
Twenty-twenty Vision



Kanawha County Comprehensive Plan Revised 2014



*A Comprehensive Development Plan for
Kanawha County, West Virginia
June 2014*

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Acknowledgements

Kanawha County Commission (2014)

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Executive Summary

2014 Updated Vision is a 2014 update and revision of the Twenty-Twenty Vision Plan, the Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of Kanawha County, West Virginia. (Figure 1) (Figure 2) It has been developed in conformance with the guidelines and requirements cited in West Virginia State Code, Chapter 8A, Article 3, Section 1.

The current *2014 Updated Vision* is an update of the Twenty-Twenty Vision. The Twenty-Twenty plan was designed to serve the needs of the community during a planning period of approximately 20 years. This plan will undergo an additional revision within 10 years (by 2024) or as needed.

The Comprehensive Plan is meant as a guide to assist officials with decisions about the future development of Kanawha County. It establishes countywide goals and recommends strategies to achieve those goals. It sets policy directions that will help design developmental tools such as subdivision regulations, transportation plans and options, and other future projected projects. It does not consist of legislative mandates or new ordinances.

Modern comprehensive planning can be defined as follows:

A systematic way of anticipating, causing, preventing, or monitoring change related to the provision of public and/or private facilities and programs. It is a continuous process of change in response to new social values, funding, lifestyle patterns, trends, technology, legislation, and availability of resources...

Central Mission

The constructive and effective management of change in Kanawha County, West Virginia is the central mission and purpose of *2014 Updated Vision*. In addition, *2014 Updated Vision* plan will strive to promote health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens and business located within Kanawha County.

Public Review and Comment

The vision statements, goals, and objectives detailed in this document were the subject of public review, comment, and meetings held throughout Kanawha County. It was posted online for public review and comment. It was then submitted to the Kanawha County Planning Commission for its members' consideration. After public review and comment period concluded, the Planning Commission oversaw revision of the document to incorporate further detail to complete a substantive Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with W.Va. Code 8A-3-6, the Planning Commission adopted by motion the above procedures for participation.

Completion of the *2014 Updated Vision* Comprehensive Plan

This revised draft of the *2014 Updated Vision* Comprehensive Plan is based on the work of the Kanawha County Planning and Development Office staff, Kanawha County Commission staff, initial public comment on the first draft of the updated Comprehensive Plan, and review and approval of the Kanawha County Planning Commission. Upon a final public review and comment period, the *2014 Updated Vision* will once

more go to before the Kanawha County Planning Commission to incorporate any changes. The Planning Commission will then forward the recommended updated Comprehensive Plan to the Kanawha County Commission for their approval by June of 2014.

Kanawha County, WV



0 20 40 80 Miles

Date: 1/28/2014

Map Data from WV GIS Tech Center
Created by the Regional Intergovernmental Council



Populated Cities within 500 miles of Kanawha County, WV



Date: 2/20/2014

0 80 160 320 Miles

Map Data from WV GIS Tech Center
Created by the Regional Intergovernmental Council



Recommendations

Recommendation Summary: This list below does not represent the “sequence” of programs or projects, nor does it serve to establish the relative importance of one category of action plan elements compared to another.

Arts & Culture

- Encourage curricula and exposures that develop an abiding appreciation across a broad spectrum of cultural activities for people of all walks of life.
- Support establishment of an annual calendar of cultural events and programs.
- Continue to support the Clay Center arts and science programs.
- Encourage incorporation of more public art in public areas of the county.

Building, Housing, & Development

- Continue to enforce the following Ordinances and Regulations, which help improve life in unincorporated areas of Kanawha County:
 - ❑ Subdivision Regulations
 - ❑ Cell Tower Regulations
 - ❑ Video Lottery Ordinance
 - ❑ Mobile Home Park Regulations
 - ❑ Adult Entertainment Ordinance
 - ❑ Public Nuisance Ordinance including Regulations for meth labs/houses, dilapidated, abandoned, and substandard structures
 - ❑ **All County Ordinances are available for review at www.kanawha.us**
- Encourage residents to establish or continue neighborhood plans for:
 - ❑ Coal River Valley
 - ❑ Sissonville (already has neighborhood group)
 - ❑ Lower Elk Valley (Big Chimney, Elkview, Pinch)
 - ❑ Cross Lanes (in process of establishing a neighborhood group)
 - ❑ Institute-Dunbar
- Identify all major entrances to Kanawha County as community gateways.
- Continue scenic highway status for US Route 60 and Midland Trail Scenic Highway.
- Encourage neighborhood revitalization plans by area residents.
- Continue to work with the State Historic Preservation Agency to inventory and prioritize historic properties and districts for preservation and enhancement.

- Consider grant-funded programs designed to help low- to moderate-income first-time home buyers and other programs that help county residents live in safe, warm, and dry homes.
- Consider restricting outdoor advertising and signage.

Transportation

- **Complete key transportation projects for 2014–2026:**
 - Widen WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to 5 lanes from US 60 (MacCorkle Avenue to US 119 (Corridor G), correct offset intersection at Kanawha Turnpike and grade-separate CSX railroad crossing. Cost \$55 million.
 - Construct new bridge over Elk River, connecting US 119 to Coonskin Park, upgrade connecting roads. Cost \$9 million.
 - Construct RHL Boulevard connector from the Shops at Trace Fork to WV 601 (Jefferson Road). Cost \$10 million.
 - Add 3rd lane to US 119 (Corridor G) northbound from Cantley Drive to MacCorkle and improve operations. Cost \$5.6 million.
 - Add lanes to US 119 (Corridor G) from Lawndale Lane to MacCorkle Avenue and to the I-64 connector. Install Cantley flyover, build underpasses at Lucado Rd. and Oakwood Rd and improve operations. Cost \$34.7 million.
 - Improve intersection of WV 622 and WV 62 in Cross Lanes, including signal improvements and turn lanes. Cost \$4.7 million.
 - Widen and upgrade the 3rd St. railroad underpass in St. Albans. Cost \$9.6 million.
 - Add southbound left turn lane on WV 62 (W. Washington St.) at Woodrum Lane. Cost: \$ 0.6 Million
- **Complete key transportation projects for 2026-2040**
 - ❑ Add third lane northbound on US 119 and improve operations from WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to Emerald Road. Cost \$24.9 million.
 - ❑ Widen US 60 to 4 lanes with median from Chelyan Bridge to Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road). Cost \$31.3 million.
 - ❑ Implement center turn lanes and right turn lanes at various locations on US 60 from Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road) to the Montgomery Bridge. Cost \$14.4 million.
 - ❑ Construct additional truck climbing lanes on WV 94. Cost \$4.7 million.
- Encourage the continued deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems Systems (ITS) technologies to gain greater efficiency from the existing transportation system.
- Encourage KVRTA to implement service changes and other strategies identified in its ongoing system analysis.
- Kanawha County's most important project is—and this Comprehensive Plan strongly recommends—to complete, adopt, and implement the updated Master Plan for Yeager Airport. Kanawha County must support the completion of the major recommendations from the most recent Yeager Airport Master Plan:

- Expand Taxiway Alpha to the approach end of Runway 5 for a distance of 600 ft.
- Expand the General Aviation aircraft ramp area and install infrastructure to support the construction of additional hangars and maintenance or cargo facilities.
- Purchase and remove structures from the Runway Protection Zone located near the intersection of Barlow and Keystone Drive.
- Continue rehabilitation and reconstruction of the pavement surfaces in accordance with the recently completed pavement management study.
- Support the completion of major recommendations from the WV Air National Guard (WVANG) Base Master Development Plan:
 - Rehabilitate two older maintenance hangars
 - Expand the WVANG aircraft parking apron.
- Assure completion by the WVDOH of the Coonskin Park Bridge over the Elk River, connecting Coonskin Park to US 119 and closure of the current Coonskin Park access.
- Support the elimination of at-grade railroad crossings where feasible. Promote the installation of additional or improved safety devices where warranted.
- Pursue the expansion of Amtrak passenger service from the current 3-day per week schedule to daily service.
- Take advantage of the Complete Street Acts to see that alternative modes are also accommodated when the State constructs new highway facilities.
- Encourage the use of available funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- Support the development of projects such as the Kanawha Boulevard bike path and the Dunbar Toll Bridge accessibility project.

Economic Development

- Maintaining and expanding Yeager Airport is a critical factor influencing economic development in Kanawha County. Every effort should be made to strongly oppose any relocation of air traffic.
- Maintain and support the efforts of the Charleston Area Alliance (CAA), Regional Development Authority (RDA), Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC), and Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation (UKVEDC).
- Encourage Charleston Area Alliance to implement a Manager's Council or councils, as appropriate, given the size of the county and diversity of businesses within, to bring together managers/owners to share mutual concerns and ideas, resolve problems of the businesses involved, and propose solutions to improve the general business climate of the region. Additionally, utilize the Charleston Area Alliance Board of Directors as a representative group, made up of both small and large businesses, to garner data and information to understand specific challenges or opportunities with which to partner to improve the general business climate.
- Continue to work with CAA existing business' level of satisfaction with the local business climate, and incorporate findings in strategies to recruit and sustain businesses in the county.

- Because exports from Kanawha County businesses have a tremendous economic impact, bringing in new dollars into the community, and creating new jobs, continue to work with the Charleston Area Alliance, the WV Development Office, and the US Department of Commercial Service (Charleston office) to encourage and assist existing businesses to explore and capitalize on international growing markets.
- Work with Charleston Area Alliance in their efforts to develop and implement a county marketing plan to recruit and sustain businesses.
- Work with Charleston Area Alliance to identify and potentially develop suitable sites for future industrial and commercial activities. "Shovel Ready" sites remain a challenge for Kanawha County with its topography.
- Work with Charleston Area Alliance, the Chemical Alliance Zone, and the WV Regional Technology Park to expand the capacity of small business incubators.
- Work with Charleston Area Alliance to encourage and continue in the creation of, where practical, flexible business networks (FBNs) to minimize common purchasing costs across participating businesses, merge expertise to manufacture products, and conduct other common activities (i.e., marketing, employee training, use of expensive equipment, etc.)
- Support the Governor's Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County to monitor and assess the capacity of local labor.
- Support efforts to market the Marcellus Shale and a potential ethane cracker and other downstream development to this area.
- Market the benefits of Kanawha County and West Virginia to outside firms, including minimal traffic, low crime rate, fine education system and good college and post-graduate opportunities, adequate housing for various incomes, etc.
- Support and encourage the development of the Tech Park, a technology park in which one facility's waste becomes another facility's feedstock, and all ensure that raw materials are recycled or disposed of efficiently and safely.
- Publicly recognize exemplary local businesses at Kanawha County Commission meetings.

Education & Training

- Continue to support the Clay Center and the Free Admission Program for Kanawha County school children.
- Provide ongoing support of the Region III Workforce Investment Board in its goals to meet the ongoing demand for services and training for Kanawha County's youth, both in school and out of school, unemployed and underemployed (adult) workers, who qualify for WIA assistance, as well as dislocated workers
- Support Region III Workforce Investment Board in the commitment of providing guidance to better educate men and women about higher paying jobs and careers including jobs traditionally dominated by men.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to develop and implement initiatives geared to help children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.
- Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department, WV Department of Health & Human Resources, and Kanawha County Schools to develop a comprehensive tracking and follow-up system to ensure that all children get immunization shots before they begin school.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to establish adolescent health services in schools which offer youth programs.
- Encourage the WV State Board of Education to define, monitor, and measure the effectiveness of the Kanawha County School System educational delivery system.

- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to clearly articulate the performance level expected of both educators and students.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to work with business and industry to make adjustments to the educational delivery system to accommodate the current and future needs of commerce, industry, government, and the community.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to develop, use, and expand access to information technologies and the Internet in all educational settings (i.e., satellite learning).
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System, along with responsible neighborhood groups, to establish, where appropriate, the "Community Schools Program" to develop existing schools as community centers to host community events and programs during non-school hours.
- Continue to provide support and funding to the Kanawha County library system.
- Encourage all local area Colleges and Universities, and the Community and Technical College to work with local businesses to develop and update curriculum to reflect job skills and knowledge vital to today's business environment, and expand access to these classes to all educational settings (i.e., Satellite Learning, Internet)
- Provide ongoing support of the Region III Workforce Investment Board in its goals to meet the ongoing demand for services and training for Kanawha County's youth, both in school and out of school, unemployed and underemployed (adult) workers, who qualify for WIA assistance, as well as dislocated workers and for providing guidance to better educate men and women about higher paying jobs and careers including jobs traditionally dominated by men.

Farms & Agriculture

- Work with the WV Department of Agriculture to encourage the continued use of large and small farm and agricultural tracts of land.
- Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture and the WV Legislature to secure adequate tax incentives for preservation of farm and agricultural operations.
- Work with the WV Department of Agriculture, the WV Department of Environmental Protection, and the WV Department of Natural Resources to protect existing farms from any adverse impacts caused by new, adjacent, or nearby land development (i.e., soil erosion and sedimentation).
- Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture to preserve and expand existing agricultural services that enhance farm operations and increase profitability.
- Collaborate with the WV State Department of Agriculture, WVU Extension, and local colleges to offer certification courses in farming and agriculture.

Human & Family Services

- Encourage the Kanawha County School System and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to support existing and establish new child and youth development programs in the public schools (i.e., after-school mentoring programs, adolescent health services, etc.)
- Encourage the WV Dept. Health and Human Resources to create family resource center(s) for coordinated delivery of primary health, human, and job services, and to provide services that increase opportunities for parents to reenter the labor force, located in communities where people most need them.
- Encourage public and private expansion of adult daycare, assisted-living, and respite programs or programs that increase opportunities for seniors to remain independent.

Natural Resources, Environment & Conservation

- Support developing regulations and rules regarding the regulation of above ground chemical storage tanks. Kanawha County Office of Emergency Management will develop an interactive database identifying potential water contamination locations in Kanawha County.
- Continue to follow the objectives and implementation of the plan for flood mitigation and control.
- Oppose Biggert Waters Act, or any similar legislation, that seeks to impose unrealistic flood insurance rate increases on residents and businesses. .
- Initiate a public awareness program—in conjunction with the administrative permit review and approval procedure—to clarify flood insurance available under the Flood Disaster Protection Act.
- Use the Kanawha County Commission's Web Site to publish the library of publications on flood insurance, protecting buildings from flood damage, and local contacts for flood emergencies and recovery.
- Support the WV DEP as they regulate the timbering and mining operations and new large-scale developments and storm water run-off as it pertains to streams, rivers, and waterways by requiring a stormwater management plan.
- Acceptance of Community Rating System for lower flood insurance premiums.
- Mitigate flood zone properties for potential use in agriculture and/or community recreation.
- Mitigate stream blockages in flood-prone areas.
- Update maps of flood-prone areas, flood hazards, and repetitive loss properties as part of implementing the county-wide Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Develop a comprehensive guide to best management practices and ecologically-based development and stormwater run-off.
- Encourage grants for revitalization of brownfields as defined by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Planning, Management & Governance

- Maintain and update the Comprehensive Development Plan as needed, and issue a complete update every 10 years.
- Assemble, and maintain information about Kanawha County Ordinances and Regulations, Planning Commission meetings, County Commission meetings, Building Commission meetings, RDA Meetings, Meeting minutes, Building Permits, Subdivision Applications, Cell Tower applications, Video Lottery/ Adult Entertainment Applications, County Clean-ups, and other Planning Office and County Commission information.
- Plan, program, budget, and adequately staff new public-sector initiatives.
- Develop and implement strategies to recruit highly qualified persons to careers in local government.

Public Health, Fitness & Safety

Public Health and Physical Fitness

- Encourage smoking and tobacco cessation programs, both among the public and county employees.
- Continue to provide support and financial assistance to local agencies, clinics, and organizations with the goal of promoting public health.
- Encourage development of workplace wellness programs in Kanawha County.
- Encourage local schools and community centers to offer adolescent health services and youth fitness programs.
- Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to review and maintain vital statistics on public health risks, especially those regarding heart disease, meth labs, prescription drug abuse, physical fitness, and use of tobacco.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to open public schools, where practical, for year-round community recreation.
- Encourage enclosed malls and other indoor, protected locations to provide safe places for walking in any weather.
- Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to establish programs to control communicable disease.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

- Continue developing through KPEPC (Kanawha-Putnam Emergency Planning Committee) as needed, countywide Emergency Procedures and Protocols. Participate in reporting and training as required by the State.
 - The Chemical Leak and resulting Water Crisis of January 2014 had a devastating impact on the Kanawha Valley. Kanawha County Office of Emergency management will make the protection of the local water supply an absolute priority. Kanawha County Emergency officials will provide support to the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee, WV DEP, and the State office of Homeland Security in order to implement recently passed legislation aimed at protecting our water supply. See *Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act*, W.Va. Code §22-30-1
- Kanawha County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will continue to benchmark, monitor, review emergency responses and adopt performance standards for all Kanawha County emergency response agencies.
- Encourage installation of fire hydrants in areas underserved where water pressure is available.
- Continue to work with the fire service districts as determined by the WV State Fire Commission, where each VFD is assigned to first, second, or third.
- Continue to use the 2 County Training Centers sponsored by RESA 3 with a burn building and drill tower.
- Support and assist the Kanawha County Fireman's Mutual Aid Association as they develop and deploy a countywide recruitment campaign and training program for volunteer firefighters.
- Continue to require IRS 990 tax information for volunteer fire departments in order to receive County Commission funding.
- Encourage KCEAA to establish location criteria for installation of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.

- Continue with the RESA 3 regional Emergency Service Training programs to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.
- Encourage KCEAA to establish a county-wide CPR system that can be monitored and quantitatively measured.
- Take necessary steps to advance the Metro 911 system to the “enhanced” level, including completing the urgently needed countywide mapping/addressing project.
- Continue to use lines of communication between State and local emergency officials, using interconnected Comm Centers (i.e., Metro 911), and other technological advancements.
- Explore potential municipal and county program consolidation, in arenas where it would result in greater effectiveness, consistency, and economy of scale.
- Encourage Kanawha County public facilities to become compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Encourage neighborhood watch groups to enhance community safety.
- Encourage a county-wide fire safety program to reduce home fires.
- Encourage a Smoke Alarm program to make sure every household in Kanawha County has at least one working smoke alarm.
- Revise as needed the Kanawha County Wrecker Dispatch Policy (Towing Policy) to guarantee wrecker companies are dispatched in a safe and efficient manner.

Recreation, Entertainment & Tourism

- Continue financial support and assistance to Kanawha County Parks and Recreation.
- Encourage the Kanawha County Board of Education, University of Charleston and West Virginia State University, Kanawha County Parks and Recreation, and local cities to establish countywide infrastructure of outdoor athletic fields designed to support community-based softball, baseball, soccer, football, and other sports organizations.
- Promote to all citizens the multitude of opportunities for recreation, leisure, exercise that exist in Kanawha County and are more plentiful than in many counties much larger than Kanawha County.
- Encourage the State to promote Kanawha State Forest, including encouraging the State to build a new, improved access road to the forest.

Utilities & Infrastructure

- Plan, program, budget, fund, and construct expansion of the existing water treatment and water distribution systems as is practical.
- Modernize and/or consolidate existing Public Service Districts (PSDs) to meet the demands of the 21st century as funds become available.

Development and Organization of the Comprehensive Plan

The *Twenty- Twenty Vision Plan* was developed through a planning process that elicited broad-based community consensus around a workable and widely supported comprehensive development plan for Kanawha County, West Virginia. *2014 Updated Vision Plan* again sought out input from the community, community organizations, and other local governments in order to refresh and reorganize the *Twenty- Twenty Vision Plan*.

The product of this planning process—*2014 Updated Vision* will provide Kanawha County with a vision of what we might become, public policies and guidelines for managing change, a programmatic framework for undertaking specific actions, and a focus for defining the most relevant components of change. In order to be successful, all future amendments to the plan will also be built upon the firm foundation of citizen participation, consensus building, public awareness, and empowerment.

The Comprehensive Development Plan serves multiple functions. It is an "official" expression of what the community wants. It is a statement of vision, mission, and goals. The plan document includes a listing of specific objectives, and strategic steps for their implementation. In addition, the plan considers all current Kanawha County ordinances and the role these ordinances play in furthering the plan's goals.

2014 Updated Vision is also intended to be an educational tool. The plan helps everyone who uses and is involved with the development process to understand the conditions, problems, challenges, and opportunities within Kanawha County by providing key factual information (see Statistical Profile and Assessment). Finally, the plan serves as a guide to public and private decision-making that serves to shape the future of our community.

Plan Organization

This Comprehensive Plan is organized around 12 content areas which reflect the work of the same number of Comprehensive Plan Element Committees (CPECs) that formed in 1996 to begin the task of visioning, composing mission statements, and drafting goals and objectives for *Twenty- Twenty Vision Plan*. The all-volunteer citizen committees were organized into the following focus groups:

Arts & Culture	Human & Family Services
Building, Developments & Development	Natural Resources, Environment & Conservation
Transportation	Planning, Management & Governance
Economic Development	Public Health, Fitness & Safety
Education & Training	Recreation, Entertainment & Tourism
Farms & Agriculture	Utilities & Infrastructure

While the planning process was intended to be all-inclusive rather than exclusive, the identification of initial contacts was far from comprehensive in scope. In December 1996 and January 1997, initial contacts were made with over 130 prospective "participants"—local organizations, institutions, businesses, industries, and individuals. By March 1997, the potential membership roster had grown to well over 1,200. Not all prospective participants chose to actively participate, but new members were welcome to join any of the twelve Comprehensive Plan Element Committees (CPECs) during the comprehensive planning process.

The Kanawha County CPECs repeatedly met over a period of months to discuss and debate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to their individual topics. Staff compiled the work of each committee to prepare the recommendations above. The recommendations are built on the CPECs' deliberation of each element and their agreement on:

Vision Statements—by “beginning with the end in mind” (Stephen R. Covey), the committees stated the desired end result of the planning effort in the most concise terms possible.

Mission Statements—both the public- and private-sector roles are reflected in the committees' statements of community mission.

Goals—one of the several concepts or major accomplishments necessary to perform the mission and realize the work.

Objectives—major achievements or benchmark projects necessary to reach stated goals.

Strategies—proposed actions, key players, and essential components of success.

Key Indicators (included where appropriate)—units by which future change and/or effectiveness may be measured.

This revised document provides public officials and citizens with the opportunity to review the final draft with its recommendations based on the current planning estimates. In many instances, there are “cross-cutting” issues, goals, objectives, and proposed actions.

Legislative Guidance

Comprehensive planning is a collaborative process that involves both public- and private- sector participants. Partners in the planning process have their own special concerns, but the basic or core issues they address affect the entire community—developments, social policy, historic preservation, transportation, housing, economic development, policy planning, environmental protection, public health and safety, and urban design.

