

Recommended Plan for Summersville, WV

May 13, 2013

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GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

In order for the comprehensive plan to remain consistent and provide a sound foundation for decision-makers, guidelines for future growth and policy practice need to be developed. These guidelines are best discussed in three layers; the first is a set of **broad goals** for the county to use as ultimate endpoints, the second layer is contained in a set of **objectives** for each goal that begins to lay out the directions that should be taken to achieve the listed goal, and the third layer is characterized by a set of **strategies** that may be used to implement the objective. Areas for which goals, objectives, and strategies are presented include:

- 🏠 Section 1: Citizen Participation
- 🏠 Section 2: Historic Resources
- 🏠 Section 3: Land Use & Conservation
- 🏠 Section 4: Transportation
- 🏠 Section 5: Utilities
- 🏠 Section 6: Recreation
- 🏠 Section 7: Housing
- 🏠 Section 8: Community Facilities
- 🏠 Section 9: Tourism
- 🏠 Section 10: Community Design
- 🏠 Section 11: Implementation

In the following sections the goals, objectives, and strategies will address future growth and development for the City of Summersville.

1.0 CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Goal 1.1: INCLUSION OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY IN SHAPING THE FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF SUMMERSVILLE

Objective 1.1.1: Incorporate citizen input into the formulation and development of the county comprehensive plan and the overall planning program

STRATEGY 1.1.1A: Hold public meetings on a quarterly basis in years when plans are up for review/revision to solicit citizen comments on general planning ideas and proposals and gauge interest on involvement in planning for the City of Summersville.

STRATEGY 1.1.1B: Hold public meetings (at a minimum) on an annual basis in years when the comprehensive plan is not up for review. At these meetings solicit input from citizens on the progress of plan goals and objectives.

STRATEGY 1.1.1C: Make information on the comprehensive plan and other planning topics available for civic groups and organizations. Make planning staff available for presentations and other public information sessions.

Objective 1.1.2: Appoint citizens to advisory boards and committees

STRATEGY 1.1.2A: Appoint citizens to a regularly-scheduled citizens advisory committee that is assigned the task of facilitating citizen involvement in county planning and development

STRATEGY 1.1.2B: Appoint a citizen group (possibly the same group highlighted in 1.1.2a) that would be directed to research and study issues for the Planning and Zoning Board.

Objective 1.1.3: Encourage interaction between citizens of Summersville to instill civic pride and cooperation

STRATEGY 1.1.3A: Schedule quarterly public forums at rotating locations throughout the county. These forums should be topic-driven and focus on

public discussion of current issues. Representatives from various county departments should rotate in leadership of the forums.

Goal 1.2: FACILITATE MEANINGFUL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCEEDINGS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD AND CITY COUNCIL

Objective 1.2.1: Improve the dissemination of information on planning and zoning issues to the public

STRATEGY 1.2.1A: Clearly identify properties subject to zoning or other review and make this information readily available to the public, including posting of properties whenever feasible.

STRATEGY 1.2.1B: Maintain county information systems so that relevant information will be updated in a timely manner to the county web site. This information should include meeting dates, existing and projected publications and availability of review copies, and synopses of current cases coming up for review by the Planning & Zoning Board, City Council, and other public bodies, county agencies and organizations as needed.

2.0 NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

GENERAL HISTORY

Summersville began as a small farming community. The town was named after Judge Lewis Summers, who was instrumental in the formation of Nicholas County. In 1820, just two years after the county was formed, Summersville was created through an act of legislation. It remained a quiet farming community with a population of a little more than a hundred people up until the Civil War.

Like many other places in West Virginia, the civil war forever changed the small town. In 1861 Union troops won a decisive victory over Confederate troops at what is now the Carnifex Ferry Battlefield, a historical site located near Summersville. The victory allowed the Union to regain control of the Kanawha Valley. Three years later, during the winter of 1864 and 1865, armies from both the Union and the Confederacy camped in or around Summersville. It was during this time that the town and all of its buildings were burned to the ground.

The resilient citizens of Summersville refused to allow the fire to extinguish their spirit, and by 1884, the town was rebuilt and became home to over one hundred people. Agriculture sustained the small town until the 1930s when large coal operations transformed Summersville into a center of commerce and industry. Since then, the coal industry has been a major source of employment for the town's citizens.

Summersville has continued to develop over the last fifty years. Thousands of travelers pass through Summersville on U.S. Route 19, which has become a national thoroughfare.

Summersville has become a destination for many tourists. In 1966, the Army Corps of Engineers completed construction of the Summersville Dam, which was dedicated by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The dam created Summersville Lake, the largest lake in West Virginia, with more than 60 miles of shoreline. The Summersville Lake and the surrounding scenic areas provide residents and tourists with many recreational activities, including boating, camping, hiking, fishing, rock climbing, swimming and even scuba diving.

The Summersville Dam is released once every year, and its waters fill the nearby Gauley River, creating some of the best whitewater in the nation. Nearly 60,000 outdoor adventurers come to the Summersville area every fall for Gauley Fest. In addition to the Gauley River, the New River Gorge National River Park, created

in 1978, provides Summersville residents and tourists over 70,000 acres of protected land to enjoy.

GOAL 2.1: RESPECT THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CITY OF SUMMERSVILLE THROUGH STEWARDSHIP OF HISTORIC, ARCHITECTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Objective 2.1.1: Preserve and protect valuable historic sites

STRATEGY 2.1.1A: The City should strive for designation of resources on State and National Registers.

STRATEGY 2.1.1B: The City should identify additional measures to protect sites of interest through the zoning ordinance.

STRATEGY 2.1.1C: Establish a comprehensive survey of historic resources through cooperation with the Nicholas County Historical Society and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History. This survey should contribute to planning measures established through the comprehensive plan.

STRATEGY 2.1.1D: Provide the Nicholas County Historical Society with the opportunity to review development plans for projects which may impact designated historic properties.

Objective 2.1.2: Improve accessibility to historic resources for all county citizens

STRATEGY 2.1.2A: Provide means of access to historic resources that comply with ADA standards and practices.

STRATEGY 2.1.2B: Provide educational resources for county residents in cooperation with the Nicholas County Historical Society. These resources should include printed as well as internet media.

OBJECTIVE 2.1.3: Promote historic resources as valuable commodities to economic development within the county

STRATEGY 2.1.3A: Provide economic incentives to developers that adaptively reuse historic structures in new development.

STRATEGY 2.1.3B: Promote historic resources through tourism development and marketing of the city.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Decisions to develop a community and its surrounding area can affect the quality and long term existence of its natural resources. Considering developments ability to affect current and future generations' use of nearby natural resources, a plan that sufficiently maintains and protects these resources is important to Summersville. Therefore, Summersville will consider the following actions to ensure that all future planning efforts take into consideration any potential effects from development.

Public Input

Public input was captured through the distribution and collection of surveys that asked citizens to express their views on Summersville. The public's most important concerns regarding Summersville were realized through the survey results.

Although it is not within Summersville's municipal limits, residents frequently mentioned Summersville Lake as an important and desirable destination. As a result, the City of Summersville should undertake efforts to help preserve this resource.

Areas that present the potential for outdoor activities, including Summersville Lake, were frequently mentioned by residents as being important to them. For these areas to continue to be desirable the current water and air quality of the area needs to be protected.

Existing Conditions Report

The existing conditions report identified the following concerns involving Summersville's natural resources.

The Summersville region has been blessed with several **water resources**. Summersville is located in the immediate proximity of Summersville Lake and the Gauley River, which is part of the Kanawha River system.

Additionally, Nicholas County enjoys the Birch, Cherry, and Meadow Rivers as well as the Anglins, Hominy, Muddlety, Peters, and Twentymile Creeks. With these readily accessible waterways, it is in the interest of Summersville to take measures to help preserve and improve their quality.

Floodprone lands are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of communities as they hold back stream flows and reduce flooding downstream. Summersville should assess the viability of development near floodprone lands and determine if any are suitable for development given their potential to harm the water resources of the city.

The **slope of land** has an impact on where development may occur and what may be developed in any particular location. Summersville contains areas with steep slopes that may not be proper for building. Therefore, development should be discouraged in areas where it is not appropriate.

When considering future development, **soil quality** is an important factor. Summersville has several different soil types that may make portions of the city unsuitable for specific types or intensities of development.

Forest resources are incredibly important natural resources because they provide social, ecological, and economical value to an area. Due to the values associated with forests, Summersville should be concerned with the preservation of forested areas in surrounding areas and any resources contained within them.

While **agricultural resources** do not have a direct impact on Summersville, it is an important part of Nicholas County's economy as a whole, which has an impact on Summersville. Political support should be given to Nicholas County to develop in a manner that allows more agricultural land to be maintained.

Even though Summersville will not have any **mineral extraction** take place within its borders, Nicholas County has and will more than likely continue to observe mineral extraction in the future. Consequently, the development of coal and natural gas may possess the greatest ability to impact natural resources that are within the interests of Summersville.

GOAL 2.2: PROMOTE THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE THEIR ENJOYMENT FOR GENERATIONS BY SUMMERSVILLE RESIDENTS.

Objective 2.2.1: Maintain water quality in all local water bodies

STRATEGY 2.2.1A: The City should work to protect and preserve all water bodies that flow through its boundaries.

STRATEGY 2.2.1B: The City should work with Nicholas County to protect and preserve water bodies outside the City's boundaries that will impact natural resources important to Summersville.

STRATEGY 2.2.1C: The City should work with Nicholas County to ensure development, particularly the development of mineral resources, will not harm water or air quality.

STRATEGY 2.2.1D: Assess the appropriateness for development near floodprone lands.

Objective 2.2.2: Designate areas according to their slope and soil quality for appropriate development intensities.

STRATEGY 2.2.2A: Refer to the Soil Survey of Nicholas County, West Virginia, June, 1992, prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture to determine what areas of Summersville possess suitable soil quality for development.

STRATEGY 2.2.2B: Create a slope overlay area where there are development restrictions.

Objective 2.2.3: Preserve Nicholas County forests and agricultural lands

STRATEGY 2.2.3A: The City should work with Nicholas County as well as state and national agencies to help preserve nearby forests and agricultural lands.

STRATEGY 2.2.3B: The City should work with Nicholas County to ensure development, particularly the development of mineral resources, will not

result in the degradation or loss of forests and agricultural lands.

Objective 2.2.4: Consider the impacts from zoning changes on natural and historic resources

STRATEGY 2.2.4A: The City should assess any impacts on natural resources that may result from the granting of requested variances and conditional uses.

STRATEGY 2.2.4B: The City should assess any impacts on historic resources that may result from the granting of requested variances and conditional uses.

3.0 LAND USE & CONSERVATION

LAND USE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Since land development trends shape the physical pattern of a planning area and often its livability, they are important items to be recognized and controlled. A general land use plan will act as a guide for the Summersville City Council, the Planning & Zoning Board, and other area governmental bodies which draw information for making decisions that affect the physical pattern of the city.

The Comprehensive Plan is designed to serve as a guide for the future development of the city. Broad principles of planning and community development are presented here to serve as a basis for the more refined development proposals. These broad principles are also a basis for the goals and policies presented in the Plan. An awareness of the interconnection of these elements will help local officials make coordinated and systematic day-to-day development decisions.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

The basic goal of residential development is to provide a pleasant and stimulating living environment for all the residents. This type of environment must be fostered and preserved in all residential developments, whether single, duplex or multi-family housing; seasonal housing, mobile home parks or even transient resort hotel housing.

Principles

Although specific needs of these different types of residential development may differ, broad planning principles apply equally to all:

- ▮ Residential developments should be designed to promote the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants -- they should be blight free, attractive and contain a variety of compatible housing types.
- ▮ Residential developments should be within reasonably convenient access to commercial, community and primary transportation facilities.
- ▮ Residential developments should blend in with the overall community pattern and make wise use of the land.

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- 🏠 Residential developments should be constructed on land where all community services can be efficiently and economically provided. This implies that they be constructed on relatively flat (not more than a 25 percent grade), well drained, stable land.

While the above apply to all types of residential development, there are some differences in proper development of particular types of residential areas. For example, there is often a need to prevent uncontrolled mixture of residential types such as single-family homes, high density multi-family dwellings and mobile homes.

Indiscriminate mixture of these uses can be detrimental to all, since each requires a specific type of environment. The specific requirements of the five types of residential development recommended for the Planning Area are presented below:

- 🏠 Single-family and two-family residential areas generally require fairly large lots, a street system that does not carry large volumes of traffic and which provides safe and easy access and a generally pleasant, appealing environment.
- 🏠 Multi-family dwellings require large lots, central parking areas, convenient access to shopping and recreational facilities, centralized play areas and special land controls pertaining to access and density. Because families live closer together than in single-family residential areas, sufficiently large parks located nearby for common use are desirable. Large scale developments require arterial access to properly distribute larger traffic volumes.
- 🏠 Mobile homes must comply with the HUD standards to ensure standard construction and should be restricted to well-designed parks which offer all the amenities available to all other types of residential areas. Any development that connects to an arterial corridor should have a site design that conforms to City of Summersville access management standards.
- 🏠 Seasonal residences are not necessarily incompatible with year round residences. However, because seasonal residences rarely require year-round services, such as schools and churches, it is not as important that they be located near these facilities. Seasonal residences should be

located near vacation type recreational facilities and convenience goods shopping areas.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

It should be emphasized that the primary goal for commercial development is to provide well designed clusters conveniently located and offering a full variety of goods and services while fulfilling the needs of the community without becoming a liability to it.

Principles

Community or area shopping centers should be located near major transportation routes with limited access to such facilities; while neighborhood convenience shopping centers should be located within walking distance (one-half mile maximum) of the market population in proximity to arterials and collector streets and/or within the proposed villages.

Sufficient off-street parking, as well as safe and efficient traffic access including egress, ingress and interior flow, should be provided.

Sites should be varied and useful for a variety of commercial activities. Expansion space should be available.

Shopping complexes should have a safe, attractive and functional design. Minimum conflict with other activities and intelligent use of physical features of the land are of the utmost importance.

A shopping center should be compact and offer a full range of goods and services available within short walking distance of each establishment.

Adequate shipping, loading and storage areas should be provided.

