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City of Waynesboro, VA 2018 Comprehensive Plan



PREPARED BY czb, LLC



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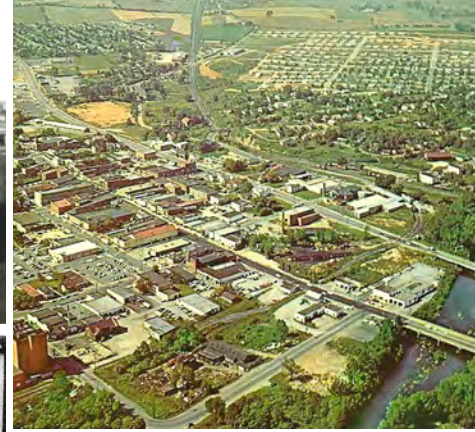
Foreword

There's only one location in all of America that's partway between Charlottesville and Staunton and physically linked to Skyline Drive, Shenandoah National Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the Appalachian Trail.

Only one community is lucky enough to sit at the base of Afton Mountain, have Main Street front the South River, and be able to hike to the Crozet Tunnel. This is where the Blue Ridge Mountains are Waynesboro's to enjoy, to nurture, and, eventually, pass on to future generations of Virginians.

These attributes put Waynesboro in a unique place in American cultural geography, and position the city beautifully at a time when outdoor recreational opportunity has never been more important in the marketplace. Where else can one walk to Downtown, have a morning coffee, and then make short work of catching a half dozen rainbow trout? Waynesboro's setting is indeed magical.





The present City of Waynesboro was included in the 118,491-acre Beverley Patent of 1736, issued to William Beverley by Governor William Gooch under the direction of King George II of England. Joseph Tees purchased 465 acres from Beverley in 1739. His widow operated a well-known tavern or inn, and the Tees' or Teas' Tavern was a widely known landmark. As the settlement developed, Samuel and Jane Teas Estill and the developer James Flack promoted the area, which was named Waynesboro as early as 1797 in honor of the Revolutionary War hero General "Mad" Anthony Wayne. The town was officially established by the Virginia General Assembly in 1801.

Waynesboro flourished during the following decades. It was incorporated as a town in 1834. Twenty years later, the east-west railroad reached Waynesboro, which received even greater access to major trading markets with the completion of the Crozet railroad tunnel through the Blue Ridge Mountains in 1858. Waynesboro was reincorporated in 1874. In 1881, the north-south railroad reached the area, crossing the east-west line at Waynesboro Junction, east of the river, at a place promoters called the "Iron Cross", which formed the nucleus of the new boomtown, Basic City, incorporated in 1891.

For 32 years the two towns enjoyed a remarkable period of rivalry and expansion, often punctuated by recession and depression. They finally consolidated under the name of Waynesboro-Basic, following a referendum in both towns in 1923. Renamed Waynesboro by the legislature the next year, the consolidated town soon experienced industrial investment that brought unparalleled growth.

DuPont opened its doors in the 1920s to produce acetate rayon fibers. By the 1950s General Electric moved a facility into Waynesboro and both continued to have a significant

and growing presence in the city. Together along with other manufacturers, they employed thousands.

However, the nature of manufacturing gradually changed. Some companies relocated to less expensive labor sources, others shifted to reliance on robotics. Some began to substitute materials. As a result, manufacturing employment in Waynesboro declined. Today, Waynesboro is facing some hard realities. The upside of robust employment from 1950-1970 had costs. Some but not all of these costs were not then - or are even now - fully known. What is known is the burden, or legacy, of environmental degradation. There's the unoptimized value of real estate along the South River. And the cost of addressing abandoned manufacturing facilities and other buildings.

As a response to the loss of Dupont and the imperative to reposition the city economically - especially after the Great Recession that ended in June 2009- Waynesboro transitioned from its previous and vulnerable reliance on manufacturing to an economically more diversified community. With Invisita and Lumos on one hand, and Target, Lowes, and Home Depot on the other, Waynesboro and the region today have a good diversity of well-paying jobs, and a sizable source of public revenue from retail sales taxes and the taxation of tools and machinery. The city's efforts to incentivize the development of the Town Center and surrounding commercial real estate have paid dividends. The city's creative work within the Downtown Enterprise Zone continues to transform Broad Street, just as Waynesboro's investments Downtown are showing results. The city's commitment to continue to develop its industrial park has attracted new employers and it means it has the potential to fully leverage its rail

lines and location on I-64. New, high-quality housing is being developed in Waynesboro. Older traditional neighborhoods are slowly being rediscovered. Small businesses are successfully operating Downtown.

This doesn't mean Waynesboro doesn't have work to do. The world is changing more rapidly than ever. The nature of retail today means that despite gains in rebuilding its economic base, Waynesboro is vulnerable to the realities of unpredictable commercial transformation. Decisions made elsewhere - for example in Wisconsin by the Kohl's Corporation, in Minneapolis by Target, or in Charlotte by Collette - are fundamentally no more in the city's control than were those made in Wilmington by DuPont or in Rhode Island by the Crompton Corporation so many years ago. Indeed, the pace of change in retail today, where decisions by Amazon or Walmart - neither with any more allegiance to Waynesboro than anywhere else - require that the community become ever more informed and assertive.

This document is Waynesboro's comprehensive plan, a decision-making guide to help the community successfully navigate the challenges Waynesboro faces. Some of these challenges are well known. Others are more subtle. Some are short term. Some are long-term. The following sections describe these challenges in greater detail, and then present a careful, coordinated process to address them.

Waynesboro is at a crossroads - historically, politically, environmentally, economically, and especially demographically.

The city is at a historical and political crossroads. It enjoys the benefits of a lower than average property tax rate in Virginia, but it also has challenges. These challenges include having test scores below state averages in the Commonwealth, several of the least up to date schools in the region, several overdue repairs to roads and bridges, sidewalks, and schools, that will grow more costly to tackle if not fixed now. The community will have to confront the issue of revenue sufficiency if it is to successfully reposition itself and become more competitive in the region. It will have to confront a growing reliance on sales tax revenue, and this will mean aligning property tax rates to the reality of what it costs to run a city properly. In short, the community will have to badly want Waynesboro to be able to compete, and demonstrate a willingness to pay for it.

The city is at a crossroads environmentally and economically. Waynesboro enjoys an incredible natural setting but it has not been optimized. The South River is on the rebound, but it is to Waynesboro's economy only partially as valuable as it could be. Significant tax revenue comes from the Waynesboro Town Center, but pad and big box retail - by design - depreciate as newer shopping centers pop up down the road. Waynesboro will have to confront these issues if it is to become economically sustainable.

Waynesboro is at a crossroads demographically. Waynesboro is a family-oriented city, with excellent parks, good shopping, terrific housing options and the beginnings of a potentially great trail system. But it also has an aging housing stock and as demand to buy a home in Waynesboro has softened, confidence in the local market has weakened relative to nearby locations within the Valley. Lower housing costs reflect that Waynesboro is less and less the solidly middle income community it used to be. It will have to confront its changing demographics if residents and business owners want the schools to succeed and help Waynesboro again become a community of choice in the valley.

This plan is a commitment on three fronts.



Catching up

First, the community must accept that it has some catching up to do, and pay for it.

The time has come for Waynesboro to pay the costs of bringing the city up to date, pay for what it costs to maintain Waynesboro at the competitive level of finish needed today to succeed, and pay for the expense of getting ahead of the cost curve.

Keeping up

Second, the community will have to do a better job keeping up than it was able to do with limited resources and the shock of job loss experienced 20 years ago.

This plan makes clear the community's commitment to bring its schools and roads and sidewalks and homes to the high standard required for Waynesboro to compete successfully.

Getting ahead

Third, the community will follow through and invest to get ahead in the future.

The community will follow through and invest to get ahead in the future. Sometimes aggressively and at other times more cautiously, Waynesboro will see itself in the competitive context of market reality, and will take active steps on a continual basis to get and stay ahead of cost curves, to make the most of its resources, and to seize the opportunity that life in the Valley offers.

It will take follow through on all three if today's Waynesboro residents want to ensure future residents inherit a strong city.

Introduction

This is Waynesboro's Comprehensive Plan. It is a guiding document used for decision-making within the community.



Foundation

To institute a clear foundation for how the city will make decisions in the near future.

This starts with the establishment of clear and well communicated baselines. The foundation is furthered by a simple articulation of Waynesboro's most cherished values. It is additionally amplified by clear planning principles that will guide implementation. The baseline conditions were discussed in numerous small group meetings that took place in 2017. How the community chose to respond to these conditions in those discussions formed the basis of the the values and principle statements in this document.



Big Things

To identify the "big things" that Waynesboro absolutely must get right.

These are the most pressing matters the community faces at the present time; matters that the community determined it cannot ignore and which therefore require attention now.



Goals

To set clear goals for the city to aim for; goals that are clear, attainable, and meaningful.

By design, the goals in this plan are **Specific** (clear about what the city is trying to achieve). They are **Measurable** (clear about how Waynesboro will know if progress is being made so it can continually, and objectively reassess). They are **Ambitious** yet achievable (tied to financial, political, and other realities). They are **Relevant** (connected both to today's circumstances, and to Waynesboro's estimated trajectory in the years to come). And they are **Time-bound** (with dates on a calendar that the city works towards and to which it holds itself accountable).



Projects

To outline the prioritized projects that are needed to achieve these goals.

In order to make progress towards each goal, specific actions (or projects as they are labeled in this plan) will have to be undertaken. This plan outlines priority projects, but leaves to expert staff the finer grain work of project detail.



Implementation

To describe succinctly the manner in which Waynesboro must implement this plan.

Even in the best of circumstances, Waynesboro will not have enough money to do all that needs to be done. And while the community will have to "catch up" in many areas, it also can't ignore the "getting ahead" work needed to attract strong households and businesses. Thus, much care is required to prioritize and sequence the various projects. Some projects will need to be started immediately. Others can only start when resources become available. Staff expertise will determine how best to sequence and re-sequence these and future projects. In this plan, each project is directly tied to one or more goals, has a clear connection to the big things that Waynesboro must get right, and has a justification contained in the baselines and in the community's articulated value system.

Planning Process

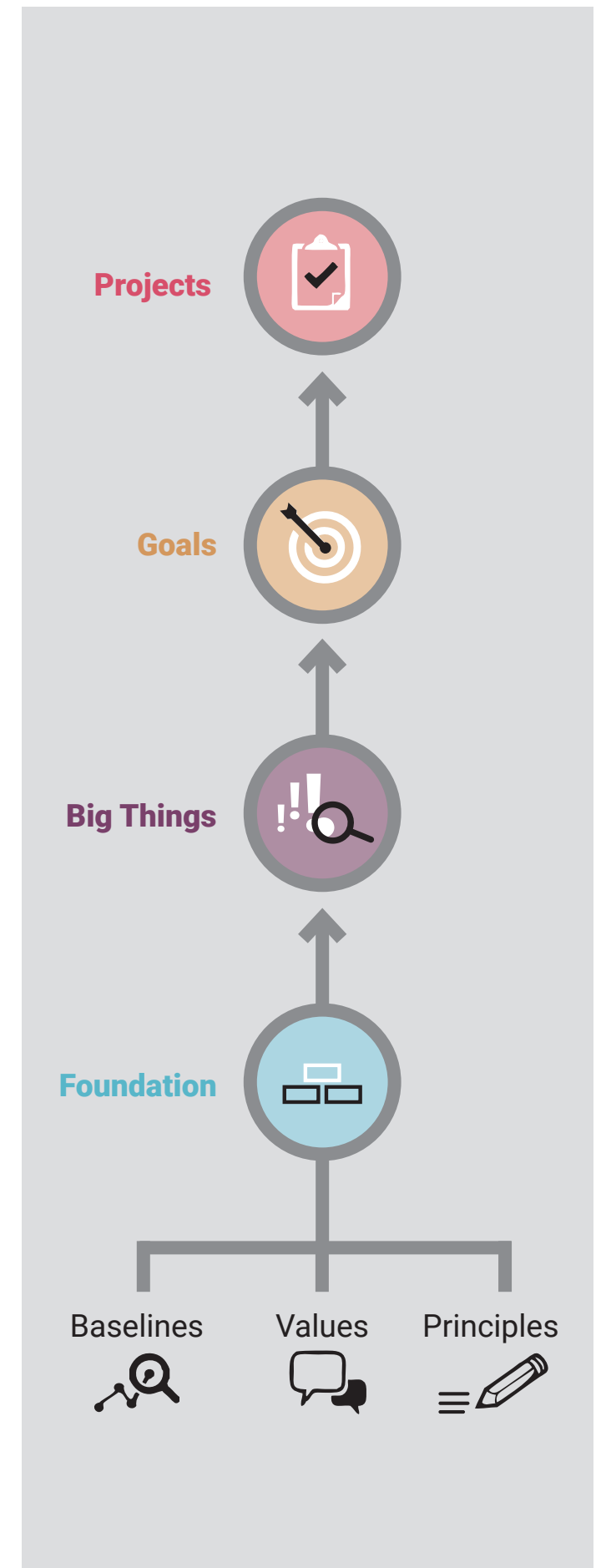
This plan is the result of the planning process described here.

Community Engagement

- In February 2017, a project steering committee was impaneled by the City Council to collaborate with a team of planning professionals. Members of the steering committee were drawn from across the community.
- From March to August, they provided insights and feedback to the planning team that complemented the quantitative and qualitative data that the planning team collected and analyzed.
- The steering committee facilitated numerous small group conversations in the community during the Spring and Summer of 2017.
- A draft Comprehensive Plan was received in November 2017 and the Planning Commission vetted this document and forwarded a recommendation to the City Council.

Community Expertise

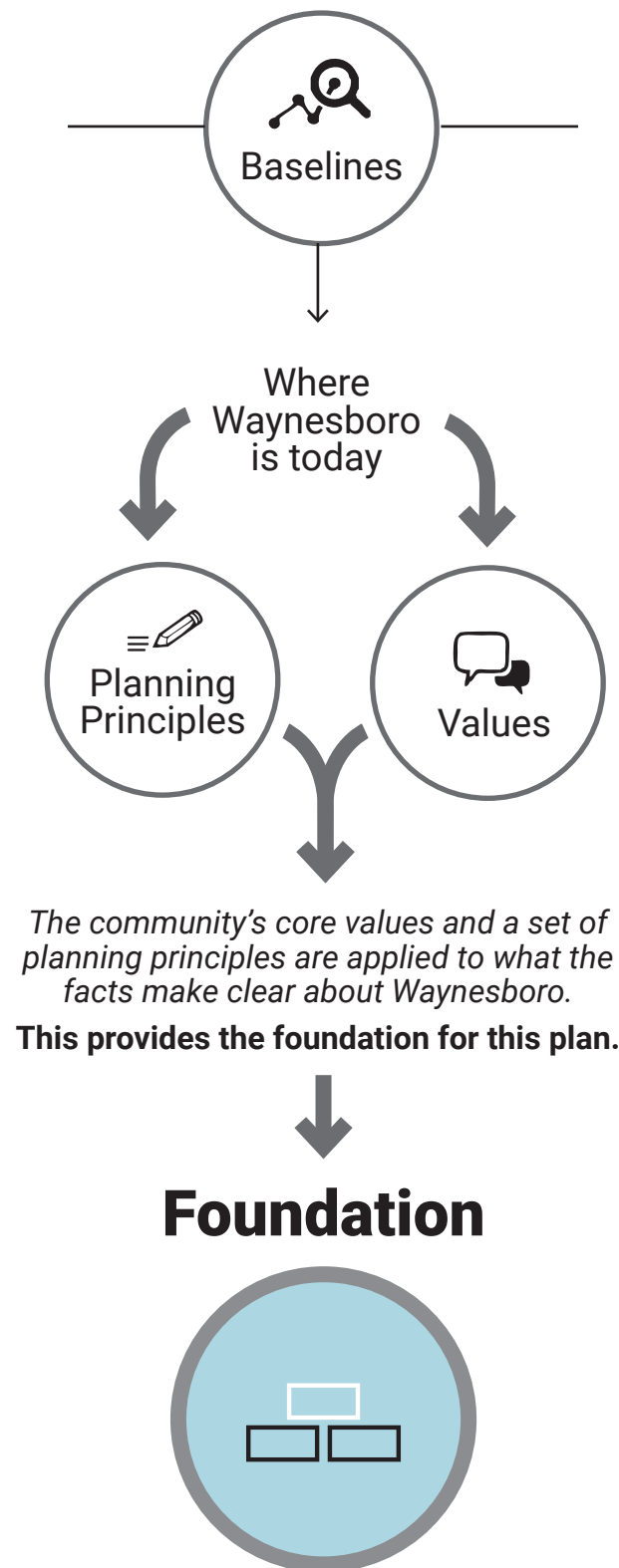
- From February through October, planning consultants worked closely with city planning staff, the police department, staff from parks and recreation, engineers from public works, experts from the Economic Development Authority, officials from the school system and representatives from the City Manager's office.



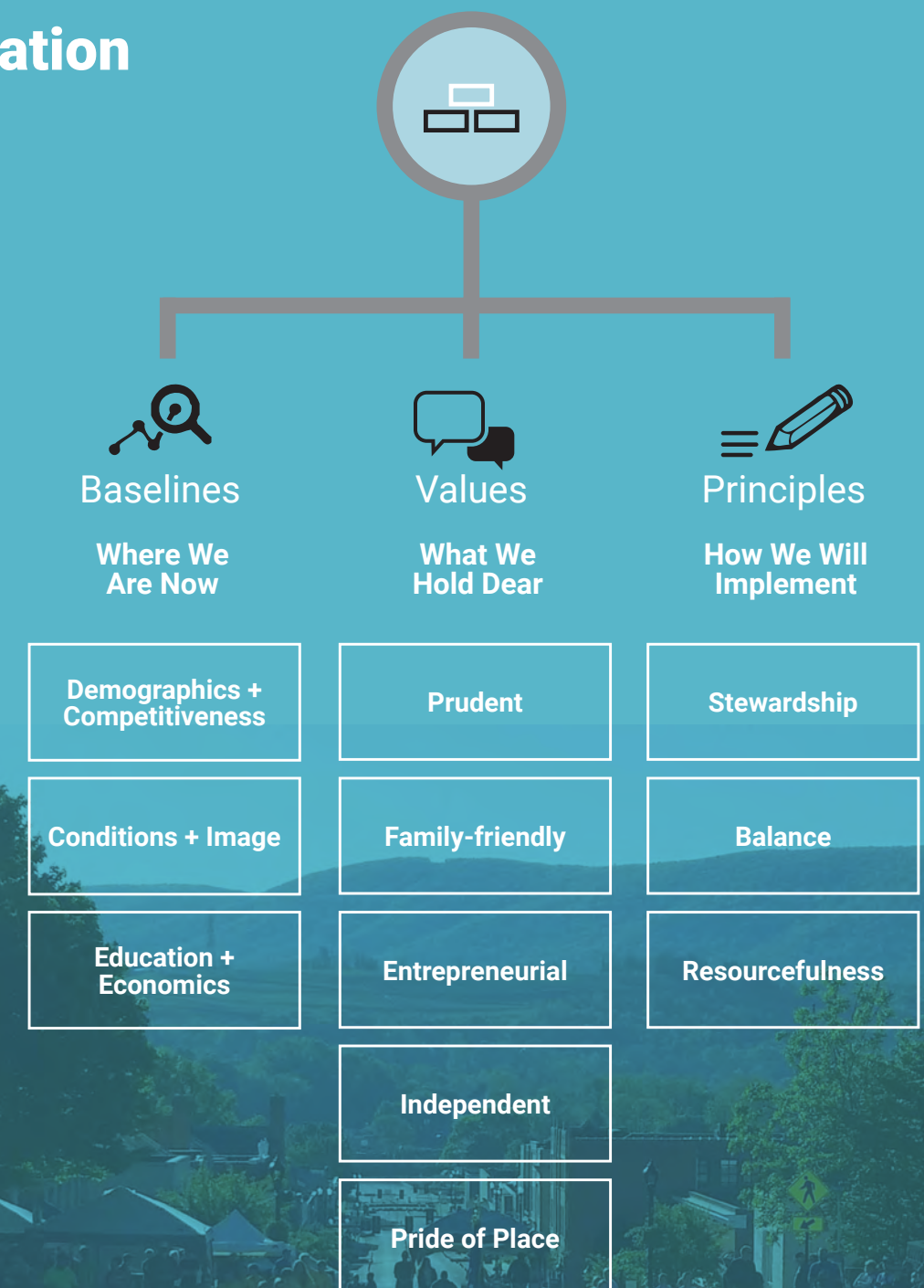
PART 1

Part One of the Comprehensive Plan - the Foundation - consists of the following three component subparts.

