRAPHY & MAP DIVISION

G3894.C4 1890.T2 Copy 1

FINAL DRAFT 12/8/2023

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

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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

FINAL DRAFT 12/8/2023

FINAL DRAFT 12/8/2023

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

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Image 1.1 Mildred Street, 2023

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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.

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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.



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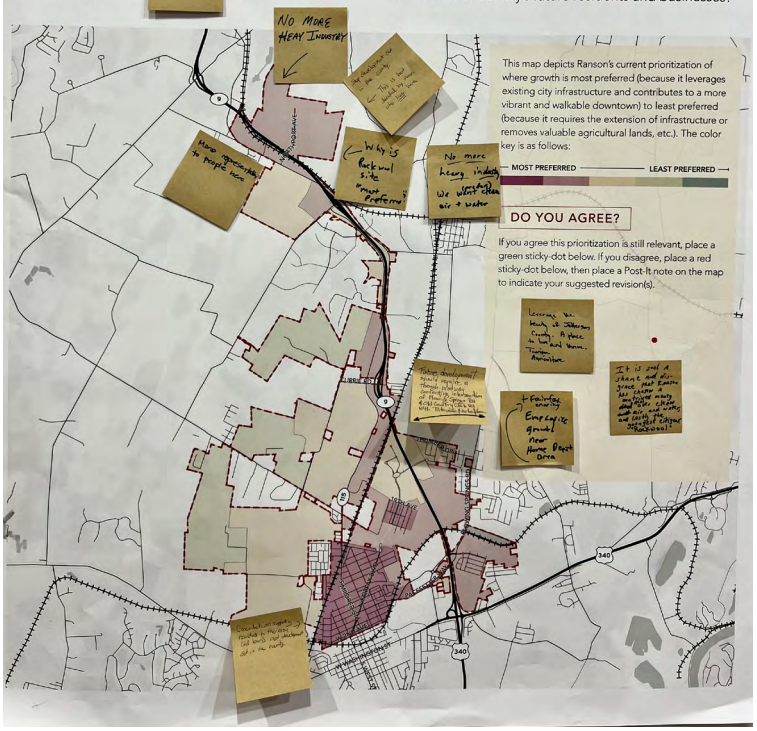
RANSON Refined

LAND USE

How we grow.

The opposite of growth is decline and no community wants that. But *how* growth & decline is not a binary relationship & ur choices, opportunities, and quality of life; o de 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?


No more heavy industry
Why is Rockwool site more preferred
No more heavy industry We want clean air + water
Mixed use/walkable to people here
Existing development
Emerging growth area Home Depot Area
It is such a shame and also strange that Ranson has chosen a path of growth that only adds more traffic, litter, pollution, and strip malls. Please stop!!!

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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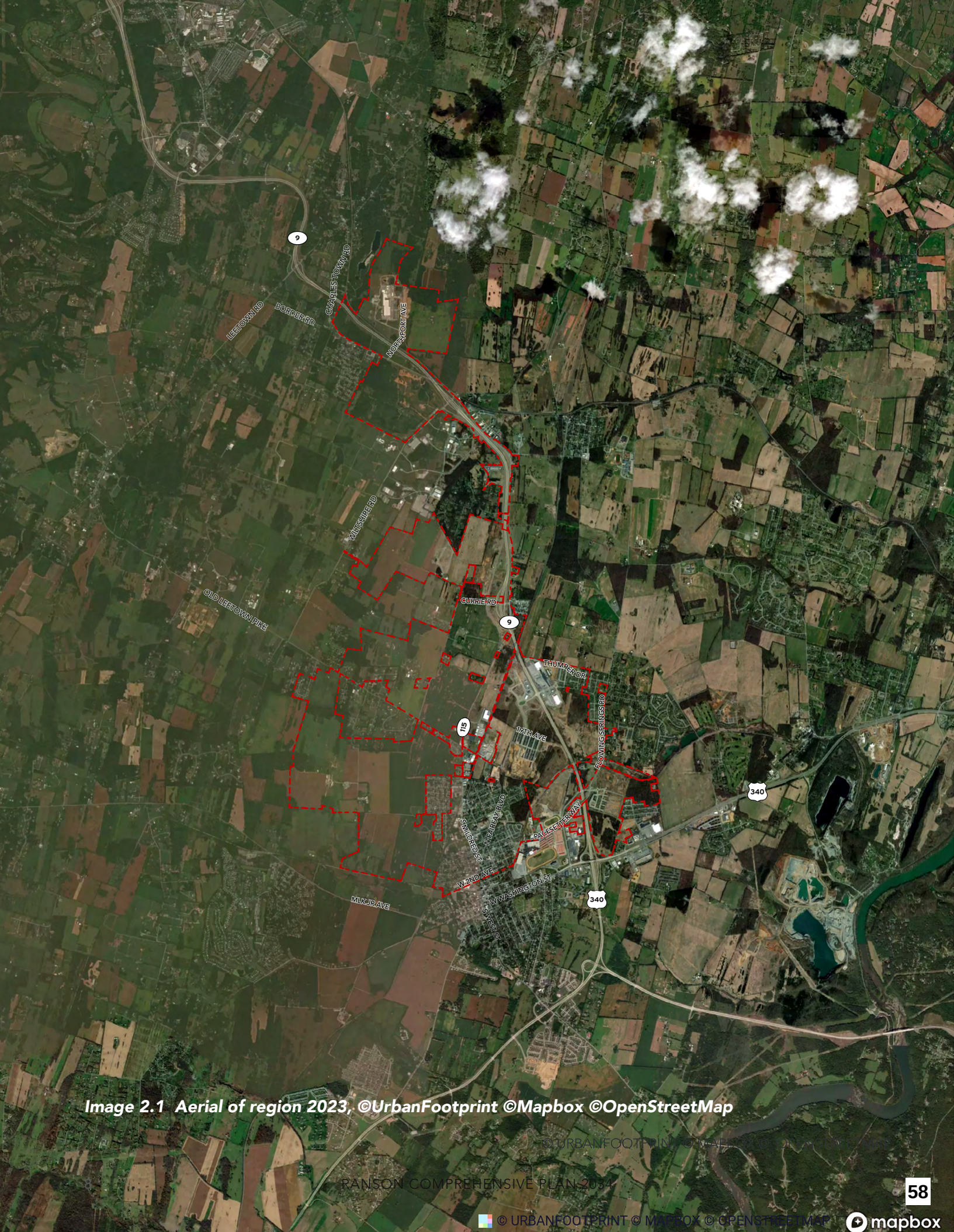


Image 2.1 Aerial of region 2023, ©UrbanFootprint ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap

2

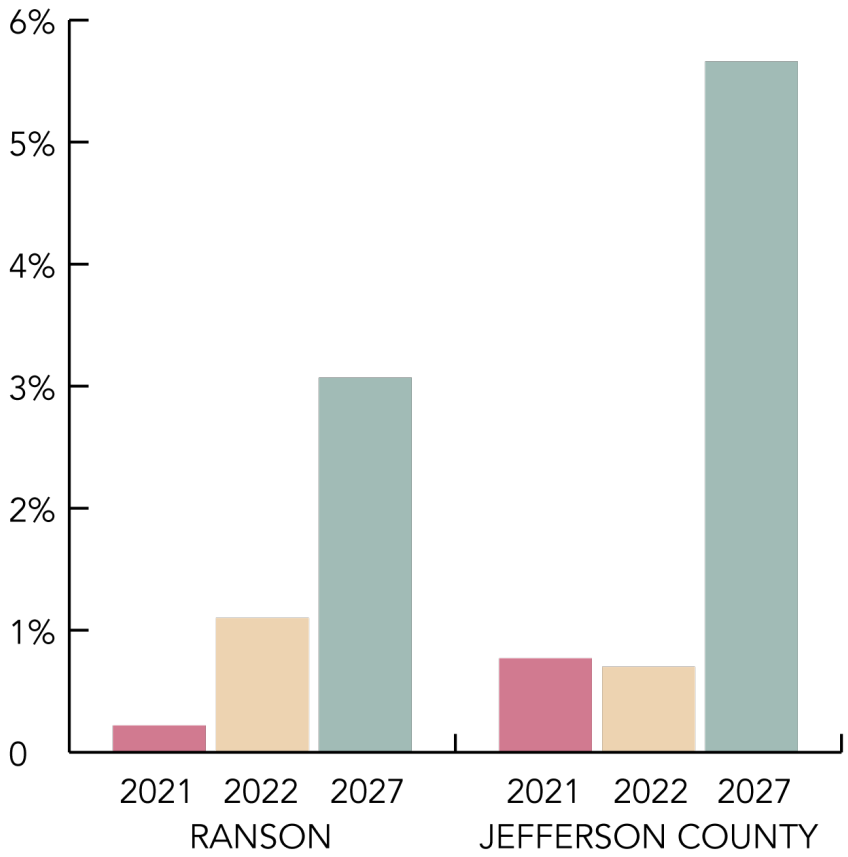
DEMOGRAPHICS

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)

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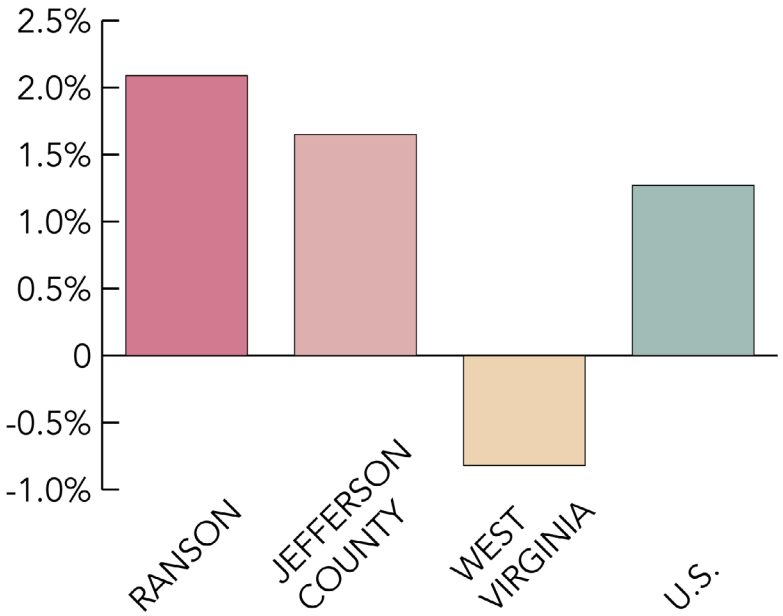
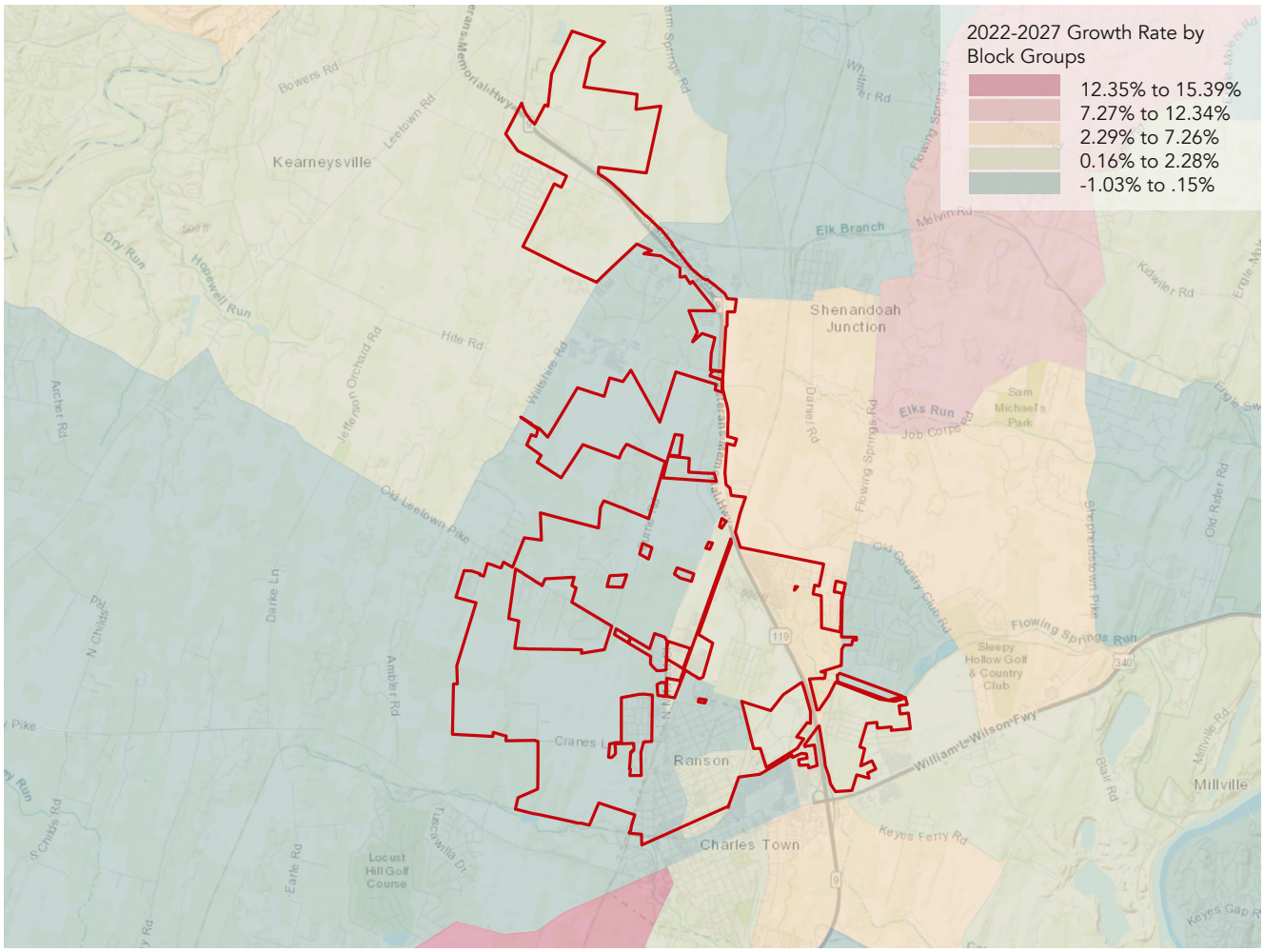
Growth in the West Virginia panhandle has been slow and steady over the last two decades, outperforming the national average. This trend is projected to continue for another four years, in spite of the overall decline in the population of West Virginia as a whole.

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

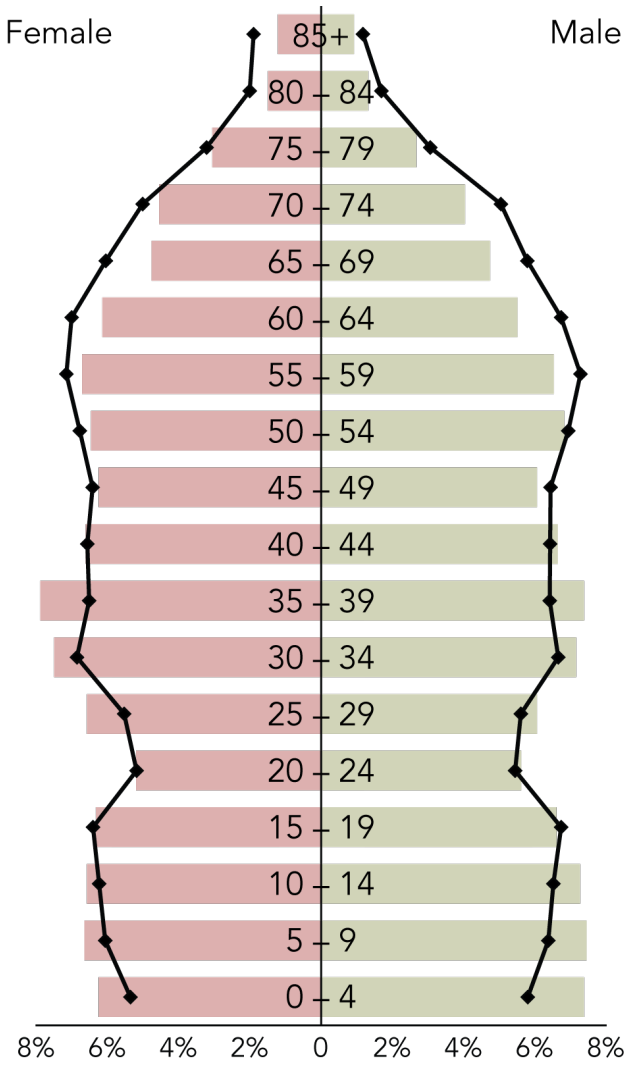
The city of Ranson boasts a noticeably younger demographic profile when compared to the broader Jefferson County, with each age group showing a slight tilt towards youthfulness. This trend is particularly apparent among young professionals within the 30 to 40 years old age bracket. This group is noticeably 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)

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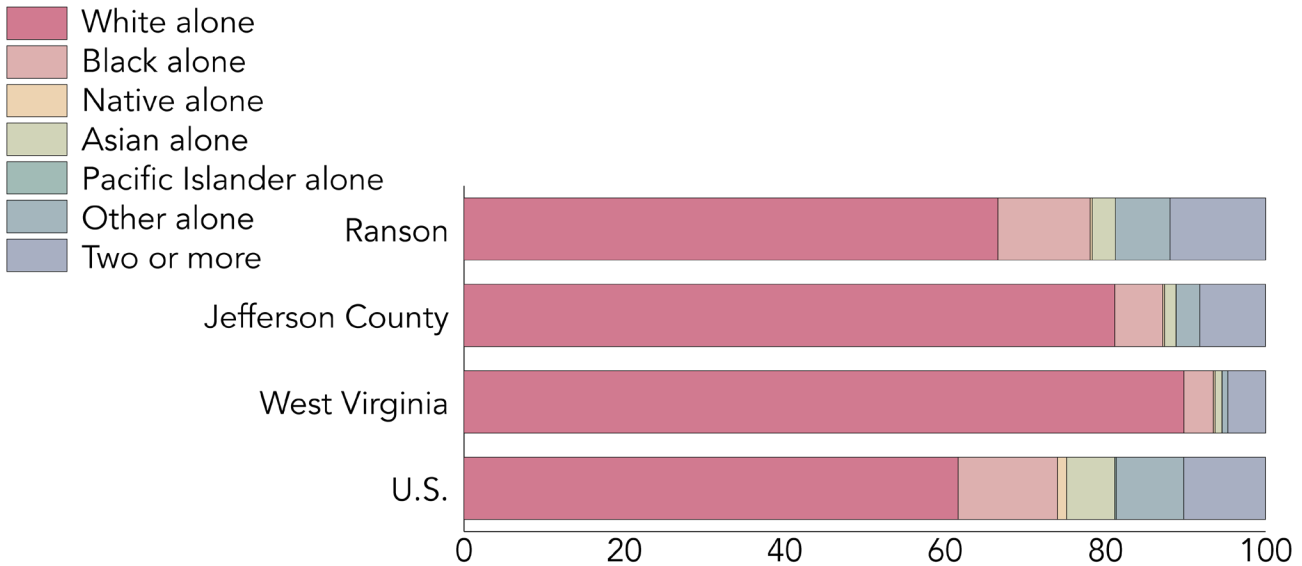
RACIAL COMPOSITION

