



## Clarke County Planning Department

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**TO: Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Committee members**

**FROM: Brandon Stidham, Planning Director**

**RE: February 10, 2022**

**DATE: February 17, 2022 Meeting**

Enclosed you will find an agenda and materials for the Comprehensive Plan Committee meeting to be held on **Thursday, February 17 at 10:30AM** in the Government Center Main Meeting Room.

Two new items are enclosed for review and comment at the meeting:

- **Foreword and Introduction sections (Initial Draft).** Staff has updated both of these sections to reference the revised Plan document and to improve upon the current language. You will note that the revised descriptions of the component plans are included that were previously provided to you in our initial discussion of edits to Chapter III. Staff has also included the narrative version of the former “Citizen Participation in the Planning Process” objective that was relocated from Chapter II. The Introduction section concludes with new language to describe the scope of the current Plan revision. Please feel free to provide comments and “wordsmithing” for these two sections at the meeting.
- **Public Services and Infrastructure section (Rough Draft).** This is a new section that Staff proposes for inclusion at the end of revised Chapter I. The purpose is to provide a brief inventory of the public services and infrastructure provided by the County’s local government entities. This rough draft has not been vetted by the applicable departments but most information was taken from public information that is currently provided by those departments. Staff is looking for initial comments and suggestions on the draft.

At the end of the meeting, we plan to distribute a revised draft of Chapter I for review that addresses comments received from the Committee at the January 25 meeting and includes sections that were incomplete in the previous draft. Discussion of the draft will take place at the Committee’s next meeting in March, which will also need to be scheduled at the end of the meeting. Some potential meeting dates are listed below:

- Tuesday, March 8 at 10:00AM or 2:00PM

- Wednesday, March 9 at 10:00AM
- Thursday, March 10 at 10:00AM or 2:00PM

Please let me know if you have questions or will not be able to attend the meeting.



# Clarke County Planning Commission

AGENDA – Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2022 (10:30AM)

Berryville/Clarke County Government Center – Main Meeting Room

1. **Approval of Agenda**
2. **Approval of Minutes – January 25, 2022 Meeting**
3. **Comprehensive Plan Update**
  - A. Discussion, Foreword and Introduction (Initial Draft)
  - B. Discussion, Public Facilities and Infrastructure section (Rough Draft)
  - C. Distribution of Chapter I Revised Draft (for review at next meeting)
4. **Scheduling of Next Meeting**
5. **Adjourn**



# Clarke County Planning Commission

**DRAFT MINUTES** – Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 – 2:00PM

Berryville/Clarke County Government Center – Main Meeting Room

<b>ATTENDANCE:</b>			
Matthew Bass (Board of Supervisors)	✓	Bob Glover (Millwood)	X
Anne Caldwell (Millwood)	✓	Randy Buckley (White Post)	✓
George L. Ohrstrom, II (Ex Officio)	✓E		

E – Denotes Electronic Participation

NOTE – Chair Ohrstrom served as a voting alternate member for this meeting and participated electronically due to health issues related to the current pandemic.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Brandon Stidham (Director of Planning), Jeremy Camp (Senior Planner/Zoning Administrator)

**CALL TO ORDER:** By Mr. Stidham at 2:05PM.

## 1. Approval of Agenda

Members voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented by Staff.

<b>Motion to approve the agenda as presented:</b>			
Bass	AYE	Glover	Absent
Caldwell	AYE	Buckley	AYE (seconded)
Ohrstrom (alternate)	AYE (moved)		

## 2. Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2022 Meeting

Commissioner Caldwell identified one correction on Page 3 of 46, last paragraph, third line, the words “shall” and “should” need to be reversed. Mr. Stidham noted this correction.

Members voted unanimously to approve the January 10, 2022 meeting minutes as amended.

<b>Motion to approve January 10, 2022 meeting minutes as amended:</b>			
Bass	AYE (moved)	Glover	Absent
Caldwell	AYE	Buckley	AYE (seconded)
Ohrstrom (alternate)	AYE		

## 3. Comprehensive Plan Update – Overview of Revised Chapter I (General Information)

Mr. Stidham stated that an initial draft of Chapter I is provided for review, noting that it is missing a new section on County infrastructure and facilities that is still under development. He said that he hopes to have this section available for the next meeting. Commissioner Caldwell

said that Chapter I is an amazing snapshot of the County and a section on infrastructure and facilities is the missing piece. Chair Ohrstrom congratulated Mr. Camp for doing a nice job on the Chapter I draft.

Mr. Camp gave a Powerpoint presentation on the changes to Chapter I. Chair Ohrstrom asked if all comments and corrections should be offered after Mr. Camp's presentation and Mr. Stidham replied yes. Mr. Camp said that he did not want to discourage any members who have comments, noting that he wanted to focus on a big picture analysis since Staff is continuing to work on some of the data. He added that a lot of the data from the 2020 Census has not been released so Staff is using other resources such as the American Community Survey. He also distributed a handout that outlines the changes made to date.

Regarding Map 2 (Major Features), Chair Ohrstrom asked whether the large gray area at the bottom of the map extending into Fauquier County is Sky Meadows and Mr. Camp replied yes. Chair Ohrstrom suggested modifying the map legend for that color to say "Appalachian Trail Corridor and State parks."

Regarding Map 3, Chair Ohrstrom suggested that Mr. Camp consult Commissioner Lee about the groundwater hydrology information to be depicted.

Regarding Table 2B (Conservation Easement Purchase Summary), Chair Ohrstrom asked why the Conservation Easement Purchase Summary has not been updated. Mr. Camp said that Staff is still working on the data and Mr. Stidham added that recently-retired Alison Teetor assembled this information in the past. Chair Ohrstrom suggested checking the most recent Easement Authority review report for this information.

Regarding population and growth rates in Tables 5 and 6, Chair Ohrstrom asked if it would be accurate to say that the growth rate from 2000-2020 can be determined by adding the growth rates from 2000-2010 and 2010-2020 together. Commissioner Caldwell said that you have to do the math differently by subtracting the 2000 population from the 2020 population, then dividing that number by the 2000 population to come up with the 20-year growth rate. Mr. Stidham said that this comes out to be 16.8%. Chair Ohrstrom said that this is not far off from the Weldon-Cooper Center's projected growth rate of 20%. Commissioner Bass noted that the 2025 growth rate projection is likely low given the number of new homes recently built and to be built in Berryville.

Regarding Table 8A (Commuting Patterns), Commissioner Caldwell asked if working from home has gone up. Mr. Camp replied that it has and that he expects it will continue to increase.

Regarding Table 8B (Top 10 Places Residents Are Commuting To and From), Chair Ohrstrom asked whether the table listing the places non-residents are commuting from means people commuting to Berryville. Mr. Camp replied that the data is reported by the Virginia Employment Commission but does not say where the non-residents are commuting to in the County. He also noted the spike in unemployment due to the pandemic and referenced the new language included to address this issue.

Regarding Table 13 (Age Distribution of Population in Clarke County), Mr. Stidham noted that the age percentages when added up exceed 100%. Mr. Camp noted that this is likely because the data is from a survey. He also stated that the American Community Survey has a high margin of error which is a drawback to using the data.

Regarding Table 17 (Current Land Use), Mr. Stidham noted that the land use types were established by prior staff who attempted to coordinate terms used by planning and by the Commissioner of the Revenue. He added that the average reader could be confused by usage of the terms “urban residential,” “suburban residential,” and “rural residential” in relation to how we address residential uses in planning and zoning. Mr. Camp added that it is not a true land use breakdown but it is a calculation tool that can be managed. Chair Ohrstrom asked that Table 17 not be split between two pages when the final document is formatted.

Regarding Table 18 (County Zoning Districts; Land Uses in Berryville and Boyce), Commissioner Bass suggested adding the title “County Zoning Districts” to the empty cell in the top left corner. Mr. Stidham replied that the first five categories are zoning districts and the “Light Industrial” category can be deleted because it is a County zoning district that was removed long ago. He added that while Boyce only has one residential and one commercial zoning district, Berryville has multiple residential and commercial zoning districts. He suggested the solution of splitting the table into two separate tables and members agreed.

Mr. Camp concluded his presentation and encouraged members to ask questions and provide comments.

