

Town of Bolivar, West Virginia

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Adopted by Bolivar Town Council January 14, 2025

Acknowledgments:

Current Members of the Bolivar Town Council

Stephen Paradis, Mayor
P. Jean Reed, Recorder
Victorian Gale
Dan Jimeno
Sarah McMains
Sarah Shafer
Chris Higdon

Current Members of the Bolivar Planning Commission

Barbara Staats, President
Deb Hale, Secretary
Jeffrey Staats
Marcelo Morinigo
Town Council Rep. Chris Higdon

Jacob Stettes, 2020-2024 former member
Sarah Gordon, 2024 former member
Sandi Marra, 2023 former member

We wish to thank those Bolivar residents who participated in the process, either by completing the community satisfaction survey or by attending the public forums.

Vision statement and overview

The vision Bolivar citizens share is a desire for Bolivar to “stay like it is” and to keep its smalltown characteristics: a livable community that provides safe, walkable streets; age friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for all ages to participate in local life. They value peace and quiet, the night sky, the town’s outdoor spaces, and prefer single-family homes as neighbors, wanting to limit new multi-family construction. They would like to see the town’s main thoroughfare, Washington Street, revitalized in small, significant ways to provide the kind of gathering places that make for a vital community.

Bolivar is a small-town scenic community whose residents value its outdoor space, natural beauty, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street.

Table of Contents

Index

Note- pg.# indicates start of information*

Summary

- ❖ Summary of plan sections with **Goals** and **Objectives** – pg.7

Section 1 Introduction

- ❖ Purpose of the Plan – pg.12 ❖ Planning Process and previous plans – pg.12 ❖ Coordination with regional planning – pg.13

Section 2 History

- ❖ **Goals** – pg.14
- ❖ **Objectives** – pg.14
- ❖ Brief Historical Account – pg.14 ❖ The Old Schools of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar – pg.17 ❖ The Old Bolivar Jail – pg.18

Section 3 Land Use and Development

- ❖ **Goals** – pg.19
- ❖ **Objectives** – pg.19
- ❖ General Land Use – pg.19 ❖ Residential Land Use – pg.20
 - ❖ Commercial Land Use – pg.22 ❖ Agricultural Land Use – pg.23 ❖ Parks, Recreation, and Open Space – pg.23
 - ❖ Public Buildings and Institutions – pg.24 ❖ Non-Commercial Private Buildings and Institutions – pg.24
- ❖ Housing – pg.24 ❖ The Tree Canopy – pg.25

Section 4 Transportation and Infrastructure

- ❖ Goals – pg.26
- ❖ Objectives – pg.26
- ❖ Sidewalks – pg.26 ❖ Roads and Highways – pg.27 ❖ Public Transportation – pg.28 ❖ Parking – pg.28 ❖ Bolivar Water Services Management – pg.29 ❖ Sewage Treatment System – pg.30 ❖ Septic Systems – pg.30 ❖ Surface Water Quality – pg.30 ❖ Drainage and Stormwater – pg.30 ❖ Wetlands – pg.31 ❖ Floodplains – pg.32

Section 5 Economic Development

- ❖ Goals – pg.33
- ❖ Objectives – pg.33
- ❖ Population – pg.35 ❖ Local Business – pg.39 ❖ Short-term rentals (STR's) – pg.41 ❖ The Hill Top House Hotel in Harpers Ferry – pg.41 ❖ COVID-19 and its Effects: Spring of 2020 – pg.42 ❖ Other Impacts on the Local Economy – pg.43 ❖ Parking – pg.44 ❖ Economic and Workforce data – pg.44 ❖ Town Finance – pg.46 ❖ Tourism – pg.49

Section 6 Community Services

- ❖ Goals – pg.54
- ❖ Objectives – pg.54
- ❖ Library – pg.54 ❖ Police Services – pg.56 ❖ Fire Department – pg.57 ❖ Community Center – pg.57 ❖ Healthcare Services – pg.57 ❖ Churches – pg.58
- ❖ Clubs – pg.58
- ❖ Harpers Ferry National Historical Park – pg.59 ❖ Background Information about Harpers Ferry National Historical Park – pg.59 ❖ Homebuyer Assistance Program (Affordable Housing) – pg.60 ❖ Senior Services – pg.61 ❖ Adult Services – pg.61 ❖ Youth Services – pg.61 ❖ Pet Services – pg.62 ❖ Public Schools – pg.62

Section 7 Implementations

- ❖ Achievements – *pg.64* ❖ History – *pg.64* ❖ Land Use – *pg.64*
- ❖ Transportation – *pg.65* ❖ Economy – *pg.66* ❖ Community Activities and Services – *pg.66* ❖ Natural Resources – *pg.67* ❖ Action Plan Timeframe for Goals and Objectives – *pg.67*

Section 8 Appendices A, B, C, & D

Appendix A: History & “Walking Tour”

- ❖ Who Lived Here First – *pg.73*
- ❖ How Was the Area Governed – *pg.74* ❖ Who Lived Here and How Did They Get the Land – *pg.75* ❖ What Did Early Settlers Leave Behind for Us – *pg.78* ❖ How Were Children Educated – *pg.80* ❖ What Happened to Bolivar During the Civil War – *pg.80* ❖ How Did Bolivar Fare After the Civil War – *pg.91* ❖ Twentieth Century Bolivar – *pg.94* ❖ Bibliography and Further Reading – *pg.98* ❖ Walking Tour – *pg.99*

Appendix B: Transportation and Infrastructure

- ❖ FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) & Legend – 2009 – *pg.103*
- ❖ Soil Map – 1916 – *pg.105* ❖ Soil Map – 1973 – *pg.106* ❖ Soil Survey Map & Legend – 1973 – *pg.107*

Appendix C: Economic Development

- ❖ Income & Benefits Chart – *pg.109*

Appendix D: Survey Results

- ❖ Introduction – *pg.110* ❖ Survey Results – *pg.110*

Maps and Table Reference

S# or A(Letter) indicates which section or appendix map/table is located

❖ **Maps**

- S3 Map1 Bolivar, WV Land Use Map Original – *pg.21* ▪ S3 Map2 Bolivar, WV Street and Border Outline Map – *pg.22* ▪ S4 Map1 Bolivar Wetlands Map w/Key – *pg.31*

❖ **Tables**

- S3 Table1 Housing Units – *pg.20*
- S5 Table1: Snapshot of Bolivar in statistics (2020 Census Information) – *pg.36* ▪ S5 Table2: Total Population for Bolivar – *pg.36* ▪ S5 Table3: Population by Gender – *pg.37* ▪ S5 Table4: Population by Race – *pg.37* ▪ S5 Table5: Population by Age – *pg.38* ▪ S5 Table6: Business Survey – *pg.40* ▪ S5 Table7: Largest Employers – *pg.40* ▪ S5 Table 8: Means of Transportation to Work-Bolivar, WV 2022 – *pg.45* ▪ S5 Table9: Means of Transportation to Work-Bolivar, WV – *pg.45* ▪ S5 Table10: Owner-Occupied Housing Values – *pg.45* ▪ S5 Table11: Gross Rent – *pg.46* ▪ S5 Table12: Major Revenue Sources – Bolivar (July 2012 – June 2023) – *pg.47* ▪ S5 Table13: Visitor Numbers – *pg.50* ▪ S5 Table14: Community Activities and Events – *pg.51* ▪ S7 Table1: Action Plan Timeframe Priorities for Goals and Objectives – *pg.68* ▪ S8 AA Table1: Services and Cost for Keyes Boarding House and Tavern – *pg.75* ▪ S8 AA Table2: Bolivar/Harpers Ferry and the Civil War Chronology – *pg.84* ▪ S8 AC Table1: Income and Benefits – *pg.109*

Note – Q# following Goals and/or Objectives refers to the specific survey question from the 2023 Comprehensive Survey (see Appendix D)

Summary

Summary of plan sections with Goals and Objectives

The comprehensive plan is comprised of eight sections which define the goals and objectives for developing a vision for Bolivar's future. The following is a list of the goals and objectives developed for each of the plans sections.

1. Introduction

This section details the purpose for this Comprehensive Plan; the process utilized in the development of the plan; previous planning documents; and coordination with other regional planning efforts.

2. History Goal(s):

- Revive past efforts to preserve local history and lore by establishing a History committee.

Objective(s):

- Utilize the renovated old jail for housing a small-town museum with donated artifacts, letters, photographs, etc.
- Engage long-time residents in preserving their stories and memories in Living History interviews.
- Encourage preservation of historic structures.
- Publish historic walking guide.

3. Land Use and Development

Goal(s):

- Retain the small town, historic, quiet atmosphere of Bolivar, and Nighttime Sky, while maintaining and improving walkability to scenic outdoor spaces and other town amenities (Q4).

Objective(s):

- Set aside and maintain more open spaces for all residents to enjoy (in support of open space - 84%).
- Continue to enforce current land use/zoning ordinances ("in favor of growth at a limited rate" - 58%).
- Replace or improve uneven, deteriorating sidewalks as needed (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Improve overall connectivity via new sidewalks and trails (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Investigate creating a new ordinance to allow some form of overnight tent camping in Bolivar (Q31, Q32).
- Create plan for a town program to plant trees along Washington Street (Q4, Q30).
- Consider revising demolition ordinance to protect and preserve historical structures (Q10).
- Consider revising ordinance regarding General Building Requirements requiring minimum of 800 square feet for new structures to allow for Tiny Homes (Q24).

- Review current ordinances and permit processing procedures to ensure clarity and enforceability.
- Strengthen the enforcement of ordinances on property appearance and litter, such as snow removal by owners, pet waste pick-up, and regular yard maintenance.
- Consider investing in more trash bins throughout the town
- Consider hiring a code enforcement official for all of the codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV with the exception of Part 13 –Planning and Zoning & Part 17 – Building and Housing, which should fall under the Building Administrator’s Duties.
- Confine commercial enterprises to the commercially-zoned Washington Street corridor.

4. Transportation and Infrastructure Goal(s):

- Improve community walkability and pedestrian safety (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Improve parking and traffic flow (Q12, Q26, Q30).
- Continue to communicate with town residents regarding water service management.
- Continue to make the town and local area roads and sidewalks safe for residents.
- Continue the Town’s coordination with water and sewer service providers.
- Continue to focus on storm water management projects.

Objective(s):

- Continue improving/replacing existing sidewalks and maintenance of roads (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Look for logical places to explore adding additional sidewalks or natural surface corridors in cooperation with the State and adjacent property owners (ex. Old Furnace Rd sidewalk from Washington St to Cheney Ave; a sidewalk or path on the Bolivar side of the street where Old Furnace Rd meets Prospect Ave on a narrow blind curve; or a sidewalk to the WV Welcome Center (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Continue proper maintenance and upgrades of roads and improvement of sidewalks (nearly 58% think that the existing sidewalks would be inadequate to serve any additional population) – these issues remain very important to residents.
- Continue the plan to control the local deer population with special-permit bow-hunting within town limits.
- Develop a consistent message while continuing to advocate for controlled growth in Jefferson County – traffic and congestion remain a major issue for residents – especially as policies pertain to the development of the Route 340 corridor.
- Continue to apply and secure funding for infrastructure projects (Q12, Q30).
- Adopt new Storm Water Management ordinances, combining them with existing ordinances to create a comprehensive and practical set of rules for all future development (Q25).
- Consider conducting a regular flushing of drainage culverts/grates in town as part of the Storm Water Management.

5. Economic Development

Goal(s):

- **Create a favorable business environment** along the business corridor of Washington Street. 84% of all 2023 survey respondents rated “walkability to dining, shopping, other commercial services, outdoor recreation, etc.” as “Somewhat” or “Very” important (Q10). More than 75% still agree for the most part with this original 2003 Vision Statement for Bolivar (Q9):
“Bolivar is a small-town scenic community whose residents value its outdoor space, natural beauty, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street.”
- **Strengthen ties and lines of communication** between local businesses, government, and the public. One-third of survey respondents expressed the view that the Town “website and general communications” need improvement, more than any other Town service (Q11).
- **Keep Bolivar small.** This sentiment has not changed over the last 20 years. Over 65% of survey respondents equally chose “quiet small-town atmosphere” and “access to outdoors/scenic beauty” as the qualities that most attracted them to Bolivar (Q4). And 95% value “peace and quiet” in their community (Q10).
- **Encourage affordable housing.** A resounding 60% of survey respondents think “the Town should do more to encourage affordable housing” (Q33).
- **Monitor parking** problems in Town, especially along Washington Street. 56% of survey respondents answered “No” when asked if parking is a problem in Bolivar, but 44% answered “Yes”. Considering that the majority of Bolivar residents reside on other streets than the main thoroughfare of Washington St, this indicates that parking in town is indeed a concern (Q26).

Objective(s):

Create a favorable business environment

- Improve Town infrastructure, namely sidewalks and streets, along with stormwater management, to improve the commercial district. Town investment in infrastructure projects will attract more business to Bolivar. The two highest-ranked options when residents were asked which projects would you most like to see the Town undertake were (1) Washington St sidewalk improvements and (2) street upgrades and repairs (resurfacing, storm water management, Old Furnace Road gulley, etc.) (Q30).
- Undertake beautification projects in Town. Residents have expressed dismay at the necessary removal of the decaying mature trees in the Children’s Park, and removal of roadside trees along Washington Street for the sidewalk project. A Streetscape Committee was formed in 2023 by Council to address appropriate replacement plants along Washington Street. Hotel tax revenue may be used for such projects.
- Provide uniform structure for Bolivar mailboxes. There has been a massive increase of mailboxes along Washington Street since the Post Office annual rental fee for post office

boxes keeps increasing. Future management of new mailboxes should show pretense of neat and orderly appearance.

- Support the Hilltop House Hotel project. “A rising tide lifts all boats.” Surely, other local enterprise will emerge and thrive with a new upscale hotel in our neighboring town. Locals might benefit from employment. 67% of survey takers responded “No” when asked if they had any “concerns regarding redevelopment of the Hilltop House Hotel” (Q28).
- Continue to support existing local organizations which promote local business, such as Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Jefferson County Development Authority.
- Promote local businesses with kiosk/map/brochure, perhaps featuring businesses, historic sites, and other points of interest, all in one, intended for tourists and local residents alike.

Strengthen ties and lines of communication

- Provide registered business owners with annual or regular reminders of town guidelines for signs, parking, etc., to encourage compliance with local laws. 26% of survey takers think that “ordinance and code enforcement” needs improvement (Q11).
- Maintain and use a residential email group to send out email notices for meetings, ordinances (friendly reminders), Town-sponsored events, committee news, etc., to keep Bolivar residents better informed. According to the survey, nearly half (47%) of respondents don’t “understand the Town’s ordinances and Comprehensive Plan, or know where to find them” (Q15); and most residents would prefer to be informed via “Email, Website, and Social Media/Facebook” (Q14). ***Keep Bolivar small.***
- Without much more room to grow (very few empty buildable lots left), the population of Bolivar should not grow very much, but the Planning Commission should continue the Town’s land use policy of one single-family home per half acre (or platted lot), which has managed to control density in the last three decades. ***Encourage affordable housing.***
- AirBnB/Vacation Rentals (STR’s) located throughout the town shall follow and be aware of all town ordinances and codes established by the town including but not limited to parts 7 and 9 and be held responsible for upholding these established codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV. Only owner-occupied dwellings would be allowed to rent rooms to tourists, such as stated in Ordinances 1303.02 under Residential District, Permitted uses “B.” Under that same ordinance, “C” should be changed to read, “Nothing in the establishment of Zone ‘R’ (Residential) uses shall prohibit the rental of properties for accepted ‘R’ uses *for a period of at least 30 consecutive days.*” ***Monitor parking***
- Have law enforcement patrol Washington Street on busy tourist days to enforce parking uniformity (parking outside of the white road lines, entirely on the shoulder). Parked vehicles should in no way impede traffic.
- Place “No parking from here to corner” signs at several junctions with Washington Street, such as Jefferson St and Fisher Alley to ensure unimpeded views of oncoming traffic.
- Re-evaluate/enforce zoning ordinance 1303.04(h) requiring 6 off-street parking spaces per commercial establishment and 2 per residential building. Businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and professional offices, should certainly require 6 spots at minimum, but perhaps other businesses like short-term rentals or cottage businesses should not.

6. Community Services Goal(s):

- Encourage a vibrant community environment.
- Improve communications between Town Council and residents.

Objective(s):

- Continue financial support of the library, police and volunteer fire departments, and to work collaboratively with these entities.
- Offer more organized Community events (100% response) – such as yoga classes, trash pick-ups, teen activities, potluck picnics, holiday/historic festivals, music in the park, and farmer’s market.
- Continue to offer the Community Center as a venue to residents and local non-profit organizations.
- Publicize the town website to make it more widely known and therefore more useful.
- Continue newsletter/announcements by email option and/or social media.
- Encourage residents to attend monthly Town Council meetings and look into having signage reminders or kiosk by the children’s park.
- Periodically assess the effectiveness of communication strategies and tools, adapting to new technologies as finances allow to ensure ongoing improvement in communication with the community.

Section 1 Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

The Town of Bolivar Comprehensive Plan is a document describing the community's vision for the future of Bolivar. The document describes the history, population, land use, economy, transportation, education, community services, and natural resources elements comprising the community. The plan also identifies goals and objectives, based on community input.

Chapter 8A "Land Use Planning" of the West Virginia Code provides guidance on Planning Commissions and the role of a community's comprehensive plan as "a plan and a vision for the future" and "the basis for land development and use."

Per the West Virginia Code §8A-3-1 (d), the purpose of a comprehensive plan is to:

- 1. Set goals and objectives for land development, uses and suitability for a governing body, so that a governing body can make an informed decision;*
- 2. Ensure that the elements in the comprehensive plan are consistent;*
- 3. Coordinate all governing bodies, units of government and other planning commissions to ensure that all comprehensive plans and future development are compatible;*
- 4. Create conditions favorable to health, safety, mobility, transportation, prosperity, civic activities, recreational, educational, cultural opportunities and historic resources;*
- 5. Reduce the wastes of physical, financial, natural or human resources which result from haphazard development, congestion or scattering of population.*
- 6. Reduce the destruction or demolition of historic sites and other resources by reusing land and buildings and revitalizing areas;*
- 7. Promote a sense of community, character and identity;*
- 8. Promote the efficient utilization of natural resources, rural land, agricultural land and scenic areas;*
- 9. Focus development in existing developed areas and fill in vacant or underused land near existing developed areas to create well designed and coordinated communities; and 10. Promote cost-effective development of community facilities and services.*

This Plan will serve as a long-range comprehensive guide for the community's land use and development goals. It must be understandable and available to the public. The plan may be referenced in future planning, policy and decision making.

Planning Process and previous plans

Chapter 8A, Article 3. Comprehensive Plan of the West Virginia Code provides specific guidance for the purpose and required content of comprehensive plans. A comprehensive plan must promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development. (8A-3-1c) The original iteration of the Town of Bolivar, West Virginia, Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2000 and updated in 2014 and involved establishment of a Town Planning Commission and Advisory Committee (Town Council) who utilized a planning process that included public participation in the development of the plan through surveys and public meetings.

In writing the Comprehensive Plan, the members of the Bolivar Planning Commission (BPC) and Advisory Committee (Town Council) kept the express wishes of the community at the forefront. The Planning Commission's role is to provide opportunities for citizens to express their views, to reflect these views in setting policies for the future, and to administer these policies in fair and open meetings with input from neighbors and citizens at all times.

Code requires periodic update or review of adopted Comprehensive Plans to ensure that goals and objectives remain current and continue to meet the needs and vision of town citizens. In 2023, the BPC began the process of updating the Plan. The process involved review and assessment of the existing plan as well as public participation throughout the plan update. Working with the 2014 plan survey/questionnaire, along with sample surveys from similarly sized small communities, the BPC compiled a new public survey, which was then distributed to all Bolivar households. The survey results were then tabulated, reviewed by the BPC, and presented in a public forum. The BPC also evaluated the original plan's goals and objectives – which had been achieved in the last ten years, which had not, which ones were still viable or pertinent. In addition, a public forum was conducted to gather community input on goals. A final draft of the updated plan was then submitted to the Town Council for their review and made available for additional public review and comment. The final version of the plan was then submitted to the Town Council for review and final adoption.

Coordination with regional planning

Coordination with other local planning efforts that may impact Bolivar is an important component of any plan update and is included in the recommendations and implementation of this plan. Bolivar's planning efforts should coincide with similar efforts by the Town of Harpers Ferry and the National Park in issues that may overlap or prove mutually beneficial. Continuing the mayors' group meetings are a positive start in increasing cooperation between neighboring towns to combine efforts and effectiveness. Inviting Harpers Ferry Council Members and other Commission and Committee members to Bolivar meetings might be another step towards establishing common ground on major issues and projects.

Section 2 History

Goal(s):

- Revive past efforts to preserve local history and lore by establishing a History committee.

Objective(s):

- Utilize the renovated old jail for housing a small-town museum with donated artifacts, letters, photographs, etc.
- Engage long-time residents in preserving their stories and memories in Living History interviews.
- Encourage preservation of historic structures.
- Publish historic walking guide.

Brief Historical Account

Included below is a brief history of Bolivar as compiled by its townspeople with aid of their memories, books, and personal knowledge. The appendix of this plan includes additional information pertaining to the history of Bolivar.

By Jean Reed, Robert Menefee, and Katherine Collins – Additions by Barb Staats, Jeffrey Staats, and Andrew Lee (HFNHP)

The town of Bolivar, in Jefferson County, West Virginia, is located along US. Route 340, one mile west of the point where the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers meet. It boasts some of the most beautiful natural scenery anywhere in the state.

Bolivar was built on part of a 310-acre tract of land that was purchased from a man named Rutherford on February 20, 1797. At first, this small settlement was known as “Mudfort,” because, as legend has it, the boys of the village were always able to drive the boys from Harpers Ferry, nicknamed “The Hole,” back down the hill with the mud balls which they had made and carefully dried in the sun before each battle.

On Sept. 8th, 1824, the Harpers Ferry Free Press printed the following: “Notice is hereby given that a petition will be presented to the Legislature of Virginia at their next session for authority to lay off and establish a town, adjoining Harpers Ferry, so as to include the village of Mudfort and

some adjoining Lands.” The 270 residents of Mudfort requested in their petition that the town be known as Bolivar, in honor of Simon Bolivar, the great South American liberator. On December 29, 1825, permission was granted, and Bolivar, Virginia, became the first town in the United States to be named for Simon Bolivar. Joel Downer, George Rowles, Dr. John Hayden, John Graham, and Robert Avis became the town’s first trustees.

Bolivar grew rapidly and, by 1850, had 1,054 inhabitants. In May 1856, the people of the county voted to establish public schools. Accordingly, on August 12, 1858, the Virginia Free Press carried an advertisement by J. P. Smeltzer and Webster Eichelberger, announcing the opening of Fairview High School in Bolivar, on September 2, 1858. Instruction was offered with sessions in modern and ancient geography, English, grammar, mathematics, natural, moral and mental philosophy, anatomy, chemistry, Greek, and Latin.

During the Civil War, both Bolivar and Bolivar Heights were the scene of much fighting and were captured and recaptured many times. The trenches used in these battles can still be seen on Bolivar Heights.

Mail trains sometimes were detained and ransacked by armed posses. If letters were discovered that had been written to Bolivar residents by friends denouncing Virginia’s secession from the Union (in April 1861), problems erupted. The recipients could be arrested, placed in jail, and subjected to punishment. This was the case of William McCoy, a highly respected gentleman who was one of the first trustees of Bolivar Methodist Church. Influential friends were able to get him released with the promise that he would return to his native Ohio. This he did, but, because of the unhappy ordeal, he died soon thereafter. (West Virginia did not formally become a state until June 1863.) John Yates Beall, who served in the Confederate States Army under Jackson and was wounded on Bolivar Heights earlier in the war, was a native of Jefferson County. Later towards the end of the war he was captured and convicted for being a Confederate spy and executed on February 24, 1865. All efforts to save him failed. His body was sent to Charles Town where he was buried in Zion Episcopal Churchyard.

During one of the battles on Bolivar Heights on September 15, 1862, Union Colonel Dixon S. Miles gave the order to surrender to the Confederates. However, Col. Miles was killed by an artillery shell moments after giving said order; his wound was fatal. Another soldier Col. Robert Whitman wounded while in battle on Bolivar Heights declared that, if he survived, he would return to build a castle like the one his family had in Scotland. This soldier survived the war and returned to build the castle, which remained standing until the National Park Service removed it for the purpose of restoring the Bolivar Heights Battlefield. The castle was enjoyed by everyone who had the opportunity to visit there.

With the end of the war, much needed to be done in Bolivar. Many parts of the town had been burned by one side or the other; many homes had been used as hospitals and living quarters for the soldiers.

By an act of the West Virginia Legislature on December 23, 1868, the Towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry were consolidated. For more than two years, they were known as Bolivar Township. It was not a successful venture then, nor would it be now.

In October 1870, E. Willis Wilson, a native of Bolivar, was elected as a member of the House of Delegates. From 1885 to 1890, he served as Democratic governor of West Virginia. He was the only person from Jefferson County yet to serve as governor.

In 1904, while Mr. Lyle Eackles and Mr. William Coyle were doing some work on the foundation of the Bolivar Methodist Church, they found the remains of a Union soldier. His canteen and the buttons from his uniform bore out the fact that the body had been there since the Civil War. A memorial window was placed in the vestibule of the church, bearing this inscription: "In memory of an unknown Union soldier whose remains were found under this church in 1904. Wounded and alone he crept to shelter." In September 1949, this church, the only one in Bolivar, had a three-day celebration commemorating its one-hundredth anniversary.

In 1927, an all-volunteer fire department was established. Organizers named the first fire engine Old Abigail. In 1965, a volunteer ambulance service was started. The requirements for serving on the ambulance crew were basic and advanced first aid.

On September 25, 1948, under the leadership of Mayor Clarence E. Garten, the people of Bolivar organized the Bolivar Citizenship League for the purpose of improving Bolivar - to work with the Simon Bolivar Memorial Foundation to perpetuate the principles of freedom exemplified in the lives of the two great liberators, George Washington and Simon Bolivar.

For years, the only highway east to Maryland went directly through Bolivar, into Harpers Ferry and across the Potomac near Sandy Hook. Then, in the fall of 1949, the State completed work on a beautiful new highway bridge across the Shenandoah south of Bolivar, eliminating many road hazards that had existed over the old route and improving the already beautiful drive along Route 340.

A new business moved to Bolivar in 1956. At first, Courtney's Auto Parts and Salvage Yard started along the Shenandoah River (near where the sewage treatment plant is now), and, in 1960, it moved to the lower section of the salvage yard. In 1969, the business expanded to its present site on what is now Paul Courtney Drive. This business had been in Bolivar for over 55 years. Its original owner Paul Courtney served both on the Town Council and then as Mayor for a combined 23 years.

Timelines developed at the Spring 2000 town meetings show an abundance of businesses and arrivals in Bolivar in the 1970's. These include: the Green Bean Deli, Daniels' Antique Shop, Butts Drug/Fountain Shop, a post office, liquor store, Jones Cement Block Factory, Eackles Vault, Reed's Barber Shop, and a beauty shop. In 1975, the Harpers Ferry Branch of the Bank of Charles Town was built on Washington Street. Two years later, in 1977, the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library was dedicated. This was followed by the construction of the public sewer system.

In 1982, thanks to Al and Katherine Collins, Dr. Rosemarie Cannarella and Dr. Konrad Nan opened offices at the corner of Washington and Taylor streets in Bolivar. Their practice grew and expanded to the point where they needed to relocate to 171 Taylor Street where the Medical Center is located today. In 1994, Bolivar had a gas station just outside of town (Washington Ct), and then along came a 7-11 with more pumps. Today the closest gas stations are several miles away. As businesses come and go, so did the barber shop at the corner of Washington and Elm streets, due to the death of Clyde Reed, who ran it for 30 years. In 1999, the little shop reopened as a unisex hair styling business, but the small building has since come down due to structural problems.

Since that time many businesses have opened in the town, such as the Anvil Restaurant, Snallygasters Café and Wine Bar, The Barn, Kelley Farm Kitchen (the first vegan restaurant), the Quality Inn, and the Jackson Rose B&B. Some have closed due to the retirement of the owners but Bolivar is still striving and growing its little town.

People working together are the key to transforming a cluster of homes, businesses, schools, and organizations into a place that people are proud of. So it is with our town of Bolivar. Many have given hours, days, months, and years to this small town in its 200-year history (December 29, 1825). From the formidable mudball makers to the illustrious governor, to the citizens of today - old-timers and newcomers of all ages - it takes good people working together to make a great town.

The Old Schools of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar

On October 27, 1824, the Harpers Ferry Free Press (published in Harpers Ferry, Virginia) carried the following notice: “Another quarter of the Lancasterian School commences this day (Oct. 20). Subscriptions will be received at the School Room. A Night School will positively be opened on the 25th of the present month ...Signed: Joseph Swartz.”

There is little doubt that schools existed here, in some form, even before this time. As early as 1810, the historian Charles Varle records that, in Bolivar there were “a good tavern, several large stores for goods, a library, a physician, and a Professor of English language.” Note that he does not use the word “school.” The professor probably conducted a class in his lodgings, or conceivably, in a church building. This most likely consisted of tutoring a group of private pupils - the most promising lads of the village. (In Bolivar, as elsewhere, girls were not formally educated at that time.)

Almost all early schools were made of brick since this area was rich in good clay. The brick schools were destroyed in the Civil War, with the exception of one on Schoolhouse Lane, now Gilbert Street. After the Civil War, Storer College, “the first College for the Education of Black School Teachers” was established in 1867 in neighboring Harpers Ferry. A parochial school for Roman Catholic children was started in 1854, and continued intermittently until 1899. Many non-Catholics attended it as well.

Gilbert Street, or “Schoolhouse Lane” as it was called in 1870, housed the first schoolhouse in Bolivar. This red one-and-one-half-story brick building still stands, the second house on the right

after turning north from Washington Street. Another Gilbert Street schoolhouse also remains. Now known as the Mauzy home place, it is the fifth house on the right.

Writing in the magazine of the Jefferson County Historical Society, Mariana Ross commented, “The old school, it is true, lacked almost every material and academic tool. But they had one thing for which neither money nor degrees can compensate - moral purpose. Our forefathers did not expect education to make up, at public expense, for their private deficiencies. They expected it to strengthen and broaden the moral training which they, at home, were giving their children.”

Those who attended these schools of long ago were, in a real sense, pioneers in what we know as education. They lived in a relatively young country that was just starting on the road to discovery and adventure, a country whose exciting present was dwarfed by the tremendous contours of its future.

The Old Bolivar Jail

Over a hundred years ago Bolivar had a jail. In June 2012, the Town embarked on work to repair the old town jail. The work was performed by Historic Restoration Specialists of Smithsburg, MD, who came highly recommended. Because the floor tile tested positive for asbestos, as mandated by the State, the Town obtained a qualified contractor to safely remove the asbestos before any further work could be completed. The next phase of work included removing old plaster from the walls; stabilizing the bulge in the north wall to prevent further damage; repairing and replacing sections of the existing roof; repairing the chimney; painting the roof to coordinate with the Spring House in the Park; and replacing the original window. These steps —Phase I of the jail project - proved considerable as the jail is a very old structure and had suffered water damage in addition to damage from animals that had made the jail their temporary shelter. Due to lack of funding, Phases 2 and 3 have been placed on hold. The Town plans to complete small item jobs, such as painting the outside of the structure and installing new gutters, by using its own resources. In future, the Town plans to display archive material obtained through donations. Up to this point, the cost for repairs has reached approximately \$30,000.

Section 3: Land Use and Development

Goal(s):

- Retain the small town, historic, quiet atmosphere of Bolivar, and Nighttime Sky, while maintaining and improving walkability to scenic outdoor spaces and other town amenities (Q4).

