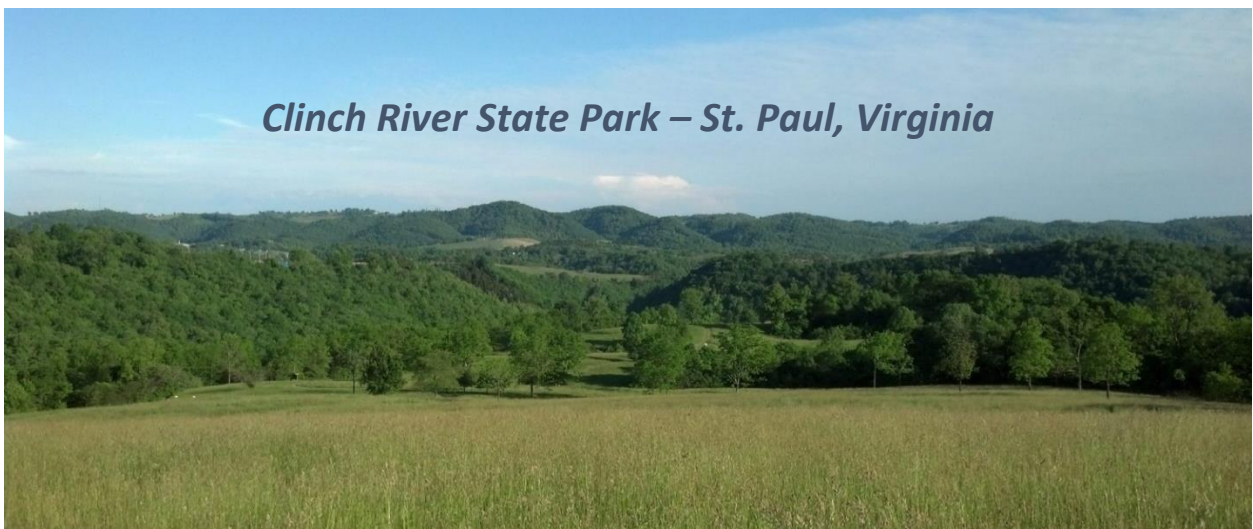


Comprehensive Plan 2023



Clinch River State Park – St. Paul, Virginia



Acknowledgments:

This planning document was prepared St. Paul Planning Commission, and reviewed, approved and adopted by the City Council, and the Citizens of St. Paul Virginia. The background research, writing, and assembly of the document were completed by a committee appointed by the Planning Commission with help from the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission.

This plan does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation, rather a vision for the future of St. Paul.

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INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

St. Paul, Virginia, is a charming town, located in the midst of one of the most beautiful areas of the country. Founded in April 1911 it is one of the smallest of the six towns in Wise County. It is a place of extraordinary natural beauty, where the pristine Clinch River serves as the lifeblood of our community and sustains a collection of rare animals found nowhere else in the world. The river not only provides drinking water to the residents of St. Paul, but its abundant fish and rapidly flowing water provide relaxation and adventure opportunities for our outdoor enthusiasts.

The town was founded along the banks of the Clinch in the center of a region filled with natural treasures, from our southern rolling hills, to the mountain peaks and coalfields of our north. Many of the ancient mountains which make up the southwestern counties of Virginia remain almost pristine, their heavily forested sides revealing each season of the year with splendor.

We are a humble community that values our unique history. The earliest settlers came in the late 1700s, including French immigrants of noble blood escaping royal oppression, and they found sanctuary here. The moving nature of the Clinch fueled the vision of twin cities on its banks - Minneapolis and St. Paul. Although “Minneapolis” never developed, the community of St. Paul grew and prospered over the years.

Situated in the Appalachian coalfield region, St. Paul, its residents and general economy have depended throughout much of its existence upon the coal mining industry, which has been subject to continuing cycles of boom or bust. Coal production has seen an overall decline in the last 20 years. Lower production and advancing mining technology resulted in substantially fewer numbers of coal related jobs. The decline in local coal production combined with fewer jobs in all areas of the local economy resulted in a decline in population as families moved away in search of other opportunities.

The shift away from coal production in our area resulted in the development of a focused strategic plan in search of new economic solutions. St. Paul quickly became a forward-looking community making significant commitments to maintaining a good quality of life for its residents and visitors alike.

In 1974, the Town extended its boundary into Russell County by annexing South St. Paul and West Hills Estates. A boundary extension occurred in 2006 at Highway 58, going North including adjoining properties. This included land that currently is occupied by the Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center (VCHEC). Groundbreaking for VCHEC was in August 2008 and production began in July 2012. VCHEC was constructed to process GOB or “garbage of bituminous” to encourage the use and reclamation of waste coal in the production of electricity.

Our redevelopment projects over the last 20 years have resulted in sound infrastructure: excellent water treatment facilities with an existing capability to handle growth; street, storm water and sidewalk improvements; new parks, trails, and other public facilities.

The Town of St. Paul continues to reinvent itself into a vibrant community. Although we remain focused on ways to bring new industry to our area, tourism has seen significant growth for St. Paul due to our location and the many natural resources of our area. COVID certainly had an impact on our plans and growth, but we are confident that we will continue to expand our goal of becoming a sought-after location for outdoor enthusiasts.

LEGAL STATUS/AUTHORITY TO PLAN

Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia requires that every governing body in the Commonwealth to adopt a comprehensive plan for the territory under its jurisdiction.

Section 15.2-2230 requires the local Planning Commission to review that plan at least once every five years to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

Section 15.2-2200 of the Code of Virginia establishes the legislative intent of planning and zoning enabling authority.

Section 15.2-2223 specifically states that “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 probably 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.”

Virginia’s local planning legislation requires that all localities have a planning commission and to adopt subdivision ordinances and comprehensive plans. Virginia localities may also adopt zoning ordinances. St. Paul appointed a Planning Commission in 1992.

The Town of St. Paul will undertake a review of the Comprehensive Plan every five years as mandated by the Code of Virginia. The Town may also review and amend any portion of the Plan as the need arises, and may develop a work program to establish priorities for undertaking various actions or to implement specific policies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan (“the Plan”) is to provide a guide or a “vision” for the future development of our town. This plan is part of a continuous process requiring periodic updates based on new opportunities, challenges, changing conditions, and resources. The Plan ensures the Town of St. Paul (“the Town”) sets specific goals, objectives and strategies that most closely align to our vision. The Plan is designed to hold the Town accountable for working towards the future we have envisioned. The Comprehensive plan bridges the gap between where we are today to where we want to be in the future. The Plan is only as good as the tools and actions utilized in implementing the strategies identified within.

This document encompasses the entire town, a broad range of topics, and covers a long-term time frame. The Plan is official in nature and intended to be adopted by Town Council after a public hearing to obtain feedback. The Plan can be used to assist the governing body, committees, and town staff with strategic planning, visioning and project development. It is a *general guide* for decisions and actions that determine the Town’s physical, social and economic development. The governing body can exercise some discretion in how strictly it interprets or adheres to the plan. However, the Code provides that the construction of streets or other facilities be subject to review and the extent of the proposed facility be in substantial accord with the adopted.

PLAN HISTORY AND DATA COLLECTION

This comprehensive plan was developed with assistance from the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission. Data for the plan were obtained from several sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, state agencies, citizens and officials of the Town of St. Paul and Wise County, the Wise County Comprehensive Plan, and local business establishments.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

A successful comprehensive planning process requires the creation of goals; the transformation of the goals into objectives and strategies to achieve and implement the defined goals. The goals within this Comprehensive Plan have been updated to more closely align to the Town's priorities and will be utilized to shape our physical, community and economic growth.

VISION:

Maintain our unique small-town charm while attracting and strengthening commerce and tourism. St. Paul is focused on providing the infrastructure required to support our economy while providing a better quality of life, building on our local assets.

1. Encourage new development/redevelopment of residential, commercial and industrial land use while remaining compatible with our small-town character.
2. Preserving and enhancing the visual aesthetics and leverage the natural beauty and unique cultural heritage of St. Paul.
3. Preserve and enhance open spaces/recreational facilities for public use and enjoyment.
4. Create an environment that encourages new business and commerce.
5. Promote well-planned residential, office, light industrial and commercial growth consistent with the towns low-density character.
6. Build a sustainable community that provides essential services and public facilities.
7. Plan, manage and support events that foster a strong community spirit, improve the quality of life of our residents and visitors alike, and promote economic development.

RISKS:

- Ability to attract/provide a quality workforce
- Low inventory of housing combined with Street level housing in Historic Downtown area (grandfathered in Zoning) – maps attached
- Low inventory of business/commercial properties
- Borders that prevent physical growth (highway, river, geographic location of downtown, town boundaries)
- No local high school
- Reduction in Fire and EMS services in surrounding communities
- Declining rural populations

PRIORITIES:

- Develop a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan that links our municipality’s strategic vision, our future land use plan, and our annual budget.
- Pursue applicable Sewer and Water System Improvements & Grant Opportunities.
- Enhance and maintain the quality of existing housing stock and overall appearance of neighborhoods.
- Expand our Town Marketing plan to include data driven campaigns that improve, increase and encourage new business, new industry and attract prospective residents.
- Improve our Town Corridors Gateways.
- Increase economic development efforts to increase the availability of commercial space.
- Pursue Zoning land use and planning strategies (and other codes) for the orderly growth of our community.
- Review and improve current ordinances to more closely align to the vision and goals for the Town of St. Paul.
- Continue our Historic Preservation efforts.

On the following pages contain information in regards to the St. Paul goals, objectives and strategies related to our priorities. The tables are organized into the following categories

- Land Use/Growth – Commercial and Industrial
- Economy
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Government Services
- Transportation

LAND USE/GROWTH -Commercial /Industrial

GOAL: Adjust our footprint in ways that encourage growth and result in best use of land.

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|--|---|---|
| 1) Expand St. Paul through boundary adjustments or incorporations. | 1) Determine feasibility of expansion and evaluate economic gain of these adjustments. | St. Paul's growth has been constrained as a result of terrain, county boundaries, highways and the Clinch River. |
| | 2) Evaluate infrastructure needs | |
| 2) Improve and strengthen St. Paul's business district. | 1) Continuation of downtown revitalization activities including utilization of grants and programs. | Economic development efforts increase availability of commercial space and make business districts more attractive to patrons and businesses. |
| | 2) Maintain or improve character of current structures and while encouraging new development compatible with the Town's small-town character. | There are several buildings/structures within the business district that are vacant or underutilized. Several of these buildings have been unoccupied for years. |
| | 3) Reassess adequate and convenient parking solutions including review of ordinances. | With the newly opened Lyric Theater, new restaurants and businesses in development phases, the parking issues will become more acute. |
| | 4) Pursue Zoning land use and planning strategies to ensure orderly growth of our community. | Review and improve current ordinances to more closely align to the vision and goals for the Town of St. Paul. |
| | 5) Enforce the maintenance of vacant lots and buildings, to enhance the value of all adjacent properties and improve aesthetics | Ensure we have ordinances that require upkeep of property including parking areas that are privately owned. |
| 3) Promote well-planned residential, office, light industrial and commercial growth consistent with the town's low-density character. | 1) Promote the redevelopment of existing sites and structures as a higher priority than developing open space through incentive programs. | We currently have a low inventory of occupant ready business/commercial properties. |
| | 2) Update land use codes and regulations to ensure adequate protection for industry and nearby land. | Planning where development should or should not go helps encourage growth in town, and allows business to thrive on a walkable "main street" - Current "grandfathered" street level residential housing has further limited available commercial space. |

LAND USE/GROWTH - Commercial/Industrial

GOAL: Adjust our footprint to encourage growth and result in best use of land.

