

Botetourt County 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update



Prepared By:



RENAISSANCE PLANNING GROUP

Adopted: March 22, 2011

Acknowledgement

Botetourt County would like to thank the many people and residents who contributed to the preparation of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and county staff spent many hours attending meetings, reviewing materials, and providing recommendations for this plan. Their contributions significantly shaped the plan update and their participation helped assure that the broad views of the county residents were represented.

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Botetourt County would also like to thank those residents of Botetourt who participated in the community survey, public meetings, and hearings. The purpose of this plan is to serve the future needs of Botetourt County residents and input from Residents is important.

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1 POLICY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

*A Vision for Botetourt County:
“Envision a community where
County residents are attaining
higher educational and economic
goals; are enjoying a quality of life
marked by safety and security,
environmental protection, quality
business and residential
development, and a variety of
recreational and cultural
opportunities; and are pleased with
the value and cost of government
services.”*

Board of Supervisors

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for the County of Botetourt Virginia. It was prepared as an update to Botetourt County’s current comprehensive plan adopted in 2004. The plan update was adopted on March 22, 2011.

A comprehensive plan is one of the most important long range-planning tools that Virginia communities use to guide development, manage change and implement a community vision. Communities naturally go through changes over time. A well thought out comprehensive plan which evaluates local trends and conditions and presents a shared vision for the future implemented through targeted goals, objectives and action strategies can help guide public and private decision making and investment to the benefit of the whole community. To be effective and useful, the plan must reflect the knowledge, values and

aspirations of a community’s citizens and be embraced and implemented by elected and appointed representatives.

Community involvement is one of the guiding principles that governed the preparation of this plan. Many citizens contributed to its development, as either participants in the community workshops, or as members of the Steering Committee. Stakeholder interviews, a citizen survey, community meetings, Planning Commission work sessions, and public hearings were just some of the techniques used to effectively engage Botetourt citizens in the development of this important document.

AUTHORITY TO PLAN

Authority for local government planning in Virginia is contained in Section 15.2-2223 through 15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia. This plan was prepared in accordance with these provisions. By law, the Botetourt County Planning Commission is charged with the responsibility of preparing and recommending a comprehensive plan to the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors for adoption. This update was undertaken in part to fulfill code provisions that require local planning commissions to review the adopted comprehensive plan at least once every five years.

The Code of Virginia requires that the Commission base the preparation of a comprehensive plan on "careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth," and of the probable future requirements of Botetourt County's citizens. It also specifies that the plan should include all unincorporated areas of the County and that it shall be general in nature. The Code further requires that a comprehensive plan "shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use...."

The Comprehensive Plan, with accompanying maps, charts, and descriptive matter, may include, but need not be limited to:

- The designation of various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted housing, business; industrial; agricultural; mineral resources; conservation; active and passive recreation; public service; floodplain and drainage; and other areas;
- The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, sports playing fields, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;
- The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;
- The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protection measures;
- An official map, a capital improvement program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestal district maps, where applicable;
- The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;
- The location of military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas;
- The designation of corridors or routes for electric transmission lines of 138 kilovolts or higher.

Comprehensive Plan Purpose:
"It is the purpose of the Botetourt Comprehensive Plan to promote balanced growth and development while protecting the County's natural environment and cultural resources. This shall be accomplished through the application of sound planning principals and the implementation of complementary development controls"

Planning Commission,
August 2003

The Comprehensive Plan shall include:

- The designation of areas for the implementation of measures to promote the construction and maintenance of affordable housing, sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.
- A map that shall show road improvements and transportation improvements, including the cost estimates of such road and transportation improvements as available from the Virginia Department of Transportation, taking into account the current and future needs of residents in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.

PURPOSE AND PLAN ELEMENTS

Botetourt County has a thirty-five year history of formal comprehensive planning initiatives. The County Board of Supervisors adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in February 1975. That plan, entitled the *Botetourt County Land Use Plan*, was intended to manage land development and population growth.

Five additional plans have been adopted since 1975, with updates occurring generally every five years. These planning efforts incorporated information from each decennial census and responded to land development trends and the need for improvements to County infrastructure. The plans developed from 1975 through 1998 were prepared with the assistance of the staff of the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC). Subsequent plans have been prepared by staff with the assistance of outside planning consultants through a process that included public involvement, followed by Planning Commission review and recommendation with ultimate review and adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

Relationship to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan was prepared using a facilitated visioning process. The 2004 plan included discussion, analysis and recommendations that emerged from the community planning process. This Comprehensive Plan Update, which was also based on extensive community and stakeholder input, builds upon that information, further examining growth trends, planning initiatives, and affirming the county's goals and vision for Botetourt County's future growth. Some of the information included in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan has been incorporated into this plan update.

Vision for Botetourt County

This Comprehensive Plan sets out goals and policies that will be used by public officials to make decisions that will greatly influence the County's future. Most successful, thriving communities have a vision for the future that guides day-to-day decision-making. Stated or unstated, an ultimate vision sets a framework for incremental decisions that lead toward creating the future. The long term vision for Botetourt, adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2002 and reviewed and affirmed as part of this update, is the foundation for more specific goals and policies that are included in later chapters of this plan. If the goals and policies of the plan are upheld and implemented, the following vision for Botetourt should be realized:

“Envision a community where County residents are attaining higher educational and economic goals; are enjoying a quality of life marked by safety and security, environmental protection, quality business and residential development, and a variety of recreational and cultural opportunities; and are pleased with the value and cost of government services.”

Plan Elements

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan is organized into six elements, or major topics, of countywide significance. Immediately following this introductory chapter is a discussion about key countywide issues and influences driving the need to update the plan. This Trends chapter provides an overview of growth forecasts, defines the vision and themes that serve as the overarching goals for this Plan, and describes the role of the Future Land Use Map.



The subsequent chapters of the plan contain a summary overview providing the context and defining issues for each element, followed by policies and actions to address these issues. Tables, images, text boxes, and maps supplement the narrative content. One chapter of the plan is dedicated to each countywide element listed below:

Trends: The Trends Element provides base information for understanding the short and long-term growth trends related to people, jobs, race, income, housing, mobility, and agricultural activity.

Land Use: The Land Use Element provides a framework for all land use and development-related decisions. It is the critical foundation upon which all other elements are based, and includes the Future Land Use Map and related policies to guide growth in a more compact and efficient pattern over the next 20 years.

Transportation: The Transportation Element guides development of the County's transportation network. It includes highways, public transit systems, and bike and pedestrian networks to support the County's desired land uses and form. The proposed transportation system seeks to reduce the growth of vehicle miles traveled and provide transportation options that provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicles. The aim is to achieve a balanced and efficient transportation system for Botetourt County's expanding populations and their corresponding needs.

Cultural and Environmental: The Cultural and Environmental Element contains the policies and actions required for Botetourt County to preserve its natural resources and address the challenges inherent with retaining these resources as growth occurs. This element addresses park and recreation planning, greenway and trail planning and connectivity, open space conservation, and the preservation of special landscapes and historic resources, among other issues. The element also identifies all natural features of the County, including soils, topography, and floodplains.

Community Services and Facilities: The Community Services and Facilities Element provides direction for the location of government buildings, solid waste services, emergency services, schools, and libraries. This element also includes recommendations to ensure the adequacy and safety of the drinking water supply, distribution system, and the wastewater system.

Economic Development: The Economic Development Element provides recommendations to enhance Botetourt County's competitive advantages and economic viability. In May 2010, the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors adopted the Botetourt County Economic Development Study, which serves to update this section of the plan. That study addresses two main objectives; 1) Identify opportunities that can potentially expand quality jobs, build tax base, and enhance tourism activity within the County; and 2) define the strategy and plan for implementing those efforts required to achieve specific actions derived from the first objective.

This plan is intended to be accessible and easily understood by all users. Key issues are described with data to make the purpose of policies more apparent. Graphics, maps, photos, and charts have been used to illustrate major points and improve the legibility of the text. The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map is incorporated as part of the document and provides the foundation for future decisions regarding land use and zoning.

PLANNING HORIZON

Typical planning horizons for comprehensive plans range from approximately 20 - 50 years with 20 years being the most common. The year 2030 is the planning horizon for this comprehensive planning initiative. This comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the Botetourt County Planning Commission at least once every five years, as required by State Code. Each review will serve as the basis to evaluate the continued appropriateness of the plans' goals, objectives and policies, and progress made toward achieving the Board's vision for the community.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

There are several key documents that are available to Virginia localities to implement the goals, policies and vision of the comprehensive plan. These documents include the zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, and the capital improvements plan. County officials and staff use these tools on a day to day basis to guide development of individual properties and to plan for public improvements. Further, there are numerous other planning documents that guide the decision making processes. The County's recreation strategic plan provides information on the needs and future implementation of recreation services, the emergency service strategic plan provides direction of how to best provide safety and security, the economic development study report provides a new direction of how the County can best attract and promote economic growth, and the county-wide water and wastewater plan is critical to providing direction of where existing and planned infrastructure can accommodate new growth. All of these plans have been consulted and referenced in this plan. Consistency between all of these documents and the comprehensive plan ensures that the long term vision for the County is considered as part of the many incremental decisions that shape a community.

Zoning Ordinance

The Botetourt County Zoning Ordinance is perhaps the most significant of the three primary implementation tools that guide development and land use in the county. It includes regulations intended to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of current and future county residents by providing specific standards for uses, lots, building size, location and other related issues that encourage and ensure appropriate development in the County. The provisions for various zoning districts and zoning regulations included in the ordinance should be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the adopted comprehensive plan to ensure that the vision for Botetourt is fully realized.

Subdivision Ordinance

The second regulatory document that helps implement the comprehensive plan is the Botetourt County Subdivision Ordinance. It provides for the orderly, efficient division of land into parcels or lots for development and for the coordinated construction of streets, highways and public facilities within proposed subdivisions. Like the zoning ordinance, the subdivision ordinance directly influences development in the County and the character of the community. Subdivision regulations should be in sync with the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan if the County is to be developed consistently with the adopted vision. Botetourt County's subdivision Ordinance adheres to the Virginia State Code.