Objective(s):

- Set aside and maintain existing town lands as open spaces for all residents to enjoy (Q4, Q10).
- Continue to enforce current land use/zoning ordinances to limit density and protect outdoor space (Q4, Q10).
- Replace or improve uneven, deteriorating sidewalks as needed (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Improve overall connectivity via new sidewalks and trails (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Investigate creating a new ordinance to allow some form of overnight tent camping in Bolivar (Q31, Q32).
- Create plan for a town program to plant trees along Washington Street (Q4, Q30).
- Consider revising demolition ordinance to protect and preserve historical structures (Q10).
- Consider revising ordinance regarding General Building Requirements requiring minimum of 800 square feet for new structures to allow for Tiny Homes (Q24).
- Review current ordinances and permit processing procedures to ensure clarity and enforceability.
- Strengthen the enforcement of ordinances on property appearance and litter, such as snow removal by owners, pet waste pick-up, and regular yard maintenance.
- Consider investing in more trash bins throughout the town

- Consider hiring a code enforcement official for all of the codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV with the exception of Part 13 –Planning and Zoning & Part 17 – Building and Housing, which should fall under the Building Administrator’s Duties.
- Confine commercial enterprises to the commercially-zoned Washington Street corridor.

Introduction

This section delves into the intricate dynamics of land use and development within the Town of Bolivar. As we assess the current landscape of residential, commercial, and open spaces, it becomes essential to align the town's future growth with the desires and needs of its residents. Through comprehensive survey findings and public workshops, the community has voiced a clear preference for preserving Bolivar's small-town ambiance while enhancing its walkability and accessibility to scenic and recreational areas.

General Land Use

The Town of Bolivar is comprised of residential, commercial, institutional, and parks/open space land uses. These land use zones were established in the original plan; additionally, there were certain individual properties granted non-conforming use zoning. Survey respondents and public workshop attendees expressed interest in keeping the town small and quiet with increased walkability being the primary improvement made to the land (Q4, Q10, Q12, and Q30). Structures on the land should keep sky view and stargazing in mind with regards to building heights and night lighting (Q10). Survey results show there is strong support for some form of overnight tent camping on private property (Q31) and majority support for it on public land (Q32).

Residential Land Use

The wide variety of housing styles in Bolivar is evident along Washington Street, the main thoroughfare through town. Relatively new houses on the side streets fill in the background behind approximately 35 pre-Civil War houses on Washington Street. Side streets, such as Gilbert and Union in particular, contain many 19th Century houses as well. Citizens have emphasized the importance of maintaining history over the years, and thus, these historic homes serve as a focal point in the town (Q10).

As shown in the housing units chart below, Bolivar achieved a goal from the last Comprehensive Plan to “retain the small town, quiet atmosphere” with housing units only increasing by a very small amount in the last US Census.

Today, survey results and community discussions show residents are concerned about the lack of residential ownership opportunities resulting from the rise in short-term rentals in this tourist town (Q18). Citizens are concerned this will damage our ability to build community in Bolivar. Still, only 27% said short-term rentals should be restricted but 39% said maybe/not sure (Q19). The Bolivar Planning Commission has assembled a list of over 40 properties in Bolivar operating as short-term “vacation rentals” in Bolivar as of late 2023.

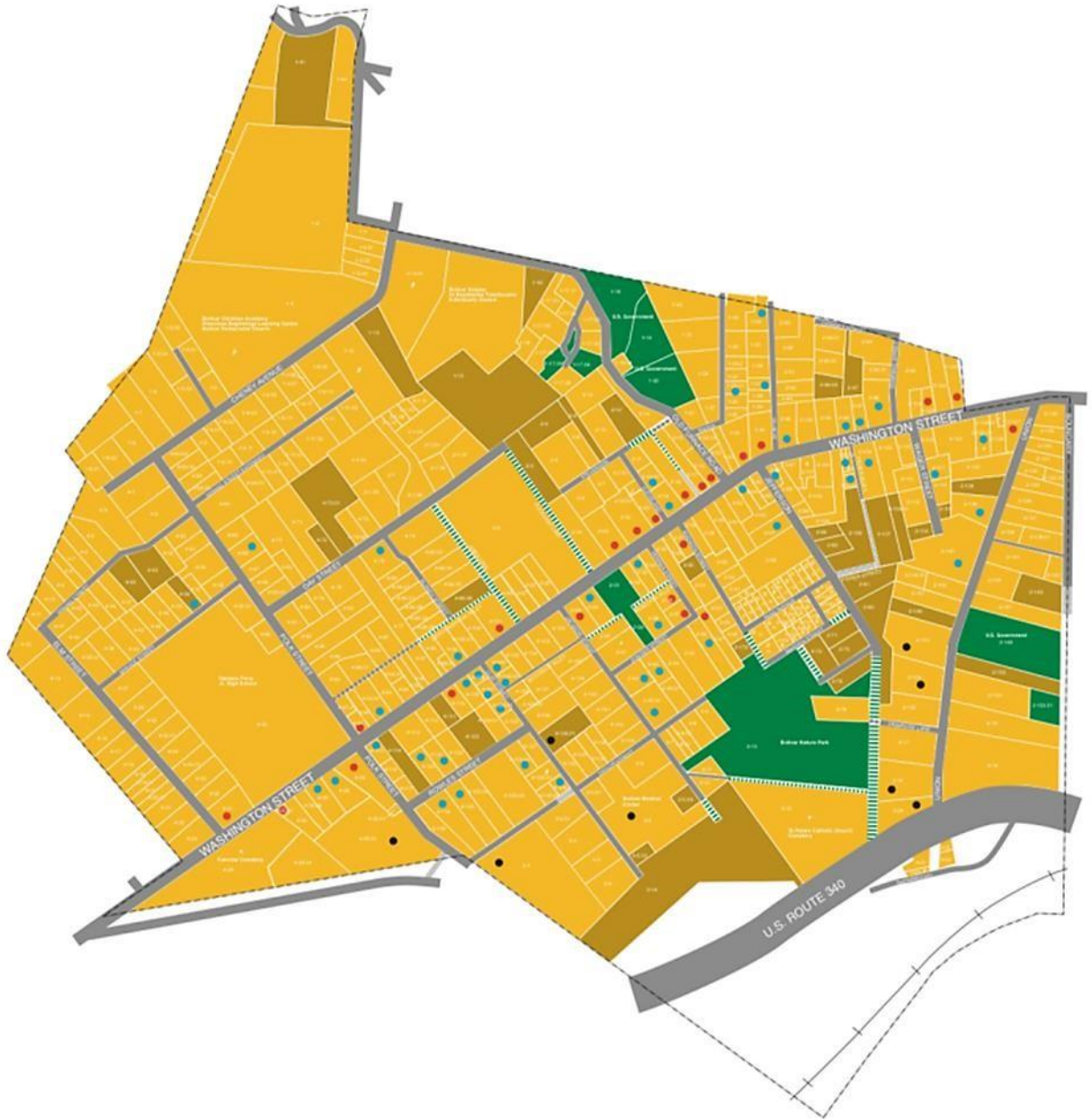
Though restricting large structures showed some support (Q23), residents are generally supportive of residential land use for “tiny houses” (Q24).

S3 Table 1 Housing Units **Figures from US Census and Previous Comprehensive Plan*

Year	2020	2010	2000	1990	1980
Occupied	510	498	479	431	234
Vacant	56	67	40	38	54
Total Units	566	565	519	469	288

S3 Map 1 Bolivar, WV Land Use Map Original [Land-Use-Map-Bolivar-West-Virginia2024.pdf](#)

Land Use Map • Bolivar West Virginia



Bolivar Comprehensive Plan • June 2000

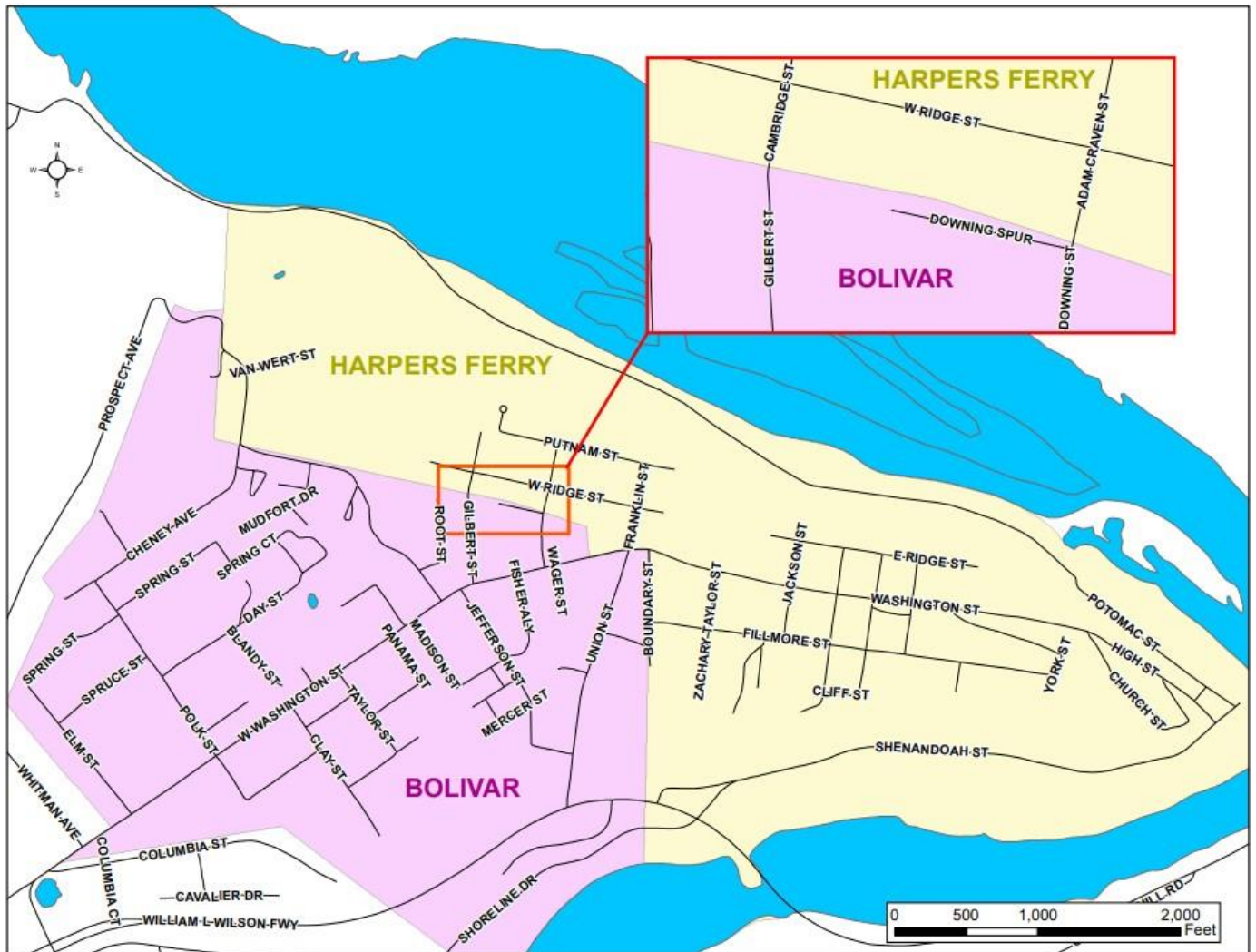
- LEGEND**
- Residential
 - Business/Commercial
 - Park/Open Space
 - Water Use
 - Non-conforming Use
 - Residential Undeveloped
 - Paper Street
 - Public Building
 - Community Center

The purpose of this map is to indicate what use the land can be used for without violating the provisions of the plan.

Map prepared by Bolivar Planning Commission. All rights reserved.

S3 Map2 Bolivar, WV Street and Border Outline Map provided by Jefferson County,

WV 911 Dispatch



Commercial Land Use

Other than WVU's Harpers Ferry Family Medicine on Taylor St and the Quality Hotel on Union Street, the designated commercial area is confined to the Washington Street corridor. This corridor allows residential as well as commercial uses and presently contains a variety of commercial establishments interspersed with residential units. (See the Economic Development section for additional information on existing businesses.) As mentioned previously, walkability to these businesses is important to the community, translating into sidewalk repair and sidewalk and trail expansions (Q4, Q10, Q12, and Q30). Respondents also indicate concern with parking, which affects the Washington Street corridor (Q27). (See the Transportation section for more on parking in the survey.)

Agricultural Land Use

Farming no longer exists in Bolivar. A few residents raise chickens, and other farm animals, while many others have small backyard vegetable and herb gardens.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Located in a rural, mountainous area in close proximity to two major rivers, Bolivar is surrounded by significant amounts of open space, farms, park land, and woodlands. According to the 2023 survey, the outdoors and scenic beauty of the area remain a primary draw for many of Bolivar's current residents (Q4). Furthermore, residents indicated that Bolivar's "quiet smalltown atmosphere" was of top concern (Q4); maintaining natural spaces further supports this.

In addition to several smaller trails in and around town, four major nationally known trails - The Appalachian National Scenic Trail, C&O Canal Towpath, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, and American Discovery Trail- pass within a mile of Bolivar. Notably, the Town of Bolivar has been designated an Appalachian Trail Community and a Canal Town.

In addition, the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, with a host of recreational activities ranging from fishing to white water rafting, form natural borders north and south of town. Today, Bolivar has three developed areas of open space - Bolivar Children's Park, Jefferson County's Bolivar Nature Park and the western portion of WV DNR's Woodpecker Woods - as well as undeveloped park land, paper streets, utility easements, and creeks.

Bolivar Children's Park, located on Washington Street between Panama and Taylor, was established by the Bolivar Building Commission in 1996. Open from dawn to dusk, it is a recreational facility with park pavilion, picnic tables, benches, playground equipment, and basketball hoops. The Town Council funds expenses for grass cutting, trash removal, maintenance and equipment repair. Because it is on the main street of town and borders the Bolivar Community Center parking lot, the park is easily accessible by foot and by car. Since the completion of the initial plan, the Historic Spring House has been refurbished through the generosity of a local resident.

The Bolivar Nature Park is part of the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission. As a key part of community walkability (Q4, Q10), the small park (~7 acres) offers the Red Trail, built on Montgomery Paper Street, connecting Taylor St with Jefferson and scenic St. Peter's Cemetery. Off the Red Trail, there is an inner Blue Trail loop and outer Yellow Trail Loop connecting Taylor Court with Warren and Mercer streets. At the base of the trail there is a gazebo and picnic table. At this time, community access and knowledge of the park are limited due to lack of advertising and the absence of a defined parking area.

Woodpecker Woods is owned by the WV Department of Natural Resources and maintained by the Trail & Town Alliance of Harpers Ferry-Bolivar. The western portion stretches to Bolivar Heights with about 25% existing in Bolivar. The park offers miles of natural surface trails with wooded views of old wall ruins, stream valleys, small cascades and the Potomac River. Woodpecker Woods connects Bolivar Heights and its residents with Harpers Ferry neighborhoods to the east improving walkability and outdoor enjoyment for all (Q4, Q10).

Paper streets belong to the town. They are streets that are designated on the map or parcel book of the Jefferson County Assessor but are not in use by vehicles and are generally natural spaces. There are a number of paper streets in Bolivar. In the future, more paper streets might be considered for change/conversion into nature trails to improve walkability, connectivity, and outdoor enjoyment (Q4, Q10).

Public Buildings and Institutions

Bolivar has four major buildings and institutions: Bolivar Community Center, Harpers Ferry Family Medicine Center, Harpers Ferry Middle School, and Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library. Lacking a building dedicated solely to government use, the Bolivar Community Center houses all public-office space for the town.

A hundred or so years ago, Bolivar had a jail. Although the small, two-story structure is still standing at the edge of the community center parking lot, it functions now as a town storage space, but should be restored and perhaps used to provide a service to the town such as a Bolivar History Museum (Q10).

Non-Commercial Private Buildings and Institutions

Bolivar has one church and two graveyards. Bolivar United Methodist Church was built in 1849 and is located on Washington Street. St. James Catholic Church in Charles Town maintains St. Peter's Cemetery, and the St. John's Lutheran Church in Harpers Ferry maintains the Fairview Lutheran Cemetery.

Housing

Analysis of projected housing needs is based upon historical and current population trends as described in Section 5 of the Plan. As indicated in that Section, the total population of Bolivar has remained relatively constant since 1990. A large increase in housing unit demand is possible with the rise of teleworking in our society. With the majority of vacant land in the residential land use zone, there is capacity available to meet some future housing demand if it occurs. A further increase in housing units should also be balanced with the Plan's vision statement of maintaining the small-town character of Bolivar.

Rehabilitation and improvement of existing housing units should be encouraged through the clarification of Town ordinances regarding permitting and building construction. Easy to understand regulations followed by a straightforward permitting process would allow Bolivar to encourage existing and new residents to maintain and improve their housing units. Most new buildings within the town are residential with some larger commercial type structures on W. Washington Street. The makeup of architectural types makes adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings into housing seem unlikely, although current zoning would not prohibit that from occurring in most of the town.

The Tree Canopy

On November 3, 2011, the Jefferson County Commission approved an Urban Tree Canopy Plan and Goals. In it, Chapter 5 lists “Recommendations/Goals for Bolivar.” Bolivar should encourage opportunities to meet at least one of the stated goals listed, namely to “Increase Bolivar’s Tree Canopy by 1% to 50% (two additional acres) by 2030.” Bolivar could support new appropriate species of tree plantings on municipal and/or public land in town by pursuing grants, actively planting trees and encouraging non-profits and residents to do the same. Many trees have and will be lost in sidewalk improvements and replacement along Washington Street. A Bolivar Streetscape Committee has been created. Though the state does not intend to replace trees between the new sidewalk and the street, the town should ideally have a plan in place to quickly replace trees with appropriately-sized flowering shrub and plant species. Perhaps, trees could be provided and planted by the town in the neighboring front yards of interested residents along Washington Street to help provide shade for the new sidewalks, at a proper distance from the sidewalks to prevent recurring damage. As the budget allows, these trees should be more mature (i.e., larger) so that they will restore shade and start flowering as quickly as possible for residents to enjoy (Q4, Q10, Q12, and Q30).

Section 4: Transportation and Infrastructure Introduction

The town of Bolivar, positioned near the easternmost tip of West Virginia, adjacent to Harpers Ferry, presents unique challenges and opportunities in terms of transportation and infrastructure. The limited access points into and out of Bolivar, combined with its historical and environmental context, necessitate careful planning and innovative solutions to ensure the community's

longterm viability and quality of life. This document synthesizes survey findings from the community and outlines strategic recommendations for the Town Council's consideration.

Goal(s):

- Improve community walkability and pedestrian safety (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Improve parking and traffic flow (Q12, Q26, Q30).
- Continue to communicate with town residents regarding storm water management.
- Continue to make the town and local area roads and sidewalks safe for residents.
- Continue the Town's coordination with water and sewer service providers.
- Continue to focus on storm water management projects.

Objective(s):

- Continue improving/replacing existing sidewalks and maintenance of roads (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Look for logical places to explore adding additional sidewalks or natural surface corridors in cooperation with the State and adjacent property owners (ex. Old Furnace Rd sidewalk from Washington St to Cheney Ave; a sidewalk or path on the Bolivar side of the street where Old Furnace Rd meets Prospect Ave on a narrow blind curve; or a sidewalk to the WV Welcome Center (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).
- Continue proper maintenance and upgrades of roads and improvement of sidewalks (nearly 58% think that the existing sidewalks would be inadequate to serve any additional population) – these issues remain very important to residents.
- Continue the plan to control the local deer population with special-permit bow-hunting within town limits.
- Develop a consistent message while continuing to advocate for controlled growth in Jefferson County – traffic and congestion remain a major issue for residents – especially as policies pertain to the development of the Route 340 corridor.
- Continue to apply and secure funding for infrastructure projects (Q12, Q30).
- Adopt new Storm Water Management ordinances, combining them with existing ordinances to create a comprehensive and practical set of rules for all future development (Q25).
- Consider conducting a regular flushing of drainage culverts/grates in town as part of the Storm Water Management.

Sidewalks

There is clear support for sidewalk improvements, replacements and expansion in Bolivar (Q4, Q10, Q12, and Q30). Council should look to act on this as the budget allows. Some work has already begun.

ADA (handicapped accessible) approved ramps were added to the corner of all streets on West Washington street in 2022. Funding for this project was secured through a state grant from the Department of Transportation – DOT.

In 2021, the town received state infrastructure funds to replace sidewalks along the north side of West Washington between Polk and Gilbert streets. American Recovery Program has dedicated American Rescue Plan Act funds to meet the required match for the project. The project, administered by the West Virginia Department of Highways, includes the removal and replacement of existing sidewalk to repair uneven and broken walkway. The project, slated for summer 2024, will require the removal of trees between the sidewalk and the DOH-owned roadway so as not to contribute to recurring damage of the new sidewalks.

A state grant through the West Virginia Department of Transportation was secured in 2022 to replace damaged sections of sidewalk along the north side of the state highway from Polk to Gilbert Street. Additional grant funding was secured in 2024 for the design phase, for the south side of West Washington Street in order to complete the replacement of the sidewalks in the Town of Bolivar. Funding for the south side of Washington Street project repairs/replacement has yet to be secured.

Roads and Highways

The town of Bolivar is situated at the easternmost tip of West Virginia, west only of the small town of Harpers Ferry. The corporate limits of Bolivar include a stretch of Route 340, the town's only access/egress route. Rt. 340 is classified by the West Virginia Department of Highways as a "trunkline." It supports the highest volume of traffic in Jefferson County.

There currently are three ways in and out of Bolivar: one at Rt. 340 and Washington Street at the west end of town, a major intersection with a traffic light; the second, a T-junction at Rt. 340 and Union Street (against fast moving traffic on a hill on a curve); and a third through Harpers Ferry to Lower Town along Washington St down to High Street.

While the limited access to Bolivar enhances its security, it does leave the town susceptible to massive tie-ups when there are problems on Rt. 340, such as accidents or construction delays. The ever-increasing traffic on Rt. 340 due to growth in other areas of Jefferson County and beyond will exacerbate congestion in the future.

Many of the roads within the town of Bolivar are maintained by the State of West Virginia Department of Highways. These include: W. Washington Street (alternate 340), Polk Street, Cheney Street, Old Furnace Road, Taylor Street, Clay Street, and Union Street.

Bolivar maintains all of the remaining streets that are under town purview, with responsibility for their condition falling to the Street Committee of the Bolivar Town Council as well as snow removal (all streets including those owned by Department of Highways), with the exception of Ashland Village and Heritage Square which are both operated by an HOA (Homeowners Association).

Traffic in Bolivar is not particularly heavy during weekdays. There is intermittent traffic on the main Washington Street corridor and Taylor and Clay due to Harpers Ferry Family Medicine. For this reason, these latter two narrow streets are now one-way. There is little commercial traffic, due to the small number of businesses in Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. Since the 2000 plan was adopted, the closure of the Hilltop House Hotel in February 2008 decreased the traffic from guest vehicles and tour buses. This traffic volume will likely return when the hotel reopens. For

this reason, the town must be vigilant to monitor traffic flow to consider any potential changes. Much of the tourist traffic is diverted from the town's streets by Harpers Ferry National Historical Park's bus system. On weekends, there is a considerable amount of tourist traffic, particularly in spring, summer, and fall.

Additional morning and evening traffic occurs when local commuters drive through Bolivar to reach or return from the Harpers Ferry train station where MARC trains carry commuters into Washington, DC, every weekday. Approximately 7% of survey respondents in town use the MARC trains for commuting (Q7).

A comprehensive assessment of road conditions needs to be completed. Streets need repaving or repair from time to time. The town has limited financial resources; therefore, street repairs are prioritized and repaved as resources allow.

Public Transportation

There are a few public transportation options available to residents of Bolivar that offer service in the local area (Harpers Ferry, Charles Town, Martinsburg) and access to Washington, DC:

- MARC Trains - MARC trains are available from adjacent Harpers Ferry and Brunswick, Maryland, stations. They offer access to Washington, DC, and the Rt. 270 technology corridor in Maryland, but service is limited to weekday rush hours. There are several trains each morning and evening. County residents can also catch the MARC trains at the Duffields stop between Charles Town and Shepherdstown.
- Amtrak - The Capitol Limited Amtrak train stops at Harpers Ferry twice daily, east- and westbound. It runs between Chicago and Washington D.C.
- Taxi Service - There is no taxi service based in Bolivar or Harpers Ferry, but taxis are available from Charles Town. There is limited Uber and Lyft service.
- Bus – Pan Tran buses operated by the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) provide local service between Charles Town, Harpers Ferry and Martinsburg. However, 0% of surveyed responses received use this service to commute (Q7). There is also a Pan Tran bus line from Martinsburg to Shepherdstown.

Parking

Parking along Washington Street can sometimes be difficult, during the tourist season weekends. This is especially true in “Lower Bolivar” or the few blocks near the area where Washington Street approaches Union and the boundary with Harpers Ferry to the East. Though a smaller percentage of residents live in this area compared to the rest of town, 44% of those surveyed said parking is a problem for Bolivar. Thus, parking restrictions should be explored and further discussed with affected residents and businesses (Q26).

Bolivar Water Services Management

Bolivar residents and property owners purchase water services from the Harpers Ferry Water Works (HFWW). HFWW is owned and managed by the Town of Harpers Ferry. It serves 850 customers (approximately 2,200 people) in the Towns of Harpers Ferry and, Bolivar as well as in the, Cavalier Heights, and Bolivar Heights parts of Jefferson County. The primary drinking water

source is Elks Run, a local tributary of the Potomac River. Water is treated in a state-of-the-art micro-filtration production facility on Bakerton Road, pumped to storage tanks located on Prospect Avenue, Bolivar Heights, and gravity fed to customers across the system. The plant meets West Virginia Department of Health regulations promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency emanating from the federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. The Potomac River serves as the system's alternate water source. The water plant was rebuilt in 2022, funded by a \$6M USDA loan carrying a 30-year term. The plant has the capacity to produce 12 million gallons per month. Monthly revenues in 2023 were based upon an average 2.8 million gallons sold.

The Town of Harpers Ferry actively seeks grant funding to address long-term needs to repair and replace sections of the distribution system (storage tanks, pressure reducing valves, and underground mains and service lines). The HFWW maintains 73 fire hydrants located throughout its service area.

The Town of Harpers Ferry's ordinance formulating the Water Commission stipulates that one member of the seven-member advisory board shall be a resident of the Town of Bolivar. The expectation of the Bolivar Town Council when putting forward a Bolivar resident for consideration and appointment by Harpers Ferry Town Council is that the Bolivar representative will keep the Bolivar Town Council apprised of news and developments coming from the Water Commission.

In 1987, Harpers Ferry built what at that time was a modern-day filtration plant to process water from Elks Run and pump it through a network of water mains and service lines installed throughout the towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. Over the subsequent three decades, rates were held down as additional investment in the system was curtailed. Due to a backlog of deferred maintenance, water rates have been rising over the past decade. HFWW ranks in the upper quartile when compared to other systems in West Virginia. In 2017, water rates stood at \$14.25 per 1000 gallons rising to \$15 per 1000 gallons in 2018 in anticipation of the rebuild of the water plant. Once the project was initiated in 2020, customers saw rates rise to \$19.25 per 1000 gallons, in part to service the \$6 million USDA loan. After holding rates flat through the inflationary years following the pandemic, HFWW requested and was granted an increase by the WV Public Service Commission to \$25 per 1000 gallons. Rising electricity, labor rates, and process chemical costs, along with requirements by the PSC to hold increased funds in reserve, necessitated the latest increase.

A number of factors affecting the rates Bolivar residents pay for safe drinking water are the relatively small customer base over which investment in infrastructure improvements can be spread; the cost to borrow money to rebuild its system; and the high median household income of its customer base when compared to other communities served by other systems across the state. HFWW competes for limited federal infrastructure funds with all West Virginia communities, many of which have even more acute system needs, and economic resources that are considerably scarcer than those found in Jefferson County.

Harpers Ferry's drinking water was judged with distinction, placing 5th, in the 34th annual Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting (held in 2023) among municipal water entrants from across the U.S. and Canada, and from as far away as Australia.

Sewage Treatment System

Waste water treatment is provided by the Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Public Service District (PSD). Per State code, the PSD is an independent public authority that provides waste water treatment services jointly to the towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. The Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Public Service District waste water treatment plant occupies National Park Service (NPS) property via easement. An independent board consisting of three local, county-appointed commissioners oversees the administration of the PSD.

The Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Public Service District has provided sewer service to both towns since 1978.

The treatment plant is a 300,000 gallon per day extended aeration style plant. There are 11 miles of gravity sewer lines, two major sewer lift stations, and 11 small grinder style pumping stations around the two towns.

The Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Public Service District, handles waste water treatment in accordance with West Virginia Code. Water and sewer utility systems are located throughout the Town and park, sometimes requiring cooperative planning for maintenance, replacement, or expansion. It is an independent public authority separate from both Towns' governments. The Harpers FerryBolivar PSD Board oversees the administration of the Public Service District.

Septic Systems

Septic tanks are no longer permitted in the town of Bolivar.

Surface Water Quality

The Safe Water Harpers Ferry/Elks Run protection group that meets regularly under the organizational leadership of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition. Also, by Harpers Ferry ordinance, there is a Bolivar resident seat on the HF Water Commission responsible for representing Bolivar's interests and reporting information back to the Bolivar Town Council.

Drainage and Stormwater

A Stormwater green infrastructure study was recently completed by Thrasher, a civil engineering firm. An older Stormwater Management study and model Stormwater Ordinance has yet to be adopted by the Town of Bolivar.

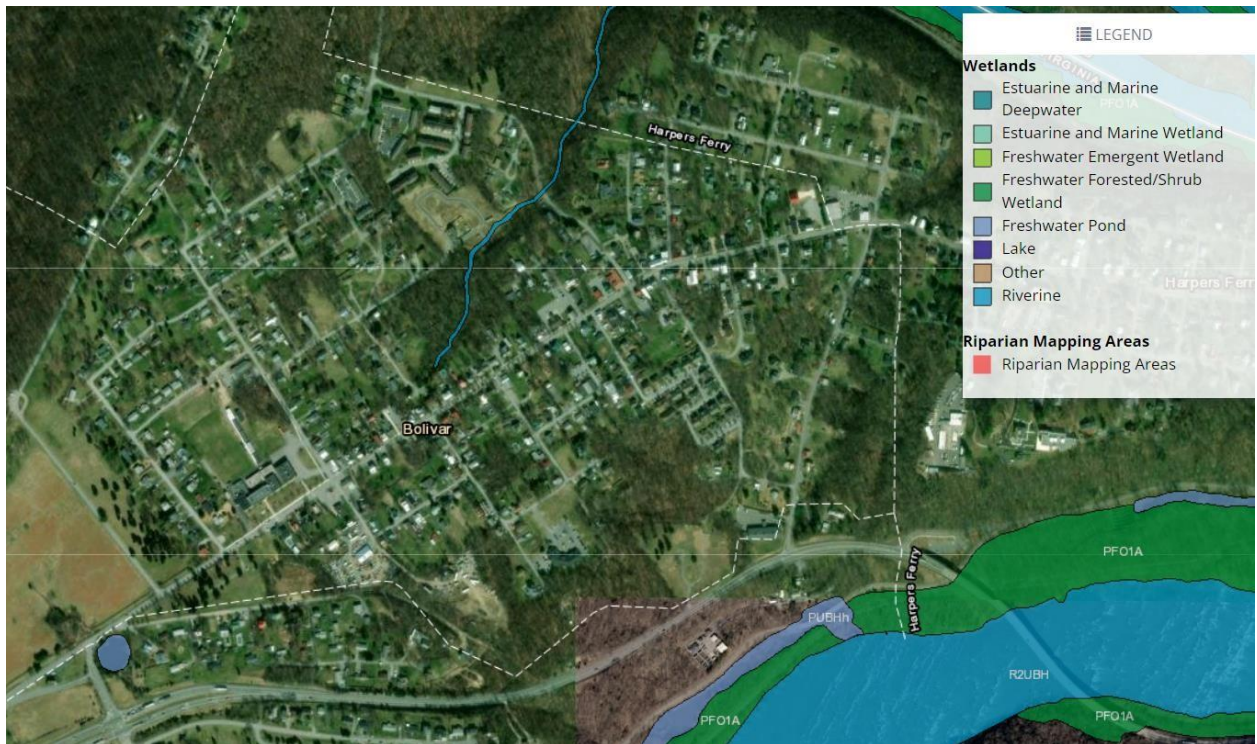
Wetlands

Wetlands are valuable natural resource features. Their values include wildlife habitat, fish spawning and rearing, recreation, water quality improvement, attenuation of runoff and flood flows and removal of pollutants. Floodplain wetlands support furbearers and water fowl populations and may provide seasonal habitat for sport fish. The U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service manages the National Wetlands Inventory Program which develops and maintains the mapping inventory and classification of wetland systems, and the interpretation and analysis of aerial images. The NWI mapping and inventory data is available online at: <http://www.fws.gov> or [National Wetlands Inventory \(usgs.gov\)](http://nationalwetlandsinventory.usgs.gov).

