



# Town of Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan

**May 2019**

**WVU**LAW

LAND USE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LAW CLINIC

## Introduction

Introduction .....	Page 2
Why develop a Comprehensive Plan? .....	Page 2
Role of the Planning Commission .....	Page 3
Chapter 8A: Land Use Planning .....	Page 4
Public Involvement .....	Page 6
Vision Statement and Goals .....	Page 6
Implementation Matrix .....	Page 7
Priority Projects .....	Page 8

## Focus Area 1: Tourism and Recreation

Strengths .....	Page 17
Weaknesses .....	Page 18
Opportunities .....	Page 19
Action Plan .....	Page 23

## Focus Area 2: Community Facilities

Government Overview .....	Page 28
Infrastructure .....	Page 29
Education .....	Page 29
Transportation .....	Page 30
<i>Map 1: Sidewalk Concerns</i> .....	Page 31
Cultural, Historic, Community and Social Services .....	Page 32
Recycling .....	Page 32
Action Plan .....	Page 33

Focus Area 3: Public Safety

Police .....Page 36

Fire .....Page 36

Medical Facilities.....Page 37

Emergency Management.....Page 37

Action Plan.....Page 38

Focus Area 4: Land Use

Existing Land Use .....Page 41

*Map 2: Existing Land Use*.....Page 41

Housing .....Page 42

Community Design .....Page 43

Future Land Use .....Page 44

*Map 3: Future Land Use* .....Page 44

Action Plan .....Page 46

*Map 4: Annexation Areas*.....Page 49

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Public Input Procedures
- Appendix 2: Open House Results
- Appendix 3: Sources
- Appendix 4: Funding Opportunities
- Appendix 5: Adoption Materials



# INTRODUCTION





## Introduction

Gauley Bridge is a quaint town in Fayette County, West Virginia. Visitors driving southeast on the Midland Trail will notice a 60 foot waterfall, Cathedral Falls, as they enter into Gauley Bridge. The small town emerges just down the road. Town Hall, formally a railroad depot, sits on a grassy hillside. A close look at Kanawha River, winding beside the town, will reveal the worn piers of an old bridge burned during the Civil War in 1861. The town's rich history remains quite visible in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



The town's strategic location at the entry to the Upper Kanawha Valley led to much activity during the Civil War. In 1861, the covered bridge was burned by Confederate forces, requiring Union troops to cross the river by boat. The Union troops eventually rebuilt the bridge, using the original piers, but burned it again when Confederate troops attempted to retake the town. The Union maintained control of Gauley Bridge throughout the remainder of the war, and all that remains of the burned bridge are grassy piers in the Kanawha (Blackwell and Taylor, 1992).

By 1891, the Kanawha and Michigan Railroad spanned past Gauley Bridge. The coal industry thrived alongside the newly built railroad. Gauley Bridge and nearby communities became coal camps. *Gauley Bridge: A Brief History* points out that, in the area's heyday, Fayette County had 129 post offices. A smelting plant, the Electro-Metallurgical Company, provided jobs beginning in the 1920s.

The Hawk's Nest Tunnel Disaster occurred in 1930, during the construction of a tunnel between Gauley Bridge and Ansted. Approximately 5,000 men, predominantly African American, were hired during the construction of the tunnel. Many workers developed silicosis due to working conditions, leading to the death of hundreds, if not thousands, of workers. The disaster at Hawk's Nest is one of the worst industrial disasters in the United States. A memorial along Route 19 was completed in 2012.

## Why develop a Comprehensive Plan?

The small town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, lies at the confluence of the New and Gauley Rivers. The town's close-knit community, convenient location, and beautiful scenery contribute to Gauley Bridge's great potential. In the coming years, community leaders in Gauley Bridge will be tasked with the responsibility of building a bright future from these assets. A comprehensive plan is a policy guidance document designed to assist local governments in planning for the future. From beginning to end, a comprehensive plan is guided

by input from residents, planning commission members, and other local stakeholders— the plan is designed to be a reflection of the community’s goals and desires for future development.

Most individuals plan on a daily basis. We plan for what we wear to work or what we’re making for dinner. We also plan long-term for retirement or for a vacation. A community should, likewise, have a plan for allocating funds and prioritizing projects. It should have a unified vision for what it strives to become. Oftentimes, a community has ideas for capitalizing on assets, but no clear vision on how to move forward. The 2018 Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan is guided by three goals identified by the town’s planning commission and community members. Over the next ten years, these goals, and their corresponding action steps, can serve as roadmap for Gauley Bridge’s future.

In addition to serving as a useful tool that prioritizes projects and guides policy decisions in the town, a comprehensive plan can be an attractive addition to grant applications. A comprehensive plan shows funders that a municipality has an identified needs, as well as methods for implementing its goals. Additionally, the adoption of a comprehensive plan is a prerequisite to adopting other land use ordinances that can be used to guide development or address issues such as dilapidated structures.

Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code outlines specific components and objectives that must be included in a comprehensive plan. Some of these requirements include transportation, projected population growth or decline, and housing. The Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan is guided by three primary goals, and required components are interwoven within discussion and analysis. Tables with detailed information about where a certain

required objective or component can be found in the plan are located on pages **4 and 5**.

## *Quick Facts about Comprehensive Planning*

- **Policy guidance document**
- **Looks 10 years into the future**
- **Enables municipality to adopt and enforce other land use ordinances**



## **Role of the Planning Commission**

Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code grants a planning commission the authority to develop a comprehensive plan. Planning commission members must be residents of the municipality for which the plan is being developed and should serve as a diverse representation of the community. The Gauley Bridge Planning Commission consists of five members that have met monthly since May 2017. Since the commission’s first meeting, members have been addressing three guiding questions: Where are we now?



Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

All planning commission meetings are open to the public and are held at Town Hall. Meeting agendas are posted at Town Hall at least three business days in advance of the meeting.

As part of the plan's development, planning commission members hosted an Open House, identified key stakeholders whose input should be included, created a community-wide survey, and identified the town's assets and challenges. The final version of the comprehensive plan is adopted by the Gauley Bridge Town Council after two public hearings.

## Chapter 8A: Land Use Planning

The West Virginia Code, Chapter 8A: Land Use Planning, sets out the rules that local governments must follow when developing comprehensive plans.

Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code: Land Use Planning requires several elements in a Comprehensive Plan. The following tables display the mandatory elements and where they can be found in the Comprehensive Plan.

Required Objectives for a Comprehensive Plan	
<i>W. VA. Code §8A-3-4(b)(1)-(7)</i>	
Code Provision	Page #
Statement of goals and objectives	23, 25, 33, 38, 46, 47
Timeline on how to meet short and long-term goals and objectives	7, 9-15
Action plan with implementation strategies	7, 9-15
Recommendations of a financial program for necessary public funding	7, 9-15
Statement of recommendations concerning future land use and development policies	44-45
A program to encourage regional planning, coordination, and cooperation	7
Maps, plats, and/or charts - that present basic information on the land, including present and future uses	41, 44, 49

## Required Components for a Comprehensive Plan

## W. VA. Code §8A-3-4©

Code Provision	Page #
<b>Land Use</b>	
Different land uses (including, for example, residential, agricultural, historic, conservation)	32, 41, 44
Population density and building intensity standards	41
Growth or decline management	45, 49
Projected population growth or decline	45
Constraints on development (including identifying flood-prone and subsidence areas)	41
<b>Housing</b>	
Analyze projected housing needs and different types of housing needed (including affordable housing and accessible housing for persons with disabilities)	41
Identify the number of projected housing units and land needed	45
Address substandard housing	47-48
Rehabilitate and improve existing housing	47-48
Adaptive reuse of buildings into housing	42
<b>Transportation</b>	
Vehicular, transit, air, port, railroad, river, and any other mode	30, 34
Movement of traffic and parking	30, 31
Pedestrian and bicycle systems	31, 33
Intermodal transportation	30
<b>Economic development</b>	
Analyze opportunities, strengths and weaknesses	17-22
Identify and designate economic development sites and/or sectors	19-22
Identify types of economic development sought	20-22
<b>Miscellaneous Components</b>	
Infrastructure	29
Public Services	32, 36-39
Rural	
Recreation	17-26
Community Design	43, 44, 46
Preferred development areas	44-45
Renewal and/or redevelopment	44-45
Financing	7, 9-15, Appendix 4
Historic preservation	19, 23, 24 32



## Public Involvement

A comprehensive plan is guided by input from residents, visitors, and other engaged members of the community. Ensuring that all community members are provided the opportunity to contribute their perspective was crucial to the development of this comprehensive plan. The Gauley Bridge Planning Commission provided several opportunities for public input and



formally adopted Public Input Procedures (found in [Appendix 1](#)) that outlined the steps, at minimum, that the planning commission would take to elicit feedback.

The planning commission first identified a list of stakeholders, which included members of the police department, local business owners, schoolteachers, and more. The stakeholders were contacted via telephone or email and were provided a list of survey questions that sought to identify existing needs and future hopes for Gauley Bridge.

On August 29, 2017, the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission hosted an Open House at the community center. The open house served as an opportunity for community members to learn about the comprehensive plan and participate in a variety of activities designed for sharing input. The feedback provided during the Open House can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

## Vision Statement and Goals

The Gauley Bridge Planning Commission developed a vision statement to guide the development of the town's comprehensive plan. A vision statement looks ten years into the future and seeks to capture the town's aspirations. When local leaders are faced with change and challenges, referencing the vision statement is a way to ensure that decisions made in Gauley Bridge reflect the town's hopes for the future. Establishing a vision statement creates enthusiasm and motivation towards planning for a town's future. Establishing goals is one of the first steps a planning commission can take to implement its vision. The planning commission developed four goals that are consistent with feedback from stakeholders and survey participants. The four goals, listed below, serve as the backbone of this comprehensive plan.

***"The Town of Gauley Bridge is the gateway to the New River Gorge. Visitors and residents enjoy the town's rich history, natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and family atmosphere. Come as a visitor, leave as a friend."***

Each proceeding section of the comprehensive plan will explore these goals in detail. For every goal, data and background information will be included, to ensure that the question “where are we now?” is answered. The plan will then include specific objectives and action steps that the town can take to achieve each of its three goals. With each action step that is implemented, Gauley Bridge will be closer to achieving its vision for the future.

## **Goal 1: Promote tourism and recreation in the Town of Gauley Bridge**

## **Goal 2: Establish community services that improve quality of life**

## **Goal 3: Improve public health and safety in Gauley Bridge and the region**

## **Goal 4: Enhance and revive the local character of Gauley Bridge through land use planning**

### **Implementation Matrix**

The Gauley Bridge Planning Commission should continue to meet after the adoption of the comprehensive plan. The planning commission and local government will be tasked with linking community successes, connecting stakeholders, and maintaining momentum in implementation. The town should also continue its participation in the Upper Kanawha Valley (UKV) Regional Planning Commission. The UKV Regional Planning Commission is comprised of representatives from Montgomery, Smithers, Gauley Bridge, Fayette, and Kanawha Counties. The regional planning commission is a great way to keep regional leaders informed and promote the sharing of resources. Many of the action items in this comprehensive plan will require regional participation. The UKV Regional Planning Commission will be vital in achieving those action items. The town should also work together with both Region IV Planning and Development Council to implement and fund projects detailed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The implementation matrix serves as a snapshot of the goals, objectives, and action steps provided in the Town of Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan. The implementation matrix lists potential partners and funding sources that can be utilized during implementation. The implementation matrix also notes whether an action step is deemed a low, moderate, or high priority, as well as the timeline in which a specific step should be taken.



## Priority Projects

There are a total of 46 action items detailed in the comprehensive plan. As funding is limited, as well as staff capacity and resources, the planning commission decided to choose five (5) action items that the city should focus efforts on now in order to jump start the implementation of the comprehensive plan. All of the action items are important but the top five chosen should be high priorities for the town.