Capital Improvements Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides direction for managing growth and development and guiding continued investment in the County's physical infrastructure and facilities. The plan can enhance the capital improvement planning and budgeting process by implementing more explicit ties between the Comprehensive Plan and the development of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and by helping establish priorities among competing potential capital investments. The Botetourt County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is reviewed and adopted annually by the Board of Supervisors to provide fiscal guidance for capital investments over a five year period. As the third primary implementation tool of the comprehensive plan, the CIP should reflect the recommendations and priorities of the plan to support the pattern of development envisioned for the future.

USE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This document is intended for use by elected and appointed officials, County government administration and staff, residents, businesses and developers, and others with an interest in the future of Botetourt. This Comprehensive Plan will:

- Establish the vision for what Botetourt County can achieve and aspires to be by 2030;
- Consolidate and coordinate policies that relate to the County's physical and economic growth and development into one document for use by all County departments;
- Guide decision-making and evaluation of zoning map and text amendments and discretionary development approvals;
- Guide public investment by coordinating the Capital Improvement Program with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan; and
- Identify short to long-term strategic actions for the County to undertake.

As the County's primary policy and planning document addressing the physical development of the County, the Comprehensive Plan will be used by elected and appointed officials who make land use and fiscal decisions related to the CIP. It will also be used by County staff that will be charged with implementing policies contained in the plan through departmental programs, strategic initiatives and by coordinating updates to related documents.

The Comprehensive Plan is also an important source of information and guidance for businesses, potential investors or employers, and members of the development community. The plan's Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map provides clear guidance on preferred land uses for each area of the County that will assist in guiding property owners in decisions about their property. Several policies describe the desired character of future development and will ideally be used as a factor in evaluating discretionary development applications, such as Special Exception Permits, rezoning applications and, to some extent, site plans and subdivisions.

The plan lays out a strategy for public improvements that reflect public investment priorities and that may promote concurrent and compatible private sector development. It also has the potential to improve the predictability of the development review and approval process for developers, property owners, and concerned citizens alike when the Future Land Use Map is used as a foundation for land use and zoning decisions. Finally, the Comprehensive Plan is also a resource for those who seek general information about how the County may evolve over the next 20 years, as well as those who seek to understand how the County will respond to key issues in the future.

Interpretation of Policies

Policies provide direction for decision-makers regarding particular courses of action to pursue. They are also intended to guide decisions regarding the review and approval of development proposals, and provide a consistent basis for decisions relating to land use, such as amendments to the County's official zoning map. Policy language may be written to apply exclusively to County actions, or it may set forth an expectation regarding private sector activities.

The policies are typically worded as an ongoing aspiration or intent, using active words such as "encourage", "promote", and "provide". The latter such policies are typically worded as a statement expressing a desired state or outcome, using the word "should" to distinguish the policy statements in the plan from the legal requirements found in the County's codes, where the word "shall" is the norm.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Public participation is possibly the most important part of any planning process and this may be especially true for a countywide comprehensive plan. Botetourt County undertook this plan update with a solid commitment to public participation. The public participation process began with the formation of a Steering Committee, comprised of a range of stakeholders in the county, to provide input throughout the planning process.

The public at large was also involved at critical points in the plan update process to ensure that the most accurate information was available, that goals and implementation steps were feasible, and most importantly, reflected the vision of the general public, Steering Committee members and municipal officials. Surveys, newsletters, a website and open house forums were used to involve the public in identifying and prioritizing key issues and initiatives deemed important by the community. These efforts are discussed in greater detail later in this plan. The information gathered through these efforts was a key component in developing goals and policies included in the plan.

Three-phase public input process was used to identify priorities, develop goals and objectives, and craft plan recommendations. The initial phase was aimed at identifying regional concerns and issues including potential areas for development, preservation and addressing specific issues such as infrastructure. The second phase of public involvement was designed to assist in identifying expectations and opinions about growth and development, and the overall future of the County. And the third phase served to present the final vision to the public. Community members were given an opportunity to review the plan's goals and objectives for a wide range of planning topics, including housing, transportation, community facilities, historic preservation, natural resources, agriculture, and land use. Final comments were received regarding the plan's recommendations and future land use plan. These comments were considered in the final revisions of the plan.

Role of Steering Committee

Botetourt County initiated the public input component of the Comprehensive Plan update process by appointing a Steering Committee. A list of Steering Committee Members can be found at the beginning of this document within the Acknowledgement page. The Steering Committee embodied a cross-section of citizens representing businesses and industry, civic and social organizations, human service agencies, governmental bodies, and residents. Their mission was to engage the residents of Botetourt County to identify and articulate a vision and set of goals for the County. Steering Committee members also served as a liaison to their respective organizations to share and receive information about the plan update process. Additionally, members provided valuable information in their particular fields of expertise when appropriate during development of the plan.

The work of the Steering Committee assisted in identifying both local and regional concerns to develop a consensus for plan recommendations. This group of over 25 individuals was surveyed early in the plan process to help identify issues of importance and values that shape community opinion and aspirations. In those areas where the questions related to development patterns, there was a clear consensus: plan growth and infrastructure to provide for jobs, but do it in such a way as to ensure the preservation of the rural character of the county.

Website Development

In October 2009, the County launched a project specific website to provide steering committee members, officials and the general public with easy access to the most current information related to the plan. Initially, the website provided an overview of the comprehensive planning process, the planning team, and Botetourt County data and resources. As the plan evolved, the website was used to conduct an electronic survey, provide press releases and news articles, post draft development objectives and goals, and summaries of public involvement meetings. Contact information was provided on the website so that any member of the public could address the planning team with questions related to the plan update.

Public Workshops

The Botetourt County Comprehensive Plan Update began with advertised public workshops designed to solicit community input on issues of concern to citizens and to get a sense of their visions for the future of the County. The first public meetings were held on October 24, 2009; one at Lord Botetourt High School, and the other at James River High School, to target different geographic areas of the County. Between twelve and forty participants attended each workshop. At each of these meetings, participants were asked to affirm the current vision as adopted in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and to identify what residents valued the most in relation to the county's future growth. Participants provided feedback needed to develop recommendations for the 2010 Comprehensive Plan update.

These meetings were designed as open house forums and displayed information on growth trends for the public review and comment. Stations provided information about population and housing growth, transportation issues, employment and economics, agricultural and environmental features, land use, and public facilities. A questionnaire was provided to solicit responses from attendees about topics such as: What is best about the county? What are the top challenges? What are its opportunities? What is the vision for the next 20 years? Where should growth go, or not go? County and consultant team members were at the meetings to address questions and to listen to the public comments.

A second round of meetings was held on December 5, 2009 and on January 5, 2010. These meetings were held at Lord Botetourt High School and Central Academy Middle School, respectively. The purpose of these meetings was for participants to review and affirm the community values and priorities that evolved from the information and input gathered at the previous public forums. A total of 23 participants attended the second set of forums. Twelve people attend the December 5th meeting and 11 attended the January 5th meeting.



SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT

Major Themes

Citizen Survey participants identified "managing growth and development," "economic development" and "protection of farm and rural land" as the top three issues that the County will face in the next 20 years. Strong concerns about these three issues also emerged from the community-input meetings, along with more specific concerns about the pace and pattern of development, community design, preservation of natural and cultural resources, retaining traditional industries such as agriculture as a cornerstone for economic development, in addition to controlling commercial development along U.S. Route 220 and around Exit 150.

Population Growth and Pace of Development

Botetourt County's population has grown substantially in the past decade, and surveyed residents perceive population growth as "somewhat too fast" or "much too fast." Growth management received the highest average score (8.35 out of 10) relative to areas of importance to residents.

At the public forums, participants expressed their perception that change is on its way and that the County's future is somewhat threatened by factors beyond the control of local residents and local government. The high quality of life in Botetourt County has attracted retirees and new families, stimulating recent growth.

Citizens expressed concern that the attractive character of Botetourt County creates growth pressures that will overwhelm it and compromise the rural quality of life for those who currently live here. Comments received at the public forums also emphasized preserving rural land and allocating growth to areas that are already designated to support future growth. Residents would like to see commercial growth occur where capacity exists and ensure future commercial growth is designed well to minimize the impact on the rural character. Overall, most comments focused on how to maintain the rural character and related land uses. Workshop participants felt that one of the best ways to address these issues in the future is to direct new development to appropriate locations and ensure that the County's Comprehensive Plan goals and policies are reflected and supported in its Zoning Ordinance.

Local Economy and Economic Development

Residents expressed concern that young people are leaving the area for jobs elsewhere, wages are too low, and local workforce skills are not adequate. Botetourt County's residents also voiced concerns about the future vitality of the County's traditional economic engines – agriculture and manufacturing.

The general sense among workshop participants was that Botetourt County is fortunate to have some of the most fertile and productive agricultural soils in Virginia. However, outside influences, such as nationwide changes in farming practices, loss of local farm laborers, increased agricultural regulations, and changes in food merchandising, have meant that family farming is gradually giving way to larger, corporate-owned farm entities, or have increased pressure to sell family farms for conversion to residential development.

In addition, citizens in the workshops commented on Botetourt County's strong tourism potential and highlighted assets that would be attractive to the tourism industry, including pristine natural areas, historic buildings and settlements, and recreational activities. Agriculture-based, nature-based, and cultural and heritage-based tourism were identified as key industries that the County should pursue and plan for in the coming years.

Citizens voiced a strong interest in finding ways to strengthen agriculture and tourism for economic development purposes, but also as a crucial part of maintaining the County's rural character and traditional development pattern of towns and villages.

