

PULASKI
C O U N T Y
C O M P R E H E N S I V E P L A N 2 0 3 0



AWAITING YOU

*Adopted by : Pulaski County Board of Supervisors
Date: December 16, 2019*

Your voice. Your plan.

PULASKI COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



AWAITING YOU

Acknowledgements

The Comprehensive Plan 2030 was prepared under the guidance of the Pulaski County Planning Commission with the participation of hundreds of residents and community partners who completed surveys, attended Planning Commission meetings, focus group meetings, and open houses, and shared their preferences, concerns, ideas, direction and vision for the future of Pulaski County. These contributions are greatly appreciated.

We are thankful to Pulaski County staff who provided valuable insights and contributed information for the Plan.

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Special Thanks

Mr. Jon Wyatt for the many photographs that were
contributed for this plan

Mr. Jay Turner for sharing his historic photograph collection
from photographers David C. Kent, A.E. W. Miller and Theda's
Studio

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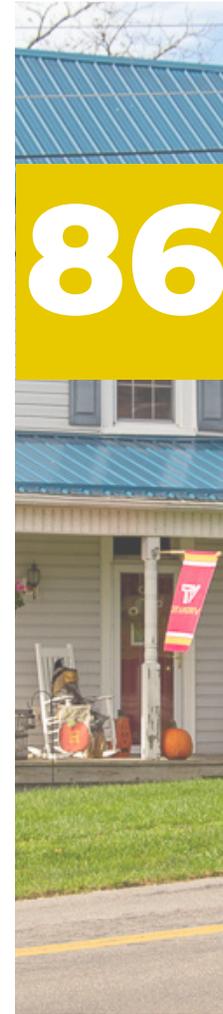
Staff of Snowville Elementary

Ms. Debbie Garner and Ms. Kim Fox of The Draper Village

Ms. Carol Smith and Ms. Nancy Burchett- Historical Timeline

Focus Group Participants

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Land Use	Transportation	Recreation & Tourism	Housing	Economic Development	Community Facilities & Public Services	Infrastructure
 <p data-bbox="71 651 289 862">06</p> <ul data-bbox="71 862 289 1502" style="list-style-type: none"> History Guiding Principles Planning Process Community Engagement Community Survey Public Meetings 	 <p data-bbox="310 651 533 862">24</p>	 <p data-bbox="554 651 777 862">47</p>	 <p data-bbox="798 651 1020 862">71</p>	 <p data-bbox="1041 651 1264 862">86</p>	 <p data-bbox="1285 651 1507 862">99</p>	 <p data-bbox="1528 651 1751 862">116</p>	 <p data-bbox="1772 651 1995 862">138</p>

INTRODUCTION

The Pulaski County Comprehensive Plan 2030 is a long-range planning document. It establishes a platform for future programs, prioritizes county initiatives, and creates a pathway for achieving a common vision. Carefully drafted from local values, community input and a desire to accommodate projected future needs, the plan is designed to guide Pulaski County into the future.

The Comprehensive Plan originates from Chapter 22 of the Virginia Code. This statewide policy mandates that every local government in Virginia prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan. The last comprehensive plan was adopted in 2009.

Code of Virginia § 15.5-2223 directs the local planning commission “to prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the county”. Per the code, the commission’s role includes “careful and comprehensive surveys and studies such as: existing conditions, trends of growth, and the responsibilities of the County for the probable future”. As you read the plan you will notice that critical data and statistics are provided in tables, charts and maps, and photos illustrate the County. There are seven (7) chapters, which are referenced as elements. The purpose of these chapters is two-fold, first to illustrate current conditions and second to provide goals and objectives to guide future policy.

The Appendix provides additional support documents for those who choose to explore these topics further. The Appendix will be amended each year and the entire comprehensive plan will undergo a five-year review and update in accordance with Code of Virginia requirements and to ensure that the plan stays relevant to the community.