In conformance with West Virginia State Code, §8A-3-1 *et. seq.*, the general purpose of a comprehensive plan is:

- To guide a governing body to accomplish a coordinated and compatible development of land and improvements within its territorial jurisdiction, in accordance with present and future needs and resources. A comprehensive plan is a process through which citizen participation and thorough analysis are used to develop a set of strategies that establish as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the area under the jurisdiction of the planning commission.
- To aid the planning commission in designing and recommending to the governing body ordinances that result in preserving and enhancing the unique quality of life and culture in that community and in adapting to future changes of use of an economic, physical or social nature.
- To guide the planning commission in the performance of its duties to help achieve sound planning. A comprehensive plan must promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development.

Citizen Participation

Traditional planning principles have always required broad citizen participation in order for any plan to be developed, adopted, implemented, effective, or successful. To prepare a comprehensive development

plan for Kanawha County, one needed to research current needs to best estimate what the plan will include and then allow for public comment and feedback. In order to complete *2014 Updated Vision*, the Kanawha County Planning Commission adopted public participation plan that included public meetings held in various locations throughout the county and the posting of a draft of the *2014 Updated Vision* plan online for public comment.

2014 Updated Vision Comprehensive Plan **for Kanawha County, West Virginia**

This section of the document is the heart of the Comprehensive Plan. It is organized into 12 subsections, according to the content areas addressed by the Comprehensive Plan Element Committees. These subsections elaborate on the recommendations for each of content areas (*Recommendations for all content areas are also shown starting on page 6*).

Each of the 12 subsections proceeds according the outline below.

- I. Vision Statement
- II. Mission Statement
- III. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies
- IV. Discussion of (content area) Issues in Kanawha County
- V. Summary of Recommendations

The mission statement, goals, objectives, and strategies further establish a clear direction for each content area, and provide a means of measuring the Comprehensive Plan's progress and effectiveness. It is anticipated that additional objectives and strategies for the goals in each subsection may be developed during the period covered by this plan. In such cases, all action elements must correspond to an appropriate vision statement in this plan.

Arts & Culture

Vision

A lively cultural environment where citizens have a greater appreciation of our cultural heritage and diversity; where music, opera, literature, painting, sculpture, theatre, dance, and architecture are shared human values that serve to strengthen the soul and fuel the spiritual growth of the community.

Mission

To inspire greater appreciation of cultural activities.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

- GOAL 1: Provide curricula and exposures that develop an abiding appreciation across a broad spectrum of cultural activities for people of all walks of life.
- OBJECTIVE: Work with various art groups to establish an annual calendar of cultural events and programs that provide "something for everyone to enjoy."
- GOAL 2: Maintain the outstanding West Virginia Symphony Orchestra and the Clay Center as the foundation upon which other cultural activities can build and gain support.
- GOAL 3: Support the Clay Center and Cultural Center museums for art, natural history, cultural history, science, and industry (i.e., fossils, minerals, and wildlife).
- GOAL 4: Encourage a wide range of cultural offerings to satisfy a variety of individuals' tastes, preferences and interests (i.e., theaters of varying sizes, patronage of non-professional performing, fine, and creative arts).
- GOAL 5: Work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) to continue to attract County tourists, foreign visitors, and resident artists, writers, and performers to Kanawha County.

Discussion of Arts & Culture Issues in Kanawha County

Located at the interchange of three Interstate highways and within a two-hour drive of 80 percent of the state's residents Kanawha County is well positioned to continue its growth as an "arts and culture hub" for West Virginia.

One key part of that development is the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences in Charleston. The Kanawha County Commission has annually donated \$100,000 to help fund various children's events at the Clay Center.

The Clay Center is located in Charleston, on a four-acre lot located between the city's central business district and the State Capitol. It opened in 2003 and has stimulated a lively cultural environment where citizens have a greater appreciation of the area's cultural diversity.

The Clay Center serves Kanawha County residents and other visitors with its educational outreach program, Sunrise Museum, cultural opportunities, and tourism. The Clay Center is the permanent home

of the WV Symphony, and also hosts some Broadway shows performed by the Charleston Light Opera Guild.

This *2014 Updated Vision* for Arts and Culture has identified goals for continuing the strong arts program in Kanawha County.

Summary of Recommendations

- Encourage curricula and exposures that develop an abiding appreciation across a broad spectrum of cultural activities for people of all walks of life.
- Support establishment of an annual calendar of cultural events and programs.
- Continue to support the Clay Center arts and science programs.
- Encourage incorporation of more public art in public areas of the county.
- Support the initiatives and recommendations contained in the City of Charleston's *IMAGINE CHARLESTON* Comprehension Plan adopted in 2013.

Building, Housing, & Development

Vision

A sustainable built environment that is safe, attractive, functional, livable, economically stable, and efficient in the use of land, energy, and other resources.

Mission

To protect, preserve, and enhance both the natural and built environments; to accomplish both environmental and land development objectives.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Continue to update and apply Subdivision Regulations for minimum performance, quality, and safety standards for new and expanded subdivisions.

OBJECTIVE: Require and enforce storm-water management plans for new and expanded subdivisions, and new cell towers.

OBJECTIVE: Enforce flood plain management codes.

STRATEGY: Continue to work in cooperation with our Representatives in Congress to oppose the *Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act* or any similar legislation that will unfairly increase flood insurance rates for Kanawha County Homeowners and Businesses.

OBJECTIVE: Update and enforce fill, land subdivision and development regulations.

STRATEGY: Continue to use and modernize Kanawha County Subdivision Regulations, to simplify developer compliance, permit processing, and public administration. Complete a complete review of the current subdivision regulations by 2015.

GOAL 2: Encourage development along existing transit corridors, near a range of transit alternatives, close to employment centers, and on rehabilitated brownfield sites, where appropriate.

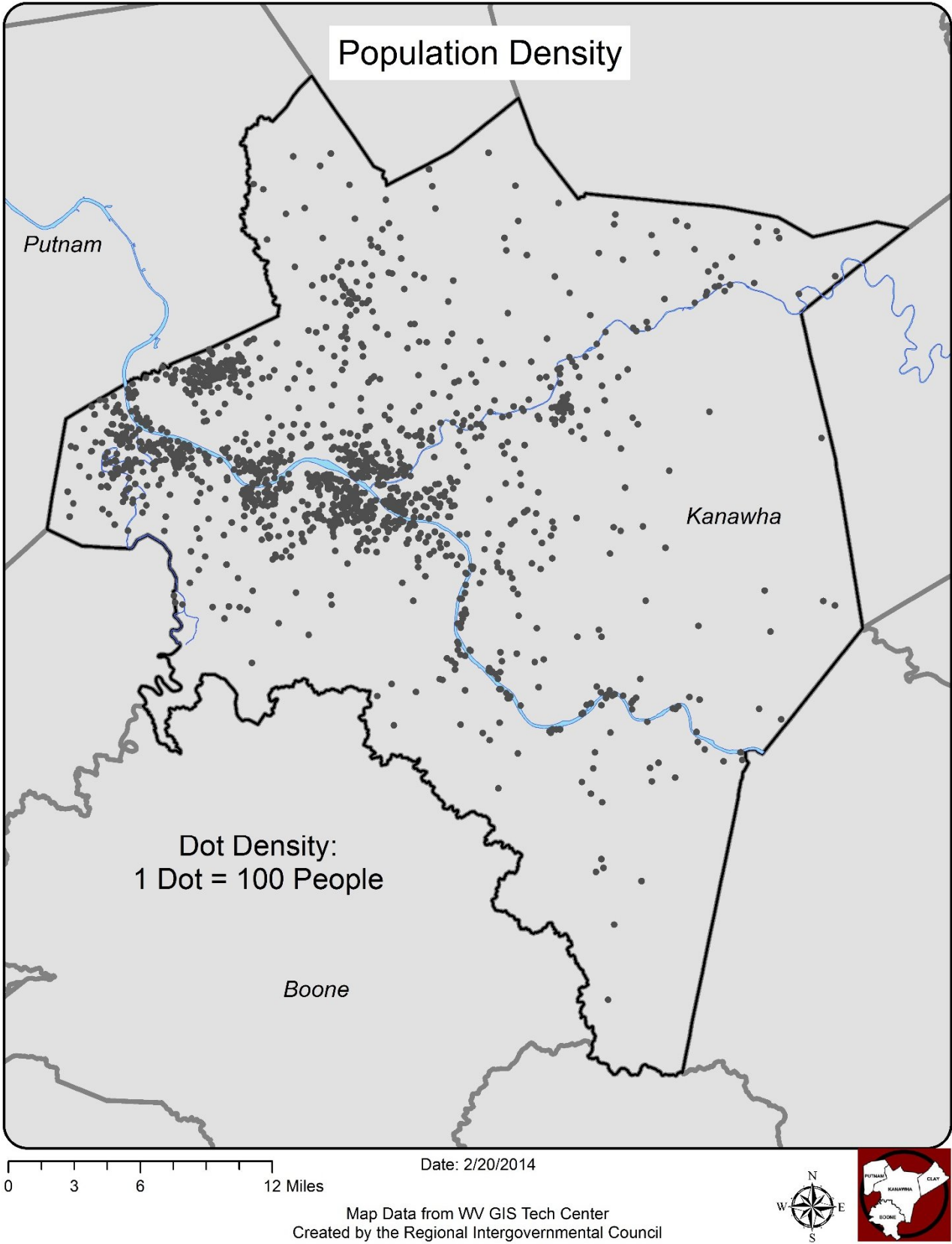
GOAL 3: Encourage citizen participation in government, addressing community issues, and promote public discussions that identify solutions to local problems.

GOAL 4: Encourage cooperation among Kanawha County communities for collaboration on issues such as affordable housing, economic development, and developments that transcend political jurisdictions.

GOAL 5: Examine undeveloped areas or areas not served by water and sewer systems to determine the practicality of the capital costs of infrastructure, such as road, water distribution, and sanitary sewer construction.

GOAL 7: Encourage the use of public open space networks and "greenways" (especially Kanawha, Elk, Coal and Pocatalico riverfront corridors).

OBJECTIVE: Consider new opportunities for outdoor recreation, exercise, and alternative transportation (i.e., bikeways, and trails).



Discussion of Building, Housing & Development Issues in Kanawha County

Though Kanawha County is one of the largest counties in West Virginia, there is fierce competition for its very limited land resources. Residential, commercial, recreational, and industrial developments—among others—must find suitable sites for development without creating hardships or run-off issues in the surrounding community.

Kanawha County totals 903 square miles in total area, or approximately 578,050 acres. An estimated 40,000 acres (7%) is developed or built-up. The remainder (93%) is either agricultural, barren, forestland, waterways, jurisdictional wetlands, or undevelopable due to terrain.

Development Patterns

Existing development patterns reflect the severe physical constraints of adverse topography, soils, geology, and other barriers, such as rivers, streams, and floodplains. Both the earliest human settlements and more recent urbanization have occurred along the Kanawha River Valley and adjacent areas. These lands have proven to be both the most accessible and buildable sites for new development and redevelopment. Development by general category include:

Residential

The majority of all urbanized or built-up land in Kanawha County is used for residential purposes. Approximately 27,000 acres (4.7%) are dedicated to single-family and multi-family dwellings.

The greatest concentrations of residential developments and population densities are found in the Charleston-Dunbar-Nitro corridor on the north side of the Kanawha River, and Charleston-South Charleston-St. Albans corridor located on the south side of the valley.

A total of sixteen riverfront municipalities are located on the Kanawha and Elk Rivers. Numerous unincorporated communities are also found along the river courses and minor tributaries.

Low-density residential land development has also occurred on hillside and mountain tracts, adjacent to the river valleys. Most recently, ridge top residential development has increased in frequency as the demand for new housing continues to exceed the supply of suitable building sites. One such site is the Ridges of Rabel Mountain, near Alum Creek.

Commercial

Less than 5,000 acres (0.9%) in Kanawha County are dedicated to service and commercial developments. Commercial development is predominantly located within the corporate boundaries of the river cities. The principal Central Business District (CBD) is located in the city of Charleston, with smaller CBDs located in the cities of Clendenin, Dunbar, Nitro, St. Albans, and South Charleston. Strip commercial development can be found in the remaining municipalities, on all principal highways, most minor, and some collector routes.

Large-scale strip commercial developments—Southridge Centre, Dudley Farms, and Shops at Trace Force—are open and expanding on Corridor G (US Route 119), south of Charleston. This development cluster is the first major suburban shopping center of its kind in Kanawha County, built on entirely man-made sites.

Another commercial center is located adjacent to the Cross Lanes interchange of I-64, near the Mardi Gras Casino and Resort. Developers have added a greater variety of commercial build outs in that area, and the Cross Lanes commercial center is now enjoying renewed consumer traffic.

Unlike most US metropolitan areas, there has not been a proliferation of suburban shopping malls in Kanawha County. One of the largest enclosed inner-city shopping mall east of the Mississippi River is the Town Center Mall, located in downtown Charleston. With nearly one million square feet under roof, and dedicated parking garages to accommodate more than 4,000 vehicles, Charleston Town Center mall serves a regional market.

Only one other smaller enclosed center, Kanawha City Mall, serves Kanawha County, and is also located in Charleston. Hence, Charleston remains the center for the regional market.

Industrial

Approximately 3,400 acres (0.6%) have been or are being used for industrial purposes in Kanawha County. Again, such development has been limited to the river valleys due to the availability of highways, railways, and water-borne transportation facilities.

The Civil War-era salt works, located at Malden, have been replaced by chemical manufacturing operation located throughout the Kanawha Valley. Dow Chemical (formerly a Union Carbide Corporation plant), Aventis, DuPont, and other major companies have plants sited at Belle, Charleston, Institute, Marmet, Nitro, and South Charleston.

Agricultural

Agricultural uses, including cropland and pasture, remain the second-largest category of developments development in Kanawha County. Approximately 10,000 acres (1.7%) remain as farm operations, but that number has been rapidly declining.

Suburban sprawl threatens to further erode this category of developments as the demand for new residential and commercial development sites grows over time.

Barren Land

Surface or strip mine operations, quarries, gravel pits, and transitional areas involve about 8,900 acres (1.5%) in Kanawha County. The majority of active mining operations are located in the eastern portion of the county, including Paint Creek, Cabin Creek, Kelly's Creek, Lens Creek, Rush Creek, and Blue Creek.

Most of these sites will be reclaimed during the next decade, and represent a tremendous opportunity to satisfy existing and future market demand for new buildable sites for large-scale development.

Forest Land

By far the most dominant category of all existing developments, undeveloped forestland involves more than 515,000 acres, or 89% of the total are of Kanawha County. Only 150 acres are evergreen; 381,000 acres are deciduous; and the balance is mixed growth.

Topography

Only 40,463 acres, or 7.0% of the total area of Kanawha County, involve average slopes less than 9%. This land is readily developable, and corresponds directly to the 40,000 acres of existing urban and built-up developments.

An additional 52,024 acres (9.0%) have slopes ranging between 9% and 16%. These areas are suitable for sparse, low-density, low-intensity developments. Approximately 46,244 acres (8.0%) involve slopes of 17% to 24%, which require substantial earth moving, foundation, stabilization, and storm-water management improvements.

More than three-quarters of the total area of Kanawha County (439,318 acres) lies on a 25% to 75% slope, and is considered to be either financially or physically undevelopable.

Recommendation

Enforce and Update the Kanawha County Subdivision Regulations, and Cell Tower Regulations.

In order to establish minimum performance requirements and to implement various goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan, continued enforcement of the Subdivision Regulations and other Ordinances, are recommended for Kanawha County. In addition to other issues that may be deemed relevant, the Subdivision Regulations and other Ordinances may encompass:

- a road structure plan,
- mobile home park regulations,
- subdivision regulations,
- Water and Sewer utility locations,
- Storm-water guidelines and regulations.
- Cell Tower regulations, Video Lottery restrictions, Adult Entertainment Establishment restrictions.

Subdivision Regulations

Due to the extremely limited supply of developable land in Kanawha County, wise subdivisions regulations, and establishment of orderly, quality subdivisions is essential to the successful residential development of the community.

The residential development section of any comprehensive plan is usually implemented through development, adoption, and enforcement of subdivision regulations in unincorporated areas and zoning ordinances in municipalities. In West Virginia, the control and regulation of residential and commercial developments and zoning is principally used by municipalities. Only a few counties, have adopted zoning codes for unincorporated areas. Kanawha County residents have expressed limited desire for zoning in the unincorporated areas.

Kanawha County does use ordinances to control and insure quality for new Cell Towers, and ordinances to control Adult Entertainment Establishments, Video Lottery Establishments, and Mobile Home Parks. Kanawha County has also adopted and enforced a strong Public Nuisance Ordinance, which includes a Meth Lab Boarding and Clean-up Addendum. This Ordinance helps communities from becoming junk-ridden and protect existing homeowners. These ordinances are good examples of innovative local controls to help communities.

Chapter 8, Article 7, Section 1 of the West Virginia Code give the Kanawha County Commission the power and authority to classify, district, regulate, and restrict the use of land and the intensity of developments, and to establish minimum standards for development, but this type of development control is most commonly known as "zoning," and involves adoption of both an ordinance (performance standards, rules, and regulations) and official map (zoning districts). At this time, zoning is not an option that Kanawha County is actively pursuing.

Rules and Regulations

Any new Planning ordinances or revisions to existing Planning ordinances to be enforced must be reviewed by the Kanawha County Planning Commission, then submitted as a recommendation, along with explanatory documents, to the Kanawha County Commission.

Final Report

The Kanawha County Planning Commission then reviews the planned ordinance or revision to an existing ordinance. After proper public notice is given and public hearings are conducted, the Kanawha County Commission may consider the ordinance or ordinance revision adoption.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan

Any amendments, supplements, or changes of the rules or regulations of the County ordinance are automatically considered as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

Development within a Subdivision Plan

Principles for quality urban land development reinforce the concept that the most appropriate location for urban development is within municipal service area boundaries. Existing State enabling legislation and revenue sources do not support the County to deliver urban services throughout all areas of the County. Urban development, for this reason, is often located within municipalities rather than the unincorporated portions of the County.

Development in unincorporated areas can occur if it meets basic service levels and is designed to be compatible with the policy or developments plan for the adjacent city or town. Quality subdivision regulations are intended to make future annexation possible without costly improvements to streets and utilities and to ensure that development approved in the County can be easily integrated into the fabric of the incorporated community when it is eventually annexed.

Both historic and recent development trends for new lots created in unincorporated portions of Kanawha County are very different from urban subdivisions. Average lot sizes are much larger than those generally associated with urban development, at about 0.9 acres per unit. Not only are new building lots in unincorporated areas of the County often much larger than typical urban lots, they also often lack basic services such as public water and/or sanitary sewer, solid waste collection, and community policing.

Solid Subdivision Regulations create resulting development patterns that create quality enclaves of rural-type development adjacent to the urbanized area, minimizing problems for future annexation and extension of public utilities and roads. The Comprehensive Plan contains principles for strengthening requirements for all new development within the Growth Management Areas, which should be consistent with urban standards developed and jointly adopted by municipalities and the County.

Land Redevelopment Plans

Some areas of Kanawha County have already been developed and are now in need of redevelopment. Many sites that were once active now lay idle. Some prime development sites are underutilized while other built-out lands were never suitable for construction.

Due to the extremely limited inventory of sites suitable for building and new investment in Kanawha County, land redevelopment is an option for developers to consider. Such special sites include:

- Brownfield Sites
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Surface Mine Sites

- Parks and Public Open Lands
- Vacant Building and Sites
- Slum and Blighted Areas

Brownfields are contaminated sites that previously hosted commercial and industrial development, but are now either abandoned, idle, or underutilized due to the tremendous expense of environmental cleanup and redevelopment.

Nevertheless, these historic sites of community activity and employment represent our best prospects for accommodating new investment and jobs in the near term.

Due to their location, size, and serviceability by public utilities, brownfield sites merit special public attention and effort.

Flood Hazard Areas are defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as depicted on Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), available in the Community Planning and Development office.

These areas are not well suited for new construction of any type of habitable structures, but may be useful for other public purposes, (i.e., outdoor recreation facilities, solid waste transfer stations, agricultural developments). All habitable structures located within the flood hazard areas (floodways and flood plains) are at significant risk during flash flood events, as are their occupants.

As funding becomes available, flood plain properties should be redeveloped for more suitable developments.

Surface Mine Sites and mountaintop removal operations represent a new opportunity for introducing large tracts of land to the inventory of buildable sites in Kanawha County. These sites total in the thousands of acres, but lack basic infrastructure (i.e., suitable access roads, water, and sewer service).

While few existing surface mine sites are located on the urban fringe, in close proximity to highways and public utility service areas, future growth patterns are expected to envelop these sites. When this occurs, once isolated mountaintops will become ideal locations for residential, commercial, and light industrial development.

To take full advantage of these future opportunities, the design, management, and reclamation of surface mine operations must be coordinated with post-mining redevelopment.

Access road alignments, earthmoving operations, drainage, and utility plans should be incorporated as part of a Master Plan for Redevelopment of Surface Mine Sites.

Parks and Public Open Lands include all properties owned and operated by Federal, State, and local units of government. Parks, outdoor recreation facilities, and open space lands are necessary to assure a high quality of life for the residents of the community. Such lands are in short supply in Kanawha County.

Expansion and redevelopment of existing facilities to meet the needs of the resident population can be the most effective means of satisfying future levels of demand.

Vacant Buildings and Sites of various sizes and types are located throughout Kanawha County. They range from small residential sites suitable for infill development to large, obsolete industrial buildings.

Many of these buildings and sites are in need of special efforts before they can be reintroduced as useful and productive properties, contributing to the County tax base.

It is in the public's best interest, as funds arise, to clear such sites of obsolete improvements and solid waste, to eliminate property liens or flaws in the title, or perform other such tasks necessary to prompt new investment and redevelopment.

Recommendations

Continue to demolition program for dilapidated, abandoned, meth-contaminated and substandard structures. Continue to use building permit fees to fund demolitions. Actively seek grant funding where available.

Slum and Blighted Areas are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare due to their present condition and use. Such areas constitute a serious and growing menace to the residents of the County. These areas necessitate excessive and disproportionate expenditures of public funds for the preservation of public health and safety.

Their very existence substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth and development of communities and retards the provision of adequate, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing opportunities. Slum and blighted areas are appropriate for special consideration for demolition. The Kanawha County Planning and Development Office and the Kanawha County Enforcement Agency identifies abandoned structures that are unsafe. The Kanawha County Enforcement Agency meets on an as needed basis to review and prioritize the current list of these blighted structures for possible demolition. A list of structures under review before the Enforcement Agency can be obtained by contacting the Kanawha County Planning Office.

Urban Services in Rural Areas

Further, this Comprehensive Plan acknowledges, that Kanawha County will not provide the broad range of services necessary to support a quality urban environment throughout the remote, rural areas of the County. The projected cost of delivering a higher (i.e. municipal) level of service to the entire population of Kanawha County would not be sustainable. In addition to being cost-prohibitive and inequitable, selective County delivery of urban services would support and encourage suburban sprawl as well as threaten the rural lifestyle that nearly half the county's resident population has come to enjoy.

