



# Town of Woodstock Vision, Goals, and Objectives September 16, 2024



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# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Vision .....                                      | 5  |
| Big Ideas .....                                   | 6  |
| Weave Activity Centers Together.....              | 8  |
| Build on Woodstock's Foundation .....             | 10 |
| Foster High Quality Spaces .....                  | 12 |
| Activate Woodstock! .....                         | 14 |
| Land Use .....                                    | 16 |
| Economic Development.....                         | 20 |
| Mobility .....                                    | 22 |
| Public Services, Utilities, & Infrastructure..... | 26 |
| Trails, Parks, & Recreation .....                 | 30 |
| Environmental Sustainability .....                | 32 |
| Housing .....                                     | 38 |
| Historic & Architectural Resources .....          | 40 |
| Fiscal Sustainability .....                       | 42 |

## **Our Vision:**

**“Woodstock is the thriving heart of a verdant valley, where social and economic prosperity is generously shared and passed from generation to generation.”**

# Vision

## What is a Vision Statement?

The Vision Statement is a key piece of the Comprehensive Plan that sets the tone and direction of the document. The message should identify the higher level aspirations that the Town is looking to achieve. The statement is intended to be clear and be based on the consensus, goals, and needs expressed through the community engagement process. The report is available through the Public Participation Summary document on the Comprehensive Plan website ([woodstockva.com/plan](http://woodstockva.com/plan)). The comments have provided invaluable insight into what the community finds as important.

## Why Use These Words?

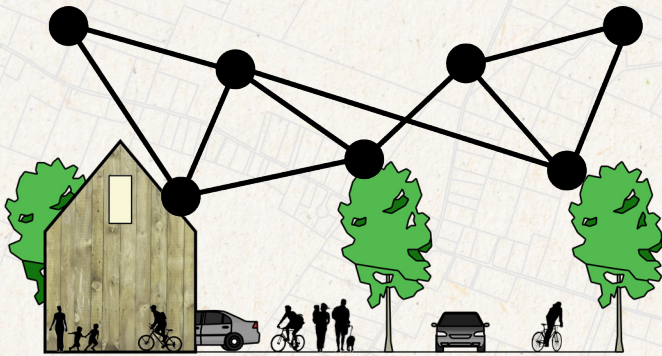
These sentences capture the community's future vision of Woodstock. The statement emphasizes Woodstock's location in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley and its role as the center of economic, political, and cultural life in the area. It aspires to physical connectedness through infrastructure, as well as community connectedness through social and economic prosperity. The statement concludes with Woodstock's high quality of life passing from generation to generation, aspiring that through time the Town will always be a wonderful place to age or grow up in.

## Defining "Small Town Charm"

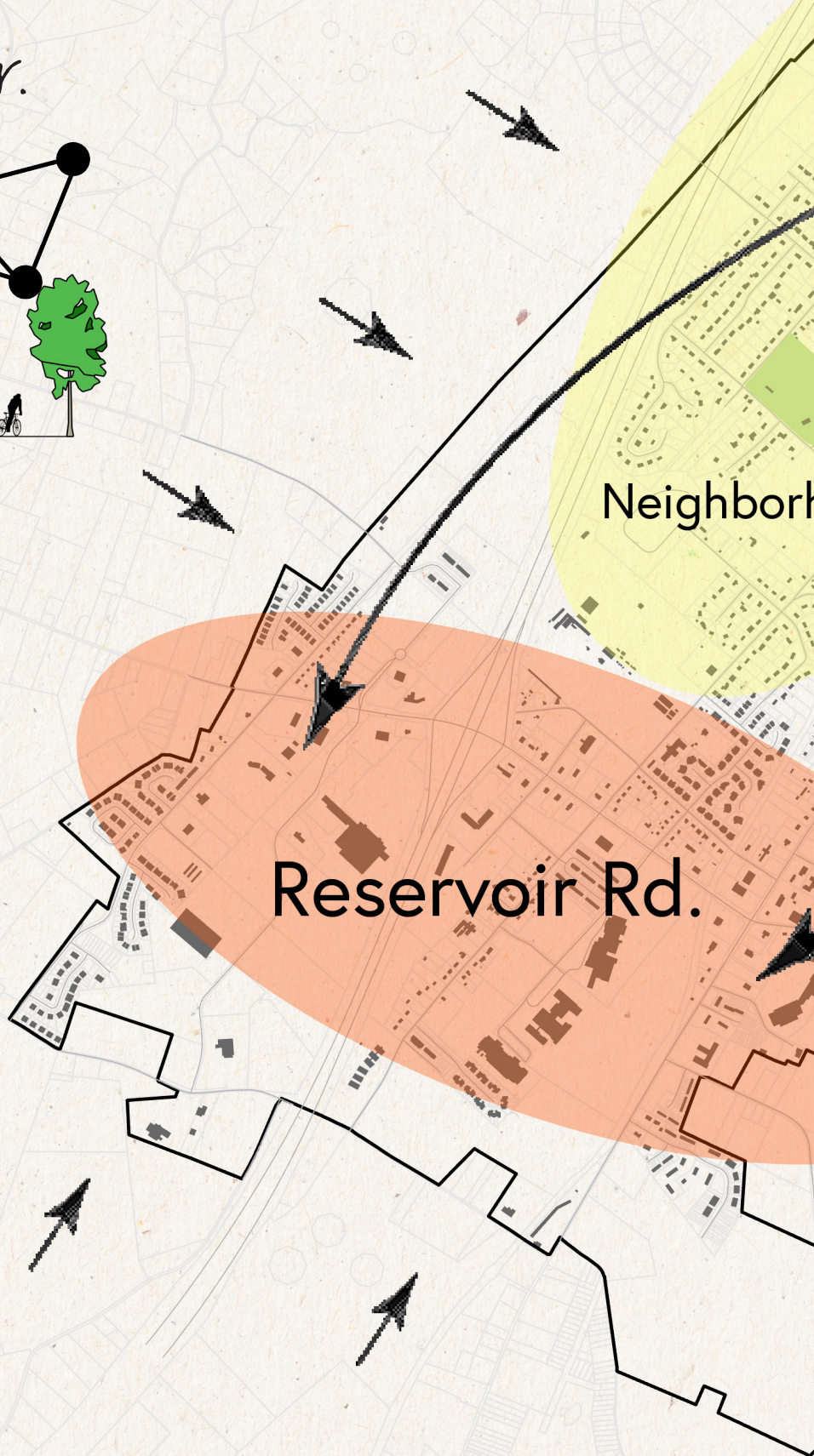
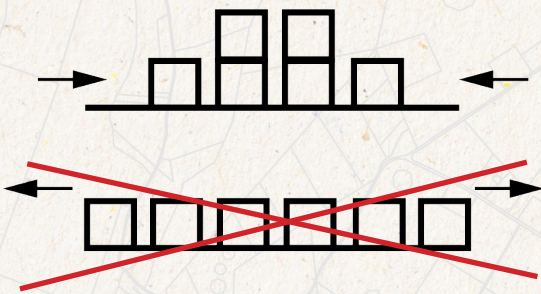
The phrase "small town charm" comes up often when discussing why people enjoy living in Woodstock. When people are asked to elaborate, the response is usually centered on the sociable nature of the community. People are happy to know their neighbors and support local businesses in Town.

