



City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan

Adopted November 2014

WVULAW

LAND USE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LAW CLINIC

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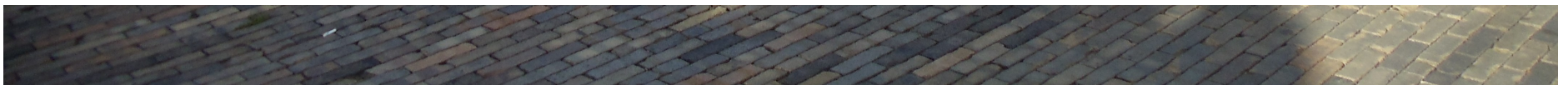


City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 1: Introduction

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Wellsburg is a unique city rich with a history and culture unlike anywhere else in the state. One of the oldest settlements along the Ohio River, the city has long been the hub of commerce, business, and industry for Brooke County. Like many communities along the Ohio River, the last couple of decades have been challenging for Wellsburg, especially with the closure of many major centers of employment. However Wellsburg has begun to redevelop and revitalize itself.

Many factors allow for the revitalization and the redevelopment of the city, including the city's proximity to a major metropolitan area, ease of access to the interstate highway system, the low cost of living, and the presence of many historical and cultural resources. One of the best ways to facilitate revitalization and redevelopment is through the creation of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is the foundation for future development, re-development, and prioritization of projects within a community.

Purpose

According to §8A-1-2 of the West Virginia Code the comprehensive plan is a plan for physical development and sets forth guidelines, goals and objectives for all activities that affect growth and development in the governing body's jurisdiction.

A comprehensive plan must be in place for a local government to adopt land use ordinances. In addition, many land use ordinances, including zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances (SALDOs), must be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

In order to make sound decisions, as they pertain to land use and development, a community is often well served by not only adopting a comprehensive plan but actively utilizing the plan as a policy and guidance document once it is adopted.

Acknowledgments

There are many people and organizations that participate in the comprehensive plan process and the creation of Wellsburg's comprehensive plan is no different. First and foremost is the planning commission, who was tasked with preparing the



Chapter One: Introduction

comprehensive plan. The planning commission, which is a volunteer body, has met several times over the course of a year to discuss the various components that help form the comprehensive plan. Additionally the planning commission held public meetings and distributed surveys to receive public input throughout the process.

As elected officials, the Mayor and City Council hold responsibility for adopting the comprehensive plan and a large role in the subsequent implementation of the comprehensive plan after adoption. City staff, including the City Manager, also prove instrumental during the comprehensive plan process by obtaining information, organizing meetings, and providing the necessary support to complete the comprehensive plan. Countless citizens also provided input, filled out stakeholder surveys, or spoke with planning commissioners or elected officials. This input is crucial in achieving a communitywide comprehensive plan.

Through the assistance of the Northern Brownfields Assistance Center, the city reached out to WVU College of Law, Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic to assist in the completion of the comprehensive plan. The Clinic facilitated meetings, assisted the city in ensuring that all required components and objectives were sufficiently met, helped develop surveys, and drafted the comprehensive plan.

Legal Requirements

Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code establishes the scope and purpose of comprehensive plans. Each comprehensive plan and subsequent update must follow the requirements found in this chapter.

A comprehensive plan is a vision for
the future for a community.

As stated in §8A-1-1(a)(5) “a comprehensive plan is a guide to a community’s goals and objectives and a way to meet those goals and objectives.” According to the West Virginia Code the comprehensive plan should also “be the basis for land development and use, and be reviewed and updated on a regular basis (§8A-1-1(b)(3)), which the Code later defines as every 10 years (§8A-3-11(a)).

A comprehensive plan is required if a governing body wants to enact a zoning ordinance, enact a subdivision and land development ordinance, require plans and plats for land development, or issue improvement location permits for construction.

Pursuant to Chapter 8A, a comprehensive plan must meet certain objectives and contain certain components in order to be considered valid. Care has been taken to ensure that all required objectives and components have been sufficiently addressed in the City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan.

Adoption Process

The planning commission is tasked with preparing the comprehensive plan. Once the planning commission has either created or amended the comprehensive plan they need to hold a public hearing pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code. After the planning commission holds a public hearing and addresses any public comments, the planning commission may recommend the comprehensive plan to the governing body. In order to do this the planning commission needs to submit the comprehensive plan to the governing body, then at the governing body's next regularly scheduled meeting the planning commission must present the recommended comprehensive plan to governing body.

After the presentation by the planning commission the plan comes under the purview of the governing body. At some point prior to adoption the governing body also needs to have a public hearing. After providing proper notice and allowing for written public comment of the plan the governing body can hold a public hearing. After holding a public hearing the governing body can decide whether or not to adopt the comprehensive plan. If adopted then comprehensive plan needs to be filed with the office of the county clerk of the county where they are situated.

Plan Organization

The City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan has been organized to allow ease of reading and navigation to specific content. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the comprehensive plan including a description of the legal framework and detailed tables that show where each mandatory component and objective is discussed in the plan. Chapter 2 is the Community Profile, which gives the reader a historical snapshot, as well as an overview of the city with regard to housing, economic development, transportation, land use, recreation, and public facilities. Chapter 3 sets out the Needs Assessment, which identifies the issues that need to be addressed in order for the city to achieve its vision of the future. Chapter 4 articulates the Action Plan, which lists goals, objectives, and specific action steps, prioritized by importance. Finally the reader will have an opportunity, through the appendices, to review information that is supplemental to the comprehensive plan.

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Chapter 2- Community Profile
Chapter 3- Needs Assessment
Chapter 4- Action Plan
Appendices

Chapter One: Introduction

Public Participation

Involving the public early, often, and throughout the comprehensive plan process is very important to the success of the plan. While West Virginia law requires public hearings, the city took great care to encourage and facilitate public input throughout the process. By doing so, the planning commission and citizens benefit as citizens gain a better understanding of the issues and become more informed about the overall comprehensive plan process. The City of Wellsburg Planning Commission adopted required public input procedures, which have been followed throughout the process and can be found in the appendices of the comprehensive plan.

The planning commission ensured that all official business was conducted during an open meeting as required by the state's open governmental proceedings act regulations. The planning commission also solicited public comment by advertising for and holding an open house where all members of the public were invited to attend and provide comments. Finally, the planning commission conducted stakeholder surveys as another way of getting input from the public.



Required Objectives for a Comprehensive Plan	
W. VA. Code §8A-3-4(b)(1)-(7)	
Code Provision	Chapter
Statement of goals and objectives	Chapters 3 & 4
Timeline on how to meet short and long-term goals and objectives	Implementation Matrix-(Chapter 4)
Action plan with implementation strategies	Chapter 4
Recommendations of a financial program for necessary public funding	Chapters 3 & 4
Statement of recommendations concerning future land use and development policies	Chapter 4
A program to encourage regional planning, coordination, and cooperation	Chapters 3 & 4
Maps, plats, and/or charts- that present basic information on the land, including present and future uses	All Chapters

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Required Components for a Comprehensive Plan	
<i>W. VA. Code §8A-3-4(c)(1)-(13)</i>	
Code Provision	Page #
Land Use	
Different land uses (including, for example, residential, agricultural, historic, etc.)	2-3, 2-3, 3-4 through 3-9
Population density and building intensity standards	2-10
Growth and/or decline management	3-4, 3-5, 4-5
Projected population growth or decline	2-11
Constraints on development (including identifying flood-prone and subsidence areas)	2-2, 3-6, 3-7, 3-8, 3-10, 4-6
Housing	
Analyze projected housing needs and different types of housing needed (including affordable housing and accessible housing for persons with disabilities)	3-11, 3-12, 4-10
Identify the number of projected housing units and land needed	3-11
Address substandard housing	3-10, 3-11
Rehabilitate and improve existing housing	3-11, 3-12
Adaptive reuse of buildings into housing	3-11, 4-10
Transportation	
Vehicular, transit, air, port, railroad, river, and any other mode	2-18, 2-19
Movement of traffic and parking	2-19, 3-17
Pedestrian and bicycle systems	2-15, 3-16, 3-17, 4-12
Intermodal transportation	2-19

Code Provision	Page #
Economic development	
Analyze opportunities, strengths and weaknesses	3-9, 3-12, 3-13
Identify and designate economic development sites and/or sectors	3-10, 3-13
Identify types of economic development sought	3-13, 3-18, 4-8
<i>Miscellaneous Components</i>	
Infrastructure	3-14 through 3-17
Public Services	2-15, 2-16
Rural	2-2
Recreation	4-16
Community Design	3-4, 3-13
Preferred development areas	3-9 through 3-12
Renewal and/or redevelopment	3-9, 3-10
Financing	Implementation Matrix
Historic preservation	3-8, 3-9



City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 2: Community Profile

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Existing Land Use

The City of Wellsburg is situated between the Ohio River to the west and steep terrain to the east. The city's identity is closely tied to the river. While the city owes much of its history and prosperity to the river, the city's proximity to the river has caused much damage and destruction.

Today much of Wellsburg is single-family residential development. However, several areas contain a significant amount of commercial structures, including the Commerce Ave. (Route 2) corridor and the central business area near the Brooke County Courthouse and City Hall. Because of its industrial heritage, numerous industrial sites still exist throughout Wellsburg, including the Brooke Glass Factory and the Eagle Manufacturing Company building.

Since Wellsburg is the county seat of Brooke County, numerous government facilities exist within the corporate boundaries, including the courthouse, board of education building, and other county-owned facilities.

Wellsburg boasts a large historic district that encompasses a significant portion of the city. The historic district has been designated under the National Register of Historic Places since 1982. Additionally, several state and federally-designated historic structures lie within Wellsburg city limits.

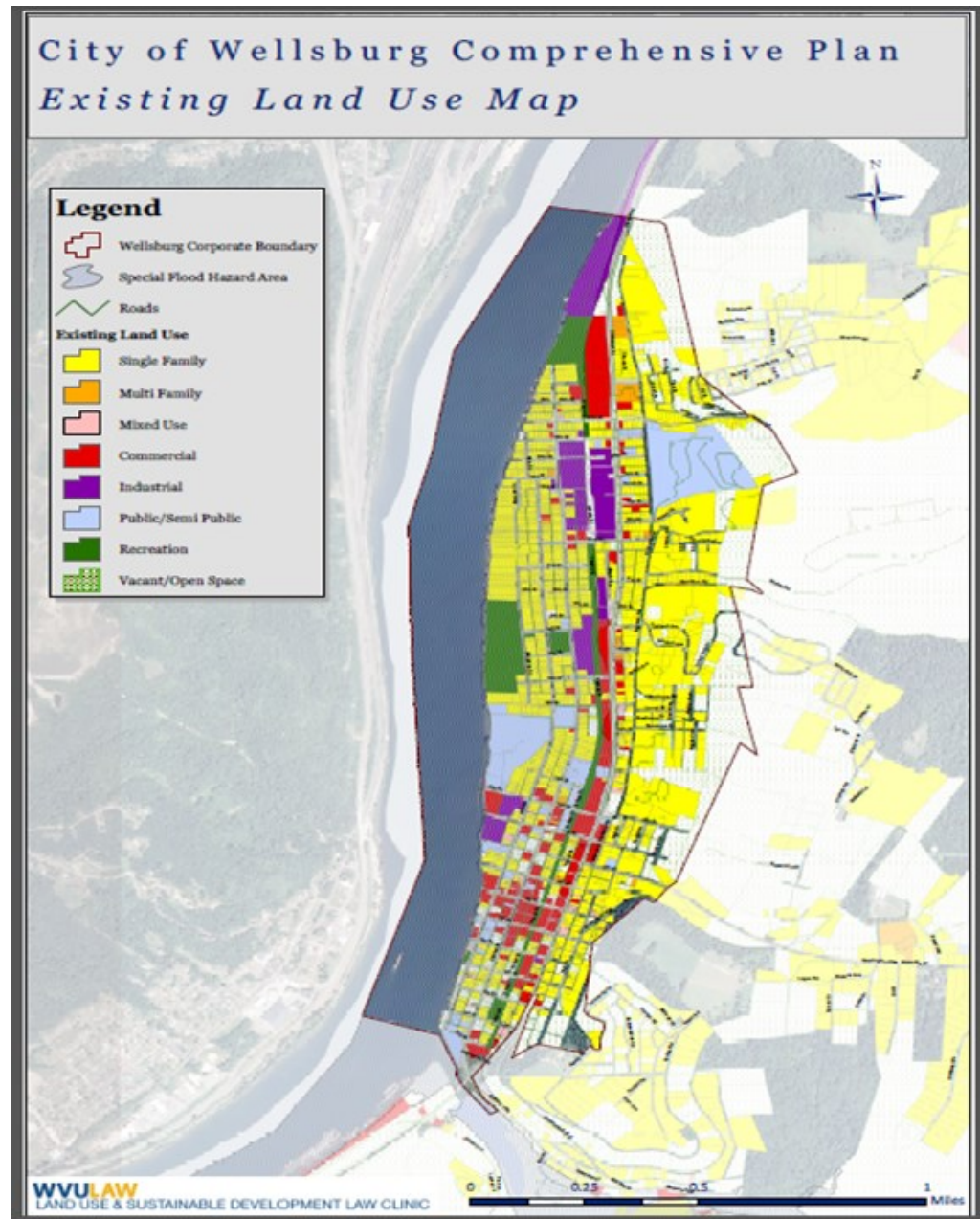
Wellsburg is nearly built out, leaving very little undeveloped land remaining in the city. Additionally, very little land in Wellsburg is considered agricultural and/or rural in nature. In fact, very little land within the corporate boundaries, according to tax map information, is considered "vacant."