Regarding Map 1, Commissioner Caldwell noted that some of the state roads shown on the map do not continue to the next locality. She also noted that other important roads are not shown such as the U.S. 17 corridor. Mr. Camp asked if Staff should show all primary highways and Commissioner Caldwell replied yes. Commissioner Caldwell asked if color could be used to differentiate the road types. Mr. Stidham asked if the vicinity perspective should be zoomed in and Commissioner Caldwell replied no.

Regarding Map 2, Commissioner Caldwell noted that the State Arboretum is listed in the legend but not shown on the map. She asked to have the Opequon Creek included and noted that all of the villages should be shown in addition to White Post. She said that Double Tollgate and Waterloo should be shown as business intersections. She suggested adding the electric power substations to go with the major transmission lines. She also suggested using color to distinguish road types as she suggested for Map 1. Mr. Stidham noted that the railroads layer is not showing up on the map. Chair Ohrstrom said that the map might be missing a transmission line in the northern part of the County. Mr. Stidham thought that it might be a gas line only. Chair Ohrstrom cautioned that using color may significantly increase printing costs. Commissioner Caldwell said that line width could be used to contrast road types instead of color. She also suggested printing copies double-sided to save paper and grouping maps in sections with the narrative to which they apply. Mr. Camp said that Staff will optimize spacing and layout when all new and revised information is included and the final draft is compiled. Vice-Chair Buckley asked Mr. Stidham to elaborate on his earlier comment about a gas line in the northern part of the County. Mr. Stidham said that he thought the transmission line in the northern part of the

County that extends to the southwestern part of the County is a gas line only. Vice-Chair Buckley asked if we want to include gas transmission lines on the map. Mr. Stidham questioned whether he could get mapping for that. Mr. Camp suggested moving this information to the section on public infrastructure. Vice-Chair Buckley noted that the gas line is currently being upgraded from a 10-inch to a 24-inch pipeline and would be significant. Mr. Stidham noted that it may not be possible to get mapping as gas companies may not want the location of their pipelines shown for security reasons.

Regarding Map 4 (Groundwater Recharge Area), Commissioner Caldwell asked why a limestone ridge be a recharge area for the County's karst areas. She added that she did not see an explanation for this in the Plan and thought it would be important to add. Chair Ohrstrom said that it is counterintuitive and you would think that a limestone ridge would make the water go away faster. Commissioner Caldwell reiterated that it would be nice to include some narrative on how the groundwater recharge area works.

Regarding Section 3 (Relief), Commissioner Caldwell said that the section sentence should be rewritten with more explanation because the statement that "softer sedimentary rocks have eroded considerably" comes across as jarring. She added that the "Eastern and Central lowland areas" should just be referred to as the Valley.

Regarding the History and Historic Resources Section, Commissioner Caldwell said that she found a lot of the text confusing to read. She cited the third paragraph in that section on Page 17 of 46 as an example. Commissioner Bass asked about the source material for this section and Mr. Camp replied that it is existing text from the current Comprehensive Plan. Chair Ohrstrom suggested simplifying the language, such as replacing reference to the County being "part of a 50,212 acre grant" by saying "less than half of the County." Commissioner Caldwell said that this could be written much more clearly so you can actually follow the story. Mr. Camp said that this could be the result of trying to condense 100 years of history into a single paragraph. Mr. Stidham noted that this language also appears in the Historic Resources Plan. Chair Ohrstrom suggested removing "By tradition" in the last sentence of that paragraph regarding the sign post in White Post as it is awkward, possibly replacing with "according to lore" or some similar wording. Vice-Chair Buckley noted that the statement is factual. Commissioner Caldwell advised that the paragraph should be written for an audience that knows nothing about Clarke County. She also noted that in the second paragraph on Page 18 of 46, the Lower Shenandoah Valley should be referred to as the Northern Shenandoah Valley. Mr. Stidham suggested that since most of this text appears verbatim in the Historic Resources Plan that Staff could do a scrub or pare it back into a more concise summary. Chair Ohrstrom thought a thorough scrub to simplify the wording would be better than paring back the information. Commissioner Caldwell also noted that this paragraph would be better divided into two paragraphs – one discussing settlement in the County and the other about the formation of the County from other counties.

On Page 21 of 46, next to last sentence in the second paragraph, Chair Ohrstrom said that "hand in hand" sounds awkward. On Page 23 of 46, end of second paragraph, he suggested clarifying that the goal of an easement is to reduce the number of dwelling units but not necessarily down to one. In the last sentence of the last paragraph, he said "any" should be removed between "forego" and "development." Commissioner Caldwell noted in the top paragraph that language

should be added to explain the FOC regulations are designed to protect the most difficult terrain from development.

Commissioner Bass left the meeting at 3:15 and quorum was lost.

Mr. Stidham said that he will coordinate scheduling of the next meeting and offered some potential dates. He also noted that the Commission will be receiving the final drafts of Chapters II and III for discussion at the February 1 Work Session.

**ADJOURN:** Meeting was adjourned by consensus at 3:20PM.

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Brandon Stidham, Clerk



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FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW 2-17-2022

*“A plan serves a public body much as a promise serves an individual.  
If we make a promise, others expect that we will honor it with our actions.”<sup>1</sup>*

FOREWORD

The Comprehensive Plan maps the future of land use in Clarke County. This long-range Plan captures the County’s vision, projects the necessary resources to make this vision happen, and ~~develops the planning tools (guidelines and strategies)~~ *provides strategies and recommendations* to make the vision a successful reality. Such long-range planning, as set out in the Comprehensive Plan, anticipates future impacts of land use choices, and guides all present and future decisions regarding land use.

The purpose of this plan is to guide land-use decisions, both public and private, as they relate to the specific goals of the County. The Plan is for the citizens of the County and, for this reason, considers many diverse interests. It cannot satisfy every citizen's particular interest but does provide a mechanism for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all County citizens. Most importantly, it provides an outline for future decisions on land use, natural resource protection, capital improvements, and economic growth while attempting to balance the community’s diverse interests.

Clarke County adopted its initial Comprehensive Plan on June 15, 1974. The Plan ~~has been~~ *was* updated ~~several times over the years in August 1974, September 1980, March 1988, August 1994, March 2001, and March 2007,~~ *most recently in March 2014. Revised guidance and innovations were added with each update, but the following general* guiding principles ~~of the 2007 Plan were~~ *have remained consistent:*

- *Managing residential and business growth in designated areas where it can be supported by public infrastructure in a fiscally-responsible manner.*
- *Ensuring the prosperity of agriculture by protecting farmland agricultural land from development pressures and supporting the right to farm.*
- *Protecting the County’s unique natural environmental, historical, and cultural resources.*
- *Encouraging compatible business activity to broaden the tax base, particularly businesses related to agriculture.*

~~These principles remain the focus of this updated Plan and its Implementing Component Plans.~~

~~Clarke County has many cultural, historical, and natural attributes that make it an attractive place in which to live. This Comprehensive Plan is designed to protect and enhance attributes that contribute to the rural and agricultural character of the County, while it accommodates additional people and businesses primarily in the designated growth areas.~~

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<sup>1</sup> *Charles Hoch, Linda C. Dalton, and Frank So, eds.  
The Practice of Local Government Planning, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
Washington, DC: International City/County Management Association, 2000, p. 32.*

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This Comprehensive Plan is a document first and foremost for the citizens of Clarke County. It is designed to protect and enhance the quality of life and sense of community valued by the people who have chosen to live and work here.

### SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Clarke County places tremendous value on its unique natural and historic resources and its agrarian economy. This rural character makes the County an exceptional place to live, work, and play. ~~The This~~ Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, and policy statements that are designed to ensure that these elements are maintained and protected. ~~Furthermore, The~~ Plan is drafted and organized to help citizens, business owners, appointed and elected officials, and other stakeholders clearly understand the path that the County has chosen in planning for its future.

