
Wise County Comprehensive Plan Update
Defining Alternatives
PLANNING WORKS
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AH, POGO, THE BEAUTY OF THE FOREST PRIMEVAL GETS ME IN THE HEART.
IT GETS ME IN THE FEET, PORKYPINE.
IT IS HARD WALKIN' ON THIS STUFF.
YEP, SON, WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND HE IS US.

Current Conditions

- Virginia's coal industry has changed
- In 1980, Virginia had over 800 licensed mines.
- By 2001, the number of Virginia licensed mines had declined by more than 50% to 328 (only 204 of which produced marketable coal)
- Over the past 10 years, the number of coal-mining jobs in Virginia has declined by more than 40%

Agenda

- Background Highlights
- Growth Projections
- Alternatives
- Next Steps

What Does the Plan Do?

- Prepare for change
- The Plan is a policy guide
- The Plan establishes standards
- The Plan will protect public and private investment
- The Plan process will provide the County with a wealth of data – it will coordinate with other projects and improve decision-making

How Will the Plan Be Used?

- Create an Official Map
- Create a Future Land Use Map
- Foundation for development regulations
- Foundation for Budget and CIP
- Establish growth areas and community facility service boundaries
- Basis for development review decisions

Background Highlights

Growth Projections

- Growth rates in the County have been elastic and variable, dependent in large part to the cycle of coal production and expanding role of the colleges.
- Projections show a long-term population decline in the County, through 2040, though the rate of decline will slow.
- Communities likely to experience continued population decreases include Appalachia, Pound and St. Paul.
- Communities likely to experience continued population increases include Big Stone Gap, Coeburn and Wise.
- Norton is expected to experience continued growth.

Growth Projections

- One of the most interesting trends has been the transition, albeit slowly, from sprawl (rural) to a community-based (urbanized) development pattern.
  - In 2000, 34% of the population was in the towns and 66% was in the unincorporated areas.
  - By 2010, the pattern had shifted to a 35%-65% town-rural population ratio. Market and lifestyles were reflecting efficiencies and preferences.
  - The potential for the Plan to build on this pattern is substantial.
- This pattern is projected to continue, with new development (and population) increasing more in the towns (.2% per year) and decreasing in the rural areas (.1% per year).

Growth Projections

- There's a role for strong communities - those with available and adequate facilities and services, a mix of uses, a robust local economy, desirable amenities - that were good places to invest in homes and businesses.
  - By 2010, Big Stone Gap had over 38% of the population of the unincorporated area (an increasing share from 35% in 2000).
  - Coeburn saw a modest 1% increase in share of population.
- Though the other towns had reduced shares of population, Pound (9.9% decrease in share) and Appalachia (9.7% decrease in share) hint the losses may be due to larger issues, which the Plan can and should address.

Table 2: Population Estimates and Projections, 2000-2040

	2000			2010			2000-2010			2013		2020			2030			2040		
	Population	Percent of Total County	Percent of Unincorporated County	Population	Percent of Total County	Percent of Unincorporated County	Average Annual Pop Change	Urbanization Rate	Change Percent of Unincorporated County	Population	Average Annual Change	Population	Percent of Total County	Average Annual Change, 2010-2020	Population	Percent of Total County	Average Annual Change, 2020-2030	Population	Percent of Total County	Average Annual Change, 2030-2040
Incorporated County																				
Appalachia	1,839	4.6%	13.3%	1,754	4.2%	12.0%	-0.5%		-9.7%			1,727			1,700			1,673		
Big Stone Gap	4,856	12.1%	35.1%	5,614	13.5%	38.4%	1.5%		9.4%	5,548	-0.4%	5,903	14.5%	0.5%	6,191	15.3%	0.5%	6,480	16.2%	0.5%
Coeburn	1,996	5.0%	14.4%	2,139	5.2%	14.6%	0.7%		1.4%			2,189			2,240			2,293		
Pound	1,089	2.7%	7.9%	1,037	2.5%	7.1%	-0.5%		-9.9%			1,020			1,004			988		
St. Paul (partial)	784	2.0%	5.7%	772	1.9%	5.3%	-0.2%		-6.8%			768			764			760		
Wise	3,255	8.1%	23.6%	3,286	7.9%	22.5%	0.1%		-4.5%			3,296			3,307			3,317		
Total	13,819	34.4%		14,602	35.2%		0.6%	0.2%				14,715	36.0%	0.1%	14,872	36.8%	0.1%	15,067	37.7%	0.1%
Unincorporated County	26,304	65.6%		26,850	64.8%		0.2%	-0.1%				26,138	64.0%	-0.3%	25,519	63.2%	-0.2%	24,975	62.5%	-0.2%
County Total	40,123			41,452			0.3%			40,589	-0.7%	40,841		-0.1%	40,357		-0.1%	39,976		-0.1%
Decennial Change	1.4%			3.3%								-1.5%			-1.2%			-0.9%		
City of Norton	3,904			3,958			0.1%			4,017	0.5%	4,201		0.6%	4,468		0.6%	4,722		0.6%

Table 7: Age Dependency, 2010

	Virginia		Wise County		Norton city		Wise Cty/Norton	
Age Group	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Youth (0 - 19)	2,083,685	26%	9,997	24%	986	25%	10,983	24%
Working (20 - 64)	4,940,402	62%	25,590	62%	2392	60%	27,982	62%
Aged (65+)	976,937	12%	5,865	14%	580	15%	6,445	14%
Total	8,001,024	100%	41,452	100%	3,958	100%	45,410	100%
Youth Dependency	2.37		2.56		2.43		2.55	
Aged Dependency	5.06		4.36		4.12		4.34	

Table 6: Change by Age Group, 2000-2010

	Change, 2000 to 2010
Wise County	
19 and Under	-5.8%
20-64	6.9%
65 and Over	5.0%
Total Population	3.3%
Norton City	
19 and Under	3.7%
20-64	1.5%
65 and Over	-2.7%
Total Population	1.4%
Wise Co. / Norton	
19 and Under	-5.0%
20-64	6.5%
65 and Over	4.2%
Total Population	3.1%