**Priority 1: Enact vacant and dilapidated property registry ordinances**

**Priority 2: Support the development of hiking trails being developed around Cathedral Falls and throughout Gauley Bridge**

**Priority 3: Support the development of ATV trails as a potential economic driver**

**Priority 4: Enact a zoning ordinance**

**Priority 5: Focus revitalization in the renewal/redevelopment areas**

Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 1: Promote tourism and recreation in the Town of Gauley Bridge</b>							
Develop a marketing campaign for local and regional attractions for travelers	High	Short-term	23	Town of Gauley Bridge	New River CVB	Staff time	General Fund
Reopen and repair the Gauley Bridge Historical Society Museum as a visitors center	High	Short-term	23	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Utilize the museum for youth events and community programming	Medium	Mid-term	23	Historical Society	Town of Gauley Bridge, WVU Extension, and New River Gorge CVB	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund
Reestablish the Gauley Bridge Historical Society	High	Short-term	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Volunteer time	N/A
Install signage at Cathedral Falls	High	Short-term	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers, New River Gorge CVB	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Explore ideas for reinstalling the spotlights at Cathedral Falls	Low	Mid-term	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Continue to hold events, like the Town Celebration and Trunk or Treat to attract visitors to the town	Ongoing	Ongoing	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Events Committee of Town Council, Volunteers	Dependent on type of events	General Fund
Maintain the old football fields for community events, like a turkey shoot and gun raffle, and for sports events	Ongoing	Ongoing	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Events Committee of Town Council, Volunteers	Dependent on type of events	General Fund
Repave Gauley Bridge's tennis and basketball courts	Medium	Short	24	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants



Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 1: Promote tourism and recreation in the Town of Gauley Bridge</b>							
Support the development of hiking trails being developed around Cathedral Falls and throughout Gauley Bridge	High	Short-term	25	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Support the development of ATV trails as a potential economic driver	High	Short-term	25	Town of Gauley Bridge	Hatfield and McCoy Trails, UKV Region	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Continue to support local businesses	High	Short-term	25	Town of Gauley Bridge	Local business owners	N/A	N/A
Work with the New River Gorge CVB to capitalize on traffic to be received by paddlers on the New River Dries	High	Short-term	25	Town of Gauley Bridge	New River CVB	Staff time	N/A
Maximize the potential for recreational opportunities on the Kanawha River	High	Short-term	25-26	Town of Gauley Bridge	New River CVB	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Explore the potential of using the Community Center as space for a business incubator	High	Long-term	26	Town of Gauley Bridge	Telemarketing investors, Local business owners, and	Dependent on scope of project	Grants

Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference Page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 2: Establish community services that improve the quality of life</b>							
Develop a Capital Improvements Plan	High	Short-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	N/A	Staff time	N/A
Purchase a new communications system to regulate water flow	Low	Long-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	WV Division of Highways	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Work with Kanawha Falls PSD to upgrade and replace the outdated water lines	Low	Long-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	Kanawha Falls PSD	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Update the stormwater system	High	Long-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	WV Division of Highways	Dependent on scope of project	Grants
Develop a sidewalk plan	Medium	Long-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	WV Division of Highways	Staff time	N/A
Update municipal website	Ongoing	Ongoing	34	Town of Gauley Bridge	Municipal League	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund
Work with the Mountain Transit Authority (MTA) to expand public transportation options	Medium	Long-term	34	Town of Gauley Bridge	Mountain Transit Authority	Staff time	N/A
Continue to advocate for a recycling service	Low	Long-term	34	Town of Gauley Bridge	Waste Management	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund
Coordinate a group of volunteers to organize a book borrowing system at the community center	Low	Mid-term	34	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Staff/ Volunteer Time	General Fund

Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference Page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 2: Establish community services that improve the quality of life</b>							
Install a Little Free Library	Low	Mid-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Staff/ Volunteer Time	General Fund
Utilize the Community Center as a gathering place to host activities and events	Ongoing	Ongoing	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers	Staff/ Volunteer Time	General Fund
Host community field days or other events at the town's sports fields	Medium	Short-term	33	Town of Gauley Bridge	Events Committee of Town Council, Volunteers	Staff/ Volunteer Time	General Fund



Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference Page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 3: Improve public health and safety in Gauley Bridge and the region</b>							
Explore more partnerships with local police departments to realize cost savings	Ongoing	Ongoing	38	Town of Gauley Bridge	Deputy Sherriff and State Police	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Support police department efforts for new equipment	High	Short-term	38	Town of Gauley Bridge	Police Department	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Work with other communities in the UKV region to develop a public awareness campaign on drug addiction	High	Short-term	38	Fayette County Board of Education	UKV Regional Planning Commission	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Expand treatment options for drug and alcohol users	High	Short-term	38	Town of Gauley Bridge	Department of Health and Human Resources, Private rehabilitation	N/A	N/A
Collaborate with local businesses to participate in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day	High	Short-term	38-39	Town of Gauley Bridge	Local Businesses, Police Department	Staff time	N/A
Work with neighboring communities to obtain cots and backup generators to expand the Community Center's capacity to function as an emergency shelter	High	Medium	39	Gauley Bridge Volunteer Fire Department	UKV Regional Planning Commission	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Develop a disaster plan	High	Short-term	39	Town of Gauley Bridge	Deputy Sherriff and State Police, Town of	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants

Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference Page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 4: Enhance and revive the local character of Gauley Bridge through land use planning.</b>							
Enact a zoning ordinance	High	Short-term	46	Town of Gauley Bridge	WVU Land Use Clinic	New Zoning Ordinance- \$20,000-\$30,000	N/A
Revive beautification on Main Street through new street lights	Medium	Mid-term	46	Town of Gauley Bridge	Beautification Committee	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund; Grants
Revitalize old storefronts to attract businesses with murals of businesses and restaurants painted by local children	Medium	Mid-term	46	Town of Gauley Bridge	Volunteers, Local Businesses	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund
Update the existing mural outside the bank	Medium	Mid-term	46	City National Bank	Town of Gauley Bridge, Volunteers	Volunteer Time	N/A
Adopt the WV State Building Code	High	Short-term	47	Town of Gauley Bridge	WVU Land Use Clinic	Cost of hiring a certified building inspector	General Fund
Adopt the International Property Maintenance Code	High	Short-term	47	Town of Gauley Bridge	WVU Land Use Clinic	Cost of hiring a certified inspector	General Fund
Share code enforcement with neighboring communities	High	Short-term	47	Town of Gauley Bridge	Fayette County	Staff time	General Fund
Adopt 8-12-16	High	Short-term	47	Town of Gauley Bridge	WVU Land Use Clinic	Staff time	General Fund
Enact vacant and dilapidated property registries ordinance	High	Short-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	WVU Land Use Clinic	Staff time	General Fund

Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe	Reference Page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
<b>Goal 4: Enhance and revive the local character of Gauley Bridge through land use planning.</b>							
Update the 2016 vacant and dilapidated property survey	Medium	Mid-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	Fayette County Urban Renewal Authority	Dependent on scope of project	General Fund
Consider public pressure to get property owners to maintain their property	Medium	Short-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	N/A	Staff time	General Fund
Sponsor a monthly yard and home contest	High	Short-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	Events Committee of Town Council	Staff time	General Fund
Focus revitalization in the renewal/redevelopment areas	High	Short-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	Investors	N/A	N/A
Annex surrounding lands to increase the tax base and potential development areas	Medium	Long-term	48	Town of Gauley Bridge	Fayette County	Staff time	General Fund



# Focus Area 1: Tourism and Recreation





The West Virginia Code, Chapter 8A requires a thorough economic analysis in a comprehensive plan. During the planning process, residents were asked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in regards to economic development in Gauley Bridge. The biggest economic driver for Gauley Bridge at this time is tourism and recreation. Therefore, most of this section focuses on needs and opportunities in tourism and recreation.

## Strengths

Gauley Bridge is in a prime location on the Midland Trail to develop opportunities related to tourism and recreation. Promoting tourism and recreation in Gauley Bridge could spur economic development while improving quality of life for residents. The town sits directly at the confluence of the New and Gauley Rivers, which flow into the flat water of the Kanawha.

One of the biggest attractions in the town is Cathedral Falls. The falls is a 60ft. waterfall on Cane Branch, a tributary of the New River. Visitors traveling on the Midland Trail will notice the waterfall directly upon entering Gauley Bridge. Cathedral Falls is one of the town's most beautiful natural assets. A small parking lot and picnic area is located at the falls, as well as various hiking trails.

The Town of Gauley Bridge hosts annual events for community members to enjoy. The town's Christmas parade provides an opportunity to see Santa and celebrate the holiday season. In September 2018, Gauley Bridge also hosted a Town Celebration with fireworks. The hope is to make this an annual event. Trunk or Treat and New Years celebrations usually take place in Gauley Bridge annually.

Gauley Bridge's existing businesses include the New River Campground, Gino's Pizza and Spaghetti House, Fosters One Stop Auto Care, and more. A new supermarket, the New River Market, recently opened in Gauley Bridge. City National Bank operates a branch in Gauley Bridge.

Currently, a boat launch exists at the New River Campground, an asset to the community. The New River Campground offers both full hookups and rustic camping. A shelter can be rented for birthdays, weddings, reunions,

The Midland Trail/Route 60 is a National Scenic Byway that spans 180 miles across West Virginia. Route 60 offers educational experiences and outdoor opportunities to those that take the less beaten path. Gauley Bridge falls at Mile 95, located in the Midland Trail's "Recreation Center," which offers the drive's most mountainous and scenic views. The Midland Trail Scenic Highway Association coordinates with over 300 partners along the byway.



and more. A bait shop and bathhouse are also available. In the fall, the campground becomes “haunted.” Proceeds generated by the haunted campground are donated to a local animal shelter.

Gauley Bridge also has tennis courts, basketball courts, and baseball fields that serve as assets to the community.

Weaknesses

Local businesses contribute to a community’s sense of character and quality of life. The town has lost businesses over the past few years. In recent years, Gauley Bridge has been struggling with the decline in the coal industry. During the completion of the SWOT analysis, the planning commission listed “sparse businesses” as a weakness. The median household income for Gauley Bridge in 2017 was \$33,333 according to the US Census. The median income is lower than the median average in West Virginia of \$39,297. The unemployment rate in Gauley Bridge in 2017 was 14.2 percent, which is significantly higher than the state rate of 7.2 percent. Similar to many other communities in West Virginia, Gauley Bridge has experienced a consistent decline in population. The lack of industry in the area likely led to the decrease.

Over 48 percent of residents are not participating in the labor force. Those that do work travel a distance to work, the mean travel time to work is approximately 28 minutes. More residents in Gauley Bridge rely on Supplemental Security Income, Cash Public Assistance, and Food Stamps/SNAP benefits than the county and state as shown on **Table 1: Earnings**. Approximately 26 percent of families in Gauley Bridge are living below the poverty level.

Table 1: Earnings			
	Gauley Bridge	Fayette County	West Virginia
Earnings	60.1%	63.2%	63.2%
Social Security	32.6%	45.8%	45.8%
Retirement Income	19.1%	25.4%	25.4%
Supplemental Security Income	18.8%	10.7%	10.7%
Cash Public Assistance	2.3%	1.8%	1.8%
Food Stamp/SNAP benefits	33.6%	21.0%	21.0%

**Table 5.2: Employment by Industry** displays the estimated number of employees for a variety of industries. The most significant percentage of Gauley Bridge residents (22.3%) are employed in educational services, health care, and social assistance. This employment pattern is common in West Virginia. Very few residents are employed in manufacturing, wholesale trade, finance and insurance, real estate and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining. The lack of residents employed in these industries could account for the lower median household income as these jobs typically pay a higher wage.



**Table 2: Employment by Industry 2017**

	<b>Gauley Bridge</b>	<b>West Virginia</b>
<b>Industry</b>	Percent	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, & mining	3.7%	7.2%
Construction	8.3%	6.1%
Manufacturing	0.8%	5.7%
Wholesale Trade	1.2%	2.7%
Retail Trade	12.4%	13.7%
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	9.1%	4.6%
Information	7.9%	2.3%
Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, & leasing	2.9%	4.2%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management services	9.5%	6.5%
Educational services, health care, social assistance	22.3%	27.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, & food services	6.6%	7.7%
Other services, except public administration	5.0%	4.7%
Public administration	10.3%	7.0%

## Opportunities

The Town of Gauley Bridge can take many steps to improve the area’s recreational and historical opportunities. As part of this effort, a marketing and branding campaign should be considered. The town has no website and no local Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB). A marketing campaign should include promotion of the town as an outdoor destination. Gauley Bridge is currently in the process of copywriting “Gateway to the New River” as their slogan for marketing purposes.

The town should promote its rich history. Reopening the Gauley Bridge Historical Museum and Visitor’s Center is a priority of the town, however repairs to the building are needed. The museum was formerly a railroad office and is currently owned by the town. In previous years, the museum held exhibits on coal mining, railroads, and Native Americans, often loaning antiques from Charleston. A stakeholder survey revealed that the goal of operating the museum—and the goal of the Gauley Bridge Historical Society—was to preserve the integrity of the town and to serve as a place that welcomes tourists to Gauley Bridge.

In addition to serving as an attraction to tourists, the Historical Museum and Visitor’s Center could serve as an opportunity to connect community members. A few ideas for engaging the community in the museum were identified prior to the planning process by allowing it to be volunteer-ran. Overall, the Gauley Bridge Historical Museum and Visitor’s Center can serve as a local hub that draws tourists to town, celebrates the history of the area, and serves as a local space for community involvement.

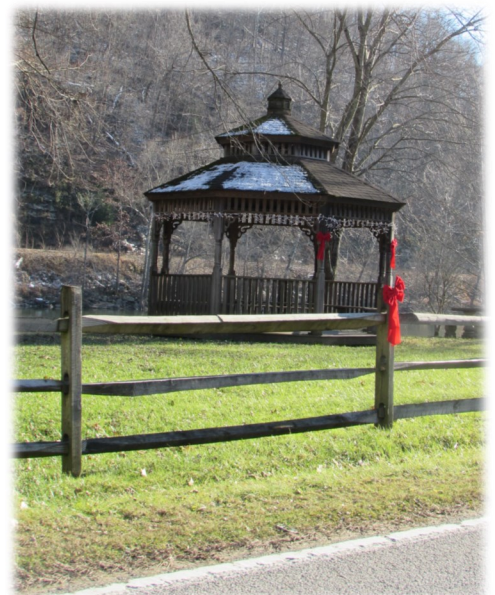
In regards to local recreational attractions, the tennis courts and basketball courts need repaved. The tennis

court net is intact but may need replaced in the next 1-2 years. Brush needs removed at all sports fields. The walking trail at the football field is currently overgrown in some areas. The football field has an accompanying concession stand that is in good shape that could be utilized in the future. An idea discussed during the planning process is using the football field as a location for a drive-in theater. The Upper Kanawha Valley does not have a drive-in theater and such an attraction would likely draw people to Gauley Bridge. A playground used to be above the football field. A new and improved playground would be beneficial to young children in the community. Recreation revitalization areas are shown on **Map 3: Future Land Use**. These areas were identified to improve recreational amenities in order to prevent people from dumping trash at the sites. Upgrades to the tennis courts and softball field would be beneficial to the community and help spruce up the area. Gauley Bridge would also like to add recreational trails and walking paths for locals and visitor's to utilize.