A search of the NWI's mapping data shows no existing known mapped wetlands within the town limit. Mapped wetlands in the Riverine and Palustrine freshwater types occur within the areas adjacent to the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. The NWI map is included within the appendix. It should be noted that this level of mapping analysis does not reveal all wetland systems present. Additional areas within Bolivar may be present which have positive indicators for wetlands and may be regulated at the state or federal levels. Wetlands generally occur in low lying areas that are prone to prolonged, greater than two weeks, inundation or soil saturation during the growing season through surface or ground hydrologic sources.

S4 Map1 Bolivar Wetlands Map with Key

[National Wetlands Inventory \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/national-wetlands-inventory)



Floodplains

Flooding is a normal process of rivers that is considered a hazard when it threatens human life or damages property. The damage associated with a flood event is magnified when natural river floodplains are developed and inhabited. The Town of Bolivar is included on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood maps.

Section 5 Economic Development Goal(s):

- **Create a favorable business environment** along the business corridor of Washington Street. 84% of all 2023 survey respondents rated “walkability to dining, shopping, other commercial services, outdoor recreation, etc.” as “Somewhat” or “Very” important (Q10). More than 75% still agree for the most part with this original 2003 Vision Statement for Bolivar (Q9):
“Bolivar is a small-town scenic community whose residents value its outdoor space, natural beauty, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street.”
- **Strengthen ties and lines of communication** between local businesses, government, and the public. One-third of survey respondents expressed the view that the Town “website and general communications” need improvement, more than any other Town service (Q11).
- **Keep Bolivar small.** This sentiment has not changed over the last 20 years. Over 65% of survey respondents equally chose “quiet small-town atmosphere” and “access to outdoors/scenic beauty” as the qualities that most attracted them to Bolivar (Q4). And

95% value “peace and quiet” in their community (Q10).

- **Encourage affordable housing.** A resounding 60% of survey respondents think “the Town should do more to encourage affordable housing” (Q33).
- **Monitor parking** problems in Town, especially along Washington Street. 56% of survey respondents answered “No” when asked if parking is a problem in Bolivar, but 44% answered “Yes”. Considering that the majority of Bolivar residents reside on other streets than the main thoroughfare of Washington St, this indicates that parking in town is indeed a concern (Q26).

Objective(s):

Create a favorable business environment

- Improve Town infrastructure, namely sidewalks and streets, along with stormwater management, to improve the commercial district. Town investment in infrastructure projects will attract more business to Bolivar. The two highest-ranked options when residents were asked which projects would you most like to see the Town undertake were (1) Washington St sidewalk improvements and (2) street upgrades and repairs (resurfacing, storm water management, Old Furnace Road gully, etc.) (Q30).
- Undertake beautification projects in Town. Residents have expressed dismay at the necessary removal of the decaying mature trees in the Children’s Park, and removal of roadside trees along Washington Street for the sidewalk project. A Streetscape Committee was formed in 2023 by Council to address appropriate replacement plants along Washington Street. Hotel tax revenue may be used for such projects.
- Provide uniform structure for Bolivar mailboxes. There has been a massive increase of mailboxes along Washington Street since the Post Office annual rental fee for post office boxes keeps increasing. Future management of new mailboxes should show pretense of neat and orderly appearance.
- Support the Hilltop House Hotel project. “A rising tide lifts all boats.” Surely, other local enterprise will emerge and thrive with a new upscale hotel in our neighboring town. Locals might benefit from employment. 67% of survey takers responded “No” when asked if they had any “concerns regarding redevelopment of the Hilltop House Hotel” (Q28).
- Continue to support existing local organizations which promote local business, such as Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Jefferson County Development Authority.
- Promote local businesses with kiosk/map/brochure, perhaps featuring businesses, historic sites, and other points of interest, all in one, intended for tourists and local residents alike.

Strengthen ties and lines of communication

- Provide registered business owners with annual or regular reminders of town guidelines for signs, parking, etc., to encourage compliance with local laws. 26% of survey takers think that “ordinance and code enforcement” needs improvement (Q11).
- Maintain and use a residential email group to send out email notices for meetings, ordinances (friendly reminders), Town-sponsored events, committee news, etc., to keep Bolivar residents better informed. According to the survey, nearly half (47%) of respondents don’t “understand the Town’s ordinances and Comprehensive Plan, or know

where to find them” (Q15); and most residents would prefer to be informed via “Email, Website, and Social Media/Facebook” (Q14). **Keep Bolivar small.**

- Without much more room to grow (very few empty buildable lots left), the population of Bolivar should not grow very much, but the Planning Commission should continue the Town’s land use policy of one single-family home per half acre (or platted lot), which has managed to control density in the last three decades. **Encourage affordable housing.**
- AirBnB/Vacation Rentals (STR’s) located throughout the town shall follow and be aware of all town ordinances and codes established by the town including but not limited to parts 7 and 9 and be held responsible for upholding these established codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV. Only owner-occupied dwellings would be allowed to rent rooms to tourists, such as stated in Ordinances 1303.02 under Residential District, Permitted uses “B.” Under that same ordinance, “C” should be changed to read, “Nothing in the establishment of Zone ‘R’ (Residential) uses shall prohibit the rental of properties for accepted ‘R’ uses *for a period of at least 30 consecutive days.*” **Monitor parking**
- Have law enforcement patrol Washington Street on busy tourist days to enforce parking uniformity (parking outside of the white road lines, entirely on the shoulder). Parked vehicles should in no way impede traffic.
- Place “No parking from here to corner” signs at several junctions with Washington Street, such as Jefferson St. and Fisher Alley to ensure unimpeded views of oncoming traffic.
- Re-evaluate/enforce zoning ordinance 1303.04(h) requiring 6 off-street parking spaces per commercial establishment and 2 per residential building. Businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and professional offices, should certainly require 6 spots at minimum, but perhaps other businesses like short-term rentals or cottage businesses should not.

Introduction

Bolivar’s population has seen dramatic changes over the past 150 years. After reaching a peak of 1,054 residents in pre-Civil War 1850, it fell to 637 in 1950. The population started growing again in the past half-century, reaching 1,037 in 1990 and leveling off for the next 30 years according to 2000 and 2010 census information. The latest census data for 2020 has the Bolivar population at 1036 residents.

Bolivar’s compact population and limited geography make for a small economic base. Even so, a wide variety of outlooks, occupations, and expectations exist among its citizens. This chapter will discuss where we are now and where we would like to be in the future. It includes information on local business, population and work force, recent growth, tourism, and the wishes of Bolivar’s residents for a strong, sustainable economy responsive to its needs.

A sustainable economy is one that is diverse, grows sufficiently to create meaningful jobs, reduces poverty, and increases the opportunity for a high quality of life for all without degrading the natural and cultural heritage of the community. It is also capable of meeting the needs of the present population without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Population

Several factors influenced this population flux over the decades, including the following: the growth and subsequent decline of industry; the Civil War; a number of devastating floods, which affected employment in Lower Town Harpers Ferry; emigration from the Washington, DC, metropolitan area; the national economy; and the National Park Service’s establishment of a historical park at nearby Harpers Ferry, and its National Headquarters on the old Storer College campus.

In early 2000, the Town of Bolivar initiated a Community Planning Questionnaire and a series of neighborhood meetings to solicit citizen input on planning Bolivar’s future. According to the questionnaire, 84% of the 216 respondents wished to see Bolivar’s population “stay the same” while only small percentages wanted to see the population either increase or decrease.

This sentiment received further support in the neighborhood meetings where participants, one after another, spoke of moving to Bolivar for its quiet, small-town character and voiced a desire that Bolivar retain this quality in the future. Eighty-four percent of Community Planning Questionnaire respondents wanted to limit or stop the construction of new multi-family dwellings, and a majority of respondents felt that Bolivar’s infrastructure – its streets, sidewalks, streetlights, water and sewer service, police and emergency services, schools, and post office – could not support an increased population.

Similar questions on population were posed in the fall of 2012 survey with similar results. Those sentiments continue to hold true for residents today, as expressed in the latest June 2023 survey, where residents placed high value on keeping Bolivar small.

Reasons for the drop in population from 1970 to 1980 are unclear. The increase in the following decade can be accounted for, at least in part, by the new housing that became available at Heritage Square, Bolivar Court, and Madison Square.

In the last 30 years, Bolivar’s population has remained steady. For comparison, the population of Jefferson County was up 7.8% in 2020 (57,783) from 2010 (53,612); during that same period, the US population grew 7%, and West Virginia's overall state population shrank 3.4% (USAfacts.org). Bolivar experienced some growth during this last decade, as twenty new building permits were issued (19 new homes, 1 commercial property). Twelve new homes were built on the former Ashbaugh property “Ashland Village”, and three on Columbia Street by Bolivar developer Steve Bittinger. There are a few undeveloped isolated lots left in Bolivar, but two large tracts of undeveloped private land remain: Marmion Hill (6-acre parcel behind the Medical Center), and the 7-acre Pentecostal Church property along Cheney Avenue.

As part of the 2024 update of the plan, additional population statistics from U.S. Census data are included below to provide a more informative breakdown of the makeup of the citizens of Bolivar.

S5 Table 1: Snapshot of Bolivar in statistics (2020 Census information):

Total Population	1036
------------------	------

Median age	39.9
Education: Bachelor's degree or higher	37.9%
Total housing units	566
Total households	529
Median household income	\$80,125
Employment rate	72.4%
Median gross rent (housing)	\$1,526

S5 Table 2: Total Population for Bolivar

Year	Population
1840	536
1850	1,054
1910	687
1940	628
1950	637
1960	754
1970	943
1980	672
1990	1,037
2000	1,045
2010	1,045
2020	1,036

S5 Table 3: Population by Gender

Census Year	2020
Male	513
Female	523
Total	1036

S5 Table 4: Population by Race

	2020	2010	2000
White	885	976	952
African American	53	47	56
Asian	8	3	5
American Indian and Alaska Native	4	2	7
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0	0	2
Other	6	3	5
Identified by two or more	80	14	18
TOTAL	1036	1045	1045

S5 Table 5: Population by Age

	2020	2010	2000
Under 5 years	45	61	56
5 to 9 years	146	145	179

10 to 14 years			
15 to 19 years			
20 to 24 years	193	200	211
25 to 29 years			
30 to 34 years			
35 to 39 years	135	131	165
40 to 44 years			
45 to 49 years	153	199	155
50 to 54 years			
55 to 59 years	164	141	106
60 to 64 years			
65 to 69 years	123	90	103
70 to 74 years			
75 to 79 years	52	58	51
80 to 84 years			
85 years and over	25	20	19
TOTAL	1036	1045	1045

Local Business

According to town records, in fiscal year 2023 (starting July 1), there were 58 businesses registered to operate in Bolivar. Comparatively, a survey done in May 2013 shows a total of 25 businesses and/or institutions in operation, providing employment for approximately 246 people.

Besides the obvious brick and mortar establishments in town, Bolivar business licenses are issued to vendors providing goods and services on regular basis. In addition, many people work at home in cottage industries such as providing day care, operating a B&B, doing freelance work in photography or accounting, or working professionally as artists, potters, or carpenters. As expressed in past surveys, in 2023 Bolivar residents want a more “livable” community, which they define as having more business establishments in town (within walking distance), where people can gather and socialize, and where they can obtain essential services. Many complained that Bolivar businesses are inadequate and seem to cater mostly to the tourist crowd. They would like to see more small businesses and a diversity of business, in particular restaurants and retail/grocery stores/farmers market (fresh produce) with emphasis on serving residents’ needs.

The town of Bolivar has experienced some turnover during the last decade in its business community. Several long-time businesses closed, including Bob & Janie’s Pool Supplies (2016), Jason’s Antiques (2018), Courtney’s (salvage yard/repair shop – 2018), Rivers Studio & Gallery (2020), Canal House Café (2020), The Jackson Rose Bed & Breakfast (2022), and The Anvil Restaurant (2023). Others either moved location within town and/or were replaced by other businesses. For instance, Alissa Harris built a new facility for her Harpers Ferry Chiropractic business in 2017, moving from 43 Panama Street to her current location at 1627 W. Washington Street. The Massage & Wellness Center located at 1441 W. Washington Street closed in 2013; in 2017 after rehabbing and expanding the property, Washington Street Studios opened its pottery-making class and retail space. A Step in Time bakery relocated from 1112 W. Washington Street to Ranson in 2016; in its place Kelley Farm Kitchen, a vegan restaurant, opened in 2020. This business is part of a commercial area at the eastern end of Washington Street (north side) developed in the last ten years, anchored by The Barn (a bar and event venue opened), The Light Horse Inn (a bed and breakfast), and Snallygaster’s Café & Wine Bar (since 2021). In 2020, Rations Spaceport (virtual “escape room”) rehabbed the old Pub building at the western side of town (1635 W Washington St) after it had been closed for well over a decade.

Since the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, more and more Americans, including many in Bolivar, began telecommuting. This working-from-home trend accelerated under COVID, giving many tech company employees and website-based cottage industry workers the option to live in any location with reliable internet access. As of 2023, many federal government offices still allow their employees to telecommute, at least several days a week, if not more.

In the 2023 community survey (Q6 & Q7), over 45% of respondents claim either to work from home or are retired/unemployed and therefore do not commute. This relatively high number of residents at home most days, whether retired, unemployed, or working from home, may likely increase the need for more bandwidth capacity (high-speed internet/streaming services), and reliable and affordable utilities like water/sewer and electric. These infrastructure needs seem likely to continue into the next ten years.

S5 Table 6: Business Survey (May 2023)

Industry	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
Service	6	13
Retail	4	18
Food	3	21
Lodging	3	20
Medical and dental	5	87
Banking	1	7
Public institutions	2	55
Construction	1	25
TOTAL	25	246

S5 Table 7: Largest Employers*

Business Name	Number of Employees
Harpers Ferry Family Medicine	25
Harpers Ferry Middle School	74
7-11	10
Quality Inn	11
Mayhew and Smith Dentistry	10
Bank of Charles Town	4

TOTAL	134
--------------	------------

* This table includes the largest employers, counting both full and part time, and excludes smaller employers which may be present within the town.

Short-term rentals (STR's)

Another growing trend within the last 10 years has been a proliferation of AirBnBs, or Vacation Rental units, in town. In 2014, there were two Bolivar businesses listed as Vacation Rentals. Currently, there are at least 41 units in town serving as short-term rentals (STR's). Most of these units are either entire single-family homes or apartment units offering tourist accommodation by the night or week. These units are not owner-occupied. STR's do not include the more traditional Bed & Breakfast facilities or hotels, and are typically advertised and booked through website companies such as AirBnB, VRBO, or Booking.com.

In the comment section for Q9 on the 2023 community survey, many residents expressed concern about this recent proliferation of vacation rentals. They feel that Bolivar is “losing a bit of its residential character” to a “transient” community and are worried that STR's are having a “negative effect on [housing] affordability.” Under Q18, while one-third of respondents had “no concerns” about STR's, others listed “loss of properties available for residential ownership to build community” as their top concern (46%) and “lack of parking” (33%) as their second. When asked (Q19) whether Bolivar should have ordinances to “limit/restrict/control” STR's, the response was 27% Yes, 30% Maybe, while 34% responded No (9% remained unsure).

Many also expressed the desire to keep commercial properties to the official business corridor of Washington Street.

The jump in housing prices can be pinned, at least in part, by this relatively new AirBnB phenomenon. Investment house buyers, awash in cash and lured by income potential, have kept local home sales up and out of reach of local buyers. This, along with the limited supply of housing in Bolivar/Harpers Ferry, demand from incoming buyers from neighboring states, an increase in building costs during COVID, and higher interest rates, have combined to make housing costs unattainable for many.

The Hill Top House Hotel in Harpers Ferry

The Hill Top House Hotel was built in 1890 by Thomas S. Lovett on a bluff overlooking the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Despite two major fires, Lovett rebuilt and operated the hotel for 36 years. Afterwards, the hotel changed hands frequently until it closed its doors in 2008 after a structural engineering study predicted an eminent collapse. The current owners, Fred and Karen Schaufeld from SWaN Investors, have worked since 2008 on finding a path forward to restore the Hill Top to its former glory of 1913.

“Even though the existing structure was badly damaged and had to be dismantled,” Karen Schaufeld has indicated they are intent upon honoring the Hill Top's history. “We'll be putting it back up in approximately the same footprint of the original hotel and the dance pavilion that

were there in 1914,” she said. “We want to try and recapture what that building would have felt like both inside and out if it had been a hotel that would have aged gracefully and not had the structural issues.”

The collapsed hotel was disassembled in 2022. Since then, the design team has refined a design for a 120-room new hotel, spa and terraced parking garage including updated infrastructure within a \$150 million budget. Seven other historic structures will be included at the hotel site as part of hotel operations. Tax incentive financing is being sought to help finance the public infrastructure at the site. When the financial package is finalized, construction will begin.

There will be an approximate two-year construction period that will employ over 200 workers. Once the hotel is operating it will create 120 new jobs, \$700,000 a year to public schools and \$720,000 a year in Hotel/Motel tax.

In August 2023, SWaN purchased The Anvil restaurant property in Bolivar, which includes adjacent parking lots and rental home. The programming for the restaurant area will be decided once the hotel operators are onboard, but for now there are long term rentals upstairs and the armory house will be an Airbnb rental.

According to the Community Survey (Q28), most Bolivar residents (67%) are not concerned about the hotel development and welcome the rebuild. Having a destination hotel close to the Bolivar boundary will increase the consumer base and provide a restored venue for dining and events.

COVID-19 and its Effects: Spring of 2020

Beginning close of day March 13, 2020, West Virginia Governor [Jim Justice](#) announced that all schools across the state would close indefinitely as a proactive measure to help stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. On March 16, the Governor declared a state of emergency. On March 17, the state of [West Virginia](#) reported its [first confirmed case](#) in Shepherdstown of the [COVID19 virus](#), becoming the last state in the union to do so. Gov. Justice urged West Virginians to [stay home](#) as much as possible, and by March 23, he ordered non-essential businesses to be closed immediately. He issued a [stay-at-home order](#) effective March 24 which lasted through April. Starting in early May, specific sector businesses were allowed to re-open over a one-and-a-half-month roll-out period, even while the Governor issued an order on July 6 mandating masks in indoor public spaces outside of the home. By July 1 the re-opening plan allowed for fairs, festivals, amusement parks, and outdoor concerts to resume.

Jefferson County Public Schools reopened in Fall of 2020 (post-Labor Day) on a staggered reentry basis, with COVID-19 protocols in place. (The schools closed Friday, November 13, 2020, due to an uptick in cases county-wide, and remained closed until February 1, 2021, on a staggered re-opening schedule.)

The initial rollout of the Pfizer vaccine began in earnest in West Virginia in early 2021. By March 2021, Governor Justice lifted restrictions to allow bars and restaurants in the state to open

at full capacity, as well as allowing gyms, fitness centers and museums to reopen fully, and lifting all restrictions for small businesses and retail stores.

West Virginia was one of the few states on the East Coast that had no travel restrictions regarding crossing state lines or quarantining, which helped to boost the tourism industry during this time.

A few restaurant practices which popped up during the COVID-era seem to have taken hold. Restaurants, unable to accommodate many diners indoors due to space restrictions, created outdoor dining space. The Country Café still uses its front parking pavement for on-site table space in fair weather. Kelley's Farm kitchen offers food service at outdoor tables or as take-away only. Another new feature was the QR code, which allowed restaurants to dispense with physical menus (no contact) and presented consumers with menus online, with a quick click of the code. And lastly, food delivery services like Grubhub and DoorDash gained in popularity, and still appear to be going strong, similar to the AirBnB phenomenon, fueled by COVID-era protocols of no-contact service, self-isolation and sanitizing practices.

Other Impacts on the Local Economy

Two other recent events created some short-term distress for Bolivar residents and businesses and the local economy. The first was the train derailment in Lower Town Harpers Ferry. On December 21, 2019, a CSX freight train carrying empty grain cars, derailed on the Shenandoah line bridge crossing the Potomac River, damaging a portion of the train bridge, and effectively closing it down for six months. This accident put the bridge, which includes the Goodloe E. Byron Memorial Pedestrian Walkway, out of commission for Park visitors and residents alike. The Appalachian Trail hikers were directly affected, as well as C&O bicyclists wanting access to Harpers Ferry. It stopped recreational hikers from accessing the towpath and Maryland Heights trail directly. The bridge was finally repaired in time for the July 4th weekend in 2020.

Another shutdown occurred September 12 through November 30, 2023, that also directly affected many residents and visitors. The WV Department of Highways conducted a rock slide project to implement rockfall protection and stabilization measures associated with the existing slopes along the portion of US 340 between the Shenandoah River east to WV stateline. This project effectively shut down that section of road connecting Maryland and Virginia via Route 340 to Harpers Ferry and Bolivar and the rest of Jefferson County for over two and a half months. Travelers bypassed the closed road via a Loudoun County, VA, route that added 30 minutes travel time, or via the Potomac Bridge at Shepherdstown. The additional stress on commuters and travelers was real, but the project finished ten days earlier than planned, in time for Old Tyme Christmas and the holiday season.

Parking

In 2023, 56% of survey respondents answered No, when asked if parking is a problem in Bolivar, but 44% answered Yes. This result may indicate that it depends where one lives in

Town. During the COVID pandemic, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park closed March 18, 2020, and only restarted bus service from the Visitors Center to Lower Town on October 1, 2020. At that time, buses ran at half-capacity through the end of 2021. Subsequently, many daytripping visitors, unable to use NPS parking/visitor facilities, found other ways to enter town and spend the day. These visitors parked primarily at the Harpers Ferry train station, along Potomac Street and Washington Street in Harpers Ferry (\$3/hour metered parking with a Parkmobile cell phone app), or at The Barn, which started offering daily parking in its sizable lot (\$20 fee). When these options filled up, visitors continued past The Barn (1062 W. Washington) to park in free spaces along both sides of West Washington Street and further up into Bolivar.

This trend has continued long after the NPS re-opened its Visitor Center parking lot. In part, visitors prefer parking for free and walking to Lower Town to avoid paying the current \$20 NPS park visitation fee and riding the shuttle bus. (The NPS had increased its daily vehicular fee rate to \$20 in 2020, just one year after increasing it to \$15.) Also, Harpers Ferry has experienced a resurgence in tourism in the last few years. Despite there being over 1000 parking spaces on Park property, these lots filled to capacity three times in 2023, forcing additional visitors to look elsewhere for parking. In the next ten years, this parking trend is likely to continue to affect Bolivar.

Economic and Workforce data

2022 Census data indicates that Bolivar has a 72.4% employment rate, compared to the 50.2% overall rate for the state of West Virginia. In the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, figures showed that of the total workforce in Bolivar: 44% worked in Jefferson County, 5% worked elsewhere in West Virginia, and 51% worked outside of West Virginia. (These figures are not available for 2010.) In 2022, census data shows that of the 55.8% of Bolivar workers that work in West Virginia, 50.5% of them stay in Jefferson County to work; 44.2% work out of state; and 25.2% work in their town of residence. According to our 2023 survey, 23% of respondents work from home, differing from the 15.4% statistic in Table 9 below.

One notable change is the rise in housing costs. Numbers based on the “American Community Survey” data derived from the U.S. Census show that from 2010 to 2020, median house prices increased 22%, while housing rents went up a whopping 126%. [Bolivar, WV - Housing | Townfolio](#)

S5 Table 8: Means of Transportation to Work - Bolivar, WV 2022

PLACE OF WORK	
<u>Worked in state of residence</u>	55.8
Worked in county of residence	50.5
Worked outside county of residence	5.3

<u>Worked outside state of residence</u>	44.2
<u>Living in a place</u>	100.0
Worked in place of residence	25.2
Worked outside place of residence	74.8

S5 Table 9: Means of Transportation to Work - Bolivar, WV 2022

Workers 16 years and over	753
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK	Percentage
Car, truck, or van	79.9
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1.5
Walked	3.2
Bicycle	0.0
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	0.0
Worked from home	15.4

S5 Table 10: Owner-Occupied Housing Values

% Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	2020	2010
Less than \$50,000	0	1.7%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	0	4.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	13.1%	27.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	19.1%	20.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	41.6%	34.1%

\$300,000 to \$499,999	25%	11.1%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	1.3%	0
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0
MEDIAN (\$)	\$210,800	\$172,400

S5 Table 11: Gross Rent

% Estimate	2020 Estimate	2010 Estimate
Less than \$200	3.3%	28%
\$200 to \$299		
\$300 to \$499		
\$500 to \$749	29.7%	50%
\$750 to \$999		
\$1,000 to \$1,499	14.4%	37%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	49.8%	0
\$2,000 to \$2,999	2.9%	0
\$3,000 or more	0	0
MEDIAN (\$)	\$1,526	\$674

Town Finances

The Town of Bolivar had \$786,007 revenue for fiscal year (FY) 2013. In (FY) 2022, Town revenue amounted to \$687,053. This contrast, nearly ten years apart, is due to the decline in table gaming and video lottery revenue generated by the Charles Town Hollywood Casino & Racetrack. To make up for revenue losses in the intervening years, Bolivar has instituted municipal taxes. Revenue income for the Town is climbing again.

The Charles Town Race Track has experienced its ebbs and flows. First opened on December 2, 1933, shortly after West Virginia legalized racing and pari-mutuel betting, it was the first horse race track in the state. By 1996, with the future of the racetrack in doubt, Penn National Gaming

agreed to purchase the facility once video lottery machines were approved. Since then, the “track” has relied extensively on non-racing income. In 2009 Charles Town Racing and Slots changed its name to Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races. The Hollywood Casino currently features over 1,900 slot machines; 74 table games including blackjack, craps, roulette, and poker; live entertainment; and live and simulcast thoroughbred horse racing.

Due to the development of legal gambling in neighboring states, revenue flow from the casino has slowed down. To compensate for this loss in revenue, the Town of Bolivar instituted new taxes in recent years. The first was a municipal sales tax of 1% implemented in 2015, which is added to the state tax of 6% on all sales transactions. The second tax was the Hotel Occupancy tax, which levied an additional 5% tax on top of the existing 7% sales tax for all hotel rates beginning in July 2019. The Hotel Occupancy tax is split 50/50 between the Town and Jefferson County Convention Visitors Bureau as prescribed by WV Code. The funds remitted to Bolivar’s general fund are restricted for expenditure pursuant to the provisions of WV Code (§7-1814), such as historic preservation, beautification projects, promotion of the arts, among other things, and is meant to promote tourism in town. In addition, the Town of Bolivar started to benefited from the state imposed wine/liquor distributor tax in 2021.

Please see Table 12 below for major revenue income source/amounts for Bolivar over the last ten fiscal years.

S5 Table 12: Major Revenue Sources – Bolivar (July 2012-June 2023)

Period	Property tax	Video Lottery	Gaming	Sales tax	Hotel Occupancy Tax	Wine/liquor tax	Total
July 2012- June 2013	\$82,652	\$217,201	\$126,708				\$426,561.00
July 2013- June 2014	Information unavailable						
July 2014- June 2015	Information unavailable						

July 2015- June 2016	\$97,031	\$180,957	\$67,847	\$19,638			\$365,473.00
July 2016- June 2017	\$97,112	\$179,420	\$54,272	\$38,422			\$369,226.00
July 2017- June 2018	\$101,294	\$163,160	\$50,476	\$35,035			\$349,965.00
July 2018- June 2019	\$106,367	\$142,344	\$50,648	\$44,941			\$344,300.00
July 2019- June 2020	\$107,941	105,815	\$40,513	\$61,590	\$41,240		\$357,099.00
July 2020- June 2021	\$121,221	\$121,813	\$35,847	\$123,715	\$15,643		\$418,239.00
July 2021- June 2022	\$117,651	\$127,431	\$51,602	\$105,812	\$76,939	\$33,787	\$513,222.00
July 2022- June 2023	\$117,114	\$168,670	\$52,235	\$76,939	\$101,232	\$41,427	\$557,617.00

Tourism

The Harpers Ferry area continues to attract a multitude of visitors, flocking to this small mountain town community for its history, natural beauty, and outdoor recreation. Many come

specifically for the historical park, others for the river outfitters, and still more head past town on their way to the Charles Town Hollywood Racetrack and Casino. Harpers Ferry, serving as the eastern gateway to West Virginia, welcomes many travelers, whether by vehicle or train, on bicycle or on foot. The Appalachian Trail and the C&O Canal towpath intersect here. The Town of Bolivar has also been designated an Appalachian Trail Community and a Canal Town. Civil War history abounds.

There are three Visitor Centers that attract and greet those coming to the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry area. These include the main visitors center at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Cavalier Heights, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) welcome center at the west end of Washington Street (37 Washington Court), and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) Visitors Center at 799 Washington Street in Harpers Ferry. Visitor counts were available from the National Park Service (<https://irma.nps.gov/stats/reports/reportlist>) and the ATC (See Table 13). These numbers tallied together represent a conservative estimate of all visitors to our towns.

According to Annette Gavin-Bates, the CEO of the Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau, local tourism in 2023 was, “off the charts.” The local Harpers Ferry National Historical Park visitor numbers swelled to early 1990’s levels – in other words, the highest in decades. For 2023, traveler spending statewide (in WV) totaled \$5.3B – the highest ever; that included \$1.174B in the Eastern Panhandle and \$838M in Jefferson County. In 2023, 1 in every 16 jobs statewide was tourist-related; in Jefferson County that number was 1 in 3. The current trend of “travel sentiment” is working for Harpers Ferry, with 86% of visitors returning after having visited once (having had good, memorable experiences/associations). It helps that Jefferson County, and Harpers Ferry/Bolivar in particular, lie at the “gateway” of West Virginia, just one and a half hours from the metropolitan population centers of Washington, DC, and Baltimore.

While local visitor numbers can only be estimated, Ms. Gavin-Bates suggests that for traffic purposes and visitation to Jefferson County, a more reliable bellwether may be the 1.9 million people who went to the Hollywood Casino in Charles Town in 2023.

Another indicator of increased tourism is West Virginia’s statewide statistic: in 2023 the state experienced a 17% increase in visitor spending (compared to pre-pandemic levels). After the dip in 2020, the graph shows a “V” -shaped recovery that just keeps going up. According to the 2023 Annual Report from WV the Department of Tourism (www.wvtourism.com), in the last five years, the State park system experienced its best financial performance in its history. Governor Justice has been a major force in pushing tourism in the State, pouring millions of budgetary funds into State park capital improvements as well as marketing and advertising efforts. For FY 2025, the Governor’s recommendation for the state’s overall tourism budget stands at over \$41M.