Water and Sewer Service Related to Developments Planning

The vast majority of Kanawha County households are served by public water and wastewater systems. Only the most remote areas of the county depend on wells and/or septic tanks. To date, it has not been economically feasible to extend distribution or collection systems to low-density, rural areas.

As the total number and density of households grow in these communities, so does the prospect for extending public utilities. Neither state nor local units of government or agencies encourage or discourage this pattern of development.

Unless and until adequate plans and provisions are developed for extending public water and/or sewer service to remote, low-density areas, new land development in those areas may be impractical. For new construction in such areas of the county, building permits could be amended to include formal acknowledgement that public utilities are not available and the Kanawha County Commission is not obligated, now or in the future, to finance the extension of public water and/or sewer services.

Subdivision Regulations

Haphazard subdivision of land, substandard access or land-locked parcels, inappropriate deed restrictions, and inadequate infrastructure are common man-made constraints to new land development. In addition, incompatible developments often undermine and diminish property values, and cause conflicts or public nuisances that deprive owners of the full utilization of their land. These and other factors can combine to create slum and blighted conditions. Enforcement of the County's Subdivision Regulations work to eliminate these conditions from new developments

Most of the development applications that are received by the Kanawha County Planning and Development office are for residential uses in the unincorporated areas of the County.

Adverse topography (i.e., slopes of 15% or greater) serves to encourage large lot development in many parts of the County. In these situations, the protection and conservation of steep slopes should take precedent over other developments issues. Nevertheless, lot size and configuration should be encouraged to minimize sprawl and maximize sustainable land development patterns.

The existing Subdivision Regulations should be revised as needed to insure quality developments. However, it is the intention that the changes to the Subdivision Regulations or other County Ordinances will not detract from the property owner's ability to develop or use his land to its maximum. These revisions are planned to protect property owners and surrounding property owners by controlling storm water, erosion, and establishing standards for street and utility construction in new developments. They also may establish other construction standards associated with land development, which will facilitate controlled and efficient use of land.

Streetscape Design and Construction

Streetscape design is one of the most effective tools for establishing a sense of place, stabilizing neighborhoods, and encouraging private-sector investment. The application of streetscape design elements is encouraged for both existing and future land development projects.

Current standards for street design and construction in the Subdivision Regulations for Kanawha County assure that future developments feature safe, attractive streets which are also durable and easy to maintain.

Street design standards may also be applied to existing (i.e., substandard) streets. Financing of these improvements could be problematic, however, current State law does make limited allowances for such public projects.

Elements of quality subdivision streets could include specifications for the following:

- Design and grading
- Base material
- Wearing course (pavement)
- Drainage

- Driveway entry
- Lighting
- Pedestrian facilities
- Line of sight
- WV Division of Highways Approvals for tie-ins to existing major thoroughfares.

Stormwater Management Guidelines and Requirements

Among the most pressing environmental issues in Kanawha County are stream stabilization and the management of stormwater runoff.

Stormwater, sediment, and erosion control were problems most often cited by citizens during public meetings conducted throughout the county. Common complaints involved the diversion or concentration of surface water runoff by upstream property owners. This usually results in property damage ranging from minor flooding to major erosion, undermining of improvements, or complete destruction.

Property owners must rely on the legal system to solve their stormwater drainage problems, as this is a civil matter. However, the enforcement of the Subdivision Regulations requiring a stormwater management plan helps to mitigate these type problems for new subdivision construction and new cell tower construction in Kanawha County.

Special Area Plans

Special area developments plans and studies may be needed where local conditions present unique challenges, development issues, and development opportunities.

These conditions require more detailed investigation than is possible for the majority of the County's area, usually including a great deal of public focus and input. The outcome of the studies may be adoption of special development principles and implementation strategies that are tailored to the specific issues of the particular unincorporated area. However, at this time, no areas requiring special investigation have not been identified.

Coal River

Urbanized areas adjoining and in close proximity to the City of Saint Albans are in desperate need of improved wastewater collection and treatment upgrades. The residents of the Coal River Road area outside St. Albans have already completed a wastewater plan to reduce the amount of raw sewage being placed in Coal River. The community may need outside assistance to help implement those remaining plans.

Cross Lanes – Tyler Mountain Area Plan

The Cross Lanes area is unique in Kanawha County. Its size and character are comparable to that of many incorporated towns in the State. The community has many facilities and services associated with an incorporated town, including an elementary and a middle school, a small community park, a fire station, and public water and wastewater services.

Kanawha State Forest and Environs

Kanawha State Forest is owned and operated by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. West Virginia Region III (Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam counties) is the only area in the State that is not served by a State park. Kanawha State Forest is the only existing public recreation facility of adequate size to serve the needs of the region.

Although it is the largest tract of public property in the County, its size and location restrict patronage. Additional acreage, access routes, outdoor recreational, and other public facilities are

recommended in the future to meet the needs of the existing and future resident population. In particular, development of the area between the Kanawha River and State Forest lands would serve to expand opportunities for outdoor recreation and create a new, more safe and convenient means of ingress and egress.

Malden Historic District

Located on the north side of the Kanawha River between the City of Charleston and Town of Belle, the community of Malden is the oldest unincorporated settlement in the region. As such, there are valuable historic landmarks, sites, and structures located in Malden.

The preservation and protection of this district would serve to aid economic development through improvement of property values and enhancement of the County's historic attractions to tourists and visitors. It also serves to aid the development of education in the County, State, and nation by preserving our heritage for future generations.

Upper Kanawha Valley Enterprise Community Strategic Plan

The Upper Kanawha Valley is an area of special need in Kanawha County. It was designated a Federal Enterprise Community (EC) in December 1998. That special status was granted based upon a 10-year strategic plan submitted as part of an Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) nomination for the area. The UKVEC is self-governed by a grass-roots, community-based board of directors, dedicated to revitalizing the 224-square-mile region.

The *Upper Kanawha Valley EC Strategic Plan*, as amended by the governing board, is hereby made a part of the Kanawha County Comprehensive Plan as a special area plan for a rural area. Its developments map and plan objectives and policies will continue to be used as a guide to developments decisions by the County.

Route 119 – Corridor Plan for Appalachian Corridor G

Significant growth has occurred since construction of US Route 119 was completed south of the Kanawha River. Higher levels of accessibility and public services have attracted residential, office, commercial, and industrial developers to the area. The Ridges of Rabel Mountain is a highly successful residential subdivision near Alum Creek off Corridor G.

Growth in traffic volumes has necessitated expansion of the original five-lane roadway to a seven-lane facility from WV Route 61 to the Southridge (shopping) Centre. Additional growth and new commercial and residential growth is anticipated.

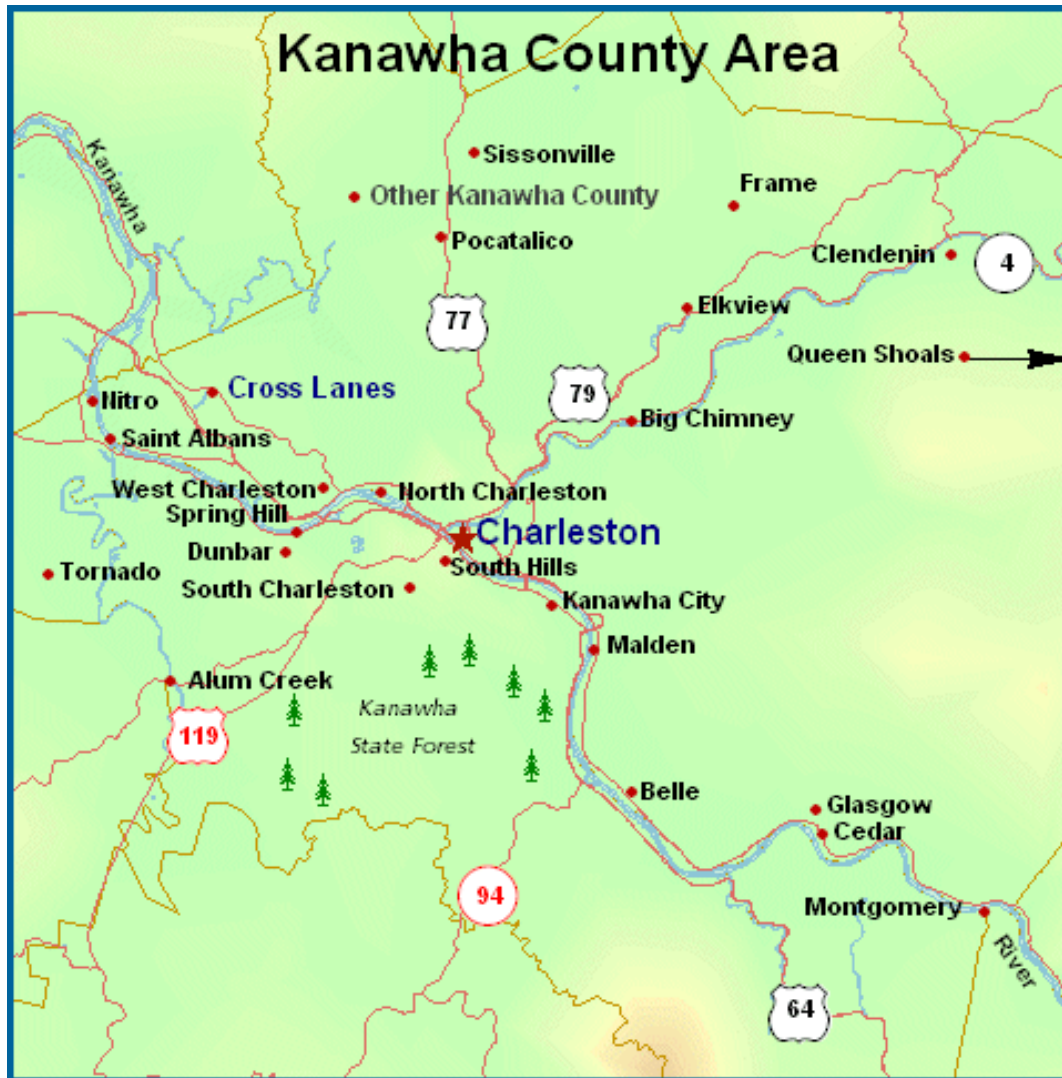
Yeager Regional Airport Influence Area

Yeager Airport, located between the City of Charleston and Coonskin Park, is operated by the Central West Virginia Regional Airport Authority, and serves both the southern and western regions of the State.

The purpose of a Regional Airport Influence Area is to recognize benefits and potentially adverse impacts that may occur within certain distances from public aviation facilities, and to provide a policy framework to minimize these impacts as well as protect the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations. The economic effects of aviation, related to both air passenger and cargo traffic, are also to be considered.

The Airport Influence Area is based on a technical analysis of the Yeager Airport and extends 400 yards beyond the outer boundary of the critical zones, 55-decibel noise contour and/or the flight pattern boundary lines depicted in the Airport Master Plan.

The potential adverse impacts of airport operations are generally of two types. Within the critical zones that surround and extend beyond the runways, safety for persons and property is of concern. Within the noise contours surrounding the airport and under the flight paths, complaints from property owners, particularly residents of the area, can eventually change or even curtail aircraft operations.



At the same time, there are unique locational advantages for many types of developments being in close proximity to a regional airport. Aviation-related industries require suitable sites within or near airport facilities. It is in the public's best interest to make sure such sites are made available.

A Master Plan has been developed and adopted by the Central West Virginia Regional Airport Authority. Like the County's Comprehensive Plan, it is periodically updated. The Master Plan addresses many of the potential developments conflicts, impacts, and opportunities around the airport. The areas surrounding Yeager Airport involve a variety of existing developments, including residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

A developments plan should be developed to coincide with noise, critical area, flight paths, and developments elements of the most recent Airport Master Plan. In particular, the areas east and northeast of Yeager Airport, which includes Coonskin Park, is identified as a potential impact area in the Airport Master Plan.

Future work should focus on improved alignment and coordination between the new Airport Master Plan and proposed zoning in the area. Adequate opportunities for future aviation-related development and expansion should be provided both on-site and off-site in the immediate proximity of Yeager Airport.

Recommendation

Encourage Neighborhood Community Improvement Groups for the 5 specified neighborhoods.

- ❑ Sissonville
- ❑ Lower Elk Valley (Elkview, Pinch, Big Chimney)
- ❑ Coal River
- ❑ Cross Lanes
- ❑ Institute-West Dunbar

Neighborhood Plans

The individual and cumulative strength of our neighborhoods make Kanawha County an attractive place to live, learn, work, and play. Special area and neighborhood developments plans and studies are appropriate where local conditions present unique challenges, developments issues, and development opportunities.

These conditions require more detailed investigation than is possible for the majority of the County's area, usually including a great deal of public focus and input. The outcome of the studies may be adoption of special developments principles and implementation strategies that are tailored to the specific issues of the particular unincorporated area.

Neighborhood Plans are recommended for the following areas of Kanawha County: (*Figure 4*)

Neighborhood Area	2010 Census Tracts*	2010 Population	2010 Employment	2010 Housing Units
Sissonville	108.01, 108.02	17,102	8,422	7,605
Lower Elk Valley	110, 111, 113.01, 113.02	36,355	15,807	17,814
Coal River	132, 133, 136, 137	24,193	10,948	11,150
Cross Lanes	105, 106, 107.01, 107.02	20,575	10,514	9,564
Institute- W Dunbar	104	10,409	4,535	5,232

* Unincorporated areas only. 2010 Census Statistics also include all or portions of contiguous municipalities (if any).

Outdoor advertising and signage is regulated by the State of West Virginia, although the State's jurisdiction is restricted to the Federal Aid Highway System (i.e., interstate highways). Visual clutter (i.e., overhead utilities) and the proliferation of outdoor advertising may become a topic of special public concern in the future.

Subdivision Regulations and County Ordinances serve as the best indicator of local values and standards. These protections and guidelines that are in place tell others who and what we are, and what we think is important. It is, in effect, the equivalent of "body language" as Kanawha County communicates with the global economy.

Gateways

A gateway is the entrance to a place or community. Due to its historic dependence upon rivers to define and shape the urban form, there are very few entrances into Kanawha County. River valleys and Interstate highway corridors now serve as the primary gateways to the community.

For many, these gateways constitute a first and lasting impressing of Kanawha County. Special attention to and improvement of these key locations will serve to improve the community.

Recommendation

Identify and improve all major entrances to Kanawha County as community gateways.

Scenic Highway Corridors

Only one roadway in Kanawha County is currently designated a scenic highway. The Midland Trail, which extends from the State Capitol (Milepost 0) east to Lewisburg and beyond, follows US Route 60. While most of the Midland Trail Scenic Highway is very attractive, portions within Kanawha County are plagued with roadside eyesores.

The Midland Trail is only one of several potential routes for scenic highways in Kanawha County. Other routes may be developed in the future, but the Midland Trail Scenic Highway represents our best prospect for developing a heavily patronized route with interstate connections.

Recommendation

Continue the scenic highway designation for US Route 60 and Midland Trail Scenic Highway.

Design Principles

The generally accepted principles of quality Subdivision design are intended to create functional, safe, and attractive places to live, learn, work, and play. These principles address all the essential elements of the subdivision, including infrastructure (i.e., water, wastewater, utilities, stormwater drainage), circulation (vehicular and pedestrian), parking, amenities (i.e., landscaping, open space, recreational facilities), and accessory uses (i.e., storage, signage).

Landmarks

Landmarks are key elements of any community and help establish a sense of place. They can take many forms, including significant buildings, public places, geographic features, scenic overlooks, or unique intersections.

Many of the landmarks in Kanawha County are of historic origin and deserve special protection. Others are less historically significant, but still need to be preserved or enhanced. In some cases, new community landmarks need to be established where none currently exist.

Neighborhood Conservation

Our individual neighborhoods serve to create diverse lifestyle, commercial, and housing opportunities throughout Kanawha County. Each has its own unique characteristics, assets, and liabilities. Among those liabilities are development patterns and trends that threaten to undermine those neighborhoods.

Neighborhood conservation means exactly what the term implies: the preservation of attractive, stable communities. This is a proactive approach to growth management in Kanawha County that serves to protect our citizens' most significant financial investment, their homes.

Like neighborhood conservation, community revitalization involves the same goals and process, but is retroactive. For communities that have already begun to deteriorate, a revitalization plan composed by the neighborhood residents and volunteers maps out a solid strategy for redeveloping or revitalizing an entire neighborhood.

Tree Protection

Trees serve to improve our living environment in numerous ways. An essential part of the ecosystem, they also provide protection from the adverse effects of sun and wind. Trees help to reduce energy consumption and serve to enhance the built environment.

Landscaping

Kanawha County currently does not have any landscaping requirements for new multi-family residential, commercial, or industrial land development. Almost every professional developer and most southern states have become aware of the tremendous value of minimum landscaping requirements.

In addition to environmental benefits, well-landscaped properties are more attractive and yield significantly higher real estate values. When applied throughout a community, the overall positive effects of professional landscaping are overwhelming.

Public Art

The City of Charleston has been a leader in promoting local artists through programs such as FestivALL and Artwalk. Similar initiatives should be supported throughout the county.

Historic Preservation

To protect, preserve, enhance, and promote the historic resources of Kanawha County, the state Historic Preservation agency has established and maintains an inventory of possible historic landmarks. The committee would also recommend which of these sites warrant use of public monies for acquisition, preservation, restoration, and/or maintenance.

The agency also reviews comments from representatives from local historic and preservation organizations, archeologists, architects, and historians. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) is an active participant in this process.

The duties and functions of the State Historic Preservation Agency includes the following:

- Keeps a list of county landmarks and districts that should be acquired, preserved, restored, and/or maintained by public or private programs,
- Coordinates and develops plans for Kanawha County that protect, preserve, enhance, and promote the historic landmarks that are selected for preservation,

Historic Preservation Ordinance

Adoption of a historic preservation ordinance may be considered in the future in implementing a countywide historic preservation program. Upon meeting criteria defined in West Virginia Code Chapter 8, Article 26A, and by the National Historic Preservation Amendments Act of 1980, Kanawha County would become eligible to apply for the Historic Preservation Certified Local Government (CLG) grant program. The program is a nationwide initiative providing technical assistance and grants to local governments seeking to preserve the important and significant aspects of their heritage.

The Federal law defines a CLG as any city, town, county, or parish that meets the following basic criteria:

- Enforces appropriate state and local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties,
- Establishes an adequate and qualified historic preservation review commission by state and local legislation,
- Maintains a survey and inventory system for historic preservation properties within its basic jurisdiction,
- Provides for adequate public participation in local historic preservation programs, including the process of nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and
- Satisfactorily performs the responsibilities delegated to it under applicable laws.

If designated as a CLG, Kanawha County would receive national recognition for its commitment to historic preservation. Grants received through the program can support a variety of preservation activities, including architectural and archaeological surveys, National Register Nominations, educational brochures, walking tours, guidelines for design review, and feasibility studies of historic structures.

Housing

In order to make an immediate and significant impact to address housing issues in Kanawha County, the Comprehensive Plan makes three recommendations, and anticipates additional strategies will be developed during the plan's duration to accomplish its housing goals.

Summary of Recommendations

- Continue to enforce the following Ordinances and Regulations, which help improve life in unincorporated areas of Kanawha County:
 - ❑ Subdivision Regulations
 - ❑ Cell Tower Regulations
 - ❑ Video Lottery Ordinance
 - ❑ Mobile Home Park Regulations
 - ❑ Adult Entertainment Ordinance
 - ❑ Public Nuisance Ordinance including Regulations for meth labs/houses, dilapidated, abandoned, and substandard structures
 - Encourage residents to establish neighborhood improvement groups/plans for:
 - ❑ Coal River Valley
 - ❑ Sissonville (already has a working group),
 - ❑ Lower Elk Valley (Big Chimney, Elkview, Pinch)
 - ❑ Cross Lanes
 - ❑ Institute-Dunbar
 - Identify all major entrances to Kanawha County as community gateways.
 - Continue scenic highway status for US Route 60 and Midland Trail Scenic Highway.
 - Encourage neighborhood revitalization plans by area residents.
 - Continue to work with the State Historic Preservation Agency to inventory and prioritize historic properties and districts for preservation and enhancement.
 - Consider grant-funded programs designed to help low- to moderate-income first-time home buyers and other programs that help county residents live in safe, warm, and dry homes.
-

Transportation

Vision

Provide a safe, efficient, and sustainable multi-modal transportation system that supports economic growth, enhances quality of life, and preserves the region's natural and cultural resources.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

- GOAL 1: Promote an efficient, interconnected and accessible transportation network.
- OBJECTIVE: Provide efficient regional routes and internal connectivity for freight goods movement.
- OBJECTIVE: Develop strategies to manage travel demand.
- OBJECTIVE: Increase transit accessibility and availability to transit-dependent users and persons with special needs.
- OBJECTIVE: Improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility.
- GOAL 2: Promote economic development through targeted transportation investments.
- OBJECTIVE: Improve access to key economic nodes and areas of planned development.
- OBJECTIVE: Support transportation investments and policies that work to create jobs and improve access to people, places and goods.
- OBJECTIVE: Utilize local, regional and state energy sources within the transportation system.
- GOAL 3: Improve travel safety and security in Kanawha County.
- OBJECTIVE: Reduce the number of injuries, fatalities and hazardous spills.
- OBJECTIVE: Mitigate potential conflicts and delays at rail crossing sites.
- OBJECTIVE: Reduce the number of high incident-accident locations.
- OBJECTIVE: Facilitate coordination for emergency preparedness.
- GOAL 4: Preserve and sustain the natural and built environments.
- OBJECTIVE: Encourage use of alternative transportation modes and/or energy sources that reduce air pollution, fuel consumption, and other environmental impacts.
- OBJECTIVE: Minimize development impacts in areas of environmental, cultural and historical significance.
- OBJECTIVE: Develop strategies to decrease single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- GOAL 5: Improve the integration of land use and transportation.

OBJECTIVE: Enhance communication and coordination between various transportation planning and land use planning agencies.

OBJECTIVE: Increase coordination between roadway design and land use development to improve transportation system performance.

OBJECTIVE: Focus future growth in areas of reduced transportation demand.

GOAL 6: Support and strengthen the current transportation network.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the number of operational conflicts between various transportation modes.

OBJECTIVE: Develop strategies and implement measures to extend the functional life of transportation facilities.

OBJECTIVE: Increase the use of innovative transportation technology to enhance the efficiency of the existing transportation system.

Discussion of Transportation Issues in Kanawha County

Kanawha County is fortunate to be served by three interstate highways, an Appalachian Corridor highway as well as rail lines, a navigable river, a primary commercial service airport and public transit service. The county's transportation advantages are a key to the area's success as a regional center of commerce, government, health care and other services. However, there are improvements that can be made to increase mobility, improve access and safety and spur economic development. This chapter will look at the existing transportation system and consider ways to strengthen it and to further the comprehensive plan goals. For the most part, Kanawha County does not have direct control over the transportation system, but can use its influence to affect transportation decisions.



