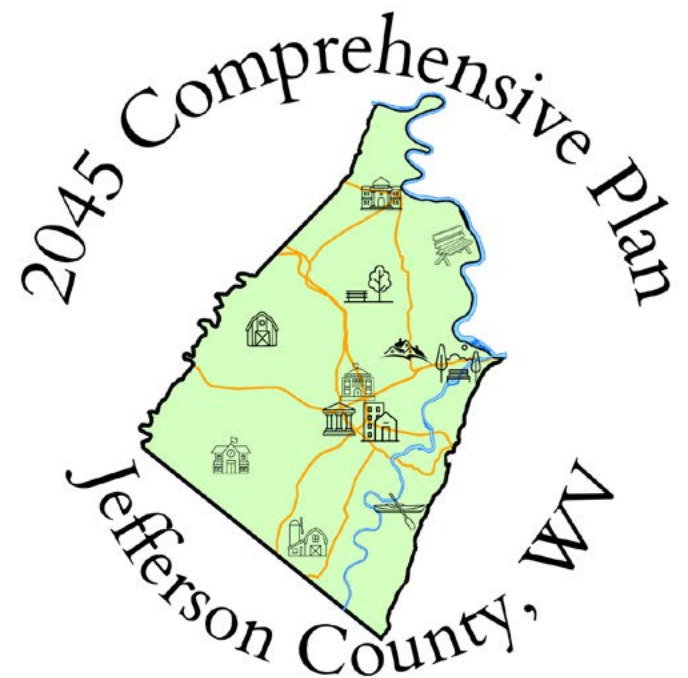


2045 Comprehensive Plan

Jefferson County, West Virginia



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Executive Summary

The main purpose of the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* is to build on the groundwork and accomplishments of Envision Jefferson 2035 Plan and continue to foster the improvement of Jefferson County. From its implementation in 2015, Envision Jefferson 2035 has seen many of its main objectives come to fruition through the work and dedication of Jefferson County's residents, County Staff and officials, and partner agencies. Several essential zoning and subdivision text amendments were approved, supporting historic preservation and adaptive reuse in collaboration with the Historic Landmarks Commission. These amendments also included the adoption of campground regulations; established agricultural special event facility provisions; removed the LESA process from development review; strengthened the provision for cluster developments; and clarified rural site plan standards to protect the County's rural character. By expanding on the progress made through Envision Jefferson 2035, the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* is focused on guiding the County into the next 20 years.

To initiate these goals, Jefferson County's local government and staff began the process of creating the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* by gathering input from County residents through five public input meetings over 2023 and 2024. At the first meetings, residents were able to share ideas about the most paramount

topics for the Plan to include. Later meetings gathered public comments on specific goals, objectives, and the Future Land Use Guide. Staff also created a large-scale survey to gather residents' opinions on Jefferson County, including such topics as positive improvements, negative detractions, and quality of life in the community. The survey garnered approximately 1,200 results and was instrumental in helping the Planning Commission and County Staff determine what concepts to prioritize. Building on the public input, Planning Commission and Staff drafted the Comprehensive Plan during work sessions throughout 2023 and 2024. When the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* draft was complete, Planning Commission then held a public hearing for residents to offer comments. Following this, Planning Commission recommended the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* to the Jefferson County Commission for adoption.

In order to achieve its purpose of guiding Jefferson County, the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* relies on goals and objectives categorized by five themes: Quality Land Use and Growth Management, Promoting Tourism and Conservation, Community Connections, Growing a Diverse Economy, and Creating Livability. As these foundational concepts are implemented, Jefferson County can improve as a community to remain a place where people of all lifestyles can live and thrive.

Acknowledgments

County Commission Members

Steve Stolipher, President
Jane Tabb, Vice President
Kelvin Upson
Pasha Majdi

Planning Commission Members

Mike Shepp, President
Aaron Howell, Vice President
Wade Louthan, Secretary
Steve Stolipher, County Commission Liaison
Cara Keys
Donnie Fisher
Jack Hefestay
J. Ware
Tim Smith

Planning and Zoning Staff

Alexandra Beaulieu, Deputy Director & Zoning Administrator (through September 2024)
Jennifer Brockman, Chief County Planner
Luke Seigfried, County Planner
Jennilee Hartman, Zoning Clerk
Michelle Evers, Planning Clerk (through May 2024)
Colin Uhry, Planning Clerk (beginning September 2024)
Joe Guttman, 2023 Planning Staffer
Shenandoah Olsen, 2023 and 2024 Planning Staffer

GIS/Addressing Staff

Jessica Gormont, GIS Coordinator
Rebecca Westbrook, GIS Analyst

Design & Layout

Alexander Malek, Mediadesign

Partner Agencies and Organizations

City of Ranson
Town of Bolivar
City of Charles Town
Corporation of Harpers Ferry
Corporation of Shepherdstown
Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority
Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization
West Virginia Department of Highways
West Virginia American Water
Charles Town Utility Board
Shepherdstown Utilities
Harpers Ferry Water Works
Jefferson County Board of Education
Jefferson County Emergency Services Association
Jefferson County Parks and Recreation
Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Jefferson County Development Authority
Jefferson Medical Center
Historic Landmarks Commission
Farmland Protection Board
Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle
West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection
West Virginia Rivers Coalition
United States Geological Survey Eastern Ecological Science Center
Shepherd University

Format of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is organized into Themes, Goals, Objectives and Action Items.

Themes organize the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan into understandable segments

Goals

are the aspirational statements that help envision and focus where the community is headed.

Objectives

focus on specific policies and programs to bring the Goals to fruition.



Action Items

Objective

Action Items

operate under the Objectives as specific and attainable items that have a timeline and the group/s that are responsible for enacting them.

Goals

Examples of structuring.

Objective

Action Item

Action Item

Action Item

Action Item

Objective

Action Item

Objective

Action Item

Action Item

Organizing a Comprehensive Plan

Key Players: County affiliated organizations that are responsible for undertaking an Action Item.



P&Z	Planning and Zoning
PC	Planning Commission
CC	County Commission
JCDA	Jefferson County Development Authority
EO	Elected Officials
CVB	Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau
HLC	Historic Landmarks Commission
FPB	Farmland Protection Board
JCPR	Jefferson County Parks and Recreation
JCBOE	Jefferson County Board of Education
EPTA	Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority
ESA	Emergency Services Agency
HD	Jefferson County Health Department

Time Frame: The Time Frame of an Action Item is an estimate and the time to complete an Action Item may vary.

Ongoing, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-10 years, Yearly

The *2045 Comprehensive Plan* is a document for Jefferson County and is not for one particular department. The Plan does not have authority over the municipalities in Jefferson County but successful collaboration with our municipalities is highly supported for a successful plan.

The Plan is organized into five themes and seventeen goals under the umbrella of those themes. The Themes, Goals, Objectives, and Action Items are not in preferential order.

Jefferson County's *2045 Comprehensive Plan* is the sixth plan for the County since the first Planning Commission was formed in 1968. The need for long range planning has continued over the last 56 years as a response to growth in the greater Washington metropolitan area. The *2045 Comprehensive Plan* began in the winter of 2022 with Planning Commission deciding to develop the Comprehensive Plan with the assistance of staff. Planning Commission's goal was to create a focused Comprehensive Plan that would be easily approachable to anyone who uses it.

Adoption of a Comprehensive Plan is not the end of long range planning. Text amendments, ordinances updates, ongoing collaboration are all part of the ongoing planning process and are contained as Action Items and Objectives within this Plan. Throughout this document any place the term "*2045 Comprehensive Plan*" or "this Plan" is used, it is intended to include all goals, objectives, action items, text, and maps incorporated herein. References to "the County" is meant to be Jefferson County, WV. Photographs in this Plan are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to unduly draw attention to one area over another.

Elected Officials

Public and elected officials can use the Plan as a guide to write and/or amend land use and development rules and regulations that affect Jefferson County. The Plan is also a tool for implementing the long range goals of Jefferson County that may require support at the local or state legislative level.

Appointed Commissions

The Jefferson County Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Parks and Recreation, EPTA, Farmland Protection Board, and other appointed boards and commissions refer to the Plan to make decisions about topics including land use proposals, providing recreational areas, developing pedestrian trails, and other similar proposals.

General Public

Residents use the Plan to assess and participate in implementing the County's long term goals. They can also use the Plan as an aid when addressing an appointed commission or board about a request, proposal, or other matter.

Comprehensive Plan Users Guide

County Staff

Staff use the Plan as a reference tool when evaluating development proposals, rezoning requests, and other facility or service improvements.

Development Interests

Landowners in Jefferson County can consult the Plan to request owner-initiated zoning map amendments and development proposals. Business owners, developers, and others involved in Jefferson County can also use the Plan as a guide to develop projects that support the goals and implement the objectives described in the Plan.

Partner Agencies

Jefferson County's partners including West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT), Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO), Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBOE), and many others can use the Plan to aid and participate in mutually supported goals.

Courtesy: Jefferson County Parks and Recreation



Quality Land Use and Growth Management

Jefferson County, WV is situated in the Eastern Panhandle and is part of the Greater Washington Metropolitan Area. In addition to its regional position, Jefferson County's demographic profile and economic opportunities are heavily impacted by the state of West Virginia. The road system, public teacher salaries, state code, state tax policies, and other legislative policies are all controlled or decided at the state level. The delegation of state powers limit the role of the county government in land use and infrastructure.

As a whole, Jefferson County is more educated, has less poverty, and is economically better off than the rest of the state of West Virginia. Significantly, Jefferson County has been one of the few counties in West Virginia that has seen an increasing population between 2010 and 2020. Jefferson County's population growth was aided by its natural population increase and its ability to attract out-of-state migrants. In contrast, most of West Virginia has experienced population decline as more people have moved out of the state.

As a geographic and economic outlier, Jefferson County often has very different issues that are not shared with the rest of the state. One of the key concepts that the Comprehensive Plan addresses is how to better influence the location of new development within Jefferson County. As the cost of providing services and utilities increases, it is important to identify specific areas to focus infrastructure and community service into.

Future Land Use Guide

As part of the Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, a Future Land Use Guide was adopted for the first time in Jefferson County. The Future Land Use Guide was made to assist in guiding the Planning Commission and County Commission in making decisions on changes to the Zoning Map. Both the Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan and the *2045 Comprehensive Plan* do not initiate any zoning map amendments. Use of the Future Land Use Guide is to be in combination with the recommendations of this Plan when considering owner






initiated zoning map amendments. The existing zoning on any property in the County will not be affected by this process. This Plan, including the Future Land Use Guide, does not propose to reduce the rights of any property owner. The *2045 Comprehensive Plan* has updated the Future Land Use Guide and included several changes to the Land Use Classifications. The Land Use Classifications were restructured to align them with the zoning districts used in the county. The Future Land Use Guide does not contain any Land Use Classifications that align to the Residential-Light Industrial-Commercial zoning district and instead has proposed three new zoning districts to avoid using the Residential-Light Industrial-Commercial district. The preferred choices of zoning districts for Zoning Map amendments are the proposed districts in this Plan or the existing zoning districts with the exceptions of Residential-Light Industrial-Commercial, Major Industrial, and Planned Neighborhood Development.

The Difference between Land Use Maps and Zoning Map

The Future Land Use Guide expresses the desired arrangement of future land use patterns.

The Zoning Map identifies currently mapped zoning categories that work with current regulations, managing or regulating some of the opportunities of the land.

Jefferson County contains five municipalities:

-  Charles Town is the county seat of government. Charles Town is centrally located and has the largest downtown business district in the county.
-  Ranson is located immediately to the north of Charles Town. Ranson was originally founded in 1910 to attract manufacturing operations.
-  Shepherdstown is located in northern Jefferson County on the Potomac River. It has a small, historic business district and is home to Shepherd University.
-  Harpers Ferry is a former industrial city located at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Today, most the town's territory is part of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Its historical significance and the preserved nature of the townscape makes Harpers Ferry a major tourist destination.
-  Bolivar is located up the hill from the lower town of Harpers Ferry. It historically provided housing for the workers of Harpers Ferry. Today, the town remains primarily a residential area with a sprinkling of small businesses.

There are eight recognized unincorporated villages in Jefferson County. All of the villages develop under County regulations. Each municipality has defined boundaries. Within town limits, the municipalities have certain taxation powers, are given jurisdiction over land-uses, and may provide services such as policing. Areas located outside of the established town limits are considered unincorporated.

Villages of Jefferson County

- Bakerton
- Kearneysville
- Leetown
- Middleway
- Mannings
- Rippon
- Shenandoah Junction
- Summit Point

The Future Land Use Guide and the Zoning Map are different. The categories on each may bear some similarities, but the maps themselves are not the same. This Plan does not call for County initiated zoning map amendments, as it is anticipated that all zoning map amendments will be owner initiated. All property owners within Jefferson County have the right to request a zoning map amendment. The Planning Commission reviews all zoning map amendment requests and makes a recommendation to County Commission regarding whether if a given request is or is not consistent with the Future Land Use Guide and relevant text of this Plan. Following a public hearing regarding the request and with the advice of the Planning Commission, County Commission must act as the governing body and determine if the request is consistent or inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan or otherwise meets the requirements of WV Code 8A.

Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

According to §8-6-4a of the West Virginia Code, Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) are...“an area around and outside the corporate limits of a municipality within which there is a sufficient supply of developable land within the boundary for at least a prospective

twenty-year period of municipal growth based on demographic forecasts and the time reasonably required to effectively provide municipal services to the identified area.”

At present, only three of the five municipalities in Jefferson County have planning boundaries that meet the definition of §8-6-4a of the West Virginia Code. In 2009, Charles Town and Ranson had their UGBs formally approved by the County Commission. In 2014, Shepherdstown created a boundary called the Growth Management Boundary (GMB) which falls under the state definition of a UGB and was formally approved by the County Commission. If Bolivar or Harpers Ferry chooses to create a UGB in the future that is different than the Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs) depicted, the recommendations in this Plan related to UGBs may be extended to the newly created UGBs based on the town’s planning goals. The use of the term UGB throughout this document refers to the Charles Town and Ranson UGBs only.

This Plan expects that properties

within the UGB may be annexed into the adjoining municipality which has created the UGB. However, an entity with property located within the UGB could choose not to annex their land into a municipality and could then develop the land under the County’s

land development standards instead. In such circumstances, the UGB acts as a Preferred Growth Area for the County and urban level development is still anticipated in these areas.

A. Shepherdstown Growth Management Boundary (GMB)

The Shepherdstown Growth Management Boundary was adopted in 2014 and is reflected on the County Zoning Map. Shepherdstown’s adopted GMB allows the Corporation to plan for future growth and annexations, but is not anticipated to have urban scale development if it remains in the unincorporated area. A smaller Preferred Growth Area that would be conducive to urban scale development has been identified to the west of the Shepherdstown.

B. Ranson Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

In 2009, Ranson formally requested that the County Commission approve a prior Townscape Boundary as their Urban Growth Boundary. This boundary was approved in 2010 and is reflected on the County Zoning Map.

C. Charles Town Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)

In 2009, Charles Town formally requested that the County Commission approve a prior Townscape Boundary as their Urban Growth Boundary. This boundary was approved in 2010 and is reflected on the County Zoning Map.

Preferred Growth Areas (PGA)

In addition to the defined UGBs, a series of additional Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs) were identified in the Envision Jefferson 2035 plan and have been incorporated into the *2045 Comprehensive Plan*. These areas are outside the UGBs where water and sewer services are either currently available or could be made available, and are generally intended to develop using the County's development standards. Individual PGAs may also have other community services and facilities that are currently available or could be made available in the next two decades. The PGAs are not intended to be promoted in favor of the UGB for the municipalities. Both areas are expected to be viable areas for development and no policy decision is being made to favor one area over another.

The proposed PGAs are (in no particular order):

A. Shepherdstown PGA

This PGA is located south and west of Shepherdstown and defined predominately by existing zoning, residential and commercial development, and access to water and sewer services. It encompasses an area on either side of WV 45 past the west end of Old Martinsburg Road to Venice Way and to the south along the west side of WV 480. This area is included within Shepherdstown's Growth Management Boundary (GMB) and is the primary area outside of Shepherdstown that this Plan anticipates developing at an urban level even if it remains in the unincorporated area.

B. US 340 East PGA

Much of this area between Charles Town, Ranson, Harpers Ferry and Bolivar is already zoned for a wide range of commercial and residential uses. Water and sewer facilities exist along several segments of this corridor, particularly within the nodes where development is proposed to take place. The easternmost segment of the PGA could eventually be included as part of a Bolivar UGB.

C. US 340 South PGA

Parts of the area from Rippon to the Clarke County Line along US 340 have been zoned for Industrial and Commercial uses prior to the Future Land Use Guide and are conducive for further growth based on the road infrastructure, including the ongoing US 340 widening and realignment, which is reflected in the Future Land Use Guide.

D. Route 9 PGA

This area between Kearneysville and the Berkeley County line has the potential to access water, sewer, and natural gas services from Berkeley County, allowing more intense business park/commercial uses to develop along the County line. The intersection of Route 9 and Leetown Pike is characteristic of a commercially oriented highway interchange, and Kearneysville could develop small businesses and residential uses compatible with the village district. As part of the *2045 Comprehensive Plan*, the Route 9 PGA has been extended to include properties south of Route 9 down to Border Rd.

E. Middleway PGA

Adjacent to the historic village of Middleway located between Charles Town and Inwood is a vacant industrial facility with existing water, sewer, and natural gas utilities which might serve the village area after some improvements. The vacant facility could be redeveloped for a variety of office or business uses and the historic Middleway area could allow development in a pattern and scale compatible with the village district.

F. Shenandoah Junction PGA/School Based Growth Area

This area abuts the Ranson UGB and includes the village of Shenandoah Junction, TA Lowery Elementary School, Wildwood Middle School, Jefferson High School, and the existing Duffields train stop. This PGA allows the development of walkable neighborhoods around these schools. Planning growth around existing schools decreases bus and vehicular traffic and allows for connectivity including walking and biking trails.

G. Residential PGA

The Envision Jefferson 2035 Plan determined that some areas where a concentration of existing or approved residential development exist and are outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) should be identified as a Residential PGA. This includes properties currently zoned for Residential Growth (RG) or have a vested development right to develop. This core residential area is bounded by Old Country Club Road, Flowing Springs Road, Job Corps Road, and Shepherdstown Pike to the railroad tracks.

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Guide were developed throughout the planning process and may not relate precisely to a single zoning classification. These land use classifications are intended to provide guidance to the County and Planning Commissions when considering owner initiated zoning map amendments (rezoning requests). According to West Virginia State Code Chapter 8A, as amended, the County Commission can approve any zoning ordinance map or text amendment by finding that the request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.



Goal 1

Ensure that future land use regulations and policies support and balance the land rights of all land owners of all property types.

Courtesy: Mark Muse Photographs

To ensure that any growth that occurs in Jefferson County is positive, the County must support land use regulations and policies that manage the types and locations of that growth. However, this should not infringe on the right of property owners to use and develop their land. Jefferson County must work to find a balance between these factors that encourages quality land use where it is needed most.

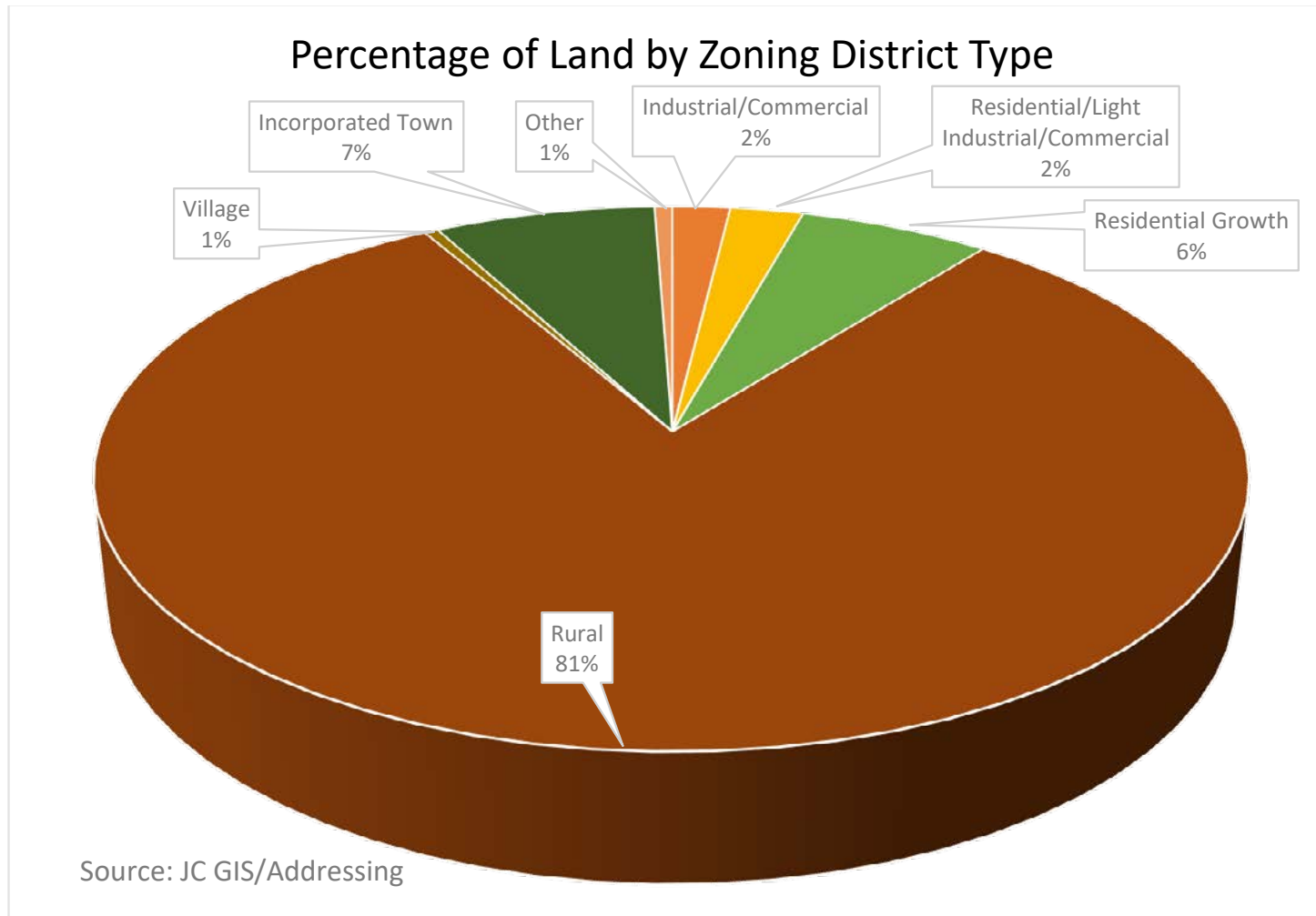
Despite the growth that has taken place in recent years, Jefferson County is still a largely rural county, with approximately 81% of the County's land located within the rural zoning district. One step towards quality land use and reducing the conversion of farmland to urban sprawl is clustered development. To reduce the conversion of farmland and the spread of sprawl, the Plan recommends that clustering should be the preferred method of any rural development. This would have land owners group small lots in a traditional rural community pattern. In order to retain the maximum amount of land as open space or rural economic activity, the open space requirement for residential cluster development shall be met by the residue which will retain no development rights. Rural properties outside the UGB, PGA, or GMB can subdivide as a cluster development following the 1 lot per 5 acres requirement and preserving 50% or more of the land as green space. Alternatively, a cluster development can preserve more than 50% of the land as green space by following the sliding scale found in the Zoning & Land Development Ordinance. Clustering is the preferred method of any rural development in order to retain the maximum amount

of land as open space or rural economic activity.

There are two quarries along US 340, Old Standard Quarry and Shenandoah Quarry, which were identified in the Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan as areas that would benefit from redevelopment. This Plan supports the redevelopment opportunities for both quarries and these future land uses are reflected on the Future Land Use Guide. Old Standard Quarry would be appropriate for a mixed use, commercial, residential, or recreational uses and possible be part of a trail expansion in the area.

Development in Jefferson County must follow the existing land use regulations. These regulations explain standards for acceptable types of development for land within the County based on many factors including location, size, and available infrastructure. Having adequate and quality infrastructure in Jefferson County is beneficial to residents, businesses, and the County's economy because many types of development cannot occur without it. By planning and coordinating with partner agencies involved regarding where services are to be located, the efficiency of infrastructure systems can be raised. In order to streamline development process and ensure that new growth brings a positive impact to the region, Jefferson County must confirm that its land use regulations are oriented with WV State Code and consider how to preserve the rights of neighboring people, properties, and the natural environment while still allowing property owners to progress with development.

Following the Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the County eliminated the previous Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) system from the Zoning Ordinance and updated the Conditional Use Permit process. This change allowed for a large amount of flexibility for the potential development within the zoning and land use regulations. There are still gaps in the existing zoning districts, which is why this Plan recommends the adoption of additional residential zoning districts. It is important



for Jefferson County to take a proactive role in defining where development will occur and what that development will look like. This Plan also calls for an update to the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations and the Zoning & Land Development Ordinance. Such an amendment should contemplate the addition of some land uses as principal permitted uses or conditional uses

in additional zoning districts if the use benefits the surrounding area and would not negatively impact any surrounding area in the County. During the public input process, residents reported a concern about the access to medical services and other essential institutional services in Jefferson County. Increasing the number of zoning districts that allow medical facilities to develop as principal permitted uses in the County could help medical facilities expand where access to health care is needed.

Institutional refers to a publicly accessible facility or nonprofit, or in the context of medical facilities, it describes the necessary and standard uses or practices that are aligned with medical facilities and personnel

Land uses that are Principally Permitted are allowed on all lots in a certain zoning district if a property owner follows the adopted subdivision and zoning ordinances and land use process. This may include filing a permit, site plan, or plat; meeting setbacks, or including landscaping. A Conditional Use is a land use that requires approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals and follows the adopted subdivision and zoning ordinances and land use process.

When the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations are updated, additional measures need to be taken to mitigate the impact of development on farms and lands under conservation easements. Specifically, major subdivision should include a 50 foot buffer along rural zoned properties and properties with an active conservation easement in place. This buffer area should be owned by the Homeowners Association of the subdivision and contain a fence and vegetative buffer within 10 feet of the property line.

Objective 1.1

Establish a simplified variety of commercial, residential, and mixed-use zoning categories and Land Use Classification appropriate to the County's needs.

1. Educate the public about the County's Zoning, Subdivision, and land development processes and regulations through educational materials, presentations, and digital tools.

P&Z | 1-2 years

2. Introduce text amendments to remove the Major Industrial and Planned Neighborhood Development zoning districts.

P&Z • CC | 1-2 years

3. Establish or modify zoning district options that allow residential and commercial land uses, residential and mixed use land uses, and rural residential land uses.

P&Z • CC | 1-2 years

4. Complete and enact an update to the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations and the Zoning & Land Development Ordinance to include the recommendations in the 2045 *Comprehensive Plan*.

P&Z • PC • CC | 1-2 years

Objective 1.2

Continue to encourage the utilization of cluster subdivisions as the preferred form of residential development within rural areas.

1. Avoid future use of the Residential-Light Industrial-Commercial district as a zoning district for zoning map amendment requests.

PC • CC | Ongoing

2. Allow residential development outside of the Urban Growth Boundaries or Preferred Growth Areas to develop as rural cluster subdivisions or minor subdivisions, in accordance with existing land use rights.

P&Z • CC | Ongoing

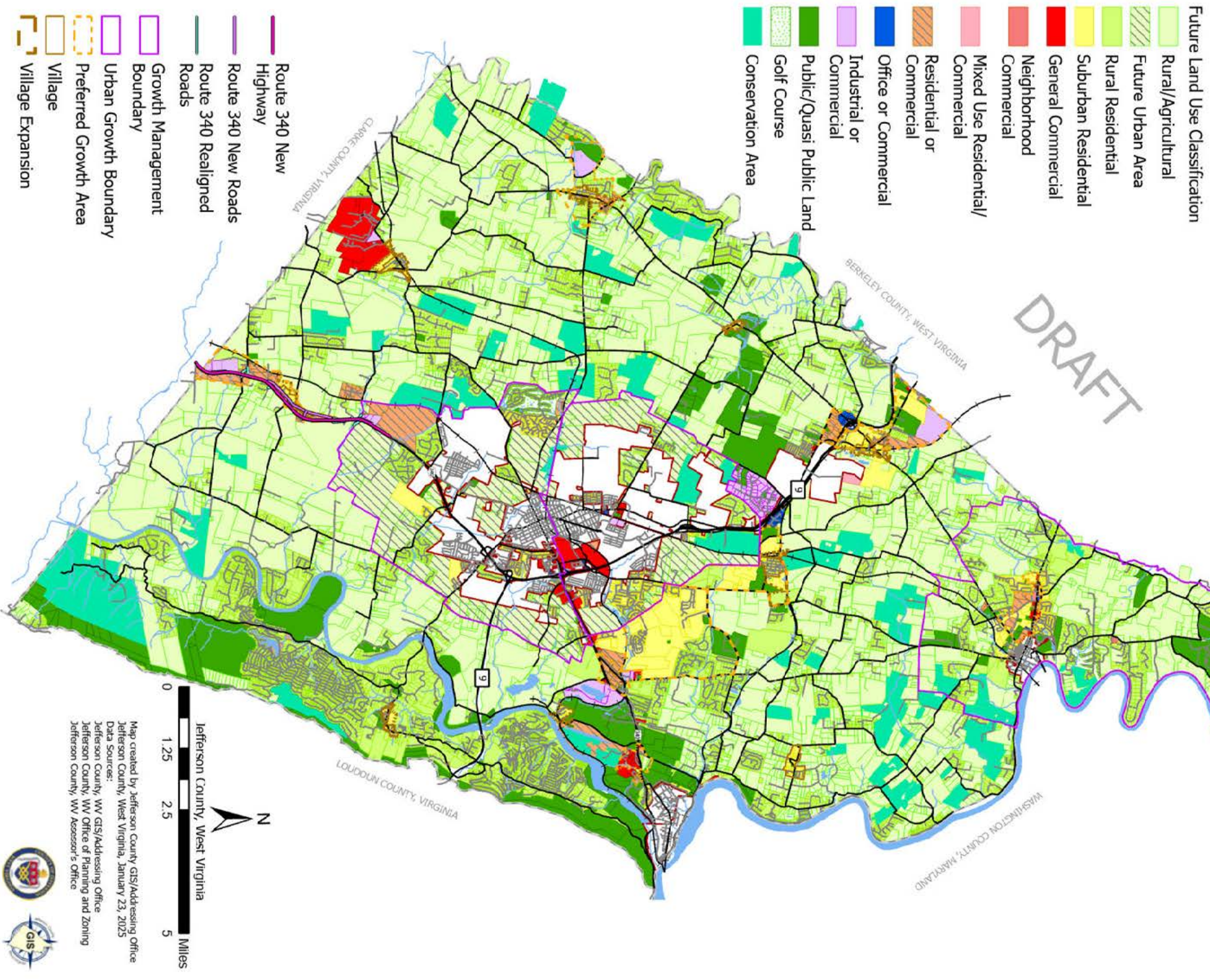
Objective 1.3

Align existing land use regulations with West Virginia State code and make the land development processes consistent with the County ordinances and regulations.

1. Perform a yearly review of relevant changes to West Virginia Code 8A following the end of the West Virginia state legislative session.

P&Z | Yearly

Future Land Use Map - Jefferson County, West Virginia 2045 Comprehensive Plan



DRAFT

Jefferson County, West Virginia Major and Minor Subdivisions 2045 Comprehensive Plan





Goal 2

Concentrate high density development in the County's Preferred Growth Areas (PGA), Villages, and municipal Growth Boundaries (UGB&GMB) where infrastructure exists or is made available.

Courtesy: Jefferson County CVB

In the early 1970's, Subdivision Regulations were adopted and countywide zoning followed in 1988. Jefferson County continues to be one of a few counties in the West Virginia with countywide zoning. As part of the County's long range planning, Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and Preferred Growth Areas (PGA) were identified as sections of Jefferson County where urban scale development is appropriate.

Traditional villages, hamlets, and crossroad areas can meet the needs of the community to have walkable amenities and have a sense of place. All of the existing villages in Jefferson County have opportunities for infill and limited expansion that would complement the existing historic areas and support the sense of community that currently exists. In particular, the villages of Kearneysville, Middleway, Rippon, and Shenandoah Junction are included within four of the identified Preferred Growth Areas (PGA). Each of these villages has a Village Expansion Area identified on the Future Land Use Guide

as a part of the PGA in which they are located. Additionally, the villages of Mannings, Summit Point, and Leetown, which are not a part of a PGA, have an expansion area identified on the Future Land Use Guide. It is the recommendation of this Plan that new development within the villages and the surrounding area should complement and integrate with the existing village areas. Proposed commercial structures should take into account similar types of structures that would be appropriate for the area in which it is located.

Like many areas in the Greater Washington Metropolitan Areas, Jefferson County witnessed great development pressure in the past decade. There have been numerous developments within the unincorporated areas of Jefferson County and within the municipalities. This Plan supports the annexation of properties within UGBs and the GMB into the relevant municipalities with understanding that infrastructure, including utilities and higher volume roadways, be available to support urban scale development. Repurposing existing sites into new development allows continued use of existing infrastructure. This can include redeveloping dilapidated structures, vacant buildings, and bringing in new businesses to existing buildings. By concentrating development into these areas, a more efficient delivery of services and use of infrastructure can be provided.

