

# hip

(hĭp) also **hep** (hĕp)

adj. hip-per, hip-pest also hep-per or hep-pest Slang

- 1. Keenly aware of or knowledgeable about the latest trends or developments.
- 2. Very fashionable or stylish.

## City of Charles Town: Previous Plans & Studies

Brancing in Native Nursery Program Feasibility Study and Business Plan, 2017. Eastern Panhandle Planning and Development Council Region 9.

http://anyflip.com/ocqe/paxo

C\*Town Arts and Culture District Plan, 2016. City of Charles Town.

http://anyflip.com/ocqe/ceth/basic

Charles Town - Ranson Collaboration Strategy, 2015. City of Charles Town and City of Ranson.

http://charlestownwv.igm2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=4&ID=1617&MeetingID=1320

Charles Town Transportation Study, 2014. City of Charles Town and Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.

 $http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/\%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674\%7D/uploads/Official\_Transportation\_Plan\_4-23-14.pdf$ 

Charles Town West End Master Plan and Brownfields Reuse Strategy (Draft), 2015. City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/CTWEP\_Report\_Complete.pdf

Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study, 2011. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69\_466536d4b0d5430cbffdb24010776ab1.pdf

City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan, 2006. City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Comp\_Plan\_Final\_January\_19\_2010(2).pdf

City of Charles Town Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2014. City of Charles Town.

http://anyflip.com/ocqe/zznu/basic

City of Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016. City of Charles Town.

http://anyflip.com/ocqe/ceth/basic

City of Ranson / City of Charles Town Brownfields Area-wide Plan. City of Charles Town and City of Ranson.

http://ransonrenewed.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Ranson-Charles-Town-Area-Wide-Plan-Final.pdf

City of Ranson Comprehensive Plan, 2012. City of Ranson.

http://ransonrenewed.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/RansonCompPlan\_2012\_Adopted-Reduced.pdf

Construction Plan for the Evitts Run Green Infrastructure Park Project, 2014. City of Charles Town.

http://online.anyflip.com/ocge/wrga/mobile/index.html

Direction 2020: HEPMPO Long Range Transportation Plan Update, 2014. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69\_cdc7ccf7c64341418e3c642d62f7593c.pdf

Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, 2014. Jefferson County.

http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-planning-and-zoning-a

**EPTA Five Year Transit Development Plan, 2015**. Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority.

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69\_e79f9d9079cf4cb3b06920ca6281a960.pdf

Evitts Run Park Master Plan, 2015. City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Park\_Master\_Plan.pdf

Happy Retreat Community Forestry Plan, 2015. City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/08\_CTWEP\_AppD\_HR\_Comm\_Forestry\_Plan(1).pdf

Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board Annual Report, 2015. Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board.

http://jefferson.wvfp.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/12/2015 Ann Rpt for web.pdf

Jefferson County Parks Master Plan, 2016. Jefferson County.

http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/home/showdocument?id=12094)

Source Water Assessment: Cave Quarter Estates. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.

http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/get.cfm?id=3301904

Source Water Assessment: Charles Town Water Department. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.

http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/get.cfm?id=3301905

Source Water Protection Plan, 2016. Charles Town Utility Board.

http://www.ctubwv.com/default/assets/File/Charles%20Town%20%20PUBLIC%20SWAP%20UPDATED\_6-22-2016.pdf

*Urban Tree Canopy and Goals, 2011*. Jefferson County.

http://www.cacaponinstitute.org/Forestry/Forestry\_PDFs/Jefferson%20Co%20UTC%20Goal%20&%20Plan%20Final%20Approved%202011-11-03.pdf *Wastewater Strategic Plan & Ten Year Wastewater Capital Plan, 2015.* Charles Town Utility Board.

http://www.ctubwv.com/default/assets/File/2015%20Sewer%20Strategic%20Plan-Final%20April%2022,%202015.pdf

### City of Charles Town: Programs & Regulations

City of Charles Town Design Review Standards for Historic Overlay Districts. City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Charles\_Town\_Historic\_Overlay\_District\_Design\_Review\_Standards\_-\_Final.pdf

*City of Charles Town Façade Improvement Program.* City of Charles Town.

http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/Sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/Facade\_Improvement\_Program\_-\_Final\_ Amended.pdf

City of Charles Town Zoning & Subdivision/Land Development Ordinances. City of Charles Town.

 $http://www.charlestownwv.us/index.asp?Type=B\_BASIC\&SEC= \{34313FF3-04F6-4C95-804B-64C2358325ED\}\&DE= \{E59EA5F4-F2CF-402D-99F1-25D2C2714F3B\}$ 

**HEPMPO Transportation Improvement Program**. Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle MPO.

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/116f69\_dfee0566b65341bc8e86592e1c8418be.pdf

Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance. Jefferson County.

http://www.co.jefferson.id.us/use\_images/planning\_zoning/ZoningOrdinance2008-07.pdf

West Virginia Source Water Assessment and Wellhead Protection Program. WV Department of Health and Human Resources.

https://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/

#### Other Works Cited

**Building Healthy Places Toolkit, 2017.** Center for Active Design.

https://centerforactivedesign.org/buildinghealthyplacestoolkit

Conservation Subdivision Design, 2016. Greener Prospects.

http://www.greenerprospects.com/PDFs/CSD\_Overview.pdf

Livability Index, 2016. AARP, Inc.

https://livabilityindex.aarp.org/

Small Business Administration Loans, 2016. US Small Business Administration.

https://www.sba.gov/starting-business/finance-your-business/loans/sba-loans

Venture Capital's Leading Industrial Clusters, 2016. Martin Prosperity

http://martinprosperity.org/content/venture-capitals-leading-industrial-clusters/

**US Census American Community Survey, 2015.** US Census Bureau.

https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/

Woods and Poole Population Data, 2015. Woods and Poole.

https://www.woodsandpoole.com/

City of Roanoke Urban Design Manual, 2013. City of Roanoke.

https://www.roanokeva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1502

US Kitchen Incubators: An Industry Snapshot, 2013. Econsult Solutions, Inc.

http://www.econsultsolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/ESI-SharedKitchenReport\_2013.pdf

City of Missoula's Downtown Inventory, 2012. City of Missoula.

http://www.missouladowntown.com/wp-content/uploads/DT-Inventory-Overview-5 25 12.pdf

SmartCode Version 9.2, 2012. Duany Plater-Zyberk.

http://www.dpz.com/uploads/Books/SmartCode-v9.2.pdf

Greenbridge Master Plan, 2011. Center for Active Design.

https://centerforactivedesign.org/awards/greenbridge

Better Models for Development on the Shenandoah Valley, 2010. Valley Conservation Council.

https://valleyconservation.org/themencode-pdf-viewer/?file=https://valleyconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Better-Models-for-Development.pdf

Historic Charles Town Walking Tour. City of Charles Town and Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

http://washingtonheritage trail.com/other tours.html

Residential Street Pattern Design, 2002. Canada Mortgage and Housing Company.

https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html

Charlestown's West End in the Lifetime of Charles Washington, 2011. Mark Reinhart.

Jefferson County Historical Society, Volume IXXVII.

Page intentionally blank

# Table of Contents

1	Letter from the Mayor
2	Introduction to the Planning Process
12	Community Profile
26	A Vision for Downtown Charles Town
40	Growth and Land Use
78	Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability
96	Mobility, Accessibility and Connectivity
122	Image and Identity
136	Quality Public Services
150	Environmental Stewardship
166	Plan Implementation
181	Appendices



# Letter from the Mayor

On behalf of the City of Charles Town, the Planning Commission, and our many community partners, who participated extensively in its development, I am pleased to share the Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 - Comprehensive Plan. This comprehensive plan is a "blue print" for the future of our city and articulates the vision of the community as to what we want Charles Town to become in the future.

The Comprehensive Plan promotes a "Downtown First Focus" strategy for all areas of economic and community development. The plan recognizes the significance of Downtown Charles Town as not only the heart of the City and center of Jefferson County government, but also recognizes it as the State of West Virginia's eastern-most gateway to the Baltimore–Washington metropolitan area; which is the most educated, highest income-earning statistical area in the United States.

This plan provides a framework for the City to guide growth, encourage new investment, affordable housing, an environmentally sustainable economy, increased connectivity, expanded Arts and entertainment, and a more equitable future of all our citizens. As a community we cherish our historic downtown and this plan protects our City's historic character while encouraging new growth and development throughout Charles Town's Urban Growth Boundary.

We are at a pivotal moment in Charles Town's history. The planning decisions we make today will decide our community's future. While the future holds many unknowns, I am confident the citizens of Charles Town will rise to any challenge. Becoming an Arts community, revitalizing our downtown, preserving our history and encouraging new development just doesn't happen, it happens because we make it happen. And for those who say Charles Town can't, we say we can and we will!

I hope you will work with us to make this plan a reality.

Sincerely,

Scott Rogers Mayor of Charles Town August 2017





A comprehensive plan is "... a plan for physical development, including land use, adopted by a governing body, setting forth guidelines, goals, and objectives for all activities that affect growth and development in the governing body's jurisdiction."

West Virginia Code, §8A-3

Photo courtesy of Michael Baker International

## **Process**

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 (Historically Hip 2040) is the City of Charles Town's Comprehensive Plan developed under the authority of the West Virginia Code (§8A-3). The plan serves as the City's official policy guide for short- (0-4 years), mid- (5-10 years) and long-term (11-20 years) decision making related to future land use, growth and development, and resource preservation within the City's existing political jurisdiction and its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Historically Hip 2040 is an "implementable plan" created using the "5 Keys for An Implementable Comprehensive Plan".

Through the leadership of the City's Department of Community Development, the City organized and convened an ad-hoc Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to help guide the comprehensive planning process. The CAC members consisted of City and county residents representing various community interests who provided unique insights into critical issues related to land use and zoning, multimodal transportation, community and economic development, cultural and historic resources, housing, public utilities, and governance. Furthermore, the CAC afforded the planning process a strong grass-roots approach and will help champion the plan's successful implementation.

At the onset of the planning process, the CAC was instrumental in identifying real issues affecting the Charles Town community and obtaining public input and validation of the issues through the

# 5 KEYS FOR AN IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- 1. Focus the plan on relevant, real community issues
- 2. **Organize the plan** the way local officials and citizens think
- 3. **Devise** practical and workable recommendations
- 4. **Recruit partners** and **create capacity** to implement the plan
- 5. **Get local ownership** of the plan and commitment to implement it

**Source:** Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, "Creating an Implementable Plan: Principles and Keys", 2016.

development and administration of a public survey (**Appendix A**). This public engagement process resulted in the creation of the planning framework, shown in **Table 1**, to begin organizing the plan in a way that is relevant and logical to local officials and citizens alike. As shown, the key issues (or focus areas) were categorized into seven comprehensive plan "themes" and each theme was cross-referenced with the comprehensive plan elements specified by the West Virginia Code (§8A-3).

The CAC continued its public engagement process by convening a series of public meetings that included focus group discussions with property owners and the general public. The meetings began with an information session on the comprehensive planning process and the key issues and trends effecting the City's growth and development. Breakout sessions were then held to facilitate a meaningful and purposeful dialogue centered on the key comprehensive themes listed in **Table 1**.

Comprehensive Planning Themes	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	WV Code § 8A-3-4 Elements	
Downtown	<ul> <li>Downtown First Focus</li> <li>Reinvest and Revitalize</li> <li>Cultural and Historical Identity of the City</li> <li>Events, Festivals and Farmers Market</li> <li>Charles Town Now</li> <li>Cultural and Historic Preservation</li> <li>Entertainment (Live)</li> <li>Historic Resources (Opera House, Zion Church, CW Hall, Happy Retreat, Fishermen's Hall)</li> <li>Jefferson County Museum</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Economic Development</li> <li>Renewal and/or Redevelopment</li> <li>Recreation</li> </ul>	
Growth and Land Use	<ul> <li>Future Land Use</li> <li>Connectivity</li> <li>Annexation Policy</li> <li>Water/Sewer/Gas</li> <li>Rural to Urban Transect</li> <li>Urban Growth Boundary</li> </ul>	<ul><li> Preferred Development Areas</li><li> Rural</li></ul>	
Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability	<ul> <li>Blighted and Vacant Properties</li> <li>Code Enforcement</li> <li>Accessory Dwelling Units and Tiny Houses</li> <li>Affordable and Attainable Housing</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Housing</li><li>Safety</li></ul>	
Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity	<ul> <li>Connectivity to Downtown from all points within the City</li> <li>Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility (Trail Network, including Washington Heritage Trail)</li> <li>Parking</li> <li>Transportation and Circulation</li> <li>Wayfinding/Historical Signage</li> <li>Complete Streets</li> <li>Accessory Dwelling Units</li> <li>Casino/Race Track</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Transportation</li><li>Recreation</li></ul>	

Table 1: City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan Framework

Comprehensive Planning Themes	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	WV Code § 8A-3-4 Elements	
Image and Identity	<ul> <li>Historic Landmarks Commission and Design Review Standards</li> <li>Cultural and Historic Preservation</li> <li>Arts and Cultural District (Building C*Town)</li> <li>Community Character and Design</li> <li>Beautification</li> <li>Gateways</li> <li>The Grand Idea: Historically Hip Charles Town</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Community Design</li><li>Historic Preservation</li></ul>	
Quality Public Services	<ul> <li>Charles Town Library</li> <li>Intergovernmental Cooperation – Jefferson County PSD         Acquisition Plan Implementation</li> <li>Technology and Telecommunications</li> <li>Recreation</li> <li>Parks and Recreation (Evitts Run Park, Jefferson Memorial Park, Willingham Knolls Park, Charles Town Skate Park)</li> <li>Charles Town Police</li> <li>Jefferson County Schools</li> <li>Public Sewer and Water (Charles Town Utility Board)</li> <li>Vocational Education</li> <li>Fire/EMS, Emergency Management</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Infrastructure</li><li>Public Services</li><li>Safety</li></ul>	
Environmental Stewardship	<ul> <li>Green Infrastructure</li> <li>Green Infrastructure Initiatives</li> <li>Brownfield Redevelopment (Evitts Run/West End Master Plan)</li> <li>Branching In Native Nursery</li> <li>Water Quality (Chesapeake Bay, Stormwater Management and MS4)</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Environmental</li><li>Conservation</li><li>Natural Resource Use</li></ul>	
Implementation	<ul><li>Prioritization</li><li>Funding and Capital Planning</li><li>Partnerships</li></ul>	• Finance	

Table 1 Continued: City of Charles Town Comprehensive Plan Framework

Additionally, the CAC met with the volunteer Downtown organization, Charles Town Now, to identify specific and distinct issues facing Downtown merchants and business owners. A survey was designed and administered specifically for the Charles Town Now membership to help them prioritize their issues and define a vision for the Downtown. This vision is reflected in the Goal Statement for Downtown as specified on the following pages.

"To create an implementable comprehensive plan, implementation

 not preparation – of a comprehensive plan must be the target, the end."

**Source:** Denny Puko, Pennsylvania Governor's Center for Local Government Services

The CAC utilized the results from the above public engagement process to then formulate a new vision statement for the City supported by specific goal statements for each of the final comprehensive plan themes.



Figure 1: Charles Town Citizen's Advisory Committee Public Engagement and Walking Tour (Photos courtesy of Michael Baker Intl. Inc.)

# Charles Town's Vision Statement for 2040

The City of Charles Town is a community that offers an exceptional quality of life for all residents by:

- · Promoting access to jobs and livelihoods;
- · Providing well-planned, safe and secure neighborhoods;
- · Delivering quality public services;
- · Preserving and promoting its unique history and cultural heritage for residents and visitors alike to enjoy; and
- Stimulating a business-friendly culture that embraces innovation and encourages entrepreneurship, business development and growth.

# Key Themes and Goals

Seven key themes were brought forth as critically important to achieving Charles Town's Vision for 2040 and they serve as the Plan's overall goals:

- Downtown Charles Town
- Growth and Land Use
- · Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability
- Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity
- Image and Identity
- Quality Public Services
- Environmental Stewardship

These themes highlight and reinforce the major concerns the plan seeks to address and the issues raised by the public. Their goal statements are expressed in the following sections.

# Downtown Charles Town

Downtown Charles Town will be the heart of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. Downtown Charles Town will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and learning.



# Growth and Land Use

The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.



# Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability

The City of Charles Town will promote and encourage economic development activities that capitalize on community assets, support the needs of present and future residents, and strive to ensure a sustainable and diverse economic base.



# Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity

The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for all citizens by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, public transit, and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.



# F Image and Identity

The City of Charles Town will be known as a national destination offering a wealth of heritage tourism resources, entertainment attractions, and support services including high-quality and unique dining, lodging and entertainment venues, and extensive outdoor recreation opportunities.



# **Quality Public Services**

The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

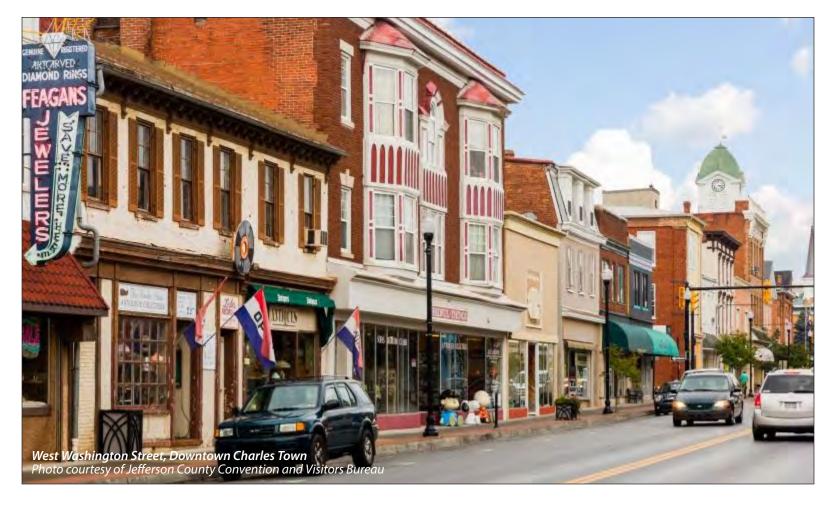


# Environmental Stewardship

The City of Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development, and redevelopment.

The following sections of *Historically Hip 2040* provide an in-depth discussion of each of the above themes that defined a series of objectives supporting their respective goal statements. The Implementation Plan section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines practical and workable recommendations along with key partners to spearhead and support their implementation. Additionally, the Implementation Plan identifies a timeframe for achieving all recommendations and potential sources of funding as may be necessary to finance their completion.

Historically Hip 2040 provides the City of Charles Town with a clear vision and roadmap for its near- and long-term success as a livable community whose center of activity is its Downtown connected to well-planned, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods and supported by quality public services. Thriving centers of commerce will provide sustaining employment and a solid tax base for the City's financial well-being, making Charles Town a community of lasting value worthy of preservation and continued investment.



## Relationship to the 2006 Comprehensive Plan

Charles Town's 2006 Comprehensive Plan was prepared during the peak of the City's growth period and its future population growth trends and land development opportunities assumed continued and sustained growth in the regional and national economy. However, the Great Recession of 2008 occurred and resulted in the loss of wealth, significant cutbacks in consumer spending, and the significant reduction in U.S. employment. As a result, the City along with many communities throughout the U.S. experienced a significant slowdown in their economies and the projected continuation of the pre-recession growth never materialized. For instance, the City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan projected the City's population would be 12,096 in 2015, but the current population is estimated to be 5,723 according to the 2015 American Community Survey.

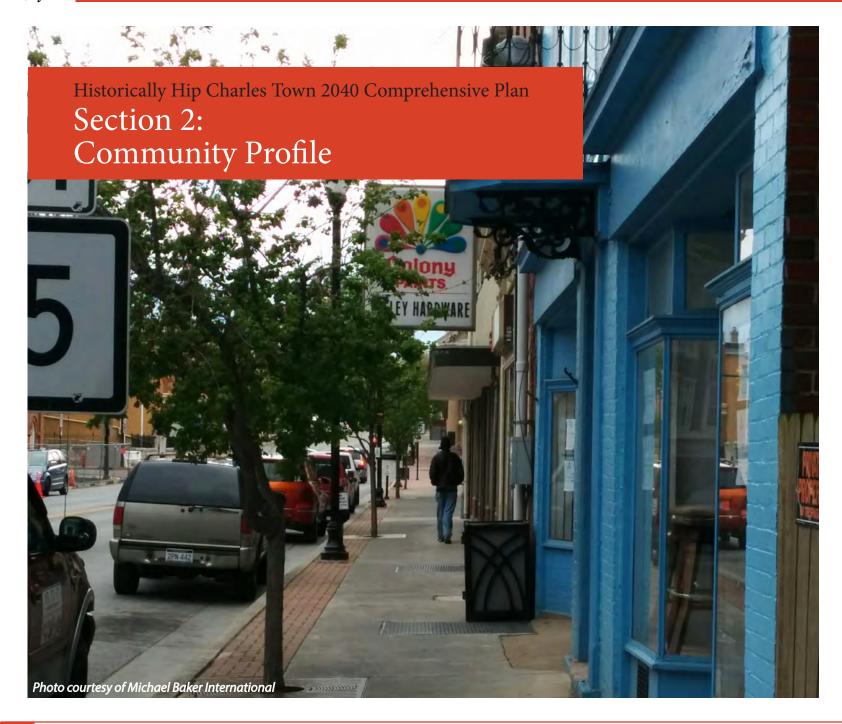
Additionally, in 2015 the Jefferson County Commission adopted the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide titled Envision Jefferson 2035. This plan recognizes Charles Town's proposed UGB and establishes a future land use policy prioritizing growth and development to occur within the UGBs and Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs) where public services exist and to preserve the county's rural areas for agriculture and low density rural development that is not dependent upon public services, such as sewer and water.

To this end, the City's elected officials and staff determined that the Charles Towns' 2006 plan was not a valid blueprint for the City's future and determined the need to prepare *Historically Hip 2040* to set the course for the City's future growth and development vision based on current realities.

## Relationship to the Capital Improvement Program

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance on the need to manage growth and development and to continue investment in the City's physical infrastructure. *Historically Hip 2040* recommends enhancing the City's capital improvement planning and budgeting process by implementing more explicit ties between the comprehensive plan and the development of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as well as the establishment of priorities among various potential capital investments. In addition, for each recommended action in *Historically Hip 2040*, the Implementation Strategy section identifies whether capital dollars are required to implement that action. There are approximately 11 such actions where the need for capital funds is recommended.

Page intentionally blank



# Charles Town Today

Charles Town has a long, rich history dating back to its founding in 1786. The Washington family had significant land holdings in the Eastern Panhandle during Colonial times. Charles Washington, the youngest brother of President George Washington, donated the four corners of the George Street and Washington Street intersection to the City for public use. The County Courthouse, City Hall, Charles Town Post Office, and Charles Washington Hall were later built on this land and to this day they serve as a historic focal point for the community.

Today, the City of Charles Town is home to approximately 5,723 residents and boasts a rich history with prominent historical sites and cultural assets. The City is located in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and is in proximity to the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area. Because of this proximity and the availability of the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) train service, Charles Town is an attractive home for commuters where the cost of living is about 30% lower than similar DC suburbs in northern Virginia (NOVA) and Maryland. Additionally, commuters can reach Dulles International Airport, Baltimore, and Washington, DC, in under 90 minutes. Significant regional transportation improvements make commuting more convenient and the extension of the DC Metrorail to Dulles Airport, and in the near future, Leesburg, may result in additional commuters exploring Charles Town as a place to call home.

## A Changing Market

Since the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Charles Town's population has increased by 47 percent. In 2011, nearly 60% of adults had at least some college education, and 30% held a bachelor's degree or higher. Job growth between 2003 and 2013 rose to 13%, due especially to growing economic sectors such as hospitality, information technology, transportation, and educational services. To review these recent socioeconomic trends, the following demographic and market overview is a summary of a more detailed market assessment conducted early in the planning process.

The market assessment examined demographic trends in Charles Town, the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and Jefferson County to form a better understanding of Charles Town's competitive position within the adjoining markets. It identifies the key issues that the community is facing and creates a foundation based on quantitative data to assist with future land use and planning objectives.

The market assessment presents current figures alongside 2020 demographic projections to document anticipated shifts within the City and UGB. While projections can be made beyond this 5-year timeframe, the level of accuracy in which market potential can be assessed would be reduced. Market data for this overview were obtained from ESRI Business Analyst, a nationally recognized provider of demographic and market data.

### Population Growth

A key factor in measuring the depth of a retail or commercial market is assessing the trends in population – as population represents the consumers of goods and services that could be offered in the city and the larger region, as well as a local workforce that could potentially be tapped to fill job openings.

The City of Charles Town is projected to experience an 8.8% increase in population between 2015 and 2020 while the UGB is projected to increase by 8.6% (see **Table 2**). Population growth rates in the City and the UGB exceed growth rates in both Jefferson County and the state.

Based on Woods and Poole population data, Jefferson County is projected to increase by approximately 36% between 2015 and 2030. West Virginia at a statewide level is projected to increase by 5% during the same time period, demonstrating that projected growth is concentrated in the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area. As a comparable, Howard and Frederick counties (Maryland) are projected to grow 20.3% and 38.4% respectively during the same 15-year period. See **Figure 3**. Even with its relative proximity to the National Capital Region, Jefferson County's population is not expected to grow at the same rate as other similar suburban counties to the south and west (e.g. Frederick County, VA and Stafford County, VA). One possible explanation is denser population centers in Jefferson County lack a direct transportation connection to jobs, services, and amenities found in DC and other communities surrounding the nation's Capital.

As shown in **Figure 4**, counties located in the Baltimore - Washington, DC metropolitan area are projected to experience high levels of population growth between 2015 and 2040. Jefferson County is projected to grow by 20 percent during this time-period, an increase of approximately 67,800 new residents.

	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020 (Estimate)	% Change 2015-20
Charles Town	3,230	2,907	5,259	5,723	6,512	8.8%
Charles Town UGB	N/A	7,570	10,666	11,584	13,633	8.6%
Jefferson County, WV	36,145	42,190	53,498	56,914	62,674	6.4%

Table 2: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2020

Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

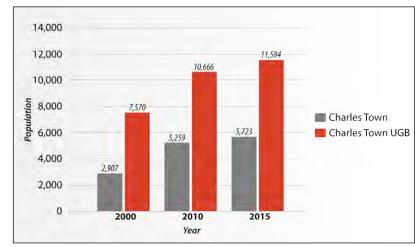


Figure 2: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2015 Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

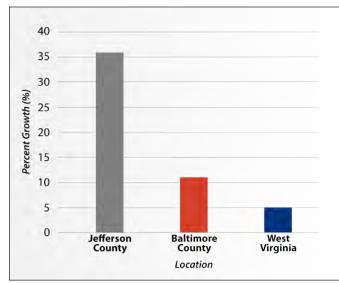
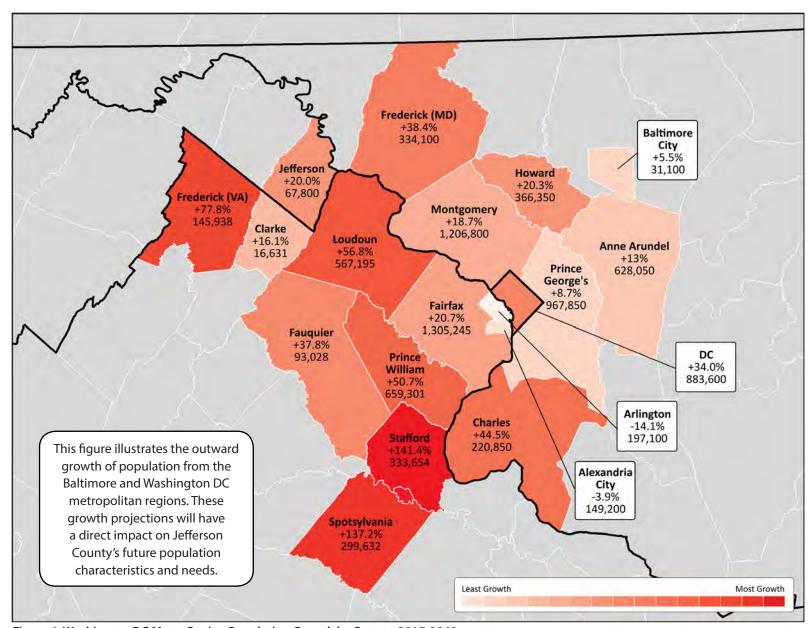


Figure 3: Regional Population Growth, 2015 - 2030

Source: Woods and Poole, 2014



**Figure 4: Washington DC Metro Region Population Growth by County, 2015-2040**Source: US Census Bureau, UVA Cooper Center, and Maryland Department of Planning

#### **Educated Workforce**

Compared to other communities in West Virginia, Charles Town and its surrounding region is well educated. Nearly 30 percent of residents age 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is 10 percent higher than the statewide average, as depicted in **Figure 5**. Higher education is demonstrated to provide economic benefits in terms of annual earnings. Residents with high educational attainment typically have increased disposable income and, particularly for Millenials, may desire high quality housing and amenities in the Downtown.

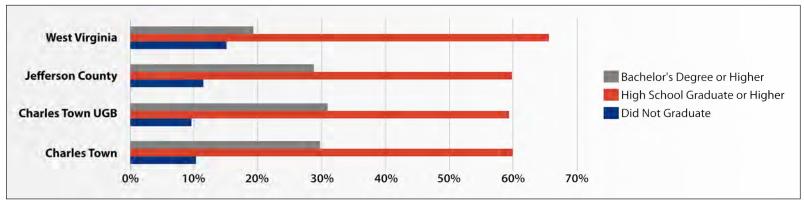


Figure 5: Educational Attainment, 2016
Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

### **Housing Trends**

Housing is a central component of livability and quality of life. People spend more time in their homes than anywhere else and as a result, housing affordability, availability, and accessibility are critical to a community's wellbeing. Since 2000, average household and family sizes in Charles Town have been growing steadily (shown in **Table 3**). Growing household and family sizes within the City suggest a demand for single family dwelling units. Data compiled in 2016 for properties within Charles Town indicates that a majority of parcels (72.3%) within the City contain single family homes.

Housing tenure compositions within the City favor homeownership, with 59% of occupied housing units belonging to homeowners in 2015. Nearly 40% of housing units within the City were constructed between 2000 and 2009. Median home values for Charles Town properties are significantly higher than the state average (\$266,353 in 2015, compared to \$123,440 for West Virginia). By comparison, Jefferson County's median home value was \$294,770 in 2015, demonstrating Charles Town housing

	2000	2010	2015	2020 (Estimate)
Average Household Size	2.26	2.57	2.58	2.62
Average Family Size	2.95	3.19	3.28	3.30

Table 3: Charles Town Population Growth, 2000 - 2020

Source: ESRI Business Information Systems

stock is more affordable than the County average. In theory, these housing metrics are favorable for Charles Town as a desirable community. However, the lack of a diverse housing inventory coupled with higher-than-statewide average home values makes it difficult for less educated individuals with lower earning potential and for seniors with fixed incomes to access affordable housing.

### **Economy and Industry**

#### Overview

According to the 2014 Charles Town Economic Development Strategic Plan, the Charles Town zip code is projected to add nearly 1,500 new jobs in the 10-year period between 2013 and 2023. The plan also includes a comprehensive overview of workforce characteristics within the City and its larger laborshed (which includes Jefferson County and its contiguous counties in West Virginia, Maryland, and Virginia). Currently, the accommodation and food services industries (e.g., hospitality) are the leading sectors for the City, accounting for 24% of its available employment.

The largest employer in this industry is the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. Located just outside of Charles Town's city limits, the establishment is one of the busiest thoroughbred tracks in the country and is the largest employer in Jefferson County. Although Charles Town does not benefit directly from property taxes, the casino's position as an employer, a draw for tourism, and source of income to the City through track receipts has positively impacted Charles Town physically and financially. Currently, an extremely competitive environment as a result of nearby casinos in Maryland (Anne Arundel County, Downtown Baltimore, and MGM National Harbor) may make it increasingly difficult for the Hollywood Casino to attract visitors from nearby metropolitan regions. This has adversely affected industry growth and revenue generation for Charles Town.



Information and professional, scientific, and technical services are two industries that are strong in the labor shed and are projected to continue to grow. These industries present an opportunity for Charles Town to capture related companies looking for small office space in a walkable Downtown location with easy access to Baltimore and Washington, DC. American Public University<sup>1</sup> is one example of a thriving Downtown employer and accounts for the high number of employees in the colleges, universities, and professional school industry.

#### **Job Gains and Losses**

Employment data obtained through the U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies provides quantitative insight into which industries have gained or lost jobs over the most recent 15-year period. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Jefferson County gained a total of 742 jobs between 2010 and 2015. Shown in **Figure 6**, the Accommodation, Food Services and Drinking Places, and Educational Services industries had the highest employment gains. Conversely, the Performance Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related industries reported the highest job losses. Employment data verifies that increased competition from nearby casinos are having a negative impact on the Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races.

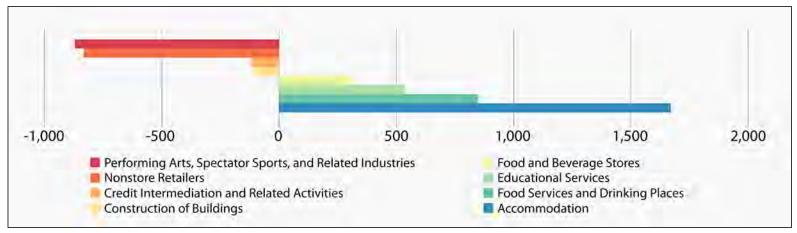
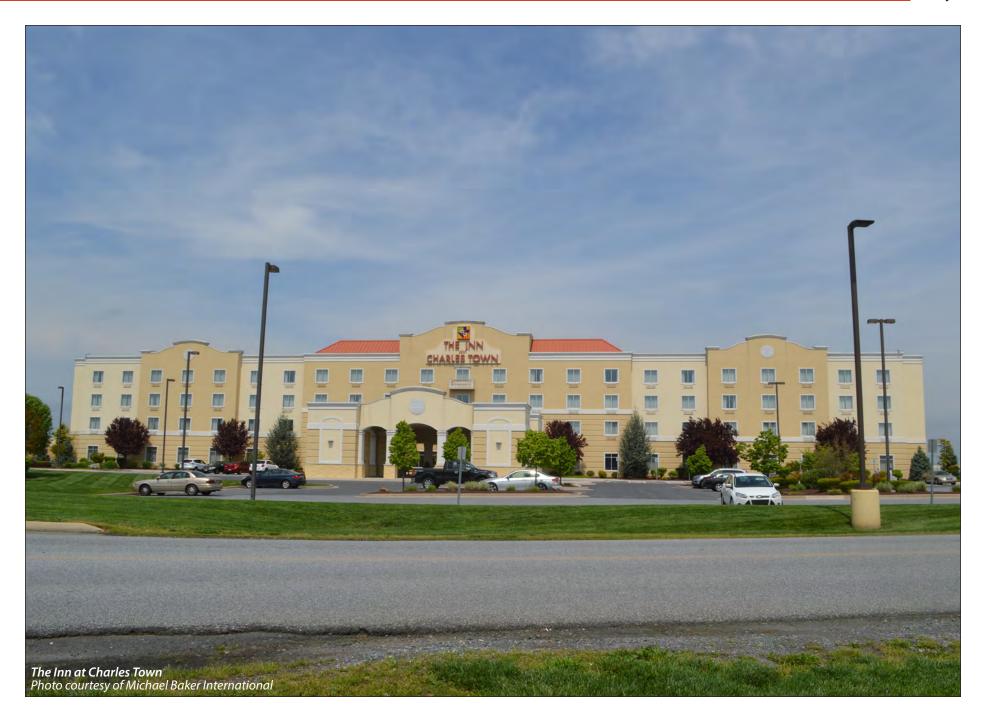


Figure 6: Jefferson County Top Employment Gain/Losses by Industry (2000 - 2015)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies

<sup>1</sup> http://www.apus.edu/



### **Industry Projections**

WorkForce West Virginia is a state government agency responsible for overseeing the state unemployment insurance program, as well as a network of workforce development services. Funded through the U.S. Department of Labor, WorkForce West Virginia also provides industry projections for the state's seven Workforce Investment Areas (WIA).

Charles Town is located in WIA 7, which is comprised of Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Mineral, Hampshire, Hardy, Grant, and Pendleton Counties. Based on West Virginia Industry Projections for 2012-2022, WIA 7 is projected to realize the highest job gains, by percent change, in Ambulatory Health Care Services (39% growth), Wood Product Manufacturing (27% growth), and Administrative and Support Services (18% growth). By net gain, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is projected to have the highest employment growth (3,747 net new jobs), followed by the Ambulatory Health Care Services (1,819 net new jobs) and the Government sector (1,092 net new jobs). The full set of industry projections can be found at: <a href="http://lmi.workforcewv.org/LTprojections/LTIndustryProjections.html">http://lmi.workforcewv.org/LTprojections/LTIndustryProjections.html</a>.

The Health Care and Social Assistance sector has been rapidly increasing across the country, and Jefferson County and WIA 7 follow this trend with large increases in employment in the sector. In fact, employment in Health Care and Social Assistance has been steadily increasing since 2001, suggesting potential increased demand for corresponding medical, laboratory, and medical office space.

#### Retail Market Potential

A retail gap analysis was performed during the development of the City's 2014 Economic Development Strategic Plan. The results of this analysis are also useful to better understand local retail market expansion and development opportunities. It is important to realize that market conditions and consumer spending patterns and trends are constantly changing and are particularly being influenced by the significant shift over the past several years to online shopping. However, niche and specialty products and services unique to the greater Charles Town and Eastern Panhandle Region provide greater opportunities to capture existing and new consumers to the City's retail industries. The City's 2014 Economic Development Strategic Plan can be found on the City's webpage.

#### **Commuting Patterns**

The U.S. Census Bureau provides data on inflow and outflow labor characteristics of a municipality. That is, the data shows the number of non-resident workers employed within the municipality (inflow) and how many resident workers are employed outside of the municipality (outflow). Interior flow refers to residents living and working within the same municipality.

Based on 2014 data, the City of Charles Town has approximately 3,212 primary jobs located within the City. Of these jobs, 233 are both employed and live in the City; 2,979 workers are employed in the City but live outside; and 2,450 live in the City, but work outside of the City. **Figure 7** provides a visual representation of the labor inflow/outflow in Charles Town.

The data shows that Charles Town is neither a net importer nor exporter of workers. Rather, the inflow and outflow of workers is relatively neutral, and 7% of the workforce in the City is comprised of City residents.