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

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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

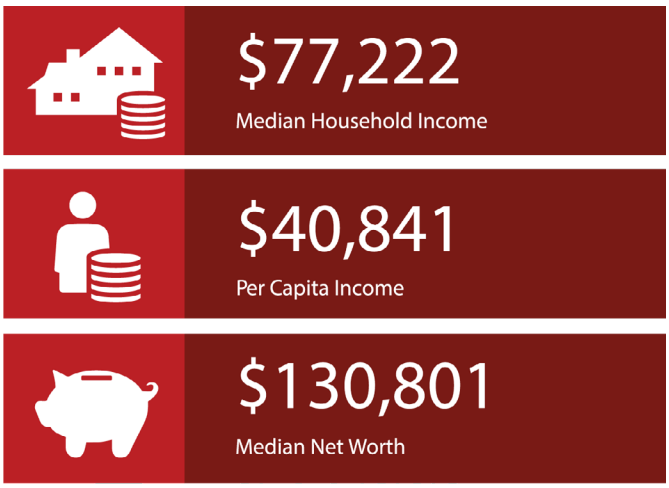
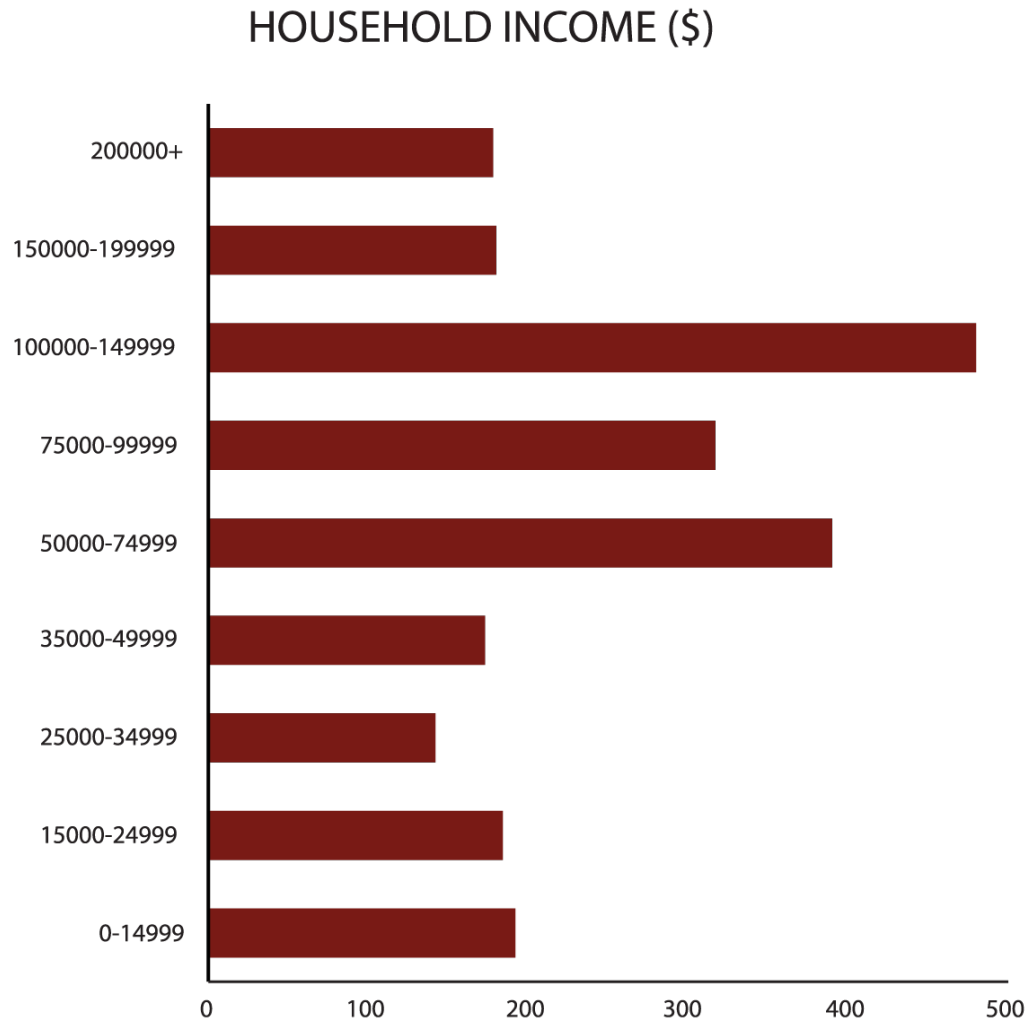


Image 2.3 Income Summary (Source: Esri 2022, 2027)



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.

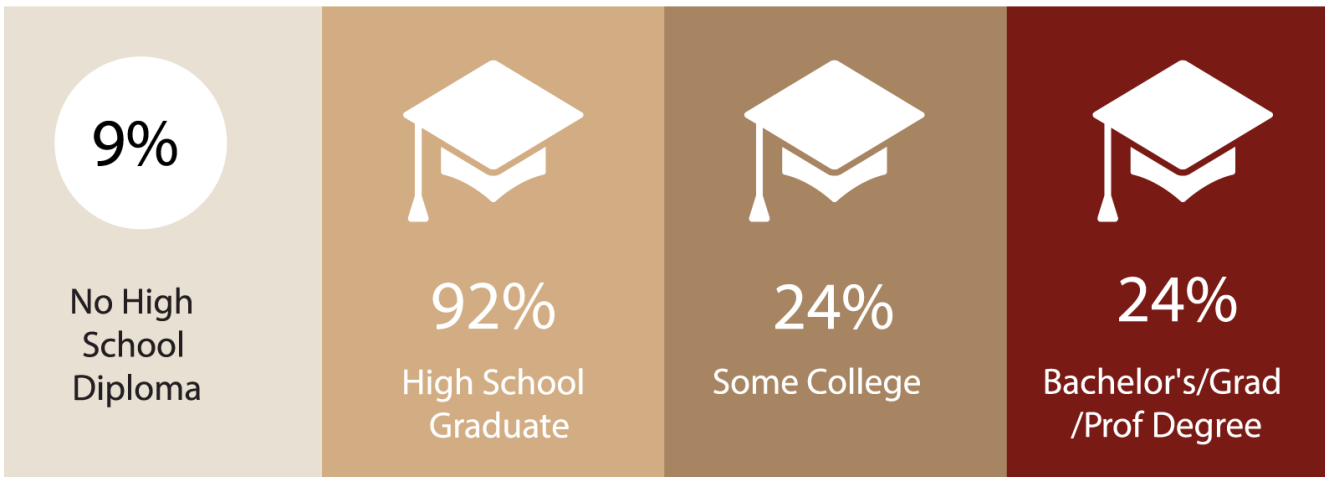


Image 2.4 Educational Attainment Summary (Source: US Census, ESRI forecasts for 2022)

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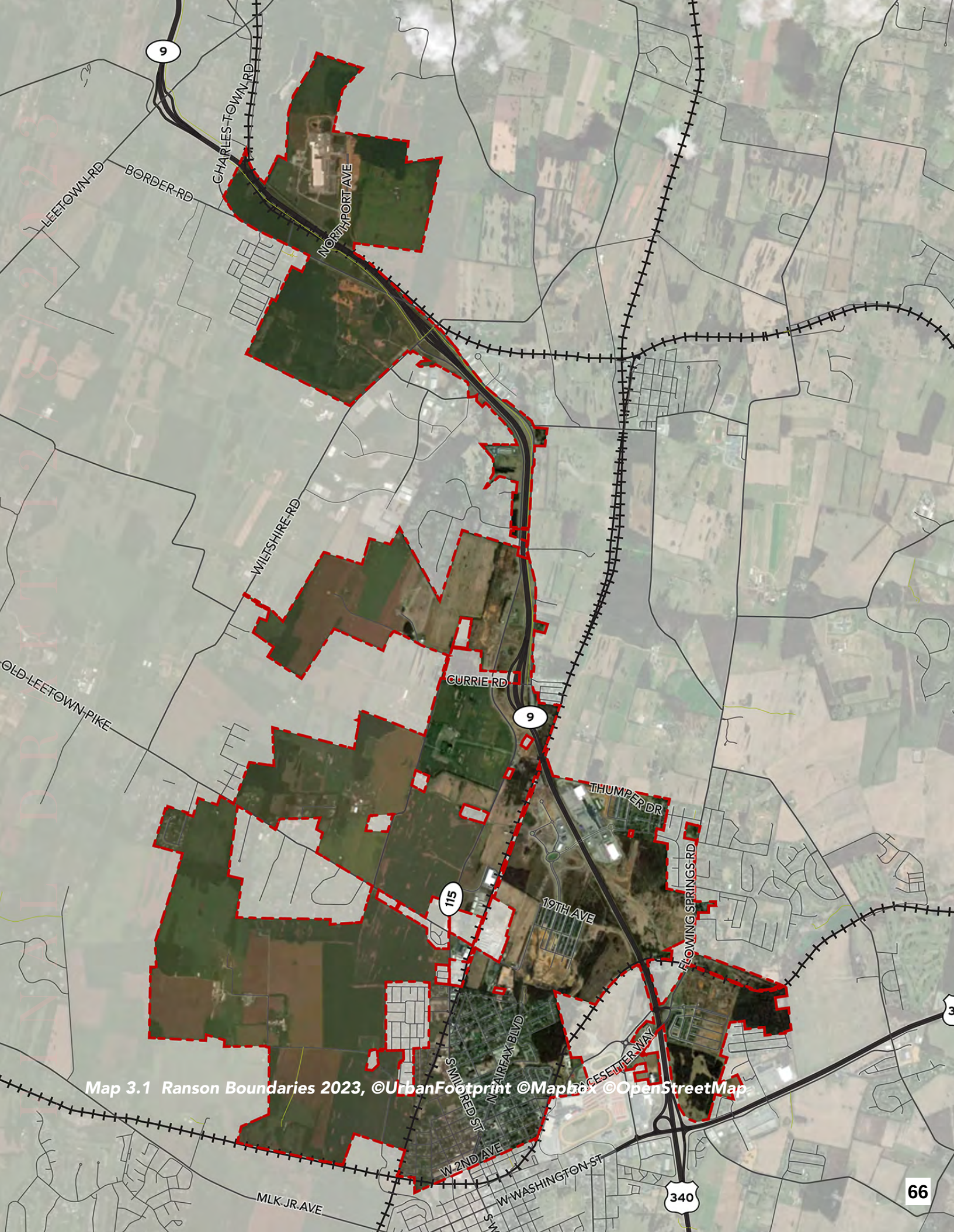

Map 3.1 Ranson Boundaries 2023, ©UrbanFootprint ©Mapbox ©OpenStreetMap

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.

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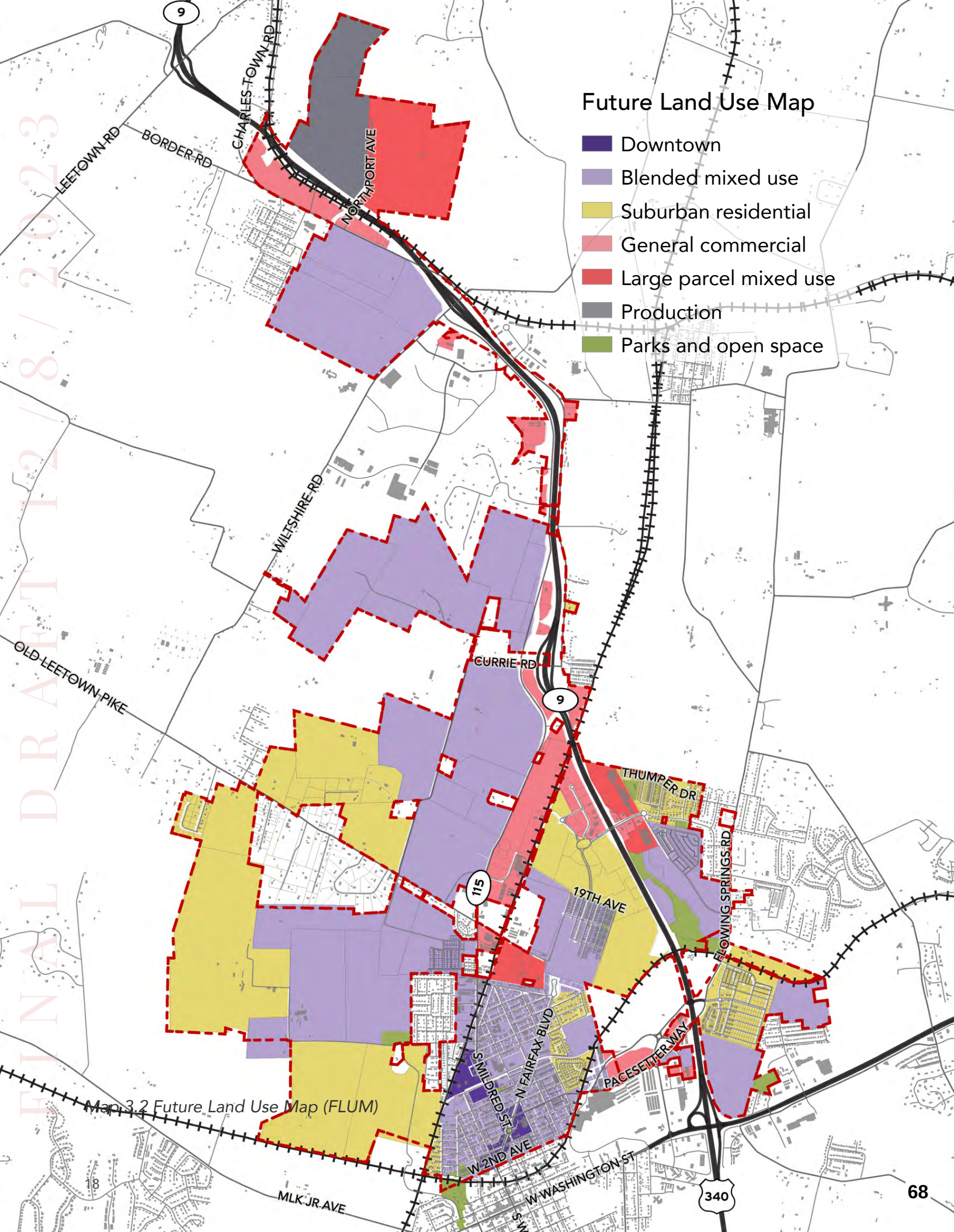

Map 3.2 Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

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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.

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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

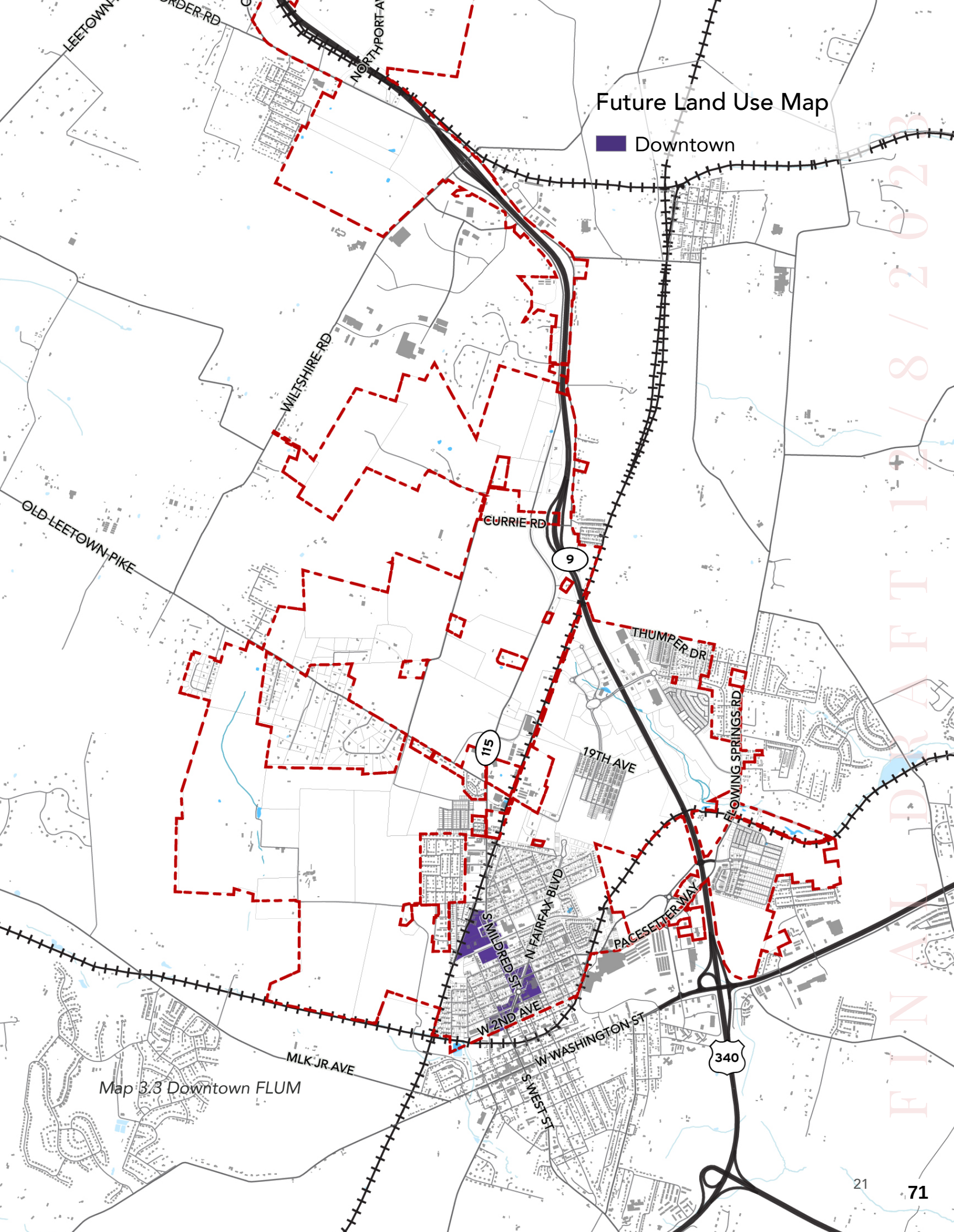
- Duplexes
- Townhouses
- Single family dwellings
- Hotels
- Schools
- Places of worship
- Cultural uses
- Parks