Having adequate and quality infrastructure in Jefferson County is beneficial to residents, businesses, and the County's economy. Urban level development, which requires the provision of water and sewer systems, is defined as where more intense levels of residential, commercial, and industrial development activity occur. In West Virginia, by law, water and sewer providers are required to provide water and/or sewer service anywhere in a community so long as a developer pays to provide the initial infrastructure that would support the service. As a result, land use planning in West Virginia has to take a pro-active role in defining where urban level amenities and development will occur. As Jefferson County has grown in population over the

last several decades, newer subdivisions and commercial developments are increasingly built to a level of density that requires water and sewer services. The population growth of Jefferson County and the development pattern that has occurred has resulted in additional demands placed on the County's water resources and wastewater facilities. At the same time, federal and state regulations limit discharges into and from Jefferson County's water bodies, which eventually flow into the Chesapeake Bay. These guidelines and regulations have created additional demands for water and sewer suppliers to upgrade their facilities. While many of the County's utilities have upgraded their facilities to meet Chesapeake Bay Watershed Protection program requirements, it may be difficult to finance future upgrades to the County's water and sewer infrastructure.

Jefferson County's residents and businesses expect infrastructure capacity, facilities, and services to be available to meet current needs while ensuring the ability to accommodate future expansion of the services.

Businesses considering relocation or expansion to Jefferson County are able to better plan for their needs knowing that infrastructure and services are in place, or that documentation for plans to expand services exist. Coordination of future land use plans with water and sewer plans allows local residential and business development to be targeted to areas where water and sewer services and other infrastructure and services are readily available. Local utility and service providers will have a reasonable expectation of where growth will occur and what the potential maintenance and operating costs of expanding services would be. Encouraging the utility and service providers to coordinate the creation of their service plans for infrastructure and service improvements with the growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Guide would enhance the providers planning efforts and local land use planning efforts.

In January 2022, a text amendment was made to the Envision Jefferson 2035 Plan by County Commission on the permitting of solar energy facilities in the

County. The process laid out in that text amendment defined solar energy facilities as principally permitted uses within the UGB and PGA and as conditional uses outside of a UGB or PGA. This Plan supports the reassessment of the solar energy facility development process and recommends requiring a site plan and additional stipulations on vegetative buffers, setbacks, and agrovoltaics. This Plan also supports the installation and use of renewable energy sources by residents and businesses.

Land Use Planning

The Shepherdstown Growth Management Boundary (GMB) is not considered an area for future Urban Development if it remains unincorporated with the exception of the Shepherdstown PGA.

In 2018 the JCBOE acquired 101 acres along Shepherdstown Pike for the purpose of establishing the new Shepherdstown Campus including Shepherdstown Elementary and Shepherdstown Middle Schools. While the importance of walkability for students has been noted elsewhere in this Plan, a change in land use classifications or the creation of a new Preferred Growth Area around the new Shepherdstown Campus is not suitable based on the lack of water and sewer service. In the event that water and sewer service is extended to the Shepherdstown Campus, traffic safety will need to be evaluated before considering higher intensity development. This location is a rural gateway that encourages tourism and supports the historic and cultural resources in the greater Shepherdstown area.

As data centers have developed in the region it is important to address where such development would be appropriate in Jefferson County. Data centers require large amounts of power and may require large amounts of water for their essential operation and cooling. Data centers require large buildings with cooling operations and generators, which have the potential to generate noise that most closely aligns to industrial land uses. Due to the nature of data centers, this Plan supports the development of data centers in the Industrial Commercial and Major Industrial zoning districts.

Objective 2.1

Encourage and support the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, previously used sites, dilapidated structures, and vacant buildings within Jefferson County, paying particular attention to brownfield and greyfield sites.

1. Collaborate with stakeholders to recruit new and existing businesses and industries to use existing buildings and previously used parcels for new development including business parks and commercial sites.

JCDA | 6-10 years

2. Create, publish, and maintain a directory of previously used sites, including brownfield and greyfield sites, that are good candidates for redevelopment.

JCDA • HLC | Yearly

Objective 2.2

Encourage expansions to the village areas and to provide a continuation of village scale and design in these areas.

1. Identify opportunities for restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of structures within village areas.

HLC | Yearly

Objective 2.3

Coordinate with utility providers operating in Jefferson County to identify appropriate locations to provide new service based on existing and proposed development and infrastructure while supporting the enhancement, repair, and modernization of existing infrastructure.

1. Promote the importance of extending natural gas services and alternative energy sources into Jefferson County and encourage the extension of these services into new subdivisions.

JCDA | Ongoing

Objective 2.4

Reevaluate the Preferred Growth Areas to reflect infrastructure expansions and land use changes.

1. Direct new urban level residential developments to locate in preferred areas within the municipalities, UGBs, PGAs, or Villages where water and sewer services are available.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

2. Support the annexations of parcels located in UGBs and the GMB, focusing on parcels that are primarily surrounded by parcels already incorporated into the municipality.

CC | Ongoing

3. Direct new development to be contained in municipalities, UGBs, PGAs, Villages, and areas zoned for Residential Growth (RG), where public water and sewer will be available.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

4. Coordinate planning efforts with the municipalities to ensure that the development complements the future land uses in Jefferson County.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

5. Adopt a text amendment to include Bolivar, Charles Town, Harpers Ferry, Ranson, or Shepherdstown staff and Planning Commission as an agency that must be notified as a courtesy by the applicant when submitting a concept plan for development within the relevant municipality's UGB or GMB.

PC | 1-2 years

Jefferson County, West Virginia Town and Village Map 2045 Comprehensive Plan



Map created by Office of GIS and Addressing
Jefferson County, West Virginia, June 2024
Data Sources:
Jefferson County, WV GIS/Addressing Office
Jefferson County, WV Office of Planning and Zoning
Jefferson County, WV Assessor's Office



Goal 3

Support agricultural activities and promote agritourism.

Courtesy: Mark Muse Photographs

One of the highest priorities of Jefferson County residents is the desire to preserve the rural landscape, heritage, and lifestyle that attracted numerous residents. Many feel that Jefferson County needs to balance the demands of growth with the protection of agricultural lands. A variety of means exist to assist in the protection of land, soils, and active farm sites ranging from policy to land development standards. Following the Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, regulations concerning zoning, subdivision, and building code were modified as they apply to rural areas. This Plan supports reevaluating local regulations to continue to support active agriculture as conditions change in Jefferson County.

Although some members of Jefferson County's agricultural community are active in civic and community organizations, during the public input process a number of farm operators stated that issues related to agriculture in Jefferson County are not well understood by the community, County staff, and community leaders. By engaging the agricultural community in the planning process, County staff and officials could more effectively address the concerns that are affecting farming activities now and into the future. Members of the agricultural community also identified concerns about the decreasing numbers of young farmers. This demographic trend highlights the benefits to the agricultural economy of educational opportunities and resources for future farm operators. Supporting a new generation of farmers and residents who wish to start a new farm will strengthen the County's agricultural resilience.

Farm operators and artisans have expressed concerns regarding regulations on existing and potential activities located on farms. Some of the areas of concerns relate to state and/or federal regulations to mitigate the impact of agricultural, mining, or industrial activities on the region's air, water, and soils, while other concerns relate to County ordinances. Since there are a variety of state and national regulatory agencies that review the safety and quality of products created on farms, there is limited local ability to address certain agricultural issues, but there are opportunities to review and amend local requirements related to production and marketing of agricultural products on farms or residential properties. By having additional flexibility in uses and operations, farm operators might continue to have a viable business while devoting more time and resources to on-site needs. The agricultural community expressed their interest in diversifying farm operations through the sale and marketing of value added products, allowing farm operators to collaborate by marketing and selling each other's goods on each individual farm, and allowing a wider range of service activities to take place on agricultural properties.

The rural areas of Jefferson County also include a variety of small artisan studios and other cottage industries. While the preservation of agriculture is essential to the protection of rural areas, it is also important to provide for the ability of appropriately scaled businesses to succeed. Efforts of the agricultural and artisan communities can create desirable places for tourism to thrive. In these communities, visitors can visit working farms, shop at an artisan studio, and eat locally grown

food. By enabling farm operators and artisans to have more options and encouraging the creation of cottage industries that reflect the rural aesthetic, the viability of operating rural based businesses in the County's rural areas will be enhanced in the coming decades.

Another issue expressed by members of the agricultural community is the lack of agricultural service facilities located in Jefferson County. Farm operators often need to travel out of the County or State to purchase or repair farm machinery and when buying or selling livestock. There are only a few large animal veterinarians in Jefferson County that can assist with maintaining the health of animals or be available in emergencies. The lack of facilities that support agriculture could have a negative impact on the maintenance and expansion of agricultural activities in Jefferson County.

During the public input process, the farming community highlighted difficulties in accessing butchering facilities. Supporting animal husbandry and related activities is of high importance to Jefferson County and the scarcity of processing facilities in the area and the wait times involved increase the cost of processing and lower net returns for farmers. It would benefit the farming community to have access to on-farm or small-scale meat processing facilities in the County.

The increasing need to add value to farm products has shifted the marketing and sale of many farm products to focus on farmers' markets and direct sales to local and regional

restaurants. There are several farmers' markets operating in Jefferson County during the growing season on a weekly basis at temporary sites. The creation of common distribution and marketing facilities or year-round food hub could provide opportunities to sell arts and crafts, root crops, or other products. Incorporating a farmers' market into a regional food hub might serve as another means of selling the County's farm products and could include dining and/or commercial kitchen facilities. Other opportunities include marketing a regional agricultural identity for the Eastern Panhandle. The Jefferson County Development Authority has devised several marketing mechanisms to create a unified regional branding and Jefferson County specific branding. It is important for farms in Jefferson County to have the opportunity to provide a viable range of income generating agricultural activities to farm operators.

Objective 3.1

Enhance the viability of existing farmlands within Jefferson County by allowing a flexible range of agricultural and/or artisan uses within existing rural areas.

1. Revise existing Jefferson County land use requirements and site plan standards to reduce regulatory barriers related to agricultural or artisan operations.

P&Z | 3-5 years

Objective 3.2

Encourage potential economic development opportunities related to agriculture and agricultural products in Jefferson County.

1. Advocate for new legislation to the relevant bodies to allow agricultural grant and loan funds be an approved use for agritourism and advocate for regulatory changes that promote and support the growth of craft beverage producers and sellers.

JCDA • EO | Yearly

2. Coordinate with local businesses to brand and market Jefferson County farms and products by identifying and linking potential partnerships and matching suppliers with potential local and regional markets

JCDA | Ongoing

3. Encourage the expansion of off-site farmers' markets to provide market-places for farmers and artisans to sell their goods within a variety of Jefferson County commercial venues;

JCDA | 6-10 years

4. Support economic opportunities relating to the aggregation, processing, and distribution of agricultural products.

JCDA | Ongoing

5. Promote the agritourism businesses and events of Jefferson County.

CVB | Ongoing

6. Encourage ongoing horse breeding and raising in Jefferson County.

JCDA | Ongoing

Objective 3.3

Support programs for the education of and resources for the creation and viability of new generations of farmers.

1. Work with stakeholders to provide educational opportunities to promote the business of farming from generation to generation.

P&Z • JCDA | 6-10 years

Objective 3.4

Update existing land use regulations to allow for diverse compatible and complementary uses on agricultural properties and within rural areas of Jefferson County.

1. Work with stakeholders to provide recommendations on potential amendments to policy and ordinances to promote uses compatible and complementary to agriculture in rural areas.

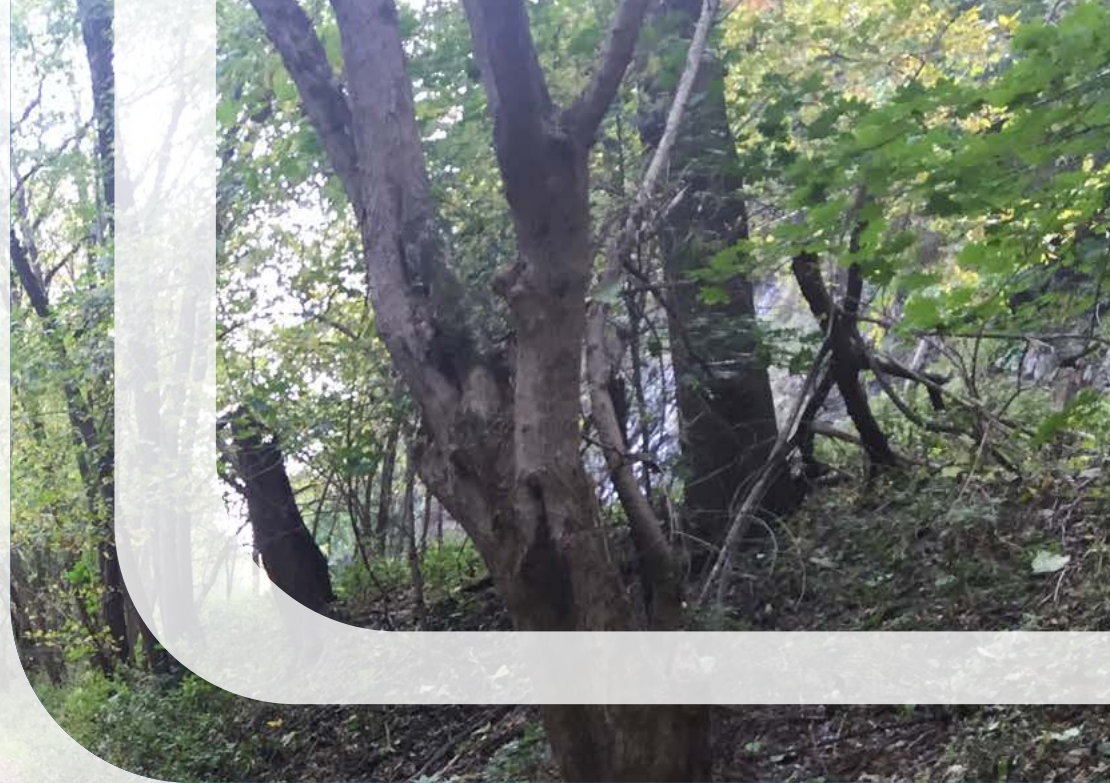
P&Z • JCDA | 6-10 years

Objective 3.5

Support on farm agricultural processing businesses.

1. Encourage farm operators to collaborate with County officials in identifying potential economic development opportunities including attracting a meat processor to Jefferson County.

P&Z • JCDA | 6-10 years



Promoting Tourism and Conservation

Courtesy: Hagerstown Eastern Panhandle MPO

Jefferson County is the gateway to West Virginia from surrounding states and hosts the most visitors in the state of West Virginia. Proximity to the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, MD Metropolitan Areas and to the Eastern Seaboard offers a large market to target visitors interested in the many activities and attractions to be found in the county. These activities include recreational, heritage and cultural tourism, local and regionally known restaurants, farmers' markets, flea markets, motor sports, horseracing, gambling, music, theater, festivals, and arts events. Many of the attractions that draw tourists to the County are located in areas where the combination of historic and geographic resources enhances the sense of place and provides an authentic rural experience.

Harpers Ferry played a significant role in the African American community after the Civil War, with the establishment of what eventually became Storer College in 1865 as one of the first public institutions of education for former slaves. Harpers Ferry was also the site of the second meeting of the Niagara Movement in 1906, which led to the founding of the NAACP.

The treason trials for coal miners affiliated with the United Mine Workers' West Virginia Coal Mine Wars were held at the same site where John Brown's treason trial was held about 70 years earlier. The acquittal of the mine workers in 1922 was the culmination of two decades of strikes, gunfights, assassinations, and violence over working conditions that occurred in the southern coal fields of West Virginia. More recently, Shepherdstown hosted the Israel-Syria peace accord discussions in late 1999 which brought more attention to Jefferson County.

In the mid 1940's, the Armory and numerous surrounding properties in Harpers Ferry were declared a National Monument. Over the ensuing years, Harpers Ferry became a National Historic Park, with numerous structures rebuilt and lands surrounding Harpers Ferry purchased and protected by the National Park Service. Today, the town of Harpers Ferry is surrounded by historic Civil War battlefield areas and numerous rehabilitated and rebuilt structures dating back to the Civil War era.

A significant problem confronting County tourism is transportation concerns. Most of the roads in the County's rural area are paved, but tend to have narrow widths and safety concerns associated with increasing motor vehicle traffic on the rural roads. Parking concerns persist in the municipalities and Harpers Ferry National Historic Park that dissuade visitors. Transportation issues are discussed further in the *Community Connections* theme.



Goal 4

Encourage the preservation of historical sites and leverage heritage and cultural tourism to foster local business growth and development.

Jefferson County has played a role in numerous milestones throughout the history of the United States. Nomadic Native American tribes hunted and lived in the Eastern Panhandle proceeding colonization and the founding of the United States. The family of George Washington established 12 estates in the County, eight of which remain, and 75 members of the Washington family are buried in Charles Town cemeteries. In addition, several generals from the Revolutionary War resided here.

Harpers Ferry was established during the Presidency of George Washington as one of only two U.S. Federal armories. The Lewis and Clark expedition, funded under President Thomas Jefferson and which precipitated the westward expansion, was outfitted at the Harpers Ferry Armory. Later, prior to the Civil War, John Brown led an attack on Harpers Ferry in 1859 with hopes of securing a major munitions stockpile that would lead to a spontaneous uprising by slaves. The effort was unsuccessful and Brown and several of his associates were captured, tried, and

convicted at the Jefferson County Courthouse in Charles Town. They were hanged a few blocks away on what is now South Samuel Street.

Harpers Ferry and the rest of Jefferson County were critical during the Civil War as they served as a main rail corridor between the eastern and western theatres of the War. The strategic value of the site led to the area changing hands between Union and Confederate forces many times during the war. Over 12,000 Union troops garrisoned at Harpers Ferry surrendered while under attack from Confederate forces led by General Stonewall Jackson. This was the largest surrender of troops on American soil. Without that surrender, the bloodiest battle of the Civil War, Antietam, may have never occurred. The battlefield at Shepherdstown has been determined by the National Park Service to have played an important role in the end stages of the battle of Antietam. In addition, Jefferson County served as a staging area during the Shenandoah Valley campaign, which included battlefield sites at Summit Point and Middleway.

With so many historical sites and buildings from a variety of time periods and events, Jefferson County is a prime location for historic tourism. The Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) works to preserve a large number of these significant sites, which preserve the identity of the County. There are structurally sound buildings throughout the County that are no longer in use but still can be an asset to the community. By applying principles of adaptive reuse, many of these unprotected buildings could be repurposed and fill new uses in the community, creating usable space without more development and allowing the old buildings to remain in their historic locations. This endeavor could be aided by the creation of a publically accessible catalog showing non-residential structures that have the potential for adaptive reuse. Additionally, it is important to educate County residents, potential businesses or developers, and tourists alike about the historic character of Jefferson County and its need for adaptive reuse. The HLC currently provides many accessible resources as well as educational opportunities about these topics.

In 2001, Jefferson County adopted building code and has continued to update the Building Code Enforcement Ordinance to match the current version of West Virginia State Building Codes. Jefferson County has elected to not to adopt the International Property Maintenance Code and added an agricultural exemption for farm uses. As the International Code Council releases new versions of its Codes, it is crucial for West Virginia to adopt these updates to meet industry best practices and maintain high standards of safety and efficiency.

In the Envision Jefferson 2035 Plan, great attention was given to the cultural and historical organizations that support the artistic tourism of Jefferson County. The local artisan community has helped to create the many places in the County where art has become a focus for public enjoyment, especially in the municipalities. Beyond hosting art galleries, Jefferson County's municipalities have worked to make art accessible through public installations, including murals on downtown buildings, decorative benches, and displays in parks. Jefferson County can support artistic tourism through the County's population of local artists by working with the municipalities and agencies to encourage the installation of local art in public buildings and spaces.

As all forms of tourism in Jefferson County increase, it is important that the County promote this economic benefit while maintaining its rural character and preserving its unique historic features. By encouraging agritourism, the County supports its agricultural community and farms, allowing its rural character to flourish. The increase of artistic tourism helps local artists and supports the growing artistic nature of many communities. Promoting heritage tourism increases historical awareness and support for preserving Jefferson County's unique place in history. By balancing these aspects of tourism and conservation, Jefferson County can host a thriving environment for all residents and visitors.

The increase of short-term rentals in residential neighborhoods has been a growing trend across the U.S., particularly in popular tourist destinations. Jefferson County in particular has seen an up swell in short term rentals as more visitors come to the County for outdoor recreation, historical significance, and other tourism offerings. Short-term rentals affect the housing stock in the county as what would otherwise be a long-term residence is instead rented out to temporary guests. This pushes the cost of housing up as less housing is available. West Virginia has recently enacted several laws that have specified what local regulations can be adopted regarding short-term rentals. The County will need to find ways to balance the need for housing in the community with the opportunities provided by tourism in the County.

Objective 4.1

Encourage the utilization of existing historic and agricultural areas for a variety of uses in ways that respect their historical function or setting.

1. Create a public art program working with municipalities that would encourage the installation of locally produced art in publicly owned facilities and sites.

CVB • Arts Council | Ongoing

2. Educate county residents and visitors about historic preservation efforts and current projects in Jefferson County.

HLC • CVB | Ongoing

3. Expand upon the existing interconnected marketing of the County's multiple historic resources and the National Historical Park to encourage visitation to multiple locations in the County.

HLC • CVB | Yearly

4. Encourage the ongoing documentation of Category 1 and 2 historic sites in the County.

HLC | Ongoing

Objective 4.2

Encourage the adaptive reuse of existing structures.

1. Encourage the state legislature to include adaptive reuses of historic structures in the state code.

EO | Yearly

2. Develop and maintain a public catalog of existing non-residential structures that are adaptable for reconfiguration as housing or other uses.

P&Z • JCDA | Yearly

3. Revise existing Jefferson County land use requirements and site plan standards to promote adaptive reuse.

P&Z | 3-5 years

Objective 4.3

Identify and implement feasible strategies to ensure short term rental compliance with local ordinances.

1. Perform a yearly review of short term rental offerings in the county and cross check adherence to local ordinances then work to bring offenders into compliance.

P&Z | Yearly



Goal 5

Encourage land conservation programs to help preserve the rural character of Jefferson County.

Courtesy: Mark Muse Photographs

During the input meetings and public surveys, county residents expressed a key interest in maintaining the rural economy and open space of Jefferson County. Both the preservation and the future of agriculture was framed as critical to the quality of life in the county. To maintain this rural landscape a viable rural economy must also be maintained. The rural economy includes innovative agriculture, horticulture, forestry, commercial and non-commercial equine industry, other forms of animal husbandry, tourism, rural based public and commercial recreation, ancillary rural business, and compatible rural institutional uses that have been the historical heart of the Jefferson County economy.

One of the ways the County can leverage this opportunity is through supporting a food hub. By bringing producers together a food hub can handle a more efficient distribution and sale of agricultural products. There are also opportunities for value adding activities or equipment rentals that would grow the local economy. Entwined with

this opportunity is agritourism, where visitors from surrounding areas visit Jefferson County for agricultural related activities. Significant efforts have been taken in the County to create and market the burgeoning craft beverage industry of Jefferson County.

A key aspect of the County's rural economy is recognizing the changes in the regional and national marketplace that might affect agricultural activities at the local level. Farm operators have pointed to the need for value adding activities to keep pace with the agribusiness market. Several groups support these efforts in the county including the WVU Extension Office, the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District, the Jefferson County Development Authority, and the Farmland Protection Board. In order to meet the objectives regarding the rural character of Jefferson County, this Plan endeavors to support all farms of any size.

Farm size is an important factor to consider for agricultural activity. Only 18% of all total farms in Jefferson

County are less than 10 acres, while 38% have 50 acres or more. When encouraging rural and agricultural activities like agritourism, recreation, and animal husbandry, Jefferson County must ensure that all farms are provided support and opportunities for economic success regardless of size.

Since the formation of the Farmland Preservation Program in 2000, 6,846 acres have been placed under farm preservation easements across Jefferson County. Funding for the program is from a portion of the transfer tax of real estate purchases meaning expansion of preservation activities is dependent upon new real estate activity. The Historic Landmarks Commission and the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle also have multiple preservation easements on historic land in the county and serve as secondary monitoring bodies to Farmland Preservation Easements. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has 2,023 acres under easement to protect the Appalachian Trail in the eastern part of the county.

Objective 5.1

Financially support county conservation agencies including but not limited to the Farmland Preservation Board and Historic Landmarks Commission.

1. Continue the efforts of identifying and protecting open space areas with prime soils for agricultural uses.

FPB | Ongoing

2. Support further development of farmland preservation easements and educate the public on the value of preserving historic sites and open space.

HLC • FPB | Ongoing

Objective 5.2

Support agricultural cooperatives and food hubs in Jefferson County.

1. Collaborate with stakeholders to identify the needs of the agricultural community, assist in establishing cooperative structures, and market the initiative.

JCDA | 3-5 years

Objective 5.3

Provide equal opportunity to small and large farms.

1. Assess disparity in potential land uses for small and large farms and adopt policies to ensure equal opportunities.

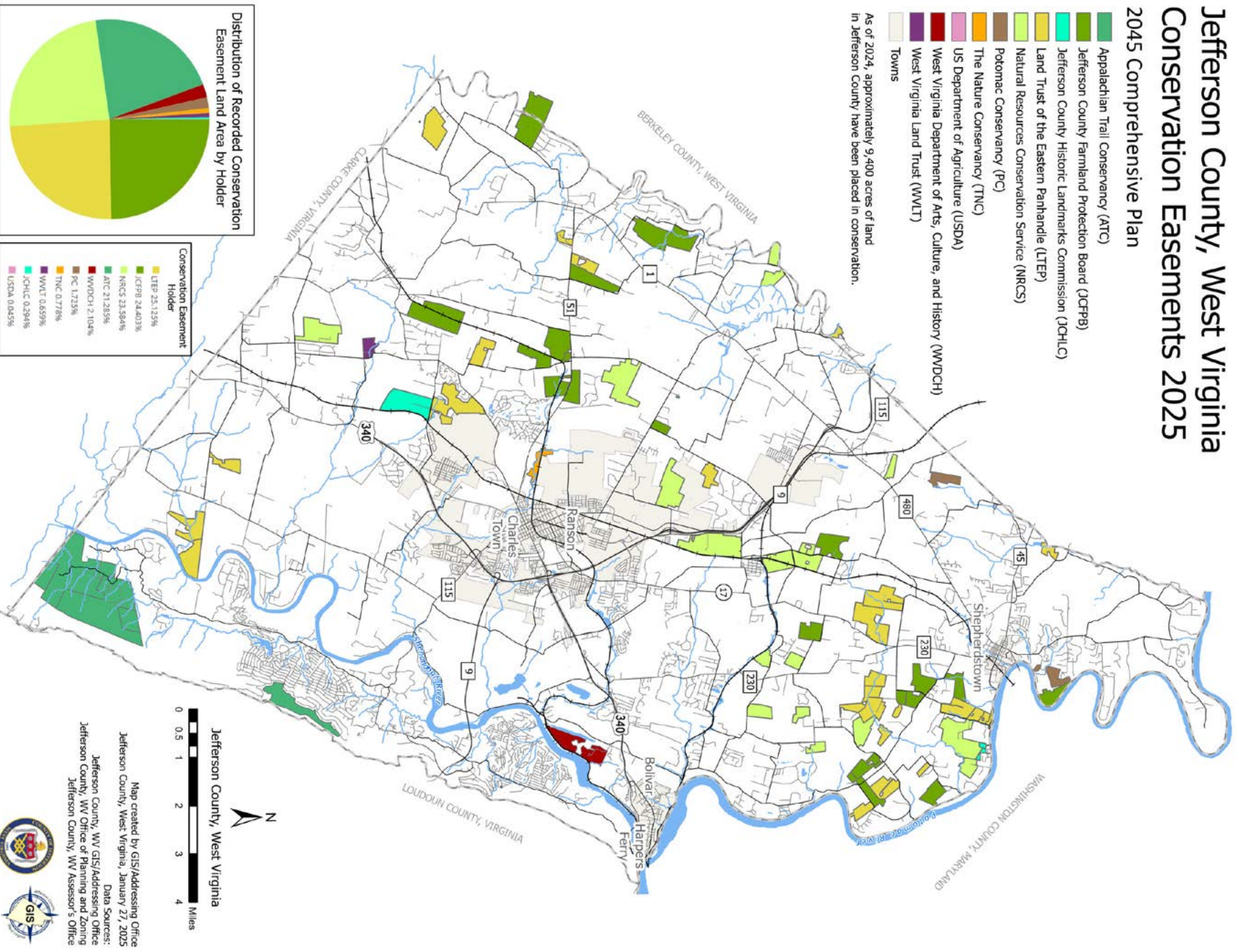
P&Z • FPB | 3-5 years

Jefferson County, West Virginia Conservation Easements 2025

2045 Comprehensive Plan

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC)
- Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board (JCFPB)
- Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (JCHLC)
- Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle (LTEP)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Potomac Conservancy (PC)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History (WVDCH)
- West Virginia Land Trust (WVLT)
- Towns

As of 2024, approximately 9,400 acres of land in Jefferson County have been placed in conservation.



Courtesy: Jefferson County CVB



Goal 6

Balance the existing preservation of Jefferson County's natural resources with providing additional access to and utilization of outdoor recreational tourism.

The County is home to a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities for visitors, such as fishing, hunting, hiking, bicycling, auto racing, a wide range of river activities, and other outdoor adventure activities. Two nearby national trails bring in a stream of hikers and bikers to the county. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail, a 2,198-mile long footpath extending from Maine to Georgia, with Harpers Ferry at the midpoint. Additionally, the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal National Historical Park, a linear bicycle and walking trail extending from Washington, D.C. to Cumberland, MD is accessible from Jefferson County near Harpers Ferry and Shepherdstown. Outdoor recreation complements the County's natural, cultural, and built environments. It is anticipated that recreational tourism opportunities in Jefferson County will continue to expand in the coming years. This is particularly true in areas near the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, where the numerous outfitters and private outdoor recreation providers in the region are expanding their offerings to visitors and residents. The type and scale of new recreational

development should be appropriate to the rural nature of Jefferson County.

Public access to the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers is limited in Jefferson County. This Plan supports developing additional public access points to the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers by collaborating with stakeholders to identify opportunities for new areas for active recreational opportunities along the rivers. Potential expansions will need to consider nearby property owners and environmental considerations to ensure quality access to the County's natural resources.

The Old Standard Quarry is partially covered by a conservation easement to protect the view sheds on the property. During conversations with stakeholders, a potential trail on the property connecting Schoolhouse Ridge South and Murphy's Farm was identified as an opportunity to create a longer trail and safely direct walkers and bikers to see the quarry lake without interfering with future development of the property.

Objective 6.1

Investigate additional opportunities for public river access.

1. Encourage all river recreation activities to occur in a manner which supports the Chesapeake Bay Initiative.

P&Z | Ongoing

2. Support and promote rural and recreational tourism for its economic benefits.

CVB | Ongoing

3. Develop additional public access points to the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers while taking into account the rights of property owners and environmental concerns.

PC • JCPR | 6-10 years

Objective 6.2

Develop connectivity to existing pedestrian and bike trails.

1. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop a path on the Old Standard Quarry property to potentially connect Schoolhouse Ridge South and Murphy's Farm.

P&Z • PC | 6-10 years

Objective 6.3

Increase the visibility and accessibility of tourism opportunities.

1. Increase awareness of public and private recreational opportunities that are available to visitors and residents of Jefferson County.

CVB • JCPR | Ongoing

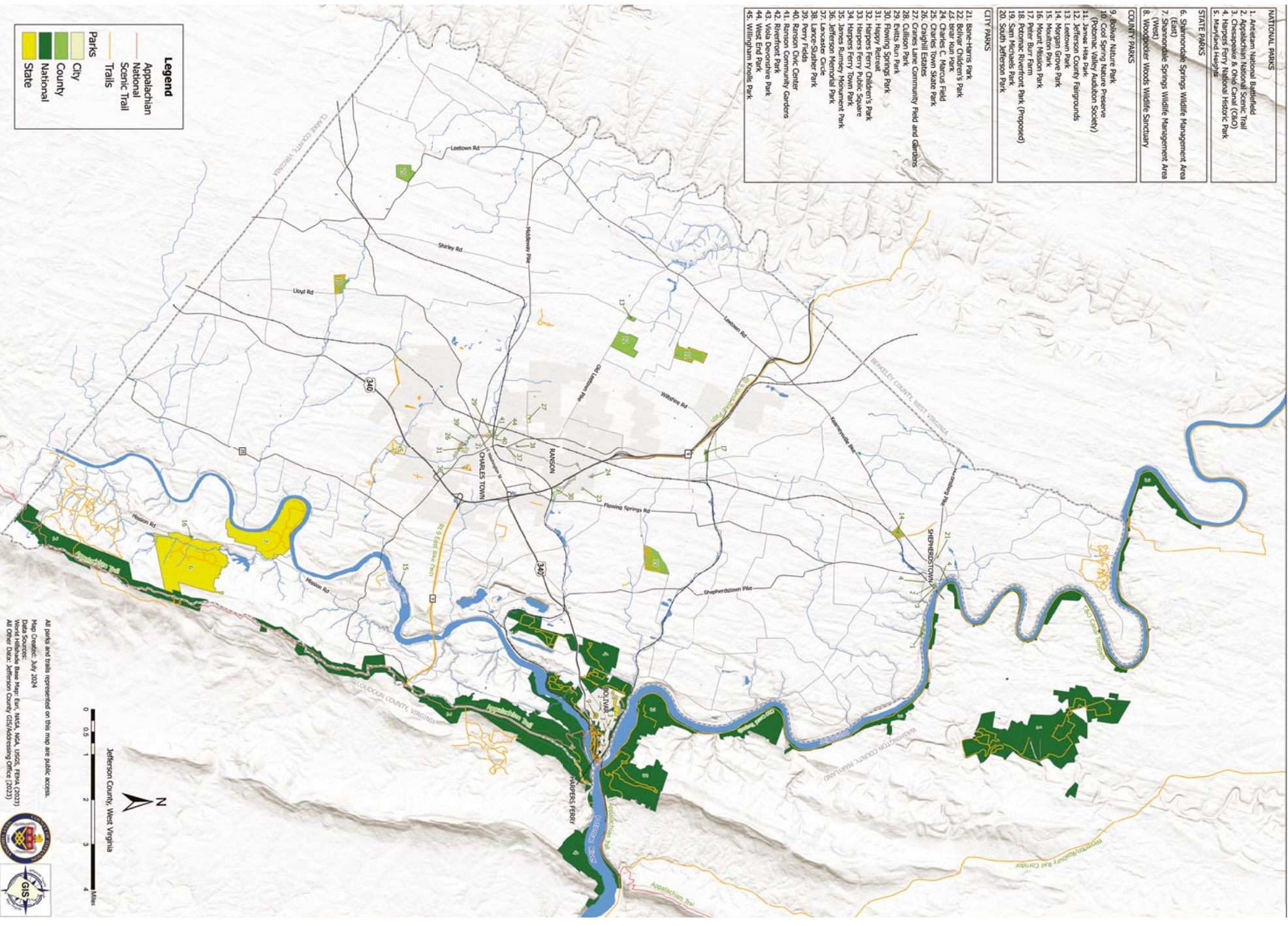
2. Create and maintain a community calendar of events.