# Big Ideas

1. Weave activity centers together.



2. Build on Woodstock's Foundation



3. Foster high quality spaces.

Downtown



hoods

Neighborhoods

4. Activate Woodstock!

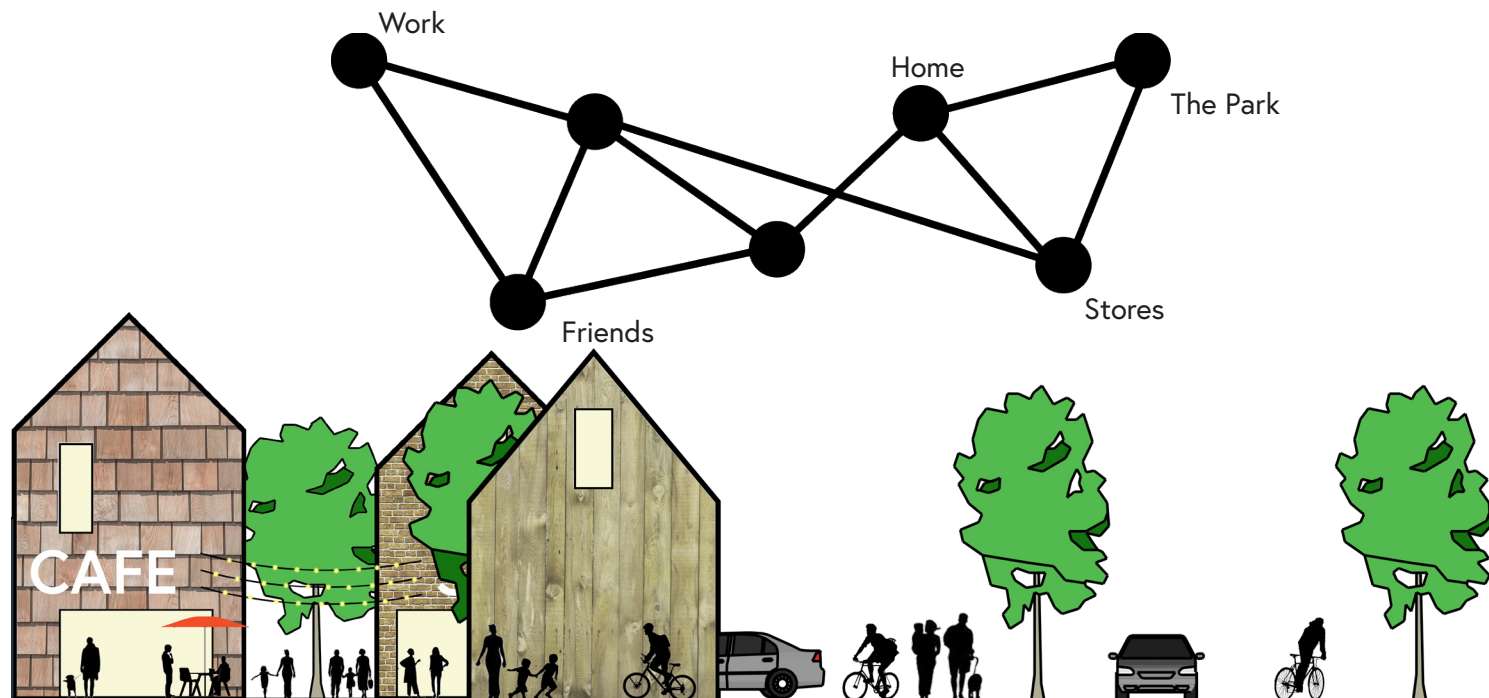


# 1. Weave Activity Centers Together

If one were to mention Woodstock, it would likely bring the mental image of its downtown. However, the community knows that Woodstock’s boundaries extend further than the historic downtown area. The exit off of Interstate 81, along Reservoir Road, features a road lined mostly with national chain restaurants, hotels, “big box” stores, and other businesses. Here, activity is intense and busy, mostly within vehicles. These businesses are open for long hours, offer many employment opportunities, and provide food and services to the Town’s residents. This comes at some cost to the community. Although there is a tax benefit to the Town’s revenue much of the business profit produced goes up and out to a national corporation rather than staying and circulating within the community. Additionally, although covering the entirety of the Town’s geography on foot or bicycle is possible, the character of this “auto-centric” area is generally unsafe, for pedestrians or bicycles. The Town’s adopted Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan seeks to remedy this situation, making strategic alignment with the Comprehensive Plan important to ensure that land use decisions are supporting investment in the transportation network and vice versa.

Downtown Woodstock is the charming center of the community, and where the original blocks were planned and formally chartered in 1761. Some of the businesses are alive around lunch or dinner time, but it is otherwise activity is generally sparse in the area. However, during events the area becomes crowded with many locals and visitors. Compared to Reservoir Road, the streets do not have as much activity. In the public engagement process, Woodstock residents expressed a strong desire for more restaurants and a lively atmosphere downtown. Community members also noted that, although there is signage, it seems difficult to attract people off of the interstate and into the actual historic core of the Town.

One “big idea” of the Plan is to unite key centers of activity together so that from border to border, Woodstock is a lively and comfortable place to live in and get around. This requires coordination between two parts of the Comprehensive Plan, although there are many steps to take to “weave together” these areas, specifically the Land Use and Mobility sections of the Comprehensive Plan. First, land use policies should be adjusted so that of varying types of businesses and houses can be mixed, where desired.





## Land Use

Currently, Woodstock has two distinct centers with very different feels and infrastructure. While a balanced town often includes different areas with diverse opportunities, weaving these areas into a more cohesive fabric can actually create a greater “small town feeling” while also having more businesses and places to live in closer proximity to one another. The Goals and Objectives in this document help adjust land use policies to see more high quality development projects are realized.

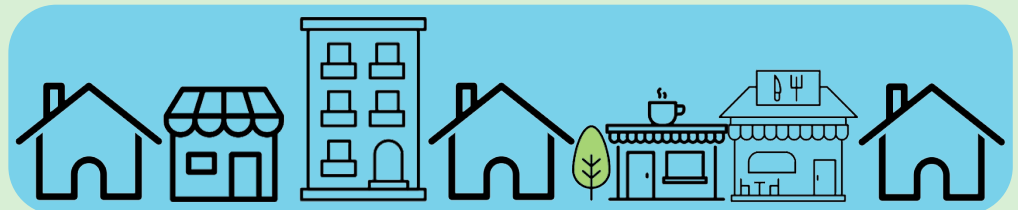
“Euclidean Zoning” is the historically recent way communities have regulated land use.

- Introduced a century ago to separate noisy, dirty factories from residents. Since then, it has been overused.
- Today it causes traffic congestion, decline in community cohesiveness and character.



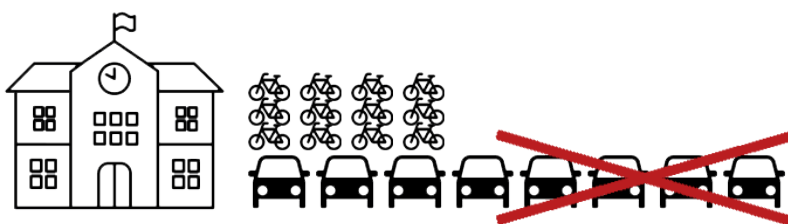
Today, communities are reverting back to a “Mixed Use Zoning” approach.

- Allows uses in closer proximity together.
- More walkable design.
- Different types of housing allowed.



## Mobility

In the 24 hours of every day, most people have to work eight hours, attempt to get eight hours of sleep, and then have eight hours for “everything else.” Those eight hours include your transportation to work or between errands and activities, daily chores, and whatever is left is time to spend on leisure, family, or whatever one enjoys! Regardless of health, or socioeconomic standing, we all have a 24 limit to our day. Unfortunately, the past century’s urban planning trends have caused us to spread out every destination we have to visit. The space between these places wastes time in traffic, requires an automobile which might be expensive or limiting to children, the elderly, or disabled, and disconnects the community from one another. While vehicles are currently the quickest and most convenient way to get around, if everyone makes the same choice to drive, there will not be enough space to move comfortably or safely. One well-known example is the challenge of school pick-up and drop-off times near Reservoir Road. What if the community were better connected and half of the students arriving in cars could arrive safely by bicycle? The inconvenience of completing the activity would be greatly decreased and the experience would make everyone much happier. This “savings” in time can be utilized for other things that, in turn, are more enjoyable, thus leading to a higher quality of life. The Town’s other projects, such as the Rail to Trail and the Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan, also help implement this “big idea.”



One parking space can fit either a single car or up to 20 bikes!

## 2. Build on Woodstock's Foundation

The Town's currently active planning documents anticipated growth expanding the community's borders through annexations of Shenandoah County. "Planned Unit Developments," with some commercial components and new housing subdivisions would be how the Town accommodates people moving to the area. This strategy is in line with previous decades thinking that created the Woodstock we see today. From the area of the original charter, the Town expanded westward to accommodate new patterns of suburban residential and commercial development. With the addition of automobiles, these distances became greater and greater.

Woodstock's original plat created a street grid that created blocks extending from Foundry St. to Spring St. bisected by the Great Wagon Road as "Main Street." A map from 1878 shows that the extent of the Town had not expanded far outside these original boundaries, with a dense number of buildings fronting Main Street much like today, with the local railroad depot at the end of Court Street.



*Grid-like, dense, mixed-use plan of Woodstock in 1878.*

Through the 1900s, however, the passenger rail system declined, bicycles were briefly invented and made popular, then automobiles continued to grow in use, the highway system was created, and numerous other social and technological advancements continued to push Woodstock outside of its historic boundaries. However, modern life's benefits also come with increased demands and burden on infrastructure for energy or transportation, natural resources, wastewater treatment, and internet access. As this demand and burden continues to increase, communities around the United States have generally pursued the same patterns of growth and development to move into the future.

Downtown Woodstock was not so crowded that its Town boundaries needed to be expanded! New technologies, such as the refrigerator or cheaper housing construction methods allowed for the neighborhoods surrounding the historic centers of communities across the United States. With acres of available land surrounding them, American communities historically grew by annexing new areas of land and attracting new businesses with new roads to access them. Particularly with the creation of Interstate 81, which bisects Woodstock, and the rise of strip commercial and fast-food restaurants, the Town would seek to improve quality of life through the creation of new neighborhoods and shopping areas, and fiscally balance the cost of the infrastructure extending out to the new growth by preparing the next area of land for expansion, but this development model will not work in the future.