Images 3.1-3.3 Downtown, 2023



Map 3.3 Downtown FLUM

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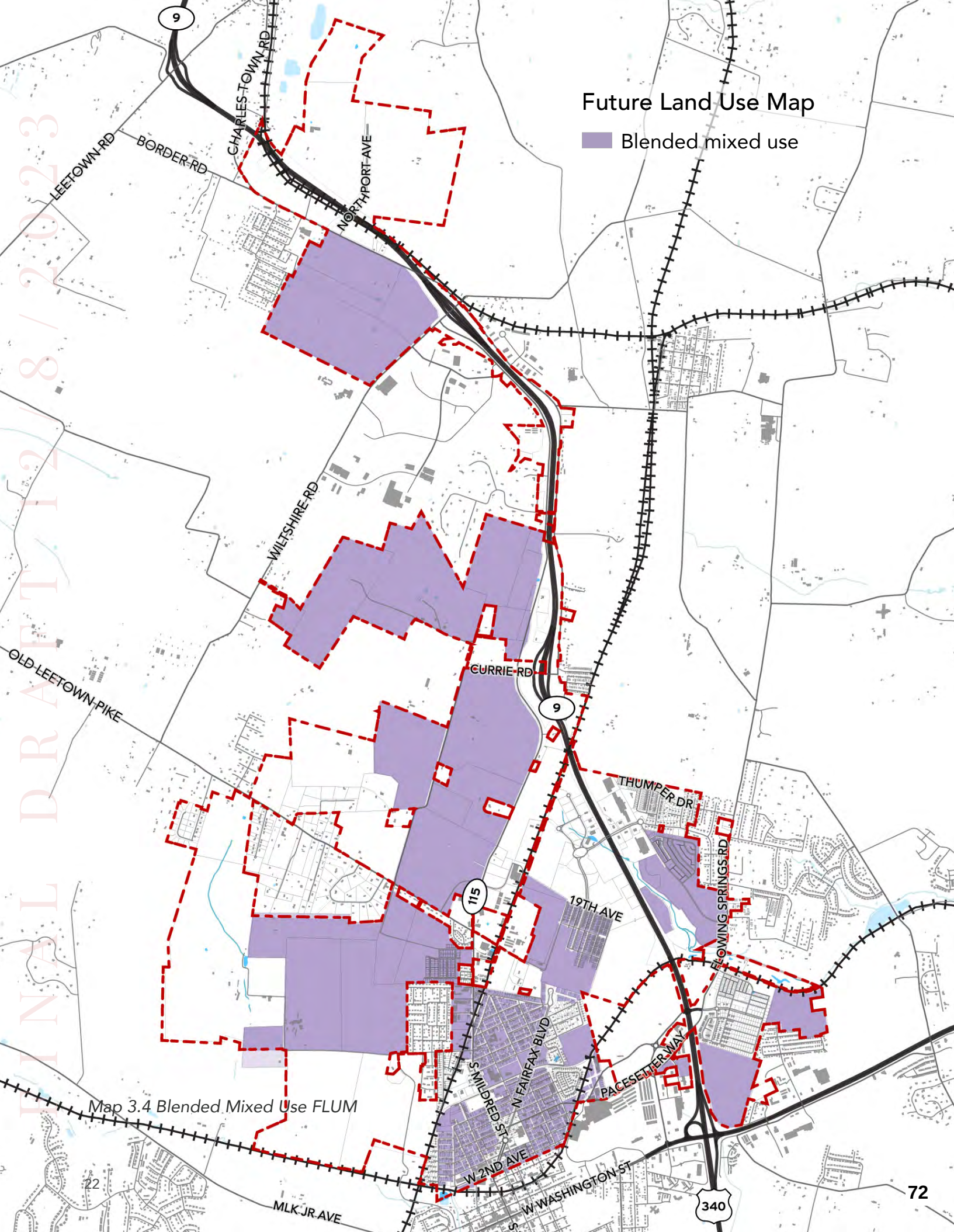

Map 3.4 Blended Mixed Use FLUM

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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

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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

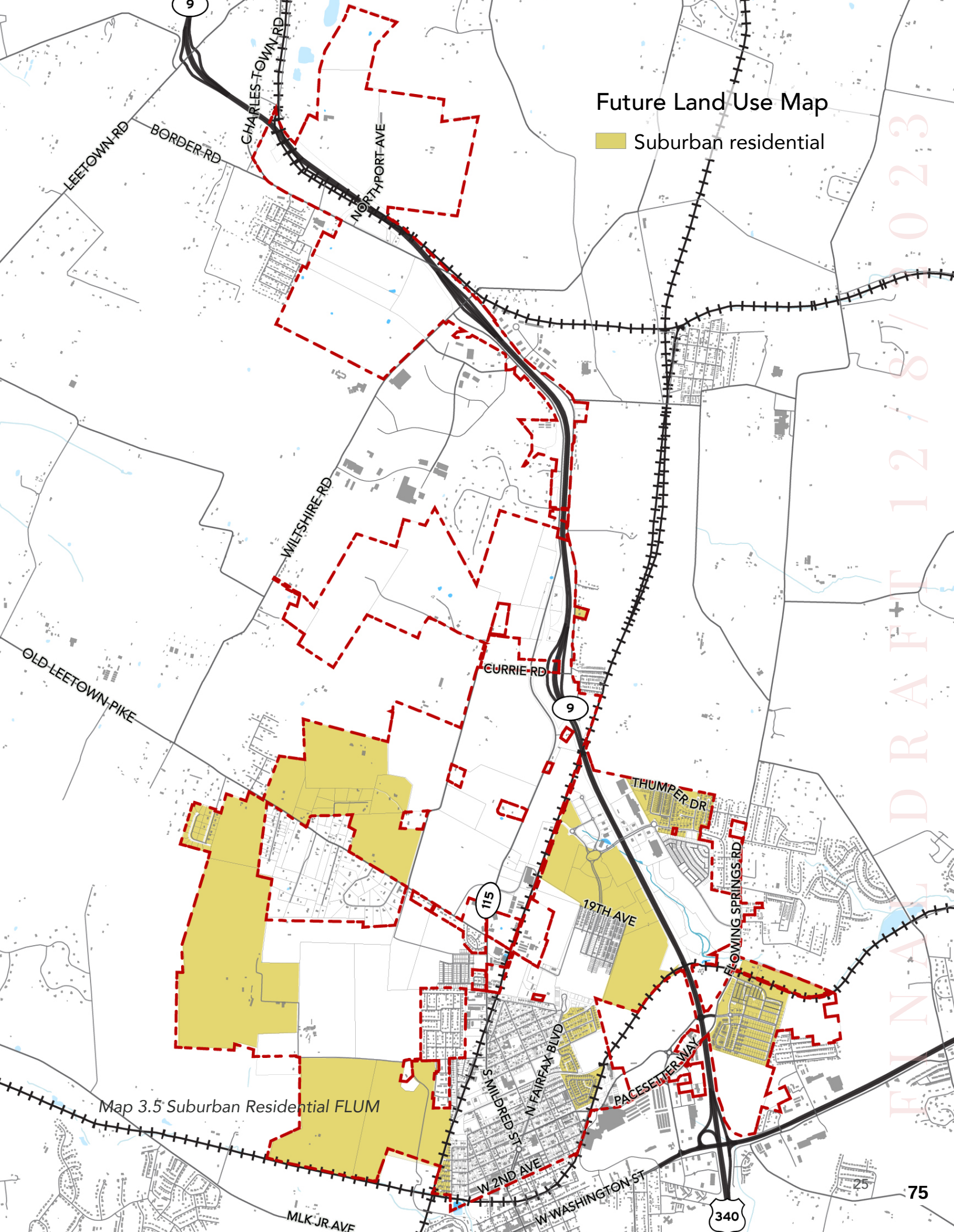








Images 3.9-3.12 Suburban Residential, 2023



Map 3.5 Suburban Residential FLUM

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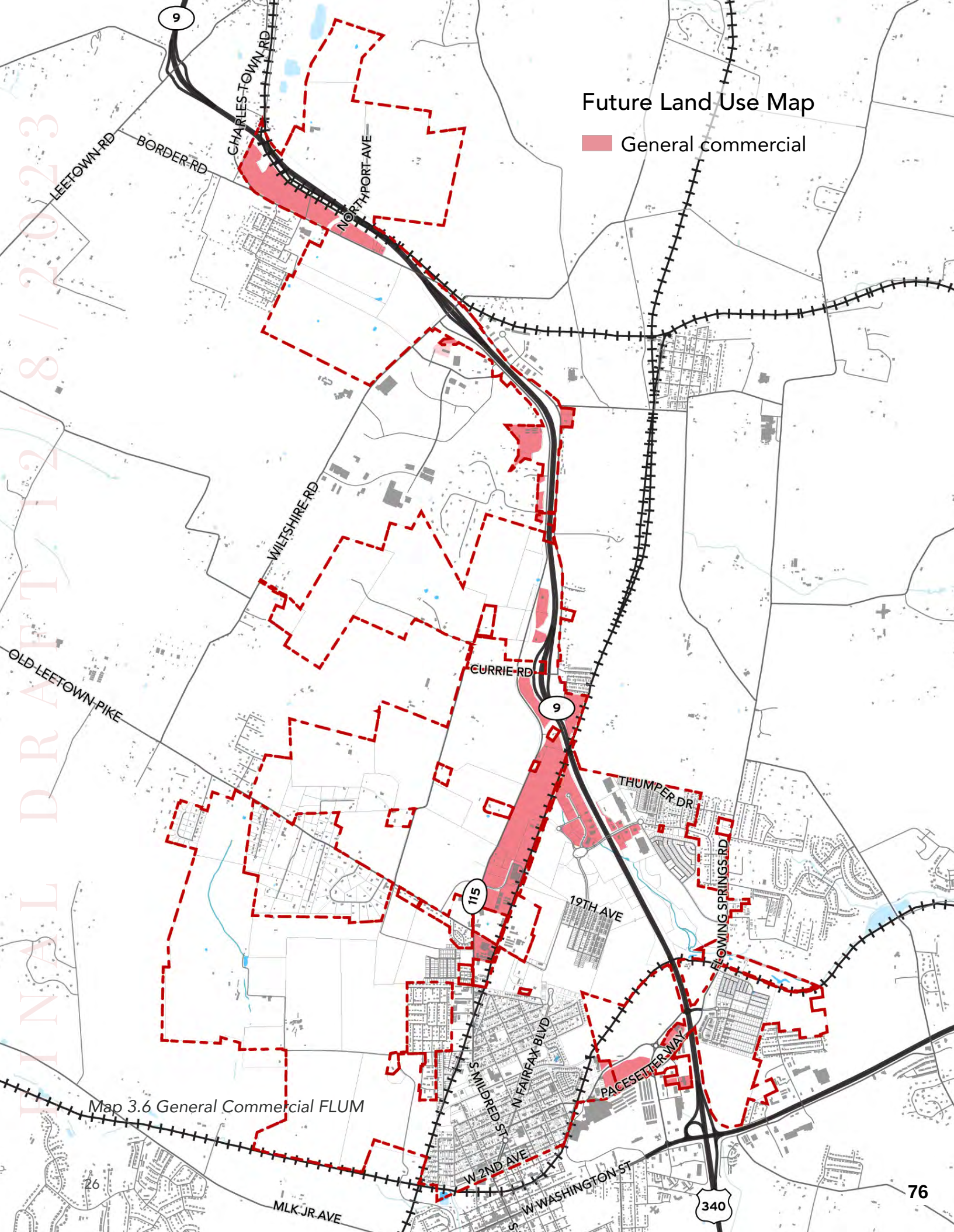

Map 3.6 General Commercial FLUM

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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

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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

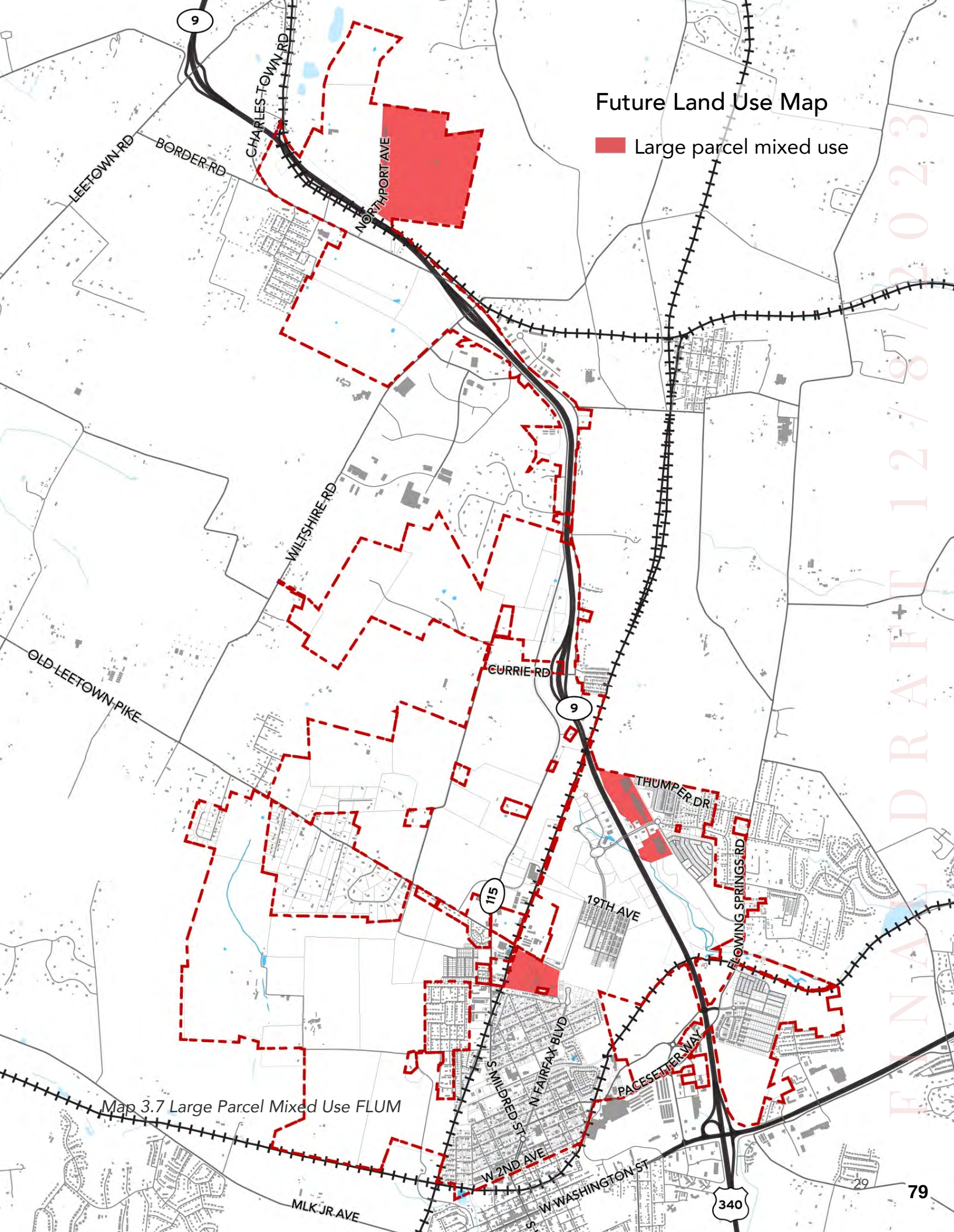
- Regional retail center
- Strip commercial
- Office
- Warehousing
- Logistics
- Data centers
- Light industrial
- Restaurants and pubs
- Gas stations

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

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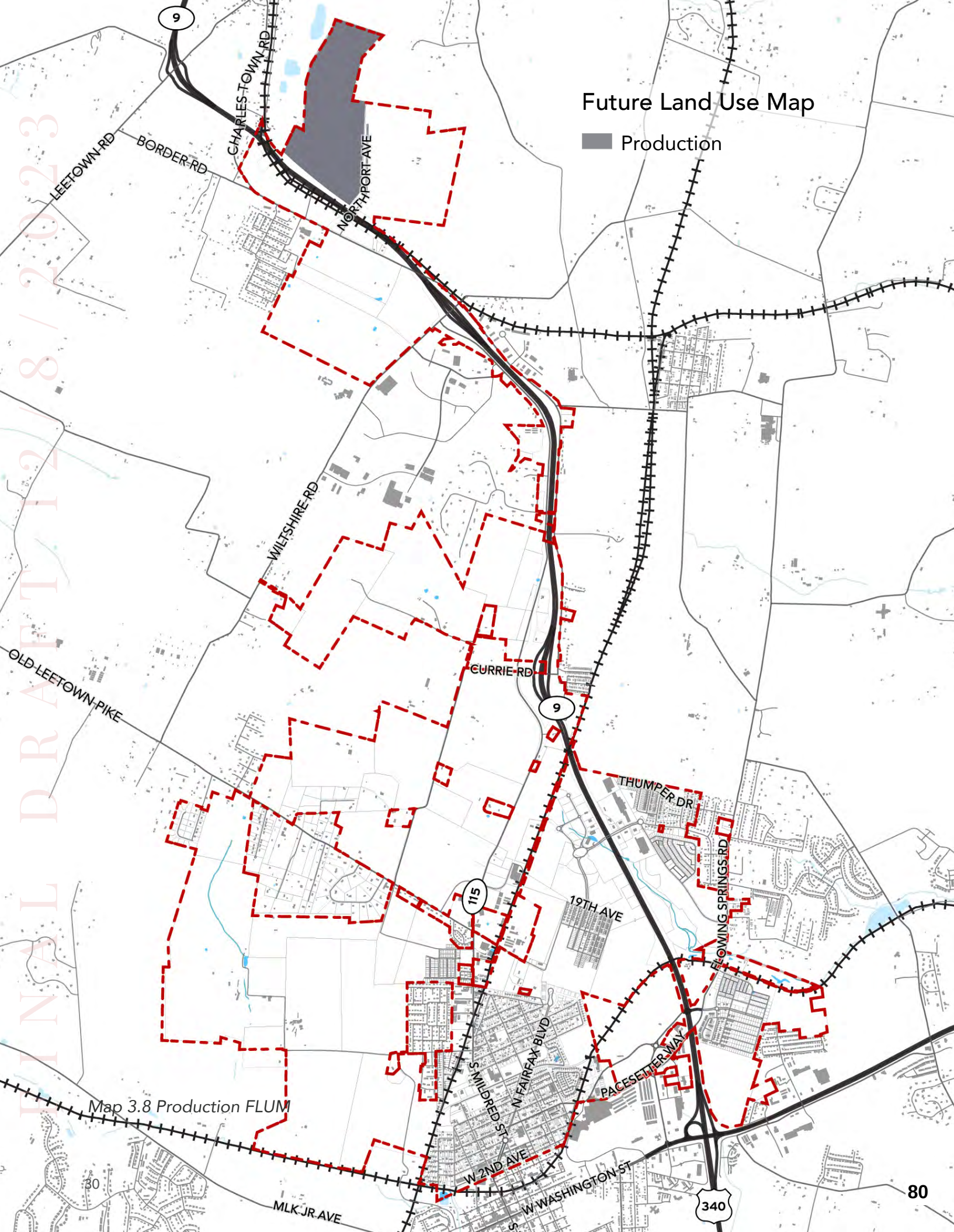

