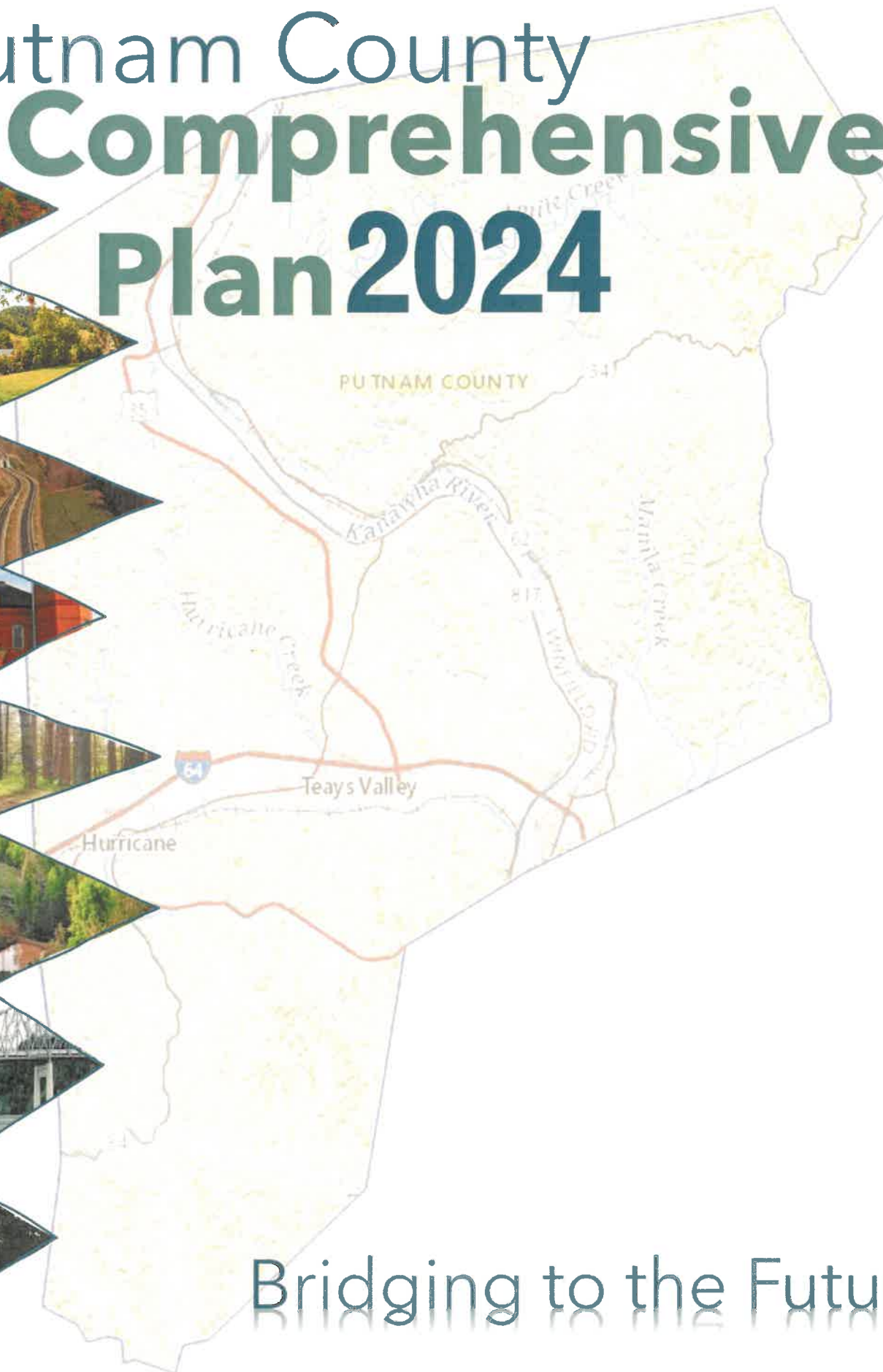
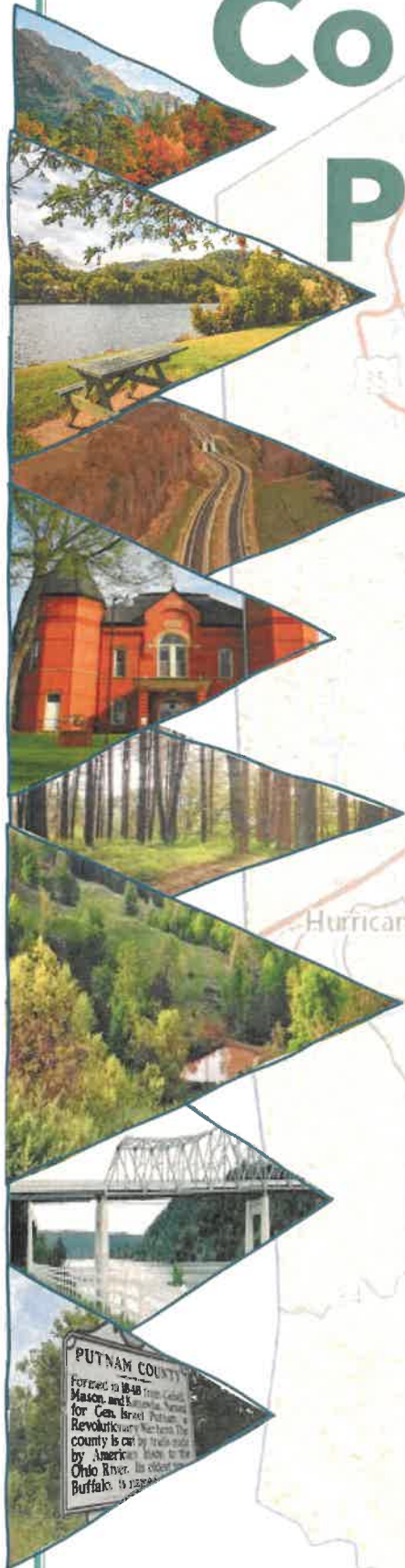


Putnam County **Comprehensive** **Plan 2024**



Bridging to the Future

Produced By

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Preface

Overview

In 2004 the West Virginia State Legislature adopted Section 8(A) of West Virginia State Code, which provides local governments the ability to implement and administer land use and land planning ordinances. This plan sets goals and objectives for land use development that include a timeline, action plan, and financial recommendations for each plan or objective. State code requires inclusion of land use, housing, transportation, infrastructure, public services, rural issues, recreation, economic development, community design, preferred development areas, redevelopment, financing, and historic preservation.

To provide for the orderly and efficient development of land, this legislation stipulates that a comprehensive plan be adopted to provide guidance for land-use decision making and direction for policies and initiatives in all areas of the county. A comprehensive plan incorporates the diverse visions of the residents, commerce, and industry into a common initiative.

The policy guidance provided by this plan applies to all Putnam County ordinances, specifically the amendment and enforcement of the *Zoning Ordinance for the Zoned Unincorporated Areas of Putnam County, West Virginia*. Further, this document is intended to give a clear and consistent vision by which the Putnam County Planning Commission and its governing body, the Putnam County Commission, make decisions on land use and development questions.

This plan presents a narrative of the current conditions of Putnam County that highlights areas in which the county has excelled and issues that could be improved upon. This plan provides guidance for decision making by highlighting community goals. Each section offers actions for achieving the community vision.



Mission Statement

This Comprehensive Plan is a tool to help achieve the community goal of:

Continuing the vision of improving quality of life to make Putnam County a better place to live, work, and play.

Location

Putnam County is in western West Virginia along the Interstate 64 corridor. A newly completed section of US Route 35 has further expanded an already good transportation infrastructure and now provides easier access to western cities such as Dayton and Cincinnati. The Kanawha River bisects the county providing water transportation access.

The metropolitan areas of Huntington and Charleston flank the County. This convenient location and its short commutes to the larger cities has caused substantial residential growth in past decades. Putnam County is included in the Huntington-Ashland, WV-KY-OH Metropolitan Statistical Area. The central part of the county touts a gently rolling terrain given way by the ancient Teays River system and glacial forces. This terrain is not typical in the region and provides Putnam County with a competitive advantage for growth and development.

The rural areas outside of Teays Valley and the Interstate 64 corridor have experienced slower growth. The rural character is a point of considerable pride among many residents. Areas north of the Kanawha River and south of US Route 60 are similar in their geography to surrounding counties with pronounced ridgetops and valleys. The rural nature of these areas paired with relative ease of access to nearby urbanized areas for employment, shopping, and recreation places them in high demand for individuals and families seeking the best of both worlds.

Process

The Planning process for this document was focused on collecting and incorporating public input. A public input questionnaire was conducted to gather and quantify the ideas and opinions of the citizenry. Advertisements for this effort were posted in forty local businesses around the county, listed in the Hurricane Breeze Newspaper, and given to twenty-four county organizations to share. In addition, The Office of Planning and Infrastructure established a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and held 5 committee meetings and 2 formal public hearings prior to adoption. Planning Commission staff also conducted numerous meetings with organizations and individuals interested in the future of Putnam County.

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee analyzed public input and used this information as the foundation for constructing goals for each topic covered by the plan. The topic of growth garnered suggestions to bring more dining and retail options to the county, create opportunities for indoor recreation for families, update and enlarge schools, protect residences from encroachment where growth is prominent, and preserve rural neighborhoods with low density development that doesn't over tax the infrastructure. Public input regarding transportation infrastructure was largely concern for the condition of secondary roads in the county, specifically Sleepy Hollow, Rocky Step, Teays Lane, Silver Street, Route 62 (through Buffalo and Poca), Bills Creek, and Eleanor circle. Many responses regarding the quality of life in Putnam County were positive, but there were several mentions of bringing more dining, retail, and entertainment for residents. Survey responses expressed an overall satisfaction with public safety services, but many requests for more funding for Fire and EMS as well as more ambulances, new or updated fire stations, full time fire departments (instead of volunteers), and more deputies for the Sheriff's office were received. Economic development is also a positive for our county, but residents want to see more development outside of the Hurricane, Teays Valley, and Scott Depot area.

The study area includes all of Putnam County and its municipalities that use the Putnam County Planning Commission as their designated planning commission, currently the towns of Buffalo, Bancroft, and Poca. This plan gives detailed attention to the zoned unincorporated areas of Putnam County, offering specific goals and action plans pertaining to land use and development in those areas.

History of Planning in Putnam County

Planning has a long history in Putnam County. The Putnam County Planning Commission was first organized in the 1960's when high growth first began in the Teays Valley area. With growth came a need to ensure that new development harmonized and blended with its surroundings and protected the character of the community.

Early attempts to make subdivision of land and development more orderly included adoption of subdivision regulations. The first local ordinance for this purpose was adopted around 1990. The current subdivision regulations have been amended at times to provide greater safety to citizens and ease to developers.

In 1991 Putnam County developed a Comprehensive Plan to guide the development and growth of the county through its greatest period of growth to date. This document provided a look at the conditions of the time and forecasted the potential victories and pitfalls that lay ahead. This Comprehensive Plan similarly identifies possibilities and offers guidance for improving the quality of life for county residents.

In 1996 the Putnam County Commission adopted the first version of the *Zoning Ordinance for the Zoned Unincorporated Areas of Putnam County, West Virginia*. This ordinance was based on the public desires for the growth and development of what was termed at the time to be the "High-Growth Areas" of Putnam County. These regulations set basic parameters for protecting residential neighborhoods from encroachment from commerce and industry while maximizing the growth of business in areas most suited for those endeavors. The adoption of this ordinance included the adoption of the county's first Zoning Map for the High-Growth Area.

In 2001, with funding from the Federal Highway Administration, the county undertook a comprehensive study of the corridor surrounding the proposed location of the relocated US Route 35. This planning process included public hearings in which residents were very vocal in expressing their desire to maintain the rural character of the corridor. This US 35 Corridor Management Plan was adopted as the basis for the amendment of the local zoning code. In 2003, the *Zoning Ordinance for the Zoned Unincorporated Areas of Putnam County, West Virginia* and the official Zoning Map were amended to reflect the goals and recommendations of the US 35 Corridor Management Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance for the Zoned Unincorporated Areas of Putnam County, West Virginia has been amended numerous times as the conditions in the county have changed.

Definitions

Agricultural – The use of land for commercial farming operations, including dairying, horticulture, floriculture, animal, and poultry husbandry, etc. Not to include commercial slaughtering or meat processing of anything not raised on the property.

Broadband Internet – the transmission of wide bandwidth data using one of several high-speed transmission technologies achieving download speeds of at least 25 Mbps and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps.

Commercial development – Development which generally refers to the process of developing land for commercial purposes, such as any wholesale, retail, or service activity being established to carry on trade for a profit.

Development – Any human-caused change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, degrading, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.

Grant funding – Money, i.e., financial assistance, given by a government, organization, or person for a specific purpose and does not require repayment.

High-intensity development – Densely developed areas including major employment concentrations, high density residential living, and related commercial and service uses.

Historical structure – A site designated as such by a governmental unit and placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Impervious surface – Any hard surfaced, human-caused areas that do not readily absorb or retain water, including but not limited to building roofs, parking areas, sidewalks, and other paved areas.

Infrastructure – The basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise.

Low-intensity development – Prominently development of low activity with minimum impact to the people, infrastructure, or the environment, such as single-family dwellings or low land use intensity development on large tracts.

Medium intensity development -areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units and services that support them.

Municipality – A city, town, or other district possessing corporate existence and usually its own local government.

Planned unit development – PUD is a community of homes that could look like single-family residences, townhomes, or condominiums and can include commercial units.

Rural – Sparsely populated regions located outside of towns or cities with fewer homes and buildings and lots of open spaces, often lacking access to infrastructure.

Shovel-ready - A phrase used to describe a site that is at an advanced enough stage (including infrastructure) for development.

Single-family residential development – A building designed or used exclusively for the occupancy of one family and having housekeeping facilities for only one family.

Tax increment financing - A TIF District is a financial tool used by local government to fund economic development. It is designed to utilize the growth in taxes created by business activity to finance critical improvements.

Urban – Belonging to, or relating to, a city or town.

Zoning - Adopted regulations and districts that govern land use and development standards in certain geographic areas.

Chapter 1

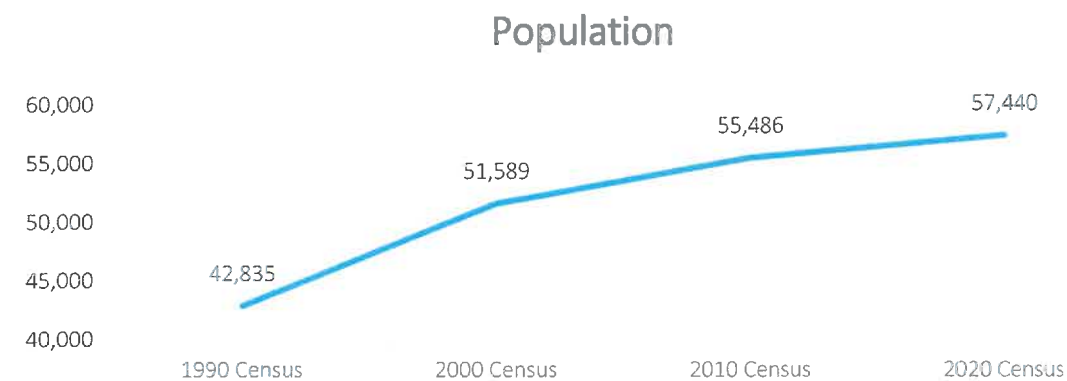
General County Profile

Overview

This section presents a wide range of statistical data for Putnam County to illustrate overall trends. The data is derived from a variety of sources including the US Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Putnam County Assessor, the Putnam County Office of Planning and Infrastructure, the Putnam County Development Authority, the Regional Intergovernmental Council, and Advantage Valley's Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

Socio-Economic & Demographic Data

Putnam County is a steadily growing community. As can be seen in Graph 1.1, between 2000 and 2020 the county grew by 5,851 individuals, amounting to population growth of over 11%. Between 2010 and 2020, the population increased by 1,954 (3.5%). By comparison, the population within the Advantage Valley Region saw a decrease of 5% and the state a decrease of 3.2% over the same period. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment projects continued growth in Putnam County over the next five years.



Graph 1.1 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

Growth in Putnam County is concentrated in the Teays Valley area along the Interstate 64 corridor. The population is exactly split by gender. As shown in Chart 1.2, 95% of residents identify as white, while 1.3% identify as black, and less than 4% represent all other races. The median age of Putnam County residents is 42.2 years. Approximately a quarter of the population is 19 years old or younger, while citizens 60 years old or older make up 20% of citizens.

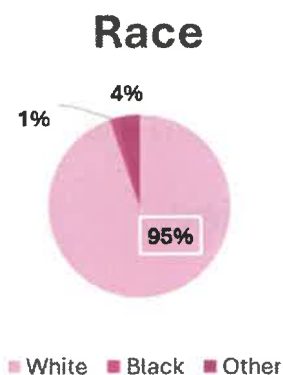


Chart 1.2 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

Population by Location

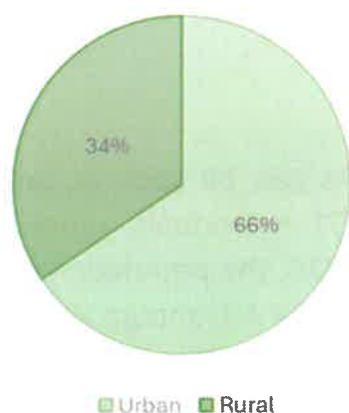


Chart 1.3 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

Population growth has occurred in urban areas, but Putnam County has a strong rural heritage which lends considerable desire for housing in rural areas. Roughly 66% of the population lives in an urban setting, while about 34% lives in rural areas, as illustrated in Chart 1.3. This allows for a wide range of settings available for housing in the county. Even the most remote rural areas are within a commutable distance to essential services and employment centers.

Between 2010 and 2020, the total number of households within Putnam County increased by 955 (4.3%). The county has an average of 2.5 individuals per household. Table 1.4 indicates that out of a total of 22,936 households, roughly 31% have children under the age of eighteen living in them. Not quite 6% of households with children present are single-parent households. Roughly one quarter of households are considered non-family, or individuals living alone.

Households by Type

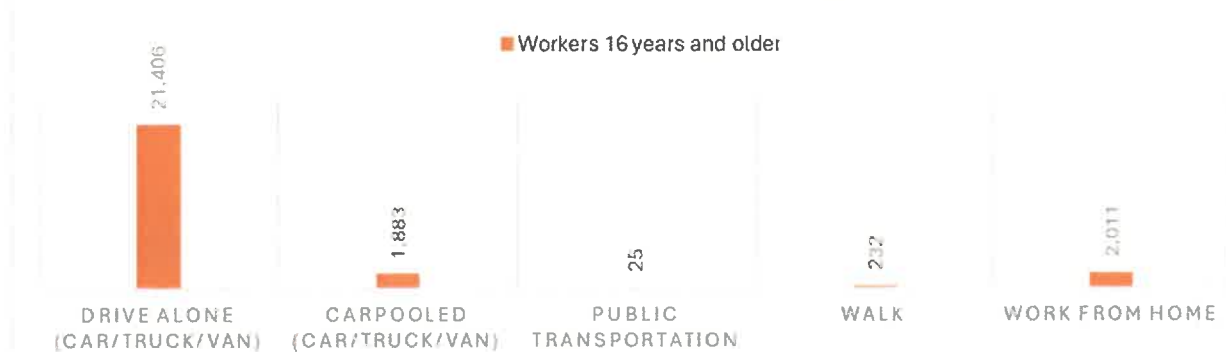
Total Households	22,936
With children under 18	7,188 (31.3%)
Married couple	12,505 (54.5%)
Single parent family	1,348 (5.8%)
Non-family	5,796 (25.2%)

Table 1.4 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

Housing demand is greater than what is available in the county. Presently, for sale

availability is at 0.4%; a healthy market has 2% to 3% availability. Demand for housing in Putnam County remains strong in large part because of the family-friendly living conditions created by award-winning schools and easy access to employment.

COMMUTING TO WORK



Graph 1.5 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Putnam County is a highly automobile dependent community. Eighty-three percent of residents drive to work alone, which is 7.5% higher than the national average. The road network within and near Putnam County allows for ease in automobile transport. The average commute to work in the county is 28 minutes; about average compared to the nation. Generally, residents do not use public transport for their daily work commute, partly due to limited access to those modes of transportation. Only about 1% of residents report walking to work. Easy access to employment is due in large part to the excellent vehicular transportation network within Putnam County. Of the estimated 25,790 workers over age 16, almost 93% commute to work of which 90% do so by automobile.

The workforce in Putnam County is strong and diverse and can be categorized into five broad categories by occupation. The first category is management, business, science, and arts occupations and accounts for just over 40% of the workforce. The next most prevalent category is sales and office occupations, comprising about 23% of the workforce. The remaining three categories make up for roughly equal parts of the remaining third of the county's employed population over sixteen and include production,

Occupation



Chart 1.6 (American Community Survey, 2022)

transportation, and moving occupations, service occupations, and natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations. These statistics are depicted in Chart 1.6 and closely mirror employment trends for the US.

Educational background is a major area of strength in Putnam County’s workforce. Putnam County Schools provide high quality career and technical education, as well as college preparatory courses and counseling. As shown in Table 1.7, more than 93% of the population over age 25 has completed secondary education or earned the equivalent. Putnam County boasts educational attainment rates much higher than the state average. More than a quarter of residents have obtained at least a bachelor’s degree, and over 10% of those people have completed a graduate or professional degree. This highly educated workforce continues to be a pillar of economic vitality in the county.