Land Use

Transportation

Recreation & Tourism

Housing

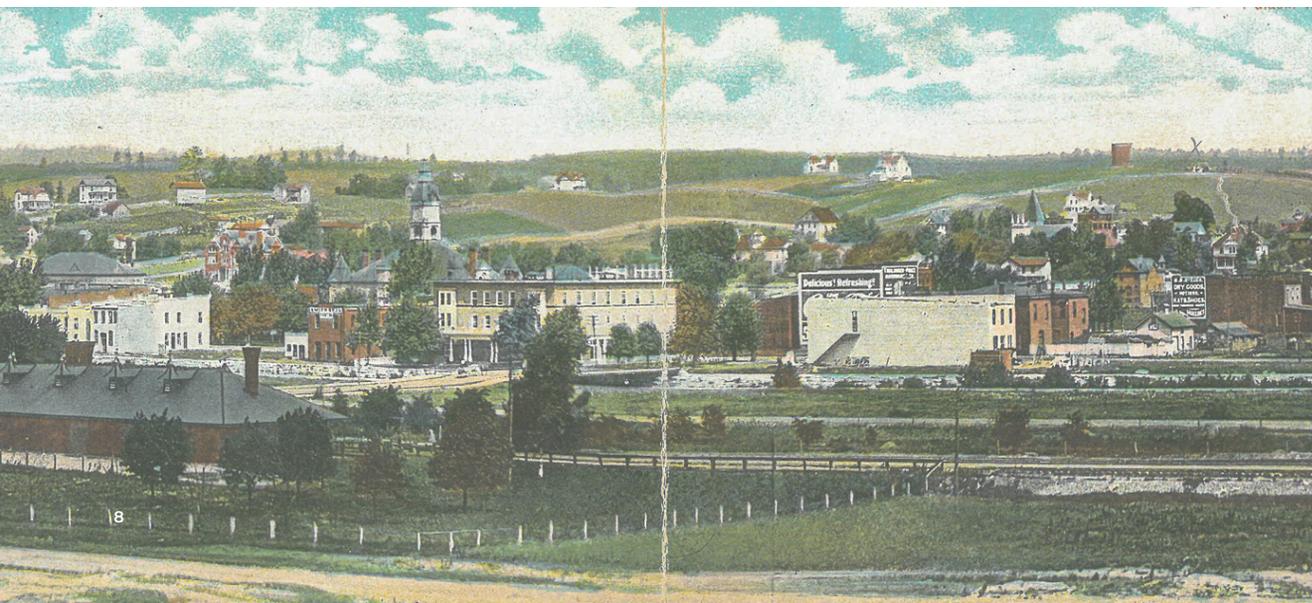
Economic Development

Community Facilities & Public Services

Infrastructure

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HISTORY



KEY DATES

1700 - 1800

Early 1700's

New settlers and American Indians travel through Pulaski County using "The Great Warpath Trail".

1745

Council of Colonial Virginia granted 100,000 acres along the Wood's (New) River and westward to the Wood's River Company. Land was purchased by early settlers.

1762

Colonial Government licensed the first Ferry across the New River - Ingles Ferry. Operates for 186 years.

1774

McCorkle's Store located in New Dublin, a multi-purpose general store served travelers, settlers, and soldiers.

1779

Pepper's Ferry (same site as the 114 Bridge) and Christian's Ferry at Dunkard Bottom began a ferry operation across the New River.

1799

Merchants licenses granted to Allen and Reed stores at New Dublin, Cloyd Store at Springfield Plantation and John Ingles Store at Ingles Ferry.

KEY DATES

1800 - 1900

1810

Adam Hance designs Newbern town from his 1400-acre plantation. Newbern location chosen due to its location halfway between Christiansburg and Wytheville.

1833

Asiel Snow settles with family on Little River. Named in his honor, Snowville becomes a manufacturing center with mills, tannery, shoe stores and carpenters.

1839

County of Pulaski officially formed, nearly 100 years after settlers arrived here. County is named after Count Casimir Pulaski, a cavalry chief in Washington's Army.

1855

Dublin Town is formed at location of Central Depot also called Newbern Depot. Town of Dublin was incorporated in 1871.

