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Hampshire County
WEST VIRGINIA

COUNTRY LIVING BY CHOICE

Country Living by Choice

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Hampshire County Planning Commission
Assisted by West Virginia University Extension Service

June 2019

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David Parker
Brian Eglinger

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Michael Ketterman, Code and Compliance Official and Floodplain Manager
Amanda Barnes, Secretary

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

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

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy guide for Hampshire County officials. It can and should be used by the Planning Commission, the County Commission, and other county entities as they assess future development, including its location, its character, and its intensity. Plan recommendations are to be implemented over time through a variety of decision-making actions such as subdivision of land and the location and construction of public infrastructure improvements, among other things. The 2017 Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan is a revision of the 2009 plan for the county. It meets the legal requirement to update its plan every 10 years (WV Code §8A-3-11(a)). It also allows the county to focus its land use decisions in a coordinated and responsible manner to capitalize on the county's geographic location and its desirable physical features as it deals with the slow but still steady development that has occurred over the last decade.

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

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

Goals

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

Objectives

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

Strategies

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

PROCESS

The Great Recession changed the growth dynamics of the county. The slowing of new development allowed the county to revisit its regulations related to land use. The county approved substantial revisions to its subdivision and land development ordinance in July 2016 and to its building code in August 2016. This marked the third time the subdivision rules had been changed and the first time the building code had been amended since current version of each was adopted in in 2009.

This new comprehensive plan for Hampshire County represents the most recent planning effort for the county. Work began on this new version of the current of the comprehensive plan in the last half of 2016. The current planning process has had three main elements: seeking public input, updating background data, and determining a course of action.

The Hampshire County Planning Commission held a public, informative meeting and forum on November 15, 2016 at The Bottling Works, a community cultural center in Romney. It was advertised (as a public hearing) in the *Hampshire Review* (the weekly newspaper serving the county). Those in attendance were asked to review and comment on informational surveys distributed and to share their thoughts openly. The survey questions were also published in the *Hampshire Review* and distributed at meetings of various community, civic, and church groups. County officials also discussed the plan with other groups, such as the Hampshire County Landmarks Commission.

During that meeting as well as at different times during the process, discussions took place regarding the theme of the plan. However, no decision was made to change the theme of the plan. Thus, it remains “Rural Living by Choice.”

The updating of the descriptive and comparative data for Hampshire County occurred at different times. Work related to the demographic and economic data primarily occurred in November 2016.

Meanwhile, revisions to specialized datasets and maps within the plan document happened between August 2017 and October 2017. This involved reviewing Census estimates, federal data, state statistics, local information, and other data sources. This information was then compiled and placed in new tables and maps throughout the plan document.

Finally, the ideas generated and the changes in the circumstances were compared with the existing situation and then melded into an updated plan document. Personnel changes within the Hampshire County Planning Office caused this process to take longer than originally anticipated and resulted in final plan development moving from an internal process to cooperative one with the Planning Commission working with the WVU Extension Service on the final plan document.

The development of this new plan represents the latest chapter in a nearly three decade history of planning activity in Hampshire County. The first broad planning effort in the county occurred in 1990 with the preparation of a community development plan.

Despite this early success, it would take over a decade for the county to develop a comprehensive plan. In 1995, an attempt at drafting a comprehensive plan was made, but was not completed. Then in 2000, the county established a Comprehensive Plan Committee.

By this time, development-related stress has affected Hampshire County's natural resources, and strained its ability to provide community services and public facilities. This was true from the late 1990 through the early years of the 21st century, prior to the Great Recession. While there were some benefits from new development, this had to be balanced with the increased demands placed for utilities, transportation, infrastructure, and services as well as the additional impacts such as increased traffic congestion and flooding caused by run-off and erosion.

Faced with the prospect of continued development and the need to conserve, better utilize, and increase resources, while at the same time promoting economic prosperity, the Hampshire County Commission appointed a Comprehensive Plan Blue Ribbon Panel in 2002 to develop a Comprehensive Plan to help guide county growth for the next 20 years.

In an effort to complete the Plan, the County Commission contracted the professional planning services of Benatec Associates. Working with the Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan Blue Ribbon Panel, Benatec facilitated a series of meetings and interviews, focusing on the development of a long-term community vision, goals, and objectives.

The Planning Committee has been incorporated into the Plan and supplemented with more recently available Census data, as well as information from other relevant sources.

In 2007, the Hampshire County Commission decided to undertake the responsibility of updating the Comprehensive Plan with the cooperation of the Hampshire County Planning Commission and the West Virginia University Extension Service. The goal was to address the county's escalating growth and the completion of numerous objectives in the then current plan. As a result, it used the information collected during the previous planning process as a base and incorporated newer Census and supplemental data.

The planning process included community meetings in Romney and Capon Bridge to obtain viewpoints from the entire county to ensure that the great diversity of the county was taken into account. At these meetings, county residents made recommendations to help shape the county's future. Other governmental entities were also contacted for information and recommendations that would assist in the update of the plan.

To finalize the plan, community stakeholders gathered in early 2009 for a day-long summit to review the draft document. They included representatives from civic groups, government, utility companies, banks, businesses, fire and police departments, education, healthcare, and economic development. The discussion was facilitated by planning and policy experts. The tagline "Country Living by Choice" focused discussion and became the plan theme.

The Hampshire County Planning Commission approved the plan in August 2009. It was adopted by the Hampshire County Commission in October 2009. It is that 2009 plan that this effort revised and replaced.



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CURRENT SITUATION

REGIONAL SETTING

Hampshire County is located in the Potomac Highlands of the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, between the western Maryland panhandle and northwestern tip of Virginia. It is part of the Winchester VA-WV Metropolitan Statistical Area. These locational characteristics play key roles in the socio-economic trends of Hampshire County.

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

PHYSICAL LAND CONDITIONS

Geology

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

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

There are many different types of soils in Hampshire County. The most common appear to be Weikert-Berks channery silt loams (14.5 percent of all soils in

¹ Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

² Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

Hampshire and Mineral counties), Weikert shale silt loam (8.3 percent), and Dekalb and Lehigh very stony sandy loams (7.6 percent).³

Floodplain Areas

Historically, flooding has been part of the South Branch of the Potomac River's nature resulting in flood-adapted habitats, floodplain forests, and scour bars. The map on the following page illustrates the boundaries of the 100-year floodplain areas in the county.

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

Flooding in the South Branch of the Potomac River occurs in cycles that fluctuate in frequency and magnitude. Many floods occur in spring after heavy rainfall lasting several days. The situation can be exacerbated by rapid snowmelt and frozen ground that prevents runoff from being absorbed. This combination of factors was responsible for the January 1996 flood event. Periodic inundation benefits the natural systems and agriculture in the river valleys. Learning the rivers' natural cycles can help river communities maintain the natural and cultural resources the rivers have to offer, maximize profits, and prevent loss of property and life.⁴

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

Current flood maps can be found on-line at the FEMA Flood Map Service Center.⁵

Existing Land Use

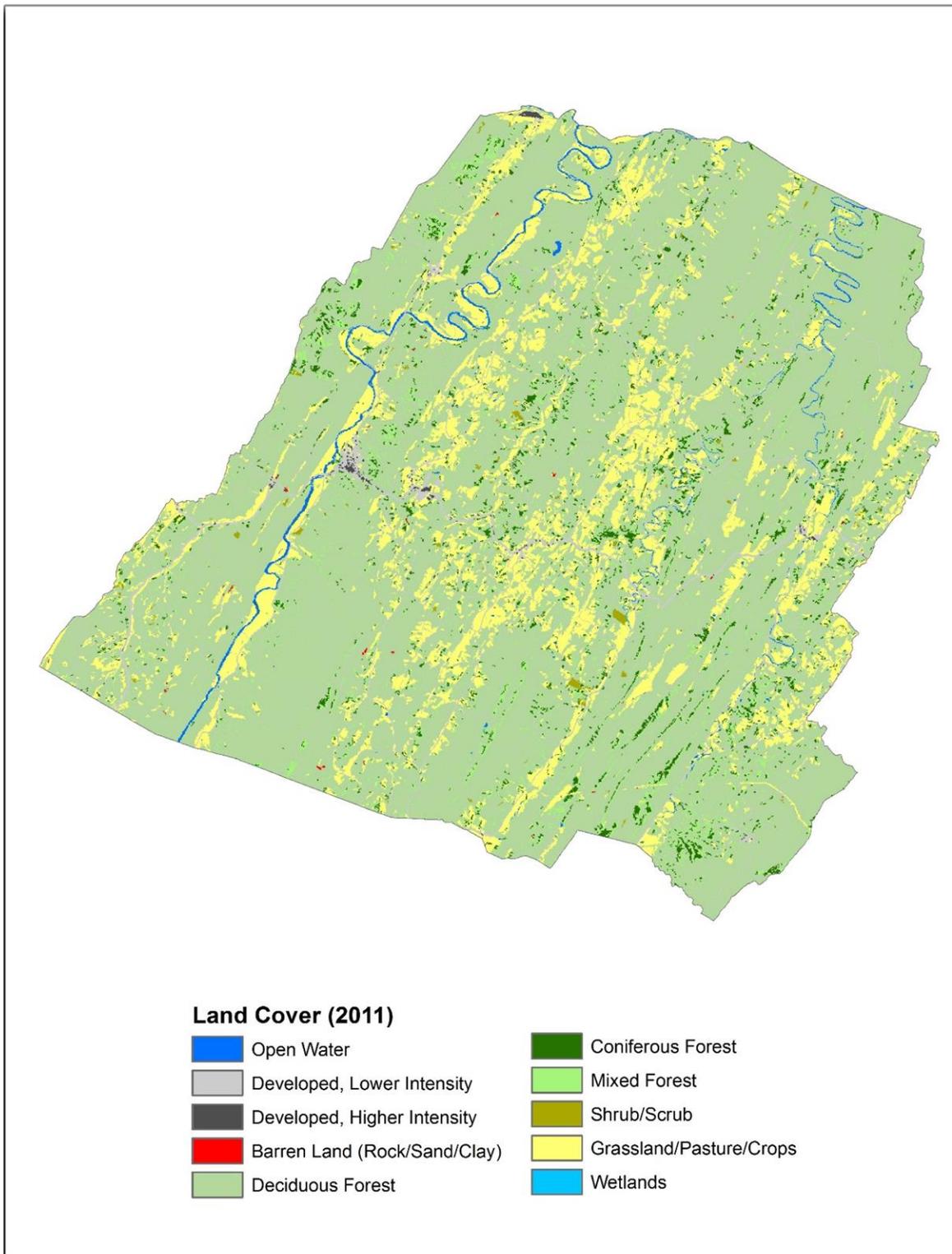
The Existing Land Use Map (Map 1) and the Subdivision Map (Map 2) illustrate the county's land development patterns. The vast majority of the county is forested land. Productive agricultural land is found adjacent to the major watercourses and on the rich valley floors. Urbanized areas are evident along the major roadways. Other developments are often large lot subdivisions where people built second or seasonal homes, generally prior to the Great Recession.

³ Hampshire and Mineral Counties Web Soil Survey. Tabular data 2016. (websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx)

⁴ Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, WV 2002-2022.

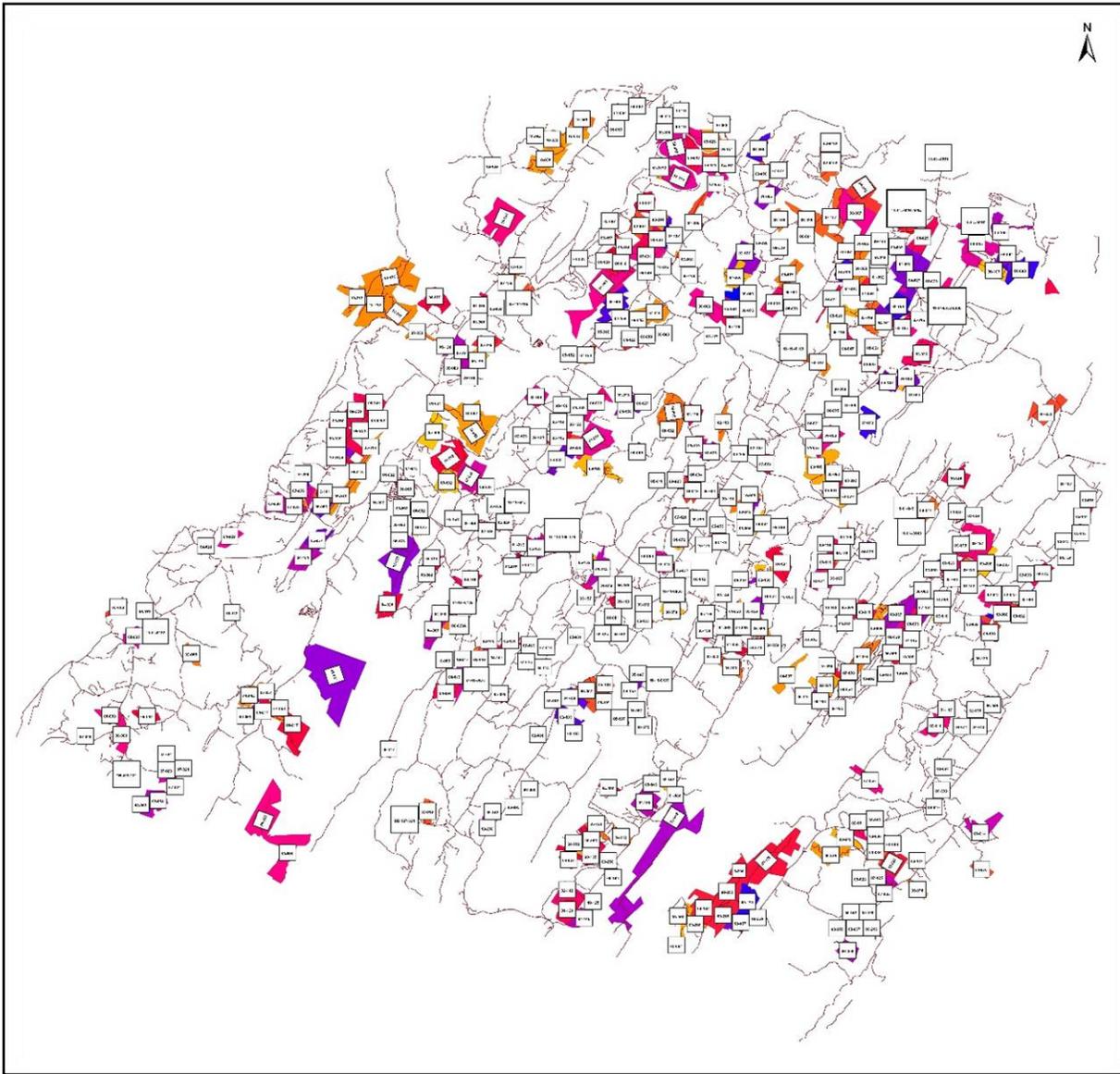
⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency website. 2017. (msc.fema.gov/portal/)

Map 1. Existing Land Use Map



Source: USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2011.

Map 2. Subdivision Map



Source: Hampshire County Planning Office, 2017.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population & Households

Hampshire County is greatly influenced by the counties that surround it, particularly those in the neighboring states of Maryland and Virginia. The county is part of the Winchester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). As a result, the data and trends for Hampshire County are compared to Frederick County, Virginia (to the east) and Allegany County, Maryland (to the north) as well as Mineral County (to the west) and Hardy County (to the south). (Data for Winchester has been included with Frederick County, even though they are treated as separate counties in Census Bureau and other federal statistics because of Virginia's system of independent cities.)

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

County population trends from 1950 to 2010 illustrate a steady but small increase in residents in Hampshire County throughout the period (Table 1 and Figure 1). This was similar to what was experienced its neighboring West Virginia counties of Hardy and Mineral. By comparison, Winchester and Frederick County experienced explosive growth between 1970 and 2010 when the population more than doubled. Conversely, during this period, Allegany County leveled off at below 75,000 residents, after falling from a peak of 89,556 in 1950.

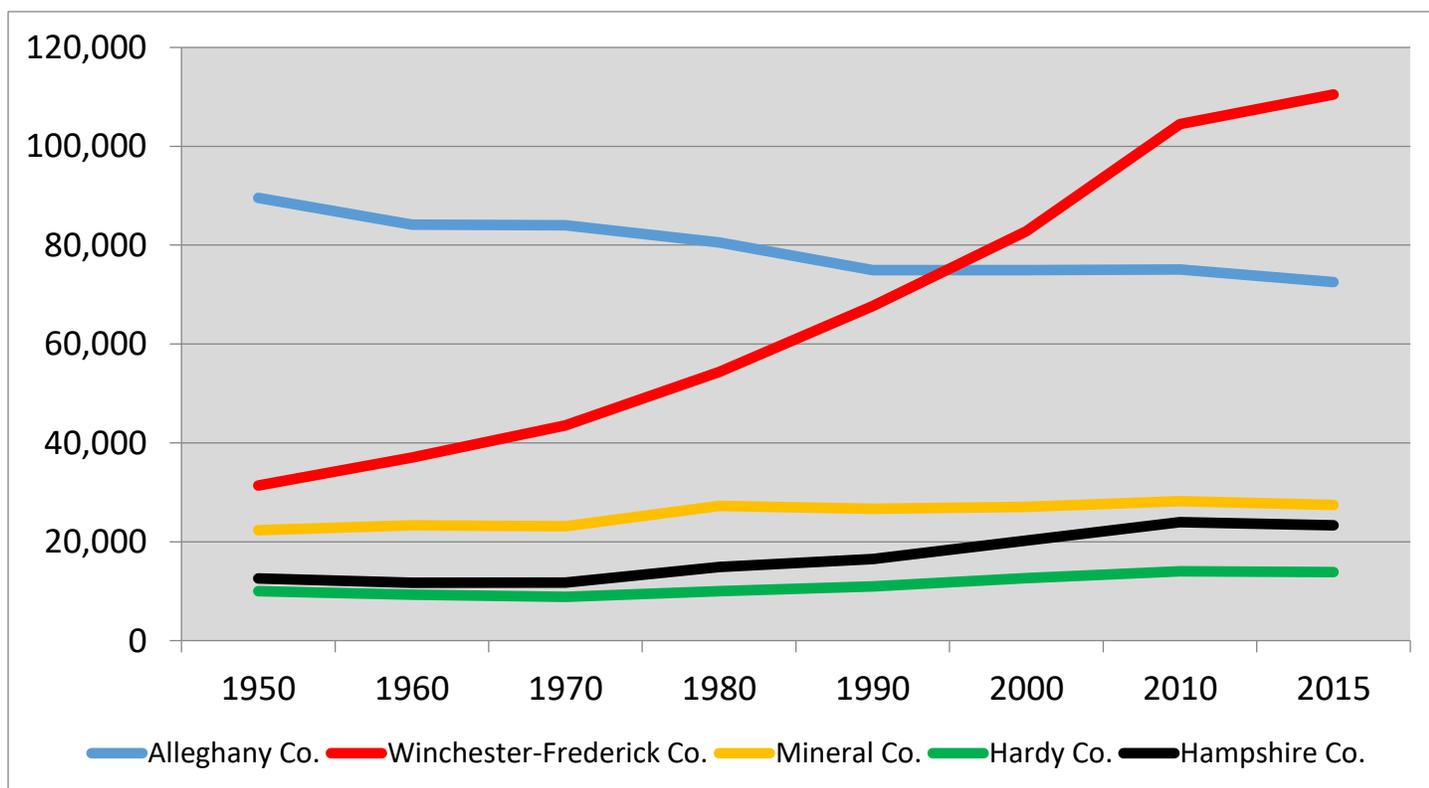
The most recent population estimates show population decreases for most areas examined since the last decennial census. Hampshire County is estimated to have had its population drop 2.5 percent between 2010 and 2015. The population drop was larger Allegany County (3.4 percent) and Mineral County (2.7 percent) while it was not as big in Hardy County (1.2 percent). Meanwhile, the growth in Winchester-Frederick County continued unabated with a nearly 5.7 percent jump in population since 2010.