A network of hiking trails near Cathedral Falls is also being developed by a community member. A report on the trail network is being developed for the town. The town should continue to develop and advertise the hiking trails at Cathedral Falls. In the past, the falls were lit by spotlights. There is desire for this to occur again.

ATV trails are currently being developed in Gauley Bridge. The town was recently approved to participate in the Hatfield-McCoy Trails. Three takeout locations will be located in Gauley Bridge, Jodie, and Ansted. The town should continue to support this potential economic driver.

Gauley Bridge's opportunity to promote river recreation is one of the town's greatest strengths. The nearby New and Gauley Rivers are some of the most sought after in the world. Kayaking and rafting enthusiasts visit the region every year. These rivers merge at Gauley





Bridge and create several opportunities for recreating on flatwater, as well. One anonymous survey said that “the allure of Gauley Bridge is the water activities, nature and family gatherings.”

Beginning in 2019, nine whitewater releases are scheduled for the New River Dries, a section of river that flows directly into Gauley Bridge. The river can currently be paddled approximately 80 days out of the year. Potential

businesses owners in Gauley Bridge could establish eateries that target paddlers hungry after a day on the river. Gauley Bridge’s scenery and relaxing atmosphere would be assets to any such establishment.

The peaceful Kanawha River offers opportunities for flatwater paddling, fishing, and stand-up paddle boarding. A rental and guiding company would provide an opportunity for visitors and community members who want to experience the Kanawha. Gauley Bridge’s riverside location would allow such a company to operate directly out of the town. Discounts on rentals, or “try it for free” days, could be provided for community members interested in recreating on the river.

*“Gauley Bridge could be a place on the map that people want to visit for a relaxing vacation with simplicity and untethered by technology and the hustle and bustle of the daily lives of most.” - Anonymous Survey Respondent*



A new take-out site will be installed adjacent to the New River Campground in Gauley Bridge to accommodate river traffic. The site will include seven parking spaces for vehicles and seven spaces for boats and trailers. The area will also have a turnaround eat each end of the parking area for convenience.

The Gauley Bridge Community Center is currently underutilized and could also serve as a resource for the town. The space is large enough to be used in multiple different ways. A walking group meets in the gym regularly and exercise equipment is there as well. The Community Center also has books to start a small library. There are many ideas for use of the Community Center, like an emergency shelter, arts and theatre center, and business incubator. Active Southern WV would like to incorporate the Community Center into its traveling pickleball league, a game that resembles tennis. The organization is also interested in helping residents of Gauley Bridge obtain paid instructor trainings for exercise classes. Some major repairs and upgrades are needed in the ceiling and floors





to fully improve its capacity to serve as a community hub for Gauley Bridge, though grants and other organizational help can be utilized.

Telemarketing was mentioned in the planning process as a means for employment and especially for those recovering from addiction. This business opportunity could be located inside the Community Center as a part of the business incubator programs. This would be beneficial to Gauley Bridge to expand employment as well as help those in need.



Lastly, there is also potential to expand proposed trails to Gauley Bridge from Smithers and Montgomery. The cities of Smithers and Montgomery participated in a master plan for the River Cities Trail. The proposed River Cities Trail is walking/bicycling trail that will connect Smithers and Montgomery. As part of this plan, the existing Cannelton Trail in Smithers is proposed to be extended along an abandoned rail corridor to connect to the greater Fayette County trail network. The River Cities Trail along the Kanawha River is also proposed to be extended to connect to trails throughout Fayette County.

The trails in Gauley Bridge will likely be a part of the greater trail network in the New River Gorge Trail Alliance. Ideally, Gauley Bridge would become the center of trails following the New River to Hawk's Nest, up the Gauley River on river left to Carnifax Ferry and Meadow River, across the New River going to Cotton Hill, Beckwith, or Fayetteville, down the Kanawha River to Montgomery on river left, and down the Kanawha River to Smithers on river right. According to the New River Gorge Trail Alliance, a potential trail along the ridgeline on river right of the Gauley River has also been suggested making trails on both sides of all three rivers.

## Goal: Promote tourism and recreation in the Town of Gauley Bridge

**Objective 1: Market historical and recreational attractions to visitors**

**Objective 2: Improve and maintain community recreation facilities**

Action Step: Develop a marketing campaign for local and regional attractions for travelers

Action Step: Reopen and repair the Gauley Bridge Historical Museum and Visitors Center

Action Step: Utilize the museum and visitors center for youth events and community programming

Action Step: Reestablish the Gauley Bridge Historical Society

Action Step: Install signage at Cathedral Falls

Action Step: Explore ideas for reinstalling the spotlights at Cathedral Falls

Action Step: Continue to hold events, like the Town Celebration and Trunk or Treat to attract visitors to town

Action Step: Maintain the old football fields for community events

Action Step: Repave Gauley Bridge's tennis and basketball courts

The town needs to work with the New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) to promote the recreational and historic attractions in town. The town should also ask the CVB for help in developing a marketing campaign. This campaign should include an updated online presence for Gauley Bridge and all of its attractions, as well as brochures. There is a lack of knowledge of what existing businesses are located in Gauley Bridge. Existing shops, restaurants, and lodging should be listed on both a municipal website and the CVB website. An inventory of all local businesses needs to be created and displayed on the updated webpage and any other promotional materials. The town should use consistent marketing on its website and informational material. The town seal, for example, could be used more frequently. A phrase from the comprehensive plan's vision statement, such as "Come as a visitor, leave as a friend" could also be frequently utilized.

The museum is currently unopen. Repairs to the building's ductwork are needed. The town should explore the feasibility of installing window AC units to revitalize the museum. The town should also explore opportunities to pursue AC units as a donation.

The museum could be reopened as a combined Historic Museum/Visitor's Center that serves as a great stop for travelers on the Midland Trail. The Visitor's Center could give people a chance to stretch their legs, while learning about a small town's unique history. The Visitor's Center would have resources that point out local and regional highlights, such as Cathedral Falls. The Visitor's Center could have a few West Virginia themed gifts to encourage visitors to stop by as well. Finally, as ATV trails develop in Gauley Bridge, the Visitor's Center could also serve as a resource for riders that need additional information on the trails in the area. The town should involve local scouts and other youth in building a model of the town to engage them in

Gauley Bridge's history. Many similar opportunities and activities could be hosted at the museum as well. Re-establishing the Historical Society would provide momentum to this goal. Overall, the Gauley Bridge Historical Museum and Visitor's Center can serve as a local hub that draws tourists to town, celebrates the history of the area, and serves as a local space for community involvement.

Cathedral Falls is one of the top attractions in Gauley Bridge. One concern is that the attraction has little signage. Often, a visitor driving through Gauley Bridge doesn't have enough time to pull into the parking lot after noticing the falls. The town should work with the WV Department of Highways to install a sign that informs visitors of Cathedral Falls in advance. Additionally, an interpretive sign should be installed at the waterfall.

Hiking trails are available near Cathedral Falls. The town should continue to develop and advertise these hiking trails. In the past, the falls were lit by spotlights. The town could work with stakeholders, Fayette County, and the WV Division of Tourism to explore ideas for reinstalling the spotlights at Cathedral Falls.

Utilizing the waterways through town for events and recreation would be beneficial to Gauley Bridge. Kayak and paddleboard races could bring in many people from the surrounding areas. Float trips could even be advertised for visitors to participate in while in town.

The area by the old softball field should be used for community events, like a turkey shoot and gun raffle, and for sports events. A semi-pro soccer team, the "Black Knights" are to utilize the sports field for practice. The town had ideas for community field days with lawn mower races and other activities to bring out youth and families. This area would also be ideal for music events and concerts.

Existing recreation facilities need to be continuously maintained for residents as well as visitors to the town. The basketball courts and tennis courts need to be paved. The softball field should be upgraded and cleaned up for future use.

### Objective 3: Improve the trail network in Gauley Bridge

### Objective 4 : Promote and develop opportunities for river recreation

### Objective 5: Utilize the Community Center as a great resource for the town and region

Action Step: Support the developing of hiking trails around Cathedral Falls and throughout Gauley Bridge

Action Step: Support the development of ATV trails as a potential economic driver

Action Step: Continue to support local businesses

Action Step: Work with the New River Gorge CVB to capitalize on traffic to be received by paddlers on the New River Dries

Action Step: Maximize the potential for recreational opportunities on the Kanawha River

Action Step: Explore the potential of using the Community Center as a business incubator

The Cathedral Falls hiking trails are being constructed as of 2018 and are to be used by the community and visitors alike. Appropriate signage and trail blazes should be placed around the trailhead and along the trails to inform hikers of the trail's difficulty level. Maintenance of the trails should be in place to keep hikers safe and to avoid off-trail bushwhacking. An abandoned railroad in Gauley Bridge has been identified as a potential rail trail opportunity for Gauley Bridge. The town should seek guidance from the railroad's current owner and consider the possibility of turning it into a local attraction. Nearby Smithers and Montgomery are incorporating connecting trails to their communities. Gauley Bridge should assess the feasibility of also connecting to these trails. The town should work with Smithers and Montgomery to identify what steps need to be taken to incorporate into the connector trail. The town should continue to support ATV trails in and around Gauley Bridge.

Local businesses contribute to a community's sense of character and quality of life. Opportunities that emerged during the planning process include hiking, river recreation, coal heritage, and an availability of storefronts. Promoting the area's assets to potential business owners should be a priority of the town. Additionally, available building or office space could be advertised on the town's municipal website. The New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA) provides information on potential office space and available land. Gauley Bridge should explore the possibility of promoting vacant storefronts and other attractive business spaces on the NRGRDA website. The town has potential for a rental and retail company related to river recreation. The town should welcome and support business that are consistent with Gauley Bridge's vision for the future. Potential businesses owners in Gauley Bridge could establish eateries that target paddlers hungry after a day on the river. Gauley Bridge's scenery and relaxing atmosphere would be assets to any such establishment.

The Kanawha River meanders through the UKV region. The cities of Smithers and Montgomery are interested in establishing the river as a designated river trail. The Town of Gauley Bridge should join this effort. As part of this effort, a map would be created that show visitors of public access points and



attractions along the river. Gauley Bridge should be included on this map and any promotional brochures regarding the water trail.

The Community Center could serve as a location for a business incubator in the Upper Kanawha Valley. Communities such as Smithers and Montgomery are looking to promote entrepreneurship, and having a joint conversation about utilizing this space would be a great first step. Recently developed community plans, such as “Your Voices, Your Valley,” detail steps that communities in the Upper Kanawha Valley can take to develop entrepreneurship. Gauley Bridge should collaborate with the Upper Kanawha Valley Regional Planning Commission to implement priority action steps found in recent studies. The Upper Kanawha Valley Regional Strategic Plan will synthesize newly developed community plans, which will serve as a helpful tool to Gauley Bridge, Smithers, and Montgomery.

## Focus Area 2: Community Facilities



### GAULEY BRIDGE

Here New and Gauley rivers  
unite to form Great Kanawha  
River. Piers still stand of old  
bridge destroyed by the  
Confederate troops in 1861.  
Here Thomas Dunn English,  
author of the ballad, "Ben  
Bolt" wrote "Gauley River"



The need for improved public services to improve the quality of life in Gauley Bridge was identified as a focus area for local government officials. Public services include transportation, infrastructure, medical, educational, and community needs.