In 1967 the City of Wellsburg established a municipal zoning ordinance. Since that time only a few textual amendments have been made to the ordinance. The city last amended the official zoning map in 1989. The textual component of the zoning ordinance and other municipal ordinances can be found online through the Walter H. Drane Company website which has codified Wellsburg's ordinances. According to the official zoning map nine (9) different zoning districts exist. At this time the city has not enacted any subdivision regulations for the development of land within the city.

A significant portion of Wellsburg is located within the FEMA-designated Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and the city participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Participation in this program by a community is a requirement in order for citizens who own property which has a federally-backed mortgage and who live in the SFHA to obtain flood insurance. The city should consider what types of future development and redevelopment should occur in the floodplain, if any.

Chapter Two: Community Profile

a. Existing Land Use Map



History

The Cox brothers, originally from Brownsville, PA, were the first pioneers to settle in the area that is now Wellsburg in 1773. The area was originally named "Charlestown" until 1816 when the town changed its name to Wellsburg in honor of Alexander Wells, an earlier inhabitant of the area and whose log cabin is still standing in Wellsburg. Brooke County, originally part of Ohio County and named after Virginia Governor Robert Brooke, was organized in 1797. Early settlers heading into the "Ohio Territory" stopped in Wellsburg to replenish their supplies before resuming their travels westward. (Source: Chamber of Commerce)

One of Wellsburg's most famous residents was Patrick Gass, who was the last surviving member of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, Corps of Discovery. Gass kept a daily account of the famous expedition and his journal was widely published in 1807. He lived in Wellsburg until his death at the age of 98 and is buried in Wellsburg.

One of the first commercial enterprises in Wellsburg was the ferry, which started operations in 1792 and was in continuous use for 140 years (except when the river froze over). Thus the river has been an important part of commerce and trade for the city since the early stages of settlement, in fact Wellsburg rivaled Pittsburgh and Wheeling in commercial river travel and warehousing in the early nineteenth century.

Another industry that developed in Wellsburg and was tied to the river in the early days were boat yards. Additionally, the Wellsburg wharf has been in use since the 1790s. Some of the stones from the original wharf can still be seen at the water's edge.

The glass industry in Wellsburg began in 1815 and flourished with the introduction of railway transportation. During the peak of the glass-making era, between 35-40 factories existed in or around Wellsburg and the city became known as a glass-making center.

Various other industries were established in the early 1800s, including a grist mill, saw mill, cotton factory, pottery-making factory, paper mill, and a marble and stone cutting yard. By 1900, Wellsburg reached its height as a glass and paper manufacturing center, relying more heavily on transportation by rail than river. (Nomination Form, National Register of Historic Places).

During the 1900s Wellsburg "experienced little significant growth." (Source: National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination



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Form- Wellsburg) Geographical elements limited growth of the city; to the west expansion was limited by the Ohio River, and to the east there was hilly terrain. During this time the Vancroft Estate, now known as Aspen Manor, was built by the Vandergrift family who found fortune in the blossoming oil industry. The manor sits on 600 acres of land overlooking the Ohio River and is currently being used as a bed and breakfast.

Between 1900 and 1940, Wellsburg became known as the "Marrying Town." This designation came about by the fact that West Virginia didn't have a three-day waiting period, customary in most other states, between the issuance of a marriage license and the church or civil ceremony. Wellsburg, with its advantages of being close to the population centers of Pittsburgh and Youngstown, and having a train depot that delivered prospective newlyweds right to its doorstep, became a mecca for couples anxious to get married. (Source: <http://www.brookecountywvgenealogy.org/wellsburg.htm>).

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History has identified several historic structures in Wellsburg including, Miller's Tavern, the "Beallmore," Brooke Cemetery, the "Elmhurst," Lewis Hall Mansion, Harry Paull and Louisiana Beall Paul Mansion, David Fleming and Lucy Tarr Mansion, General I.H. Duval Mansion, and the Kirker House.

In addition there is one federally-designated historic site (NPS), the Wellsburg Wharf, and one federally-designated historic district, the Wellsburg Historic District. The historic district was established in 1982 and covers 246 acres including a significant portion of the city, especially areas along the river.

Apples also play a large part in the history of Wellsburg and Brooke County. The importance of the apple to Wellsburg and Brooke County can be traced back to the Grimes Golden Apple (claimed predecessor of the Golden Delicious Apple) which was found growing on Thomas Grime's farm near Wellsburg. The annual Wellsburg Applefest that has been held for several decades and upwards of 800 bushels of apples are brought to the festival and 2,400 quarts of apple butter is sold to the thousands of people from all over the region who attend the event.



Economic Profile

A. Employment statistics

The unemployment rate in Brooke County has recently fluctuated. However there was a large increase in 2008 from 5.6% to 10.0% in 2009. The following year (2010), the unemployment rate peaked at 12.3% and has decreased to 9.6% as of 2012.

The 2012 Census estimates that the City of Wellsburg's unemployment rate is 8.3%, slightly lower than the county's unemployment rate (See Table X). The unemployment rate in 2012 for West Virginia was 7.9%

Table 1- Brooke County Unemployment Rates (as a percentage)

2000	4.6
2001	5.1
2002	5.9
2003	6.3
2004	7.3
2005	6.9
2006	6.8
2007	5.5
2008	5.6
2009	10.9
2010	12.3
2011	10.8
2012	9.6
2014*	7.6

**Bureau of Labor Statistics*



Chapter Two: Community Profile

According to the Census Bureau the two largest industries in Wellsburg are 1) educational services, health care, and social assistance and 2) Retail trade. Manufacturing, which used to be an important industry in the area, now accounts for roughly 17% of the total workforce in Wellsburg. The information section only accounts for .6% of the workforce and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining altogether account for only .6% of the workforce.

Table 2- Employment by Industry-City of Wellsburg (2012 American Community Survey)

Industry	% of Workforce
Educational services, health care, and social assistance	28.6%
Retail Trade	20.9%
Manufacturing	17.1%
Transportation and Warehousing and utilities	5.5%
Public Administration	5.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4.7%
Wholesale Trade	4.1%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3.8%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	3.5%
Construction	3.3%
Other services except public administration	2.2%
Information	0.6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.5%

B. Median Household Income

The median household income in the City of Wellsburg in 2012 was \$35,993, while Brooke County's median household income was \$42,307 and the State's median household income was \$40,400. The city's median household income was 15% below the county's and 11% below the state's figures.

C. Top Employers-Brooke County

Top Employers in Brooke County-March 2013 (Source: West Virginia Department of Commerce):

- Weirton Medical Center
- Brooke County Board of Education
- Ball Metal Food Container Corp.
- Mountain State Carbon, LLC
- Bethany College
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Kroger
- Wheeling-Nissshin, Inc.
- Eagle Manufacturing Company
- Rue Services Corporation
- Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Corporation
- Graphic Packaging, LLC

Housing Profile

Housing is an important component of any community. The number of units, type of housing, condition of housing, and the redevelopment of houses are all important factors for a community to consider when it is developing a comprehensive plan.

A. Occupied/Vacant

In 1990 the number of housing units totaled 1,564 and the number of occupied units was 1,426 (91.2%), leaving 138 (8.8%) vacant housing units. The 2000 Census indicated that there were 1,493 housing units, 1,361 of which were occupied (91.2%), leaving 132 vacant (8.8%) structures in Wellsburg.



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The 2010 Census indicated that there were 1,463 total units of which 89.7% occupied (1,312 units), leaving 10.3% (124 structures) residential structures vacant. To put these rates into context, in 2010, the vacancy rates for the U.S. and West Virginia, were 11.4% and 13.4%. Based off this data Wellsburg had a lower housing vacancy rate than the US average and a significantly lower vacancy rate than the state.

In 2012, the American Community Survey (ACS) estimated that there were 1,371 housing units in Wellsburg of which 1,199 or 87.5% were occupied, leaving 12.5% vacant (172 housing units vacant).

Table 3: Vacant Residential Structures

Year	Wellsburg Vacant (%)	West Virginia (%)	United States Vacant (%)
1990	8.8	-	-
2000	8.8	12.8	9.0
2010	10.3	13.4	11.4
2012	12.5	15.8	12.5

B. Home Ownership

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, of the homes in Wellsburg classified as “occupied,” 70.7% were owner-occupied. The median home value was \$78,600 and 27.7% of home owners with a mortgage paid more than 30% of their monthly household income in housing costs. The median home value for West Virginia was \$97,300 and 24.7% of home owners with a mortgage paid more than 30% of their monthly household income in housing costs.

The remaining 29.3% of occupied units in Wellsburg were occupied by tenants (rentals). The median monthly rent in Wellsburg was \$526. In Wellsburg 26.5% of renters paid more than 30% of their household income in rent. According to the 2010 Census a majority of residents (64.4%), both homeowners and renters, have lived in their residence for less than 20 years. In contrast, 71.7% of residents in West Virginia have lived in their residences for less than 20 years.

C. *Age of Housing*

One indicator of a community's housing stock, in regards to condition and value, is the age of the housing units. Typically there is some correlation between the age of a community's housing stock and the prevalence of dilapidated and/or vacant structures. This must be tempered with the fact that many homes that were constructed decades ago are still in good shape and may be of historical significant to a community. Therefore higher prevalence of older housing does not suggest unequivocally that there is widespread dilapidation.