Community Character and Development Pattern

Participants in the community meetings expressed fears that without appropriate land-use policies and regulations, regional growth pressures will lead to the conversion of farmland to residential and commercial use, loss of affordable housing and loss of rural character. There was also a concern that towns will lose their identities and significance or be indistinguishable from surrounding suburban development. Most community workshop participants favored directing new development to existing incorporated towns where public services are already available as a way of revitalizing existing incorporated towns and promoting compact development.

Workshop participants also suggested that historic districts, design guidelines and maintaining a clear separation between incorporated towns and encroaching development would reinforce the fabric and sense of community in the existing incorporated towns and improve the compatibility of new development.

Natural Resources

It was evident from comments made at the public-input meetings that Botetourt County residents take pride in the unique natural resources that make the County a desirable and beautiful place to live, including the ecologically and environmentally significant feature of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Citizens supported promoting Botetourt County's unique natural features as a means to attract tourists, encourage eco-tourism, market Blue Ridge products and goods, and to attract innovative and ecologically compatible business and industry.

Community Facilities and Infrastructure

While local residents expressed pride in local community facilities such as schools and libraries, the lack of water and waste water facilities needed to serve existing and future residents was a topic of concern during the public forums. The potential for development at higher densities and adjacent to the incorporated towns is limited due to a lack of utility capacity. Citizens also noted that new development brings demands for services that may stretch the County's financial capabilities. Citizens identified Town and County cooperation and coordination, improvements to existing systems, and development proffers garnered through conditional zoning as ways to address future infrastructure needs.

The U.S. Route 220 Corridor

U.S. Route 220 is not only the major local roadway connecting Botetourt County's incorporated towns to regional destinations; it is the only north-south connector road in the County. It is a vital transportation artery for both local residents and the many travelers who pass through the area each year. For this reason, residents expressed concerns about the level of commercial development occurring on U.S. Route 220 and at key intersections. U.S. Route 220 has been a typical location for commercial uses that serve through travelers. Residents are concerned that too much commercial development along U.S. Route 220 would create congestion, compete with commercial activities in the incorporated towns and fundamentally alter the character of the rural "view from the road" valued by residents and a factor in attracting potential tourists to the area. Stakeholders interviewed during the plan update process focused on the need to control commercial development along U.S. Route 220 and focus growth around existing incorporated towns to promote nodes of development.

SUMMARY OF 2008 CITIZEN SURVEY

Another source of input for the Comprehensive Plan Update was the third county-wide "Botetourt County Citizen Satisfaction Survey" conducted in 2008. The telephone survey was a comprehensive citizen survey conducted by *The Center for Community Research at Roanoke College*. A summary of the survey as it relates to the Comprehensive Plan is provided below.

Table 1 – Citizen Survey Summary

1. Top three areas of importance scored 1 to 10, with 10 being extremely important (mean score of respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ensure carefully managed growth – 8.35 B. Improve quality of schools – 8.07 C. Improve job creation and business investment – 7.90
2. What are the three things that have changed for the better in Botetourt County?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. More shopping/restaurants B. More people/population growth C. Better schools
3. What are the three things that have changed for the worse in Botetourt County?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Too many people/population growth B. Traffic/roads C. Taxes too high
4. Top three aspects rated best of Botetourt County (mean score provided)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. As a place to raise children – 8.77 B. Public safety – 7.79 C. Quality of housing – 7.49
5. Top three aspects rated worst of Botetourt County (mean score provided)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Cultural amenities – 5.53 B. Cost of housing – 5.88 C. Availability of recreational activities – 6.21

Source: Botetourt County Citizen Satisfaction Survey, May 2008.

Conflicts and Contradictions of the Public Input Process

It is an inherent part of any community planning process that conflicts and contradictions occur. When discussing with residents certain aspects of the community in isolation, they form opinions based on the context of the discussion. As a result, desires and needs will conflict, for a single individual as well as between residents of a diverse community like Botetourt County. For example, based on the input received during the public workshops and information from the 2008 Citizen Survey, there is consensus that more people moving to Botetourt County is a change for the better (Table 1, 2B). But, this directly conflicts with the consensus that the population growth is a change for the worse (Table 1, 3A). Further, residents have concerns that taxes are too high, but there is a desire for more recreation facilities and more commercial growth, both require expenditure of County funds.

There exists a fine balance of what resources and infrastructure are critically implemented, and what resources are critical for the sense of livability. Through the use of the comprehensive plan, and continued community input, the county can prioritize the investments of its resources to best meet the needs, and expectations of the residents. It is only through the use of this plan that the County can ensure appropriately planned growth while minimizing unnecessary investments in infrastructure.

INVENTORY, ANALYSIS AND PEER COUNTY COMPARISON

Research and Analysis

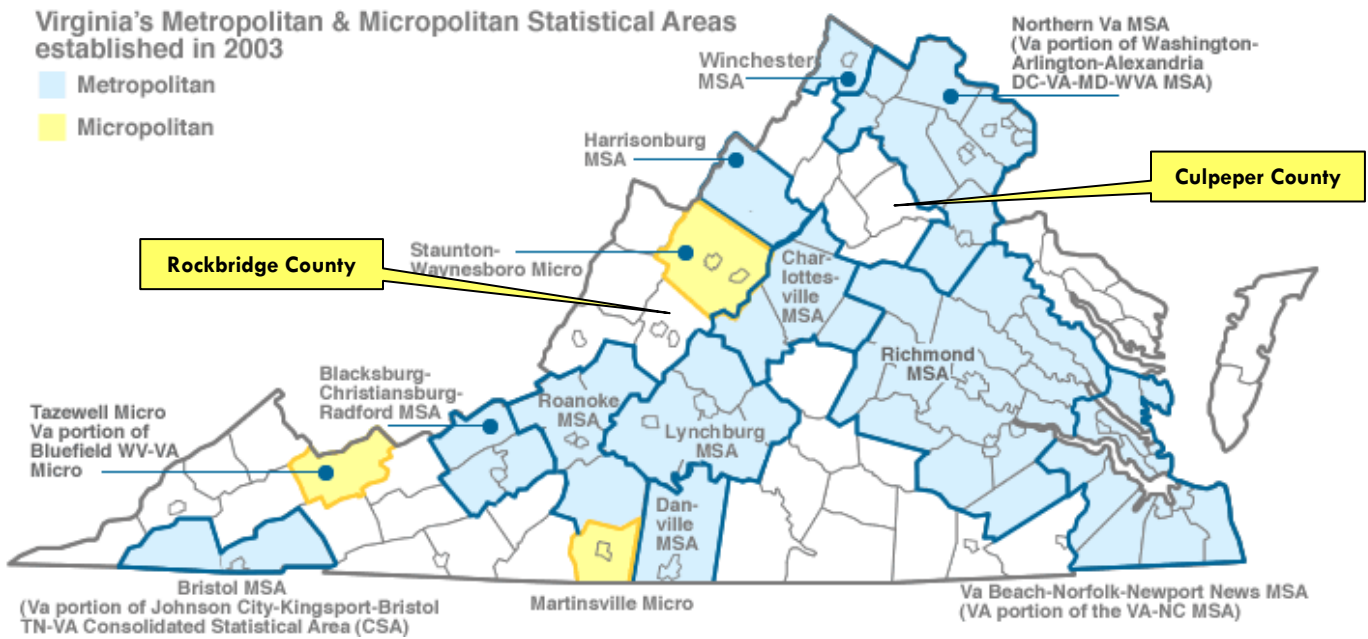
Based on the preliminary comments and opinions researched and received, an analysis of several topic areas have been conducted to provide a basis for understanding how Botetourt County has grown and how it is projected to grow. The following data and information has been reviewed and evaluated to provide a basis for informed decisions during the Comprehensive Plan Update process:

- *Demographics:* Provides information about local and regional growth, age groups, income, persons per dwelling units (measure of average household size), and population forecasts.
- *Employment:* Includes a trend analysis of the labor force, commuting patterns, types of jobs, types of businesses, and location/density of employment.
- *Land Use:* Includes information about current zoning and the use of land throughout the county; trends of building permitting, residential dwelling units; population distribution, and anticipates future land use demands based on population forecasts (these projections are based on current trends and not planned development or existing development approvals).
- *Public Facilities:* Includes an inventory of existing public facility capacity, projected capacity, future demands based on projected population growth, fire and rescue inventory, recreation plans, and water and sewer service.
- *Housing:* Includes an analysis of the current housing stock, the availability of housing, density of residential dwelling units, owner occupied versus rental units, home values, and the relation of home values to income levels.
- *Environmental and Historic Resources:* Shows an inventory of environmental and historic resources.
- *Transportation:* Presents a summary of the existing travel demand analysis, an assessment of future transportation demands, and current studies related to I-81 interchanges 150 and 162.

Regional and Peer Comparison

Botetourt County is one of six localities in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). To provide a sense of Botetourt County's role in the region, most of the analysis in this document is based on a comparison of Botetourt County relative to the other communities in the Roanoke MSA. Additionally, two counties were selected for peer evaluation since they share some characteristics with Botetourt County; Culpeper County and Rockbridge County. Comparisons to these counties provide a means of evaluating Botetourt County relative to other predominantly rural communities of different sizes in other regions of the State.

Figure 1 – Map identifying Roanoke MSA, Culpeper County, and Rockbridge County



2 TRENDS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview and analysis of selected trends that may shape the future of the County. An analysis of demographic data is a helpful comprehensive planning tool. Evaluating changes in a community's population over time helps a locality better understand current needs and can help the community anticipate future needs that should be addressed in the plan's goals, objectives and policies.

An analysis of population, income, housing, and education data is presented below. This analysis also includes information comparing local and regional growth, age groups, persons per dwelling units (measure of average household size), and population forecasts. This data was presented to Botetourt County residents at a Public Workshop on October 24, 2009. Residents reviewed the data and analysis, and offered comments about the significance of this information for the future.

