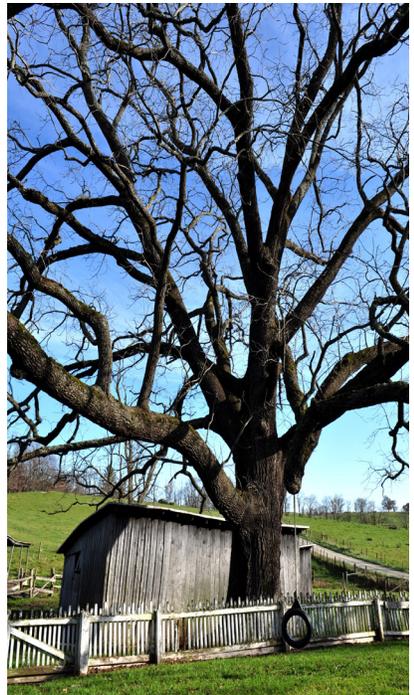# GRAYSON COUNTY Comprehensive Plan

Adopted December 12, 2013

Acknowledgements

The Grayson County Comprehensive Plan began with an idea, transformed into a plan of work and culminated into a valuable resource for the community. The input from the 700+ citizens, leaders and youth of the county, Grayson County Department Heads and the local/state/federal agencies and organizations who provided data, were all instrumental in the development of this plan.

Special recognition is given to the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission including James Dillon, Salem Bush and Michael Armbrister who spent countless hours on this creative new approach to web based, user-friendly comprehensive planning.

County staff including; Elaine Holeton; Planning & Community Development; Jonathan Sweet; County Administrator, Kevin Spurlin; Grayson County Extension Agent; Anthony Isom; Director of Social Services; Jonathan Luper; Director of Public Works; Richard Vaughan; Grayson County Sheriff Department; Kevin Chalfant and Judy Grear of Grayson County Public Schools; for providing input and participation in the Planning Commission Strategy Meetings. Erin Farmer; the 4-H Extension Agent who conducted the youth survey and teachers at Grayson High School for assistance with the youth survey.

A special "thank you" goes out to Grayson National Bank for use of the GNB Conference Center and the eleven locations for the citizen survey boxes including: Whitetop, Independence and Fries Libraries, Grant Computing Center, Loghouse Trading Post, Galyean Plumbing & Electric, D&J Hobby Center, Baywood Market, 21 Grocery, Star Market, and Fries Town Hall.

We appreciate the Grayson County Historical Society, The Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation & Mr. Fred Newcomb for assistance with the History/Geology Chapter and the employees of the Virginia Department of Transportation who assisted us with the Transportation Chapter and Plan.

A special thank you to members of the Grayson County Planning Commission 2012-2013, who dedicated countless hours to the drafting of the plan and to the Grayson County Board of Supervisors 2012-2013 for their leadership in the adoption of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

Grayson County Planning Commission	Grayson County Board of Supervisors 2012-2013
Dr. Palmer Fant, Chairman	Kenneth Belton, Chairman
Larry Bartlett, Vice Chairman	Brenda Sutherland, Vice Chair
Larry Brannock	John Brewer
Stephanie Brewer	David Sexton
Lindsey Carico	*Thomas Michael Maynard
Robert Felicito	
Robert Noblett	
Barbara Russell	

*The 2013 Grayson County Comprehensive Plan update began under the leadership of Mr. Mike Maynard, who served as a member of the Planning Commission and as the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors during the drafting of the plan. Mr. Maynard sadly passed away in June of 2013 as the plan was being developed. He recognized the importance of this plan for the improvement of our community. His influence in the plan will live on in the work ahead. Mike Maynard and his contributions will never be forgotten

Table of Contents

Grayson County Comprehensive Plan-2013

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Evolution of the Comprehensive Plan

In recognition that a well drafted plan was necessary for positive improvement of the community and to meet the upcoming deadline for the jurisdictional review of the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission agreed to begin work on the plan in the fall of 2011. In 2012, Grayson County contracted with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC) to provide technical assistance to update the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The planning process was initiated through a survey of the county's leaders, which included governmental leaders as well as leaders in education, healthcare, agriculture, housing, and other content areas. The results of the leadership survey were used to develop a citizen survey, which was available for all Grayson County residents between January 25, 2013 and March 25, 2013. The results were also used to understand the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of Grayson County. A web site, was developed early in the process, http://plangrayson.com/index.htm to assist the community with announcements, meeting dates, and to provide the chapter drafts as they were developed for review by the community. This website will continue in service as the official landing page for the approved draft of the plan, as a resource for more information on the plan and for use by the Planning Commission. Several press releases were issued to notify the public of the plan's progress throughout the year and two public hearings were advertised and sponsored prior to adoption of the plan.

Throughout 2013, MRPDC staff collected data and information for "focus pages" and developed the

format of the Comprehensive Plan. Grayson County developed the original concept of "focus pages" to improve the readability of the Comprehensive Plan and to provide a web friendly, navigable document. Each focus page covers a unique topic and the focus pages are organized into chapters by content area. The chapters in the Comprehensive Plan include; History & Geography, Population & Housing, Education, Economy, Agriculture & Forestry, Transportation, Public Services/Facilities & Utilities, Health & Wellness, Tourism, Land Use, Public Input, and The Goals & Action Plan. Special meetings of the Planning Commission took place over the course of the year to review and edit the content of the chapters and to guide MRPDC in the development of the plan.

Chapter 13: The Goal and Action Plan originates from the contents of the chapters, strategy meetings with various Department Heads and after careful review of the public input provided by the citizens of Grayson County. The Action Plan is a 10 year plan. It is a recommended list of potential strategies to achieve the overall goals listed in the Action Plan.

The 'Official Grayson County Map' is the culmination of all the maps used throughout the Comprehensive Plan.

Data Used in the Development of the Plan

To document and analyze demographic and economic trends in Grayson County, several data sources were used. In each of the chapters, data content was gathered from referenced sources relative to the chapter content. Those who choose to pursue additional data can explore the web links and sources provided. Much of the data cited in the Comprehensive Plan was provided

by the United States Census Bureau through the decennial census or the American Community Survey (ACS). During the 2000 Census and earlier decennial censuses, the Census Bureau used both short form and long form questionnaires; however, during the 2010 Census only the short form was used. This means that only basic population and housing data were collected during the 2010 Census. In 2005, the Census Bureau initiated the American Community Survey, an annual demographic survey of the United States that captures the long form questions that were not asked during the 2010 Census. The ACS and decennial census provide the same types of data; however, the methodology of these two surveys differs greatly. The decennial census is a count of the population and specific characteristics on a specific date – a snapshot in time. The ACS is a continuous demographic survey that averages characteristics over time. The decennial census surveys all households in the United States, and thus, has a lower margin of error and is more accurate. The ACS surveys a sample of households each year that are then totaled and averaged over a five-year period resulting in a higher margin of error and less accurate results. In December 2012, the Census Bureau released the 2007-2011 five-year American Community Survey estimates for Grayson County. There are some data used in this Comprehensive Plan that are only available from the 2000 Census and the 2007-2011 five-year ACS estimates. Generally these data can be compared; however, since ACS variables change over time, comparisons must be made with caution. Where possible, other data sources were used to analyze trends. The overall goal was to identify the most current and accurate data possible to document and analyze demographic and economic trends in Grayson County.

Legality of the Comprehensive Plan

The premise of the Comprehensive Plan is that it will be a guide for future decisions regarding the provision of public services. It will be a roadmap for changes in the use of land to the betterment of the health, safety, and welfare of Grayson County citizens.

The essential characteristics of the plan are that it is comprehensive, general, and long range. It is comprehensive in that the plan encompasses the entire county (outside the incorporated towns) and all of the natural, physical, and social elements that influence development. It is general in that the plan does not indicate specific locations nor contain detailed regulations. Long range means the plan looks beyond the foreground of pressing current issues to a desirable possible future in 20 years.

The Comprehensive Plan is not an end in itself; it is a living document, a continuing study through which issues relating to the future of the county can be resolved by citizens and their elected representatives. The plan should be revised and supplemented as necessary. State law requires that it be reviewed at least every five years.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is described in the Code of Virginia in Subsection 2223 of Title 15.2, and the legal status of the Comprehensive Plan is explained in Subsection 2232 of Title 15.2.

On behalf of the Grayson County Board of Supervisors and the Grayson County Planning Commission we sincerely hope that you find the information provided in the plan useful. We look forward to a prosperous, healthy and sustainable future in cooperation with the citizens of Grayson County.

Chapter 2

History & Geology

Introduction

The rich history of Grayson County includes hundreds of families and dozens of communities. These pages are a brief summary of the major events which have occurred since the county's inception over the last two hundred years. More information about the history of Grayson County can be found in the resources at the bottom of the page.

The Department of Planning & Community Development worked with members of the Grayson County Historical Society & The Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation to develop the pages included in this chapter. The information was compiled using the sources as listed below. Every attempt was made to factually portray the history of the Grayson County. Suggestions for any corrections to this chapter can be sent to the Director of Planning & Community Development, Grayson County Courthouse, for consideration in the next draft.
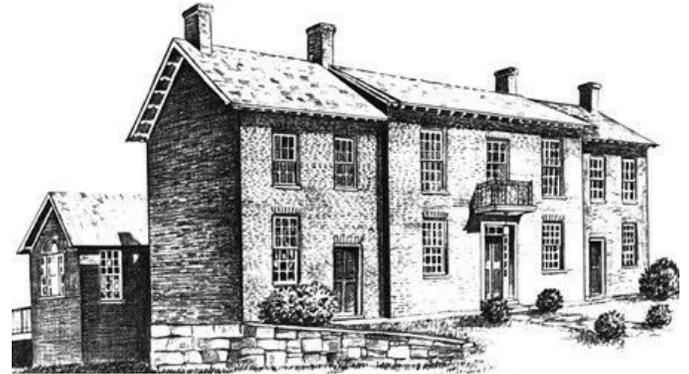
Courthouse at Oldtown-1800's

Historic 1908 Courthouse-Independence

Grayson County Courthouse-Today

History Chapter Reference Materials

- Grayson County Historical Society- http://www.graysonvahistsoc.com/index.html
- Grayson County Virginia Heritage Foundation, Inc - http://www.graysonheritage.org/
- Grayson County History - http://www.graysoncountyva.com/history-of-grayson
- New River Notes - http://www.newrivernotes.com/grayson_index.htm
- Historical Markers - http://www.markerhistory.com/tag/grayson-county/
- **Grayson County A History in Words and Pictures**. Grayson County Historical Society, 1976.
- **Bicentennial Heritage Grayson County**, Virginia 1793. 1908 Courthouse Foundation, 1995.

The Grayson County Planning Commission would like to thank the members of the Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation and the Grayson County Historical Society for assistance with this chapter; most notably David Hauslohner, Sara Hauslohner, Shirley Gordon and Laura Bryant. We would also like to thank Mr. Fred Newcomb, Marion Senior High School Geology Instructor, for assistance with the Geology pages.

Grayson County Pre-1800
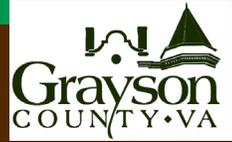
The first inhabitants of Grayson County were believed to be Native Americans known as Xualans and/or Mohetan Indians, who may have been conquered by the Iroquois, Cherokee or Shawnee who used this area as hunting grounds. The last known settlement of Native Americans lived peacefully near the New River at Mouth of Wilson during the 1850's.

European explorers traveled throughout Southwestern Virginia, starting with DeSoto in **1540**, Abraham Wood (Woods River now the New River was named for) in **1653** and later the Jefferson/Frye surveying expedition in **1751**, traveled through Grayson County expanding the boundaries of European exploration and preparing the way for western expansion.

1750 - 1780's -The Colonial Governor issued land grants which were later sold to the pioneers who settled here. The first settlers included the Hales of Elk Creek who came over Iron Mountain, William Bourne and family who settled in the Spring Valley area, Capt. John Cox and Lieut. David Cox who set up a fort on Peach Bottom Creek/New River and the Enoch Osborne Fort near Bridle Creek. Some of these pioneers participated in the French/Indian War and later in the Revolutionary War. Historical evidence of Revolutionary War battles between settlers and Tory's in what is now Baywood (Round Meadows) and Fairview (The Glades) show us that Grayson County was part of our young country's efforts to break free from European dominance.

The immigrants came from the wagon road (current I-81, Hwy 11), followed the New River or came over Iron Mountain from Wythe County, some arrived here from the Yadkin Road which was a corridor (Roanoke - North Carolina) through the mountain gaps. Those who made it into the county were true pioneers as the major wagon roads were left behind and the paths into the county were traveled with pack animals carrying the few items needed to start new homesteads in Grayson County.

1787- The first industry was established by Matthew Dickey at the Falls of Peach Bottom Creek. Point Hope Furnace, an iron furnace and forge which was essential to the settlers for supplies began operation there, remnants of which can still be seen at "the falls" on Powerhouse Road. The first road order of the County was issued to connect this enterprise to the community of Blair's (now known as Cliffview).William Bourne becomes the owner of the Furnace in 1797.The grist and saw mill, mine and stores of this operation were a huge asset to the formation of Grayson County.

1792- Grayson County was formed out of Wythe County and officially became its own county in **1793** when the first court is held in William Bourne's barn on the Knob Fork of the New River. In **1794**, the new log courthouse is built in Greenville (Old Town), where a brick courthouse replaced it in **1811** and again the courthouse was rebuilt of brick at the same site in 1838.

Grayson County is named for William Grayson, who was one of the first two U.S. Senators from Virginia.

Before 1800, over 100 families had settled in Grayson County. These were self sufficient pioneer families who made, built, grew or bartered for everything they owned.

Grayson County 1800-1900
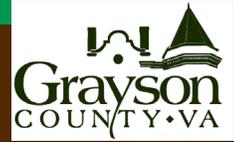
The year is **1800** and approx 100 families are living in Grayson County, the transition from pioneer to permanent settlements had begun. Communities have developed with schools, churches, post-offices, banks and general stores throughout the county. A mill was found on just about every major stream in the County. Communities formed near these waterways and also at major transportation routes or ferries/fords across the New River. Fox Creek had a 3 story grain/flour mill and a saw mill, Reavis had a rolling mill, Gordon's Woolen Mill on Meadow Creek, and the mill at Brush Creek were in operation. In **1844**, a textile mill was established on Wilson Creek by Col. Fields J. McMillian. Various mills were also found on Elk, Wilson, Saddle and Peach Bottom Creeks.

Church and faith were central to the communities of Grayson County and is witnessed today by the many churches that dot the landscape. The Methodist circuit rider Francis Asbury visited the area in the late **1700's'** and his work combined with the faith of many denominations spurred church development at a phenomenal rate during this time period. Old Bethel Church in **1812**, Mt Zion UMC in **1831**, Cox's Chapel UMC in **1832**; and many more were built throughout the 1800's, along with places of worship for Lutherans, Baptists, Quakers, Dunkards and more.

The county saw healthy population growth during this century. Carroll County separated from Grayson County to form its own County in **1842.** As a result of this shift in county lines, the leaders decided to relocate the county seat more central to the county. The Town of Independence developed, named after "the Independents" who won the new location of the county seat, Independence, VA, established in **1850**.

In **1860**, the slave schedule recorded a total of 560 slaves in Grayson County. Records show that slavery was not the main issue driving local secession efforts that led up to the Civil War. In fact, some claim that up until the first shots were fired in South Carolina the county had yet to formally support Virginia's decision to secede from the Union. When the war began in **1861** hardships overcame the county. While no major battles were fought here, the impact of labor shortages, union raids for provisions, and supply shortages were felt across the county. Some Grayson County men were active in Confederate Units such as the Grayson Dare Devils and the Grayson Rifles. When the war ended in **1865** Grayson County resumed its pace to develop infrastructure and communities. This century saw the development of academies and schools; Oak Hill, Bridle Creek, Elk Creek, High Point at Grant and Spring Valley just to name a few.

In **1897** Boyd's Survey Map (on display at the Historic 1908 Courthouse) was commissioned by the Grayson Board of Supervisors and accompanied a guide to the natural resources of the county. By this time the county was interested in development of the county's natural wealth and labor resources. By the late **1800's** telephone lines had developed along major corridors, The Grayson Gazette and other local newspapers were established, railroads were under development, timber was being harvested on a large scale and the county was optimistic about the future.

Some would claim that the local economy was not close enough to major cities and transportation routes to keep pace with other areas of the country (Northeast and Mississippi Valley) who were rapidly expanding because of the capital resources gained during this time of growth for the entire nation. When outside interest did invest in the county during the later part of this century and into the 1900's, these investments were often short lived and lacked long term sustainable development. Subsistence farming and a resourceful community provided for farm and family. The rapid pace of innovation and modern amenities was typical for the American life at the turn of the century.

Powerhouse falls circa 1880's
Photo courtesy of the Grayson County Historical Society

Grayson County 1900-1950
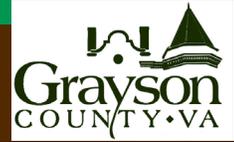
1900 - 1950 would have been an exciting time to live in Grayson County. Railroads were built on both ends of the county; **1902 i**n Fries, in **1906** the same line was connected to Galax. In the early **1900's** the railroad extended to the Troutdale area with the Marion and Rye Railroad and also in Whitetop with connections to Abingdon and West Jefferson. The rails were used for timber extraction and for shipping agricultural products out of the county. The timber extraction on the western end of the county transformed the landscape dramatically. In **1929** Fields Dam was built on the New River in Mouth of Wilson, the power was used for a woolen mill and for electricity in the Mouth of Wilson community. The communities of Fries, Galax, Troutdale, Whitetop, Mouth of Wilson, and Independence were all booming town centers due to the supply of electricity produced by hydro-electric dams and the influence of the railway along with the wages that supported off farm income in these communities. Th mill town Fries was highly notable during this time period as one of the most modern communities in Southwestern Virginia. With public water and sewer, electricity, recreation and commercial activity, many people traveled to Fries for a taste of "modern life".

In **1905** the Grayson County Board of Supervisors ordered that a new courthouse be built to meet the state standards for a fire-proof vault. As a result the Historic 1908 Courthouse began construction in **1906** and was completed in **1908**. This unique structure, preserved by the Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation, is a surviving tribute to this time in our county's history.

The period from **1910-1920** presented hardships with the negative effects from WWI, major floods in **1916** and **1917** impacting both Fries and Mouth of Wilson and the major flu epidemic of **1918**. Effects of the Great Depression were felt in the **1930's** as financial resources were scarce and migration patterns of people leaving the area looking for work and returning home to "live off the land" were felt across the county.

From the **1930's** to **1950's** dairies and creameries were established, schools, churches, post offices and banks were popping up across the county and infrastructure was developing. The Byrd Act of the **1930's** transferred the responsibility of roads away from the county. The Lakes to Florida road, now Hwy 21 and Hwy 58 were paved during this time period. Independence received electricity, public water and sewer in the **1930's**. During this time, big screen movie theatres and automobiles were bringing the outside world to the lives of Graysonites.

This time period may also be remembered for the effect of federal projects on our local communities. The Jefferson National Forest was created, absorbing large tracts on the western edge of the county. The Civilian Conservation Corps, NYA and WPA projects created infrastructure in the national forest and in the community. The programs developed a trade school in Baywood, provided employment through construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway and other innovative initiatives. Because of these projects the Mt. Rogers School, Bridle Creek School, Grant School (Grange) and Becker Library were built.

In **1940** over 10" of rain fell in 24 hours. Major flood damage occurred across the county. In **1941** when WWII began, many citizens left the county to join the military forces or work in the factories supporting the war effort. After WWII, Grayson County experienced accelerated growth. The Grayson County Regional Library System was up and running and Grange Halls/Community Centers had formed across the county.

In the **1940's** local business leaders began small scale sewing factories in one room shops across the county. These become the foundation of the larger hosiery and textile operations yet to come. Furniture manufacturing begins in the Galax area. Grayson County continued the march toward modern life and while agricultural income was still important; wage dollars from developing industry enable discretionary spending important to the post war generation.

Grayson County 1950-2000

The **1950's** through the **1980's** was a period of growth for the county. The smaller textile and garment operations were replaced by larger operations such as Grayson Garment, Kayser Roth Hosiery, Mr. Casuals/Perry Mgf, Inc, Anvil Brand Inc., Grayson Millis Hosiery Mills, Hampton Knitting Mills, Klear Knit Inc., Parsons & Rives, and Washington Mill (later Fries Mill/Reigel Textiles) all together this established Grayson County as a textile manufacturing locale. Furniture manufacturing in Galax and Dairy Industries such as Foremost Dairies, Clover Creamery and later Kraft Food blossomed in the **1950's**. Other industries such as Camcar Textron, Robertshaw Controls, Comp Air Kellog, Nautilus, Darco Southern, McAllister Mills, Grayson Mountain Water, Michelin Tire developed later during this time period. The economic impact of these industries increased local wages that further supported retail and service industries across the county.

In the **1950's**, agriculture production increased as mechanization and modern tractors took hold, agricultural organizations could be found in every community from Cox's Chapel to Comers Rock and the commodity prices were high enough for farm success throughout the **1950's**.

In **1952** Galax became an independent city. The overall population of the county declined with the physical land that was now a part of Galax City. A significant percentage of the county's tax base was reduced because of this. Independence High School opened in **1956** ushering in the new age of school consolidation as smaller schools merged.

In **1962** Appalachian Power Company applied for the Blue Ridge Dam Project. The proposed dam was to flood 14,500 acres of the county on the New River west of Independence. After much controversy the project was abandoned in **1977**. During this debate the county's land was in a state of flux as citizens didn't know whether to buy or sell and some would claim that this debate caused many long established farms and families to relocate.

During the years **1965 - 1966** both Grayson Highlands State Park and the Mount Rogers National Recreation area were formed of lands in western Grayson, thus transferring land to the State and Federal governments

In **1977** the rail line through Whitetop was closed and in **1984** rail service was abandoned on the Fries/Galax line. Interstate I-77 opened in the **mid 70's**, this reduced traffic on the "Great Lakes to Florida" Highway 21, a major east/west corridor that came through Elk Creek and Independence. The loss of thru traffic was a revenue loss for local businesses and several businesses closed as a result.

In **1973** the new Grayson County library was built and shortly after in **1979** the new Grayson County Courthouse began construction and was completed in **1981**. The Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation secured the old courthouse in **1985** and has kept the building operational as a community facility to this day. In 1983/84 the Grayson County Recreation Park was completed with a swimming pool and athletic facilities for the community.

Fries and the county experienced hardship in the **1980's** when the Fries Mill/Mount Vernon Mill closed in **1989** (the mill was the largest taxpayer in Grayson County). In **1989** Fries High School is consolidated with Grayson County High School. Local manufacturing began a decline in the **late 80's -90's** as free trade and other factors caused textile and furniture industries to close down. During this same time period growth in the real estate market from second home and recreational lots occurred. These economic issues (high unemployment and low capital reserves) are still prevalent to this day. In general those who can afford to live in the county enjoy the benefits of strong community and family ties, a moderate climate with bountiful natural resources and a clean and safe environment.

The Communities of Grayson County

The communities of Grayson County developed around transportation and resources. Transportation routes and crossroads, creeks and the New River provided natural areas for churches, schools, general stores, banks and post offices. The waters of Grayson were areas of development due to the water powered mills, which provided essential products for business, home and farm. In general, communities formed in areas where nearby residents could travel the distance to the community center and back to the homestead in one day. As the modern automobile became prevalent, the close proximity of products and services became less important. Today only a handful of the original communities of Grayson County provide products and services.

Left -Washington Mills at Fries, Virginia on the New River
(Photo courtesy of the Grayson County Historical Society)

Right-Fields Motor Company and Grocery
Mouth of Wilson in the 1930's
(Photo courtesy of Grayson County Historical Society)

Left -Elk Creek after the construction of the Elk Creek Training School (in the far right of photo), circa 1900
(Photo courtesy of Grayson County Historical Society)

Right - Flour Mill in Flatridge
(Photo courtesy of Grayson County Historical Society)

Grayson County Communities

Grayson COUNTY·VA

1. Bald Rock
2. Baywood/Hamptons Crossroads
3. Bennington Mill
4. Bethel
5. Bridle Creek
6. Brush Creek
7. Burtons Chapel
8. Carsonville
9. Chestnut Hill
10. Clito
11. Comers Rock
12. Cox's Chapel (The Bend)
13. Crackers Neck
14. Crossroads (Barton's Crossroads/Major)
15. Delhart
16. Edgewater
17. Elk Creek
18. Fairview
19. Fairwood
20. Flat Ridge

21. Fox
22. Fries
23. Gold Hill
24. Grant
25. Grassy Creek
26. Grubbs Chapel
27. Independence (Penn Hook)
28. Longs Gap (Salem)
29. Low Gap
30. McKnights Mill
31. Mouth of Wilson
32. Oak Hill
33. Oldtown

34. Peach Bottom
35. Pine Branch
36. Pleasant Grove
37. Potato Creek
38. Providence
39. Reavistown (Grinders Mill)
40. Riverside
41. Roberts Cove
42. Rocky Hollow (Piney Peak)
43. Rugby
44. Saddle Creek

45. Spring Valley (Fallville/Knob Fork)
46. Stevens Creek
47. Summerfield
48. Troutdale
49. Tug
50. Volney
51. Whitetop

Geology of Grayson County

Grayson County is located in the Southern Blue Ridge province of the Appalachian Mountains. The landscape in the county is dominated by broad areas of gently undulating topography, with elevations of 2400 to 3000 feet, and higher peaks rising in the central and western parts that include Virginia's highest peak, Mt. Rogers, at 5729 feet. In fact, Grayson is home to four of the five highest peaks in Virginia (1. Mount Rogers, 2. Whitetop Mountain, 3. Pine Mountain, and 5. Haw Orchard Mountain.).

All the rocks found in Grayson County formed in settings much different than we see today and all of them formed long before the uplift of the ancestral Appalachian Mountains over 200 million years ago.

Oldest Rocks in the County

Grayson's oldest rock formation is called the Cranberry Gneiss. Gneiss is type of metamorphic rock, that is, it was made from preexisting rock that was altered by the application of high heat and/or pressure, which probably happened many miles deep inside the earth. Uplift and erosion have brought it to the surface for us to see. The Cranberry Gneiss is found in the central and western parts of the county, and, at 1.1 billion years old, is among the oldest rocks found on the East Coast. Outcrops of the Cranberry Gneiss, which is usually light-colored (like most granites) but weathers to a grayish color, can be seen from many roads in the county. Highway 58, from the New River to near Troutdale provides many views of this most ancient of rocks, as in these exposures shown in the photograph, taken on Highway 58 a few miles west of Independence behind Rixey's General Store.

A Landscape of Volcanoes

Next younger in age comes the Mount Rogers Formation found primarily in the western part of the county, especially in the area of Grayson Highlands State Park (GHSP). It includes volcanic and related rocks that formed about 760 million years ago. Mount Rogers, as well as the other four peaks mentioned above, are all made up of these volcanic rocks, although none was ever a volcano. They are very tall because the volcanic rocks that make them up are very resistant to erosion. These volcanic rocks of the Mount Rogers Formation are predominantly light-colored and fine-grained, rhyolite (formed from lava) and tuff (formed from volcanic ash). Some dark (purplish) rhyolite is also present. These can be easily seen while driving through the western end of the county, but especially so along the roads at GHSP and on the walls of the visitors center. Interspersed among these volcanic layers are sedimentary rocks that were deposited in the streams that flowed between the volcanoes. Such rocks can be seen in the boulders at the picnic area near the visitors center.

The volcanic centers that were present in the Mount Rogers area produced different types of eruptions. Some released lava that flowed like a very thick, hot liquid, and formed into rhyolite when solidified. Other eruptions were explosive, like the dramatic and destructive 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington. Explosive eruptions from these volcanic centers produced hot, dense, fast-moving flows of volcanic ash that formed sheets of tuff that total more than one-third of a mile in thickness. In addition to the violence of these eruptions, they were also quite prolific as the total thickness of all of the volcanic rocks preserved in the Mount Rogers area is over two miles!

The Pinnacles on Haw Orchard Mountain
(photo by Tina Cunningham)

Geology of Grayson County

Scenes from an Ice Age

Next younger in age after the Mt. Rogers Formation is the 650 million-year-old Konnarock Formation where visitors can find rocks formed by glaciers. Rocks of the Konnarock Formation can be seen, as with the Mt. Rogers Formation, in the western parts of the county. They are especially well displayed along SR 603 (Fairwood Rd.) between the town of Troutdale and the Smyth County town of Konnarock.

How do we know there were glaciers and lakes in western Grayson County? Two types of rocks in the Konnarock Formation tell the story of the ancient glaciers and lakes that formed after the volcanic activity. One rock type, diamictite was formed from a jumbled mix of pebbles and mud carried by glaciers as they moved downslope and then deposited the debris.

A second rock type, rhythmite, formed from fine sediments deposited on a lake bottom. Pebbles that dropped from floating glacial ice into soft lakebeds are found in the rhythmite; larger stones that fell from the floating ice are called dropstones.

Grayson County has its Fault (Zone)

A major, but inactive, fault zone can be found running south-west-to-northeast through the southeastern part of the county, the Fries Fault Zone. In the county it extends from the inter-section of Highway 221 and the New River through and past the town of Fries. Outside the county it extends for over 100 miles, from central Virginia to the Grandfather Mt. area of North Carolina. The easiest place to see this is in the high road cuts south of Independence near where Highway 221 crosses the New River. This fault zone is wide and so at this exposure visitors will see a couple hundred yards of highly contorted rocks, including quartz and biotite gneiss of the Ashe Forma-tion (see text below).

A Gift from the Ocean

Southeast of the Fries Fault Zone is the Ashe Formation, which

This is a view of the Fries Fault zone on Highway 221 just north of the New River. The fault zone consists of many smaller faults along which the rock has become broken and bent. There are some layers that have been folded a full 180 degrees without breaking, which shows that this happened a great depth and under great pressure. (photo by Fred Newcomb)

is mostly gneiss, but while the Cranberry is light-colored (due to the abundance of quartz and feldspar), the Ashe is dark gray to black (due to the abundance of the black minerals biotite and amphibole). The black minerals are very rich in the elements iron and magnesium. The rocks that were the source for the gneiss of the Ashe Formation were very likely from the floor of an ancient ocean much older than the Atlantic, for the sea floor is where rocks that are rich in iron and magnesium are most commonly found. They were probably pushed up onto the continent during the formation of the Appalachian Mountains hundreds of millions of hears ago. Highly deformed rocks of the Ashe Formation are shown above in the photo of the Fries Fault Zone; the formation can also be seen in the town of Galax and along roads between Galax and Fries. The age of the Ashe Formation is uncertain, but it appears to be about the same age as the Mt. Rogers Formation.

Information in the Geology of Grayson County was provided by Fred Newcomb and:
Rankin, D.W., Miller, J.M.G., Simpson, E.L., 1994, Geology of the Mt. Rogers area, southwestern Virginia Blue Ridge and Unaka Belt: in Schultz, A., and Henika, B. (editors), Field guides to southern Appalachian structure, stratigraphy, and engineering geol-ogy: Virginia Tech Guidebook No. 10, p. 127-176.
Rankin, D.W. 1993, The Volcanogenic Mount Rogers Formation and the Overlying Glaciogenic Konnarock Formation—Two Late Proterozoic Units in Southwestern Virginia, U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 2029
Rankin, D.W., 1971, Geology of the Blue Ridge in Southwestern Virginia and adjacent North Carolina: in Guidebook to Appala-chian Tectonics and Sulfide Mineralization of Southwestern Virginia: Virginia Tech Guidebook No. 5, p. 39-86.

Chapter 3
Population & Housing

Population Trends

Grayson County Population
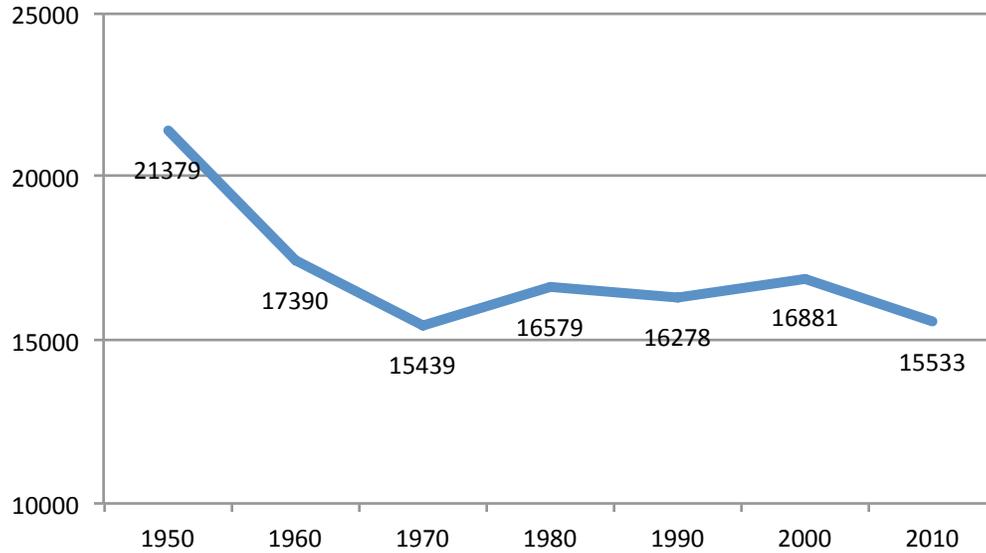
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census
Note: 2000 population figure is given as corrected by the U.S. Census Bureau as of July 6, 2001.

- The county's population declined by 5,940 persons between 1950 and 1970. Much of that decline was due to the creation of the City of Galax from portions of Carroll and Grayson counties.
- The county's population remained relatively steady between 1980 and 2000.
- Between 2000 and 2010, population in Grayson County declined by approximately eight percent.
- The county's population declined at a rate of 4.56 percent per decade between 1950 and 2010.
- Population projections published by the Weldon Cooper Center show a continued decline in Grayson County's population between 2010 and 2040.
- With the opending of the North River Correctional Center, due to the inmate population, Grayson County's overall population will increase. Starting October 7, there will be 25 inmates introduced to the prison population every week until the population hits around 1,000 inmates. Sometime around April 2014, the overall Grayson County population will have increased by over 1,000 people compared to the 2013 population numbers.

YEAR	POPULATION PROJECTION
2010	15,533
2020	15,014
2030	14,727
2040	14,520

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census & Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

Demographics

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Population by Age Groups
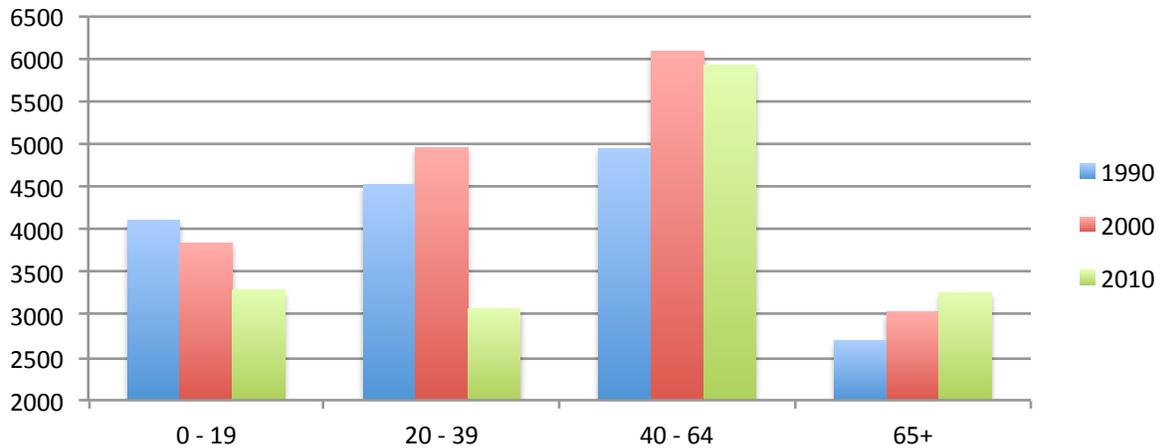
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

Population by Sex
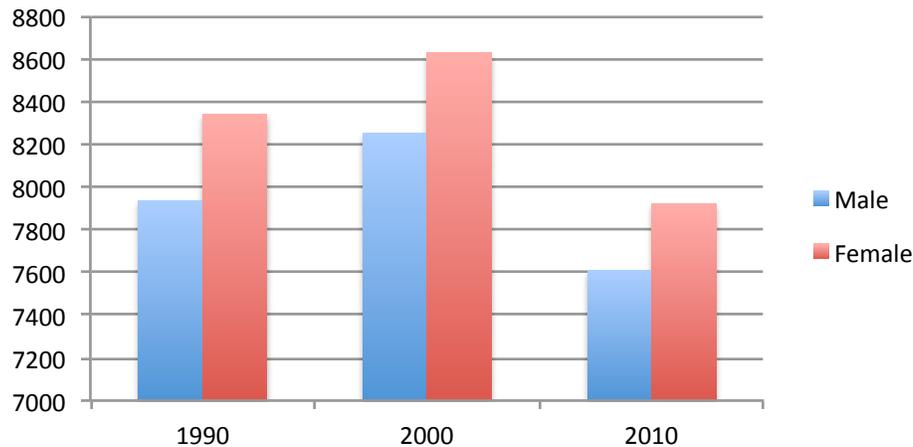
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

- Grayson County's population is aging. The 0-19 year age group declined steadily between 1990 and 2010, while the 40-64 and 65+ age groups experienced growth.

- The majority of the county's population decline between 2000 and 2010 was seen in the 0-19 and 20-39 year age groups.

- The median age of Grayson County's population in 2010 was 46.7 years.

- The distribution of males and females remained steady between 1990 and 2010 with approximately 49 percent males and 51 percent females.

Race & Ethnicity

RACE	POPULATION
White	14,802
Black or African American	320
American Indian/Alaskan Native	31
Asian	16
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3
Some Other Race	224
Two or More Races	137

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

DISTRICT	HISPANIC	NON-HISPANIC
Elk Creek	150	3,853
Old Town	97	4,063
Providence	105	3,934
Wilson Creek	64	3,267
Total	416	15,117

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

- Due to a error in the 2000 Census data released for Grayson County by the U.S. Census Bureau, trends in the racial composition of county are difficult to identify.

- In 1990, 97 percent of the county's population was classified as White. In 2010, that percentage was 95 percent of the population.

- Both the White and Black or African American racial groups experienced a decline between 1990 and 2010, with a 6 percent (927 persons) decline in the White population and a 34 percent (166 persons) decline in the Black or African American population.

- The Hispanic population increased from 75 persons in 1990 to 416 persons in 2010.

- Approximatley 2.7 percent of Grayson County's population was identified as Hispanic in 2010.

Population Change

	1990 - 1999	2000 - 2009
Natural Increase [1]	-253	-598
Resident Births	*1,881*	*1,520*
Resident Deaths	*2,134*	*2,118*
Average Annual Natural Increase	-25.3	-59.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census; Virginia Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics
1. Natural increase equals resident births minus resident deaths.

Resident Births and Deaths

Source: Virginia Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics

1990 - 1999	
1990 Population	16,278
1990 - 1999 Natural Increase	-253
2000 Total	16,025
2000 Population	16,881
Net In-Migration	856
Average Per Year	85.6
2000 - 2009	
2000 Population	16,881
2000 - 2009 Natural Increase	-598
2010 Total	16,283
2010 Population	15,533
Net In-Migration	-750
Average Per Year	-75.0
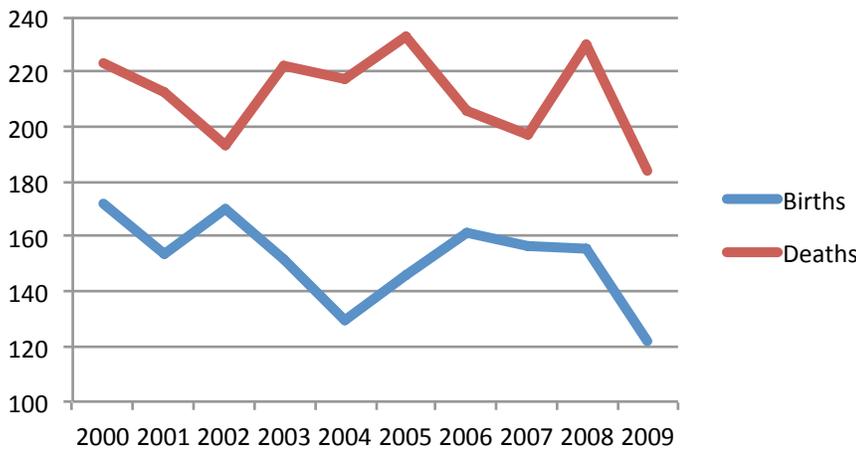
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census; Virginia Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics

- Between 2000 and 2009, deaths exceeded births in Grayson County by an average of 59.8 per year, a 136 percent increase over the 1990-1999 average.

- Grayson County experienced an 85.6 persons per year average rate of in-migration between1990 and 1999. During the 2000s, however, the county experienced a 75.0 persons per year average rate of out-migration.

- Population change during between 2000 and 2009 was a result of both a negative rate of natural increase and out-migration.

Housing-Occupancy Status

HOUSING OCCUPANCY-GRAYSON

Vacant-2,357 Units
26%

Occupied-6,858 Units
74%
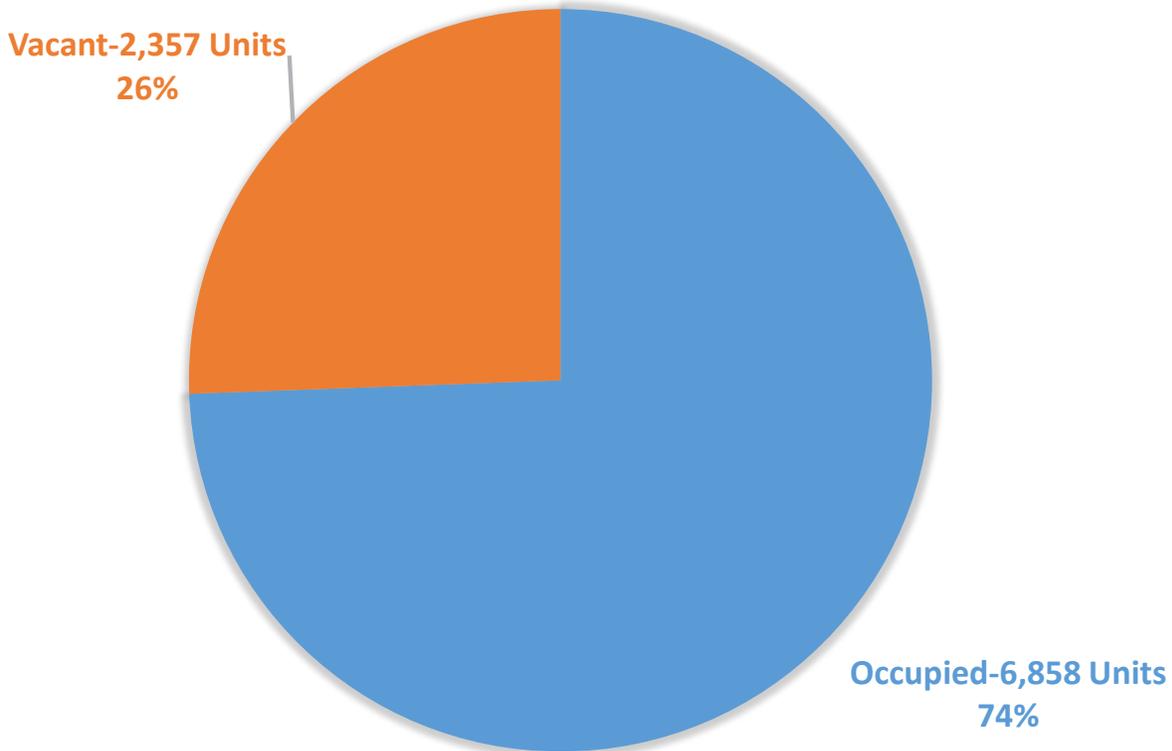
HOUSING OCCUPANCY-VIRGINIA

Vacant-0.314M Units
10%

Occupied-2.974M
Units
90%
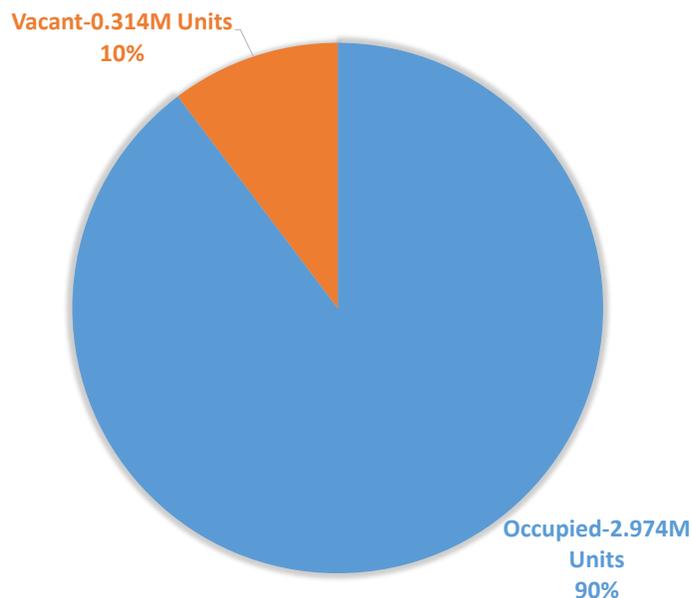
Grayson County has a 74 percent occupancy rate and a 26 percent vacancy rate. This rate appears to be high especially when you compare the numbers to the State of Virginia with a 90 percent occupancy rate and a 10 percent vacancy rate. However, if you look at the vacant housing unit status for Grayson County on the following page, the numbers can be explained.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Vacant Status

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

VACANT HOUSING UNIT STATUS-GRAYSON

For rent
4%

Rented, not occupied
5%

Other vacant
30%

For sale only
19%

Sold, not occupied
1%

For seasonal, rec, or occasional use
41%
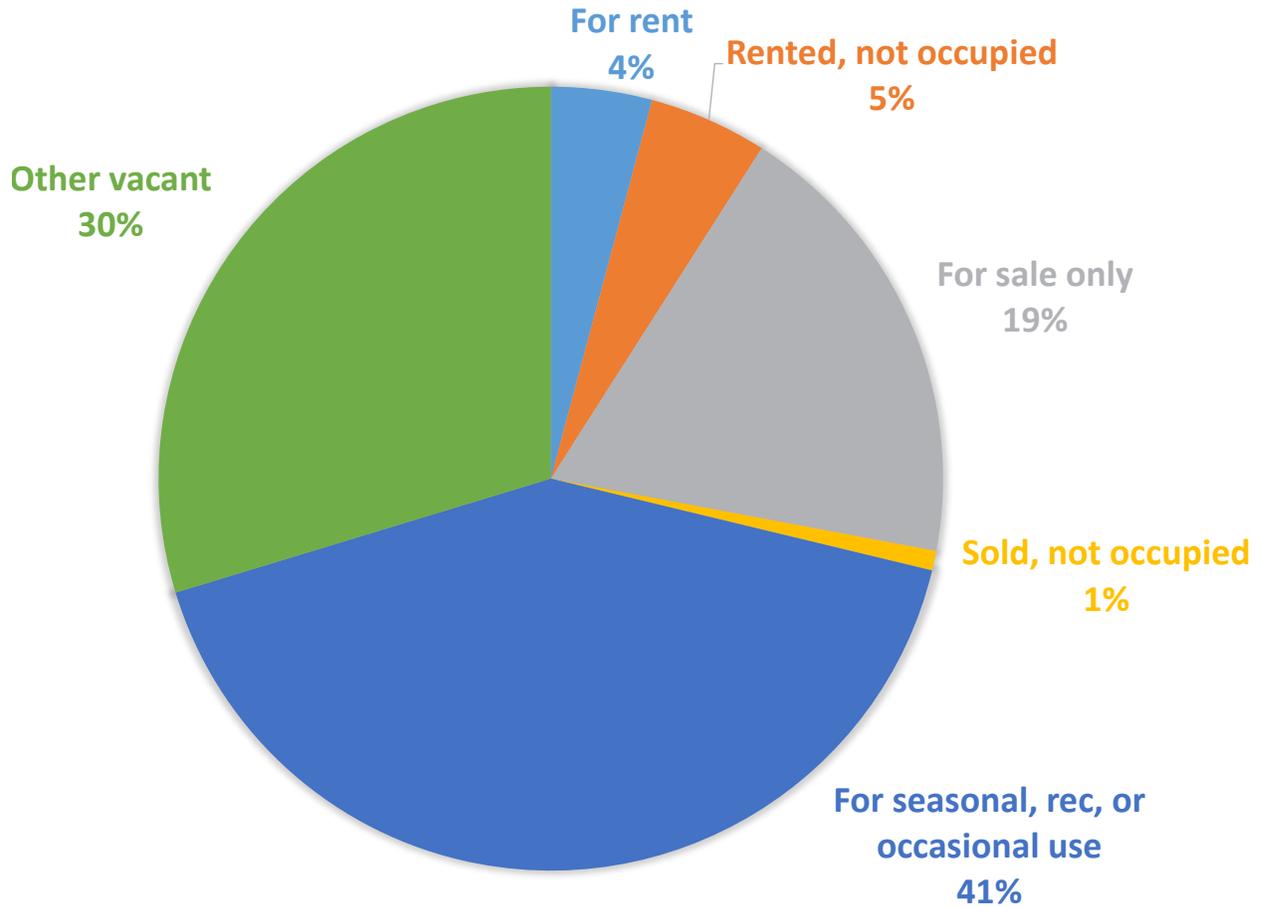
VACANT HOUSING UNIT STATUS-VIRGINIA

For Rent
20%

Other vacant
32%

Rented, not occupied
8%

For sale only
12%

For seasonal, rec, or occasional use
23%

Sold, not occupied
5%
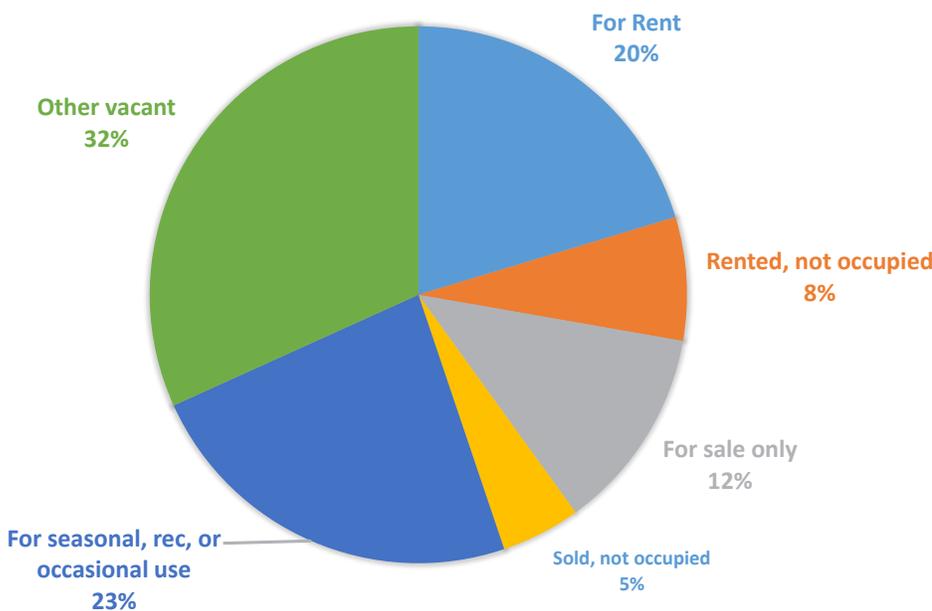
The high housing vacancy for Grayson County can be explained with high numbers of seasonal, recreational and occasional housing occupancy. There are many 'second home' homeowners that use their houses for short periods of the year. If you compare the Grayson County seasonal occupancy numbers (41 percent) to Virginia's (25 percent), the numbers for Grayson County are significantly higher.

Housing-Types

HOUSING TYPES-GRAYSON

Mobile home-2,172
24%

Multi-unit, attached-
293
3%

1-unit, detached-
6,783
73%

HOUSING TYPES-VIRGINIA

Mobile home-0.188M
6%

Multi-unit, attached-
1.052M
32%

1-unit, detatched-
2.074M
62%
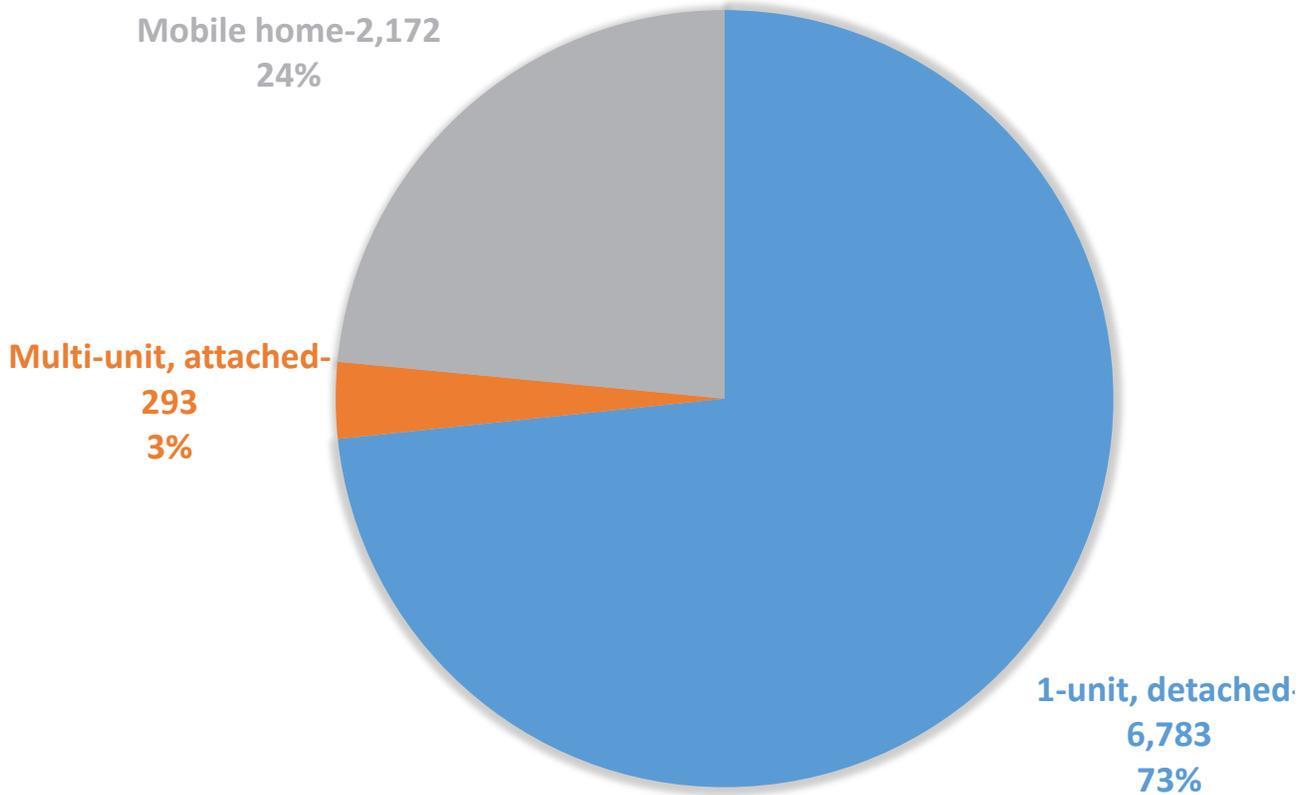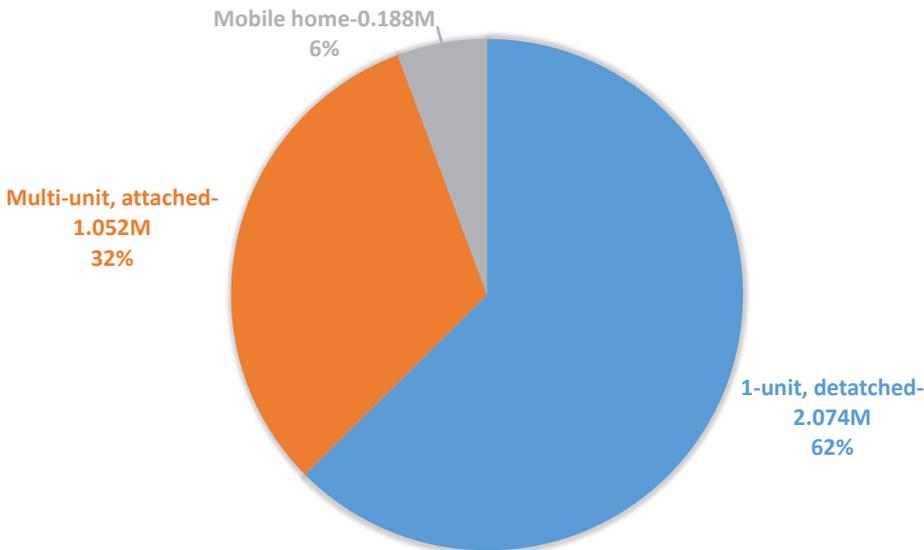
Grayson County has very few multi-unit attached housing available. Over 95 percent of Grayson County housing is detached 1-unit or mobile home units. This may indicate that Grayson County could use more multi-use housing, especially since this type of housing is typically more affordable. However, single unit detached housing is more common for rural areas and Grayson County is no exception.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Number of Bedrooms

Grayson
C O U N T Y • V A

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS-GRAYSON

(5 +)-196
2%

(4)-839
9%

(0)-114
1%

(1)-592
7%

(2)-2,612
28%

(3)-4,862
53%
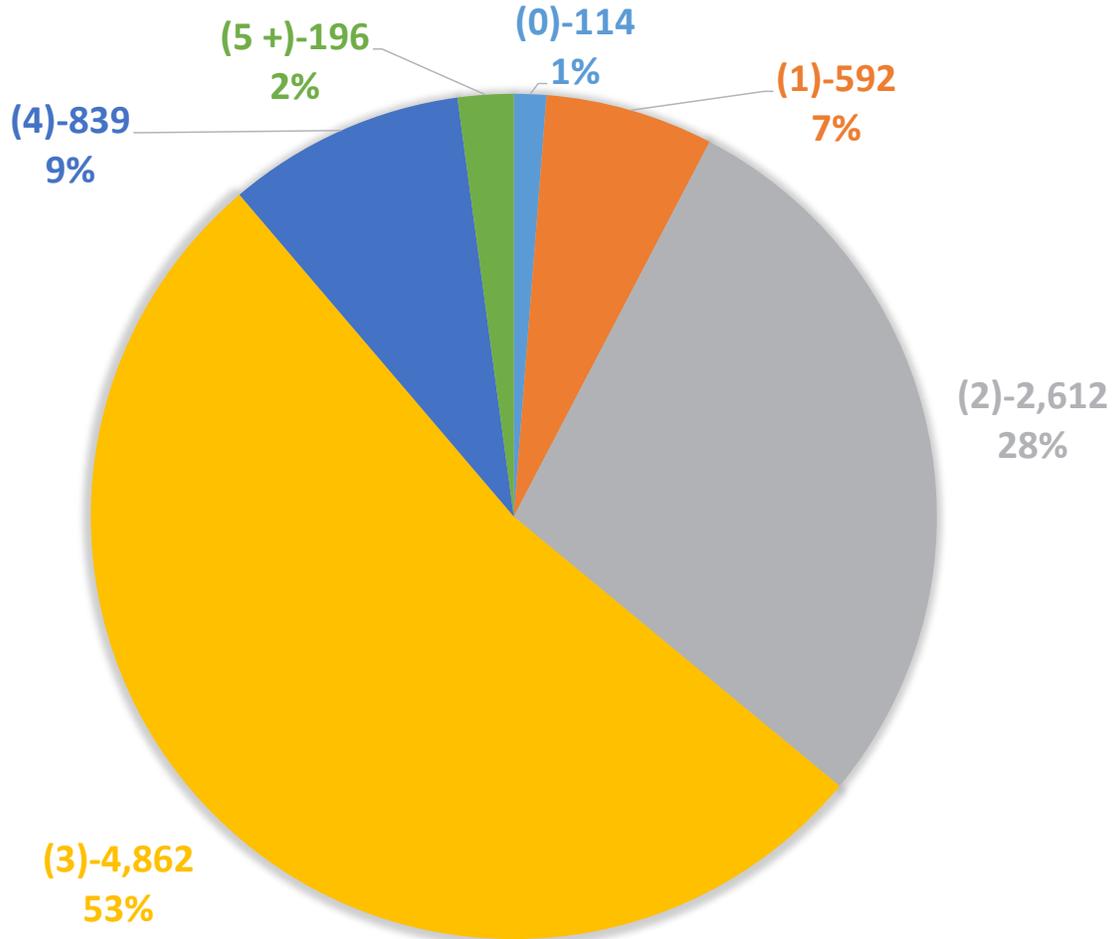
NUMBER OF BEDROOMS-VIRGINIA

(5+)-198,988
6%

(0)-38,767
1%

(1)-278,647
9%

(4)-670,219
20%

(2)-807,208
24%

(3)-1,321,910
40%
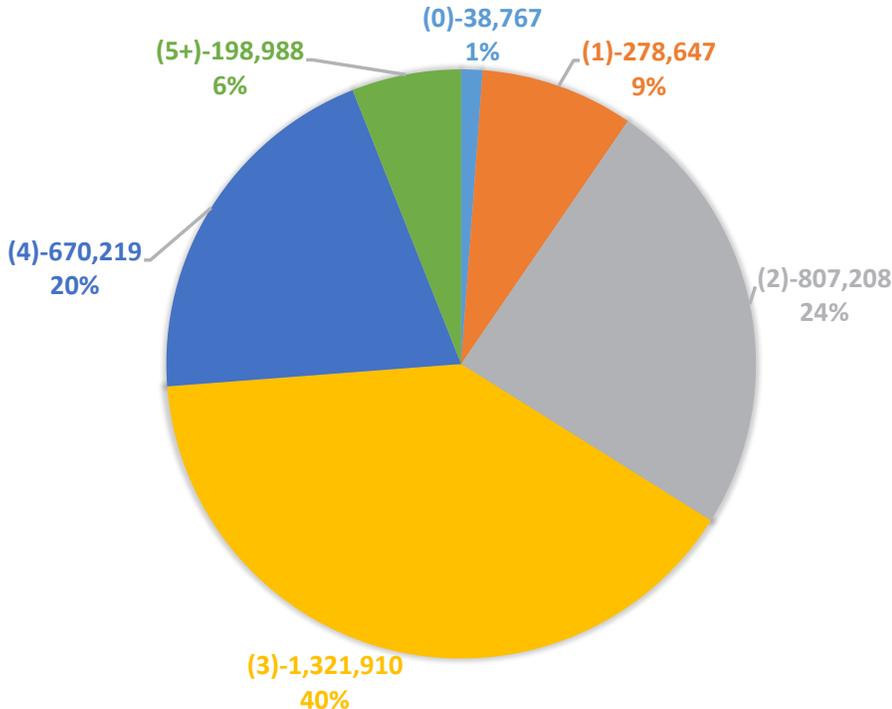
Grayson County appears to have similar number of bedrooms compared to the State of Virginia. Overall, Grayson has less bedrooms in the 4+ spectrum than the State of Virginia. However, the averages are not alarmingly different.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Year House Built

