



Introduction

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Purpose

The Comprehensive Plan is the County's official policy guide for future development related decisions. The Plan is long-range in nature, and provides a picture of how the community wishes to develop over the next 15 to 20 years.

As a policy document, the Plan provides a framework for the County's residents and decision makers to conceptualize how the County should look and function. Within each chapter of the Plan, there are implementation strategies identified. All or some portion of the strategies may be implemented to accomplish the goals and objectives for any particular topic addressed in the Plan. The major purposes of the Comprehensive Plan are:

- Provide a guide for the numerous public and private decisions that will create the future County.
- Promote the interests of the community as a whole.
- Enhance, describe, and promote the County's physical environment.
- Develop a coordinated, well-planned system of public services.
- Evaluate short-term actions against long-term goals.
- Recognize the natural resources, historical, and architectural significance of Warren County and the surrounding area so that they can be more effectively preserved, protected, and integrated into an orderly pattern of development.
- Fulfill the legal requirement of Chapter 11, Title 15.1 of the Code of Virginia.

The overall goal of the comprehensive plan is to: **Maintain and enhance the quality and character of Warren County's natural and man-made environment by promoting the efficient use and conservation of the County's land and natural resources in order to effectively meet the social and economic needs of present and future citizens.**

Plan Organization

The Plan is broken down into several chapters which cover a broad range of topics. Many of the topics in any particular chapter may be tied into other topics or referenced in other chapters. The chapters cover the following topics: History, Growth Trends, Natural Resources/Environmental, Growth Management and Land Use, Community Facilities, Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Implementation. Each of these chapters have the following sections: Introduction, Background, Goals and Objectives, Implementation strategies, and a Summary. Additionally each chapter may be further divided into sections on selected topics.

Planning Process

This update of the 2005 Plan began in late 2009 with a citizen survey. The results from this survey were tabulated, analyzed and presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in February 2010. The Warren County Planning Commission has discussed the update at nine

meetings, including reviewing each chapter and updating the goals, objectives, maps, and other information as necessary. Planning Staff re-formatted the Plan into a Microsoft Publisher format, re-designed the format of the maps, and added pictures of the community throughout the Plan. The County was required by the Code of Virginia to designate one or more Urban Development Areas in their Comprehensive Plan by July 1, 2011. The County worked with the Town of Front Royal to designate these areas in the Town of Front Royal limits. Both the Town and the County approved amendments to their Comprehensive Plans to designate these Urban Development Areas prior to July 1, 2011. Separate plans have been completed since the last Comprehensive Plan update and were referenced in this update. These plans include: the Government Facilities Plan (2007), Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (2006), Telecommunications Plan (2006), Broadband Plan (under development), Hazard Mitigation Plan (2007), Rockland Park Plan (2009), Water Supply Plan (2011), USGS Groundwater Study (2010), Rt. 340/522 Multi-model Corridor Study (2010), Cedarville Karst Study (2006), Airport Layout Plan (2009), Springsted Fire and Rescue Study (2009), and the Royal Shenandoah Greenway Plan (2009).

Maps Associated with the Comprehensive Plan

The maps associated with the Warren County Comprehensive Plan, are general in nature. These maps show the approximate areas of the features illustrated on the map(s). These maps should not be used to determine the exact areas associated with any particular item illustrated upon them.

Implementation

In each chapter there are many implementation options identified. The adoption of this plan does not require that the County immediately proceed to implement each of the recommendations. In Chapter 8 there is an implementation schedule. This schedule prioritizes the suggested recommendations. However, since the County is an ever changing community, the schedule may be altered to meet the needs of the County during the planning period.

Past Comprehensive Planning Efforts

The Warren County Planning Commission was established in 1968. Adoption of the first Comprehensive Plan occurred in 1975. The Plan has been updated in 1984, 1989, 1997, and 2005.

Warren County adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1973. Its first subdivision ordinance was adopted in 1981. Since initial adoptions of these development ordinances, there have been many subsequent amendments. The zoning ordinance was completely revised in 1992.

A full-time Planning-Zoning Administrator was first appointed for Warren County in 1984. In 1994, the Planning-Zoning Administrator position was split to form two full-time positions: Zoning Administrator and Planning Director. Separating these functions was necessary due to the increasing development of the County. The Planning Department now has five employees and is under the County Administrator's direction. There is a separate Building Inspections Department which administers the Virginia State Uniform Building Code and the County's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance. The Building Department has six full-time employees and three part-time employees.

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan process started in early 1994. The planning process was organized as a bottom-up or citizen driven process. Two community surveys were conducted with the results from the surveys being tabulated and analyzed. There were 34 citizens who volunteered to participate on the Citizen Advisory Committee. This committee subdivided into subcommittees, each with a separate topic to address. These subcommittees wrote the majority of this plan. County staff provided technical support as well as the staff of the Loud Fairfax Planning District Commission. A vast array of citizens, with varying backgrounds were involved in this planning effort. Additionally, many community groups and organizations were involved or offered comments as to the content of the Plan.

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan process started in July 2002 with a citizen survey. The results from this survey were tabulated and analyzed. The Warren County Planning Commission met on a monthly basis to review each chapter and update the goals, objectives, and other information as necessary. The Board of Supervisors adopted the updated Plan on March 15, 2005.