If we continue to look at development as a “linear progression,” we ignore exponentially increasing costs and the challenges to this growth model quickly add up. New roads, water, and sewer systems are very expensive. Locating grocery stores in an area that is too far to walk, and then making the way there unsafe to walk, means that everyone will make the same decision to drive around the same times of day, creating traffic that pollutes the air and water, creates noise, and is potentially unsafe to both drivers and other transportation modes. Modern schools and office facilities often demand ever larger parking lots to keep up with students, faculty, and worker needs. Collectively, across the country, we have taken all the activities that used to create active and vibrant streets and spread them out further and further in search of an “equilibrium” that is unobtainable by the development pattern’s design.

This Comprehensive Plan seeks to refocus Woodstock’s attention inward rather than outward. By looking for incremental opportunities for redevelopment and infill development of vacant parcels, the Town can develop in a way that maintains its charming, sociable character. There is a new moment in growth and development trends, where companies, visitors, and new residents are looking to live in walkable environments. Fortunately, this pattern of growth has already existed historically; we just need to get back to the development rules that made this a charming community in the first place.

Simply stated this big idea of the Comprehensive Plan seeks to:



Keep the Town fiscally sustainable by using infrastructure investment more efficiently, encouraging compact growth, rather than sprawl that increases maintenance costs.



Allow development in the historic patterns and forms that produced many of Woodstock’s favorite buildings that now contain well enjoyed businesses.



Protect the rural landscape and preserve agricultural uses surrounding Woodstock by focusing growth and development inward rather than outward.

### 3. Foster High Quality Spaces

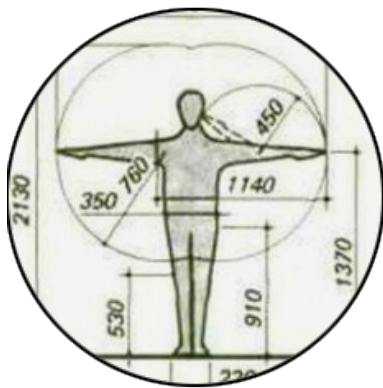
Woodstock needs more spaces. Spaces for new restaurants, shops, or offices to open up. Spaces for young families or single individuals. Spaces for the elderly and for children. However, not all development is of the same quality. The Town’s own regulations and rules, like many communities, are full of requirements such as setbacks or buffer yards that push different buildings away from one another and prevent building shared value. The idea here is that higher quality spaces can be achieved when there are more uses in proximity to one another, like the historic buildings on main street. When a building is only used for one purpose and requires too much parking and driving around it, the ability to build shared value is lost.

The design of individual buildings and their relationship to the other buildings along a street create the immediate sensory experiences, possibilities for interaction, and effectiveness at creating a lively atmosphere. Often, people look at main streets around the United States and notice that the buildings are historic. Intuitively, one might equate the ornamentation and architectural style typical of 1800s to early 1900s buildings with why the street is so attractive. However, while ornamentation is often interesting or beautiful, it is the actively used proximity and diversity of functions along the street that makes it more attractive. There are also physical features of the architecture that contribute to its attractiveness, regardless of architectural style, such as windows, porches, large windows in storefronts, informal outdoor seating spaces, and others. Awnings or siting buildings in response to wind or solar patterns can also enhance the experience of walking down the street by providing shade or protection as needed.

While the first big idea focused on weaving activity centers in Woodstock together and connecting them with infrastructure and the second focused on building on the foundation rather than looking outward, this big idea is focused on the physical layout and architectural features of buildings that create the atmosphere Woodstock’s community members have expressed their desire for.

#### The Human Scale

The basic definition of the human scale is that objects in the environment are scaled to a size and shape that is tailored to the size of the average human body. When we compare areas such as Reservoir Road and Woodstock’s downtown, there is a clear example of architecture and design that is either scaled for automobiles and viewing the world through car windows, or for engaging pedestrians. Studies in the field of Environmental Psychology have sought to document the impacts of our built environment on our health, often finding that unsafe and unengaging environments raise people’s stress and anxiety levels. Therefore, it is important to build in ways that are scaled and conducive to the community’s health.



Average human size should influence architecture, planning, and design.



Scaled for automobiles with wide distances, limited opportunities, and large signs.



Scaled for pedestrians with many small details and opportunities.

## Twelve Quality Criteria

How can we define what makes a “high quality place” from a “low quality one?” The renowned Danish urbanist Jan Gehl was one of the first researchers, in the 1970s, to study the built environment and categorize all characteristics that attract people. This was at the same time communities were building wide roads and separating all land use functions, such as residential and commercial areas. Today, many communities have realized the benefits of mixed uses and better design that follows historical patterns and are seeking to return and improve on how to build with higher quality.

High quality spaces exhibit all of the criteria below, regardless of where they are in the world. How much of the criteria do different areas of Woodstock meet? By identifying which of the criteria is missing, the Town can begin to work on improving the area. New development can also be assessed for its contributions towards meeting the various criteria.

|            |   |   |   |
|------------|---|---|---|
| PROTECTION | <p>PROTECTION AGAINST TRAFFIC AND ACCIDENTS<br/>– FEELING SAFE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection for pedestrians</li> <li>• Eliminating fear of traffic</li> </ul>                                | <p>PROTECTION AGAINST CRIME AND VIOLENCE<br/>– FEELING SECURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lively public realm</li> <li>• Eyes on the street</li> <li>• Overlapping functions day and night</li> <li>• Good lighting</li> </ul> | <p>PROTECTION AGAINST UNPLEASANT SENSORY EXPERIENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind</li> <li>• Rain/snow</li> <li>• Cold/heat</li> <li>• Pollution</li> <li>• Dust, noise, glare</li> </ul>    |
|            | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO WALK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Room for walking</li> <li>• No obstacles</li> <li>• Good surfaces</li> <li>• Accessibility for everyone</li> <li>• Interesting façades</li> </ul> | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO STAND/STAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edge effect/attractive zones for standing/staying</li> <li>• Supports for standing</li> </ul>   | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO SIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zones for sitting</li> <li>• Utilizing advantages: view, sun, people</li> <li>• Good places to sit</li> <li>• Benches for resting</li> </ul> |
|            | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO SEE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable viewing distances</li> <li>• Unhindered sightlines</li> <li>• Interesting views</li> <li>• Lighting (when dark)</li> </ul>              | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO TALK AND LISTEN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low noise levels</li> <li>• Street furniture that provides “talkscapes”</li> </ul>   | <p>OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY AND EXERCISE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low noise levels</li> <li>• Street furniture that provides “talkscapes”</li> </ul>  |
| DELIGHT    | <p>SCALE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings and spaces designed to human scale</li> </ul>   | <p>OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF CLIMATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sun/shade</li> <li>• Heat/coolness</li> <li>• Breeze</li> </ul>  | <p>POSITIVE SENSORY EXPERIENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good design and detailing</li> <li>• Good materials</li> <li>• Fine views</li> <li>• Trees, plants, water</li> </ul>                 |

Source: Gehl, Gemzøe, Kirknæs, Søndergaard, “New City Life,” The Danish Architectural Press, 2006. Further developed: Gehl Architects – Urban Quality Consultants, 2009.

## 4. Activate Woodstock!

Through the community engagement process, Woodstock community members of all ages expressed a desire for various activities. While some ideas for this Plan, like a new community center, will require a long time with a high level of investment, other ideas like a “roller rink” came up. Building a roller rink may take time as well, but what if Town Hall’s parking lot were transformed into a temporary roller rink for a weekend? With some decorations, lights, and a sound system with music set up, the Town could put on yet another fun event for its residents to enjoy.

The Town is full of unlikely spaces that can serve as potential social infrastructure, it just takes some experimenting and creative ideas. Woodstock has a strong sense of “place.” Sense of place is the mental and emotional connection with a geographic location. The Shenandoah Valley and its Towns are unmistakable in their identity and community spirit, however, to even further maximize the shared value of being in or a part of Woodstock, the Town can create a formal “placemaking program.” Beautifying the Town through landscaping, signage, banners, and other materials are ways the Town currently helps increase sense of place. However, creating a diverse amount of activities and temporary uses, new seating and gathering areas, or new public art, are all ways that the Town can invite its citizens to take ownership and stewardship of new areas.

Teenaged students specifically responded in the survey that they do not necessarily go to the Town’s parks or feel that event programming in the community engages them. By partnering with the schools and setting aside space or resources to allow for “pilot projects” of creative installations or events, the Town can begin to engage its young people and test ideas that might make them feel more included. Likewise, this can be repeated for elderly members of the community as well. Woodstock has many great local organizations and involved community members to collaborate with to ensure that events or new installations are produced with high quality.

Part of achieving this big idea to activate Woodstock requires ensuring that the Town is not getting in the way of its own success. The Zoning Ordinance and other development standards need to be assessed to ensure that activities, games, new seating areas, food or retail vendors, and other temporary uses are legally able to locate around Town. With a “lighter footprint” than a formal brick and mortar development, the Town can diversify opportunities in various locations and test what works with lower risk and investment. Other uses, such as pop-up kiosks for young entrepreneurs, art galleries, or music venues, while thoroughly enjoyed by the community might be incredibly difficult to develop due to the Town’s ordinances. “Activating” Woodstock and bringing its streets to life will take flexibility, diversity, and creativity.





