

SCOTT COUNTY, VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2022 UPDATE

Prepared by:

Scott County Planning Commission

with assistance provided by:

LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

ADOPTED BY:

SCOTT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
July 6, 2022

SCOTT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
July 6, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
HISTORY AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS	I-1 thru I-6
NATURAL RESOURCES	II-1 thru II-5
POPULATION	III-1 thru III-3
ECONOMY.....	IV-1 thru IV-7
HOUSING.....	V-1 thru V-2
TRANSPORTATION	VI-1 thru VI-6
COMMUNITY FACILITIES	VII-1 thru VII-9
LAND USE.....	VIII-1 thru VIII-3
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	IX-1 thru IX-7
IMPLEMENTATION.....	X-1 thru X-3

APPENDIX A	EXISTING LAND USE MAP
APPENDIX B	FUTURE LAND USE MAP / TRANSPORTATION MAP PROJECT COSTS/VISUALS LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) RATINGS

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Scott County Comprehensive Plan

AUTHOR: Scott County Planning Commission

SUBJECT: A plan for the physical development of
Scott County, Virginia

DATE: July 6, 2022

PLANNING AGENCY: LENOWISCO Planning District Commission

SOURCE OF COPIES: County of Scott

ABSTRACT: The Scott County Comprehensive Plan is a community guide
for orderly growth and development.

Statements of goals and objectives and future land use form the heart of the plan and are intended to aid public and private decision makers in promoting the most beneficial arrangement of land use and related public services.

The plan was developed through an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, leading to policy determinations that will best achieve the community development aspirations of the citizens of Scott County, Virginia.

Chapter I

History and Physical Characteristics

Location

Scott County is located in the far southwestern corner of the Commonwealth of Virginia, adjoining Tennessee on the south and separated from Kentucky to the northwest by Lee and Wise Counties. Gate City, the county seat, is 290 air-miles west of the state capital of Richmond. The roughly triangular outline of the County's boundaries is formed by a somewhat winding mountain ridge on the northwest and by straight lines on the south and east. The greatest distance across the county from east to west is about 38 miles and from north to south about 21 miles. The county comprises an area of 538 square miles, or 344,320 acres.

Historical Perspective

The territory now identified as Scott County was hunted over and fought for by many tribes of Indians. According to evidence found by early settlers, an Indian village once stood on the south bank of Clinch River near the mouth of Stony Creek.

Next to the rich virgin soil, wild game was perhaps the greatest inducement to the pioneer hunters to enter a wilderness often made dangerous by hostile Indians. Some of these men came as Long Hunters and fur traders, explored the country, and marked traces to be followed by adventurous home seekers and their families. These early explorations and settlements would hardly have been possible without the food the wild game provided.

Forts were built for protection against Indians. The Block-house, built sometime before 1782 and situated about four miles southeast of Big Moccasin Gap at the meeting point of the pioneer roads from Virginia and North Carolina, was one of the most widely known places on the Wilderness Road. It was possibly the only blockhouse in the county, the other forts being log cabins and stockades.

Fort Blackmore, early a famous fort, was situated on an ancient elevated flood plain on the north side of the Clinch River opposite the mouth of Rocky Branch. For many years this fort was on the extreme frontier of Virginia and was used by hunters, explorers, adventurers, and home seekers for rest and refreshment. Daniel Boone was in command of Fort Blackmore and other forts on the Clinch River in 1774 while the militiamen were engaged in the Point Pleasant campaign of Dunmore's war.

Many other forts were built in the early days. In Rye Cove, Crisman's Fort was built in 1776 and Carter's Fort in 1784. Porter's Fort was built on Fall Creek in 1775. Fort Houston was built probably soon after 1774 on Big Moccasin Creek, near the present Russell County line, and was a place of safety for the earliest settlers in that valley. Dorton's Fort, built one mile southwest of Nickelsville around 1790, was not as exposed to Indian attacks as the forts built earlier.

Big Moccasin Gap, a breach in the hard rocks of Clinch Mountain, is perhaps the most important natural feature in the county, for in it centered much of the early history and development. Through the gap Daniel Boone and his companions carved the Wilderness Road to Kentucky in 1775 and through it thousands of pioneer settlers passed on their way to Kentucky and the Midwest. Most of the goods used by the people who lived north of the Clinch River were hauled through the gap before the coming of the railroad. The first railroad in the county was built through Big Moccasin Gap, and most of the main highways now lead toward it.

Thomas McCulloch, the first settler, located in 1769 on Big Moccasin Creek, near Fort Houston. From 1769 to 1782, many people came to live in what is now Scott County, and settlements increased until they reached nearly all sections. In 1790, strongly built houses began to take the place of forts. One of these, the Old Kilgore Fort House, about 2 miles west of Nickelsville, is still standing, and is likely the oldest house in the county. Convenience to water was one of the main considerations in the selection of home sites, and most of the early homes were located on lowland.

The early settlers were mainly Scotch-Irish, though some were of English descent. They came from eastern Virginia, from Augusta County, Virginia, from Yadkin Valley, North Carolina, and a few from Ireland. Some of the thousands who traveled the Old Wilderness Road on their way westward grew weary of traveling, turned aside, and settled in the Scott County territory. A string of log cabins soon lined the Wilderness Road from the Blockhouse to Kane Gap, in Powell Mountain.

Scott County was formed by an act of the General Assembly on November 24, 1814, from parts of Washington, Lee, and Russell Counties, and was named for General Winfield Scott. Its area in 1830 was 624 square miles. In 1856 part of Scott County was taken to form part of Wise County. The first court was held in a dwelling at Big Moccasin Gap in 1815, and the first public free schools were opened in 1870.

Climate

The climate of Scott County can be characterized as continental and warm-to-temperate. Winters are short and cool, with the average temperature about 36.5 degrees Fahrenheit. Warm spells, during which day temperatures may reach into the middle 60's for a week at a time, are not unusual. The summer season is warm, with an approximate average temperature of 77 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall is well distributed with the greatest mean rainfall occurring during the summer and winter, and the least average annual rainfall experienced during the fall season. This is conducive to the harvesting of local crops. Rainfalls are characteristically light-to-medium during the summer season with occasionally heavy thunderstorms. Late winter and spring are characterized by sudden, heavy rainfalls which, in combination with existing steep terrains in some areas of the county, result in periodic flash flooding.

There is no distinct dry season, although local droughts sometimes cause light damage to crops. Hail also causes light damage to crops. Snowfalls are generally light and remain on the ground for only short periods of time. Tornadoes are extremely rare with most of the high and potentially damaging winds resulting from tropical storms which occur on the east coast. Average monthly precipitation amounts are recorded by the U.S. Weather Station in Mendota in nearby Washington County, Virginia.

Topography and Relief

Almost the entire land area of Scott County is located within a physiographic subdivision of the Appalachian Province called the Appalachian Valley. This Appalachian Valley extends from New York to Alabama, taking in the western portion of Virginia. A small section of northern Scott County is the exception; this region is situated in the Cumberland Plateau division of the Appalachian Province.

Most of Scott County is characterized by a succession of hills, ridges and valleys. Some of the smoothest uplands are located on Copper Ridge, Moccasin Ridge, in Rye Cove, in the valley of the North Fork of the Clinch River near Pattonville and Fairview, and in Poor Valley. Yet even in these relatively smooth uplands, hilly and steep topography exists. The smoothest relief within the county lies in the stream terraces and stream "bottom" land. Such areas are located along the North Fork of the Holston River; in Poor Valley near Maces Spring and Hiltons; near Big Moccasin Creek and Copper Creek; along the Clinch River near Ft. Blackmore, Dungannon; along Stony Creek north of Ft. Blackmore; and along the North Fork of the Clinch River near Duffield.

Elevations throughout Scott County range from 1,200 feet at the junction points of the North Fork of the Holston River, the Clinch River and the Virginia-Tennessee state boundaries, to a point at Camp Rock in northern Scott County where the elevation is 3,860 feet. The overall slope of the total county topography is generally southwestward.

Although the county's highest point is at 3,860 feet, its towns and communities are located at considerably lower elevations. Flatwoods, a small community in northern Scott County, has an approximate elevation of 2,100 feet; Dungannon, 1,311 feet; and Ft. Blackmore, 1,268 feet. The county's easternmost locations are Nickelsville at 2,000 feet, and the community of Snowflake at 1,579 feet. In the county's southern areas are Maces Spring and Gate City at 1,363 and 1,304 feet respectively, and Hiltons at 1,311 feet. In the western section are Pattonville at 1,326 feet; Duffield, 1,320 feet; Speers Ferry, 1,208 feet; Clinchport, 1,245 feet; and Fairview at 1,208 feet. Scott County's historically rural character and mountainous terrain have helped maintain a pattern of small towns and communities. Most of these population areas are located near rivers or large creeks, in county valleys, and in some cases, such as Gate City and Weber City, in close proximity to natural passage ways through mountain chains.

Air Quality

At this time, Scott County has no significant negative contributor to its air quality. In addition to air quality, there are no known producers of noise pollution in Scott County at present.

Geology

Scott County is comprised of expansive, alternating ridges and paralleling valleys and low-lying hills. In general terms, the northwestern edge of the county falls within the Appalachian Plateau Province. This Appalachian Plateau is comprised of generally flat-lying relatively undisturbed, alternating beds of dolomite, shale, sandstone and coal. The rest of Scott County lies within the Ridge and Valley Province and is underlain by limestone, shale and sandstone. The rock beds of this Ridge and Valley Province have experienced severe cracking and shifting due to underlying geologic changes and now exist under the earth's surface in uneven, cracked beds which generally parallel those previously mentioned alternating ridges and valleys on the earth's surface. Those rock beds run in a northeast to southwest direction across Scott County.

One of the more practical aspects of underlying geologic strata is evidenced in its relationship to future development. Three such geologic considerations include (1) presence of limestone bedrock, (2) soil suitability and accompanying depth to bedrock, and (3) presence and extent of mineral deposits.

One of the most crucial geology-related factors to be considered is the occurrence of limestone rock. The presence of sinkholes throughout Scott County indicates the presence of underground drainage and unstable rock formations. Such areas are undesirable for development requiring septic tank drainfields. Often there is danger of sewage drainage into such underground channels. With the absence of good drainage soils, contamination of underground water supplies that are used for domestic purposes can present health hazards. Care should be taken when locating heavy structures in an area with sinkholes due to the possibility of collapsing an existing underground network of caverns.

A second geology-related factor that affects development is soil suitability and accompanying depth to bedrock. Many areas throughout Scott County are unsuited for development – examination of these areas would reveal extremely shallow soil measurements which are underlain by massive rock formations. Such occurrences, for example, would affect agricultural development, the construction of water and sanitary sewer systems, and the construction of basements and building foundations. On the other hand, the presence of large rock foundations (sandstone, limestone, etc.) would be desirable in situations involving the construction of very large, heavy commercial and industrial structures. Much of the Ridge and Valley Province of Scott County is underlain by such sandstone and limestone expanses. Thus while much of the geology of Scott County is suitable for heavy structures, the occurrence of previously mentioned sinkholes necessitates onsite analysis prior to construction.

A third geology-related consideration relative to development is the presence of mineral deposits beneath the surface. Mineral rights in the Appalachian Plateau are often owned by individuals other than those currently residing on the land. It is possible for mining to have taken place underground that is not evident from the surface. Development should not be encouraged in areas where mining has occurred relatively close to the surface due to problems associated with settling and unstable bedrock. Development in an area should be mindful of any remaining mineral reserves. The future extraction of these minerals may adversely affect the quality of the environment that has been developed.