Table 1. County Population Change, 1950-2015

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
Alleghany Co., MD	89,556	84,169	84,044	80,548	74,946	74,930	75,087	72,528
Winchester-Frederick Co., Va.	31,378	37,051	43,536	54,367	67,670	82,794	104,508	110,483
Mineral County	22,333	22,354	23,109	27,234	26,697	27,078	28,212	27,451
Hardy County	10,032	9,308	8,855	10,030	10,977	12,669	14,025	13,852
Hampshire County	12,577	11,705	11,710	14,867	16,498	20,203	23,964	23,353

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decadal Census and Population Estimates.

Figure 1. County Population Change, 1950-2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decadal Census and Population Estimates.

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

Household type and size illustrates the domestic situation of a community with higher average household size often indicating more children. Communities with

larger households often must consider more family-oriented planning and educational services, as well as school facilities. Larger households can demand larger houses and often include more children who require specific social and educational services.

Hampshire County falls in between Winchester-Frederick County and Allegany County in several key demographic characteristics: family households, married couples, school-age children, labor force availability, elderly citizens, and median age. Each of these characteristics impacts some aspect of the comprehensive planning process, from housing choice and school facilities to water and sewer service.

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

Table 2. Population & Households, 2014

	Hampshire County	Allegany County	Winchester-Frederick	Mineral County	Hardy County	West Virginia	United States
Total Population	23,674	73,976	107,408	27,912	13,955	1,853,881	308,745,538
Average HH Size	2.23	2.60	2.69	2.50	2.70	2.50	2.66
Total Households	10,628	28,490	39,876	11,148	5,169	742,359	116,211,092
% Family Households	43.2%	61.3%	69.7%	55.6%	63.8%	64.9%	66.2%
% Under Age 21	24.6%	23.8%	27.7%	24.5%	22.7%	24.8%	28.4%
% Age 25-44 Years	23.3%	24.2%	26.1%	22.7%	24.9%	24.4%	26.6%
% Age 65 & Older	17.8%	18.5%	14.0%	18.4%	18.2%	16.8%	13.0%
Median Age (Years)	43.8	41.5	38.7	42.7	44.1	41.6	37.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014.

Note: Median Age for Winchester-Frederick County represents a weighted average for Winchester (35.9 years) and Frederick County (39.6 years).

Population Projections

Population projections are made by West Virginia University's Bureau of Business and Economic Research⁶. The most recent projections were done in 2014 and published in *Population Trends in West Virginia Through 2030*. They illustrate plausible courses of future population change based on assumptions about future natural population change (births and deaths) as well as transitory

⁶ Christiadi, John Deskins, and Brian Lego. (2014). *Population Trends in West Virginia Through 2030*. WVU Research Corporation: Morgantown, W.Va.

population change (in-migration and out-migration). They also examine other factors such as age cohorts and expected employment opportunities.

The most recent projections were developed in 2014. They used the 2000 and 2010 Census data as a base and then looked at the factors that influence future population shifts. The projections called for a small population loss statewide over the two decades covered by the study. 15 years and population declines in 80 percent of the 55 counties.

For Hampshire County, the projections showed a slow decline over the period. The county is expected to see its population decline between 600 and 1,000 residents for each five year period. By 2030, the projected population of the county will be under 21,000. That is slightly above where it stood in 2000 but substantially above the county's population from 1950 to 1990.

The current population estimates for 2015 show that this decline appears to be occurring, though the estimates show a population loss (2.5 percent) this is not quite as steep as projected (2.7 percent). One factor that may alter the future population on the county is the development of second homes being built or purchased by people from nearby metropolitan areas (such as Washington, D.C.). If they decide to retire to Hampshire County, there could be a population increase that the current models may not have considered.

Table 3: County Population Projections

	Census 2000	Census 2010	Estimates 2015	Projected 2015	Projected 2020	Projected 2025	Projected 2030
Hampshire County	20,203	23,964	23,353	23,313	22,615	21,820	20,809

Sources: West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2014.
U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and Population Estimates

Age Structure

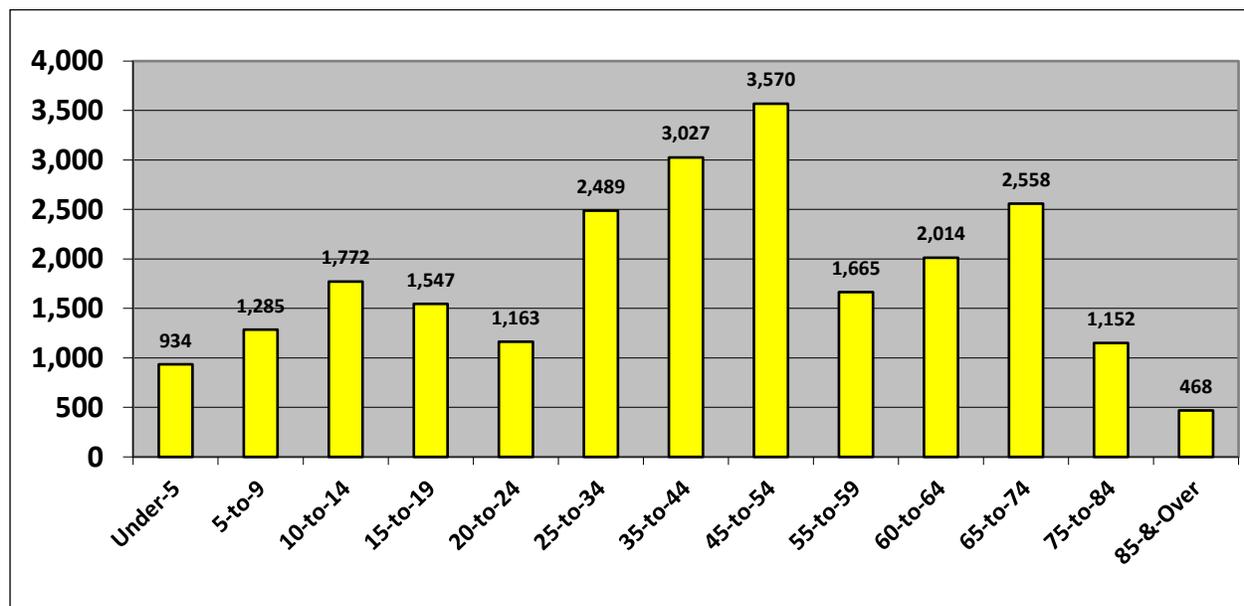
The distribution of age cohorts in Hampshire County is important for many planning applications as citizens of different ages have different needs. Education, social services, recreational facilities, and a host of other services and facilities must be considered for the various age groups. Also, commercial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

In 2014, according to the American Community Survey, more than 19 percent of county residents were between the ages of 5 and 19, inclusive (Figure 2). The smallest cohorts were those under age 5 (less than 4 percent) and in the 20-24 age group less than 5 percent). The former may indicate that demand for schools will be decreasing in the next few years. The latter seems to indicate that some individuals leave the area after high school for educational and/or employment opportunities.

Not surprisingly, more than 38 percent of the population of the county is between the ages of 25 and 54, inclusive. Residents in this age range generally are beginning families, buying homes, and actively participating in the labor force. However, while this sounds fairly large, this age grouping is proportionately a smaller part of the county population than it was several years ago (it was almost 42 percent of the population in 2007).

Finally, almost 18 percent of county residents were 65 years or older in 2014, representing more than one in every six residents. This is an increase in the same proportion of senior citizens that the county that were found in the 2000 Census (14.6 percent) and 2010 Census (16.3 percent). The share of older residents in the county population is expected to continue to grow as large cohorts of younger residents grow older.

Figure 2. Hampshire County Age Distribution, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014.

Housing

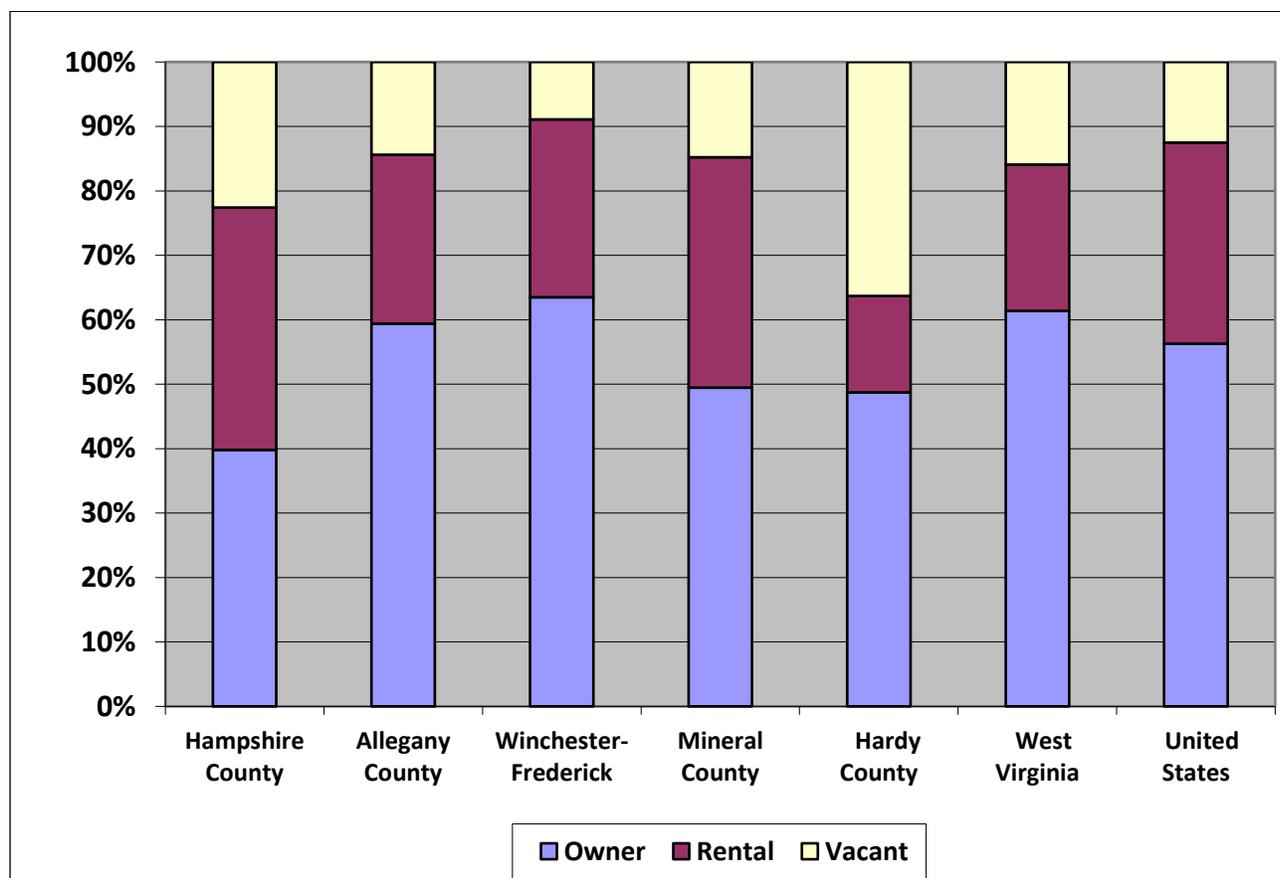
Housing occupancy is described in several ways by the Census Bureau. First, all housing units are classified as either occupied or vacant. In 2014, occupied housing units accounted for more than three-quarters (77.4 percent) of the total housing stock in Hampshire County (Figure 3). This represented a jump from several years ago (it was 68.5 percent in 2007).

All occupied housing units were classified as either renter-occupied or owner-occupied, with the latter providing the rate of homeownership. Barely half (51.5

percent) of the occupied units were owner-occupied in the county. This is far below the state average as nearly three-quarters of the occupied housing units are owner-occupied (73.0 percent). Likewise, only Hardy County had less than 60 percent of occupied housing units that were owner-occupied. This also represented a substantial drop from years ago when more than four-out-of-five were owner occupied (the county homeownership rate in 2007 was 81.6 percent).

This appears to have been the result of more housing units being classified as occupied in Hampshire County. In 2014, more than three-quarters of housing units were classified as occupied (77.4 percent). This is almost nine percentage points higher than what was found in 2007 (68.5 percent).

Figure 3. Housing Occupancy Status, 2014



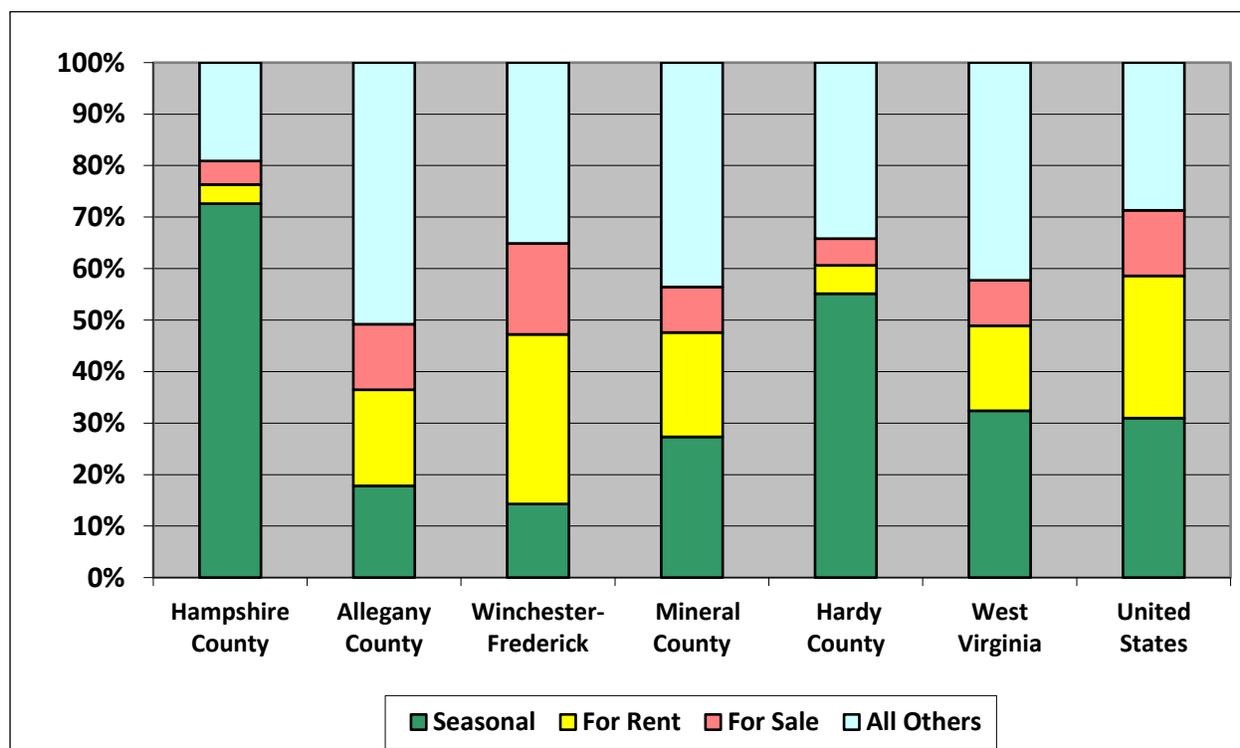
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014.

Also, the Census provides classifies all vacant housing units as: for rent; for sale; rented or sold but not occupied; for seasonal, recreational or occasional use; for migrant workers; and all others. The most recent information on this subject comes from the 2010 Census. The data shows the vast majority of the vacant housing units in Hampshire County (72.6 percent) are for “seasonal, recreational, and occasional use” (Figure 4). That was more than one out of every five housing units in the county (21.7 percent), regardless of occupancy status. It was also

twice the state average (32.4 percent) and only Hardy County had as much as half of its vacant housing units reserved for seasonal use (55.1 percent).

The high proportion of vacant units for seasonal and recreational purposes has been a recurring theme in Hampshire County. In 2000, nearly four-fifths of all vacancies were for seasonal units (77.8 percent). This had fallen about 9 percentage points by 2007 (69.7 percent), but had increased again to almost three-quarters of all vacant units by 2010. The county’s convenient location to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area combined with its scenic vistas, lower land costs, and lower taxes have made Hampshire County one of the most attractive destinations for second and vacation homes. The completion of Appalachian Corridor H (US Route 48) to the south of Hampshire County (through Hardy County) is expected to continue to increase the demand for land and second homes in the region.