<i>Educational Attainment (Age 25 and over)</i>		
<i>High school graduate/equivalent</i>	14,200	(35%)
<i>Associate degree</i>	3,742	(9%)
<i>Some college, no degree</i>	8,307	(19%)
<i>Bachelor’s Degree</i>	7,241	(18%)
<i>Graduate/Professional degree</i>	4,739	(12%)

Table 1.7 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Household income is a reliable indicator of the economic health of a population. In 2023 Putnam County has an estimated median household income of \$78,379, which is 46.2% higher than that of the state. Between 2010 and 2023, Putnam County experienced a 48.6% increase in the median household income, which outpaced the rate of increase in the region and in the state during the same period. The median household income in Putnam County is projected to increase by 11.8% between

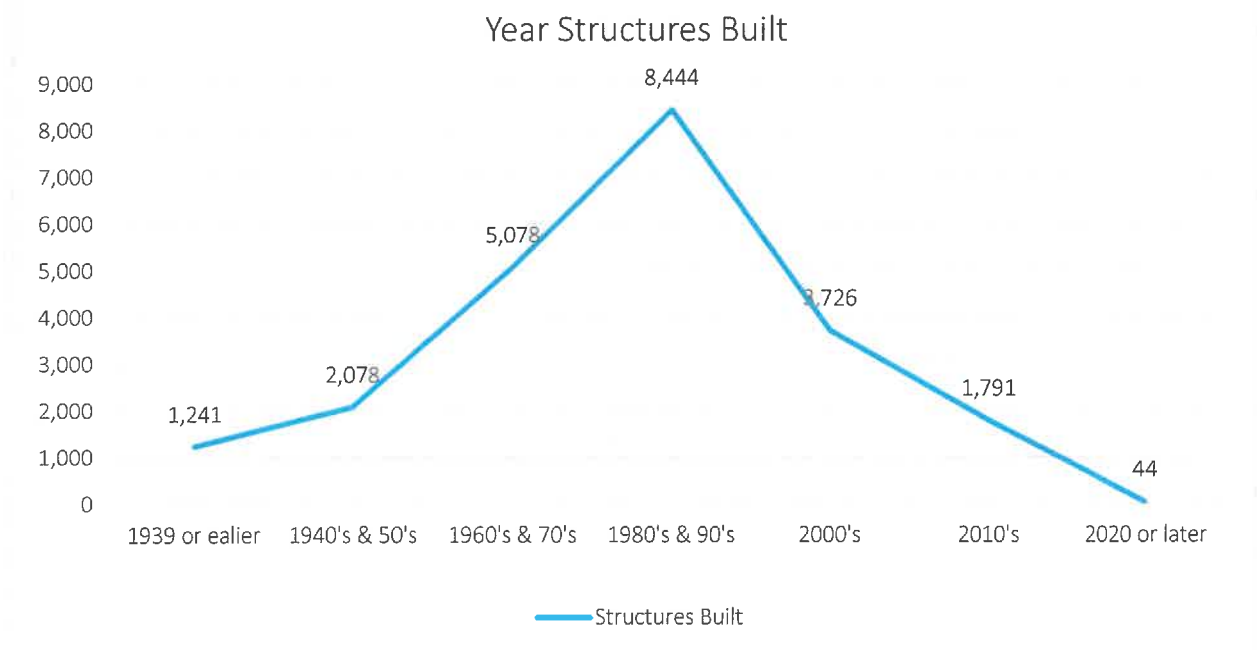
<i>Owner Households by Income</i>		
<\$19,999	1,317	6.9%
\$20,000-\$39,999	2,548	13.4%
\$40,000-59,999	2,472	12.9%
\$60,000-\$99,999	5,167	27.1%
\$100,000+	7,556	39.6%

Table 1.8 (Bowen National Research, 2023)A

2023 and 2028, resulting in a projected household income of \$87,598 in 2028. The projected household income is expected to remain above the projected median household income for the state (\$60,592). Distribution of household income is broken down in Table 1.8 to show what percentage of the population falls into each income category. A strong majority of households earn more than \$60,000 annually, which translates to strong buying power for the housing market. The American Community Survey estimates 10.9% of the population in Putnam County to be below the poverty threshold.

Comparatively, the nation's estimated population for whom poverty status is determined is 12.6%, while West Virginia's estimate is \$17.9%.

In total, there are an estimated 25,163 housing units in Putnam County in 2023. Depicted in Graph 1.9, Just over 33% of the housing units were constructed in the 1980's and 1990's, during the county's notable housing boom. Just over 55% of the housing units in Putnam County are less than 40 years old, illustrating the modern housing options the county offers to residents as well as the high rate of growth in previous decades.



Graph 1.9 (American Community Survey, 2022)

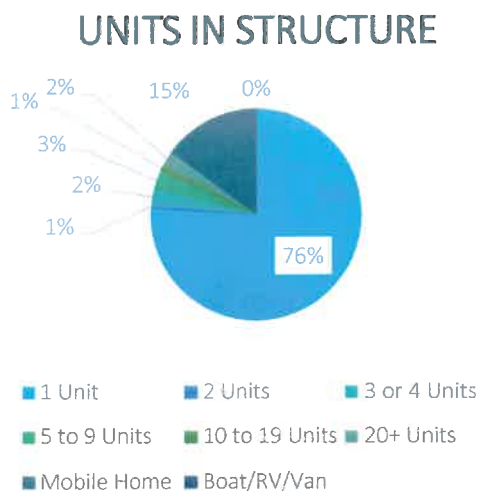


Chart 1.10 (American Community Survey, 2021)

Recent growth in the housing market has occurred in substantial amounts for multi-family residential structures. However, as can be seen in Chart 1.10, still less than 10% of residences are multi-family structures with three or more units. Single-family housing units account for 90% of residential structures in Putnam County.

The fabric of a community is more than the sum of its statistics. The numerical data provided here is only a snapshot of the overall condition of Putnam County.

A multitude of organizations within the county can provide greater detail in many regards. The Office of Planning and Infrastructure is glad to share its knowledge of public and private entities that serve to promote and facilitate the growth and development of Putnam County. There are also numerous resources to assist potential residents, developers, and businesses in making Putnam County their home for future generations.

Development Data

Putnam County has sustained growth in a national economic climate that has crippled many communities. Since 2009, the slowest development year in many decades, the county has seen continued development, even during the global pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Between 2012 and 2022, the Office of Planning and Infrastructure issued 339 commercial or industrial development permits. During the same period development permits were issued for thirty-eight multi-family structures and over 1,400 were issued for single-family structures. This consistent growth demonstrates Putnam County's resilience in economic downturns.

PUTNAM COUNTY UNINCORPORATED AREA DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPROVALS											
Year	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Residential	134	157	137	129	129	129	138	128	122	83	116
Site-Built	98	97	93	78	66	80	74	59	46	39	74
Multi-Family	2	3	1	9	1	2	0	0	9	7	4
Mfd Homes	34	57	43	42	53	47	64	69	67	37	39
Commercial	33	37	32	30	20	33	22	18	18	30	66
Accessory	27	24	23	23	12	25	33	32	23	42	20
Other	5	3	5	5	5	8	8	8	9	2	4
Total	199	221	197	187	157	195	201	186	172	157	207

Table 1.11 (Putnam Co Office of Planning & Infrastructure, 2022)

Table 1.11 lists the number of development permits issued across an array of development types. Development permitting slowed in 2021 and has since bounced back, emphasizing how desirable Putnam County is as a place to live and conduct business. Continued economic stability requires that growth be well integrated to keep the county's character intact, so the county continues to be an attractive place for potential residents and businesses to call home. For further information

pertaining to development statistics, consult the Putnam County Planning Commission Annual Report, available to the public in the Office of Planning and Infrastructure.

Applicable Local Ordinances

The Zoning Ordinance for the Zoned Unincorporated Areas of Putnam County, West Virginia, adopted on May 13, 2003, has land use authority for properties within this designated area. The county adopted these land use controls, and development standards have been incorporated to preserve property values and quality of life.

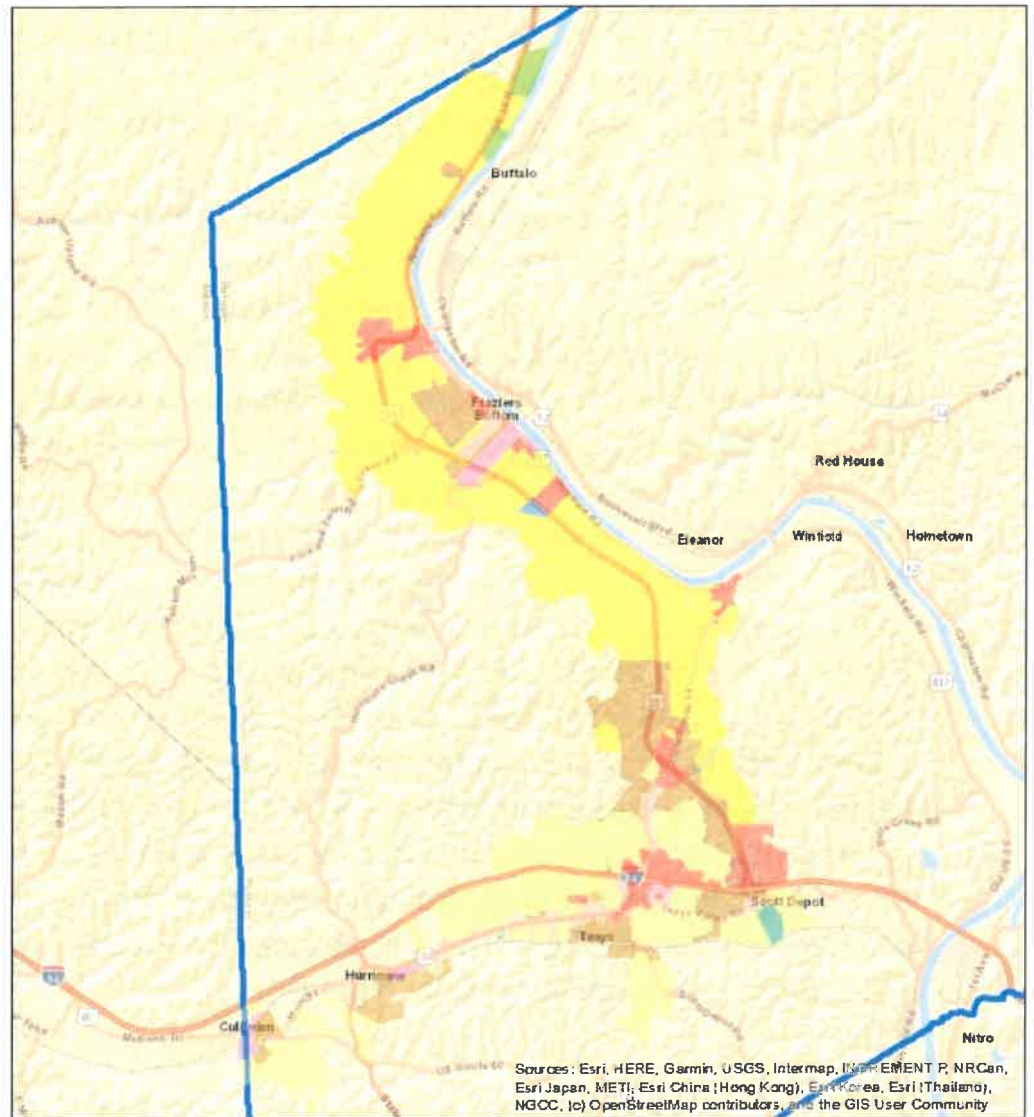
Development standards include property line setbacks, lighting, parking, solid waste, storm water management, and density requirements. Site planning review is always available from county staff to give guidance on the development potential of properties under applicable zoning rules and other local standards. Other applicable local laws include a FEMA compliant Floodplain Management Ordinance which spells out standards for development in flood prone areas. This ordinance provides site plan review authority and assures that development in floodplains cause no adverse impact to the development itself or surrounding properties. Human health, safety, and welfare are of paramount importance in areas of significant flood risk. Safe and resilient habitable structures, no matter their relationship to a flooding risk, are the goal of this local law. The county also reviews commercial site plans outside of the Zoned Unincorporated areas for sediment and erosion control, highway access and basic storm water impact among other criteria. An Adults Only Establishment Location Ordinance and a Salvage Yard Permit Ordinance provide development and location standards for adult establishments and salvage yards. A Dilapidated and Abandoned Ordinance grants authority to the county to compel property owners of dilapidated and abandoned structures to secure the structure so as not to cause a safety or health hazard.

Figure 1.12 Putnam County Zoning Map

Legend

Zoning

	Agricultural
	Suburban Commercial
	High Density Commercial
	Highway Interchange
	Light Industrial
	Industrial Office Park
	Planned Development
	Single Family Residential
	Mixed Residential
	Neighborhood Residential
	Rural Residential



(Putnam County Assessor, 2023)

Chapter 2

Land Use

Overview

This section of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the current land use circumstances and evaluates how the policies and initiatives can be bolstered or augmented to further overall goals of the community. There are three basic land use categories that can be used to discuss specific conditions, goals, and actions for areas within the county: *Rural*, *High Growth*, and *Municipal*. Each of these areas face unique challenges and opportunities.

Putnam is one of the fastest growing counties in West Virginia, increasing by more than 11 percent during the 21st century. Rapid home-building dominated growth from 1980 to the early 2000's. This trend slowed when the national economy experienced a decline in the housing market and has since leveled off. As commercial and industrial development continues to grow, the county's housing market has limited availability. The creation of housing options for current and prospective residents is key to helping meet the demand and encouraging commuters to move into Putnam County.

Land use varies widely throughout the county. Several municipal jurisdictions are outside the scope of this plan because they have invoked local land use authority under the state enabled legislation, specifically the City of Winfield, the Town of Eleanor, the City of Hurricane, and the City of Nitro. Much of the county's setting is rural with residential, agricultural, and commercial/industrial uses occurring sporadically. High growth areas cluster around highway access. Industrial development tends to favor the Kanawha River, for access to barges and railways. The variety of land use in Putnam County reflects a strong and varied economy.

Rural Areas: Current Conditions

Rural land makes up much of Putnam County. Generally, areas north of the Kanawha River, excluding municipalities, and south of the US Route 60 are rural in nature. Rural areas are typically situated away from highway access points; however, a vast

amount of rural land has been opened to highway access along the US Route 35 corridor since its completion in 2021.

Rural land use in Putnam County is generally residential or agricultural in nature. This is true of areas south of US Route 60 (Figure 2.2). Large tracts of land are forested or otherwise undeveloped. On the north side of the Kanawha River some ridge top land is utilized as pastures and hay fields, concurrent with the livestock production common in the area (Figure 2.3).

Residential development in rural areas is almost entirely single-family dwelling units and tends to be concentrated along main transportation routes, such as State Route 34 and US Route 60. Residences in rural areas are typically situated on larger tracts of land, giving these areas a lower population density than that of the Interstate 64 corridor and the Kanawha River Valley.

Commercial development in the rural parts of Putnam County tends to be on a smaller scale. Some rural areas lack access to necessary utility infrastructure for commercial land use. Lack of water infrastructure is a limiting factor for the development of both enterprises and residences. Additionally, limited access to broadband internet impacts the spread of residential and educational, as well as commercial land uses into the rural areas.

Some rural areas of Putnam County have seen the improvement of certain infrastructure or utilities, while others continue to have limited access.

Figure 2.1 Land Cover Southern Putnam County Zoning

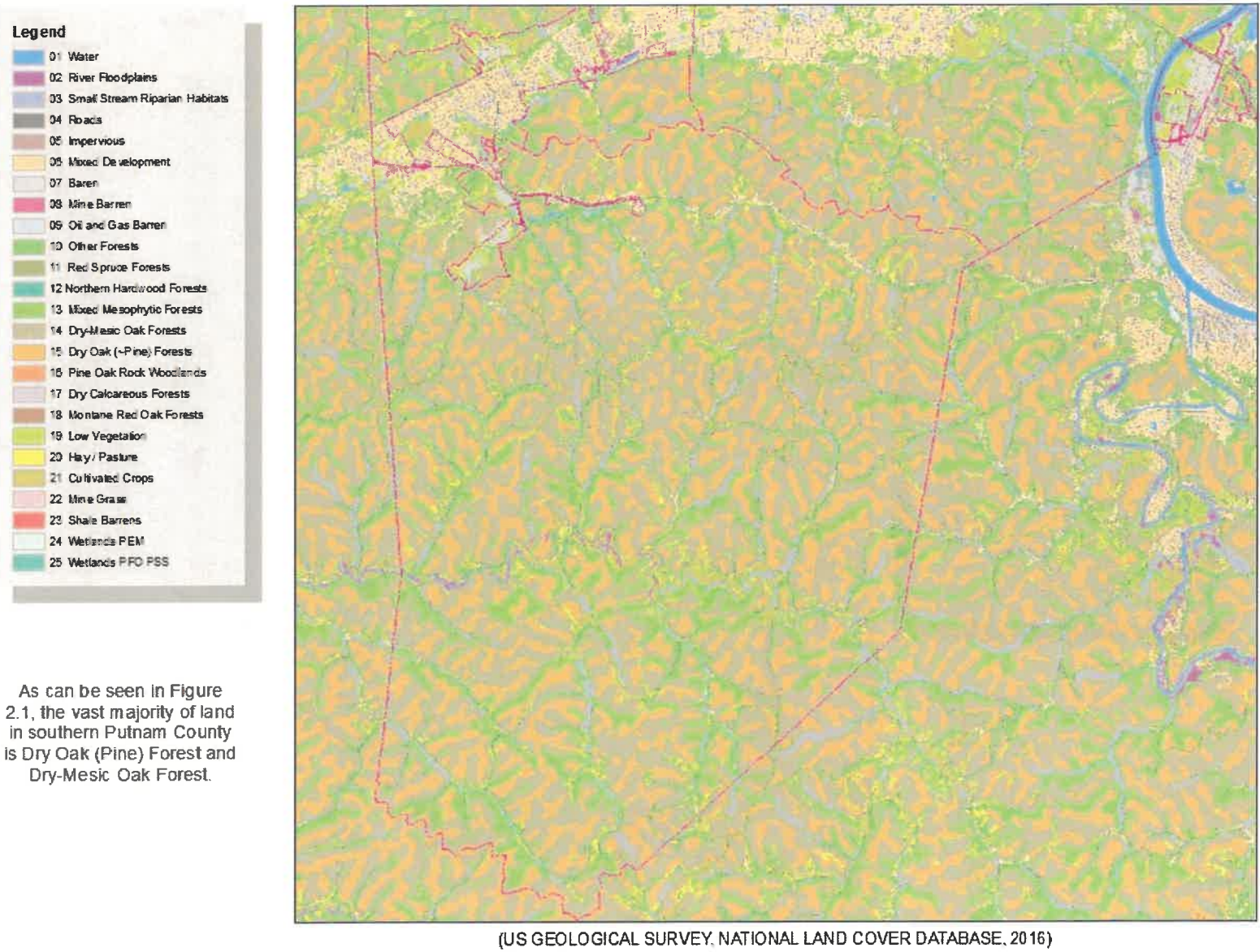
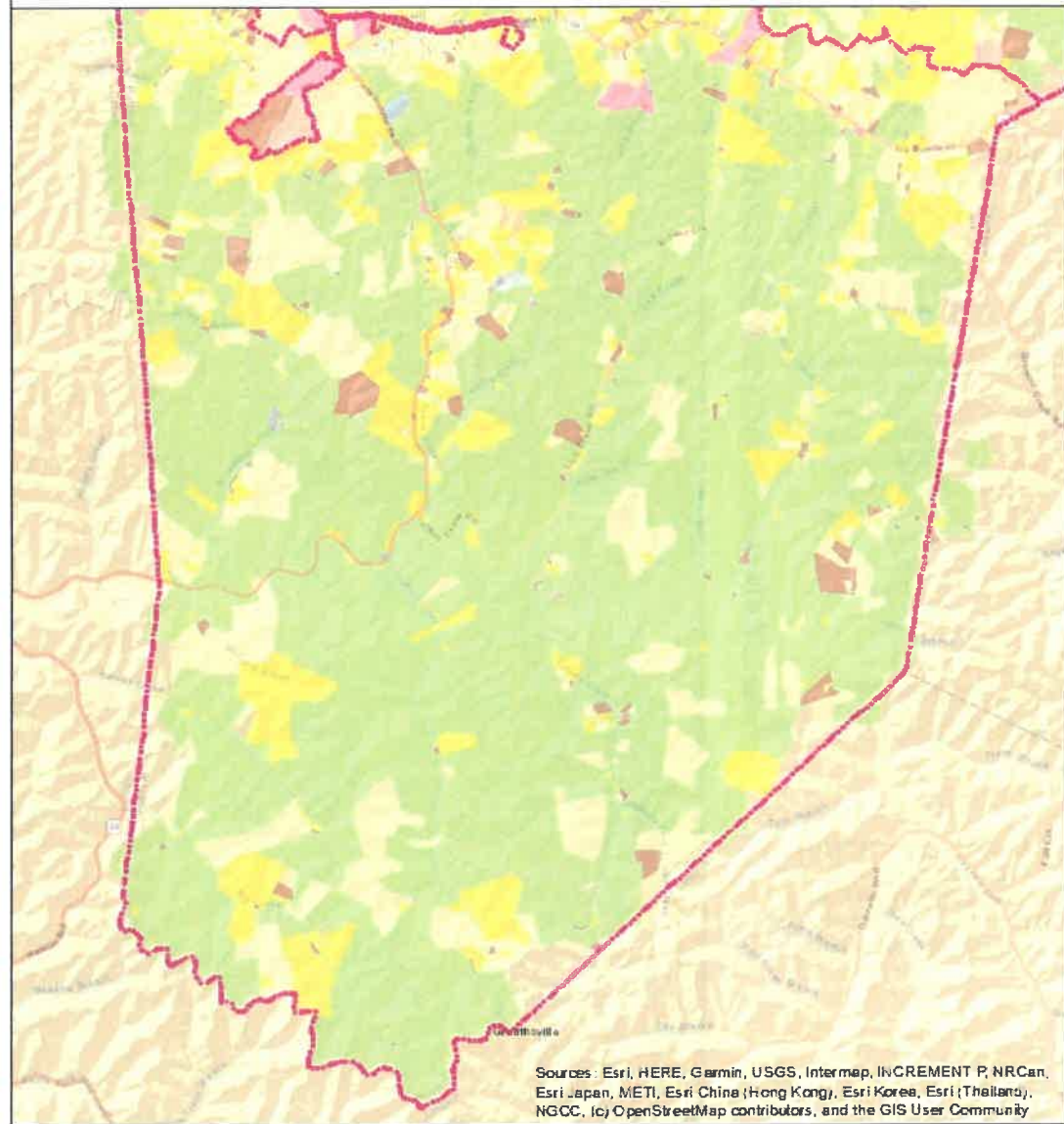