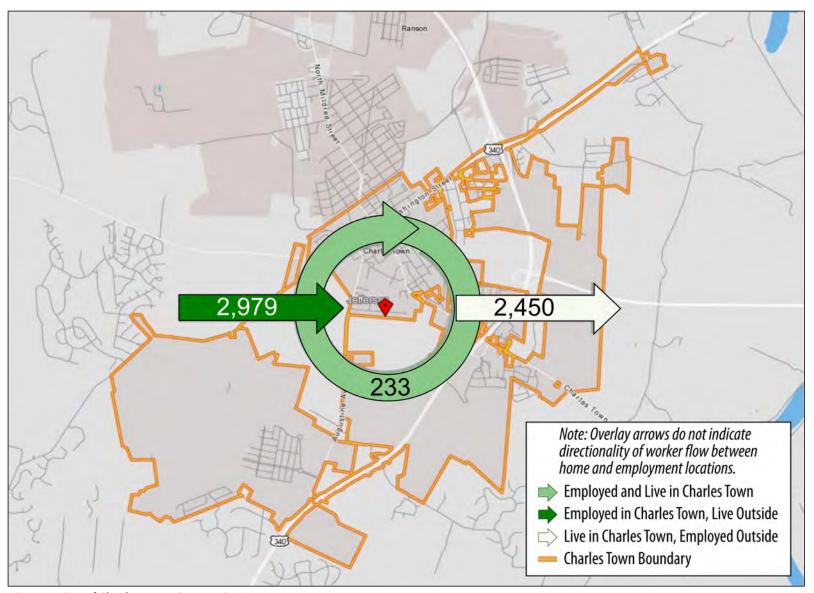


Figure 7: City of Charles Town Commuting Patterns, 2014
Source: Census Bureau - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics

### **Employment Clusters**

**Figure 8** shows employment is densely concentrated in Charles Town's Downtown district. The City's largest employment nodes are situated along or just off of East Washington Street in the Downtown area.

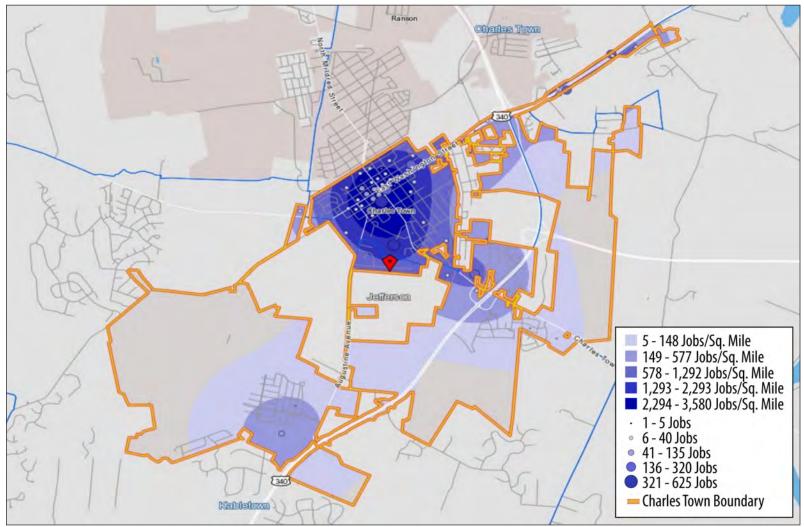


Figure 8: City of Charles Town Employment Clusters, 2014
Source: Census Bureau - Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics

# Analyzing the Trends

Like many small cities, improving the Downtown district is a core ingredient to attracting and supporting residential, business, and tourism growth. The population and employment trends projected for the next decade suggest Charles Town has an opportunity to leverage positive growth to improve its Downtown and strengthen its employment base.

#### **Residential Housing**

Charles Town has become an attractive home location for families, boasting affording housing prices but still located within commuting proximity to the Washington DC and Maryland markets. These competitive advantages have led to steady population growth between 2000 and 2010 (increasing by 80%), and the City is expected to add an additional 750+ new residents between 2015 and 2020.

In line with population growth, the number of rental occupied housing units is projected to trend upward, increasing from approximately 920 units in 2015 to more than 1,000 units by 2020, which is a 10% increase. This population growth may offer the City an opportunity to encourage second floor building conversion to rental properties in the Downtown. Adding residential units along Washington Street and the surrounding street network would have a positive impact on local businesses, increasing foot traffic and consumer spending.

#### **Industry and Employment**

Charles Town witnessed positive economic growth between 2005 and 2010 driven by the tourism industry at Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. New hotels added jobs to the accommodations sector within the city limits and the casino was a source of income to the City. However, as shown in the employment trends, competing casinos in the mid-Atlantic region have had an adverse impact on Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. The number of jobs in the tourism sector are now back to 2000 levels.

Moving forward, projected growth in the healthcare industry could provide new jobs for Charles Town. By net gain, the Health Care and Social Assistance industry is projected to have the highest employment growth in the county (3,747 net new jobs between 2012-2022), followed by the Ambulatory Health Care Services (1,819 net new jobs).

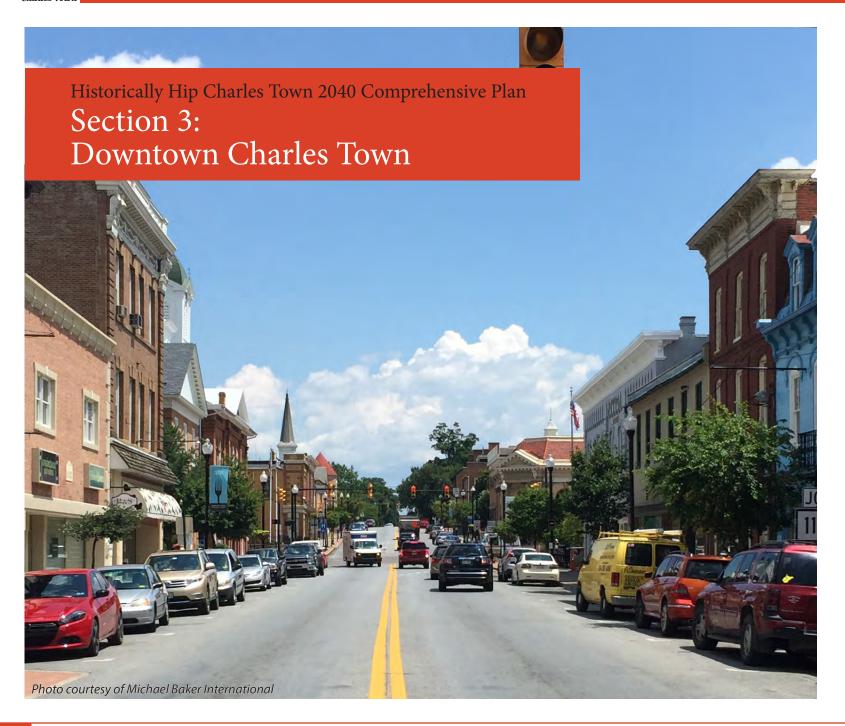
### The Need to Plan

Charles Town's ongoing growth and related development implications make planning for the City's future a critically important undertaking. This update to the Comprehensive Plan provides an integrated planning approach for addressing the key issues unique to Charles Town and outlines specific policies and strategies for achieving the desired vision for the community.

This Comprehensive Plan aims to:

- Provide a framework for consistent and predictable land use decision-making for property within the Charles Town UGB;
- Develop a plan for more sustainable growth patterns;
- Better connect areas within the UGB to the City's historic Downtown core; and
- Incorporate ideas from members of the public who participated in the *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan* update.







Downtown Charles Town will be the heart of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment, and learning.

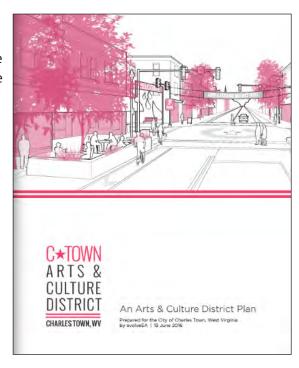
# Objectives:

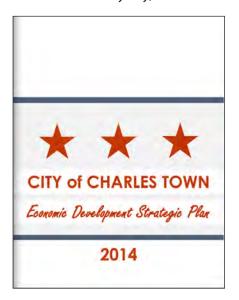
- Increase economic vitality through Downtown and neighborhood revitalization.
- Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation and technical assistance.
- Provide attractive storefronts occupied with a variety of appealing retail and service businesses.
- Create and maintain a clean, well-lighted, and inviting appearance day and night throughout the Downtown.
- Preserve and protect the Downtown's architecture that offers visual appeal and a quality experience in history and culture.
- Develop and create Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit the community.
- Promote adaptive reuse of and investment into Downtown properties that strengthens the mix of uses within multistory structures.

#### Downtown First Focus

Downtown Charles Town is the historic, functional, and symbolic heart of the City of Charles Town. It serves as an iconic and powerful symbol for the City and contains quintessential landmarks, distinctive features, and unique neighborhoods. It lies at the nexus of the Jefferson County regional roadway network that makes it easily accessible and provides a desirable small town, low cost-of-living alternative to Northern Virginia (NOVA), the National Capital Region (NCR), and the Baltimore and Frederick, Maryland metropolitan regions. The roadway networks leading to Charles Town includes the major state routes of 51, 340, 9, 115, and Augustine Avenue.

Charles Town is the seat of government for Jefferson County and it serves as the hub for the region's wealth of irreplaceable historic, cultural, and natural resources. According to the *Historic Charles Town Walking Tour*, Downtown Charles Town itself hosts 77 attractions, including cultural and historic resources, government and institutional facilities, small town America streetscapes, and unique architecture. Located within a few miles drive outside of Downtown exists a host of historic, cultural, and natural resources including Washington-family history, Civil War sites and battlefields, African-American Heritage sites, Lewis and Clark and abolitionist John Brown historic sites, the Appalachian Trail, The Journey through Hallowed Ground National Scenic Byway, and a host of other venues and attractions.





Given this critical mass of attractions, in 2016, the City formally designated the Downtown area as the "Charles Town Arts and Culture District," which is the City's strategy for growing and sustaining its diversity of arts and cultural amenities as a centerpiece to its Downtown economic development strategy. In 2014, the City prepared an *Economic Development Strategic Plan* to establish a blueprint for the City's community and economic development success.

The plan is guided by the following principles that emphasize the importance of the City's Downtown and the need to leverage the City's heritage tourism assets as essential elements to its overall economic success:

- Place: Creative Destinations
- Brand: Identity and Marketing
- **Programming:** Cultural Planning and Events
- Organizations: Organizational Capacity

#### Future Land Use Plan

A healthy, vital, and growing Downtown Charles Town is essential to the City's overall sustainability, quality of life, and future economic competitiveness. The Future Land Use Plan outlined in Section 4 of this Comprehensive Plan recognizes the Downtown as the urban core. Its connectivity and accessibility to and within the Downtown from all parts of the City's existing and future land use is imperative to sustaining and growing the Downtown's economic competitiveness in the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle region. The Downtown symbolizes the City's image and identity and upholding and strengthening these elements can only be achieved through effective urban design approach that is in part accomplished through the City's historic preservation and building and property code enforcement policies.



Figure 9: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company Master Plan for Charlestown, WV

The City's Future Land Use Plan recognizes the importance of Downtown's diversity and density of uses ranging from public, institutional, and mixed used commercial in the Central Business District area, supported by vibrant, well-maintained, and walkable residential neighborhoods that have maintained the traditional urban grid development pattern.

The continued success, increased vibrancy and sustainability of the entire Downtown is predicated upon the urban grid development approach that facilitates higher densities, a range of uses and housing types that fosters an attainable, sustainable, and livable community. Furthermore, the success of Downtown is also dependent upon the City championing Smart Growth Principles as defined in the Growth and Land Use section. Part of the balance is considering the impact of various types of development, planning for development that is consistent with Smart Growth Principles, and maintaining design guidelines as adopted by the City Council. The best practices in the industry indicate that Smart Growth Principles help preserve community resources, support dense development that does not put a strain on current service provision and provide predictable development guidelines for developers considering the area.

The City's historic growth patterns, beyond the Downtown area, have occurred in contrast to the City's historic master plan envisioned by Charles Washington and further expanded upon by the *Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Master Plan* illustrated in **Figure 9**. Instead, the City's more recent growth patterns have occurred through greenfield annexations to the City that have largely developed as suburban subdivisions dominated by low to medium density single-family detached residential lots aligned along curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. The exception is the neo-traditional neighborhood of Huntfield. These suburban residential developments are located in proximity to the City's major transportation corridors (Routes 51, 340,

Augustine Avenue, etc.), but they lack interconnectivity with neighboring developments or multimodal connectivity to Downtown. The Future Land Use Plan embraces the City's Downtown and envisions greater and stronger connectivity with its existing suburban neighborhoods and a more measured and strategic growth pattern within its UGB.

# Downtown - Stepping Outside the Boundaries and Expansion

The commonly agreed upon boundaries of the Downtown are often West Street to the west, Congress to the south, Liberty or North Street to the north and Samuel or Mildred to the East. As with any boundary, there

"In order for Charles Town to thrive in the next 10-20 years, it must finally commit its resources and energy to creating an economically vibrant and viable historic downtown business district. If the downtown is allowed to continue to stagnate or decline, Charles Town will lose its identity and sense of place."

**Source:** Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

are exceptions and others may believe it to be slightly different based on their point of view. Regardless, the concept of the Downtown area needs to be broadened as Charles Town grows and redevelopment opportunities appear. There will be a time when all the existing non-residential real estate is at its highest productive value and vacancies will be limited. This could allow for further expansion of the Downtown area.

There may be opportunities for the extension of the Downtown based on the form and character currently found in the Downtown, such as size, height, density, multi-story mixed use structures, build to lines or up to the property line with sidewalks, and a large building footprint on the lot.

Areas that are suitable for increased use and expansion of the Downtown include:

- Maximize redevelopment opportunities of underutilized sites along the Liberty Street corridor;
- Revitalization the South West Street / Augustine Avenue corridor including the Hill Dale Shopping Center; and
- Revitalization and redevelopment of underutilized properties situated between East North Street and CSX Railway and
  considerations for maximizing future opportunities related to urban development and railway transportation (e.g., transit
  oriented development).

#### **Charles Town Now Goals**

- To support our Downtown as a regional arts, entertainment, and shopping focal point which will support Main Street merchants, businesses and area artists.
- To provide an economic engine for the local economy which will promote local business and community charities.
- To periodically bring together the entire area in a festive community based event which will promote diversity, understanding, and tolerance while promoting community

# Downtown Investments and Future Opportunities

Through the diligent efforts of the City in collaboration with Charles Town Now, Charles Town is maturing into a vibrant Main Street community focusing on organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Organized in November 2011 from the City's Merchants' Association, Charles Town Now is comprised of business and property owners, as well as institutions and organizations having a vested interest in the revitalization, growth, and success of Downtown and the City as a whole.

Together, the City and Charles Town Now have collaborated in making the following signature investments in Downtown:

- Charles Washington Hall \$4 million renovation of this 1870 building owned by the Charles Town Building Commission. The newly renovated Charles Washington Hall will serve as a multi-use public space serving as the Downtown anchor to the \$10 million, 1.5-mile Ranson-Charles Town Green Corridor roadway that will ultimately extend to the Potomac Market Place shopping center on WV Route 9 via North George St. to Fairfax Boulevard in Ranson, WV.
- Streetscape Improvements \$3.2 million invested in streetscape improvements in the Downtown and along East Washington Street. The improvements included new sidewalks and pedestrian crossings.
- Building Façade improvements \$18,000 awarded to business owners for façade improvements to properties in Downtown. Funded by the City, this program is anticipated to be an annual grant to property owners in the Historic Overlay District. Figure 10 illustrates the building façades to Jones Insurance buildings before and after improvements.



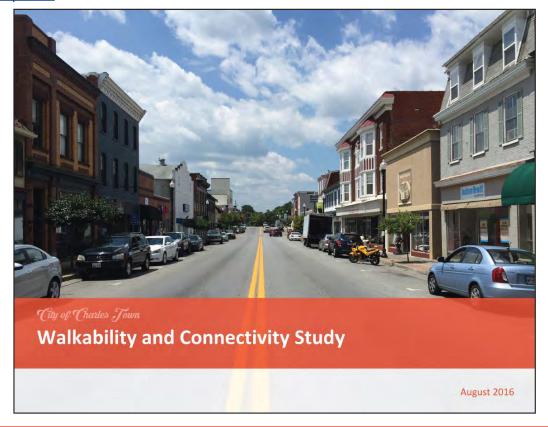




In 2016, the City and Charles Town Now partnered in completing a Walkability and Connectivity Study that provides:

- an accurate inventory and assessment of the current state of existing sidewalks within Downtown Charles Town and identifies key corridors and trail connections to connect residents and visitors with Downtown;
- a resource roadmap and implementation strategy for future walkability improvements; and
- an initial framework for the City's Wayfinding Signage Program

Among other priority improvements, the *Walkability and Connectivity Study* leverages the vision established by the City's *Arts and Culture District Plan* by increasing pedestrian safety, mobility, and accessibility in the Downtown through specific design standards for Washington and Charles streets. While current sidewalks along West Washington and North Charles Streets provide for safe and easy movement of pedestrians, these streets are still predominantly car oriented with wide travel lanes. Reducing the width of the travel lanes will allow for the streets to become more pedestrian oriented with wider sidewalks (**Figures 11 and 12**). Increasing sidewalk widths will activate public spaces resulting in an increase in commerce for businesses. In addition, wider sidewalks create safer places for pedestrians to walk and provide opportunities to liven the streetscape by providing space for sidewalk cafes and artist display, and increase outdoor seating for pedestrians and Downtown shoppers alike. The complete study can be found at: http://anyflip.com/ocge/ceth.



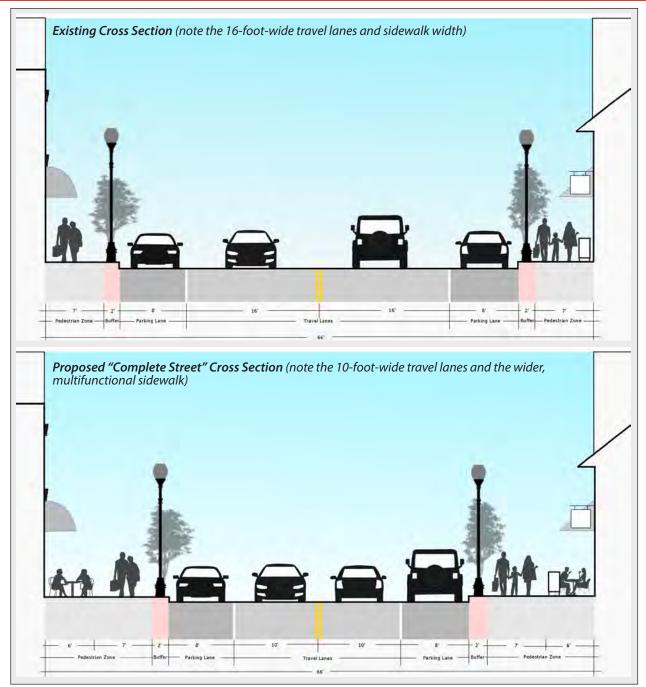


Figure 11: Washington Street "Complete Streets" Design

Source: Michael Baker International

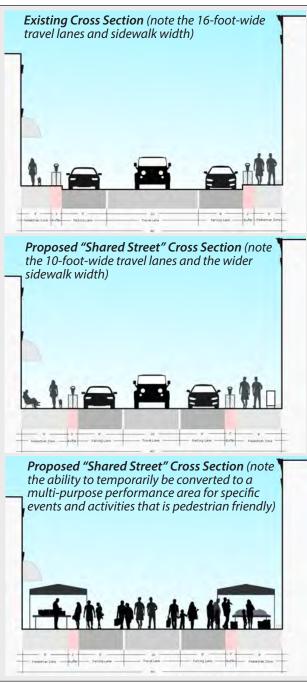


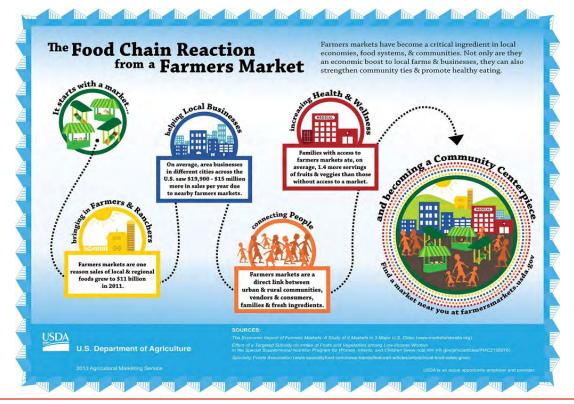
Figure 12: Charles Street "Shared Street" Design
Source: Michael Baker International

#### **Charles Town Farmers Market**

The Charles Town Farmers Market is a seasonal, weekly Downtown gathering of farmers, consumers, bakers, children, musicians, artists, athletes, non-profits, business owners, City and town representatives, and interested citizens. It serves as a communal place to shop, relax, visit, talk, connect, eat, and enjoy Charles Town's arts and culture, and highlights the community's agricultural abundance and talented artisans. The Farmers Market contributes to Charles Town's sense of place and greatly contributes to the City's economic well-being and provides a strong foundation for a healthy community. Specifically, the market provides opportunities for small farmers and businesses to sell their products, and they help meet the growing demand for locally produced food and community sustainable agriculture.

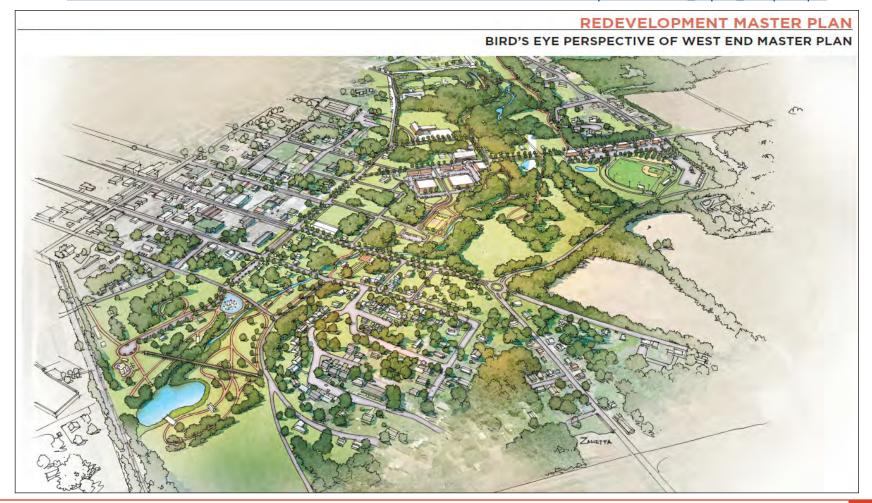


The success of the Farmers Market supports the continuation of the rural agricultural environment in Jefferson County that many residents of the City have said contributes to the small town character of Charles Town. According to the USDA, farmers markets have become a critical ingredient to local economies, food systems, and communities. Not only are they an economic boost to local farms and businesses, they can also strengthen community ties and promote healthy living as shown in the following illustration.



#### **Proposed West End Master Plan**

Another important element to increasing the vibrancy and growth of Downtown and promoting the City's overall economic success is the City's effort to achieve the proposed 2015 Charles Town West End Master Plan and Brownfields Reuse Strategy (West End Master Plan) vision for brownfield and neighborhood revitalization. Drafted and presented to City Council in 2015, the West End Master Plan, which is a broad sweeping concept plan, provides a comprehensive revitalization strategy that includes a collaborative effort to repurpose existing brownfield sites, reinvest in existing neighborhood housing and infrastructure, improve stormwater management, enhance Evitts Run Park, and create multimodal connections that increase accessibility to Downtown and with surrounding neighborhoods and communities. City Council is currently identifying a capital budget strategy to determine the plan's implementation viability. The West End Master Plan is available on the City's website at: <a href="http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/CTWEP">http://www.charlestownwv.us/vertical/sites/%7B497B4BB1-9A1F-47D0-AF93-611C825E6674%7D/uploads/CTWEP</a> Report Complete.pdf.



#### **Liberty Street Police Department Adaptive Reuse**

As the City plans for the relocation of the police department, a reuse strategy for the current facility located at 114 W. Liberty Street will need to be considered. One reuse strategy to consider is how the site, which is owned by the City's Building Commission, could be used to enliven Liberty Street and continue to serve the citizens of Charles Town.

The City Building Commission and City Council should consider commissioning a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station property. The study's findings could then be used by the Building Commission to idenitfy highest and best reuse options and long-term ownership that align with the Goal Statement for Downtown and the overall Vision of this Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the study and reuse options could also serve as the basis for soliciting competitive proposals from interested entrepreneurs.







Former American Public University System's Trefry Technology Center at 661 S. George St., Charles Town, WV. that is being renovated to serve as the new location for the City's Police Department.
Photos courtesy of APUS

#### **Density Creates Vibrancy**

The City envisions the Downtown as a vertical, mixed use commercial environment whereby first floors are occupied by restaurants and retail businesses, second floors are occupied by business services (finance, insurance, real estate, etc.), and third floors serve as residential units. However, Charles Town's Downtown is largely comprised of commercial properties that have yet to achieve their true mixed use potential and, moreover, lack the residential density necessary to foster a vibrant and sustainable Downtown.

The "critical supply" of shopping, eating, and entertainment venues is currently lacking, but greater demand is also necessary to enable the sustainability of expanding supply to ultimately achieve a more diverse set of amenities and experiences in Downtown Charles Town. The retail market profile discussed in the Community Profile section of this document indicates that there is a demand for eating establishments in the City.

"The majority of [downtown] apartments are being snatched up by young, unmarried professionals and empty nesters, a trend that started about 20 years ago and continues today. Most are seeking a lifestyle that gives them easy access to parks, restaurants, entertainment, art and culture within an easy walking distance."

**Source:** Rapid Growth Media:

http://www.rapidgrowthmedia.com/features/downtownapartmentboom2.aspx

"Downtowns throughout North America are making a major contribution to the bottom line of their municipalities. In most cases downtowns serve as the engine for local economies. However, downtowns are much more than a profit center to cities. They also represent the image and character of a city to the rest of the world. Downtowns are unique in that they are typically the only neighborhood that belongs to and is shared by everyone in the region."

Source: Rapid Growth Media:

http://www.rapidgrowthmedia.com/features/downtownapartmentboom2.aspx

In addition to the public investments outlined above, an increasing number of property owners are beginning to realize this potential and are reinvesting in their buildings to increase their value and mixed use potential. Such investments are focusing on new entrepreneurial ventures that include breweries, coffee shops, a bakery, and new restaurants, as well as new residential spaces. These investments are in direct support of the public's strong desire to have a greater number of shopping, eating, and entertainment options available in Downtown and business hours that extend into the evenings and weekends. Collectively, these investments are building momentum and confidence back into Downtown and are key to creating the "critical supply" and demand opportunities for sustainability.



## **Next Steps**

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Downtown, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in **Section 10**, **Implementation Strategy**:

#### **Ongoing**

- Continue to maintain the City's database of blighted and vacant structures and prioritize those structures that are most detrimental to the Downtown's revitalization efforts.
- Continue to fund, administer, and promote the *Charles Town Façade Improvement Program*.
- Utilize the City's market analysis information to identify, attract, and retain prospective businesses that meet the Downtown's market demand needs.
- Continue the City's seasonal flower planting and seasonal decorating activities within Downtown.
- Continue to administer and enforce the City's Design Review Standards.
- Incentivize building and property owners to provide restaurant and retail space on street level floors, and business services and residential on the upper floors.

#### Short-term (0-4 years)

- Implement a wayfinding signage program.
- Create a marketing campaign promoting incentives for employees, workers, and visitors.
- Establish a small business, low interest loan fund and provide technical assistance training to perspective loan recipients.
- Become a nationally-certified Main Street community to leverage business retention and recruitment and other necessary technical and financial assistance needs.
- Replace the City's Downtown amber-colored streetlights with cleaner and brighter, energy efficient LED lights.
- Build and strengthen an online presence for Downtown Charles Town through a more effective website and greater utilization of social media tools.

#### Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Implement the West End Master Plan.
- Implement the walkability and accessibility improvements identified in the City's 2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station property.

#### Long-term (11-20 years)

• Undertake a small area plan with conceptual architectural details that encourages the expansion of the Downtown area.





The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) while maintaining a vibrant, walkable, and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

## Objectives:

- Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the future land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.
- Promote adaptive reuse of and investment in Downtown properties that strengthens the mixed use concept within multistory properties.
- Utilize the City's annexation policy to provide areas for future growth, preserve critical green space, and expand the City's tax base.

# Managing Our Growth

Growth and land use are often the primary components of a comprehensive plan because they establish the general physical characteristics of a community. The land use plan is a policy statement that decision makers must rely on to guide future actions. It provides the necessary foundation upon which all other elements are based. Included in the land use plan is a future land use map and related policies and strategies for guiding growth and development patterns through 2040. The previous *Charles Town Comprehensive Plan* was completed in 2006, during the economic peak of the early 2000s. The policies included in the document anticipated significant and continued growth. Furthermore, while the 2006 Plan was amended in 2009 to reflect the adoption of the UGB, no future land use map was developed for the unincorporated area (land that is governed by the jurisdiction of the County). Now, ten years later, the Comprehensive Plan must be updated to reflect a more stable growth reality and defined boundary to which the City can grow.

With this update, Charles Town has the opportunity to plan proactively for future growth and land use issues within its UGB. In recent decades through the annexation process, suburban-style commercial strip plazas, as well as isolated, low-density suburban developments have dominated the City's landscape. This has occurred even though there is a renewed interest in walkable, dense traditional neighborhoods with a variety of housing types and a mixture of land uses. This land use pattern is also a defining feature in the unincorporated area of the UGB.

This section of the plan includes the following:

- an overview of Charles Town's historic growth patterns;
- · existing land uses and zoning designations; and
- annexation policies that have defined Charles Town's current landscape.

Each component plays a vital role in the future land use plan that was developed through extensive discussions with the Comprehensive Plan's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Charles Town Now, property owners, and the general public. Also, the Future Land Use Plan encompasses various Smart Growth Principles, specifically by encouraging a mixture of land uses within the UGB, creating more walkable and livable neighborhoods by directing higher density development towards the existing Downtown core, and making development decisions more intentional (predictable), fair, and cost effective.

#### **Charles Town - A History of Land Use Planning**

#### Charles Town's West End 1750-1786<sup>2</sup>

Before Charlestown was founded in 1786 by Charles Washington, the community had its beginnings circa 1755 as a small community settlement on the west end along Evitt's Run. This location was also along a transportation route connecting Harpers Ferry and Winchester, VA and it served as a vital stop along the transportation route, as the creek provided a resting place for travelers and a place to water horses. What is now North Street today, was the main transportation route through the community. As part of the larger effort to establish a village around the Evitt's Run Creek, a mill was established along the creek and North

<sup>2</sup> Mark Reinhart, "Charlestown's West End in the Lifetime of Charles Washington". Jefferson County Historical Society, Volume IXXVII, December 2011

Street. When Charles Washington formally platted what is today Charles Town, he moved the main thoroughfare from North Street to Washington Street. Since the Evitts Run Creek area had the elements of a budding community, the west end of Charles Washington's platted community was the first areas to see active expansion and improvements

#### 1786 – Civil War Era

In 1786, Charles Washington platted the 80 acres adjoining his now historic Happy Retreat Estate (circa 1780) and laid out the streets of "Charlestown" naming many of them after his brothers and one after his wife, Mildred. He donated the four corner lots at the intersection of George and Washington Streets for public buildings of the town and county, provided the town became the seat of the county in the event that additional area was separated from then Berkeley County, VA for the formation of a new county. The Corporation of Charles Town was officially chartered by the Virginia General Assembly in 1787. Jefferson County was later formed in 1801 and Charles Town became the county seat of government and the four corner lots were ultimately occupied as town and county public uses Charles Washington had envisioned.

#### Circa 1890 – 1910

In 1890, the notable Confederate horse artillery commander Robert Preston Chew and his business associates formed the Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company (CMM&I) and in 1891 established its headquarters in then "Charlestown" (today's Ranson City Hall building). Using 850 acres of land purchased from the Ranson family, CMM&I commissioned D.G. Howell, a Washington, D.C. landscape architect and civil engineer, to design a master plan for Charlestown. However, CMM&I fell on hard times in 1893 and relinquished its presence in Charles Town. They sold their headquarters building to the Charles Town Board of Education. As a result, CMM&I's master planned community was never achieved as envisioned, except in the area that was to become Ranson. While the western portion of Charles Town never developed as shown in **Figure 13**, the concept of a connected community on grid patterned was preferred.



Figure 13: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing, and Improvement Company Master Plan for Charlestown, WV

The Charles of the Control of the Co

Figure 14: Charlestown Mining, Manufacturing and Improvement Company's Master Plan for Charlestown's East Side Neighborhood

During this same period, a development plan for the eastern side of Charles Town was created as presented in **Figure 14**. This development includes the north/south streets of Jefferson, Euclid, and Prospect Avenues that exists today. Much of this plan was built as depicted, with the notable exception of the traffic circle. Some of the east/west streets exist and others are "paper streets", meaning they are platted, but not constructed. While this area has remained in the jurisdiction of the county, the urban grid pattern form was designed anticipating they would connect to the City and eventually be incorporated into the City.

#### Circa 1910 – 2000

In 1910, the Corporation of Ranson was created when a faction of Charles Town residents decided to form their own town and seceded from the City. Ranson's growth was largely based on the railroad and manufacturing industries. Charles Town's growth was predominately fueled by its Downtown business district and surrounding residential neighborhoods, with limited supporting industrial development. As shown in **Figure 15**, Ranson grew according to the master plan that was developed in 1891. This concentrated, medium to high density growth pattern continued through much of the 20th Century and each cities' population growth increased steadily through the 1990s.

#### Circa 2000 – 2010

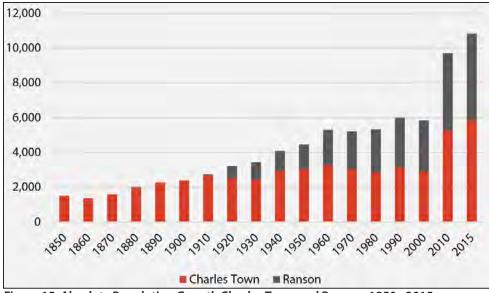


Figure 15: Absolute Population Growth Charles Town and Ranson, 1850 - 2015 Source: U.S. Census Bureau

During this period, Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County became inundated with new citizens and growth. Charles Town and Ranson's population and land development patterns grew substantially during this period. While Jefferson County had been part of the Baltimore-Washington, DC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the County was considered a distant community of DC, Northern Virginia, and Maryland. Post-2000, Jefferson County was no longer considered a distance community but became an option for commuters.

Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County were not adequately prepared with a vision of where and how each community would grow. The amount of growth that occurred came at an astonishing rate. Land development regulations

were not adequate for the scope and the amount of development. Schools, roads, sewer, and water capacity was quickly maxed out and required needed improvements. It was during this time Charles Town and Ranson went from small communities with a slow growth rate to rapidly growing communities, both in the context of population and significant physical growth. While the towns were still semi-rural in nature, the population explosion caused them to take on additional suburban characteristics.

The land development patterns during this period were decentralized, medium to low density development patterns dominated by single family detached subdivisions and auto-oriented commercial centers were located outside of the Downtown. Such growth patterns were facilitated through the annexation of unincorporated territory into municipal corporations as enabled through the *West Virginia State Code (Chapter 8, Article 6)* and greatly contributed to the City's respective sprawling and disjointed land use patterns. Moreover, Charles Town's growth and development during this period occurred under an outdated zoning ordinance and there was no standalone subdivision and land development ordinance. The zoning ordinance was void of any

specific subdivision and land development standards, except a loose combination of standards found in the Zoning Ordinance, Codified Ordinances, and limited and non-specific standards prescribed under the State Code.

The building locations and densities illustrated in **Figure 16** demonstrates how the annexation process has caused the City's developed land area to greatly expand beyond its historic Downtown core and surrounding traditional residential neighborhoods to now include outlying suburban-style residential and commercial uses. This lower-density, disconnected development pattern extends along and within the vicinity of Old Route 340 (Augustine Avenue), the Route 340 Bypass, and South George Street. Additionally, the annexation process has caused Charles Town's growth pattern to occur in a "leap frog" manner. This pattern has diminished the connectivity to and integrity of the historic Downtown core. The impacts of this outward and disconnected growth have resulted in a more automobile reliant population and nearly makes it impossible to walk to the Downtown or a neighborhood store.

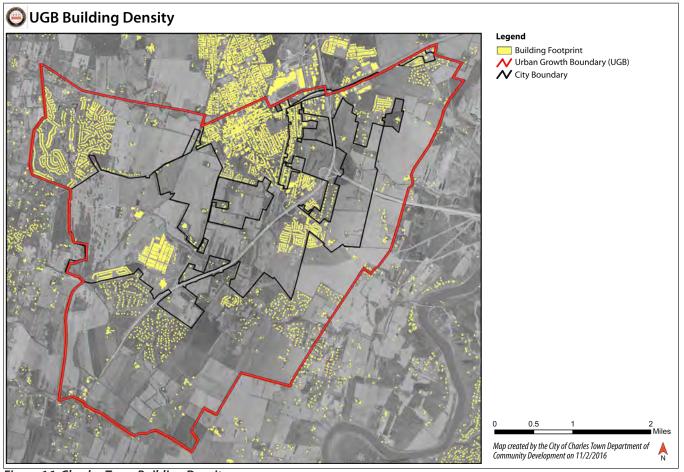


Figure 16: Charles Town Building Density

Source: Jefferson County GIS

In addition to unplanned land development, the City's annexation policy has led to the inconsistent provision of utilities within the UGB. While most properties located within the City limits are served by the Charles Town Utility Board's public sewer and water systems, there are several neighborhoods located within Charles Town and the UGB serviced by the Jefferson County Public Service District. Utility rates across Jefferson County vary significantly. Charles Town and Ranson are currently attempting to equalize utility rates for customers by proposing an asset acquisition for utility services. <sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the City's rapid residential growth of the 2000s underscored the need for more balanced growth whereby city services (police, utilities, and public works) were now needed well-beyond the City's traditional compact, mixed-use Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The cost of these services is paid through the City's revenue sources, which are comprised of taxes (including property ad valorem tax and business and occupation licenses and permits), as well as video lottery gaming from the casino. However, as casino revenues diminish, the cost of providing city services must be supported by tax or other revenues.

Strengthening Charles Town's financial position through greater economic development in both its Downtown and UGB is essential to support future growth and development. Furthermore, investing the City's finite tax dollars must also be done wisely to ensure existing infrastructure is well-maintained to avoid costly and potentially unaffordable cost burdens in the future that will ultimately weaken Charles Town's position in the regional economy and marketplace.

According to the Smart Growth Network:

"Paying for new infrastructure for development on the fringes of a community—while neglecting buildings and infrastructure in which the community has already invested—is not fiscally prudent, but it is often how communities grow. Increasingly, however, communities are realizing that this approach undermines their efforts to strengthen downtowns and improve existing infrastructure."

As such, there needs to be a symbiotic relationship between the Downtown, older neighborhood core, and new developments where neither one is forfeited at the expense of the other.

#### **Cost of Community Services**

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association has conducted numerous cost of community services (COCS) studies that examine the relationship of municipal and school district revenue and expenses associated with various land use categories, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and farmland/open space. The revenues and costs generated by each of these different land uses are entered into a formula, the outcome being expressed as a ratio, showing the tax and non-tax revenue generated by that land use compared to the expenses incurred by that land use. A ratio greater than 1.0 suggests that for every dollar of revenue collected from a given category of land, more than one dollar is spent on municipal services. A ratio less than 1.0 is read as a net profit for the municipality. Nearly all of the studies that have been undertaken show that the ratio for residential land is above 1.0, signifying that residential land results in a net drain on local government budgets. On the other hand, the ratios for the other two land use categories (commercial/industrial and farmland/ open space) are usually well below 1.0, representing a net tax gain for the municipality.