Figure 4. Housing Vacancy Status, 2010

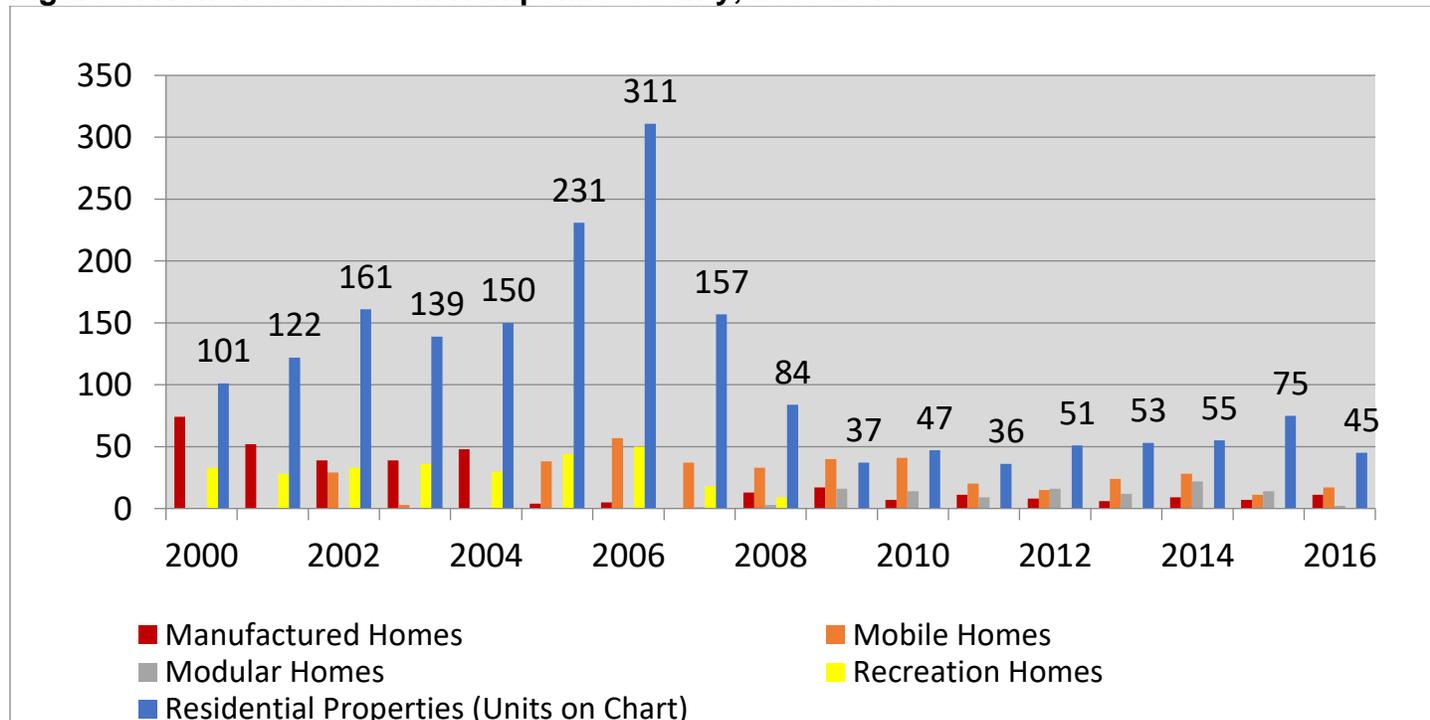


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.

New housing starts in Hampshire County have averaged just over 175 new housing units annually from 2000-2016., based on building permit data (Figure 5). However, this figure is misleading as the county saw a substantial drop in new construction after the Great Recession. Between 2000 and 2007, there were an average of about 259 new housing units annually. No year saw fewer than 200 new units. The building boom peaked in 2006 with 423 new units. From 2008 to

2016 has been a different story. There have been only an average of 102 new units each year. Four times in nine years, there have been fewer than 100 new housing units added in the county. The slow in housing growth has occurred in all types of structures, although it is difficult to make exact statements regarding this as housing categorizations changed during the time period. This slowing of housing growth may also be part of the reason that newer population projections now show a slight decline over the next two decades, rather than the slow growth that had been previously predicted.

Figure 5: New Residences in Hampshire County, 2000-2016



Source: Hampshire County Planning Office.

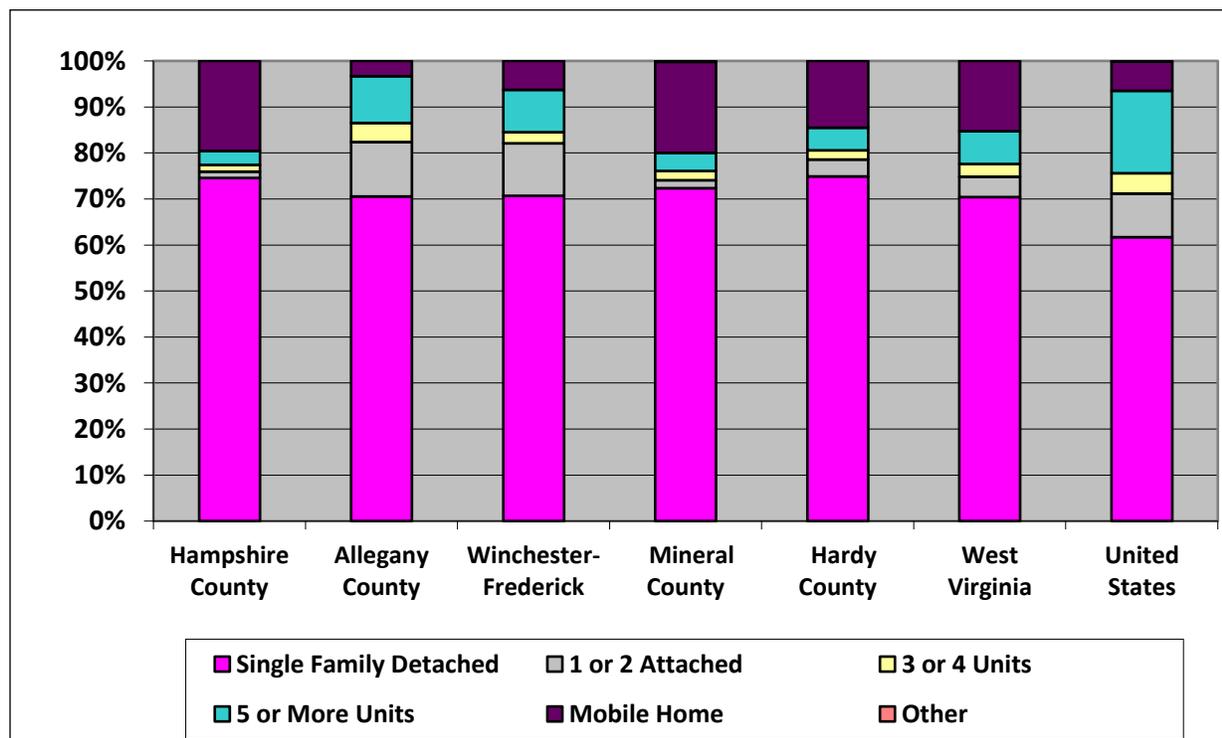
Housing Type

The types of housing found in Hampshire County has remained fairly constant the Housing type distribution remained almost virtually unchanged since the last decade and a half. Almost three-quarters of housing was classified as single-family (one-unit) detached homes, according to the 2014 American Community Survey (74.6 percent). This was a slightly lower proportion of all housing units being classified as single-family detached in the 2007 American Community Survey (76.6 percent); but it was higher than the proportion of single-family detached housing units found in the county by the 2000 Census (70.9 percent).

The second most common type of housing unit in the county was mobile homes. Nearly one-fifth of all housing units were mobile homes in 2014 (19.6 percent). This was the same in 2007 and slightly higher in 2000 (22.4 percent).

Both the proportion of single-family homes and mobile homes found in 2014 in Hampshire County were generally higher than what was found in neighboring counties as well as the state and national averages (Figure 6). The exceptions were that Mineral County had a slightly higher proportion of single-family detached homes and Hardy County had a slightly higher proportion of mobile homes.

Figure 6. Type of Housing Units, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014.

Education

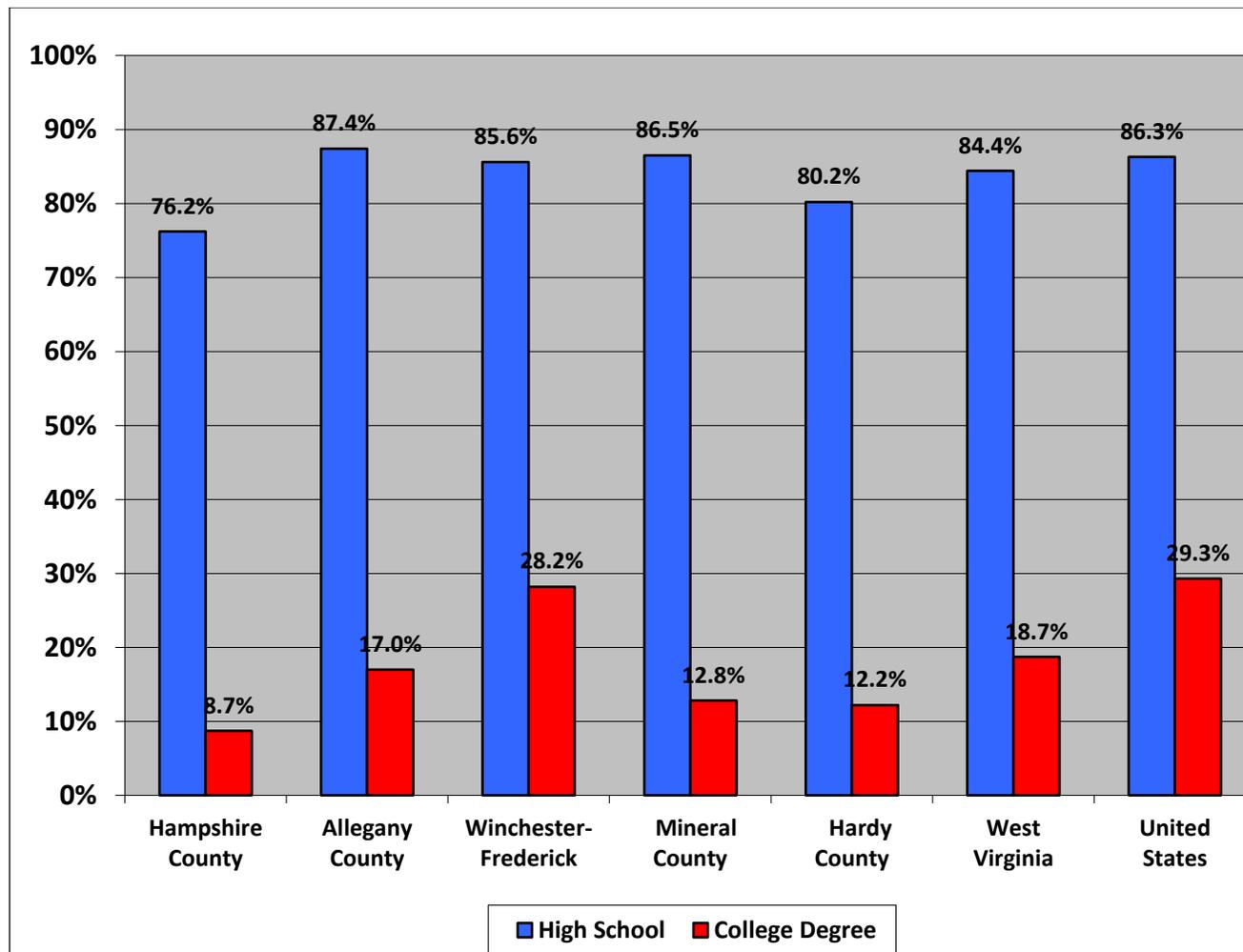
Education plays a critical role in the economic viability of a community. Business and industry analyze regional demographics when searching for new locations and plant expansions. They scrutinize the level of high school and college graduates, the quality of local schools and the availability of worker-readiness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

In 2014, according to the American Community Survey, Hampshire County had 76.2 percent of its adults (age 25 and over) with a high school diploma. This was slightly lower than the proportion of the adult population with a high school diploma in 2007 (77.0 percent), but higher than the proportion of high school graduates in 2000 (71.3 percent).

Likewise, only 8.7 percent of adults had with a bachelor’s (college) degree or higher in 2014. This figure has fallen by over 2½ percentage points over the last decade and a half (it was 10.0 percent in 2007 and 11.3 percent in 2000).

The educational attainment levels were also lower than what was found in the surrounding counties (Figure 7). In the neighboring counties, at least 80 percent of adults had high school diplomas and 10 percent of adults had college degrees.

Figure 7. Educational Attainment, 2014

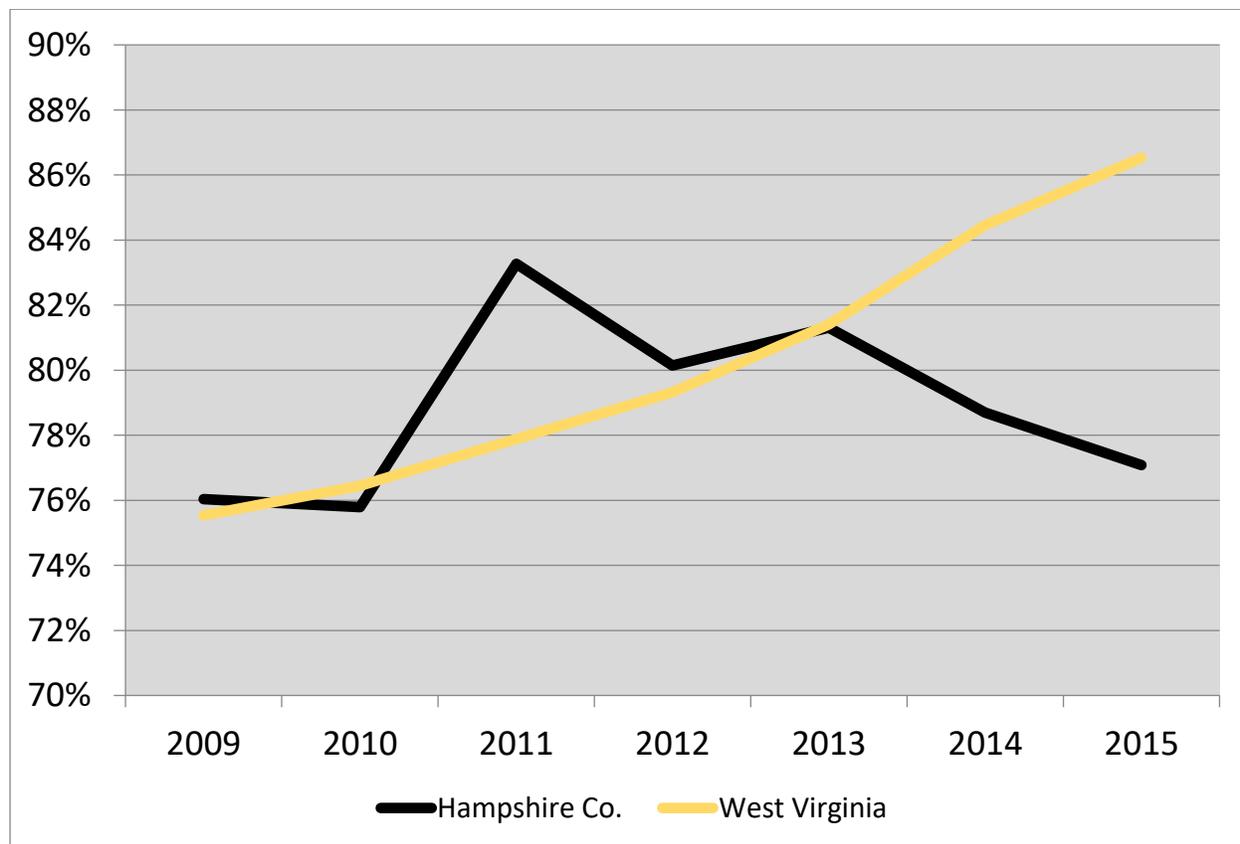


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014

This is important because studies have consistently shown a correlation between education and earnings. Nationally, the median average earnings for all workers, age 25 and older, is \$43,628, according to the Bureau of Labor Studies' *TED: The Economics Daily* article "Median weekly earnings by educational attainment in 2014" which was published on-line on January 23, 2015. However, this amount varies substantially by educational level. A person without a high school diploma would be expected to earn a \$25,376 annually. The high school graduate would be expected to earn \$34,736, those with some college or an associate's degree \$39,572, those with a bachelor's degree \$48,892, those with more than a bachelor's degree \$62,036, and those with an advanced degree \$72,072.

Indicators of educational quality and outcomes provided by West Virginia Department of Education are mixed. The high school graduation rate from 2009 to 2015 has ranged between 75.5 and 83.5 percent; it was 77.1 percent in 2015. Meanwhile, the state high school graduation rate has the Hampshire County has climbed every year during that period and was 86.5 percent in 2015. The state graduation rate has also exceeded the county graduation rate each of the last three years.

Figure 8. High School Graduation Rate, 2009-2015



Source: West Virginia Department of Education, 2016.

The preliminary results of the West Virginia General Summative Assessment presented the county schools in a slightly more positive light. The test was given to all pupils in grades 3 to 11. All grade levels were tested in math and reading while those in fourth, sixth, and tenth grades also took a test in science.

Hampshire County had a higher proportion of pupils rating proficient or above in on the in math on the standardized tests in both 2015 and 2016. The 31 percent proficient score in 2016 was up three points from the year before and was one point above the statewide score (30 percent).

However, the county experienced lower scores in the most recent testing for the other two subjects on the test and fell below the state average in both cases. In

English/Language Arts, the county had 45 percent of pupils rated proficient in 2016. This was down one point from the year before and two points below the statewide score (47 percent). Likewise, in science, the county had 33 percent of pupils rated proficient in 2016. This was down three points from the year before and was three points below the statewide score (36 percent).