Figure 2.2 Land Use Southern Putnam County



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

Figure 2.3 Land Cover Northern Putnam County

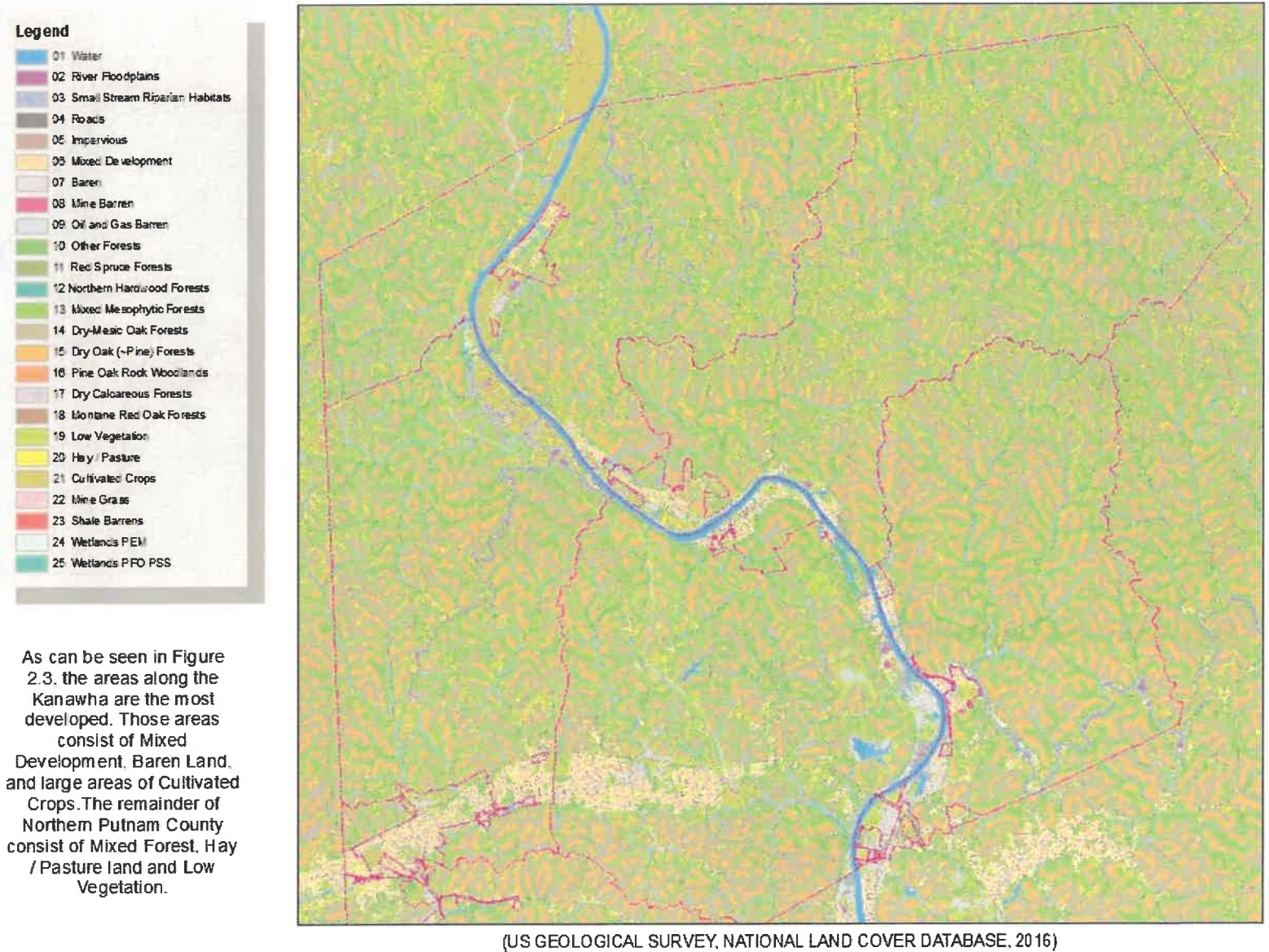
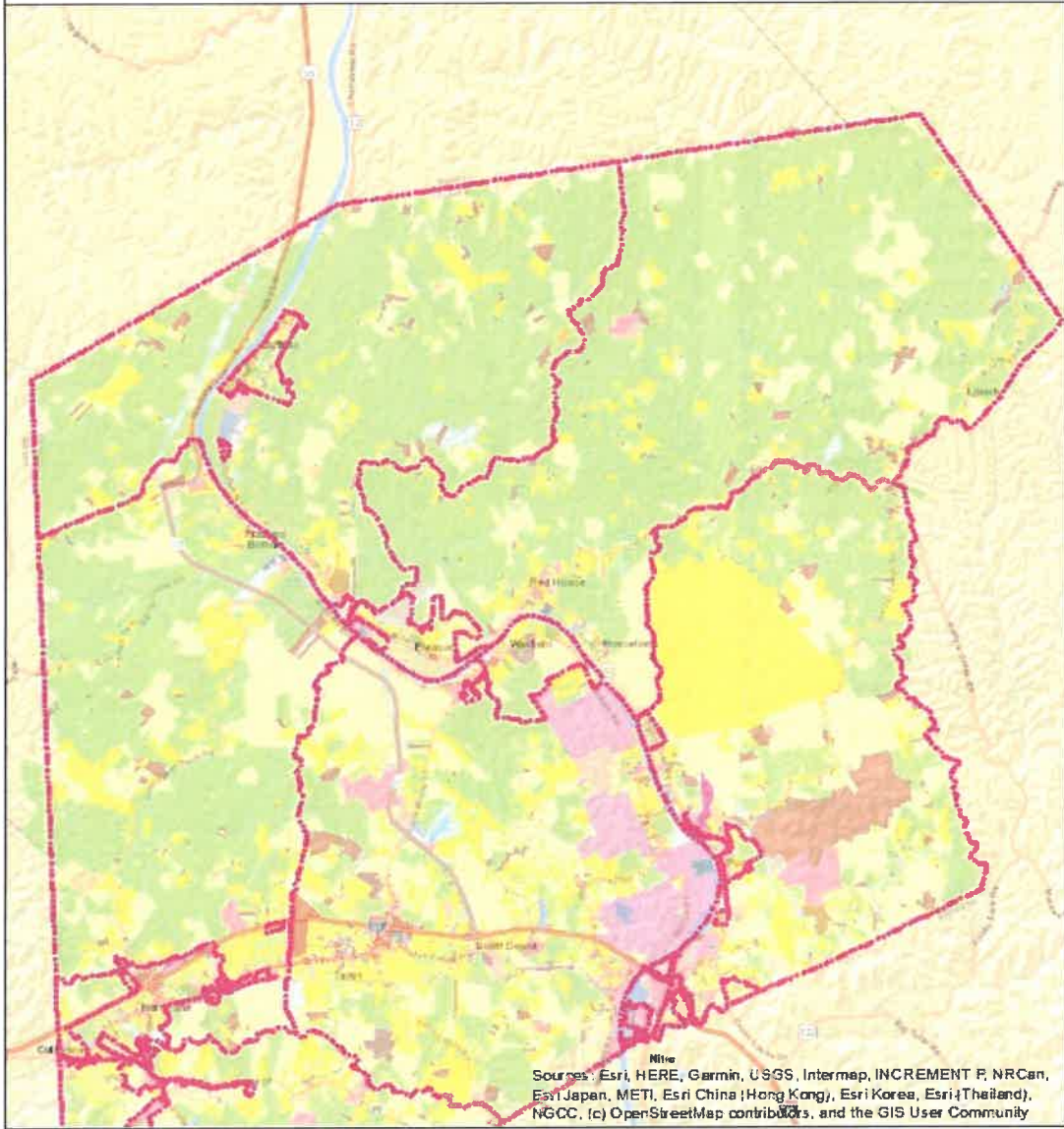


Figure 2.4 Land Use Northern Putnam County

- Legend**
- Putnam County Land Use**
- Residential Undeveloped/Minimally Improved
 - Single Family
 - Multi Family
 - Mixed Use
 - Mobile Home
 - Agricultural
 - Unsound Residential
 - Apartments
 - Commercial Undeveloped
 - Residential on Commercial Land
 - Unsound Commercial
 - High Intensity Commercial
 - Low Intensity Commercial
 - Mobile Home Park
 - Industrial Undeveloped
 - High Intensity Industrial
 - Low Intensity Industrial
 - Exempt Undeveloped
 - Cemetery
 - Government/Federal Buildings
 - Misc Exempt
 - Recreational
 - Institutional Building
 - Religious/Church
 - Utility Undeveloped
 - Utility
 - Communications
 - Unknown



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

Rural Areas: Priorities

Residents of rural areas express a desire to preserve the rural character of the region, citing the privacy it affords as a primary attraction for taking up and maintaining their residence. The privacy of rural areas in Putnam County coupled with reasonable commutes to essential services is a favored style of development for residents living in the northern and southern parts of the county. Promoting low density development will ensure that transportation and utility infrastructure will not become overly taxed; additionally ensuring that the overall character and nature of these areas is retained.

Roads in rural areas, while less heavily trafficked than those in higher growth areas, provide essential access for property owners and public safety officials. Roads with enhanced safety features and routine maintenance will ensure this access. Roads are essential and are best accompanied by balanced growth and availability of utilities.

Rural Areas: Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Continue to increase and improve the access to basic utility infrastructure for rural lands, including water and broadband internet access to support current land use and invite compatible growth.

Actions:

- Coordinate with public service utilities to expand utility networks in rural areas.
- Seek external sources of funding for utility expansions.
- Prioritize new projects to expand utility access for the greatest number of customers.
- Construct a county-wide fiber optic network.

Finance:

Grant funding can be sought from the Federal Government and the State of West Virginia, including but not limited to the WV Broadband Enhancement Council.

Financial coordination with service providers, land developers, and the county should be utilized to fund expansion and improvement projects.

Medium Range Goal:

Improve roadways in rural areas to ensure public safety and ease of access.

Actions:

- Seek external sources of funding for road improvements.
- Lobby for roadway repair for deteriorated or potentially dangerous roads.
- Lobby for roadway improvements including vehicular safety features.

Finance:

Roadway funding is almost exclusively administered by the West Virginia Division of Highways. Working in conjunction with the Division of Highways is essential for acquiring funding for roadway projects in Putnam County. Engaged participation from county officials in planning efforts of regional planning partners is key for allocation of funds to the maintenance of county roadways.

Long Range Goal:

Preserve the rural character of Putnam County.

Actions:

- Support development in rural areas by implementing adopted development standards to maintain rural character.
- Promote the development of lands near high intensity and in medium intensity developed areas and/or where infrastructure supports it.
- Encourage the development of land uses that blend with the county's rural character.

Finance:

Achieving this goal involves adherence to and the ability to change land use ordinances as conditions evolve. Outside financing can be sought through grant funding for rural preservation.

High Growth Areas: Current Conditions

High growth areas of Putnam County continue to experience development consistent with growth over the last forty years. This growth has roots in suburbanization that evolved to include commercial and industrial land use. Continued growth in each land use type paired with a focus on increasing density in the medium intensity developed areas will ensure the economic prosperity of the county.

The Teays Valley area is located along the Interstate 64 corridor from the St. Albans exit ramp to the corporate limits of the City of Hurricane (Figures 2.5 & 2.6). This swath of land is uncharacteristically flat for the region and therefore in high demand for development.

The major thoroughfare, State Route 34, is primarily lined with commercial development including professional services, retail, restaurants and medical services. CAMC Teays Valley Hospital serves as an anchor land use for many associated medical services in the area. Major shopping center complexes are in the area surrounding the intersection of State Route 34 and Interstate 64.

Residential land use in the Teays Valley area is primarily single-family residential units including detached structures and multi-unit structures. Some of these developments include amenities, but private recreational open space is not widely present. Single-family subdivision developments have been almost entirely developed in a single-use style.

Commercial developments are often organized as multi-tenant structures, but less often incorporate mixed commercial uses and almost never residential uses. Commercial uses in this area are utilized by residents from both inside and outside the high growth areas and attract customers from the county at large.

Other areas that have grown at a moderate rate or show the potential for high rates of growth include the land surrounding the intersection of State Route 34 and U.S. Route 35 and the area surrounding the intersection of Teays Valley Road (CR 33).

High Growth Areas: Priorities

The high growth areas of Putnam County are still experiencing steady growth. The development has been somewhat piecemeal, so physical and visual flow between different structures is lacking. Medium to high density land uses concentrated in the high growth areas have minimal interconnectivity between developments. Congestion of roadway infrastructure is also intensified where large-scale, low-intensity developments are served by only one ingress and egress point. Interconnectivity of development should be encouraged to facilitate local travel and to increase access for public safety officials.

This disjointedness is evident when considering the overall aesthetic appeal of the community. Many developments are compartmentalized within themselves, which impedes the ability of people to move from one development to another and lends an arbitrary appearance to the area. Community identity, design, and aesthetics ought to be considered with new development.

Attention to community design is a key factor in preserving the character of Putnam County. Setting land use standards that require consistent site planning with a focus on creating open spaces, proper property line setbacks, and controlling density will ensure that new development and redevelopment bring continuity to our community. Site plan review and land use controls are means to alleviate inconsistencies and avoid development styles that hinder community character.

Ensuring future development is consistent with these high development standards is necessary, however, adoption of architectural standards as a part of local law is not desired. Smart site planning standards that reflect the desire to have a safe, comfortable, and healthy community are a top priority. Evaluation of development standards is necessary to determine which regulations contribute to improving community design and which are detrimental to the goal.

Community design priorities include, but are not limited to:

- Maximize density where infrastructure can support it.
- Reducing density where rural land use and design are predominant.

- Reducing impacts from neighboring development through effective site planning
- Prioritizing space for people to walk and recreate in developments, enhancing the clean and healthy appearance of neighborhoods.
- Preserving historical structures and places that demonstrate and exemplify the history of Putnam County
- Encouraging commercial development which reflects the lofty standards of living that Putnam County enjoys.
- Development of public spaces that serve as gathering spaces for the community.

These priorities are wide ranging because community design varies widely from densely developed suburban areas to cities, and from towns to countryside. Community design and land use are linked in Putnam County, especially in high growth areas that have land use standards in place.

Putnam County has demonstrated its appeal as a desirable place to seek residence. Activities that serve as pastimes for residents are essential to maintaining a vibrant community. With elevated levels of growth comes an increased demand to develop land to the most profitable use. To ensure the continued profitability of development and desirability of residence in Putnam County, recreational open space must continue to be present. Open space for recreation facilities is essential.

Figure 2.5 Land Cover Teays Valley



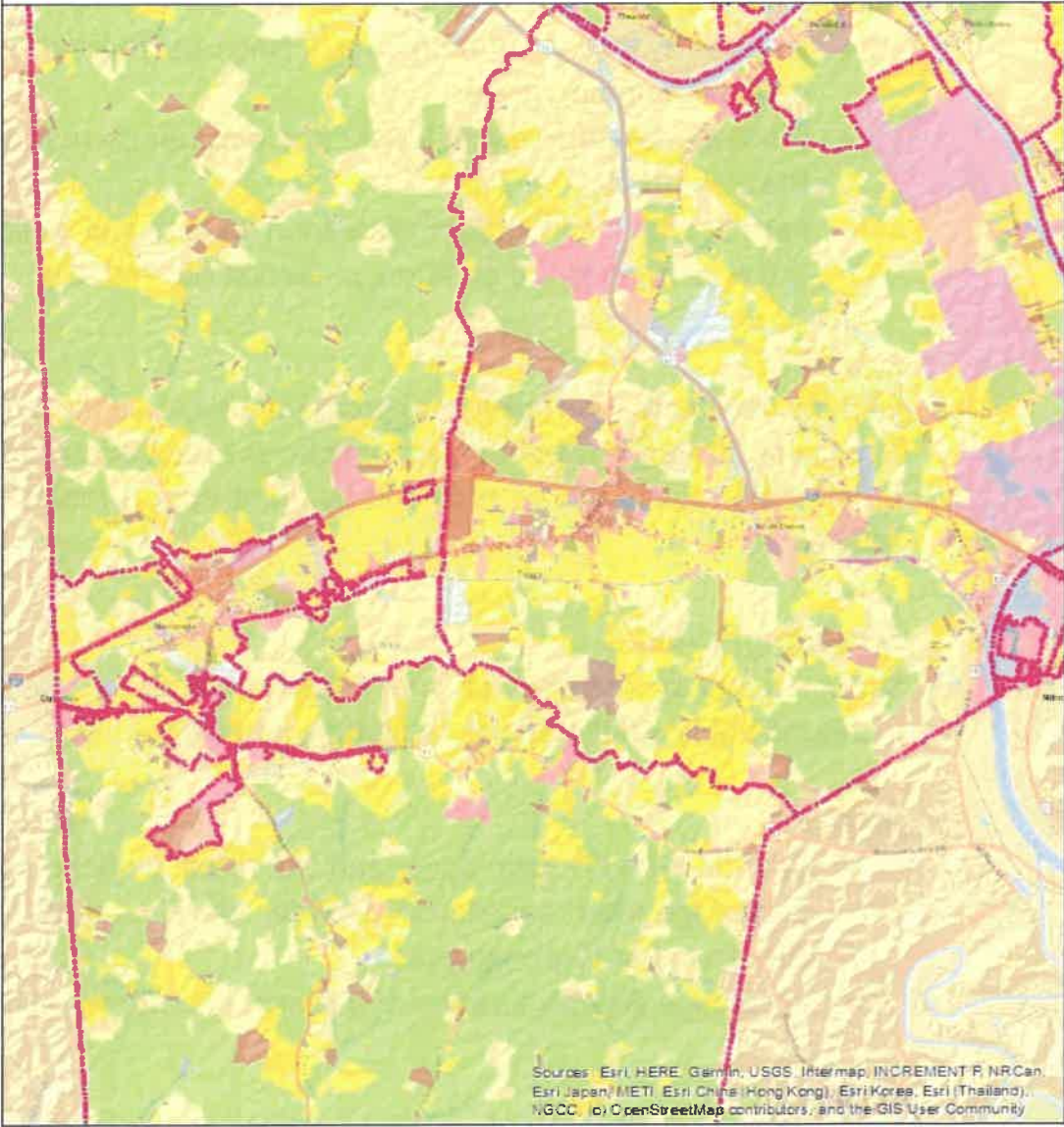
(US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, NATIONAL LAND COVER DATABASE, 2016)

As can be seen in Figure 2.5, the areas along the Interstate 64 corridor and State Route 34 are highly developed and shown as Baren on the map. The remainder of Teays Valley is Mixed Development, mainly being residential subdivisions.

Figure 2.6 Land Use Teays Valley

Legend
Putnam County Land Use

- Residential Undeveloped/Minimally Improved
- Single Family
- Multi Family
- Mixed Use
- Mobile Home
- Agricultural
- Unsound Residential
- Apartments
- Commercial Undeveloped
- Residential on Commercial Land
- Unsound Commercial
- High Intensity Commercial
- Low Intensity Commercial
- Mobile Home Park
- Industrial Undeveloped
- High Intensity Industrial
- Low Intensity Industrial
- Exempt Undeveloped
- Cemetery
- Government/Federal Buildings
- Misc Exempt
- Recreational
- Institutional Building
- Religious/Church
- Utility Undeveloped
- Utility
- Communications
- Unknown



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

High Growth Areas: Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Increase the number of recreational opportunities in high growth areas.

Actions:

- Increase availability of recreational land uses through expansion of county park lands and programs.
- Promote development of indoor and outdoor recreation as an amenity for the community.
- Partner with local outdoor recreation, health, and wellness organizations to promote open space creation, preservation, and use.

Finance:

Funding new recreation space and programming at public facilities can be achieved by making strategic investments from current recreation funding. Further funding for special projects can be provided by grant opportunities that focus on healthy activity.