- **Baseline** conditions (current demographics, current financial capacity of the city, current market conditions).
- The community's **values** (what the community's fundamental beliefs are).
- The set of **planning principles** Waynesboro will apply as it implements this plan.



Foundation





Baselines

While there are many indicators that can be useful to tell the Waynesboro story, three especially influential baseline stories shape Waynesboro today:

Demographics and Competitiveness.

Today, Waynesboro has far fewer higher-income households than neighboring jurisdictions, even failing to capture higher-income earners who work in Waynesboro. This is important because it is an indicator of weak demand. It means households that have a choice are choosing to live elsewhere. Weak demand translates into lower property values and a smaller tax base, making life harder for the remaining residents. Because it also impacts classroom performance, and therefore the city's reputation and ability to compete for households for whom school quality is the most important factor in choosing where to live, Waynesboro's current demographic profile undermines the long term fiscal health of the city. Given the high cost of services to meet the challenges posed by struggling households - from housing to education to public safety - the city's current demographic profile is not economically sustainable. Repositioning Waynesboro in the region depends on how economically diverse the city becomes.

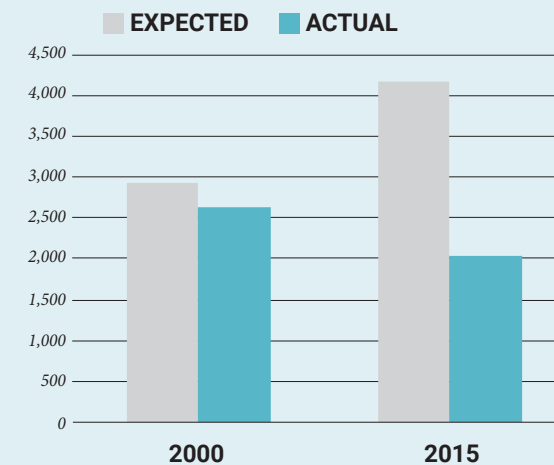
Education and Economics.

The national economy today is highly and increasingly reliant on and structured to reward the educational achievements of individual households. The more formal education - from college to technical - the greater the probability of higher earning power. This is a reality that has the effect of intensifying Waynesboro's current and growing demographic disadvantage. What is true of the national economy is also true of Virginia's and the region's. More education and more training mean more earning power. Households with more education and training - more earning power - have a greater capacity for reinvestment, not only in their own futures, but, importantly, in their communities. As well-trained and well-educated households make investments in their community - in their homes by higher levels of maintenance and more frequent upgrades, and in their cities by directing resources into schools and parks and infrastructure - existing assets become even more valuable. In turn, this fuels the feedback loop needed for economic durability. Making Waynesboro a community of choice for households with extensive technical training and education - the pre-requisites for high wages - is critical for the city's long term success. None of this is to suggest that less educated or less technical households should be replaced by educated or technical households. But rather that Waynesboro should aim to provide the quality life and sense of community that those households in the latter group desire. Adding them into the demographics of Waynesboro will provide a more robust and economically diverse community.

Conditions and Image.

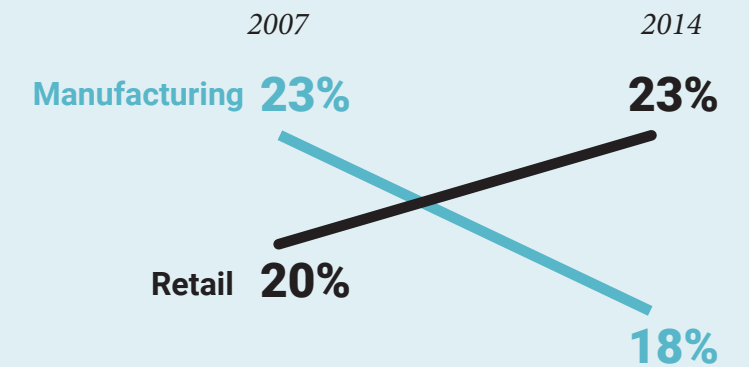
Much of Waynesboro is in good condition. Some blocks are in excellent shape. However, a significant portion of the city's real estate - public and private - has been long neglected, and it shows. Passing by vacant storefronts or dilapidated housing is a daily reminder to residents of Waynesboro's unrealized potential. Visitors will wonder why current residents and business owners don't appear to be reinvesting.

Waynesboro's share of college-educated adults in the region (ages 25-64) is smaller than its share of the overall population and has declined since 2000.



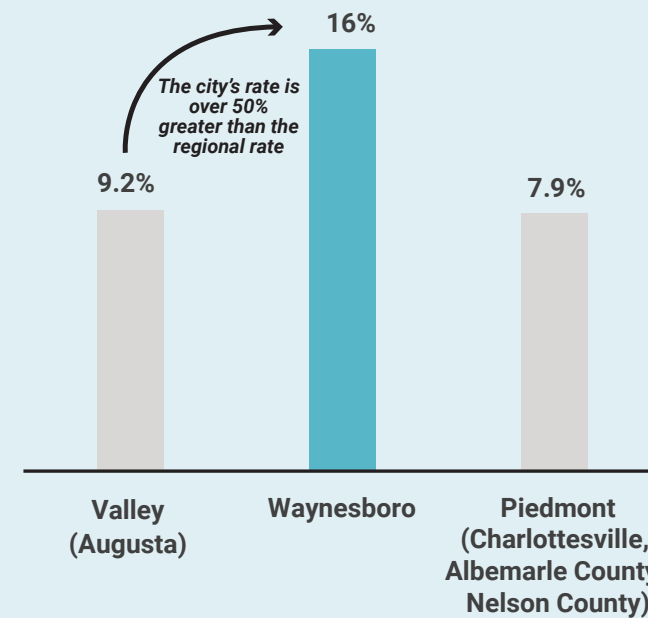
Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Retail replaced manufacturing as the largest source of employment between 2007 and 2014



Source: Census' County Business Patterns..

The number of individuals in poverty who live in Waynesboro is disproportionately large compared to the region.



Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Waynesboro's housing stock suffers from tens of millions in deferred maintenance - but property owners are holding back.

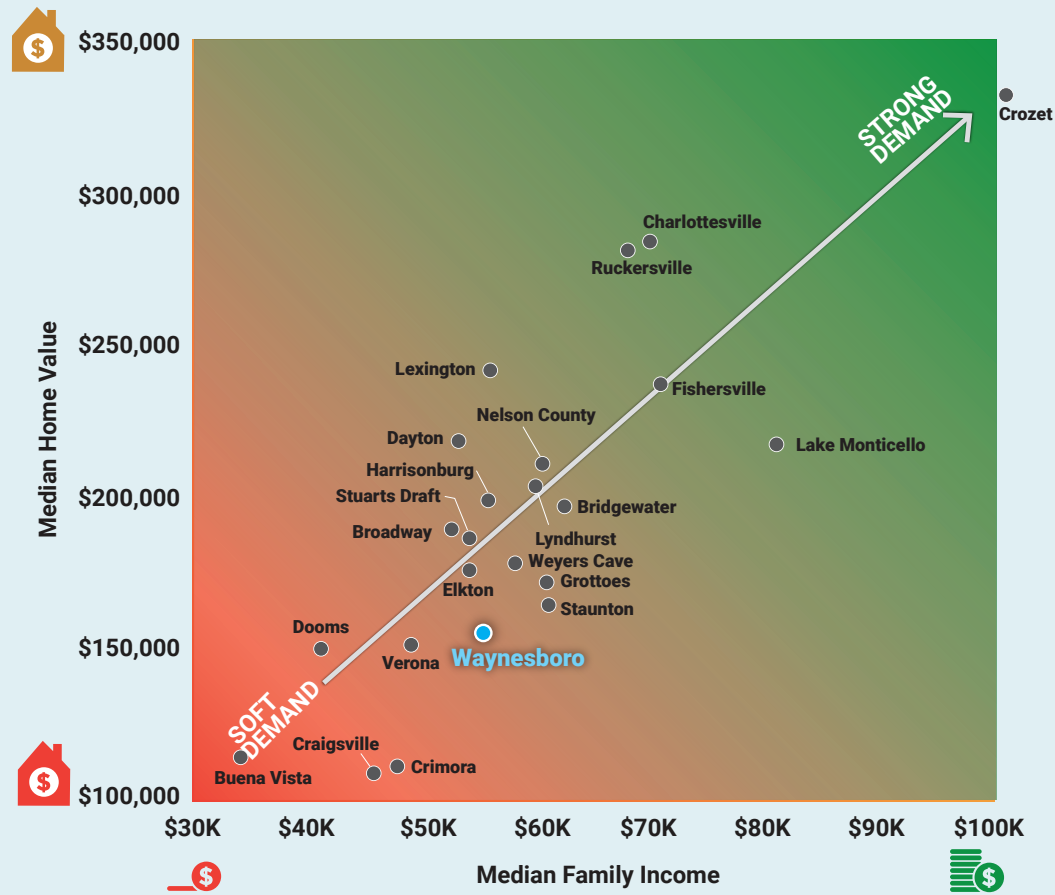
\$76 MILLION:
Estimated cost to remove blight and address deferred housing maintenance

\$34 MILLION:
Annual estimate of untapped housing expense capacity

Compared to other cities within the Commonwealth, Waynesboro's residents spend less on housing and housing maintenance -- 3.2 x household salary in Waynesboro vs. 3.9 x household salary in the Commonwealth. This suggests a lack of confidence in the local market/economy.

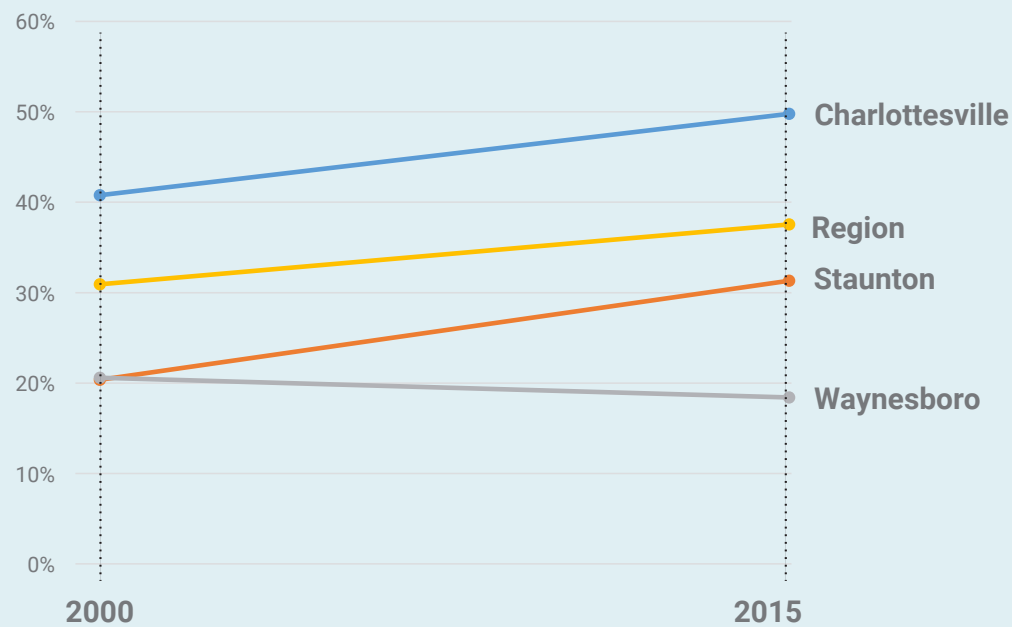
Family income distribution in the region is closely correlated with levels of housing demand and the expression of demand in terms of market value. In communities that successfully compete for families at higher income ranges, levels of investment in housing are greater, as are public revenues to reinvest into schools, infrastructure, and amenities.

MARKET SPECTRUM

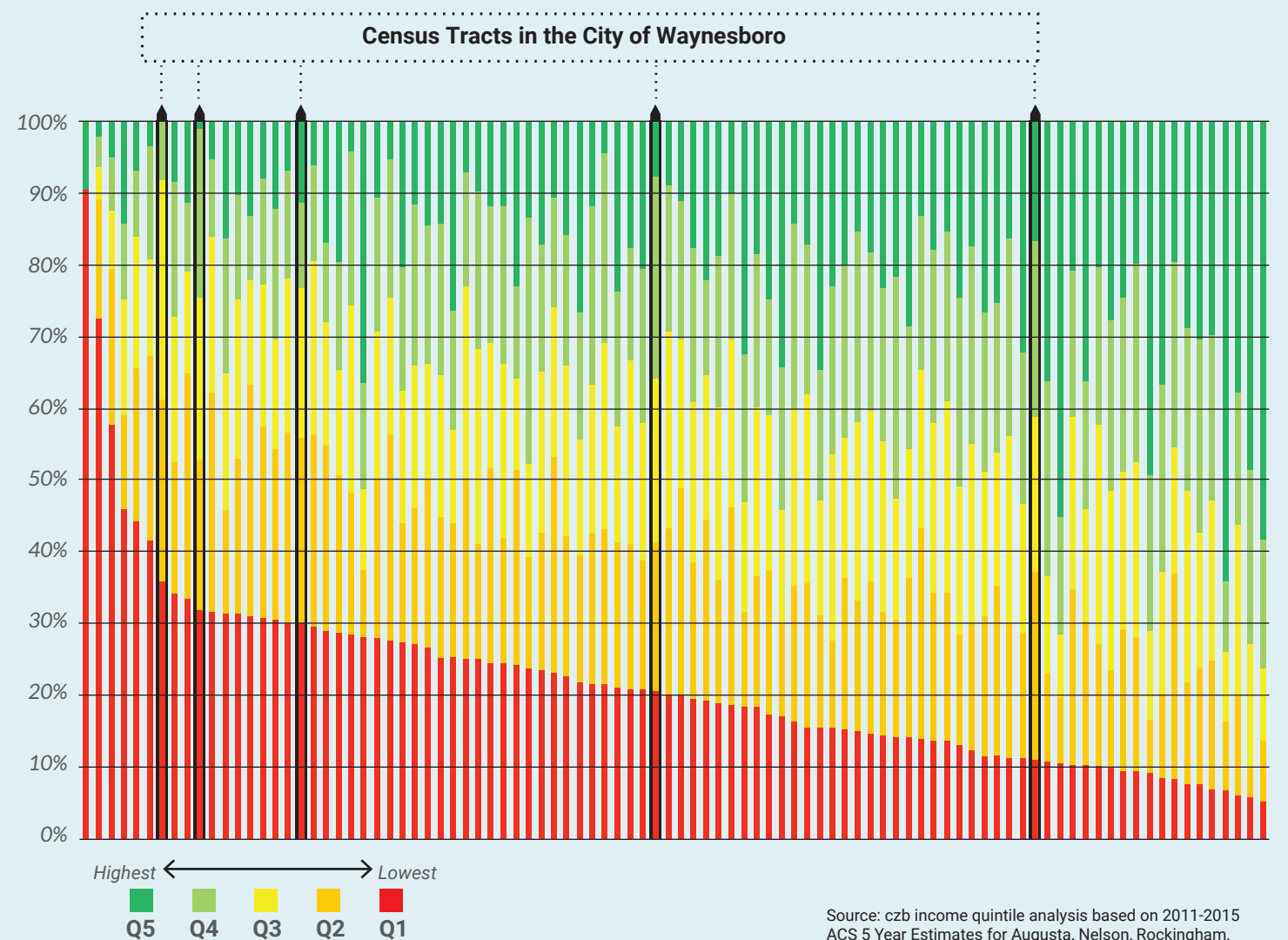


Waynesboro's income, poverty, and housing investment problems are reflected in its small (and declining) percentage of college graduates. In an economy that increasingly rewards a college education, Waynesboro's residents are not keeping up, and the city is not capturing enough of the region's college graduates.

PERCENTAGE CHANGE OF POPULATION 25 YRS AND OLDER WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE (2000 - 2015)

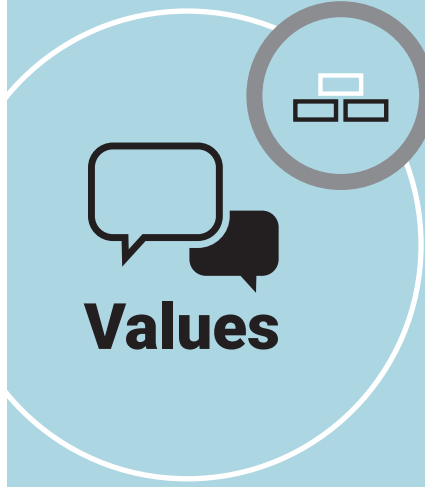


REGIONAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUINTILES BY CENSUS TRACT



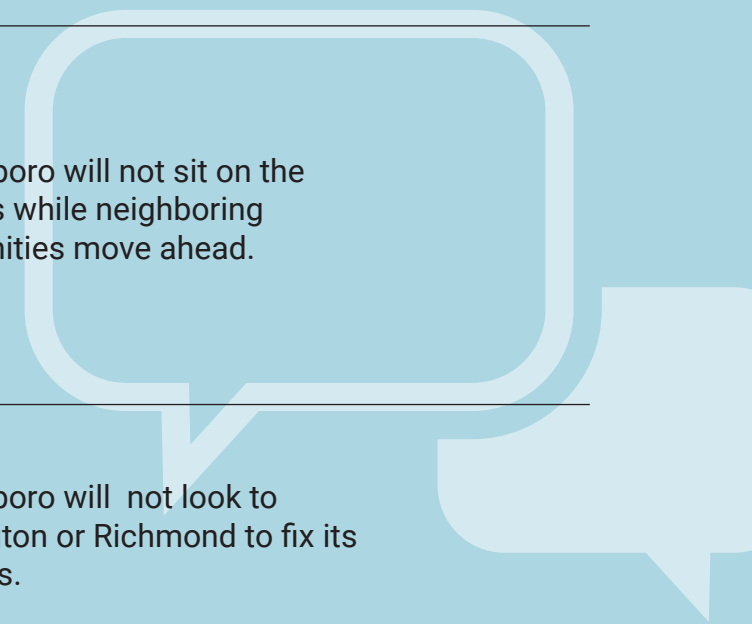
Source: czb income quintile analysis based on 2011-2015 ACS 5 Year Estimates for Augusta, Nelson, Rockingham, Greene, and Albemarle counties and independent cities of Waynesboro, Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, and Staunton. Each bar represents an individual census tract.

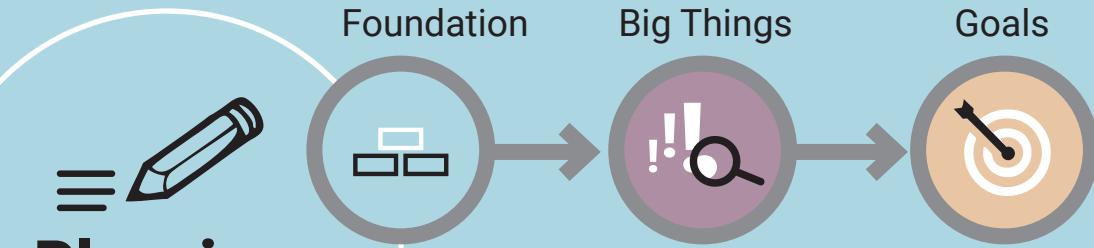
An analysis of income quintiles in the region around Waynesboro (where the 1st quintile represents the lowest 20% of households in terms of income, and the 5th quintile represents the top 20%) underscores Waynesboro's relatively weak competitive position in the region. Three of the city's five census tracts have among the region's highest concentrations of households in the lowest quintile. With 30% or more of households in the 1st quintile in those census tracts, levels of demand and investment are low.



