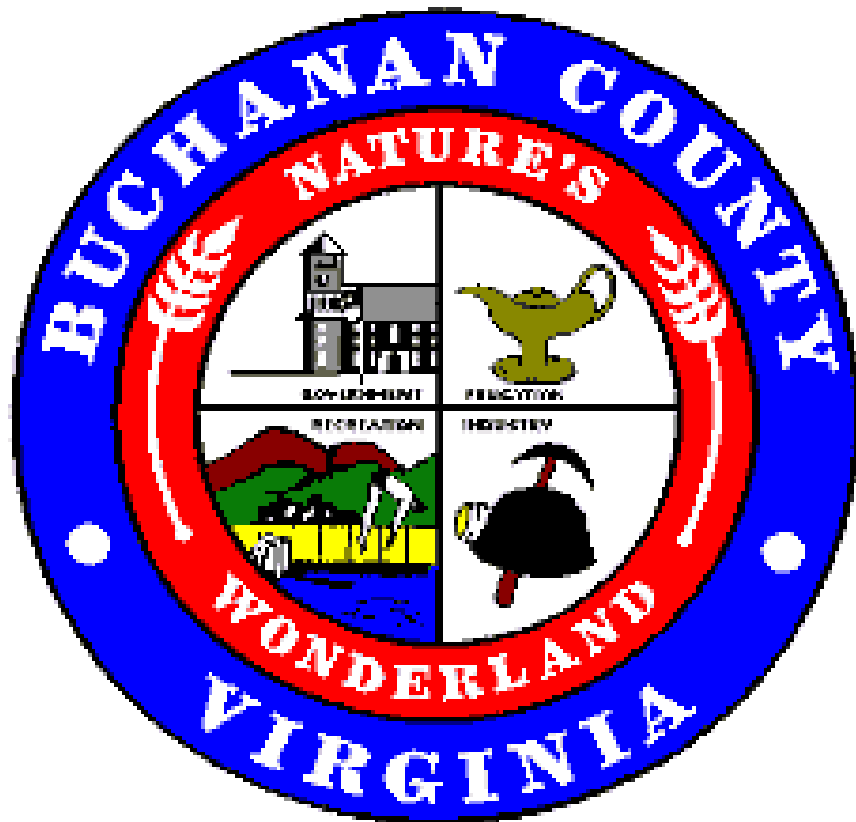


**BUCHANAN COUNTY  
2017  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN**



The Code of Virginia section 15.1- 446.1 grants the county planning commission in Buchanan County the authority to undertake a planning program which includes the preparation of a county comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan is an important step in the growth and development of a county. Implementation of a long range plan aids in the practice of good public management and provides a framework for orderly development in terms of land use and facilities.

The officials of Buchanan County intend that the comprehensive plan serve as a broad policy guide to assist in the decisions necessary for future development and redevelopment in Buchanan County. The comprehensive plan provides an analysis of present conditions and trends in areas such as population and the local economy. Plans for capital improvements, community facilities, and future land use can be based on this analysis. By nature, the comprehensive plan is a general document, and to be useful in the long range management of the county it should be updated and revised as changing conditions warrant. This revision is in accordance with the Code of Virginia's requirements that the comprehensive plan be updated as needed.

Because county planning requires specialized technical skill and experience, the government of Buchanan County, Virginia enlisted the help of Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission for the preparation of this document. Every effort was made to use the most current data available.

## **LOCATION AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Buchanan County lies in the Appalachian Plateau Province of the Appalachian Highlands, between the Appalachian Valley on the southeast and the Cumberland and Allegheny Mountains on the northwest. The county contains 508 square miles, and covers some of the richest coalfields in the United States.

The county seat of Buchanan County is Grundy, Virginia. Grundy functions as the trade center for Buchanan County as well as portions of neighboring counties in Kentucky and Virginia. Buchanan County joins with Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell Counties to form the Cumberland Plateau Planning District. Buchanan County comprises 27.4 percent of the district's total land.

Buchanan County is bordered in the west by Dickenson County, Virginia; in the south by Russell and Tazewell Counties, Virginia; in the north by Pike County, Kentucky, and in the northeast by McDowell and Mingo Counties, West Virginia. Major access to Buchanan County from an east-west direction is Virginia Highway 83. Major access from a north-south direction is provided by U.S. Highway 460. U.S. Highway 460 intersects Interstate 77, which links the south central coastal states to the midwestern United States and intersects with Interstate 81. Interstate 81 is the major transportation route linking the northeast and southeast United States.

Southwest Virginia began to be settled over 200 years ago. Farmers migrated across the Appalachian Valley from the Atlantic Coast. The mountainous terrain of Buchanan County, characteristic of that found in the Appalachian Plateau, forced settlers to locate along the stream beds, filling the narrow valley floors.

Most of the early development in Buchanan County occurred in the Grundy area, spreading from the center of town along the Levisa Fork and Slate Creek. The tributaries to these streams have also been heavily developed, including Garden Creek, Dry Fork, Poplar

Creek, Trace Fork, Bull Creek, Looney's Creek and Roddick Creek. The southeastern section of the county (around Whitewood) and the southwestern section (around Council) are the less populated areas of the county, mainly because they lack good access.

The people of the county lived by tilling the soil for food and by hunting and fishing. In the 1880's, activity in the lumber industry began but it was difficult to deliver the timber to markets. By the early 1900's, lumber had grown to be the main industry in the county and continued to be until the late 1920's when most of the marketable timber had been cut.

In 1931 the Norfolk and Western Railway Company completed construction of the first standard gauge railroad into Buchanan County. This was a very significant event in the history of Buchanan County, because coal could be mined profitably for the first time. From then on the coal industry grew, making Buchanan County the number one coal producing county in the state of Virginia.

The growth of the coal industry brought many families into Buchanan County to live and work. The population of the county nearly doubled between 1930 and 1940. Growth slowed during the next twenty years, and declined considerably during the sixties, as jobs within the mining industry were eliminated. The county is dependent on coal for its livelihood but reliance on the "boom and bust" coal industry poses certain problems. High unemployment and population declines are common. Increased use of automation requires fewer workers for coal production, and many people have been forced to seek employment in other regions.

### TOPOGRAPHY

In this mountainous region, flat lands even a few acres in extent are at a premium, and valley slopes are very steep. The surface is deeply and maturely dissected by streams, with the water courses being only a few miles apart but separated by ridges that rise 500 to 1,000 feet above them. Many of the valleys are winding, so that water in the streams travels long distances

between points not far apart. The valleys are also deep and V-shaped, with flat bottom lands along the rivers and creeks. The ridges are flat-topped, presenting a nearly even skyline, and the heights of neighboring ridges are approximately the same in most areas. Some of the principal ridges, mostly those in the southern portion of the county, are wide enough on the top to support a road and houses.

The highest point in the county is found on Big A Mountain, an elevation of 3,735 feet. The lowest point, 845 feet above sea level, is found on the Levisa Fork at the Kentucky border. The maximum relief of the county is 2,890 feet.

### CLIMATE

Buchanan County has a continental climate, with temperatures averaging highs of 42 degrees in January and 83 degrees in July. Despite the variation in temperature, the climate is mild, with the average annual temperature being 54 degrees. Precipitation averages 45 inches annually.

Buchanan County is at a lower elevation than many other counties in southwestern Virginia, and therefore has a slightly longer growing season.

### SOILS

Soil properties exert a strong influence on the manner in which land is used. Soils are an irreplaceable resource and mounting pressures continue to make soil more valuable. The Cooperative Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University has done some on-site survey work in Buchanan County in order to compile general information on the county's soils, since soil capabilities influence development. Careful surveys should be made prior to construction in order to determine the suitability of each individual site for such things as foundation and septic tank support.

The flatter ridge tops offer soils of sufficient thickness on developable terrain. On these

uplands, where soils are found in place from residual rock materials, the only two series suitable for development are the Hartsells and Enders. The Hartsells is developed in sandstone and the Enders in micaceous shale. Both the soils average less than three feet to bedrock, but both are sometimes found to range up to five and one-half feet in depth. The Coeburn, which is associated with the Enders, is also present on the ridge tops but its depth is insufficient for development.

Areas that are located at the mouths of some mountain hollows may support very limited development. Most of the soils in this area are colluvial, they were formed with materials accumulated from the adjacent higher upland slopes. The two most prevalent soils in these colluvial lands, the Leadville and the Jefferson, were formed from areas of Coeburn soils. These soils are usually thicker than the upland soils, but they are subject to considerable seepage from high lying areas.

On the terrace lands, which are those benchlike areas bordering, but higher than stream bottoms, the chief soils are the Holston and the Monongahela. These soils were deposited by streams at a time when their channels were higher. Poor drainage makes most of this area unsuitable for development. Areas along the stream beds contain alluvial soils washed away from areas underlain by sandstone and shales. These soils are very sandy and gravelly, and the depth to water level of these soils is usually 0 to 20 inches during wet periods.

### ROCK CLASSIFICATIONS

There are six classifications of rocks which have been identified in the Buchanan County study area. Four of these - the Wise Formation, the Gladeville Sandstone, the Norton Formation and the Lee Formation - belong to the Pennsylvanian series, in which all of the commercially important coal beds of the area are located. Each of these rock classifications consist of sandstone, shale, coal, and thin beds of clay.

The Wise Formation averages about 1,080 feet thick in Buchanan County. Except near

Kentucky, the Wise Formation is confined to the upper parts of ridges. It occupies a large irregular area in the northern part of Buchanan County where it is interspersed with bands of the Norton Formation along the streams and hilltops. The major coal beds found in the Wise Formation are Eagle, Clintwood, Campbell Creek, Blair and Cedar Grove.

The Gladeville sandstone lies just below the Wise Formation and just above the Norton Formation. It is located throughout the coal fields, but is less conspicuous in outcrop in Buchanan County than in other areas. The Gladville is commonly 50 to 100 feet thick, is brownish-red, and contains considerable mica and other minerals.

The Norton Formation includes all the strata, with several minable coal beds. It lies between the Gladeville sandstone and the Lee formation. The thickness of the Norton Formation ranges from 825 feet along the southeast slope of Pine Mountain to about 1,300 feet along the southeast border of the county on Big A Mountain. The Norton Formation thins in the northern part of the county where it intersperses with the Wise Formation.

The Norton Formation contains several of the important coal beds of the county, including Upper Banner, Lower Banner, Splash Dam, Hagy, Big Fork, Kennedy, Raven, Jawbone and Tiller.

The Lee Formation is the lowest formation in the Pennsylvanian series. Only small parts of the Lee Formation are exposed in Buchanan County. These exposures are present in the southeast portion of the county near Big A Mountain along Indian Creek and its tributaries, and near the Breaks in the extreme northwest portion of the county. The exposures are in areas where faulting and folding have occurred. Along the southern border of the county, the Lee Formation has the same characteristics as the Norton and Wise Formations. The Lee here is from 1,500 to 1,600 feet thick. On Pine Mountain along the northwest border, the Lee consists of more sandstone than in the south. The sandstone here contains white quartz pebbles and is more silicious than the Lee sandstones in the southern portion of the county. In the north, the Lee

Formation is only 300 feet thick, considerably thinner than in the south. The Lee Formation in the south contains some of the Pocahontas coal beds, but the northern Lee contains very little coal.

Rocks from the Silurian System and the Mississippian series of the Carboniferous System are also found in Buchanan County. These rocks, however, are only found in small quantities around Big A Mountain in the southern portion of the county. The Clinch sandstone is a massive white sandstone composed chiefly of quartz grains so firmly cemented that the rock forms cliffs and has notable effects on the topography. It outcrops in two strips on Big A Mountain - one near the top of the northwestern knob and the other along the northwestern border. The Pennington shale, the only Mississippian Formation exposed in the county, outcrops on the northwestern slopes of Big A Mountain. The rocks are overturned so that the oldest beds appear near the top of the mountain.

### FAULTS

The only fault of any importance to development in Buchanan County is the Russell Fork fault, which has caused disturbances in the areas surrounding it. The largest disturbed zone was caused by shearing along one or more vertical faults. This area extends for eight miles along Russell Fork, from its head to about halfway between Murphy and Indian. Evidence of crumbling exists in this area, especially around Indian. Rock beds within parts of the zone are dragged and crumpled, producing irregular dips. These dips have been found in several places along Russell Fork and short distances back from the stream, going from Murphy to a point about a mile northwest. Heavy construction should not take place along the Russell Fork fault.

There are two other faults in Buchanan County, one along Pine Mountain and the other along Big A Mountain. Neither of these faults should have any significant effect on development in Buchanan County.



## GROUND AND SURFACE WATER

Water is a very important natural resource, necessary to maintain human life itself. Additionally, a safe, clean and dependable water supply is required for many commercial, industrial, and recreational purposes. The availability and quality of water is therefore an important consideration in assessing the development potential of Buchanan County.

Water resources exist as surface water and also as ground water. Streams, rivers and lakes comprise our surface water, since they occur on the surface of the earth. Ground water is stored in open spaces underneath the surface of the earth. Coal mining operations have damaged the supply of ground water in Buchanan County. Underground aquifers have been depleted and only a small amount of groundwater is available.

Traditionally, wells provided most of the water for Buchanan County, but many of these wells have gone dry. Surface water can be found in the three major rivers and many smaller streams, but these rivers cannot supply the daily demand for water without impoundment. This water shortage has necessitated that the county receive water from neighboring counties. Dickenson County suffers from similar problems of groundwater depletion, but contains a reservoir. The John Flannagan Reservoir in neighboring Dickenson County provides Buchanan County with much of its water.

## DRAINAGE

All of the drainage in Buchanan County is tributary to the Big Sandy River through its three main branches - Levisa Fork, Russell Fork and Tug Fork. Numerous creeks and branches ramify practically all parts of the county, creating a good drainage system for most of the county, as well as beautiful scenery and a great deal of recreational potential. In 1971 the Army Corps of

Engineers published a report on the flooding situation along a 14.7 mile segment of the Levisa Fork and portions of its tributaries. This is the only known published study of flooding conditions in Buchanan County.

Grundy suffers the majority of the flood damages that occur along the Levisa. The valley in the Grundy area is narrow and major floods overflow the floodplain. Most of the flood damage occurs to stock stored in the basements of business establishments. Residences situated along the lower portion of Slate Creek also suffer heavy damages. The Levisa is tightly flanked in many areas by highways, railroads, and streets. These transportation arteries are prone to the ravages of high stream flow.

The topography of the area has dictated that most of the development in Buchanan County take place in the bottom lands that are subjected to frequent flooding. Several structures in the Grundy, Vansant, Tookland and Oakwood areas are located in the floodplain. Vansant, Garden, Whitewood and D.A. Justus Elementary schools have been flooded. Several industries are also located in the floodplain.

This level of development in the floodplain has further aggravated the flooding problem. The commercial and residential buildings, along with the highway and roadway embankments which are adjacent to the streams, encroach upon the stream channels and raise flood heights for some distance upstream from these obstructions. Highway and railway bridges across the streams restrict flood flows and result in higher crests upstream from their location. All of these obstructions, coupled with the steep slopes of the stream channels, produce hazardous water velocities during severe storms.

The Army Corps of Engineers report computed the magnitude of the Intermediate Regional Flood and the Standard Project Flood. The Intermediate Regional Flood ( 100 year-flood ) is a flood having an average frequency of occurrence in the order of once in 100 years, although the flood could occur in any year. It is based on the statistical analyses of

rainfall and runoff characteristics in the general region of the watershed. The Standard Project Flood is the largest flood that may be expected from the most severe combination of meteorological and hydrological conditions that is considered reasonably characteristic of the region involved.

One of the greatest known floods on the Levisa Fork during the past 100 years occurred in April 1977. This flood also caused major damage, and several homes and some businesses were washed away. The flood was nearly equal in magnitude to a statistical 100 year flood. Prior to the April 1977 flood, the January 1957 flood caused a great deal of damage. During a Standard Project Flood, velocities would be extremely dangerous to life and property. According to reports by the Army Corps of Engineers, a Standard Project Flood, with its great velocity and depth (20 to 25 feet higher than the 1957 flood), would be catastrophic to the areas along the Levisa and its tributaries.

Possible measures to alleviate the flooding problem include: stream clearance and channel improvements for those areas where flooding is greatest; protection of the watershed areas of streams to see that runoff is properly controlled; construction of flood protection works; and regulatory measures to control future use of the flood plains.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

The chief mineral resource in Buchanan County is coal. The southwestern Virginia coalfields are part of a larger central Appalachian coal region which also includes parts of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Buchanan County is the leading coal producer in the state, in 2013 Buchanan County produced over 7 million tons of coal.

One measure of coal's significance is the value of its production. The dramatic increases in coal's price in 1974 caused coal's value to more than double, but as prices declined throughout the decade of the eighties, so did the value of production. This reduction in price has forced

coal companies to increase productivity (tonnage mined per miner) in order to be profitable.

According to a 1987 report published by the department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, coal reserves can last up to 78 more years in Buchanan County at current production levels.

These figures, however, do not take into account many variables such as less profitable operations, a volatile market, and overseas competition. Some of the most profitable mines may be nearing depletion. Mines in the western United States and in other countries have large, easy to reach seams with high quality coal. With this type of competition, the coal market is highly unpredictable. Production in Virginia has dropped from 46 million tons in 1988 to 42 million tons in 1991, and that trend has continued through 2013.

In addition to being the leading producer of coal in the state, Buchanan County is also one of the major producers of natural gas. In Virginia in 1989, natural gas provided about 10 percent of the primary energy and 14 percent of the end-use energy. Because of concerns about oil imports and the air emissions from coal burning, many look to natural gas as an increasing source of energy for Virginia and the nation. Natural gas has been produced from the natural gas fields in southwestern Virginia since the 1930's. Production as a whole doubled in the mid-to-late eighties, and the development of coalbed methane improved the prospects for a continued increase in natural gas production through the 2010's.

It is important to distinguish between reserves and resources. Reserves include those known deposits that are recoverable at today's prices using today's technologies. In addition to reserves, resources also include unknown deposits, as well as those that are known but cannot be developed profitably at today's prices. According to recent government estimates, the nation's natural gas reserve and resource base is weak. This weakness could be a strength for the gas producing counties of southwestern Virginia.