Mid-Range Goal:

Support interconnectivity of new developments for reduced traffic impact, increased public safety, and to facilitate continuity of place.

Actions:

- Coordinate with developers and the West Virginia Division of Highways to encourage interconnectivity between developments and limit overall curb cuts on major thoroughfares.
- Encourage decentralization of business in order to relieve traffic congestion.

Finance:

Promoting the development of underdeveloped areas can be achieved as part of the mission of economic development professionals, specifically the Putnam County Development Authority. Staffing time can be allocated as needed.

Further financing could be secured with the use of tax increment financing for redevelopment and building to optimize density as defined in applicable land use ordinances.

Long Range Goal:

Increase residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in high growth areas.

Actions:

- Facilitate medium and high-density development in high growth areas by implementing adopted policies to ensure development is compatible with the welfare of the overall community.
- Promote the repurposing of existing development in high growth areas.
- Encourage the development of mixed-use development that incorporates residential and commercial development.

Financing:

Support the efforts of Putnam County's Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority to develop and repurpose land use in high growth areas with business retention and job creation. The County Commission can offer grant writing assistance for repurposing and developing in high growth areas.

Municipal Areas: Current Conditions

The towns of Bancroft, Buffalo, and Poca have elected to appoint the Putnam County Planning Commission to serve as the designated planning commission for their respective jurisdictions. Each town has specific and varied land uses along with differing opportunities.

Town of Bancroft

The Town of Bancroft is a small, established community in central Putnam County in the Kanawha River Valley. Land use in Bancroft is primarily residential. Its major thoroughfare, State Route 62, runs parallel to the Kanawha River with most of the town falling between this roadway and the river. Residential land use is low intensity and mostly single-family units. Locally owned and operated businesses are typical of

commercial land use found in the town. Land use in this municipality is illustrated in Figure 2.11.

Floodplain management is a top priority in Bancroft, due to its location along the Kanawha River. Portions of the town are within the Special Flood Hazard Area defined by FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps. For this reason, extra documentation is required under the *Town of Bancroft Floodplain Management Program Ordinance* for areas within the floodplain.

BANCROFT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Population	466
Gender	60% male, 40% female
Housing Units	197
Area	96 acres
Median Household Income	\$80,417

Table 2.7 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Town of Buffalo

The Town of Buffalo is in Northwestern Putnam County in the Kanawha River Valley. The major thoroughfare, State Route 62, bisects the town. Residential land use is mostly single-family units including mobile home parks, and to a lesser degree, multi-family apartment structures. Common commercial land uses in the town are locally owned retail and dining establishments. The town is also home to an elementary and high school. A large-scale manufacturing facility is located just outside of city limits.

The town is the oldest in the county and boasts a rich history including archeological sites and a historic town square.

A sizable portion of the Town of Buffalo is located within the Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Development requires additional elevation data documentation under the *Town of Buffalo Floodplain Management Program Ordinance* for areas within the floodplain. The Town of Buffalo reviews other aspects of development such as sewer availability and manufactured home placement.

BUFFALO DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Population	1,151
Gender	50% male, 50% female
Housing Units	578
Area	1,056 acres
Median Household Income	\$46,389

Table 2.8 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Town of Poca

The Town of Poca is in the Kanawha River Valley along State Route 62 in east central Putnam County. The town is largely made up of residential land use. These uses are made up of mostly single-family residential structures but do include some multi-family development. Multi-family development has been increasing in recent years.

The town incorporates several non-residential uses including schools, churches, restaurants, commercial retail, and commercial service establishments. Commercial development clusters along the major thoroughfare, as it is typical of small-town development patterns.

Portions of the Town of Poca are located within the Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Development in these areas requires further elevation data documentation. The Putnam County Planning Commission implements the *Town of Poca Floodplain Management Program Ordinance* and reviews this documentation for compliance. The town implements other municipal ordinances beyond floodplain management.

TOWN OF POCA

Population	1,133
Gender	52% male, 48% female
Housing Units	457
Area	480 acres
Median Household Income	\$64,408

Table 2.9 (American Community Survey, 2022)

City of Hurricane

The City of Hurricane is in western Putnam County, located roughly equidistant from Charleston and Huntington and is part of the Huntington–Ashland metropolitan area. Its position along Interstate 64 makes it easily accessible for commuters working in those major metropolitan cities and is a driving factor in the high rate of growth seen in Hurricane in the past two decades.

Hurricane's roots are in suburbanization, so residential land use is prominent across the city, however the area is high-growth and land use varies greatly. Much of the residential land use is single-family units situated in subdivisions. Recent developments have included an increasing number of multi-family structures, predominately townhouse style housing.

Commercial development in the City of Hurricane is concentrated along its major thoroughfare, State Route 34. Churches, schools, restaurants, retail stores, and a multitude of services available in the city, including many locally owned and operated businesses reflect its continued and varied commercial growth and development. A wide variety of parks and recreation can be found in Hurricane for residents of Putnam County to enjoy, supporting healthy and active lifestyles.

The City of Hurricane has elected to be included in the Putnam County Comprehensive Plan, but does oversee its own planning, zoning, development permitting, parks and recreation, public safety, water and wastewater treatment.

CITY OF HURRICANE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Population	6,908
Gender	45% male, 55% female
Housing Units	2,967
Area	2,419 acres (3.78 mi ²)
Median Household Income	\$70,861

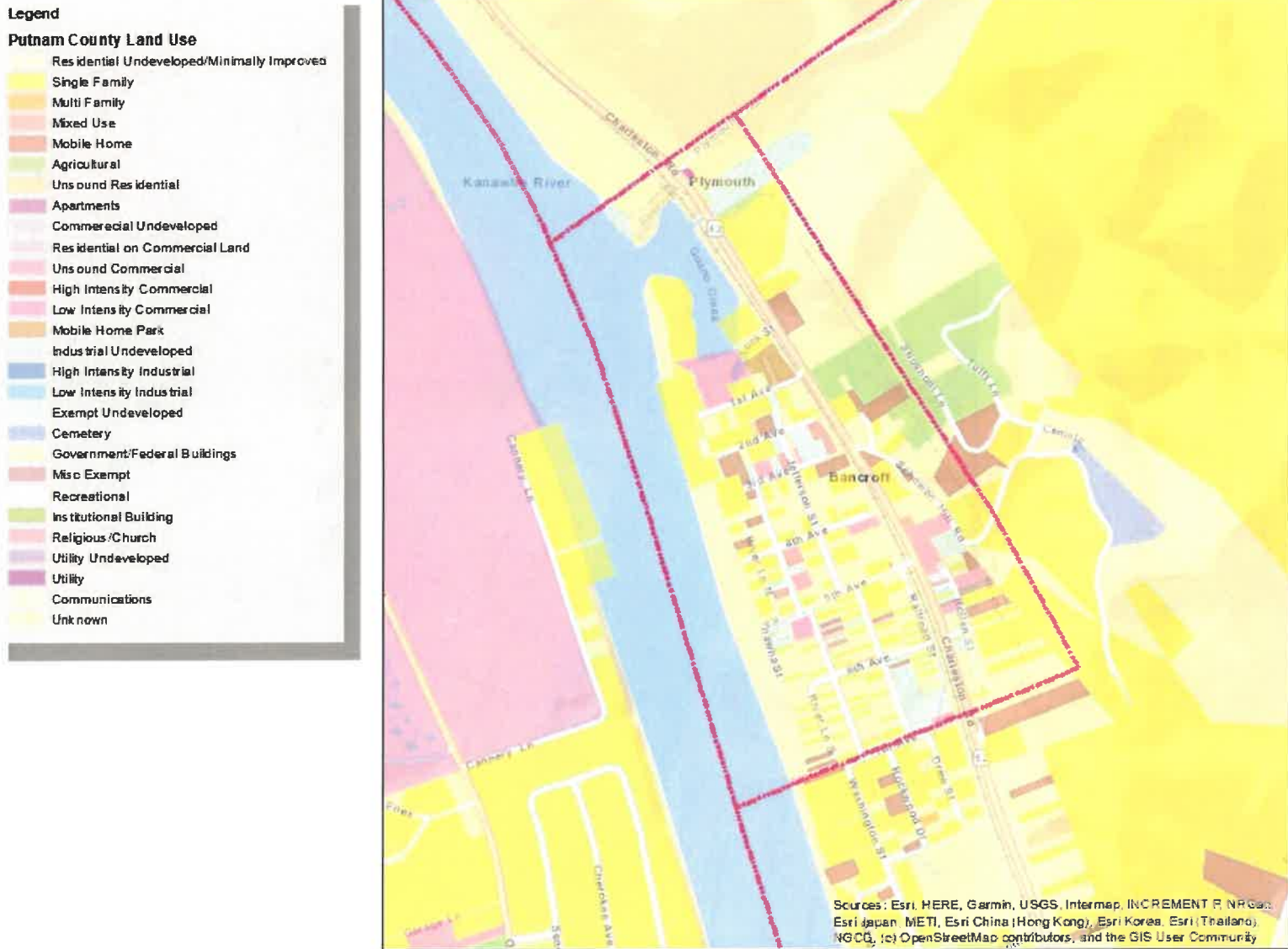
Table 2.9.1 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Figure 2.10 Land Cover Town of Bancroft



(US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, NATIONAL LAND COVER DATABASE, 2016)

Figure 2.11 Land Use Town of Bancroft



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

Municipal Areas: Priorities

Residents of each municipality express overall satisfaction with the land use characteristics of their communities. Ease of access to local goods and services attracts residents to each community; and close-knit neighborhood development patterns, which provide opportunities for moderately priced housing and social interaction for children and adults alike, cause them to stay. This land use pattern is consistent throughout each jurisdiction.

New residential development of both single-family and multi-family housing is essential, as there is a shortage of housing available for purchase or rent. Multi-family structures are in high demand for first time buyers and elderly residents. Affordable housing options in the general area, but especially in the towns of Buffalo, Poca, and Bancroft are vital to ensuring that residents who are just starting out or who are living on fixed incomes have options for housing.

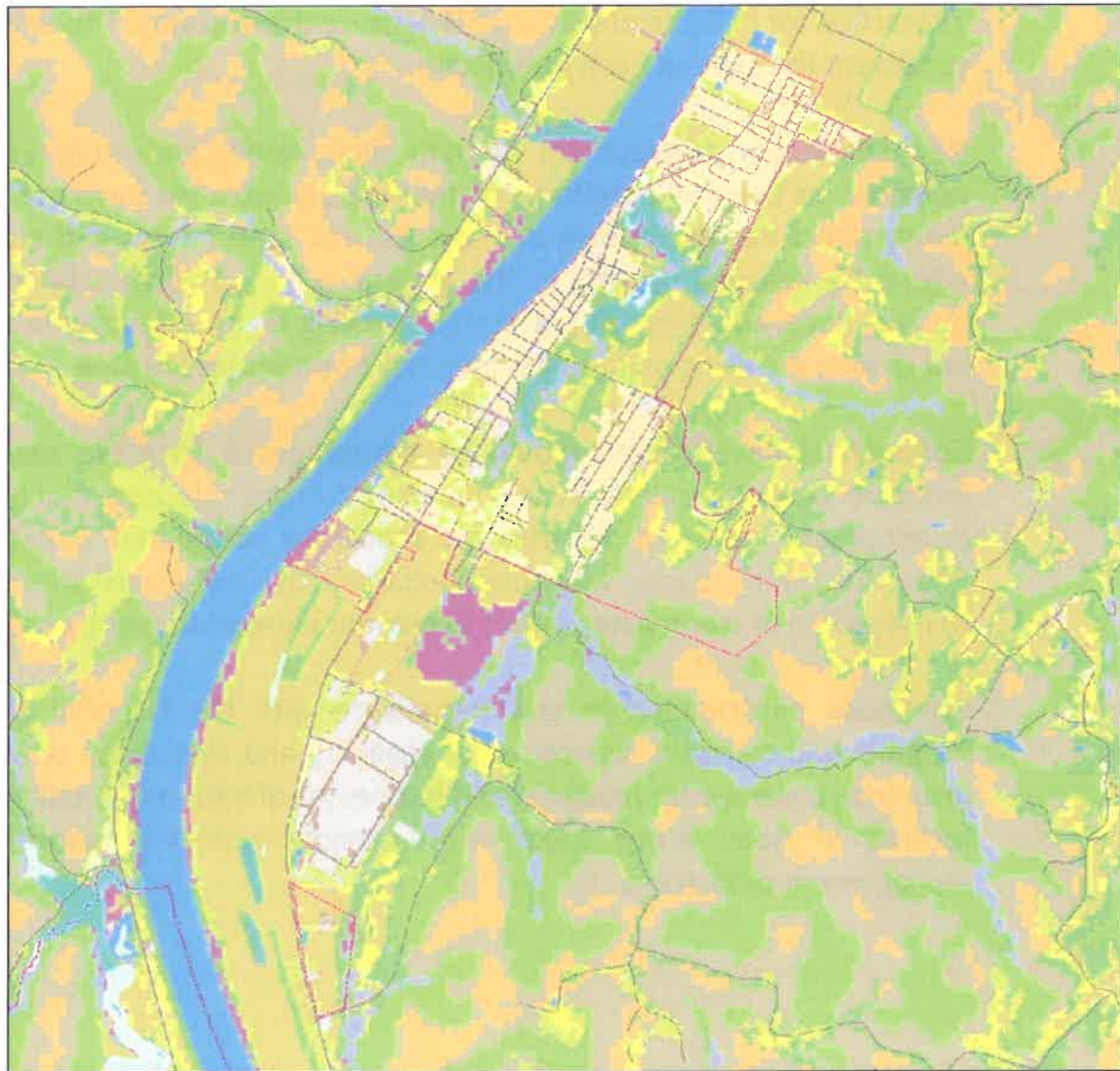
Commercial development would be advantageous to these areas, so long as interference with residential use is minimized. Proper placement of new commercial developments to avoid disturbances should be considered. Greater amounts of impervious land are seen with commercial land use and special attention needs paid to mitigation of stormwater runoff to prevent damage to nearby properties.

Continued participation in and compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program will maintain disaster relief eligibility and availability of affordable flood insurance coverage for residents and businesses of each municipality. Development located in flood prone areas must comply with the respective floodplain management ordinances.

Figure 2.12 Land Cover Town of Buffalo

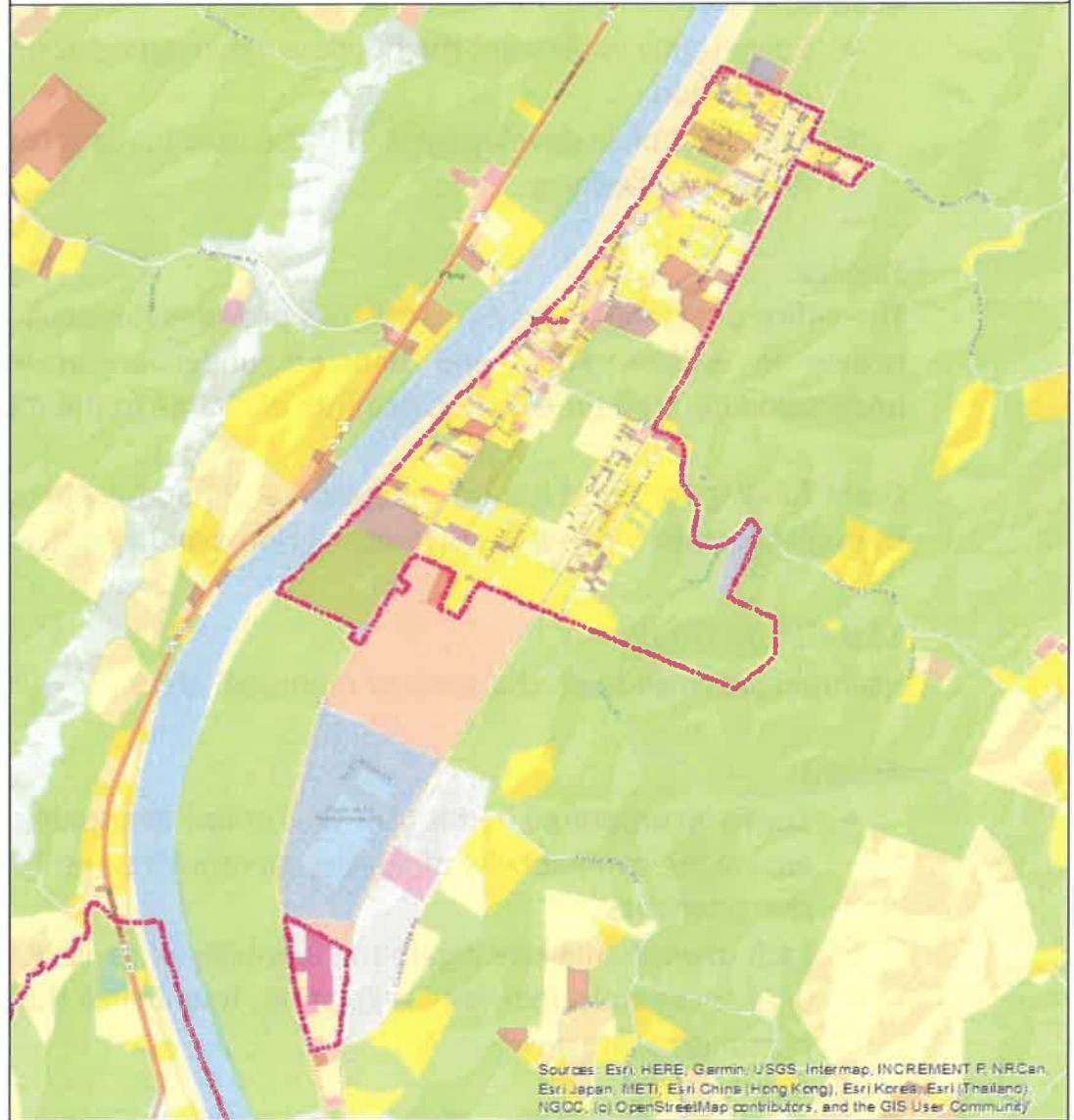
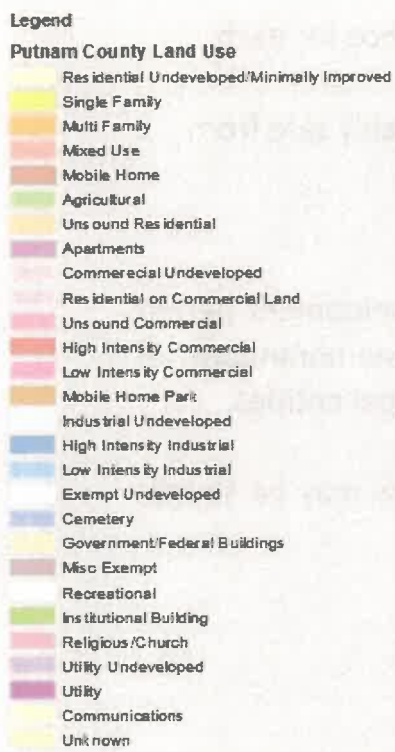
Legend

- 01 Water
- 02 River Floodplains
- 03 Small Stream Riparian Habitats
- 04 Roads
- 05 Impervious
- 06 Mixed Development
- 07 Bare
- 08 Mine Barren
- 09 Oil and Gas Barren
- 10 Other Forests
- 11 Red Spruce Forests
- 12 Northern Hardwood Forests
- 13 Mixed Mesophytic Forests
- 14 Dry-Mesic Oak Forests
- 15 Dry Oak (~Pine) Forests
- 16 Pine Oak Rock Woodlands
- 17 Dry Calcareous Forests
- 18 Montane Red Oak Forests
- 19 Low Vegetation
- 20 Hay/Pasture
- 21 Cultivated Crops
- 22 Mine Grass
- 23 Shale Barrens
- 24 Wetlands PEM
- 25 Wetlands PFO PSS



(US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, NATIONAL LAND COVER DATABASE, 2016)

Figure 2.13 Land Use Town of Buffalo



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

Municipal Areas: Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Ensure proposed land uses are compatible with flood-prone areas.

Actions:

- Consistently implement the floodplain management ordinance for each jurisdiction.
- Limit floodplain development to those uses that are reasonably safe from loss due to flooding.

Finance:

The Office of Planning and Infrastructure provides floodplain development permit review to Buffalo, Poca, and Bancroft under an at will memorandum of understanding. Staff time is allocated free of charge to the municipal entities.

Grant funding for flood hazard mitigation and flood preparedness may be sought through the West Virginia Department of Homeland Security.

Mid-Range Goal:

Maintain the small-town character of municipal areas.