Ms. Bates states that challenges to West Virginia’s and our local tourism industry do exist. They include: attracting a sufficient and trained employee work force, providing affordable housing for that work force, dealing with rising inflation and utility costs, and supporting infrastructure needs to handle the increasing number of tourist travelers. The infrastructure necessary to

accommodate these visitors includes roads, of course, possibly public transportation, but also hotel rooms and restaurants.

S5 Table13: Visitor Numbers

Year	HFNHP	ATC	Total
2023	427,317	18,940	446,257
2022	407,008	15,277	424,307
2021	309,901	11,535	323,457
2020	234,473	5,956	236,493
2019	299,577	29,728	331,324
2018	265,737	27,888	295,643
2017	342,535	31,502	376,054
2016	335,691	34,880	372,587
2015	282,893	27,868	286,942
2014	261,202	22,405	287,776
2013	255,714	18,781	279,225
2012	263,105	19,367	284,484
2011	255,348	16,531	273,890
2010	268,822	15,337	288,791
2009	275,044	15,881	292,934
2008	254,162	13,597	269,767
2007	249,908	12,822	264,737
2006	267,501	10,561	280,068

2005	241,807	8,804	252,616
2004	260,783	8,441	271,228
2003	264,478	8,970	275,451
2002	286,289	8,807	297,098

There are numerous activities and events in Bolivar and the surrounding area that draw people to the area. An understanding of the events and cooperation with event organizers may be of value to local business or potential business within Bolivar. A listing of known events is shown below.

S5 Table14: Community Activities and Events

Locale	Organizing Group	Event and Description	Date
Bolivar	Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library	Book Club for Adults – All adults welcomed	Second Thursday at 6pm
		All Ages Storytime – 30 minute program includes stories, rhymes, songs, bubbles, and play	Tuesdays at 10:30am
		Crafty Storytime (ages 3+) – 45 minute Storytime featuring longer books and a corresponding craft	Fridays at 11am
		Adult, Teen, and Children’s Summer Reading Programs – Stay tuned to website for more details	Dates and Activities Vary
		Youth Book Club – Elementary/Middle School Grades	Second Saturday of the month
		Teen Book Club – Teens	Second Saturday of the month

Community	Historical Town Foundation	Black Heritage Walking Tour – African American community that was concentrated along Fillmore and Washington Street, also in the West Ridge neighborhood	June
-----------	----------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------

		Historical Home Holiday Tour – Tour local Historical Homes fully decorated for the Holidays	First and Second Weekends in December
Bolivar	Harpers Ferry – Bolivar Veterans Association	Memorial Day Parade – Annual Parade from Fire House to Ceremony at Middle School	May
		Veterans Day Parade – Annual Parade from Fire House to Ceremony at Middle School	November
Bolivar	Friendship Fire Company	Christmas Parade – Annual Christmas Parade from the Visitors Center to the Fire House	Second Saturday in December
Bolivar	Town of Bolivar	Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony – Celebrate at the Children’s Park immediately the Parade	Second Saturday in December
		Lantern Festival	Varies
		Dettmer Summer Concerts Music in the Park – Free Music in the Children’s Park	Summer Months, One Friday per Month at 6:30pm
Bolivar	Harpers Ferry Family Medicine	Adolescent Health Fair at HFMS	
		Annual student sports physicals	June

Community	Harpers Ferry National Park	Olde Tyme Christmas – Lower Harpers Ferry Celebration including lighting of Yule Log, live plays, and Horse Carriage rides	First and Second Weekends in December
		Bolivar Heights cannon reenactments	Ongoing
		Many Events - Check nps.gov for full event schedule	Ongoing
Community	Harpers Ferry National Park Association	Offers various events and programs to support the local park https://www.harpersferryhistory.org	Ongoing
Bolivar	Sierra Club Potomac Region	The One Day Hike	April
Community	Trail and Town Alliance	Fall Festival with Hike Through History	September
Community	Two Rivers Treads	Harpers Ferry Half-marathon – Hilly and challenging, this half marathon goes through town and loops around the battlefield and back	May
		Freedom’s Run Marathon	October
Community	Appalachian Trail Conservancy	Family Hiking Day	September
		Flip Flop Festival – Learn and Celebrate Flip Flop Hiking on the Appalachian Trail	April
Community	Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship	Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival	Jun
Community	Harpers Ferry Woman's Club https://hfwomansclub.org	Herb Fair – Held at the Harpers Ferry Town Gazebo	May
		House and Garden Tour	April

		July 4 th Celebration in conjunction with the Corp of Harpers Ferry at the Gazebo, featuring the Rohrsville band, the oldest continually performing community band in Maryland	July
Community	Jefferson County Visitor's Bureau	Frosty Fest – Discounts from businesses and events like the hot cocoa trail	Last Weekend in January

Section 6 Community Services

Goal(s):

- Encourage a vibrant community environment.
- Improve communications between Town Council and residents.

Objective(s):

- Continue financial support of the library, police and volunteer fire departments, and to work collaboratively with these entities.
- Offer more organized Community events (100% response) – such as yoga classes, trash pick-ups, teen activities, potluck picnics, holiday/historic festivals, music in the park, and farmer's market.
- Continue to offer Community Center availability to residents and local non-profit organizations.
- Publicize town website to make it more widely known and therefore more useful.
- Continue newsletter/announcements by email option and/or social media (presently reaching over 400 subscribers).
- Encourage residents to attend monthly Town Council meetings and look into having signage reminders or kiosk by the children's park.
- Periodically assess the effectiveness of communication strategies and tools, adapting to new technologies as finances allow to ensure ongoing improvement in communication with the community.

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the array of public and private community services and activities available in Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. One hundred percent of Community Planning Questionnaire respondents stated that they would like to see more community activities. Their suggestions included festivals, a farmers market, outdoor summer concerts, support services for seniors, youth activities, and organized sports programs.

Library

The Bolivar Harpers Ferry Public Library has served as a learning, social, and resource center since its dedication on October 15, 1977. Since then, the Library has expanded off the original structure to meet the needs of the community. The Library's funding comes from Jefferson County, the Board of Education, the towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry, and the State of West Virginia. The current staff includes a director, one full-time librarian, and several part-time positions. Current Library hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:30AM - 5:30 PM, Thursday from 8:30 AM - 7:00 PM, and Saturday from 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM.

The Library service area includes 19,234 people and currently 8,474 people have library cards. In 2023, there were 22,105 visits and physical library materials checked out a total of 74,882 times. The Library owns 38,847 print materials, 1,619 audio books on CD, and 3,289 DVDs. Almost any item not on the shelves can be obtained from other libraries through an extensive interlibrary loan system. Many titles can be delivered within one to three days.

The Library has a growing collection of popular eBooks that can be downloaded for free from the website to almost any tablet, eReader, or phone. There are 9,345 Digital Audiobooks and 16,900 Digital eBooks that can be downloaded to MP3 players, iPods, and phones. The Library also offers streaming services and eVideos. Between physical and electronic resources, the community has over 105,000 materials to choose from. Library staff are available to assist patrons with these downloads. This number is expanded when considering outside services such as inter/intra library loan.

Virtual services can be found through the Library website:

<http://www.bolivarharpersferrylibrary.com/>. From the comfort of home patrons can search the collections of nine public libraries and request items to be sent to Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library for pickup. Patrons can log in to see when their books are due and renew them.

The Library offers a wide variety of programs for all ages. Events are listed on its Facebook page, Instagram, and website. Events are often listed in your local newspaper or posted around the Bolivar/Harpers Ferry area.

For Children:

- All Ages Storytime (Ages birth and up). Tuesdays at 10:30 AM. Nurture early language development through stories, bubbles, songs, and play.
- Crafty Storytime (Ages 3+) Fridays at 11 AM. Listen to stories, make a craft and sing songs.
- Elementary Book Club: Meets 2nd Saturday of the month.
- Middle School Book Club: Meets 2nd Saturday of the month.
- Special Programs: Throughout the year the library hosts many programs for the different age groups.
- Summer reading program. Children receive prizes for reading during the summer. This prevents the loss of reading skills gained during the previous school year.
- End of Summer Reading Movie at the Park.

For Teens:

- Teen Book Club meets 2nd Saturday of the month.
- Specialized Programs: Pottery classes, Science Days, Crafts, and more.
- Teen summer reading program features prizes for reading and the End of Summer Reading, Movie at the Park.

For Adults:

- Book Club meets second Thursday of each month.
- Summer Reading program for adults includes prizes and annual potluck.
- Yoga Tuesdays nights.
- Crochet and Knit groups the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.
- Special programs offered throughout the year. Past events include: Annual Art Walk, living history performances, crafts, and presentations by local historians and authors.

The Library works both within and outside the library walls. To provide the best services possible for our area, we also perform outreach by working alongside on programs with the public schools, homeschool groups, local businesses, Jefferson County Parks and Rec, the National Park Service, and more. Some other services we provide is notary, online tutoring and online test prep, research databases, and hotspots for checkout.

The Library has eleven computers available for public use; seven are new computers donated last year by Work Force West Virginia. Free wireless internet service is available. Printing from the computer, photocopying, faxing, and using a scanner are services available for a small fee. The Library maintains a selection of books for sale year-round. Adult materials are \$1.00 for hardbacks and \$0.50 for paperbacks, DVD's for \$1.00 and audiobooks for \$2.00; Youth materials are available for \$0.50 hardback and \$0.25 paperback. Free paperbacks are available to patrons in the Library foyer. Donations of books, DVD's and audiobooks are always welcome.

Police Services

The Town of Bolivar has a substation/office of the Jefferson County Sheriff located at Town Hall. An officer is available upon request to meet with residents there to answer any questions or concerns you may have. The town of Bolivar, in partnership with the Sheriff, are committed to serve the safety needs of all of our citizens and businesses. A representative from JCSO attends most monthly Council Meetings to provide a report.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office is to provide the citizens and visitors of Jefferson County with professional law enforcement services, as well as respect, efficiency, and integrity. The Sheriff's Office strives to work in collaboration with the other law enforcement agencies in the county and surrounding areas. The Sheriff's Office endeavors to make our community proud of those that are sworn to protect it. Our desire is a safer Jefferson County with less crime and more involved citizens. - Thomas H. Hansen, Sheriff and Treasurer

Fire Department

The all-volunteer Friendship Fire Department was established in 1927.

In April of 2024, approximately 10 men and women serve the community and provide lifesaving services.

The fire company is funded by the state and county, by the municipalities of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry, and by annual fundraisers. The impact of the growth our County is taking a significant toll on our volunteer services. In partnership with Jefferson County Emergency Services Agency (JCESA), career staffing for EMS services is stationed at the Friendship Fire Department twentyfour hours every day.

While volunteer services are dwindling in Jefferson County and across our nation, dedicated volunteers continue to support the community for fire and rescue services. In a collaborative effort with JCESA, Friendship Fire Company provides support to critical infrastructure and government organizations, such as the National Training Center for Customs and Border Protection, National Park Service, Corporation of Harpers Ferry and the Town of Bolivar. Additionally, Friendship provides mutual aid services to surrounding jurisdictions in Jefferson County, WV, Frederick County, MD, Washington County, MD, and Loudoun County, VA. County-wide, each fire station is assigned overlapping jurisdictions, so that if a house catches fire, at least three fire trucks will be on their way. Similarly, the Friendship Fire Department has a mutual-aid agreement with towns in neighboring states.

Community Center

The Bolivar Town Council coordinates and authorizes use of the community center and maintains the building. Veterans Association, Lions Club, and other committees use the building regularly. The building is rented to individuals for social activities on a weekly basis.

Healthcare Services

The Town of Bolivar is home to an array of healthcare services including a dentist's office, family-health clinic, dietician/nutritionist, chiropractor, and physical therapist, as well as alternative medicine establishments.

The Harpers Ferry Family Medicine Center began in 1982 in a small restored Civil War-era building. Since that time, the program has grown into a large, thriving rural teaching and healthcare center housed in a 10,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility that currently accommodates more than 30,000 patient visits per year.

The team includes full- and part-time family medicine and pediatric faculty physicians, resident physicians, a physician assistant, a nurse practitioner, a clinical pharmacist, and nursing staff.

The center is open:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

Tuesday, Thursday, 8 am – 8 pm *Lab*

Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 7:30 am – 4 pm

Churches

Bolivar United Methodist Church is a charming community church in historic Bolivar, WV, with all the quaintness and beauty of its surroundings. Love and support abound! The Bolivar United Methodist Church celebrates weekly services on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. The church sponsors community activities. The community celebrates the 175th anniversary of its founding in September 2024.

Clubs

Harpers Ferry Women's Club

The Women's Club of the Harpers Ferry District was established June 19, 1915. The founding club motto, "Get together, work together," still applies today!

Our mission is to serve the community, to educate ourselves about local issues, and to make good friends in the process. Our charter members held their meetings in the Home Economics Department of the old C.W. Shipley School on Washington Street, before moving into the present clubhouse a few years later, just across the street.

Those ladies started the first library in Harpers Ferry; the original library bookcase is still a fixture in our clubhouse. Those ladies rolled bandages for soldiers in wartime, and we continue

to honor our veterans today. The club had the privilege of recognizing three octogenarian “Rosie [the] Riveters” on Labor Day 2017.

We are proud to have been instrumental in establishing the local Children’s Park on Washington Street in Harpers Ferry and in rebuilding the hardscape around the historic Harpers Ferry town gazebo/bandstand in 2018. Membership dues and our fundraising activities support many local causes, including the Friendship Fire Company, Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library, Harpers Ferry/Bolivar District Veterans’ Association, Harpers Ferry Park Association, Cause For Paws no-kill animal sanctuary, our local public schools, and a number of the county non-profit agencies that serve our residents.

Our Carrie Schilling Scholarship is given annually to a deserving high school senior living within the Harpers Ferry zip code. A warm Thank You for supporting our club and helping to carry on its traditions!

In 2024, the Club voted to change its name to the Harpers Ferry Women’s Club.

Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Lions Club

The Lions club is a local club that has been in operation for over 50 years consisting of a small group of members. Meetings take place each month at the Bolivar Community Center. The group makes donations to different causes and provides flags for schools.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park offers a variety of experiences for visitors. Whether you enjoy recreation or historical inquiry, a quiet stroll by the river or a guided program with a ranger, there are opportunities for everyone to find their place here. The National Park Service hosts many community events such as reenactments, speaker nights, jazz concerts, and Old Tyme Christmas.

Background Information about Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Congress established the Park in 1944 (Public Law 78-386) and changed its name in 1963 to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Congress's purpose in creating the park was to preserve the Park "for the benefit and enjoyment of the people as a public national memorial, commemorating historical events that occurred at or near Harpers Ferry [West Virginia]." The Park's authorized boundary includes approximately 3,660 acres, most of which is held in fee by the NPS. The boundary of the Park includes lands in Maryland (Washington County), Virginia (Loudoun County), and West Virginia (Jefferson County), and surrounds the towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry.

In 2023, 427,000 (407,000 in 2022) Park visitors spent an estimated \$23.8 million (\$22.3 million in 2022) in local gateway regions while visiting Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. These expenditures supported a total of 319 (302 in 2022) jobs, \$14.5 million (\$13.6 million in 2022) in labor income, \$23.4 million (\$22.0 million in 2022) in value-added, and \$37.7 million (\$35.4

million in 2022) in economic output in local gateway economies surrounding Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. For more economic statistics and for more information, please visit [Visitor Spending Effects - Economic Contributions of National Park Visitor Spending - Social Science \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#) and click on "Park Economies." There you can navigate to Harpers Ferry NHP to see these statistics and more dating back to 2012. For further information in regard to the data shown above there is a downloadable pdf on the link provide above that breaks it down and goes into even greater detail.

Note: NPS believes the Park's annual visitation is higher than official numbers indicated 427,000 for 2023, the same applies for previous years. This is because the Park boundary is porous and not all visitors come through the Visitor Center or to programs where the Park staff collect visitation data.

NPS has direct and continued interest in protection of source water (Elks Run, Potomac River) for clean water. The Park is the largest individual customer of the Harpers Ferry Water Works and similarly of the Harpers Ferry Bolivar Public Service District.

As a federal land manager, NPS has direct access to the Federal Highway Administration's Eastern Federal Lands Office. Eastern Federal Lands supports road and road-related infrastructure projects in the Park, and provides guidance to the Park on myriad FHWA grant opportunities, many of which support local-federal partnership projects. The Park encourages the Town to reach out to make use of these resources.

The Park is a flagship attraction that brings hundreds of thousands of visitors to its gateway communities each year. (See link above for Park and gateway community economic data compiled by the NPS.)

As one of the closest gateway communities to the Park, Bolivar has the opportunity to benefit from Park visitors by developing its economic portfolio, such as providing services like gas, food, and lodging. The NPS is aware of and sensitive to the fact that increased visitation may also cause less desired outcomes, such as more local traffic and impacts to natural and cultural resources in the Town. NPS understands and respects the Town's analysis of the pros, cons, and mitigations associated with being a gateway community to a national park.

Mutual Aid agreements between the NPS and Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services are fundamental to our public safety and emergency response program. Through the existing Mutual Aid Agreements, the Park's federal law enforcement officers (Park Rangers) may at times respond to incidents in Bolivar when called to assist by JCSO/JCES.

Homebuyer Assistance Program (Affordable Housing)

A Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP) is available for first-time homebuyers in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties and the City of Martinsburg.

HAP provides income-eligible buyers with a deferred no-interest loan for down payment and closing costs. The loan is forgiven if the buyer remains in the home for the term of the loan. The amount of the HAP loan depends on the buyer's need for assistance. It provides the gap funding

to make the loan affordable to the buyer with the first mortgage payment not being more than 30% of monthly household income.

Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 provides for the creation of the HOME Investment Partnership Program.

The funding source for the HAP program is the federal HOME Investment Partnership Program. All HOME regulations apply to the HAP program.

The HOME Administrator will provide all HAP loan documents needed to secure the funds and ensure compliance with HOME program regulations and other federal requirements.

For more information contact Nancy Strine, HOME Administrator City of Martinsburg Community Development Department by phone at (304) 264-2131 ext 278 or email her at nstrine@cityofmartinsburg.org.

Senior Services

Meals on Wheels

The Meals on Wheels program, which operates out of the Charles Town Presbyterian Church, cooks and delivers meals five days per week for those in need in Jefferson County, including Bolivar. The nearly all-volunteer group has maintained, and even increased, its service to the community by providing more than 235 meals per week to clients who are housebound.

Volunteers come daily to Meals on Wheels to assist in a multitude of ways. As approximately 50 volunteers arrive per week, some work inside the building to pack the meals for transport. Each client receives a hot meal and a cold pack that includes things like bread and milk. Once meals are packed, additional volunteers arrive to drive the meals to the recipients.

Meals on Wheels is available to those who are homebound or unable to prepare a meal. Availability is not based on income. However, clients are expected to pay a fee toward each meal. The suggested contribution is currently \$5 per meal. The program offers some flexibility in menus in that specialized meals for those with dietary restrictions can be accommodated. In addition, volunteers are always welcomed.

Jefferson County Council on Aging (JCCOA)

Home-Delivered Meals are currently being delivered to Charles Town, Ranson, Middleway, Summit Point, Tuscawillia Hills, and Harpers Ferry/Bolivar areas.

Adult Services

Jefferson County Parks & Recreation provide an array of activities at various locations throughout the county covering a range of topics including: dance, pickleball, volleyball, and fitness classes.

Youth Services

4-H is one of the largest youth development programs in the United States involving more than 6.5 million young people and 540,000 youth and adult volunteers. The focus is on helping youth learn leadership, citizenship, and life skills by participating in projects and service.

Membership is open to any youth when he/she is at least 9 years of age and is not older than 21 within the current 4-H year, which runs from October 1 – September 30. The Cloverbud program is open to youth ages 5-7 years of age. On a local level 4-H offers community clubs, specialty clubs, Cloverbud clubs, county camp(s), club outings, Achievement Banquet, and more! In 4-H, youth socialize, learn, and develop life skills in a safe, educational atmosphere.

Studies show that 4-H members:

- Do better in school.
- Are more motivated to help others.
- Feel safe to try new things.
- Achieve a sense of self-esteem.
- Develop lasting friendships.

Pet Services

Cause for Paws (CFP), a nonprofit Maryland corporation, is located 1390 W. Washington Street. CFP is an all-volunteer, no-kill rescue sanctuary/hospice shelter for homeless and severely sick, handicapped, or injured cats and dogs. The facility operates almost at capacity and with limited funds. It is always in need of donations and volunteers. Some of its future plans include increasing the number of dog runs, building more outdoor enclosures for cats, and fixing up the facility. It is open by appointment and has a website: www.causeforpaws.org

Public Schools

The present ***C. W. Shipley Elementary (CWS)*** opened its doors in 1972 on the perimeter of the scenic Civil War battlefield near Harpers Ferry, WV, in historic Jefferson County. Sitting atop the site of the Civil War battle of School House Ridge, the school is nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains near the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. This grade K–5 school was established to service the small rural communities of Harpers Ferry, Bolivar, Millville, Bakerton, and the surrounding countryside. Our school embraces a rich tradition in strong academics, character values, and family/school relations. Our school population of approximately 400 is ethnically, culturally, and economically diverse.

Each student at CWS is recognized as an individual, and we work to accommodate the needs of all students. Children come first in the eyes of our staff members as we strive to instill a love of learning into each and every student – our future. Our faculty awards scholarships to graduating

seniors who are alumni of CWS. These are in honor of the late Elizabeth Seibert, a beloved art teacher. Students are inspired through integrated studies that include a memory garden, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Math Field Day, and recycling (just to name a few!). These activities enhance students' roles in and around the school community, creating an awareness of service towards our community and its citizens.

As visitors approach the school, Bradford pear trees that line the circular drive welcome them. CWS students involved in our school beautification project planted these trees. Our memory garden is dedicated to students and faculty members and is located in our front circle. Our outdoor amphitheater enables us to enjoy many outdoor assemblies. Approximately 15 acres serve as a beautiful play area with rolling hills and flat playing areas. Some enjoy swings, climbing gyms, horizontal ladders, and slides, while others can play basketball, four squares, or hopscotch on our large blacktopped area. Children can also engage in football, funnel ball, or kickball. A walking & running trail and a softball/kickball backstop also provide active options.

As visitors enter our building, a mural of Harpers Ferry, along with a portrait of Mr. Charles W. Shipley welcome them. Student artwork and wall graphics adorn the halls to motivate students to excel. Bulletin boards are attractively decorated, displaying the children's creations! Our school colors are blue and white, and our mascot is Ranger Raccoon!

Over 800 years of teaching experience thrive at CWS. Our staff of over fifty employees exemplifies true dedication and service. Faculty members are continuing their education through graduate courses, staff development, and educational trainings. Staff members are continuously modeling appropriate behavior and encouraging students to excel, as we believe that all students can learn. We are very proud of our staff, which includes several former CWS students!

Harpers Ferry Middle School is located in the beautiful town of Harpers Ferry in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Our school is over 80 years old and brings history to life for our students. We are one of four middle schools in Jefferson County and we serve grades 6-8. We take great pride in being an active and integral part of our community. We have numerous business partners, an active Alumni Association, a great relationship with local law enforcement, and we are very involved with the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Shepherd University, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. We have a positive attitude and embrace the Character Counts program. Our students learn 21st Century skills by doing - we are always out in our community, having a good, healthy, fun time while learning the skills needed to be responsible members of our community.

Jefferson High School opened in 1972 at its current location in Shenandoah Junction as the sole high school to serve students from across Jefferson County. The school is named for the county it serves, not for President Thomas Jefferson.

When Jefferson High School opened, Charles Town, Harpers Ferry, and Shepherdstown High Schools became junior high schools, and later, middle schools. In 2008, Washington High School opened as the second high school serving Jefferson County.

Jefferson High School is a fully accredited institution through the West Virginia Department of Education's Office of Educational Performance Assessments and the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement/AdvancED.

Washington High School is a Grade 9–12 public high school in Charles Town, West Virginia. In 2007, population growth in the county required a "de-consolidation," and the county split into two zones. The eastern half of the county's students attended the new Washington High School, and the remaining half attended Jefferson, formerly known as Jefferson County High School.

Section 7 Implementations

Achievements

Over the past decade there have been many achievements resulting from the recommendations from the first Comprehensive Plan. As part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update, the original plan's goals and objectives were assessed. The BPC identified those objectives that had successfully been achieved, and others that either had not come to fruition, or were no longer relevant. A list of achievements is included below, organized by the chapters of the original plan.

HISTORY

The small town of Bolivar has retained its historic character even while the 21st Century continues its furious pace forward. It is quiet, old-fashioned nature is what appeals most to Bolivar residents. But many of the town's long-time residents are passing on, their valuable stories lost to future generations. A real sense of the past is slipping away. While the town of Bolivar has attempted to capture this past, it has a lot more work to do. Some of the projects that the Town Council has begun in the last decade includes:

- Established a Bolivar Historical Commission to research and document as much known local history as possible. For a time, excerpts of this collected history were featured in a monthly column in the town newsletter. Unfortunately, this committee dissolved.
- Began a Living History project to chronicle the lives of older residents, which was also intended to be a regular feature in the newsletter and on the Bolivar website. The project faltered for lack of interest. Mr. Raymond Biller participated, but otherwise, there seemed a sense of apathy among the older folks in town.
- Restored the old spring house in the Children's Park.
- Embarked on work to repair the old town jail.

LAND USE

In 1999, the Town of Bolivar embarked on the immense and important project of creating its own set of codified municipal ordinances. One of the first steps in tackling this goal was to produce a Comprehensive Plan. Another was establishing a Bolivar Planning Commission to

organize and enforce the plan and the ordinances. A Zoning Board of Appeals was also formed to address any variance requests, and a Zoning Administrator hired to supervise local building projects. Since that first Comprehensive Plan was published, the Bolivar Town Council, guided by many of the Plan's recommendations, has achieved many goals. In the last two decades, the Town Council has accomplished much:

- Zoning: As a direct result of the original Comprehensive Plan survey, the Town Council passed stricter land use ordinances, limiting new building in town to one single-family home per one-half acre lot. This zoning ordinance was intended to restrict development thereby addressing growth and density issues in town. The ordinance has been extremely effective in doing so.
- Children's Park: The Building and Parks Committee, as appointed by the Town Council, has continued to improve the Children's Park in many ways. It has purchased more playground equipment while ensuring that safety standards are met. New fencing, gates, and bike racks were erected, and additional parking spaces were provided with the land acquisition in 2011. More recently, the Town has run electric power to the Park to facilitate in certain community activities, as well as removing old decaying trees and plant new trees to replace them.
- Legal/Financial Counsel: The Town Council hired a lawyer on retainer, who attends all town meetings and is available for legal counsel when necessary. The Town also hired an accountant to manage the town's fiscal business.
- The Town Council has advocated against over-development of Route 340 corridor in the local vicinity.
- Engaged the West Virginia University Law Clinic to review its Comprehensive Plan and its Planning and Zoning Ordinances. As a result of this in depth review, the Planning ordinances were revised and the roles of the planning entities were clarified and brought in to agreement with current West Virginia state code.
- The Town hired a fully credentialed and certified building inspector.

TRANSPORTATION

The Town Council has made streets and sidewalks a priority.

- The Town finalized a deal in which the State of WV would take over all responsibilities for the upkeep of Union Street.
- With the direct help of the local Jobs Corps, sidewalks were repaired on the north side of Washington Street. In addition, the Town secured a grant that allowed for a new sidewalk in front of the middle school, and continuing around the corner down Polk Street to the Library.
- The Streets Committee reports regularly at all town meetings, addressing concerns and issues raised by local citizens, and acts accordingly.
- A PanTran bus stop shelter was erected along Washington Street next to the Bank of Charles Town.

- A solar-powered speed monitor was installed at the western end of town to help slow vehicles entering town speed zone.
- The Town has improved snow-removal services by contracting the work out to local businesses.
- In 2021, the town secured federal infrastructure funds to replace sidewalks along West Washington Street between Polk and Gilbert Streets. American Recovery Program has dedicated American Rescue Plan Act funds to meet the required match for the project. The project, administered by the Department of Highways, will be completed in 2024.
- The Town secured a grant that funded ADA approved sidewalk curb cuts along the entire length of West Washington Street in 2023.

ECONOMY

In their approval of the codified zoning ordinances in 2002, the Town Council in effect created a Commercial District along the entire length of Washington Street in Bolivar. Existing businesses not located along Washington Street were “grandfathered in.” By keeping most commercial entities along the main thoroughfare, the Town hoped to retain quiet residential neighborhoods on its side streets. In the last two decades, the Mayor and Town Council have:

- Established an Economic Development Committee.
- Designed and installed new Town signs in 2003 at entryways to the town.
- Continued support of the local fire department and Jefferson County Sheriff’s Office to ensure a safe, sound business and living environment.
- Established a substation/office of the Jefferson County Sheriff located at the Town Hall.
- Hired a full-time Maintenance Person in 2004, who works to keep Town streets and Community Center looking good and operating smoothly.
- Included a local business directory and tourist information on Town website.
- Had Bolivar designated an official Appalachian Trail Community and, in conjunction with Harpers Ferry, one of seven Canal Towns as part of the C&O Canal Towns Partnership program.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

The Town Council has made many efforts to increase community activities. These include:

- Community use of the Community Center. The traffic at the Community Center has certainly increased since the last Comprehensive Plan was completed. The center is made available to all sorts of groups and individuals. Some of these offer opportunities to residents for recreation and learning. Regular patrons of the Community Center include: The Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Veterans Association and Lions Club.
- Concerted efforts to establish a local Farmers Market. The first Market opened in the spring of 2001 and operated for 2 seasons. More recently (2016), another local Farmer’s

Market started up, setting up weekly at the Children's Park. Unfortunately, due to lack of resident interest, these markets dissolved.

- Town-sponsored annual events including: The Christmas Parade, Dettmer Summer Concerts Music in the Park, Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, and Lantern Festival.
- The hiring of a part-time Office Manager. In 2004, the position became fulltime. The town office is now properly staffed and open with regular office hours to address resident inquiries and concerns.
- Publication of a Town newsletter, emailed to interested residents each month and made available on the Town website.
- Upgrades to the Town website, which is now regularly updated to include all relevant information about upcoming meetings, ordinances, meeting minutes, and important bulletins.
- A Bolivar social media page (Facebook), which is regularly updated with local and Town events.
- A bulletin notice board outside the Community Center, where residents can find postings of imminent meetings and activities.
- Recent refurbishing of the Community Center's main room with new flooring, new wall plates, and a complete paint job applying funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).
- Installation of new sink vanities in both Community Center bathrooms.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town continues to wrestle with infrastructure problems, but has been making real strides to manage them.

- In 2010 the Town of Bolivar obtained grant funding from WV Region 9 to devise a Storm Water Management Plan. The grant also included monies to begin real work on improving storm water management on the street level. These projects have begun, and the Planning Commission is also in the process of adopting certain Storm Water Management ordinances to be included with the rest of the Town's codified ordinances.
- In 2006, the towns of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry jointly created the Elk Run Study Group, formed to investigate the local drinking water source and ensure its cleanliness and viability for continued use and/or overuse. In 2012, the Group acknowledged that it had completed its mission, having made public its findings, and officially disbanded. An outgrowth of this group, Safe Water Harpers Ferry, has taken on a related mission under the organizational leadership of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition
- Upgrades to the town sewer plant were completed in 2012, thanks to another Region 9 grant – these included the purchase of a new compactor to comply with increased standards in the Chesapeake Watershed program. The second phase of improvements is ongoing and consists of upgrading most of the outdated pipes in the underground sewer system.

- In 2022, the town water plant was rebuilt and funded by a \$6M USDA loan carrying a 30-year term.
- The Town has begun the process of developing a beautification project along Washington Street, with plans to enhance the Town’s appearance under the guidance of a Streetscape Committee formed by the Council in 2023.