Coalbed methane found in the coal seams offers an opportunity for production of unconventional gas. A long-time hazard of underground mining, this gas has had to be vented from mines to insure safe mining conditions. After successful commercial development in Alabama and New Mexico, this methane is now seen as a valuable resource. The greatest potential coalbed methane resources are in the coal seams of Buchanan and Dickenson Counties.

Coal Production (Tons)

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	PDC Total
1990	20,938,340	6,686,984	926,249	3,716,869	32,268,442
1991	17,479,189	5,857,352	1,114,282	3,921,886	28,372,709
1992	17,962,757	6,360,976	1,094,510	3,534,018	28,952,261
1993	13,958,036	5,516,515	1,552,558	2,862,372	23,889,481
1994	13,594,006	4,303,346	1,467,694	2,481,842	21,846,888
1995	13,791,629	2,704,253	1,728,600	2,156,220	20,380,702
1996	14,783,931	2,988,258	1,345,502	1,839,618	20,957,309
1997	14,224,401	3,699,032	696,401	1,699,083	20,318,917
1998	12,467,167	4,021,151	705,429	1,806,652	19,000,399
1999	10,655,918	4,168,329	394,430	2,069,730	17,288,407
2000	11,154,684	4,259,431	156,525	1,469,825	17,040,465
2001	11,589,519	3,230,718	665,065	1,626,539	17,111,841
2002	10,048,222	2,779,463	556,557	1,435,455	14,819,697
2003	10,812,659	2,735,067	555,534	1,293,990	15,397,250
2004	10,347,697	2,564,014	489,984	1,335,068	14,736,763
2005	7,756,474	2,566,576	952,366	1,237,844	12,513,260
2006	10,180,930	2,582,717	980,663	1,349,704	15,094,014
2007	7,777,265	2,139,842	1,072,568	1,165,052	12,154,727
2008	8,438,897	2,070,185	1,133,535	744,959	12,387,576
2009	6,799,719	1,384,909	1,031,003	836,322	10,051,953
2010	8,744,056	1,058,819	726,205	943,236	11,472,316
2011	9,315,749	1,331,667	881,376	1,118,585	12,647,377
2012	7,183,857	3,412,332	725,511	1,410,408	12,732,108
2013	7,695,116	3,542,761	397,957	1,248,095	12,883,929

Source: Department of Mines Minerals and Energy

## POPULATION

### PAST GROWTH

One of the most effective ways to track population growth in this county is to trace the population growth of Buchanan County from 1900 when there were only 9,692 persons living in the county to the most recent census total of 24,098. Population growth in the county began as the lumber and coal industries grew. As these industries grew many new inhabitants migrated to the county. By 1920 the county's population stood at 15,441 an increase of 24.94 percent from the 1910 count of 12,334. The county continued to grow as the population increased 8.62 percent during the 1920's to 16,740 in 1930. Between 1930 and 1940 the population showed its largest increase by reaching 31,477 persons, a rise of over 88 percent. An increase of 13.56 percent during the 1940's brought the county's population up to 35,748 in 1950.

Growth slowed considerably during the next twenty years. After reaching a high in 1960 of 36,724 persons, the following years saw the county's population decreased rapidly as the introduction of machines into the coal industry eliminated many jobs. This decrease totalled 12.67 percent during the 1960's. The years between 1970 and 1980 saw another increase in population, 18.46 percent, as the mining industry expanded. This increase led the county to its peak number of inhabitants, but a population drop of 17.53 percent by 1990 is proof that the mining boom was short lived. Unfortunately, these trends have continued in the current direction, with the 2000 census revealing a population decrease of over 13% with 26,978 county residents and further decline in the most recent census with a total of 24,096 county residents.

The population of Grundy reached 2,054 persons in 1970, but had dropped to 1,699 persons in 1980, then to 1,305 persons in 1990, then to 1,105 in 2000, and then to 1,021 residents in the most recent census.

Table 6 BUCHANAN COUNTY GROWTH TRENDS: 1900-1990

Year	Population	% Changes
1900	9,692	
		+27.25% (1900-1910)
1910	12,334	
		+24.94% (1910-1920)
1920	15,441	
		+ 8.62% (1920-1930)
1930	16,740	
		+88.03% (1930-1940)
1940	31,477	
		+ 13.56% (1940-1950)
1950	35,748	
		+2.73% (1950-1960)
1960	36,724	
		-12.67% (1960-1970)
1970	32,071	
		+ 18.45% (1970-1980)
1980	37,989	

		-17.52%	(1980-1990)
1990	31,333		
		-13.90%	(1900-2000)
2000	26,978		
		-10.68%	(2000-2010)
2010	24,098		

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

### DENSITY

Approximately 96 percent of Buchanan County's population reside in the county, while 4 percent reside in the town of Grundy. According to the 2010 Census of Population, Buchanan County has a density of 62.2 people per square mile. The density for the town of Grundy is much greater, 259 people per square mile. In 1980, 7.3 percent of the county's population was considered urban. By 1990, population density in the Town of Grundy had dropped below the threshold level and 100 percent of Buchanan County's population is currently considered to be rural.

The distribution pattern of Buchanan County's population is linear, with development following the major streams, ridgetops and highways. This linear growth is likely to continue, given the limited amount of developable land.



## RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Buchanan County has a primarily white population with minority groups in 2010 totaling approximately 664 persons, less than one percent of the population.

Selected Racial Data By Population and Percentage

Jurisdiction	Population	White	Percent	Black or African American	Percent	Asian	Percent	Hispanic Latino	Percent
Buchanan County	24,098	23,271	96.6%	616	2.6%	53	0.2%	95	0.4%
Dickenson County	15,903	15,712	98.8%	51	0.3%	18	0.1%	86	0.5%
Russell County	28,897	28,270	97.8%	233	0.8%	53	0.2%	275	1.0%
Tazewell County	45,078	42,868	95.1%	1,333	3.0%	289	0.6%	296	0.7%
CPPDC	113,976	109,689	96.2%	2,222	2.0%	409	0.4%	752	0.7%
Virginia	8,001,024	5,486,852	68.6%	1,551,399	19.4%	439,890	5.5%	631,825	7.9%

Source : U.S. Census Bureau 2010

Selected Racial Data Estimates By Population and Percentage

Jurisdiction	Population	White	Percent	Black or African American	Percent	Asian	Percent	Hispanic Latino	Percent
Buchanan County	23,683	22,760	96.1%	549	2.3%	215	0.9%	106	0.5%
Dickenson County	15,612	15,376	98.5%	118	0.8%	13	0.1%	114	0.7%
Russell County	28,444	27,615	97.1%	384	1.4%	64	0.2%	126	0.4%
Tazewell County	44,331	42,070	94.9%	1,221	2.8%	163	0.4%	354	0.8%
CPPDC	112,070	107,821	96.2%	2,272	2.0%	455	0.4%	700	0.6%
Virginia	8,185,431	5,668,363	69.3%	1,577,943	19.3%	475,632	5.8%	687,265	8.4%

Source : U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2010-2014

## AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The age of a population can be used as a rough indicator of the level and type services which are needed and desired in an area. Each age group generally possesses certain needs and desires which are quite different from those of the other age groups. The obvious trend is that the population of Buchanan County is growing older. A steady decrease in the number of young people and a steady increase in the number of elderly people causes the median age of the population to increase.

The median age of all the counties within the Cumberland Plateau Planning District is increasing, and currently Buchanan County's median age is 43.8 years old, is middle aged. This median age is expected to increase, due to several factors such as a lack of job opportunities for young adults and the resulting outward migration as graduates leave and do not return. Also contributing to the aging population is the influence of the nationwide group known as Babyboomers. As this segment of the nation's population grows old, no county will be left unaffected and many adjustments will need to be made to support their needs.

Table 8 MEDIAN AGES: 1990- 2010

	1990	2000	2010
Buchanan	32.2	38.8	43.8
Dickenson	34.0	39.7	43
Russell	34.6	38.7	43
Tazewell	35.4	40.7	43.2
CPPD	34.1	39.5	43.2
Virginia	32.6	35.7	37.5

Source: 1990, 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census of Population.

## ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

The basic employment of Buchanan County is the coal mining industry. Basic employment is defined as the employment in industries which sell most of their goods and services outside of the area. Emphasis is always placed on the basic employment sector because it is the primary source of area growth. An economy based on a single industry, such as coal, creates problems which are difficult to correct. Dependence on one basic industry makes the economy of an area highly susceptible to changes in that industry. Industries which sell most of their goods to outside areas depend on national or regional demand rather than on local demand.

The national demand for coal during the 1960's decreased, as oil and natural gas moved into coal's major markets as home and industrial heating fuel. To further impact employment in the coal mining industry, greater mechanization allowed for higher production rates with fewer people. The coal boom of the 1970's brought a short-lived boost to the economy of the area. In the later part of the 1970's, environmental controls were tightened and over time impacted several of the smaller marginally profitable companies. These companies were able to withstand this burden until the market price of coal began to decline in the early 1980's. The coal mining industry again made a large come back in the early 1990's leading to a drastic decrease in unemployment and a host of economic opportunities throughout the county. However, coal again precipitously declined in the early 2000s leading to a major economic downturn county wide.

During this time economic decline became apparent by the high rates of unemployment and the low levels of family income for Buchanan County.

Recent efforts to diversify the economy include the following additions to Buchanan County's employment base: Keen Mountain Correctional Center; Heritage Hall XIV, which is an elderly care center; Application School of Law; and the Appalachian school of Pharmacy.

## FORECASTS

According to Virginia Employment Commission reports, 2020 Buchanan County population projections are forecasted to continue dropping slightly over the next ten years leveling off at 2030 and even increase by 2040.

Population decline can cause a county's tax revenues to decrease, making it more difficult and expensive to deliver services to the remaining residents. Additional jobs could be lost, as businesses leave the area due to lack of demand for the goods they provide. Declining enrollment in local schools shifts more financial responsibility to the county, since state funding is based on the number of students. If population loss continues, certain changes will be necessary to ensure the most efficient use of limited funds. To minimize the effects of population loss, consolidation of certain schools may be required, and businesses should be recruited that produce products with a national or international market.

Many tools are available that will enable Buchanan County officials to provide services efficiently and maintain an adequate tax base. The Geographic Information System (GIS) currently being developed by Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission can greatly improve the county's ability to collect property taxes and keep up-to-date records on parcels within the county. GIS technology can also be used to locate areas most in need of specific services. Technology such as this will greatly aid in planning for the 21st century.

### COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	2010	2020	2030	2040
VA EC	24,098	23,383	23,263	23,298

Population Projections By Gender & Age

Age	Buchanan County									Dickenson County								
	2020			2030			2040			2020			2030			2040		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Under 5 years	895	475	420	830	440	390	801	425	376	732	373	359	673	343	330	659	341	328
5 to 9 years	1,016	509	507	966	484	482	908	455	453	763	391	372	728	373	355	700	358	342
10 to 14 years	1,304	669	635	1,123	576	547	1,092	560	532	1,003	500	503	878	438	440	833	416	417
15 to 19 years	1,183	659	524	1,096	611	485	1,093	609	484	948	480	468	827	419	408	815	413	402
20 to 24 years	1,059	568	491	1,098	589	509	983	533	460	892	366	326	748	396	352	676	358	318
25 to 29 years	1,113	606	507	997	543	454	970	528	442	714	373	341	738	385	353	666	348	318
30 to 34 years	1,365	772	593	1,179	667	512	1,260	724	556	771	411	360	740	395	345	826	441	395
35 to 39 years	1,483	783	700	1,229	649	580	1,155	610	545	1,003	499	504	814	405	409	868	432	436
40 to 44 years	1,451	747	704	1,498	771	727	1,356	698	658	980	508	472	828	429	399	820	425	395
45 to 49 years	1,519	785	734	1,591	822	769	1,383	715	668	1,041	521	520	1,091	546	545	913	457	456
50 to 54 years	1,721	909	812	1,539	813	726	1,666	890	785	1,034	527	507	1,056	538	518	921	469	452
55 to 59 years	1,968	987	981	1,619	812	807	1,777	891	886	1,197	604	593	1,049	529	520	1,136	573	563
60 to 64 years	2,023	949	1,074	1,790	840	950	1,679	788	891	1,275	630	645	1,065	526	539	1,123	555	568
65 to 69 years	1,788	885	903	1,950	965	985	1,682	832	850	1,154	609	545	1,187	628	561	1,074	566	508
70 to 74 years	1,429	848	781	1,784	809	975	1,656	751	905	948	445	503	1,112	522	590	959	450	509
75 to 79 years	980	454	526	1,389	644	745	1,590	737	853	621	266	355	839	360	479	891	382	509
80 to 84 years	648	239	409	898	331	567	1,175	433	742	401	143	258	590	210	380	714	254	460
85 and over	437	149	288	687	234	453	1,039	364	685	324	106	218	415	135	280	588	192	396
<b>Total population</b>	<b>23,382</b>	<b>11,793</b>	<b>11,589</b>	<b>23,263</b>	<b>11,600</b>	<b>11,663</b>	<b>23,295</b>	<b>11,623</b>	<b>11,772</b>	<b>15,601</b>	<b>7,752</b>	<b>7,849</b>	<b>15,378</b>	<b>7,575</b>	<b>7,803</b>	<b>15,192</b>	<b>7,430</b>	<b>7,762</b>

Age	Russell County									Tazewell County								
	2020			2030			2040			2020			2030			2040		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Under 5 years	1,327	667	660	1,341	674	667	1,344	676	668	2,127	1,073	1,054	2,032	1,025	1,007	2,020	1,019	1,001
5 to 9 years	1,379	694	685	1,380	694	686	1,401	705	696	2,329	1,165	1,164	2,229	1,115	1,114	2,203	1,102	1,101
10 to 14 years	1,743	859	884	1,544	761	783	1,601	789	812	2,599	1,360	1,239	2,448	1,281	1,167	2,400	1,256	1,144
15 to 19 years	1,669	864	805	1,499	776	723	1,539	797	742	2,679	1,372	1,307	2,536	1,299	1,237	2,492	1,276	1,216
20 to 24 years	1,490	768	722	1,601	825	776	1,455	750	705	2,166	1,132	1,034	2,194	1,148	1,048	2,122	1,109	1,013
25 to 29 years	1,824	854	770	1,597	840	757	1,472	774	698	2,219	1,178	1,041	2,212	1,174	1,038	2,149	1,141	1,098
30 to 34 years	1,879	863	816	1,692	870	822	1,865	959	908	2,485	1,327	1,138	2,354	1,267	1,087	2,448	1,318	1,130
35 to 39 years	1,608	784	824	1,730	844	886	1,747	852	895	2,898	1,412	1,286	2,503	1,310	1,193	2,561	1,340	1,221
40 to 44 years	1,682	834	848	1,737	861	876	1,797	891	908	3,058	1,577	1,481	2,796	1,442	1,354	2,740	1,413	1,327
45 to 49 years	1,944	950	994	1,880	821	859	1,856	907	949	2,997	1,462	1,535	2,878	1,404	1,474	2,741	1,337	1,404
50 to 54 years	2,016	991	1,025	1,803	886	917	1,911	939	972	2,961	1,435	1,526	3,293	1,596	1,897	3,092	1,499	1,593
55 to 59 years	2,211	1,081	1,130	2,015	985	1,030	1,788	874	914	3,264	1,621	1,643	3,109	1,544	1,565	3,065	1,522	1,543
60 to 64 years	2,488	1,244	1,244	2,080	1,040	1,040	1,908	954	954	3,668	1,829	1,839	3,033	1,512	1,521	3,463	1,727	1,738
65 to 69 years	2,097	982	1,115	2,134	999	1,135	1,896	935	1,061	3,365	1,581	1,784	3,157	1,483	1,674	3,086	1,460	1,636
70 to 74 years	1,657	741	916	2,126	951	1,175	1,825	817	1,008	2,711	1,225	1,486	3,141	1,419	1,722	2,667	1,205	1,462
75 to 79 years	1,153	480	673	1,588	661	927	1,660	691	969	1,794	749	1,045	2,550	1,065	1,485	2,455	1,025	1,430
80 to 84 years	676	280	396	967	401	566	1,274	528	746	1,115	421	694	1,696	640	1,056	2,018	762	1,256
85 and over	609	219	390	781	281	500	1,097	385	702	1,083	338	745	1,275	398	677	1,811	565	1,246
<b>Total population</b>	<b>29,052</b>	<b>14,155</b>	<b>14,897</b>	<b>29,295</b>	<b>14,170</b>	<b>15,125</b>	<b>29,536</b>	<b>14,233</b>	<b>15,303</b>	<b>45,298</b>	<b>22,257</b>	<b>23,041</b>	<b>45,436</b>	<b>22,120</b>	<b>23,316</b>	<b>45,533</b>	<b>22,066</b>	<b>23,467</b>

Age	CPPDC								
	2020			2030			2040		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Under 5 years	5,081	2,588	2,493	4,876	2,482	2,394	4,834	2,461	2,373
5 to 9 years	5,487	2,759	2,728	5,303	2,666	2,637	5,212	2,620	2,592
10 to 14 years	6,648	3,368	3,280	5,993	3,056	2,937	5,926	3,021	2,905
15 to 19 years	6,479	3,375	3,104	5,958	3,105	2,853	5,939	3,095	2,844
20 to 24 years	5,407	2,834	2,573	5,641	2,956	2,685	5,246	2,750	2,496
25 to 29 years	5,670	3,011	2,659	5,544	2,942	2,602	5,257	2,791	2,466
30 to 34 years	6,280	3,373	2,907	5,965	3,199	2,766	6,419	3,442	2,977
35 to 39 years	6,792	3,478	3,314	6,276	3,208	3,068	6,331	3,234	3,097
40 to 44 years	7,171	3,666	3,505	6,859	3,503	3,356	6,713	3,427	3,286
45 to 49 years	7,501	3,718	3,783	7,240	3,593	3,647	6,893	3,416	3,477
50 to 54 years	7,732	3,862	3,870	7,691	3,833	3,858	7,590	3,787	3,803
55 to 59 years	8,640	4,293	4,347	7,792	3,870	3,922	7,766	3,860	3,906
60 to 64 years	9,454	4,652	4,802	7,968	3,918	4,050	8,173	4,024	4,149
65 to 69 years	8,404	4,057	4,347	8,428	4,073	4,355	7,838	3,783	4,055
70 to 74 years	6,745	3,059	3,686	8,163	3,701	4,462	7,107	3,223	3,884
75 to 79 years	4,548	1,949	2,599	6,366	2,730	3,636	6,596	2,835	3,761
80 to 84 years	2,840	1,083	1,757	4,151	1,582	2,569	5,181	1,977	3,204
85 and over	2,453	812	1,641	3,158	1,048	2,110	4,535	1,506	3,029
<b>Total population</b>	<b>113,333</b>	<b>55,957</b>	<b>57,376</b>	<b>113,372</b>	<b>55,465</b>	<b>57,907</b>	<b>113,556</b>	<b>55,252</b>	<b>58,304</b>

Source : Virginia Employment Commission

## **ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT**

The basic employment of Buchanan County is the coal mining industry. Basic employment is defined as the employment in industries which sell most of their goods and services outside of the area. Emphasis is always placed on the basic employment sector because it is the primary source of area growth. An economy based on a single industry, such as coal, creates problems which are difficult to correct. Dependence on one basic industry makes the economy of an area highly susceptible to changes in that industry. Industries which sell most of their goods to outside areas depend on national or regional demand rather than on local demand.