Map 3.8 Production FLUM

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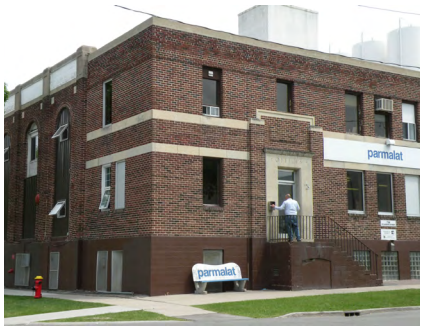



Images 3.20-3.22 Production

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

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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

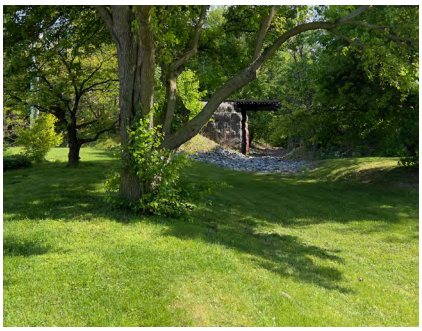
CHARACTERISTICS

PRIMARY USES

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

SECONDARY USES

- Restrooms
- Parking lots
- Accessory structures



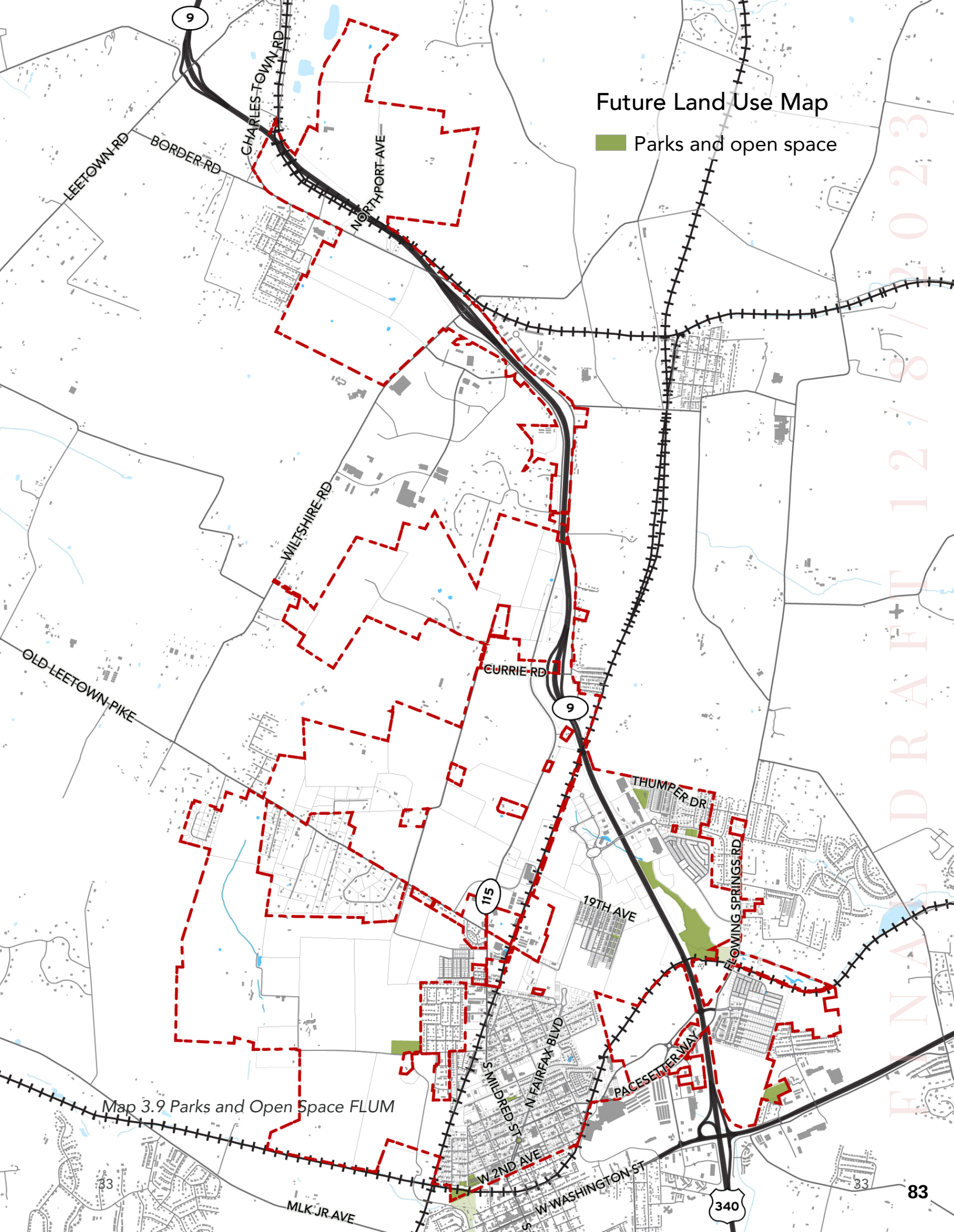








Images 3.23-3.27 Parks and Open Space, 2023



Map 3.9 Parks and Open Space FLUM

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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.

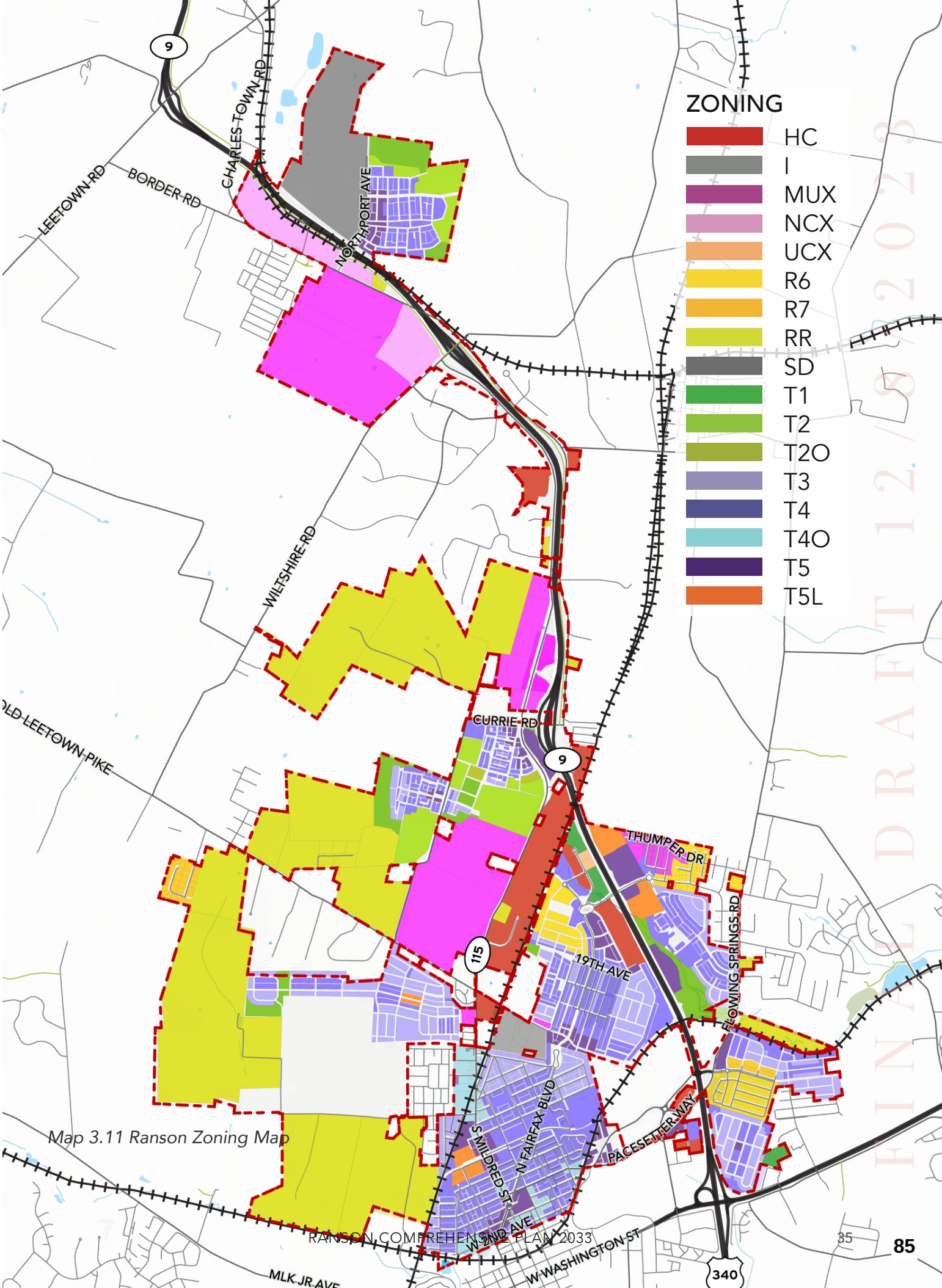
T3 SUB-URBAN. This is a low density residential district permitting home occupations. It includes a little over 300 acres of land.

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

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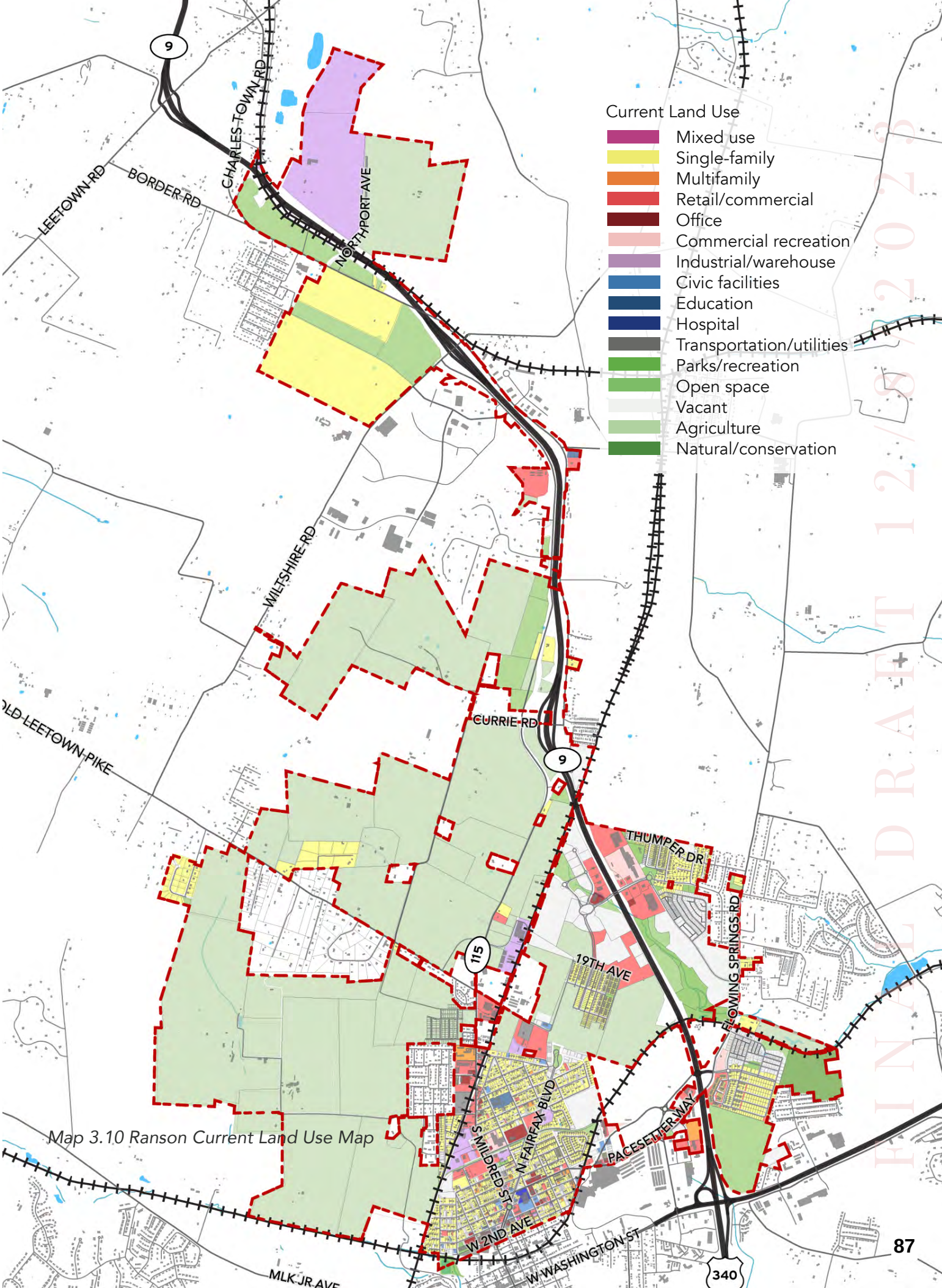
EXISTING CONDITIONS

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

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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.

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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.

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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.

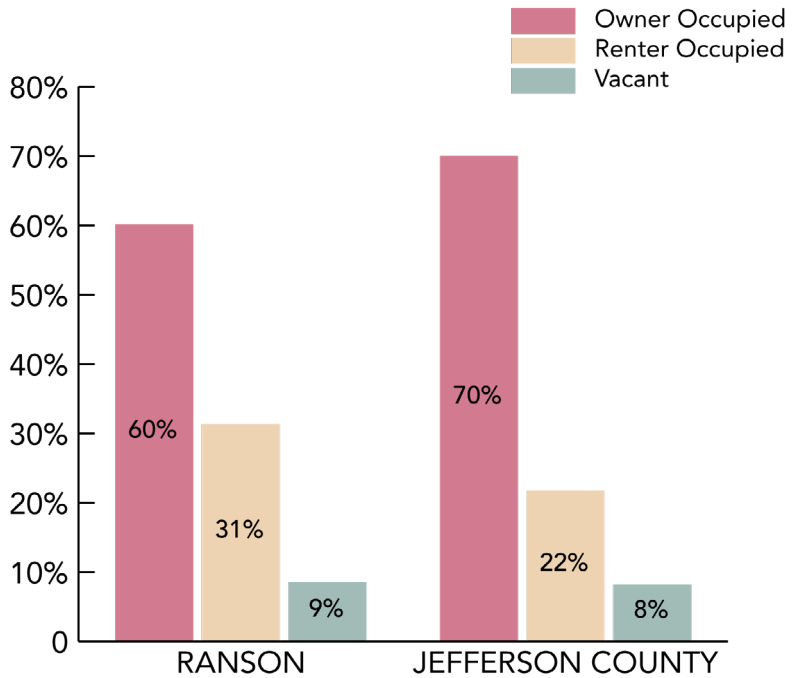
OCCUPANCY

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

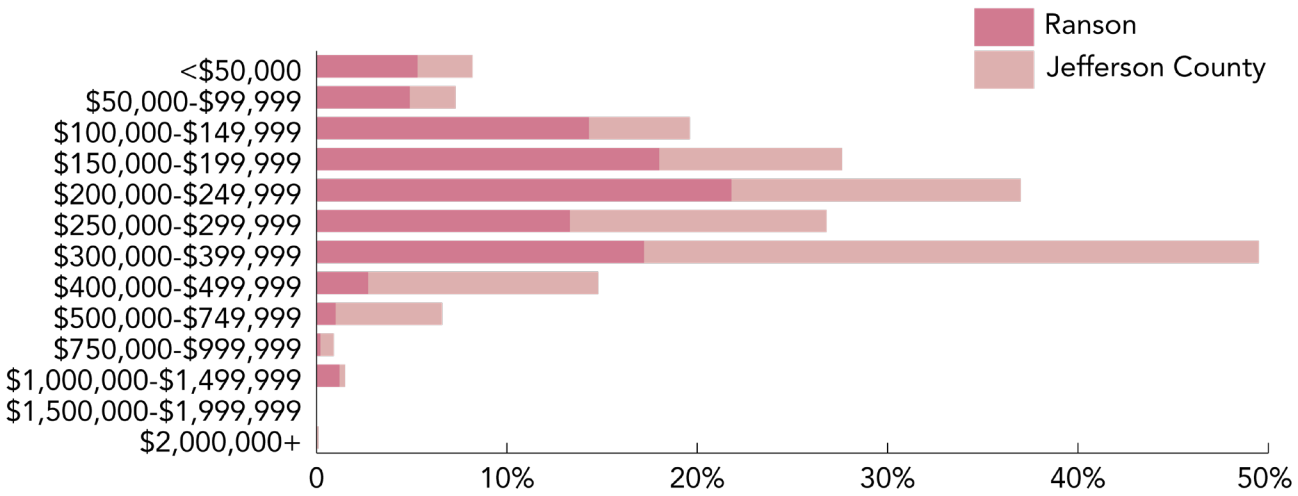
An analysis of Ranson's housing market and income statistics provides a deeper insight into the city's economic structure and living standards. Central to this analysis is understanding the median home value and median household income, key indicators of a city's economic health and the financial well-being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

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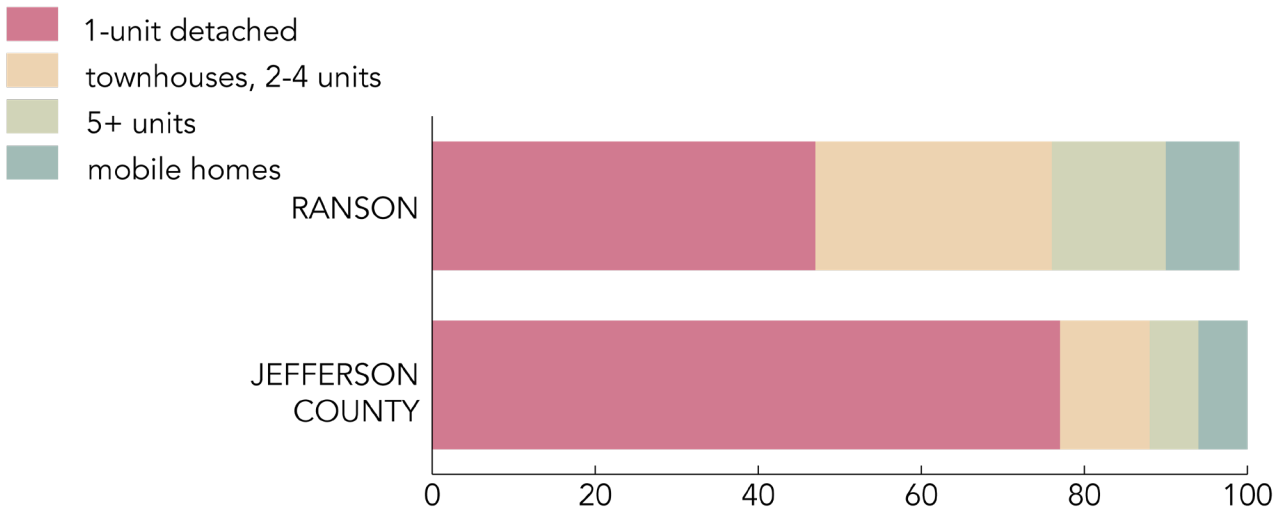
HOUSING TYPES

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.

