

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

Code of Virginia
 Title 15.2. Counties, Cities and Towns
 Chapter 22. Planning, Subdivision of Land and Zoning

§ 15.2-2223. Comprehensive plan to be prepared and adopted; scope and purpose.

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

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

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

B. 1. As part of the comprehensive plan, each locality shall develop a transportation plan that designates a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations that include the designation of new and expanded transportation facilities and that support the planned development of the territory covered by the plan and shall include, as appropriate, but not be limited to, roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, railways, bridges, waterways, airports, ports, and public transportation facilities. The plan shall recognize and differentiate among a hierarchy of roads such as expressways, arterials, and collectors. In developing the plan, the locality shall take into consideration how to align transportation infrastructure and facilities with affordable, accessible housing and community services that are located within the territory in order to facilitate community integration of the elderly and persons with disabilities. The Virginia Department of Transportation shall, upon request, provide localities with technical assistance in preparing such transportation plan.

2. The transportation plan shall include a map that shall show road and transportation improvements, including the cost estimates of such road and transportation improvements from the Virginia Department of Transportation, taking into account the current and future needs of residents in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.

3. The transportation plan, and any amendment thereto pursuant to § 15.2-2229, shall be consistent with the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Statewide Transportation Plan developed pursuant to § 33.2-353, the Six-Year Improvement Program adopted pursuant to subsection B of § 33.2-214, and the location of routes to be followed by roads comprising systems of state highways pursuant to subsection A of § 33.2-208. The locality shall consult with the Virginia Department of Transportation to assure such consistency is achieved. The transportation plan need reflect only those changes in the annual update of the Six-Year Improvement Program that are deemed to be significant new, expanded, or relocated roadways.

4. Prior to the adoption of the transportation plan or any amendment to the transportation plan, the locality shall submit such plan or amendment to the Department for review and comment. The Department shall conduct its review and provide written comments to the locality on the consistency of the transportation plan or any amendment to the provisions of subdivision 1. The Department shall provide such written comments to the locality within 90 days of receipt of the plan or amendment, or such other shorter period of time as may be otherwise agreed upon by the Department and the locality.

5. The locality shall submit a copy of the adopted transportation plan or any amendment to the transportation plan to the Department for informational purposes. If the Department determines that the transportation plan or amendment is not consistent with the provisions of subdivision 1, the Department shall notify the Commonwealth Transportation Board so that the Board may take appropriate action in accordance with subsection F of § 33.2-214.

6. If the adopted transportation plan designates corridors planned to be served by mass transit, as defined in § 33.2-100, a portion of its allocation from (i) the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority distribution specified in subdivision B 1 of § 33.2-2510, (ii) the commercial and industrial real property tax revenue specified in § 58.1-3221.3, and (iii) the secondary system road construction program, as described in Article 5 (§ 33.2-351 et seq.) of Chapter 3 of Title 33.2, may be used for the purpose of utility undergrounding in the planned corridor, if the locality matches 100 percent of the state allocation.

7. Each locality's amendments or updates to its transportation plan as required by subdivisions 2 through 5 shall be made on or before its ongoing scheduled date for updating its transportation plan.

C. The comprehensive plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the locality's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:

1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted, housing; business; industrial; agricultural; mineral resources; conservation; active and passive recreation; public service; flood plain and drainage; and other areas;

2. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, sports playing fields, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;

3. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;

4. The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable measures to provide for the continued availability, quality, and sustainability of groundwater and surface water;

5. A capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestal district maps, where applicable;

6. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;

7. The location of military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas; and

8. The designation of corridors or routes for electric transmission lines of 150 kilovolts or more.

D. The comprehensive plan shall include the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.

E. The comprehensive plan shall consider strategies to provide broadband infrastructure that is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses in the locality. To this end, local planning commissions may consult with and receive technical assistance from the Center for Innovative Technology, among other resources.