Table 9: General Household Characteristics, Wise County, 2000 and 2010

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total households	16,013	100	15,968	100
Family households (families) *	11,517	71.9	10,892	68.2
With own children under 18 years	4,963	31	4,260	26.7
Husband-wife family	8,992	56.2	8,036	50.3
With own children under 18 years	3,717	23.2	2,847	17.8
Male householder, no wife present			850	5.3
With own children under 18 years			390	2.4
Female householder, no husband present	1,918	12	2,006	12.6
With own children under 18 years	966	6	1,023	6.4
Nonfamily households*	4,496	28.1	5,076	31.8
Householder living alone	4,088	25.5	4,379	27.4
Male			1,917	12
65 years and over			523	3.3
Female			2,462	15.4
65 years and over			1,291	8.1
Total Householders living alone 65 years+	1,792	11.2	1,814	11.4
Households with individuals under 18 years	5,488	34.3	5,013	31.4
Households with individuals 65 years and over	4,160	26	4,369	27.4
Average household size	2.44		2.4	
Average family size*	2.91		2.9	

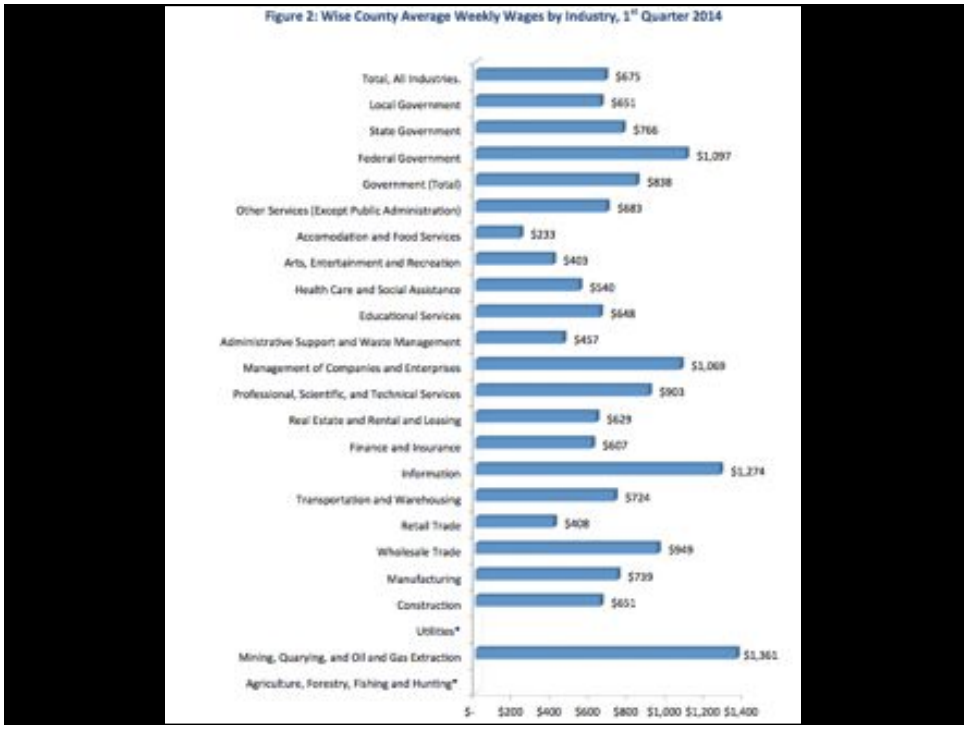


Figure 2: Wise County Average Weekly Wages by Industry, 1st Quarter 2014
Total, All Industries
Local Government
State Government
Federal Government
Government (Total)
Other Services (Except Public Administration)
Accomodation and Food Services
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
Health Care and Social Assistance
Educational Services
Administrative Support and Waste Management
Management of Companies and Enterprises
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
Finance and Insurance
Information
Transportation and Warehousing
Retail Trade
Wholesale Trade
Manufacturing
Construction
Utilities*
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting*
$675
$651
$766
$1,097
$838
$683
$233
$403
$540
$648
$457
$1,069
$903
$629
$607
$1,274
$724
$408
$949
$739
$651
$1,361
$- $200 $400 $600 $800 $1,000 $1,200 $1,400