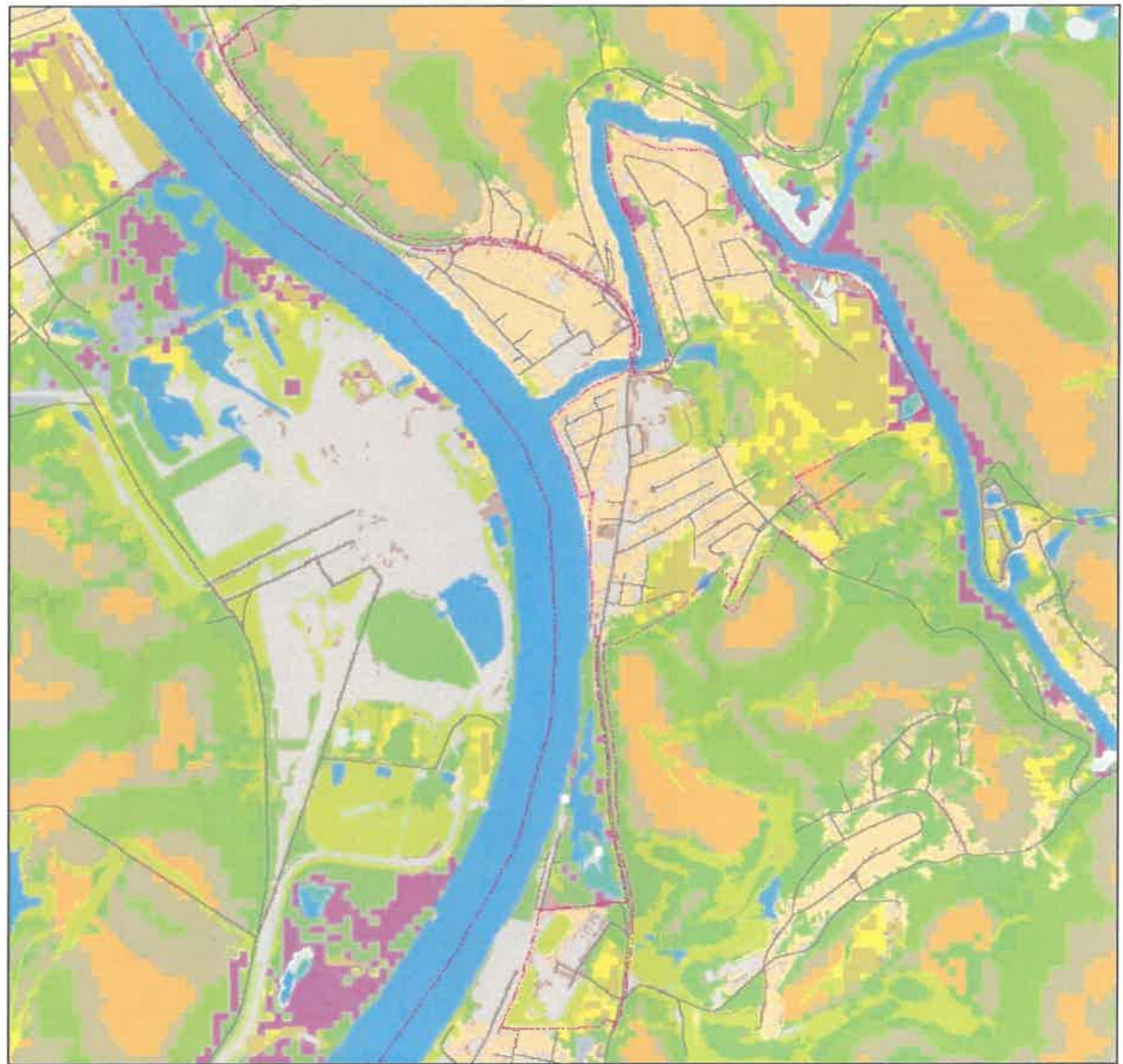
Actions:

- Towns incorporated in this plan shall utilize their municipal ordinances to ensure the compatibility of development with current land use characteristics.
- Each town should investigate the feasibility of revising their municipal ordinances and subdivision regulations to enhance the small-town character of municipal areas.

Finance:

Technical assistance from public entities in the state including West Virginia University Extension Service and the West Virginia University School of Law Land Use Clinic may assist in development and revision of their local ordinances intended to protect community quality and character.

Figure 2.14 Land Cover Town of Poca

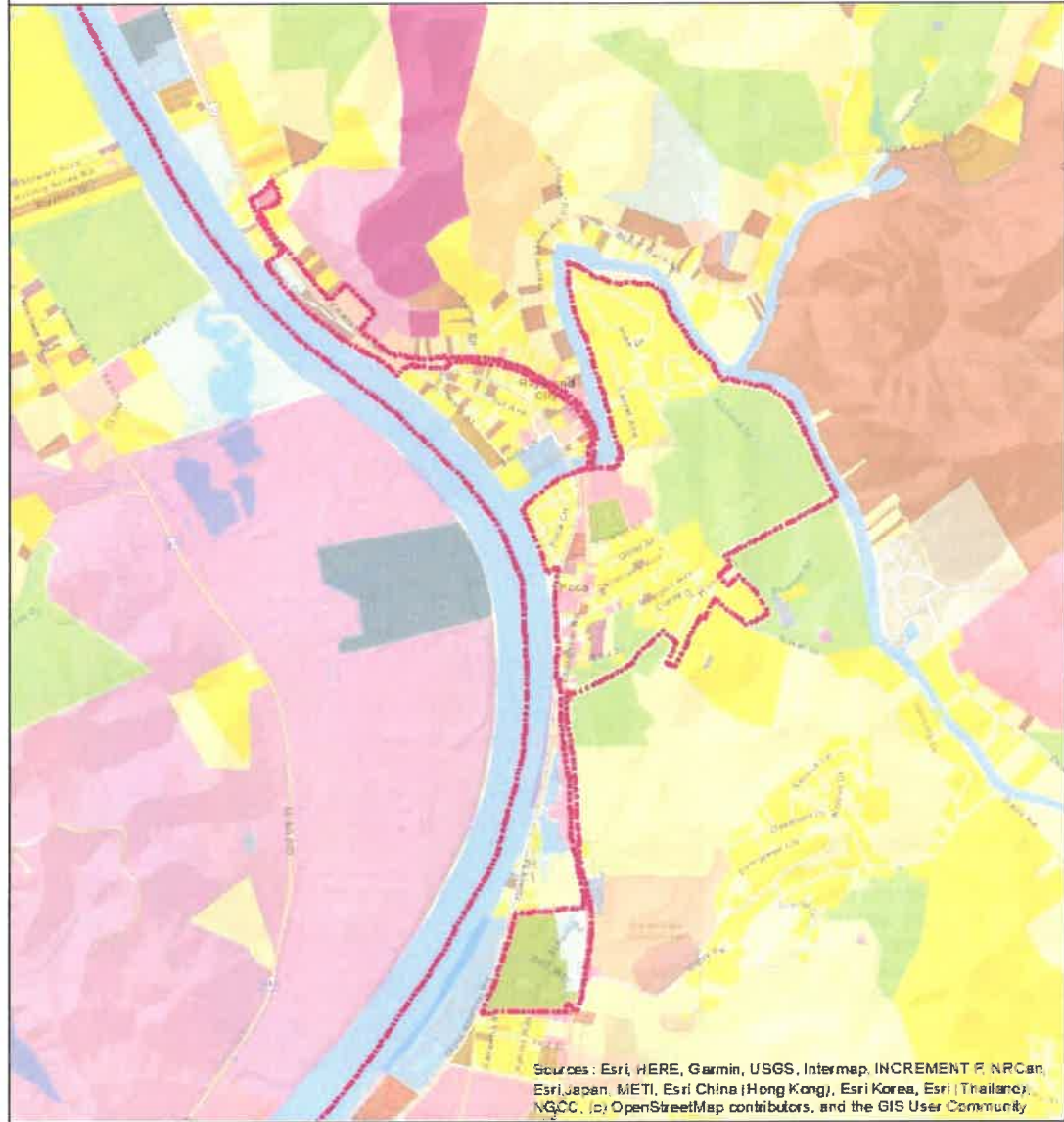


As can be seen in Figure 2.11, Poca Town land cover consist mainly of Mixed Development and Baren land with the highest concentration of development being along State Route 62

(US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, NATIONAL LAND COVER DATABASE, 2016)

Figure 2.15 Land Use Town of Poca

- Legend**
- Putnam County Land Use**
- Residential Undeveloped/Minimally Improved
 - Single Family
 - Multi Family
 - Mixed Use
 - Mobile Home
 - Agricultural
 - Unsound Residential
 - Apartments
 - Commercial Undeveloped
 - Residential on Commercial Land
 - Unsound Commercial
 - High Intensity Commercial
 - Low Intensity Commercial
 - Mobile Home Park
 - Industrial Undeveloped
 - High Intensity Industrial
 - Low Intensity Industrial
 - Exempt Undeveloped
 - Cemetery
 - Government/Federal Buildings
 - Misc Exempt
 - Recreational
 - Institutional Building
 - Religious /Church
 - Utility Undeveloped
 - Utility
 - Communications
 - Unknown



(PUTAM COUNTY ASSESSOR 2023)

Long Range Goal:

Increase affordable single and multi-family residential land use in municipal areas.

Actions:

- Facilitate low and medium-density residential development in municipal areas by setting policies and amending their individual rules to align development with the character of the community.
- Promote the development of multi-family land use by allowing for the repurposing of outdated or vacant single-family structures.
- Encourage mixed-used development that incorporates compatible commercial development with residential development.

Finance:

Achieving this goal involves, in part, adjusting and incentivizing applicable land development rules and municipal taxation. Changes can be studied, evaluated, and implemented by town council members with technical assistance entities such as the West Virginia University Extension Service and the West Virginia University School of Law Land Use Clinic. Reallocation of their staffing time may be necessary to focus on assessment activities.

Municipalities can apply for grants available to them through state and federal entities.

Revitalization

The Putnam County Commission has identified a significant problem of deteriorated and abandoned structures scattered across the county posing safety and health risks. To address these concerns, the Commission has established regulations governing the repair, modification, enhancement, abandonment, closure, elimination, or demolition of structures deemed unsafe or unsanitary, as well as the removal of waste and debris on privately owned land. The primary objective is to safeguard the public from the perils associated with unsafe structures, unsanitary conditions, waste, and debris.

The Putnam County Dilapidated and Abandoned Enforcement Agency (DAEA) comprises the following individuals: the county engineer (or another qualified technical county employee or consulting engineer); the county health officer or their

delegate; a fire chief from a county fire company; two members at large, appointed by the County Commission for two-year terms; and the Sheriff, who serves in their official capacity and is responsible for enforcing the County Commission's directives as per this Ordinance.

The Enforcement Agency holds the duty of mandating the removal of any unoccupied or unused dwelling, non-farm structure, building, or any associated remnants, along with the clearance of waste or debris on all privately owned lands, except for structures utilized for agricultural purposes on actively farmed land. This directive applies to any accumulation of waste or debris caused by either natural forces or human activities, provided it poses a safety or health hazard.

Revitalization: Goals and Actions

Long Range Goal:

Identify deteriorated and abandoned structures across the county and plan for elimination and/or rehabilitation of such for community renewal, revitalization, and redevelopment.

Actions:

- Coordinate with property owners to encourage the proper maintenance of private property.
- Promote rehabilitation or repurposing of abandoned or dilapidated structures.

Finance:

It is the responsibility of the property owners to finance rehabilitation of subject properties per the direction of the DAEA Board and the order of the County Commission. The County Commission reserves the right to put a lien on properties to expend and recoup funds used for these purposes.

Chapter 3

High Priorities

Economic Activity

Overview

Putnam County has a vibrant, well diversified economy. The county's superior transportation resources, prime location, award-winning schools, and safe community ratings allow for sustained growth of its population, commerce, and industry. As one of few growing counties in West Virginia with projected growth to continue over the next 10 years, the impact of economic development in recent years is evident.

The Putnam County Economic Development Authority (PCDA) is a non-profit, quasi-public organization tasked with encouraging expansion of economic development within Putnam County. This organization has worked to establish more than a dozen industrial parks within the county, serves as a marketing liaison to prospective business, and assists with expansion of the industrial and commercial establishments that already call Putnam County home. This organization has a sixty-year record of putting Putnam County in front of development trends and bringing a diverse mixture of investment and employment.

In 2023, the PCDA began work on a comprehensive strategic plan that evaluates and identifies the current state of economic development in the county and provides an outlook for the coming years regarding opportunities for economic growth. This section of the plan borrows from the expertise and vision of this plan, to be released in the second quarter of 2024. The primary focus is on growth of manufacturing and industry, with included focus to address recent needs for workforce and housing development.

Economic Trends

Putnam County continues to see steady economic growth and, as a result, sustained population growth. This trend continues because the county has untapped development potential, a high standard of living, desirable amenities, and a stable and predictable regulatory structure. This mixture of successful strategies makes Putnam County poised for continued growth and prosperity.

The top six industries driving revenue in Putnam County are Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Wholesale Trade, Healthcare, and Administrative Services. These top six industries account for over three billion dollars of annual revenue in the county's economy, as shown in Chart 3.1. This robust and diverse economy can support growth and expansion.

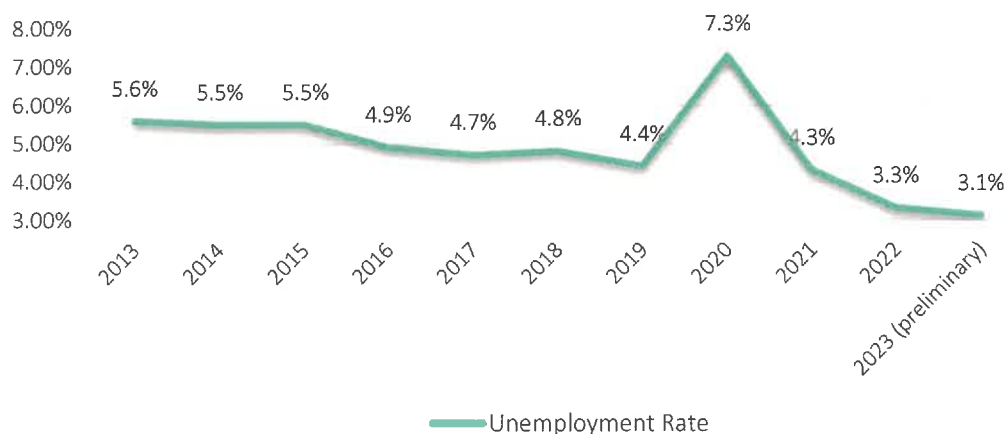
Bowen National Research recently did a Housing Needs Assessment, in which employment trends were evaluated, showing the employment base in Putnam County increased by 4.8% from 2013 to 2019. During the pandemic, the county saw a decrease in employment of 3.5%, a smaller rate than the state's 5.3% decrease.

Commercial Revenues



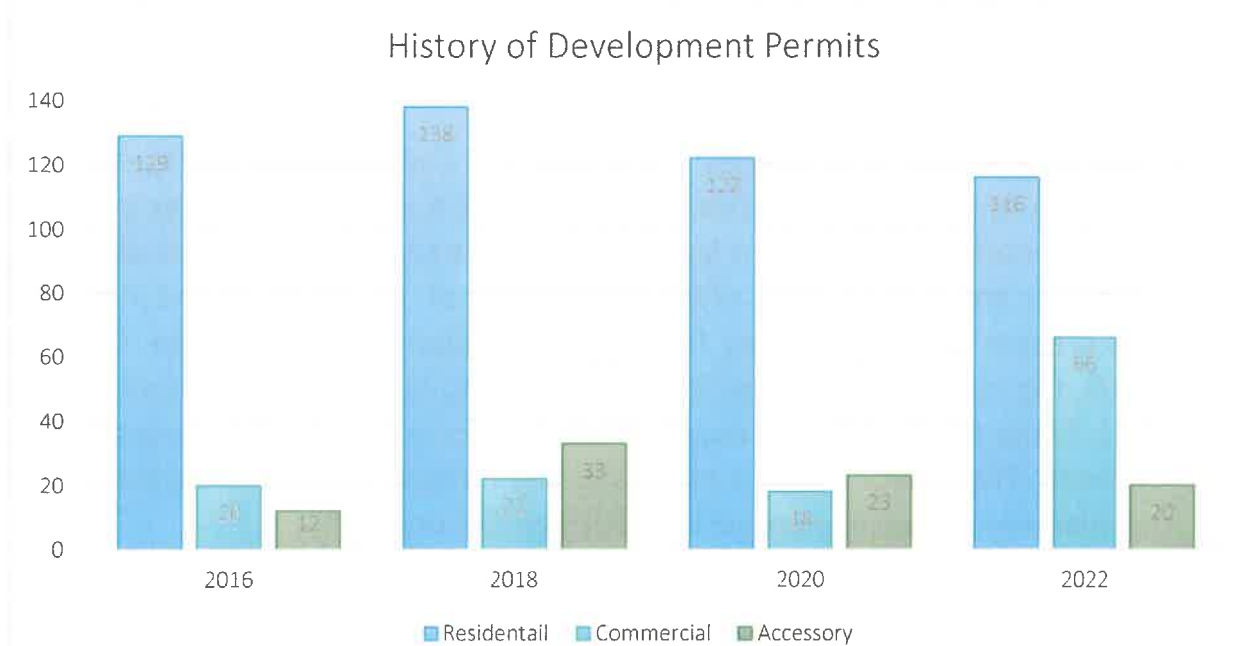
Chart 3.1 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

Unemployment Rate



Graph 3.2 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013-2023)

Overall, the county has recovered to 101.6% of the total employment in 2019, signaling that the local economy has recovered from the effects of COVID-19. This also represents a recovery rate above that of West Virginia (99.8%). The unemployment rate in the county is the lowest recorded in the most recent 10-year period.



Graph 3.3 (Putnam Co Office of Planning & Infrastructure, 2022)

The Putnam County Office of Planning and Infrastructure has been tracking development permitting trends since 1990. Development growth and new construction has been strong in Putnam County throughout previous decades. Adequate housing stock and commercial base can be cited as reason for economic well-being of current residents and for desirability for families relocating from surrounding areas.

The county experienced a significant building boom in the 1990's with sharp increases in construction of single-family housing and commercial structures. The increased construction activity was sustained for several building seasons. Above, in Graph 3.3, recent construction trends are visualized to highlight that even in slowed construction, the community avoided "bursting the bubble" that many places around the country experienced in the housing sector. While there is still a steady rate of new development permits being issued, Putnam County is seeing current housing development be outpaced by demand.

Development Opportunity

The economy of Putnam County remains strong, reflecting trends nationally and internationally of steady growth. The opportunity for expansion and growth in Putnam County has increased in recent years alongside progress on utility and transportation infrastructure. The Putnam County Development Authority identifies several areas of opportunity for continued growth.

- Transportation Opportunities: US Route 35, completed in 2021, connects Putnam and Mason Counties. The upgraded 4-lane highway has provided much improved access to a large swath of Putnam County. Areas along the roadway and in the vicinity of the interchange of U.S. Route 35 and Interstate 64 present vast opportunity for future development. The Putnam Business Park, the most recent industrial park developed by the PCDA, is located along U.S. Route 35 providing an excellent location for industrial and manufacturing growth. The sale of multiple parcels in The Putnam Business Park indicates a demand for accessible property in Putnam County.
- Infrastructure Opportunities: Putnam County has placed a focus on expanding and improving access to water and sewer services for households and commerce. The availability of these essential utilities is needed to capture projects which are currently considering development outside the county. The Putnam County Commission is using American Rescue Plan Act funds to develop county-wide broadband access. Forward-thinking initiatives ensure business viability is possible in Putnam County.
- Industrial and Commercial Development Opportunities: Attracting new investment in Putnam County is essential and a primary goal of the PCDA's efforts. Coupled with the Business Retention and Expansion program, these efforts translate to a holistic approach to growth. Opportunities for expansion and new growth exist within surrounding parcels of established business parks and sites with access to key transportation infrastructure, including highways, river, and rail access.

Further development opportunities exist in all corners of Putnam County. Those areas that have superior vehicular access and utility service are more attractive for

development. The completion of US Route 35 and the exit ramp and interchange located at the intersection of the terminus of US Route 35 and Interstate 64 provides much improved access to a large area of the county. The impending completion of construction of a new exit on Interstate 64 into Culloden will also provide access to further development on US Route 60.

Priorities

Economic development priorities center around improving the overall health, well-being, education, income, and living standards of Putnam County residents. Economic development requires economic growth plus progressive changes, including a population shift from agriculture to industry. Some key factors in the economic development process are increasing the tax base and attracting new employment opportunities.

Recent economic development announcements will make way for continued economic growth in Putnam County. The Putnam County Development Authority is challenged to develop “shovel-ready” properties to attract businesses for continued economic investment in the county. The PCDA is also focused on maintaining its partnerships with educational institutions to help cultivate a skilled workforce to attract and retain companies.

Stable economic growth depends on providing opportunities for both low and high wage-earners, such as those who are just beginning their careers and those who are transitioning to a well-deserved retirement. Expanding opportunities for increased growth in moderately priced housing options is vital to the improvement of living standards for residents in the county and will serve to expand the economic growth of the homebuilding and land development sectors. In the case of promoting continued economic growth by promoting availability of moderately priced housing options there is a fine line to walk between maximized utility and transportation access and cost.

Putnam County has an excellent transportation network that can always benefit from further improvements. More densely developed areas are prone to congestion which reduces the flow and movement of people and goods. Regular review of the county’s transportation infrastructure as it supports economic vitality is essential to maintaining a lifestyle conducive to a high standard of living. Support of

transportation planning efforts by the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC, the designated metropolitan planning organization) will ensure that continued improvement of the transportation network allows for continued growth of housing and commerce in Putnam County.

Utility infrastructure is equally essential to continued economic growth. Heavy investment in water and sewer resources has benefited the county in years past and continues to be an area of focus. Utility service in high-growth areas is available and affordable. Expansion of the utility network is a priority concern. In planning future expansion projects, cost to benefit ratio is an essential measure of consideration. This will ensure that public funds support new investments with the greatest economic impact for continued prosperity of the county.