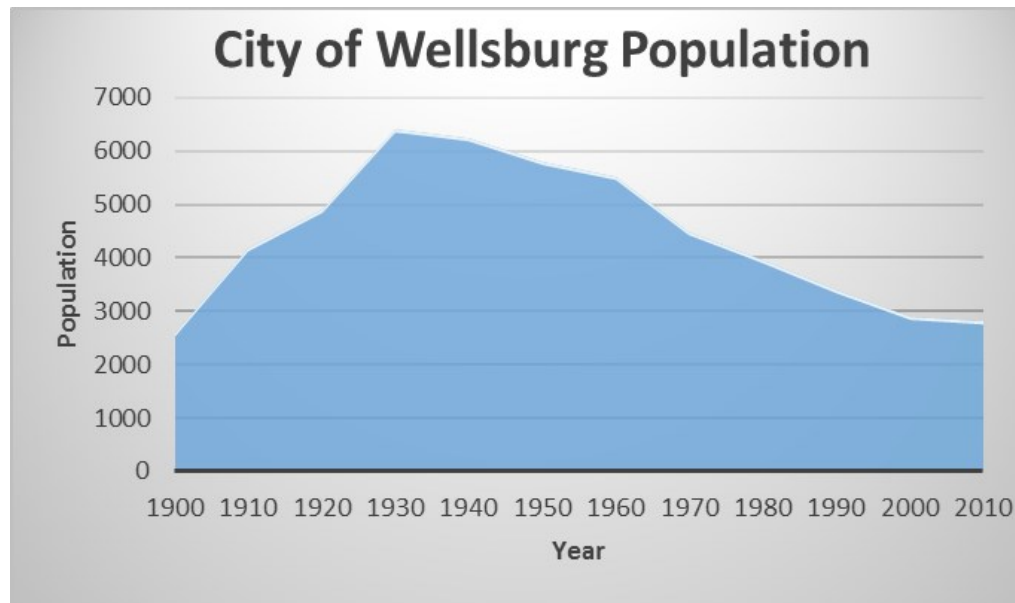
Census data indicates that the majority of houses in West Virginia, Brooke County, and Wellsburg were built prior to 1980: 64% of houses in the state, 81% in Brooke County, and 91% in Wellsburg. While several residential structures were built between 1970 and 1979, almost half of Wellsburg entire housing stock was originally built prior to 1940 (49.1%).

These figures indicate that a very high proportion of Wellsburg's housing stock is 30 years or older with a significant portion over 70 years old.

Population Profile

Beginning in 1900, the population increased significantly in Wellsburg, from 2,588 in 1900 to 4,189 in 1910, a 38% increase in 10 years. The population hit its apex in 1930 when the population of Wellsburg totaled 6,398. The population has been gradually dropping since that time, including a 51% decrease in population between 1960 and 2010. In 2010 the City of Wellsburg had a population of

2,805 and the Census estimated that in 2012 the number had further dropped to 2,769. In 2012 the population density of Wellsburg was 2,862 people per square mile.



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Brooke County has followed a slightly different trend in terms of population. There was considerable growth in the county from 1900 (7,219) through 1930 (24,663) when the population more than tripled. The population for Brooke County hit its highest point in 1980, with 31,117 people living in the county. Since that time the county has gradually lost population and by 2012 the county had an estimated population of 23,853.

Several factors come into play when trying to make population projections and some factors are clearly outside the city's control. The WVU Business and Economics Department has projected population estimates for all the counties in West Virginia through 2030. The forecast for Brooke County calls for continued declines through 2030 when the population is estimated at 21,103, which would be an 11.5% decline from 2012 (18 years). (Source: West Virginia Population Projection, WVU College of Business and Economics)

The City of Wellsburg is also part of the Weirton-Steubenville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which consists of three counties in two states. The estimated population of the MSA in 2012 was approximately 122,000, down from 132,008 in 2008.

E. Age Distribution

Table 4: Age Distribution, City of Wellsburg 2012

Cohort Group	Number of Persons	Percentage of Population
Preschool	129	4.6%
Primary School	175	6.3%
Middle School	142	5.1%
High School	222	8.0%
Post-Secondary	143	5.1%
Childbearing	249	8.9%
Childrearing	771	27.6%
Pre-retirement	371	13.3%
Younger retired	287	10.3%
Older retired	302	10.8%

General Age Cohorts

- Preschool- (Under the age of 5)
- Primary School (5-9 age group)
- Middle School- (10-14 age group)
- High School- (15-19 age group)
- Post-Secondary- (20-24 age group)
- Childbearing- (25-35 age group)
- Childrearing- (35-54 age group)
- Pre-retirement- (55-64 age group)
- Younger retired- (65-74 age group)
- Older retired (75- and up age group)

Almost 28% of Wellsburg's population falls into the "Childrearing" cohort (35-54 years old) and only 14% fall under the combination of the "post-secondary" and "childbearing" cohorts (20-35 years old). A significant portion (21%) of Wellsburg's population falls under the younger and older retired cohorts (65 years old and over).

F. Median Age (2012 American Community Survey)

The median age in Wellsburg (43.4%) is slightly higher than the median age found in the state (43.1%) but is significantly less than the median age of Brooke County (44.9).

G. Race and Gender

The city is not very racially diverse. According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 97.5% of people living in Wellsburg are White, 2.5% are Black, and 0.0% Hispanic or Latino. Compared to Brooke County which is 96.9% White, 1.7 Black, and 0.6% Hispanic or Latino. The State, while still not very racially diverse, is more so than Brooke County or the City of Wellsburg with 93.9% white, 3.1% black, and 1.2% Hispanic.

According to the 2010 Census there are 1,318 (47%) males and 1,487 (53%) females in Wellsburg.

Form of Government

A. City Government

The City of Wellsburg operates a City Council-City Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of 8 members elected from the wards by voters of the city and serve four-year terms. The Mayor is elected at-large in a separate election and presides over council meetings.

The City Manager is the chief executive of the city and the position is full-time and compensated. There are currently a total of 22 full-time and 5 part time city employees. The following table breaks down the placement of employees into various departments.



Chapter Two: Community Profile

Table 5: City of Wellsburg Employment (as of July 2014)

City Department	Number of Employees
Street Department	3 full time
Sewer Department	3 full time
Water Department	5 full time/ 1 part time
Building Enforcement and/ Zoning Officer	1 part time
City manager	1 full time
Administrative Staff	3 full time/ 1 full time elected
School Crossing Guards	3 part time (during school hours only)
Police Department	6 full time

The 2013-2014 annual budget (expenditures) for the City of Wellsburg totaled \$1.495 Million, allocated as follows:

- General Government- \$295, 337 (19.7% of total expenditures)
- Public Safety- \$526,884 (35.2%)
- Street and Transportation- \$524,288 (35.1%)
- Culture & Recreation- \$57,317 (3.8%)
- Social Services- \$5,000 (0.3%)
- Capital Projects- \$85,887 (6.8%)

The majority of the city's revenues during FY 2013-2014 came from the following sources:

- Property Taxes- \$265,626
- Business and Occupation Tax- \$466,000
- Excise Tax on Utilities- \$96,000
- Unassigned Fund Balance- \$340,887
- Franchise Fees- \$50,000
- Municipal Service Fees - \$106,000

B. Police Department

The city has an established police department that is tasked with enforcing the laws of the city and keeping the peace. The Wellsburg Police Department consists of six (6) full-time officers and each officer has his/her own police cruiser. The operating budget for the police department during FY 2013-2014 was \$441,887. The police department answered over 1,600 calls last year.

C. Fire and EMS Services

There are currently 28 members, all unpaid, of the Wellsburg Volunteer Fire Department which was established in 1832. The fire department has a service area of 1.34 square miles plus land that is covered in the mutual aid agreements the department has with Brooke County, the City of Wheeling, and the City of Weirton.

The City of Wellsburg assists the fire department by paying for vehicular insurance and workmen's compensation. The city also contributes some funds for the purchase of fire department vehicles. The Fire Department's fleet includes 3 pumpers, a Chevy Tahoe equipped with medical equipment, 1 rescue water craft, 1 Spartan heavy rescue vehicle, and a HAZMAT truck. The fire department plans on constructing a new fire station in the future. In Fiscal Year 2013-2014 the city's budget included \$76,500 for the fire department.



Brooke County Ambulance Service provides emergency services to the City of Wellsburg. The county's ambulance service is comprised of two stations (Follansbee and Wellsburg) and an Administrative/Billing Office. The Brooke County has (5) advanced ambulances and

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covers 92.5 square miles of the county.

D. Parks and Recreation

The city maintains several acres of recreational land within its corporate limits. There are four (4) parks located in the city. The 4th Ward Park at the very northern portion of the city is mostly empty and is where the former municipal swimming pool was located. The Betty Carr Recreation Site is a large recreational area which has softball, baseball, and football fields as well as a seasonal ice skating rink, basketball courts, and various playground equipment. Just down the street from the Betty Carr Recreation Site is Central Park which is a passive-use park with benches and a landscaped walking area. Finally, the 1st Ward Park, which is situated at the southern end of the city along 4th Street, offers a basketball court, bocce ball court, shelter, and picnic facilities.

The Wellsburg Yankee Rail-Trail consists of a 1.1 mile asphalt surface trail that links up with the Brooke Pioneer Trail to the south of the city. The permitted uses on the trail include hiking, biking, skating, and the trail is handicapped accessible.

Additionally Wellsburg is home to two museums, the ADBC WWII Museum and the Brooke County Historical Museum & Cultural Center. Located in downtown Wellsburg the Brooke County Historical Museum & Cultural Center is a place that promotes the cultural history of the area and exhibits various artifacts from throughout Brooke County's history.

The ADBC WWII Museum has one full-time coordinator and multiple volunteers that help catalog, display, broadcast, and archive materials relating to the WWII defense of the Philippines. The Museum is open for visit by researchers, students, and contributors and holds several annual events throughout the year.

The Brooke County Library is located in Wellsburg. There are 5 full-time employees, 9 part time employees and 6 volunteers. The library provides several extra services and programs to community members throughout the year including a summer reading program, computer classes, and family fun night.

E. Public Services/Facilities

Public Services and facilities typically include such things as power utilities, waste management, and the management of a potable water supply. These services and their corresponding facilities are extremely important to the wellbeing of a community.

The City of Wellsburg provides water treatment services for citizens within the city limits as well as providing water to one resale customer, the Washington Pike Public Service District, which has an average number of customers of 1,341. The average number of water customers within the city is 1,632, therefore the city provides water for close to 3,000 customers.

The construction for the current water plant started in 1962 and was completed in 1964. Recently the city completed a \$1.5M water plant upgrade. The city is also completing a water line replacement on Marianna Street which will cost \$500,000 when finished.

The city also provides wastewater treatment services to both citizens within the city and people living outside the corporate limits. Construction of the current wastewater treatment facility began in 1977 and was dedicated on October 1, 1980.

Within the city there are an average of 1,480 wastewater customers. The city also provides wastewater treatment services to the Rabbit Hill area outside the city, which has an average of 59 customers. Lastly there is one resale customer for waste water treatment facilities, the Brooke County Public Service District which adds another 376 customers on average.

Construction is expected to start in the spring of 2015 to eliminate 3 combined storm and sanitary sewer systems and to upgrade the waste water treatment plant at a total cost of \$4 Million.

Trash pickup in the city is handled by a private 3rd party, Republic Services, Inc. and recycling is also handled by a third party, the Brooke County Solid Waste Authority.

Education

The mission statement of Brooke County Schools states that "Brooke County Schools believe that all children can learn and will provide a high-quality education that ensures success for every student through excellence in teacher and learning." (Source: Brooke County Strategic Plan, 2014). Six (6) of the ten (10) schools in the County are Title I Schools. The Title I program, which was authorized by Congress, provides supplemental funds to school districts to assist schools with the highest student concentrations of poverty to meet school educational goals.

Brooke County Schools operate 10 schools (1 high school, 2 middle schools, 7 primary schools). Two of these schools are located in Wellsburg (Wellsburg Middle School and Wellsburg Primary). Wellsburg Primary currently has 37 people on staff, and an enrollment of 234 students, 80% which live in the city. Wellsburg Middle School has 60 staff members including support, custodial, and administrative staff. The Middle School has an enrollment of 470 students and the school has partnered with



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Change, Inc. to offer hot meals with their summer time tutoring program. The lone high school, Brooke High School, is located right outside the Wellsburg city limits.

The West Virginia Educational Standards Test (WESTEST2), is administered to judge students' aptitude in Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Reading/Language Arts for grades 3-11. There are five levels in which a student can obtain, novice, partial mastery, mastery, above mastery, and distinguished. Wellsburg Primary has a higher percentage of students at or above the "mastery" level in three out of the four noted subjects than the state. Wellsburg Middle School has a higher percentage of students at or above "mastery" in math and science than the state's averages.