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|--|--|--|
| 1) Provide for the expansion of St. Paul's Industrial base. | 1) Designate/Identify current and future suitable industrial sites that are accessible to major highways and rail lines. | St. Paul's growth has been constrained as a result of terrain, county boundaries, highways and the Clinch River. |
| | 2) Evaluate infrastructure needs for the development of new and existing industrial properties. | |
| | 3) Create buffers with open space, trees shrubbery or fencing between industrial and other land uses. | |
| | 4) Establish land use regulations to protect the rights of adjacent landowners while also allowing industrial properties to develop fully. | |
| | 5) Create programs that encourage development of vacant or underutilized properties to create more commercial and industrial employment. | Industrial Development Authority will need to review and recommend programs that help spur new industrial expansion. |
| | 4) Pursue Zoning land use and planning strategies to ensure orderly growth of our community. | Review and improve current ordinances to more closely align to the vision and goals for the Town of St. Paul. |
| | 5) Enforce the maintenance of vacant lots and buildings, to enhance the value of all adjacent properties. | Ensure we have ordinances that require upkeep of property including parking areas that are privately owned. |

ECONOMY

GOAL: Support and promote the Town's existing economic base focused on tourism, while actively recruiting other economic development, small business and entrepreneurial opportunities.

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|--|--|--|
| 1) Make it easier to open a business in St. Paul. | 1) Provide online guides for opening a business and centralizing information related to business licensing, taxes and links to other agencies and organizations. | We do not currently have a comprehensive guide for opening a business in St. Paul. |
| 2) Make St. Paul a more appealing place to open a business. | 1) Utilize Virginia uniform statewide building code the maintenance and building a blight abatement ordinance, and zoning code enforcement, to address blight that inhibits economic growth. | |
| | 2) Promote current incentives such as the Tax Abatement Program for new businesses and identify other opportunities to make opening a business in St. Paul more appealing. | |
| 1) Increase Tourism. | 1) Capitalize on our many outdoor/recreational amenities through quantifiable targeted marketing. | |
| | 2) Strengthen and Centralize an Annual Calendar of Events. | We do not have a centralized calendar for town events. Needs accountability. |
| | 3) Create new ways to attract visitors to our town during off-peak seasons. | |
| | 4) Find ways to capitalize the newly announced Three Rivers destination center and walking/biking bridge. | St. Paul needs a strategic plan to funnel visitors from the destination center to downtown businesses. The corridors from the landing site to town and the State Park should be visually inviting with walking and biking paths. |
| | 5) Obtain Consumer Profile data to assist in identifying and soliciting new business, services and attractions that align to the new Clinch River State Park customers. | |
| 2) Promote St. Paul as an attractive location for new residents | 1) With more remote employment opportunities available, St. Paul will create a plan to attract new residence. | Our cost of living, taxes and outdoor recreation opportunities are great assets for us to promote. The lack of a local high school may be a hinderance. |

HOUSING

Goal: Provide a mix of housing options that meet the varied needs of current and prospective town residents.

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|--|--|---|
| 1) Identify needs and gaps in current housing availability. | 1) Participate in Wise County Planning Grant to conduct a housing needs assessment. | Dramatic shifts in the housing market indicates the need for a more recent assessment of housing needs. |
| 2) Enable low to moderate-income families to live in suitable, quality, affordable housing. | 1) Develop or promote programs that increase in the number of major housing rehabilitations. | There are limited new/vacant land opportunities for new housing. Rehabilitation and expansion of current structures is key to providing options for residents. |
| | 2) Enforce legislation that allows for the destruction of dilapidated buildings and require vacant lots and /or buildings to be properly maintained. | Blight prevention can be accomplished through active code enforcement. Creating a Local Code and creating a code enforcement position should be considered/discussed in the future. |
| | 3) Encourage residents to investigate home financing offered by VHDA, USDA Rural Development, VA Department of Housing and Community Development. | |
| 3) Facilitate the orderly beneficial growth of the community. | 1) Utilize the subdivision ordinance to encourage development to adhere to specified setback from streets. | |
| | 2) Identify town owned property or prospective properties suitable for development. | |
| 4) Increase the number of available housing units in the Town of St. Paul. | 1) Incentivize developers to build on speculation of mid-income housing opportunities | There has been very little new construction of homes and housing in St. Paul over the last few decades |
| | 2) Identify areas within and near the Town that are suitable for larger scale residential development. | As land is in short supply, townhomes may be an active solution for development. |

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

GOAL: Maintain and improve the city's infrastructure while continuing to develop a system of open space and recreational facilities

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|---|---|--|
| 1) Improve infrastructure | 1) Continue to upgrade and expand the water and wastewater systems using federal, state, regional, and local funding sources where possible, including sewer and storm drainage separation. | |
| | 2) Investigate steps necessary to begin the replacement of above ground utility wires with underground utilities. | |
| 2) Support and maintain emergency service operations to meet the needs of St. Paul | 1) Continue to evaluate levels of police protection to meet the demand. | |
| | 2) Continue to support the St. Paul Volunteer Fire Department and other area rescue squads and emergency responders. | As more local Fire and EMS services close, the need for a new emergency services multi use site that includes fire rescue and training facilities increases. |
| 3) Expand St. Paul's recreational activities | 1) Develop and expand recreational areas within town. | |
| | 2) Ensure appropriate visibility and signage is installed and maintained. | |
| | 3) Partner with Russell and Wise County School Board to continue allowing public use of school recreational facilities. | |

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Identify and implement solutions to relieve current traffic problems and support specific land use objectives.

| Objective | Strategy | Comments |
|--|--|--|
| 1) Provide a street and highway system that is compatible to residential, commercial and industrial uses. | 1) Support the conduction of traffic flow studies in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation. | |
| | 2) Obtain funding for electric car charging stations. | |
| | 3) Provide additional street lighting and work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to make improvements to sidewalks where needed. | HSIP sidewalk improvement is scheduled to begin in 2023. |
| | 4) Work with residents, county officials and the Virginia Department of Transportation to plan and improve streets where needed. | |
| | 5) Work with residents, county officials and the Virginia Department of Transportation to address traffic safety needs to include turn lanes, improving limited turning views, and railroad crossings. | |
| | 6) Continue the Town's role as an ATV-friendly town. | |

CHAPTER 3

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Town of St. Paul is located in both Wise and Russell County in the coalfields of Southwest Virginia. The town lies within the Clinch River Basin above the Tennessee-Virginia state line. The town is bordered by the Clinch River with steep topography within the town. St. Paul is approximately 1.4 square miles in size. The elevation of the river at St. Paul is 1,450 feet.

CLIMATE

St. Paul enjoys four distinct seasons with moderate summers and average winters. On average our region will see 45 inches of rain, with flooding in most streams on an average of once per year. St. Paul averages 22 inches of snow per year, 6 inches lower than the US average. On average, there are 196 sunny days per year in St. Paul. The US average is 205 sunny days.

Summer High: the July high is around 82 degrees

Winter Low: the January low is 21

GEOLOGY

The geological environment of St. Paul is characterized by generally flat-lying, relatively undisturbed, alternating beds of sandstone, shale and coal. In this area, mineral rights are sometimes owned by other than the present owner of the surface rights, or mining may have taken place under the surface and not be evident from the surface. Development should not be encouraged in areas where mining has been undertaken relatively close to the surface and may cause problems of settling and unstable bedrock. Coal reserves under any given piece of property should be evaluated in light of past/future subsurface mining.

SOIL CHARACTERISTICS

General soil conditions of an area are important factors in the formulation of future development plans. Certain soils have better permeability, drainage characteristics, and bearing strengths than others and are more suitable for urban and industrial uses. The desirability and suitability of specific tracts should be determined by a detailed site investigation of the soils by a qualified professional. The complexity of soil types warrants such an investigation before any extensive use is made of the land.

WATER RESOURCES

Water availability and quality is an important consideration in assessing development potential. Water resources exist as ground water and as surface water. Ground water occurs beneath the earth's surface, stored in open spaces in rocks, while surface water occupies the earth's surface in such forms as streams, rivers and lakes. Both ground and surface water depend upon precipitation for replenishment. In addition to the intensity, frequency, duration and distribution of precipitation, a complex set of factors influence the water resources of the area. Such factors as topography, geologic structure, temperature, soils, vegetation and land use activities contribute to both the quantity and quality of water available.

Surface Water: The streams and rivers of Wise County are headwaters of two major rivers, the Tennessee and the Big Sandy. The Powell and Guest Rivers and their tributaries lie within the Tennessee River Basin, while the Pound River and its tributaries are a part of the Big Sandy River Basin. As headwater streams, these rivers and streams have relatively small watersheds and are particularly subject to the wide variation in rainfall that can occur within the county due to the mountainous terrain. The terrain also contributes to rapid runoff during periods of heavy rain. These factors cause stream flows to change dramatically, often in a matter of hours, creating flash flooding situations. The small size of the watersheds and the fluctuation of stream flows mean that these streams can provide only moderate supplies of surface water unless impoundments are used, allowing water stored during periods of high stream flow to be used during periods of low stream flow. Several impoundments have been constructed in the county, serving as raw water sources for public water systems.

Ground Water: The southeastern section of Wise County (including St. Paul) is underlain by moderately and steeply dipping shales and sandstones. Wells drilled into these rocks average 100 feet in depth and yield an average of 20 gallons per minute. A few deeper wells near the Guest and Clinch Rivers are reported to yield more than 100 gallons per minute. Ground water is developed at depths between 70 and 150 feet in most wells. Water quality in this area is similar to that of ground water in the northern section of the county. It is difficult to estimate the overall ground water potential in the county due to a lack of sufficient well data. Additionally, extensive mining activity in the northern section of the county has adversely affected the water table.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources have dominated the history and development of Wise County. While coal has been the most abundant and important of these resources, others such as iron ore, natural gas, shale, limestone, sandstone, manganese and clay are also present in varying quantities and qualities. The importance of these resources to the nation's economy will continue to change, impacting the economy of our region.