A detailed examination of the 2016 standardized test result by grade level showed that Hampshire County was at or exceeded the statewide proficiency scores in for all subjects in grades 3, 4, and 5. However, the results were not as good for students in the middle and high schools. The county exceeded the statewide scores in math in grades 7, 10, and 11 – and equaled it in grade 8. But it only exceeded the statewide score in reading/language arts in grade 8 and was below the statewide score in science for the grade levels that took the test.

Meanwhile, enrollment of students is an important statistic for a community because education funding is based on the number of enrolled students. Also, high or increasing enrollments demand larger, newer and costly facilities. The current (2016-2017) enrollment for the county school system was approximately 3,600 pupils (3,585). This is about the same level of enrollment in 2002-2003 but down about 200 pupils from the 2007-2008.

The enrollment was spread through nine schools (with a technical center also serving county students), according to information posted on the Hampshire County Schools website. The six elementary schools had a total of 1,670 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5, down 120 from 2007-2008. Two of the schools had enrollments of just 125 pupils while two others housed more than 400 pupils. Of the other two elementary schools, one had an enrollment of over 200 pupils and one had an enrollment of over 300 pupils.

Meanwhile, the two middle schools combined had 800 pupils in grades 6 through 8, almost 100 fewer than in 2007-2008. The attendance was split 350-450 between the two schools. The county high school had 1,115 pupils in grades 9 through 12, a slight increase (of 15) from 2007-2008.

Employment

Total employment in Hampshire County fell by 1.2 percent to 4,105 between 2010 and 2015, according to data from Workforce West Virginia. It had increased by 9.8 percent between 2001 and 2007 (from 3,782 to 4,153). Employment in the private sector showed a similar pattern. It was down 3.9 percent to 2,673 between 2007 and 2015. Private employment had increased by 9.9 percent between 2001 and 2007 (from 2,532 to 2,782).

Likewise, the number of establishments showed the same recent decline after previous increases pattern. Total establishments in Hampshire County fell by 3.6 percent to 404 between 2007 and 2015. It had increased by 13.6 percent between 2001 and 2007 (from 368 to 419) Also, number of establishments in the private

sector were down 3.4 percent to 341 between 2007 and 2015. It had increased by 6.6 between 2001 and 2007 (from 331 to 353).

Employment is dominated by three NAICS Super Sectors: Government, Education & Health Services, and Trade/Transportation/Utilities. In 2015, almost seven jobs out of ten (69.2 percent) in the county were in these three areas, according to data from Workforce West Virginia. Not surprisingly, each of these sectors had higher employment in 2015 than they did in 2001. Four super sectors had job gains were seen over both time periods (2001 to 2007 and 2007 and 2015). They were the dominate super sectors of Government and Education & Health Services as well as Professional Services and Education & Health Services. Meanwhile, the three super sectors had employment gains between 2001 and 2015, despite losing jobs in the second time period (between 2007 and 2015). This included Trade/Transportation/Utilities as well as Financial Activities and Leisure & Hospitality.

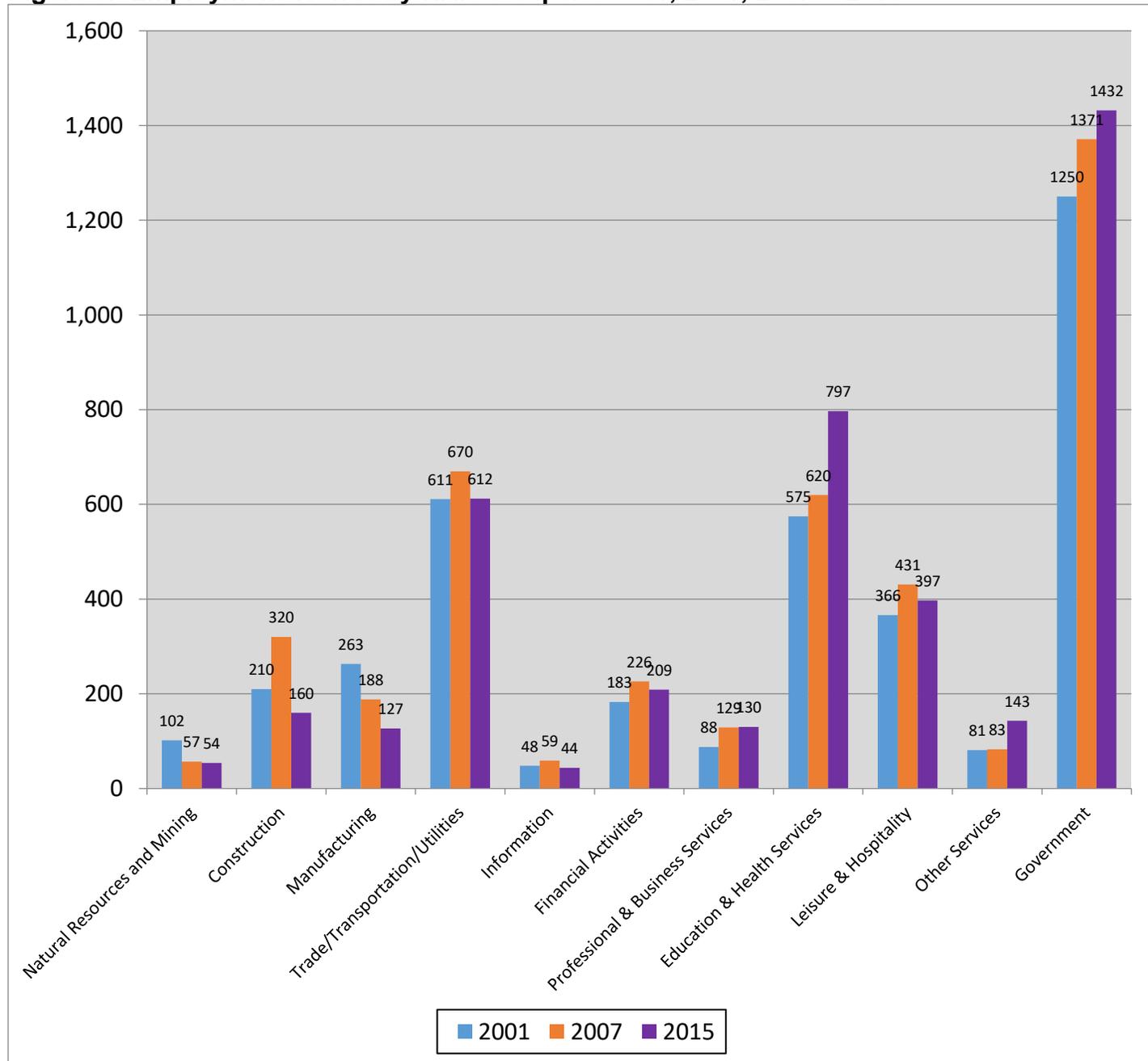
An examination of the ten largest employers in the county demonstrates the domination of Government, Education & Health Services, and Trade/Transportation/Utilities super sectors. All but one of the top employers were in the two-digit NAICS industries related to those super sectors (which those areas). Four of the largest employers were in the area of Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62, Table 4). Two others were public sector entities offering services in Education (NAICS 61) while two others were governmental entities (NAICS 92). And one was a retail outlet (NAICS 44-45). The only large employer not in the three super sectors that dominate the county economy was a financial institution (NAICS 52).

Table 4: Top 10 County Employers, 2015

Employer	Sector (NAICS Code of Sector)	Gov't /Private
Hampshire County Board of Education	Education (61)	Gov't
West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind	Education (61)	Gov't
Valley Health Systems Inc. (Hampshire Memorial Hospital)	Health Care/Social Assistance (62)	Private
Potomac Comprehensive Diagnostic Guidance Center, Inc.	Health Care/Social Assistance (62)	Private
Hampshire County Agency on Aging	Health Care/Social Assistance (62)	Private
Hampshire County Commission	Public Administration (92)	Gov't
Bank of Romney	Finance & Insurance (52)	Private
Romney Health Care Center LP (Hampshire Center)	Health Care/Social Assistance (62)	Private
Slanesville General Inc.	Retail Trade (44-45)	Private
West Virginia Regional Jail & Correctional Facility Authority	Public Administration (92)	Gov't

Source: Workforce West Virginia

Figure 8. Employment Trends by NAICS Super Sector, 2001, 2007 & 2015

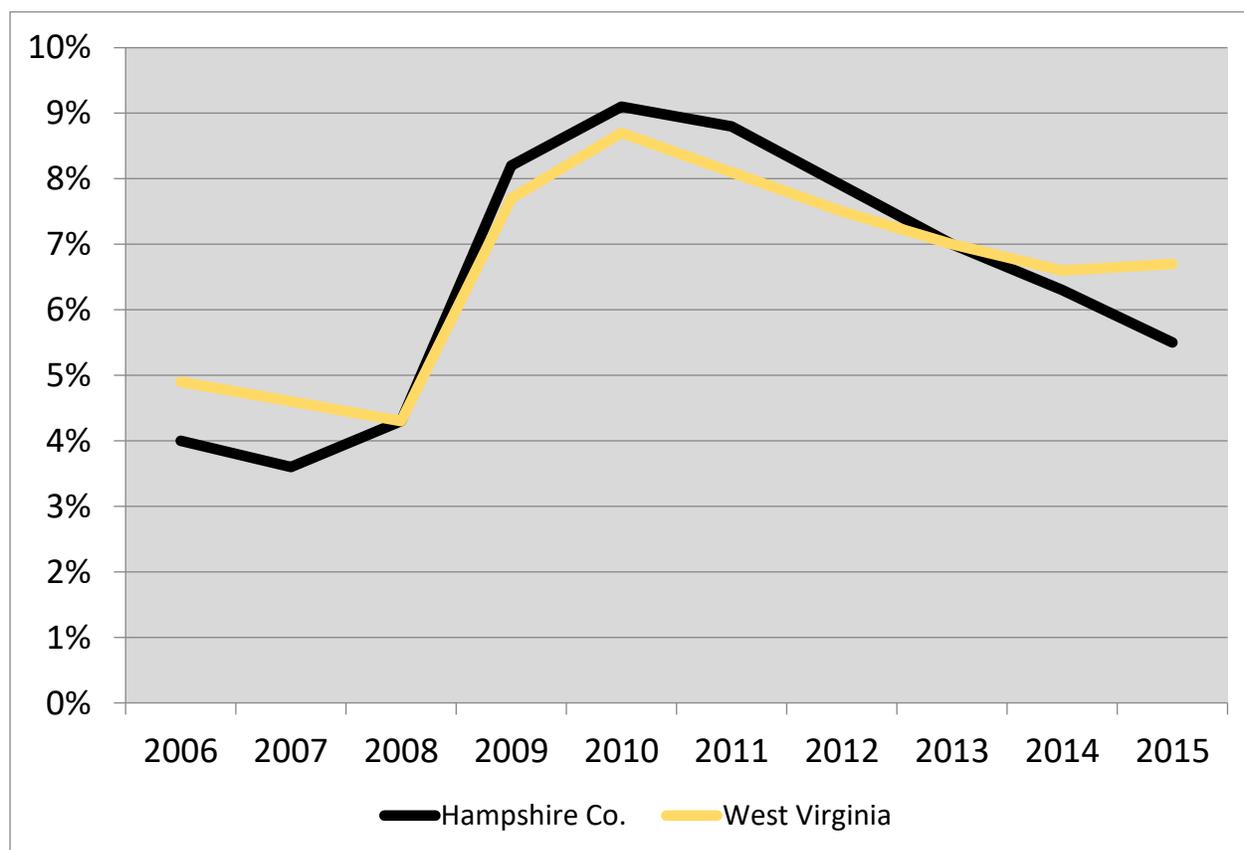


Source: Workforce West Virginia.

Unemployment and Labor Force

The unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) in Hampshire County has generally tracked with the state rate (Figure 9). For the last two years, the county has had a lower unemployment rate than the state; the current 1.2 percentage points difference between the county and state unemployment rates is actually the largest differential between the two rates over the last decade. During that period, the Hampshire County unemployment rate has ranged between a low of 3.6 percent (2007) and a high of 9.1 percent (2010).

Figure 9. Unemployment Rates, 2006-2015



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Note: Unemployment rate is not seasonally adjusted.

The unemployment rate for Hampshire County is also lower than the other counties in the region, except for Winchester-Frederick (Table 5). One likely explanation for this lower unemployment rate is the low labor force participation rate for the county. Barely more than half of those who could be working are in the civilian labor force in Hampshire County (51.7%). This is the lowest in the region as well as 2½ percentage points lower than the state and over 11 percentage points lower than the national labor force participation rates.

Table 5. Unemployment, Labor Force Participation, and Commuting Time, 2014

	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate	Commuting Time
Hampshire Co.	5.5%	51.7%	38.3 minutes
Allegany Co., MD	7.1%	53.0%	21.4 minutes
Winchester-Frederick Co., VA	4.1%	66.2%*	28.1 minutes*
Mineral Co.	6.3%	52.3%	26.6 minutes
Hardy Co.	6.6%	59.5%	24.5 minutes
West Virginia	6.7%	54.2%	25.6 minutes
United States	5.3%	63.5%	25.7 minutes

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Note: Unemployment Rate is not seasonally adjusted.

Selected Winchester-Frederick data are weighted averages, calculated using 2014 Population, Age 16 and above.

Labor Force Participation Rate: Winchester (63.1%) and Frederick County (67.2%).

Commuting Time: Winchester (22.0 minutes) and Frederick County (30.0 minutes).

Commuting Patterns

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

The two most important commuting characteristics in Hampshire County are the length of time spent commuting and the travel patterns (where workers travel for employment). The commuting time for county residents has varied within a narrow band in recent years. The 2014 data from the American Community Survey show an average commute of 38.3 minutes (Table 5). This is slightly longer than the 2007 average (37.6 minutes) but shorter than the 2000 average (39.7 minutes). It is also more than 12 minutes longer than the average commute statewide (25.6 minutes) or national (25.7 minutes) commutes.

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

The lack of urbanized areas in closer proximity to residents exacerbates this dilemma as cities offer more employment opportunities. Much of the county labor force is employed outside of the county, further increasing average

commuting times. In 2014, the county had a deficit of 4,636 jobs, according to data from the Census Bureau’s “OnTheMap” Tool. Of the 8,442 Hampshire County residents who worked outside the home, only 1,970 worked inside the county while 6,472 worked elsewhere. Meanwhile, 1,836 workers traveled into the county for employment. In other words, even if every job in the county was held by a county resident, 54.9 percent of the workforce would still have to leave Hampshire County to go to work.

Overall, 76.7 percent of the workforce left the county for employment. The most common destination was Winchester-Frederick County, Virginia, where more than one-out-of-every three county residents worked (1,713 persons or 20.3 percent of the workforce). Alleghany County, Maryland (379 persons, 4.5 percent), Hardy County (365 persons, 4.3 percent), and Mineral County (337 persons, 4.0 percent) were the next three most common destinations of workers. Additionally, more than two workers out of five (43.6 percent) had to travel beyond Hampshire County and the four area counties for employment.

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

Income

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

In 2014, the median household income for Hampshire County was \$36,715 (Table 6a). This was a slight increase over 2007 (\$36,071, Table 6b) and a large increase over 1999 (\$31,666, Table 6c). However, the county’s median household income was almost \$5,000 less than the statewide level in the most recent data, after being within \$20 of the statewide average in 2007 and nearly \$2,000 above the statewide average in 1999. The current median household income was also lower than all the surrounding localities, except Mineral County.

Associated with this, Hampshire County had the highest poverty rate in the area examined in 2014 (20.8 percent, Table 6a). Every other county had a poverty rate that was at least two percentage points lower. This was also the only time period studied where the county had a higher poverty rate than West Virginia as a whole. Meanwhile, Hampshire County was tied for the second-highest percentage of people receiving cash public assistance (3.0 percent) – with only the West Virginia counties of Hardy (4.4 percent) and Mineral (3.0 percent) having higher or at least as high a proportion of its population receiving cash assistance. Interestingly, Hampshire County had the lower proportion of its population receiving retirement income than any of the neighboring counties or than West Virginia as a whole.

Table 6a. Type of Income by Household, 2014

	Median Household Income	% With Earnings	% Receiving Cash Public Assistance Income	% Receiving Social Security Benefits	% Receiving Supplemental Security Income	% Receiving Retirement Income	% Persons Below Poverty Level
Hampshire Co.	\$36,715	61.2%	3.0%	36.4%	7.5%	15.7%	20.8%
Allegany Co., MD	\$39,794	67.8%	2.7%	40.8%	6.9%	24.6%	17.3%
Winchester-Frederick Co., VA	\$62,287	80.8%	2.3%	29.9%	3.4%	20.7%	8.3%
Mineral Co.	\$30,713	63.1%	3.0%	38.8%	8.4%	17.6%	18.7%
Hardy Co.	\$36,465	69.5%	4.4%	40.4%	8.1%	19.2%	15.0%
West Virginia	\$41,576	68.2%	2.3%	38.8%	7.9%	23.5%	18.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Median Household Income for Winchester-Frederick County represents a weighted average of figure for Winchester (\$44,731) and Frederick County (\$68,719).