CVB | Ongoing

3. Encourage County businesses and service stations to provide electric vehicle recharging stations within Jefferson County

PC • CC | Ongoing

Parks & Trails of Jefferson County, WV and Surrounding Areas



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

The background image shows a white building with a dark roof, likely a public library, with a grassy field in the foreground. The image is divided into four quadrants by a blue and white geometric design. The text "Community Connections" is overlaid on the bottom right quadrant.

Community Connections

Many of the Goals of this Plan require the hard work and dedication of organizations that serve the needs of Jefferson County but are not part of the County government. These organizations can work closely with the County but have their own Boards or are State organizations. This includes the Jefferson County Board of Education and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection. While these organizations have responsibilities outside of the purview of the County Commission, their direct impact on the community means active communication and coordination with these organizations is essential for the County. This cooperation includes having elected officials and staff serve on boards, attending events, and engaging in the long range planning of County partners. By proactively working together, the County can be more connected with our partners in serving the community.

Jefferson County is a unique place due to its physical landscape and regional position. While the County does not own

any roads, it does support the efforts of DOH, HEPMPO, EPTA, and the municipalities in the county to maintain the roadways and make safety improvements as needed. This Plan includes a Highway Problem Areas map to highlight where traffic safety spots currently exist and where the County would like to see improvements. As the community grows and new development occurs, new safety concerns may arise that proactive transportation planning can mitigate or solve. Transportation planning is primarily performed by other organizations and Jefferson County supports their work to make the County a safer place to travel in.

Maintaining and improving transparent governmental infrastructures is critically important to all local governments. Jefferson County needs to continue engaging with the public and regional partners including other governmental organizations. This increases the residents' trust and satisfaction, making the County a better place to live. Simultaneously, coordination among various internal and intergovernmental governance initiatives could be pursued to enhance these efforts. In an era where fiscal resources are increasingly constrained and the impacts of growth and development are felt on a regional basis, Jefferson County and its municipalities need to identify ways to collaborate with nearby local, county, state, and federal agencies that operate within the Eastern Panhandle to limit redundancies and share resources effectively.

Jefferson County's water features are an integral part of its identity. The northern half of the county is bound on the east by the Potomac River, while Opequon Creek and Rocky Marsh Run partly compose the western border. The Shenandoah River winds through the south east of the county until it meets the Potomac River. Most of Jefferson County features karst topography, which significantly impacts groundwater dynamics. Due to the County's unique topography, many point and non-point source activities impact the water quality in waterways due to stormwater run-off. These include source pollution, over-fertilization and the use of chemicals to grow crops, use of salt and chemicals on roads in winter weather, industrial emissions, waste

products associated with auto use, and animal husbandry activities. The effect of stormwater run-off on the local waterways has a significant impact on the environment. There are a number of watershed protection groups in the County that are actively seeking to improve the quality of the surface and groundwater within particular watersheds. These groups have made efforts to clean-up the waters and restore aquatic life to Jefferson County waterways. The watersheds within Jefferson County are located within the larger Chesapeake Bay watershed, which encompasses portions of six states, including eight West Virginia counties. Jefferson County approved revised stormwater management regulations for compliance with Chesapeake Bay requirements. Having regulations in place to protect the County's surface water supplies protects the numerous creeks and rivers. The protection of natural areas aids in maintaining wildlife habitat, provides public areas for recreation activities, and creates clean air.

As part of the greater Washington

metropolitan area, Jefferson County has seen a significant increase in the number of professional and business service jobs, especially technical and management consulting, information technologies, and computer systems design. The high levels of education required by these

jobs is reflected in the large percentage of college graduates living in the western DC metropolitan counties, including Jefferson County. Access to quality education attracts both residents and businesses looking to capitalize on local opportunities.

Educational Attainment and Median Household Income for Jefferson County and Select nearby Counties, 2020

Counties	Percentage with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher, Age 25 +	Median Household Income
Jefferson Co. WV	31.6%	\$82,551
<i>DC Metro Counties</i>		
- Fairfax Co. VA	62.1%	\$127,866
- Montgomery Co. MD	59.2%	\$111,812
- Loudoun Co. VA	61.6%	\$147,111
- Frederick Co. MD	41.7%	\$100,685
<i>Valley Counties</i>		
- Clarke Co. VA	34.7%	\$86,154
- Frederick Co. VA	26.8%	\$80,011
- Winchester City VA	34.3%	\$61,321
- Berkeley Co. WV	22.8%	\$65,286
- Washington Co. MD	22.4%	\$63,510

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2020 5-Year Estimate

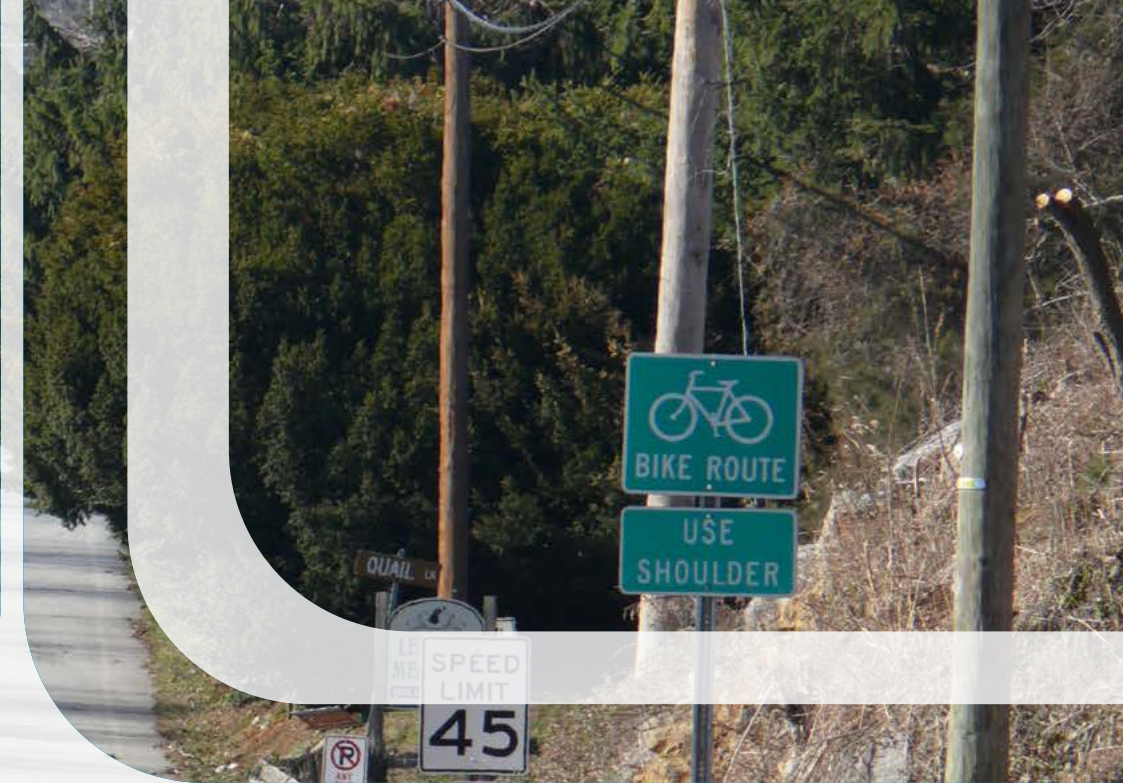
Jefferson County schools are primarily funded by property taxes and a voter approved excess levy that is required to be renewed every five years. The specific use of excess levy funds is set out in the election notice to ensure the JCBOE is able to meet the desired quality of services and facilities for its students. Additional funding can be available in Jefferson County through impact fees for schools. It is important to note that impact fees are only able to be used on capital improvements that relate directly to cost of providing additional resources due to the growth generated by students in new homes built in the County. Impact fees for new buildings were reduced to \$1 in 2021 by the Jefferson County Commission then updated in 2024 with rollout to begin on June 1, 2025.

Jefferson County has a wide variety of public and private recreational options, including municipal and county parks, West Virginia Wildlife Management Areas, the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, and various private camping and outfitter operations. The parks and recreational facilities present in Jefferson County are a key asset for residents to enjoy public events, get exercise, and socialize with other members of the community. These Parks and Recreation provide the County with a variety of both active and passive recreation opportunities.

Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority



Courtesy: Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO



Goal 7

Collaborate with state and regional transportation partners to enhance the built environment to promote safety on and around state and municipal roads and lessen congestion.

Efficient transportation is vital for the well-being of Jefferson County's community, given its proximity to Washington, D.C., Baltimore, MD, and surrounding areas. The County's growth has led to higher transportation demands, necessitating better interconnectivity to enhance daily transit safety and ease for residents, workers, and visitors. This connectivity makes efficient transit essential for the daily commute of residents, the operation of local businesses, and the influx of vacationers. Quality transportation options significantly affect the overall quality of life in the community. While roadways remain the primary mode of travel for residents, the development and expansion of alternative transportation methods are anticipated, further enhancing the County's accessibility.

Roads in Jefferson County are owned and maintained by either the state, a municipality, or a private owner such as a homeowners association. This complicates the relationship between land use planning and transportation because the county does not own or maintain any roads. Consequently, Jefferson County must collaborate with the State for any roadway improvements and necessary changes to address local transportation needs. The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) plays a crucial role in coordinating transportation planning across county and state lines, which includes Jefferson County.

HEPMPO integrates local and regional transportation plans by considering commuting patterns, traffic modeling, and public input to forecast future needs. Jefferson County supports

HEPMPO's efforts to improve transportation options, safety improvements, and transportation connectivity within the region at large.

This collaborative planning is essential to accommodate the increasing traffic and transportation demands in the region. Part of this planning approach could be the use of Complete Streets design principles to make streets accessible and safe for all uses. Pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and public transit riders all can benefit from safety improvements such as protected bike lanes, wider sidewalks, and improved crosswalks. The U.S. Federal Highway Administration publishes educational materials on how local governments can adopt Complete Street designs to promote mobility for everyone in the community.

Currently there is commuter rail service utilizing the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Brunswick Line. Use of this service has declined since the COVID 19 pandemic and recovery of ridership has been slow. This connection is important to county residents who commute to jobs outside of the county. Access to MARC services reduces commuter traffic and contributes to quality of life in the county.

If a County resident is unable to drive, there are currently few options available to get from homes to shops, services, or employment. This issue particularly affects seniors, young residents, and the physically disabled. The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority fills in this gap by offering public transportation services in the community.

Coordination with WVDOH, HEPMPO, and other stakeholders is critical to address the safety concerns of highways, railways, biking, and pedestrian pathways. The impact of increased traffic volumes due to population growth and commuting patterns is a significant concern. Ensuring safe and efficient roadways is a top priority to accommodate the growing transportation demands. Traffic calming measures such as roundabouts where appropriate help to ensure safe roads for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists. As part of this Plan, the Highway Problem Areas map was created to identify intersections and corridors where there are existing safety issues within Jefferson County. The intent of this map is to highlight some of the most dangerous roadways in Jefferson County for DOH and HEPMPO to address with roadway improvements where appropriate.

Improving accessibility to neighboring states, such as Virginia and Maryland, is a critical component of regional transportation planning. HEPMPO creates and updates a Long Range Transportation Plan that identifies transportation corridors and access points where safety is a concern. The LRTP also addresses critical corridors like US 340 and WV/VA Route 9. Through collaboration with state and regional transportation partners, Jefferson County can align roadway improvements with land use activities to ensure efficient and sustainable development.

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is responsible for both road maintenance and performing development and access reviews that directly implement safety and efficiency goals.

The extension of the Metro Silver line to Leesburg is an opportunity for the county to support the EPTA in creating a reliable connection into the DC metro area.

In order to reduce the burden of undue through traffic on private roads, this Plan supports the construction of a State roadway connection between Route 9 and Flowing Springs Road.

Courtesy: Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO

Objective 7.1

Continue to coordinate with WVDOH related to access and transportation improvement decisions regarding local development review.

1. Collaborate with HEPMPO and other transportation agencies to identify ways to improve transportation (commuter, air, rail, and bus services) connectivity and roadways between Jefferson County and nearby states.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

Objective 7.2

Actively coordinate with HEPMPO, WVDOH, Municipalities and other appropriate stakeholders to identify potential highway, rail, bike, and pedestrian safety concerns within Jefferson County and promote safety measures.

1. Encourage municipalities to adopt a Complete Streets Policy following Federal Highway Administration suggestions.

CC | Ongoing

2. Participate in conferences and meetings with HEPMPO and WVDOH regarding transportation planning in the Eastern Panhandle.

P&Z • CC • EO | Ongoing

Objective 7.3

Advocate for new developments to utilize traffic calming measures and building safe roads for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

1. Advocate for HEPMPO and WVDOH to prioritize new safety measures based on the Highway Safety Areas Map.

PC • CC | Ongoing

Objective 7.4

Identify methods to improve public transportation and highway connectivity into adjoining states by working with HEPMPO, WVDOT, EPTA, and agencies in Maryland, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia, and Virginia.

1. Coordinate with Virginia and Maryland state transportation agencies to identify ways to improve mobility within the US 340 corridor in the Harpers Ferry area.

P&Z • CC • EO | Ongoing

2. Collaborate with EPTA, HEPMPO, and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to study the feasibility of providing commuter bus service between the Charles Town/Ranson area into Leesburg and the future Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Silver Line terminus.

P&Z • CC • EO | 6-10 years

3. Coordinate with state officials to identify funding sources and mechanisms that would encourage additional MARC service into West Virginia, as identified in the HEPMPO Long Range Transportation Plan.

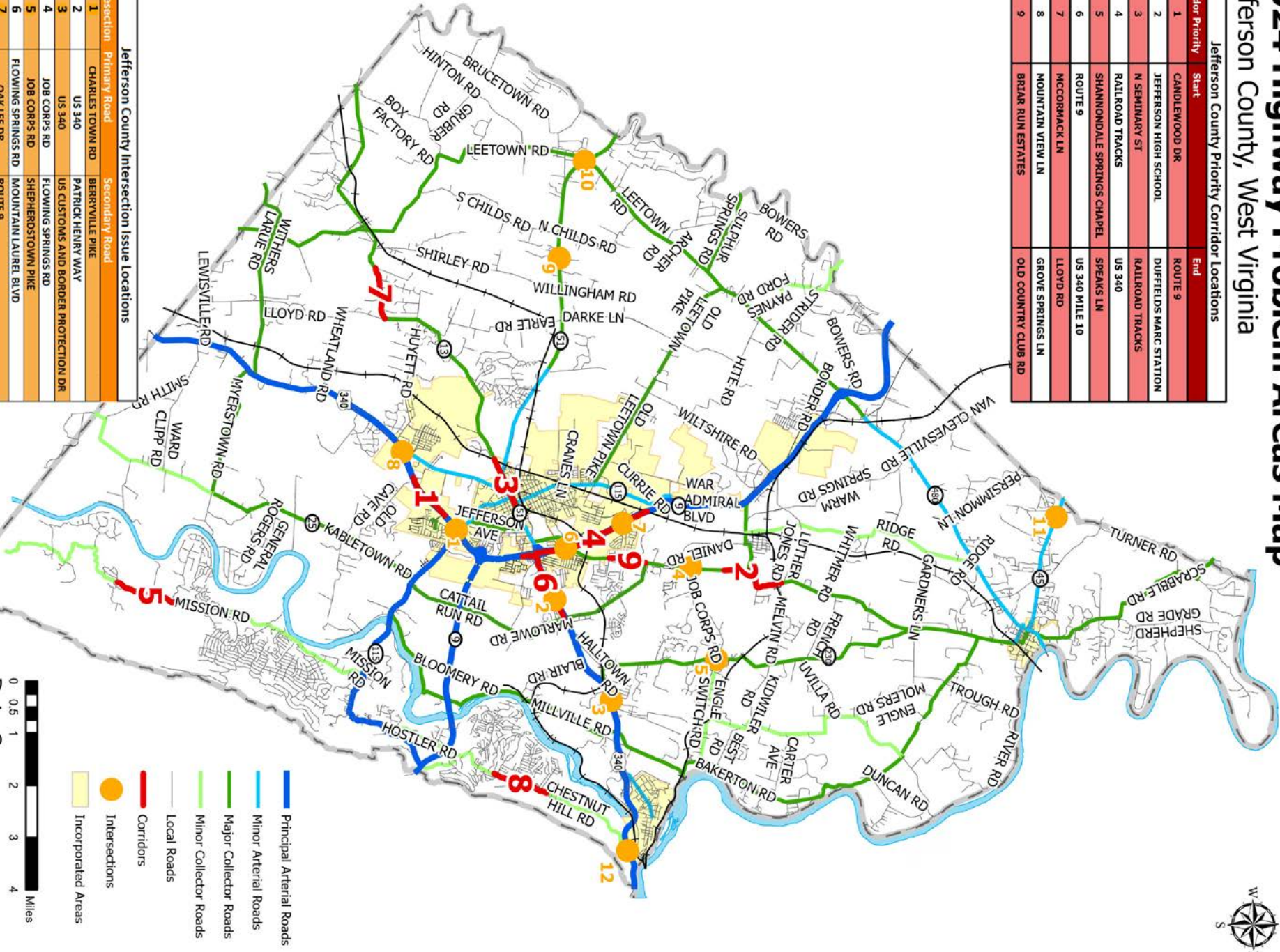
P&Z • CC • EO | 6-10 years

2024 Highway Problem Areas Map

Jefferson County, West Virginia



Jefferson County Priority Corridor Locations		
Corridor Priority	Start	End
1	CANDLEWOOD DR	ROUTE 9
2	JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL	DUFFIELDS MARC STATION
3	N SEMINARY ST	RAILROAD TRACKS
4	RAILROAD TRACKS	US 340
5	SHANNONDALE SPRINGS CHAPEL	SPEAKS LN
6	ROUTE 9	US 340 MILE 10
7	MCCORMACK LN	LLOYD RD
8	MOUNTAIN VIEW LN	GROVE SPRINGS LN
9	BRIAR RUN ESTATES	OLD COUNTRY CLUB RD



Jefferson County Intersection Issue Locations		
Intersection	Primary Road	Secondary Road
1	CHARLES TOWN RD	BERRYVILLE PIKE
2	US 340	PATRICK HENRY WAY
3	US 340	US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION DR
4	JOB CORPS RD	FLOWING SPRINGS RD
5	JOB CORPS RD	SHEPHERDSTOWN PIKE
6	FLOWING SPRINGS RD	MOUNTAIN LAUREL BLVD
7	OAK LEE DR	ROUTE 9
8	BERRYVILLE PIKE	AUGUSTINE AVE
9	MIDDLEWAY PIKE	NEW MEADOW DR
10	LEETOWN RD	MIDDLEWAY PIKE
11	WINEBRENNER RD	MARTINSBURG PIKE
12	US 340	CHESTNUT HILL RD



Data Sources

Jefferson County, WV GIS/Addressing Office
Jefferson County, WV Office of Planning and Zoning
WV Department of Transportation
WV Department of Highways
HEP/PO Map Created: September 2024



Courtesy: Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO

Goal 8

Foster a culture of public engagement that effectively communicates policy making decisions.

Jefferson County values the input of residents, businesses, and property owners to help guide the policy-making decisions that will affect the future of the county. This ongoing effort includes creating and maintaining governmental processes that are transparent and accessible for all. Jefferson County must comply with all relevant state codes and when appropriate should advocate for improvements to the policy-making process.

Government transparency is critical to increase the residents' trust and satisfaction. At the same time, coordination of a variety of internal and intergovernmental governance efforts is critical to providing quality services. Participation in regional and state organizations as well as membership in local boards is an ongoing effort for staff and elected officials. Having staff members and elected officials participate in groups such as Region 9 and HEPMPO is essential for promoting the priorities of Jefferson County and understanding the regional projects that affect the County.

The West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings Act requires meetings of public bodies such as County Commission to be open to the public and take transparent actions. This includes advance notice of meetings, published agendas, and making meetings open to public attendance. This enhances transparency, accountability, and trust in county governments, fostering an environment where community members are informed and can actively engage in local governance.

Members of the public can directly access public information from the County website or visit County offices to learn about what is happening in the community. It is important for County staff to make information available following established policies and procedures. When feasible, new practices should be adopted that enhance public transparency and facilitate productive public input. Techniques to enhance transparency can include promoting public events on digital platforms and adding graphics to presentations. Such efforts would benefit from additional staffing or access to time saving digital tools.

Objective 8.1

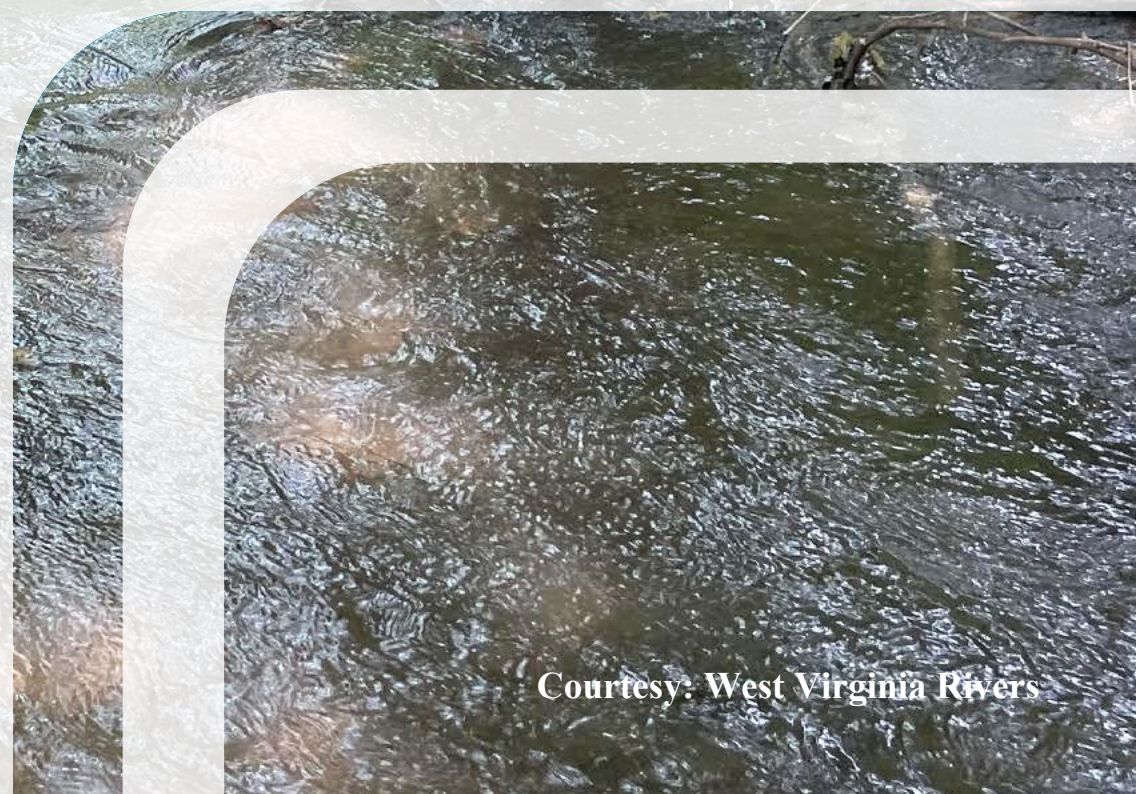
Ensure public hearing and workshops are held in accordance with state code and local land use regulation.

1. Continue to develop discussion between the various local and regional agencies that are addressing similar issues for ways to increase collaboration.

P&Z • CC | Ongoing

2. Assess the need for upgrades to County digital platforms to improve ease of access to information.

CC | 3-5 years



Goal 9

Work with partners to protect the watersheds of Jefferson County and preserve the natural environment.

Courtesy: West Virginia Rivers

In order to mitigate the runoff of groundwater, Jefferson County adopted storm water management standards in the Jefferson County Subdivision & Land Development Regulations that have effectively regulated the quantity of storm water generated by local development. These regulations do not compel older storm water systems, which may not meet current standards, to be upgraded or maintained. The County also adopted a new stand-alone Stormwater Management Ordinance that includes additional standards related to water quality and includes provisions for low impact design provisions such as rain gardens, bio-swales, permeable pavers, and permeable asphalt. These new standards help to minimize the impact of sediment and certain identified minerals as well.

As land development occurs, the effect is an increase in impervious surfaces, which affects the ability of the land to absorb rainwater or snowmelt. This results in run-off on adjacent properties, into waterways, and/or directly into the groundwater

through the karst topography.

The effect of storm water run-off on the local waterways, particularly the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers, has a significant impact on Jefferson County's local and regional recreational and heritage tourism, as well as drinking water quality. There are a number of watershed protection groups in the County that are actively seeking to improve the quality of the surface and groundwater within particular watersheds. These groups have made efforts to clean-up the waters and restore aquatic life to Jefferson County waterways. Such efforts have included river clean ups, water monitoring, septic tank pumping and repair reimbursement programs, livestock fences to protect streams, tree plantings, and outreach to residents and businesses to educate them about how to combat pollution. These efforts will ensure that high quality of water in Jefferson County continues.

By having regulations in place to protect the County's surface water supplies, the numerous creeks and rivers can be used as a source for drinking water

as well as recreational purposes such as swimming, boating, and fishing. The protection of natural areas aids in maintaining wildlife habitat, provides public areas for recreation activities, and creates clean air. Jefferson County is actively pursuing measures to protect its watersheds and preserve the natural environment. Locally, the county can implement stringent regulations on land use and development near water sources to prevent contamination and preserve water quality. Collaborating with state and regional authorities, Jefferson County can enhance watershed management practices, ensuring sustainable water use and safeguarding aquatic ecosystems.

Public engagement and education efforts in Jefferson County can raise awareness about local water quality issues and encourage community actions that contribute to the restoration of the region's watershed. Securing funding and leveraging partnerships with federal and state agencies, as well as seeking support from local stakeholders, are critical for implementing restoration projects and achieving conservation

goals. By participating actively in the Chesapeake Bay Program, Jefferson County WV not only contributes to the restoration of a vital natural resource but also strengthens regional partnerships aimed at ensuring the long-term health and sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Jefferson County can adopt sustainable building practices like the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) to promote energy-efficient construction and help protect the County's watershed. This code sets standards for insulation, HVAC systems, lighting, and more, contributing to reduced energy consumption and lower carbon emissions from buildings. By aligning local building codes with IECC standards, the county supports energy conservation efforts and improves the building quality for new and future residents. Additionally, Jefferson County can work alongside federal agencies to implement policies that protect natural habitats and wildlife within its borders. This includes advocating for wildlife corridors and protected areas, as well as supporting federal initiatives aimed at biodiversity conservation.

The watersheds within Jefferson County are located within the larger Chesapeake Bay watershed, which encompasses portions of six states, including eight West Virginia counties. In 2009, President Obama issued an executive order directing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and implement a comprehensive bay restoration plan. This has resulted in a significant mandatory review of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediments that affect the health of the Bay. Agriculture, urban runoff and wastewater are the most significant sources of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediments reaching the Bay from this area. In 2011, West Virginia legislators passed Senate Bill 245, as part of the Chesapeake Bay restoration plan, allocating six million dollars a year over the next thirty years for wastewater facility improvements in the Eastern Panhandle. Jefferson County then approved revised stormwater management regulations for compliance with Chesapeake Bay requirements.

For Jefferson County, participation in the Chesapeake Bay Program involves aligning local efforts with broader regional goals. Continuing to implement best practices in land use and development near water sources can help mitigate pollution and preserve local waterways that ultimately feed into the Bay. Collaboration with neighboring states and jurisdictions within the watershed is essential for developing and implementing effective Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs). These plans outline strategies to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment runoff, thereby supporting the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Recently, the presence of polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS), better known as forever chemicals, was detected in water across West Virginia. Supporting the efforts of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Geological Survey in detecting PFAS is an ongoing priority for the County.

Objective 9.1

Encourage developers to build new subdivisions to meet standards set by regional or national sustainable building organizations.

1. Encourage ordinances that require developers to meet sustainable building standards including model standards.

CC | 3-5 years

2. Pursue funding sources to commission a water quantity and quality study be performed to assess available water resources in the County.

CC | Ongoing

Objective 9.2

Coordinate with local and regional partners regarding information and activities related to meeting the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan goals and property owners to enact voluntary recommendations.

1. Work with state and regional groups to address water quality issues related to failing water wells and septic tanks.

HD • CC | Ongoing

2. Continue to monitor and participate in planning efforts related to the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Improvement Plan.

P&Z | Ongoing

Objective 9.3

Work with property owners and applicable agencies to identify voluntary ways to protect unique natural features and the watersheds of Jefferson County.

1. Incorporate best management practices for areas along all creeks and rivers into the subdivision & land development regulations to provide additional protection for stream corridors and water quality.

P&Z | 1-2 years

Objective 9.4

Collaborate with applicable agencies, local watershed groups, and private property owners to identify funding for the maintenance and upgrade of existing septic systems.

1. Work with the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District and other stakeholders to promote their cost share programs for septic pumping.

HD | Ongoing

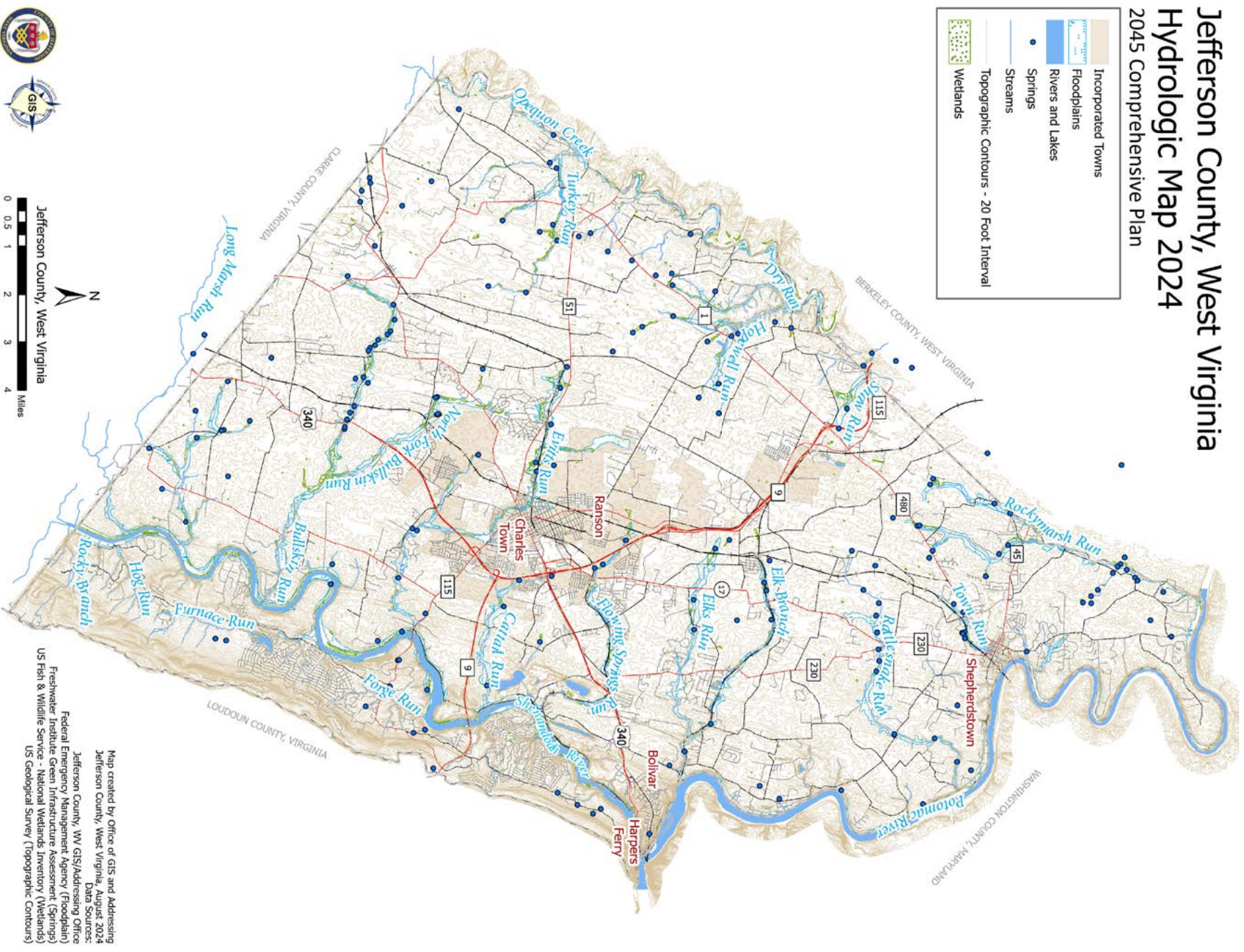
2. Utilize allocated funds from the state and other sources to support local water service providers in administering remediation efforts to minimize the amount of per-and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in finished water from their systems.