Different types of commercial activities, such as business services, retail outlets, highway oriented and recreation oriented commercial activities, and wholesaling, have different types of requirements as follows:

- 🏪 Convenience, retail and service outlets depend on ready access by foot or car, and their location should reflect this need. Off-street parking, compactness and attractiveness are prime considerations.

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- ▣ Business and other specialized services are best located near their customers, with general public access a secondary consideration. Banking and financial services follow a similar pattern, but with more emphasis on public access. Centralized locations are not as important for these as for retail commercial activities.
- ▣ Highway commercial uses should be located in compact clusters near major traffic carriers, with safe access a prime consideration.
- ▣ Recreational commercial uses should follow a similar cluster pattern with regard to environmental features, such as bodies of water. In both cases, attractiveness, aesthetic appeal and efficient utility systems are vital.
- ▣ General commercial categories such as wholesaling and warehousing are best located as buffers between commercial and industrial areas on land of less than top market value. Loading and shipping facilities are necessary, as is proximity to rail and truck transit.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

The primary goal for industrial development is to provide a viable, diversified industrial tax and employment base compatible with the other allowed uses.

Principles

Industrial development should be in compact areas well buffered from conflicting land uses such as residential, and close to regional and local transportation facilities, public utilities and commercial business services. Proximity to a labor force is also important.

An adequate supply of industrial land, usually in the form of industrial parks, is necessary for existing industrial activity and future expansion.

An adequate supply of water at reasonable rates should be available to industrial development.

Industrial development should be serviced by adequate public or centralized sewage disposal facilities.

Industrial sites and structures must be closely regulated and maintained to prevent blight and declining property values. Sites and structures that have the potential to pollute both air and/or water resources must be regulated and taken into account in the approval process. Those facilities that participate in

the transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous materials should be strictly examined in the approval process.

Industrial development is best located in an area which is isolated from residential development -- either by natural features, such as topographic variation and vegetation for screening, or by other less intensive uses such as commercial or warehousing facilities. Probably the best buffer is open space and vegetation to separate industry from incompatible uses.

Commercial/Industrial sites should be planned along major roadway corridors such as US 19. These areas are ideally situated to support commercial / industrial development.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

GROWTH MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

The term "Growth" can refer to population increase, the spread of development across a region, more intensive land uses, or the extension or expansion of utility and transportation systems. For purposes of this Plan, growth should be defined as "the spread or intensification of development." Development is defined as: "any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate including but not limited to buildings or other structures, the placement of mobile homes, streets, and other paving, utilities, filling, grading, excavation, mining, dredging, or drilling operations".

Development usually entails some change in land use (typically towards a more intensive use), which generally results in transportation and utility demands, environmental impacts and increased demand for community, social and other services. Development of this type must comply with federal, state, and local regulations governing environmental protection, water quality and run-off control, and other matters fundamental to public health, safety and general welfare.

In the City of Summersville, development will bring about an upgrade in the land use intensity or a change in the land use classification category, which would correspond to a change in the current zoning of the property. If the proposed development use is not permitted in that location under the current zoning category, application must be made to the city for rezoning that parcel in

accord with the provisions for zoning in the Code of West Virginia and the City of Summersville zoning ordinance.

Due process for rezoning of property includes review of the proposal by the locality, the Planning & Zoning Board and the general public. Final approval, after extensive review and recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board, may be granted by the City Council. It is within this application, review and approval process that growth and development proposals are evaluated by the Planning & Zoning Board and staff for appropriateness and compatibility to the officially adopted Comprehensive Plan and current land use regulations.

Proposed development plans can be fine-tuned to comply with these fundamental land use guidance tools, so as to minimize impacts on adjacent properties and existing infrastructure and public social service systems. This is the realm where growth management strategies have been employed most successfully by other localities.

The concept of Growth Management evolved from an ecological awareness during the 1960's, and the recognition that ecosystems do have limits to their use and carrying capacities. In a similar fashion, planners, citizens and government officials began to discover the problems and costs associated with community growth and began to develop strategies to manage or direct the causes of related problems.

Some of the first growth management initiatives were implemented in California during the early 1970's. Since then, a variety of "techniques" have emerged to enable governments to manage and direct growth. Most have their basis in land use regulation, as a locality controls the intensity of development through zoning.

Recently, local governments have taken into consideration the link between fiscal planning and land use regulation, limiting growth to the extent that roads, sewers, schools and other public facilities and services can be provided by the locality.

IMPACTS OF GROWTH

Anticipated growth in the City of Summersville will have a substantial impact on the existing way of life in the area, including current land uses, the environment, the provision of services and facilities for its people and the overall quality of life. The nature of this impact and associated cost with respect to future planning decisions is briefly outlined below.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Growth ultimately means increased demand and costs for schools, libraries, parks, law enforcement, fire protection, other public facilities and utility services. These costs include annual operating costs and annual debt service on funds borrowed for these and future capital facilities. The tax burden to pay for services falls on residential and non-residential property tax payers. Historically, the greater fiscal responsibility has been carried by non-residential development. This is because residential development typically uses more services than it can pay for with the taxes generated from the development. This is an obvious situation that is due simply to the fact that most local public services (such as schools and recreation) are provided to residents rather than to employees.

Unplanned and unregulated growth in the surrounding County may result in fragmented expansions of services and facilities creating expensive upgrades, poor economies of scale in the provision of infrastructure systems, and inefficiency in delivering services. In order to accommodate growth in the most cost-effective manner, public services and facilities must move forward in harmony with development. Close coordination with Nicholas County leadership will help to ensure that Summersville grows smoothly.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS

Unmanaged growth will adversely impact the environment. Uncontrolled or inappropriate use of the land will eventually carry a high price tag. Water supplies may become endangered, water runoff can cause erosion and pollute drainage basins and Summersville Lake, the Gauley River, and overall water quality can be affected and important wetlands destroyed. Excessive development can strangle transportation systems where demand exceeds capacity; air pollution results and time and energy are wasted. Encroachment of development on productive farmland and forest areas will reduce an important component of the local economy and an important wildlife habitat.

RURAL CHARACTER

Development of raw land often occurs in a "leapfrog" manner, which is to say that it jumps to where the cost of land and development is significantly less. In a speculative environment development tends to sprawl along the access routes. Ideally, in rural areas, the small villages develop a distinctive "sense of place". Today, traditional retail and residential areas in the village are being replaced with large, generic shopping centers. In this process, the rural landscape is quickly consumed, and agriculture and forestry uses are converted to low density residential and commercial uses. The unique character of the region and the very features which make the rural areas so attractive and contribute to the "quality of life" are lost.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to fully preserve the traditional "rural character" of any area as it is developed with more intensive uses served by public utilities. However, it is possible to mitigate these impacts by providing setbacks and buffers from major roadways, clustering residential and commercial development, and preserving sensitive environmental resources such as floodplains, wetlands, existing vegetation and steep slopes.

CIVIC COSTS

Perhaps the most fundamental question pertaining to the issue of growth management becomes "who profits from growth and who pays for it?" In the decade of the 1990's, the nation became aware of the precious scarcity of many of our resources and the limit to which services can be provided by federal, state and local governments. Growth management recognizes that the land resources are limited, development should take into consideration public and private impacts, benefits should be equitable, and the quality of life should be carefully retained.

UNREGULATED GROWTH, DISPARITY AND INEFFICIENCIES

Poorly regulated growth in the City of Summersville will have a detrimental impact on current land uses and the environment, and it will cost the City and State of West Virginia more to provide new services than it will if it was properly planned and managed.

The City of Summersville could become even more of a patchwork of various types of projects with greatly differing design standards, appearances and economic life-cycles, or **it can become a well-planned, harmonious community**

with coordinated, harmonious land uses and compact, dense, walkable development served by high-capacity roadways and scenic corridors.

While some developments might make positive contributions to the city, its citizens and the quality of life, other developments can cause problems and become burdens. Future problems can be anticipated: inadequate community water and sewer systems, septic failures and transportation and community facility demands which will eventually exceed capacity and require expansion. Other impacts, such as the loss of farmland and unregulated growth, will have a detrimental effect upon the city, unless strong conservation and resources protection measures are implemented.

The basis for establishing growth management and conservation strategies is to protect Summersville's human and natural resources. A sound Comprehensive Plan should endeavor to balance and maintain an ongoing, dynamic equilibrium between:

- ▣ Community and economic development and the "quality of life"
- ▣ Community and economic development and the "rural character"
- ▣ Cost of funding necessary infrastructure and sources of revenue

NEED FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN THE CITY OF SUMMERSVILLE

The City of Summersville has not experienced extensive urbanization largely because of its location along the largely rural US 19 corridor and the lack of major employers and commercial opportunities more prevalent in larger communities in West Virginia. However, with the development of the Summersville Readiness Center, the Division of Motor Vehicles offices, the Bechtel Reserve, and ongoing regional population and job growth, the pressures for development in the City of Summersville will continue to increase. Unless the city is proactive in providing infrastructure and guiding development, the County risks several negative outcomes:

- ▣ Loss of character
- ▣ Quality job growth may locate in neighboring jurisdictions that are competing with Summersville for new employment
- ▣ Growth may occur in an uncoordinated, scattered pattern that detracts from the overall quality of the city and may depress land values and tax revenues

GOAL 3.1: GENERAL - PROMOTE A FUTURE LAND USE PATTERN THAT REINFORCES THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

- 1. Plan for growth centers that meet the needs of existing and future residents and businesses*
- 2. Preserve attractive aspects of the existing character and lifestyle of the City of Summersville*
- 3. Reinforce quality of life through strong neighborhoods*

Objective 3.1.1: Concentrate new development in identified growth areas rather than allowing random development along roadway corridors and into sensitive development areas.

STRATEGY 3.1.1A: Delineate land areas best suited for development on an officially adopted Land Use Map. This map should indicate accepted growth boundaries and development areas and show adopted land use classes for the entire city. *Figure 1, Designated Growth Areas* illustrates these development areas.

STRATEGY 3.1.1B: Provide incentives for new development inside growth areas that encourage creative and innovative design as well as allowing for developer flexibility. Clustering of uses and higher densities should be encouraged as discussed in 3.1.2d and 3.6.1a. Investigate fiscal incentives for development inside growth areas.

STRATEGY 3.1.1C: Enforce the comprehensive plan through the rezoning process to ensure that development only occurs as it is prescribed.

STRATEGY 3.1.1D: Plan for new development inside growth areas by setting aside land where future development may be slated to occur.

STRATEGY 3.1.1E: Require dense development (greater than one unit per acre) to locate only inside growth areas where sufficient public facilities and utilities are present

STRATEGY 3.1.1F: Develop a build-out analysis of The City of Summersville. This study should identify those areas presently slated for development, use the existing zoning and the highest possible intensity allowed, and predict the eventual build-out of that land according to those criteria. This

Figure 1: Designated Growth Areas





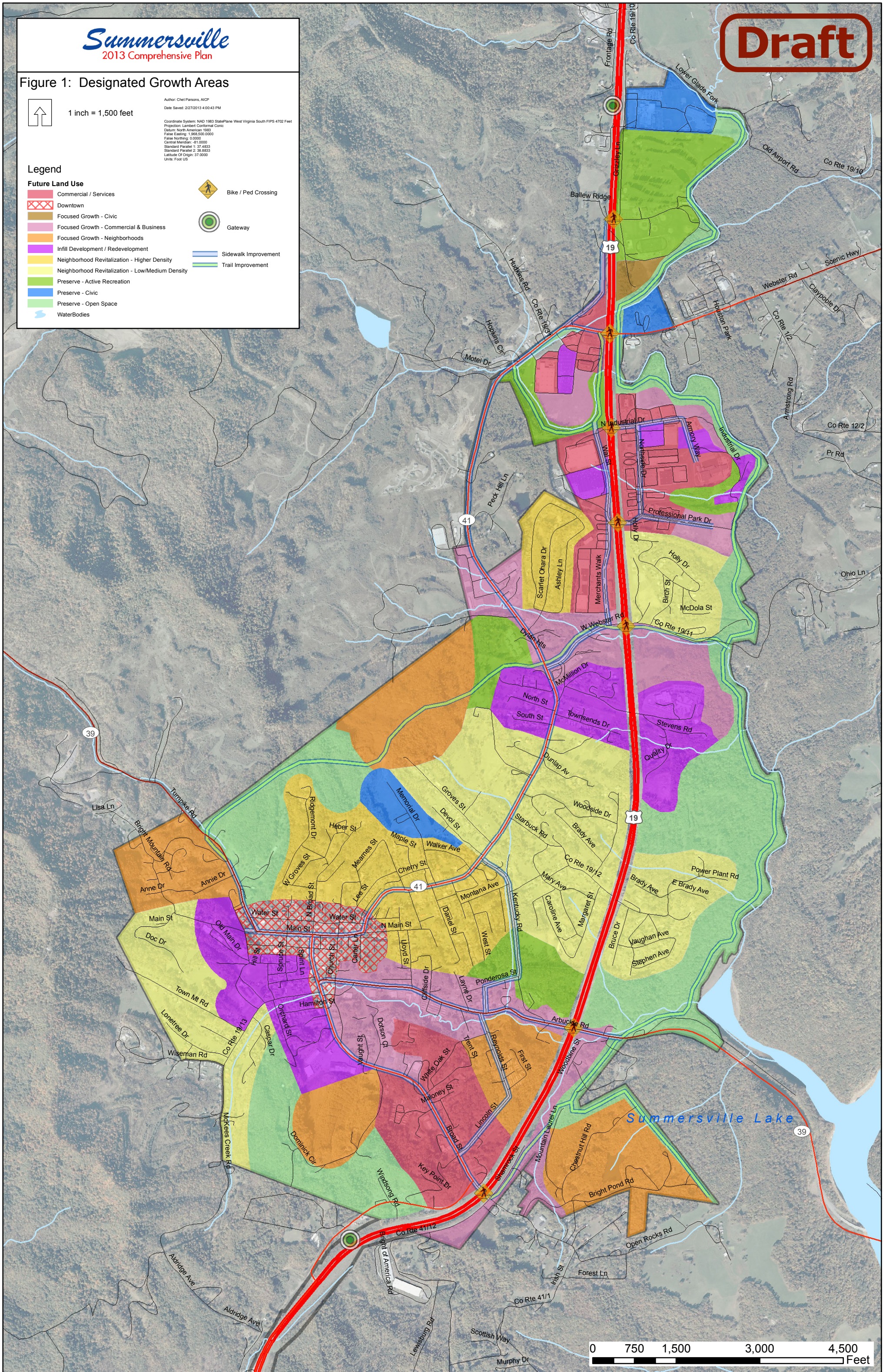
1 inch = 1,500 feet

Author: Chet Parsons, AICP
Date Saved: 2/27/2013 4:00:43 PM
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane West Virginia South FIPS 4702 Feet
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American 1983
False Easting: 1,968,500.0000
False Northing: 0.0000
Central Meridian: -81.0000
Standard Parallel 1: 37.4833
Standard Parallel 2: 36.8823
Latitude Of Origin: 37.0000
Units: Foot US