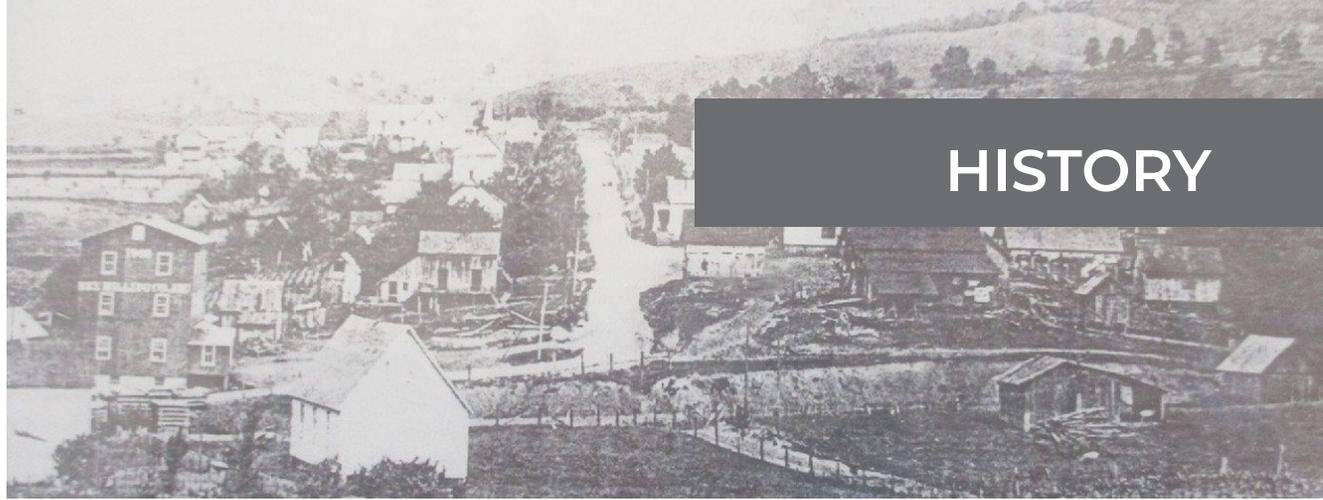
1864

Battle at Cloyd's Mountain where 10,000 Union and Confederate soldiers battled.

1886

Pulaski City incorporated as a town, at location formerly known as Martin's Tank.

HISTORY



HISTORY



KEY DATES

1900 - 2000

1900

Towes Ferry Bridge across New River completed.

1915

First hospital on East Main Street, Pulaski, largely funded by Allied Chemical Company

1928

Virginia Maid Hosiery Mills begin operation, Wallner Silk Hosiery (1936), Jefferson Mills (1937), along with Acme Hosiery Dye Works (1939) establishes Pulaski as a premiere textile town.

1935

Calfee Park opens for its first baseball game. Built with WPA works during the Great Depression.

1939

Claytor Lake and Hydro-electric dam built on New River creating 100 miles of lake shoreline.

1960

Gateway Dam, 50' tall, completed for Pulaski Water supply. Gateway Park opens.

1965

Interstate 81 completed through Pulaski County. 18 miles of interstate, 21 miles of service road.

1974

White Motor Company established near Dublin. Becomes Volvo in 1981.

1987

New River Trail State Park established. Recreation trail on old rail line, Pulaski to Galax and Fries.

KEY DATES

2000 - TODAY

2000

Evelyn Alexander donates 87 acres for Randolph Park. Park opens for all to enjoy in 2001.

2006

James Hardie plant opens near Wurno.

2007

Three Draper Village begin with purchase of site and restoration of the Draper Mercantile.

2008

Fire destroys historic train depot in Pulaski. Rebuilt by the Town.

2009

Pulaski Theatre reopens after successfully renovating the century old theatre on Main St.

2010

Phoenix Packaging announces new plant. 240 new jobs.

2011

Two tornados strike, first in Mt. Olivet / Town of Pulaski and next in Draper. 267 homes damaged.



Guiding Principles

In 2019 the Board of Supervisors developed vision statements and principles to guide their work plan. These vision statements served as a foundation basis for the plan.

- » *To grow a younger and more diverse population of 40,000 citizens by 2030 (40 by 30)*
- » *To be further defined as Southwestern Virginia's Center for International Business and the capital of Advanced Manufacturing*
- » *To see infrastructure built out that facilitates investments within development corridors*
- » *To be more closely partnered with our higher education institutions and be considered an extension of their communities and a partner in opportunity*
- » *To enable a diverse and vibrant local economy that naturally and progressively supports the current and future revenue needs of the County without having to resort to increases in tax levies*
- » *To experience a positive growth in our public-school population*
- » *To become the preeminent location for all bat-ball sports in Southwestern Virginia*
- » *To be a place that attracts and retains distinct talent that desires to contribute culturally and civically of their time, energy and emotions*
- » *To host a full array of housing selections to include modern walkable sub-communities*
- » *To see our Towns progress and develop to their full potential*
- » *To become the home of green energy producers that attracts data and information technology projects*
- » *To be home to next-level commercial centers and retail businesses that provides balance within the business community and lends a variety of commerce and employment offerings*