COAL

In recent decades, increasing mechanization and technological advances in the mining industry have resulted in ongoing decreases in demand and employment. More recently, natural gas prices and federal regulatory actions have had substantial impacts on the industry.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forests are unique among the major raw materials in that they are renewable. Lumbering operations began in Wise County during the late 1800s. It is estimated that by 1923, less than one percent of the county's 227.3 thousand forest acres remained virgin. The practice of taking the best trees and leaving low-quality stands may have reduced the genetic base for today's forest. Burning logged areas, often more than once, resulted in erosion and site degradation. As farms were abandoned during the Great Depression, forests reclaimed the landscape naturally.

It is evident that Wise County's Forest resources have the potential to contribute significantly to the county's economy. The county's soils and climate are conducive to rapid tree growth. With proper management, the variety of native woods promises the production of quality raw materials for future markets.

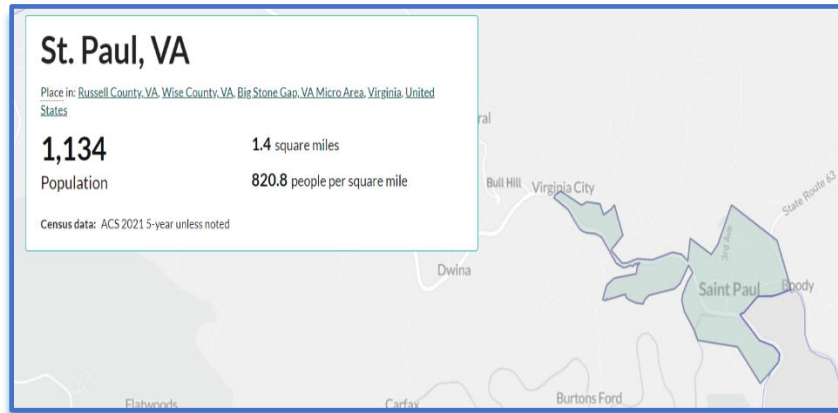
SUMMARY

Physical characteristics of an area such as topography, drainage, soils, flooding conditions and large tracts of forested land contribute to the type, location and nature of development within the town. In St. Paul, the physical elements are highly restrictive and therefore must be a major consideration in the construction of this plan.

Although considered restrictive in terms of urban development, the same factors are also the physical assets of St. Paul, that is, the physical amenities of the environment that should be preserved and protected because of their contribution to the unique character of the mountainous area

CHAPTER 4

POPULATION AND TRENDS



Please note that the following pages are for St. Paul Virginia as indicated by the map and were obtained from [Censusreporter.org](https://censusreporter.org)

OVERVIEW

Analysis of local population characteristics provides a great deal more information than just the number of persons residing therein. Historic accounts of population data, as well as analysis of natural increase and migration rates, allow for reasonable population projections. Such projections are extremely valuable for planning purposes. Realistic projections enable the Town and Counties to plan what types and amounts of various land uses will be required in the future. Population distribution trends reveal where residential development will most likely occur and where services must be provided. Residence, age and educational composition changes in the population indicate what types of services will be necessary in the future.

Total Population as indicated in the ACS 2021 5-Year Report: 1,134

| Geography Name | Total Population | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| | 2030 | 2040 | 2050 |
| Virginia, Statewide | 9,129,002 | 9,759,371 | 10,535,810 |
| Wise County | 30,366 | 27,952 | 25,955 |
| Russell County | 22,340 | 19,781 | 17,517 |
| Norton city | 3,367 | 3,210 | 3,102 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Virginia Employment Commission – Weldon Cooper Center population projections

POPULATION AND PROJECTIONS

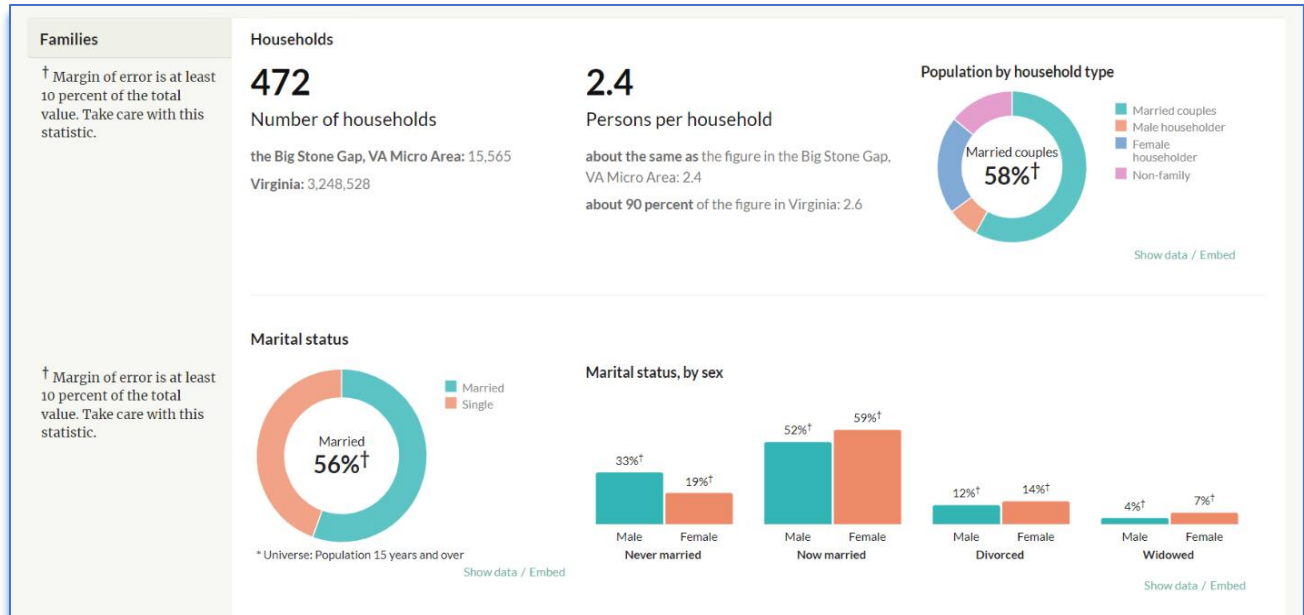
The following chart presents the age composition of the population by broad age groupings. The "65 and over" age group represents an increasing segment of the local population, and a significantly higher percentage than that of the state as a whole. Although the population did see a gain in the last 10 years, the "aging" of the overall population can present various challenges, serving as a rough indicator of the level and type of services desired and needed, both present and future, as well as suggesting potential issues with future labor force supply.

POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE GROUP

| | St Paul | Wise Co | Russell Co | Virginia |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------|------------|------------|
| <u>2010</u> | | | | |
| Total Population | 970 | 41,452 | 28,897 | 8,001,024 |
| Under 18 | 20.5% | 20.8% | 20.3% | 23.2% |
| 18-64 | 62.0% | 65.1% | 63.3% | 64.6% |
| 65 & over | 17.5% | 14.1% | 16.4% | 12.2% |
| Median Age | 44.8 | 39.0 | 43.0 | 37.5 |
| <u>2021</u> | ACTUAL | | | |
| Total Population | 1,134 | 40,841 | 29,052 | 8,811,485 |
| Under 18 | 20.0% | 20.6% | 18.8% | 22.5% |
| 18-64 | 60.0% | 61.4% | 59.9% | 62.1% |
| 65 & over | 20.0% | 18.0% | 21.3% | 15.4% |
| Median Age | 42.1 | | | |
| <u>2030</u> | (projection) | | | |
| Total Population | | 40,354 | 29,295 | 9,645,271 |
| Under 18 | not avail | 20.0% | 17.6% | 22.4% |
| 18-64 | at town level | 59.7% | 56.4% | 59.3% |
| 65 & over | | 20.3% | 25.9% | 18.3% |
| <u>2040</u> | (projection) | | | |
| Total Population | | 39,978 | 29,536 | 10,530,231 |
| Under 18 | not avail | 19.5% | 17.8% | 22.6% |
| 18-64 | at town level | 59.6% | 55.6% | 59.3% |
| 65 & over | | 20.9% | 26.6% | 18.1% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census, Virginia Employment Commission - population projections Note: The Virginia population projections by demographic characteristics, such as by age group and sex, rely on the 2020 Census data as a benchmark, and are therefore not available because the U.S. Census Bureau has not released the 2020 Census data by five-year age groups and by sex. The Census Bureau plans to release the next set of 2020 Census Data Products in May 2023.

POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD



RACIAL COMPOSITION OF POPULATION

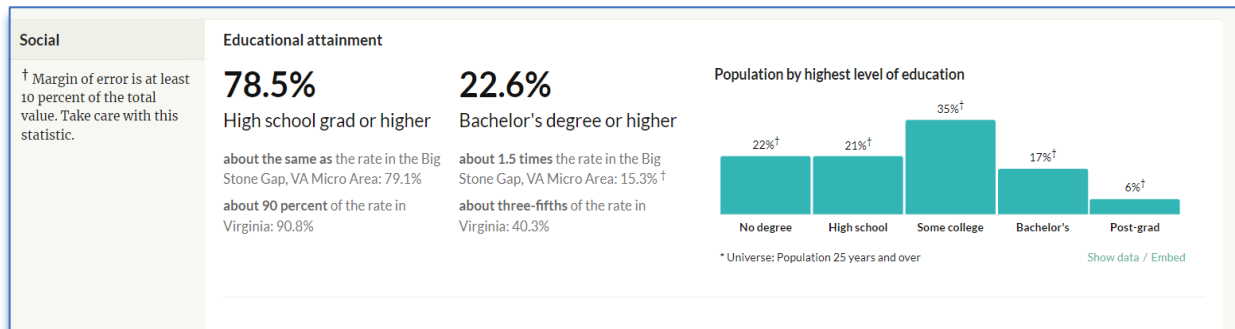
The racial composition of the area's population has historically varied greatly from that of the Commonwealth. For decades, the non-white population stood well under two percent of the district's total population. The table below reveals the racial distribution of the area and the changes since 2000.

| | St Paul | Wise Co | Russell Co | Virginia |
|---------------------|---------|---------|------------|----------|
| 2010 | | | | |
| White | 94.6% | 93.0% | 97.5% | 68.6% |
| Black | 1.5% | 5.2% | 1.3% | 18.4% |
| American Indian | 0.3% | 0.1% | .1% | 0.4% |
| Asian/Pac Isl/Other | 2.0% | 0.7% | .3% | 6.8% |
| Two or More Races | 1.6% | 0.9% | .8% | 9.5% |
| Hispanic (Any Race) | 2.9% | 1.1% | .1% | 10.2% |
| 2021 | | | | |
| White | 97% | 91.6% | 96.7% | 60.8% |
| Black | <1% | 5.6% | 1.6% | 19.4% |
| American Indian | 0% | .2% | .02% | 0.4% |
| Asian/Pac Isl/Other | 0% | .5% | 0% | 8.8% |
| Two or More Races | 2% | 1.7% | 1.4% | 2.9% |
| Hispanic (Any Race) | 2.6% | 1.3% | .5% | 7.9% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