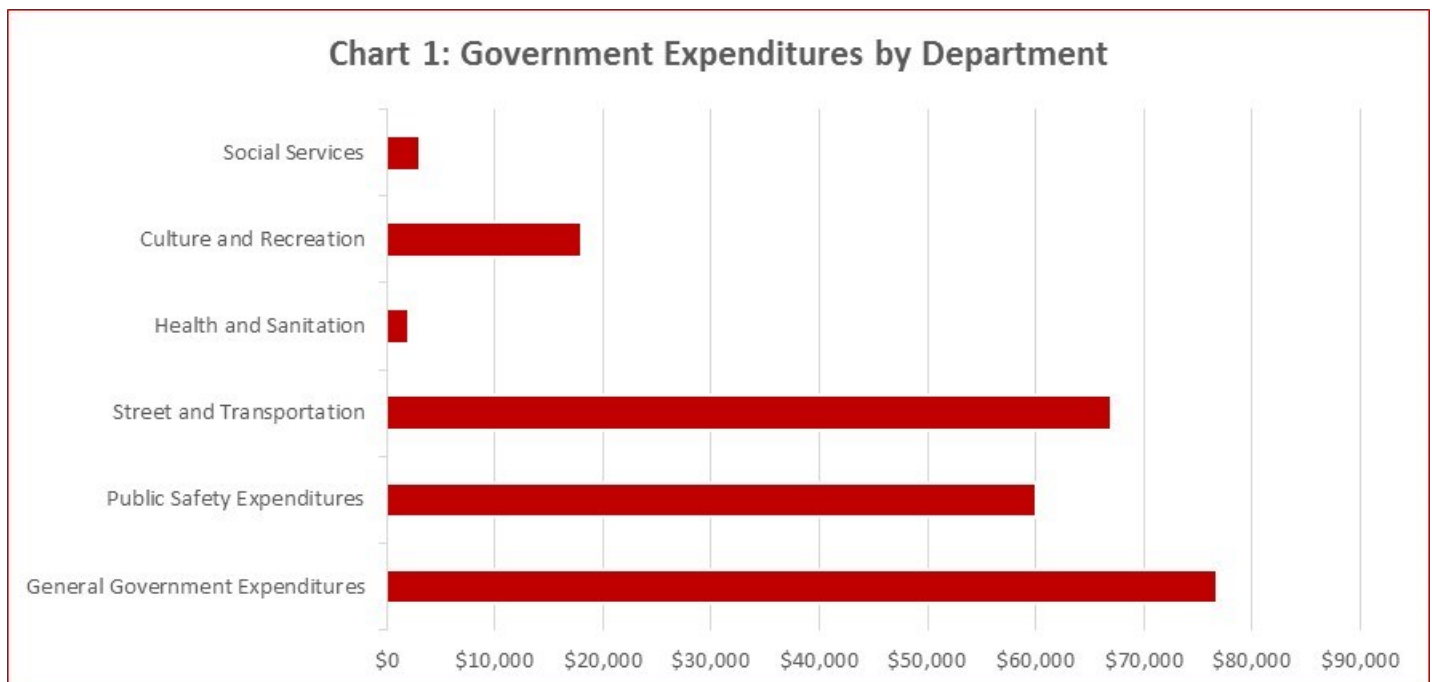
## Government Overview

Gauley Bridge is located in Fayette County, West Virginia. The town operates under the Mayor-Council plan. There are five council members and a mayor that are elected by large. To develop this comprehensive plan, a planning commission was formed with five members. An Events Sub-Committee of Town Council meets to plan town events and gatherings.



The town has a website, however it is out of date.

The 2017-2018 municipal budget was \$226,800. Expenses by department are shown on **Chart 1: Government Expenditures by Department**. The majority of the revenue that the town collects comes from business and occupation taxes, property taxes, and fines, fees, and court costs. The biggest expense is General Governmental Expenditures seconded by Streets and Transportation.



Gauley Bridge does not have a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to help with budgeting of projects long-term. The town also does not have a dedicated grant writer. A grant writer is needed to help the town receive additional funding for projects.

### Infrastructure

Gauley Bridge's water and sewer systems are operated by the Kanawha Falls Public Service District (KFPSD). Consolidation of PSDs in Fayette County has been recently discussed, in part because of a decline in customers. The Planning Commission expressed concern with the water system's telemetry sensors and water lines.

The town is challenged with ineffective stormwater systems. Addressing drainage concerns is one of the town's most significant infrastructure needs. New culverts, better drainage from hillsides, and improved storm drains are needed. All of Gauley Bridge has access to sewer services. Updated piping is needed in some parts of the town to prevent backups from occurring in a storm.

Appalachian Power supplies electricity to Gauley Bridge. Generally this service is good, though old wiring issues due to the aging housing stock will need to be addressed in the future. Gas is provided by Mountaineer Gas. Cell phone coverage is adequate in Gauley Bridge. AT&T has a tower nearby and Verizon, US Cellular, and Sprint carriers also receive coverage in the valley. Suddenlink and Frontier provide internet, though customers in Gauley Bridge do not feel this service is adequate.

### Education

Elementary-age students in Gauley Bridge attend Gauley Bridge Elementary School, located in town. 150 students currently attend Gauley Bridge Elementary School (K-5). These students hail from Falls View, Boomer, Cane Branch, and other areas nearby to Gauley Bridge. Middle and high school students attend the nearby Valley High School in Smithers, WV. Valley High is approximately 11 miles from Gauley Bridge and enrolled 470 students during the 2017-18 school year.



The Fayette County Board of Education is seeking closure of seven schools. The potential closure of the nearby Valley High School has been of recent concern. No definitive decision has been made on this topic during the drafting of this comprehensive plan. In the case that Valley High is closed, students will likely attend Riverside High School in Kanawha County or Oak Hill High School in Fayette County. Present-day Valley High would be renovated into an elementary and middle school for students in Kindergarten to the 8th-grade.



Currently there is no library in Gauley Bridge. However, several books are available in the Community Center. The closest library is located in Montgomery and the Book Mobile from Fayetteville frequents the town.

## Transportation

The Town of Gauley Bridge is located along U.S. Historic Route 60, also known as the Midland Trail. WV Route 39 intersects Route 60 in Gauley Bridge as well. Gauley Bridge is approximately 14.1 miles from the Fayette County seat in Fayetteville.

The nearby City of Montgomery has an Amtrak station that is served by the Cardinal, a passenger train that runs three times per week. The Cardinal travels from New York City's Penn Station to Chicago's Union Station. Montgomery's station is approximately 12.3 miles from Gauley Bridge.



Yeager Airport, located in Charleston, WV, is approximately 39.7 miles from Gauley Bridge. Yeager is currently served by American, Delta, Spirit, and United Airlines.

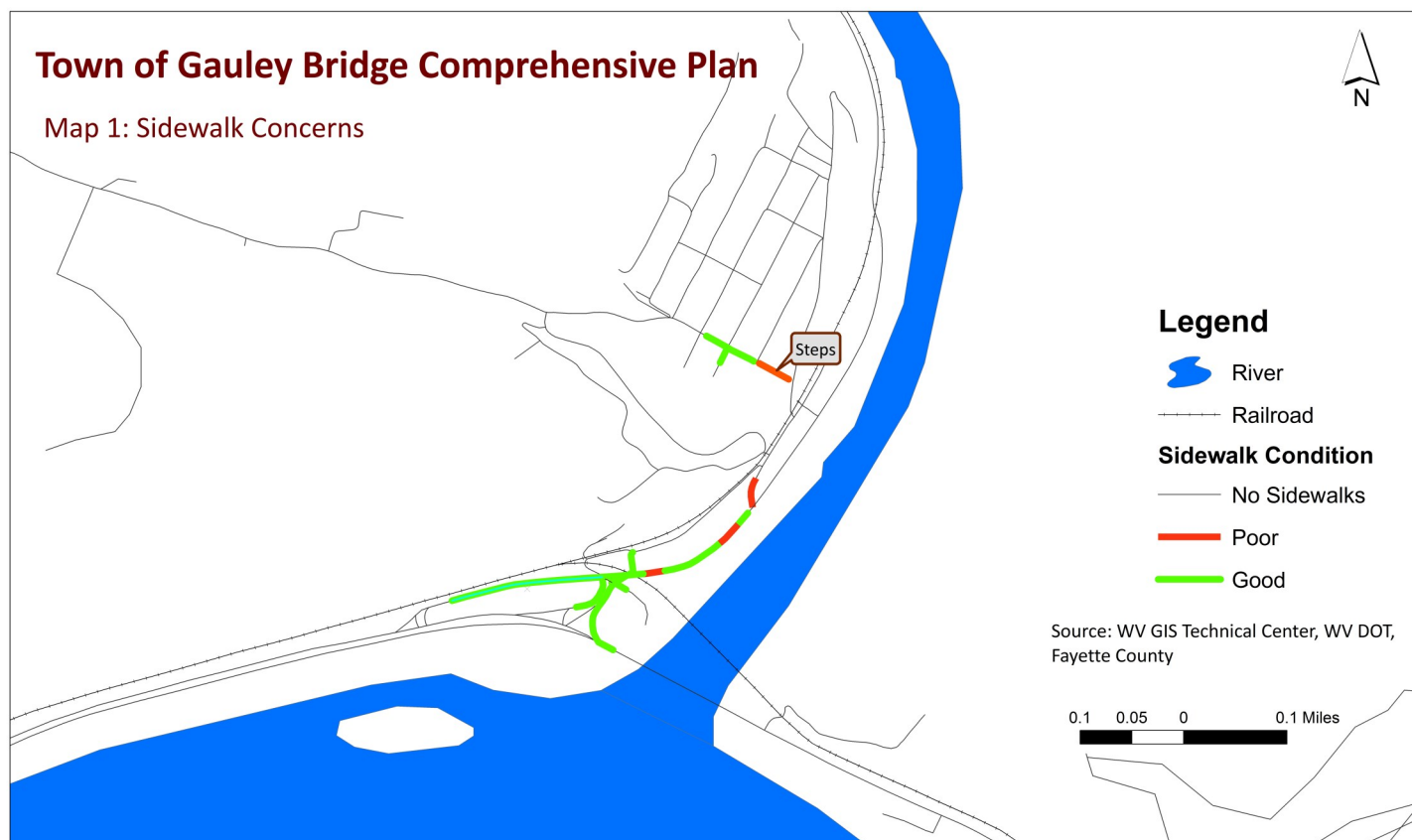
The Kanawha, New, and Gauley Rivers are not used for commercial traffic, there is no port in the region. The closest port is located in the City of Charleston. There are no intermodal transportation options for the town at this time.

While Gauley Bridge is not currently served by a bus line, the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation (KRT) and Mountain Transit Authority (MTA) have stops in nearby municipalities. KRT's closest stop to Gauley Bridge is in Montgomery. MTA's closest stop is in Fayetteville. A lack of public transportation was a weakness that was reiterated throughout the planning process. The need for increased public transportation is felt by community members seeking jobs outside town and by seniors that are unable to drive outside town to buy groceries or visit a medical center.

There are no public parking lots, though street parking is available all through town. Neighborhood street parking is adequate for the community. There are no bicycle lanes within town limits. Due to the topography of most of the residential area, bicycling can be difficult in town.

The mean travel time to work for residents living in Gauley Bridge is estimated to be 28.1 minutes. 81.2% of residents are estimated to drive to work alone, 8.5 percent carpool and 1.3 percent walk to work. The 2017 American Community Survey estimates that no residents in the town use public transportation to travel to work.

Local roads are in need of repairs to fill in potholes around town. The town does not have bike lanes. Gauley Bridge has several sidewalks throughout town. Generally sidewalks are in good condition, though some areas are in need of repair as shown on **Map 1: Sidewalk Concerns**. There is also a need to repair the steps that connect Thomas Street to Front Street. A sidewalk is wanted by residents of Gauley Bridge to connect to nearby Glen Farris and make it safer for pedestrians. There is also a need for a sidewalk along Route 60 to connect town with the shopping center, campground and Cathedral Falls.



Cathedral Falls can become congested with traffic. This challenge is heightened by the fall's location at a bend in the road. No other major traffic concerns currently exist. More parking options are needed, though there is not space currently in town for a parking lot. The only option for additional parking would be across the street, adjacent to Cathedral Falls. This area is land-locked by CSX Railroad, but there is potential for CSX and Gauley Bridge to work together to allow public use of the land.

Other public parking could be accessed at the Historical Museum and Visitor's Center, though no overnight parking is permitted.

## Cultural, Historic, Community, and Social Services

The churches in Gauley Bridge are active in the community. The Gauley Bridge Baptist Church, the oldest church in the area, hosts an Easter egg hunt and other holiday events and also hosts food drives. Gauley Bridge Baptist Church was built in 1835 and survived a fire during the Civil War. The Gauley Bridge Methodist Church, in addition to other churches in the Upper Kanawha Valley, are active in the region.



The Gauley Bridge Community Center serves as a great resource for residents of the town and region. The Community Center is housed in the town's former high school. Thus, the facility offers amenities such as a kitchen, gym with basketball hoops, exercise room, auditorium, and more. Community lunches are hosted here regularly.



The Gauley Bridge Senior Center is located in the town's Community Center. Senior lunches are available on designated days.

The exercise room can be accessed with an affordable membership. The exercise room has both cardio and weight-lifting equipment. Basketball Night is currently held on Monday. The town is currently exploring the potential of establishing batting cages in the community center's old library.

The auditorium in the Community Center is in great shape. The auditorium's sound system is also fully functional. While the auditorium does not currently experience much use, it could be a regional resource to host theatrical and musical events.

Several structures in Gauley Bridge point to the town's unique history. The Gauley Bridge Town Hall, as well as the Gauley Bridge Historical Museum, tell a story about railroad history. The National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places enables a community to preserve structures that meet criteria corresponding to age, integrity, and significance. While Gauley Bridge only has Town Hall listed on the Register, the town should enquire about the possibility for other historic structures to be on the list.

## Recycling

Recycling is not currently offered in Gauley Bridge, but residents feel it would be very beneficial to the community. The nearest drop-off location for recycling is in Fayetteville. The need for a streamlined recycling service is common to communities in the Upper Kanawha Valley.