Table 6b. Type of Income by Household, 2007

	Median Household Income	% With Earnings	% Receiving Cash Public Assistance Income	% Receiving Social Security Benefits	% Receiving Supplemental Security Income	% Receiving Retirement Income	% Persons Below Poverty Level
Hampshire Co.	\$36,071	73.4%	1.5%	34.5%	5.4%	22.9%	16.8%
West Virginia	\$36,088	70.4%	2.2%	35.7%	6.9%	23.7%	17.7%

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

Table 6c. Type of Income by Household, 1999

	Median Household Income	% With Earnings	% Receiving Public Assistance Income	% Receiving Social Security Benefits	% Receiving Supplemental Security Income	% Receiving Retirement Income	% Persons Below Poverty Level
Hampshire Co.	\$31,666	74.9%	4.3%	33.4%	5.3%	21.9%	16.3%
West Virginia	\$29,696	70.6%	4.0%	33.9%	6.9%	22.0%	17.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Conclusions

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

- The county is often inundated with flash floods which can cause substantial property damage. Strict enforcement of floodplain management regulations is necessary not only to prevent some of the damage, but also to keep the county in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program.
- The county's population is projected to decline slowly over the next 15 years. This reflects a change from previous projections. However, because of decreasing household size and second (vacation) home construction, there is still expected to be a steady number of new housing starts.
- Residents under the age of 21 account for about one-quarter of total population in Hampshire County. This represents a slight drop in the school-age population, which has led to modest decreases in school enrollments. Given that a similarly-sized (but slightly smaller) proportion of the population is in the family-forming age-range (25-to-44), as well as the predicted population decline, it does not appear there will be a great need for additional school facilities in the short-to-medium term.
- Hampshire County's percentage of housing units classified as seasonal, recreational or occasional remains quite high. How this type of housing is regulated within the county's subdivision ordinance should be evaluated for effective land management practices.
- Less than 9 of county residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. This number has been declining since 2000. Nationally, a high school diploma earned 71 percent of the income earned with a bachelor's degree in 2001.
- The average commuting time for a county worker was over 38 minutes and almost 44 percent of the labor force traveled outside the immediate region for employment. This high degree of commuting over long distances for lengthy periods contributes to traffic congestion, higher incidences of vehicular accidents, and less time for family and community activities, among other things. It also demonstrates that higher tax-generating commercial and industrial properties are not located in Hampshire County.
- Income levels in the county have stagnated in the county. Meanwhile, unemployment levels and labor force participation levels are low. This may be reflective of structural issues in the local and state economies.

VISION

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

After reviewing the public input conducted as part of the planning process, the following vision will guide the Hampshire County Comprehensive Plan:

Hampshire County is a place where the rural lifestyle and characteristics of a rural locale is preserved – Country Living by Choice. Future growth and development is directed to existing communities served by adequate infrastructure systems. The result of this “protect and promote” approach is a diversified regional economy for a thriving population that enjoys a high quality of life within a sustainable environment for current and future residents.

LAND USE AND HOUSING

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

PLANNING CONTEXT

Hampshire County occupies nearly 645 square miles, of which less than 22 square miles is developed – residential, commercial, industrial, or governmental properties and facilities. Over 95 percent of the total land in the county is farm or forest. According to a 2011 Landsat data⁷, the county land use or land cover could be divided into six primary categories (see Table 7).

Table 7. 2011 Land Use/Land Cover

Land Cover Type	Area (Sq. Mi.)	Percent
Agriculture	92.78	14.39%
Barren	0.21	0.03%
Developed	21.57	3.34%
Forested	525.03	81.43%
Water	5.13	0.80%
Wetlands	0.04	0.01%
TOTAL	644.76	100.00%

Source: USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2011.

With so few areas of residential communities located within such a vast area, extension of water and sewer lines is costly and difficult to accomplish at times due to the rugged terrain and soil composition.

The primary developed areas in the county can be found along the major thoroughfares such as US Route 50 and WV Route 28, particularly at the intersection of two primary highways. Small commercial centers can be found along these roadways, consisting of one or more retail or service establishments, to serve the local population. The distribution and location of growth in recent years has not always assured efficient delivery of public services as the development pattern has been widely dispersed. Continued evaluation of the county subdivision regulations – which has occurred periodically over the last decade – for best land management practices may improve this situation.

⁷ USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2011. (www.mrlc.gov/nlcd2011.php)

Contributing to the landscape are managed or preserved lands, which are publicly owned and permanently protected. These include three Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) entirely within the county: Short Mountain, Edwards Run, and Fort Mill Ridge. An additional three WMAs are located in both Hampshire and Hardy counties: South Branch, Nathaniel Mountain, and Wardensville. The southeast corner of the county is in Monongahela National Forest. A small part of the northeast corner is in Cacapon Resort State Park. Finally, there is the county's Hampshire Park. The designation of these federal, state, and county parcels will ensure their protection and existence as open space for public use. It should be noted that these designations can be transitory as the Springfield WMA was abolished when the owner decided not to renew the lease in 2004. Numerous subdivisions have been proposed for the former wildlife management area lands since that time.

Seasonal home buying has traditionally been a significant issue for Hampshire County on several levels. First, it has generated interest in the county as a place to live, play, and invest. At specific times of the year (i.e., weekends, holidays, summertime), the influx of these seasonal homeowners brings with it an influx of spending for food, gas, supplies, home furnishings, equipment, recreational activities, etc. Second, many of the owners of these over 2,500 vacation homes pay Class III property taxes, which are double the amount paid by Class II (owner-occupied) properties. This means the vacation homeowners pay twice the rate of property taxes than year-round county homeowners, even though they generally do not require the same level of public services that year-round residents require. In other words, to some degree, the seasonal homeowners support the cost of public services for the year-round population.

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

Future Land Uses

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

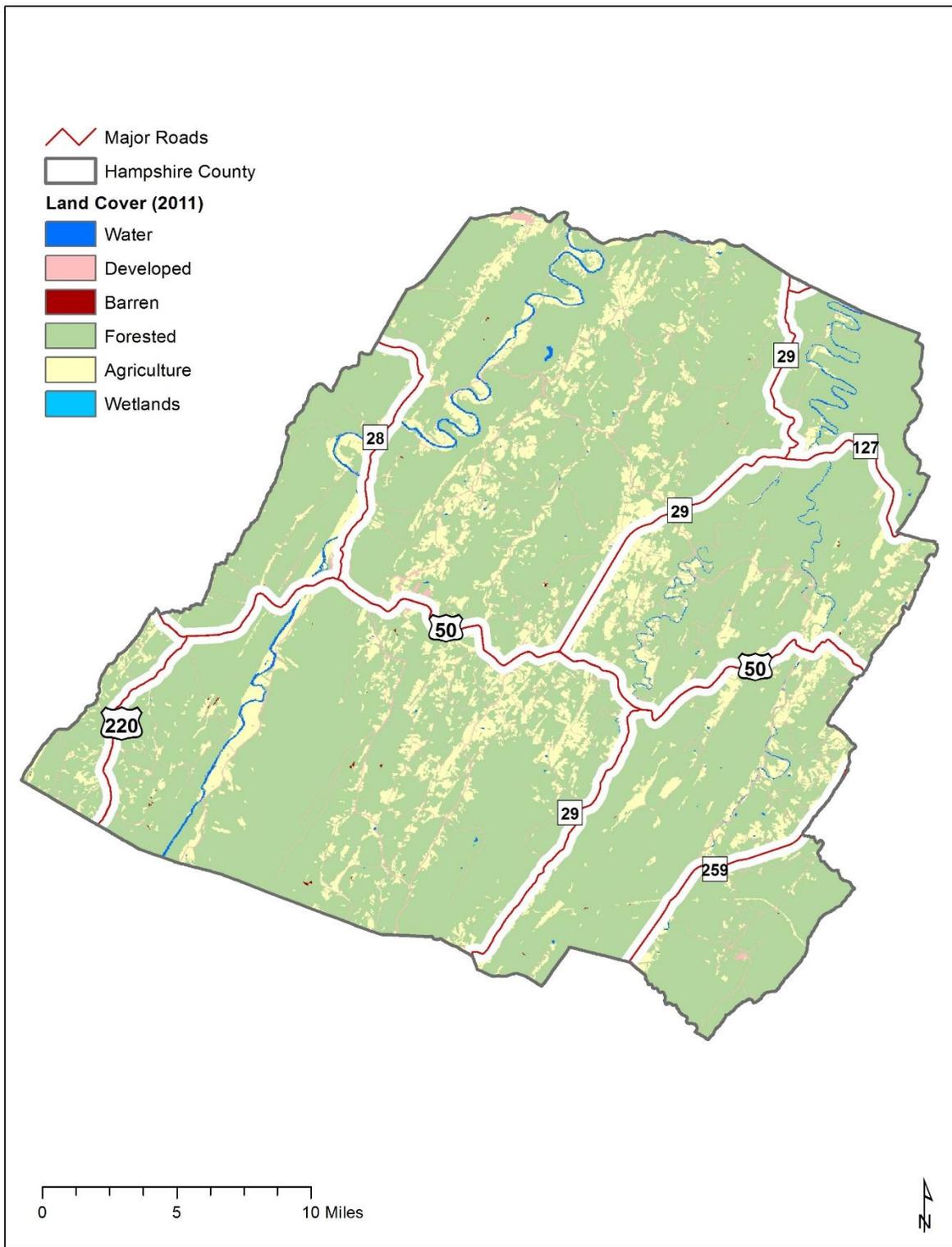
The future land use section of this plan anticipates Hampshire County land uses in 2020 and beyond. It contains broad development corridors along main highways throughout the county – US Route 50, US Route 220, WV Route 28, WV Route 29, WV Route 127, and WV Route 259. Some of these routes – US Route 50 and WV Route 28 – are already the focus of development activity within the county. Meanwhile, the construction of Appalachian Corridor H (US Route 48) through Hardy County to the south has placed additional intense development pressures along the three primary thoroughfares providing direct access from that highway to Hampshire County – US Route 220, WV Route 29, and WV Route 259.

These areas also should be considered for planned infrastructure extensions as denser development in these locations would make the extensions more cost-effective to finance. More location-specific decisions, such as whether a site is located in a floodplain or whether the necessary infrastructure is present, will determine exactly where development occurs.

Even with this proposed growth, the vast majority of the county will remain forest even when the number of approved subdivisions is considered because the density of development will remain relatively low.

Additionally existing communities, which can be thought of as “village centers,” are locations where denser development could be expected to occur with adequate infrastructure in place to provide the necessary public services.

Map 3. Development Corridors



Sources: USGS National Land Cover Dataset 2011; Hampshire County Planning Commission.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

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

Objectives

- Identify growth areas, which are logical extensions of existing concentrations of development in the Romney, Augusta, Capon Bridge, Rio, Purgitsville, Yellow Spring, and similar developed areas, and insure that they have appropriate access and can be efficiently served by infrastructure systems.
- Encourage compact business development patterns along the defined growth corridors in the county along US Route 50, US Route 220, WV Route 28, WV Route 29, WV Route 127, and WV Route 259.
- Encourage new development in the county in existing communities and growth areas.
- Discourage development in areas not suitable for on-site sewage disposal and which cannot feasibly be served by publicly owned waste management.
- Encourage adequate and proper self-management of subdivisions.
- Encourage proper utilization of creek valleys, open areas, and steep slopes as open space.
- Recognize the variety of housing needs of county residents.
- Encourage a variety of housing densities and attractive residential housing types in appropriate areas, consistent with the natural resources, service constraints and existing character of the county.
- Encourage the development of residential subdivisions, which incorporate trails linking residential areas to open spaces, and recreation resources located within or adjoining such developments.
- Encourage retention of dwelling units within commercial areas to provide for mixed and continued use of these areas.

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

Strategies

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

Fiscal Considerations

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Utilize existing mechanisms (e.g., Tax Increment Financing) to fund improvements necessary to serve or spur development.
- Charge appropriate service/permit/application fees for new and existing activities.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.

TRANSPORTATION

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

PLANNING CONTEXT

Hampshire County is a very large county that connects the three eastern panhandle counties of West Virginia to the rest of the State. It has nearly 700 of roadways – all under the auspicious of the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH).

There are no interstate highways located within the county; the closest interstate highways are Interstate 68, Interstate 70, and Interstate 81. I-68 is located north of Hampshire County in Maryland and has its eastern terminus at I-70 in Hancock, Maryland. Meanwhile, I-81 is located east of the county and connects Winchester, Virginia, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Hagerstown, Maryland (where it intersects I-70), and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Likewise, there are no roads in Hampshire County in the National Highway System (NHS), a set of strategic highways connecting the country and serving important transportation and industrial facilities. Every county that borders Hampshire has at least one route in the system. Interestingly, US Route 50 is part of the NHS in Frederick County, Virginia until it reaches the state line (where it enters Hampshire County). Also, US 50 from Clarksburg to Parkersburg is part of the system.⁸

Furthermore, there are also no divided highways in the county. The major roadways are generally two lanes wide – one in each direction – with an occasional turning lane in congested areas or climbing lane where the topography necessitates it.

Overall, only 106.5 miles of the 694.6 miles of state highways in Hampshire County are primary routes (US Routes or WV Routes). This is just over 15 percent of the roadways in the county but it handles almost three-quarters of the traffic load – 155.7 million vehicle miles annually of the total 208.4 million vehicle miles (Table 8A). Similarly, the 45.2 miles of arterial roadway in Hampshire County carries 46.8 percent of the traffic and the 149.8 miles of major collector roadways carries 39.8 percent of the traffic (Table 8B).

⁸ U.S. Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration. National Highway System Maps (West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland.).

Table 8A. Hampshire County Highway Miles and Use by Route Type

	Roadway Miles	% of Total	Annual Vehicle Miles (Millions)	% of Total
Interstates	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%
US Routes	42.62	61.30%	92.96	44.60%
WV Routes	63.94	9.20%	62.75	30.10%
County Routes	559.74	80.58%	51.99	24.94%
FANS Routes	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%
HARP Routes	21.54	3.10%	0.70	0.33%
State Parks	6.75	0.97%	0.02	0.01%
Total	694.59	100.00%	208.43	100.00%

Notes: FANS is Federal Aid, Non-State. HARP is Home Access Road Program.

Source: West Virginia Highway Classification 2015: Hampshire County.

Table 8B. Hampshire County Highway Miles and Use by Functional Classification

	Roadway Miles	% of Total	Annual Vehicle Miles (Millions)	% of Total
Interstate Highway	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%
Other Primary Arterial	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%
Minor Arterial	45.23	6.51%	97.70	46.87%
Major Collector Roads	149.83	21.57%	82.95	39.79%
Minor Collector Roads	36.35	5.23%	6.16	2.95%
Local Roads	463.18	66.68%	21.62	10.37%
Total	694.59	100.00%	208.43	100.00%

Notes: FANS is Federal Aid, Non-State. HARP is Home Access Road Program.

Source: West Virginia Highway Classification 2015: Hampshire County.

The major east-west corridor in Hampshire County is US Route 50. It traverses the Allegheny Mountains in a generally curvilinear and steep fashion for 34.05 miles. US 50 is one of the last remaining non-interstate transcontinental highways in the country. It connects Ocean City, Maryland with Sacramento, California (the original western terminus was San Francisco until the 1964 California highway renumbering). The basic alignment of the roadway follows some of the historical route of the Northwest Turnpike, which was originally developed in the late 1700s to connect eastern and western Virginia.⁹ It is also the busiest highway in the county. The average annual daily traffic (AADT) count is about 3,500 on the western edge of the county, is around 8,000 in Romney, ranges between 8,000 and 12,000 in the stretch from Romney to Augusta, and drops to around 5,000 in the eastern half of the county.¹⁰

⁹ Wilbur Smith Associates, "Traffic Operation and Safety Study, Route 50, State Project No. X229-H-1.00 00, Mineral and Hampshire Counties." West Virginia Division of Highways. February 6, 2002.

¹⁰ WV DOT Traffic Counts. Provided by geocounts.com. 2014 data. Accessed October 2017. Website: geocounts.com/traffic/project/1471556443665?l1z=39.33208232643084,-78.6408.10.

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

The primary roadways carry the bulk of the intra-county and inter-county traffic. WV Route 28 has an AADT is about 4,700 as it approaches Romney; the AADT is between 2,800 and 3,000 at the northern end of the county. Likewise, WV Route 127 has an AADT of about 4,800 near the state line. All other primary roadway sections have an average annual daily total of between 1,800 and 3,300 vehicles.¹¹

Given its rural setting and its reliance on undivided roadways, it is not surprising that Hampshire County sees more automobile fatalities than would be expected, based upon its population. From 2012 to 2016, approximately 1.3 percent of the state’s population has lived in the county. However, in no year during that that span did it have less than 1.8 percent of the state’s fatal vehicular accidents (Table 9). It also had more fatalities per 100,000 in population than the state average or national average. Of the 37 fatalities in the county during the five-year span, 36 involved roadway departures and 23 were single car accidents. Speeding played a role in 16 of the fatalities while 11 involved alcohol impairment¹²

Table 9. Hampshire County Vehicular Fatal Accident Data

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Hampshire County Total Fatalities	12	6	5	8	6
Hampshire County as % of WV Fatalities	3.5%	1.8%	1.8%	3.0%	2.2%
Hampshire Fatalities per 100,000 people	50.66	25.57	21.29	34.29	25.75
West Virginia Fatalities per 100,000 people	18.26	17.91	14.71	14.56	14.69
United States Fatalities per 100,000 people	10.76	10.40	10.28	11.06	11.59

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts: Hampshire County, WV 2012-2016*; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts: West Virginia 2012-2016*.

The Potomac Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) provides local/regional bus service in Hampshire County as well as the surrounding counties and cities. A bus runs from Romney to Rubbermaid in Winchester, Va., every day with stops in Shanks, Augusta, North River, and Capon Bridge. The Romney-Moorefield-Petersburg bus runs weekdays and stops at Mechanicsburg Gap and in Junction

¹¹ WV DOT Traffic Counts. Provided by geocounts.com. 2014 data. Accessed October 2017. (geocounts.com/traffic/project/1471556443665?llz=39.33208232643084,-78.6408,10)

¹² National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Traffic Safety Facts: Hampshire County, WV 2012-2016*.

and Purgitsville. Likewise, the workday bus from Cumberland, Md., to the Pilgrim's Pride plant in Moorefield serves Springfield, Romney, Junction, and Purgitsville. In addition, a bus runs between Romney and Cumberland, Md., on Thursdays. Also, the transit authority operates Romney Ready Ride, an on-demand local transportation service for residents in the immediate Romney area.

The nearest inter-city bus service or rail service available in is Cumberland, Md.

Freight rail service is available from the South Branch Valley Railroad (SBVR). The West Virginia State Rail Authority owns the railroad. It was a branch line by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and then the Chessie System until the state took it over in 1978. Its headquarters are in Moorefield.

The 52.4-mile route runs from Petersburg to Green Spring, generally running parallel to the South Branch of the Potomac River. It links into the CSXT mainline connecting Cumberland, MD to Martinsburg at its northern terminus. It generally parallels the South Branch of the Potomac River. It provides freight service five days a week and weekends as needed with stops at the Hampshire County Industrial Park in Romney as well as in Hardy and Grant counties.