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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

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SINGLE FAMILY MASSING STUDY FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS

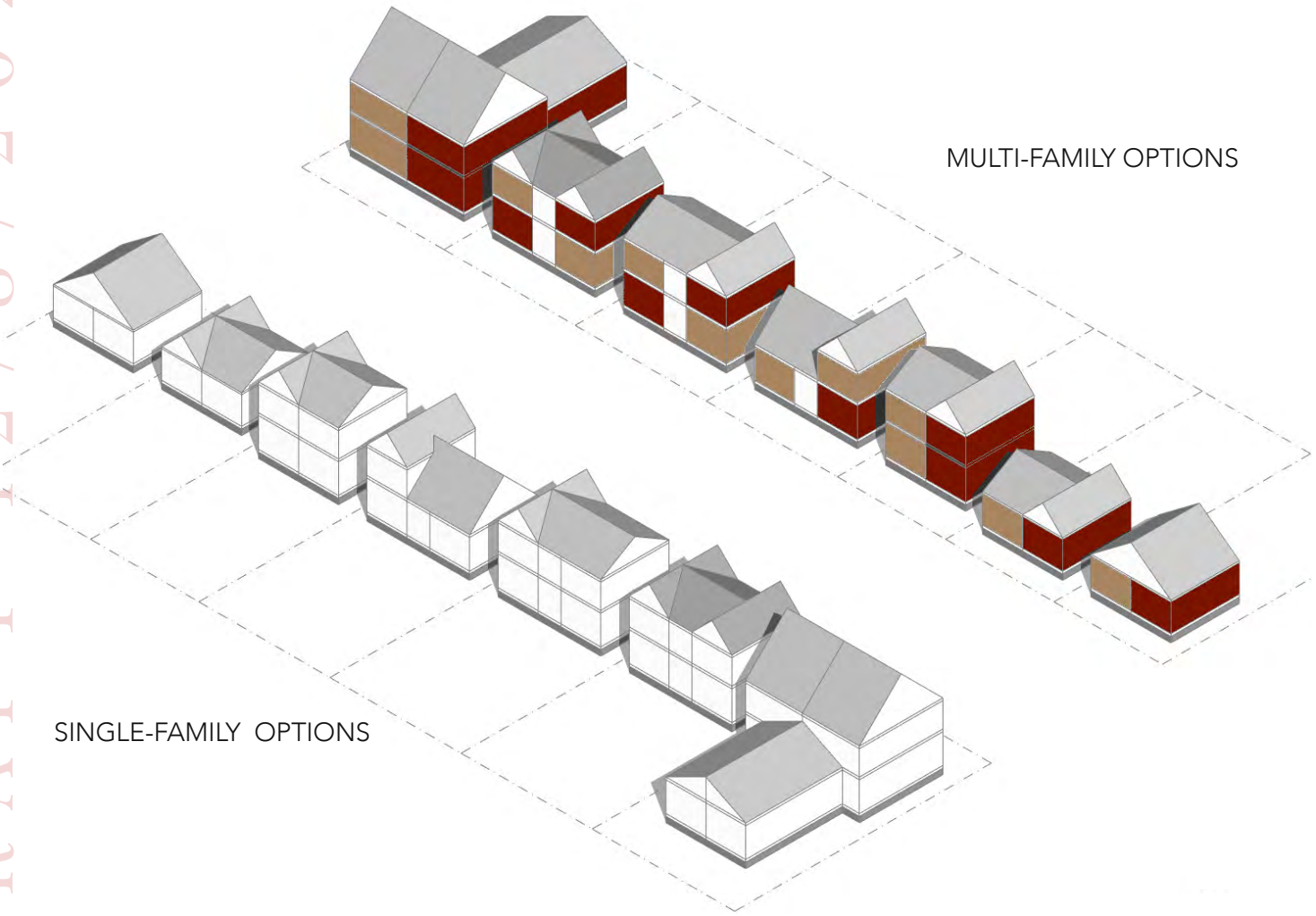

Image 4.12 Massing Study

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.



SINGLE-FAMILY OPTION





MULTI-FAMILY OPTION

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.

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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 improvement, 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

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)

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.



Image 4.15 Adaptive reuse, 2023

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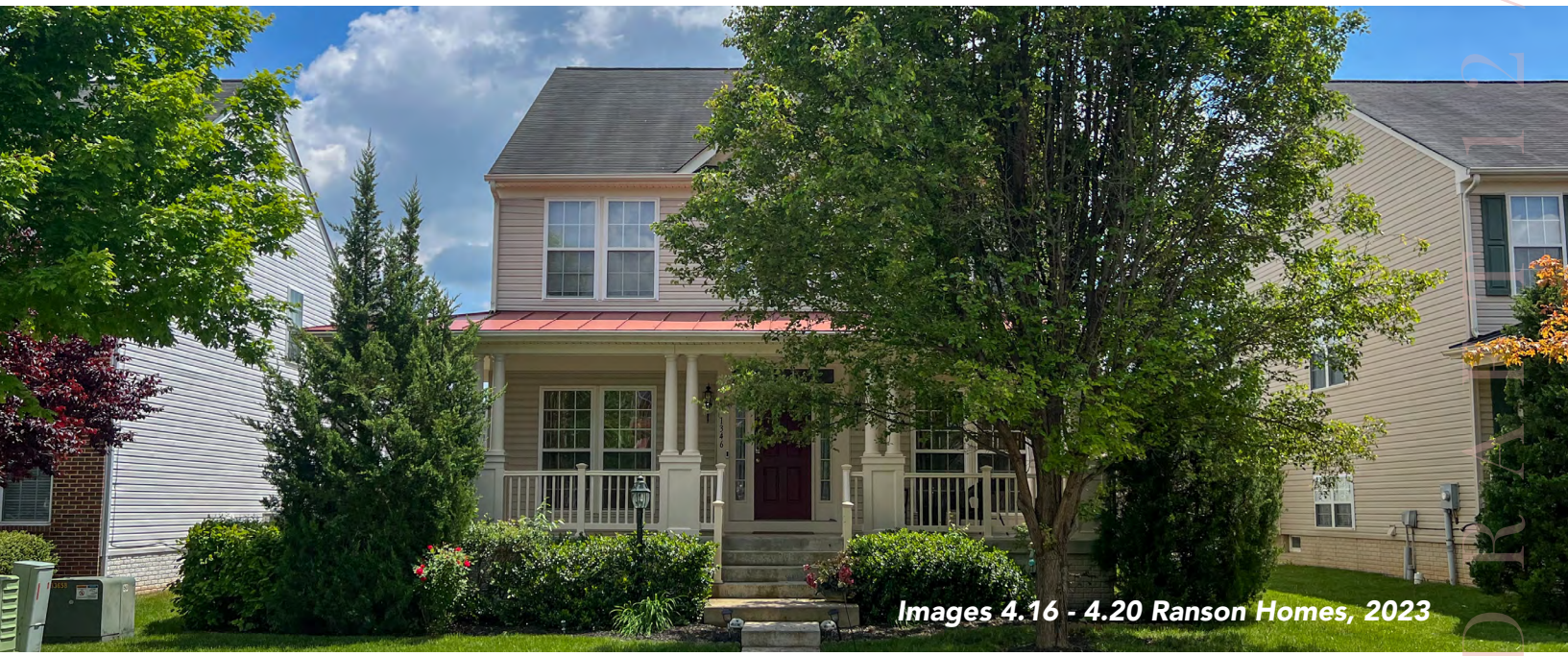
HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

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





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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.

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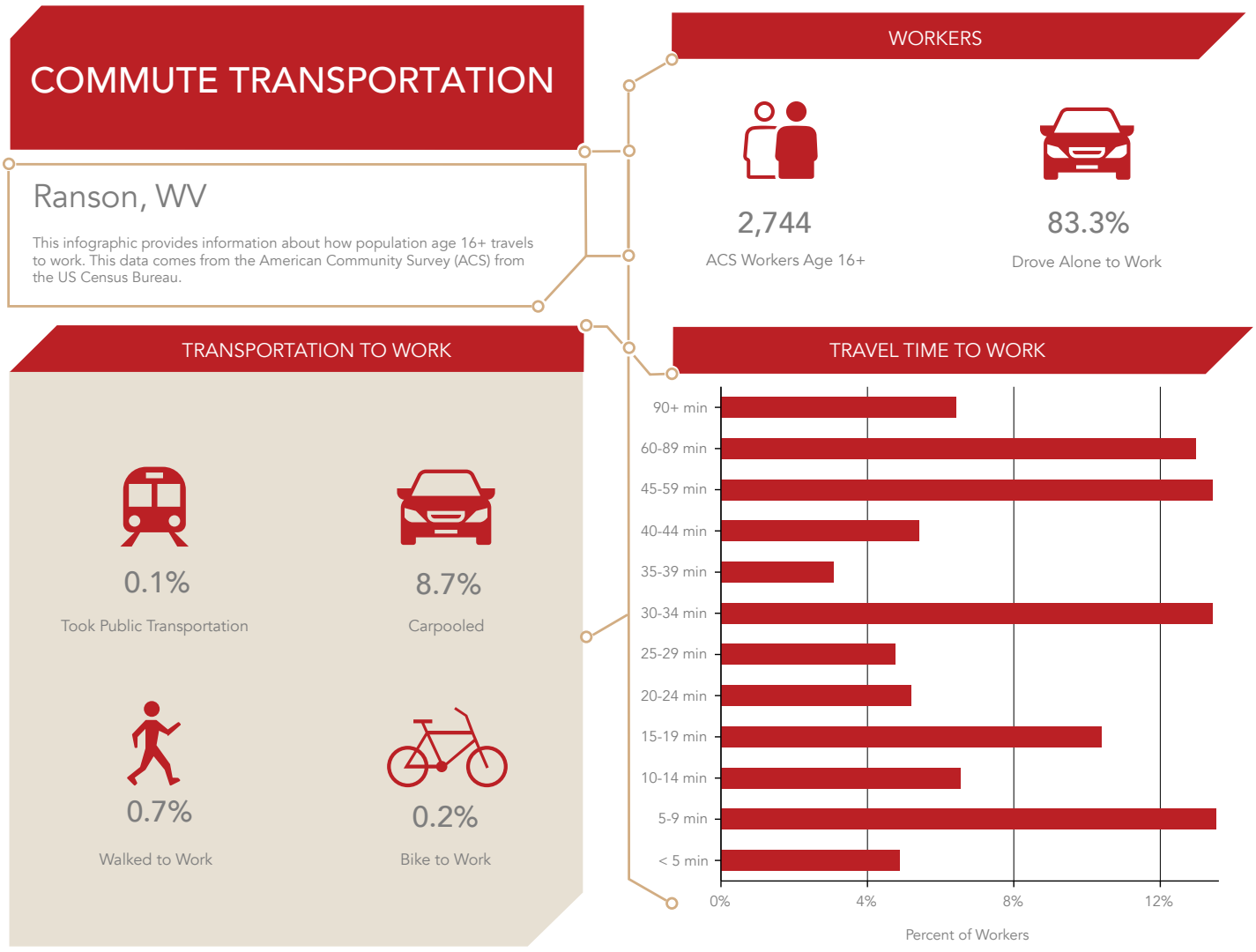
COMMUTE

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.

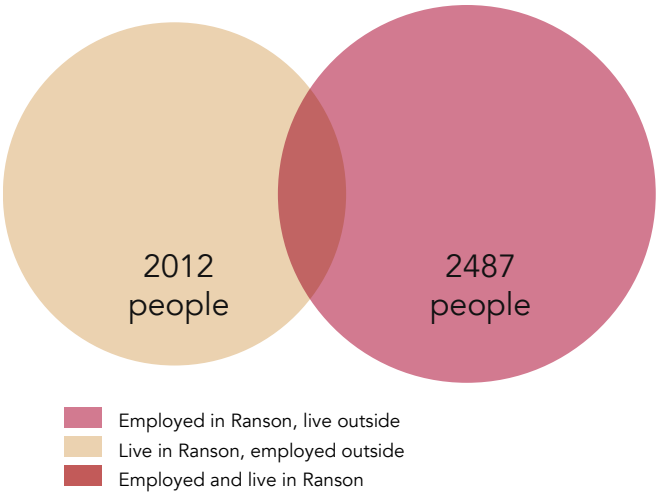
Ranson's commute time statistics shed light on these factors. Of the 2,744 residents commuting to work, the majority, 83.3%, drive alone. This high proportion signifies an area for potential improvement, as reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips could lead to less traffic congestion and better air quality.

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.



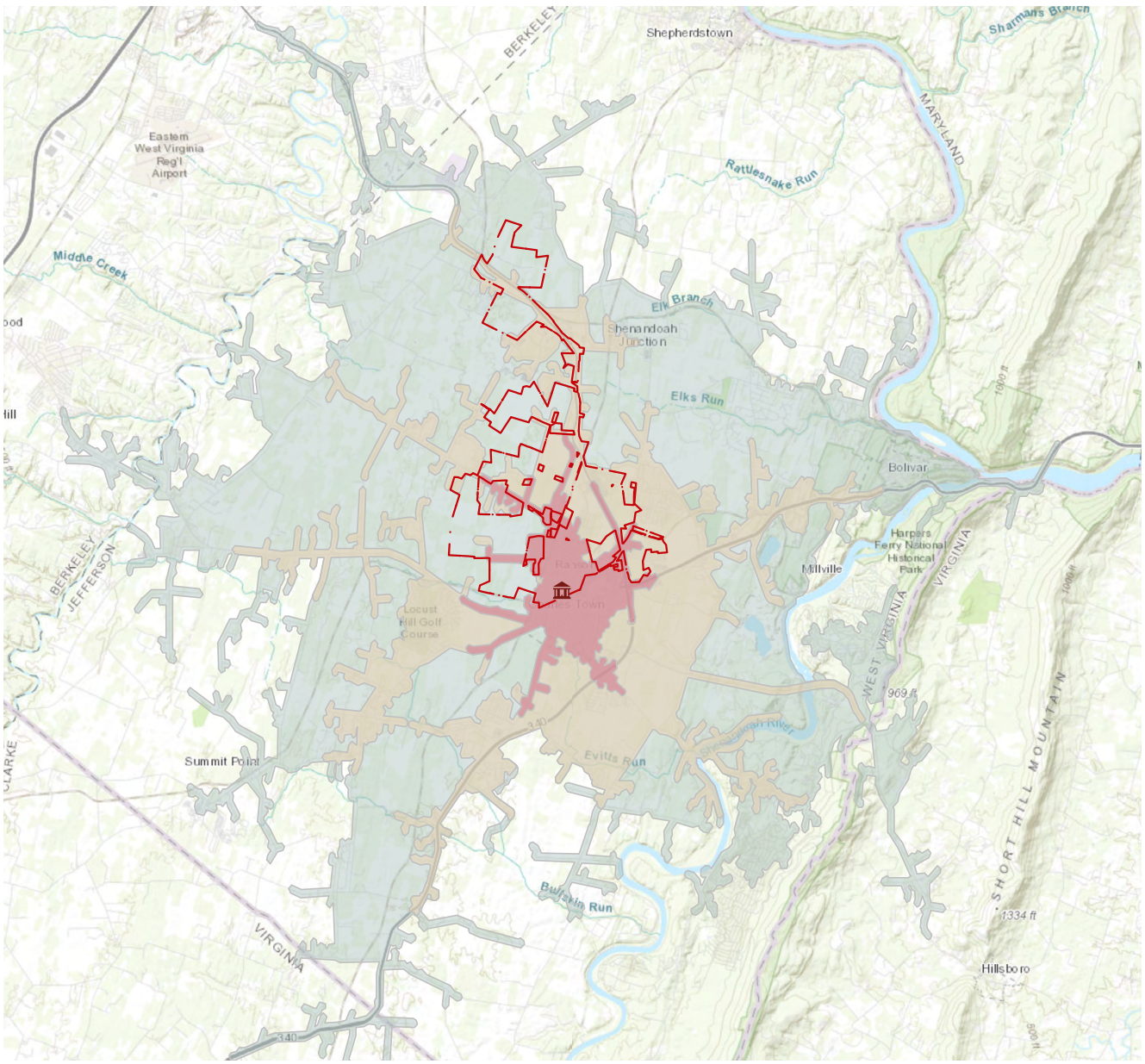
Graph 5.1 Commute Transportation (Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2017 – 2021)



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)

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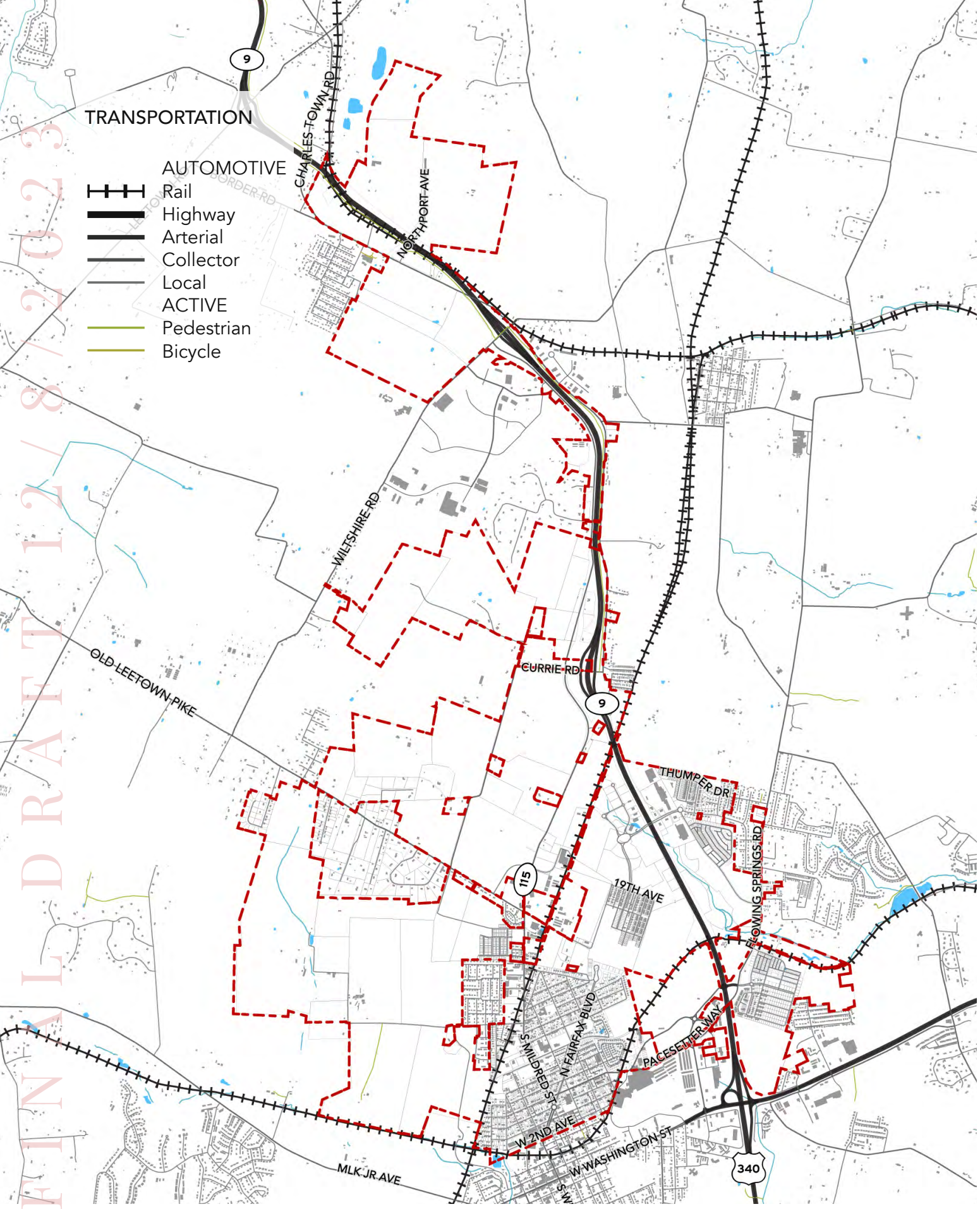

Map 5.2 City Transportation (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap, Map Box)

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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.