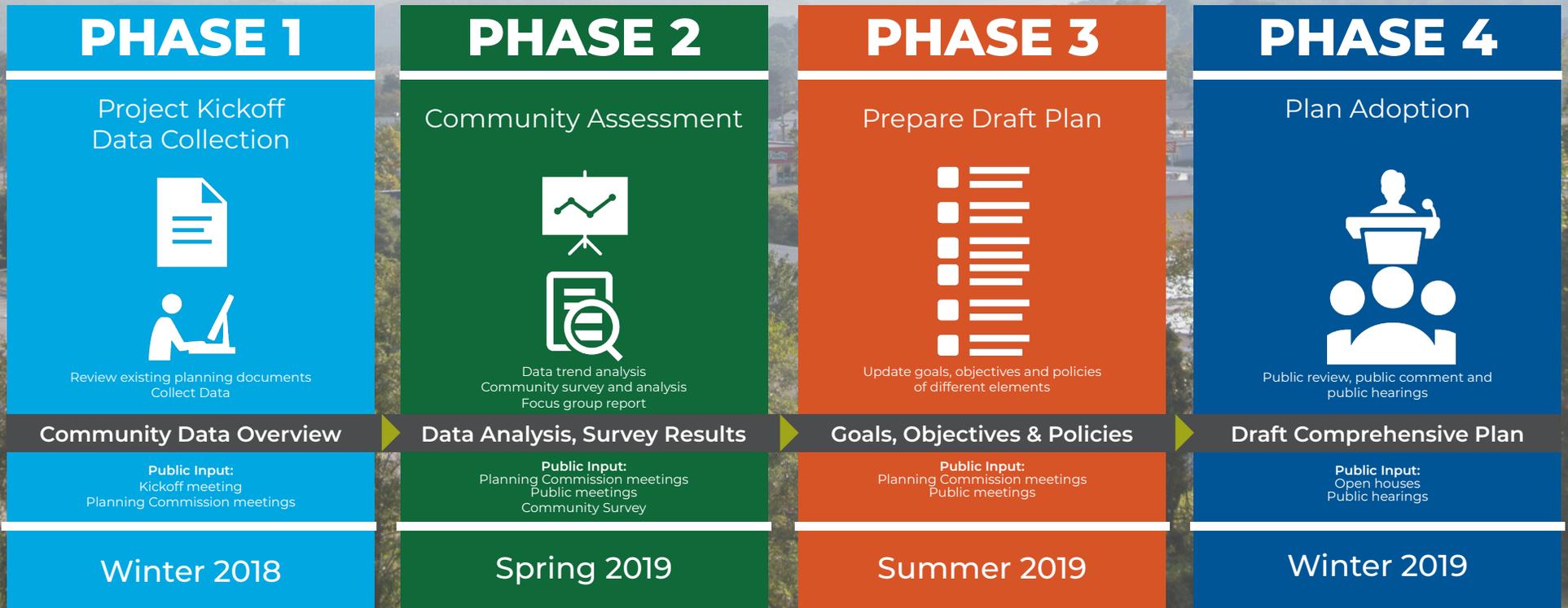
Guiding Principles

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- » *To invest in optimizing to the fullest our natural, outdoor and sports recreation assets that makes us a premier tourism destination and an event venue magnet*
- » *To boast a local economy conducive for our citizens to enjoy the opportunity for success, happiness and financial prosperity*
- » *To enjoy a universally high community morale through transparency and communication where trust, respect and appreciation of leadership are tenets shared by our citizens*
- » *To be a community that raises, invests in and equips our next generations of leaders*
- » *To be the new hot bed of entrepreneurial activity and diverse small business growth*
- » *To be a community that raises and praises volunteers and instills a sincere heart for community service*
- » *To have a comprehensive multi-level workforce development continuum in place that satisfies the needs of all our employers*
- » *To enjoy mutually respectful and rewarding relationships with all our county and community partners that are centered firstly around advancing our common goals*
- » *To ultimately be a paragon in the region for local government leadership, economic development and customer service*
- » *To maintain the heritage, character and traditions of Pulaski County and who we are*
- » *To take the County, its assets and all its offerings to the next level...*

Planning Process

Pulaski County's Comprehensive Plan was developed under the leadership of the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors. The Planning & Zoning Department facilitated the process and the plan was designed and drafted by the New River Valley Regional Commission. The voices of many citizens are reflected. Valuable input was received by community survey, focus group meetings, public meetings and open houses. Subject experts, department heads, community leaders, elected officials, local organizations and various government agencies contributed to the development of the plan.