Drainage

Scott County is located within the Tennessee River Basin of Virginia. This 40,910 square mile river basin drains a total of 3,131 square miles in Virginia, or approximately eight percent of Virginia's total land area, including all of Lee, Russell, and Washington Counties, and portions of Wise, Bland, Dickenson, Grayson, Smith, Tazewell, and Wythe Counties. The county's topographic trend is generally northeast to southwest, thus determining the direction of the general drainage pattern. With Scott County being situated in the Valley and Ridge Province, existing streams and creeks in the ridge areas are typically swift flowing and clear. The hilly and steep relief of these uplands is well to excessively drained. Water flow in the county's valley sections tends to be slower and characterized by turbidity. Many such low lying valley areas and "bottom lands" are poorly drained. The numerous creeks, branches, forks, etc., form a dendritic, or tree-like drainage pattern, most of which eventually drain into three primary rivers in Scott County – the North Fork of the Holston River, the North Fork of the Clinch River, and the Clinch River, which are discussed in greater detail below. In some cases around the county, small creeks and streams do not join the primary drainage ways but, instead, descend into underground waterways later appearing in the form of springs. The most popular example of such an occurrence is Sinking Creek, which disappears underground east of the Town of Dungannon.

The North Fork of the Holston River traverses the southeastern quarter of Scott County in a northeast to southwest direction, generally paralleling the southern slope of the Clinch Mountain Range. Flowing an approximate 34 miles through Scott County, the North Fork of the Holston is fed by roughly 35 tributaries and drains about a 90 square mile sub-basin within Scott County before it leaves Virginia and enters the Holston River west of Kingsport, Tennessee.

The Clinch River is joined by its major tributary, the Guest River, near the northeastern most tip of Scott County from which it flows in a generally northeast to southwest direction across Scott County. While traversing the entire diagonal length of Scott County, the Clinch River flows an approximate 39 miles during which it is joined by roughly 60 tributaries. The Clinch River drains a roughly 400 square mile area while heavily influencing activity and development in and around the Towns of Clinchport and

Dungannon and the vicinity of Fort Blackmore, as it flows adjacent to these areas. The Clinch River represents the most significant element in the entire drainage system of Scott County.

The North Fork of the Clinch River represents the smallest of the three major drainage systems within Scott County and is located in the extreme western portion of the county. Flowing in a generally southwest direction, the North Fork of the Clinch River drains an approximate 50 square mile sub-basin while being joined by roughly a dozen tributaries over its 20 mile course. Of primary significance is the North Fork of the Clinch River's role in supplying water to Scott County's only industrial development park at Duffield, before exiting Scott County at the juncture of Lee and Scott County, Virginia, with Hancock County, Tennessee.

Such dominant water bodies which have a drainage area of 15 or more square miles are as follows: Cove Creek, Big Moccasin Creek, Possum Creek (all of which are tributaries of the North Fork of the Holston River), and Little Stony Creek, Stock Creek, Stony Creek, and Cove Creek (Clinch River tributaries).

Chapter II Natural Resources

Water Resources

Existing water resources are intricately related to development. In Scott County, water resources have been a primary determinant of past and present residential development patterns, industrial locations, agricultural activities, and certain water related recreational activities. With increasing future population levels competing for available developable areas, water resources will play an even more central role as a locational factor.

Existing water resources in Scott County are apparent in two forms, underground and surface water. Water supplies and their replenishment are determined primarily by levels of precipitation. Factors affecting precipitation in an area are its intensity, frequency, duration and distribution. The presence and extent of water resources in Scott County are affected by such factors as topography, geologic structure, temperature, soils, vegetation, and land use activities. These factors in conjunction with changing rates and types of land use will directly affect the availability of future water resources in Scott County.

With the amount of precipitation determining the existing levels of surface and groundwater, the average monthly precipitation level for Scott County is 3.25 inches, with an annual average precipitation level of 39 inches. Such information is useful in determining short and long term water replenishing levels. Precipitation level averages also reveal potential drought seasons, and, equally important, seasons of heavy rainfall that may result in severe flooding. Knowledge of existing water resources and their replenishment potential will also serve to ease the conflicting agricultural, recreational, residential, etc., use demands.

Presently, there are no major surface water sources, such as reservoirs, serving residential water demands in Scott County. Such residential water resources come from creeks, underground springs and wells. Such non-surface water sources are those portions of precipitation that has penetrated the earth's surface by direct infiltration or by gradual seepage from surface water sources. The location and amount of such groundwater is determined by such factors as lithography (rock structure and formation), soil, slope, vegetation and type and intensity of land use activities. Underlying lithography varies in its ability to store and transmit water. At certain underground levels, openings in the lithography are filled with water to form underground reservoirs. Such reservoirs discharge water in the forms of springs and wells.

Future land use activities within Scott County must be carried out with an increasing awareness of the relationship between surface water and groundwater. Because of the unavoidable ultimate transmittal of surface water to groundwater sources, care must be taken to protect the quality of such surface water prior to its transfer. Danger of pollution and contamination appear in many forms, such as runoff from residential and commercial construction sites, grease and oils from county roads, pesticides used in agricultural activities, and acidic bearing runoff and seepage from coal mining activities.

Two processes compose the relationship between surface water and groundwaters – (1) recharge and (2) storage and transmission. Recharge to existing groundwater levels through the hydrologic cycle begins with precipitation. On the average, prime recharging activity occurs during winter and summer months, with the least active recharge months taking place during spring and autumn. In addition to recharge of groundwater levels resulting from precipitation, continual entry from existing surface water sources such as rivers and streams also maintains groundwater supplies. Thus, on the basis of existing lithography, topography, vegetation, etc., there exists a constant interchange of surface and groundwaters, i.e., a stream may receive water from groundwater in the area when the water table is higher than the stream stage, and conversely, a stream may transfer water to existing groundwater levels when the water table is below stream stage.

A second relationship between surface and underground results from the actual quality and characteristics of the geologic strata containing the groundwater, i.e., its storage and transmission qualities. Groundwater is stored in the openings of rock materials. Porous or fine grained material such as clay and silt retain maximum water volumes. This type of geologic cavity increases permeability and freer transmission to the surface waters is possible. Conversely, quartzite and slate are characteristically less porous, thus they can attract and retain less water. Because these rocks provide much smaller space for storage, they are unable to transmit much volume to the surface water bodies.

Because new households and population growth, as well as increased industrial, commercial, and community facility use will place new demands upon water reserves, it is important to determine the type of water withdrawals that are likely to occur, their location, their potential use rate, and any possible effect upon the quality of the water within Scott County.

Forest Resources

One of Scott County's most valuable, and most apparent, natural resources is its forest lands (land at least 10 percent stocked by forest trees of any size, or formerly having such tree cover, and not currently developed for non-forest use). While many areas across the state, as well as across the country, are suffering from unclean, dangerous air quality, Scott County is fortunate to have retained high air quality levels, even with its close proximity to rapidly industrializing northeastern Tennessee.

Scott County is characterized by three dominant forest type groups – loblolly/shortleaf, oak/pine, and oak/hickory. The loblolly/shortleaf type covers approximately 96 percent of total forest land and includes loblolly pine, shortleaf pine, or other southern yellow pines, except longleaf or slash pine as the plurality of the stocking. The second and third types, oak/pine and oak/hickory, each cover approximately two percent of forest land.

The task for the future is to achieve a balance between the obvious benefits offered by Scott County's forested areas, and the changing demands placed upon a fixed land area by an expanding population. On one hand, the county's residents need areas in which to hunt, forested streams and reservoirs to fish, camping and hiking areas, picnic spots and wildlife habitats. On the other hand, a growing population must have additional housing, and more employment opportunities.

Scott County has seen its forest acres, as a percent of its total land acres, range from 54 percent in 1957 to as high as 74 percent in 1975, and more recently at 62 percent. Of the county's 345,421 total acres, this represents 187,000 acres in 1957, 256,498 in 1975, and 216,000 more recently.

In Scott County, forests are in comparatively poor condition when compared with their actual potential. Non-selective, careless timbering activity in the past vastly reduced the availability of healthy stands of hardwood leaving rough and deformed trees that were unfit for timber. Past forest practices have yielded far less than maximum growth potential. There is thus a great need to initiate good forest management practices with emphasis on increasing (and protecting) the availability of quality hardwoods.

In Scott County, where the sharp terrain limits the extent of hardwood plantings, care must be taken to reforest with healthy trees. Information and assistance necessary for productive forest lands is available from such agencies as the Soil Conservation Service, TVA, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, VPI Extension Service, National Forest Service, and the Virginia Division of Forestry.

There are several steps that should be taken to protect and enhance Scott County's forest lands. The forest land interior should be accessible particularly regarding recreation areas; however, the construction of major thoroughfares and routes designed primarily to serve through traffic should be strongly discouraged. The construction of several new water impoundment sites in the county's forest lands should be encouraged to supplement the existing recreation base.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is present in Lee, Scott and Wise Counties in far southwestern Virginia, although historically, such reserves have proven minimal. Following the discovery of natural gas supplies south of Mendota, Virginia, a four inch line conveyed the gas to nearby Bristol, Virginia, where it was marketed. Declining pressure in subsequent years resulted in the abandonment of this operation.

However, serious supply problems have recently occurred in the eastern natural gas markets of the United States. These problems have accelerated interest in the potential supply of natural gas that occurs between layers of Devonian Shales. Such natural gas originates from decomposition of ferns, fish and marine life through the ages. These Devonian Shales underlie much of the middle and eastern sections of the United States. Scott County lies on the fringe of these areas. This location factor, combined with more recent natural gas shortages, renewed drilling efforts within northern areas of Scott County.

In 1988, Penn Virginia Resources drilled four development wells and one exploratory well in the Scott County portion of the Early Grove Field. Of the four development wells, three were successfully completed, while one was a dry hole. Total footage drilled for the development wells, including the dry hole, was 17,025 feet. The exploratory well reached a depth of 6,300 feet and was plugged after evaluation.

Speculative drilling in Scott County is expected to continue as the nation's energy requirements increase and existing natural gas supplies are exhausted.

Mineral Resources

While large expanses of mineral deposits exist throughout Scott County, they are widely scattered and are basically of such low quality that they are economically non-profitable.

Prospecting has been done in past years to locate the valuable mineral zinc, with most of these efforts undertaken along Copper Creek and the Clinch River. Intensive geochemical prospecting methods were utilized by mining companies from roughly 1950 to 1965, but no follow up efforts were undertaken, nor any zinc extraction activities begun, because other forms of geologic strata among the zinc deposits made extraction of the zinc economically unprofitable.

Prospecting activity for manganese deposits throughout Scott County in the past proved non-beneficial. While many prospecting pits were dug along Moccasin Ridge and Copper Ridge, no large deposits have as yet been located.

To present, the most active and profitable mineral extraction activities have involved coal and limestone. A separate short section will address coal-mining activities. However, there are four operations that deal with the extraction of limestone.

The Natural Tunnel Stone Company, not presently in operation, quarried Knox dolomite. This rock was mined and crushed at the quarry site and sold for concrete aggregate, road stone, and railroad ballast. Although other minerals occur throughout Scott County, their extent is very insignificant and their concentration and quality prevents profitable mining. Increased demand for such minerals or refined extraction methods may, in the future, lead to increased mineral extraction activities; however, at the present time, this sector accounts for little of Scott County's economy or individual income.