This approach is summarized in the points below:

- The County’s conservation easement program, land use taxation, and various planning and zoning tools, *including sliding-scale zoning*, shall continue to be used to protect rural areas, to aid in the vitality of our agricultural industries, and to preserve our natural and historic resources.
- Land use decision-making shall emphasize *managed directed, controlled* growth on a rural, small-town scale in designated areas where public infrastructure can be efficiently provided. These areas include the Towns of Berryville and Boyce as well as ~~other~~ *villages and* business intersections *and unincorporated villages as* described in this Plan and its ~~implementing~~ *component* plans.
- The County will focus its resources on infrastructure and economic development projects to serve the designated growth areas. *With the exception of broadband internet service,* residents and businesses in rural, *unincorporated* areas *outside of designated growth areas* should continue to expect rural levels of service.
- To ensure community vitality into the future, the County will explore and consider implementing new and innovative concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that provide diverse housing options, *compatible context-sensitive* economic development, and *cost-effective efficient* public infrastructure in designated growth areas.
- The County shall strive to support concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that *protect natural resources from significant degradation* ~~ensure environmental sustainability~~. Clarke County's fundamental goal is to protect our natural resources so that we may pass them on to future generations. We seek to accomplish this through efforts that manage surface water and groundwater, protect and restore stream and river corridors, and preserve the integrity of our natural environment.

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- The County shall also strive to support concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that ensure economic sustainability *in a fiscally-responsible manner consistent with its land-use philosophy*. Public and private sector investments in business, housing, and infrastructure should be economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially responsible to the community's objectives as set forth in this Plan. Achieving this goal requires participation from all sectors of the community, both to determine community needs and to identify and implement innovative and appropriate solutions.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Comprehensive Plans Generally**

The Comprehensive Plan ~~is a~~ ~~combines~~ long-range planning *document that provides guidance with guidelines* for making ~~tomorrow's~~ *land use and policy* decisions. ~~The Plan~~ ~~is~~ for the *County's* citizens, *business owners, and stakeholders of the County* and thus considers many diverse interests. Most important, it provides an outline for future land-use decisions that balance diverse interests and are based upon the goals, objectives, and policies of the County.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a vision for how a community should grow in the future. It is typically long-range and forward-looking, addressing a wide range of issues and questions relating to land use, community facilities, infrastructure, preservation, community character, and economic development among other topics. It is important to understand that the Comprehensive Plan is an adopted guideline and not a law or regulatory tool. The Plan provides specific recommendations on land use tools that should be implemented, *maintained, or enhanced* to further the Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Policies. These tools can come in the form of regulations, such as changes to the County Code or Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. They can also come in the form of more detailed plans such as the *implementing component plans*, or in programs and processes such as a Capital Improvement Planning program. Implementing the Plan's recommendations via these tools is the most critical element to ensure that the Plan's strategies are followed.

The County's Planning Commission is charged with preparing the plan and presenting it to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The Code of Virginia requires local jurisdictions to adopt comprehensive plans in accordance with §15.2-2223:

*The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction.*

*In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.*

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*The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.*

~~Most recently, the General Assembly mandated that comprehensive plans include transportation plans with new requirements including coordination with the Statewide Transportation Plan, Six Year Improvement Program, and route locations selected by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The transportation plan components must also be provided to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to be reviewed for consistency with the aforementioned elements before the plan is adopted by the locality. Urban development areas (UDAs), a previously mandated component for certain jurisdictions, have now been made optional by the General Assembly.~~

### **Form and Function of the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan consists of two components – a base Plan document and various *implementing component plans*. The base Plan document contains background information on the County’s history and characteristics, demographic and statistical information, and general goals, objectives and policies. The *implementing component plans* are separate specialized documents that provide detailed implementation strategies on specific topic areas outlined in the base Plan.

Code of Virginia §15.2-2230 requires planning commissions to review their comprehensive plans at least once every five years in order to determine whether it is advisable to make changes to the plan. *This requirement applies to the County’s Comprehensive Plan and to each of the component plans as they are also considered to be part of the Comprehensive Plan. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in March 2014 and the Planning Commission adopted a resolution in January 2019 to initiate a review and update of the Plan. There is no requirement in the Code of Virginia regarding when a comprehensive plan review must be completed.*

~~The Planning Commission began their review and update of the 2007 Plan in Summer 2012 with the adoption of a work plan that designated the Commission as a “committee of the whole” for the review of the base Plan document. Upon the adoption of the revised base Plan document, attention will be turned to the review and update of the Implementing Component Plans along with the drafting of any new Component Plans recommended in the revised base Plan document. To ensure the efficient review of the Component Plans, the use of subcommittees is recommended so that multiple Component Plans can be worked on in tandem.~~

The base Plan document consists of three Chapters – General Information (Chapter I); Goals, Objectives, and Policies (Chapter II), and Implementing Components (Chapter III). ~~The revised Plan document includes new appendices that include detailed background information on the County and additional statistical information—some of which were moved from other sections in the 2007 Plan to make the Plan more readable. Chapter I contains factual information about the County including its history and historic resources, its unique environmental resources and characteristics, and a summary of the County’s approach to growth management.~~

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*Chapter I also contains statistical information of the County’s population and growth trends, housing patterns, and land use.*

**Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

*Chapter II contains the Plan’s guidance language, recommendations, and implementation strategies addressing several key topic areas including:*

- *Agriculture*
- *Mountain resources*
- *Natural resources*
- *Historic resources*
- *Conservation easements*
- *Outdoor recreational resources*
- *Energy conservation and sustainability*
- *Village plans (Millwood, Pine Grove, White Post)*
- *Designated growth areas for development*
- *Economic development*
- *Public infrastructure, capital improvement planning, and fiscal responsibility*
- *Transportation*
- *Broadband internet access*

*Guidance language is described in a goals/objectives/policies format.* Goals of the Comprehensive Plan describe the future of Clarke County in general terms and are the long-term expectations of this Plan. ~~The goals for land use planning in Clarke County are listed below.~~

- ~~1. Preserve and protect the agricultural, natural, and open space character of unincorporated areas.~~
- ~~2. Enhance town, village, and commercial areas through context sensitive design and walkability elements to improve the quality of life for all residents.~~
- ~~3. Encourage and maintain a diverse and viable local economy compatible with the County's size and character.~~
- ~~4. Exercise stewardship over resources so as to reduce the consumption of nonrenewable resources, utilizing renewable energy whenever possible; and foster within the private sector of the County a culture of resource conservation.~~
- ~~5. Provide for the economical delivery of necessary public services consistent with these goals.~~

Objectives ~~are more specific expressions of these goals~~ They describe the County's intended planning actions *in the format of the key topic areas listed above*. Policies are specific statements, *directives, or strategies* for each planning objective. They provide the rationales for land-use decisions and help to guide them. ~~The objectives and policies can be found in Chapter II.~~

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**Implementing Components of the Comprehensive Plan**

To achieve these Goals, Objectives, and Policies, implementation of the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan has been divided into seven components pertaining to specific geographic and policy areas. It is through these implementing components that the aspirations of the citizens are achieved and the elements of the Plan are realized.

*Chapter III contains descriptions of the Comprehensive Plan’s implementing component plans. As noted previously, implementing component plans are a series of specialized plans that address specific geographic areas or policy issues. Component plans are developed from various applicable goals, objectives, and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan. Each component plan contains its own goals, objectives and/or strategies which go into greater detail on the geographic area or policy issue than can be accomplished succinctly in the Comprehensive Plan. Component plans are reviewed once every five years and the update processes are informed by the Comprehensive Plan’s guidance and by guidelines enumerated in Chapter III. The Chapter also includes a section describing other plans and studies adopted or used by the County noting that while they are not part of the Comprehensive Plan, all such plans and studies must be developed and maintained in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan’s guidance.*

*It should be noted that in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan revision, the County’s Economic Development Strategic Plan and Capital Improvement Plan are to be removed as implementing component plans. These plans require more frequent review and update than once every five years and will continue to be maintained in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan’s guidance.*

*Brief summaries of the component plans are provided. These components can be found in Chapter III of the Comprehensive Plan and are briefly described below.*

**Geographic Area Plans – Rural Areas**

**Agricultural Land Plan**

*The purpose of the Agricultural Land Plan is to provide tools and approaches for conserving farmland, and to establish and maintain policies and programs for the long-term prosperity of the County’s agricultural industries. It is recommended to be used by property owners, elected and appointed officials, and other interested stakeholders to understand the County’s approach to protecting and promoting agriculture. The Agricultural Land Plan’s recommendations are applicable to all areas of the County where agricultural operations exist and are allowed by-right.*

~~Clarke County has been, and continues to be, a predominantly rural and agricultural environment. Agriculture is the defining characteristic of the County. It is Clarke County's most significant economic, cultural, and historic feature. The preservation of agricultural lands is promoted and encouraged by the Agricultural Land Plan as it seeks to perform the following items:~~

- ~~1. Minimize the impact of nonagricultural residential development.~~



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- ~~2. Minimize the size of parcels created for residential purposes in rural areas.~~
- ~~3. Keep residual tracts as large, and therefore as agriculturally viable, as possible.~~
4. Provide for residential growth within the designated growth areas.