Action Plan Timeframe for Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives that have been recommended within each of the sections of this Plan were reviewed and prioritized to identify an anticipated actionable timeframe. The table below lists all the goals and objectives included within this Plan and places each one within one of the three categories either short-term, long-term, or on-going. Short-term (S) is defined as occurring within the next five years. Long-term (L) is defined as occurring within five to ten years. On-going (O) is defined as items where there is overlap between short and long term and are continual in nature.

S7 Table1: Action Plan Timeframe Priorities for Goals and Objectives

<u>Plans Goals and Objectives</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>		
	<u>S</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>O</u>
History			
Revive past efforts to preserve local history and lore by establishing a history committee.	X		
Utilize the renovated old jail for housing a small-town museum with donated artifacts, letters, photographs, etc.		X	
Engage long-time residents in preserving their stories and memories in Living History Interviews.	X		
Encourage preservation of historic structures.			X
Publish historic walking guide.	X		
Land Use and Development			
Retain the small town, historic, quiet atmosphere of Bolivar, and Nighttime Sky, while maintaining and improving walkability to scenic outdoor spaces and other town amenities (Q4).			X
Set aside and maintain more open spaces for all residents to enjoy (in support of open space – 84%).			X
Continue to enforce current land use/zoning ordinances (“in favor of growth at a limited rate” – 58%).			X
Replace or improve uneven, deteriorating sidewalks as needed (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q13).			X

Improve overall connectivity via new sidewalks and trails (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).			X
Investigate creating a new ordinance to allow some form of overnight tent camping in Bolivar (Q31, Q32).	X		
Create plan for a town program to plant trees along Washington Street (Q4, Q30).	X		
Considering revising demolition ordinance to protect and preserve historical structures (Q10).	X		
Consider revising ordinance regarding General Building Requirements requiring minimum of 800 square feet for new structures to allow for Tiny Homes (Q24).	X		
Review current ordinances and permit processing procedures to ensure clarity and enforceability.	X		
Strengthen the enforcement of ordinances on property appearance and litter, such as snow removal by owners, pet waste pick-up, and regular yard maintenance.			X

Consider investing in more trash bins throughout the town.	X		
Consider hiring a code enforcement official for all of the codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV with the exception of Part 13 – Planning and Zoning & Part 17 – Building and Housing, which should fall under the Building Administrator’s Duties.			X
Confine commercial enterprises to the commercially-zoned Washington Street corridor.			X

Transportation and Infrastructure

Improve Community Walkability and Pedestrian Safety (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).			X
Improve Parking and Traffic Flow (Q12, Q26, Q30).	X		
Continue to communicate with the town residents regarding water service management.			X
Continue to make Town and local area roads and sidewalks safe for residents.			X
Continue the Town’s coordination with water and sewer service providers.			X
Continue to focus on storm water management projects.			X
Continue improving/replacing existing sidewalks (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).			X

Look for logical places to explore adding additional sidewalks or natural surface corridors in cooperation with the state and adjacent property owners (Ex. Old Furnace Sidewalk from Washington to Cheney, a sidewalk or path on the Bolivar side of the street where Old Furnace meets Prospect on a narrow blind curve or sidewalk to Visitor Center(s) (Q4, Q10, Q12, Q30).		X	
Continue proper maintenance and upgrades of roads & improvement of sidewalks (nearly 58% think that the existing sidewalks would be inadequate to serve any additional population) – these issues remain very important to residents.			X
Continue the plan to control the local deer population with the special permit bow-hunting within town limits.			X
Develop a consistent message while continuing to advocate for controlled growth in Jefferson County –traffic & congestion remain a major issue for residents- especially as policies pertain to the development of the Route 340 corridor.			X
Continue to apply and secure funding for infrastructure projects (Q12, Q30).			X
Adopt new Storm Water Management ordinances, combining them with existing ordinances to create a comprehensive and practical set of rules for all future development (Q25).	X		
Consider conducting a regular flushing of drainage culverts/grates in town as part of the Storm Water Management.			X

Economic Development			
Create a favorable business environment along the business corridor of Washington Street. 84% of all 2023 survey respondents rated “walkability to dining, shopping, other commercial services, outdoor recreation, etc.” as “Somewhat” or “Very” important. (Q10) More than 75% still agree for the most part with this original 2003 Vision Statement for Bolivar (Q9): <i>“Bolivar is a small-town scenic community whose residents value its outdoor space, natural beauty, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street.”</i>			X
Strengthen ties and lines of communication between local businesses, government, and the public. One-third of the survey respondents expressed the view that the Town “website and general communications” need improvement, more than any other Town service (Q11).	X		

Keep Bolivar small. This sentiment has not changed over the last 20 years. Over 65% of survey respondents equally chose “quiet small-town atmosphere” and “access to outdoors/scenic beauty” as the qualities that most attracted them to Bolivar (Q4). And 95% value “peace and quiet” in their community. (Q10)			X
Encourage affordable housing. A resounding 60% of survey respondents think “the Town should do more to encourage affordable housing” (Q33).	X		
Monitor Parking problems in Town, especially along Washington Street. 56% of survey respondents answered “No” when asked if parking is a problem in Bolivar, but 44% answered “Yes.” Considering that the majority of Bolivar residents reside on other streets than that of main street “Washington St,” this result indicates that parking in this area is indeed a concern (Q26).	X		
Improve Town infrastructure, namely sidewalks and streets, along with stormwater management, to improve the commercial district. Town investment in infrastructure projects will attract more business to Bolivar. The two highest-ranked options when residents were asked which projects would you most like to see the Town undertake were (1) Washington St. sidewalk improvements and (2) street upgrades and repairs (re-surfacing, storm water management, Old Furnace Road gulley, etc.) (Q30).			X
Undertake beautification projects in Town. Residents have expressed dismay at the necessary removal of the decaying mature trees in the Children’s Park, and removal of roadside trees along Washington Street for the sidewalk project. A Streetscape Committee was formed in 2023 by Council to address appropriate replacement plants along Washington Street. Hotel tax revenue may be used for such projects.	X		
Provide uniform structure for Bolivar mailboxes. There has been a massive increase of mailboxes along Washington Street since the Post Office keeps increasing its annual rental fee for post office boxes. Future management of new mailboxes should show pretense of neat and orderly appearance.			X
Support the Hilltop House Hotel project. “A rising tide lifts all boats.” Surely, other local enterprise will emerge and thrive with a new upscale hotel in our neighboring town. Locals might benefit from employment. 67% of survey takers responded “No” when asked if they had any “concerns regarding redevelopment of the Hilltop House Hotel” (Q28).			X
Continue to support existing local organizations which promote local business, such as Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation, The Jefferson County Convention, and The Visitors Bureau, and the Jefferson County Development Authority.			X

Promote local businesses with kiosk/map/brochure, perhaps featuring businesses, historic sites, and other points of interest, all in one, intended for tourists and local residents alike. (54% of responders would like to see more businesses in town.)	X		
Provide registered business owners with annual or regular reminders of town guidelines for signs, parking, etc., to encourage compliance with local laws. 26% of survey takers think that “ordinance and code enforcement” needs improvement (Q11).	X		
Maintain and use a residential email group to send out email notices for meetings, ordinances (friendly reminders), Town-sponsored events, committee news, etc. to keep Bolivar residents better informed. According to the survey, nearly half (47%) of respondents don’t “understand the Town’s ordinances and Comprehensive Plan, or know where to find them” (Q15); and most residents would prefer to be informed via Email, Website, and Social Media/Facebook (Q14).	X		
Without much more room to grow (very few empty buildable lots left), the population of Bolivar naturally should not grow very much, but the Planning Commission should continue the Town’s land use policy of one single-family home per half acre (or platted lot), which has managed to control density in the last three decades.			X
AirBnB/Vacation Rentals (STR’s) located throughout the town shall follow and be aware of all town ordinances and codes established by the town including but not limited to parts 7 and 9 and be held responsible for upholding these established codified ordinances of Bolivar, WV. Only owner-occupied dwellings would be allowed to rent rooms to tourists, such as stated in Ordinances 1303.02 under Residential District, Permitted uses “B.” Under that same ordinance, “C” should be changed to read, “Nothing in the establishment of Zone ‘R’ (Residential) uses shall prohibit the rental of properties for accepted ‘R’ uses <i>for a period of at least 30 consecutive days.</i> ”	X		
Have law enforcement patrol Washington Street on busy tourist days to enforce parking uniformity (parking outside of the white road lines, entirely on the shoulder). Parked vehicles should in no way impede traffic.	X		
Place “No parking from here to corner” signs at several junctions with Washington Street, such as Jefferson St. and Fisher Alley to ensure unimpeded views of oncoming traffic.	X		
Re-evaluate/enforcing zoning ordinance 1303.4(h) requiring 6 off-street parking spaces per commercial establishment and 2 per residential building. Businesses such as restaurants, hotels, and professional offices, should certainly require 6 spots at minimum, but perhaps other businesses like short-term rentals or cottage businesses should not.	X		

Community Services

Encourage a vibrant community environment.			X
Improve communications between Town Council and residents.			X
Continue financial support of the library, police and volunteer fire departments, and to work collaboratively with these entities.			X
Offer more organized Community events (100% response) – such as yoga classes, trash pick-ups, teen activities, potluck picnics, holiday/festivals, music in the park, and the farmer’s market.			X
Continue to offer the Community Center availability to residents and local non-profit organizations.			X
Publicize the town website to make it more widely known and therefore more useful.	X		
Continue newsletter/announcements by email option and/or social media.			X
Encourage residents to attend monthly Town Council meetings and look into having signage reminders or kiosk by the Children’s Park.	X		
Periodically assess the effectiveness of communication strategies and tools, adapting to new technologies as finances allow to ensure ongoing improvement in communication with the community.			X

Section 8 Appendices A, B, C, & D

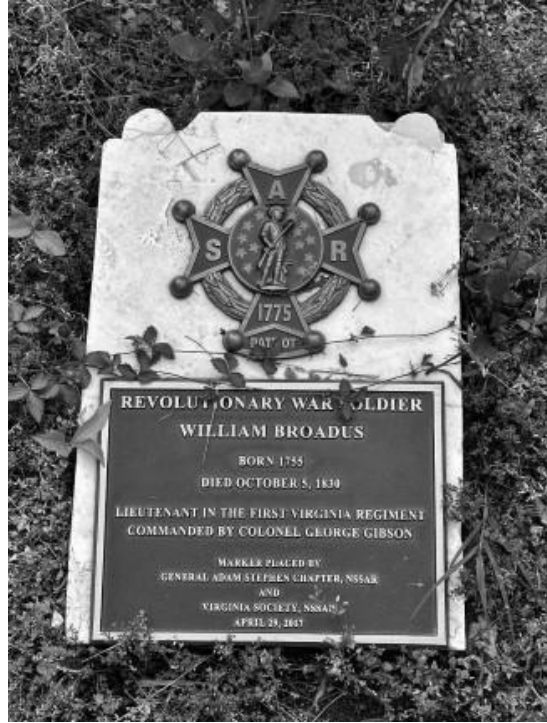
Appendix A: History & “Walking Tour”



An overhead view at the center of the modern-day Town of Bolivar with Washington Street running through the middle of town.

Who Lived Here First?

Our history begins over 1000 years ago. In Bolivar, Native American artifacts have been found from the 12th Century – 300 years before Columbus arrived in the New World. The Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia was the home of tribes of the Iroquois Nation when European settlers first arrived. The Delaware and Shawnee tribes hunted in the area during spring and summer seasons. Explorer Louis Michel, looking for land for a Swiss settlement, reported Indians in the area during his 1706 travels along the west bank of the Potomac River.



Left: The original headstone of Maj. William Broadus 1755 – Oct. 7th 1830; Right: A marker placed in front of the headstone honoring his service as a Lieutenant during the American Revolution under the command of Col. George Gibson.

How Was The Area Governed?

Soon after the 1607 establishment of Jamestown, Virginia, English settlers moved inland and grew in numbers to establish the Colony of Virginia for the Royal Crown. The Colony was divided into eight counties in 1634, and the land, which is now Bolivar, was part of the Indian District of Cickacoan. The Eastern Panhandle was part of Virginia until 1863 when the State of West Virginia was admitted to the Union during the Civil War. At varying times in history, we were part of Essex County (1691-1720, Spotsylvania (1720-1734), Orange (1734-1738), Frederick (1738-1772), and Berkeley County. In 1800, residents of southern Berkeley circulated a petition to become a separate county to be called Richland. One hundred eighty-seven white property owners signed the petition sent to the Virginia General Assembly. The Virginia Assembly responded in January of 1801 by declaring a new county to be cut from Southern Berkeley County, and naming it in honor of the sitting United States President, Thomas Jefferson. During the Civil War (June 20, 1863) the state of West Virginia, cut from the larger Commonwealth of Virginia, became the 35th State admitted to the Union.

Who Lived Here And How Did They Get The Land?

King Charles II of England granted the land that became Jefferson County to Lord Thomas Fairfax of Fairfax. An Iroquois Treaty opened the Blue Ridge to English Settlement. Fairfax sold some of his five million acres to speculators, farmers, and businessmen. This included Robert Harper and Gersham Keyes whom purchased this area. Harper was a Philadelphia architect who settled in “The Hole” at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. He ran a ferry service across the Potomac from what was then called the Shenandoah Falls. In time, the town at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers became Harpers Ferry. Keyes settled on land, which is now within the township of Bolivar. He built his home and tavern on Washington Street. According to census figures for 1790, Keyes owned a grist mill, saw mill, smithy (blacksmith shop), and two distilleries. He grew wheat and corn, owned ten horses, cows and pigs sixteen of each, thirty-two sheep, and had seven pet deer. Keyes owned eight books, which during this timeframe was considered a sign of great wealth and education. Keyes also owned two slaves, likely a house servant and a skilled worker rather than agricultural (field) slaves.

Smaller divisions of land were sold from the three major land grants. These were farms, homes, and a small town named Mudfort. In 1810, Charles Varle surveyed the area and noted that Mudfort had, “A good tavern, several large stores for goods, a library, a physician and a Professor of English...”. By 1825, the town’s population was two-hundred and seventy persons. The county set rates for various commercial enterprises, including tavern and boarding house costs. If you were to stay at Mr. Keyes boarding house “Ordinary” or tavern, your costs would be as follows:

S8 AA Table 1: Services and Cost for Keyes Boarding House and Tavern

Services	Cost
Overnight Stay	7 cents
Breakfast	10 cents
Supper	28 cents
Boarding Horse	10 cents
Quart of Whiskey	1 dollar and 25 cents



Keyes Boarding House, known today as The Lighthouse Inn.

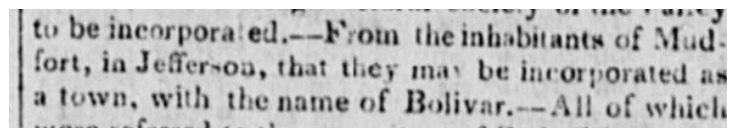
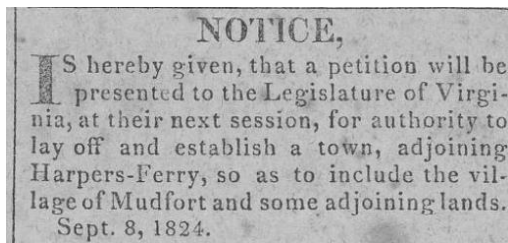
Heirs of Robert Harper sold much of their land during the period before 1830, including lands upon which the United States Army built an armory in 1796. Harper's heir, his nephew John Wager, never even saw Harper's land. John Wager's son also named John settled in Mudfort on tracts of land north and east of Washington Street. Wager's son owned land and public accommodations in Harpers Ferry; he also bought land in Charles Town.



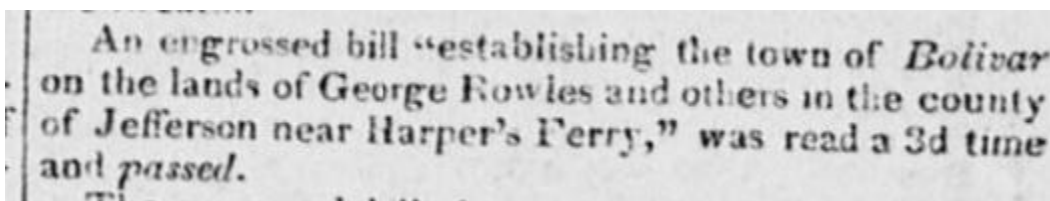
Left: Robert Harper's Headstone 1718 – Oct. 22nd, 1782; Right: John Wager Sr. Headstone 1747 – 1803. Both graves are located in the Harper Family Plot in Harpers Cemetery in Harpers Ferry, WV.

According to oral history, Mudfort received its name because of “boys with good throwing arms.” Children from Harpers Ferry would come up the hill on what is now Washington Street, and be repelled by the boys of Mudfort. The boys of Mudfort would do this by hurling actual dried mud balls at the Harpers Ferry children as they approached. This would send the children of Harpers Ferry retreating back down the hill to Harpers Ferry to spread the tale of the “mud fort” on the hill.

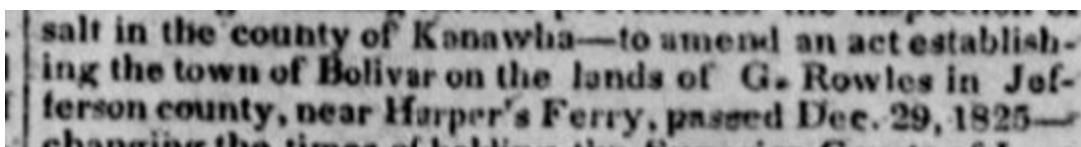
On Sep. 8th, 1824 (again on Sep. 15th, 22nd, 29th, and Oct. 20th of the same year) citizens of Mudfort and the surrounding lands had printed in the *Harpers-Ferry Free Press* a “Notice” of petition to the Virginia Legislature to establish a town, named after the South American freedom fighter Simon Bolivar. This along with many other petitions from various counties were presented to the Virginia Legislature’s House of Delegates on Dec. 7th, 1825. On Friday Dec. 16th, 1825 after a 3rd reading of an engrossed bill it was passed, “establishing the town of Bolivar on the lands of George Rowels and others in the county of Jefferson near Harper’s Ferry”. Later in 1832 the Virginia Legislature met again and one part of the agenda was to amend and give a definitive date for the establishment of the Town of Bolivar. December 29th, of 1825 marks the founding of the Town of Bolivar and it came into existence 16 years before Harpers Ferry was granted a town charter.



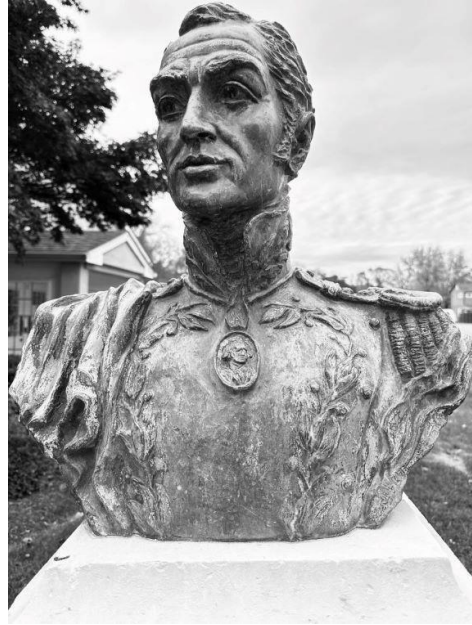
Left: Notice as appeared in the *Harpers-Ferry Free Press* on Sep. 8th, 1924; Right: Section from the proceedings as appeared in the *Richmond Enquirer* on Dec. 10th, 1825



Article as appeared in the *Constitutional Whig*. on Dec. 20th, 1825



Article as appeared in the *Richmond Enquirer* on Mar. 15th, 1832



Simon Bolivar bust next to Bank of Charles Town in Bolivar, WV.

The armory in Harpers Ferry was a large part of the economic industrial engine that drove development in the Eastern Panhandle. But most of the land was agricultural, with wheat and corn being the primary crops. Plantation-style agriculture was concentrated in the Southwest portion of the county. Farmers in and around Bolivar had less land to work. They owned and operated grist mills, distilleries, and smelting facilities. One third of the county was African American, most of them being slave laborers. Bolivar's African-American population was ten percent of the town, a number of whom were freedmen who had settled in the area before the Civil War.

Harpers Ferry employed large numbers of workers, the majority of which were transient. In contrast, Bolivar's workers were farmers, merchants, and skilled armorers, and primarily longterm residents. Prior to the Civil War, armory workers who put down roots often chose Bolivar as their home. There is an example in the 1820 census: William Smallwood is listed as a skilled rifle borer at the armory and is shown to be renting a small house in Mudfort. By the 1830's Smallwood had purchased a small home from the Wager estate and had begun farming. Then by the late 1840's Smallwood had a family, owned a store and a farm, with the farmland reaching as far as Bolivar Heights.

What Did Early Settlers Leave Behind For Us?

Construction in Bolivar began with log structures. Later easily kilned clay in the area made building with brick affordable to many middle-class residents. Stone construction was popular in the late 18th Century, and all these materials can still be seen in the structures throughout Bolivar today. The unique Armorers House style is brick, often being a duplex. These homes date back to

the early 1800s. Smokehouses and well, or spring, houses of brick are still seen in backyards. A restored public spring house sits on the edge of the Bolivar Children's Park today.



Left: an example of a log structure house still in use today; Right: an example of a stone structure house still standing today.



Left: an example of a spring house still standing today; Right: an example of an Armorer's style brick house still standing today.

Special Note – all the above structures can be found along the main thoroughfare on Washington Street in Bolivar, WV.



Left: site of one of the old academies in Jefferson County; Right: The Gunsmith shop was one of the stores that remained standing after the Civil War and is still standing today.

How Were Children Educated?

The population of Bolivar continued to grow until the Civil War with stores, farms, taverns, and schools serving the community. Many early schoolhouses were on Gilbert Street. Public academies for boys existed in Jefferson County as early as 1762 with a curriculum including reading, writing, arithmetic, and surveying. In 1795 Charles Town Academy was founded to teach basics, as well as Latin and Greek, with expansion to include French, English, geography, astronomy, and philosophy as enrollment grew. While educational institutions often included the word public in their titles, schools were maintained by subscription (family contributions and donations). A similar academy in Charles Town was later established to teach girls and included many of the same subjects as boys were taught. Some families employed tutors or sent their children to “Professors” who were freelance educators teaching from their lodgings or church facilities.

In 1846 the Virginia General Assembly authorized free schools in several counties including Jefferson. A local election followed, approving free schools by a 7 to 1 majority vote. Restricted to the 3 R’s (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and, when possible English, geography, history, and philosophy, children in the county could go to school regardless of the ability for their parents to pay or of their parents’ occupation/standing. Free and public education did not mean the same thing in the 19th Century that it means today. While indigent children between the ages of 5 and 21 could attend for free, other children paid fifty cents per quarter year (two dollars per year). The first year of operation for the Jefferson County School System cost ten thousand dollars to fund twenty-three schools serving one thousand one hundred students. Teachers in the 1840’s were paid an average of two hundred seventy-five dollars to three hundred dollars per year. By 1856 public schools were firmly established in the Town of Bolivar and in Jefferson County.

What Happened To Bolivar During The Civil War?

Part of Virginia, the Eastern Panhandle supplied soldiers to both the Confederate States Army and the Union Army during the war. In the spring of 1861, Bolivar Heights was the scene of recruitment into the Virginia Infantry and Cavalry. Known as Camp Jackson after General “Stonewall” Jackson, more recruits came to volunteer to march with Virginia and the Confederacy, rather than with the Union and its troops. The first AWOL (Away Without Leave) soldier from the Virginia Regiments was a man from Bolivar named Buzzard. Buzzard lived with his family in a house, which today can still be seen on Union Street. The question of allegiance in this far-flung Virginia County fractured along regional lines: on one side, the industrialized Wheeling, the center of Union support; and on the other side the Shenandoah Counties, that were loyal to the Commonwealth of Virginia and in turn to the Confederacy. In 1863, West Virginia was officially declared a new state and was admitted to the Union. Because the Civil War still waged, the new state was far from being a unanimously happy new member of the Union. The benefits of becoming independent from Virginia were very attractive to the counties where wealth was based on industry, small farming, mining, and transportation. Cutting away a large chunk of Virginia served the Union’s purposes as the war raged on. This added a state to the Union side, took away valuable land and resources from the Confederacy, and added large numbers of fighting men to Union ranks. Jefferson County’s inclusion into West Virginia was not settled until 1871. The US Supreme Court ruled that a small poll taken on May 28, 1863 in the eastern panhandle was valid, and therefore, Jefferson and Berkeley Counties were part of West Virginia, not Virginia. The Eastern Panhandle was the site/staging area for many Civil War battles, and the confluence of the two rivers mirrored the confluence of spying from each side, and scavenging from local farms and families. As a battle site, Bolivar is best known for an engagement which resulted in the largest Union surrender in the history of the war. Approximately twelve thousand five hundred Union troops surrendered to/were captured by “Stonewall” Jackson’s forces at the Battle of Bolivar Heights. Advances and retreats by Union and Confederate troops laid waste to much of the area from battle and fire damage. Property values were cut in half: “good farms where the fences were destroyed \$25 per acre” or “farms with excellent buildings and standing fences \$40 per acre.” Many residents had left the area before the war (ex., Mennonites, better known today as Baptists) or during it, due to all the bloodshed and looting. According to local newspapers, the region of the Shenandoah Valley was left “destitute” by the war. [The Spirit of Jefferson](#) and the [Shepherdstown Register](#) newspapers reported that returning soldiers did not see the prosperous farming and merchant community of Bolivar. The town was weed-covered and overgrown, with a few makeshift homes in burned-out ruins. Trees had been felled or had their branches shot away, leaving only trunks with little to no foliage. Some areas suffered far worse, such as Mossy Creek, VA, just two hours south of Bolivar and Harpers Ferry. In Mossy Creek under the order of Union General Phil Sheridan, a six-mile diameter was laid waste as retribution for the alleged murder of a Union officer at the end of the war. Union soldiers followed through with the order without hesitation, leaving nothing standing, be it natural or manmade. Below are screenshots of one such article titled ***The Shenandoah Valley*** from the [Shepherdstown Register](#). Although the article is almost one hundred and sixty years old, it is still very legible. [Browse Issues: Shepherdstown register. \[volume\] « Chronicling America « Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#)

The Shenandoah Valley.

Its Present Condition—Destitution of the People—The Late Slaves—Value of Lands—The German Element—What the Valley Needs.

From Winchester to Harrisonburg fences are scarcely to be seen; but few houses have been destroyed, but near Harrisonburg many barns and mills have been burned. From Winchester to Strausburg, scarcely any crops have been planted, and scarcely a chicken, horse, cow or pig is to be seen. Towards Harrisonburg considerable wheat is out and corn has been planted. Beyond Harrisonburg, towards Staunton, west of the turnpike, near Mossy creek, is the section which, by order of General Sheridan, was laid waste for the alleged murder of a Union officer. The citizens there assert that he was not murdered, but killed in an open fight, he having first wounded his adversary in the arm. Within a circle of five or six miles in diameter, with scarcely an exception, not a house, barn mill or other building has been left standing.

Many of the citizens were Mennonists, who are non-residents, and many of them, early in the war, had left for the North. They are a quiet, hard-working, industrious people, never owning or hiring slaves, and are already returning to their desolated farms, and putting up small frame buildings to shelter themselves and families.

Extreme destitution prevails throughout the whole valley. Having been so often traversed by both armies, farms have been entirely stripped of their stock, and in many districts of all their fences. The able-bodied negroes have all left, those only remaining who are not able to do any work, and who are a burden on their former owners. In many cases the agents of the government compel their former masters to keep and support them, although recognizing the fact that they are free, and while they are entirely useless for agricultural or domestic purposes. This is regarded as great injustice, as the citizens have scarcely enough to support themselves, and think the rights of freedom should be reciprocal. They recognize the fact that slavery is extinct; think that they should have the privilege to employ such labor as should be most advantageous to them, and that as they cannot have the services of the negroes who could labor and raise crops, the government should assume the care or charge of those who are mere consumers.

As an illustration of the way in which things are done, a negro woman came to a provost marshal's office, and complained that her late master had beaten and ill-used her. He showed conclusively that her story was an utter falsehood, and offered to furnish her and her three children with a complete outfit if the Government would take charge of them. The provost marshal refused to accept the offer, ordered her late owner to take her back, and prescribed the wages he was to pay. Unfortunately he was unable to support himself and family, having plenty of first class land but no one to work it, and a crowd of helpless old men and women to support. This is mentioned, not for the purpose of finding fault with the Government, but to show the condition of the people.

Article from the Shepherdstown Register from a publication on July 15, 1865.

This immense valley, hundreds of miles in length, is one of the finest agricultural and mineral regions in the world, and, with free men and free labor, no limits can be set to its future greatness. Its people are disposed to receive frankly Northern men and Northern capital. The soil is unsurpassed for agricultural purposes, the whole valley being the best limestone land, and generally well wooded and watered. What is now needed is some capital to stock and improve the farms, to rebuild mills and manufactories, and to develop the immense mineral resources of the valley. The best lands may now be purchased on the most reasonable terms—say for less than half what they would command a year or two hence. Good farms, where the fences have been destroyed, may be bought for \$25 per acre; farms with excellent building and fences for \$40. For example, a farm containing 400 acres of good arable limestone land, and 200 acres first-rate white oak timber land, fine two-story brick mansion house, large barn, stabling and other out-buildings, with a fine stream of water running through the land, good springs in various parts of the property, and good fences, was offered for \$40 per acre. On the farm was a splendid crop of wheat, corn and grass. It is within six miles of a railroad, and about 120 miles from Washington or Baltimore.

Many German families from Lancaster co., Pa., found their way into this valley many years ago, and taking with them their industrious and thrifty habits, have become large and prosperous land owners.

What the valley now needs is labor and money. The war destroyed the old banks, and new ones are much needed. Capital to any amount might be invested on a safe security, as there is an abundance of valuable and unimproved land.

Article from the Shepherdstown Register from a publication on July 15, 1865.

The Harpers Ferry/Bolivar area changed hands from Union to Confederate territory at least seven times, and potentially as many as eleven times during the war.