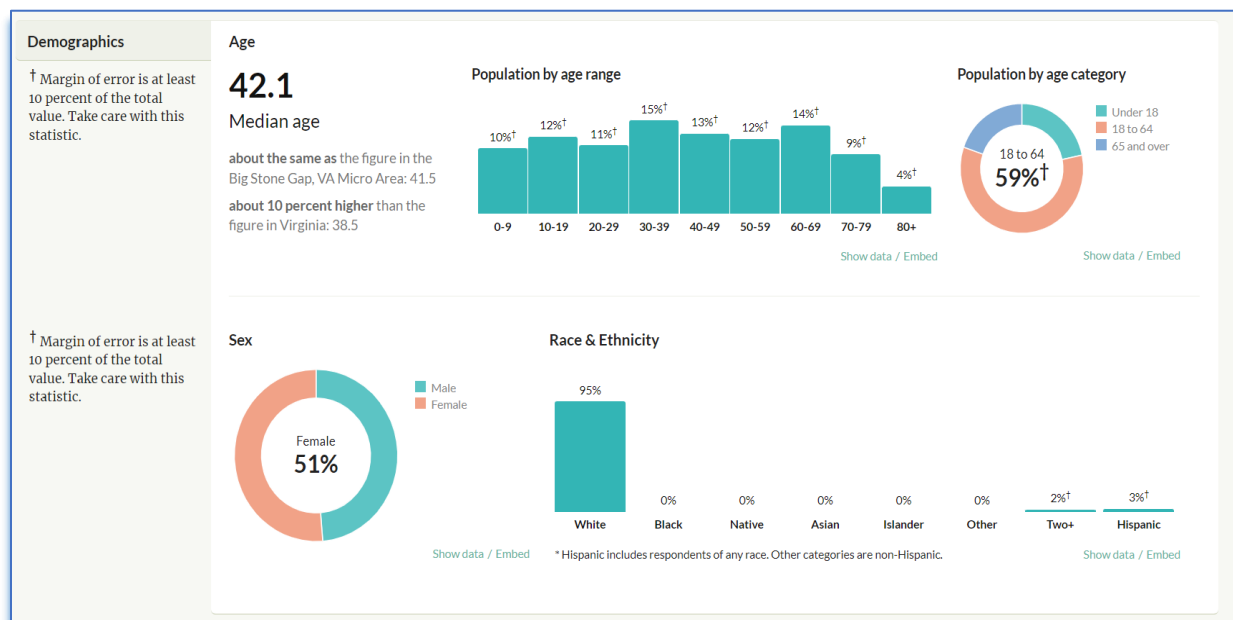
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

One historic, ongoing characteristic of the region's population is relatively low education levels. The table below reflects the significant portion of the population with less than a high school diploma and, concurrently, the comparatively small portion of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher. While southwestern Virginia has long held a strong reputation for its citizens' hardy work ethic, educational levels continue to be an obstacle to true economic diversification.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2021 5-year

DEMOGRAPHICS



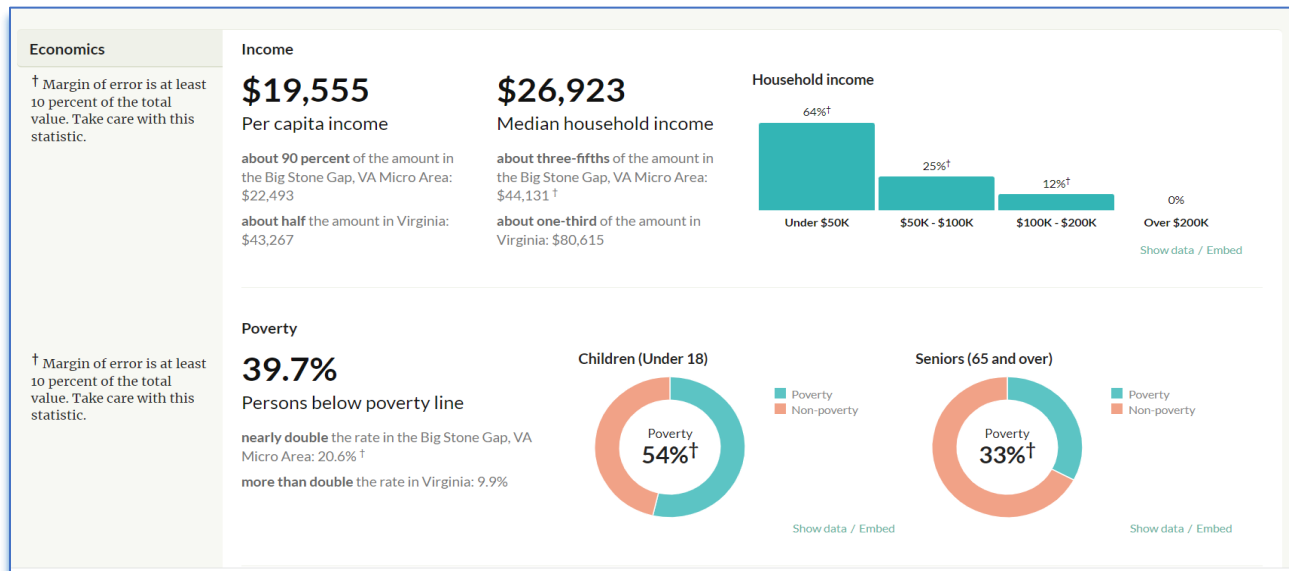
Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2021 5-year

CHAPTER 5

ECONOMY

OVERVIEW

Information presented in this section pertains to the labor force characteristics of Wise County, Russell County and the Town of St. Paul, as well as insights into the local economy. Some of the more pertinent factors to be examined are employment sectors, labor force data, retail sales and income.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2021 5-year

Income distribution can be used to analyze the utility of a community. Income levels are often reflective of the level of needs the citizenry may demand. While increases have been noted it is important to acknowledge that local figures fall well below state levels and fall short of income levels for both the Town of Norton (21 miles from St. Paul) and Lebanon (13 miles from St. Paul). Income in 2021 was about half that compared to the state of Virginia. According to the Census Bureau 2021: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables. In addition, Russell counties per capita income is \$23,540 and a Median household income of \$41,100. Wise county shows per capita income at \$22,225 with a median household income of \$44,884.

One of the difficulties in attracting new business and industry to St. Paul is the lack of housing options, especially for mid to upper-level income levels. As an example: In early 2023 a new facility was announced in the Russell County portion of St. Paul. It is projected to bring approximately 50 jobs to the area with a salary range of \$60,000 to \$65,000 per year. We currently do not have appropriate housing to accommodate any influx of residence relocating for these positions.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Any individual 16 years of age and older, who is employed or seeking employment, is designated a member of the labor force. The table below shows labor force participation data from 2000-2022.

| | St Paul | St Paul | Wise Co | Russell Co |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| | 2000 | 2022 | 2022 | 2022 |
| - | | | | |
| Persons 16-over | 799 | 741 | 31,571 | 22,455 |
| In Labor Force | 415 | 322 | 14,374 | 9,921 |
| Civilian LF | 415 | 322 | 14,367 | 9,921 |
| Employed | 389 | 274 | 13,040 | 9,271 |
| Unemployed | 26 | 48 | 1,327 | 650 |
| Armed Forces | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 |
| Not in Labor Force | 384 | 419 | 17,197 | 12,534 |
| LF Participation | 48.10% | 56.55% | 14,367 | 9,921 |
| Male | 58.30% | 51.69% | 56.59% | 55.82% |
| Female | 46.70% | 48.31% | 43.41% | 44.18% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – American Community Survey 2020

UNEMPLOYMENT AVERAGES

| Year | Wise County | Russell County | Virginia |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|----------|
| 2004 | 5.3 | 5.9 | 3.8 |
| 2009 | 6.6 | 10.5 | 6.7 |
| 2014 | 9.4 | 8.0 | 5.2 |
| JULY 2022 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 2.7 |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY DATA

The following table illustrates occupation and industry trends for the Town of St. Paul.

| Occupation | |
|---|-----|
| Management, professional and related occupations | 137 |
| Service occupations | 40 |
| Sales and office occupations | 45 |
| Natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations | 20 |
| Production, transportation and material moving occupations | 32 |
| Industry | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining | 11 |
| Construction | 11 |
| Manufacturing | |
| Wholesale trade | 6 |
| Retail trade | 42 |
| Transportation, warehousing and utilities | 40 |
| Information | 0 |
| Finance, insurance and real estate | 8 |
| Professional, scientific, management, waste management | 39 |
| Education and health care | 73 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation and food services | 19 |
| Public administration | 21 |
| Other services | 4 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2020

TAXABLE SALES – ST. PAUL

| Year | Amount of Sales Tax Collected |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| July 1 2016 – June 30 2017 | \$49,412.86 |
| July 1 2017 – June 30 2018 | \$46,864.93 |
| July 1 2018 – June 30 2019 | \$47,041.71 |
| July 1 2019 – June 30 2020 | \$37,533.73 |
| July 1 2020 – June 30 2021 | \$52,815.77 |
| July 1 2021 – June 30 2022 | \$54,183.71 |

CHAPTER 6

HOUSING

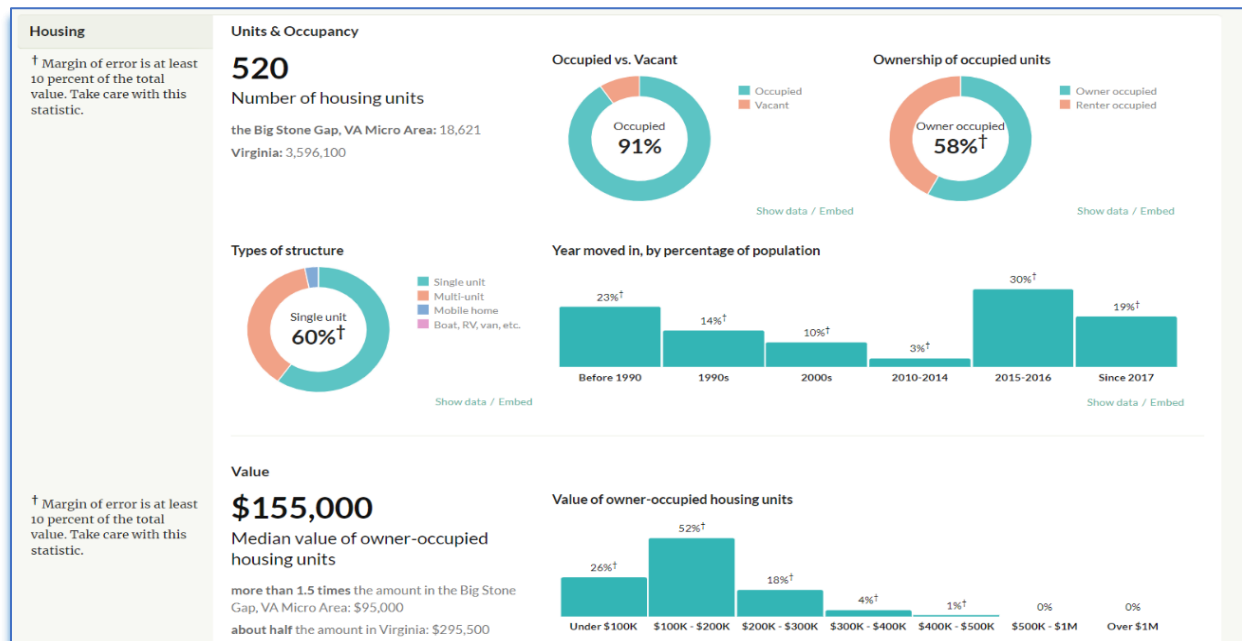
OVERVIEW:

Housing prices have increased by over 30% in the last 5 years according to local real estate agents. Inventory of houses is extremely low, as prices continue to increase and wages have not increased at a comparable rate. Housing construction remains an elusive key to sustainable growth for St. Paul. Identifying new areas, suitable for impactful development will be paramount to our Towns success. Dramatic shifts in the housing market indicates the need for a more recent assessment of housing needs.