Waynesboro's residents and business owners are a community with **shared values**. Five are especially important:

		We will...	We will not...
Prudent.	It is wise and cautious with the public's trust and resources. Change is welcome when at a pace the community can absorb. In practice going forward, this means Waynesboro will respond to its challenges carefully, and after study and deliberation, it will act prudently.	Waynesboro will catch up and keep up where needed.	Waynesboro will not saddle future generations with catch up expenses that make keeping up and getting ahead impossible.
Family-friendly.	Waynesboro is family-friendly. Being able to raise a family in a safe and nurturing community is very important. Civic life - from the Saturday farmer's market at the Pavilion, to the Run-The-Valley Race Series - is celebrated. In practice going forward, this means that Waynesboro's next steps as a community will be taken in partnership with the many religious and civic organizations that define community life, with the expressed aim of ensuring children in Waynesboro are able to succeed.	Waynesboro will put the future of our children at the top of our agenda.	Waynesboro will not tolerate unsafe conditions in our neighborhoods and housing where children cannot possibly succeed, nor will we accept a lack of progress in our schools.
Entrepreneurial.	Waynesboro has a can-do spirit. It is an entrepreneurial community, full of creativity and ingenuity, and a willingness to take risks when needed. Industry and small business have flourished despite the loss of Dupont. Indeed, after Dupont left, significant effort was required to stimulate the development of the Town Center, and rebuild the city's tax base. Whether the challenges have been natural or otherwise, the community has always found a way to come back. In practice going forward, this means the projects to be undertaken in the coming years will reflect the community's spirited commitment to becoming better and better.	Waynesboro will invest in projects that improve residential quality of life and grow the community's capacity to stimulate demand to invest in Waynesboro.	Waynesboro will not sit on the sidelines while neighboring communities move ahead.
Independent.	Waynesboro is a self reliant and independent community with a history of looking inward. It has repeatedly shown that it has the grit and resolution to face challenges. Waynesboro aims to set its own course, be financially self supporting, and to make its own way. In practice going forward, this means Waynesboro will enthusiastically partner, but first will aim for enduring sustainability by investing in itself using its own resources.	Waynesboro will leverage its ingenuity to seize opportunities and address challenges.	Waynesboro will not look to Washington or Richmond to fix its problems.
Pride of Place.	The Waynesboro community treasures its place in the Valley, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and along the South River. It takes great pride in its history and culture, geography, and place.	Waynesboro will respect its place, and will champion environmental stewardship based on a land ethic.	Make decisions not solely on the basis of economic self interest, but in consideration of integrity, stability, and beauty of Waynesboro natural setting.





Planning Principles

Going forward, Waynesboro will apply the following planning principles as it undertakes the projects identified in this plan, projects designed to make progress towards the city's goals, goals that have been stated and adopted by the city to ensure Waynesboro will be getting the big things right.



Stewardship.

It will look after public resources, the natural and built environment, human capital, and local culture. **In all efforts, Waynesboro must be careful and economical and remain committed to getting and staying ahead of maintenance costs.**



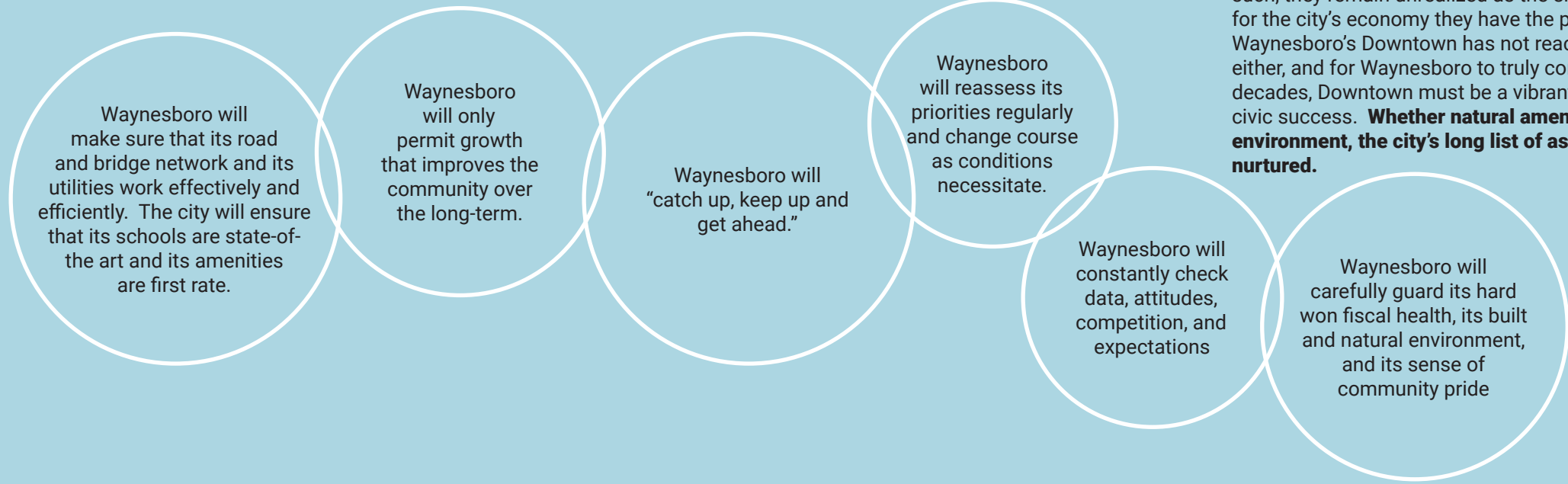
Balance.

Waynesboro will be balanced so it's not vulnerable in any one way. While a sustainable Waynesboro economy is one where there are jobs across several sectors, what's far more important is that workers across the Valley choose to live and raise their families in Waynesboro. **Right now, too few strong households are choosing Waynesboro, and so a commitment to achieving a sustainable demographic profile is critical.**



Resourcefulness.

Waynesboro will protect its natural assets that have gone unprotected for too long. The South River is a jewel any community in America would treasure and protect. Waynesboro must continue its efforts to expand its urban trout fishery, widen kayak access, and invest in its parks. The city's location at the base of Afton Mountain and its proximity to the Appalachian Trail, Skyline Drive and the Blue Ridge Parkway are also unleveraged. As such, they remain unrealized as the significant drivers for the city's economy they have the potential to be. Waynesboro's Downtown has not reached its potential either, and for Waynesboro to truly compete in the coming decades, Downtown must be a vibrant commercial and civic success. **Whether natural amenities or the built environment, the city's long list of assets much be nurtured.**



Waynesboro will make sure that its road and bridge network and its utilities work effectively and efficiently. The city will ensure that its schools are state-of-the-art and its amenities are first rate.

Waynesboro will only permit growth that improves the community over the long-term.

Waynesboro will "catch up, keep up and get ahead."

Waynesboro will reassess its priorities regularly and change course as conditions necessitate.

Waynesboro will constantly check data, attitudes, competition, and expectations

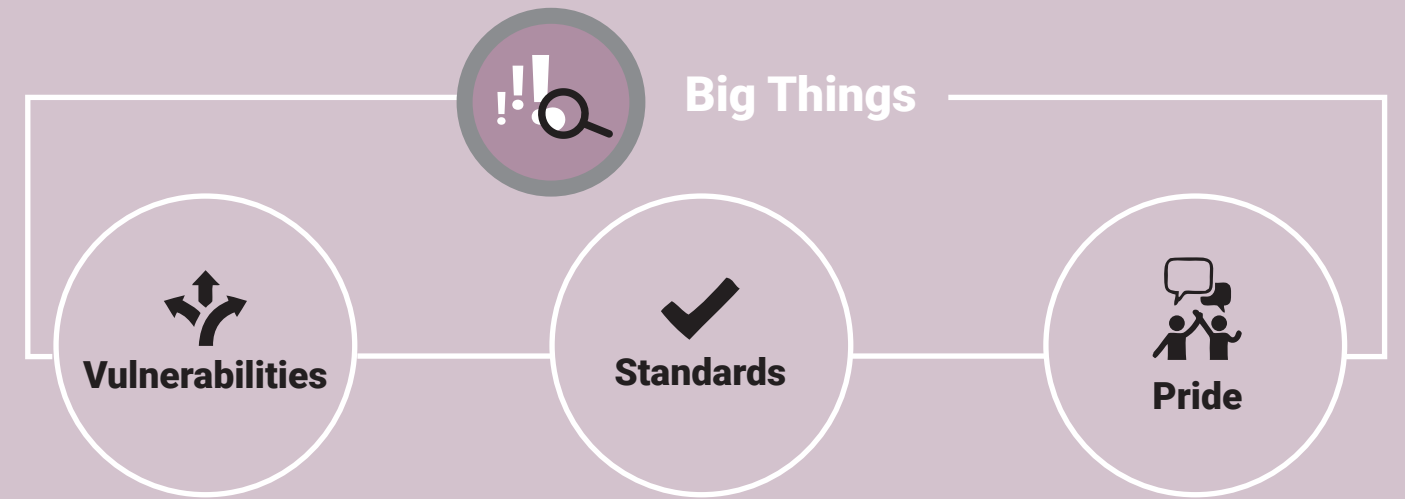
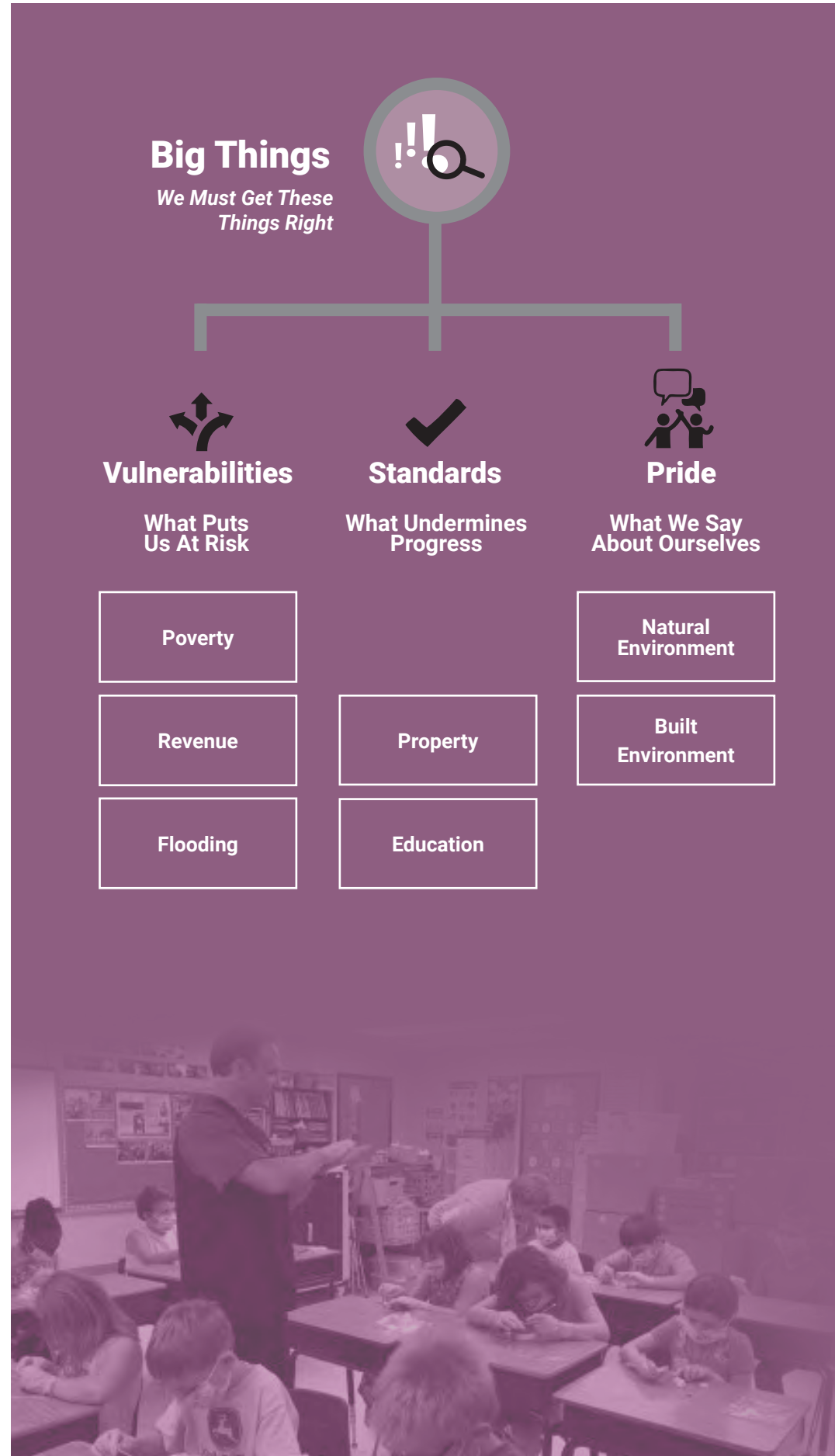
Waynesboro will carefully guard its hard won fiscal health, its built and natural environment, and its sense of community pride

Big Things

The second part of this plan builds upon and is an extension of the first. It consists of the three BIG THINGS Waynesboro absolutely must address now and get right.

Every effort must be made to:

- tackle lingering **vulnerabilities**
- set, maintain, and communicate high **standards**
- demonstrate **pride**



Waynesboro must be responsive to uncertainties.

Revenue.

The city relies heavily on sales and meals taxes, especially those from chains and franchises. An extremely dynamic commercial environment across the country combined with the temporary nature of big-box retail puts the city at fiscal risk.

Poverty.

Poverty has risen and is a growing concern. The city is and should continue to be an inclusive community but must address the issue of poverty head on. Jobs providing a living wage, housing assistance and daycare will be part of this multi-pronged approach.

Flooding.

A significant portion of Downtown remains vulnerable to flooding potential and all of its attendant consequences including reduced valuations for these properties. Few significant investments are going to occur anywhere that is likely to be flooded under current market conditions.

There are two areas where Waynesboro must succeed: housing property conditions and classroom performance.

Property.

The housing market is relatively weak, owing to falling standards of care and declining levels of property owner reinvestment. It is necessary to build a firm floor in the housing market, first by establishing standards beneath which the community will not allow property conditions to go, then by incentivizing reinvestment.

Education.

Student performance in the classroom has also fallen, in some cases to troublesome levels where basic accreditation is an issue. Closely tied to the city's changing demographics, many students come to school from extremely difficult family circumstances and are unprepared to succeed, with school readiness out of reach. These and issues of transience greatly challenge the ability of even the best teachers. It is essential that the school system have the resources to allow every student to succeed in Waynesboro Public Schools, regardless of family challenges.

Waynesboro takes great pride in its valley location but that pride is not translated to individual properties.

Natural Environment.

The South River is the city's greatest natural asset. Continue to make it even more accessible.

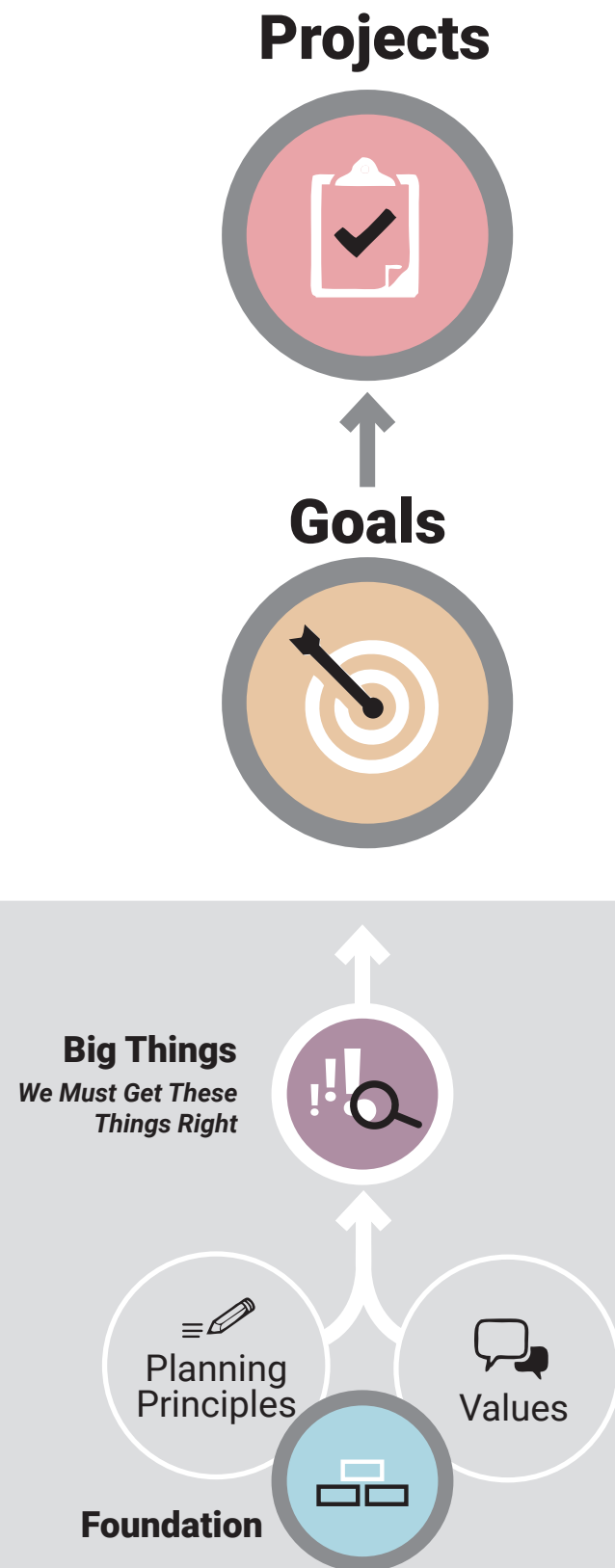
Built Environment.

Significant portions of the city's built environment have not fared well the past several decades. Public facilities such as the high school, private property such as empty strip shopping centers, and poorly maintained housing have become the norm on too many blocks that are visible to too many. This requires attention.

PART 2

In view of where Waynesboro is today - at a crossroads with strengths and vulnerabilities, its core values and planning principles, and the big things it absolutely must get right - this plan establishes **five goals** that the community must work to achieve.

When the community's core values and planning principles are applied to these goals and attached to a commitment to get the big things right, a resulting slate of **priority projects** emerges.



Goals

The goals in this plan are intentionally **S-M-A-R-T**, that is they are **Specific, Measurable, Ambitious yet achievable, Relevant and Time-bound**. Some are outputs, some are outcomes, but all are goals the achievement of which will have a positive impact.





Goals & Measurements of Success



Education

Performance

- **By 2022**, all Waynesboro Schools will be fully accredited by the 2022 state and federal accreditation standards.
- **By 2027**, all seniors will graduate with the qualifications to enter the workforce and/or to enter college.

Facilities

- **By 2028** all educational facilities in Waynesboro will be caught up in terms of maintenance and capital improvements.



Economic

Locational Optimization

- **By 2019** optimize area around exit 96.
- **By 2019**, the City will have procured a small area plan for the exit 94 area.
- **By 2020** advance construction of the Waynesboro extension of the Virginia Natural History Museum by increasing the local share of funding.
- **By 2020**, the City will have procured an analysis of the risk of flooding Downtown.
- **By 2023** construction of a trail to the Crozet Tunnel will have been started.

Downtown

- **By 2025**, Wayne Avenue between Broad and Federal and Main Street between Wayne and Arch will have a 90% storefront occupancy rate by tenants paying market rate rents.

Revenue Shift

- **By 2020**, the city will make progress towards indexing property tax rates to the General Fund and towards sequestering sales and meals taxes into a discrete Comprehensive Plan Implementation Fund to be used solely for the purpose of making “Catch Up” and “Get Ahead” investments.