Legend

Future Land Use

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------------|
|  | Commercial / Services |  | Bike / Ped Crossing |
|  | Downtown |  | Gateway |
|  | Focused Growth - Civic |  | Sidewalk Improvement |
|  | Focused Growth - Commercial & Business |  | Trail Improvement |
|  | Focused Growth - Neighborhoods | | |
|  | Infill Development / Redevelopment | | |
|  | Neighborhood Revitalization - Higher Density | | |
|  | Neighborhood Revitalization - Low/Medium Density | | |
|  | Preserve - Active Recreation | | |
|  | Preserve - Civic | | |
|  | Preserve - Open Space | | |
|  | WaterBodies | | |



information will be incorporated into future amendments of the comprehensive plan. Findings from the build-out analysis should be evaluated for necessary changes to zoning and subdivision ordinances.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.2: Protect sensitive areas from new development

STRATEGY 3.1.2A: Adopt a Map of Potential Conservation Lands (*Figure 15, Existing Conditions*) that delineates sensitive environmental features for the entire city. These features include prime farmland (USDA definition), steep slopes (>25%), moderate slopes (15%-25%), and Floodprone lands (>50% chance of annual flooding). Development proposals should be assessed using this map alongside parcels to be affected to determine the extent of impact on the environment.

STRATEGY 3.1.2B: Require groundwater testing for development proposals not occurring in areas with public water and sewer facilities.

STRATEGY 3.1.2C: Establish riparian buffers along all surface water bodies to protect water resources from additional nutrient and sediment loadings. These buffers should restrict development at least 100 feet from the edge of perennial streams and at least 50 feet from the edge of intermittent streams.

STRATEGY 3.1.2D: Encourage development patterns that conserve land as an alternative to traditional cookie-cutter zoning patterns. Two alternatives are the Rural Preservation and Planned Unit Development designations.

Rural Preservation:

The city encourages developers to set aside portions of land for conservation in new development proposals.

Preservation of a significant portion of the land holdings in a conservation easement is required to be eligible to develop the remaining land. The preserved land will be held in perpetuity by a homeowner's association, the county, or a third party and future development of this land will not be permitted. This land will be made available for passive recreation activities and will be beneficial as a groundwater recharge area and nutrient and sediment filter from developed areas.

The following principles will apply to land developed as Rural Preservation:

- ▤ Land required to be set aside in a conservation easement should be held in existing agricultural, forested, or natural condition. At least fifty (50) percent of the site should be set aside in this easement. Control of the easement will be held by a homeowners association, the city, or a third party (i.e. West Virginia Land Trust, etc.).
- ▤ All lots created in the rural preservation zoning district should be served by not more than one access to an existing public road unless the development contains fifty (50) or more lots. Those developments over forty-nine (49) lots should utilize two access points. The rights-of-way for all internal roads serving the development should be a minimum of fifty (50) feet and all roads should be paved according to WVDOT standards.
- ▤ Density bonuses should be provided to developers that choose this land use pattern so that the reduced development area will remain viable through more creative options in site design. Developers that set aside sixty (60) percent of the site for conservation will be given a twenty-five (25) percent bonus in building lots. Setting aside seventy (70) percent of the site for conservation will yield a fifty (50) percent bonus in building lots.
- ▤ Special consideration for density bonuses will be given for those developments that incorporate the following:

Environmental Protection

For protecting water quality, vegetated buffer areas, wildlife habitats and other sensitive areas.

Permanent Open Space Conservation Easements

For dedication of permanent open space, reductions in lot sizes and road widths.

Pedestrian Access

For providing designs that foster pedestrian convenience within the development and to adjacent commercial areas, and for providing additional trails, sidewalks and related amenities.

Provision of Amenities

For providing easement donations and community amenities such as recreation and community facilities, road dedication

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and construction, landscaping and buffers, affordable housing and cash proffers for, or in addition to these items.

Planned Unit Development:

This development type only applies to designated growth areas. Further discussion of this type of land use pattern will be covered under the sections on designated growth areas (3.2 and 3.5).

STRATEGY 3.1.2E: Develop a countywide map of groundwater resources through geologic testing and analysis. Predict existing water supply levels through this analysis. This map should be used in conjunction with the Map of Potential Conservation Lands to determine development feasibility. This map should be developed in a manner that it can be incorporated into the City of Summersville GIS without major difficulty.

STRATEGY 3.1.2F: Since 2000, the average annual growth rate has been 0.8%. Summersville should plan for an average annual growth rate of 1% citywide with 75% of that growth occurring in designated growth areas.

STRATEGY 3.1.2G: Consult the Elk Conservation District on a regular basis for input on issues before the Planning & Zoning Board. Provide assistance to the ECD in developing a watershed management plan that includes The City of Summersville.

STRATEGY 3.1.2H: Preserve the existing dark night sky, insofar as is possible, by requiring the use of best available technology when installing or modifying outside lighting sources, limiting internally lighted signs, limiting height for lamp mounting structures, and light coverings that direct lighting downward.

Objective 3.1.3: Coordinate city codes, ordinances, and policies with land use planning

STRATEGY 3.1.3A: Evaluate city codes to determine the level of consistency with stated land use goals and objectives. If needed, revise codes to establish uniformity with the comprehensive plan.

STRATEGY 3.1.3B: Maintain and amend, if necessary, zoning codes to match both current and future planning efforts.

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STRATEGY 3.1.3C: Synchronize transportation and utility plans across agencies to match land use goals and objectives so that services are available to target areas as development pressures require additional infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.4: Encourage creative architectural and landscape design that complements the existing built environment

STRATEGY 3.1.4: Retain natural features where possible to provide additional groundwater recharge areas. Alternative designs should be considered for paved areas like parking and walkways as well as for stormwater runoff collection facilities (collecting rainwater for irrigation is one example).

Objective 3.1.5: Strive towards a tax base of 70% residential and 30% commercial over time.

STRATEGY 3.1.5A: Continue to encourage creative planned development of office and commercial areas, with emphasis on walkability and connections to residential areas.

STRATEGY 3.1.5B: Target areas for commercial and industrial development through provision of public utilities and access to transportation infrastructure.

GOAL 3.2: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – RETAIN THE INTIMATE CHARACTER OF THE CITY WHILE ENCOURAGING INCREASED DENSITY AND WALKABILITY THROUGH FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.1: Guide major growth towards designated growth areas.

STRATEGY 3.2.1A: Develop designated growth areas as the primary recipients of new growth in The City of Summersville. See Goal 3.5 for individual area plans.

STRATEGY 3.2.1B: Residential densities should be dictated by *Table 1, Development Densities*. The intent of this strategy is to direct dense development towards planned growth areas. Directing the placement of new residential growth will aid the city in preventing a sprawling pattern of new residential development.

🏠 Designated Growth Areas: As stated in 3.1.1a, accepted designated growth areas include those categories highlighted for growth in *Figure 1, Designated Growth Areas*.

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT DENSITIES

LOCATION	DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE	
	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM CLUSTER
FOCUSED GROWTH - NEIGHBORHOODS	2	10
INFILL DEVELOPMENT / REDEVELOPMENT	3	12
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – HIGH DENSITY	4	15
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – LOW / MEDIUM DENSITY	1	4

STRATEGY 3.2.1C: Encourage new major subdivisions outside designated growth areas to develop in a cluster pattern that sets aside open space in a conservation easement and causes fewer disturbances to the surrounding environment than traditional large lot site design practice. Guidelines for alternative development patterns can be reflected in the

zoning ordinance under classifications such as Rural Preservation (RP) and Rural Planned Unit Development (RPUD).

Objective 3.2.2: Encourage varying residential densities and patterns based upon the conditions of the site to be developed.

STRATEGY 3.2.2A: The developer of major subdivisions should hold a pre-application meeting with city staff to review the compatibility of the site plan with surrounding areas. The city will provide the developer with a pre-application checklist of “options to consider” prior to this meeting.

STRATEGY 3.2.2B: The developer should use the Map of Potential Conservation Lands to assist in site design and lot layout for any new major subdivision. This map will be referenced for consistency with the development proposal when the application is in review.

Objective 3.2.3: Minimize the impacts of new residential development on the transportation system.

STRATEGY 3.2.3A: New development site design should encourage multiple options for travel between home and other destinations. These options should include modes such as walking and cycling.

STRATEGY 3.2.3B: Proper screening and buffer requirements at entrances to new subdivisions should be established through cooperative efforts between WVDOH and The City of Summersville.

GOAL 3.3: COMMERCIAL / SERVICE DEVELOPMENT – PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE MARKET FOR COMMERCIAL GOODS AND SERVICES THAT WILL MEET THE DEMAND OF CITY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS WITHOUT DETRACTING FROM THE INTIMATE, INVITING CHARACTER OF THE CITY.

OBJECTIVE 3.3.1: Encourage orderly, convenient, and compatible commercial development patterns.

STRATEGY 3.3.1A: Locate new commercial services in designated growth areas or in close proximity to primary roads and major intersections. Retaining the welcoming character of the city includes prescribing the type and location of commercial development.

STRATEGY 3.3.1B: Incorporate all applicable access management standards to the development of new commercial activities. Keep traffic congestion at a minimum.

STRATEGY 3.3.1C: Arrange new commercial services in close proximity to residential areas to provide convenient access, encourage walking and biking between uses, and enhance the neighborhood experience.

STRATEGY 3.3.1D: Incorporate environmentally-friendly design into commercial parking lots and shared spaces. Retain natural features where possible and include landscaping and parking design that provides opportunities for groundwater recharge.

STRATEGY 3.3.1E: Encourage dedication of public space as part of new commercial design. This public space may include benches, public squares, gardens, or other types of features that support public interaction.

STRATEGY 3.3.1F: Ensure that adequate utility and transportation infrastructure and parking exists in areas where commercial development is targeted. Convert unused parking areas to higher uses to ensure the best use of the land.

STRATEGY 3.3.1G: Support local business development through measures such as providing socio-economic and other useful data to potential business owners, assisting new establishments through small business incentives, and providing a continuous information resource through the

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Planning & Zoning Board and the New River Gorge Regional
Development Authority.

GOAL 3.4: INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT – DEVELOP A DIVERSIFIED, VIABLE INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIC BASE WITHOUT DETRACTING FROM THE OVERALL CHARACTER OF THE CITY.

Objective 3.4.1: Determine types of industrial development that are compatible with the needs and preferences of The City of Summersville.

STRATEGY 3.4.1A: The Planning & Zoning Board should develop a priority matrix with the New River Gorge Economic Development Authority that evaluates the existing industries in the region and ranks existing and new industries according to their suitability for city conditions.

OBJECTIVE 3.4.2: Attract industrial development that is compatible with city growth ideals.

STRATEGY 3.4.2A: Use the priority matrix in Strategy 3.4.1a to select industry types to target for future development in the city and outlying areas.

STRATEGY 3.4.2B: Identify areas suitable for economic development and designate that land for business use.

Objective 3.4.3: Ensure that industrial development will be visually and operationally beneficial to both the industry and to the city.

STRATEGY 3.4.3A: Require advance construction of adequate utility and transportation infrastructure in areas where industrial development is targeted.

STRATEGY 3.4.3B: Encourage compatibility with neighboring land uses (and require adequate buffering) of industrial uses to ensure that surrounding uses are not adversely affected. Maximum noise levels should be enforced.

STRATEGY 3.4.3C: Industrial uses that require traffic heavier than typical automobile traffic should be served by separate access roads. These roads should not interfere with everyday circulation patterns.

STRATEGY 3.4.3D: Incorporate environmentally-friendly design into industrial areas and shared spaces. Retain natural features where possible and include landscaping and parking design that provides opportunities for groundwater recharge.

STRATEGY 3.4.3E: Incorporate all applicable access management standards to the development of new industrial activities. Keep traffic congestion at a minimum.

STRATEGY 3.4.3F: Promote the development of residential and commercial activities in close proximity to light industrial districts to facilitate pedestrian circulation and simultaneously reduce traffic congestion, air and noise pollution.

Goal 3.5: GUIDE GROWTH IN TARGETED AREAS TO CREATE HEALTHY, VIBRANT COMMUNITIES WITH A MIX OF USES AND SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CITY RESIDENTS

The following section illustrates the recommended future land use for the designated growth areas.

This plan establishes these areas as the “focused growth nodes” of the city while maintaining the hometown character of Summersville. To accomplish these growth patterns, coordination of regulations, policies, and programs needs to occur to ensure that the prescribed uses are encouraged in the growth areas. The designated growth areas are outlined in *Figure 1* and are highlighted by the Downtown district and the Focused Growth areas. The categories and descriptions of each area are outlined through the objectives and strategies below.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.1: Direct growth patterns in the **Commercial / Services District** so that it develops as a higher-density commercial/residential and flexible office/service center for Summersville

STRATEGY 3.5.1A: Clustering of building lots and higher-density development patterns are recommended in this district. Development densities for residential uses on public water & sewer will be an average of 5 units per acre with a maximum of 20 units per acre clustered.

STRATEGY 3.5.1B: Encourage higher density infill commercial and office / service development in the area adjacent to Northside Drive and Professional Park Drive as well as along Merchant's Walk. This area has already developed a significant commercial base and will increase in land value as this plan matures and density of development will keep the land viable. Edges between adjacent land uses should be softened through use of buffers, bike and pedestrian access, creative building design, public space, or other appropriate measures.