**Source:** Pennsylvania Land Trust Association. Cost of Community Services. http://conservationtools.org/quides/15-cost-of-community-services-studies

<sup>3</sup> Martinsburg Journal. "Residents experience annexation side effects." Access online http://content.journal-news.net/?p=637676/Residents-experience-annexation-side-effects.html. December 21, 2016.

#### Circa 2010 - Present

Immediately following the adoption of the City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan and realizing the need for improved land use regulations, Charles Town officials and City staff commenced drafting a new zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development standards, which were adopted in 2012. These regulations provided the City with a solid foundation to better manage its land use and development. Also, the regulations included design standards to encourage connectivity, accessibility, and mobility with the Downtown. Furthermore, the 2006 Comprehensive Plan established the City's proposed UGB, which provides a stronger foundation for a more sustainable growth and development pattern.

According to §8-6-4a of the West Virginia Code, Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) are: "an area around and outside the corporate limits of a municipality within which there is a sufficient supply of developable land within the boundary for at least a prospective twenty-year period of municipal growth based on demographic forecasts and the time reasonably required to effectively provide municipal services to the identified area."

During the development of the 2008 Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance, the County and the City of Charles Town worked jointly to develop a land use planning tool referred to as the County Townscape Boundary. When the West Virginia Code was amended in 2009 to allow for the creation of UGBs, Charles Town formally requested that the County Commission approve this draft boundary as their UGB and reflect it on the County Zoning Map. The draft boundary was approved by the County Commission through the July 2011 amendment to Jefferson County Zoning and Land Development Ordinance.

The 2015 Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan (Envision Jefferson 2035) establishes the County Commission's official policy on future land use as specified by the Future Land Use Guide. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide expects all future suburban and urban type uses to be located within the designated UGB areas (Charles Town and Ranson), as well as the specifically designated Preferred Growth Areas (PGAs), and preserve the remaining unincorporated areas of Jefferson County as low density rural landscapes and hamlets.

As such, the future land use and growth considerations for Charles Town must include all properties within the UGB (**Figure 17**). A general recommendation of this plan is to encourage new developments where infrastructure exists and better coordinate any significant land use changes with property owners and the general public, particularly within the UGB. Specific strategies for future land use will be addressed in later sections.

#### **Charles Town's Annexation Policy Purpose Statement**

"To guide annexation decisions in a manner that preserves the character of the community, the quality of life of its citizens, and the fiscal health of the locality. Charles Town's vision is to create a dynamic City with a logical growth boundary that defines a designated growth zone for Jefferson County, a greenbelt of protected land at the boundary, and well-designed neighborhoods and business areas within the boundary that enhance the established character of the community. This policy provides guidance to citizens, landowners, developers, and other local government officials in Jefferson County on the considerations that will guide and govern Charles Town annexation decisions."

# CITY OF CHARLES TOWN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN City of Charles Town Urban Growth Boundary **Jurisdictional Boundaries** ✓ Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) City Boundary West Virginia Map created by the City of Charles Town Department of Community Development on 11/2/2016

Figure 17: Charles Town Urban Growth Boundary
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

# Existing Land Use Planning and Regulatory Environment

#### **Existing Land Use and Zoning**

Defining and mapping Charles Town's existing land uses and growth patterns is also essential to further understand the specific types of uses comprising Charles Town's urban transect and to determine its future land use and growth management policies. For the area contained within the City's UGB, existing land uses have been inventoried using both digital aerial imagery and windshield survey techniques, and were categorized based on the classification system depicted in **Figure 18** and shown in **Table 4**. These land use types are found in almost every transect zone, which are discussed in more detail on page 56. However, their densities and intensities vary depending upon their location. For example, agriculture and open spaces dominate the T1 Natural and T2 Rural zones, while the highest concentrations of residential uses occur in the City's T3 – T6 zones (Suburban, General Urban, Urban Center and Urban Core zones, respectively) with increasing density accordingly.

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Rural/Agriculture	8,010	72.0%
Low Density Residential	1,106	9.9%
Medium Density Residential	342	3.1%
High Density Residential	143	1.3%
Mixed Residential/Commercial	7	0.1%
Golf Course	170	1.5%
Commercial	597	5.4%
Office	22	0.2%
Industrial	36	0.3%
Public/Quasi Public Land	353	3.2%
Vacant	342	3.1%
TOTAL	11,128	100%

Table 4: City of Charles Town UGB Existing Land Use

Source: City of Charles Town 2016

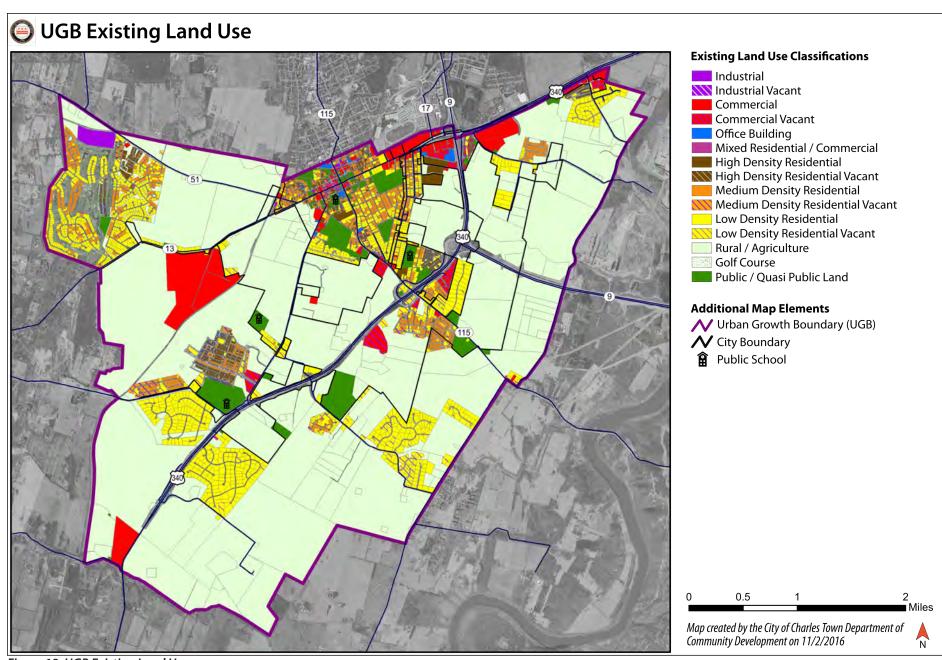


Figure 18: UGB Existing Land Use

Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

As noted previously, there is land within the City's UGB that is under the jurisdiction of the county. The result is that there are two different governing bodies planning for development within the UGB. As such, there are two Zoning Ordinances regulating land development within the City's UGB. The City of Charles Town Zoning Ordinance and Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance. This multijurisdictional patch work has resulted in both governing bodies having their own distinct zoning districts, each with their own guidelines for approved uses, bulk and area regulations, and parking standards.

Figures 19 and 20 on the following pages depict the existing City and county zoning regulations governing land uses area within the UGB. In Figure 19, over 80 percent of the City's jurisdictional land area is residentially zoned, and approximately 79 percent of this area is zoned for Neighborhood Residential. The remaining 15 percent of land is composed of General and Neighborhood Commercial (12 percent) and Old Town Mixed Use Commercial (3 percent). In Figure 20, county zoned lands within the UGB are largely zoned Rural and Residential Growth representing 46% and 35%, respectively). As shown in Table 5, over 51 percent of the combined City and county lands within the UGB are zoned for residential uses while less than one third (31.2 percent) of the total UGB area is zoned for rural/agriculture uses.

Zoning	Acreage	Percentage
Rural (county)	3,431.56	31.2%
Public/Quasi-Public (county)	73.84	0.67%
Residential (city)	3,044.52	27.65%
Residential (county)	2,604.83	23.66%
Commercial (city)	561.80	5.10%
Industrial/Commercial (county)	1,294.52	11.75%
TOTAL	11,011.07	100%

Table 5: Zoning Classifications (City and County) within the UGB Source: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

This update to the Comprehensive Plan did not occur in a vacuum. Many previously completed and ongoing planning efforts have laid the groundwork for the City as it works towards its unified future vision. The Plans reviewed in this section come from a variety of sources and represent the local and regional building blocks to be leveraged for managing future growth.

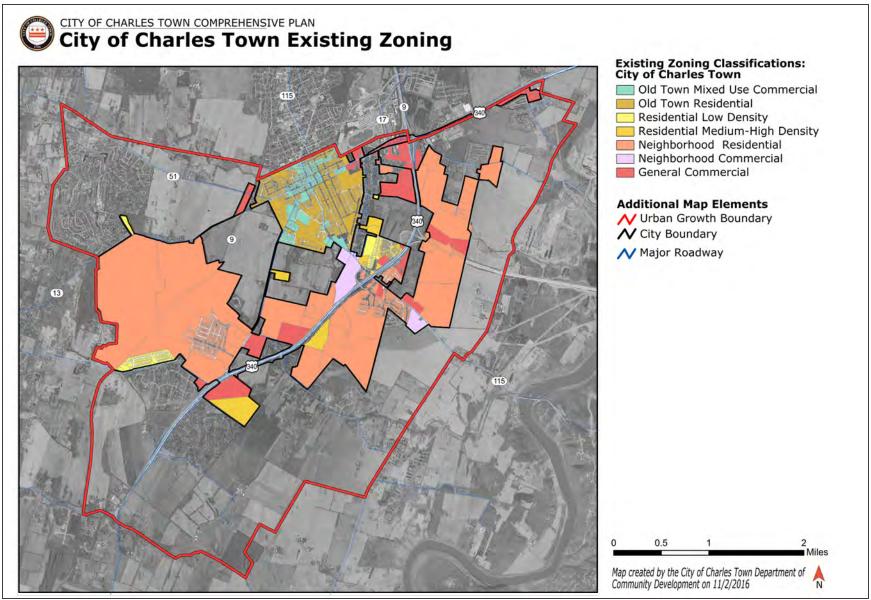


Figure 19: City of Charles Town Existing Zoning

Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

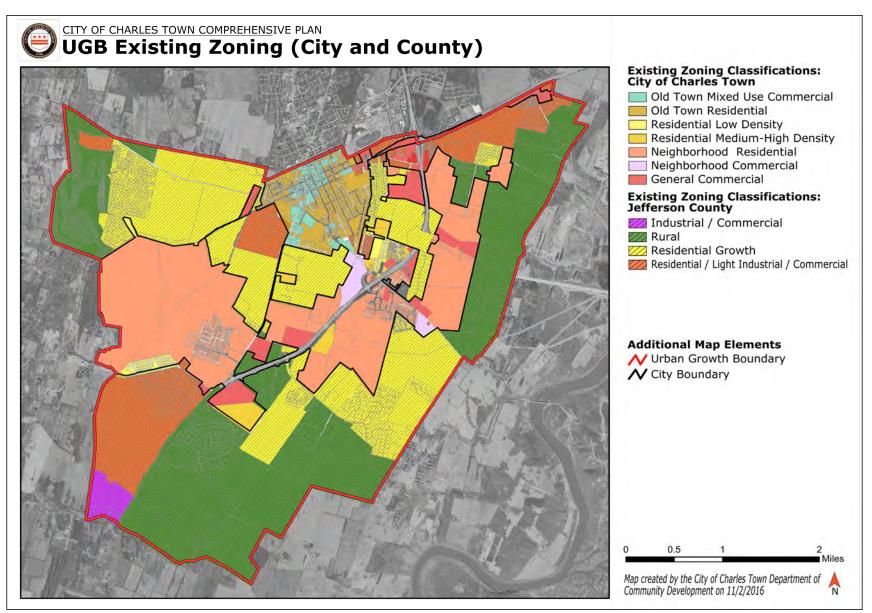


Figure 20: UGB Existing Zoning (City and County)
Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016 and Jefferson County GIS, 2016

#### **Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**

In 2012, Charles Town enacted its very first Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO), which establishes the City's standards for the subdivision and physical development of land within the City's legal jurisdiction. The SALDO defines the design standards that private land owners and developers must follow when making physical improvements to property including public streets and roadways, parking lots, utilities, stormwater management facilities, sidewalks and trails, and lighting among physical elements associated with residential and non-residential development. The Subdivision Ordinance is a regulatory tool that determines how the community will look as it develops.

#### **Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan**

In 2015, Jefferson County approved the *Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Guide* <sup>4</sup>. Many of the Plan goals, objectives, and implementation strategies align with Charles Town's desire to prioritize infill development and redevelopment, increase the density of development, and adaptively reuse existing buildings to better utilize existing land resources. Further, the 2035 County Plan recognizes the disconnect between Downtown urban centers and the rural areas that surround them.

Envision 2035 addresses this disconnect in detail:

"Due to annexation and changes in building practices across our Country since World War II, there is less delineation between downtown areas and the rural areas of the community. This is due to suburban residential and highway commercial development patterns with individual access and parking along major corridors leading from traditional downtowns. With the approval of Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and Preferred Growth Areas (PGA) as a part of Envision Jefferson 2035, an opportunity exists to work with the municipalities to create and implement a series of design principles that reflect the nature of the existing communities, while ensuring an appropriate transition between town and country inside the UGBs and PGAs."

With the adoption of the Charles Town UGB in 2010, the City confirmed its leading role in proactively and intelligently planning within a designated growth area.

#### **City of Ranson 2012 Comprehensive Plan**

In 2012, the City of Ranson adopted a new comprehensive plan that set a vision to "Maintain the quality of life and the community for the citizens within the Urban Growth Boundary of the City of Ranson by enhancing development, revitalizing 'Downtown Ranson,' recognizing and protecting the natural resources, encouraging economic growth, and providing new community facilities." The plan sets priorities to focus on infill development over outward expansion and defines specific growth sectors within its UGB and preservation of rural areas that include villages and hamlets on the fringes of the UGB. This future land use strategy is consistent with Charles Town's future land use presented in this plan.

<sup>4</sup> http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/planning-and-zoning-department/envision-jefferson-2035-comprehensive-plan

#### **Charles Town West End Master Plan**

The West End Master Plan was initiated in 2015 primarily to address viable reuse options for several of the City's key brownfield properties located within the West End neighborhood. In order to determine the best reuse strategies for the targeted brownfield sites, an effort that looked at the larger context was required. The Plan considered the needs of the entire West End neighborhood, as well as specific opportunities for the Evitts Run corridor and portions of the Downtown. The Plan integrates land use, transportation, and economic development elements to create a small area plan and brownfield reuse strategy.

The most significant aspects of the Plan include:

- addressing brownfields through the creation of parks and greenways;
- making key infrastructure improvements, including complete street upgrades and integrated stormwater management techniques; and
- promoting economic development through infill housing, suburban retrofitting, and existing historic resources.

More information regarding the West End Master Plan can be found in this Plan in the Downtown Charles Town Section.

"Parks, natural areas, and scenic landscapes also have great economic value. Protected open space increases the property values of nearby homes and attracts tourism and recreation. Working lands like farms and ranches support local economies, strengthen the tax base, and provide food. Preserving and restoring environmentally important areas such as wetlands helps protect drinking water from pollution, reducing the need for costly water treatment infrastructure."

**Source:** Smart Growth Network

# Building Blocks for Growth and Land Use

#### **Urban-to-Rural Transect**

Defining Charles Town's urban design framework is essential to understanding its dynamic and diverse landscape that transitions from a densely built Downtown district to low density and agricultural rural areas located within the City's UGB. A geographic cross-section, or transect, is commonly used in planning to illustrate a municipality's landscape. This transect shows the built environment (e.g., building) and physical elements supporting a community's population and economy. Defining a community's transect helps municipal leaders understand current landscape patterns and provides a framework to plan for and guide future land uses ranging from Natural (Transect Zone 1, T1) to Urban Core (Transect Zone 6, T6). A template transect is illustrated in Figure 21 below. Figure 22 depicts Charles Town's transect extending from its T1 Natural Zone to its T6 Urban Zone.



**T-1 Natural:** T-1 Zone consists of lands approximating or reverting to a wilderness condition, including lands unsuitable for settlement due to topography, hydrology or vegetation.

**General Character:** Natural landscape with some agricultural use

**Building Placement:** Not applicable Frontage Types: Not applicable **Typical Building Height:** Not applicable **Type of Civic Space:** Parks, greenways



**T-2 Rural:** T-2 Zone consists of sparsely settled lands in open or cultivated states. These include woodland, agricultural land, grassland, and irrigable desert. Typical buildings are farmhouses, agricultural buildings, cabins, and villas.

General Character: Primarily agricultural with woodland & wetland and scattered buildings

**Building Placement:** Variable setbacks **Frontage Types:** Not applicable **Typical Building Height:** 1- to 2-story **Type of Civic Space:** Parks, greenways



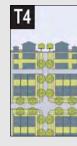
**T-3 Suburban:** T-3 Zone consists of low density residential areas, adjacent to higher zones that have some mixed use. Home occupations and outbuildings are allowed. Planting is naturalistic and setbacks are relatively deep. Blocks may be large and the roads irregular to accommodate natural conditions.

General Character: Lawns and landscaped yards surrounding detached single-family houses; pedestrians occasionally

**Building Placement:** Large and variable front and side vard setbacks

Frontage Types: Porches, fences, naturalistic tree planting **Typical Building Height:** 1- to 2-story with some 3-story

**Type of Civic Space:** Parks, greenways



**T-4 General Urban:** T-4 Zone consists of a mixed use but primarily residential urban fabric. It may have a wide range of building types. Setbacks and landscaping are variable. Streets with curbs and sidewalks define medium-sized blocks.

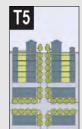
General Character: Mix of houses, townhouses and small apartment buildings with scattered commercial activity; balance between landscape and buildings; presence of pedestrians

Building Placement: Shallow to medium front and side yard setbacks

**Frontage Types:** Porches, fences, dooryards

**Typical Building Height:** 2- to 3-story with a few taller mixed use buildings

**Type of Civic Space:** Squares, greens



**T-5 Urban Center:** T-5 Zone consists of higher density mixed use buildings that accommodate retail, offices, rowhouses and apartments. It has a tight network of streets, with wide sidewalks, street tree planting and buildings set close to the sidewalks.

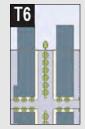
General Character: Shops mixed with townhouses, larger apartments, offices, work place and civic buildings; predominantly attached buildings; substantial pedestrian activity

**Building Placement:** Shallow setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street defining a street wall

**Frontage Types:** Stoops, shopfronts, galleries

**Typical Building Height:** 2- to 5-story with some variation

Type of Civic Space: Parks, plazas, and squares, median landscaping



**T-6 Urban Core:** T-6 Zone consists of the highest density and height, with the greatest variety of uses, and civic buildings of regional importance. It may have larger blocks; streets have street tree planting and buildings are set close to wide sidewalks. Typically only large towns and cities have an Urban Core Zone.

**General Character:** Medium to high-density mixed use buildings, entertainment, civic and cultural uses. Attached buildings forming a continuous street wall; highest pedestrian and transit activity.

**Building Placement:** Shallow setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street defining a street wall

**Frontage Types:** Stoops, dooryards, shopfronts, galleries and arcades **Typical Building Height:** 4-plus story with a few shorter buildings Type of Civic Space: Parks, plazas, and squares, median landscaping

Figure 21: Urban-to-Rural Transect Zone Descriptions Sources: SmartCode Version 9.2



**Figure 22: Charles Town Transect**Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

#### **SmartCode**

To support the concept of the rural-to-urban transect, SmartCode is a zoning tool that is used to determine types of land development patterns that should occur within each transect. SmartCode is a form-based code that encourages sustainable development through a mix of uses, diverse housing options at all income levels, open space preservation, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that reduce automobile dependency. In other words, SmartCode focuses more on the form, or physical style or look, of a new development or existing neighborhood rather than strictly on use.

#### **A Place for Everything**

The SmartCode and transect seeks to rectify the inappropriate intermixing of rural and urban elements known as sprawl. For example, the transect eliminates the "urbanizing of the rural," such as office towers in an otherwise rural environment that is anticipated to remain rural. Equally damaging, the "ruralizing of the urban" is also eliminated, such as the undefined, vacant open space in the urban core. Source: DPZ & Co.

Conventional zoning historically has focused on use, which has led to separate building developments for residential, industrial, retail and commercial, and office. Zoning systems across the nation have, accordingly, also resulted in a car-dependent culture and land-consuming sprawl. The principals of SmartCode, outlined below, emphasize a new, form-based approach to land development that emphasizes walkability and complete neighborhoods to reduce sprawl.

#### SmartCode Overview

In total, SmartCode has six transect zones (T-zones) that progress from rural areas (T1) to urban areas (T6). The zones ensure that neighborhoods offers a full diversity of building types, transportation options, and civic spaces. Zoning categories are based on whether an area's character is urban or rural, or somewhere in-between. In accordance, land use patterns are based on the proper location of development along the rural-to-urban transect. SmartCode emphasizes co-locating multiple uses to create walkable neighborhoods and emphasizes the design of buildings. SmartCode takes into consideration the sustainability of infrastructure. For example, SmartCode seeks to minimize new development in rural zones to avoid costly public water and sewer to be extended to those locations.

#### SmartCode as an Overlay Option

From a municipal planning perspective, SmartCode streamlines zoning, subdivision ordinances, urban design standards, and the infrastructure requirements development process. This results in a predictable and timely land development process for new construction, ultimately assisting the development community in the approval process. It is important to remember, however, that the SmartCode model is not exclusively an off the shelf product that is ready to go for adoption. The codes and standards for the transects must be calibrated to each community to reflect local character and form.

One way to implement the SmartCode is to have the code as an overlay across the whole city. This would allow the development community to use the SmartCode overlay as an option and not a requirement (much the same way a Planned Unit Development proposal is an optional overlay). It would allow property owners to retain their existing zoning designations. As described above, the ordinance would feature transect zones and form-based development regulations. Various incentives could be consolidated under the new code.

#### Applying SmartCode to Charles Town

To guide future land use planning for the City of Charles Town, SmartCode "Community Types" have been applied to the UGB areas. The intent of these Community Types is to define land use, density, streets, parks types, and patterns for four distinct community development pattern types.

The four community types are based on the rural-to-urban transect, identified for Charles Town.

- Old Town
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)
- Gateway
- Hamlet

These Community Types are characterized in the following sections and their respective density and intensity features are overlain on Charles Town's 10- and 25-year future land use scenarios as introduced and described in the Future Land Use Plan for Charles Town.

#### **Old Town Charles Town**

The Old Town pattern recognizes and preserves the existing Downtown and contiguous residential neighborhoods within the City characterized as having smaller lots, smaller setbacks, traditional grid street pattern and access by street or alley. The intent of preserving this pattern is to further enhance business vitality, increase walkability and transit accessibility, provide employment opportunities for residents close to home, and ensure the appearance and effects of buildings and uses are harmonious with the traditional neighborhood character of the area.

- **Transportation:** Direct access to these more urban neighborhoods is via well-connected thoroughfares of various street types, and specifically anchored by a main street corridor with sidewalks, curbs, and pedestrian-scaled lighting and signage.
- **Parks:** Parks, including 'Plazas,' are a civic space designed for public use and commercial activities in the more urban Transect Zones. These are generally paved and spatially defined by building frontages when in urban transect areas. 'Squares,' are also a civic space, and are located at an intersection of important streets and designed for unstructured recreation and civic purposes.
- Parking: Parking lots should be designed as plazas with the paving not as detailed as typical parking lots.
- **Built Form:** The Old Town development pattern includes mostly smaller lots with freestanding and attached buildings forming complete neighborhoods as found in historic Charles Town. The entire range of housing is found here, these includes large and small homes set close to streets and parkways to small lots with detached homes and attached homes and businesses.

Figure 23 illustrates the development characteristics of Old Town.



**Figure 23: Old Town Charles Town Development Characteristics**Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

#### **Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)**

Also known as Neighborhood Units, these are complete, freestanding neighborhoods in the countryside. Located adjacent to major transportation corridors, these are less urban in character than Old Town Charles Town, which is an assemblage of several neighborhoods sharing a substantial center and Main Street. Figure 24 illustrates the TND development characteristics.

- Transportation: Within the TND communities, the transportation network is an interconnected system comprised of boulevards, avenues, neighborhood streets, and alleys with pedestrian and other motorized and non-motorized transportation linkages that include sidewalks and defined pedestrian and bicycle pathways, and public transportation bus stops.
- Parks and Greenspace: Park types include sports fields, which are open areas specifically designed and equipped for large-scale structured recreation. Such fields should be confined to the edges of neighborhoods, as their size is disruptive to the fine-grained network. Playgrounds for children can be incorporated into greenspace without disruption to the urban fabric. Greenspace is a medium-sized public space available for unstructured recreation, circumscribed by building facades, its landscape consisting of grassy areas and trees, naturalistically disposed and requiring only limited maintenance.
- Built Form: This development pattern includes a
  mix of attached, small, and large lots with both
  freestanding and attached buildings from the edge
  to the center. The mix of housing includes a few
  large, private homes setback very far from roads
  to more detached and attached buildings in the
  more urban centers on streets with alleys. These
  are assembled form a range of housing from fewer
  multiple-acre lots to more small lot detached and
  attached homes.

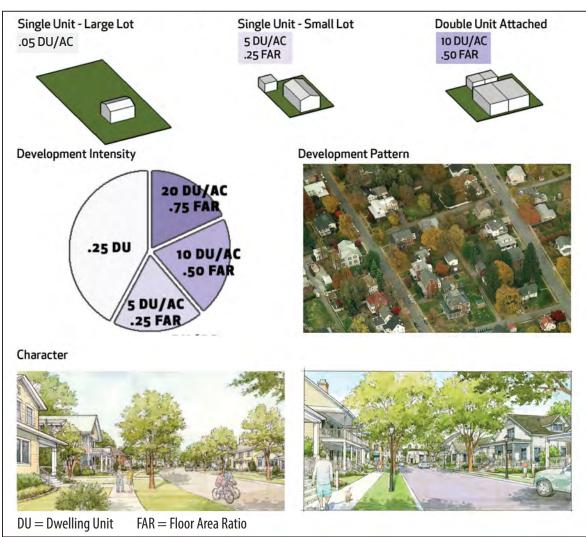


Figure 24: TND Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

#### **Gateways**

Also similar to the patterns and character of Old Charles Town, Gateways are an assemblage of several neighborhoods sharing or extending from a new substantial development center adjacent to the traditionally identified core of Charles Town. Its neighborhood structure has a strong core supported by the surrounding region.

Gateways are envisioned to be located along the City's main thoroughfares (e.g. Route 340, Augustine Avenue, etc.) serving as entry points to the City's Old Town area. Gateways provide the initial image and impression of the City and, therefore, should be sensitively designed to uphold and reinforce Charles Town's small town, historic character. Additionally, Gateways design should provide land use and access management controls to ensure smooth transitions between community types and mitigate traffic congestion issues that are typical of suburban, auto-oriented commercial developments located along highways. **Figure 25** illustrates the Gateway development characteristics and **Figure 26** depicts example gateway community designs.

- Transportation: Within Gateways thoroughfare types include parkways, streets, and boulevards, designed for high vehicular capacity and equipped with slip roads buffering sidewalks and buildings. Also, avenues act as a short distance connectors between communities and are usually contain landscaped medians and formal rows of trees. Gateways should also provide wayfinding and other directional and orientation information to the motorist to provide a sense of arrival to the community and guide their way into the Downtown.
- Built Form: The Gateway development pattern includes mostly smaller lots with freestanding and attached buildings forming complete neighborhoods as found in historic Charles Town. The entire range of housing is found here, this includes large and small homes set close to streets and parkways to small lots with detached homes and attached homes and businesses.

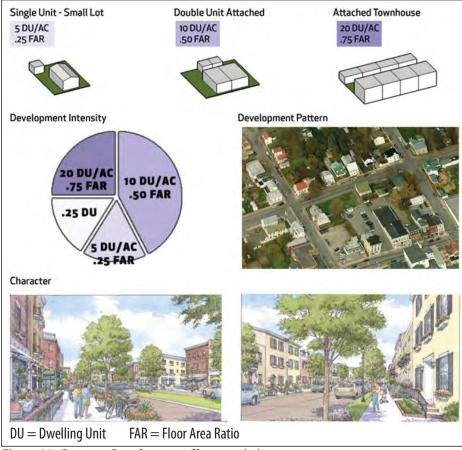


Figure 25: Gateway Development Characteristics
Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio





#### Traditional Suburban Commercial Strip (to be avoided)



The image above is representative of a typical suburban commercial corridor along a four-lane highway. Zero design standards have led to big box commercial and out-parcel developments with vast expanses of surface parking lots have created access management issues and a severe lack of mobility and connectivity with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

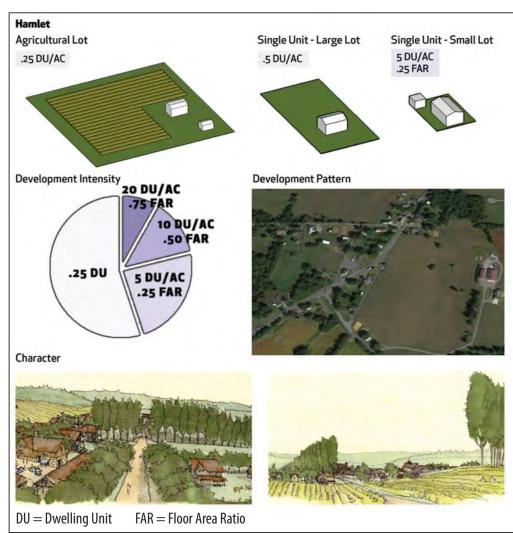
Figure 26: Example Gateway Community Designs

Sources: Midtown Commons Crestview Station, FTS Cities, and GoogleEarth

#### Hamlet

Hamlets are rural neighborhoods in the making, standing free in the countryside. Located furthest away from transportation and water and sewer connections, hamlets consist of mostly agricultural, countryside, or natural lands with a few homes and fewer businesses beyond working agriculture (see **Figure 27**).

- Transportation: Access to these more rural areas are mostly via thoroughfares with soft shoulders, with few lights and signs and no alleys or service lanes. Thoroughfare types include parkways, a highway designed in conjunction with naturalistic landscaping, including medians, and a road, which is a local rural and suburban thoroughfare of low-to-moderate vehicular speed and capacity.
- Parks and Greenspace: Open space types include grasslands and wooded lands interspersed by lineal riparian-buffered streams. These open spaces are sparsely inhabited and are uncultivated. Farmlands are an area of particular value for the cultivation of crops or the raising of livestock.
- Greenbelts: Greenbelts are defined as a network of interlocking open spaces that separate urbanized areas and community types. Greenbelts may contain environmental and agricultural preserves, golf courses, parks, and playing fields. Regional parks are large open areas available for recreation, usually located at a neighborhood edge, and fronted by buildings. Their landscape comprises paved paths and trails, some open lawns, trees, and open shelters, all naturalistically disposed and requiring limited maintenance.
- Build Form: This development pattern includes mostly very large lots with freestanding buildings surrounded by agriculture and natural lands. The mix of housing includes farmsteads, working agricultural facilities, large, private homes setback very far from roads and parkways. These elements form a range of housing from multiple-acre, to quarter-acre to very few small lot detached homes (to include farm worker housing). Agriculture-oriented commercial is low intensity that ranges from .25 lot coverage to .50 lot coverage freestanding in the landscape.



**Figure 27: Hamlet Development Characteristics**Sources: Michael Baker International Urban Design Studio

#### Future Land Use Plan for Charles Town

A primary component of the Charles Town Comprehensive Plan is a Future Land Use Plan, which provides a framework defining the City's future growth and development patterns, types, and intensities. Moreover, the Future Land Use Plan establishes the basis for the City's Zoning Map and the various zoning districts delineated thereon and further defined within the Zoning Ordinance.

Charles Town's Future Land Use Plan is composed of two Future Land Use Maps (FLU) depicting 10-year and 25-year growth scenarios within the UGB (Figures 28 and 29). The 10-Year FLU Map builds upon the City's existing land use patterns and offers a generalized guide for development and agricultural lands within its UGB. Because all land contained within an UGB is considered for future land development, the 25-Year FLU Map is a broader depiction of intended uses for the Comprehensive Plan's horizon year of 2040 and, therefore, does not include an agricultural element. Both FLU Maps are neither existing land use maps nor zoning maps, but serve as a reference for future zoning determinations.

#### **Public Infrastructure**

The Future Land Use Plan is also a key determinant of public infrastructure needs and requirements, such as roads, schools, transit, water and wastewater, and public services, such as police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS). The greater the amount of development the plan permits in a particular area, the more infrastructure and resources are required. To meet the City's growth and development needs, such infrastructure and services must be expanded and continually maintained at the taxpayers' expense. Therefore, developing a financially sustainable land use plan and growth management strategy is imperative for the City's fiscal well-being and the quality of life it provides to its residents, employers, and visitors.

#### **Regional Coordination**

Above all, Charles Town must continue to communicate with the public, Jefferson County, Jefferson County Public Service District, Jefferson County Schools, Hagerstown-Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Ranson, and other municipalities in Jefferson County. This will encourage a coordinated approach to land use planning and implementation, as well as the provision of public services and other planning needs will be achieved. This also includes, but is not limited to, the coordination of new transportation infrastructure for properties adjacent to the City and developing compatible community and economic development strategies with the City of Ranson and Jefferson County.

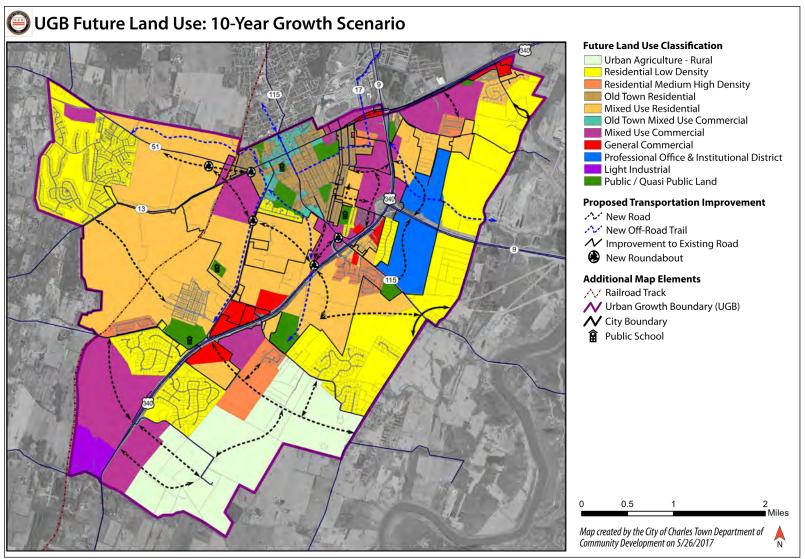


Figure 28A: UGB Future Land Use 10-Year Growth Scenario

Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

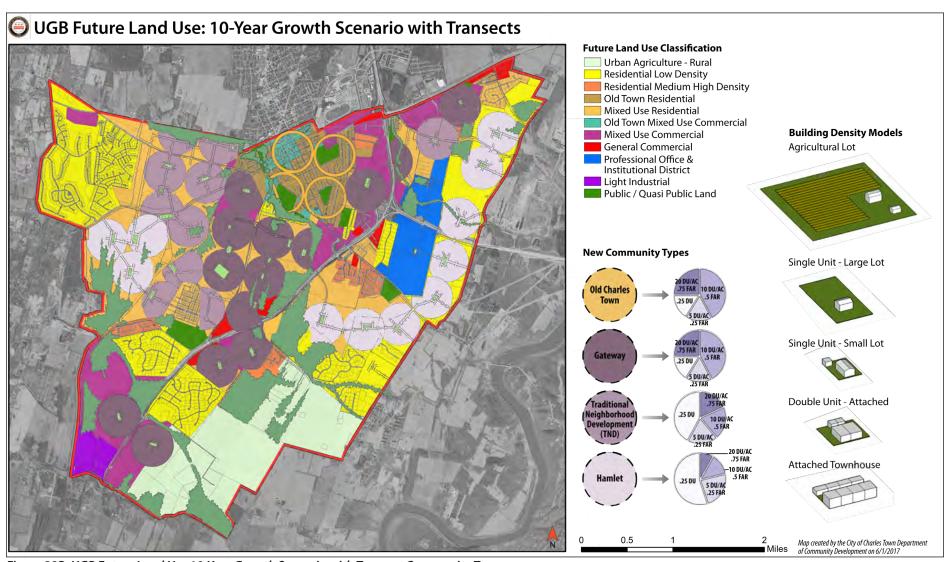


Figure 28B: UGB Future Land Use 10-Year Growth Scenario with Transect Community Types Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

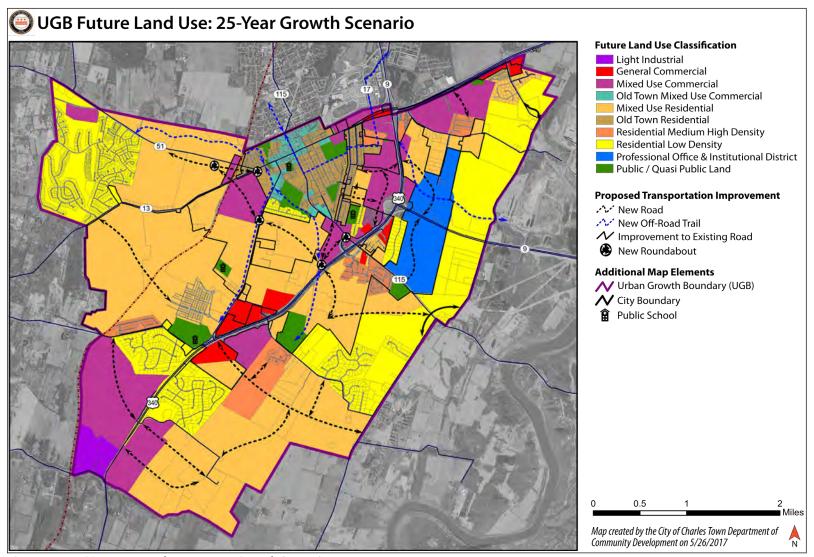


Figure 29A: UGB Future Land Use 25-Year Growth Scenario

Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

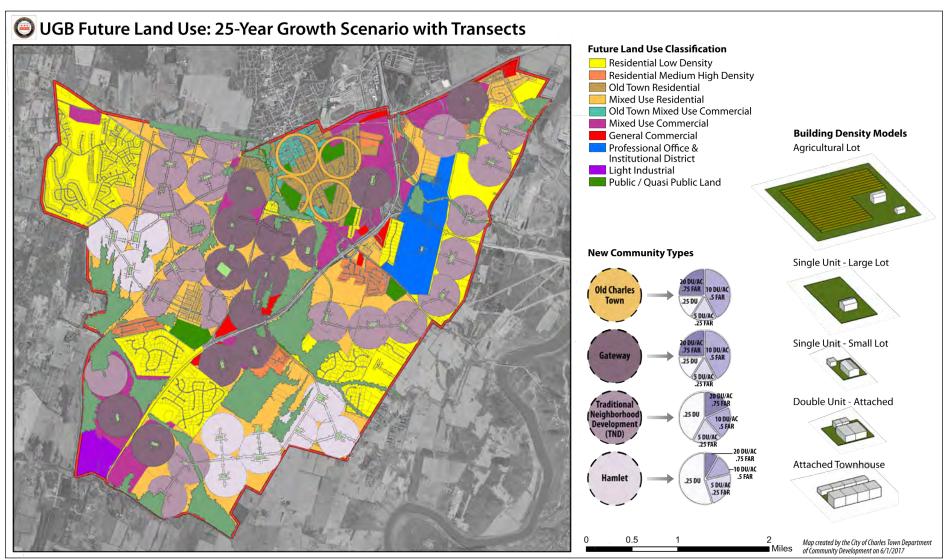


Figure 29B: UGB Future Land Use 25-Year Growth Scenario with Transect Community Types Sources: City of Charles Town, 2016

#### **Definition of Future Land Use Categories**

Charles Town's Future Land Use Map contains eight color-coded districts that express policy objectives on future land uses throughout the City, as described in the following sections. Implementation of these land use categories will require amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

#### **Agriculture**

Charles Town's charming, historic Downtown and safe residential neighborhoods, coupled with its rural countryside, make the City a truly great place to live, work and play. Scenic views of its agricultural lands, rolling hillsides and mountains, and pastoral open spaces is what makes the City so inviting for people of all ages. During the public participation process for the development of this plan, the public consistently noted the small town feel and the rural surroundings were important to them. Preserving the City's agriculture and open spaces is indeed a priority going forward to not only bolster the community's small town image, but to preserve and strengthen the community's agrarian opportunities by promoting value-added agricultural and artisan entrepreneurs.