The Potomac Eagle excursion train runs on weekends during the summer and daily for the autumn-color season. It is based out of Romney and travels southward through a scenic section of the SBVR known as "The Trough." A private vendor operates it under a contract with the state.¹³

There are three private airports in Hampshire County, one at Capon Bridge and two near Romney. All three require permission to use; none has a runway longer than 2,650-feet, according to Federal Aviation Administration data.¹⁴ As a result, these facilities are primarily for the small private planes of their respective owners. Additionally, Hampshire Memorial Hospital has a helipad for emergency medical transport flights. The nearest general aviation airport is Winchester (Va.) Regional Airport which has a 5,500-foot runway and flight services available.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

Plan for a circulation system in Hampshire County that includes road, transit, and other facilities, which will allow safe and efficient travel using multiple modes of transportation.

¹³ West Virginia Department of Transportation. South Branch Valley Railroad webpage. (transportation.wv.gov/rail/SBVR/Pages/default.aspx)

¹⁴ Federal Aviation Administration. (www.faa.gov/airports/airport_safety/airportdata_5010/menu/). Airport Facilities Data. (Current as of Oct. 12, 2017). Airport Runway Data (Current as of Oct. 12, 2017).

Objectives

- Coordinate land use policies and road improvement activities.
- Maintain and improve the capacity of the existing roads within the area as future development occurs through cooperative efforts with developers and WV DOH.
- Work with WV DOH to improve the quality of state road network and bridges.
- Assure adequate access occurs along major roadway corridors such as US Route 50, other primary routes identified as growth corridors, and areas influenced by the development of Corridor H. Of particular concern are WV Route 259 north from the Hardy County line to Yellow Spring; WV Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area to US Route 50; US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgitsville area to Junction; and US Route 50 in the area east of Romney and in the Capon Bridge area.
- Determine the merits of and appropriate locations of park and ride facilities and other multi-modal facilities.
- Preserve the natural scenic quality of Hampshire County while providing sufficient transportation systems consistent with the county's present and long-term needs.
- Ensure progress continues on right-of-way acquisition to ensure road improvements can be pursued even after future development occurs.
- Provide for better regulation of road construction in subdivisions within the county.
- Facilitate pedestrian circulation within community business areas through such means as benches, landscaping, and other pedestrian amenities.
- Support additional routes for regional bus service.
- Support more connections to inter-city bus and passenger rail service.
- Support continued freight rail service to the county.
- Support better access to air service.

Strategies

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

Fiscal Considerations

- Seek local funding to enhance WV DOH road improvement projects, particularly with respect to improving access to property.
- Pursue additional state appropriations for improvements on state highways throughout the county.
- Explore legal authority to charge impact fees or development fees to augment existing funding sources.
- Ensure efficient and effective use of bond funds to increase the number of projects that can be completed using “Roads to Prosperity” monies.
- Seek state and federal grants to provide additional funding for the regional mass transit system (PTVA).
- Work with state and corporate officials to ensure charges are sufficient to fund continued operation and improvement of freight railroad operations (SBVR).

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services include the infrastructure, institutions, services, agencies, land, and other properties intended for general use to benefit of Hampshire County as a whole. They are intended to provide for the common good. The quality of these facilities and services contribute to the quality of life of county residents and the quality of experiences for county visitors. Ensuring that community services and facilities meet the demand of people and property owners is a major growth management component.

The county's community facilities must be carefully coordinated with land use and transportation. The demands of the county must be balanced with ability to pay for improvements. Coordination of county land use, transportation and community facilities development is the key to providing equitable, efficient and cost-effective government services for current and future county residents and property owners. Where possible, the current and future needs should be addressed through enhancement and expansion of facilities and services. Where this is not possible, these new facilities and services can be used to manage growth.

By identifying where infrastructure improvements or new public facilities should be constructed, the county can encourage development in areas is meant to be consistent with adopted county policies. To that end, larger developments should be targeted to places where facilities and services are already present, particularly where there is excess capacity. Similarly, places that lack infrastructure networks and likewise should remain more rural settings.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Water & Sewer Service

The extension of public sewer and water service to an unserved area of a county is usually a harbinger of development. A county must effectively communicate its growth proposals to local public service districts as well as municipal and private water/sewer providers to avoid potential conflicts. Certain areas of a county may ultimately require water and/or sewer service because of public health concerns or related issues, even though this could result in pressures for additional development in places where it is not desirable. Nevertheless, the overriding factor for all decisions must remain the public health, safety, and welfare.

Ideally, the local public service districts should communicate when extensions of service are proposed within its boundaries and probable development concerns must be fully evaluated prior to a final decision. Then appropriate planning strategies can be utilized to alleviate development conflicts.

There are four water and sewer providers in Hampshire County – one public service district (PSD), two municipalities, and one private vendor.

The Central Hampshire PSD is based in Augusta and serves customers in unincorporated areas, primarily along or near the main development corridors in the county, primarily east of Romney along U.S. Route 50 and north of Romney along WV Route 28. The PSD has 1,734 water customers and 731 sewer customers.¹⁵ The system was expanded when it acquired the former Green Spring Valley PSD through merger in 2007.

The PSD began water service in 1977. Potable water is purchased in bulk from the City of Romney (for the original Central Hampshire system) and ground water from a spring (for the Green Spring Valley system). Sewer service in 2000. A wastewater treatment plan is located on the Little Capon River at Frenchburg using a lagoon system. The Central Hampshire PSD completed a source water protection plan for the Green Spring water system in 2015. It also finalized an order for compliance for failing to file Discharge Monitoring Reports in 2016.

The City of Romney has a Water Department and Wastewater Department. It has 900 water customers and 1,025 sewer customers.¹⁶ For water, it uses surface water from the South Branch of the Potomac River. The current filtration plant west of the city opened in 2000 and treats 500,000 gallons daily. It serves the city and sells bulk water to the Central Hampshire PSD. The city has participated in the Water Sense program to encourage conservation and wise use of water resources since 2006. For sewer, the city opened a new plant in 2015 that allows it to meet the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan before water is discharged back into the South Branch of the Potomac River.

The Town of Capon Bridge also operates a municipal water and sewer system. It has 272 water customers and 169 sewer customers.¹⁷ The water source is ground water from the Heitt Spring and has no problems. However, there are issues with the sewer system discharging pollutants into the Cacapon River that must be addressed.

Finally, P&P Enterprises Utilities LLC provides water and sewer services to the Avalon Resort in the northern part of the county near Paw Paw (Morgan County, according to the West Virginia Public Service Commission.

Solid Waste

Hampshire County is a member of the Region VIII Solid Waste Authority, which also includes the counties of Grant, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton. The Authority was founded in the mid-1970s as a branch of the Region VIII Planning

¹⁵ Region VIII Planning and Development Council (2013). *2014-2018 Regional Development Plan*.

¹⁶ Region VIII Planning and Development Council (2013). *2014-2018 Regional Development Plan*.

¹⁷ Region VIII Planning and Development Council (2013). *2014-2018 Regional Development Plan*.

and Development Council. It was reconstituted as an independent agency in the mid-1980s to address the solid waste needs of the five counties and their municipalities.

Presently, the authority provides solid waste disposal services to solid waste collection companies, as well as to industries, businesses and individuals who choose to bring their own solid waste directly to one of two regional transfer stations. The northern station is located just north of Romney and serves Hampshire County as well as Mineral County. (The southern station just south of Petersburg serves Grant, Hardy, and Pendleton counties.)

The Romney-area station managed 8,015 tons of waste in 2015, averaging 668 tons per month. That waste went to the Tucker County Landfill.¹⁸ United Disposal Service of Davis offers trash collection services to the entire county. It can use the Apple Valley Waste in Frostburg Maryland, the LCS Landfill in Hedgesville, or other facilities both inside and outside of West Virginia.

Recycling is limited in Hampshire County. The county continues to evaluate its options after the passage of a recycling referendum in November 2014, according to the Region VIII Solid Waste Authority's 2015 Comprehensive Litter and Solid Waste Control Plan. The regional solid waste authority does not offer curbside service but does have some drop-off locations. Scrap metals (57%) and electronics (38%) made up the vast majority of the recycled materials in the region. There were also some mixed metals and other plastics recycled; there was no report of any paper-based materials being recycled.¹⁹

The projections for solid waste needs in Hampshire County over the next 20 years appears to be entirely dependent upon the direction of population change. The county is expected to see a decline in its amount of solid waste, according to the West Virginia Solid Waste Management Plan 2017 (Table 9). This corresponds to the projected decline in population over the same period. This is a drop of 13.9 percent, the same as the decrease in the population projections in the plan. Interestingly, the regional solid waste authority's projections from its 2015 Comprehensive Litter and Solid Waste Control Plan show an increase in both monthly tonnage and population over the same period. In both forecasts, the monthly waste per capita fairly constant at between 130 and 135 pounds.

Table 9. Long Term Monthly Waste Projections

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
State Projections 2017	1,571 tons	1,521 tons	1,470 tons	1,402 tons	1,352 tons
SWA Projections 2015	1,704 tons	1,779 tons	1,832 tons	1,861 tons	1,869 tons

Sources: West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board, 2017. Region VIII Solid Waste Authority, 2015.

¹⁸ West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board. *West Virginia Waste Management Plan 2017*.

¹⁹ West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board. *West Virginia Waste Management Plan 2017*.

Utilities and Communications

Landline telephone service in Hampshire County by Frontier of West Virginia (the former Citizens Telephone). It has local exchanges serving Romney (304-822), Capon Bridge (304-856), Augusta (304-496), and Levels (304-492).

Romney telephone exchanges have been allocated to two cellular providers: Verizon (304-360) and Sprint (304-516). There is a US Cellular authorized dealer in the area as well. Also, a Capon Bridge exchange (681-448) has been allocated to Virginia-based communications services company Coretel.

Atlantic Broadband provides cable television service in and around Romney. Some places near Augusta, Green Spring, Shanks, and Springfield may have access to Comcast Xfinity. Satellite-based television is available throughout the county.

Frontier provides DSL broadband to most places in the county. The cable television providers offer broadband internet service where they operate. Hardy Telecommunications serves some places near the Hardy County line, particularly near Rio and Purgitsville, with its fiber optic lines. Wireless (cellular data) and satellite internet services are available in some areas.

Potomac Edison, a First Energy company, provides electrical service throughout Hampshire County. Natural gas distribution is not available in the county, even though there is major natural gas storage facility (Hampshire Gas).

School Buildings

The Hampshire County Board of Education consolidated its schools starting in the 1960s. These efforts were aided by the passage of a school bond in 1998. The most recent closure occurred in 2004. Today, the system has ten facilities serving the children of the counties.

Hampshire High School opened in 1964 near Romney. The countywide high school was the result of consolidating consolidation of the Romney High and Capon Bridge High. It and was expanded in 1999 and now serves about 1,100 students in grades 9 to 12. The school has a variety of athletic fields and performance arenas. It is also co-located with the Hampshire County Career Training Center. The center provides career and technical education for both high school students and adults.

The county has two middle schools serving grades 6 to 8 in the towns of the former high schools. The county replaced both buildings in the last 15 years. Romney Middle School opened in 2004. It serves about 450 students. Capon Bridge Middle School opened in 2007. It serves about 350 students.

There are six elementary schools around the county for children in grades pre-K (pre-kindergarten) through 5. Augusta Elementary School has 315 students. Capon Bridge Elementary School has 435 students. John J. Cornwell Elementary School in Levels has 125 students. Romney Elementary School has 450 students. Slanesville Elementary School has 220 students. Springfield - Green Spring Elementary School located near Springfield has 125 students.

These schools received upgrades and renovations throughout the years. For example, Romney Elementary opened in 1951. It expanded into the former junior high/middle school building in 2004 when the new Romney Middle opened. There has also been consolidation and new buildings. Springfield - Green Spring Elementary School replaced two smaller schools from which its name is derived – Springfield Elementary and Green Spring Elementary. John J. Cornwell Elementary School replaced the former Levels Elementary.

There remains the need for additional facilities upgrades, expansion, and replacement. The Hampshire County Board of Education and Hampshire County Schools plans to address these issues in the upcoming update of the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan.

Education

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

The vision of the Hampshire County Schools is “Learning for all ... and all means all!” Its mission statement is “All Hampshire County students will make continuous progress toward mastery or beyond of the essential curriculum including 21st Century skills.”

While the Hampshire County school system has had impressive results in the past, recent trends in show there are some troubling trends with respect to the schools that must be addressed.

Hampshire County’s four-year cohort high school graduation rate for the 2015-16 school year was 75.96 percent. This marked the fourth straight year-to-year decline and was the lowest rate since 2009-10. It was also 14 percentage points below the state graduation rate (89.81%).

Related to this, the college going-rate for the county fell to 37.38 percent for those entering higher education at the Fall 2016 semester. This was the lowest rate in at

least a decade and substantially below the state rate (55.57%). Of the high school graduates, the largest group who continued their studies enrolled in in-state, four-year public colleges and universities (27.1% of graduates). Others enrolled in in-state two-year public institutions (4.7% of graduates), in-state independent colleges and universities (2.8% of graduates), proprietary institutions (estimated 0.5% of graduates), and out-of-state institutions of higher education (estimated 2.3 percent of graduates).

Not surprisingly, the dropout rate has increased over the same four-year period. It was 2.35 percent in 2015-16, more than twice the state dropout rate (1.10%).

System wide, 88.44 percent of classes were taught by “highly qualified teachers,” according to data from the West Virginia Department of Education. This varied widely across the school district. The main areas of deficiency were math, science, geography, and history.

The high school only had 75.33 percent of classes taught by highly qualified teachers. The other schools fared better. The two middle schools had a combined 89.88 percent of classes taught by highly qualified teachers. The six elementary schools had a combined 96.19 percent of classes taught by highly qualified teachers. In addition, all six county elementary schools are Title I schools. Title I provides supplemental funds to school districts to assist schools with the highest student concentrations of poverty to meet school educational goals.

The only private school in Hampshire County is Slanesville Christian School. Enrollment generally ranges between 10 and 20 students. It offers all grade levels.

Post-secondary education is available at Eastern West Virginia Community & Technical College in Romney and Potomac State College of WVU in Keyser as well as colleges and universities throughout the state.

Public Safety

Law enforcement staffing levels in Hampshire County are a compromise between community expectations, the need to provide other services, and available revenue. Citizens rightfully demand the highest levels of economy and efficiency from their governmental operations. The Hampshire County Sheriff’s Department generally has between 12 and 15 deputies for law enforcement duties in the county²⁰. This includes the chief deputy, other ranked officers, and any specialty officers. The sheriff’s department has a process server and bailiff (court security), who perform duties law enforcement-associated duties. The main office for the department is in Romney. It also has a sub-office Capon Bridge.

²⁰ Hampshire County Sheriff’s Office (www.hampshirecountysheriffwv.com/index.html)

This current level of staffing equates to less than 1 officer for every 1,500 county residents or less than 1 officer for every 40 square miles of area in the county. The staffing level is important for a number of reasons. The services and activities provided to a community have a direct relationship to staffing levels; this includes how quickly patrol units can respond to calls for service, what cases can receive investigative attention, and how much time can be spent on localized community problem solving.

There are other factors that to note with respect to the law enforcement level of staffing. The number of people in Hampshire County can be higher during vacation months and holiday seasons due to the presence of second and vacation homes. This would lead to an even lower level of staffing than noted above. Conversely, the county law enforcement efforts are supplemented by the presence of a West Virginia State Police Detachment based in Romney (part of Troop 2, District 2).²¹ This means there are additional law enforcement officers present in the county, improving the level of service. Based on historical staffing norms, the addition of the state police officers makes the overall level of staffing for law enforcement more than 1 officer for every 1,000 county residents or about 1 officer for every 25 square miles.

Fire and EMS

The Hampshire County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management oversees the fire and EMS services for the county. There are eight volunteer fire companies: Romney (Station 1), Augusta (Station 3), Slanesville Fire and Rescue (Station 5), Levels Fire (Station 6), North River Valley Fire (Station 7), Capon Springs Fire and Rescue (Station 8), Capon Bridge Fire (Station 9), Springfield Fire and Rescue (Station 42).

Ambulance and emergency medical services are available from six stations: Romney EMS (Station 11), Capon Bridge EMS (Station 12), August EMS (Station 13) as well as the three fire stations that also provide rescue services (Slanesville, Capon Springs, and Springfield).

Public Health

The Hampshire County Health Department plays an important role in the development of land. The West Virginia Department of Health sets rules, including design standards, for the drilling of water wells and for individual sewage systems. These rules require that sewage systems installers and water well drillers must to be certified by the state.²²

²¹ West Virginia State Police. *FY2015-2016 Annual Report*.

²² Hampshire County Health Department: Environmental Services – Sewage and Water website. (www.hampshirecountyhealthdepartment.com/sewage-and-water.html)

The county does have a public health interest in protect those who depend on ground water sources. As a result, the Planning Department will not approve new developments or construction without certification of water and sewer by the Health Department or the Central Hampshire PSD.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

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

Objectives

- Continue to evaluate the need and opportunity for additional, expanded or improved community services and facilities and plan for the efficient and economical provision of those services and facilities.
- Encourage proper maintenance and upgrading of county infrastructure.
- Review proposed developments to ensure that required infrastructure facilities are constructed.
- Assure that the scale of development in the area is consistent with the capacity of the area's infrastructure and fiscal capacities.
- Encourage communication and cooperative efforts among county government, the Board of Education, community organizations, residents, and businesses to assure the continued vitality of the area.
- Investigate opportunities for cooperation between the county and the Board of Education in providing and making available facilities and programs to area residents.
- Promote the importance of education for the community and for its residents.
- Support improvements the county educational system.
- Protect sources of potable water in the county.
- Promote proper operational and management practices within water/sewer utilities.
- Coordinate sewer and water planning with land use policies.

- Promote appropriate management of storm water, soil erosion, and sedimentation.
- Encourage proper management of solid waste.
- Pursue ways to offer recycling services to county residents and businesses.
- Seek to expand broadband availability and options within the county.
- Work to increase cellular telephone coverage throughout the county.
- Encourage development of natural gas distribution networks for the county.
- Support efforts to increase law enforcement staffing and capacity.
- Encourage cooperation among the county's fire companies to address fire protection needs.
- Encourage cooperation among the county's rescue squads to address emergency medical service needs.