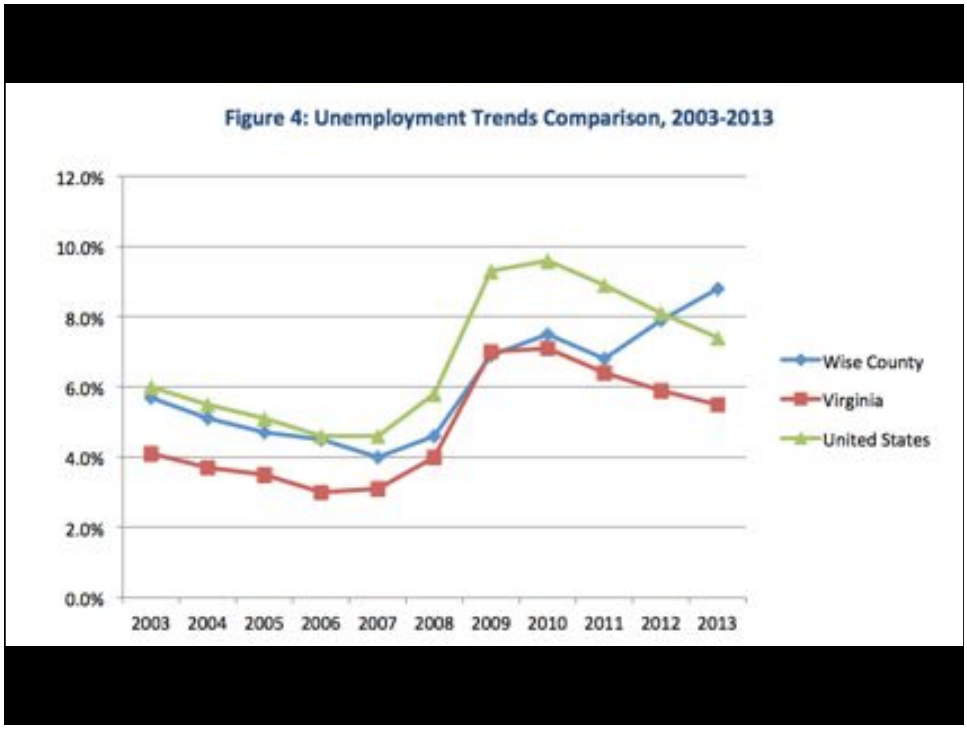
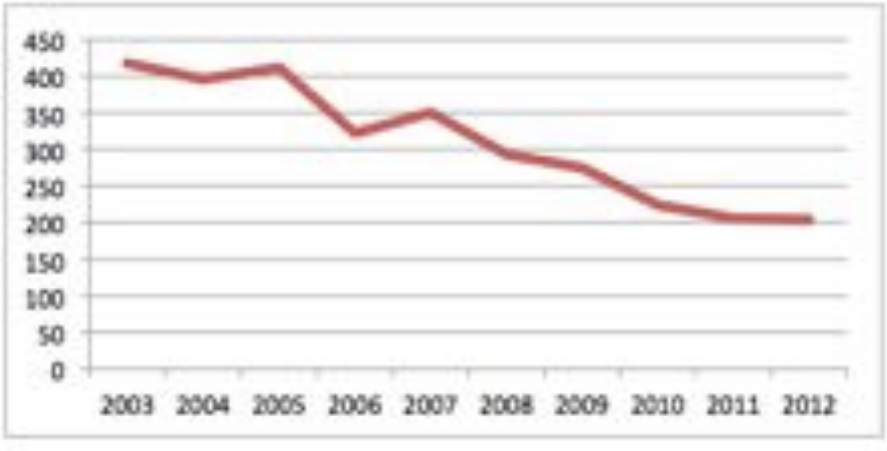


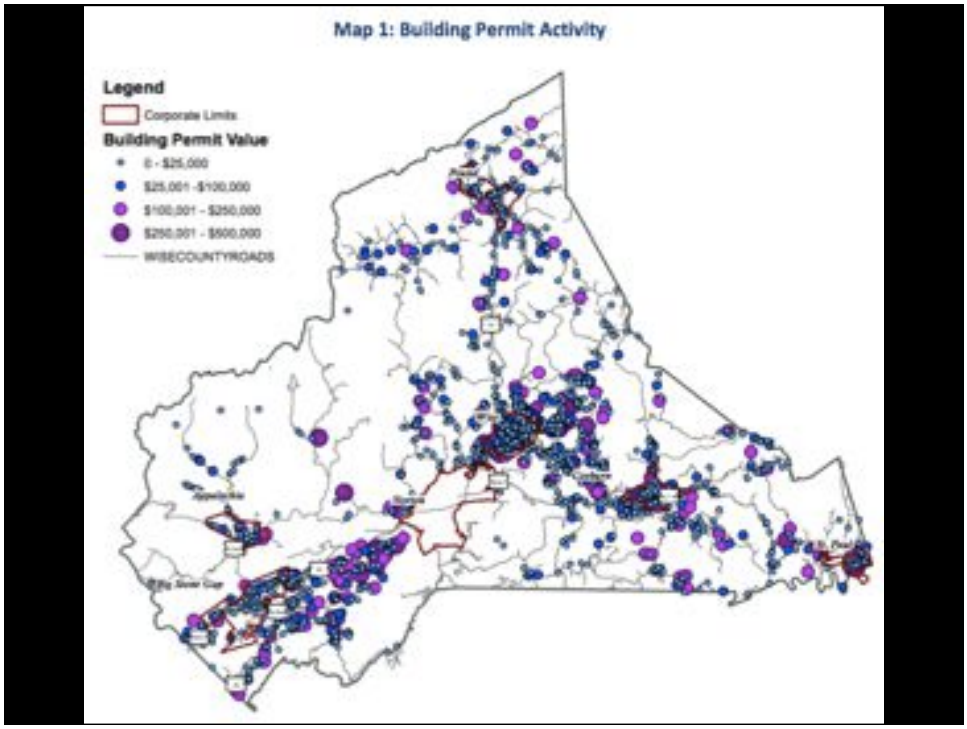
Figure 4: Unemployment Trends Comparison, 2003-2013
12.0%
10.0%
8.0%
6.0%
4.0%
2.0%
0.0%
2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013
Wise County
Virginia
United States

Table 21: Year Structure Built, Wise County, 2012

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
Total housing units	17,935	17,935
Built 2010 or later	104	0.60%
Built 2000 to 2009	1,733	9.70%
Built 1990 to 1999	2,726	15.20%
Built 1980 to 1989	2,418	13.50%
Built 1970 to 1979	4,153	23.20%
Built 1960 to 1969	1,536	8.60%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,792	10.00%
Built 1940 to 1949	1,408	7.90%
Built 1939 or earlier	2,065	11.50%

Figure 6: Building Permit Activity, 2003-2012




Map 1: Building Permit Activity
Legend
Corporate Limits
Building Permit Value
0 - $25,000
$25,001 -$100,000
$100,001 - $250,000
$250,001 - $500,000
WISECOUNTYROADS