S8 AA Table2: Bolivar/Harpers Ferry and the Civil War Chronology

Year	Month/Day	Description
1861	April 12 th	Fort Sumter fired upon at Charleston SC
	April 15 th	President Lincoln calls for 75,000 volunteers to stamp out the rebellion
	April 17 th	Virginia secedes from the Union
	April 18 th	Virginia militia marches on Harpers Ferry, VA and as a result the Federal troops set fire to the U.S. Armory and Arsenal, destroying over 15,000 weapons
	April 28 th	Colonel Thomas J. Jackson (later in the war becoming better known as “Stonewall”) takes his first command of the war at Harpers Ferry, VA. Over the next seven weeks, all machinery and tools from the armory are removed packed and shipped to Richmond, VA and Fayetteville, NC to produce weapons for the Confederacy
	June 14 th	The B&O Railroad bridge and the U.S. Armory buildings burned by evacuating Confederate troops
	June 28 th	Confederate Raiders burn Hall’s Rifle Works and the Shenandoah Bridge
	July 4 th	First civilian death occurs in Harpers Ferry, businessman Frederick Roeder is shot and killed by a Union soldier on Maryland Heights
	July 21 st	Union Forces occupy Harpers Ferry
	August 17 th	Union troops withdraw from the town to the adjacent side of the shore on the Maryland side – Harpers Ferry remains unoccupied by either side until February of 1862
	October 16 th	Battle of Bolivar Heights, Five-hundred Confederate troops under the command of Colonel Turner Ashby clash with six hundred Federal troops commanded by Colonel John Geary – Ashby forces fall back towards Charles Town and Union Flags are placed on the ridge – A small contingent of Ashby’s troops return to burn a prosperous flour mill on Virginius Island owned by a Unionist citizen

1862	February 7 th	Union soldiers burn the commercial area near “The Point” in retaliation for the death of a Federal scout killed by a Confederate sniper
	February 25 th	Federal troops occupy the Town of Harpers Ferry to maintain communication and supply lines along the B&O Railroad and to deter the invasion from the Shenandoah Valley – Eventually 14,000 Union soldiers, nicknamed “The Railroad Brigade” are stationed in Harpers Ferry
	March 29 th	Colonel Dixon S. Miles is given command of “The Railroad Brigade” at Harpers Ferry
	May	In response to Stonewall Jackson’s Shenandoah Valley Campaign, the U.S. Army and Navy forces construct a naval artillery battery on Maryland Heights
	May 29 th – 30 th	“Stonewall” Jackson’s troops approach Harpers Ferry from direction of Bolivar Heights and charge to within a few hundred yards of Union fortifications on Camp Hill before withdrawing – Union General Rufus Saxton is awarded the Medal of Honor for his defense of Harpers Ferry
	September 4 th	Confederate General Robert E. Lee begins the first Confederate campaign on Union soil by invading Maryland with the Army of Northern Virginia
	September 9 th	At Frederick, MD, General Lee issues Special Orders 191, boldly dividing his army into four parts, sending three columns to capture or destroy the garrison at Harpers Ferry For more info in regard to Special Orders 191 see Special Orders No. 191 - Monocacy National Battlefield (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)
	September 13 th	Under the command of “Stonewall” Jackson, Confederate troops take strategic positions on the hills surrounding Harpers Ferry, surrounding the Union garrison on three sides

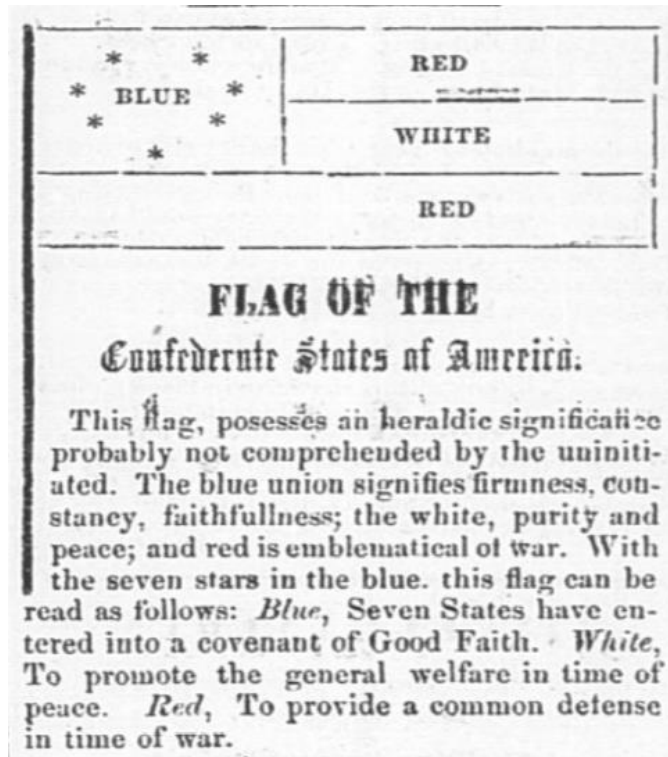
	September 14 th	The Battle of South Mountain delays the advance of the main Federal army while “Stonewall” Jackson’s artillery hammers the Harpers Ferry garrison – During the night, Jackson orders General A.P. Hill’s division to the Chambers’ Farm to outflank the Union
		position on Bolivar Heights – Also under the cover of darkness, 1,500 Union cavalry cut through Confederate lines to escape the tightening noose around Harpers Ferry
	September 15 th	Approximately 12,500 Federal troops surrender to “Stonewall” Jackson – It was the largest surrender of Federal troops in American history until the fall of Bataan during World War II
	September 17 th	The Battle of Antietam — the single bloodiest day in American history — is fought
	September 18 th	Remaining Confederates evacuate Harpers Ferry
	September 19 th	The campaign ends with a battle at Shepherdstown as Lee crosses back into Virginia with his army
	September 20 th	Federals occupy Harpers Ferry and begin constructing extensive fortifications on the heights
	September 22 nd	President Lincoln issues the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation For more info in regard to Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation see Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation - Antietam National Battlefield (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)
	October 1 st – 2 nd	Lincoln reviews the Union troops on Bolivar Heights and Maryland Heights

1863	January 1 st	Lincoln revises and reissues the Emancipation Proclamation, expanding the scope of the Union war effort to include abolition of the institution of slavery and authorizing the recruiting and training of United States Colored Troops For more info in regard to Emancipation Proclamation see Emancipation Proclamation - Antietam National Battlefield (U.S. National Park Service) (nps.gov)
	April – May	U.S. Army Engineer General John G. Barnard plans and recommends further fortifications in and around Harpers Ferry including Maryland Heights
	June 16 th	The Army of Northern Virginia invades Union soil for the second time

	June 17 th	Federals evacuate Harpers Ferry and man fortifications on Maryland Heights
	June 20 th	West Virginia is admitted to the Union as the 35th state
	June 23 rd	From his high position on Maryland Heights, Union General Daniel Tyler provides the first alert of the Confederate movements that would later result in the Battle of Gettysburg
	June 30 th	Federals abandon Maryland Heights, retreating to Frederick, MD
	July 1 st – 3 rd	The Battle of Gettysburg occurs
	July 14 th	Harpers Ferry is occupied by Union troops after Confederate troops retreat from Gettysburg
1864	January 10 th	Colonel John S. Mosby's Partisan Rangers suffer a rare defeat following their failed ambush of Union Major Henry Cole's Maryland Cavalry on Loudoun Heights
	March 19 th	Members of the 19th U.S. Colored Troops march through Harpers Ferry recruiting new members
	July 4 th	The Confederates invade Union soil for the third time – General Jubal Early forces Union soldiers to withdraw to Maryland Heights as

		he marches on Harpers Ferry toward Washington, DC
	July 5 th – 7 th	Early attempts to dislodge the garrison in order to continue directly to Washington – Failing to do so he marches northeast to Frederick, MD
	July 9 th	The Battle of Monocacy further delays Early’s advance toward Washington
	July 11 th – 12 th	Early fights on the outskirts of Washington at the Battle of Fort Stevens – Unable to pierce the city’s defenses, he withdraws and returns to the Shenandoah Valley
	August 6 th	Union General Philip Sheridan arrives at Harpers Ferry to mount a major offensive to destroy Early’s army and conquer the Shenandoah Valley – Supply trains leave for the “front” regularly, always under threat of attack from Colonel John S. Mosby’s Partisan Rangers or other Confederate guerillas
	September 19 th	The Battle of Third Winchester occurs
	September 22 nd	The Battle of Fisher’s Hill occurs
	September 23 rd	Fifteen hundred prisoners from these battles are processed through Harpers Ferry
	October 19 th	The Battle of Cedar Creek ends major Confederate resistance in the Shenandoah Valley
	November 8 th	President Lincoln is reelected
1865	April 2 nd	The capital of the Confederate States of America Richmond, VA falls
	April 5 th	Confederate guerrilla and Harpers Ferry native John Mobberly is shot and killed by Union cavalry in nearby Lovettsville, VA
	April 9 th	General Lee surrenders to General Grant at the Appomattox Court House in Appomattox, VA
	April 14 th	President Lincoln is assassinated

[Harpers Ferry and the Civil War Chronology - Harpers Ferry National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/harperferry/learn/chronology)

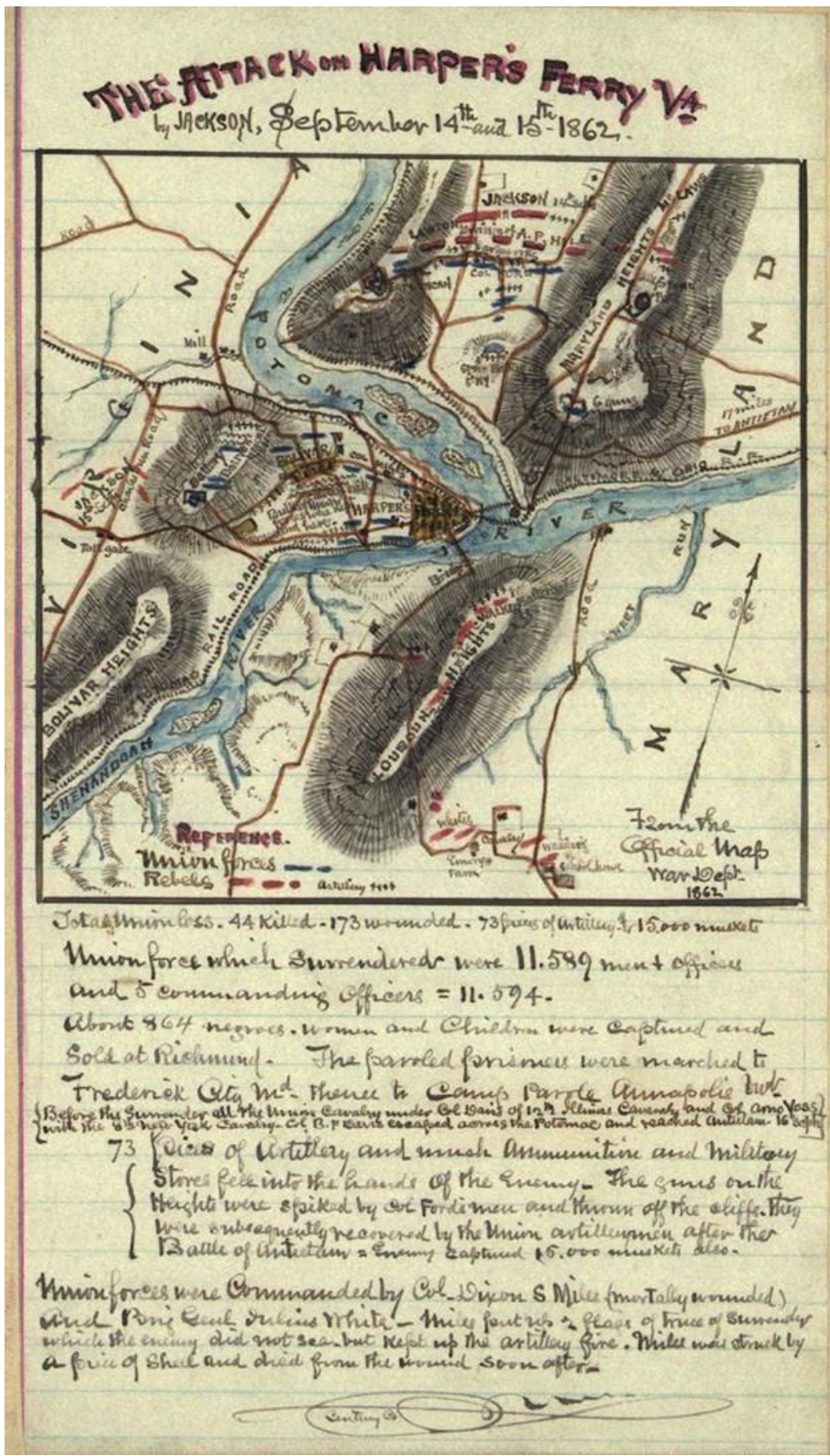


Spirit of Jefferson March 29, 1861 Flag of the Confederate States of America significance and meaning.

[Spirit of Jefferson — Browse by title — Virginia Chronicle: Digital Newspaper Archive](#)



An article from the *Harper's Weekly* in NY May 11, 1861 depicting the burning of the Harpers Ferry Armory by Federal troops on April 18, 1861 (this image has been colorized by modern technology to show what it would have looked like if they had been able to print this in color).



The Attack on Harpers Ferry, VA, by "Stonewall" Jackson on September 14th & 15th 1862
drawn and written by Robert Knox Sneden in 1862.



An overlook of Harpers Ferry in July 1865 after the conclusion to the Civil War.

[National Archives NextGen Catalog](#)

How Did Bolivar Fare After The Civil War?

The armory closed after the Civil War, and the industrial prosperity of the area came to a grinding halt. The Federal government tried selling the armory property and buildings in 1869, but were unsuccessful. This was due to the interested buyer wanting ownership in order to file a lawsuit against the railroad. No payments were ever made on the property, nor were there any improvements made. The big floods during the 1870s severely damaged the buildings and property that were left standing along the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. The armory land was finally sold in 1884 to a pulp mill operator. For nearly twenty years after the conclusion of the Civil War, industry in the eastern panhandle languished.

Another debilitating issue was that of labor shortages, both in building and in farming. There were a large number of freedmen that lived in and around the area, but a combination of post-war

prejudice and a lack of skills and proper training or those willing to work kept unemployment high for the African-American community.

Though the Civil War has long since faded into history, it still perseveres to this very day in stories passed down through generations and in structures still standing, National Park Service battlefield reenactments and history lessons, or discoveries unearthed. In the 1900s, church members from the Bolivar Methodist Church discovered the remains of a Union soldier when remodeling work was being completed on the foundation. The remains of the soldier were identified by the buttons on his uniform. It can be assumed, based on the autopsy, that this young soldier had crawled under the structure after being gravely wounded and there did meet his death, his remains to lay undiscovered until forty years later.



Bolivar Methodist Church in Bolivar, WV.

A Union officer of Scottish background Col. Robert Whitman came back to the area shortly after the Civil War. He built a castle on Bolivar Heights, which stood for one hundred years. The castle was shipped from Scotland to Bolivar stone by stone and reconstructed. The castle is no longer standing and the land is now owned by the National Park Services. [Scottish Castle, Bolivar Heights, Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, WV - Photos from Survey HABS WV-228 | Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#) Up until the late 1990s that same land was the location of the annual 4th of July fireworks spectacular.



Front Façade – Scottish Castle, Bolivar Heights, Harpers Ferry, WV.



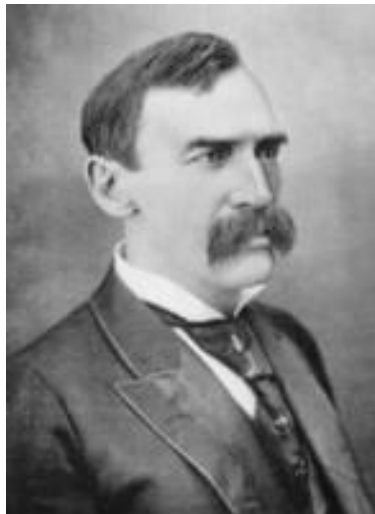
Rear Façade – Scottish Castle, Bolivar Heights, Harpers Ferry, WV.

Until the 1920s, a Civil War cannon was mobilized from Camp Hill to The Point at Harpers Ferry every year. The cannon was loaded with a single round of shot and fired across the Potomac River to Maryland.

A better outcome of the Civil War was that of the establishment of Storer College on Camp Hill. For ninety years Storer College educated African-Americans. The school began by offering a two-year college program for students to become teachers, later turning the program into a four-year degree in all academic areas. The Storer College campus now houses the National Park Service headquarters.

Jefferson County and the town of Bolivar remained split between Unionists and Southern sympathizers after the Civil War was over. Only three-hundred of the registered voters in Jefferson County were allowed to vote before the war. Another fifteen-hundred could not participate in government because of prohibitions against Confederate soldiers and sympathizers.

The first years after the war the government was run by the Unionists, which had become the Republican Party. Secessionists became the Democratic Party. By the 1870s, voting prohibitions were gone and political parties were no longer identified with Civil War ideals. A local Democrat elected from Bolivar to the state legislature, E. Willis Wilson, went on to become WV Governor from 1885-1890, and later served several terms in the U.S. Congress. Governor Wilson's home is located on Washington Street in Bolivar.



The 7th Governor of West Virginia Emanuel Willis Wilson.

Twentieth Century Bolivar

A variety of textile and paper mills powered by water sustained much of the local economy as residents in Bolivar continued farming and merchant activities. The population was much lower than it had been before the Civil War, and the economy fluctuated almost as much as the high water marks of the Potomac. Floods occurred frequently and were named based on the time of year (for example, the Pumpkin Flood of 1870 that damaged much of the water powered industries). A major flood occurred in 1889. And then in 1936, one of the most devastating floods in the area occurred, washing over Shepherdstown, Harpers Ferry, as well as many other

towns located on the Potomac River. The devastation wrought by flooding in the latter half of the 19th Century and the first half of the 20th Century effectively ended industrial production in the area.

In the 1890s a series of rumors led residents to believe Bolivar would enjoy a much-needed economic boom. The rumors ran the gauntlet from a limestone quarry in Kearneysville, to an alleged find of oil near Moler's Crossroads. Citizens felt that development would soon follow with the discovery of these various natural resources. In Bolivar, rumors of an iron ore mine and high-quality marble quarry were encouraged by a rich investment group from the North. Most of these hopeful rumors for economic booms did not mature due to misrepresentations, lack of capital, and downright falsehoods by those pushing for investment for their own personal financial gain. The overwhelming hopefulness of possibilities, however, were real enough for investors in the county to build office space. This optimism trickled down to a small construction boom across the county and in Bolivar. The realized outcome of this building frenzy was that the offices that were built remained uninhabited/unoccupied for many years which resulted in further economic distress and frustration.

The late 19th Century saw school improvements that had the strong support of local taxpayers. A nine-month school year was instituted, and in 1887 a new idea was adopted for Jefferson County's rural schools. This idea is how schools operate today, where students are assigned a grade based on age with a specific academic curriculum for each year of learning, leading up to final graduation. Before this idea, students were instructed with the same material year after year until they left. The individual responsible for this idea was Jefferson County's own innovative school superintendent William Wilson. Wilson went on to serve as Post Master General for the nation, where he initiated rural postal delivery.

The early part of the 20th Century posed social questions for Bolivar and Jefferson County. Prohibition passed in 1912, and women's suffrage was defeated by a 75% to 25% margin. At the same time, modern conveniences were being introduced to Bolivar. A water-generated electric plant was constructed in 1901 across the Potomac, telephones were being connected to homes and businesses (\$18 per year), and all roads except for one became freeways (vs. toll roads) by 1903. In 1909, Jefferson County won second prize (a prize of \$500) in a national contest to select the best country roads between New York and the Roanoke. In 1912, Bolivar was awarded the contract for construction of a high school, but it was not until 1929 that a bond issue was approved for construction.

During World War 1, Bolivar and Jefferson County did more than their share to support the U.S. soldiers in Europe. The county exceeded its quotas on war bonds, Red Cross contributions, and the sale of Victory Loans. Five hundred and forty-eight men were registered for service and fought in the War, thirty of those men paying the ultimate price serving their country. The war was a boon to the local economy, providing a \$25 million investment in producing war materials which helped the struggling rural area. One such material was the production of leather, which was used to make cavalry equipment.

State or national issues did not consume life in Bolivar. Farmers farmed, merchants bought and sold, and our Town Council and mayor attended to streets, lighting, snow removal, maintenance and various other day-to-day responsibilities to keep the town running like a well-oiled machine. Some special circumstances, however, make this period interesting. In 1899, the mayor received a number of complaints about cows wandering the streets of Bolivar unattended. He asked the Town Council to enforce an existing law about loose cows. Months later, the issue persisted and the mayor order that a fence be built around the town jail and all of the wandering unattended cows were rounded up and sent to the hoosegow. While owners had to post bail to retrieve their cows, this action resolved the ongoing problem.



Bolivar Town Jail located beside the Bolivar Community Center in Bolivar, WV.

The independence of Bolivar was shown in an incident in 1920. The German Ambassador to the U.S. was caught speeding in town. He was given a ticket but refused to pay. The town insisted on payment of the \$5.60 ticket but the Ambassador claimed diplomatic immunity. The U.S. State Department tried to intervene, and Bolivar finally backed down on payment of the ticket. Bolivar did not send an apology, however, and the Governor of West Virginia stepped in to write one to the Ambassador. The speed limit had just been raised from 8 MPH for horses and 10 MPH for automobiles.

Bolivar endured the Depression-era difficulties of the entire Nation. As an agricultural community, however, farmers, churches, and neighbors met immediate family needs for food.

Bolivar and Jefferson County alike strongly supported the New Deal of President Roosevelt and the work programs that it brought to West Virginia, including that of a fishery located in nearby Leetown.

World War II found Bolivar again a strong supporter of the national government and the military. Hundreds of soldiers served from Jefferson County, dozens of those from Bolivar. Of the hundreds that served from Jefferson County thirty-three paid the ultimate price serving their country. If you go to the link shown below, you can see the names of those men. The list is broken up by county: [WWII Army Casualties: West Virginia | National Archives](#). World War II marked a major change in Bolivar with the establishment of the National Park at Harpers Ferry. The Park both preserved and reconstructed our neighboring town. New bridges and highways cleared the way to our area to day tourists from the Baltimore-Washington, DC, area. The Charles Town racetrack was another attraction, which opened just before World War II. Still a rural economy, Bolivar became more interwoven with the regional economy and has shown itself resilient in moving from an agricultural and self-contained merchant community into an economic developmental area ranging from Frederick, MD to Winchester, VA.

In 1999, a survey was conducted in Bolivar to assess what residents wanted to preserve or change about the town. As a result of this survey, and the ordinances which grew from it, Bolivar has retained its small-town characteristics. About every ten years Bolivar reconducts a survey for the purpose of updating its Comprehensive Plan. The results of the survey are based on what the Town's residents and businesses value and desire for the community and its future.

This ever-growing history is simply a template upon which Bolivar residents are invited to add family stories and memories, share historic artifacts, and discover what is important in our past to be continued through our future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READING

Bushong, Millard K. *A History of Jefferson County West Virginia* (Charles Town, WV, Jefferson Publishing Company, 1941).

Norris, J.E., ed. *History of the Lower Shenandoah Valley* (Berryville, VA: Virginia Book Company, 1890).

Williams, John A. *West Virginia* (NY, Norton and Co., 1984).

Uncollected papers of the Town of Bolivar (Bolivar Community Center) courtesy of Elizabeth Blake, Esq.

And special thanks to William Theriault, author of numerous publications and articles and the CD-ROM *Explorer: The West Virginia History Database Jefferson County Module* (West Virginia Division of Culture and History, 1996).

Walking Tour

Our tour of Bolivar begins at the Harpers Ferry Post Office, at the corner of Franklin and Washington Streets. As you start walking up the hill, the first house on the right after passing the fire department (home of Company 1) is the Gersham Keyes House. Restoration architects have dated the home to Colonial times, although the census and deed information does not confirm this date. The red brick home belonged to farmer and merchant Gersham Keyes who also operated a tavern. Inns at Williamsburg, Virginia, were based on the layout of the Keyes home.



Gersham Keyes House, today known as The Lighthouse Inn.

Across Washington Street on the left side, you will see the boyhood home of E. Willis Wilson, which was built in the 1840's. Wilson was the only West Virginia Governor from the Eastern Panhandle. His youngest daughter noted in an interview in the 1960's that Wilson would talk about studying for his bar examination on the side porch. Wilson is best known for his role in the Hatfield & McCoy feud. In the 1890's, he refused to extradite the Hatfield's to Kentucky to face murder charges.



Home of West Virginia's 7th Governor Willis Wilson.

Continuing up Washington Street on the left side of Fisher Alley, you will see the former business site of The Jackson Rose B&B. It is a red brick house set back from the road. This 1795 home, listed on the National Register of Historic Places as “Lee-Longworth House,” was built by the Lee family of Virginia. During the Civil War, the house was used as the headquarters for Confederate General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson. The town changed hands at least seven times during the war.



“Lee-Longworth House.”

Across the alley from the Jackson Rose House still on the left side of Washington Street is a typical Armorer’s style house. This house was built by the Federal Government in 1819. As you walk up Washington Street further you will see several copies of this style of house. These square houses were divided into duplexes for workers at the Armory in Harpers Ferry. The original design had a front porch, and a full second story which at the time was considered to be enviable. Homes were leased by the Federal Government to workers for \$100 per years (on a \$2 per day salary).



Armorer Style House.

As you walk up the gentle curve of Washington Street you'll be in the middle of old Mudfort (the original name for the Town of Bolivar). Legend has it that Mudfort got its name because of the young boys that threw mud balls at the children of Harpers Ferry who walked up the hill. In the 1820's a visitor from Switzerland noted that Mudfort had a number of inns, several distilleries, a library, a doctor, and plenty of stores.



Top of the hill going up Washington Street featuring a left and right side view.

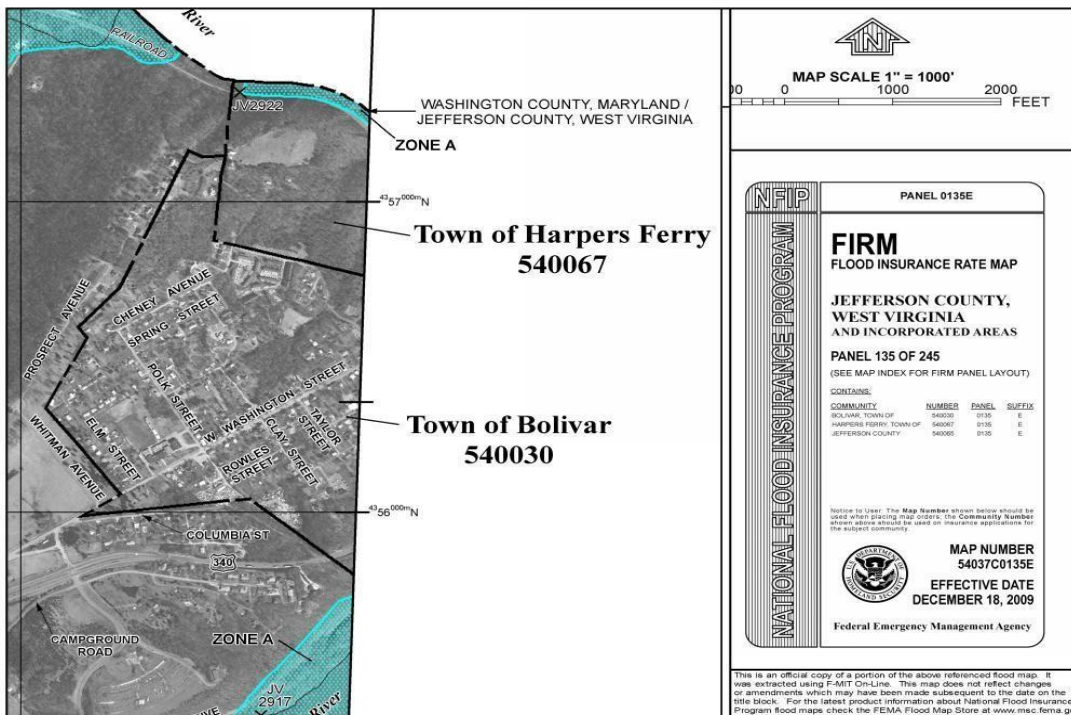
Walking through the Town center, you will see numerous old brick and stone buildings. Buildings not of the Armorer Style were the church and the homes of local merchants and farmers.

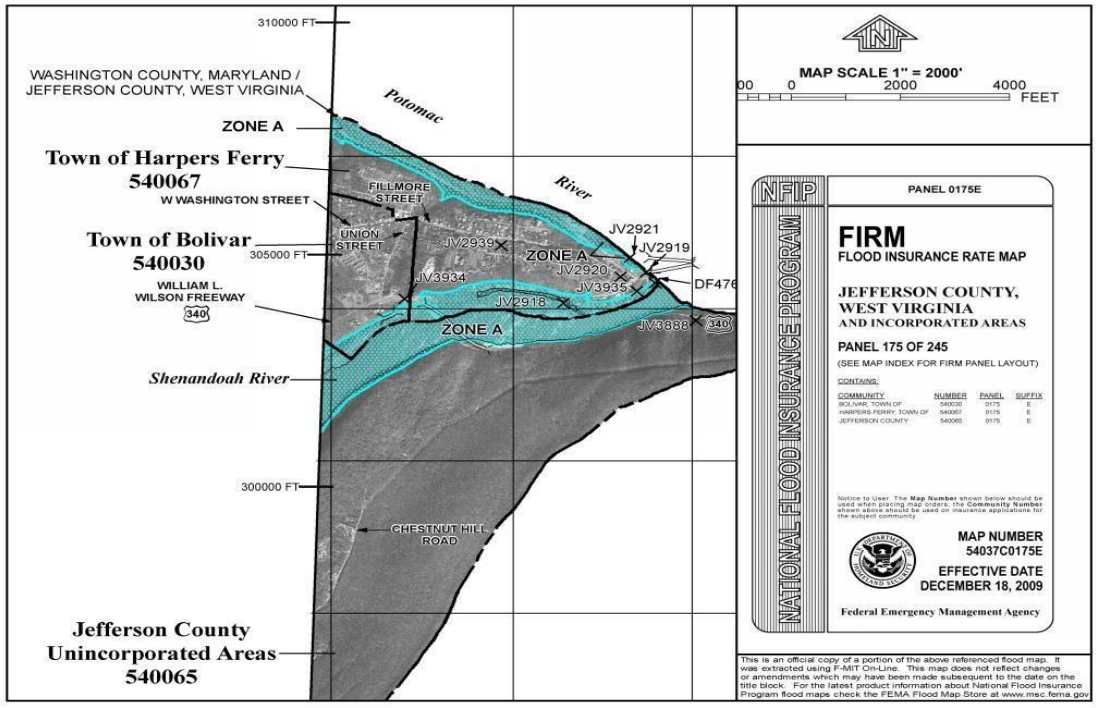


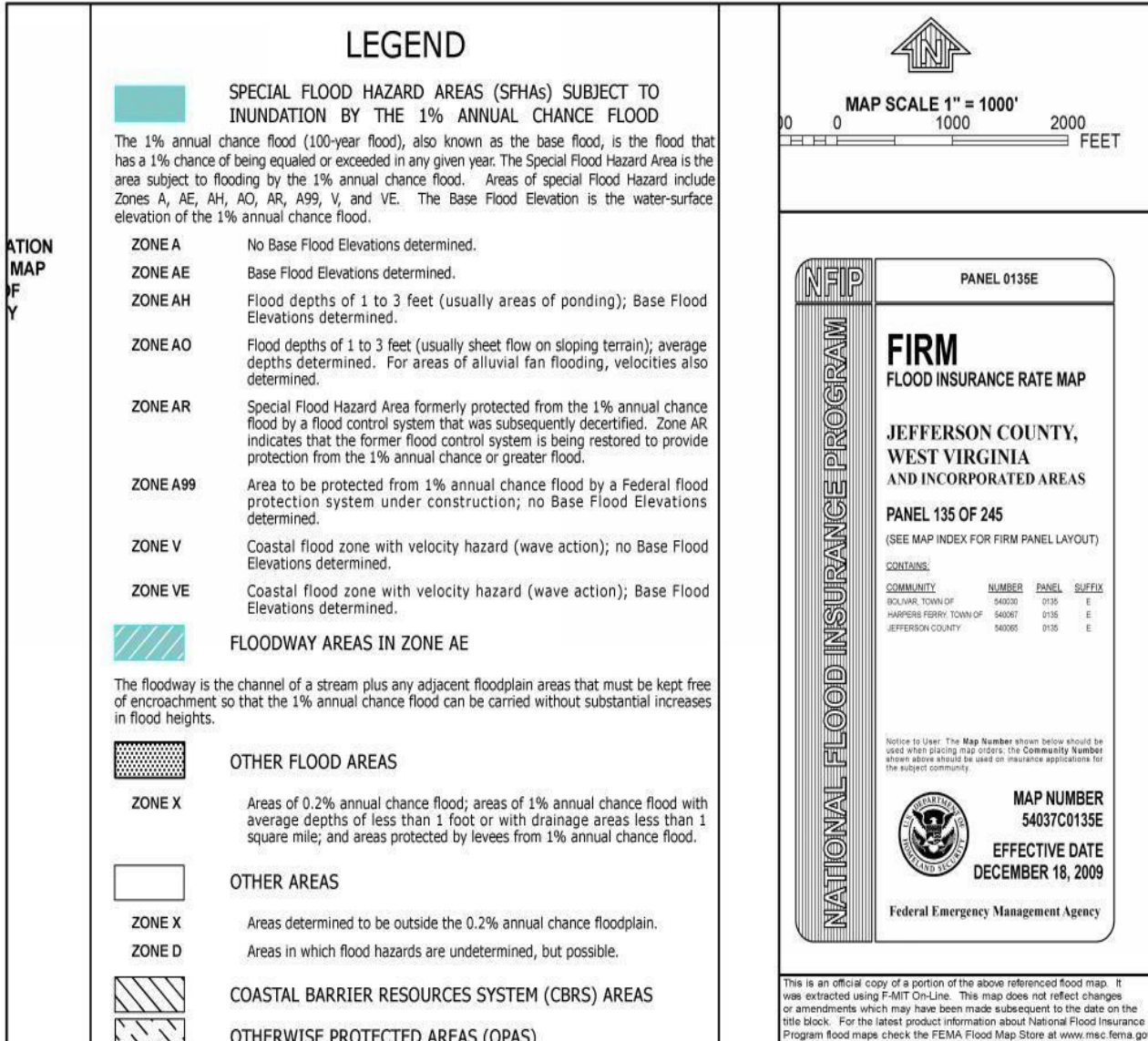
Be A History Detective In Bolivar

The side of this house on Jackson Street (today known as Taylor Street) illuminates part of our history as a 19th Century town. Chimneys were built outside of the walls of homes and the fireplace openings inside were used for both heating and cooking. If there were fires out of control in the fireplace, the chimney could be pulled down and house would be left intact. Take a walk around town and notice how many homes have outside chimneys. You can be a history sleuth and date those buildings to before the Civil War.