Events are an exciting part of life in Woodstock, regular pop-up markets can create predictable crowds to boost the local economy!

Creative events, like inviting all of Woodstock to dine at the same table for a night, can bring the community together.



With some simple planters, tents, and picnic tables, a parking lot can become a new community space.



More substantial temporary uses, like a cafe, can be accommodated in shipping containers. Add some chairs and a movie screen and it becomes a perfect meeting place!



Paint can be used to make safer local streets as well as display public art.



If there are more parking spaces than activities or places to sit, parklets can help add more space and extend the sidewalk.

# Land Use

*Woodstock will efficiently utilize its land area to address the community's needs for residential, commercial, and other uses to support a vibrant and sustainable local economy.*

## **Goal 1: Implement changes to the Town's land use regulations and make decisions in accordance with the Future Land Use map.**

**Objective 1.1 Audit and amend the Zoning Ordinance to fit the desired uses and character of an area, as determined by the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use map categories.**

Action 1.1.1 Allow for more diverse uses of land, encouraging vertical and horizontal "mixed uses" on various properties.

Action 1.1.2 Encourage infill of vacant and underdeveloped parcels of land with commercial and residential spaces.

Action 1.1.3 Allow for "gentle density," increases of areas throughout Woodstock to incrementally increase the supply of housing. This can include accessory dwelling units (or "backyard cottages"), multifamily housing units, duplexes, or townhomes. Explore removing height requirements in favor of "stories."

Action 1.1.4 Permit accessory commercial units, or small scale commercial spaces that allow for diverse retail or small scale non-nuisance creating manufacturing, such as to locate throughout Woodstock.

Action 1.1.5 Explore amending parking requirements from Woodstock's ordinance. Consider the reduction or creation of "parking maximums" in areas where parking on-site is seen as required (such as Reservoir Road). Amend Section 90-387. - Off Street Parking - Generally. to greatly reduce the amount of required parking per use.

Action 1.1.6 Consider the future implementation of a Form-Based Code or revisions to the Municipal Code of Ordinances to promote different uses and varied housing types and densities, while maintaining the character of the town.

## **Goal 2: Weave together centers of activity with adjacent neighborhoods.**

**Objective 2.1 Amend the zoning regulations in residential neighborhood areas to allow for a mix of residential and commercial development outside of established cores where the market can support it to encourage connectivity between centers of activity.**

Action 2.1.1 Amend parking requirements to ensure that new development in transitional areas between activity centers supports walkability by locating parking to the sides or rear, with buildings located closer to the street.



## **Goal 3: Improve the Reservoir Road center of activity through walkable design and a greater mix of residential uses.**

**Objective 3.1 Amend the Highway Commercial (B-2) District to reform all requirements that create unwalkable site designs. Create a new Zoning District more tailored to the I-81 exit to accommodate highway-oriented uses.**

Action 3.1.1 Revise the "intent" of the B-2 district to better reflect its changing character into another important center of activity for Woodstock. The district name could be changed to reflect a more "mixed use" character.

Action 3.1.2 Revise the permitted uses to include apartments or other residential units.

Action 3.1.3 Amend district requirements to allow for more walkable site design, inter-parcel connections, and mixed uses. Consider buffering requirements that allow for "cut-through" sidewalks to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Action 3.1.4 Encourage the redevelopment of excess parking areas into new active uses.

Action 3.1.5 Ensure that all related development standards are conducive to the ability to walk or bicycle safely and comfortably through the community.

Action 3.1.6 Encourage parking to be located in ways that do not inhibit pedestrian or alternative transportation access to the use.

Action 3.1.7 Create design guidelines for "big box" stores that encourage contemporary parking lot design and building architecture.

**Objective 3.2 Collaborate with the Virginia Department of Transportation to ensure that the Town's bicycle and pedestrian network is fully implemented and that new land uses are assessed for their ability to make the Reservoir Road area more walkable.**

Action 3.2.1 Conduct further studies to ensure that students have a safe route to school by bicycle or on foot, particularly crossing West Reservoir Road.

## **Goal 4: Preserve the history of the area while enhancing the character of the Downtown center of activity to create more social and economic opportunities.**

**Objective 4.1 Amend the Central Business (B-1) District requirements to allow for a mix of residential and commercial development that enhances the walkability and use of the downtown area.**

Action 4.1.1 Create provision in the Town code for bicycle racks and bus shelters for commercial uses.

Action 4.1.2 Amend district requirements to allow for more flexible siting of residential and/or commercial uses.

Action 4.1.2 Explore increasing the maximum building height and a set number of allowable "stories for more flexible architectural design, in keeping with the character of the district.

Action 4.1.3 Consider amending the requirements for accessory uses, structures, or buildings to allow for more varied uses.

Action 4.1.4 Explore the removal of off-street parking requirements in this district. Public parking supply adequately accommodates all needs and new public facilities can be constructed if necessary.

Action 4.1.5 Create suggested design guidelines for the downtown area that reflect high quality architecture and design.

Action 4.1.6 Revise the Code of Ordinances to require a percentage of a structure to be commercial, or street facing first floor use as commercial only in target areas. This could be achieved through an "overlay district" along Main Street with full residential use through Special Use Permits.

**Objective 4.2 Amend or rezone areas of the High Density Residential (R-3) District to allow for a mix of residential and commercial development that enhances the walkability and use of the downtown area. Examples are included as actions below, but further revisions may be necessary.**

Action 4.2.1 Increase the amount of permitted uses in the district to include neighborhood-scale commercial uses, such as restaurants or small shops.

Action 4.2.2 Amend district requirements to allow for more walkable site design, inter-parcel connections, and mixed uses as well as increasing the overall supply of housing. Revise requirements to allow for a continuation of the historic fabric found in the downtown area. Readdress height limits and set to a number of "stories."

Action 4.2.3 Consider the removal of on-site parking requirements or change "shall" to "may" include up to two spaces for each unit.

**Objective 4.3 Amend or rezone areas of the Industrial (I-1) District to allow for a mix of residential and commercial development that enhances the walkability and use of the downtown area. Examples are included as actions below, but further revisions may be necessary.**

Action 4.3.1 Allow for the development of residential units of varying types as a permitted use in the district. Include the requirement that commercial spaces be developed as part of residential development.

Action 4.3.2 Revise the requirement that only one main building and its accessory buildings may be erected on a lot or parcel of land in this district to allow multiple uses on one property.

Action 4.3.3 Amend district requirements to allow for more walkable site design, inter-parcel connections, and mixed uses. Consider buffering requirements that allow for "cut-through" sidewalks to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

**Objective 4.4 Identify underutilized or vacant properties that present redevelopment opportunities.**

Action 4.4.1 Develop incentives or research and help advertise the use of grants and tax credits to assist in funding the redevelopment of underutilized or vacant properties.

Action 4.4.2 Use zoning enforcement methods to require vacant property owners to bring their properties in line with code, thereby encouraging owners to maximize usage of their property. Consider collaborating with the County on enforcing the Virginia Property Maintenance Code (VPMC).

**Goal 5: Ensure that development is of high quality architectural design that contributes to its surroundings.**

**Objective 5.1 Develop and adopt design guidelines that promote high quality design of storefronts and shared community areas in new developments.**

Action 5.1.1 Develop incentives or research and help advertise the use of grants and tax credits to assist in funding the redevelopment of historic properties.

Action 5.1.2 Consider the implementation of Form-Based Code to allow for different uses and housing types while maintaining the character of the town.

**Goal 6: Collaborate with Shenandoah County and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission to direct growth towards the Town, protecting the rural landscapes and agricultural economy.**

**Objective 6.1 Participate in the creation of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. Consider coordinating with land banking and management foundations or entities.**

Action 6.1.1 Ensure that future land uses are complimentary to Shenandoah County's Comprehensive Plan.

# Economic Development

*Woodstock will collaborate with Shenandoah County and regional partners to strategically develop a productive, vibrant, and diverse local economy that focuses on small business growth and gainful employment opportunities.*

## **Goal 1: Retain and attract new businesses to meet the needs of the current and future community.**

### **Objective 1.1 Develop an economic development strategy that identifies target businesses by type and long-term economic goals.**

Action 1.1.1 Focus on local quality job creation to increase opportunities to live and work in the same community in the future.

Action 1.1.2 Seek grants from state agencies such as the Department of Housing and Community Development and Virginia Tourism Corporation to support local business retention and development.

Action 1.1.3 Research rural development grants offered to towns such as Woodstock through federal agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

### **Objective 1.2 Create a strategy for business development and education.**

Action 1.2.1 Support Woodstock's work in advancing economic vitality through program evaluation, development, and promotion. Consider special emphasis in the downtown area for services, restaurants, tourism, recreation, and retirement-age/teenage demographic needs.

Action 1.2.2 Meet with existing businesses to determine their needs and the needs of future businesses.