It is important to note that while the City respects the urban growth policies of the *Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan*, it also promotes and encourages agricultural land uses. To support this initiative, the City has a policy to allow traditional agriculture and to also promote urban agricultural goals.

Examples include:

- you pick operations produce, pumpkins, tree farm, etc.;
- family activities corn mazes, petting zoo, etc.;
- on-site farmers markets;
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA);
- equestrian activities; and
- on the farm distilleries and breweries or other value-added operations.

The City's agriculture future land use category is designed to provide for and preserve the agricultural and rural use of land, while accommodating very low-density residential development generally associated with agricultural uses. This use classification is also designed to facilitate local food production, improve community health, and provide local opportunities for agriculture-based entrepreneurship and employment. It promotes cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around the city and region. Urban agriculture involves animal husbandry, aquaculture, agroforestry, urban beekeeping, and horticulture.

"From 'amber waves of grain' to 'purple mountains' majesty,' natural landscapes help define the character of our nation and our communities. Whether it's a community garden in a busy neighborhood; a scenic river where people fish, kayak, or hike along the banks; or a 'pick your own strawberries' farm, people care about conserving recreational, scenic, working, and environmentally valuable lands."

**Source:** Smart Growth Network



The City's 10-Year Future Land Use Plan envisions the agricultural land areas located on the southern and eastern fringes of the UGB will remain in productive agriculture use. These areas lack the transportation and public sewer and water infrastructure necessary to support their immediate development and the investments borne by private developers to make such improvements will likely make any medium to high density development financially infeasible. Therefore, the City's 25-Year Future Land Use Map foresees the potential for these areas to develop as rural hamlets comprised of clustered, mixed use residential areas designed to uphold the rural, agrarian landscape and provide opportunities to value-added agriculture and artisan economic development opportunities as described previously. In this scenario, the landowner has the ability to cluster much of their density rights and retain a sizable portion of their farm land for agricultural uses.

#### **Residential Districts**

#### Residential Low Density

The Residential Low Density District is shown in pale yellow in the Future Land Use Maps. The areas designated as Residential Low Density are generally located along the perimeter of the UGB, farthest away from the Downtown core. These areas are generally characterized by single family houses constructed on lots typically ranging from 0.5 to 2 acres per unit. This land use type on average consists of larger single family lots with a fair amount of building separation. The purpose of this land use designation is to provide for locations for low density residential development through a variety of housing types. These locations serve as transitional areas from the City's rural and largely undeveloped areas located within its UGB. These areas could be served by private wells and septic systems. Like the agricultural future land use category, clustering of the low-density rights is also encouraged and permitted here.

#### **Old Town Residential**

The area on the Future Land Use Maps shown in light brown is designated as Old Town Residential. Properties with this future land use classification are located in the City's historic Old Town and are within close walking distance of the Downtown. The primary function of the Old Town Residential future land use is to recognize and preserve the existing older residential neighborhoods within the City that are characterized as having smaller lots, smaller setbacks, traditional grid street pattern and access by street or alley. The preservation of the Old Town residential neighborhoods are vital to promoting interaction among activities located within the entire Old Town District that includes the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial area. The purpose of such interaction is to further enhance business vitality, reduce vehicular traffic, increase access to and the use of transit services. Also, it can provide employment opportunities for residents close to home, ensure the compatibility among and between residential and Downtown Commercial Uses, and ensure the appearance and effects of buildings and uses are harmonious with the traditional neighborhood character of the area.

#### **Mixed-Use Districts**

The Future Land Use Plan supports and promotes the Smart Growth Principle of mixed land uses that are comprised of varying intensities and densities of mixed income livable communities where people choose to live, work, and play.

The plan's mixed use districts include:

- Mixed Use Residential,
- Old Town Mixed Use Commercial, and
- Mixed Use Commercial

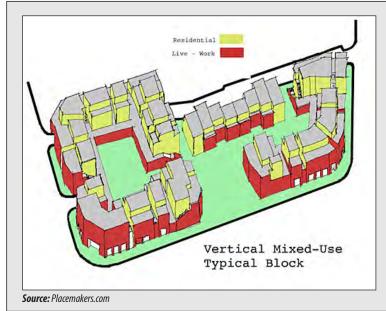
#### Mixed Use Residential

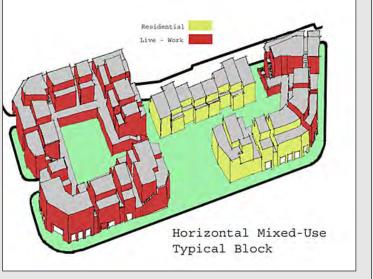
Mixed-Use Residential Future Land Use categories are intended to provide for a mix of housing types and sizes (e.g. tiny houses), as well as related services and uses, including compatible and supporting

 Mix land uses · Take advantage of compact building design · Create a range of housing opportunities and Create walkable neighborhoods Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place **Smart Growth** · Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas **Principles**  Strengthen and direct development towards · Provide a variety of transportation choices · Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

**Source:** https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/codes-support-smart-growth-development

commercial uses and office services. Regarding the mixing of uses, residential uses are predominate and non-residential uses are secondary, supporting the needs of the residential uses. Areas classified as Mixed Use Residential are a continuation of Charles Town's existing zoning category of Neighborhood Residential District and by extension, the non-residential uses would be similar to that of the Neighborhood Commercial zoning category. The Future Land Use Map envisions a higher intensity and density of uses oriented near Downtown to provide for greater walkability, accessibility, and mobility between Downtown commerce and surrounding neighborhoods.





The City's Huntfield mixed use development is a great example of a traditional neighborhood style development that includes a range of housing types and configurations situated upon a grid street network with well-placed and designed parks and open spaces. In many ways, this is predicated upon the development pattern of Old Town Charles Town's existing residential layout. This development was a negotiated process between the original developer and the City. While it is too early to speculate, if the development continues as planned, it could be a model for the City to be emulated in other locations and could become as historically notable as prior plans shown previously. Encouraging and promoting this type of residential development and providing multimodal connections to Downtown and neighboring schools, parks, and trails will increase the City's livability and vibrancy.



**Greenbridge Master Plan** – This community redesign by GGLO turned a car-centric suburban space in King County, Washington into a walkable, bike-able greenway. Part of an affordable housing site, Greenbridge makes it easier for pedestrians to travel around the community and the addition of community gardens improves access to fresh and local foods.

Source: https://centerforactivedesign.org/greenbridgemasterplan

#### **Old Town Mixed Use Commercial**

The purpose of the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial Future Land Use designation is to recognize the diversity of existing Downtown uses and to provide for a wide range of residential and commercial office, restaurant, hospitality, and retail services within in the Downtown. This land use designation intends to strengthen Charles Town's urban core, contribute to its historic character, minimize impacts on adjacent land uses, and be well connected to existing and future land uses located within the UGB. Downtown Charles Town is characterized by typical main street components found in the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial land use.

#### **Mixed Use Commercial**

Mixed Use Commercial Future Land Use plans provide for necessary commercial uses of a convenient nature within residential areas. These plans encourage the formation and continuance of stable, healthy, and compatible environments that are located to provide nearby residential areas with convenient shopping and service facilities, reduce traffic congestion, and avoid the development of strip malls. The non-descript "anywhere USA" look and feel of strip malls are not desired. This is similar with the Old Town Mixed Use (see page 72) which anticipates buildings pulled up to the front of the street and is a much more pedestrian centric environment. Compatibility and integration with residential character of the area surrounding the mixed use commercial zone shall be of primary consideration. The City prefers vertical mixed use commercial development over horizontal mixed use development. However, in situations where horizontal mixed use development is proposed, greater attention to multimodal connectivity and accessibility will be imperative.



#### **Commercial and Industrial Districts**

#### Professional Office/Institutional

Professional Office/Institutional Future Land Uses are included to enhance the work place environment by providing for the establishment of offices, medical and other institutional uses, limited accessory services for workers' convenience and public space. It is intended to promote attractive office development projects which are compatible with one another, as well as with adjoining residential areas. A medium to high density residential option is available when such can be achieved through innovative design and include significant natural resource protection. This future land use district is specifically designated to incentivize economic development opportunities and diversify the City's economy and strengthen its tax base to support its critical infrastructure and public service needs.



#### **General Commercial**

The purpose of the General Commercial Future Land Use classification is to provide locations for businesses of a more general nature that may not be found in a neighborhood and can be served with adequate water, sewer, gas, and electric service. The businesses proposed in this Comprehensive Plan update include retail, wholesale, and some light processing operations. These uses tend to be very auto centric. It will be important for the Charles Town community (residents, visitors, and investors alike) to strongly consider the City's small town, historical significance of building and site design. New commercial development should strongly consider and be encouraged to deliver commercial products that uphold the City's small town and historical character and encourage walkable communities.





#### **Light Industrial**

Light Industrial Future Land Uses intend to provide locations for light manufacturing uses that are not as extensive as those provided elsewhere in Jefferson County and can be adequately served by public or community utilities. Light manufacturing is composed of processing or assembly of previously processed materials. This land use shall only be located where denoted on the Future Land Use Map and may be considered when annexations of county zoned properties that contains this designation.

#### Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Growth and Land Use, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

#### **Ongoing**

- Continuously examine and where appropriate implement Best Management Practices for land use planning concepts.
- Promote and incentivize new development investments in the Old Charles Town and Gateway Community Types where urban infrastructure exists to readily support revitalization and infill development.
- Ensure development in City's proposed growth areas and redevelopment/development of the Old Town occurs in congruent fashion.

#### Short-term (0-4 years)

- Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.
- Implement agricultural value added categories in a new agricultural zoning district as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan (10-year).
- Examine and implement zoning districts that achieve the desired goals of the Future Land Use map.
- Create small area plans for Downtown Charles Town, US 340 East Gateway, US 340 South Gateway area.
- Employ the City's Home Rule and annexation policy to strategically manage the City's future growth within the Urban Growth Boundary, and increase economic development opportunities.
- Develop land development standards that preserve critical green space will not impacting development rights.
- Adopt and administer the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) amendment (IRC Appendix Q) specifying requirements for tiny houses on foundations.

Page intentionally blank



# Vibrancy, Sustainability, and Livability: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will be a community where all of its residents can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and, in turn, encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

### Objectives:

- Utilize the City's limited resources in efficient and innovative ways, and foster revitalization.
- Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives.
- Implement a City Housing and Redevelopment program to proactively and effectively address the City's blighted and abandoned properties.
- Collaborate with Charles Town Now to develop a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use Downtown.
- Preserve, promote, and market the City's Heritage Tourism assets including its emerging C\*Town Arts and Culture District.

# Building a Foundation for Charles Town's Vibrancy and Sustainability

Charles Town is well positioned to grow as a regional destination for heritage tourism. As a historic community surrounded by well-received destinations located in proximity to and economically influenced by the National Capital Region, the City of Charles Town has the makings of a true regional destination. To achieve this, the City will need to harness this energy and sustain it over the long term for nearby residents and visitors to acknowledge the City as a worthwhile investment.

#### **Creating a Vibrant Downtown**

The cornerstone to building the foundation of Charles Town is the revitalization of the City's Downtown and adjoining historic neighborhoods. As expressed in the Vision for Downtown, the Downtown area is the historic, functional, and symbolic heart of the City, and continued public and private investments are vital to the City's overall vibrancy, sustainability, and well-being.

"Charles Town is stuck in the past--we need innovation & creativity. Think ethnic restaurants, a bookstore, coffee shop, art centers/community spaces, quality boutiques, etc. Places people want to be."

Source: Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

One method for enlivening Downtown is a close management of underutilized, blighted, and vacant properties. While Charles Town does not suffer from wholesale vacancy and blight, there are a couple dozen properties of concern at any given time. It is important to provide the necessary resources to track and remediate blight as it can have a damaging effect on streetscape aesthetics, property values, citizen morale, and overall identity of a place. These issues can contribute to residents feeling unsafe on certain streets, which can steer potential patrons away from nearby businesses. Moreover, vacant and blighted properties also negatively contribute to the City's image and identity. That said, vacancy is a natural part of the real estate market and it is impossible to completely eliminate it. The City should continue to maintain a reasonable understanding of its vacancies via its Vacant Structures Board and Vacant Structures Registry.

Another common source of urban blight is the insufficient enforcement of municipal codes. The *Codified Ordinances of Charles Town* provide a solid framework for City officials to manage the growth of the entire City (not just Downtown) and any changes to the current historic fabric. When effectively enforced, the City's building codes ensure that its building structures are safe, inviting, and consistent with the historic character of the area. One significant barrier municipalities often encounter is enforcement. More recently, the fair and equal application of the code compliance program and associated fees which has resulted in greater compliance. In smaller municipalities, there is often not a dedicated code compliance officer and the task of code compliance becomes a secondary task for other administrative officials. Currently, this is the primary barrier to a successful code compliance program for the City. These barriers often allow structures or parcels to fall out of compliance for an extended period of time. This not only allows for the deterioration of structures, but it can also cause the owners of delinquent properties to devalue the importance of the code.

Regarding underutilization, there are opportunities to work with Charles Town Now and property owners to encourage greater utilization of structures in the Downtown. There are some structures that have upper floors that go unused or the time of vacancy seems to be fairly long. As noted in the Downtown Vision and discussed in detail, there are opportunities for improvements which may include the construction of multi-story commercial structures that are in keeping with form and compatibility of that which currently exists. For example, the conversion of surface parking, expansion of the Downtown along the corridor of West to Augustine Streets to Hill Dale Shopping Center, and the railroad area north of the Downtown may be project opportunities.

#### **Creating a Livable City**

Charles Town must distinguish itself in the marketplace as a community that is not only a great place to visit, but also a great place to live, work, and foster diverse economic development opportunities. Another key to Charles Town's vibrancy and sustainability is its livability, which considers a number of community factors and characteristics to arrive at an overall livability score. According to AARP:

#### According to AARP:

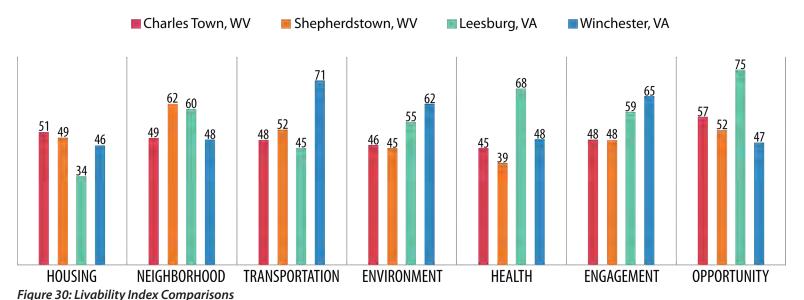
"A livable community is one that is safe and secure, has affordable and appropriate housing and transportation options, and has supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence; allow residents to age in place; and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life. Furthermore, livability is about realizing values that are central to healthy communities: independence, choice, and security. Livable communities help residents thrive, and when residents thrive, communities prosper."

Measuring livability is challenging because people desire different qualities and characteristics when searching for places to live and work. AARP's *Livability Index* provides a particularly fair and balanced assessment of Charles Town's livability score based on seven major livability categories as presented in this section (it should be noted that these livability categories are not focused solely on seniors). The index gives higher scores to communities with diverse features that help people of all ages, incomes, and abilities. It is important to not just look at the "Total Score" exclusively, as the seven livability factors are significant in their own right. For example, a community could have high scores on housing and transportation, but be ranked low on health and opportunity and have an averaged "Total Score" 50 or higher, but the "Total Score" by itself would not reflect the wellbeing of the community. A higher score is credited with having a better community and a lower score represents opportunities for improvement.

Charles Town's livability index score of 49 falls within the average range of 34 – 66, which is where most communities in the nation fall. In comparison, nearby Shepherdstown, WV, and Leesburg and Winchester, VA, have scores of 50, 57 and 55, respectively. A comparison of each community's livability score is illustrated in **Figure 30**.

Charles Town outperforms its competing communities on the livability category of housing and measures up on the categories health and opportunity, but has room to improve with respect to neighborhood, transportation, environment, and engagement. Marked improvements in these areas through the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan will increase Charles Town's livability and overall vibrancy and sustainability. Furthermore, the City should use these categories as its performance measures by viewing the current scores for each element as benchmarks to measure improvements going forward.





Source: AARP Livability Index. https://livabilityindex.aarp.org

Charles Town outperforms its competing communities on the livability category of housing and measures up on the categories health and opportunity, but has room to improve with respect to neighborhood, transportation, environment, and engagement. Marked improvements in these areas through the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan will increase Charles Town's livability and overall vibrancy and sustainability. Furthermore, the City should use these categories as its performance measures by viewing the current scores for each element as benchmarks to measure improvements going forward.

#### **Creating Financial Sustainability**

A stronger and more diverse economic base is not only essential to creating a more vibrant and livable community, it is also crucial to offset the City's shrinking video lottery and table gaming revenue, which comprise over 23 percent of the City's annual budget. This is even more critical to providing the necessary funding to support the Downtown and neighborhood revitalization initiatives and to strengthen its financial position to sustain the growth and development envisioned in this plan.

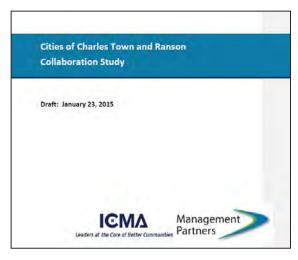
In addition to investing in the revitalization of Downtown, the City's Future Land Use Map envisions new commercial nodes of development within the UGB, as well as opportunities for professional office and institutional uses that leverage planned investments by the West Virginia University Healthcare System. The existing Jefferson Medical Center facility in Ranson is expected to expand where it is currently located. In turn, Charles Town believes that WVU's investments will leverage additional investments from the private sector, bringing skilled and well-paying jobs to further diversify and grow the local economy. Opportunities for WVU to have research and development facilities in this area that supports the WVU Healthcare Systems is conceivable.

Supporting the City's vision for the professional office and institutional future land use is the Martin Prosperity Institute's Cities Project focusing on the role of cities as the key economic and social organizing unit of global capitalism. The institute's *Venture Capital's Leading Industrial Clusters* report uses detailed data from Thomson Reuters to examine geographic clusters of venture capital investment and startup activity across five leading industries: software, biotechnology, media and entertainment, medical devices and equipment, and information technology services. It identifies the leading metro areas for venture capital investment where such investment is clustered.

The report includes the following findings:

- Software is the leading industry, attracting nearly \$12 billion, roughly a third of all venture investment (36.2 percent). Together, the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor accounts for \$2.7 billion dollars, 23 percent of venture capital investment in software.
- **Biotechnology is second with \$5.7 billion, 17.3 percent of total investment.** Biotechnology investment is clustered in three broad regions, including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a combined \$2.3 billion in investment representing roughly 40 percent of the sector's total.
- Media and entertainment is third with \$3.2 billion, 9.5 percent of total investment. The Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor is the nation's second leading cluster with \$764 million, representing roughly a quarter of all venture investment in this sector.
- **Medical devices and equipment is fourth with \$2.3 billion, 7.1 percent.** Venture capital investment in medical equipment spans three main clusters including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a total of \$550 million in investment representing nearly a quarter of the industry total.
- Information technology services is fifth with \$2 billion, 6 percent. Venture investment in information technology and services is concentrated in two broad clusters including the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor, which has a total of \$604 million in investment representing 30.4 percent of the industry total.

A common theme among all five industry sectors is the predominance of the Boston-New York-Washington DC Corridor. Given Charles Town's proximity to the Baltimore-Washington DC metropolitan area, all of the above sectors present opportunities for Charles Town's future economy and its diversity. Moreover, the biotechnology, medical equipment and information technology services sectors are well-aligned with WVU's R1 Research classification by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.



Strengthening Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration is also another opportunity for the City to strengthen its vibrancy and sustainability. The 2015 Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study jointly commissioned by the cities of Charles Town and Ranson identified opportunities for collaboration in service delivery. The report identified 15 recommendations and potential total annual combined savings of over \$1 million; \$562,200 for the City of Charles Town and \$535,000 for the City of Ranson. Such savings could be reinvested into the City's capital improvement program to leverage substantial improvements in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.



# Charles Town Building Blocks

Charles Town has an existing unique, vibrant urban character. In particular, the City's Downtown is emerging as a growing and active central core for the region, serving as the Jefferson County seat with a high concentration of cultural and historic resource attractions that are supported by a growing base of locally-owned businesses and entertainment venues, festivals and events, and other amenities as described below.

#### **Community Events and Festivals**

Community events and festivals are critical to the sustained growth and vitality of a local economy. They create a sense of community, invite tourists and guests to enjoy spending time and money in the City, and encourage residents to be creative and invest in their own community.

Charles Town already has many long established annual events such as the Charles Town Farmers Market every Saturday throughout summers, the Charles Town Heritage Festival – rebranded as Charles Town's West Virginia Fest, the Charles Town Car Show, and the Jefferson County Juneteenth Celebration. The growth of these festivals and the addition of new ones will keep the residents and visitors of Charles Town engaged.

"The Charles Town community has envisioned a future that celebrates arts & culture. The strategic plan will help the community grow and sustain a robust arts & culture district. The "C\*Town Arts & Culture District will grow through an arts-based real estate strategy, activating its core with vibrant places and activities that attract people to experience the arts."

Source: Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

In 2016, Charles Town established the "Charles Town Arts and Culture District" which places an emphasis on growing tourism and local economy through arts, festivals, and branding. The district was officially announced by Mayor Peggy Smith during the opening ceremonies for the Charles Town's West Virginia Fest on June 18, 2016.

#### **Regional Attractions**

The City is also home to Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races, a gambling casino and thoroughbred track. While the track and casino are situated adjacent to City limits, their proximity to Downtown makes them a worthy anchor to leverage investment from their visitations. Charles Town Races has become one of the busiest thoroughbred circuits in the country with notable events including the Charles Town Classic and the West Virginia Breeders Classic. Supportive events on race days could draw the spirit of the race from the park and into the streets. Additionally, Hollywood Casino has live entertainment at the indoor Event Center. The Event Center offers concerts that have a regional draw and help make Charles Town an entertainment venue for the region.

Farmers markets are great assets to cities that promote civic engagement and community building. The Charles Town Farmers Market currently takes place on Saturdays weekly between April and October. During the event, a block of street is closed to traffic and stands are erected for use by local farmers and artisans to sell goods and services. The market has been a staple in Charles Town since 2006 and continues to grow in popularity.

Many cities have been able to find permanent homes for farmers markets to keep them running year round. This can be accomplished with a larger investment in the rehabilitation of an unused building, or more inexpensively by covering a municipal parking lot as was recently done in Washington, PA. Changes and improvements to Charles Street as proposed in the Downtown Section of this Plan could allow for a pedestrian friendly street that could host the farmers market.

#### **Entertainment**

Live entertainment in the City is seen as a valuable asset that has room for growth. Currently, the City is home to the Old Opera House, which offers a full season of community theater works as well as classes in acting, dance, and voice. 2016 saw the addition of the Craft Beer & Music Festival at Happy Retreat, creating an atmosphere where local entertainment is enjoyed in a relaxed comfortable environment.

The establishment of easily rentable concert and event spaces can go a long way toward making a city feel vibrant and inviting. The second level of the newly renovated Charles Washington Hall could make for an excellent event space. Additionally, conceptual improvements to Evitts Run Park includes an outdoor amphitheater in the block bordered by Liberty and Washington Streets. Hosting regular outdoor events in this space would add to the spirit of community and promote local arts to those who may not be actively seeking entertainment.



#### **Cultural and Historic Resources**

The City of Charles Town is blessed with a number of historic assets, most of which are centralized around Washington and George Streets. While the entire Downtown district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are a few buildings of note including the Jefferson County Courthouse, Charles Washington Hall, Charles Town City Hall, and Fishermen's Hall. Outside of the Downtown are a number of historic assets from the legacy of President George Washington and his family. Many of these assets are included on the Washington Heritage Trail including Zion Episcopal Church, St. George's Chapel Ruins, and the nearby mansions of Happy Retreat, Harewood, Cedar Lawn, Claymont Court, and Blakeley. Additionally, Charles Town is surrounded by a plethora of cultural and historical resources relating to the Civil War, John Brown, Lewis and Clark, African-American Heritage, and Washington Family History.

The annual Jefferson County African American Culture and Heritage Festival showcases the historical and cultural significance of the African American community in Jefferson County, with vendors and live entertainment, as well as tours of historic landmarks significant to African American history in Jefferson County, Charles Town, and Ranson.

These assets form a very accessible cluster of rich heritage in a relatively small area. This lends itself well to heritage tourism, a large and growing industry that has been fostered in nearby Harpers Ferry. Connecting tourists to these assets with trails and interpretive signage, as well as cross promotion with nearby tourist destinations will allow for residents and visitors alike to form a complete picture of the City's rich and important history.

#### **Cultural and Historic Preservation**

Charles Town staff manages the citizen-comprised Historic Landmarks Commission, a board of the City tasked with reviewing any new construction, rehabilitation or demolition project proposals within the Historic Overlay District to determine appropriateness. Codified in Charles Town's municipal code, this commission's approval is required before any work can begin. One common concern is the financial burden that historic preservation can place on a developer, however there are grants, loans, and tax credits for historic preservation projects. Protecting and preserving historic assets requires additional cost and research, but a governing body such as the Historic Landmarks Commission helps make the task more manageable. Any town that has historic resources derives its identity from those resources. As such the maintenance, protection, and preservation of those resources equates to the protection and preservation of Charles Town's identity.

As property is annexed into the UGB, historic resources will be added to the City's inventory. There may be large tracts of land that have a historic house on the property or historic outbuildings, such as barns and a spring house. When development occurs on those properties, the historic resources should be protected as community amenities. It is important to remember that a resource's surrounding is an important part of its context. In protecting and maintaining the character of the resource, retaining a portion of the context, generally open space, is important. For the retention of these resources, amendments could be made to the open space standards and/or density bonus standards as incentives to ensure such protection.

An additional resource that often aids in the redevelopment of historic districts is a Form-Based Zoning Code. Form-Based code allows for cities to set a desired form for new development (scale, materials, massing, etc.) as opposed to the use of the building established under the currently adopted Euclidean zoning code. Neighboring Ranson utilizes a version of Form-Based Code called SmartCode which also incorporates a transection from urban to rural land use types to apply to plots. The Growth and Land Use section provides a more in-depth discussion of the SmartCode and its application in land use regulation.



#### **Jefferson County Museum**

The Jefferson County Museum is located in the center of Downtown Charles Town inside the Charles Town Library at Washington and Samuel Streets. The museum offers visitors and residents a look at the long history and culture of Jefferson County, including exhibits on Early Settlements, the John Brown Raid, Civil War, multiple exhibits on the artworks, goods, and services created by local men and women throughout the county's history. The museum has artifacts of national significance, including a letter from George Washington and the wagon that transported John Brown as a prisoner. The museum is an invaluable asset to the community and should be widely promoted.

Museums are amenities that are not only sought out by visitors, but also enrich the lives of local residents. They provide learning opportunities, as well as instill pride in the places they reference. Additional galleries, museums, and educational landmarks should be encouraged in new developments.



#### **Happy Retreat**



Happy Retreat is the home of Charles Washington, the founder of the City. In 2014, the Friends of Happy Retreat (FOHR) purchased the Happy Retreat property (~two acres) and the City separately purchased the adjoining 10 acres that includes access to Evitts Run, which is a critical connectivity and open space element envisioned in the *West End Master Plan*. The FOHR are exploring the house as a public resource for education, enjoyment, and economic development through heritage tourism. The FOHR are currently in the process of restoring the house and working toward implementing their vision. This resource has the opportunity to become a great cultural and educational amenity for the community. The property, via the City owned land, connects to Evitts Run and across the creek, is another City park. Opportunities for a walking bridge to connect the two sides of the creek exists.

# Housing Needs for the Future

As Charles Town grows as a more popular and diverse City, it is important to seize opportunities that will establish a balance of various housing types. Towards that end, the City should make a particular effort to realize opportunities for flexible and affordable housing.

As Charles Town grows in popularity, it is expected that property values and housing costs will grow similarly. The inclusion of affordable housing within the City will become an increasing priority. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) are one unique way to promote affordable and diverse housing options. ADUs are small residential units for lease typically found in garages, barns, or guest houses. To be considered an ADU, the unit may accompany or stand alone as a primary residential property on a plot of land. Further, the primary residential use is occupied by the property owner. ADUs create an opportunity to provide affordable, Tiny Houses that cater to the needs of Baby Boomers, college students, veterans, young professionals, or anyone else who may not require additional living space or long term housing commitments.

#### **Affordable Housing**

Can generally be defined as decent, safe and sanitary shelter, of adequate size so as to not cause overcrowding, and does not require any more than 30% of a household's annual gross income.

#### **Workforce Housing**

Typically determined as affordable to households earning between 60% and 120% of the Median Income

Source:US Department of Housing and Urban Development

ADUs should be recommended or promoted in renovation and new construction projects in the City, to promote affordable and diverse housing options. In addition to utilizing ADUs, federal funding resources, such as those available through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and/or West Virginia Housing Development Fund, exist to promote the construction of new affordable housing units. A balanced assortment and civic discussion on the importance of this mix are necessary to maintain a stable, diverse and growing Charles Town.

In conjunction with a discussion of the SmartCode in the Growth and Land Use Section of this plan, the SmartCode is able to encourage a mix of uses with housing, diverse housing options at all income levels, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that reduce automobile dependency. For those with less economic resources, the ability to rely on their vehicle less results in less maintenance costs and repairs. The ability to eliminate the need for a vehicle significantly increases purchasing power on other goods. A variety of housing choices allows residents various types of places to reside at various price points. Opportunities for new and infill developments that incorporate affordable housing in mixed uses, higher densities, and traditional neighborhood design elements will be incentives to be examined. A City Housing and Redevelopment Agency that encompasses code compliance, vacant structures, new construction, rehabilitation of structures, renter assistance and a variety of other afford housing options could be create to assist these endeavors.

Traditionally, a neighborhood housing and redevelopment agency held a negative connotation. In certain communities and locations, that is not always the case. For Charles Town, the ability for a housing and redevelopment agency could be a positive and beneficial component of community development. For a growing City with innovative tools obtained during the Home Rule Program and the typical Code Compliance aspects faced by most communities, Charles Town has the ability to create a housing and redevelopment agency that is proactive, addresses existing housing and infill in the urban core, and involved in new development arrangements in "greenfield" areas.

Exploring the non-traditional side of a housing and redevelopment agency, it is possible for the City to partner with a developer to create communities based on some of the fundamental principles:

- Pre-World War II development pattern (grid pattern and connected communities);
- · Open space amenities within walking distance of every house;
- Right size the utility lines so that future developments do not have to upsize existing lines; and
- Right size the roadway infrastructure.

The important role of the City in this arrangement, is the developer and a City have a different model and pro-forma. If the City is able to participate in the development arrangement where it matters for the municipality, such as infrastructure, open space and general layout, this allows the free market participants to market, develop, and build houses. In this role the City can provide stability throughout the development process to the private market. The private investors understandably have a model to achieve a profit of the highest value possible with reasonable cost necessary to develop a community and have a return on investment within a reasonable period of time. The City's model looks at the long-term maintenance and operations costs once the developer has left. The City has to maintain the streets, roads, water and sewer lines, stormwater infrastructure, any parks that may have been dedicated to the City and public safety. By developing new communities that meet the developer's economic needs and the long-term interests of the public sector, there is an opportunity to forge a public-private partnership between the City and private developer to create a more livable community through diverse neighborhood styles and price points for residents. The ability for the City to participate is found in the Home Rule Authority that was granted in the community enhancement districts.

As previously discussed, the housing and redevelopment agency is a great opportunity to assist in the future layout of the City, but there are as many important opportunities to improve the existing fabric of the City. The housing and redevelopment aspects are a combination of tools and each are as instrumental as the other, reinforcing one other. As with the enhancement districts for new developments, the City could partner with private developers or non-profit entities to construct housing that serves the needs of both workforce housing and affordable housing. This would enable and encourage infill development.

The following is a list of aspects to consider as being the interest of a housing and redevelopment agency:

#### **Housing**

- Workforce housing and affordable housing
- Owner occupied and non-owner occupied options

#### **Rental Registration**

- Inspection of rentals to establish a minimum level of safety and quality
- Ensure B and O taxes are paid

#### **Code Compliance**

- Maintenance of structures
- · Correction of property violations
- Accountability

#### **Vacant Structures Board**

Eliminate chronic vacant structures, and vacant and inhabitable structures

# <u>Improvements and investment in neighborhood</u> infrastructure

- Improvements of adequate water pressure
- Installation of hydrants and street lights
- Improvements to sidewalks and, where missing, installation of new sidewalks

# Coordinate with county, state, and/or federal organizations that have compatible missions

Harnessing these various aspects together can improve the quality and affordability of housing in the existing core of Charles Town. It is possible that the City could acquire land, particularly in the urban area core, retain the property under City ownership and the homes will be available for residents who are below the median income where the ability to find affordable or workforce housing is challenging. The opportunities for success are great and achievable if these elements are properly utilized, resulting in a vibrant, sustainable, and livable community for all residents.



## Bring It Together to Achieve Success

Strengthening Charles Towns' vibrancy, sustainability, and livability will take a holistic approach from concentrating investments into Downtown and contiguous neighborhoods, strengthening its financial position and diversifying its economy. Taking measured steps to make the City a livable and healthy community for people of all ages will be the goal and objectives outlined on the following pages provide a clear vision for the City to become a more vibrant and sustainable community and specific steps moving forward are outlined in the Implementation Section of this plan. In doing so, there will be an opportunity for a cross section of society to be a member of the Charles Town community.



Source: Center for Active Design, https://centerforactivedesign.org, 2017

# Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

#### **Ongoing**

- Use AARP's seven major livability categories to benchmark and measure the City's performance relevant to meeting and servicing the needs of its current and future population.
- Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to maximize the community-based utilization of Charles Washington Hall and to strengthen the revitalization of Downtown and Old Town neighborhoods.
- Implement the recommendations outlined in the Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study, and C\*Town Arts and Culture District Plan.

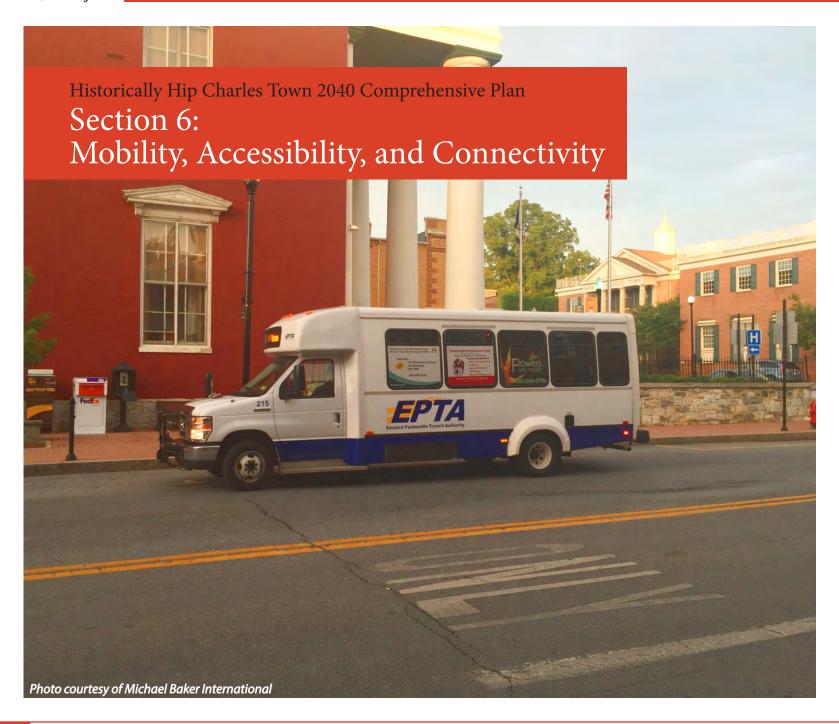
#### Short-term (0-4 years)

- Strengthen Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration as recommended by the 2015 *Collaboration Study* commissioned by Charles Town and Ranson. Among other multi-municipal service efficiency opportunities, collaboration initiatives could be used to strengthen Charles Town's code enforcement efforts and build capacity for a joint economic development organization as recommended in the City's 2014 *Economic Strategic Plan*.
- Encourage reinvestment and where appropriate redevelopment of the City's existing commercial shopping plazas (i.e., Somerset Village and Hill Dale) and work with the existing property owners to create a vision and redevelopment concept plan.
- Partner with West Virginia University, Jefferson County, Charles Town's State and Federal Congressional Delegation, and the Federal Government to identify economic development initiatives that leverage the University's R1 Research classification.
- Collaborate with the City of Ranson to create a joint Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

#### Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Collaborate with Charles Town Now and Downtown property owners to maximize the full mixed-use potential of building structures in the Downtown.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy.







The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for all citizens by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

## Objectives:

- Provide convenient and affordable access to goods, services, jobs, and recreation for all residents and visitors.
- Create well-connected, safe, and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks.
- Strengthen the walkability of Downtown Charles Town through improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities, and reduced volumes of through truck traffic.
- Implement complete streets design in all existing and new street and road design.
- Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.
- Continue to support and increase City residents' access to public transportation services.

# Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity in Charles Town

Efficient and reliable movement within a city is vital to its growth and success. Accessible transportation—affordable, safe, and extensive circulation between activity centers—supports a mobile workforce, regional tourism, local business, and overall community health. A well-developed network of multimodal transportation options benefits citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by removing barriers to jobs, accessing important goods and services, and engaging in community activities. For Charles Town, increasing mobility, accessibility, and connectivity around the Downtown area, residential areas, and nearby commercial centers will make the City a better place to live, work, and play.