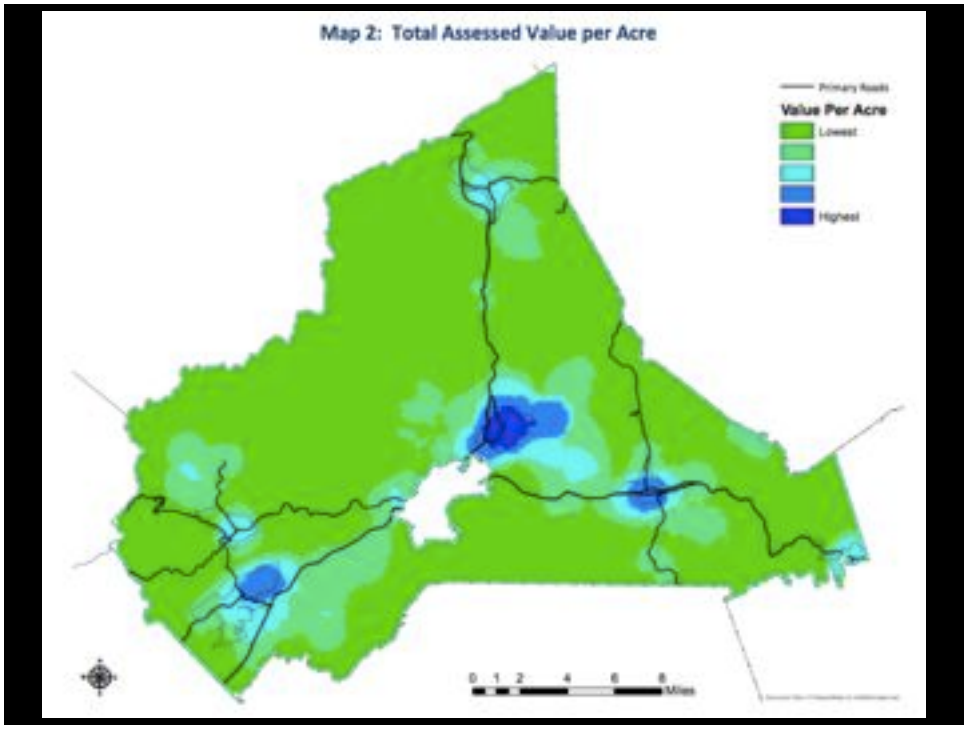

Map 2: Total Assessed Value per Acre
Primary Roads
Value Per Acre
Lowest
Highest
0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles

Table 23: Undeveloped Acreage, Incorporated Areas

Community	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Undeveloped Acres
Appalachia	1,425.9	332.0	1,093.9
Big Stone Gap	3,196.3	853.0	2,343.3
Coeburn	1,250.7	464.4	786.4
Norton	4,810.7	2,442.6	2,368.1
Pound	1,661.1	510.9	1,150.3
St. Paul*	910.1	158.6	751.5
Wise	1,944.3	955.5	988.9

* Part of this undeveloped area is really developed but in Russell county.

Table 24: Potentially Buildable Undeveloped Acreage, Incorporated Areas

Community	Buildable Acres
Appalachia	165.2
Coeburn	227.5
Big Stone Gap	374.0
Pound	219.7
St. Paul	124.1
Wise	423.1
TOTAL	1,533.6

Figure 7: Delinquency and Foreclosure Activity, 2001-2014

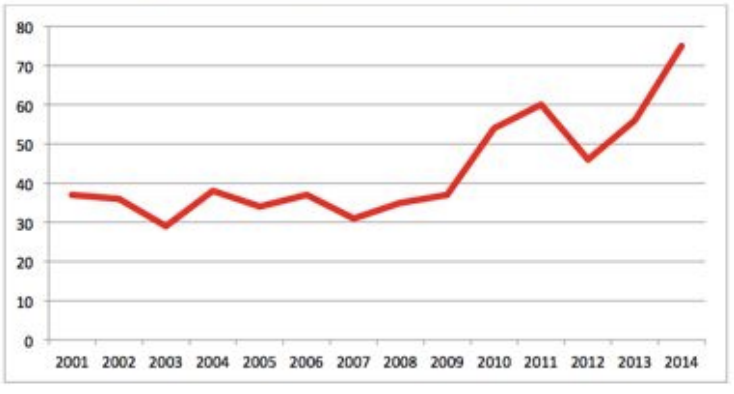
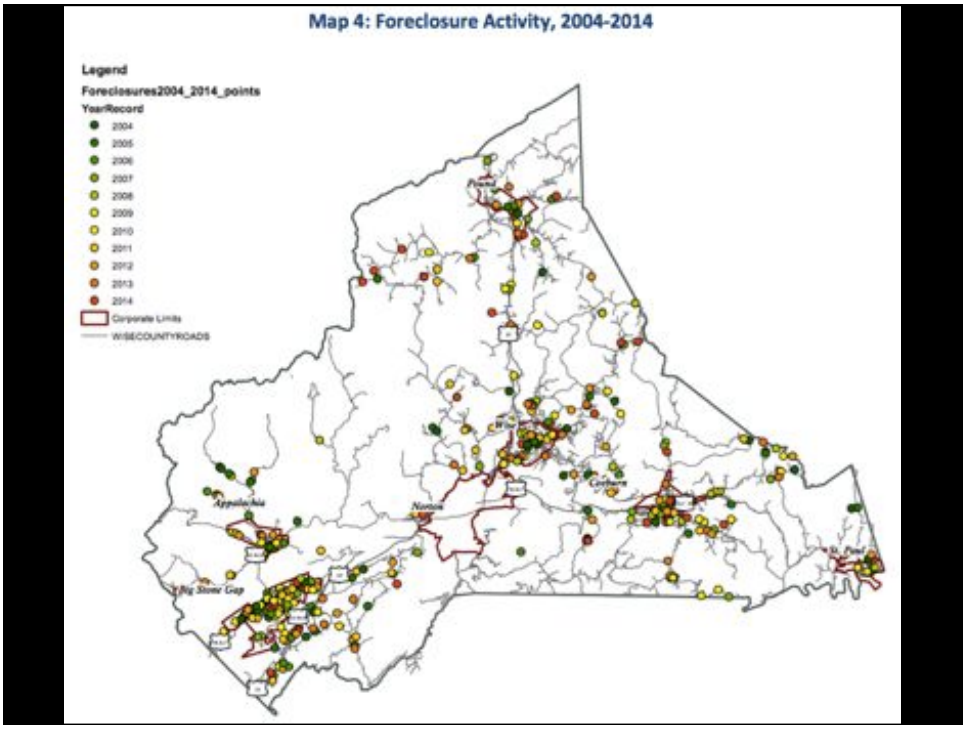