Appendix B: Transportation and Infrastructure

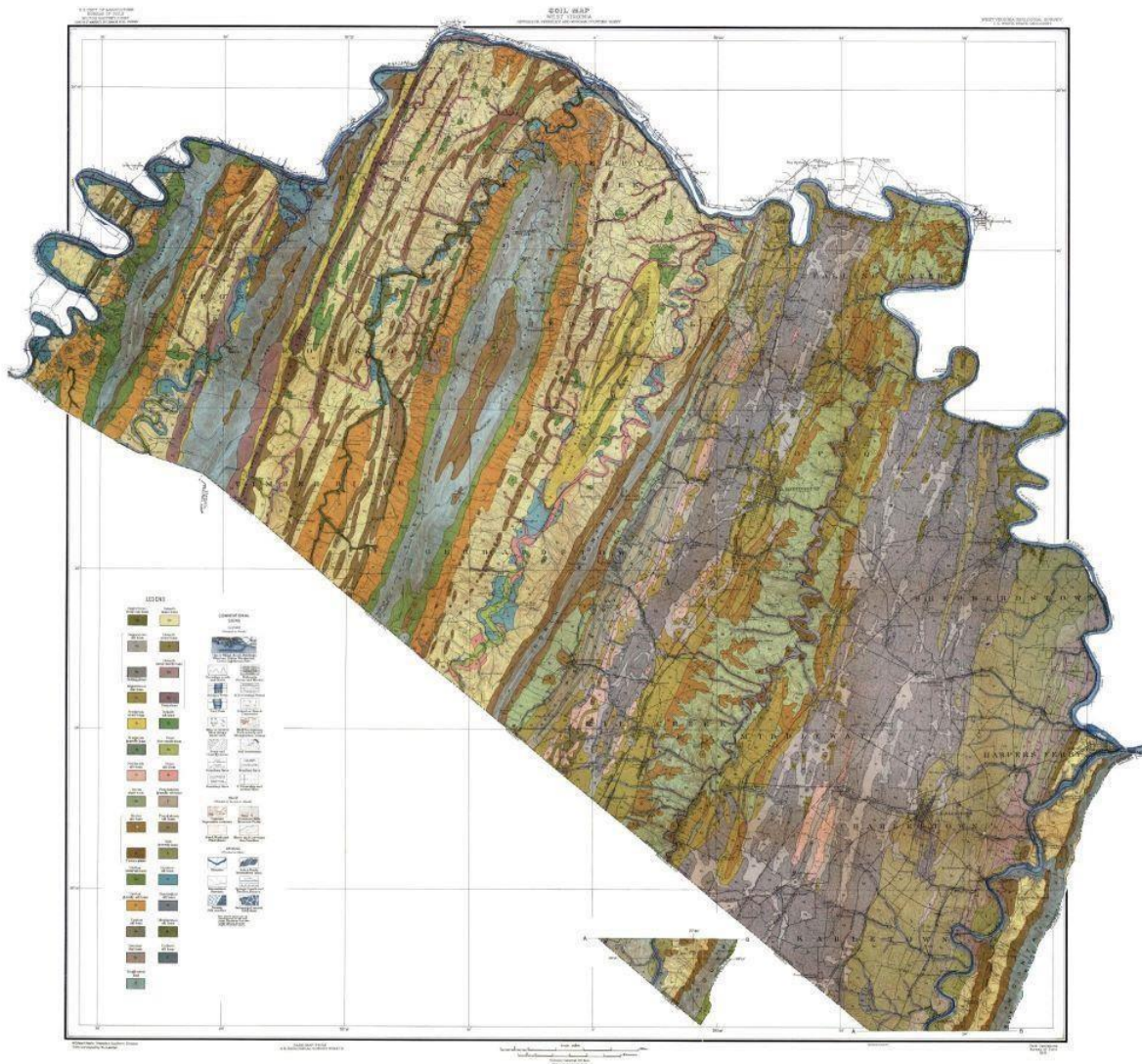






The above three images are of the FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map) from December 18th, 2009 for Jefferson County, WV and incorporated areas.

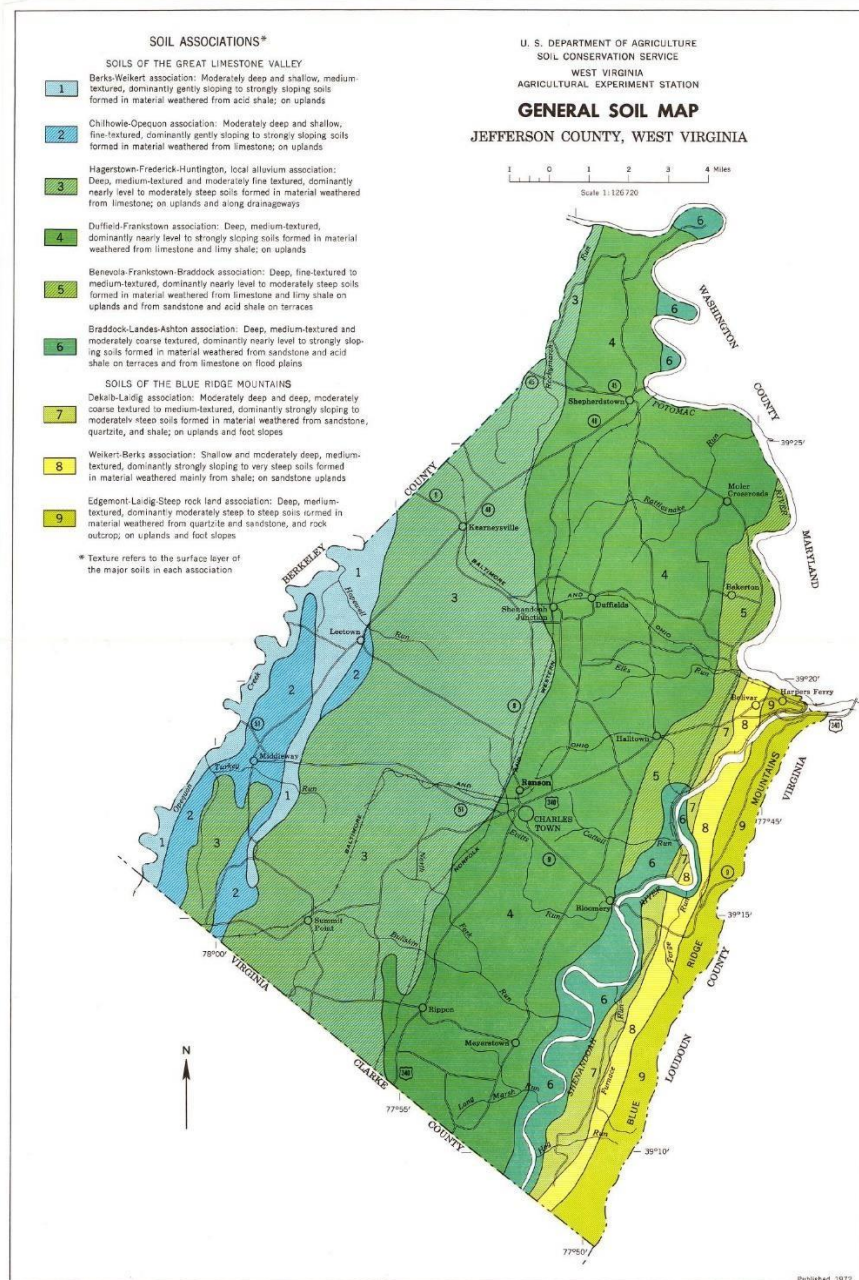
**Special Note – These are the most current available FIRM at this time June 28th, 2024*



Soil Map for West Virginia – Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan Counties Sheet 1916.

For further information to see the full eighty-two page document published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1916 please see the provided link below.

[Soil Survey of Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan Counties, West Virginia : United States. Natural Resources Conservation Service : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)



General Soil Map – Jefferson County, WV 1973.

10



Photomaps from 1967 aerial photographs. Grid values based on West Virginia plane coordinate system, north zone, 1927 North American datum.

Jefferson County, WV Sheet Number 10 Soil Survey Map 1973

GUIDE TO MAPPING UNITS

For a full description of a mapping unit, read both the description of the mapping unit and that of the soil series to which the mapping unit belongs. The suitability of the soils for use as cropland is discussed in the soil descriptions. The capability system is discussed on pages 31 to 33. Other information is given in tables as follows:

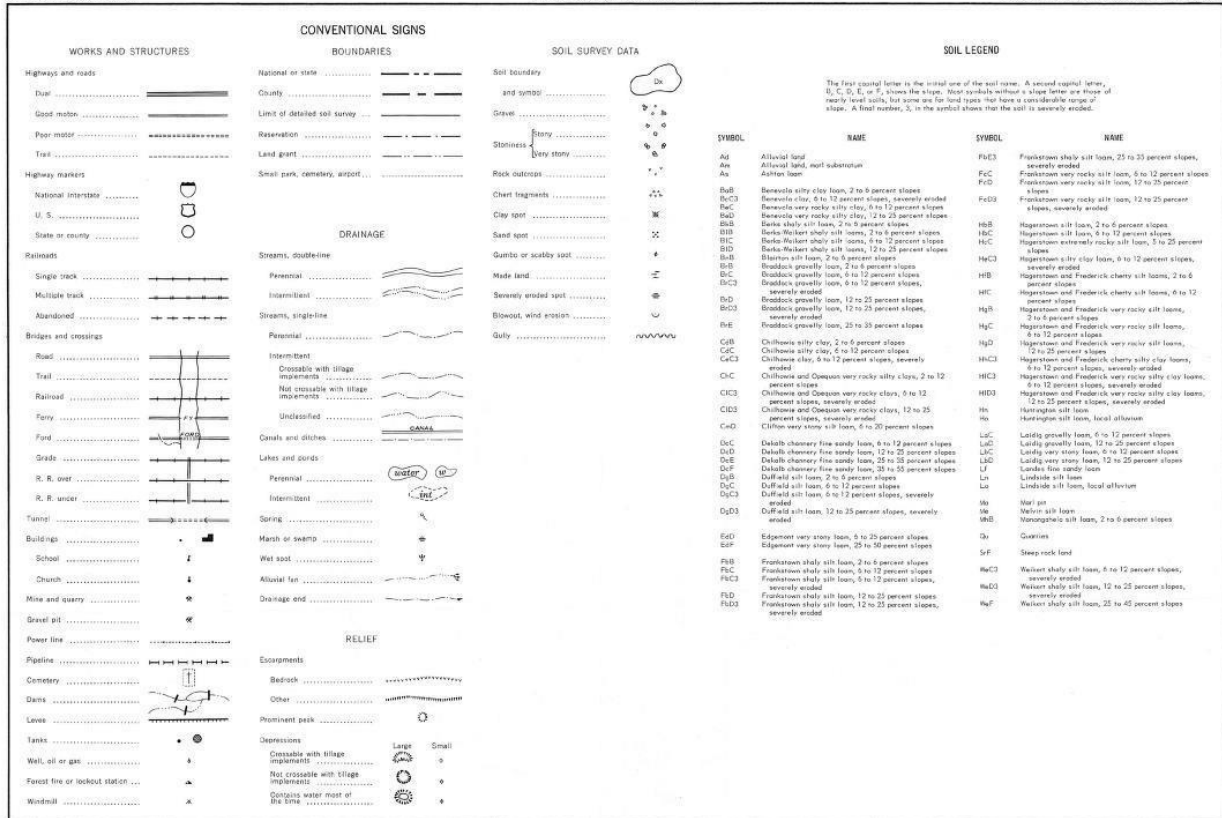
Acres and extent, table 1, page 8.
Estimated yields, table 2, page 34.

Engineering uses of the soils, tables 6, 7, and 8,
pages 48 through 61.

Map symbol	Mapping unit	Described on page	Capability unit		Map symbol	Mapping unit	Described on page	Capability unit	
			Symbol	Page				Symbol	Page
Ad	Alluvial land	7	VIIc-1	19	FVc3	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	19	IIVc-1	19
Am	Alluvial land, marl substratum	8	IIIc-1	19	FVd	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	19	IIVc-1	19
As	Ashton loam	9	Ic-6	19	FVb3	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	19	IIVc-1	19
B&B	Benevola silty clay loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	9	IIIc-1	19	FVb1	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 25 to 35 percent slopes, severely eroded	19	VIIc-1	19
BcC1	Benevola clay, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	10	IIVc-1	19	FVc	Frankstown very rocky silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	19	VIIc-1	19
BcC	Benevola very rocky silty clay, 6 to 12 percent slopes	10	VIIc-1	19	FVd	Frankstown very rocky silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	19	VIIc-1	19
BcD	Benevola very rocky silty clay, 12 to 25 percent slopes	10	VIIc-1	19	FVb1	Frankstown very rocky silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	19	VIIc-1	19
B&B	Berks shaly silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	10	IIVc-10	21	HBB	Hagerstown silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	21	IIVc-1	21
B1B	Berks-Weikert shaly silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	10	IIIc-32	21	HBC	Hagerstown silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	21	IIIc-1	21
B1C	Berks-Weikert shaly silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	11	IIVc-32	21	HcC	Hagerstown extremely rocky silt loam, 5 to 25 percent slopes	21	VIIc-4	21
B1D	Berks-Weikert shaly silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	11	VIIc-31	21	HcC3	Hagerstown extremely rocky silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	21	IIVc-1	21
Bns	Blairton silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	12	IIIc-5	22	HBB	Hagerstown and Frederick cherty silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	22	IIVc-1	22
BFB	Bradtook gravelly loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	12	IIVc-4	22	HBC	Hagerstown and Frederick cherty silt loams, 6 to 12 percent slopes	22	IIIc-1	22
BFC	Bradtook gravelly loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	12	IIIc-4	22	H&B	Hagerstown and Frederick very rocky silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slopes	22	VIIc-1	22
BFD	Bradtook gravelly loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	12	IIVc-3	22	H&C	Hagerstown and Frederick very rocky silt loams, 6 to 12 percent slopes	22	VIIc-1	22
BFE	Bradtook gravelly loam, 25 to 35 percent slopes	13	IIVc-3	22	H&D	Hagerstown and Frederick very rocky silt loams, 12 to 25 percent slopes	23	VIIc-1	23
BFB	Bradtook gravelly loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	13	VIIc-2	24	HcC3	Hagerstown and Frederick cherty silty clay loams, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	24	IIVc-1	24
C&B	Cathowite silty clay, 2 to 6 percent slopes	13	IIIc-20	24	HcC3	Hagerstown and Frederick very rocky silty clay loams, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	24	VIIc-1	24
CcC	Cathowite silty clay, 6 to 12 percent slopes	14	IIVc-30	24	Hc	Huntington silt loam	24	IIVc-6	24
CcC	Cathowite clay, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	14	VIIc-1	24	Hc	Huntington silt loam, local alluvium	24	Ic-6	24
Cnc	Cathowite and Osgoon very rocky silty clay, 2 to 12 percent slopes	14	VIIc-1	24	L&C	Laidig gravelly loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	25	IIIc-1	25
C1C3	Cathowite and Osgoon very rocky clays, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	14	VIIc-1	24	L&D	Laidig gravelly loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	25	IIVc-3	25
Cnd	Clifton very stony silt loam, 6 to 20 percent slopes	15	VIIc-2	24	L&D	Laidig very stony loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	25	VIIc-2	25
DcC	Dekalb channery fine sandy loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	15	IIIc-12	25	L&D	Laidig very stony loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	25	VIIc-2	25
DeD	Dekalb channery fine sandy loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	15	IIVc-5	26	Lf	Landes fine sandy loam	26	IIVc-6	26
DeE	Dekalb channery fine sandy loam, 25 to 35 percent slopes	15	IIVc-4	26	Ls	Lindside silt loam	26	IIVc-7	26
DeF	Dekalb channery fine sandy loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes	15	VIIc-2	26	Ls	Lindside silt loam, local alluvium	27	IIVc-7	27
DgB	Duffield silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	16	IIVc-1	27	M	Marl pit	27	IIIc-1	27
DgC	Duffield silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	16	IIIc-1	27	Me	Marvin silt loam	27	IIIc-1	27
DgD	Duffield silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	17	IIVc-1	27	MsB	Monongahela silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	28	IIVc-1	28
DgE	Duffield silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	17	VIIc-1	27	Q	Quarries	28	IIIc-1	28
DgF	Duffield silt loam, 25 to 35 percent slopes	17	VIIc-2	27	SF	Sleep rock land	28	VIIc-1	28
DW	Edgemont very stony loam, 8 to 25 percent slopes	17	VIIc-2	27	Wc3	Weikert shaly silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, severely eroded	30	VIIc-2	30
DW	Edgemont very stony loam, 25 to 30 percent slopes	17	VIIc-2	27	Wc3	Weikert shaly silt loam, 12 to 25 percent slopes, severely eroded	30	VIIc-3	30
FbB	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	19	IIVc-1	19	WcF	Weikert shaly silt loam, 25 to 45 percent slopes	30	VIIc-3	30
FcC	Frankstown shaly silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	19	IIIc-1	19					

961-488 O-72 (Rev. 6-6-73)

Jefferson County, WV Soil Survey Guide to Mapping Units (Sheets) 1973.



Jefferson County, WV Soil Survey Key/Legend to Mapping Units (Sheets) 1973.

For further information to see the full one-hundred and eleven page document published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in February of 1973 please see the provided link below.

[Soil Survey of Jefferson County, West Virginia \(1973\) : United States. Natural Resources Conservation Service : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/soil/survey/jefferson-county-west-virginia-1973/)

**Special Note – This is the most recent Soil Survey available provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to date as of June 28th, 2024*

Appendix C: Economic Development

S8 AC Table1: Income and Benefits*

	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total households	450	+/-66
Less than \$10,000	50	+/-25
\$10,000 to \$14,999	40	+/-32
\$15,000 to \$24,999	35	+/-17
\$25,000 to \$34,999	53	+/-28
\$35,000 to \$49,999	43	+/-25
\$50,000 to \$74,999	105	+/-38
\$75,000 to \$99,999	52	+/-29
\$100,000 to \$149,999	60	+/-33
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8	+/-9
\$200,000 or more	4	+/-7
Median household income (dollars)	52,000	+/-16,714
Mean household income (dollars)	56,154	+/-6,901
With earnings	348	+/-62
Mean earnings (dollars)	64,021	+/-8,495
With Social Security	107	+/-25
Mean Social Security income (dollars)	12,147	+/-2,685
With retirement income	76	+/-30
Mean retirement income (dollars)	12,045	+/-3,888
With Supplemental Security Income	18	+/-14
Mean Supplemental Security Income (dollars)	5,978	+/-1,604
With cash public assistance income	5	+/-7
Mean cash public assistance income (dollars)	8,400	+/-6,968
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	27	+/-15

* Figures based on estimates from 2011 and 2022 U.S. Census data

Appendix D: Survey Results

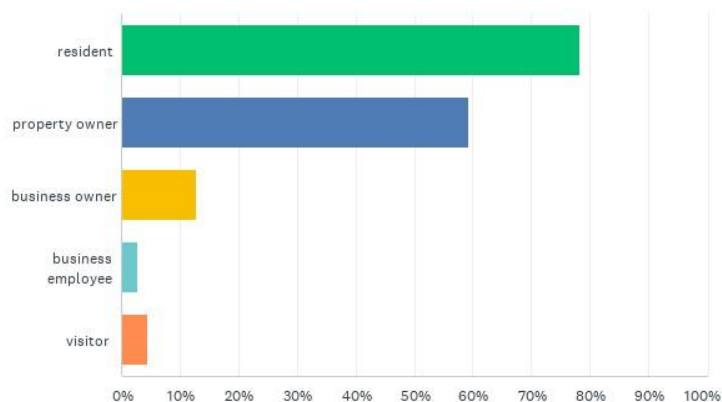
Introduction

In 2023, the Bolivar Planning Commission distributed a community survey to all households in Bolivar. The survey was open to all Bolivar residents, Bolivar businesses (employers & employees), and visitors. Upon completion of the survey, 180 responses were received. Survey results were presented and discussed in a public meeting on October 23, 2023. These results, along with comments provided during the public meeting, have served as an additional source of information for the recommendations provided in the 2024 Comprehensive Annual Plan.

Survey Results

A summary of the survey results appears below.

Q1 Here in Bolivar, I am a (check all that apply)

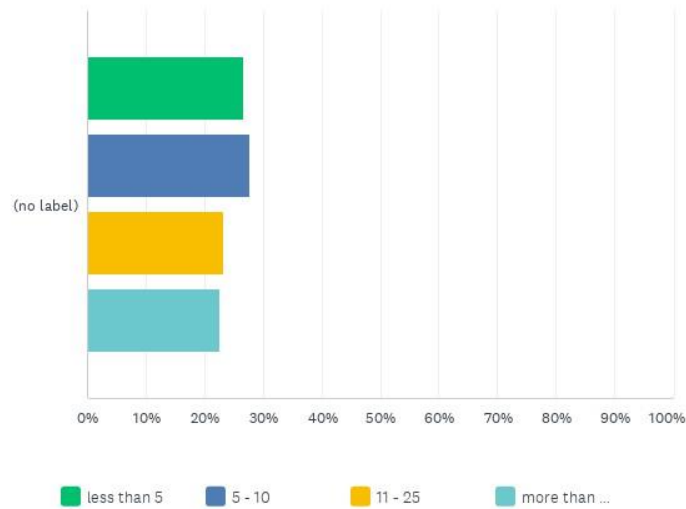


Answers Choices	Responses by Percentage & Number of Respondents	
Resident	78.21%	140
Property Owner	59.22%	106
Business Owner	12.85%	23
Business Employee	2.79%	5
Visitor	4.47%	8
<i>Total Respondents</i>	179	

Q2 Please enter street where you live / own property / work:

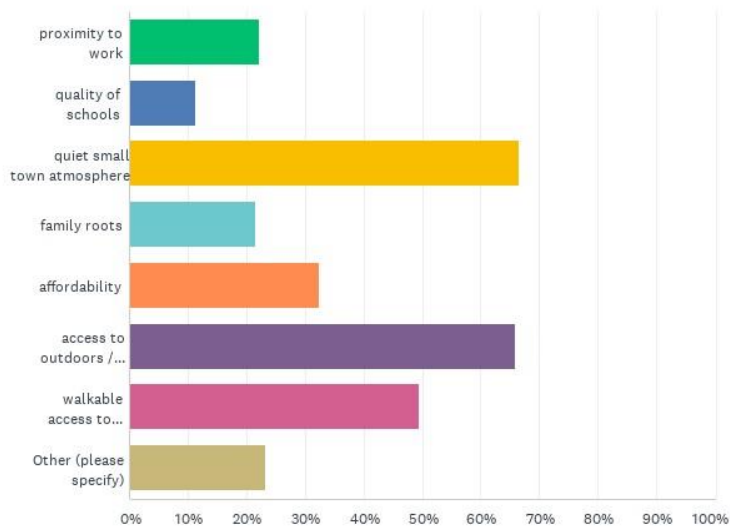
Elm Old furnace rd Day Taylor Court Polk Mudfort Drive W Washington Zorger
Spring Clay Washington St Warren St Union Street
Village Circle St Rowles Street Street Cheney Ave
Washington Union Taylor Columbia West Washington
park ave Madison Spring Court W Washington St Old Furnace Road Mudfort
Gilbert

Q3 How many years have you been a part of the Bolivar community?



Answer Choices: *Less than 5 years, 5 to 10 years, 11 to 25 years, and more than 25 years*

Q4 what attracted you to Bolivar ? (select all that apply)

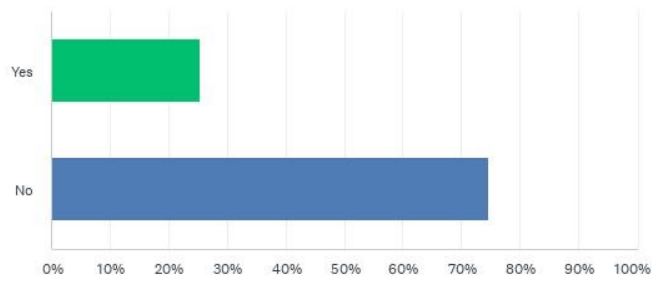


Answer Choices: *Proximity to work, quality of schools, quiet small town atmosphere, family roots, affordability, access to outdoors/scenic beauty, walkable access to amenities (post office, library, restaurants, etc.), and other (please specify)*

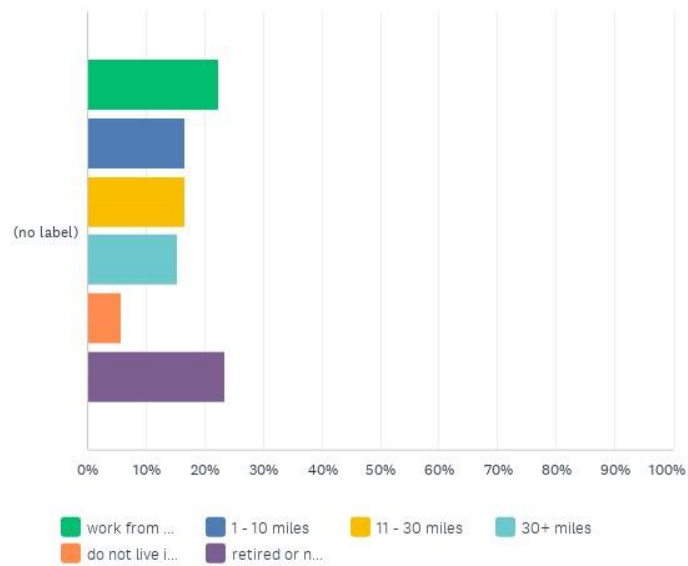
Q4 what attracted you to Bolivar ? (select all that apply)



Q5 Do you have school-aged children under the age of 18 at home?

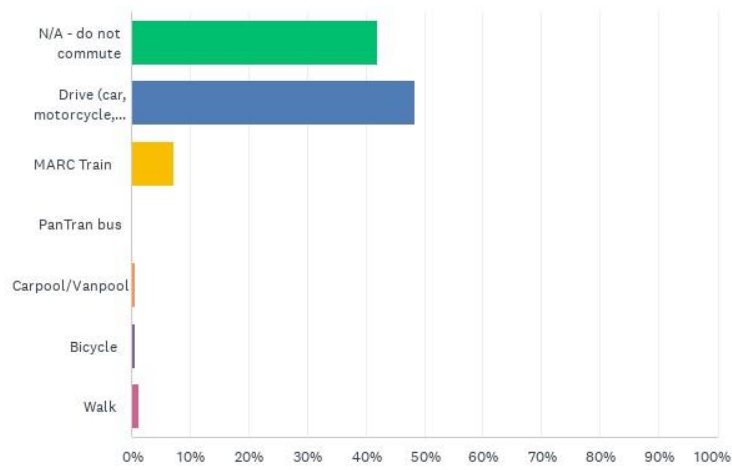


Q6 If you are employed, what is the distance of your typical commute?



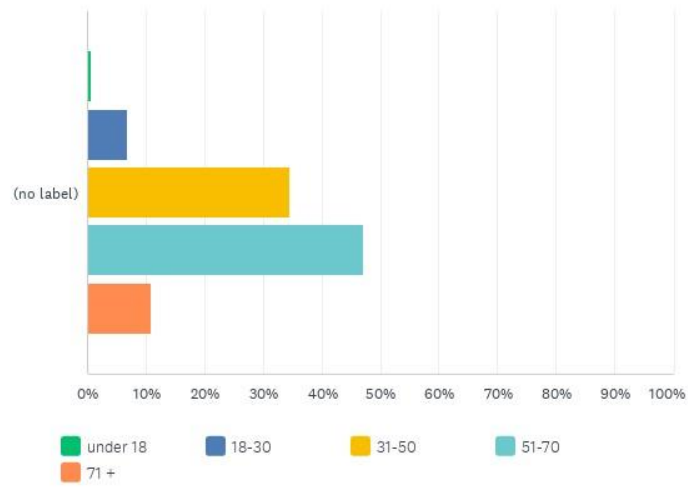
Answer Choices: *Work from home, 1 to 10 miles, 11 to 30 miles, 30 miles or more, do not live in Town of Bolivar, and retired or not employed*

Q7 If you commute to work, what is the primary mode of your commute?

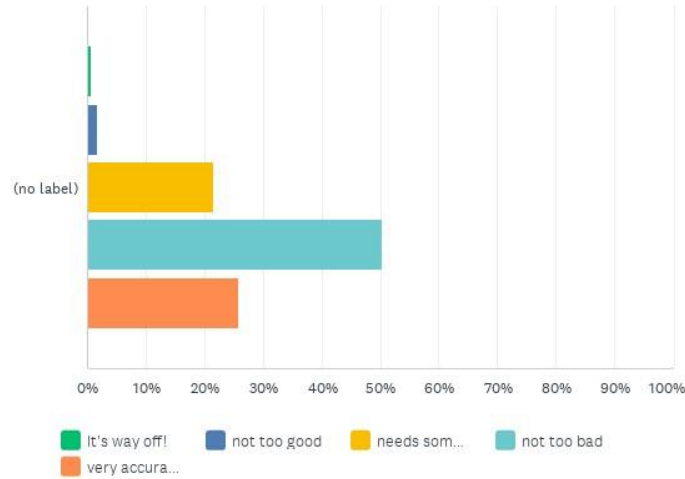


Answer Choices: *N/A – do not commute, drive (car, motorcycle, etc.), MARC train, PanTran bus, carpool/vanpool, bicycle, and walk*

Q8 Which category best describes your age in years?



Q9 "Bolivar is a small-town livable community whose residents value its open space, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street." - Bolivar Vision Statement - created 2003 How would you rate this?