Strategies

- Collaborate with the Central Hampshire Public Service District to develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan. (Short term)
- Actively support the efforts of the Board of Education to finance the necessary upgrade and new construction projects identified in its ten-year facilities plan, utilizing a myriad of revenue sources such as state development money, assistance from developers, and local matches. (Short term)
- Help facilitate the plans set forth in the Hampshire County Board of Education's 10-year plan. (Short term)
- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in providing community facilities and services. (Short term)
- Actively support and advocate for the planning and construction of a new high school in the eastern end of the county within ten years, utilizing state and local monies. (Medium term)
- Improve programs focusing on management of sewage and solid waste. (Medium term)

- Undertake an aggressive approach to the development of high tech, high speed, and wireless data transmission and telecommunications through government and private sector joint ventures thus creating economic development possibilities while providing low cost service to the general public. (Medium term)
- Work with the Region VIII Solid Waste Authority to increase recycling options – particularly for paper and plastic products – available at the authority’s transfer stations. (Medium term)
- Ensure water and sewer projects are actively pursued in development and funding to guarantee projects reach construction. (Long term)
- Commingle projects for cost benefit in funding opportunities and construction feasibility. (Long term)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to include best land management practices and related approaches, procedures, and information. (Long term)
- Develop and adopt a countywide growth management policy that identifies growth areas where the county will direct new development. New infrastructure systems should be emphasized in the growth areas so as to avoid rural sprawl development patterns. (Long term)

Fiscal Considerations

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

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

PLANNING CONTEXT

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

Approximately half of the labor force traveling outside the county and the state for employment, the county does not have the financial benefit of a strong non-residential tax base. Furthermore, because these members of the labor force must commute daily through and around the county to get to their jobs, the county must tolerate the negative impacts of the long, daily commuting habits: traffic congestion, pollution, increased vehicular accidents, longer drive times, etc.

One area with great potential for generating economic growth is the health care arena. Presently, four of the largest private employers are in the health care and social assistance industrial sector. This includes Valley Health Systems, the Winchester, Va.-based organization that operates Hampshire Memorial Hospital. The hospital is a licensed critical access facility with 14 acute care beds, 30 transitional/long-term care beds, and an emergency department in Romney. Other large employers in this sector include the Potomac Comprehensive Diagnostic Guidance Center, which provides services to people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families; the Hampshire County Agency on Aging, which serves seniors through centers in Romney, Capon Bridge, and Springfield; and the Hampshire Center, which offers long-term care and short stay rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, four of the 10 fastest growing occupations listed by Workforce West Virginia for 2010-2020 are jobs related to health care and social assistance: personal care aides, home health aides, health educators, and biomedical engineers. Hampshire County could see economic growth because of its strong health care sector and increased need for workers in these professions.

Charged with working to improve economic conditions in the county is the Hampshire County Development Authority. It currently has two primary goals:

1. Generate business leads and projects for Hampshire through an aggressive, external marketing program focused on specific business sectors that include the life science, technical service, advanced manufacturing and back office industries.
2. Attract and retain sustainable, well-paying jobs to Hampshire that capitalize on the highly educated workforce and outstanding quality of life afforded by the area.

The authority also helps market potential business and industrial locations in the county. These include sites in the 58-acre Hampshire County-Romney Business Park (which has 25 developable acres available), the 90-acre Capon Bridge Tech Park (which has locations as large as 55 acres available), and the 206-acre Royce Saville Site near Augusta.

To accomplish its goals, the authority has generally targeted smaller, higher-skill employers that would find the rural environment of Hampshire County attractive and conducive to a higher quality of life than that found in more urbanized areas.

Likewise, the characteristics of life in the county continue to be a priority for Hampshire County residents. Quality of life issues such as rural design, parks, schools, and public services are also priorities for businesses and their employees. Additionally, Hampshire County residents benefit from many of the attractions and amenities designed to bring tourists to the county – and which make it an attractive location for second home development. Preserving and enhancing these aspects of Hampshire County will enable it to retain existing businesses and residents, as well as appeal to new businesses and residents.

Tourism can be one of the cleanest industries and has a multiplier effect on a community's economy. West Virginia tourism remains a growing industry and continues to be a top income producer for the economy. Tourism can also take many forms such as bed and breakfast inns, arts and crafts shows/festivals, sports events, and museum attractions.

Hampshire County can offer visitors historic attractions through tours as well as important buildings and locations. It offers natural beauty at the state wildlife management areas and throughout the county. It features an excursion train – the Potomac Eagle. It is home to it is numerous fairs and festivals. The Hampshire County Convention and Visitors Bureau lists events such as the West Virginia Peach Festival, Hampshire County Fair, Hampshire Heritage Fest, Avalon Fest Capon Bridge Founders' Day and Annual South Branch Bluegrass Festival, which bring live music and special happening to the county.

A study completed for the West Virginia Division of Tourism in 2015 reported \$288 million of total direct travel spending in the eight-county Potomac Highlands region in 2014, a 22 percent increase from a decade earlier. Spending peaked in 2008 at \$293 million, fell precipitously after the Great Recession, but had increased since 2010. For Hampshire County, total travel spending each year ranged between \$35 million and \$38 million between 2010 and 2014. In 2014, there was \$35.8 million in direct spending, resulting in 370 jobs, \$6.6 million in business earnings, and \$127,000 in local tax revenue.²³

This result was not surprising. Previous studies in 2005²⁴ and 2001²⁵ had shown the importance and value of tourism to the Hampshire County economy. This data demonstrates the continued a healthy market for tourism and tourism-related activities in the county.

Related to this, the presence of second or seasonal homes has provided both short-term and long-term benefits to the county. The building of these homes led to a surge in construction jobs before the Great Recession, followed by a substantial decrease in such employment over the last decade. These properties are generally taxed at Class III rates (all other property – vacant land, rental property, vehicles, commercial real estate, equipment and inventory, etc. – located outside a municipality, which is twice the rate of Class II properties (owner-occupied properties as a primary residence). This has helped to expand the county tax base.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

Sustain and enhance the economic vitality of Hampshire County, while maintaining its essential rural character.

Objectives

- Target industries for recruitment, development, or improvement in economic sectors with a strong fit and potential for growth in Hampshire County.
- Support programs and efforts to promote economic development in the county and to retain, replace, and increase jobs for county residents.
- Encourage better use of vacant and underutilized properties.

²³ Dean Runyon Associates. “Economic Impact of Travel on West Virginia,” West Virginia Division of Tourism. October 2015.

²⁴ Dean Runyon Associates. “Economic Impact of Travel on West Virginia,” West Virginia Division of Tourism. June 2005.

²⁵ D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd, “2000 Year End Overnight Leisure Travel Report,” West Virginia Division of Tourism. August 2001.

- Encourage additional, appropriate commercial and industrial development areas along the Corridor H areas of influence located in Hampshire County. Of particular concern are Route 259 north from the Hardy County Line to Yellow Spring; WV Route 29 north from the Hardy County line/Rio area to US Route 50; and US Route 220 from the Hardy County line/Purgitsville area to Junction.
- Enhance the quality of life in Hampshire County through appropriate economic activity.
- Foster county and business community cooperation in promoting economic development, community attractiveness, and activities and events.
- Promote the development of tourism destinations, activities, and services.
- Encourage linkages to major open spaces such as the South Branch of the Potomac River, North River, Little Cacapon River, and Cacapon River, and the regional transportation system, to increase the attractiveness of the region as a residential and business location.
- Coordinate county agencies who can work on economic development related activities, such as the Hampshire County Economic Development Authority, the Hampshire County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Hampshire County Parks and Recreation, the Hampshire County Planning Office, and Hampshire County Schools.

Strategies

- Collaborate with the Central Hampshire Public Service District to develop a 20-year county water and sewer plan. (Short term)
- Actively participate in collaborative marketing efforts with the Hampshire County Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and the West Virginia Development Office. (Short term)
- Participate in the Potomac Highlands Entrepreneurial Forum and provide technical assistance to potential entrepreneurs in Hampshire County. (Short term)
- Actively promote ongoing and established festivals and encourage additional community festivals. (Short term)
- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in development-related activities. (Short term)

- Target employers who are interested in locating/expanding to a rural environment within easy commuting distance to a major metropolitan area and are interested in diversifying the employment opportunities needed for long-term economic vitality and stability. Identify businesses that are not detrimental to the natural resources of Hampshire County. (Medium term)
- Develop a comprehensive infrastructure initiative for cable, phone, internet, and other technology based infrastructure. (Medium term)
- Develop infrastructure needed by targeted employer groups. (Medium term)
- Encourage creation of business base to support other business, such as food service, recreation facilities, outlet shops, rental properties, and other amenities. (Medium term)
- Develop Hampshire County into a local provider of high quality agricultural goods, thereby stimulating the local economy. (Medium term)
- Support efforts to protect/promote tourism-related activities. (Medium term)
- Update the county subdivision regulations to include land development requirements for single parcel developments and incorporate requirements for interconnecting linkages between non-residential and residential uses and between adjacent commercial uses to provide greater pedestrian accessibility. (Medium term)
- Develop entrepreneurial opportunities involving the increasing population of seniors/elderly for health care, home care, and extended residential care. (Long term)
- Pursue the development of additional senior centers to more efficiently cope with ever increasing needs for the services provided throughout Hampshire County by the existing providers. (Long term)
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, subject to approval by county voters, to designate and preserve areas for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other uses, with the goal of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use. (Long term)
- Conduct a corridor management study of the US Route 50 corridor to determine the most appropriate use of land and to evaluate the need for development standards such as access management. (Long term)

- Encourage and establish a local community college and technical schools. (Long term)
- Work to expand nature and outdoor recreation opportunities associated the state wildlife management areas, the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad, and sky/star watching. (Long term)

Fiscal Considerations

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

NATURAL RESOURCES

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

PLANNING CONTEXT

Natural Resources

Hampshire County is abundant in its natural resources. There are commercial product commodities such as timber. There are asset resources such as water. There are amenities such as clean air and clear skies. There are specialties such as varied wildlife and plant life. These will need to be addressed as the county moves toward its future, ensuring that they are both utilized and maintained for future generations.

The tallest point in the county is South Branch Mountain at 3,028 feet. There are also 14 other mountains (points at least 1,000 feet above sea level), 10 of which are more than 2,000 feet in height.

The major river in Hampshire County is the Potomac River, which forms the northern border of the county with Maryland. Its presence makes the county is also one of eight in the state that is entirely within the Chesapeake Bay drainage area. Its presence in that vital watershed both increases the importance of protecting water resources and the requirements in place to ensure water protection occurs.

The branches of the Potomac River meet at the northern edge of the county. The North Branch of the Potomac flows in the extreme northwest corner of the county. The South Branch of the Potomac flows northward the entire length of the county.

There are other prominent rivers in Hampshire County. The Cacapon River flows south-north across the eastern edge of the county. From it branches the North River at Capon Springs, which travels in a southwest-northeast direction. The Little Cacapon River branches from the Potomac and flows north-south in the central part of the county. Connected to these rivers are other smaller rivers, streams, creeks, runs, and tributaries.

There are also some small lakes, ponds, and reservoirs throughout the county, including Lake Ferndale (a feature in a residential subdivision in the northwest part of the county) and northern edge of Warden Lake (in the wildlife management area in the southeast part of the county bordering Hardy County).

Publicly Owned and/or Managed Lands

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

Fort Mill Ridge WMA (217 acres) is located two miles southwest of Romney off of US Route 50. The area is located primarily on a ridge that ranges in elevation from 680 to 1,100 feet. The forest consists mainly of hardwood with some pine. The primary game species are deer and squirrel and fishing for rock and smallmouth bass, channel catfish, and panfish. Camping is not permitted.

Edwards Run WMA (397 acres) is located two miles north of Capon Bridge on County Road 15. The area primarily consists of low hills with steep slopes covered in an oak-hickory forest plus approximately 17 acres of scattered clearings and brushy areas. There are hunting opportunities for deer, squirrel, and turkey. A section of Edwards Run is stocked with catfish. There are six primitive campsites with pit toilets.

Short Mountain WMA (8,005 acres) is located near Augusta on WV Route 29 and near County Roads 10, 7, and 53. Two mountain ridges form a long horseshoe-shaped basin, nearly all of which is covered in mixed oak and Virginia pine. Hunting for turkey, deer, squirrel, and ruffed grouse is available, along with three furbearers – bobcat, coyote, and fox. The North River offers fishing opportunities for rock and smallmouth bass, panfish, and trout (stocked). There are 74 primitive campsites with pit toilets.

South Branch WMA (1,092 acres) consists of four separate tracts, mainly located in Hardy County but the small sector tract (35 acres) is located in Hampshire County. The area offers hunting for deer, dove, squirrel, and turkey, as well as fox among the furbearers. Fishing opportunities includes rock and smallmouth bass, channel catfish, and panfish. There is a boat ramp on the South Branch River. Camping is not permitted.

Nathaniel Mountain WMA (10,675 acres), the southern part of which is located in Hardy County, is accessed via County Road 10 just east of Romney. Nathaniel, Piney, and Big mountains dominate the area, ranging from 1,000 to 3,050 feet, and the forests are primarily mixed oak-hickory and Virginia pine. Hunting for bear, deer, squirrel and turkey is available, along with three furbearers – bobcat, coyote, and fox. There are 75 primitive campsites with pit toilets.

Wardensville WMA (55,327 acres) is also located in both Hampshire and Hardy counties and is accessed via WV Route 259 and County Road 16. Oak-hickory forest predominates on the mountainous terrain, which provides hunting for bear, deer, squirrel, grouse, and turkey. Fishing is available at Trout Pond (2 acres), Rock Cliff Lake (16 acres), Cacapon River, Lost Rivers, and 61 miles of streams for trout, rock and smallmouth bass, redbreast sunfish. . Camping is available at Trout Pond, Rock Cliff Lake, Wolf Gap, and Hawk recreation areas. Wardensville WMA is owned by the U.S. Forest Service. ²⁶

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

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

Objectives

- Protect and retain water resources within the County to assure the quantity and quality of surface and groundwater for recreational use, wildlife habitats, fire protection, and water supply. Of particular concern will be the South Branch of the Potomac River, North River, Little Cacapon River, and Cacapon River, their tributaries, wetlands and floodplains, and the steep slopes draining into the rivers and creeks.
- Protect groundwater and surface water from pollution and excessive withdrawal.
- Protect watersheds for Central Hampshire PSD, Capon Bridge municipal water supply, and Romney municipal water supply.
- Protect the steep slopes within the county.
- Protect and manage woodlands within the county.
- Promote continued appropriate care for protected lands and other sensitive lands.
- Encourage preservation of open space.
- Encourage protection of open/dark skies.

²⁶ West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, Wildlife Management Areas website. (<https://www.wvdnr.gov/Hunting/WMAMap.shtm>).

Strategies

- Develop programs focusing in stabilization of water corridors and floodplain restoration. (Short term)
- Develop protection incentives for maintaining existing large blocks of forested areas. (Medium term)
- Encourage conservation easements participation pertaining to land uses, i.e., timber, agriculture, open space, dark skies, flood hazard areas. (Medium term)
- Develop agriculture into a local base industry using the existing high quality products being currently produced throughout the county. (Medium term)
- Determine the necessity for and advisability of implementing various forms of land use regulation, to designate and preserve areas for industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and other uses, with the goal of encouraging the use of land in a manner consistent with its most appropriate use. (Medium term)
- Conduct a comprehensive county-wide water resources study. (Long term)
- Work in conjunction with federal, state, and local agencies to ensure water quality management practices are implemented. (Long term)
- Work to expand nature and outdoor recreation opportunities associated with state wildlife management areas, the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad, and sky/star watching. (Long term)

Fiscal Considerations

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

HISTORY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation activities in the county are overseen by Hampshire County Historic Landmarks Commission, which was created in 2007. The Commission is charged with the oversight and preservation of historic places throughout Hampshire County. This section of the Comprehensive Plan allows the county to set priorities for that work.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Historic Landmarks Commission is essential to preservation of the past identity of the county. Hampshire County has experienced growth and continues to experience growth that in many ways affects the previous characteristics of the area. This growth not only demands existing forested and agricultural lands for new subdivisions and commercial entities, but the influx of residents also impact social services and the rural nature of the community. In reaction to these changes, the Historic Landmarks Commission and other county entities feel it is imperative to take a proactive approach to retain the important history and heritage of the county.

Local History

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

By an act passed in 1753 and taking effect May 1, 1754, the Virginia House of Burgesses partitioned the counties of Frederick and Augusta and formed the new county of Hampshire. This makes Hampshire the first of the 55 counties in what would become West Virginia to be formed.

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

Prior to 1754, the regional seat of government was at what is now Old Fields, West Virginia, but was relocated to what became Romney sometime prior to 1762. Before December 1762, Lord Fairfax sent surveyors to the intersection of two trails in Hampshire County to lay out a town. On November 12, 1762, a petition for a town of fifty acres laid off by Lord Fairfax at Pearsall's Level was introduced in the House of Burgesses. After three readings, the bill was passed and then signed by Governor Francis Fauquier. As a result, Romney was established on December 23, 1762. The articles incorporating Romney indicate that the town was laid out in 100 lots. The town was laid out in a square, five blocks deep and five blocks wide, or 25 blocks bisected by four streets. Each block was divided equally into four lots, each being about one-half acre.

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

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

Hampshire County became a destination point for hunters and adventurers in the late 1890s and early 1900s with improved rail access through the South Branch Valley. Inexpensive mountain land and relative ease of travel lured many of the newly wealthy to the South Branch and the Monongahela Valleys of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Before the mid-point of the twentieth century, many camps and cabins could be seen dotting the landscape of Hampshire County from the Trough to Largent.²⁷

Properties Listed on the National Register

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, part of the state's Division of Culture and History, administers both state and federal historic preservation activities. The most prominent of these involves overseeing the placement of properties on the National Register of Historic Places. There are 26 such sites in

²⁷ 2000 Preliminary Comprehensive Plan, Hampshire County, 2000-2020.