A well-developed multi-modal transportation network serves Kanawha County:

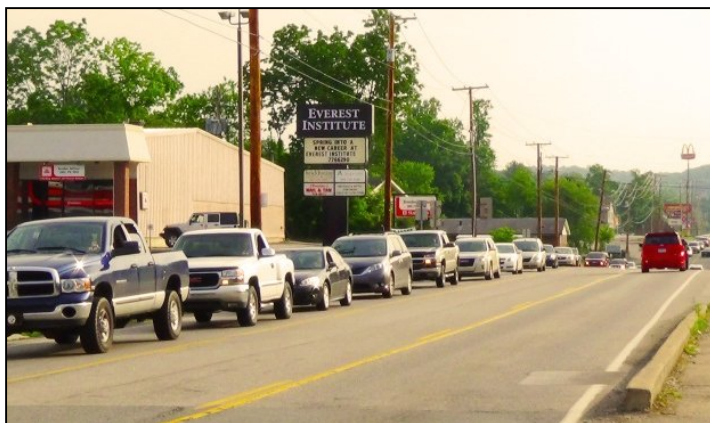
- highway system
- public transportation system
- air service
- rail transportation
- river transportation and port facilities
- bicycle and pedestrian facilities

Kanawha County is an active member on the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Charleston area, which includes Kanawha and Putnam Counties. As such, RIC is responsible for carrying out a coordinated, comprehensive, and continuing transportation planning process.

Plans are developed in cooperation with the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA), West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT), and other modal agencies, local elected officials, citizens, and various groups and agencies. The most important product of this process is the Charleston Metropolitan Transportation Plan (CMTP), a comprehensive transportation plan for Kanawha and Putnam counties. Many of the matters addressed in this transportation subsection are based on the most recent CMTP, which was completed in 2013.

Highway System

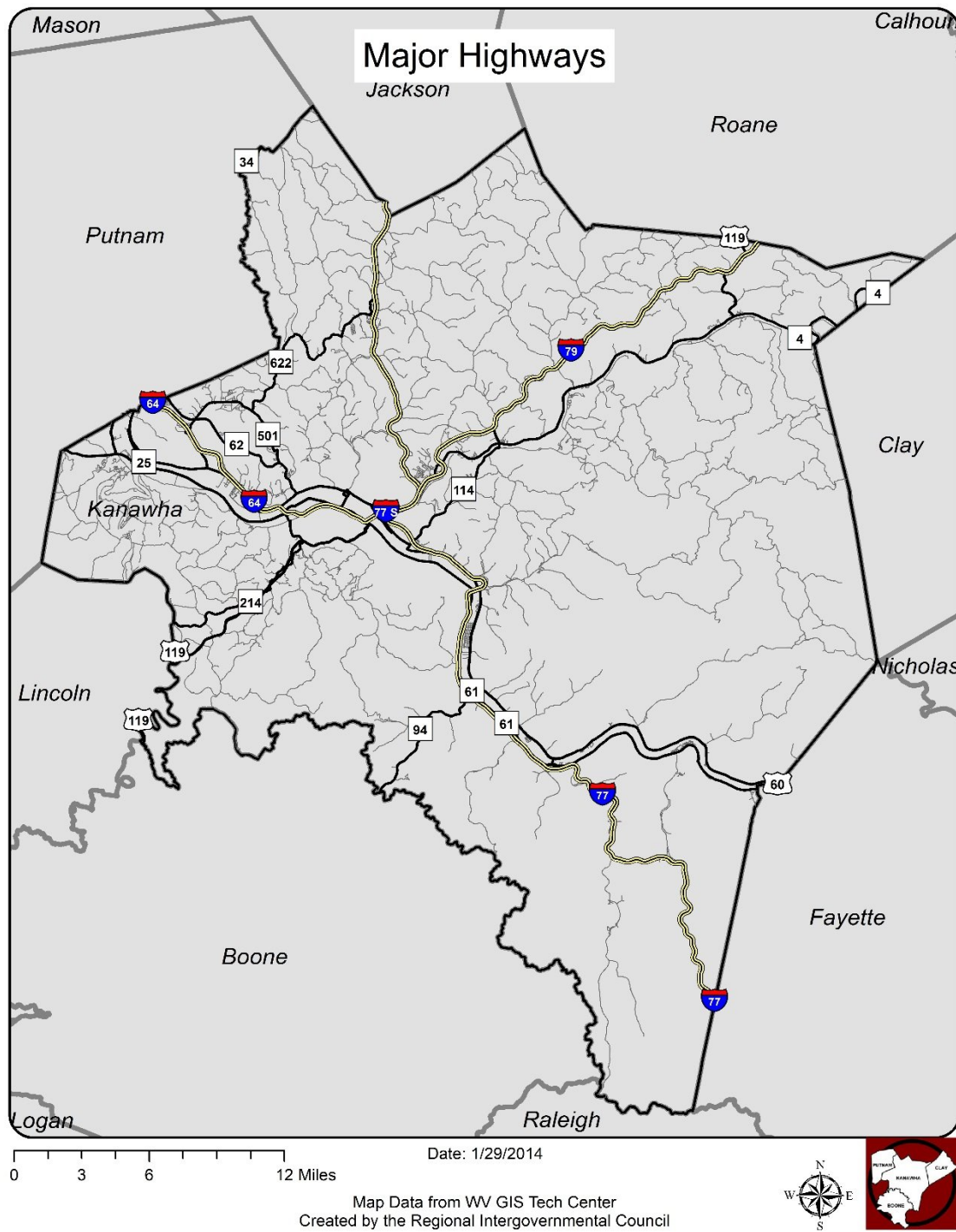
The existing highway system in Kanawha County reflects a pattern that closely parallels the river valleys. In most of the region, development and roadways have the highest densities in the river valleys. Within the traditional city centers, a grid pattern exists. In more recent growth areas such as Cross Lanes and Sissonville, however, newer suburban roadway patterns have emerged.



Three interstate highways (I-64, I-77, and I-79) converge in the city of Charleston and serve all of Kanawha County. The major east-west routes include I-64 and US Route 60. North-south travel is provided on I-77, I-79, and US Route 119 (Appalachian Corridor G). Other important minor arterials include WV Routes 61, 62, and 622.

Existing Conditions

Highway travel in Kanawha County, as expressed in daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) has generally increased over the past 30 years, but since its peak in 2006 has declined somewhat, possibly due to the economic downturn. As expected, the three interstate highways account for some of the county's highest traffic volumes, with the highest location being on I-64 at the Eugene A. Carter Bridge in Charleston, which has an average daily travel (ADT) of 100,000 vehicles per day. Other highways with high and generally increasing volumes include US 119 south of Charleston (Corridor G), WV 601 (Jefferson Road), WV 62 and WV 622 in Cross Lanes and US 60/WV 61 (MacCorkle Ave.) through Charleston and South Charleston.



Existing and Projected Deficiencies

Current and projected deficiencies in the highway network are based, in part, on analysis from RIC's Charleston Metropolitan Transportation Plan travel demand model. The highway system studied here includes all interstates and US Route highways, all major and minor arterials, and most collectors. Congestion is defined in terms of level of service. Level of service is expressed as a letter grade, A through F, with E and F considered capacity deficient (highly congested). Locations that are identified as deficient, now or in the future, include:

- WV 622, from I-64 to Rocky Fork (Cross Lanes)
- WV 62 in Cross Lanes
- I-64 through Dunbar, South Charleston and Charleston
- WV 601 (Jefferson Road), from US 60 to US 119 (South Charleston)
- US 119 (Corridor G) between I-64 and Southridge Center
- WV 817 (former US 35) north of St. Albans
- 3rd Street in St. Albans
- Kanawha Turnpike, near WV 601 (Jefferson Road)
- US 60 from the Chelyan Bridge to Cedar Grove

A review of crash data also helps identify locations where improvements and/or additional study are warranted. Based on WVDOT crash data from 2009 to 2011, the highest concentrations of crashes generally existed at downtown intersections and along key commercial corridors – most often at entrances to malls, restaurants, convenience stores, and gas stations. Some specific locations identified included various intersections in downtown Charleston and Kanawha City.

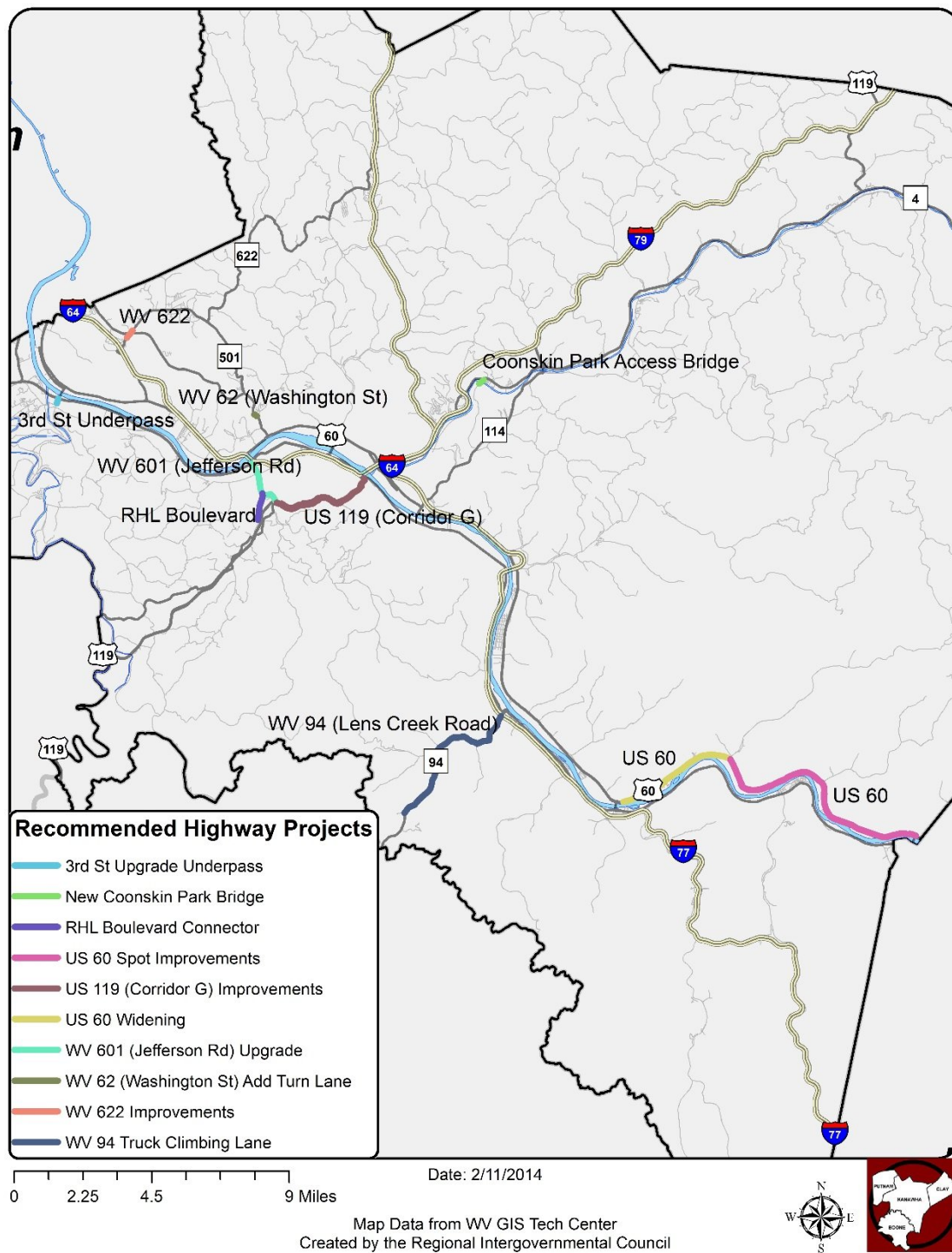
Highway Recommendations

The Charleston Metropolitan Transportation Plan recommended highway projects based upon projected capacity deficiencies, accident information, as well as public and stakeholder input. That CMTP is cost-constrained, based upon estimated revenues. The recommendations from that plan are included here.

Recommendation

Support the completion of major highway projects by 2026:

- Widen WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to 5 lanes from US 60 (MacCorkle Avenue to US 119 (Corridor G), correct offset intersection at Kanawha Turnpike and grade-separate CSX railroad crossing. Cost \$55 million.
- Construct new bridge over Elk River, connecting US 119 to Coonskin Park, upgrade connecting roads. Cost \$9 million.
- Construct RHL Boulevard connector from the Shops at Trace Fork to WV 601 (Jefferson Road). Cost \$10 million.
- Add 3rd lane to US 119 (Corridor G) northbound from Cantley Drive to MacCorkle and improve operations. Cost \$5.6 million.
- Add lanes to US 119 (Corridor G) from Lawndale Lane to MacCorkle Avenue and to the I-64 connector. Install Cantley flyover, build underpasses at Lucado Rd. and Oakwood Rd and improve operations. Cost \$34.7 million.
- Improve intersection of WV 622 and WV 62 in Cross Lanes, including signal improvements and turn lanes. Cost \$4.7 million.
- Widen and upgrade the 3rd St. railroad underpass in St. Albans. Cost \$9.6 million.
- Add southbound left turn lane on WV 62 (W. Washington St.) at Woodrum Lane. Cost \$0.6 million.



Recommendation

Support the completion of major highway projects after 2026:

- Add third lane northbound on US 119 and improve operations from WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to Emerald Road. Cost \$24.9 million.
- Widen US 60 to 4 lanes with median from Chelyan Bridge to Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road). Cost \$31.3 million.
- Implement center turn lanes and right turn lanes at various locations on US 60 from Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road) to the Montgomery Bridge. Cost \$14.4 million.
- Construct additional truck climbing lanes on WV 94. Cost \$4.7 million.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

Intelligent Transportation systems (ITS) are advanced technology applications designed to help travelers make more efficient and safer use of transportation networks. The WVDOT, working with federal, state and local agencies, has recently introduced several key ITS initiatives that will help manage roadway demand and increase roadway safety. Recent or planned improvements include: replacement of traffic signals in the CBD with “smarter” signals that can adapt to demand; a statewide 511 system to provide traveler information; proposed joint operations center with Homeland Security, the National Guard and National Weather Service; mobile weather stations; and highway cameras.

Recommendation

Encourage the continued deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies to gain greater efficiency from the existing transportation system.

Public Transportation

Bus transit provides mobility to thousands of residents who cannot, or choose not to, drive. Bus transit also provides a regional air quality benefit by reducing the number of cars on the road, particularly during congested travel periods and on hot summer days. The region's transit services provide access to major regional employers, shopping areas, health care services, social services, universities, and even a connection between Charleston, Teays Valley, and Huntington. This section examines transit initiatives and describes the challenges facing the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA)

The Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA) System

KVRTA serves Kanawha County and portions of Fayette and Putnam counties. The service area is approximately 913 square miles, with a population of approximately 195,000. An estimated 88.0% of Kanawha County's residents live within three-quarters of a mile of a KVRTA route.

KVRTA operates a network of 21 fixed routes oriented around the commercial center of Charleston. With the exceptions of four holidays during the year, KVRTA provides service seven days a week. The earliest routes begin at 4:20 a.m., and service continues until 12:30 a.m. the next day. Complementary paratransit service, known as Kanawha Alternative Transit, or KAT, operates during the same days and hours.

KVRTA uses zoned fares, with a fixed-route base zone fare of \$1.00. Fares increase by zone to a maximum of \$2.50. Reduced fares are offered during all hours to the elderly, persons with a disability, and Medicare cardholders. The reduced base zone fare is \$0.50, with successive fares either exactly half or rounded down. The fares for the paratransit service are twice the fixed-route fares for the respective zones. KVRTA offers discount passes and reduced student fares on all routes. There is a five-mile rubber-tire trolley loop that serves the State Capitol area and major suburban retail centers.

KVRTA operates a fleet of 55 vehicles for fixed-route service. The fleet consists of 30 and 35-foot long transit coaches, minibuses, and five rubber-tired trolleys. KVRTA also has 15 cutaway vans for the KAT complementary paratransit service.



KVRTA's operations, maintenance, and administrative headquarters are located on 4th Avenue in Charleston. The Laidley Street Transit Mall, in downtown Charleston, is the hub and transfer center for all routes. The Transit Mall is a component of the multi-use, multi-modal space that includes commercial and entertainment venues, hotels, and government offices.

In an effort to accommodate current and anticipated employment growth in South Charleston, KVRTA recently introduced a route extension to the West Virginia Regional Technology Park (formerly the Dow Technical Center).

In addition, KVRTA and the Tri-State Transit Authority (the transit agency for the Huntington-area), in partnership with the state, operate an intercity Charleston-Huntington route, with an interim stop in Putnam County. While ridership on the intercity route has declined since a recent fare increase (from approximately 34 passengers to 25 passengers), the route is funded until 2015, at which point KVRTA will evaluate the feasibility of continuing service between the two cities.

The two primary funding sources for KVRTA's gap between costs and farebox revenues are: 1) special levy money; and 2) the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Operating Assistance. The levy amount, determined by local property taxes, requires approval by Kanawha County voters every four years (60.0% approval is required). KVRTA increasingly faces the challenge of needing to do more with less. Bus passenger volumes are close to all-time highs while federal funding continues to decline. Simply put, there is insufficient funding to cover KVRTA's capital and operational costs.

In an effort to adapt to the challenging fiscal climate, KVRTA is conducting a system analysis to evaluate potential service expansion and reduction. The study will analyze demographics, conduct passenger surveys, identify the potential for non-traditional and innovative transit service, evaluate the existing route structure, forecast future service levels, and propose future funding strategies.

It should be noted that KVRTA System Analysis Studies first phase being conducted by Wendel Companies is due to be presented in the summer of 2014. Implementation of some of the recommendation should be expected in 2015.

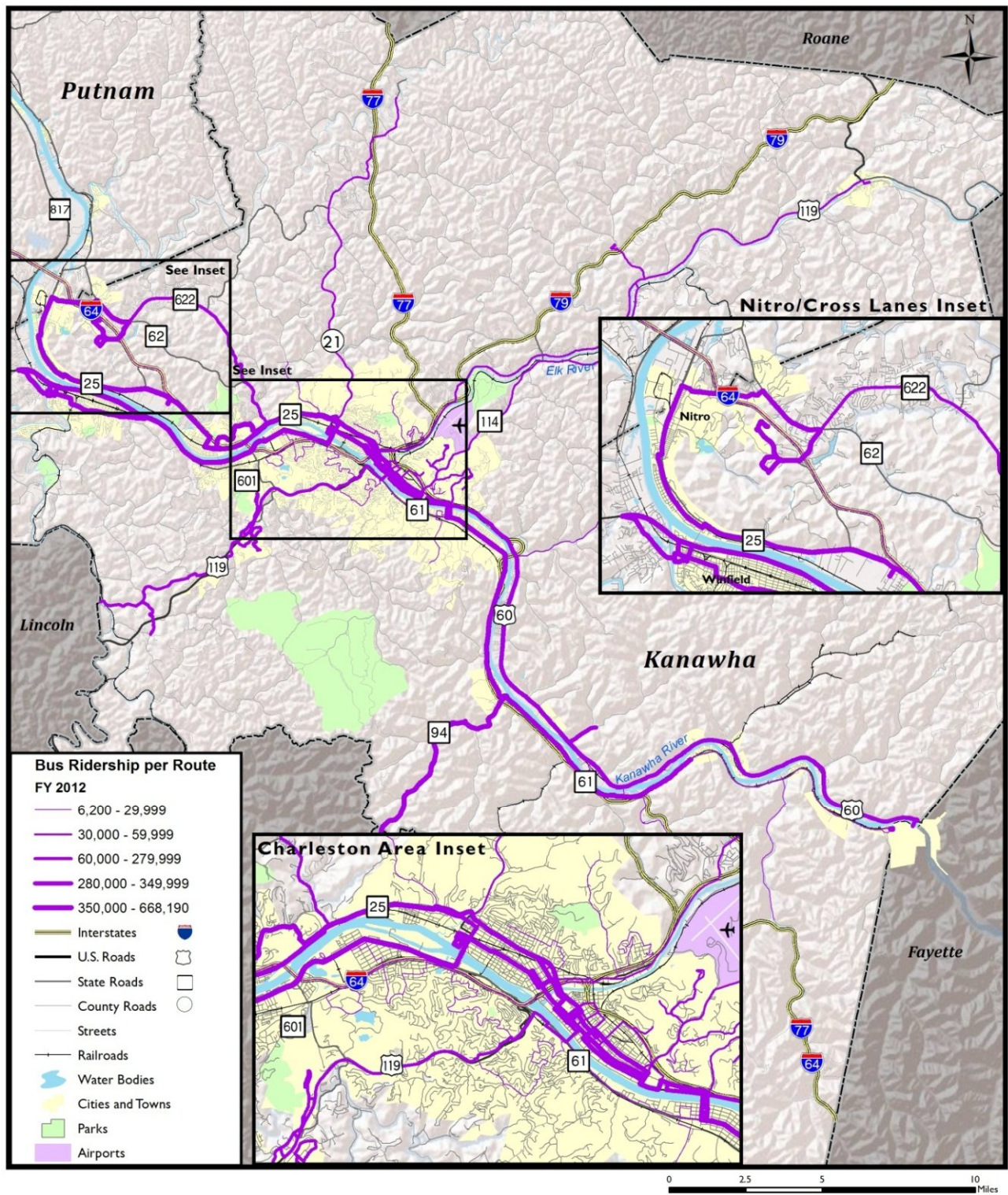
Recommendation

Encourage KVRTA to implement service changes and other strategies identified in its ongoing system analysis.

Other Services

Various other public, private-for-profit, and private-non-profit agencies operate vans, buses, and automobiles providing transportation in the county. These include taxis, senior services, and social service agencies providing transportation to their clients.

Greyhound provides intercity passenger bus service. The station is adjacent to I-64 on the West End of the Charleston CBD. It is also adjacent to the Charleston Civic Center.



Air Service

Kanawha County and the surrounding region are served by Yeager Airport, which is managed by the Central West Virginia Regional Airport Authority (CWVRAA). Yeager serves five commercial airlines (American, United, Delta, Spirit, and US Airways) and provides direct flights to Dallas, Houston, Chicago, Washington DC, Atlanta, Detroit, Fort Lauderdale, Myrtle Beach and Charlotte. In 2011, there were 282,704 passenger boardings (enplanements) at the airport, a 6.7% increase from 2010. According to airport officials, the new Boy Scout camp in Fayette County, could contribute to a 10 % annual increase in enplanements. Air cargo service is available through several parcel companies, but volumes are fairly low.

The Charleston area is somewhat unique in that its airport is located immediately adjacent to Charleston's Central Business District and the State Capitol Complex. By shortening trip lengths to and from the airport, traffic congestion, energy consumption, and economic losses are minimized. The convenient location is also an enticement for businesses to locate here.



The airport's main runway (runway 5) is 6,802 feet long by 150 feet wide. Recent improvements at the airport have included conversion of the secondary runway (runway 15) to taxiway C and installation of an Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS) at the end of runway 5 to prevent aircraft from going over the hillside. Other amenities at the airport include long-term and short-term parking garages, four car rental companies, restaurants, ATM and a gift shop.