The existing transportation network within the City of Charles Town encompasses a variety of modes—a road network capable of handling vehicular and freight traffic, access to a regional public transportation system, and infrastructure geared for non-motorized transportation, like multiuse trails and sidewalks. Additionally, air and rail transportation modes are important elements of the regional transportation system, each with its own benefits and limitations.

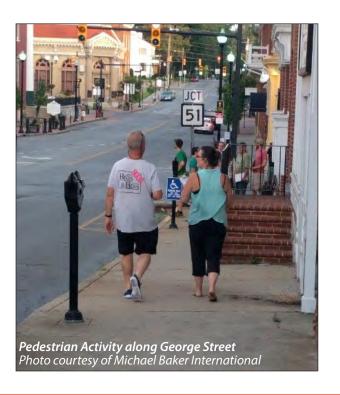
This Comprehensive Plan element reviews the foundations of the City's transportation system and deficiencies in that system that inhibit mobility, accessibility, and connectivity within Charles Town's UGB and beyond. It also identifies critical transportation connection opportunities and sets forth a future direction for multimodal accessibility improvements.

#### **Understanding Downtown Charles Town: A Walking Tour**

The best way to understand the existing strengths and challenges of promoting mobility and connectivity is to experience it firsthand. For this reason, and in line with the "Downtown first" focus, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) completed a walking tour of Downtown Charles Town to observe existing infrastructure and look for opportunities for improvment.

Through the walking tours, each CAC member was assigned a "role" of a specific type of community member and asked to share their experiences through answering six questions:

- 1. What are your general impressions of Charles Town?
- 2. Do you feel safe and comfortable during your walk? Why?
- 3. What positive elements make you want to be in Charles Town?
- 4. What negative elements would stop you from staying long or visiting at all?
- 5. What is missing that you need?
- 6. What is already here that you would use the most?



Roles were designed to cover various age ranges, mobility levels, and main travel purposes (i.e., work versus leisure).

In summary, the following comments were developed as themes:

- Traffic, especially truck traffic through Downtown during the day is an issue.
- Sidewalks in Downtown are generally in good condition and are comfortable to walk.
- Outside of the immediate Downtown area, the condition deteriorates and does not encourage people to walk to other amenities, such as Evitts Run Park.
- People felt safe walking. Bicycling did not seem to be as comfortable and safe and most people would not bicycle around Downtown Charles Town.
- In the evening hours, there was a lack of activity of all types.

Information gathered from the walking tour was used throughout multiple themes. The input gathered through the activity was a foundational element for the objectives to improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity throughout Charles Town.



# Foundations for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity

Charles Town has a well-established transportation system upon which to build. With a robust street network, the elements are in place for a successful multi-modal transportation network to provide opportunities for all residents of Charles Town.





# Travel Characteristics: A Portrait of Charles Town

As shown in **Table 6**, Charles Town, like most suburban municipalities in America, is heavily auto-oriented. In fact, according to the *2015 American Community Survey (ACS)* estimates, 87 percent of those traveling to work drive, with nearly 70 percent driving alone. Furthermore, less than 7 percent of the total of those traveling to work use a form of transportation other than driving. Extending the logic of this analysis to the average citizen in Charles Town, the vast majority of travelers drive to their destinations every day. Assuming that this trend continued for the foreseeable future, investments focused on alternative modes of transportation must be aimed towards meeting the people where they live, and making walking, bicycling, or using public transportation as easy as walking to the driveway to get in a car. While most people will need to use an automobile to commute to work and accommodate larger bulk retail purchases, the ability to make some trips by walking or biking should be strongly factored into the City's transportation network. This is more possible when developments are designed in such a way as to have a corner store for general items of necessity.

Cubiast	Charles Town, WV - 2015 Estimate				
Subject	Total	Male	Female		
Workers 16 years and over	2,249	1,234	1,015		
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK					
Car, truck, or van	86.90%	84.40%	90.00%		
Drove alone	69.10%	69.50%	68.60%		
Carpooled	17.80%	14.80%	21.40%		
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	3.00%	4.90%	0.70%		
Walked	3.20%	2.80%	3.80%		
Bicycle	0.30%	0.60%	0.00%		
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%		
Worked at home	6.50%	7.40%	5.50%		

Table 6: Means of Transportation for Charles Town Workers 16 Years and Over

Source: American Community Survey, 2015

# **Street Network**

The ability of a roadway network to safely move people and goods to a desired destination has wide-reaching impacts and is an important factor in land use decisions. The activity centers where people work and play must be efficiently accessible. Additionally, the layout and design of the roadway network impacts the ability of local and county governments to provide services. Charles Town's street network consists of a variety of street types that serve various types of travel.

As indicated in the Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, there are five main functional classifications within Charles Town:

- Primary Street
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Neighborhood Center Street
- Neighborhood Street

These classifications as assigned to streets in Charles Town are illustrated below in Figure 31. In line with the roadway classifications, US Route 340, State Route 9, and State Route 51 are the major thoroughfares for the City and its surrounding areas and carry some of the highest traffic volumes, according to the 2014 Charles Town Transportation Study.

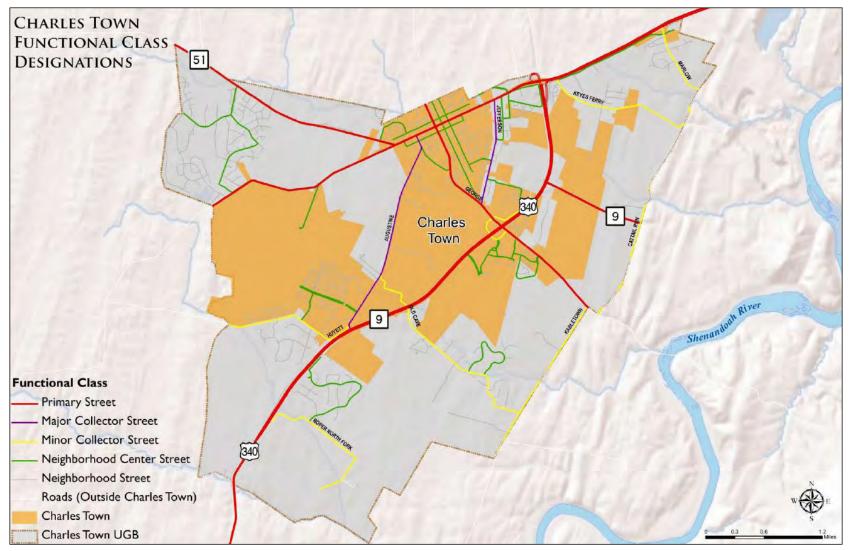


Figure 31: Charles Town Functional Roadway Classifications

Source: FHWA Functional Roadway Classifications

# **Sidewalk Network**

Walkable communities are experiencing a resurgence in America and are becoming highly desirable features. With new generations desiring to live a less auto-focused lifestyle and the baby-boomer generation downsizing, there is demand for affordable urban areas that are walkable. Walkable communities allow residents to complete most daily activities within a convenient walk of their home in a way that is safe, comfortable, and interesting. Walkable communities encourage sidewalks to be used as "outdoor living rooms" with a seamless connection between businesses and the public realm. The ultimate goal for walkable communities is to enable residents to live their lives in the way they choose, and with the option of doing so without a car. This lifestyle choice is not statement against the automobile, but a desire to walk to shops, services, and entertainment without having to get in the car, drive a short distance only to look for a parking space. Regionally, new developments are being built in Virginia and Maryland that serve this lifestyle. In other locations, people are returning to the authentic fabric of the traditional Downtown.

To promote a prosperous Downtown, sidewalk infrastructure is vital to allow pedestrians to maneuver easily throughout the City. Establishing a walkable community starts with connecting residents to Downtown and providing an economical alternative to driving. As part of a *Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study* completed in August 2016, an inventory of existing sidewalks gaps and conditions within the Old Town area of the City was completed and is illustrated in **Figures 32 and 33** on the following pages.

Overall, sidewalks are present and in generally fair condition in the Downtown area, which support walkability and the Downtown-first focus. Once leaving the immediate historic Downtown area, sidewalk condition deteriorates significantly or sidewalks do not exist at all. Making improvements to those sidewalks encourages residents that live around Downtown to walk instead of drive. This action reduces the need to find a place to park and allows Charles Town to retain parking space for those traveling from a distance too far to walk. The Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study area should be expanded to cover all areas of the City.



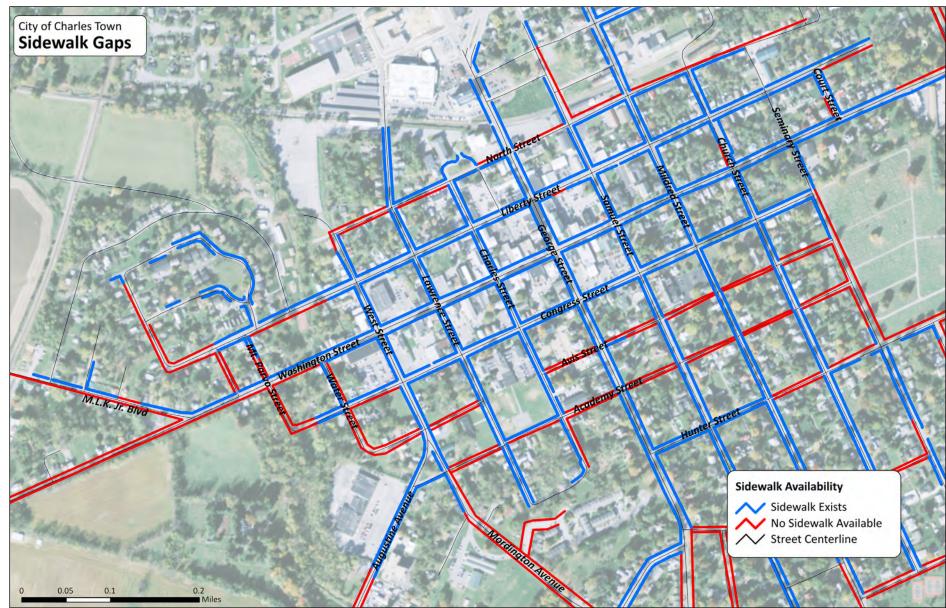


Figure 32: Charles Town Sidewalk Gaps Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

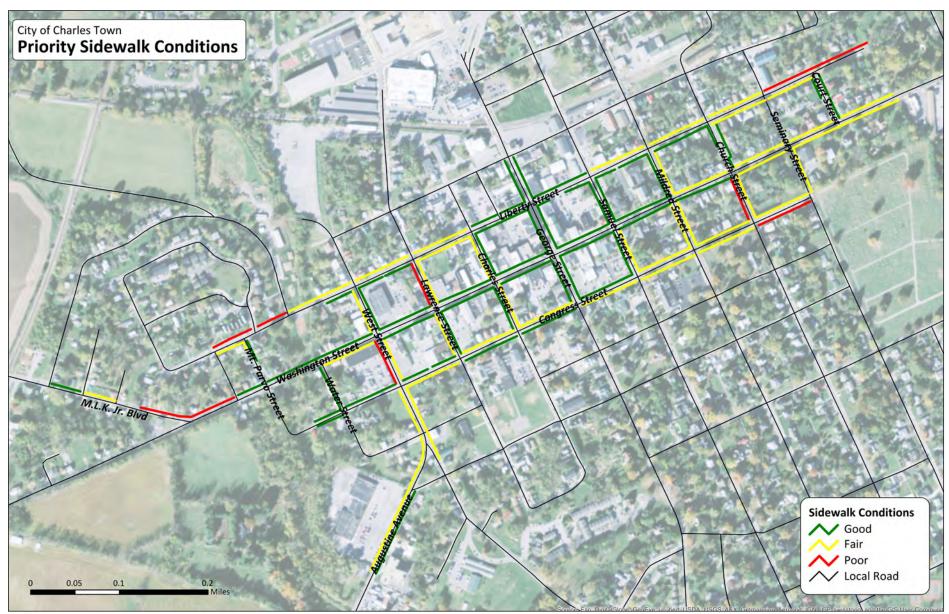


Figure 33: Charles Town Priority Sidewalk Conditions
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

# **Regional Bus Services**

Charles Town residents are serviced by the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA), which operates fixed-route, off-route (flex), and demand-responsive public transportation services throughout Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. During the week, Charles Town is served by the Orange Line and Charles Town Circulator. On weekends, EPTA does not provide fixed-route service to Charles Town.

The Orange Line provides service to Harpers Ferry and the VA Medical Center in Martinsburg where riders can transfer to the Blue Line, which provides access to Downtown Martinsburg and other connecting bus lines. The Orange Line provides scheduled service in Charles Town and Ranson at designated bus stop locations Monday through Saturday (Figure 34).

The Charles Town Circulator provides local service to Downtown Charles Town, shopping centers, the Casino/Racetrack, as well as some residential areas. The Charles Town Circulator stops periodically throughout the day. The current schedule of the EPTA service in Charles Town does not operate on regular headways (i.e., every 30 minutes). Because of this, the system may be confusing for some riders to understand and makes it difficult to use for those who aren't daily riders.



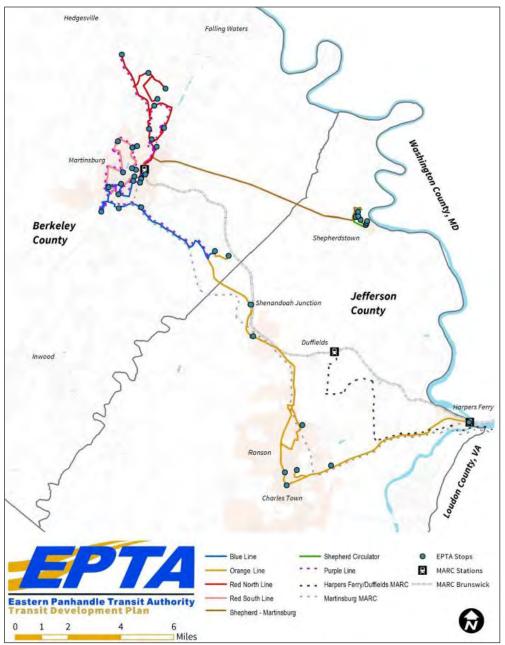
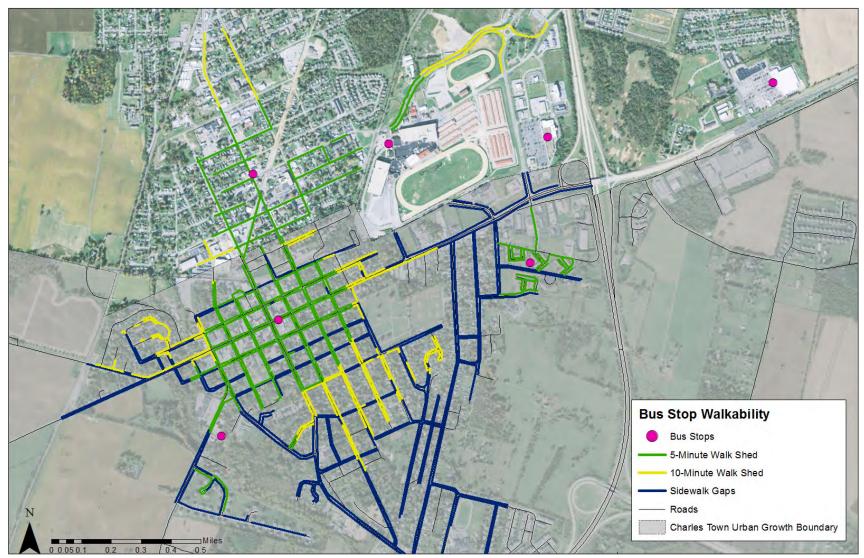


Figure 34: EPTA Transit Service and Designated Bus Stops

Source: EPTA Transit Development Plan, 2016

Finally, the limited sidewalk network outside of the Downtown provides few opportunities for transit users to reach destinations beyond the bus stop. **Figure 35** illustrates 5- and 10-minute walksheds from existing EPTA Orange Line designated bus stops in Charles Town and Ranson. This limited mobility utilizing public transit, combined with the small area of walkability surrounding existing transit stops, promotes the auto-centric nature of Charles Town and limits options for those who can't, or don't, drive.



**Figure 35: Charles Town Priority Sidewalk Conditions**Source: Michael Baker International

# **Passenger Rail**

Charles Town is located in a rail-rich area of West Virginia that has access to two passenger rail services: the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train Brunswick Line and Amtrak's Capital Limited Service operating between Washington, DC and Chicago. The City is in proximity to three train stations, identified below in **Table 7**, that provide access to one or both of these passenger rail services. Access to the three stations provides multiple options for access to residents of Charles Town, including by connection with bus transit.

Station Location	Passenger Rail Line	Connecting Services	Parking Spaces
226 E. Main Street Martinsburg, WV	MARC Brunswick Line Amtrak Capital Limited Line	EPTA Blue and Red Lines	81
5057 Flowing Springs Road Duffields, WV	MARC Brunswick Line	None	295
120 Potomac Street Harpers Ferry, WV	MARC Brunswick Line Amtrak Capital Limited Line	EPTA Orange Line	98

Table 7: Passenger Rail Stations Serving Charles Town

Source: Michael Baker International

As identified earlier in the plan, the City of Charles Town has a relatively lower cost of living as compared to the National Capital Region. This fact, coupled with good access to passenger rail makes the City an attractive choice for those who work in the Washington, DC metropolitan region but desire a lower cost of living.

# **Opportunity for Passenger Rail Downtown**

Bisecting Charles Town, east to west, is an existing CSX freight rail line that connects to the MARC passenger rail line in Harpers Ferry, WV. Although the feasibility has yet to be examined or determined, there exists the possibility of rerouting the existing CSX freight traffic to the existing Norfolk Southern line on the east side of Ranson and reusing the CSX line as an extension of the MARC passenger line to Downtown Charles Town and Ranson. Such a stop in Downtown Charles Town would result in a transit-oriented development (TOD) pattern and be a boost to the area. Presumably, such a stop would be on North Street between Mildred and Church where the railroad company has additional space were a stop could be located. A passenger rail transit stop located in the urban core, with commuters having the ability to walk from home to the train would benefit both Charles Town and Ranson. There would be opportunities to increase the Transect Zone (discussed in the Growth and Land Use Vision of this Plan) or the density and mixed used options around the train station.

# Building Blocks for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity: Downtown First Focus

Discussed throughout this Comprehensive Plan is the recurring theme of a Downtown First focus. The historic, cultural, residential and economic activities throughout Downtown serve as the symbolic heart of Charles Town. In order to truly realize the full potential of Downtown Charles Town for residents and visitors alike, the City must fully embrace the improvement of mobility, accessibility, and connectivity.

Mobility represents more than movement, it is the ability for a person to travel to where they want to go in the way in which they want to get there. Mobility is highly variable, it is a personal choice and can have many different definitions throughout the community. To fully achieve mobility, a place must be accessible. Accessibility allows people of all walks of life, regardless of ability, to freely travel to, enter, and exit their destination. Accessibility rises above legal requirements when it is recognized as a key component of a livable community that works for all its residents. Finally, connectivity allows people to easily move throughout the City in a direct way. Connectivity also has roots in redundancy, and the ability to travel different routes and in different ways to reach the same destination is critical to keeping Charles Town moving.

Charles Town has a solid foundation on which to continue to build a transportation network that promotes mobility, accessibility, and connectivity for all. Chares Town and the region at large have made a concerted effort over the past several years to place an emphasis on improving transportation resources and connections. Focusing on implementing these plans should be a key priority for Charles Town moving forward.

# **Building Blocks: Street Network**

# **2014 Charles Town Transportation Study**

The 2014 Transportation Study for the City of Charles Town provides data, analysis, and project recommendations for inclusion in the City's Comprehensive Plan update. The plan was developed using a combination of data sources, previous studies, stakeholder input, and technical analyses conducted both for the City's study and the Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The study specifically recommended 24 improvements to the roadway network as illustrated in **Figure 36**. These improvements include new roadway construction, improvements to, or reconstruction of existing streets to ensure their long-term viability and increase capacity where needed, and intersection improvements to enhance safety. The study recognized the inherent interrelatedness, particularly through transportation, of Ranson and Charles Town and how projects in one jurisdiction naturally impact the other.

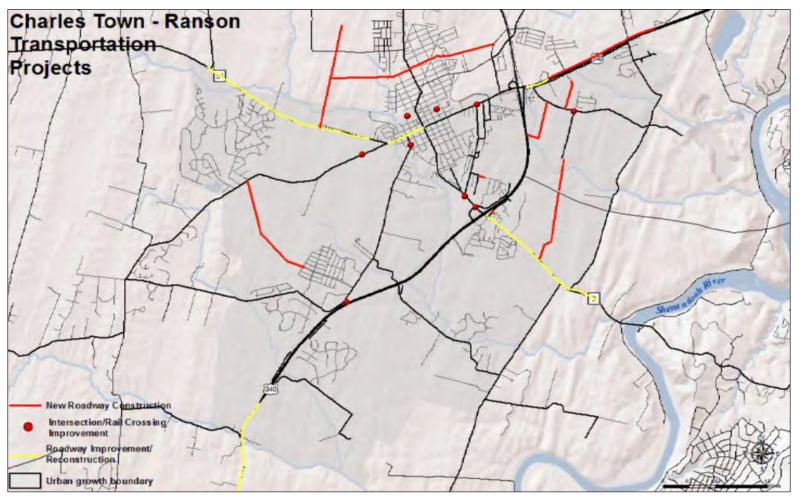


Figure 36: Charles Town – Ranson Transportation Improvement Projects Source: HEPMPO 2014 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

# **Existing Roadway Improvements**

In addition to the improvements identified through the 2014 *Transportation Study*, as development occurs on State Routes, improvements to those roads may be needed or required. The cost of such improvements would be borne by the developer where the development has frontage along the street or road. These requirements are beyond regular volume capacity improvements needed based upon the impact during peak hours. One solution to such an issue is the application of a transportation development fee, which is discussed in Building Blocks: Policy and Implementation.

Outside of capacity improvements and reconstruction of roadways that have met the end of their design-life, there as several roads that have significantly compromised vertical alignments and will also need improvements. These compromised alignments, such as the intersection of WV 115 and Cattail Run Road, pose a safety risk to the traveling public and where improvements to horizontal alignments can be accomplished, they should also be improved.

# **Grid Network**

Much of the existing network of streets in Charles Town are based on the original historic layout designed by Charles Washington and his successors in a primary grid pattern. Grid patterns maximize the effectiveness of the transportation network by allowing multiple ways to get to a single point and providing the shortest possible distance between two points. Traffic is dispersed across the entire grid – rather than confined to the identified arterial streets.

More recently, additions to the street network have been based on decisions dictated by property boundaries, the timing of development, and individual development plans. There was no master plan to guide subsequent street patterning or to ensure that, when infill occurs, streets between various developments meet. This is perhaps best characterized by the abundant use of curvilinear street design.



The use of curvilinear street patterns, characterized by cul-de-sacs, limits by its nature the connectivity of neighborhoods and directness of travel. It pushes local traffic onto higher classification roadways with generally one-way-in one-way-out design and limits the ability to find alternative routes. Furthermore, it creates artificially long travel paths as part of its design.

For example, for a person living in house 1 to visit house 2, their path of travel is much farther using the existing curvilinear street network (blue line) rather than if the streets connected in a grid-like pattern (orange line), see **Figure 36**. The ability for reasonable travel becomes more even untenable between different developments. A person traveling between points 1 and point 2 (red line) in **Figure 37** has a long distance to travel due to curvilinear streets (green line) not joining developments.





Figure 36 and 37: Connectivity Analysis between Development Types Source: Michael Baker International

Again, using the grid pattern concept, the red line shows a connection between developments and the distance would be much shorter than the distance presented in green. It is important to remember this is not just about vehicle travel, but neighbors and children walking to friends' homes.

Grid pattern streets are efficient in that when a street is congested or a street is obstructed due to an emergency, going over one block alleviates the pressure being applied to particular area. The grid pattern is more walkable and expandable. This creates connections and a sense of community among the developments, and any future redevelopment or increase in density is completed best on a block-by-block basis.

In light of the above discussion, curvilinear streets can be an acceptable design approach based on topography and site layout for new developments provided they are designed with connectivity in mind and with reasonable block lengths that promote walkability. In fact, a technical study conducted on the residential street pattern compares the benefits of both the curvilinear street and grid street design approaches, and further details the benefits of a hybrid street design approach that makes it possible to create communities that are efficient, viable, livable, healthy and highly marketable. <sup>5</sup> Cul-de-sacs, due to their size, are very inefficient use of land and resources, consume a significant amount of asphalt and time to plow during snow storms, reduce walkability, exacerbate congestion, and reduce overall mobility.

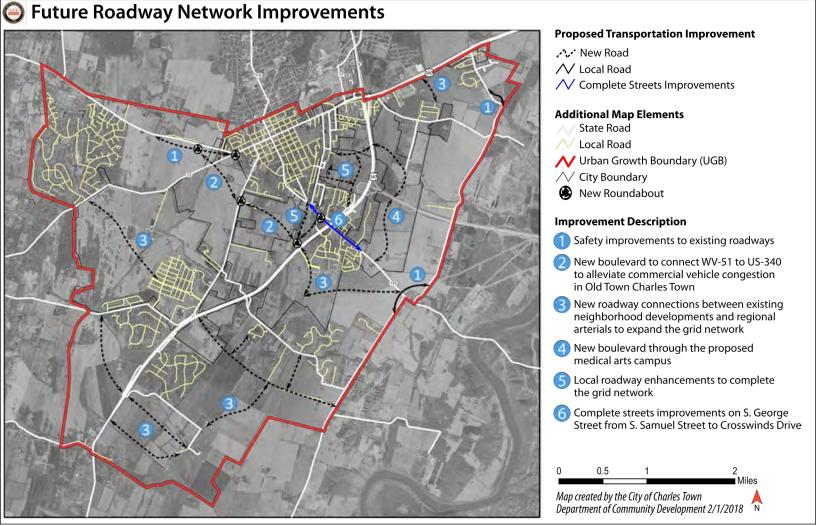
<sup>5</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Company. Research Highlights Socio-economic Series 75, Residential Street Pattern Design. 2002. Accessed online at https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/publications/en/rh-pr/tech/socio75.html

# **Existing Roadway Improvements**

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, the Downtown First focus and the grid network concept were discussed at length and a series of future transportation connections.

Depicted in Figure 38 below are three main purposes:

- connect existing or new suburban developments to Downtown Charles Town;
- · fill-in existing gaps in the grid network; and
- establish primary streets for new grid networks in undeveloped areas.



**Figure 38: Future Roadway Network Improvements** 

# Building Blocks: Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks

# 2016 Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study

The Walkability and Connectivity Study completed by the City of Charles Town in August 2016 identified sidewalk gaps and the areas with the poorest overall sidewalk conditions requiring improvement. Based on this analysis, a short list of eight priority segments were identified for investment. These segments represent areas in most need of investment due to the condition and importance to the sidewalk network.

"[We] want to be able to walk EVERYWHERE in Charles Town. We are a small community, there is no reason to have to drive everywhere."

Source: Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

The sidewalks in Charles Town are largely the responsibility of the individual land owner. Those responsibilities include maintenance, repair, and replacement, as necessary. The City must work alongside landowners to find ways to improve these priority sidewalk investment areas, and continue to improve the walkability of Charles Town (see **Figure 39** below).

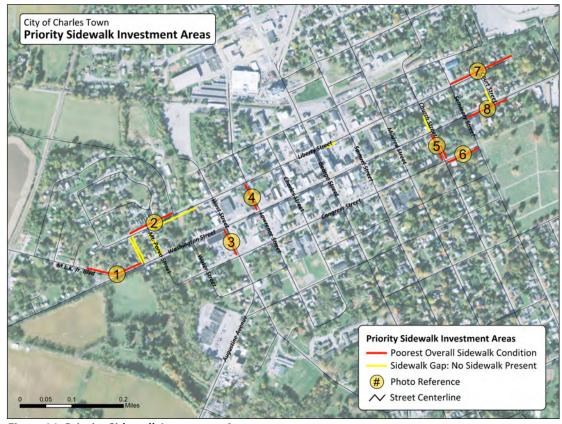
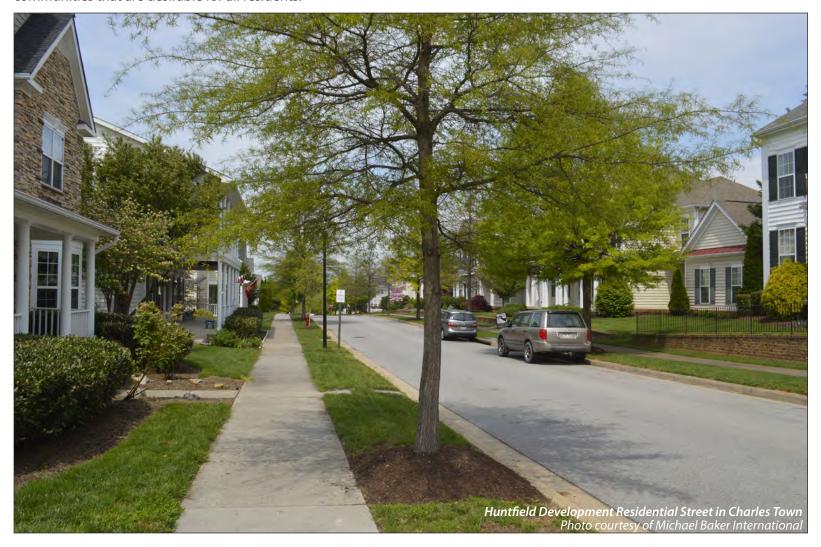


Figure 39: Priority Sidewalk Investment Areas
Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

The plan also identified opportunities to improve the trail network which would improve the overall connectivity of Charles Town through non-vehicular means. These trail improvements have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan through the future bicycle and pedestrian connections map (**Figure 39**).

# New Development Sidewalk Requirements

To ensure the future of the walkability of Charles Town, a requirement should be enacted that mandates all new developments to install sidewalks at the time of initial construction. This approach, combined with grid network development style, will promote communities that are desirable for all residents.



# **Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections**

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, Charles Town's relationship with the natural environment was routinely cited as a top asset to the community and a reason that many people choose to live here.

Combining this desire to provide access to natural resources with the Downtown First focus, a series of future bicycle and pedestrian connections (shown in **Figure 40**) were identified which would connect:

- existing or new suburban developments to Downtown Charles Town;
- existing parks and recreational resources; and
- regional bicycle and pedestrian assets, such as the Route 9 Trail.

Evitts Run Improvements: Not to be overlooked, a discussion of a trail connection path along the Evitts Run is highlighted in the Downtown Vision Section of this Plan.

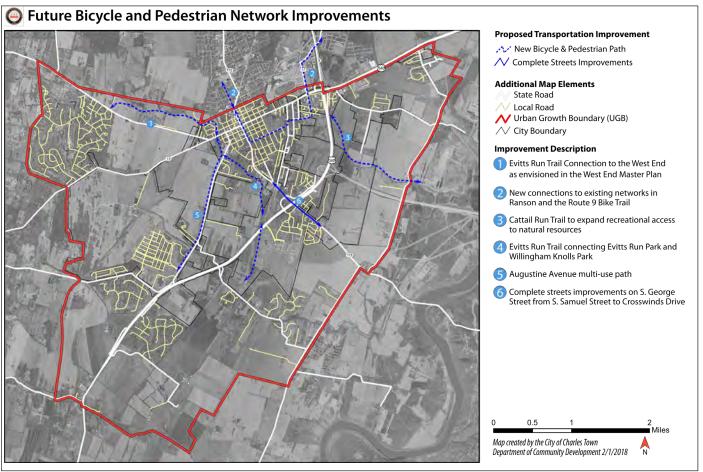


Figure 40: Future Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Improvements

# **Building Blocks: Wayfinding**

The 2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study identified a preliminary wayfinding program that is highlighted by vehicular and pedestrian and bicyclist signage. A wayfinding signage system (see Figures 41 and 42) for Charles Town should be organized to direct visitors and residents to major attractions and destinations, regardless of their transportation mode. Signage should be strategically located along priority routes that connect to areas of high activity. In addition to navigation, the signs can alert newcomers to the presence of these attractions and encourage "pedestrian propulsion", or some element of the street that entices one to walk farther than originally intended. Fortunately, the City has many points of interest located in its Downtown that are within walking distance.

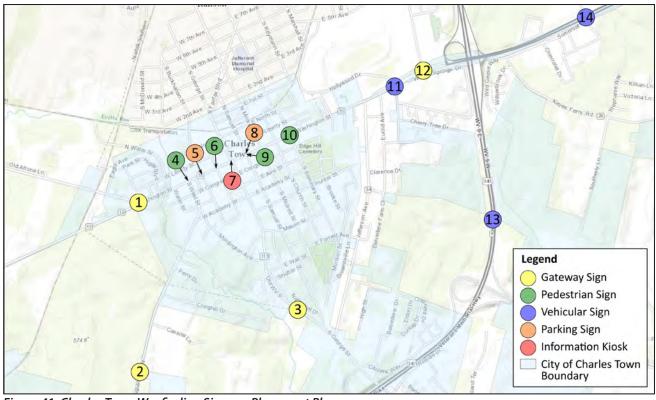


Figure 41: Charles Town Wayfinding Signage Placement Plan Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016



Figure 42: Charles Town Wayfinding Signage Designs Source: Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study, 2016

# **Building Blocks: Complete Streets**

Charles Town is currently vehicle-focused with wide travel lanes, sidewalk gaps, and limited trail connections. The City has the opportunity to achieve greater mobility and accessibility for all residents and visitors by creating a network of **complete streets**. Complete streets integrate and balance people, land use, and multi-modal transportation into the street design so that all people can utilize and enjoy the space. Street designs are not one size fits all, but instead should be unique to its context.

The Downtown streets should be designed to support pedestrian mobility and active public spaces. Reducing travel lane widths reduces vehicular speeds and allows for the streets to become more pedestrian oriented. Wider sidewalks promote active public spaces and increase commerce for businesses by creating safer places for pedestrians to walk, allowing for storefronts to expand onto the sidewalk, and increasing outdoor seating options. On some streets, such as Charles Street, creating a "shared street" by raising the roadway to the same height as the sidewalk allows for a continuous surface. This creates a pedestrian only space when the road is closed to traffic.

Outside the Downtown, streets should be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and accessibility to Downtown Charles Town and surrounding areas. Design should include safe and visible crossing opportunities and use of landscaping as a buffer zone between pedestrians and bicyclists and vehicular traffic. These streets should allow for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists through wide sidewalks or separate trails.



# Building Blocks: Policy and Implementation

# 2012 Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

The Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance provides design standards for any new public or private streets. These design standards are specified for defined functional street types according to the level of service they provide or are intended to provide. Amendments to this document may be needed in accordance with best practice standards or the principles of SmartCode.

# 2011 Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study

In 2011, HEPMPO completed a study for a proposed transportation development fee for the cities of Ranson and Charles Town. The study was developed as a result of the significant growth projections through the *HEPMPO LRTP: Direction 2035*. The need for a transportation development fee was identified due to limited state funding available for highway improvements and the anticipated growth outpacing the available transportation infrastructure.

The fee structure was developed to be:

- legally and technically defensible;
- financially constrained;
- related to "real" project needs;
- fair and consistent; and
- simple to administer.

The study developed and employed a methodology to determine transportation improvements that would be required at full "build-out" of both Charles Town and Ranson, identified costs associated with these improvements, and estimated the total cost per unit of development (by land-use type) that would use the transportation improvements. The scale of improvements identified as necessary exceeded the available funding for transportation projects. One way in which to fund these improvements is to apply a transportation development fee at the time of construction.

Transportation development fees are typically collected at the time of building permit application and can be collected for individual developers. The fee structure identified through the study included options for credits based on improvements made by developers to reduce the impact on the transportation network. These credits would reduce the total transportation development fee applied per unit.

If the transportation development fee is not applied, the cost of the transportation improvements necessary for development of Charles Town and Ranson will need to be funded at the local and county level through some other type of revenue generation method, including taxes, fines, fees, and unique revenue generating partnerships with the private sector.

# Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity, it is recommended that Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

# **Ongoing**

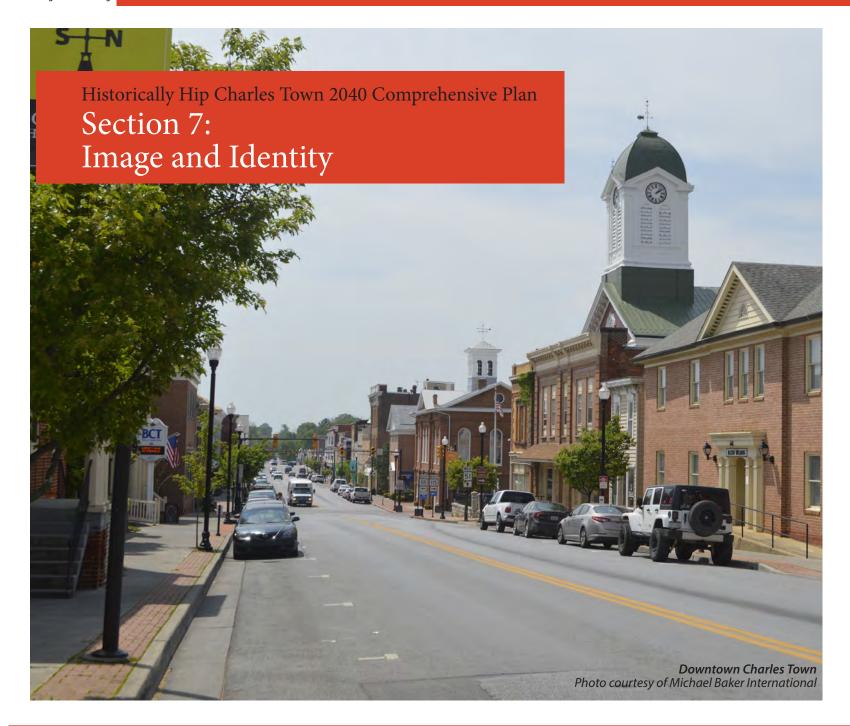
• Continuously consult EPTA on all initiatives pertaining to public transportation service initiatives within the Charles Town and Ranson service area.

# Short-term (0-4 years)

- Implement the recommendations contained in the Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study.
- Ensure the City's land development regulations include appropriate standards for the placement and construction of transit bus stops and shelters.
- Amend the City's *Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* to ensure all land developments are required to include sidewalks to increase the City's pedestrian connections and accessibility needs.
- Communicate the City's Comprehensive Plan to HEPMPO and ensure the plan's vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation improvement recommendations are considered for inclusion into the HEPMPO's LRTP.
- Prioritize the City's transportation improvement projects, and secure the necessary local, state, federal, and private funding for their successful implementation.
- Consider implementing a transportation development fee.
- Amend the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to include Complete Streets design standard details and requirements for their use and application.
- Collaborate with EPTA to identify new transit stops within the City and ensure all existing and future transit bus stops are ADA accessible.

# Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Secure the necessary easements to achieve a trail linkage to the Shenandoah River via Cattail Run.
- Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open space, and infrastructure.
- Work with the City of Ranson, Jefferson County, WVDOH, and HEPMPO to determine alternative routes (as specified in the Comprehensive Plan) to reduce through traffic flows in the Downtown.
- Commission a feasibility study to determine the viability of creating a MARC station stop in Downtown Charles Town via the existing CSX line between Charles Town/Ranson and Harpers Ferry.



# Image and Identity: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will protect, enhance, and reinforce its historic, small town character and "sense of place" through high quality urban design and development standards that protect existing assets and investments, and create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods that all people want to live, work, and play.

# Objectives:

- Improve the quality of new development and ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Charles Town's streetscapes and public spaces.
- Support the preservation of historic buildings throughout the City and its UGB.
- Improve the appearance of existing commercial facilities to revitalize existing businesses and stimulate the development of new business.

# Charles Town's Changing Image and Identity

Charles Town is a historically-rich community founded by President George Washington's brother Charles Washington in 1786 and chartered by the Virginia Assembly in 1787. With a population just above 5,000, the City is a quintessential rural American town nestled within the lush and bucolic Shenandoah Valley. It is the seat of government for Jefferson County and serves as the focal point of commerce for area residents, businesses, and farming community.

# "Charles Town has good bones

- Downtown COULD be great, if historical buildings are maintained/ updated. There's small town charm potential."

**Source:** Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

Charles Town has a wealth of heritage tourism assets and its proximity to established destinations like Harper's Ferry, Frederick, Antietam National Park, and other historically-rich communities such as Leesburg, VA makes it a popular tourist destination. Additionally, its proximity to the Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD metropolitan areas coupled with an affordable living environment make Charles Town a primary area for growth and commerce.

Although the City has grown considerably since its founding, the gridded street pattern and resilient urban framework of Downtown and its surrounding Old Town residential neighborhoods remains a testament to Charles Washington's vision. Moreover, the City provides a sense of place within its ever growing and changing landscape as discussed and illustrated in the Growth and Land Use section. However, like many rural American towns and cities, Charles Town's more recent suburban growth and development patterns have begun to erode. Its small town image, identity, and sense of place that is so important to its sustainability, livability, and vibrancy are changing. Understanding these challenges impacts strategic thinking about the City's future growth opportunities. Future scenario envisioning and dedicated planning can ensure that such growth in its historically-rich residential neighborhoods will be beneficial to the entire community.



# Building Blocks: Urban Design

A key strategy to sustaining Charles Town's small town image, identity, and sense of place is the application of sound urban design principles and standards. Urban design addresses a wide range of issues, including historic preservation; visual impact of new development; compatibility of new development with the existing community; natural landscape; perceptions of image; and identity and character within a community. The City has already implemented a number of design standards and policies as outlined below. A more comprehensive approach to the application of urban design must be considered in the context of smart growth for small rural towns like Charles Town. This will be discussed later in this section.

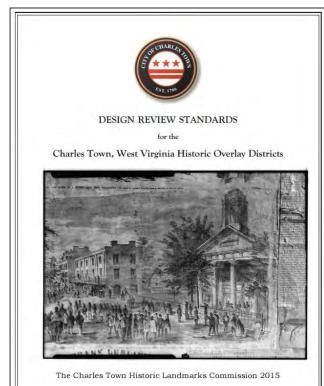
# **Design Review Standards for the Historic Overlay District**

Charles Town currently has Design Review Standards that are maintained, amended, and reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC). The HLC has a set of principles that are used to determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness is awarded on all new construction, demolitions, and exterior alterations to structures within Historic District Overlays.

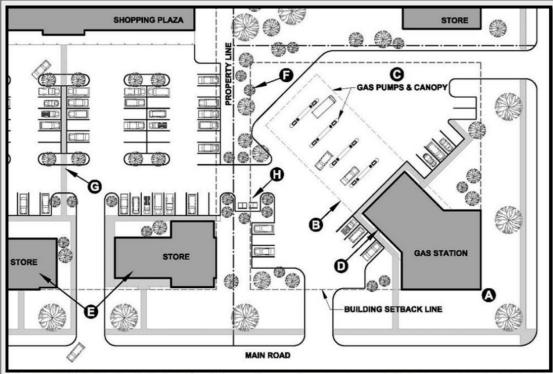
These principles include:

- safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving a historic district, including areas, sites, landmarks, structures and buildings, which reflect elements of Charles Town's cultural, social, economic, political and/or architectural history;
- stabilize and improve property values in the historic district;
- foster civic beauty;
- · strengthen the local economy;
- · promote heritage tourism; and
- promote the use of the historic district for the education, pleasure, and welfare of Charles Town citizens and the State of West Virginia

There are opportunities to extend the boundaries of the Historic District Overlay from the Downtown Charles Town central business district to include more of the City's residential neighborhoods around Downtown. As more property types are added to the overlay, it may become necessary to amend the design standards to incorporate design features for a more diverse set of buildings.



# **Land Development Design Standards**



**Figure 1323.01B: Redefining the Edges.** Corner Lots are especially important in defining the Street. Special attention shall be paid to bringing the Building mass all the way out to meet the corner. Large shopping plazas shall also attempt to infill the front of their Lots with new commercial space to take advantage of the road frontage.

- (A) Corner lots should try to place as much building mass near the intersection as possible to help anchor the lot and take advantage of the high visibility
- **(B)** Gas station canopies should be designed as an integral part of the station architecture whenever possible. This can allow for a visual or even physical connection which provides shelter between the vehicle and the building.
- (C) Alternative gas station layouts include placing the pumps near the rear of the lot while having the convenience store out in front near the street.
- (D) When it is not feasible to place the building entry directly on the front façade, attempts should be made to ensure that it is still readily visible and faces the main road or internal street.
- (E) Older shopping plazas set back far from the street can benefit from developing the land at the front of their lot. This helps to define the street character and allows for more "one-stop" shopping and shared parking opportunities.
- **(F)** Provide trees and other landscape screening to shield large parking areas from adjacent lots.
- (G) Large parking lots are encouraged to provide landscaped islands and walkways which help to break up the visual expanse of blacktop and encourage safe pedestrian travel areas
- (H) Some developments may benefit from having a shared access to a common dumpster location which both neighboring properties can use.

Figure 43: Charles Town Commercial Urban Design Standards Example Source: Charles Town Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

In addition to the Historic Overlay design standards, the City's Zoning Ordinance includes design standards for the Old Town Mixed Use Commercial (OT-MUC) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning districts that are to be appropriately incorporated into applicable subdivision and land development applications pursuant to the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. These standards require Traditional Neighborhood Development site planning and design for new residential construction. Such design contributes to Charles Town's historic character, upholds and reinforces the pedestrian scale and walkability of neighborhoods, and deemphasizes travel by automobile. The design standards also specify building orientation and site planning practices requirements for commercial and mixed-used commercial development which reinforce Charles Town's traditional urban grid and sidewalk system by maintaining a consistent building edge behind the right-of-way/parcel lines. Additionally, the standards include design requirements for pedestrian circulation and pedestrian amenities. Opportunities exist to strengthen these standards and their application.

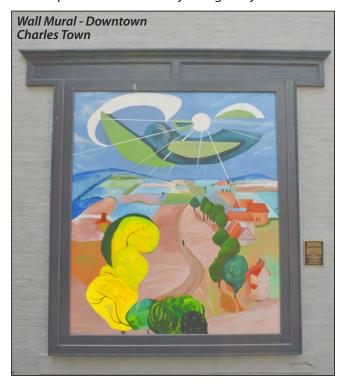
# **Façade Improvement Program**

Charles Town has an ongoing Façade Improvement Program that provides 50/50 match grants up to \$5,000 to building owners within the Historic Overlay District. The Charles Town's Façade Improvement Program was designed as an effort to improve and enhance the overall look and experience of Downtown Charles Town. The program is intended to assist property owners and/ or tenants within the Charles Town Historic Overlay District (HOD) in beautifying and rehabilitating property fronts. The ultimate purpose is to attract both customers and prospective business owners while serving as a tool for revitalization of the Downtown area. This program is managed by the City of Charles Town's Historic Landmarks Commission.

# **Beautification and Gateways**

Charles Town doesn't have a formal beautification program. However, citizens and clubs continuously demonstrate community pride through the City's seasonal beautification of Downtown that consists of the Public Works Department's planting colorful potted flowers during the growing season to the hanging of festive Christmas lights and decorations. Additionally, the Dolley Madison Garden Club annually maintains vibrant flower gardens in the Evitts Run Park that accentuate the park's natural beauty and greatly enhances the enjoyment of this public space.





The City's recent creation of the "C\*Town Arts & Culture District" will also contribute to its beautification efforts through the creation of community wall murals and "art alleys" in the Downtown. Such art alleys could further highlight the vibrancy and interest in the proposed expansion of Evitts Run Park as envisioned in the *West End Master Plan*. In fact, the City's first wall mural project was commissioned in 2016.

Research shows that beauty is one of the top three factors in creating community attachment or loyalty. Community beautification focuses on increasing the vibrancy and vitality of residential areas, public spaces, streets, and highways to promote community pride. It also includes environmental beautification involving planting flowers, trees, and other decorative flora.

A community's appearance has a significant impact on the mental impression that is formed by the person experiencing or visiting it for the first time. Depending upon the route taken, first time visitors to Charles Town may indeed form either negative or positive impressions of the City. Their impression could lead to decisions such as extending their visit, returning in the future, sharing their perceptions with family and friends, and perhaps relocating to the community. A pleasant community appearance adds to home values, helps attract business investment, and improves the health and livability of neighborhoods and the City overall.

# **Community Character and Design**



Charles Town already has a distinct character and established cultural center in its Downtown area. The Washington Heritage *C\*Town" Arts & Culture District Plan* calls for highlighting those features through simple and tactical streetscape improvements that highlight these details through design. New signage, design branded pavement, new benches, etc., are just a few of the recommendations. These improvements can be made sequentially over time.

Charles Town has the opportunity to engage local artists in the design and construction of new infrastructure improvements. Encouraging murals, pop-up shops, and temporary works of tactical urbanism can help members from across the community join in on the changes.

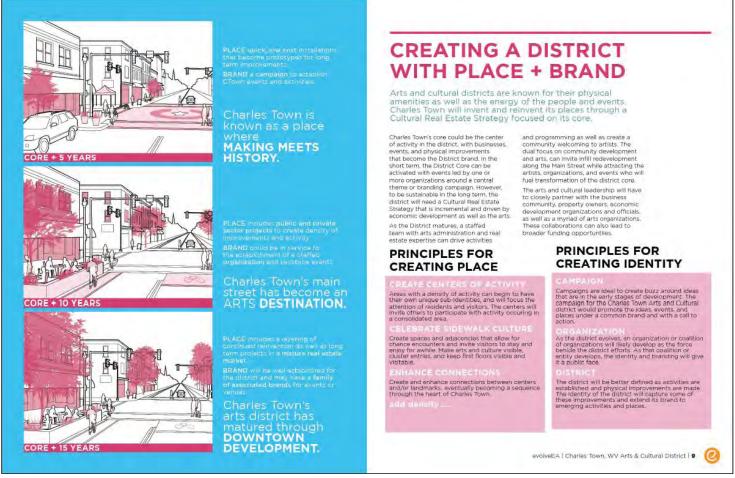


Figure 44: Charles Town's C\*Town Arts & Culture District Plan

# **Gateways**

Charles Town has four main gateways, entering and exiting the historic districts along Washington and George Streets. The *C\*Town Arts & Culture District Plan* recommends gateway signage along East and West Washington Street near Charles Town Races and Evitts Run Park, respectively. Additional gateway opportunities exist by entering the City from the north along N. George Street, and entering the City from the south near the intersection of S. George Street and Jefferson Ave.

The East Washington Street gateway presents the biggest challenge to the City's image and identity. It is mostly due to the heavy concentration of commercial strip development occurring along the U.S. 340 corridor that leads into East Washington Street at the City's boundary with Jefferson County. The lack of site development and urban design standards has produced a hodge-podge of single use commercial establishments. The majority of which have their own access driveways to U.S. 340/East Washington Street creating an environment that is not pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, the City's past efforts to improve the sidewalk infrastructure within its jurisdictional limits notwithstanding. In the future, improvements to the City's eastern gateway should extend to at least Flowing Springs Way.

# The Grand Idea: Historically Hip Charles Town

Charles Town already has many assets that make it Historically Hip, but few outside of the City are aware of those resources. The ultimate goal is to change the perceptions of visitors and nearby residents regarding the culture and assets of Charles Town.



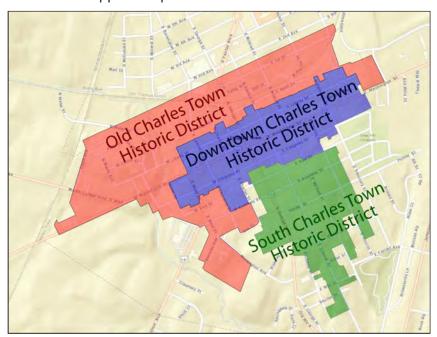
# **Building Blocks: Community Assets**

# **Arts & Cultural District (Building C\*Town)**

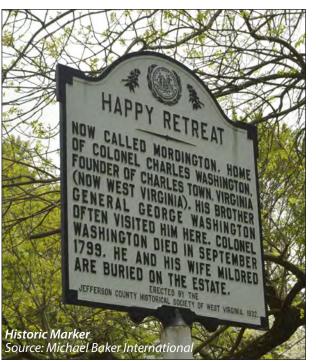
In June 2016, the Pittsburgh-based Architecture and Consulting firm evolveEA completed the *C\*Town Arts & Culture District Plan* for the City of Charles Town. The plan outlines a series of branding and design features for Downtown Charles Town to establish the area as a tourist and commercial destination under the name C\*Town Arts & Culture District. The City has adopted the plan and began the process of establishing the district with a kickoff event during the opening ceremonies of the first annual West Virginia Fest on June 18, 2016. In the future, more of these events will accompany targeted design improvements to public infrastructure in the Downtown area to formally establish the C\*Town Arts and Culture District over the following 15 years.

# **Cultural and Historic Preservation**

Charles Town has a number of historic and cultural assets that are well positioned to be leveraged. In addition to the municipal Historic District Overlay in Downtown, Charles Town has three more National Register Historic Districts within city limits. They are Downtown Charles Town Historic District, Old Charles Town Historic District, and South Charles Town Historic District (**Figure 45**). These three districts contain a total of 665 contributing structures of historical and cultural importance. In order to leverage these assets, a culture of awareness needs to be fostered through Citywide discussions on these structures and their historic significance. With a public consensus on the significance of various structures, the task of utilizing both public and private resources to support the preservation of these structures becomes more palatable.



**Figure 45: Charles Town Historic Districts** Source: City of Charles Town



# Needs for the Future

As envisioned by this Comprehensive Plan, the City of Charles Town desires to strengthen and emphasize its identity as exemplified by the Downtown and its traditionally designed and compact Old Town neighborhoods. This plan's Downtown First Focus approach emphasizes the need to reinvest in the City's existing infrastructure and neighborhoods, and encourage new growth and development (including infill) within its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Also the plan advocates a traditional neighborhood design structure that promotes walkability, connectivity, and a diverse mix of commercial uses and residential types that withstand the test of time.

To accomplish this vision the City must embrace good urban design principles and standards which epitomizes Charles Town's historic, small town, rural character as well as creates a sustainable and livable City. Embracing the principles and standards will create a framework that: supports a growing and diverse population; attracts and retains a skilled workforce; achieves greater efficiency in the use of land; and leads to a more diversified economy.

To reiterate, design standards should address a wide range of issues, including: the visual impact of new development; compatibility of new development with the existing development; natural landscape; perceptions of image; and identity and character within the Charles Town community.

According to the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan, Envision Jefferson 2035:

"Good design is not optional. The quality of the physical environment – attractive streets, buildings, parks, and open space – has a direct impact on the city's economy, the sustainability of its neighborhoods, and the successful stewardship of its unique natural and cultural resources. The community expects the highest level of excellence in building design, streetscapes, pedestrian amenities, preservation of special places, and enhancement of community distinctiveness."

**Source:** City of Roanoke Urban Design Manual

Design and form guidelines are standards that aim to maintain a level of quality and architectural character, addressing features such as building facades, orientation, setbacks, public spaces, and/or landscaping. The goal is to address form-based standards, including building height and size elements, highlighting the building's context within its surroundings, rather than only zoning classifications. While the primary focus is on the size, scale, and shape (massing) of buildings in relation to one another, there is also a desire for an appropriate mix of uses. It will continue to be desirable for the style of the new structure to take its inspiration from its surroundings. The important factor of community design is that massing is in keeping with the area in which it is designed.

# **Conservation Design Development**



The above image shows low density, large lot, single family, detached residential greenfield development in Charles Town. Zoning and land development site layout and design standards are encouraged to achieve development styles that accomplish the same densities, but preserve the city's small town identity and rural viewsheds. The examples below compare an identical development site, but from different development perspectives.

## To be avoided (traditional site layout):



To be encouraged (better site design approach):



Figure 46: Conservation Design Approach
Source: http://www.greenerprospects.com/PDFs/CSD\_Overview.pdf

# Maintaining Alignment, Rhythm, and Spacing Development



The yellow dashed line in the above image illustrates the building setback line for a typical urban residential neighborhood. As illustrated, the shaded structure's setback is not consistent with the other building setback and disrupts the alignment and rhythm of the streetscape. The illustration further explains how new infill housing setback standards should conform to ensure compatibility with existing housing on the block.

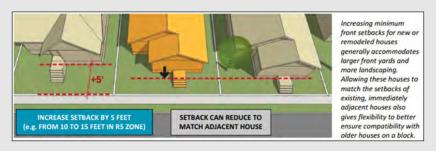


Figure 47: Development Setback Consistency

# **Traditional Neighborhood Infill Development**



The above image shows a traditional residential infill development project in Carlisle, PA. The area enclosed in the yellow box was the former site of the Carlisle Hospital. After its demolition and relocation, the Carlisle community revised the zoning to allow traditional neighborhood development that upholds the surrounding residential neighborhood's design, scale, and massing that includes rear-loaded garages accessed by alleyways. The left image below shows a modern designed house placed between traditional neighborhood homes, while the right image demonstrates a mores consistent neighborhood design.

### To be avoided:



To be encouraged:



Figure 48: Urban Residential Infill Development

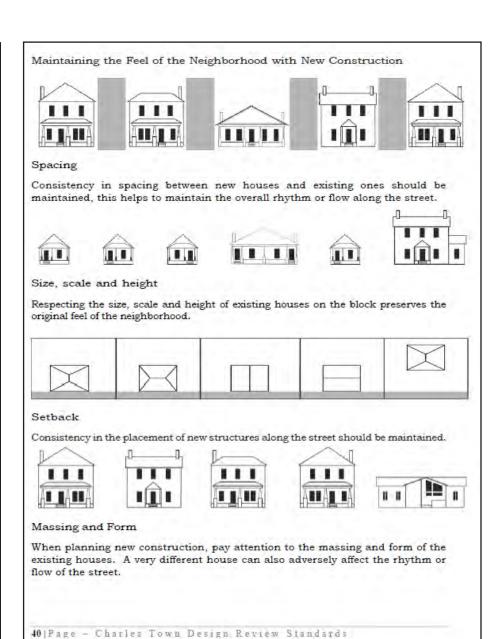


Figure 49: Charles Town's Design Review Standards

# Better Models for Development in the Shenandoah Valley 2010 Meeting 21st Century Challenges

Valley Conservation Council

Updated and Expanded by Sara S. Hollberg Urban design standards may address the following elements:

- architectural detailing
- building style and form
- building height
- building orientation
- building materials
- building setbacks
- circulation lighting
- grading
- landscaping

- lot dimension
- parking
- pedestrian and vehicular access
- preservation of natural and cultural features
- public and open spaces
- signage
- site amenities
- streetscape design

The City must consider a more comprehensive approach to its urban design standards, in light of the City's Historical Overlay District design standards and those detailed in its Zoning Ordinance. This ensures the above mentioned elements are specific to the form and function of its Downtown, Old Town neighborhoods, gateways and commercial centers, and new greenfield development opportunities within the UGB.

As discussed in the Growth and Land Use section, the SmartCode provides a form-based approach to zoning emphasizes form, function and design of land uses, and deemphasizes the focus on specific use types. Among other design resources, the Valley Conservation Council's *Better Models for Development in the Shenandoah Valley* is a very relevant publication that "encourage[s] communities and the private sector to achieve true community development, where projects fit into an overall vision that takes into account fiscal, environmental, quality of life, and economic objectives." <sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Hollberg, Sara S., Better Models for Development in the Shenandoah Valley 2010. Valley Conservation Council. Retrieved online:

http://www.valleyconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Better-Models-for-Development.pdf

## Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Image and Identity, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

#### **Ongoing**

• Continue to support and work with the Dolley Madison Garden Club to expand upon the City's landscaping and flower garden initiatives within the Downtown and gateways.

## Short-term (0-4 years)

Review the Charles Town Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to identify opportunities to
incorporate conservation subdivision design principles and standards as recommended by published practitioner Randall
Arndt.

## Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.
- Partner with Charles Town Now to promote clean streets and sidewalks, properly designed signage, facade improvements, placemaking, art and beautification projects to present an appealing image to residents, visitors, tenants and investors to the Downtown.
- Expand the City's current Historic District within the Old Town areas to protect and preserve additional historic resources.
- Implement appropriate regulations and standards to preserve historic buildings and properties located within the City's undeveloped areas that often include historic homestead and farmstead properties and buildings. Such properties and buildings should be protected from new development and/or integrated into the proposed land development plan.
- Promote, encourage, and incentivize the redevelopment of the Hill Dale Shopping Center into a vibrant new commercial mixed use center that is supportive of the West End neighborhood and Downtown revitalization. The mixed use center should serve as an additional hub and anchor connecting mixed use residential development with Downtown.
- Promote, encourage, and incentivize the redevelopment of the Somerset Village Shopping Plaza into a vibrant mixed use Town Center.
- Develop design review standards that are appropriate to the context of new developments in the Old Charles Town area not covered by a historic overlay district.



## Quality Public Services: Goal Statement

The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety, and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

## Objectives:

- Ensure the delivery of quality, adequate, and affordable public water and sewer services through intergovernmental cooperation.
- Continue to provide a high quality and well-trained police force to meet the City's law enforcement and protection needs.
- Support the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers.
- Promote the sustainability of the Charles Town Library to ensure its continued provision of quality museum and library services.
- Continue to provide diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities, and open natural spaces.
- Continue to support the provision and delivery of quality public education services and increase access to vocational educational opportunities.

## **Building Blocks for Quality Public Services**

Quality public services are the foundation of strong growing cities. Clean and economical drinking water and efficient wastewater treatment is central to a city's ability to provide for its residents. Residents require well-run and responsive law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and fire departments. Families expect investments in schools, libraries, community meeting spaces, and recreational opportunities. Proper implementation of technology and telecommunication capabilities can increase the efficacy of public services and provide opportunities for growth. The City of Charles Town recognizes the importance of not just maintaining, but improving and upgrading its public services to exceed the needs of residents. By ensuring that public services are effective, Charles Town will have the standing required to attract new residents, tourists, and economic investment.

## **Public Safety**

## Fire/EMS

Two volunteer fire/EMS departments serve the City of Charles Town. The Independent Fire Company's designated territory is the northern part of Charles Town, encompassing the Downtown. Independent Fire Company has approximately 50 active members and responds to an average of 1,300 service calls per year. The southern part of Charles Town is serviced by the Citizens Fire Company. This company has over 70 volunteers and typically responds to more than 2,000 service calls per year. The designated territories of each department within the City are shown in **Figure 50**. Both departments service significant areas of Jefferson County.

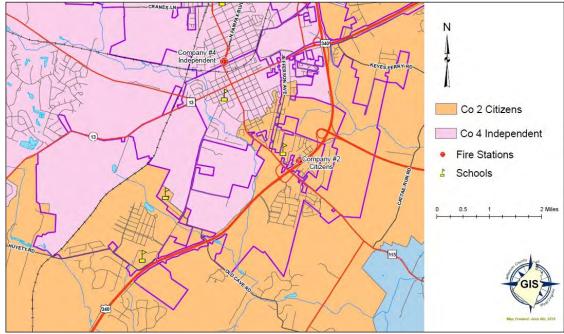


Figure 50: Fire/EMS Responsibilities within the City of Charles Town

Source: Jefferson County, 2016

These volunteer fire departments function independently of City governance and are funded primarily through their own fundraising initiatives. Charles Town, Ranson, and Jefferson County provide only minimal support to local fire departments. Jefferson County does support a separate entity, the Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency, which hires emergency response staff and provides emergency medical and fire suppression assistance across the county, in combination with local volunteer fire departments. Jefferson County has enacted an annual \$40.00 residential fee and an annual \$85.00 commercial fee to support the EMS services. Recently, the residential fee has been reduced from \$40.00 to \$35.00, which was publicly and greatly debated.

The reduction of this revenue specific EMS fund does not advance the effort to promote quality public services. At times, these two local fire departments struggle with volunteer recruitment and fundraising enough to adequately equip themselves. However, the operation of these departments is much too expensive for Charles Town and Ranson to fund, and providing additional City funding could endanger the departments' ability to solicit donations from the public. Nonetheless, the City of Charles Town stands behind its volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel and recognizes the essential lifesaving services they provide. The City will continue its support for both fire departments and encourage residents to support them as well.

## **Charles Town Police Department**

Charles Town's Police Department provides for the safety and well-being of all residents, visitors, and businesses within Charles Town. The department currently operates out of the police station located at 114 West Liberty Street and has 18 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees on staff. This includes a chief, a captain, two lieutenants, three sergeants, four corporals, four patrolmen, several part time crossing guards, a parking meter attendant, and an administrative assistant. The City is in the process of relocating the police department to 661 South George St., which provides a more modern facility that is centrally located to the department's service area.

The Charles Town Police Department has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.65 million. The City of Ranson also has its own police force, which is comprised of 16 FTE employees with annual operating budget of approximately \$1.344 million. In comparison, Charles Town's and Ranson's police departments' annual operating budgets respectively represent approximately \$314 and \$272 of per capita expenditures. The cities' joint-commissioned 2015 Collaboration Study provided an extensive evaluation of their respective police departments (among other City department functions) and evaluated opportunities for intergovernmental collaboration to achieve greater efficiencies in their respective law enforcement staffing and equipment, and ultimately overall cost savings.

In light of the collaboration opportunities, Charles Town is committed to ensuring that is police department resources and law enforcement capabilities are right sized based on the City's population.

#### Recreation

The City of Charles Town recognizes the importance of recreational opportunities in maintaining a good quality of life for residents. Parks and community green space increase the ability and desire for residents to engage in physical activity, improving community health and wellness. Developing a park in a neighborhood can also increase the value of nearby properties while decreasing city stormwater management costs.

Charles Town parks are operated by the City of Charles Town Parks and Recreation Commission (CTPR) and maintained by the City. The City established CTPR in 2005, and it, along with the City, work hand-in-hand but are distinct entities. CPTR has its own program-based employees that are responsible for the operation of the public pool and seasonal tennis programs. The City provides administrative, financial, and maintenance support to CTPR and a management services agreement is being drawn up to formalize this arrangement and provide proper oversight. Regarding programming, there may be opportunities to partner with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation.

The CTPR operates the park systems summarized in **Table 8** and illustrated in **Figure 51**. These systems are located within the City's existing jurisdictional corporate limits.

At this time the CTPR has not developed a parks and recreation master plan, however, the City's Evitts Run Revitalization Master Plan provides a series of detailed expansion and improvement recommendations for Evitts Run Park, as well as repurposing opportunities for the Charles Town Skate Park. The CTPR will need to consider future parks and recreation needs based on the Future Land Use Plan and needs of the population. For example, the Comprehensive Plan Community Survey indicates the general public's interest in the availability of volleyball courts, tennis courts, and water features (splash pads) among other recreational facility amenities as listed in Figure 52. These and other amenities will need to be considered, prioritized, and funded (via a Capital Improvements Plan) in the future as demand and funding availability warrant.

## City of Charles Town Parks and Recreation Commission

#### Mission:

It is our mission to enhance and unify our community by providing diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities and open natural spaces that serve the needs of our citizens and visitors.

#### Values:

We believe that parks and recreation opportunities are an essential component of a strong and vibrant community. Quality parks, recreational facilities and programs strengthen community pride and sense of place, promote health and wellness, contribute to a healthy economy and preserve natural and cultural resources.

**Source:** City of Charles Town, 2016

Charles Town's Parks and Recreation Commission should collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the 2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan. Such facility improvements could serve to help meet the City's park facility programming needs. Doing so could eliminate duplication of resources and create greater efficiencies in the City's and County's capital investments.

Park	Location	Size	Туре	Features/Amenities
Charles Town Skate Park (future improvements planned in the West End Revitalization Plan)	102 Maple Avenue, Charles Town, WV	~1.5 Acres	Active	Half-pipe, quarter pipe, grind rail, bank rail, stairs, picnic table, and other equipment with a steel riding surface; the park is usable for skaters of all levels. Two benches and a picnic table also provide seating for spectators.
Evitts Run Park (future improvements planned in the West End Revitalization Plan)	W. Liberty Street (between N. West and N. Water Streets), Charles Town, WV	~2 Acres	Active	Regulation basketball court; a second multi-use court; play structure and other playground equipment; benches, picnic tables, and an outdoor grill; and one pavilion.
Happy Retreat/Craig Hill Estates	Craig Hill Estates and Happy Retreat, Charles Town, WV	23 Acres	Passive	Hard-surface walking trail, plus gravesites of Charles Town's Founder, Charles Washington, and his wife, Mildred.
Jefferson Memorial Park	S. Mildred Street and Morrison Street, Charles Town, WV	11.6 Acres	Active	Hard-surface walking trail, three tennis courts, two basketball courts, two playground areas, four pavilions, a Veteran's memorial, and an outdoor public swimming pool
Willingham Knolls Park	Old Cave Road near the intersection of Rt. 340, Charles Town, WV	66 Acres	Passive	Hard-surface walking trail, benches and footbridges over Evitts Run

**Table 8: Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission Park Resources** Source: Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission, 2017

Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan



Q7: What are your top 5 recreation

Figure 51: City of Charles Town Public Park Facilities
Source: City of Charles Town Department of Community Development, 2016

#### **Water and Wastewater Services**

Water and wastewater utility providers can have a significant impact on their community and the environment. Service rates must be economical so that not too large of a burden is placed on residents, but maintaining and operating water and wastewater treatment facilities can be an expensive proposition. Additionally, these water and wastewater operations must be conducted with great care in order to meet strict health, engineering, and environmental regulations.

The Charles Town Utility Board recently completed a *Source Water Protection Plan* for its water treatment facility in May 2016. This plan emphasizes the need for the Board to work with local farming regulatory and advisory agencies to raise awareness about nutrient and land management issues to reduce nutrient runoff and water non-point source pollution. The Board would also like to strengthen its relationships with the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) and the WV Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR) and work with them to ascertain methods to identify and reduce contamination sources. Generally, the Board also sees a need to raise awareness among the general public about the importance of protecting drinking water supplies and increase the involvement of residents in the development of source water protection plans.

### **Charles Town Utility Board**

The Charles Town Utility Board was created in 1998 by the Charles Town City Council to supervise, manage, and control the operation of the city's waterworks and sewage system. The Charles Town Utility Board systems provide water and wastewater service to Charles Town residents, residents in Ranson, and surrounding areas in Jefferson County. The Board currently operates the Charles Town Water Treatment Facility, which withdraws water from the Shenandoah River. This facility has the capacity to store 4.0 million gallons of treated drinking water per day and currently treats and produces an average of 1.68 million gallons per day. The Board also operates three wastewater treatment plants (WWTP): Tuscawilla WWTP; Willow Spring WWTP; and Charles Town WWTP. These WWTP's have a combined average daily flow of 2.35 million gallons and total annual flow of 858 million gallons. The WWTP's total available treatment capacity is 0.75 million gallons, which equates to approximately 4,166 additional households.

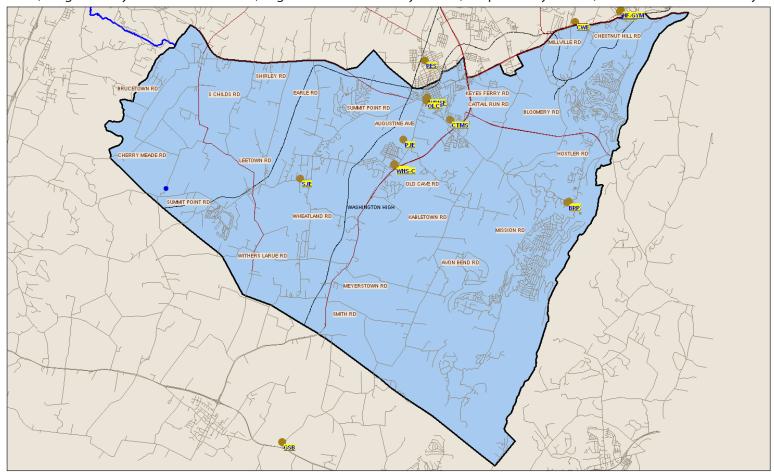
Additionally, the Board released, in April, its 2015 Wastewater Strategic Plan and Ten-Year Wastewater Capital Plan. This plan examines the future wastewater needs of the Board's service area, determines needed upgrades, and provides implementation recommendations. These recommendations included additional actions to reduce nutrient loads in treated wastewater, continuing growth related capital projects, and evaluating the Willow Spring WWTP for possible closure. The Board has made a preliminary assessment that the Willow Spring WWTP is superfluous because there is available treatment capacity at both the Charles Town WWTP and Tuscawilla WWTP. The Willow Spring WWTP also has limited expansion potential because of its discharge location along Cattail Run. Furthermore, this WWTP regularly exceeds its discharge limits on copper and zinc, resulting in permit violations.

Three sewer utilities provide wastewater treatment services to Charles Town, Ranson, and the immediate surrounding areas of Jefferson County. The service providers are the Charles Town Utility Board, the Ranson Sewer Department, and the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD). On November 2016, Charles Town and Ranson presented a preliminary sewer reorganization plan to the Jefferson County Commission. The plan proposes that the Charles Town Utility Board and the Ranson Sewer Department divide and acquire the existing Jefferson County PSD assets and debt. This plan would reduce the redundancy and inefficiency that occurs under the current ownership system. In May 2017, the Jefferson County Commission held a Public Hearing and voted to dissolve the Jefferson County PSD and have Charles Town Utility Board take over the assets and debt. This process has been approved and the proposed reorganization and consolidation is supported by the Comprehensive Plans of Jefferson County, Ranson, and Charles Town. Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 continues to support the consolidation of the three service providing entities.

#### Education

## **Jefferson County Schools**

High quality schools are fundamental to long term economic growth in an area. Schools educate and prepare the youth of today to be contributing citizens and the economic drivers of the future. Families also place a high value on being located in a good school district when relocating or buying a home. The City of Charles Town is fortunate to be served by Jefferson County Schools and its exemplary staff. The Jefferson County Schools includes two high schools, four middle schools, eight elementary schools serving grades K-5, one primary school serving grades K-1, and one intermediate school serving grades 3-5. The specific schools that cater to the Charles Town area are Washington High School (its service area can be seen in **Figure 53**), Charles Town Middle School, Wright Denny Intermediate School, Page Jackson Elementary School, Harpers Ferry Middle, and Driswood Elementary.



**Figure 53: Washington High School District Map** Source: Jefferson County Schools, 2016

A major issue that the Jefferson County Schools must overcome in the coming years is student enrollment growth. At a Jefferson County Schools Board of Education meeting in September 2016, the current superintendent of the district, Dr. Bondy Shay Gibson, gave a presentation on projected student growth and related planning efforts. She stated that the projected 2027 student enrollment will be more than 10,000 students and that district schools will reach their maximum capacity by 2024 if this growth rate continues. The Board of Education must take steps to expand its capacity while maintaining the same level of educational quality.

Another long term project is the schools' goal of increasing the use of technology in the classroom and making computer access more readily available to students. The long term goal is to have a device for every student and teacher. More immediate projects Jefferson County Schools hopes to address in the 2017-2018 school year include a redistricting plan and to prepare an update of the schools' transfer policy. Charles Town would like to strengthen its relationship with Jefferson County Schools in the future and assist the Board of Education, its staff, and its students whenever possible. A city can only be as strong as its local schools.

To that end, Charles Town supports that existing schools remain in the urban core and are not vacated by the school district. The following schools are within the Charles Town UGB:

- Page Jackson Elementary;
- Charles Town Middle School;
- · Wright Denny Intermediate School; and
- Washington High School.

As growth occurs in the UGB all of these schools will be able to serve a population that can walk to the schools. The Growth and Land Use and Mobility, Accessibility, and Connectivity sections of the Comprehensive Plan provide a unified vision for future land use and multimodal connectivity throughout Charles Town. This vision encourages the increased use of pedestrian and bicycle transportation modes to reduce the reliance on motorized transportation to access Downtown Charles Town, as well as various other destinations such as schools, parks, shopping, etc. As such, there is the opportunity to provide safe environments and pathways that encourage the City's school-age children to walk and bike to school, thereby increasing their healthy and active lifestyles.

#### **Vocational Education**

Vocational education is a valuable element of the education system and prepares students to transition directly into a trade, craft, or professional support positions. It is greatly appreciated by students, employers, and local stakeholders. Jefferson County Schools have a multifaceted approach to providing vocational education to its students. At Washington High School, instructors are provided in agricultural science, business and marketing, and family and consumer science programs. Students can take a concentration in one of these areas through a series of courses. Examples of these courses include Agricultural Equipment and Repair, Companion Animals, Natural Resources, and Equine Science in the agricultural concentration or Accounting, Business Computer Apps, and Desktop Publishing in the business and marketing concentration. The family and consumer science concentration includes courses such as Food and Nutrition, Careers in Education, Parenting Strong Families, and Applied Design: Housing and Interior Design. Washington High School also offers the opportunity for students to become certified Microsoft

Office Specialists through the Microsoft Imagine Academy. Additionally, the James Rumsey Technical Institute is the designated Area Technical School for Jefferson County Schools. James Rumsey offers technical and vocational education opportunities for high school students and adult learners. It has 18 high school programs in which students can participate and earn credits. With the rapidly changing economic forces in the world today, vocational education will be of increasing importance. Charles Town recognizes this importance and will seek to encourage these vocational programs and their students.

## **Charles Town Library**

The Charles Town Library is a privately endowed library that serves Jefferson County. The library is free to individuals who live or work in Jefferson County. Libraries are a wonderful community resource, and the Charles Town Library serves the City of Charles Town well. The library fosters the love of reading and learning by providing free educational events and book clubs for people of all ages. It also provides the public with access to the internet and to books for reference or recreation purposes.

The Charles Town Library is the only private nonprofit library in Jefferson County, and it is also the largest library in Jefferson County. The Charles Town Library's director estimates that the library should be serving about half of the county's population due to its location and size. However, the library often struggles with funding. In 2005, 2010, and 2015, county voters approved the Board of Education Excess Levy, which provides funding for public schools and libraries within the county. The county expects to give each library \$62,500 in 2016 using these funds. However, the Charles Town Library's status as a private nonprofit has prevented it from receiving this funding from the county. The Charles Town Library does receive allocations from the Jefferson County Commission, the City of Charles Town, and the City of Ranson each year. In 2015, the City of Charles Town contributed \$10,000 and the City of Ranson contributed \$5,000 to the library.