Coal Resources

Although the extraction of coal resources has historically been associated with the surrounding coal laden counties in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, more recent exploration activities have revealed high quality metallurgical coal in north and northeastern areas of Scott County. Traditionally, the availability of thick seams of high grade coal in surrounding regions has limited its extraction within Scott County.

Scott County's coal reserves occur within three major drainage basins – Stock Creek, Stony Creek and McGhee-Dry-Little Stony Creek basins. Within these river basins, seven coal beds, or seams compose all of Scott County's coal reserves. These beds are Burtons Ford, Starnes, Tacus, Carter, Egan, Cove Creek and Jawbone. In 1989 coal production in Scott was 40,861 tons, dropping to 29,985 tons by 2000, with no active mining operations at present.

Chapter III Population

Total Population Trends and Projections

After reaching a high of 27,640 persons in 1950, the population of Scott County declined by 6.6 percent to 25,813 in 1960, and by another 5.6 percent to 24,376 persons in 1970. Following another coal boom in the 1970s, the county's population increased to 25,068 (a 2.8 percent rise) by 1980. By 1990, however, that trend had reversed, with the county's population dropping to 23,204 persons, even lower than the 1930s and the Great Depression. Much of that decline could be traced to the migration of past Scott County residents to the Tri-Cities areas of Kingsport, Bristol and Johnson City, Tennessee. The county's population rebounded slightly by 2000, rising to 23,403 (up 0.9 percent), only to drop again, to 23,177 persons (down 1.0 percent) by 2010.

Population Distribution and Density

Roughly 18.3 percent of the county's total population, or 4,237 persons, resides in one of the county's six incorporated towns (Clinchport, Duffield, Dungannon, Gate City, Nickelsville and Weber City). Population losses in these incorporated areas have generally mirrored those of the county as a whole.

The incorporated areas of Scott County combined account for 4.65 square miles, or just 8.6 percent of the county's total land area. It is a reasonable assumption that the remaining 91.4 percent of the county's total land area is for the most part composed of terrain that is either primarily still used for agricultural uses or undesirable for population development.

**Table III-1
Population Levels and Percentage Change**

Year	Population	Change
1900	22,694	4.6%
1910	23,814	4.9%
1920	24,776	4.0%
1930	24,181	(2.4%)
1940	26,989	11.6%
1950	27,640	2.4%
1960	25,813	(6.6%)
1970	24,376	(5.6%)
1980	25,068	2.8%
1990	23,204	(7.4%)
2000	23,403	0.9%
2010	23,177	(1.0%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census

Age Characteristics

The age characteristics of a population can be used as a rough indicator of the level and type of services that are desired and needed in an area.

The "65 and over" age group represents an increasing segment of the local and regional populations, and a significantly higher percentage than that of the state as a whole. The median age is also consistently increasing, while remaining noticeably higher than that of the Commonwealth.

When coupled with an ongoing marked drop in the 18-under population, this constant "aging" of the overall population can present various challenges, serving as a rough indicator of the level and type of services desired and needed, both present and future, as well as suggesting potential issues with future labor force supply.

**Table III-2
Population, Population Change by Age Groupings**

	Scott County	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1990			
Total Population	23,204	91,520	6,187,358
Under 18	22.1%	25.2%	24.3%
18-64	61.2%	60.1%	65.0%
65 & Over	16.7%	14.7%	10.7%
Median Age	38.2	35.4	32.6
2000			
Total Population	23,403	91,019	7,078,515
Under 18	20.6%	22.3%	24.6%
18-64	61.6%	62.3%	64.2%
65 & Over	17.8%	15.4%	11.2%
Median Age	41.4	39.3	35.7
2010			
Total Population	23,177	94,174	8,001,024
Under 18	19.3%	20.3%	23.2%
18-64	61.0%	63.6%	64.6%
65 & Over	19.7%	16.1%	12.2%
Median Age	44.7	41.0	37.5
2020			
	<i>(projection)</i>		
Total Population	22,985	93,089	8,811,514
Under 18	18.2%	19.6%	22.5%
18-64	58.2%	60.6%	62.1%
65 & Over	23.6%	19.8%	15.4%
2030			
	<i>(projection)</i>		
Total Population	22,822	91,604	9,645,281
Under 18	17.3%	18.9%	22.4%
18-64	55.6%	58.5%	59.3%
65 & Over	27.1%	22.6%	18.3%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census; Virginia Employment Commission - Population projections

Racial Composition

The racial composition of the region’s population has historically varied greatly from that of the Commonwealth. For decades, the non-white population stood well under two percent of the area’s total population. The table below reveals the racial distribution of the County, district and the state since 1990. While the non-white population is still a fairly small percentage of the local population, especially when compared to Virginia’s diverse population, the relative increase in non-white and Hispanic populations, especially in the past decade and a half, is not insignificant.

**Table III-3
Racial Composition of Population**

	Scott Co	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1990			
White	99.3%	98.3%	77.4%
Black	0.6%	1.3%	18.8%
American Indian	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Asian/Pac Islander/Other	0.0%	0.3%	3.5%
Hispanic (Any Race)	0.3%	0.4%	2.6%
2000			
White	98.5%	97.5%	72.3%
Black	0.6%	1.3%	19.6%
American Indian	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian/Pac Islander/Other	0.2%	0.4%	5.8%
Two or More Races	0.5%	0.6%	2.0%
Hispanic (Any Race)	0.4%	0.6%	4.7%
2010			
White	97.9%	94.4%	68.6%
Black	0.6%	3.7%	19.4%
American Indian	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%
Asian/Pac Islander/Other	0.7%	0.8%	8.8%
Two or More Races	0.7%	0.9%	2.9%
Hispanic (Any Race)	1.0%	1.3%	7.9%
2020			
White	97.3%	92.9%	65.3%
Black	0.6%	4.2%	19.0%
Asian	0.3%	0.5%	6.9%
Other	1.8%	2.4%	8.8%
Hispanic (Any Race)	1.8%	2.2%	11.1%

Sources: Sources: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census; Virginia Employment Commission – Population projections

Chapter IV Economy

Background

Scott County had its origins in agriculture; however, with the completion of transportation facilities, agriculture became less important while manufacturing became more prominent. In earlier years, the manufacturing areas of neighboring Sullivan County, Tennessee, and the coalfields of both Wise and Lee Counties, Virginia, drew workers from Scott County. Following the creation of the regional industrial park at Duffield, Scott County developed its own manufacturing base during the 1970s and 1980s, with that growth continuing at a rate comparable to other parts of the region.

In this section of the Comprehensive Plan, an attempt is made to analyze certain economic factors associated with Scott County in an effort to identify current trends and provide a basis for future planning and decision making.

Labor Force

Far southwestern Virginia has long held a strong reputation for its citizens' hardy work ethic, but educational levels continue to be an obstacle to true economic diversification.

One historic, ongoing characteristic of the local population is relatively low education levels. Table IV-1 reflects the significant portion of the County population with less than a high school diploma and, concurrently, the comparatively small portion of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Table IV-1
Educational Attainment (Population 25 Years and Over)

	Scott Co	Virginia	U.S.
Less than High School diploma	24.1%	12.1%	13.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	11.6%	35.7%	29.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As shown in Table IV-2 on the following page, an estimated 50.7 percent of Scott County's population age 16 and over was in the labor force in 2014, the most current estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. This was well below the state level of 66.4 percent.

Notable is the continued low female labor participation rate, which generally remains well below local male participation rates, as well as Virginia female rates. Both this low female participation and the district's relatively high 65-over population (noted in Chapter III), typically a "non-employed" age group, may be viewed as burdens on that portion of the population that is employed.

**Table IV-2
Labor Force Participation Status**

	Scott Co	LENOWISCO	Virginia
<u>2000</u>			
Persons 16-over	19,082	73,265	5,529,980
In Labor Force	9,827	36,527	3,694,863
Civilian Labor Force	9,827	36,516	3,563,772
Employed	9,246	33,950	3,412,647
Unemployed	581	2,566	151,125
Armed Forces	0	11	130,891
Not in Labor Force	9,255	36,738	1,835,317
LF Participation	51.5%	49.9%	66.8%
Male	58.4%	57.3%	73.4%
Female	45.2%	43.1%	60.6%
<u>2014 (estimate)</u>			
Persons 16-over	18,949	76,931	6,531,424
In Labor Force	9,599	37,592	4,338,606
Civilian Labor Force	9,595	37,539	4,229,948
Employed	8,776	32,683	3,936,638
Unemployed	819	3,498	293,310
Armed Forces	4	53	108,658
Not in Labor Force	9,350	39,838	2,192,818
LF Participation	50.7%	48.9%	66.4%
Male	55.5%	51.0%	71.7%
Female	45.7%	46.0%	61.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table IV-3 provides annual average civilian labor force, employment and unemployment data in selected years for recent perspective.

**Table IV-3
Unemployment Rate w/ Civilian Labor Force, Employment, Unemployment**

	Scott Co	LENOWISCO	Virginia	U.S.
<u>2000</u>				
Civilian Labor Force	9,710	36,241	3,584,037	142,583,000
Employed	9,340	34,744	3,502,524	136,891,000
Unemployed	370	1,497	81,513	5,612,000
Rate	3.8%	4.1%	2.3%	4.0%
<u>2010</u>				
Civilian Labor Force	9,947	39,255	4,185,321	153,889,000
Employed	9,000	36,033	3,896,167	139,064,000
Unemployed	947	3,222	289,154	14,825,000
Rate	9.5%	8.2%	6.9%	9.6%
<u>2015</u>				
Civilian Labor Force	9,676	34,038	4,240,470	157,130,000
Employed	9,179	31,636	4,051,908	148,834,000
Unemployed	497	2,402	188,562	8,296,000
Rate	5.1%	7.1%	4.4%	5.3%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Income

As shown in Table IV-4, while median household income has increased significantly in recent decades, local levels still lag far behind statewide numbers, faring slightly more favorably against national levels. This gap is mirrored in poverty levels, which generally, and often greatly, exceed state and national averages.

**Table IV-4
Median Household Income, Poverty Status**

	Scott Co	Virginia	U.S.
Median Household Income			
1980	\$10,851	\$17,475	\$16,841
% Virginia	62.1%		96.4%
% United States	64.4%	103.8%	
1990	\$18,346	\$35,073	\$29,942
% Virginia	52.3%		85.4%
% United States	61.3%	117.1%	
2000	\$28,680	\$47,163	\$41,990
% Virginia	60.8%		89.0%
% United States	68.3%	112.3%	
2014 Estimate	\$36,579	\$64,792	\$53,482
% Virginia	56.5%		82.5%
% United States	68.4%	121.1%	
Poverty			
2000			
All Ages	16.8%	9.6%	12.4%
< Age 18	20.1%	11.9%	16.1%
2014 Estimate			
All Ages	19.1%	11.5%	15.6%
< Age 18	26.1%	15.2%	21.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Employment Characteristics

Table IV-5 on the following page shows trends in employment and wages in the goods-producing and service-producing domains. Various similarities and disparities are worthy of note.

From 2005 to 2015, total employment in Scott County rose by 4.4 percent, mirroring the 4.4 increase at the state level.

Disparities are evident, however, when observing the intervening year of 2010, when the impacts of the national recession were felt more quickly at the state level than in Scott County.

While total employment at the state level dropped 1.2 percent between 2005 and 2010, Scott County employment increased 5.8 percent. Between 2010 and 2015, however, Scott County employment fell 1.3 percent, while state levels rose by 5.6 percent, leaving both with a 4.4 percent increase over the decade.