The West Virginia Air National Guard (WVANG) is a major tenant of the airport, and operates on a 50 year lease. The lease provides that the WVANG provides aircraft

firefighting and rescue services for all aircraft operations at Yeager Airport at a level that meets current FAA standards, in exchange for the yearly rental requirement. It is estimated that the value of the services provided by the WVANG are in excess of \$1,500,000 annually.

With adequate planning, funding, and timely execution of improvements, central West Virginia can maintain the finest air center and related transportation complex in the State.

Plans and Recommendations

The Central West Virginia Regional Airport Authority, owner and operator of Yeager Airport, completed a Master Plan update that was accepted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on November 10, 2009. Airport Master Plans are funded by the FAA and completed in accordance with guidance issued by the FAA. A copy of the full document is available at Yeager Airport and with the Kanawha County Commission.

The Airport Master Plan looks at 5, 10, and 20 year planning horizons and identifies projects necessary to maintain the airport in compliance with all FAA regulations and to meet the projected demand for aircraft

usage. Airport Master Plans are typically updated after 10 years or more often if there are events that materially affect the aviation forecasts. Major project from the Master Plan are included here:

Recommendation

Support the completion of major recommendations from the most recent Yeager Airport Master Plan:

- Expand Taxiway Alpha to the approach end of Runway 5 for a distance of 600 ft.
- Expand the General Aviation aircraft ramp area and install infrastructure to support the construction of additional hangars and maintenance or cargo facilities.
- Purchase and remove structures from the Runway Protection Zone located near the intersection of Barlow and Keystone Drive.
- Continue rehabilitation and reconstruction of the pavement surfaces in accordance with the recently completed pavement management study.

The West Virginia Air National Guard has adopted a Base Master Development Plan that outlines the rehabilitation of two older maintenance hangars, and the expansion of the WVANG aircraft parking apron.

Recommendation

Support the completion of major recommendations from the WV Air National Guard (WVANG) Base Master Development Plan:

- Rehabilitate two older maintenance hangars
- Expand the WVANG aircraft parking apron.

An additional recommendation of this plan, also included in the highway section, is construction of the Coonskin Bridge over the Elk River, connecting Coonskin Park to US 119. This will provide an alternate access to Coonskin Park and allow for maintenance of a proper secure area surrounding the West Virginia Air National Guard base, which is critical to assuring the future of the base.

Recommendation

Assure completion by WVDOH of the Coonskin Bridge over the Elk River, connecting Coonskin Park to US 119 and closure of the current Coonskin Park access.

Rail Transportation

Kanawha County is served by two major railroads, CSXT and Norfolk and Southern (NS). CSXT is located on the southerly side of the Kanawha River and operates a primary route through the region, connecting Charleston to Cincinnati, OH and Richmond, VA. Meanwhile, NS, located on the north side of the Kanawha River, operates a secondary route that connects Charleston, WV to Columbus, OH.

Freight Rail

The two railroads ship a number of commodities to and from the region, with the major one by far being coal, although metallic and non-metallic ores, chemicals, metals and petroleum are also significant. There is also some “bridge” traffic that passes through the region. These railroads also capitalize on the region’s

intermodal facilities. CSXT serves the TRANSFLO facility in South Charleston, while NS serves the Allied Warehousing facility in Nitro.

In 2001, a study team explored the possibility of enabling double-stacking (containers stacked two high on railroad cars) along the secondary route as well as the primary NS route, which runs in the southern part of the state. After evaluation, the study concluded that double-stacking was not feasible along the secondary route due to several factors, including:

- A general lack of signals;
- A lack of passing sidings;
- Challenging grades that would significantly impact the horse power necessary to move intermodal trains at sufficient speed; and
- Track alignment obstacles.

Passenger Rail

Intercity passenger rail service is provided by Amtrak. The station is located along the Kanawha River on the opposite side of the river from the Charleston CBD. Currently, Charleston is on the Cardinal route, which provides direct service between Chicago and Washington, DC three days per week. Passenger volumes have steadily increased over the past few years, but passenger revenue still only covers about 28.0% of its cost.

Rail Deficiencies

An important concern for local planners and officials is the relationship between the rail network and the street and highway system. There are many at-grade railroad crossings in the area. This situation often results in traffic delays and safety concerns and may inhibit emergency response.

It is an objective of this Comprehensive Plan to minimize the number of at-grade crossings while maintaining traffic flow.

Recommendation

Minimize the number of at-grade railroad crossings. Promote the installation of additional or improved safety devices where warranted.

The scheduling of Amtrak only three days per week discourages travelers from using this economical and otherwise convenient form of transportation. Daily service would greatly enhance passenger rail opportunities in the county. It is anticipated that passenger volumes would increase substantially with daily Cardinal Service, particularly with the recently completed Summit Bechtel Reserve Boy Scout camp in Fayette County.

Recommendation

Pursue the expansion of Amtrak passenger service from the current 3-day per week schedule to daily service.

River Transportation and Port Facilities

The Kanawha River basin is the largest northerly flowing river system in the United States. The US Army Corps of Engineers maintains a navigation channel 200 feet wide and nine feet deep in the Kanawha

River, from the mouth at Point Pleasant to a point near Deepwater, West Virginia about 91 miles above the mouth. Three navigation locks and dams are located on the Kanawha River at Winfield, Marmet, and London.

The Gallipolis locks and dam, located on the Ohio River about 14 miles downstream from the mouth of the Kanawha River, provides the navigation pool on the lower 31 miles of the river. The Winfield navigation pool extends about 37 miles to include the Charleston industrial area.

Recent projects at Winfield and Marmet have replaced the increasing their capacity and all but eliminating delays, which hours.



antiquated locks, greatly sometimes reached several

Movement of freight on the Kanawha River is largely one-way, as goods such as coal, chemicals, sand, and gravel are shipped from Kanawha County or other West Virginia origins downstream to destinations primarily out of state.

There are multiple freight terminals located on the Kanawha River within Kanawha County. Many serve industry located adjacent to the river, but some are intermodal facilities, transferring coal and other products from trucks to barges.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian travel provide both mobility and health benefits. Regions around the U.S. are discovering that the health and quality of life benefits of these “active” transportation modes warrant greater consideration and investment, regardless of their direct impact to highway congestion. Traditional transportation planning in West Virginia focused largely on highways, with little emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian considerations. Over the past 20 years or so, this has changed, due in part to newly available funding sources, and also because of an increased awareness of the health and environmental benefits of walking and biking.

Current Initiatives

In 2013, the West Virginia legislature passed the Complete Streets Act, which urges the WVDOT to consider many alternative modes of transportation when constructing future roads. Also, a number of funding sources are available for bicycle and pedestrian improvements through the US Department of Transportation, including the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program and the Recreational Trails Program.

Recommendation

Take advantage of the Complete Streets Act to see that alternative modes are also accommodated when the State constructs new highway facilities. Encourage the use of available funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

A number of studies in recent years have identified potential bicycle and pedestrian projects. These include RIC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Kanawha and Putnam Counties, the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, the City of South Charleston's 2011 Master Plan for Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Corridors, the Statewide Bicycle Connectivity Plan and Imagine Charleston.

The City of Charleston received a Congressional earmark of \$1.7 million for the conversion of the abandoned CSX rail trestle over the Kanawha River near Florida Street. However, due to structural issues with the trestle, the City was compelled to put the trestle project on hold and redirect the Federal funds for a bicycle path project along Kanawha Boulevard from Magic Island to Patrick Street. The WVDOT has also initiated a project to provide wheelchair access to the former Dunbar Toll Bridge between Dunbar and South Charleston.

Recommendation

Support the development of projects such as the Kanawha Boulevard bike path and the Dunbar Toll Bridge accessibility project.

Summary of Recommendations

- Support the completion of key transportation projects by 2026
 - ❑ Widen WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to 5 lanes from US 60 (MacCorkle Avenue) to US 119 (Corridor G), correct offset intersection at Kanawha Turnpike and grade-separate CSX railroad crossing. Cost \$55 million.
 - ❑ Construct new bridge over Elk River, connecting US 119 to Coonskin Park, upgrade connecting roads. Cost \$9 million.
 - ❑ Construct RHL Boulevard connector from the Shops at Trace Fork to WV 601 (Jefferson Road). Cost \$10 million.
 - ❑ Add 3rd lane to US 119 (Corridor G) northbound from Cantley Drive to MacCorkle Avenue and improve operations. Cost \$5.6 million.
 - ❑ Add lanes to US 119 (Corridor G) from Lawndale Lane to MacCorkle Avenue and to the I-64 connector. Install Cantley flyover, build underpasses at Lucado Rd. and Oakwood Rd. and improve operations. Cost \$34.7 million.
 - ❑ Improve intersection of WV 622 and WV 62 in Cross Lanes, including signal improvements and turn lanes. Cost \$4.7 million.
 - ❑ Widen and upgrade the 3rd St. railroad underpass in St. Albans. Cost \$9.6 million.
 - ❑ Add southbound left turn lane on WV 62 (W. Washington St.) at Woodrum Lane. Cost \$0.6 million.
- Support the Completion of key transportation projects after 2026
 - ❑ Add third lane northbound on US 119 and improve operations from WV 601 (Jefferson Road) to Emerald Road. Cost \$24.6 million.
 - ❑ Widen US 60 to 4 lanes with median from Chelyan Bridge to Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road). Cost \$31.3 million.
 - ❑ Implement center turn lanes and right turn lanes at various locations on US 60 from Co. Rt. 81 (Kelly's Creek Road) to the Montgomery Bridge. Cost \$14.4 million.
 - ❑ Construct additional truck climbing lanes on WV 94. Cost \$4.7 million.
- Encourage the Deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies to gain greater efficiency from the existing transportation system.
- Encourage KVRTA to implement service changes and other strategies identified in its ongoing system analysis.
- Support the completion of major recommendations from the most recent Yeager Airport Master Plan:
 - ❑ Expand Taxiway Alpha to the approach end of Runway 5 for a distance of 600 ft.

- ❑ Expand the General Aviation aircraft ramp area and install infrastructure to support the construction of additional hangers and maintenance or cargo facilities.
 - ❑ Purchase and remove structures from the Runway Protection Zone located near the intersection of Barlow and Keystone Drive.
 - ❑ Continue rehabilitation and reconstruction of the pavement surfaces in accordance with the recently completed pavement management study.
 - Support the completion of major recommendations from the WV Air National Guard (WVANG) Base Master Development Plan:
 - ❑ Rehabilitate two older maintenance hangars.
 - ❑ Expand the WVANG aircraft parking apron.
 - Assure completion by WVDOH of the Coonskin Bridge over the Elk River, connecting Coonskin Park to US 119 and closure of the Coonskin Park access.
 - Minimize the number of at-grade railroad crossings. Promote the installation of additional or improved safety devices where warranted.
 - Pursue the expansion of Amtrak passenger service from the current 3-day per week schedule to daily service.
 - Take advantage of the Complete Streets Act to see that alternative modes are also accommodated when the State constructs new highway facilities. Encourage the use of available funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
 - Support the development of projects such as the Kanawha Boulevard bike path and the Dunbar Toll Bridge accessibility project.
-

Economic Development

Vision

A healthy and sustainable regional economy that grows sufficiently to create meaningful jobs, reduce poverty, and provide opportunity for a high quality of life for all Kanawha County citizens in an increasingly competitive global economy.

By 2030, the Kanawha Valley will have a diversified economy grounded in sustainable industries that provide jobs to a variety of skill levels driving opportunity and prosperity throughout the regional economy.

Mission

To advance and diversify the business prosperity and economic welfare of Kanawha County and the Metro Charleston area.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Work with Charleston Area Alliance and West Virginia Development Office and other business groups to develop and maintain strategies to create a resilient economy based upon the unique local strengths of our people and communities as sources of competitive advantage in a global economy.

OBJECTIVE: Work with the above agencies to identify suitable sites for future industrial and commercial activities.

GOAL 2: Work with Charleston Area Alliance and West Virginia Development Office and other business groups to nurture and strengthen the economic partnership among the private sector, employers, educators, lenders, and government.

OBJECTIVE: Expand and maintain open and effective lines of communication between multiple stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE: Work with Charleston Area Alliance to conduct and maintain an inventory and assessment of Kanawha County's economic, natural, and human resources to identify its unique comparative advantages and strategic niche in the regional and global economies.

STRATEGY: Support and expand the efforts of the Charleston Area Alliance and other local nonprofit economic development organizations.

GOAL 3: Encourage and promote an environment that promotes entrepreneurship, innovation, and small business growth to marshal resources within the community to fill local economic needs.

STRATEGY: Support the expansion and capacity of small business incubators (i.e., Charleston Area Alliance, Chemical Alliance Zone).

STRATEGY: Work with Charleston Area Alliance to encourage the creation of flexible business networks (FBN) to purchase supplies or equipment or employee

benefits to bring the price down; merge expertise to manufacture a product, or; offer services they all need, like employee training, marketing, or the use of expensive equipment.

GOAL 4: Promote and work to expand our high-quality, flexible, well-educated workforce, especially new jobs and job skills needed in the expanding Marcellus Shale natural gas arena.

OBJECTIVE: Work with Charleston Area Alliance, Kanawha Valley Community and Technical College and county career and technical training centers to promote and support labor force development.

STRATEGY: Work with Charleston Area Alliance and local colleges and adult education facilities to monitor and assess the capacity of local labor.

OBJECTIVE: Promote business opportunities and quality of life in Kanawha County.

STRATEGY: Work with Charleston Area Alliance and Chemical Alliance Zone to promote business incubators and the WV Regional Technology Park.

GOAL 5: Support economic development capacity and relationships at the neighborhood, community, and regional levels.

OBJECTIVE: Facilitate, organize, and assist groups that lack knowledge or resources to accomplish their economic missions.

STRATEGY: Continue to honor and celebrate local businesses at County Commission meetings with resolutions.

STRATEGY: Work with Charleston Area Alliance to nurture new and growing small business enterprises.

STRATEGY: Make the connection between where the jobs are and where people live.

GOAL 6: Work with Charleston Area Alliance to encourage development of businesses and industries at the forefront of economic environmental opportunities.

OBJECTIVE: Promote a positive business climate.

INDICATORS:

- Unemployment rate in Kanawha County
- Increase in Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI)
- Increase in per capita savings and investment rates
- Increased per capita production per hour worked
- Increases in number, wage level, and quality of jobs
- Decreased number of persons living below poverty level

Discussion of Economic Development Issues in Kanawha County

Recommendation

Maintaining and expanding Yeager Airport is a critical factor influencing economic development in Kanawha County. Every effort should be made to enhance Yeager Airport. Every effort should be made to strongly oppose any relocation of air traffic.

One of the most challenging aspects of economic development is developing sound policy direction for improving the economic well-being of people and businesses. Technological changes, occurring at ever-increasing rates and global markets are creating a new economy with new businesses, new occupations, and new competitive issues for commerce and industry.

The workplace is changing dramatically. Computer-based communications services, such as e-mail, e-commerce, dynamic streaming applications, video virtual meetings, and many more were not widely used even ten years ago, yet today they are considered essential.

While an ever-changing environment adds to the challenge of planning for economic development, it is also one of the most important reasons for doing so. Just as businesses must work smarter and continually seek innovative ways to remain competitive and thrive, so must the community that supports them.

A sound, comprehensive, strategic plan—which anticipates a changing economy—provides the blueprint for preemptive action.

The purpose of this subsection on economic development is to provide a solid foundation for a flexible, innovative, comprehensive economic development program, which is open to revision and responsive to changes as a global market evolves in ways we cannot anticipate today.

Incorporating the shared vision of stakeholders throughout the county, goals and objectives seek continuous improvement in the programs and services, many currently operational, which are designed to increase the competitive position of the county's people and businesses.

2014 Updated Vision seeks to improve the efficiency by which the programs and services are delivered, target the allocation of scarce resources, and eliminate duplications. The Comprehensive Plan is intentionally collaborative in nature, stressing the critical importance of multiple stakeholder involvement from project design through evaluation.

Economic Development Organizations

As a lead agency in Kanawha County, Charleston Area Alliance serves as a coordinating organization, helping various stakeholders within the county and region reach consensus on issues affecting economic development. It currently has a 20-year economic development plan in place, titled "Vision 2030", which in 2014 is in its third year of implementation. In addition, there are other entities throughout the county that interact with issues affecting economic development, and each—directly or indirectly—fills a unique niche and influences a different dimension of community life.

Recommendation

Maintain and support the efforts of the Charleston Area Alliance (CAA), Regional Development Authority (RDA), Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC), and Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation (UKVEDC).

Economic development alliances in Kanawha County may include, but are not limited to:

- Charleston Area Alliance
- Regional Development Authority of Charleston, Kanawha County Metropolitan Area
- Upper Kanawha Valley Enterprise Community
- Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation
- Municipal development organizations
- Cities and towns
- Charleston Urban Renewal Authority
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Municipal Convention, Visitors, and Tourism Organizations
- Economic development agencies of adjacent counties, such as the Putnam County Development Authority
- Regional economic development agencies, such as Advantage Valley
- Regional Intergovernmental Council
- Charleston Small Business Development Center
- Regional Contracting Assistance Center (RCAC)
- West Virginia Development Office

These organizations shall retain their individual identities, missions, and goals, but will work collaboratively on specific development and marketing projects. It must be remembered that successful communities are not fragmented, but instead articulate and work to accomplish a shared vision.

Economic Development Initiatives

Issues affecting economic development in Kanawha County are increasingly complex and interdependent. Nearly every sector of a community—its education system, transportation network, infrastructure, housing, health care, etc.—is affected by economic development. Conversely, the caliber of each of these components influences the success of an area’s economic development efforts.

Because the *2014 Updated Vision* addresses each of these elements separately, only those activities related directly to business support and development are presented here.

Business Retention and Expansion

Recommendation

Encourage Charleston Area Alliance to implement a Manager’s Council or councils, as appropriate, given the size of the county and diversity of businesses within, to bring together managers/owners to share mutual concerns and ideas, resolve problems of the businesses involved, and propose solutions to improve the general business climate of the region. Additionally, utilize the Charleston Area Alliance Board of Directors as a representative group, made up of both small and large businesses, to garner data and information to understand specific challenges and opportunities with which to partner to improve the general business climate.

Recommendation

Periodically assess existing business' level of satisfaction with the local business climate, and incorporate findings in strategies to recruit and sustain businesses in the county.

Such an assessment could be accomplished through a survey, with results communicated to local and state elected officials, agencies, and businesses (such as utilities) whose policies, programs, and services affect business development. Appropriate strategies could be enacted to capitalize on the County's assets, as well as remove identified constraints on business growth.

Recommendation

Because exports from Kanawha County businesses have a tremendous economic impact, bringing in new dollars into the community, and creating new jobs, continue to work with the Charleston Area Alliance, the WV Development Office, and the US Department of Commercial Service (Charleston office) to encourage and assist existing businesses to explore and capitalize on international growing markets.

Recommendation

Work with Charleston Area Alliance in their efforts to develop and implement a County marketing plan to recruit and sustain businesses.

This recommendation involves a target industry market plan, selecting targets based on the region's marketable attributes and which types of firms are best suited to the region's resources. This activity will include researching the region's marketable assets and exploring the feasibility of certain types of business operations within the county.

The business recruiting strategy is based on the premise of readiness—ready sites, ready work force, streamlined processes—and being prepared for development.

Further marketing strategies of Charleston Area Alliance would include:

- develop a well-integrated, informative, and attractive complement of marketing brochures and printed materials to use with business prospects;
- establish standard operating procedures for end-game marketing—responding to prospects, presenting the community, and closing the deals;
- maintain the relationship with the West Virginia Development Office to be aware of new state resources and funding opportunities, and seek selective joint venture marketing opportunities with the State industrial marketing team;
- continue working collaboratively with neighboring counties and development organizations seeking co-promotion and project referrals;
- promote the county's assets through a selective, focused strategy of advertising, networking, and personal selling.

Recommendation

Work with Charleston Area Alliance to identify and potentially develop suitable sites for future industrial and commercial activities. "Shovel-ready" sites remain a challenge for Kanawha County because of its topography.

Recommendation

Work with Charleston Area Alliance, the Chemical Alliance Zone, and the WV Regional Technology Park to expand the capacity of small business incubators.

Recommendation

Work with Charleston Area Alliance to encourage and continue in the creation of, where practical, possible flexible business networks (FBNs) to minimize common purchasing costs across participating businesses, merge expertise to manufacture products, and conduct other common activities (i.e., marketing, employee training, use of expensive equipment, etc.)

Expanding the capacity of small business incubators and creating flexible business networks recognizes the importance of assisting entrepreneurs through offering small business start-ups cost-effective shared services and easy access to the expertise of SCORE, the Regional Contracting Assistance Center, the WV Small Business Development Center, and other supportive programs.

Recommendation

Support the Governor's Workforce Investment Board to monitor and assess the capacity of local labor.

Recommendation

Support efforts to market the Marcellus Shale and a potential ethane cracker and other downstream developments to this area.

Recommendation

Market the benefits of Kanawha County and West Virginia to outside firms, including minimal traffic, low crime rate, fine education system, and good college and post-graduate opportunities, adequate housing for various incomes, etc.

Recommendation

Support and encourage the development of the West Virginia Regional Technology Park, where one facility's waste becomes another facility's feedstock, and where raw materials are recycled or disposed of safely and efficiently.

Summary of Recommendations

- Maintaining and expanding Yeager Airport is a critical factor influencing economic development in Kanawha County. Every effort should be made to strongly oppose any relocation of air traffic.
 - Maintain and support the efforts of the Charleston Area Alliance, Regional Development Authority (RDA), Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC), and Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation (UKVEDC).
 - Encourage Charleston Area Alliance to implement a Manager's Council or councils, as appropriate, given the size of the county and diversity of businesses within, to bring together managers/owners to share mutual concerns and ideas, resolve problems of the businesses involved, and propose solutions to improve the general business climate of the region. Additionally, utilize the Charleston Area Alliance Board of Directors as a representative group, made up of both small and large businesses, to garner data and information to understand specific challenges or opportunities with which to partner to improve the general business climate.
 - Periodically assess existing business' level of satisfaction with the local business climate, and incorporate findings in strategies to recruit and sustain businesses in the county.
 - Because exports from Kanawha County businesses have a tremendous economic impact, bringing in new dollars into the community, and creating new jobs, continue to work with the Charleston Area Alliance, the WV Development Office, and the US Department of Commercial Service (Charleston office) to encourage and assist existing businesses to explore and capitalize on international growing markets.
 - Work with Charleston Area Alliance in their efforts to develop and implement a county marketing plan to recruit and sustain businesses.
 - Work with Charleston Area Alliance to identify and potentially develop suitable sites for future industrial and commercial activities. "Shovel Ready" sites remain a challenge for Kanawha County with its topography.
 - Work with Charleston Area Alliance, the Chemical Alliance Zone, and the WV Regional Technology Park to expand the capacity of small business incubators.
 - Work with Charleston Area Alliance to encourage and continue in the creation of, where practical, flexible business networks (FBNs) to minimize common purchasing costs across participating businesses, merge expertise to manufacture products, and conduct other common activities (i.e., marketing, employee training, use of expensive equipment, etc.)
 - Support the Governor's Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County to monitor and assess the capacity of local labor.
 - Support efforts to market the Marcellus Shale and a potential ethane cracker and other downstream development to this area.
 - Market the benefits of Kanawha County and West Virginia to outside firms, including minimal traffic, low crime rate, fine education system and good college and post-graduate opportunities, adequate housing for various incomes, etc.
 - Support and encourage the development of the Tech Park, a technology park in which one facility's waste becomes another facility's feedstock, and all ensure that raw materials are recycled or disposed of efficiently and safely.
-

Education & Training

Vision

Knowledge availability for all; education and access to information will continue to be vital assets in Kanawha County, helping our students and workers compete internationally and to enjoy a higher quality of life.