CC | Ongoing

3. Support efforts of the local Board of Health to establish standards related to regular septic tank pumping and inspections.

HD | Ongoing

2045 Comprehensive Plan





Goal 10

Support a variety of public and private educational opportunities in Jefferson County.

Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Schools have long served as neighborhood centers, with space for indoor meetings and outdoor spaces for physical education and sport activities. However, as communities have moved toward consolidated schools, a variety of factors led to the relocation of new school facilities to regionalized locations outside of communities. Some of the factors are related to larger requirements for land for physical education and sports, as well as building size requirements set by the WV State Board of Education. The JCBOE has indicated their interest in campus like settings that include a variety of uses and schools with additional areas for expansion on the same property. The creation of additional educational programs that serve a larger number of students has led to the relocation of schools to areas outside of municipal and village communities. This has resulted in fewer students or faculty able to walk or bike to school, increased numbers of parking spaces, separate bus and car loops to drop off/pick up zones, and an increased reliance on buses to transport students to and from school. Long range

planning is all performed internally by JCBOE but Planning staff can be contacted for feedback regarding where growth is expected to occur in the community.

In some instances, there are residential developments within walking distances to schools, particularly at the outer edges of municipalities or in suburban settings. However, rural roads such as those that lead to these schools often have high design speeds and minimal shoulder areas, and are not safe for students to walk or bike to school. Pathways and sidewalks should be expanded to link homes, neighborhoods, schools, and recreation facilities. Programs such as Safe Routes to School should be explored as a funding mechanism. Newer developments around Driswood Elementary School, TA Lowery Elementary School, Wildwood Middle School, and Jefferson High School have the opportunity to incorporate this concept into their development plans as well as any development that may occur in the future.

Jefferson County recognizes the need to provide additional community amenities

and services, such as community centers, libraries, and parks to assist in improving the health and welfare of the community, enhancing the quality of life, and serving as a way to attract tourism to the County. The primary agency for action is the JCBOE and other entities that are not under the control of the County Commission. County officials and staff, however, can serve in an advisory role during the planning and implementation process if requested.

Like schools, libraries are also an important resource for developing an educated workforce. Increasingly, the need for libraries to serve the entire community has resulted in the need for a variety of reading and study spaces for individuals, mentoring, tutoring and group collaborations, as well as special program and activity spaces. As libraries refocus their priorities and meet new information technology challenges, there is increased interest in their facilities to also meet demands for integrating these assets into their programs and community activities. The biggest issue identified by the County's librarians is the limited

local funding available. Most of the County’s libraries are public libraries and are eligible for state and federal funding, but local aid to libraries in Jefferson County is typically at minimal amounts. The one exception is Old Charles Town Library, which is a non-profit community library and is not eligible to be part of the West Virginia public library consortia. Attracting qualified staff to work at the libraries is an ongoing challenge directly impacted by the issue of limited funding.

The County school system and local higher education institutions have an important role in preparing a well-educated and trained work force for existing and future employers in Jefferson County. Working collaboratively with the Jefferson County Development Authority to be aware of local workforce development needs will assist both the schools and the employers in developing a well prepared work force.

Objective 10.1

Coordinate with the Jefferson County Board of Education to identify appropriate locations to develop new schools based on existing and proposed residential development and infrastructure.

1. Request the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBOE) to include County and municipal agencies on future facility plans and redistricting efforts.

PC • CC • JCBOE | Ongoing

2. Evaluate potential walking and bike paths that could connect new and existing public and private schools to nearby neighborhoods, and create them where feasible.

P&Z • PC • JCBOE | 6-10 years

Objective 10.2

Support the efficient enhancement and renovation of existing Jefferson County School buildings.

1. Advocate for the state to re-evaluate the funding formula related to state based educational aid schools in order to create a quality Jefferson County public school system.

EO • JCBOE | Ongoing

Objective 10.3

Continue to assess school impact fees as development occurs.

1. Reevaluate school impact fees and then assess fees commensurate with the impact of development and increased population on school buildings.

CC | Yearly



Goal 11

Align expansion of County park facilities and programs with federal, state, municipal, and non-profit recreation providers to ensure that a wide variety of park and recreation opportunities are available throughout Jefferson County.

Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

As Jefferson County has grown, residents of the community have recognized the need to provide a greater range of park and recreational services to visitors and County residents. Jefferson County is home to and surrounded by quality state and federal recreational areas, including Bolivar, Loudoun, and Maryland Heights, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, and the C & O Canal National Historical Park. By having places for year round recreation, County residents are provided with opportunities to exercise and to socialize with each other. Recreation is important for the physical and mental health of the public. Parks and recreational facilities can also serve as sites for festivals and sporting events, providing another economic development benefit and stimulate community between residents. An additional role for parks and recreational facilities is to serve as gathering places for younger residents. Having facilities and programs for teens and young adults fosters community involvement and is of particular interest to County residents. When safe places to meet, play, and exercise are provided, children, teens, and young adults can have recreation facilities and activities close to their homes. These parks and recreational facilities can also be used to encourage public wellness programs for residents of all ages, improving physical and mental wellbeing in the County.

The Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) owns and operates nine parks, totaling 471 acres

across the County, which meet a wide variety of active and passive recreation needs with related programming for the area in which each park is located. Many of these programs include options for children, such as swimming classes, gymnastics training, or coed sports. The County also has a large number of playgrounds in its parks, increasing the free recreation opportunities for young families. However, as the number of residents has increased in recent years, the available park and recreation space may not be enough to serve the needs of all residents. Jefferson County must explore new ways to provide healthy and accessible recreation opportunities for residents of all ages.

Jefferson County has a wide variety of public and private recreational options, including municipal and county parks, West Virginia Wildlife Management Areas, the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, and various private camping and outfitter operations. The parks and recreational facilities present in Jefferson County are a key asset in supporting the County's quality of life.

One such option for public recreation is non-profit organizations. Jefferson County already has several of these, including the Boys and Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle in Charles Town. However, the number of non-profit recreation organizations is not large, and would certainly not be enough to

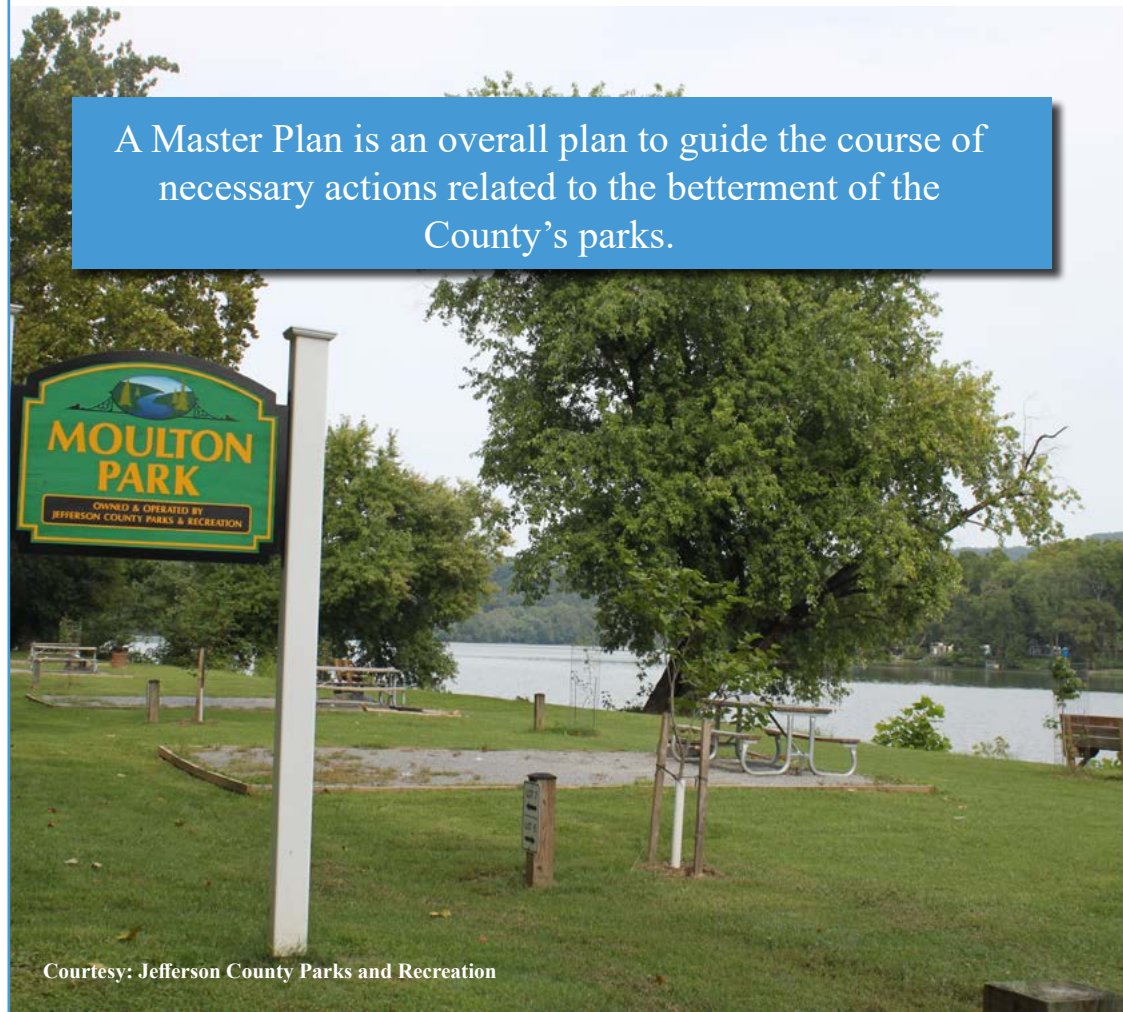
service all residents of the County who would be interested in participating. One example of a non-profit recreation provider that is not currently available in Jefferson County is the YMCA, which offers both childcare and early learning services, and coed recreation opportunities for the public. Beyond this, the YMCA also offers adult programs and classes to educate participants about establishing a healthy lifestyle or encouraging positive youth development. Many people may not otherwise have access to such classes or be able to afford to attend those offered by learning institutions. These accessible programs encourage a physically and mentally healthy community for both adults and children. Promoting non-profit recreation providers like the YMCA to locate in Jefferson County is another way to invite more recreation opportunities for residents.

Another potential recreation facility would be a public pool. Residents have identified the need for more access to aquatic recreation. Jefferson County has a public pool in Jefferson Memorial Park, and several neighborhoods in the County have private community pools, but these do not serve the needs of all residents. The installation of a new public aquatic center would provide better access to water recreation activities and allow for enhanced and expanded programs like swimming lessons for children or water aerobics classes for adults.

One difficulty that Jefferson County faces when considering the expansion of parks and recreational facilities is that of

funding. New facilities can incur great costs and ongoing maintenance are a long-term expense. Jefferson County Parks and Recreation is responsible for finding partnerships with local organizations and funding through federal and state programs. It is important that Jefferson County continue both financial support and cooperation with the Parks and Recreation Commission, particularly the priorities laid out in their Master Plan. When working together with local partners, Jefferson County can expand recreational access and amenities for all County residents.

A Master Plan is an overall plan to guide the course of necessary actions related to the betterment of the County's parks.



Courtesy: Jefferson County Parks and Recreation

Objective 11.1

Continue to evaluate the need for and financing of a public or non-profit pool or aquatic center.

1. Support efforts to create an aquatic center that includes a competition pool and aquatic programming for swimmers of all ages.

JCPR • JCDA | 6-10 years

Objective 11.2

Coordinate with local, state, and regional governments, non-profits, and community groups to identify funding sources for recreational facilities.

1. Expand park and recreational programming options for children, teenagers, young adults, and all residents of Jefferson County.

JCPR | Yearly

Objective 11.3

Support the expansion of park lands and adoption of Master Plans or existing park utilization.

1. Encourage the location of new community public facilities (such as schools, libraries, parks) within Municipalities, UGBs, PGAs, or Villages.

P&Z • PC • CC | Ongoing

2. Update and implement the current and future recommendations of the County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

P&Z • JCPR | 6-10 years



Growing a Diverse Economy

Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority

Jefferson County's present and future growth is sustained by its economy. The occupations of its residents fuel the County by providing income to support homes, businesses, and recreation opportunities. However, many residents are unable to find jobs within the County and must commute to other areas for work. In order to ensure a strong economic foundation, Jefferson County must promote and grow diverse businesses in preferred areas to provide more job opportunities for all residents.

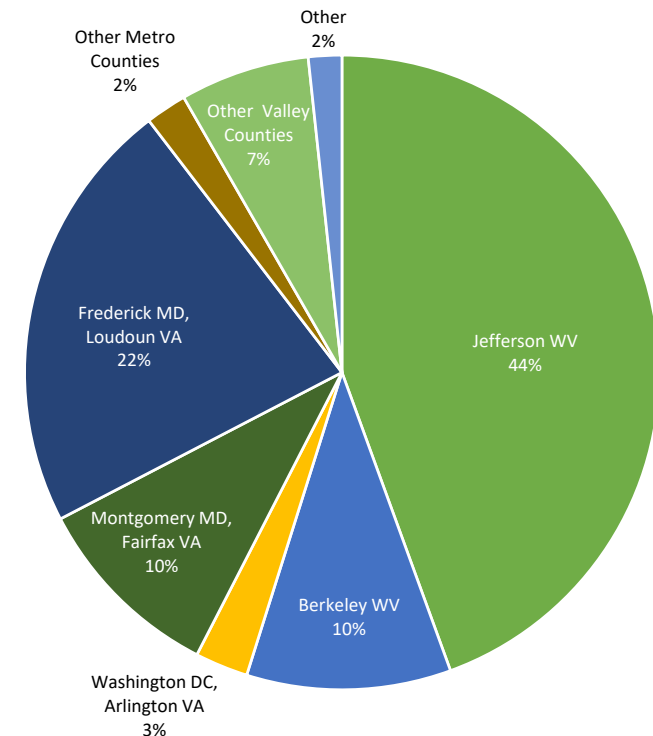
Jefferson County's surrounding region is one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. The County is a major economic driver in a state that boasts the nation's fourth lowest cost of doing business, low utility rates, and a highly skilled and hard-working workforce, making it a prime location for new businesses and industry. In 2020, the US Census Bureau estimated that nearly 45% of Jefferson County residents commute out of West Virginia to their place of employment. Many of these individuals travel eastward to work in one of the counties of the Washington DC Metropolitan

area. An estimated 7% of this group make the long commute to Washington DC, Arlington County, or the city of Alexandria. Some of these commuters were facilitated by the MARC train, a commuter rail service that terminates at Union Station in Washington DC. Passengers exiting at Union Station, Rockville, or Silver Spring, can connect to the Washington Metrorail rapid transit system. An estimated 2,652 Jefferson County residents commute to either Montgomery County, Maryland or Fairfax County, Virginia. Many commuters to Montgomery County work in the I-270 Technology Corridor, a cluster of information technology companies and both private sector and federal government-run biotechnology labs. Stretching from Fairfax County to eastern Loudoun County, the Dulles Technology Corridor is an even larger clustering of information technology, cybersecurity, and the defense industry companies. Over

6,000 of the county's residents work in Loudoun County, Virginia or Frederick County, Maryland.

In terms of commuters, Jefferson County has a more reciprocal relationship with the other Shenandoah Valley counties than it does with the rest of the Washington DC metro area. The commuting inflow and outflow between the Shenandoah Valley counties and

County of Employment for Jefferson County Residents 2020



Source: US Census Bureau

Jefferson County is nearly balanced with roughly 4,600 commuters going each way. Neighboring Berkeley County provides the third most jobs for residents of Jefferson County. The opening of new facilities such as the Procter & Gamble plant in 2017 is one reason why over 1,000 more residents of Jefferson County worked in Berkeley County in 2020 than in 2010. While many employers in Berkeley County and other places in the Shenandoah Valley offer a lower pay scale, the jobs are appropriate for an area with less educational attainment than areas closer to Washington DC.

In 2020, the US Census estimated that 87% of employed Jefferson County residents commuted to work by car. Alternative means to traveling to work such as walking, biking, or public transportation accounted for less than 4%. Most commuters drove alone to work, with only slightly more than 8% participating in a carpool. The average time it took someone to travel to work was 36.7 minutes compared to the national average of 26.7 minutes. While slightly over 8% of US residents drive more than an hour to work, more than 24% of Jefferson County residents do the same. This likely results from Jefferson's location on the outer edge of the Washington DC metropolitan area commuting shed. Congestion near the US 340 chokepoint at Harpers Ferry and several other chokepoints in Virginia also extend commuting times.

Another factor impacting commuting trends is the continued expansion of the Washington DC commuting zone. As more jobs diffuse to the outer suburbs and the distance to these jobs

from Jefferson County lessens, the county becomes more attractive to a wider set of potential residents. The extension of the Washington Metrorail's Silver Line to Ashburn near Dulles Airport may provide options to Jefferson County residents who wish to avoid the traffic congestion associated with those areas. Plans are for the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority to send two daily commuter buses from Martinsburg to the Ashburn Metrorail stop. These buses would have a short stopover at the Potomac Marketplace shopping center in Ranson, increasing Jefferson's viability as a home for commuters. Economic growth and development in Jefferson County is closely tied to the availability of natural resources, technological innovation, and human capital as well as its geographic proximity to major population centers, adequate roads, and infrastructure. The general health of an economy can be determined by examining two components: stability and balance. Stability is an indication of the ability of a local economy to withstand the fluctuations in the regional and national economy. Balance refers to the level of diversification of a local economy. The more diversified the local economic and employment base, the more difficult it is to disrupt the local economy. Any economy that is overly reliant on a single employer or employment sector is more highly impacted by economic shifts. Below are shown the top ten employers in Jefferson County as of 2022.

In order to attract and maintain employers, Jefferson County must work to provide a greater diversity of employment options, along with training to meet the skillsets desired by Jefferson County's employers. It is important to improve and expand connections such as school to work, co-op, and mentoring programs. Jefferson County has a high educational attainment rate in relation to the rest of West Virginia, and there are a variety of opportunities for higher education in the Eastern Panhandle as well as access to the universities in the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, MD regions. Building on the County's education foundation to ensure jobs for residents is of high value to Jefferson County's economic future.

Top Ten Employers in Jefferson County March 2022

Rank	Company Name
1	Jefferson County Schools
2	Penn Entertainment - Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races
3	Shepherd University
4	American Public University System
5	WVU Medicine - Jefferson Medical Center and offices
6	Dept. of Homeland Security - US Customs and Border Patrol
7	Walmart
8	Jefferson County Commission - county government
9	UFP Ranson - a subsidiary of Universal Forest Products
10	Synergy Business Innovation and Solutions - a federal IT contractor

Regional Transportation Area Map

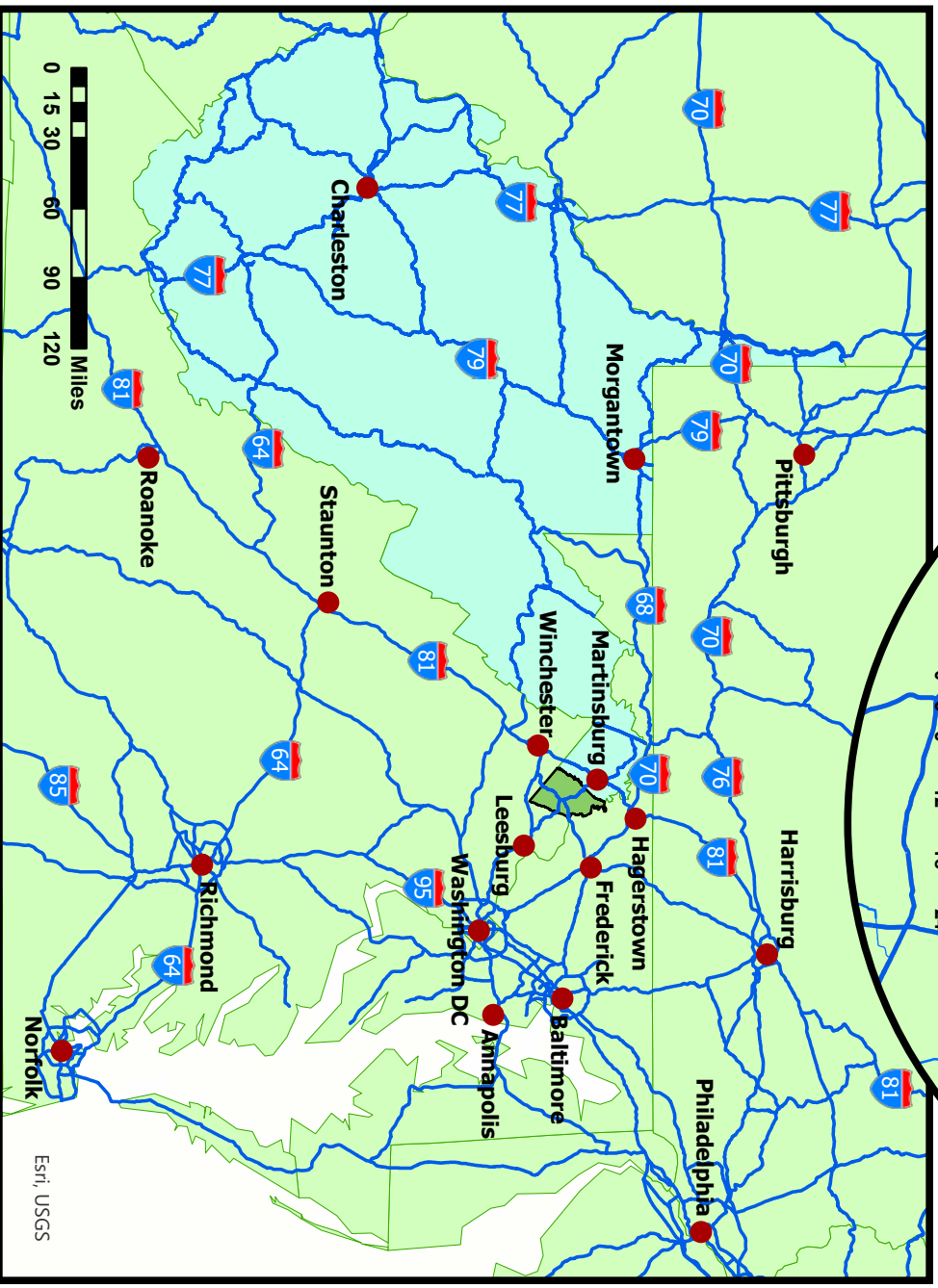
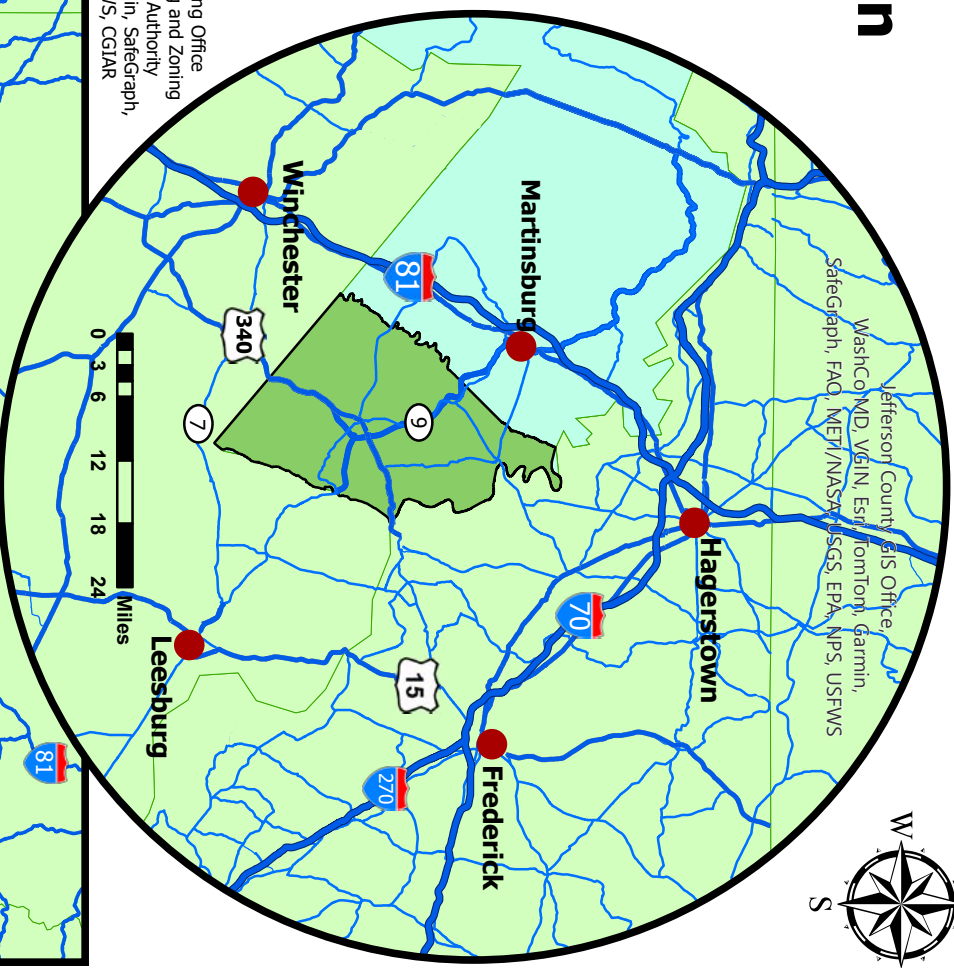
2024

Jefferson County,
WV

- Regional Cities
 - Jefferson County, WV
 - West Virginia
 - DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, VA
- Roadways**
- Interstate
 - Highway
 - Route

Data Sources

Jefferson County, WV GIS/Addressing Office
 Jefferson County, WV Office of Planning and Zoning
 Jefferson County, WV Development Authority
 ESRI, WashCoMD, VGIN, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph,
 FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, NPS, USFWS, CGIAR





Goal 12

Foster job development in Jefferson County by promoting diverse businesses; employment opportunities; local business entrepreneurship; and professional service jobs.

Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority

A primary interest for Jefferson County is the employment of its residents. Occupations in the Washington DC Metro area attract many Jefferson County residents from a wide range of professions that include construction workers, schoolteachers, and other public servants because these counties often offer higher pay scales for these jobs than Jefferson County. However, thousands of people from the metropolitan area are connected to Jefferson County through recreational commuting for the scenery, hunting, hiking, rafting, biking or visiting Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The Hollywood Casino at the Charles Town Races and cultural events like the annual Contemporary American Theater Festival held at Shepherd University would not be viable without the support from recreational commuters.

Another factor impacting Jefferson County employment is the continued expansion of the Washington DC commuting zone. As more jobs diffuse to the outer suburbs and the distance to

these jobs from Jefferson County lessens, the county becomes more attractive to a wider set of potential residents. Additionally, the city of Frederick, MD and its bioscience research and manufacturing facilities as well as numerous distribution centers and service industry jobs are relatively close. In Loudoun County, the extension of the Washington Metrorail's Silver Line to Ashburn and the plans for EPTA public transport to that stop may also be appealing to Jefferson County residents needing to commute to that area. If people view the Ashburn Metro stop as a viable commuting option similar to the Shady Grove stop in Montgomery County, more commuters may also be enticed to live in Jefferson County.

The future outlook concerning Jefferson County residents' employment will depend on internal growth, the continued expansion of the Washington DC commuting shed, and the changing nature of work itself. Currently, more than half of all employed Jefferson County residents commute outside of the county to work, but this percentage could shift through the organic growth of Jefferson County-based companies or by attracting outside companies to locate in Jefferson County. Population growth will also increase the ability for the community to support more restaurants, shops, and healthcare facilities that create service industry jobs. Conversely, the shutdown of a major employer may force Jefferson County residents to look outside the county for employment opportunities. Berkeley County also provides a significant number of jobs for residents of Jefferson County. Some are employed at the large cluster of federal agencies located just across the County line, while others work at the many distribution centers and manufacturing facilities along the Interstate 81 corridor. By supporting vocational and certification training programs, as well as businesses that utilize these skills, Jefferson County might increase the number of residents who can find jobs within the County. It is also important to note that the expansion of broadband access and the rise in online working options may allow more County residents to work from their homes rather than commuting to a job. The JCDA plays a large role in protecting the County's internal employment by supporting new local businesses and

encouraging established businesses to relocate to Jefferson County, which provides more job opportunities for residents.

In 2020, the US Census Bureau estimated that close to 44% of Jefferson County residents were employed in the county while 45% commuted out of West Virginia to their place of employment. Nearly 10,000 residents travel to the Washington DC Metropolitan area.

Location of Employment for Jefferson County Residents, 2010-2020				
County	2010	Share	2020	Share
Jefferson Co. WV	11,415	46.1%	12,005	44.4%
<i>Washington DC Arlington Co. VA; Alexandria City VA</i>	<i>1,286</i>	<i>5.2%</i>	<i>728</i>	<i>2.7%</i>
<i>Montgomery Co. MD; Fairfax Co. VA*</i>	<i>3,136</i>	<i>12.7%</i>	<i>2,652</i>	<i>9.8%</i>
<i>Loudoun Co. VA; Frederick Co. MD</i>	<i>4,612</i>	<i>18.6%</i>	<i>6,014</i>	<i>22.2%</i>
<i>Remainder DC Metro Area**</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>1.5%</i>	<i>578</i>	<i>2.1%</i>
Total DC Metro Area***	9,400	38.0%	9,972	36.9%
<i>Berkeley Co. WV</i>	<i>1,782</i>	<i>7.2%</i>	<i>2,807</i>	<i>10.4%</i>
<i>Remainder Valley Counties****</i>	<i>1,766</i>	<i>7.1%</i>	<i>1,794</i>	<i>6.6%</i>
Total Valley Counties	3,548	14.3%	4,601	17.0%
All Other Counties*****	385	1.6%	458	1.7%
Total Residents Employed	24,748	100.0%	27,048	100.0%

* Includes Fairfax City VA and Falls Church City VA

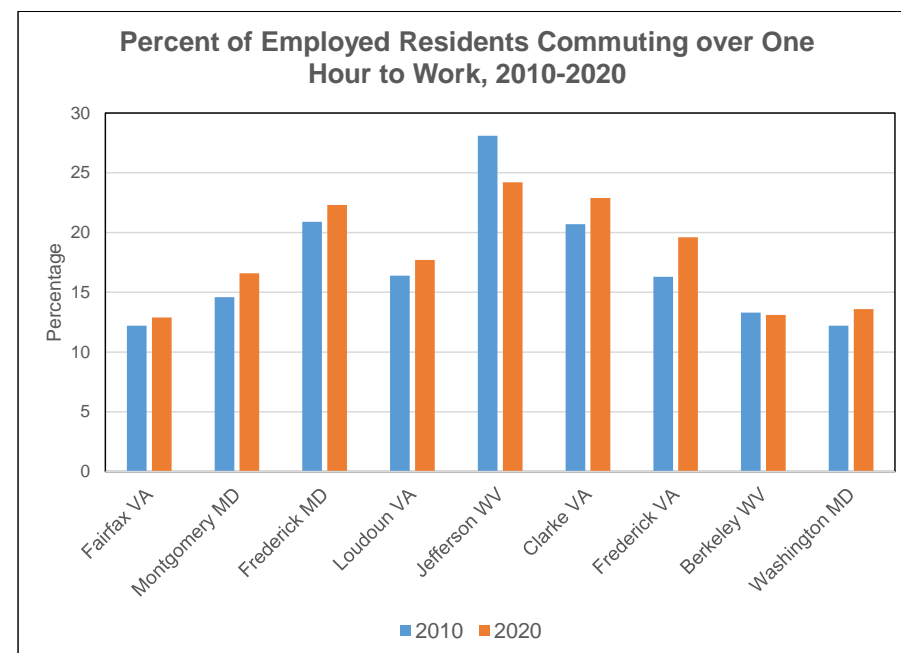
** Includes Prince Georges Co MD; Fauquier Co VA; Warren Co VA; Prince William Co VA; Stafford Co VA; Manassas City VA; Manassas Park City VA; Fredericksburg City VA

*** Excludes Jefferson Co WV; Clarke Co VA

**** Includes Clarke Co VA; Frederick Co VA; Winchester City, VA; Washington Co MD

***** Counties that were not within reasonable driving distance for a commute were eliminated from the original data set. In 2020, this increased Jefferson County's share of employment from 43.7 percent to 44.4 percent.

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2006-2010 and 2016-2020 5-Year Commuting Flows



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2020 5-Year Estimate

Objective 12.1

Collaborate with stakeholders to build and expand existing local businesses, support the start-up of new businesses, and attract new businesses to Jefferson County.

1. Organize and host small business development, entrepreneurship, financial assistance, and urban site selection classes in collaboration with stakeholders.

JCDA | Yearly

2. Conduct business retention and expansion visits of interested businesses including assessments of future challenges and opportunities.

JCDA | Yearly

3. Attract local development with a focus on government contracting, agribusiness, tourism, and community development.

JCDA | Ongoing

4. Collaborate with stakeholders and municipalities to provide awareness

programs about the availability of financing and support for businesses that locate in existing Federal Opportunity Zone census tracts.