The library director believes that the county needs to look at additional ways that it can support the Charles Town Library. The City of Charles Town would like to support the Charles Town Library as much as possible and assist the library in identifying and pursing ways to achieve additional funding or become eligible for excess levy funds. In order to achieve the desired goals of the Charles Town Library, the Library Board should develop a strategic plan for its future financial sustainability.



## Technology

## **Technology and Telecommunications**

New technology is continually being developed that can make city services more efficient. It is the city's duty to its residents to make investments in this technology so these benefits can be realized. For example, a variety of technological advances have been made in the area of police services. The City's FY 2015-2018 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) anticipates that the City will implement a number of upgrades in this area. These upgrades includes a new police record management system, new in-car computers, and improved mobile data capabilities. The City would also like to implement an e-ticketing system. However, the highest priority technological improvement is an exchange server which will allow for direct data backup with the recently replaced server at the Police Department and allow mobile email to be utilized by department staff. The combination of all of these upgrades would allow officers to write reports, check the status of licenses, and complete a majority of their traditional office work in the field. By allowing officers to complete more work in the field, the department can increase its coverage capabilities and its visibility in the community without hiring additional officers. The total cost of these upgrades is expected to be approximately \$340,000 spread over five years.

Furthermore, Charles Town is in the process of deploying a cloud based server system across city services. This system will give the City increased flexibility and scalability with regards to technological resources and data access. It should also be an improvement in cost-effectiveness and reliability over the City's current system. Additionally, this upgrade will allow increased collaboration with Ranson, as the remote access capabilities of this new server system will allow the two cities to work together and share responsibilities without a need to physically consolidate. This could enable certain aspects of the *Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Collaboration Study* to be carried out, such as the sharing of planning and zoning strategies or accounting and finance responsibilities.

In addition to the above technology improvements, the City should also continue to make improvements to its web-based applications and services to provide the public greater access to information and create greater efficiencies in doing business with the City (e.g., online bill payments, submission of applications, etc.). These improvements could also create greater efficiencies for City staff by reducing the manual intake and processing of payments, applications, etc. and also increasing accuracy of information.

## Intergovernmental Cooperation with the City of Ranson

As previously indicated, the cities of Charles Town and Ranson jointly commissioned the 2015 Collaboration Study evaluating the municipal operations of both cities to identify opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration in eight distinct areas including parks and recreation, public works, public utilities, and police services. This study provides a solid foundation for the cities to achieve greater efficiencies in the provision and delivery of quality public services for their respective residents.

**City of Ranson Gateway Signage** Source: Visitor Inquisitor

## Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Quality Public Services, it is recommended that the City of Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

## Short-term (0-4 years)

- Complete the consolidation of the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD) into the Charles Town and Ranson Public Service Districts, respectively.
- Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the City's Policy Chief to ensure the Police Department is well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.
- Continue to financially contribute to the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers to help them maintain and meeting their annual operating and capital equipment needs.
- Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the Jefferson County Emergency Services City's Policy Chief to ensure the Police Department is well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.
- Encourage the Charles Town Library Board to develop a strategic plan that includes a strategy for its financial sustainability. The plan should then serve as a blueprint for the City's continued financial support of the Library's continued services.

### Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the 2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan.
- Reevaluate the consolidation and cost efficiency recommendations outlined in the January 2015 *Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study*.
- Develop a City-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan that establishes specific park facility improvement and capital budgeting needs.
- Communicate the Comprehensive Plan to the Jefferson County Schools and advocate that the use of existing school facilities be maximized to support the accessibility to and connectivity with the City's core urban neighborhoods.





# Environmental Stewardship: Goal Statement

Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development, and redevelopment.

## Objectives:

- Assist Jefferson County with achieving targeted reductions in sediments and nutrients to achieve the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load attainment goals.
- Continue to implement the City of Charles Town's joint brownfield reclamation and redevelopment efforts with the City of Ranson.
- Protect the supply and quality of groundwater and surface water.
- Maximize the preservation of permanent natural areas within new developments.
- Preserve the City's agricultural lands in coordination with the future land use map and objectives to strengthen the City's urban agricultural opportunities and access to fresh foods.
- Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure.

## Environmental Building Blocks and Community Assets

Charles Town acts as the confluence of multiple natural and political environments. The City is the county seat for Jefferson County, which is bordered by other West Virginia counties and Virginia and Maryland. The cities of Charles Town and Ranson also share a unique and close relationship, jointly pursing some brownfield redevelopment and greenway construction strategies. The area around the City also encompasses the headwaters of several perennial streams, such as Cattail Run, Evitts Run, and Bullskin Run. These small bodies of water flow west to east and discharge into the Shenandoah River, a major tributary of the Potomac River. Furthermore, the City limits encompass urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods. This diverse setting leaves the City with a lofty responsibility to be a good steward of both its natural environment and its residents.

## Charles Town Greenprint

As illustrated in **Figure 54**, approximately 18 percent of the City's jurisdictional land area is comprised of forested areas that are represented on the map by the dark green tree cover areas. Comparatively, tree cover represents over 16 percent of the total land area contained within the UGB. As illustrated, these forested areas exist in dense concentrations within the City's Old Town area and in areas beyond. Such heavy concentrations not only provide habitat for wildlife, but trees in general provide a host of environmental and health benefits. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, trees help clean the air, contribute to our health, provide oxygen, clean drinking water, provide shade to lower surface and air temperatures, save energy, and increase property values.

The 2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan establishes specific tree canopy goals to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate nitrogen and sediment loading into local streams and tributaries within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The plan outlines specific goals for the City of Charles Town including a goal to increase the City's tree canopy by one percent (i.e., approximately 48 acres).

The City is currently collaborating with the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council to determine the feasibility of creating a native nursery (via a public and private partnership) within the City to achieve the following objectives:

The City recognizes the importance of trees and has enacted a Tree Ordinance under Section 1104.01 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Charles Town. The ordinance creates and establishes a Tree Board, which among other powers and duties granted therein, is required to maintain a Tree Master Plan that includes the identification of the City's Landmark Trees. However, the City's Tree Board is not currently active and the opportunity exists to create a Tree Master Plan to further capitalize on and develop a strategy for the maintenance, protection, and where appropriate, the expansion of its tree resources.<sup>1</sup>

1 Arbor Day Foundation. Tree Facts. Retrieved online at https://www.arborday.org/trees/treefacts/.

- provide a sustainable and affordable supply of native trees and shrubs;
- promote local environmental stewardship to mitigate growth and development impacts on the region's air and water quality;
- reduce the use of non-native plant species and the proliferation of invasive plants, and diversify and strengthen wildlife habitat;
- · promote the use of native plant species through education and information; and
- provide technical assistance to the general public regarding the planting, growing and maintenance of native landscapes.

Should the native nursery concept prove successful, the City would have an even stronger foundation upon which to build and strengthen its Tree Ordinance objectives. Moreover, the preservation of the existing forested areas must be considered as land development proposals are submitted to the City for greenfield development opportunities. Ensuring the City's land use regulations are sensitive to the preservation of existing trees and forested areas will help protect and grow the City's overall greenprint (Figure 54).

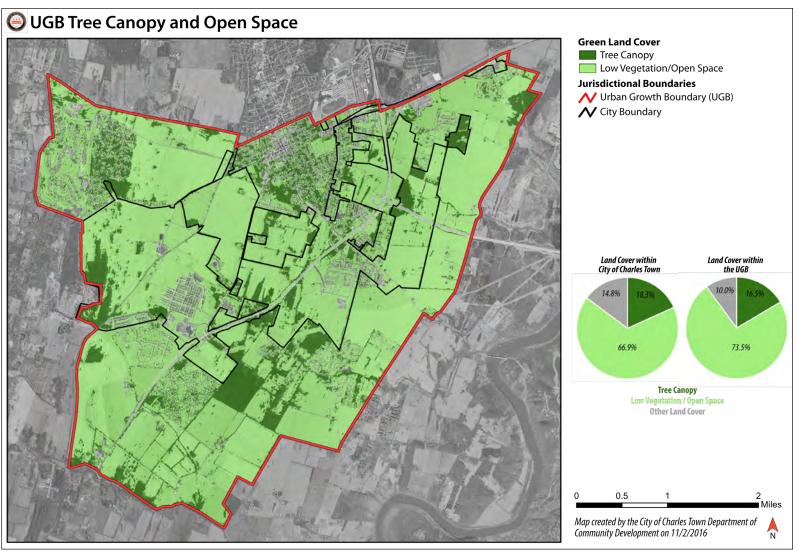


Figure 54: Tree Canopy and Open Space within the Charles Town UGB

Source: Chesapeake Bay Land Conservancy, 2016

## Brownfields to Greenways

Charles Town still bears the imprints of its industrial past. The City was shaped by large employers, such as Dixie-Narco, and growth spurred by the energy produced by the Supertane manufactured gas plant. However, changing technology and economic forces have left these sites abandoned and contaminated by their former uses. These brownfield sites sit vacant and currently do not add value to the City. They can be perceived as unsightly to neighboring residents and the City loses out on the potential economic and community value of these properties. This has led the City of Charles Town to make redeveloping of these brownfield properties a priority. Since 2005, collaboratively, Charles Town and Ranson have made significant improvements in the assessment and reuse of brownfields. It is not just environmentally responsible to clean up and rehabilitate these sites, but would result in improved community quality of life and long term economic growth opportunities.

This focus on brownfield development led the City to invest in the creation of the *West End Master Plan*, which was released in July 2015. This plan was partly funded through assistance from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and focuses on addressing brownfields and development in the City's West End neighborhood, as well as portions of the

"There's a lack of green open spaces in the city, sidewalks, and bikeways."

**Source:** Charles Town Community Survey Comment, City of Charles Town Resident

Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The most significant aspects of the plan involve the redevelopment of brownfields through the creation of parks and greenways, key infrastructure improvements, and economic development promotion. More information on the *West End Master Plan* can be found in the Downtown Vision of this Plan.

The development of greenways and recreation areas, as discussed in the *West End Master Plan*, is one of the most viable ways to reuse brownfield spaces and improve neighborhoods in a safe and relatively inexpensive manner. The construction of parks and greenspaces does not typically involve significant intrusive soil work and should not disrupt any contamination or environmental caps. Furthermore, no developer needs be enticed to invest in the properties if a greenway or park is constructed. Most importantly, greenways and recreation areas are highly valued by City residents. These areas improve the quality of life of residents, providing them with space to relax and play, while also improving the aesthetics and image of the City. Such amenities are features that do well in other communities. These attributes can be community amenities that help to encourage a prospective resident to locate in Charles Town.

## Dixie-Narco Brownfield and Charles Town Public Works Brownfield

The former Dixie-Narco site along W. North Street provides an ideal spot for brownfield redevelopment and reuse. The Charles Town Skate Park was opened in 2008 at the site, but the skate park only utilizes a small area on the property. The *City of Ranson/City of Charles Town Brownfields Area-Wide Plan*, was released in December 2012. It proposed uniting the West End Park in the City of Ranson with the Charles Town Skate Park, the Charles Town Public Works Brownfield, the Dixie-Narco Brownfield, and the current Evitts Run Park in Charles Town to create a large park and greenway (**Figure 55**). The new park would have a stream walk, sporting and recreation facilities, a dog park, and pavilions.

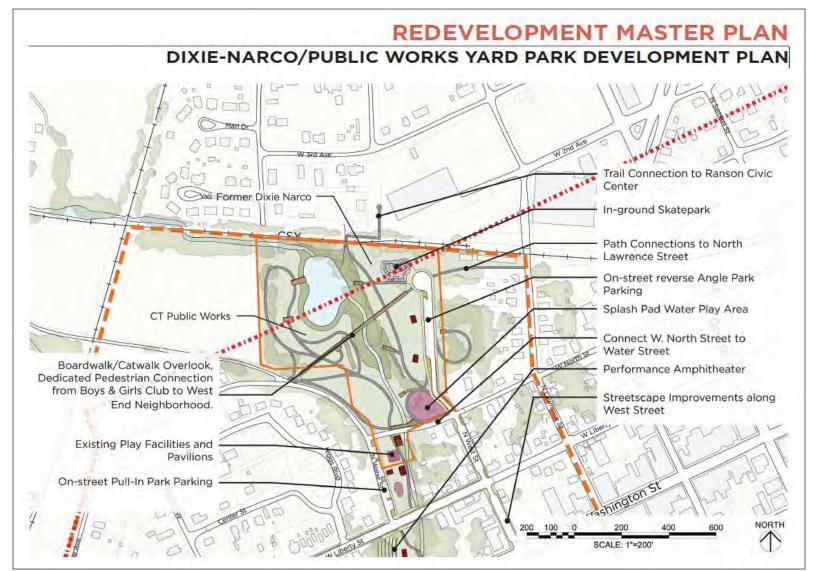


Figure 55: Dixie-Narco/Public Works Yard Park Development Plan

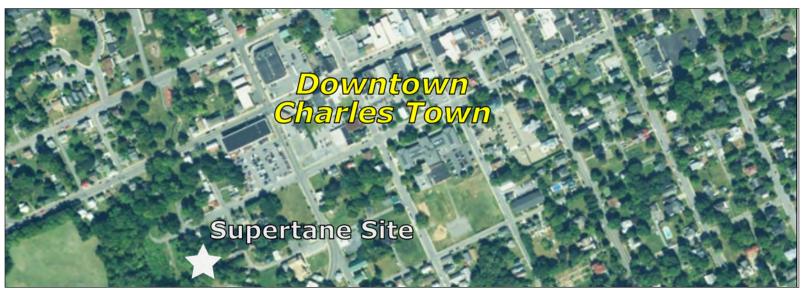
Source: Charles Town West End Master Plan, 2015

## **Supertane Brownfield**

## **Evitts Run Conservancy**

Evitts Run Conservancy is a municipal nonprofit formed with the goal of transforming
brownfields and vacant parcels along Evitts Run
into a greenway, with multiple parks, trails, green
infrastructure, and recreational opportunities.
The non-profit has been acquiring land that
fits this profile and is the current owner of the
Supertane brownfield. The Conservancy will likely
retain ownership of the land, but lease it to the
Charles Town Parks and Recreation Board. The
mission of the Conservancy, the redevelopment
of brownfields, and the construction of
greenways also support another one of the City's
environmental stewardship goals: water quality
protection.

The brownfield formerly occupied by the Supertane manufactured gas plant, shown in **Figure 56**, also holds much potential for development as a park amenity. The Supertane facility operated for nearly a century, closing down in 1954. Manufactured gas plants produced gas by heating up coal and oil. This gas was stored and piped to surrounding areas where it could be used for lighting, cooking, or heating. Unfortunately, this process also produced hazardous byproducts, and the resulting coal tar has been especially problematic during the remediation of former manufactured gas plant sites. Clean up of these sites is expensive, but Charles Town has received funding assistance from the USEPA to carry out the Supertane remediation. The site's contamination also prevents any intrusive development, making its reuse as a park amenity desired. The park's remediation design, shown in Figure 57, proposes a naturalized area traversed by a multi-use trail and a separate nature trail. A park at the Supertane site could potentially synergize well with the adjacent Hill Dale Shopping Center too, by increasing public visibility of both sites and providing a single area for both commercial and recreational activity.



**Figure 56: Supertane Brownfield Birds-Eye View** Source: Bing Maps



Figure 57: Supertane Park Plan

Source: City of Charles Town Supertane EPA Revolving Loan Fund, 2016.

## Green Infrastructure and Water Quality Protection

## **Stormwater Management**

Addressing Charles Town's brownfield properties is a significant step in improving water quality in Evitts Run and other local watersheds. The remediation of contaminated sites ensures that contaminants will not migrate into nearby waterbodies. Building greenways on brownfield and vacant sites will reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and increase the stormwater management capacity of the City. Improving stormwater management will address flooding and water quality issues with Evitts Run. Recreational facilities will be designed to heavily incorporate green infrastructure features. Such improvements are not only limited to area's along Evitts Run, brownfields and recreational areas, but are to be integrated throughout the City to improve water quality. Where there are no existing stormwater controls, green infrastructure improvements could assist in managing this situation. Green infrastructure is gaining popularity for its aesthetic appeal and ability to improve water quality.

Green infrastructure encompasses a variety of stormwater design techniques, including:

- Green Walls Walls covered in vegetation with a growing media (e.g. soil) supported on the wall face. These walls can reduce stormwater runoff from buildings and absorb additional precipitation.
- Bioswales A gently sloped drainage course that supports vegetation. They are designed to maximize water storage, increase water absorption, and trap pollutants. Figure 58 depicts a bioswale.
- Rain Gardens A vegetated depression that gives stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces the opportunity to be absorbed.
- Planters Boxes A space with maintained plants and vertical walls.
   These boxes absorb runoff from impervious urban surfaces and are ideal in dense urban areas or as streetscaping features.
- Permeable Pavement Paved surface that allows infiltration of, stores, and/or treats rainwater. Figure 59 shows an example of permeable pavement.



Figure 58: Bioswale on Fairfax Blvd., Ranson, WV Source: Michael Baker International



Figure 59: Permeable Pavement

Source: EPA, 2016

The City of Charles Town will interweave these green infrastructure elements into the construction of parks and the overall urban design of the Downtown. This will enable the City to better manage its stormwater, decrease the amount of runoff from contaminated sites and impervious surfaces, and increase rainwater absorption in the City. The resulting improvements in water quality should make the City successful in its goal of assisting Jefferson County to reducing sediment and nutrient loads within local waterbodies and achieving the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Load attainment goals. A preliminary construction plan for the Evitts Run Green Infrastructure Park Project was released in September 2014. This project is redesigning the site of Evitts Run Park and implement green infrastructure features such as wetland areas, infiltration ponds, swales, and rain gardens. This would improve local water quality and help fulfill the City's regulatory requirements under its MS4 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Projects like these will also help fulfill the City's obligation to current and future residents to improve the health of local water resources.

Additionally, these green infrastructure improvements will contribute to the City's low impact development (LID) approach. Charles Town intends to implement LID solutions during urban revitalization and redevelopment efforts. LID techniques break from traditional stormwater management practices that focus on efficiently conveying water away from a site, and instead seek to maximize the infiltration of stormwater. The benefit of this approach is reduced runoff, which leads to improved water quality, a healthier Chesapeake Bay watershed, and less severe flooding. This can be accomplished through previously mentioned green infrastructure techniques. **Appendix B** provides a more comprehensive overview of the LID approach.

Green infrastructure will also contribute to the City's goal of being a modern and hip City while maintaining its historic roots. Greenways gives pedestrians and visitors the opportunity to enjoy the City free from cars and city streets. Vegetation that accompanies planter boxes, green walls, and rain gardens can add color and life to otherwise dull paved areas. Permeable pavement can add a distinctive look to streets, sidewalks, or parking lots. Green infrastructure is not just about water quality, it is also about quality of life.

## **Low-Impact Development (LID)**

is a term used in Canada and the United States to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to manage stormwater runoff. LID emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features to protect water quality. This approach implements engineered small-scale hydrologic controls to replicate the pre-development hydrologic regime of watersheds through infiltrating, filtering, storing, evaporating, and detaining runoff close to its source.

**Source:** Larry Coffman et al; Prince George's County, Maryland. Department of Environmental Resources (PGDER) (June 1999). Low-Impact Development Design Strategies; An Integrated Design Approach (Report). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA 841-B-00-003.

#### **Source Water Protection**

The West Virginia Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAP) encompasses both the wellhead protection and surface water source water assessment efforts. The state's implementation of the wellhead protection program began in the early 1990s, as part of West Virginia ground water protection strategy. This protection strategy was extended to surface water sources with the 1996 amendments to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments. The Act require states to develop and implement a Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) program designed to evaluate the vulnerability of public drinking water systems to possible sources of contamination, and encourages states to work with these systems in developing protection and management plans.

The goal of the WV SWAP is to prevent degradation of source waters which may preclude present and future uses of drinking water supplies to provide safe water in sufficient quantity to users. The most officient way to accomplish this goal is to a

in sufficient quantity to users. The most efficient way to accomplish this goal is to encourage and oversee source water protection on a local level.

Wellhead protection required under Section 1428 of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act was established to protect ground water resources from contamination and forms the cornerstone of the Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) Program. For more information, please visit:

http://www.wvdhhr.org/oehs/eed/swap/swapfactsheet.pdf

The Charles Town Utility Board has a current Source Water Protection Plan (2016) that meets the requirements of the West Virginia Code. The plan describes what Charles Town Utility Board has done, is currently doing, and plans to do to protect its source of drinking water.

## Rural Identity and Natural Resources

Charles Town prides itself on connecting the greater Baltimore - Washington D.C metropolitan area with the scenic beauty and rural identity of West Virginia. Additionally, agriculture has historically played a significant role in the local economy of Charles Town. Many of Jefferson County's most historic estates were constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries and encompassed vast areas of the areas landscape. Although the original scale and size of these estates have since been reduced considerably in size, many of the original historic homesteads still exist and their legacy should be preserved and where possible integrated into the City's future land use scheme as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan. This is discussed in the Growth and Land Use Section. The goal is to celebrate the City's small town identify that includes its rural and natural landscapes located on the outer fringes of its UGB. Furthermore, the goal is to support the community's existing farming community and encourage the sale and consumption of locally-produced foods and agricultural products.

#### **Farmland Protection**

There are many acres of farmland within Charles Town and the UGB. Moving forward, it will be important for the City to further its relationship with the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board so the City can align its farmland protection strategy with other local farmland protection efforts. The creation of county farmland protection programs is authorized and encouraged by the state of West Virginia. The mission of these programs is to protect productive agricultural lands and maintain the viability of local agriculture. According to the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board's 2015 Annual Report, the Board was created in 2000 and currently protects 4,028 acres on 40 farms. The Board protects farmland by assisting farm owners with the creation of conservation easements for their property and providing incentives to do so. These easements are voluntary legal agreements between landowners and the board that permanently protect the agricultural and scenic qualities of the property. The landowners still retain ownership of the property. However, the property becomes subjected to restrictions on any future real estate, commercial, or industrial development. Conservation easements are a powerful, long term, tool to protect farmers, agricultural lands, and the farming way of life in and around Charles Town. The City will support the mission of the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board and encourage Charles Town landowners to consider conservation easements that align with the Future Land Use Map.



#### **Natural Resources**

The City's conservation efforts must go further than just conserving farmland. Charles Town can take action to ensure that its soil, land, water, wilderness, and air are protected for future generations. This requires the City to partner with various organizations, state/federal agencies, and its residents. Some important allies to consider in natural resource conservation could include the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Virginia Division of Forestry, the United States Forest Service, West Virginia University Extension, the City of Ranson, the West Virginia University Division of Forestry and Natural Resources, and Friends of Happy Retreat. The City must strengthen these relationships and continue to coordinate conservation initiatives so that they can have the maximum desired impact.

One recent conservation initiative has made use of the City's relationships in an important way. The development of the Happy Retreat Forest and the Happy Retreat Forest Community Forestry Plan involved the City, the Friends of Happy Retreat, the WV Division of Forestry, and several other groups. The purchase of the Happy Retreat Mansion property by the Friends of Happy Retreat and the Happy Retreat Forest property by the City of Charles Town was a significant victory in the protection of the City's natural and historic resources. Both properties could have been purchased by private individuals or developers, but conservation partnerships allowed a plan for public protection of the properties to be realized. The Happy Retreat Forest is the largest tract of forested land within Charles Town, as shown in **Figure 60**. According to the Happy Retreat Community Forest Plan, the 10 acre property is covered by a full stand of mature trees, some more than 100 years old. Now that the City owns the forest it can be fully utilized by the public and the habitat provided by the forest can be protected. The property is also instrumental in helping the City expand its urban tree cover and meet its goals under the *Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plans and Goals*. This plan encourages Charles Town to increase its tree canopy by one percent (i.e. 48 acres) by 2030 and expand canopy coverage and the riparian buffer along streams such as Evitts Run.

The unique and irreplaceable Happy Retreat properties also fit seamlessly into the City's vision for a Citywide network of recreation areas and a greenway spanning across the City. As shown in **Figure 59**, the Happy Retreat Forest, along with the brownfield properties, will allow this vision to be realized. As the City implements its plan to turn these brownfields into recreational resources, it can also begin to seamlessly connect these properties into a larger greenway. This greenway will not only provide recreational enjoyment for residents and visitors, but also help protect the City's natural resources for years to come. The greenway would also follow Evitts Run, protecting it and improving the stream's water quality.

Additionally, the City would like to encourage the use of alternative and renewable energy sources. Renewable energy puts less strain on air quality and natural resources than traditional energy sources. The City can encourage transitions to alternative energy by discussing the topic with residents, building owners, and local utilities. The City will also consider using alternative energy in its own activities and services when the opportunity arises. A model of alternative energy use in Charles Town is the American Public University System (APUS) and their parking facility at 393 N. Lawrence Street. The parking facility is equipped with solar panels that provide a significant amount of energy to the adjacent APUS Finance Center and to charging stations for electric and hybrid vehicles. This type of project shows the potential for alternative energy to be integrated into existing infrastructure.



Figure 60: Evitts Run Conservation and Revitalization Plan Source: Charles Town West End Master Plan, 2015

## Next Steps

To achieve the Goal and Objectives for Environmental Stewardship, it is recommended that Charles Town consider the following strategies as further detailed in Section 10, Implementation Strategy:

## **Ongoing**

- Continue to enforce and administer the City's Stormwater Management regulations to include the utilization of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Design (LID).
- Continue to examine locations that may be abandoned or blighted that qualify for brownfield reclamation.
- Continue to monitor and as needed require remediation of leaking underground storage tanks.
- Continue to advance the implementation of the West End Master Plan.

## **Short-term (0-4 years)**

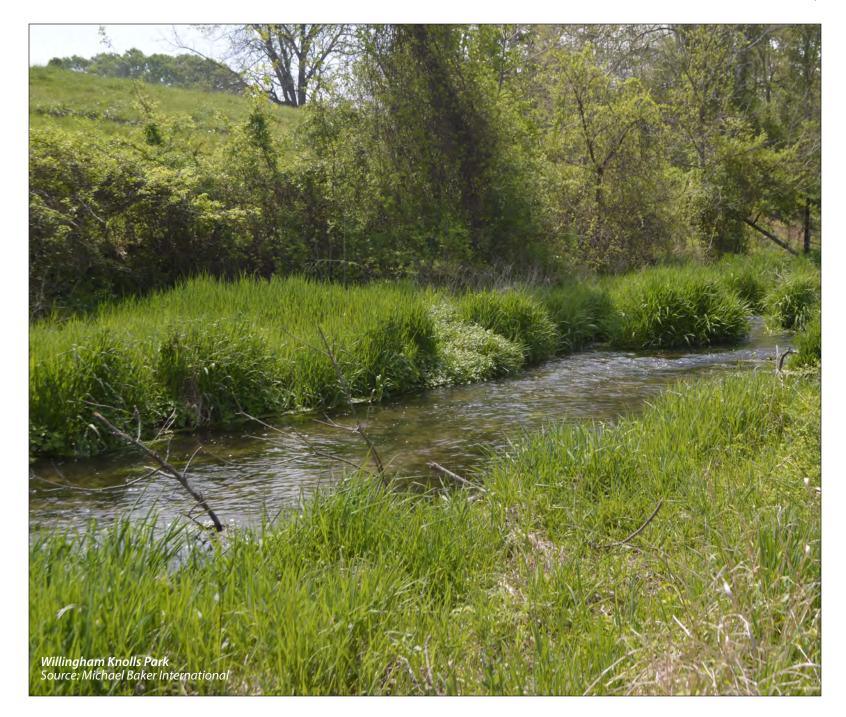
- Implement the Branching in Native Nursery program as detailed in the 2017 Feasibility Study and Business Plan.
- Implement the recommendations outlined in the 2016 Source Water Protection Plan.
- Collaborate with the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to identify agricultural land owners that have an interest in participating in GAP to further support and promote locally grown and purchased foods.
- Reactivate the Charles Town Tree Board.

## Mid-term (5-10 years)

- Implement the recommendations of the 2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan for the City of Charles Town.
- Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure as identified and supported by *Historically Hip Charles Town 2040*.
- Consider creating a joint Stormwater Management Enforcement program with Ranson in preparation for the cities' future Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) designations by West Virginia DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

### Long-term (11-20 years)

• Achieve the ultimate revitalization program as detailed in the West End Master Plan.





## Introduction

To support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan Goal Statements, this Implementation Strategy features implementation strategies for each of the 35 objectives that were identified under the seven theme areas. These strategies outline a tactical approach for advancing Charles Town's 2040 vision by specifying tangible action steps that can be taken to ensure progress over the next 20 years. In addition to implementation strategies, this chapter also identified key partners that the City may collaborate with to support implementation. Partners include local, county, and state entities, as well as qualified consultants who offer expertise in specific areas of need. The Implementation Strategy also identifies possible sources of funding that may be considered to support the implementation of each strategy. Such sources includes the City's Capital Improvement Plan, which would require the City to identify specific sources of revenue (tax dollars) and/or state, federal or private investments over a multiyear funding period.

A targeted timeframe for the completion of each implementation strategy is also outlined in this chapter. The timeframes include short-term (0-4 years), mid-term (5-10 years), long-term (11-20 years), and ongoing, and prioritize the implementation items that can be advanced in the near-term. Finally, the Implementation Strategy identifies funding resource opportunities for each strategy, identifying City, county, state, and other resources that may be available to off-set implementation costs.

The Implementation Strategy should be used by the City Planning Commission and staff to continuously monitor and measure progress on each strategy. The Planning Commission should also report annually or periodically to the City Council on the implementation process and progress made towards achieving the strategies and how they relate to the attaining the Comprehensive Plan goals and vision. The Planning Commission's report to City Council should also provide recommendations on strategies that need to be programmed in the City's Annual Operating Budget and Five-Year Capital Plan, and identify the priority implementation work tasks for the following fiscal year.

#### **Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town**

**Goal Statement:** Downtown Charles Town will be the center of Charles Town and the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
3.1 – Increase economic vitality through Downtown and neighborhood revitalization.	3.1.1 – Implement the West End Master Plan.	• City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Sustainable Strategies DC</li> <li>Private Property Owners</li> <li>Partnership for Affordable Housing</li> <li>West Virginia Housing Development Fund</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	3.1.2 – Implement the walkability and accessibility improvements identified in the City's 2016 Walkability and Connectivity Study.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>WV Department of         Highways         Private Property Owners     </li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
	3.1.3 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property, and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy and/or private use, either by sale or lease. The reuse strategy should consider the building's relationship to Downtown revitalization and economic development opportunities.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Charles Town Building         Commission</li> <li>Non-Profit Organizations</li> <li>Businesses</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>USDA Local Food Program</li> <li>USDA Rural Business Enterprise         Grant</li> <li>WV Governor's Community         Participation Program</li> <li>Private if a sale/lease</li> </ul>
	3.1.4 – Continue to maintain the City's database of blighted and vacant structures and prioritize those structures that are most detrimental to the Downtown's revitalization efforts.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
	3.1.5 – Undertake a small area plan with conceptual architectural details that encourages the expansion of the Downtown area by the development and redevelopment of new infill by promoting additional mixed use vertical building as identified in this Plan. Ensure the conceptual architectural details are supportive of the Historic Overlay District Design Guidelines.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Long-term (11 - 20 years)	<ul><li>Private Investment</li><li>Public/Private Investment</li></ul>
3.2 – Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation, technical and financial business assistance, and overall improvements to the business climate and Downtown business environment.	3.2.1 – Implement a wayfinding signage program consistent with the recommendations outlined in the City's 2016 Walkability Study.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Charles Town Now</li><li>Jefferson County</li><li>Convention and Visitors</li><li>Bureau</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	WV Small Cities Block Grant Program
	3.2.2 – Create a marketing campaign promoting incentives (loyalty cards, discounts, special promotions) to Downtown employers and workers, as well as visitors to Jefferson County (Charles Town Races, Harpers Ferry, etc.).	Charles Town Now	<ul> <li>Jefferson County         Convention and Visitors         Bureau     </li> <li>Businesses</li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul><li>Charles Town Now</li><li>WV Small Cities Block Grant Program</li></ul>

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

#### **Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town** (Continued)

**Goal Statement:** Downtown Charles Town will be the center of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
Objectives	implementation strategy(les)	Leau Entity	rai tilei (5)	Timename	
3.2 – Help new and existing Downtown businesses be successful through increased visitation, technical and financial business assistance, and overall improvements to the business climate and Downtown business environment.	3.2.3 – Establish a small business, low interest loan fund and provide technical assistance training to perspective loan recipients on business planning and budgeting. More information is available from the U.S. Small Business Administration at <a href="https://www.sba.gov/starting-business/finance-your-business/loans/sba-loans">https://www.sba.gov/starting-business/finance-your-business/loans/sba-loans</a>	Charles Town Now	<ul> <li>Local Financial Institutions</li> <li>WV Small Business         Development Center     </li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul> <li>SBA Basic 7(a) Loan Program</li> <li>SBA Certified Development Company</li> <li>(CDC) 504 Loan Program</li> <li>SBA Microloan Program</li> <li>Nonprofit community based lenders</li> </ul>
	3.2.4 – Become a nationally-certified Main Street community to leverage business retention and recruitment, market analysis, fundraising, vision and strategic planning, property development and other necessary technical and financial business assistance needs.	Charles Town Now	<ul> <li>Clty of Charles Town</li> <li>West Virginia         Department of         Commerce     </li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul><li>City Annual Operating Budget</li><li>CTN annual fundraising</li></ul>
3.3 – Provide attractive storefronts occupied with a variety of appealing retail and service businesses.	3.3.1 – Continue to fund, administer and promote the Charles Town Façade Improvement Program to Downtown property and business owners.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Now     Property owners	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
	3.3.2 – Utilize the City's market analysis information to identify, attract and retain prospective businesses that meet the Downtown's market demand needs. Update the analysis on a regular basis.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Now	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
3.4 – Create and maintain a clean, well- lighted and inviting appearance day and night throughout the Downtown.	3.4.1 – Continue the City's seasonal flower planting and seasonal decorating activities within Downtown.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Charles Town Now</li><li>Dolley Madison Flower Club</li></ul>	Ongoing	<ul><li>City Annual Operating Budget</li><li>In-Kind Services Partnerships</li></ul>
	3.4.2 – Replace the City's Downtown amber-colored street- lights with cleaner and brighter, energy efficient LED lights.	City of Charles Town	Potomac Edison	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul><li>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*</li><li>Potomac Edison</li></ul>
3.5 – Preserve and protect the Downtown's architecture that offers visual unity and a quality experience in history and culture.	3.5.1 – Continue to administer and enforce the City's Design Review Standards for Charles Town's historic districts (Downtown Charles Town, Old Charles Town, and South Charles Town).	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Historic     Landmarks Commission	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
3.6 – Program and promote Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit areas residents, visitors, industry, and the university community.	3.6.1 – Implement the <i>C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan</i> .	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>C*Town Creative Council</li> <li>Charles Town Now</li> <li>Jefferson County Arts         Council</li> <li>Jefferson County         Convention and Visitors         Bureau</li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

### **Section 3 – Downtown Charles Town** (Continued)

**Goal Statement:** Downtown Charles Town will be the center of the Jefferson County region and will serve as the center for community and economic development. The Downtown will be a strong center for business, and serve as a regional destination for arts, culture, entertainment and learning.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
3.6 – Program and promote Downtown events and activities that will attract and benefit areas residents, visitors, industry, and the university community	3.6.2 – Build and strengthen an online presence for Downtown Charles Town through a more effective website and greater utilization of social media tools.	• Charles Town Now	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	Charles Town Now Budget
3.7 – Promote adaptive reuse of and investment into Downtown properties that strengthens the mix of uses within multistory properties by promoting first floor retail and restaurants uses, second floor business services and third floor residential.	3.7.1 – Encourage and incentivize building and property owners to provide restaurant and retail space on street level floors, and business services and residential on the upper floors.	• City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Charles Town Now</li> <li>Private property owners and realtors</li> </ul>	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget

## Section 4 - Growth and Land Use

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
4.1 – Establish land use and development regulations and supporting policies that uphold and achieve the Future Land Use Plan.	4.1.1 – Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.	City of Charles Town	Qualified Technical Consultant	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.2 – Continuously examine and where appropriate implement Best Management Practices for land use planning concepts.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.3 – Implement agricultural value added categories in a new agricultural zoning district as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan (10-year).	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
	4.1.4 – Examine and implement zoning districts that achieve the desired goals of the Future Land Use map.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
4.2 – Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.	4.2.1 – Place a priority on promoting and incentivizing new development investments in the Old Charles Town and Gateway Community Types where urban infrastructure exists to readily support revitalization and infill development.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## **Section 4 – Growth and Land Use** (Continued)

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will strategically plan for and promote sustainable and well-designed growth and development throughout its Urban Growth Boundary while maintaining a vibrant, walkable and mixed-use Downtown that serves as the City's image center and core of civic life.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
4.2 – Balance development between new growth on the edges of the City and reinvestment in the City's Old Town.	<ul> <li>4.2.2 - Create small area plans for Downtown Charles Town, US 340 East Gateway, US 340 South Gateway area and Rt 9. A small area plan is any plan that addresses the issues of a portion of the City. Small area plans can cover three different geographic scales neighborhood, corridor, and district regardless of the size of the area. Small area plans cover a specific geography that often has a cohesive set of characteristics. In addition to the above locations, criteria for prioritizing small area plans may include the following: <ul> <li>Evidence of disinvestment and deteriorating housing</li> <li>Significant change is occurring or anticipated</li> <li>Public facilities and/or physical improvements need to be addressed</li> <li>Opportunities for substantial infill or redevelopment are present</li> <li>Opportunities arise to influence site selection, development or major expansion of a single large activity generator</li> <li>Transit station development opportunities</li> </ul> </li></ul>	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years) and Ongoing	• City Annual Operating Budget
	4.2.3 – Ensure development in City's proposed growth areas and redevelopment/development of the Old Town occurs in congruent fashion.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
4.3 – Utilize the City's annexation policy to provide areas for future growth, preserve critical green space, and	4.3.1 – Employ the City's Home Rule and annexation policy to strategically manage the City's future growth within the Urban Growth Boundary, and increase economic development opportunities.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
expand the City's tax base	4.3.2 – Develop land development standards that preserve critical green space while not impacting development rights.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

## **Section 5 – Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability**

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will be a community where its residents of all ages, abilities and incomes can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and in turn encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