Action 1.2.3 Identify entrepreneurs that are operating small businesses from their home, garage, or their property and determine what their needs would be to locate to a brick-and-mortar location.

### **Objective 1.3 Attract additional grocery options, with an emphasis on support for local agriculture, entrepreneurs, and quality of life by strategically supporting food-related production, commercial, and retail businesses.**

Action 1.3.1 Research alternative grocery options and barriers hindering the establishment of grocery stores in Woodstock.

Action 1.3.2 Coordinate efforts between local government and farmer's markets to ensure the market is successful and accessible, such as advertising campaigns.

## **Goal 2: Encourage physical improvement or construction of new spaces for businesses.**

### **Objective 2.1 Encourage the development of additional leasable spaces for restaurants and retail, especially in the downtown core.**

Action 2.1.1 Utilize incentives and regulations to encourage owners to bring substandard commercial rental space up to standard through rehabilitation or rebuilding.

Action 2.1.2 Encourage more small footprint leasable spaces for new businesses at rents compatible with the scale of their business.

### **Objective 2.2 Establish a program to retain and improve existing business locations through the creation of incentives to reinvest.**

Action 2.2.1 Consider opportunities with local banks or WEDA for setting up a low-interest or no-interest loan pool for building improvements in addition to the facade improvement grant program.

## **Goal 3: Coordinate efforts to maximize efficient and effective economic development.**

### **Objective 3.1 Review relevant ordinances, regulations, and policies for consistency and support of economic development.**

Action 3.1.1 Research best economic development policy practices established by other localities.

Action 3.1.2 Integrate all department perspectives and develop consistent messaging throughout the organization.

Action 3.1.3 Review the Zoning Ordinance for barriers to establishing new businesses where appropriate.

### **Objective 3.2 Collaborate with surrounding towns, Shenandoah County, and other economic development organizations on strategies for layering business attraction, retention, and expansion.**

Action 3.2.1 Research best practices established by other localities in developing successful business retention and expansion strategies.

### **Objective 3.3 Consider what has drawn tourists to Woodstock and build on current successes.**

Action 3.3.1 As local tourism grows, consider how to capitalize on tourism while maintaining local housing stock and supporting residents.

Action 3.3.2 Work with Shenandoah County and other tourism partners to identify new target tourist groups and find ways to connect them with experiences in Woodstock.

# Mobility

*Woodstock residents and visitors of all ages and abilities will be able to move around the Town safely, comfortably, and conveniently using their mode of choice. Bicycles, pedestrians, and other modes besides automobiles will be given increased importance for community benefits to health, safety, infrastructure, and the local economy.*

## **Goal 1: Expand public transportation in Woodstock.**

### **Objective 1.1 Coordinate with ShenGO to improve routes in Woodstock.**

Action 1.1.1 Increase the frequency of bus headways and number of stops by working with partner agencies and localities.

Action 1.1.2 Establish permanent bus shelters with seating and other amenities throughout Woodstock.

## **Goal 2: Enhance pedestrian safety and comfort throughout the Town.**

### **Objective 2.1 Utilize traffic calming devices throughout the community to ensure safety.**

Action 2.1.1 Continue the use of the "tactical urbanism" program to calm traffic on neighborhood streets and other areas throughout the community.

Action 2.1.2 Provide traffic calming measures, such as curb extensions/"bump outs," neighborhood roundabout islands, and other measures throughout the Town.

### **Objective 2.2 Ensure that mobility-impaired community members are protected and able to access all sidewalk facilities throughout the community.**

Action 2.2.1 Ensure that sidewalks and trails are wide enough to accommodate strollers, wheel chairs, or other mobility devices and are free of obstructions such as signage and utility poles.

Action 2.2.2 Ensure that all new sidewalks and sidewalk repairs meet ADA accessibility standards.

### **Objective 2.3 Strengthen streetscape connections by installing pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks, pathways, and trails where such infrastructure is missing.**

Action 2.3.1 Develop Town-wide public realm standards to include shade trees, bike parking, bike share, signage, public art, screened parking, street furniture, pedestrian-level lighting, and other elements in the public right-of-way that enhance walkability.

Action 2.3.2 Conduct and maintain a sidewalk inventory.

Action 2.3.3 Expand the annual allocation of funds for sidewalk and multi-use trail improvements in the capital improvements program.

Action 2.3.4 Require developers to construct sidewalks and street trees as part of their development projects, including up-coming infill developments in neighborhoods.

Action 2.3.5 Implement continuous sidewalks throughout key pedestrian areas in the Town. Sidewalks should continue the same grade with cars having to pass "over the sidewalk" rather than a curb cut stepping down for the pedestrian.

Action 2.3.6 Implement deferred maintenance budgets in capital improvement budgets to make repairs to pedestrian infrastructure when damage occurs.

**Objective 2.4 Increase the amount of street furniture throughout the Town, including benches, trash cans, bicycle repair stations, bicycle parking, and other amenities to allow for resting while traveling between destinations.**

## **Goal 3: Ensure that there are Safe Routes to Schools, particularly by walking and biking.**

**Objective 3.1 Coordinate with VDOT to establish safe crossing points that allow for pedestrians or bicyclists to directly and conveniently reach the school.**

Action 3.1.1 Consider adding signalized pedestrian crossings to key intersections for pedestrians, especially near the schools.

**Objective 3.2 Address school drop-off congestion**

Action 3.2.1 Conduct a traffic study at schools during peak hours.

Action 3.2.2 Create walk and/or bike "bus" programs that offer students the ability to walk or bike as a group safely to school chaperoned by volunteers to ensure their safety.

**Objective 3.3 Seek state and federal grants for Safe Routes to Schools.**

## **Goal 4: Improve safety, traffic congestion, and flow.**

**Objective 4.1 Work with Virginia Department Of Transportation (VDOT) to improve safety at key intersections.**

Action 4.1.1 Coordinate efforts with VDOT to identify roadway safety improvements, especially on Reservoir Road.

Action 4.1.2 Incorporate safety considerations into the design of roadways for all travel modes.

Action 4.1.3 Identify pedestrian safety improvements to Route 11 through downtown.

**Objective 4.3 Consider how to deal with and expedite high traffic events, such as I-81 closures.**

Action 4.3.1 Consider designating alternate routes to Henry Ford Drive from the north side of the Town.

Action 4.3.2 Continue to explore the north connector extension of Hisey Avenue north to West Spring Street or West North Street/Fairview Road. Additional considerations may reference the limited frequency but high traffic impact of events at the fairgrounds.

**Objective 4.4 Assess and seek to mitigate the transportation impacts of development and redevelopment projects.**

Action 4.4.1 Require traffic impact studies with all rezoning and special-use permit applications proposing development that will create a significant traffic impact. Such studies should meet the requirements of the Virginia Department of Transportation for traffic impact analyses and should encourage transit, pedestrian, and bicycle use.

**Objective 4.5 Create, adopt, implement, and update regularly a Town Road Improvement Plan of needed road and intersection improvements. This plan will serve existing and future land uses and should be coordinated with road improvement plans of the Virginia Department of Transportation and Shenandoah County.**

Action 4.5.1 Annually review, update, and expand the town's Road Improvement Plan to include additional projects as deemed necessary.

Action 4.5.2 Expand the plan to include multi-use trail projects identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

**Objective 4.6 Identify potential sites for a future structured public parking facility in the downtown area.**

**Objective 4.7 Consider strategic street extensions and/or realignments to facilitate future mobility, such as Hisey Avenue to Spring or North Street; Eagle Street to Reservoir Road; and a second school access street from Falcon to Hoover or Route 11.**

## **Goal 5: Improve multimodal safety and comfort throughout the Town.**

**Objective 5.1 Safe, protected bicycle infrastructure will be implemented along roads throughout the community.**

Action 5.1.1 Fully implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Update and expand as needed.

Action 5.1.2 Monitor success of the plan by counting bicycle users and pedestrians in key areas as resources become available.



Action 5.1.3 Ensure that the bicycle system can be utilized by all members of the community by utilizing best practices, such as protected or separated bicycle lanes.

Action 5.1.4 Inventory and map the locations of bicycle parking to ensure that there is availability across Town.

**Objective 5.2 Increase the number of bike racks on sidewalks and/or use the curb to provide on-street bike parking.**

Action 5.2.1 Select simple standardized forms of bicycle racks that can be used throughout the Town. Work with property owners around the Town to ensure bicycle parking spaces are located in convenient places near the entrance.

Action 5.2.2 If needed, replace select automobile parking spaces for "bicycle corrals" where multiple racks can be located within the space of one private automobile space.

**Objective 5.3 Explore events such as a "Ciclovía" to close parts of the downtown area (such as a dedicate time on Saturday mornings or one day a month) to car traffic to allow for recreative use of other modes of transportation that help to build community.**

Action 5.3.1 Consider permanent or temporary street closures and expanding and improving bike-walk streets, which are not entirely closed to cars but use physical infrastructure to slow cars. This could include, but is not limited to, weekend closures of parts of the downtown for bicycle, pedestrian, and retail use.