Hampshire County, with 15 of those currently listed having been placed on the register since 2010.²⁸

- French's Mill, Augusta. (2014).
- Hook's Tavern, Capon Bridge area. (2011).
- Capon Chapel, Capon Bridge area. (2012).
- Capon Lake Whipple Truss Bridge (South Branch Bridge), Capon Lake. (2011).
- Capon Springs. (1993)
- The Brill Octagon House, Capon Springs area. (2016).
- Captain David Pugh House, Hook Mills area. (2004).
- Sloan-Parker House, Junction area. (1975).
- North River Mills Historic District. (2011).
- Pin Oak Fountain, Pin Oak. (2016).
- Old Pine Church, Purgitsville area. (2012).
- Wilson-Wodrow-Mytinger House, Romney. (1977).
- Literary Hall, Romney. (1979).
- Old District Parsonage, Romney. (2006).
- Hampshire County Courthouse, Romney. (2005).
- Valley View, Romney. (2012).
- Fort Mill Ridge Civil War Trenches, Romney area. (2014).
- Fort Van Meter, Romney area. (2009).
- Hickory Grove, Romney area (2011).
- Kuykendall Polygonal Barn, Romney area. (1985).
- Nathaniel and Isaac Kuykendall House, Romney area. (2014).
- Sycamore Dale (Gibson-Wirgman-Williams House), Romney area. (c. 1980).
- Washington Bottom Farm, Springfield. (2001).
- Springfield Brick House, Springfield. (2013).
- Yellow Spring Mill, Yellow Spring. (2014).
- Hebron Church, Yellow Spring area. (2014).

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

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

²⁸ West Virginia Division of Culture and History, State Office of Historic Preservation, National Register List. (<http://www.wvculture.org/shpo/nr/hampshire.html>)

Objectives

- Survey existing and potential historic, landmarks, buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts which constitute the principal historical and architectural sites which are of local, regional, state, or national significance.
- Prepare and publish a register of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts.
- Certify and appropriately designate landmarks.
- Create guidelines for care and management of the certified landmarks.
- Educate the general public on the importance of preservation of landmarks.
- Encourage the preservation, protection, and enhancement of historic and architectural resources and their context.
- Support the efforts of local historic preservation groups to save and restore historic and cultural resources important to the county.

Strategies

- Continue to inventory historical events, sites, structures and related resources. (Short term)
- Identify, preserve, and use the historical resources for future generations, including structures, artifacts, sites, and oral tradition. (Medium term)
- Work in cooperation with landmark property owners to ensure the engagement of preservation activities and that landmarks are allowed to be designated and protected. (Medium term)
- Work in cooperation with the Hampshire County Planning Commission to ensure adequate surveys are conducted prior to the development of land. (Medium term)
- Pursue professional services to conduct a complete and comprehensive land survey of Hampshire County. (Long term)
- Develop educational programs designed to instill the importance of preservation and the benefits that can be obtained on a county wide basis. (Long term)

Fiscal Considerations

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Seek additional county general revenues.
- Seek financial contributions/assistance from external entities with whom work is jointly done.
- Pursue gifts, grants, and in-kind contributions.
- Seek bequests and endowments to create a permanent funding source and fund reserve.

RECREATION

The Hampshire County Parks and Recreation Department works to provide recreation and enjoyment to individuals of all ages. This is done through a various activities and programs. It operates six parks and works in conjunction with numerous community based groups to provide leisure opportunities utilizing facilities not owned by the county. There are also other groups and entities involved in recreational offerings, from the Hampshire County Arts Council to the Hampshire County Little League to the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad.

PLANNING CONTEXT

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

County Park Facilities

The county offers a variety of recreational options through its six park facilities.

Camp Walker is a 10-acre park in Frenchburg. It has a disc golf course, a large pavilion with an attached covered stage, and 32 picnic tables.

The Capon Bridge Town Park has a tennis/basketball court, a paved walking track, a sports field, and playground equipment.

The Green Spring Park has a picnic pavilion with attached covered stage, a sports field, a sand volleyball area, and playground equipment.

Hampshire Park is an 11-acre facility three miles south of Romney. It has a kitchen and dining hall, seven picnic pavilions, a large barbecue pit, a basketball court, a sports field, a sand volleyball area, and playground equipment.

Central Hampshire Park is a 16-acre facility east of Romney near Augusta. It has four picnic pavilions, two large barbecue pits, an outdoor amphitheater, horseshoe pits, a basketball court, a sports field, a sand volleyball area, and playground equipment.

Slanesville Park is a 10-acre park with open fields and woodlands, including a nature trail with tree identification markets. It also has picnic tables and benches, a paved walking track, a soccer/sports field, a youth baseball/softball field.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

Goals Statement

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

Objectives

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

Strategies

- Query residents to investigate wanted leisure activities. (Short term)
- Encourage continued and improved communication and coordination among the entities, agencies, and organizations involved in recreation and tourism activities. (Short term)
- Supplement activities being undertaken by the Board of Education. (Short term)
- Pursue innovative initiatives for increased leisure opportunities through the county. (Medium term)
- Integrate a driving tour program for all eras of Hampshire County history to promulgate interest in preservation and tourism of the rich history of Hampshire County. (Medium term)
- Work with private sector to establish support businesses to embellish the tourist industry in Hampshire County. (Medium term)
- Support efforts to protect and promote existing recreation and tourism-related activities. (Medium term)
- Utilize existing trail system on Nathaniel and Short Mountains for tourism and recreational opportunities. (Long term)
- Develop tourism through Civil War Trails program. (Long term)

- Utilize the draw of the Potomac Eagle to attract tourists as a destination for extended periods of time with the development and information distribution about Hampshire County's other tourism opportunities. (Long term)
- Undertake advertising campaign to attract tourists to Hampshire County, concentrating on the D.C. Metropolitan and Pittsburgh areas. (Long term)
- Develop recreational facilities in the eastern Hampshire County. (Long term)
- Develop and utilize the recreational opportunities on the Cacapon and Potomac Rivers to mirror those encountered on the South Branch of the Potomac. (Long term)
- Ensure leisure opportunities for all Hampshire County residents within close proximity to both residential and work locations. (Long term)
- Acquire land for future expansion of the Hampshire County Parks and Recreation, utilizing subdivision regulations and land purchases. (Long term)
- Work in conjunction with the planning of subdivisions through the Planning Commission to ensure recreational opportunities for new planned developments. (Long term)
- Promote recreational activities as tourism opportunities through cooperation between the Hampshire County Parks and Recreation, the Hampshire County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other entities. (Long term)
- Work to expand nature and outdoor recreation opportunities associated the state wildlife management areas, the Potomac Eagle Scenic Railroad, and sky/star watching. (Long term)

Fiscal Considerations

- Use existing revenues streams.
- Explore legal authority to charge impact fees or development fees to augment existing funding sources.
- Support efforts of external entities to find appropriate financial resources (i.e., recreation facilities construction grants).
- Create traditional and innovative measures for increased money flow for facilities improvements, expansions, and program development (e.g., fundraisers, auctions, pavilion rentals, and special event fees).
- Pursue bequests and endowments for parks, facilities, and other properties.

- Work in conjunction with local, county, state, and national entities to develop revenue flow for the increased development of the Department (e.g., grants, gifts, and low interest loans).

APPENDIX 1: PUBLIC INPUT

The Hampshire County Planning Commission surveyed county residents in the Fall of 2016 to seek direction for the comprehensive plan update. The surveys were published in the *Hampshire Review* and made available at public meetings.

The planning commission then held a special, informative meeting on, November 15, 2016 for public comment and input on the comprehensive plan update and the survey results. The meeting was advertised (as a public hearing) in the *Hampshire Review* in October and took place at the Bottling Works (the Coca Cola Bottling Building) in Romney. Those attending the meeting were asked to review and comment on the surveys and to share their thoughts openly. Surveys were also made available at the meeting.

Additionally, some groups, such as the Historic Landmarks Commission, were consulted directly about the plan update.

The results of the survey are below.

Question 1: What are the most positive aspects of Hampshire County?

Responses	Total
Rural Life & Rural Living	21
Friendly & Helpful People	17
Landscape Beauty & Scenery	15
Abundant Wildlife & Resources	7
Heritage, History, & Historic	7
Open Spaces & Quietness	5
Clean Air & Little Pollution	4
Relatively Safe & Low Crime Rate	4
Strong Sense of Community	4
Low Property Taxes	3
Workable Distance from Urban Areas	3
Tourism, Cultural Festivals, & Other Events	2
Churches	1
Clean Water	1
Dark Skies	1
Diversity of Population	1
Little Traffic	1
Low Cost to Operation	1

Question 1 Comments

- Includes State & Federal Land,
- Need more public access & parks along waterways
- Local businesses support schools, local hospital
- Potomac Eagle Railroad
- Small, traditional community
- Quality of life
- Good location
- Natural environment
- Schools are heading in right direction

Question 2: What changes have occurred in the last 5-10 years in Hampshire County?

Responses	Total
Increase of Drugs & Crime	10
Critical Access Hospital & Services & Wellness Increase	7
Loss of Businesses & Restaurants	4
Heavier Traffic	3
Very Little Development/ Business Growth	3
911 Address Update	2
Building Permits Too Extreme	2
Cooper Mountain Landfill	2
High Demand-Communication Infrastructure	2
Increased Population	2
New Restaurants	2
Poor Education	2
Backwards In Some Ways	1
Growth of Farm to Table Operations	1
High Number of Small Acreage Development Lots	1
Increased Cultural Activities (CVB & HC Arts Council Participation)	1
Losing Historic Structures	1
Loss of Population	1
New Business in Capon Bridge. Less in Romney	1
Positive Business Development in Augusta	1
Positive Restrictions on Development	1
Raised Taxes	1
Recycle Center	1
Regional Jail	1
Retirement Community for Low Tax Base	1
Stricter Building Codes	1
Upgrade to Sewer Treatment	1

Question 2 Comments

- Valley Health-Cardiology, General Surgery, Gynecology, Orthopedics, Podiatry, Internal Medicine, Pulmonology
- Restrictive development too late for mountaintop-left ruined view and wildlife habitat & cost increase of emergency services
- Sheetz & Main Street Grill
- Landfill came in with no knowledge
- Other than Dollars Stores
- Studio Tour, Public Place Art, Bottling Works Shows & Concerts
- Stress in the economy results in bigger restraints to provide.
- Gain two: Main Street Grill & Farmers Daughter
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Desire to reach toward the future while still holding on to the past

Question 3: What Challenges does Hampshire County face today?

Responses	Total
Focus On Drug Addiction & Problem	17
Jobs, Lack Of Jobs, & Sustainable Jobs	16
Quality Of Education & Improvement Of Education	11
Poor Communication	9
Attracting Business To Improve HC Economy	7
Maintain Main & Secondary Roads	7
Infrastructure & Growth	6
High Unemployment Rate & Poverty Rate	4
More People Than Revenue Available	2
Resistance to Change & Not Overcoming Peoples Rights through taxes & laws	2
What To Do With Youth & High School Graduates	2
Challenge of Implementing Comprehensive Plan	1
Chronic Disease	1
Decline in Population	1
Future World Challenges Affecting HC	1
Improve Health of Population	1
Lack of Financial Security	1
Lack of Health Care Providers	1
Maintain & Promote Heritage & Tourism	1
Preserving Natural Resources	1
Risk of Overemphasizing Sentimental Loyalty to Confederate	1
Run Down Homes, Junk Outside, etc.	1
Tax Base Providing Resources to Implement Needs	1

Question 3 Comments

- Businesses do not want to come in due to poor communication
- Roads, Schools, EMS,
- Lack prohibits business growth & increased tax revenue base
- Increase economic opportunity without congestion & pollution
- Focus on vocational schools
- Lack of air, rail, etc.
- See Attached Paperwork, Supporting water & sewer
- New residents keeping out of state registered plates
- Large County with limited resources to maintain infrastructure
- More Choices for Internet, Homelessness

Question 4: What must be preserved or maintained in Hampshire County?

Responses	Total
HC History, Heritage, Historical Structures, Monuments, Landmarks, Sites	20
Rural Atmosphere/ Sense of Community	13
Agriculture	10
Beautiful Scenery & Open Spaces	7
Conserve Natural Areas & Wildlife	5
Environment & Healthy Environment	5
Jobs & Family Owned Businesses	5
Water Quality & Clean Water	5
Dark Skies	3
Freedom of Choice & Rights of Land Owners	3
Preserve the Future of the Next Generation	2
Arts	1
Low Cost Development Operations	1
Low Taxes	1
Preserve the Fire, Rescue, & Sheriff Departments	1
Roads & Road Congestion	1
School Buildings	1
Tourism	1
Unused Buildings Must Be Maintained	1
Volunteerism	1

Question 4 Comments

- Zoning has never been supported in HC, resulting in haphazard development & Long-term increased costs, Green space to keep HC "Wild & Wonderful."
- Can do what they want within reason w/o too many restrictions on land
- Main Street Grill & new Sign & landscaping for Potomac Eagle
- South Branch Conservation
- To maintain tourism & retirement population
- Especially Related To Tourism
- Clean Air & Water
- Davis House & Other Landmarks
- Preserve WV State School & Quality
- Low Crime, Strong Community
- Preserve & Emphasis on Union Soldiers Records

Question 5: What can be done to improve the quality of life in Hampshire County?

Responses	Responses:
Jobs & Better Jobs & Local Businesses	20
Education	10
Reliable Cell Service, Internet, Land Line Service	9
Increase Outside/Inside Recreational Use	5
Highway Improvement Implementation	4
More Progressive Thoughts & Look to the Future	4
Well Trained Drug Free Workforce	4
HC Support Of Arts Program, Cultural Programs & Festivals	3
Social Opportunities for Young Adults	3
Encouragement of History & Maintain History	2
Protection & Development of HC Natural Resources	2
Wildlife	2
Clean, Safe Drinking Water	1
Drug Programs	1
Encouragement of Property Cleanup	1
Family Support to Churches and Others	1
Keep Contributing HC Citizens	1
Keep Dark Skies	1
Less Regulations	1
More Restaurants	1
Need Awareness Groups & Watch Dog Groups	1
Noise Control	1
Support Farmers	1

Teen Center	1
Theater	1
Tourism & Attract Tourism	1
Urban Development Zones	1
Zoning	1

Question 5 Comments

- Technical & Trade Schools to guide graduates career paths to obtain employable skills
- Do not permit high density development outside of urban zones-otherwise, will lose what attracted people first.
- Restaurants that serve alcohol with meals
- Better access to Cacapon River, especially Capon Bridge area
- Better Internet & Communication
- Hire teachers that want to teach
- Wellness Programs through employers
- Citizens work close to home will have better quality of life
- High Speed Internet
- More support for volunteer rescue squad, Maybe have an Noise Ordinance
- Trust & Faith in God & Christian Values
- Have you ever tried to dispose of anti-freeze in our area? Try Recycling

Question 6: What direction should development take in Hampshire County?

Responses	Total
Jobs & Businesses	15
Tourism & Develop Tourism	7
Technology & Business Park Growth	6
Zoning & Change Zoning & Limited Land Use	5
Assess & Address Education System Defects	3
Business That Won't Negatively Impact Rivers Or Dark Night Skies	3
Communication Industry of Telecom, Broadband, Internet, & Cellular.	3
Promote Healthy Lifestyles & Addiction Awareness	3
Goal of Ecotourism & Agritourism	2
Lower Business Taxes and/or Cut Property Taxes	2
Non-Invasive Economic Development	2
Preserve Farmland	2
Active Recruitment & Marketing To Select Industries	1
Clean Up Highways	1
East of the Virginia State Line	1
Encourage Local People To Create Small Businesses	1
Fewer Regulations	1

Keep Fracking Out	1
Keep Rural Development In Areas That Can Be Served w/ /Roads, Water, & Sewer	1
Limit Townhouses & Apartment Complexes	1
Maintain Public Buildings and Roads	1
Make Route 50 a Four Lane Road	1
Need to Keep Young Professionals	1
Proactive Tourism, Recreational, Cultural, Heritage Collab.	1
Provide For Removal of Solid Waste & Hazardous Materials	1
Rail Service	1
Slow, Planned Development	1

Question 6 Comments

- Technical/Trade Schools
- Create Urban Development Zone & do not permit high density development outside of it.
- Great public spaces & parks, esp. river & water fronts
- Survey, certify, & Mark all historical structures, Seek & start a Historic Preservation Group, designate HC as "Oldest County in WV" so that US Presidents & Wives came to visit; goal to have destination worthy of future presidential families.
- To Keep Landfills Out; Employers see eager competent work force
- Focus on bringing business in, not keeping it out
- Think about recycling & preserving
- More business, less housing
- Water Trails & Farmers Markets
- Results in controlled growth
- There's a limit to tourism; need businesses that employ without negative impact on environment
- Earth Friendly Businesses; Don't wait for some corporations to "rescue" HC; Identify assets of HC, Including people & skills
- Farmland Protection efforts to be commended; If economic conditions better, then residential development would increase
- Will require public & private project that is implemented strategically & phased into as part of Comp. Plan
- Encourage Alternative Schools, Charters, Homeschools & School Choice
- Address drug problem through law enforcement, school, church, & local community; internet providers other than Frontier
- Preserve past is nice, but when it becomes a hindrance to our future it has become a problem

APPENDIX 2: INFORMATION SOURCES

- Canaan Valley Institute
- Central Hampshire PSD
- City of Romney
- D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd.
- Dean Runyon Associates
- DecisionData.org
- Greyhound/Trailways
- Hampshire County Board of Education (Hampshire County Schools)
- Hampshire County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Hampshire County Economic Development Authority
- Hampshire County Parks and Recreation
- Hampshire County Planning Commission
- North American Numbering Plan Administration
- Region VIII Planning and Development Council
- Region VIII Solid Waste Authority
- Town of Capon Bridge
- United States Census Bureau
- United States Department of Transportation
- United States Federal Aviation Administration
- United States Natural Resources Conservation Service
- West Virginia Department of Education
- West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection
- West Virginia Department of Transportation
- West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
- West Virginia Division of Highways
- West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
- West Virginia Solid Waste Management Board
- West Virginia State Police
- West Virginia State Office of Historic Preservation.
- West Virginia University
- Workforce West Virginia
- Wilbur Smith Associates
- Workforce West Virginia
- Zip-Codes.com