STRATEGY 3.5.1C: Develop commercial uses along Broad Street between the downtown district and US 19 that serve local residents in addition to through traffic. Development of these services should be kept to a 1,000 foot buffer and will serve to encourage walking between neighboring residential areas and shopping rather than shorter automobile trips.

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STRATEGY 3.5.1D: New development should conform to best practices set forth in current access management guidance.

STRATEGY 3.5.1E: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.2: Direct growth patterns in the **Downtown District** so that it develops as the civic center of life in Summersville. A mix of uses including residential, commercial, service, entertainment, and government should be found in this district.

STRATEGY 3.5.2A: Higher-density development patterns are recommended in this central district with the availability of public water and sewer service. Development densities for residential uses on public water & sewer will be an average of 10 units per acre.

STRATEGY 3.5.2B: Encourage mixed use residential/commercial development along Main Street, North Broad Street, and Church Street. A mix of uses will provide a concentration of amenities for residents and encourage pedestrian interaction.

STRATEGY 3.5.2C: Develop a strong commercial and service presence for the district along Main Street and Broad Street. Uses to consider here should include retail and commercial services that would cater to downtown businesses and residents.

STRATEGY 3.5.2D: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths to make the downtown more walkable and encourage bicycling and walking connections to neighboring districts.

STRATEGY 3.5.2E: Encourage creativity in amenities for the downtown district that will establish it as a destination for all ages. Investigate arts programs, after-work events, live music opportunities, and recreation.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.3: Direct growth patterns in the **Focused Growth District** so that it develops as a new area targeted for growth that serves particular needs and takes advantage of location

Focused Growth – Commercial / Business: This area will focus growth in the commercial/business/retail sectors and take advantage of proximity to downtown, existing shopping, and US 19 commercial locations

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STRATEGY 3.5.3A: Encourage mixed use residential/commercial development along Arbuckle and Webster Roads. A mix of uses will provide a concentration of amenities for residents and encourage pedestrian interaction.

STRATEGY 3.5.3B: Develop a strong commercial and service presence for the district along Arbuckle Road neighboring downtown, Webster Road, West Webster Road, and surrounding the Lowes Shopping Center in north Summersville. Uses to consider here should include retail and commercial services that would cater to downtown businesses and residents.

STRATEGY 3.5.3C: Focus development of office and light industrial uses on the east side of US 19 on Professional Park Drive and south of W Webster Road adjacent to Summersville Regional Medical Center.

STRATEGY 3.5.3D: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

Focused Growth – Neighborhood: This area will focus growth in residential variety and take advantage of proximity to downtown and future quality of life assets related to a strong downtown core

STRATEGY 3.5.3E: Clustering of building lots and higher-density development patterns are recommended with the availability of public water and sewer service for the five neighborhoods highlighted in *Figure 1*. Development densities for residential uses on public water & sewer will be an average of 2 units per acre with a maximum of 10 units per acre clustered.

STRATEGY 3.5.3F: Encourage mixed use residential/commercial development along Turnpike Road and Broad Street in these districts. A mix of uses will provide a concentration of amenities for village residents while encouraging pedestrian interaction.

STRATEGY 3.5.3G: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

Focused Growth – Civic: This area will focus growth in community and civic resources that can impact the quality of life of all residents

STRATEGY 3.5.3H: Develop a community YMCA along US 19 adjacent to the Nicholas County High School football field and New River Community and Technical College.

STRATEGY 3.5.3I: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.4: Direct growth patterns in the **Infill Development / Redevelopment District** so that it takes advantage of existing development sites that are either underutilized or out of context with surrounding development.

STRATEGY 3.5.4A: Encourage development of new commercial and retail opportunities in areas near existing similar uses. These areas include the Lowes shopping center, Walmart, and Northside Drive.

STRATEGY 3.5.4B: Encourage development of infill residential units in those areas near downtown and around Fairview Heights Road near Summersville Regional Medical Center.

STRATEGY 3.5.4C: Encourage development of mixed-use commercial, retail, and residential units near downtown and around Fairview Heights Road near Summersville Regional Medical Center.

STRATEGY 3.5.4D: As these districts begin to develop, strongly recommend that infrastructure is updated concurrently to provide neighborhood amenities such as lighting, sidewalks, and bike lanes to positively impact residential and commercial quality of life and attractiveness.

STRATEGY 3.5.4E: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.5: Direct growth patterns in the **Neighborhood Revitalization District** so that it reinvests in existing neighborhoods. Focus should be given to revive infrastructure, infill or adaptive reuse of housing and neighborhood businesses.

STRATEGY 3.5.5A: Encourage development of new residential stock in areas near existing similar uses, especially in those areas where there is opportunity for infill growth or improvements in neighborhood offerings. These areas include two different density types, each supportive of the types of growth that would coalesce with the surrounding neighborhood features.

STRATEGY 3.5.5B: Neighborhood Revitalization (NR₁) will be a higher density residential district that encourages residential / neighborhood commercial mixed use development, as well as a variety of housing types and densities. These housing types could include single family detached, single family attached, multi-family clustered housing, or other arrangements. Flexibility and creative design between the developer and the city are encouraged.

STRATEGY 3.5.5C: Neighborhood Revitalization (NR₂) will be a low to medium density district that encourages more traditional single family development similar to existing structures in these areas. These types of housing could include single family detached or attached structures.

STRATEGY 3.5.5D: Develop neighborhood revitalization districts should encourage flexibility and creativity in community amenities such as walking trails, sidewalks, and street lighting. Sidewalks and trails should connect to neighboring districts, especially in the NR₁ district where proximity to the downtown or commercial and retail areas might be attractive to residents wishing to walk or bike to these destinations.

STRATEGY 3.5.5E: Improve public facilities such as street trees, sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

OBJECTIVE 3.5.6: Direct growth patterns in the **Preserve District** so that it remains viable as open space, recreation, or civic property for all residents of Summersville to enjoy.

Preserve – Active Recreation (P_{AR}) District: Develop this area with the goal of catering to the diverse needs of the community relating to outdoor activities. This category of open space preservation will vary, depending on the location and character of the property.

STRATEGY 3.5.6A: The P_{AR} district surrounding Nicholas County High School should remain a hub for outdoor activity and sporting events related to the high school, golf course, and park. Continue efforts to provide for the active recreation demands of area youth

STRATEGY 3.5.6B: The P_{AR} district surrounding the Lowes Shopping Center should be focused on walking and biking and related physical exercise. This area, with Muddlety Creek and a buffered wooded area, makes a perfect location to provide active exercise opportunities to complement

the surrounding shopping and retail uses. Connect this area with passive recreation opportunities on the east side of US 19.

STRATEGY 3.5.6C: Develop two neighborhood parks adjacent to growth areas that will provide residents opportunities to walk or bike from their homes to these destinations rather than drive. These parks should cater to families and have playgrounds and other appropriate activities that blend with the surroundings. The parks are located behind Dylan Heights and also off Kentucky Road near Arbuckle Road.

Preserve – Open Space (P_{OS}) District: Develop this area with the goal of providing outdoor space that is set aside for the enjoyment of the community. This category of open space preservation will consist of open lands that are kept in a natural state for use by the community.

STRATEGY 3.5.6D: The P_{OS} district will include a linear park extending from the Nicholas County High School along the city boundary south to Arbuckle Road and include connections to the city sidewalk system.

STRATEGY 3.5.6E: The P_{OS} district will include set-asides of open space south of Broad Street and east of Turnpike Road, as shown in *Figure 1*.

STRATEGY 3.5.6F: Sensitive environmental features may also be preserved in this district, aiding in the recharge of groundwater reserves and filtering nutrient and sediment runoff.

Preserve – Civic (P_C) District: Develop this area with the goal of providing permanently preserved community open space that is dedicated for the benefit of uses that benefit Summersville.

STRATEGY 3.5.6D: The P_C district will contain existing uses including the Nicholas County High School property, the New River Community and Technical College, and Groves Cemetery.

4.0 TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system has perhaps the greatest effect upon the growth and development of an area. The character and location of streets, highways, railroads and airports ultimately determine the pattern and location of all land uses. They also connect the various activities dispersed throughout the city. The components of the transportation system should be designed to accommodate the travel demands of the people both within the city and between the city and other areas. However, because they have the greatest effect upon the land use pattern, they should be located and designed with the utmost caution.

This component of the Comprehensive Plan identifies goals, objectives and strategies which specifically pertain to the city's transportation network. Further, probable future demands upon the network are discussed and specific "on-the-ground" proposals are presented for the improvement and expansion of the network in an effort to most effectively facilitate the demands of the city's future population. Close cooperation between The City of Summersville, Nicholas County, the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, and the West Virginia Department of Transportation will help to ensure that intergovernmental actions make the most impact in respect to the scarce federal and state transportation dollars available.

Since the city is primarily dependent upon its road and highway system for the efficient dissemination of people, goods, and services, major emphasis will be placed upon this system. At the same time, **when considering the small town character and connectedness of Summersville, the road and highway network must be considered multimodal, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities as viable options for travel.**

It should be emphasized that a truly effective transportation network is one that provides for the dissemination of people, goods and services within the minimum time span in the safest, most convenient and environmentally sensitive manner. Poorly designed transportation systems lead to traffic congestion and accidents, losses in lives, time and money, and pollution, which are equally detrimental to both public and private interests. It should be noted that although the proposals presented within this section may be subject to future change, the basic underlying goals, objectives and principles remain relevant since they constitute the basis for any safe and efficient transportation network.

Principles

A good transportation network is designed to provide a circulation system which facilitates convenient movement of people, goods and services between linked activity centers with due consideration to safety, comfort and convenience as well as economy.

A transportation network shapes the land use patterns that occur within it; thus good transportation planning is an essential part of any Comprehensive Plan.

Local Streets

In residential areas, streets should be designed to facilitate circulation within the neighborhood unit and to discourage through traffic. The primary purpose of local streets should be to provide access to property. Serving the local streets should be a system of collectors which gather local traffic and direct it to the major arterial roads of the city and county. To obtain the best traffic patterns and assure safe and pleasant residential areas, arterial streets should border rather than traverse neighborhood units. Vehicular access to properties abutting arterial roads should be restricted. A planting strip should separate pedestrian walks from streets to provide room for utility and street fixture installation and tree planting, to deter young children from straying into the street, as well as to protect all pedestrians from vehicular conflict.

Because traffic movement is a secondary function of local streets, the volume should be kept to a low level and should not impair the property access function. These streets should not carry through traffic; buses and heavy trucks should be excluded except when the local street is in a commercial or industrial district.

Local streets serve as open spaces, fire breaks and design elements. Street location is a major determinant of the characteristics and arrangement of buildings. As such, streets are an important means for creating large-scale design compositions. In low density residential areas traffic volumes are low enough to allow the use of narrow streets. By varying both building setback requirements and street widths, different impressions can be created in a neighborhood unit. Small setbacks and narrow streets will create a sense of intimacy while large setbacks and wide streets will emphasize openness. In addition to offering the possibility for creating unique living environments, narrow streets in residential areas have safety and cost advantages. Narrow streets force vehicular traffic to move at a slow rate of speed, an important consideration when children are present. Less pavement and right-of-way are

required and maintaining these roads is cheaper. Inherently necessary, of course, in any system of narrow residential streets is adequate off-street parking and on-street parking restrictions. Most homes built these days have enough driveway space to accommodate two or more automobiles. This is enough space to meet normal parking demands without utilizing any of the streets.

Collector Streets

The most important design consideration on collector streets is safety. Local streets should enter at “T” intersections rather than crossing directly. Location and design of collectors is determined by traffic volumes, density of residential areas served and location of arterials to which traffic must be delivered. Traffic speeds and volume should be carefully controlled on collectors flowing through residential developments.

Collector streets siphon traffic from local streets before volumes get too high. They lead the traffic to arterials or to local generators such as schools, shopping centers or community centers. These streets also potentially carry bus and some truck traffic. In commercial areas collectors do not function well because volumes build up too rapidly. Therefore, local streets should connect directly to an arterial.

The major function of the collector street is to bring traffic to or from the local residential streets or arterials. Land access should be a secondary function of collectors. Traffic emphasis should be reflected in the design of the collector street.

Parking should be limited on the collector. Like the local streets, the collector functions as an easement for utilities, an open space and a design element in the residential community. The collector must not be narrower than any of the local streets it serves.

Arterial Streets

The primary function of the arterial street is to move large volumes of traffic; access to abutting properties should be a secondary function and therefore should be regulated. These routes carry all truck traffic, as well as automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians. They act as connectors and main traffic arteries between and within communities. Because of the great width required for an arterial street, the design potential of the thoroughfare is very high. This opportunity has rarely been realized though, due to insensitive selection of street furniture and lack of sign control ordinances, inadequate median design and

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underutilization of rights-of-way. Arterial street widths vary greatly depending upon needed capacity. They range from a simple 50 foot right-of-way with an 18 foot pavement to a right-of-way of 200 feet or more, complete with median strips and service roads.

Goal 4.1: PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WHICH IS SAFE, EFFICIENT AND CONVENIENT

Objective 4.1.1: Recognize the connection between land use planning and transportation

STRATEGY 4.1.1A: Transportation planning in the City of Summersville will support the goals of the comprehensive plan. The Planning & Zoning Board, in cooperation with WVDOH, should evaluate the impacts of any road projects under consideration on the local community and assure consistency with future land use plans

STRATEGY 4.1.1B: New development proposals should consider transportation improvements that will alleviate negative impacts on the roadway network and provide relief for increased travel demand once the development is completed.

STRATEGY 4.1.1C: The City of Summersville should work with the West Virginia Division of Highways to collect traffic counts, capacity and design deficiencies, current trip generation data and other pertinent information for the entire transportation network on a regular basis (the regularity to be established by the Planning & Zoning Board). Continuous evaluation of the road network operation is essential for proper future planning.

STRATEGY 4.1.1D: Configure land development patterns in the Comprehensive Plan so that transportation facilities needed for new development are combined with existing deficiencies and the benefits received are maximized.