Infrastructure

Roads and Bridges

- Continue to participate with VDOT.
- During the period **2018-2023**, continue to monitor the funding gap that exists in the transportation maintenance area (pavement maintenance, signals, bridges, alleys) and develop a plan that by CY 2028 will result in 80% of the roads and 100% of the city’s bridges will be of an adequate condition using the standard Pavement Management System.
- **By 2022** East Main between city limits and Arch and Broad between Arch and Dupont will have been redeveloped to an “A” standard and have achieved landmark aesthetic quality on par with the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Sidewalks and Trees

- Adopt and implement the draft 2016 Sidewalk Plan.
- Create a street tree planting plan that complements the Sidewalk Plan.



Quality of Life

Parks and Trails

- **By 2021** the city’s park system will be expanded to include the new Sunset Park.
- **By 2021** the existing trail system will be extended north to Ridgeview Park and south to Basic Park.
- **By 2023** the city’s park system will be expanded to include a redeveloped Constitution Park that will extend from the South River to Arch Avenue.
- **By 2028** 100% of residential addresses in Waynesboro will be less than one mile from an access point to an interconnected, circumferential citywide trail network.

Corridors

- **By 2028** Main Street between Arch, and Wayne will have been redesigned to enable installation of street trees.
- **By 2028** a median with street trees will have been installed along Broad Street between Wayne and Arch.



Neighborhoods

Residential Values

- **By 2025** the median sales value for single family detached homes will be equal to, or greater than the average for the region.
- **By 2025** the median rent for a two bedroom apartment will be equal to, or greater than the average for the region.

Safety

- **By 2025**, the rate of all Part 1 and 2 Uniform Crime Reports Offenses will be decreased by 20%.

Neighborhoods

- **By 2025** all properties that scored 4 (distressed) or 5 (severely distressed) in the 2017 evaluation will have been upgraded to, at least a 3 (moderate), or demolished.

Rental Property Impacts

- **By 2020** all rental properties will have been registered with the city by a legal agent for the owner, subject to on-going inspection requirements.

Projects



To attain these five goals - summarized as raising the quality of the city's schools, leveraging the city's locational value, investing in the city's infrastructure, increasing the quality of life for residents of Waynesboro, and strengthening the city's housing market - this plan outlines the specific priority projects that must now be undertaken.



Education

To achieve the goals established for school/student performance and for the quality of the city's educational facilities, the following projects are scheduled.

- Design, fully fund, and launch a Best-in-Valley for the Best Teachers Compensation Package by 2020, and thereafter maintain Best-in-Valley status.
- Perform necessary repairs to Waynesboro High School sufficient for five years; meanwhile saving enough annually to start substantial rehabilitation in 2023 designed for completion by 2028.
- Invest in school readiness, and other educational improvements.
- Evaluate the merits of revising the current school catchment area designations by 2020.



Economic

Waynesboro will be on a solid economic footing when businesses can grow and when visitors discover the city is significantly reinvesting in itself. To achieve the goals established to maximize Waynesboro's locational value and the the performance of Downtown real estate, the following projects are scheduled.

- Begin pump station installation at the Industrial Park, completing installation by the time VDOT completes the road. Have efficient cost-effective infrastructure in place to market the area.
- By putting an increased share of the city's own funds into the project, expedite planning and development of the Virginia Natural History Museum.
- Develop plans to begin construction in 2023 of a connection to the Crozet Tunnel from Jones Hollow.
- With city funds, increase by 2025 the small business loan capacity for Downtown businesses on Main and on Wayne by growing the real estate development loan ceiling to \$200,000 (capacity of five), raising business expansion loans to \$100,000 (capacity of 10), and increasing working capital lines to \$50,000 (capacity of 20).
- Procure a high quality analysis of the risk of flooding Downtown.



Infrastructure

The city's economic foundation will be secure in direct proportion to the degree to which its long term physical assets are in excellent condition. To achieve the goals of increasing the performance and aesthetic quality of the city's infrastructure, the following projects are scheduled.

- Monitor the funding gap that exists in the transportation maintenance area (pavement maintenance, signals, bridges, alleys).
- Develop a plan that by CY 2028 will result in 100% of the roads being adequate using PMS (Pavement Management System) standards.
- Adopt and implement a sidewalk plan and complete by CY 2028.
- Begin installing street trees at a rate necessary to achieve 30% canopy coverage in Waynesboro's developed areas by 2028, and a 40% rate by 2040. Cursory GIS data indicate the city is currently at approximately 25% tree coverage. The city should have a complete LIDAR mapping assessment to ascertain the exact coverage percent.
- Redevelop East Main Street between Jones Hollow and Arch Avenue, and Broad Street between Arch Avenue and Dupont Avenue to a standard to achieve landmark aesthetic quality on par with the Blue Ridge Parkway. Where Jones Hollow almost abuts East Main Street, establish a quality trailhead leading to an eventual trail to the Crozet Tunnel. Construction for this should start no later than 2023 and consider a connection to the new Sunset Park.



Quality of Life

Residential quality of life will be dramatically increased upon greater development of the city's parks and upon expansion of the city's trail network. It will be further increased by additional community policing, and by increased code enforcement capacity. To achieve these goals, the following projects are scheduled.

- Complete the re/development of Constitution Park from South River to Arch Avenue by 2023 in a manner to absorb the new Natural History Museum, and at a landmark aesthetic quality on par with the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- Complete the development of Sunset Park by 2021. Work with the railroad management organization to explore opportunities to develop a trail to connect to East Main Street and the forthcoming Jones Hollow Trail.
- Extend trail system upstream to Ridgeview Park and downstream to Basic Park by 2021.
- Plan for and adequately resource the completion of a city-circumference trail by 2028.
- Waynesboro will launch the Best-in-Valley 1st Responder Compensation Package by 2020.



Neighborhoods

Property owners will be investing their time, energy, and money into their homes and businesses, with confidence that it makes increasing sense to do so. This level of confidence in the city's housing markets will be supported by strong code enforcement, increased police presence, and partnership between the city and owners aimed at increasing reinvestment rates.

- Expedite condemnation of the most distressed properties while increasing resources to ensure property maintenance citywide.
- Address blighting properties by condemning the most distressed homes.
- Provide matching grants to strong home owners willing to make improvements to their properties.
- Provide matching grants to good rental property owners willing to make improvements to their properties.
- Implement a citywide rental property registration and inspection program.
- Step Up Code Enforcement Procedures

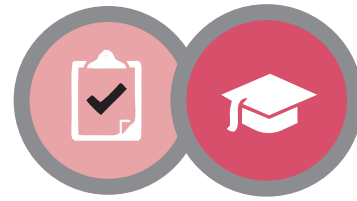
City Effectiveness



The challenge of implementing this plan requires additional staffing. Such an expansion of staffing will greatly increase capacity while accelerating attainment of goals.

- At the following estimated levels and subject to the confirmation of staff experts in the relevant departments, add Full Time Employees and/or subcontractors as needed to achieve and when possible reduce the costs of continued dependency on external funding and/or implementation partners.
 - Public Works (5 by 2021)
 - Police (3 by 2020)
 - Public Schools (5 by 2018)
 - Building and Zoning(3 by 2018)
 - Parks/Recreation (3 by 2020)
- Throughout the planning process, "Leroy's Crew" was a commonly referenced group of past city employees who were remembered for their ability to get the job done. They were not confined by city department silos or similar bureaucracy -- consider a second act for a new group of hires.

Education Projects



The Challenge

Education must be addressed in Waynesboro's comprehensive plan for several reasons. The physical condition of the high school requires considerable resources, thereby compelling the city to prioritize. Test scores at every grade level are among the lowest in the state, compelling the city to act. Enrollment is slipping, which by formula translates into fewer state education resources, thus requiring the city to pay attention to the relationship of school

performance to demographics. Two clear challenges result. First, the city's educational facilities need to be upgraded. This constitutes a capital expense at the front end and adequate operational funds on an on-going basis. Second, performance needs to improve, and dramatically. Waynesboro's children are not doing as well in school as they need to. Though some go on to excel, many who enter the Waynesboro school system

today come unprepared to take advantage of the city's excellent faculty and curriculum. In point of fact:

1. Too many of the children who are entering Waynesboro's elementary schools are not coming poised to succeed.

Teachers alone cannot engineer, much less provide, enough compensatory help to enable every child to succeed. Robust community-school partnerships are needed.

2. A significant number of Waynesboro's elementary school age children are not doing well in the basics.

A community partnership on behalf of Waynesboro's children must extend through elementary school so students begin to enter middle school at a level of preparedness on par with the state.

3. Waynesboro's middle school children are not performing in the classroom at a level they need to become successful in high school.

A community partnership on behalf of elementary students must extend through the 7th grade so children are able to enter high school predictably able to succeed. As in the elementary schools, there is a need for additional personnel to address special learning challenges many students bring to Kate Collins.

4. High school students are not graduating at high enough rates.

As greater success in elementary and middle school occurs, it can be anticipated that significant improvement in Waynesboro's on-time high school graduation rate and college readiness will result.

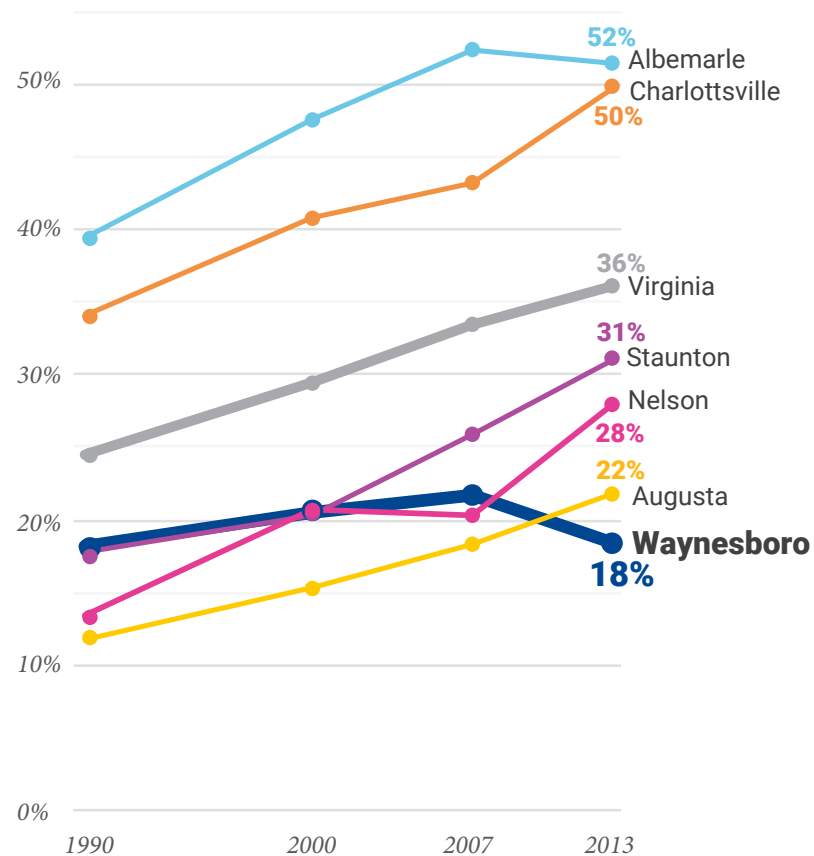
The Significance of Addressing the Educational Challenge

These two challenges - bringing school facilities up to date and improving performance outcomes - are priorities. A high school where hallways are lined with buckets to catch rain coming in from a leaky roof is a serious problem; but what's more serious is that this is not a new problem. Test scores that show Waynesboro's students are performing never better than at the top of the bottom third in the state. This is a serious problem. Nor is this a new challenge, reflecting a deeper, more serious dilemma illustrating a long running lack of commitment to education in Waynesboro that cannot continue. This was not always the case. During the Dupont era, the city's schools were recognized as some of the best in the region. But that recognition ended more than two decades, a full generation, ago.

Poor quality facilities and low average proficiency reflect and shape the city's housing market, the city's neighborhoods, the city's demographics, and the community as a whole. Both have a deeply intertwined influence on how well or how poorly Waynesboro competes in the Valley. Both require time and resources, though the impacts from positive action will differ. As demand for housing in Waynesboro has failed to keep pace against competition in the region, an important reason is that schools in Waynesboro are not viewed by the area-wide market as an asset, and the reason for this is that right now, they objectively aren't. At it stands today, neither performance nor facilities are good enough to help Waynesboro compete, so this requires immediate attention.



Percent of Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher



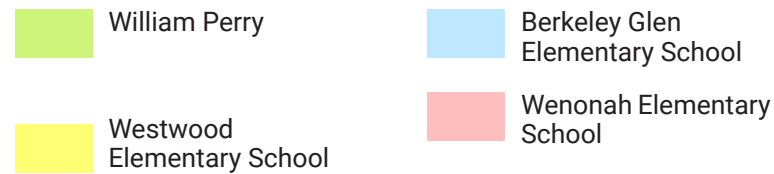


Education Priority Projects

There is **catch up** work to do - overdue facility renovations and improving student proficiency. There are **keep up** challenges - maintaining facilities and being responsive to shifting demographics. And there are **get ahead** opportunities - curriculum refinement, teacher compensation, and reorganization.



Evaluate the merits of revising the current school catchment area designations



1. Design and in 2020 launch and market a Best-in-Valley for the Best Teachers Compensation Package.

Why It's Important

Waynesboro teachers are not as well compensated as other districts. It is critical to offer teachers in Waynesboro compensation that enables Waynesboro to compete for the best teachers in the state.

➔
Catch up

2. Repair high school as needed while saving to be in an adequate position to pay for/finance substantial renovations or a new school in 2023.

Why It's Important

Basic learning is impeded given the current physical condition of Waynesboro High School. There is a fundamental expectation, and rightly so, that the school is in a condition conducive to learning. That is not the case at the present time.

➔
Catch up

3. Ensure that all seniors graduate with the qualification to enter the workforce and/or college by 2027.

Why It's Important

School readiness matters and Waynesboro must continue to improve in this regard. Whether a student desires to move directly to the workforce upon graduation from high school or begin a college program, a fundamental skill set is imperative for success.

➔
Catch up

4. Evaluate the merits of revising the current school catchment area designations.

Why It's Important

School district boundaries must reflect the unique diversity and geography that is Waynesboro. Resources and opportunities should be equal in all districts.

↗
Get Ahead



Economic Projects



The Challenge

The competitiveness gap between Waynesboro and many of its neighbors is reflected by two notable demographic realities.

First, the number of college graduates in Waynesboro between the ages of 25 and 64 (2,025) is only half of what it would be if the region's college graduates were distributed proportionately (4,170). By not retaining and attracting a fair share of households that already live nearby and have higher than average levels of household income, Waynesboro is at a fiscal disadvantage when it comes to having the means to invest in the quality-of-life amenities that in turn, will positively influence future demand.

Second, Waynesboro's industrial legacy and soft market conditions – resulting in a relatively old and inexpensive housing stock – have given the city an outsize share of families living in poverty and whose options are highly constrained. Currently, the poverty rate for individuals in Waynesboro (16%) is 53% higher than the rate for Augusta County.

Indeed, the state average across Virginia for households with a college degree is 36.9% and rising, the seventh highest in the United States. Staunton's rate is 31.3%, Fishersville's 34%, Charlottesville's is 49.8%, Crozet's is 50.8%, and Harrisonburg's is 35.8%. By contrast, Waynesboro's is 18.4%. The percentage of households with college degrees are rising everywhere but Waynesboro. One way to have a fair share of households with a college degree across the region is for Waynesboro to find a way for more than 1,500 strong families to want to move to and raise families in Waynesboro. If Harrisonburg, Charlottesville, and Crozet are subtracted from these considerations, Waynesboro is still 748 households short of a fair share in this regard. What all of this means is that Waynesboro is having to grapple with greater levels of need - housing, educational, public safety - than the rest of the region, and do so with fewer resources.

Waynesboro is in a cut-throat competition for businesses and households – especially for those that have options in today's economy and are able to take their purchasing power, investment capacity, and social capital elsewhere. For those who choose small town life in the Shenandoah Valley and the Piedmont region of Virginia, Waynesboro is one of many good options. A company that can be in Waynesboro can also just as easily be in Harrisonburg or Charlottesville. A family that can move to Waynesboro

can find excellent options in Fishersville or Staunton. Waynesboro will have to invest heavily in quality of life projects such as trails and streetscape improvements to provide new residents the level of services they expect before they will move to the community and start a business.

Today, demand for places such as Staunton, Crozet, and Charlottesville is simply stronger among well educated workers than is demand for Waynesboro. Consequently, while Waynesboro is succeeding on some levels, it remains one of the region's softer markets.

While part of Waynesboro's demographic disadvantage is a result of superior competition, it also stems from the nature of a shifting economy. A large manufacturing sector that accounted for 23% of all jobs as recently as 2007 shrank to 18% by 2014 – closer to the state and national average. The loss of 500 manufacturing jobs over that period was offset by jobs gained in other sectors – including retail, which surpassed manufacturing's share of the local job market. But the rise of retail jobs – themselves vulnerable to national trends – has reinforced the emergence of low-wage jobs as a significant piece of Waynesboro's economy. One-third of Waynesboro's employed residents are in low-wage jobs compared to just 24% of employed residents in Augusta County.

The paradox of healthy employment levels (unemployment is now less than 5% in Waynesboro) mixed with low or stagnant wages is a nationwide challenge. But it is not a challenge that will be addressed locally by hoping for the next large employer to come to town. Nor will Waynesboro be fundamentally more competitive so long as less than 20% of the adult population has a college degree, and less than 25% of Waynesboro High's graduating seniors are measurably college ready.

The time when a community could be economically self sufficient without having an exceptionally well educated labor force has long passed. Progress for Waynesboro will come by acknowledging Waynesboro's connectedness to the global economy, and the market's need to attract entrepreneurs and skilled workers. Progress will also be enhanced by catching up on years of deferred reinvestment, in both the city's physical assets and the city's workforce.

The Significance of Addressing the Economic Challenge

Competing successfully in the Valley for strong households is essential. Continuing to diversify the jobs base in Waynesboro is important. Improving the city's image by continually reinvesting in the city's infrastructure and housing and storefronts has to occur if the city is to be competitive. There are some aspects of a city's economy that are within its control, and others that are not, and everything is along a continuum. **But the bottom line is this: the single best of many good predictors of the vibrancy and durability of a local economy in 2017 is the level of total educational attainment of its citizens.** This profoundly impacts the attractiveness of a city's workforce, its business climate, and its level of entrepreneurial activity (research and development, patent volume, technology, startup frequency and success). And a city can increase its level of overall educational essentially in two ways: it can get there by homegrown means – by education and retention – or by in-migration. Waynesboro must take steps to make progress in both areas.





Economic Priority Projects

There is **catch up** work to do - investing in education at unprecedented levels. There are **keep up** challenges - getting the Industrial Park into position to succeed. And there are **get ahead** opportunities - investing in Downtown physically and in business development and expansion, and by growing Waynesboro's relationship to the mountains and the South River and the natural environment in general.



Proposed



Current

View South on Arch Avenue (New Museum)

1. Consistent with VDOT road installation plans, schedule continued maintenance in the Industrial Park.

Why It's Important

Protecting previous investments in the Industrial Park and growing its capacity to succeed in attracting businesses and thus jobs is important. A modest investment to bring the Industrial Park to a level necessary to compete in the Valley brings the existing cost/future potential benefit ratio into a range Waynesboro can afford.

→
Keep up

2. Increase the city's share of the projected cost of developing the National History Museum in order to expedite design and construction, and hasten its opening.

Why It's Important

Interpretive strategies by museums and parks to advance cultural learning are a key part of linking Waynesboro to its geography, and will have a clear role in revitalizing Downtown, strengthening the city's relationship with the South River, and using the built environment to affirm these connections.