PEOPLE & JOBS

Population growth is an indicator of existing demand for services and can be used to predict future demand for public services such as education, recreation, and public safety. The 2008 American Community Survey estimates the population of Botetourt County to be 32,261. In contrast, the 2003 comprehensive plan estimated the County population to reach 32,200 in 2005. This comparison represents a slower rate of growth than anticipated in the last Comprehensive Plan update process. The Virginia Employment Commission projects Botetourt County's population to be 38,437 in 2030. Table 2 – Population Estimates & Forecasts for Botetourt County and Figure 2 – Alternative Population Forecasts, show three population projections that were considered for use in development of Comprehensive Plan.

The population projections labeled as "long term growth trend" are based on the rate of growth experienced in the County from 1900 to 2008 and includes periods of rapid growth and long periods of relatively small change. Population projections labeled as "short term growth trends" are based on the County's rate of growth from 1990 to 2008, a period which includes rapid population growth, particularly between 1990 and 2000. Population projections based on the long term and short term growth trends present widely varying projections that reflect the difference between rates of growth that may not be typical in the future; one includes growth periods when the County grew very little and the other places too much emphasis on the County's most rapid period of growth.

The population projections deemed most appropriate for use in this plan update were prepared by the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) (Table 3– Virginia Employment Commission Population Forecast). The VEC population forecasts take into account anticipated growth rates and projected job growth in the region and state, as well as actual growth rates experienced by the county in the past and therefore are expected to provide the best representation of future growth in Botetourt County. The VEC projects that the County's population will increase by approximately 6,000 residents by 2030.

Table 2 – Population Estimates & Forecasts for Botetourt County

Alternative Population Forecasts (2000 to 2030)					
	2000 (actual)	2008 (estimate)	2010 (estimate)	2020 (projected)	2030 (projected)
VEC	30,496	32,261	33,156	35,756	38,437
Long Term Growth	30,496	32,261	32,445	34,518	36,724
Short Term Growth	30,496	32,261	34,075	38,075	42,543
2004 Comprehensive Plan Figures (estimates after year 2000)	30,496	33,250	34,300	38,500	N/A

Figure 2 – Alternative Population Forecasts

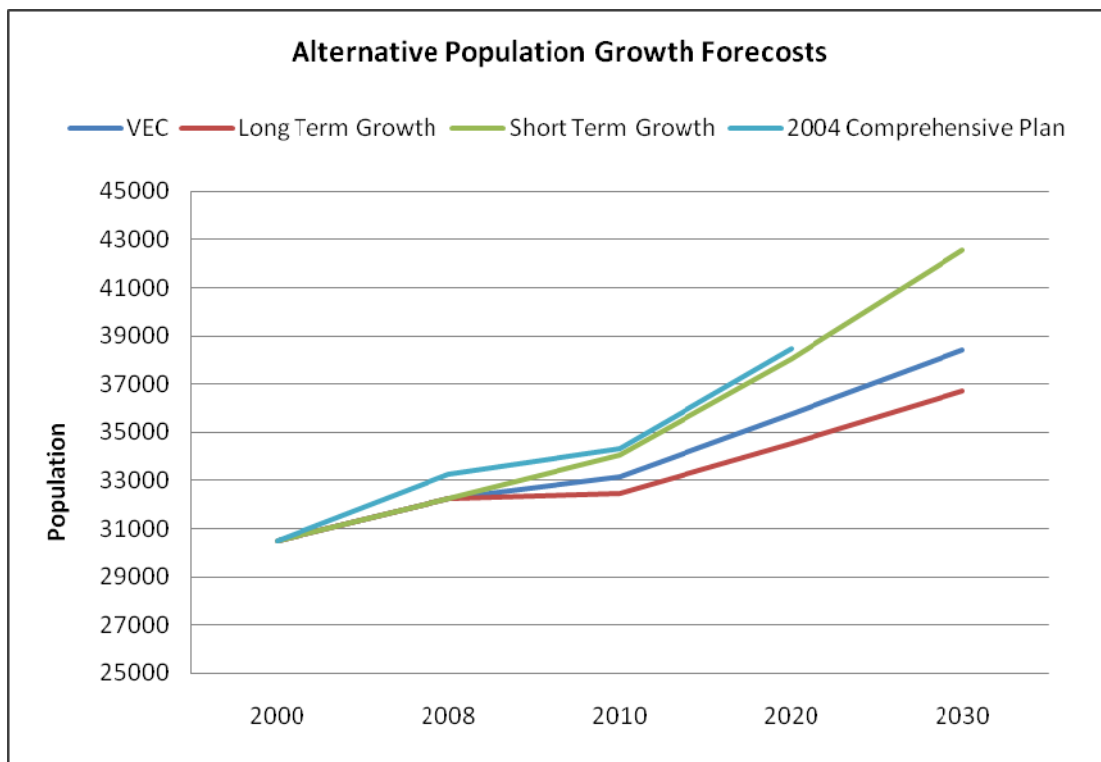


Table 3– Virginia Employment Commission Population Forecast

	Botetourt County	(% change)	Virginia	(% change)
1990	24,992		6,187,358	
2000	30,496	22.02 %	7,078,515	14.40 %
2010	33,156	8.72 %	8,010,239	13.16 %
2020	35,756	7.84 %	8,917,396	11.32 %
2030	38,437	7.50 %	9,825,019	10.18 %

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Botetourt Community Profile

Botetourt County's population experienced relatively minor fluctuations between 1900 and 1970 (Table 4 – Historical Population Trends). After 1970, the county experienced significant population growth. Table 4 illustrates the growth of Botetourt County compared to the Roanoke MSA and the peer communities of Culpeper County and Rockbridge County. Between 1970 and 2008, the County grew over 77% with significant increases between 1970 and 1980 and between 1990 and 2000, while the Roanoke MSA and Rockbridge County grew only by 28.1% and 28.83% respectively during the same timeframe. While Botetourt County's growth outpaced that of the MSA as a whole, it did not outpace growth in Culpeper County, which grew by 148.64% between 1970 and 2008.

While Botetourt continues to grow at a faster rate compared to regional trends, the most recent data suggests a much slower rate of growth this decade than the previous decade. From 2000 to 2008, growth occurred at a rate of 5.0%, compared to a 22% increase in the previous decade of 1990 to 2000. The growth rate for the Roanoke MSA during this same time period (2000-2008) was 2.8%, as compared to 32.2% for Culpeper County and 3.0% for Rockbridge County.

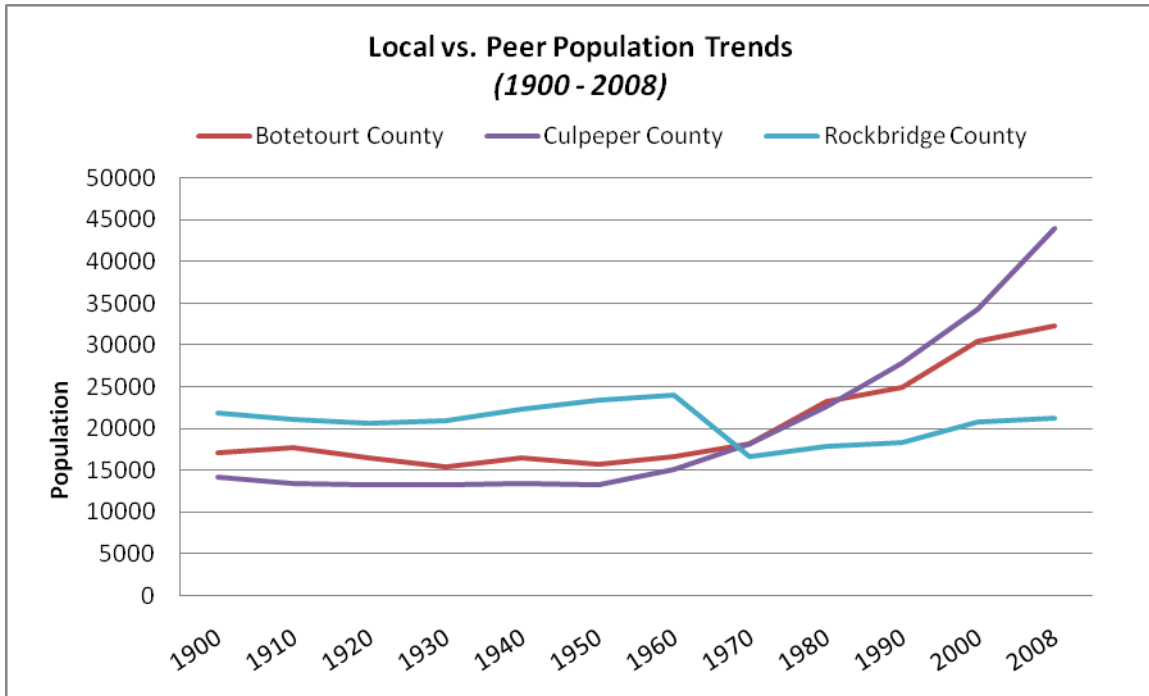
Table 4 – Historical Population Trends

LOCAL, PEER AND REGIONAL POPULATION TRENDS (1900 – 2008)								
Year	Botetourt County	Percent Change	Roanoke MSA Population*	Percent Change	Culpeper County	Percent Change	Rockbridge County	Percent Change
1900	17,161		84,739		14,123		21,799	
1910	17,727	3.3%	103,415	22.0%	13,472	-4.6%	21,171	-2.9%
1920	16,557	-6.6%	120,177	16.2%	13,292	-1.3%	20,626	-2.6%
1930	15,457	-6.6%	147,851	23.0%	13,306	0.1%	20,902	1.3%
1940	16,447	6.4%	158,264	7.0%	13,365	0.4%	22,384	7.1%
1950	15,766	-4.1%	177,185	12.0%	13,242	-0.9%	23,359	4.4%
1960	16,715	6.0%	204,799	15.6%	15,088	13.9%	24,039	2.9%
1970	18,193	8.8%	231,316	12.9%	18,218	20.7%	16,637	-30.8%
1980	23,270	27.9%	260,081	12.4%	22,620	24.2%	17,911	7.7%
1990	24,992	7.4%	268,513	3.2%	27,791	22.9%	18,350	2.5%
2000	30,496	22.0%	288,309	7.4%	34,262	23.3%	20,808	13.4%
2008	32,261	5.8%	297,029	3.0%	43,945	28.3%	21,312	2.4%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

*MSA Population adjusted to reflect sum population of all counties within existing MSA boundaries

Figure 3 - Peer County Comparison of Population Growth Trends



As population expanded during the 1980s and 1990s, population density for the entire County increased from 42 persons per square mile in 1980, to 56 persons per square mile in 2000, a 33% increase. Table 5 and Map 2 (Population Distribution – 2000 US Census Data) show total population and density in the year 2000 by U.S. Census Blocks. The majority of the population is concentrated in the southern part of the County, specifically in Census Tracts 403, 404, and 405. Table 5 shows that in 2000, 75% of County residents lived in those three Census Tracts, as compared to 72% in 1990, and only 66% in 1980. Map 2 and Map 4 (Population Distribution – Estimated 2009) provide a geographic analysis of population distribution and growth. Map 4 illustrates a more recent population distribution estimate based on the location of dwelling units and using an estimated average of 2.4 persons per dwelling unit.