	WESTEST2 (2012)			
	<i>% of Students at or above "Mastery" level</i>			
	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies
West Virginia	48.42	46.54	40.73	36.79
Brooke County	42.54	45.97	41.9	36.28
Wellsburg Primary	51.01	53.04	50.51	34.76
Wellsburg Middle School	38.83	50.63	48.23	34.5

The average composite ACT score for Brooke County has consistently been above 21. This score consistently above the average composite score for the state and has been at or above the national ACT average composite score.

ACT- Average Composite ACT Score			
Year	Brooke County	West Virginia	National
2008	21.2	20.7	21.1
2009	21.1	20.7	21.1
2010	21.2	20.7	21.0
2011	21.2	20.6	21.1
2012	21.4	20.6	21.1

There are 3,363 students currently enrolled in Brooke County Schools according to the West Virginia Department of Education. Enrollment has fluctuated but is trending downward from 3,633 in 2002-2003. The average class size in Brooke County is currently 21.3 students per class.

In 2011, the pupil/teacher ratio for Brooke County Schools is 13.3 while the state ratio was 13.9 and there are approximately 250 teachers working for the school district.

Transportation

Throughout its history Wellsburg has always enjoyed being a transportation center. A ferry operated in the city for several years, getting people across the Ohio River. Rail has also been an important transportation mode for commerce and travel through Wellsburg. There is still an active rail line through the northern part of the city, while the southern portion of the rail line has been converted into a recreation rail-trail.

The city has been laid out in a grid-like pattern with east-west running streets following a numbered system. The main road that runs through Wellsburg is Route 2 (locally known as Commerce Street). Route 2 runs in a general north-south direction and connects Wellsburg to Weirton in the north and Wheeling to the south. Route 27 comes into Wellsburg from the east and connects the city with Washington, PA.

Wellsburg is only about 15 miles from Interstate access (I-70). Interstate 70 goes to various points east and west including Columbus (2.5 hours drive), Baltimore (4.5 hours), and Indianapolis (5 hours).

The city spent \$524,288 during FY 2013-2014 on streets and transportation. This amount was 37% of the total Wellsburg budget.

While there are no ports in Wellsburg there is a city-maintained boat ramp, for access to the Ohio River, near 12th Street that can be used for boating and other recreational activities.

The Wheeling-Ohio County Airport is approximately 10 miles south of Wellsburg. This airport is publicly-owned and run by the Ohio County Commission. The airport covers 1,000 acres and has two asphalt runways, one 5,001 feet in length and the other 4,497 in length. There are



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40 aircraft based on the field including 12 military aircraft. The Airport averages 128 operations per day.

The Jefferson County Airpark is located just outside Steubenville, Ohio, about 15 miles from Wellsburg. The Airpark is about 15 miles from Wellsburg and is publicly-owned Airport has one asphalt runway that is 4,400 feet in length. There are 33 aircraft based on the field and the Airpark averages 44 operations per day.

Additionally Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT) is a little over 30 miles away with a drive time of about 35 minutes. PIT offers a large number of domestic and international flight options from many airlines.

While there are some issues with parking downtown and with parking near the Betty Carr Recreational Area during youth games overall Wellsburg is fortunate to not have major problems with not having enough parking.

A. Public Transit

Currently there are no public transportation services within the City of Wellsburg. Regionally there is the Weirton Transit Corporation (WTC) that operates bus service on a route-deviated basis. To the south of Wellsburg the Ohio Valley Regional Transit Authority (OVRTA) operates throughout Wheeling and surrounding communities.

B. Intermodal Transportation

Historically intermodal transportation, meaning the use of multiple modes of transportation, was an important part of life in Wellsburg. There were roads, rail lines, and a ferry all of which came together in Wellsburg and made the city a center for trade and commerce in Brooke County. While the roads are still here much of the river traffic has disappeared and the rail line has mostly been converted into a rail trail for recreational purposes.



City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 3: Needs Assessment

WVULAW

LAND USE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LAW CLINIC



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

One of the more important exercises related to the Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan is the identification of the city's critical issues. The planning commission, through the comprehensive plan process, has identified the most pressing needs of the community which need to be addressed in order for the community to achieve its overall vision for the future. Once those critical issues have been identified the city needs to develop goals, objectives, and actions steps that will specifically address these issues. In order to identify the critical issues in Wellsburg the planning commission involved the community through public meetings, surveys, press coverage, and encouraging citizen participation throughout the comprehensive plan process.

CRITICAL ISSUES

The critical issues that have been identified in Wellsburg have been discussed and analyzed throughout the comprehensive plan process by city officials, planning commissioners, professional planners, law students, the municipal attorney, and several community stakeholders over the course of several months.

Each issue has been identified as important in order to achieve the overall vision for the future. The purpose of Chapter 3 is to identify the critical issues. Chapter 4- Action Plan includes a list of prioritized goals, objectives, and action steps that aim to address the critical issues in the Chapter 3- Needs Assessment.

There were six primary areas of concern:

- ◇ Land use
- ◇ Housing
- ◇ Economic Development/Redevelopment
- ◇ Infrastructure
- ◇ Marketing the City
- ◇ Youth Activities

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Involving and inviting the public to participate in the comprehensive plan process is not only a good idea, it is required by law in West Virginia. The Wellsburg Planning Commission was required to adopt procedures for public input and to try to obtain public input throughout the comprehensive plan process, pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code.

Additionally the planning commission followed the State's Open Government Proceedings Act (Chapter 6, Section 9A of the West

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Virginia Code), which requires there to be notice and agenda setting for each meeting. The Wellsburg comprehensive plan process began in August 2013 when the Land Use and Sustainable Development Law (LUSD) Clinic at the WVU College of Law started assisting the city with all facets of the comprehensive plan process, including how to elicit public input throughout the comprehensive plan process.

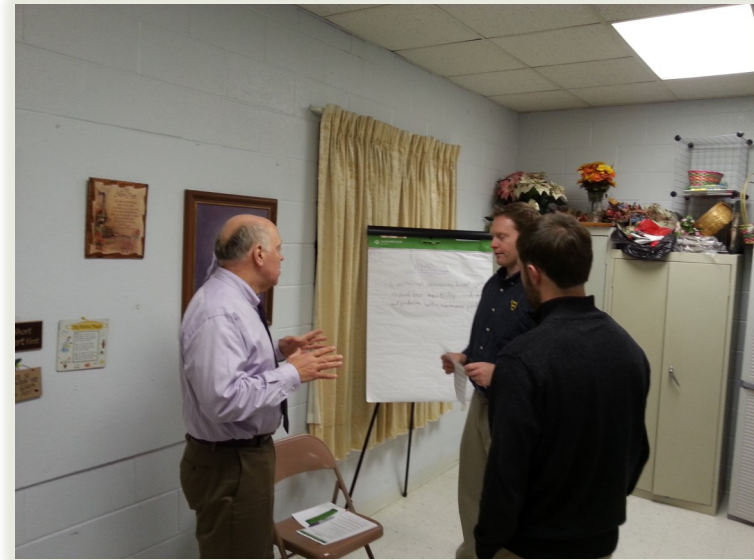
The planning commission created and distributed stakeholder surveys throughout the community. Each stakeholder was given a customized survey to fill out. The planning commission had a very good response to these surveys and because of the individualized questions the planning commission was able to get very detailed information from the stakeholders.

The planning commission also held an open house public meeting in February 2014. This meeting provided an opportunity for the public to voice their concerns, ask questions, and actively participate in the comprehensive plan process.

The open house format is often successful in obtaining useful and candid information from stakeholders because it is designed to make people feel comfortable and does not have the familiar trappings of a regular municipal meeting. The planning commission received good input from the participants about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the community.

Youth are often overlooked when a community seeks public input. Wellsburg made a conscious effort to involve the youth in the comprehensive plan process since they are the individuals which in the next 5-15 years will decide where they might want to buy a home, open a business, and/or start a family.

The LUSD clinic team visited with several students at Brooke County High to talk about the comprehensive plan process and to gather input on some of the strengths and weaknesses of the community.



VISION

The planning commission developed the following vision statement to help guide them through the comprehensive plan process.

The City of Wellsburg is an active, affordable, and growing community nestled along the banks of the Ohio River that embraces its small town atmosphere and vibrant downtown and promotes its proximity to several metropolitan areas and institutions of higher learning. The city continues to improve its infrastructure and extensive parks and recreational facilities, including the rail-trail that traverses the city. The city also promotes and embraces its vast and storied history as well as its industrial heritage.

LAND USE NEEDS

Land Use Ordinances

The comprehensive plan provides the blueprint for future development and redevelopment in Wellsburg. Adopting the comprehensive plan, while very important, is only the first step towards achieving the vision of the community. Creating and updating land use ordinances consistent with the comprehensive plan advances the goals of the plan.

The City of Wellsburg needs to review and update the existing zoning ordinance. The original zoning ordinance was adopted on May 16, 1967. Few updates or amendments to the zoning ordinance have been adopted, despite significant changes in the city's population, workforce, and employment opportunities.

While updating the zoning ordinance the city should ensure that the zoning district descriptions and the official zoning map are consistent. Property owners should be able to look at the zoning map and determine their property's zoning designation. The zoning ordinance text should clearly lay out permitted and conditional uses.

While the city has not seen substantial growth in several years, annexation offers the opportunity for growth. Annexation may require the city to establish a subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO) pursuant to Chapter 8A of the West Virginia Code.

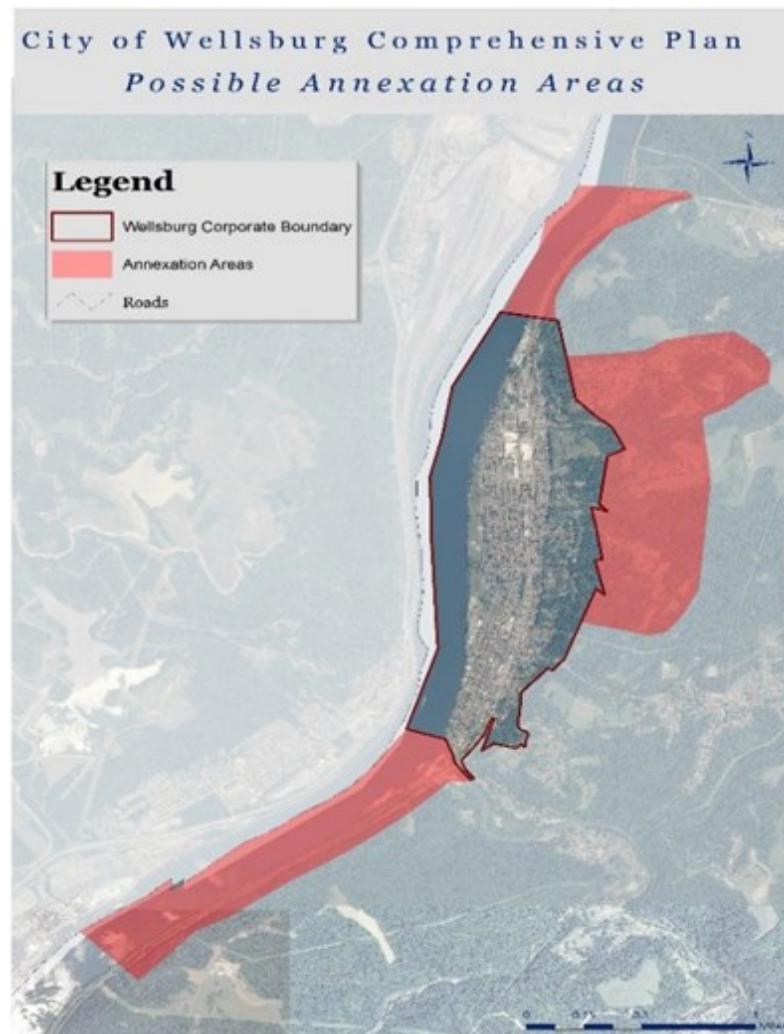
Even if annexation is not an option it would still be advantageous for the city to establish subdivision regulations. SALDO provisions would allow the city to set reasonable requirements for the recordation of plans and plats, an approval process, and for minimum design and development standards.