### Goal: Establish community services that improve quality of life

Objective 1: Improve municipal infrastructure by updating water systems and sidewalks

Objective 2: Identify and assess public service needs within Gauley Bridge

Objective 3: Expand community events and amenities

Action Step: Develop a Capital Improvements Plan

Action Step: Purchase a new communications system to regulate water flow

Action Step: Work with Kanawha Falls PSD to upgrade and replace the outdated water lines

Action Step: Update the stormwater system

Action Step: Develop a sidewalk plan

Action Step: Update municipal website

Action Step: Work with the Mountain Transit Authority (MTA) to expand public transportation options

Action Step: Continue to advocate for a recycling service

Action Step: Coordinate a group of volunteers to organize a book borrowing system at the Community Center

Action Step: Install a Little Free Library

Action Step: Utilize the Community Center as a gathering place to host activities and events

Action Step: Host community field days or other events at the town's sports fields

Improving quality of life is one of Gauley Bridge's top goals and one way to achieve this is through updated infrastructure. The town should develop a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to adequately assess spending and project needs for the future. Gauley Bridge can utilize its CIP to synchronize planning efforts and capital capacity to fulfill project goals.

A new communications system is needed to help with regulating the water flow from storms. Many water lines need repaired and replaced. The town should work with Kanawha Falls PSD to inventory which water lines need updated. Drainage and stormwater runoff have also been a major issue in Gauley Bridge. Residents are concerned with the amount of water that is backed up every time it rains. The town should assess the feasibility of installing new stormwater drains and systems to alleviate water backup in storms. Many residents are in favor of adding and updating existing sidewalks to promote walkability within Gauley Bridge. The town should be encouraged to develop a sidewalk plan in order to allow access to more places in and around the community. Updated sidewalks will also give users safer walking routes throughout Gauley Bridge.



Gauley Bridge should update their municipal website because it is currently out of date. The website can display information relating to town events. The site could also be linked to the town's Facebook account—Town of Gauley Bridge Events, which is followed by over 400 people.

Many residents do not feel that they have adequate transportation to and from Gauley Bridge. The town should work with the MTA and surrounding communities to advocate for a public bus service in Gauley Bridge. This would further benefit all residents of the Upper Kanawha Valley and provide public transportation to Fayetteville and Charleston.

Gauley Bridge is interested in recruiting recycling services. This would allow residents to participate in recycling in their community rather than driving it to the nearest drop-off location. The town should continue to advocate for a site within Gauley Bridge.

Residents have noted that there is no public library in Gauley Bridge. The town should work to organize a group of volunteers to create a book borrowing system at the Community Center. To further promote reading in the community, the town should assess the feasibility of installing a Little Free Library. Little Free Libraries are small boxes in which community members can take and leave books, free of charge. The Town of Athens, for example, has a little library. Gauley Bridge should install a little library at a convenient location.

The former high school is now the Community Center and with some updates, it could act as a hub for social events and activities. The town should continue to assess the condition of the Community Center and make improvements to allow for gatherings. Likewise, the old sports fields should also be utilized for community field days and other events.

# Focus Area 3: Public Safety



Public safety was consistently brought up during the planning process as an area of concern. This section of the comprehensive plan review issues and concerns regarding the police and fire departments, medical facilities, and emergency management.

## Police

The Town of Gauley Bridge Police Department consists of one full-time officer and two part-time officers. All officers participate in annual training.

The most significant concerns expressed by the department relate to aging vehicles and a need for additional officers. The department currently has four cruisers. Each vehicle has maintenance issues and mileage exceeding 100,000 miles.



The police department has noted a need for additional capacity to address issues surrounding drug use. The issue is pervasive in that home break-ins correspond with drug use in the area. Current officers have recorded 70-80 hour work weeks.

*Source: <https://www.wvntv.com>*

Issues with traffic congestion near Cathedral Falls have also been noted. Computers and radios are currently sufficient.

## Fire

The Gauley Bridge Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) was established in 1954 and services 25 square miles. There are approximately 23 volunteers, with 17 being active. The VFD is supported by the Fayette County Fire Levy and state taxes collected from homeowner fire insurance. All equipment is owned and maintained in good condition by the VFD. The majority of calls in 2016 were to vehicle accidents and secondly, service calls.



*Source: [www.montgomery-herald.com](http://www.montgomery-herald.com)*

Concerns of several locations without fire hydrants have arisen in the past—Cane Branch Road and Taylor Hill Road. A recent bridge closure has completely cut off access to Kanawha Falls and Boonesborough Road. Fire Chief Dave Runyon feels as though the main concerns long-term are a lack of people who want to



volunteer and operating costs in the future.

### Medical Facilities

There are no medical facilities located in Gauley Bridge. The nearest facilities are located at Valley High School Health & Wellness in Smithers, Fayetteville Urgent Care, and Montgomery General Hospital.

There are no doctors, dentists, or eye doctors in Gauley Bridge. Generally residents travel to Charleston, Oak Hill, or Montgomery for medical appointments. Given that there is no public transportation, elderly residents will call a taxi or hire someone to drive them to appointments.

Jan Care provides ambulance service with a station near Gauley Bridge. Generally there is a long response time.

Gauley Bridge has a defibrillator located at the VFD.

### Emergency Management

The town has discussed the possibility of utilizing the Community Center as an emergency shelter with cots and showers. The showers in the Community Center currently need improvements and a major water leak is coming through the ceiling. General equipment to provide in a disaster, like generators and cots, are needed to make the Community Center prepared for a disaster. An alternative to the Community Center functioning as a shelter is the Baptist Church. The church has been utilized before as a distribution center and shelter with help from the Red Cross in 2001.

Currently there is no disaster plan in place.

## Goal: Improve public health and safety in Gauley Bridge and the region

**Objective 1: Enhance policing efforts and expand awareness about substance abuse**

**Objective 2: Implement disaster preparedness strategies**

Action Step: Explore more partnerships with local police departments to realize cost savings

Action Step: Support police department efforts for new equipment

Action Step: Work with other communities in the UKV region to develop a public awareness campaign on drug addiction

Action Step: Expand treatment options for drug and alcohol users

Action Step: Collaborate with local businesses to participate in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

Action Step: Work with neighboring communities to obtain cots and backup generators to expand the Community Center's capacity to function as an emergency shelter

Action Step: Develop a disaster plan

Many communities in the Upper Kanawha Valley have utilized part-time police officers from other areas of the county in the past. Communities in the valley should explore partnerships with local police departments to save on costs associated with hiring additional part-time help. The police department is in need of modernized equipment to help them do their job efficiently. Gauley Bridge should support the police department's efforts to find funding for equipment and operational needs.

Substance abuse is one of the top critical issues in the Upper Kanawha Valley. Communities should work together to develop a public awareness campaign on drug addiction. Utilizing each of the communities will help reinforce the campaign and make it a stronger, more collaborative effort. A common concern of residents has been that there is not a place in close proximity that has treatment options for drug and alcohol users. The town should support efforts to expand treatment options for those who need it within the community.

Gauley Bridge's police department should collaborate with local business to participate in "drug take back days". The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while educating the public about the potential for abuse of medications. The Fayette County Sheriff's Department participates in this event annually. The public can dispose of their prescription drugs at the court house in Fayetteville during the event. The Town of Gauley Bridge and other communities in the UKV Region should work with the

Fayette County Sherriff's Department to determine if an event could be held in the UKV Region so residents don't have to travel to Fayetteville.

The Upper Kanawha Valley needs to be prepared for any disaster given their location to the mountains, river, power plant, and railroad. Gauley Bridge should work with neighboring communities in the UKV to identify the best strategy to obtain emergency equipment like backup generators and shelter supplies. The town should also consider creating a disaster plan to prepare for any potential emergencies in the future. Having a thorough plan in place will strengthen Gauley Bridge's coordination during an actual event.



# Focus Area 4: Land Use



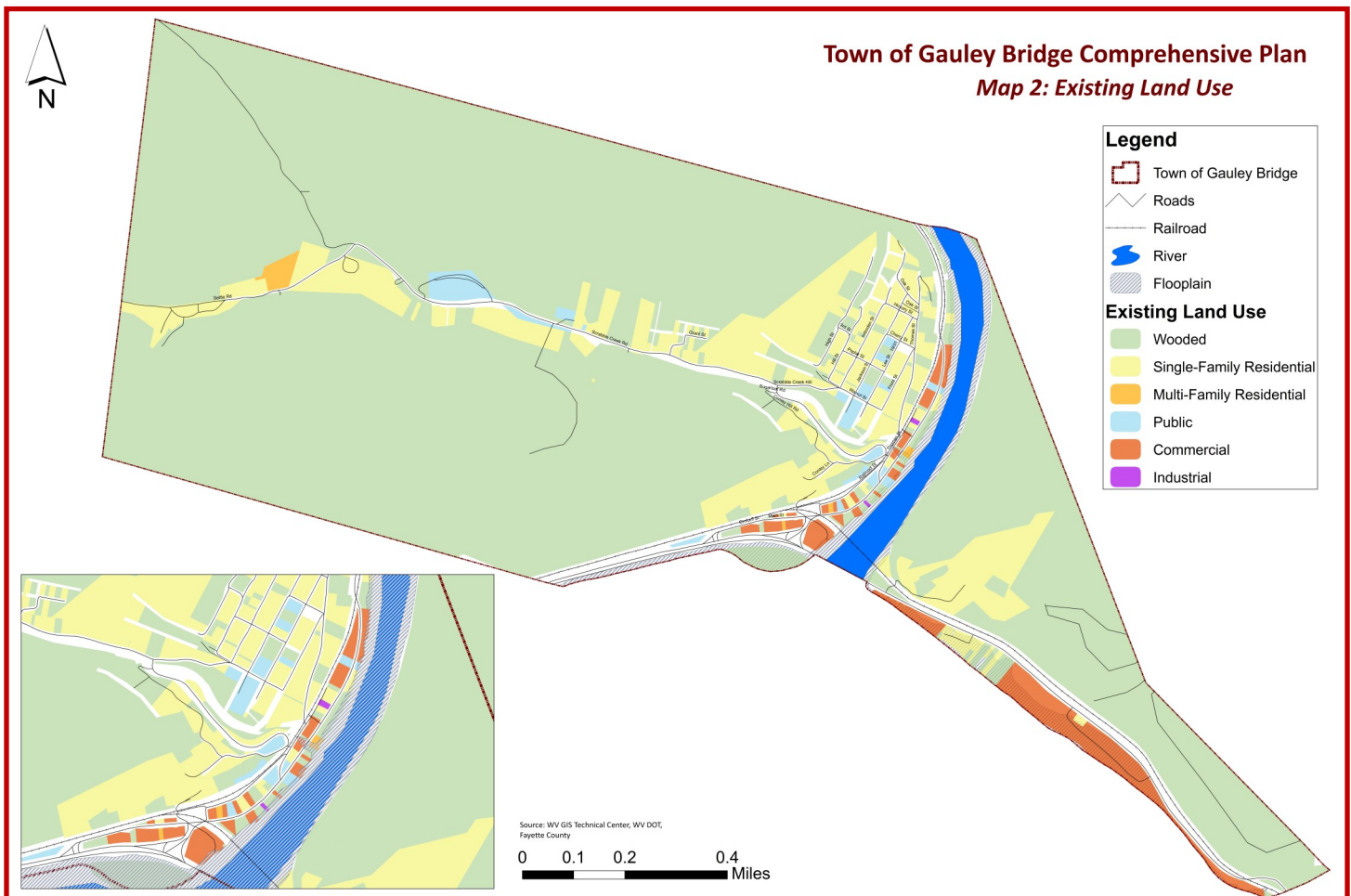


## Existing Land Use

Gauley Bridge is a small town in Fayette County with a total population of 614 according to the US Census 2010. Population density is 388.6 people per square mile. Most homes in Gauley Bridge are located on small lots. There is very little land left in town limits that can be developed in the future. The majority of Gauley Bridge is single family uses as shown on **Map 2: Existing Land Use**. A good portion of the town is also wooded as the town through the years developed on the side of the mountain. The amount of steep slopes located in town limits new development. Multi-family residential uses are scattered throughout town. There is affordable housing that does accommodate persons with disabilities. Most commercial uses are located along Main Street and State Route 16. Many of the commercial businesses on Main Street are vacant. The one building considered industrial is no longer in industrial use. Public uses include churches, local parks, elementary school, volunteer fire department, city hall, and a post office.

Due to the presence of the Gauley and Kanawha Rivers, portions of Main Street and State Route 16 are in the floodplain. Flooding is somewhat a concern. There is a floodplain ordinance, which is administered by the Mayor, though this ordinance has not been updated in several years. Subsidence is not an issue at this time.

The city currently has no land use regulations, such as zoning in place. There is a concern by residents regarding the lack of ordinances. Some residents would like to see ordinances enacted to protect the character of the town and encourage development in the right places.



Gauley Bridge is currently experiencing challenges with residents living in the town's old business spaces, draping sheets over the windows. Many residents live in buildings that the town would like to see maintained for commercial uses. Zoning could help keep these buildings in commercial use.

### Housing

Vibrant communities typically have a good housing stock. People desire to live in communities that offer high quality housing. The physical condition of housing, age of housing, affordability and diversity of the types of housing are all important characteristics of a housing market in a community. If residents housing needs are not being met, they are more likely to move. Good quality housing is also important in order to attract new residents to a community.



A pressing concern by local elected officials is that the town has a high rate of vacant homes and an older housing stock. One plus for the town is that housing is very affordable. However, many homes are becoming vacant and dilapidated. There is a need for higher value homes to attract middle/upper income families. Any new housing development would most likely occur on vacant parcels as infill development. A former grocery store was converted into a 6-unit apartment building. Other adaptive reuse opportunities exist in Gauley Bridge, like at the former health clinic.