Grayson COUNTY·VA

YEAR HOUSE BUILT-GRAYSON

(2005 or later)-92
1%

(2000-2004)-420
4%

(1939 or earlier)-1,601
17%

(1990-1999)-1,659
18%

(1940-1949)-611
7%

(1950-1959)-609
7%

(1980-1989)-1,544
17%

(1960-1969)-1,187
13%

(1970-1979)-1,492
16%

YEAR HOUSE BUILT-VA

1939 or earlier-
277,788
8%

(2005 or later)-
140,140
4%

(1940-1949)-172,852
5%

(2000-2004)-302,289
9%

(1950-1959)-329,438
10%

(1990-1999)-544,978
17%

(1960-1969)-395,772
12%

(1980-1989)-579,474
18%

(1970-1979)-573,008
17%
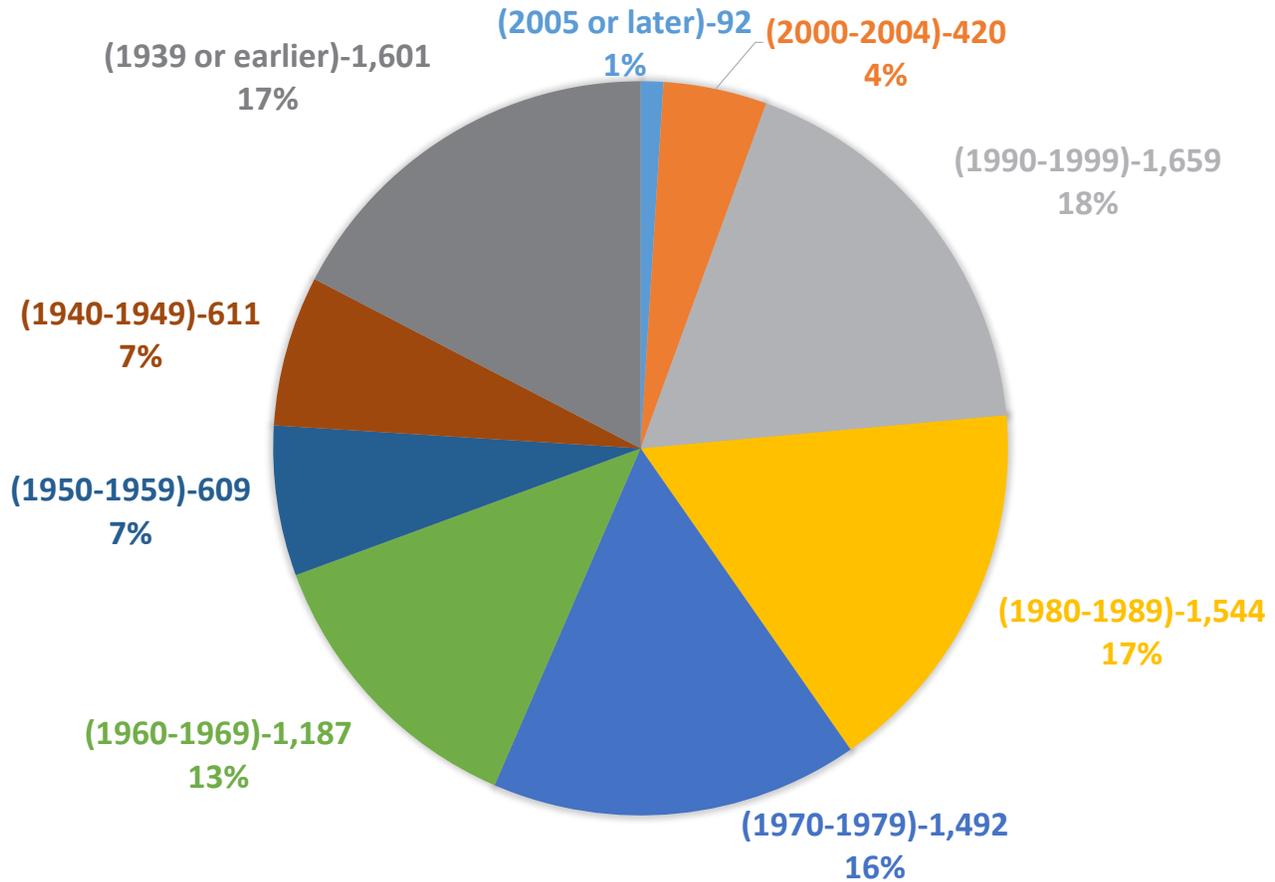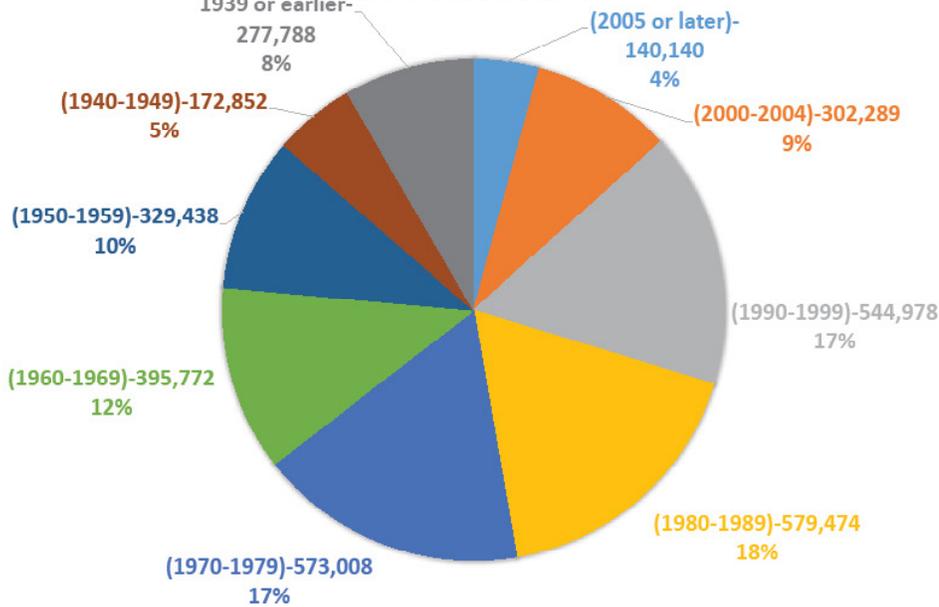
Grayson County's houses by year built are fairly similar to the State of Virginia. Grayson County has a much greater percentage of houses built before 1939 (17 percent) compared to Virginia's (8 percent). These statistics may insinuate that Grayson County has more potential for historic preservation of houses that are of an age of 50 years or more.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Heating/Fuel Type

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

HOUSE HEATING FUEL-GRAYSON

Utility Gas
1%

Solar Energy
0%

Other fuel
0%

No fuel used
0%

Bottled, tank, or LP
gas
5%

Wood
15%

Coal or coke
0%

Electricity
43%

Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.
36%
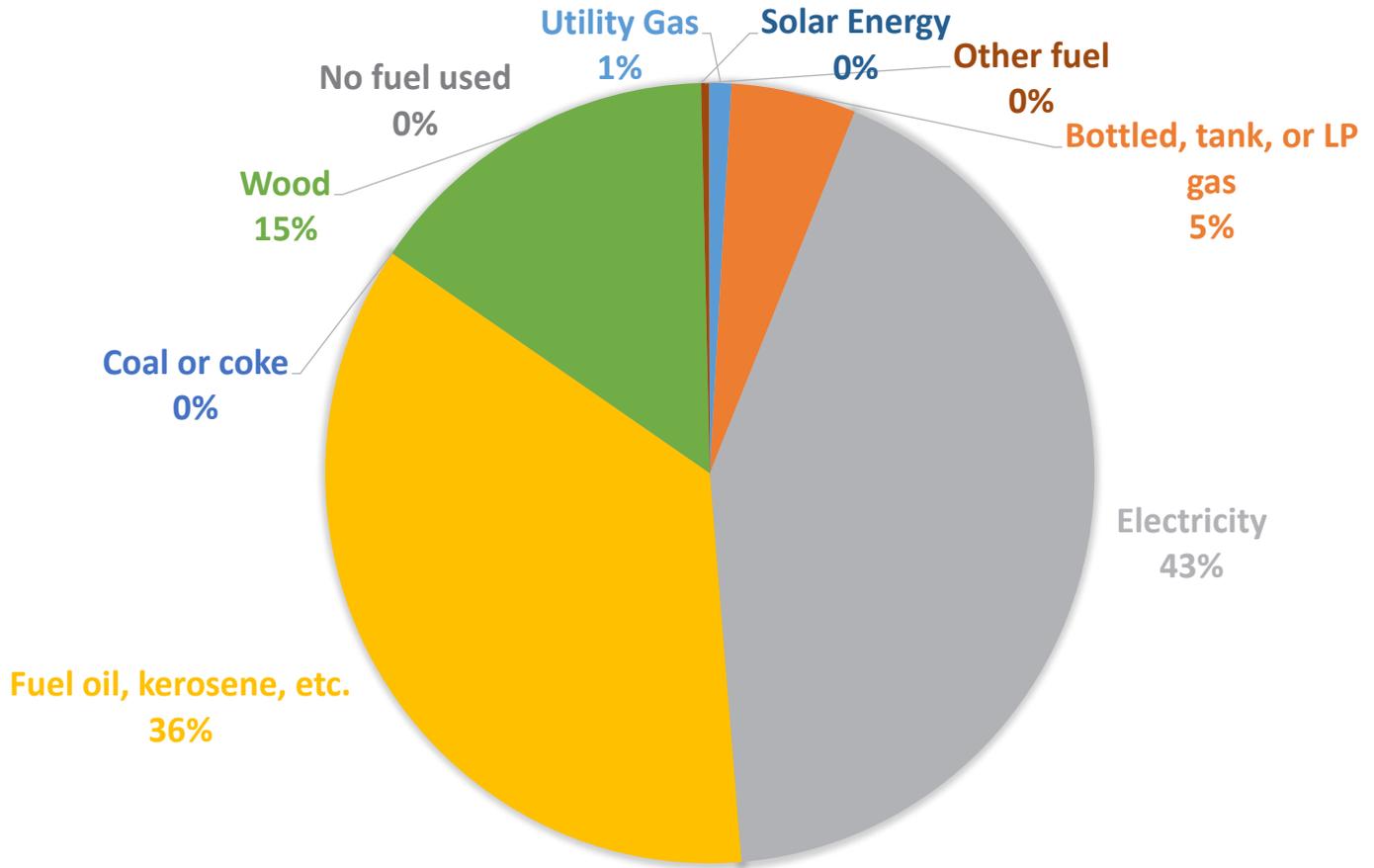
HOUSE HEATING FUEL-VIRGINIA

Wood
3%

Solar energy
0%

Other fuel
0%

Coal or coke
0%

No fuel used
0%

Fuel oil, Kersosene,
etc.
7%

Utility Gas
34%

Electricity
52%

Bottled, Tank, or LP
Gas
4%
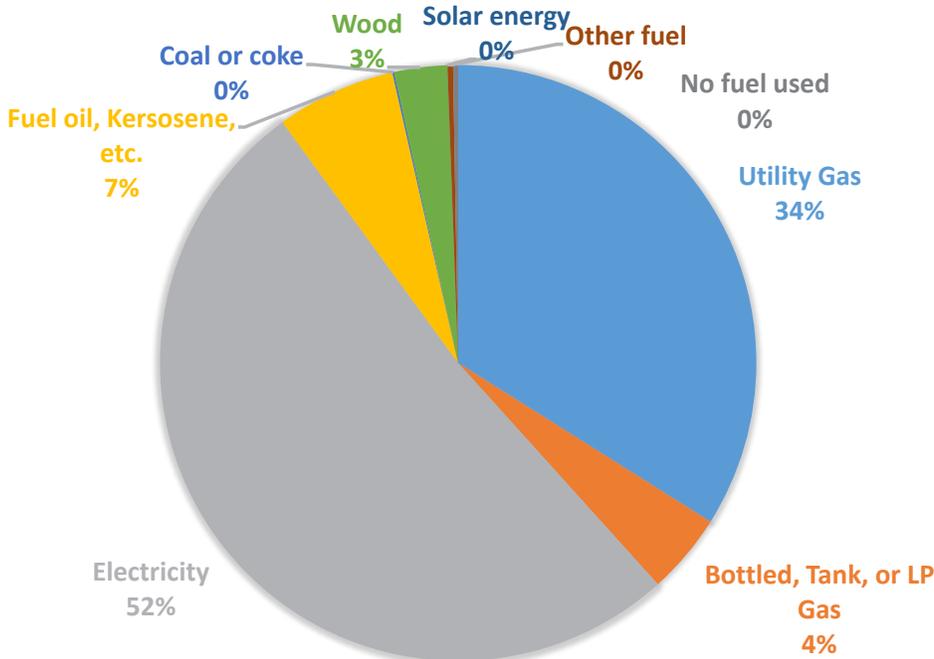
Grayson County uses
more fuel oil, kero-
sene and wood for fuel
sources and Virginia
uses more utility gas
for heating.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 Amer-
ican Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Value

HOUSE VALUE-GRAYSON

$500K-$1M
3%

$1M +
1%

$300K-$500K
5%

Less than $50K
20%

$200K-$300K
8%

$150K-$200K
12%

$50K-$100K
32%

$100K-$150K
19%

HOUSE VALUE-VIRGINIA

$1M or more
2%

Less than $50K
5%

$500K-1M
13%

$50K-$100K
8%

$100K-$150K
11%

$300K-$500K
22%

$150K-$200K
15%

$200K-$300K
24%
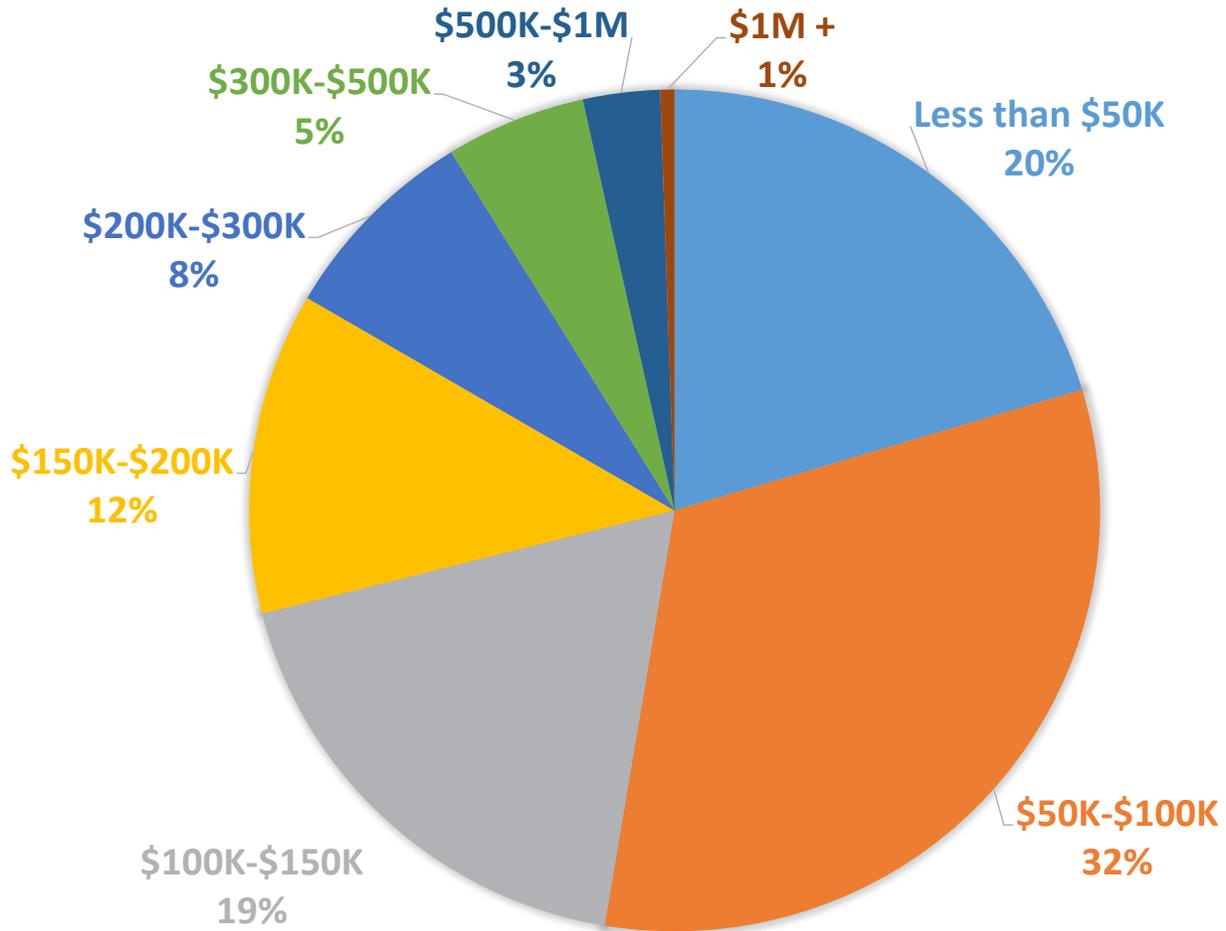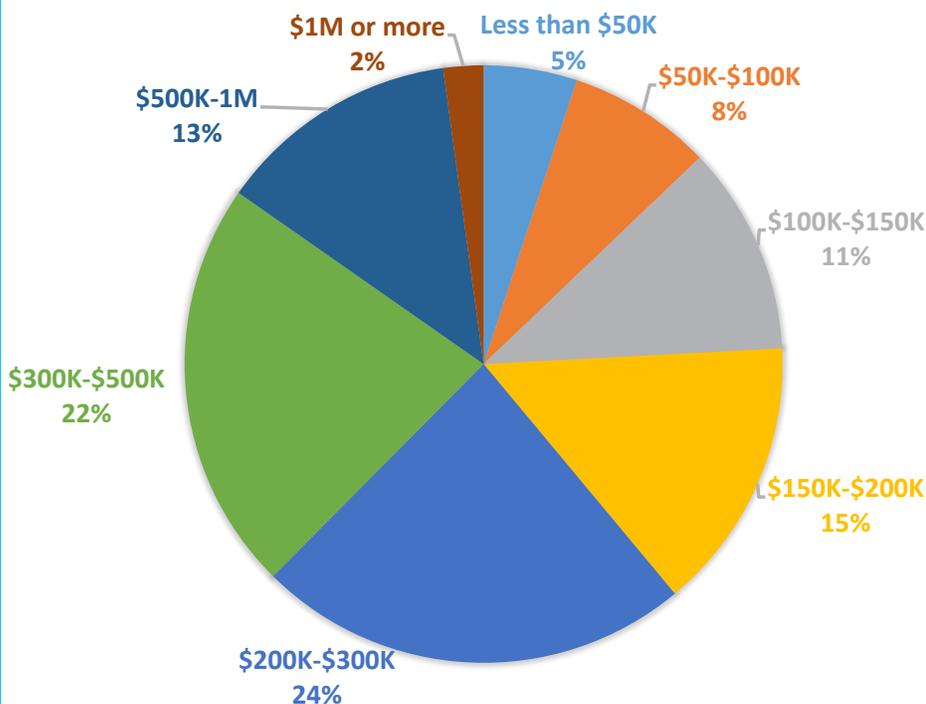
Grayson County housing value is relatively inexpensive, particularly in comparision to the State of Virginia. The average median housing price in Grayson County is $92,200, while Virginia's is $255,100. That is over two and half times the price. The extreme prices at the low and the high end of the spectrum is where the most difference occurs between the Grayson County housing prices and the State of Virginia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Mortgage Status

MORTGAGE STATUS OF OCCUPIED UNITS-GRAYSON

With Mortgage
41%

Without Mortgage
59%

MORTGAGE STATUS OF OCCUPIED UNITS-VIRGINIA

Wihtout Morgtage
29%
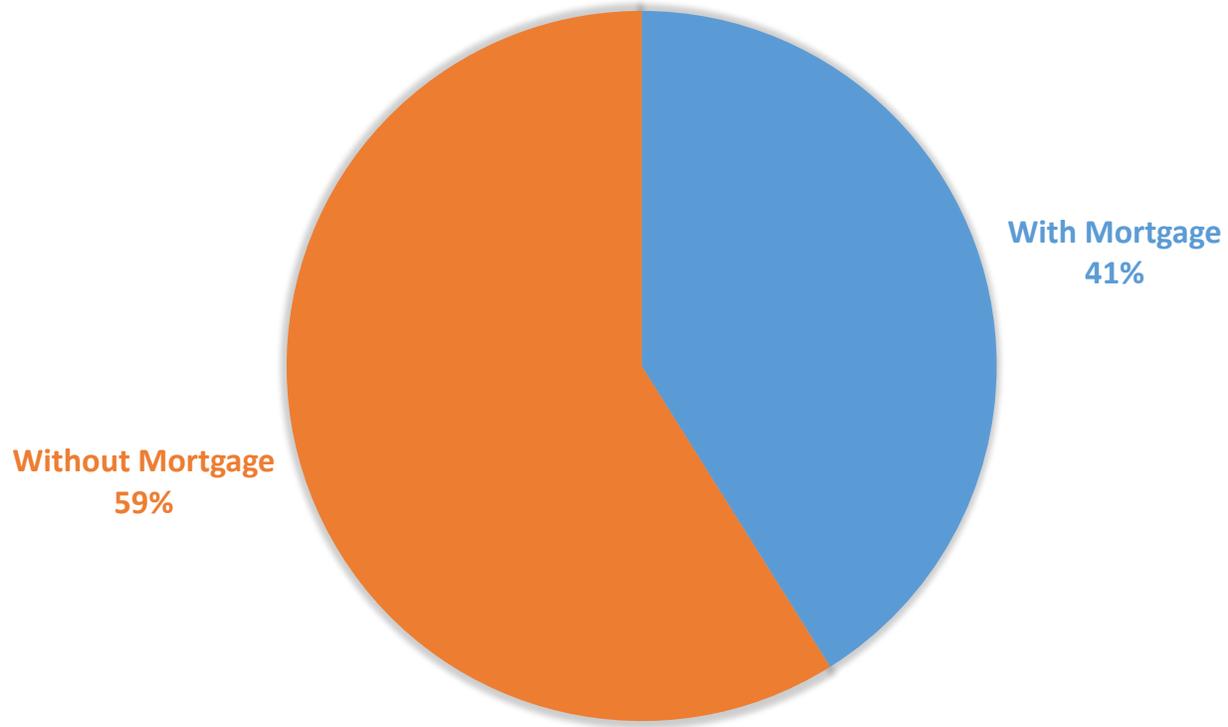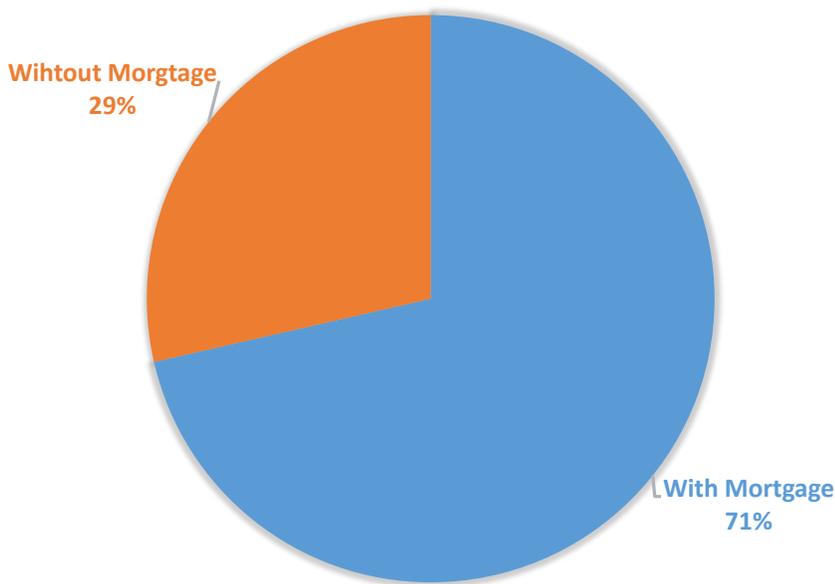
With Mortgage
71%

When comparing the mortgage status of owner occupied units in Grayson County and the State of Virginia, there are a significant number of owners who are without a mortgage in Grayson County. Grayson County has 30 percent less mortgage status than Virginia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Owner Cost of Mortgage

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

MONTHLY OWNER COST WITH MORTGAGE-GRAYSON

- **$2000 or more** 3%
- **Less than $300** 2%
- **$1,500-$1,999** 6%
- **$300-$499** 16%
- **$1,000-$1,499** 26%
- **$500-$699** 22%
- **$700-$999** 25%
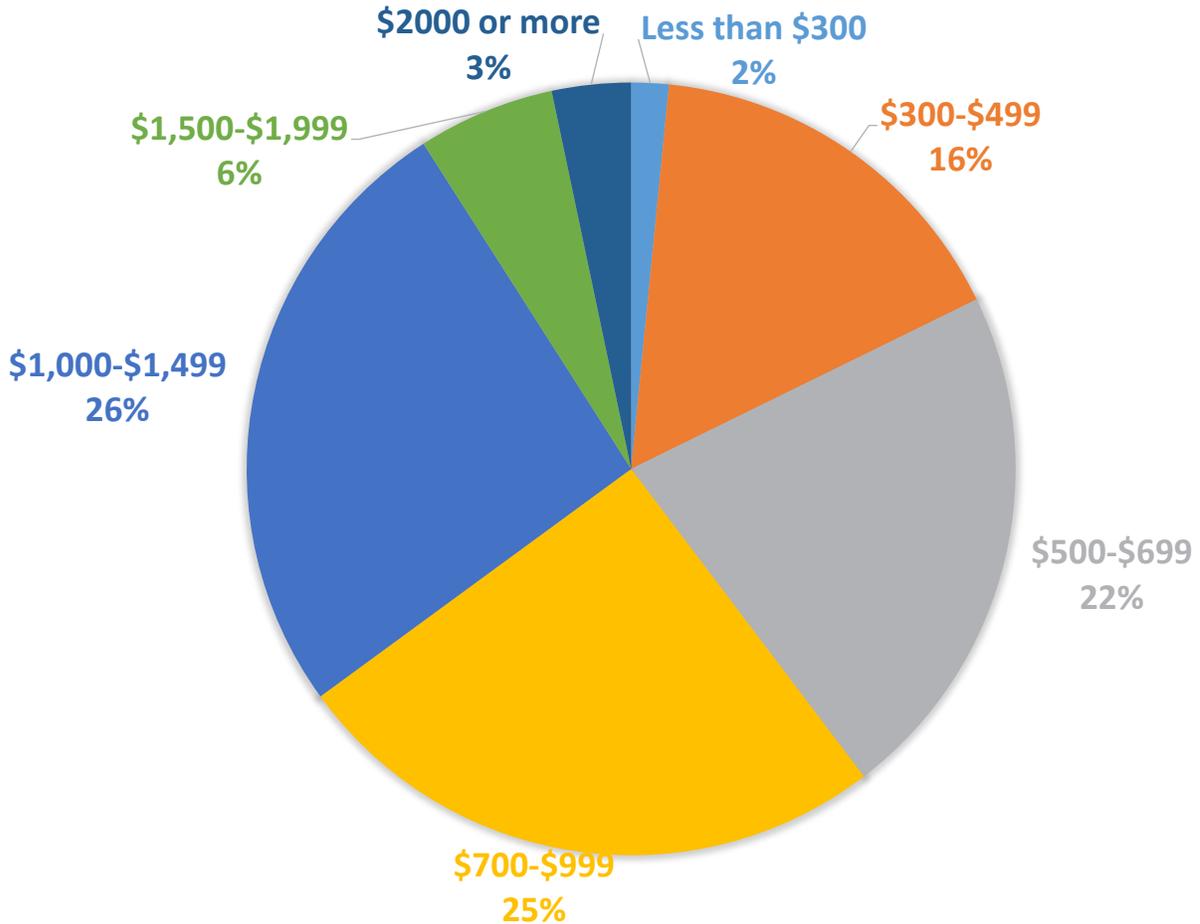
MONTHLY OWNER COST WITH A MORTGAGE-VIRGINIA

- **$300-$499** 2%
- **$500-$699** 4%
- **Less than $300** 0%
- **$700-$999** 11%
- **$2,000 or more** 38%
- **$1000-$1,499** 24%
- **$1,500-$1,999** 21%
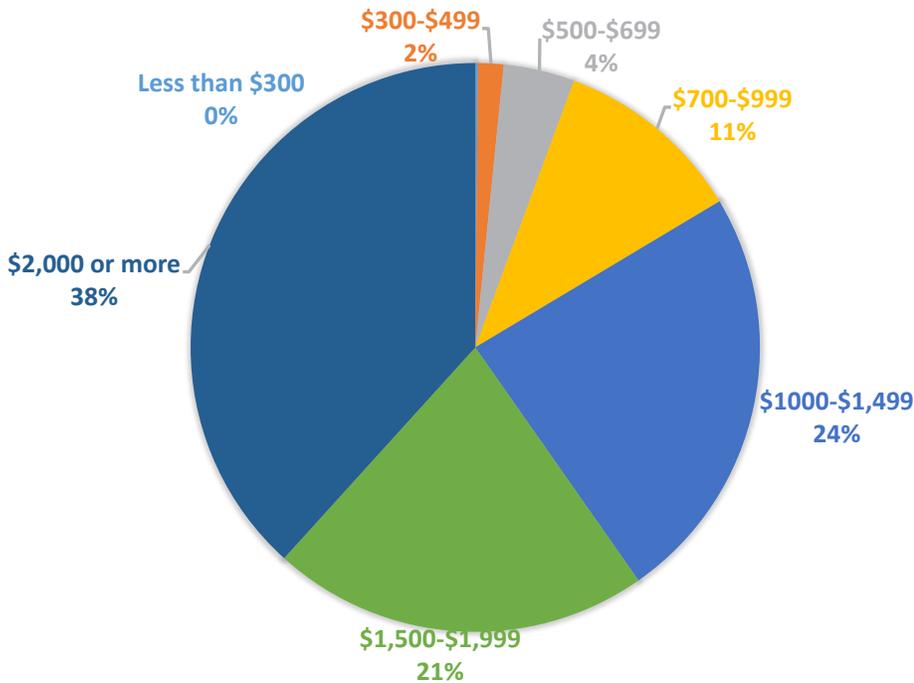
Monthly mortgage cost for Grayson County is much lower compared to the State of Virginia. If you look at the numbers for monthly owner cost as a percent of income on the following page, the numbers become a little more similar.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Monthly Mortgage Cost as a Percent of Income

Grayson COUNTY·VA

MONTHLY OWNER COST AS A % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME-GRAYSON

35% or more of income
16%

30-34.9% of income
10%

Less than 20% of income
42%

25-29.9% of income
12%

20-24.9% of income
20%
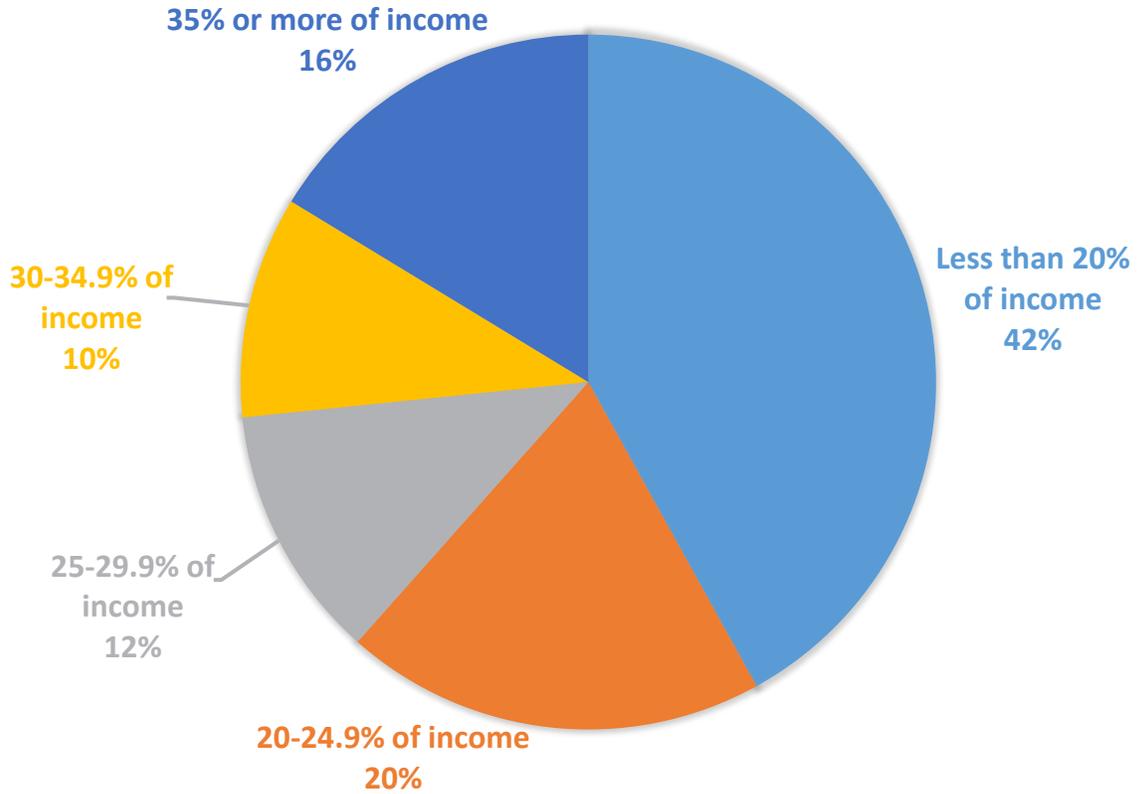
MONTHLY OWNER COST AS A % OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME-VIRGINIA

35% or more of income
25%

30-34.9% of income
9%

25-29.9% of income
13%

Less than 20% of income
36%

20-24.9% of income
17%
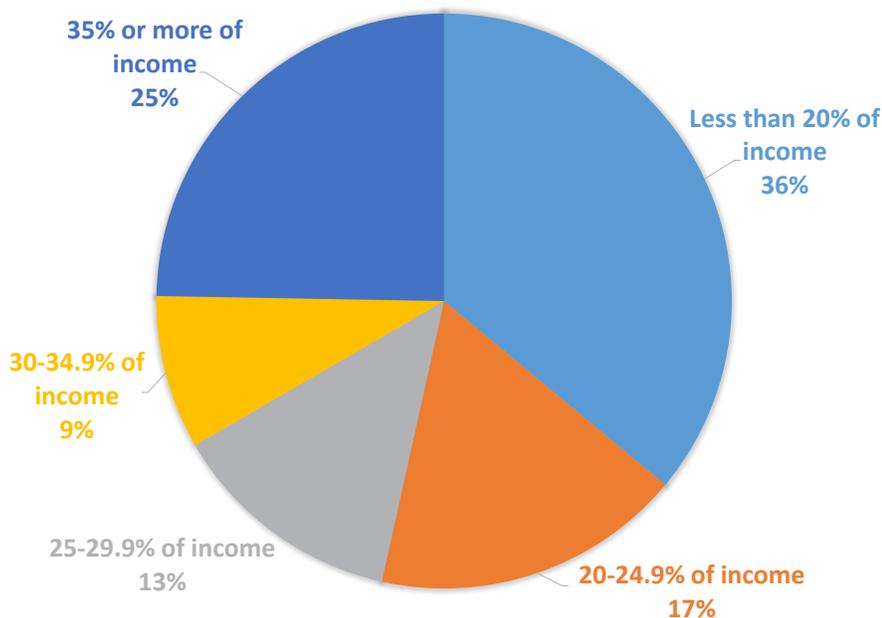
When comparing Grayson County to the State of Virginia the numbers are similar for all brackets aside from the highest percentage of household income spent on mortgage, where a 9 percent difference occurs.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Housing-Cost of Rent

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

RENT COST OF OCCUPIED UNITS-GRAYSON

$1,000-$1,499
3%

$1,500 or more
0%

$750-$999
2%

Less than $200
16%

$500-$749
32%

$200-$299
13%

$300-$499
34%

RENT COST OF OCCUPIED UNITS-VIRGINIA

Less than $200
2%

$200-$299
3%

$300-$499
6%

$1,500 or more
23%

$500-$749
16%

$1000-$1,499
31%

$750-$999
19%
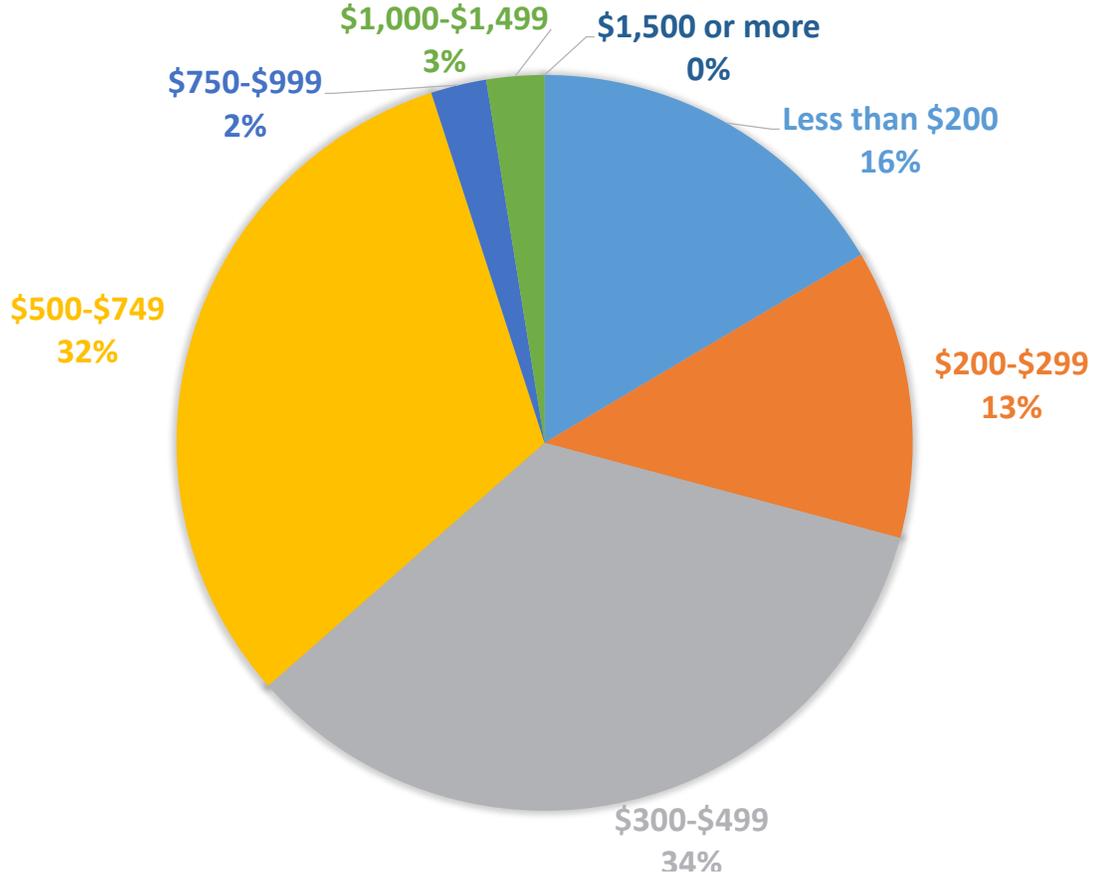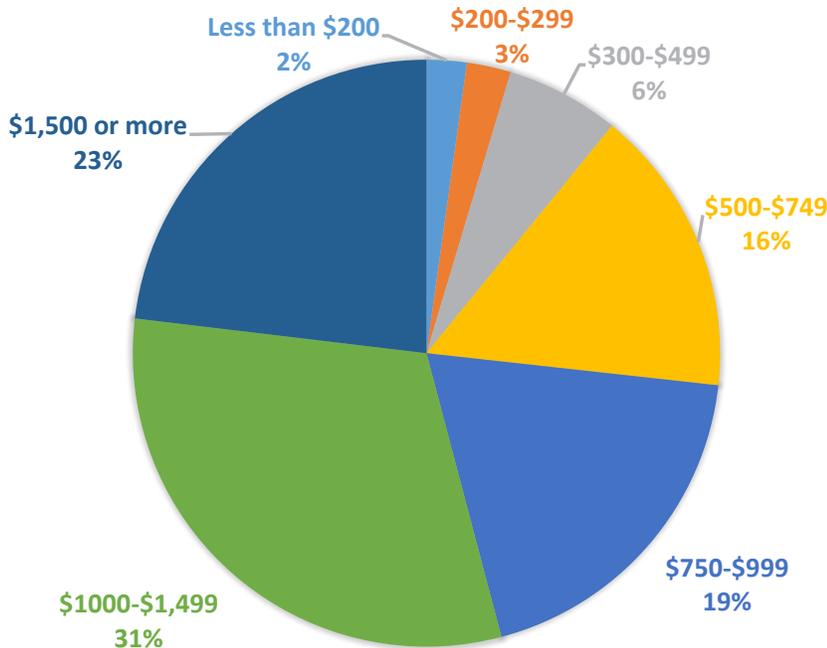
Grayson County offers more affordable rental rates for an average household than the State of Virginia. Cost of living and housing prices factor into this discrepancy. Grayson County has 65 percent of it's households paying less then $500 per month for rent, while Virginia only has 11 perent of it's renters paying less than $500 rent per month. Cost of living as a percent of income on the following page, shows the numbers evening out a little bit more.

Housing-Rent as a Percent of Income

GROSS RENT AS A % OF INCOME FOR OCCUPIED UNITS-GRAYSON

- **35% or more** 23%
- **Less than 15%** 25%
- **30-34.9%** 10%
- **25-29.9%** 11%
- **20-24.9%** 13%
- **15-19.9%** 18%

GROSS RENT AS A % OF INCOME FOR OCCUPIED UNITS-VIRGINIA

- **Less than 15%** 11%
- **15-19.9%** 13%
- **35% or more** 40%
- **20-24.9%** 13%
- **30-34.9%** 10%
- **25-29.9%** 13%
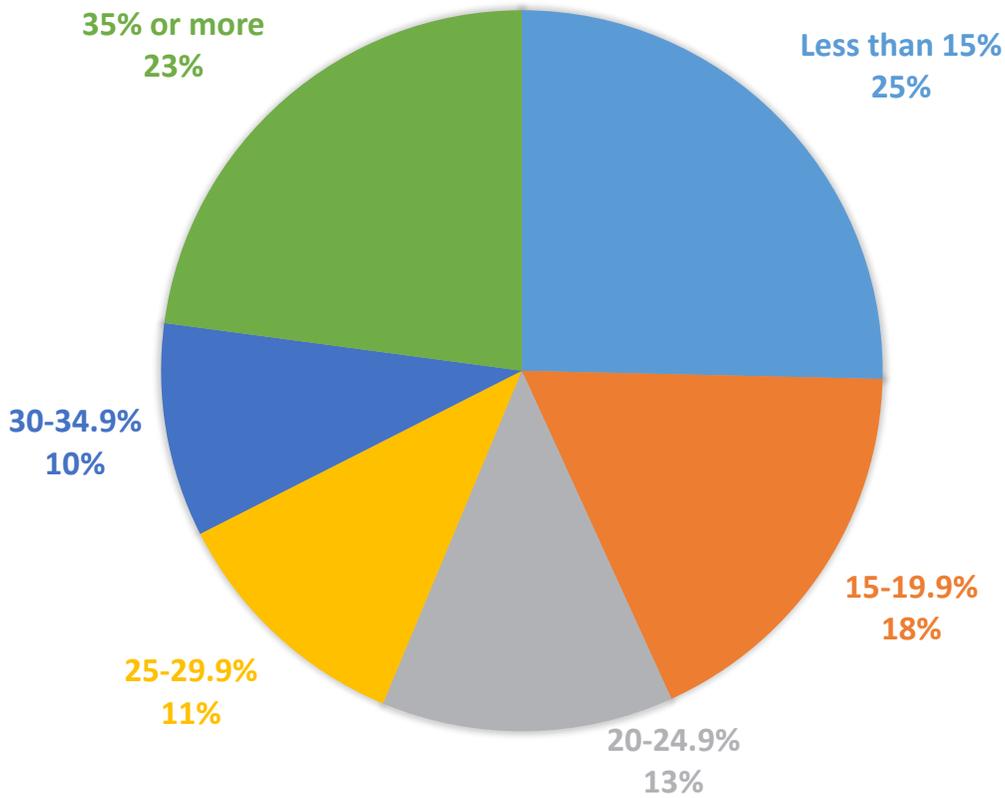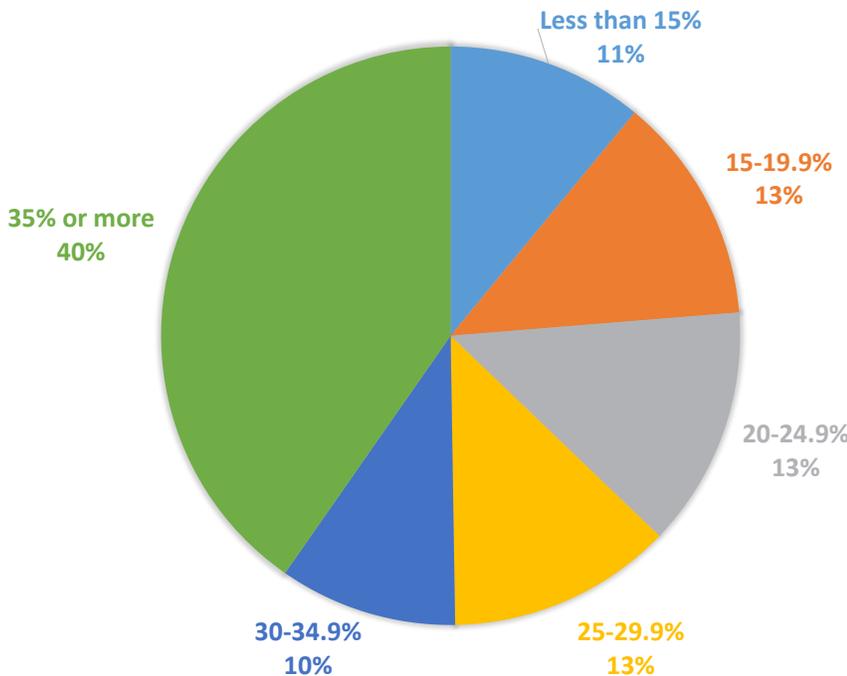
Gross rent as a percent of income for Grayson County is significanly lower than the State of Virginia, especially at the high and low end of the spectrum. Grayson County has 17 percent less households paying 35 percent or more of their income to rent when compared to Virginia. Grayson County has 14 percent more of their households paying less than 15 percent of their income to rent when compared to Virginia. Housing prices and cost of living in Grayson County is lower than the State of Virginia.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

Summary

With the opending of the North River Correctional Center, due to the inmate population, Grayson County's overall population will increase. Starting October 7, there will be 25 inmates introduced to the prison population every week until the population hits around 1,000 inmates. Sometime around April 2014, the overall Grayson County population will have increased by over 1,000 people compared to the 2013 population numbers.

Trends indicate that the percentage of Grayson County residents over 39 years of age has been increasing, with the largest gain in the population over 65 years of age. Strategies and programs to assist the elderly and ensure a good quality of life for older adults should be pursued. Strategies to encourage younger populations to remain in Grayson County or relocate to Grayson County should remain a priority for the county to ensure that a viable workforce and population numbers remain steady.

In general the entire population of Grayson County has declined since 2000. This has been a result of the overall number of deaths exceeding the overall number of births during this time period, in addition to the out migration of individuals exceeding the in migration of individuals to the county during the time period from 2000- 2009.

The number of houses in Grayson County considered vacant is much higher than the state average. This is due to the number of homes used for seasonal or recreational use, which is almost 20 percent higher than the state average use of vacant homes for this purpose.

There are fewer multi-unit attached housing types in Grayson County than the state average, this difference is almost 30 percent. This housing type, such as apartment complexes is sought after by young adults, older populations and low income individuals. Opportunities to increase this type of housing type should be looked at to meet the population challenges mentioned earlier.

The percentage of homes that are over 70 years old is higher than the state average. This indicates that more homes may need assistance remaining livable, achieving energy efficiency and in need of available construction workforce to ensure that these homes remain viable. There may also be a large number of homes eligible for historic preservation.

In general, it requires less of a family's income to live in Grayson County. Home prices are lower by a factor of almost 2.5 than the state average. The monthly cost of mortgage comparison shows us that 65% of households paying mortgage are paying less than $1000 a month, compared to the state average of only 17% of those paying mortgage paying less than $1000 a month. In general less people are paying mortgage (30% less) than the state average and the numbers of homes where income used for mortgage is over 35% of household income is almost 10 percent less than the state average.

Grayson County has 65 percent of renters paying less than $500 a month. Statewide only 11 percent of renters pay less than $500 a month.

To heat the homes in Grayson County, more fuel oil, kerosene and wood is used compared to Virginia, where utility gas and electricity are more prevalent. With recent increases in home heating oil and predictions that this source will remain high, heating cost as compared to percentage of income should be reviewed in the future and opportunities to assist residents with reducing heating costs or home efficiency improvements should be explored.

Chapter 4

Education

Introduction

The Grayson County Public School System manages primary and secondary schools in the county. Currently there are seven schools in this system. The Grayson County School Board is elected by the citizens of the county and the five members represent each voting district and an at large member. The primary role of the school board is to develop policy as it relates to the management of the school system. The School Superintendent is the executive officer of the school system and is in charge of managing personnel, financial considerations, school budgets, facilities and reporting to the school board. More information about the School System can be found at: http://www.grayson.k12.va.us/home

Notes taken from the Superintendent's 'School Financial Report': The School Division's list of priorities include employee compensation, technology enhancement, facilities improvements, transportation upgrades, school safety, and continual improvement in school programs. For more information on specific improvement strategies visit: http://www.grayson.k12.va.us/administration/superintendent

Over thirty higher education opportunities are located within sixty miles of Grayson County. The Wytheville Community College network that includes the Smyth County Education Center and the Crossroads Institute is an important higher education staple for the region. The Wytheville Community College network offers a variety of Associate Degree Programs, Work Force Development and Occupational & Technical Programs, and includes the Manufacturing Technology Center which is a cooperation of five community colleges in Southwest Virginia and various industries throughout the region. Other educational opportunities in the region include Blue Ridge Job Corps Center, Emory and Henry College, Virginia Tech and Radford University. In addition to higher education opportunities some students may be interested in vocational and artistic training at one of the many facilities in region.

Early Childhood Education

Head Start

The award winning Rooftop of Virginia CAP program is an option for children in need of early childhood education. Rooftop of Virginia is a non-profit, private agency that is supported by local, state and federal funds. The program caters to 221 three and four year olds from families eligible for assistance residing in Grayson and Carroll counties and the City of Galax. The four major areas of importance to the program are education, health, social services and parental involvement. There are classrooms for the pupils in Fries, Galax and Hillsville. There is an option to be home schooled as well.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start is another Rooftop of Virginia Program that caters to children ages 6 weeks to 3 years old. For more information visit: http://www.rooftopofvirginia.com/

The Virginia Preschool Initiative

The Virginia Department of Education established the Virginia Preschool Initiative which provides state funds to community-based organizations that provide preschool programs for at-risk-four-year olds unserved by Head Start. The VDE and the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs establish measurable standards in order to prepare preschool age children for entry into Kindergarten. For a preschool program to receive funding from the VDE then they must provide services that include: quality preschool education, parental involvement, comprehensive child health services, comprehensive social services and transportation. For more information visit: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early_childhood/

Grayson County Public Schools Map

Grayson COUNTY·VA

1. Grayson Highlands School
2. School Garage
3. Grayson County High School/Vocational Technical
4. Independence Middle School
5. Independence Elementary School
6. Baywood Elementary School
7. Fries Elementary & Middle School
8. Fairview Elementary School

Wythe County

Smyth County

Carroll County

Elk Creek

Fries

Troutdale

Providence

Grant

Galax

Washington County

Volney

Independence

Whitetop

Mouth of Wilson

Bridle Creek

Baywood

Ashe County

Alleghany County

Miles
0   2.5   5   10
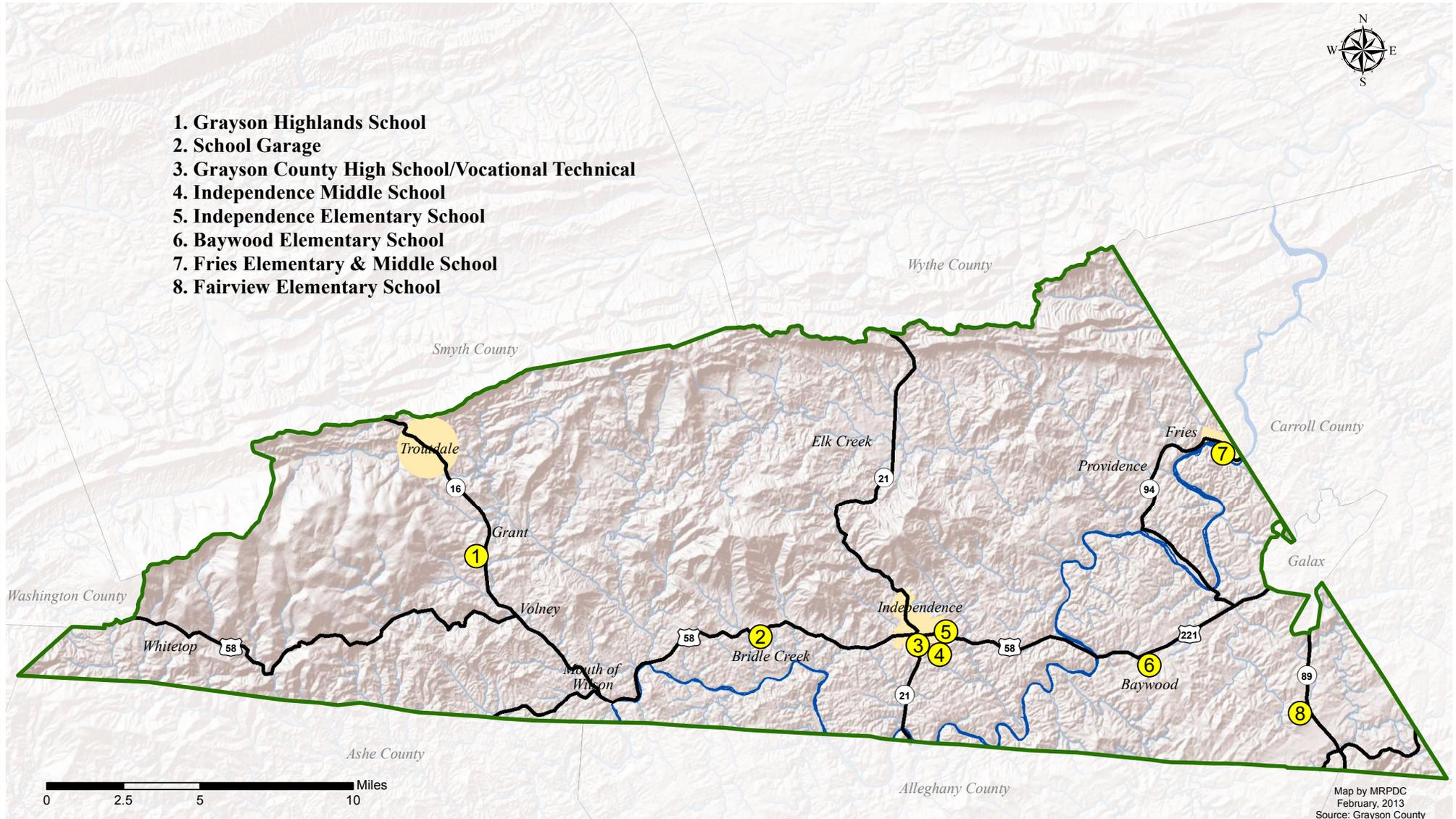
Map by MRPDC
February, 2013
Source: Grayson County

Grayson County Public Schools

Grayson County School System is composed of seven schools and the Career & Technical Education Center at the Grayson County High School Campus. There are many programs offered beyond standard curriculum that includes: The Cate Center - credentials in Nursing (CNA), Cosmetology (State Board Certification), Auto Mechanics (ASE), Business Information Systems (MOS), and various National Occupational Competency Testing Initiative (NOCTI). Grayson County High School offers Associate Degree Programs and numerous offerings for Dual Enrollment.

Grayson County High - 55,524 sq. ft., built in 1955, renovated/addition to the main building in 1989
Band facility, art annex, and mobile units have been added to the campus since that time.
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-715, 2012-756, 2011-783, 2010-770, 2009-620, 2008-649, 2007-655, 2006-643

Grayson County Career and Technical Center (CATE Center)- Adjacent to Grayson County High School, this school offers hands on learning for students to prepare them for career ready jobs after graduation.

Grayson Highlands - 67,000 sq. ft., built in 2010 (consolidation of Mount Rogers School and Bridle Creek School)
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-153, 2012-153, 2011-171

Independence Middle - 38,000 sq. ft., built in 1936, gym complex (physical education space for IMS/competition gym for GCHS) was added in 1989. Last renovated/addition in 2005.
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-170, 2012, 184, 2011-208, 2010-222, 2009-385, 2008-395, 2007-483, 2006-467

Independence Elementary - 30,400 sq. ft., built in 1983
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-267, 2012-277, 2011-265, 2010-265, 2009-288, 2008-278, 2007-243, 2006-261

Baywood Elementary - 23,000 sq. ft., built in 1950
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-102, 2012-103, 2011-100, 2010-112, 2009-116, 2008-129, 2007-122, 2006-133

Fairview Elementary - 25,700 sq. ft., built in 1942, last addition 1957
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-114, 2012-106, 2011-104, 2010-113, 2009-114, 2008-111, 2007-104, 2006-138

Fries School - Built in 1922, renovated in 2010
Recent enrollment numbers: 2013-251, 2012-243, 2011-250, 2010-140, 2009-142, 2008-111

Four of the schools were built before 1950, although Fries Middle School, built in 1922 was renovated in 2010. The Grayson County School System conducted a Public Schools Facility Study in 2006 to assess the current condition of buildings and determine the feasibility of renovation and/or construction. This study determined that these schools may be near the end of their useful life and that maintenance issues will increasingly become problematic for these schools. The ability of these schools to meet building codes and energy efficiency standards are difficult for these older structures. Without major capital investment the "band aid" approach used to keep the buildings operational will only delay the substantial capital investment needed to replace these buildings. Furthermore, the aging school system may impair local economic development where as young professionals prefer modern and high performing structures. More information about the study is available at the Grayson County School Board office.

Grayson County Public Schools Enrollment Trends

Grayson County High Enrollment Numbers

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
643	655	649	620	770	783	756	715
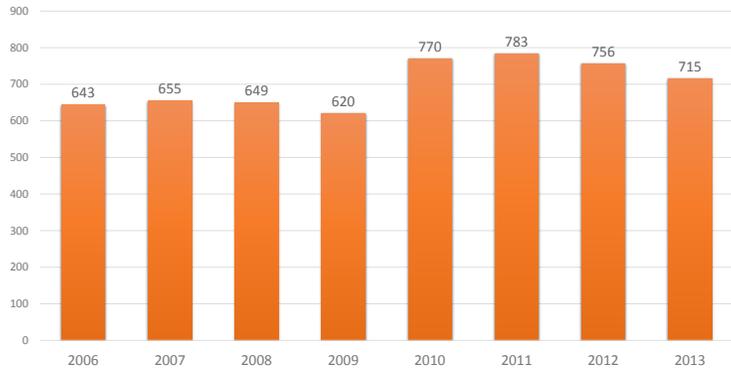
Independence Middle Enrollment Numbers

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
467	483	395	385	222	208	184	170
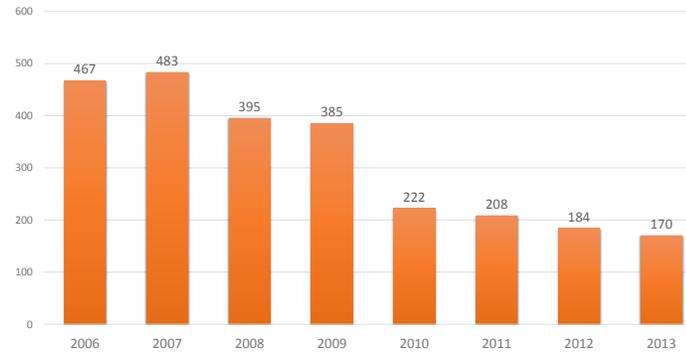
Grayson Highlands Enrollment Numbers
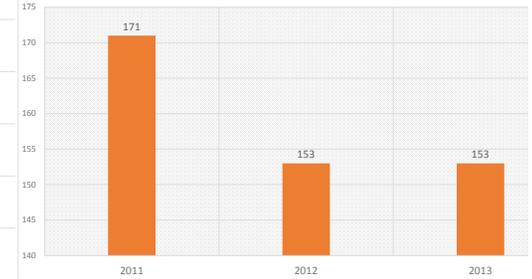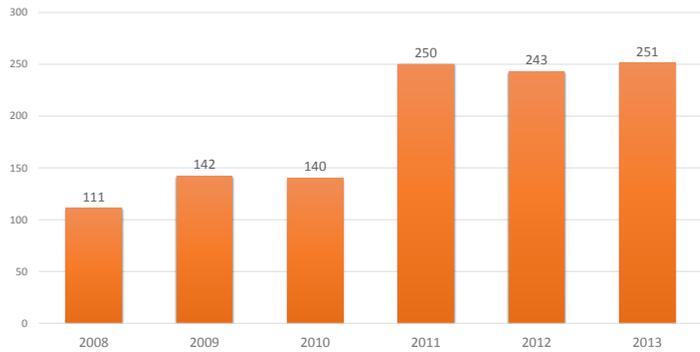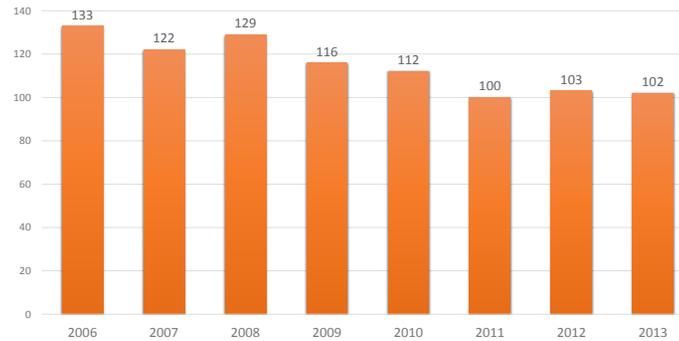
2011	2012	2013
171	153	153

Fries Enrollment Numbers

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
111	142	140	250	243	251

Baywood Elementary Enrollment Numbers

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
133	122	129	116	112	100	103	102

Fairview Elementary Enrollment Numbers

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
138	104	111	114	113	104	106	114

Independence Elementary Enrollment Numbers

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
261	243	278	288	279	265	277	267
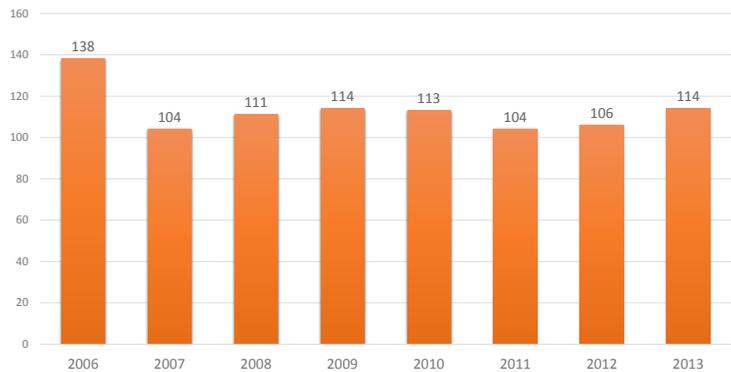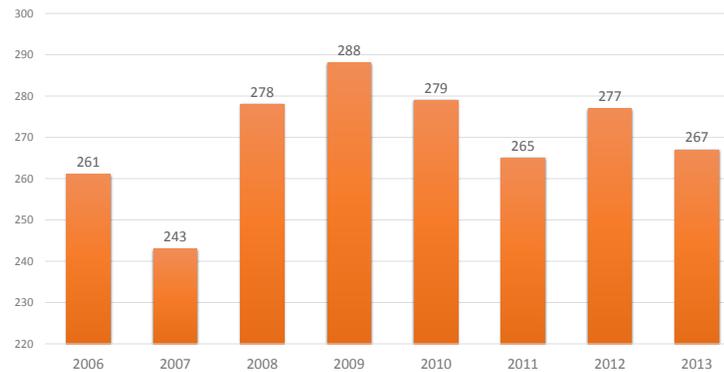
*Drastic changes in school enrollment by year may be due to school consolodation.

Public School Funding

Public school funding is provided by local, state and federal sources. The following table outlines funding sources by year for fiscal years 2006 through 2014. Expenditures per pupil is shown by funding source.

County, State & Federal Revenue Received										
Fiscal Year	Local Funding Operations	Local Funding Debt Service	State Funding	Federal Funding	ADM	LCI	Local PPE Operations	Local PPE Debt Service	State PPE	Federal PPE
2006-07	$5,126,312.00	$187,370.00	$14,010,982.50	$2,478,128.50	2064.43	0.2780	$2,483.16	$90.76	$6,786.85	$1,200.39
2007-08	$4,892,428.00	$183,744.20	$13,919,503.14	$2,010,946.78	2059.22	0.2780	$2,375.86	$89.23	$6,759.60	$976.56
2008-09	$4,472,014.00	$180,494.26	$15,335,786.11	$2,507,893.30	1996.21	0.2607	$2,240.25	$90.42	$7,682.45	$1,256.33
2009-10	$3,775,727.00	$170,714.00	$12,845,357.27	$3,438,565.98	1928.64	0.2607	$1,957.71	$88.52	$6,660.32	$1,782.90
2010-11	$4,175,980.00	$49,125.00	$12,977,831.84	$4,004,540.42	1892.54	0.3178	$2,206.55	$25.96	$6,857.36	$2,115.96
2011-12	$4,126,682.93	$48,375.34	$11,128,523.21	$4,397,188.77	1799.03	0.3178	$2,293.84	$26.89	$6,185.85	$2,444.20
2012-13	$4,648,870.42	$47,625.00	$11,664,372.95	$4,616,430.95	1783.40	0.3385	$2,606.75	$26.70	$6,540.53	$2,588.56
2013-14	$4,765,507.00	$46,875.27	$11,825,328.70	$3,094,100.04	1783.00	0.3385	$2,672.75	$26.29	$6,632.27	$1,735.33

* - 2013-14 numbers are budgeted - all other fiscal years are actual amounts received

ADM = Average Daily Membership

LCI = Local Composite Index

PPE = Per Pupil Expenditures

Source: Grayson County School System-Finance Department

Virginia Department of Education & Grayson County

This page is designed to give general information about the Grayson County School System as it relates to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), funding, teacher salaries, standards of learning and overall performance of the school system. The information on this page was compiled from the information and data provided by the Virginia Department of Education and is available at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/index.shtml

The **Virginia Board of Education** is the governing and policy-making body for the Virginia system of public elementary and secondary education. Its work touches on all facets of education from accountability and evaluation to curriculum and teacher education. Policies and performance standards established by the Virginia Board of Education guide the activities of the Virginia Department of Education and mandates the activities of local school divisions such as Grayson County.

VDOE reports a variety of data on public education in the commonwealth, including information on enrollment, demographics, student achievement, finances and safety. Report cards for schools, school divisions and the commonwealth provide detailed information about the quality of learning and instruction, including state and federal accountability ratings, grade-by-grade data on student achievement, graduation rates and teacher qualifications.

Funding- Virginia's public schools are financed through a combination of state, local and federal funds. The private sector also contributes through partnerships with schools and school divisions. The appropriation of the state funds for public education is the responsibility of the General Assembly, through the Appropriations Act. General fund appropriations serve as the mainstay of state support for the commonwealth's public schools, augmented by retail sales and use tax revenues, state lottery proceeds, and other sources.

Counties, cities and towns comprising school divisions also support public education by providing the locality's share to maintain an educational program meeting the commonwealth's Standards of Quality. While public education is primarily a state and local responsibility, the federal government provides assistance to state and local education agencies in support of specific federal initiatives and mandates.

Average Daily Membership (ADM), or school enrollment is used as a multiplier of the Standards of Quality formula to appropriate state funds to each school division. The Local Required Effort (LRE), the amount that the locality must provide and other local government costs for the school system is a significant portion of Grayson County government expenditures. In FY 2012, the following monies from the Grayson County budget was spent for the school system: School Construction $975,000.00, Debt Service $ 47,625.00, Local Required Effort $4,505,166.00. In FY2013, the following was spent: Water Costs $28,275.00, School Construction $772,235.76, Debt Service $47,625.00, LRE $4,621,817.00, Additional Funds $40,322.00.

Virginia Department of Education & Grayson County

Non-public school education - School divisions report the number of students who have obtained an excuse from school attendance by reason of bona fide religious training or belief as well as the number of students whose parents have notified the division superintendent – by August 15 – of their intention to provide home instruction. According to the Virginia Department of Education website in 2011-2012, 54 Grayson County students in grades K-12 were homeschooled and 33 students in grades K-12 claimed religious exemption.