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Annexation

Annexation is a process whereby local governments may change their legal corporate limits to include land that was not previously within their jurisdiction. Annexation is a tool that can help implement the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan. With annexation the city could see an increase in population as well as an increase in the amount of Business and Occupation Tax. The city needs to look at the potential costs as well as the benefits of annexing land into the city. One possible cost is providing services to more people and businesses including infrastructure and maintenance costs. Possible benefits include an increased tax base and population to the city. Figure 1 shows possible annexation areas.

Map 1 : Possible Annexation Areas



Bridge

Wellsburg is located in close proximity to major metropolitan areas in both Ohio and Pennsylvania. This relative proximity should be considered an advantage for the city. However, one long standing concern for Wellsburg residents is access to Ohio. While Ohio sits right across the river, there is no vehicular access (bridge) in or around Wellsburg. To the north the closest crossing is at East Steubenville and to the south in Wheeling at the I-70 Bridge, which is over well over 15 miles away.

However, a proposed Ohio River Bridge that would link Brooke County to Jefferson County, Ohio near Brilliant and would be positioned, on the West Virginia side, just south of Wellsburg. The estimated cost of the bridge project is \$96 Million. Recently an Environmental Assessment (EA) found that impacts were “not anticipated to be significant on the natural, physical, social, or cultural environs.” Therefore a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was prepared and no Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary. Next steps include a state line agreement and preliminary/final design work. (Source: BHJMPC website).

The city should continue to promote the bridge project and advocate for its completion, as the bridge stands to be a catalyst for further development and redevelopment in the city. The city should work with all appropriate local, regional, state, and federal authorities to help ensure that this project is completed.

Floodplains

Because of its location along the Ohio River, much of Wellsburg, including its downtown, is prone to flooding events. A significant portion of the city’s developed land lies within the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), also known as the floodplain. The city should continue to work with FEMA representatives to make sure that Flood Insurance Rate Maps are updated and accurate. The city also needs to continue to educate and provide information to citizens about the costs and hazards of developing in the SFHA. Furthermore the city should help its citizens understand what measures can be taken to minimize flood damage risk especially in light of the Biggert-Waters Act of 2012 and the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

In 2010, the city updated the Flood Damage Prevention ordinance, which was put in place to meet the minimum standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The city needs to periodically review the NFIP standards and



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to work with the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, which is the state agency that administers the NFIP, to make sure that the provisions the city has put in place continue to fulfill NFIP minimum standards.

While participation in NFIP is required for property owners to be able to receive flood insurance, the program sets minimum requirements. In addition to administering NFIP, FEMA has also created a volunteer program called the Community Rating System (CRS) which awards communities that go above and beyond the minimum requirements of NFIP. The more activities/programs/actions taken to mitigate flood risks the more points that community is awarded. When certain scores are obtained, all property owners in the community receive a discount on their flood insurance premiums. The more flood mitigation activities the community completes, the larger the discount individual policy-holders receive.

Wellsburg's building inspector plans to sit for the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) Exam. The ASFPM recognizes continuing education and professional development that enhance the knowledge and performance of local, state, federal, and private-sector floodplain managers. Once the building inspector becomes a CFM mandatory continuing education is required.

The City of Wellsburg should establish a CRS program and make it a priority to focus on activities that can mitigate flood damage hazards while trying to reach a higher class level that would allow community members to receive a greater discount on their flood insurance premiums.

Currently there are only 7 CRS communities in the state, however Wellsburg should take the necessary steps to become the next West Virginia community that is part of the CRS. In fact Wellsburg has the 15th most flood insurance policies for any jurisdiction (county or municipality) in the state and the 5th most for any city or town regardless of population. This means that per capita, Wellsburg has a very high number of structures in the floodplain.

Example- Benefit of Becoming a CRS Community- City of Buckhannon

160 policies: \$155K in flood insurance premiums for entire city.

Average Premium \$692 per policy holder.

The following shows the individual as well as communitywide savings at the various classes if Buckhannon implemented a CRS program:

CRS Class 9- savings of \$37 per year/per policyholder (\$8,227- annual communitywide savings)

CRS Class 7- savings of \$103 per year/per policyholder (\$23,239 –annual communitywide savings)

CRS Class 5- savings of \$173 per year/per policyholder (\$38,975- annual communitywide savings)

(Source: WVDHSEM)

In addition to identifying flood-prone areas, Chapter 8A also requires the identification of any subsidence areas, which are typically associated with karst areas.

Mr. David Weary, a geologist with the USGS, indicated that there are karst areas around Wellsburg (see Map 2). He stated that “the karst area we show in the northern panhandle of West Virginia panhandle is underlain by the Monongahela Group...This unit does not produce a classic karst terrain (sinkholes, etc.) but is limited to narrow exposures in steep valley walls. Mr. Weary indicated via email (July 2014) that there are probably not any caves in the area but that there might be small voids and enlarged joints.

Map 2: Karst in Wellsburg Area



There are many factors that allow for the revitalization and the redevelopment of the city to occur. Some factors include the city's proximity to a major metropolitan area, ease of access to the interstate highway system, the low cost of living, and the presence of many historical and cultural resources. One of the best ways to facilitate revitalization and redevelopment is through the creation of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is the foundation for future development, re-development, and prioritization of projects within a community.

Historic Resources

Much of Wellsburg's charm derives from its significant and storied culture and history. While many historic resources have been preserved, many places of significance have been lost forever. The remaining historical resources should be maintained and preserved

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to the greatest extent possible.

Much of the city is designated by the National Park Service (NPS), under the National Register of historic places as the “Wellsburg Historic District,” a designation that has been in place since 1982. Within this district there are several individual historic structures, some designated by the federal register, others by the state’s register of historic places. The city needs to evaluate the current historic district since the original designation by the NPS is over 30 years old. The evaluation may identify new structures or new parts of the city deserving of historical designation.

While preservation of the historical and cultural amenities of Wellsburg is vital towards maintaining the city’s identity as a historical community along the Ohio River, preservation must be balanced with the importance of continuing to redevelop and revitalize Wellsburg by encouraging appropriate new commercial and residential development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

Development and Redevelopment

Commercial and Industrial Sites

In 2011 the City of Wellsburg approved the creation of the Wellsburg Urban Renewal Authority, pursuant to West Virginia Code, in order to address vacant/dilapidated structures, including brownfields, in the city. The URA cannot acquire real property for a redevelopment project unless the city has approved the URA’s redevelopment plans. Additionally, the URA cannot prepare a plan for a redevelopment area until the city has declared, by resolution, that an area is blighted or a slum area in need of redevelopment.



The URA also may not recommend a development plan to the city until the city has prepared and adopted a general or comprehensive plan. Therefore, after the adoption of the comprehensive plan, Wellsburg should identify, and then declare by resolution, any areas in the city that are slum or blighted and in need of redevelopment. Once the city declares an area as either slum or blighted then the

Wellsburg URA can prepare redevelopment plans for those areas. The redevelopment plans must be approved by City Council before any acquisition of property by the URA. The city should continue to work with the URA to create the redevelopment plans that are required prior to the URA buying or selling properties in the designated slum or blighted areas.

Wellsburg has already adopted an ordinance that allows the city to set up a vacant structures registry. The city should update the registry regularly, and utilize GIS to map these properties. This will give City Officials a better idea of where the areas of concern are for redevelopment purposes. The city, in conjunction with the URA, needs to use the registry to start to formally prioritize properties or portions of the city for redevelopment.

One of the more prominent industrial sites in Wellsburg, the Brooke Glass Building, was recently purchased by the Business Development Corporation (BDC) of the Northern Panhandle for redevelopment. The BDC is working to redevelop the old Brooke Glass property. The project has received \$77,000 in funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for Phase II site assessments. Additionally the BDC is partnering with the Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center, which has developed a new regional "Site-Ready Program" to address brownfields using nearly \$380,000 in funding from the Benedum Foundation.

The city has also been working with the Northern Brownfields Assistance Center and the Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission in order to obtain grant funding for site assessment. The city has also participated in the Brooke-Hancock Brownfield Redevelopment Task Force which is a regional group that works on brownfield and redevelopment issues. The group has already completed a Phase I site assessment of the Gen-Pak Building.

The city should continue to participate and be an active member of the regional task force which meets quarterly.

Abandoned and Dilapidated Residential Structures

While the focus may be on commercial and industrial dilapidated and abandoned structures, many residential structures in Wellsburg are dilapidated and/or abandoned. Recently FEMA gave the city funds to demolish 10 dilapidated homes located in the floodplain. Wellsburg's vacant structures registry also applies to residential structures, therefore the city needs to also prioritize residential structures for possible demolition.



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The city should move forward with the demolition of the 10 structures, which includes bidding out the work. The city should also continue to seek FEMA grant funding for further demolition of residential structures that are uninhabitable/vacant and meet the necessary requirements.

Residential Development and Redevelopment

The city should encourage different types of housing options, including affordable condominiums, apartments, and one story ranch-style housing. The aging population of Wellsburg and Brooke County is increasing and smaller residential units, possibly aged-restricted, would likely be in demand. These types of residential units would need to be accessible. Therefore, during the process of updating the zoning ordinance the city needs to make sure that these types of housing are specifically permitted by right in some zoning districts and as conditional uses in other districts.

While it is very difficult to project the number of houses that will be needed in the community, because Wellsburg is very close to being built out more land would needed if any significant amount of residential units were to be constructed.

Apartments above businesses, especially in the downtown area, and adaptive reuse of commercial and industrial buildings as residential should also be encouraged in certain situations. Adaptive reuse is using a structure that was originally constructed for one purpose to be redeveloped for another use. For example, an old warehouse can be redeveloped as studio apartments and thereby utilize a space that had been empty. For example, the Brooke Furniture Building could be redeveloped as residential units. Land use regulations must accommodate these conversions, however.

Turning viable vacant and abandoned commercial structures into residential rentals and long-term living spaces should be encouraged. However, the city also encourages new and diverse businesses to come to the city.



Whenever residential development or redevelopment occurs, the city should encourage property owners to take more than the minimum required steps for flood mitigation. Property owners in the Special Flood Hazard Area should be aware of mitigation practices in place, such as raising the structure and adding flood vents in the foundation. These measures can significantly reduce flood insurance premiums. Holding citizen education sessions and composing and disseminating a fact sheet on floodplain management constitute lower cost ideas that can help educate the public about flood risk reduction. The city should also hold question and answer sessions with property owners about recently passed legislation such as the Biggert-Waters Act and the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

Business Retention and Development

The city has lost a significant amount of people and businesses over the years, therefore it is imperative that the city promote and encourage both the retention of current businesses as well as facilitating the expansion of new businesses.

Current Businesses

The city should remain apprised of the current economic climate in Wellsburg by working with local business groups, including the Chamber of Commerce. By partnering with local businesses the city can understand how to better serve these businesses. When amending the zoning ordinance the city should ensure that commercial districts are still appropriately zoned and determine whether placement of the districts and the permitted uses within those districts should be amended.



Special events should be encouraged throughout the year in the city. To the greatest extent possible, these special events should benefit local business owners. The Applefest held each year in October in downtown Wellsburg provides a good model in terms of getting the tourists to come and visit. The city should establish a special events committee that can work with organizers from established festivals and events so that the city can help coordinate and provide ancillary services. The committee should work to develop smaller-scale events that will bring community members and tourists to the city on a more regular basis.