Community Engagement

The Comprehensive Plan update involved four pillars of public engagement. This included facilitated focus group meetings held early in the process, a community survey which captured input from the citizens, public meetings held in four (4) locations across the county prior to plan adoption, and the required public hearings held for both the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The public input which was captured throughout the process informed and shaped the Pulaski County Comprehensive Plan.

Focus Group Meetings

In February 2019, Pulaski County Planning staff coordinated a series of focus group meetings relating to the subjects of transportation, housing, and economic development. Each meeting was facilitated by senior planning staff from the New River Valley Regional Commission and the purpose of the meetings was to capture key input from subject-area experts, county departments/offices and regional partners. The meetings provided an opportunity to review the previous comprehensive plan and to discuss new areas of concern around these topics.



Community Engagement

Transportation Focus Group Meeting Key Takeaways

- Capitalize on land development adjacent to rail infrastructure
- Evaluate wayfinding signage
- Increase coordination with neighboring towns
- Maximize funding potential for new projects
- Increase multimodal options
- Support a robust transportation network to support a competitive economy
- Connectivity and access to link people to job centers
- Increase opportunities for people and businesses
- Improve safety and support healthy lifestyles
- Maintain existing infrastructure
- Ensure consistency with regional and state-wide plans
- Coordinate with towns and neighboring jurisdictions

Transportation Focus Group Meeting Participants

- Representatives from the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors
- Planning Commission representative
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- County Sheriff's Office
- County Engineering Department
- County Planning Department
- County Emergency Services Department
- Pulaski Town staff
- Dublin Town staff
- Local engineering firms
- NRV Metropolitan Planning Organization
- NRV Regional Commission
- Citizens from Pulaski County

Community Engagement

Economic Development Focus Group Meeting

Key Takeaways

- Foster entrepreneurs and innovation
- Support existing businesses and industry
- Attract and recruit new business and industry
- Maintain and promote diverse economic sectors to provide economic resiliency
- Promote renewable energy investments and attract related industry/business
- Preservation of agricultural land and support the agricultural sector
- Build on existing assets and foster an attractive location for new business/new homes
- Improve housing stock
- Focus growth in those areas with infrastructure/public water and sewer
- Promote mixed-use developments
- Improve access to child care and youth services to accommodate workforce needs
- Promote tourism and cultural assets to support the growth of this economic sector

Economic Development Focus Group Meeting

Participants

- Staff from Regional Workforce Development Board
- Pulaski On Main
- Pulaski Town staff
- Pulaski County Administration
- Representative from Pulaski County Board of Supervisors
- County Planning Department
- County Economic Development department
- Local Engineering Firms
- Planning Commission Representative
- County Building Department
- Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce staff
- Dublin Town staff
- Representative from NRV Commerce Park
- NRV Regional Commission
- Representatives from private real estate developers
- Representative from private consulting firm
- Pulaski County E.D.A. Representative

Community Engagement

Housing Focus Group Meeting *Key Takeaways*

- Address housing stock between \$200,000 and \$300,000 and high-end housing availability
- Diversify housing choices
- Align residential uses with public water, sewer, and broadband availability
- Need availability of one to two-bedroom rental units
- Address aging in place and needs of elderly
- Partner and support organizations that are working to reduce homelessness
- Provide access to crucial healthcare
- Preserve historical character of neighborhoods
- Maintain affordable housing in close proximity to public transportation amenities and schools
- Support for the Housing Resource Guide – Housing Resource Coordinator/Specialist
- Promote rehabilitation with incentives
- Build walkable neighborhoods
- Assist with home weatherization and remodel efforts
- Ensure adequate trades people to address needs of aging buildings.

Housing Focus Group Meeting *Participants*

- Representatives from regional housing organizations
- County Building Department
- NRV Regional Commission
- Regional non-profit community agencies
- Representatives from private developer and real estate professionals
- County Planning Department
- Pulaski Town staff
- Representatives from Pulaski County Board of Supervisors
- Pulaski County Administration

Community Survey

The County conducted a community survey as part of the comprehensive plan update process. The survey was available online and it was available in printed copy at the public libraries, beginning on February 22, 2019 and closing on April 20, 2019. A total of 737 online responses and 131 paper submissions were received.