↗
Get Ahead



3. Develop plans to extend the city's trail system from Jones Hollow to the Crozet Tunnel.

Why It's Important

The uniqueness of the Crozet Tunnel - culturally, geographically, physically, historically — mean it is an economic development opportunity waiting to be tapped. When complete, residents and visitors will have significantly extended the city's connectivity to the Blue Ridge Mountains and to the economic opportunities that will accompany exploration of the area from both Nelson and Augusta counties.

↗
Get Ahead



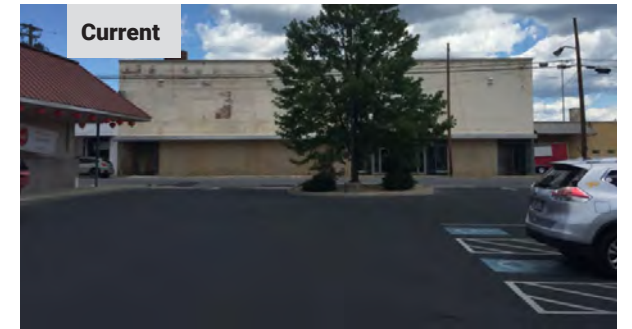


Proposed

4. Significantly increase the financial capacity of the Waynesboro Economic Development Authority to invest equity and make loans towards business development and expansion Downtown.

View from Kroger (north to Main Street)

This illustrates one possibility to connect Kroger to Main Street via demolition of the Leggett Building and adding a north/south connection. Other options should be considered as well.



Current

Why It's Important

Current vacancy rates along Wayne Avenue and Main Street are too high to communicate success and too low for either corridor to obtain the leasing momentum needed for Downtown to be vibrant, much less sustainably so. Key buildings need to become flood proof if not redeveloped outright. A parking garage will eventually be needed. Existing businesses that are succeeding need help expanding, and entrepreneurs in the Valley on the sideline need encouragement to locate Downtown. Current capacity by the WED to provide sufficient incentives for these ambitions is far too low and must be increased dramatically.

 **Get Ahead**

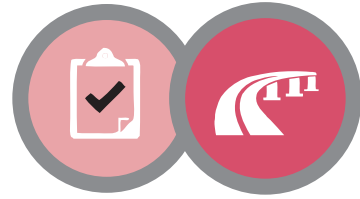
5. Address revenue vulnerabilities posted by reliance on the Town Center and similar suburban-style commercial development.

Why It's Important

Waynesboro is vulnerable to a fast changing retail landscape and property taxes are not indexed in a rational way to the the actual costs of running the city, yet should be.

 **Get Ahead**

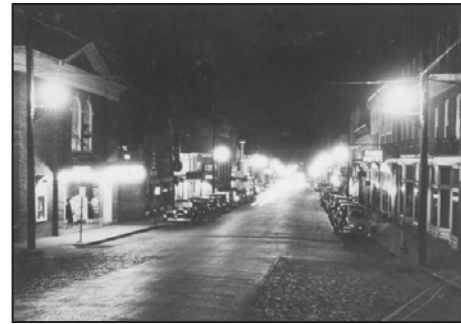
Infrastructure Projects



The Challenge

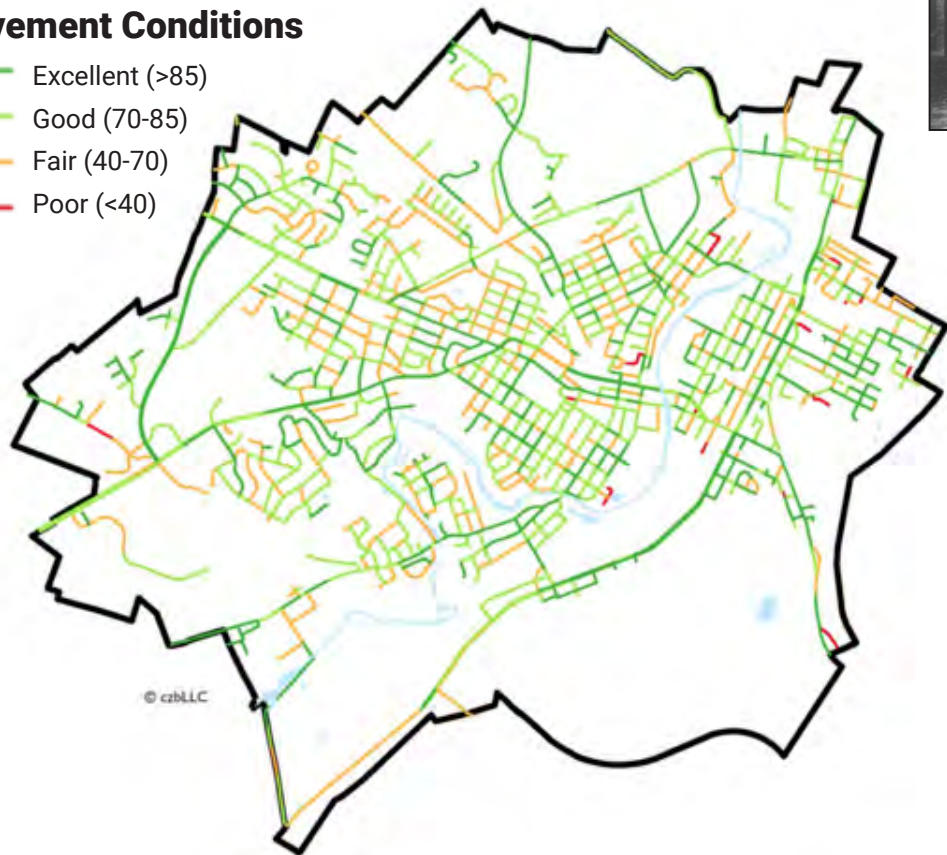
Entering Waynesboro should be as beautiful and welcoming as entering Shenandoah National Park at Rockfish Gap. Roads and bridges in Waynesboro should evoke the Blue Ridge Parkway, and let everyone - residents and visitors alike - feel special in Waynesboro.

This level of finish needs to go hand in hand with the degree to which city roads and bridges and sidewalks are up to date, fully on or ahead of maintenance schedules. Waynesboro's roads and bridges are in very good shape overall, though additional resources to stay on top of costs on an annual basis are in order. The essence of the challenge for the city's infrastructure is less pressing than for the city's schools and housing, and different. Here, maintenance is less the issue than finding ways to significantly increase the capacity of the city to redevelop its infrastructure to a landmark level of aesthetic quality befitting a gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains, and build a community consensus that aesthetic quality is important enough to pay for.



Pavement Conditions

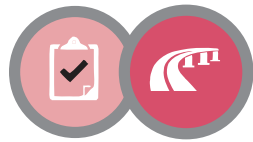
- Excellent (>85)
- Good (70-85)
- Fair (40-70)
- Poor (<40)



The Significance of Addressing the Infrastructure Challenge

Waynesboro communicates function. It communicates a basic-ness. Its stubbornly vacant Downtown, worn building envelopes on key entryways, notably missing tree canopy, lack of easily grasped center and edges, and persistently vacant buildings all notify visitors that the vibrancy they seek might just as well be found elsewhere. There are too many signals sent that say "we're not worth it" and the many roads and bridges that link the Valley to the Mountains exist as significant opportunities to communicate otherwise. Stonework, street tree installation, signage, and artistic notes all can have a profound and positive impact on the City's image. Waynesboro's infrastructure is probably the city's best opportunity to quickly and durably claim a place on the podium. Doing so will be neither cheap nor easy but what the Waynesboro community must do is convey that it is worthy. The most important rule of investing is that capital follows capital. Making holistic investments in itself will yield considerable rewards. Half measures will accomplish very little at best or nothing at worst.





Infrastructure Priority Projects

There is catch up work to do - bringing road and bridge schedules fully up to date. There are keep up challenges - setting aside enough resources annually to maintain roads and bridges at the optimum level. And there are get ahead opportunities - investing in aesthetic beauty to help make Waynesboro as charming its setting and the market demands.

1. Monitor the funding gap that exists for transportation maintenance and develop a solid and accountable plan to stay ahead of infrastructure needs, specifically roads. This will require increased funding from the City.

Why It's Important

Like taking care of a home's roof *before it rains*, getting and staying ahead of the cost curve on expensive public works obligations is one the best investments Waynesboro can make.

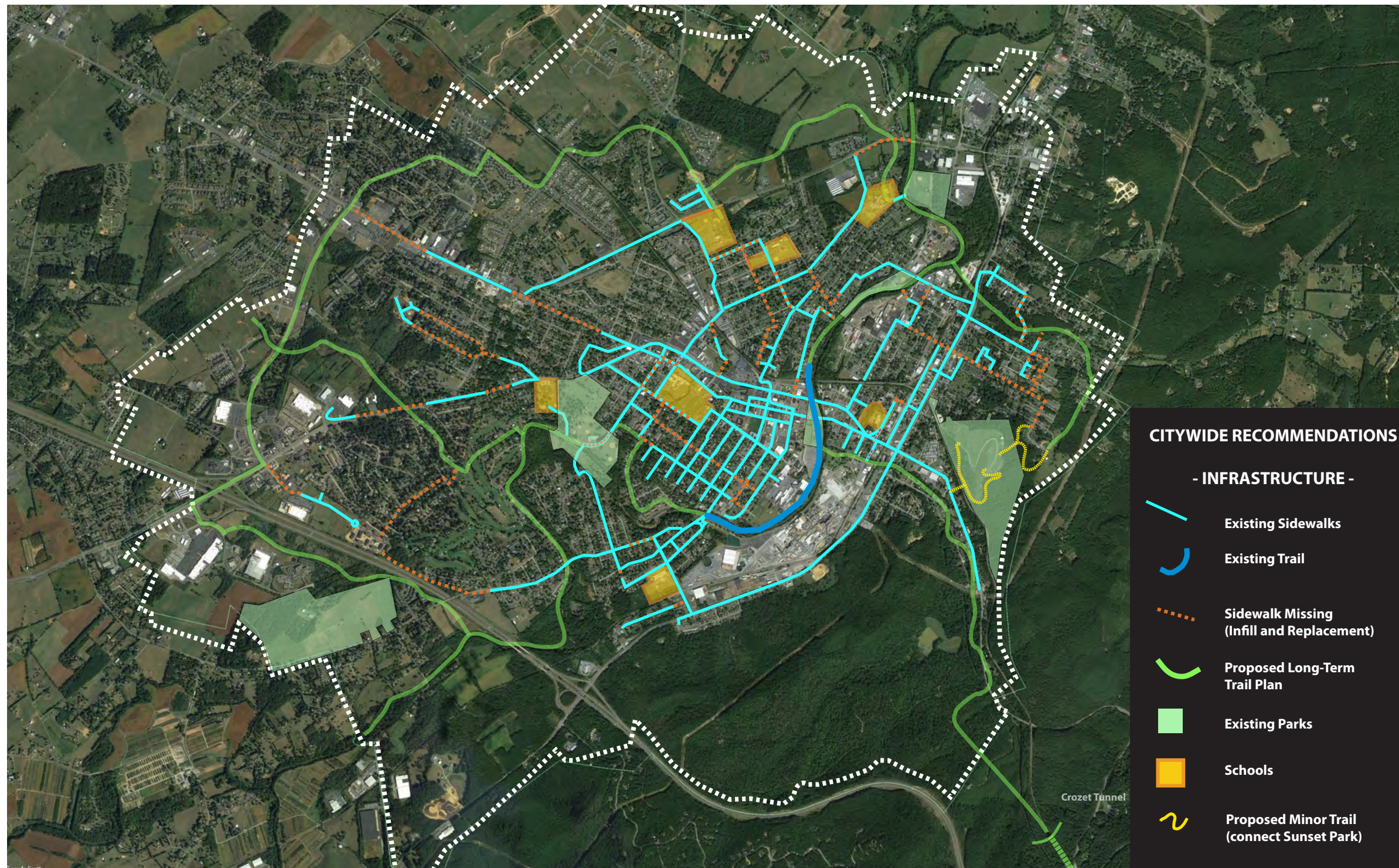
→
Catch up

2. Adopt and Implement a Sidewalk Plan. This will require the city to increase its city sidewalk budget from the current level.

Why It's Important

The City's sidewalks offer users of all ages the opportunity to get around town without the dependency of the automobile. The gaps in sidewalk connectivity create safety concerns for the end user and these gaps, should be completed within the next 10 years.

→
Keep up



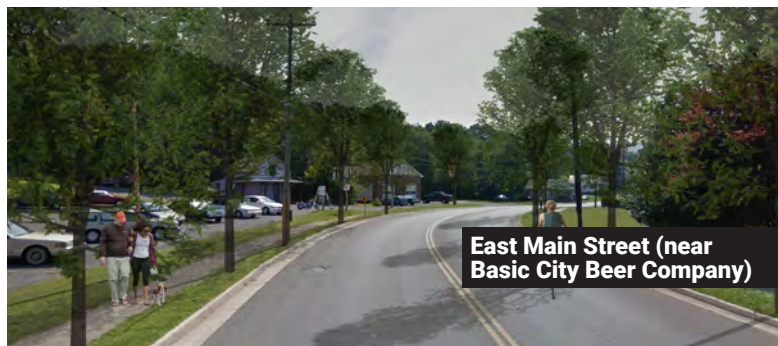


3. Begin installing street trees at a rate necessary to achieve a 30% canopy in Waynesboro's developed areas by 2028 and begin to reclaim hardscape areas for parkland if possible or stormwater basins at minimum.



Why It's Important

Trees and greenspace are essential to the quality of life for the residents of Waynesboro. The City should aim for ambitious goal of 30% urban coverage within the next 10 years, and then set the bar higher - 40% by 2040. The existing coverage is estimated at 25% based upon GIS data. A more accurate LIDAR mapping assessment should be undertaken. The same is true for greenspace; seize any opportunity to reclaim impervious surfaces for both aesthetic and functional purposes.



Key Entryways and Corridors

The following entryway and corridor improvement projects are vital to ensure the kind of visual statement Waynesboro must convey to both residents and visitors alike:

Broad Street is the primary transportation route to move east/west through the downtown area, and yet it is challenged by the lack of any defining or memorable features. To the average passerby, it is neither an unimpeded bypass for Main Street, nor a quaint local street typical of its proximity to downtown. This is not to say that the businesses along Broad Street are not viable or downright unique in some instances. It is rather an observation of the right-of-way itself: It is far too wide given its central city location. Street tree planting and the implementation of center boulevard islands (allowing for necessary turning movements) would greatly improve the aesthetic characteristic of Broad Street.

Rosser Avenue – the section of Rosser Avenue that extends from I-64 northeast to Pratts Wood Road contains numerous grassed medians that could be planted with trees. This would create a sense of arrival for visitors to Waynesboro. Additional trees planted along either side of Rosser Avenue would also provide an improved streetscape and, in time, give the appearance of a narrowed right-of-way.



“Trees: the only infrastructure that increases in value over its lifetime.”

The Society of Municipal Arborists





East Main Street (at Afton Ice Cream Shop)
- Conceptual Ideas for an Entryway



4. Redevelop East Main between Jones Hollow and Arch and Broad between Arch, and Dupont to an "A" standard, and sufficient to achieve landmark aesthetic quality.

Why It's Important

East Main Street is a major entryway into Waynesboro and should become a billboard for the city's renaissance, highlighting Waynesboro's place in the Shenandoah Valley and reminding visitors of its special and unique qualities.

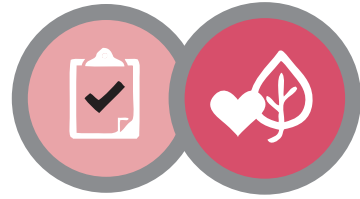


Get Ahead



Shenandoah National Park - A National Treasure in Our Backyard

Quality of Life Projects



When people regularly remarks about how happy, safe, and satisfied they feel in their personal and professional lives, they most likely have a pretty high quality of life. The place they live in often has a lot to do with that, owing to factors like job opportunities, a good housing market, access to quality public schools, and proximity to outdoor activities.

The Challenge

Besides education, no area is more important to Waynesboro's future than the degree to which it makes a concerted effort to invest in itself.

Today, aesthetic quality matters in the relentless competition between communities vying for tourist and other visitor dollars, for home purchases by middle income families able to live elsewhere, and by businesses that have a keen eye on the residential opportunities their employees might have were they to relocate company operations. In this respect, the best returns to the city in terms of economic development will be from investments in projects that generate increased quality of life for residents, current and future. Trails and parks and a vibrant Downtown are the most important of these, along with beautiful infrastructure.

Such investments communicate confidence and pride, the lifeblood of any community with stable and rising property values. Middle income families want to see their children's schools are as beautiful as the high test scores they require as a condition for planting roots in a community. After that, strong households want homes likely to appreciate in value, a probability that increases as investments in quality of life grow.

As Waynesboro's trail system becomes more extensive,

eventually enabling any resident to walk out of their front door and within a 15 minute walk be able to be on a circumferential city trail that takes them Downtown and to the South River and to the city's parks, demand for housing in Waynesboro will grow. As housing demand grows, property values will grow. As values grow, so will the tax base.

As Waynesboro's Downtown becomes increasingly more vibrant, civic life Downtown will grow. As economic investments in the Natural History Museum and in a tree canopy downtown and in urban design more generally, Downtown Waynesboro's full potential can begin to be realized. This is the approach that has been so successful in Lynchburg (Sasaki Associates; ERA; Craddock-Terry Hotel) and Roanoke (Downtown Roanoke Inc) and will work in Waynesboro.

The Significance of Addressing the Quality of Life Challenges in Waynesboro

What cannot happen is a handful of half measures, whether for roads and bridges or sidewalks or street trees, or public schools, or other public investments. Public monies are sacred, and public space deserves investments in quality sufficient to inspire the market to invest its private resources. The recent history of Waynesboro is to choose low taxes over a high level of finish, and Waynesboro cannot compete in 2017 with this approach. In all investments - from the completion of Constitution and Sunset Parks to extending the city's trail system, to ensuring enough code and police enforcement capacity, Waynesboro cannot afford to go into the future cheaply; it must tilt in favor of Stanley Abbott's design ambitions and achievements as the designer of the Blue Ridge Parkway.





Quality of Life Priority Projects

There is catch up work to do - refining Constitution Park to optimize it as the link between Downtown and the South River, and also extending the city's trail system upstream to Ridgeview Park and downstream to the Basic Park. There are keep up challenges - improving the design of Downtown, especially Main Street, Lumos Plaza, and Wayne Avenue. And there are get ahead opportunities - developing Sunset Park and planning for, and eventually implementing a circumferential trail system.

1. Redevelop/refine Constitution Park to address flooding, and connect with the new Natural History Museum in such a way that it creates an urban street wall along Arch Avenue, yet connects Downtown to the South River.

Why It's Important

Constitution Park is the city's connection to the beautiful South River. Unfortunately, it feels disjointed from Downtown as a result of the block of buildings along the east side of Arch Avenue (between Main Street and Short Street) that create a visual and physical barrier and include no retail or business magnet that would draw pedestrians to this side of Arch Avenue. Over time, the City has an opportunity to begin acquisition and demolition of this block in an effort to reclaim land for green space - an opportunity heightened by the fact that this entire block lies in the heart of the flood zone, and is negatively impacted during regular flood events.

 **Get Ahead**



2. Address enclosure ratio challenges on Main Street - vitality is essential to the success of downtown.

Why It's Important

Downtown, and Main Street in particular, is the heart and soul of most cities and sends powerful messages about a community and its core values. Main Street should be a vibrant civic and commercial gathering place, active throughout the week, during the days and evenings, where residents and visitors shop, visit, attend festivals, and in general, enjoy life in Waynesboro. Care should be taken to physically develop Downtown to support these activities.