The town is lacking in housing diversity as over 70 percent of the homes within town limits are single family. 5 percent are classified as mobile homes and the rest as multi-family. Of the total housing units in Gauley Bridge, approximately 25 percent are considered vacant. This is a high vacancy rate, especially compared with Fayette County's rate of 17 percent. Vacancies can negatively affect residential neighborhoods. The high vacancy rate indicates that economic circumstances and housing type and condition are such that many people choose not to live within the municipal boundaries or move elsewhere.

The percentage of renter-occupied units in the town (57% greatly exceeds the percentage in the County (21.5 percent). The number of rented homes is a concern as home-owners tend to take better care of their home whereas renters may not stay in the community as long, or have a stake in the appearance and quality of the home.

The housing stock in Gauley Bridge is also considerably older, which is a concern as older homes tend to have issues and continuously need to be maintained.

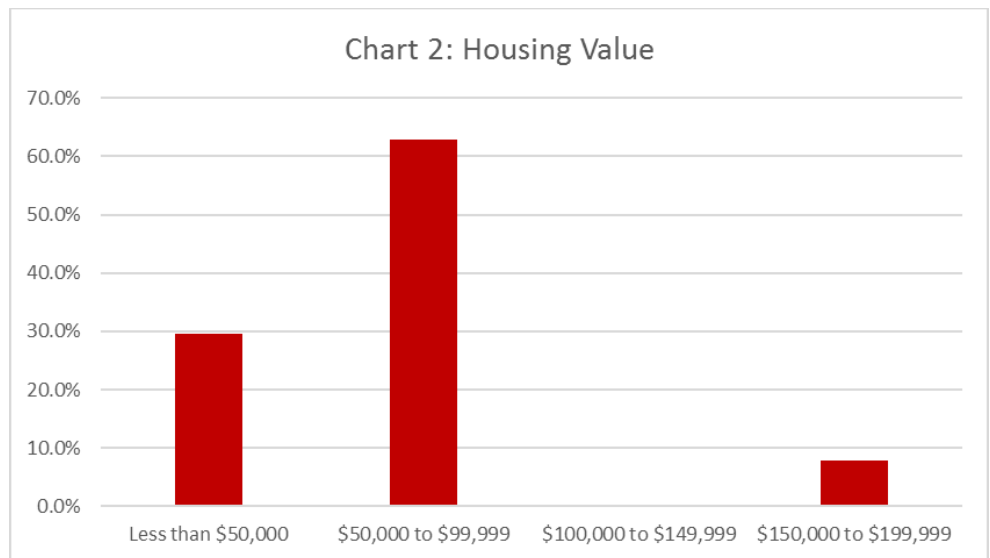
Of the occupied housing units in Gauley Bridge, 43 percent are owned, while 57 percent are rented.

Over 66 percent of housing in Gauley Bridge was constructed in 1950 or earlier. There has been very little new construction in the past 18 years.



Over 60 percent of the homes in Gauley Bridge are valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999 as shown on **Chart 2: Housing Value**. Very few homes are valued more than \$100,000. The median housing value in 2017 was estimated at \$63,000.

Gauley Bridge's median rent was estimated to be \$558 per month in 2017. The average monthly cost for homeowners with a mortgage was estimated to be \$742 per month.



One of the main issues in regards to housing is the lack of the West Virginia State Building Code or International Property Maintenance Code. Gauley Bridge currently does not have an updated ordinance to address abandoned and dilapidated buildings. Updating 8-12-16 of the West Virginia State Code will help to address abandoned and dilapidated structures.

Fayette County recently helped Gauley Bridge inventory abandoned and dilapidated buildings in the city. However, a more detailed study of buildings needs to be completed.

## Community Design

Community design refers to physical characteristics that can contribute to identity, character, and a distinct sense of place. At this time, no concentrated efforts in beautification of the town have occurred. In the past trash can barrels were painted by kids in the community and lights were placed on Cathedral Falls. The main issue with any beautification project is the lack of volunteers to start a project and finish.

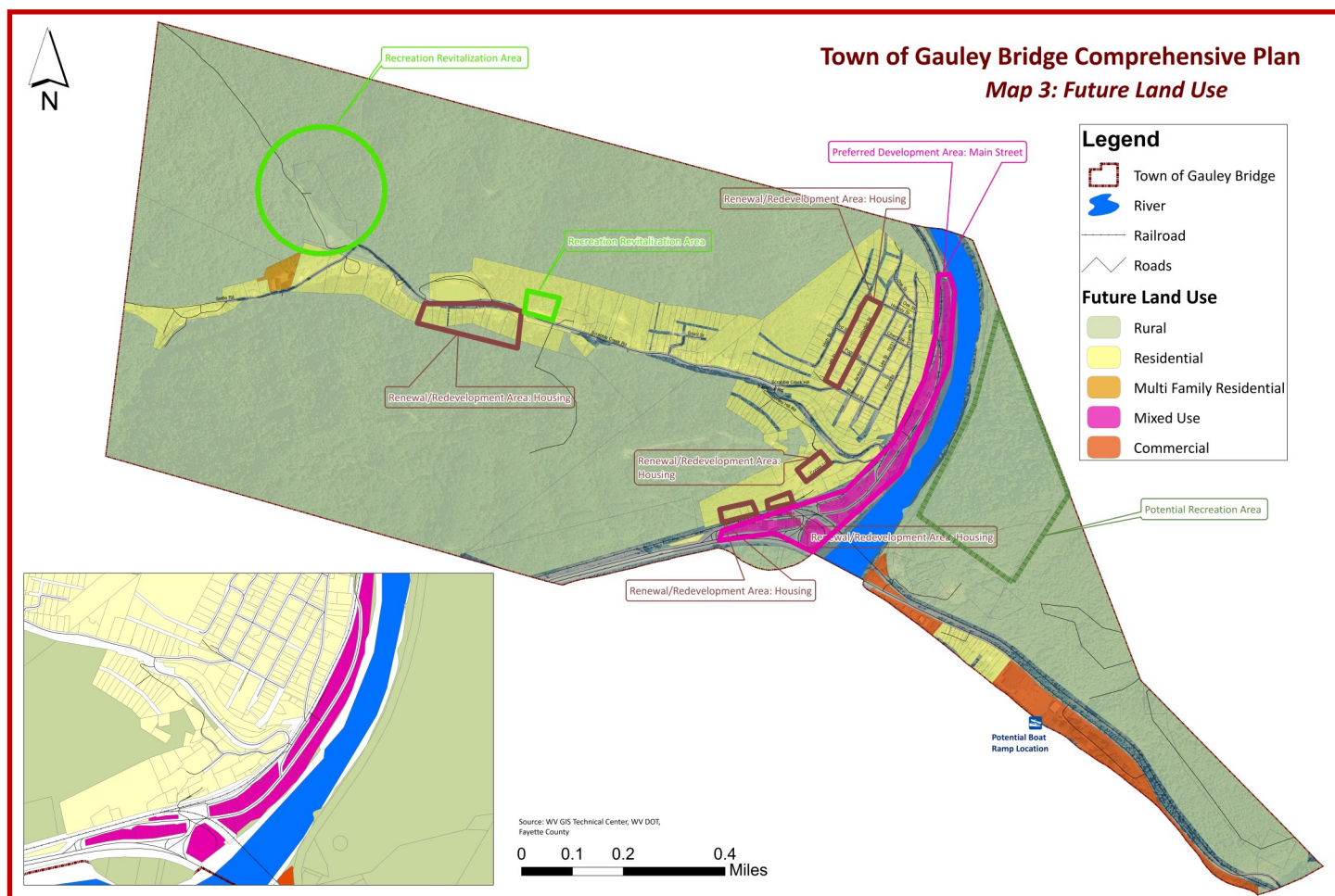


## Future Land Use

A future land use map was created as part of the comprehensive plan to guide the town in planning for new development and revitalization.

**Map 3: Future Land Use** is not a zoning map, but an illustration of how Gauley Bridge wants to develop over the next ten years. The future land use categories are as follows:

- Rural- land designated to stay as open space, wooded or used for recreation and/or conservation purposes
- Residential- areas designated for single family residential development
- Multi-Family Residential- areas for multi-family residential development
- Mixed Use- consists of the main corridor in town that serves residents with small scale commercial development and multi-family
- Commercial- large scale commercial development located on State Route 16 that will not only serve local residents but the traveling public





The map also identifies preferred areas for development and renewal/redevelopment areas in accordance with the West Virginia Code Chapter 8A. Main Street is identified as a Preferred Development Area as there are vacant buildings that could be utilized for new business. Renewal/redevelopment areas were identified for housing revitalization. These areas have a concentrated amount of vacant and dilapidated homes. Population projections were developed to better understand the potential for future growth in Gauley Bridge. Projections for incorporated areas are not available for communities in West Virginia. Therefore, an analysis of past population trends was used to determine projections for the future. The town has continuously lost population since 1980 as shown on **Chart 3: Population Trends**.

The estimated numbers released by the US Census in 2017 show a further decrease. Assuming population trends continue, by 2030 the town may lose an additional 146 people. Due to a projected population loss, there is not a need for construction of additional housing based on the population projections.

The median age of Gauley Bridge has increased from 2000 to 2010. In 2000 the median age was 35.4 and in 2010 43.5. As the population aged in the past 10 years, age cohorts were examined to determine specifically what age groups are on the rise in the city.

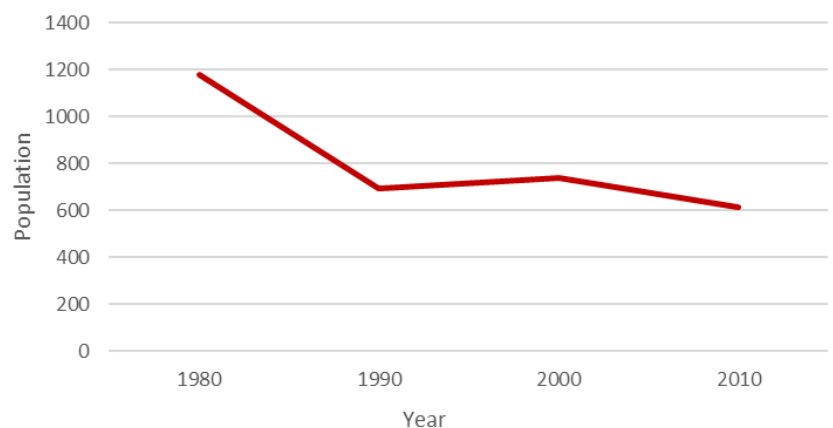
**Chart 4: Age Cohorts** depicts the percentage of Gauley Bridge's population that fall into a range of ten age cohorts. A significant portion of the town's residents, 61%, are over the age of 35. 34% of residents are over age 55, while 22% are under age 20. Since 2000, the town has lost population in the preschool, primary school, high school, post-secondary, and childbearing age cohorts. The population in the older cohorts has increased from 2000 to 2010. In the coming years, the town should strive to care for the aging members of its population. The desire to improve the opportunities and amenities for seniors has emerged in similar communities in the Upper Kanawha Valley. The region's municipalities should work collaboratively to care for an aging population.

Rural areas- land that is not intended for urban growth

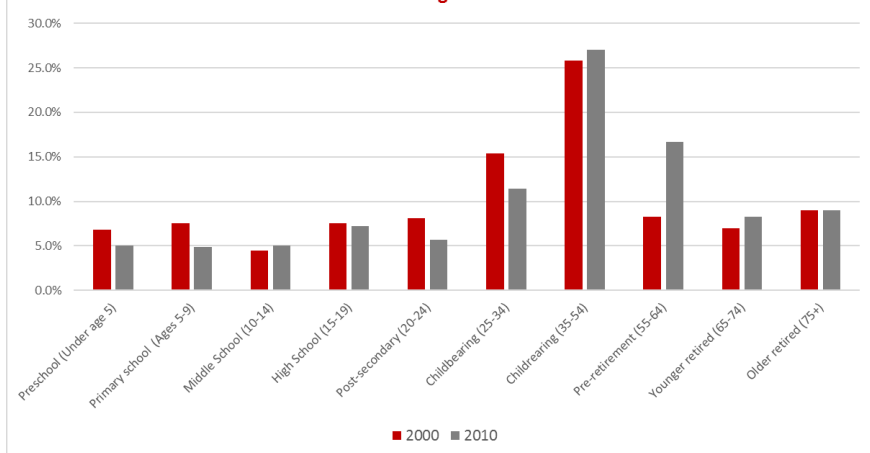
Preferred development areas- areas where incentives may be used to encourage development, infill development or redevelopment

Renewal and/or redevelopment areas -- slums and other blighted areas that need community renewal, revitalization and/or redevelopment

**Chart 3: Population Trends**



**Chart 4: Age Cohorts**





## **Goal: Enhance and revive the local character of the town through land use planning.**

**Objective 1: Enact regulations to protect the character of the town**

**Objective 2: Improve aesthetics of Gauley Bridge**

Action Step: Enact a zoning ordinance

Action Step: Encourage beautification efforts throughout the community

Action Step: Revitalize old storefronts to attract businesses

Action Step: Update existing mural

The need for land use regulations was discovered during the planning process. Therefore, the Town of Gauley Bridge should enact a zoning ordinance to help implement the Comprehensive Plan. **Map 3: Future Land Use** should be the basis of the zoning ordinance.