### **Mountain Land Plan**

*The Mountain Land Plan was developed to address the unique challenges and policy issues facing the County’s mountain areas located east of the Shenandoah River. While this rural area allows agriculture by-right, forestal resources predominate and present challenges in protecting scenic viewsheds, wildlife habitats, and ecosystems. The mountainous terrain also presents challenges of protecting surface water resources from erosion and sedimentation. This component plan attempts to address these issues while simultaneously balancing private property rights and the demand for access to the area’s natural and scenic resources.*

~~The mountain lands of Clarke County to the east of the Shenandoah River constitute approximately one fourth of the County. The steep slopes and predominantly forested areas create special land use concerns that require specific land use planning. The Mountain Land Plan is designed to protect the scenic values, forest resources, surface and groundwater quality as well as wildlife habitats of the area, while allowing well-sited development compatible with these concerns.~~

### **Geographic Area Plans – Designated Areas for Growth**

#### **Berryville Area Plan**

The Berryville ~~area~~ *Annexation Area* has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as the *County’s primary* designated growth area ~~of the County~~. Because *the Town of* Berryville contains the highest concentration of available public facilities and infrastructure, it is the most appropriate place ~~for~~ *to direct future* growth. The Berryville Area Plan provides a guide for the physical growth of ~~that area~~ *the Annexation Area and for the orderly transition of properties from the County to the Town as development occurs*. The ~~overriding~~ *primary* purpose of this ~~Plan~~ *component plan* is to encourage development of a safe, vibrant, and distinctive small town environment, while maintaining the unique historical character of the community.

#### **Double Tollgate Area Plan**

*The Double Tollgate Area Plan is one of two Business Intersections Area Plans created under the Comprehensive Plan’s guidance. This component plan focuses on the future commercial development of the area immediately surrounding the Double Tollgate unincorporated area at the intersection of U.S. Routes 340 and 522 and Va. Route 277. Strategies are included to address County investment in public infrastructure over time to facilitate highway commercial-scale development at this intersection.*

#### **Waterloo Area Plan**

*The Waterloo Area Plan is the second of two Business Intersections Area Plans and focuses on development issues and challenges at the unincorporated Waterloo area at the intersection of U.S. Routes 340 and 50/17. The Waterloo area is partially served by public water and public sewer, and strategies are included to facilitate the future build-out of highway commercial-scale businesses.*

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## **~~Business Intersections Area Plans~~**

~~There are two intersections in the County of major arterial highways that are federally designated routes: Waterloo (U.S. Routes 50/17 and 340), and Double Tollgate (U.S. Routes 340 and 522). These intersections are uniquely suited for business activities that require auto or truck access. Area plans are necessary to help ensure that appropriate land is provided for such development, that the necessary utilities are available, and that the character of the development enhances the character of County.~~

## **Policy Issue Plans**

### **Historic Resources Plan**

*The Historic Resources Plan is an action-oriented component plan focusing on the promotion and preservation of the County's historic and cultural assets.* Clarke County's extensive historic resources play a large part both in attracting tourism and influencing land use decisions. The County encourages historic preservation through state and national programs and has conducted four area surveys to provide documentation of historic properties. *This component plan contains a list of specific goals to be implemented through the County's Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in furtherance of historic preservation.*

### **Recreation Plan**

*The Recreation Plan is the second of two new component plans developed as recommended by the 2013 Comprehensive Plan's guidance. This component plan contains specific recommended strategies to protect, promote, grow, and enhance the County's active and passive recreational resources. Its purpose is to address the community's recreational needs and outline steps to ensure the continued viability and enhancement of recreational resources for present and future generations.*

### **Transportation Plan**

Provision of a safe and efficient transportation network is critical to any community but it is also important to ensure that the community's transportation needs are compatible and coordinated with the land use philosophy. These needs are not limited to public roads but also extend to bicycle, pedestrian, and commuter networks. The Transportation Plan provides a clear statement of how the County's land use philosophy is coordinated with its transportation policies. The Transportation Plan also contains the County's current list of improvement projects along with planning level cost estimates and statistical information to support the need for each project.

### **Water Resources Plan**

*The Water Resources Plan was established to protect the County's groundwater and surface water resources and to raise attention to the unique challenges of preserving water quality and quantity in a County with significant Karst areas and mountainous terrain. The component plan contains specific goals and strategies to support regulatory protections, to guide land use decision-making, and to encourage ongoing initiatives to further these goals.*

#### **1) — Groundwater Resources**

~~Three fourths of the people in Clarke County depend on groundwater as their source of drinking water. Protection of groundwater from pollution is, and has been, of primary importance. The~~



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~~urgent need for protection was vividly demonstrated in 1981, when, because of pollution, the Town of Berryville had to abandon the wells that provided its public water supply. In the early 1990s wells were polluted by benzene in the White Post area and fuel contamination has occurred in Pine Grove and the Shepherd's Mill Road area. These events underscored the need for protection of groundwater. The Groundwater Resources section addresses related issues, including minimizing contamination from non-point sources, protecting the Prospect Hill Spring water supply (the public water supply serving the businesses and residents in Boyce, Millwood, Waterloo, and White Post), and increasing public understanding of the sensitive nature of limestone geology and its susceptibility to contamination.~~

## ~~2) — Surface Water Resources~~

~~Surface waters include secondary streams or tributaries, such as the Shenandoah River, the Opequon Creek, and Spout Run (a state-designated trout stream). The Surface Water Resources section addresses related issues including surface water contamination from both point and nonpoint sources, off-stream water use, such as domestic supply and irrigation, and recreational uses. Point source pollution comes from specific, identifiable sources. Nonpoint source pollution is caused by many diffuse sources, such as runoff, precipitation, or percolation.~~

## **Capital Improvement Plan**

~~Public facilities are the infrastructure for Clarke County's essential services, including education, police and fire protection, social services, parks and recreation, and library services. Because the provision of public facilities can influence when and where development will take place, they are very important growth management tools. The intent of the Capital Improvement Plan is to provide an outline of potential public facility and services needs so the County can review these provisions and maintain adequate levels of services in a timely fashion. Most important, it promotes the effective provision of capital improvements consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.~~

## **Process for Amending the Comprehensive Plan**

While not recommended, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may consider a proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan or any of the Implementing Components of the Comprehensive Plan outside of the scope of the Plan's five-year review cycle in accordance with Code of Virginia §15.2-2229 and other relevant sections.

A Comprehensive Plan amendment should demonstrate the following elements: a) preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas, and/or b) improving the quality of life and services and directing development toward designated growth areas.

A Plan Amendment must also meet one of the following criteria.

1. The goals, objectives, or policies of the Comprehensive Plan or an implementing element of the Comprehensive Plan would be more effectively met or implemented, particularly by a concept of land development that was not foreseen by the Plan, if the Plan Amendment were approved.
2. The area surrounding the property in question has changed substantially since the review of the Comprehensive Plan or the applicable element of the Comprehensive Plan.

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3. The General Assembly has adopted new requirements affecting comprehensive plans that must be implemented prior to the County’s next five year review schedule.

The importance of the three criteria noted above are critical to ensure that such an amendment addresses a genuine change in conditions of the property, the County, or outside influences affecting the County, or to address a gap in the guidance or State regulatory compliance provided by the Plan and its Component Plans. Piecemeal *plan amendments* should not be considered solely to address a land use change or other request that is in conflict with the Plan’s recommendations.