 **Catch up**

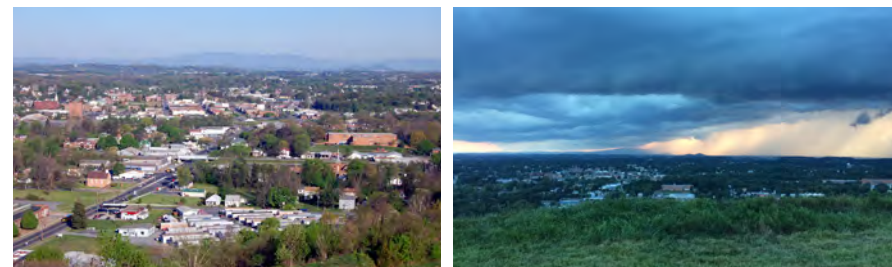


3. Design and develop Sunset Park.

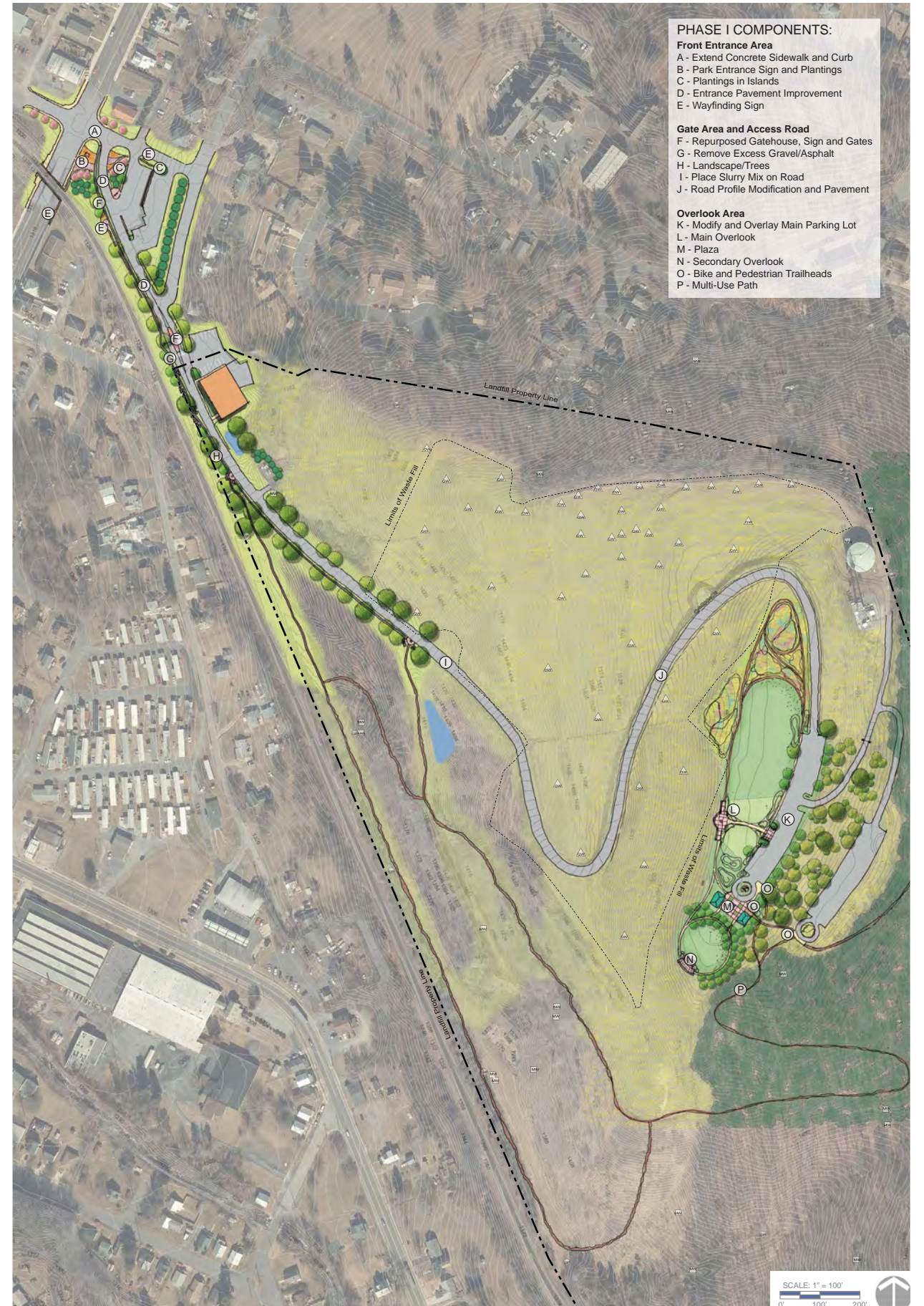
Why It's Important

Sunset Park becomes a combination treasure for residents, and a brilliant link in a chain to world class outdoor amenities in the Blue Ridge Mountains. It will inspire confidence throughout the community, and send important signals to the Valley that Waynesboro means business.

 **Get Ahead**



Sunset Park is a former city landfill that affords excellent views of the community as illustrated in these photos taken from Sunset Park



Credit: LPDA Land Planning and Design (Sterling, VA)

4. Extend trail system to Ridgeview Park and Basic Park.

Why It's Important

Every investment in trails will be a force multiplier for property values.

→
Keep up

What Does Keeping Up Mean for the Greenway Trails?

Regionally, statewide, and nationally, trails are the most popular and most-used recreation amenity in the cities that have installed them. Trails have the highest benefit-to-cost ratio of any recreation amenity. Trails along or around water features (e.g. the South River) rank even higher.

The 2001 Conceptual Greenway Map (prepared by the Whitebell Group) recommends a significant expansion to the City's trail system (approximately 22 miles of trail recommended). The proposed routes are well thought out and, in particular, do a nice job of connecting the City's existing parks. To date, only one mile of the proposed Greenway Trails system has been completed – the area from Constitution Park south to Arch Avenue (at the intersection with Market Avenue). The following map outlines the recommended phasing for not only the Greenway Trails system, but also recommended complete streets (adequate sidewalks, bike lanes or "sharrows," street trees, etc.) that will connect to the local schools.

This plan was originally prepared by the Whitesell Group and has been updated to include the following connections:

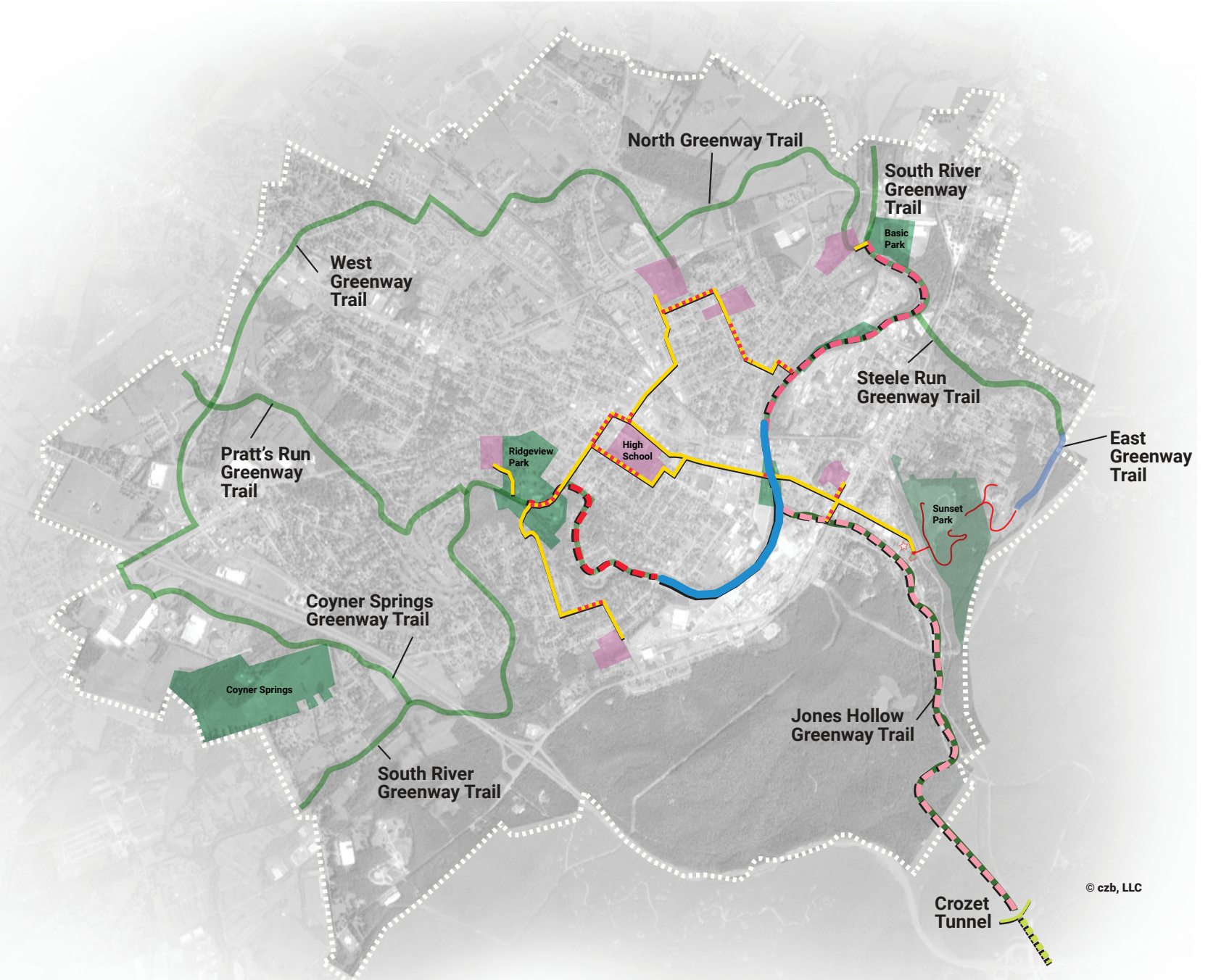
- An extension of the Steele Run Greenway to connect to the northeastern edge of Sunset Park. This one third mile stretch begins at Steel Run Creek and Malcom Avenue, incorporates sections of the existing Malcom Avenue trail, and connects into the proposed trails within Sunset Park.

- Pratts Run trail connection to Coyner Springs trail connection – an approximately half mile gap that could be closed by using the north side shoulder of Rosser Avenue as a defined, and painted, greenway for dual direction pedestrian/bike traffic.

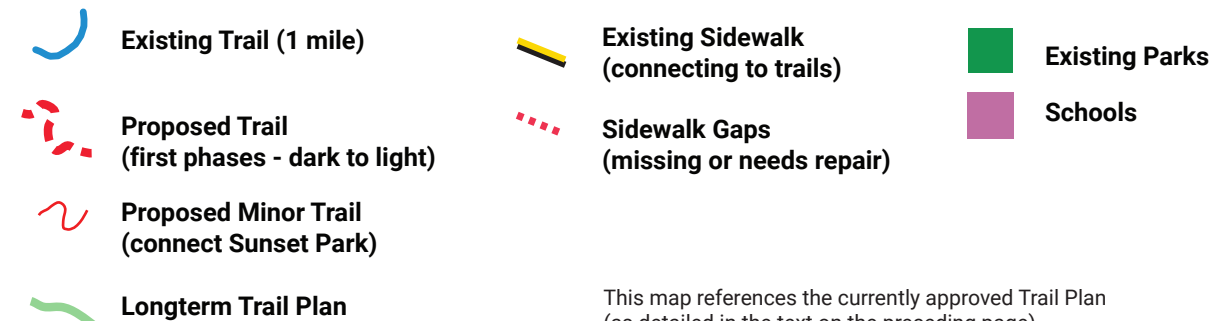
Greenway Trail – Phasing Recommendations

A phased approach provides a manageable implementation approach. There are elements of the conceptual plan that should be completed in the first phases of implementation, as outlined below:

- First, the existing one-mile stretch of Greenway Trail, the South River Trail, should be extended approximately one mile to the south to Ridgeview Park.
- Second, this same stretch of trail should be extended to the north to Basic Park (crossing over the 2nd Street bridge). This extension, along with the prior recommended extension, will not only expand the use of the trail system but also capitalize upon the aesthetic amenities of the South River.
- Third, the Jones Hollow Trail extending from the South River Trail at its western terminus should be fully constructed to the proposed eastern terminus at the entrance to the Crozet Tunnel – an approximately 2 mile endeavor.



The Basic Framework for Citywide Connectivity (The Spine)



This map references the currently approved Trail Plan (as detailed in the text on the preceding page)

5. Design and plan for a citywide circumferential trail system enabling every resident to be a short walk from a trail head.

Why It's Important

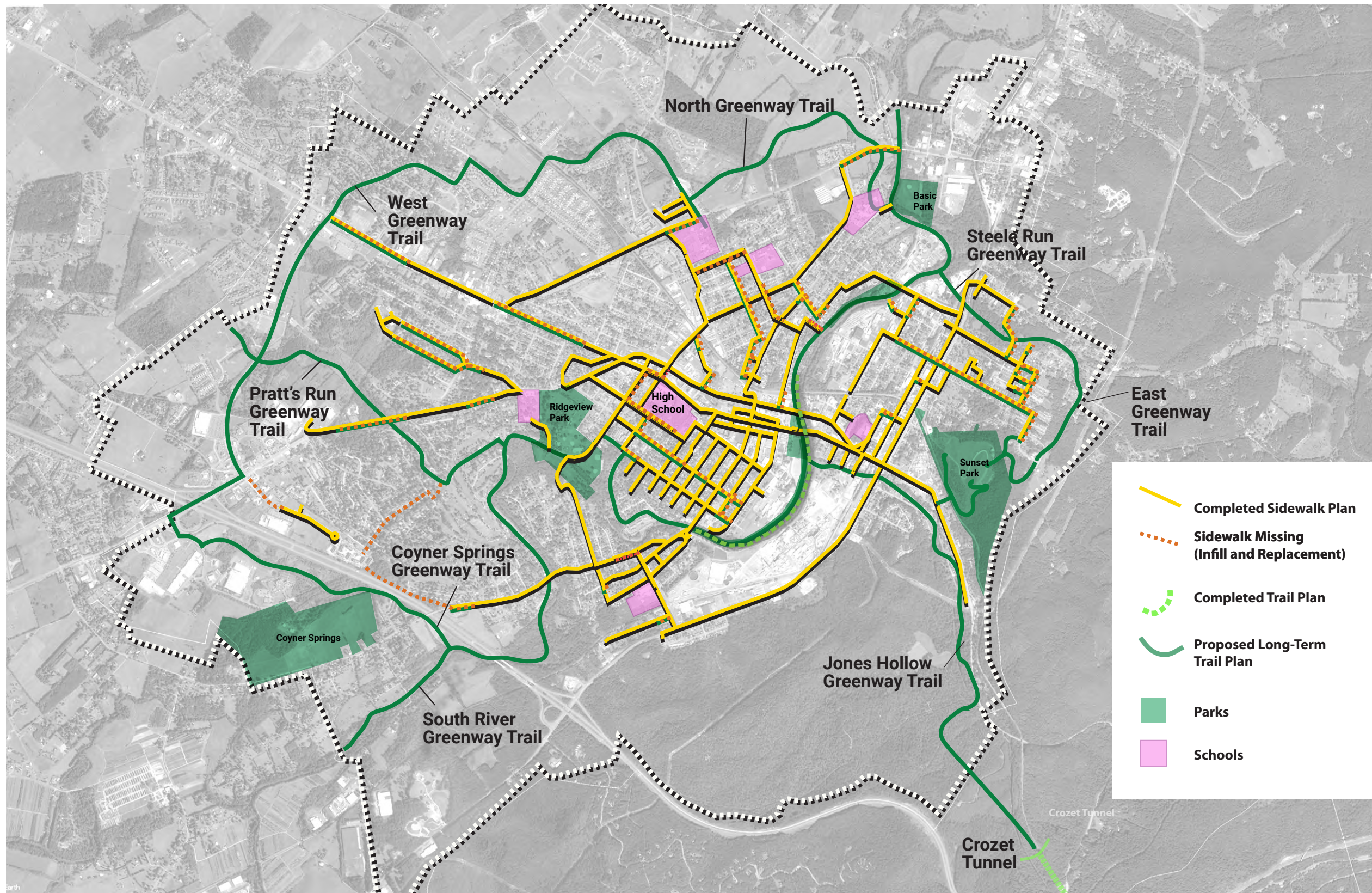
Every investment in trails will be a force multiplier for property values









6. Waynesboro will launch the Best-in-Valley 1st Responder Compensation Package by 2020.

Why It's Important

Having a crew that is flexible to move about the community to do anything from sidewalk repair to tree planting to piling sandbags, etc. is essential to address the desires of the community efficiently and effectively.



-  Completed Sidewalk Plan
-  Sidewalk Missing (Infill and Replacement)
-  Completed Trail Plan
-  Proposed Long-Term Trail Plan
-  Parks
-  Schools

Neighborhood Projects



The Challenge

In the last several decades, standards of care for homes in Waynesboro have fallen. Many of the city's residential neighborhoods have not been maintained to the standard needed in Waynesboro for the city to be able to compete in the region. It is important that there be a firm floor in the local Waynesboro housing market beneath which residents will not let conditions - and thus values - fall. It is also important that demand by Waynesboro's strong households to stay and reinvest in Waynesboro be stimulated, and that demand be sustained. It is vital that confidence within the region in the future of residential life in the city grow so that regional demand seeks and finds great opportunities to plant roots and raise a family in Waynesboro.

This will take action on numerous concurrent fronts. A diverse supply of good quality housing available at a range of prices is necessary for Waynesboro to be home to a cross section of the Valley's families. Neighborhoods that are attractive and walkable and safe is a necessity. A community of economically diverse households is necessary for Waynesboro to become competitive. Waynesboro should and can be home to plumbers and teachers, police officers and attorneys, cashiers and accountants, students and professors, machinists and engineers; in short, to anyone and everyone with a contribution to make.

The city's neighborhoods must be polished to a high standard. The most modest homes must communicate pride. Not every home has to appeal to everyone, but everyone who visits Waynesboro must be able to quickly conclude that Waynesboro has a lot of pride. Preconditions for this have to exist, from a well funded and sharply aimed code enforcement effort, to fully funded community policing, and ample resources for home improvement and resident leadership development.

The objective is for Waynesboro to stimulate the conditions that make sense to the average property owner to invest their time, energy, and money into their residential properties, whether as home owners or absentee rental property owners. In both cases, homes will have to be maintained to an ever higher standard for Waynesboro to compete for households who can, and in fact are now choosing Staunton or Crozet or Fishersville or even Harrisonburg instead of Waynesboro. Across the board, Waynesboro's residential neighborhoods must become more desirable.

The work of revitalization is the coordination of efforts to make these objectives so: to build a firm floor in Waynesboro's neighborhood housing market, to stimulate and sustain demand to live in Waynesboro by households who can choose to live someplace else, and to grow and sustain confidence in the idea of living in Waynesboro and channel that confidence into actual reinvestment.

To spur the incremental confidence needed for the first investments to occur, which in turn will prompt additional investments, a one-size-fits-all strategy will not work. Some Waynesboro neighborhoods need only polish the excellent housing stocks that are already in excellent condition. Some blocks need more than polish; they need more active resident leadership that can promote the development, restoration, and preservation of vibrant community life in Waynesboro. Other parts of the community are now developing largely through market forces alone, and in those areas, no more than very minor tweaks to development trends may be needed. In still others, principally those that have been long neglected and too rarely stewarded at a high level, opportunities must be seized to set new standards. And in a few cases, there is no firmness in the market's floor. Unacceptable conditions persist and require attention, and unacceptable owner behaviors must be dealt with.

There are four objectives to work towards.

- 1** First is to stimulate homeowner reinvestment. This should occur in the city's middle quality neighborhoods, those identified in this plan as being both at risk and imminently marketable. These are the city's Legacy Neighborhoods.
- 2** Second is to encourage positive neighbor-to-neighbor interactions. This should occur throughout the city, but creative use of community policing and code compliance assistance in the city's Transitional Neighborhoods will have positive impacts.
- 3** Third is to strengthen the quality of rental housing, especially in Transitional and Opportunity Neighborhoods.
- 4** Fourth is to grow resident leadership capacity, especially in the Legacy and Transitional Neighborhoods.