1975, c. 641, § 15.1-446.1; 1976, c. 650; 1977, c. 228; 1988, c. 268; 1989, c. 532; 1990, c. 19; 1993, cc. 116, 758; 1996, cc. 585, 600; 1997, c. 587; 2003, c. 811; 2004, cc. 691, 799; 2005, cc. 466, 699; 2006, cc. 527, 563, 564; 2007, c. 761; 2012, cc. 729, 733; 2013, cc. 561, 585, 646, 656; 2014, cc. 397, 443; 2018, cc. 420, 691, 796, 828.

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1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted, housing; business; industrial; agricultural; mineral resources; conservation; active and passive recreation; public service; flood plain and drainage; and other areas;
2. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, sports playing fields, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;
3. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;
4. The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable measures to provide for the continued availability, quality, and sustainability of groundwater and surface water;
5. A capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestal district maps, where applicable;
6. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;
7. The location of military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas; and
8. The designation of corridors or routes for electric transmission lines of 150 kilovolts or more.

D. The comprehensive plan shall include the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.

E. The comprehensive plan shall consider strategies to provide broadband infrastructure that is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents and businesses in the locality. To this end, local planning commissions may consult with and receive technical assistance from the Center for Innovative Technology, among other resources.

1975, c. 641, § 15.1-446.1; 1976, c. 650; 1977, c. 228; 1988, c. 268; 1989, c. 532; 1990, c. 19; 1993, cc. 116, 758; 1996, cc. 585, 600; 1997, c. 587; 2003, c. 811; 2004, cc. 691, 799; 2005, cc. 466, 699; 2006, cc. 527, 563, 564; 2007, c. 761; 2012, cc. 729, 733; 2013, cc. 561, 585, 646, 656; 2014, cc. 397, 443; 2018, cc. 420, 691, 796, 828.

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§ 15.2-2223.1. Comprehensive plan to include urban development areas.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Commercial" means property devoted to usual and customary business purposes for the sale of goods and services and includes, but is not limited to, retail operations, hotels, motels and offices. "Commercial" does not include residential dwelling units, including apartments and condominiums, or agricultural or forestal production, or manufacturing, processing, assembling, storing, warehousing, or distributing.

"Commission" means the Commission on Local Government.

"Developable acreage," solely for the purposes of calculating density within the urban development area, means land that is not included in (i) existing parks, rights-of-way of arterial and collector streets, railways, and public utilities and (ii) other existing public lands and facilities.

"Population growth" means the difference in population from the next-to-latest to the latest decennial census year, based on population reported by the United States Bureau of the Census. In computing its population growth, a locality may exclude the inmate population of any new or expanded correctional facility that opened within the time period between the two censuses.

"Urban development area" means an area designated by a locality that is (i) appropriate for higher density development due to its proximity to transportation facilities, the availability of a public or community water and sewer system, or a developed area and (ii) to the extent feasible, to be used for redevelopment or infill development.

B. Any locality may amend its comprehensive plan to incorporate one or more urban development areas.

1. Urban development areas are areas that may be appropriate for development at a density on the developable acreage of at least four single-family residences, six townhouses, or 12 apartments, condominium units, or cooperative units per acre, and an authorized floor area ratio of at least 0.4 per acre for commercial development, any proportional combination thereof, or any other combination or arrangement that is adopted by a locality in meeting the intent of this section.
2. The urban development areas designated by a locality may be sufficient to meet projected residential and commercial growth in the locality for an ensuing period of at least 10 but not more than 20 years, which may include phasing of development within the urban development areas. Where an urban development area in a county with the urban county executive form of government includes planned or existing rail transit, the planning horizon may be for an ensuing period of at least 10 but not more than 40 years. Future residential and commercial growth shall be based on official estimates of either the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service of the University of Virginia, the Virginia Employment Commission, the United States Bureau of the Census, or other official government projections required for federal transportation planning purposes.
3. The boundaries and size of each urban development area shall be reexamined and, if necessary, revised every five years in conjunction with the review of the comprehensive plan and in accordance with the most recent available population growth estimates and projections.
4. The boundaries of each urban development area shall be identified in the locality's comprehensive plan and shall be shown on future land use maps contained in such comprehensive plan.
5. Urban development areas, if designated, shall incorporate principles of traditional neighborhood design, which may include but need not be limited to (i) pedestrian-friendly road design, (ii) interconnection of new local streets

with existing local streets and roads, (iii) connectivity of road and pedestrian networks, (iv) preservation of natural areas, (v) mixed-use neighborhoods, including mixed housing types, with affordable housing to meet the projected family income distributions of future residential growth, (vi) reduction of front and side yard building setbacks, and (vii) reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections.