**Objective 5.4 Create an "ad campaign" style communications program about the benefits of walking and bicycling for the community's health, safety, local economy, and infrastructure.**

Action 5.4.1 "Ad campaigns" used elsewhere have created posters or other materials that say "Hello! Thank you for bicycling. You are contributing by \_\_\_\_" When people begin to see other people bicycling, they will consider the option for themselves.

## **Goal 6: Prepare the Town for the Rail Trail.**

**Objective 6.1 Ensure that all necessary connections, amenities, signage to and from, and collaboration with local businesses is coordinated to capitalize on the trails development.**

Action 6.1.1 Proactively address potential parking issues for the trail. Ensure that existing parking is well signed and marked. Allow for paid lots to accommodate increased visitation due to Rail Trail.

Action 6.1.2 Consider the creation of a specialty overlay district that provides greater development flexibility along the trail corridor.

# Public Services, Utilities, & Infrastructure

*The Town will continue to provide excellent services and build resiliency into its utility and infrastructure systems.*

## Goal 1: Enhance Town services by creating a resilient built environment.

### Objective 1.1 Support Shenandoah County Public Schools in the delivery of quality education through well-designed learning environments.

Action 1.1.1 Collaborate with Shenandoah County to support education goals through infrastructure, connectivity, public spaces and parks, and specialty programming, such as including students in the maintenance of the school arboretum.

### Objective 1.2 Maintain public safety through resilience planning.

Action 1.2.1 In cooperation with federal, state, other local law enforcement and emergency preparedness agencies, and Shenandoah Memorial Hospital, provide for continual maintenance and updates in collaboration with the Shenandoah County Emergency Operations Plan and the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Action 1.2.2 Encourage new development that takes public safety into consideration and use code enforcement measures to ensure that properties continue to be maintained.

Action 1.2.3 Foster safe environments and communities through active and well-designed places that have high visibility and lots of activity, discouraging negative social behavior.

### Objective 1.3 Ensure that all local government facilities are well maintained and functionally appropriate to meet all requirements. Proactively invest in necessary municipal, police, and public works space needs to meet the demands of a growing community.

## Goal 2: Provide high quality Water, Sewer, and Stormwater services

### Objective 2.1 Continue to provide high quality public water service.

Action 2.1.1 Maintain the existing water system components through programs that emphasize repair, protection, system reliability, water quality, and water loss reduction. Develop a comprehensive maintenance and replacement schedule for our infrastructure.

Action 2.1.2 Continue to add water supply, treatment, distribution, and storage capacity as growth requires.

Action 2.1.3 Develop a Water Works Facilities Plan for the water system to provide a comprehensive assessment of the town's infrastructure and its ability to store and deliver the amount of water anticipated at full build-out.

Action 2.1.4 Identify a potable water source through groundwater to supplement the river intake.

Action 2.1.5 Develop a plan to address compliance with new state and federal standards on removing PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonate) pollutants as well as mitigating the potential impacts of Harmful Algae Blooms (HAB) on the potable water supply.

**Objective 2.2 Continue to provide dependable, environmentally sound, sanitary sewer service.**

Action 2.2.1 Continue the Town's wastewater system repair and maintenance programs that emphasize repair, preventive action, and reliability. Develop a comprehensive maintenance and replacement schedule for our infrastructure.

Action 2.2.2 Continue the Town's abatement program addressing infiltration and inflow to the wastewater collection system.

Action 2.2.3 Continue and enhance the Town's grease trap inspection program to eliminate grease, oil, and sand from the wastewater system.

Action 2.2.4 Develop a Wastewater Facilities Plan for the wastewater system to provide a comprehensive assessment of the town's infrastructure and its ability to collect and transport the amount of wastewater anticipated at full build-out.

Action 2.2.5 Identify future expansion need for sewer capacity and set a reserve fund for when expansion is needed.

**Objective 2.3 Continue to improve the quality of stormwater runoff in and around the town.**

Action 2.3.1 Develop and implement a public education and outreach program regarding the impacts of stormwater discharges on streams.

Action 2.3.2 Prepare a Drainage Master Plan to assess stormwater and identify areas for improvement to reduce flooding and overland sheet flow.

Action 2.3.2. Detect and eliminate illicit discharges to the sanitary sewer system.

Action 2.3.3 Continue to work with Shenandoah County to enforce the Erosion and Sediment Control ordinance.

Action 2.3.4 Maintain and improve programs to prevent pollution and practice good housekeeping in town operations.

Action 2.3.5 Use sustainable design principles and concepts for town facilities.

## **Goal 3: Ensure the Town's resources are invested equitably and sustainably across the community**

### **Objective 3.1 Annually revise, adopt, and maintain a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Action 3.1.1 Balance the Five Year CIP as required by the Code of Virginia (§15.2-2239).

Action 3.1.2 Update the CIP annually as part of the annual budget process.

Action 3.1.3 Identify one-time funding sources such as grants, donations, and in-kind sources to develop capital amenities.

Action 3.1.4 Identify CIP items that equitably serve residents while limiting impacts to Town resources.

### **Objective 3.2 Ensure that revenues adequately support current and future service and infrastructure needs.**

Action 3.2.1 Review previous capital improvement spending and determine what gaps may exist or what projects have not received funding in recent years.

Action 3.2.2 Put aside funding for each capital improvement budget towards deferred maintenance budgeting.



# Trails, Parks, and Recreation

*The Town will continue to invest in high quality parks and recreation facilities. Creative and diverse activities will be possible to ensure that all age groups are engaged and attracted to enjoy use of Woodstock's spaces.*

## **Goal 1: Woodstock will enhance public health and quality of life in the community through high quality parks, recreation facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements.**

### **Objective 1.1 Improve active connections throughout the Town and surrounding areas through trails and bicycle lanes.**

Action 1.1.1. Pursue funding and timely implementation of trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks utilizing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

Action 1.1.2. Promote active recreational groups through Town communications and foster events that encourage usage of pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

### **Objective 1.2 Develop equitable active recreational improvements for all ages and abilities.**

Action 1.2.1. Inventory park resources and infrastructure to determine accessibility for residents of all ages and abilities or disabilities.

Action 1.2.2. Foster welcoming environments in parks and recreation facilities for a diverse population through safety enhancements such as lighting and paved pathways.

Action 1.2.3. Consider the accessibility needs of multi-generational residents when improving trails, parks, sidewalks, and recreation facilities.

Action 1.2.4. Explore creating active recreational uses such as skate rinks, skate parks, climbing walls, chess boards, and other uses that encourage physical activity and play.

Action 1.2.5 Explore creating passive recreational access, such as therapy gardens, mazes, "forest bathing" trails, for sensory rest in a natural setting.

### **Objective 1.3 Foster symbiotic partnerships with organizations for shared facilities.**

Action 1.3.1. Partner with various organizations to develop shared recreational facilities that benefit residents through enhanced programming.

Action 1.3.2. Build upon established relationships to seamlessly permit programmatic and cultural usage of Town recreational facilities.

## **Goal 2: The Town will continue to support and enhance cultural programs and activities.**

### **Objective 2.1 Support local organizations in their efforts to provide cultural events and programs.**

Action 2.1.1. Provide opportunities for local organizations to utilize Town resources and facilities for cultural events.

Action 2.1.2. Promote local organizations' activities and events through Town communications to foster greater social cohesion and usage of recreational facilities.

### **Objective 2.2 Develop programs and events in partnership with local organizations.**

Action 2.2.1. Take advantage of funding opportunities at the federal, state, and philanthropic level to support cultural programs, activities, and events in the Town of Woodstock.

Action 2.2.2. Promote events and activities that draw visitors to walk or bike in Woodstock or Woodstock's parks.

Action 2.2.3. Develop themed weeks or months to support local businesses, arts, and culture in Woodstock.

### **Objective 2.3 Promote regional cultural identity and appreciation.**

Action 2.3.1. Partner with neighboring towns and the County to develop cultural events that celebrate the arts, history, and music of the region while celebrating and embracing newcomers.

Action 2.3.2. Encourage walking or cycling tours of Woodstock and beyond to identify and appreciate historic sites and natural resources.

# Environmental Sustainability

*Woodstock will seek to protect the natural environment through active pursuit of sustainability in its actions and assets and encourage the community to follow its lead for future generations.*

## **Goal 1: Secure access to and sustainably use water resources**

### **Objective 1.1 Find a secondary water source.**

Action 1.1.1 Work with consultants, other localities, or the Planning District Commission to identify alternative potable sources using groundwater.

Action 1.1.2 Conduct a feasibility study of other potential water sources.

### **Objective 1.2 Reduce water consumption town-wide.**

Action 1.2.1 Consider local incentives for water saving faucets, toilets, and appliances.

Action 1.2.2 Incorporate greywater use or rainwater capture into local government buildings or park structures, and encourage educational materials about such technologies to inform and inspire the public.