Areas where these factors converge are preferred for development, as the highest and best use of land must be evaluated, as well as the impact any such development will have on the infrastructure that will support the development. Putnam County has experienced healthy growth clustered around available infrastructure. Sprawl from these developed areas is likely, given market pressures. Future development will continue to be focused in areas considered prime locations, where roadway access meets readily available utility infrastructure. When possible, redevelopment of underdeveloped sites is preferred.

Preferred Development Areas include, but are not limited to:

- Areas with access to major highways including, but not limited to, Interstate 64, US Route 35, and US Route 60.
- Areas with established utility infrastructure.
- Areas with rail and river access.

Goals and Actions:

Short Range Goal:

Identify opportunities in workforce development and site development.

Actions:

- Identify property for industrial, commercial, and housing development and categorize sites for the highest and best use.

- Study weaknesses to address for site readiness.
- Support the work of the PCDA's business retention program in identifying workforce training needs for current industries.

Finance:

Workforce and site development for continued economic growth and development is an area of focus and top priority for the Putnam County Development Authority. Outside funding can also be sought through the West Virginia Development Office and collaboration with local public and private entities.

Mid-range Goal:

Develop an inventory of shovel-ready sites, implement in-demand workforce training programs, and continue supporting business expansion.

Actions:

- Utilize state and local governmental agencies and resources to expand utility infrastructure and aid in site preparation.
- Support PCDA's initiative to partner with educational institutions for workforce development for in-demand fields.

Finance:

Workforce and site development for continued economic growth and development is an area of focus and top priority for the Putnam County Development Authority. Outside funding can also be sought through the West Virginia Development Office and collaboration with local public and private entities.

Long Range Goal:

Promote the continued growth of commerce and industry within Putnam County.

Actions:

- Support existing businesses and encourage growth through engagement with civic organizations including the Chamber of Commerce and PCDA.
- Encourage development of "shovel-ready" sites marketed by PCDA.

Finance:

Business attraction and retention is a top priority for the Putnam County Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce and goes hand in hand with

promoting the county as a prime location for investment. Expanded efforts can be financed by grant applications for business development promotion. Funded staff initiatives work to achieve this goal.

Transportation

Overview

Transportation infrastructure is essential to the movement of people for enterprise, conveying goods and materials for commerce, and travel for recreation and everyday life. The interstate highway system facilitates the easy movement of people and goods, interconnecting communities across the country. Economic prosperity and freedom of movement are inherently tied to speedy and efficient transportation networks linking our regions and cities.

Putnam County is the hub of several major transportation networks. One interstate passes directly through the county while two others are within a 15-mile drive. The county is also the origin of US Route 35 providing access west to northwestern Ohio and central Illinois. Interstate 64 bisects the county providing access eastbound to Richmond, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach and westbound to Louisville, Evansville, and St. Louis. Interstate 79 travels from Charleston to Erie and provides easy access to Morgantown and Pittsburgh. Interstate 77 provides direct access to Cleveland to the north and Charlotte and Columbia to the south.

This highway network places Putnam County within a one-half day drive of Indianapolis, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Dayton, Richmond, Charlotte, Nashville, Louisville, and the Washington DC metro areas. This is advantageous to businesses depending on the commercial shipping industry for regional and national delivery. Putnam County's location is optimal for success.

Support for transportation planning efforts is provided by the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC) and the KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission - the designated metropolitan planning organizations for Putnam County. Portions of Hurricane and Teays Valley have been included in the Huntington Urbanized Area (UZA) since the 2010 Decennial Census was completed. The tri-state area (KY, OH, and WV) currently qualifies as a Transportation Management Area (TMA), lending access to additional federal transportation funds. The qualifying measurement is a

population over 200,00 based on the census conducted by the United States Census Bureau. Between the 2010 and 2020 censuses, the population fell from 202,637 to 200,157; if the current trend continues Huntington TMA will lose that status and will lose access to TMA-specific fund types. RIC serves as Putnam County's Metropolitan Planning Organization, as its planning area includes all of Putnam and Kanawha counties as well as the Charleston Urbanized Area which extends into Putnam County, following the Kanawha River and ending at the Toyota Manufacturing facility and includes the Hurricane-Teays Valley portion of the Huntington TMA. As a result, the Putnam County Commission is a key stakeholder of RIC's long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The MTP serves as the comprehensive guide for Kanawha and Putnam counties in developing a regional transportation system that not only accommodates current mobility needs but anticipates future needs. In response to federal mandates and the desires of residents, the MTP addresses priorities and needs for all modes of transportation. The plan is a fiscally constrained list of projects envisioned to be implemented in the RIC TIP by 2050. The current MTP was adopted by the Policy Board of the RIC on September 9, 2021. Putnam County continues to support this planning initiative and the goals and objectives in this long-range planning document. This planning process was conducted with input and support from many Putnam County officials.

Current Conditions:

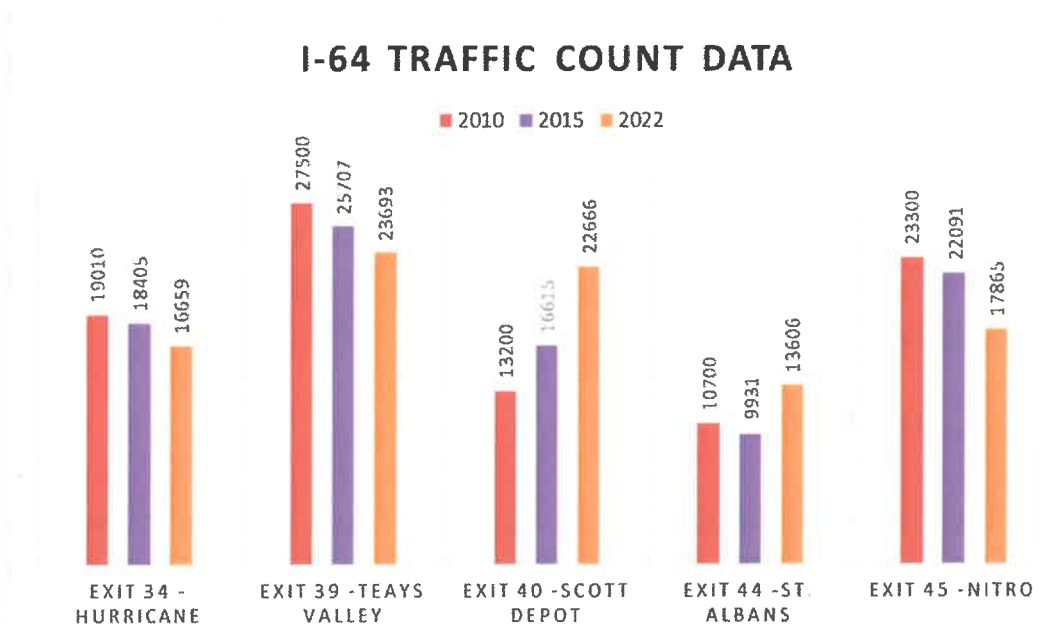
Putnam County has a multimodal transportation network allowing movement via all three broad categories: land, water, and air. The Kanawha River runs through the county, providing excellent river transportation opportunities. The United States Army Corps of Engineers designed, owns, operates, and maintains Winfield Locks and Dam, which is an integral part of the Kanawha River navigation system that provides an efficient, dependable, and economical means for commodity transport.

The county has two helipads. One is located adjacent to the Teays Valley Business Park complex in central Teays Valley; the other is at the CAMC Teays Valley Hospital complex. The nearest Federal Aviation Administration certified airport is the West Virginia International Yeager Airport, located in Charleston, which provides commercial and private air travel. Air transport seat capacity and passenger totals

have recovered to 80% of pre-pandemic amounts and are expected to reach 90% before the end of 2024.

Rail service in Putnam County consists of freight service along two routes. CSX operates a freight railroad line that runs roughly parallel to Interstate 64 providing access to the John Amos Power Station in Morgan's Landing. The second railroad line travels along the northern bank of the Kanawha River Valley. Amtrak passenger rails service runs through Putnam County, with nearby stops in Charleston and Huntington along their service from Chicago to Washington DC and beyond to New York City.

Completion of the US Route 35 corridor in November 2021 from the Buffalo bridge into Mason County opened access to the southern parts of Ohio and alleviated some truck traffic in Teays Valley and its surrounding residential areas.



Graph 3.4 (WV Dept. of Transportation, 2010, 2015, 2022)

The interstate highway system is a major transportation resource for Putnam County. Interstate 64 incorporates five exit ramps within the county serving the City of Nitro, St. Albans, Scott Depot including the US Route 35 interchange, Teays Valley at the intersection of State Route 34, and Hurricane in order of sequence westbound. Interstate 64 is the most heavily travelled roadway, with commercial and commuter traffic making it one of the highest traveled roads in the state. The robust vehicular traffic along the Interstate 64 corridor is illustrated in Graph 3.4 above.

State Route 34 serves local north-to-south traffic, extending from the northeastern county boundary with Jackson County to the southern county line near Hamlin. This route is primarily a two-lane highway with three lanes in the Teays Valley area to help with traffic congestion due to its high-intensity development. The State Route 34 crossing of the Kanawha River at Winfield connects the northern and southern parts of the county.

The other two crossing points of the Kanawha River in Putnam County connect State Route 62 at Buffalo to State Route 817 and US Route 35, and Nitro to St. Albans via Interstate 64. While Interstate 64 is used by local and through motorists alike, another significant east-to-west transportation corridor is US Route 60 which runs through Putnam County connecting St. Albans in Kanawha County with Culloden in Cabell County.

The RIC MPO Kanawha-Putnam Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan serves as a guide for communities interested in enhancing bicycle and pedestrian access, mobility, and safety. The plan provides communities with an implementation strategy for recommended improvements to develop a network of bikeways, trails, and pedestrian facilities. The plan was adopted at the meeting of the RIC Policy Board on March 14, 2019. In addition, the RIC MCO adopted the RIC Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) that lays out a plan to achieve the vision of zero traffic fatalities or serious injuries in Kanawha and Putnam counties. The RIC CSAP can be viewed on their website at www.wvregion3.org/csap/.

Future Projects

The RIC and the KYOVA Interstate Planning commission provide Putnam County with transportation planning expertise services. The following are financially constrained projects (funding is already allocated through the 2021-2025 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) as well as projects whose full funding amount is estimated to be available through the 2050 horizon year:

- Widen WV 817 from the Winfield Bridge to Planters Road
- Widen Interstate 64 from Nitro to US 35 to 6 lanes.
- Widen Interstate 64 from Cow Creek Road to Cabell County Line
- Widen Interstate 64 from Cow Creek Road to WV 34

- Roundabout Corridor on WV 34 from I-64 to Great Teays Blvd
- Widening Teays Valley Road (CR 33) from WV 34 to Thomas Drive
- Widening WV 62 from WV 25 to Dairy Road
- Modernization of Mt Vernon Road (CR 34)
- Access management improvements in Hurricane
- Widening WV 62 Heizer Creek Road to Poca City Limits (south)
- Widening Sleepy Hollow Road from Teays Valley Road to Cow Creek Road

Further detail on each of these projects is included in the RIC 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Goals and Actions:

Short Range Goal:

Continue a close working relationship with the Division of Highways for remedying instances of disrepair and unsafe road conditions.

Actions:

- Continue hosting bimonthly James H Caruthers Jr. Putnam County Transportation Committee meetings with staff from WVDOH District 1.
- Name citizen representatives to enhance input and communication to the RIC Transportation Technical Advisory.

Finance:

The efforts needed to achieve this goal do not require direct funding. Volunteers are essential for communication between county residents and Division of Highways staff; staffing time can also be allocated for meetings, as necessary.

Mid-range Goal:

Encourage the development of property and transportation networks concurrently to mitigate stress and congestion of roadways.

Actions:

- Promote the use of traffic impact studies for development of significant impact.

- Support decisions made by the DOH to communicate and remedy transportation challenges raised by proposed development.

Finance:

Achieving this goal involves ensuring applicable land development ordinances consistently require approval and study by the DOH. Support the DOH for proper roadway improvements.

Mid-range Goal:

Support the goals described in the RIC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Actions:

- Support the development of roadways with Complete Street amenities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Investigate grant opportunities for development of inter-modal transportation including pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

Finance:

Efforts needed to achieve this goal do not require direct funding; allocation of time by county staff and elected officials to advocate for improvements to roadways for the benefit of cyclists and pedestrians to the DOH is needed.

Putnam County has direct access to Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds through a competitive allotment through the RIC MPO.

Long Range Goal:

Support the overall growth and maintenance of the transportation system of Putnam County.

Actions:

- Lobby for increased roadway funding from the Division of Highways and the Federal Highways Administration.
- Identify areas of opportunity for growth of the transportation network that would provide for the most beneficial and compatible growth for Putnam County.

- Work with the RIC to promote the long-range transportation planning efforts of the county and the region.

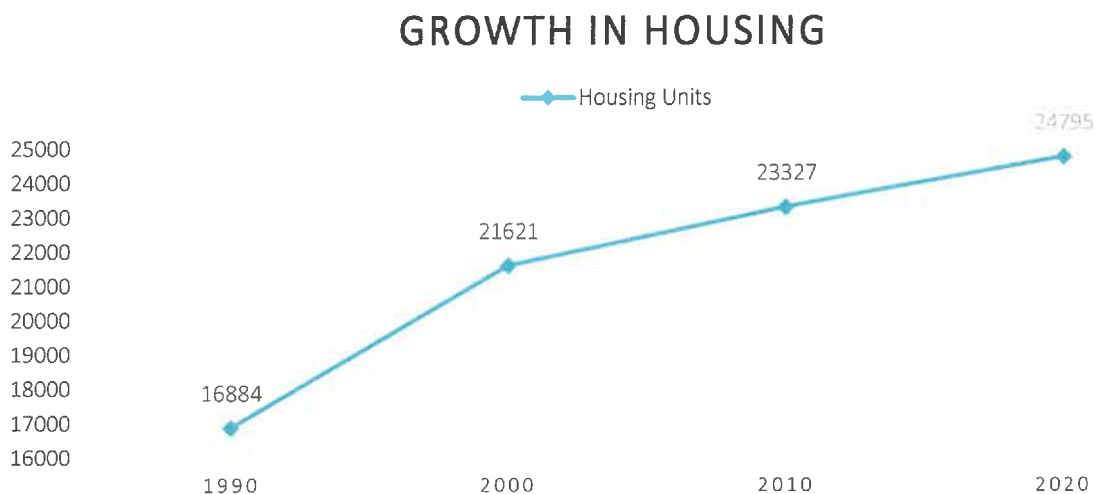
Finance:

The efforts needed to achieve this goal do not require direct funding. Allocation of time from county staff and elected officials for meeting with the DOH and lobbying for roadway improvements is necessary. County officials support regional transportation planning and must continue to do so.

Housing

Overview

Putnam County is identified as a prime location for housing. Much of the growth is attributed to the migration of working professionals from the metropolitan areas of Charleston and Huntington. Easy commuting distances from each allows for some families to split employment between both metro areas. The demand for housing has increased prices of the available housing stock. Housing prices have remained competitive and have seen a cumulative increase over the past decade.



Graph 3.5 (US Census Bureau, 2020)

The housing market in Putnam County grew very quickly through the 1990's up until the United States housing bubble burst in 2008. The rate of growth in housing was 22% between 1990 and 2000, and 4.3% between 2010 and 2020. The number of households in Putnam County increased 1% between 2020 and 2023 and is projected to grow by .08% through 2028. Conversely, projections indicate that the state, including the region surrounding the county, will experience a decrease in

households over the next five years. Recent economic investments and anticipated job growth in the region are expected to contribute to overall household growth trends in the county.

Current Conditions

In 2023, Advantage Valley commissioned a 10-county regional housing study to assess the availability and affordability of housing across a spectrum of household incomes. Bowen National Research gathered data and conducted surveys to cover a wide range of topics regarding the housing market in the region surrounding and including Putnam County for this housing study. In total, there are 25,163 housing units within Putnam County in 2023, of which 23,157 units (92%) are occupied. Of the occupied housing units in the county, 82.3% are owner occupied and the other 17.7% are renter occupied. Vacant housing units include abandoned properties, unoccupied rentals, for-sale homes, and seasonal housing units and make up approximately 8% of the housing units in Putnam County.

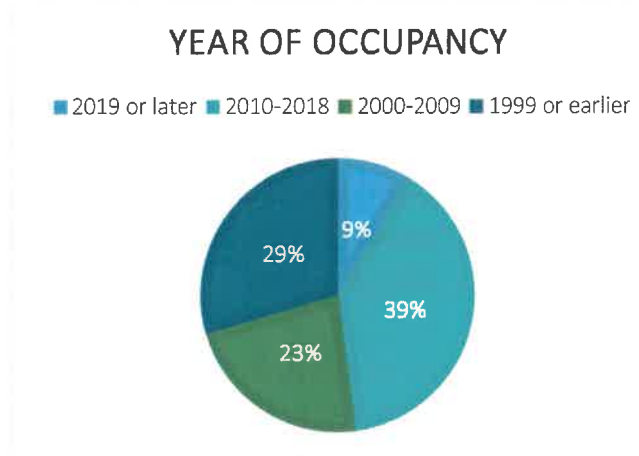


Chart 3.6 (American Community Survey, 2022)

Housing age and condition were taken into consideration when assessing the needs of the county. In Putnam County, 23.6% of the renter-occupied housing units and 20.6% of the owner-occupied housing units were built prior to 1970. The housing stock in the county is much newer than that of the region and the state. The share of renter households in Putnam County that experience overcrowding (1.01+ persons per room) is lower than that of the region, while the share of owner households experiencing this is slightly higher. The share of households in the county with incomplete kitchens or plumbing is slightly higher for renters in Putnam County than in the rest of the region and slightly lower for owner households compared to the region. As such, the most notable housing issues in Putnam County appear to be incomplete plumbing among renter households and a slightly above-average share of overcrowded owner households.

The estimated median home value in Putnam County of \$190,606 is 28.1% higher than the median home value for the region. Similarly, the average gross rent in Putnam County of \$887 is 11.3% higher than the regional average. Although Putnam County has a higher median home value and average gross rent, the county has lower shares of cost burdened households; likely due to the higher median household income found here. Regardless, nearly one-third of renter households and over 10% of owner households are cost burdened or spending over 30% of their income on housing costs. With nearly 3,800 cost burdened households in the county, affordable housing alternatives should be a part of future housing solutions.

<i>Estimated Monthly Gross Rent in Putnam County</i>							
Rent	<\$300	\$300- \$500	\$500- \$750	\$750- \$1,000	\$1,000- \$1,500	\$1,500- \$2,000	\$2,000+
Number	96	290	976	882	967	103	16
Percent	2.4%	7.4%	24.9%	22.5%	24.6%	2.6%	0.4%

Table 3.7 (Advantage Valley, 2023)

The above table summarizes monthly gross rent for rental units within the county. While this data encompasses all rental units, which includes multifamily apartments, a sizeable majority (70.3%) of the county's rental supply consists of non-conventional rentals, i.e. structures with 4 units or less and mobiles homes. It should be noted that gross rent includes tenant-paid utilities. The largest share (24.9%) of Putnam County rental units has gross rents between \$500 and \$750. Collectively, 57.2% of rental units in the county have gross rents below \$1,000. It is estimated that 27.6% of Putnam County rentals are priced at \$1,000 or more.

The available for-sale housing stock in Putnam County as of October 2023 consisted of seventy-one total units with a median list price of \$330,000, representing only 0.4% of the estimated 19,061 owner-occupied units in the county. For the housing market to be considered healthy and well-balanced, approximately 2% to 3% of the for-sale housing stock should be available for purchase, allowing for inner-market mobility and attraction of new households. Putnam County appears to have a disproportionately small number of housing units available for purchase.

The largest share of available housing units in Putnam County is priced at \$400,000 or above. Putnam County also has a notable share of homes priced between \$200,000 and \$399,999 (39.4%). Sales activity from Jan 1, 2020 to Oct 31, 2023 indicated that nearly half of all sales were priced between \$200,000 and \$399,999. By comparison, homes priced below \$200,000 represent 21.1% of current listings,

while homes at that pricepoint represented 36.2% of sales from January 2020 to October 2023.

Putnam County Available For-Sale Housing by List Price (As of Oct. 31, 2023)		
List Price	# Available	% of Supply
Up to \$99,999	4	5.6%
\$100,000 to \$199,999	11	15.5%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	16	22.5%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	12	16.9%
\$400,000 +	28	39.4%
Total	71	100.0%

Table 3.8 (Advantage Valley, 2023)

Priorities

Maintaining Putnam County's reputation as a desirable place to call home is essential. To maintain such a reputation, there must be a focus on enriching the level of public services, community amenities, infrastructure, utilities, and schools on which it was built. These areas of focus, while important to anyone considering a place to call home, will not address the need for increased housing options that make it possible for the county to continue to grow.

County residents express a need for increased housing options in a moderate price range. Housing development is cited as more costly than average families or individuals can afford. Many of the newly developed housing options cater to well-paid professionals moving from outside the county. A sizable portion of those moving into the county are families raising children, which has increased the demand for larger and sometimes more luxurious housing. While this growth has certainly been a positive for the county, it has driven up the size and cost of homes and we have not seen much development in moderately priced options.

Another need identified by residents is for housing options that serve the county's aging population. There is a great need for the development of housing that allows for increased care while still being considered affordable. Assisted living style housing has seen a great deal of growth in other areas of the country but has not gained momentum in Putnam County. Demographic shifts, including a statewide aging population, indicate that demand for this type of housing will be increasing.