**Citizen Participation in the Planning Process**

*The Code of Virginia requires the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to hold duly advertised public hearings in order to adopt changes to the Comprehensive Plan and implementing component plans. While this minimum requirement ensures that citizens and stakeholders have at least two opportunities to provide formal comment on proposed changes, additional public input using both formal and informal methods is important in order to produce a well-rounded planning product as well as to facilitate understanding and to achieve buy-in.*

*Methods to educate citizens and stakeholders and to encourage their participation include but are not limited to:*

1. *Schedule informal public information sessions prior to conducting required public hearings which allow participants to learn about plan revisions and provide questions and comments to elected and appointed officials and Staff on a one-on-one basis. Sessions can be scheduled in multiple locations around the County as a means of facilitating attendance and participation.*
2. *Hold workshops or planning charrettes for major revisions or development of new plans that allow citizens and stakeholders to participate in and interact directly with the planning process at its earliest stages.*
3. Ensure that information pertaining to the Plan and the planning process is available to citizens in an understandable form, which may include internet postings, newsletters, mailings, informational brochures, and announcements in newspapers and on radio to stimulate citizen involvement.
4. Encourage educational institutions, agencies, clubs, and special interest groups to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan and implementing components.
5. *Following plan adoption, ensure uniform interpretation, administration, enforcement procedures, and staffing levels for the implementing plans, policies, and ordinances of the Comprehensive Plan.*

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~~Encourage citizen involvement in the planning process.~~

~~Policies~~

- ~~1. Provide opportunity for citizens to participate in all phases of the planning process.~~
- ~~2. Require that all meetings involving preparing, revising, or amending the Comprehensive Plan be publicly posted and open to the public.~~
- ~~3. Meet or exceed all state requirements for public notice for meetings and freedom of information requests.~~

~~Scope of the Current Plan Revision~~

~~As noted above, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution in January 2019 to initiate a review of the Clarke County 2013 Comprehensive Plan. This resolution included the following key issues to be addressed during the revision process in addition to any other issues identified by the Commission:~~

- ~~1. Evaluate the current Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for relevance and consistency with recent implementing component plan updates. Consider adding or revising language to address any new County priorities such as broadband internet access for residents and businesses.~~
- ~~2. Update demographics and statistical information that have changed since 2013 and for which new data is currently available.~~
- ~~3. Determine whether to incorporate data or other information from the Cost of Community Services Study.~~
- ~~4. Update implementing component plan descriptions in Chapter III to reflect recent updates of these Plans.~~
- ~~5. Evaluate whether to conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Mountain Land Plan and, if so, develop objectives and strategies that will inform the update process.~~
- ~~6. Determine whether to retain reference to the Capital Improvement Plan as an implementing component plan and make changes to the applicable objectives and strategies as necessary.~~

~~In addition to addressing these and other issues, All demographic information has been updated in Chapter I using a variety of primary sources including to include the data provided in the 2020 2010 US Census, 2019 American Community Survey, as well as current and projected information provided by the University of Virginia’s Weldon-Cooper Center, and the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), West Virginia University’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Clarke County Planning Department records.~~

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*Work on the Comprehensive Plan revision was assigned to the Commission’s Comprehensive Plan Committee. Because of delays due to work on other planning projects and the COVID pandemic, the Committee and Staff were not able to begin work until June 2020. A final draft was completed and presented to the full Commission for final review in [INSERT DATE].*

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*“A plan serves a public body much as a promise serves an individual.  
If we make a promise, others expect that we will honor it with our actions.”<sup>1</sup>*

**FOREWORD**

The Comprehensive Plan maps the future of land use in Clarke County. This long-range Plan captures the County’s vision, projects the necessary resources to make this vision happen, and provides strategies and recommendations to make the vision a successful reality. Such long-range planning, as set out in the Comprehensive Plan, anticipates future impacts of land use choices, and guides all present and future decisions regarding land use.

The purpose of this plan is to guide land-use decisions, both public and private, as they relate to the specific goals of the County. The Plan is for the citizens of the County and, for this reason, considers many diverse interests. It cannot satisfy every citizen's particular interest but does provide a mechanism for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all County citizens. Most importantly, it provides an outline for future decisions on land use, natural resource protection, capital improvements, and economic growth while attempting to balance the community’s diverse interests.

Clarke County adopted its initial Comprehensive Plan on June 15, 1974. The Plan has been ~~was~~ updated several times over the years, most recently in March 2014. Revised guidance and innovations were added with each update, but the following general guiding principles have remained consistent:

- Managing residential and business growth in designated areas where it can be supported by public infrastructure in a fiscally-responsible manner.
- Ensuring the prosperity of agriculture by protecting farmland from development pressures and supporting the right to farm.
- Protecting the County’s unique natural, historical, and cultural resources.
- Encouraging compatible business activity to broaden the tax base, particularly businesses related to agriculture.

This Comprehensive Plan is a document first and foremost for the citizens of Clarke County. It is designed to protect and enhance the quality of life and sense of community valued by the people who have chosen to live and work here.

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<sup>1</sup> *Charles Hoch, Linda C. Dalton, and Frank So, eds.  
The Practice of Local Government Planning, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
Washington, DC: International City/County Management Association, 2000, p. 32.*

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Clarke County places tremendous value on its unique natural and historic resources and its agrarian economy. This rural character makes the County an exceptional place to live, work, and play. The Comprehensive Plan contains goals, objectives, and policy statements that are designed to ensure that these elements are maintained and protected. The Plan is drafted and organized to help citizens, business owners, appointed and elected officials, and other stakeholders clearly understand the path that the County has chosen in planning for its future.

This approach is summarized in the points below:

- The County’s conservation easement program, land use taxation, and various planning and zoning tools, including sliding-scale zoning, shall continue to be used to protect rural areas, to aid in the vitality of our agricultural industries, and to preserve our natural and historic resources.
- Land use decision-making shall emphasize managed growth on a rural, small-town scale in designated areas where public infrastructure can be efficiently provided. These areas include the Towns of Berryville and Boyce as well as business intersections and unincorporated villages as described in this Plan and its implementing component plans.
- The County will focus its resources on infrastructure and economic development projects to serve the designated growth areas. With the exception of broadband internet service, residents and businesses in rural, unincorporated areas outside of designated growth areas should continue to expect rural levels of service.
- To ensure community vitality into the future, the County will explore and consider implementing new and innovative concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that provide diverse housing options, compatible economic development, and cost-effective public infrastructure in designated growth areas.
- The County shall strive to support concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that protect natural resources from significant degradation. Clarke County's fundamental goal is to protect our natural resources so that we may pass them on to future generations. We seek to accomplish this through efforts that manage surface water and groundwater, protect and restore stream and river corridors, and preserve the integrity of our natural environment.
- The County shall also strive to support concepts, programs, projects, and regulations that ensure economic sustainability in a fiscally-responsible manner consistent with its land-use philosophy. Public and private sector investments in business, housing, and infrastructure should be economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially responsible to the community's objectives as set forth in this Plan. Achieving this goal requires participation from all sectors of the community, both to determine community needs and to identify and implement innovative and appropriate solutions.

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INTRODUCTION

**Comprehensive Plans Generally**

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range planning document that provides guidance for making land use and policy decisions. The Plan is for the County’s citizens, business owners, and stakeholders and thus considers many diverse interests. Most important, it provides an outline for future land-use decisions that balance diverse interests and are based upon the goals, objectives, and policies of the County.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a vision for how a community should grow in the future. It is typically long-range and forward-looking, addressing a wide range of issues and questions relating to land use, community facilities, infrastructure, preservation, community character, and economic development among other topics. It is important to understand that the Comprehensive Plan is an adopted guideline and not a law or regulatory tool. The Plan provides specific recommendations on land use tools that should be implemented, maintained, or enhanced to further the Plan’s Goals, Objectives, and Policies. These tools can come in the form of regulations, such as changes to the County Code or Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. They can also come in the form of more detailed plans such as the implementing component plans, or in programs and processes such as a Capital Improvement Planning program. Implementing the Plan’s recommendations via these tools is the most critical element to ensure that the Plan’s strategies are followed.