Table 25: Delinquencies and Foreclosures, Incorporated Areas

	Foreclosures*	Total Structures**	
Appalachia	38	1,101	3.45%
Big Stone Gap	120	3,984	3.01%
Coeburn	54	2,448	2.21%
Pound	20	1,228	1.63%
St Paul	10	833	1.20%
Wise	47	3,883	1.21%
Total	289	13,477	2.14%

* Delinquencies and foreclosures within 1-mile of community.

** Includes all apartments, businesses, etc.



Land Suitability Analysis (LSA) Model

LSA Purpose and Use

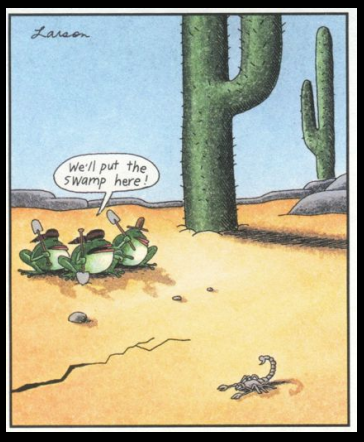
- The purpose of a land use suitability analysis is to provide a rational, systematic guide for identifying areas which are more suitable for development, and identifying areas which should be maintained for rural or agricultural uses, or protected as conservation areas.
- GIS based

suit·a·bil·i·ty

A measure of the relative usefulness of a land unit for a given purpose

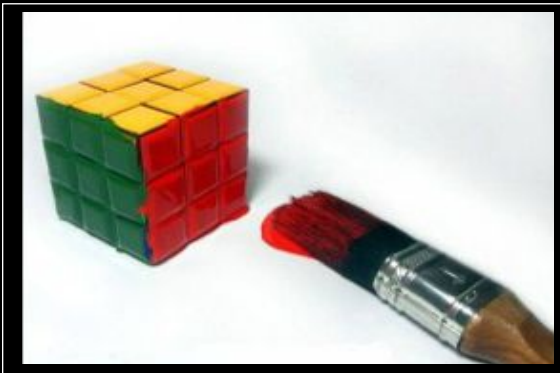
Suitability Model

A repeatable computer simulation that allocates suitability to land units relative to each other based on given criteria



Land Suitability Analysis provides a defensible system for…

…but it is not a “black box.”



Optimism

There are solutions to even the hardest problems

LSA Presumptions

- Low Suitability for Development (High Agricultural/ Environmental Sensitivity). Presumption that land is not suitable for development. This does not preclude development, but requires a showing by the applicant that sufficient conditions exist that, could require on- and off-site mitigation.
- Moderate Suitability for Development (Moderate Agricultural/ Environmental Sensitivity). No presumption regarding suitability (that land is suitable or not suitable for development).
- High Suitability for Development (Low Agricultural/ Environmental Sensitivity). Presumption that land is suitable for development. This does not guarantee that a proposed development is appropriate for any specific location.

Table 26: Land Suitability Model Factors

Land Evaluation and Suitability Analysis Factors			Presumption of Non-Ag Development Suitability		
			Low Suitability	Moderate Suitability	High Suitability
Factor	1	Conservation Lands and Easements	Within 1/4 mile of boundary	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Outside 1/2 mile
Factor	2	Wetlands	Within 1/8 mile of boundary	Between 1/8 and 1/4 mile	Outside 1/4 mile
Factor	3	Distance to local road	Outside 1/2 mile	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Within 1/4 mile
Factor	4	Distance to Primary Highway	Outside 1/2 mile	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Within 1/4 mile
Factor	5	Existing availability of a public water	Outside 1/2 mile	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Within 1/4 mile
Factor	6	Existing availability of community / public sewer (if required)	Outside 1/2 mile	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Within 1/4 mile
Factor	7	Distance to municipal boundary	Outside 1/2 mile	Within 1/2 mile	Within Boundary
Factor	8	Distance to Schools	Greater than 2 miles	between 1 and 2 miles	less than 1 mile
Factor	9	Distance to Fire Station	Greater than 2 miles	1 mile to 2 miles	Less than 1 mile
Factor	10	Distance to Floodplains	within floodplain	within 500ft of floodplain	outside 500ft of floodplain
Factor	11	Distance to Scenic Rivers	within 1/4 mile of river	between .25 and .5 miles	outside .5 miles
Factor	12	Slope	Over 30% Slope	Between 15% and 30%	Below 15%
Factor	13	Mining	Within 1/4 mile of boundary	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Outside 1/2 mile
Factor	14	Trails	Within 1/8 mile of boundary	Between 1/8 and 1/4 mile	Outside 1/4 mile
Factor	15	Natural Gas	Within 1/4 mile of boundary	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Outside 1/2 mile
Factor	16	3-Phase	Outside 1/2 mile	Between 1/4 and 1/2 mile	Within 1/4 mile
Factor	17	Ecological Cores Model	Outstanding	Very High, High	Moderate, General
Factor	18	Composite Urban Vulnerability Model	1, 2, 3	4, 5	6, 7, 8
Factor	19	Potential Charter Change	Unincorporated		Incorporated w/o Pound, Appalachia

Alternative Development Scenarios

Purpose of Alternatives Analysis

- To reflect a clear understanding of the existing conditions in the community
- To propose growth trends and development patterns which reflect realistic possibilities for communities and the County
- To compare the relative impacts of different growth strategies