Single family houses, apartments, and rental homes will remain in significant demand as existing housing stock continues to age. Housing is critical to attracting new industry and yet only 37 new housing units have been built since 2000. Land available for new housing is limited - rehabilitation and expansion of current structures is key to providing options for residents.

St. Paul allows mixed use/upper story apartments in the business district, but restrict street level apartments. Although there is an ordinance against street level apartments, there are multiple properties that were “grandfathered” in, which reduces the number of commercial properties available. According to <https://censusreporter.org/> 12% of the workforce located within St. Paul walk to work. A balance between the need to house workers within walking distance of their jobs and the need to provide more commercial and retail space needs to be addressed.

UNITS AND OCCUPANCY:



CHAPTER 7

TRANSPORTATION

HIGHWAYS

Two major U.S. highways, seven primary highways and numerous state secondary highways serve Wise County. U.S. 23 is a major north-south artery connecting Michigan and Florida. U.S. Alternate 58, which passes through the Town of St. Paul, is an alternate route of U.S. 58, an east-west highway that connects Norfolk, Virginia with Middlesboro, Kentucky. U.S. 58A, four-lane from Norton to Abingdon, is the major arterial route that passes through St. Paul and provides the only through traffic route for the Town.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES:

The following table shows average daily traffic volumes on St. Paul's streets and roads.

| Route Number | From | To | AADT |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------|
| US 58A | West Corp. Limits St. Paul | Wise Street | 6,800 |
| US 58A | Wise Street | Russell County Line | 10,000 |
| VA 63 | US 58A | North Corp. Limits | 4,000 |
| 4 th Avenue/SR 270 | US 58A | Wise Street/VA 63 | 3,300 |
| Deacon Road | Route 63 | Dickenson Street | 1,800 |
| Riverside Drive | Fourth Avenue | Dead End | 1,300 |
| Johnnie Ramey Dr | US 58A | Route 63 | 1,900 |

Average Daily Traffic Volumes ([recent study](#) from 2021)

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, 2021

Allocations of state funds used for improvements to secondary highways are made through a cooperative effort between the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Wise County Board of Supervisors. Reference should be made to the "Secondary Six-Year Plan" for planned secondary road improvements.

COAL HAUL ROADS

One half of the receipts under the coal severance tax program go into a special coal haul road fund. This fund in turn finances needed improvements on roads (both primary and secondary) where heavy coal truck traffic is a problem.

RAIL

At the turn of the 20th century, the construction of railroads into Wise County provided the initial stimulus for development and growth. Originally devoted primarily to the transportation of coal, the railroads remain a necessary component of the county's economy. Two major railroad corporations, Norfolk Southern Corporation and CSX Transportation, serve the county.

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

Lonesome Pine Airport: Lonesome Pine Airport, located east of Wise, accommodates both business and personal aircraft, serving the general aviation needs of the area. It is owned by the Cumberland Airport Commission and consists of about 375 acres. The facility has a 5,280 foot long, 100-foot-wide asphalt runway, a 35-foot-wide taxiway, a 10,875 square yard apron, 6 T-hangars, 3 corporate hangars, a conventional hangar, 12,000-gallon storage for both Avgas and Jet-A fuel, a 4,000 square foot terminal building, and 32 automobile parking spaces.

Tri-Cities Regional Airport: Tri-Cities Regional Airport is a commercial, full-service facility, located near Blountville, Tennessee, 60 miles south of St. Paul. The facility provides passenger and air freight service with nationwide connections.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mountain Empire Transit (MET) is the only public transit system in the LENOWISCO Planning District. MET is the Transportation Department of Mountain Empire Older Citizens, Inc., the Area Agency on Aging for Planning District 1. MET provides public transit for all members of the general public, regardless of age. MET is funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Routes are coordinated so that round trips may be made between these communities, with Big Stone Gap serving as MET's hub of operation. Utilizing vans and buses, MET provides ambulatory and wheelchair passengers with on demand service, Medicaid and aging services, human service transportation and general public transit at nominal fares. MET currently serves the Counties of Wise, Russell, Lee and the City of Norton.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The town has recently utilized several grant including USDA, VDOT and Department of Health for funding to upgrade and replace sidewalk in and around the Downtown area. The Town will continue to monitor sidewalk conditions and repair sidewalks in other parts of town as necessary, or add additional sidewalks. These needs updated to include sidewalk projects.

****Please see Appendix I for additional transportation information****

VDOT LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations: Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly added § 15.2-2222.1 to the Code of Virginia intends to improve how land-use and transportation-planning decisions are coordinated throughout Virginia by establishing standardized methodologies (definitions, analytical methods, etc.), procedures for analyzing transportation impacts and providing that information to citizens and policymakers. The Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations (24 VAC 30-155), sets forth procedures and requirements governing VDOT's review of and submission of comments regarding comprehensive plans and amendments to comprehensive plans, rezoning proposals, and subdivision plats, site plans and plans of development and the accompanying traffic impact analyses. Additional information the Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations can be found online at <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/chapter527/default.asp>.

The Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements (SSAR): Establishes the requirements that newly constructed streets will need to meet to be accepted into the secondary system of state highways for public maintenance. The regulation became effective March 9, 2009.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has developed a website to offer all interested and involved parties' information, materials, and training opportunities to become more familiar with the SSAR. For more information on these regulations, visit <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/ssar>.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

Access management focuses on the location, spacing, and design of entrances, street intersections, median openings, and traffic signals. Each of these creates conflict points where vehicles have to stop or slow down, disrupting the flow of traffic. As the number of conflict points increases, so does traffic congestion and crashes. Better management of access to the highway can reduce the number of conflict points and their adverse impact on highway operation and public safety. Roads are a critical public resource and constitute a major investment of the public's money. Access management can maximize this investment. Because the motorist spends less time waiting in traffic, fuel efficiency is maximized, air pollution is reduced, and commuting times are shortened. Businesses benefit because better mobility expands their market area.

For more information on VDOT's access management tools and guidelines, visit <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/accessmgt>.

HIGHWAY NEEDS AND PROJECT LIST

The Town will continue to examine specific projects that meet VDOT requirements on a yearly basis to propose applying for funds. During this process, the Town will explore solutions to some of the currently identified issues as follows:

- Examine transportation improvements that may be necessary for increases in commerce and industrial potential that exists along US 58 and in the more rural sections of Wise and Russell Counties surrounding St. Paul.
- Traffic safety improvement plan including all intersections into St. Paul off US 58.
- Infrastructure repair, improvement, upgrade, and/or replacement projects that include, but are not limited to: sidewalks, roadways and multimodal facilities. All of which continue to integrate the Historic Downtown of St. Paul with the rest of the Town while meeting requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Cooperate with VDOT and Wise County to identify road maintenance opportunities; including potholes, drainage, gravel, debris cleanup, and handicap accessibility.
- Encourage the use of public transportation when and where available.
- Examine linking certain roads that currently exist as dead ends.

CHAPTER 8

LAND USE

PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS TO LAND USAGE

There are a number of factors that severely limit the amount of developable land in the Town of St. Paul. Primary constraints include steep slopes, poor soil conditions, flood prone areas, mineral land under development, land subject to subsidence, and National Forest lands and other public and private property not available for development.

Slopes: Areas with slopes in excess of 20 percent are generally considered unsuitable for urban type development. This by itself presents Wise County with severe development problems, since 92.4 percent of the county's 265,000-acre land area has slopes in excess of 20 percent. Only 5.3 percent of the county have slopes of 10 percent or less. The scarcity of "level" land becomes more apparent when one considers that almost a third (1,743 acres) of the 5,385 acres classified as "urban and built-up" have slopes in excess of 20 percent.

Soil Conditions: The engineering suitability of soils, or the ability of a particular soil to support various land uses, is of primary consideration in evaluating the suitability of land for development. Soil properties such as percolation, compaction, density, slope, depth to bedrock, underlying material, location, water table and composition are factors considered in determining the suitability and limitations a soil may possess for different land uses. A U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Survey of Wise County, Virginia, rated engineering suitability for home sites; large building foundations; basements; lagoons; roads, streets, and parking lots; and septic tank drainfields. Each soil type was given a rating of either good, fair, poor or unsuited for each usage category.

LAND OWNED BY RESOURCE COMPANIES and the U.S. GOVERNMENT

Land ownership can be divided into surface ownership, mineral ownership and "fee simple" ownership. The majority of Wise County's mineral acreage is owned by private coal and resource development companies. A land ownership study from 1980 showed corporate ownership of land in Wise County to be approximately 45 percent of the total surface land. Most of this land was owned by major resource development companies. There is no obvious indication of any major change in this ownership pattern since that time. At the same time, the USDA Forest Service controls approximately 13 percent of the county's surface lands. Thus, nearly 60 percent of the county's surface is, for all practical purposes, not available to private individuals and non-resource companies for purchase or development.