The County’s Planning Commission is charged with preparing the plan and presenting it to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. The Code of Virginia requires local jurisdictions to adopt comprehensive plans in accordance with §15.2-2223:

*The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and every governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction.*

*In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.*

*The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.*

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**Form and Function of the Clarke County Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan consists of two components – a base Plan document and various implementing component plans. The base Plan document contains background information on the County’s history and characteristics, demographic and statistical information, and general goals, objectives and policies. The implementing component plans are separate specialized documents that provide detailed implementation strategies on specific topic areas outlined in the base Plan.

Code of Virginia §15.2-2230 requires planning commissions to review their comprehensive plans at least once every five years in order to determine whether it is advisable to make changes to the plan. This requirement applies to the County’s Comprehensive Plan and to each of the component plans as they are also considered to be part of the Comprehensive Plan. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in March 2014 and the Planning Commission adopted a resolution in January 2019 to initiate a review and update of the Plan. There is no requirement in the Code of Virginia regarding when a comprehensive plan review must be completed.

The base Plan document consists of three Chapters – General Information (Chapter I); Goals, Objectives, and Policies (Chapter II), and Implementing Components (Chapter III). Chapter I contains factual information about the County including its history and historic resources, its unique environmental resources and characteristics, and a summary of the County’s approach to growth management. Chapter I also contains statistical information of the County’s population and growth trends, housing patterns, and land use.

Chapter II contains the Plan’s guidance language, recommendations, and implementation strategies addressing several key topic areas including:

- Agriculture
- Mountain resources
- Natural resources
- Historic resources
- Conservation easements
- Outdoor recreational resources
- Energy conservation and sustainability
- Village plans (Millwood, Pine Grove, White Post)
- Designated growth areas for development
- Economic development
- Public infrastructure, capital improvement planning, and fiscal responsibility
- Transportation
- Broadband internet access

Guidance language is described in a goals/objectives/policies format. Goals of the Comprehensive Plan describe the future of Clarke County in general terms and are the long-term expectations of this Plan.



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Objectives describe the County's intended planning actions in the format of the key topic areas listed above. Policies are specific statements, directives, or strategies for each planning objective. They provide the rationales for land-use decisions and help to guide them.

Chapter III contains descriptions of the Comprehensive Plan's implementing component plans. As noted previously, implementing component plans are a series of specialized plans that address specific geographic areas or policy issues. Component plans are developed from various applicable goals, objectives, and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan. Each component plan contains its own goals, objectives and/or strategies which go into greater detail on the geographic area or policy issue than can be accomplished succinctly in the Comprehensive Plan.

Component plans are reviewed once every five years and the update processes are informed by the Comprehensive Plan's guidance and by guidelines enumerated in Chapter III. The Chapter also includes a section describing other plans and studies adopted or used by the County noting that while they are not part of the Comprehensive Plan, all such plans and studies must be developed and maintained in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan's guidance.

It should be noted that in conjunction with this Comprehensive Plan revision, the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan and Capital Improvement Plan are to be removed as implementing component plans. These plans require more frequent review and update than once every five years and will continue to be maintained in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan's guidance.

Brief summaries of the component plans are provided below.

### **Geographic Area Plans – Rural Areas**

#### **Agricultural Land Plan**

The purpose of the Agricultural Land Plan is to provide tools and approaches for conserving farmland, and to establish and maintain policies and programs for the long-term prosperity of the County's agricultural industries. It is recommended to be used by property owners, elected and appointed officials, and other interested stakeholders to understand the County's approach to protecting and promoting agriculture. The Agricultural Land Plan's recommendations are applicable to all areas of the County where agricultural operations exist and are allowed by-right.

#### **Mountain Land Plan**

The Mountain Land Plan was developed to address the unique challenges and policy issues facing the County's mountain areas located east of the Shenandoah River. While this rural area allows agriculture by-right, forestal resources predominate and present challenges in protecting scenic viewsheds, wildlife habitats, and ecosystems. The mountainous terrain also presents challenges of protecting surface water resources from erosion and sedimentation. This component plan attempts to address these issues while simultaneously balancing private property rights and the demand for access to the area's natural and scenic resources.

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**Geographic Area Plans – Designated Areas for Growth**

**Berryville Area Plan**

The Berryville Annexation Area has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as the County’s primary designated growth area. Because the Town of Berryville contains the highest concentration of available public facilities and infrastructure, it is the most appropriate place to direct future growth. The Berryville Area Plan provides a guide for the physical growth of the Annexation Area and for the orderly transition of properties from the County to the Town as development occurs. The primary purpose of this component plan is to encourage development of a safe, vibrant, and distinctive small town environment, while maintaining the unique historical character of the community.

**Double Tollgate Area Plan**

The Double Tollgate Area Plan is one of two Business Intersections Area Plans created under the Comprehensive Plan’s guidance. This component plan focuses on the future commercial development of the area immediately surrounding the Double Tollgate unincorporated area at the intersection of U.S. Routes 340 and 522 and Va. Route 277. Strategies are included to address County investment in public infrastructure over time to facilitate highway commercial-scale development at this intersection.

**Waterloo Area Plan**

The Waterloo Area Plan is the second of two Business Intersections Area Plans and focuses on development issues and challenges at the unincorporated Waterloo area at the intersection of U.S. Routes 340 and 50/17. The Waterloo area is partially served by public water and public sewer, and strategies are included to facilitate the future build-out of highway commercial-scale businesses.

**Policy Issue Plans**

**Historic Resources Plan**

The Historic Resources Plan is an action-oriented component plan focusing on the promotion and preservation of the County’s historic and cultural assets. Clarke County’s extensive historic resources play a large part both in attracting tourism and influencing land use decisions. The County encourages historic preservation through state and national programs and has conducted four area surveys to provide documentation of historic properties. This component plan contains a list of specific goals to be implemented through the County’s Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in furtherance of historic preservation.

**Recreation Plan**

The Recreation Plan is the second of two new component plans developed as recommended by the 2013 Comprehensive Plan’s guidance. This component plan contains specific recommended strategies to protect, promote, grow, and enhance the County’s active and passive recreational resources. Its purpose is to address the community’s recreational needs and outline steps to ensure the continued viability and enhancement of recreational resources for present and future generations.

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## **Transportation Plan**

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## **Water Resources Plan**

The Water Resources Plan was established to protect the County's groundwater and surface water resources and to raise attention to the unique challenges of preserving water quality and quantity in a County with significant Karst areas and mountainous terrain. The component plan contains specific goals and strategies to support regulatory protections, to guide land use decision-making, and to encourage ongoing initiatives to further these goals.

## **Process for Amending the Comprehensive Plan**

While not recommended, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors may consider a proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan or any of the Implementing Components of the Comprehensive Plan outside of the scope of the Plan's five-year review cycle in accordance with Code of Virginia §15.2-2229 and other relevant sections.

A Comprehensive Plan amendment should demonstrate the following elements: a) preserving open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas, and/or b) improving the quality of life and services and directing development toward designated growth areas. A Plan Amendment must also meet one of the following criteria.

1. The goals, objectives, or policies of the Comprehensive Plan or an implementing element of the Comprehensive Plan would be more effectively met or implemented, particularly by a concept of land development that was not foreseen by the Plan, if the Plan Amendment were approved.
2. The area surrounding the property in question has changed substantially since the review of the Comprehensive Plan or the applicable element of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. The General Assembly has adopted new requirements affecting comprehensive plans that must be implemented prior to the County's next five year review schedule.

The importance of the three criteria noted above are critical to ensure that such an amendment addresses a genuine change in conditions of the property, the County, or outside influences affecting the County, or to address a gap in the guidance or State regulatory compliance provided by the Plan and its Component Plans. Piecemeal plan amendments should not be considered solely to address a land use change or other request that is in conflict with the Plan's recommendations.