The national demand for coal during the 1960's decreased, as oil and natural gas moved into coal's major markets as home and industrial heating fuel. To further impact employment in the coal mining industry, greater mechanization allowed for higher production rates with fewer people. The coal boom of the 1970<sup>f</sup>s brought a short-lived boost to the economy of the area. In the later part of the 1970's, environmental controls were tightened and over time impacted several of the smaller marginally profitable companies. These companies were able to withstand this burden until the market price of coal began to decline in the early 1980's. The coal mining industry again made a large come back in the early 1990's leading to a drastic decrease in unemployment and a host of economic opportunities throughout the county. However, coal again precipitously declined in the early 2000s leading to a major economic downturn county wide. During this time economic decline became apparent by the high rates of unemployment and the low levels of family income for Buchanan County.

Recent efforts to diversify the economy include the following additions to Buchanan

County's employment base: Keen Mountain Correctional Center; Heritage Hall XIV, which is an elderly care center; Application School of Law; and the Appalachian school of Pharmacy.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

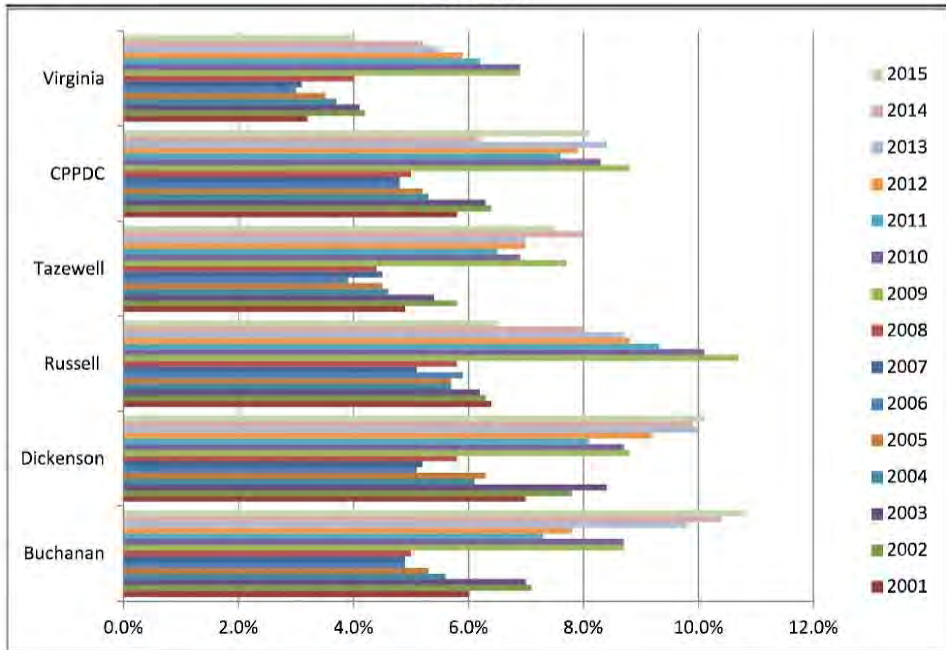
Unemployment has plagued Buchanan County over the past 35 years. The unemployment level peaked in 1983 at 26.4 percent, and although the figure dropped to 4.9 percent in 2007 it rose again to 10.8 percent in 2015. In comparison to the other counties in Cumberland Plateau Planning District and the state of Virginia average, Buchanan County has had the highest rate of unemployment for the past two years.

Average Unemployment Rates  
2000-2015

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPDC	Virginia
2000	5.8%	5.8%	5.1%	5.1%	5.3%	2.3%
2001	6.0%	7.0%	6.4%	4.9%	5.8%	3.2%
2002	7.1%	7.8%	6.3%	5.8%	6.4%	4.2%
2003	7.0%	8.4%	6.2%	5.4%	6.3%	4.1%
2004	5.6%	6.1%	5.7%	4.6%	5.3%	3.7%
2005	5.3%	6.3%	5.7%	4.5%	5.2%	3.5%
2006	4.9%	5.1%	5.9%	3.9%	4.8%	3.0%
2007	4.9%	5.2%	5.1%	4.5%	4.8%	3.1%
2008	5.0%	5.8%	5.8%	4.4%	5.0%	4.0%
2009	8.7%	8.8%	10.7%	7.7%	8.8%	6.9%
2010	8.7%	8.7%	10.1%	6.9%	8.3%	6.9%
2011	7.3%	8.1%	9.3%	6.5%	7.6%	6.2%
2012	7.8%	9.2%	8.8%	7.0%	7.9%	5.9%
2013	9.8%	10.0%	8.7%	7.0%	8.4%	5.5%
2014	10.4%	9.9%	8.0%	8.0%	6.2%	5.2%
2015	10.8%	10.1%	6.5%	7.5%	8.1%	4.0%

Source: Virginia Employment Office

Average Unemployment Rates  
2000-2015





## INCOME

All counties within the district have below average incomes for the state of Virginia. Disparity in income is expected to lower somewhat as more jobs become available and educational attainment rises.

Income Type

Income Type	Buchanan County		Dickenson County		Russell County		Tazewell County		CPPDC		Virginia	
	2000	2010-2014	2000	2010-2014	2000	2010-2014	2000	2010-2014	2000	2010-2014	2000	2014
Median Household Income	22,213	29,678	23,431	33,106	26,834	34,768	27,304	36,248	24,946	33,450	46,667	64,902
Median Family Income	27,328	39,722	27,986	42,308	31,491	48,495	33,732	46,768	30,134	44,323	54,169	78,290
PerCapita Income	12,788	18,357	12,822	17,954	14,863	20,117	15,282	21,558	13,939	19,497	23,975	34,052

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 data - 2010-2014 American Community Survey  
Virginia is from 2014 1 yr American Community Survey

The median family income has dropped for Buchanan County, along with the entire district, but has risen for the state of Virginia.

## POVERTY

In Buchanan County, 20.60 percent of the population lives below poverty level, or 18.9 percent of all families. When female householder families are singled out, the rate increases to 47.3 percent living below poverty level.

Poverty Status

Group	Buchanan County	Percent Below Poverty	Dickenson County	Percent Below Poverty	Russell County	Percent Below Poverty	Tazewell County	Percent Below Poverty	CPPDC	Percent Below Poverty	Virginia	Percent Below Poverty
All Families	6,618	20.60%	4,289	15.50%	7,386	15.00%	12,369	14.20%	30,662	16.33%	2,047,106	8.20%
Families With Children Under 18	2,569	35.90%	1,743	26.60%	2,808	24.80%	5,075	24.70%	12,195	28.00%	990,615	13.00%
Families With Female Head of Household	1,326	47.30%	669	39.90%	1,119	37.20%	1,924	37.80%	5,038	40.55%	375,722	25.50%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey

With over 20 percent of all households below the poverty level and a dearth economic opportunity within the county, many families remain at a low income level, thus becoming permanently dependant on state and federal assistance.

## TAXABLE SALES

Taxable sales in Buchanan County have dropped since 2012, while Russell, Tazewell, and Dickenson Counties tend to oscillate by year.

Taxable Sales  
2000-2015

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPDC
2000	\$115,923,478	\$48,398,260	\$107,862,419	\$409,177,303	\$681,361,460
2001	\$114,597,950	\$47,977,617	\$101,878,423	\$414,883,974	\$679,337,964
2002	\$114,720,922	\$49,531,310	\$122,525,574	\$421,810,028	\$708,587,834
2003	\$112,152,118	\$50,249,767	\$129,188,820	\$439,228,597	\$730,819,302
2004	\$116,924,712	\$52,914,791	\$138,753,368	\$462,767,675	\$771,360,546
2005	\$107,211,477	\$50,357,215	\$132,085,662	\$433,462,904	\$723,117,258
2006	\$123,290,187	\$57,182,687	\$149,040,720	\$503,888,173	\$833,401,767
2007	\$127,687,900	\$60,083,344	\$156,657,814	\$520,718,233	\$865,147,291
2008	\$139,948,887	\$63,232,095	\$161,030,985	\$541,605,045	\$905,817,012
2009	\$127,560,716	\$64,054,957	\$157,889,960	\$532,354,982	\$881,860,615
2010	\$125,345,514	\$65,984,411	\$158,276,136	\$531,158,462	\$880,764,523
2011	\$142,304,553	\$68,042,398	\$159,840,501	\$540,216,247	\$910,403,699
2012	\$156,984,874	\$66,417,728	\$160,139,687	\$552,018,668	\$935,560,957
2013	\$148,802,737	\$65,552,723	\$153,199,811	\$527,292,801	\$894,848,072
2014	\$147,726,232	\$69,962,263	\$159,893,054	\$521,246,767	\$898,828,316
2015	\$141,875,222	\$60,520,561	\$172,010,922	\$531,489,881	\$905,896,586

Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

The trend in taxable sales for Buchanan County appears to show steady nominal growth in most years peaking 2012, and decreasing steadily since.

## FORECASTS

The different segments of the economy are interrelated. If employment is to increase, sales and production must expand. If sales and production are to expand, there must be an increase in demand. If demand is to increase, there must be an increase in income, in the size of the economic base, or both.

The Woods and Poole Forecast, like all economic and demographic forecasts, analyzes historical data to make estimates of future data. One limitation is that the future is never known

with any certainty. There is always the possibility of an unprecedented shock to the economy, or of some other event that could not be foreseen based on analysis of historical data. Small area forecasts are subject to more error because of the small sample size. The larger the area, the more reliable the model will be.

The Woods and Poole Forecast expects that areas of Virginia which have strong manufacturing economies or are regional centers for retail trade, transportation and services will have high growth. Regional economies dependant on mining, however, are expected to have the slowest economic growth. The mining industry is considered to be stabilized, with only slight changes in mining employment expected.

Employment growth for Buchanan County is likely to occur in the areas of state and local government, services, manufacturing and retail trade. When the forecasted population growth is compared to the forecasted growth in employment, the result is an expected 4,040 more jobs, and an expected 1,800 more people. This indicates that the unemployment rate will decline. As the population ages and people begin to leave the labor force, labor market pressures will be eased further, with the changes most keenly felt in 2015 when the bulk of the baby-boom generation enters retirement.

### EMPLOYMENT/POPULATION FORECAST

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>
Population	31,700	32,100	32,520	32,990	33,500
Employment	16,030	16,990	17,960	18,970	20,070

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

### EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS BY INDUSTRY

Sector	<u>1995</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>
Agriculture	10	10	10	10	10
Mining	5,750	5,910	6,070	6,270	6,520
Construction	800	840	890	930	980
Manufact.	340	350	360	370	380
Tran, Com, PU	1,630	1,820	2,010	2,200	2,380
Wholesale	690	790	880	980	1,080
Retail	1,910	2,100	2,310	2,530	2,760
Fin, Ins, R.E.	370	390	400	410	430
Service	2,530	2,750	2,980	3,210	3,450
Govt.	1,900	1,930	1,950	1,980	2,000

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

Buchanan County has the institutional, locational, and human resources necessary to plan and successfully stimulate a recovery in the local economy. Efforts must be made to allow the residents to fully satisfy their demands for consumer goods locally, by encouraging expansion and revitalization of the retail sector. Since the county does not contain any large towns or urban centers with which to attract business and secure economic diversification, local government must be very attentive to business's needs.

Unskilled workers can be viewed as a strength, since national shortages of reliable unskilled workers are expected to develop during the 1990's. Facilities formerly used by coal companies have potential as industrial incubators and small industry buildings, they have both office and industrial purposes.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The effects of a community's transportation system are vital. The distance from the county seat of Buchanan County to nearby metropolitan areas pushes the county into an isolated and remote situation. These distances can be used to partially explain the value of a good transportation system, one which will counteract the problems created by isolation. An improved transportation system would tremendously help Buchanan County in its efforts to diversify the local economy.

A transportation plan must take into consideration topography, population density and distribution, land development policies and the overall planning objectives of the community. A safe and efficient transportation system is a critical service provided and maintained by the government. It provides means of transportation for goods and services and connects citizens to their areas of employment, schools, shopping, and community activities. Due to the overall topography and as Buchanan County continues to struggle with growth and economic development, careful consideration must be given to the relationship between land use and development and transportation

needs. Buchanan County must consider economic impacts and must find a balance that will be in the best interest of its residents.

## **BUCHANAN COUNTY ROAD NETWORK**

The primary mode of transportation in Buchanan County is the road system. This system utilizes a combination of interstate roads (through access routes), state primary roads, state secondary roads, Buchanan County road system, and privately maintained roads to serve the needs of Buchanan County residents. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains, improves, and develops state roads and road infrastructure. Though maintenance of transportation infrastructure occurs at the state level, transportation planning occurs on a national, state, regional and local level. It is important for the county to study transportation issues to ensure the needs of Buchanan County citizens are reflected in regional and state plans. Roads classifications, locations, maintenance, and access have a strong influence on the economic development and interest of Buchanan County and its' residents.

Virginia's Highway System is divided into four (4) categories: Interstate, Primary, Secondary, and Frontage. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) divides the state into nine (9) districts. Each district oversees maintenance and construction projects on the state-maintained highways, bridges, and tunnels within its region. Buchanan County state highway system is maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, Bristol District. The Bristol District consist of four (4) residencies and includes more than 7,400 miles of roads located within twelve (12) counties. Buchanan County has three (3) primary state roads and numerous secondary state roads within their highway system.

**INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS** in Virginia are four (4) – to – ten (10) lane highways that connect states and major cities. The nearest interstates to serve Buchanan County are Interstate 77 and Interstate 81. Interstate 81 in Virginia extends for a total of 325 miles from the Virginia –

Tennessee state line near Bristol to the Virginia – West Virginia state line near Winchester. Interstate 81 corridor functions as a freight corridor for both trucks and rail. This interstate links twenty (20+) plus colleges and universities and many tourism attractions including state parks, recreations areas, Civil War battlefields, and National Forests. Interstate 77 in Virginia extends for a total of 69 miles from the North Carolina state line near Carroll County to the West Virginia state line near Bland County. Interstate 77 includes a high traffic volume, eight-mile overlap with Interstate 81 in Wytheville/Wythe County. The nearest Interstate 81 access for Buchanan County is located in Washington County at Exit 14. The nearest Interstate 77 access for Buchanan County is located in Bluefield, WV.

**STATE PRIMARY ROADS** in Virginia are numbered and maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation as a system of state highways. Primary routes are typically two (2) – to – six (6) lane roads that connect cities and towns with each other and also connects with interstates. Primary State Routes receive more funding that Secondary State Routes and are numbered as U.S. Routes or State Routes with numbers ranging from 1 to 599. Buchanan County is served by three (3) primary state highways: US 460, SR 80, and SR 83. VDOT maintains, improves and develops state roads and road infrastructure in Buchanan County. In Buchanan County there are 93 road miles (187 lane miles) of state primary roads.

**STATE SECONDARY ROADS** are generally numbered 600 and above. Secondary roads absorb traffic from busier primary roads and locally maintained roads. In Buchanan County there are 462 road miles (926 lane miles) of state secondary roads.