JCDA | Ongoing

5. Develop partnerships with area financial institutions, including non-profit lenders that specialize in providing business financing to new and emerging businesses that are in the Federal Opportunity Zone census tracts and other eligible businesses.

JCDA | 3-5 years

6. Coordinate with local and state economic development agencies to identify potential funding sources for economic development efforts.

JCDA | 3-5 years

7. Plan with stakeholders' co-work facilities or business incubators that provide space for start-up companies along with a small network of entrepreneurs to collaborate.

JCDA | 3-5 years

8. Identify opportunities for public/private partnerships investment that

would result in the creation or expansion of employment opportunities and infrastructure.

JCDA | 3-5 years

Objective 12.2

Support vocational training opportunities for students of all ages in skilled trade programs and higher education to create a flexible, resilient workforce.

1. Grow relationships with local businesses and local/regional education institutions to increase availability of co-op and mentoring programs between students and businesses in the Eastern Panhandle.

JCDA | 3-5 years

2. Collaborate with key business and economic stakeholders to identify and create programs that would encourage the retention of highly skilled young graduates from the County's institutions of higher learning.

JCDA | 3-5 years

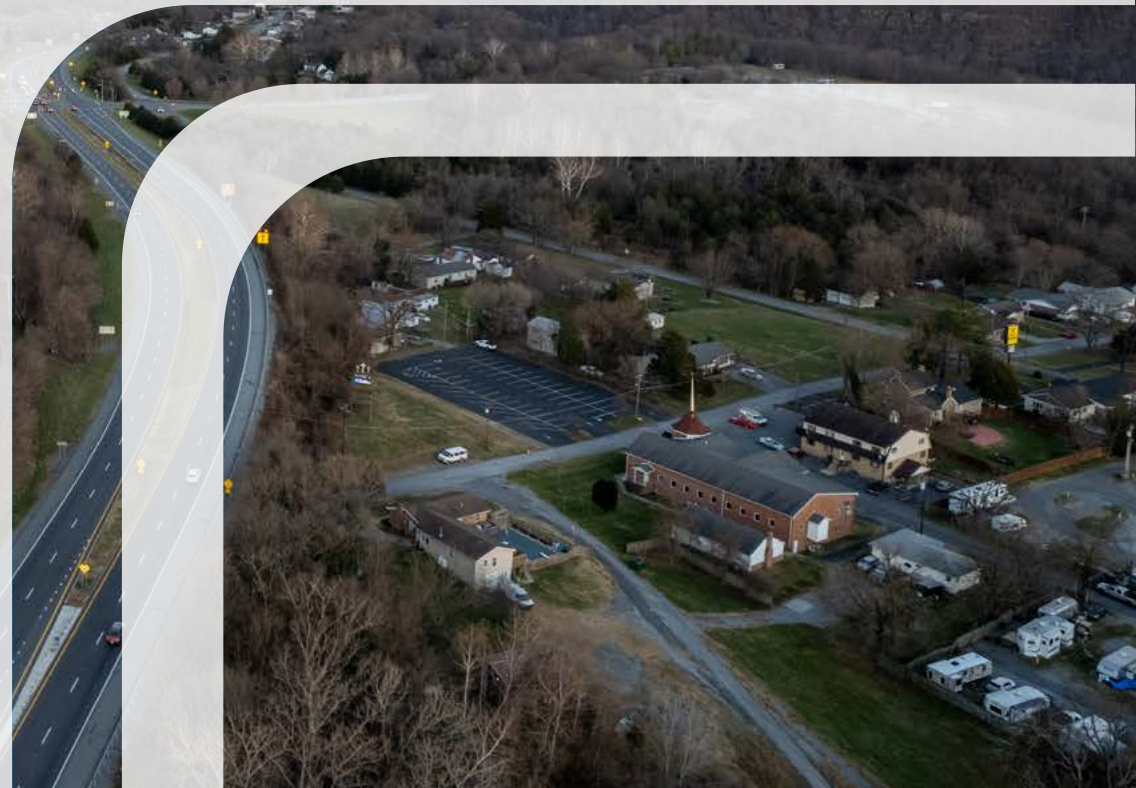
3. Coordinate with key business stakeholders to improve employer outreach and collaboration with regional and state university/college career centers to promote Jefferson County employment and internship opportunities to students on all academic levels.

JCDA • JCBOE | 3-5 years

Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority

Goal 13

Develop an environment that promotes existing and new businesses by expanding necessary infrastructure within the Preferred Growth Areas (PGA), Villages, and municipal Growth Boundaries (UGB&GMB).



Jefferson County is ideally situated to have a vital economy. Economic growth and development are closely tied to the availability of natural resources, technological innovation, and human capital as well as its geographic proximity to major population centers, adequate roads, and infrastructure. The major sectors of Jefferson County's economy include traditional economic development activity, including education and technological training; agriculture and the rural economy; and recreational, historic and heritage tourism.

According to the Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA), Jefferson County's location close to the Washington, DC Metropolitan area and ready access to major transportation routes makes the County ideally situated for business, manufacturing, and industry. With Jefferson County's existing economic cluster of federal agencies and its proximity to Washington, DC, the County also has the opportunity to attract additional federal facilities. It is important that elected officials

within the County, State, and federal government work together to maintain the government facilities that are located here and to explore the development of additional facilities that could bring mutual benefit to their agencies and Jefferson County.

To support the success of future economic growth, there are several proposed improvements to the County's public infrastructure that are expected to take place in the coming years. These include the widening and realignment of US 340 from Charles Town to the Virginia state line, the potential for improving natural gas and alternative energy facilities and, extending natural gas services into Jefferson County, and improvements to the County's telecommunications network, particularly advanced wireless technology. West Virginia's \$1.2 billion dollar Broadband Enhancement Access and Deployment grant looks to extend broadband coverage across the state, including underserved areas in Jefferson County. These improvements will enhance the ability of Jefferson County to compete on an

economic development basis with other communities in the region.

Building on these infrastructural improvements, Jefferson County can invite a diversity of businesses to locate within its borders. As part of these efforts, the JCDA has identified several target industries and employment sectors towards for incentives and programming: agricultural development, information technology, manufacturing, government, small business, and tourism. Each of these target industries are currently located in Jefferson County and will benefit from retention, expansion, and promotion.

One of the strengths of Jefferson County is that the residents have a strong entrepreneurial spirit. There is a need for local and regional technical and financial resources to be made available to these entrepreneurs and to publicize these resources. Existing programs in Jefferson County which currently work to support smaller companies include the Eastern Panhandle Entrepreneur Forum and the JCDA's agricultural

development program and small business coaching efforts, which focus on cultivating the talent that resides in Jefferson County. Creating opportunities that allow residents with a variety of skills and talents to be employed at jobs located in Jefferson County will also continue to be of importance. With the increasing number of highly skilled workers that have relocated into the community and the presence of Shepherd University, American Public University System (APUS), and other educational facilities, Jefferson County has workforce that is attractive to a wide variety of employers. In order to continue to attract and maintain employers, it is imperative to expand opportunities for residents of all ages to obtain the skills that would attract employers and for employers to find and retain a highly skilled, local workforce available to meet their needs by improving and expanding connections and mentoring programs between educational institutions, residents and employers. Such networks provide a chance for employers to work closely with both educational institutions and potential workers. Co-op or mentorship

programs can be an important factor in improving both the quality of Jefferson County's workforce and encouraging residents to stay in the County, working for employers that are a part of this program.

A robust transportation network is also important to the economic vitality of a community. With the improvements to the local and regional transportation and infrastructure networks that upcoming or in progress, the atmosphere for attracting a diversity of businesses to the County is constantly refining. As transportation access to and through Jefferson County has improved in recent years, it has become increasingly easier to move goods and people to and from the County. In the past several years, Jefferson County has worked to reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers which were impacting the viability of economic development in the County, allowing urban level commercial, office, and industrial activity to be located in the municipalities within the Urban Growth Boundary and Preferred Growth Areas, where the infrastructure will be available to support these uses.

Within the unincorporated area, the County's industrial park and properties zoned industrial are also important to the economic growth of the County. Within the municipalities, public and private reinvestment in the urban cores has occurred and is continuing to grow. The County's downtown concentrations of local and regional government agencies, small offices, shops and boutiques, restaurants, and services attract visitors and residents alike. These unique features help make downtown areas of Jefferson County a place for community.

Due to the rising growth in the County, there has been an increasing need to assess the viability of alternative and renewable energy sources that may assist in maintaining the quality of life of Jefferson County's residents and businesses. Alternative and renewable energy sources ranging from water, solar, and wind power to various biofuels, plant crops, and geothermal systems might be used to complement or replace existing power sources. There are efforts underway at the local and state level to encourage the conservation of energy

and the utilization of alternative energy sources, notably some projects incorporated into the expansion of the American Public University System (APUS) in Charles Town and Ranson. These projects include the use of solar collectors that serve as cover for parked cars, electric car charging stations, and building improvements and materials that limit the use of energy needed for heating, cooling, and lighting. The improvements undertaken by APUS can serve as a role model to new development in Jefferson County and to the redevelopment of existing structures and sites. Another option for energy sourcing is natural gas, which an increasing number of businesses are using in their manufacturing process due to the lower costs and cleaner emissions. The expansion of natural gas into Jefferson County would aid economic development efforts while providing an alternative to electricity for residential and commercial purposes.

The Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) works to encourage and assist the development and growth of businesses and industry in the County.

Small businesses, which can range from restaurants and artisan cottage industries to small technology and service firms, are an integral part of the local economy and will need opportunities to grow stronger. Building on these assets will give the County a strong identity in its core business strengths.



Objective 13.1

Utilize existing infrastructure to allow construction of village-scaled businesses, residential uses, and community facilities with Village areas and potential village expansion areas.

1. Promote available sites in villages for new businesses.

JCDA | Ongoing

Objective 13.2

Allow small-scale commercial and multi-family uses in existing areas that have the potential to be designated as a village at a future date.

1. Support the zoning map amendment of properties wishing to be zoned Village that are adjacent to Village or Village expansion areas.

PC • CC | Ongoing

Objective 13.3

Provide incentives and opportunities for businesses to relocate or expand their operations within the County.

1. Work with the County's municipalities to create a unified economic development strategy.

JCDA | 1-2 years

2. Encourage local non-profit organizations and local and regional economic development agencies to create a regular forum where all County artisans, businesses, and members of the non-profit and arts communities can meet to network and collaborate.

JCDA • CVB | 3-5 years

3. Encourage the engagement of the public in creating a unified economic development strategy.

JCDA | 1-2 years

Objective 13.4

Work with utility providers to ensure public and private infrastructure is in place within UGBs, PGAs, and Villages to enable economic development.

1. Identify partners and funding sources for the expansion of natural gas services.

JCDA | 6-10 years

2. Request state and federal agencies to consider the location of new facilities in Jefferson County within the growth areas identified in this Plan.

JCDA | Ongoing

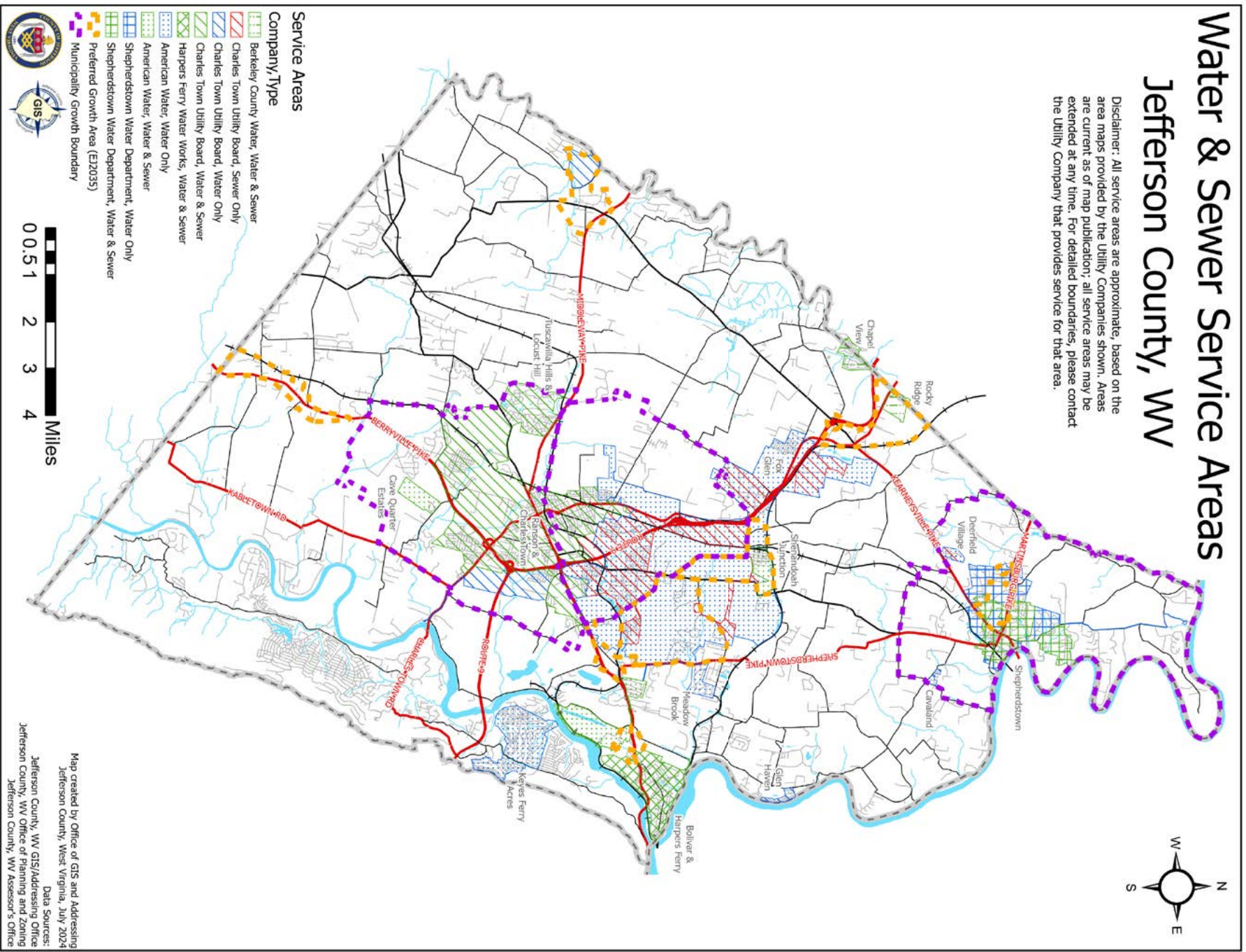
3. Request the deployment of infrastructure, including water and sewer, in all UGBs and the PGAs.

P&Z • CC | Ongoing

Water & Sewer Service Areas

Jefferson County, WV

Disclaimer: All service areas are approximate, based on the area maps provided by the Utility Companies shown. Areas are current as of map publication; all service areas may be extended at any time. For detailed boundaries, please contact the Utility Company that provides service for that area.





Creating Livability



Courtesy: WV Independent Observer

Jefferson County has experienced significant growth in the preceding decades. There is now more people, houses, and businesses than ever. While this growth brings many positive impacts to the County, it also requires some considerations. Jefferson County must look towards creating livability to ensure the sustainable health and happiness of all residents.

During the summer of 2023, a residential build out analysis was conducted for tax parcels in Jefferson County to determine the number of unoccupied or vacant parcels available for residential construction. Jefferson County issued just over 1,700 residential building permits throughout the unincorporated County area between the summer of 2013 and May 2023. Some parcels may have been recorded at the Court House or are anticipating approval, but are currently designated as vacant on the tax parcel and are not reflected in the data. The analysis was conducted using residential site address data and is strictly an analysis of the parcels that either are recorded in the land records

or have a vested right to continue the development process. It can be assumed that some construction will not proceed and a number of parcels platted for development may stay vacant. The estimates include parcels in the historic cores of the five municipalities, the mountain corridor between the Shenandoah River and the Loudon County, VA border, and within developments in municipalities. Parcels that are not zoned residential, do not meet the size requirement for a septic system, or could not be reasonably classified as potentially buildable are excluded from the estimates and are the cause of any discrepancies between the parcel counts. A similar analysis was performed as part of the Envision Jefferson 2035 Plan but this earlier report did not include residences in the historic cores of the five incorporated municipalities. The Envision Jefferson 2035 analysis pulled different data for their analysis and without a firm record of the analysis process; the two buildable parcel analyses are not comparable. This 2023 buildable parcel analysis indicates that approximately 6,900 residences could be built on existing vacant parcels without approving another lot.

<u>Total Parcels Estimate</u>	
Total parcels platted for residential use	29,400
Total parcels occupied by a residence	22,400
Vacant parcels with potential for future residential construction	6,900

Source: JC Planning and Zoning

Jefferson County experienced its highest rate of growth of about 42% in the 1970s, and a housing bubble in the early 2000s stimulated another spike in the growth rate that resulted in Jefferson's highest net gain of residents over a single decade. Growth slowed considerably in the 2010s, but following the COVID pandemic

and the general rise of housing prices in the Washington DC Metropolitan area, growth in Jefferson County has increased as new residents look for competitive housing prices. Since 2000, the municipalities have experienced a population increase of 43.2% compared to 21.3% in the unincorporated areas, and now make up 25% of the county's total population. Charles Town and Ranson have contributed significantly to this growth in municipal population, largely due to the annexation of new land.

Conversely, the adjoining towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry have seen a small decline in residents. Surrounded by the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers and National Park Service lands, there are limited opportunities to annex additional land, and market pressure to provide short term rentals has also affected the availability of long term housing for current and prospective residents.

Historically, Jefferson County's population demographic was characterized by a significant Black or African American population and

a majority of White residents, but in more recent decades has seen a gradual decline in the number of Black or African American residents in the County, as well as a steeper decline relative to the total population. The percentage of Black or African American residents reached its lowest point in 2000 but has been rising since then. Jefferson County is also increasing in diversity due to growing numbers of other racial and ethnic minority groups, which has risen from about 10% of the County's population to almost 21%, including significant increases in the Hispanic or Latino population and Multiracial individuals. With these noticeable increases in racial and ethnic minority populations, Jefferson County has a high probability of continuing to become a more racially and ethnically diverse community.

In its age demographics, Jefferson County differs from the national trend. The county is aging more rapidly than the rest of the United States, with proportionally fewer young adults in their 20s and a higher proportion of residents in their 50s than the rest of the United States.

In 2020, almost 21% of all Berkeley County's residents were between the ages of 25-39, compared to only 17% of Jefferson County's residents. Retired military veterans are also attracted to Jefferson County because the state tax policies regarding veteran benefits are more generous than those of Virginia and Maryland are. These policies have contributed to Jefferson County having a significantly higher percentage of residents with veteran status compared to bordering counties in Virginia and Maryland. The percentage of Jefferson County residents who are senior citizens has also risen. As these demographics continues to grow, there will be a need for more assisted care facilities, affordable senior housing, and access to medical care in the county. Additionally, these residents will likely require access to expanded public transit systems with greater availability.

Another important demographic is the County's level of educational attainment, which plays a key role in determining the economic possibilities of an area. Generally, people who

have obtained more education tend to earn higher wages and have more discretionary income. The economic health of the County's residents directly influences its commercial and retail composition, and companies consider the skill set of the area's labor pool when expanding to a new location. These factors help shape the quantity and quality of services provided for its residents, showing the importance of Jefferson County's educational attainment. The 2020 high school graduation rate in Jefferson County was above 90%. In the past twenty years, the percentage of residents without a high school diploma plummeted from 21% in 2000 to 9.5% in 2020. The number of residents who attended college rose from about 44% to nearly 60%, and residents who have completed at least a bachelor's degree increased by almost 10% over the same timeframe. The rise in the number of those with associates degrees or occupational certifications has been aided by the expansion of the Blue Ridge Community and Technical College and the James Rumsey Technical Institute in nearby Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Many demographics are affected by Jefferson County's location. Housing markets, migration patterns, and the flow of commuters are all heavily influenced by Jefferson County's geographical position within the Washington DC metropolitan area and the Shenandoah-Cumberland Valley system. High housing costs in the surrounding regions have made Jefferson County an appealing place to live for many who commute to jobs. Just as Jefferson County's lower-priced housing has attracted residents from Loudoun County and other counties

in the DC metropolitan area, Berkeley County has attracted a positive migration flow from Jefferson County. Between the 2017-18 and 2020-21 tax seasons, Jefferson County experienced a net outflow of 973 residents to Berkeley County, where the lack of zoning and impact fees for new housing has contributed to a lower median home value. Many migrants from Jefferson County were attracted by either the comparatively affordable housing prices or the larger amount of rental options found in Berkeley County.

As Jefferson County has grown, residents of the community have recognized the need to provide a greater range of park and recreational services to visitors and County residents. Having facilities and programs for teens and young adults is of particular interest to County residents, as is the expansion of a trail network that would not only include trunk lines such as the Route 9 Bike Path, but also trails that would connect communities, schools, and recreational facilities. With a network of safe, well-maintained trails and walking paths in place, individuals will have more options available to them for traveling throughout the county while improving physical health.

Jefferson County Population, 1950-2020

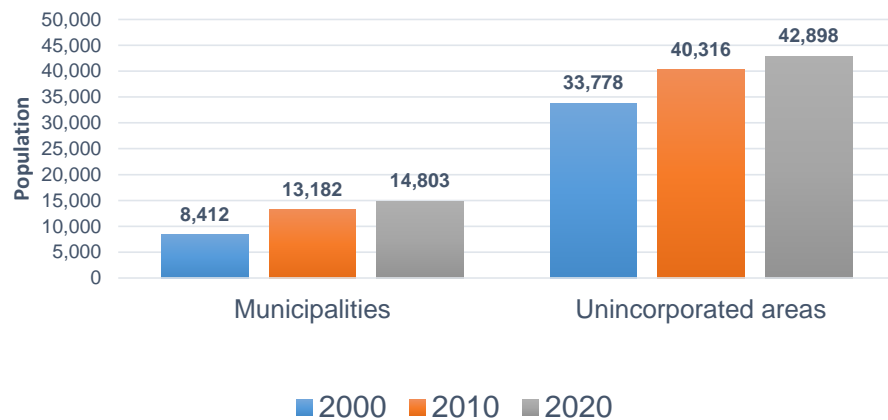
Year	Population	Growth per Decade	Percentage Growth
1950	17,184	422	2.5%
1960	18,665	1,481	8.6%
1970	21,280	2,615	14.1%
1980	30,302	9,022	42.4%
1990	35,926	5,624	15.7%
2000	42,190	6,264	17.4%
2010	53,498	11,308	26.8%
2020	57,701	4,203	7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

A minor subdivision is defined as any subdivision with two lots and a Residue or less prior to October 2008 and any subdivision with four lots and a Residue or less after October 2008. A major (conventional) subdivision is defined as any subdivision with three lots and a Residue prior to October 2008 and five lots and a residue after October 2008.

It should be noted that the US Census Bureau officially upwardly revised the population counts of Shepherdstown by around 400 residents in both the 2000 and 2010 censuses. In its initial counts, the Census Bureau had inaccurately assigned the annexed residence halls to an area outside of the corporate limits. The drop in Shepherdstown's population in 2020 may be the combination of another inaccurate initial count, the decline in attendance at Shepherd University, or the difficulty in counting students at the start of the COVID pandemic, as the university closed its student housing just prior to the delivery of the 2020 Census questionnaires. As of May 2023, the census count for Shepherdstown has yet to be revised.

Comparison of Municipal and Non-municipal Population, 2000-2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

The US Census Bureau provides population counts for Census Designated Places (CDPs) that are statistical equivalents of incorporated places but represent unincorporated communities that lack a legally defined boundary or an active, functioning governmental structure. Jefferson County has three CDPs: Middleway, Shenandoah Junction, and Shannondale, as well as eight officially recognized villages: Bakerton, Kearneysville, Leetown, Mannings, Rippon, and Summit Point. Middleway and Shenandoah Junction are both villages as well as CDPs. The US Census Bureau does not offer official population statistics for non-CDP villages.

The increase in Multiracial identity is a nationwide trend that the US Census Bureau partially attributes to its revision of the race and ethnicity questions, which now better reflect personal self-identification. Some individuals who selected a single racial category in previous censuses were able to choose multiple racial categories in the 2020 census, leading to a decrease in single race categories.

Courtesy: Jefferson County Parks and Recreation



Goal 14

Promote a countywide expansion of activities, amenities, and entertainment for all Jefferson County residents.

The past decade has seen an influx of young families moving into the County's residential developments, but without a matching increase in healthy entertainment opportunities for young people. Residents have emphasized a growing need for an increase in activities and programs for Jefferson County's youth. Some of these programs and services are already available within the County, but may be only privately available or are not conveniently accessible for all residents. Developing more programs and entertainment options for this age group could help the County's young residents form connections in their community and provide motivation for them to remain in Jefferson County as they age. Having access to outdoor amenities encourages all residents to be active and move, increasing physical health. Amenities geared towards different age groups can provide all residents with enjoying and rewarding experiences, which can also support mental wellbeing. It should be noted that besides traditional amenities like parks, access to wireless connectivity is a modern amenity that is growing in importance. Many people rely on wireless connectivity for their jobs,

students may need it to access educational resources, and residents of all ages use it for personal enjoyment. One way to support this is to ensure that all residents of the County and the State have access to high-speed internet. As Jefferson County works to provide many kinds of accessible amenities, it is important to encourage the development of wireless connectivity to support the needs of all residents.

In contrast to the increase of young families, Jefferson County has decreasing numbers of young adults who graduate from a County school and remain in the County to live or work. Young people who grow up in Jefferson County may experience difficulty finding job opportunities appropriate for their age or level of educational attainment, which negatively affects their ability to live in the County as they age and require income to support themselves. Additionally, neighboring Berkeley County offers numerous job opportunities for young adults and a relatively lower cost of living, attracting many of Jefferson County's early-career residents to that area. Residents have expressed the need for Jefferson County to work towards

retaining its young adult population. Currently, the JCDA works to attract and support businesses, which provide job opportunities for those living in the County. Collaborating with the JCDA and with local businesses to provide increased employment options for young adults could help Jefferson County retain more of its youthful population and strengthen the diversity of its age demographics.

Just as it is important for Jefferson County to become a place that supports residents of all ages, the County must also look to support the health of those residents and their environment. As Jefferson County increases in population and development, this raises the amount of light pollution the region emits. Light pollution is a change in levels of outdoor light due to artificial lighting, and includes issues like glare from excessive brightness and sky-glow above cities at night. Light pollution also brings significant negative impacts to the community. Excess lighting wastes energy and can compromise individuals' safety and security by affecting vision. It also disrupts the nocturnal patterns of the natural environment, including those of

wildlife. However, many of these issues can be mitigated. DarkSky International helps communities like Jefferson County by recommending methods for implementing sustainable lighting options that can be adopted to minimize light pollution and increase resident safety and comfort. Adopting measures to reduce light pollution would serve to benefit Jefferson County.

Promoting a countywide expansion of establishments and programs that provide services, activities, and entertainment increases the quality of life and improves mental and physical wellness for residents of all ages.

DarkSky International is an organization of experts that advocates the protection of the night sky and natural darkness for its many benefits by reducing light pollution through education, citizen awareness, and supportive legislation.

Objective 14.1

Collaborate with local businesses to identify opportunities and programs to aid in retaining and attracting families, early-career adults, and seniors to Jefferson County.

1. Develop and administer an initiative of feasibility and marketing studies for private entities that are exploring launching new commercial businesses or expanding existing commercial businesses from within or outside the County, particularly commercial businesses that provide entertainment and recreational opportunities for families and youth.

JCDA | 3-5 years

2. Work with local lenders and other stakeholders to identify financing for businesses that provide essential services, entertainment, and recreational opportunities.

JCDA | 3-5 years

Objective 14.2

Support programs that provide services and entertainment for residents of Jefferson County.

1. Ensure that all areas of Jefferson County are served by high speed landline and/or wireless services and other advanced communication technologies.

CC | 3-5 years

2. Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations related to tree preservation, buffering, and effective landscaping standards.

P&Z • PC | 3-5 years

Objective 14.3

Explore DarkSky International and Illuminating Engineering Society recommended standards to reduce light pollution.

1. Adopt text amendments to minimize light pollution as recommended by the DarkSky International and Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) and their current Model Lighting Ordinance Template.

PC • CC | 3-5 years

2. Support education and outreach programs for property owners and citizens to raise awareness about the impacts of light pollution, potential energy savings by reducing light pollution, and potential solutions to light pollution.

CC | Yearly

3. Urge municipalities to implement a Street Lighting Master Plan to convert existing and future street lighting to reduce light pollution and follow DarkSky International recommended standards.

CC | Ongoing

Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority



Goal 15

Enhance public services and public safety to meet the needs of Jefferson County residents.

Jefferson County residents have identified that one of their greatest concerns regards the provision of police, fire, rescue, and EMS services. It is widely recognized that local governments ought to establish and provide these services, and Jefferson County operates a combination career/volunteer Fire, Rescue, and EMS system funded by the County and ambulance fees. The Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency (JCESA) owns and operates the 911 EMS ambulance transport system, employing both full-time and part-time personnel. There are seven Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) which own and primarily operate the Fire and Rescue equipment and services. JCESA career personnel operate their EMS units out of space within four of these VFDs and assist with Fire and Rescue responses and operations. To maintain adequate numbers of available responders, improve emergency responses, and meet the needs of its residents, businesses, and visitors the County will continue to see its career services expand. The Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management department serves as the long range planning for disaster preparedness and updates the Jefferson County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan every five years. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies risks and vulnerabilities in the County and sets goals to mitigate those risks in the event of an emergency.

Another public concern that has come with the growth of the County's population is the availability and reliability of the public transit system. The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) provides limited transit services, including round trips between Harpers Ferry, Charles Town, Ranson,

and Shepherdstown. There is also a shuttle service between Martinsburg, Shepherd University, and Demand Response Services for people with disabilities. Ground has also broken on the EPTA Multimodal Transit Center in Martinsburg to better serve the community with public transit as the Eastern Panhandle continues to grow. Additionally, Jefferson County has a growing percentage of senior residents in the population, many of whom may not be able to drive, and may have increased physical health needs that require medical care. These citizens need affordable and reliable public transit to and from community locations like wellness centers and grocery stores, as well as medical care appointments. Expanding the EPTA's service in Jefferson County and its surrounding region will secure the availability of transportation for these aging residents as well as the County's incoming residents.

Another option for public transit for County residents is the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train. The MARC Brunswick Line offers commuter rail services between Martinsburg and Washington D.C. It has two stops in Jefferson County at Duffields and Harpers Ferry, and provides vital regional connectivity with the larger metropolitan area. This service is essential for daily commuters and enhances the overall transportation network in the region. With better access to quality public transportation, residents will have less need to drive, which could help decrease roadway traffic as well.

Public Service

The EPTA is the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority, which provides public transportation services, including non-emergency medical transportation, for those in Jefferson and Berkeley County.

County-owned buildings and equipment are essential to the fluid operation of Jefferson County as a whole. These assets undergo depreciation as they age and may require maintenance or updates to make sure that everything is in working order. This care is of high importance to ensure that Jefferson County continues to operate smoothly and the residents and community receive quality service.

Impact fees are enacted by the local government and help cover the cost associated with incoming developments required to ensure that new growth is sustainable for the community.

While the Jefferson County Commission does not have a fiduciary responsibility in providing certain services such as public utility systems and the road network, the citizens of the County are impacted by the cost of these services. For this reason, it is important for County officials and residents to be involved in the policy making process of outside agencies that provide services to the County when possible. The County's current budgetary responsibilities primarily consist of General Government, Public Safety, Health and Sanitation, Culture and Recreation, Social Services, and Capital Projects. General Government accounts for approximately fifty percent of the County budget expenditures, while public safety accounts for an additional forty-three percent.

Objective 15.1

Coordinate with EPTA to improve transit service within Jefferson County and the Eastern Panhandle as a whole.

1. Support Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority's programs to provide additional transit services that address the transportation needs of the county and the disabled population in particular.

CC | Yearly

Objective 15.2

Ensure access to emergency services in Jefferson County.

1. Explore all funding options to support and enhance County emergency services.

ESA | Yearly

2. Implement improvements of County facilities and grounds for better access and safety.

CC | Yearly

Objective 15.3

Identify ways to expand medical services and wellness programs.

1. Identify and expand the utilization of state and/or federal grants that might be available for capital projects in Jefferson County.

CC | Yearly

2. Support Health Department efforts to provide health services to County residents.

HD | Ongoing

Courtesy: Jefferson County CVB

Goal 16

Improve interconnectivity by enhancing and expanding pedestrian and bike paths.

With a network of safe, well-maintained trails and walking paths in place, individuals will have more sustainable options available for traveling throughout the county while improving physical health. It is important for these trails to connect communities, schools, libraries, and recreational facilities. Enhancing interconnectivity through these trails will foster a stronger sense of community and accessibility for all.

Creating a more balanced transportation system and better connecting neighborhoods significantly enhances the physical and mental health of both residents and visitors.

Many Jefferson County residents walk or bike to destinations within the County and nearby. Where pedestrian and bike trails do not exist along the roadways, pedestrians and cyclists are obliged to use narrow shoulder areas or the grass, which endangers those individuals and

creates hazards for motorists on the roads. Many roads in Jefferson County do not have paved or graveled shoulders. This limits the desirability of walking or biking in these locations. Creating bike and pedestrian interconnectivity between subdivisions, commercial developments, and recreational facilities enhances mobility and accessibility. This type of improvement increases the ability for individuals without a private automobile to access their homes, school, employment, medical appointments, shops, and services. When accessibility does not exist, residents must drive and the increasing motorists increase traffic on major roadways and smaller developments located between connections. Private road connections in neighborhoods should not need to contend with the traffic that State built and maintained roadways are designed for. This Plan supports including sidewalks and trails in new major subdivisions and along state roadways even if surrounding connections do not yet exist. Increased availability of sidewalks and trails encourages greater transportation options and future connections. Overall increases in transportation options also reduce transportation costs for both communities and residents and create a greater sense of community.