Teacher Salaries- The ability to attract and retain educators is often based on the ability of the local system to provide competitive salaries. The VDOE website lists the average salaries of teachers by school district. Grayson County average salary for teachers in 2012-2013 as reported on the VDOE website is listed at: $36,507. The starting teacher salary for those who hold a Bachelors Degree was listed as $32,472 for 2012-13 and those who hold a Masters Degree at $34,020. Increases were projected for 2013-14 in response to the VRS share contribution required by employees. The Virginia Statewide Average for Teachers was listed at $52,096 in 2012-2013. The National Education Association "Rankings of the States 2011 and School Statistics 2012 Report" ranked the Commonwealth of Virginia number 30 out of 50 states who reported teacher's salaries. The United States average salary for teachers is listed at $55,623.

Accountability- Standards of Learning and annual assessments of student achievement comprise the academic standards used to gauge academic success and ultimately a schools state accreditation rating. The **school accreditation ratings** reflect SOL tests, approved assessments in English, History/Social Science, Mathematics and Science, based on the previous year test scores or on a three year average of achievement. High Schools must also show a **Graduation & Completion Index (GCI)** of 85 points or higher to be considered **"Fully Accredited"**. Lower scores and lower GCI may cause a school to be **"Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate"** and subject to academic reviews. **"Accredited with Warning"** is assigned when the adjusted pass rates for any of the four core subjects are below the achievement levels for full accreditation. These schools must undergo academic reviews and adopt and implement a school improvement plan. A school may hold this rating for no more than three consecutive years. **"Accreditation Denied"** is assigned if the school fails to meet requirements for four years. **"Conditionally Accredited"** schools are either new schools or reconstituted schools.

Standards of Learning (SOL) - Instruction in Virginia's public schools is guided by the Standards of Learning. The standards describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history and social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education and driver education.

The commonwealth and its public schools also provide specialized instruction and programs for gifted students, students with disabilities, English language learners and children in schools serving economically disadvantaged communities.

Educational Attainment

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT OF PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER-GRAYSON COUNTY

- Graduate or professional degree 3%
- Bachelor's degree 9%
- Associate's degree 9%
- Some college, no degree 17%
- High school graduate 36%
- Less than 9th grade 13%
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma 13%
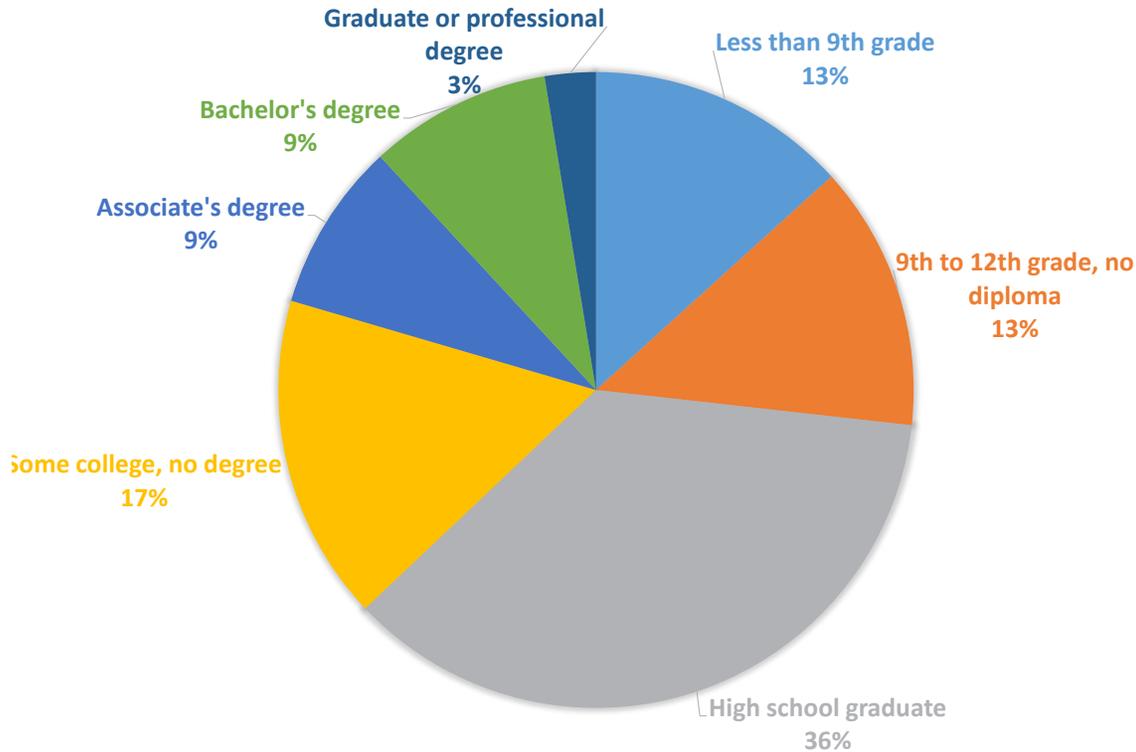
EDUCATION ATTAINMENT OF PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER-VIRGINIA

- Graduate or professional degree 14%
- Bachelor's degree 20%
- Associate's degree 7%
- Some college, no degree 20%
- High school gradua 26%
- Less than 9th grade 5%
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma 8%

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT OF PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER-MRPDC

- Graduate or professional degree 5%
- Bachelor's degree 11%
- Associate's degree 8%
- Some college, no degree 20%
- High school graduate 34%
- Less than 9th grade 10%
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma 12%
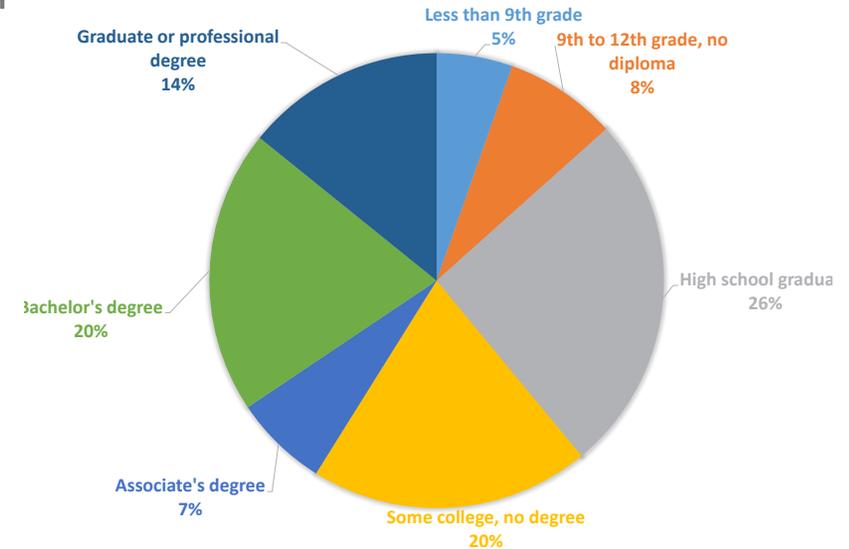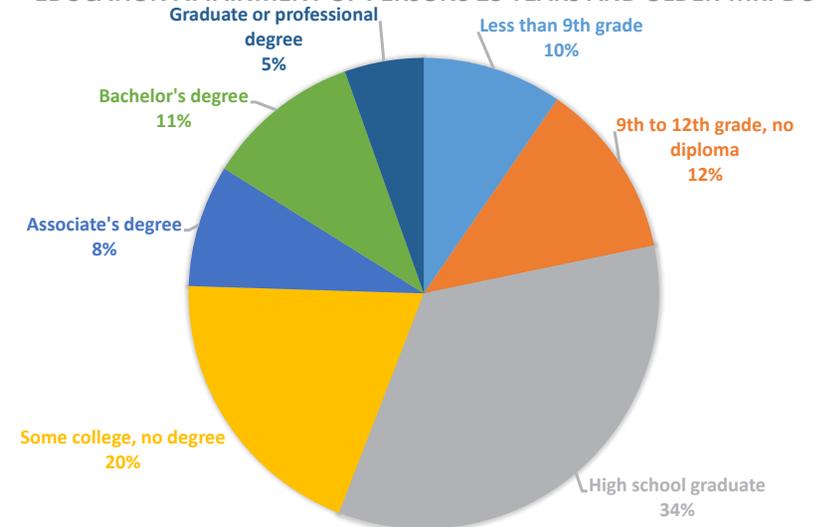
- Only 21 percent of Grayson County's population of persons 25 years and older have earned an associate's degree or higher.

- For Virginia, 41 percent of the population 25 years and older have earned an associate's degree or higher.

- Only 12 percent of Grayson County's population of 25 years and older has earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

- 34 percent of Virginia's population of 25 years and older have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

MRPDC-Mount Rogers Planning District Commission includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe and Washington and the cities of Bristol and Galax.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Citizen Survey & Education

Adult respondents were asked to choose the top three options to improve the public school system:

Improve the Public School System

- Higher pay for teachers and adding work-force/skill training courses were selected as the most favorable methods for improving the public school system.
- Improving facilities and adding informal education opportunities were the least favored options.
- Respondents that chose 'other' as an option listed ideas that included more discipline, elimination of SOLs, and improved transportation for students.

Youth respondents were asked how the public school system in Grayson County can be improved:

Improve the Public School System
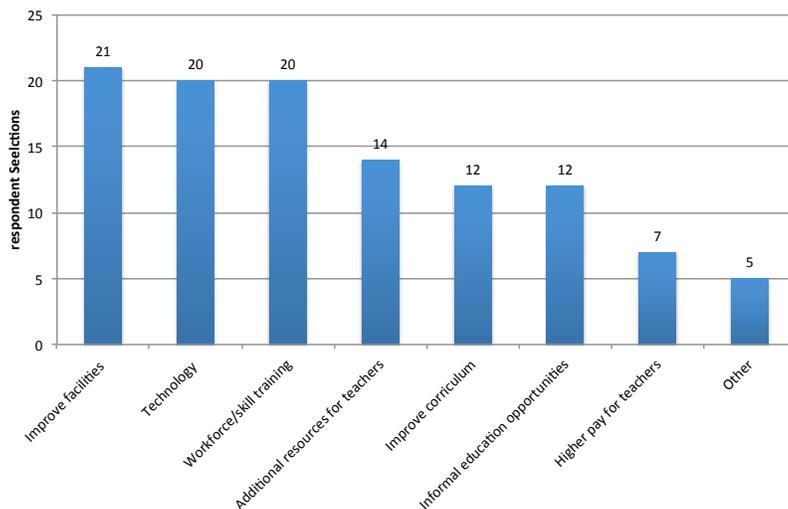
- Improve facilities, technology, and work-force/skill training were selected as the most favorable methods for improving the public school system.
- Higher pay for teachers was the least favored option.
- Respondents that chose 'other' as an option listed ideas that included better lunch menu options, air conditioning, and cleaner schools.

- Workforce/skill training ranked high among adult and youth respondents for improvements that can be made to the public school system.

- Improved tehcnology ranked fairly high among both adults and youth respondents.

- Additional resources and improved cirriculum ranked fairly 'middle of the road' for both adults and youth respondents.

Citizen Survey & Education

Adult respondents were asked to choose the top three programs they would like to see developed for Grayson County's youth:

Youth Programs

- 'After school opportunities outside of sports' was the program selected by the most respondents.
- Respondents were interested in both 'internships' and 'mentorships' for the county's youth.
- 'Athletic programs' received the fewest number of selections by survey respondents.
- Respondents that selected 'other' as an option provided responses that focused on additional business training, part-time jobs, extracurricular activities (environmental/outdoor, volunteer opportunities, and music).

Youth respondents were asked to select the programs they would like to see developed for Grayson County's youth:

Youth Programs

- Internships was the program selected by the most respondents.
- Respondents were also interested in after school opportunities outside of sports and athletic programs.
- Drug awareness programs received the fewest number of selections by survey respondents.
- Respondents that selected 'other' as an option provided the following responses: more art related things (art and music), a "teen hangout" non-school related, camps for people who just graduated high school to give them a break and prepare them for the future, chess club, wellness center, horse shows, and job opportunities for teenagers.

- After school opportunities and internships ranked high among adults and youth respondents as youth programs that should be emphasized in Grayson County.
- Promoting after school school opportunites and internships could provide real life opportunities for the Grayson County youth population.

Citizen Survey & Education

Adult respondents were asked to choose the top three types of programs for lifelong learning they would most like to see in Grayson County:

Lifelong Learning Programs
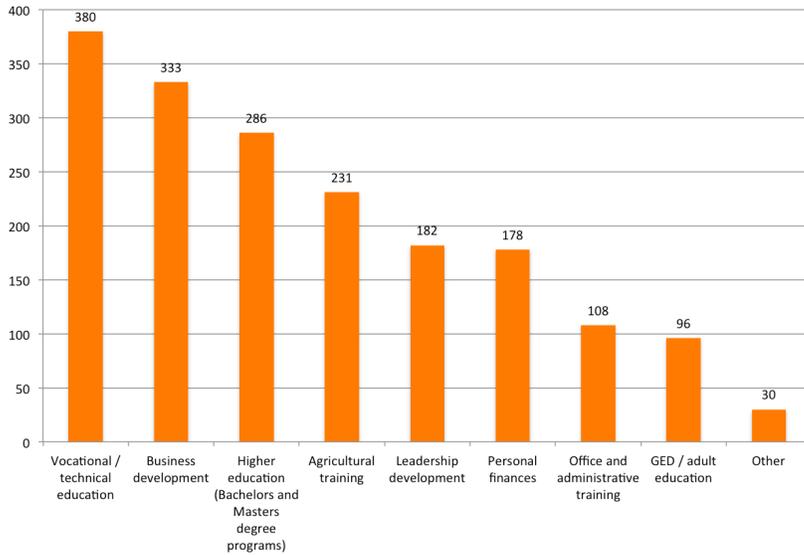
- Respondents are most interested in additional vocational/technical education programs in Grayson County.

- Business development programs received high interest by respondents.

- Respondents were least interested in GED/adult education, office, and administrative training programs.

Youth respondents were asked to choose the types of programs for lifelong learning they would most like to see in Grayson County:

Lifelong Learning Programs
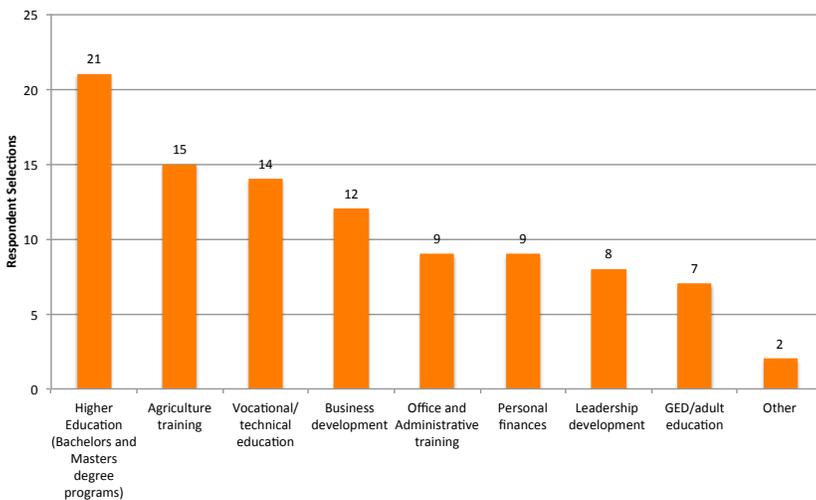
- Respondents are most interested in higher education (Bachelors and Masters degree programs) in Grayson County.

- GED/adult education programs received low interest by respondents.

- Two respondents selected the "other" option and listed art programs or degree programs in fields that are not common such as marine science and physics.

- Vocational/Technical education ranked high among both adult and youth respondents as priorities for lifelong learning programs in Grayson County.

- Higher education (Bachelors and Master degree programs), business development and agricultural training were also ranked fairly high for both adult and youth respondents.

- Both adult and youth respondents are interested in furthering educational opportunities in a variety of ways throughout Grayson County.

Higher Education Near Grayson County
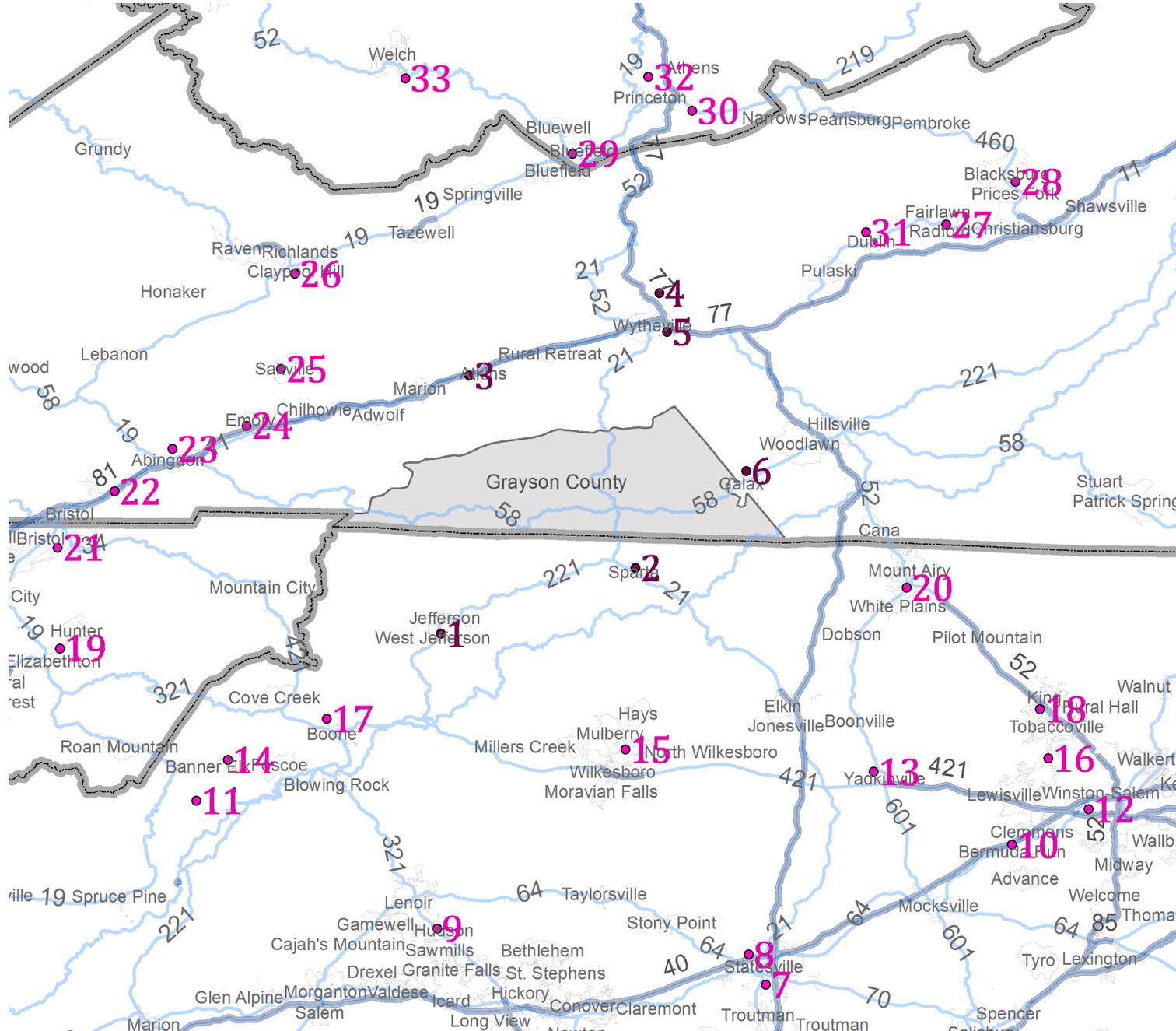
Within 30 Miles
1. Ashe Campus-Wilkes CC
2. Wilkes CC
3. Smyth County Education Center
4. Old Dominion Univ. Teletechnet
5. Wythville CC
6. Crossroads Institute

Within 60 Miles
7. Mitchell CC
8. Gardner-Webb University
9. Caldwell CC
10. Davidson County CC
11. Mayland CC
12. Wakeforest University
13. Surry CC
14. Lees-McRae College
15. Wilkes CC
16. High Point Univ-Budd Family
17. Appalachian State University
18. Forsyth Technical CC
19. Northeast St CC
20. Surry CC
21. King College
22. Virginia Intermont College
23. Virginia Highlands CC
24. Emory And Henry College
25. VT Aquacutlure Research
26. Southwest Virginia CC
27. Radford University
28. Virginia Tech
29. Bluefield State College
30. National College
31. New River Comm & Technical Clg
32. Valley College
33. Bluefield State College

Art & Vocational Schools Near Grayson County

GRAYSON COUNTY•VA
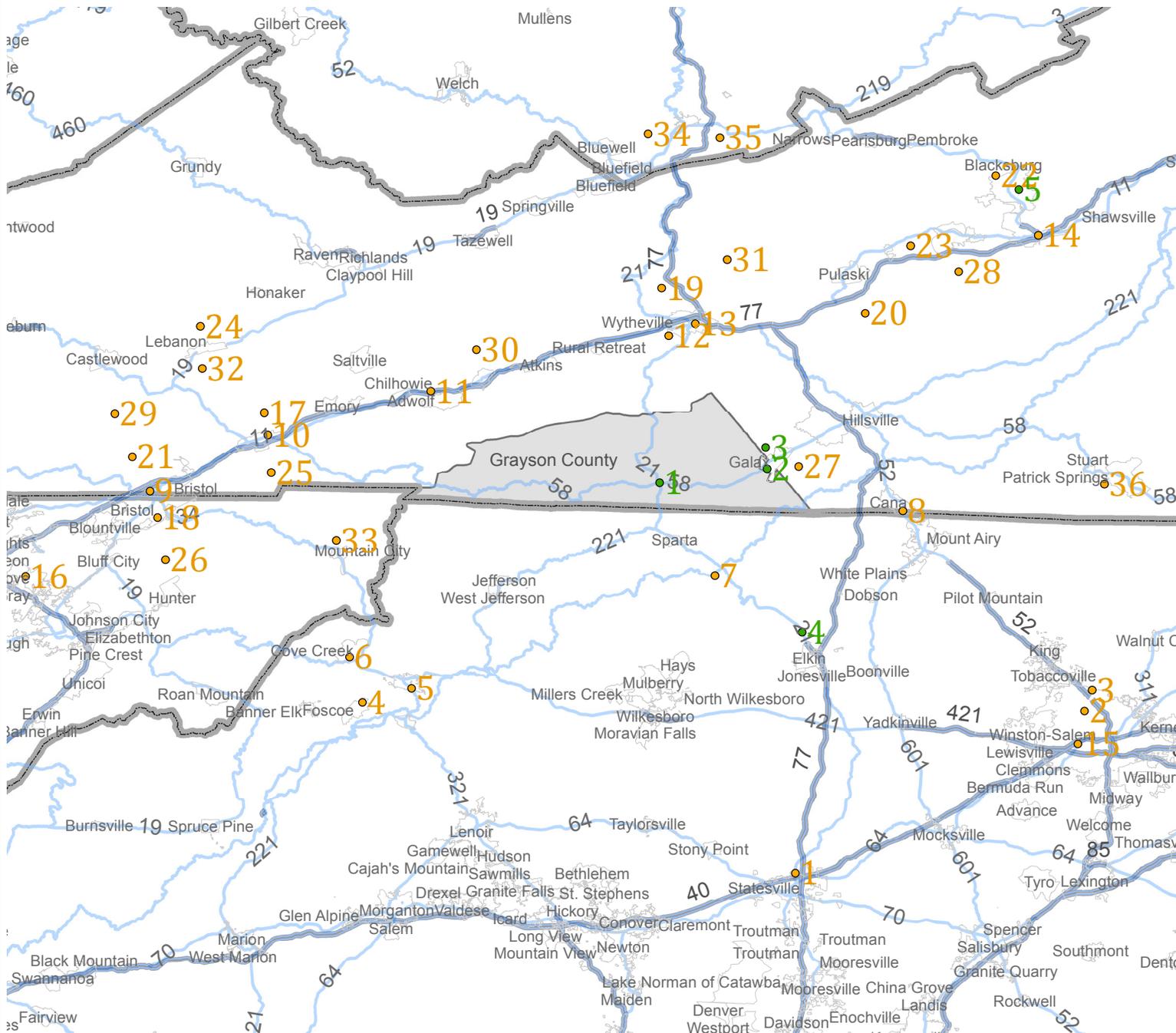
Within 60 Miles

Art Schools
1. Rouse House Music
2. Arts Council of Twin Counties
3. Chestnut Creek School-Arts
4. Mitchell River Crafts
5. Sew Attitude Studio

Vocational Schools
1. Goodwill Employment & Training
2. Hair Design School
3. Pyramid Institute of Barbering
4. Ballistic Edge
5. Pro Web Service
6. Jung Tao School-Chinese Medicine
7. Safety-Net Inc.
8. Cana Virginia Beauty School
9. Bristol School of Hair Design
10. Washington County Skill Center
11. Blue Ridge Job Corps Center
12. Wythe County Technology Center
13. Wytheville Training School
14. Chamar Academy of Cosmetology
15. Heli-Xpress Flight Training
16. Baily Computing
17. Stars Esthetic Training
18. Bristol School of Hair Design
19. Summit School of Cosmetology
20. New River Criminal Justice Train.
21. Southwest Law Enforment Acad.
22. Blue Ridge School of Massage
23. Radford City Schools-Health
24. Russell County Career & Tech.
25. William N. Neff Voc. Center
26. Southeast Culinary & Hosp.
27. TCR Management-Groundsman
28. Western VA Public Ed. Consortium
29. National College Bus. & Tech
30. Smyth Career Tech. Center
31. Alliance Tractor-Trailer Training
32. Tri-County Driving Academy
33. Tenn. Tech. Center
34. Mercer County Ac. of Adult Learn.
35. Mercer County Tech. Ed. Center
36. Blue Ridge Nursing Center

The Crossroads Rural Entrepreneurial Institute

The Crossroads Rural Entrepreneurial Institute, located in Galax, Virginia, opened in July 2005 to help improve the lives of people in southwest Virginia and beyond, by providing an innovative educational and economic development engine that will contribute to the revitalization of the region's economy while offering a brighter future for its citizens. Located in the Crossroads Institute facility are the Southwest Regional Enterprise Center, the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, the Crossroads Small Business Development Center, and Wytheville Community College. Over 200 jobs have been created through the small business incubator and a Sirius/XM call center located in the facility. The Small Business Development Center, along with their host organization the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, has assisted more than 950 small business clients, 675 of which were new businesses. Over 265 business plans have been completed and approximately 200 companies have received funding totaling over $46,000,000 to start or expand their business.
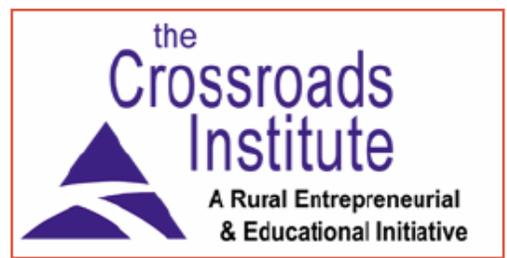
At the Crossroads Institute you can find: a mixed-use small business incubator, modular work spaces with high flexibility, a Computer Emporium with student and public access, an Idea Lab for pre-incubator small business planning, Technical and Occupational Lab Space, Electronics and Computer Networking Labs (Health Science and Wet Labs, Teaching Kitchen, Building Technologies Lab), Classrooms and two seminar rooms with video teleconferencing capabilities, a Learning Assistance Center with student access, an exhibit hall and atrium also serves as a café and social area, and a modern conference room.

The Crossroads Institute offers a Higher Education Center that contains: video conferencing capabilities in six rooms, two large meeting rooms set up with teacher stations, two small conference rooms, media hookups, a study room with four desktop computers for student use, wireless access, and a kitchen. The Higher Education Center offers a variety educational opportunities including leadership training, bachelors and masters degrees.

Wytheville Community College has been instrumental in meeting one of the primary goals of the Crossroads Institute to provide educational opportunities for high school, college, and adult students in the region. Educational programming at the Crossroads Institute has been heavily utilized by residents in the region. During the spring semester of 2010, 115 WCC credit courses were taught at the Crossroads Institute with over 317 full-time equivalents enrolled, approximately 15.7 percent of WCC's total enrollment that semester. The enrollment has grown from 150 full-time equivalents in the fall of 2005 to over 300 full-time equivalents in the spring of 2010. Course offerings have been extremely important in assisting the many people in the region who have lost furniture and textile

http://crossroadsva.org/ci/index.php

http://crossroadsva.org/ci/index.php

Workforce Development Options
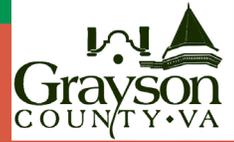
Below is a list of educational institutions that offer technical and vocational options for potential students looking to enter the workforce with a specific skill set. These institutions offer training that is intended to translate into a specific career path after graduation. The technical and vocational training offered by these schools is intended to match with the workforce needs of the greater region.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0131
Phone: (540) 231-6000
www.vt.edu

Radford University
East Main Street
Radford, VA 24141-0672
Phone: (540) 831-5000
www.radford.edu

Virginia Intermont College
1013 Moore Street
Bristol, VA 24201-
Phone: (276) 669-6101
www.vic.edu

Emory and Henry College
1 Garnand Drive
Emory, VA 24327-0947
Phone: (276) 944-4121
www.ehc.edu

VA College of Osteopathic Medicine
2265 Kraft Dr
Blacksburg, VA 24060-
Phone: (540) 231-4000
www.vcom.vt.edu

Washington County Adult Skill Center
848 Thompson Dr
Abingdon, VA 24210-
Phone: (276) 676-1948
wcsc.wcs.k12.va.us

New River Community College
5251 College Drive
Dublin, VA 24084-1127
Phone: (540) 674-3600
www.nr.edu

Virginia Highlands Community College
100 Vhcc Drive
Abingdon, VA 24212-0828
Phone: (276) 739-2400
www.vhcc.edu

Wytheville Community College
1000 E Main St
Wytheville, VA 24382-3308
Phone: (276) 223-4700
www.wcc.vccs.edu

Source: Virginia Workforce Connection, https://www.vawc.virginia.gov/

Summary

The School System provides most of the education in Grayson County. Improvements to the school system may include:

- School System Capital Improvement Plan - Aging school facilities and the aging transportation fleet of the Grayson County School System may require that the School Board consider a Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize needs and spending priorities.

- Use the already established school system energy audit to prioritize the projects with cost savings in the new School System Capital Improvement Plan.

- To remain competitive and attract the best teachers; teacher salaries, performance based salary adjustments and salary funding increases to attract instructors for identified problem areas/schools may require further study.

- Increase Career & Technical Education programs to better prepare students for changing workforce needs and local employment opportunities. Possible programs to include; Air Conditioning & Refrigeretion, Masonry, Electrician, EMT, Criminal Justice, Property Management, Forestry, Agricultural, Home Health and Elder Care....

- School system affiliated extra-curricular programs to keep students safe and well rounded. Non-athletic programs, agriculture/forestry training, career readiness/internships, college courses, leadership training and other areas identified by students should be considered.

- The use of advanced technology and the infrastructure needed to operate this technology is critical for the school system to prepare students for the future. Advancement in technology can also improve school efficiency and can be utilized for future cost savings.

- A high performing school system can be used as a tool to attract potential industry and business investment and young professional families.

Other strategies beyond the Grayson County School System to improve education in Grayson County may include:

- Partner with established college to offer a higher education center in Grayson County for long distance learning. Necessary to obtain advanced degrees close to home.

- Explore the potential to use vacant buildings/spaces to offer educational programs.

- Reach out to Grayson County retirees, second home professionals who may be interested in leading volunteer instructional programs.

- County sponsored workshop program to offer lifestyle courses relevant to Grayson County Citizens. May include renewable energy, property management and repair, agricultural and forestry education, outdoor recreation skills and other programs to improve the quality of life.

- Business development courses and mentorship programs to assist new entrepreneurs with the education/skills necessary to succeed.

- Education programs for social service recipients to break the cycle of poverty and educational opportunities for offenders to provide a skill set necessary to prevent reentry into the criminal justice system.

Chapter 5

Economy

Introduction

The Economy Chapter includes income and employment data, primary employers in Grayson County, employment related travel data, and public input as it relates to employment and needed businesses. The economic health of the community has been identified as a primary concern for the future of Grayson County.

Selected Income Characteristics for Grayson County and Virginia				
Subject	Virginia		Grayson County	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2011 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)				
Total households	2,991,025	(X)	6,760	(X)
Less than $10,000	169,437	5.7%	658	9.7%
$10,000 to $14,999	127,703	4.3%	754	11.2%
$15,000 to $24,999	251,190	8.4%	1,284	19.0%
$25,000 to $34,999	260,393	8.7%	999	14.8%
$35,000 to $49,999	379,922	12.7%	871	12.9%
$50,000 to $74,999	537,780	18.0%	1,160	17.2%
$75,000 to $99,999	395,278	13.2%	626	9.3%
$100,000 to $149,999	457,448	15.3%	296	4.4%
$150,000 to $199,999	203,872	6.8%	28	0.4%
$200,000 or more	208,002	7.0%	84	1.2%
Median household income (dollars)	63,302	(X)	31,599	(X)
Mean household income (dollars)	85,323	(X)	46,892	(X)
Families	2,015,959	(X)	4,424	(X)
Less than $10,000	67,127	3.3%	222	5.0%
$10,000 to $14,999	48,202	2.4%	177	4.0%
$15,000 to $24,999	124,372	6.2%	829	18.7%
$25,000 to $34,999	149,558	7.4%	728	16.5%
$35,000 to $49,999	236,271	11.7%	718	16.2%
$50,000 to $74,999	369,805	18.3%	881	19.9%
$75,000 to $99,999	299,530	14.9%	504	11.4%
$100,000 to $149,999	365,508	18.1%	253	5.7%
$150,000 to $199,999	172,621	8.6%	28	0.6%
$200,000 or more	182,965	9.1%	84	1.9%
Median family income (dollars)	75,962	(X)	39,789	(X)
Mean family income (dollars)	98,742	(X)	56,806	(X)
Per capita income (dollars)	33,040	(X)	21,013	(X)
Nonfamily households	975,066	(X)	2,336	(X)
Median nonfamily income (dollars)	39,150	(X)	16,676	(X)
Mean nonfamily income (dollars)	54,500	(X)	26,404	(X)
Median earnings for workers (dollars)	34,054	(X)	22,290	(X)
Median earnings for male full-time, year-round workers (dollars)	52,541	(X)	33,900	(X)

Income Characteristics in the past 12 months-2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Income Characteristics

Income and Benefits by Household

Virginia ■ Grayson ■

2011 Per Capita Income MRPDC

■ Grayson ■ Bland ■ Carroll+Galax ■ Smyth ■ Washington+Bristol ■ Wythe ■ MRPDC

Income Characteristics in the past 12 months-2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Grayson County and Virginia have similar numbers, percentage wise, of household incomes from $35,000 to $75,000. It is at the lower end and higher end of the household income scale that there are very large disparities between the two. By percentage, there are a lot more households making less than $35,000 dollars a year in Grayson County than Virginia. There are even more households, by a percentage, making more than $75,000 per year in Virginia than in Grayson County. Median household income in Grayson County is nearly half of the Virginia average.

Median household income in Grayson County for 2011 was $31,599 per year compared to the MRPD, which is $35,515.

Per capita income in Grayson County for 2011 was $24,651 per year (lowest in the MRPDC), while the MRPD average was $29,400.

From 2007 to 2011, per capita personal income has risen by 5.2% in Grayson County.

MRPDC-Includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington and the cities of Galax and Bristol.

Poverty Characteristics

Selected Poverty Statistics for Grayson County and Virginia						
	Virginia			Grayson County		
Subject	Total Estimate	Below Estimate	Percent Estimate	Total Estimate	Below Estimate	Percent Estimate
Population for whom poverty status is determined	7,681,393	818,422	10.7%	15,563	2,673	17.2%
AGE						
Under 18 years	1,817,407	255,616	14.1%	2,997	813	27.1%
Related children under 18 years	1,810,290	249,214	13.8%	2,990	806	27.0%
18 to 64 years	4,935,872	487,732	9.9%	9,420	1,388	14.7%
65 years and over	928,114	75,074	8.1%	3,146	472	15.0%
SEX						
Male	3,736,709	348,904	9.3%	7,543	1,157	15.3%
Female	3,944,684	469,518	11.9%	8,020	1,516	18.9%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN						
One race	7,488,631	794,594	10.6%	15,508	2,644	17.0%
White	5,379,697	449,549	8.4%	15,024	2,461	16.4%
Black or African American	1,468,087	276,812	18.9%	342	65	19.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	24,342	3,370	13.8%	0	0	-
Asian	422,299	34,165	8.1%	3	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	4,981	619	12.4%	107	107	100.0%
Some other race	189,225	30,079	15.9%	32	11	34.4%
Two or more races	192,762	23,828	12.4%	55	29	52.7%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	588,949	87,109	14.8%	396	97	24.5%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	5,030,916	399,772	7.9%	14,687	2,385	16.2%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Population 25 years and over	5,182,045	418,193	8.1%	11,564	1,699	14.7%
Less than high school graduate	673,299	146,449	21.8%	3,075	804	26.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,318,789	133,331	10.1%	4,182	343	8.2%
Some college, associate's degree	1,385,344	90,967	6.6%	2,931	343	11.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,804,613	47,446	2.6%	1,376	209	15.2%
All Individuals below:						
50 percent of poverty level	365,507	(X)	(X)	822	(X)	(X)
125 percent of poverty level	1,083,272	(X)	(X)	4,264	(X)	(X)
150 percent of poverty level	1,362,865	(X)	(X)	5,043	(X)	(X)
185 percent of poverty level	1,768,321	(X)	(X)	6,220	(X)	(X)
200 percent of poverty level	1,943,017	(X)	(X)	6,840	(X)	(X)
Unrelated individuals for whom poverty status is	1,401,100	305,963	21.8%	2,924	983	33.6%
Male	680,332	129,916	19.1%	1,333	345	25.9%
Female	720,768	176,047	24.4%	1,591	638	40.1%
Mean income deficit for unrelated individuals (dollars)	3,604	(X)	(X)	2,555	(X)	(X)
Worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months	681,733	16,596	2.4%	896	25	2.8%
Worked less than full-time, year-round in the past 12	317,284	123,317	38.9%	488	237	48.6%
Did not work	402,083	166,050	41.3%	1,540	721	46.8%
PERCENT IMPUTED						
Poverty status for individuals	23.4%	(X)	(X)	24.9%	(X)	(X)

Poverty Status in the past 12 months-2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year

Age and Sex Poverty Characteristics by a Percentage
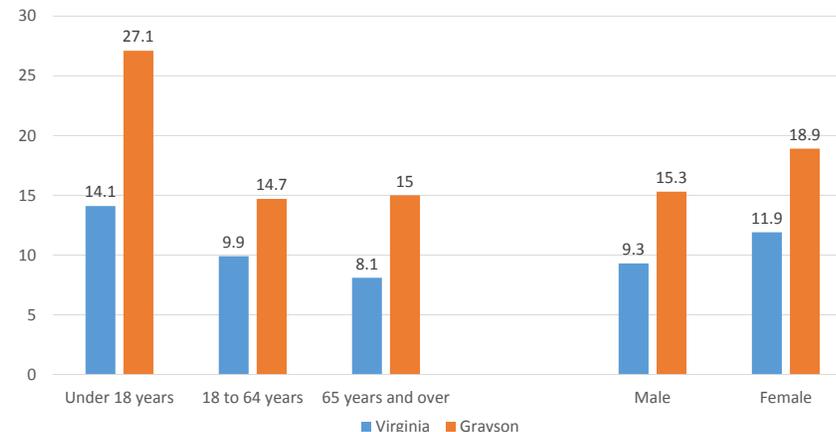
Educational Attainment and Poverty Characteristics by a Percentage
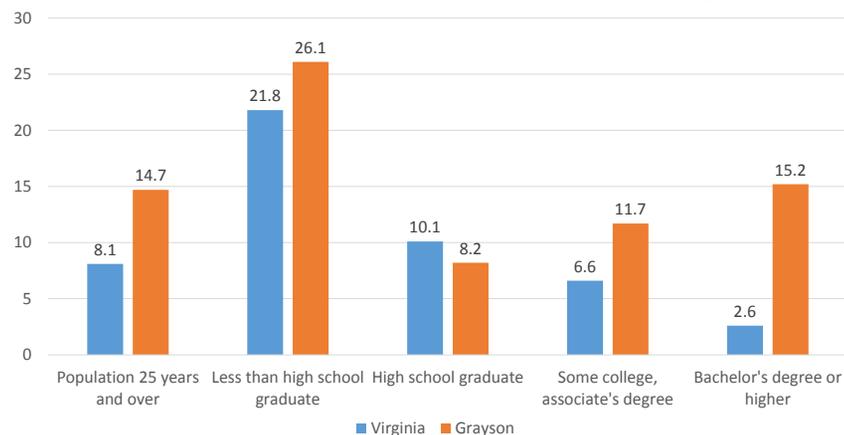
Grayson County has an overall poverty rate 17.2 percent compared to 10.7 percent for Virginia and 15.9 percent for the Mount Rogers Planning District. Males have an overall poverty rate of 15.3 percent in Grayson County and female poverty rate of 18.9 percent. Children have a very high rate of poverty in Grayson County at 27.1 percent. That is almost double Virginia's rate at 14.1 percent. The elderly poverty rate in Grayson County is fairly high at 15 percent. Interestingly, the poverty rate is much higher in Grayson County for students with some college, associate's degree, and/or bachelor's degree or higher than the state average. Grayson County has a poverty rate of 15.2 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher compared to the state at a 2.6 percent poverty rate.

Weekly Wage & Age of Workers

Average Weekly Wage by Industry

- Wholesale Trade — $869
- Finance and Insurance — $775
- Federal Government — $755
- State Government — $629
- Government Total — $628
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical... — $609
- Manufacturing — $599
- Administrative and Support and Waste... — $580
- Transportation and Warehousing — $526
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting — $508
- Local Government — $499
- Other Services (except Public Admin.) — $474
- Health Care and Social Assistance — $353
- Retail Trade — $322
- Construction — $314
- Accommodation, and Food Services — $218

Weekly wages in Grayson County are well below the state average and significantly below the MRPDC average. The average weekly wage for all industries in Grayson County is $509, nearly a $100 less than the MRPDC average and 51.3 percent of the state average. The average weekly wage for manufacturing in Grayson County is $625 or $117 less than the MRPDC average and 59.7 percent of the state average. Average weekly wage for retail in Grayson County is $329 or $60 less than the MRPDC average, and 64.6 percent the state average.

83 percent of the age of workers in Grayson County are between the ages of 25 to 64. With an aging population, Grayson County should expect the numbers of aging workers to grow.

Weekly Wages-All Industries/Manufacturing/Retail
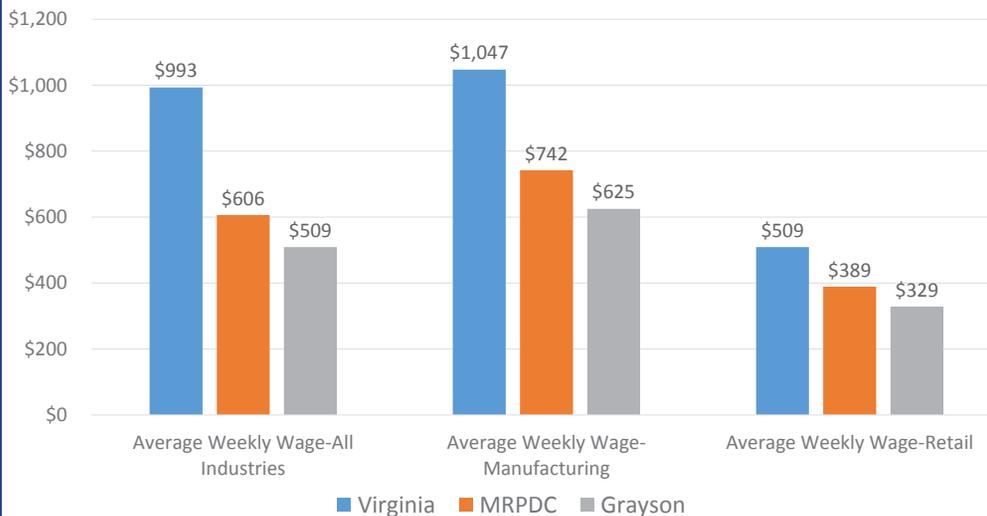
- Average Weekly Wage-All Industries: Virginia $993, MRPDC $606, Grayson $509
- Average Weekly Wage-Manufacturing: Virginia $1,047, MRPDC $742, Grayson $625
- Average Weekly Wage-Retail: Virginia $509, MRPDC $389, Grayson $329
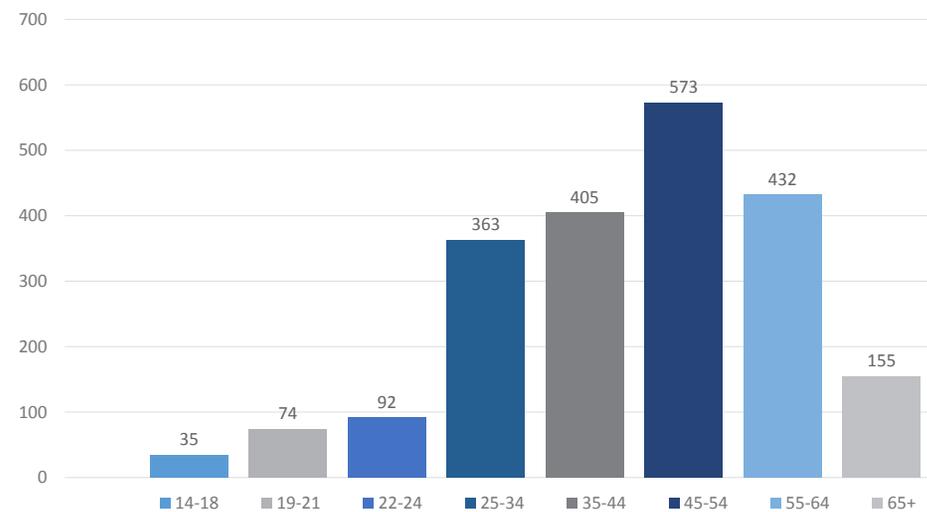
Age of Workers in Grayson County

- 14-18: 35
- 19-21: 74
- 22-24: 92
- 25-34: 363
- 35-44: 405
- 45-54: 573
- 55-64: 432
- 65+: 155

MRPDC-Includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington and the cities of Galax and Bristol.

Notable Employers in Grayson County

Grayson County School System - In charge of the public school system in Grayson County and employes teachers, administrators and other personel. For more information visit: http://www.grayson.k12.va.us/

Grayson County - Administration of government services, facilities, constitutional offices, public safety, elected officials and all county personnel. For more information visit: http://www.graysoncountyva.com/

Med-Fit Systems, Inc. - Manufacturer of various fitness and wellness machinery (including Nautilus Commercial Products) and products for the clinical and long term markets of rehab and senior solutions. For more information visit: http://www.medfitsystems.com/

Grayson Nursing & Rehab Center - A 120 bed facility that employs or contracts with 100 full time equivalent positions at the Independence facility. For more information visit: http://www.consulate-healthcare.com/

Grayson National Bank - In operation since 1900, offers business and personal financial services to Grayson County and surrounding areas. For more information visit: http://www.graysonnationalbank.com/about-us.aspx

Oak Hill Academy - This co-ed private institution offers college preparation from grades 8-12. Enrollment varies from 150 to 160 per year. For more information visit: http://www.oak-hill.net/

Food City - Regional grocery chain with a store in Independence. For more information visit: http://www.foodcity.com/

Carolina Profile Design Corp. - A lithograph commercial printing and metal machining company. In operation since 1990.

C & B Lumber Inc. - Originally, C & B started as a sawmill in 1988, now C & B Lumber provides customized hand cut lumber. Specializing in log home lumber and products including chinking, rustic railings, log home siding, and more. For more information visit: http://www.candblumber.com/about-Log-home-siding.html

Darco Southern - Fabricating high Temperature Industrial Gasketing Solutions and has been in operation since 1976, Darco Southern services steel, aluminum, petrochemical, shipbuilding, brick, pulp and paper, and boiler industries. Products include Tetraglas (Fiberglass), Tetraglass 3000 (Silica) cloths, tapes, sleeving and ropes. For more information visit: http://www.darcosouthern.com/coprofile.php

McAllister Mills - A leading manufacturer of safe, heat resistant materials for industries. Products include insulation blankets, fabrics, tapes, ropes, and custom fabricated parts. Products are designed to be resistant to temperatures ranging from 0 degrees F to 2500 degrees F. For more information visit: http://mcallistermills.com/

Tritex LLC - Located in Independece since 2000, Tritex offers high temperature alternatives to ceramic fiber. Their products are used in various industries and applications including chimneys, automotive, foundries, power gens, primary alum, petrochemical, appliance, and fire protection. For more information visit: http://www.tritexllc.com/

Employment and New Hires by Industry & Employers and Employment by Size of Establishment

Employment by Industry

Industry	Employment
Local Government	662
Manufacturing	345
Health Care and Social Assistance	318
Retail Trade	158
Accommodation and Food Service	102
Finance and Insurance	100
Transportation and Warehousing	63
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	52
Administrative and Support and Waste...	50
State Government	44
Other Service (except Public Admin.)	35
Federal Government	28
Professional, Scientific, and Technical...	25
Wholesale Trade	17

New Hires by Industry

Industry	New Hires
Accommodation and Food Service	37
Health Care and Social Assistance	30
Retail Trade	27
Manufacturing	21
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	20
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	18
Public Administration	16
Construction	6
Other Service (except Public Admin.)	6
Transportation and Warehousing	4
Wholesale Trade	3

Employers by Size of Establishment

Size	Employers
5 to 9 employees	51
10 to 19 employees	20
20 to 49 employees	12
250 to 499 employees	1

Employment by Size of Establishment

Size	Employment
5 to 9 employees	320
10 to 19 employees	265
20 to 49 employees	352
250 to 499 employees	454
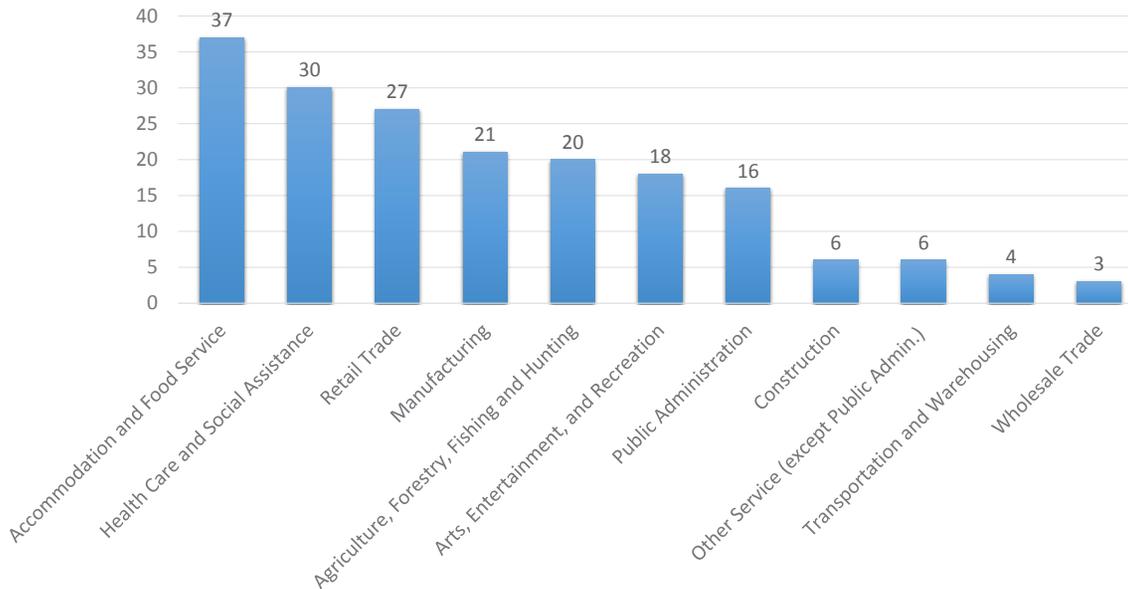
Local government is the largest employer by industry in Grayson County. Manufacturing and Health Care/Social Assistance are the next two largest employers by industry.

For 2012, Accommodation and Food Services had the most new hires by industry. Health care/social service, retail trade, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, arts, entertainment, recreation, and public administration were the next highest in new hires by industry.

Source: Grayson County Community Profile, 2013-Virginia Employment Commission

Industry Employment Distribution for the MRPDC
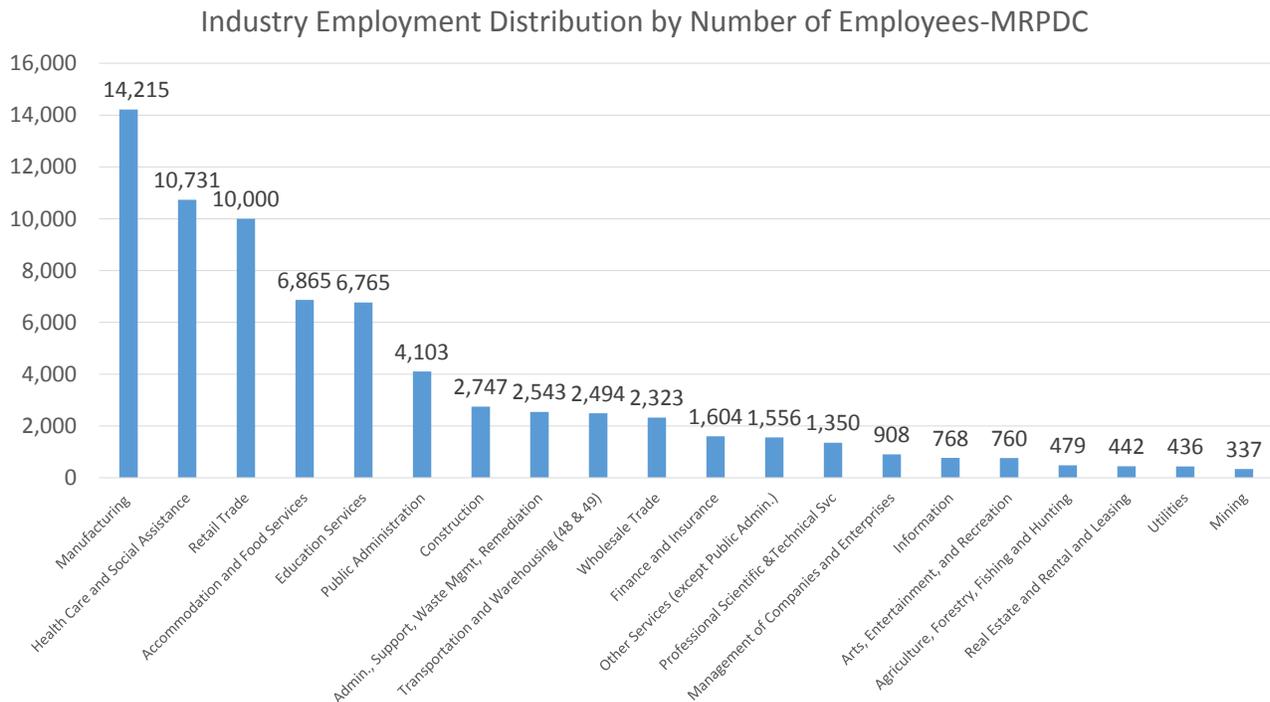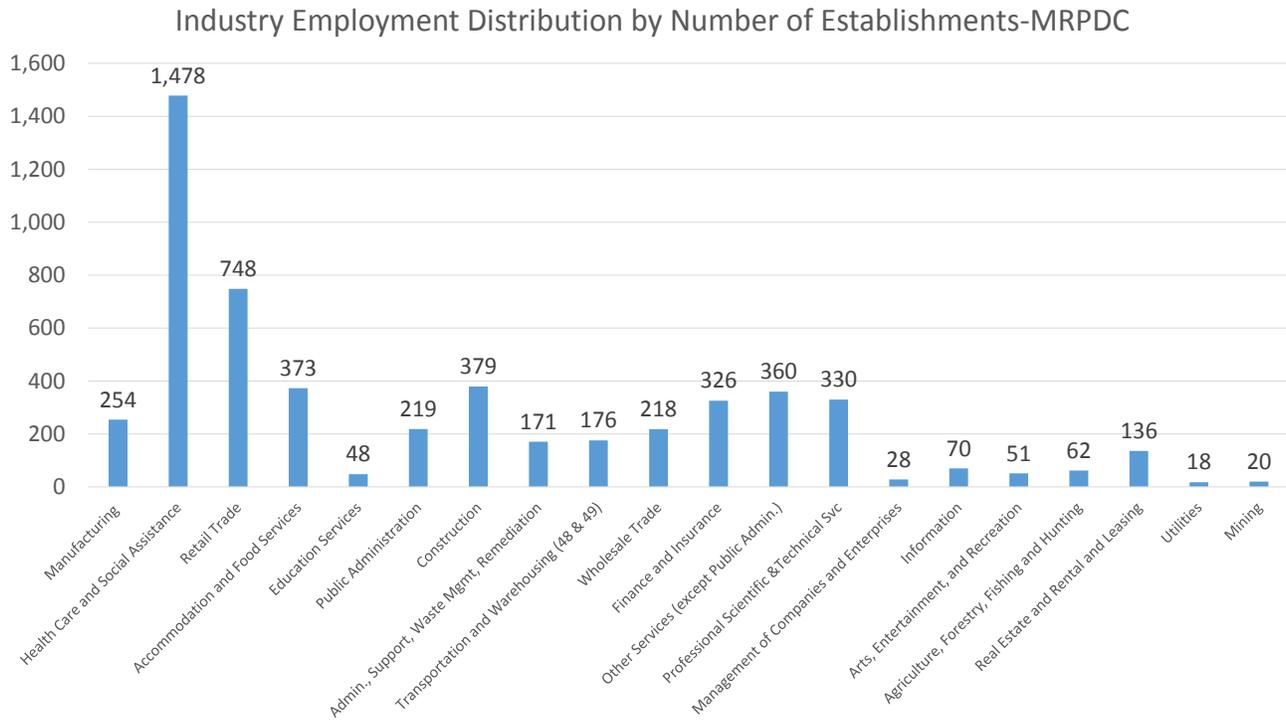
Industry Employment Distribution by Number of Establishments-MRPDC

Industry Employment Distribution by Number of Employees-MRPDC

MRPDC-Includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington and the cities of Galax and Bristol.

Health care/social assistance have by far the most establishments in the Mount Rogers Planning District. Retail trade has the next highest amount of establishments.

Manufacturing has the highest number of employees by industry in the Mount Rogers Planning District with 14,215. Health care/social assistance, retail trade, accommodation/food service, education service, and public administration have the next highest number of employees by industry in the MRPD.

Source: Grayson County Community Profile, 2013-Virginia Employment Commission

Industries by Projected Growth-Virginia

Industries by Projected Growth- Virginia					
Rank	Industry	2010 Estimated Employement	2020 Projected Employement	2010-2020 Annual Percent Change	Total Employment Change
1	Home Health Care Services	22,151	40,123	6.1%	17,972
2	Individual and Family Services	29,679	50,476	5.5%	20,797
3	Management,Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	67,623	106,884	4.7%	39,261
4	Offices of Other Health Practitioners	16,798	25,997	4.5%	9,199
5	Social Assistance	60,900	92,400	4.3%	31,500
6	Vocational Rehabilitation Services	6,955	10,435	4.1%	3,480
7	Ambulatory Health Care Services	143,701	213,379	4.0%	69,678
8	Computer System Design and Related Services	139,112	203,896	3.9%	64,784
9	Offices ofDentists	21,424	30,776	3.7%	9,352
10	Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers	20,202	28,713	3.6%	8,511
11	Offices of Physicians	59,612	84,201	3.5%	24,589
12	Securities,commodity contracts, and Other financial Investment and Related Activities	11,625	16,385	3.5%	4,760
13	Outpatient Care Centers	10,957	15,324	3.4%	4,367
14	Construction of Buildings	38,142	52,539	3.3%	14,397
15	Professional, Scientific,and Technical Services	381,552	522,818	3.2%	141,266
16	Other Ambulatory Health Care Services	5,825	7,922	3.1%	2,097
17	Specialty Trade Contractors	115,658	156,703	3.1%	41,045
18	Software Publishers	4,917	6,654	3.1%	1,737
19	Construction	182,999	247,486	3.1%	64,487
20	Other Support Services	5,310	7,128	3.0%	1,818
21	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	68,353	91,563	3.0%	23,210
22	Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	18,410	24,420	2.9%	6,010
23	Facilities support Services	10,885	14,427	2.9%	3,542
24	Community Food and Housing,and Emergency and Other Relief Services	3,428	4,533	2.8%	1,105
25	Heavy and Civil Engineering construction	29,199	38,244	2.7%	9,045

Source: Grayson County Community Profile, 2013-Virginia Employment Commission

Projected Growth of Top 25 Annual Percent Change of Industries from 2010-2020-Virginia
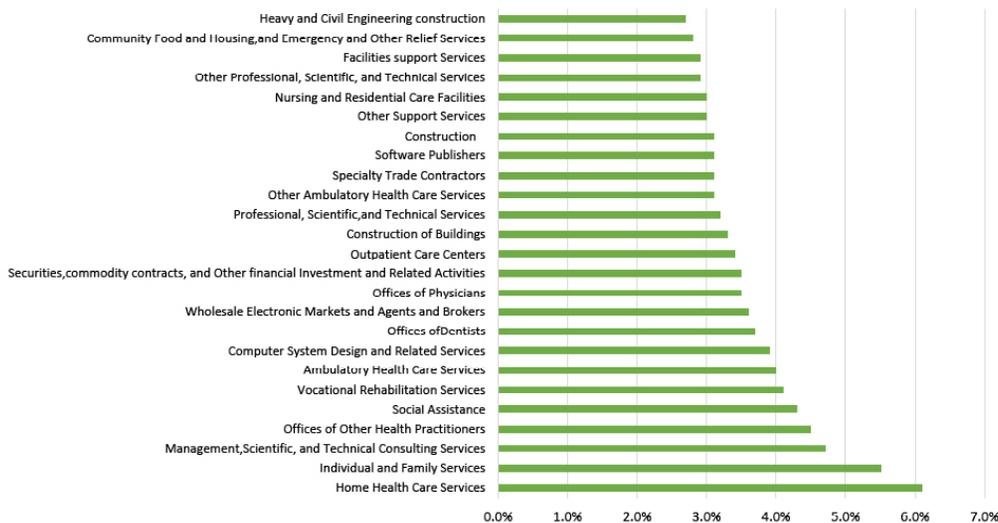
By percentage, home health care services is expected to grow the most across Virginia by 6.1 percent from 2010-2020. Individual and family services, management, scientific, and technical consulting services, offices of other health practitioners, and social assistance are the next top four industries.

Economy-Citizen Survey Desired Job Types

Respondents were asked to prioritize the top three most desired jobs types. The chart below shows the combined results of all priorities selected by respondents:

Type of Jobs Desired

- Agricultural/forestry — 14.4%
- Call Center/customer service — 4.6%
- Distribution Facility — 7.6%
- Education — 11.5%
- Health care — 9.6%
- Manufacturing — 11.4%
- Professional/office — 15.4%
- Retail — 7.7%
- Senior care/senior services — 5.3%
- Tourism-related/recreation — 12.5%

- Professional/office and agricultural jobs are the most desired jobs by survey respondents.
- Tourism, education, and manufacturing jobs were also highly desired fields.

Respondents were asked to rank the top three most desired jobs types. The table below shows the job types as prioritized by respondents:

Type of Job	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture/forestry	9	23.1%	6	15.8%	6	16.7%
Call center/customer service	1	2.6%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
Distribution facility	3	7.7%	2	5.3%	1	2.8%
Education	5	12.8%	6	15.8%	4	11.1%
Health care	8	20.5%	2	5.3%	4	11.1%
Manufacturing	2	5.1%	6	15.8%	1	2.8%
Professional/office	4	10.3%	7	18.4%	5	13.9%
Retail	2	5.1%	3	7.9%	5	13.9%
Senior care/senior services	0	0.0%	1	2.6%	4	11.1%
Tourism-related/recreation	5	12.8%	5	13.2%	5	13.9%
Total	39	100.0%	38	100.0%	36	100.0%

- Agriculture/forestry and health care jobs were selected as the most desired job types under priority 1.
- The most desired job type under priority 2 was professional/office jobs, followed by agriculture/forestry, education, and manufacturing jobs.
- Agriculture/forestry jobs were the most desired job types under priority 3, followed by professional/office, retail, and tourism-related jobs.
- Agriculture was ranked as the top priority job desired by 18.6 percent of respondents.

Economy-Youth Survey Desired Job Types

Respondents were asked to prioritize the top three most desired jobs types. The chart below shows the combined results of all priorities selected by respondents:

Type of Jobs Desired

Legend:
- Agriculture/forestry
- Call center/customer service
- Distribution facility
- Education
- Health care
- Manufacturing
- Professional/office
- Retail
- Senior care/senior services
- Tourism-related/recreation

- Professional/office and agricultural jobs are the most desired jobs by survey respondents.
- Agriculture was ranked as the top priority job desired by 18.6 percent of respondents.
- Tourism, education, and health care were also highly desired fields.

Respondents were asked to rank the top three most desired jobs types. The table below shows the job types as prioritized by respondents:

Type of Job	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture/forestry	9	23.1%	6	15.8%	6	16.7%
Call center/customer service	1	2.6%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
Distribution facility	3	7.7%	2	5.3%	1	2.8%
Education	5	12.8%	6	15.8%	4	11.1%
Health care	8	20.5%	2	5.3%	4	11.1%
Manufacturing	2	5.1%	6	15.8%	1	2.8%
Professional/office	4	10.3%	7	18.4%	5	13.9%
Retail	2	5.1%	3	7.9%	5	13.9%
Senior care/senior services	0	0.0%	1	2.6%	4	11.1%
Tourism-related/recreation	5	12.8%	5	13.2%	5	13.9%
Total	39	100.0%	38	100.0%	36	100.0%

- Agriculture/forestry and health care jobs were selected as the most desired job types under 'Priority 1'.
- The most desired job type under 'Priority 2' was professional/office jobs, followed by agriculture/forestry, education, and manufacturing jobs.
- Agriculture/forestry jobs was the most desired job type under 'Priority 3', followed by professional/office, retail, and tourism-related jobs.