These objectives, when achieved, have been shown to yield profoundly positive returns on a market wide basis. To obtain progress, a creative combination of interventions and assistance will be required, and applied in a targeted manner.

The Significance of Addressing Neighborhood Challenges in Waynesboro

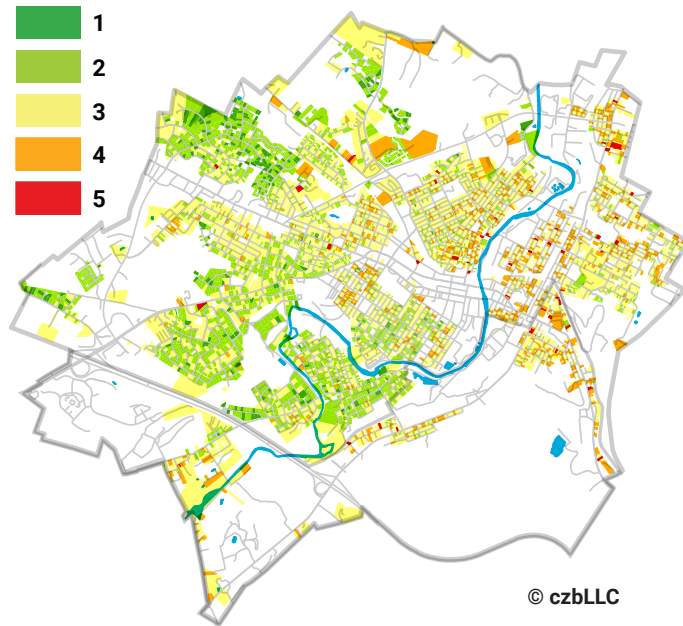
Waynesboro's future vitality hangs in the balance, and nowhere more so than in the city's neighborhoods and homes. Establishing standards and helping property owners reinvest is crucial to the city's capacity to retain and attract strong households now and in the future.



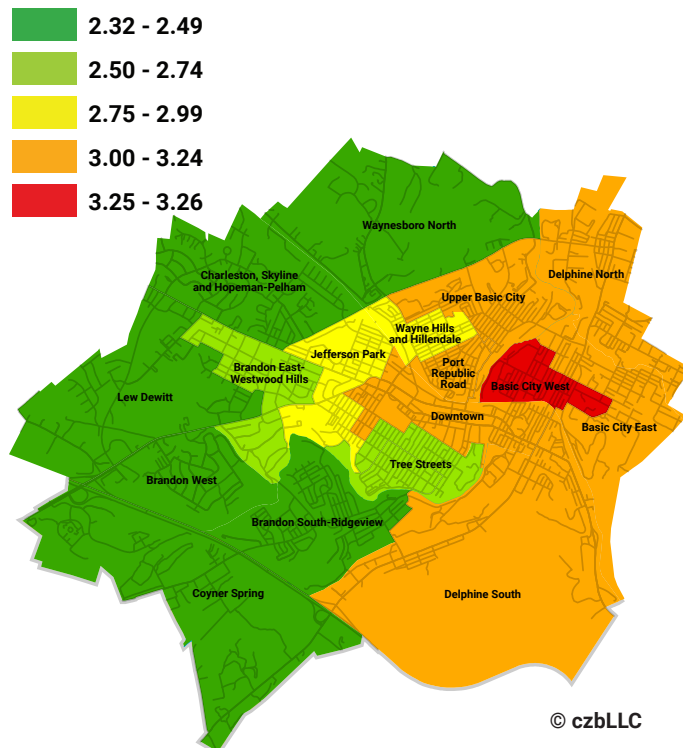


Neighborhood Projects

Waynesboro Field Survey Score



Waynesboro Average Survey Score



During the Comprehensive Planning process, the consultant team performed a windshield survey to assess housing conditions for each residential property within the city. Each unit was assigned a score from 1 to 5. A score of 1 indicates a property in excellent condition vs. a score of 5 that denotes a distressed property.

Neighborhood work must follow a common thematic aim: to grow and sustain demand.

This will be done using a variety of tools applied to specific submarket conditions when and as resources become available.

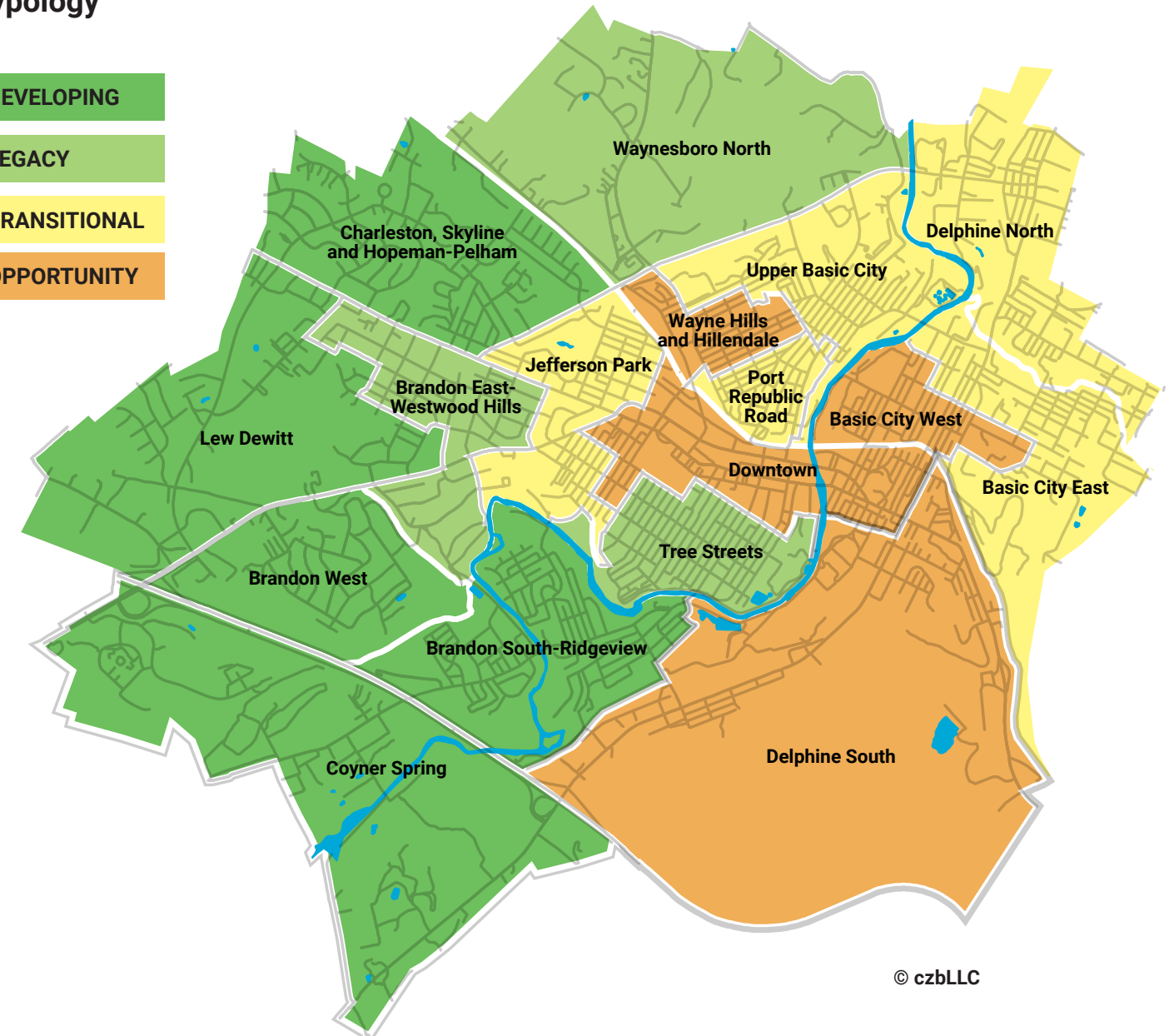
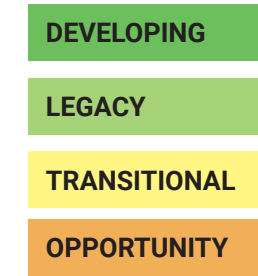
Using a survey of property conditions, an analysis of the demographic composition of households, an examination of vacancy and abandonment rates, tenure, and property values (from rents and sales), this plan organized Waynesboro's 16 neighborhoods into a taxonomy of four basic types. While granular attention will be given at the block level, such an approach allows for four broadly-defined strategies to be deployed.

- 1. Opportunity neighborhoods**, where investment in sidewalks, tree canopy, streetlights, and road quality can occur along with property owner improvements, strict code enforcement, and higher standards for rental property as necessary precursors for infill development.
- 2. Transitional neighborhoods**, where resident leadership can be developed and home exteriors and yard maintenance can be improved, and overall standards of care can be raised.
- 3. Legacy neighborhoods**, where Waynesboro's crown jewels will benefit from extra polishing, and where the city's capacity to compete has a durable foundation.
- 4. Developing neighborhoods**, where a mix of uses to coincide with current and future new development opportunities may be encouraged.

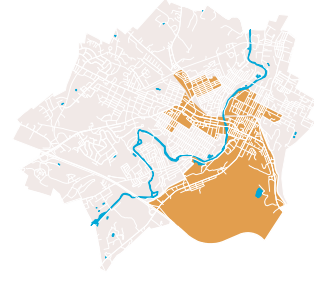
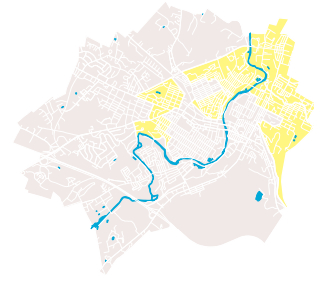
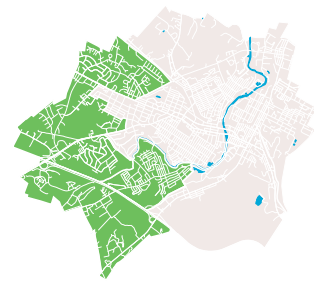
In some cases, individual developments within one of the four "types" may require specific attention that differs somewhat from the recommended approach across the rest of the neighborhood. For example, there are quite a number of new housing developments along Hopeman Parkway and along Ivy; these are selling for a high price. At the same time, a number of low cost rental projects are in the same part of the city. Attention to the specifically differentiated conditions of various subdivisions may be needed.

It is also the case that much of Waynesboro requires attention for all of the fixes that are needed to be undertaken at once. Great care is needed in deploying scarce resources wisely. Legacy neighborhoods are highly marketable with a relatively modest amount of public reinvestment. Developing neighborhoods only require small adjustments here and there. By contrast, the prevailing conditions across Opportunity and Transitional neighborhoods are such that great expense - more than is readily affordable - would be needed to treat every block at once.

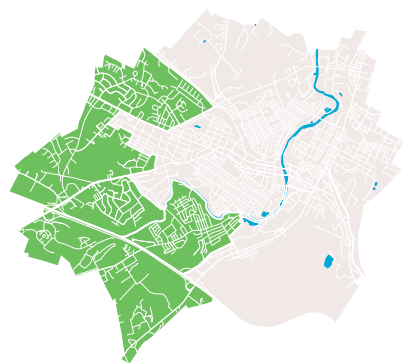
Waynesboro Neighborhood Typology



Each type of neighborhood requires a different approach to ensure that it not only grows, but prospers. The table below provides an outline to address each neighborhood typology.



TYPE	NEIGHBORHOOD	STRATEGIC AIMS	PROPERTY CONDITIONS					AVERAGE	
			TOTAL	1	2	3	4		5
DEVELOPING	Charleston-Skyline/ Hopeman/Pelham	Ensure density and mix of uses sufficient to grow Waynesboro's capacity to support local business and public services	317	22	167	118	10	0	2.37
	Brandon South - Ridgeview		707	35	404	252	16	0	2.35
	Brandon West		386	13	197	172	3	1	2.44
	Coyner Spring		146	1	23	91	30	1	3.05
	Lew Dewitt		920	81	444	388	4	3	2.35
								2.51	
LEGACY	Brandon East-Westwood Hills	Polish Waynesboro's historic blocks, stimulating regional appetite for established traditional neighborhood living in Waynesboro	715	12	223	460	20	0	2.68
	Tree Streets		1,426	55	487	810	74	0	2.63
	Waynesboro North		340	25	191	114	9	1	2.32
								2.54	
TRANSITIONAL	Delphine North	Develop resident leadership, enhance standards of care, assist owners with exterior improvements, invest in tree canopy, sidewalks, road improvements	720	0	69	519	126	6	3.10
	Basic City East		747	1	84	520	133	9	3.26
	Jefferson Park		1,233	8	214	912	96	3	2.90
	Port Republic Road		459	2	66	312	75	4	3.03
	Upper Basic City		680	2	88	507	76	7	3.00
								3.06	
OPPORTUNITY	Wayne Hills and Hillandale	Upgrade standards for rental properties, building exteriors, while stabilizing vacant properties and creating market conditions suitable for eventual infill development.	358	1	41	295	21	0	2.94
	Delphine South		568	0	44	394	113	17	3.18
	Downtown		597	6	68	340	180	3	3.18
	Basic City West		507	0	16	358	119	14	3.26
								3.14	
Totals			10,860	264	2,827	6,579	1,118	72	2.81
Percentages				2.4%	26.0%	60.8%	10.3%	0.7%	



Developing Neighborhoods

These are among the strongest residential submarkets in Waynesboro, with average sales prices the last decade ranging from \$100,000 to \$250,000 and average overall value at \$214,600. In these primarily west end and north side neighborhoods, median rent is \$917 (affordable to a household with annual income of \$33,000), and median household income is \$62,294. Most of the homes in these neighborhoods were built after 1960 and built on large lots. Many were built more recently. In addition, there are extensive new greenfield (undeveloped) opportunities between existing subdivisions that require rethinking in terms of future development potential.

The city benefits from high quality construction that maintains value and is harmed by low quality.

The outcome to work towards across Developing neighborhoods is the maintenance of current high levels of pride, encouragement of continual reinvestment in capital upgrades by owners, slow but steady introduction of increased densities between subdivisions where possible, and the long term positioning of these neighborhoods to be one of the marquee places to buy a newer home in the Valley.



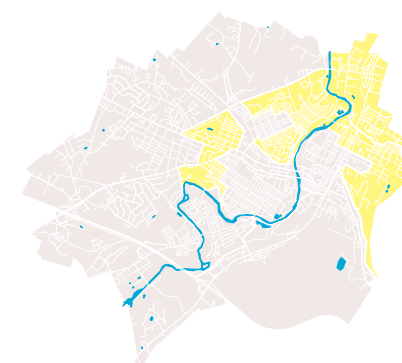
Legacy Neighborhoods

These are the neighborhoods in Waynesboro most likely to have enduring market value, provided incomplete stretches of sidewalks are completed and brought to a high standard, the mature tree canopy is maintained, the historic architecture is polished, and the homes themselves are reinvested in to a competitive standard in the coming years.

Here is it recommended that residents are encouraged to work together on shared projects that improve the exteriors of homes, beautify shared common areas on streets such as intersections, and the general level of reinvestment be raised. Polishing the city's developing and legacy neighborhoods is an essential down payment on Waynesboro's long term capacity to compete for professional households in the region presently more inclined to buy in Crozet or Staunton or Fishersville.

At \$37,123, the median income in the legacy neighborhoods, however, is too low to assume capital improvements will occur without assistance. Yet as these are the city's most durably marketable residential areas with long term desirability, and with an average overall home value of \$227,550, using the positive equity in homes here to collateralize reinvestment is strongly encouraged.

The outcome to work towards in Wayneboro's legacy neighborhoods is to ensure the remarkable qualities of many of the homes and blocks are polished, the high level of care by residents continues and grows, and that these become the signature neighborhoods in Waynesboro for families seeking traditional settings.



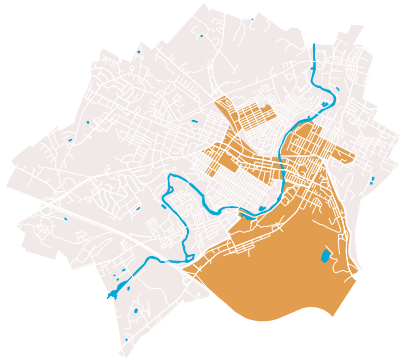
Transitional Neighborhoods

Waynesboro's neighborhoods developed largely between 1930 and 1970 are in transition today. Many streets lack sidewalks and a mature tree canopy. The architecture ranges from pre war bungalows to post war brick Cape Cods and wood-frame colonials and brick ranches. The mix of styles, lot configurations, and home sizes creates an eclectic residential fabric. Had the homes been maintained to a high standard the last three decades, they would be more competitively priced. In too many cases, though, attention to maintenance has suffered and, consequently, homes in Waynesboro's transitional neighborhoods are hard to market in a region with plenty of good alternatives for the same or even better prices.

Median value across these neighborhoods is \$123,540; median rent is \$845; and median income is \$45,634. Despite significant deferred maintenance in many cases, pride is nonetheless evident throughout many blocks, as illustrated by the fact that 72% of the homes are in good condition. Critically though, of the 3,839 homes in these transitional areas, only 534, or 14%, are being maintained at a highly marketable condition sufficient to command top dollar in the regional housing market. Six out of seven properties in transitional neighborhoods in Waynesboro are not especially marketable today in their current condition.

A vulnerability - especially in Basic City East and Delphine North - is the 506 properties that are troubled *but not yet distressed*. In Waynesboro's transitional neighborhoods, strict code enforcement is strongly encouraged, along with the provision of financial and technical assistance to those property owners needing compliance assistance. For example, unaddressed sub-standard property conditions make it hard for nearby homeowners to justify reinvesting in their properties.

The outcome to work towards in Waynesboro's transitional neighborhoods is that these homes are maintained to a slightly higher standard, infrastructure is upgraded, and owners are encouraged to raise the level of care of exteriors, and when possible to make capital improvements. On many blocks the quality of absentee ownership has declined, and this requires attention. These neighborhoods contain an outstanding supply of excellent first time buyer homes and smaller homes well-suited to empty nesters who want to be near downtown but also retain a sense of living in the country for a modest price. For these neighborhoods to be considered as such, disorder will have to be addressed, strong current owners will need encouragement to make investments, and maintenance codes will have to be strongly enforced.