6. The comprehensive plan shall describe any financial and other incentives for development in the urban development areas.

7. A portion of one or more urban development areas may be designated as a receiving area for any transfer of development rights program established by the locality.

C. No locality that has amended its comprehensive plan in accordance with this section shall limit or prohibit development pursuant to existing zoning or shall refuse to consider any application for rezoning based solely on the fact that the property is located outside the urban development area.

D. Localities shall consult with adjacent localities, as well as the relevant planning district commission and metropolitan planning organization, in establishing the appropriate size and location of urban development areas to promote orderly and efficient development of their region.

E. Any county that amends its comprehensive plan pursuant to subsection B may designate one or more urban development areas in any incorporated town within such county, if the council of the town has also amended its comprehensive plan to designate the same areas as urban development areas with at least the same density designated by the county. However, if a town has established an urban development area within its corporate boundaries, the county within which the town is located shall not include the town's projected population and commercial growth when initially determining or reexamining the size and boundary of any other urban development area within the county.

F. To the extent possible, federal, state and local transportation, housing, water and sewer facility, economic development, and other public infrastructure funding for new and expanded facilities shall be directed to designated urban development areas or to such similar areas that accommodate growth in a manner consistent with this section.

2007, c. 896; 2009, c. 327; 2010, cc. 465, 528; 2011, c. 561; 2012, cc. 192, 518, 805, 836.

§ 15.2-2224. (Effective October 1, 2021) Surveys and studies to be made in preparation of plan; implementation of plan.

A. In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the local planning commission shall survey and study such matters as the following:

1. Use of land, preservation of agricultural and forestal land, production of food and fiber, characteristics and conditions of existing development, trends of growth or changes, natural resources, historic areas, groundwater and surface water availability, quality, and sustainability, geologic factors, population factors, employment, environmental and economic factors, existing public facilities, drainage, flood control and flood damage prevention measures, dam break inundation zones and potential impacts to downstream properties to the extent that information concerning such information exists and is available to the local planning authority, the transmission of electricity, broadband infrastructure, road improvements, and any estimated cost thereof, transportation facilities, transportation improvements, and any cost thereof, the need for affordable housing in both the locality and planning district within which it is situated, and any other matters relating to the subject matter and general purposes of the comprehensive plan.

However, if a locality chooses not to survey and study historic areas, then the locality shall include historic areas in the comprehensive plan, if such areas are identified and surveyed by the Department of Historic Resources. Furthermore, if a locality chooses not to survey and study mineral resources, then the locality shall include mineral resources in the comprehensive plan, if such areas are identified and surveyed by the Department of Energy. The requirement to study the production of food and fiber shall apply only to those plans adopted on or after January 1, 1981.

2. Probable future economic and population growth of the territory and requirements therefor.

B. The comprehensive plan shall recommend methods of implementation and shall include a current map of the area covered by the comprehensive plan. Unless otherwise required by this chapter, the methods of implementation may include but need not be limited to:

1. An official map;
2. A capital improvements program;
3. A subdivision ordinance;
4. A zoning ordinance and zoning district maps;
5. A mineral resource map;
6. A recreation and sports resource map; and
7. A map of dam break inundation zones.

Code 1950, § 15-964.1; 1962, c. 407, § 15.1-447; 1975, c. 641; 1977, c. 228; 1980, c. 322; 1981, c. 418; 1988, c. 438; 1990, c. 97; 1991, c. 280; 1993, cc. 758, 770; 1996, cc. 585, 600; 1997, c. 587; 2006, c. 564; 2007, c. 761; 2008, c. 491; 2018, cc. 420, 691; 2021, Sp. Sess. I, c. 532.