Objective 4.1.2: Improve public safety and mobility on highways through management of access to developed land

STRATEGY 4.1.2A: Establish Access Management standards to guide development patterns. These standards should give direction on corner clearance, joint and cross access, interchange areas, access connection and driveway design, requirements for outparcels and phased development, emergency access, non-conforming access, reverse frontage, flag lots, shared access, connectivity, turn lane warrants, traffic impact analyses, and additional requirements for classified roadways. In addition to access management, evaluate the physical conditions of the

facility, including pavement width, sight distance, and other factors as necessary to determine the need for turn lanes.

STRATEGY 4.1.2B: Encourage new development in targeted growth areas (identified in *Figure 1*) to group commuter origins and destinations. Minimizing the need for city residents to travel for goods and services will make the transportation network more effective.

STRATEGY 4.1.2C: Strongly encourage multimodal transportation in growth areas. Incorporate facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel into density plans.

Aside from direct benefits of having travel choices and reducing congestion on the roads, providing additional transportation options will:

- Encourage healthier lifestyles
- Encourage interaction with neighbors
- Encourage awareness and safety of the community


Figure 2, Transportation Network, identifies potential corridors for various bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Corridors outlined in **blue** identify those segments of Summersville that could greatly benefit from improvements to the existing sidewalk system or development of new sidewalks. Two categories of roadways are identified as needing sidewalk improvements:

1. Sidewalks are necessary on those roads that are major connectors between development nodes. These nodes can be identified by the type of use and the potential (with future development) for walkability between activity centers. Downtown Summersville is clearly a development node as is the Northside / Merchant's Walk commercial and retail area.

Summersville is small enough where there is a real possibility of commuting from one end to the other via foot or bicycle. Providing an option for those residents who would like to make that commute or do not have options for motorized transportation is a necessary component of this comprehensive plan. For that reason, Webster Road (CR 41) is identified as a sidewalk corridor.

Figure 2: Transportation Network




1 inch = 1,500 feet


Author: Chet Parsons, AICP
Date Saved: 2/27/2013 4:06:39 PM

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane West Virginia South FIPS 4702 Feet
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American 1983
False Easting: 1,968,500.0000
False Northing: 0.0000
Central Meridian: -81.0000
Standard Parallel 1: 37.4833
Standard Parallel 2: 36.8833
Latitude Of Origin: 37.0000
Units: Foot US


Legend




WaterBodies




Bike / Ped Crossing



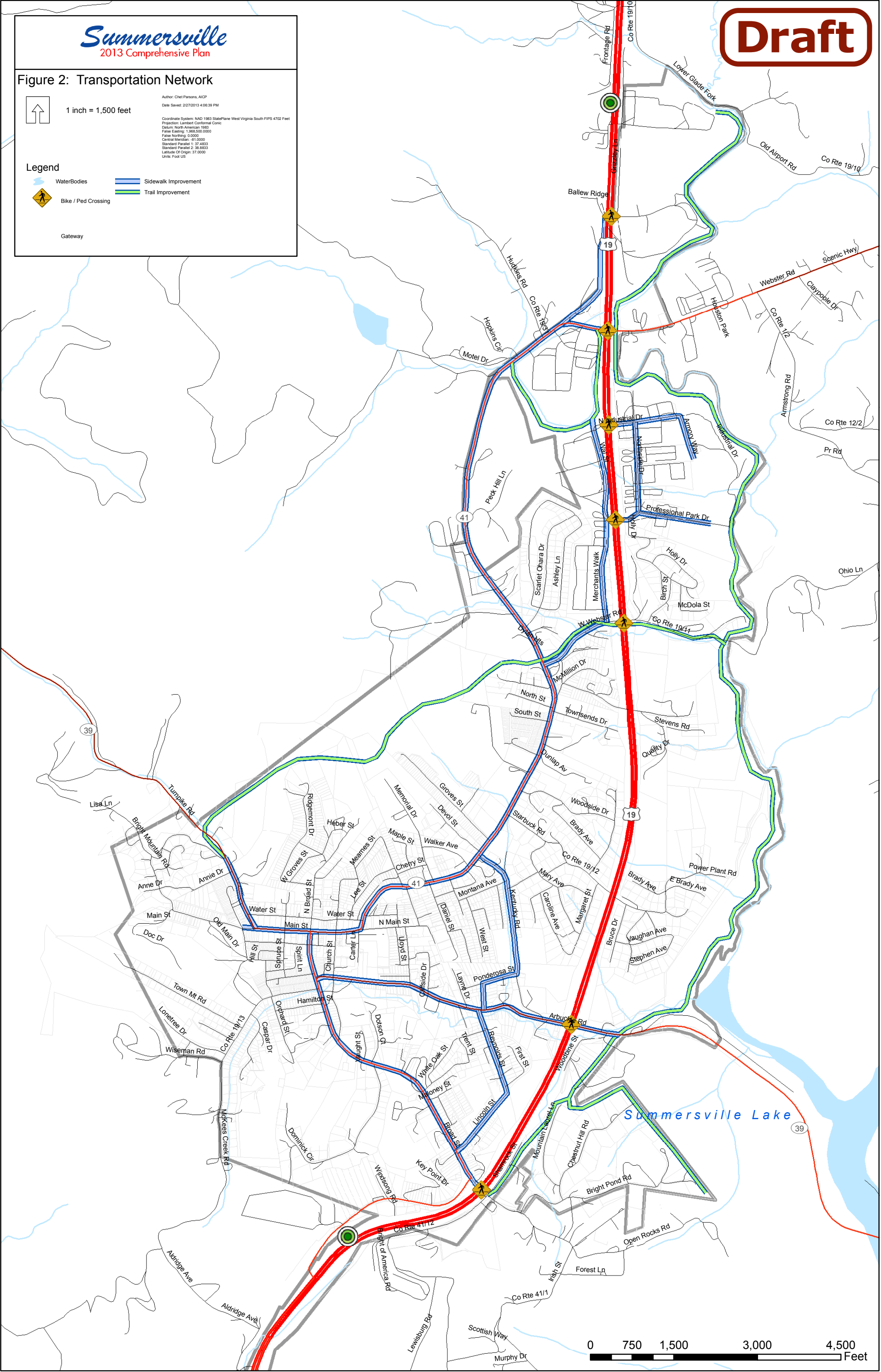
Sidewalk Improvement



Trail Improvement



Gateway



2. A second sidewalk category consists of connections between nodes that do not experience high volumes of automobile traffic but could still greatly benefit from sidewalks. Improvements in these corridors will impact the daily travel patterns of residents in these neighborhoods and provide an improved quality of life. Users of these facilities will have greater variety of access to destinations around Summersville.

In addition to access to destinations, these facilities will help to complete a network of sidewalks. This non-motorized network will make circulation through Summersville a real option for residents. Circulation is a real benefit because people will not have to settle for a straight-line trip between "Point A" and "Point B" but can chain trips together to accomplish multiple tasks by foot or pedal.

Corridors outlined in **green** identify those segments of Summersville that could greatly benefit from development of a trail system that would serve multiple uses, identified below:

1. Trails can serve as outlets for exercise that cater not only to local residents but also visitors and can be a destination all by themselves. The trail off Webster Road that circles the Lowes shopping center before meeting back with Webster Road and US 19 falls under this category. With the commercial and retail businesses concentrated in this area, there are plenty of opportunities for trail use during lunch hours, after work, and on weekends.
2. Trails can also provide organized recreation opportunities. The city-long trail identified along the east edge of Summersville extends from Nicholas County High School to the southern border of Summersville and can potentially connect to Summersville Lake in the future. Along its route, there are connections made back to developed areas including Webster Road, Merchants Walk shopping center, and Arbuckle Road. All three of these locations have potential for connections to the larger transportation network, both through trail parking and tie-ins to proposed sidewalks and neighborhoods.
3. The Merchants Walk trail also offers a connection to the western edge of Summersville and the downtown district. Through a new trail that extends from US 19 and Merchants Walk through to

Turnpike Road, users can access proposed new residential destinations in a previously undeveloped area of Summersville.

4. *Figure 2, Transportation Network*, identifies unique circulation patterns that are created through this comprehensive plan. Not only are major road travel patterns recognized, there are a number of non-motorized corridors and loops that separate the city into manageable segments for travel between home, work, shopping, and other destinations.

STRATEGY 4.1.2D: Encourage roadway design that minimizes the environmental impacts of road construction

5.0 UTILITIES

In the future, areas of The City of Summersville may require periodic upgrades to centralized sewer and water utilities.

It is likely that more intense industrial development and higher density residential development **will** be able to occur with the existing centralized sewer and water systems, but tracking the type and intensity of growth will help the city stay informed of future needs before they arise. **Managing the location and extent of land development is a major goal in the provision of public utilities.**

In view of the above conditions it is evident that the managed upgrades of centralized utilities at the proper time is crucial to the economic health and future development of the City of Summersville.

Goal 5.1: TO PROVIDE FOR MORE EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF LAND RESOURCES IN UTILITY EXTENSION AND UPGRADES

Objective 5.1.1: The joint use of existing transmission lines should be encouraged where possible. When existing lines prove inadequate, new lines should be obtained preferably so as to be contiguous with existing lines

STRATEGY 5.1.1A: Transmission line routes may be approved by the Planning & Zoning Board.

STRATEGY 5.1.1B: The Planning & Zoning Board should be instructed to investigate each proposed transmission line route to determine if:

- ❖ Sufficient and appropriate land is available within or contiguous to any existing route; or
- ❖ Creation of new routes is actually necessary and justifiable in terms of existing service demands or projected regional development plans or both.

Objective 5.1.2: The use of road rights-of-way for utility distribution lines should be encouraged where safety and feasibility requirements can be met

STRATEGY 5.1.2A: All utility companies should have such an option extended to them by entering into a comprehensive agreement with the West Virginia Department of Transportation as provided for under the Department's policies dealing with easements

**Goal 5.2: TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE FOR THE ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT
AND EXPANSION OF DEVELOPED AREAS AND UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

Objective 5.2.1: Utility expansion will be made along lines of probable and desirable growth

STRATEGY 5.2.1A: Utility trunk and distribution lines will be installed at time of development in accordance with the comprehensive plan

STRATEGY 5.2.1B: The plans of private utility companies and public utilities should be coordinated through the Planning & Zoning Board so as to minimize waste and duplication of efforts, to encourage creative alternatives, and to create a more efficient distribution of facilities

STRATEGY 5.2.1C: In areas with a known high growth potential, both trunk and distribution systems should be designed in terms of capacity to accommodate future expansions

STRATEGY 5.2.1D: The City of Summersville should coordinate and cooperate with neighboring municipalities and agencies, as needed, for the most economical and logical expansion of public utilities

STRATEGY 5.2.1E: Plan the size and location of sewer upgrades according to the drainage areas and land uses to be served as shown in the Comprehensive Plan

STRATEGY 5.2.1F: Program future water main extensions to those developing areas of the city that are reasonably close to existing mains

STRATEGY 5.2.1G: Program future sewer extensions to those developing areas of the city contiguous to existing urban development to promote the balanced and most viable growth of the County

Objective 5.2.2: High quality public water and sewer is a priority in areas which are deemed suitable for high density development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan

STRATEGY 5.2.2A: Major developments planned for the City of Summersville should require the installation of trunk and lateral sanitary sewer and water lines. Costs for such sewer lines, both laterals and trunks necessary for connection with city-owned mains should be borne by the developer.

STRATEGY 5.2.2B: Where connection with existing sanitary sewers is judged not feasible, sites for septic systems must be inspected and certified by the Nicholas County Health Department as to suitability of soil and terrain, isolation from water supplies and other contamination or nuisance problems

STRATEGY 5.2.2C: Consideration of packaged treatment systems should be given when feasibility of using centralized systems is unlikely.

This category of wastewater treatment systems includes many types of alternative treatment technologies designed to treat all of the liquid waste generated from a residence. They are installed much like a traditional septic tank, commonly having a treatment tank similar in size. The primary difference from a septic tank is the internal design and associated mechanical and electrical components that enhance treatment.

In many respects, these systems are like miniature municipal treatment plants designed for a single family rather than an entire city or community. The unique design and components used in these systems accelerate the treatment process through the creation of an optimum environment for microorganisms that digest the waste, and for collection and storage of the resulting byproducts. The effluent generated by the tank is far superior in its treatment level than that of a septic tank, which allows for greater flexibility in disposing of the treated effluent.

Rather than being sent to a traditional drain field, as is needed with a typical septic tank in order to provide additional treatment of the waste, the treated effluent from an alternative system may be used for surface irrigation, discharged to a smaller drain field, or discharged directly to a drainage ditch or open waterway. If the treated effluent is discharged directly to the surface, most systems will include a disinfection device to reduce the microorganisms present in the treated effluent. This provides for additional measures of public health protection.

Objective 5.2.3: Consideration should be given to the environmental impact of proposed utilities and their installation so as to minimize possible detrimental side effects

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STRATEGY 5.2.3A: Approval of conditional use permits for such installation should include a request for an environmental assessment which should define and outline means of alleviating possible detrimental side effects such as noise, heat, glare, vibration, soil erosion, water and air pollution, toxicity, odor, fire and explosion hazard during construction and in subsequent operation

STRATEGY 5.2.3B: The city should adopt a minimum set of performance standards. All operating utilities should observe performance standards established by the City of Summersville, agencies of the State of West Virginia and the Federal Environmental Protection Agency

Objective 5.2.4: Provide the best available utility services to residents of the City of Summersville

STRATEGY 5.2.4A: Support the provision of natural gas services to the growing population of the City of Summersville.

STRATEGY 5.2.4B: Support the provision of sufficient electrical power to the residents of the City of Summersville.

Objective 5.2.5: Ensure the adequate provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the city that will support economic growth, public safety, and provide essential communications services for the city

STRATEGY 5.2.5A: Minimize the proliferation of towers in Summersville, encourage aesthetic compatibility of new and existing towers, avoid impacts to public health and safety, and promote public/private partnerships

STRATEGY 5.2.5B: Encourage utility companies and developers to consider the inclusion of additional conduit whenever subsurface excavations are made for other purposes such as water lines, power lines, etc. This conduit should house high-speed telecommunications resources and should be dedicated to public use upon installation. The City of Summersville should consider incentives to developers that provide these utility lines.