**BUCHANAN COUNTY ROAD SYSTEM**, under Virginia Code section § 58.1-3713, was first created in 1987. Buchanan County is one (1) of three (3) counties in the state of Virginia that operate their own county road system. Buchanan County’s road system is separate from the Virginia Department of Transportation road system and includes its own numbering system, policy, and

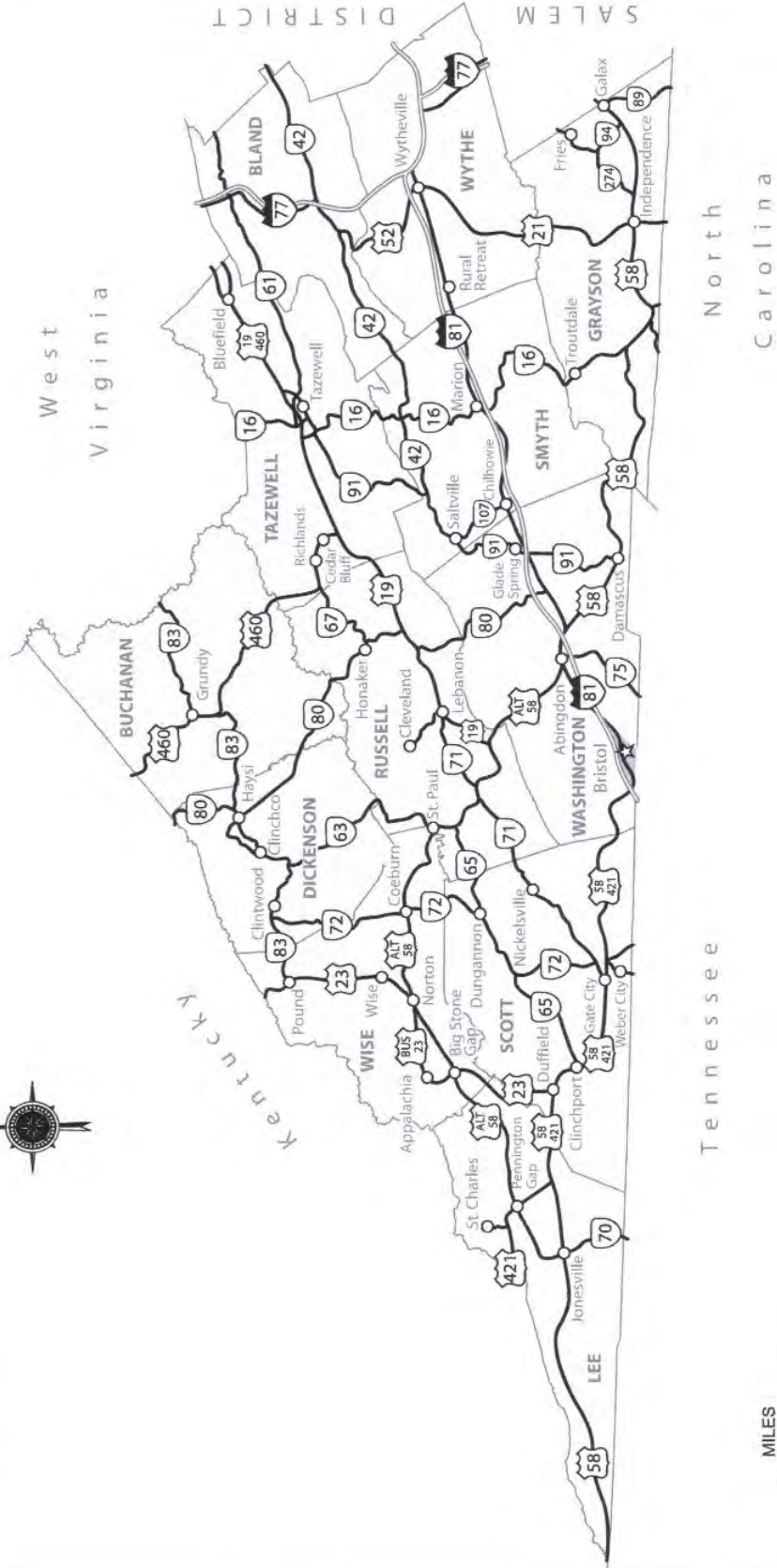
guidelines, and funding source. Buchanan County has over 700 roads & bridges in excess of 220 miles of roadway they operate and maintain each fiscal year pending on available funds. This system is operated with coal and gas severance tax funds and funding is not limited to county roads or bridges. Each fiscal year, Coal Haul Road Plan funding includes, but is not limited to, county road maintenance and construction, PSA, State Revenue Sharing, Disaster Relief, CEDA transfer, Bridge Crew, and Mapping & Engineering Administrative. Construction and Maintenance funding is approved on a fiscal year basis by the Coal Haul Road Committee and submitted to the Board of Supervisors for their review and acceptance. The fiscal year coal haul road plan must be submitted and accepted by the Board of Supervisors prior to July 1, which is the beginning of each fiscal year.

**PRIVATE ROADS** may be taken into the Buchanan County Road System by the Board of Supervisors under certain guidelines and restraint as deemed under the current revision of the Buchanan County Road and Bridge Policy.



# Virginia Department of Transportation BRISTOL DISTRICT

Bristol District Office (☆)  
870 Bonham Road  
Bristol, Virginia 24201  
276-669-6151  
[www.VirginiaDOT.org](http://www.VirginiaDOT.org)



**PRIMARY ROADS TRAFFIC VOLUME: 2016**

<u>Route</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u># Vehicles</u>
80	Dickenson Co. Line	Russell Co. Line	1,600
83	SR 640	West VA State Line	830
83	460 Intersection	SR 642	5,400
83	SR 642	SR 643	2,900
83	SR 643	SR 640	1,800
83	460 Intersection	SR 619	4,700
83	SR 619	SR 604	2,900
83	SR 604	Dickenson Co. Line	3,000
460	460/83 Intersection	SR 656	5,800
460	SR 656	SR 609	5,600
460	SR 609	SR 700	3,900
460	SR 700	SR 645	3,200
460	SR 645	Kentucky State Line	3,200
460	460/83 Intersection	SR 1006	9,700
460	460/83 Intersection	SR 83	10,000
460	SR 83	SR 638	8,100
460	SR 638	SR 1101	7,100
460	SR 1101	SR 680	7,200
460	SR 680	Tazewell Co. Line	6,700

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation. *Average Daily Traffic Volumes 2016.*

# VDOT SECONDARY ROAD SYSTEM MAP

**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

- Division Highway (Interstate)
- Division Highway (State)
- Division Highway (County)
- Division Highway (Municipal)
- Division Highway (Other)

**ROADWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY**

- Interstate Highway
- Division Highway
- VA Secondary Highway
- County Road
- Private Road
- US Route Right-of-Way

**RAILROAD**

- Regional Rail
- Local Rail

**WATER**

- State Water
- County Water
- City Water
- Other Water

**CITY AND VILLAGE BOUNDARIES**

- City
- Village

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- State
- County
- Transmittion Line
- Power Line
- Property Line

**POINTS**

- County Seat
- City Seat
- Other Point

**Other Symbols**

- State
- County
- City
- Other

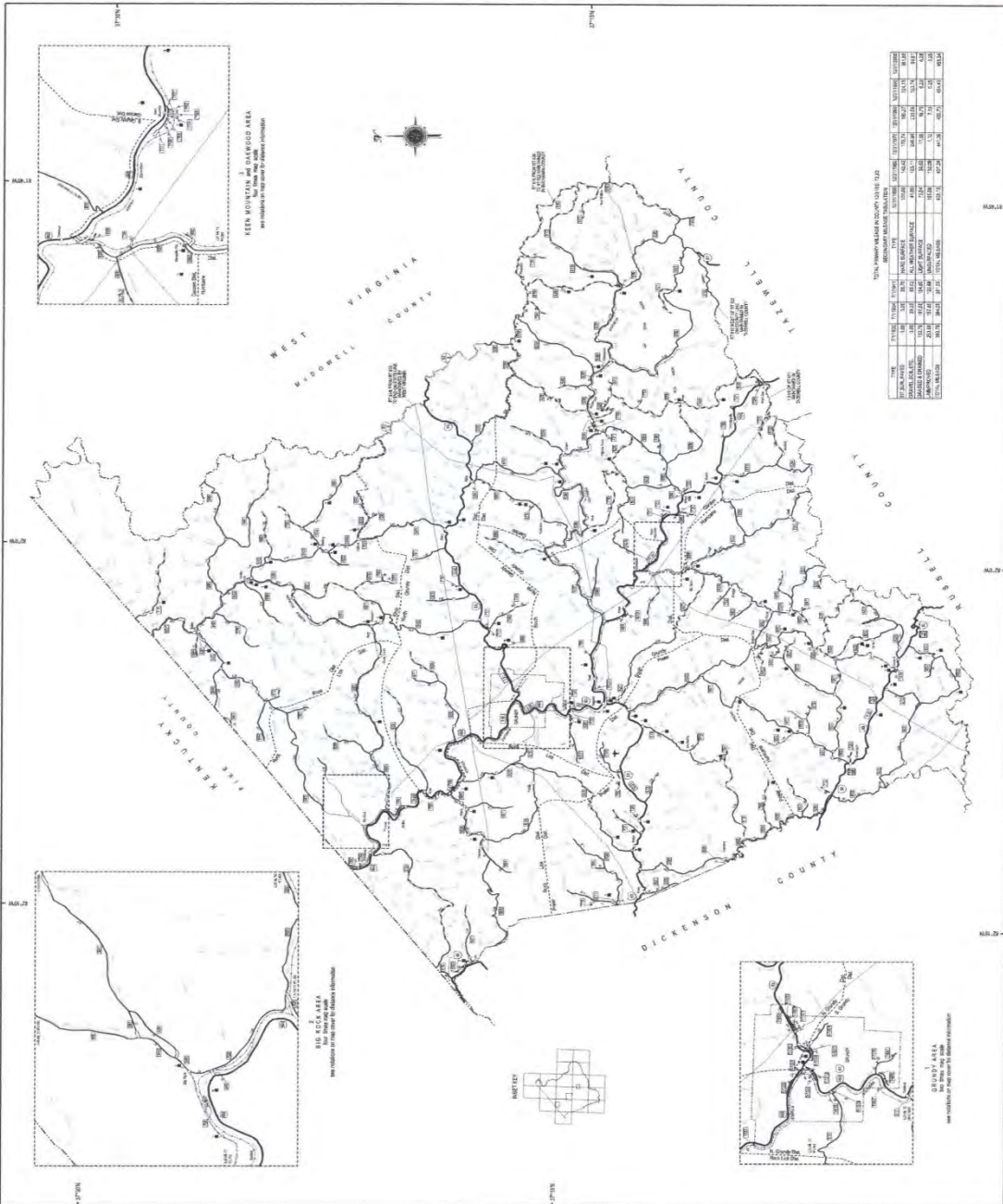
**Legend Notes:**

VDOT is not responsible for the accuracy of the data provided in this map. The user is responsible for the accuracy of the data provided in this map. The user is responsible for the accuracy of the data provided in this map.

**VDOT**  
COUNTY ROAD MAP

**BUCHANAN COUNTY**

BUCHANAN COUNTY, VA





Roads are classified in this system based on the functions they perform such as minimizing traffic and land use conflicts, improving safety, and enhancing mobility. Roads in cities and towns with populations over 5,000 receive an “Urban” designation from VDOT and those with populations under 5,000 are designated as “Rural”. A descriptive list of VDOT road classifications is included in the table below.

Virginia Department of Transportation Road Classifications	
<b>Rural Functional</b>	<p><b>Rural minor arterial/primary</b> Links cities and large towns (and other generators, such as major resorts), Spaced at such intervals so that all developed areas of the state are within a reasonable distance of an arterial highway, Provides service to corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those served by rural collectors or local systems, Design should be expected to provide for relatively high overall speeds, with minimum interference to through movement</p> <p><b>Rural minor collector/secondary</b> Spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, Collects traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector road, Provides service to the remaining smaller communities, Link local traffic generators with their rural hinterland</p> <p><b>Rural major collector/secondary</b> Provides service to any county seat not on an arterial system, to larger towns not directly served by higher systems, Links the above to nearby larger towns or routes of higher classification, Serves the more important intra-county travel corridors</p> <p><b>Rural local</b> Serves primarily to provide direct access to adjacent land , Provides service to travel over relatively short distances as compared to collectors or other higher systems, All facilities not on one of the higher systems</p>
<b>Urban Functional</b>	<p><b>Urban principal arterial/primary</b> Serves the major centers of activity of a metropolitan area, Highest traffic volume corridors, Roads serving the longest trip desires, Carry a high proportion of the total urban area travel on a minimum of mileage, Carries significant amounts of intra-area travel</p> <p><b>Urban minor arterial/primary</b> Interconnect with and augment the urban principal arterial system and provide service to trips of moderate length at a lower level of travel mobility than principal arterials</p> <p>Include all arterials not classified as a principal and contains facilities that place more emphasis on land access, and offer a lower level of traffic mobility</p> <p><b>Urban collector/secondary</b> Provides land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial, and industrial areas, Distributes trips from the arterials through these areas to their ultimate destination, Collects traffic from local streets and channels it to the arterial system</p> <p><b>Urban local</b> All facilities not on one of the higher systems, Serves primarily as direct access to abutting land, Serves as access to the higher order systems, Through traffic movement is deliberately discouraged.</p>



# RAIL SERVICE

Passenger Rail Service is not currently available in Buchanan County. The nearest passenger service stations are located in Danville, VA and Lynchburg, VA. Connecting bus service from Blacksburg, VA and Roanoke, VA to the Lynchburg service station is also available. Freight railroads have a successful working relationship with passenger railroads all across the country. Approximately 97% of Amtrak's 22,000 mile rail system consists of tracks owned and operated by freight railroads. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and Norfolk Southern Corporation entered into an agreement to improve rail related infrastructure between Lynchburg and Roanoke. The improvements will allow passenger rail to serve the Roanoke region. Grant funding to study the need and interest for passenger rail service toward Bristol from Roanoke has been awarded and is currently being evaluated.



- Two passenger rail operators – Amtrak and Virginia Railway Express
- Eleven freight railroads –
  - Two national Class I Railroads: Norfolk Southern and CSX
  - Nine local shortline railroads

**Commercial Freight Rail Service** is available in Buchanan County and is provided by Norfolk Southern Railway Corporation. Norfolk Southern owns and operates a network of 19,500 miles of rail lines East of the Mississippi River in 22 different states and the District of Columbia. Norfolk Southern serves 24 sea ports, 10 river ports, and 9 lake ports. Norfolk Southern offers many interchange points with rail partners, including CSX, BNSF, KCS, UP, CN, and CP. Norfolk Southern has more short line partners than any other Class 1 railroad. Norfolk Southern partners cover nearly 41,000 additional miles within their system. Norfolk Southern infrastructure in Virginia consists of 1990 miles of track, 1240 bridges, and 37 tunnels. Norfolk Southern operates the most extensive intermodal network in the East is a major transporter of coal and industrial products.

## **Airports**

Air travel for Buchanan County is done through the use of regional and local airports. Nestled in the mountains of Southwest Virginia, Buchanan County utilizes regional airports to connect to larger airports hubs.



**Grundy Municipal Airport** is a small 2,256 ft. runway nestled atop the mountains of Buchanan County. Located 3 nautical miles southwest of the central business district of Grundy, the county seat of Buchanan County, this airport is used only by small personal and charter planes.

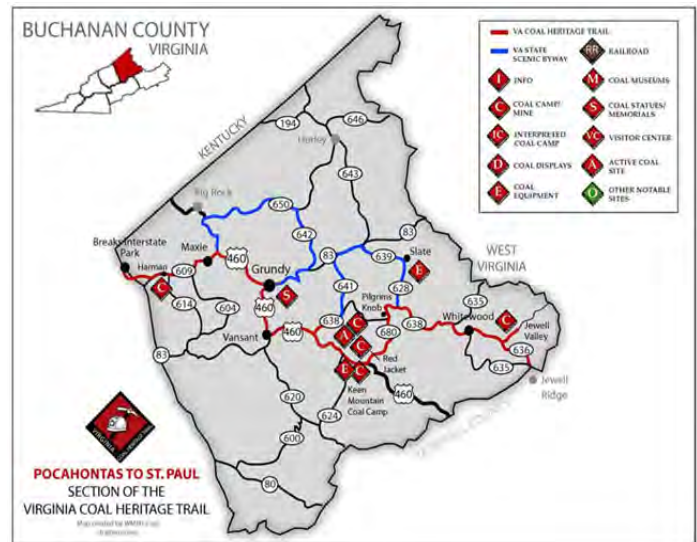
**Tri-Cities Regional Airport**, located approximately 110 miles southwest of Grundy, near Blountville, Tennessee, is the region's primary full-service commercial airport which offers non-stop service to five major hubs, primarily Charlotte, Atlanta and Chicago.



## Scenic Drives

Although most drives through Buchanan County could be viewed as a scenic drive, the sights and overall atmosphere can take you on a journey through history with scenic beauty measured in memories instead of miles.

**Coal Heritage Trail** is part of the Virginia Byway system located in the Heart of Appalachia's coalfield region and encompasses 7 Southwest Virginia counties. A drive along the Coal Heritage Trail in Buchanan County will lead you pass active mining operations, where you can see coal being loaded into trucks and railroad cars. Some for transportation to a coal preparation plant, others for the delivery to customers within the United States or even



international deliveries. Other sites along this route will lead you pass the Grundy Mural, located on the outer wall of a local supermarket, this mural depicts the history of Buchanan County and the town of Grundy. Once in the town of Grundy, in front of the courthouse you can find a bronze statue honoring local coal miners which was donated by the local Girl Scout Troops.

**Nature Drive** is a secluded one way road tucked away deep within the Breaks Interstate Park. Extending approximately 0.7 miles through the wilderness, this small one lane road traverses through the center of an area of the park that several forms of wildlife call home. Lined with laurel bushes and various types of hardwood, rests this hidden gem of the “Grand Canyon of the South”.

**Appalachian Backroads** is a scenic byway directed towards the motorcycle enthusiasts which covers the entire Coalfield Region of Virginia and Eastern Kentucky. The Appalachian Backroads - Ridge Runner Trail will take you on a 112 mile loop through the heart of Buchanan County with a good portion of the trail taking you on Route 80, which is known as the Great 80 Curves of Challenge.



## Bicycle and Pedestrian Modes

Buchanan County is home to some wonderful trail systems. Recreational hiking trails and bicycling opportunities are available at the Bull Creek Bike and Pedestrian Trail, Michael D. Young Memorial Bike Trail, Coal Canyon Trail and the US Bicycle Route 76.

**Bull Creek Bike and Pedestrian Trail** a former Norfolk & Southern railroad bed converted into a trail for pedestrians and bicyclists was opened to the public in 2013.

This trail currently provides 1.53 miles of beautiful scenery for bicyclists and pedestrians alike. Special events are held throughout the year, such as Autism Awareness 5k, and a Zombie 5k Run. Future additions are planned to extend the trail.

**Michael D. Young Memorial Bike Trail** is an intense hiking and mountain bike trail converted from an old abandoned coal mining road. The trail was opened to the public 2004 and consists of 2 miles of mountainous scenic beauty that will test your abilities. From the Town of Grundy, the trail will take you north adjacent to State Route 83.

**Coal Canyon Trail**, although primarily an ATV trail system, is also welcome to hiking and cyclists as well. Located near Poplar Gap Park, it provides enthusiasts and hobbyists with 61 miles of trails, beautiful scenery, and the possibility of viewing the county's growing elk population. Over 100 miles of additional trails are planned for future expansions connecting the town of Grundy to the town of Haysi.



**US Bike Route 76**, known as the Transamerica Trail, is a well-known bicycle route that stretches 4,300 miles from the coast of Virginia to the coast of Oregon. Bike Route 76, a shared-use facility and is widely recognized as the greatest and most traveled bike trail in America. The trail will pass through the community of Council located in the far southwest portion of Buchanan County. The trail runs adjacent to the Russel Fork River before entering neighboring Dickenson County.