Table 5 – Population Density by Census Tract (2000)

	401	402	403	404	405	Total
Square Miles	239	132	121	31	24	547
Population	3,415	4,213	8,258	7,112	7,498	30,496
Population/sq.mi.	14	32	68	229	312	56

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

POPULATION AND AGE CHARACTERISTICS

In general, Botetourt County's population is aging; a trend that is occurring nationwide as the baby boom generation ages and the average lifespan increases. The median age of Botetourt County residents was 42.7 in 2007 and the rate of population growth is higher in older age groups (over 45) than in younger groups (Table 6 and Table 7).

Population increases in Botetourt County between 1980 and 1990 were primarily due to growth in age groups over 18. However, between 1990 and 2000, a different growth pattern emerged as evidence by three significant demographic trends. First, the five and under age group kept up with overall population growth, unlike the previous decade. Second, growth rates for the 45-64 year olds and 65 years and older were quite high, 54% and over 30% respectively, while the number of young adults 18-24 years declined 9% and the 24-44 year old age group failed to keep up with the overall population growth. Table 8 provides a more detailed growth projection per age group.

An aging population may bring an increased interest in mixed use and walkable communities as people live and work longer, either by choice or necessity. Walkable communities with a mix of uses are highly desirable for aging adults, as they provide employment opportunities, needed services, and housing without dependence upon an automobile. Reduced mobility among older residents often increases the demand for transportation services and the potential for transit; making a mix of land use highly desirable, as traveling long distances becomes more difficult. The provision of adequate public transportation increases the ability for seniors to remain independent longer. An aging population may also increase the demand for certain public services such as facilities that provide health care services, senior programs and police, fire and EMS services, as well as educational facilities for lifelong learning. Demands for senior housing, nursing homes and age restricted communities may also increase.

Table 6 –Age Group Trends Botetourt County (1990 to 2008)

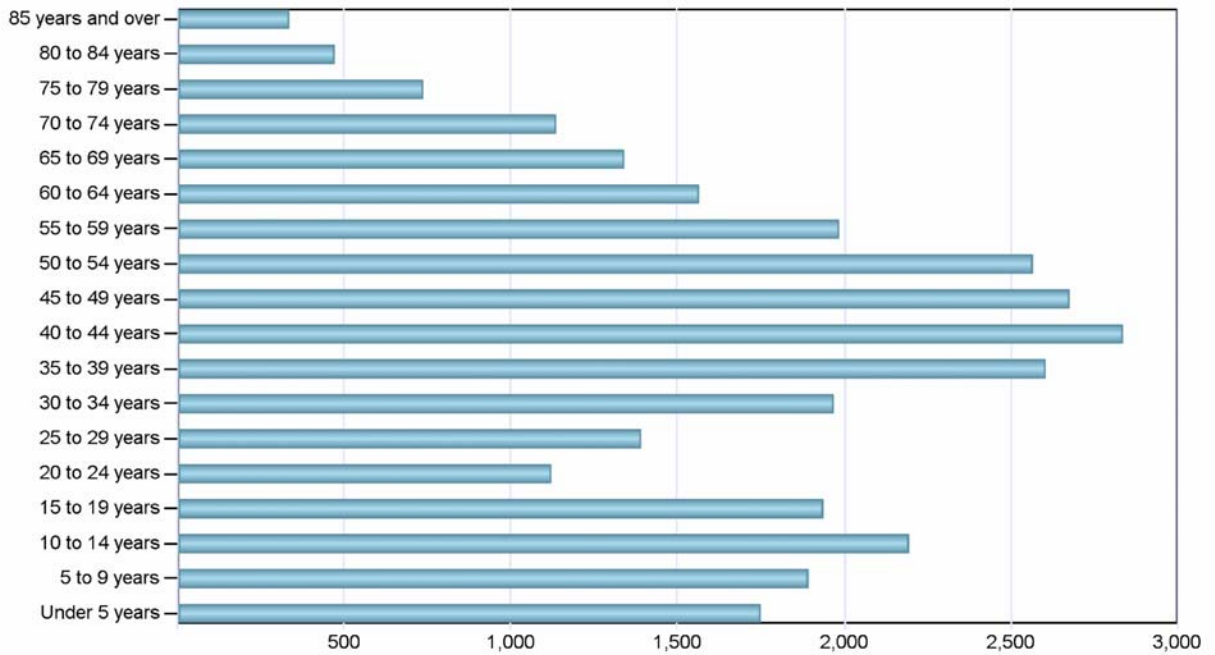
Population Age Groups (1990 - 2008)			
Age Group	1990	2000	2008
Total Population	24992	30496	31801
5 and under	1423	1749	1521
18 years and over	19184	23499	25217
65 years and over	3073	4012	4454

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 7 – Median Age, Peer County Comparison

Median Age of County Residents		
	2000	2007
Botetourt County	40.7	42.7
Roanoke MSA	39.2	40.7
Culpeper County	36.5	35.6
Rockbridge County	40.4	42.4

Figure 4 – 2000 Census Population Age Groups



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Botetourt Community Profile, 2000 Census

Figure 5 - Age Group Growth Trends for Botetourt County (1990 to 2008)

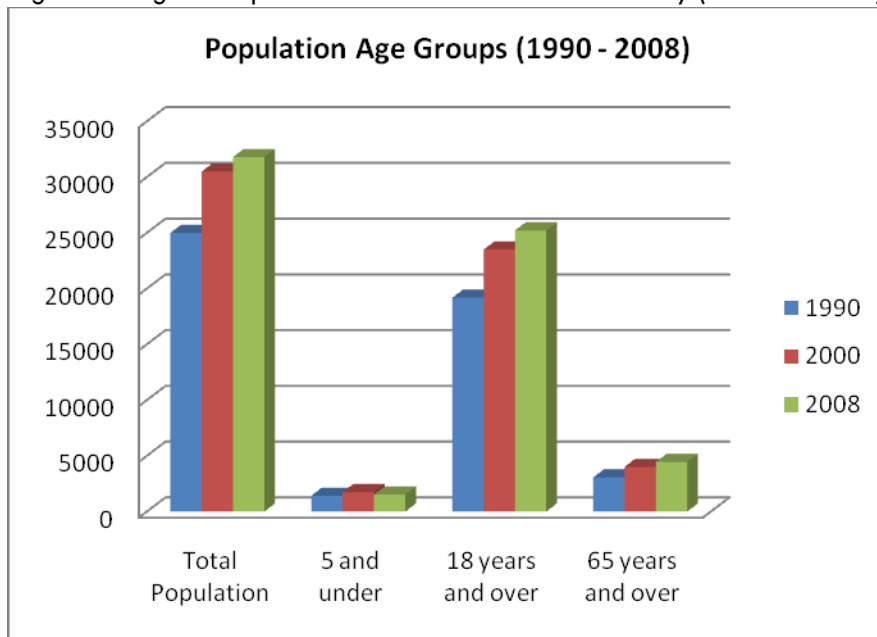


Table 8 – Population Projections by Age and Gender, Botetourt

	2010		2020		2030	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under 5 years	792	770	868	849	916	899
5 to 9 years	830	781	897	865	1,012	985
10 to 14 years	916	897	919	852	1,039	980
15 to 19 years	910	1,007	825	816	920	929
20 to 24 years	858	974	693	796	724	766
25 to 29 years	975	1,185	908	1,028	857	851
30 to 34 years	926	999	1,128	1,240	966	1,051
35 to 39 years	854	845	1,142	1,386	1,103	1,240
40 to 44 years	1,098	1,102	1,059	1,116	1,309	1,405
45 to 49 years	1,471	1,312	958	923	1,309	1,536
50 to 54 years	1,467	1,489	1,206	1,164	1,205	1,226
55 to 59 years	1,336	1,382	1,554	1,368	1,055	1,004
60 to 64 years	1,294	1,303	1,535	1,560	1,301	1,252
65 to 69 years	958	931	1,336	1,393	1,613	1,415
70 to 74 years	748	674	1,305	1,200	1,578	1,465
75 to 79 years	556	415	826	620	1,193	956
80 to 84 years	375	273	511	349	920	645
85 years and over	302	151	369	192	528	284
	16,666	16,490	18,039	17,717	19,548	18,889
	33,156		35,756		38,437	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Botetourt Community Profile

RACIAL AND CULTURAL COMPOSITION

The racial and cultural composition of the Botetourt County population has not changed greatly since 1990 see (Table 9). The County is mostly white, with other racial and cultural groups making up approximately 5% of the total population. As in other regions of Virginia, the percentages of Hispanic and Asian residents, though small in terms of total population, grew significantly, 69.2% and 49.5%, respectively, over the past ten years in the County. The African-American population increased only slightly by 3.7% during the same timeframe.