Employment in the goods-producing domain dropped overall during the past decade, but, at 19.0 percent, remains a higher percentage than the state's 12.2 percent. The County's good domain is also where noticeably higher wages remain, in contrast to the state level, where goods- and service-producing wages remain practically identical.

As would be expected, the \$599 average wage for all industries in Scott County stood at 57.4 percent of the state average wage of \$1,044 in 2015.

Goods-producing wages in the County (\$794), driven primarily by manufacturing, stood at 75.1 percent of state levels. At the same time, service-producing wages (\$553) trailed state wages (\$1,042) by a significant margin, at just 53.1 percent of state levels.

**Table IV-5
Employment, Wage by NAICS Supersector**

	2005		2010		2015	
	Employment	Wages	Employment	Wages	Employment	Wages
Scott County						
Total, All Industries	4,583	\$489	4,848	\$566	4,786	\$599
Goods-Producing Domain	960	\$667	772	\$885	908	\$794
Natural Resources, Mining	74	\$443	39	\$391	42	\$487
Construction	116	\$641	81	\$606	104	\$526
Manufacturing	770	\$692	652	\$949	762	\$848
Goods as Percentage of Total	20.9%		15.9%		19.0%	
Service-Producing Domain	3,623	\$442	4,076	\$506	3,878	\$553
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	1,136	\$429	996	\$458	909	\$500
Information	D	D	D	D	D	D
Financial Activities	135	\$453	109	\$542	118	\$654
Professional, Business Services	111	\$408	297	\$420	216	\$558
Education, Health Services	1,353	\$494	1,655	\$568	1,585	\$595
Leisure, Hospitality	395	\$200	418	\$238	474	\$232
Other Services	129	\$333	188	\$610	142	\$897
Public Administration	276	\$576	336	\$610	346	\$689
Services as Percentage of Total	79.1%		84.1%		81.0%	
Virginia						
Total, All Industries	3,576,716	\$813	3,535,451	\$955	3,734,994	\$1,044
Goods-Producing Domain	580,046	\$809	450,766	\$953	456,588	\$1,057
Natural Resources, Mining	21,802	\$679	20,326	\$842	19,673	\$853
Construction	255,190	\$772	192,317	\$898	193,883	\$994
Manufacturing	303,054	\$851	238,123	\$1,008	243,031	\$1,125
Goods as Percentage of Total	16.2%		12.7%		12.2%	
Service-Producing Domain	2,996,670	\$814	3,084,685	\$955	3,278,406	\$1,042
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	693,321	\$652	654,352	\$729	685,811	\$800
Information	98,354	\$1,386	81,251	\$1,466	74,660	\$1,753
Financial Activities	192,237	\$1,168	172,639	\$1,238	186,003	\$1,490
Professional, Business Services	621,726	\$1,152	664,538	\$1,453	709,461	\$1,570
Education, Health Services	695,898	\$704	778,931	\$812	826,543	\$881
Leisure, Hospitality	346,992	\$299	359,915	\$345	402,066	\$374
Other Services	128,214	\$602	128,403	\$711	25,489	\$792
Public Administration	214,463	\$1,096	241,616	\$1,328	246,699	\$1,419
Unclassified	5,466	\$778	3,041	\$746	10,562	\$881
Services as Percentage of Total	83.8%		87.3%		87.8%	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

D - data suppressed

As noted in Table IV-6, of those County resident reporting a place of work in 2012 (most recent available), only 28.1 percent of the county's resident workers worked within the county. Out-commuting to adjacent jurisdictions, particularly Sullivan County, Tennessee, was and continues to be significant.

While nearly 3,000 residents of other localities commuted into Scott County to work, that number was barely half of those who commuted from Scott County for jobs elsewhere.

**Table IV-6
Commuting Patterns, 2012**

Place of Work for Scott County residents	
Total resident workers	9,331
Total resident workers reporting a place of work	7,331
Place of work reported as Scott County	2,058
Out-Commuters from Scott County	
Sullivan County TN	2,038
Wise County VA	558
Washington County TN	425
Washington County VA	268
Hawkins County TN	223
Russell County VA	195
Bristol City VA	155
Lee County VA	149
Norton City VA	135
Tazewell County VA	131
Elsewhere	996
Total	5,273
In-Commuters to Scott County	
Lee County VA	551
Sullivan County TN	528
Wise County VA	333
Dickenson County VA	250
Washington County VA	174
Hawkins County TN	168
Russell County VA	160
Washington County TN	100
Elsewhere	704
Total	2,968
Net In-Commuters (Out-Commuters)	(2,305)

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Retail Sales

Taxable sales in Scott County increased by 22.2 percent from 2005 to 2015, with per capita taxable sales rising by 25.9 percent.

The county's per capita taxable sales stood at 45.5 percent of the statewide level in 2015, a slight increase from 42.2 percent in 2005. This remains, however, a relatively low level of retail activity.

**Table IV-7
Taxable Sales**

	2005	2010	2015
Scott County			
Number of Dealers	262	271	245
Taxable Sales	\$98,548,174	\$117,522,789	\$120,443,899
Per Capita Taxable Sales	\$4,324	\$5,080	\$5,444
Virginia			
Number of Dealers	96,723	105,276	103,127
Taxable Sales	\$77,621,472,847	\$86,418,571,075	\$100,215,501,375
Per Capita Taxable Sales	\$10,244	\$10,768	\$11,955

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

It should be noted that food store retail sales continue to play a strong role in Scott County. Food and beverage stores accounted for 50.9 percent of the county's sales in 2015, up from 37.5 percent in 2005. In comparison, food and beverage stores accounted for 16.6 percent of Virginia sales in 2015.

This suggests that food stores located near the Tennessee state line are able to capitalize on Sullivan County's higher sales tax rate and draw customers from the Tri-Cities metropolitan area.

Tourism

Tourism continues to have a strong economic impact throughout Virginia, as visitors to the state spent nearly \$23 billion in 2015. In Scott County, visitor spending reached nearly \$17 million and tourism-related payroll topped \$3 million, with more than \$400,000 in local tax receipts generated.

**Table IV-8
Travel Economic Impacts, 2015**

	Scott Co	Virginia
Employment	179	223,096
Expenditures	\$16,976,758	\$22,938,962,792
Local Tax Receipts	\$412,166	\$629,468,091
Payroll	\$3,397,877	\$5,337,347,232
State Tax Receipts	\$800,992	\$963,779,379

Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation

Agriculture

Scott County's agricultural makeup has changed somewhat in the past 15 years. While the number of individual farms has decreased, total farm acreage has increased slightly. Meanwhile, government payments to farmers in Scott County has risen drastically.

**Table IV-9
Agricultural Data**

	1997	2002	2007	2012
Number of Farms	1,650	1,490	1,396	1,292
Acreage in Farms	153,504	157,689	153,881	158,324
Average Size of Farm	93 acres	106 acres	110 acres	123 acres
Market Value of Production (avg per farm)	\$9,130	\$8,518	\$13,140	\$14,073
Government Payments	\$39,000	\$161,000	\$243,000	\$909,000

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Chapter V Housing

Scott County's housing inventory, trends, projections, and issues are discussed below. In developing background data, statistical information from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census of Housing was used. The number and type of housing units in an area can be an indicator of that area's economic and social structure. Population fluctuations, land consumption and availability, and the provision of public utilities can affect the development of an area as housing unit growth or decline occurs. In this chapter, we will examine pattern changes from 1990 to 2010, including housing types, housing mix and housing conditions.

Housing Types

The 2010 Census reported 11,916 total housing units in Scott County, an increase from the 2000 Census count of 11,355 housing units. The dominant housing type continues to be the single-family which comprises 71 percent of all housing units in Scott County. Multi-family housing comprises five percent and manufactured homes make up the remaining 24 percent of housing units in Scott County.

Housing Mix

In 2010, occupied rental units comprised 19 percent of Scott County's housing, with owner-occupied units at 63 percent and vacant units accounting for 18 percent. Median value for occupied housing units increased from \$46,000 in 1990 to \$91,700 in 2010. Median rent increased from \$250/month in 1990 to \$491/month in 2010.

**Table V-1
Housing Occupancy**

Category	1990	2000	2010
Owner Occupied	6,973	8,158	7,508
Renter Occupied	1,993	1,850	2,267
Vacant	1,037	1,347	2,141
Total	10,003	11,355	11,916

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Decennial Census

Housing Conditions

The 2010 Census of Housing defined substandard housing as units that were overcrowded or that lacked complete plumbing facilities. A unit is classified as lacking complete plumbing when there is either no piped water, flush toilet, or bathing facilities. Overcrowding exists when a unit contains 1.01 or more persons per room used for living purposes.

The table below reflects these past and current conditions. Each condition is listed below using census data. Slightly over one percent of Scott County's housing units lack complete plumbing and 7.1 percent lacked telephone service.

**Table V-2
Housing Conditions**

Category	1990	2000	2010
Lacking complete plumbing	1,028	302	130
1.01 or more persons per room	173	108	59

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

Chapter VI Transportation

Existing Transportation Facilities

Scott County is located within the Virginia Department of Transportation's Bristol District, one of nine such districts within the Commonwealth, also including the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe.

A network of highways and railroads carries transportation within Scott County. The highway system transports both people and goods, whereas the rail system handles mainly coal and a limited amount of merchandise and other traffic.

CSX Transportation enters Scott County from the northeast, crossing the county in a generally southwestern direction. While its major commodity is coal, it also carries merchandise traffic connecting the Midwest with the Deep South. Norfolk Southern enters Scott County near the community of Jasper and traverses the county in a generally southeastern direction. Its hauling commodity is almost exclusively coal mined in neighboring Wise and Lee Counties. Norfolk Southern provides freight service to the Duffield industrial park.

Airport service is available to Scott County through Tri-Cities Regional Airport, a commercial, full service facility located near the community of Blountville, Tennessee, less than a 40 minute drive from the Scott County area. Nonstop destinations from the Tri-Cities Regional Airport include Orlando and Tampa, and international hubs in Atlanta and Charlotte. Smaller airports, lacking commercial commuter service, are located in Lee County, Wise County and Washington County.

Scott County is served by one major arterial highway, U.S. Highway 23, which stretches for nearly 27 miles across the county. U.S. 23 is a four lane divided highway that enters the county from Tennessee at Weber City and exits the county north of the Town of Duffield, into Lee County and beyond to Wise County. U.S. 23 provides excellent north-south transportation facilities to the tenants of the Duffield industrial park.

U. S. 58-421 enters western Scott County from Lee County, joining U. S. 23 at Duffield until the northern boundary of Weber City, at which point it leaves U. S. 23 and proceeds eastward, exiting into Washington County. Virginia Route 65 serves central Scott County, from the town of Clinchport, through Dungannon and into Russell County. Virginia Route 71 proceeds northeast from the eastern edge of Gate City, through the Town of Nickelsville, and exits into Russell County. Virginia Route 72 also proceeds from the eastern edge of Gate City, northward to Fort Blackmore, where it joins Rt. 65, then eastward to Dungannon before turning northward and exiting into Wise County. U.S. 23 Business can be classified as Old U.S. 23 and serves the interior flow of Gate City.

Scott County's secondary road system is extensive, containing 695 total miles, composed of 370 miles of hard surface roads; 224 miles of all weather surface roads; 80 miles of light surface roads; and 21 miles of unsurfaced roads. Among the more dominant of these secondary roads are Route 614 west and east of Weber City; Route 701; Route 704; Route 619; and Route 870.