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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.

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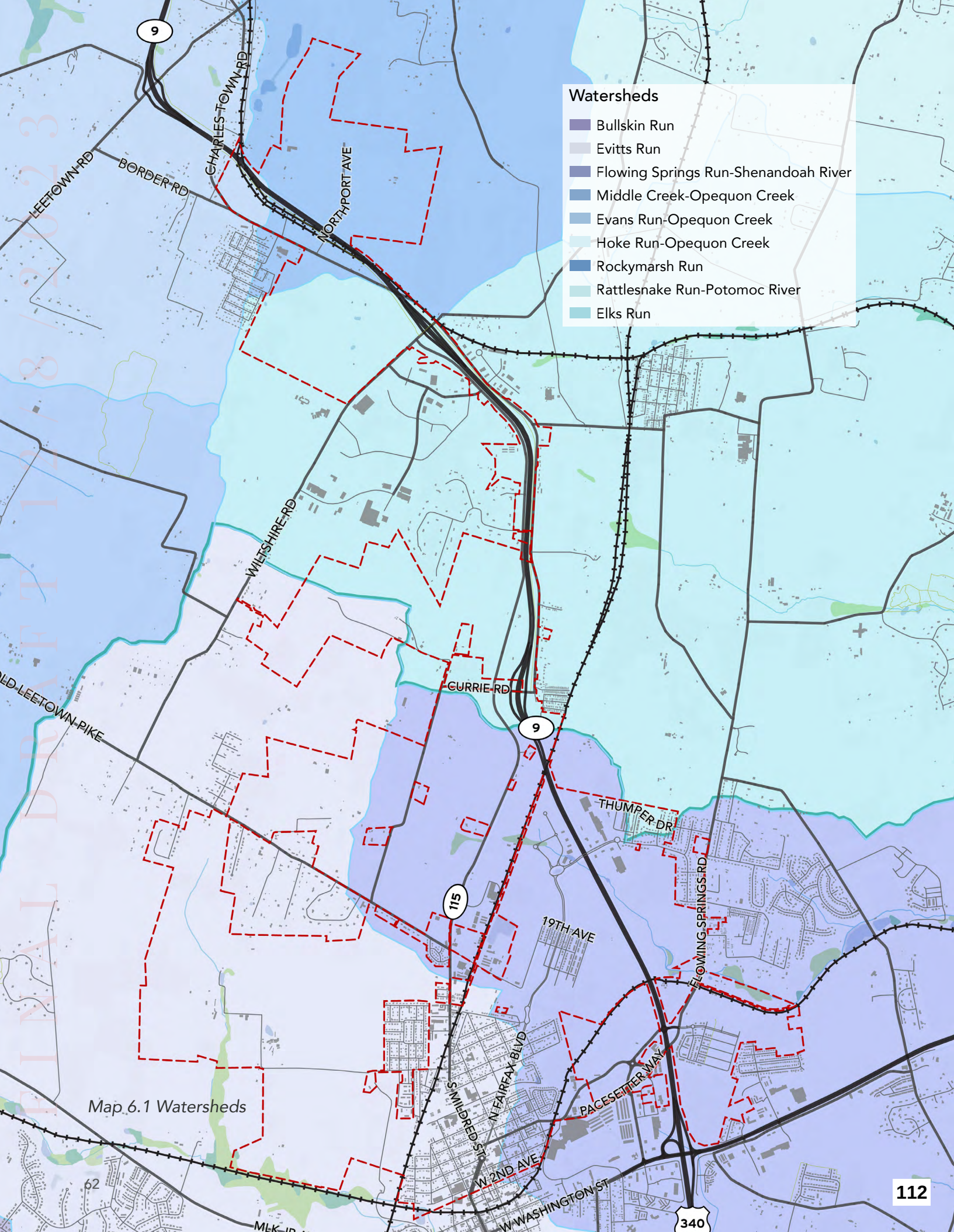

Map 6.1 Watersheds

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

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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.

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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

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Image 6.2 Ranson bioswale, 2023


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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.

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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.

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Image 7.1 Ranson Independent Fire Company, Inc., 2023

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.

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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)



Image 7.2 Ranson Elementary School, 2023

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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.

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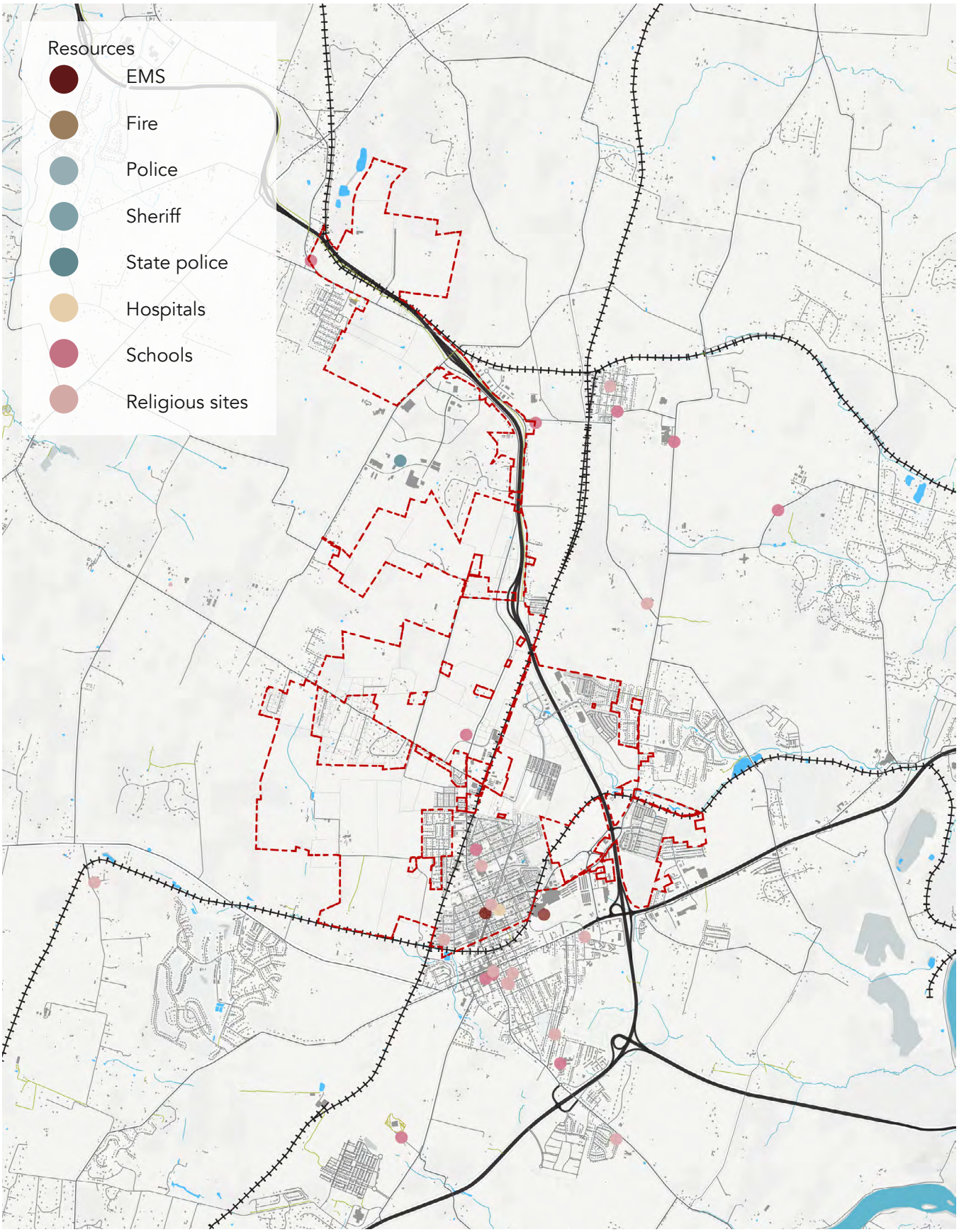
PUBLIC SERVICES IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

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 7.4 Ranson Elementary School, new facility under construction, 2023



Map 7.1 City Resources (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap)

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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.

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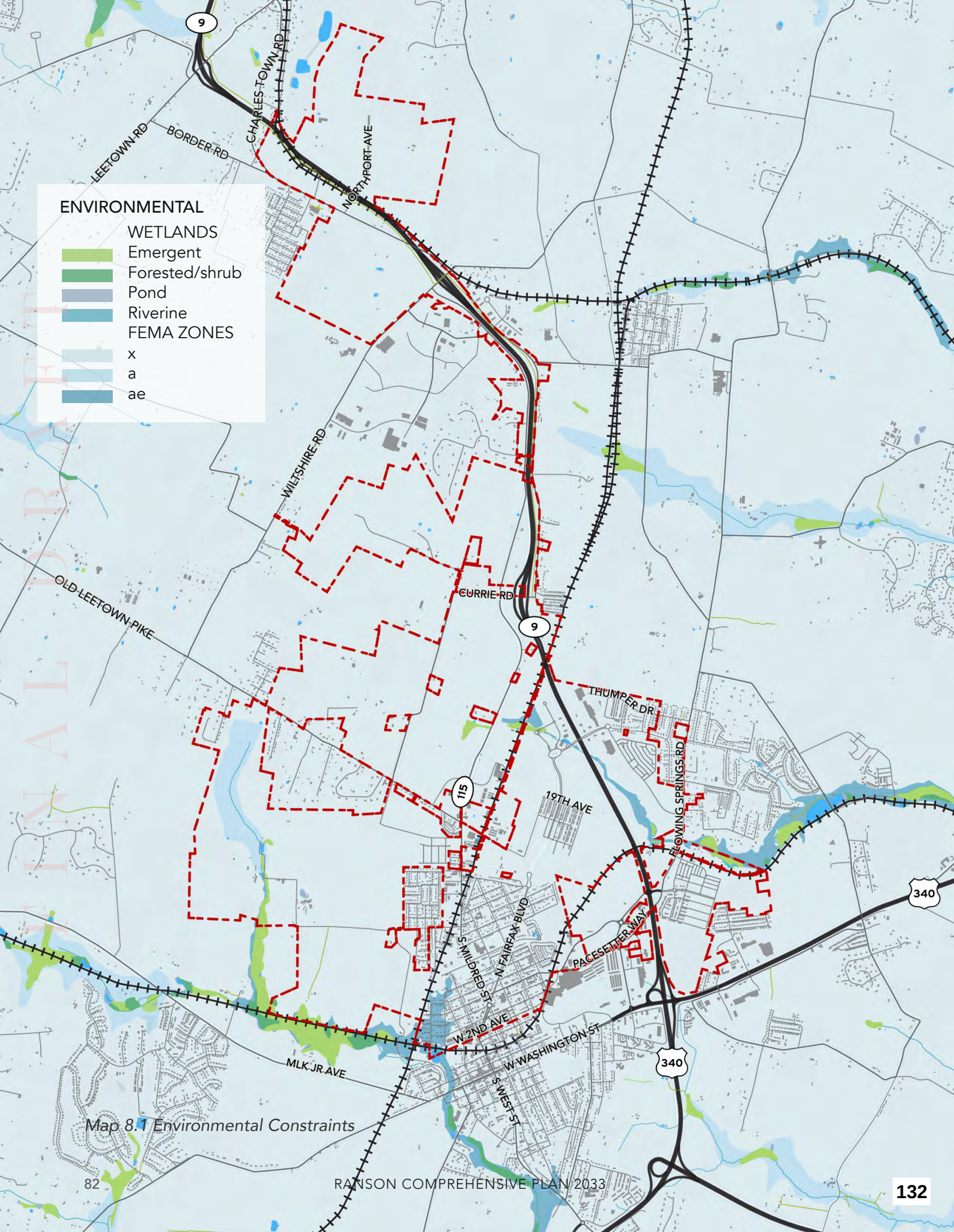

Map 8.1 Environmental Constraints

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

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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

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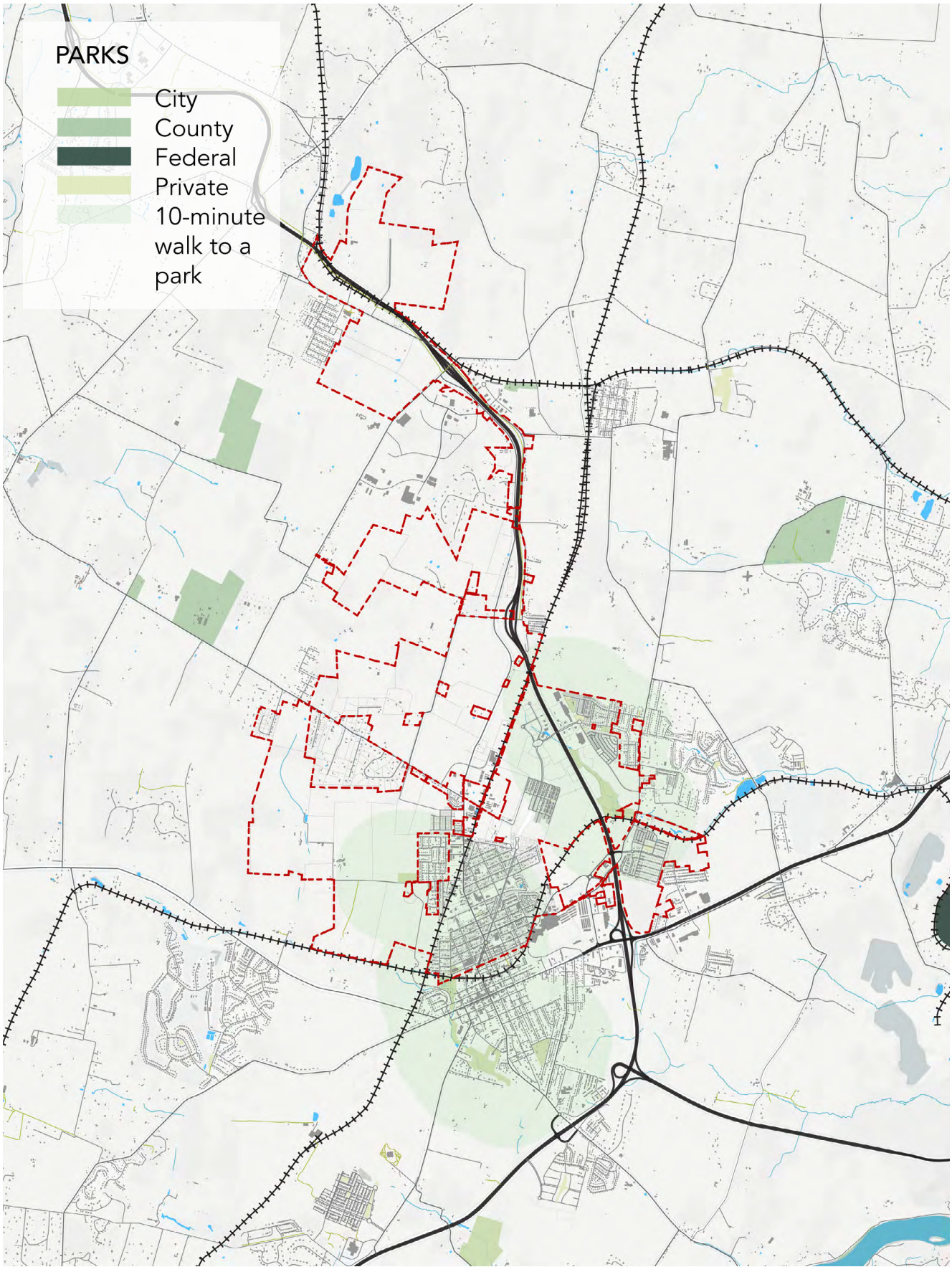

Map 9.1 Parks (Source: UrbanFootprint, OpenStreetMap)

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

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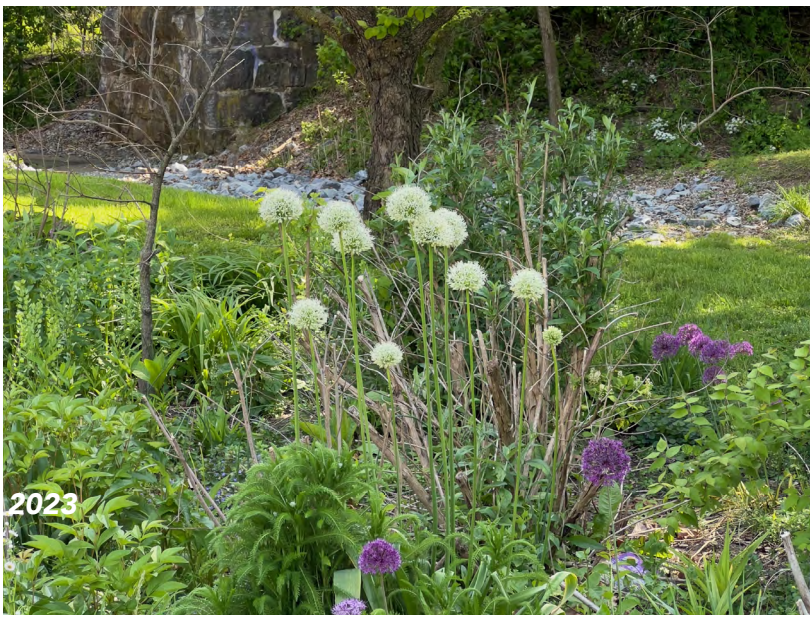
Images 9.10 - 9.15 Ranson Community Gardens 2023





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KARYN








CITY OF RANSON
CENTENNIAL
1910
2010
PARK













Images 9.16 - 9.23 Ranson Recreation, 2023

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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.