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§ 15.2-2225. Notice and hearing on plan; recommendation by local planning commission to governing body; posting of plan on website.

Prior to the recommendation of a comprehensive plan or any part thereof, the local planning commission shall (i) post the comprehensive plan or part thereof that is to be considered for recommendation on a website that is maintained by the commission or on any other website on which the commission generally posts information, and that is available to the public or that clearly describes how the public may access information regarding the plan or part thereof being considered for recommendation, (ii) give notice in accordance with § 15.2-2204, and (iii) hold a public hearing on the plan. After the public hearing, the commission may approve, amend and approve, or disapprove the plan. Upon approval, the commission shall by resolution recommend the plan, or part thereof, to the governing body and a copy shall be certified to the governing body. Any comprehensive plan or part thereof approved by the commission pursuant to this section shall be posted on a website that is maintained by the commission or on any other website on which the commission generally posts information, and that is available to the public or that clearly describes how the public may access information regarding the plan or part thereof approved by the commission and certified to the governing body. Inadvertent failure to post information on a website in accordance with this section shall not invalidate action taken by the local planning commission following notice and public hearing as required herein.

Code 1950, §§ 15-908, 15-921, 15-922, 15-964.2, 15-964.3; 1958, c. 389; 1962, c. 407, §§ 15.1-448, 15.1-449; 1968, c. 735; 1975, c. 641; 1976, c. 642; 1997, c. 587; 2009, c. 605.

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§ 15.2-2226. Adoption or disapproval of plan by governing body.

After certification of the plan or part thereof, the governing body shall post the comprehensive plan or part thereof certified by the local planning commission on a website that is maintained by the governing body or on any other website on which the governing body generally posts information, and that is available to the public or that clearly describes how the public may access information regarding the plan or part thereof being considered for adoption. After a public hearing with notice as required by § 15.2-2204, the governing body shall proceed to a consideration of the plan or part thereof and shall approve and adopt, amend and adopt, or disapprove the plan. In acting on the plan or part thereof, or any amendments to the plan, the governing body shall act within 90 days of the local planning commission's recommending resolution; however, if a comprehensive plan amendment is initiated by the locality for more than 25 parcels, the governing body shall act within 150 days of the local planning commission's recommending resolution. Any comprehensive plan or part thereof adopted by the governing body pursuant to this section shall be posted on a website that is maintained by the local governing body or on any other website on which the governing body generally posts information, and that is available to the public or that clearly describes how the public may access information regarding the plan or part thereof adopted by the local governing body. Inadvertent failure to post information on a website in accordance with this section shall not invalidate action taken by the governing body following notice and public hearing as required herein.

Code 1950, § 15-964.4; 1962, c. 407, § 15.1-450; 1975, c. 641; 1976, c. 642; 1997, c. 587; 2000, c. 893; 2009, c. 605; 2020, cc. 132, 760.

APPENDIX B

Recreational Routes in Highland County

Scenic Drives:

Nearly every road in Highland County could be described as a scenic drive with its rural character, scattered villages, rolling farmlands and mountain vistas. Scenic drives include:

Routes 678 and 614 – Roads through the Bullpasture and Cowpasture River Valleys south of McDowell, including the beautiful Bullpasture River Gorge.

Routes 642 and 640 – Roads through the Blue Grass Valley west of Monterey, one of the most scenic valleys in the country.

Route 607 – Winding, paved road through “Big Valley” located just east of the Jackson River Valley south of Monterey.

Route 617 – Road between McDowell and Doe hill runs along the eastern slope of Jack Mountain and parallels the Bullpasture Valley through an area known as “Seldom Seen”.

Route 644 – Known as Hardscrabble Road, north of Blue Grass. This road is well known for birding.

Route 600 – Follows the length of Back Creek Valley. This partially paved road borders National Forest in the westernmost valley of Highland County.