Public transportation is available to Scott County through Mountain Empire Transit, a bus/van service operated by Mountain Empire Older Citizens. Service is open to the general public, regardless of age, and MEOC operates demand-responsive vans throughout Planning District One. Frequent service is available along the U.S. 23 corridor, while limited service operates along Rt. 71 to Nickelsville, Rt. 774 to Dungannon and Rts. 72 and 619 to Gate City, and into the Fairview, Sloantown and Hiltons areas of the county.

There are four VDOT-recorded park-and-ride lots in Scott County – Rt. 71 near its junction with Rt. 619, eastern end of Gate City (paved, 70 spaces); U.S. 23/58 near its junction with Bray Road, west of Gate City (paved, 45 spaces); U.S. 23/58 at its junction with Rt. 600, near Clinchport (gravel, 15 spaces); and U.S. 23/58 near its junction with Rt. 872, north of Clinchport (unpaved, 30 spaces). Current American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau) data reveal that nearly 10 percent of Scott County residents carpool to work, suggesting that such park-and-ride facilities provide an important service to the County's workers.

Special Transportation Planning - "3-C Study"

On July 3, 1974, Scott County, the Town of Gate City, the Town of Weber City, and the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission received correspondence from the (then) Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation stating that since Kingsport, Tennessee and its surrounding area were classified as an Urbanized Area, the States of Virginia and Tennessee must establish a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative (3-C) transportation planning process for the Kingsport, Tennessee-Virginia Urbanized Area. Involvement in all of these 3-C activities assures that proper attention to transportation problems and needs is provided to that rapidly growing portion of Scott County which is part of the Kingsport, Tennessee Urbanized Area.

The modern day arrangement of this planning initiative sees the Scott County, Gate City and Weber City portions of the Kingsport Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) being represented by the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission. The LENOWISCO representative on the Kingsport MPO Executive Board works as a means of communication and collaboration between the MPO staff, VDOT and the local Virginia government.

Secondary Highways

Allocations of state funds for improvements to secondary highways are made through a cooperative effort between the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Scott County Board of Supervisors. Needed and funded improvements for Scott County's transportation infrastructure can be found in the approved FY 2023 Virginia Department of Transportation "Six-Year Improvement Plan," as follows:

UPC	Description	Route	Road System	Estimate	Previous	FY23	FY 24-28
(Values in Thousands of Dollars)							
118964	High Nob Road	619	Secondary	\$ 533,250	\$ 58,571		\$ 24,679
113653	Ann Goode Cooper	689	Secondary	\$ 455,000	\$ 183,480	\$ 271,520	
113652	Ann Goode Cooper	689	Secondary	\$ 490,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 488,000	
113651	Spurlock Hollow	856	Secondary	\$ 300,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 236,289	\$ 61,711
113650	Horton Summit Road	854	Secondary	\$ 400,000			\$ 400,000
113649	Eaton Hill Road	693	Secondary	\$ 350,000			\$ 350,000
115212	Obeys Creek Road	660	Secondary	\$ 350,000			\$ 350,000
115213	Turkey Lick Road	641	Secondary	\$ 350,000			\$ 350,000
115214	Fowlers Branch	697	Secondary	\$ 365,000			\$ 365,000
118342	Chestnut Ridge		Secondary	\$ 610,000			\$ 610,000
118343	Pippin Lane		Secondary	\$ 250,000			\$ 250,000
118344	Falin Hollow Lane		Secondary	\$ 300,000			\$ 300,000
118963	Fincastle Road	650	Secondary	\$ 395,000			\$ 395,000
119065	Quail Run Lane	821	Secondary	\$ 200,000			\$ 200,000
119064	River Bluff Road (Phase I)	659	Secondary	\$ 575,000			\$ 575,000
119064	River Bluff Road (Phase II)	659	Secondary	\$ 625,000			\$ 400,000
119063	Beeline Road	624	Secondary	\$ 325,000			\$ 325,000

Much like a grading system in an education setting, Level of Service (LOS) ratings show how certain stretches of highway measure up to current VDOT roadway standards. A table revealing the LOS ratings for the major highways through Scott County is included in **Appendix B**.

Future Transportation Facilities

Basic transportation improvements to the arterial highways within the county by 2035 include upgrading all roads to levels concurrent with the demand for traffic utilization as determined by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Most critical is the stretch of U. S. 23 within Weber City that suffers from heavy use and as a "collector" street serving the individual real estate parcels along its thoroughfare. With its primary responsibility to carry through traffic quickly and safely, these two uses are in direct conflict. A bypass around Weber City or additional improvements to the Route 224 corridor is likely the best long-term solution. Additional solutions include the County and/or Town adopting

access management guidelines to help develop future growth in a safe and efficient manner to avoid repeating safety and congesting problems.

In 2010, a planning study was undertaken by the Kingsport MPO, VDOT and LENOWISCO on the Route 224 / US Highway 23 Corridors from Gate City to the Tennessee State Line. The study looked at how both corridors can be improved in order to complement one another.

In 2015, a VDOT-commissioned roadway safety study was completed for the section of U.S. 23 between mile posts 0.0 and 3.0, from the Virginia/Tennessee state line to the intersection with U.S. 58/421 (Bristol Highway) at the northern boundary of Weber City. The study evaluated existing conditions – conflicting land uses and traffic patterns have contributed to driver confusion and a crash rate nearly twice the state average – reported collision data, and made recommendations to improve safety on that heavily traveled segment.

In 2021, VDOT began looking at the previous study that was conducted in 2015 to determine solutions along the Weber City corridor to enhance safety. The study looks at closing many of the entrances/exits that exist along the corridor and streamlining those so that each business has a designated entrance/exit. Railroad crossings are included in the study and the possibility of closing a portion of them is being considered. The study will be used to formulate upcoming applications for Smart Scale.

The following improvement projects are planned under the Primary System Classification. Additional documentation is included in Appendix C.

Moccasin Gap Bypass

This project consists of bypassing sections of U.S. 23 and U.S. 58 in the Moccasin Gap area. The project will begin at the intersection of Route 71 and Ellen Drive (Gate City), proceeding south roughly 1.3 miles to a new, signalized intersection with U.S. 58/Wadlow Gap Rd. The proposed roadway will consist of two-lane, divided highway. The project also includes a connection of 1,000' two-lane road to Filter Plant Ford that will provide access to several residences, the Scott County Sports Complex, and the county water filter plant. This project will help alleviate traffic congestion on U.S. 23 Business and Jones Street in Gate City (which is complicated by school and town traffic during peak times), and will also provide an emergency alternate route for travel, in the event of train derailment on U.S. 23/58 in Moccasin Gap.

U.S. 58 Climbing Lanes

This project consists of installing an additional climbing/travel lane, to be used as a truck climbing lane, westbound up Powell Mountain on U.S. 58, west of Duffield. The project begins at the top of Powell Mountain (at the Lee County line), and ends on the east side of Powell Mountain, near the intersection with Route 638, roughly 2.0 miles in length. Proposed improvements will involve excavating a rock cut section on the north side of U.S. 58.

Additional potential projects under consideration include U.S. 23/U.S. 58 improvements at Kane Street (Gate City), U.S. 23 improvements at Hilton Road (Weber City), U.S. 23/U.S. 58 intersection improvements (Duffield), and improvements at East Carters Valley Road (Rt. 704), Yuma Road (Rt. 614) and A.P. Carter Highway (Rt. 614). The County is also looking at further improving access to the Scott County Sports Complex from U.S. 23 via Filter Plant Road or other alternatives. Specific scopes and implementation estimates have not been compiled for these projects.

New VDOT Funding Mechanism

Set forth in the General Assembly's House Bill 1887, Virginia's SMART SCALE (§33.2-214.1) is designed to select appropriate transportation projects for funding and ensure the best use of limited tax dollars. Transportation projects are scored via an objective, transparent, outcome-based process.

Improvements are to focus on safety, accessibility, economic development, congestion mitigation, environmental quality, and multi-modal access (bicycle, pedestrian, transit).

VDOT Land Use and Development Regulations

The Virginia General Assembly and VDOT over the recent past have developed a series of new guidelines and regulations related to land use and development as they pertain to the state highway system. These new regulations can have significant impacts on developments, especially large developments. Roads are a critical public resource and constitute a major investment of the public's money. Traffic impacts caused by new development – a reduction in the traffic carrying capacity of the highways, more crashes and traffic congestion – can be very costly for state and local governments, as well as the broader community.

Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations

Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly added § 15.2-2222.1 to the Code of Virginia. The legislation establishes procedures by which localities submit proposals that will affect the state-controlled transportation network to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for review and comment. The chapter also directs VDOT to promulgate regulations to carry out the provisions of the statute. The statute intends to improve how land-use and transportation-planning decisions are coordinated throughout Virginia by establishing standardized methodologies (definitions, analytical methods, etc.), procedures for analyzing transportation impacts and providing that information to citizens and policymakers. The Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations (24 VAC 30-155), sets forth procedures and requirements governing VDOT's review of and submission of comments regarding comprehensive plans and amendments to comprehensive plans, rezoning proposals, and subdivision plats, site plans and plans of development and the accompanying traffic impact analyses.

Additional information on the Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations can be found online at:

http://www.virginiadot.org/info/traffic_impact_analysis_regulations.asp

Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements

The Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements (SSAR) regulation, which became effective on March 9, 2009, sets requirements that newly constructed streets will need to meet to be accepted into the secondary system of state highways for public maintenance. The Virginia Department of Transportation recognizes that all parties involved with the development process will need to become familiar with the contents of the SSAR. VDOT has developed a website to offer interested parties information, materials, and training opportunities to become more familiar with the SSAR.

For more information on these regulations, visit:

http://www.virginiadot.org/info/secondary_street_acceptance_requirements.asp

Access Management Regulations and Standards

Access management focuses on the location, spacing, and design of entrances, street intersections, median openings, and traffic signals. Each of these creates conflict points where vehicles have to stop or slow down, disrupting the flow of traffic. As the number of conflict points increase, so does traffic congestion and crashes. Better management of access to the highway can reduce the number of conflict points and their adverse impact on highway operation and public safety. Roads are a critical public resource and constitute a major investment of the public's money. Access management can maximize this investment. Because the motorist spends less time waiting in traffic, fuel efficiency is maximized, air pollution is reduced, and commuting times become shorter. Businesses benefit because better mobility expands their market area.

The 2007 General Assembly unanimously approved legislation directing VDOT to develop access management regulations and standards with the goals to:

- Reduce traffic congestion
- Enhance public safety by reducing conflicting traffic movements
- Reduce the need for new highways and road widening by maximizing the performance of existing state highways
- Support economic development by promoting the efficient movement of goods and people
- Preserve the public investment in new and existing highways
- Ensure that private property is entitled to reasonable access to the highways.

The legislative goals will be accomplished through regulations and standards for: spacing entrances, intersections, median openings and traffic signals; locating entrances a safe distance from intersection turning movements and from interchange ramps; providing vehicular, and where appropriate, pedestrian circulation between adjoining properties; and sharing highway entrances. The regulations and standards only apply to VDOT-controlled highways. They do not apply to roads that are maintained by localities (such as cities, towns).

For more information on VDOT's access management tools and guidelines, visit

http://www.virginiadot.org/info/access_management_regulations_and_standards.asp

Chapter VII Community Facilities

The quality and accessibility of the facilities and services that are available to the public are critical factors in the planning of a community. This is the primary area in which the local government can serve the needs of its citizens. Subjects such as health care, public safety and education are important to the public and should be of the utmost concern to local officials when planning for the future of their community.