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For example, a summer music festival in the downtown square would promote local musicians and other performing acts while providing a free or very low cost form of entertainment. The main goal of such events is to draw people downtown. Grant funding may be available to establish and support such a program.

The Brooke Hills Free Methodist Church puts on a free movie night at Central Park during a few nights each summer.

New Businesses

The city should promote new business development. One concept discussed by the planning commission involves the development of a new business incubator. The city has already indicated to the Brooke-Hancock Regional Planning and Development Council that Wellsburg would need \$1 Million (Community Economic Development Strategy -October 2013) to develop the incubator. A business incubator is an organization that is designed to promote new startup businesses through various forms of support that includes physical space, capital, networking, and marketing. The city should continue to look for physical space as well as funding opportunities for a business incubator.

Lodging accommodations businesses should be encouraged in Wellsburg. No hotel/motels currently exist in the city. Since tourism has been discussed as a focal point it makes sense to have places for the tourists and travelers to stay. Bed & breakfasts should also be encouraged in appropriate districts as there are not any currently located in the city.

The city should also apply to economic development programs such as West Virginia's *On Trac* program. If the city is accepted into the *On Trac* program and successfully completes 2 years in the program, the city would be eligible to become a Main Street program. Participating in the Main Street program provides technical assistance for activities such as downtown design, organizing community facilities, and promoting and improving physical aspects of the town. A number of other grant funding opportunities exist for economic development initiatives in Wellsburg including funds through the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Stormwater Management

Stormwater Management is an integral part of maintaining water quality, lessening damage from flood events, and lessening the severity of stream bank erosion and sedimentation. One of the biggest issues regarding stormwater management is when there are combined sewer systems and there are overflows of these systems, or a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO). CSOs can be a major source of water pollution and often contain untreated domestic, commercial, and industrial wastes, as well as surface runoff.

The City of Wellsburg has adopted a Long Term Control Plan (LTCP), which aims to eliminate CSOs in the city. The adoption of the LTCP has been mandated by the EPA via the State's Department of Environmental Protection. While the city has already taken steps to eliminate some of the CSOs there are several more areas within the city that still have CSOs that still need to be eliminated.

Essential Elements of a Long Term Control Plan:

1. Characterization, monitoring, and modeling of the combined sewer system
2. Public participation
3. Consideration of sensitive areas
4. Evaluation of alternatives to meet CWA requirements using either the "presumption approach" or the "demonstration approach"
5. Cost/performance considerations
6. Operational plan
7. Maximizing treatment at the existing publicly owned treatment works (POTW) treatment plant
8. Implementation schedule
9. Post-construction compliance monitoring program

The primary objective of the long term control plan (LTCP) is to develop and evaluate a range of CSO control alternatives sufficient to meet water quality standards (WQS), including attainment and protection of designated uses on CSO-impacted receiving waters. Approximately 390,000 people in 58 communities in West Virginia live in areas with CSOs, including Wellsburg residents.

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The city should continue to make the elimination of CSOs, through their LTCP, a priority. The issue, as with many projects, has been funding. For CSO remediation projects already completed the city was able to secure federal loans. However for future projects the city should try to obtain a low interest loan through West Virginia's Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council (IJDC).

Even though the city is within a Municipal Separate Storm Sewage Systems (MS4) area it currently has a waiver from most of the requirements, however the city is still required to run periodic water tests.

Water & Wastewater Plant

Water Treatment Facilities

The City of Wellsburg maintains and operates its own water treatment plant and appurtenant infrastructure. Both the Hammond and Washington Pike Public Service Districts also get potable water from the City of Wellsburg. The city's Combined Water/Sewer Board (CWSB) received \$1.5 Million dollars to upgrade/retrofit the existing water treatment plant from IJDC. The CWSB owns and operates a water treatment plant which has a capacity of 1.1 million gallons per day. The potable water storage reservoir has a capacity of approximately 1.0 million gallons. The reported volume of the ground level tank is 50,000 gallons. The source of the city's water supply comes from four underground wells located near the Ohio River. The water treatment system is approximately 50 years old and improvements are needed to continue to provide safe drinking water to customers.



The city has recently completed a series of upgrades to the water treatment plant including the replacement of a new floating reservoir cover, upgrades to the tank, and cleaning the wells. The city has also just completed an upgrade to the Marianna Street water line. Additionally the city was able to receive funding, through Homeland Security, for a backup generator to the water plant.

While this work was essential to the viability of the city's water treatment infrastructure, concerns still exist, including continued focus on the prioritization of the distribution system. The city also needs to continue to look for funding opportunities to establish a water meter replacement program which the city estimates the costs at \$300,000 and to build new service lines and distribution system.

Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The City of Wellsburg wastewater treatment facility currently has the capacity to process 1.25 MGD of wastewater. In 2008 the

facility processed 300K GPD, or 25% of the facility's total capacity. Even so, the infrastructure is over 40 years old and needs to be modernized. The city lost the primary user of the facility, lowering the cost effectiveness of wastewater operations. The city needs to focus on electrical and operational costs, such as going from two basins to one basin, and to fix the cement tanks which have cracks in them. The city should try and identify possible grant funding opportunities but may have to borrow money to complete the necessary repairs.

Downtown Renovation

In 2009 Wellsburg was awarded \$656,975 through a Transportation Enhancement Grant from the Federal Highway Administration (80%/ 20% matching) for the Charles Streetscape project. This grant money will continue to be used to address some drainage issues as well as to replace some benches, garbage receptacles, refurbish light fixtures, and complete landscaping along Charles Street from 6th through 9th Streets and the Town Square.

The city is also looking for funding opportunities to update the clock tower, the gutter system, and to provide ADA access to the City Hall Building. Having adequate access to municipal buildings, especially where most of the city's meetings are held, is particularly important and should be a priority for the city. (5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy-CEDS)

Transportation

Sidewalk Improvement

Wellsburg was awarded \$200,000 through the ARRA (American Reinvestment and Recovery Act) for sidewalk improvements in 2009. These funds helped restore the original brick sidewalk along Charles Street.

Areas within the city that still need to have sidewalks constructed or repaired. ADA standards must be followed for any new construction. Additionally if there are any repairs to pre-existing sidewalks, ADA standards should be incorporated into the repairs when feasible.

In order to properly plan for sidewalk improvements and other transportation-related projects the city should develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that will identify, prioritize, and develop a timetable for the repair of existing roads and



Chapter 3: Needs Assessment

sidewalks as well as the construction of any new roads and/or sidewalks. A CIP provides structure, prioritization, and identifies possible means of financing infrastructure projects.

Road and Intersection Improvements

The Brooke Hancock Jefferson Municipal Planning Commission (BHJ) "2035 Transportation Plan- Projects Considered," discussed Commerce Street from Bethany Pike to Washington Pike as having a "highway width that is functionally obsolete creating unsafe and cramped traffic conditions that have led to numerous traffic crashes at or near the 10th & Commerce Street Intersection." The Redevelopment of this intersection has already started and is moving into the design stage, the issue with the intersection is to make it safer by widening the roadway.

Additionally the city should focus on getting the entire section of Commerce Street widened as suggested, especially since it is one of the main thoroughfares and because of the inherent safety concerns with the current road width. Lastly all road projects should be prioritized in a capital improvement program that prioritizes and identifies funding for all infrastructure projects.



Roadway Land Slides

The steep terrain found along the Ohio River raises the concern of rock falls and mudslides. These concerns are especially true along Route 2 (Commerce Street in Wellsburg) in and around Wellsburg. These conditions present safety concerns to cars and their passengers as well as significant cleanup costs. The BHJ has also identified this issue in their 2035 Transportation Plan.

The city should work with the BHJ and state officials to secure funding to widen the segment of Route 2 from the Ohio County line to Wellsburg from a 2 to a 4-lane highway and to add various rock fall mitigation measures. These improvements to widen the existing route can provide better and direct access to Wheeling. This expansion can also tie in with the bridge project that is being contemplated for construction just south of Wellsburg.

MARKETING THE CITY

One of the major goals of the city is to enhance and promote the city as a great place to work, play, and live. One of the more inviting features of Wellsburg for prospective entrepreneurs or home buyers is relative proximity to major metropolitan areas. The city is located within minutes of both Ohio and Pennsylvania, has river access, and rail access through part of the city. Wellsburg is less than 35 miles from Pittsburgh International Airport, and one can travel from Wellsburg to downtown Pittsburgh in about an hour. Wellsburg is also situated between the fifth and sixth largest cities in West Virginia (Wheeling and Weirton).

Many of the communities near Wellsburg, however, lack the small town charm and the low cost of living that can be found in the city. A person might have to work in Ohio or Pennsylvania but still have a short commute and live in Wellsburg. According to Taxrate.org the average median property tax is \$464 for West Virginia, \$2,223 in Pennsylvania, and \$1,836 in Ohio. The cost of living and small town lifestyle should be promoted and an active marketing campaign with the chamber of commerce should be initiated by the city.

In order to successfully market Wellsburg, the city and its marketing partners should develop branding strategy that communicates to prospective tourists and new business owners why Wellsburg is right for them. A branding and marketing strategy does not have to be intricate or large-scale but a plan should be in place so that certain goals and objectives are met. Questions such as what makes Wellsburg unique, how we want people to think of Wellsburg moving forward and, who we are marketing to (e.g. families, retirees) are questions that should be answered when formulating a marketing plan.

The city also needs to continue to promote its vast history. From the Grimes Golden Apple, to bygone industries such as the ferry, glass factories, mills, and the designation as the "Marriage Capital." Once a hotel is built in town the city can create a Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and use funds derived from the hotel and occupancy tax to expand the city's promotional and tourism efforts.



Chapter 3: Needs Assessment

Wellsburg is known for apples, and the Grimes Golden Apple plays an important part of the city's heritage and culture. The city should look into the possibility of merging local artisan work, tourism, and fundraising by trying to establish a program to erect fiberglass apples that have been painted by local artists. These apples can be placed throughout the city and can eventually be auctioned off for fundraising purposes. The idea is to generate a buzz and for there to be temporary public art. The city would need to find appropriate locations throughout city and find appropriate funding sources to sponsor the apples.

Case Study

The City of Baltimore established the "Crabtown Project" in which 60 fiberglass crabs were painted and distributed around town. The project was commissioned to raise money for the city's schools. After several months of being on display the crabs were auctioned off to private owners however some of the sponsors such as Johns Hopkins University decided to purchase their sponsored crab. The city-managed "Believe in Our Schools" fund earned more than \$250,000 from the proceeds of the "Crabtown Project."

City establish a fully functional municipal website

In order to effectively communicate with citizens, business owners, potential tourists, staff, local leaders and other stakeholders the city must find a cost effective way of quickly and efficiently disseminating data. One way of doing this is through the establishment and maintenance of a municipal website.

The Vermont Council on Rural Development has published "5 Tips for Creating a Successful Municipal Website."

Those tips were:

1. Remember that a municipal website is a space for citizens to get information
2. You don't need to have a technical person on staff to have a powerful, effective site, but training is important.
3. Get a plan in place for site maintenance from the start
4. Start with a very simple site, work forward from there
5. Meeting minutes are key

The city should identify why it needs to create and maintain a municipal website. Some commonly noted reasons include that the website can be used to disseminate information about upcoming meetings, posting meeting minutes on the website, posting information on community events, and to provide contact information for the different municipal departments.

The level of detail and amount of information found on a municipal website can vary depending on resources, and staff's time and expertise. It is important to note that a municipal website could also be a powerful economic development tool.

The city already has its codified ordinances through the Walter H. Drane Company. This site has all of Wellsburg's municipal ordinances online and updated so that anyone with internet access will be able to view the rules and regulations of the city.

The city must budget for anticipated costs of establishing and maintaining the website. Private companies design and maintain websites for local governments.

PROVIDE MORE YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Expanding youth sports leagues is an important goal for Wellsburg. The city can work with area youth sports leagues to make sure that there are enough fields and that they are properly maintained and readily available throughout the year. One area that the city should consider places some sort of athletic field is in the 4th Ward Park, there is plenty of open space to put a baseball or softball field.