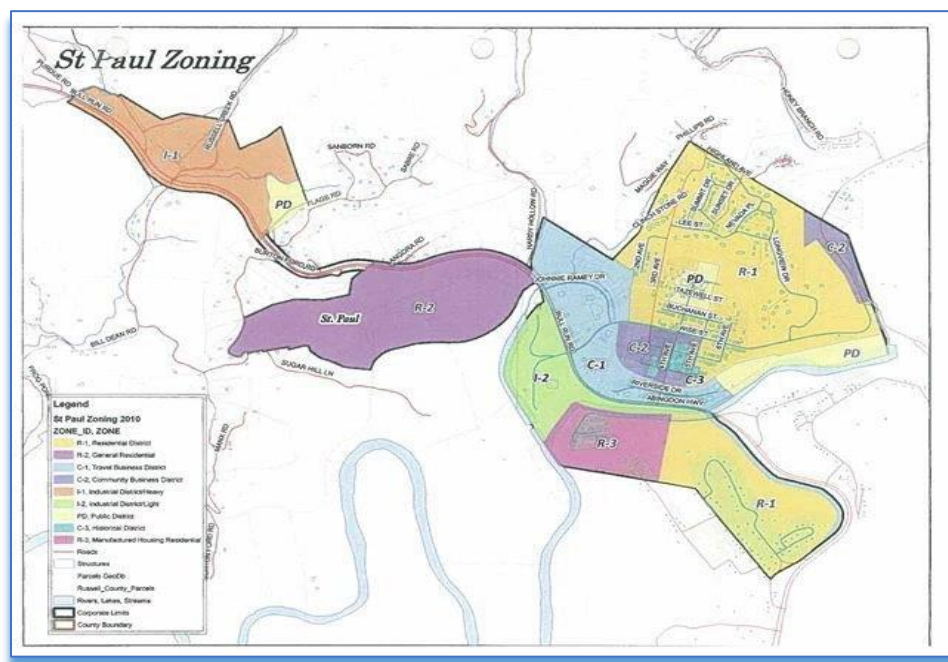
EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

The existing pattern of land use in the I Business District is illustrated on the *Existing Land Use* map as a part of this Plan and is attached.

Approximately one-third of the incorporated limits of St. Paul is in Russell County and approximately one-third of the populations lives in Russell County. The Town receives sales tax revenue from both Wise and Russell Counties.

The current town of St. Paul Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map was adopted on March 21, 2011. The intent of the town's zoning ordinance is to carefully balance the fundamental property rights and interests of the private citizens with the needs of the community as a whole, as outlined in the Town of St. Paul's Comprehensive Plan. Through the zoning ordinance, the town is authorized to provide for the establishment of districts within the town limits, in which the they may regulate, restrict, permit, prohibit, and determine:

- The use of land, buildings, structures, and other premises for agricultural, business, industrial, residential, flood protection, and other specific uses.
- The size, height, area, bulk, location, erection, construction, reconstruction, The alteration, repair, maintenance, razing, or removal of structures.
- The areas and dimensions of land, water, and air space to be occupied by buildings, structures and uses and of courts, yards, and other open spaces to be left unoccupied by uses and structures, including the establishment of minimum lot sizes based on whether a public or community water supply or sewer system is available and used.
- The excavation or mining of soil or other natural resources.



The St. Paul Zoning Ordinance outlines ten unique zones including:

- General Residential District (R-1)
- Residential District (R-2)
- Manufactured Housing District (R-3)
- Travel Business District (C-1)
- Community Business District (C-2)
- Historic Business District (c-3)
- Heavy Industrial District (I-1)
- Light Industrial District (I-2)
- Public District (P-1)

Commercial uses have developed in an elongated manner with frontage of each establishment along Main Street. The development pattern occurred because of the topography and the location of the railroads and US 58A. Future retail growth in the center of town will depend on the redevelopment of commercial land, conversions from noncommercial uses, and better utilization of all parcels, vacant and occupied.

A Farmer's Market was established in 2009 and has proven to be very successful. The market is located on the property adjoining the Lyric Theatre on "Market Square." The Town secured public grant funding to permit the construction of a permanent structure for the Farmer's Market.

Key Takeaway: St. Paul must use the remaining buildable and undeveloped land to best further the goals and objectives identified in this plan. In addition, opportunities for revitalization and redevelopment of land already developed should be considered. Finally, an additional future boundary adjustment might be in order to capture additional land better suited for development than that currently found within the Town limits.

CHAPTER 9

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

EDUCATION

A wide range of educational facilities are located in Wise and Russell Counties and provide services to the counties' residents. These include elementary, middle and high schools, vocational and technical schools and three colleges.

ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

The Wise County School Board operates the school system serving Wise County. St. Paul Elementary School is a grade K-8 facility situated on Deacon Dr. in St. Paul. Eastside High School in Coeburn is a grade 9-12 consisting of the former Coeburn and St. Paul High Schools. Eastside opened in 2013 and serves 350 students annually, offering course work in art, music, business, technical, Advanced Placement, and dual enrollment classes. According to Virginia Department of Education St. Paul Elementary School had 469 enrollments for the 2022/2023 school year as of September 30, 2023. The Russell County School System has 3,552 students in its district.

Fall Enrollment, Wise County Schools

| Year | Enrollment |
|------|------------|
| 2004 | 6,894 |
| 2009 | 6,785 |
| 2014 | 6,111 |
| 2022 | 5,913 |

Source: Virginia Department of Education

VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

The Wise County Career Technical Center offers a wide variety of course programs for public school students, including design and technology, drafting, graphic communications, and electronic technology. The learning process includes such technological advances as fiber optics, laser, robotics, and aerodynamics. Various adult evening classes are offered based on interest and enrollment.

The Flatwoods Job Corps Center, located near Coeburn, provides education and vocational training. The Center enrolls more than 200 students, who reside at the center for up to two years while being trained in one of seven construction trades. The center is operated jointly by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Forest Service.

COLLEGES

Two colleges located in Wise County and one in Russell County serve residents not only of the county but the region, state and scattered portions of the country as well.

- Located in Wise, the University of Virginia's College at Wise is a multiple-purpose institution with a liberal arts foundation. A four-year branch of the University of Virginia, UVA-Wise is co-educational with dormitory facilities. The college provides undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences as well as select undergraduate professional programs in business, nursing, teacher education and other fields. Its Continuing Education Program is offered at sites both on and off campus.
- Mountain Empire Community College and Southwest Community College are two-year state-supported colleges offering both university-parallel and occupational-technical degree programs. Both offer Associate of Arts, Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees, as well as certificates in a number of programs. Continuing Education courses and services designed to promote economic development, serving persons of all ages throughout the region are also offered. College facilities and personnel are available to provide specialized services to meet the cultural and educational needs of the area through credit and non-credit courses, cultural events, workshops and conferences.

UVA WISE OXBOW CENTER

In April 2019, UVA Wise received a grant from the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA) which was utilized for the second phase of Oxbow renovation – the Clinch River Ecological Education Center (CREEC). The Oxbow Center is a unique asset for our economic development efforts and economic diversification. The grant has helped build synergy between the region's ecological assets as well as pursue a technology industry cluster that falls within the VCEDA geography. The Oxbow Center partners with people from various businesses, ventures, projects and trades to create a network of professional support and, in turn, promotes economic development in the region.

LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Lonesome Pine Regional Library System provides services to county residents through its headquarters at Wise and three branch locations in Big Stone Gap, Coeburn and St. Paul. The St. Paul branch was opened in 1976 and named the Bicentennial Library. After many years renting different facilities, a building on Wise Street was donated to the Town by the Matthews family and named J. Fred Matthews Memorial Library. The library offers an extensive array of services for patrons, ate preschool to adult.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

There are four hospitals in the community:

- Norton Community Hospital – Ballard - Norton
- Mountain View Regional Medical Center- Ballard - Norton
- Lonesome Pine Hospital – Ballard - Big Stone Gap
- Russell County Hospital – Ballard - Lebanon

Other medical services include:

- C-Health of St. Paul is a clinic in the Holston Medical Group system.
- Riverside Community Medical
- Community Medical Care
- Castlewood Dental Group
- Coeburn Dentistry
- Lebanon Dentistry

Local Pharmacies include:

- Walgreens
- Blue Devil Drug
- Food City Drug

Nursing and Rest Homes, Extended Health Care Facilities:

- Greystone Manor
- Stonebriar

GOVERNMENTAL SERVICES

St. Paul provides police, fire and rescue services to the residents of the town and surrounding areas. Support is also provided, when needed by both Wise and Russell County governmental services. The town is served by a second-class delivery branch of the United States Postal Service.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Water: The Town of St. Paul water distribution system consists of a 0.5 MGD water treatment plant and approximately 20,000 linear feet of 12-inch through ¾-inch water line. There are five booster pump stations and seven water storage tanks (1.085 MG storage capacity) on the system. Water is supplied via a 12-inch transmission main line from the Clinch River. The system currently utilizes pump stations and tanks to provide service to the Virginia City, Hardy Hollow and Honey Branch sections of Wise County. It also maintains interconnections with the Castlewood Water & Sewage Authority, through which water can be provided to both the Castlewood and Dante systems.

At the time of this plan, the plant is producing 0.150 MGD, or 30 percent of capacity. The Town has water accountability of 86 percent. The plant is serving 1,010 persons through 655 connections.

Wastewater: The Town operates a 0.50 MGD MBR wastewater treatment facility located on the Clinch River. This facility, which utilizes state-of-the-art membrane technology, was placed in service in December 2015, and is designed to expand to 0.75 MGD with minimal upgrades. The facility discharges an average of 0.070 MGD to the Clinch River through a diffuser. The facility is considered a minor municipal wastewater treatment facility. The current sludge disposal plan requires sludge to be placed in the Wise County landfill.

CHURCHES

Religious facilities serving all major and many minor denominations are located either in or around the town. Most of the facilities offer many activities along with worship services.

ENTERTAINMENT AND MEETING VENUES

The Lyric Theater was built in 1950 as a 650-seat movie house. The theater and shoppe were the center of activity in downtown St. Paul until its closing in 1986. After many years of deterioration and blight, the building was bought in 2013 by the Town of St. Paul with funds from a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). St. Paul Tomorrow, Inc. was tasked to revitalize the theater. In January 2023, the theater has reopened as a multipurpose facility for live music, live theatre, vintage movies, meetings, and conferences with breakout rooms.

RECREATION

The Clinch River, the most bio-diverse waterway in the northern hemisphere, runs through the town, offering fishing, canoeing and kayaking. In recent years, the Town of St. Paul has become an epicenter of the region's numerous outdoor recreation activities, including hiking, biking, birding, wildlife and "off highway vehicle" trails.

The Spearhead Trails system's MountainView trailhead is situated in our "ATV friendly" town. Mountain View Trail System has grown to about 118 miles on 5,000 acres with about 20 miles of Single Track. The trail connects the ATV friendly towns of St Paul & Coeburn where outdoor adventurers enjoy a variety of lodging, camping, restaurants and shopping.

St. Paul is now the home to the Clinch River State Park, capitalizing on the Clinch River's natural, historical and recreational resources. It is the first blue way state park in Virginia. It consists of several smaller (250-400 acres) anchor properties connected by multiple canoe/kayak access points along a scenic stretch of the Clinch River. Some of the access points will be part of the state park, while other partner agencies and localities will own additional launch access points. These properties will comprise a "string of pearls," or a collection of properties along the Clinch River for outdoor enthusiasts to access the Clinch River. The build-out of the St. Paul portion of the park which includes Sugar Hill, will be completed in three phases. Each phase is estimated to take 7-10 years.