Solid Waste Management

Although it might be properly termed as a "service," solid waste management is now a major responsibility for county, city and town governments. Because of the importance of this service and the fact it is a part of each resident's daily life, solid waste management and disposal could also be termed a public utility.

"Garbage collection" has been a function of municipal governments for many years, purely out of necessity to deal with large quantities of waste that a concentrated population generates. Until the early 1970s, this waste was collected in open trucks and deposited in open dumps, where it was burned to reduce the volume. Such operations are inconceivable by today's standards.

Until the early 1970s, county residents outside of incorporated towns were left to dispose of their household waste as best they could. Unauthorized roadside dumps were common, and area streams were subjected to thousands of tons of waste each year.

Scott County operated one solid waste disposal site, which is now a transfer station for solid waste leaving the county. This 60-acre sanitary landfill had a life expectancy of 10 to 12 years. The facility is used by the county's public works department, the towns in Scott County, and the private haulers operating locally. The landfill is permitted to accept industrial waste if approved by the Virginia Department of Health and classified as non-hazardous waste. The facility is not permitted to accept any hazardous waste products.

Collection of solid waste in Scott County is provided in two different ways. Scott County maintains a rural green box (convenience centers) network throughout the county for collection of household waste. Transportation of collected waste to the landfill is also the responsibility of the county. Private haulers provide collection service for business and industry on a contract basis, for delivery of the waste may be directly to the landfill by the business or industry.

Education Facilities

A network of thirteen public schools serves Scott County, with three high schools, three middle and intermediate schools, and seven elementary and primary schools.

Table VII-1 below reflects fall enrollment figures at each of the schools in Scott County.

**Table VII-1
Fall Enrollment - Scott County Schools**

School	2005-2006	2010-2011	2015-2016
Gate City High School	433	511	492
Rye Cove High School	308	287	289
Twin Springs High School	317	296	253
Dungannon Intermediate School	93	77	61
Gate City Middle School	514	527	501
Rye Cove Intermediate School	186	189	153
Duffield Primary	320	332	383
Fort Blackmore Elementary	93	103	96
Hiltons Elementary	179	177	169
Nickelsville Elementary	281	283	286
Shoemaker Elementary	438	616	625
Weber City Elementary	405	367	340
Yuma Elementary	158	205	169
TOTAL	3725	3970	3817

Source: Virginia Department of Education

Vocational instruction is provided by the Scott County Vocational Center, was constructed in 1968. The center offers classes with the primary purpose of providing high school students with an opportunity to acquire training in selected skills and trades in addition to their regular high school subjects. The center offers classes in auto mechanics, cosmetology, drafting, electricity, electronics, food occupations, machine shop, printing, agriculture machine shop, auto body shop, carpentry, plumbing and welding. The center has a design capacity of 600 students and is in good condition.

The Scott County School System has three locations for its Special Education classes; Weber City Elementary School, Rye Cove Elementary School and Gate City High School. Special Education classes are held for elementary, middle, and high school students at the above locations with smaller operations at each school.

Public Safety

Scott County is served by three law enforcement bodies; the Scott County Sheriff's Department, the Gate City Police Department, and the Weber City Police Department.

The Scott County Sheriff's Department is located in Gate City and employs 39 full-time and 6 part-time personnel. The department has 24 patrol vehicles for its use. It is the responsibility of the Sheriff's Department, along with six Virginia State Highway Patrol Officers, to provide protection and service to the 539 square mile area of Scott County. The main problem that the Scott County Sheriff's Department is experiencing is the need for more personnel, especially in the law enforcement category. Currently there is not enough funding to provide the needed personnel.

Scott County is served by ten emergency service operations. These include a public life saving crew, a private ambulance and convalescent service, Duffield Fire and Rescue, Nickelsville Rescue and six volunteer fire departments. A county-wide rescue squad association was formed in April 1989 to provide more efficient service. The training of rescue personnel in Scott County ranges from CPR and first aid to the handling of hazardous materials.

The main problem facing emergency services in Scott County is funding for its volunteer units. The importance of volunteer emergency units in Scott County cannot be overemphasized. These groups provide a valuable service to the citizens of the county and deserve the full support of the local governments along with any assistance that can be provided.

Ambulance Service is provided by several private businesses that provide 24-hour emergency and convalescent service to the Scott County area.

Duffield Fire and Rescue has emergency fire vehicles as well as ambulances that offer 24 hour a day emergency service. The department has 32 active volunteer members and substations in the Fairview and Rye Cove communities. Its equipment consists of four ambulances, two pumper trucks, one ladder truck, one mini-pumper, two crash/utility vehicle and one tanker truck.

The Dungannon Volunteer Fire Department consists of 11 members, two pumper trucks and a brush truck. Hiltons Volunteer Fire Department has 14 members, one pumper truck and a brush truck.

The Gate City Volunteer Fire Department has 41 members. Their vehicles include a crash truck, brush truck, mini pumper truck, three pumper trucks, and one tanker truck. The Weber City Volunteer Fire Department has 30 members and five vehicles. The department has two pumper trucks and a crash truck.

The Nickelsville Volunteer Fire Department has 14 members. Their vehicles include a tanker truck, a pumper truck and a brush truck that is shared with the Nickelsville Rescue Squad. The Nickelsville Squad has 13 volunteer members, two ambulances and the aforementioned brush truck.

Fort Blackmore has just recently begun to reform their local volunteer fire department. The department presently has 7 members and is in the process of recruiting more. They presently have one pumper truck and one tanker truck.

Health Services

Although Scott County currently has no hospital facilities with none planned, the area is adjacent to Sullivan County, Tennessee, with numerous hospitals including large regional health facilities. There are nine full-time physicians and four dentists in Scott County. The county currently has one optician in practice. The current ratio of physicians to population is 1:2,578 and the ratio of dentists to population is 1:5,810. The physicians maintain practices at the local clinics in Duffield, Dungannon, Gate City, and Nickelsville. The clinics, medical centers, and health department are the only facilities that provide health care within the county.

The Scott County Health Department was built in 1971, originally located in the Daniel Boone area, five miles from Gate City. In 2002 a new structure was built and is located in Gate City. It is one of three health departments in the LENOWISCO Health District. The staff of 23 includes both classified and hourly positions. There are 15 positions shared between the three health departments in the District; supervisors, clinician, public health nurses, nutritionists, social worker and fiscal technician. The health department provides services such as screenings, immunizations and health education programs to the citizens of Scott County.

Clinch River Health Services is a family practice medical center that opened in 1978 and serves approximately 1,080 patients a month. A new facility is currently under construction adjacent to the existing clinic. The center provides general medical care, lab work and X-rays. It has office space and equipment for a dentist, three examining rooms, and a small surgical facility. At the present time the center has one full time physician. Scott County needs to attract a dentist and a permanent full-time physician to the Clinch River Health Center in order to provide sufficient health care to the residents of that area of the county.

The Holston Medical Group maintains facilities in Weber City and Duffield. The Duffield center is a new facility and offers many state of the art features that previously were not available in Scott County. The facilities do not have emergency facilities but can provide general medical care, X-rays, lab work and minor surgery.

The Nickelsville Medical Center offers primary care to the eastern part of Scott County. It is a family practice with one full-time doctor, and offers X-rays, emergency care, and general medical care. The center contains a doctor's office, three examining rooms and administrative offices. Approximately 700 patients a month are seen at this center.

Holston Mental Health Services operates as a private, non-profit, community health agency serving the residents of western Sullivan County, Tennessee, and Scott, Lee, and Wise Counties and the City of Norton in Virginia. Services in Virginia are centered around three outpatient clinics – Scott County Mental Health Center in Gate City, Lee County Mental Health Center in Pennington Gap, and the Wise County Mental Health Center in Norton. Funding is provided by the Planning District One Community Services Board (funded by Scott, Lee, And Wise Counties and the City of Norton, and the Virginia Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation), patient fees, third party payors, and private contributions. The Scott County Mental Health Center offers outpatient therapy for adults, children, and families. The center has a staff of six and provided services to more than 4,440 patients in 1990.

Scott County currently has two nursing homes, one in Duffield and another in Weber City. These nursing homes offer speech and physical therapy, social services programs, and organized activities for their residents. Both nursing homes are privately funded.

Aging Services

Mountain Empire Older Citizens is the designated agency on aging serving Planning District One, which includes Scott County. Services include home delivered meals, chore services, personal care, friendly visiting, transportation (public transportation aspect explained in Chapter VI - Transportation) and many other services for those in social and economic need.

Courthouse and Town Halls

The provision of necessary county governmental services depends not only on personnel but also upon the facilities in which these services are housed. It is for this reason the four governmental facilities of Scott County are discussed below.

The Scott County Courthouse was originally built in 1828, rebuilt in 1930 and underwent extensive remodeling in 1968. In addition to the Circuit Court operations, the courthouse also houses the following offices: Registrar, Commissioner of Revenue, General District Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations, and the V.P.I. Extension Office. The county also has offices beneath the library building including the County Administrator, County Attorney and Building Inspector. The Scott County Economic Development Office and Scott County Chamber of Commerce are currently located adjacent to the Courthouse in Gate City.

Libraries

Libraries provide an important recreational and educational service to the public. These facilities can be used at no cost and are enjoyed by all age groups.

The Scott County Public Library is located in Gate City and is part of the Lonesome Pine Library System. The library has five employees and is open to the public 54 hours per week. The library has a collection of 57,655 hardback volumes in addition to a large selection of paperbacks, periodicals,

records, cassettes, microfilm and videos for use by the public. The Scott County Public Library, along with the other libraries in the Lonesome Pine library system, is completing a computer automation project that will connect it to the other branches in the system as well as aid in checkout and inventory, and provide a computerized card catalogue for the public's use.

Information Technology

Information technology services have become a vital community service for the growth of counties throughout the United States. The categories of Information Technology are unlimited and continuing to grow every day. In this plan, we will focus on two of the more vital forms of information technology, Internet service and cellular telephone service. Both are quickly becoming major components in the economic growth and standard of living for almost every area including Scott County.

Internet Service / Broadband

Two local connection Internet providers currently serve Scott County. As demand for Internet access increases for personal, commercial and governmental use, it is expected that the amount of local access service providers will increase. Broadband internet access is provided to selected areas of the county.

Cellular Service

Five cellular service providers presently serve Scott County. Accessible coverage area for the County is at about 70 percent, primarily serving the more urban areas of the County (Gate City, Weber City). As technology grows, additional portions of the county should begin to receive service during the lifespan of this plan.

As this growth continues, focus should be placed on the design, placement, and regulated standards for communication towers. This issue should be adequately reviewed and included when the County begins work on a county zoning ordinance.

Recreation Areas

Scott County currently has several state and nationally recognized facilities including local parks, a county park, a state park, and sites in the Jefferson National Forest. The Scott County Park is located within the corporate limits of Gate City. The park's facilities include picnic shelters and grounds, a walking trail, two tennis courts, a large meeting room, restrooms, and a scenic 9-hole golf course. The Scott County Recreation Department also provides small boat access to the Holston and Clinch Rivers. This network of "blueways" includes access points located at Jett Gap Road in Hiltons, U.S. Highway 23 in Weber City, Apple Orchard Road in Yuma, and Anglers Way in Clinchport. Also, plans are under way for a future site at Islandview Circle in Fort Blackmore. The role of the Scott County Recreation Department is to provide a selection of opportunities that facilitate play and the recreation experience within designated environments for all persons to enjoy.