The city can also partner with local volunteer groups to sponsor sports camps at the parks. Many cities and towns operate sports camps for the benefit of their youth.

The city should continually be looking for ways to enhance the current recreational system. For example the city already installed round picnic tables in Betty Carr Recreational Area giving citizens more opportunities to have a picnic in the park.





City of Wellsburg Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 4: Action Plan

WVULAW

LAND USE & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LAW CLINIC



The Action Plan consists of a list of prioritized goals, objectives, and action steps that will help guide the community after the comprehensive plan has been adopted. The content in Chapter 4 is derived primarily from the Needs Assessment (Chapter 3). There were six (6) areas of concern that were identified throughout the comprehensive plan process, they included:

- ◇ Land Use
- ◇ Housing
- ◇ Economic Development/Redevelopment
- ◇ Infrastructure
- ◇ Marketing the City
- ◇ Youth Activities

The Action Plan is broken down into goals, objectives, and action steps. Goals are general guidelines that are broad, aspirational, and pertain to the overall future development of the community (Example- "Address housing shortage"). Objectives are more specific, concrete, and are measureable (Example- "Allow for more types of housing options"). Action steps are even more specific and provide specific actions to be taken to achieve the overarching goals and objectives (Example- "In zoning ordinance allow for residential units over businesses").

An implementation matrix is also included at the end of Chapter 4. The matrix includes a list of the parties responsible for certain action steps, any potential partners, funding sources, and whether a specific action step is a low, moderate, or high priority.



Chapter Four: Action Plan

Goal 1- Create sound land use strategies

Objective 1- Review, update, and create land use ordinances

Action Step 1- Review and update the current zoning ordinance

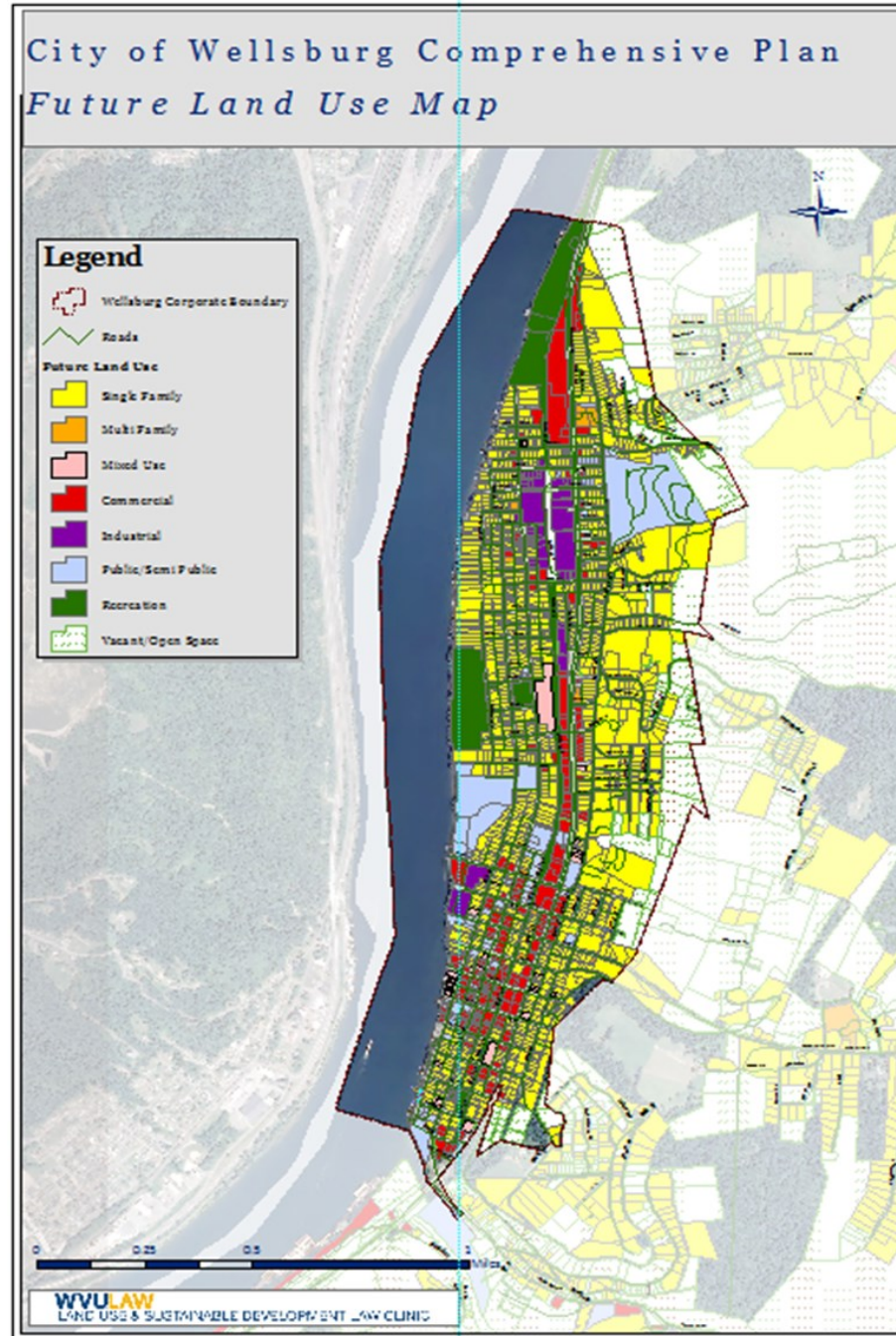
The textual component of the zoning ordinance and official zoning map need to be made consistent. The zoning map needs to be updated so that property owners will be able to easily identify what district their land is located. This can be done creating a new map utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Examine the different zoning districts that currently exist, determine if the existing districts are still appropriate for Wellsburg. This examination includes a review of permitted uses by right and conditional uses in each district.

Action Step 2- Create a Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) to provide minimal requirements for the division of land within Wellsburg.

Follow Chapter 8A, Articles 4 and 5 of the West Virginia Code for the establishment of a SALDO including the establishment of major and minor subdivision processes.



Future Land Use Map



Chapter Four: Action Plan

Objective 2- Consider annexing land around Wellsburg

Action Step 1- Identify possible areas around Wellsburg for annexation into the city.

Gain an understanding of which persons living outside the city already have municipal services such as wastewater or water facilities.

Complete a cost/benefit analysis. This analysis includes gaining an understanding of the costs of providing services to certain areas which would be annexed into the city limits.

Action Step 2- Understand all the applicable procedures and processes for the different types of annexation.

Wellsburg City Council should have a good understanding of the different methods of annexation that are permitted in West Virginia before any annexation proceeding take place.

Action Step 3- Work with residents and affected property owners during annexation proceedings.

The city should hold open houses and listening sessions and reach out to potentially affected property owners to promote transparency. Community members must understand the annexation process and implications if property gets annexed into the city.

Objective 3- Promote completion of the bridge south of the city

Action Step 1- Promote the bridge project and advocate for its completion

The bridge should be seen as a potential future asset to the city. Not only would the bridge give Wellsburg citizens easier access to Ohio, but the bridge would provide another way for people to access the city.

Action Step 2- Work with local, state, and federal agencies that are involved in the project to ensure completion of the bridge.

The bridge stands to be a catalyst for further development and redevelopment in the city. City Officials should continue to actively participate in any meetings and updates regarding the bridge. The likelihood of the eventual completion of the bridge was bolstered by the fact that the project recently received a “finding of no significant impact (FONSI) through the recently completed Environmental Assessment (EA).

Objective 4- Properly manage floodplains

Action Step 1- Continue to work with FEMA representatives to make sure that FIRM and DFIRM maps are updated and accurate.

Understand the Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) and Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) processes so that the city can assist property owners.

Action Step 2- Educate and provide information to citizens regarding the costs and hazards of developing and living in the Special Flood Hazard Area (i.e. the floodplain).

Provide literature and educational opportunities to community members. Provide materials that have been developed by FEMA and by various state agencies which outline some hazards of living in the floodplain as well as steps to mitigate some of the flood hazards.

Action Step 3- Periodically review the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards and work with the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (WVDHSEM) to ensure that the provisions which the city has put into place continue to fulfill NFIP minimum standards.

Work with WVDHSEM personnel when seeking technical advice on how to administer the NFIP.

Action Step 4- Establish a Community Rating Service (CRS) program for the city in order to lower flood insurance premiums for citizens who have a flood insurance policy.

Submit the CRS application to FEMA as well as prepare for a Community Assistance Visit (CAV).

Once the city is part of the CRS, Wellsburg should develop a strategy to obtain a certain level of points to receive a communitywide discount on flood insurance premiums. To obtain points the community needs to complete certain point-producing tasks such as requiring and maintaining all elevation certificates for new or substantially improved structures in the floodplain.

Objective 5- Maintain and preserve the community's historic resources

Action Step 1- Evaluate the current historic district designation by the National Park Service (NPS), which is over 30 years old.

In the last thirty years there have been significant changes to the city in regard to places of employment, the size of the workforce, and structures that were excluded in the original designation that may fit either state or federal requirements.

Action Step 2- Work with the State Office of Historic Preservation to identify any new structures or areas that could be included in either the state or federal historic registry.

Chapter Four: Action Plan

Goal 2– Retain current businesses and encourage new business development

Objective 1- Develop a better understanding of the needs of local businesses.

Action Step 1- Continue to attend meetings with local businesses (stakeholders), including Chamber of Commerce meetings.

Keep local business organizations abreast of current and future projects that could affect trade and commerce in the city and maintain an open line of communication with these businesses.

Action Step 2- When updating the zoning ordinance (see Goal 1) make sure that commercial districts are still appropriately zoned.

The city should review not only whether the areas within Wellsburg are zoned properly, but whether the permitted uses within the commercial zoning districts are still appropriate.



Objective 2- Encourage special events in the city throughout the year.

Action Step 1- Establish a special events committee made up of a diverse cross-section of community members who can serve as liaisons between the city and event organizers.

The special events committee consists of volunteers who meet regularly to help schedule and promote local events.

Action Step 2- Develop smaller-scale events that will bring community members and tourists to the city on a more regular basis.

One idea is to have a summer music concert series in the downtown square. The concerts do not have to be a large-scale or costly productions, but should encourage people to go downtown. Providing a free or low cost concert series downtown is also a good way to promote local musicians and other performing acts.

The city and special events committee should look for possible grant funding opportunities that are targeted to enhancing local performing arts.

Objective 3- Encourage new businesses to start-up and/or relocate to Wellsburg.

Action Step 1- Establish a business incubator.

The city should continue to look for physical space as well as funding opportunities to establish an incubator in Wellsburg. The concept behind a business incubator is to establish an organization that is designed to promote new startup businesses through various forms of support that includes physical space, capital, networking, and marketing.

Action Step 2- Actively encourage lodging-sector businesses to locate in Wellsburg.

Currently no lodging accommodations exist in the city for tourists or travelers. The city should encourage the development of hotels/ motels where appropriate.

The city should also encourage, through its zoning ordinance, the establishment of bed & breakfast lodging. Several historical structures in Wellsburg could be retrofitted to become a bed & breakfast.

Objective 4- Participate in economic development programs and grant funding initiatives that promote economic development.

Action Step 1- Apply to West Virginia's *On Trac* program.

The On Trac (Organization, Training, Revitalization and Capacity) program is aimed to assist communities in West Virginia boost their economic and community growth. The program was created by Main Street West Virginia. As part of the program a community will be able to take part in several programs including a technical design visit, attendance to training workshops, and participation in a mentoring program.

After two successful years in the *On Trac* program the city will be able to apply to the Main Street Program.

Action Step 2- Explore and apply for other grant funding opportunities that exist for economic development initiatives including through the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office.