Grayson County Unemployed Characteristics

Grayson County - 138 claimants	
Gender	Grayson County
Male	82
Female	56
Race	
White	130
Black	6
American Native	1
Asian	1
Other	
Hispanic or Latino	
Age	
Under 22	2
22 to 24	7
25 to 34	22
35 to 44	32
45 to 54	42
55 to 64	30
65 and over	3
Education	
8th Grade or Less	2
Some High School	10
High School Grad/GED	64
Some College/2-Yr Degree	29
Bachelor's Degree	14
Some Graduate School	1
Post Graduate Degree	0
Unknown	18

Source: Grayson County Community Profile,
2013-Virginia Employment Commission

Unemployed Claimants Selected Characteristics

Bar chart values: Male 82, Female 56, Under 22 2, 22 to 24 7, 25 to 34 22, 35 to 44 32, 45 to 54 42, 55 to 64 30, 65 and over 3
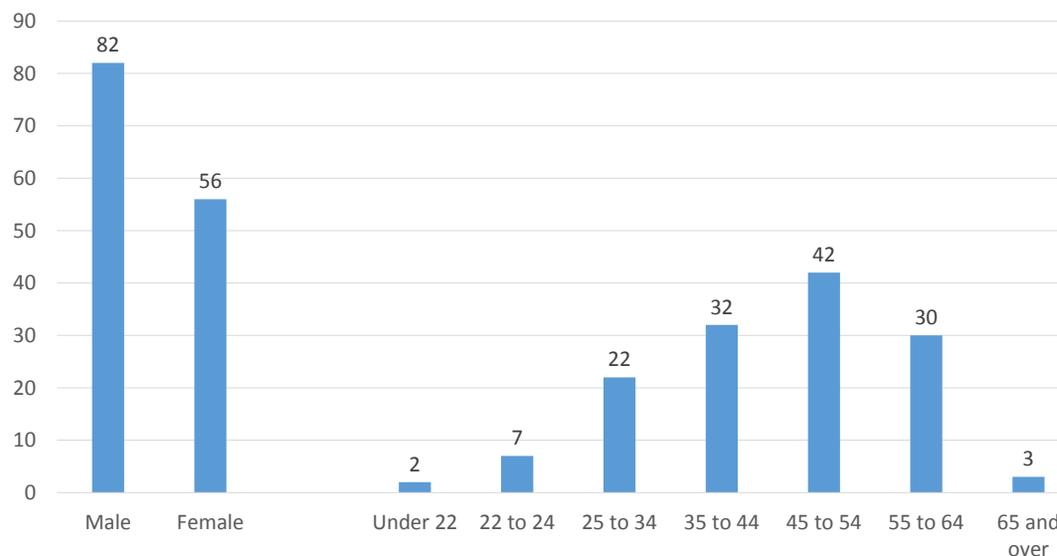
Unemployed Claimants Selected Characteristics-Education

Bar chart values: 8th Grade or Less 2, Some High School 10, High School Grad/GED 64, Some College/2Yr Degree 29, Bachelor's Degree 14, Some Graduate School 1, Post Graduate School 0, Unknown 18
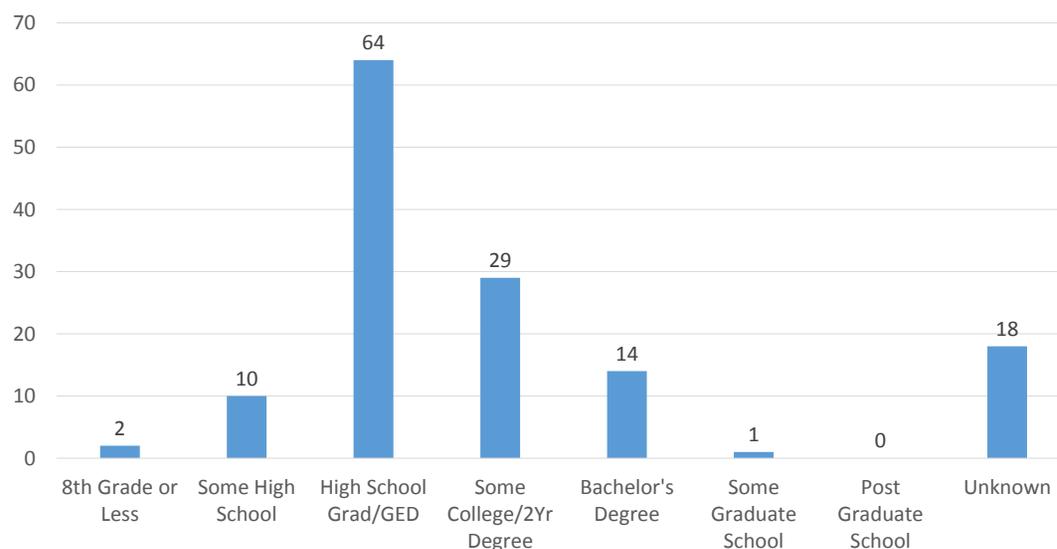
The demographics of Grayson County's claimants for unemployment appear to be fairly typical. Nearly 70 percent are male. The vast majority, 94 percent are white, 4 percent are black and 1 percent are other races. These numbers closely match the overall population demographics. 91 percent are between the ages of 35 and 64. 90 percent have at least a high school degree or GED.

Economy-Citizen Survey Employment

- 29.7 percent of respondents were retired.
- 40.6 percent of respondents were employed full-time, while 7.1 percent were unemployed.
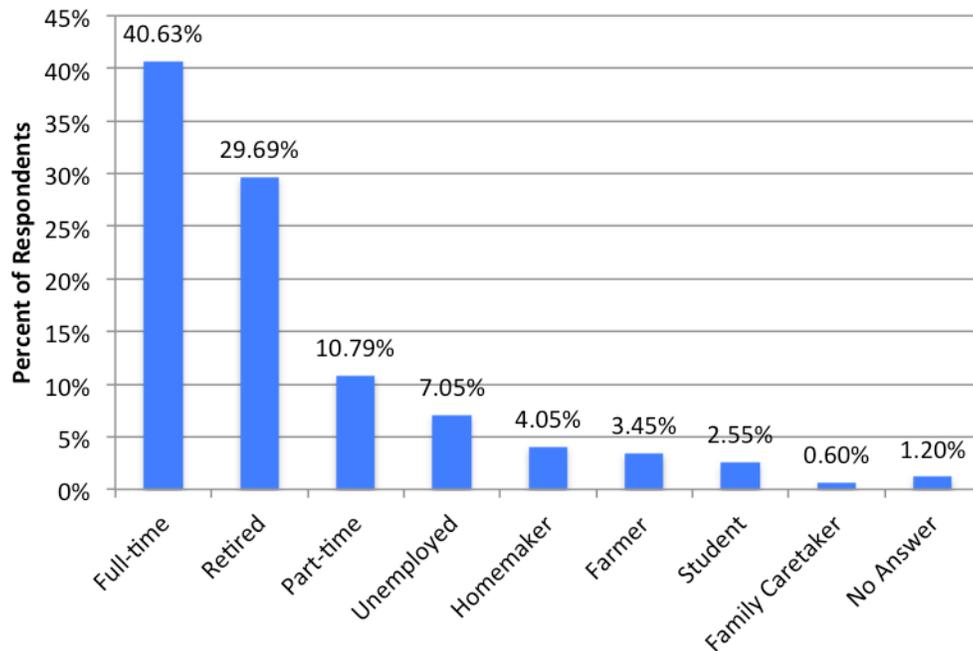
- According to respondents, 54.8 percent of those unemployed said that the lack of job opportunities is the greatest factor for unemployment.
- 19.4 percent of unemployed respondents identified health/disability as the second greatest factor.

Reasons for Unemployment

Economy-Citizen Survey Employment by District and Age
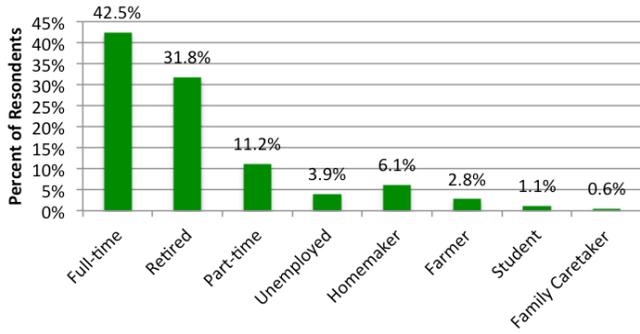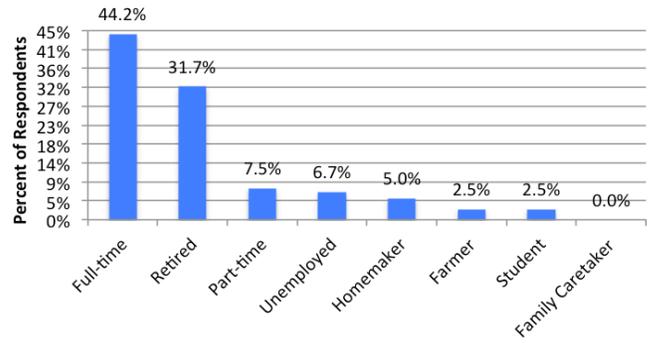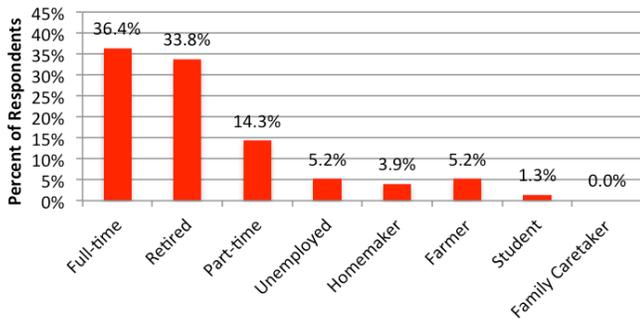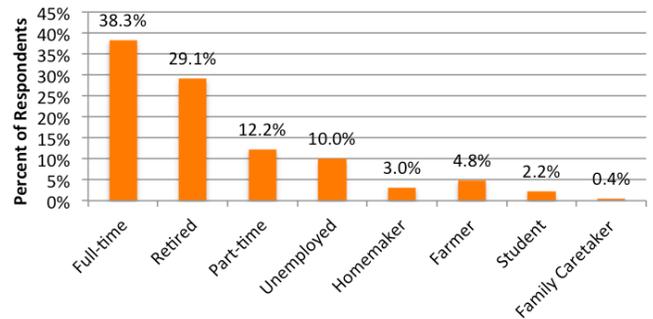
Grayson COUNTY·VA

Employment by District

Elk Creek

- 42.5% Full-time
- 31.8% Retired
- 11.2% Part-time
- 3.9% Unemployed
- 6.1% Homemaker
- 2.8% Farmer
- 1.1% Student
- 0.6% Family Caretaker

Oldtown

- 44.2% Full-time
- 31.7% Retired
- 7.5% Part-time
- 6.7% Unemployed
- 5.0% Homemaker
- 2.5% Farmer
- 2.5% Student
- 0.0% Family Caretaker

Providence

- 36.4% Full-time
- 33.8% Retired
- 14.3% Part-time
- 5.2% Unemployed
- 3.9% Homemaker
- 5.2% Farmer
- 1.3% Student
- 0.0% Family Caretaker

Wilson

- 38.3% Full-time
- 29.1% Retired
- 12.2% Part-time
- 10.0% Unemployed
- 3.0% Homemaker
- 4.8% Farmer
- 2.2% Student
- 0.4% Family Caretaker

Employment by Age

Under 18

- 12%
- 25%
- 63%

18 - 24

- 29%
- 21%
- 18%
- 32%

25 - 44

- 2%
- 1%
- 5%
- 7%
- 10%
- 13%
- 62%

45 - 64

- 3%
- 22%
- 4%
- 8%
- 11%
- 52%

65 or older

- 3%
- 8%
- 8%
- 1%
- 2%
- 78%
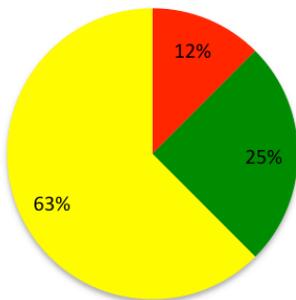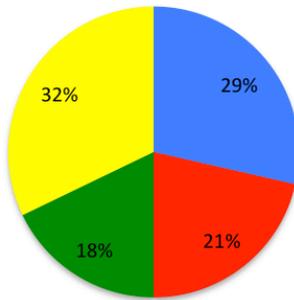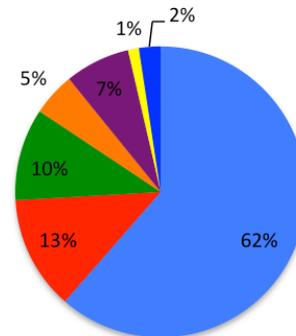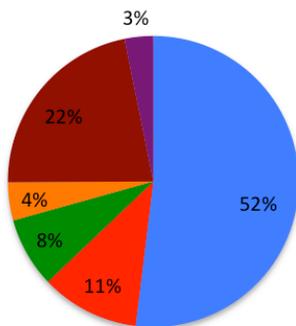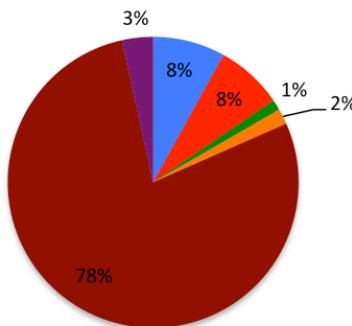
Legend:
- Full-time
- Part-time
- Unemployed
- Farmer
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Student
- Family Caretaker

Labor Force & 10 Year Unemployment Rates

Labor Force 2012				
Area Name	**Civilian Labor Force**	**Employment**	**Unemployment**	**Unemployment Rate (%)**
Grayson	6,572	5,966	606	9.2
MRPDC	92,651	85,517	7134	7.85
Source: LAUS Unit and Bureau of Labor Statistics				

MRPDC-Includes the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington and the cities of Galax and Bristol.
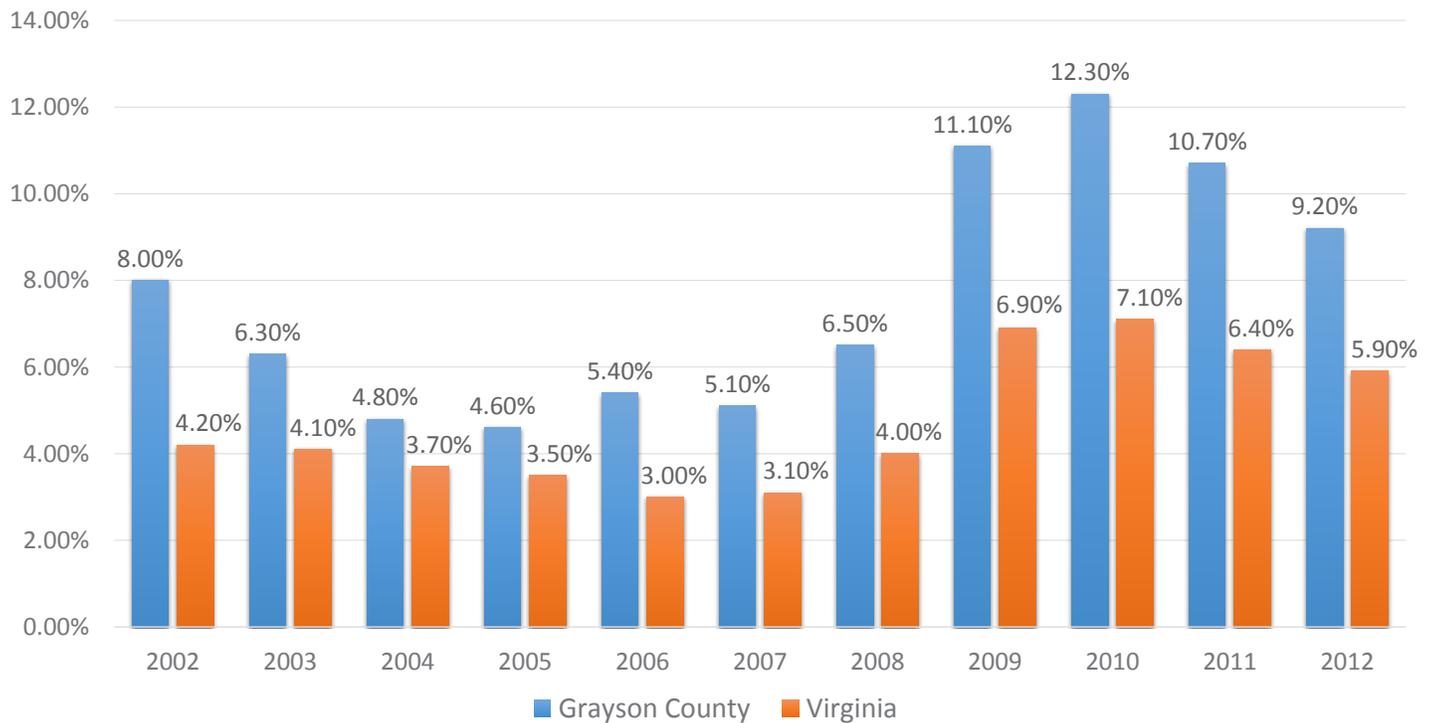
Source: Grayson County Community Profile, 2013-Virginia Employment Commission

The unemployment rate in 2012 for Grayson County was 9.2 percent. Grayson County's average was over 1 percent higher than the MRPDC unemployment rate for 2012.

From 2002 to 2012, the unemployment rate dipped to the lowest mark in 2005, at 4.6 percent. The 2010 mark was the highest the unemployment rate reached from 2002 to 2012, at 12.3 percent. Over the last few years unemployment has been on a steady decline. However, the unemployment rate in Grayson County has remained significantly higher than the state average through this time.

Grayson County & Commuting

Commuting Patterns 2007-2011 Estimates						
Area	Work Inside County Of Residence		Work Outside County of residence		Work Outside State of Residence	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Grayson	2,539	38.8%	3,075	47.0%	929	14.2%
U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates						

Top 10 Places Residents are Commuting To	
Galax City, VA	1,195
Carroll County, VA	418
Wythe County, VA	385
Smyth County, VA	317
Alleghany County, NC	203
Ashe County, NC	199
Washington County, VA	155
Pulaski County, VA	153
Montgomery County, VA	137
Surry County, NC	121

Top 10 Places Workers are Commuting From	
Carroll County, VA	214
Galax City, VA	128
Wythe County, VA	119
Alleghany County, NC	75
Smyth County, VA	61
Ashe County, NC	51
Bland County, VA	30
Washington County, VA	26
Pulaski County, VA	21
Floyd County, VA	21

Source: Grayson County Community Profile, 2013-Virginia Employment Commission

Top Five Places Residents are Commuting To and From
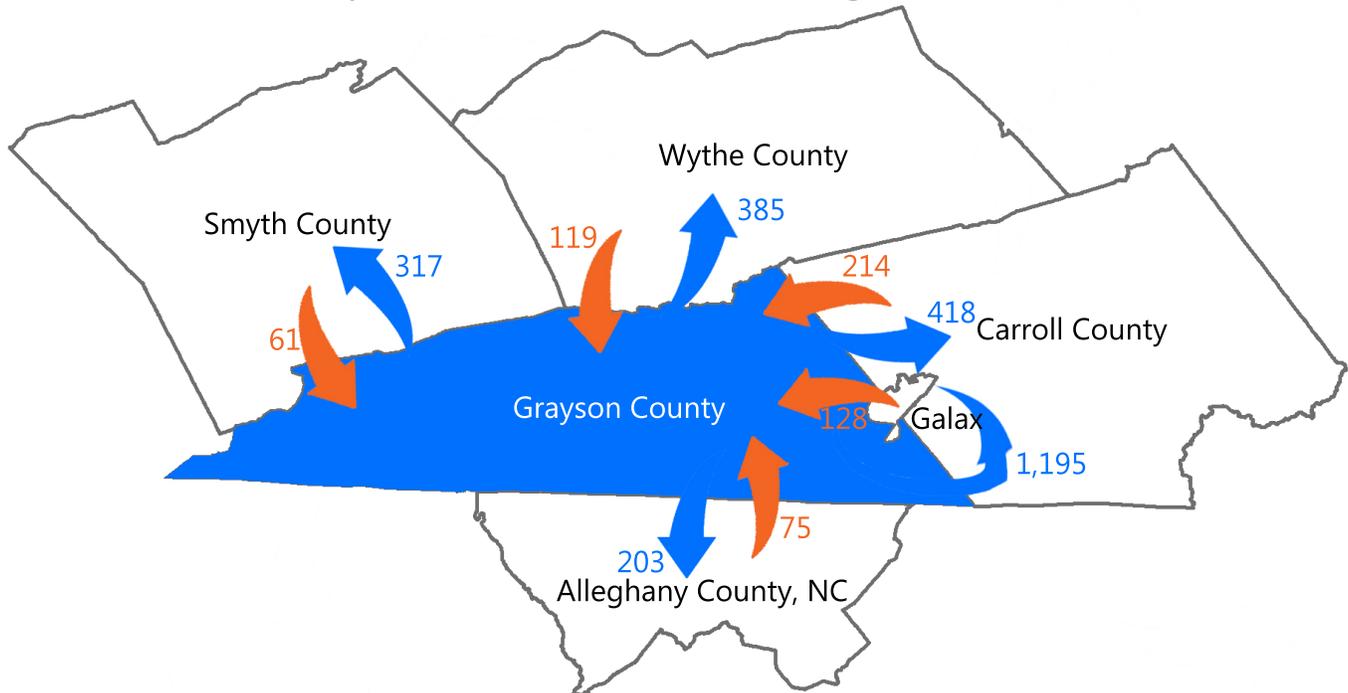
By far, more of Grayson County workers are commuting into Galax City than any other locality with 1,195 residents. Carroll County has the most workers commuting into Grayson County with 214. There are 2,520 workers commuting from Grayson County to the City of Galax and the counties of Carroll, Wythe, Smyth, and Alleghany. There are a total of 597 workers commuting from the City of Galax and the counties of Carroll, Wythe, Alleghany, and Smyth. 38.8 percent of Grayson County residents work inside of the county, 47.0 percent of residents work outside of the county, and 14.2 percent of residents work outside of the state. This data shows the lack of industry in Grayson County and the need for Grayson County residents to commute outside of their county for work.

Economy-Citizen Survey Distance to Employment or School

Where Respondents Travel to for Employment or School by District

Persons (y-axis, 0 to 50)

Legend:
- Don't know
- Elk Creek
- Oldtown
- Providence
- Wilson

Where Respondents Travel to (x-axis): Grayson County, Town of Fries, Town of Independence, City of Galax, Carroll County, Smyth County, Wythe County, Other

- 18.4 percent of employed or student respondents (184 persons) travel within Grayson County for work or school.
- 22.5 percent of employed or student respondents travel outside the immediate region for work or school.
- Of the respondents who listed "other" as a place for work or school, a majority travel to North Carolina.

District	Average Miles to Work or School
Elk Creek	33.60 mi
Oldtown	41.80 mi
Providence	25.40 mi
Wilson	45.90 mi
Don't Know	48.70 mi
County Average	39.08 mi

- The City of Galax is the primary place of work or school outside of Grayson County for respondents, with 9.8 percent of total respondents traveling to the city.
- Respondents in the Wilson district travel the farthest for work and school at an average of 45.9 miles one way, while respondents in the Providence district travel the shortest distance at an average of 25.4 miles one way.
- When asked, 48.8 percent of respondents are not interested in a rideshare program that could reduce travel costs.

Economic Development Organizations & Allies (Page 1)

The **Mount Rogers Planning District Commission** and its 38-member Board of Directors, since the founding of planning district commissions in 1969, has been a catalyst for building regional partnerships among the eight governmental jurisdictions plus towns in the district. As an intermediary and liaison to Federal Agencies such as the Economic Development Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, and United States Department of Agriculture, the MRPDC has been successful in securing hundreds of millions of dollars in public investment via grants for economic development infrastructure, operation and equipment, facilities, etc., creating thousands of jobs and stimulating private and local investment. The MRPDC's Loan Funds Programs have provided over $6.5 million in low interest financing for 68 manufacturing and service oriented startups and expansions to assist in the creation of 708 new jobs and the retention of 1,161 existing jobs. For more information visit: http://www.mrpdc.org/

The **Virginia's aCorridor/Mount Rogers Development Partnership** and its Board of Directors has been a central resource for recruitment efforts in attracting new and expanding industries to the region. Serving the six counties and two cities, the economic organization has provided the link to the state's Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the marketing representatives and broad array of services available to local areas for economic development. For more information visit: http://www.acorridor.com/

The **Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority** (BRCEDA) and the Small Business Development Center – Formed in 2004, after the Virginia Assembly designated Carroll and Grayson Counties and the City of Galax as "Virginia's Entrepreneurial Region", BRCEDA became an important catalyst for small business growth in the region. BRCEDA has received many awards since its inception in 2004 and is recognized as one of the best industrial development authorities in Virginia. For more information visit: http://www.brceda.org/

The **Grayson County Industrial Authority (IDA)** is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia that was created pursuant to the Industrial Development and Revenue Bond Act of 1950. The IDA is comprised of a 7 member Board who are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The IDA is principally charged with facilitating the creation, attraction, retention, expansion and support of business and industry. The County further utilizes the Authority for bond financing for educational facilities and various community and economic development projects. The IDA also responsible for managing the County's two revolving loan programs that are designed to support both industry and small business.

The **Virginia Economic Development Partnership** is dedicated to increasing international trade and business for Virginia businesses. The VEDP identifies potential new markets and market entry strategies for new businesses in Virginia that will lead to more international trade. VEDP has assisted more than 500 companies by expanding their global sales. For more information visit: http://exportvirginia.org/

The three **Small Business Development Centers**, located at Virginia Highlands Community College, Wytheville Community College, and the Crossroads Institute in Galax, serve in an advisory and technical resource capacity to assist new and expanding businesses and entrepreneurs with business plans, financial analysis, and training in operating business. http://www.vhcc.edu/sbdc, http://www.wcc.vccs.edu/, http://crossroadsva.org/ci/

Virginia's Department of Business Assistance through its regional office in Abingdon provides a broad array of services and state assistance to existing business in the region. Plus, the Industrial Training Division provides

Economic Development Organizations & Allies (Page 2)

on-site training services to new and expanding manufacturers. The regional Virginia Employment Commission offices and the Vocational Technical Skill Centers in each locality have played a vital role in the supply of skilled and trained labor. For more information visit: http://vdba.virginia.gov/contactus.shtml

The **District Three Governmental Cooperative** provides vital services for improving the quality of life across the region and vital transportation services. For more information visit: http://www.district-three.org/

The **Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program** provides vital educational resources the adult population, age 18 and older, to address adult illiteracy and low educational attainment and foster a more educated workforce. For more information visit: http://mrraep.com/

People Inc., a regional non-profit service provider, provides micro-business assistance to small entrepreneurs and start-up businesses via its Business Start Program. Additionally, the organization provides extensive community development assistance to localities and citizens. Based out of Abingdon, People, Inc. assist low-income people in all aspects of improving their lives, including using innovative programs to develop skills and organize resources to prepare people to improve their career outlooks. Workforce development is targeted towards the youth, adults and dislocated workers.   For more information visit: http://www.peopleinc.net/

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board is supported by federal and state funds and works with local service agencies in order help train and find people jobs. The NRMRWIB serves the people of Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Montgomery, Pulaski, Smyth, Wythe, and Washington Counties and the Cities of Bristol, Galax, and Radford. For more information visit: http://www.nrmrwib.org/

The **Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services** works with individuals with disabilities and businesses to ensure their abilities in the workforce are maximized. For more information visit: http://www.vadrs.org/

The **Virginia Employment Commission** works to help businesses find the workers and skillsets they need, as well as building the skillsets and knowledge job seekers will need in the local job market. For more information visit: http://www.vec.virginia.gov/

The **Wytheville Community College** prepares students to enter the workforce by offering a variety of technical and vocational training opportunities. Beyond the Wytheville Campus, classes are offered at the Crossroads Institute in Galax and the Smyth County Education Center in Marion. For more information visit: http://www.wcc.vccs.edu/

Other educational institutions in the greater region that are important to workforce development in Grayson County include: Virginia Tech, Radford University, Virginia Intermont College, Emory and Henry College, VA College of Osteopathic Medicine, Washington County Adult Skill Center, New River Community College, and Virginia Highlands Community College.

The **Goodwill Work and Training Services** assist in work and training youth, adults, and older workers to overcome employment problems like disabilities, economic disadvantages, and job loss due to company closing or layoff. Offices are located throughout Virginia, but the closest offices to Grayson County are the Galax Workforce Center and the Wytheville Workforce Center. For more information visit: http://www.goodwill.org/goodwill-for-you/jobs-and-careers/

Industrial/Business Opportunities

Industrial/Business sites are available at three public sponsored industrial parks: the Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park; the Grayson County Industrial Park; and the Wildwood Commerce Park. Private sites are available across the county such as the Fries Mill Site. One strategy to consider is to inventory available public and private sites, ensure adequate infrastructure is available when possible, and to increase the marketing of these sites to encourage private investment/employment opportunities throughout the community. Businesses or individuals interested in business or industrial sites may contact Grayson County Administrator for more information.

Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park

Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park is located on the jurisdictional boundary of Grayson County and Galax. This Commerce Park has resulted from a partnership of Grayson County and Galax with the assistance of Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority (BRCEDA).

The site sits strategically located next to Highway 58, a prominent four lane east/west corridor connecting the communities of Grayson County and Galax. Public water, sewer, high speed internet, and a developed entrance make this site suitable for a large variety of uses. The 30 acre site is mostly level with rolling hills and compatible with zoning district designations for business or commercial use.

Grayson County Industrial Park

Grayson County Industrial Park is located at the corner of Industrial Ln. and the Grayson Pkwy. in Independence. It is a total of 44 acres with 80 percent cleared and ready for development. There are currently three available parcels suitable for buildings ranging from 15,000 square feet to 45,000 square feet. Other additional land is available that can accommodates buildings from 40,000 square feet to 60,000 square feet. The industrial park is located just off U.S. Route 58 and within 23 miles of I-77. The closest general aviation airport is the Twin County Airport and within 25 miles. The closest commercial airport is the Piedmont Triad International Airport and is within 90 miles. The Town of Independence provides water and sewer, American Electric Power provides electric power, and CenturyLink provides telecommunications.

http://virginiascan.yesvirginia.org/site_selection/PropertySearch.aspx?id=1

Wildwood Commerce Park

Wildwood Commerce Park is at Exit 19 off of I-77, just north of the City of Galax in Carroll County. The Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority purchased the property in 2011 for Carroll and Grayson Counties and the City of Galax for development as an industrial park. Wildwood is one of seven "megasites" in Southwest Virginia. 115 of the 270 acres is currently graded. Sites 2, 3 and 4 have completed due dilgence studies and are ready for development. Site 1 is waiting permitting for development. The site was selected in part because of its close proximatey to I-77 and I-81.

Completion of all utilities including water, wastewater, and fiber communications is slated for mid-2014. Carroll County is extending natural gas service to Wildwood from the tapping station. Appalachian Electric Power will be providing a 34.5kV alternate feed circuit during 2013 and 2014.

Desired potential business and industrial sectors include agricultural & food products processing, information technology & professional services, advanced wood & fabric products manufacturing, components manufacturing (automotive, aerospace, medical, communications), and distribution & logistics.

For more information visit: http://www.brceda.org/wildwood-commerce-park-2/

Image: http://www.daa.com/img/wildwood3.jpg
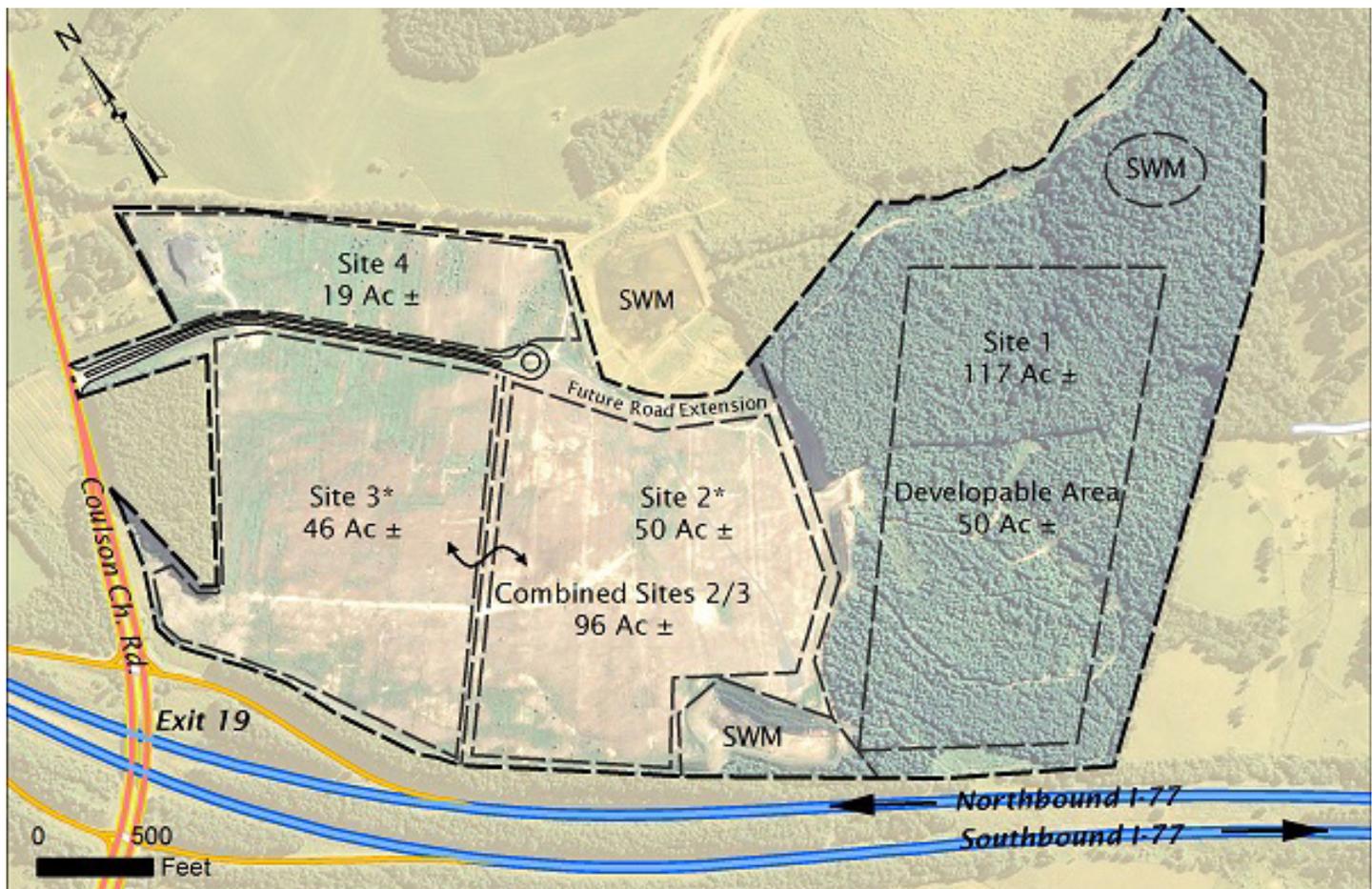
River North Correctional Center

- The opening of River North Correctional Center in Independence in October of 2013 is a great economic benefit to the county. River North is expected to bring 300 to 350 new jobs, not just in the prison but ancillary jobs as well.

- Will offer ABE, GED, and five vocational classes

- Four Central Housing buildings - each containing 256 cells on two levels.

- Support Building - containing 20 segregation cells, intake, food service, laundry, vocational technology, and visiting

- Industries Building - 30,000 square feet

- Buildings Outside the Secure Perimiter - Administration, Maintenance/Warehouse building, Hazardous Material Storage

Source: Staff Reports-Galax Gazette, February 27, 2013

Photo: http://www.moseleyarchitects.com/correctiondetention-projects/state-detention/river-north-correctional-center/

Economy-Citizen Survey Desired Businesses

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of businesses most needed in their community:

Businesses Needed

- Respondents selected grocery store and general goods as the most needed business types in their communities.
- Appliance/home repair, entertainment/hobby, and clothing store were also selected as needed businesses.
- Property maintenance was selected by the fewest number of respondents.
- Respondents who selected 'other' as an option listed a variety of needed businesses, including several responses related to convenience (gas stations, restaurants, etc.)
- Businesses that would bring jobs was also a common theme among 'other' as a response.

Economy-Youth Survey Desired Businesses

Respondents were asked to choose the type of business most needed in their community:

Retail Businesses Needed

- Respondents selected entertainment/hobby as the most needed business type in their communities.
- Clothing store and general products stores were selected as needed businesses.
- Pharmacy was selected by the fewest number of respondents.
- Respondents who selected 'other' as an option provided the following responses: sports store, arcade, decent restaurants, and all of it.

Respondents were asked to identify the types of retail goods typically purchased outside of Grayson County:

Goods Purchased Outside of Grayson County

- Clothing and entertainment were the two types of retail goods purchased outside of Grayson County by the most respondents.
- The following types of goods were listed by respondents who selected 'other' as an option, athletic equipment/apparel, sports equipment, nicer resturants, firearms, fuel and feed, ATV's, guns, vehicles, everything except things you can buy at Wal-mart, and all of the above.

Economy-Citizen Survey Desired Businesses by District

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of businesses most needed in their community:

Elk Creek

Category	Percent
General goods	13.8%
Entertainment / hobby	13.4%
Appliance / home repair	13.2%
Clothing store	13.2%
Grocery store	12.2%
Healthcare	9.9%
Auto repair	6.9%
Child care	5.7%
Property maintenance	4.8%
Other	4.6%
Pharmacy	2.3%

Oldtown

Category	Percent
General goods	16.4%
Entertainment / hobby	13.8%
Grocery store	12.1%
Clothing store	11.4%
Appliance / home repair	10.4%
Child care	9.1%
Healthcare	7.0%
Auto repair	6.4%
Pharmacy	5.7%
Property maintenance	3.7%
Other	4.0%

Providence

Category	Percent
Grocery store	16.8%
General goods	14.2%
Clothing store	10.3%
Entertainment / hobby	9.5%
Pharmacy	8.6%
Appliance / home repair	8.6%
Child care	8.6%
Healthcare	7.8%
Other	6.9%
Property maintenance	5.6%
Auto repair	3.0%

Wilson

Category	Percent
Grocery store	16.9%
General goods	15.0%
Appliance / home repair	11.0%
Child care	9.6%
Healthcare	8.1%
Pharmacy	8.1%
Auto repair	8.0%
Entertainment / hobby	7.6%
Clothing store	7.3%
Other	4.5%
Property maintenance	3.8%

- Respondents in Elk Creek selected general goods, entertainment/hobby, appliance/home repair, and clothing stores as the primary businesses needed in the community.
- Respondents in Oldtown selected general goods as the most needed business type in the community, followed by entertainment/hobby and grocery store.
- Respondents in Providence selected grocery store as the most needed business type in the community, followed by general goods and clothing store.
- Respondents in Wilson selected grocery store as the most needed business type in the community, followed by general goods and appliance/home repair.

Asset-Based Economic Development

Asset based economic development embraces the local cultural and natural assets of a community and strategically markets these assets. A cooperative effort amongst regional localities to find common assets and a common 'brand' is often taken in asset based development practices. Important assets of Grayson County include cultural staples like traditional music and other assets tied to traditional music like the Crooked Road, the Blue Ridge Music Center, local theaters, and jams/conventions/festivals. Other cultural icons include historical buildings and sites. An example is the 1908 Courthouse and other local museums. Natural assets, such as Grayson Highlands State Park, mountain peaks, trails, parkways and of course the New River are extremely important assets to Grayson County's economy. A more comprehensive list of assets are included in the Tourism Chapter (Chapter 10) and can be further explored by referencing that part of the Grayson County Comprehensive Plan.

It is important for Grayson County to embrace these assets and find ways to create economic hubs that situate themselves near or at these cultural and natural sites.
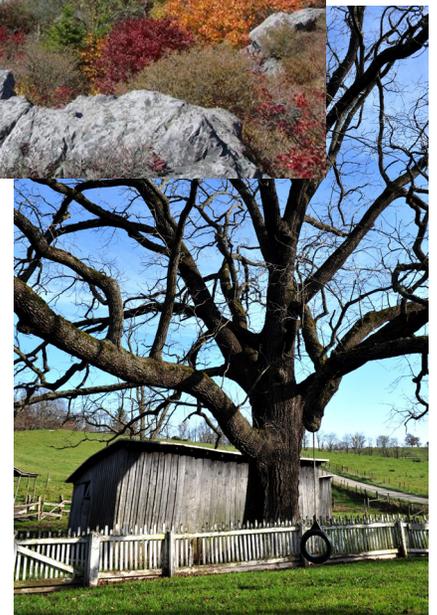
Grayson County Economic Development Strategies

Grayson County's Economic Development Strategy is primarily focused on three key areas:

1. Existing Industry Retention and Expansion

2. Small Business and Entrepreneurial Creation and Support

3. A regional approach to Next-level Economic/Industrial Development and Recruitment (product development, marketing, project management and recruitment).

The Grayson County Industrial Development Authority (IDA), in concert with the Chief Economic Development Officer, utilizes all available federal, state and local resources to assist existing industries through our EIAP (Existing Industry Advancement Program), to stabilize their operation, retain and create jobs, physically expand operations, engage in capital investments and pragmatically support the company's various traditional and non-traditional needs.

The County's small business and entrepreneurial support and programing is primarily driven through the County's regional partnership in the Blue Ridge Crossroads Small Business Development Center that is operated out of the Crossroad's Institute. This center offers an array of advisory and technical resources to assist new and expanding businesses or entrepreneurs with business planning, financial analysis and specialized training with operating a business. The IDA also provides assistance to small businesses through a partnership with People Inc., by co-underwriting a micro-loan program designed exclusively to support the capital needs of Grayson County's small businesses.

Lastly, the County's third primary focus is in developing a next-level industrial product that can be used to compete for and recruit next-level prospects to our region. This focus is accomplished through a regional partnership known as a Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and doing business as the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority (BRCEDA). This Authority is comprised of Grayson and Carroll Counties and the City of Galax and is consummated through a Participation Resolution. The Authority's two primary investments are known as the Wildwood Commerce Park and the Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park. The County owns one-third of the Wildwood Commerce Park property, and beyond the benefit of job creation, its ownership would yield one-third of the dividend on any and all revenues generated by applicable taxes associated with the locating of a business or industry. The County also owns half of the marketable property known as the Blue Ridge Commerce Park and is subject to fifty percent of the revenues generated as a result of any and all applicable taxes associated with the locating of a business or industry. In addition to the development, management and marketing of these properties by BRCEDA and the County remains engaged in advancing the workforce development needs of the region.

Economic gardening or growth company development has recently emerged as another potential tool for local economic development. This approach uses specific programs, custom tailored to bolster existing industry programs and services.

Summary

The economic data shows us that per capita income is lower than the state average. While the cost of living is lower in Grayson County (Population & Housing Chapter) the data on poverty rates and social service recipients indicate that Grayson County has significant issues relating to income generation. Providing employment for young adults is essential to keeping young adults and families in our community. Understanding unemployment/underemployment and the negative multiplier effect of unemployment on crime, substance abuse, costs for public services and other issues is equally important. The citizen survey indicated that the lack of employment opportunities is the leading cause of unemployment in Grayson County. Ensuring that the workforce aligns with current and future employment and increasing local opportunities for employment through business and industry recruitment/development are primary goals of this plan.

Over the last 30 years, the county has experienced a shift in economic trends as local textile industries and other industries relocated and/or downsized. This trend is not unique to Grayson County and reflects the national trend of globalization resulting from free trade policies, as well as overseas production of textile, furniture and other commodities. The county has retained notable employers in the advanced fabrics and sports fitness industries such as Darco Southern, McAllister Mills, Tritex and Medfit/Nautilus. While industrial development remains a primary focus, the lack of water/sewer and fiber infrastructure available outside of major corridors and towns, combined with unmet transportation needs of large industry, may limit the development of additional manufacturing/industry in these underutilized areas. A review of necessary infrastructure at these sites and an aggressive marketing campaign for established public industrial areas and private sites could be strategies for increasing employment opportunities.

The work on this chapter revealed the deficiencies in available data relating to the real economic impact and future economic potential of sectors such as agricultural/forestry production and agri-businesses, home based and self employed individuals, economic generation by second home community and retired, small businesses not captured by VEC data, and other economic drivers. This indicates the need for further study of these economic drivers and explore possibilities for endeavors linked to these sectors. The "Creative Economy" model which focuses on utilizing a community's natural and cultural assets to create unique economic opportunities should be explored. Tourism and other asset based economic development remains a high priority in this plan.

The long distances traveled for employment outside of Grayson County conveys the economic and social impact of non-localized employment and further prioritizes strategies in generating local employment. Creative ways to establish the needed businesses and services (as shown in the public surveys conveyed in this chapter) could result in more employment, while providing products and services closer to Grayson County residences.

Small business development and expansion has been identified nationally as the leading cause of employment. Understanding and assisting existing and future small businesses with a skills gap analysis study, as well as appropriate actions to fill unmet needs, is critical to expansion of the small business sector.

Workforce training and education should align with local economic trends. Utilizing existing workforce development partnerships/educational institutions can assist in developing a working plan to ensure that our citizens will be more prepared for local employment and/or generate more businesses.

Quality of life is highly dependent on employment. According to the citizen survey, adults and youth are interested in employment in the agricultural/forestry sector. Further study and support of opportunities to generate income and provide employment in these sectors is encouraged.

In summary, Grayson County has strengths in the availability of workforce, established industrial parks/areas, identified business generation needs for areas of the county, existing partnerships/support for business, natural and cultural assets available for a creative economy, tourism and agricultural/forestry potential. Challenges include lack of employment options, providing employment closer to home, infrastructure challenges for industry, lack of county staff dedicated to business development/marketing, lack of information about non-traditional economic sectors and challenges to breaking the cycle of poverty. Future strategies will focus on improving on the strengths of the county and tackling these challenges as identified.

Chapter 6
Agriculture & Forestry

Introduction

The rolling farmland and the forested ridges of Grayson County reflect the importance of agriculture and forestry to the community. In 2012 the USDA conducted the most recent agricultural census, it was not available in time for this comprehensive plan. Upon release it will be available at: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Virginia/index.asp. Local data on agriculture and forestry was provided by the Grayson County Extension Service, The Local Food Initiative and The Virginia Department of Forestry. The Planning Commission is grateful to Kevin Spurlin- County Extension Agent, Rick Cavey- Local Food Initiative and Donnie Garmin- VDOF for the input and data provided for this chapter.

As of 2013, farmland accounted for just under 50 percent of total land in Grayson County or 136,752 acres.

Below is a breakdown of 4 soil classifications that are most suitable for agriculture in Grayson County. The first two soil classifications with slopes of less than 15 percent are best suited for residential, commercial and industrial development. These prime soil types are in demand and are limited in number. Competition from residential and commercial uses force less productive land to be used for farming and forestry. A significant amount of forestry, Christmas tree farming, and livestock grazing occurs on land that is severely limited for agricultural production and most other uses, and is not represented in 4 classifications below.

- 4.6 percent of Grayson County is listed as prime farmland. Prime farmland is identified as having up to 8 different soil types; all are loam soils that are deep and well drained with less than a 7 percent slope.

- 14.5 percent of Grayson County soils are considered suitable for cultivation of field crops with very severe limitations with slopes between 7 and 15 percent. Agricultural lands with these characteristics have restrictions with what can be grown or require special management practices to farm.

- 13 percent of Grayson County soils are suitable for cultivation of field crops with very severe limitations with slopes of 15 to 25 percent and slopes with less than 15 percent slope with stony structure. Agricultural lands with these characteristics have restrictions with what can be grown and require very careful management.

- 14 percent of Grayson County soils are generally unsuitable for crop production. These agricultural lands can be used for pasture and timber production. These agricultural lands typically have between 25 and 35 percent slopes, extremely stony and can be prone to flooding in the drainage areas.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Farm Demographics

Farm Demographics-2002 & 2007		
	2007	2002
Number of farms	852	939
Acres	136,752	150,609
Average operator age	57.5	56
Operators - 65+ years old	31%	28%
Operators – 45-65 years old	53%	50%
Operators – 35-45 years old	9%	15%
Operators - <35 years old	7%	7%
Average years operating the farm	22.5	21.7
% Operators 10+ years on farm	76%	79%
% Operators <5 years on farm	9%	7%
Principal Operators - Male	768 (90%)	859 (91%)
Principal Operators - Female	84 (10%)	80 (9%)

- Grayson County follows the national trend of an ever-aging farm population.
- Long established farms continue to dominate the local farm population; however, between 2002 and 2007, the number of start-up farms (tenure <5 years) increased.

Race/Ethnicity of Farm Owners/Operators		
	Principal Operators	**Operators**
Total Number of Farm Operators	852	1255
Male	768	960
Female	84	295
Black/African American	2	2
Hispanic/Latino	6	12
White	844	1225
More than 1 race	6	12

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Farm and Farm Operator Characteristics

Farm Operator Characteristics		
	2007	2002
Number of farms	852	939
Primary Operator Characteristics:		
Primary occupation – farming	40%	52%
Primary occupation – non-farm	60%	48%
Percent of primary operators:		
0 days worked off farm	30%	38%
1-49 days worked off farm	13%	6%
50-99 days worked off farm	8%	3%
100-199 days worked off farm	7%	7%
200+ days worked off farm	42%	46%
Operator resides on the farm	82%	84%

Farm Characteristics		
	2007	2002
Acres	136,752	150,609
Rental acres	46,416	46,376
% land in farms	47.40%	52.20%
Private woodlands	41,717	46,545
Percent of all farms based on farm size		
1-9 acres	7.60%	5.60%
10-50 acres	29.90%	30.40%
50-100 acres	21.70%	23.40%
100-140 acres	9.70%	9.70%
140-180 acres	6.80%	6.90%
180-220 acres	3.40%	4.50%
220-260 acres	2.30%	3.30%
260-500 acres	10.90%	9.80%
>500 acres	7.50%	6.40%

- Between 2002 and 2007, the smallest and largest farms increased in number, while all other categories realized declines. Large farms tend to expand to capture economies of scale. Expansion in number of small farms may represent more start-up farms on smaller land parcels combined with the division of mid-size farms into smaller tracts.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Farm Business Profile

Farm Business Structure	
	Principal Operators
File farm tax as individual/married	93%
File farm tax as partnership/corporation	7%
Percent of farms with high speed internet	21.60%

Farm Business Profile			
Classification	**Annual Gross Sales**	**Operator household income**	**% of total farms**
Small Family Farm:			
Limited Resource	<$100,000	<$20,000	17.40%
Farmer –Lower Sales		>$20,000	10.00%
Farmer – Higher Sales	$100,000-$250,000	Any	2.00%
Retirement	<$250,000	"Retired"	28.90%
Residential/lifestyle		"Non-farm"	39.30%
Other Farms:			
Large family farms	$250,000-$500,000		0.50%
Very large family farms	$500,000+	Not reported	0.80%
Non family farms	Not reported		0.90%

Farm Employment

- 199 farms (23.3%) reported payroll of $2,267,000, not counting owner/operator draws. Those farms reportedly hired 759 workers.

- 81% of those farms hired <5 workers.

- 10 of 199 (5%) hired almost 32% of the workers

- 75% of the farms hired only seasonal or part-time employees working <150 days. 14% farms had long-term employees >150 days, and 11% employed both season and full-time employees.

- 30 farms hired migrant workers, with 9 farms reporting contracting migrant labor

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Farm Economics

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

- Gross value of product sold - $23,389,000

- Net cash farm income - $2,790,000

- Number of farms reporting net gains – 350 (41% of all farms)
    -Average net gain per farm - $25,761

- Number of farms reporting net loss – 502 (59% of all farms)
    -Average net loss per farm - $12,404

Farm Expenses from Highest to Lowest		
Itemized Production Expense	Value	% of farms incurring this expense
Livestock feed	$3,944,000	65.60%
Labor (hired & contract)	$2,821,000	23.40%
Value of livestock purchased	$2,622,000	25.20%
Supplies, repairs, maintenance	$2,605,000	92.20%
Fuel, oil, lubricants	$1,622,000	96.50%
Animal health, vet, marketing, insurance	$1,608,000	51.60%
Fertilizer	$1,561,000	61.60%
Real estate tax	$1,460,000	100.00%
Land rent	$1,394,000	30.30%
Interest	$1,313,000	24.90%
Seeds, plants, trees	$489,000	21.10%
Custom work	$347,000	10.30%
Chemicals	$316,000	32.50%
Utilities	$271,000	31.30%
Equipment lease	$19,000	2.10%
Total Expenses	**$22,394,000**	
Capital depreciation	$3,386,000	44.50%

- Depreciation is a capital expense and thus not counted as a cash production expense. Many farm profit and loss statements show a net loss when depreciation is accounted for, though cash balances may be favorable.

- The most common expense categories across farms are property taxes, petroleum-based fuel, oil and lubricants, farm supplies, repairs and maintenance, livestock feed, and fertilizer.

Beef & Dairy Farms

Beef and Dairy Farms		
	2007	2002
Farms with cattle	506	559
Beef farms	496	546
Dairy farms	10	13
Farms with cattle (% of all farms)	59%	60%
Number of cattle	31,044	34,016

Cattle farm sizes
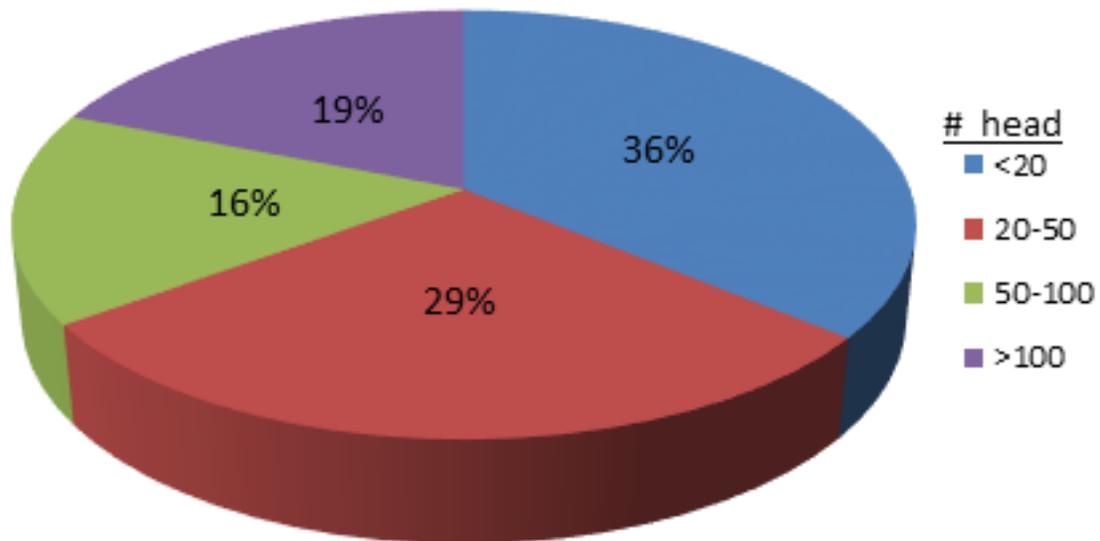
19%
36%
16%
29%

head
■ <20
■ 20-50
■ 50-100
■ >100

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Beef & Dairy Highlights

Beef Highlights

- Grayson's beef industry is one of its largest sectors based on revenue, acreage involved, and number of farms.
- Grayson does not have a traditional livestock market in the county. Most cattle are sold from the field direct to buyers while others are sold through state graded auctions or direct to slaughter. Recent years have seen an increase in multi-farm calf marketing pools of weaned calves with process verified health programs.
- Most beef operations are commercial cow/calf, meaning the farm owns cows to produce calves for sale. Historically, calves were born in February and March and sold in October. Recently, the trend has been for calves to be born in September and October and sold the next summer or fall.
- Stocker operations, while few in number, tend to handle substantial quantities of young beef animals. They purchase calves from various sources, add weight and value, and resale in hopes of realized gains.
- Several order buyers acquire cattle for landowners and then buy them back at a later date. Some even have arrangements where ownership with the order buyer is shared and payment is based on profit from weight gain during the grazing season. This is a significant revenue stream for absentee or retired landowners trying to cover real estate property taxes.
- Grayson continues to have a few seedstock herds that raise purebred breeding stock such as bulls or replacement females to neighboring herds. These are typically registered Angus breeders.
- 2007 Census Data reports $13 million in value of cows and calves sold. Field estimates accounting for the significant number of cattle marketed through Grayson County at 2013 prices would suggest the industry accounts for $40-$50 million in cattle marketing revenue. Given that many of those dollars stay local, a typical farm multiplier of 3x sales suggests that the true economic impact to the county may approach $120 million.

Dairy Highlights

- Grayson currently has 10 active dairy operations with revenues approximating $5 million and slightly less than 1,000 milking cows.
- The highest production/cow dairy in Virginia for more than 25 years is in Grayson County.
- Grayson County is home to a seasonal, pasture-based dairy that markets 95% of its milk through its own cheese. That cheese is sold in 28 states.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Livestock Diversity in Grayson County

Horses
- 233 farms with 1,348 horses or ponies
- 16% of horses and ponies are not owned, but boarded within Grayson
- Grayson's horse industry revolves around recreational opportunities including rodeos, horse shows, and predominately, the vast amount of trail riding options on both public lands and privately owned horse camps.

Sheep
- 40 farms with 1,005 animals
- Almost 900 lambs are sold for meat and approximately 4,000 lb of wool is sold annually.
- Major income stream from sheep is market lambs sold for meat. Recent trends have seen wool-type meat breeds be replaced somewhat by hair-type sheep breeds for ease of care.
- Wool is a secondary income source. Wool is marketed to Mid-States Wool Growers Cooperative and picked up once annually during the local wool pool in Sparta, NC. Wool prices struggle to cover the shearing and transportation costs to participate in the pool.

Goats
- 59 farms with 690 animals
- 13 farms reported owning milking goats.
- Most goats are meat-type goats sold for human consumption.

Poultry
- 51 farms reported owning poultry including chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, and others
- 48 farms reported owning 855 layers for egg production. There has been over a 225% increase in backyard layer production since 2002.
- 96% of poultry farms have less than 50 birds.
- 10 farms reported owning 174 broilers, or meat-type birds.
- Show chickens, game chickens, and other types of poultry existed on 11 farms.

Others
- Alpacas were reported on 2 farms. They are a significant source of fiber used for yarn.
- Domestic hogs and pigs have largely disappeared from the county. There are less than 100 head in the county.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Major Grayson County Crops

Christmas Trees

- Grayson County's #1 agronomic crop is the Fraser fir Christmas tree.
- Grayson County ranks #1 in Virginia in cut Christmas tree production accounting for over 35% of Virginia's statewide production.
- Approximately 65 farms grow Fraser fir Christmas trees on over 11,000 acres with annual sales of over 1 million trees and gross sales of more than $15 million.
- Grayson in uniquely adapted to Fraser fir production due to the elevation and access to indigenous Fraser fir parent material that grows naturally on Mount Rogers and Whitetop mountains. The county maintains seed production from two seed orchards, one located in Grayson Highlands State Park, and the newest orchard at the Old Flat State Forest. These orchards are managed by the Mount Rogers Christmas Tree Growers Association.
- Primary marketing outlets include wholesale distribution to major box stores, retail sales, Christmas tree lots secured by the growers, and local choose-and-cut farms.
- Christmas trees are typically marketed as cut trees in the 6-8 foot tall range 7 to 10 years after planting in the field. Increasingly, 36-38 "table top" trees are being sold due to a faster economic return since trees are sold younger, and more trees are harvested per acre.
- Alternative marketing includes wreaths, garland, and balled-and-burlap trees sold for landscape plantings. Locally grown white pine tips and boxwood cuttings complement the Fraser fir greenery trade.

Forage Crops

- Excluding pasture, Grayson has 489 farms with over 21,000 acres of hay and haylage production with an annual yield of over 50,000 dry tons of hay equivalent valued at over $3.25 million.
- The significant local cattle, small ruminant, and horse industries are the main users of this resource.
- Corn for silage is raised on roughly 15 farms encompassing about 1,400 acres resulting in about 25,000 tons of dairy and beef cattle forage valued close to $1.25 million.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Secondary Crops of Importance

Burley tobacco was Grayson's top agronomic crop, but it has seen significant declines in the last 20 years. Currently less than 30 farms grow tobacco on less than 100 acres. Tobacco yield is roughly 180,000 lb annually valued at around $300,000.

Vegetables/Floriculture/Greenhouse

- About 10 farms grow primarily cabbage and pumpkins on about 80 acres. Grayson is not noted as a significant vegetable producing county, but acreage has increased slightly in recent years.
- There are about 5 farms with greenhouses for cut flowers or vegetables.

Fruit, Berries and Nuts

- There are about 6 small fruit or berry farms in Grayson.
- Highbush blueberries are the major berry crop, followed by raspberries.
- Berries are sold mostly as "pick your own" or at local farmer's markets and retail outlets.
- Some berries are also made into value added products such as jams and jellies.
- Strawberry plants are grown in Grayson to relocate to Florida. Currently, no strawberries are produced for sale in Grayson County.
- Apple, peach and cherry orchards existed at one time in the county. At this time, there are no commercial orchards, but several private orchards still exist throughout the county.
- Chestnuts, walnuts and hazelnuts can be found in the county, but there are no commercial ventures using any of these nuts.

Grapes and Wineries

- Southwest Virginia has seen an increase in number of commercial wineries. Currently, Grayson has one vineyard and winery.
- Vinifera, or European wine grapes, are imported from outside Southwest Virginia to support many of the regions wineries.
- Table grape varieties such as Concord are commonly found in the county and are used for juice and jellies. Some jelly is sold at local festivals and church fund raisers, but most is for home use.

Source: United State Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Census of Agriculture, 2007 and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Kevin Spurlin

Citizen Survey Supporting the Ag. Economy

Respondents were asked to choose the top three options that would support the agricultural economy the most in Grayson County:

Support the Agricultural Economy

- Respondents selected farm-friendly land use taxes as the option that would most support the agricultural economy in Grayson County.
- Assistance in transitioning farms to younger generations was identified as an important option by respondents.
- Respondents felt that estate planning and reliable farm labor would provide the least amount of support for the agricultural economy.

The Local Food Initiative

Local Food, a growing trend across the country, has recently established itself in Grayson County creating a new and vibrant agricultural interest. Local food or the local food movement is a collaborative effort to build more locally based, self-reliant food economies - one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution, and consumption is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of a particular place. It is part of the concept of local purchasing and local economies; a preference to buy locally produced goods and services rather than those produced by corporatized institutions. In Grayson County, the Local Food movement is organized as a "food hub" structure called the Local Food Initiative by the non-profit community oriented group, Grayson LandCare - viewable on the web at http://www.graysonlandcare.org/AboutGraysonLandCare.php. Acting as fiduciary agent, Grayson LandCare partnered with the Alleghany Agricultural Coalition, a multi-state organization to form the Appalachian Food Hub in order to assess the region's local food system. The geographical area impacted by the study included Grayson and Carroll Counties, and the City of Galax in Virginia and neighboring Alleghany and Ashe Counties in North Carolina. The Appalachian Food Hub, now referred to as The Local Food Initiative in Grayson County, aggregates, markets, stores, sells and processes regional or local foods. Designed and engineered to be a complete "food system", The Local Food Initiative works to connect producers, distributors, retailers, restaurants, institutions and consumers. Additionally, the system extends to include the incorporation of the food production waste stream back into the food production system as compost and other value added products like waste oil. A key feature of The Local Food Initiative is that the consumer and retailers know the farm where the produce or meat is produced, adding a sense of community to all the participants in the food system.
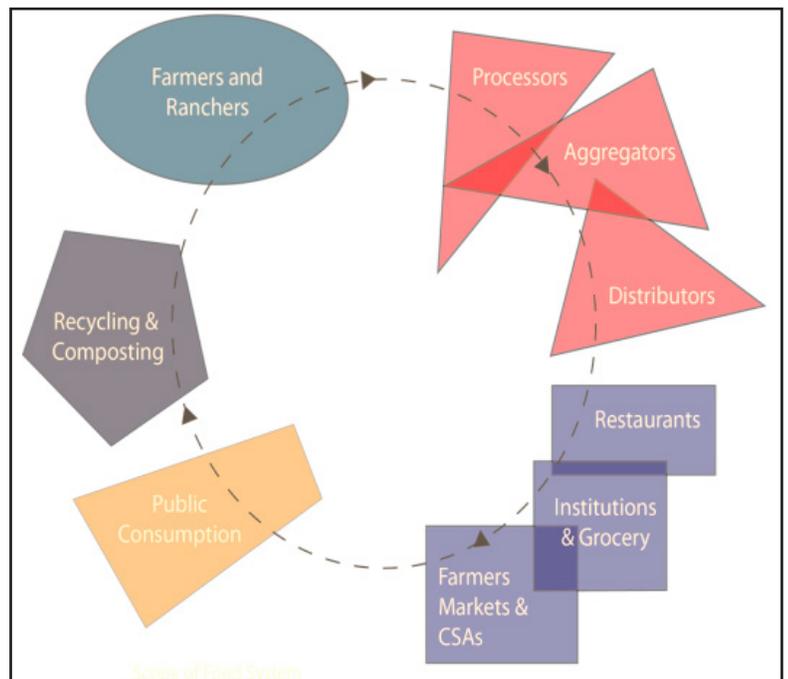
The USDA has designated Grayson County as a "Food Desert". This designation means that a large portion of the population lacks access to affordable fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat milk, and other foods that make up a full and healthy diet. Many of our citizens living in rural, minority, or low-income areas are subjected to food deserts and may be unable to access affordable, healthy foods, leaving their diets lacking essential nutrients.

Our rural and low income population combine to create the perfect conditions of a food deserts because we lack large, retail food markets and have a higher number of convenience stores, where healthy foods are less available. Studies have shown that food deserts can negatively affect health outcomes but more research must be done to show how that influence occurs. There appears to be a link between access to affordable nutritious foods and the eating of these foods, meaning less access may lead to less incorporation of healthy foods into the populations' diets.