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**Citizen Participation in the Planning Process**

The Code of Virginia requires the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to hold duly advertised public hearings in order to adopt changes to the Comprehensive Plan and implementing component plans. While this minimum requirement ensures that citizens and stakeholders have at least two opportunities to provide formal comment on proposed changes, additional public input using both formal and informal methods is important in order to produce a well-rounded planning product as well as to facilitate understanding and to achieve buy-in. Methods to educate citizens and stakeholders and to encourage their participation include but are not limited to:

1. Schedule informal public information sessions prior to conducting required public hearings which allow participants to learn about plan revisions and provide questions and comments to elected and appointed officials and Staff on a one-on-one basis. Sessions can be scheduled in multiple locations around the County as a means of facilitating attendance and participation.
2. Hold workshops or planning charrettes for major revisions or development of new plans that allow citizens and stakeholders to participate in and interact directly with the planning process at its earliest stages.
3. Ensure that information pertaining to the Plan and the planning process is available to citizens in an understandable form, which may include internet postings, newsletters, mailings, informational brochures, and announcements in newspapers and on radio to stimulate citizen involvement.
4. Encourage educational institutions, agencies, clubs, and special interest groups to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan and implementing components.
5. Following plan adoption, ensure uniform interpretation, administration, enforcement procedures, and staffing levels for the implementing plans, policies, and ordinances of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Scope of the Current Plan Revision**

As noted above, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution in January 2019 to initiate a review of the Clarke County 2013 Comprehensive Plan. This resolution included the following key issues to be addressed during the revision process in addition to any other issues identified by the Commission:

1. Evaluate the current Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for relevance and consistency with recent implementing component plan updates. Consider adding or revising language to address any new County priorities such as broadband internet access for residents and businesses.
2. Update demographics and statistical information that have changed since 2013 and for which new data is currently available.

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3. Determine whether to incorporate data or other information from the Cost of Community Services Study.
4. Update implementing component plan descriptions in Chapter III to reflect recent updates of these Plans.
5. Evaluate whether to conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Mountain Land Plan and, if so, develop objectives and strategies that will inform the update process.
6. Determine whether to retain reference to the Capital Improvement Plan as an implementing component plan and make changes to the applicable objectives and strategies as necessary.

In addition to addressing these and other issues, demographic information has been updated in Chapter I using a variety of primary sources including the 2020 US Census, 2019 American Community Survey, University of Virginia’s Weldon-Cooper Center, Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), West Virginia University’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Clarke County Planning Department records.

Work on the Comprehensive Plan revision was assigned to the Commission’s Comprehensive Plan Committee. Because of delays due to work on other planning projects and the COVID pandemic, the Committee and Staff were not able to begin work until June 2020. A final draft was completed and presented to the full Commission for final review in **[INSERT DATE]**.

# WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

This section provides a summary of the public infrastructure elements and services provided by the local government entities in Clarke County.

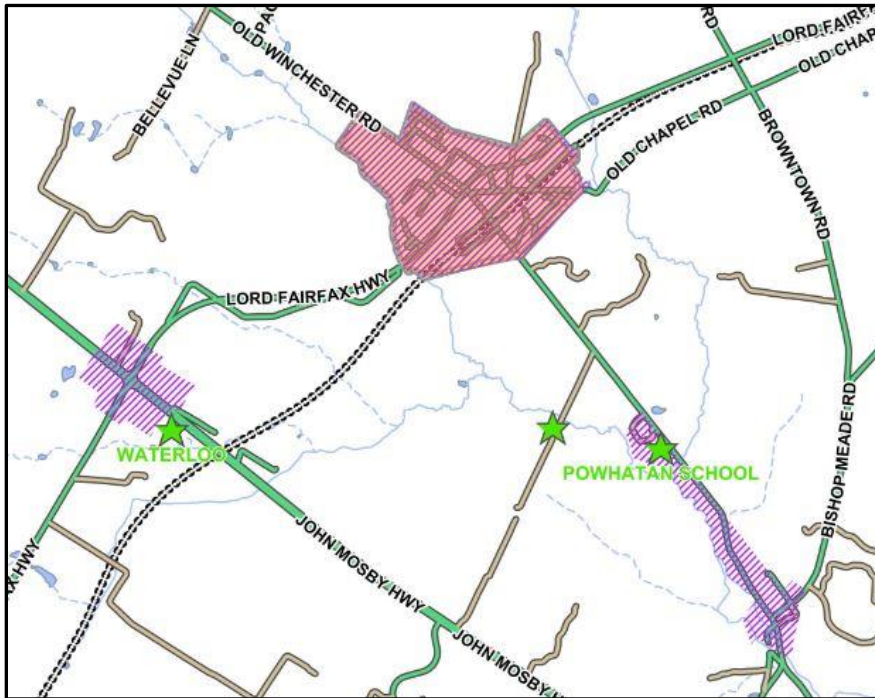
### Water and Sewer

Public water and public sewer services are provided to the incorporated towns, business intersections, and some villages and unincorporated areas on a limited basis. Those areas not served by public water and public sewer rely on private groundwater wells and private onsite sewage disposal systems.

#### County Water and Sewer -- Clarke County Sanitary Authority

The Clarke County Sanitary Authority operates the public water and sewer systems that serve the Town of Boyce, the unincorporated village of Millwood, the unincorporated village of White Post (water only), and commercial-zoned properties at the Waterloo intersection (U.S. 50 and U.S. 340). The Authority is responsible for Prospect Hill Spring, the public water supply for approximately 400 households and businesses. The Authority is also responsible for the operations of the Boyce Sewage Treatment Facility located in the Town of Boyce. The Authority employs Imboden Environmental Services, Inc., as a consultant to assist with water and sewer system operations.

The Authority is governed by a five-member board that is appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Authority members serve four-year terms and one member is required to be a resident of the Town of Boyce.



[Map of Sewer Service District -- DRAFT]



[Map of CCSA water lines -- DRAFT]

#### Town of Berryville Water and Sewer

The Town of Berryville is served by a surface water treatment facility located in the County with a raw water withdrawal from the Shenandoah River. The Berryville Water System provides approximately 1,600 residential and commercial service connections. The average daily water production is 380,000 gallons per day, with a permitted design capacity of 864,000 gallons per day. The combined water tank capacity for use by residents of the Town of Berryville is 3,500,000 gallons.

The Berryville Wastewater Treatment Facility is an advanced treatment Membrane Bioreactor utilizing two stage preliminary screening, grit removal, flow equalization, advanced activated biosolids treatment, 0.04 micron filtration, and ultraviolet disinfection. The design capacity is 0.7 MGD with a peaking factor of 2.1 MGD daily max hydraulic load. Solids management is handled by two rotary fan presses and biosolids are currently used for landfill reclamation by the Frederick County Landfill. This facility has been operating since September 2012 and consistently produces an effluent meeting stringent water quality criterion. This system is designed to handle the Town's needs for the next twenty plus years and is designed to expand as needed in the future to accommodate growth.

The Town's wastewater is conveyed to the treatment plant through a series of underground pipes and pumping stations. The collection system is also going through continual upgrades and repairs through regularly scheduled maintenance by the Town.

# WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

## Public Water and Sewer Expansion Efforts

In response to changes in ownership of the former Camp 7 property adjacent to the Double Tollgate Plan Area and requests from owners of property within the Plan Area, the County began efforts in 2021 to obtain public water and public sewer service from Frederick County. Clarke officials requested the Frederick County Board of Supervisors to authorize its authority, Frederick Water, to extend service to Double Tollgate and provide up to 150,000 gallons per day of water and sewer services. The Frederick Board voted to approve this authorization in October 2021. As of the drafting of this Plan, negotiations between Clarke County and Frederick Water remain in process.

Additional information on public water and public sewer may be found in the Water Resources Plan.

## General Government -- County Administration

Clarke County is governed by a five-member board that is elected by the citizens to serve five year terms. The County's chief administrative officer is the County Administrator who serves at the pleasure of the Board and manages the County Administration Office.

The County Administration Office directs and supervises the day-to-day operations of all county departments and agencies that are under the direct control of the Board of Supervisors, pursuant to county ordinances and regulations. The Office also serves as the Board's official liaison to the constitutional officers, the judiciary, state and regional agencies. In addition, the Office provides administrative support to the Board of Supervisors, and the Office implements directives with regard to board agendas, meetings, resolutions, and constituent services.

The County Administration Office is the primary point of contact for citizens seeking information regarding county activities. Duties include responding to Freedom of Information Act requests, clerking various boards and commissions, and serving as the records custodian for various county documents. The Office also handles special event applications.

The County Administration Office provides human resources support for county employees, serves as the Conflict of Interest Officer for all boards, committees, and commissions, and answers the main county government phone.