### **Public Transit**

The effects of a community's transportation system is vital to a community, providing residents and visitors access to shopping, dining, recreation and health care services.

**Four County Transit** is a fully coordinated public transit system serving the residents of Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, and Tazewell counties. Four County Transit was created in 1998 and operated by the Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens and funded by the Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation public transportation system. Four County Transit offers public transportation

to local colleges. Public transportation is available throughout the day and with convenient fixed routes and demand responses. Four County Transit provides a variety of services to complement the need for public transportation service in Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell Counties.

## **Travel Demand Management**

Travel Demand Management (TDM) holds the potential for enhancing many elements of the transportation network, and with other improvements, has been shown to greatly aid in reducing single-occupant vehicle trips. TDM measures include carpooling and vanpooling programs, expanded peak hour public transit, commuter buses, park and ride lots, as well as better coordination between modes to facilitate intermodal transfers. According to the 2000 U S Census, workers traveling outside their county of residence for employment was approximately 28 percent in Buchanan County. Additional commuter-oriented pieces of the transportation network in the region include park and ride lots. There are twenty VDOT maintained park and ride lots in the region, however only one (1) park and ride lot is located in Buchanan County.

## **Transportation Planning / Programs**

**SIX – YEAR Improvement Program** (SYIP) is a critical document that outlines planned spending for transportation projects proposed for construction development or study for the next six years. The SYIP is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs for the immediate fiscal year. The SYIP also identifies planned program funding for the succeeding five fiscal years. The CTB allocates funds for the first fiscal year of the SYIP but the remaining five years are estimates of future allocations. Fiscal years start on July 1 and end on June 30. The CTB updates the SYIP each year as revenue estimates are updated, priorities are revised, and project

schedules and costs change. Development of the SYIP begins in the fall and the Virginia Department of Transportation the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation host a series of meetings seeking public comment with various other multi-modal transportation agencies. Each spring, a DRAFT SYIP is presented to the CTB and made available for public comment. The FINAL SYIP is adopted at the June CTB meeting. The Six-Year Improvement Program database is available on VDOT’s website. The project list for Buchanan

VDOT Six-Year Improvement Plan - Buchanan County					
UPC	Description	Route	District	Road System	Jurisdiction
76507	RTE 83 - 2 LANE RECONSTRUCTION	83	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
107124	ROUTE 83 RUMBLE STRIP INITIATIVE	83	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
85126	RTE 121 - VDOT ALPHA/PIONEER OVERSIGHT CFX - FEDERAL	121	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
90096	CFX - HAWKS NEST - VDOT OVERSIGHT	121	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
100521	CFX - DOE BRANCH	121	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
64144	ROUTE 460 CONNECTOR PHASE I, VDOT OVERSIGHT	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
85914	NEW 460 CONNECTOR, PHASE 1, DESIGN BUILD	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
86599	WBL460 OVER DISMAL RIVER & NS RWY VA STRUC 1074 FED ID 3819	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
88140	OVERSIGHT CORRIDOR Q - 460 CONN. 2, INTERCHANGE & HAWKS NEST	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
90282	121 CFX - 460 CORRIDOR Q POPLAR CREEK PHASE A FINISH	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
100468	CORRIDOR Q ROUTE 121-460 CONNECTION VDOT OVERSIGHT	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
107072	US 460 SHOULDER INITIATIVE - BUCHANAN COUNTY	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
108045	ON-SITE MITIGATION (PLANTING & MONITORING) -RTE. 460 PHASE 1	460	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County

**Secondary Six-Year Plan** is the development of separate programs for the secondary system state highways in each county. This plan is administered differently from the SYIP. Each county oversees their own secondary roads plan which is approved each year by the Board of Supervisors. Decisions on which projects are included in the plan are based on traffic counts, immediate safety need, and projects that provide the most economically feasible. Funding allocations for each locality is often insufficient to meet the needs of the locality. Even after a project is approved for the Secondary Six-Year Plan, the project might be delayed for numerous reasons, including: changes in

local government priorities and needs, funding availability, escalating land costs and environmental concerns. Changes to both the SYIP and Secondary Six-Year Plan may occur each year. Buchanan County projects included in the Secondary Six-Year Improvement Plan are listed in database provided on VDOT’s website.

VDOT Secondary Six-Year Improvement Plan - Buchanan County					
UPC	Description	Route	District	Road System	Jurisdiction
101062	Main Knox Road -Rural Rustic 4.70 Mile East of Route 706 to WV Stateline	652	Bristol	Secondary	Buchanan County
104793	Burnt Chestnut Road - Grade, Ditch, Pave 2.25 Mile S Rte. 638 to 0.75 Mile S Rte. 638	628	Bristol	Secondary	Buchanan County
108751	Slate Creek Road - Curve Realignment 0.2 Mile West Rte. 686 to 0.4 Mile North Rte. 686	83	Bristol	Primary	Buchanan County
102628	Bull Creek Road - Bridge Replacement 0.9 Mile East Rte. 614 to 0.93 Mile East Rte. 614	609	Bristol	Secondary	Buchanan County

**Rural Rustic Road Program**, initially implemented in July 2002, is a practical approach to paving Virginia's low volume unpaved roads. The 2003 Session of the General Assembly amended the legislation to provide that this method be considered as a first alternative for improving all unpaved roads in the future. The Rural Rustic Road Program, under § 33.2-332 of the Code of Virginia, became effective July 1, 2003. The Virginia Department of Transportation’s Local Assistance Division working with the Rural Rustic Road Policy Committee established the initial guidelines for this program.

The General Assembly, during the 2008 Session, expanded the program by increasing the maximum traffic count on eligible roads from the initial 500 vehicles per day (VPD) to the current 1,500 VPD. Improvements along a Rural Rustic Road project may be less than minimum design standards. AASHTO’s *Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads (ADT ≤400)* may be used as a guide for roads with current traffic volumes up to 400 VPD. For roads with traffic volumes between 400 and 1,500 VPD, an 18-foot paved surface with 2-foot shoulders is desirable, but not required. The District Location and Design Engineer will be consulted for the higher volume roads (over 400 VPD). The General Assembly also established that the maximum

speed limit for a road designated as a Rural Rustic Road, on or after July 1, 2008, is 35 MPH. The Commissioner of Highways is authorized under § 46.2-878 of the Code of Virginia to increase, or decrease, this speed limit based on an engineering study. The ideal Rural Rustic Road project usually involves reshaping of the roadbed, cleaning ditches and applying a hard surface within existing right of way. In most cases, it is assumed there are no actual construction plans and therefore, few occasions when a Rural Rustic Road project would require an engineered solution.

### Buchanan County Unpaved Routes: 2016 Year End Final May 30, 2017 Snapshot

Route Name	Route From	Intersection Offset Start	Offset Desc From	Route To	Offset End	Offset Desc To	Centerline Miles
603	0.00	0.000	Dead End	0.90	0.000	Joe Branch Rd; Rt. 679E/W	0.90
613	3.85	3.850	Jewell Valley Rd; White Mountain Rd; Rt. 636N/S	6.80	0.000	Bearwallow Rd; Pea Patch Rd; Rt. 616N/S	2.95
621	0.00	0.000	Dead End	2.00	0.000	Brown Mountain Rd; Rt. 635N/S	2.00
623	0.10	0.100	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	1.60	1.600	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	1.50
623	1.60	1.600	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	1.96	1.960	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	0.36
623	1.96	1.960	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	2.09	2.090	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	0.13
623	2.09	2.090	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	2.10	2.100	Helen Henderson Hwy; VA-80N/S	0.01
628	0.00	0.000	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.17	0.170	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.17
628	0.17	0.170	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.27	0.270	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.10
628	0.27	0.270	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.42	0.420	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	0.15
628	0.42	0.420	Clifton Fork Rd; Osborne Mountain Rd; Rt. 629N/S	3.91	0.000	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	3.49
628	3.91	0.000	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	5.85	1.940	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	1.94
628	5.85	1.940	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	6.34	2.429	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	0.49
628	6.34	2.429	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	6.34	2.430	Ferrell Cemetery Rd; Rt. 633E/W	0.00
629	11.62	0.070	Rt. 800E/W	11.64	0.090	Rt. 800E/W	0.02
629	11.64	0.090	Rt. 800E/W	12.19	0.640	Rt. 800E/W	0.55
629	12.19	0.640	Rt. 800E/W	12.29	0.744	Rt. 800E/W	0.10
629	12.29	0.744	Rt. 800E/W	12.30	0.750	Rt. 800E/W	0.01
629	12.30	0.750	Rt. 800E/W	12.38	0.000	Big Branch Rd; Rt. 715N/S	0.08
629	13.38	1.000	Big Branch Rd; Rt. 715N/S	14.92	0.000	Contrary Creek Rd; Rt. 680N/S	1.54
629	5.90	1.100	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	6.30	1.500	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	0.40
633	0.00	0.000	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	0.50	0.000	Dead End	0.50
636	4.30	0.000	Jewell Valley Rd; Rt. 613N/S	4.34	0.040	Jewell Valley Rd; Rt. 613N/S	0.04
636	4.34	0.040	Jewell Valley Rd; Rt. 613N/S	7.09	2.790	Jewell Valley Rd; Rt. 613N/S	2.75
636	8.54	4.240	Jewell Valley Rd; Rt. 613N/S	9.54	0.000	Pea Patch Rd; Rt. 616N/S	1.00
637	0.00	0.000	Dead End	1.90	0.000	Bearwallow Rd; Rt. 616N/S	1.90
649	1.40	1.400	Hurley Rd; Rt. 643N/S	1.41	1.408	Hurley Rd; Rt. 643N/S	0.01
649	1.41	1.408	Hurley Rd; Rt. 643N/S	1.65	1.650	Hurley Rd; Rt. 643N/S	0.24
655	4.50	4.500	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.54	4.544	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.04
655	4.54	4.544	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.55	4.550	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.01
655	4.55	4.550	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.59	4.585	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.04
655	4.59	4.585	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.60	4.600	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.02
655	4.60	4.600	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.69	4.685	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.09
655	4.69	4.685	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.78	4.784	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.10
655	4.78	4.784	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.88	4.884	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	0.10
655	4.88	4.884	Riverside Dr; US-460E/W	4.90	0.000	Dead End	0.02
679	0.00	0.000	Jakes Fork Rd; Rt. 603N/S	0.50	0.000	Dead End	0.50
685	0.10	0.100	Dismal River Rd; Rt. 638E/W	2.50	0.000	Dead End	2.40
704	0.00	0.000	Dead End	0.75	0.000	Pea Patch Rd; Rt. 616N/S	0.75
708	0.00	0.000	Not Available	0.05	0.050	Not Available	0.05
708	0.05	0.050	Not Available	0.30	0.300	Not Available	0.25
713	0.00	0.000	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	0.20	0.200	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	0.20
713	0.20	0.200	Horn Mountain Rd; Rt. 628N/S	0.50	0.000	Dead End	0.30
<b>Maintenance Jurisdiction Query Total:</b>							<b>28.18</b>



**Revenue Sharing Program** provides additional funding for use by a county, city, or town to construct, reconstruct, improve or maintain the highway systems within such county, city, or town and for eligible rural additions in certain counties of the Commonwealth. Locality funds are matched, dollar for dollar, with state funds, with statutory limitations on the amount of state funds authorized per locality. The program is administered by the Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the participating localities and the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Revenue Sharing Program Policy. An annual allocation of funds for this program is designated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

- Project funding is allocated by resolution of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Projects may be developed and constructed by VDOT or the locality. Application for program funding must be made by resolution of the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting the funds. A locality may request funds for a project located within its own jurisdiction or in an adjacent jurisdiction, with concurrence from the governing body of the Revenue Sharing Program Guidelines. Towns not maintaining their own streets may not directly apply for Revenue Sharing Program funds but may include their requests as part of the package submitted by the county in which they are located. Requested funds should cover the entire cost of the project or the application must indicate where additional funds are coming from to fully fund the project.

Buchanan County has participated in the Revenue Sharing Program and strongly anticipates future participation, pending available coal haul road funding, each fiscal year through the approval and implementation of the annual Coal Haul Road Plan. In years past, Buchanan County has participated in the Revenue Sharing Program for projects such as, but not limited to, roadway construction, roadway reconstruction due to geometric deficiencies, structural rehabilitation, bridge replacement, traffic signals, intersection improvements, guardrail installation, sidewalk enhancements, rural rustic projects, and various drainage issues. Buchanan County has applied for

Revenue Sharing funds through the adoption and approval of their annual Coal Haul Road Plan which is brought before the Board of Supervisors for approval in the spring of each calendar year. If approved, the Coal Haul Road Plan will be implemented beginning July 1 of each calendar year which constitutes the beginning of each Fiscal Year. Applied funding amounts have varied in the past due to availability of funds and project scale. Each year, Buchanan County works closely with VDOT personnel to identify the state maintained roadway needs and improvements. Through this partnership, Buchanan County and VDOT can then determine the best course of action to address these needs within the allowable state programs and funding such as the Revenue Sharing Program. Buchanan County faces many different challenges in their roadway network mainly due to its steep and natural topography roadway alignments. A brief description of the typical deficiencies found among each Primary and Secondary state maintained roadway is identified in the charts below. Buchanan County exhaust their efforts and maximizes their available funding to address these deficiencies along various routes throughout the County as deemed priority by VDOT in conjunction with the Board of Supervisors request each fiscal year. **Please see the below chart identifying the proposed Revenue Sharing Projects for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 & Fiscal Year 2021-2022.**

**Buchanan County - Revenue Sharing Projects FY 21 & FY 22**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Termini From</b>	<b>Termini To</b>	<b>Estimate</b>
<b>643</b>	<b>1.03 Mi N Rt 643 / 83 Int.</b>	<b>1.19 Mi N Rt 643 / 83 Int.</b>	<b>\$ 598,788</b>

The total funds available each fiscal year will be determined by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The maximum allocation the CTB may make to the Revenue Sharing Program is \$200 million annually. The minimum allocation the CTB may make to the Revenue Sharing Program is \$15 million annually. A locality may apply for up to a maximum of \$10 million in matching allocations. Up to \$5 million of these requested funds may be specified for maintenance projects. Priority will be given first to construction projects that have previously received Revenue

Sharing funding.

**SMART SCALE (House Bill 2)** stands for System for the Management and Allocation of Resources for Transportation. House Bill 2 legislation passed unanimously by the Virginia House of Delegates in 2014. It represents a reform in how the Commonwealth prioritizes and spends transportation dollars. It is a prioritization process that evaluates each project's merits using key factors, including: improvements to safety, congestion reduction, accessibility, land use, economic development and the environment. The Bill has implications for the Six-Year Improvement Program. Projects submitted by localities will be screened to determine whether they meet a need identified in VTrans 2040. If they do, the project is then evaluated and scored using the prioritization process. Projects planned for Fiscal Year 2017 and later will be reevaluated through the prioritization process.

The SMART SCALE process identifies projects that provide the greatest return on investment, and the results are used by the CTB to select projects for funding. In 2016, Buchanan County submitted their priority project list as approved by the Board of Supervisors which included shoulder widening and geometric design on Route 83, high wall stabilization along US Route 460 near the intersection of Route 460 / 638, and sight distance improvements along the intersection of US Route 460 / 624.

**State of Good Repair Program** under § 33.2-369 of the *Code of Virginia*, states the *Commonwealth Transportation Board* shall use funds allocated in § 33.2-358 and § 58.1-1741 for state of good repair purposes for reconstruction and replacement of structurally deficient state and locally-owned bridges and reconstruction and rehabilitation of deteriorated pavement on the Interstate System and Primary State Highway System including municipality-maintained primary extensions in all nine (9) construction districts based on a priority ranking system. The State of Good Repair is not a Maintenance Program not strictly for bridge replacements. This ranking system takes

into consideration the following:

1. The number, condition, and costs of structurally deficient bridges
2. The mileage, condition, and costs to replace deteriorated pavements

Annual basis for selection of bridge rehabilitation, or reconstruction projects shall include the following:

1. Bridge must be structurally deficient
2. National Bridge Inventory Only
3. Proposed work must take bridge out of structurally deficient status
4. Localities must be current on bridge inspections
5. Projects receiving funding under this program must initiate the Preliminary

Engineering or the Construction Phase within 24 months of award of funding or become subject to deallocation

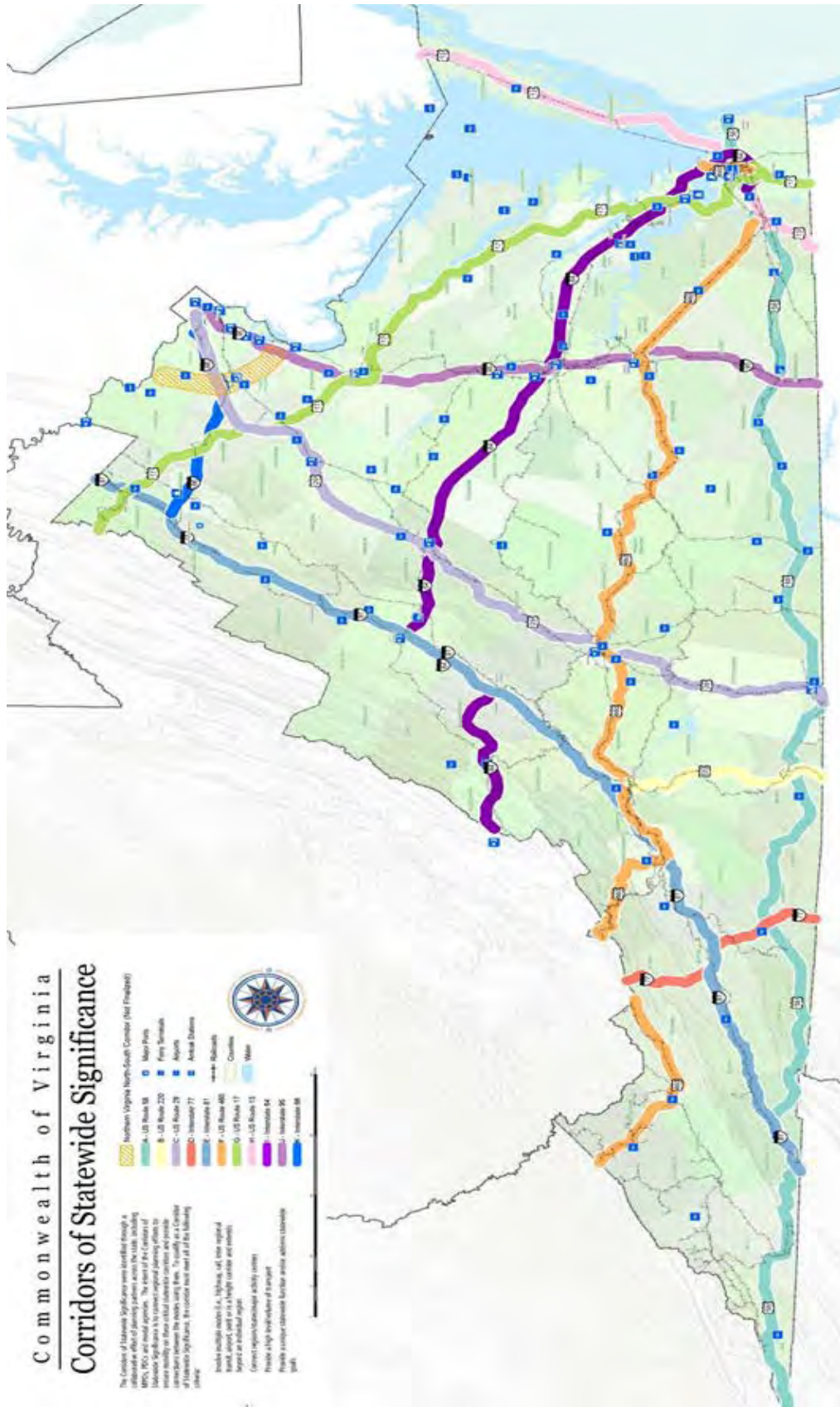
During the 2015 Session, the Virginia General Assembly passed HB 1887. Approved under HB1887, VDOT was able to accelerate the availability of funding for paving and bridge projects under this program well before the originally planned program date of FY2021. The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) recently approved the prioritization process and methodology for selecting SGR Pavement and Bridge projects. The priority ranking system required by § 33.2-369 will have two components – one for bridges eligible for State of Good Repair funding and one for pavements eligible for State of Good Repair funding.