6.0 RECREATION

The City of Summersville is presented with the opportunity to do some long range planning concerning our current and future recreational needs. While the city provides many services and opportunities for recreation around the area, a Master Plan consisting of a comprehensive needs assessment and an inventory and analysis of natural resources must be completed to facilitate proper planning. With a plan that accounts for surrounding natural gifts in addition to the services and amenities that the city provides, Summersville can be confident that future generations will be able to enjoy many different recreation opportunities.

Principles

Specific principles for the development of parks, open space, recreational facilities, and activities include the following:

1. The system must serve all people regardless of age, gender, race, or socioeconomic status.
2. The community should be the basic unit around which park and recreation planning revolves. Priority should be given to development of community parks and recreational areas in the City of Summersville that are accessible to area residents.
3. Park, open space, and recreation areas and facilities should relate geographically to the density and total population to be served.
4. Any planning for open space, parks, and recreation programs should meet the basic standards set forth by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

Goal 6.1: PROJECT AND PLAN FOR FUTURE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS IN ADVANCE OF PUBLIC DEMAND

Objective 6.1.1: Prepare a Comprehensive Recreational Master Plan for the City of Summersville that addresses future needs and provides a long-range vision for parks and recreation

STRATEGY 6.1.1A: Research existing facilities and services to develop an estimate of existing supply

STRATEGY 6.1.1B: Develop estimates of future demand based on demographic projections and other tools as necessary

STRATEGY 6.1.1C: Draft a Master Plan that details the existing facilities, future demand, and means to satisfy future demand. Utilize Section 3 of this plan and *Figure 1* as a base for future detailed analysis

Goal 6.2: PROVIDE PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF SUMMERSVILLE'S GROWING POPULATION

Objective 6.2.1: Development of new and maintenance of existing recreation sites

STRATEGY 6.2.1A: Development of cooperative planning and maintenance agreements with the Army Corps of Engineers and the National Park Service

STRATEGY 6.2.1B: Formalize maintenance agreements with the Nicholas County School Board to expand school sites as recreational areas

STRATEGY 6.2.1C: Develop strategies for acquiring and maintaining public access to the Gauley River and Summersville Lake

STRATEGY 6.2.1D: Review city (and county) policies and regulations and encourage the City Council to revise local ordinances to require the dedication of adequate open space, park and recreation areas for developments over 50 units in size

Objective 6.2.2: To provide and coordinate recreational activities for all Summersville residents and businesses

STRATEGY 6.2.2A: Develop a recreational policy manual

STRATEGY 6.2.2B: Increase citizen participation through publicizing Planning & Zoning meetings, public comment periods and annual public hearings on recreation needs of the city

STRATEGY 6.2.2C: Survey the public to find out desired activities

STRATEGY 6.2.2D: Investigate adding additional youth and senior citizen programming as needed to meet the demands of the population

7.0 HOUSING

The demand for a variety of housing in the City of Summersville will only continue to increase in the future. As employment opportunities along the US 19 corridor increase, the demand for multi-family and non-traditional single-family housing options will add to the existing demand for single-family detached housing. In addition, new recreation opportunities in neighboring jurisdictions will spur additional growth and development in the Summersville area, adding additional demands for short-term and seasonal housing.

As stated in previous sections, the intent of the City of Summersville is to concentrate new development initially in growth areas to focus on walkable, livable community growth and to reduce development and infrastructure costs. This intent should be reflected in the development of housing as well.

In order to allow sufficient housing for all income levels, flexibility in design and layout inside growth areas should be granted to developers so that costs can be minimized and different housing alternatives can be provided to the public.

Goal 7.1: TO INSURE THAT ALL CITY RESIDENTS HAVE AFFORDABLE, SAFE AND DECENT HOUSING

Objective 7.1.1: Assess the City of Summersville's current and future housing needs

STRATEGY 7.1.1A: Survey existing housing supply to identify substandard (units lacking complete plumbing and kitchen facilities) and deteriorating housing units. The extent of homelessness in the city also should be examined. Utilize *Figure 1* (p. 20) as a basemap for future housing surveys.

STRATEGY 7.1.1B: Regularly review Census and housing literature to better understand local housing characteristics including age of housing, income levels, employment data, and household composition.

STRATEGY 7.1.1C: Determine current and future housing demand based on survey results, demographic studies, economic factors, projected growth, etc. Develop a specific survey to be completed by rental housing providers in the City of Summersville detailing their housing stock and locations.

STRATEGY 7.1.1D: Review and revise the zoning ordinance to allow and encourage affordable "starter" housing in growth areas

Objective 7.1.2: Preserve, maintain and improve existing housing stock

STRATEGY 7.1.2A: Support development of city programs which offer technical and financial guidance regarding the maintenance of owner-occupied homes and manufactured housing

Objective 7.1.3: Recognize the need for new housing through the local planning process

STRATEGY 7.1.3A: Based on the city's planning goals and objectives, identify areas appropriate for housing development in the Comprehensive Plan with special attention given to housing for low and moderate income households. Utilize *Figure 1* as a basemap for those efforts.

STRATEGY 7.1.3B: Review the Zoning Ordinance for consistency with Comprehensive Plan and housing goals

Objective 7.1.4: Expand affordable housing through encouraging the development of a variety of housing types in the city

STRATEGY 7.1.4A: Encourage the development and extension of utilities in growth areas to support more intense multi-family housing and smaller residential lots. Encourage a variety of housing designs and densities in those areas where water and sewer utilities are made available to support higher densities.

STRATEGY 7.1.4B: Allow alternative housing types such as shared housing and accessory apartments which will permit more than one family or unrelated individuals to share an existing housing unit

STRATEGY 7.1.4C: Provide density incentives for developers who include affordable and starter housing units as part of a proposal, or who develop an entire multi-family project

Objective 7.1.5: Reduce the impact of the land use regulatory process on the cost of housing

STRATEGY 7.1.5A: Streamline the regulatory process by using a pre-application process, one-stop review, and maintaining adequate city staff to maintain project development efficiency

Objective 7.1.6: Insure housing is available for Summersville residents with special needs

STRATEGY 7.1.6A: Reaffirm the city's commitment to state and federal fair housing legislation

STRATEGY 7.1.6B: Encourage the establishment of housing for the elderly, as needed, to be in close proximity to basic services such as clinics, churches, cultural facilities, and convenience shopping areas

STRATEGY 7.1.6C: Provide housing opportunities for physically and mentally challenged persons

STRATEGY 7.1.6D: Encourage affordable rental and home ownership opportunities and programs for young households and first time home buyers

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STRATEGY 7.1.6E: Support the provision of emergency shelter to homeless families and individuals

Objective 7.1.7: Expand the use of state and federal assistance to encourage new housing development opportunities

STRATEGY 7.1.7A: Pursue WVHDF and FHA financing programs for financing local housing construction projects aimed at first-time home buyers as well as low and moderate income families

STRATEGY 7.1.7B: Apply for community development block grants administered by the West Virginia Development Office to be used for the rehabilitation of residential units

Objective 7.1.8: Expand public and private efforts to address housing needs in the city

STRATEGY 7.1.8A: Encourage support of third-party groups to inform city officials of important needs and to help develop long range plans to coordinate all housing programs through a separate private/public funded organization

STRATEGY 7.1.8B: Publicize through the news media and local newsletters the city's housing goals and objectives and stress the city's interest in working with citizens in solving housing problems

STRATEGY 7.1.8C: Review and revise the city's housing goals and objectives on a periodic basis to remain current on new and emerging housing issues and opportunities

STRATEGY 7.1.8D: Communicate new housing needs to the Southern West Virginia Homebuilders Association and encourage the development of those housing types in the City of Summersville

8.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Solid Waste Management

The City of Summersville has one existing trash collection service at the Nicholas County Landfill. This station currently serves the entire county and is located within 10 miles of the city on CR 55. The Nicholas County Solid Waste Authority offers West Virginia's only county-wide curbside recycling program.

Educational Facilities

Enrollment, program offerings and age of school facilities are major factors influencing educational needs. Other factors such as location, shifting and growing population, business and industrial developments also play an important role in determining educational needs.

Currently, Nicholas County is experiencing a gradual decline in enrollment. In order to continue to support and encourage a nurturing and vibrant system, improvements to the elementary and secondary facilities are needed over the planning period. These improvements are cited in the most recent Nicholas County CorePlan, developed in 2009.

Any future school expansion projects need to include the provision for public/community use. The use of school facilities for community meetings and recreation needs to be approved by the School Board. This joint use of facilities needs to continue to obtain the greatest use of these public facilities.

Crime Prevention and Law Enforcement

Over the life of this plan, specific concerns of the Summersville Police Department will include a need for additional personnel and the need to maintain the facility from which the department can operate safely and effectively.

Growth pressures such as population increase, additional traffic volume on local roadways, cooperative efforts with the Nicholas County Sheriff's Department and other regional police departments, and regional commuting patterns will all impact the need for additional services from the police department.

Fire and Rescue

As stated for crime prevention and law enforcement, growth pressures will play an important role in determining level of service needs for fire and rescue services. With population, transportation issues, and land development pressures all expected to increase, the provision of fire and rescue services may require additional measures on behalf of the city.

Firefighter and EMS personnel may be needed to supplement the existing services of volunteers. Additional development and redevelopment of city land will create the need for fire hydrants at appropriate locations as the demand requires. Salaried positions to administer the fire and rescue program may be necessary as additional services are rendered and the need grows. Technology improvements will be necessary to improve response capabilities.

Principles

As with other types of land use, public land must be developed and regulated within the framework of sound planning principles:

- ❖ Public facilities must be accessible to all residents of the city ensuring equal benefits for those whose taxes are financing them.
- ❖ Public facilities should be of a size adequate for existing needs and be flexible to allow adjustment as needs change

Most major public buildings should be centrally located in an "administrative center", whereas, schools, parks and open spaces are best located near residential areas, since public facilities are usually best located in the center of the areas which they serve.

Public facilities housing complementary services are often best combined, such as police and fire protective facilities and a human services center for social services, mental health and physical health.

While public facilities (parks and open space excepted) usually do not conflict with other land uses to the same degree as do commercial or industrial uses, larger facilities are best confined to separate areas to minimize any detrimental influence. Because major public facilities represent large capital outlays by the County, their site selection and construction must be programmed ahead of time. Also, site selection should be based on general principles of good land use planning.

Goal 8.1: PROVIDE FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF SUMMERSVILLE THROUGH PROVISION OF ADEQUATE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN A MANNER REFLECTING BOTH PRESENT AND FUTURE DEMANDS

Objective 8.1.1: Provide adequate facilities, staff and equipment for the police department, fire department, emergency medical services and other protective services

STRATEGY 8.1.1A: Maintain existing facilities and equipment

STRATEGY 8.1.1B: Provide new facilities where necessary, using volunteer efforts and contributions, existing taxing policies and various applicable grant programs to pay for such additions

STRATEGY 8.1.1C: Provide geographic information system capabilities to both the police department and the fire & rescue squads to implement quick-response systems and to map and coordinate service areas. Provide other technology as necessary.

Objective 8.1.2: Promote efficiency in city government by providing adequate facilities for general services and administration

STRATEGY 8.1.2A: Provide office space, equipment and other necessary facilities of sufficient quality and quantity to enable government operations to proceed efficiently

Objective 8.1.3: Promote economy and efficiency in the provision of public facilities through cooperation with other jurisdictions and the State of West Virginia

STRATEGY 8.1.3A: Cooperate with adjoining municipalities or participate in regional programs to provide facilities which are beneficial to city residents, but which would be underutilized or too costly if provided by one municipality alone. Provide for expansion of such facilities as growth occurs

STRATEGY 8.1.3B: Anticipate and recognize city growth by providing facilities to support growth as needed, in locations convenient to the population.

STRATEGY 8.1.3C: Maintain a complete and current inventory of facilities provided in the city or available to city residents. Anticipate additional facilities that will be needed by means of a Capital Improvements Program

STRATEGY 8.1.3D: Maintain contact with adjoining local governments, Nicholas County and the State of West Virginia to determine what other facilities are available to city residents, which are already anticipated, and which should be provided by the city or through cooperation to satisfy an existing need

Objective 8.1.4: Promote the general welfare by considering negative environmental impacts when planning community facilities

STRATEGY 8.1.4A: Choose sites for facilities on the basis of acceptable topography, soils, and other physical traits, as well as on proximity to population centers and other factors, including traffic patterns and volume.

Objective 8.1.5: Provide quality educational facilities to serve citizens of all ages in the most effective, efficient and economical means possible

STRATEGY 8.1.5A: Schools should be located so as to be easily accessible by public roads. Transportation for students should be provided by the Nicholas County School System

STRATEGY 8.1.5B: Modern school facilities and equipment help to make possible quality education for the school age population. Where revenues from normal sources are insufficient to provide for such facilities, long-term loans should be made to raise money for improvements

STRATEGY 8.1.5C: Additional school sites should be acquired in advance of development, thus ensuring relatively low land costs and ample, uncrowded facilities

STRATEGY 8.1.5D: If enrollment so dictates, new educational facilities should be constructed in central locations to ease burdens on parents, encourage attendance of students in all parts of the area to be served, and to reduce energy costs associated with transporting students to and from schools.

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STRATEGY 8.1.5E: Continue to maintain and support, independently or in cooperation with one or more adjoining municipalities, a public library system for use by all residents

STRATEGY 8.1.5F: In addition to regular school curricula and programs, school facilities should be used after normal school activities and community service needs to provide programs for continuing adult education and recreation. Technical job training should be included in these educational opportunities

STRATEGY 8.1.5G: Some facilities, such as school auditoriums, should also be available for group meetings and other community activities not directly related to public education

STRATEGY 8.1.5H: Locate schools adjacent to parks wherever possible to encourage the maximum use of both facilities

9.0 TOURISM

The City of Summersville is situated in a prime location to provide recreational opportunities and services to people coming to central West Virginia. Its proximity to the New and Gauley Rivers, Summersville Lake, the Bechtel Reserve Boy Scout Center, and many other historic resources and outdoor recreation opportunities establishes Summersville as a prime location for development of goods and services to cater to the needs of tourists of all kinds.