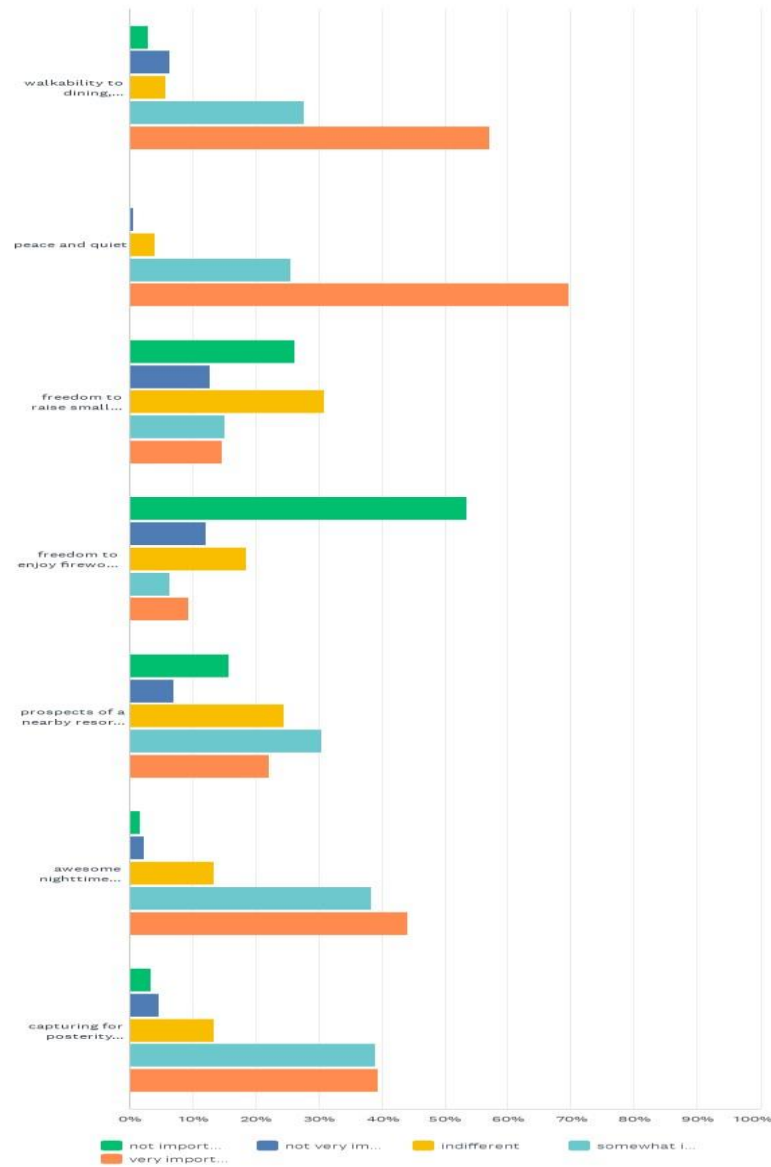


Answer Choices: *It's way off!, not too good, needs some revision, not too bad, and very accurate*

Q9 "Bolivar is a small-town livable community whose residents value its open space, historical and predominately residential character while encouraging a small-town main street business community along Washington Street." - Bolivar Vision Statement - created 2003 How would you rate this?

residents residential character better residential value rentals
Bolivar needs business small business town
 small town community main street without parking

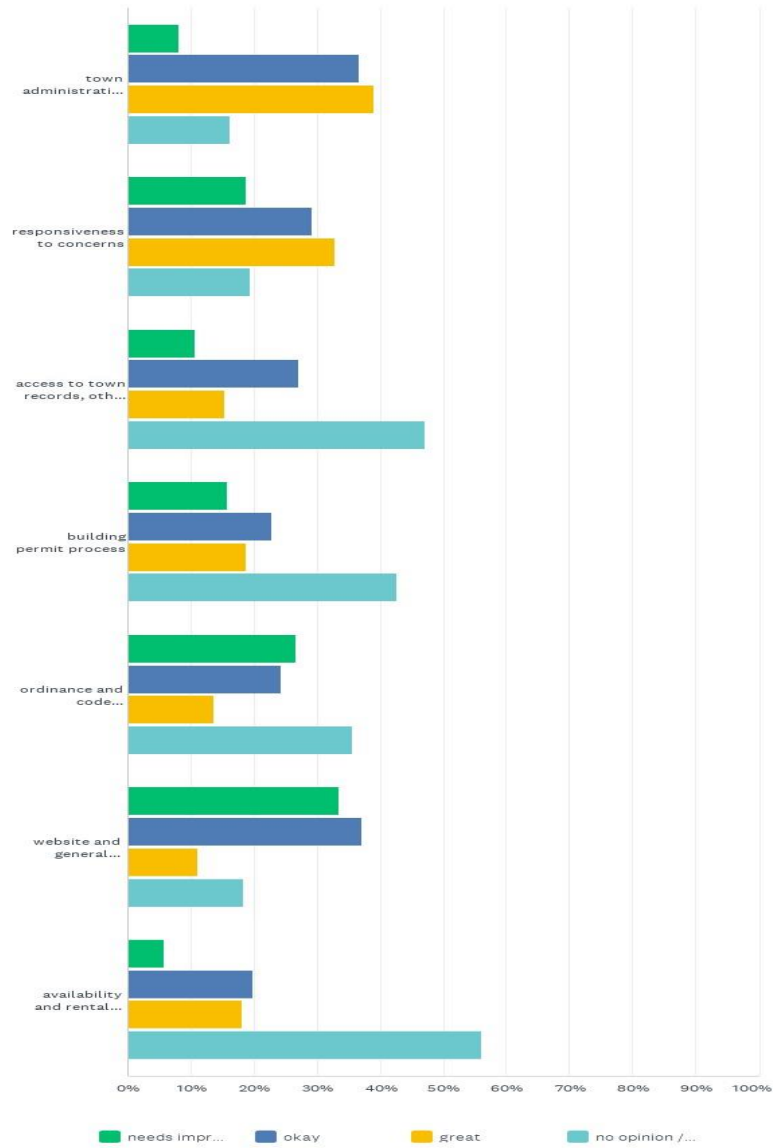
Q10 How do you value the following aspects of life in Bolivar?



Answer Choices:

- *walkability to dining, shopping, other commercial services, outdoor recreation, etc. - peace and quiet*
- *freedom to raise small farm animals*
- *freedom to enjoy fireworks throughout the year*
- *prospects of a nearby resort hotel*
- *awesome nighttime viewing of stars and constellations*
- *capturing for posterity Bolivar's past (oral histories, memorabilia, photographs, stories, etc.)*

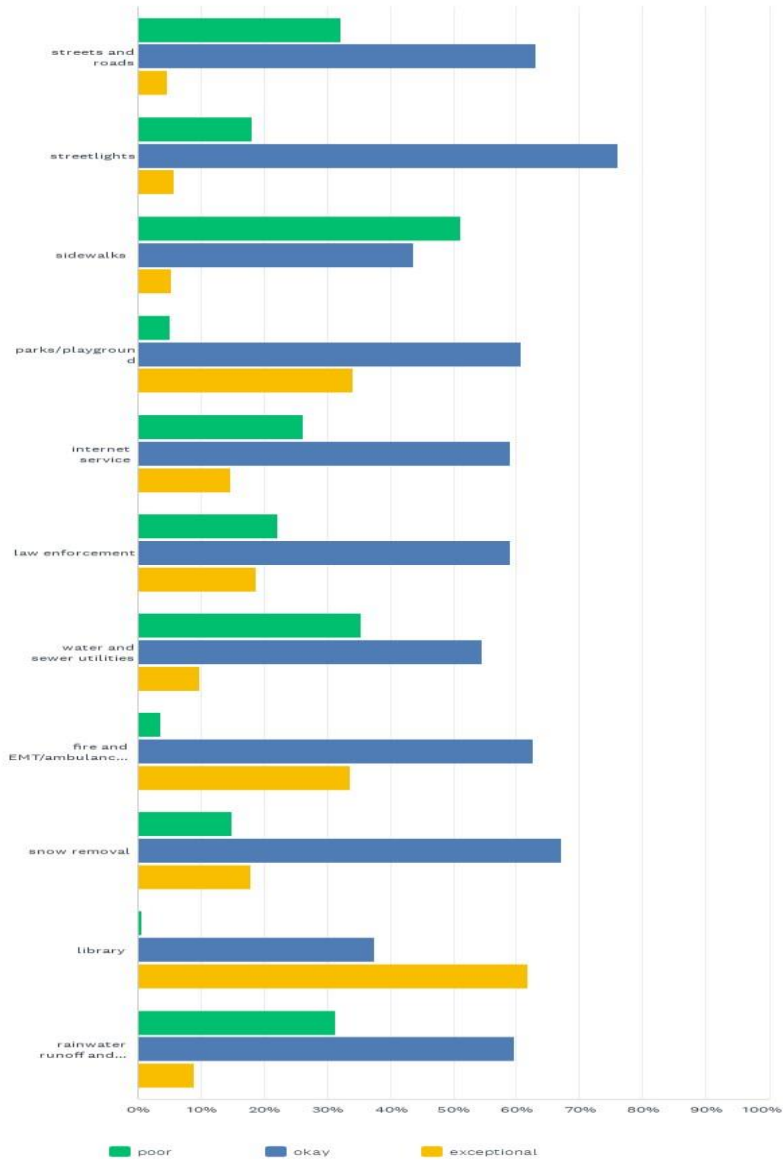
Q11 When considering Services the Town of Bolivar provides, please rate the following:



Answer Choices:

- town administrative office hours (M-F 7AM-4PM)
- responsiveness to concerns
- access to town records, other official documents and information
- building permit process
- ordinance and code enforcement
- website and general communications
- availability and rental process for town community center

Q12 Please rate current infrastructure and services



Answer Choices:

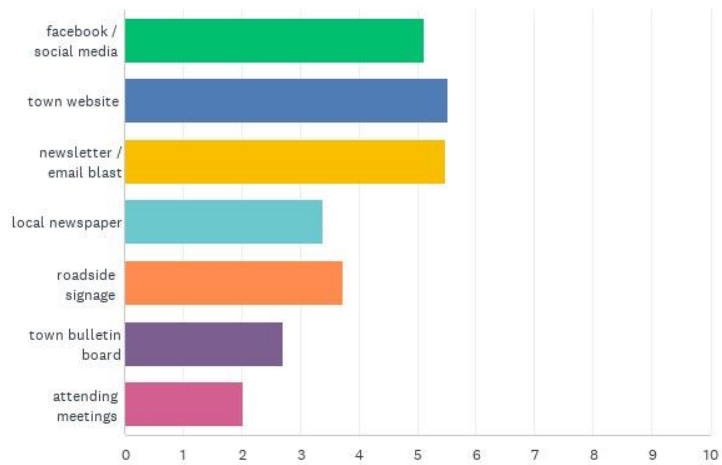
- streets and roads
- streetlights
- sidewalks
- parks/playground
- internet service
- law enforcement
- water and sewer utilities
- fire and EMT/ambulance service
- snow removal

- library
- rainwater runoff and stormwater management

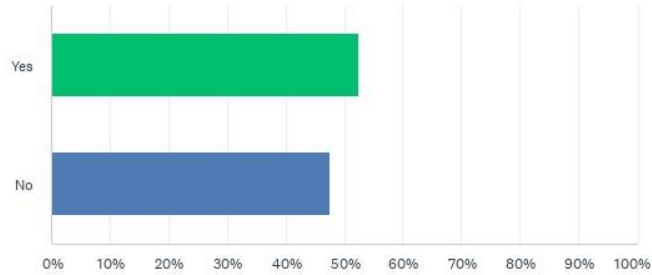
Q13 How would you rate the quality of life in Bolivar?



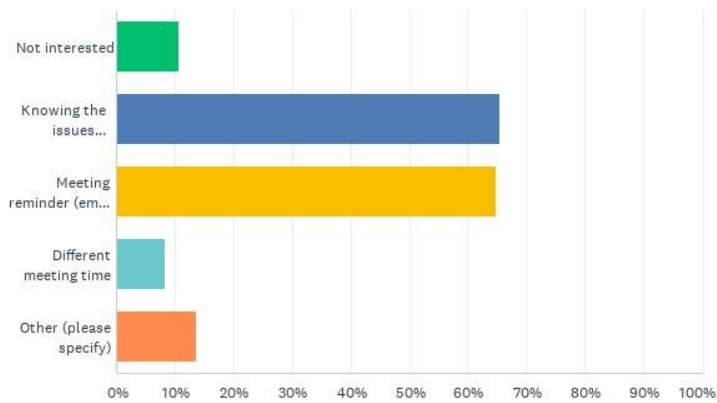
Q14 Please rank your preferences for how would you like to find out about what's happening in Bolivar.



Q15 Do you feel that you understand the town's ordinances and comprehensive plan and know where to find them?

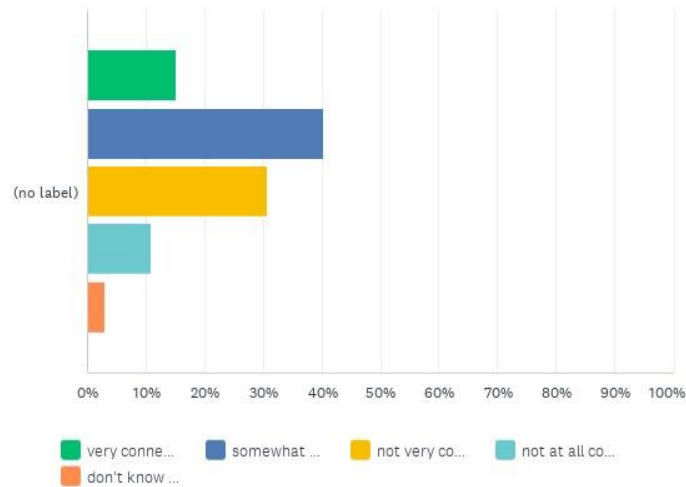


Q16 What would make you more likely to attend regular Town meetings? Please check any that apply.



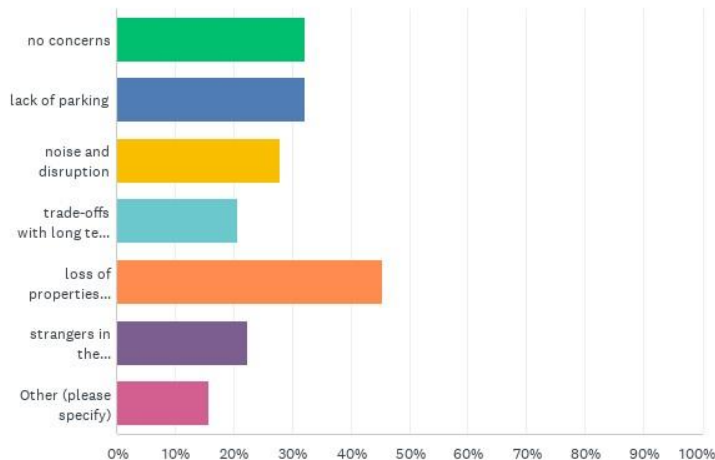
Answer Choices: *Not interested, knowing the issues beforehand, meeting reminder (email and/or sign), different meeting time, and other (please specify)*

Q17 How do you rate your overall connection to the Bolivar community (through volunteering, attending town meetings, participating in local events and recreation, talking to an elected official, etc.)?



Answer Choices: *very connected, somewhat connected, not very connected, not at all connected, and don't know/not sure*

Q18 What, if any, concerns do you have about short term rentals? (vacation rentals, tourist homes, pools, parking, storage, etc.)

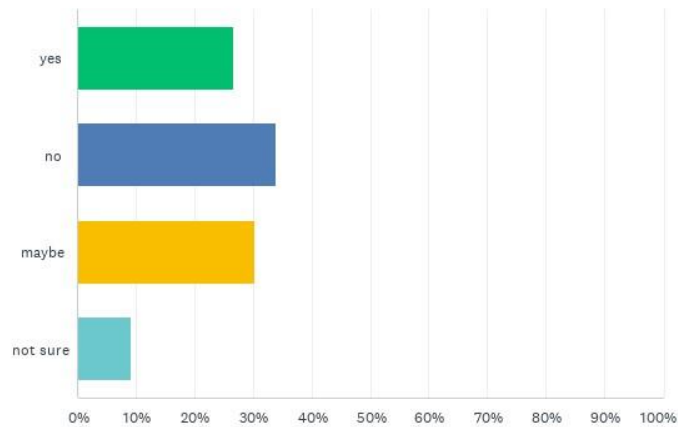


Answer Choices: *No concerns, lack of parking, noise and disruption, trade-offs with long term rental availability, loss of properties available for residential ownership to build community, strangers in the neighborhood, and other (please specify)*

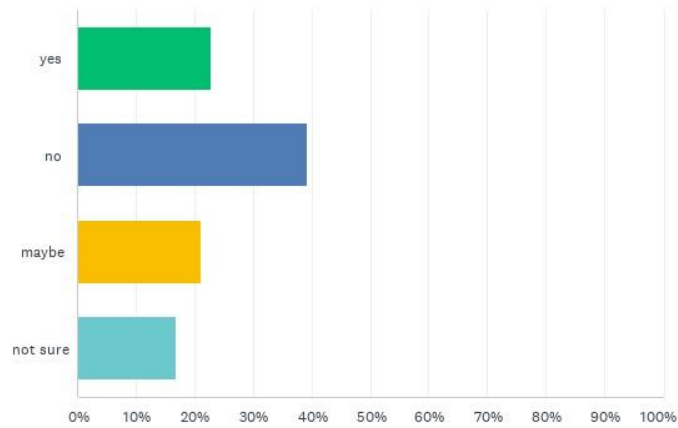
Q18 What, if any, concerns do you have about short term rentals? (vacation rentals, tourist homes, pools, parking, storage, etc.)

parking property owner housing short-term vacation rentals coming use
town making see need Bolivar take community
will residents time properties short term rentals
ordinances short-term rentals year business

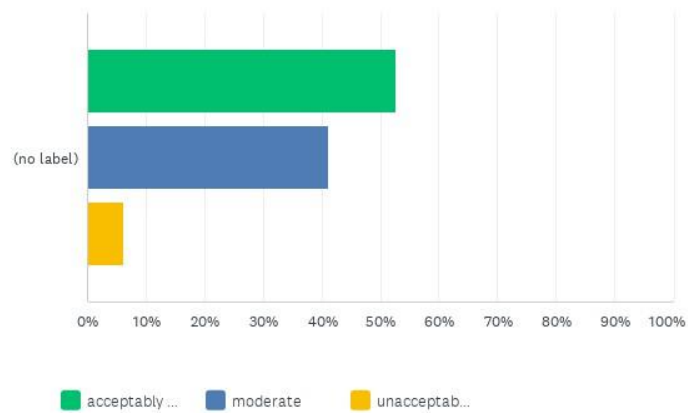
Q19 Should the town have ordinances to limit / restrict / control short term (less than 30 days) rentals of homes (vacation rentals, tourist homes, etc.)?



Q20 Should the town have ordinances to limit / restrict / control short term private rentals (less than 30 days) of assets other than homes (swimming pools, off-street parking, storage shed, private yards, etc.)?



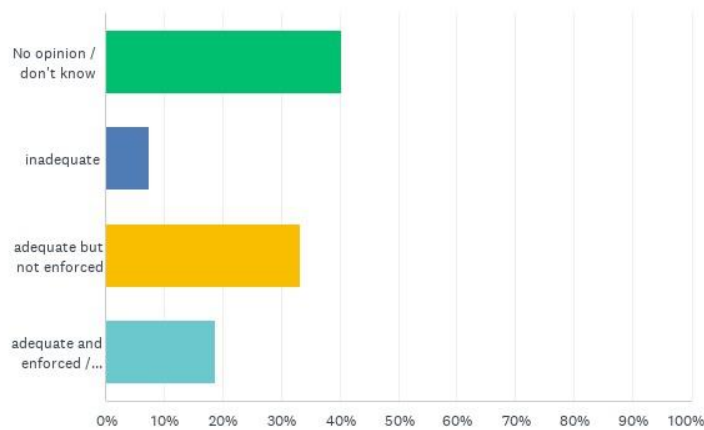
Q21 In general I find the noise levels in my neighborhood to be ...



Q21 In general I find the noise levels in my neighborhood to be ...

people Union Street vehicles random time Dogs barking street
 motorcycles traffic day neighbors trucks
 fireworks barking dogs car noise speeding rentals
 loud Cars trucks hours dogs

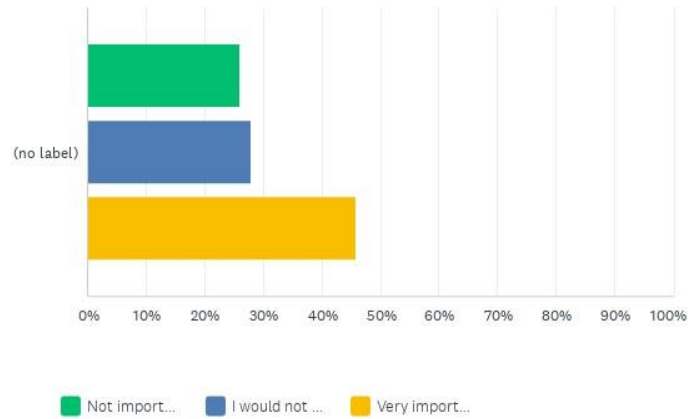
Q22 The following best describes my opinion regarding Bolivar's noise ordinances:



Q22 The following best describes my opinion regarding Bolivar's noise ordinances:

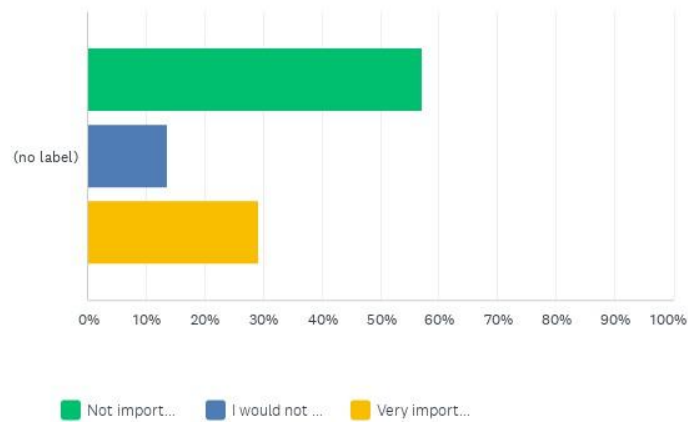
need hours people allowed issue enforcement ordinances Never
 fireworks town noise Bolivar enforced even times
 quiet Complaints control Community one dogs

Q23 Does the construction of overly large buildings and other structures in your neighborhood matter to you?



Answer Choices: *Not important. Restrictions Bolivar has in place are adequate., I would not want a neighbor to build a huge building next to me, but the town should not restrict., Very important. The town should limit the size of what can be built on private property.*

Q24 Should homes or primary buildings on lots in Bolivar be of a minimum size?

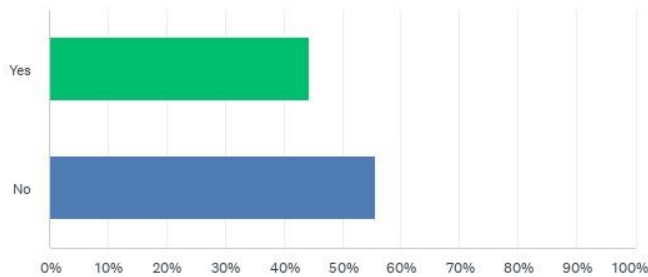


Answer Choices: *Not important. Bolivar should not restrict this., I would not want a "Tiny House" next to me, but the town should not restrict., Very important. The town should continue to require a minimum building size on private property.*

Q25 What would describe as the top 3 issues facing Bolivar in the next 5 years?

Roads adequate trees Enforcement town building need housing parking
 community water sewer Better Sidewalks property
 Water repair traffic Lack Infrastructure Loss
 services costs Police quality street storm water businesses
 costs maintenance homes maintained infrastructure Noise Roads
 water sewer town people parking school
 businesses Police sidewalks Keeping streets
 Traffic Water Lack trees Main Street Community need
 lines etc property better community maintenance Street new
 need Maintaining sidewalks water roads
 businesses parking services town Lack

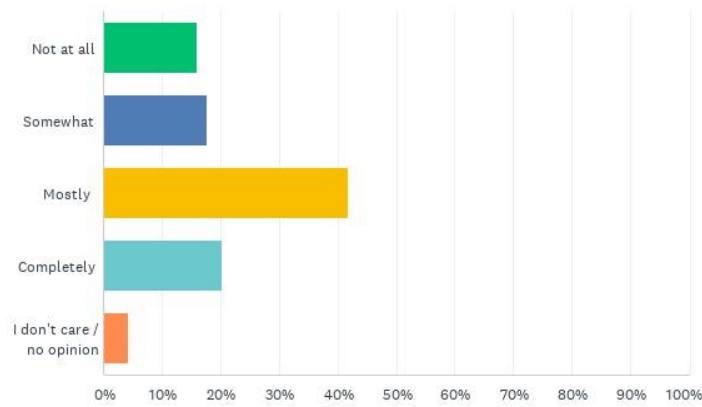
Q26 Do you think parking is a problem in Bolivar?



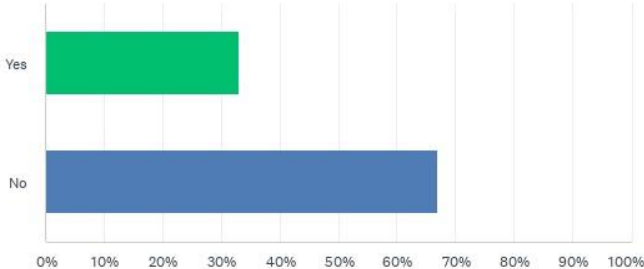
Q26 Do you think parking is a problem in Bolivar?

weekends walk cars along Washington Street HF union tourists paid parking
street everywhere Washington St line
parking makes Washington Street
Harpers Ferry town side street businesses perhaps area Lower Town
main street

Q27 Do you feel your neighbors maintain their property to an acceptable level?



Q28 Do you have any concerns affecting life in Bolivar regarding the redevelopment of the Hilltop hotel?



Q28 Do you have any concerns affecting life in Bolivar regarding the redevelopment of the Hilltop hotel?

need small hotel area concerns parking increase people
town Hilltop traffic roads Bolivar see
businesses local businesses opportunity drive will tourist

Q29 In the past, the town has supported Music in the Park, farmers market, holiday parades, community cleanup dumpsters, food drives. What new / additional Community Activities or events would you like to see the town support in the future?

park Parades Town trees Community great
Farmers market events Music Park
Fireworks Bolivar live music day

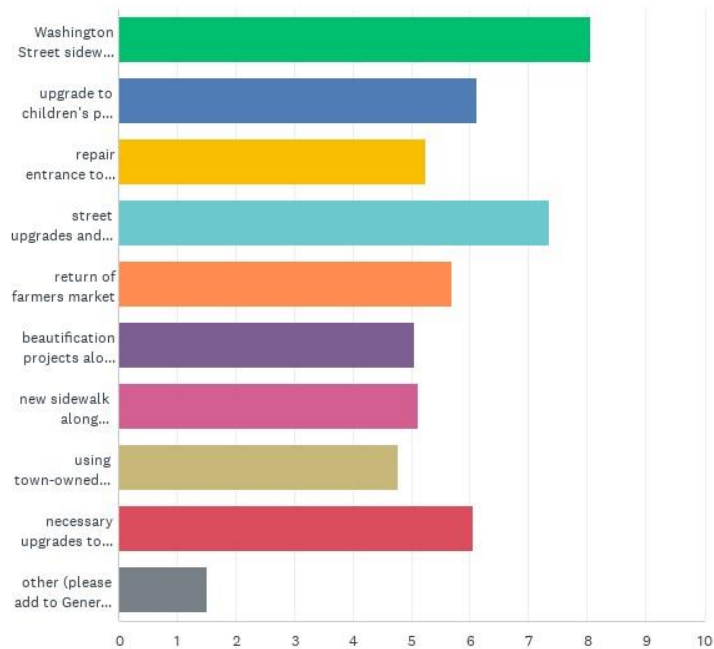
town activities Music park block party Park parades
Community cleanup Farmers Market local
events festival day teens Movies

volunteers Farmers Market days trees parades Bolivar events parked
community food Music Community cleanup local street

art nice town park events holiday Community maybe

Christmas events park activities Community bring safety day

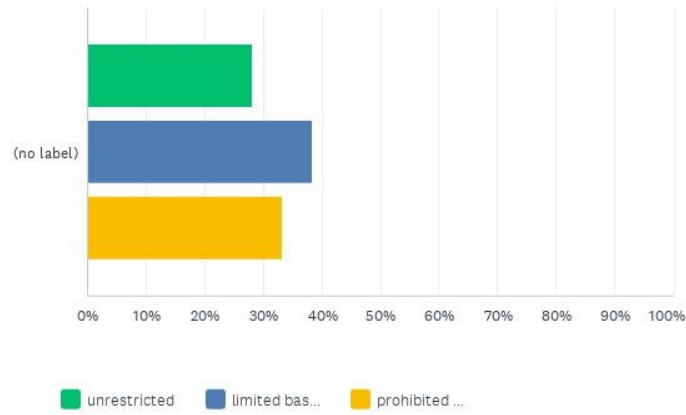
Q30 Through the federal ARPA legislation, Bolivar received \$350k. To date, approximately \$60k has been disbursed for projects such as Community Ministries shelter support, private business assistance (tree removal, outdoor seating, equipment acquisition), fire hall upgrades. Using these or additional funds that might become available, rank which projects you would like to see Bolivar undertake - with partners as appropriate:



Answer Choices:

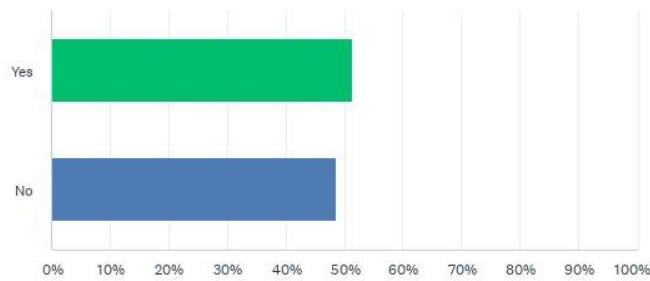
- *Washington Street sidewalk improvements / replacement*
- *upgrade to children's park equipment*
- *repair entrance to Bolivar Nature Park entrance off Primrose*
- *street upgrades and repairs (re-surfacing, storm water management, Old Furnace Road gully, etc.)*
- *return of farmers market*
- *beautification projects along Washington Street*
- *new sidewalk along Washington St. beyond Elm St. towards 340*
- *using town-owned "paper streets" and lots, build trail network, dog park, community garden, athletic field, community pool, etc.*
- *necessary upgrades to water utility*
- *other (please add to General Comments at end of survey)*

Q31 As a designated Trail Community, tent camping on private property should be ...

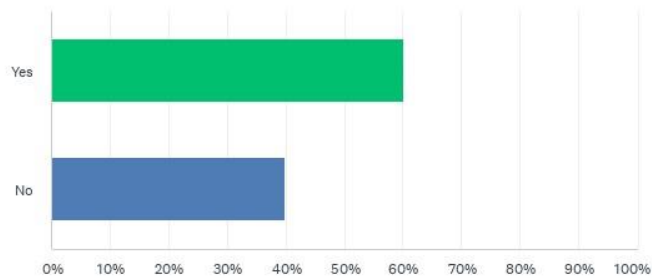


Answer Choices: *Unrestricted, limited based upon size of property, and prohibited except for children's play tents (per current ordinance's)*

Q32 As a designated Trail Community, would you like to see Bolivar offer a camping area for hikers/bikers on public property owned by the town, county, or state?



Q33 Should the town do more to encourage affordable housing?



Q34 Additional Comments:

services start trash structure etc public best responsibility want address often take even space
important tourist building lot idea related projects repairs concern beautiful great make
working us one safety also reasons new main keep flooding think neighborhoods
streets Police see event use area will run community safe
Bolivar allowing town considers need help property
place park Put trees benefit people hikers Thank Harpers Ferry live
citizens residents years maintain enforcement love serve look Maybe replace things
adding going infrastructure lights pay side yard funds continue house tents know survey
nice time encourage home beautification bad old maintenance equipment includes every