The Berryville-Clarke County Government Center is shared with the Town of Berryville and the Clarke County Library. In addition to housing the County Administration Office and Board of Supervisors/Town Council meeting room, the following departments are also located in the Government Center:

### County

- Commissioner of the Revenue
- County Treasurer
- Building Department
- Department of Fire, Emergency Medical Services, and Emergency Management
- Registrar



## WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

- Department of Planning
- Information Technology

### Town of Berryville

- Town Manager's Office
- Planning
- Police Department
- Town Business Office

### **Law Enforcement, Public Safety Communications, and Animal Control**

#### Law Enforcement -- County

The Clarke County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) provides law enforcement for the County's unincorporated areas and the Town of Boyce. Clarke County Sheriff's deputies patrol county roads, control traffic, investigate crimes, escort prisoners, provide courthouse and courtroom security, and serve legal documents. The Sheriff's Office is accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission, and it is a member of the Northwest Virginia Regional Drug and Gang Task Force. The Sheriff is a constitutional officer elected by the citizens for a four-year term.

The CCSO is located at 100 N. Church St. in Berryville.

#### Town of Berryville

The Berryville Police Department provides law enforcement for the Town of Berryville. The Department also provides several community services and programs at no cost, including fingerprinting of children for identification purposes, house checks while occupants are out of town for extended periods of time, youth substance abuse awareness and prevention programs, formation and organization of Neighborhood Watch programs, Child Safety Seat Installation/Inspection, bicycle safety and security programs and other public safety and security programs by special arrangement.

The Police Department is located in the Berryville-Clarke County Government Center at 101 Chalmers Court in Berryville.

#### Town of Boyce

The Town of Boyce does not operate its own police department and relies on the Clarke County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement. The Town does employ a code enforcement officer to enforce various provisions of the Town Code.

#### Public Safety Communications

The Emergency Communications Center is responsible for around-the-clock dispatch of emergency (911) and non-emergency (540-955-1234) calls. The office is also responsible for street addressing system throughout Clarke County. The Emergency Communications Center and Sheriff's Office maintain emergency contact information for owners of livestock (cattle, horses, sheep, etc.) so contact can be made in the event animals are reported running loose or injured.

## WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

The Emergency Communications Center is located at 100 N. Church St. in Berryville.

### Animal Control

Animal Control functions are operated as a partnership between the Clarke County Sheriff's Office and Clarke County Animal Shelter to ensure the health and safety of domestic animals, including livestock, within the County, Town of Berryville, and Town of Boyce.

The Clarke County Animal Shelter is jointly owned and managed by Clarke County and the Clarke County Humane Foundation, a 501(c)(3) corporation and an American Humane member. It is located at 225 Ramsburg Lane in Berryville.

### **Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management**

#### Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management

Clarke County operates a combined volunteer-career system which relies heavily on the efforts of trained volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians supported by paid personnel provided by the County. The County is served by three fire and rescue stations:

- John H. Enders Fire & Rescue Company located at 9 South Buckmarsh Street in Berryville
- Blue Ridge Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company at 131 Retreat Road near Shenandoah Retreat.
- Boyce Volunteer Fire Company located at 7 South Greenway Avenue in Boyce.

The Department of Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) & Emergency Management coordinates all services of Clarke County's three volunteer fire and rescue companies as well as all emergency preparedness planning and response for the county. It manages paid EMS staff and the Fee for Service program. The Department oversees professional responses to fire, medical, and environmental emergencies. The Department is dedicated to minimizing the loss of life and property through suppression, rescue, education, and other programs.

The Department is located in the Berryville-Clarke County Government Center at 101 Chalmers Court in Berryville.

### **Library**

The Clarke County Library is a branch of the Handley Regional Library system and is located in the Berryville-Clarke County Government Center at 101 Chalmers Court in Berryville. Access to the library and its resources are free to residents of Clarke and Frederick Counties and the City of Winchester. In addition to books, audio resources, and visual resources, the Library is equipped with public computers, WiFi access, and meeting rooms.

### **Schools**

Clarke County Public Schools operates four public schools for grades K-12:

## WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

- D.G. Cooley Elementary School located at 240 Westwood Road in Berryville.
- Boyce Elementary School located at 119 West Main St. in Boyce.
- Johnson-Williams Middle School located at 200 Swan Ave. in Berryville.
- Clarke County High School located at 627 Mosby Blvd. in Berryville.

Clarke County Public Schools is overseen by the Clarke County School Board, a five-member board that is elected by the citizens of the County. Administrative offices are located at 317 West Main Street in Berryville.

### **Parks & Recreation (see Recreation Plan for non-County resources)**

#### Clarke County Parks & Recreation Department

The Clarke County Parks & Recreation Department manages county-owned Chet Hobert Park, a 102-acre property west of Berryville. The park includes an outdoor swimming pool, 6 lighted outdoor tennis courts, 6 baseball-softball fields, 5 picnic shelters, 2 playgrounds, a 2-mile fitness trail, a dog park, and 13 soccer fields of various sizes. The Clarke County Recreation Center has exercise equipment, a gymnasium, meeting rooms, and kitchen. One room serves as the Clarke County Senior Center, offering programming and lunch for seniors four days each week. The Department offers a wide variety of activities and programs for people of all ages.

Chet Hobert Park and the Clarke County Recreation Center are located at 225 Al Smith Circle in Berryville.

#### Clarke County Public Schools Facilities

Clarke County Public Schools operate a number of active recreation facilities used primarily for school athletics but also for limited use by the public. This includes a football/soccer stadium, baseball/softball fields, track, playgrounds, and indoor/outdoor basketball (limited access).

#### Town of Berryville

The Town of Berryville owns and maintains the three-acre Rose Hill Park in the heart of downtown Berryville. Rose Hill Park provides a great place for families to relax and enjoy a peaceful outing. Park facilities include a playground designed for younger citizens, basketball courts, and a gazebo.

#### Kohn property

The Kohn property is currently undeveloped site located off Ebenezer Road that was gifted to the County. This property consists of 50 acres of mountain woodlands that was placed in conservation easement with the County by the owner. The deed of easement specifies the intended use for environmental education, passive recreation, and bird/wildlife watching. As a county facility, the Parks and Recreation Department and Advisory Board is tasked with developing a master plan for this facility.

# WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

The Recreation Component Plan contains additional information on the County’s active and passive recreational resources.

## **Health and Human Services**

### Department of Social Services

Clarke County Department of Social Services (CCDSS) is the local administered office of the Virginia Department of Social Services. CCDSS administers Child Protective Services, In-Home and Prevention Services, Foster Care, Fostering Futures, and Adoption for families and children. CCDSS also provides Adult Protect Services and Adult Services for the elderly and disabled. In addition to services programs, Clarke County Department of Social Services administers benefit programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Child Care Subsidy, Employment Assistance, and Energy Assistance programs.

CCDSS offices are located at 311 East Main Street in Berryville.

### Virginia Department of Health

The Clarke County Health Department — part of the Virginia Department of Health — is within the Lord Fairfax Health District, which serves the Northern Shenandoah Valley. The Health Department administers clinical services, environmental health services, and the Woman Infants and Children’s Program (WIC).

The Virginia Department of Health Clarke County currently leases office space located at 100 North Buckmarsh Street in Berryville.

## **Joint Administrative Services**

Joint Administrative Services (JAS) was developed in a unique partnership between the Clarke County Board of Supervisors and the Clarke County School Board to share the costs and resources of certain common governmental functions. JAS is charged with managing the following day-to-day functions for both the County and Schools that would ordinarily be managed by separate departments:

- Budgeting
- Accounts payable
- Payroll
- Purchasing
- Risk management

JAS is overseen by a five-member board which includes one School Board representative and one Board of Supervisors representative. JAS offices are located at 317 W. Main St. in Berryville.

# WORKING DRAFT – NOT REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENTS

## **Transportation**

Public roads in Clarke County are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Secondary roads in the Town of Berryville are maintained by the Town while the primary roads (U.S. 340 and Va. Route 7) are maintained by VDOT.

The Town of Boyce maintains several private streets located within its jurisdiction. Maintenance of all private roads in the County are the sole responsibility of the property owners.