Table 9 – Racial and Cultural Composition Botetourt County (1990 – 2000)

Group	1990	2000	Percent Change
Total Population	24,992	30,496	22.0%
White	23,818	28,944	21.5%
White Hispanic	82	111	35.3%
White-Non-Hispanic	23,736	28,833	21.5%
Black	1,035	1,073	3.7%
American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut	22	66	200%
Asian or Pacific Islander	97	145	49.5%
Total Hispanic (any race)	107	181	69.2%
Other Race	20	59	195%
Two or More Races	N/A	209	N/A

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Changes in population characteristics and lifestyles have created greater diversity in household types throughout the United States over the past 20 years. There are more single heads of households, extended family households, and multigenerational households than in previous decades. Demand for a variety of housing types and sizes have grown in response to these demographic and social changes.

Table 10 – Household Type by Census Tract, Botetourt County (2000)

Household Type	401	402	403	404	405	Total	Percent
1 Person:	324	396	524	614	379	2,237	19%
Male Householder	166	191	264	296	103	1,020	9%
Female Householder	158	205	260	318	276	1,217	10%
2+ Persons:	1,052	1,318	2,596	2,108	2,351	9,425	81%
Married Couple Family	913	1,072	2,292	1,688	2,120	8,085	69%
Other Family	125	198	257	328	179	1,087	9%
Male HH-no wife	50	33	85	87	56	311	3%
Female HH-no husband.	75	165	172	241	123	776	7%
Non-Family Household:	14	48	47	92	52	253	2%
Male Householder	14	31	16	77	31	169	1%
Female Householder	0	17	31	15	21	84	<1%
Total	1,376	3,120	2,722	2,722	2,730	11,662	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Note: HH – householder

Table 11 – Botetourt County Household Type by Census Tract: Persons Under Age 18

Household Type	401	402	403	404	405	Total	Percent
Family Households:	381	496	972	900	1,060	3,809	94 %
Married-Couple Family	324	419	876	706	955	3,280	81 %
Other Family:	57	77	96	194	105	529	13 %
Male HH-no wife	31	15	44	55	30	175	4 %
Female HH-no husb.	26	62	52	139	75	354	9 %
Non-Family Household:	14	48	47	92	52	253	6 %
Total	395	544	1,019	992	1,112	4,062	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Note: HH - householder.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of County residents and homes (also known as dwelling units) are located in the southern end of the County. In 2007, owner occupied dwelling units accounted for 11,398, or 81.7 percent dwelling units. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 81.6 percent of the County's housing stock was also owner occupied. This indicates that housing characteristics remained consistent over time and the County has not yet experienced significant demand for alternative housing styles. The tables below summarize the distribution of new dwelling types and type of construction and structural characteristics of the County's housing stock.

According to the 2007 data, the median value of housing in Botetourt County was \$177,700; a significant increase over previous years. Increased housing values were likely based on recent trends that affected the County and most regions of the country: a rapid rise in housing values due the competitive housing market and availability of easy credit and a movement toward larger houses over the last two to three decades. These trends may not be sustained long term given recent changes in the national economy. Table 13, Table 14, and Table 15 compare the median value of housing for Botetourt County from 1980 to 2007 and to peer communities and the MSA.

Table 12 – Total Housing Units Botetourt County

Total Housing Units (1970-2007)		
Year	Units	Change
1970	6,133	-
1980	8,467	38.1%
1990	9,785	15.6%
2000	12,571	28.5%
2007	13,954	11.0%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 13 – Botetourt Housing Tenure and Characteristics, Trend

Housing Tenure and Characteristics (1980 to 2007)				
	1980	1990	2000	2007
Total Population	23,270	24,992	30,496	31,801
Housing Units	8,467	9,785	12,571	13,954
Persons Per Housing Unit	2.92	2.73	2.61	2.49
Occupied Units	7,972	9,148	11,700	12,772
Owner Occupied	6,605	7,842	10,268	11,398
Renter Occupied	1,367	1,306	1,432	1,374
Median Value	\$43,300	\$73,400	\$130,500	\$177,700
Median Rent	\$125	\$249	\$475	\$603
Vacant Housing	1,862	1,943	2,303	2,556
Vacancy Rate	22.0%	19.9%	18.3%	18.3%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 14 – Housing Unit Values, Peer Comparison

Distribution of Housing Unit Value, Peer Comparison								
	Botetourt	Percent of Total	Culpeper	Percent of Total	Rockbridge	Percent of Total	Roanoke MSA	Percent of Total
Owner-occupied units	11,398		11,419		6,885		90,612	
Less than \$50,000	574	5.0%	307	2.7%	641	9.3%	4,679	5.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	1,598	14.0%	253	2.2%	1,077	15.6%	16,661	18.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	2,291	20.1%	907	7.9%	1,239	18.0%	26,418	29.2%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2,532	22.2%	836	7.3%	977	14.2%	17,029	18.8%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	2,263	19.9%	2,578	22.6%	1,342	19.5%	14,299	15.8%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	1,860	16.3%	4,880	42.7%	923	13.4%	8,135	9.0%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	264	2.3%	1,520	13.3%	535	7.8%	2,948	3.3%
\$1,000,000 or more	16	0.1%	138	1.2%	151	2.2%	443	0.5%
Median (dollars)	177,700		331,900		173,900		145,300	

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 15 – 2007 Housing Tenure and Characteristics, Peer Comparison

2007 Housing Tenure and Characteristics, Peer County Comparison							
	Total population: Total	Persons Per Housing Units	Housing units: Total	Occupied	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant housing units: Total
Botetourt County, Virginia	31,801	2.48	13,954	12,772	11,398	1,374	1182
Culpeper County, Virginia	43,945	2.56	17,496	16,344	11,419	4,925	1152
Rockbridge County, Virginia	21,312	2.29	10,694	9,296	6885	2,411	1,398
Roanoke, VA MSA	294,422	2.31	138,148	123,888	90,612	33,276	14,260

The quality of housing has improved in Botetourt County over the past few decades as evidenced by a decline in the number of housing units that lack plumbing facilities as illustrated in Table 16. As indicated in Table 17, Botetourt County had more percentage of its housing lacking facilities than peer communities or the MSA.

Table 16 – Botetourt County Total Housing Units Lacking Plumbing

Historical Trend of Housing Units Lacking Plumbing	
2007	175
2000	248
1990	393

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 17 - Total Housing Units Lacking Plumbing, Peer Comparison

Housing Units Lacking Plumbing, Peer Comparison				
	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge	Roanoke MSA
Occupied housing units	12,772	16,344	9,296	123,888
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	175	0	112	512

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 18 –Housing Unit Density, Peer Comparison

Housing Units Per Density, Peer Comparison				
	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge	Roanoke MSA
Total housing units	13,954	17,496	10,694	138,148
1-unit, detached	11,722	12,833	8,576	99,625
1-unit, attached	325	1,306	4	3,230
2 units	124	429	185	4,262
3 or 4 units	71	331	141	2,761
5 to 9 units	172	509	266	4,753
10 to 19 units	96	1,180	116	10,376
20 or more units	38	208	34	4,824
Mobile home	1,406	700	1,372	8,244

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 19 – Housing Units Year Built, Peer Comparison

Distribution of Housing Units Per Year Built, Peer Comparison				
	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge	Roanoke MSA
Total housing units	13,954	17,496	10,694	138,148
Built 2005 or later	116	1,044	89	1,280
Built 2000 to 2004	1,189	2,811	313	7,732
Built 1990 to 1999	3,333	3,215	2,215	19,976
Built 1980 to 1989	2,010	3,224	1,647	19,337
Built 1970 to 1979	3,105	2,198	1,594	25,560
Built 1960 to 1969	1,256	1,423	930	17,856
Built 1950 to 1959	782	1,053	1,061	19,137
Built 1940 to 1949	692	638	482	8,566
Built 1939 or earlier	1,471	1,890	2,363	18,704

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

The cost of housing was one item of concern to residents who participated in the Citizen Survey conducted in 2008. However, at least in terms of rental housing, Botetourt County is generally more affordable than peer counties and the Roanoke MSA. Table 13 and Table 20 provide a comparison of home values and rents, respectively.

Table 20 – Median Rent, Peer County Comparison

2007 Median Rent, Peer Comparison				
	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge	Roanoke MSA
Median Rent	\$603	\$882	\$579	\$625

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 21 – Rent as Percentage of Income, Peer Comparison

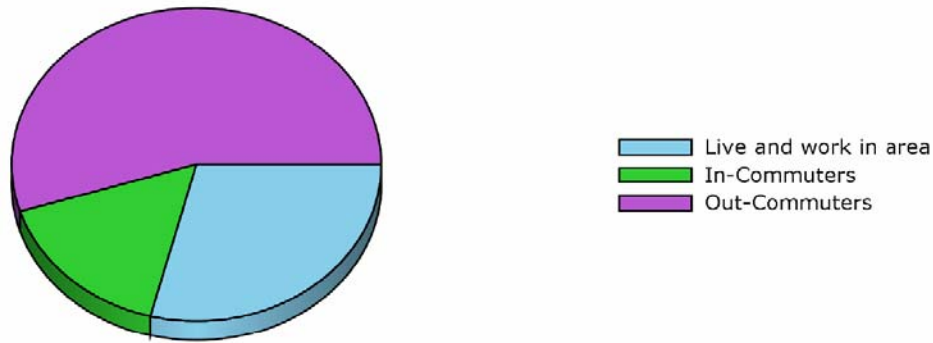
Gross Rent as Percentage of Income, Peer Comparison								
	Botetourt	Percent of Total	Culpeper	Percent of Total	Rockbridge	Percent of Total	Roanoke MSA	Percent of Total
Renter-occupied units	1,374		4,925		2,411		33,276	
Less than 15.0 percent	296	2.6%	317	2.8%	556	8.1%	5,041	5.6%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	228	2.0%	589	5.2%	172	2.5%	4,971	5.5%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	183	1.6%	421	3.7%	292	4.2%	4,791	5.3%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	79	0.7%	858	7.5%	77	1.1%	3,307	3.6%
30.0 to 34.9 percent	20	0.2%	370	3.2%	26	0.4%	2,316	2.6%
35.0 percent or more	370	3.2%	1,849	16.2%	995	14.5%	10,272	11.3%
Not computed	198	1.7%	521	4.6%	293	4.3%	2,578	2.8%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