Affordable housing is also needed for young individuals and families in the process of becoming economically established. Starter homes are in high demand and are

not being developed as quickly as larger, more luxurious homes. There is also a need for more affordable rental options in more highly developed areas. Rental housing is in truly short supply in rural areas such as Buffalo and other areas north of the Kanawha River. Fostering this type of development means ensuring that basic water and sewage service is made widely available since it is essential to maintaining the affordability of multi-family housing units.

Housing is in the most demand and most valuable to a community when it is near the employment, goods, and services that residents need. Ensuring housing developments connect well to their surrounding land uses will involve fostering mixed-use development and purposefully creating ease of access. The cul-de-sac style development seen predominately in our county serves families with access to automobile transportation but excludes anyone who cannot operate a car on their own and limits access for those who do not have a vehicle. This style of housing development can also be frustrating for residents when a vehicle is required to run quick errands. The young, elderly, and disabled are faced with limited means to have their basic needs met without relying on assistance from another person for transportation. Increasing interconnectivity between residential and commercial land uses is a priority.

Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Support the interconnectivity of future housing development to surrounding land uses.

Actions:

- Seek to incentivize connectivity between new residential development and surrounding land uses.
- Identify methods for existing housing developments to increase interconnectivity through multimodal transportation options.

Finance:

Incentivizing interconnectivity, especially non-motorized connections, should be explored. Private investment should be leveraged for increased connections. Further financing could be secured using tax increment financing or grant funding for interconnection projects that go beyond local and state standards.

Mid-Range Goal:

Promote development of affordable housing options to keep pace with growth in higher-cost housing.

Actions:

- Identify sources of funding that promote the development of affordable housing options.
- Encourage utility expansion and availability where low and moderately priced housing options are feasible.

Finance:

Supporting community groups whose mission is to promote affordable housing to aid in identifying areas of need, means to achieve, and sources of funding is a large part of achieving this goal. The county supports the collaboration of advocacy groups and private developers in funding affordable housing development.

Long Range Goal:

Retain Putnam County's reputation as a superior place to live.

Actions:

- Continue to evaluate the development and subdivision process to identify and remedy roadblocks to continued high-quality growth.
- Evaluate the feasibility of and implement regulations that create incentives for the redevelopment of unsafe or obsolete housing.
- Support the work of groups like homeowner's associations and realtors in their efforts to maintain established housing developments and market neighborhoods and communities.

Finance:

County officials should network regularly with homeowners, developers, and the real estate community to understand opportunities and challenges for promoting the county as a desirable place to make a home. These efforts do not require specific funding as their initiative can be an undertaking of existing county staff and resources.

Chapter 4

Priorities

Infrastructure Overview

Putnam County is committed to providing the highest standard of living to its citizens. Providing basic living necessities, such as the ability to have water and sewage disposal services to one's home, is a fundamental step to achieving those ambitious standards. Progress is continually being made in expanding the utility network to provide essential services to residents. More work remains to be done in the rural areas for all residents to have access to basic services.

Putnam Public Service District and West Virginia American Water have been major partners in extending service networks throughout the county. Expansion projects have been undertaken to improve the water service network into areas without water service and limited access to ground water. Lack of water service is a challenge to people living in these areas and poses a public safety concern for fire service protection. Water supply to underserved areas remains a priority.

Technology drives the modern economy and growth of business development. Technology is integral to the success of a business, and a large part of that is access to broadband internet. Putnam County has particularly good broadband access in most developed areas. Both wired and wireless connections have been made widely available for homes and enterprises. Access to modern communication networks can be the dividing line between opportunity for growth and a stagnant economy. Growing broadband penetration is an investment in the future prosperity of the county.

Water: Current Conditions

Major effort is being made for water expansion in the unincorporated areas of Putnam County by the water suppliers and county government. A consistent, safe, and affordable water supply is essential to daily life and future development.

The County Commission has worked hand in hand with the Putnam Public Service District and the West Virginia American Water Company to prioritize water projects for consideration and implementation. The evaluation of projects balances customer needs with cost-benefit analysis for the expansion. The County Commission actively seeks grant opportunities to defer costs of expansion for water projects with other portions funded by the utility provider. A temporary surcharge for ratepayers also helps reduce costs.

Presently there are twenty-two water expansion projects being evaluated. The proposed projects need further feasibility, engineering, or financial study. The designed project is being completed at Jim Ridge. The project will extend waterlines by about ten miles, servicing about seventy homes and is set to be completed by May 2024. Design is set to begin for a waterline on Custer Ridge in Buffalo thereafter.

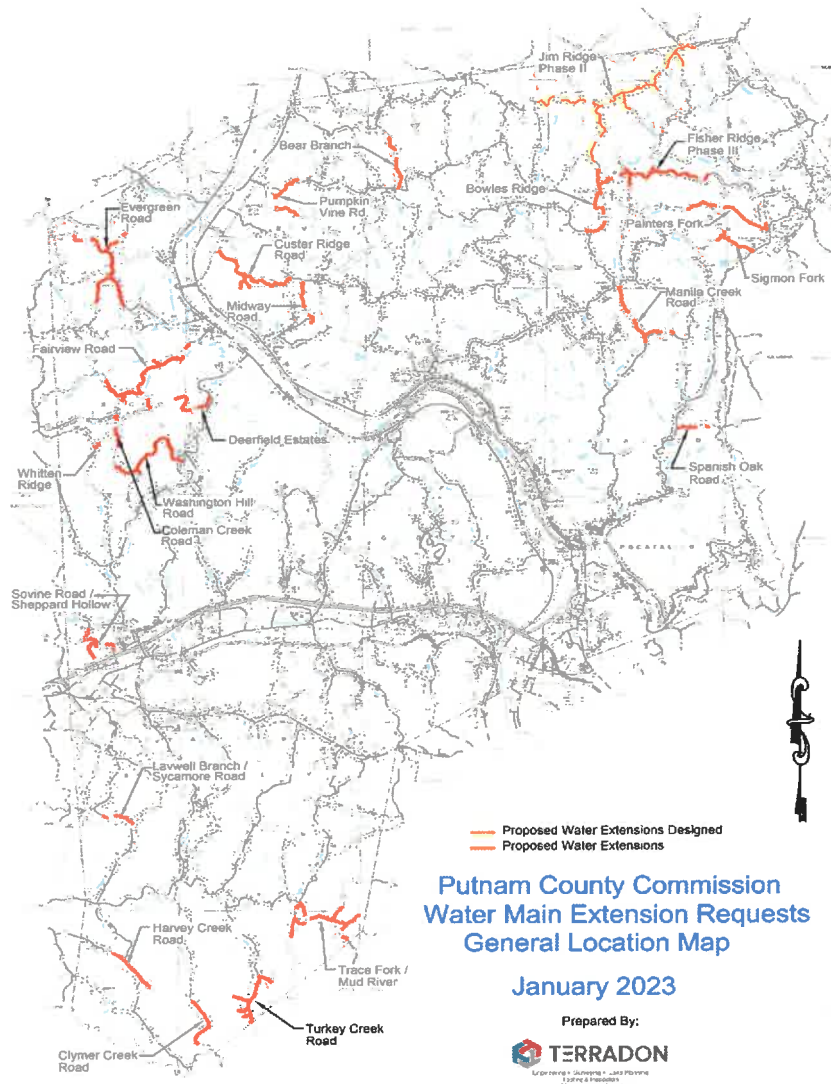


Figure 4.1

Project	Length & Pipe Size	#Homes	Total Cost	Cost/Home	Entity Contribution	County Cost	Comments
Bear Branch Road	6,200 lf 6"	8	\$431,729	\$53,966	\$41,608	\$390,121	
Bowles Ridge Road	12,900 lf 6"	16	\$891,780	\$55,736	\$83,216	\$808,564	
Clymer Creek Road	7,175 lf 8" & 565 lf 2"	14	\$586,839	\$41,917	\$72,814	\$514,025	
Coleman Creek Road	4,400 lf 6" & 1,780 lf 2"	7	\$399,662	\$57,095	\$36,407	\$363,255	Connect to existing WVAW main on Five and Twenty Mile Road
Custer Ridge Road	14,200 lf 8", 2,010 lf 6" & 1,350 lf 2"	30	\$1,305,431	\$43,514	\$156,030	\$1,149,401	
Deerfield Estates*	7,400 lf 6"	18	\$1,453,000	\$80,722	\$93,618	\$1,359,382	
Evergreen Road	12,590 lf 8", 10,000 lf 6" & 2,510 lf 2"	28	\$1,715,786	\$61,278	\$145,628	\$1,570,158	May require Booster Station Up-Grade - Need to GPS project
Fairview Road	16,020 lf 8", 6,400 lf 6" & 2,740 lf 2"	20	\$1,699,053	\$84,953	\$104,020	\$1,595,033	
Fisher Ridge - Phase III	19,360 lf 8", 1,560 lf 6" & 2,500 lf 2"	28	\$2,399,826	\$85,708	\$145,628	\$2,254,198	Tank & Booster Station Required
Harvey Creek Road	8,050 lf 6" & 1,150 lf 2"	14	\$598,177	\$42,727	\$72,814	\$525,363	
Laywell Branch/Sycamore Road	3,660 lf 6" & 915 lf 2"	9	\$294,131	\$32,681	\$46,809	\$247,322	
Manila Creek Road	9,700 lf 8" & 3,350 lf 6"	38	\$1,019,050	\$26,817	\$197,638	\$821,412	
Midway Road	2,730 lf 6" & 870 lf 2"	2	\$323,877	\$161,939	\$10,402	\$313,475	Project revised to connect to WVAW main on Steele Ridge
Painters Fork Road	12,530 lf 8" & 1,500 lf 2"	16	\$999,282	\$62,455	\$83,216	\$916,066	
Pumpkin Vine Road	9,425 lf 8" & 880 lf 2"	5	\$689,498	\$137,900	\$26,005	\$663,493	May require Booster Station - Need Pressure
Sigmon Fork	5,780 lf 6" & 1,100 lf 2"	9	\$531,907	\$59,101	\$46,809	\$485,098	May require Booster Station - Need to GPS project
Sovine Rd. / Sheppard Hollow	7,775 lf 6" & 1,535 lf 2"	8	\$731,497	\$91,437	\$20,440	\$711,057	w/ Booster Station sized for future Tank
Spanish Oak Road	2,420 lf 6" & 850 lf 2"	3	\$199,691	\$66,564	\$15,603	\$184,088	
Trace Fork / Mud River	9,300 lf 8", 7,870 lf 6" & 1,748 lf 2"	24	\$1,292,926	\$53,872	\$124,824	\$1,168,102	Need private R/W to keep costs down
Turkey Creek	6,450 lf 8", 4,530 lf 6" & 2,465 lf 2"	26	\$973,409	\$37,439	\$135,226	\$838,183	
Washington Hill Road	12,820 lf of 6" & 3,400 lf of 2"	12	\$949,837	\$79,153	\$30,660	\$919,177	
Whitten Ridge Road	760 lf of 2"	1	\$45,587	\$45,587	\$0	\$45,587	Need Entity Contribution
TOTALS		336	\$19,531,975	\$58,131	\$1,689,415	\$17,842,560	

Table 4.2 (Terradon, 2023)

Broadband Internet: Current Conditions

Broadband internet service is essential to a modern economy and helps connect communities to the outside world. High-speed internet access drives education, business, entertainment, and prosperity. The gap between regions that have access to modern information and communications technology is called the “digital divide.” Broadband access helps level the playing field between rural and non-rural communities. Just as universal access for telephone service in rural communities was made a national priority in the 1930’s to foster growth, interconnection, and public safety, so is broadband access today. Connecting rural areas to the most modern communications networks makes sure that all county residents have access to the outside world.

When considering broadband internet coverage, wireline coverage and wireless coverage should be considered independently. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines broadband as download speeds of at least twenty-five megabits per second (or Mbps) and upload speeds of at least 3 Mbps. Broadband technology includes everything from Wi-Fi and satellite to fiber-optic cables. When including wireless broadband coverage, close to 100% of Putnam County has access to high-speed internet, according to the FCC National Broadband Map. While wireless access has become more common, wireline coverage still serves as the backbone of enterprises with higher reliability and transmission speed.

Wired broadband technology is currently available to 75.14% of residences in Putnam County, with less access in the rural areas. All public schools, libraries and major healthcare facilities in the county are connected to broadband service. Wired broadband access can be accomplished through three types of transmission: copper, cable, and fiber. Most of Putnam County’s access is currently with cable transmission. There is a push to spread more fiber connectivity across the county, state, and nation because of its reliable speed.

Median Broadband Download Speed	
Rural	25.26 Mbps
Urban	86.58 Mbps
Avg.	21.99 Mbps

(National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Federal Communications Commission, National Broadband Map, 2022) Table 4.3

Research by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration supports that wages, jobs, and businesses

grow faster in communities that make investment in broadband infrastructure. Rural communities are especially affected by these investments and reap benefits directly from investment and increased connectivity. Rural areas can connect directly to worldwide markets, marketing, and commerce. This level of connectivity is often a requirement for large enterprises, but small businesses grow and succeed on this essential infrastructure. Connectivity serves as a lifeline to small businesses, allowing them to be more effective and successful.

Developed areas within Putnam County's central corridor are well served by high-speed access. Most areas that have existing high-speed service have wireline download speeds of more than 25 Mbps. This elevated level of service tends to be concentrated along highway corridors and in the most densely populated areas; speed levels decrease proportionally as customer density decreases and distance from service infrastructure increases. While service speeds are currently at acceptable levels in most areas, keeping up with technological improvement and demand is essential to simply maintaining a competitive position. To build a vibrant local economy Putnam County must ensure that the level of service is always advancing.

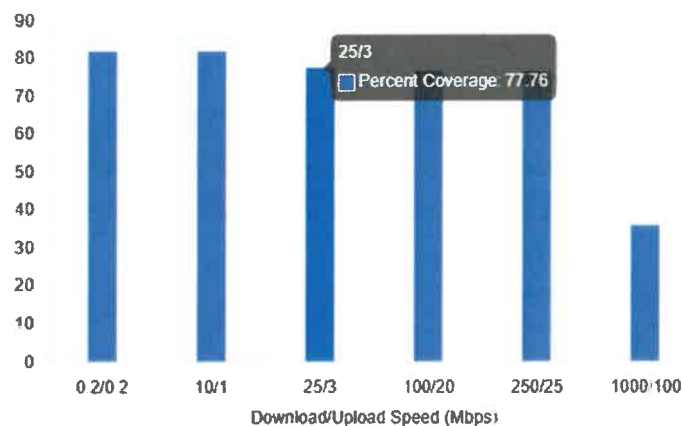


Table 4.4 (Federal Communications Commission, 2023)

Competition in the provider market will help continue to push increases in the level of service. Presently there are four wireline broadband providers in Putnam County. This ranks third in the state for access to multiple wireline high-speed service providers.

Putnam County has taken a do-it-yourself approach to extend broadband access to rural parts of the county by investing American Rescue Funds in laying fiber optic lines. Phase one of the plan to provide the county with affordable fiber optic wireline broadband access began in October 2023.

Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Promote continued expansion of broadband internet services to underserved areas.

Actions:

- Seek grant opportunities through the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council.
- Continue progress on Putnam County's Fiber Project.

Finance:

Putnam County has an active broadband expansion project funded through a combination of American Rescue Plan Act funds (ARPA) and county funds. More funding for broadband expansion is available from the West Virginia Broadband Development Council, applications for grants can be filled out by the County Commission.

Advocating for and leveraging private investment from service providers should be undertaken by county officials.

Mid-Range Goal:

Expand water service to underserved, developed areas of Putnam County.

Actions:

- Continue strong relationships with water utility providers to secure funding and technical assistance for expansion.
- Actively pursue available grant funding from federal, state, and private sources.

Finance:

The County Commission consistently pursues grant funding for expansion of water service. Financing is often a combination of utility funds, grant funds and service fees. This arrangement has been highly effective in expansion of service. Continuing this course is recommended.

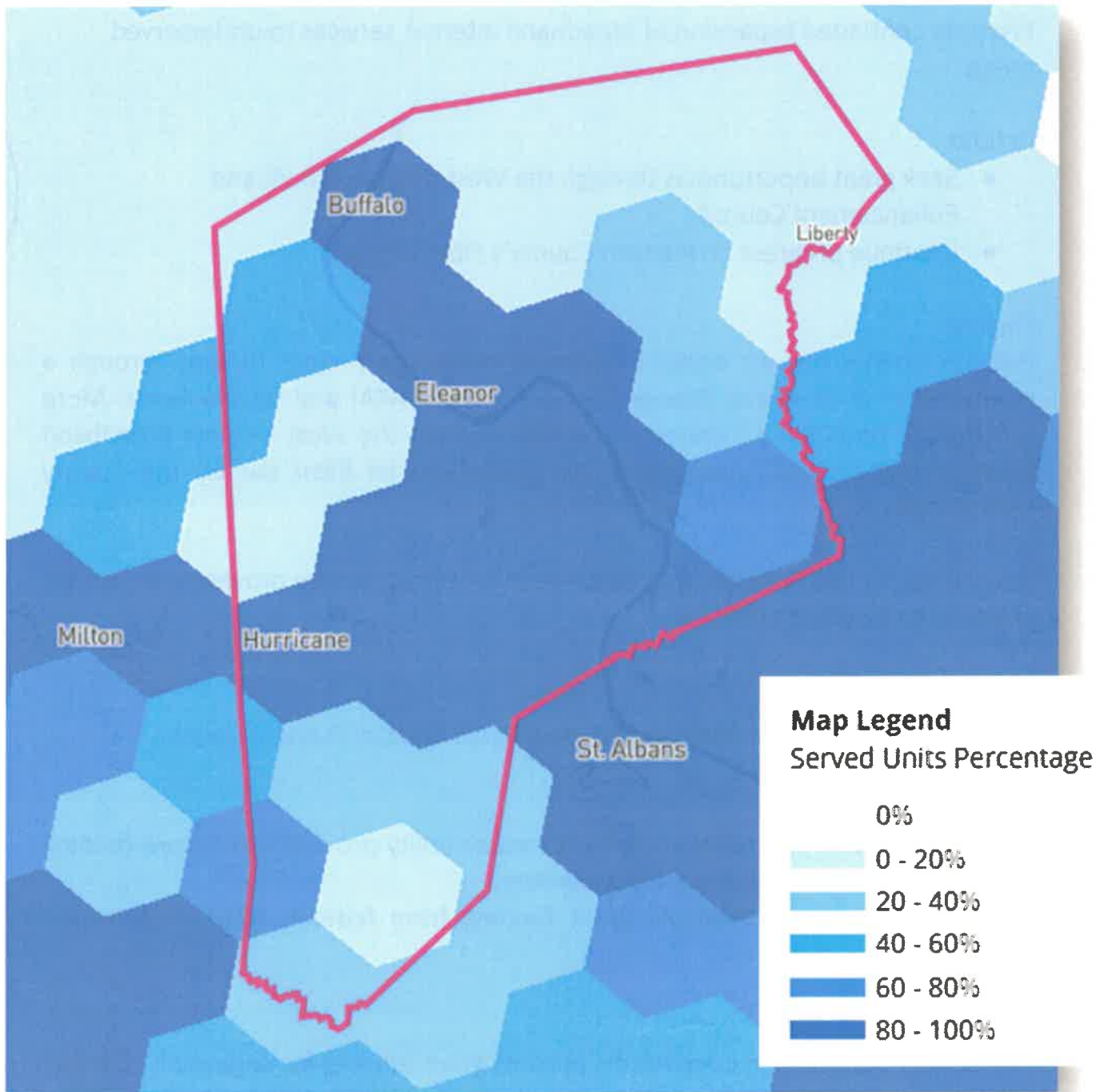


Figure 4.5 Wired Broadband Coverage
(Federal Communications Commission, 2023)

Recreation

Overview

The variety and abundance of recreational activities offered in Putnam County plays a big part in cementing the county's position as a desirable place to live. Physical activity is a considerable factor in enriching the lives of residents through physical fitness and emotional well-being. Investing in recreation enriches the lives of residents by improving quality of life and making life a more joyful experience. This increases the value of housing and helps foster a sense of community.

Differing ages, physical abilities, and interests require a well-balanced mixture of activities. The Putnam County Parks and Recreation Commission (PCPRC) is responsible for managing the public recreational facilities operated by the county. The PCPRC has placed emphasis on offering a wide array of ways to have fun and be physically active. This variety is a reason that residents cite recreational opportunities as a factor in their satisfaction with living in Putnam County. Recreation activities also attract many visitors from the region each year.

Current Conditions

Putnam County Parks and Recreation Commission currently maintains three park sites; Valley Park, the Hometown Roadside Park, and the Walter Nature Preserve that serve the community. Each park varies greatly in its level of development and offered activities.

The flagship developed park is Valley Park, located centrally along State Route 34 in Hurricane. This large suburban park provides a multitude of free outdoor activities, including more than four miles of walking trails, stocked fishing ponds, picnicking pavilions, and a fenced dog park. Areas for team sports are also well-developed including youth-oriented baseball and softball fields, tennis courts, beach volleyball courts, and soccer fields. Other activities include playgrounds and the #1-disc golf course in the state spread across almost thirty acres of the park. In 2018 Valley Park was reopened after a large investment to upgrade fields and other amenities. Pickleball is coming to Valley Park in 2024. Adults and children alike are encouraged to enjoy numerous recreational activities, including an adult softball league and several organized youth sports. Valley Park also has a large community center with

3,600 square feet of meeting space and a commercial kitchen. The Commons includes a large main multi-purpose room, classroom space, and other break-out space. Facilities are well maintained and provide a central location for events.