Over 50% of those who took the survey were aged 25 to 54 years old. Over 65% of survey respondents have lived in Pulaski County for more than 20 years.

When asked about what types of land use development the County should encourage, nearly 60% of responses indicated a need for neighborhood commercial. Neighborhood commercial development is described as smaller scale and is intended to serve the people who live in certain communities. Examples of neighborhood developments include: grocery stores, cafes, offices, and bed and breakfast/boutique lodging. According to those who took the survey, heavy industrial site development received the least amount of interest, with less than 13% of responses in favor of supporting this type of new development.

With regards to housing, more than 50% of the community feels there is a need for additional single-family homes that are detached and/or single-family homes with accessibility features that promote aging in-place. Additional townhomes, apartments, and condominiums are the least desired, with less than 25% of survey respondents supporting new attached and/or multi-family housing units.

Over 60% of those who took the survey feel that the County should prepare plans to protect or improve special historic, natural, or cultural spaces. Citizens provided ideas about specific areas such as: the downtown areas of Pulaski and Dublin, Draper Village, Gatewood Park, community of Newbern, forest and farm land, and Draper Mountain, just to name a few.

Top Five Most Important Issues for Pulaski County are:

- 1. Employment opportunities*
- 2. High quality education*
- 3. Parks and outdoor recreation*
- 4. Public infrastructure (includes water, sewer, transportation, and broadband)*
- 5. Public services (includes police, fire, social services, and public health)*

Around 70% of those taking the survey felt that congestion, lack of sidewalks or bike paths, and access to public transit were not problems for Pulaski County. However, many open-ended responses indicated a need for more transportation options for the elderly, sick, and disabled. Many suggested scaling down the larger bus system to offer a County taxi service that would be available 24 hours a day. The top three roadway concerns included: 1) Route 11 (288 votes), 2) Route 100 (131 votes), and Interstate 81 (102 votes).

The top three recreational resources that survey respondents supported for developing and/or enhancing include: 1) indoor sports/wellness facility (65%), 2) lake/river access (51%), and 3) hiking and mountain biking trails (42%). The recreational resources with the least interest included: 1) tennis courts (11%), 2) soccer fields (16%), and baseball/softball fields (20%). The areas with the least interest may also reflect amenities types that have existing capacity.

When asked to rank the types of infrastructure residents would like to see more of in the County, survey respondents indicated the following: 1) high-speed internet, 2) public water, 3) cellular coverage, 4) public sewer, and 5) transportation. In fact, high-speed internet scored nearly twice as many points as transportation after applying weighted criteria.

Community Survey Quotes

“I feel that existing apartments are unsafe and lower-end. We need more affordable housing for young professionals that are clean, pet-friendly, include fitness accommodations, and no income-based option.”

“There is a child-care desert. Young families cannot move (to Pulaski County) if they don’t have a support network to watch their kids.”

“We need options for high-speed internet, more unique restaurants, year-long recreation, and places to shop.”

“We have some really great resources in the County. They just need to be refreshed and rejuvenated.”

“Entrances to our towns should be clear of potholes, and our downtown streets should be kept up.”

Community Survey Quotes

“Many turns and traffic signals are not designed to accommodate truck traffic, even when there is an extremely high volume. Roads, entrances, and exits should accommodate large trucks.”

“We should promote available jobs and recreational activities to educated people. Capitalize on proximity to universities and trendy franchises (stores younger people frequent).”