REGIONAL MOBILITY

Botetourt County's transportation system is heavily auto-dependant with few options for public transit. Figure 6, Table 22, and Table 23 present commuting data for Botetourt County derived from Virginia Employment Commission information. The data highlights the net "journey to work" migration of daily commuters to and from the County. In 2007, 2,990 residents of other jurisdictions commuted into the County to their place of employment (also known as in-commuters). Conversely, 10,150 Botetourt residents commuted to other jurisdictions to their place of employment (out-commuters). Approximately 78% of these out-commuters traveled to Roanoke City or Roanoke County for employment. Thus, on an average, there is a net out-migration of 7,160 residents each day. This compares to a 1990 net out-migration of 6,757. The net outmigration from the County can be attributed to the increase in housing and population over the past two decades and the high number of employment opportunities found in the more urban portions of the Roanoke Valley. Most commuters coming into the County to work are from Roanoke City and Roanoke County.

Figure 6 – Botetourt County Commuting Patterns



Commuting Patterns	
People who live and work in the area	5,369
In-Commuters	2,990
Out-Commuters	10,150
Net In-Commuters (In-Commuters minus Out-Commuters)	-7,160

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Botetourt Community Profile

Table 22 – Top 10 Places Residents are Commuting TO and FROM

Commuting TO

Commuting FROM

Area	Workers
Roanoke city, VA	5,563
Roanoke County, VA	2,387
Salem city, VA	1,006
Alleghany County, VA	240
Rockbridge County, VA	149
Clifton Forge city, VA	105
Bedford County, VA	95
Montgomery County, VA	82
Covington city, VA	58
Bedford city, VA	50

Area	Workers
Roanoke County, VA	831
Roanoke city, VA	768
Bedford County, VA	487
Franklin County, VA	163
Salem city, VA	109
Rockbridge County, VA	90
Clifton Forge city, VA	61
Alleghany County, VA	59
Montgomery County, VA	55
Covington city, VA	39
Craig County, VA	39

Table 23 – Commuting to Work Comparison

Peer Comparisons of Commuting to Work				
	Roanoke MSA	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge
Workers 16 years and over	138,731	15,852	21,110	10,207
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	116,272	13,604	16,263	7,782
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	13,342	1,242	2,994	1,546
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1,299	11	146	24
Walked	2,183	221	334	310
Other means	1,033	88	284	92
Worked at home	4,602	686	1,089	453
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.5	25.7	37.4	22.9

INCOME

Income distribution is a helpful tool for evaluating the economic vitality of a community. Income data can be an indicator of the types of services and needs that County residents may require.

Table 24 shows that the median annual gross income of \$42,883 in Botetourt County was estimated to be higher than comparable median gross incomes the Roanoke MSA and peer communities. This may be attributed to the fact that the number of people in age groups that are typically at their peak earning power has increased in the County over the last decade and there has been an increase in the number of professional and/or higher-paying jobs in the County. By 2008, median annual gross income levels were about 30% higher than the Roanoke region, while median household income in Botetourt County, \$58,187, was approximately 26% higher than the regional median income.

Table 24 – Median Annual Gross Income Trend, Peer County Comparison

Median Annual Gross Income (1996 to 2008)								
	Botetourt	Percent Change	Culpeper	Percent Change	Rockbridge	Percent Change	Roanoke	Percent Change
1996	\$26,731		\$23,241		\$19,759		\$21,637	
1997	\$28,441	6.4%	\$24,380	4.9%	\$21,390	8.3%	\$22,823	5.5%
1998	\$29,423	3.5%	\$25,802	5.8%	\$22,462	5.0%	\$23,847	4.5%
1999	\$30,527	3.8%	\$27,099	5.0%	\$23,015	2.5%	\$24,492	2.7%
2000	\$32,141	5.3%	\$28,434	4.9%	\$24,477	6.4%	\$25,518	4.2%
2001	\$32,266	0.4%	\$29,469	3.6%	\$24,416	-0.2%	\$25,621	0.4%
2002	\$32,467	0.6%	\$30,466	3.4%	\$24,310	-0.4%	\$25,568	-0.2%
2003	\$33,189	2.2%	\$30,935	1.5%	\$24,219	-0.4%	\$25,444	-0.5%
2004	\$35,017	5.5%	\$33,241	7.5%	\$25,934	7.1%	\$26,433	3.9%
2005	\$38,440	9.8%	\$37,299	12.2%	\$29,251	12.8%	\$29,963	13.4%
2006	\$39,929	3.9%	\$38,158	2.3%	\$30,196	3.2%	\$30,999	3.5%
2007	\$41,345	3.5%	\$39,873	4.5%	\$31,430	4.1%	\$31,857	2.8%
2008	\$42,883	3.7%	\$41,741	4.7%	\$32,745	4.2%	\$32,832	3.1%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census

Table 25 – Income Distribution, Peer Comparison

Peer Comparison of Income (in 2007 inflation-adjusted collars)				
	Roanoke MSA	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge
Total households	123,888	12,772	16,344	9,296
Less than \$10,000	9,347	659	835	729
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7,189	481	903	576
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13,629	1,237	1,498	1,346
\$25,000 to \$34,999	16,955	1,278	1,478	1,299
\$35,000 to \$49,999	19,687	1,831	2,266	1,451
\$50,000 to \$74,999	24,829	2,722	3,606	1,889
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14,569	1,953	2,037	1,034
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11,472	1,610	2,406	568
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3,206	478	921	234
\$200,000 or more	3,005	523	394	170
Median household income (dollars)	46,103	58,187	59,138	41,298
Mean household income (dollars)	59,183	71,499	69,619	53,849
Families	79,873	9,675	12,091	6,439
Less than \$10,000	3,111	237	263	129
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2,081	249	667	249
\$15,000 to \$24,999	5,749	633	603	556
\$25,000 to \$34,999	9,488	815	935	1,052
\$35,000 to \$49,999	12,901	1,244	1,794	1,093
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18,833	2,373	2,723	1,532
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12,654	1,846	1,806	952
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9,720	1,393	2,154	511
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2,810	448	795	234
\$200,000 or more	2,526	437	351	131
Median family income (dollars)	57,517	68,085	65,671	54,052
Mean family income (dollars)	70,499	80,335	77,430	63,223
Per capita income (dollars)	25,347	28,811	25,516	23,256

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

EDUCATION

The general education statistics presented in Table 26 highlight significant overall improvements in educational attainment among Botetourt County residents. In 1970, only 38.3% of the residents 25 years or older had completed high school. By 2008, the percentage of graduates had increased to 88.3%. The percentage of college graduates increased from 2.9% to 23.2% between 1970 and 2008. The median school years completed increased from 10.4 years in 1970 to 12.2 in 1980. Statistics on median school years completed in 1990, 2000, 2008 were not available; however, the positive changes in the high school and college graduation rates and the change in employment types indicate that they continue to increase.

Table 26 – General Education Statistics 1970 – 2000

People 25 years old and older	1970	1980	1990	2000
Percent High School Graduates	38.3%	57.7%	72.9%	81.1%
Percent College Graduates	2.9%	10.9%	13.6%	19.5%
Median School Years Completed	10.4	12.2	NA	N/A

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. NA - Not available.

WORK FORCE

Employment levels in the County have fluctuated over the last 30 years. During the economic boom period of the late 1960s and early 1970s, unemployment was very low (1.6%). However, by 1982, unemployment had reached 8.4%. Between 1987 and 1992, unemployment in Botetourt County decreased to 3.5% in 1990, but peaked in 1992 at 5.8%. Since 1994, unemployment for the region has remained at or below 3% and has been consistently lower than comparable periods for Virginia and the whole country. Growth in employment kept up with population growth in the period between 1990 and 2000. In 2008, unemployment spiked to 3.8%, but still remained lower than surrounding localities (Table 27 and Table 28).

Table 27 – Labor Force, Region and Peer Counties

Peer Comparison of Labor Force				
	Roanoke MSA	Botetourt	Culpeper	Rockbridge
Population 16 years and over	238,367	26,042	34,185	17,336
In labor force	151,482	16,858	22,865	10,892
Civilian labor force	151,343	16,858	22,754	10,888
Employed	143,915	16,210	21,737	10,432
Unemployed	7,428	648	1,017	456
Armed Forces	139	0	111	4
Not in labor force	86,885	9,184	11,320	6,444
Civilian labor force	151,343	16,858	22,754	10,888
Unemployed	4.9%	3.8%	4.5%	4.2%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

Table 28 – Ratio of Employment to Population, Botetourt (1990 to 2008)

	1990	2000	2008
Population	24,992	30,496	31,801
Employment	12,895	16,488	16,210
Ratio	51.6%	54.1%	51.0%

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; American Community Survey, 2008

The County has seen significant changes in the occupations of its residents with a shift toward professional and service employment. In 1980, “technicians, sales, and administrative support” was the dominant occupation of County residents (27%), followed by “operators, fabricators, and laborers” (24%). In 1990, the major occupation of County residents was also “technicians, sales, and administrative support” (30%), followed by “managerial and professional” (22%), and “operators, fabricators, and laborers” (20%). By 2008, the “manufacturing” category had become the largest, reflecting a shift in the County’s economy towards this industry. At the same time, natural resource oriented jobs of “farming, forestry, and fishing” continued to suffer significant declines. Current occupations by age groups of Botetourt County residents during 2008 are shown in Table 29.