The Sugar Hill Unit in St. Paul (Wise County) is open for hiking, biking and fishing. The Sugar Hill Unit currently has nearly 8 miles of hiking trails, a picnic shelter, over 2 miles of river frontage, and significant cultural and historical attributes. The property contains remnants of an 18th-century French settlement. Sugar Hill Loop will continue to be open for hiking and other recreational activities during construction. You can also visit Oxbow Lake at current access point to Sugar Hill which offers picnic areas and walking trails. There is a public boat launch available for boat access to the Clinch River at Artrip (Russell County).

Other recreation opportunities include the St. Paul Municipal Pool has been updated and handicapped accessible. A few blocks from downtown you'll find Wetlands Estonoa, a student initiated, place-based service-learning project, home to numerous woodland creatures, aquatic species and birds.

LODGING

The previously mentioned outdoor recreation activities have resulted in an influx of visitors. As a result, lodging has seen an increase in demand. Visitors to the area now have access to cottages and suites, short-stay rentals, a small lodge, and full hook-up RV park and campground.

During the peak season and especially during festivals, race week, power plant shutdown (for repairs and maintenance) and music events we see full occupancy of all overnight stays within the town limits. Week-day nights are not at full capacity but during the summer season lodging is well utilized.

The Western Front hotel, a 30-room boutique hotel opened in 2018 in a previously dilapidated 1920's era building. The project transformed the building from an old retail and apartment building to a modern destination for visitors. Staying true to the building's roots, construction preserved the historic nature of the building while also incorporating modern design elements.

IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

Implementation of the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan is even more important than its preparation and adoption because the plan will be of little use unless it is carried out. There are several techniques authorized by §15.2-2204, Code of Virginia, that enable the Town of St. Paul to implement the plan once it has been approved by the Council. These include subdivision regulations, a zoning ordinance and capital improvements programming which are discussed below.

ADOPTING THE ST. PAUL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The St. Paul Planning Commission and the St. Paul Town Council must advertise and hold public hearings on the completed plan in accordance with regulations set forth in §15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia. After the plan is adopted, it may be amended as necessary to keep it up-to-date. However, the Code requires that the plan be reevaluated at least once every five years. Proposed plan amendments require public hearings and adoption by the Planning Commission and Town Council.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

The subdivision ordinance allows the Town of St. Paul to control the platting of vacant land and to regulate the layout and construction of new streets and utilities in order to assure that new development will be an asset to the Town. It also assists with the implementation of St. Paul's Comprehensive Plan by requiring that new subdivisions be developed in accordance with the Town's plans for streets and utilities. As set forth in §15.2-2240 of the Code of Virginia, every locality in Virginia is required to have a subdivision ordinance.

ZONING ORDINANCE

A zoning ordinance controls the use of land, lot sizes, the size and height of buildings, and the placement of buildings on the land. It also delineates district boundaries and specifies the activities which may be conducted in each district. Zoning helps preserve the existing character of an area by excluding incompatible uses while permitting those uses which can exist in harmony. However, it does not eliminate incompatible land uses which already exist in an area, but may provide a means of phasing out such uses if they are ever discontinued.

Both Wise County and the Town of St. Paul have adopted zoning ordinances. This ordinance helps implement St. Paul's comprehensive plan by requiring that those areas planned for residential, commercial and industrial uses be limited to their designated type of development.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

A capital improvements program (CIP) is a detailed and reasoned schedule for financing and constructing public improvements and facilities needed by a locality. A CIP usually covers a period of five years. It includes major public projects which, because of their size and expected long useful life, are considered inappropriate for the locality's annual operating budget. A CIP identifies projects which the locality wishes to accomplish over a five-year period. Every year the CIP is updated and extended another year into the future.

In order to prepare a CIP, St. Paul would have to analyze the way it programs funds for various public improvements. This would help assure that money is being spent wisely. A CIP should be used to schedule projects over a period of time, thus assuring that various development steps logically follow one another.

If St. Paul develops a CIP, the capital improvements recommended in the comprehensive plan should be considered among the projects to be included in the document. This would help tie together the timing, location, and financing of public improvements with the Town's planning program.

St. Paul may adopt a CIP in accordance with §15.2-2239 of the Code of Virginia. A CIP involves several stages of development. First would be a review of the comprehensive plan goals and the Town's financial condition and budget. Second would be a preliminary list of projects selected by the Planning Commission after it solicits input from the public. Third, the Council would select specific projects from this list and have a draft CIP prepared. Fourth, this draft would be presented at a public hearing, revised as needed, and tentatively approved by the Town Council. Finally, the CIP data would be transferred to a capital budget. The annual operating budget would be prepared and reviewed together with the capital budget and CIP. The town council has the authority to approve both capital and operating budgets and to pass appropriation ordinances.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

St. Paul should devise a program to inform its citizens of local planning efforts and the purpose and need for such efforts. This program would assist in soliciting citizen participation for the improvement of the Town, as well as improve the degree of public support for the comprehensive plan. The program could be offered as presentations to citizen advisory groups, neighborhood groups or civic organizations. Program subjects could include the planning process, planning commission function, comprehensive planning efforts, implementation efforts, and citizen participation. Public hearings provide the typical means of citizen participation. Comprehensive plans, subdivision ordinances, zoning ordinances, and CIPs require public hearings prior to adoption. For citizens, these hearings afford a forum where opinions and ideas are expressed. Public hearings are regulated by §15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Coordination among public and private decision makers is essential if the comprehensive plan policies are to be implemented. Without coordination, policies will overlap, their effectiveness will be reduced and costs will be unnecessarily high. Consistent decisions and the facilitation of citizen support are likewise essential. The Town must work closely with Wise County, the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, and state and federal agencies to achieve the stated goals. The Town cannot stand alone. It must be a team member, aware of its neighbor's activities and of new programs being considered by state and federal governments.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

Reevaluation is essential for the plan to remain a current and worthwhile document. Although the Code of Virginia requires that the comprehensive plan be reviewed by the planning commission every five years, it may require amendments at any time should some unforeseen occurrences change the premises upon which the plan is based. The plan must be flexible to change as new ideas and events occur, but should not be subject to change for a minor problem. In this way the plan will function as intended. It will be a useful guide for development, and it will be changed only when consistent with public health, safety, convenience and welfare.

LEGAL STATUS of COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ENFORCEMENT

Chapter 22, Article 3 of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia – in particular, §15.2-2232 – grants legal status to an adopted comprehensive plan. Any violation or attempted violation of these State Code provisions and/or any provision of the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan as referred to in §15.2-2232 may be restrained, corrected or abated as the case may be by injunction or other appropriate proceeding brought by the Town of St. Paul as authorized by the Code of Virginia.

APPENDIX I

Additional Transportation

VTrans

VTrans is Virginia's Transportation Plan to address the needs of moving people and goods throughout the Commonwealth in a safe and efficient manner. There are four major elements included: (1) Vision and Goals; (2) Mid-term Needs and Priorities; (3) Long-term Needs; and, (4) Strategic Actions.

Please see the chart below for specific VTrans needs:

| id | AADT_2018 | CoSS | CoSS_capacity_preservation | CoSS_non_LA_TDM | ST_NM | VDOT_COMMON_NM |
|-------|-----------|------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 65693 | 8534 | YES | YES | YES | Abingdon Hwy | ALT US-58E |
| 65723 | 8534 | YES | YES | YES | Us Highway 58 | ALT US-58E |
| 65730 | 8534 | YES | YES | YES | Abingdon Hwy | ALT US-58E |
| 65740 | 7320 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58E |
| 65750 | 8534 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58E |
| 66940 | 8534 | YES | YES | YES | Us Highway 58 | ALT US-58E |
| 67283 | 7320 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58E |
| 67891 | 7320 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58E |
| 69228 | 7320 | YES | YES | YES | Us Highway 58 | ALT US-58E |
| 70955 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58W |
| 70961 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58W |
| 70979 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Forest Rd. 704 | ALT US-58W |
| 70983 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Us Highway 58 | ALT US-58W |
| 71011 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Abingdon Hwy | ALT US-58W |
| 71013 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Abingdon Hwy | ALT US-58W |
| 71021 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58W |
| 71023 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Bull Run Rd | ALT US-58W |
| 72100 | 0 | YES | YES | YES | Us Highway 58 | ALT US-58W |

Pedestrian Bridge

The Three Rivers Destination Center will serve as the central hub of Southwest Virginia's rapidly growing outdoor recreation and tourism economy while tying together Main Street business, entrepreneurship and ecological education initiatives. Benefiting from years of preliminary planning and design work, the Center will fulfill several valuable roles as the Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority's (HOA's) headquarters, a visitor center for the newly opened Clinch River State Park and regional amenities, and as an ecology discovery center. It will be located in the Russell County portion of Town and serves as a partner in this project.

To connect visitors and local residents between the Destination Center and Downtown St. Paul, a pedestrian access bridge will be constructed. The bridge will cross the Clinch River and terminate on the lower end of Riverside Drive. Please see the attached map for additional information.

Transportation Funding

The Town of St. Paul wishes to provide the highest quality of transportation to its citizens and visitors. In doing so, the Town has worked with the Virginia Department of Transportation on a handful of projects. Below is a list of projects between VDOT and the Town since 2017:

UPC 56406 – Renovation of Historic Hillman House As A Welcome Center - \$175,000 – STP

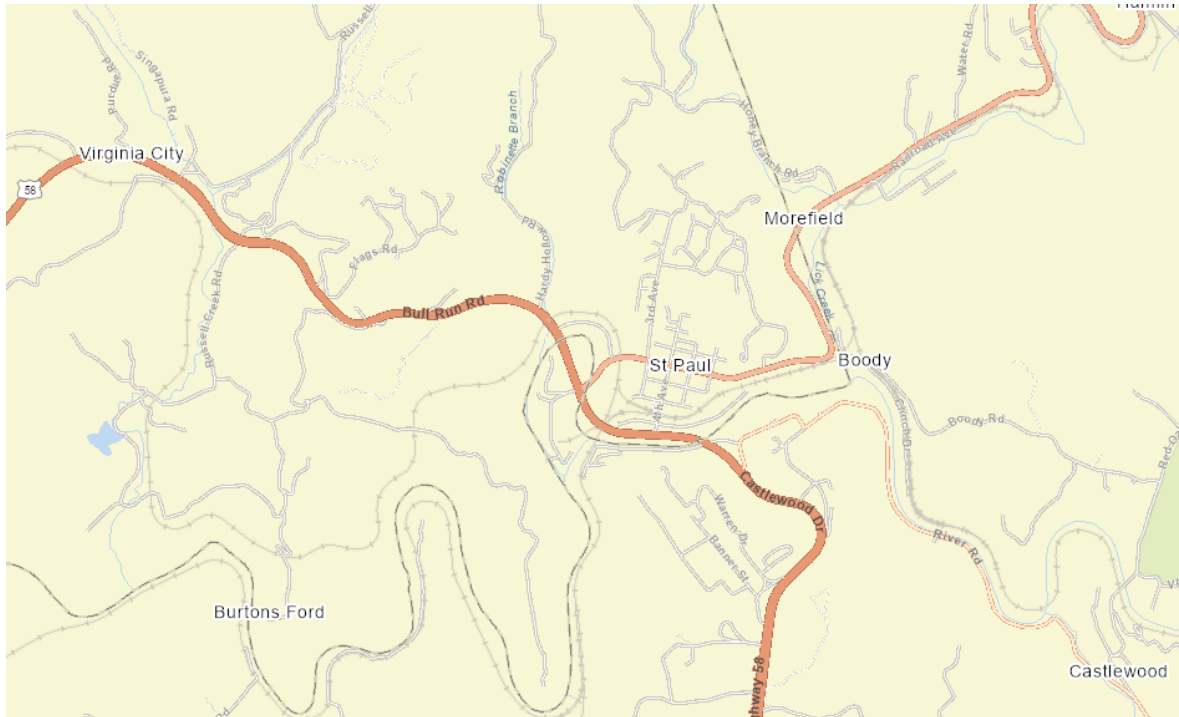
UPC 107235 – Reconstruct Roadway, Sidewalk, Curb/Gutter, Storm Drain - \$2,488,000