One of the biggest needs identified by residents is the expansion of a trail network. The Route 9 bike path connects Berkley and Jefferson County is a significant asset for both recreational and commuter use. This Plan supports the ongoing work to extend the Route 9 path to Charles Town and Ranson including cooperation with the West Virginia Division of Highways to resolve regulatory constraints regarding the addition of sidewalks and trails. A bike path connecting Shepherdstown Middle School, Morgan Grove Park, and Shepherdstown Library would be a significant asset to the community in making all of these public facilities more accessible. A similar bike path could be made between the Corporation of Ranson and Sam Michaels Park to facilitate walkers and cyclists in accessing the Sam Michaels recreation facilities. Despite the challenges, there are ongoing efforts to expand the trail network that includes securing grants for new bike paths and collaborative projects with local and national organizations. Collaboration with our transportation partners

including HEPMPO, WVDOH, and the municipalities make these projects possible. The goal is to enhance mobility, safety, and community health by increasing the availability of sidewalks and trails.

Developing interconnecting paths, trails, and walkways through Jefferson County contributes to community and health. The Potential Future Bicycle Paths map contained in the Plan identifies ideal future bike and pedestrian paths in Jefferson County. The map reflects these potential connections but does not designate the preferred location of the paths.

Objective 16.1

Establish that new development adjacent to municipal boundaries, Villages, or within UGBs is designed and built in a way that enables connectivity to the existing street and infrastructure network or for future connectivity as development is extended to these areas.

1. Collaborate with key stakeholders and developers to encourage adjoining developments to provide interconnections.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

2. Collaborate with stakeholders to construct sidewalks and/or multi-use pathways in order to connect public and private schools to nearby communities, neighborhoods, and to countywide trail, park and recreational facilities.

P&Z • PC | Ongoing

Objective 16.2

Collaborate with WVDOH to connect the Route 9 bike path into Ranson.

1. Collaborate with the WVDOH and the relevant railroad owner to allow pedestrian and bike trails to be constructed within the right-of-way where appropriate.

P&Z | 6-10 years

Objective 16.3

Continue to support construction of Shepherdstown bike path from Shepherdstown Middle School to Morgan Grove Park and Shepherdstown Library.

1. Coordinate with key stakeholders and property owners to identify potential routes and create a usable pedestrian and bike path.

PC | 3-5 years

Objective 16.4

Require sidewalks to be constructed or easements for their implementation be included within and connecting to existing and new development.

1. Strive to provide connectivity between bike and pedestrian paths that pass through or connect to adjacent new and existing residential developments.

P&Z | Ongoing

2. Support the development of a pedestrian path between the Shenandoah Springs subdivision and the Patrick Henry Estates subdivision.

PC | 6-10 years

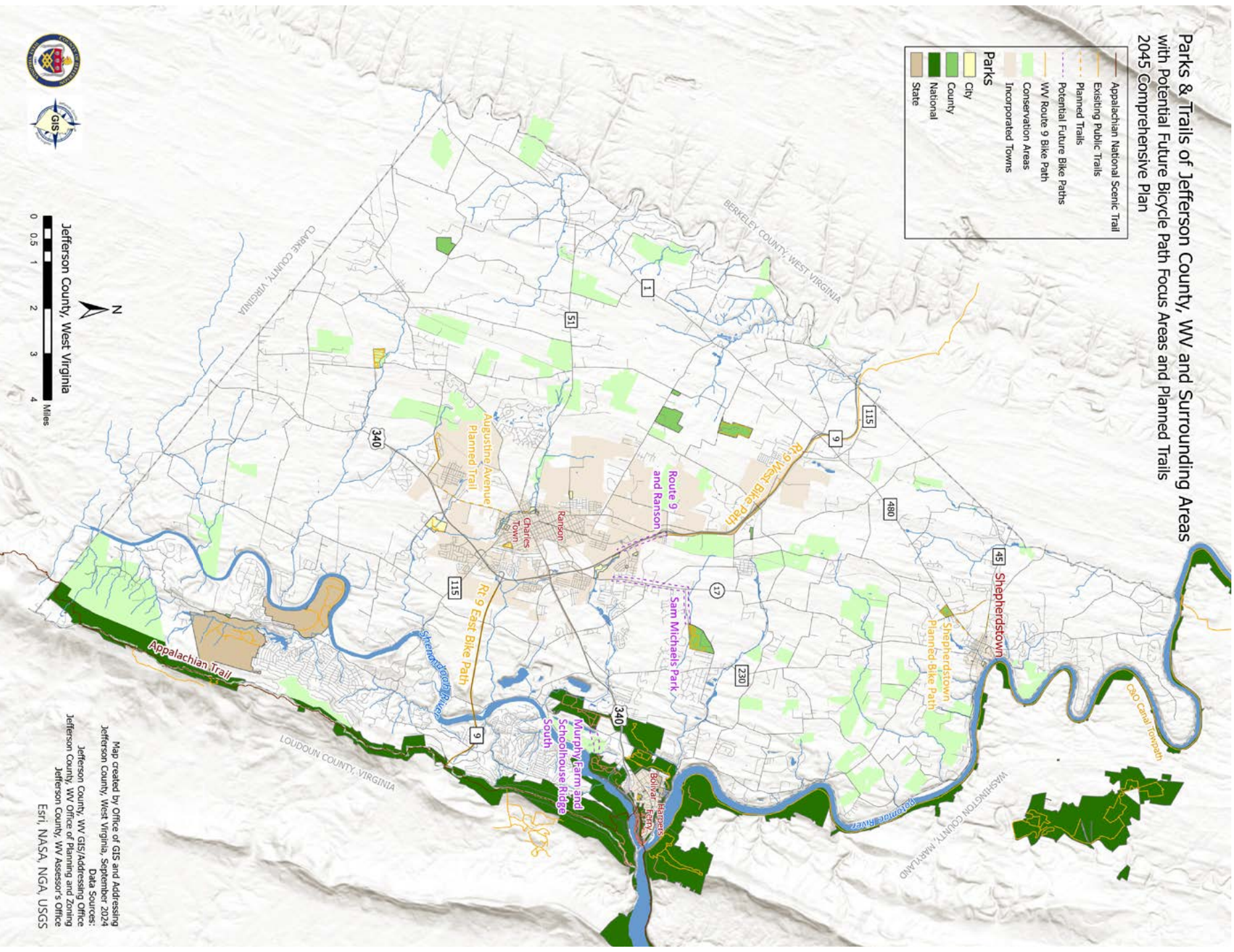
Objective 16.5

Develop a path connecting Ranson to Sam Michaels Park.

1. Coordinate with key stakeholders to develop a Countywide Trail Plan.

JCPR | 6-10 years

Parks & Trails of Jefferson County, WV and Surrounding Areas with Potential Future Bicycle Path Focus Areas and Planned Trails 2045 Comprehensive Plan



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Goal 17

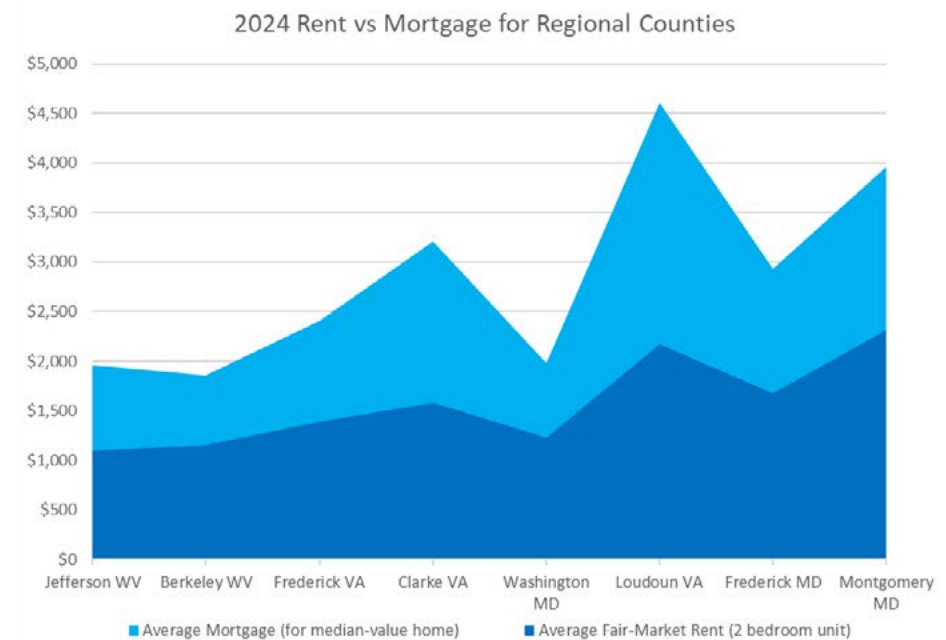
Encourage a diversity of housing options including attainable and senior housing availability and accessibility to current and incoming residents.

All communities exist within a larger network of regional influences. Jefferson County's geographical position in the Shenandoah-Cumberland Valley system and the Washington DC metropolitan area heavily influences its housing markets, migration patterns, and the flow of commuters. The federal government and the professional/business service sector in the Metro area offer many comparatively high paying jobs, allowing suburban Washington to become an affluent area. Rapid growth together with high incomes has resulted in high median owner-occupied house values increasing the cost of housing in that area and making Jefferson County an appealing place to live for many who commute to jobs in the region. Many homebuyers who were previously renting or living in a Metro area suburban county apartment or townhouse can afford a larger, single-family detached house in Jefferson County due to its lower cost of living.

Jefferson County's comparative affordability is also due to the significant housing growth the County experienced in the 1970's (56% increase in housing units). From 1980 to 2010, the number of housing units grew at an average rate of 21-26% per decade, resulting in the creation of a Planning Commission and implementation of Subdivision Regulations. Since 2010, the County has experienced slightly more than a 6% increase in its total amount of housing.

However, the affordability and availability of housing in Jefferson County is strongly impacted by the age of its population. Due to a lower birth rate, a rise in life expectancy,

and the aging status of the 1945-1964 generation, the median age for Jefferson County has risen from about 29 in 1980 to almost 42 in 2020. Jefferson County is aging faster than the rest of the United States, whose median age increased from 30 to about 39 over the same two decades. Despite hosting a university with a residential population, Jefferson County has proportionally fewer young adults in their 20s than the rest of the United States. A scarcity of long-term rental options and high housing prices compared to Berkeley County nearby discourage younger residents from staying in the County. The decrease in this age demographic affects the number of children in the county by impacting the state formula for school funding, the number of teachers and school support staff that are needed each year, and the timing of when new schools are built.



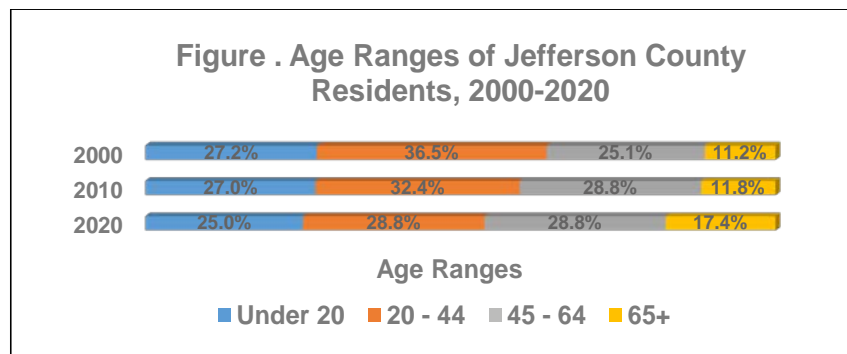
Source: HUD, National Association of Realtors

Conversely, Jefferson County has a higher proportion of residents over 50 years of age than the rest of the United States. As people progress in their career stage, the available housing in Jefferson may become relatively more affordable, especially for those who commute to high paying jobs. Some retired military veterans are also attracted to Jefferson County because the tax policies in West Virginia regarding veteran benefits are more generous than the neighboring states of Virginia and Maryland. These policies have contributed to an increase in the number of Jefferson County civilian residents with veteran status.

While the proportion of other age groupings has declined or remained fixed since 2010, the percentage of Jefferson County senior citizen residents has risen from almost 12% to over 17%. As this percentage continues to grow, there will likely be a need for more assisted care facilities, affordable senior housing, and access to medical care in the county.

As much of the resident population ages and higher numbers of younger residents move out of Jefferson County, there is an increasing need for affordable housing to support senior citizens and retain the County's youth. The American Planning Association has many resources available about affordable housing, and how communities can work towards sustainable solutions for residential growth that both incoming and current residents can afford. One of these publications is the Housing Supply Accelerator Playbook, which identifies strategies and solutions that can be adapted by local governments to their specific conditions, and used to improve the amount and quality of affordable housing.

Attainable housing refers to residential properties that are affordable for individuals and families with moderate incomes. Unlike low-income or subsidized housing, which targets the lowest income brackets, attainable housing aims to serve those who earn too much to qualify for traditional affordable housing programs but still struggle to afford market-rate housing.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

Jefferson County and the surrounding region are home to several affordable housing programs. One of these is the Telamon Corporation, which works to help low-income families break the poverty cycle with quality, affordable housing. Another is the Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP), which supports first-time homebuyers finance a housing purchase. The HAP also works to promote Community Development Block Grants through the state for multifarm affordable housing.

Objective 17.1

Work with county residents, members of the development community, and local and regional non-profit organizations to identify ways to integrate attainable housing with existing and new communities in Jefferson County.

1. Create a Planning Commission committee to review national attainable housing reports and make recommendations for a coordinated Jefferson County attainable housing initiative.

PC | 3-5 years

Objective 17.2

Identify and utilize private and public funding for the development of attainable housing in Jefferson County.

1. Research and assess the viability of grants and programs that would create attainable housing.

P&Z | Yearly

Objective 17.3

Encourage developers, contractors, and homeowners to build and renovate residential developments to meet the needs of residents across the entire lifecycle.

1. Actively support and enable the development of a wide range of affordable, workforce, senior and disabled housing units.

P&Z • PC • CC | Ongoing

2. Identify and utilize funding sources that that would assist in maintaining and providing energy efficient upgrades to homes.

P&Z | Yearly

Objective 17.4

Encourage the development of communities that provide a variety of care for elderly and/or disabled residents within Jefferson County in close proximity to transportation corridors, medical facilities, and everyday needs.

1. Create a Planning Commission committee to review national aging-in-placereportsandmakerecommendations for a coordinated Jefferson County aging-in-place initiative.

PC | 3-5 years

Objective 17.5

Identify methods to lower the cost of constructing attainable housing within Jefferson County while ensuring a high quality of housing in conjunction with local non-profits and housing providers.

1. Evaluate mechanisms to permit an amount of affordable units to be constructed at a reduced impact fee rate.

P&Z | 3-5 years



Other Content

Land Use Guide Classifications

The following land use classifications, utilized on the Existing Land Use Map and Future Land Use Guide, are intended to provide guidance to the Planning and County Commission when considering owner-initiated zoning map amendments (rezoning requests). The Future Land Use Guide is also intended to provide guidance for the Board of Zoning Appeals when considering Conditional Use Permits. While some of the land use classifications may result in new zoning categories, this is not a comprehensive list of possible zoning districts.

Residential Densities, Mixed Use, Commercial, and Industrial Definitions

Rural/Agriculture

Primary Uses: The Rural/Agriculture classification is for working agricultural operations and single family residences.

Intensity: Residences are primarily served by on-site well and septic systems.

Mobility: Agricultural equipment and auto orientated access are prioritized.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Future Urban Area

Primary Uses: This land use classification is used to identify locations that are Rural/Agriculture level development and are within the Urban Growth Boundaries of the City of Charles Town or the Corporation of Ranson. Urban Growth Boundaries facilitate owner initiated annexations into the relevant municipality and as a result the County identifies these areas as suitable for higher intensity development.

Intensity: Residential and non-residential uses may be served by on-site well and septic systems or public water and/or sewer system.

Mobility: Agricultural equipment and auto orientated access are prioritized with future developments requiring bike and pedestrian access.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Rural Residential

Primary Uses: The Rural Residential classification is for larger lot residential developments and can include single family residences, duplexes, accessory dwelling units, and residences east of the Shenandoah River.

Intensity: Residences may be served by on-site well and septic systems or public water and/or sewer system.

Mobility: Agricultural equipment and auto orientated access are prioritized with pedestrian mobility provided within residential subdivisions.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Land Use Guide Classifications

Suburban Residential

Primary Uses: The Suburban Residential classification identifies higher intensity residential developments. This can include single family residences on small lots, townhomes, apartment complexes, and assisted living communities.

Intensity: Residences are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Mixed Use Residential/Commercial

Primary Uses: This land use classification is for mixed use developments with commercial ventures or office businesses on ground level and residences on additional floors. The development should connect to the pedestrian and auto transportation networks of adjacent properties and commercial ventures can include gyms, convenience stores, and bakeries.

Intensity: Residences and commercial uses are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Conservation Area

Primary Uses: This land use classification reflects the use of historic, conservation, and farmland preservation easements.

Intensity: Residences on conservation areas are primarily served by on-site well and septic systems.

Mobility: Agricultural equipment and auto orientated access are prioritized.



Courtesy: Jefferson County HLC

Land Use Guide Classifications

Office or Commercial

Primary Uses: The Office or Commercial category is intended to support a mix of business and office uses. Developments can include mixed use projects, a mix of office or commercial buildings, or solely an office or commercial use.

Intensity: Commercial or office uses are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments. Access to public transit is encouraged.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Neighborhood Commercial

Primary Uses: The Neighborhood Commercial classification is for small scale commercial uses that are compatible with residential uses. Developments in this classification should serve the convenience needs of residential neighborhoods and commercial developments within walking distance and should connect to the pedestrian and auto transportation networks of adjacent properties.

Intensity: Neighborhood commercial uses may be served by on-site well and septic systems or public water and/or sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Residential or Commercial

Primary Uses: This land use classification is for Suburban Residential and Neighborhood Commercial level development. Developments can include mixed use projects, a mix of residences and convenience businesses, or solely office, commercial, and residential uses that should connect to the pedestrian and auto transportation networks of adjacent properties. It includes gyms, convenience stores, townhomes, commercial and residential uses on adjoining lots, and mixed use projects with commercial ventures on ground level and residences on additional floors.

Intensity: Residences and commercial uses are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Land Use Guide Classifications

Golf Course

Primary Uses: The golf course land use classification depicts two existing locations. The classification is distinguished as they both exist in residential neighborhoods but cannot be further developed as residential or commercial. There are no future sites for this land use type depicted on the Future Land Use Guide.

Intensity: Commercial uses on golf courses are primarily served by on-site well and septic systems.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Public/Quasi Public Land

Primary Uses: This land use classification is for locations occupied by non-profits and governmental agencies. It includes churches, cemeteries, water towers, utility substations, city, county, state and federal lands, parks, and schools.

Intensity: Public or quasi-public uses are served by on-site well and septic systems or public water and/or sewer system. Municipal, state, and federal entities are exempt from processing through local land use regulations.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Industrial or Commercial

Primary Uses: The industrial or commercial classification is intended for industrial uses and destination businesses uses. It includes light and heavy industrial applications, automotive repair shops, warehousing that requires frequent truck traffic, and shooting ranges.

Intensity: Industrial or commercial uses are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Truck auto orientated access are prioritized. Access to public transit and bike paths is encouraged.



Courtesy: Jefferson County Development Authority

General Commercial

Primary Uses: The General Commercial category is for general destination business uses including a broad range of commercial products, services, and structure size.

Intensity: Commercial uses are served by public water and sewer system.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and auto orientated access are prioritized along with interconnectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial developments. Access to public transit is encouraged.



Courtesy: JC Office of Planning and Zoning

Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
Agritourism	Recreational, entertainment, retail, or educational activity that brings members of the public to an agricultural venue to visit, watch, or participate in activity related to the operation of the agricultural venue.
Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)	A five member board, appointed by the County Commission.
Brownfield	Industrial or commercial property that is abandoned or disused and future development may be affected due to the potential presence of pollutants.
Chesapeake Bay Initiative	A cooperative effort to clean and preserve the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, supported by state legislation regarding pollution, industry, agriculture, and other factors that influence the health and quality of the watershed.
Cluster Subdivision	A development technique for creating subdivisions that groups houses at higher densities than normally permitted in order to preserve open space, and promote a flexible design approach that supports the preservation of natural landscape and/or farmland.
Complete Streets	A design approach to transportation that ensures streets are safe and accessible for all users including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.
Comprehensive Plan	A long-range plan for physical development, including land use, adopted by a governing body, setting forth guidelines, goals and objectives for all activities that affect growth and development in the governing body's jurisdiction.
Concept Plan	A sketch plan that is submitted by a developer to the Planning Commission to gather preliminary input from the Planning Commission and the public on a proposed development.
Connectivity	The planning and development of streets and paths that are economical and sustainable to encourage walkability, biking, and reduce vehicular congestion, travel distance, and time to destination.
Conservation Easement	A recorded document that restricts the use of a tract of land to be compatible with specified uses such as environmental conservation, historic or open space preservation, or outdoor recreation activities.
Jefferson County Commission (CC)	The governing body for the County established by the State Constitution and comprised of five members, each elected from one of the magisterial districts of the County.
Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB)	An organization which advocates for and promotes tourism and visitation of the County.

Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
DarkSky International	An organization of experts that advocates the protection of the night sky and natural darkness for its many benefits by reducing light pollution through education, citizen awareness, and supportive legislation.
Emergency Medical Services (EMS)	Is a system that responds to medical emergencies that need immediate medical support staff on scene and are able to transport injured individuals to healthcare facilities.
Energy Use Improvements	Upgrades or changes made to a private or public structure to increase its efficient usage of energy.
EO	Elected Officials, referring to representatives, senators, and other officials on a state and federal level.
EPTA	Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority, a non-profit public transit system that services Jefferson and Berkeley Counties, including bus systems and non-emergency medical transportation.
ESA	Emergency Services Agency, an organization which supports and works with volunteer and other emergency services within the County to preserve lives and property through emergency medical service and firefighting.
Federal Opportunity Zone	A federally designated area that provides incentives for businesses and residents in that area to expand economic growth and increase job opportunities to combat poverty.
FPB	Farmland Protection Board, established by the CC to oversee all matters concerning farmland protection through the implementation of goals, objectives, and policies.
Future Land Use Guide	A map that depicts the proposed future land use patterns in a community and that is incorporated as a part of a community's Comprehensive Plan. Typically such a map needs to be used in conjunction with the policies or recommendations found in the plan and is used as a resource or a guide by the local Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and County Commission when reviewing a variety of land use decisions.
Greyfield	A development or building that is economically outdated and progressively disused, such as an old mall or shopping center.
HEPMPO	The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization, a regional transportation entity that is federally designated to plan for and assist local governments concerning transportation in that area.
HLC	Historic Landmarks Commission, which operates under WV legislature and CC to promote heritage tourism as well as historic preservation and the development of historic resources.
Infrastructure	Essential services necessary to sustain development and land use activities, including utility lines, water and sewer connections, transportation systems, and roadways.
Institutional	Publicly accessible facility or nonprofit, or in the context of medical facilities, it describes the necessary and standard uses or practices that are aligned with medical facilities and personnel.

Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
Intensity	A measure of the degree of perceived level of activity as it applies to parking needs, traffic patterns, visual magnitude, or altered character on a particular parcel of land. Intensity as used in these Regulations is typically measured by the number of square feet of development or Floor Area Ratio per acre by land use type with respect to non-residential land uses.
JCDA	Jefferson County Development Authority, which works to encourage and assist the development and growth of businesses and industry in the County.
JCPR	Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, a commission responsible for creating, operating, and maintaining parks and recreational opportunities within the County.
JCBOE	Jefferson County Board of Education, an organization which builds, maintains, and operates the schools within the County and their needs.
Key Players	County affiliated organizations that are responsible for undertaking an Action Item.
Land Use Classification	A system for classifying and designating the appropriate future use of different properties
Future Land Use Guide	A map contained in the Comprehensive Plan that depicts proposed future land use patterns in the County as Land Use Classifications . This map is used as a guide alongside the Comprehensive Plan text by Planning Commission, County Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals to make land use decisions.
MARC	Maryland Area Rail Commuter, a rail transit system for commuters going to and from the Washington DC Metropolitan Area, including locations in Maryland and Jefferson County.
Open Space	Land area to be left undeveloped as part of a natural resource preservation, recreation, bufferyards, or other open space provision of the Subdivision Regulations. Open space excludes areas in lots, street rights-of-way, or parking. Private open space is designed and intended for common use and the enjoyment of the residents. Public open space is designed and intended for common use and the enjoyment of the residents of Jefferson County.
Parcels	A piece of property that is recorded and defined in legal tax records.
PC	Jefferson County Planning Commission, a branch of County government appointed by the CC which prepares and oversees the adoption and implementation of a Comprehensive plan, as well as the review of subdivisions and site development.
PGA	Preferred Growth Area, an unincorporated area which has been identified suitable for development including residential and commercial land uses in accordance with the County land development ordinances.

Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
PFAS	Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl chemicals found in many industrial and consumer products that break down extremely slowly and are being detected in the environment.
Principal Permitted Use	Referring to the land uses that can be established in a particular Zoning district in accordance with the zoning, subdivision, and land use regulations that does not require approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals.
P&Z	Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning, a department of the County government which coordinates the planning and zoning needs of the county in matters of growth and development, staffs the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, and administers land development regulations and processes.
Rural Character	A visually and culturally defining aspect of a region, mainly due to its particular visual features such as open space, farmland, rivers, and forests.
Stakeholders	An individual or entity that has an interest in or will be affected by a project or enterprise.
Text Amendment	A change or addition to the existing County codes or ordinances that has been proposed and approved by the governing body responsible for the legal text.
UGB	Urban Growth Boundary, a boundary established by a municipality and approved by the County Commission that facilitates annexations of properties within the boundary into the relevant municipality.
WVDOH	West Virginia Division Of Highways, is the state office that designs, plans, constructs, maintains, and oversees state roads and highways.
WVDOT	West Virginia Department of Transportation, a state department which is comprised of several branches including the West Virginia Division Of Highways, and is the authority for statewide transportation, related operation, and maintenance.
Zoning	The process of classifying land into areas (zoning districts) and the prescribing of permitted, conditional, and prohibited types of uses and densities on real property within those zoning districts.
Zoning District	An area on the County's adopted zoning map delineating the types of land uses and densities permitted and prohibited.
Zoning Map	A map that geographically illustrates all zoning district boundaries within the unincorporated areas of the County and is adopted as part of the zoning ordinance.

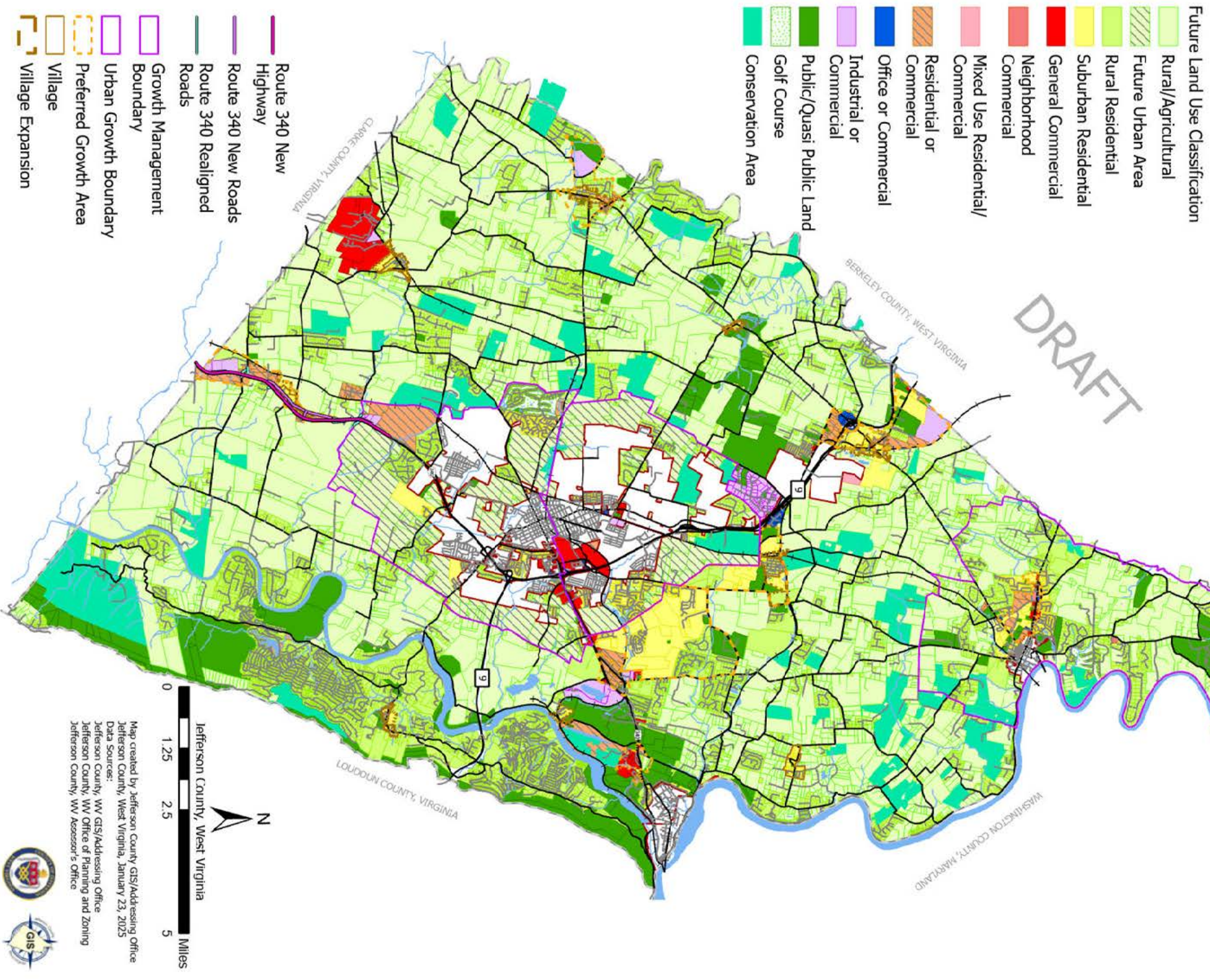
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Maps