Alternative Scenarios

- Provide realistic alternatives
- Evaluate impacts of different scenarios
  - Growth goals
  - Fiscal health
  - Excess land issue / tiers
  - Community character and integrity
  - Economic development
  - Growth priorities and benchmarks
- Selection of preferred scenario is a consensus-building process

Refining Alternatives

- Preliminary Alternative Development Scenarios were developed using GIS-based data
- Tonight's task is not to select a Preferred Alternative
  - To refine definition and concept of preliminary scenarios
  - To add, if needed, an additional scenario (which will need to be defined and conceptualized on map)
  - To refine local work program (Steering Committee, Communities Committee) to present to public for review, discussion and selection of a Preferred Alternative

Alternatives, Summarized

- Current Trends – Assumes that recent development patterns continue. County and providers take a passive role, market-driven.
- Smart / Targeted Growth – Development is directed to towns and corridors.
- Strong Communities – Development is directed to towns with ability to provide facilities, services and amenities. Prioritizes provider investment among towns.

Common Assumptions

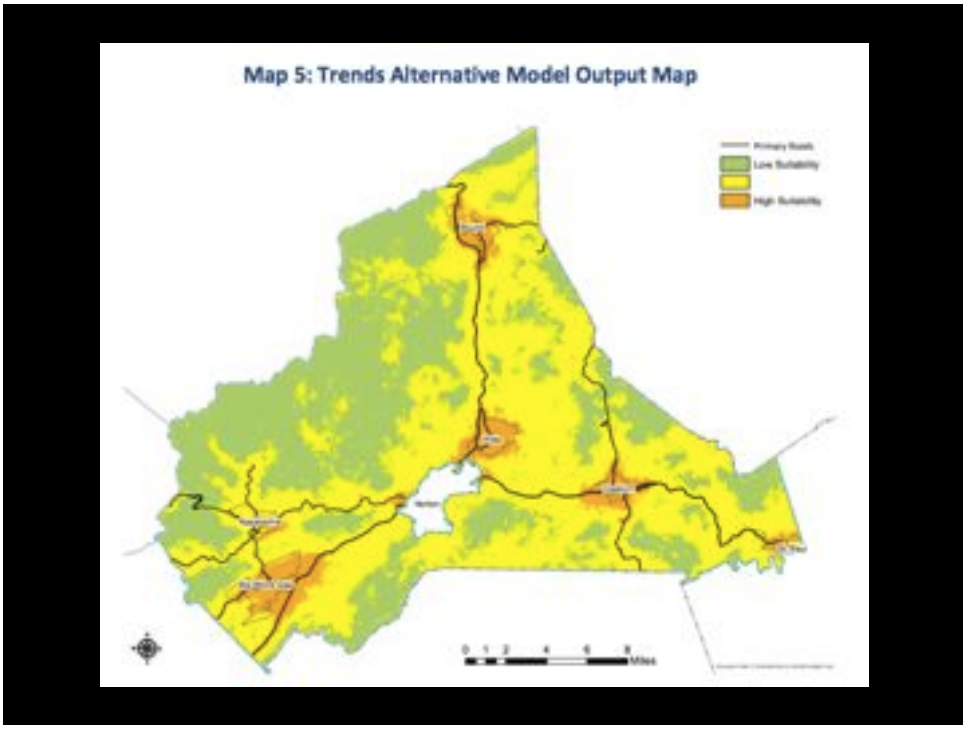
- The overall rate of growth is the same for each alternative to facilitate comparisons. Population remains constant among three alternatives, though there may be locational differences in population, density and intensity based on community (County and municipal) preferences.
- Due to declining population levels, there is available land to accommodate new development.
- Infrastructure is generally in place, with Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) infrastructure investment primarily being used to maintain and upgrade inventory.

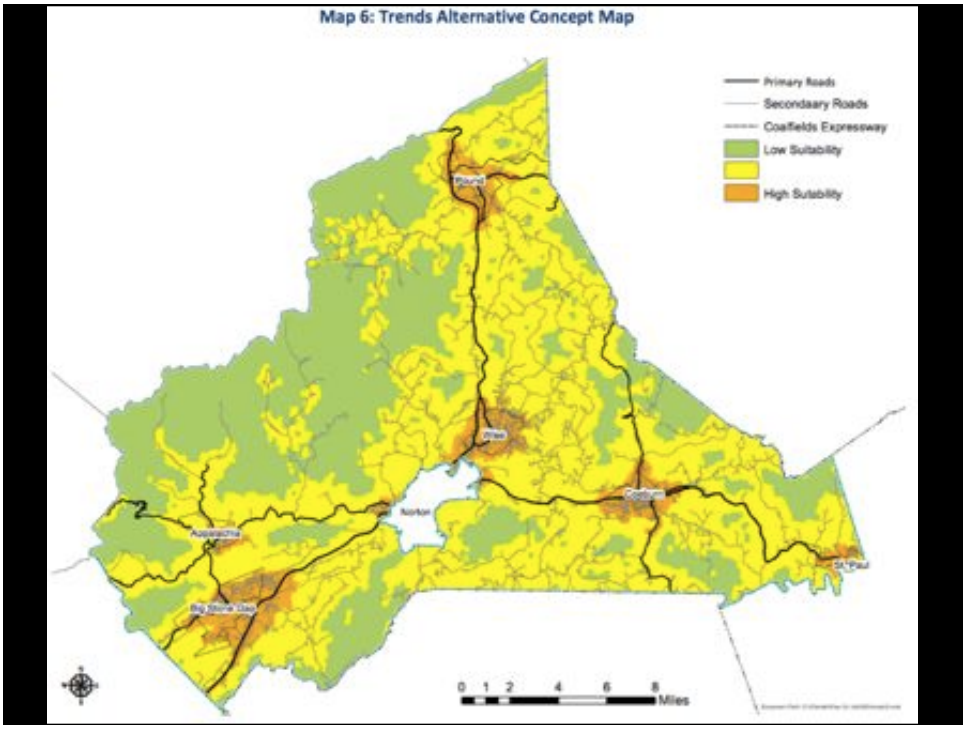
Common Assumptions

- One of the focal considerations should be character areas – the types of uses, patterns, development standards and design guidelines appropriate for each community. Competition within the County to be minimized, and coordination (land use, economic development) encouraged.
- Existing development will remain in place. However, some exceptions may be made to permit redevelopment of specific areas.
- Future land uses will be defined and refined based on community character areas.
- Community Comprehensive Plans matter.