UPC 103606 – Downtown Streetscaping - \$651,000 – STP

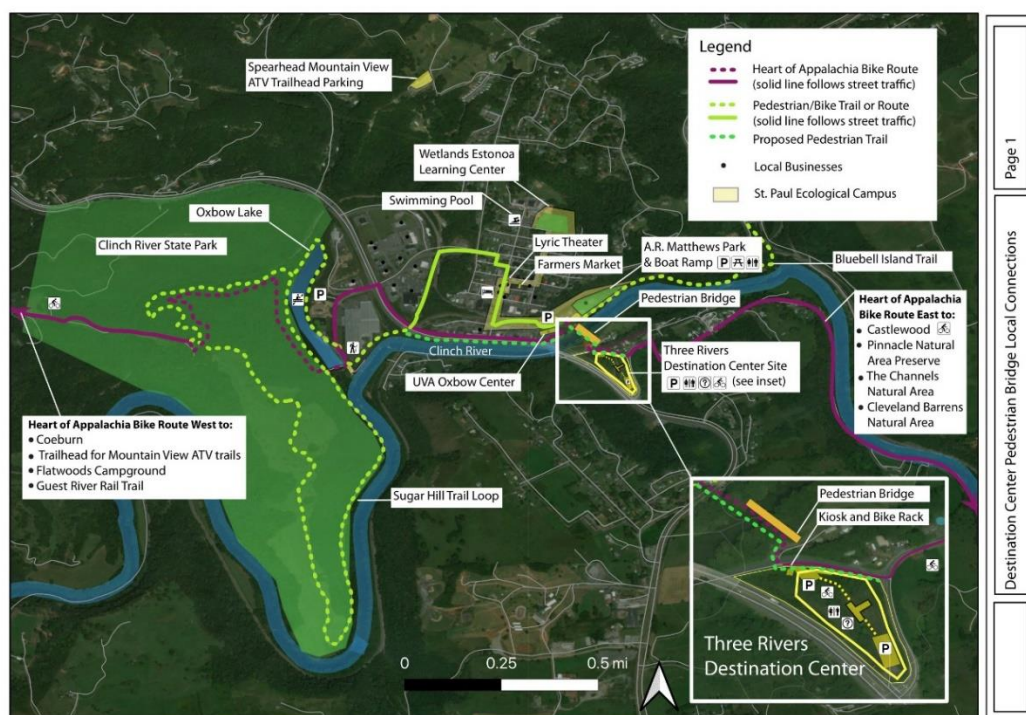
UPC 113766 – Replace and Construct New Sidewalk - \$687,000

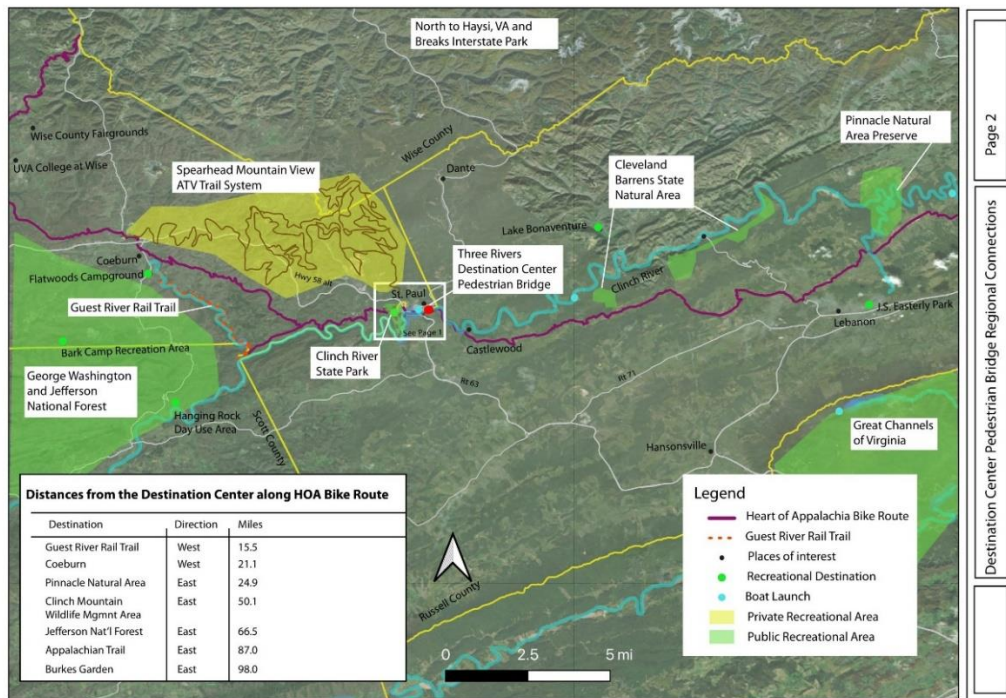
Maps

Map 1 – Current roadways and railways.



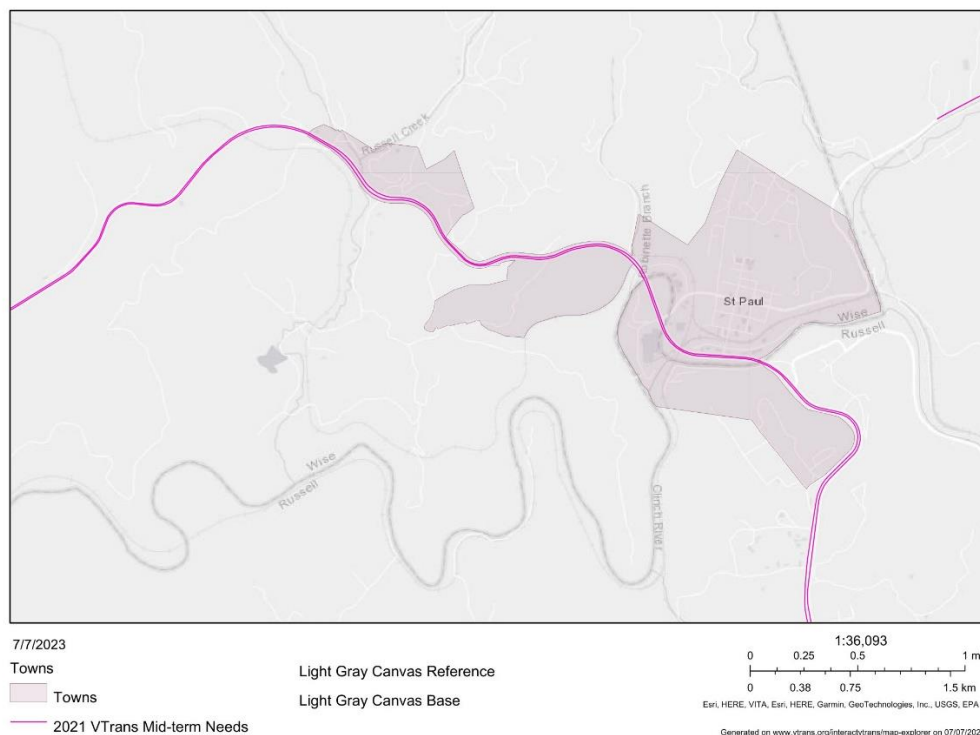
Maps 2 & 3 – Plans of the Three Rivers Destination Center.



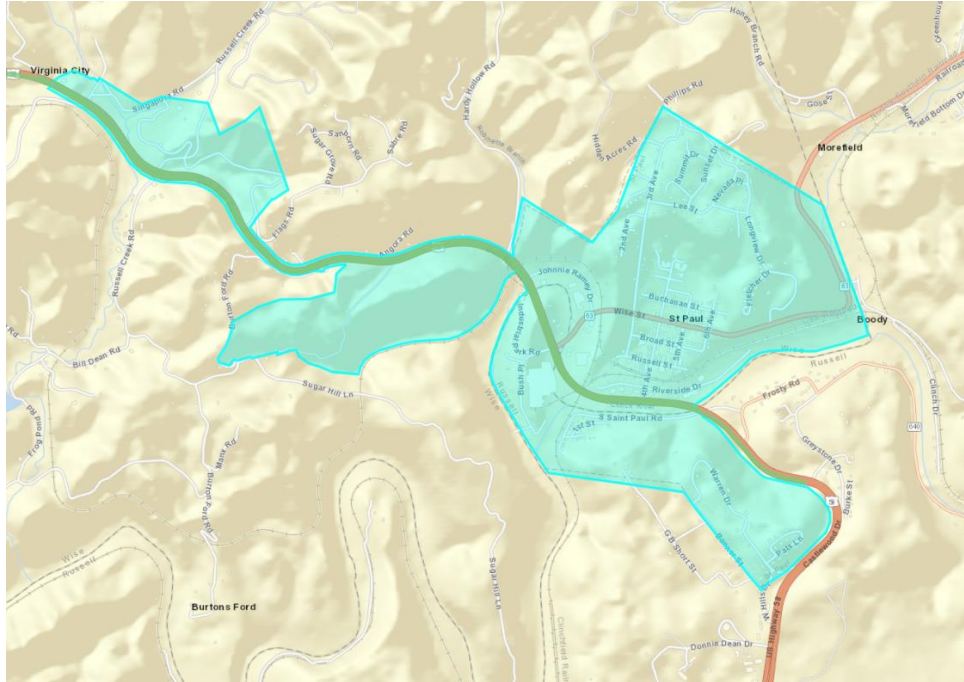


Map 4 – VTrans Needs.

VTRANS



Map 5 – Corridors of Statewide Significance (outlined in the darker green).



Map 6 – Roadway Functional Classification (outlined in the darker green).