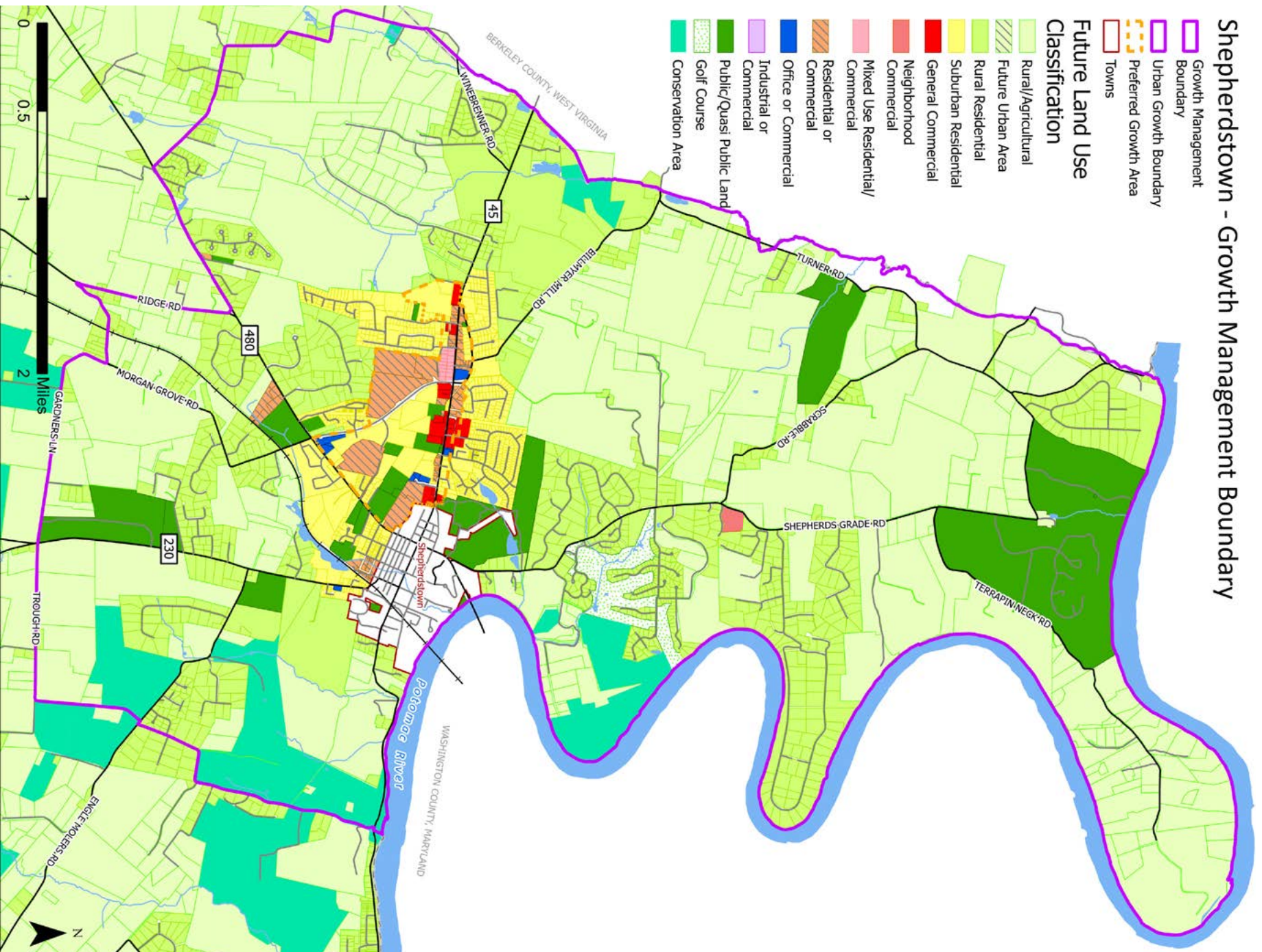
Maps in the appendix

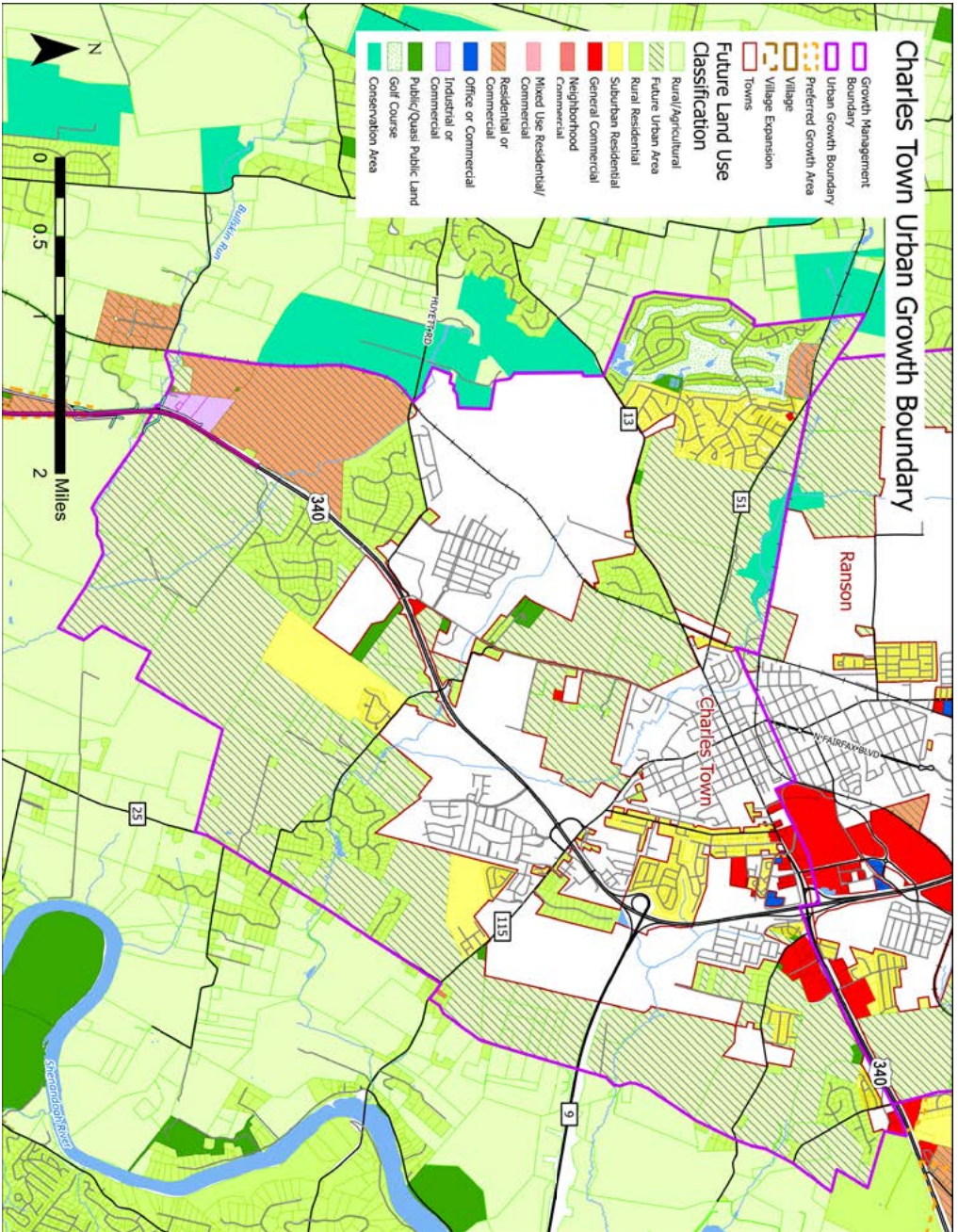
Future Land Use Map - Jefferson County, West Virginia

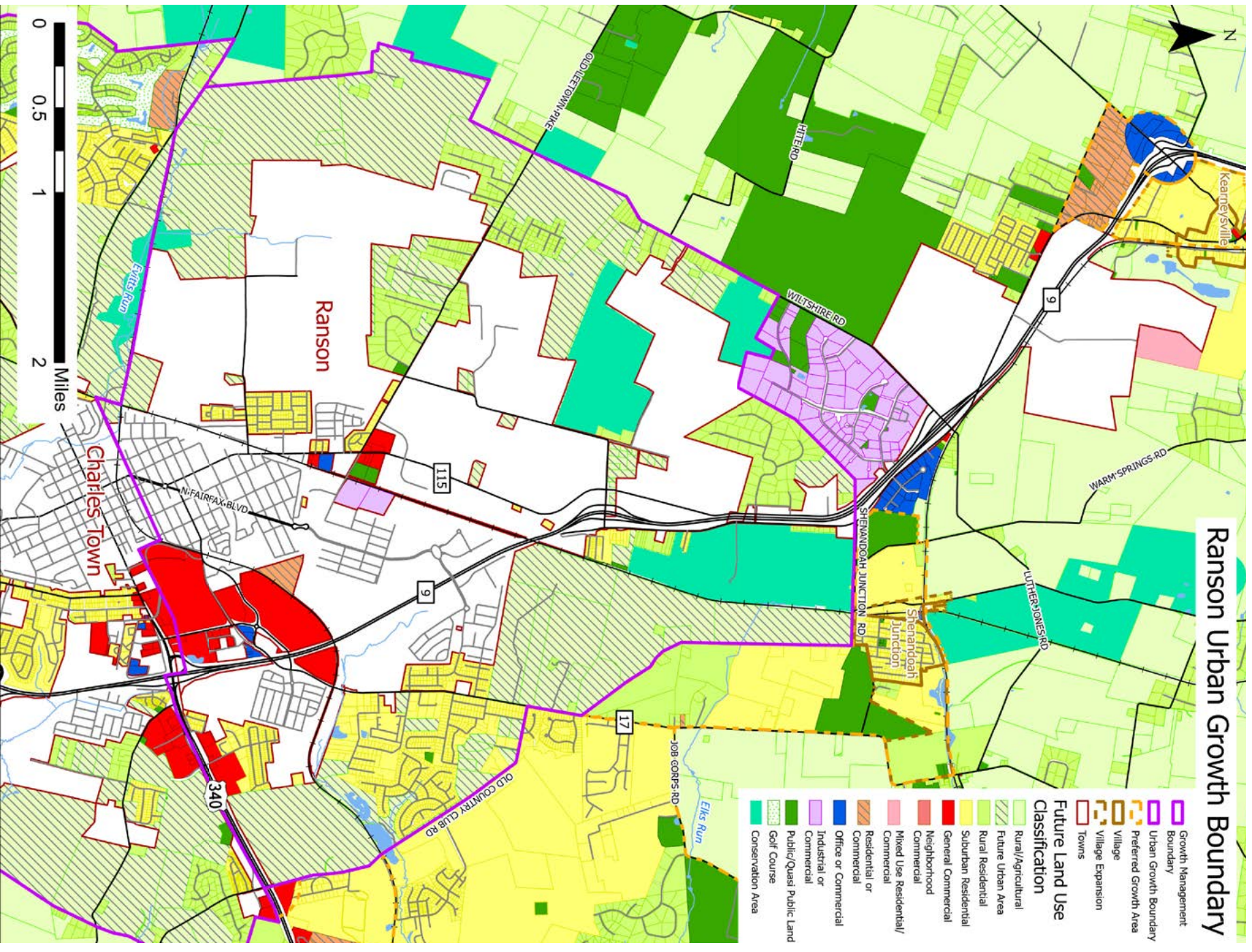
2045 Comprehensive Plan

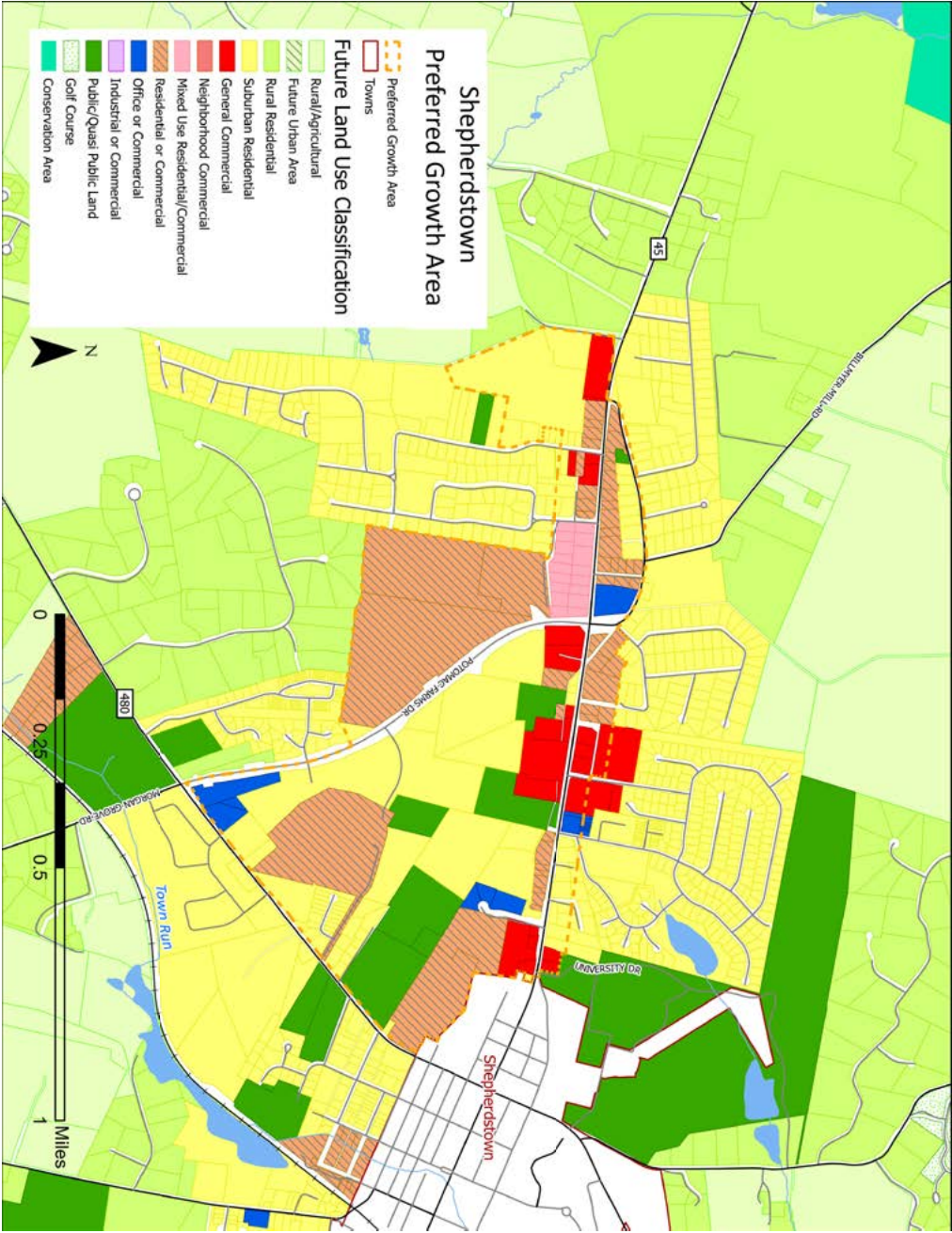


Shepherdstown - Growth Management Boundary

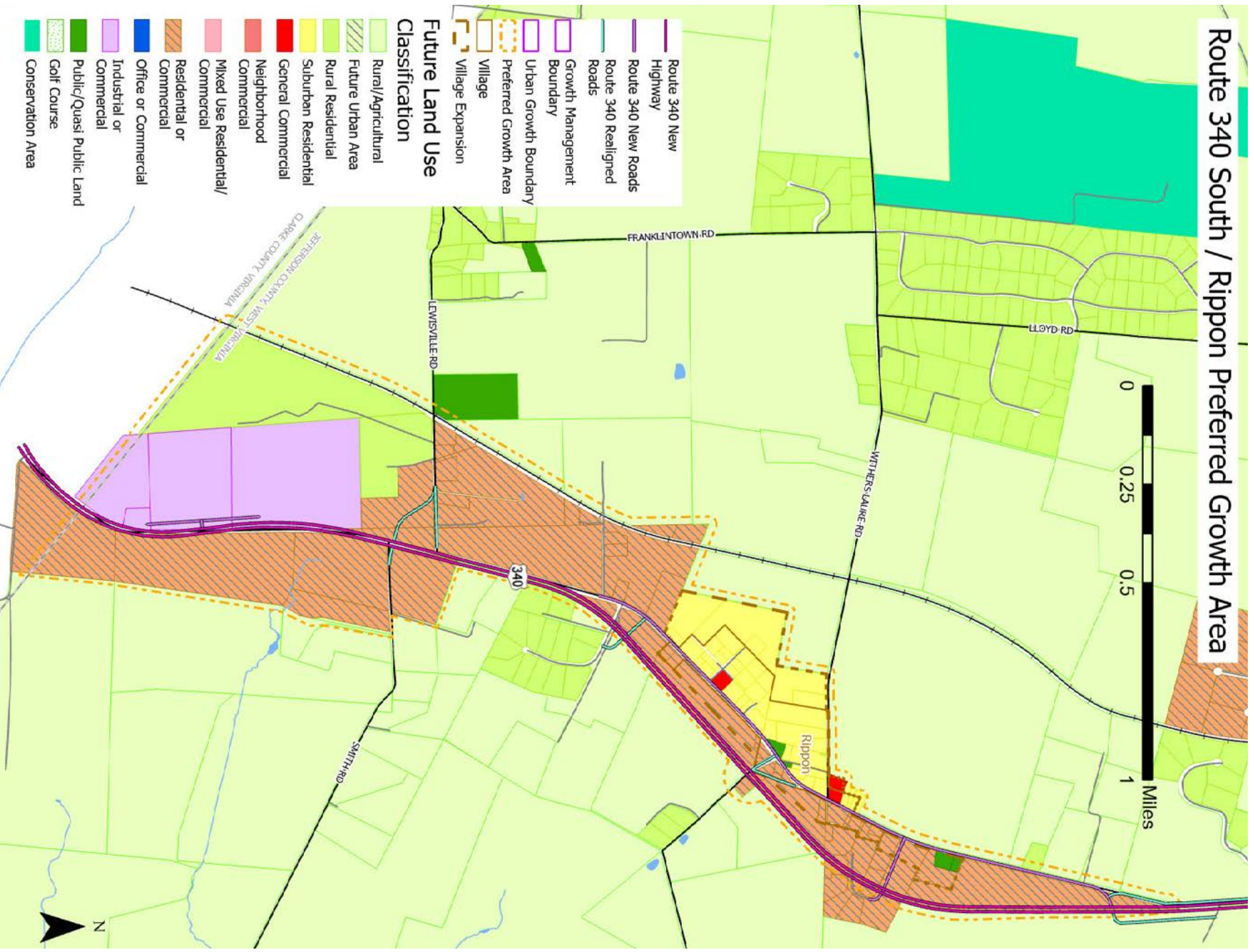




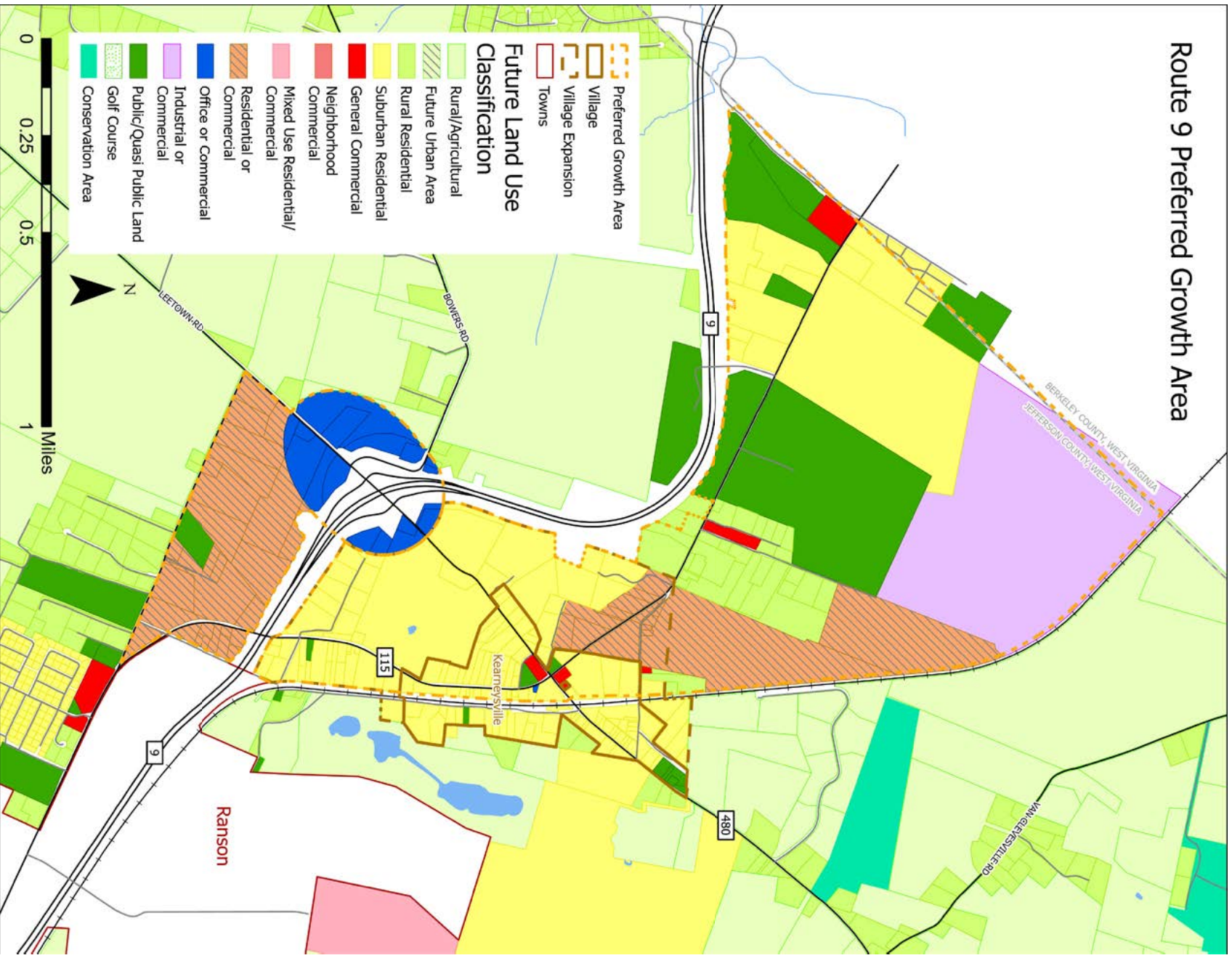




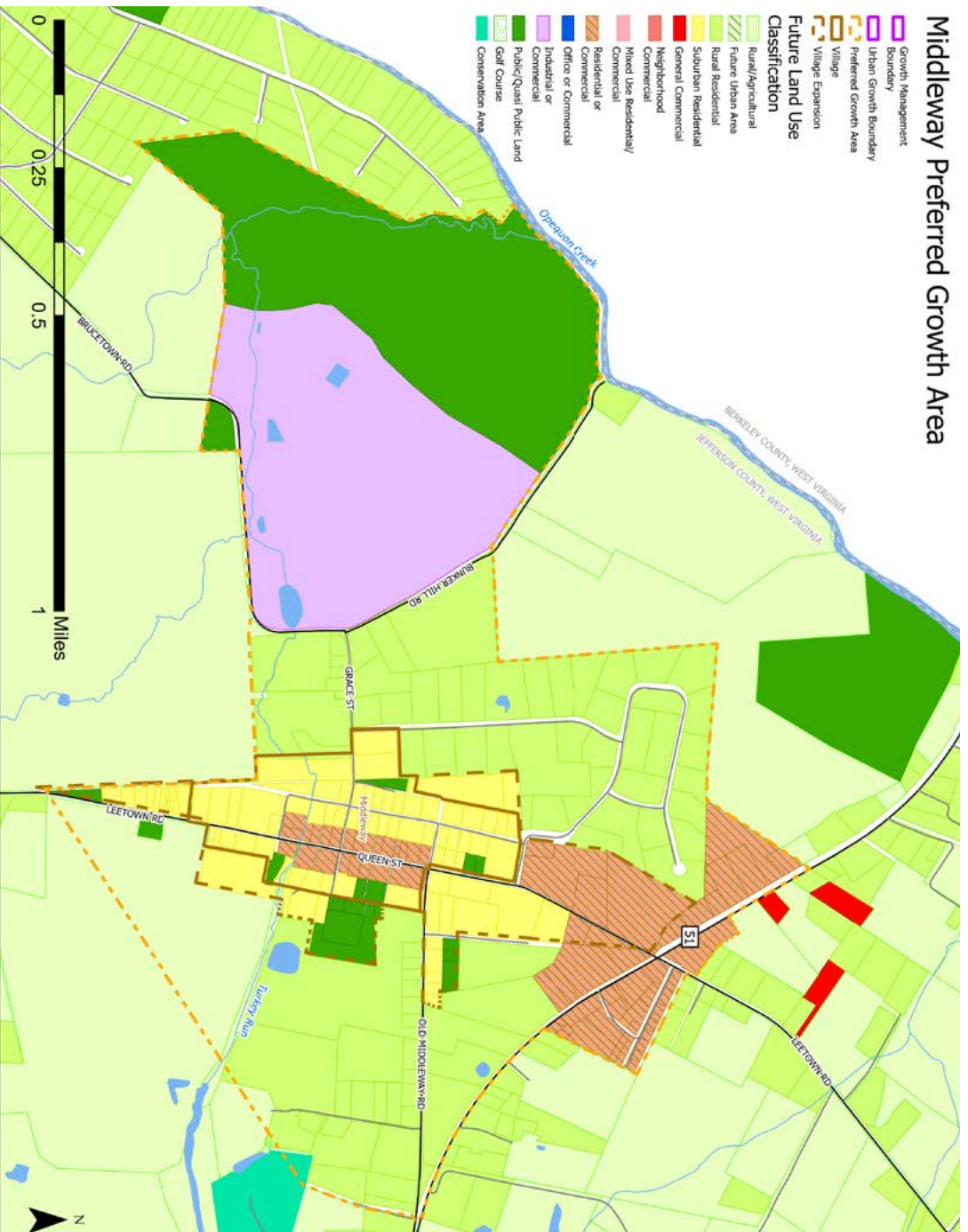
Route 340 South / Rippon Preferred Growth Area

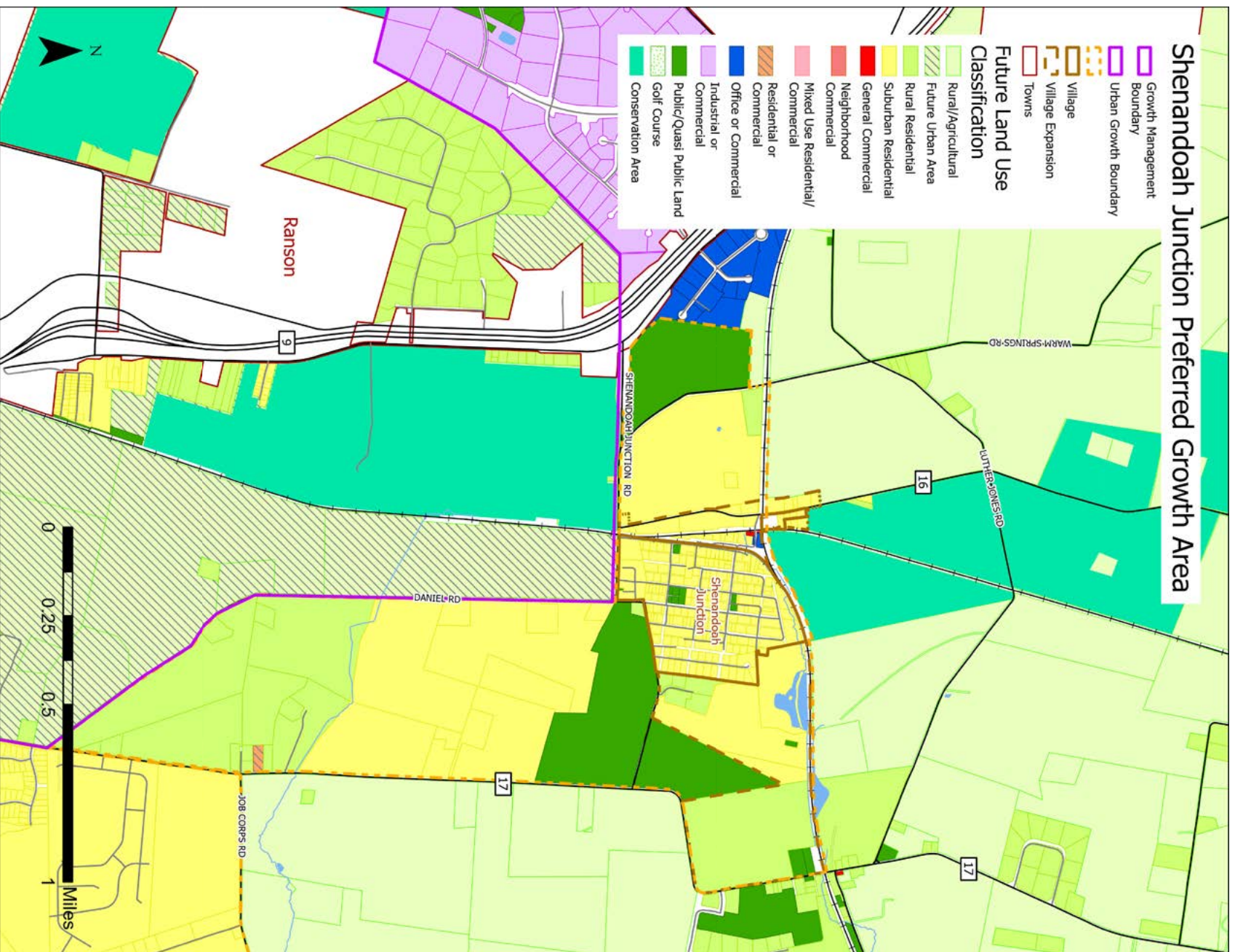


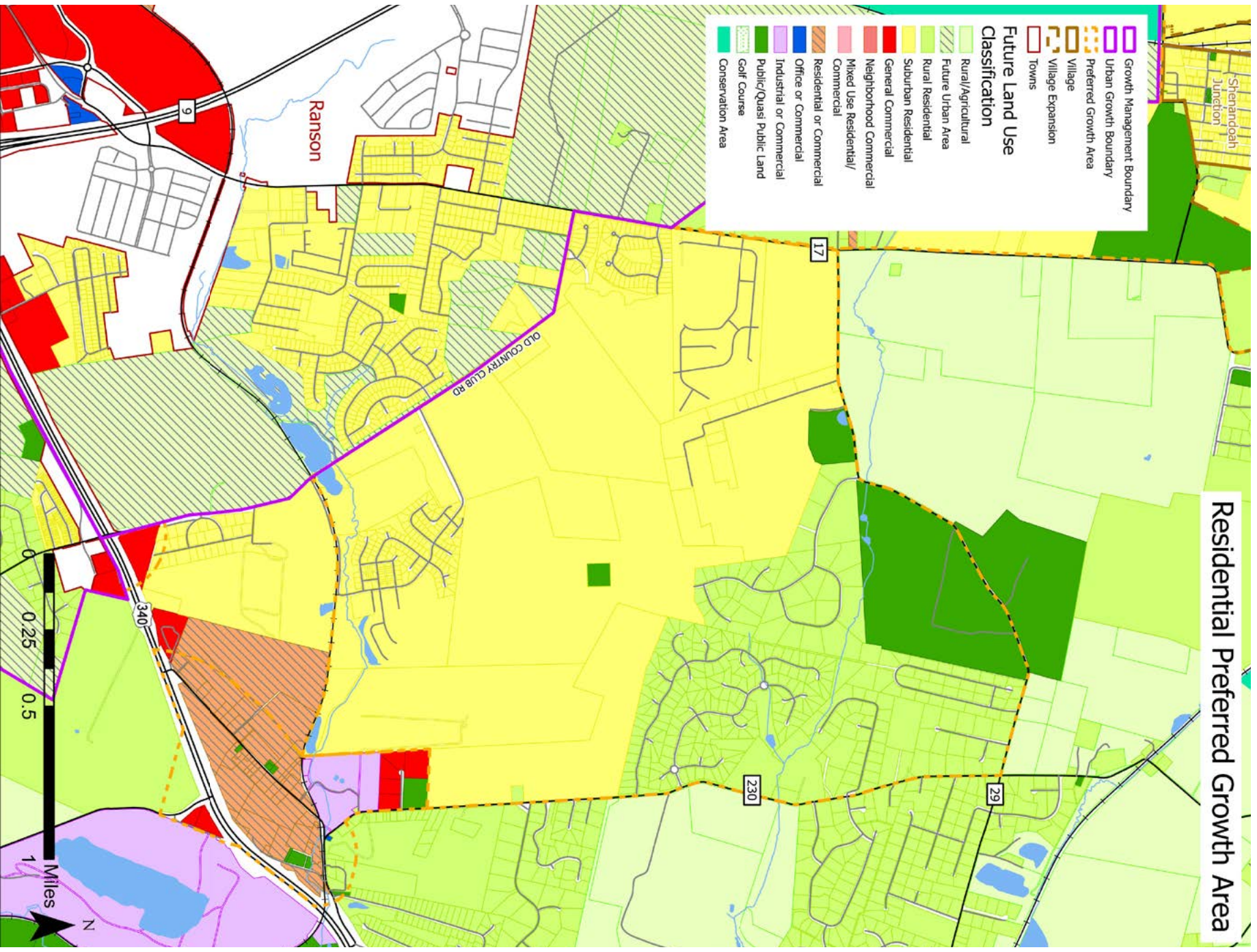
Route 9 Preferred Growth Area



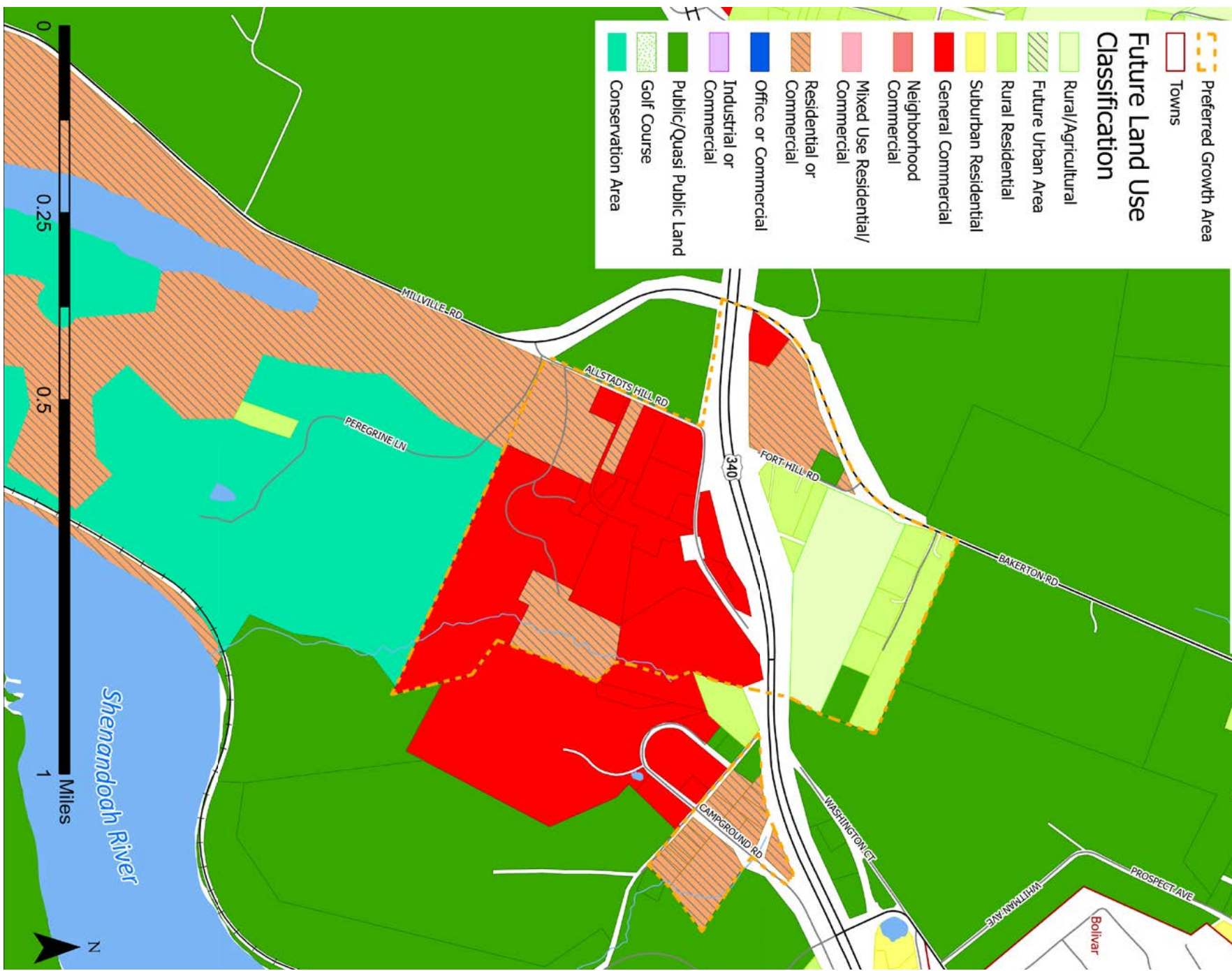
Middleway Preferred Growth Area



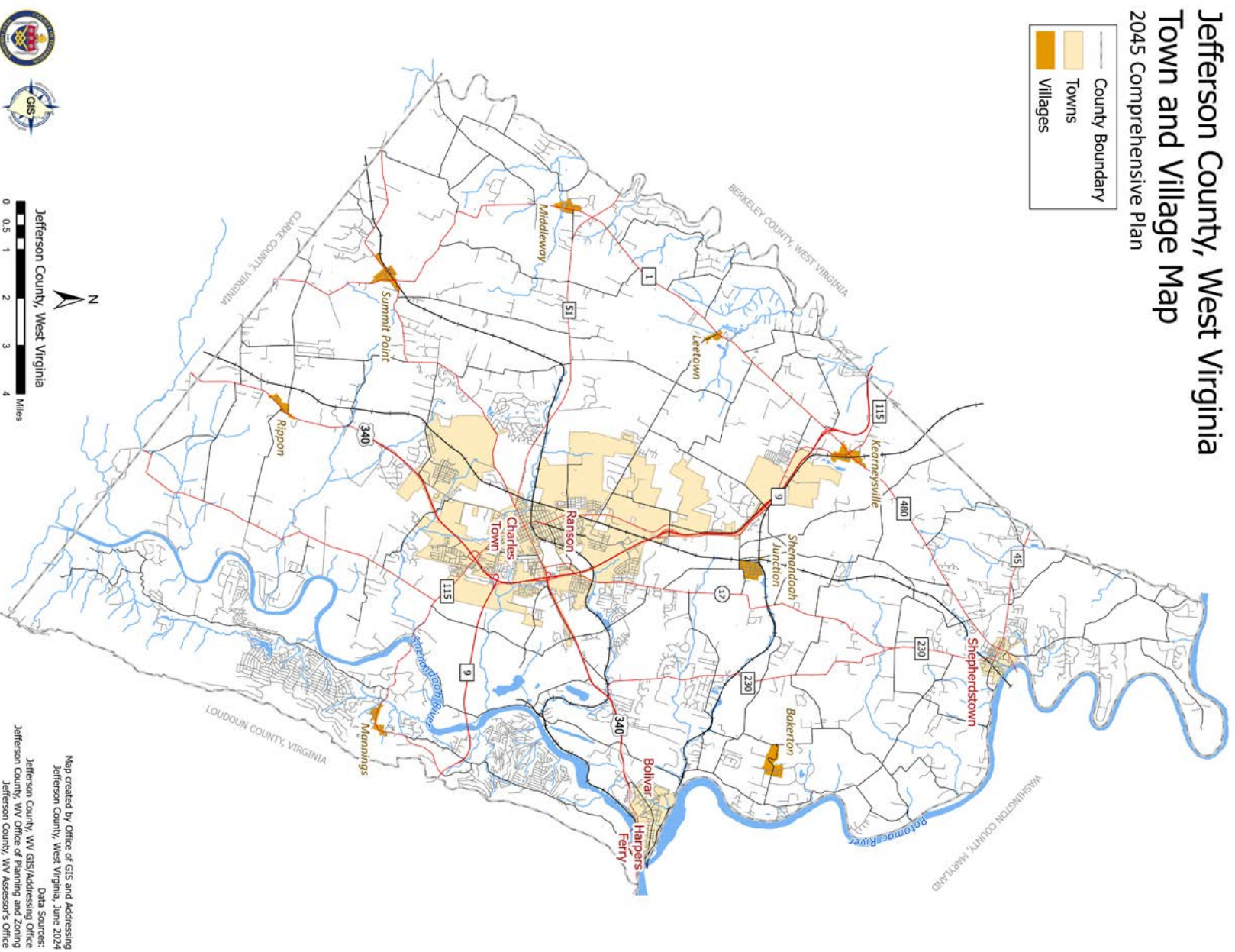




Harpers Ferry Route 340 Preferred Growth Area



Jefferson County, West Virginia Town and Village Map 2045 Comprehensive Plan



Jefferson County, West Virginia

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Jefferson County, West Virginia Major and Minor Subdivisions 2045 Comprehensive Plan