At their February 16, 2017 meeting, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved allocations for locally-owned bridge projects under the State of Good Repair (SGR) Locally-Owned Bridge Program. The CTB approved additional locally-owned bridge projects under this program at their March 15, 2017 meeting. The complete list of approved SGR locally-owned bridge projects, which includes a total of thirteen (13) deficient bridges structures within the Buchanan County Road System can be found at the following link: [http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/resources/2017/feb/reso/Resolution\\_7\\_SGR.pdf](http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/resources/2017/feb/reso/Resolution_7_SGR.pdf). In accordance with

CTB policy, all projects receiving funding under this program must initiate the Preliminary Engineering or the Construction Phase within 24 months of award of funding or become subject to deallocation.

**VTrans 2040** (Virginia's State Highway Plan) is the statewide long-range, multimodal policy plan prepared by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. It concludes components of each region's Rural Long Range Plan. VTrans is developed by VDOT to identify needs and recommend solutions for the commonwealth's interstate and primary highway systems. The Code of Virginia requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to update the plan every five (5) years. The CTB designates Corridors of Statewide Significance. The regional transportation plans serve as the building blocks for the State Highway Plan (VTrans) and are being developed in cooperation with planning districts commissions throughout the commonwealth. The complete 2035 Cumberland Plateau Planning Commission Regional Long Range Transportation Plan can be found on the following web page: [http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/Rural/Cumberland\\_Plateau.pdf](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/resources/Rural/Cumberland_Plateau.pdf).

**U.S. Route 460 Corridor** (Heartland Corridor) passes through Buchanan County. This corridor is mostly defined by U.S. 460, which is a highway running east-to-west from Norfolk, Virginia to Frankfort, Kentucky. There are two (2) separate stretches of U.S. 460. The main highway runs between Norfolk and West Virginia, exiting Virginia West of Blacksburg in Giles County. It re-enters Virginia in the Town of Bluefield in Tazewell County and continues to the West into Kentucky.



Corridors of Statewide Significance	Corridor Major Components
Coastal Corridor	Route 17, Local Transit Services, Port of Virginia, Port of Richmond, Rappahannock River, Norfolk

<b>(Route 17)</b>	Southern Heartland Corridor, Norfolk Southern Coal Corridor, CSX National Gateway Corridor, CSX Coal Corridor, Amtrak, Norfolk International Airport, Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport
<b>Crescent Corridor (I-81)</b>	I-81, Route 11, I-381, I-581, Local Transit Services, Virginia Inland Port, Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor, Short Line Railroads, Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport, Roanoke Regional Airport
<b>East-West Corridor (I-64)</b>	I-64, Routes 250, 60 and 11, I-664, I-564, I-264, I-464, Local Transit Services, Port of Virginia, Port of Richmond, James River, York River, CSX Coal Corridor, Norfolk Southern Coal Corridor, Amtrak, Norfolk International Airport, Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport, Richmond International Airport, Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport
<b>Eastern Shore Corridor (Route 13)</b>	Route 13, Local Transit Services, Port of Virginia, Bay Coast Railroad and Barge, Norfolk Southern, CSX, Amtrak, Norfolk International Airport, Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport
<b>Heartland Corridor (US 460)</b>	Route 460, Coalfields Expressway, Local Transit Services, Port of Virginia, James River, Norfolk Southern Heartland Corridor, Elliston International, Norfolk International Airport, Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport, Richmond International Airport, Lynchburg Regional Airport, Roanoke Regional Airport
<b>North Carolina to WV Corridor (Route 220)</b>	Route 220, Local Transit Services, Norfolk Southern, Roanoke Regional Airport
<b>North – South Corridor (new)</b>	Route 234, Local Transit Services, Prince William County Parkway, Washington Dulles International Airport
<b>Northern Virginia Corridor (I-66)</b>	I-66, Routes 50 and 55, WMATA Orange Line, Virginia Railway Express, Amtrak, Local Transit Services, Virginia Inland Port, Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor, Washington Dulles International Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport
<b>Seminole Corridor (Route 29)</b>	Routes 29, 50 and 28, WMATA Orange Line, Virginia Railway Express, Local Transit Services, Norfolk Southern Crescent Corridor, Amtrak, Washington Dulles International Airport, Charlottesville Albemarle Airport, Lynchburg Regional Airport
<b>Southside Corridor (Route 58)</b>	Route 58, Local Transit Services, Port of Virginia, CSX National Gateway, Norfolk International Airport, Newport News/ Williamsburg International Airport
<b>Washington to NC Corridor (I-95)</b>	I-95, I-395, I-495, I-85, I-195, I-295, Routes 1 and 301, WMATA Blue and Yellow Lines, Local Transit Services, Virginia Railway Express, Ports of Alexandria and Richmond, James River, CSX National Gateway Corridor, Amtrak, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Richmond International Airport
<b>Western Mountain Corridor (I-77)</b>	I-77, Local Transit Service, Routes 52 and 11

**The Coalfields Expressway / Corridor Q**, two (2) major transportation initiatives, will improve travel safety and help to bring an end to the isolation that has stifled economic opportunity for generations of people in the Appalachian region. By providing safe, modern and efficient highway access, the Coalfields Expressway and Corridor Q will reduce travel time, open the area to tourism, and help reverse the region’s current population and employment decline. CFX and Corridor

Q also will provide important links to a broader network of highways that promotes trade and job growth within the multi-state Appalachian region and the nation as a whole.

While there has been widespread and long-standing support for improving highways in the Appalachian region, the cost of building roads has been a major stumbling block. Virginia lawmakers approved legislation in the mid-1990s to allow the Commonwealth to consider creative funding and construction solutions with the private sector. About a decade later, the emergence of “coal synergy” would finally set the stage to make it feasible to build the Coalfields Expressway and accelerate completion of Corridor Q.

The process of coal synergy reduces road building costs substantially by using larger-scale earth moving equipment from coal companies to prepare the road bed to rough grade, and allowing the companies to recover marketable coal reserves during the road bed preparation. It is projected that coal synergy would reduce the cost of building CFX by approximately 45% compared to traditional highway construction methods. In 2013, VDOT estimates the cost of CFX construction at \$5.1 billion using traditional construction methods. Using coal synergy, CFX could be built for \$2.8 billion.

Coalfields Expressway (CFX), designated as U.S. Route 121, is a Congressional High Priority Corridor. CFX is a proposed four-lane limited access highway to provide a modern, safe and efficient transportation artery through the coalfields region of far southwestern Virginia and southern West Virginia. The route is also expected to be an economic lifeline for Buchanan County and the region which experiences high unemployment and a declining population. It is expected that the entire multi-state Appalachian region should see a boost in commerce and tourism as a result of the Coalfields Expressway. Designated as part of the National Highway System, the new road will link Interstates 64 and 77 in West Virginia with Route 23 in Virginia, which links to interstates in Kentucky and Tennessee.

This is a region now served mainly by narrow rural roads. The expressway will provide safe

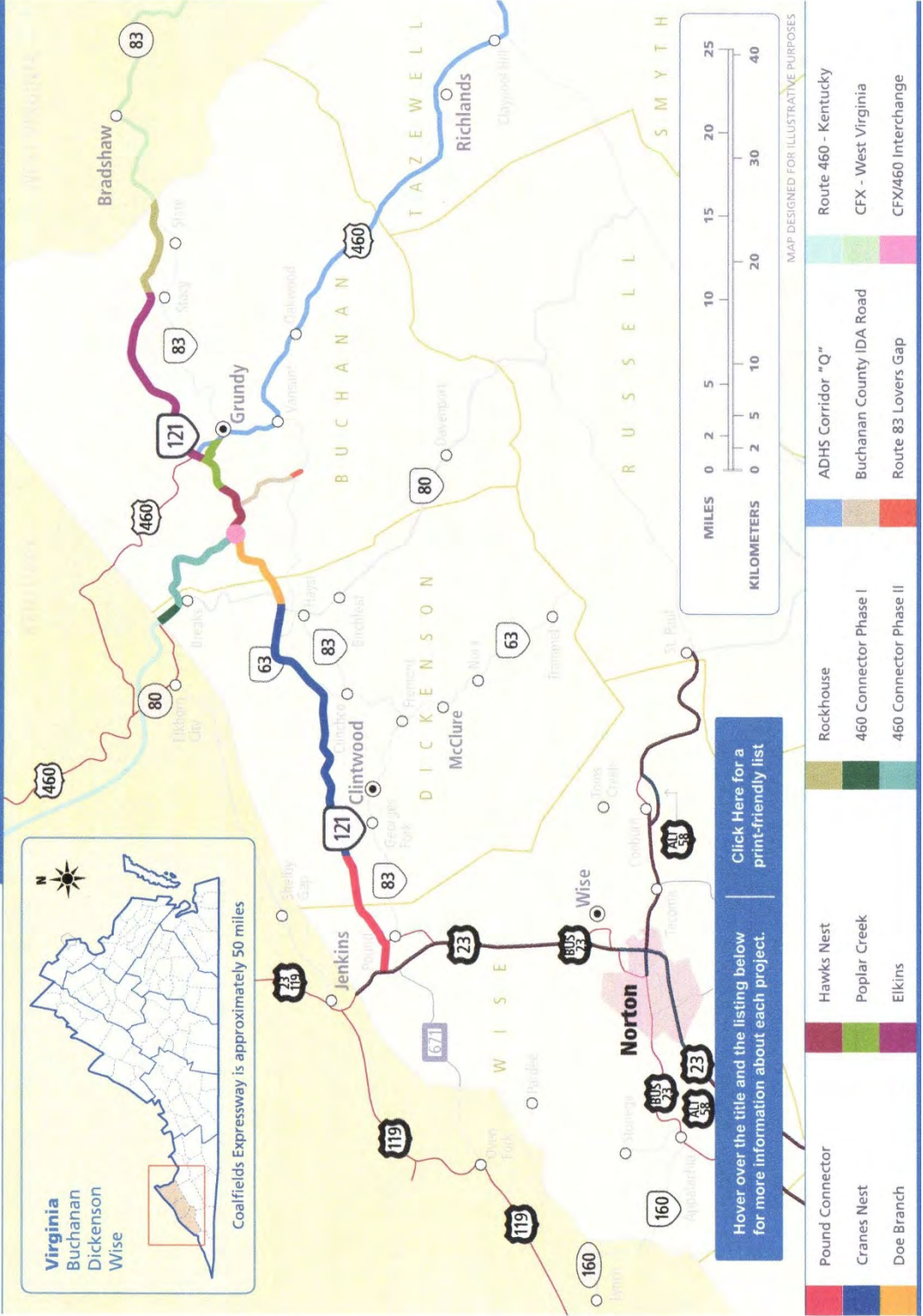


and rapid access to communities along the corridor, with interchanges connecting citizens of Pound, Clintwood, Clinchco, Haysi, Breaks, Grundy and Slate. The Virginia portion of the expressway stretches east approximately 50 miles from U.S. Route 23 near Pound, through Wise County Dickenson and Buchanan counties to the West Virginia line near Slate.

Corridor Q, designated as US Route 460, is part of the National Highway System. The Virginia portion of Corridor Q is located in southwest Virginia and shares a portion of its alignment with the CFX. Corridor Q in Virginia extends 127.5 miles eastward from the Virginia/Kentucky state line near Breaks Interstate Park to Interstate 81 near Christiansburg. Approximately 14 miles of Corridor Q in Virginia remain uncompleted with three miles currently under construction. The Kentucky portion of Corridor Q, approximately 17 miles in length, would extend westward from the Virginia/Kentucky state line to US Route 23. Kentucky currently has approximately 16 miles under construction.

Currently the Corridor Q/U.S. Route 460 Connector Phase II is under construction. This project consists of a 6.2-mile four-lane, limited access highway. Phase II is located between the U.S. Route 460 Connector Phase I, constructed near Breaks Interstate Park, Route 460 and a connection with the proposed Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway) in Buchanan County. The Phase II design-build contract with Bizzack Construction, LLC, Lexington, Ky., uses the coal synergy concept to provide a road to rough grade at a reduction in costs. A second contract will pave the road and complete the project for motorists to use. This route is designated as part of Corridor Q by the Appalachian Regional Commission and part of the Appalachian Development Highway System.

# Route 121 Coalfields Expressway



**Virginia**  
Buchanan  
Dickenson  
Wise

Coalfields Expressway is approximately 50 miles

MAP DESIGNED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES

**1 Pound Connector**

The proposed 7-mile Pound Connector begins at Route 23 near the Pound Corporate Limits in Wise County and extends into Dickenson County where it will connect to Route 83 via a connector road at Route 721.

**2 Cranes Nest**

The proposed 15.65-mile Cranes Nest segment begins near Route 83/Route 721 in Dickenson County and extends to Route 80 in Dickenson County.

**3 Doe Branch**

The proposed 5-mile Doe Branch segment begins on Route 80 near the Haysi area of Dickenson County. It travels east tying into the Corridor Q/Route 460 Connector and Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway).

**4 Hawks Nest**

The 2-mile Hawks Nest segment is located between the proposed tie in with the US Route 460 Connector Phase II and Route 614 in Buchanan County. The Hawks Nest section was completed to rough grade in summer 2011 at a cost of \$10 million, a savings to VDOT of over \$90 million using coal synergy techniques.

The Hawks Nest segment will also tie in with Buchanan County Industrial Development Authority's road, connecting to the county's Southern Gap development and Route 83 (Lovers Gap Road).

**5 Poplar Creek**

The Poplar Creek segments combined with the Route 460 Connector and the Route 460/121 connection will complete Virginia's section of federally designated Corridor Q, providing four-lane highway from the Virginia/Kentucky border to Christiansburg, Virginia. Phase A of Poplar Creek will travel from the east end of the Hawks Nest section to Route 604. Phase B of Poplar Creek will travel from Route 604 to existing Route 460 below Grundy.

**6 Elkins**

The proposed 11.5-mile Elkins segment picks up at the connection to Route 460 at Grundy and extends east to Route 643.

**7 Rockhouse**

The proposed 5-mile Rockhouse segment begins at Route 643 and will connect to West Virginia's Coalfields Expressway near Slate, W. Va.

**8 Corridor Q: Route 460 Connector Phase I**

VDOT's design-build contract for the Route 460 Connector Phase I in Buchanan County was completed September 2015. The project, located at the Kentucky State Line, included construction of twin high-level bridges that are 1,700 linear feet in length and over 250-foot-high. The bridges are currently the tallest in Virginia. They will be open to traffic in late 2017 when Kentucky opens an adjacent section of their Route 460 construction.

**9 Corridor Q: Route 460 Connector Phase II**

The 6-mile Phase II of the US Route 460 Connector travels from the end of Phase I to a proposed connection with Route 121 Coalfields Expressway.

Bizzack Construction, LLC, Lexington, Ky., is currently constructing the road to rough grade.

**10 Corridor Q Route 460 Connector and Coalfields Expressway Connection**

The .3-mile proposed project will tie together the Route 460 Connector and the Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway) in Buchanan County.

**11 ADHS Corridor Q**

Designated as US Route 460, Corridor Q is part of the National Highway System and the Appalachian Development Highway System. Corridor Q in Virginia extends 127.5 miles eastward from the Virginia/Kentucky state line near Breaks Interstate Park to Interstate 81 near Christiansburg.

The Virginia portion of Corridor Q is located in southwest Virginia and shares a portion of its alignment with Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway). Upon completion of the Route 460 Connector Phases I and II as well as connecting sections of Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway), Route 460 improvements from the Kentucky state line to Virginia Beach will be complete.

**12 Route 83 Lover's Gap**

Reconstruction of a one-mile section of Route 83 located near the intersection of Route 718 was completed in 2015. Improvements to Route 83 provide better access to Buchanan County's Southern Gap development as well as Route 121 (Coalfields Expressway).

**13 Buchanan County Industrial Development Road - Southern Gap**

The Buchanan County Industrial Development Road connects to Buchanan County's Southern Gap development, an area for residential, commercial and retail development.