The Local Food Initiative

Food deserts can be improved through several different types of efforts. Establishing community gardens, school gardens or gardens in low income areas where participants share in the maintenance and products of the garden and organizing local farmers markets are two efforts that community members themselves can do. Local governments can improve local transportation like buses, bike paths and sidewalks to allow for easier access to established markets. They can also change zoning codes and offer economic or tax incentives to attract retailers with healthier food offerings to the area.

Food deserts are a big problem for many Americans that may limit their ability to eat healthy and nutritious foods on a regular basis. However, there are a variety of ways that local governments and community members can both improve food access in their neighborhoods.

Created in 2012, The Local Food Initiative strives to be at the center of solving the Food Desert problem. Sustainability of Grayson County's Local Food Initiative will entail a three to five year support system, involving community participation, a long term strategic plan, and entrepreneur development to ensure success. This will include collaboration with, model duplication of, and resource sharing with agencies that have successfully created and supported food hub models throughout the country or region.

The Local Food Initiative Operations (formally the Appalachian Food Hub Project)

Developed in 2012 as a local food assessment study, the Appalachian Food Hub Project, viewable on the web at http://appalachianfoodhub.com/Home_Page.php, staff surveyed the region's producers, distributors, retailers and institutions to determine the extent of local food production and use. While data was being collected, obvious trends began to develop and the Project's mission was extended to address some of the immediate needs. What became quickly apparent, and later was validated by the survey responses, was that many local growers who desired to be part of the Local Food movement lacked access to local products, markets, specialized equipment, and affordable supplies. They were unfamiliar with the products in demand and how to raise them in a profitable manner. Conversely, consumers, retailers and restaurants lacked access to local food production through traditional distribution chains and were unaware of the products being grown. Appalachian Food Hub staff took action and implemented a communication and collaboration project that began addressing the gaps in the local food system. Through workshops and luncheons, the Appalachian Food Hub project began introducing producers and consumers. Activities to promote the local farmers markets which included introduction of local food into the distribution chains and aggregation of local food to supply local restaurants, were begun in earnest. Today, many of these programs are thriving and are standout programs throughout the region.

The Independence Farmers Market

The Independence Farmers Market

Established 7 years ago, the Independence Farmers Market, recently developed into a vibrant community asset, has become the cornerstone of the Local Food Initiative. In 2012, vendors at the market formed a small group in order to formalize market operations. With facilitation provide by Grayson County's Tourism Department, the group formed a Board of Directors, By-laws and a marketing strategy. Partnering with Grayson Landcare, they achieved 501(c) status which allowed the market to conduct fundraising activities and apply for grants to fund a market manager position. In 2013, the market hired a part-time market manager and grew from a core of six vendors to its present state of over 30 vendors. Through a voluntary reporting procedure, over half the vendors anonymously report their sales to the market manager. Reported sales for 2013 approached $20,000.

The Independence Farmers Market, viewable on the web at http://www.independencefarmersmarket.org/ and on Facebook, is open 22 weeks out of the year. It operates every Friday from the middle of May until the middle of October and is located across from the 1908 Courthouse in Independence, VA. Wednesday evening markets are offered during the middle of the growing season and an online market is developing for winter sales. Additionally, a local business is participating in a Farmer's Pantry operation that will carry Farmers Market products in a retail space year round.

Products offered at the Independence Farmers Market must be grown or produced locally (typically within a 100 mile radius of the market) and include vegetables, fruits, meats, cheeses, honey, baked goods, jams, pickles and local handcrafted items. The market accepts SNAP benefits and hopes to offer credit card purchases soon.

The Farmers Market vendors and volunteers support the School Garden Project at the Grayson County High School. Recent developments in school resources have created a resource shortfall to the sustainability of the School Garden Project. Where once was a robust School Greenhouse and Garden activity now exist a program projected to rely on volunteer Farmers Market vendors, school staff and interested students. We hope that can change and propose that School Garden activities not only be restored as a funded program, but are extended into the curricula of the student body. Mathematics, science, nutrition, biology and health all combine in School Garden activities. What better way to expose the students to these critical learning objectives and reinforce healthy eating habits than an activity that applies the practical use of the sciences and offers ownership in producing something they can touch, feel and watch grow.

The market is working in partnership with the Town of Independence to purchase and develop the current vacant lot for a public use Park and Farmers Market. Plans for the site can be viewed at http://www.independencefarmersmarket.org/about.html

Farm Planning & Consumer Workshops

A series of workshops, farm tours and demonstrations began in the latter part of 2012 and carried on until present. These activities address topics on a wide range of subjects and view points. Our Farmer Workshops concentrate on production practices, business planning, marketing, food safety, and sales. Our consumer workshops are designed around cooking, preserving, identifying healthy foods, meeting the farmer and get consumers excited about their local food sources.

The workshops are well-attended and are critical to the success of the Local Food Initiative. As was pointed out in the earlier section of this Chapter, prime farmland makes up less than 5% of the land designated as land suitable for agricultural. The remaining land requires special management practices not commonly learned in traditional farming. Most of the small farm participants in the local food movement specialize in: organics, specialty vegetable production, berry and fruit, grass fed/finished beef, lamb and pork, meat and egg poultry products, and bee and forestry products. The practices involved in these smaller specialized operations are often not suited to commercial farming applications commercial farming standards and applications.

For example, the local food participant vegetable farmer typically plants in a raised bed, often irrigated with drip, covered with a plastic mulch layer to preserve moisture and suppress weeds. Soil preservation practices such as cover cropping, crop rotation, and mulching are common. Some growers are organically certified or using nationally recognized organic practices. Succession planting and season extension with row covers and high tunnels is a growing trend and allows a farmer to produce three to four times the amount of produce on a small amount of land.

Meat production from the local food

Pasturing Poultry
A Viable Option For the Small-Scale Farmer
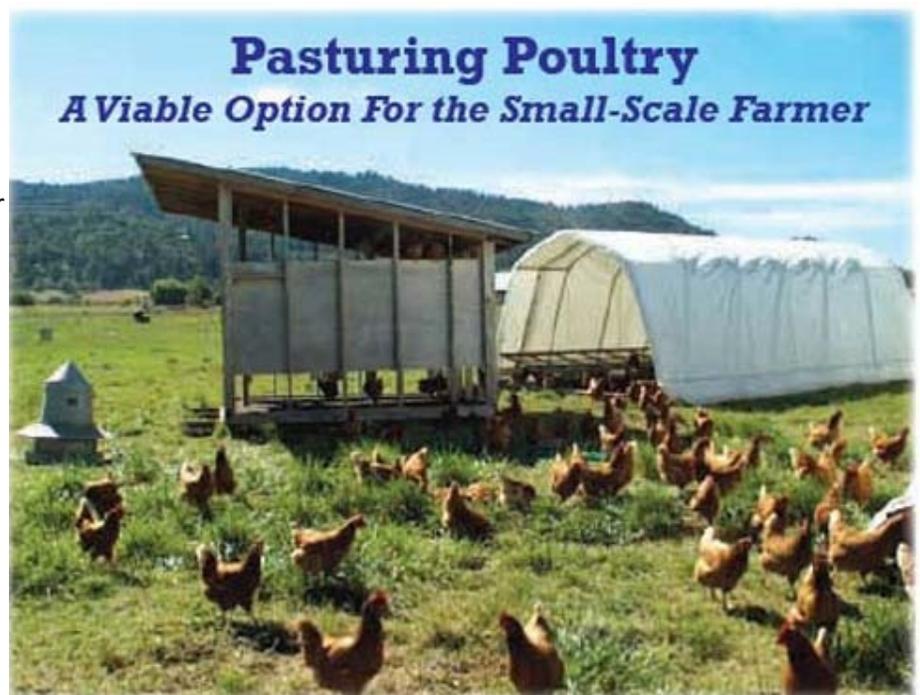
participant, such as beef, lamb, pork and poultry farms relies primarily on pasture as its main source of nutrition, restricts the use of hormones and antibiotics and many producers embrace the nationally recognized Animal Welfare certification. These value added practices have caught on across the country and are especially recognized in Grayson County due to the establishment of Grayson Natural Foods, http://graysonnatural.com/, a business that existed before the Local Food Initiative project.

There are advantages and disadvantages to this farming community make-up. On the plus side, land not suitable for row cropping can be used for value added meat/poultry production or put in raised bed farming to grow high value specialty crops such as carrots, beets, radishes and greens. In addition, competition from large growers is limited and allows new start-up and small farms to grow. Farmers are able to manage their production with little reliance on scarce labor and large machinery. On the down side, farming support agencies are unfamiliar with and/or lack the resources to assist these atypical farmers as they would a large traditional commercial grower/producer. Additionally, Local Food farmers are overwhelmingly adopting alternative production practices that askew traditional farming equipment and embrace a gentler land management practice. Often this requires specialized equipment not available in local farm supply stores or state/federal agriculture equipment pools. Instruction on applying organic pest and disease management practices is rare and often not promoted in agency circles.

The Local Food Initiative educational goals are to continue to conduct workshops and farm tours to embrace the advantages of local food production and to fill the gaps that exist in non-traditional farming education. To further our efforts we'll continue to lobby local and state agencies, public/private industry and community organizations to seek an understanding of the local food movement and work to support them as a component of the larger agricultural industry.

Food Aggregation & Distribution

Food Aggregation and Distribution

On farm aggregation of produce and access to retailers, restaurants, institutions and ultimately consumers is one of the biggest challenges a small farm faces. Unable to store bulk produce, farmers often need to sell and deliver a product within hours of harvest or processing. Delivery of their produce to the retailer takes them off their farms, adversely impacting production and increases their cost of the goods sold. A Local Food Initiative project called the Connector Service has eased this burden to some extent but relies on the good will of the aggregation facility host farm and a grant from The Central Appalachian Network.
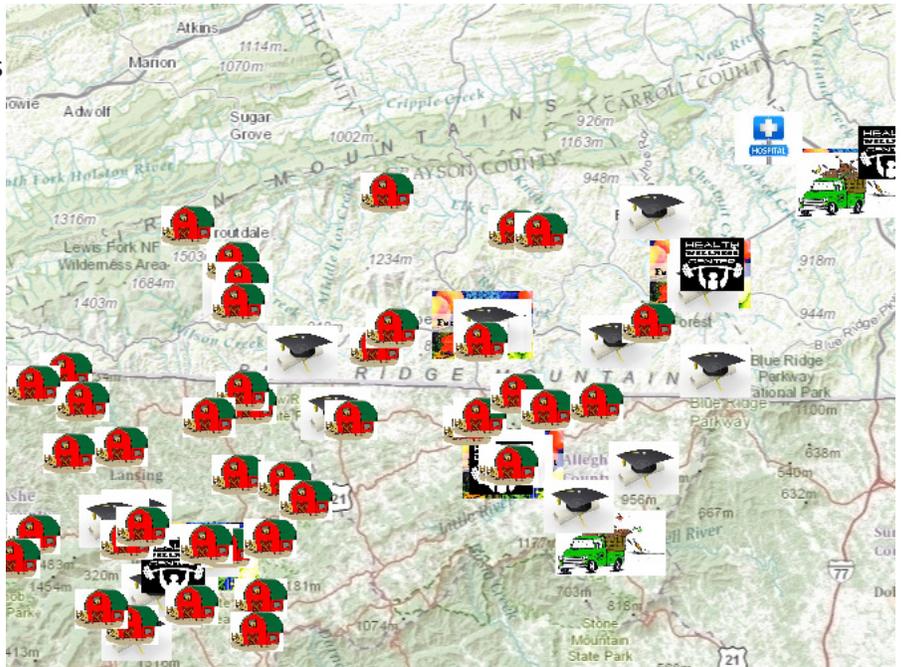
The Connector Service operates a small aggregation facility on a host farm in the western part of Grayson County. There, farmers can deliver their produce 7 days a week to a refrigerated space where it is picked up and delivered to New River Growers (NRG), a non-profit local food wholesaler in Ashe County, NC. The pick-up is made possible by a Food Hub Coordinator currently working as a volunteer, a driver funded through the Central Appalachian Grant and a 12' Box Truck donated by a Grayson County resident. The pick-up route starts in the eastern section of the County, traveling over 75 miles to ultimately deliver the products to the NRG facility in Ashe County, NC. In its six months of operation, the Connector Service has delivered over $60,000 in meats and produce to the NRG facility where it is further distributed to area retailers and restaurants.

Expanding on the Connector Service, The Local Food Initiative plans to work with one local distributer to scale up his operation to include an aggregation facility for local food storage and delivery to Grayson County retailers, schools and other institutions currently served by this distributor. In this endeavor we hope to increase our farmers' access to local markets, assist a small distribution business in expanding and offer more local, fresh, and healthy food to our neighbors and community.

Assessment conducted by the Appalachian Food Hub

Alleghany Agricultural Coalition (AAC), acting as Project Management Team, and Grayson LandCare, as Fiduciary Agent, and resource sponsor with funding provided by Heifer International, Seeds of Change and oversight provided by Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture, conducted a six month Appalachian Food Hub Project. The purpose of the project was threefold. First to assess the current regional food system in our secluded, yet geographically and visually vibrant region of Northwest North Carolina and Southwest Virginia (Counties include; Ashe and Alleghany County NC and Grayson and Carroll County VA.); second, to build collaboration and communication between the participants in the local food system; and third, to construct a blueprint of the needs of the regional food system to provide local residents with a reliable, secure supply of food grown in a way sustains the regions resources and provides a reasonable wage for the farmer and others engage in food production, aggregation, delivery, and distribution. The project management team outlined three phases to the project and conducted them concurrently throughout the duration of the project. Assessment data, findings and the "blueprint" can be accessed by clicking here: http://www.independencefarmersmarket.org/Archive/blueprint.pdf

Forestry Introduction

The forests have been an important resource to Grayson County since settlement. Today, over 50 percent of the land in Grayson County remains in timberland. While the woodland has changed due to insect, disease, fire and timber harvesting they continue to be very important to the local economy.

Grayson County's forests are one of its most important natural resources. Planning that will set guidelines to maintain a viable forest resource is essential to insuring a sustainable quality environment to Grayson County residents. The forests provide a functional asset to the community both socially and ecologically.

Ecologically, woodlands help maintain good water quality. By filtering and traping sediments, they absorb pollutants from overload and runoff or subsurface flow. Woodlands act as natural buffers along the New River, major tributaries, and smaller perennial and intermittent streams by preventing excess nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorous, from entering and polluting our waterways. Tree roots help maintain clean ground water and trapping harmful pollutants. Forested areas provide essential ecosystems for a variety of plants and animals. They provide food, shelter, cover, nesting and bedding areas for a wide variety of wildlife.

The forests in Grayson County play an important economic role in the community. Based on Timber Severance Taxes paid from 2000 to 2011, $2.4 million per year was paid to Grayson County landowners for timber sold. The 1995 publication Virginia's Forest Our Commonwealth describes how $48.64 of economic value is generated from each dollar paid to a landowner for timber stumpage through such services as primary and secondary processing, transportation, harvesting, construction and marketing. Using this multiplier, the value of the timber harvested averaged $116,736,000 in economical activity.

Trees harvested for saw timber such as mature hardwood species and white pine are processed for hardwood flooring, furniture, wood components, structural boards and plywood, and other items. Three major sawmills service the area. Two of those have significant capital and operations in Grayson County.

Several portable, privately owned sawmills also can be found in Grayson. Much of the wood product is used for building materials in a rough unfinished manner.

The timber industry also supports a small, but thriving, wood craft industry centered on instrument making and custom-made furniture. These are highly skilled niche enterprises such as Grayson Millworks. Wayne Henderson and the late Albert Hash represent the tradition of luthiers in the area and festivals in their honor are held each year. Chestnut Creek School of the Arts supports the study of woodcrafts based on this tremendous local resource.

Source: Virginia Department of Forestry, Mr. Donnie Garmin

Non-timber Forest Products

There are several items grown or harvested from forested areas and may be from the trees themselves or from the associated forest ecosystem. There are broad categories of NTFP:

Medicinals (ginseng, black cohosh, bloodroot, goldenseal and others)

- Ginseng is the primary plant of interest because it is listed as a Threatened Species. Laws regarding harvest season and when to sell roots attempt to control over-collection from natural stands. Dry root prices in 2012 averaged $580/lb (Virginia Department of Agriculture statistics). Wild simulated ginseng grown on private property is exempt from some, but not all, of the harvesting restrictions.

- There are 3 state approved ginseng buyers in Grayson County.

Edibles (elderberry, wild raspberries/blackberries, walnuts, maple syrup, mushrooms, ramps, etc.)

- Most edibles have been collected for home use. Minor processing for church or civic fundraisers of jellies, shelled nuts, and maple syrup occur. Currently, commercial scale processing is a limiting factor to more growth of these types of products.

- The Whitetop community hosts a ramp festival and maple festival each year.

- Shiitake mushrooms are well-suited to locally-sourced white oak logs, and several demonstrations have resulted in many interested in production for home use, and possibly small-scale commercial ventures.

Floral-decoratives (white pine tips for garland, pine cones, vines, Galax leaves, tree boughs, etc.)

- White pine tips, boxwood cuttings and Fraser fir boughs are widely used for garland and greenery. White pine tips are a secondary source of income at about years 7-10 of a pine planting. These trees will then grow another 20-30 years prior to harvest for saw timber. Collecting Fraser fir boughs for greenery preserves value in otherwise unmarketable Christmas trees.

Nursery/ornamentals (rhododendron, azalea, boxwoods, and fir trees)

- Grayson's natural flora include several native species of rhododendron, azalea, hardwood and conifer trees. Many of these have significant demand in ornamental landscape markets, but only limited nursery production currently exists.

Fuel wood

- Home heating with wood is still a common practice. Several individuals sell firewood by the truck load or the cord.

- Moving firewood out of a county or region is a common means of spreading invasive insects and diseases and is strongly discouraged. As a result, Grayson's significant camping and outdoor recreational opportunities need locally sourced firewood for their sites.

- Wood chips and pellets have been explored for alternative fuels for coal or oil boilers for schools and industry. Wood pellets are being manufactured from the waste stream of locally sourced trees harvested for timber.

Value-added & Alternative Agricultural Ventures

There are 3 broad classifications of agriculture and forestry-related ventures that seek out non-traditional production practices or marketing avenues to generate income from the land. These include:

Value-added production

Extra income or niche marketing can be achieved by using raw materials produced locally such as grapes or milk processed into wine or artisan cheese. These were discussed earlier. Other opportunities that exist locally include:

- Fiber arts from sheep or alpaca fleeces

- 2007 US Census of Agriculture reported 33 farms had 141 honeybee hives producing almost 5,900 lb of honey. Beeswax and pollination services are additional revenue sources for beekeepers.

- Salsa, chow-chow, processed vegetables and soups at one the regional canneries.

- grass-fed beef

Specialized marketing and distribution

- Grayson Natural Farms, LLC that supports the sale of grass-fed beef to restaurants, institutional buyers, and other distributors

- There were 5 USDA Certified Organic farms in Grayson as reported by the 2007 Census of Agriculture survey.

- Local Food Initiative

Farm and forest linked ventures

- Farmers and landowners can and do provide outdoor recreation opportunities including: lucrative hunting lease rights, mountain bike and ATV trails, access points to major waterways for canoe or kayaking, and others.

- Agritourism businesses generate income from visitors to farms including pumpkins patches, Choose and Cut Christmas tree farms, Bed and Breakfast venues, pick-your-own berry farms and others. Typically, the "experience" generates interest, sales, and repeat visits. Some experiences visitors pay for include: hay rides, harvesting their own produce or berries, educational activities, or participating in some part of farm work.

Agriculture & Forestry Governmental Support Agencies

- **USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** provide technical and financial assistance to new farmers, farmers who have suffered from natural disasters, and those wanting to participate in federal conservation efforts. They can be contacted at 276-236-7191 x2.

- **New River Soil and Water Conservation District** disburses $250,000 to $500,000 annually in state appropriations to landowners in Carroll and Grayson Counties to conserve and protect soil and water resources. Primary best management practices (BMP's) supported by the program include livestock stream exclusion, alternative livestock watering systems, animal waste storage, pesticide handling facilities, and cover crops on highly erodible land. The District also supports the Grayson Erosion and Sediment Control Plan review process. They can be contacted at 276-236-7191 x3.

- **Virginia Cooperative Extension** encompasses science-based agriculture and community development, and 4-H youth development through its association with Virginia's two land grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. They can be reached at 276-773-2491.

- **Virginia Department of Forestry** is housed locally at the Matthews State Forest. The department provides technical oversight to logging operations, fights forest fires, and provides advice to woodlot owners. Also, it manages two state forests located in the county totaling over 800 acres. DOF staff are available Monday through Thursday at 276-236-2322.

- **Virginia Department Agriculture and Consumer Service** is located in Wytheville, VA (276-228-5501). The department oversees most state regulations and programs related to agriculture production and marketing. Regulatory services include meat and milk inspections, certification of point-of-sale scales, pesticide investigations, veterinary diagnostic services and animal disease monitoring, animal feed and fertilizer quality monitoring, endangered species protection, and plant inspections for nurseries and interstate trade. Market services include: export trade assistance, branded programs such as Virginia Grown and Virginia's Finest programs, livestock and commodity price reporting, support for farmer's markets and farm-to-school programs, and many more.

- **Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries** regulate recreational hunting and fishing. They monitor wildlife and fish populations, and their health and habitat. The Marion Regional Office oversees operations in Grayson County (276-783-4860).

- **Virginia Department of Environmental Quality** is responsible for monitoring air and water point-source pollution. Most agricultural practices are not regulated by DEQ, but special situations may apply such as large confined livestock feeding areas. DEQ monitors stream health based upon Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) standards. Waterways not meeting standards are placed on an Impaired Waterway list and remediation plans are developed with DEQ's support. The Abingdon regional office covers most of Grayson County and can be contacted at 276-676-4800.

Agriculture & Forestry Non-Profit and Industry Support Groups

- The **Grayson County Farm Bureau** is located in Independence and serves as the local link to both Virginia and the American Farm Bureau Federations. Farm Bureau is one of the largest lobbies for agriculture and rural interests at the local, state, and federal level. Farm Bureau also provides many member benefits such as insurance, discounts at businesses, and agricultural-related awareness for the public and school children. The Grayson office can be contacted by calling 276-773-3091.

- **Grayson LandCare** is a grassroots effort of locally organized group of citizens, farmers, and landowners who strive to improve the economic, environmental and social well-being of Grayson County. They have several volunteer-based committees including: Energy/Water, Farmer's Market, Forestry, Livestock, and others. To get more details and see a list of major accomplishments, go to http://www.graysonlandcare.org/

- **Jack and Claire Mattews Foundation** was started by the late Judge Jack Matthews and his wife Claire to support educational initiatives, particularly in the area of forestry and agriculture. Judge Matthews gifted his estate to the Virginia Department of Forestry to be used as an educational venue.

- **Carroll Grayson Cattle Producers Association** supports the local beef industry through educational programs, marketing efforts, advocacy, and bulk purchasing of animal health products. With approximately 100 members, the association represents all segments of the local beef industry. For more information, contact the Virginia Cooperative Extension office at 276-773-2491.

- **Mount Rogers Christmas Tree Growers Association** formed to support the local Christmas tree industry. Primarily, the association is charged with preserving and protecting the native Fraser fir genetic pool that is severely threatened by the balsam wooly adelgid. In return, the association collects seed from mature Fraser fir for use in the nursery and Christmas tree industries. The association manages two Fraser fir orchards, one in Grayson Highlands State Park and the other on the Old Flat State Forest, both near Whitetop. They are also actively involved in marketing and advocacy efforts in support of the industry. You can learn more about them at: http://www.mtrogersfraserfir.org/

- **Mountain Empire Bee Keepers Association** supports local beekeepers through education and mentoring. They provide information on beekeeping supplies and attain grants for new and beginning beekeepers. See their website for more information: http://www.mountainempirebeekeepers.com/

- **Southwest Virginia Ag Association** advocates for rural Southwest Virginia on policy issues of importance. It provides input to the Southwest Virginia Delegates and Senators who represent this area in Richmond. Grayson citizens serve on the various committees such as dairy, beef, vegetable crops, youth, and others. Their resolutions reflect the common voice of farmers and citizens of Southwest Virginia. The Grayson County Extension Office has more details on this organization.

Threats to Agriculture & Forestry

Non-native or introduced weeds, insects and diseases are one of the largest external threats to Grayson's agriculture and forest industries. As with the American chestnut tree, a once dominant and economically important local tree, nearly complete loss of key resources can happen. It is imperative that all citizens be educated on the potential harm, both ecologically and financially, that these species have, and how everyone can be responsible partners in minimizing the negative consequences.

Non-native Invasive Plants

Invasive weed species impact agricultural and forest lands, particularly field borders or unmanaged fields. Also, many are the result of home landscape plantings or were used during road construction for erosion prevention before their negative impacts were known. Some major concerns include:

- Autumn olive
- Tree of heaven (Ailanthus altissima)
- Asian privet species
- Bush honeysuckle species
- Oriental bittersweet

- Kudzu
- Nepalese browntop (grass)
- Canadian thistle
- Multiflora rose
- Barberry

Non-native Invasive Insects/Animals

- **Gypsy moth** can cause severe defoliation of many hardwood and fruit tree species. Quarantines are often used to control movement of certain materials out of infected counties. Grayson is not currently under gypsy moth quarantine, but neighboring counties are.
- **Hemlock and balsam wooly adelgids** are decimating natural stands of hemlock and fir. Without intervention, these trees may soon disappear from their native range. Fir trees have brighter prospects due to their commercial importance to the Christmas tree industry where specimens exist in managed orchards.
- **Walnut twig beetle** is responsible for 1,000 cankers disease in black walnut.
- **Brown marmorated stink bug** is new to the county and a nuisance in houses. It can be a significant pest of vegetable and fruit crops.
- **Kudzu bugs** have also recently entered the county and primarily affect kudzu, but will attack plants such as alfalfa, beans and peas.
- **Varroa and tracheal mites** are significant parasitic pests of honeybee colonies, and contribute to colony loss in unmanaged hives.
- **Feral pigs** have been released illegally in some areas of Virginia by hunters. Once established, they are nearly impossible to eradicate, and decimate crop fields, forests and natural ecosystems.
- **Elk** have been reintroduced in Southwest Virginia for sportsmen. Crop damage and disease transmission to other livestock are of great concern.

Introduced Diseases of Agricultural Importance

- **Boxwood blight** is a recently introduced fungal disease that defoliates boxwoods grown in landscapes and nurseries, and used in the greenery industry. Plantings have been incinerated to control its spread.
- **Prion-based diseases** such as scrapie in sheep, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle, and chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer are rare, but still a threat. Only 4 cases of BSE have been reported in the US since 2003. Significant laws to prevent the disease were enacted in 1997 and updated in 2008. Scrapie has almost been eliminated from the US, but CWD in deer pose an ongoing concern.

Summary

Grayson County's predominant land use is farms and forest, whether publicly or privately owned. Much of the public lands such as the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, Appalachian Trial, and several state parks are dedicated to recreational enjoyment and contribute significantly to tourism and aesthetic qualities of the county. Private land zoned agricultural or forested, whether in active production or not, is the single largest revenue stream for the county through real estate taxes. Farming and forestry revenue is the largest industry segment, with significant participation from many citizens in the county. Because most of the goods produced on Grayson's farms and in Grayson's forests are consumed outside the county, they represent a major conduit for external dollars to flow into the county. To preserve and enhance the key aspect of Grayson County, the following strategies should be considered:

- Incentivize economically and ecologically sound agriculture and forestry businesses through favorable policies and tax benefits. Many farm owners support Use Value Taxation of farm real estate, but other tools such as Ag and Forestral Districts can offer tax incentives for productive uses of land.

- Raise awareness of the potential threats to agriculture and forestry, even non-farm landowners have a role to play in minimizing the threats of introduced weeds, insects and diseases.

- Facilitate farm transitions from an ever-aging farm ownership to younger, aspiring farm managers. Assist with ideas or policies that mitigate the high capital costs that make it difficult for start-up businesses to be profitable. An example of such a policy is to encourage expensive equipment sharing among multiple farm owners.

- Support the exploration of a diversity of agriculture and forestry ventures including traditional farms, value-added production, and non-traditional enterprises. Major areas of emphasis include:
   - -Marketing and distribution
   - -Farm business management support
   - -Encourage development of support industries that service local farmers including equipment dealers, re pair centers, seasonal labor sourcing, transportation, and marketing firms
   - -Non-timber forest products
   - -Niche or underdeveloped markets

- Develop a workforce development program around agriculture and forestry so that there is more reliance upon local workers instead of external labor pools.

- Use educational programs within the schools, community college, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia's land grant universities to raise awareness about the impact and possibilities in agriculture and forestry businesses.

- Conserve Grayson's land and water resources for future generations by supporting agriculture and forestry Best Management Practices (BMP's), and responsible use of fertilizers, pesticides, and livestock pharmaceuticals.

Chapter 7

Transportation

Airports

Air travel for Grayson County is provided through regional airports. These range in size from one of the largest in the world, to small, locally owned air strips and hangars. Regional airports connect to larger airports such as Charlotte/Douglas International, reaching national and international destinations.

Charlotte/Douglas International Airport (CDIA) is the region's premier airport. CDIA is located 115 miles from Independence and is sited seven miles west of uptown Charlotte. The airport offers non-stop domestic and international passenger service and averages over 700 flights daily to serve over 30 million passengers annually.

Piedmont Triad International Airport, located approximately 102 miles southeast of Independence, about seven miles west of Greensboro, North Carolina, primarily serves the Piedmont area of North Carolina and portions of Southwest Virginia. In 2011 the airfield served 1.8 million passengers.

The Roanoke Regional Airport, located approximately 109 miles northeast of Independence, is another full-service airport that offers a wide range of services for all aviation types and is the primary commercial airport serving a large portion of Western Virginia. Roanoke Regional Airport offers non-stop service to a dozen major cities, as well as connecting services to major air-transportation hubs.

Tri-Cities Regional Airport, located approximately 95 miles southwest of Independence, near Blountville, Tennessee, is another of the region's primary full-service commercial airports and serves as a gateway to Southwest Virginia, East Tennessee, Western North Carolina, and parts of Kentucky. Tri-Cities Regional Airport offers non-stop service to five major hubs, primarily Charlotte, Atlanta, and Chicago.

Local Airports

The Twin County Airport (TCA) provides general aviation services locally and is jointly owned by Grayson County, Carroll County and the City of Galax. The airport is approx 27 miles east of Independence near Hillsville, Virginia.

The Mountain Empire Airport (MEA) provides general aviation services locally and is jointly owned by Smyth County, Wythe County and the Towns of Marion and Wytheville. It is located about 35 miles north of Independence, near the Town of Rural Retreat.

Rail Service

Passenger Rail Service is not currently available in the Southwest Virginia region and the nearest passenger service (Amtrak) stations are located in Danville and Lynchburg with a direct bus connection via Roanoke and Lynchburg daily. However, the United States Congress has approved legislation that directs Amtrak to partner with the Commonwealth of Virginia and freight railroad corporations to construct the operating agreements necessary to launch passenger rail service via Bristol, Richmond and Washington, D.C..

Commercial Freight Rail Service is not available in Grayson County. However, the Norfolk Southern Railway Corporation operates a Class A Mainline that passes through the nearby towns of Wytheville, Rural Retreat, and Marion. Numerous rail sidings and spurs are available to serve industrial customers throughout the region. Regional terminal facilities for the main line are based at Bristol and Radford. Norfolk Southern provides bulk, mixed freight, containerized piggyback and team track services.

Interstate System

The primary transportation mode for Grayson County is the road system. This system utilizes a combination of interstate (through nearby access points), primary, and secondary roads to serve the needs of residents. Road classifications and road locations in the county influence development and economic activity. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) manages the public road system.

Interstate 81 & 77- In Virginia, Interstate 81 extends for a total of 325 miles from the Virginia-Tennessee border near Bristol to the Virginia-West Virginia state line near Winchester. In Virginia, Interstate 77 extends approximately 69 miles, from the North Carolina border in Carroll County to the West Virginia border in Bland County. Interstate 77 includes a high volume, eight-mile overlap with Interstate 81 in Wytheville/Wythe County. Grayson County Interstate access is available at; in Marion at Exit 45 to Interstate 81, eight miles east of Galax, at Exit 14, to Interstate 77, and access to the Interstate 77/81 overlap in Wytheville at Exits 73 and 80.
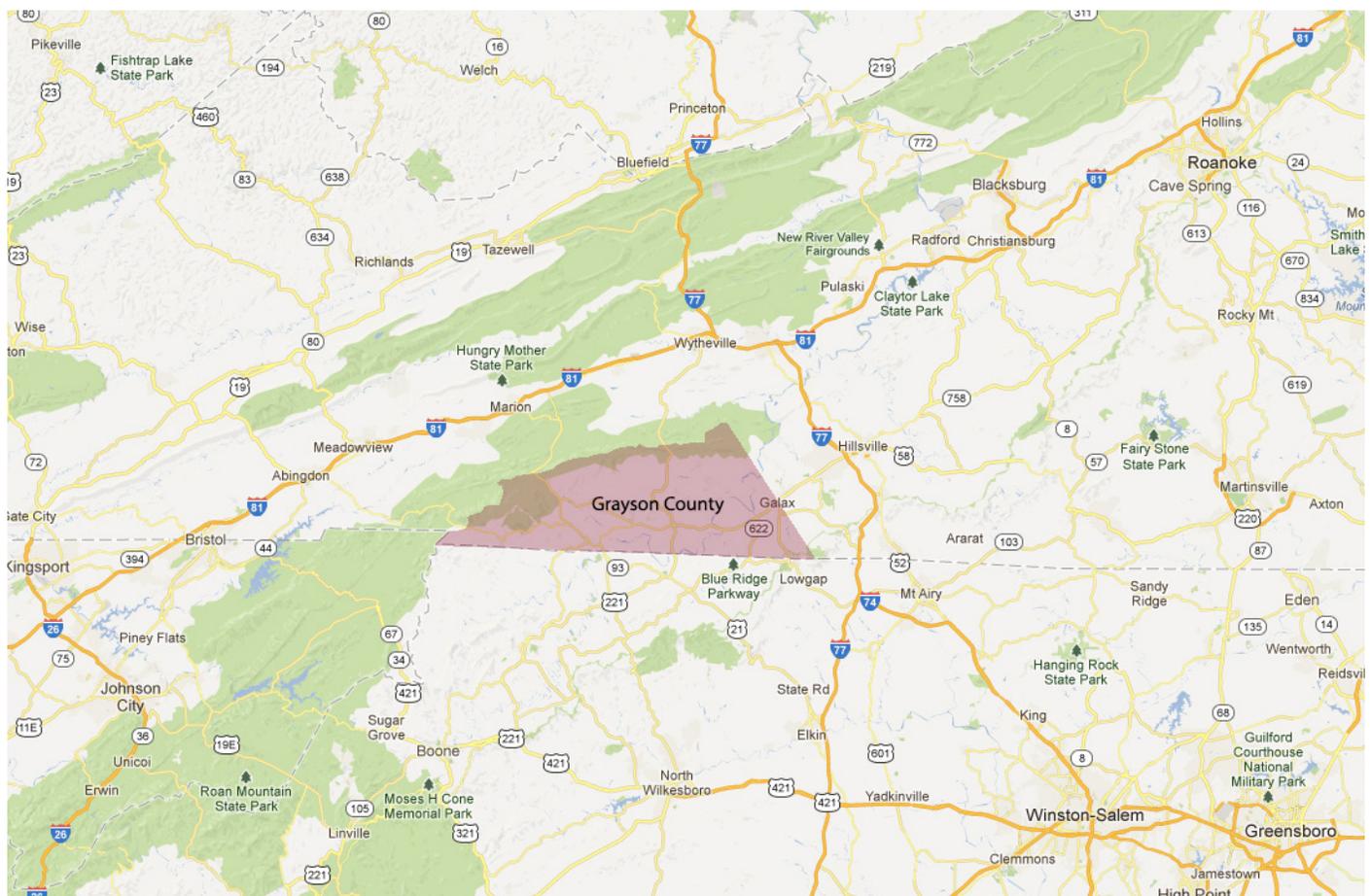
Local Road System

Primary- Rural primary (arterial) highways are defined as roads that range from two-lane, multi-lane, and divided highways with controlled points of access. The US 58, 221/21 routes, and the VA 16, 89, 93, 94, 97, and 274 routes serve Grayson County as its key arterial primary highways. Of these roads, US 58 (Southside Corridor of Statewide Significance) and US 16 provide travelers the most favorable east-west route, while US 221/21 and 94 provide the preferred means to move via north and south.
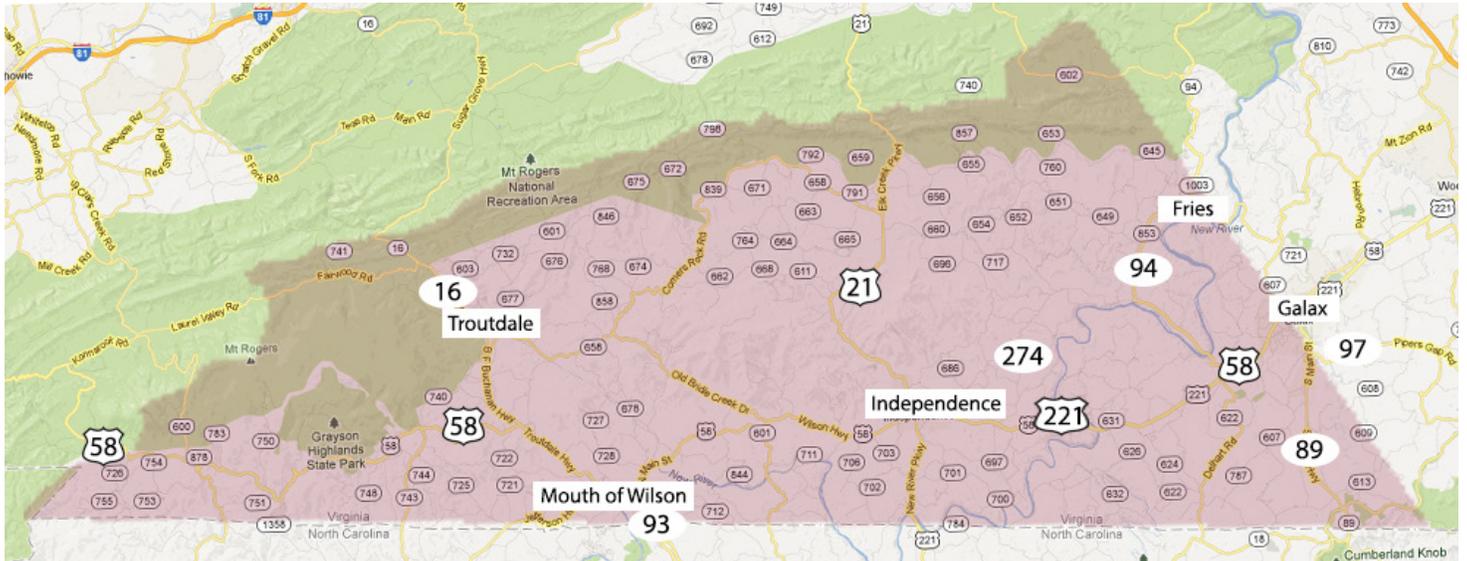
Secondary- A rural secondary road or "collector" can have two to four lanes and is usually undivided. Secondary roads absorb traffic from lightly traveled local roads and busier primary roads. Generally, these facilities have fewer restricted access points to adjacent properties than either the primary or interstate systems. In Grayson County there are approximately 338 secondary roads in the study area.

Private - Private streets and right of ways can be developed for access to individual parcels with the understanding that these areas will be privately maintained and are not under the control of the Virginia Department of Transportation.

A complete road map of Grayson County can be found at http://www.graysoncountyva.com/grayson_road_map_front.pdf
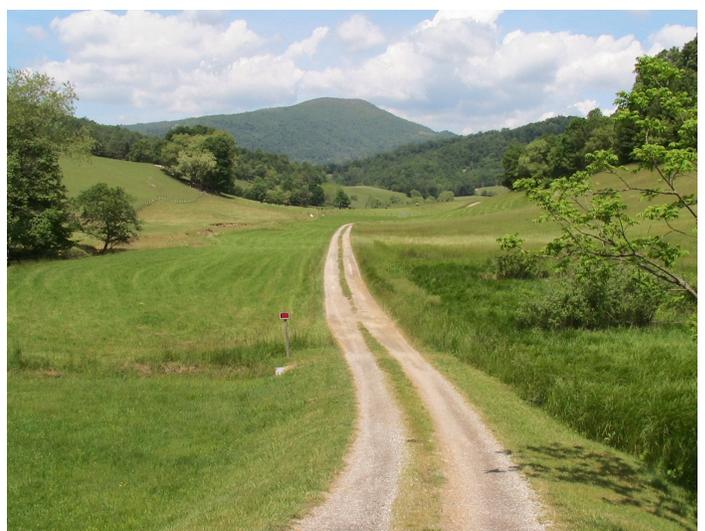
Bicycle & Pedestrian Modes

Recreational hiking trails and bicycling opportunities are available at the Grayson County Recreation Park, New River Trail State Park, Grayson Highlands State Park, Jefferson National Forest/Mount Rogers National Recreational Area, Matthews State Forest, Virginia Creeper Trail, Appalachian Trail, and the US Bicycle Route 76. Biking and walking for transportation is limited by the number of bike lanes and sidewalks in the county. The Independence Pedestrian & Bike Trail (with plans to expand) provides a safe mode of travel within the Town of Independence, along with other sidewalks in the Town of Fries and Independence.
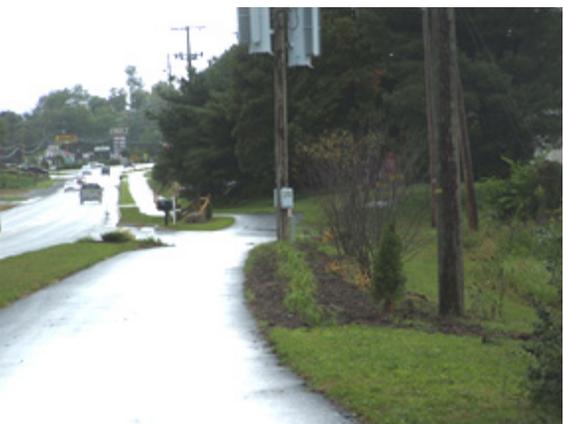
New River Trail State Park is the state's only linear park and is 57 miles in length. The park is a rail conversion of a former Norfolk & Southern railroad line. The park stretches from the City of Galax to Fries and on to Pulaski, as it parallels the banks of the New River for approximately 39 miles. Access is provided at Fries Park for Grayson County.

Grayson Highlands State Park is next to the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. The 4,822-acre park is located on US 58 between Independence and Damascus. Hiking, biking, and equestrian trail facilities are available for year-round use.

Jefferson National Forest / Mount Rogers National Recreational Area extends east to west across the entire length of Grayson County's northern boundary. This area includes many easy access points to the forest and its numerous campgrounds, picnic areas, and 400 miles of recreational trail facilities.

Virginia Creeper National Recreational Trail is a 33.4-mile, multi-use facility, which connects the Virginia / North Carolina state line one mile east of Whitetop Station to the Towns of Damascus and Abingdon. It is available for use by hikers, cyclists, and equestrians.

Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT) is a public footpath across over 2,000 miles of Appalachian Mountain ridgeline from Maine to Georgia. A beautiful section of this trail is located in the Mount Rogers NRA.

US Bike Route 76, a.k.a., the Transamerica Trail, is a well known bicycle route that stretches 4,300 miles from the coast of Virginia to the coast of Oregon. Bike Route 76, a shared-use facility, is widely recognized as the greatest and most traveled bike trail in America. The trail's route passes through the Town of Troutdale, on State Road 603 after leaving Damascus on Rt. 58. It leaves Troutdale north on State Rt. 16 to Sugar Grove, then to Cedar Springs and Rural Retreat.

Scenic Drives

Virginia offers beautiful scenery year-round and can be enjoyed on most of the roadways in the Grayson County. The closest National Scenic Byway to Grayson County is the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Blue Ridge Parkway was constructed during the Great Depression and is the nation's longest rural roadway as it extends 469 miles along the crests of the Southern Appalachian Mountains between the Shenandoah and Great Smokey Mountain National Parks.

The Blue Ridge Parkway- In Virginia, the Parkway offers spectacular views and interesting examples of Appalachian culture at places such as Humpback Rocks and Mabry Mill. The Appalachian Trail can also be reached from the Parkway at more than 20 overlooks and parking areas in the Commonwealth and provides opportunities to hike sections of this popular national scenic trail.

Virginia Scenic Byways- The Virginia Byways program began in 1972 and mirrors the federal program as a way to promote the Commonwealth's substantial natural beauty, historical places, and areas of social significance to travelers who desire a pace that will enhance their experience. Currently, about 2,600 miles of roads have received Virginia Byway designation.

Two designated scenic byways pass through the Jefferson National Forest and the Mount Rogers Planning District region. These are the Mount Rogers and the Big Walker Mountain Scenic Byways. The Mount Rogers Scenic Byway is divided in two sections. The first begins at the Town of Troutdale and goes west along Va. 603 and Va. 600 for approximately 13 miles through Grayson and Smyth counties to Rt. 58. This scenic route traverses the heart of the Mount Rogers National Recreational Area with scenic, open, rural countryside characteristics. The second section leads 32 miles east from the Town of Damascus to the community of Volney. This section follows US 58 in Grayson and Washington counties. The route offers excellent access to the "High Country" of the national recreation area as it passes the southwest slopes of Whitetop Mountain at 5,570 feet.

Public Transit & Taxi Services

For a non-driver, transportation is available through District Three Public Transit or from cab services out of Galax or Marion. A regional Greyhound Bus stop is located in Max Meadows in the Town of Marion at Exit 80, approximately 30 miles from the Town of Independence.

District Three Public Transit is operated by the **District Three Governmental Cooperative** and is the public transit provider for Abingdon, Galax, Marion, Wytheville, and the Counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, and Wythe. This service includes shopping routes, transportation to congregate nutrition sites operated by **District Three Senior Services**. **District Three Senior Services** also provides limited, on-demand response for medical transit service to eligible clientele in Grayson County to local medical facilities.

Grayson County Public Transit, a service of **District Three Public Transit** in the Town of Marion, operates a limited schedule of bus service for a reasonable fare to the citizens of Grayson County. Regular routes are available for the Towns of Fries, Independence, Troutdale, and the Whitetop community.

Grayson Co. Public Transit – 1-866-238-4293 - Mon.-Fri. – 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

104 Rex Lane

Galax, VA 24333

New Freedom is a weekly, fixed roundtrip schedule to regional medical centers and shopping malls. Two of the routes serve citizens of Grayson County. The service is open to the general public, not just low income, seniors or disabled individuals. One route originates in Marion and has scheduled stops in Troutdale, Volney, Mouth of Wilson, Independence, Galax, and Hillsville with a destination of Winston-Salem, NC medical facilities and Hanes Mall. A second route originates in Troutdale every Wednesday and follows the same pick up locations, but travels to the Roanoke area medical facilities and the Valley View Mall. Both trips are day-long events, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., from the point of origination at a $1.00 roundtrip cost. Reservations are highly recommended. For further information and scheduling at (866)-238-4293 toll free or (276) 236-3055.

Citizen Survey-Travel Distance to Work/School/Medical

A citizen survey was conducted to find out distances Grayson County residents travel to work, school and medical facilities. The results of the survey are as follows:

Where Citizens Travel to for Employment or School by District
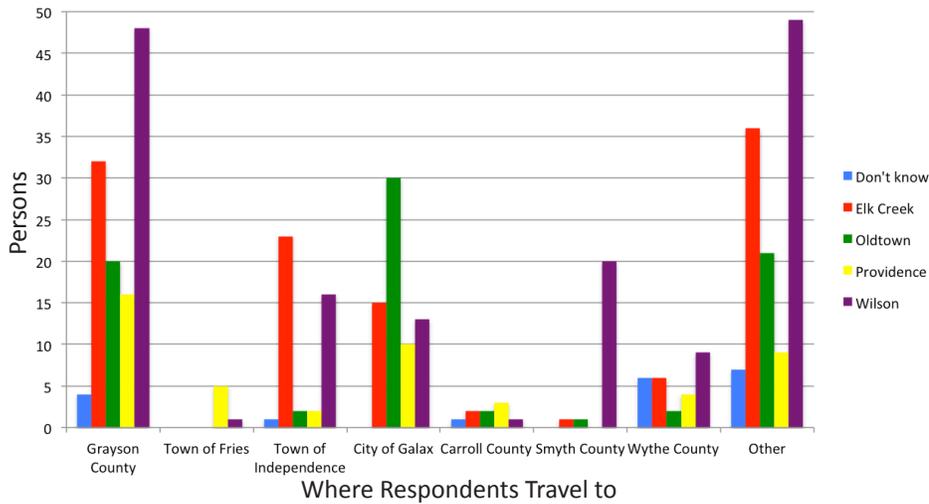
District	Average Miles to Work or School
Elk Creek	33.60 mi
Oldtown	41.80 mi
Providence	25.40 mi
Wilson	45.90 mi
Don't Know	48.70 mi
County Average	39.08 mi

- The City of Galax is the primary place of work or school outside of Grayson County for respondents, with 9.8 percent of total respondents traveling to the city.

- 18.4 percent of employed or student respondents (184 persons) travel within Grayson County for work or school.

- 22.5 percent of employed or student respondents travel outside the immediate

Average Miles Traveled (One Way) to Medical Services

- Overall, respondents residing in Grayson County travel an average of 30 miles one way for medical services.

- Respondents in the Providence district travel the shortest distance for medical services.

- Vision and dental services require longer travel times for Grayson County residents than general

District	Dental	Vision	General Practitioner	In-patient/Emergency
Elk Creek	29.03 mi	32.05 mi	23.20 mi	25.38 mi
Oldtown	20.21 mi	28.27 mi	30.02 mi	21.21 mi
Providence	19.17 mi	28.12 mi	14.76 mi	23.29 mi
Wilson	33.97 mi	38.94 mi	26.77 mi	34.45 mi
Don't Know	46.05 mi	48.90 mi	40.96 mi	31.36 mi
County Average	29.69 mi	35.26 mi	27.14 mi	27.14 mi

Travel Demand Management/Rideshare

According to the citizen surveys, the average miles traveled by respondents is about thirty-nine for work or school and about thirty for medical services. Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies should be considered to ease the amount of miles spent by Grayson County commuters in their cars. Overall, respondents residing in Grayson County travel an average of 30 miles one way for medical services. Travel Demand Management (TDM) holds the potential for enhancing many elements of the transportation network and, along other improvements, has been shown to greatly aid in reducing single-occupant vehicle trips. TDM measures include carpooling and vanpooling programs, expanded peak hour public transit, commuter buses, park and ride lots, as well as better coordination between modes to facilitate intermodal transfers. While low population densities in rural areas are not always conducive to major shifts to mass transit, some gains in mass transit ridership for commuters can sometimes be realized. Additional commuter-oriented elements of the transportation network in the region include park and ride lots. There are twelve VDOT maintained park and ride lots in the region. The image below shows park and ride lots.

Virginia Department of Transportation, *Mount Rogers Planning District Commission: 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan.* Richmond, VA: DVOT, 2011.

Transportation Planning- Virginia, Mt. Rogers Region, and Grayson County

The primary mode of transportation in Grayson County is the road system. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains, improves and develops state roads and road infrastructure. Transportation planning is a necessary component of maintaining the transportation infrastructure and the planning occurs on a statewide, regional and local level.

Virginia's 2035 State Highway Plan will include components of each region's (20 region across the state) Rural Long Range Plan. Grayson County is part of the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan. An important component of this plan is to identify local system deficiencies based on safety concerns, infrastructure improvements and meeting travel demands of each locality. A list of these recommendations can be found on the System Deficiency page in this chapter. The entire Mt. Rogers plan can be found at; http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/region_3_mount_rogers.asp

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

State law requires the development and publication of separate programs for the secondary system of state highways in each county, known as the Secondary Six-Year Plan. This plan is administered differently from the SYIP, as each county oversees their own secondary roads plan. Approved each year by the local Board of Supervisors or legislative body the Secondary Six-Year Plan reflects the needs of local citizens. Decisions on which projects are included in the plan are based on traffic counts, immediate safety needs, and projects that provide the most benefit for dollars spent. Funding allocations for the Secondary Six Year Plan for each locality is often insufficient to meet the needs of the locality. Even after a project is approved for the Secondary Six Year Plan, the project might be delayed for numerous reasons, including changes in local government priorities and needs, funding availability, escalating land costs and environmental concerns. Changes to both the Six Year Improvement Plan and the Secondary Six Year Plan may occur each year. As such these plans are constantly changing. The best source of information for understanding which projects are planned for the locality and the region is to visit the VDOT website or to contact the VDOT representative for the area.

To ensure that the state roads across Grayson County can meet the future needs of its residents, the Virginia Department of Transportation should consider supporting and funding recommended projects for Grayson County in the Six Year Improvement Program, the Secondary Six Year Plan and those projects determined System Deficiencies as outlined in the 2035 Mt. Rogers Regional Plan. Local projects in the Six Year Improvement Program (as determined by the CTB) can be found at http://syip.virginiadot.org/Pages/allProjects.aspx . The Secondary Six Year Plan (as of 2013) and the System Deficiencies for Grayson County (Mt. Rogers 2035 Plan) are found in the pages that follow.

This page was designed with information from the VDOT website. More information can be found at; http://www.virginiadot.org/default.asp

VDOT Secondary Six-Year Plan

1. River Bend Rd. (Rt. 708): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $450,000
2. Hidden Valley Rd. (Rt. 831): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $220,000
3. Rock Creek Rd. (Rt. 685): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $4,099,232
4. Shale Hollow Rd. (Rt. 818): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $40,000
5. Spring Valley Rd. (Rt. 805): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $3,302,030
6. Old Ferry Rd. (Rt. 631): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $237,500
7. Clover Ln. (Rt. 874): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $30,000
8. Crackers Neck Rd. (Rt. 631): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $280,000
9. Freedom Ln. (Rt. 644): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $100,000
10. Route 94: Bore New 24" Pipe Under Road: Estimated Cost $30,000
11. Crestwood Drive (Rt. 799): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $48,594
   * Crestwood Drive (Rt. 799): CTB Unpaved Formula Fund

Figure VIII-1

VDOT Grayson County System Deficiencies

1 US 58/VA 16-Mid-term reconstruct intersection to improve sight distance and add turn lanes.

2 **Proposed Independence Bypass from VA 703 to VA 888**-Mid-term construct proposed Independence Bypass.

3 **US 58 (Highlands Pkwy.) from VA 751 E. to VA 703**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

4 **VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from US 58 N. to 0.21 Mi. N. VA 735**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (includingfull-width lanes and shoulders).

5 **VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from 0.21 Mi. N. VA 735 to 0.20 Mi. S. VA 735**-Short-term install guardrails; Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

6 **VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from 0.20 Mi. S. VA 735 to Smyth Co. Line**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

7 **VA 89 (Skyline Hwy.) from VA 613 to SCL of Galax**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

8 **US 58 (E. Main St.) from ECL of Independence to VA 888**-Long-term monitor traffic flow after construction of Independence Bypass.

9 **VA 821 from VA 89 S. (Skyline Hwy.) to VA 89 N. (Skyline Hwy.)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

10 **VA 622 from VA 624 to VA 617**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

11 **VA 607 from NCL of Galax to Carroll Co.**-Line Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

12 **VA 815 (Tanglewood Rd.) from VA 94 (J.E.B Stuart Hwy.) to VA 647 (Stevens Creek)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

13 **VA 647 (Stevens Creek) from VA 815 (Tanglewood Rd.) to VA 759**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

14 **VA 647 (Stevens Creek) from VA 759 to VA 644**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

15 **VA 647 from VA 644 to VA 770**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

16 **VA 648 from VA 770 to VA 604**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

17 **VA 644 (Freedom Ln.) from VA 94 (J.E.B Stuart Hwy.) to VA 770**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

18 **VA 644 from VA 770 to VA 647 (Stevens Creek)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

19 **VA 770 from VA 644 to VA 647**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

20 **VA 777 (Liberty Hill Rd.) from VA 805 (Spring Valley Rd.) to VA 760**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

21 **VA 760 from VA 777 (Liberty Hill Rd.) to VA 604 (Jerusalem Rd.)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

22 **VA 604 (Jerusalem Rd.) from VA 760 to VA 644**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

23 **VA 604 from VA 644 to VA 647**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

24 **VA 660 from US 21 to VA 691**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

25 **VA 654 (Peach Bottom Rd.) from US 21 to VA 686 W.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

26 **VA 654 (Peach Bottom Rd.) from VA 686 W. to VA 695**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

27 **VA 636 from 0.16 Mi. N. of US 58 to VA 623**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

28 **VA 636 from VA 636 W. to VA 636 E.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

29 **VA 602 from VA 653 to Carroll Co.**-Line Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

30 **VA 658 (Flatridge Rd.) from VA 731 W. to VA 601 S.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

31 **VA 658 (Flatridge Rd.) from VA 601 N. to VA 670**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

32 **VA 601 from VA 680 to VA 658 S. (Flatridge Rd.)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

33 **VA 601 from S. VA 603 to Smyth Co. Line**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

34 **VA 708 from VA 766 W. to VA 766 E.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (9-foot lanes).

35 **VA 601 (Bridge Creek Road) from VA 708 S. to VA 711 N.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

36 **VA 743 from N. Carolina State Line to VA 725 S.**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

37 **VA 743 from VA 723 to US 58 (Highlands Pkwy.)**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

38 US 58 Over Big Wilson Creek/Volney-Short-term replace bridge.

39 VA 94 Over New River, near VA 634-Short-term replace bridge.

40 US 58 over M. Fork Helton Creek-Short-term replace bridge.

41 **VA 758 from VA 1001 (W. Main) to Carroll Co. Line**-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders). (Fries)

42 US 58/US 21-Mid-term reconstruct intersection to improve turn radius for trucks. (Independence)

43 **US 58 (E. Main St.) from VA 802 to ECL of Independence**-Long-term monitor traffic flow after construction of Independence Bypass. (Independence)

GRAYSON COUNTY DEFICIENCIES

Intersection Deficiency
- Operation Deficiency
- Safety Deficiency
- Both Deficiencies
- Other Deficiency

Segment Deficiency
- Operation Deficiency
- Safety Deficiency
- Geometric Deficiency
- Both Operation & Safety Deficiency

Virginia Department of Transportation, *Mount Rogers Planning District Commission: 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan.* Richmond, VA: DVOT, 2011.

VDOT Traffic Report

Grayson COUNTY·VA

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conducts a program where traffic count data are gathered from sensors in or along streets and highways and other sources. From these data, estimates of the average number of vehicles that traveled each segment of road are calculated. VDOT periodically publishes booklets listing these estimates.

AADT: Annual Average Daily Traffic. The Estimate of typical daily traffic on a road segment for all days of the week, Sunday through Saturday, over the period of one year.

AAWDT: Average Annual Weekday Traffic. The estimate of typical traffic over the period of one year for the days between Monday through Thursday.

Route Name:	Segment Edge A to Edge B	Length in Miles	AADT	QA	% of 4Tire	% of Bus	% of 2Axle	% of 3+Axle	% of 1Trailer	% of 2Trailer	QC	K Factor	QK	AAWDT	QW
16/Jefferson Highway	NC State Line to US 58 Troutdale Hwy	4.06	960	F	91	0	1	1	6	0	C	0.092	F	1000	F
16/58/Troudale Hwy	US 58 Mouth of Wilson to US 58 Volney	3.99	1500	F	91	0	1	1	6	0	F	0.086	F	1500	F
16/Troutdale Hwy	US 58 Highlands Pkwy to ECL Troutdale	5.66	1000	F	91	0	1	1	6	0	F	0.086	F	1100	F
16/Troutdale Hwy	WCL Troutdale to Smyth County Line	0.82	1100	F	91	0	1	1	6	0	F	0.088	F	1200	F
21/221/New River Pkwy	NC State Line to SCL Independence	3.39	1700	F	94	1	1	1	4	0	C	0.101	F	1700	F
21	NCL Independence to 38-791 Country Ln	8.72	1800	N	96	0	1	1	2	0	N	0.107	N	1900	N
21/Elk Creek Pkwy	38-791 Country Ln to 38-805 Spring Valley Rd	1.45	1200	F	96	0	1	1	2	0	F	0.098	F	1300	F
21/Elk Creek Pkwy	38-805 Spring Valley Rd to Wythe County Line	1.37	1100	F	96	0	1	1	2	0	F	0.09	F	1100	F
48/Blue Ridge Pkwy	NC State Line to SR 89	1.13	560	O											
48/Blue Ridge Pkwy	SR 89 to Grayson County Line	3.56	560	O											
58/Highlands Pkwy/Jeb Stuart Hwy	Washington County Line to SR 362 GHSP	9.57	650	F	95	0	1	2	1	0	F	0.103	F	670	F
58/Highlands Pkwy	SR 362 GHSP to 38-740 North of Rugby	3.76	380	F	95	0	1	2	1	0	F	0.125	F	400	F
58/Highlands Pkwy	38-740 North of Rugby to SR 16 Troutdale Hwy	3.99	630	F	95	0	1	2	1	0	F	NA		650	F
58/16/Troutdale Hwy	SR 16 Highlands Pkwy to SR 16 Jefferson Hwy	3.99	1500	F	91	0	1	1	6	0	F	0.086	F	1500	F
58/Wilson Hwy	SR 16 Jefferson Hwy to 38-711 Fox Creek Rd	3.79	1600	F	92	1	1	2	4	0	F	0.095	F	1700	F
58/Wilson Hwy	38-711 Fox Creek Rd to WCL Independence	8.04	2300	F	92	1	1	2	4	0	C	0.097	F	2400	F
58/221/Grayson Pkwy	ECL Independence to SR 274 Riverside Dr	1.55	6400	N	95	1	1	1	2	0	N	0.107	N	6700	N
58/221/Grayson Pkwy	SR 274 Riverside Dr to SR 94 Riverside Dr	8.68	4800	F	95	1	1	1	2	0	C	0.098	F	5000	F
58/221/Grayson Pkwy	SR 94 Riverside Dr to WCL Galax	1.36	7900	F	95	1	1	1	2	0	F	0.097	F	8200	F
89/Skyline Hwy	NC State Line to SCL Galax	4.89	3500	F	97	0	1	1	1	0	C	0.095	F	3700	F
93/Wilson Hwy	NC State Line to US 58 Near Mouth of Wilson	0.92	660	F	94	0	2	2	2	0	C	0.09	F	680	F
94/Riverside Dr	US 58 West of Galax to SR 274 Riverside Dr	4.22	1700	F	96	1	1	1	1	0	F	0.1	F	1800	F
94/Scenic Rd	SR 274 Riverside Dr to 38-805 SW of Fries SV	2.05	2000	F	96	1	1	0	1	0	F	0.09	F	2100	F
94/Scenic Rd	38-805 SW of Fries SV to WCL Fries	2.2	1900	F	96	1	1	0	1	0	C	0.091	F	2000	F
94	NCL Fries to Carroll County Line	0.63	2000	N	96	1	1	0	1	0	N	0.092	N	2100	N
97/Pipers Gap Rd	ECL Galax to Carroll County Line	0.78	2300	F	99	0	1	0	0	0	C	0.099	F	2400	F
221/21/New River Pkwy	NC State Line to CL Independence	3.39	1700	F	94	1	1	1	4	0	C	0.101	F	1700	F
221/58/Grayson Pkwy	CL Independence to SR 274 E of Independence	1.55	6400	N	95	1	1	1	2	0	N	0.107	N	6700	N
221/58/Grayson Pkwy	SR 274 E of Independence to SR W of Galax	8.68	4800	F	95	1	1	1	2	0	C	0.098	F	5000	F
221/58/Grayson Pkwy	SR 94 W of Galax to WCL Galax	1.36	7900	F	95	1	1	1	2	0	F	0.097	F	8200	F
274/Riverside Dr	US 58 Grayson Pkwy to SR 94 Scenic Rd;Riverside Dr	7.36	810	F	96	1	2	0	1	0	C	0.117	F	840	F

QA – Quality of AADT:
A - Average of Complete Continuous Count Data
B - Average of Selected Continuous Count Data
F - Factored Short Term Traffic Count Data
G - Factored Short Term Traffic Count Data with Growth Element
H - Historical Estimate
M - Manual Uncounted Estimate
N - AADT of Similar Neighboring Traffic Link
O - Provided By External Source
R - Raw Traffic Count, Unfactored

QW: Quality of AAWDT:
A - Average of Complete Continuous Count Data
B - Average of Selected Continuous Count Data
F - Factored Short Term Traffic Count Data
G - Factored Short Term Traffic Count Data with Growth Element
M - Manual Uncounted Estimate
N - AAWDT of Similar Neighboring Traffic Link
O - Provided by External Source

QC: Quality of Classification Data:
A - Average of Complete Continuous Count Data
B - Average of Selected Continuous Count Data
C - Short Term Classified Traffic Count Data
F - Factored Short Term Traffic Count Data
H - Historical Estimate
M - Mass Collective Average
N - Classification Estimates of Similar Neighboring Traffic Link
K - Factor: The estimate of the portion of the traffic volume traveling during the peak hour or design hour.

QK: Quality of the K Factor estimate:
A - Factor based on 30th Highest Hour Observed During at least 250 days of Continuous Traffic Data
B - Factor based on Other Hour Observed During Less than 250 days of Continuous Traffic Data
F - Factor based on Highest Hour Collected at in a 48 Hour Weekday Period
F - Factor based on Highest Hour Collected at in a 48 Hour Weekday Period
N - Design Hour Factor (K Factor) of Similar Neighboring Traffic Link
O - Provided by External Source

Source: http://www.virginiadot.org/info/2012_traffic_data.asp

Transportation Challenges

Challenges to Grayson County transportation include:

- Steep topography, over 60% of the land is in slopes in excess of 20%. Road construction that follows the natural topography reduces costs and runoff concerns but may lead to safety, line of sight and other geometric issues.

- Linear (strip) development along major corridors- multiple entrances on roadways increases safety issues and the traffic carrying capacity of the road.