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Image 9.24 South George St., Charles Town, 2023

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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.

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CURRENT STATE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

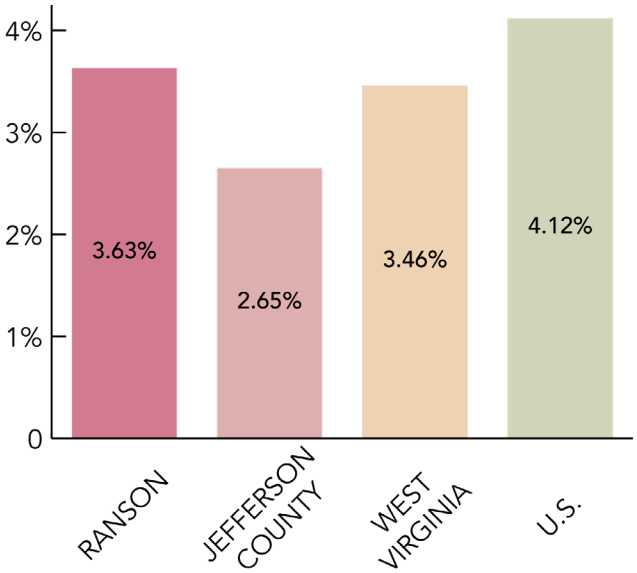
Ranson, coupled with Charles Town, presents a unique market area offering both small-town charm and a spectrum of retail opportunities. The combined cities offer a thriving retail scene with 2 million square feet of local specialty stores and large national brand retailers, making it a community shopping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

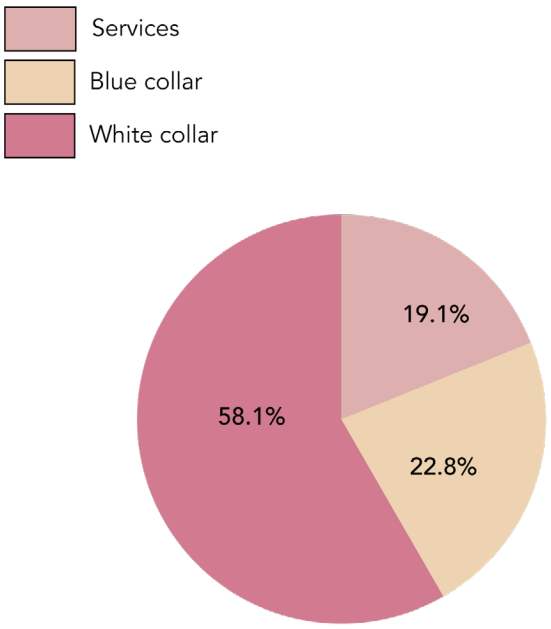
3,051 people over 16 years of age in Ranson are in the workforce. The unemployment rate is 3.63%, which is higher than Jefferson County and the State of West Virginia but less than that of the U.S. as a whole.



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.

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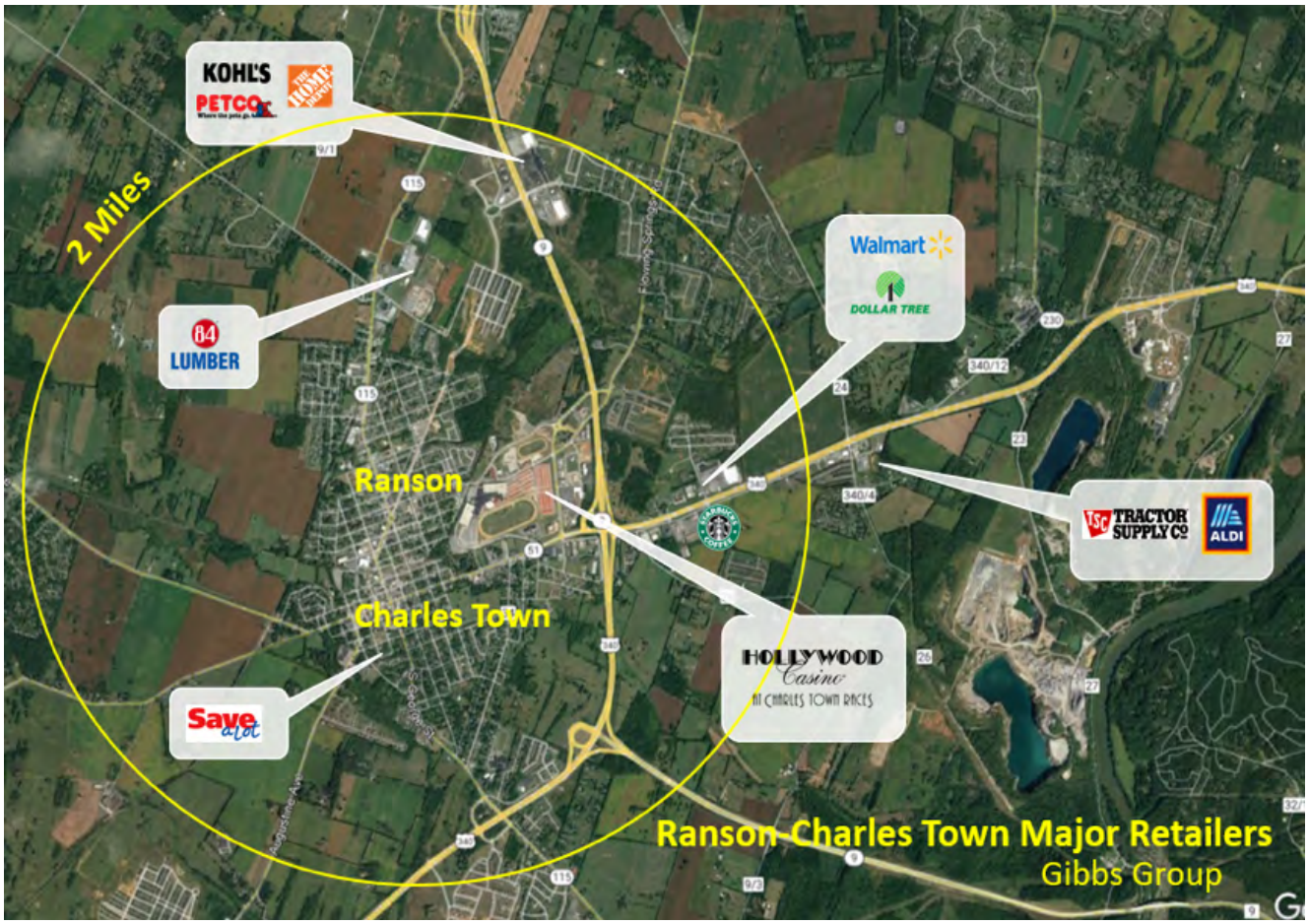
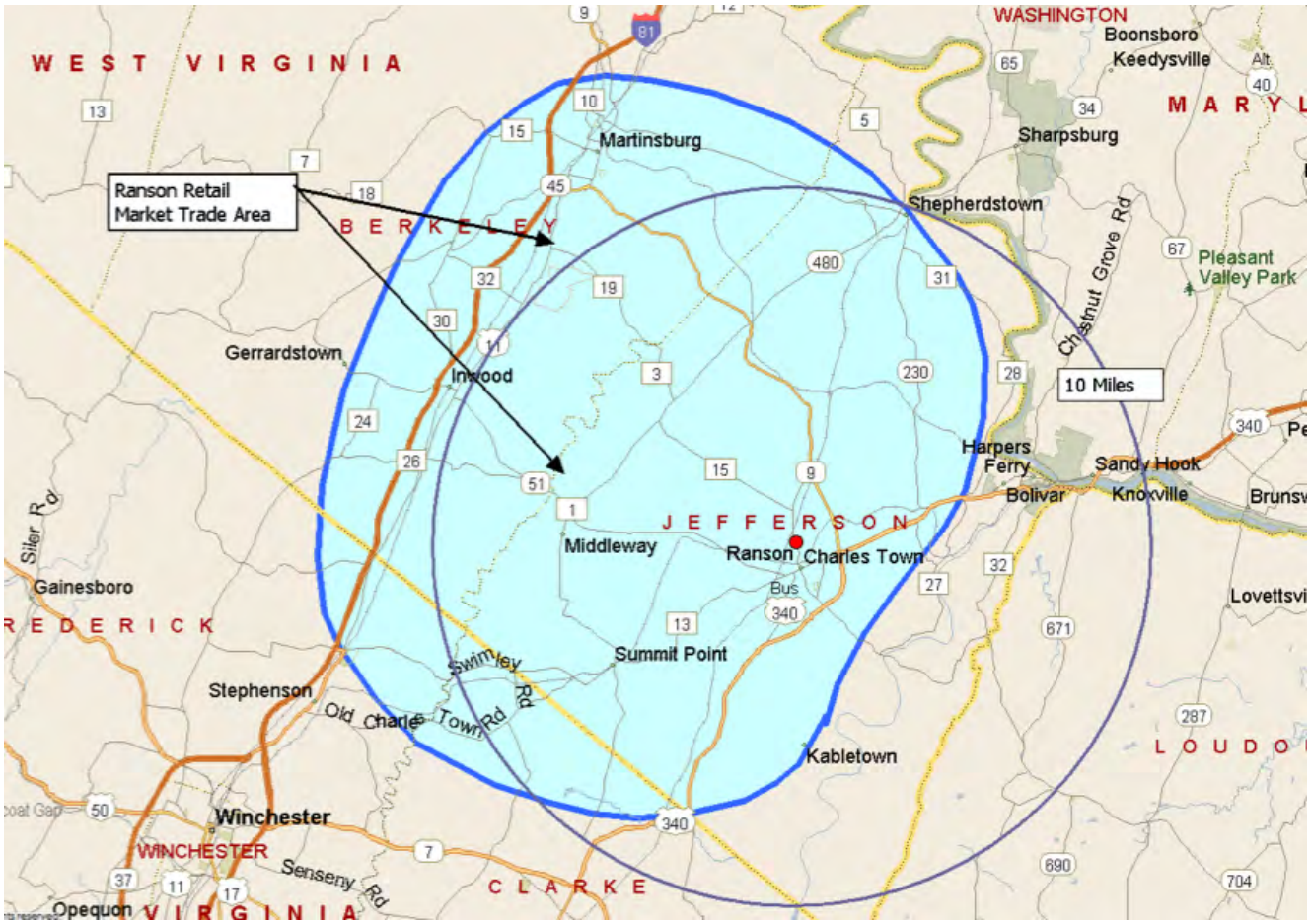


Map 10.2 The Ranson – Charles Town area is a community level shopping destination with over 1 million sf of local and national retailers.

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.

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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.

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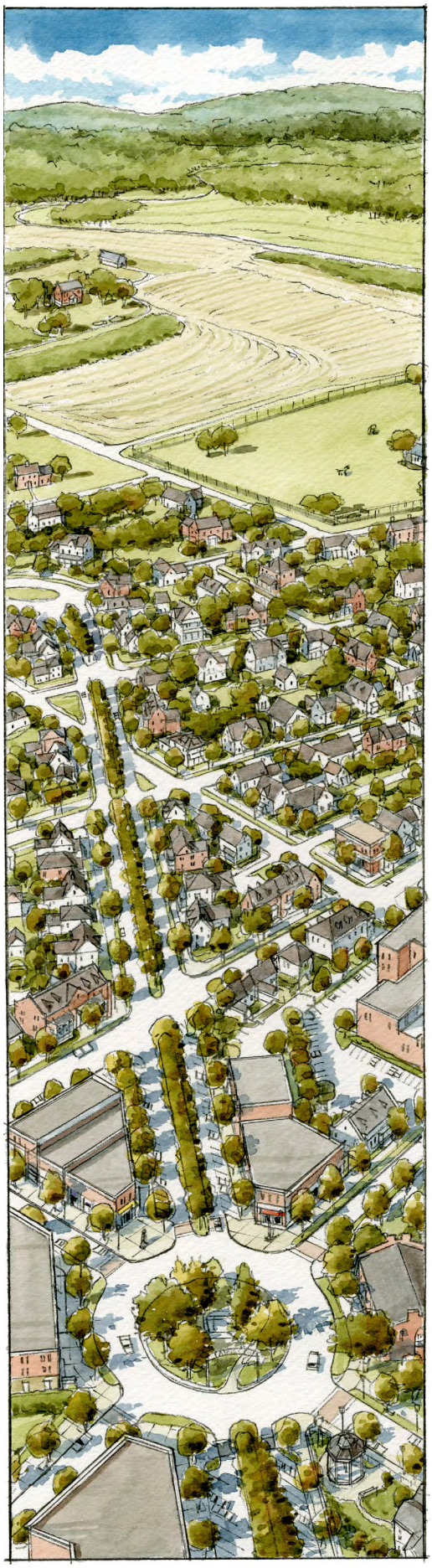

Image 11.1 The Ranson transect changes its nature as it moves from Old Town to the rural countryside. Community design is most effective when it respects this local context.

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.

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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

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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

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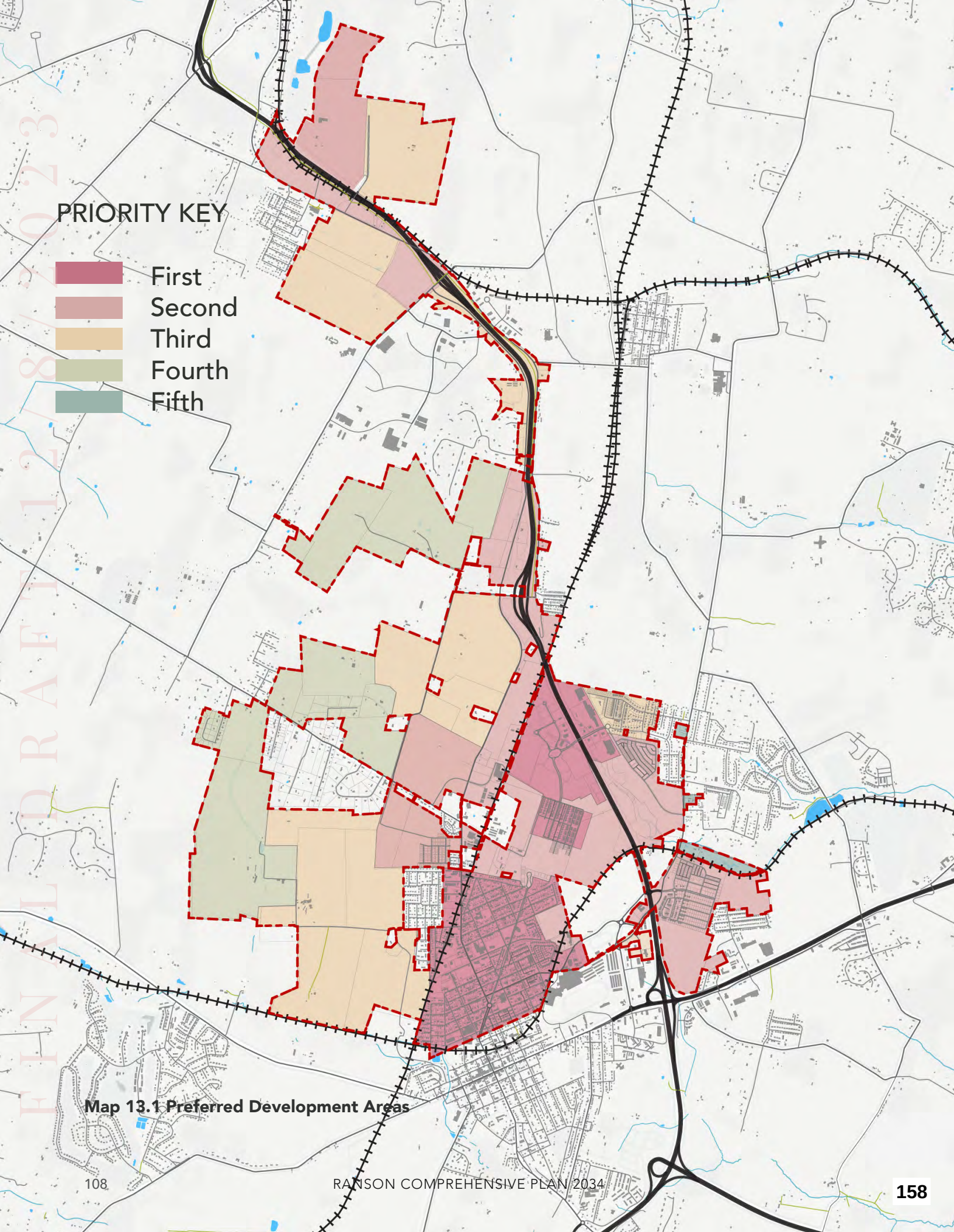

Map 13.1 Preferred Development Areas

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.

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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.

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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.

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.

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.

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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.