Table 29 – Age of Work Force by Industry – 2008

	14 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65+
Total, All Industries	343	514	614	2,051	2,665	2,691	1,725	471
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	4			19	16	24	11	11
Mining			5	17	24	35	23	6
Utilities								
Construction	7	50	62	220	243	220	125	30
Manufacturing	6	55	100	487	672	605	324	25
Wholesale Trade	6	20	51	194	242	232	125	55
Retail Trade	67	122	101	269	328	319	270	61
Transportation and Warehousing	5	15	28	124	167	219	121	28
Information			4	21	25	25	18	3
Finance and Insurance		3	7	29	35	34	24	7
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing		5	9	12	19	18	10	5
Professional and Technical Services	9	14	18	51	62	88	33	12
Management of Companies and Enterprises		3	6	30	44	45	34	4
Administrative and Waste Services	3	11	29	58	73	94	48	20
Educational Services		8	28	114	218	238	214	57
Health Care and Social Assistance	42	53	61	164	210	220	162	70
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	13	6	4	8	23	13	16	7
Accommodation and Food Services	163	123	68	134	127	106	56	33
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	11	9	16	32	34	51	37	15
Public Administration		12	16	65	102	105	72	20

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program, 2nd Quarter (April, May, June) 2008, all ownerships.

*Some data for age distribution related to employment type not provided.

AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITY

Table 30 traces changes in the characteristics of agriculture in Botetourt from 1982 to 2007. These statistics were obtained from the Census of Agriculture for the years 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2007 as published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. In general, these statistics show a diminishing role for agriculture as a part of the Botetourt County economy. Concerns about the potential conversion of farmland to other uses were raised at public workshops on the plan.

The number of farms in Botetourt County has been declining over the years (13.8 percent between 1982 and 1997), but has recently rebounded to 638 in 2007. While the number of farms has increased, the total acreage devoted to farming has declined, with a decrease of average farm size from 167 acres to 138 acres. This is likely due either to farm diversification, or medium sized farms being sold for other uses, leaving large and small farms intact. Although the number of farm acres has declined, the average value of farms has increased 75 percent from 1997 to 2007, reflecting an overall trend of increasing land values in the County as a whole; farm value may decline in the future given the recent collapse of the real estate market.

Table 30 – Agricultural Statistics

Agricultural Statistics (1982 to 2007)						
	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Number of Farms	586	532	512	505	610	638
Land in Farms (acres)	97,835	97,523	96,833	90,502	97,091	87,913
Average Farm Size (acres)	167	183	189	179	159	138
Estimated market value of land and buildings						
Average per farm dollars	\$179,118	\$202,592	\$259,284	\$332,893	\$496,590	\$584,921
Average per acre dollars	\$1,007	\$1,070	\$1,459	\$1,870	\$2,732	\$4,245
Total Cropland (acres)	46,236	40,465	41,373	40,662	44,393	27,662
Harvested Cropland (acres)	19,193	19,397	18,689	20,023	23,458	21,005
Market value of agricultural products sold\$1,000	\$10,580	\$11,934	\$12,549	\$10,773	\$9,982	\$13,548
Average per farm dollars	\$17,983	\$22,432	\$25,410	\$21,253	\$16,365	\$21,234
Crops, including nursery and greenhouse crops\$1,000	\$2,011	\$2,086	\$2,138	\$1,772	\$1,850	\$2,488
Livestock, poultry, and their products\$1,000	\$8,527	\$9,848	\$10,411	\$8,961	\$8,133	\$11,059

PLANNING FOR GROWTH AND CHANGE

Change is usually inevitable, but not entirely unpredictable. As the children of the baby boom generation age and graduate from the County school system, they often leave the County to pursue higher education, job opportunities, or a greater diversity of housing options. Those same boomer children may gravitate back to the area with young families because of the quality of life and superior education system. Seniors are increasingly choosing to “age in place” rather than migrate away from familiar communities for their retirement years. To remain attractive, competitive and stable, the County needs to anticipate changes that will affect the future and anticipate local, regional and national trends that will influence future land use patterns and drive public facility and utility needs. This comprehensive plan is designed to respond to the driving forces that will affect the County's future through policies that will maintain the county's quality of life and economic vitality.

3 LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework for the physical growth and development of the county over the life of the plan. It provides direction and guidance on a range of development, conservation and land use compatibility issues. It also describes the competing priorities that must be taken into account when planning for the future of the County.

The Land Use Element lays out policies to improve economic strength and security, enhance the built and natural environment, and build livable communities. Land use policies seek to accommodate growth and change by enhancing development in existing areas while preserving natural areas. The Land Use Element objectives and policies directly tie to the objectives and policies of all other plan elements. Transportation, economic development, cultural and environmental resources, and community facilities policies must be compatible with the overarching land use policies to ensure that the County develops as envisioned. The Land Use Element establishes policies for the physical development of appropriate uses at appropriate densities in appropriate locations and includes guidelines that describe the character and quality of future development and the preferred future development pattern.



BACKGROUND

This section of the Land Use Element provides background information, analysis, and discussion of challenges and opportunities.

Challenges

Botetourt County is fortunate to have plentiful natural resources that have fueled its agricultural economy and attracted residential growth. While the County has historically been a rural community with its roots in farming, it has become an increasingly attractive location for residential development over the last 10 to 20 years. Recent trends indicate that residential growth is shifting from large lot rural residential growth to low-to-medium density, more suburban style development and increasing pressure for the conversion of farmland to residential use.

The increase in residential development is anticipated to play a major role in the County's economy as there is an expectation that the demand for service-related businesses will increase to serve the growing residential population. Botetourt County recently initiated an *Economic Development Study* to evaluate future demands and provide direction for the County's economic development policies. The information gathered for that study will provide important input to help identify future land use needs and appropriate patterns of development throughout the County.

Transportation has long influenced the development pattern of Botetourt County. Current development patterns in Botetourt County are heavily influenced by existing transportation routes: U.S. Route 220, U.S. Route 11, U.S. Route 460 and I-81. The James River, railroads, and U.S. Route 220 were significant influences that shaped historic settlement patterns. The construction of I-81 provided access to new lands within the County, attracting development around the interchanges, specifically at Exit 150. During the Comprehensive Plan process, residents and stakeholders expressed their views that the County should develop plans to mitigate the rapid growth along U.S. Route 220; to preserve the rural character north of Daleville Town Center and promote more growth around the incorporated towns.

Land Use Analysis

In addition to public input, several factors must be evaluated to prepare appropriate Land Use goals, objectives and policies of this plan and a Future Land Use Map for Botetourt County. These include review of the existing land use pattern, current zoning, existing development densities, population distribution and recent development activity. Additionally, a capacity analysis based on population projections provides an indication of whether or not there is sufficient development capacity to accommodate projected growth.

Existing Land Use

Draft existing land use, zoning and future land use maps were reviewed by the general citizenry of Botetourt County at community meetings held on December 5, 2009 and January 5, 2010 (Map 5 - Existing Land Use, Map 6 - Zoning, and Map 9 – Future Land Use). The final existing land use map, a generalized zoning map, and a future land use map are incorporated into this plan.

The existing land use map indicates that current residential and commercial land uses are clustered in the southern end of the county, where sufficient infrastructure and facilities exist to support development of this intensity. The map (Map 5) depicts seven general land use categories:

Agricultural/Forest Land

This is the largest land use category in the County, comprising approximately 69.1 percent of the County's land area. Agricultural uses in Botetourt are generally located in the central and northern sections of the County. These areas are typically used as cropland and orchards, and raising and grazing of livestock. Buildings associated with these activities (single family dwellings, barns, grain storage, etc.) are considered agricultural uses for the purposes of this map. Forest land consists of privately, corporately owned, or National Forest. Forested areas are typically found in the more mountainous regions of the County, particularly in northern Botetourt and the area along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Federal Lands

This category consists of George Washington National Forest land that is publicly owned and managed by the Federal government. Public forest land comprises approximately 25.9 percent of the total land area in the County. Currently, the Jefferson and George Washington National Forests encompass approximately 90,000 acres of land in Botetourt County, some of which is along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Rural Residential

This category includes clusters of rural residential development in the County, which are typically single family housing. This type of development is located in very rural portions of the county, typically on land previously used for agricultural or forestry. Most of these homes have no public water and sewer service.

Low Density Residential

This category generally represents areas of single family homes in large lot suburban patterns of development. Low-density residential land uses are concentrated in the southern portion of the County. These areas may be served by public water and sewer, but are normally served by individual wells or private water systems and septic systems.

Medium Density Residential

This residential category comprises a small portion of the County's total land area. Medium density areas include all apartment and townhouse developments and small lot single family developments. All medium density residential areas are served by public or private water and public sewer. Most of these medium density residential land uses are found in southern Botetourt; however, this land use category also exists within the incorporated towns and unincorporated communities in other areas of the County, such as Iron Gate, Glen Wilton, and Eagle Rock.

Commercial/Office

The commercial/office land use category consists of areas where the wholesale and retail sale of goods and services is the primary activity. Commercial and office development in the County has historically occurred at Interstate 81 interchanges and along main transportation corridors where public water and sewer are available in proximity to existing and anticipated residential development.

Industrial

The industrial land use category indicates those areas where manufacturing is the primary activity. This includes quarrying, industrial parks, and for the purpose of this plan, sanitary landfilling. The major areas of industrial activity in Botetourt County are the EastPark Commerce Center, the Jack C. Smith Industrial Park, the Roanoke Cement Company, the Botetourt Center at Greenfield and Vista Park, all of which are located in the southern region of the County. Other smaller industrial uses and areas can be found on scattered sites and along highway corridors such as U.S. Route 11 and U.S. Route 220 North.