As the region grows over the next few years, it is important to ensure that these opportunities remain viable for as many people as would like to take part. Growth of new tourism opportunities should be a major goal for this hub of activity in central West Virginia.

Sustainable tourism fits in to the ethos of the region, and in its purest sense is an industry which **attempts** to make a low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate income, employment, and the conservation of local ecosystems. It is responsible tourism that is both ecologically and culturally sensitive. Thus, sustainable tourism activities have minimal impact on the environment and culture of the host community.

**Goal 9.1: ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THAT SUPPORTS THE
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCES THE HEALTH OF THE REGION'S
NATURAL RESOURCES**

Objective 9.1.1: Promote a variety of markets for tourism activities

STRATEGY 9.1.1A: Focus tourism activities on the natural and recreation based markets as well as motorized recreational activities

STRATEGY 9.1.1B: Develop a cohesive marketing strategy for the City of Summersville that coordinates with regional and local efforts already underway

STRATEGY 9.1.1C: Develop additional lodging capacity such as hotels and bed and breakfast inns

STRATEGY 9.1.1D: Develop tourism packages that would capitalize on assets and enhance the economic impact of visitors to the City of Summersville

STRATEGY 9.1.1E: Diversify the retail offerings in the city to bolster the tourism industry

Objective 9.1.2: Encourage natural resource tourism opportunities

STRATEGY 9.1.2A: Focus tourism activities that include Summersville Lake and the Gauley River including mountain biking, rock climbing, fishing, rafting, kayaking, and hiking

STRATEGY 9.1.2B: Develop opportunities for organized whitewater excursions from the City of Summersville to utilize the Gauley River, New River, Meadow River, and area creeks

STRATEGY 9.1.2C: Develop opportunities for organized slack water excursions from the City of Summersville to utilize the Summersville Lake and other low-flow creeks and rivers in the region

10.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

This section does not impose any legal requirements, restrictions, or zoning standards. The City of Summersville's zoning ordinance governs its land use and the West Virginia State Building Code governs building construction. The application of zoning to the extent that it can be used to protect community character and scenic quality is encouraged by this section, but the recommendations in this document are not zoning.

The design recommendations presented in this document have been prepared as a set of voluntary recommendations and not as enforceable requirements. For this reason, the use of this section is strictly voluntary. However, all property owners, investors, builders and contractors, and design professionals (engineers, architects, etc.) are encouraged to consider the recommendations given in this document and to positively contribute to the shared vision for the City of Summersville's future.

GOAL 10.1: MAINTAIN A DARK NIGHT SKY AND MINIMIZE LIGHT POLLUTION.

Light pollution is typical of urban and suburban areas, but can creep into rural areas unless the night sky is viewed as a natural resource worthy of protection.

Objective 10.1.1: Encourage dark sky lighting improvements to the design and location of public fixtures in growth areas as well as rural areas

STRATEGY 10.1.1A: Locate outdoor lighting only in areas that need light for security, safety, and business operations. Provide lighting at the minimum quantities and brightness levels necessary for safety, security, and the enjoyment of outdoor living.

STRATEGY 10.1.1B: Downward-directed lighting fixtures are preferred. Also appropriate are bollard lights and lights with opaque covers, especially in growth centers.

STRATEGY 10.1.1C: Select freestanding light posts that are sturdy enough to withstand wind and weather conditions, are corrosion and scratch resistant, can support a signage bar, and are black, brown, white, or green in color.

STRATEGY 10.1.1D: In growth areas, encourage continuity in lighting styles between developments and across neighborhood settings

Goal 10.2: DESIGN AND ORIENT BUILDINGS TO POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE COMMUNITY AND ITS LIFESTYLE

As it relates to community character, the particular style of a building's architecture is much less important than how the building relates to the street, neighboring buildings, and the surrounding natural environment, and how it contributes to the overall aesthetic. For this reason, specific architectural styles are not discussed in this section, other than to suggest the continuation of Vernacular styles. Instead, the recommendations are focused on how to best design and orient building elements to positively contribute to the City of Summersville's natural setting and outdoor adventure lifestyle.

Building Placement and Yards

A building's relationship to the street and to surrounding structures and natural features are the most important character-building elements of the City of Summersville streetscape. These relationships are primarily formed by how each building is placed on its lot and the resulting size and function of the front, rear, and side yards.

A major future contributor to the City of Summersville atmosphere is its relationship to the regional outdoor lifestyle. Uses occurring in the yards of privately-owned lots can become symbols of that lifestyle, not only by their design, but also by visibility of the various outdoor uses that occur there (dining, gardening, relaxing, or people-watching). For this reason, the open spaces found at street corners, in front yards, and between buildings are important to consider.

Objective 10.2.1: Develop neighborhoods and commercial areas in a welcoming manner that encourages interaction between people and businesses.

STRATEGY 10.2.1A: Orient the front wall(s) of buildings to parallel the street. Do not angle the front wall(s).

STRATEGY 10.2.1B: Garages should never overbear a building's appearance as seen from the street serving its front yard. Position the garage so that its door is set back deeper than the front plane of the building, or orient the garage to face a side yard or rear alley.

STRATEGY 10.2.1C: Include active uses (porches, patios, gardens, outdoor seating) in the front and/or street side yards of commercial buildings that invite customers (restaurants, coffee shops, etc.). If active public use areas are placed in interior side yards, they must be visible to a street and designed to minimize intrusions to privacy on the adjoining lot.

STRATEGY 10.2.1D: Position outdoor dining areas to take advantage of views to the fronting streetscape or to nature. Tables and chairs should not be allowed to overflow onto a public sidewalk or street, or to disrupt the pedestrian movement pattern on the sidewalk.

STRATEGY 10.2.1E: Except for driveways and sidewalks/stairs, no part of a front yard should be paved with concrete or asphalt. If parking is necessary in the front yard, construct the parking area with a decorative surface or permeable (porous) surface.

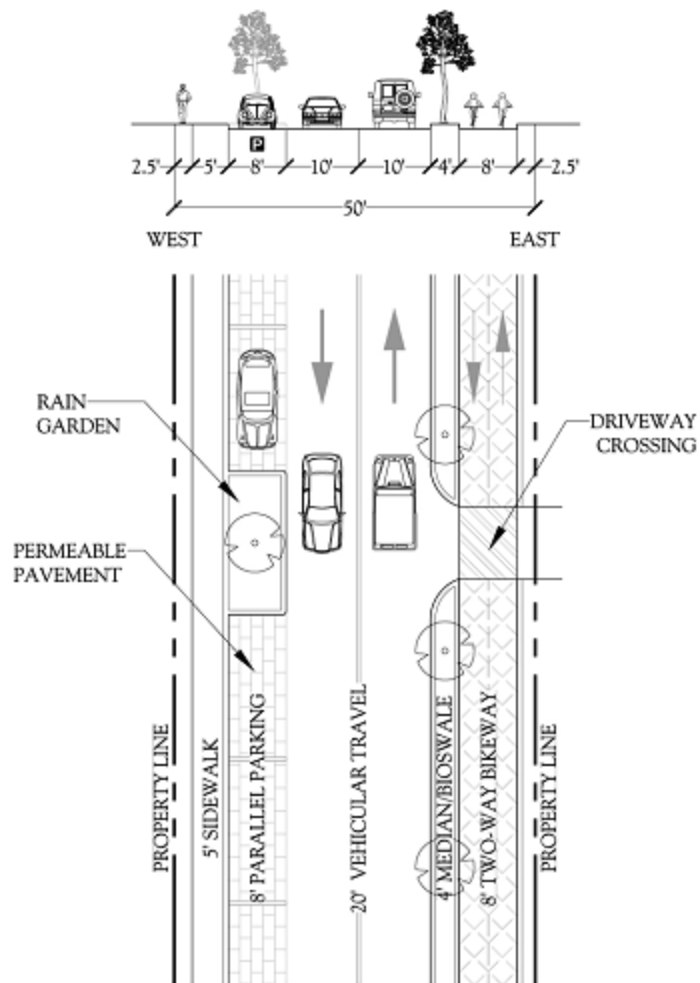
STRATEGY 10.2.1F: Do not allow storage sheds or open outdoor storage on a permanent basis in front yards or street side yards.

GOAL 10.3: EVERY STREET IN THE CITY OF SUMMERSVILLE SHOULD BE IMPROVED TO BE AS “COMPLETE” AS POSSIBLE.

A complete street is a street that accommodates users of all ages and physical abilities—including pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists—without prioritizing one over another. The complete street is also designed to consider its context with adjacent land uses and the natural environment.

Some existing buildings in Summersville are located very close to their front property lines, leaving little to no space between the front of the building and the legal public roadway. Because property lines are not marked, some property owners may be unaware of how close their building is to the street line and may even be unknowingly using and maintaining the public right-of-way as part of their yard or private parking area. Where these conditions exist, there is a width constraint to designing a complete street. Therefore, it is not possible to develop a typical complete street cross-section that will work for every road and block in the City of Summersville. The design of improvements for each street will need to be customized to consider the street's relationship to existing buildings.

FIGURE 3: COMPLETE STREET LAYOUT



Objective 10.3.1: Develop complete streets in the City of Summersville, especially when considering new development in growth areas.

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STRATEGY 10.3.1A: To the extent possible, improve each street to be “complete” by accommodating the vehicle, the bicyclist, and pedestrians of all physical abilities. (The design of each street type in Summersville will need to be customized depending on its traffic volume and how close existing buildings are positioned to the public right-of-way.)

STRATEGY 10.3.1B: When street improvements occur, incorporate natural systems like bioswales to handle and clean water runoff.

TABLE 2: COMPLETE STREET COMPONENTS

COMPLETE STREET EXAMPLE	WIDTH (ft)
Local Street, Bi-Directional Traffic	
For the Moving Vehicle, Bi-Directional Travel Lanes	20
For the Parked Vehicle, Parallel Parking on One Side	8
For the Pedestrian, Sidewalk on One Side	5
Concrete Ramps and Crosswalks at Intersections	
For the Bicyclist, Bi-Directional Bikeway	8
Permeable Pavers	
For the Environment, Landscaped Bio-Swales to Filter Runoff	Variable
Trees, Shrubs, Perennials, and Grasses	

Sidewalk Design

Objective 10.3.2: Develop consistent, interconnected sidewalks in the City of Summersville, especially when considering new development in growth areas.

STRATEGY 10.3.2A: Use cement concrete or interlocking pavers for the finished surfaces of all sidewalks.

STRATEGY 10.3.2B: Construct sidewalks of the same material in each block. Street corners are transitional spaces where a change in paving pattern or material can occur, if desired.

STRATEGY 10.3.2C: Discourage cycling on sidewalks, which is less safe than cycling in a designated bike lane or in the street. This is best done by pavement markings or signage.

Strategy 10.3.2d: Develop a universal inventory (preferably GIS mapping) of existing sidewalks, noting deficient areas and gaps in the linear sequence of facilities.

Crosswalks and Street Signage

Objective 10.3.3: Develop crosswalks and street signage that complements the surrounding neighborhood character in the City of Summersville, especially when considering new development in growth areas.

STRATEGY 10.3.3A: Install crosswalks at busy street corners. Crosswalks define safe pedestrian zones and slow vehicular traffic at intersections.

Design Elements include:

- ❖ Identify crosswalks by using paint or a decorative paving pattern across the full width of the street terminating at the curb or curb ramp.
- ❖ Do not use marking materials that would become slick in wet weather (like plastic reflectors).
- ❖ Typical crosswalk widths are six feet, but the width may vary. Intersections having a larger volume of pedestrian traffic or in locations where pedestrians are typically carrying watercraft equipment can be wider than less busy intersections.

Goal 10.4: UTILIZE RAIN BARRELS, RAIN GARDENS, AND BIOSWALES

Rain barrels conserve water and help lower costs (a rain barrel can save approximately 1,300 gallons of water during peak summer months). Rain barrels reduce water pollution by reducing stormwater runoff, which can contain pollutants like sediment, oil, grease, bacteria and nutrients. They are inexpensive and easy to build and install. Rain barrels can also be arranged to slowly release the collected rainfall to areas that can soak up the water, reducing stormwater runoff and increasing groundwater recharge.

Objective 10.4.1: Encourage the use of rain barrels and other sustainable methods for conserving water and assisting in groundwater recharge

STRATEGY 10.4.1A: Use rain barrels to collect rainwater from rooftops. Rain barrels attach to building downspouts and hold the water. The collected water can then be released slowly when the ground is not saturated or can be used to water plants during dry spells. Rain barrels can be purchased or built from parts available at home improvement stores. Barrels with a wooden exterior are preferred.

To build a rain barrel:

- ❖ Obtain a recycled barrel or new barrel made of recycled plastic, 55-gallons or larger.
- ❖ Surround the barrel with pine wood slats, sanded, stained, and sealed.
- ❖ Wrap stainless steel metal banding around the barrel to hold the wood slats in place.
- ❖ Install a spigot no less than four-inches from the base of the barrel.
- ❖ Place the barrel on a concrete block or solid surface and install aggregate (gravel or stone) on the ground under the faucet.
- ❖ Water can be dispensed from the spigot or a hose can be directly attached.

STRATEGY 10.4.1B: As an alternative to rain barrels, plant rain gardens at the base of downspouts or where water runs off of lawns or hard surfaces (patios, driveways, etc.).

To install a rain garden:

- ❖ Dig a shallow depression in the ground where water can pond. The depression can be of any size.
- ❖ Loosen the soil and add at least six to eight inches of soil amendment.
- ❖ In the depression, plant hardy, native, perennial plants that have deep roots, can tolerate being wet for extended periods, and that will thrive without chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Plant mixes can include shrubs, wildflowers and grasses.

STRATEGY 10.4.1C: As an alternative or supplement to storm drains, direct water flowing off of street surfaces and parking lots into bioswales. A bioswale is a method of conveying water in a vegetated swale instead of in a pipe. Bioswales are designed similar to rain gardens (planted with shrubs, wildflowers and grasses having deep roots that can tolerate being wet for extended periods), but they are larger and usually linear or trapezoidal in shape.