- Land use policies which may not consider transportation. For example; promoting development in areas without good access and/or state maintained roads and by not taking in the consideration of distances to critical services from areas of development.

- Funding. Reduced funding in the Secondary Six Year Plan program equates to a small percentage of actual improvements completed annually. Little to no funding for primary road projects such as the HWY 58 expansion and lack of funding to correct safety issues on major corridors.

- Limited signage allowed on VDOT right of ways may discourage economic development.

- Maintenance budgets and the distance of the maintenance headquarters from locations prohibit a feasible maintenance schedule.

- The distance traveled by residents to work or school average over 39 miles a day (citizen survey).

- Travelers are reliant on the automobile and they are paying a large percentage of their budgets on fuel transportation costs.

- Local involvement in the Six Year Improvement Program to ensure that statewide projects reflect the needs of Grayson County.

- Safety concerns due to line of sight issues on rural roads, lack of adequate shoulders and guardrails.

- Lack of emphasis on pedestrian and bicycling alternatives in residential areas such as the towns.

- Distance to regional public transit such as airports, major bus lines and rail.

- Limited option for local bus transit service for low income, elderly and other non-drivers.

Chapter 8

Public Services, Facilities, & Utilities

Introduction

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

"Leadership is based on inspiration, not domination; on cooperation, not intimidation." William Arthur Ward

The cooperation of state, federal and local partners, governmental and non-governmental agencies, religious, civic and volunteer organizations of all shapes and sizes; cannot be underestimated. Together these partnerships promote the general well being of our community.

This chapter will focus on services available through local government. In addition to the services provided on these pages, there are many more volunteer and civic organizations, federal and state agencies, and regional boards, authorities and commissions who partner with our local governments to serve the public. This chapter is dedicated to all of these organizations and individuals.

Grayson County Government Structure & the Board of Supervisors

Grayson County, Virginia Organizational Chart

```
                    The Citizens of
                    Grayson County
                           |
         ┌─────────────────┴─────────────────┐
  Grayson County                      Grayson County
  Constitutional Offices              Board of Supervisors
                                             |
   ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬───────────┴──────────┐
Department of   Boards,        County                County
Social Services Authorities    Administrator         Attorney
                and Commissions
```

Finance Department -Accounts Payable -Payroll	Building Official Inspections Dept.	Deputy County Administrator	Parks & Recreation	Planning & Community Devlopment Department
	Utilities Department (water)	Personnel and Human Resources	Emergency Services	Zoning & Subdivision / Tourism & Community Dev.
Maintenance Department	Department of Public Works (Solid Waste)	Animal Control Department	Day Report Program	Victim Witness
Custodial Staff				

Grayson County Administration & Board of Supervisors

The Grayson County Board of Supervisors serves as the chief governing body for the county. There are five members of the board, with four representing the local magisterial districts and one at-large member. The magisterial districts are Elk Creek, Oldtown, Providence, and Wilson. Each supervisor serves a four-year term, and the terms have been staggered since 1979 to smooth out the transition process.

The policies and programs set by the Board of Supervisors are carried out by the County Administrator, an appointed employee who serves at the pleasure of the Board. The County Administrator has day-to-day supervision of county departments. The administrator along with the Board of Supervisors is responsible each year for setting the county budget. The administrator performs other functions as directed by the Board and may suggest policy recommendations from time to time.

All **Board of Supervisors** meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Grayson County Courthouse, Room 206, located at 129 Davis Street, Independence, VA 24348.

Grayson County Administration, P.O. Box 217, Independence, Virginia 24348 – 276-773-2471- http://www.graysongovernment.com/graysoncountyvirginia.aspx"

Office of the Registrar/The Electoral Board/Voting Districts

The Constitution of Virginia requires the appointment of an Electoral Board who is tasked with governing the electoral process and the functions of voting. The County Registrar is appointed by the Electoral Board and manages the voting process, registers individuals to vote and maintains the records of citizenship for the purposes of voting among other duties assigned to the position. The office of the Registrar is located at the Grayson County Courthouse. More information can be found at http://www.graysongovernment.com/mountrogers.aspx or 276-773-2843
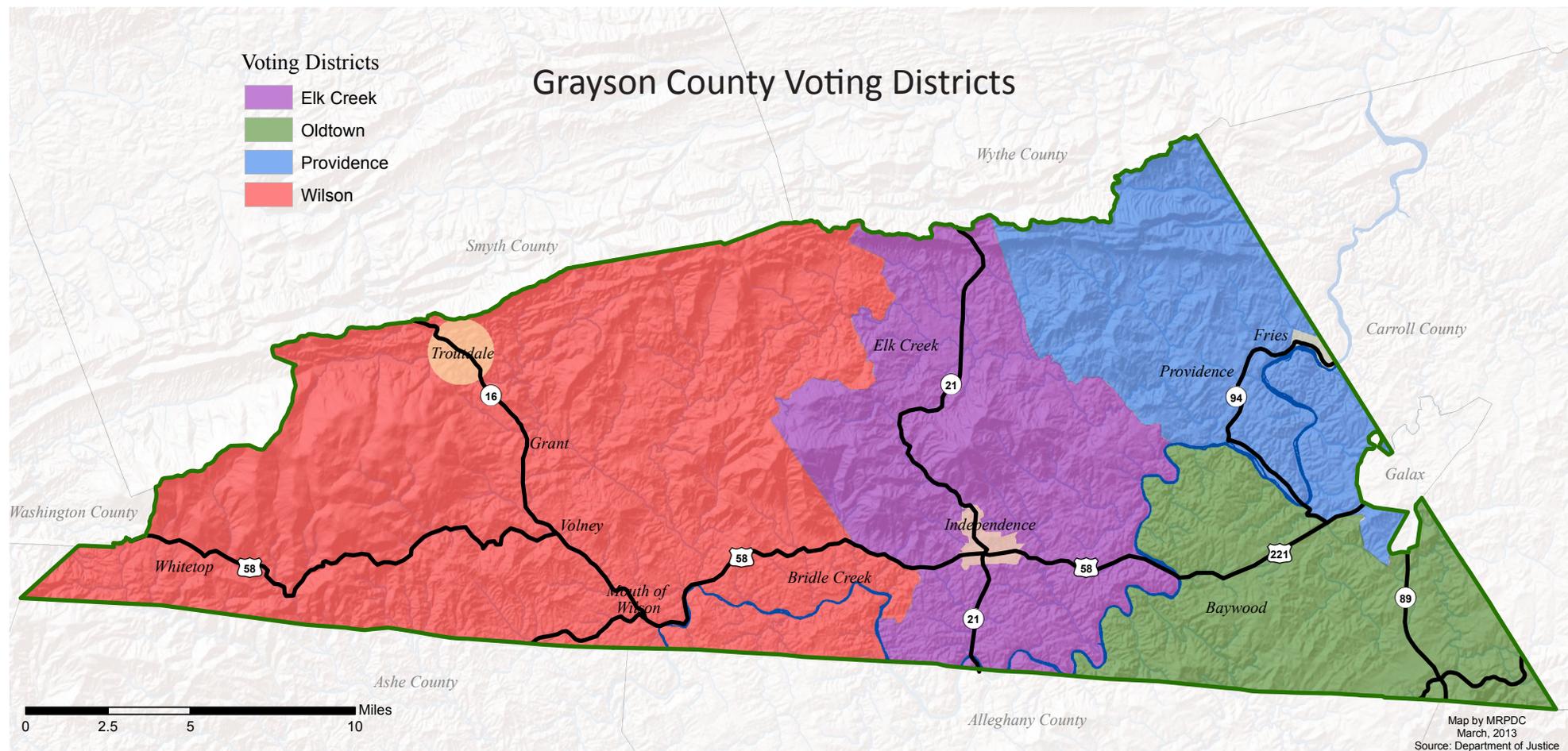
Grayson County is divided into four voting districts; Including Elk Creek, Oldtown, Wilson and Providence. On Election Day and during special elections the citizens of the county report to assigned polling places in their districts to cast their vote.
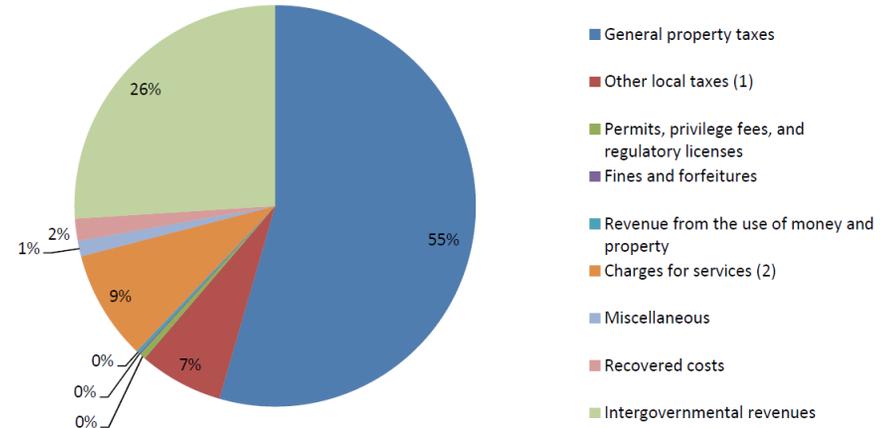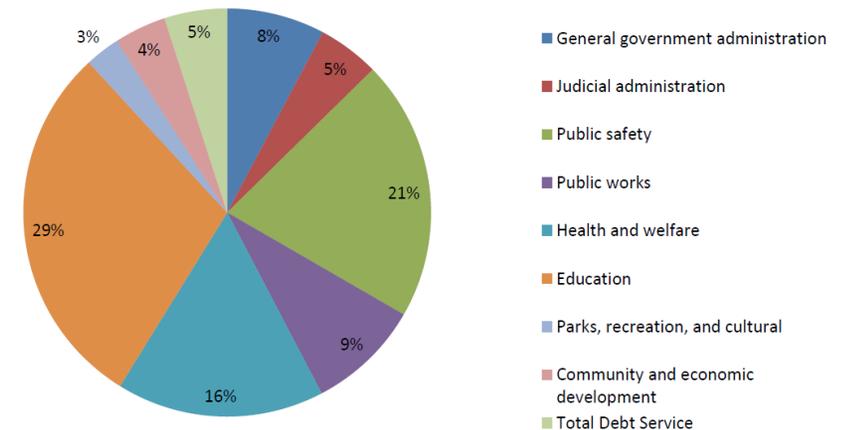
County Finance: Audit Report for 2012 Fiscal Year

GRAYSON COUNTY·VA

County of Grayson, Virginia
General Fund Summary

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Compounded Annual Growth Rate
Revenues:							
General property taxes	$	6,293,863	6,284,555	6,897,256	9,648,978	9,717,645	11.47%
Other local taxes (1)		1,716,432	1,666,459	1,625,599	1,558,841	1,207,281	
Permits, privilege fees, and regulatory licenses		125,615	97,988	79,193	94,520	87,487	
Fines and forfeitures		1,055	14,873	24,609	45,467	22,033	
Revenue from the use of money and property		145,487	69,408	48,006	42,240	44,440	
Charges for services (2)		276,202	287,714	1,438,166	1,479,390	1,573,152	
Miscellaneous		120,632	98,332	237,769	116,907	223,235	
Recovered costs		164,539	230,029	270,356	289,495	318,903	
Intergovernmental revenues		4,408,711	4,659,022	4,574,799	4,953,796	4,638,981	1.28%
Total Revenues		13,252,536	13,408,380	15,195,753	18,229,634	17,833,157	7.70%
Expenditures							
General government administration		993,506	1,262,259	1,394,457	1,293,198	1,217,199	
Judicial administration		686,829	701,381	736,291	781,229	763,200	
Public safety		2,487,696	2,869,603	3,044,741	2,897,363	3,230,783	
Public works		1,393,860	1,295,219	1,358,343	2,123,915	1,403,871	
Health and welfare		2,449,335	2,589,793	2,484,195	2,367,933	2,578,416	
Education		4,255,829	4,165,672	3,270,976	5,106,175	4,582,556	
Parks, recreation, and cultural		452,820	448,798	480,181	494,889	432,114	
Community and economic development		608,193	916,625	519,713	582,763	644,680	
Total operating expenditures		13,328,068	14,249,350	13,288,897	15,647,465	14,852,819	2.74%
Capital projects		29,373	21,648	25,251	362,875	-	
Annual Debt Service:							
Principal retirement		271,638	1,905,535	2,607,164	2,358,145	134,255	
Interest and other fiscal charges		80,662	82,757	105,759	80,708	642,784	
Total Debt Service		352,300	1,988,292	2,712,923	2,438,853	777,039	21.87%
Debt Refinancing		-	-	-	-	18,300,000	
Total Expenditures		13,709,741	16,259,290	16,027,071	18,449,193	33,929,858	25.43%
Other Financing Sources/(Uses)		50,543	2,086,773	1,886,131	2,502,856	18,003,855	
Change in Fund Balance		(406,662)	(764,137)	1,054,813	2,283,297	1,907,154	
Beginning Fund Balance		2,660,831	2,254,169	1,490,032	2,544,845	4,918,053	
Ending Fund Balance	$	2,254,169	1,490,032	2,544,845	4,828,142	6,825,207	
Ending Cash Balance	$	675,382	291,527	96,205	3,567,157	4,847,051	

County of Grayson, Virginia
Debt Summary

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
General Long-term Obligations						
Literary Loans	$	243,470	118,470	-	24,948	63,829
Capital Leases		139,983	171,315	107,588	24,948	63,829
General Obligation Debt		1,434,425	1,359,968	1,285,001	1,209,496	1,133,426
Lease Revenue Notes		16,300,000	16,300,000	18,300,000	18,300,000	17,900,000
Other Long-term Obligations		221,927	252,048	276,946	299,871	301,407
General Long-term Obligations	$	18,339,805	18,201,801	19,969,535	19,834,315	19,398,662
Population		17,917	17,917	17,917	15,533	15,533
Debt per capita		1,024	1,016	1,115	1,277	1,249
State Averages		2,307	2,481	2,651	2,855	n/a

General Fund Revenues for Fiscal Year

- General property taxes — 55%
- Other local taxes (1) — 7%
- Permits, privilege fees, and regulatory licenses — 0%
- Fines and forfeitures — 0%
- Revenue from the use of money and property — 0%
- Charges for services (2) — 9%
- Miscellaneous — 1%
- Recovered costs — 2%
- Intergovernmental revenues — 26%

General Fund Expenditures for Fiscal Year
(Excludes Capital Projects)

- General government administration — 8%
- Judicial administration — 5%
- Public safety — 21%
- Public works — 9%
- Health and welfare — 16%
- Education — 29%
- Parks, recreation, and cultural — 3%
- Community and economic development — 4%
- Total Debt Service — 5%

Source: Grayson County Audit Report. Prepared by Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates

Capital Improvement Program Introduction

The Grayson County Board of Supervisors' Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is an instrument for prioritizing capital expenditures and a means of appropriate planning for the funding of county facilities, equipment, vehicles and such, with a unit cost greater than $24,900 or a project cost greater than $34,900 over the next five (5) fiscal years. The Board of Supervisors reviews and approves the Capital Improvement Plan each year during the budget review process.

A. The CIP shall serve as a county-wide financial planning tool for capital projects and will be adopted as an addendum to the County's Annual Budget.

B. The instrument will be applicably used for the purposes of:
    1. Identifying appropriate funding options such as grants and other leveraged resources.
    2. Prioritizing projects in which to fund
    3. Scheduling the onset of capital projects

C. The CIP will be developed by the County Administrator and presented to the Board of Supervisors for formal adoption.

D. All projects that do not meet the CIP criteria are to be funded through the applicable department's annual budget appropriation and shall not be funded through the CIP.

E. Whenever possible, CIP projects shall be funded wholly or in part by non-debt sources (e.g., grants donations, reallocation of unanticipated revenues, etc.) and/or offset through the department's annual budget appropriation.

F. The CIP may be adopted with the direction to proceed with specified projects and serve as approval to advance with the applicable procurement processes.

G. The CIP plan shall consist of, at minimum, the project name, priority ranking, estimated cost, plan for funding, date to be engaged (include phases when a phased approach is applicable), brief description of project and justification/purpose of said project.

Program Adopted: June 15th, 2013

Attest: _____

       Clerk, Grayson County Board of Supervisors

Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (FY 2014-FY 2019)

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Project	*Est. Cost	**Financing Plan	*Time Table	Description	Purpose
1. Water Meter Replacement Project (Water Dept.)	PI - $70k PII - $70k $140,000	To identify and pursue grant and loan opportunities to fund the cost of each phase and fund the remaining expense of project through an allocation from the CIP Fund and/or budget appropriately for debt service (Ex: SERCAP Grant and Loan Programs)	Phase I – Fall of 2013 Phase II – Fall of 2014	To replace failing and obsolete county water meters in Fairview and Oldtown	Current water meters are failing and parts are no longer available. Note: Current meters do not meet the new code requirements (lead components). Utilize this opportunity to incorporate technology in meter reading. Greater revenue capture based on lower reading tolerances
2. Courtroom Renovation Project (Court Services)	$25,000	To use courthouse maintenance monies and/or a CIP allocation to fund the cost of the project	CY - 2014	To make FF&E improvements to the Circuit Court Room and Judge's Chambers	To make needed FF&E repairs, updates and improvements that have resulted from neglect within the Circuit Court room and the Judge's chambers
3. Pedestrian Walking Trail Phase II (Community Project)	TBD	To primarily utilize Transportation Enhancement Act funding at 80% and match the remaining w/ in-kind contributions and a CIP allocation	CY - 2014	To complete Phase II of the Pedestrian Bike Trail	Completing the trail will satisfy the VDOT grant and provide safe thoroughfare to our recreation park, enhance the beauty of the town and expand recreational opportunities
4. Grayson County Shooting Range (County Partnership Project)	$75,000	$25,000 – NRA Grant $25,000 – DGIF Grant $25,000 – Local Match (CIP Fund)	CY - 2014	To site and develop a public shooting range for community use	To provide the public and various organizations in the community with a safe location to practice or qualify with their weapons, conduct educational courses and classes, host competitions, etc.
5. County Phone System Replacement Project (Maintenance Dept.)	$45,000	To make application for a VDEM grant to cover the cost of the project and use an allocation from the CIP Fund to match grant or execute project if VDEM funding is not available.	CY - 2014	To replace the entire county courthouse phone system	To replace and upgrade the county's obsolete phone system (equipment) with greater integration and features for ease of use w/ potential for cost savings
6. Recreation Park Lighting Replacement Project (Parks & Rec. Park)	PI - $150K PII - $150K $300,000	To fund the cost of each phase of the project through two separate allocations from the CIP Fund	Phase I – Winter of 2013 Phase II – Winter of 2014	To replace the outdoor polls and lighting at the Grayson County Rec. Park	To replace the outdoor polls and lighting due to the age and condition of the structures. Note: We have already experienced one poll to fall due to age and condition
7. Compactor Truck (Public Works Dept.)	$115,000	To fund the cost of the purchase through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY - 2015	To purchase a compactor truck to replace two (2) current ton trucks	To replace aging equipment for increased reliability and safety, and reduction in cost and time of maintenance
8. Courthouse Roof Replacement Project (Maintenance Dept.)	$80,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY - 2015	To replace the three (3) remaining portions of the roof of the courthouse	To replace the aging and leaking roof system that was not accommodated during our previous renovation project
9. Transfer Station (Public Works)	$30,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2015	To construct a transfer station upon the grounds of the public works facility	To establish a transfer station to allow for the transfer of solid waste from smaller ton trucks to a compactor truck(s) in to reduce trips to the landfill and save fuel costs, wear and tear on equipment, wasted man hrs,

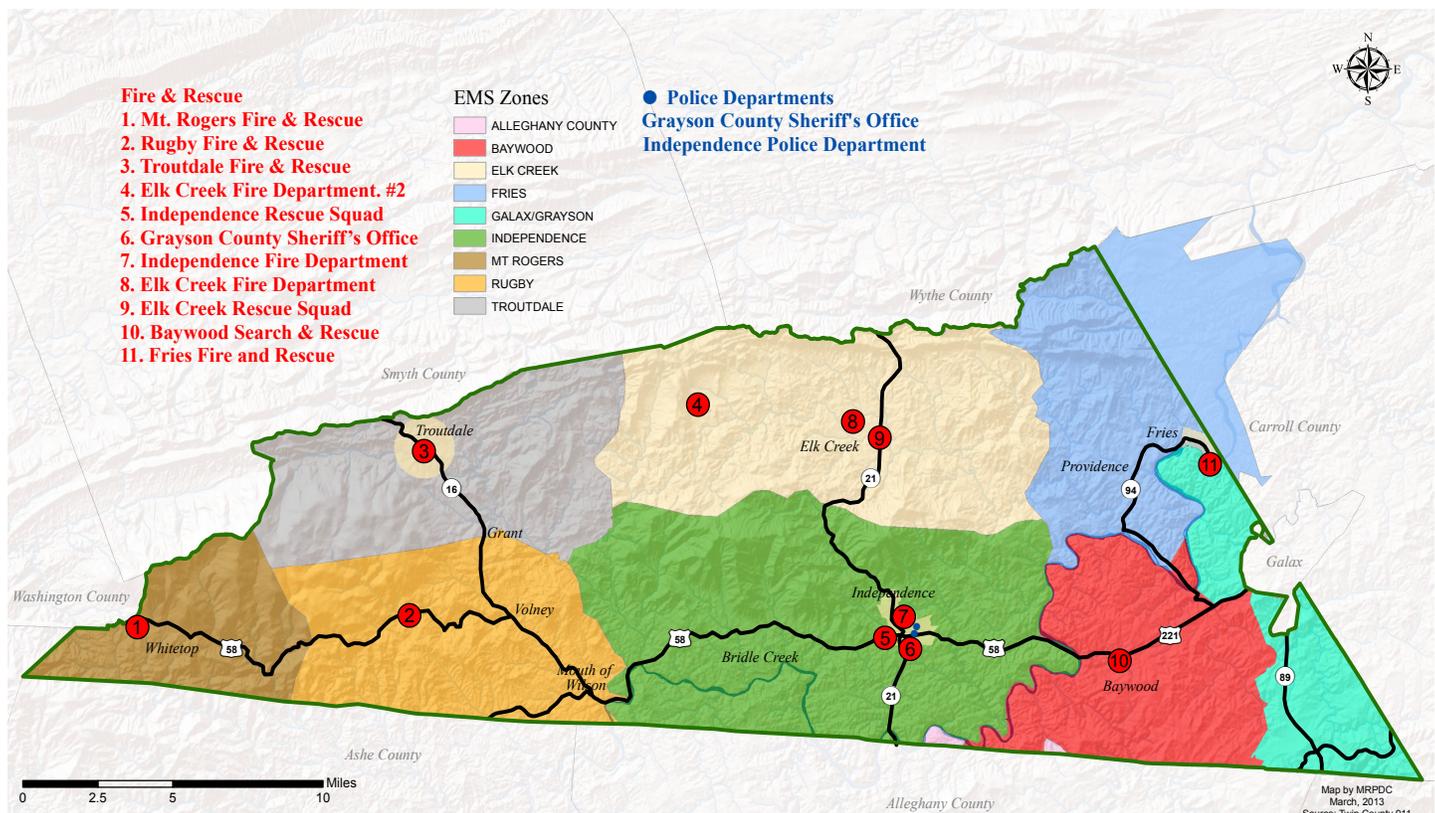| Project	*Est. Cost	Financing Plan	*Time Table	Description	Purpose
					risk management, etc.
10. ACO Vehicle (Animal Control)	$30,000	To fund the cost of the purchase through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY - 2015	To purchase an ACO Vehicle	To replace aging equipment
11. Inspections Vehicle (Building Official)	$25,000	To fund the cost of the purchase through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY - 2015	To purchase an inspections vehicle	To replace aging equipment
12. Softball Field Improvements (Parks & Rec. Dept.)	$65,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2016	To construct and install concession stands, restrooms, press box at the new ball fields	The new fields currently are without any of the specified facilities, and port-a-johns are being temporarily used. The addition of concession stands will yield opportunity for commerce and enhance the offerings along with a press box for regional events
13. Security Fencing Project at Public Works Facility (Public Works Dept.)	$25,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2016	To enclose the public works property with security fencing	To enclose the public works property with security fencing to secure the premises for safety, liability and security purposes
14. Courthouse Paving Project (Maintenance Dept.)	$95,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY - 2017	To resurface the courthouse parking lot	To repave the parking lot of the courthouse to make proper repairs and corrections
15. Pool Repair Project (Parks & Rec. Dept.)	$40,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2017	To make necessary repairs to the pool	Replace and repair pool components such as filter system due to age and life span of the equipment
16. Tennis Court Repair Project (Parks & Rec. Dept.)	$30,000	To fund the cost of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2017	To make necessary repairs to the tennis courts	Install a new topcoat surface to allow for continued and expanded use
17. Tractor-Trailer Purchase (Public Works Dept.)	$75,000	To fund the cost of the purchase through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2018	To purchase a tractor trailer for use in the Public Works Dept.	To allow Public Works the capabilities to haul recyclables and off-set freight charges
18. Library Carpet Replacement Project (Community Library)	$35,000	To fund the cost of the purchase in part through an allocation from the CIP Fund	CY – 2018	To replace the carpet in the community library facility	To remove and replace the worn out carpet in the library facility with new carpeting
19. Community Center Project (Community Partnership)	$2,500,000	To fund a portion of the project through an allocation from the CIP Fund; secure available grant funding, Town(s) partnership, business community, private capital raise, etc. (Breakdown TBD)	CY - 2019	To renovate or construct a community center	To develop a partnerships to pursue various funding sources to construct or renovate a facility (Ex: Robert Shaw Building) for a community center for wellness activities, community mtng space, for/non-profit/gov't office space, after school activities, training rooms, and many other community oriented functions
Total:	**$3,730,000.**	(*Estimated and/or Projected)	(**Funding Plan is subject to B.1 &E. of the adopted Program)		

CIP Adopted: _____   Attest: _____

Clerk, Grayson County Board of Supervisors

Emergency Services

There are ten volunteer fire and rescue squads that provide emergency services to Grayson County. The map below shows the independent fire and rescue departments and their allocated EMS zones. The Galax-Grayson EMS provides additional services through paid staff and support from the City of Galax and Grayson County.

The Twin County E-911 Regional Dispatch Center is located at the Harold Sneed Public Safety Building, 353 North Main Street, Galax, Virginia. The E-911 Service is organized, maintained and administered by the Twin County E-911 Regional Commission which is comprised of two members from Grayson and Carroll Counties and the City of Galax. The E-911 service receives all 911 emergency calls from Grayson and Carroll County and the City of Galax. They directly dispatch all fire and rescue services if there is an imminent or life threating situation. If there is no imminent threat they will still patch the call over to local law enforcement call centers and allow their center to handle the necessary dispatch.

In 2012, the Twin County E-911 service received a total of 24,059 calls from all jurisdictions. There were 320 dispatches of fire squads and 1800 dispatches of rescue squads in Grayson County specifically.

Fire & Rescue
1. Mt. Rogers Fire & Rescue
2. Rugby Fire & Rescue
3. Troutdale Fire & Rescue
4. Elk Creek Fire Department. #2
5. Independence Rescue Squad
6. Grayson County Sheriff's Office
7. Independence Fire Department
8. Elk Creek Fire Department
9. Elk Creek Rescue Squad
10. Baywood Search & Rescue
11. Fries Fire and Rescue

EMS Zones
ALLEGHANY COUNTY
BAYWOOD
ELK CREEK
FRIES
GALAX/GRAYSON
INDEPENDENCE
MT ROGERS
RUGBY
TROUTDALE

● Police Departments
Grayson County Sheriff's Office
Independence Police Department

Water & Sewer Facilities

Water and sewer facilities across the county consist of independent systems such as private wells and onsite sewage/septic treatment systems.

The Town of Independence and the Town of Fries maintain and operate water and sewage lines from within their jurisdictions. The county water system includes lines in the areas of Oldtown, Fairview and Volney/Grant communities. Troutdale has its own water system.

Water supply has been increased through a partnership of the Virginia Carolina Water Authority. This partnership of Sparta, Independence and Grayson County has increased supply by over 900 gallons of water per minute from the New River.

The Town of Independence plans to update their water and sewer lines.

The Town of Fries' water plant is currently operating at half capacity and has talked about extending their lines to the communities of Eagle Bottom and Hawkstown.

Grayson County is currently looking to replace aging water meters in the Fairview and Oldtown water system.

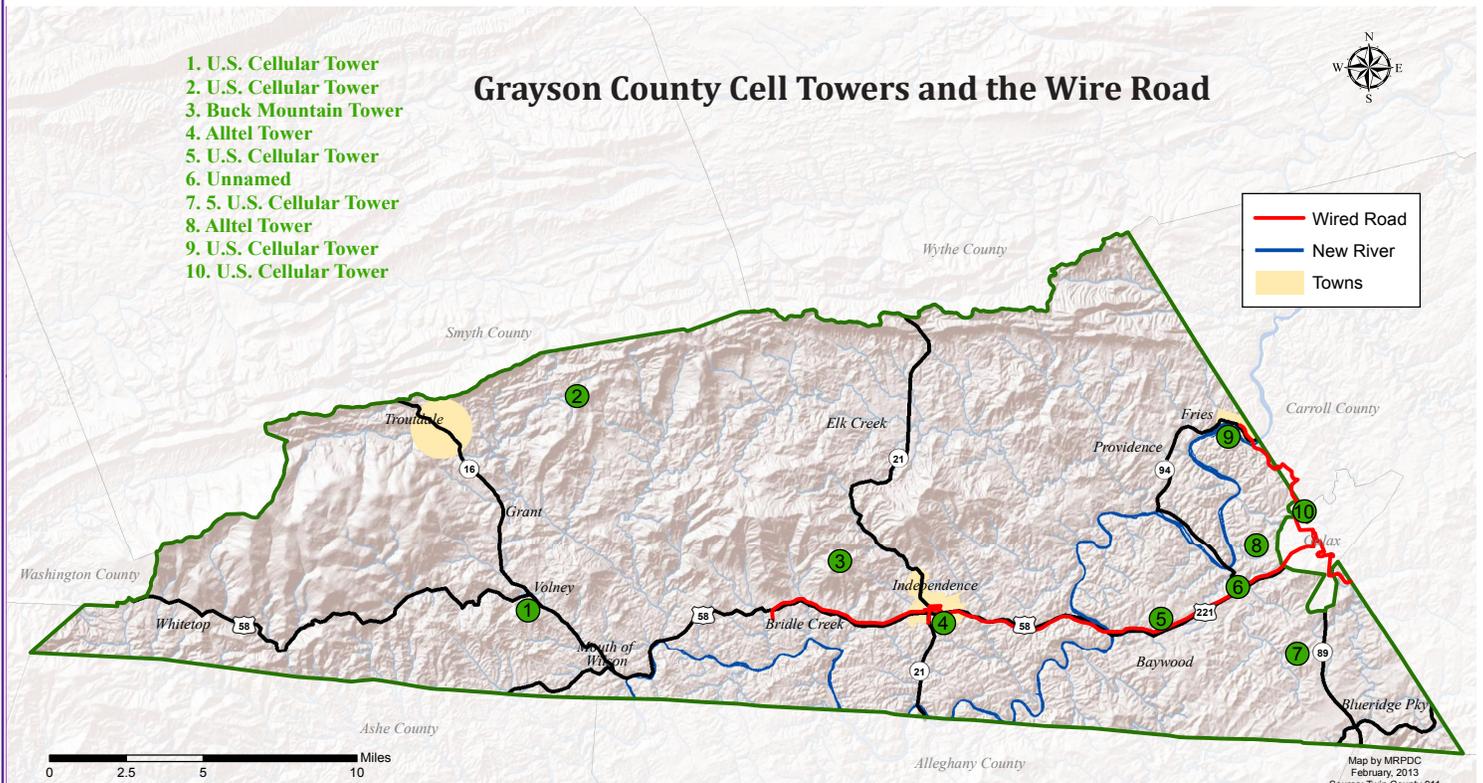
Grayson County Water and Sewer Lines
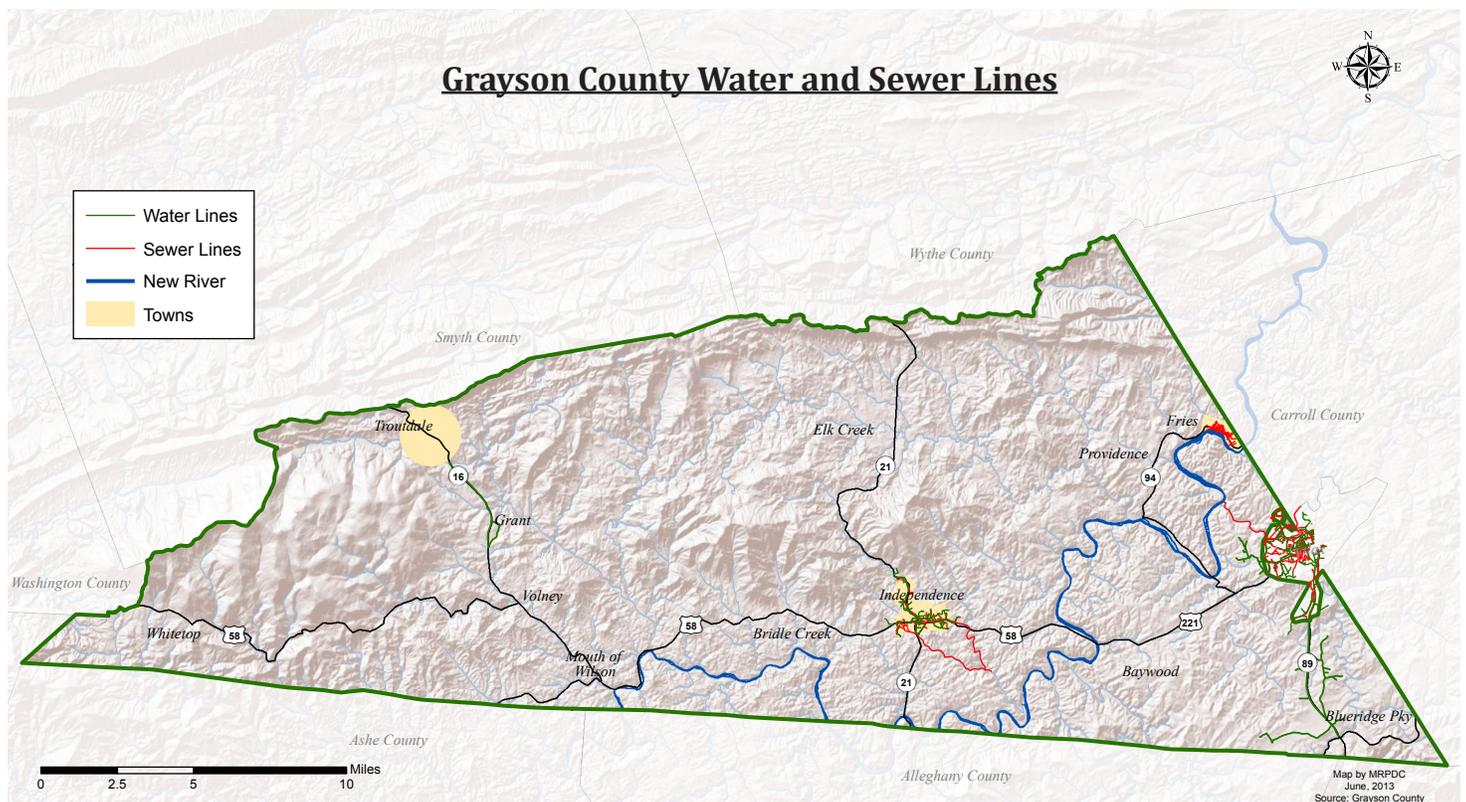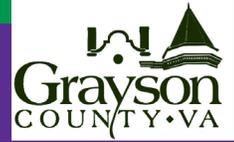
The Broadband Network & Cell Services
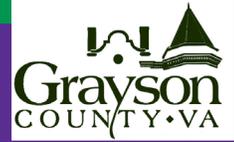
Grayson County continues efforts to increase wireless and broadband communication to improve the quality of life for its citizens and to encourage economic development. Challenges include lack of cell phone coverage and limited wireless capibilites in some areas of the county. Efforts to improve the broadband communication includes the Wired Road. Below is a map that shows cell tower locations and the broadband location of the Wired Road.

The Wired Road is a fully integrated fiber and wireless broadband network offering 100 megabit and gigabit fiber connections and multi-megabit wireless connections throughout Grayson and Carroll Counties and the City of Galax. The Wired Road is a collaborative effort by the counties of Grayson and Carroll, the City of Galax, the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority and private sector service providers. The service provides the region with critically advanced technology that will continue to attract businesses along with aspiring entrepreneurs.

As of 2013, the Wired Road has generated over one million dollars in wireless and fiber construction. The Grant Community Computing Center in Grayson County and three Wireless Access Points have been added to provide additional infrastructure.

Grayson County Cell Towers and the Wire Road

1. U.S. Cellular Tower
2. U.S. Cellular Tower
3. Buck Mountain Tower
4. Alltel Tower
5. U.S. Cellular Tower
6. Unnamed
7. 5. U.S. Cellular Tower
8. Alltel Tower
9. U.S. Cellular Tower
10. U.S. Cellular Tower

Grayson County Parks & Recreation

Grayson County Recreation Park is located at 85 County Park Lane in Independence and provides the following ammenities:

1. B.A. Rudy Jr. Memorial Ball Fields – Two multiuse fields with baseball diamonds and 285' fences

> Amenities include: Press box with PA system, covered picnic shelters, concession stands, covered dug outs, spacious parking, lighting and restrooms

2. Two Additional Softball Fields with 200' Fences

> Amenities include: Digital scoreboard, batting cages, pitching areas, covered dug outs, press box with PA system, concession stand, pitching areas, rest rooms, lighting, and a walking track around the fields

3. 25 Meter Outdoor Pool

> Amenities include: Certified lifeguards, concessions, vending machines, restrooms with showers, lighting, electricity, and picnic tables

4. Picnic Areas and Shelters (Open from dawn till dusk, year round)

5. Playground with a sand area, multi-play system and swing sets

6. Walking Track – A paved 0.3 Mile Loop

7. Single Track Three Mile Loop Trail for advanced mountain bikers or hikers/cross country runners

Various youth programs are offered through GCPR including baseball, softball, t-ball and machine pitch, football, flag football, tackle football, soccer, cheerleading and basketball.

For more information please visit: http://www.graysonrecpark.com/index.html

The Town of Fries offers outdoor opportunites for residents at the **Fries Recreation Center** right off of Main Street. Live music, dances, plays, public swimming pool, indoor gym, duck pin bowling alley, weight room and a game arcade is offered at the site. Youth sports programs are available as well.

For more information please vistit: http://friesva.com/Recreation.php

Judicial Services

Judicial Services of Grayson County can be found at the Grayson County Courthouse in the Town of Independence. The following list summerizes Judicial Services in Grayson County:

The Office of the **Clerk of the Circuit Court** is an elected office serving an 8-year term. The Clerk is the official record keeper for the county records since Grayson County was formed in 1793. Most notably, those records include, but are not limited to, land records, marriages, divorces, civil law suits, criminal cases, judgments, and wills. Documents are available online to paid subscribers for land records established after 1984 and for other records established since 2001. Public access to these records can always be obtained by visiting the Clerk's office during regular business hours.

The Clerk is probably best known for being an assistant to the Judge. The Clerk prepares many legal documents for the court and maintains these documents in preparation for hearings. The Clerk provides information from court proceedings to the Department of Corrections, the New River Valley Regional Jail, the Division of Motor Vehicles, and other state agencies as required by law.

The duties of the **Clerk of District Court** include receiving fees, processing all criminal warrants, summons, and motions for criminal and traffic violations. The Clerk also updates all dispositions, which include notifying Central Criminal Records Exchange agency which keeps a record of all offenses. This information is used by the local Sheriff's or by State Police or other agencies when criminal background checks are requested.

The **Commonwealth's Attorney** is primarily responsible for matters involving enforcement of the criminal law within Grayson County and a portion of the City of Galax, formerly in Grayson County. The Commonwealth's Attorney serves a four year term and is an Elected Counstitutional Officer.

The **Court Services Unit** or probation department serves the court and facilitates the rehabilitation or treatment of juveniles who come before the court. Services are provided to families of the juveniles as well, to preserve the family structure, if appropriate.

Magistrates are authorized to issue arrest and search warrants, to admit to bail or commit to jail persons charged with offenses, to administer oaths and take acknowledgments, and to act as conservators of the peace. They also have the same power as district courts to issue warrants and subpoenas within the county in which they have jurisdiction. Magistrates are authorized to perform all other acts or functions that are provided specifically by law and may assist in federal criminal proceedings as authorized by federal law. The Victim/Witness Program helps insure that crime victims and witnesses receive fair and compassionate treatment while participating in the Criminal Justice System.

The **Victim/Witness Director** can provide information on the specific rights of a crime victim and witness per the Virginia's Crime Victim and Witness Rights Act; make referrals to community service agencies for counseling or other assistance to victims; assist in preparing a victim compensation form; explain court procedures and/or a tour of the courtroom before a person has to testify; explain how to obtain protection and protective orders; provide a separate waiting area during court proceedings; determine the amount of restitution; and other services as needed.

For more information on Grayson County Judicial Services please go to: http://www.graysongovernment.com/judicial_services.aspx

Solid Waste Management

The Grayson County Public Works Department conducts weekly solid waste pick up and disposal for businesses and residents of Grayson County. Waste materials are brought by truck to the regional landfill in Hillsville, VA. The Grayson County Solid Waste Ordinance guides the operation of these services and the role of both the residents and the county in conducting efficient solid waste dipsosal. Large item pick-up for the residents is offered in the spring of the year; this program collects appliances, furniture and other large items.

From July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2013 (5 years), 30,293 tons of solid waste have been collected and transferred to the regional landfill. On average 6,300 tons of solid waste is delivered to the landfill each year from Grayson County, translating into approx 1/5th of the total landfill load each year.

Transportation costs are a large part of the public works budget. With the average distance from Grayson County solid waste collection routes to the regional landfill at over 60 miles roundtrip, fuel, employee time and maintenance costs create a real challenge. Recycling and the potential for other resourceful ways to deal with the wastestream are a priority for the Grayson County Public Works Department.

The recycling program offers collection centers across the county at sites in Whitetop, Bridle Creek, Elk Creek, Providence, Fries, Baywood, Fairview, Independence at the Courthouse and at Grayson Highands School, Volney, Troutdale and Rugby. Materials collected include; cardboard, office paper, newspaper, magazines, plastic (with recycling symbol) aluminum & steel cans and containers.

In 2011 the Public Works Department expanded the new facility to sort and bale the recycled materials. These commodities are sold directly from the facility to regional markets, offsetting the cost of solid waste disposal by capturing revenue from the recycled materials. For the fiscal year of 2013 the department collected $40,767 in revenue from the recycling program and saved tipping fees in the amount of $17,598 along with associated transportation costs of 351 tons which would have otherwise gone to the landfill.

Recycling by Pounds	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Steel	6,080	6,600	Not Av.	789	17,199
Aluminum	3,185	Not Av.	Not Av.	56	1,623
Cardboard	321,430	886,600	538,778	352,931	398,556
Magazines	14,803	63,385	149,183	Not Av.	Not Av.
Office Paper (2009-2011)	6,903	61,460	40,311	N/A	N/A
Mixed Paper (2012 & 2013)	N/A	N/A	N/A	182,812	212,179
Plastic	38,945	59,482	92,341	20,936	74,394
Newspaper	27,634	76,991	116,390	Not Av.	Not Av.
Total	402,900	1,148,918	937,003	557,524	703,951

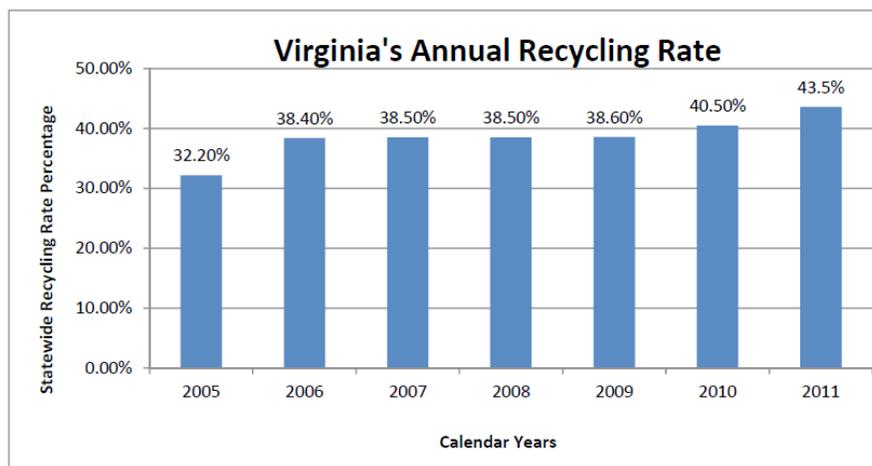# The Carroll-Grayson-Galax Solid Waste Authority

The Carroll-Grayson-Galax Solid Waste Authority is a nine member board represented by three individuals from each jurisdiction. The primary role of this authority is to manage the regional landfill. The Authority was formed in 1993 to provide equal representation to the City of Galax and Grayson County in their use of the regional landfill. Prior to that time each jurisdiction operated independently.

The regional landfill includes two tracts of land. The first tract of 72 acres (SWP508) was acquired in 1987 and encompasses six cells. According to the Landfill Manager these six cells are full of solid waste and this site will be closed in January of 2014. Upon closure the site will be monitored for thirty years according to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The second 155 acre tract (SWP605) adjoins the first tract and was acquired in 1998 to accommodate future expansion of the landfill. This site has 6 cells, of which 5 cells are available. Based on current disposal rates of six years per cell, this portion of the landfill has approximately 30 years left in service to the region. On average the regional landfill takes in approximately 119 tons of waste per day from Grayson & Carroll Counties and the City of Galax.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality regulates solid waste disposal statewide. The regional landfill is required to issue annual reports regarding the amount of solid waste collected. In 2012, the Carroll-Grayson-Galax Regional Landfill collected 37,320 tons of solid waste according to this report. The entire report can be found at; http://www.deq.state.va.us/Programs/LandProtectionRevitalization/ReportsPublications/AnnualSolidWasteReports.aspx

The Carroll-Grayson-Galax Solid Waste Planning Unit is also responsible for reporting the amount of recycled materials or recycling rates to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. In 2011 the statewide recycling rate (average of all planning units) was 43.5%. The Carroll-Grayson-Galax Solid Waste Planning Unit reported a recycling rate of 30%. The entire report can be found at: http://www.deq.state.va.us/Portals/0/DEQ/Land/RecyclingPrograms/Reports/2011Recycling_Rate_Report.pdf

Virginia's Annual Recycling Rate

Calendar Years	Statewide Recycling Rate Percentage
2005	32.20%
2006	38.40%
2007	38.50%
2008	38.50%
2009	38.60%
2010	40.50%
2011	43.5%

Statewide Recycling Rate Data – 3-year summary

2011 - 3,988,266 tons of material recycled or reused, and 9,226,177 tons of solid waste generated (calculation includes + .25% for source reduction initiatives)

2010 - 3,469,747 tons of material recycled or reused, and 8,628,975 tons of solid waste generated (calculation includes + .25% for source reduction initiatives)

2009 - 3,490,151 tons of material recycled or reused, and 9,098,045 tons of solid waste generated (calculation includes + .23% for source reduction initiatives)

Virginia Annual Recycling Rate Report (Department of Environmental Quality, 2012)

Public Libraries & Computer Centers

The **Wythe-Grayson Regional Library** offers five branch locations and a variety of events and programs for the public. The Outreach Program brings library resources by van to citizens who may not have the ability or means to access the library branches. For more information on the programs and events the WGRL has to offer visit:

http://wythegrayson.lib.va.us/index.htm

Below is the location information for the WGRL branches:

Grayson County Public Library

147 South Independence Ave

Independence, VA 24348

(276) 773-2761

Whitetop Public Library

16309 Highlands Parkway

Whitetop, VA 24292

(276) 388-2873

Fries Public Library

105 W. Main St.

Fries, VA 24330-0325

(276) 744-3160

Wythe County Public Library

300 East Monroe Street

Wytheville, VA 24382-2367

(276) 228-6034

Rural Retreat Public Library

119 North Greever St.

Rural Retreat, VA 24369-0279

(276) 686-8337

The Grant Community Computing Center offers free public access to a computer lab and provides high speed broadband internet.

The Wired Road's Grant Community Computing Center provides free access to high quality computing equipment and high speed internet service. This computer center has been designed as a high quality facility with business class equipment and amenities to support not only training, but telework, small business and entrepreneur startups.

This facility is located in Troutdale and offers educational (free classes and workshops), business (training and "business class" workstations), and research (genealogy, hobby, and self-help) resources and opportunities. Services also include free advice on general computing any time the lab is open.

Grayson County Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff is a constitutional officer elected by the citizens of the county. Providing law enforcement and emergency services, the Grayson County Sherriff's Office consist of 25 sworn officers and 8 civilians. The Sheriff's Office receives an average of over 450 calls each month. Below is a list of some of the programs the Sherriff's Office is invovled in:

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.)
This program is aimed at the student population in the school system. Students are taught the dangers of drug use and ways to say "No".

Education-Grayson County School Resource Officers teach "Class Action," a law related education course which instructs high school students in areas such as character, responsibility, and respect for others.

Project Child Find-This project is in place so that parents may bring their children to the Sheriff's Office to have them fingerprinted. Special finger print cards are available at no cost for this valuable record.

House Watch Program-This free service is offered to all Grayson County residents. It allows a home owner the peace of mind that their property is recieving extra patrol coverage while they are out of town. A deputy will check your home at least once every day while you are gone. You can request a house watch by calling 276-773-3241.

Project Lifesaver-Project Lifesaver helps provide rapid response to save lives and reduce the potential for serious injury for adults and children who wander due to Alzheimer's, autism, Down syndrome, dementia and other related cognitive conditions. Contact Karen Smith at (276) 773-3241 if you would like more information on this program.

Crime Prevention-The Grayson County Sheriff's Office is proactive in their crime prevention efforts and coordinates many community services and crime reduction education programs. The Grayson County Sheriff's Office is also responsible for conducting home and business security surveys; managing the Neighborhood and Business Watch Programs, and being involved in many community events and seminars.

Child Identification Kits-The chances of your child being a victim of an unspeakable crime are unlikely. However, it is important to take every precaution available to ensure their safety. The Grayson County Sheriff's Office will assist you with the completion of a Child Identification Kit at no cost to you. A completed child identification kit, which should include fingerprints, a lock of hair, dental records, and a recent photo, can make it easier for law enforcement officers to find missing children.

Senior Call-In Program-This program is in place for the elderly citizens, who live alone, to phone in each morning and let the communications officer know that they are okay. If they fail to call, an officer will be sent to their home to check on them if they cannot be reached by phone. To sign up for this program (at no cost), simply contact the Sheriff's Office at 276-773-3241.

Child Safety Seat Inspections-An Operation Kids trained deputy will inspect and install your child saftey seat for you. The deputy can also check your particular safety seat model to ensure that it hasn't been recalled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for potential safety concerns.

Crim Prevention Programs Offered:

Neighborhood Watch (Neightborhoods bond together to create a watchgroup that helps prevent crime in their immediate area.), **Operation ID** (A prevention program that informs citizens on how to mark their property to prevent theft and aid in recovery.), **Identity Theft Prevention** (Learn ways to protect yourself against the eight different types of identity theft.) **Crime Stoppers** (Help solve crime in your neighborhood and possibly earn a reward.) **Internet Safety** (Learn ways to protect against viruses and prevent internet crimes against children.) **Security Surveys** (A Crime Prevention Specialist assesses your home or business and explains methods to prevent burglary and theft.) **Triad/S.A.L.T.** (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (S.A.L.T.) is a partnership between senior citizens, law enforcement, and community services. This partnership works to reduce criminal victimization, improve safety and quality of life for the elderly through education, fellowship and support.

The **Viringia Uniform Crime Report** is available here: http://www.vsp.state.va.us/downloads/Crime_in_Virginia_2012.pdf. The Virginia Uniform Crime Report provides Law Enforcement with criminal stats and Incident Based Reporting (IBR) by locality. The document measures the affects of crime prevent and deterence.

The Grayson County Sheriff's Office is located in Independence, Virginia. For more information please go to: http://www.graysoncountysheriff.com/ - 276-773-3241

New River Valley Regional Jail

The New River Valley Regional Jail is located in Dublin, Virginia and serves the Counties of Grayson, Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Pulaski, Wythe, and the City of Radford.

The newly built regional jail housed its first prisoners on April 27, 1999. The initial inmate count after all of the local facilities were closed was 248 men and women. Since that time the inmate population has doubled and includes federal inmates as well as inmates from outside jurisdictions. Total occupancy rate includes 859 beds. The building is secured with state of the art technology.

Grayson County is one of eight jurisdictions that contributes funding to the New River Valley Regional Jail for care of their prisoners. According to the 2013-2014 Grayson County budget, $600,000 is budgeted for the projected cost to the county for incarceration of county inmates at the New River Valley Regional Jail.

For more information visit: http://www.nrvrj.org/

Total Number of Arrest Per Fiscal Year for Grayson County and All other Jurisdictions at the NRVRJ

Fiscal Year	Grayson County Number of Arrest	All Jurisdications Number of Arrest
2008-2009	519 / 7% of total	7353
2009-2010	690 / 9% of total	7992
2010-2011	664 / 8% of total	8443
2011-2012	908 / 9% of total	10392
2012-2013	1155 / 8% of total	14781

http://www.nrvrj.org/

Day Report Center

Grayson County began the Day Report Program in January of 2010. The program is used to reduce the costs of regional incarceration, to provide community service, and to assist offenders with life skills and rehabilitation in lieu of incarceration. In three years time (2010 - 2013) $149,000 of county funds have been saved and dozens of offenders have been assisted by this innovative program.

The Day Report Program

The Day Report Center provides a community-based probation option to the qualifying offender who has been convicted of a felony and has been sentenced to an active term of incarceration. To be considered for the Day Report program, an offender must not have been convicted of a violent crime, a sex crime, a crime involving juveniles, or other offense which may indicate that the offender poses a threat to society. Based upon review of the offender's case by the Circuit Court Judge, the Commonwealth's Attorney, the Probation Officer, and the Day Report Manager, an acceptable candidate is provided the opportunity to participate in the program as an alternative to serving an active jail sentence. Compliance with all Day Report Center program components becomes a condition of probation. Failure to comply with the program terms and conditions will most likely result in the offender's return to jail to serve his/her full original sentence.

Program Components

While in the program, participants must perform community service work: forty hours per week for participants who are not employed, twelve hours per week for those who are. If unemployed, a participant must demonstrate continued efforts to find a job. All participants must attend mandatory Life Skills and/or Substance Abuse classes each week. Frequent random drug and/or alcohol testing is performed on every participant. All participants must remain drug-free and alcohol-free, and must not accrue any additional convictions during their period of assignment to the program.

Benefits

The Day Report program offers the offender an opportunity to reintegrate into society and to become a productive member of the community. Through intense supervision, personal guidance, and meaningful work, the program encourages offenders to avoid the activities and situations that have proven so destructive and costly to themselves and to the community in the past.

Grayson County must pay for each day of incarceration for every offender from our county who is serving a sentence at the New River Valley Regional Jail. The cost is substantial, and is on the rise. Thus, significant savings to the taxpayers can be realized by diverting offenders to the Day Report program whenever feasible. All participants must pay monthly participation fees to the county, and must pay for their own drug screens. These fees help to defray program operating costs, and constitute a further incentive for participants to become and remain employed. At the same time, the program provides a pool of community service workers to the county at no additional cost to the taxpayer.

For more information visit: http://www.graysongovernment.com/graysoncountydayreportcenter.aspx

Building & Planning and Community Development Departments

Building

The Grayson County Building Department is responsible for permitting and inspection of new construction, modifications and building related activities within Grayson County. The Building Department reviews plans prior to construction and inspects the construction process to ensure compliance with local and state standards and codes. The Grayson County Building Code Ordinance along with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code and the Virginia Maintenance Code provide guidance for the Building Department.

The Building Department provides guidance on safe building practices, contractor licensing information (The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations), and promotes fire safety and safe living environments.

Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management

The Building Department is responsible for the administration of the Grayson County Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance and after June 2014, the Building Department will implement the Stormwater Management Pollution Prevention Program (SMPPP). Stormwater management, by act of the Virginia General Assembly, has been delegated to local jurisdictions beginning in 2014. Both of these programs will work together to prevent soil erosion and to protect water quality in Grayson County.

Planning & Community Development

The Department of Planning & Community Development is where you can find information about: Tourism, Land-Use Planning, Subdividing land, Zone Districts and the Zone Map, Zoning Permits, The Zoning Ordinance, The Subdivision Ordinance, The Planning Commission or The Board of Zoning Appeals and the Grayson County Comprehensive Plan. The Director of Planning & Community Development serves as the administrative agent of these functions as part of County Administration and serves as the clerk to both the Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals. More information about this department can be found at: http://www.grayson-government.com/stateofvirginiatourism.aspx

These departments are located in the Grayson County Courthouse. More information can be found at 276-773-2322 or at http://www.graysongovernment.com/independencevirginia.aspx

Social Services

The Department of Social Services is located on the lower level of the Grayson County Courthouse. Grayson County Department of Social Services has experieced an increase of recipients receiving benefits. Since 2000, the population of Grayson County has lowered from 16,881 to 15,183. However, the number of people receiving social security benefits has increased from 4,487 to 4,935. Non marital births have increased from 22 percent to 45 percent, the poverty rate has climbed from 13.5 percent to 19 percent, the child poverty rate has increased from 19.9 percent to 29 percent and the number of people receiving SNAP (food stamps) increased from 2,860 to 4,075.

Services and benefits offered by the Department of Social Services include:

Adoptions, Adoptions Assistance, Adult Protective Services, Adult Services, Auxiliary Grant Program, Child Care, Child Protective Services, Companion Services, Comprehensive Services Act, Cooling Assistance, CPS/Eligibility Appeal Hearings, Crisis Fuel Assistance, Diversionary Assistance, Emergency Sheltering, Family Engagement Program, Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program, Fraud Investigation, Elderly/Disabled Christmas Programs, Elderly/Disabled LTC Waiver Program, FAMIS, Foster Care, Foster Parent Training, ICPC, Medicaid, Ongoing Child Protective Services, Prevention Services, Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, Resource Family Case Management, Service Intake and Referral, SNAP, Strengthening Families Initiative, TANF Program, Title IV-E, and VIEW.

More information about the Grayson County Department of Social Services can be found at: http://www.graysongovernment.com/graysoncountysocialservices.aspx or 276-773-2452

The Treasurer

The **Treasurer** is a constitutional officer elected to four year terms by popular vote. The Treasurer is the official responsible for the collection and custody of county funds. The Treasurer reports all activities involving county funds and collections to the Board of Supervisors.

In the Treasurer's office you are able to: Pay your real estate and personal property taxes, state income taxes, purchase county dog tags and county stickers, pay Fairview, Oldtown, and Troutdale water bills, as wells as individual & business trash pickup fees and transient occupancy taxes.

Tax Billing and Collection

The tax billing and collection is the sole responsibility of the Treasurer's office. Assessment values are determined by the Commissioner of Revenue and the tax levy is set by the Board of Supervisors. It is imperative that collections be done in a timely manner; it is the responsibility of the Treasurer's office to do current and delinquent collections. The code of Virginia specifically gives the local Treasurer guidance in procedures and applicable means of collection. Without local collections, the local county's obligations would not be met.

Reporting

The Treasurer's books, papers, and county fund accounts must be available for inspection by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Local Auditors, Federal Auditors, the Board of Supervisors, Commonwealth Attorney, or any taxpayer at all times.

Care and Custody of Funds

The Treasurer is responsible for the safe keeping of all funds. Interest earned on investments adds to the available funds to the County. Strict state laws dictate what types of investments are allowed. The Treasurer's Office is located in the Grayson County Courthouse. More information can be found at: 276-773-2371, http://www.graysongovernment.com/graysoncounty-treasurer.aspx

Commissioner of the Revenue

The Commissioner of the Revenue is a state constitutional officer as set forth in the Constitution of Virginia as the chief assessing officer of the local government. It is an elected position with a four-year term and serves the taxpayers, as well as Grayson County. The Commissioner of the Revenue's office is regulated by the State Code of Virginia. It is the responsibility of this office to uphold the Constitution and the laws of Virginia, along with local ordinances and policies. The scope of the work administered and processed, and the taxes assessed by this office are extremely broad and complex. The Commissioner's office plays a vital role in the multitude of services offered to taxpayers at the local level.

This office assists taxpayers in completing Virginia state tax returns. All incoming tax returns are screened, reviewed, and processed. Tax due payments and initial estimated income tax payments are processed on a daily basis. This office represents the closest link between citizens, elected government and the Virginia Department of Taxation.

The Commissioner of the Revenue's office is responsible for fairly assessing taxes on real estate; personal property (including vehicles, boats, trailers, campers, mobile homes, etc.); business personal property (including equipment, furniture & fixtures); merchant's capital; machinery & tools; bank franchise; and public service corporation taxes.

All real estate is subject to taxation, except those specifically exempt by state code. Tax bills on real estate are due annually on December 5th. As required by Virginia Code, Grayson County conducts a general reassessment on all real estate (currently every six years), in which a professional and independent appraisal company hired by the Board of Supervisors carries out this task. The Commissioner's office is responsible for assessing new construction, as well as additions/improvements that occur between reassessments. This office is responsible for maintaining a record for each parcel of property in Grayson County, transferring property as recorded by deed or will in the Clerk of the Circuit Court's office, assigning map numbers, updating addresses of property owners and new assessment changes for billing, producing the annual real estate and personal property book, which is the basis for the Treasurer's office tax bills.

Our office administers Grayson County's tax relief program which is eligible to citizens who are elderly and/or disabled. This program is dependent upon several factors including income and net worth of the applicants. This office also offers the state wide tax relief program for veterans that are 100% disabled.

In general terms, the Commissioner's office assists the public with any questions concerning a variety of taxes and assessments. One of the main goals is to ensure that all citizens are treated fairly and their taxes are equitable. The office is located at the Grayson County Courthouse and open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. -- 5:00 p.m. Anyone with concerns or questions can call 276-773-2381 or visit: http://www.graysongovernment.com/mapofvirginia.aspx

Grayson County's Virginia Cooperative Extension

The Grayson County Extension Office is Grayson's link to Virginia's land grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Grayson County Extension employees are Virginia Tech faculty and staff providing research-based education and decision support tools to the citizens of the county in four primary areas: Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Services, and Community Viability. The extension office is located in the Grayson County Courthouse on the lower level. For more information visit: http://offices.ext.vt.edu/grayson/

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Rural Economic Development and Policy Support
- Estate and farm transition planning
- Farm financial and business decision support
- Fence laws
- Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development

Animals and Animal Products
- Beef production and marketing
- Dairy farm management
- Sheep and goats
- Pasture management and forage field days for grazing livestock
- Forage and feed testing
- Honeybees

Plants and Plant Products
- Christmas tree production
- Tobacco production and marketing
- Commercial and residential gardening, landscape and turf
- Fruit tree pruning and grafting classes
- Virginia Tech Plant Disease Clinic

Pest Management
- Pest identification (insects, weeds)
- Licensing and recertification classes for pesticide applicators
- Pest management recommendations

Natural Resources
- Monthly New River Soil and Water Conservation District meetings
- Water quality education
- Pond maintenance
- Forestry and wildlife education
- Nutrient management, soil fertility and fertilizer education
- Soil testing lab

Emergency Preparedness
- Support county Emergency Operating Plan
- Report weather-related damage or conditions for state and federal disaster declarations
- Weekly crop weather reporting

4-H Youth Development

Diverse opportunities for young people ages 5-19
- Self-paced projects
- Special interest clubs (ie Lego Robotics Club, Livestock Club)
- Community clubs
- Field trips and other travel opportunities

In-school enrichment programming structured for hands-on learning

Life skills development

Healthy living education

Annual summer camp

Youth leadership training

Civic engagement

Community service opportunities

Agriculture education including yearly field days

Environmental awareness

Local, state, and national project competitions in numerous categories

Family and Consumer Sciences

Food, Nutrition and Health
- Healthy meals and lifestyles
- Safe food preservation
- Food entrepreneurship
- SNAP-Ed (targeted nutrition and lifestyle education for families receiving SNAP benefits, the elderly and new families)

Family financial management

Family and human development
- Smart Beginnings
- Early childhood development
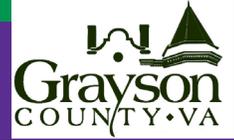- Training for day care providers

Community Viability

Leadership development

Facilitation skills development

Trained facilitator for local civic, governmental, community or non-profit groups

Grayson County Health Department

The Grayson County Health Department is located on West Main Street in the Town of Independence. The Grayson County Health Department is part of the Virginia Department of Health as well as the Mount Rogers Health District which serves the counties of Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington and Wythe and the cities of Bristol and Galax. The Health Department offers some free services based on income levels and others require certain payment rates. Some of the programs offered through the health department deal with Adult Immunization, Baby Care, Cardiovascular Risk Reduction Project, Care Connection for Children, Children's Immunizations, Communicable Disease, Dental Services, Environmental Health Services, Family Planning, Health Education, Health Works, Occupational Health and Safety, Plan First, Pre-Admission Nursing Home Screenings, Resource Mothers, Smoke Free Babies, and Women's Infants and Children's.

The local facility handles onsite water and sewage permits.

Certified copies of birth and marriage certificates can be optained at the Virginia Deparment of Health Office of Vital Records. Death certificates can be obtained at the local health department/ Grayson County Health Department.

The Wellness Team provides worksite health promotion, including on-site health screenings aboard a mobile medical unit. Screenings are held for the public at the Grayson County Health Department twice a year. Screenings include: Lipid Panel/Blood Sugar(triglycerides-HDL-VLDL-LDL-Gluclose-ratio), prostrate cancer screen for men age 40 or over, HgbA1c(blood sugar control), thyroid, complete blood count, gluclose/blood sugar, vitamin d, CMP, kidney profile or liver profile, bone density, and other lab services are available upon request.

Staff members attend health fairs, trainings and provide health education programs for other agencies and community groups, and serve on local coalitions that promote services to the public.