As Gauley Bridge is a small town, the zoning ordinance should be a simplified and user friendly to help with understanding and enforcing the code. An idea of the type of zoning regulations Gauley Bridge would like to include are restricting main floor businesses being turned into apartments.

Zoning will help the town protect the character that residents cherish. However, beautification efforts should also be considered to improve the aesthetics of the town. The Town of Gauley Bridge can take steps to improve and promote the town's desired image. The town could host clean-up days where tools like trash bags or lawn equipment can be available to rent at little to no cost to community members. Gauley Bridge could also participate in West Virginia's Make It Shine Program, offered through the state's Department of Environmental Protection. Participating organizations or municipalities receive the tools necessary to conduct a litter clean-up in early April, at no cost. Coordinating volunteers to repaint murals is another opportunity to improve community design. Students from nearby high schools or colleges may be interested in volunteering in Gauley Bridge. Decorative street lights are also desired by residents.

Vacant storefronts in downtown Gauley Bridge are detrimental to the hope of bringing in more businesses. The community would like to revitalize downtown storefronts and create artistic window displays to give the town an idea of what it would be like to have shops and restaurants again. Children and volunteers in the community can work together with building owners to create visions for the storefront windows. The goal would be to show potential business owners the impact their store could have on the community.

The existing mural on City National Bank's property is outdated and chipped. Local students and volunteers should work with the bank prioritize repainting the mural to display a new vision for Gauley Bridge.

### Objective 3: Address vacant and dilapidated buildings

### Objective 4: Develop a strategy for growth and revitalization efforts

Action Step: Adopt the WV State Building Code

Action Step: Adopt the International Property Maintenance Code

Action Step: Share code enforcement with neighboring communities

Action Step: Adopt 8-12-16

Action Step: Enact vacant and dilapidated property registries

Action Step: Update the 2016 vacant and dilapidated property survey

Action Step: Consider public pressure to get property owners to maintain their property

Action Step: Sponsor a monthly yard and home contest

Action Step: Focus revitalization in the renewal/redevelopment areas

Action Step: Annex surrounding lands to increase the tax base and potential development areas

The town should consider adopting the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) or the entire West Virginia Building Code. The IPMC addresses the maintenance and upkeep of structures. By adopting the IPMC the town can also spend money to repair a building that violates the code and a lien can then be filed against the property for the costs.

The WV State Building Code is one of the most effective means to regulate buildings before they become dilapidated. The West Virginia Building Code is a set of rules for construction. The building code protects public health, safety and general welfare as they relate to the construction of and occupancy of buildings and structures. The West Virginia State Building Code is based on the International Building Code, a model building code developed by the International Code Council and adoption for use by most states in the United States.

The building code must be administered by a licensed building official. As Gauley Bridge does not have the capacity or funds to hire a full-time code enforcement officer, the town should consider sharing code enforcement with neighboring communities in the Upper Kanawha Valley. The town could also ask Fayette County for assistance in enforcing ordinances.

The town should also consider enacting an ordinance pursuant to W. VA. Code 8-12-16. West Virginia Code Section 8-12-16 allows municipalities to address structures, dwellings or buildings that are unsafe, unsanitary, dangerous or detrimental to the public safety or welfare. Procedures set out in the provisions ensure that property owners receive due process. Although similar to the building code in some ways, West Virginia Code Section 8-12-16 contains some authority that are not included in the building code. Adoption

of both the West Virginia State Building Code and West Virginia Code Section 8-12-16 can provide additional protection to the municipality.

The city also is in need of a vacant property registry and a dilapidated property registry. The registries would require all property owners to pay a fee to the city every year that their property sits vacant and/or is dilapidated. In order to determine the extent of the problem in the city, an inventory first needs to be completed. A few years ago Fayette County assisted Gauley Bridge with an inventory. As the inventory is a few years old, the town needs to update the inventory. Properties should be rated on their present condition. Information should also be gathered on ownership, code violations, fire and police calls, and tax status. This inventory will then enable the city to prioritize which structures need demolished and concentrate efforts in specific locations.

The town should also consider publicizing the most notorious property violators. The hope is that it will force the property owner to clean the property up. The town should use Fayette County's method of publicizing problem properties. The county places a Notice of Violation sign on problem properties. The Notice of Violation sign includes the property owner's name and the property's address, and states that the building is in violation of the Fayette County Dilapidated Building and Beautification Ordinance. The Building Department also sends a letter to the landowner. These measures are taken only after the building has been designated dilapidated by the County's Beautification Committee. (Source: WV LEAP Toolkit, 2015.)

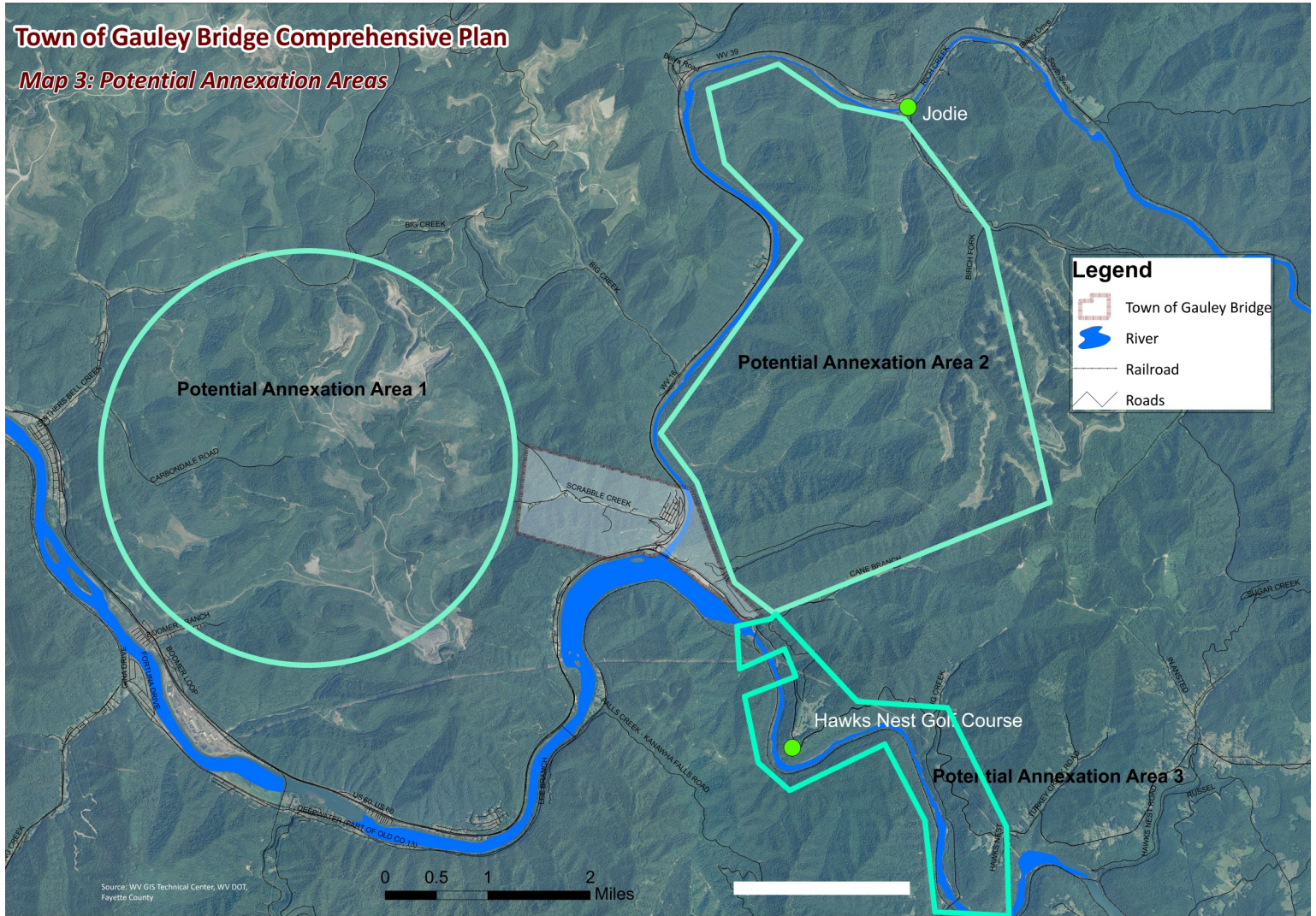
The town should also sponsor a monthly yard and home contest. Property owners can enter the contest and win prizes from local businesses. The purpose of the contest is to provide motivation for residents to get their properties in good condition. The town should also continue the contest during the holiday months with a Halloween and Christmas decorating contest.

Several renewal/redevelopment areas were identified on the future land use map. The town should target its code enforcement and resources in these areas to help revitalization efforts. Three potential annexation areas are identified on **Map 4: Annexation Areas**. The three areas have the potential for new growth due to the expansion of the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System into Gauley Bridge. ATV trails are proposed for these areas. Annexation areas 1 and 2 are not supported by infrastructure or water and sewer, so the use would strictly be for recreational use. Annexation area 3 does have some infrastructure in place with the old Hawks Nest golf course, though again the rest would ideally be incorporated strictly for recreational use. The town should coordinate with Fayette County on the annexation of lands. This would be a great opportunity to promote regional planning between the county and town. The third annexation area is along the New River. It would be for the potential "wet the dries" and National Park classification of the river. This would provide Gauley Bridge with more opportunities to find grant funding for the community and to protect recreational assets in the community.



**Town of Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan**

*Map 3: Potential Annexation Areas*



# **APPENDIX 1: PUBLIC INPUT PROCEDURES**

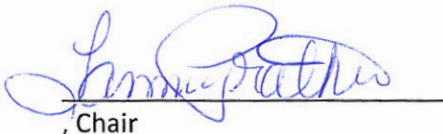


**Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia**  
**Planning Commission**  
**The Comprehensive Plan Procedures for Public Input**

Pursuant to the requirements of W. Va. Code § 8A-3-6(c), the Planning Commission of the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia ("Gauley Bridge Planning Commission") hereby adopts the following procedures to encourage and promote public participation in the drafting of the Gauley Bridge Comprehensive Plan ("comprehensive plan"). The comprehensive plan is being drafted pursuant to W. Va. Code § 8A-1-1.

- (1) The Gauley Bridge Planning Commission will request input from other affected governing bodies and units of governments that may be affected by the adoption of the comprehensive plan.
- (2) Under W. Va. Code § 8A-3-6(b), once the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission has completed a draft of the comprehensive plan, and before the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission submits a plan to the Town Council for adoption or consent, it must publicize and hold a public hearing on the draft of its plan.
  - a. More particularly, under W. Va. Code § 8A-3-6(b), at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the public hearing, the Planning Commission will publish a notice of the date, time and place of the public hearing as a Class I legal advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of the West Virginia Code. The notice shall run in a general circulating publication, the publication area will be the area that will be covered by the comprehensive plan.
  - b. In addition to the requirements at W. Va. Code § 8A-3-6(b), above, the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission will publish its draft of the comprehensive plan at least thirty (30) days prior to the public hearing. Specifically, the Planning Commission will post hardcopies for public review at the Gauley Bridge Municipal Building.
- (3) Public notice of Gauley Bridge Planning Commission meetings will be given pursuant to the West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act, where applicable.
- (4) No provision herein shall be construed as limiting the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission's ability to engage in additional public participation efforts as the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission deems appropriate. No provision herein shall prohibit the Gauley Bridge Planning Commission from amending these procedures.

Adopted this 26<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
, Mayor



Cheryl Getz  
, Vice Chair

[Signature]  
, Member

Edgar M. Monin  
Member

[Signature]  
, Member

# **APPENDIX 2: OPEN HOUSE RESULTS**

## City of Gauley Bridge Open House Results

The **City of Gauley Bridge's Planning Commission** held an open house on 8/29/2017 at the Community Center in the old high school in Gauley Bridge, WV. The purpose of the open house was to gain public input for the upcoming comprehensive plan draft. Community members were asked to present their thoughts about where they see the Town of Gauley Bridge in 10 years, strengths, opportunities, challenges, and threats of the community, future growth areas, and how they would want to see their tax dollars utilized in Gauley Bridge. The results of the open house are as follows:

### ***Exercise 1: "Spend my tax dollars on... to help improve quality of life in the Town."***

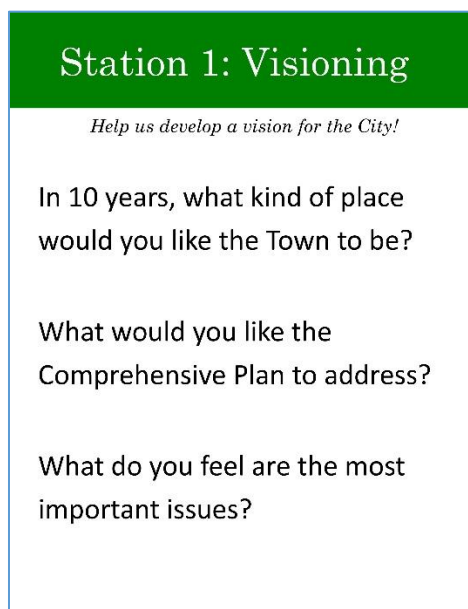


**Spend my tax dollars on**

**to help improve the quality of life in the Town.**

- Replacing water supply lines to house meters.

### ***Exercise 2: "Visioning – Help Develop a Vision for the Town!"***



**Station 1: Visioning**

*Help us develop a vision for the City!*

In 10 years, what kind of place would you like the Town to be?