11.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

For a comprehensive plan to be successful, it needs to properly consider the local market, stakeholders, and any development realities with the city. Economic development not only refers to the existing conditions, challenges, and business opportunities, but also implies impacts to the larger region as a whole and any employment, industry, or work patterns it may observe. As part of the economic development approach:

- Current strengths and foreseeable future strengths of the local economy must be identified. This information allows more specific development ideas to be targeted.
- Summersville should be prepared for unexpected changes in economic conditions. That is, the addition of a new business to the community may create a need for additional services while the loss of a business may cause the city to restructure in order to increase efficiency and retain remaining businesses.
- Realistically assess future economic development opportunities while also preparing for any changes that may affect Summersville's economic outlook.

Public Input

Public input was captured through the distribution and collection of surveys that asked citizens to express their views on Summersville. The public's most important concerns about Summersville's economic condition were realized through the survey results.

Summersville residents expressed their desire to see **job development**, both an increase in both the type of jobs available and the amount of jobs in the area. Although attracting different job types to the region would likely require the need to attract new industry, expansion within the existing industries could create new positions within them.

The most frequently mentioned topic Summersville residents would like to see improved was the amount of existing businesses, particularly those that provide **shopping and dining**. The residents wanted to see a more diverse selection of restaurants and shops as well as other services.

Empty and abandoned store fronts were mentioned by Summersville residents as being an unfavorable characteristic of the city. One method of filling these locations is to redevelop them. **Reuse of existing storefronts** and spaces rather than building new structures may be the most cost effective or land use friendly method available as long as there is existing infrastructure capable of doing the same.

Competitive Advantages

With the Nicholas County Board of Education, Walmart, and Summersville Regional Medical Center, **Summersville has several of Nicholas County's largest employers located within its boundaries that provide significant employment opportunities.** Summersville Regional Medical Center is particularly an asset to the city because the health care industry supplies 19.1 percent of jobs in Summersville, which makes it the industry employing the most people in the city. Additionally, food services (10.4 percent), education services (6.1 percent), and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (5.8 percent) are large industries. Altogether, they provide over 40 percent of the city's jobs.

With **mineral resources** existing in Nicholas County, Summersville has the ability to benefit from any business related to their development. These natural resources include coal, which is recovered through both underground and surface mining methods, and natural gas. To recover either of these fossil fuels, people must be trained to work in each respected field.

The Summersville Dam and Gauley River are both located near Summersville. These **natural resources attract tourists** to the area for recreational purposes. In addition, the natural beauty of the area and other outdoor activities available in the surrounding region are unique to Summersville. All of these natural resources help bring tourists to the Summersville area every year.

Carnifex Ferry Battlefield State Park and the Gauley River National Recreational Area are additional **geographic resources** that allow travelers and locals alike to actively experience the beauty in the area surrounding Summersville. Since these lands are located near Summersville, each has the ability to bring travelers to or through the city.

Summersville is located strategically along U.S. Route 19, which is a **major north-south corridor** and brings regional traffic through the city on a daily basis. The city is also located within a two hour drive of larger West Virginia destinations such as Charleston, Beckley, Clarksburg, Fairmont, and Morgantown.

GOAL 11.1: PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THAT ALLOWS SUMMERSVILLE TO PROSPER ECONOMICALLY AND FLOURISH INTO THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

Objective 11.1.1: Promote business and job growth within Summersville.

STRATEGY 11.1.1A: Target areas within Summersville that are best suited for growth.

STRATEGY 11.1.1B: Before building new facilities, promote the redevelopment of any existing infrastructure in these areas.

STRATEGY 11.1.1C: Target businesses that build upon the existing opportunities in the Summersville area.

Objective 11.1.2: Account for the regional resources that effect the economic development of Summersville and promote their continued exploitation.

STRATEGY 11.1.2A: Summersville should work with Nicholas County officials to create an environment that establishes long term sustainable growth on resources unique to the region.

STRATEGY 11.1.2B: Target businesses that enter the area for the regional resources and provide incentives to them to locate in Summersville.

Objective 11.1.3: Retain existing businesses and create conditions that allow them to grow.

STRATEGY 11.1.3A: For companies that wish to expand locally, provide incentives that are tied to employment creation, among other things.

STRATEGY 11.1.3B: Develop promotional material to help attract potential residents to the area.

Objective 11.1.4: Promote redevelopment of existing infrastructure.

STRATEGY 11.1.4A: Implement strategies that attract businesses back into previously occupied locations.

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STRATEGY 11.1.4B: Provide incentives to promote locating new business ventures in existing infrastructure rather than building new facilities

Objective 11.1.5: Use Summersville's competitive advantages to attract new business

STRATEGY 11.1.5.A: Develop marketing and promotional material to advertise Summersville as a location that is fit for the business.

STRATEGY 11.1.5B: Provide incentives to attract the desired new businesses

STRATEGY 11.15C: Work with incoming industries to better prepare Summersville residents for needed positions.

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Completion of the Comprehensive Plan is only the beginning of the planning process. To derive any benefit from the Plan, steps must be taken toward its implementation. This requires the adoption of the Plan, the carrying out of the recommendations contained therein and the adoption and enforcement of the necessary regulations.

Since the city does not have control over regional, state, and national influences, it has to rely on education, land use controls, supply of information, taxation and assessment, incentives, development of public facilities and services, and persuasion, in order to develop all facets of the Plan. To accomplish this end, every level of local government must participate along with a generous input of citizen participation.

The Planning & Zoning Board's role in carrying out the Plan is predominantly a fact-finding and advisory service to public officials and private agencies. This is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. The board's advice concerning both public and private development cannot be easily ignored. This imposes a high level of responsibility on the board and means that the board must assure itself that its recommendations promote the best interests of the City of Summersville; will not conflict with other features of the Comprehensive Plan; are in scale with present and future needs; and are not arbitrary or capricious. A concerted effort by the Planning & Zoning Board supported by legislative authority and citizens along with the actions of other public officials will result in the gradual realization of the benefits to the city from the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Summersville City Council has direct responsibility for adoption and implementation of a Comprehensive Plan and continuing city planning programs. According to West Virginia law the functions of the Planning Commission (Planning & Zoning Board) are primarily advisory. Final approval, adoption, and implementation of many planning decisions require the legislative actions of the City Council.

Procedures for adoption of a Plan are contained in Chapter 8A, Article 3 of the Code of West Virginia. In an effort to involve a broad segment of public opinion in the planning process, the Planning & Zoning Board must hold at least one public hearing before certifying the Plan to the City Council and recommending its adoption. The recommendations of the Planning & Zoning Board regarding the proposed Plan or Plan Amendments must be presented to the City Council

for action. The Planning & Zoning Board must also hold a public hearing on the Plan prior to taking official action. After adopting or amending a Plan, the city must file a notice of official Plan adoption with the office of the City Clerk.

The processes utilized in implementation of the Plan can be classified into three major groups: regulation of development and use of private and public properties; negotiations with landowners and developers as to the best use of land; and the provisions of public services and facilities. Planning objectives, no matter how well formulated, may never achieve fulfillment if legal controls are not provided.

Plans must be accompanied by jurisdictional guides if future growth is to occur in a manner compatible with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

ZONING REGULATIONS

The Zoning Ordinance and its accompanying map represent the regulatory means of carrying out the interest and principles of the Comprehensive Plan. In order to fit not only existing conditions but also future requirements of an expanding population, an up-to-date Zoning Ordinance and Map are essential.

Zoning is the regulation of the use of private property for the purpose of promoting the orderly development of a community and furthering the health, safety and general welfare of its inhabitants. Under zoning, every property owner is allowed the enjoyment of individual property rights but is restricted from encroaching upon the rights of others. Thus, it protects every property owner from injury by other property owners who would seek private gain at their expense or at the expense of the community as a whole.

Zoning involves the allocation of land in the community to districts or zones of different categories. It also regulates, district by district, the use of property and the height and size of buildings. It is the principal instrument for giving effect to that part of the Comprehensive Plan which is concerned with the use of private lands, as distinguished from that part which is concerned with public spaces and facilities.

The Zoning Ordinance establishes several kinds of community development standards. The most common is the control on density of population and intensity of development. Density is a direct function of the minimum lot size

established for each zone. Intensity is generally regulated through height restrictions and through established ratios of floor area and general coverage to the total area of the parcel.

These controls establish the scale at which the development of the community is to take place. The ordinance needs to ensure that the density recommended in the Comprehensive Plan for growth areas and rural areas are regulated.

The City of Summersville's zoning should be amended to bring it in line with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and to also assure the reality of Plan proposals. Regulations will be needed that encourage development in the growth areas and limits development in the conservation areas.

Innovative methods and techniques should be researched to determine their effectiveness in encouraging primary growth in prescribed areas. These methods could include provisions for cluster development, performance zoning, sliding scale, density standards and other possible methods.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Usually, before land can be put to urban uses, acreage must be converted into streets, blocks and lots which establish the pattern and determine the character and convenience of each new area. This process is known as land platting and subdividing. Every subdivision laid out within the city becomes an integral part of the community and has a lasting effect upon that community.

Consequently, the regulation of land subdivision is one of the major measures for gradually bringing about a well-designed and attractive community. When subdivisions are not controlled, or inadequately controlled, they may be defective in several major respects. Their street systems may be badly designed or ill-adaptive to existing or required future streets in contiguous areas of the community or to natural terrain. Lots may be of inappropriate size or shape and may not be in harmony with either the natural terrain or the existing or desirable future character of the neighborhood. Utility improvements may fall short of minimum standards necessary for health, safety or desirable living conditions or the utilities may not be properly coordinated in location or size with those of adjacent areas.

Subdivision regulations normally include standards for the design of new subdivisions, requirements for the construction of needed improvements, criteria

for lands to be developed, and standards for maintaining the quality of the natural environment.

Subdivision regulations specify very closely the relationship between land use, transportation and community facilities at the level of the smallest components of the community. Procedures for the review of proposed new subdivisions offer an opportunity to coordinate new development with capital improvements such as roads, sewers and water mains.

The legal basis for making guidance of land subdivision effective is the exercise by public authority of the right to withhold the privilege of public record from the subdivision plats which have been poorly or inappropriately designed, or which are not properly adjusted to the existing or desirable future development of adjoining area or to the Comprehensive Plan.

The Code of West Virginia (8A-4) establishes the framework for adoption of a subdivision ordinance by municipal governments. When consistently and intelligently applied in accord with the Comprehensive Plan, subdivision regulations should prove to be one of the most effective and beneficial instruments for achieving the desired future development of the community.

BUILDING AND HOUSING CODES

West Virginia municipalities are authorized and empowered to adopt building and housing codes establishing and regulating minimum building and housing standards for the purpose of improving the health, safety and well-being of its citizens. Many local governments in West Virginia adopt the State Building Code by reference.

The Code of West Virginia (29-3-5b) directs the State Fire Commission to promulgate a State Building Code to safeguard life and property and to ensure the quality of construction of all structures erected or renovated throughout this state. The rules shall be in accordance with standard safe practices so embodied in widely recognized standards of good practice for building construction and all aspects related thereto and have force and effect in those counties and municipalities adopting the state building code.

HOUSING PROGRAM

To ensure that the goal of providing every resident of Summersville with a safe and decent housing unit is realized, the Planning & Zoning Board along with city officials, interest groups and public agencies - local, regional and State - should work closely with the Raleigh County Housing Authority and other third-party housing groups to ensure that safe and decent housing is available for low and moderate income residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The New River Gorge Regional Development Authority serves the New River Gorge of West Virginia, a long-standing collaboration between the City of Beckley and the Commissions of Fayette, Nicholas, Raleigh, and Summers County. The mission of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority is to initiate, facilitate and support the economic development efforts of its members. Operating under the direction of a 13-member board of directors, this economic development partnership seeks to improve the quality of life for all NRGRDA region citizens by expanding and diversifying the regional economy with increased and enhanced employment opportunities.

The City of Summersville Chamber of Commerce and Summersville Convention and Visitors Bureau work together locally to organize local business membership and provide resources for visitors to the region.

Just outside Summersville city limits sits Glade Creek Park. Originally 182 acres, it has been zoned for Industrial purposes with 125 acres developable. The remaining acreage is woodland. The location near Summersville is a key feature for this property. The area is expected to see continuous growth in the near and far future due to the location of the Bechtel Reserve in the New River Gorge Region. The site has Phase I clearance, is publicly owned, and funding is available to extend road access and utilities as needed.

SUPPLY OF INFORMATION

The fact that the city has a Comprehensive Plan and that the Plan is publicly distributed to potential investors, developers and other public agencies is a significant step toward the eventual realization of the planning goals and objectives. However, an important factor to remember is that the biggest problem in land use investment decisions is uncertainty. A Plan is an expression of land use policy and will reduce this uncertainty factor only when the community resists arbitrary or capricious alterations and changes to the Plan. The results will be seen by the City of Summersville in the form of investors' interests, definite commitments and actual development which is consistent with the Plan.

An effort should be made to maintain an inventory of data on police, fire, schools, parks, utilities, street conditions and other community facilities and their cost of operation and schedule of availability and completion. In addition, regular publications on building activity, subdivision activity, business activity and progress toward the Comprehensive Plan objectives should be published and distributed. The Planning & Zoning Board can assure that these publications are made available to the public by placing copies in the local library, maintaining a current internet presence, and maintaining public files in the city office.

PLAN COORDINATION

The implementation of this Plan establishes a need for coordination between the city and other public and private entities from which important services could be obtained. The Planning & Zoning Board, in fulfilling its responsibilities, will be continually involved in coordinating the elements of the Comprehensive Plan as they interrelate both internally and externally. However, the responsibility for effective coordination does not rest solely with them alone. All city agencies, commissions and the Nicholas County Commission must also be involved in the process if there is to be measurable benefit in terms of high return in services and needed improvements for the taxpayers' dollars.

PLAN UPDATE AND REVIEW

To guide Plan implementation and to insure that the Comprehensive Plan is kept current, each element of the Plan should be revised at least every five years. Such reviews should result in reaffirmation of the Plan or produce a need for revision, amendment and re-adoption of sections of the Plan. These actions will assure the city that its Plan remains a reliable, reasonable and realistic guide to a better future.

CONTINUING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The citizens of Summersville should constantly be called upon to advise the Planning & Zoning Board and other governmental agencies in all of the aforementioned processes.