Mission

To prepare our workforce for life in the next decades.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Parents and guardians will see that their children will arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

Recommendation

Encourage the school system to develop and implement initiatives geared to help children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

Recommendation

Encourage the School system to establish adolescent health services in schools which offer youth programs.

OBJECTIVE: Parents and guardians should take good care of children before they are born, at birth, and as they grow and develop.

STRATEGY: To assist parents in their role of raising a child, encourage schools, and government agencies to expand and sustain prenatal care programs to include childbirth education and parenting classes, in-home nursing care, postpartum visits, nutrition and life counseling and referrals for other community services.

STRATEGY: Encourage parents and families to prepare children for their education (i.e., reading, problem-solving and literacy skills).

KEY INDICATORS:

- Infant mortality and birth defect rates
- Percentage of fully immunized children
- Kindergarten readiness and achievement in grades 1-3
- Poverty rate for children

GOAL 2: Challenge the Kanawha County School system to deliver a quality education.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the Kanawha County Schools to work together with local colleges to improve the education delivery system which includes K-12, community technical college or university, along with labor union apprenticeship programs or post-graduate studies.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage Kanawha County Schools and local colleges to inform Kanawha County citizens about education and lifelong learning opportunities that will prepare them for meaningful work and a high quality of life.

Recommendation

Encourage the WV State Board of Education to define, monitor, and measure the effectiveness of the County's educational delivery system.

Recommendation

Encourage Kanawha County Schools to clearly articulate and maintain a high performance level expected of both educators and students.

Recommendation

Encourage the School Board by working closely with local business groups to make adjustments to the educational delivery system to accommodate the current and future needs of commerce, industry, government, and the community.

Recommendation

Continue support of the Clay Center. Continue to fund the Free Youth Admission Program which allows thousands of area school children to attend the clay center without the cost of admission.

Recommendation

Continue to provide support and funding for the Kanawha County Library System.

STRATEGY: Encourage Kanawha County Schools to partner and collaborate with community groups, businesses, industries, and other educational stakeholders to identify the essential skills and knowledge that all students should have at specified benchmark grades.

STRATEGY: Encourage changes in the formal education system to help all students, educators, and education administrators learn about the environment, the economy, and social equity as they relate to all social disciplines and their daily lives.

STRATEGY: Encourage professional development for teachers (pre-service and in-service), curriculum reform, school-based family service centers, and equitable funding of educational institutions in Kanawha County.

INDICATORS:

- Performance-based incentives and sanctions
- High school dropout rate
- Quality job placement
- Non-managerial workers engaged in continuous learning

GOAL 3: Encourage the Kanawha County School System to develop, use, and expand access to information technologies in all educational settings.

OBJECTIVE: Public and private sectors should support the development of and equitable access to enhanced multimedia telecommunications technologies (i.e., Satellite learning) and make full use of the Internet to improve capabilities that help promote community sustainability and eliminate duplication.

Recommendation

Encourage Kanawha County Schools to develop, use, and expand access to information technologies in all educational settings (i.e., satellite learning).

OBJECTIVE: Formal and informal educators should ensure that information technologies invites and involves diverse viewpoints, and that everyone - regardless of background and origin - has opportunities to participate in all aspects of the learning process.

INDICATORS:

- Number and use of multimedia telecommunications sites
- "Hits" and homepages at local Internet servers
- Local synthesis of new ideas from diverse points of view

GOAL 4: Encourage the Kanawha County School System to constructively expand the role of local educational facilities and programs in the daily lives of Kanawha County residents.

Recommendation

Encourage the Kanawha County School System to establish, where appropriate, a "Community Schools Program" to develop existing schools as community centers to host community events and programs during non-school hours.

OBJECTIVE: To increase citizen awareness and ability to engage in decisions affecting their lives.

STRATEGY: Encourage community-based citizen action groups throughout Kanawha County; and with School Board approval, use existing schools to host events and programs.

OBJECTIVE: Endorse and promote awareness of the economic, environmental, and social benefits of sustainable practices—such as more efficient resource use in government, the private sector, and the home—and encourage local governments, businesses, and community groups to engage people in making these improvements.

OBJECTIVE: Where no other suitable community center exists, encourage community groups to create a public place for local exchange of information and ideas, where they may possibly combine recreational activities and entertainment with formal and informal educational opportunities to create synergy and, therefore, greater public participation rates.

INDICATORS:

- Identifying local risks and priorities
- Developing innovative solutions
- Measuring progress toward local economic, environmental, and social goals

GOAL 5: Encourage the expansion and coordination of public and private training programs to enable all people to improve their skills to match future job requirements on a continuing basis.

OBJECTIVE: Businesses, unions, schools, students, and local governments within Kanawha County should be encouraged to develop and integrate training programs to ensure that all workers—especially those who need it most—have the necessary skills to take advantage of current and future employment opportunities.

STRATEGY: Training programs to be integrated and potentially expanded include school-to-work, tech-prep, apprenticeships, community service, summer youth employment, and job corps opportunities.

Discussion of Education & Training Issues in Kanawha County

Four colleges and universities have primary campuses located in Kanawha County, providing a full complement of high quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Additionally, West Virginia University, which is headquartered in the northern region of the state in Morgantown, conducts medical education from a satellite campus affiliated with Charleston Area Medical Center in Charleston.

1. The University of Charleston is a privately-supported, independent university offering both undergraduate and graduate degree programs.
2. Marshall University's Graduate College, located in South Charleston, caters to the working professional by offering opportunities to earn advanced degrees.
3. West Virginia State University, located at Institute, is a four-year liberal arts and science institution.
4. West Virginia Institute of Technology, located in Montgomery, is a four-year engineering and liberal arts institution.
5. Bridge Valley Community and Technical College, which offer 2-year Associate of Science degrees and many 1-year technical and vocational skills programs for skills which are highly valued in today's job market.

In addition to higher education, adult education is available in the County through the Governor's Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County, which provides job placement and training programs. The Charleston Job Corps Center provides similar programs for at-risk and urban youth.

Pre-employment, post-employment, and pre-trained personnel job training programs are available from a variety of public and private agencies in Kanawha County. Two vocational-technical schools and one adult career center are operated by Kanawha County Schools. Combined with programs through the WV Department of Vocational Education, the needs of business and industry are served.

The Kanawha County School System offers a superior public educational program with traditional curriculum and progressive instructional approaches. Our children consistently score above the state averages on total basic skills tests. Special programs for gifted and learning impaired students are also offered through the public school system, along with School-to-Work and other special programs.

In order to better prepare for their future, students choose from one of three learning pathways: College Prep, Tech Prep, or Occupational Prep. At the end of the eighth grade, Kanawha County students develop four-year study plans based on one of three career clusters: business, health and human services, or technology. Students then further refine their selected career cluster to determine their precise area of specialty. Their curriculum is selected to match their course of study: again, Tech Prep, College Prep, or Occupational Prep.

Public schools in Kanawha County are governed by a five-member board. School Board members are elected on a non-partisan ballot to represent geographic regions of the county. Each board member serves a (staggered) four-year term.

Catholic, Christian and other private elementary and secondary schools further enhance the public education system. Montessori and parochial schools have a reputation for educational excellence, which is supported by their students' performance records.

Recommendation

Encourage all local area Colleges and Universities, and the Community and Technical College to work with local businesses to develop, and update curriculum to reflect job skills and knowledge vital to today's business environment, and expand access to these classes to all educational settings (i.e., satellite learning, Internet).

Discussion of Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County

The purpose of the Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County (WIB-KC) is to consolidate, coordinate, and improve workforce investment programs pursuant to the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the federal regulations as issued by the U. S. Secretary of Labor for the implementation of the Act.

The vision is to be responsible for the developing of policy, goals, objectives and overall direction of the Kanawha County workforce investment area with respect to activities under Title I of the Act, to increase the business community's involvement in the workforce investment programs operated within the Kanawha County workforce investment area represented by the Local Elected Official Board (LEO's), and to address workforce investment needs our youth of Kanawha County, of adult and dislocated job seekers, workers and business within the Kanawha County Workforce Investment area represented by the LEO's. The vision of the Region III Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County is to build a better workforce to improve and support a viable and sustainable economy.

The Region III Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County will provide the means for citizens of Kanawha County to attain and sustain substantial employment opportunities while supporting local businesses, industry, and labor in attracting and retaining higher paying jobs. Our network of training opportunities are fluid to ensure the "demand" jobs are being identified and training updated to ensure "job readiness". Region III Workforce Investment Board of Kanawha County is also committed to providing guidance to better educate men and women about higher paying jobs and careers including jobs traditionally dominated by men.

Recommendation

Provide ongoing support of the Region III Workforce Investment Board in its goals to meet the ongoing demand for services and training for Kanawha County's youth, both in school and out of school, unemployed and underemployed (adult) workers, who qualify for WIA assistance, as well as dislocated workers and for providing guidance to better educate men and women about higher paying jobs and careers including jobs traditionally dominated by men.

Summary of Recommendations

- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to develop and implement initiatives geared to help children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to establish adolescent health services in schools which offer youth programs.
- Encourage the WV State Board of Education to define, monitor, and measure the effectiveness of the Kanawha County School System educational delivery system.
- Continue support for the Clay Center.
- Continue to provide support and funding for the Kanawha County Library System.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to clearly articulate the performance level expected of both educators and students.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to work with business and industry to make adjustments to the educational delivery system to accommodate the current and future needs of commerce, industry, government, and the community.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to develop, use, and expand access to information technologies and the Internet in all educational settings (i.e., satellite learning).
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System, along with responsible neighborhood groups, to establish, where appropriate, the "Community Schools Program" to develop existing schools as community centers to host community events and programs during non-school hours.
- Encourage all local area Colleges and Universities, and the Community and Technical College to work with local businesses to develop and update curriculum to reflect job skills and knowledge vital to today's business environment, and expand access to these classes to all educational settings (i.e., Satellite Learning, Internet).
- Provide ongoing support of the Region III Workforce Investment Board in its goals to meet the ongoing demand for services and training for Kanawha County's youth, both in school and out of school, unemployed and underemployed (adult) workers, who qualify for WIA assistance, as well as dislocated workers and for providing guidance to better educate men and women about higher paying jobs and careers including jobs traditionally dominated by men.

Farms & Agriculture

Vision

The remaining farms in Kanawha County will be maintained as much as possible; farmers will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to sustain this vital activity.

Mission

Work to encourage and preserve farms and agriculture.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

- GOAL 1: Work with the WV Department of Agriculture to encourage the continued use of large and small farm and agricultural tracts of land.
- GOAL 2: Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture and the WV Legislature to provide adequate tax incentives for preservation of farm and agricultural operations.
- GOAL 3: Work with the WV Department of Agriculture, the WV Department of Environmental Protection, and the WV Department of Natural Resources to protect existing farms from any adverse impacts caused by new, adjacent, or nearby land development (i.e., soil erosion and sedimentation).
- GOAL 4: Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture to preserve and expand existing agricultural services that enhance farm operations and increase profitability.
- GOAL 5: Collaborate with the WV State Department of Agriculture, WVU Extension, and local colleges to offer certification courses in farming and agriculture.

Discussion of Farm & Agriculture Issues in Kanawha County

Agricultural uses, including cropland and pasture, remain the second-largest category of development in Kanawha County. Approximately 10,000 acres (1.7%) remain as farm operations, but that number has been declining rapidly. New housing and commercial developments may further erode this category of developments as the demand for new residential and commercial development sites grows over time.

Summary of Recommendations

- Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture to maintain productive farms as agricultural tracts.
- Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture and the WV Legislature to provide adequate tax incentives for preservation of farm and agricultural operations.

- Work with the WV Department of Agriculture, the WV Department of Environmental Protection, and the WV Department of Natural Resources to protect existing farms from any adverse impacts caused by new, adjacent, or nearby land development (i.e., soil erosion and sedimentation).
- Encourage the WV Department of Agriculture to preserve and expand existing agricultural services that enhance farm operations and increase profitability.

Human and Family Services

Vision

All residents of Kanawha County are afforded social justice and have the opportunity to achieve economic, environmental, and personal well-being.

Mission

Protect, nurture, teach, and serve families, individuals, and children.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Work with WV Department of Health and Human Resources and other government agencies to develop, maintain and expand access to critical human and family services (i.e., education, health care, information, counseling and community services)

OBJECTIVE: Maintain and expand the centralized system of services information and referral.

GOAL 2: Increase opportunities for the elderly to remain independent through increased assisted-living service providers.

OBJECTIVE: Work with WV Bureau of Senior Services and the Kanawha Valley Senior Services agency to expand adult day care programs to satisfy demand.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage more assisted-living residential developments.

STRATEGY: Encourage alternatives which allow seniors to maintain independent living, move into assisted-living quarters, and reintroduce their conventional dwelling unit to the housing market.

GOAL 3: Work with various health groups and agencies to improve access to and availability of family planning and reproductive health services.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the rate of adolescent and unplanned pregnancies, and resulting long-term health issues, long-term welfare, and increased rate of juvenile delinquency. Ensure that all Kanawha County residents have the information and services they need to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.

OBJECTIVE: Strengthen efforts to enhance information, education, and outreach capabilities, particularly for men, underserved, and rural residents.

GOAL 4: Work with government agencies and local police and Sheriff's Office to help reduce rates of chemical abuse and dependency in the community.

OBJECTIVE: Reduce rates of illegal drugs, prescription drug abuse, meth labs, alcohol, and tobacco use by adolescents.

GOAL 5: Provide opportunities to participate in decision-making by different social and economic groups.

Discussion of Human & Family Service Issues in Kanawha County

A community can be measured by the health of its children and the ability of its families to successfully rear them. Generally, a family's ability to care for and educate its children is directly related to their personal sense of parental responsibility (or lack thereof) as well as external support systems and community networks that exist. Parents bear the primary responsibility for meeting their children's educational, emotional, and physical needs, and traditionally, families have relied on relatives, neighbors, and friends to assist them in times of need.

Many families are fortunate enough to have these informal systems to assist them, but too many do not have those networks. They must look to community resources for temporary help or for ongoing support and welfare. It is in Kanawha County's best interest to encourage parents to fulfill their vital roles in their childrearing, so children can grow up healthy and well prepared to assume their roles as responsible citizens.

Recommendation

Encourage the Kanawha County School System and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to support existing and establish new child and youth development programs in the public schools (i.e., after-school mentoring programs, adolescent health services, etc.)

This *2014 Updated Vision* affirms that individual and family services offered in Kanawha County should concentrate on helping people identify their needs and working with them to determine how best to use available resources to improve their lives.

By structuring human and family services according to these ideals, the county can achieve simple, but profound goals:

- Individuals and families will receive assistance tailored to their particular situations, with the goal being to encourage self-sustaining behavior.
- Agencies will be able to evaluate their effectiveness in improving the quality of lives, and
- Service organizations will increase their outreach and effect on the community.

Recommendation

Encourage and support the public and private expansion of adult daycare, assisted-living, and respite programs or programs that increase opportunities for seniors to remain independent.

Recommendation

Encourage the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to create family resource center(s) for coordinated delivery of primary health, human, and job services, and to provide services that increase opportunities for parents to reenter the labor force, located in areas where people most need them.

Kanawha County is interested in improving the quality of life for all citizens. Community organizations, schools, public and private agencies, and individuals needing services are collaborating to bring about programs and services that are coordinated and easily accessible. Together, they are shaping the principles to guide human and family services over the next 20 years.

Principles for Human and Family Services in Kanawha County
Services are provided in a collaborative environment that includes the service recipient.
Services are responsive to the people they serve.
Service delivery and administration are efficient.
Services lead to positive results for individuals and families.

Summary of Recommendations

- Encourage the Kanawha County School System and the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to support existing and establish new child and youth development programs in the public schools (i.e., after-school mentoring programs, adolescent health services, etc.)
- Encourage the WV Department of Health and Human Resources to create family resource center(s) for coordinated delivery of primary health, human, and job services, and to provide services that increase opportunities for parents to reenter the labor force, located in communities where people most need them.
- Encourage and support the public and private expansion of adult daycare, assisted-living, and respite programs or programs that increase opportunities for seniors to remain independent.

Natural Resources, Environment & Conservation

Vision

A community that protects, preserves, and effectively manages its natural environment, and conserves our most precious community resources.

Mission

To manage and balance the needs of environmental, economic, and ecological objectives.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Ensure that the WV Department of Environmental Protection works to protect and enhance natural and human ecological systems, especially the drinking water system.

OBJECTIVE: WV DEP should develop a definitive guide for best management practices and ecologically appropriate drinking water protection and chemical tank spill control and containment.

- Kanawha County Office of Emergency management will make the protection of the local water supply an absolute priority. Kanawha County Emergency officials will provide support to the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee, WV DEP, and the State office of Homeland Security in order to implement recently passed legislation aimed at protecting our water supply. See *Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act*, W.Va. Code §22-30-1.

Recommendation: Beginning independent mapping of all the potential water contamination sources in the Elk River and other watersheds feeding into the Kanawha Valley.

GOAL 2: Encourage the DEP and landowners to revitalize brownfields—which are contaminated, abandoned, or underutilized land—by making them more attractive for redevelopment.

OBJECTIVE: Eliminate barriers and create incentives for redevelopment of brownfield sites.

GOAL 3: Encourage business, industry, and citizens to generate less waste and pollution, and recycle as much as possible.

KEY INDICATORS:

- Decrease in waste and pollution
- Decline in energy demand per household
- Decline in energy demand per economic output
- Lowered energy costs for industrial and residential consumers

Discussion of Natural Resources, Environmental & Conservation Issues in Kanawha County

Flood Hazard Areas

In 1968, the US Congress passed the National Flood Insurance Act, which created the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Kanawha County participates in the NFIP, which is designed to reduce future flood losses through local floodplain management and to provide protection for property owners against potential losses through flood insurance.

As part of the agreement to make federally subsidized flood insurance available in Kanawha County, the Kanawha County Commission adopted Floodplain Management Regulations containing minimum requirements intended to reduce future flood losses of life and property. That ordinance forbids construction or earthwork within the floodway, and requires new buildings in the floodplain to be flood proofed and located above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

Kanawha County is also responsible for submitting data to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reflecting revised (i.e., actual) flood hazard information so that NFIP maps can be revised as appropriate. This allows risk premium rates and floodplain management regulations to be based on the most current data. The Planning and Development Office currently administers this program through the processing and issuance of building permits.

Flood hazard areas, either floodways or floodplains, constitute a significant portion of the developed area of Kanawha County. These areas are not suitable for human habitation, however, unless floodproofing measures have been taken. Many businesses and residents are located in harm's way, certain to have their lives or property threatened by a future flood event.

Recommendation:

Oppose the Biggert Waters Act, or any similar legislation, that seeks to impose burdensome and unrealistic flood insurance rate increases on Kanawha County residents.

Recommendation

Acceptance of the Community Rating System for lower flood insurance premiums.

Recommendation

Initiate a public awareness program—in conjunction with the administrative permit review and approval procedure—to clarify flood insurance available under the Flood Disaster Protection Act.

Recommendation

Use the Kanawha County Commission Web site to publish the library of publications on flood insurance, protecting buildings from flood damage, and local contacts for flood emergencies and recovery.

Recommendation

Support the WV DEP as they regulate timbering and mining operations and large scale developments and storm-water run-off as it pertains to streams, rivers, and waterways by requiring a stormwater management plan.

Recommendation

Mitigate flood zone properties for potential use in agriculture and/or community recreation.

Recommendation

Mitigate stream blockages in flood-prone areas.

Special Flood Hazard Areas

Existing flood hazard areas are found throughout Kanawha County. A flood-prone study was conducted in 2007 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Kanawha County Planning and Development Office. It includes the 12 following areas in Kanawha County:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Paint Creek | 6. Campbell's Creek | |
| 2. Smith Creek | 7. Coal River Area | 11. Elk River Area |
| 3. Martins Branch | 8. Blue Creek | |
| 4. Coopers Creek | 9. Big Sandy | 12. Two-Mile Creek |
| 5. Cabin Creek | 10. Little Sandy | |

These areas are unsuitable for development of any kind, especially construction of utilities or structures. Many businesses and families have been forced to relocate due to flooding.

A better public understanding of flood-prone areas helps to guide buyers, sellers, builders, property owners, and emergency service organizations. It also is important for that the Kanawha County Planning Commission have full information on flood activity when reviewing and approving new developments.

Recommendation

Update maps of flood-prone areas, flood hazards, and repetitive loss properties as part of implementing the countywide Geographic Information System (GIS).

Recommendation

Develop a comprehensive guide to best management practices and to promote ecologically-based development and stormwater run-off.

Brownfields

Brownfields are contaminated sites that previously hosted commercial and industrial development, but are now either abandoned, idle, or underutilized due to the tremendous expense of environmental cleanup and redevelopment.

Nevertheless, these sites may represent potential prospects for accommodating new investment and jobs in the near term.

Recommendation

Encourage grants for revitalization of brownfields sites as defined by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Summary of Recommendations

- Support developing regulations and rules regarding the regulation of above ground chemical storage tanks. Kanawha County Office of Emergency Management will develop an interactive database identifying potential water contamination locations in Kanawha County.
- Continue to follow the objectives and implementation of the plan for flood mitigation and control.
- Oppose Biggert Waters Act, or any similar legislation, that seeks to impose unrealistic flood insurance rate increases on residents and businesses. .
- Initiate a public awareness program—in conjunction with the administrative permit review and approval procedure—to clarify flood insurance available under the Flood Disaster Protection Act.
- Use the Kanawha County Commission's Web Site to publish the library of publications on flood insurance, protecting buildings from flood damage, and local contacts for flood emergencies and recovery.
- Support the WV DEP as they regulate the timbering and mining operations and new large-scale developments and storm water run-off as it pertains to streams, rivers, and waterways by requiring a stormwater management plan.
- Acceptance of Community Rating System for lower flood insurance premiums.
- Mitigate flood zone properties for potential use in agriculture and/or community recreation.
- Mitigate stream blockages in flood-prone areas.
- Update maps of flood-prone areas, flood hazards, and repetitive loss properties as part of implementing the county-wide Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Develop a comprehensive guide to best management practices and ecologically-based development and stormwater run-off.
- Encourage grants for revitalization of brownfields as defined by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Planning, Management & Governance

Vision

A proactive and continuous planning program; management which maximizes the public benefits derived from limited resources; governance which is responsive to the needs of Kanawha County and its people.