Opportunity Neighborhoods

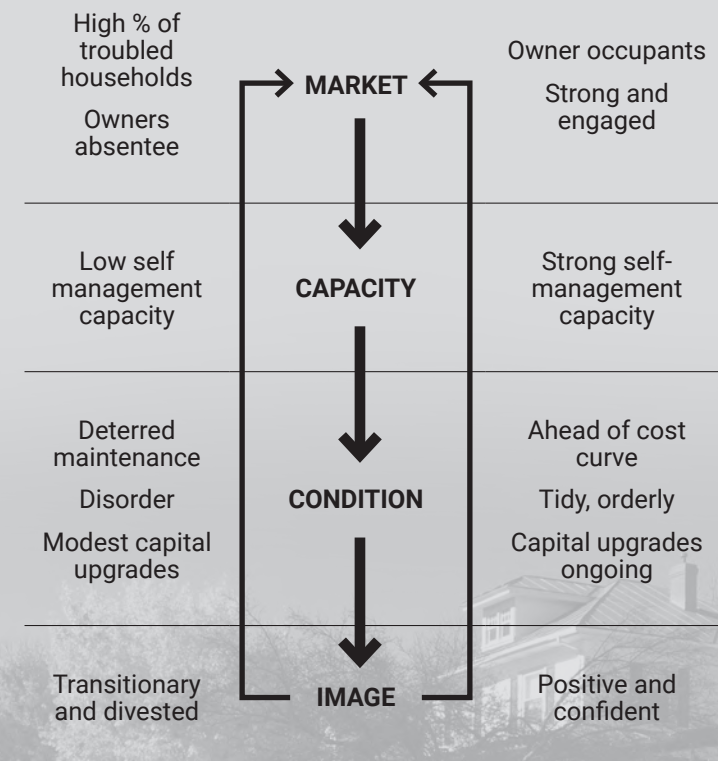
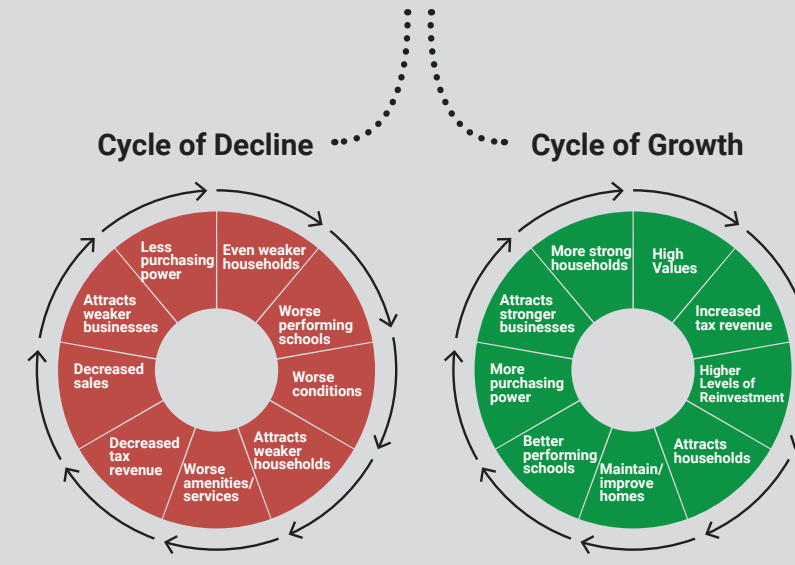
Every city in America that developed between 1830 and 1930 has “close-in” residential blocks near to rail lines, rivers, downtowns, older industrial sites, mills, and which in general, were close to yesterday’s places of employment and commerce in an era where walking distance was an especially defining element of growth and settlement. This is true in Waynesboro’s inner core areas of Downtown and many of the blocks in close walking distance to Main Street.

Regrettably, property standards here are quite low, with less than 10% of the neighborhood’s 1,462 properties being in good enough condition to sell for a good price - and thus able to compete - in the regional housing market. The real risk in these neighborhoods is not distress and abandonment typical of such older core areas in many communities across America, so much as the fact that 320 homes - fully 20 percent - are in poor quality and very much trending in the wrong direction. Such properties are magnets for crime. They command very low prices on the market. Absentee owners too frequently find value in ownership only through net cash flow deriving from reduced care, and on some occasions, tax delinquency. Disorder follows neglect. And crime follows disorder.

Such problematic realities as these are well-reflected in an average sale price of just \$51,691 since the recession, an acquisition expense that can be amortized for less than \$300 a month. At this amount, it is possible to borrow enough to acquire and then properly manage a typical single family detached house in this neighborhood and still charge no more than \$600 a month. That conditions remain below acceptable standards means that many buyers are dumpster diving for slum rental properties they can cash flow and eventually walk away from, tax bills they can neglect, poorly serving struggling households today, and leaving the city holding the bag tomorrow. Without an intervention in the form of strict rental property registration requirements, inspections, and unbending code enforcement, many of these property’s only future use will be as slum dwellings acquired by toxic investors whose positive cash flow will only come from taking advantage of vulnerable tenants.

The low (31%) home ownership rate is this area’s challenge and opportunity. First, Opportunity neighborhoods are residential areas where it makes more economic sense to be an absentee landlord than an owner occupant. Second, Waynesboro’s Opportunity neighborhoods are where the regulatory environment in Waynesboro is such that low standards of care are in fact the norm because they have been long tolerated. Here is the opportunity. In Wayne Hills, converting just 21 substandard but still recoverable homes to average condition is both an achievable objective and a meaningful one. In Basic City West there are 14 truly distressed residential properties, a very manageable number to address positively. The outcome to work towards here, through a range of interventions that address absentee ownership quality and occasional distress, is that these areas become high quality entry level neighborhoods offering good quality buyer and renter opportunities for young households.

Where to invest?





Neighborhoods Priority Projects

There is catch up work to do - addressing distressed properties that impose a drag on neighboring values, and ensuring blight does not widen. There are keep up challenges - helping existing owners improve their homes and rental properties. And there are get ahead opportunities - eventually investing in leadership development and ensuring infrastructure and other public investments are tied to housing and neighborhood improvement work.



1. Address blighting properties by condemning the most distressed homes.

Why It's Important

Removing the negative drag on adjoining values and providing neighbors with a basis for confidently making investments in their properties is key. This will require an increase in funding for demolition work.



2. Provide matching grants to strong home owners willing to make improvements to their properties.

Why It's Important

Many owners want to upgrade their homes but for a variety of reasons are on the sidelines, withholding investments they can make. Incentives can help stimulate demand



3. Provide matching grants to good rental property owners willing to make improvements to their properties.

Why It's Important

Many rental property owners want to upgrade their homes but for a variety of reasons are on the sidelines, withholding investments they can make. Incentives can help stimulate demand



4. Implement a citywide rental property registration and inspection program.

Why It's Important

Rental property is an essential part of a healthy housing market, except when it is poorly managed. A citywide registration and inspection requirement will help divide good from problematic owners and begin to tighten the rental market.



5. Step Up Code Enforcement Procedures

Why It's Important

Code enforcement must be deployed aggressively in neighborhoods where landlords are not invested in the community. Conversely, updated code compliance policies, such as maintenance assistance funds, could benefit poorer neighborhoods where homeowners are fiscally constrained and unable to properly maintain their home (e.g. roof, windows, porch, painting, etc.).

This will require a significant increase in funding for the Code Enforcement Division. The city currently demolishes only one house a year on average; this number will need to be significantly increased to address the number of distressed and/or abandoned housing units that should be condemned.

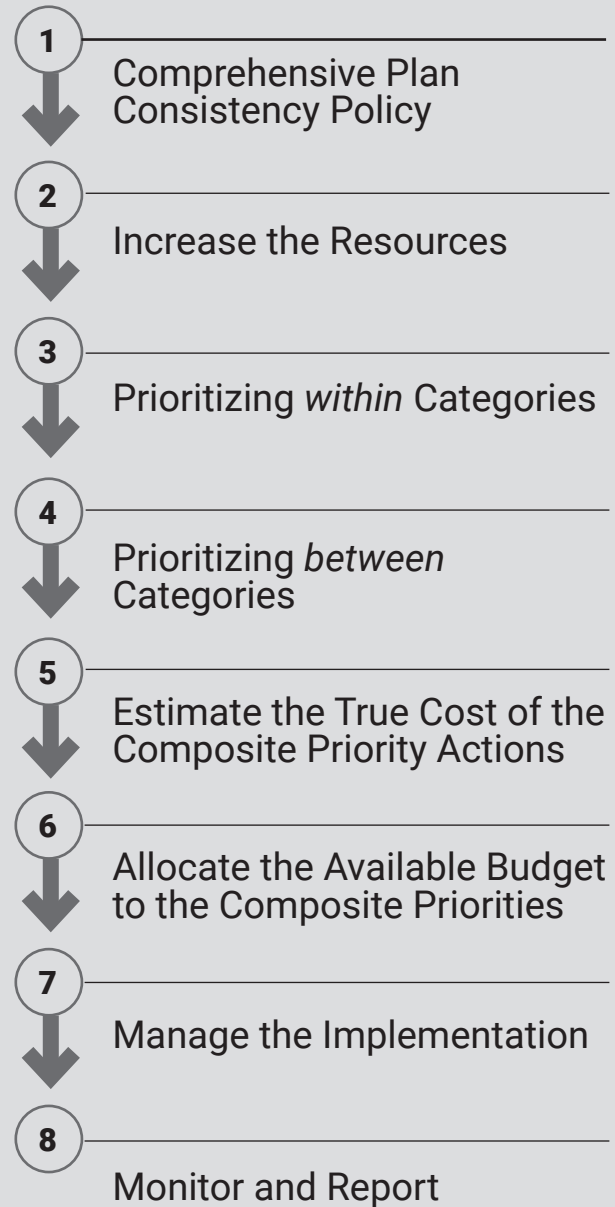


PART 3



Implementation

In Part 2 of this plan, the measurable goals and the priority projects that must be undertaken to make progress on the Big Things have been identified and described. Undertaking the projects listed in Part 2 will help Waynesboro Catch Up, Keep Up, and Get Ahead. Although the list of actions has been reduced to the truly “most important” things, the list is still daunting. The planning process that led to the creation and adoption of this document made clear that a plan is only as good as it can actually be implemented. Therefore how the work is started, and how progress is measured is important. This third section of the plan describes the hard work, and a process for making decisions as circumstances change, that will be helpful turning the plan into reality. It is comprised of eight steps.



1 Comprehensive Plan Consistency Policy

Adopt a Comprehensive Plan Consistency Policy immediately following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. This binds Council to the plan when making any financial or regulatory decision from that point forward.

2 Increase the Resources

To date, Waynesboro’s current annual city budget (the taxpayer supported budget is just less than \$50mn) has been primarily focused on the work of trying to Keep Up, with only a little leftover for modest investments aimed at Catching Up or Getting Ahead. Although there may be room for some reallocation of existing resources to spend on Catching Up or Getting Ahead, the planning process made clear that the city’s budget is already too slim to truly Keep Up, and any diminution of trying to Keep Up will only put the city further behind, and only increase Waynesboro’s future Catch Up challenges. The planning process revealed that the city’s annual budget needs to be increased significantly to enable sufficient levels of the right kind of investments needed to position Waynesboro to catch and keep up and incrementally try to get ahead. There are several ways city resources can be expanded for the purpose of trying to catch up and also get ahead.

- First is to raise grants from outside sources.
- Second is to effectively prioritize expenditures recognizing we can’t do everything right now; some expenses must be deferred.
- Third is to more fully leverage Waynesboro’s existing assets.
- Fourth is through General Obligation Bonds.
- Fifth is through taxes. The city must not be afraid to raise taxes for needed projects.

Some combination of measures will likely be necessary to raise the revenue to a sufficient level to tackle the challenges Waynesboro faces.

Grants from Outside Sources. In the past, Waynesboro has significantly relied on grants to supplement revenues. In fact, many capital improvements have been dependent on grants, and those for which grants were not available have been pursued less aggressively, or not at all. While grants can often seem to be “free money,” they also contain drawbacks. Federal and State grant sources are diminishing dramatically and across the board. They can no longer be relied on. Grants typically come with their own objectives, which may or may not align with a recipient community’s priorities; what is a priority in Washington or Richmond may not be a priority in Waynesboro, or the way Washington or Richmond might require an action to be undertaken in Waynesboro might not make local sense. Grant funded projects alone are unlikely to accomplish Waynesboro’s objectives. Finally, grants often require a significant effort and cost to obtain (writing proposals) manage (monitoring and reporting) them, and can impose other cost-increasing requirements.

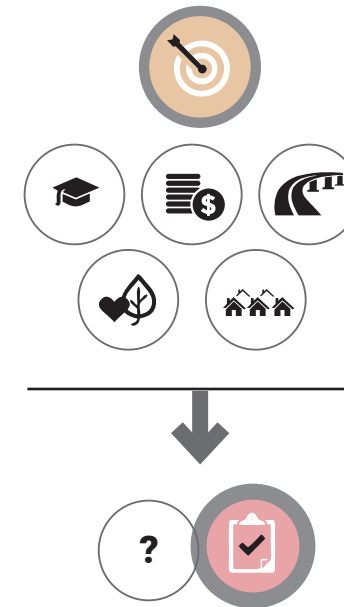
Reallocating Existing Dollars. There are a few opportunities in the Waynesboro budget where the community can decide to continue to defer maintenance (regularly Keep Up), and a few areas where planned expenditures may not be aligned with the community’s updated understanding of its revitalization needs. However, the total of these reallocations will not achieve the needed revenue goals, and they risk merely deferring (or increasing) attention to the city’s Catch Up needs in the future.

Leveraging Existing Assets. Like most cities, Waynesboro has a large portfolio of assets, only some of which appear on the city’s balance sheet. These include some city as well as some private properties that are underutilized (vacant, partially used) as well as properties and buildings that are on land that has a higher market value (e.g. in a commercial area) than can be realized by the city. Additionally, easements and rights-of-way that may no longer be needed can be re-purposed. It may be possible to put these assets to higher and better uses by engaging professional asset managers rather than relying on department heads that are fully devoted to their primary responsibilities.

Borrowing at Low Rates. Waynesboro has untapped capacity because it has one of the lowest debt ratios in the Valley. Increased borrowing is very viable as an option. Under normal circumstances, debt and interest obligations should be minimized. But with historically low interest rates and critical funding needs long present - and a secure future unlikely without significant public reinvestment in schools, staffing, infrastructure, economic development, and neighborhood improvement - a larger, creatively financed debt load is prudent. Low borrowing rates are not likely to remain in perpetuity – so striking while the iron is hot is wise.

Increasing Local Taxes – Waynesboro has below average tax rates among independent cities in the Commonwealth. This can be a competitive advantage as it shapes the business climate and can be an incentive for business expansion and job creation. However, low tax rates cannot overcome the challenges identified in the planning process and described in this plan.

3 Prioritizing *within* Categories



In each of the five goals - Educational, Economic, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Neighborhoods - Council (with technical support from staff) should regularly prioritize the proposed actions listed in this document, and also any that are added year to year as changing conditions necessitate. Use should be made of the foundational elements contained in this plan.

For example, as regards the city’s educational goals - school readiness (student performance) and facilities (high quality and properly maintained), this plan identifies five projects, each with a series of attendant costs and each with different time tables, different outputs, and a different potential impact on the future of Waynesboro. The community will need to continually rank order possible projects based on the following filters in the following sequence:

- Is the proposed project (or activity) consistent with the core values stated in this plan? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which are more and which are less consistent.
- Is the manner in which the project will be implemented consistent with the planning principles stated in this plan? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which are more and which are less consistent.
- Is the proposed project going to measurably make progress towards the relevant goal stated in this plan? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which will make more and less progress.

Once Council and staff have done a preliminary prioritization within each goal category (Educational, Economic, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Neighborhoods), a second level of transparent evaluation is needed.

- Is the proposed project going to increase demand and its capacity to compete in the Valley for strong households able to choose where they want to live? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which will more greatly enhance the city’s profile.
- Is the proposed project going to improve Waynesboro’s capacity and probability for reinvesting in the city in ways that will be likely to trigger additional reinvestment? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which will more greatly lead to a culture of sustained reinvestment.
- Is the proposed project going to improve Waynesboro’s physical conditions and resulting image? If all of the proposed projects meet this test, Council and staff will have to determine, transparently, which will more greatly lead to greater pride of residency shown in willingness to care for property at a high level and project a healthy image.

4 Prioritizing *between* Categories

The highest ranked projects within each category then need to be compared alongside one another using the same filtering questions.

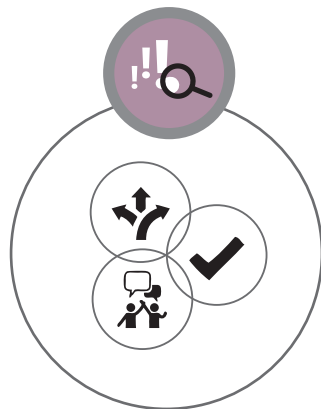
5 Estimate the True Cost of the Composite Priority Actions

Staff experts and consultants will then make cost estimates for the highest composite priority actions that remain, taking care to separate out capital from operating expenses, and then value engineer those costs to obtain a quotient.

6 Allocate the Available Budget to the Composite Priorities

From the available budget, Council and staff will determine the share to be allocated for Catching Up, Keeping Up, or Getting Ahead, knowing all are vital, and that over time today's Catch Up costs will decline, and, eventually, the budget will almost entirely be allocated over to a balanced combination of efforts designed to Keep Up and investments aimed at Getting Ahead. Council and staff should reserve the prerogative to re-prioritize when matters arise of health and safety (flooding, for example), and unique and unexpected opportunities emerge (to purchase a valuable property at a good price), or critical path dependencies become necessary to pay for.

7 Manage the Implementation



A critical part of making progress towards mitigating Waynesboro's vulnerability, setting and maintaining high standards, and re-igniting pride, as well as getting and keeping the public trust, is good management. This includes the imperative to

- Stay on budget
- Alert the public when it is not possible to stay on budget
- Procure high quality design services and use high quality materials that show pride without being extravagant
- Ensure staff and Council are sharing in the development of quarterly implementation updates
- Show the public what is being done with their tax dollars (project signs, media coverage, dedicated part of the city's web presence)
- To help reinforce, and raise confidence in planning, link the implementation to its origination in the Waynesboro Plan (signage, media coverage)

A corollary of good comprehensive plan implementation is the removal of "political" overtones from the implementation process. This means:

- Using community standards to make decisions
- Using hard data to inform decisions (return on investment, revenue history and projections, comparables from other communities)
- Getting expert advice and investing in second and if necessary, third opinions
- Designating the City Council as the "Board of Directors" of the Comprehensive Plan whereupon it sets policy, works with staff to prioritize, and consistently and transparently ties decisions back to the foundational elements of the plan
- Empowering a Steering Committee as a cross section of the public to monitor plan implementation

8 Monitor and Report

Measure the impact of the Waynesboro Plan projects over time and report to the Council and public. This is done by evaluating the SMART goal timelines contained in this plan and circling back to these key metrics and others as staff experts may determine and share with Council.



• Education Achievement in Waynesboro

- 3rd and 4th grade performance compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions
- High school graduation rates compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions



• Economic Progress in Waynesboro

- Per Capita Wages in Waynesboro compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions
- Household Income in Waynesboro compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions
- Lease rates for commercial property compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions



• Quality of Life and Neighborhood Progress in Waynesboro

- Residential values compared to the County and neighboring jurisdictions



• Management of Community Input and Completion of Projects

- Collect and disseminate feedback throughout the project (hot line, surveys, comment cards)
- Mark/celebrate completions

Waynesboro is at a crossroads.

There is the business of catching up on projects that are long overdue; projects that require immediate investment to ensure that fundamental needs are addressed within the community. Simultaneous is an ongoing commitment to keep up with our day-to-day needs - the necessary maintenance of our schools, our infrastructure network, our parks and trails and our teachers' compensation packages. It all matters in an economic environment where cities are in constant competition for households that will contribute to the unique fabric of the community while also ensuring that Waynesboro is represented by residents embedded within the knowledge/technology economy.

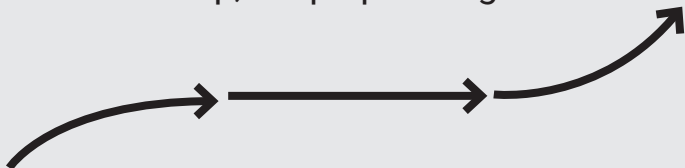
And then there is the act of getting ahead of our competition – ensuring our schools are competing at above average scores within the Commonwealth, building the quality of life amenities (including trails, parks, festivities, cultural opportunities) expected in a 21st Century city, and life-cycle (cradle-to-grave) opportunities. All of this will require a serious commitment that must remain steadfast for the decade ahead; there is no short-term solution that will succeed.

The Waynesboro community has been diligent in its efforts to create this plan. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee committed countless hours to this project and engaged their fellow residents in many "kitchen table" meetings. The results of these meetings and the input collected are the very content of this plan.

This plan should be used as a decision-making tool for every City Council and Planning Commission meeting for the next decade. It should be utilized when the City prepares the annual budget, the annual strategic plan, individual departmental programs, the capital improvement projects list and as the basis for all policy discussions moving forward. The plan lays out a solid blueprint for the community's future. Elements of the plan may need to be tweaked over the years but the principles of the plan are unwavering and represent the community's input.

Implementation of this plan will require the cooperation of the entire community and a commitment to reinvest in ourselves.

Let's catch up, keep up...and get ahead.



City of Waynesboro, VA 2018 Comprehensive Plan



PREPARED BY czb, LLC