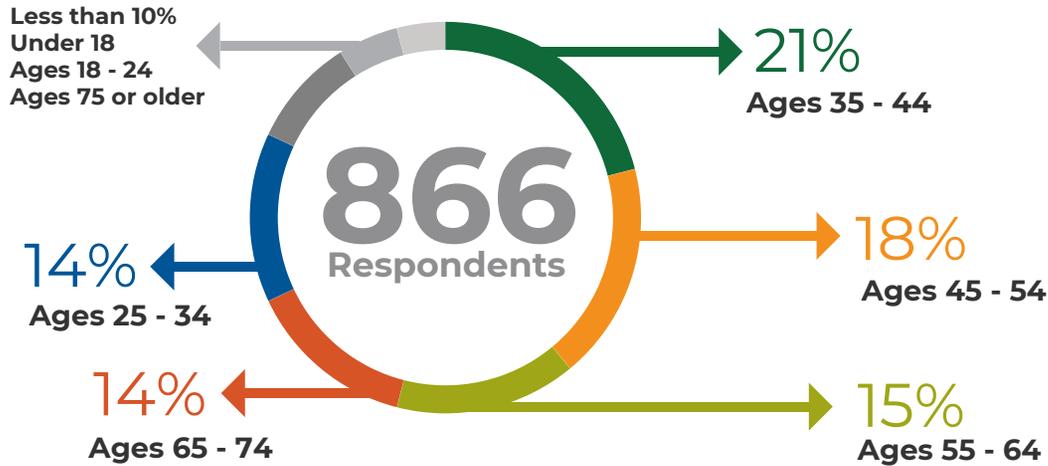
“We should (continue to) participate in the ACCE program. Our community should care about our young people.”

“Pulaski County has the most beautiful cycling routes in the NRV. Promote and develop this asset.”

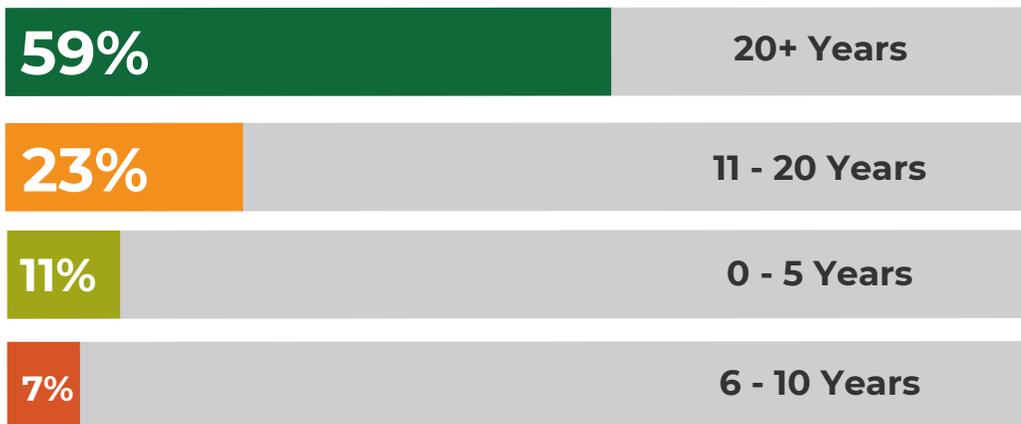
“We need public sewer in the Community of Newbern. A lot of septic systems in this area are failing.”

Community Survey

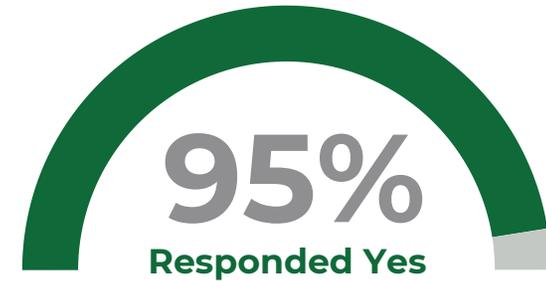
Who Responded?



How long have you lived in Pulaski County?



Are you a Pulaski County Resident?



What is most important to Pulaski County residents?

-  **Employment Opportunities**
-  **High Quality Education**
-  **Access to Healthcare**
-  **Infrastructure**

Public Meetings

In the final months of the Comprehensive Plan draft the county hosted four (4) public meetings across the county to solicit public input. Each meeting provided the residents and business owners of Pulaski County an opportunity to review the updated goals, objectives, strategies, and policies for each chapter of the plan.