Another major attraction at Valley Park is the Waves of Fun Water Park. This facility was constructed in 1981 to serve the county and region. The wave pool is more than half a million gallons and can accommodate six hundred swimmers, serving more than 2,500 guests at a time. This attraction brings in visitors from the tri-state region during the summer months for a taste of the beach in West Virginia.

The Hometown Roadside Park, nestled between WV 62 and the Kanawha River, has been around since the early 1920's and consists of two acres of picnic and recreational space outside of Hometown. This facility includes a variety of playground equipment, picnic shelters, and interpretive historical markers. Renovations to the park have provided newer playground equipment, lampposts, and a permanent restroom with an updated shelter and picnic tables. More renovations such as basketball courts are anticipated in the future.

Dedicated on October 22nd, 2015, The Esther and Norman Walter Memorial Nature Trail is a one-mile trail located on Red House Hill. The land was donated to the Putnam County Parks and Recreation by Martha Somers and Mary Creager, Daughters of Esther and Norman Walter for the purpose of creating the trail.

Municipalities offer a wide range of parks and recreation opportunities to county residents as well. The City of Hurricane's City Park has a spray ground and a new skate park completed in 2023 in addition to baseball fields, basketball courts, and playgrounds. Meeks Mountain Trails began construction there in 2018 and boast thirty miles of hiking and biking trails. Also, the new state of the art football and baseball fields at Bridge Park near Midland Trail in Hurricane is to be completed in May of 2024. The City of Winfield and Town of Buffalo also maintain youth ball fields and other park amenities. The town of Eleanor maintains the Putnam County Park, home of the Putnam County Fair each summer.

The YMCA has a centrally located facility on Teays Valley Road in Scott Depot. This facility has a fitness center, pool, indoor courts and recreation space, and childcare facilities. The YMCA also operates Camp High-Tor for youth during the summer, presenting a wide range of educational and entertaining programming.

Recreational investments in many communities center on organized team sports, which is evident in the many recreation programs offered in Putnam County that are important for young people. Casual and less organized recreation activities for adults are rising in popularity. This type of opportunity is essential in helping residents find physically active pastimes that both meet their needs and interests while being flexible and diverse enough to be part of their everyday lives. Expanding opportunities for daily physical activity, both outdoors and indoors, is important to promoting healthy lifestyles.

Goals and Actions:

Short Range Goal:

Evaluate and implement casual recreation initiatives that promote daily physical activity.

Actions:

- Develop recreation programming that involves residents in non-competitive, casual physical activities including biking and walking trails.
- Support recreational activity clubs for adults as well as young people.
- Develop or alter facilities to accommodate any identified shifts in recreational patterns.

Finance:

Special funding outside of existing parks and recreation budgeting is not needed to tailor programming and recreation activities to the needs of the community. Funding for dedicated events or new activities can be appropriated as identified on a cost-benefit basis. Grant funding may be sought for facility improvement to bolster community participation in healthy recreation activities.

Long Range Goal:

Increase public and private recreational facilities and opportunities for county residents.

Actions:

- Direct PCPRC to compile a need and use assessment of current facilities and offer plans for expansion of those.

- Partner with municipal and private entities to collaborate on new projects and the repurposing of current facilities.
- Support open and recreational space in new developments.

Finance:

Special funding outside of existing parks and recreation budgeting is not needed for evaluation of current uses and needs of the community and can be achieved through the redirection of staffing time for that purpose. Funding for dedicated events or new activities can be appropriated as identified on a cost-benefit basis. Grant funding may be sought for facility improvement to bolster community participation in healthy recreation activities.

Historic Preservation

Overview

Putnam County has a rich historical tradition dating back to long before modern settlement. The earliest known people in the county settled near Buffalo in the Late Archaic Period (3000 – 1000 BCE) as evidenced by the discovery of a unique style of arrow and spearhead tips found only in this area. The Buffalo Archeological site, a National Historic Register Site, where these artifacts were found was partially excavated in the mid-1960's by the West Virginia Geologic and Economic Survey. This study revealed at least four different settlements on the site from between 1000 BCE and 1600 CE. The excavation unearthed only 15% of the site yet still found 562 burial sites and tens of thousands of artifacts.

Modern settlement began with early exploration of the Kanawha River Valley. Early settlements include Hurricane Bridge, first established around 1815 and so named for its location on the James River and Kanawha River Turnpike crossing of Hurricane Creek. The Commonwealth of Virginia, recognizing the transportation significance of the river, took steps to improve travel by blasting the Red House Shoals that allowed the first steamboat to travel from the Ohio River to Charleston around 1820. Reliable steamboat travel would take nearly another 80 years to be established with lock and dam improvements completed in 1898.

Putnam County was established on March 11, 1848, by act of the General Assembly of Virginia. The area that is now Putnam County was severed from portions of Kanawha, Cabell, and Mason counties. Named for Revolutionary War General Israel Putnam, the county was home to 5,366 residents which included 632 enslaved persons in 1850.

The Civil War was divisive to the nation, Putnam County included. With roughly four hundred men joining each the Union and Confederate forces, tensions were remarkably high at the time. This produced street fighting in Winfield on October 26, 1864, resulting in the death of Captain Philip Thurmond who was aligned with the Confederate forces. Captain Thurmond was buried in an unmarked grave near Winfield and his grave was relocated to the historic Hoge House complex in 2010. Significant battles of the war were fought in Putnam County including the battles of Scary Creek and Hurricane Bridge.

The Civil War brought about statehood for West Virginia with final proclamation of admission to the Union by President Lincoln on June 20, 1863. Following the war, Putnam County remained largely a traditional agricultural economy until commercialized coal mining began just before the turn of the 20th century. Five major mines were established employing more than 1,000 men by 1907. This industry largely dissipated when the outbreak of World War I brought about a shift to large-scale manufacturing in the City of Nitro.

Putnam County remained very rural and largely divided by the Kanawha River until the construction of the Winfield Toll Bridge in 1957. This interconnection replaced the intermittent ferry service crossing between Red House and Winfield. The construction of Interstate 64 in the 1960's increased access to uncharacteristically flat land in the Teays Valley and Hurricane areas. Suburban neighborhoods have dominated the development patterns since, marking Putnam County as a bedroom community for adjacent Charleston and Huntington.

Historic preservation is a top goal of many residents. The Historic Landmarks Committee works to identify, assess, and protect historical assets in Putnam County. These assessments are conducted at the request of property owners or other interested parties. Members of the committee, which include local historians and preservationists, make site visits and research the historical significance of sites and structures throughout the county. Once sites and structures are assessed the

committee can work to secure funding for preservation efforts. The committee seeks grants and other financial assistance from federal, state, and local sources including the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Putnam County Commission, and the City of Winfield, among others. This group also works to maintain all historic place markers located around the county with assistance from community service workers.

The Hoge House Committee was created specifically to preserve the home of Putnam County's first judge James W. Hoge. The home, built in 1838, was relocated to avoid demolition to its present location on the Putnam County Courthouse complex. The relocation placed the home within sight of its original location keeping it close to the historic Hoge family cemetery and slave cemetery on the property. The preservation of the home also includes pieces of furniture and other belongings of the Hoge family. The structure is now partially restored and under renovation. The Hoge House was named a National Historic Landmark on July 27th, 2007.

Priorities

The Historic Landmarks Committee and the Hoge House Committee are invested in preserving the history of Putnam County by making it available and accessible to residents and visitors alike.

The Historic Landmarks Committee specifically seeks to continue to identify and assess sites and structures of significance throughout the county. This process takes time and deliberation from a host of volunteers committed to the same goals. Working to increase public awareness of this committee's work is essential in making preservation of our history a priority for all residents. Resources for preservation are limited so prioritization of projects and initiatives should focus on the most significant and historically unique places, people, and events in the county.

The Hoge House Committee is focused specifically on the preservation of the Hoge House and the history surrounding this structure. Judge Hoge, the Hoge family, war veterans like Captain Thurmond killed in Winfield during Civil War fighting, enslaved people living and laboring in Putnam County – these are the stories that can be told with more accuracy and effect when this historic home is preserved for future generations. Renovations are still under progress with further improvements needed to the plumbing, roofing and heating before the structure can function as a

historical center. The goal of opening the Hoge House as a historical site is to give a backdrop for history to come alive, especially to students. Plans for the site include walking trails to both the Hoge family cemetery and slave cemetery, period furnishings and household items from the Hoge family and others, interpretive exhibits for the native peoples, modern settlement, the Civil War and coal mining history. Exhibits of farm equipment, wagons and other items are also planned. Making history come alive for young people is the most significant goal of this effort. The Hoge House will serve as a place to tell the story of Putnam County.

Renovation of the Hoge House is already helping to drive heritage tourism in Putnam County. The Rivers to Ridges Heritage Trail initiative is aimed at identifying scenic byways as an attraction to visitors interested in local history. This effort has created the Mary Ingles Trail Excursion Loop which runs from Nitro to Buffalo along both sides of the Kanawha River Valley. One of the many historical stops is the Hoge House. Historic Preservation pays dividends to residents and visitors alike.

Goals and Actions:

Short Range Goal:

Complete restoration of the Hoge House as a historical center for the education of residents and visitors.

Actions:

- Seek further funding sources to complete renovation of the structure to modern standards while maintaining historical accuracy.
- Develop plans for exhibits, storytelling, and interpretive tools for Putnam County history to be located at the Hoge House.
- Partner with public and private schools to make historical resources available.

Finance:

Work on this historic preservation project has been grant funded through historic preservation focused awards and funding from the County Commission and the City of Winfield. Continued pursuit of funds from grantors by the County Commission and appropriations from County Commission and the City of Winfield must be undertaken by the Historic Landmarks Committee. Support for grant writing can be provided by the County Commission.

Long Range Goal:

Identify and preserve the historic resources in Putnam County through continued efforts of the Historic Landmark Committee.

Actions:

- Continue to measure the historical significance and value of sites and structures.
- Actively pursue funding from federal, state, local, and private sources for preservation efforts.
- Promote identified places of historical significance and how individuals can help identify unrecognized places of historical significance.

Finance:

The work of the Historic Landmarks Committee on assessment and identification of historic assets is conducted by community volunteers. Support for volunteer efforts by county officials may be provided for record keeping and administration. Seeking funding for preservation of newly identified assets from grantors, local governments, and private sources is key. The County Commission can offer support for grant writing.

Public Services

Overview

Putnam County provides superior essential public services to residents through 911 dispatching, emergency medical services, law enforcement, fire service, and emergency management.

Putnam County 911 Provides 911 dispatching service for the entire county including municipal jurisdictions. This service is run from a high-tech public safety building in Winfield. From this hub, the Putnam County 911 Center can mobilize five full-time advanced life support units with medic stations located in Winfield, Buffalo, Poca, Hurricane, and Teays Valley. Three other units can be staffed in case of extraordinary circumstances. These units incorporate the highest level of life-saving technology for pre-hospital care. The dispersal of medic stations throughout the county allows for prompt response to emergency calls. The average response time is 10 minutes county-wide.

Emergency preparedness planning is headed by Putnam County Emergency Management. This agency has implemented an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan to establish procedures for responding to different natural and human-caused disasters. Methodical responses are planned for extreme weather events, flooding, and hazardous material accidents to ensure public safety is maintained. Protecting life and property is the goal of emergency preparedness plans.

Dispatch also mobilizes the Putnam County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement purposes. The Sheriff's Department has thirty-eight sworn deputies; this includes four deputies assigned to the criminal investigation unit, one deputy assigned to domestic violence, two deputies assigned to a drug task force, one deputy assigned to the US Marshal's task force, one deputy assigned as the evidence technician, and one narcotic detecting K-9. Additionally, there are three civilian home confinement officers.

Fire and Rescue protection service is provided in the unincorporated areas of Putnam County by eight volunteer fire departments. The fire departments are in Buffalo, Eleanor, Winfield, Red House, Bancroft, Poca, Teays Valley, and Hurricane. The Teays Valley and Hurricane departments are supplemented with paid staff members. The fire departments in Putnam County receive funding from the Putnam County Fire Service fee. The fee was implemented in 1986 by the Putnam County Commission to assist in the overall funding of the stations for operations and protection. The Putnam County Fire Service Board was created for the responsible, effective, efficient management of those funds.

The Putnam County Board of Health works to maintain sanitary conditions and fight disease. The Health Department is responsible for food service inspections of all institutions and businesses to ensure cleanliness and proper sanitation practices. Clinical services include a range of immunizations and other medical services. In addition to food service inspections, environmental services include individual sewage disposal approval and inspections, recreational facilities inspections including swimming pools and spas, private water supply inspection, and housing safety inspections including hospitals and daycares. The Health Department also collaborates with national partners like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to assess and control infectious diseases.

Priorities

Maintaining the highest level of public safety is an essential component of the high standard of living residents have come to expect. Continually matching services to the community's need will allow for limited resources to be used in the most efficient manner. Service levels are currently acceptable and should be raised in proportion to their demand. Technology is constantly changing and has a disproportionate impact on how essential emergency medical, law, and fire service is provided. Often, levels of service can be increased or enhanced by innovative technologies and in some instances cost savings can be achieved.

Consistent, dependable funding for service providers allows these individuals to focus on protecting the life and property of the county and not on fundraising or budgeting. Fiscal constraint is always necessary, but focused investment can yield greater public safety by allowing first responders to do their jobs without distraction. Finding ways to tie funding and expense levels to adjusted automatic increases to revenue would achieve this.

Goals and Actions

Short Range Goal:

Provide dependable and predictable funding for emergency services that maintains proportion to expenses.

Actions:

- Pursue supplemental funding in combination with EMS to improve chances of meeting funding needs.
- Adopt policies to include funding increases and future alterations to fire service fee schedules.
- Implement an automatic, proportional fee increase mechanism for fire service fees.
- Propose alternative funding models and gauge public preference.

Finance:

Funding this goal can be managed within the current scope of the public service's capacity to evaluate funding methods. Nominal funding is needed to distribute

public information materials in Fire Service Board billing mailings and can be allotted from operating budgets.

Long Range Goal:

Maintain consistent levels of public service protection in law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical services, and emergency preparedness.

Actions:

- Continue agency reporting on current levels of service and effectiveness at achieving public safety.
- Maintain levels of funding and staffing based on needs assessments completed by each agency.
- Adopt tested and proven technologies to increase safety for residents and reduce costs for agencies.

Finance:

Ongoing funding for public safety services is a major focus of county budgeting. Maintaining fiscal constraint during the appropriating process is well established. Implementing detailed reporting for each agency to demonstrate effectiveness of funding will strengthen service to the public and public safety. Utilizing grant funding for special projects to support public safety service delivery is always ongoing and should continue. Support for grant writing can be provided by the County Commission.

Chapter 5

Findings & Conclusions

The development of this plan places emphasis on an exuberant number of opportunities and challenges that face Putnam County. The information presented here condenses complex issues into a functional guide to inform decision making. This plan should be referenced by the Putnam County Commission and its appropriate boards, commissions, and agencies often and with great consideration. The goals and actions explained here are intended to guide development in a way that ensures the continued prosperity and growth in Putnam County and keeps the community goal of making Putnam County a better place to live, work, and play at the forefront of decision-making processes.

Responding to the opportunities and challenges requires strategies that are consistent with desires of county residents, and thus provide the following:

1. Protection of residents' health, safety, and welfare.
2. Fiscal policies that anticipate, evaluate, and account for changes in circumstances.
3. Application of reasonable and effective development standards to mitigate negative impacts of development and maintain or improve quality of life.
4. Consistent economic growth that enhances the quality of life for residents.
5. An efficient and affordable transportation network that meets residents' needs.
6. Affordable and safe housing options for all residents.
7. Appropriate and cost-effective infrastructure supports desired living conditions and encourages economic growth.
8. Ample and diverse recreation opportunities.
9. Preservation of the historical resources of Putnam County for the benefit of residents and to encourage tourism.

As the Putnam County Commission and its appointee boards, commissions, and agencies make decisions they should be consistent with the goals described in this document and summarized here.

Land Use Goals



RURAL

- Improve access to basic utility infrastructure including water and broadband internet.
- Improve roadways to ensure public safety and ease of access.
- Preserve the rural character of Putnam County.



HIGH GROWTH AREAS

- Increase the number of recreational opportunities.
- Support interconnectivity of future developments to reduce traffic, increase public safety, and foster a sense of place.
- Increase residential, commercial, and industrial uses.



MUNICIPAL

- Require uses compatible with flood zoning requirements.
- Maintain small-town character of our municipalities.
- Increase affordable single and multifamily housing.



REVITALIZATION

- Identify deteriorated and abandoned structures to eliminate or rehabilitate.

Economic Activity Goals



- Support the Putnam County Development Authority in its efforts to market Putnam County as a prime location for commerce and investment.
- Encourage development of shovel-ready sites through the efforts of the PCDA.
- Promote continued growth of commerce and industry within Putnam County.

Transportation Goals



- Continue working closely with the WVDOH to keep roadways safe and well maintained.
- Encourage concurrent development of property and transportation networks.
- Support goals in the RIC *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*.
- Support growth and maintenance of transportation system.

Housing Goals



- Support interconnectivity of future housing developments with surrounding land uses.
- Promote development of affordable housing.
- Retain Putnam County's reputation as a superior place to live.

Infrastructure Goals



- Promote continued expansion of broadband internet service to underserved areas.
- Expand water service to developed but underserved areas of Putnam County.

Recreation Goals



- Support the Putnam County Parks and Rec Commission's efforts to evaluate and implement casual recreation initiatives.
- Increase private and public recreational facilities and opportunities.

Historic Preservation Goals



- Complete restoration of the Hoge House as a historical education center.
- Identify and preserve historic resources in Putnam County through the efforts of the Historic Landmarks Committee.

Public Service Goals



- Provide dependable and predictable emergency services funding that is proportional to expenses.
- Maintain consistent levels of public service including fire, law enforcement, EMS, and disaster preparedness.

Funding of the initiatives will vary: Goals that fall under the jurisdiction or responsibility of agency level departments of the County Commission must work together with the commission staff to seek funding from either general revenue sources, state agency funding sources, federal grant opportunities, or public-private partnerships. When initiatives are outside the jurisdiction or responsibility of the County Commission or its agents the county must advocate and lobby for the completion of goals. Providing technical assistance, partial funding, grant writing expertise, and fiscal agent duties to outside organizations in pursuit of goals is warranted.

The goals set by this document are considered an ongoing process with varied timelines. Short range goals have a 1-to-3-year timeline. Mid-range goals have a 4-to-7-year timeline. Long range goals have an 8-to-10-year timeline. All goals will be revisited intermittently as the plan is updated with current conditions and data. Maintaining public input to ensure that goals remain consistent with community priorities is essential.

SHORT-RANGE GOALS (1-3 YEARS)

PRIORITY	GOAL
LAND USE	Rural: Increase and improve the access to basic utility infrastructure for rural areas including water and high-speed internet.
	High growth areas: Increase the number of recreational opportunities in high growth areas.
	Municipal: Ensure proposed land uses are compatible with flood zoning requirements.
ECONOMIC	Identify opportunities for workforce and site development through the work of the PCDA.
TRANSPORTATION	Continue working with the Division of Highways for remedying instances of disrepair and unsafe road conditions.
HOUSING	Support the interconnectivity of future housing development to surrounding land uses.
INFRASTRUCTURE	Continue expansion of broadband internet services to underserved areas.
RECREATION	Evaluate and implement casual recreation initiatives that promote daily physical activity.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	Complete Hoge House renovations a historical center for the education of residents and visitor.
PUBLIC SERVICES	Provide dependable and predictable funding for emergency services that maintains proportion to expenses.

MID-RANGE GOALS (4-7 YEARS)

PRIORITY	GOAL
LAND USE	Rural: Improve roadways in rural areas to ensure public safety and ease of access.
	High growth areas: Support interconnectivity of future developments for reduced traffic impact and increased public safety.
	Municipal: Maintain the small-town character of municipal areas.
ECONOMIC	Promote the development of an inventory of shovel-ready sites in alignment with the goals and initiatives of the PCDA.
TRANSPORTATION	Encourage concurrent development of property and transportation networks to mitigate stress and congestion of roadways.
	Support the goals described in the RIC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
HOUSING	Promote the development of moderately priced and affordable housing options to keep pace with growth in higher cost housing development.
INFRASTRUCTURE	Expand water service to underserved, developed areas of Putnam County.

LONG-RANGE GOALS (8-10 YEARS)

PRIORITY	GOAL
LAND USE	Rural: Preserve the rural character of Putnam County.
	High growth areas: Increase residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in high growth areas.
	Municipal: Increase affordable single and multi-family housing.
	Revitalization: Renew, revitalize, and redevelop abandoned and dilapidated structures throughout the county.
ECONOMIC	Promote the continued growth of commerce and industry within Putnam County.
TRANSPORTATION	Support the overall growth and maintenance of the transportation system in Putnam County.
HOUSING	Retain Putnam County's reputation as a superior place to live.
RECREATION	Increase public and private recreational facilities and opportunities for county residents.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	Identify and preserve historic resources in Putnam County through efforts of the Historic Landmarks Committee.
PUBLIC SERVICES	Maintain consistent levels of public service protections in law enforcement, fire, emergency medical and preparedness.