## **Goal 2: Reduce stormwater runoff through sustainable design.**

### **Objective 2.1 Reduce impervious surfaces.**

Action 2.1.1 Consider removing concrete and installing additional permeable paver systems in areas that are more susceptible to flooding, such as low-lying areas near water sources.

Action 2.1.2 Encourage new developments to incorporate rain gardens, rain barrels, green roofs, buffer zones, and permeable pavement whenever feasible.

### **Objective 2.2 Utilize innovative measures to handle stormwater runoff.**

Action 2.2.1 Preserve and use natural drainage ways and wetlands wherever possible for stormwater management and nonpoint source pollution control.

Action 2.2.2 Adopt flood resilient design standards within flood plain areas to ensure the safety of residents and the resilience of structures in the event of a flood.

Action 2.2.3 Monitor stream health and seek grants to improve water quality and biodiversity in local ecosystems.



### **Objective 2.3 Enforce existing environmental standards and provide incentives where applicable.**

Action 2.3.1 Continue to collaborate with Shenandoah County to enforce soil sediment, erosion control, and stormwater management regulations to protect surface waters.

Action 2.3.2 Determine the feasibility of providing incentives to businesses and homeowners for instituting sustainable design for their properties.

## **Goal 3: Increase tree canopy and native flora while controlling for invasive species by implementing the Urban Tree Canopy Plan.**

### **Objective 3.1 Facilitate tree planting in residential and commercial districts (private properties) to attainment an increase in the overall tree canopy. Increase community awareness regarding the benefits of tree plantings.**

Action 3.1.1 Use the latest tree canopy assessment research for the identification of priority sites for additional tree canopy (additional tree plantings on residential and commercial properties).

Action 3.1.2 Support Tree Board activities, which raises awareness among citizens and property owners of the benefits of tree canopy.

Action 3.1.3 Support the Tree Board's community education efforts through Arbor Day events, collaboration with Shenandoah County Schools, involvement in park development, creation of tree care brochures, public presentations, and other methods.

Action 3.1.4 Develop a "Tree Voucher Program" for residential property owners and citizens that promotes tree affordability (developed in conjunction with area retail establishments.)

Action 3.1.5 Adopt an ordinance requiring the planting and replacement of native trees during the development process.

Action 3.1.6 Consider an ordinance which would provide for the maintenance of existing natural vegetative cover and prevent excessive erosion.

Action 3.1.7 Continue to update and promote recommended native landscaping trees and shrubs. Utilize "approved" species for street trees/public land, particularly those that are drought tolerant to be used with xeriscaping practices.

Action 3.1.8 Implement a Tree Inventory Plan for existing and future tree plantings and Maintenance Plan for existing trees in collaboration with the Public Works Department, local power companies, and other utility providers.

Action 3.1.9 Promote further plantings in the public realm and work with private entities to reduce the heat island effect, targeting suitable areas identified by the University of Vermont's 2011-2022 Tree Canopy Study.

### **Objective 3.2 Control for invasive species.**

Action 3.2.1 Seek to collaborate with community members on invasive/non-native species removal.

Action 3.2.2 Review state code to determine what ordinances the Town can adopt to reduce invasive species plantings within Woodstock.

Action 3.2.3 Adopt ordinances to prevent the proliferation of running bamboo and other invasive species.

### **Objective 3.5 Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Shenandoah County to implement a wildflower beautification project along Route 11 north and south of town, and along Route 42 west of town.**

Action 3.5.1 Request VDOT's pollinator program be expanded to include areas at the Town's primary entrance points.

Action 3.5.2 Use Town resources and volunteers to assist VDOT with the creation and maintenance of pollinator wildflower areas.

## **Goal 4: Protect and preserve ecosystems**

### **Objective 4.1 Determine prominent nesting locations for birds and other wildlife.**

Action 4.1.1 Collaborate with local conservation groups to locate bird and wildlife populations and develop measures to preserve and protect wildlife.

### **Objective 4.2 Protect and preserve wetlands in Woodstock**

Action 4.2.1 Identify wetlands throughout the Town and determine what threats to wildlife, water, and air quality may be present for each.

Action 4.2.2 Partner with community groups, schools, and conservation groups to provide in the field education on the importance of wetlands and wildlife.

Action 4.2.3 Collaborate with conservation groups, schools, and community organizations to schedule cleanup events for wetlands and streams that have trash, junk, or for invasive species removal.

### **Objective 4.3 Consider or support federal or state initiatives on wildlife crossings as resources become available.**

## **Goal 5: Implement sustainable land use and mobility ordinances, policies, and objectives.**

### **Objective 5.1 Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to increase safe bike and pedestrian access around Woodstock.**

Action 5.1.1 Ensure quality bicycle parking in key destination areas.

Action 5.1.2 Encourage electric bicycles and other alternative transportation to reduce traffic congestion and single occupancy vehicle trips.

### **Objective 5.2 Encourage incremental development in key areas to allow for greater opportunities for walkability to reduce emissions by car usage.**

Action 5.2.1. Recommend mixed-use developments for new projects to allow residents to obtain their needs by walking or biking to their destination, rather than driving.

## **Goal 6: Encourage or incentivize the use of local and sustainable building materials and techniques in development.**

### **Objective 6.1 Encourage sustainable building techniques.**

Action 6.1.1 Encourage the use of 'passive house' technology, or design that reduces energy usage through insulation, ventilation, and airtightness.

Action 6.1.2 Educate homeowners on energy efficiency through workshops and classes at libraries and community centers.

Action 6.1.3 Encourage homeowners increase the energy efficiency of their homes through incentives and other means.

### **Objective 6.2 Allow for and encourage the creative integration of solar energy in development projects, such as on large flat roofs or over parking lots.**

Action 6.2.1 Educate community members through public events on the benefits of local distributed solar generation and energy efficiency methods.

Action 6.2.2 Review zoning code and ordinances from other localities that have more established solar presence on local distributive projects to determine what gaps may exist in Woodstock's code.

## **Goal 7: Reduce light pollution and adopt a “dark sky” policy.**

### **Objective 7.1 Evaluate requirements and installation of street lights to reduce light pollution.**

Action 7.1.1 Consider street lights that are shielded, low-glare, or low-wattage.

Action 7.1.2 Reevaluate and improve existing outdoor lighting ordinance or initiate the development of an outdoor lighting ordinance. Consider incorporating Virginia IDA, Illuminating Engineering Society (IES), or Smart Outdoor Lighting Alliance guidelines.

Action 7.1.3 Set a timeline for replacing current streetlights with dark sky friendly streetlights.

Action 7.1.4 Explore incentivizing the use of infrared cameras to replace all-hour illumination of stores for security.

### **Objective 7.2 Encourage parks and local natural areas to incorporate night-time programming, starwatches, awareness resources, and citizen science projects**

Action 7.2.1 Engage with local tourism staff and board as well as amateur astronomer clubs to explore potential for "astrotourism".

Action 7.2.2 Partner with schools, area museums, and local businesses to design night-time programming for all ages to appreciate stargazing.

## **Goal 8: Create an official Town sustainability program**

### **Objective 8.1 Research effective approaches in developing sustainability programs.**

Action 8.1.1 Research sustainability efforts adopted by other localities and develop an understanding of how approached could be adapted to meet the needs of Woodstock.

### **Objective 8.2 Commit to sustainable practices while encouraging local businesses and residents to do the same.**

Action 8.2.1 Consider sustainable practices for Town services, such as switching to an electric or hybrid fleet for Town vehicles and other sustainable efforts.

Action 8.2.2 After adopting and implementing sustainable efforts, encourage businesses and residents to follow in the Town's footsteps by implementing sustainability efforts of their own.

Action 8.2.3 Promote/advertise local recycling efforts and look for regional coordination to increase recycling opportunities.

## **Goal 9: Formally conduct “Resiliency Planning” in coordination with Shenandoah County and the Planning District Commission.**

**Objective 9.1 Assess the Town’s preparation for potential extreme weather events, such as flooding or heat spikes.**

Action 9.1.1 Monitor Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines to address threats from extreme weather.

Action 9.1.2 Plan measures for reducing vulnerable population groups exposure to extreme weather events.

Action 9.1.3 Designate and clearly mark Emergency Shelters for refuge in disaster events.

# Housing

*The Town will pursue a diverse stock of housing types suitable for both ownership or rent at all stages of life. Through both increasing the supply and implementing policies, programs, and research the Town will pursue the ability for all generations to enjoy affordable living.*

## **Goal 1: Promote and facilitate a variety of housing styles and densities and the development of diverse housing types**

### **Objective 1.1 Identify opportunities for new housing development.**

Action 1.1.1. Identify additional vacant parcels for multifamily or single family attached homes to increase both available renter and owner-occupied units.

Action 1.1.2. Ensure that new housing development is well-connected to existing walkable, mixed use neighborhoods.

Action 1.1.3. Investigate potential funding sources for smaller-scale infill development, such as duplexes, tri-plexes, 4-plexes, 6-plexes, backyard cottages, carriage houses, or other accessory dwelling units.