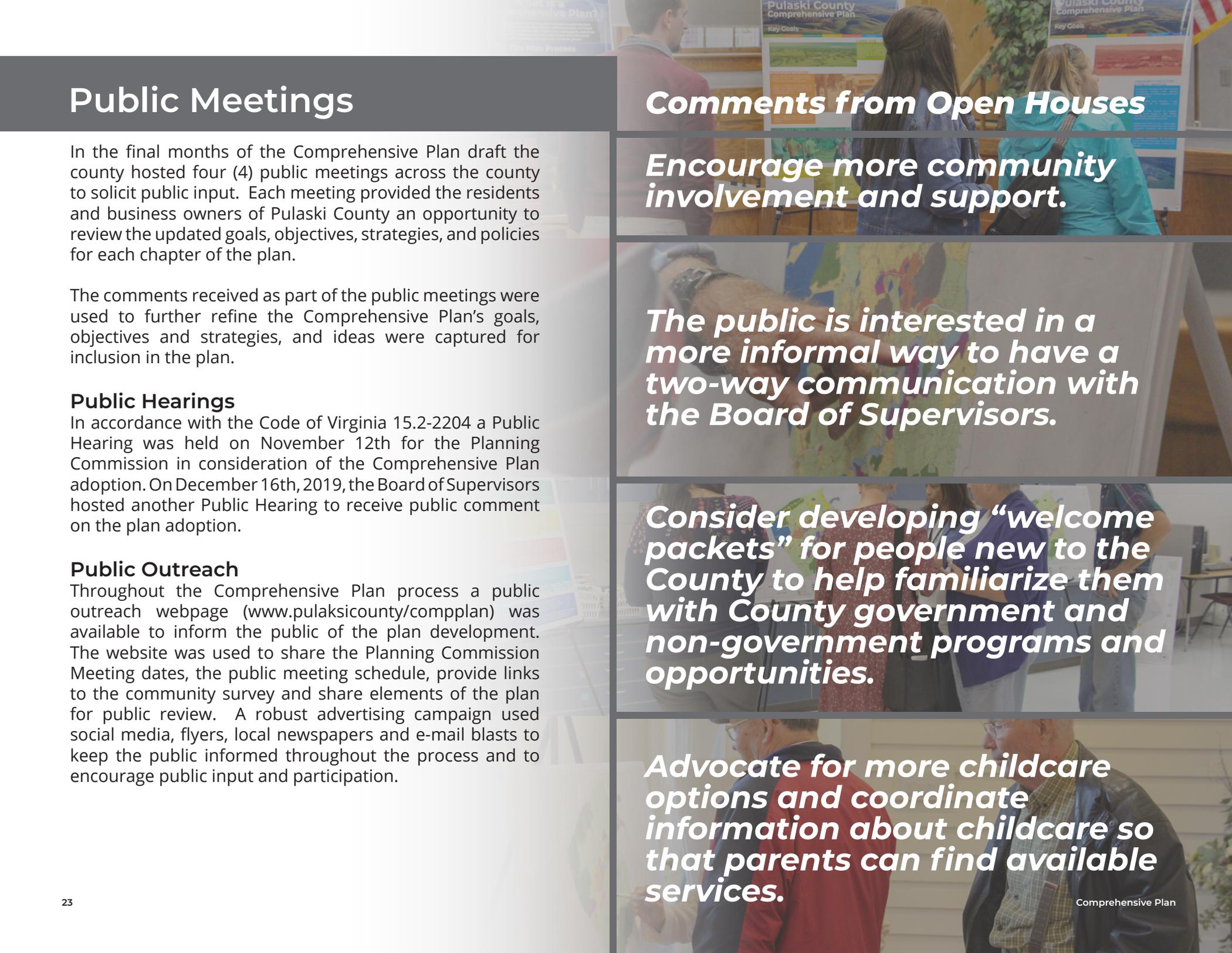
The comments received as part of the public meetings were used to further refine the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and strategies, and ideas were captured for inclusion in the plan.

Public Hearings

In accordance with the Code of Virginia 15.2-2204 a Public Hearing was held on November 12th for the Planning Commission in consideration of the Comprehensive Plan adoption. On December 16th, 2019, the Board of Supervisors hosted another Public Hearing to receive public comment on the plan adoption.

Public Outreach

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan process a public outreach webpage (www.pulaskicounty.com/compplan) was available to inform the public of the plan development. The website was used to share the Planning Commission Meeting dates, the public meeting schedule, provide links to the community survey and share elements of the plan for public review. A robust advertising campaign used social media, flyers, local newspapers and e-mail blasts to keep the public informed throughout the process and to encourage public input and participation.



Comments from Open Houses

Encourage more community involvement and support.

The public is interested in a more informal way to have a two-way communication with the Board of Supervisors.

Consider developing “welcome packets” for people new to the County to help familiarize them with County government and non-government programs and opportunities.

Advocate for more childcare options and coordinate information about childcare so that parents can find available services.