The historic preservation office administers two grant programs. First, the Survey and Planning Grant is funded by the annual federal Historic Preservation Fund of the National Park Service. In addition, the State Development Grant Program is funded by the West Virginia State Legislature. The city should pursue these grants if appropriate.



Chapter Four: Action Plan

Goal 3— Promote the continued development and redevelopment of Wellsburg

Objective 1- Reduce the number of abandoned and dilapidated commercial and industrial sites in the city.

Action Step 1- Identify, and then declare by resolution, areas in the city that are slum or blighted and in need of redevelopment.

Follow the procedures set out in the West Virginia Code to determine what constitutes both a slum area and what constitutes a blighted area.

Action Step 2- Work with the Wellsburg Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) to create redevelopment plans.

Redevelopment plans are required prior to the acquisition of real property by the URA for a redevelopment project in the designated slum or blighted areas.

The city should work closely with the URA to create the redevelopment plans as the City Council is required to approve any redevelopment plan which pertains to land within Wellsburg.

Action Step 3- Regularly update the vacant and uninhabitable buildings registry

The fee schedule for the registry should be reviewed periodically to ensure the fee achieves the desired result of encouraging owners to put into active use, redevelop or demolish abandoned buildings.

Mapping properties on the registry should be done regularly. Mapping will help identify areas within the city that may need to be designated as a slum or blighted and targeted for redevelopment.

Action Step 4- Continue to participate and be an active member of the Brooke-Hancock Brownfield Redevelopment Task Force which meets quarterly.



Objective 2- Enable city redevelopment or demolition of abandoned and dilapidated residential structures that are not acted upon by the owners.

Action Step 1- Continue to seek FEMA grant funding for further demolition of residential structures that meet the necessary requirements for demolition.

Bid out work for the 10 residential structures that have already been funded by FEMA to be demolished.

Action Step 2- Prioritize dilapidated residential structures for demolition.

Having a plan in place will give staff direction on what properties need to be demolished first. By prioritizing structures the city can focus on identifying and working with property owners of the highest priority structures first.

Objective 3- Encourage diverse housing options

Action Step 1- Encourage different types of housing including affordable condominiums, apartments, and one-story ranch style housing.

The city can encourage different housing options in different districts when updating the zoning ordinance.

Wellsburg should also permit age-restricted residential complexes in certain zoning districts.

Action Step 2- Encourage adaptive reuse and residential units over businesses.

These strategies can be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.

Action Step 3- Educate citizens about the advantages of taking more than the minimum required steps for flood mitigation.

Discuss the new legislation regarding flood insurance including the Biggert-Waters Act and the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 with citizens.



Chapter Four: Action Plan

Goal 4– Improve infrastructure within the city

Objective 1- Continue to make stormwater management a top priority

Action Step 1- Follow the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) created by the city.

The LTCP was mandated by the West Virginia DEP to improve water quality through the elimination of combined sewer systems. The primary objective of the LTCP is to develop and evaluate a range of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) control alternatives sufficient to meet water quality standards.

Action Step 2- Continue to eliminate combined sewer systems in Wellsburg

Wellsburg was able to eliminate several CSOs within the city limits using federal funds. However the city will need additional funds to eliminate the other combined sewer systems still found in the city.

The city should try and obtain a low interest loan through the Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council (IJDC) to complete the work.

Objective 2- Improve water and wastewater treatment facilities

Action Step 1- The city should focus on the prioritization of the water treatment supply lines and a distribution system. The water treatment system is approximately 50 years old and improvements are needed to continue to provide safe drinking water. Some upgrades have already been completed including getting a new floating reservoir cover, upgrades to the tanks, and a thorough cleaning of the wells.

Wellsburg has also recently completed a large water line upgrade to Marianna Street. However, several water lines need to be replaced. A prioritized list of water lines, beginning with the lines in most need of repair, should be developed. Wellsburg should plan to repair a few lines each year.

Action Step 2- Continue to implement the water meter replacement program.

The estimated cost of project completion is \$300,000, therefore the city should pursue grant funding opportunities.

Action Step 3- Focus on electrical and operation costs of the municipal wastewater facilities.

The city lost its primary user of the wastewater treatment facilities, which lowered the cost effectiveness of the wastewater operations.

The city should analyze how to implement upgrades that will allow the wastewater facilities to operate more efficiently. Eliminating one of the two existing wastewater basins could increase efficiency.

Action Step 4- Repair the cracked cement tanks in the wastewater facility.

Objective 3- Renovate the downtown area.

Action Step 1- Repair the City Hall Building.

Renovate the clock tower and the gutter system at city hall. Update city hall to provide ADA compliant access.

Action Step 2- Continue to update the town square and surrounding areas of downtown

In 2009 Wellsburg was awarded over \$650,000 for Charles Street upgrades. The grant money will be used to address some drainage issues downtown as well as replace benches, garbage receptacles, light fixtures, and landscaping. The project area is along Charles Street from 6th through 9th including the Town Square.



Objective 4- Improve transportation infrastructure

Action Step 1- Identify areas of the city where sidewalks need to be constructed or repaired.

Whenever sidewalks are constructed or repaired ADA standards for sidewalk width and for curb cuts should be followed.

Action Step 2- Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for street and sidewalk improvements

A CIP will be used to identify, prioritize, and develop a timetable for the repair and creation of roads and sidewalks.

Action Step 3- Widen Commerce Street from Bethany Pike to Washington Pike as suggested in the BHJ "2035 Transportation Plan."

Commerce Street is too narrow and presents a significant safety hazard to pedestrians and drivers.

Also consider widening the intersection of Commerce Street (Route 2) and Washington Pike (Route 27) to allow for a larger turning radius.

Chapter Four: Action Plan

Action Step 4- Widen Route 2 south of Wellsburg.

Encourage responsible agencies to widen the segment of Route 2 south of the city to the Ohio County line and to add mitigation measures that address rock fall and mudslides, which are prevalent on that stretch of road.



Goal 5– Marketing the city

Objective 1- Establish a marketing and branding strategy to promote economic development

Action Step 1- The city and its partners should develop a marketing and branding strategy that communicates a positive image to prospective tourists and new businesses owners.

Focus on the relative proximity of Wellsburg to several metropolitan areas in many different states. Also emphasize the low cost of living in Wellsburg in relation to living in nearby areas of Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Action Step 2- Create a Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) or work with existing regional CVB.

Once lodging accommodations such as hotels or a bed and breakfast locate in Wellsburg, the city can establish hotel occupancy tax. A portion of the tax proceeds can be used to help fund a local CVB which can use some of the monies for marketing and branding initiatives in Wellsburg.

The community needs to determine if it should utilize existing regional CVB or create a CVB dedicated solely to Wellsburg.

Action Step 3- Establish a way to promote local artists and artwork.

Create a summer concert series to promote local and regional performing artists.

Establish a program to erect fiberglass apples around town which have been painted by local artists. The city can eventually auction the painted apples off as a way to fundraise for various municipal projects.



Objective 2- Establish a fully functional municipal website

Action Step 1- Identify uses for a municipal website.

In order to create a useful website the city should identify how a municipal website will be beneficial. Will citizens be able to pay their water bills online? Will an updated list of community meetings and events be part of the website? Will approved minutes be online?

Chapter Four: Action Plan

Action Step 2- Determine if the website will be completed and maintained in-house or by a website design company.

Private companies exist that design and maintain websites for local governments. The city should determine if sufficient in-house resources exist to create and maintain a website or if the city should contract with a third party to develop and maintain the website.

Action Step 3- Regularly maintain the website so that citizens and elected officials can get the latest news, updates, and approved meeting minutes.

Goal 6— Provide more youth activities

Objective 1- Enhance communitywide recreational opportunities for the youth throughout the year

Action Step 1- Expand youth sport leagues.

Work with area youth sports leagues to make sure that enough properly-maintained fields are available throughout the year. The city can also partner with local volunteer groups to sponsor sports camps at the parks.

Action Step 2- The city should continually be looking for ways to enhance the current recreational system. For example, the city already installed round picnic tables in Betty Carr Recreational Area, giving citizens more opportunities to have a picnic in the park.



Recommendation	Priority	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
Goal 1: Create sound land use strategies						
Review and update the current zoning ordinance						
Create a subdivision and land devleopment ordinance						
Identify possible areas around Wellsburg for annexation into the city.						
Understand all the applicable procedures and processes for the different types of annexation						
Work with residents and affected property owners during annexation proceedings.						
Promote the bridge project and advocate for its completion						
Work with local, state, and federal agencies that are involved in the project to ensure completion of the bridge						
Continue to work with FEMA representatives to make sure that FIRM and DFIRM maps are updated and accurate.						
Educate and provide information to citizens regarding the costs and hazards of developing and living in the Special Flood Hazard Area (i.e. the floodplain).						
Periodically review the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards and work with the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.						
Establish a Community Rating Service (CRS) program for the city						
Evaluate the current historic district designation by the National Park Service (NPS)						
Work with the State Office of Historic Preservation to identify any new structures or areas that could be included in either the state or federal historic registry.						

Recommendation	Priority	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
Goal 2: Retain current businesses and encourage new business development						
Continue to attend meetings with local businesses (stakeholders), including chamber of commerce meetings						
When updating the zoning ordinance (see Goal 1) make sure that commercial districts are still appropriately zoned.						
Establish a special events committee made of up of a diverse cross-section of community members who can serve as liaisons between the city and event organizers.						
Develop smaller-scale events that will bring community members and tourists to the city on a more regular basis.						
Establish a business incubator						
Actively encourage lodging-sector businesses to locate in Wellsburg.						
Apply to West Virginia’s On Trac program.						
Explore and apply for other grant funding opportunities that exist for economic development initiatives including through the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office.						

Recommendation	Priority	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
Goal 3: Promote the continued development and redevelopment of Wellsburg						
Identify, and then declare by resolution, areas in the city that are slum or blighted and in need of redevelopment.						
Work with the Wellsburg Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) to create redevelopment plans.						
Regularly update the vacant and uninhabitable buildings registry						
Continue to participate and be an active member of the Brooke-Hancock Brownfield Redevelopment Task Force which meets quarterly.						
Continue to seek FEMA grant funding for further demolition of residential structures that meet the necessary requirements for demolition.						
Prioritize dilapidated residential structures for demolition.						
Encourage different types of housing including affordable condominiums, apartments, and one-story ranch style housing.						
Encourage adaptive reuse and residential units over businesses.						
Educate citizens about the advantages of taking more than the minimum required steps for flood mitigation.						
Goal 4: Encourage sound land use decisions that preserve open space, historical resources, community character and provide for clean air and water						
Follow the Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) created by the city.						
Continue to eliminate combined sewer systems in Wellsburg						
The city should focus on the prioritization of the water treatment supply lines and a distribution system.						
Continue to implement the water meter replacement program.						
Focus on electrical and operation costs of the municipal wastewater facilities.						
Repair the cracked cement tanks in the wastewater facility.						
Repair the City Hall Building.						

Recommendation	Priority	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
Continue to update the town square and surrounding areas of downtown						
Identify areas of the city where sidewalks need to be constructed or repaired.						
Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for street and sidewalk improvements						
Widen Commerce Street from Bethany Pike to Washington Pike as suggested in the BHJ “2035 Transportation Plan.”						
Widen Route 2 south of Wellsburg.						

Recommendation	Priority	Reference page #	Responsible Party	Potential Partners	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources
Goal 5: Marketing the city						
The city and its partners should develop a marketing and branding strategy that communicates a positive image to prospective tourists and new businesses owners.						
Create a Convention and Visitor’s Bureau (CVB) or work with existing regional CVB.						
Establish a way to promote local artists and artwork.						
Identify uses for a municipal website.						
Determine if the website will be completed and maintained in-house or by a website design company.						
Regularly maintain the website so that citizens and elected officials can get the latest news, updates, and approved meeting minutes.						
Goal 6: Provide more youth activities						
Expand youth sport leagues.						
The city should continually be looking for ways to enhance the current recreational system						