Action 1.1.4 Monitor and support legislation at the State-level that increases local flexibility in housing production and prepare any necessary ordinance changes to align with the updated code, if adopted.

Action 1.1.5 Support the development of a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) in Woodstock.

### **Objective 1.2 Increase the affordable housing stock of Woodstock.**

Action 1.2.1. Identify issues causing residents to be "housing cost burdened" or paying more than 30% of their gross income in housing costs.

Action 1.2.2. Explore solutions to reducing the number of housing cost burdened residents through state and federal voucher programs for renters and homeowners.

Action 1.2.3 Identify opportunities to provide more affordable housing, such as through code updates, rehabilitation of derelict buildings, or affordable housing requirements.

Action 1.2.4 Create a local Housing Task Force, comprised of local housing non-profit leaders, business owners, and citizens, to provide policy recommendations for creative and sustainable housing initiatives. Utilize this group to participate in regional efforts at the Planning District level.

Action 1.2.5 Purchase or acquire vacant parcels to develop jointly with affordable housing developers to directly provide affordable housing to residents of Woodstock.

Action 1.2.7 Incorporate "missing middle" housing strategies that complement existing development patterns in Woodstock.

## Goal 2: Adopt improved policies to support housing development

### Objective 2.1 Amend zoning districts to allow for more flexibility in developing housing.

Action 2.1.1 Allow for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right and ensure that the setback requirements do not preclude their development.

Action 2.1.2 Remove parking minimums and consider the implementation of parking maximums to conserve land in the Town.

Action 2.1.3. Consider the implementation of form-based code to allow for different uses and housing types while maintaining the character of the town.

Action 2.1.4 Consider amending the zoning code to allow housing development adjacent to or on the same parcels as places of worship.

Action 2.1.5 Encourage better spatial organization of housing developments through the reduction of building setbacks, lot widths, and front and side yards, and the incorporation of smaller lot sizes.

### Objective 2.2 Audit Woodstock's zoning and permitting process

Action 2.2.1 Work with a housing task force composed of community members, developers, planning staff, and other stakeholders to determine methods of refining and streamlining housing construction in Woodstock. Develop recommendations to alter zoning code, Town ordinances, and planning and permitting processes to streamline housing development for the Town of Woodstock.

Action 2.2.2 Develop an affordable housing plan for policies to promote a percentage of new residential development be priced to address affordability.

Action 2.2.3 Explore the development of pre-approved building plans or pattern books to expedite the permitting process.

## Goal 3: Preserve and support housing where it currently exists with services and other amenities equitably

### Objective 3.1 Ensure Woodstock's housing stock ages gracefully and sustainably.

Action 3.1.1 Monitor state and federal grant releases annually to determine Woodstock's eligibility for preservation and rehabilitation grants.

Action 3.1.2 Consider funding grants for neighborhoods to improve their facades.

Action 3.1.3 Utilize proactive zoning code enforcement to encourage owners to maintain their buildings and prevent decay.

### Objective 3.2 Eliminate all substandard housing through code enforcement where necessary

Action 3.2.1 Assist owners with applying for rehabilitation grants or other programs to prevent code violations whenever possible.

# Historical & Architectural Resources

*Woodstock will identify and encourage the preservation of significant historic properties, and consider ways to protect them as a community asset to the extent practical and consistent with the character of a dynamic downtown.*

## **Goal 1: Support growth that preserves and enhances the historic urban fabric.**

**Objective 1.1 Preserve culturally, historically, and architecturally significant buildings, sites, structures, neighborhoods, cemeteries, and landscapes that contribute to Woodstock's cultural identity.**

Action 1.1.1 Continue the Town's Façade Renew Grant program to encourage investment and growth in downtown.

Action 1.1.2 Complete and maintain a historic resources inventory that is current and comprehensive.

Action 1.1.3 Pursue public and private partnerships to fund the preservation of historically significant sites.

**Objective 1.2 Create suggested architectural guidelines that provide recommendations for development to enhance streetscapes in historic areas.**

Action 1.2.1 Explore establishing suggested design guidelines for the historic district. This could include signage, facades, attractive architecture, landscaping, rehabilitation of existing structures, and commercial and residential infill guidelines.

**Objective 1.3 Consider requiring the screening of rooftop utilities, communication, transformers, and other service connections to buildings, where feasible.**

Action 1.3.1 As a part of a long-range effort, embark on a program of incrementally placing utility lines and structures underground or behind buildings, particularly in this historic district. At major intersections, freestanding traffic signals should be installed to reduce visual clutter.

Action 1.3.2. Pursue the undergrounding of power lines where feasible. Investigate funding through grants for undergrounding powerlines. Consider requiring new developments to fund the undergrounding of utilities on their sites.



## **Objective 1.4 Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings to preserve historic assets.**

Action 1.4.1 Create flexibility in the Zoning Ordinance to encourage the adaptive reuse of historical buildings and deter demolition, such as allowing for compatible densities and uses in historical areas (e.g., reduce parking requirements for historical institutional buildings that are changing uses).

Action 1.4.2. Increase property maintenance code enforcement as a proactive tool to prevent demolition by neglect.

Action 1.4.3 Continue the demolition delay period of 30 days at which time the Town could explore other options through civic groups, public agencies, and interested citizens. Options could include relocation or recommendations for acquisition by public or private bodies or agencies.

## **Goal 2: Provide for the inclusive telling of Woodstock's history.**

### **Objective 2.1 Educate the public on the economic and aesthetic benefits of preservation and restoration.**

Action 2.1.1 Ensure that historic preservation values and interests are coordinated with economic development groups, affordable housing developers, historical societies, as well as cultural groups.

Action 2.1.2 Strengthen programs and partnerships that engage the public in exploring community history and places of significance.

Action 2.1.3 Partner with preservationists and researchers to provide preservation workshops at local libraries or community centers to teach residents about preservation techniques for their properties.

### **Objective 2.2 Encourage and invest in public art.**

Action 2.2.1 Continue to allocate Town funds for art, providing financial support for art groups, schools, and hosting public art competitions.

Action 2.2.2 Continue to locate, purchase, and install public art that inspires creativity for Woodstock residents and visitors alike.

### **Objective 2.3 Maintain the historic character of the Town through the preservation of historic buildings and natural resources for the optimal benefit of current and future citizens.**

Action 2.3.1 Develop mini parks and plazas in the downtown area for public events.

Action 2.3.2 Work with schools and property owners of vacant storefronts and encourage volunteer participation for window displays. Encourage vacant building owners to participate in beautification programs to highlight local art and history through window displays.

Action 2.3.3 Create an interpretative signage program for historic contributing properties throughout the historic district, possibly in collaboration with Shenandoah County Schools.

# Fiscal Sustainability

*Woodstock will make careful investments and decisions that lead to long lasting fiscal stability and positive growth.*

## **Goal 1: Review the Strategic Plan annually and update as needed.**

### **Objective 1.1 Identify strategic management objectives that guide decision making, goals, and objectives.**

Action 1.1.1 Work with relevant Town departments to develop cohesive goals and objectives for the strategic plan.

Action 1.1.2 Encourage participation from a variety of Town employees to craft meaningful goals and objectives for strategic planning.

Action 1.1.3 Identify strategic objectives aimed at ensuring a fiscally sound government while achieving the desired vision for Woodstock.

### **Objective 1.2 Ensure public participation for community based and publicly accessibly community investments.**

Action 1.2.1 Develop a community engagement strategy that meets residents in their neighborhoods at reasonable hours to maximize public participation efforts.

Action 1.2.2 Observe public usage of Town amenities such as sidewalks, parks, and community facilities to determine what hidden improvements may be needed. For example, a mother lifting a stroller over a curb, a teen skateboarding in a crumbling parking lot, or an older adult pushing a walker up a staircase.

### **Objective 1.3 Develop participatory budgeting process for some elements of the capital improvement budget.**

Action 1.3.1 Research participatory budget usage in other cities to determine best practices for Woodstock.

Action 1.3.2 Determine which elements of the capital improvement budget could benefit from a participatory format. For example, setting aside budgetary items to allow citizens to vote for funding for parks, tree plantings, or sidewalks.

Action 1.3.3 Consider setting aside funding to allow citizens to vote for temporary pilot projects. For example, placing picnic tables and traffic cones in a parking space outside of a popular restaurant to dine outside.

## **Goal 2: Study land use and mobility infrastructure development patterns to ensure that the Town remains fiscally sustainable.**

**Objective 1.1 Ensure that land use decisions are efficient and compatible with current and future service levels.**

Action 1.1.1 Consider requiring non-administrative land use applications submit a fiscal impact model or statement using the Town's provided proforma models for fiscal impacts and general revenue gain or loss to study service level impacts and inform decision-making.

**Objective 1.2 Ensure that transportation infrastructure investment is carefully made with future maintenance costs considered.**

## **Goal 3: Continue the Town's sound fiscal management practices, as evidenced by the award of the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting over the last thirteen consecutive years.**