Trends Scenario

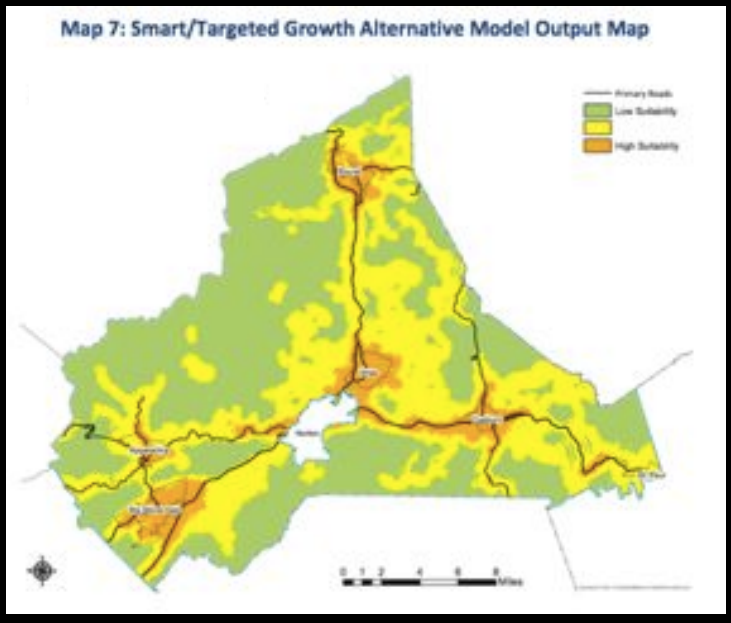
- Assumes that recent development patterns continue
- County and providers take a passive role, market-driven approach (response) to development
- No significant limitations on development in rural areas
- Development requirements based only on health, safety and ability to serve
- Costs negotiable

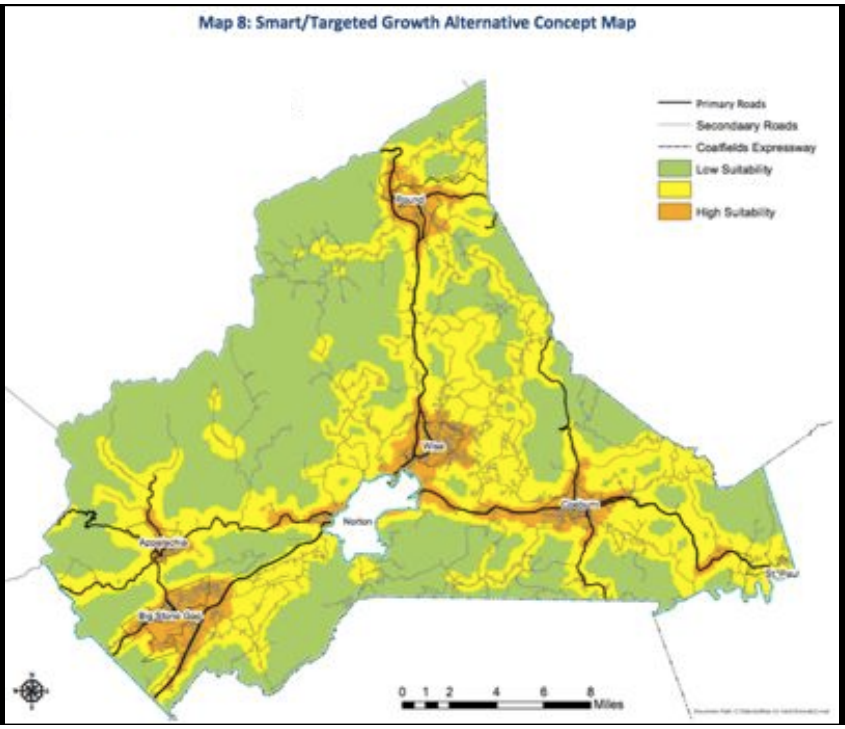

Map 5: Trends Alternative Model Output Map
Primary Roads
Low Suitability
High Suitability
Wise
Norton
Appalachia
Big Stone Gap
St. Paul
0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles


Map 6: Trends Alternative Concept Map
Primary Roads
Secondaary Roads
Coalfields Expressway
Low Suitability
High Suitability
Wise
Norton
Appalachia
Big Stone Gap
St. Paul
0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles

Smart/Targeted Growth Scenario

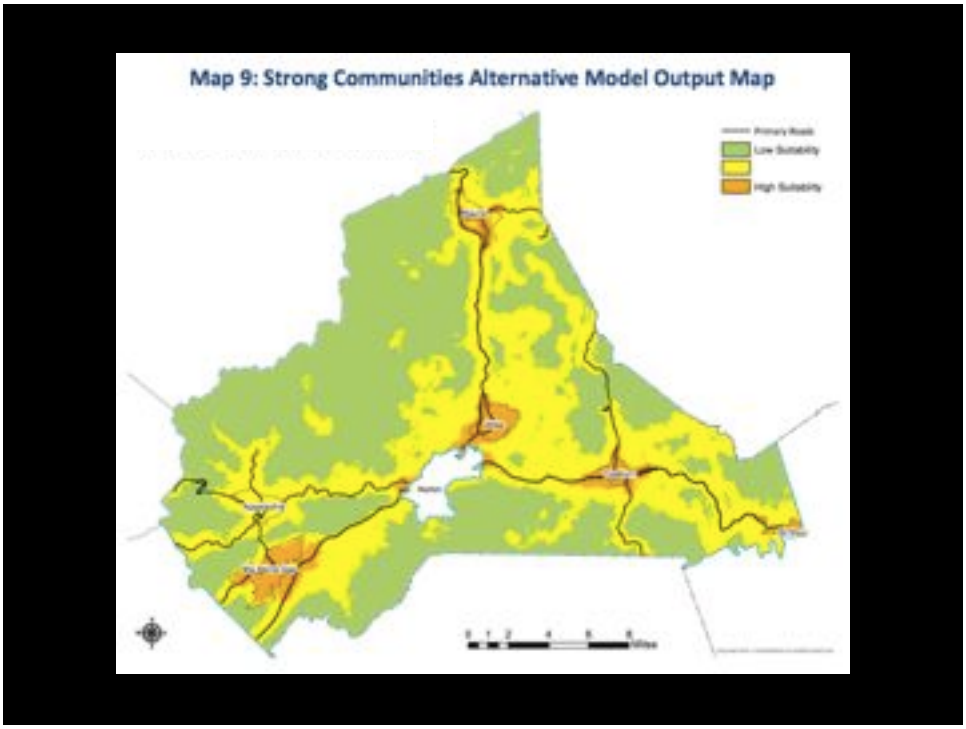
- Development is directed to City, towns and corridors
- Corridors play a larger role for commercial and industrial development
- Small lot and multi-family residential development directed to communities
- Corridors are important activity centers, but not as strip development
- County as key service provider in corridors
- Gateways important, design matters
- Coordination with towns for development at fringes

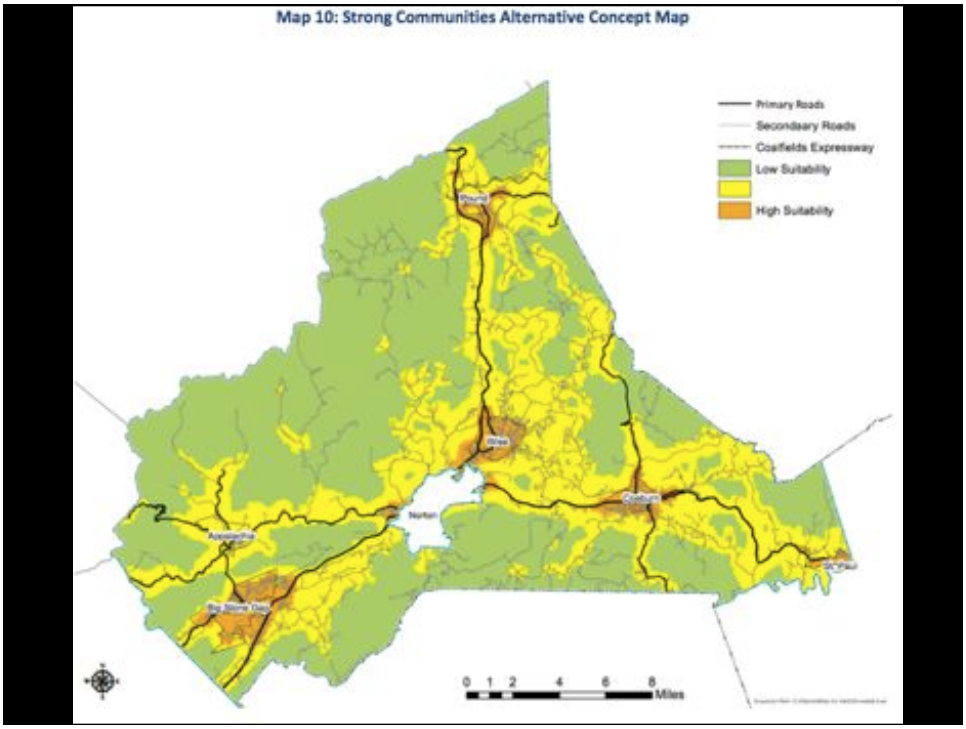




Strong Communities Scenario

- Development is directed to City and towns with ability to provide facilities, services and amenities
- Prioritizes provider investment among communities, recognizes a ROI for public investment
- Communities not competing, but creating distinct 'personalities' to attract economic development and distinct future land use types
- Recognizes that not all communities will remain incorporated, but will retain character


Map 9: Strong Communities Alternative Model Output Map
Low Suitability
High Suitability
Norton
0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles


Map 10: Strong Communities Alternative Concept Map
Primary Roads
Secondaary Roads
Coalfields Expressway
Low Suitability
High Suitability
Norton
0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles

Preliminary Findings

- Trends preserves the status quo. What you see now is what you get more of.
- Trends is *Let's Make a Deal* policy. It is based on a continuation of case-by-case negotiation, which typically favors the developer over the community (developers have considerable experience negotiating because nearly every deal is a deal, communities less so).
- Trends has the strongest property rights perspective. This is not intended to convey a loss of property rights for the other two alternatives, but that Trends places the higher emphasis on individual choice and less emphasis on community and provider cost and impact.

Preliminary Findings

- Smart/Targeted Growth directs non-residential development, primarily, to corridors adjacent to and connecting communities, which has the potential to increase County service provider responsibilities. In contrast, Strong Communities directs most non-residential development to communities.
- Smart/Targeted Growth and Strong Communities require the greatest level of coordination and formal partnership between the County, municipalities and providers.
- Strong Communities inherently recognizes that not all municipalities may exist in 2040, should reversion be further considered and petitioned. However, Strong Communities protects and recognizes community character areas regardless of incorporation.

Alternatives Discussion

- What are the strengths of each alternative?
- What are the weaknesses of each? How would you resolve those weaknesses?
- How would you change the alternative(s)?
- What are the features you believe are important for a preferred alternative?

Next Steps

Next Steps

- Local discussion of alternatives and preferences
- Communities Committee
- Select Preferred Growth Alternative
- Begin drafting preliminary goals and policies
- Begin drafting preliminary strategies

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