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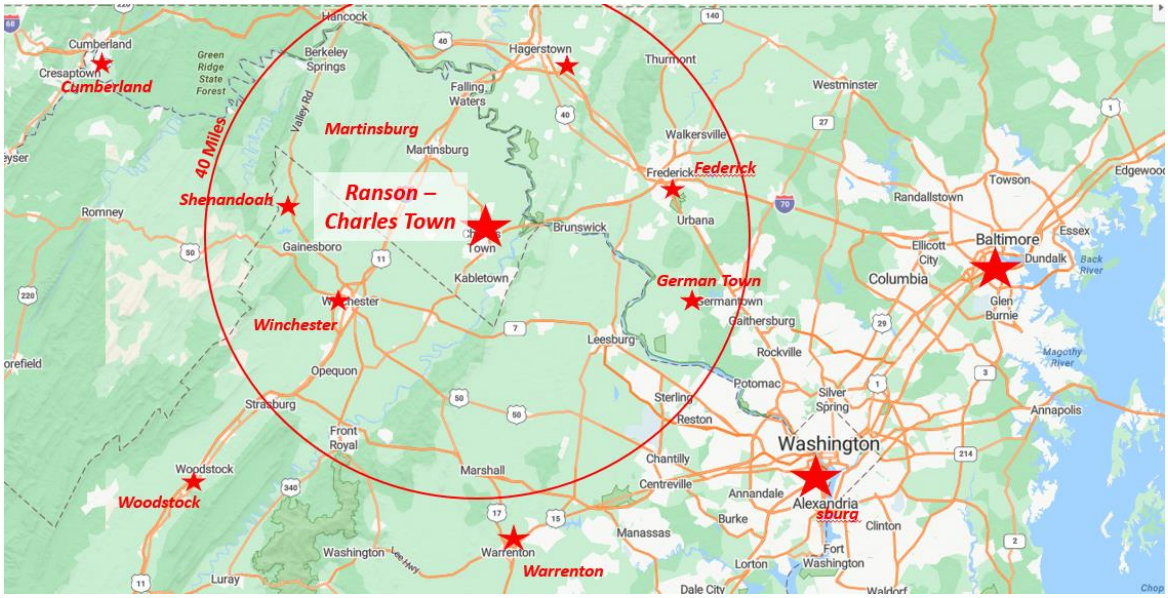

Figure 1: *Ranson is located in West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, 50 miles northwest of Washington DC.*

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
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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

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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

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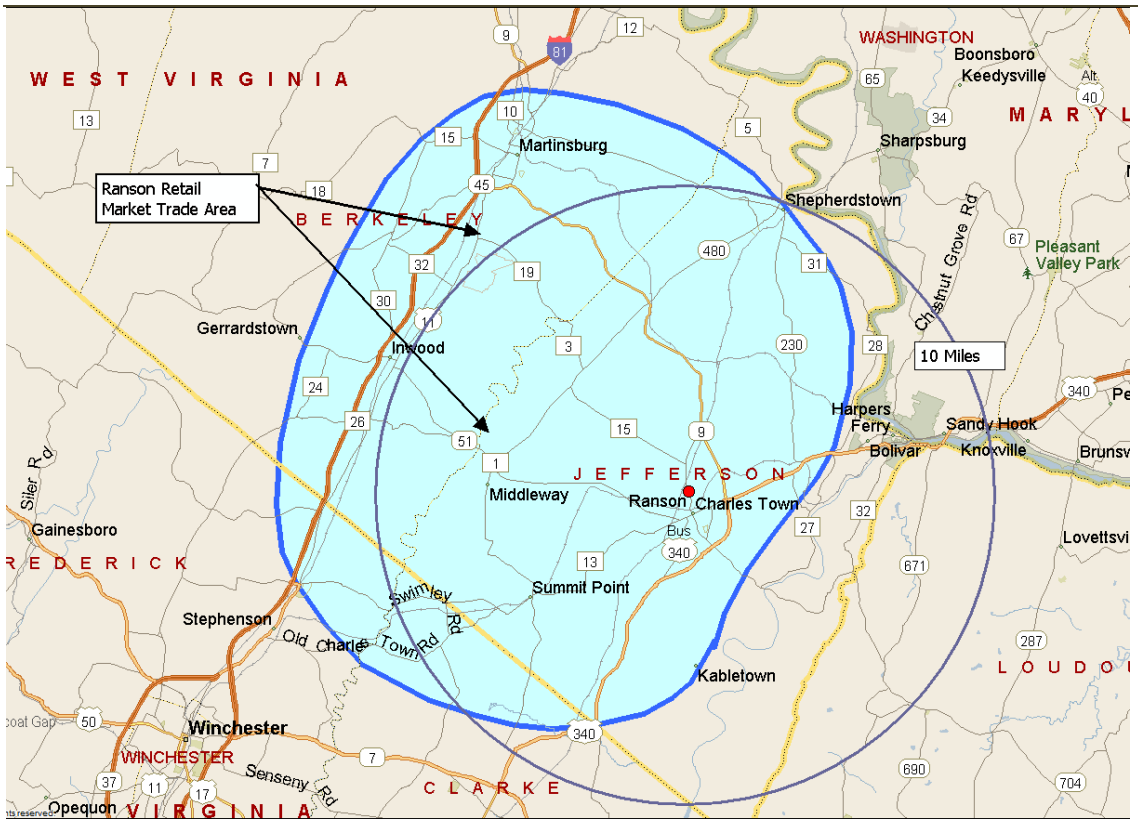

Figure 3: *Above, Ranson's estimated trade – catchment area extends 10 miles (shown inside blue boundary). The market area includes 110,000 people, 42,000 households with $105,000 average household incomes.*

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.

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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.

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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**

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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.

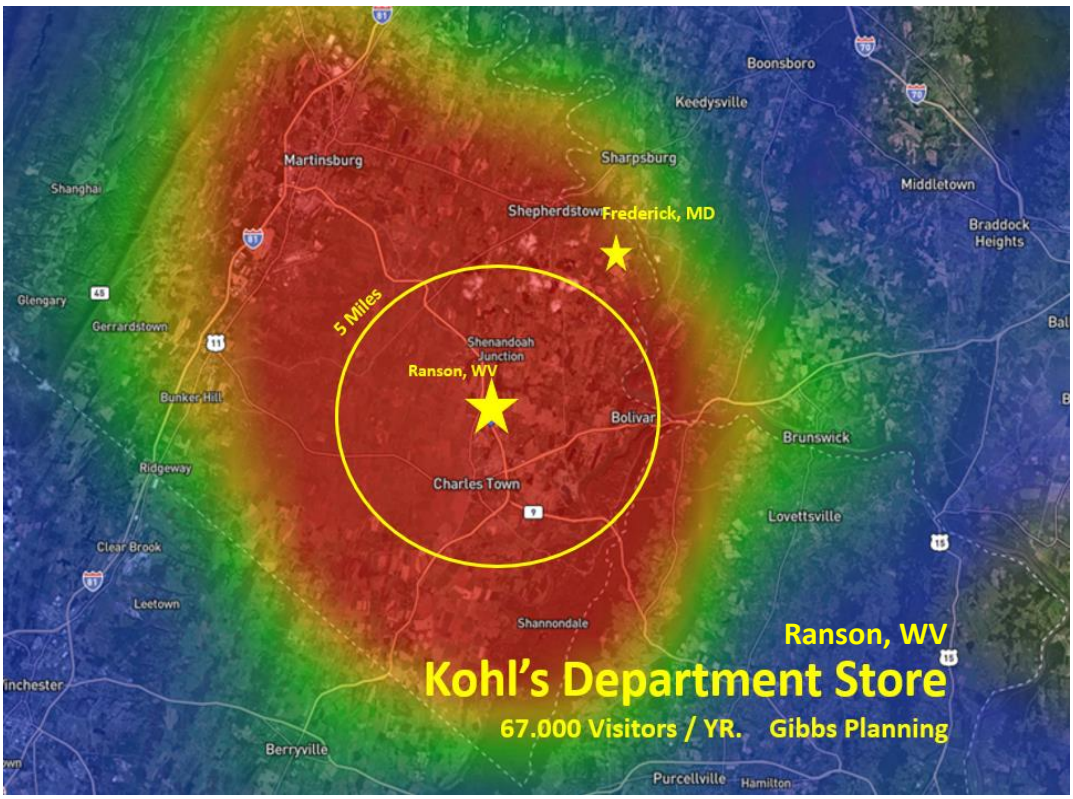

***Figure 11**: Illustration of Ranson Kohl's department store's shoppers' residences. Source Placer.ai*

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.

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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.

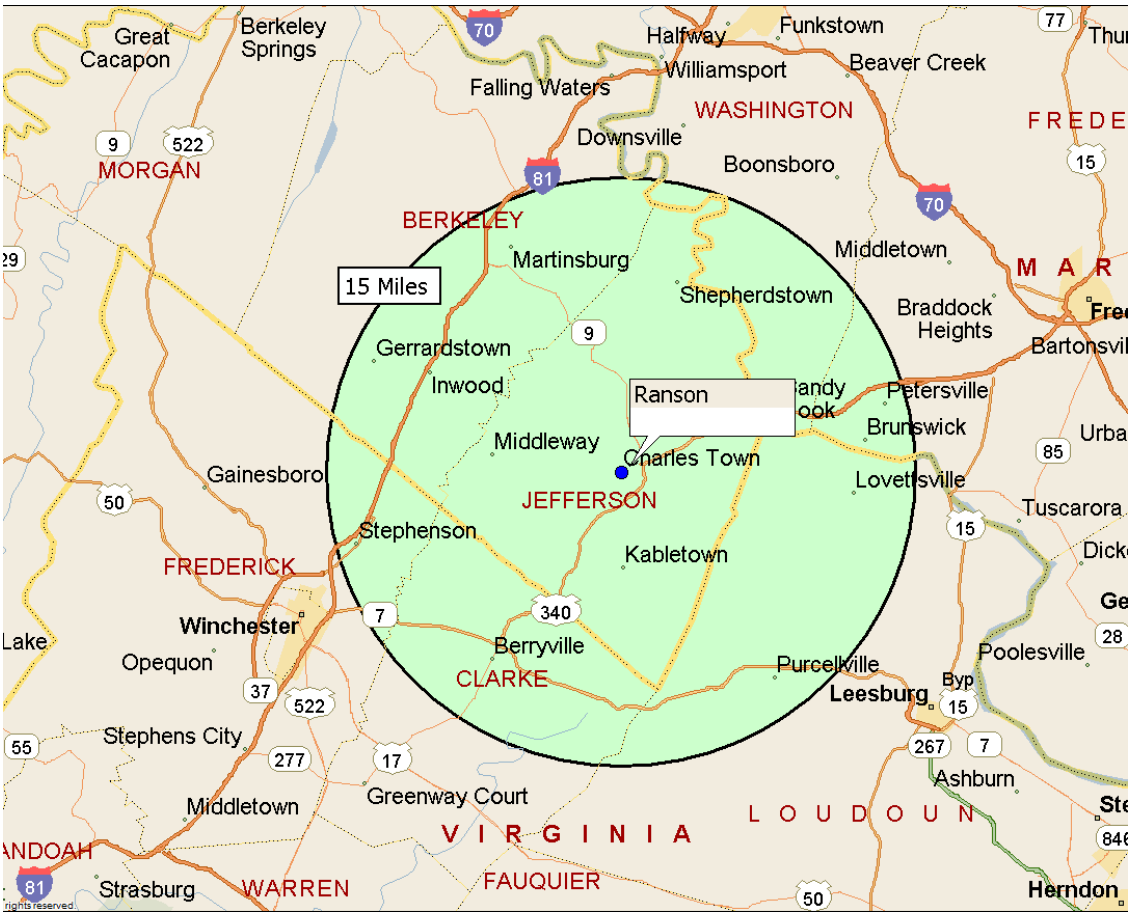


Figure 12: *Map of 15 Mile Ranson radius. 135,000 people, 50,000 households with a $119,000 average income live within 15 miles of Ranson- Charles Town.*

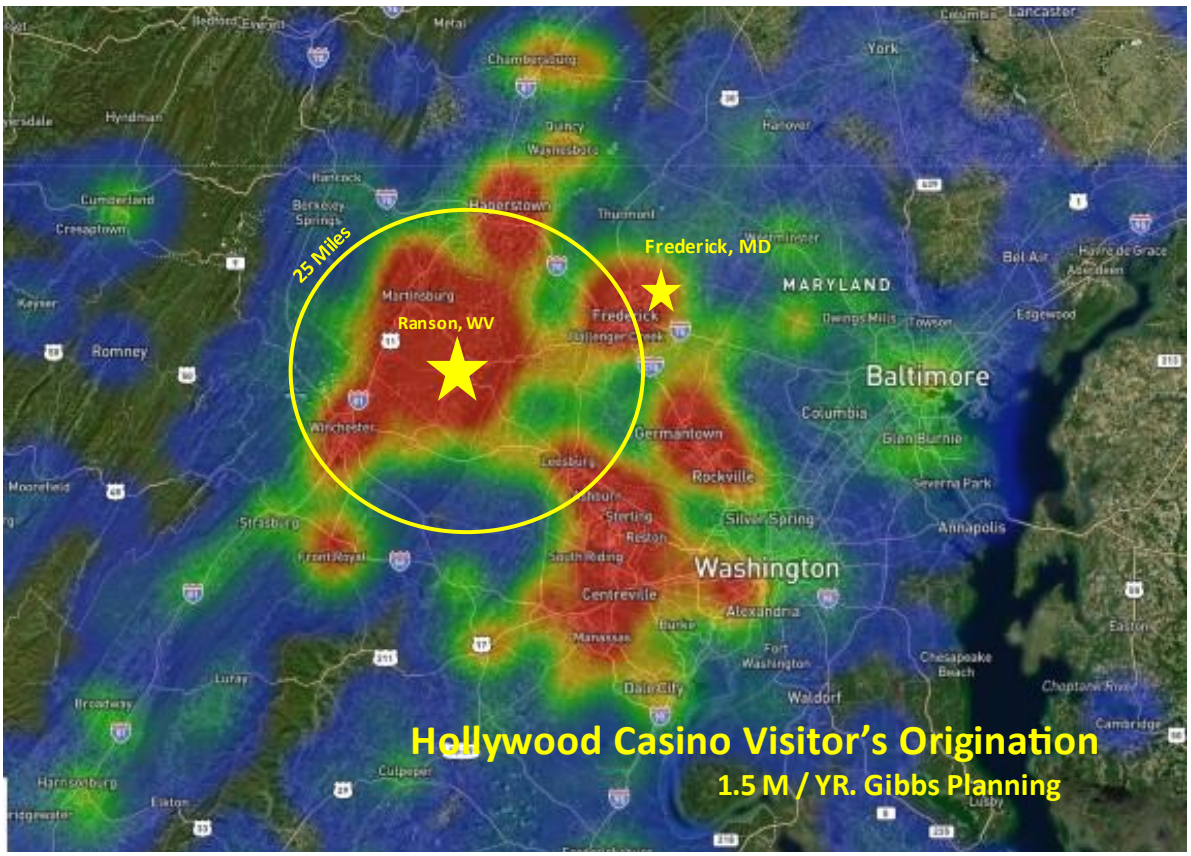
Actual results achieved during the period covered by our market analysis may vary from those described in our report, and the variations may be material. Therefore, no warranty or representation is made by the GPG that any of the projected values or results contained in this study will be achieved.

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

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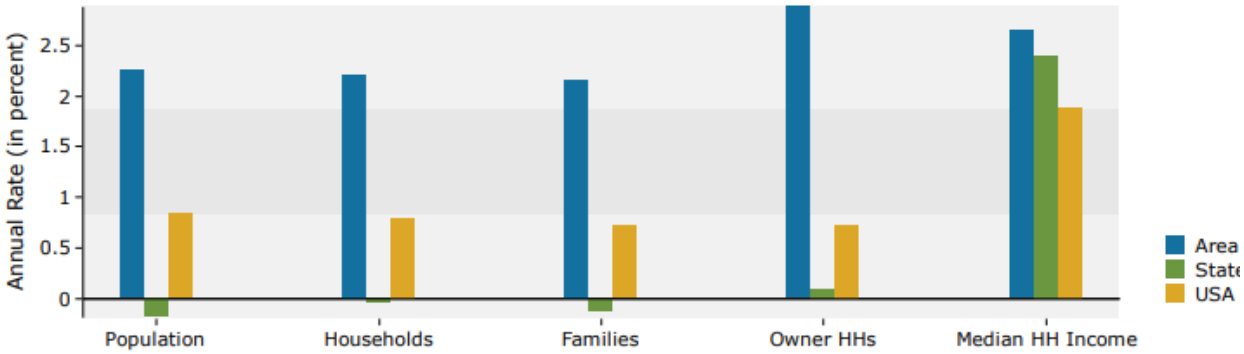
Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

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

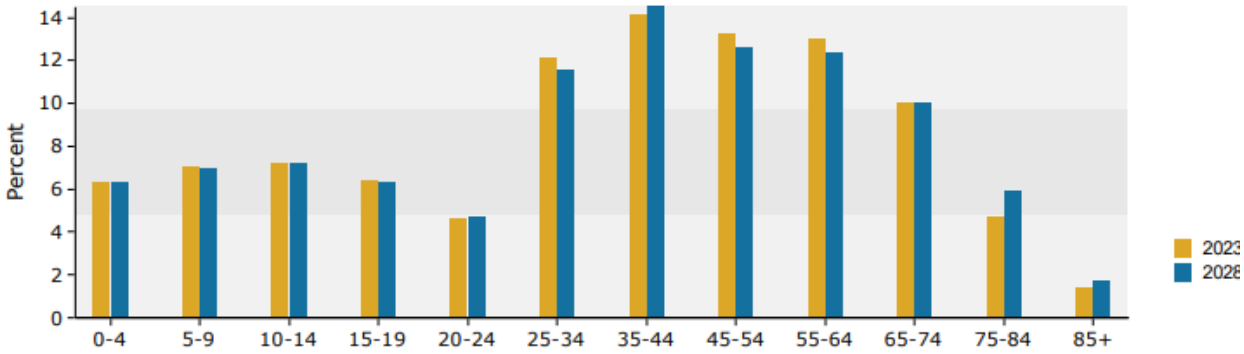
Prepared
Latitude: 39.
Longitude: -77.

0 - 5 mile

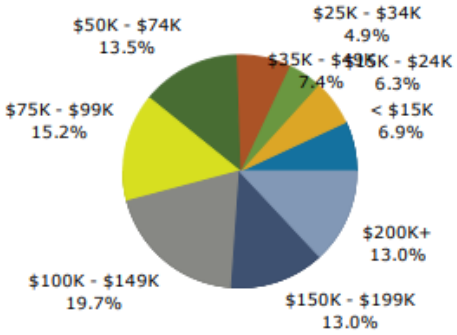
Trends 2023-2028



Population by Age



2023 Household Income



2023 Population by Race

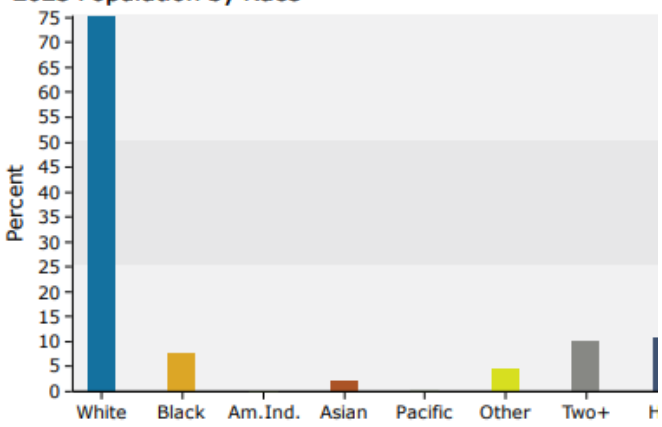




Image 15.2 East 3rd Avenue, 2023



RANSON Refined

WWW.RANSONREFINED.COM

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 2024-20234 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