Mission

To promote informed and sound decision-making at the neighborhood, local, and regional levels.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

Planning, Management & Governance

GOAL 1: Assemble, and maintain information about Kanawha County Ordinances and Regulations, Planning Commission meetings, Building Commission meetings, Meeting minutes, Subdivision Applications, Cell Tower applications, Cell Tower applications, County Clean-ups and other Planning Office information.

Recommendation

Assemble, and maintain information about Kanawha County Ordinances and Regulations, Planning Commission meetings, Building Commission meetings, Meeting minutes, Building Permits, Subdivision Applications, Cell Tower applications, Video Lottery/ Adult Entertainment applications, County Clean-ups and other Planning Office information.

OBJECTIVE: Provide access to information and applications for Kanawha County residents concerning Planning Office matters.

Recommendation

Continue to develop and implement public information concerning Kanawha County on the Kanawha County website.

GOAL 2: Initiate an ongoing, strategic planning process that brings people together to identify key issues, develop a vision, set goals and benchmarks, and determine actions to improve their community.

OBJECTIVE: All levels of government and the private-sector citizens will build decision-making capacity at the local level.

OBJECTIVE: All levels of government should ensure substantial opportunity for public participation in all phases of planning and decision-making to allow those affected to have a voice in the outcome.

GOAL 3: Encourage and support community-based nonprofit corporations dedicated to community development and revitalization.

Recommendation

Plan, program, budget, and adequately staff new public-sector initiatives.

OBJECTIVE: Provide technical and staff support to unincorporated communities on special issues that require outside assistance, such as health or safety matters.

GOAL 4: Encourage communities within the region to work together to deal with issues that transcend jurisdictional and other boundaries.

OBJECTIVE: Cooperate with the State, other counties, and communities to improve the region's economy, environment, and quality of life.

STRATEGY: Collaborate on regional issues such as transportation, economic development, and safety and health issues, that affect Kanawha County.

GOAL 5: Where desired and reasonable, incrementally negotiate intergovernmental compacts on a municipal, countywide, or regional basis to reduce costs, enhance public services, or improve operating efficiency.

GOAL 6: Continue to receive feedback from our citizens on our County government to assure that it is sufficiently representative and responsive to the needs of Kanawha County and its people.

Creating More Livable Communities

GOAL 1: Restore and create attractive, functional, and self-sustaining built environments.

OBJECTIVE: Incorporate the principles of good subdivision design in the County Subdivision Regulations.

Leadership

GOAL 1: All Kanawha County units of government will be helpful, polite, and accountable.

GOAL 2: All local units of government will empower our people and institutions by encouraging participation.

Recommendation

Maintain and update the Comprehensive Development Plan as needed, and issue a complete update every 10 years.

OBJECTIVE: Delegate decisions and choices that affect individuals and communities to those directly affected.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage and support people and organizations that plan or co-invest in projects or programs that truly help them.

GOAL 3: Kanawha County will act regionally to create opportunities and leverage resources.

GOAL 4: Bold, visionary leaders will continue to guide Kanawha County.

GOAL 5: No racial, ethnic, or gender barriers will be tolerated.

Recommendation

Develop and implement strategies to recruit highly qualified persons to careers in local government.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage and support agencies that create new community service and leadership opportunities for the youth of Kanawha County.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage organizations that promote better relations between diverse groups.

Discussion of Planning, Management & Governance Issues in Kanawha County

Implementation of *2014 Updated Vision* will require continuous improvement in county planning, management, and governance. New technical tools, fiscal management, and general management tools are needed to implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Kanawha County Commission – Administration

The Kanawha County Commission manages County departments and day-to-day administrative matters through the County Manager, and the County Staff. The County Manager addresses numerous policy challenges and ever-broadening social responsibilities.

Accessible, responsive, effective, efficient, and financially sound local government—in all categories—is essential to the proper development of private business, for cultural growth, and for the general health and welfare of the citizenry.

Kanawha County has been a pioneer in improving local government in West Virginia. Many new initiatives developed by the Kanawha County Commission have been emulated elsewhere, to the benefit of many. *2014 Updated Vision* proposes to continue that tradition of innovation and improvement of county government operations.

Community Planning and Development

As per West Virginia Code, the Community Planning and Development (CP&D) office provides direct staff support to the Kanawha County Planning Commission, as well as managing numerous other County functions.

- Flood Plain Management, Subdivision, and Manufactured Home Park Regulations, among others are currently administered by the Planning and Development Office. These duties include assistance to permit applicants and developers, and presentation of staff reports to Planning Commissioners.
- Salvage Yard Permits and Liquor License Permit applications are among the state-issued permits reviewed by the Kanawha County Planning Commission and administratively handled by Planning Office staff.

- All new street addresses, street names, and changes in address are authorized through Metro 911 Mapping staff, which coordinates with E 9-1-1, the US Postal Service, and all public utilities.
- Several million dollars in Federal and State grants for community development, public water, and public wastewater projects are also developed and administered by the County Grant Coordinator office.
- The Planning Office staff administers an enforcement program targeting slum and blighted properties throughout the county, and manages a countywide solid waste cleanup program.
- In the event of natural disaster, all County staffs are on-call for emergency response and recovery duties, and also assist with Federal and State grant programs to assist victims of natural disaster.
- The Planning Office staff also supports the activities of the Regional Development Authority and Kanawha County Building Commission. Technical assistance and staff support is provided to the Kanawha County Commission, County Manager, and all other County agencies as requests are received and staff resources are available.

Regional Development Authority

The Regional Development Authority currently serves to plan, program, finance, and implement water service extension projects throughout Kanawha County.

Kanawha County Housing and Redevelopment Authority

The Housing Authority currently administers the HUD Section 8 rental assistance program—both certificates and vouchers—and manages the public housing units throughout Kanawha County.

Kanawha County Building Commission

Several projects have been sponsored by this public agency.

Summary of Recommendations

- Maintain and update the Comprehensive Development Plan as needed, and issue a complete update every 10 years.
- Assemble, and maintain information about Kanawha County Ordinances and Regulations, Planning Commission meetings, County Commission meetings, Building Commission meetings, RDA Meetings, Meeting minutes, Building Permits, Subdivision Applications, Cell Tower applications, Video Lottery/ Adult Entertainment Applications, County Clean-ups, and other Planning Office and County Commission information.
- Develop and implement public information concerning Kanawha County on the Kanawha County website.
- Plan, program, budget, and adequately staff new public-sector initiatives.
- Develop and implement strategies to recruit highly qualified persons to careers in local government.

Public Health, Fitness & Safety

Vision

A healthy community where physical fitness, public wellness, mental health, and public safety are protected, preserved, and enhanced; where medical care is accessible and equitable.

Mission

Create and sustain a collaborative effort between individuals, business, industry, government, and service providers to protect, preserve, and enhance the public's health and safety.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

Public Health & Physical Fitness

GOAL 1: The health care system will serve the public through delivery of high-quality and cost-effective environmental, preventive, emergency, acute, long-term and other specialized medical care services.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the elimination of duplication of efforts, but maintain adequate levels of accessibility and equitable delivery of health care services.

STRATEGY: Encourage adolescent health services in existing schools and community centers that offer youth programs.

STRATEGY: Implement smoking and tobacco cessation programs.

GOAL 2: Individuals, business, industry, institutions, organizations, service providers, and units of government will work together to improve public health, physical fitness, and safety.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage businesses and employers to promote and expand employee wellness programs.

GOAL 3: The general public will understand the relationship of lifestyle to health and will take responsibility for personal health, physical fitness, mental health and wellness.

OBJECTIVE: Utilize community health assessment tools and measures to help citizens realize their health status.

STRATEGY: Maintain and publish vital statistics on public health risks, especially those regarding heart disease, physical fitness, and use of tobacco.

OBJECTIVE: Increase incentives to promote preventive services, health screenings, and health education services.

GOAL 4: Encourage good coordination between local providers and users of public health, fitness, and safety programs.

OBJECTIVE: Identify, modify or eliminate barriers to coordination and cooperation among organizations.

GOAL 5: Promote and support physical activity, lifelong fitness, and recreational activities.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage and support physical education classes, after-school programs, and use of existing recreational facilities in public schools during non-school hours and vacations.

Public Safety & Emergency Services

GOAL 1: Continue to improve coordination and communication between units of local government, law enforcement agencies, and emergency services providers (i.e., emergency medical and fire protection services).

OBJECTIVE: Continue to improve all methods of communication between law enforcement, emergency medical, and fire protection and rescue services (i.e., E 911 radio, mobile data terminal, mapping, etc.).

OBJECTIVE: Where practical, improve local Insurance Service Office (ISO) fire classifications to a 5 or less to benefit citizens and businesses.

STRATEGY: Encourage county-wide Standard Operating Procedures, procurement, reporting, and training requirements.

OBJECTIVE: Review capacity of public safety infrastructure to accommodate existing and projected demand for services.

STRATEGY: Establish a Kanawha County Public Safety Review Board to benchmark, monitor, recommend and adopt performance standards for all public safety organizations (i.e., Metro E 911).

STRATEGY: Assist with the development of a county-wide recruitment campaign and training program for volunteer firefighters.

STRATEGY: Develop adequate water flow capacity to provide fire hydrants in all urbanized areas of the county.

GOAL 2: Create a safe environment for all those in Kanawha County to live, learn, work, and play.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage all law enforcement agencies to develop a county-wide strategy for reducing crime.

STRATEGY: Target chemical abuse, including alcohol, tobacco, prescription drug abuse, meth labs, illegal narcotics and controlled substances.

STRATEGY: Target juvenile crime, delinquency, and vandalism. Encourage parents and guardians to provide alternative activities and sites for juveniles.

STRATEGY: Encourage deployment of law enforcement officers into geographic areas where the incidence of crime is known to be higher.

OBJECTIVE: Coordinate the efforts of municipal and county law enforcement officials with those of the WV State Police.

STRATEGY: Improve lines of communication between State and local law enforcement officials, to include interconnected Communications Centers (i.e., Metro 911), and other technological advancements.

OBJECTIVE: Recruit, train, equip, and deploy volunteers to patrol the low-crime, unincorporated area neighborhoods of Kanawha County.

GOAL 3: Promote and sustain the highest standards for law enforcement, emergency medical, and fire protection programs, management, education, training and equipment.

STRATEGY: Improve the methods (i.e., equipment) and management of emergency communications as technology improves.

STRATEGY: Consider to improve the benefits package for emergency service personnel so as to recruit and retain qualified employees and volunteers.

GOAL 4: Continue to update the uniform, countywide system of street names and street addresses which support and enhance timely delivery of emergency services.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to apply the standards already adopted by the United States Postal Service and the National Emergency Number Association.

Discussion of Public Health, Fitness & Safety Issues in Kanawha County

The physical and mental well-being of Kanawha County citizens is a major goal of *2014 Updated Vision*. Without good health, individuals cannot fully attain their potentials for their own good or the benefit of the community.

Although county and local units of government have limited involvement in the delivery of health services, the problems of public health, fitness, and safety are interrelated and complex, and their solution is essential to the long-term success of Kanawha County.

Physical fitness is of special concern, since Kanawha County is an unfortunate leader in the state and the nation in both rates of obesity and sedentary lifestyle.

Public safety—including emergency medical, fire protection, disaster preparedness, law enforcement, and other services—are functions of county and municipal units of government. Many of these services are provided by volunteers in the community.

To a large extent, the achievement of public health, fitness, and safety goals are dependent on goals in other areas addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, including public facilities, recreation, economic development, and education. It is understood that individual fitness and safety requires personal responsibility and common sense, not government intervention.

Public Health and Wellness

The adequacy of public health and wellness programs can be measured only by end results: lowered death, accident, and disability rates; reduced incidence of disease; sedentary lifestyle; and improved level of health.

In comparison to the nation, Kanawha County has a much higher rate of death from heart disease, cancer, unintentional accidents, and motor vehicle accidents. County residents also have a much higher adult prevalence of cigarette smoking, hypertension, seatbelt nonuse, sedentary lifestyle, and obesity.

Kanawha County is served by numerous medical and health institutions of excellent caliber. Nevertheless, the delivery and/or effectiveness of critical health care services and wellness programs are often inadequate, unacceptable, or unknown.

These inadequacies stem from lack of funding, manpower, and professional motivation; the fixed location of health care facilities and the lack of adequate transportation to them, the scheduling of programs and clinics for staff convenience; and the traditional deterrents among patients (especially families with low incomes)—lack of motivation and ignorance of where and when to obtain health care.

Several statewide and local organizations, including the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department, West Virginia Hospital Association and Kanawha Coalition for Community Health Improvement, have collaborated on studying these issues in more detail. Their initiatives have the following key components:

- Research and development
- Public information and education
- Professional education
- Policy and environmental guidelines
- Coordination and leadership
- Surveillance and evaluation

The Kanawha County Commission may encourage such health advocacy organizations to work toward realizing this plan's public health goals.

Recommendation

Encourage local health advocacy groups, comprised of public and private health groups, local schools, and private practitioners, to maintain a statistical profile of public health and wellness indicators, recommend actions and programs to correct inadequacies in present services, and draft a plan for establishing satellite health care clinics and wellness programs in geographic areas of pressing need.

Physical Fitness

Regular physical activity for children, working adults, senior citizens, and other special populations is the most simple, cost-effective means of reducing the risk of developing or dying from some of the County's leading causes of death. Thousands of residents currently suffer from illness that can be prevented or improved through regular physical activity.

The vast majority of Kanawha County residents do not engage in the recommended amount of daily activity, and at least 25% are not active at all. While there are many potential partners in the promotion of physical fitness, county government can primarily encourage improvement through its employees. This Comprehensive Plan encourages the fitness of its citizens through personal responsibility.

Recommendation

Encourage development of workplace wellness programs in Kanawha County, with an emphasis on smoking and tobacco cessation.

Recommendation

Encourage local schools and community centers to offer adolescent health services and youth fitness programs.

Recommendation

Review vital statistics on public health risks, especially those regarding heart disease, physical fitness, and use of tobacco.

Recommendation

Encourage the Kanawha County School System to open public schools, where practical, for year-round community recreation.

Recommendation

Encourage enclosed malls and other indoor, protected locations to provide safe places for walking in any weather.

Recommendation

Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to establish programs to control communicable disease.

Hospitals, Clinics, and Mental Health Centers

Private hospitals, clinics, and mental health centers—and the services they provide—are an integral part of the community that must be augmented by public programs. Cooperation at the professional and governmental levels is essential.

Mental illness and emotional disturbances are factors in the increasing rate of crime, breakdown of families, juvenile delinquency, alcoholism, substance abuse, and many other social and economic problems. Hence, mental health assumes an importance equal with physical health in our society.

Emergency Ambulance and Medical Services

Ambulance service is provided by the Kanawha County Emergency Ambulance Authority (KCEAA), currently based in Charleston. The KCEAA board of directors and staff make constant improvements to their training, equipment, and service delivery systems.

Recommendation

Encourage local health agencies to establish location criteria for installation of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.

Recommendation

Continue to encourage RESA to provide adequate training to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.

Recommendation

As practical, encourage installation of an Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system as part of a new, state-of-the-art High Performance EMS system.

Recommendation

Continue to encourage health agencies to establish a countywide CPR system.

Recommendation

Encourage Kanawha County public facilities to become compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Enhanced 9-1-1 System Mapping and Addressing

To ensure the effective operation of Kanawha County's enhanced 9-1-1 System, and to establish an orderly system of mapping, street naming, and addressing, Kanawha County undertook a countywide addressing effort in conjunction with the West Virginia Statewide Addressing and Mapping Project. During this project, Kanawha County Metro 9-1-1 completed a thorough survey of addresses throughout the Kanawha County to ensure all addresses met applicable local, state, and federal standards and guidelines. Upon the completion of the project in December of 2010, all homes and business throughout Kanawha County were assigned a unique physical address.

The detailed mapping information produced during the countywide addressing project has since been put to use in a new, map-based Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system implemented in March 2013 by Kanawha County Metro 9-1-1. The mapping data has also been used effectively during activations of the county's Emergency Operations Center. Additionally, a system of highly-reflective street signs has been installed throughout the county, and is maintained by Kanawha County Metro 9-1-1. The signs greatly increase the ability of first responders and other emergency personnel to locate homes and business throughout the county, even in the most rural areas.

Recommendation

Continue with Metro 9-1-1 system operating at the "enhanced" level, including using and updating as needed the countywide mapping/addressing system.

Fire Protection and Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs)

Efficient fire protection in the unincorporated areas of Kanawha County requires adequate numbers of properly equipped fire trucks to be operated continuously and manned by qualified personnel to assure prompt and effective service.

There are currently 32 fire departments located throughout the County. They routinely respond to structure fires, brush/forest fires, motor vehicle accidents, water rescues, and requests for medical assistance. Increasingly, the VFDs also respond to natural disasters, domestic terrorism, and spills of hazardous materials.

A stated goal of *2014 Updated Vision* is to continue to earn an ISO classification of five or lower most of the county.

Recommendation

Continue to work with the fire service districts as determined by the WV State Fire Commission, where each VFD is assigned to first, second or third.

Recommendation

Develop and adopt countywide standard operating procedures, procurement, reporting, and training requirements.

Recommendation

Continue to use the RESA 3 County Training Center for burn building and drill tower.

Recommendation

Continue to use lines of communication between State and local emergency officials, using interconnected Comm Centers (i.e., Metro 9-1-1), and other technological advancements.

Recommendation

Continue to use OEM to monitor the performance of Volunteer Fire Departments (VFD's).

Recommendation

Support and encourage the Kanawha County Fireman's Mutual Aid Association as they develop and deploy a countywide recruitment campaign and training program for volunteer firefighters.

Recommendation

Develop fire safety education teams of volunteer firefighters to teach fire safety to the community they serve.

Recommendation

Develop a smoke alarm campaign to make sure every household in Kanawha County has at least one working smoke alarm.

Recommendation

Continue to require IRS 990 tax information for volunteer fire departments in order to receive County Commission funding.

Law Enforcement

Although Kanawha County residents often cited the low crime rate as one of the special strengths of their neighborhoods, they also ranked crime as the second most important problem to address (after air and water pollution). One proven method for reducing crime and juvenile delinquency is a program known as Community Policing.

A very limited Community Policing Program is currently in place, sponsored by the Kanawha County Sheriff's office. To satisfy the requests of residents, an expanded program may be necessary.

Recommendation

As practical, recruit, train, equip, and deploy volunteers to patrol the unincorporated neighborhoods of Kanawha County.

Recommendation

As practical, combine municipal and county law enforcement programs, as needed, in order to achieve greater effectiveness, consistency, and economy of scale.

Recommendation

Encourage neighborhood watch groups to enhance community safety.

Air and Water Pollution

Air and water pollution were cited by Kanawha County citizens as the most serious environmental health threats. The Elk and Kanawha river valleys form natural conduits for the collection of airborne and waterborne pollutants. Coincidentally, the vast majority of our resident population, businesses, and industries are located in these areas.

Other water issues are addressed elsewhere in this Comprehensive Plan (i.e., additional water and sewer service extensions, stormwater management; sediment and erosion control measures, but local government has little influence over other sources of pollution.

Noise pollution was also a problem cited by County residents during the comprehensive planning process, and could be addressed during any review of pollution problems in the County. Since noise pollution is primarily an urban problem. Further study and action by municipalities should be respected prior to any consideration by the Kanawha County Commission.

January 2014 Elk River Chemical Spill:

On Jan. 9, 2014, a large amount of Methylcyclohexane Methanol (MCHM) leaked from an aboveground storage tank into the Elk River. This chemical leak, which occurred upstream from West Virginia American Water intake, polluted the public water supply for as many as 300,000 people in a nine county area. As a result, an unprecedented "do not use" water order was issued and remained in place in some areas of the Kanawha Valley for over a week.

In March 2014, the West Virginia Legislature responded to this disaster by passing Senate Bill 373. This bill created the "**Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act**" (W.Va. Code §22-30-1 *et. seq.*) and the "**Public Water Supply Protection Act**" (W.Va. Code §22-31-1). This extensive legislation requires the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) to identify potential sources of public water contamination, places increased regulations on owners of above ground chemical storage tanks, and directs the West Virginia Bureau of Public Health to conduct a study of the potential long-term health effects of exposure to MCHM.

"Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act"

- Mandates that owners or operators of all new and existing above ground storage tanks with a capacity of 1,320 gallons or more, with certain exclusions, register with the WVDEP by Oct. 1, 2014. Registration requires owners or operators to provide extensive information regarding each tank (age, size, location, design) as well as the type of product stored.

- All new constructed above ground storage tanks are required to obtain a new tank permit from the WVDEP.
- All above ground storage tanks must: meet certain design and construction standards, implement systems for early detection of releases and to provide immediate reporting of releases, develop corrective action plans; close and remediate tank sites in accordance with standards to be developed by the WVDEP.
- All tanks must have an annual inspection by a licensed engineer who will prepare and submit a written report concerning the tank.
- Tank owners will be required to submit "Spill Prevention Response Plans" which among other things, addresses secondary containment facilities. Plans must be updated every three years.
- Tank owners and operators located within 25 miles of a public water system must annually provide notice to the public water system and the local municipality and county emergency management agencies. This notice must provide a detailed inventory of the type and quantity of product stored, applicable material data safety sheets, and the facilities Spill Prevention Response Plan.
- Establishes civil and criminal penalties of up to \$ 25,000 per day per violation.
- Requires the WVDEP to coordinate with state and local emergency response agencies to prepare emergency response plans to address facility emergency response and incident command
- Establishes the Protect Our Water Fund. The fund will provide monies to be used in responding to leaking tanks when no responsible person is identified and no federal funding is available for any such actions that may be needed to address such a release.

"Public Water Supply Protection Act"

- Requires WVDEP, in conjunction with the State Division on Homeland Security and Emergency Management and Bureau of Public Health, to identify all "potentially significant contaminant sources" located with the "zones of critical concern" for public water supplies.
- Owners or operators of contaminant sources identified by WVDEP within a zone of critical concern must, upon notice from WVDEP, register their location with WVDEP, provide detailed information about the potential contaminants, and may be subject to increased regulatory requirements under the authority of both the WVDEP and the Bureau for Public Health.
- Requires public water utilities to develop "source water protection plans" that address a host of issues, including a contingency plan in case of a contamination event, an assessment of the ability to switch to an alternate water source or isolate or divert contaminated waters, operational information about the treatment plant, storage capacity, and a communication plan.
- Establishes the Public Water System Supply Study Commission which is created for the purpose of studying and reporting to the legislature.
- This legislation also requires large water to implement a regular monitoring system to monitor for certain contaminants or demonstrate to the Public Service Commission why such monitoring is not feasible. W.Va. Code §24-2G-1. Public water utilities required to install monitor for contaminants.