Route 642 – This gravel road crosses Middle Mountain into Laurel Fork and borders the National Forest.

Highland County Barn Quilt Trail – Discover over 50 unique wooden quilt blocks and their stories on Virginia’s first barn quilt trail. Brochure and map available at the Chamber of Commerce.

Staunton to Parkersburg Turnpike – Enjoy dozens of historic sites and beautiful scenery along the route from Staunton to Parkersburg. Brochure and map available at the Chamber of Commerce.

Historic Trails:

McDowell Battlefield Trail – Approximately 1-mile trail leading to the top of Sittlington Hill and the core of the McDowell Battlefield. Access from Route 250 at the Battlefield Park one mile from the top of Bullpasture Mountain or from the junction of Routes 250 and 678 in McDowell.

Confederate Breastworks Trail – 0.5-mile interpretive trail along the top of Shenandoah Mountain, connecting to the Shenandoah Mountain Trail in Augusta County.

Monterey Walking Trail – A self-guided tour (brochure available) through historic Monterey. Explore the history of Victorian homes, the Courthouse, early churches and an old-time General Store.

McDowell Walking Tour – A self-guided tour (brochure available) of historic McDowell detailing highlights of the Civil War battle that took place here in 1862.

Birding and Wildflower Trails:

These thematic trails were developed primarily as driving tours but could also be enjoyed by cyclists or on foot. Interpretive brochures are available.

Blue Grass Valley Trail – 13-mile loop from Monterey through the Blue Grass Valley and Hightown.

Bullpasture Valley Trail – 31-mile tour from McDowell through the Bullpasture and Cowpasture Valleys.

Bluebird Trail – From Monterey to the Bath County line on U.S. 220. The road is lined with birdhouses for bluebirds. Approximately 15 miles one way.

Monterey – The town of Monterey is a designated bird sanctuary. Bird feeders and nesting boxes abound throughout town.

Laurel Fork – 21 miles of gravel roads in a remote wooded area of Highland County featuring abundant wildflowers and wildlife.

Highland Wildlife Management Area – The gravel roads throughout this area are best suited to foot or horse traffic and four-wheel drive.

Big Valley – Approximately 16-mile route from Monterey to Mustoe through Big Valley and Bolar.

Hiking and Horseback Riding:

With large tracts of open space and thousands of National Forest and state-maintained lands, there are ample opportunities for hiking and enjoying nature.

Highland Wildlife Management Area – Comprises over 14,280 acres of upland forests with access to 20 miles of roads and trails, offering hiking, hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities. Managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Sounding Knob – The highest point in Highland County, at 4,390 feet, the site of a fire tower built in 1934, disassembled and removed in 2002, then restored and re-erected in 2017.

Laurel Fork – Over 28 miles of hiking trails, mostly on historic tram logging roads. Hunting, fishing and camping are permitted. Within parts of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, these hardwood forests contain an abundance of wildlife, including flying squirrel habitat. Key trails include:

Laurel Fork Trails – 6.5-mile trail runs along Laurel Fork, a well-known stream for anglers.

Back Run Trail – 2.9 miles trail located on historic logging tram with spectacular views of beaver ponds, open glades and unique vegetation.

Locust Spring Run Trail – 3.1-mile trail in a remote area of northern hardwoods ideal for viewing deer, wild turkey and native brook trout.

Bicycling and Motorcycling Routes:

While there are no designated bikeways in Highland County, many of the county's roads are suited to cyclists. Popular loops include:

Williamsville Loop – 21-mile loop on gravel and paved roads along Bullpasture and Cowpasture Rivers, including a 1.5-mile climb across Bullpasture Mountain.

Wallace Tract – 20-mile loop near Williamsville with views of the Bullpasture and Cowpasture Rivers.

Laurel Fork Trail – 18-mile loop on a combination of Forest Service roads and creek beds in the Laurel Fork Special Management Area, 30 miles northwest of Monterey.

Sweet Rides Motorcycle Guide – Offering several loops and amenity information. Brochure and map available at the Chamber of Commerce.