# **BUCHANAN COUNTY ROAD NETWORK DEFICIENCIES**

## **Primary Routes Deficiencies**

1. U.S. 460 – Improved site distances along intersections. Reconstruct sections due to geometric deficiencies. Improve drainage. Stabilize shoulders. Guardrail installation and replacement. Replace structure no. 1044.
2. SR 83 – Reconstruct sections due to geometric deficiencies. Improved site distances. Stabilize shoulders. Improve drainage. Guardrail installation and replacement. Replace structure no. 1023.
3. SR 80 – Reconstruct sections due to geometric deficiencies. Improved site distances. Stabilize shoulders. Improve drainage. Guardrail installation and replacement.



## **BUCHANAN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES**

- Buchanan County has steep topography, with slopes in excess of 20%. Road construction that follows the natural topography reduces costs and runoff concerns but may lead to safety, line of sight and other geometric issues.
- Limited signage allowed on VDOT right of ways discourage economic development.
- Development along corridors also increase safety issues, such as multiple entrances and traffic carrying capacity of the road.
- Local involvement in the Six Year Improvement Program to ensure that statewide projects reflect the needs of Buchanan County.
- Shorten commute distances traveled by residents to work and/or school due to the topography.
- Residents are paying larger percentage of their budget on transportation fuel cost due to the distances for which they must travel.
- Safety concerns on rural roads, lack of adequate line of sight issues and lack of adequate shoulders and guardrails.
- Lack of pedestrian and bicycling transportation options in rural areas, due to lack of adequate shoulders.
- The required travel distance to a public airport transit, major bus terminal and rail line.

## **HOUSING**

### HOUSING DEMAND

Housing is a factor in the national economy, and increased building is a sign of economic growth, as well as an economic stimulator. Nationally, growth in housing is primarily determined by government decisions such as interest rates, tax codes, and regulation of financial institutions. Local and state governments have attempted to encourage housing production by providing financial incentives. Since investment in housing is so highly leveraged, the availability of money has the most significant impact on construction. The declining income of Buchanan County residents has prompted a shift in demand away from single family homes, and toward the less expensive alternative, a mobile home. The price difference between a mobile home and a site-built house makes the former the only affordable choice for many residents. While mobile homes have solved the short-term problem of housing, they also have a much shorter life-span than does a site built home, so the need for adequate housing in the future should not be forgotten.

As of 2014 single family units still make of the majority of home in Buchanan County with 60% of all homes in the county qualifying as a “single county unattached” home. However, mobile homes are rapidly increasing in number with over 37% of homes in the county qualifying as mobile homes.



Housing Composition By Type of Structure

UNITS IN STRUCTURE	Census 2000										2010 - 2013 American Community Survey									
	Buchanan	% of Total	Dickenson	% of Total	Russell	% of Total	Tazewell	% of Total	CPPDC	% of Total	Buchanan	% of Total	Dickenson	% of Total	Russell	% of Total	Tazewell	% of Total	CPPDC	% of Total
1-unit, detached	6,278	60.0%	4,148	61.6%	7,763	65.8%	12,331	67.5%	30,520	64.6%	7,278	63.2%	4,362	57.8%	8,830	65.7%	13,639	65.8%	34,109	64.1%
1-unit, attached	68	0.6%	78	1.2%	73	0.6%	277	1.5%	496	1.0%	113	1.0%	48	0.6%	268	2.0%	333	1.6%	762	1.4%
2 units	52	0.5%	27	0.4%	87	0.7%	167	0.9%	333	0.7%	46	0.4%	40	0.5%	101	0.8%	194	0.9%	381	0.7%
3 or 4 units	30	0.3%	16	0.2%	124	1.1%	351	1.9%	521	1.1%	74	0.6%	87	1.2%	224	1.7%	446	2.2%	831	1.6%
5 to 9 units	58	0.6%	82	1.2%	198	1.7%	367	2.0%	705	1.5%	103	0.9%	93	1.2%	206	1.5%	621	3.0%	1,023	1.9%
10 to 19 units	22	0.2%	61	0.9%	54	0.5%	128	0.7%	265	0.5%	110	1.0%	156	2.1%	94	0.7%	202	1.0%	562	1.1%
20 or more units	6	0.1%	42	0.6%	44	0.4%	136	0.7%	228	0.5%	70	0.6%	30	0.4%	95	0.7%	227	1.1%	422	0.8%
Mobile home	3,912	37.4%	2,271	33.7%	3,446	29.2%	4,518	24.7%	14,147	30.0%	3,703	32.2%	2,732	36.2%	3,609	26.9%	5,075	24.5%	15,119	28.4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	38	0.4%	7	0.1%	0	0.0%	2	0.0%	47	0.1%	11	0.1%	0	0.0%	12	0.1%	0	0.0%	23	0.0%
Total housing units	10,464	100.0%	6,732	100.0%	11,789	100.0%	18,277	100.0%	47,262	100.0%	11,508	100.0%	7,548	100.0%	13,439	100.1%	20,737	100.0%	53,232	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 data - 2010-2014 American Community Survey

The coal boom years of the 1970 created a growth in the number of houses built in Buchanan County. This building activity surpassed that of the rest of the counties in the district. District housing growth during these years surpassed that of the state, as increases in population and income provided stimulus to build. Between 1970 and 1980, housing stock increased by 38.7 percent, while the population of the county increased by 23.2 percent. This indicates that the number of people residing in a housing unit became smaller.

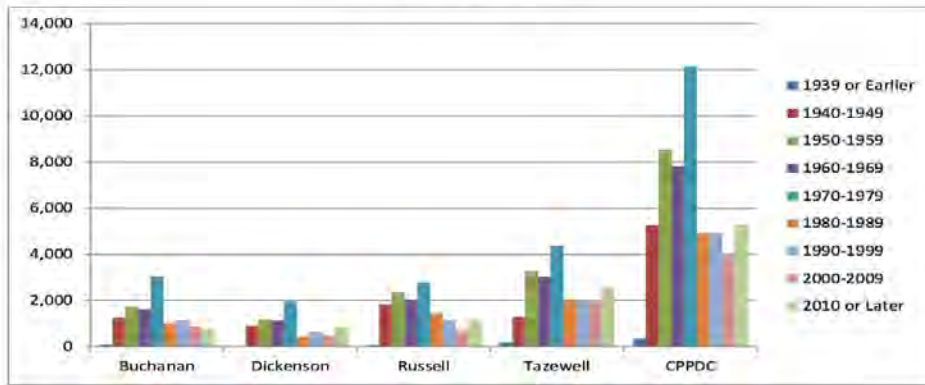
In the current decade, demand for new housing has been greatly reduced with only 75 new housing units being built in the county from 2010 to 2014. The current trends in demand for new housing in Buchanan County and surrounding areas can be seen in the figure below.

Housing Units by Year Built

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPDC	Virginia
2010 or Later	75	19	59	199	352	86,006
2000-2009	1,248	900	1,815	1,295	5,258	548,484
1990-1999	1,722	1,189	2,353	3,283	8,547	560,182
1980-1989	1,615	1,136	2,039	3,033	7,823	572,756
1970-1979	3,060	1,934	2,773	4,363	12,130	554,487
1960-1969	1,010	430	1,425	2,054	4,919	379,829
1950-1959	1,147	649	1,135	2,000	4,931	316,799
1940-1949	870	452	699	1,947	3,968	162,906
1939 or Earlier	761	839	1,141	2,563	5,304	265,136
Total	11,508	7,548	13,439	20,737	53,232	3,446,585

20010-2014 United States Census Bureau American Community Survey  
Virginia is from 2014 1 year estimate American Community Survey

Housing Units by Year Built



20010-2014 United States Census Bureau American Community Survey  
Virginia is from 2014 1 year estimate American Community Survey

## HOUSING VALUE

Between 1980 and 1987 housing values declined substantially in Buchanan County, around 18 percent. The same is true for Dickenson County, and in Russell and Tazewell Counties housing values increased slightly. However, housing prices have increased over the last several years, from 42,800 dollars in 2000 to 68,700 in 2014.

The median value for housing units in Buchanan County is 68,700 dollars, compared to Dickenson County's 72,000; Tazewell County at 89,600; and Russell County, with the highest median value of 94,500 per unit. This shows that while the housing market may be weak in

Buchanan County, housing here is more affordable.

Comparative Values for Owner Occupied Housing By Value Range

Value	2000 Census						2010-2014 American Community Survey					
	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPDC	Virginia	Buchanan 2010-2014 ACS	Dickenson 2010-2014 ACS	Russell 2010-2014 ACS	Tazewell 2010-2014 ACS	CPPDC 2010-2014 ACS	Virginia 2014 ACS
Less than \$50,000	4,861	3,016	4,360	6,315	18,552	91,881	2,861	1,717	2,153	3,453	10,184	120,905
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2,960	1,984	3,722	5,532	14,198	462,870	2,440	1,543	2,459	3,980	10,422	155,433
\$100,000 to \$149,999	499	370	1,013	1,314	3,196	373,288	880	786	1,287	2,259	5,212	223,854
\$150,000 to \$199,999	210	68	226	509	1,013	233,999	427	480	1,071	1,627	3,605	295,456
\$200,000 to \$299,999	97	53	136	301	587	209,613	451	190	989	1,296	2,926	453,886
\$300,000 to \$499,999	24	9	84	82	199	107,093	385	56	523	558	1,522	453,831
\$500,000 to \$999,999	9	13	15	60	97	28,041	85	37	75	110	307	279,469
\$1,000,000 or more	14	12	8	14	48	4,013	47	27	42	164	280	45,320
Median (dollars)	42,800	45,100	55,200	55,700	49,700	118,800	68,700	72,400	94,500	89,600	81,300	243,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 data) and 2010-2014 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Estimates

## LAND USE

### RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Residential land use encompasses the entire mix of dwelling unit types and densities.

The location, character and intensity of residential development should be linked to natural characteristics of the land, such as topography, soils, existing vegetation and water flow.

## COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Commercial land use includes all activities which are predominantly connected with the sale of products or the performance of services. This includes retail trade, office space, personal and professional services, and entertainment facilities. Retail establishments can be classified according to the type market that they serve, such as regional, community, or neighborhood scales. Convenience, neighborhood and community scale retail provide every day, immediate goods, while regional and sub-regional retail provide more specialized goods.

### Commercial land use guidelines:

1. Provisions should be made for two principle types of commercial areas: neighborhood shopping areas and community shopping areas.
2. New commercial developments should be in the form of unified and concentrated planned developments. Spot commercial development in residential neighborhoods and the stringing out of commercial development along streets, or what has been referred to as a strip commercial development, should be discouraged.
3. Commercial areas should not detract from residential and industrial development nor should residential and industrial development adversely affect commercial areas.
4. The protection of pedestrian traffic should be given adequate consideration to insure the safety and flow of pedestrians in new commercial development areas without unnecessary interruption of

automobile traffic.

5. Existing commercial establishments should be encouraged and assisted to the fullest extent possible in correcting any deficiencies, to improve traffic safety and convenience.

### INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Activities predominantly connected with the manufacturing, assembly, processing, storage and distribution of products are considered industrial. Industrial facilities place a heavy demand on local resources, and have the greatest impact on the surrounding environment. Land use policies which promote the efficient utilization of industrial development is to be realized. The location must respect air and water flows and the more visible environmental features.

In general, "cleaner" industries are preferred over those which employ heavily impactive processes. Any new industrial activity should not impede the county's efforts to meet established environmental quality standards. In order to attract desired industries, it is necessary to reserve enough suitable land as is deemed necessary for future growth. Industrial activities should be located where land use buffers can be established to separate and protect non-industrial uses, and where natural land characteristics are conducive to high site development intensities.

#### **Industrial land use guidelines:**

1. Industrial development should take place on land having stable, well drained soils. Topography should be reasonably level and free from flooding and grading problems. Climatic factors such as prevailing

wind speed and directions should be considered in potential industrial locations.

2. Appropriate transportation facilities with good access to highways, and where possible rail facilities, should be available to industrial areas. Industrial plants which generate large volumes of traffic should be located on major streets so as not to encourage traffic through residential areas; and, where possible, industrial areas should be buffered by major highways, railroads, and greenbelt areas, greater set-back depth or natural topographic features.
3. Basic utilities such as water, sewer, electricity, and gas should be available in adequate capacities to industrial areas.
4. Site size requirements for different types of industrial usage vary widely as does the locational requirements. Therefore, there should be provided a range of choice in site sizes and location with sufficient flexibility to meet the need of a wide variety of industries.
5. Land set aside for industrial use should not overshadow other community needs nor be arranged so as to hinder proper residential or commercial growth. At the same time, it is equally important that residences and commercial establishments not be allowed to encroach upon land planned for industrial use.

## RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACES

The recreational and open space areas are ordinarily included in a larger category "public and semi-public lands" which includes areas containing schools, churches, police stations and other necessary lands. Although recreation will be dealt with in the community facilities category, recreational space and open space land use guidelines are presented in the land use plan.

### **Recreational and open space land use guidelines:**

1. Appropriately located community recreation facilities should be provided to serve the residents. These facilities should be adequate in terms of size, number and variety. The facilities should serve the needs of the total population.
2. Places of historical significance, as well as areas having rare natural beauty should be preserved and well maintained.
3. Whenever possible, natural boundaries such as steeply sloping ridges, sinkable areas, areas of exposed bedrock, stream flood plains, and the areas unsuitable for urban development should be used as natural dividers between neighborhoods and retained as recreation and for open spaces.
4. Areas designated in the land use plan as intended for permanent open space or recreation should be reserved as such.
5. Agricultural uses should be retained in areas subject to periodic

flooding and in outlying areas where premature urbanization would be detrimental to the community.

6. Where feasible, land use for the production or extraction of natural resources should be isolated in compact areas so as not to detract from the beauty and integrity of the community.

### RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Residential land use encompasses the entire mix of dwelling unit types and densities. The location, character and intensity of residential development should be linked to natural characteristics of the land, such as topography, soils, existing vegetation and water flow.

### SUITABILITY

The ability of soil to support various land uses effects suitability. Soil properties such as percolation, compaction, shrink-swell potential, density, slope, depth to bedrock, underlying material, location, water table and composition are factors considered in determining the suitability and limitations that soil may possess for different land uses.

### SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE

A comprehensive view of the existing land use composition in Buchanan County was determined approximately eighteen years ago. Recent field studies indicate slight changes in land use acreage since the original calculations were compiled.



The total amount of developed land in Buchanan County has grown by an estimated 2,120 acres since the original land use studies were completed. The greatest amount of growth has taken place in residential land use. This can be attributed to two main reasons, population growth during the 1970's and fewer persons living in each housing unit. In addition to residential land use, more acreage is being devoted to industrial, commercial (trade), and public land use, although some buildings have been abandoned or temporarily vacated due to economic conditions in the 1980's and the outward migration that resulted from those economic declines.

### EDUCATION

Buchanan County has 10 public schools. Total enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year was 2,974 students. Enrollment has declined significantly over the past several decades. For example, enrollment on August 31, 1993 was 5,732. In fact enrollment has been on the decline since the 1960's, following the same trend as most schools in Southwest Virginia and the Appalachian region. For instance, enrollment for the 1975-1976 school year was 9,614, and improvements were needed at many schools in order to reduce crowding. Now, focus is on building maintenance, improving test scores and maintaining a high quality teaching staff.

Pupil Teacher Ratios Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015

Table 21

<b>Elementary</b>	Virginia	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell
Teaching Positions	57,644.07	163.50	113.50	199.45	368.75
End of Year Membership, K-7	765,380.04	1,778.12	1,374.38	2,402.65	3,750.64
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	13.28	10.88	12.11	12.05	10.17
<b>Secondary</b>					
Teaching Positions	37,064.10	117.00	66.50	125.94	164.40
End of Year Membership, 8-12	463,019.57	1,195.69	842.29	1,537.67	2,229.04
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	12.49	10.22	12.67	12.21	13.56

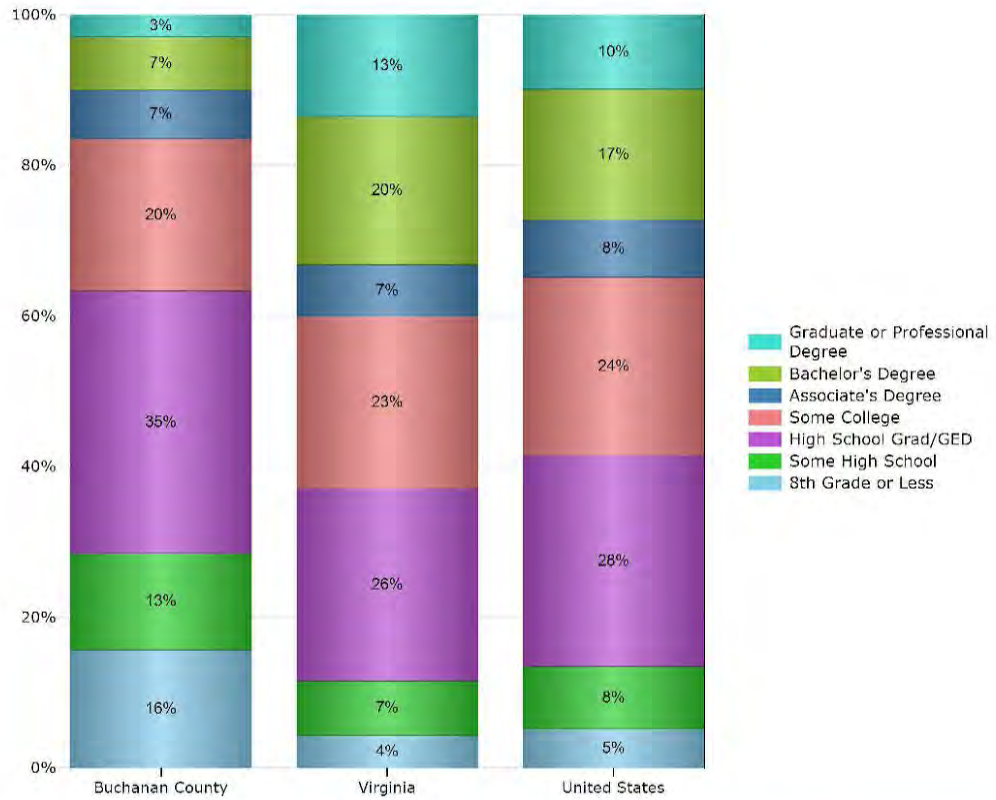
Source: Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Annual Report

Public responsibility for education does not stop at the provision of schools and libraries, it extends to such diverse areas as public television and radio, adult literacy, and job training. Educational television and radio provide ways of making specialized information available to the majority of the population.