What would you like the Comprehensive Plan to address?

What do you feel are the most important issues?

*Instructions: In 10 years, what kind of place would you like the Town to be? What would you like the Comprehensive Plan to address? What do you feel are the most important issues?*

- Active, safe, prosperous town
- Jobs, opportunities, schools
- Jobs, schools

***Exercise 3: “Strengths and Opportunities.”***

Station 2: Strengths and Opportunities
<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <p>Strengths are typically those elements that currently contribute to the quality of life of a community. They help create a distinct sense of place and can be used as a foundation on which to build positive economic growth. Strengths can also act as major attractions for visitors or potential new residents. Strengths are those qualities that you want to see maintained, protected and used as catalysts for future planning.</p>
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <p>Opportunities are typically those elements that may, in the future, contribute to an increased quality of life of a community. They may eventually help create a distinct sense of place and could be used as a foundation on which to build positive economic growth. The community may need to take some active steps in order to realize an opportunity.</p>

*Instructions: Write down things you feel as though are strengths or opportunities in the Town of Gauley Bridge.*

**Strengths:**

- Cathedral Falls
- Scenic views
- Trails
- River
- History
- Existing businesses
- New River campground
- Neighbors supporting each other in troubled times
- Churches

**Opportunities:**

- Use clinic building
- Rafts, boats, etc. rentals
- Air boat excursions
- Visitor center
- Publicize what we do have
- Rivers and mountain activities



- Boating possibilities

***Exercise 4: “Challenges and Threats.”***

**Station 3: Challenges and Threats**

Challenges

Challenges negatively influence a resident or visitor's experience in a community. Challenges are those things that you want to see paid special attention to in the creation or updating of a comprehensive plan. Challenges may or may not have an obvious solution, but it is important to identify them regardless of their complexity. Challenges, like strengths, can be anything from a structure to a service.

Threats

Threats could cause problems for the county in the future. Threats are often external and beyond a community's control. It is important to identify threats as communities can prepare for the possible impact they may have in the future.

*Instructions: Write down things you feel as though are challenges and threats to the Town of Gauley Bridge.*

Challenges:

- Vacant buildings
- Infrastructure
- Temporary water lines to east Gauley Bridge

Threats:

- Drugs
- Drunks
- Petty thieves

***Exercise 5: “Future Growth”***

### Station 4: Future Growth

Please identify future growth areas, conservation areas, rural areas, and redevelopment areas!

Growth areas– areas that you would like to see additional commercial, industrial and/or residential development.

Conservation areas– areas that you want to see conserved and not developed in the future.

Rural areas– areas that will remain undeveloped as either agricultural lands, park land or open space/woods.

Redevelopment areas– blighted areas that are in need of revitalization.

*Instructions: Please identify future growth areas, conservation areas, rural areas, and redevelopment areas.*

- There are hidden falls along a farm area on the southeastern side of town.
- Trails along southeastern part of town.
- Cathedral falls
- Light falls

# **APPENDIX 3:**

## **SOURCES**



## Sources

American FactFinder, U.S. Department of the Census website, <http://www.census.gov> Accessed 2017-2018.

Appalachian Regional Commission website, <http://www.arc.gov/> Accessed September 2013.

Benedum Foundation website, [www.benedum.org](http://www.benedum.org) Accessed September 2013.

Blackwell, L. and Taylor N. (1992) *A Pictorial History of Gauley Bridge*. The Gauley Bridge Historical Society.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day website, <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> Accessed August 2018.  
Plummer, Sarah. (2016, February 24) Smithers: Fixing the Past. Register-Herald Reporter. Retrieved from [www.register-herald.com](http://www.register-herald.com)

Smart Growth Implementation Assistance website, <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sgia.htm>  
[Accessed September 2013.](#)

United States Department of Transportation- Federal Highway Administration, Transportation Alternatives Program website, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm> Accessed September 2013.

West Virginia Code, Chapter 8A: Land Use Planning website, <http://www.legis.state.wv.us> Accessed September 2013.

West Virginia Department of Commerce, Community Resources website, <http://www.wvcommerce.org/people/communityresources/default.aspx>  
Accessed October 2013.

West Virginia Department of Education website, <https://wveis.k12.wv.us/> Accessed September 2018.

West Virginia Department of Transportation website, <http://www.transportation.wv.gov/ports> Accessed March 2014.

WVU Law Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic. *From Liability to Viability A Legal Toolkit to Address Neglected Properties in West Virginia*

Yeager Airport website, <https://yeagerairport.com/> Accessed June 2018.

# **APPENDIX 4: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

## *Funding Opportunities*

### *Appalachian Regional Commission*

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) provides federal grant funds for the support of economic and community development in West Virginia. The goal of ARC is to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

Projects approved for ARC assistance must support one of the four general goals:

- Strengthen the capacity of the people of Appalachia to compete in the global economy.
- Increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia to reach parity with the nation.
- Develop and improve Appalachia's infrastructure to make the Region economically competitive.
- Build the Appalachian Development Highway System to reduce Appalachia's isolation.

Activities generally eligible for funding include, but are not limited to, projects that:

- Improve infrastructure for community and economic development.
- Improve educational opportunities and workforce skills.
- Increase civic and leadership capacity.
- Increase entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Improve health care resources.

### *Benedum Foundation*

The mission of the Benedum Foundation is to encourage human development in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania through strategically placed charitable resources. The foundation gives two types of grants; education and economic development.

### *Governors Community Participation Grant Program*

The Governor's Community Partnership Grant program provides state grant funds for community and economic development projects throughout West Virginia. The program enables communities to expand, build and improve a variety of public facilities and services.

Eligible activities include but are not limited to permanent public improvements related to the following:

- City hall and courthouse facilities
- Community centers
- Construction and renovation of public facilities
- Demolition
- Economic development
- Flood and storm drainage
- Business and industrial parks
- Land and property acquisition
- Libraries
- Parks and recreation
- Parking facilities
- Preservation and beautification
- Street and sidewalk repair

- Technology
- Water and wastewater facilities and services

### ***KaBOOM***

KaBoom is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to creating play spaces for children throughout the United States. KaBoom offers three types of grants:

- **Build it with KaBOOM!**- work with KaBOOM! and their corporate partners. This grant provides coaching and facilitation of an experienced Project Manager to help design and build a permanent play structure
- **Build it Yourself**- grant (\$15,000) to be used toward the purchase of playground equipment
- **Creative Play Grants**- used to design play equipment that encourages creativity, communication, and collaboration in play

### ***Land and Water Conservation Fund***

The Land and Water Conservation Fund program (LWCF) provides supplemental federal funding for the acquisition and/or development of high- quality, public outdoor recreational areas throughout West Virginia. Proposed projects must be consistent with the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Park renovations, expansions to promote active lifestyles, innovation in community cores, attracting or retain visitors to an area, development of trailheads or preservation of other natural areas to impact community health objectives and brownfields renewal efforts will receive funding priority.

Eligible activities include but are not limited to the development of outdoor recreation resources related to the following:

- “ Land acquisition for parklands
- “ Development or renovation of the following types of outdoor recreational facilities:
- “ Campgrounds
- “ Picnic areas
- “ Sports and playfields
- “ Golf courses
- “ Swimming facilities
- “ Boating facilities
- “ Fishing facilities
- “ Hunting areas
- “ Trails
- “ Winter sport facilities
- “ Support facilities (walks, utilities, bathrooms, etc.)
- “ Amphitheaters
- “ Lake impoundments
- “ Visitor information centers
- “ Interpretive centers

### ***Neighborhood Investment Program***

The Neighborhood Investment Program (NIP) increases charitable giving to local nonprofit organizations. The program allows 501(c)3 designated charitable organizations to apply for tax credit vouchers. These organizations distribute the vouchers to contributing businesses and individuals. By donating to approved NIP organizations, contributors can support their communities and earn credits to reduce certain West Virginia taxes.

The West Virginia Legislature sets aside \$2.5 million annually in state tax credits for the NIP. To participate, a 501(c)3 charitable organization must apply to the West Virginia Development Office. Upon meeting program requirements and obtaining approval from the NIP Advisory Board, organizations are awarded tax credit vouchers. Businesses and



individuals that contribute to NIP-approved organizations are eligible to receive up to 50 percent of the contributed amount in the form of state tax credits. Donors may use the credits to reduce liability for the Corporate Net Income Tax, the Business Franchise tax or the Personal Income Tax.

Projects generally eligible for program participation include but are not limited to the following:

- Health clinics
- Homeless shelters
- Educational programs
- Housing programs
- Preservation/revitalization activities
- Domestic violence shelters
- Children's shelters
- Meal delivery programs
- Senior citizens' centers
- Community foundations
- Scholarship programs
- Hospice care
- Transportation programs
- Day care centers
- Counseling services
- Services for the disabled

### *Small Cities Block Grant Fund*

The Small Cities Block Grant program (SCBG) provides federal funds for community and economic development projects throughout West Virginia. The program supports job creation and retention efforts, local government efforts to provide affordable infrastructure systems and community efforts to improve the quality of life for low- to moderate-income citizens. Eligible units of local government may receive SCBG funds if they are documented to fulfill one of three national objectives:

- Activities benefiting low- and moderate-income people.
- Activities that aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight.
- Activities designed to meet community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community and where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

Activities generally eligible for funding include but are not limited to permanent public improvements related to the following:

- Community centers/senior citizen centers
- Construction and renovation of public facilities
- Demolition
- Economic development
- Flood and storm drainage
- Acquisition
- Parks and recreation
- Preservation and beautification
- Technology
- Water and wastewater facilities and services
- Community facilities renovation/construction

### *Smart Growth Implementation Assistance*

The Smart Growth Implementation Assistance (SGIA) program provides assistance from national experts to help communities explore barriers to smart growth implementation and pilot innovative ideas that create more sustainable communities. EPA will provide technical assistance to successful applicants.

### *Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)*

TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

The TAP program now funds projects that would have previously been considered under the Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to Schools Programs.

### *The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (GKVF)*

The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (GKVF) encompasses Kanawha, Putnam, Boone, Clay, Lincoln, and Fayette Counties in West Virginia. The Foundation helps individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofits improve the lives within the community now and for generations to come. They assist donors in creating charitable funds, each with its own philanthropic purpose, and provide grants to nonprofits that meet the needs of the community.

There are two discretionary grantmaking tracks:

- Proactive collaborative grants in education, health, and civic engagement and community building
- Responsive grants in basic needs or arts and culture

To be eligible for both discretionary grantmaking programs, an applicant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, public school, or government entity
- Demonstrate the ability to build community wealth
- Serve Kanawha, Putnam, Lincoln, Boone, Clay, and/or Fayette Counties of WV
- Have an audit, financial review, or financial compilation

# **APPENDIX 5:**

## **ADOPTION**

## **MATERIALS**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PREPARED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF  
THE TOWN OF GAULEY BRIDGE, WEST VIRGINIA**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission for the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code, has prepared a comprehensive plan for the City;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has adopted procedures for public input throughout the comprehensive plan process;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has identified and addressed all required objectives and components pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to West Virginia Code §8A-3-6, notice was published in the Montgomery Herald on January 30, 2019;

**WHEREAS**, further pursuant to West Virginia Code §8A-3-6, a public hearing was held before the Town of Gauley Bridge's Planning Commission on Tuesday, March 19, 2019;

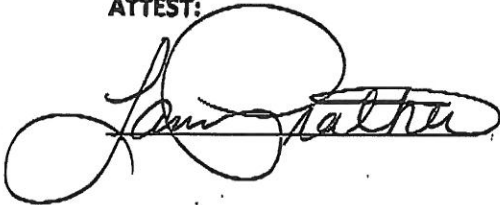
**WHEREAS**, all written comments presented to the planning commission pursuant to the notice of public hearing were duly considered; and,

**WHEREAS**, no oral comments were presented to the planning commission pursuant to the notice of the public hearing;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Planning Commission for Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, that, pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code, the comprehensive plan prepared by the Planning Commission for the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, bearing the date of January 2019, is made a part of this resolution by reference and is hereby recommended to Town Council;

**PASSED and APPROVED** at a special meeting of the Planning Commission of the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, held on March 19, 2019.

**ATTEST:**



President, Town of Gauley Bridge Planning Commission



**RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF GAULEY BRIDGE, WEST VIRGINIA**

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission for the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code, has prepared a recommended comprehensive plan for the town;

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has recommended that Town Council adopt the comprehensive plan;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to West Virginia Code §8A-3-7, a public hearing was held before the Town of Gauley Bridge's Planning Commission on Tuesday, March 19, 2019;

**WHEREAS**, the planning commission presented the comprehensive plan to Town Council on Tuesday, April 9, 2019;


**WHEREAS**, pursuant to §8A-3-7, a public hearing was held before Town Council on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED** by the Town Council for the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, that, pursuant to West Virginia Code §8A-3-8, the comprehensive plan prepared by the Planning Commission for the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, bearing the date of January 2019, is made a part of this resolution by reference and is hereby adopted without any amendments thereto entered into the official minutes of the Town Council.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this adopted comprehensive plan shall, pursuant to West Virginia Code §8A-3-9, be filed in the office of the clerk of the county commission for Fayette County, West Virginia.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** at a regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, held on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

**ATTEST:**

  
Town Clerk

May 14, 2019