The Grayson County Health Department is located at 186 West Main Street, Independence, Virginia and can be reached at 276-773-2961- http://www.vdh.state.va.us/LHD/mtrogers/grayson.htm

Animal Control & Local Shelters

Grayson County Animal Control

The mission of the Grayson County Department of Animal Control is to balance the health, safety and welfare needs of the people and animals in accordance with Virginia State and Local Ordinances. The department may accomplish these goals by working with our citizens and other animal welfare organizations. The department investigates animal cruelty cases, finds homes for many abandoned animals, and humanely euthanize the unwanted animals in our community in accordance with state law. For more information visit: http://www.graysongovernment.com/graysoncountyanimalshelter.aspx

Ideal Goals for Future Consideration:

1) Advocate and champion Spay/Neuter Law for dogs and cats which in time shall reduce the population of unwanted and stray animals in a progressive manner that saves taxpayers dollars and positively reduces the numbers of cats and dogs euthanized.

2) Facilitate and operate outreach programs to schools and groups to educate the public about responsible companion animal ownership.

3) Continue building partnerships with certified groups to find homes for the homeless animals including the loveable "mutts" that are often times overlooked.

4) Increase awareness and communication among the three jurisdictions to build strong, worthwhile, and effective policies and procedures.

Local Animal Shelters

Galax Carroll Grayson SPCA
Animal Shelter
200 Fair St., Galax, VA 24333
(276) 236-8501

Twin County Humane Society
PO Box 125 Hillsville, VA 24343
(276) 788-4038
info@twincountyhumanescociety.org

Smyth County Animal Shelter
287 Fox Valley Road, Marion VA 24354
(276) 646-2222
kmoore@smythcounty.org

Town of Independence

The Town of Independence is the county seat of Grayson County and is the location for many of the county services including the Grayson County Courthouse. The town was founded in 1850 and operates with a council form of government. The Town of Independence operates its own Police Department, Public Works including water and sewer and other administrative functions for residents and businesses of the county. The Town Office is located on Main Street and is open daily to the public. More information about the town can be found at: http://independenceva.com/ or (276)-773-3703
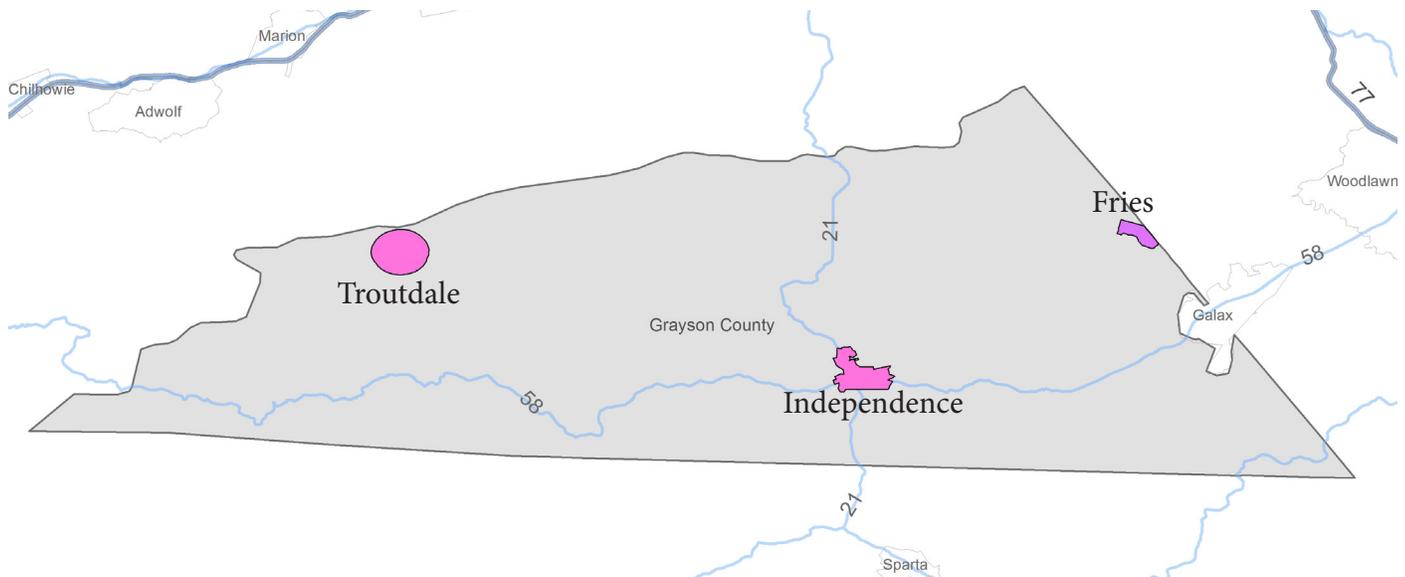
2010 Census Data

Total Population: 947

Median Age: 50.9

Total Households: 535

Average Household Size: 2.13

Population Over 3 Enrolled in School: 315

Percent of High School Graduate or Higher: 74.5%

Percent of Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 8.9%

Civilian Labor Force: 510

Per Capita Income: 17,925

Percent that are unemployed: 5.5%

Percent of All People Below the Poverty Level: 24.9%

Land Area: 2.3 Square Miles

Town of Fries

Located on the banks of the New River, the Town of Fries is a quaint historical town with great potential for tourism development. Outdoor recreation assets include the trailhead to the New River Trail State Park and the scenic New River, with close proximity to the Jefferson National Forest and the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail. The Fries Town Council governs the town and operates a Town Hall on Main Street. Public water and sewer is provided by the Town. The Fries Recreation Center, library, and theatre is located above the town hall and provides services and entertainment. More information about the town can be found at: http://www.friesva.com/Home_Page.php 276-744-2231
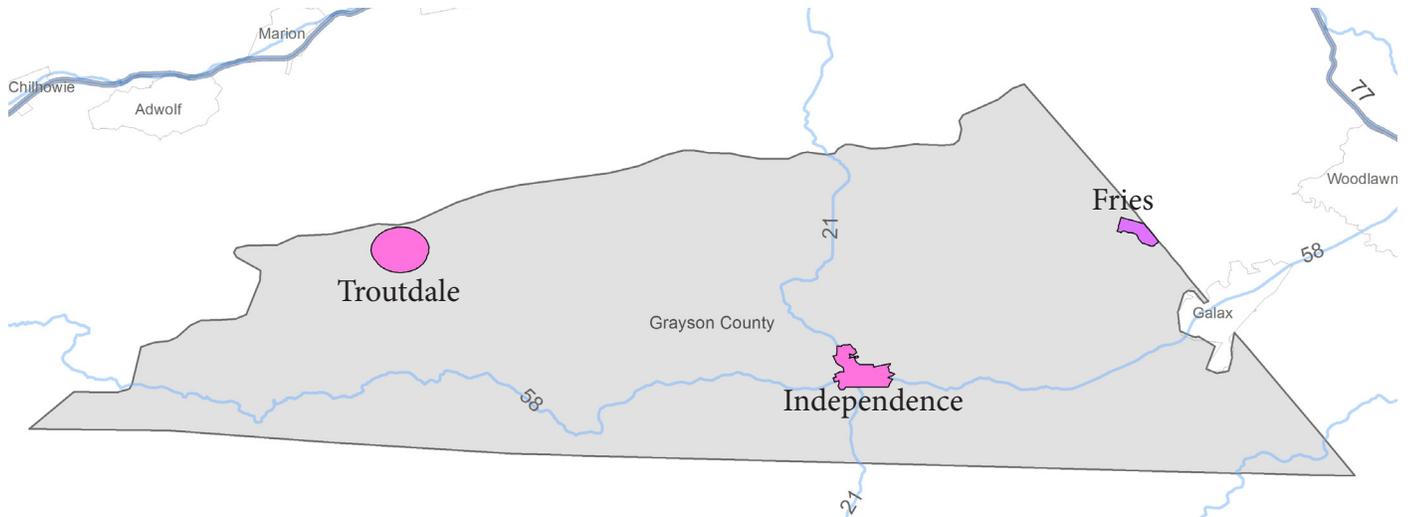
2010 Census Data

Total Population: 484

Median Age: 56.3

Total Households: 255

Average Household Size: 1.9

Population Over 3 Enrolled in School: 113

Percent of High School Graduate or Higher: 71.0%

Percent of Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 22%

Civilian Labor Force: 221

Per Capita Income: 16,603

Percent that are unemployed: 13.6%

Percent of All People Below the Poverty Level: 17.7%

Town of Troutdale

Troutdale is an incorporated town and it lies on the western edge of Grayson County at an elevation of 4017 feet above sea level. The town council overseas the affairs of the town with limited services for its residents. The town operates water services and is home to a post office, medical clinic, and a bank. The town motto "In the Land of the Rhododendron, the Balsam Tree, and the Mountain Trout" reflects the natural beauty of this area with close proximity to countless trout streams, the Jefferson National Forest, the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, Whitetop Mountain, Grayson Highlands State Park and the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail.
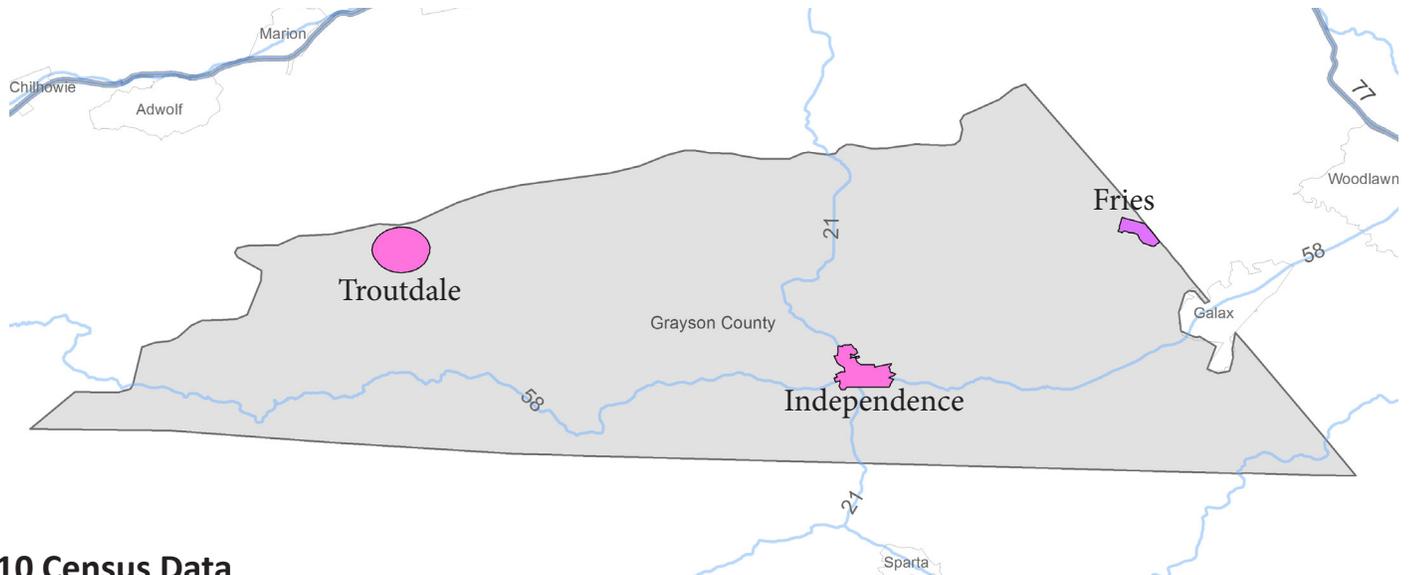
2010 Census Data

Total Population: 178

Median Age: 49.0

Total Households: 78

Average Household Size: 2.28

Population Over 3 Enrolled in School: 68

Percent of High School Graduate or Higher: 71.8%

Percent of Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 3.2%

Civilian Labor Force: 125

Per Capita Income: 17,019

Percent that are unemployed: 19.2%

Percent of All People Below the Poverty Level: 26.3%
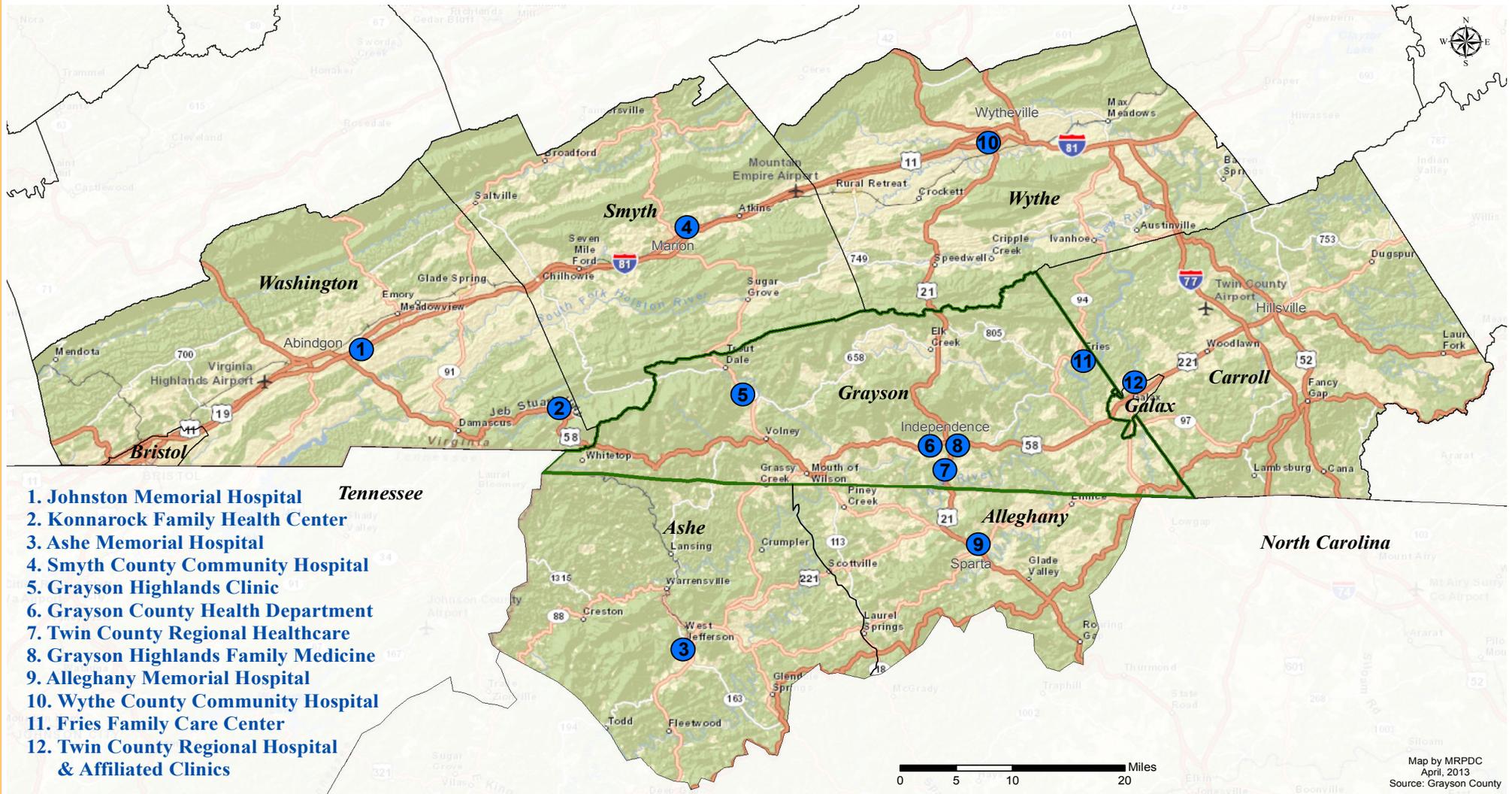

Rocky Hollow Horse Camp

Summary

Below is a list of goals developed as a result of the findings from the Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities Chapter. The order of the list of goals is not by priority, but by the order of pages and subjects in the chapter.

- Partnerships with non-profit, private, state, federal, towns and regional collaborations are important to leverage funds and resources necessary to improve our communities.

- With property taxes as the major source of revenue for the county- fiscal responsibility and accountability combined with creative avenues to reduce costs are extremely important.

- Expand the county GIS system to make county departments more efficient and to provide information to the citizenry. Improve the tax parcel information by considering a plan of work in the CIP.

- Reduction of debt/interest payments and improving county efficiency is important for cost savings.

- Capital Improvement Program is a useful financial planning tool for capital projects, maintenance of county facilities and necessary projects to maintain services.

- Support for volunteer emergency services is vital to ensure that all residents can receive timely emergency assistance.

- Expanded water and sewer lines to at risk communities may alleviate environmental hazards and hardship for those who are located in challenging locations or to facilitate economic development. A continued evaluation of water and sewer lines and a maintenance schedule to ensure that services remain viable.

- Broadband and cellular phone coverage are important for small business development, quality of life and public safety. Efforts to improve coverage and improve speeds should be encouraged.

- Support strategies to prolong the life of the regional landfill including larger recycling/reuse of materials for ALL partners in the Solid Waste Authority and public education to encourage less waste.

- Evaluate local incineration of trash and/or transfer station as an option to reduce trips to the landfill.

- Support initiatives that expand the recycling program and ability to collect revenue such as available truck to haul products, glass recycling/crushing and processing that returns better prices.

- Crime reduction has a multiplier effect of reducing overall costs to the county. (judicial, housing at New River Valley Jail and breaking negative lifestyle cycles) Efforts to reduce crime should be supported.

- Completing a local study on the poverty cycle, poor lifestyle choices, lack of employment and or education, use of the social services and substance abuse. Develop programs to prevent the high level of social welfare and to reduce the county costs for providing these services.

- Continue to support the work of the Extension Service and public libraries as valuable educational opportunities for the county.

- Create a task force to analyze the Environmental Health of the county. In particular as it relates to septic tank issues, lack of a full time Environmental Health officer and to ensure that the programs offered by the Health Department align with county needs.

- Consider an Environmental Health revolving loan fund to help low income with the costs associated with septic system replacement and/or structures in need of replacement or repair.

- Support the Animal Control Program by establishing equal representation for Grayson County regarding decisions at the regional animal shelter, supporting educational programs about responsible animal ownership, consider a spay neuter ordinance to address the taxpayer cost for animal control and support public/private partnerships to find homes for unwanted animals.

Chapter 9

Health & Wellness

Medical Clinics Near Grayson County

1. Johnston Memorial Hospital
2. Konnarock Family Health Center
3. Ashe Memorial Hospital
4. Smyth County Community Hospital
5. Grayson Highlands Clinic
6. Grayson County Health Department
7. Twin County Regional Healthcare
8. Grayson Highlands Family Medicine
9. Alleghany Memorial Hospital
10. Wythe County Community Hospital
11. Fries Family Care Center
12. Twin County Regional Hospital
    & Affiliated Clinics

Map by MRPDC
April, 2013
Source: Grayson County

Citizen Survey-Distance to Medical Service

Average Miles Traveled (One Way) to Medical Services

District	Dental	Vision	General Practitioner	In-patient/ Emergency
Elk Creek	29.03 mi	32.05 mi	23.20 mi	25.38 mi
Oldtown	20.21 mi	28.27 mi	30.02 mi	21.21 mi
Providence	19.17 mi	28.12 mi	14.76 mi	23.29 mi
Wilson	33.97 mi	38.94 mi	26.77 mi	34.45 mi
Don't Know	46.05 mi	48.90 mi	40.96 mi	31.36 mi
County Average	29.69 mi	35.26 mi	27.14 mi	27.14 mi

- Overall, respondents residing in Grayson County travel an average of thirty miles one way for medical services.

- Respondents in the Providence district travel the shortest distance for medical services.

- Vision and dental services require longer travel times for Grayson County residents than general practitioner and in-patient/emergency care.

Citizen Survey-Health Care

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of new or improved facilities or services Grayson County should pursue:

Adult Respondants

Facility/Service	Value
Wellness center	340
Renewable energy programs	290
Agricultural processing facilities	243
Medical clinics	198
Housing repair programs	192
Community center	187
Tourism initiative	158
Public safety projects	74
Other	66

Youth Respondants

Facility/Service	Respondent Selections
Gym/wellness center	25
Trails (hiking, biking, horseback)	18
Improve public access to the New River	17
Swimming	16
Exercise classes	11
Youth organized sports	10
County-owned parks	10
Adult organized sports	8
Primitive/tent campsites	8
Senior citizen programs	7
Other	6
RV campsites	4

- A Wellness Center was the top choice by adult and youth respondents for new facilities or services in Grayson County.

- Medical Clinics were also high on the list for adult respondents of new facilities or services in Grayson County.

The Virginia Atlas of Community Health/Adult Health Risk Profile

Much of the following data used in this chapter was collected at the Virginia Atlas of Community Health website: http://www.atlasva.com/. The Virginia Atlas of Community Health is an online source of community health indicators for Virginia. The Atlas provides a platform for creating and interacting with maps related to community health indicators in Virginia at various geographic scales. The purpose of the Atlas is to support the work of Virginians engaged in the vital work of improving the health of our communities.

Sources used by the Virginia Atlas of Community Health include: is the Virginia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) (2006-2010, demographic data from Alteryx, Inc. (2012), Community Health Solutions analysis, Virginia Health Information (VHI) requires the following statement to be included in all reports utilizing its data: VHI has provided non-confidential patient level information used in this report which was compiled in accordance with Virginia law. VHI has no authority to independently verify this data. By accepting this report the requester agrees to assume all risks that may be associated with or arise from the use of inaccurately submitted data. VHI edits data received and is responsible for the accuracy of assembling this information, but does not represent that the subsequent use of this data was appropriate or endorse or support any conclusions or inferences that may be drawn from the use of this

Adult Health Risk Profile (2012 Estimate)	Virginia		Grayson	
Estimated 2012 Total Population 18+ #	6,297,590	Percentage	12,524	Percentage
Adults age 18+ with High Blood Pressure (told by a doctor or other health professional) #	1,859,926	30%	4,257	34%
professional it was high) #	2,230,623	35%	4,494	36%
Adults age 18+ with Arthritis (told by a doctor or other health professional) #	1,494,308	24%	3,694	29%
Adults age 18+ and Overweight or Obese #	3,893,354	62%	8,489	68%
Adults age 18+ Smokers #	1,206,498	19%	2,722	22%
Adults age 18+ with Diabetes (told by a doctor or other health professional) #	582,633	9%	1,033	8%
Adults age 18+ Asthma (told by a doctor or other health professional) #	479,498	8%	676	5%
Adults age 18+ in Fair or Poor Health Status (self report) #	999,124	16%	1,953	16%
Adults age 18+ with No Dental Visit in Last Year #	1,411,460	22%	2,903	23%
Adults age 18+ Could Not See Doctor Due to Cost #	617,286	10%	2,055	16%
Adults age 18+ at Risk for Binge Drinking (males having five or more drinks on one occasion, females having four or more drinks on one occasion)#	1,145,316	18%	1,635	13%
Adults age 18+ with Not Meeting Physical Activity Recommendations in the Past 30 Days #	3,045,893	48%	6,346	51%
Adults age 18+ Less Than Five Servings of Fruits and Vegetables Per Day #	5,068,406	80%	10,504	84%
Adults age 18+ Limited in any activities because of physical, mental or emotional problems #	1,189,673	19%	2,803	22%

Source: http://www.atlasva.com/

Selected Adult Health Risk Profile Statistics (2012 Estimate)	Virginia	Grayson
Estimated 2012 Total Population Age 50+	5,301,220	7,096
Estimated 2012 Female Population Age 18+	6,437,588	6,344
Estimated 2012 Male Population Age 40+	4,007,800	4,728
Estimated 2012 Female Population Age 40+	3,591,489	4,342
Females aged 40+ who have had a mammogram within the past two years#	2,886,311	3,466
Females aged 18+ who have had a pap test within the past three years#	5,378,511	5,030
Men aged 40+ who have had a PSA test within the past two years#	2,008,010	2,381
Adults aged 50+ who have had a blood stool test within the past two years #	931,679	1,584
Adults aged 50+ who have ever had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy#	3,835,214	4,745
Females aged 40+ who have had a mammogram within the past two years%	72%	73%
Females aged 18+ who have had a pap test within the past three years%	84%	79%
Men aged 40+ who have had a PSA test within the past two years%	56%	55%
Adults aged 50+ who have had a blood stool test within the past two years%	18%	22%
Adults aged 50+ who have ever had a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy%	72%	67%

Source: http://www.atlasva.com/

Youth Health Risk Profile

Youth Health Risk Profile (2012 Estimates)	Virginia	Grayson
Estimated Youth Age 14-19 #	639,322	1,024
Estimated Youth Age 0-17 #	1,857,225	2,774
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who ate vegetables less than three times per day during the seven days before the survey #	563,293	904
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rarely or never wore a bicycle helmet during the 12 months before the survey #	556,665	876
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who ate fruit or drank 100% fruit juices less than three times per day during the seven days before the survey #	552,223	895
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day #	193,253	253
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey #	189,350	348
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who played video games/used computers for non-school activities for 3 or more hours per day on an average school day #	185,922	271
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities #	159,249	257
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who smoked cigarettes; smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars; or used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey #	130,030	236
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who were bullied on school property during the 12 months before the survey #	129,393	218
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in a car or other vehicle during the 30 days before the survey #	125,783	210
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who are overweight #	107,890	151
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on any day during the seven days before the survey #	95,472	145
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who had ever been electronically bullied during the 12 months before the survey #	92,087	168
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who are obese #	71,183	94
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who were ever told by a doctor or nurse that they had asthma and still have asthma #	69,361	104
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who drank a can, bottle or glass of soda/pop three or more times per day during the seven days before the survey #	58,765	101
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rarely or never wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else #	45,853	62
Youth (age 0-17) with no dental visit in the past year #	384,359	550
Youth (age 0-17) with dental caries in their primary or permanent teeth #	339,855	438
Youth (age 0-17) with teeth in Fair/Poor Condition #	104,969	141
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who ate vegetables less than three times per day during the seven days before the survey %	88%	88%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rarely or never wore a bicycle helmet during the 12 months before the survey %	87%	86%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who ate fruit or drank 100% fruit juices less than three times per day during the seven days before the survey %	86%	87%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day %	30%	25%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey %	30%	34%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who played video games/used computers for non-school activities for 3 or more hours per day on an average school day %	29%	26%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities %	25%	25%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who smoked cigarettes; smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars; or used chewing tobacco, snuff, or dip on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey %	20%	23%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who were bullied on school property during the 12 months before the survey %	20%	21%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol one or more times in a car or other vehicle during the 30 days before the survey %	20%	20%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who are overweight %	17%	15%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who did not participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on any day during the seven days before the survey %	15%	14%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who had ever been electronically bullied during the 12 months before the survey %	14%	16%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who are obese %	11%	9%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who were ever told by a doctor or nurse that they had asthma and still have asthma %	11%	10%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who drank a can, bottle or glass of soda/pop three or more times per day during the seven days before the survey %	9%	10%
High school-aged youth (age 14-19) who rarely or never wore a seat belt when riding in a car driven by someone else %	7%	6%
Youth (age 0-17) with no dental visit in the past year %	21%	20%
Youth (age 0-17) with dental caries in their primary or permanent teeth %	18%	16%
Youth (age 0-17) with Teeth in Fair/Poor Condition %	6%	5%

Source: http://www.atlasva.com/

Maternal & Infant Health Profile/Mortality Profile

Maternal and Infant Health Profile (2011)	Virginia	Grayson
Pregnancy Rate Per 1,000 Femaile Population 15-44	79.8	51.8
Natural Fetal Dealths #	6,269	5
Total Live Births #	102,525	117
Birth Rate Per 1,000 Population	12.7	7.6
Low Weight Births (under 5 lbs 8 oz.) #	8,204	10
Births without early Prenatal Care #	13,500	20
Non Marital Births #	36,390	53
Low Weight Births %	8%	9%
Births without early Prenatal Care %	13%	17%
Non Marital Births %	35%	45%
Total Infant Deaths #	685	0%
Five-Year Average Infant Mortality Rate 2007-2011	7	9%
Total Teenage (age 10-19) Pregnancies	9,630	14%

Source: http://www.atlasva.com/

Mortality Profile (2011)	Virginia	Grayson
Total Deaths #	60,325	213
Malignant Neoplasms Deaths #	14,261	56
Heart Disease Deaths #	13,201	45
Cerebrovascular Diseases Deaths #	3,327	13
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases Deaths #	3,097	20
Unintentional Injury Deaths #	2,726	9
Alzheimer's Disease Deaths #	1,800	10
Nephritis and Nephrosis Deaths #	1,425	3
Diabetes Mellitus Deaths #	1,628	8
Septicemia Deaths #	1,372	1
Influenza and Pneumonia Deaths #	1,404	2
Suicide Deaths #	1,052	6
Chronic Liver Disease Deaths #	725	1
Primary Hypertension and Renal Disease Deaths #	569	1
Pneumonitis Deaths #	560	4
Total Age Adjusted Death Rate per 100,000	735.8	874.9
Malignant Neoplasms Deaths (age adjusted rate per 100,000)	169.5	218.7
Heart Disease Deaths (age adjusted rate per 100,000)	161.3	174

Source: http://www.atlasva.com/

PQI Hospital/Behavioral Hospital Discharge Proile & Health Coverage

Prevention Quality Indicator Hospital Discharge Profile (2011)	Virginia	Grayson
Total Prevention Quality Indicator (PQI) Discharges #	83,392	179
Adult Asthma PQI Discharges #	6,419	2
Angina PQI Discharges #	715	1
Bacterial Pneumonia PQI Discharges #	16,221	52
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) PQI Discharges #	11,439	42
Congestive Heart Failure PQI Discharges #	18,990	36
Dehydration PQI Discharges #	3,401	14
Diabetes PQI Discharges #	11,326	11
Hypertension PQI Discharges #	2,898	2
Perforated Appendix PQI Discharges #	1,487	1
Urinary Tract Infection PQI Discharges #	10,496	18
Total Age Adjusted PQI Discharge Rate per 100,000	1,006.80	789.2

Behavioral Health Hospital Discharge Profile (2011)	Virginia	Grayson
Total Behavioral Health (BH) Discharges	64,892	98
Adjustment reaction	2,123	6
Affective Psychoses	27,277	48
Alcoholic Dependence Syndrome	2,161	1
Alcoholic Psychoses	3,283	2
Depressive Disorder, Not Elsewhere Classified	2,785	9
Drug Psychoses	1,321	2
General Symptoms	11,135	17
Neurotic Disorders	1,351	1
Other Nonorganic Psychoses	2,148	4
Schizophrenic Disorders	8,042	7
Total Age Adjusted BH Discharge Rate per 100,000	786.8	669.3

Health Coverage (2012 Estimates)	Virginia	Grayson
Nonelderly Population Age 0-64	7,109,476	11,916
Uninsured Nonelderly Age 0-64 Percent	15%	20%
Uninsured Nonelderly Age 0-64 Total	1,052,614	2,336
Adult Population Age 19-64	5,142,631	8,980
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 Percent	18%	23%
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 Total	914,900	2,065
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 <=138% FPL	336,711	924
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 <=200% FPL	495,892	1,309
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 <=250% FPL	600,135	1,554
Uninsured Adults Age 19-64 <=400% FPL	776,641	1,897
Child Population Age 0-18	1,966,845	2,936
Uninsured Children Age 0-18 Percent	7%	9%
Uninsured Children Age 0-18 Total	137,038	258
Uninsured Children Age 0-18 <=200% FPL	75,042	162
Uninsured Children Age 0-18 <=250% FPL	93,135	195
Uninsured Children Age 0-18 <=400% FPL	120,858	242
2012 Medicare Enrollment*	1,199,217	4,215

Source:
http://www.atlasva.com/

Summary of the Virginia Atlas of Community Health Data

Adult Health Risk Profile

- More than a quarter of adults 18+ have been told by a health professional or doctor that they have high blood pressure, 4% more than the state.
- 68% of adults are obese or overweight in Grayson County, 6% more than the state.
- Over 20% of adults are smokers, 3% more than the state.
- Over 8% of adults have been told by a doctor that they have diabetes.
- Over 16% of adults were unable to see a doctor to treat a medical issue due to high cost and unaffordability, 6% more than the state.
- Over 50% of adults are not meeting the recommended physical activities.

Youth Health Risk Profile

- Grayson County is better or at the state averages for youth health statistics.
- Cigarette smoking is slightly higher in Grayson County than the state at 3% more.
- Alcohol use is slightly higher in Grayson County than the state at 4% more.

Maternal and Infant Health Profile (2011)

- There were 4% more births without early prenatal care at 17% in Grayson County than the state average.
- There were 10% more non marital births in Grayson County at 45% more than the state.
- There were 14% total teenage (10-19) pregnancies in Grayson County

Mortality Profile (2011)

- Grayson County had 874.9 total age adjusted death rate per 100,000 compared to the state average at 735.8.
- Grayson County had 161.3 heart disease deaths (age adjusted rate per 100,000) compared to the state at 174.

Prevention Quality Indicator Hospital Discharge Profile (2011)

- The total age adjusted PQI discharge rate per 100,000 for Grayson County was 789.2 compared to the state average at 1,006.8.

Behavioral Health Hospital Discharge Profile (2011)

- The total age adjusted BH discharge rate per 100,000 for Grayson County was 669.3 compared to the state average at 786.8.

Health Coverage (2012 Estimates)

- 20% of the nonelderly adults in Grayson County are uninsured, 5% higher than the state average.
- 9% of children in Grayson County are uninsured, 2% higher than the state average.

Social Service Stats

There were 7,259 households out of which 26.4% had children living in them, 57.6 percent were married couples living together, 8.5% had a female householder with no husband present, and 29.9 percent were non-families. 26.8% of all households were made up of individuals and 12.9 percent had someone living alone who was 65 years or older. The average household size was 2.31 and the average family size was 2.77. In the county, the population was spread out with 19.5% under the age of 18, 7.6 percent from age 18 to 24, 29.8 percent from the age of 25 to 44, 26.2 percent from 45 to 64, and 16.9 percent who were 65 years or older. The median age was 40 years. For every 100 females there were 107.7 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 109.7 males. The median income for a household in the county was $28,676 and the median income for a family was $35,076. Males had a median income of $24,126 versus $17,856 for females. The per capita income for the county was $16,768. About 10.0 percent of families and 13.6 percent of the population were below the poverty line, including 18.8 percent of those under age 18, and 16.3 percent of those age 65 and over.

There were 2,817 people living in poverty or 19% of total population in Grayson County. There were 816 children living in poverty or 29 percent of total population under the age of 18.

From 2000 to 2011 the poverty percentage of all ages has risen from 13.5 percent to 18.6 percent. From 2000 to 2011 the poverty percentage of children has risen from 19.9% to 29.0%.

Public Assistance Recipients, SFY 2012	Total Recipients	Children	Adults (18-64 years)	Adults (65 years and older)
SNAP	4,075	1400	2346	329
Medicaid	3,692	1788	1203	701
TANF	263	158	105	0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

Public Assistance Served by State Fiscal Year
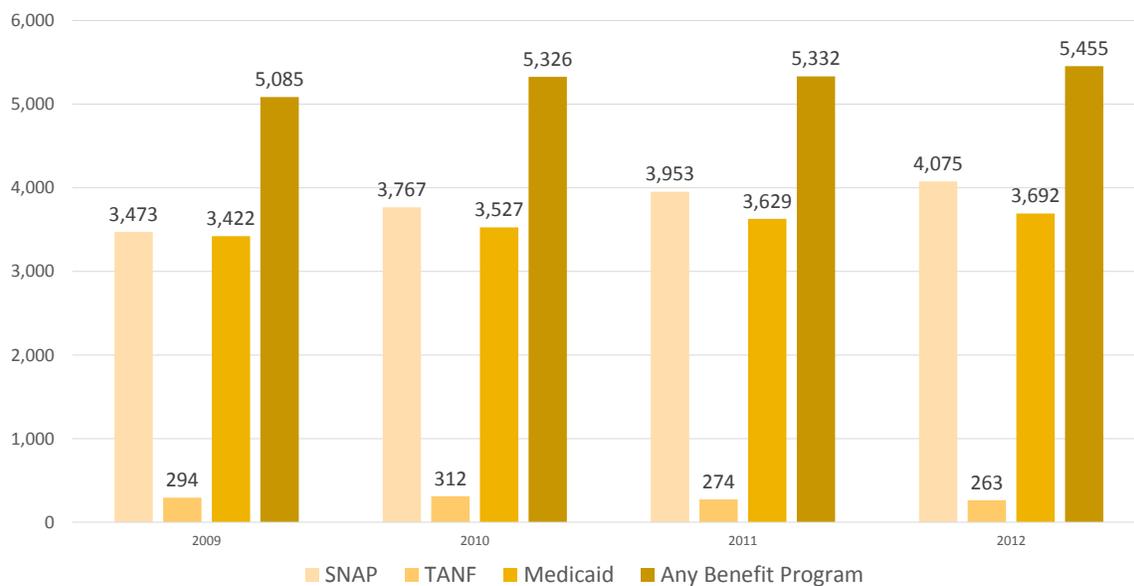
# State Licensed Child & Adult Care Facilities

Child Care Facilities

Fairview Baptist Church
 3543 Skyline Highway
 Fairview Church Child Care Center
 GALAX, VA 24333
 (276) 236-5541

Grayson Children's Center
 143 West Main Street
 INDEPENDENCE, VA 24348
 (276) 773-2500

Ms. Robin West
 48 Magnolia Lane
 INDEPENDENCE, VA 24348
 (276) 773-2023

Ms. Shannon Anders
 19 Savannah Road
 GALAX, VA 24333
 (276) 236-8491
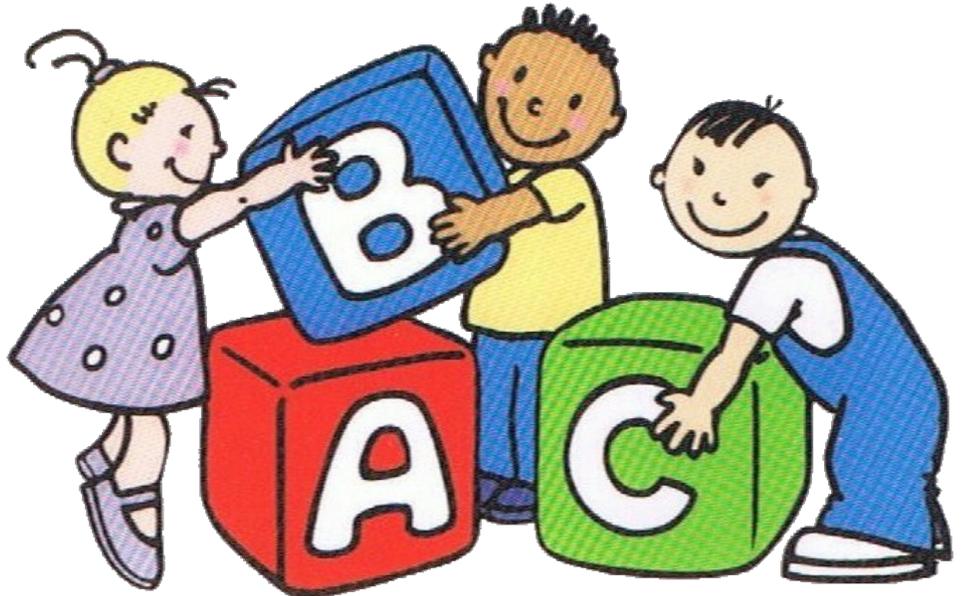
Source: http://childcarecenter.us/provider_detail/abundant_love_child_care_arlington_tx

Adult Assisted Living Facilities

Grayson House
 110 Bedwell Street
 ROUTE 21
 INDEPENDENCE, VA 24348
 (276) 773-3525

Hilltop Home for Adults
 180 Rainbow Circle Drive
 INDEPENDENCE, VA 24348
 (276) 773-2010

For more information on these facilities visit: http://www.dss.virginia.gov/

Elder Care

District Three Senior Services

District Three offers volunteer and paid jobs to people age 55 and older. The District Three's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) provides services to the community at hospitals, libraries, senior centers, and other public facilities. Seniors with limited income can apply for job training and other community service employment.

District Three offers 16 nutrition sites in partnerships with other organizations, where a variety of activities for social opportunities are offered.

Health screenings, flu shots, and informational programs for senior groups are offered by District Three through their disease prevention and health promotion programs. Chronic disease self-management classes is one of the programs offered.

District Three provides assistance to seniors to find the appropriate organizations if they need help with direct emergency financial assistance, help with civic legal matters, health insurance counseling, chores, and minor home repair. District Three advocates for the elderly advocates against elder abuse. Services are provided for the frail and home-bound elderly to encourage independence and family caregiving. Home delivered meals, visits, and phone calls are some of the ways volunteers reach out to elders in order to encourage their independence and well-being.

There is an Ombudsman Program set up to resolve conflicts regarding nursing homes, adult care residents, and in-home services.

A Guardianship Program assists indigent adult clients whom do not have the capacity to make decisions themselves. Care Managers are assigned clients in order to asses their needs and coordinate plans or resourses for them.

One-on-one medical transportation is available for eligible clients of District Three Senior Services. Clients are picked up at home and taken directly to the doctor. Transportation is offered through the towns and counties with flexible-fixed routes that will pick up at or near their homes. Transportation to Roanoke, Johnson City and Winston-Salem is offered.

District Three will offer assistance to people who need help paying bills for heating and cooling.

Insurance counseling and assistance programs provide information on helping people obtain benefits and filing claims for Medicare and Medicaid programs.

For more information on the District Three Government Cooperative please visit: http://www.district-three.org/

Senior Navigator - A source for information and access to community programs and services for Virginia seniors and caregivers. For more information visit: http://www.virginianavigator.org/sn/IndexSN.aspx?.f=1&API=17

Grayson County RX Cards - The County RX Card is a free discound prescription card for citizens to use at local pharmacies. Anyone is eligibile for a County RX Card. Fore more information visit: http://www.graysongovernment.com/CountyRX_Cards.aspx

Summary

A healthy population is the foundation for a successful community. Good health translates into lower overall health insurance rates and can aid in the attraction of business and industry. A healthy community is more productive at work or school and is productive longer in life, which minimizes the overall community costs for social services related to health conditions.

The primary health concerns for Grayson County are considered "lifestyle illnesses" or those related to negative lifestyle choices. Obesity, heart disease, diabetes, strokes, and some forms of cancer can be prevented by a healthy diet and exercise. The health statistics for Grayson County show a slightly higher rate for these lifestyle related illnesses as compared to the state average. Of particular concern is the obesity rate of 68 percent for adults in Grayson County as compared to the state average of 62 percent. Increased efforts to promote healthy diets and providing additional opportunities for recreation and exercise can work together to improve the communities overall health and well being.

Poverty has increased in Grayson County by 5 percent since 2000. The childhood poverty rate has risen by 9% since 2000. More citizens are using social services, therefor increasing the overall costs to provide these services. Childhood poverty has a negative multiplier effect on the ability of children to learn. Childhood poverty can lead to adult poverty and negative life choices. Breaking the cycle of poverty through life skills education and workforce training are strategies that can reduce poverty. Economic development is critical to provide the additional employment opportunities necessary to reduce poverty.

Is there sufficient elder care and child care opportunities available to allow working age adults the opportunity to engage in work or school? Further study is required to access the needs for elder care and for child care in our community. A good quality of life for the elderly is equally important.

Proximity to health/dental/vision services and the ability to afford these services can improve the community's health. Supporting medical, dental, and vision clinics should be a priority for the county. Uninsured adults (age 19-64) in Grayson County comprise 20 percent of non-elderly adult population as compared to the state average of 18 percent. Uninsured individuals may suffer the health consequences that result from lack of screenings and the delaying of care.

Overwhelming support for a gym/wellness center in Grayson County was shown in the citizen and youth survey. Efforts to plan and fund a gym/wellness center should remain a top priority for county leadership.
The recent construction of the Independence Pedestrian and Bike trail has offered a much needed avenue for increased physical exercise in Independence. Support for phase 2 of this trail as it connects Independence to the Recreation Park will provide additional opportunities for fitness and provide a safe avenue for residents to access the recreation park by foot or bicycle.

Chapter 10

Tourism

Grayson County Tourism

Grayson County Tourism operates out of the Department of Planning & Community Development, located in the Grayson County Courthouse. Many travelers to the area visit the older Historic 1908 Courthouse operated by the Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation on Main Street, which serves as a tourism information center. Travelers can obtain tourism information, purchase Grayson County crafts & products, visit the historical displays and enjoy entertainment through special events and the traditional music jam.

The primary objectives of the Grayson County Tourism Department include;

• Interaction with and promotion of local tourism related businesses.

• Revenue generation for the county, through transient occupancy and sales tax.

• Development of tourism infrastructure/attractions/businesses.

• Tourism metrics including travel trends and statistics.

• Mailing of information and online interaction with prospective visitors.

• Maintaining accurate information about tourism assets and offerings for the tourism website.

• Marketing the county through promotional materials and advertising.

• Festival promotion to market the 20 + major festivals of the county.

• Tourism business trainings/development of internal marketing/promotions

• Management of tourism grants and creative funding for tourism initiatives.

• Building positive relationships with potential investors and prospective residents to promote overall growth in employment and opportunities for the county.

Tourism marketing initiatives includes the use of rack card advertising, radio, magazine, television, digital media and newspaper advertising. The promotion of lodging establishments is a primary focus for the fifty (50+) cabins, campgrounds & bed and breakfasts operating in Grayson County.

The Tourism Department manages the website http://www.graysoncountyva.com/ which is used as a web based clearinghouse for information about events, attractions, lodging, outdoor recreation, traditional music and more. Assets are also listed on www.virginia.org - Virginia Tourism Corporation, a website marketed nationally and internationally.

Partnerships with adjacent localities and with organizations such as; Round the Mountain, The Crooked Road, Blue Ridge Travel Association, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Take A Break From the Interstate and other regional collaborations are used to market Grayson County and the southwest Virginia region.

The pages in this chapter will present travel statistics, the major drivers for visitation to county and future opportunities for tourism initiatives.

Tourism Metrics

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Tourism statistics are a vital component of the tourism program. Using travel profiles and trends, tourism marketing can be directed to target markets with tourism messages that drive visitation. These sources for tourism data may include; TNS Travels America Study sponsored by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, local data such as the Visitor Log at the Historic 1908 Courthouse, Tourism Surveys and additional information provided as part of the Southwest Virginia Tourism Initiative.

With all sources of data, tourism trends indicate that most travelers to Grayson County originate from the southeast, including; North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. Most travelers come to visit friends and family, enjoy the outdoor activities, for cultural heritage travel and for the traditional music scene.

Marketing efforts have recently begun to focus on the urban professional within 120 miles of the county. Research has shown that these groups may be the most interested in local assets and be close enough to visit for an extended weekend getaway.

Information from local tourism businesses indicate that the outdoor recreation opportunities and traditional music drivers, such as The Crooked Road are important for driving visitation to Grayson County. Other important drivers include the unique festivals offered throughout the year and spending time with family.

Visitor Log at the 1908 Courthouse in Independence Oct. 2009- Oct. 2012 Grayson County
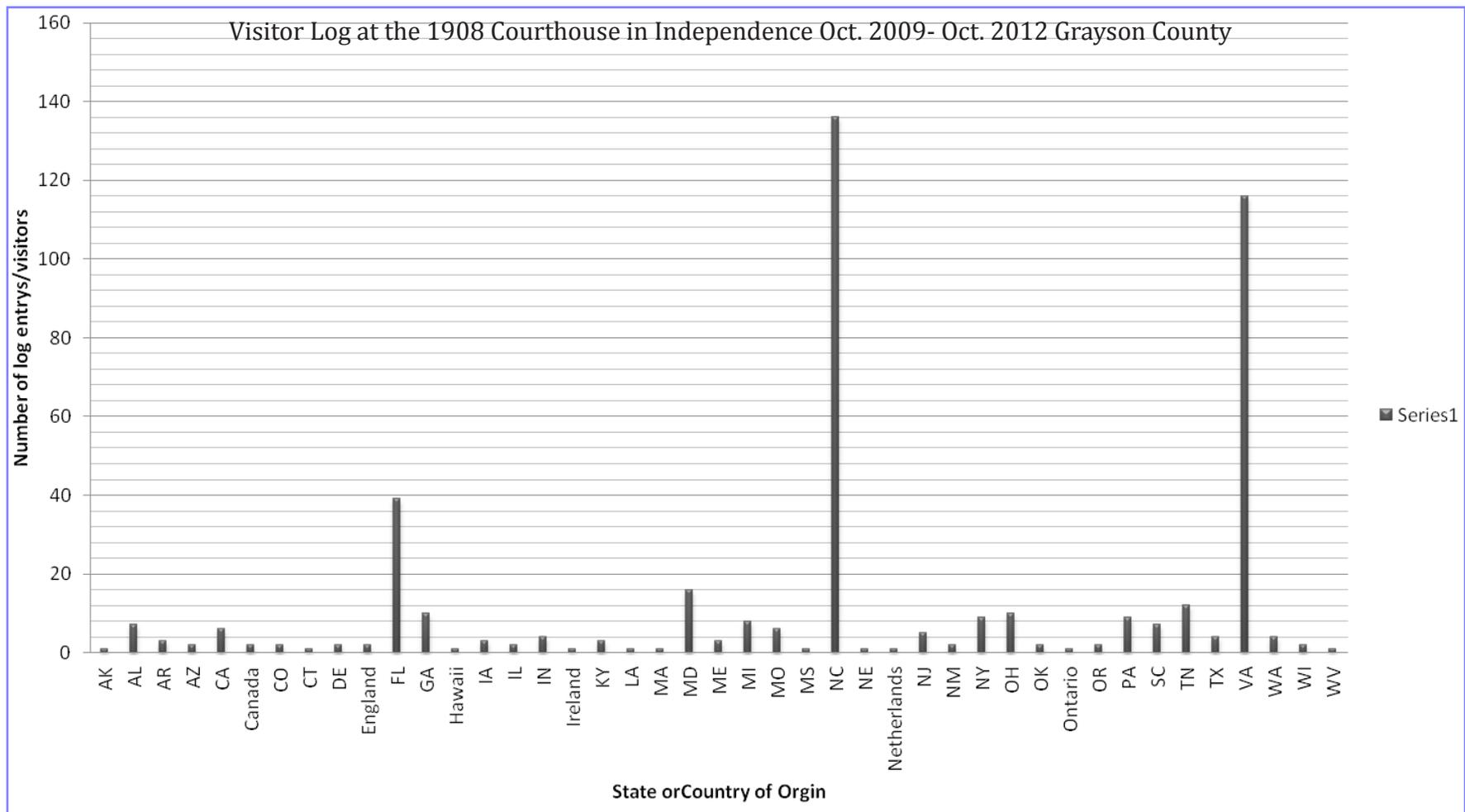
Visitor Profile

Travel Trends - "Heart of Appalachia/Blue Ridge Highlands Travel Profile" - VA module of the TNS Travel America Study 2011 - Compiled by the Virginia Tourism Corporation

The Virginia Tourism Corporation conducts research on travel profiles for geographic areas of the state. A summary of this data compiled for the Blue Ridge Highlands region is included below.

The primary purpose of a trip to this region included; Visit friends & relatives (48%), Outdoor Recreation (8%), Entertainment & Sightseeing (12%), other pleasure/personal (12%) and Personal Business at (9%).

The primary months for tourism visitation are July through December. This data correlates with local trans-occupancy tax collection, which shows most visitations occurs during this time period.

The demographics of the traveler indicate that most are 35 years of age or older and that most of these travelers originate from Virginia (45%) and North Carolina (10%). The traveler is most often in a household size of 2 people (45%) and is of white ethnicity (91%). The mean age of

household head is 46 years of age and married. An overwhelming majority of the traveler has a college education and annual household incomes over $40,000 a year.

Planning the trip most often occurred less than 2 weeks before the trip (43%) and the primary sources of information for planning includes friends and relatives (23%) and their own experience (30%). The destination website was also a primary source of planning at (11%).

Most travelers came for the day (20%) and for those that stayed the night, two nights was the majority length of stay at (18%) followed by (16%) for single night and (14%) for three nights. Weekend visitation is highly prevalent with (61%) spending a Friday and/or Saturday night at the location.

The primary mode of transportation to the area is (88%) who owned their own automobile and used it for the trip.

The entire report can be found at; http://www.vatc.org/research/

Photo by Cassidy Williams

Photo by Allison Smith

Economic Impact of Tourism & Summary Profile

The **economic impact of tourism** is important for small businesses, for generation of employment and for county revenue by sales tax and transient occupancy tax. The impact on tourism activity to country stores and restaurants should not be underestimated; as many of these locations see an increase in business activity during the tourism season in Grayson County.

In the unincorporated area of Grayson County; sales tax and transient occupancy tax are the two public revenue generators as it relates to tourism. In the towns of Fries and Independence, additional revenue may be generated from fuel, cigarette and alcohol taxes and these areas will collect and record their own sales and transient occupancy tax. Unincorporated Grayson County Transient Occupancy Tax collected for (July 1 - June 30th) 2011 was $9,214.33 and for 2012 the amount was $10,954. In 2013 the tax collected was $10,693.

The **economic impact summary profile** represents locality-specific travel-related data kept by the Virginia Tourism Corporation. Each profile is intended to provide 4 unique pieces of information: 1) Population estimates for 2007- 2011 to indicate growth in resident population 2) The direct economic impacts of domestic travelers' spending for calendar years 2007 - 2011 3) Local Excise Taxes collected by fiscal year and 4) Local Excise Tax Rates imposed within each locality. The discussion below explains the topics within each major section in more detail. The studies to estimate the domestic travelers' spending estimates were conducted by the Research Department of the U.S. Travel Association (formerly TIA). The studies provide 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 estimates of domestic traveler expenditures in Virginia and its 134 counties and independent cities, as well as the employment, payroll income, and state and local tax revenue directly generated by these expenditures. Percent Change column represents the percentage change in each category over the previous year. The following page shows the economic summary profile for Grayson County.

Economic Impact of Tourism-VATC Research

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Percent Change
Population	16,128	16,003	15,793	15,478	15,380	(0.63) %

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Percent Change
Travel Economic Impacts						
Employment	140	135	138	136	136	0.33%
Expenditures	$ 12,086,725	$ 11,934,756	$ 11,894,237	$ 12,541,650	$ 13,243,312	5.59%
Local Tax Receipts	$ 367,118	$ 365,939	$ 368,861	$ 379,352	$ 381,889	0.67%
Payroll	$ 2,691,788	$ 2,647,811	$ 2,763,200	$ 2,834,934	$ 2,901,005	2.33%
State Tax Receipts	$ 504,941	$ 486,600	$ 518,238	$ 530,169	$ 534,429	0.80%
Local Excise Tax Rates						
Admissions Excise Tax Rate	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	n/a
Food Service Excise Tax Rate	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	n/a
Lodging Excise Tax Rate	2 %	2 %	2 %	2 %	2 %	n/a
Local Excise Tax Collection						
Admissions Excise Tax Collected	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	n/a
Food Service Excise Tax Collected	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	$ 0	n/a
Lodging Excise Tax Collected	$ 7,108	$ 8,695	$ 8,268	$ 9,829	$	

LOCAL EXCISE TAX RATES

Lodging Excise Tax Rate, Food Service Excise Tax Rate, and Admissions Tax Rate show the local excise tax rates (if applicable) for lodging, meals, and admissions as of the most recent fiscal year. These rates are typically for July-to-June fiscal years, not calendar years. The tax rates shown are only for the county or city listed. Incorporated towns within a county may impose a separate excise tax rate. The source for this data is an annual survey administered by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. The survey is administered between the spring and early fall of each year. For this reason the fiscal year tax rate reported by each county may vary.

More information regarding excise tax rates can also be found in the Economic Impact section of the Virginia Tourism Corporation industry site: http://www.vatc.org/research Website: http://www.coopercenter.org/

Source: http://www.vatc.org/research/economicimpact/

LOCAL EXCISE TAX COLLECTION

Lodging Excise Tax Collected, Food Service Excise Tax Collected, and Admissions Excise Tax Collected represent the local excise tax collections for lodging, meals and admissions, respectively, if applicable in the locality. Incorporated towns within a county may also impose a separate excise tax. Excise tax collections from incorporated towns are included in this report. If applicable, a separate note identifying a town's collections and tax rate will appear at the bottom of the report. NOTE: Localities imposing a local lodging excise tax may impose the tax on any or all classes of lodging such as hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, cabins, and campgrounds. These collections are typically reported in July-to-June fiscal years, not calendar years. For this reason, they may not perfectly mirror the lodging and meals sales movements. The source for this data is the Auditor of Public Accounts. Website: http://www.apa.state.va.us/ComparativeReport.cfm

POPULATION

Population represents the Virginia Employment Commission's population estimates for Virginia localities.

TRAVEL ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Expenditures: Expenditures represent the direct spending by domestic travelers including meals, lodging, public transportation, auto transportation, shopping, admissions and entertainment.

Payroll: Payroll represents the direct wages, salaries and tips corresponding to the direct travel-related employment.

Employment: Employment represents the estimates of direct travel-related employment in the locality.

State Tax Receipts: State Tax Receipts represents the estimates of direct travel-related state taxes generated within the locality. These taxes would include the state sales-and-use tax, gasoline excise taxes, corporate income tax and the personal income tax.

Local Travel Receipts: Local Travel Receipts represents the estimates of direct travel-related local taxes generated within the locality. These taxes would include the local sales-and-use tax, local excise taxes and property taxes.

These five impact estimates EXCLUDE indirect, or multiplier impacts.

Grayson County Festivals & Events
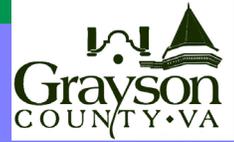
Grayson Tourism values the importance of local festivals and events as drivers to the county. Some festivals such as the Whitetop Mountain Maple and Whitetop Mountain Ramp Festivals are visited for their unique quality. Every year the Tourism Department compiles a master list of these events and distributes information to encourage attendance and visitation to the county.

Photo by Kelly Snider

GRAYSON COUNTY - FUN FOR EVERY SEASON

March

March 16: Go Green. 10am - 4pm. Presentations & workshops on green living & conservation. Matthews State Forest. 276-236-2322, zachary.olinger@dof.virginia.gov

March 23 & 24: Whitetop Mountain Maple Festival. Maple Syrup making, sugar house tours, great food, & traditional music from this area. 8:00am Mt. Rogers School. For info: www.mtrogersvfd-rs.com

May

May 4: Iron Mountain Memorial Poker Ride Poker Ride with horses, buggies & wagons for a good cause, music, food & more at the Old Ivanhoe Horse Show Grounds. Best & Worst Hand, breakfast, BBQ supper 3-5:00. For info: 276-236-3615 or rector.pat@gmail.com

May 18: Henry Whitter Festival. Traditional music festival honoring a local legend, food & vendors held at the Fries Park. For info: 276-744-2231 or www.friesfestivals.com

May 19: Whitetop Mountain Ramp Festival. Mt. Rogers VFH. Ramp eating contest, music and food! 11am. For info: www.mtrogersvfd-rs.com

June

June 8: Catch the Fun-Fries Festival. First weekend in June. Fishing tournament & flea market on the New River. For info: 276-744-2231, townoffries@embarqmail.com, www.friesfestivals.com

June 14 & 15: Galax Leaf & String Festival. Music performances, dancing, blacksmith demonstrations, and puppet shows. For info email: info@visitgalax.com or 276-238-8130

June 15: Wayne C. Henderson Music Festival and Guitar Competition. Grayson Highlands State Park. For info: www.waynehenderson.org

June 28 & 29: Grayson County Fiddlers Convention. Old Time & Bluegrass Music Competition at Elk Creek Ball Park. For info: 276-655-4866, www.ecvfd.net or email ecvfd@ls.net.

July

July 4th: Independence Fourth of July Celebration. Downtown Independence. For info: 276-773-3703, www.independenceva.com or email: jhughes@graysoncountyva.com

August

August 3rd: Matthews Farm Museum Heritage Day. Travel back in time with traditional farming, music, crafts & more. For info: 276-773-3080 or www.matthewsfarmmuseum.org

August 5 - 10: Galax Old Fiddler's Convention. Oldest and largest bluegrass and old-time convention in the world. For info: www.oldfiddlersconvention.com

August 17: Grayson Co. Youth Livestock Show. Youth competition with cattle, goats, poultry & sheep. Elk Creek Ball field. For info: 276-768-8478 or www.graysonyouthlivestock.com

August 16 & 17: Fries Fiddlers' Convention. Fries Volunteer Fire Department hosts a competition for the best in old-time & bluegrass music. For info: www.friesfiddlers.com

Aug 24: Grayson Wine Festival. Live music, wine tasting, vendors.Historic 1908 Courthouse Admission $10, includes wine glass. For info: 276-773-3711 or www.graysonwinefest.org

August 31: Albert Hash Memorial Festival. Celebrating Albert Hash, traditional music, dance, arts & crafts. Grayson Highlands State Park For more info www.alberthashmemorialfestival.com

September

September 7: Stories of the Stitch. Quilt and fiber arts showcase at the Matthews Farm Museum. For info: 276-238-1217, info@artsculturalcouncil.com or artsculturalcouncil.com

September 14: Save Green Expo. Info & presentations on saving Energy, Money, and the Planet! Crossroads Institute. 9am - 3 pm. For info: 276-7680800, lorenwebster@embarqmail.com or www.graysonlandcare.org

September 21: Festival by the River in Fries. Live music, food, arts & crafts. For info: 276-744-2231 email: willowhaus@yahoocom or www.friesfestivals.com

September 28 & 29: Grayson Highlands Fall Festival. Molasses & apple butter making, cider squeezing, wild pony auction, crafts, barbecue chicken dinners, music & dancing. Grayson Highlands State Park For info: www.ghfallfestival.50megs.com

October

October 5: Baywood Pumpkin Festival. Pumpkins, food, music, crafts & more at Baywood Elementary School. For info rector.pat@gmail.com or call 276-236-3615.

October 12: Mountain Foliage Festival & Grand Privy Race. Parade, arts & crafts, and the Grand Privy Race. Downtown Independence For info: jhughes@graysoncountyva.com or www.independenceva.com

October 12: New River Trail 50K. USATF 50km course & marathon at the New River Trail State Park. For info: 336-620-2986, annettebednosky@gmail.com, www.ncnr.org/nrt50K.html

October 13: Whitetop Mountain Molasses Festival. Molasses & applebutter making, a family event featuring Old Time & Bluegrass Music, arts/crafts, BBQ Chicken. Mt. Rogers VFH. For info www.mtrogersvfd-rs.com

December

December 7: Christmas on the Mountain. Get in the holiday spirit with decorations, arts, crafts & more. At the Fries Recreation Center. For info: 276-744-2231www.friesfestivals.com

Virginia is for Lovers

2013 FESTIVALS

Grayson County Department of Planning and Community Development, 276-773-2471, www.graysoncountyva.com.

Public Lands & Outdoor Recreation

Grayson Highlands State Park, Jefferson National Forest, Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, Mathews State Forest, New River Trail State Park, The Virginia Creeper Trail, Blue Ridge Parkway and the Grayson County Recreation Park are available to the public for outdoor recreation opportunities. All together there is 39,584 acres of public land in Grayson County, totaling 14 percent of all county land.

Each of these public lands is managed by separate entities and each of these has different regulations for public use. Together these public lands comprise thousands of acres of land with hundreds of miles of trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing and cross country running. Fishing, hunting, bird watching, picnicking, bouldering, swimming, camping, interpretive programs, festivals, events and trail runs, are additional amenities at some of these public lands. Visitation of these public lands is a primary driver for

tourism visitation to Grayson County. Partnerships with these public lands and promoting businesses that can provide amenities/services and additional attractions to round out the visitor experience will greatly improve the tourism experience in Grayson County.

Highlights include; Highest Peak in Virginia- Mt. Rogers (5,728 feet), located in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. The New River Trail State Park begins in Fries, VA, located on the scenic New River. The Virginia Creeper Trail begins at Whitetop where many tourists begin an exhilarating 20 +mile downhill bike trip and Grayson Highlands State Park where wild ponies roam.

Whereas the information for each of these Public Lands can best be found at their individual websites, the list below provides these links for further exploration.