Recommendation Kanawha County Office of Emergency management will make the protection of the local water supply an absolute priority. Kanawha County Emergency officials will provide support to the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee, WV DEP, and the State office of Homeland Security in order to implement recently passed legislation aimed at protecting our water supply. See *Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act*, W.Va. Code §22-30-1.

Summary of Recommendations

Public Health and Physical Fitness

- Encourage local health advocacy groups, comprised of public and private health groups, local schools, and private practitioners, to maintain a statistical profile of public health and wellness indicators, recommend actions and programs to correct inadequacies in present services, and draft a plan for establishing satellite health care clinics and wellness programs in geographic areas of pressing need.
- Encourage development of workplace wellness programs in Kanawha County.
- Encourage local schools and community centers to offer adolescent health services and youth fitness programs.
- Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to review and maintain vital statistics on public health risks, especially those regarding heart disease, meth labs, prescription drug abuse, physical fitness, and use of tobacco.
- Encourage the Kanawha County School System to open public schools, where practical, for year-round community recreation.
- Encourage enclosed malls and other indoor, protected locations to provide safe places for walking in any weather.
- Encourage the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department to establish programs to control communicable disease.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

- Kanawha County Office of Emergency management will make the protection of the local water supply an absolute priority. Kanawha County Emergency officials will provide support to the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee, WV DEP, and the State office of Homeland Security in order to implement recently passed legislation aimed at protecting our water supply. See *Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act*, W.Va. Code §22-30-1 et seq.
- Encourage installation of fire hydrants in areas underserved where water pressure is available.
- Continue to work with the fire service districts as determined by the WV State Fire Commission, where each VFD assigned to first, second, or third.
- Continue to use the 2 County Training Centers sponsored by RESA 3 with a burn building and drill tower.
- Support and assist the Kanawha County Fireman's Mutual Aid Association as they develop and deploy a countywide recruitment campaign and training program for volunteer firefighters.

- Continue to require IRS 990 tax information for volunteer fire departments in order to receive County Commission funding.
- Encourage KCEAA to establish location criteria for installation of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.
- Continue with the RESA 3 regional Emergency Service training programs to meet the needs of emergency service personnel and administrators.
- Encourage KCEAA to establish a county-wide CPR system that can be monitored and quantitatively measured.
- Take necessary steps to advance the Metro 911 system to the “enhanced” level, including completing the urgently needed countywide mapping/addressing project.
- Continue to use lines of communication between State and local emergency officials, using interconnected Comm Centers (i.e., Metro 911), and other technological advancements.
- Explore municipal and county program consolidation, in arenas where it would result in greater effectiveness, consistency, and economy of scale.
- Encourage Kanawha County public facilities to become compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Encourage neighborhood watch groups to enhance community safety.
- Encourage a county-wide fire safety education program to teach fire safety to the community.
- Encourage a Smoke Alarm program to make sure every household in Kanawha County has at least one working smoke alarm.
- Revise as needed the Kanawha County Wrecker Dispatch Policy (Towing Policy) to guarantee wrecker companies are dispatched in a safe and efficient manner.

Recreation, Entertainment & Tourism

Vision

Everyone in Kanawha County should be able to find active and passive recreation or leisure activities, either as a spectator or participant.

Mission

By encouraging and supporting recreation and leisure activities, our youth, children, and adults, are offered a wide array of leisure activities for adults, families, and seniors, and Kanawha County is blessed with a lively environment for enjoyment by residents and visitors alike that much larger cities do not have.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

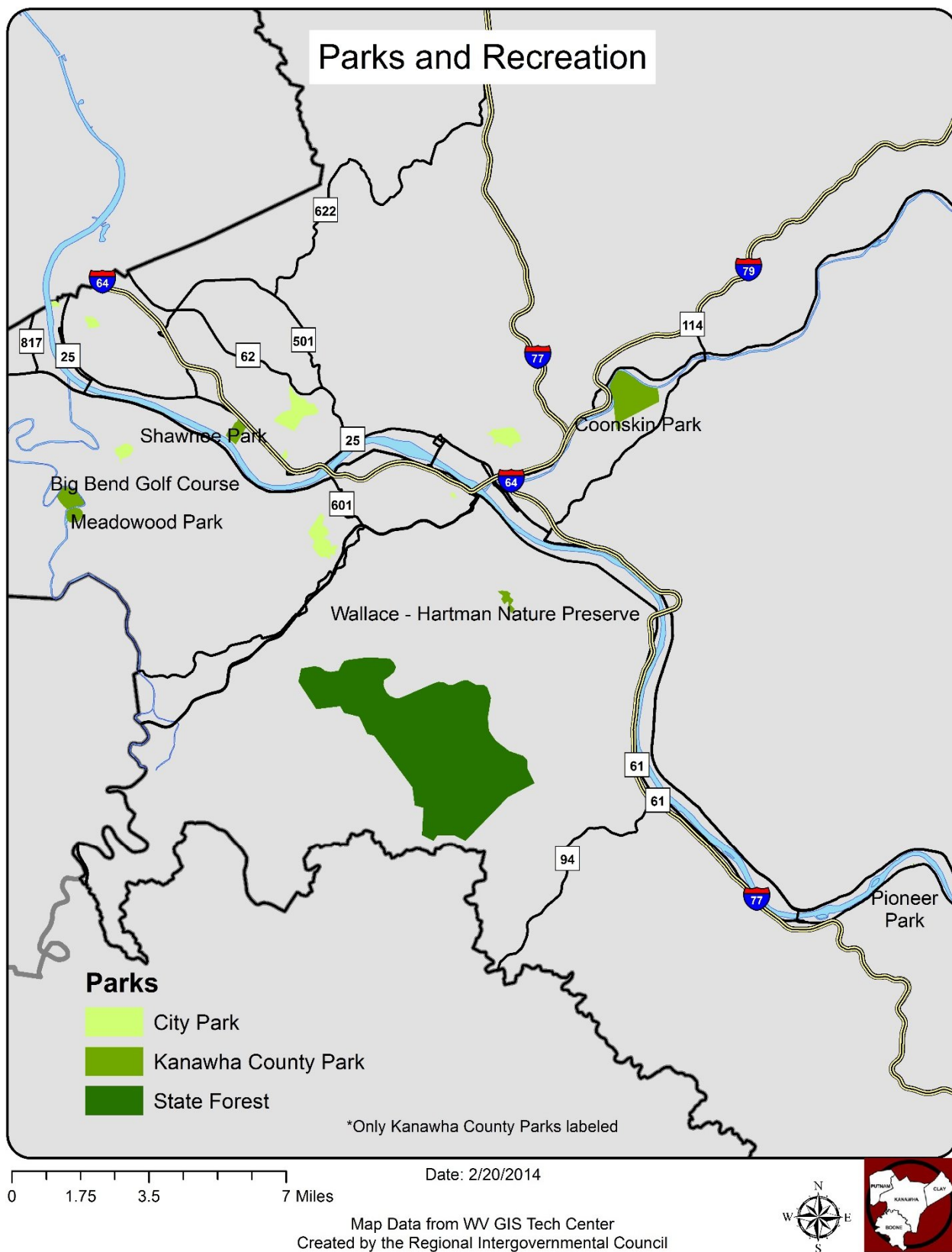
- GOAL 1: Support the numerous county and promote city parks in Kanawha County, including Coonskin, Shawnee, Little Creek, Cato, and Pioneer, as well as Kanawha State Forest and Camp Virgil Tate.
- GOAL 2: Capitalize upon our waterfront recreational opportunities.
- GOAL 3: Capitalize upon existing (local) recreational infrastructure.
- GOAL 4: Promote the multitude of exercise locations such as the YMCA Tennis Club, YWCA, Nautilus, South Charleston Recreation Center, various Charleston Recreation Centers, and other fitness centers located throughout the County.

Discussion of Recreation, Entertainment & Tourism Issues in Kanawha County

The Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission supports the following public recreational facilities: *(Figure 7)*

- Big Bend Regional Park (and golf course)
- Coonskin Park (and golf course)
- Pioneer Park (proposed for expansion along the riverfront)
- Shawnee Regional Park (and golf course) in partnership with WV State University and the City of Dunbar.

These county-owned facilities adequately serve Kanawha County, especially when combined with other city-run golf courses and tennis courts and recreational facilities.



Kanawha State Forest

In addition to county parks, state-owned and operated Kanawha State Forest partially serves the needs of the entire region, including eastern Kanawha County.

West Virginia Region III (Boone, Clay, Kanawha, and Putnam counties) is the only region in the state that is not served by a state park. Only Kanawha State Forest provides comparable opportunities for outdoor recreation. The public has difficulty using this facility, however, due to its remote location and serpentine access route.

Patrons must use the main access road, traveling through multiple residential neighborhood (County Route 42 via Loudendale), or approach using unpaved roads (County Route 44 via Hernshaw). Other, even less attractive alternative routes are available, but do not provide suitable approach for a regional recreational facility of this size, character, or capacity.

Recommendation

Encourage the State to promote Kanawha State Forest, including encouraging the State to build a new, improved access road to the forest.

A new approach to Kanawha State Forest would provide direct access to the Upper Kanawha Valley. In so doing, a greater number of potential users will be able to find the forest (a problem often cited by citizens), and the entrance will be much more conveniently located for the majority of County residents.

Summary of Recommendations

- Promote to all citizens the multitude of opportunities for recreation, leisure, exercise that exist in Kanawha County and are more plentiful than in many counties much larger than Kanawha County.
- Encourage the Kanawha County Board of Education, University of Charleston and West Virginia State University, Kanawha County Parks and Recreation, and local cities to establish countywide infrastructure of outdoor athletic fields designed to support community-based softball, baseball, soccer, football, and other sports organizations.
- Encourage the State to promote Kanawha State Forest, including encouraging the State to build a new, improved access road to the forest.

Section-Utilities & Infrastructure

Vision

A community served by all the essential utilities, public improvements, and public services necessary to sustain future growth and development.

Mission

To guide and foster sustainable community and economic growth by providing adequate utilities and infrastructure in a timely manner.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following goals and objectives are numbered for identification. The sequence below is not intended to set priority for implementing items.

GOAL 1: Provide safe, potable drinking water to existing and future development areas.

OBJECTIVE: Plan, program, budget, fund and construct expansion of the existing water treatment and distribution system.

STRATEGY: Pursue all sources of potential funding:

- Small Cities Block Grant
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- WV Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council
- WV Water Development Authority
- WV Division of Environmental Protection - Office of Abandoned Mine Lands and Reclamation
- US Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration
- US Department of Agriculture - Rural Utility Service
- Safe Drinking Water Act Revolving Loan Fund

GOAL 2: Protect water quality by expansion of the existing sanitary sewerage collection and treatment system.

OBJECTIVE: To eliminate all sources of contamination by untreated sewage.

STRATEGY: Pursue all sources of potential funding:

- Small Cities Block Grant
- Appalachian Regional Commission
- WV Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council
- WV Water Development Authority
- WV Division of Environmental Protection - Revolving Loan Fund Program
- US Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration
- US Department of Agriculture - Rural Utility Service

GOAL 3: Modernize and/or consolidate existing Public Service Districts (PSDs) to meet the demands of the 21st Century.

OBJECTIVE: Mobilize infrastructure planning, funding, implementation and operation by sub-regions of Kanawha County (rather than individual cities, towns, and PSDs).

KEY INDICATORS:

Number of Capital Improvement Projects completed

Value of Capital Improvement Projects completed

Discussion of Utility & Infrastructure Issues in Kanawha County

Public Water Supply

The public-private partnership between Kanawha County and West Virginia–American Water Company has proven to be very successful. Working together, these two entities have extended the most essential utility of potable water to many rural and urbanized communities throughout Kanawha County.

Several thousand residents have received public water service since the last update of the Comprehensive Plan. New records for annual service extensions and spending have repeatedly been set and broken. This partnership has been so very successful that no change is recommended.

It is anticipated that access to public water will achieve and maintain a service level of approximately 98% (of all households) during the period 2000–2020. In consideration of the rural lifestyle practiced by so many families in Kanawha County, this level of service is both suitable and acceptable.

Recommendation

Plan, program, budget, fund, and construct expansion of the existing water treatment and distribution system.

- Kanawha County Office of Emergency management will make the protection of the local water supply an absolute priority. Kanawha County Emergency officials will provide support to the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee, WV DEP, and the State office of Homeland Security in order to implement recently passed legislation aimed at protecting our water supply. See *Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act*, W.Va. Code §22-30-1.

Public Wastewater Collection and Treatment

The cities of Charleston, South Charleston, Dunbar, and St. Albans currently provide sanitary sewage collection and treatment services within their corporate limits. In isolated cases, collection services are extended beyond municipal boundaries. Public wastewater services throughout the remainder of the county are provided by Public Service Districts (PSDs). While the majority of all households are currently served, there is constant pressure to expand existing service areas.

Public Service Districts

Kanawha County is currently served by several Public Service Districts (PSDs) established pursuant to West Virginia State Code, 37 PSDs have been created to serve the immediate needs of Kanawha County.

As their service areas grow and customer bases expand, several PSDs are becoming contiguous with other service areas. Each PSD performs similar, if not identical, tasks. This constitutes duplication of services. In many cases, the level of service can be maintained or expanded by consolidation of adjacent PSDs.

Consolidation has proven to be a cost-effective solution for many PSDs, including those in financial crisis. By reducing the number of public service districts, significant savings can be realized. This cost reduction can be passed along to patrons or used to finance system expansion or other improvements.

Recommendation

Modernize and/or consolidate existing Public Service Districts (PSDs) to meet the demands of the 21st century.

For wastewater PSDs, three major methods of consolidation are proposed:

- by municipal sanitary boards,
- by existing adjacent PSDs, or
- by a proposed countywide PSD.

Phase I of the consolidation plan will result in a reduction in the number of PSDs from twenty-seven to seven. Phase II will further reduce that number to only one (1) countywide PSD. The *Greater Kanawha Valley PSD* will serve all unincorporated portions of Kanawha County not otherwise served by municipalities.

For water service (only), all remaining distribution systems are proposed for acquisition by West Virginia–American Water Company (WVAWC). Independent and municipal water systems will not be acquired by WVAWC until and unless all proper agreements and approvals are in place.

A schematic of the recommended (wastewater and water) PSD consolidation plan for Kanawha County (2000–2020) is summarized on the following page.

Kanawha County PSD Wastewater Consolidation Plan 2000–2020

#	Wastewater PSD	PHASE I (by 2010)	Phase II (by 2020)
1	Arborland	Greater St. Albans PSD	City of St. Albans
2	Fairview		
3	Marlaing		
4	Riverbend		
5	Mt. Tyler	City of Charleston	City of Charleston
6	Ruthdale		
7	Loudendale	City of Charleston	
8	Elk Two-Mile	City of Charleston	
9	Guthrie	City of Charleston	
10	West Dunbar	City of Dunbar (O&M Only)	City of Dunbar
11	Green Valley	City of South Charleston	City of South Charleston
12	Sissonville	(Proposed) Greater Kanawha Valley PSD	(Proposed) Greater Kanawha Valley PSD
13	Union		
14	Washington (Sanitation Only)		
15	Big Sandy	Elk Valley PSD	
16	Elk-Pinch		
17	Pinch		
18	Blue Creek (unserved)		
19	Chelyan	Kanawha PSD **	
20	Riverside		
21	Mammoth		
22	Cloverleaf	Malden PSD *	
23	Burning Springs		
24	Holly Lawn		
25	London	Kanawha PSD **	
26	Paint Creek	Kanawha PSD (O&M Only)	

Color Code: *White Background – Completed Prior to 2014 Update*

Red Background – Not Completed

Purple Background – Under Operation and Maintenance Agreement

**** Chelyan PSD and Upper Kanawha Valley PSD merged to form Kanawha PSD in 2010**

Kanawha County PSD Potable Water Consolidation Plan 2000-2020

#	WATER PSD	PHASE I (by 2010)	Phase II (by 2020)
1	Big Sandy	WV–American Water Co.	WV–American Water Co.
2	Blue Creek		
3	Chelyan		
4	Elk Two-Mile		
5	Guthrie		
6	Mammoth		
7	Pinch		
8	Riverside		
9	Sissonville		
10	Washington		
11	Paint Creek		

All the above listed projects were completed prior to this 2014 Update.

Kanawha County Potential Potable Water Extension Projects Through 2020

#	PROJECT NAME*	POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS	SERVED BY
1	Coalburg (\$)	15	Kanawha County RDA under an O&M Agreement with: WV-American Water Co.
2	Standard/Paint Creek/Collinsdale	45	
3	Pentacre (\$)	9	
4	Leatherwood-Reamer Hill	145	
5	Sanderson-Dutch Ridge Phase II	62	
6	Olcott	200	
7	Cicerone	86	

**** Project are not ranked or listed in any particular order***

(\$) Indicates a project had funding in place prior 2014 update

Summary of Recommendations

- Plan, program, budget, fund, and construct expansion of the existing water treatment and distribution system as is practical.
- Modernize and/or consolidate existing Public Service Districts (PSDs) to meet the demands of the 21st century as funds become available.

Funding Suggestions

Grants

In 2012, Kanawha County received \$2,832,695 in federal and state grant funding. This funding goes to a multitude of county programs including law enforcement, emergency services, drug court, drunk driving prevention, and maintaining courthouse facilities. For the fiscal year ending 2013, grant funding was reduced to \$1,066,719. Sequestration cuts, as well as other funding reductions at both the federal and state level, are the primary reason for this reduction.

Recommendation:

Kanawha County Planning and Development and Kanawha County Commission Grant Coordinator continue to seek all possible grant funding sources.

Video Lottery and Coal Severance Revenue

Lottery Revenues have been used by the County Commission to support numerous projects and initiatives. In particular, **Table Games** revenue goes into a separate line item that Commission uses for community projects that support education, emergency services, healthcare, and economic development. Below are list of some of these contributions from the last three plus years:

- Clay Center - \$100,000 annually since 2011 for the purpose of funding free youth admissions to the museum.
- Children's Theatre of Charleston – \$30,000 to construct a ramp making the facility handicap accessible
- Pinch Volunteer Fire - \$10,000 to modify their firehouse to accommodate a ladder truck
- Sissonville VFD - \$100,000 toward rebuilding the station after it was destroyed in 2012
- Kanawha County Ambulance - \$53,000 to equip ambulances with the Lucas Chest Compression System - a new technology designed to improve outcomes in an emergencies involving cardiac arrest patients
- Health Right of Kanawha County - a free clinic that provides medical and dental services to uninsured and underinsured, received \$20,000 in 2011
- In 2013, Kanawha Valley Fellowship home, which provides treatment for alcoholism and substance abuse, received \$35,000 in table games revenue for improvements to their facility.
- Two years ago in February 2012, Charleston Area Alliance received \$50,000 to further fund the development of a natural gas program for West Virginia.
- Other Organizations receiving Table Games revenue: Kanawha Charleston Humane Society, K9 search and rescue unit, Kanawha County Parks, local 4H program and Camp Virgil Tate, Multi-fest, West Virginia State University, Shawnee pool, playground equipment for the City of Dunbar, and local schools such as George Washington High, Nitro Elementary, South Charleston and others.

In addition, coal severance revenue has traditionally be used by the County Commission to fund projects in the coal producing areas of Kanawha County, specially the eastern portion of Kanawha County. Municipalities, service organizations, schools, and non-profit organizations have benefited from coal severance revenue.

Recommendation: Continue to allocate Lottery and Coal Severance revenue toward projects and organizations that meet the mission and goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

Building permit fees

The Kanawha County Planning Office collected \$166,557 in building permit fees for the fiscal year ending June of 2013. For the 2014 year, the Kanawha County Commission allocated an additional \$100,000.00 of general fund revenue towards the demolition of blighted and substandard structures.

Recommendation:

Continue to provide funding and support to the Kanawha County Planning and Development Office's Demolition Program which seeks to remove blighted, unsafe, and unsanitary structures.

Infrastructure

Plan, program, budget, fund and construct expansion of the existing water treatment and distribution system and public service districts.

Recommendation:

Pursue all sources of potential funding, including Small Cities Block Grant, Appalachian Regional Development Commission, WV Infrastructure Council, Abandoned Mine Land Funds, and other.

Action Plan

Strategies for Implementation:

Recommendation

At the direction of the Planning Commission and Planning Director, review and prioritize Comprehensive Plan recommendations and goals. Develop subcommittees comprised of county staff and necessary outside agencies to pursue recommendations. (*Timeframe: Complete by late 2014*).

Recommendation

Planning Staff will provide a written update to the Planning Commission annually regarding the progress in implementing the goals and recommendations of the Kanawha County Comprehensive Plan (*Timeframe: Continuous – staff to provide update at January or February Planning Commission meeting*)

Recommendation

County Engineer, with assistance of Planning Staff, to review all Planning Commission ordinances and provide written recommendations on improvements or necessary revisions. Emphasis should be placed on the Subdivision Regulations. (*Timeframe: Complete by December 2014*).

Recommendation

Economic Development: The County Commission maintains an excellent relationship with the Charleston Area Alliance. The Commission must continue this partnership in order to support and expand the pursuit of new economic development in our region. (*Timeframe: Continuous*)

Recommendation

Continue to provide the County Clean-up Program: The County Wide Clean-up Program, held at various locations in each Spring and Fall, has been an overwhelming success. From 2008 through 2013, 37,251 visitors have disposed of over 80,000 tires and almost 15 million pounds of debris. The County Clean-up program helps improve the appearance of our county, protects the local environment, and keeps junk tires and debris out of our streams and rivers. (*Timeframe: Continuous*)

Recommendation

Continue to seek out funding and support for water infrastructure projects. From 2000 through 2013, eleven water projects were completed extending service to an additional 1,093 households in Kanawha County. *(Timeframe: Continuous)*

Recommendation

Emergency Services: Continue active membership in the Kanawha Putnam Emergency Planning Committee. Work cohesively with communities, state agencies, local governments, and industry toward common emergency management goals. Provide support for the implementation **Aboveground Storage Tank Water Resources Protection Act**” (W.Va. Code §22-30-1 *et. seq.*) and the **“Public Water Supply Protection Act**” (W.Va. Code §22-31-1) passed by the legislature in March of 2014. *(Timeframe: Continuous)*

Recommendation

Comprehensive Plan update and review: Consider revising plan by 2020 in order to ensure goals and recommendations are kept current.

CURRENT KANAWHA COUNTY ORDINANCE AND REGULATION LIST:

- Pawn Broker and Scrap Dealers Reporting Requirements Ordinance
- Anti-tethering Ordinance
- Order Increasing Hotel/Motel Occupancy Tax
- Adult Only Establishment Ordinance
- Mobile Home Park Regulations
- ATV Regulations
- Public Nuisance and Property Maintenance Ordinance
- Salvage Yard Regulations
- Subdivision Regulations
- Wireless Communications Ordinance
- Video Lottery Ordinance
- Removal/Clearance of Debris & Refuse of Abandoned Dwellings
- Commercial Dog Breeder Regulations
- Kanawha County Wrecker and Towing Policy