3	ent; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordal				
Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
	5.1.1 – Implement the recommendations outlined in the <i>Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study,</i> and <i>C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan</i> .	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Charles Town Now</li><li>Jefferson Arts Council and allied organizations</li></ul>	Ongoing	<ul> <li>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*</li> <li>WV Governor's Community         Participation Program         City Annual Operating Budget     </li> </ul>
	5.1.2 – Encourage reinvestment and where appropriate redevelopment of the City's existing commercial shopping plazas (i.e., Somerset Village and Hill Dale) to create more vibrant centers of commerce and strengthen the City's financial position. The City should work with the existing property owners to create a vision and redevelopment concept plan for each plaza demonstrating how they may be transformed into a more livable and walkable urban environment.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Property Owners</li><li>Jefferson County</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul> <li>USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program</li> <li>Small Cities Block Grant Fund</li> <li>Tax Increment Financing (TIF)</li> </ul>
5.1 – Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives	5.1.3 – Partner with West Virginia University, Jefferson County, Charles Town's State and Federal Congressional Delegation, and the Federal Government to identify economic development initiatives that leverage the University's R1 Research classification and maximize the Professional Office and Institutional future land use proposed by this Comprehensive Plan.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>West Virginia Unviersity</li> <li>Jefferson County         Development Authority     </li> <li>State and Federal         Congressional Delegation     </li> </ul>	Short term (0 - 4 years)	<ul> <li>USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program</li> <li>Small Cities Block Grant Fund</li> </ul>
and promoting strategic economic development opportunities within the City's Urban Growth Boundary.	5.1.4 – Collaborate with Charles Town Now and Downtown property owners to maximize the full mixed-use potential of building structures in the Downtown. Such efforts should begin with a comprehensive inventory and conditions assessment of existing buildings located within Downtown Charles Town. The inventory and assessment should then be used to identify each building's optimal reuse potential and develop a cost estimate to address any identified code deficiencies to better position the building in the market place. Charles Town Now should then promote the availability of such properties on its website. Consider the City of Missoula's downtown inventory as a model: https://www.missouladowntown.com/about/downtown-building-business-inventory/	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Charles Town Now</li><li>Business Owners</li></ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>City Annual Operating Budget</li> <li>USDA Business Development Grant Program</li> </ul>
	5.1.5 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the appropriate adaptive reuse of the City's Liberty Street Police Station building and property and develop a business plan for the proposed reuse strategy. The reuse strategy should consider the building's relationship to Downtown revitalization and economic development opportunities.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Building     Commission	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>USDA Local Food Program</li> <li>USDA Rural Business Enterprise</li> <li>Grant</li> </ul>

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## **Section 5 – Vibrancy, Sustainability and Livability** (Continued)

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will be a community where its residents of all ages, abilities and incomes can enjoy great streets and complete neighborhoods; where walking, bicycling, and public transit are the preferred choices for most trips; where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained; where local businesses are supported by the community and in turn encourage local economic development; and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
5.1 – Increase the City's economic vitality and sustainability by supporting Downtown revitalization initiatives and promoting strategic economic	5.1.6 – Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to maximize the community-based utilization of Charles Washington Hall and to strengthen the revitalization of Downtown and Old Town neighborhoods.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Charles Town Building         Commission     </li> <li>Jefferson Growers Artisans         Producers (GAP) Coalition     </li> </ul>	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
development opportunities within the City's Urban Growth Boundary.	5.1.7 – Implement the <i>Charles Town Economic Development Plan</i> , update and amend as necessary.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Now	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
5.2 – Utilize the City's limited resources in efficient and innovative ways, and foster	5.2.1 – Strengthen Charles Town's financial position through intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration as recommended by the 2015 Collaboration Study commissioned by Charles Town and Ranson. Among other multi-municipal service efficiency opportunities, collaboration initiatives could be used to strengthen Charles Town's code enforcement efforts and build capacity for a joint economic development organization as recommended in the City's 2014 Economic Strategic Plan.	• City of Charles Town	• City of Ranson	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
revitalization to create and promote a vibrant, attractive, prosperous and healthy community for present and future generations.	5.2.2 – Use AARP's seven major livability categories to benchmark and measure the City's performance relevant to meeting and servicing the needs of its current and future population. Consider using AARP's Livability Fact Sheets as a means to inform City officials, property owners, developers, and investors about various means to creating a livable city: http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/documents-2014/Livability%20Fact%20Sheets/AARPLivabilityFactSheetsCollection.pdf	• City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Property owners</li><li>Developers/investors</li></ul>	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
5.3 – Implement a City Housing and Redevelopment program to proactively and effectively address the City's blighted and abandoned properties.	5.3.1 – Consider creating a Housing and Redevelopment Agency to address the City's needs pertaining to housing assistance, rental registration, code compliance, vacant structures board reporting, neighborhood revitalization, and interagency coordination.	City of Charles Town	City of Ranson	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
5.4 – Collaborate with Charles Town Now to develop a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use downtown that serves as the civic hub to the greater Charles Town community.	5.4.1 – Implement the recommendations outlined in the <i>Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan, Walkability and Connectivity Study,</i> and <i>C*Town Arts and Culture District Plan.</i> Expand upon the concepts of the <i>Walkability and Connectivity Study</i> to other areas of the City and implement a sidewalk improvement program. Development of trails and pathway plan within a Master Parks and Recreation Plan and implement the goals of the plan.	• City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Charles Town Now</li> <li>C*Town Arts Council</li> <li>Jefferson Arts Council and allied organizations</li> <li>Parks and Recreation Board</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## Section 6 - Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

	lown, and between and among its residential neighborhoo				
Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
6.1 – Provide convenient and affordable access to goods, services, jobs and	6.1.1 – Communicate the City's Comprehensive Plan to the Hagerstown Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) and ensure the plan's vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation improvement recommendations are considered for inclusion into the HEPMPO's Long Range Transportation Plan.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>HEPMPO</li><li>EPTA</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
recreation for all residents and visitors regardless of socio-economic status, physical ability, or age through a balanced, multimodal transportation system.	6.1.2 – Prioritize the City's transportation improvement projects, and secure the necessary local, state, federal and private funding for their successful implementation. Ensure all federal funding is programmed through the HEPMPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.	City of Charles Town	HEPMPO     EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	<ul> <li>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*</li> <li>HEPMPO Long Range Plan and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</li> </ul>
	6.1.3 – Consider implementing a transportation development fee as recommended by the 2011 Cities of Ranson and Charles Town Transportation Development Fee Study.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>City of Ranson</li><li>Jefferson County</li><li>HEPMPO</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
	6.2.1 – Implement the recommendations contained in the <i>Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study</i> and expand its scope to neighborhoods throughout the City.	City of Charles Town	• НЕРМРО	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
6.2 – Create well-connected, safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle networks that support the City's future land use	6.2.2 – Secure the necessary easements to achieve a trail linkage to the Shenandoah River via Cattail Run.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Private Property Owners</li><li>WV Land Trust</li></ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	Conservation easement agreement with private property owner(s)
vision.	6.2.3 – Amend City's <i>Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance</i> to require additional interconnectivity within and between developments that support motorized and non-motorized connections.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
6.3 – Strengthen the walkability of	6.3.1 – Implement the recommendations contained in the <i>Charles Town Walkability and Connectivity Study</i> .	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
Downtown Charles Town through improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities, and reduced volumes of through truck traffic.	6.3.2 – Work with the City of Ranson, Jefferson County, WVDOH and HEPMPO to determine alternative routes (as specified in the Comprehensive Plan) to reduce through traffic flows in the Downtown.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>City of Ranson</li> <li>Jefferson County</li> <li>HEPMPO</li> <li>WV Department of Highways (WVDOH)</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	HEPMPO Long Range Plan and TIP
6.4 – Implement complete streets design in all existing and new street and road design.	6.4.1 – Amend the City's <i>Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance</i> to include Complete Streets design standard details and requirements for their use and application.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## **Section 6 – Mobility, Connectivity and Accessibility** (Continued)

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will be a highly accessible community for citizens of all ages, abilities, and incomes by providing efficient multimodal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular) connections with Downtown Charles Town, and between and among its residential neighborhoods and local and regional commercial centers.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
6.5 – Continue to create a Citywide network of greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure that also affords City residents' access to regional outdoor recreational amenities including the Shenandoah River and Appalachian Trail.	6.5.1 – Secure conservation easements to protect and preserve priority greenways, open spaces, and green infrastructure as identified and supported by <i>Historically Hip Charles Town 2040 Comprehensive Plan</i> .	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Property Owners</li><li>West Virginia Land Trust</li></ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>West Virginia Land Trust</li> <li>Land and Water Conservation Fund</li> </ul>
	6.6.1 – Collaborate with EPTA to identify new transit stops within the City and ensure all existing and future transit bus stops are ADA accessible.	City of Charles Town	• EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
	6.6.2 – Ensure the City's land development regulations include appropriate standards for the placement and construction of transit bus stops and shelters.	City of Charles Town	• EPTA	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
6.6 – Continue to support and increase City residents' access to public transportation services.	6.6.3 – Continuously consult EPTA on all initiatives pertaining to public transportation service initiatives within the Charles Town and Ranson service area. This includes communicating the City's Future Land Use Plan to EPTA to ensure the information is appropriately considered for the Authority's Five-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) update. Additionally, the City should ensure that all major subdivision and land development plan applicants are required to consult EPTA on bus transit facilities and accessibility improvements within the proposed development project.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>EPTA</li><li>Private Developers</li></ul>	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
	6.6.4 – Commission a feasibility study to determine the viability of creating a MARC station stop in Downtown Charles Town via the existing CSX line between Charles Town/Ranson and Harpers Ferry.	City of Charles Town	HEPMPO     Eastern Panhandle     Regional Planning and     Development Council     (Region 9)     CSX     MARC	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>HEPMPO Technical Assistance</li> <li>Region 9 Technical Assistance</li> </ul>

## **Section 7 – Image and Identity**

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will protect, enhance and reinforce its historic, small town character and "sense of place" through high quality urban design and development standards that protect existing assets and investments, and create great new places by building vibrant, enduring neighborhoods that people of all ages and abilities want to live, work and play.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
7.1 – Improve the quality of new development and ensure it is compatible with existing neighborhoods relative to their form, design and function.	7.1.1 – Utilize the SmartCode to create a form-based overlay zoning district to ensure the Future Land Use Plan and the concepts of the Urban to Rural Transect and New Community Types envisioned therein are achieved.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
7.2 – Protect and enhance the visual	7.2.1 – Partner with Charles Town Now to promote clean streets and sidewalks, properly designed signage, facade improvements, placemaking, art and beautification projects to present an appealing image to residents, visitors, tenants and investors.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Now     Property owners	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul><li>City Annual Operating Budget</li><li>Charles Town Now</li></ul>
qualities of Charles Town's streetscapes and public spaces.	7.2.2 – Continue to support and work with the Dolley Madison Garden Club to expand upon the City's landscaping and flower garden initiatives within the Downtown and Gateways. Begin by identifying locations for new and improved landscaping and flower bed plantings along with appropriate signage welcoming residents and visitors to Charles Town.	• City of Charles Town	<ul><li>City of Charles Town</li><li>Dolley Madison Garden</li><li>Club</li></ul>	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
	7.3.1 – Expand the City's current Historic Districts and Historic Overlay District within the Old Town areas to protect and preserve additional historic resources.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
7.3 – Support the preservation of historic buildings throughout the City and its Urban Growth Boundary.	7.3.2 – Implement appropriate regulations and standards to preserve historic buildings and properties located within the City's undeveloped areas that often include historic homestead and farmstead properties and buildings. Such properties and buildings should be protected from new development and/or integrated into the proposed land development plan.	• City of Charles Town	WV Archives and History     Commission (State     Historic Preservation     Officer)	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
7.4 – Improve the appearance of existing	7.4.1 – Promote, encourage and incentivize the redevelopment of the Hill Dale shopping center into a vibrant new commercial mixed use center that is supportive of the West End neighborhood and Downtown revitalization. The mixed use center should serve as an additional hub and anchor connecting mixed use residential development with Downtown.	• City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Jefferson County</li><li>Hill Dale Shopping Center Owner</li></ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>City Annual Operating Budget</li> <li>USDA Rural Business Enterprise         Grant</li> <li>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*</li> <li>Small City Block Grant Fund</li> <li>Tax Increment Financing (TIF)</li> </ul>
commercial facilities to revitalize existing businesses and stimulate the development of new business.	7.4.2 – Promote, encourage and incentivize the redevelopment of the Somerset Village Shopping Plaza into a vibrant mixed use Town Center that is supportive of and integrated into new active living and professional office and institutional development as envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.	• City of Charles Town	Somerset Village Shop- ping Plaza Owner (i.e., Kentlands Foundation)	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>City Annual Operating Budget</li> <li>USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant</li> <li>Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*</li> </ul>
	7.4.3 – Develop design review standards that are appropriate to the context of new developments in the Old Charles Town area not covered by a historic overlay district and new developments.	• City of Charles Town	N/A	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## **Section 8 – Quality Public Services**

**Goal Statement:** The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
8.1 – Ensure the delivery of quality, adequate and affordable public water and sewer services through intergovernmental cooperation to support the City's Future Land Use Plan and economic development objectives.	8.1.1 – Complete the consolidation of the Jefferson County Public Service District (PSD) and Ranson Public Service Districts into the Charles Town Utility Board.	Charles Town Utility     Board	<ul> <li>City of Charles Town</li> <li>City of Ranson Sewer         Department     </li> <li>Jefferson County Public         Service District     </li> <li>Jefferson County         Commission     </li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	Charles Town Utility Board Capital Budget
8.2 – Continue to provide a high quality and well-trained police force to meet the City's law enforcement and protection	8.2.1 – Communicate the Future Land Use Plan to the City's Police Chief to ensure the Department is informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's budgeting and training programs.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Police     Department	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
needs.	8.2.2 – Reevaluate the consolidation and cost efficiency recommendations outlined in the 2015 Cities of Charles Town and Ranson Collaboration Study.	City of Charles Town	City of Ranson	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
8.3 – Support the City's volunteer fire and emergency medical service	8.3.1 – Continue to financially contribute to the local volunteer fire and emergency medical service (EMS) providers to help them maintain and meet their annual operating and capital equipment needs.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li>Citizens Fire Company</li><li>Independent Fire Company</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
providers' to ensure their respective staffing and equipment capabilities are appropriately improved with the City's growth.	8.3.2 – Communicate the City's Future Land Use Plan to the Jefferson County Emergency Services and City's Police Chief to ensure both are well-informed of future growth policies and that the implications of such policies are reflected in the Department's capital budgeting and training programs.	City of Charles Town	<ul><li> JCESA</li><li> City of Charles Town Police Department</li></ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
8.4 – Promote the sustainability of the Charles Town Library to ensure its continued provision of quality museum and library services.	8.4.1 – Encourage the Charles Town Library Board to develop a strategic plan that includes a strategy for its financial sustainability. The plan should then serve as a blueprint for the City's continued financial support of the Library's services.	City of Charles Town	Charles Town Library     Board	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
8.5 – Continue to provide diverse recreational programs and opportunities, quality facilities and open	8.5.1 – Develop a Citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan that establishes specific park facility improvement and capital budgeting needs. The master plan should consider all City- owned facilities and identify future space needs based upon the Future Land Use Plan and any annexations.	City of Charles Town	Parks and Recreation	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)*
natural spaces that serve the needs of the City's citizens and visitors.	8.5.2 – Collaborate with the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission to identify mutually beneficial, regional park facility improvements identified in the 2016 Jefferson County Parks Master Plan.	City of Charles Town	Jefferson County     Parks and Recreation     Commission	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

<sup>\*</sup> May require new tax revenue sources to be budgeted

## **Section 8 – Quality Public Services** (Continued)

Goal Statement: The City of Charles Town will ensure the provision of quality and affordable public services to meet the health, safety and welfare needs of its residents and visitors.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
8.6 – Continue to support the provision and delivery of quality public education services and increase access to vocational educational opportunities.	8.6.1 – Communicate the Comprehensive Plan to the Jefferson County Schools and advocate that the use of existing school facilities and new school facilities be maximized to support the accessibility to and connectivity with the City's core urban neighborhoods. Vacating existing urban facility should be strongly discouraged.	City of Charles Town	Jefferson County Board of Education	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

## **Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship**

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
	9.1.1 – Continue to enforce and administer the City's Stormwater Management regulations to include the utilization of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Low Impact Design (LID).	City of Charles Town	Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) Chesapeake Bay Technical Assistance	Ongoing	City Annual Operating Budget
9.1 – Assist Jefferson County with achieving targeted reductions in sediments and nutrients to achieve the West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load	9.1.2 – Consider creating a joint Stormwater Management Enforcement program with the City of Ranson in preparation for the cities' future Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) designations by West Virginia DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Such designations will require each City to develop and administer a comprehensive Stormwater Management Program pursuant to the requirements of their respective National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>City of Ranson</li> <li>Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9) Chesapeake Bay Technical Assistance</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
attainment goals	9.1.3 – Implement the recommendations of the 2011 Jefferson County Urban Tree Canopy Plan for the City of Charles Town.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Jefferson County         Commission</li> <li>Eastern Panhandle Regional         Planning and Development         Commission (Region 9)</li> <li>Jefferson County Public         Schools</li> <li>Cacapon Institute</li> <li>West Virginia Divion of         Forestry</li> </ul>	Mid-term (5 - 10 years)	<ul> <li>City Annual Operating Budget</li> <li>National Fish and Wildlife Foundation</li> </ul>

# **Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship** (Continued)

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
	9.2.1 – Continue to advance the implementation of the "Charles Town West End & Evitts Run Creek Revitalization Plan" and achieve the ultimate revitalization program as detailed in the <i>Charles Town West End Revitalization Plan</i> .	City of Charles Town	City of Ranson	Long-term (11 - 20 years)	<ul> <li>U.S. EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund</li> <li>National Fish and Wildlife Foundation</li> <li>Private Sector</li> </ul>
9.2 – Continue to implement the City of	9.2.2 – Implement the Branching In Native Nursery program as detailed in the 2017 Feasibility Study and Business Plan.	City of Charles Town	Eastern Panhandle Regional     Planning and Development     Council (Region 9)	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City of Charles Town     National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Charles Town's joint Brownfield reclamation and redevelopment efforts with the City of Ranson.	9.2.3 – Continue to examine locations that may be abandoned or blighted that qualify for brownfield reclamation.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>City of Ranson</li> <li>Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Council (Region 9)</li> <li>U.S. EPA</li> </ul>	Ongoing	<ul> <li>U.S. EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant</li> <li>Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development Commission (Region 9) Technical Assistance</li> </ul>
	9.2.4 – Continue to monitor and as needed require remediation of leaking underground storage tanks.	City of Charles Town	City of Ranson	Ongoing	U.S. EPA Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund
9.3 – Protect the supply and quality of groundwater and surface water.	9.3.1 –Implement the recommendations outlined in the 2010 Source Water Protection Plan.	Charles Town Utility     Board	<ul> <li>City of Charles Town</li> <li>WV Department of Health and Human Services (DHHR)</li> <li>Ranson PSD</li> <li>Jefferson PSD</li> <li>Eastern Panhandle Regional Planning and Development County (Region 9)</li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	WV DHHR Wellhead and Source Water Protection Grants

# **Section 9 – Environmental Stewardship** (Continued)

Goal Statement: Charles Town will promote the conservation of the City's natural environment while supporting sustainable economic growth, development and redevelopment.

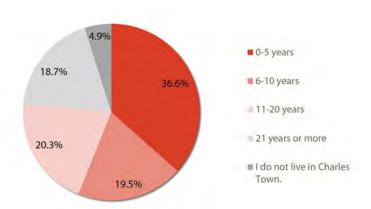
Objectives	Implementation Strategy(ies)	Lead Entity	Partner(s)	Timeframe	Funding Resource Opportunities
9.4 – Maximize the preservation of permanent natural areas within new developments.	9.4.1 – Review the <i>Charles Town Zoning Ordinance</i> and <i>Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance</i> to identify opportunities to incorporate conservation subdivision design principles and standards as recommended by published practitioner Randall Arndt (http://www.greenerprospects.com/PDFs/CSD_Overview.pdf).	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
	9.4.2 – Reactivate the Charles Town Tree Board.	City of Charles Town	N/A	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget
9.5 – Preserve the City's agricultural lands in coordination with the future land use map and objectives to strengthen the City's urban agricultural opportunities and access to fresh foods.	9.5.1 – Collaborate with the Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition to identify agricultural land owners that have an interest in participating in GAP to further support and promote locally grown and purchased foods. Identify and confirm these owners' commitment to participating in GAP and determine if the property qualifies and merits being included in the Jefferson County Farmland Protection program.	City of Charles Town	<ul> <li>Jefferson Growers Artisans Producers (GAP) Coalition</li> <li>Private Property Owners</li> </ul>	Short-term (0 - 4 years)	City Annual Operating Budget

# Appendix A: Public Survey Results

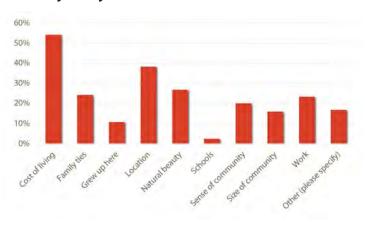
As part of the *Historically Hip 2040* update, the City prepared public surveys to gain broad input about specific community issues and concerns. Survey respondents were also tasked with sharing their ideas on what would make Downtown Charles Town a more desirable destination. The survey was available for one month, from October 2016 to November 2016, and the survey link was disseminated via multiple sources to Charles Town residents. Hard copy surveys were made available to those who did not want to use the online link. In total, 136 individuals completed the public survey.

The following pages provide a summary of the public survey responses by question.

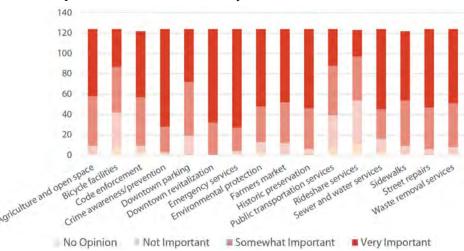
## Q1: How long have you lived in Charles Town?



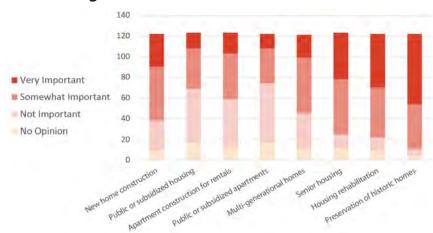
## Q2: Why did you move to Charles Town?



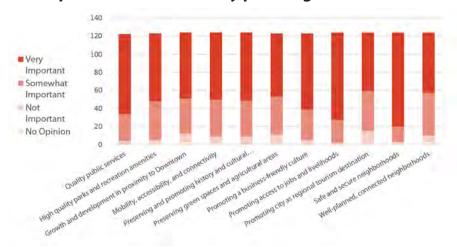
## Q3: Importance of community facilities/services in Charles Town



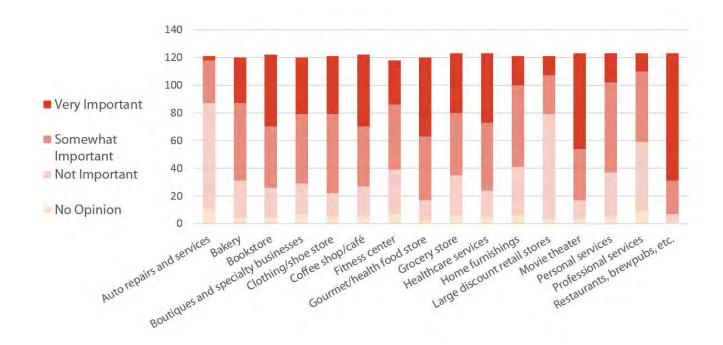
## **Q4: Housing needs in Charles Town**



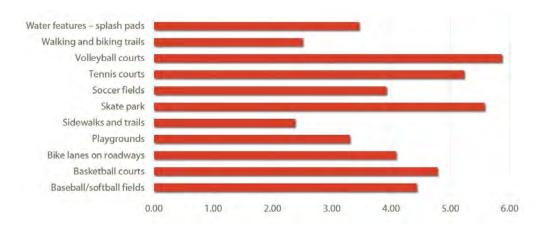
## Q5: Importance of community planning initiatives



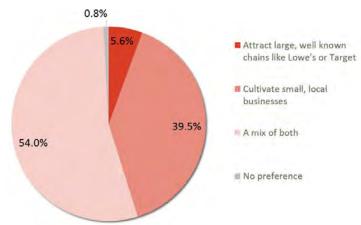
## Q6: What kinds of businesses would you like to see more of in the City?



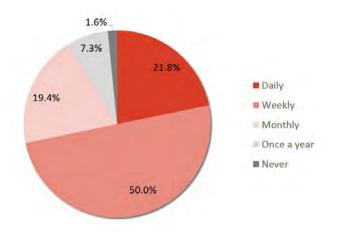
## Q7: What are your top 5 recreation facilities and amenities?



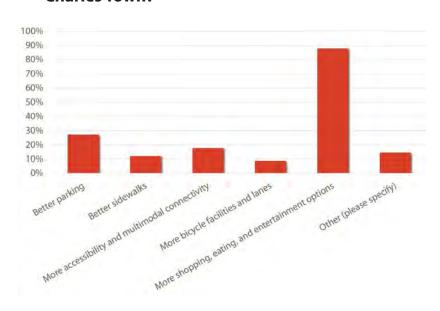
Q8: What type of commercial development would you like to see?



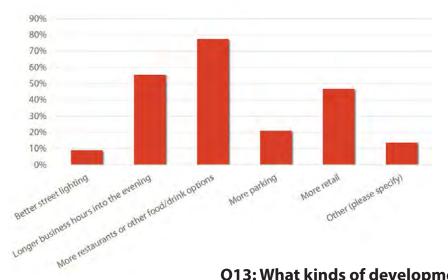
**Q9: How often do you visit Downtown Charles Town?** 



Q10: What would increase your visitation to Downtown Charles Town?



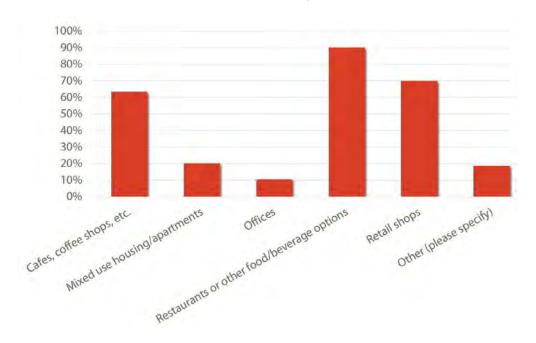
## Q11: Would you be more likely to visit Downtown if it had...?



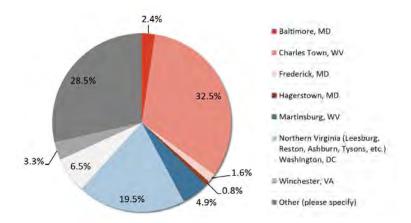
## Q12: What is needed in Downtown to increase your interest and patronage?

- Better support for small businesses
- Greater variety of dining and shopping options, including a movie theater and book store
- Cultural programs and arts education
- Festivals and music venues
- More parking
- Longer hours of operation, weekend hours

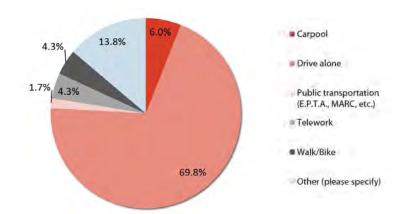
Q13: What kinds of development would you like to see Downtown?



Q14: Where do you work?



## Q15: How do you travel to work?



## Q16: What are your thoughts on the future of Charles Town in the next 10 - 20 years?

- Heritage tourism and cultural activities
- Revitalization of older neighborhood
- Greater diversity of shops, restaurants, retail (especially for teens and young adults)
- Small, local businesses and boutiques
- More career-oriented jobs
- Family-friendly activities and destinations
- Public sculptures, public benches, public space where people can meet up and hang out
- Better/more extensive sidewalks

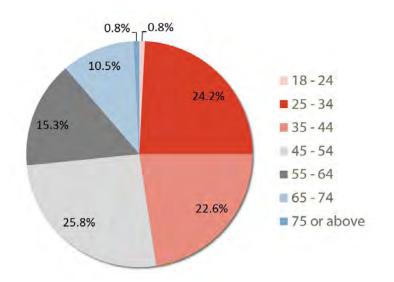
## Q17: What do you think are the City's greatest challenges?

- **Education**
- Job creation
- Attracting new/younger residents
- Heroin epidemic
- Insufficient infrastructure (natural gas lines, cell phone service, public restrooms)
- Preserving Charles Town's small-town character
- Excessively high lease rates that deter new businesses
- Lack of cooperation with Ranson
- **Vacant buildings**

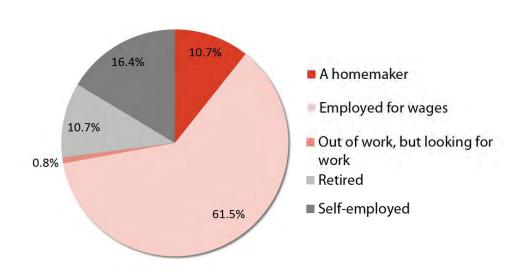
## Q18: What do you think are the City's greatest strengths?

- History and cultural heritage
- Beautiful historic architecture
- Natural beauty
- **Proximity to larger cities**
- Low cost of living
- Small-town charm

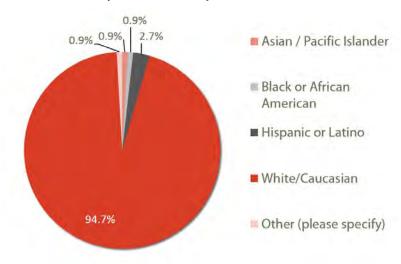
Q19: What is your age?



## Q20: Are you currently...?



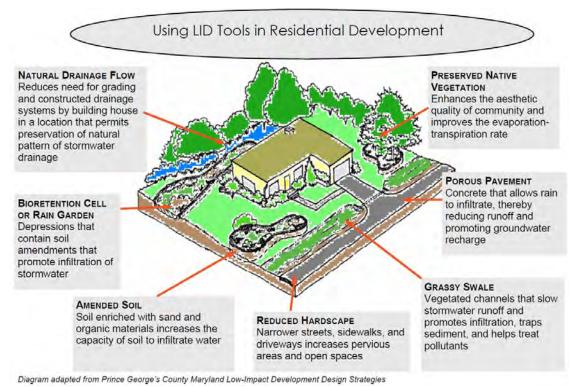
## Q21: What is your ethnicity?



# Appendix B: Low Impact Development (LID) Approach

## What is Low Impact Development (LID)?

LID is an alternative method of land development that seeks to maintain the natural hydrologic character of the site or region. The natural hydrology, or movement of water through a watershed, is shaped over centuries under location-specific conditions to form a balanced and efficient system. When hardened surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops are constructed, the movement of water is altered; in particular, the amount of runoff increases and infiltration decreases. This results in increased peak flow rate and volume, and pollution levels in stormwater runoff. LID designs with nature in mind: working with the natural landscape and hydrology to minimize these changes. LID accomplishes this through source control, retaining more water on the site where it falls, rather than using traditional methods of funneling water via pipes into local waterways. Both improved site design and specific management measures are utilized in LID designs. LID has been applied to government, residential, and commercial development and redevelopment, and has proven to be a cost-efficient and effective method for managing runoff and protecting the environment.



## Traditional vs. LID Stormwater Management

Historically, in the U.S., the motto for stormwater management has been "conveyance:" move water away from the site where it falls as quickly and efficiently as possible. Traditional management tools include street gutters and curbs, pipes, and canals to remove water from the developed areas. To receive this increased volume. creeks and rivers are re-shaped and lined with concrete. Detention ponds, some with water quality filtration devices, regulate discharge to reduce peak flow impacts on receiving waters. For the most part, these practices reduce flood impacts, but do not completely address water quality, and aquatic and riparian habitat degradation issues.

In contrast with the traditional approaches, the guiding principle of low impact development approaches is not conveyance; it is "source control and infiltration". LID techniques seek to maximize the area available for infiltration so that runoff volume and pollutant concentrations are reduced. This is achieved through a variety of site design and engineered infiltration techniques. Site design techniques include locating open spaces in low-lying areas to serve as a detention/retention basin and avoid development on permeable soils to promote infiltration and groundwater recharge. Engineered techniques include the use of grassy swales, bioretention cells, and porous pavement.

### LID Benefits

### **Water Quality**

- Contributes to groundwater recharge through infiltration
- Improves surface water quality
- Protects stream and lake quality from large volumes of polluted runoff

### Meets Clean Water Act Requirements

- Source control reduces the pollutant level and volume of runoff entering a water body, complying with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and anti-degradation policy:
- · This also aids in complying with 401 certification requirements

#### Flood Control

- Reduces frequency & severity of floods
- Reduces peak flow volume & velocity

#### **Habitat Protection**

- Preserves stream & riparian habitats
- Preserves regional trees & vegetation
- Reduces eroded sediment loading into streams & lakes Community Value
- Increases aesthetics and recreational opportunities in protected riparian habitats
- Increases land value by having a cleaner environment
- Increases public/private collaborative partnerships

## LID Challenges

#### Lack of Information

Many municipal planners, consultants and the general public are unfamiliar with the benefits of LID practices and how to utilize them in different environments.

### Inflexible Regulations/Ordinances

Existing rules often lack the flexibility to implement LID solutions

#### Maintenance

 Some LID tools require maintenance by homeowners and local public works departments to function properly

#### Presence of Contaminants

Use of filtration practices can threaten groundwater quality if high levels of soil contaminants are present.



Stormdrain leading to bioretention cell

Roof runoff drains to grassy swale

www.main.nc.us/riverlink/content/12chap/chap12.htm

## Economic Issues

#### The economic benefits of LID include:

- Reduced costs of stormwater infrastructure, including curbs and gutters
- · Reduced stormwater utility fees
- Increased land value
- Decreased spending on current and future environmental conservation programs

Specific cost savings vary on a case by case basis. There can be additional costs:

- Higher installation costs for certain soil types and gradients
- Increased landscape maintenance costs

Clay Soils/Limited S
----------------------

The combination of clay soils and small lot sizes can work well together. As clays are naturally less pervious, less engineering and land is required to achieve predevelopment infiltration rates. Use integrated stormwater management techniques, a combination of traditional and LID approaches. Significant stormwater runoff reduction can still be achieved.

### Local Codes Aren't LID-friendly

Revise local codes & ordinances to support use of LID techniques. Check out the Center for Watershed Protection's website for suggested guidelines (www.cwp.org/COW\_worksheet.htm).

### Don't know what would work and where

Educate planning & public works staff. Numerous references are available on the use of LID in a variety of settings (see Online References).

Issue	Savings
Higher Lot Value	\$3000 more per lot
Lower Cost Per Lot	\$4800 less cost per lot
Enhanced Marketability	80% of lots sold in first year
Added Amenities	23.5 acres of green-space/parks
Recognition	National, state, and professional
Total Economic Benefit	Over \$2,200,000 added to profit

The above table, from **Gap Creek residential subdivision**, Sherwood, AR, illustrates the financial benefits of using LID methods. *Tyne & Associates, North Little Rock, AR* 

**Hercules** has modified stormwater management guidelines that fit LID principles, city codes that allow administrative approval for LID projects, and limited street lengths.

Contra Costa incorporated LID measures into their Standard Urban Stormwater Management Plan (SUSMP) for new development (http://www.cccleanwater.org/construction/nd.php). Sacramento, likewise, is publishing their own design manual in Fall, 2006 that includes LID measures.

San Diego has new parking standards for intensive commercial zones that include smaller parking spaces and driveways, plus new guidelines requiring reduced imperviousness for parking spaces.

**Santa Monica** encourages LID by requiring that all new developments and substantial remodels submit an "Urban Runoff Mitigation Plan", and reduce projected runoff for the site by 20%. The city recommends LID technologies.

# LID as a Re-design Strategy

Retrofit a Parking Lot to increase permeability. Over sixty-five percent of impervious areas are associated with "habitat for cars". Using porous pavement in parking lots is a simple way to increase infiltration and reduce runoff. When the US Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. needed to repave its parking lot, they used porous pavers. They also added bioretention cells to the landscaped areas and disconnected downspouts. The re-design did not alter the amount of parking spots, but reduced peak runoff and pollution, thus protecting and helping to restore the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.



Porous pavement covers about 1/3 of each parking space in the D.C. Navy Yard parking



LID street design: vegetated swales, no curbs, and narrower streets promote infiltration of stormwater.

Alter street design to increase infiltration. In a landmark project in Seattle, the Street Edge Alternative or SEA project involved building vegetated swales, bioretention cells, and narrower streets without curbs to promote an effective drainage and filtration system. The system reduced peak runoff for the 2 year flood event by 98%, and is capable of conveying the 25 year flood event. The local watershed provides spawning habitat for endangered salmon. The project was so successful that similar ones are being planned throughout the city.

Replace lawns with rain gardens. Rain gardens are small bioretention cells landscaped with plants, trees, and grasses. They are a particularly good way for individual homeowners to enhance their landscaping while protecting water quality. By planting easy-care native wildflowers, hardy perennials and grasses, attractive gardens can be constructed that have the added environmental benefits. More information on rain gardens is available at: http://www.healthylandscapes.org/raingarden.htm. Information on plants compatible for use in a California rain garden is posted at:

http://www.bbg.org/gar2/topics/design/2004sp\_raingardens.html.



Rain garden in a small backyard that collects runoff from roof and patio.

# LID as a Design Strategy

LID is more than a collection of engineered tools. It is a comprehensive design technique incorporating site planning and integrated management measures.

LID design principles include:

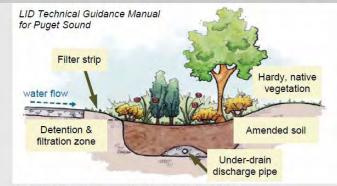
- Extensive site assessment of hydrology, topography, soils, vegetation and water features;
- Higher density, clustered housing, preserving open spaces to facilitate infiltration and protect habitats;
- Street layout that minimizes road length and width, calming traffic while allowing safe access of emergency vehicles.

LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound



In this example, LID design reduces imperviousness by changing the cul-de-sac design, reducing street width and lot size, and instead clustering houses around common green spaces that also serve as infiltration sites and preserving natural features.

# **Examples of LID**



#### Basic Components of a Bioretention Cell

To see how to engineer bioretention cells with the proper gradient and components visit: www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/epa03/biospec.htm

Rain Gardens and grass swales between houses are used at Douglas Ranch, Granite Bay, CA to catch and filter runoff from roofs and driveways before entering a local stream.

# **Examples of LID**



**Curb Cuts** permit stormwater to flow into grassy swales to reduce roadway contaminants that flow into nearby waterways. They can also be used in *existing* landscaped areas.



Hollywood Driveways have a dividing strip of grass in order to reduce the amount of impervious surface. Another way to reduce driveway space is to share one with a neighbor.

Online Resources Low Impact Development Center
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Stormwater Manager's Resource Center
National NEMO Network
LID Urban Design Tools
National Association of Home Builders

California Stormwater Quality Association

www.lowimpactdevelopment.org
www.epa.gov/owow/nps/urban.html
www.stormwatercenter.net
www.nemonet.uconn.edu
www.lid-stormwater.net
www.toolbase.org/index-toolbase.asp
www.cabmphandbooks.com

Prepared by Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment & the California Water & Land Use Partnership (CA WALUP) Written by E. Ruby & D. Gillespie, student interns, OEHHA. For more information contact Barbara Washburn: bwashburn@oehha.ca.gov.

CA WALUP is an educational program for land use decision makers addressing the relationship between land use and natural resource protection. The CA WALUP is a Charter Member of the National NEMO Network. CA WALUP website: http://cawalup.usc.edu