Colleges and universities are often the best providers of higher education for non-traditional adult students in this region, and these institutions may require local government assistance in performing this function. Community-based educational programs or extension services sometimes need the part-time use of public facilities to hold weekend and evening programs. Schools, libraries, and other public structures should be made available for this purpose.

### Educational Attainment

(Population 18 years and over)



	Buchanan County	Virginia	United States
<b>8th Grade or Less</b>	3,024	275,329	12,639,425
<b>Some High School</b>	2,470	464,075	20,093,117
<b>High School Grad/GED</b>	6,709	1,633,105	68,044,371
<b>Some College</b>	3,895	1,457,887	57,431,237
<b>Associate's Degree</b>	1,258	440,219	18,586,866
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	1,351	1,258,661	42,027,629
<b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>	565	862,686	24,008,551
	<b>19,272</b>	<b>6,391,962</b>	<b>242,831,196</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
American Community Survey, 2011-2015.

Two major institutions of higher learning in the county are the Appalachian School of Pharmacy (ASP) and the Appalachian School of Law (ASL). Both of these institutions offer professional degrees in their respective fields. Enrollment in ASP has remained strong with 225 students enrolled in their full time program. Enrollment in ASL has declined in recent years, slipping below 150 students in 2016. Enrollment has seemed to recover somewhat as of 2017 with the closure of some competing law schools.

Southwest Virginia Community College operates the Booth Center in Grundy jointly with ASL. This facility offers classes leading to an R.N. degree and provides employment training such as computer classes through the JTPA program. Another educational facility in the immediate area is the SVCC A.R.C.H.S. Incorporated Education and Training Center in Haysi, Virginia. Although it is located in Dickenson County, it can be reached in a few minutes by many of Buchanan County's residents.

The following colleges are located within three hours driving time from Buchanan County :

University of Virginia at Wise	Wise, VA
Emory and Henry College	Emory, VA
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State Univ.	Blacksburg, VA
Radford University	Radford, VA
East TN State University	Johnson City, TN
King College	Bristol, TN
Lincoln Memorial University	Harrogate, TN
Pikeville College	Pikeville, KY
Southwest Virginia Community College	Richlands, VA
Appalachian School of Law	Grundey, Va
Appalachian School of Pharmacy	Oakwood, VA

## INDUSTRIAL PARKS

Built in 2004 Buchanan County has invested heavily in developing modern infrastructure and buildings to suit industry needs. The Buchanan Information Park is a modern, multi-tenant facility that has approximately 26,000 sq. ft. of available office space.



Buchanan County has numerous other sites which are well suited for industrial facilities. Most of these sites are situated in the valleys of the county, and lie alongside public highways, streams and the Norfolk & Southern Corporation's rail lines. Most of these sites are currently being used, or have been used, as sites for coal preparation and loading facilities. As the coal industry continues to decline, less of these sites will be needed for use by the coal industry. These sites are served by public water and sewer facilities and are accessible to large gas transmission lines. An example of such a site is the location of Island Creek Coal Company's Beatrice/Pocahontas mine. This site is located directly across the Levisa River from U.S. Route 460 (a four - lane highway) between Oakwood and Keen Mountain, Virginia. The site contains

approximately twenty acres of level land; is served by the Norfolk & Southern Corporation's rail line; is served by public water and public sewer; and is located within close proximity to several gas transmission lines, which transmit to areas outside of the County millions of cubic feet of gas per day which has been produced in Buchanan County. The site is also located near abundant supplies of high grade bituminous coal and hardwood timber. The site has not been used for coal mining for several years, and some reclamation work has been completed on the site.

There are also numerous large tracts of level land which lie along the ridgetops of the County which may be developed for industrial use or for use by the tourism industry. Many of these sites have magnificent views.

### HOSPITALS

Approximately 20 primary care physicians provide health care services in Buchanan County. The Buchanan General Hospital, which is located on State Route 83 in Slate Creek, provides ICU, PCCU, laser surgery, minor and major surgery as well as same-day surgery services. The Buchanan General offers many other services including ultrasound, mammography and physical therapy.

Regional hospitals include:

Russell County Medical Center	Lebanon, VA
Norton Community Hospital	Norton, VA
St. Mary's Hospital	Norton, VA
Wise Appalachian Regional Hospital	Wise, VA
Johnston Memorial Hospital	Abingdon, VA

Bristol Regional Hospital	Bristol, TN
Indian Path Pavilion	Kingsport, TN
Indian Path Hospital	Kingsport, TN
Holston Valley Medical Center	Kingsport, TN
Buchanan County General	Grundy, VA

### PUBLIC SAFETY

A major responsibility of local government is to keep public order and to protect citizens from the dangers of crime, fire and natural catastrophes. Volunteer fire departments in Buchanan County work to protect all the development in the county from fire. Each department serves a roughly defined area in the county, but each one has a mutual agreement with the others to assist each other upon request.

Police protection in Buchanan County is provided by the Buchanan County Sheriff's Department, which has 33 sworn officers, the Town of Grundy Police Department, which has 4 sworn officers, and several Virginia State Police Officers. Vansant is the location of this area's Virginia State Police Headquarters. Police activities include the prevention of crime, apprehension of offenders, recovery of property and regulation of noncriminal conduct.

The duties of policemen in a rural county such as Buchanan also include traffic supervision, patrolling, prevention of delinquency, crime investigation, and performance of administrative functions within the department. Buchanan County police departments should continue efforts to obtain new equipment in order to provide the latest technology available to aid the police in crime prevention and detection.

Rescue squad units are located throughout Buchanan County to offer assistance to all citizens of the community on a twenty-four hour basis. These organizations provide on-the-spot first aid to victims of accidents, natural disasters, sudden illness or any other emergency situation.

### RECREATION

The Breaks Interstate Park is a recreational and scenic area encompassing 4,500 acres located on the Virginia-Kentucky border in Dickenson County. The park's close proximity to Buchanan County allows residents of both counties to enjoy the facilities and share the benefits of the park's increasing recognition. The park includes a 1,000 foot deep canyon carved by the Russell Fork River, which is often referred to as the "Grand Canyon of the South".

### SEWERAGE

The Buchanan County Public Service Authority plans and designs the county's sewer projects. This agency is responsible for dealing with all water, sewer, solid waste and air pollution problems within the county. The sewer treatment capacity is 1,250,000 gallons per day, with an average of 314,490 gallons per day being treated. Sewerage from the town of Grundy is treated at the Conaway treatment plant.

### SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid Waste is defined as any type of garbage or refuse including solid, liquid, semi-solid or contained gaseous material. This includes industrial, hazardous, medical and municipal waste,



each of which requires different treatment. Most of these waste types are strictly regulated by federal agencies, but several aspects of their collection, processing, and disposal are local planning issues. Solid Waste collection and disposal is a growing responsibility for county, city and town governments.

Once refuse has been collected, there are two main methods of preparing it for final disposal, incineration and compacting. Both methods are aimed at reducing the mass and volume of waste, the former by burning and the latter by compression. Incineration, although sometimes thought to be more cost effective and efficient, may produce gaseous pollutants which can be removed from the exhaust gases only by stack scrubbing. However, wet scrubbers produce liquid effluent, creating a trade off between polluted air and polluted water. The heat generated by combustion can be recovered for beneficial uses such as the generation of steam, chilled water or electricity. Compacted waste is placed in a sanitary landfill, where fresh waste is covered with clean fill.

There are a number of ways to limit the need for disposal, including recycling, source reduction, composting and energy reclamation. All of these methods should be elements of a comprehensive solid waste management program.

Buchanan County operated a non-hazardous industrial waste disposal facility, but this landfill closed in the Spring of 1994. At this time disposal services are being provided by the Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority (CPRWMA). A regional approach to solid waste management is offered by the Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority, which includes Dickenson, Buchanan and Russell Counties. The authority has signed a five-year option with BFI, Inc., to dispose of solid waste at a facility outside the three-county

area.

Three transfer stations should be constructed, one in each county. Buchanan County will send its waste to the county transfer station, where the waste becomes property of the authority.

The Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority has compiled a regional waste management plan and is reviewing waste management options being operated successfully in other regions, in order to provide the three-county area with safe and adequate disposal in the future.

Private landfills will not be established in Buchanan County until the private enterprise meets the requirements of each ordinance of Buchanan County, including, but not limited to, performance standards, health, and safety ordinances.

## WATER

As stated in the survey of Buchanan County's natural resources, a safe, clean, and dependable water supply is required for many commercial, industrial, agricultural and recreational purposes. Coal mining operations have damaged the supply of groundwater in Buchanan County. Underground aquifers have been depleted in some areas and only a small amount of groundwater is still available.

Lack of water is a major problem for many residents in the outlying areas and remote sections of the county. Projects are currently underway to provide adequate water services for all of Buchanan County.

A master water plan has been designed for Buchanan County by Thompson and Litton

Engineers. The first priority is to replace water lines in the town of Grundy. The plan will be developed, designed, and installed in phases. The Buchanan County Public Service Authority provides water for much of Buchanan County. The PSA's average daily water use is approximately 3,947,556 gallons.

## **FINANCE**

### **BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

Business and industrial financial assistance is available through the Buchanan County Industrial Development Authority. This Authority is empowered to issue Industrial Revenue Bonds and can also act as the recipient of Virginia Revolving Loan Funds.

The Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA) manages a financing program that provides grants and loans for infrastructure improvements and for the location of new industry and the expansion of existing industry. Its funding is derived from a portion of the coal severance tax. The VCEDA maintains a current listing of all available industrial property in its service area, and coordinates its activities with the local government jurisdictions that it serves. The Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority also serves as an advocate for the coalfield region, representatives from VCEDA serve on numerous organizations, committees, and special task forces dealing with economic development related issues for the coalfields.

### **TAX RATES**

Buchanan County has a 1% local sales tax above and beyond the 4.3% state sales tax imposed on sale of goods throughout the state. The amount of taxable sales in Buchanan County has risen over 20% in the past 15 years. This rise is within the same approximate range as other counties in the area.

Taxable Sales  
2000-2015

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPDC
2000	\$115,923,478	\$48,398,260	\$107,862,419	\$409,177,303	\$681,361,460
2001	\$114,597,950	\$47,977,617	\$101,878,423	\$414,883,974	\$679,337,964
2002	\$114,720,922	\$49,531,310	\$122,525,574	\$421,810,028	\$708,587,834
2003	\$112,152,118	\$50,249,767	\$129,188,820	\$439,228,597	\$730,819,302
2004	\$116,924,712	\$52,914,791	\$138,753,368	\$462,767,675	\$771,360,546
2005	\$107,211,477	\$50,357,215	\$132,085,662	\$433,462,904	\$723,117,258
2006	\$123,290,187	\$57,182,687	\$149,040,720	\$503,888,173	\$833,401,767
2007	\$127,687,900	\$60,083,344	\$156,657,814	\$520,718,233	\$865,147,291
2008	\$139,948,887	\$63,232,095	\$161,030,985	\$541,605,045	\$905,817,012
2009	\$127,560,716	\$64,054,957	\$157,889,960	\$532,354,982	\$881,860,615
2010	\$125,345,514	\$65,984,411	\$158,276,136	\$531,158,462	\$880,764,523
2011	\$142,304,553	\$68,042,398	\$159,840,501	\$540,216,247	\$910,403,699
2012	\$156,984,874	\$66,417,728	\$160,139,687	\$552,018,668	\$935,560,957
2013	\$148,802,737	\$65,552,723	\$153,199,811	\$527,292,801	\$894,848,072
2014	\$147,726,232	\$69,962,263	\$159,893,054	\$521,246,767	\$898,828,316
2015	\$141,875,222	\$60,520,561	\$172,010,922	\$531,489,881	\$905,896,586

Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

A portion of the coal severance tax provides revenue for the Buchanan County general fund. The coal severance tax is also used for road improvements.

Real Estate tax in Grundy is .39 cents, and personal property tax is 1.95 dollars per hundred dollars of assessed value.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

**Goal: Improve the quality of education for all students.**

Objective: Structure curricula to promote acquisition of basic educational skills.

**Policies:**

1. Promote the development of a satellite educational system.
2. Expand special needs programs.
3. Carefully monitor population and enrollment trends to accurately project educational needs.

**Goal: To encourage an acceptable level of community facilities to be located in areas throughout Buchanan County where they will be most efficiently and effectively utilized.**

Objective: Provide all citizens of Buchanan County with access to community facilities.

**Policies:**

1. Insist that all new public buildings are built in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Follow the county ADA Plan to make the necessary renovations to existing public buildings, to ensure that they meet ADA standards.

## ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

**Goal: To diversify the county's economic base in order to reduce the dependence on coal mining.**

Objective: Foster new or expanding local business by creating the necessary incentives. Policies:

1. Work with financial institutions to improve the availability of venture capital for existing and new industries.
2. Provide a highly trained and motivated work force by using jobs training programs to improve the skills of unemployed and underemployed workers.
3. Increase inventory of industrial buildings and developed land.
4. Commit resources into market research and technical assistance for local businessmen and local developers.
5. Encourage the development of industries utilizing raw materials from our area's natural resources.

**Goal: To reduce the number of persons and families living below poverty level.**

Objective: Strengthen Buchanan County's economy so that all residents will have access to suitable employment.

Policies;

1. Continue area-specific industrial marketing and recruitment program.
2. Improve entrepreneurial opportunities, especially for unemployed workers.
3. Improve access to skill training programs and enhance the programs' linkages with industry.

## FINANCE

**Goal: To provide the needed funding for county improvements and expansions.**

Objective: Maintain an adequate tax base.

Policies:

1. Consider the development of retirement facilities as a potential foundation for diversified future growth and revenue.
2. Consider long terms gams from increased public investment in education, transportation, and public utilities.
3. Support efforts to collect all assessed taxes.

Objective: Use Geographic Information System technology to develop an organized, up-to-date cadastral system. Policies:

1. Convert Buchanan County tax maps into digital format and link the geographical features with all tabular data relative to each parcel.
1. Periodically renew data in order to sustain accurate records.

## HOUSING

**Goal: To expand the range of housing opportunities for all county citizens.**

Objective: Define and implement a residential development policy which will protect and enhance the right of citizens of modest means to acquire housing.

### Policies:

1. Develop programs to construct affordable housing.
2. Support the development of housing for citizens who are handicapped.
3. Support the development of low-income housing.
4. Support the development of alternative housing options for senior citizens.

Objective: Provide for safe and attractive housing and housing areas.

### Policies:

1. Encourage property owners to maintain their dwelling units.
2. Promote rehabilitation of existing housing units which are below standards, where possible seek federal and state funding to assist in making the renovations.
3. Encourage cleaning and fix-up campaigns, calling upon the civic and church groups within the community.
4. Sponsor a housing maintenance/housekeeping educational training program.



## LAND USE

**Goal: To encourage harmonious and wise use of land through future developmental decisions.**

Objective: Implement a land use plan which will be used to guide future development.

### Policies:

1. Encourage new housing in areas where water and sewer service exists or is planned.
2. Encourage development to occur in a manner which will best utilize the natural characteristics of the land.
3. Discourage non-residential encroachment on residential areas, where feasible and in the best interest of the area.

## TRANSPORTATION

**Goal: To promote feasible solutions to relieve current traffic problems and support future land use objectives.**

Objective: Provide a street and highway system that is compatible with residential, commercial and industrial uses.

### Policies:

1. Encourage improvement in the primary and secondary road system.
2. Improve traffic flow and circulation in the commercial areas.
3. Encourage the development of the Coalfield Expressway.
4. Encourage the development of scenic roads to help develop tourism.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

A number of tools and mechanisms may be used to implement a comprehensive plan. These tools are mostly the responsibility of local governments and their administrative officials. The effectiveness of these tools is dependent upon official commitment and citizen understanding and endorsement. Some of the more common methods of plan implementation include capital improvement programs, water and sewer facilities, subdivision regulations, road improvement programs, community codes, ordinances and several state and federal grant and loan programs.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM**

A capital improvements plan is a very effective implementation tool. This program is a budgetary listing of all major public improvements needed over the next five to ten years, along with the estimated costs of the improvements. The improvements are itemized on the basis of priorities. Advantages to preparing such a budget are that ample time is available for perfection of designs and gaining the best deal in terms construction costs, and adequate time is also available for selecting the least burdensome method of financing.

### **COMMUNITY CODES**

Housing, building, plumbing, electrical and fire codes are important to the implementation of any planning program. Codes can aid in ensuring adequate health, sanitation and safety standards for the citizens of the county.

### **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

Performance standards can be used in the implementation of plans. They can be used as a method of insuring that sub-standard development does not occur. Performance standards may be oriented toward flood protection, preservation of open space and agriculture lands,

historical and cultural areas, as well as the more traditional residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

### CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

The citizens, individually and collectively, can be of assistance and important in implementing the comprehensive plan by keeping well informed to the changes in Buchanan County's growth patterns and using this knowledge to formulate sound and sensible recommendations for needed revisions to the plan; by fostering widespread support for the goals; by working with the administrative officials, offering advice and suggestions; and by supporting other governmental and planning endeavors which endorse updates of the plan.

### SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are available as a way by which control can be exercised over the division and development of land. They may be used to set standards for future development by establishing design standards for block lengths and widths, street widths and grades, street intersections, street alignment, lot sizes and other important features. Subdivision regulations may be used to require the installation of basic improvements on land being developed, such as water distribution and sewage collection facilities, utilities easements, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, etc. They may also be used to require open space or recreation areas.

### LAND ACQUISITION AND ASSESSMENT

The acquisition and/or assessment of land areas by a jurisdiction for the preservation of open space, natural, or agricultural areas, is becoming important as a planning tool. Land acquisition obtained by total, partial, lease, sale, rental or other techniques provides a wide range

of alternatives for Buchanan County or for any town therein.