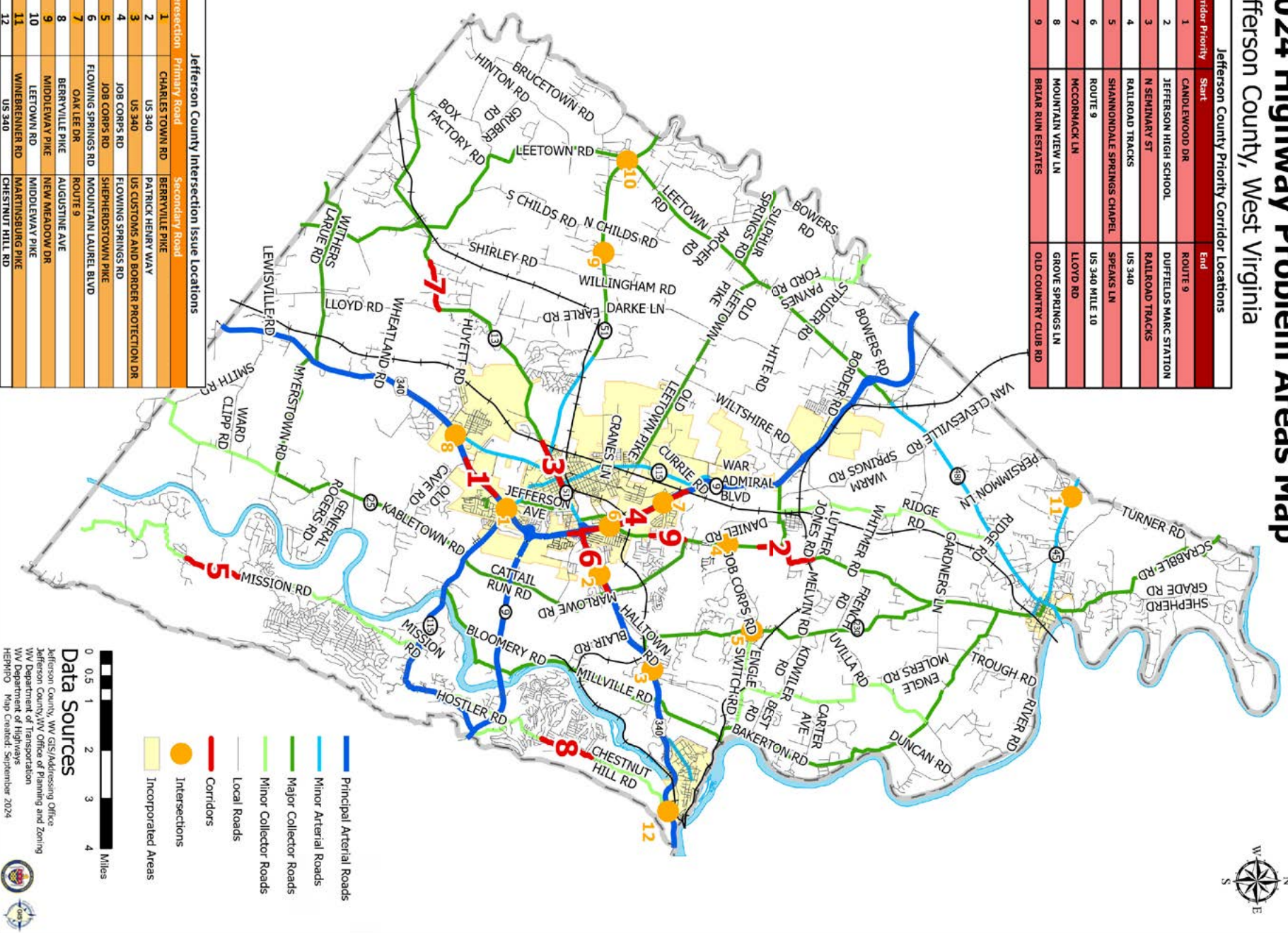


2024 Highway Problem Areas Map

Jefferson County, West Virginia

Jefferson County Priority Corridor Locations		
Corridor Priority	Start	End
1	CANDLEWOOD DR	ROUTE 9
2	JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL	DUFFELDS MARC STATION
3	N SEMINARY ST	RAILROAD TRACKS
4	RAILROAD TRACKS	US 340
5	SHANNONDALE SPRINGS CHAPEL	SPEARS LN
6	ROUTE 9	US 340 MILE 10
7	MCCORMACK LN	LLOYD RD
8	MOUNTAIN VIEW LN	GROVE SPRINGS LN
9	BRIAR RUN ESTATES	OLD COUNTRY CLUB RD

Jefferson County Intersection Issue Locations		
Intersection	Primary Road	Secondary Road
1	CHARLES TOWN RD	BERRYVILLE PIKE
2	US 340	PATRICK HENRY WAY
3	US 340	US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION DR
4	JOB CORPS RD	FLOWING SPRINGS RD
5	JOB CORPS RD	SHEPHERDSTOWN PIKE
6	FLOWING SPRINGS RD	MOUNTAIN LAUREL BLVD
7	OAK LEE DR	ROUTE 9
8	BERRYVILLE PIKE	AUGUSTINE AVE
9	MIDDLEWAY PIKE	NEW MEADOW DR
10	LEETOWN RD	MIDDLEWAY PIKE
11	WINERENNER RD	MARTINSBURG PIKE
12	US 340	CHESTNUT HILL RD

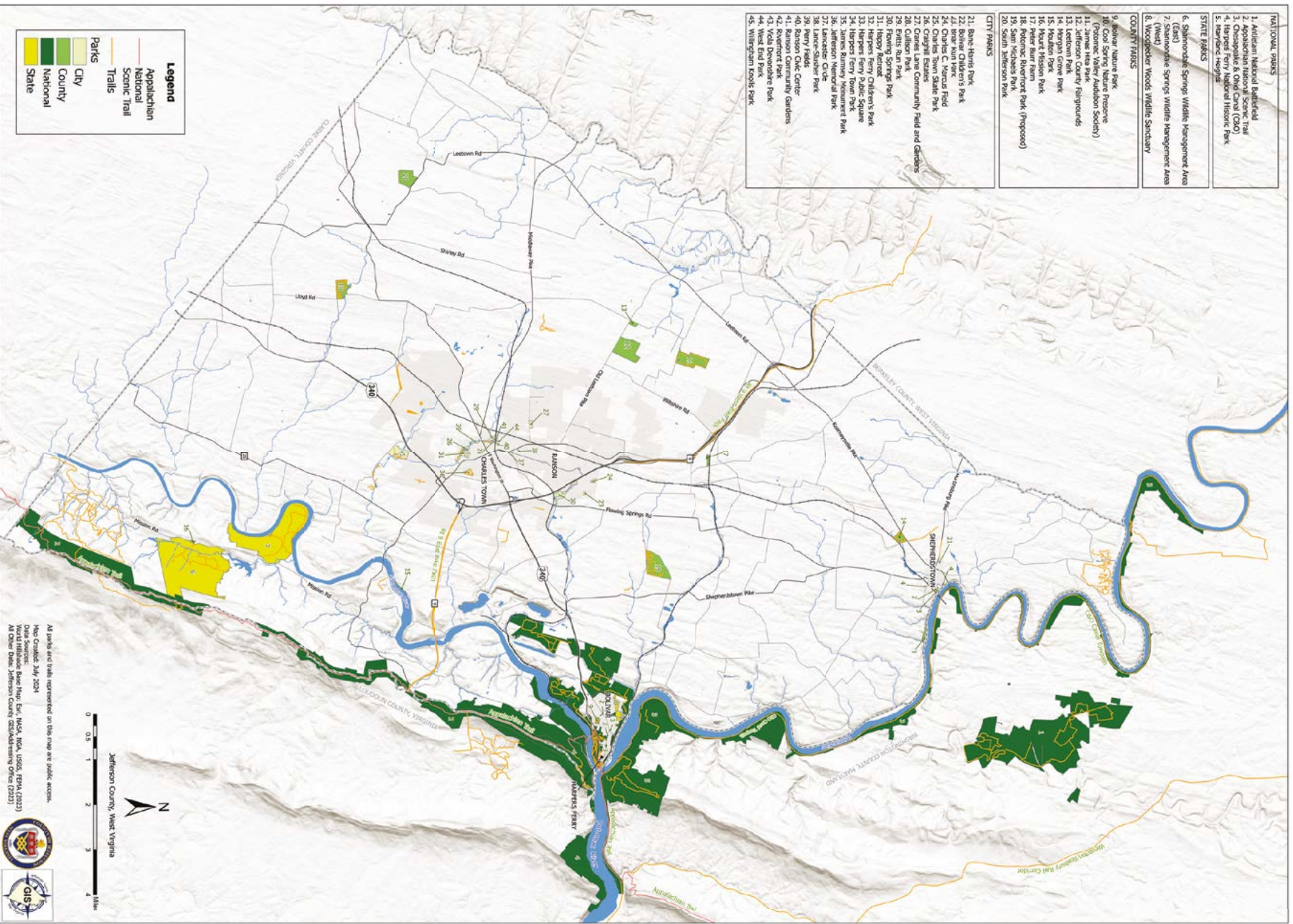


Jefferson County, West Virginia Hydrologic Map 2024

2045 Comprehensive Plan



Parks & Trails of Jefferson County, WV and Surrounding Areas



Regional Transportation Area Map

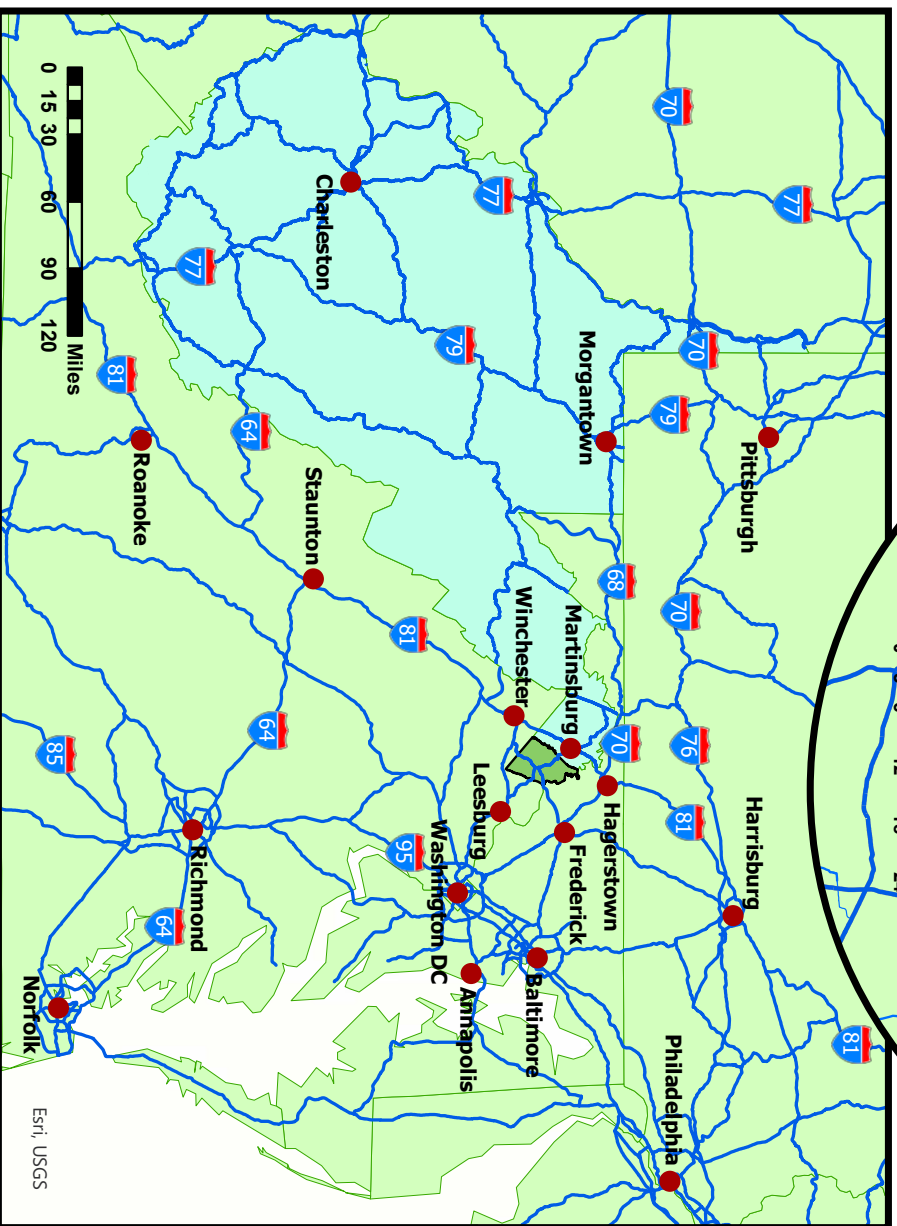
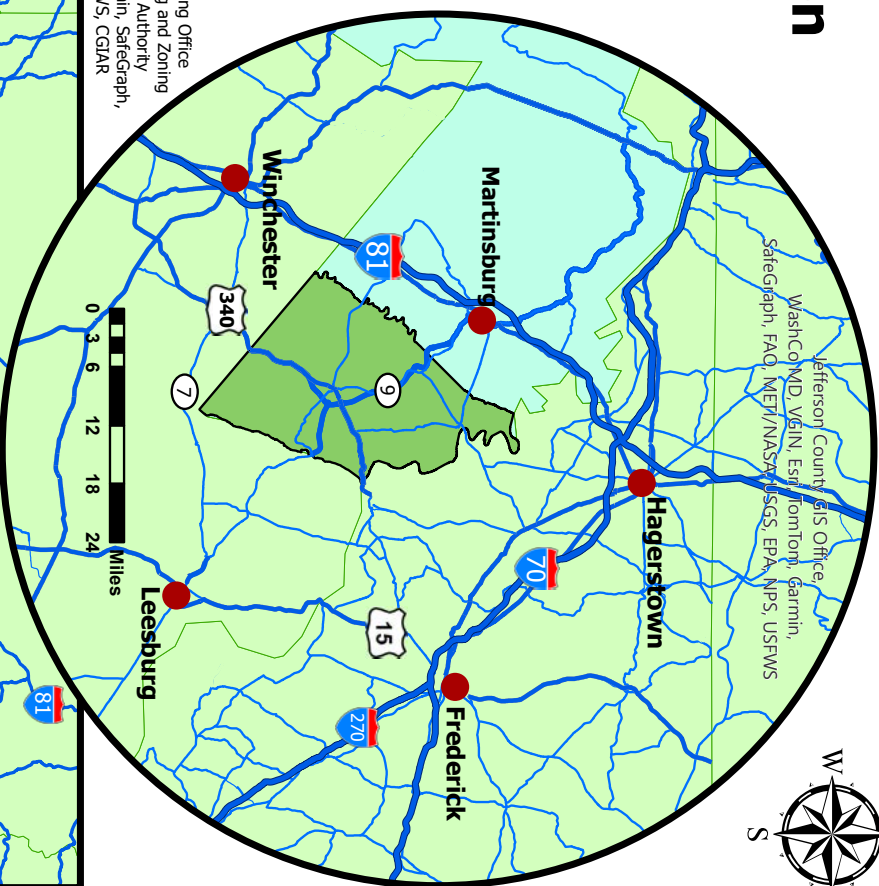
2024

Jefferson County,
WV

- Regional Cities
 - Jefferson County, WV
 - West Virginia
 - DC, DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, VA
- Roadways
- Interstate
 - Highway
 - Route

Data Sources

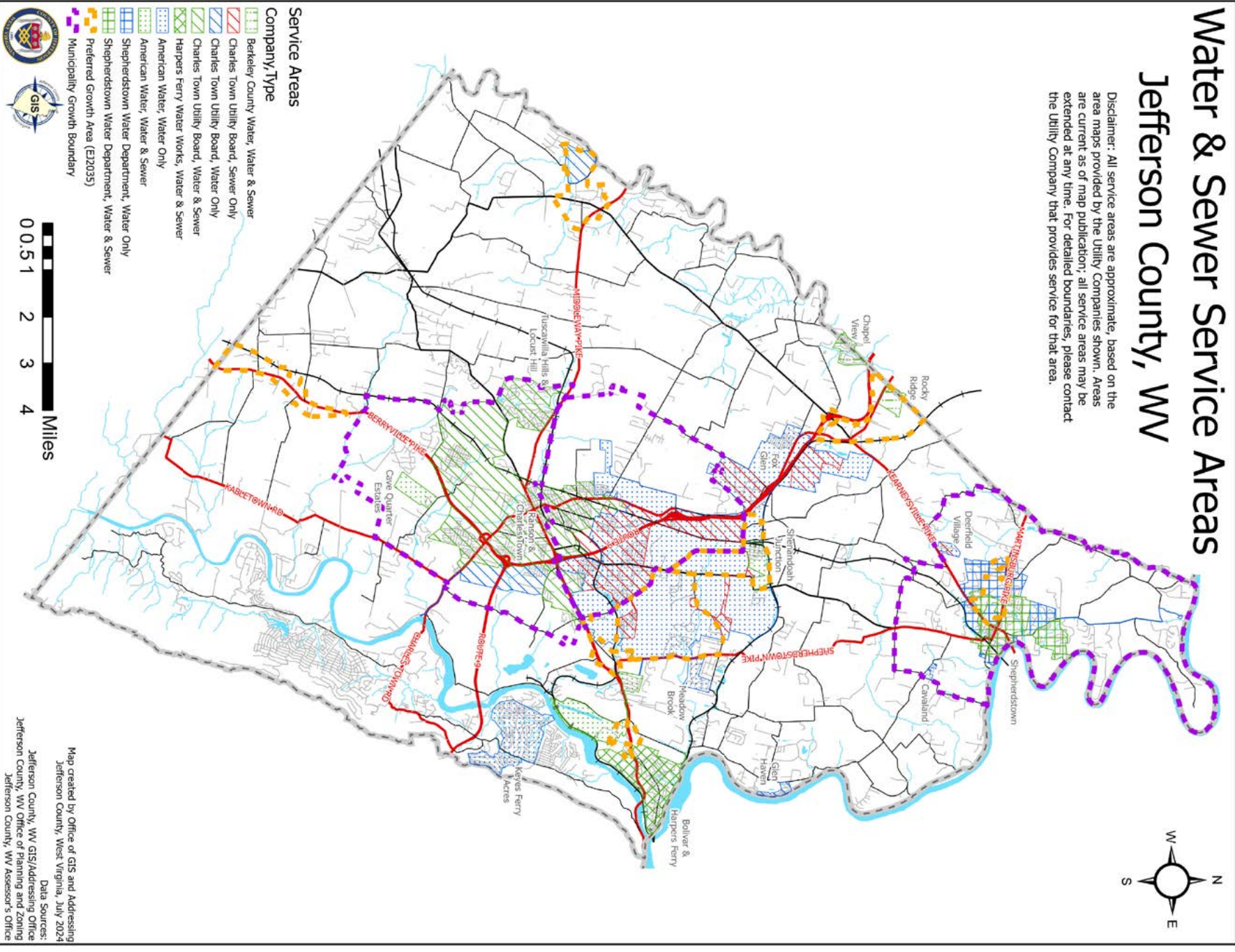
Jefferson County, WV GIS/Addressing Office
 Jefferson County, WV Office of Planning and Zoning
 Jefferson County, WV Development Authority
 ESRI, WashCoMD, VGIN, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph,
 FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, NPS, USFWS, CGAR



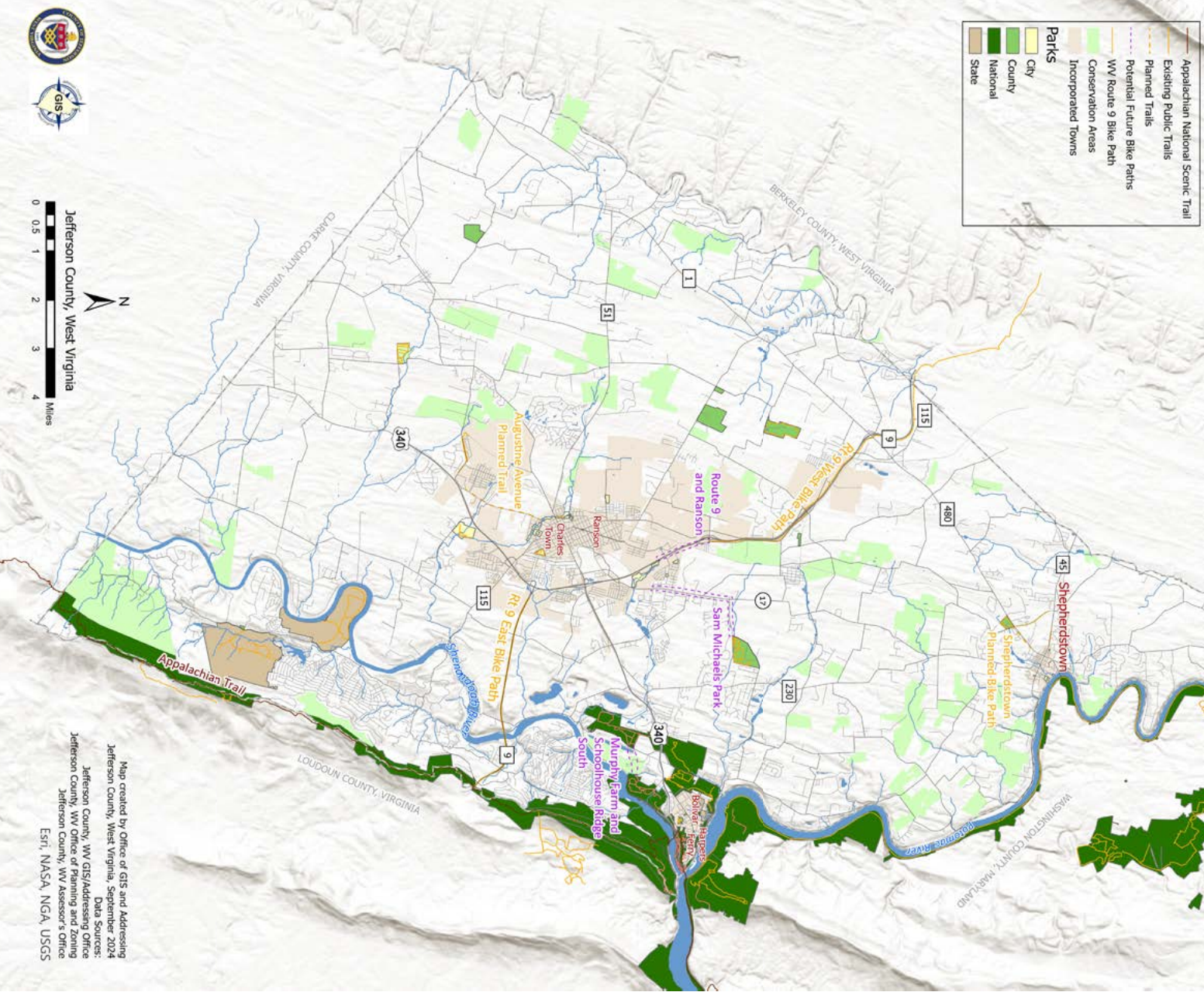
Water & Sewer Service Areas

Jefferson County, WV

Disclaimer: All service areas are approximate, based on the area maps provided by the Utility Companies shown. Areas are current as of map publication; all service areas may be extended at any time. For detailed boundaries, please contact the Utility Company that provides service for that area.



Parks & Trails of Jefferson County, WV and Surrounding Areas with Potential Future Bicycle Path Focus Areas and Planned Trails 2045 Comprehensive Plan

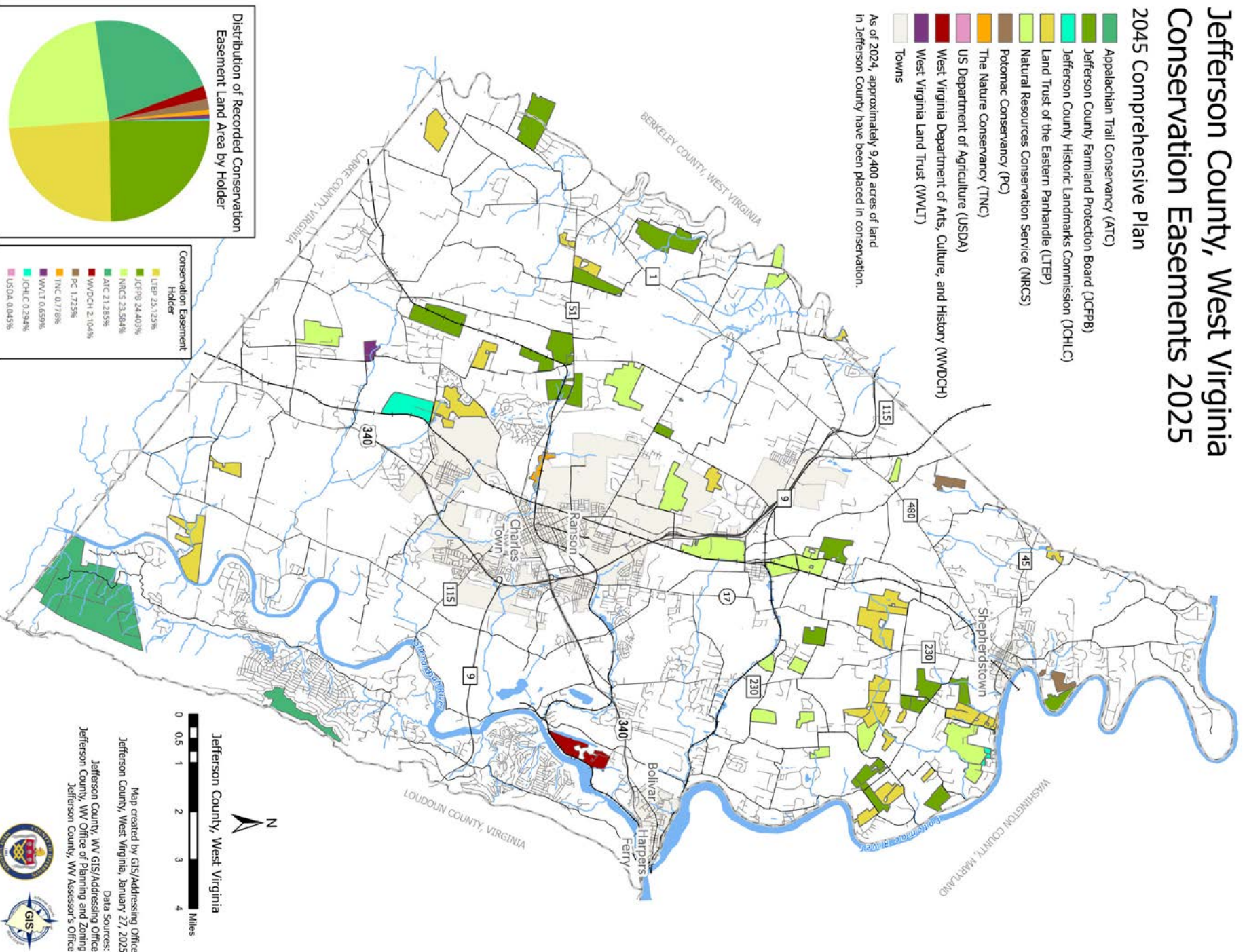


Jefferson County, West Virginia Conservation Easements 2025

2045 Comprehensive Plan

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC)
- Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board (JCFPB)
- Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission (JCHLC)
- Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle (LTERP)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Potomac Conservancy (PC)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History (WVDCH)
- West Virginia Land Trust (WVLT)
- Towns

As of 2024, approximately 9,400 acres of land in Jefferson County have been placed in conservation.

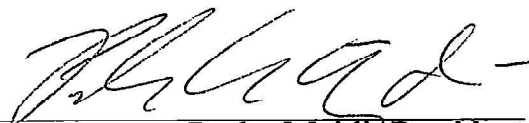


STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF JEFFERSON**The County Commission of Jefferson County in Charles Town, West Virginia**

In accordance with West Virginia State Code §8A-3-1, et seq.,

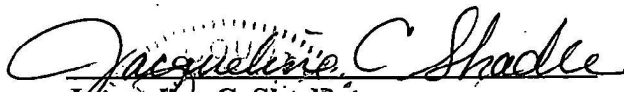
The County Commission of Jefferson County hereby certifies the papers hereto annexed to be true copies of the Jefferson County West Virginia, 2045 Comprehensive Plan as amended by act of the County Commission on January 14, 2025 and affirmed by the Planning Commission on February 25, 2025 to stand adopted by the County Commission as of **February 25, 2025**.

In attestation whereof, I hereunto set my hand this 6th day of March, 2025.



Pasha Majdi, President
County Commission of Jefferson County

ATTEST:



Jacqueline C. Shadle
CLERK OF JEFFERSON COUNTY



Jefferson County
Jacqueline C Shadle, Clerk
Instrument 202500002826
03/10/2025 @ 12:12:07 PM
NOTICE
Book 1342 @ Page 41
Pages Recorded 141