Tourism

Scott County has a wide variety of activities for tourists to our area. Be it history and culture, music, or outdoor recreation, there is plenty for visitors to do to stay entertained.

Scott County has a rich historical and cultural past. Daniel Boone "blazed the trail" to Kentucky through Scott County, while Gate City served as a gateway to the west. Scotty County sites listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places include the Kilgore Fort House, the Scott County Courthouse, downtown Gate City, the Flanary Archaeological Site, and the A.P. Carter Homeplace.

The Flanary archaeological site, located near Dungannon, contains well-preserved Archaic period deposits (8,000 to 1,000 B.C.), which rarely occur in the western part of the state. The presence of these Native American artifacts provide valuable documentation of the interaction of native Virginia Indians with their neighbors in eastern Tennessee and western North Carolina.

To inform tourists about life in the 1700s, the Wilderness Road Blockhouse was built at Natural Tunnel State Park in 2003, and is a replica of the original which was located in Carter's Valley and was a gathering point for settlers on their way to Kentucky. Daniel Boone used the Blockhouse as a starting point in blazing the first gateway to the West. Moccasin Gap and Kane Gap, both in the county, were two of the three gaps Boone used for his travels. Kane Gap remains in its natural state and has not been compromised for road construction or development.

The Kilgore Fort House, near Nickelsville, was constructed in 1790. Robert Kilgore's stout log house represents a period during which Indians were still a threat to settlers in southwestern Virginia. The house was restored in the 1970s to serve as a visitor's attraction for a wayside park. Also in Nickelsville, the historic Bush Mill was recently renovated.

Scott County, due to its location on the western edge of Virginia, was seen as a frontier during the 1700s and early 1800s. Many families migrated here from eastern locations ranging from Tidewater Virginia to Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. Some members of these families stayed in Scott County, with their ancestors here to this day, while many moved on to the North and West. Due to a well-preserved local history and location on The Wilderness Road, Scott County is a prominent area in many genealogical searches, and represents opportunities for genealogy related tourism.

The Carter Family Fold is the music epicenter of Scott County. The Hiltons community is home to what many consider the First Family of Country Music, the Carter Family. A.P, Sara and Maybelle Carter's famous 1927 recordings in nearby Bristol are widely regarded as the "birth" of country music. The "Fold," one of the premier sites on the Crooked Road, Virginia's heritage music trail, hosts family friendly music events every Saturday night, with the Carter family museum next door.

There are three major music festivals in Scott County: the Clinch Mountain Music Fest in Gate City, the Papa Joe Smiddy Music Festival at Natural Tunnel State Park, and the Carter Family Fold's Annual Festival. And open throughout the year, "picking parlors" can be found all over the county.

Cultural tourism is a significant factor in Scott County. Many talented local artisans produce woodturning, handmade mandolins, photography, etc. Shops showcase some of the works of local artisans for tourists' purchase.

Festivals are one of the cornerstones of Scott County tourism, with Nickelsville Days, Duffield Daze, Clinch Mountain Music Fest, Carter Family Fold's Annual Festival and Dungannon's Mountain Treasures Festival among the largest. These events cover a day or two over a weekend, typically on holidays, and are events that bring in visitors from all over. Other festivals and events include Seige at the Blockhouse, Carter Family Memorial Music Festival, Papa Joe Smiddy Music Festival, High Knob Naturalist Rally, Bush Mill Days, Frontier Harvest Festival, The Storytelling Festival, Boo at the Zoo, Christmas at the Zoo, Dungannon Christmas Parade and Holiday Fest, the Santa Train, Gate City Christmas Parade, and the Nickelsville Christmas Parade. In September, the county hosts the Explore Scott County Outdoors Festival, which specifically encourages people to get outdoors.

Scott County has a wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Bark Camp Lake, in northern Scott County, provides a perfect spot for fishing, boating, hiking and camping. The Clinch River is one of the most diverse in the nation. It is full of rare plants and animals, some of which can't be found anywhere else in the world. The North Fork of the Holston River offers seclusion and is also a trophy smallmouth bass fishery. The Jefferson National Forest has more than 34,000 acres of hunting, fishing, camping and picnicking land in Scott County.

The Scott County tourism department, in conjunction with the County's E911 GIS department, created trail maps for various activities that tourists can participate in across the county. Visitors can enjoy scenic driving trails, the many blueways that include boat ramps and access points, hiking, walking and equestrian trails. Horse shows, extravaganzas, horse pulls, annual wagon trains and various other equestrian related events take place at the Scott County Horse Park, just west of Dungannon, and equestrian trails are being developed and expanded.

Natural Tunnel, deemed the "Eighth Wonder of the World" by William Jennings Bryan, was created by the waters of Stock Creek and was first used as a railroad tunnel in the 1890s. Natural Tunnel State Park offers an amphitheater, two campgrounds, ten cabins and a six bedroom lodge. Also located on the property are a swimming pool, picnic areas, chairlift and meeting space.

Scott County Park and Golf Course, located in Gate City, offers a scenic 9-hole golf course, tennis courts, picnic shelters and a walking trail, with meeting space in the clubhouse.

Chapter VIII Land Use

The Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan will address the current and future land use in Scott County. Topics covered in this section include existing land use, physical constraints to development, and future land use.

Past Development

The pattern in which land has been developed will largely determine the future development of Scott County. The bulk of developable land within Scott County has been developed, and no major changes except expansion of existing developable areas and transportation corridors is expected.

The existing land use patterns of the region are the result of changing economic conditions, technology and social attitudes — all of which have operated within restrictive topographic conditions. The multitude of topographic related restrictions which influence the pattern and distribution of land uses within the region include:

- Flooding of rivers and streams which has restricted development
- The rugged topography and excessive slopes have tended to restrict development to areas between the ridges and adjacent to major roads serving the area;
- Highways and railroads have followed the paths of rivers and creeks between ridges and have restricted development opportunities to small areas along the roadways;
- Soil characteristics, such as poor permeability, depth to bedrock, subsoil suitability, etc., have not been conducive to new development;
- Land suitable for development on plateaus, ridge tops, and in hollows has been restricted because of inadequate access and lack of utilities; and
- Incompatible land use mixtures have resulted from a lack of developable land.

Future Land Use

The proposed Future Land Use Plan shows a generalized land use concept for the year 2020 for Scott County. The map is general in nature and suggests a continuation of many land use patterns already established within the County.

Limitations on Future Land Development

There are a number of factors that severely limit the amount of developable land in Scott County. This section of the Comprehensive Plan will attempt to address the primary factors, including steep slopes, poor soils conditions, flood prone areas, public water and sewer systems, and transportation access.

Slopes

Areas with slopes in excess of 20 percent are generally considered unsuitable for urban type development, due to costs and varying stability of slopes. Roughly 88 percent of the acreage in Scott County has a slope in excess of 20 percent. Another 4.2 percent has slopes between 10 and 20

percent, leaving 7.8 percent of the county with slopes of 10 percent or less. The scarcity of level land becomes more apparent when one considers that nearly one-third of the land in the county classified as urban and built-up has slopes in excess of 20 percent.

Flood Prone Areas

The Flood Plain Map following shows the extent of flood prone areas within and Scott County. Many of the developed areas of the region are subject to flash floods due to local topography. Areas within the flood plain should be reserved for the flow of flood waters.

Floodplain development regulations do not prohibit the use of floodplain land. Such regulations do attempt to prevent harmful or adverse types of land use in these areas. Intensive development of floodplain areas is strongly discouraged. Swollen streams and rivers not only cause damage to individual structures, but also present a threat to downstream areas in the form of floating flood debris. Construction activities within floodplains also lead to erosion and washout problems. Not only is this detrimental to those specific land areas in the floodway, but may result in sedimentation buildups downstream. Such buildups over time may cause general routing of streams and riverbeds. As such, development activities within floodplains can have far-reaching, detrimental effects even upon those areas that lie outside the hazardous area.

Health hazards can also result from development within floodplains. Cases occur in which on-site waste disposal systems will not function properly during flooded periods. This can cause contamination of existing water supplies during times when drinking water is in the greatest demand. Additionally, flood hazard areas are often low lying, with high ground water conditions and semi-impermeable soils. These conditions may prevent the effective functioning of on-site sewage disposal systems involving septic tanks and drainfields even under normal conditions.

Development within floodplains can also threaten surrounding areas by creating obstructions to floodflows, thus increasing flood heights. Several adjacent buildings, or even a fence, can become obstacles which can trap floating debris and create temporary dams which water must either flow around or over. Such obstructions can force water far beyond even its normal flood banks resulting in extreme property damage, disruption of transportation links, and breakdown of communications throughout the county.

Tools for regulating development within the floodplain in Scott County exist in the form of the County's subdivision regulations and floodplain management ordinance. Although a zoning ordinance is not yet available to help guide future development, such an ordinance represents one of the most direct tools through which development within floodplains can be regulated.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is not intended to show the exact location of areas to be developed, rather it is intended to reflect the rationale that should be adopted and refined in designating areas for future development. The criteria used in delineating the areas shown include:

- areas subject to flooding should not be developed;
- development should be directed toward areas which have access to public sewer or are suitable for septic system drainfields;
- areas with public water supply service should be developed prior to areas without such service; and
- areas with adequate road access should be developed prior to areas without such access.

Chapter IX

Goals, Objectives and Policies

Before formulating a plan for Scott County, goals, objectives and policies must be developed from among selected concerns identified in the background material. These goals, objectives and policies provide a framework for the comprehensive plan. Goals, objectives and policies have been developed for land use, transportation, housing, physical environment, community facilities, and implementation.

A goal is a general statement of something the community wishes to achieve; it is an end towards which actions are aimed.

An objective is a statement of a way in which a goal is to be reached; it refers to some specific idea which is reasonably attainable.

A policy is a statement prescribing a definite course of action or method of doing something; it is based on an assessment of existing conditions and future expectations.

Land Use

Goal:

Encourage harmonious and wise use of land through future land development decisions.

Residential Land Use

Objective:

Provide for safe and attractive housing and housing areas.

Policies:

1. Encourage development of single family building lots.
2. Encourage residential development similar in type and density to other nearby residential development.
3. Coordinate the planning of housing areas and highway transportation.
4. Encourage dense patterns of new housing only in areas where water and sewer service exists or is planned.

Commercial Land Use

Objective:

Provide for commercial services to support a quality standard of living.

Policies:

1. Encourage commercial development consistent with good land use patterns.
2. Encourage "strip development" along major corridors where frontage roads or other means of appropriate controlling access are provided.

Agricultural Land Use

Objective:

Promote the efficient and effective use of agricultural land toward the realization of present and future needs.

Policy:

1. With an awareness of Scott County's substantial agricultural base, county policy consideration should reflect maximum support of the county's agricultural population.

Industrial Land Use

Objective:

Promote the expansion of a viable and diversified industrial base within Scott County reflecting permanent, high-wage skilled jobs.

Policies:

1. Maintain an inventory of and provide suitable industrial sites that are accessible to major highways and, if possible rail lines.
2. Establish land use codes and regulations to assure adequate protection for industry and users of nearby land.
3. Encourage buffers such as open space, trees, shrubbery or fencing between industry and residential or commercial areas.
4. Seek additional industry which complements existing industry for Scott County.
5. Continue an active economic development program in the county.

Objective:

Enhance the marketability of existing industrial sites in Scott County.

Policies:

1. Implement a "shell building" program in Scott County to increase the number of prospect visits to the County. Use funds received from sale of first building to finance construction of second, and so forth. Matching state/federal funds should be sought to assist in financing, or funds from existing industrial tax receipts could be used to finance this project.
2. Seek federal/state funding to complete Environmental Audits of strategic industrial sites in Scott County.
3. Maintain a complete inventory of available sites and buildings in the county.

Population

Goal:

Encourage a population level and balance commensurate with housing, employment, economic opportunities, transportation systems and community services/facilities in conjunction with an awareness of natural resource limitations.

Objective:

Promote both a population increase and a balanced population structure in Scott County.

Policies:

1. Encourage the construction of both water and sanitary sewer lines and expansions of such existing systems.
2. Encourage new housing construction in compliance with building codes and development regulations in those areas most amenable to development.
3. Maintain acceptable traffic volumes safety, and road conditions.

Transportation

Goal:

Promote feasible solutions to relieve current traffic problems and support specific land use objectives.

Objective:

Provide a street and highway system that is compatible to residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Policies:

1. Support reconstruction of Wadlow Gap Road / Route 224.
2. Support Moccasin Gap Interchange Project.
3. Support construction of by-pass around Weber City to assist traffic flow and relieve congestion.
4. Request the Virginia Department of Transportation to study the feasibility and cost of extending Interstate 181 from its present terminus near Kingsport, Tennessee through Scott County and beyond to the Kentucky, Virginia state line north of Pound, Virginia

Housing

Goal:

Insure a suitable residential environment and adequate housing for all Scott County families.

Objective:

Encourage the use of Federal and State assistance for new residential construction and rehabilitation of substandard units.

Policies:

1. Encourage the use of Section 8 subsidy programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Loan programs of the Farmers Home Administration and Veterans Administration.
2. Improve water and sewer systems using state/federal loan/grant funds where economically feasible for both the provider and end user.
3. Seek the assistance of the Scott County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, RADA, Inc., and the Appalachian Service Project to identify substandard units and encourage those agencies to seek federal or any other available funding to bring these units into compliance with at least the minimum Section 8 housing livability standards.
4. Initiate cleanup, fix-up campaigns calling upon the resources of the numerous civic and church groups in the county.

Objective:

Encourage development of additional housing opportunities for the handicapped.

Policy:

1. Encourage development of a supervised housing complex by seeking out a developer in the private sector.

Objective:

Encourage development of affordable housing units for Scott County's citizens.

Policy:

1. Encourage residents to investigate home financing options offered by Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), Federal Housing Administration (FHA), and the Veteran's Administration (VA).

Physical Environment

Goal:

Encourage the development of a healthy and stable environment within Scott County which encompasses a diversity of living patterns for present and future generations.

Objective:

Control or restrict development within fragile environmental areas such as floodplains and steep slopes.

Policy:

1. Continue to restrict development in flood hazard areas of all Scott County waterways where flood hazard areas have been identified.

Community Facilities

Goal:

Provide a range of community facilities and services to meet Scott County's current and emerging needs.

Utilities

Objective:

Expand the scope of water and sewer service to meet future demands.

Policies:

1. Provide for adequate water service in accordance with engineering recommendations.
2. Extend water and sewer to developing areas and areas experiencing sanitation or water supply problems, including Nickelsville, south of Weber City across the Holston River, areas adjacent to Gate City, and Dungannon, and other areas identified for "future service" in this plan.
3. Study the feasibility of consolidating all water, sewer, and possibly solid waste collection/disposal systems into a single administrative body for expense reduction.
4. Require developers to install water distribution and sewerage collection systems.

Solid Waste

Objective:

Provide for residential, commercial, and non-hazardous industrial solid waste disposal; particularly, in recognition that the establishment and operation of any sanitary landfill must be a function of the public sector due to the tremendous potential for adverse impact of such facilities on the environmental resources of the county and the health, safety and welfare of its residents.

Policies:

1. Expand existing solid waste disposal services, as needed, to serve new customers.
2. Construct manned solid waste convenience centers in five or six locations across the county to increase the efficiency of the present solid waste collection system.
3. Only sanitary landfills under the operation and ownership of the county's governing body or its designee may be located, established, operated and maintained in Scott County.

Objective:

Encourage development of a recycling program to conserve our natural resources and the Scott County Landfill, and also to come into compliance with recently enacted state requirements to recycle solid waste by 25 percent by 2015.

Policies:

1. Study the implementation of a sorted collection program for glass, aluminum, paper, and other recyclable materials, either curbside or at solid waste convenience centers.

2. Implement the most cost efficient systems which will allow Scott County to achieve mandated recycling goals.

Public Safety

Objective:

Support and maintain fire and police protection and rescue squad services.

Policies:

1. Continue the current level of police protection.
2. Continue to support the Fire Department(s) and the Scott County Lifesaving Crew in the county budget.

Information Technology

Objective:

Focus on the roles telecommunications are now playing on personal, commercial, and governmental growth and their importance on economic development.

Policies:

1. Identify telecommunication facility (towers, buildings, lines, etc.) locations and encourage the use of those locations that can ensure a broad range of services, with minimal impact and compatible with nearby land uses.
2. Encourage a futuristic communications infrastructure for the County and encourage the combination of compatible technologies for commercial and public usage.
3. Encourage competition among existing and new services that will offer low-cost, effective communications for businesses and residents.

Objective:

Use current and future available forms of information technology to their fullest potential to help Scott County and it's residents.

Policies:

1. Make use of telecommunication infrastructure goals to support information technology.
2. Promote economic growth by encouraging businesses that make use of information technology.
3. Provide connectivity for households to information systems.
4. Promote the County and region through cyber-communication systems
5. Make access to County offices, records, forms, and transactions available through the Internet.
6. Promote community forums through the Internet.

Recreation

Objective:

Encourage expansion of Scott County's recreation activities and facilities.

Policies:

1. Bring about the participation of Scott County in the Guest River Gorge hiking trail project near Bangor.
2. Encourage the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to continue to expand programs and facilities at Natural Tunnel State Park.
3. Develop floodplains, not suitable for other uses, into recreation areas.

Implementation

Goal:

Make effective use of implementation tools provided to the County to carry out plan goals and objectives.

Objective:

1. Review at least once every five years, update as necessary, and adopt the Scott County Comprehensive Plan.
2. Maintain a zoning ordinance.
3. Adopt a Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize county capital facility improvements over 5 years.

Chapter X Implementation

Implementation of the Scott County Comprehensive Plan is even more important than its preparation and adoption because the plan will be of little use unless it is carried out. There are several techniques authorized by Title 15.2, Chapter 22, Code of Virginia, 1950 (as amended) that enable Scott County to implement the plan once it has been approved by the Board of Supervisors. These include subdivision regulations, a zoning ordinance and capital improvements programming which are discussed below.

Adopting the Comprehensive Plan

The Scott County Planning Commission and the Scott County Board of Supervisors must advertise and hold public hearings on the completed plan in accordance with regulations set forth in Sec. 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia. After the plan is adopted, it may be amended as necessary to keep it up to date. However, the Code requires that the plan be reevaluated at least once every five years. Proposed plan amendments require public hearings and adoption by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Subdivision Ordinance

The subdivision ordinance allows Scott County to control the platting of vacant land and to regulate the layout and construction of new streets and utilities in order to assure that new development will be an asset to the County. It also assists with the implementation of Scott County's Comprehensive Plan by requiring that new subdivisions be developed in accordance with the County's plans for streets and utilities. As set forth in Section 15.2-2240 of the Code of Virginia, every locality in Virginia is required to have a subdivision ordinance.

Zoning Ordinance

A zoning ordinance controls the use of land, lot sizes, the size and height of buildings, and the placement of buildings on the land. It also delineates district boundaries and specifies the activities that may be conducted in each district. Zoning helps preserve the existing character of an area by excluding incompatible uses while permitting those uses that can exist in harmony. However, it does not eliminate incompatible land uses that already exist in an area, but may provide a means of phasing out such uses if they are ever discontinued.

Capital Improvements Program

A capital improvements program (CIP) is a detailed and reasoned schedule for financing and constructing public improvements and facilities needed by a locality. A CIP usually covers a period of five years. It includes major public projects which, because of their size and expected long useful life,

are considered inappropriate for the locality's annual operating budget. A CIP identifies projects the locality wishes to accomplish over a five year period. Every year the CIP is updated and extended another year into the future.

In order to prepare a CIP, Scott County would have to analyze the way it programs funds for various public improvements. This would help assure that money is being spent wisely. A CIP should be used to schedule projects over a period of time, thus assuring that various development steps logically follow one another.

If Scott County develops a CIP, capital improvements recommended in the Comprehensive Plan should be considered among the projects to be included in the document. This will help tie together the timing, location, and financing of public improvements with the County's planning program.

Scott County may adopt a CIP in accordance with Section 15.2-2239 of the Code of Virginia. A CIP involves several stages of development. First is a review of the Comprehensive Plan goals and the County's financial condition and budget. Second is a preliminary list of projects selected by the Planning Commission after it solicits input from the public. Third, the Board of Supervisors selects specific projects from this list and has a draft CIP prepared. Fourth, this draft is presented at a public hearing, revised as needed, and tentatively approved by the Board of Supervisors. Finally, the CIP data is transferred to a capital budget. The annual operating budget is prepared and reviewed together with the capital budget and CIP. The Board of Supervisors has the authority to approve both capital and operating budgets and to pass appropriation ordinances.

Citizen Participation

Scott County should devise a program to inform its citizens of local planning efforts and the purpose and need for such efforts. This program would assist in soliciting citizen participation for the improvement of the County, as well as improve the degree of public support for the Comprehensive Plan. The program could be offered as presentations to citizen advisory groups, neighborhood groups or civic organizations. Program subjects could include the planning process, planning commission function, comprehensive planning efforts, implementation efforts, and citizen participation. Public hearings provide the typical means of citizen participation. Comprehensive Plans, subdivision ordinances, zoning ordinances, and CIPs require public hearings prior to adoption. For citizens, these hearings afford a forum where opinions and ideas are expressed. Public hearings are regulated by Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Coordination among public and private decision makers is essential if the Comprehensive Plan policies are to be implemented. Without coordination, policies will overlap, their effectiveness will be reduced and costs will be unnecessarily high. Consistent decisions and the facilitation of citizen support

is likewise essential. The County must work closely with the six towns in the County, the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, and state and federal agencies to achieve the stated goals. The County cannot stand alone, but must be a team member, aware of its neighbors' activities and of new programs being considered by state and federal governments.

Plan Review and Update

Reevaluation is essential for the plan to remain a current and worthwhile document. Although the Code of Virginia requires that the Comprehensive Plan be reviewed by the planning commission every five years, it may require amendments at any time, should some unforeseen occurrences change the premises upon which the plan is based. The plan must be flexible to change as new ideas and events occur, but should not be subject to change for a minor problem. In this way, the plan will function as intended. It will be a useful guide for development, and it will be changed only when consistent with public health, safety, convenience and welfare.

Legal Status of Comprehensive Plan Enforcement

Chapter 22, Article 3 of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia – in particular, §15.2-2232 – grants legal status to an adopted Comprehensive Plan. Any violation or attempted violation of these State Code provisions and/or any provision of the Scott County Comprehensive Plan as referred to in §15.2-2232 may be restrained, corrected or abated as the case may be by injunction or other appropriate proceeding brought by Scott County as authorized by Chapter 22, Article 1, Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia.