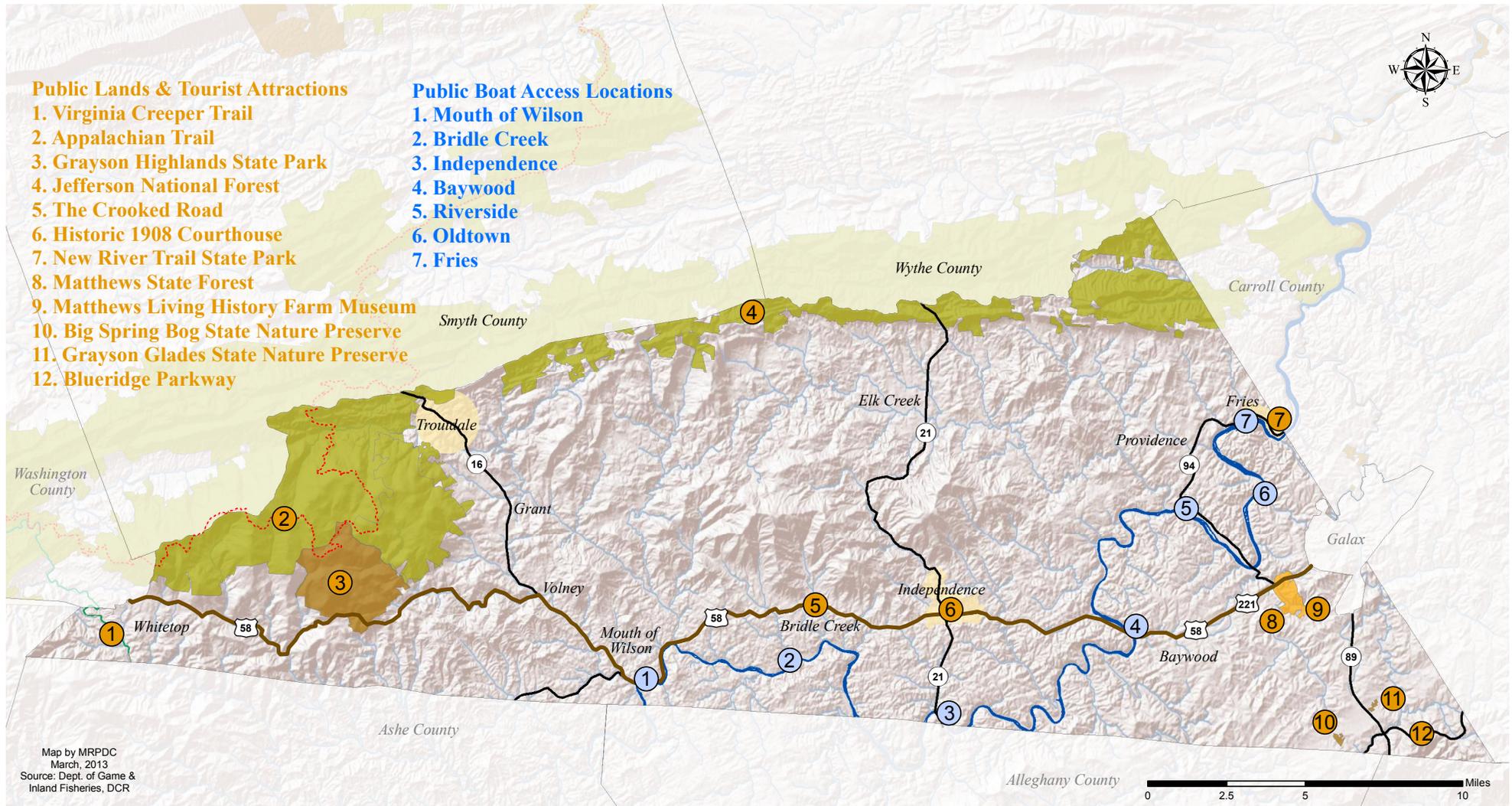|	
Grayson Highlands State Park	http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/gra.shtml
Jefferson National Forest	http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/gwj/home
Mount Rogers National Recreation Area	http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gwj/specialplaces/?cid=stelprdb53027
Matthews State Forest	http://www.dof.virginia.gov/stforest/list/matthews.htm
Old Flat State Forest	http://www.dof.virginia.gov/stforest/list/old-flat.htm
New River Trail State Park	http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/new.shtml
Virginia Creeper Trail	http://www.vacreepertrail.com/
Blue Ridge Parkway	http://www.nps.gov/blri/index.htm
Grayson County Recreation Park Trails	http://www.graysonrecpark.com/index.html

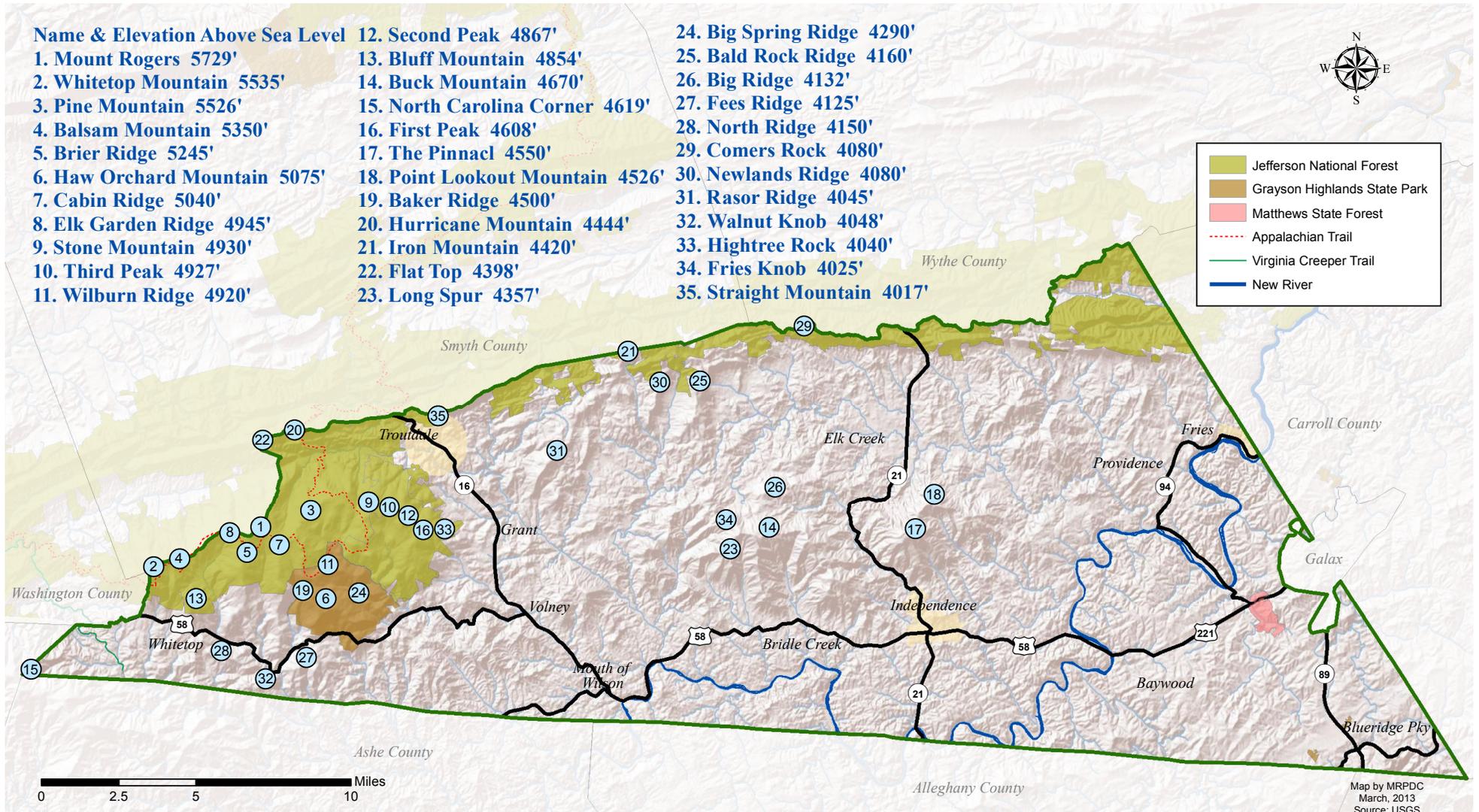Photo by Kim Baughman - Ponies at Grayson Highlands

The Scenic New River

The New River (337 miles long) is the second oldest river in the world, beginning in North Carolina and traveling north until it reaches West Virginia and eventually becoming part of the Mississippi River. The New River enters Grayson County on the western end near Mouth of Wilson; travels within several miles of Independence as it weaves in and out of North Carolina and then continues into the Town of Fries. This American Heritage river is well known for recreational boating and fishing. Currently there are three outfitters operating on the river in Grayson County, countless rental cabins and vacation homes located on the river and one riverside campground. There are seven public boat landings available to access the river located throughout the county. In the future, development of river related attractions and services could greatly improve the ability of this resource to attract visitation to the county. Land use policies that protect the scenic and water quality of the New River and expanding the availability of additional access points to the river may encourage further use of this resource. For more information on the New River in Grayson County please visit: http://www.graysoncountyva.com/new-river

Public Lands, Tourism Attractions, & New River Boat Access

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Public Lands & Tourist Attractions
1. Virginia Creeper Trail
2. Appalachian Trail
3. Grayson Highlands State Park
4. Jefferson National Forest
5. The Crooked Road
6. Historic 1908 Courthouse
7. New River Trail State Park
8. Matthews State Forest
9. Matthews Living History Farm Museum
10. Big Spring Bog State Nature Preserve
11. Grayson Glades State Nature Preserve
12. Blueridge Parkway

Public Boat Access Locations
1. Mouth of Wilson
2. Bridle Creek
3. Independence
4. Baywood
5. Riverside
6. Oldtown
7. Fries

Wythe County

Carroll County

Smyth County

Elk Creek

Fries

Providence

Troutdale

Washington County

Grant

Volney

Galax

Whitetop

Mouth of Wilson

Bridle Creek

Independence

Baywood

Ashe County

Alleghany County

Map by MRPDC
March, 2013
Source: Dept. of Game &
Inland Fisheries, DCR

0   2.5   5   10   Miles

Mountain Peaks

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Name & Elevation Above Sea Level
1. Mount Rogers 5729'
2. Whitetop Mountain 5535'
3. Pine Mountain 5526'
4. Balsam Mountain 5350'
5. Brier Ridge 5245'
6. Haw Orchard Mountain 5075'
7. Cabin Ridge 5040'
8. Elk Garden Ridge 4945'
9. Stone Mountain 4930'
10. Third Peak 4927'
11. Wilburn Ridge 4920'
12. Second Peak 4867'
13. Bluff Mountain 4854'
14. Buck Mountain 4670'
15. North Carolina Corner 4619'
16. First Peak 4608'
17. The Pinnacl 4550'
18. Point Lookout Mountain 4526'
19. Baker Ridge 4500'
20. Hurricane Mountain 4444'
21. Iron Mountain 4420'
22. Flat Top 4398'
23. Long Spur 4357'
24. Big Spring Ridge 4290'
25. Bald Rock Ridge 4160'
26. Big Ridge 4132'
27. Fees Ridge 4125'
28. North Ridge 4150'
29. Comers Rock 4080'
30. Newlands Ridge 4080'
31. Rasor Ridge 4045'
32. Walnut Knob 4048'
33. Hightree Rock 4040'
34. Fries Knob 4025'
35. Straight Mountain 4017'

Legend:
- Jefferson National Forest
- Grayson Highlands State Park
- Matthews State Forest
- Appalachian Trail
- Virginia Creeper Trail
- New River

Map by MRPDC
March, 2013
Source: USGS

Art & Culture

The Blue Ridge Highlands have inspired artisans for generations. Clay for pots, wood for guitars, wool for yarn, nature becomes art. Five organizations operate locally to inspire artisans, teach art, promote performing arts and assist with marketing works of art. Independence offers three locations where local arts and crafts can be purchased, Round the Mountain offers an artisans trail where local studios are open to the public and works of art can be commissioned or purchased. Information on art can be found at; http://www.graysoncountyva.com/arts-culture

Arts Council of the Twin Counties - Serving the City of Galax, Carroll County and Grayson County -Events such as children's theatre, winter concert series, arts in the schools, holiday extravaganzas and partnerships to promote arts throughout the region. http://artsculturalcouncil.org/

Chestnut Creek School of the Arts located in Galax, VA serves the Twin County area by providing instructional workshops and by promoting the traditional and contemporary forms of arts. http://www.chestnutcreekarts.org/

The Historic 1908 Courthouse promotes the arts by providing the Baldwin Auditorium for performances, serving as a site for local festivals, selling handmade arts and crafts at The Treasury Gift Shop and by sponsoring the Wednesday Night Traditional Music Jam. http://www.historic-1908courthouse.org/

Round the Mountain - Woven Mountains River Bends - The Artisans Trail for Grayson County provides an avenue for local crafts stores, artisan studios, lodging, restaurants and more to showcase the best of Grayson County. Travelers can visit all the sites on the trail or custom tailor their spots along the way. More information is available at http://www.roundthemountain.org/map/woven-mountains-and-river-bends

Traditional Music

Travelers visit Grayson County to experience traditional music, otherwise known as "Old Time". Along with bluegrass, traditional music laid the foundation for modern country music and is composed of traditional instruments such as the fiddle, banjo, guitar, dulcimer and more. The ballads and songs originate from European folk songs and storytelling culture. Sometimes the music is used to accompany dance such as flat footing. Traditional music venues include:

Grayson County Jams: *http://www.graysoncountyva.com/music-jams*

• **The 1908 Courthouse Jam** at the Historic 1908 Courthouse, Main Street, Independence, VA. - Wed. 6:30-9:00 p.m.

• **The Mt. Rogers Community Jam and Music Lessons** at Mt. Rogers Combined School in Whitetop.- Tue. 7-10 p.m.

• **The Fries Jam Session** at The Fries Recreation Center Theatre, Fries, Virginia. - Thu. 6-9 p.m.

Fiddler's Conventions and Festivals: *http://www.graysoncountyva.com/festivals*

• **Grayson County Fiddler's Convention**- Every summer the Elk Creek Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad sponsors a terrific fidler's convention at the old Elk Creek School Grounds.

• **Henry Whitter Festival** - Every May Fries celebrates this local musical legend on the banks of the New River with traditional music and festivities for all.

• **Fries Fiddler's Convention**-The Fries Fiddlers Convention traditionally occurs the weekend after the Galax Fiddlers Convention and is sponsored by the Fries Volunteer Fire Department.

• **Old Fiddler's Convention**- Beginning on the second week end in August, the Galax Fiddler's Convention is the oldest, and largest of its kind in the world.

• **Wayne C. Henderson Music Festival**- Held every third Saturday in June at Grayson Highlands State Park, the winner of the guitar competition receiving a new W.C. Henderson guitar.

• **Albert Hash Memorial**- Festival in celebration of Albert Hash, a Grayson fiddler and luthier, this festival offers great music and entertainment for everyone.

Local Luthiers- Grayson County is home to many well know luthiers such as Wayne Henderson, Gerald Anderson, Spencer Strickland, Jimmy Edmonds and, the late, Albert Hash. These handcrafted instruments reflect the quality craftsman and musicians of the area. Local youth mastering traditional music with help from the local school program and mentors, ensure that traditional music will remain alive in Grayson County.

The Crooked Road- Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, winds through the mountains of Southwest Virginia. Here, the Bluegrass, Old Time, and Traditional Country music is as beautiful and rugged as the landscape itself. The Crooked Road travels the entire length of Grayson County, occasionally following along the New River and then climbing in hairpin turns to the high country. http://www.crookedroad.org/

The Blue Ridge Music Center- celebrates the music and musicians of the Blue Ridge. Established by the U.S. Congress in 1985, the site includes an outdoor amphitheater and indoor interpretive center used to highlight an important strand of American musical culture, which is still alive and thriving in the region. http://www.blueridgemusiccenter.org/

The Fairview Ruritan - Bluegrass Music Concerts- http://www.fairviewruritan.com/

The Rex Theater - Downtown Galax http://rextheatergalax.com/

Photo by Amy Boucher

Information regarding traditional music in Grayson County: http://www.graysoncountyva.com/traditional-music

The Historic 1908 Courthouse

The Historic 1908 Courthouse serves as the Art & Cultural Center of Grayson County, Virginia. The building served as the county courthouse from 1908, until the county built the new courthouse in 1979. Since the Grayson County government moved into their new quarters in the late 1970's the 1908 Courthouse has been restored and now houses the Crossroads Museum, the Baldwin Auditorium, and the Treasury Gift Shop, in addition to offices for businesses and other non-profit organizations.

Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation- The Historic 1908 Courthouse Foundation is a non-profit, corporation whose mission is to preserve and maintain the 1908 Courthouse in Independence, VA for future generations. The Foundation also operates the building for the benefit of the people of Grayson County.

The Grayson Crossroads Museum- display artifacts spanning the history of the regions and specifically Grayson County. The Vault (a portion of our museum that was literally the vital records vault) shows many of the household items you would have found in a homestead in the region.

The Baldwin Auditorium- What used to be the courtroom is now the Baldwin Auditorium, named for Dan Baldwin, the man who bought the 1908 Courthouse to preserve it. It is the scene of many events such as concerts, plays, meetings, parties, receptions, and civic events. There is seating for over 200.

The Treasury Gift Shop- The Foundation operates a gift shop in the 1908 Courthouse. Most of the items in the gift shop are made by local artisans and crafts people. Other items are books about the area and souvenir items of the 1908 Courthouse.

All of the profits from the Treasury Gift Shop go towards the maintenance of the 1908 Courthouse. For more information about the Historic 1908 Courthouse, visit their website: www.historic1908courthouse.org

McKnight Park-Independence Farmers Market

Investing in public parks and markets is a win/win/win strategy for citizens, businesses, and visitors. The vision for a permanent park in downtown Independence, with a farmers' market facility is not new. The concept has been a Town revitalization strategy for a number of years (www.independenceva.com/downtown.htm). Recently the initiative has garnered new life and interest, as the Independence Farmers' market has grown in popularity. In early 2012 the Town applied for technical assistance through a joint program of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In October 2012 a workshop was held to explore downtown revitalization strategies that included enhancing and transforming McKnight park into a permanent park with a farmers's market, stage, playground, and other community amenities. For two days a group of citizens, local officials, and the technical assistance consultants worked together to identify ideal design concepts and features of a future park. A preliminary concept plan (illustrated below) was developed by the group that featured the following key concepts: Flexibility is a centerpiece of the design concept and would allow the park to accommodate many uses. It will host a farmers' market but also many other community events. This flexibility will generate ac-

tivity, use and visitors downtown. The design intentionally provides a stable and functional venue for a farmers' market, with permanent vendor stalls that have vehicular access from the rear. Parking would be located at the south end of the site adjacent to, and shared with, the Library parking area. The central, open area of the park serves as the Town Green, and would host the many events the town schedules though-out the year. A permanent stage for outdoor performances and events at the south end faces the Main Street and uses the slope upwards as a natural amphitheater for audience viewing. The stage could serve as a music venue for Crooked Road Music Heritage Trail events. Adjacent to the stage is a playground facility and public rest rooms. The corner of Main Street and Independence Avenue is a highly visible part of the site and a signature kiosk-gazebo would be located there along with signage and a low, artfully done stone wall that allows for sitting. The whole park would be flanked by generous and well landscaped sidewalks and plantings, with sidewalks both externally and more defined walkways around the vendor stall areas and stage areas. Other design elements include a demonstration edible landscaping area, and an expansion area for future vendor stalls to be constructed when needed.

Summary

Grayson County is a unique destination and enjoys a large variety of outdoor recreation assets. The Crooked Road and other traditional music drivers are increasingly becoming a larger percentage of visitors. Tourism efforts will also begin to focus on agritourism, historical related travel and continue the work of promoting local festivals as attractions. Bringing the outdoor recreation traveler into our towns and business establishments remains a primary focus, as will increasing occupancy for cabin/B&B lodging.

Beginning in 2013, marketing mediums will expand away from a traditionally print advertising focus into more television, online, radio and marketing to regional metropolitan centers. Small business development to improve tourism businesses, including networking & capacity of businesses will be a primary focus in the years ahead. A Tourism Ambassador Program is planned to train tourism businesses in marketing and professionalism beginning in 2014.

In July of 2013 the Transient Occupancy Tax rate will increase from 2 - 5%. To receive this increase the locality must direct this percentage increase to tourism marketing. In the years ahead the county will increase tourism marketing efforts. Increased visitation and revenue capture is expected from the public and private

sectors as a result of these initiatives.

The challenges for Grayson County Tourism include; limited staff time to devote to tourism, lack of a full time Visitor Information Center, shortage of restaurants and other tourism related businesses, lack of tourism attractions aside from outdoor recreation assets and a need for professional front line tourism business staff.

These challenges limit the ability of tourism to become a viable economic option for the future of the county. The limited number of tourism attractions and services creates a lack of tourism capacity. Tourism capacity is needed to keep visitors in the area longer and is necessary to keep multigenerational travel parties satisfied. Tourism staffing is not sufficient to fully market the area and to assist with small business development. A full time visitor center open on weekends and nights would be helpful, as the Historic 1908 Courthouse is volunteer ran and unable to be open for extended hours.

The Leadership Survey conducted in 2012 (Public Input Chapter) identified further expansion of tourism efforts as one of many economic strategies for the county.

Photo by Bernice Brown

Photo by Rosemary Cornett

Chapter 11

Land Use

Environmental Features & Climate

Grayson County's total land area is approximately 443 square miles, for a total of 283,305 acres of land. Of that total, more than 50 percent of all land is identified as "woodlands." The general landscape of Grayson is characterized by high pastures and deep hollows which are watered by the New River and its many tributaries.

To the east, the land rises into the scenic height of the Blue Ridge Mountains. To the west are more spectacular heights, but are seen less often – Mount Rogers, Whitetop Mountain, and the Iron Mountain range.

The impressive New River lowlands contrast sharply with the high peaks of Iron Mountain sections of the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area and Jefferson National Forest.

Topography

Grayson County has 35 peaks with elevation over 4,000 feet. Mount Rogers is the highest peak in Virginia at 5,729 feet and attracts visitors from all over the world. Over 60 percent of the land in the county has slopes in excess of 20 percent. For development purposes, steep slopes present a building challenge and possible environmental consequences.

Climate

Grayson County has a temperate climate with distinct season variations. Frontal air masses affect the climate with rapid and frequent weather changes because of the low and high pressure systems that move with the fronts. The general prevailing winds are from the southwest.

The average annual precipitation is about 42 inches and snowfall averages approximately 20 inches. The average annual evaporation rate is 36 inches and the relative humidity is 68 percent. The January average daily high temperature is 46 degrees F and the average daily low is about 24 degrees F. In July the average daily high temperature is 82 degrees F and the average daily low is 64 degrees F.

Intense showers may occur at anytime, but these generally occur during the period from December to April. Thunderstorms are frequent and commonly occur from May to September. Snowstorms are usually confined to the months of November through March.

Hydrology

Grayson County crosses three major watershed areas; these are the Upper New, which drains Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee; the Upper Yadkin, which drains North Carolina and Virginia; and the South Fork Holston, which drains Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The largest drainage system crossing the study area is the Upper New.

The New River has a median daily discharge of 1,623 cubic feet per second, and a minimum daily flow of 564 cubic feet per seond near the City of Galax, which is approximately 6.5 miles upstream from the Town of Fries.

Other significant drainage systems include the Fox Creek, and Elk Creek. Lesser drainage systems include Big Horse Creek, Helton Creek, Wilson Creek, Grassy Creek, Peach Botton Creek, Brush Creek, Little River, Chestnut Creek, and Fisher River.

Due to the abundance of mountainous land, there are also 112 lesser streams/tributaries of the greater watershed systems. As a result of this great number of streams, isolated flash flooding is always possible. The majority of flood damage occurs as a result of rushing water, rather than rising water.

Grayson County Hyrdrology
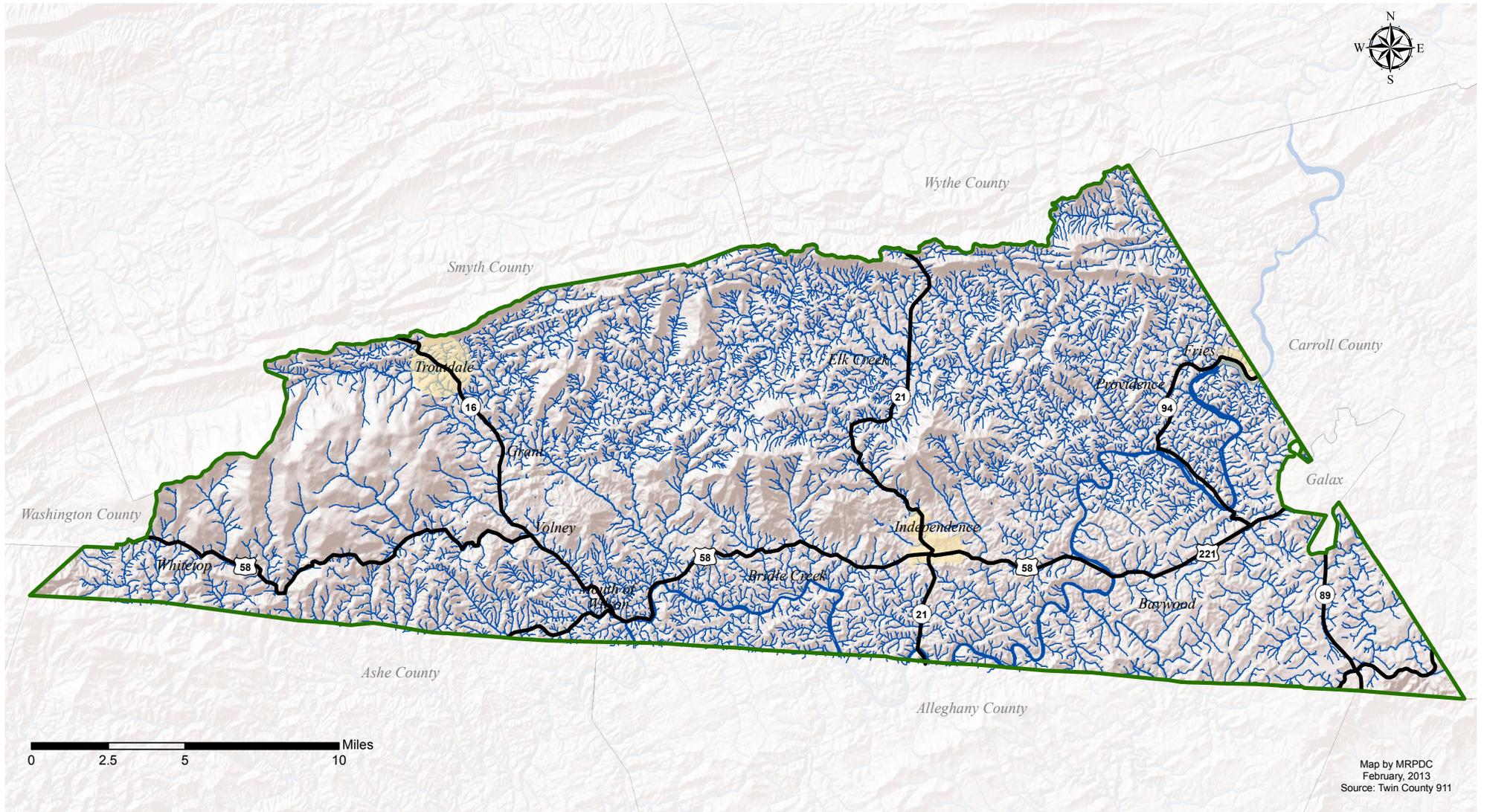
Map by MRPDC
February, 2013
Source: Twin County 911

Grayson County Soil Types

Grayson County has a large variety of soil types and slopes. This variety can be seen on the attached soil map provided by the United States Department of Agriculture in partnership with other federal and state agencies. The work on the soil survey and soil descriptions, that produced the soil map, was conducted in 1997/1998. The online database can be used to define a landowner's soil type and qualities of the soil at that site. Reference the online database at; http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx More information about soil types can be found at the Grayson County

1C- Balsam cobbly loam, 2-5% slopes, very bouldery	19A- Delanco fine sandy loam, 0-2% slopes, rarely flooded	SOIL TYPES CONTINUED:	45D- Pigeonroost gravelly loam, 7-35% slopes, very stony
1C- Balsam cobbly loam, 15-35% slopes, very bouldery	19B- Delanco fine sandy loam, 2-7% slopes, rarely flooded	33B- Hayesville loam, 2-7% slopes	45E- Pigeonroost gravelly loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony
1E- Balsam cobbly loam, 35-55% slopes, very bouldery	20C- Delanco fine sandy loam, 7-15% slopes	33C- Hayesville loam, 7-15% slopes	46E- Pigeonroost-Rockoutcrop complex, 25-55% slopes
2D- Balsam-Noplan complex, 15 - 35% slopes, very bouldery	21B- Edneytown loam, 2-7% slopes	33D- Hayesville loam, 15-25% slopes	
2E- Balsam-Noplan complex, 35 - 55% slopes, very bouldery	21C- Edneytown loam, 7-15% slopes	34B- Keener loam, 2-7% slopes	47D- Pineola loam, 15-35% slopes
3D- Bloodyhorse gravelly loam, 7-35% slopes, very bouldery	21D- Edneytown loam, 15-25% slopes	34C- Keener loam, 7-15% slopes	48E- Pineola loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony
4F- Bloodyhorse gravelly loam, 35 - 80% slopes, ext bouldery	21E- Edneytown loam, 25-35% slopes	34D- Keener loam, 15 -25% slopes	49- Pits, quarries
5B- Braddock loam, 2-7% slopes	21F- Edneytown loam, 35-55% slopes	35C- Keener loam, 7-15% slopes, very stony	50F- Rock outcrop- Peaks complex, 25-80% slopes
5C- Braddock loam, 7-15% slopes	22C- Edneytown-Urban land complex, 0-15% slopes	35D- Keener loam, 15-25% slopes, very stony	51B- Scales mucky peak, 0-7% slopes, very bouldery
5D- Braddock loam, 15 - 25% slopes	23C- Edneytown loam, 7 - 15% slopes	36A- Kinkora fine sandy loam, 0-3% slopes, rarely flooded	52C- Sylco-Sylvatus complex, 7-15% slopes
6E- Braddock cobbly loam, 25-35% slopes	23D- Edneyville loam, 15 - 35% slopes	37C- Konnarock channery silt loam, 7-15% slopes	52D- Sylco-Sylvatus complex, 15-35% slopes
7D- Brevard-Greenlee complex, 8 - 25% slopes, very bouldery	23E- Edneyville loam, 35 - 55% slopes	37D- Konnarock channery silt loam, 15-35% slopes	52E- Sylco-Sylvatus complex, 35-55% slopes
8C- Burton loam, 7-15% slopes, stony	24D- Edneyville loam, 15-35% slopes, very stony	37E- Konnarock channery silt loam, 35-55% slopes	53B- Tate loam, 2-7% slopes
9D- Burton loam, 15-35% slopes, very stony	24E- Edneyville loam, 35 - 55% slopes, very stony	38C- McCamy fine sandy loam, 7-15% slopes	53C- Tate loam, 7-15% slopes
9E- Burton loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony	24F- Edneyville loam, 55 - 80% slopes, very stony	38D- McCamy fine sandy loam, 15-35% slopes	53D- Tate loam, 15-25% slopes
10D- Chestnut-Peaks complex, 8 - 25% slopes, very rocky	25B- Elsinboro fine sandy loam, 2-7% slopes, rarely flooded	39D- McCamy fine sandy loam, 7-35% slopes, very stony	53E- Tate loam, 25-35% slopes
10E- Chestnut-Peaks complex, 25 - 45% slopes, very rocky	26B- Elsinboro-Urban land complex, 0-7% slopes, rarely flooded	39E- McCamy fine sandy loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony	54C- Tate loam, 7-15% slopes, stony
11F- Chestnut-Peaks-Tuscagee complex, 45-90% slopes very rocky	27D- Evard-Cowee Complex, 15-25% slopes, stony	40D-MtRogersBloodyhorseRockoutcrop,7-35%,rubbly windswept	54D- Tate loam, 15-35% slopes, stony
12A- Codurus loam, 0-3% slopes, frequently flooded	28B- Glenelg loam, 2-7% slopes	40F- MtRogersBloodyhorseRockoutcrop,35-80%,rubbly windswept	54E- Tate loam, 35-55% slopes, stony
13A- Comus fine sandy loam, 0-3% slopes, frequently flooded	28C- Glenelg loam, 7-15% slopes	41C-MtRogers Buzzrock Complex, 7-15% slopes,very bouldery windswept	55D- Tate loam, 7-35% slopes, extremely bouldery
14C- Cowee loam, 7-15% slopes	28D- Gleneg loam, 15-25% slopes	41D- MtRogers Buzzrock Complex, 15-35% slopes,very bouldery windswept	56C- Thunder Cobbly loam, 2-15% slopes
14D- Cowee loam, 15-35% slopes	28E- Glenelg loam, 25-35% slopes	42C- Peaks very gravelly loam, 7-15% slopes	56D- Thunder Cobbly loam, 15-35% slopes
14E- Cowee loam, 35-55% slopes	28F- Glenelg loam, 35-55% slopes	42D- Peaks very gravelly loam, 15-35% slopes	56E- Thunder Cobbly loam, 35-55% slopes
15D-Cowee gravelly loam, 7 - 35% slopes, stony	29C- Glenelg gravelly loam, 7-15% slopes, very stony	42E- Peaks very gravelly loam, 35-55% slopes	57C- Thunder Cobbly loam, 2-15% slopes, very bouldery
15E- Cowee gravelly loam, 35 - 55% slopes, stony	29D- Glenelg gravelly loam, 15-35% slopes, very stony	43C- Peaks very gravelly loam, 7-15% slopes, extremely stony	57D-Thunder Cobbly loam, 15-35% slopes, very bouldery
16D- Cowee-Rock outcrop complex, 7 - 35% slopes	29E- Glenelg gravelly loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony	43D- Peaks very gravelly loam, 15-35% slopes, extremely stony	57E-Thunder Cobbly loam, 35-55% slopes, very bouldery
16E- Cowee-Rock outcrop complex, 35 - 55% slopes	30C- Glenelg-Urban land complex, 0-15% slopes	43E- Peaks very gravelly loam, 35-55% slopes, extremely stony	58D- Udorthents-Urban land complex, 0-25% slopes
17A- Craigsville cobbly sandy loam, 0 - 3% slopes, frequently flood	31D- Greenlee very cobbly loam, 15-35% slopes, very stony	43F- Peaks very gravelly loam, 55-80% slopes, extremely stony	59D-Unicoi very gravelly sandy loam, 7-35% slopes, extremely stony
18C- Cullasaja cobbly loam, 7 - 15% slopes, very stony	31E- Greenlee very cobbly loam, 35-55% slopes, very stony		
18D- Cullasaja cobbly loam, 15 - 35% slopes, very stony	32A- Hatboro sandy loam, 0-3% slopes, frequently flooded		

Grayson County Soil Types
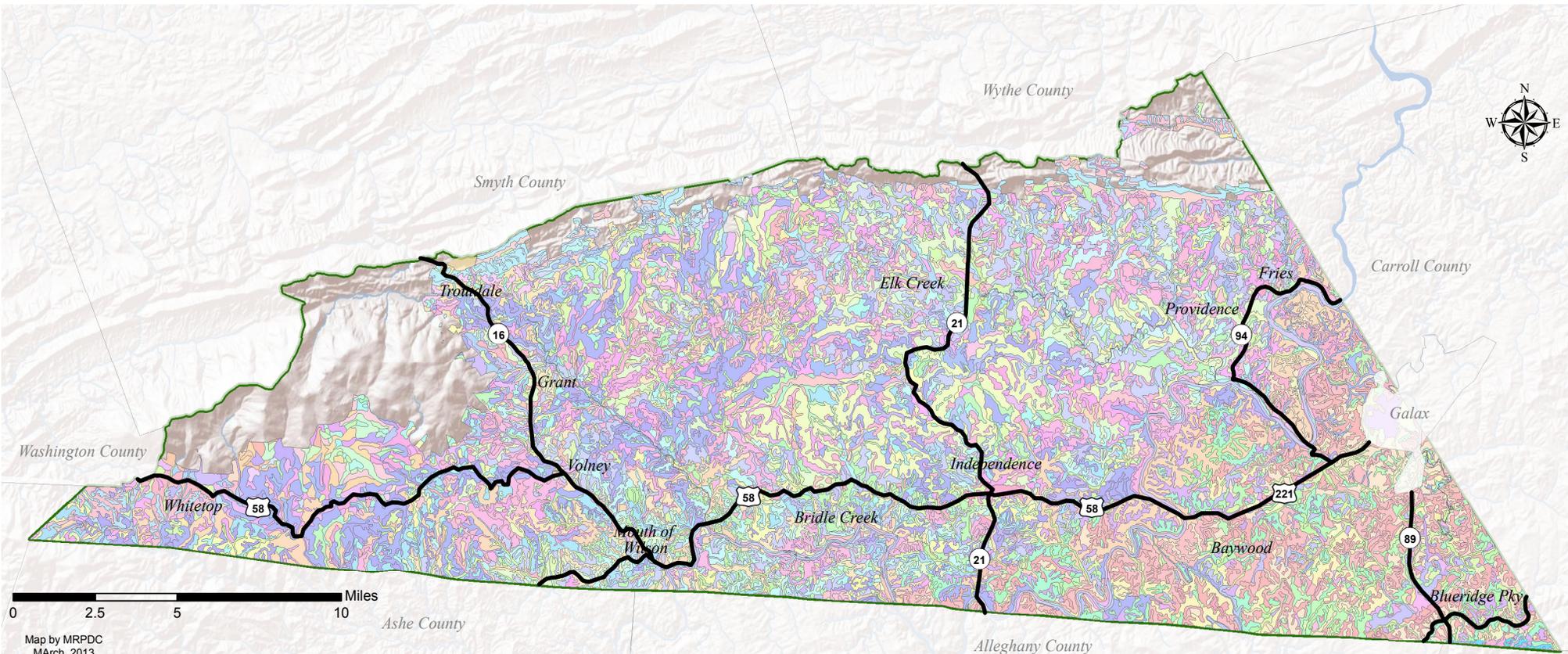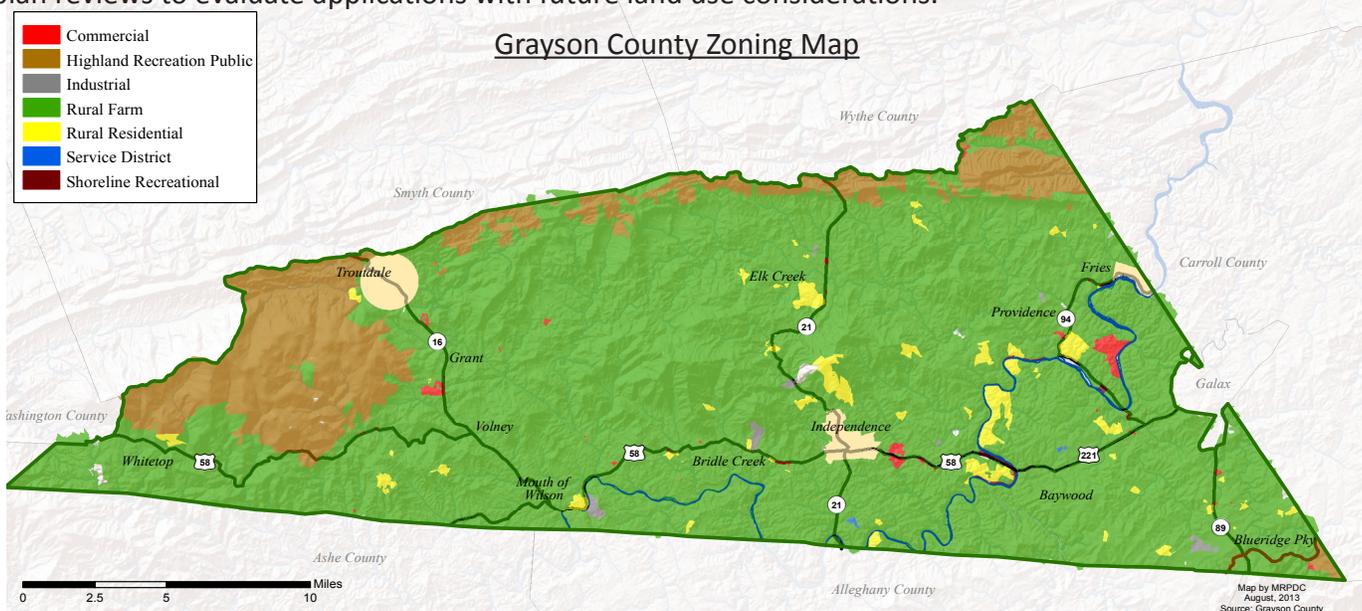

Map by MRPDC
MArch, 2013
Source: USDA
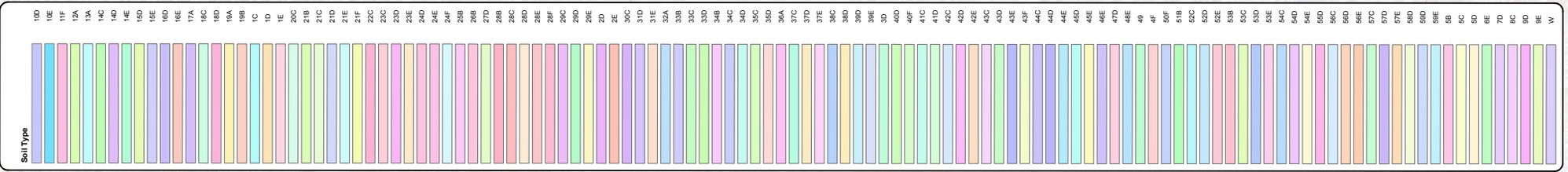
Grayson County Zoning Districts & the Zoning Map

The Grayson County Zoning Map is comprised of zoning districts. These include; Rural Farm, Rural Residence, General Commercial and General Commercial Light, Industrial, Highland Recreation and Highland Recreation Public, Service District and Shoreline Recreation. The purpose of zoning districts is to align compatible uses and areas of community character, protect the general health and welfare of the citizens and to promote appropriate land use planning. Each district establishes uses by right, special uses by permit, setbacks, allowable structures and lot dimensions among other characteristics.

Proposed changes to the zoning map are achieved through the rezone process. This process involves the evaluation of the rezone to ensure that the proposed uses/characteristics of the site can meet the standards of the zone district and that the proposed rezone is compatible with the goals of the zone district and surrounding community. The default zone for the unincorporated areas of Grayson County (towns have their own zoning) is the Rural Farm District. The Rural Farm District defines the majority of land in the county and is the district affiliated with residential, farm and recreational use of open land.

As part of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan update the Planning Commission has identified goals to improve the zoning districts, zoning map, Zoning Ordinance and rezone process as part of an overall strategy to improve land use planning in the years ahead.

1) Ensure the Zoning Ordinance reflects each community's vision/character. Consider community meetings to gather public input and custom tailor zoning districts/policy to meet that community's vision

2) Reevaluate all existing zoning districts to ensure that they are meeting their original goal/usefulness. Potential to remove those not being used and or add new zoning districts such as Light Industrial District, Agricultural District, Business Incentive Districts.

3) Use of zoning/zone districts for safety and hazard mitigation concerns. Minimize flooding risks and protecting communities from industrial hazards are two examples where zoning can fulfill the goal of protecting health and welfare of the citizens. Setbacks should meet the fire code standards, access should be maintained for emergency vehicle access and safe entrance to public roads should be promoted.

4) Consider zoning districts/policy to assist small business development and allow by right some commercial activity where deemed appropriate in Rural Farm. Existing businesses in Rural Farm can be rezoned commercial to align with the zoning map.

5) Agriculture clarity of "uses by right". Consider voluntary agriculture district for premium agricultural lands to ensure prime areas are protected for future agricultural uses.

6) Mapping to include; **Inventory Map** (showing natural and cultural assets, critical infrastructure, areas with business development and overlay with current use of land, density, transportation networks and the zoning map) **Future Land Use Map** (identify areas in need of protection, areas suitable for commercial/industrial, future proposed infrastructure and areas most suitable for residential development based on proximity to services. Future studies such as fiscal impact and cost of infrastructure studies, suitability analysis ect... to assist with long range planning.

7) Ensure the Zoning Ordinance and all other ordinances are aligned and evaluate the ordinances to ensure that they meet federal and state laws, protect the public welfare and to ensure that these ordinances minimize regulations when they are not necessary.

8) Administrative improvements to streamline process clarify procedure and promote the use of checklists and site plan reviews to evaluate applications with future land use considerations.

Grayson County Zoning Map

Legend:
- Commercial
- Highland Recreation Public
- Industrial
- Rural Farm
- Rural Residential
- Service District
- Shoreline Recreational

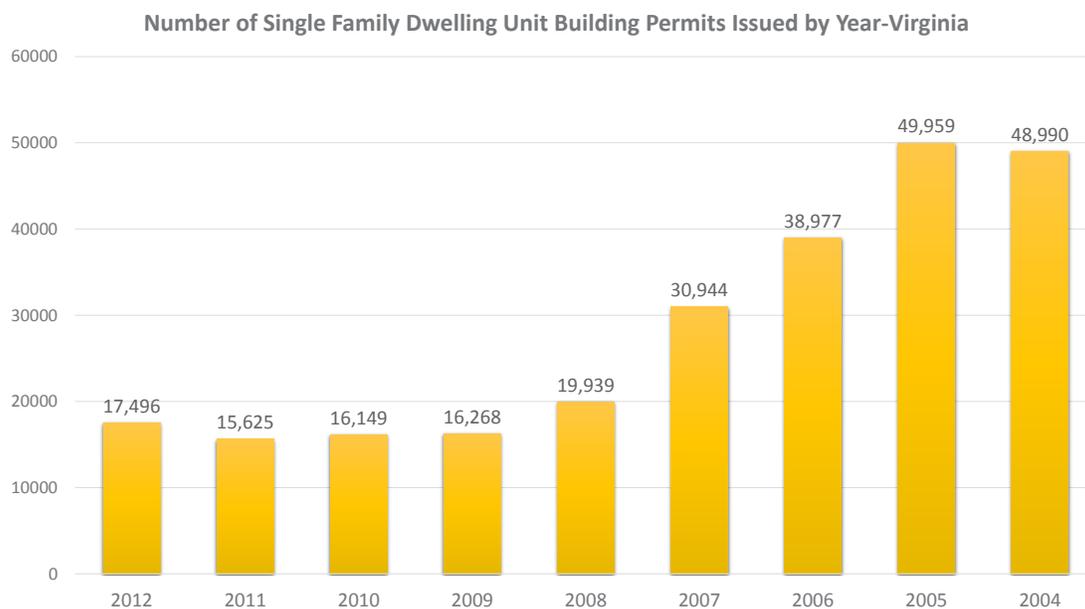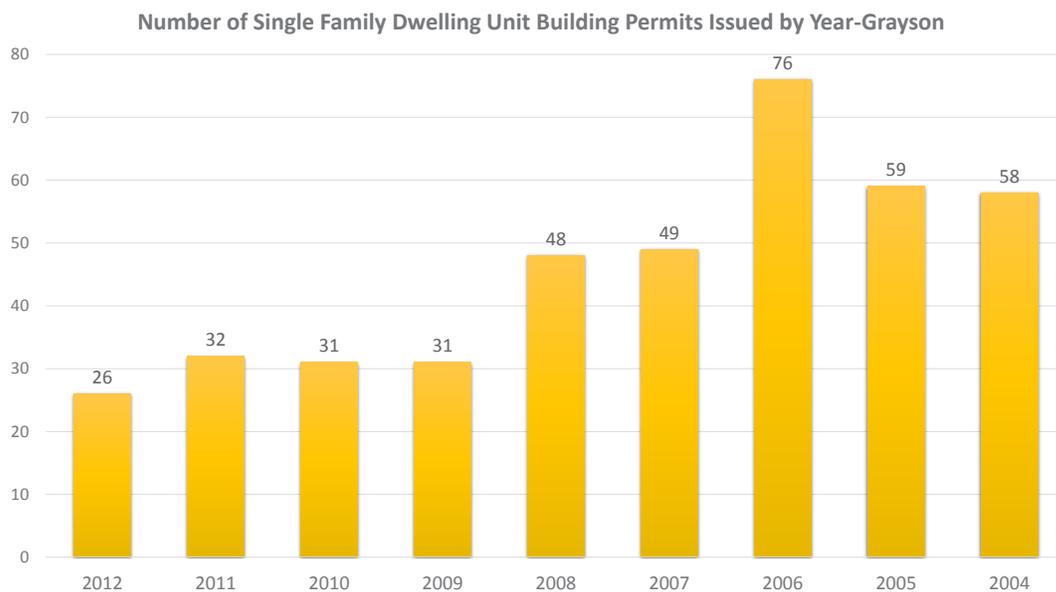Map by MRPDC
August, 2013
Source: Grayson County

Development Patterns/Trends

The primary type of development occurring in Grayson County is the construction of single family residential structures. Accessory structures that support residential construction such as storage sheds and garages are the majority of building types/ permits issued.

Commercial construction activity has mainly consisted of additions and the remodeling of current structures; the most notable new construction projects within the last 5 years include the River North Correctional Facility, Grayson Highlands School and the Oracle Institute. The most recent industrial facility was completed in 2000.

Minimal road infrastructure development has occurred over the last 10 years.

Number of Single Family Dwelling Unit Building Permits Issued by Year-Grayson

Year	Permits
2012	26
2011	32
2010	31
2009	31
2008	48
2007	49
2006	76
2005	59
2004	58

Number of Single Family Dwelling Unit Building Permits Issued by Year-Virginia

Year	Permits
2012	17,496
2011	15,625
2010	16,149
2009	16,268
2008	19,939
2007	30,944
2006	38,977
2005	49,959
2004	48,990

Source: www.census.gov/permits

Development Challenges

The Blue Ridge Mountains formed millions of years ago by plate tectonics/volcanic activity and have slowly eroded over time. The mountainous terrain provides a landscape in Grayson County which is truly unique and sought after by those who enjoy scenic drives and high mountain vistas. With over 60% of the county classified as having slopes over 20% this mountainous terrain creates challenges for development. Developing excessive slopes into a level grade required for development requires grading, cut and fill and unique challenges for addressing hydrological features, storm water runoff and prevention of erosion. Access roads and critical infrastructure for development face the same challenges.

In the valleys that accompany the scenic New River and other major tributaries periodic flooding occurs as a natural function of the watershed. These areas which are subject to the 1% chance of flooding each year or commonly known as the 100 year floodplain or Special Flood Hazard Area by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are subject to periodic flooding events. Grayson County administers a Floodplain Program as part of the requirement for the National Flood Insurance Program The program ensures that floodplain maps are shared with the public and mandates that the locality regulates development of flood prone areas mapped by FEMA. Land which lies in the Special Flood Hazard Area can be developed to some extent, but these areas are less than ideal for development due to the long term hazards, negative impact to the capacity of the floodway channel and the extra costs associated with floodplain development. More information about the floodplain in Grayson County can be found at: http://arcgis.webgis.net/va/Grayson/

Grayson County   Slopes & FEMA Designated Floodplains

Map by MRPDC
March, 2013
Source: FEMA
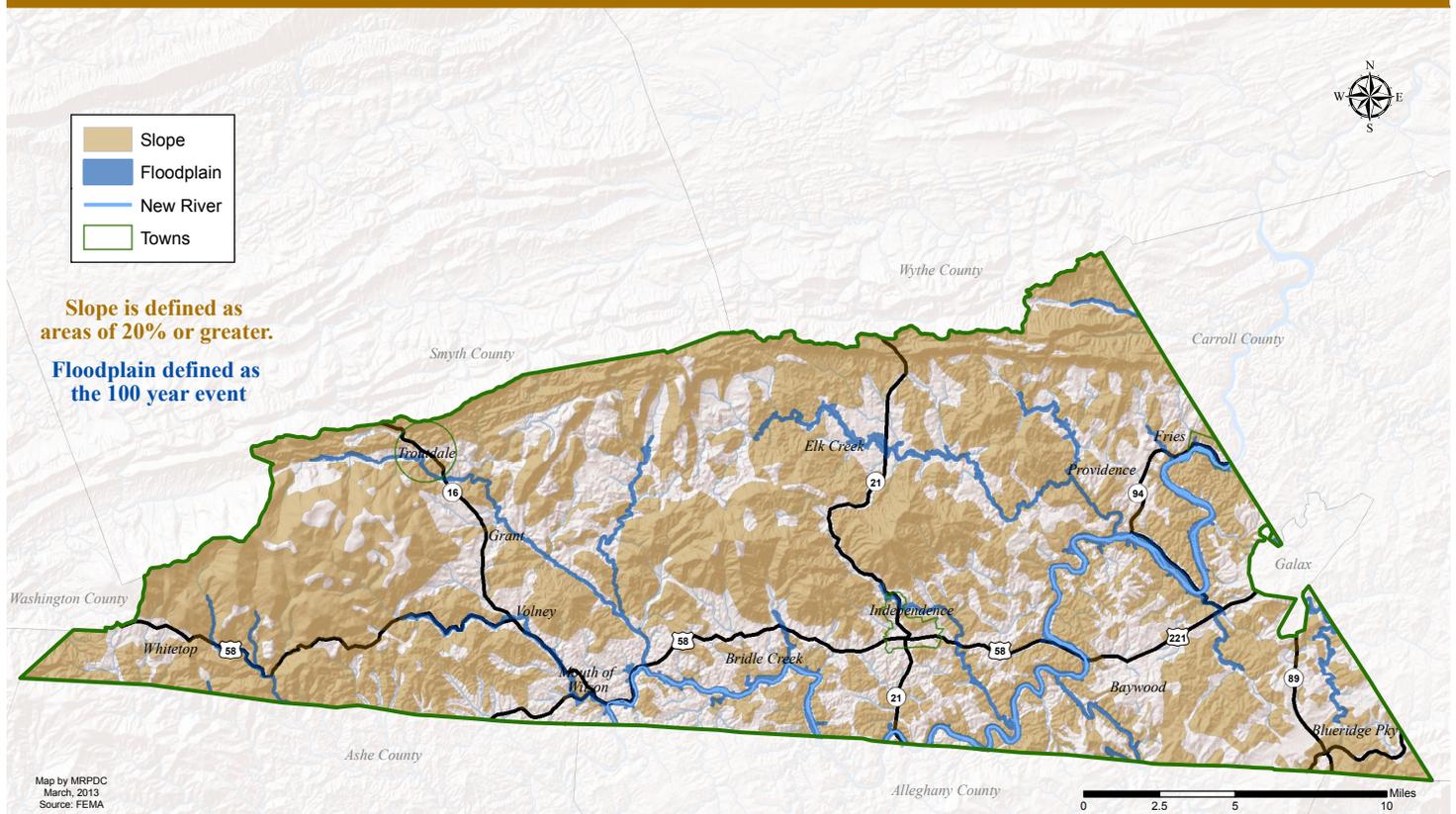
Development Ordinances & Codes

Grayson County guides the development of land and structures through local land use ordinances and codes. More information can be found at the government website http://www.graysongovernment.com/, Department of Planning & Community Development or at the Grayson County Building Department.

Floodplain Ordinance - Guides development in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated floodplain. The Floodplain Ordinance is a requirement for the locality's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. The purpose of the ordinance is to prevent the loss of life and property, the creation of health and safety hazards, prevent the disruption of commerce and government services, and to avoid the extraordinary and unnecessary expenditure of public funds for flood protection and relief, and to prevent the impairment of the tax base. The county flood ordinance applies to all unincorporated areas that lie within a FEMA designated floodplain.

Subdivision Ordinance - The Commonwealth of Virginia requires each locality to prepare and adopt a Subdivision Ordinance. The initial ordinance was adopted in July of 1977, since that time there has been five amendments with the most recent amendment in 2012. The Ordinance applies to the unincorporated areas of the county (towns excluded) and pertains to any division of property. The purpose of the ordinance is to establish subdivision standards and procedures for Grayson County and is part of a long-range plan to guide and facilitate the orderly growth of the county, and to promote the public safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity, and general welfare.

Zoning Ordinance- Land use zoning was adopted in December of 1998. Since that time the ordinance has been amended ten times with the latest revision in September of 2011. Each of the incorporated towns utilizes their own zoning ordinances and administers their own zoning. Guided by the land use goals included in the Comprehensive Plan, the Grayson County Zoning Ordinance is designed to carefully balance the fundamental property rights and interests of the citizens with the needs of the community. Policies to protect public health, safety and welfare in addition to the guiding principles of appropriate land use and future land use planning serve as the basis for zoning.

Erosion & Sediment Control Ordinance- The Grayson County Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance was initially adopted September of 1975, the latest draft occurred in January of 2008. The purpose of this ordinance is to administer the Erosion & Sediment Control Program. The E&S program prevents the degradation of properties, stream channels, waters and other natural resources of the County. This requirement for the control of soil erosion, sediment deposition and nonagricultural runoff protects against the detrimental effects of sediment and further protects local water resources from the negative effects of soil erosion on the watershed.

Stormwater Management Ordinance- The Grayson County Stormwater Management Ordinance will be adopted prior to June of 2014. A recent change to the Virginia Stormwater Management Program resulting from House Bill 1065 has mandated that all counties and cities adopt and administer a local stormwater management program. The purpose of the program is to protect water quality and to ensure that adequate measures are in place to effectively handle stormwater flows in natural or manmade channels.

Building Code- In accordance with Section 36-99 of the Code of Virginia, Grayson County adopted The Uniform Statewide Building Code in 1973. The purpose of the USBC is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, provided that the building and structures should be permitted to be constructed at the least possible cost consistent with the recognized standards of health, safety, energy conservation, and water conservation, including versions necessary to prevent overcrowding, rodent or insect infestation, and garbage accumulation; and barrier free provisions for the physically handicapped and aged.

Land Use Value Taxation

In some localities use value taxation is used as a tool to preserve farm and forested lands. The theory is that by reducing the tax burden for these properties the locality encourages landowners to keep the property in an agricultural or forested use. The decision to adopt land use taxation by the locality can be a difficult decision. Some claim that the tax break for certain landowners will unfairly place a tax burden on others. In some localities with limited sources of revenue for county expenditures (property taxes comprise a large percentage of their revenue stream) the decision can be extremely difficult. Others would argue that a better method for reducing the tax burden is to keep the tax levy low for all use values. Each locality determines its tax levy based on $1 per $100 value of the assessed market rate as determined by a scheduled assessment. Grayson County is on a 4-6 yr assessment schedule. The next assessment is scheduled for 2016. According to the Commissioner of Revenue's office the tax levy for real property has remained constant since 2010 at .49 cents per$100 value of the assessed market rate. The Weldon Cooper Center publishes a yearly report of tax rates for all localities in Virginia going back to 1999: http://www.coopercenter.org/econ/taxrates The median tax rate levy for real property of all the counties in Virginia was .59 cents per $100 value of the assessed market. According to the source listed above: in 2012 there were 17,710 tax parcels in Grayson County, 13,991 of these are considered residential parcels.

The consideration of use value taxation should accompany an independent study to determine the financial impact to the county of all eligible properties or a percentage of anticipated properties who would apply based on meeting the qualifiers by the Code of Virginia. More information on use value taxation in Virginia can be found at: http://usevalue.agecon.vt.edu/

The map below demonstrates which counties have some sort of use value taxation:
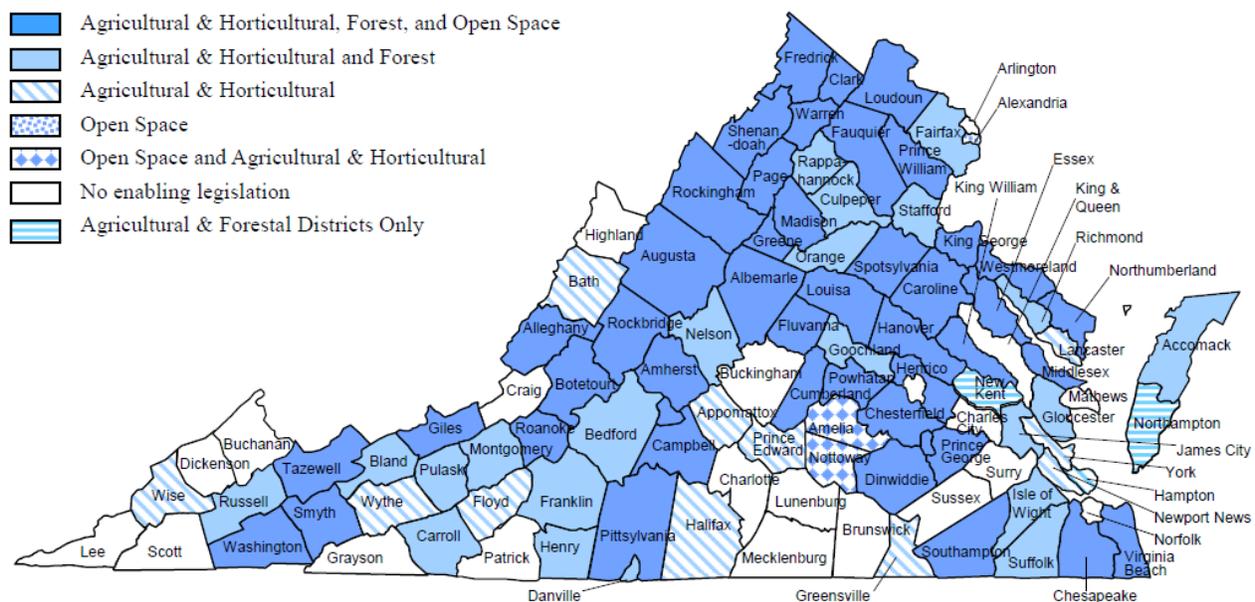
Source: Virginia's Use Value Assessment Program-Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics http://usevalue.agecon.vt.edu/

Land Conservation

A significant portion of Grayson County has been placed in either a public or private conservation area. The public lands within the county, including those areas in Grayson Highlands State Park, New River Trail State Park, Matthews State Forest and Old Flat State Forest, Jefferson National Forest and the Mt. Rogers National Recreational Area. Private conservation easements can be established by landowners. Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between a landowner and a prospective easement holder such as; New River Land Trust or Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Conservation easements are used as a tool to preserve the tract for wildlife habitat, agricultural or forestry uses, to protect against development or to preserve open space. Conservation easements on private lands can qualify the property for state tax credits and a local reduction in property tax valuation. Public lands and private conservation easements (protected lands) comprise approximately 17% of the total county area.

Protected Lands in Grayson County

New River Land Trust

Legend

- ▇ Private Conservation Easements
- ▇ Public Conserved Lands
- ▇ New River
- ▨ City of Galax
- ▢ County Border
- — Primary Roads

Jefferson National Forest

Grayson Highlands State Park

New River

City of Galax

Independence

Judge Matthews State Forest

Blue Ridge Parkway

Protected Lands: 49,296 acres (17% of county area)
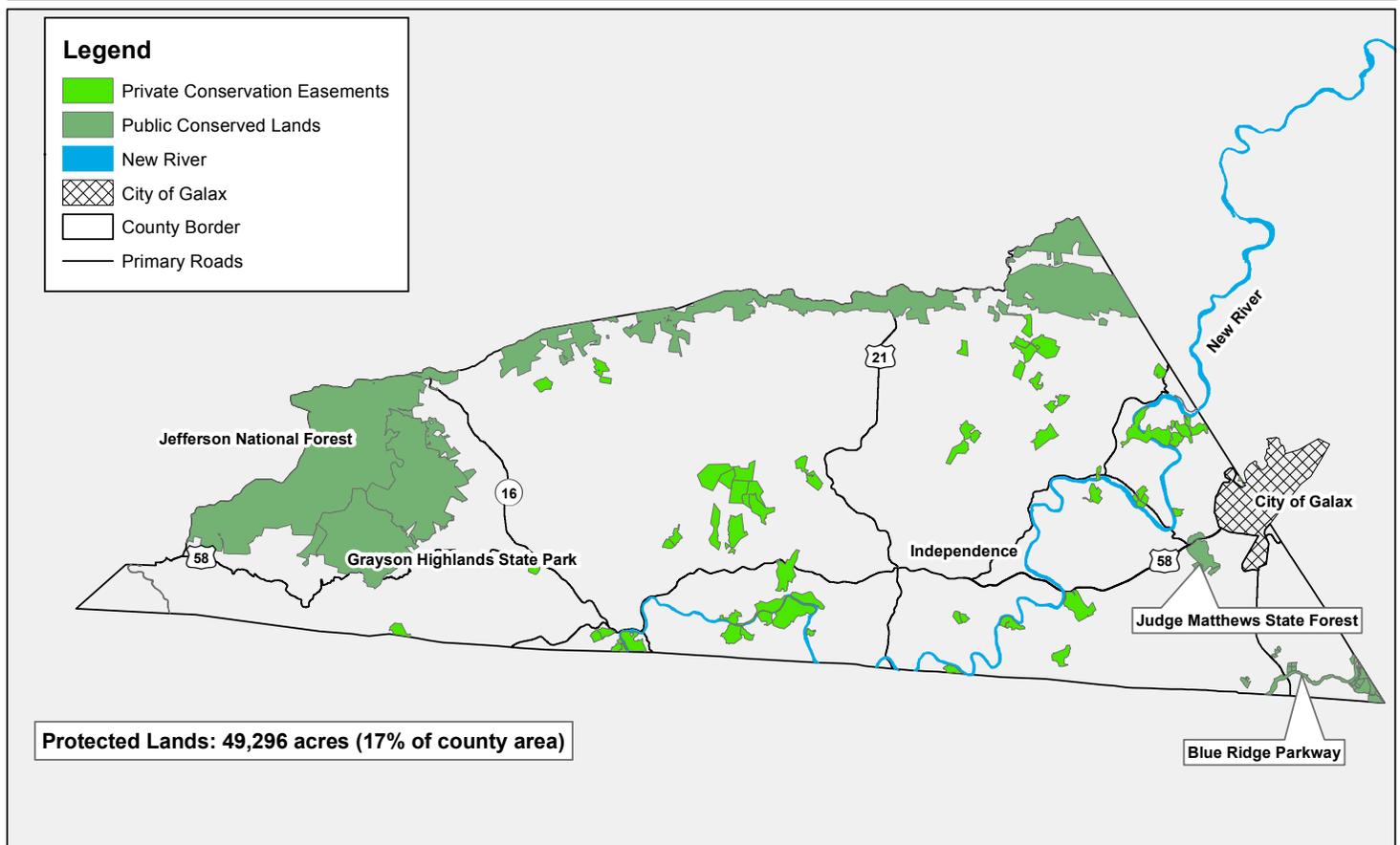
"Conserving farmland, forests, open spaces and historic places in Virginia's New River region"
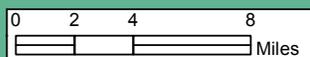
N

0   2   4   8
Miles

Floodplain development in Grayson County has historically occurred in developed areas along the New River as part of Shoreline Recreation lots. Shoreline Recreation Zone District was created to guide the development of the New River shoreline for recreational purposes while protecting the capacity of the floodway to accommodate floodwaters and protect against the loss of life and property as a result of flooding. The Planning Commission as part of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan process has identified this district as a potential area for improvement. Water quality, unregulated on site sewage, overdevelopment and future hazard mitigation from flooding events are of particular concern. Future strategies may involve new language for this zone district to align with the Grayson County Floodplain Ordinance and to accommodate the reasonable use of these recreational lots. Bringing non-compliant properties in line with the ordinance by restricting future development should be evaluated. With over 500 individual lots comprising this zone district the impact on scenic enjoyment and the water quality of the New River are critical factors in a reevaluation of this zone district.

The Rural Farm Zone District entails the majority of floodplain properties in Grayson County. These areas are mostly wooded and agricultural lands with limited residential structures. Flood prone properties designated as Special Flood Hazard Areas occur along the New River and along major tributaries such as Elk Creek, Fox Creek, Big Wilson Creek, Little River and others. In all zone districts, floodplain development is guided by the Grayson County Floodplain Ordinance as mandated by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). A review and potential revision to the Grayson County Floodplain Ordinance should be considered to ensure that this document is meeting the needs of the community.

Flooding has been identified as the number one hazard for Grayson County. Appropriate development of the floodplain is necessary to mitigate these hazards. Protection of the New River and major tributaries to ensure good water quality and to promote the public use can coincide with hazard mitigation strategies for flood prone areas.

Shoreline Recration Map
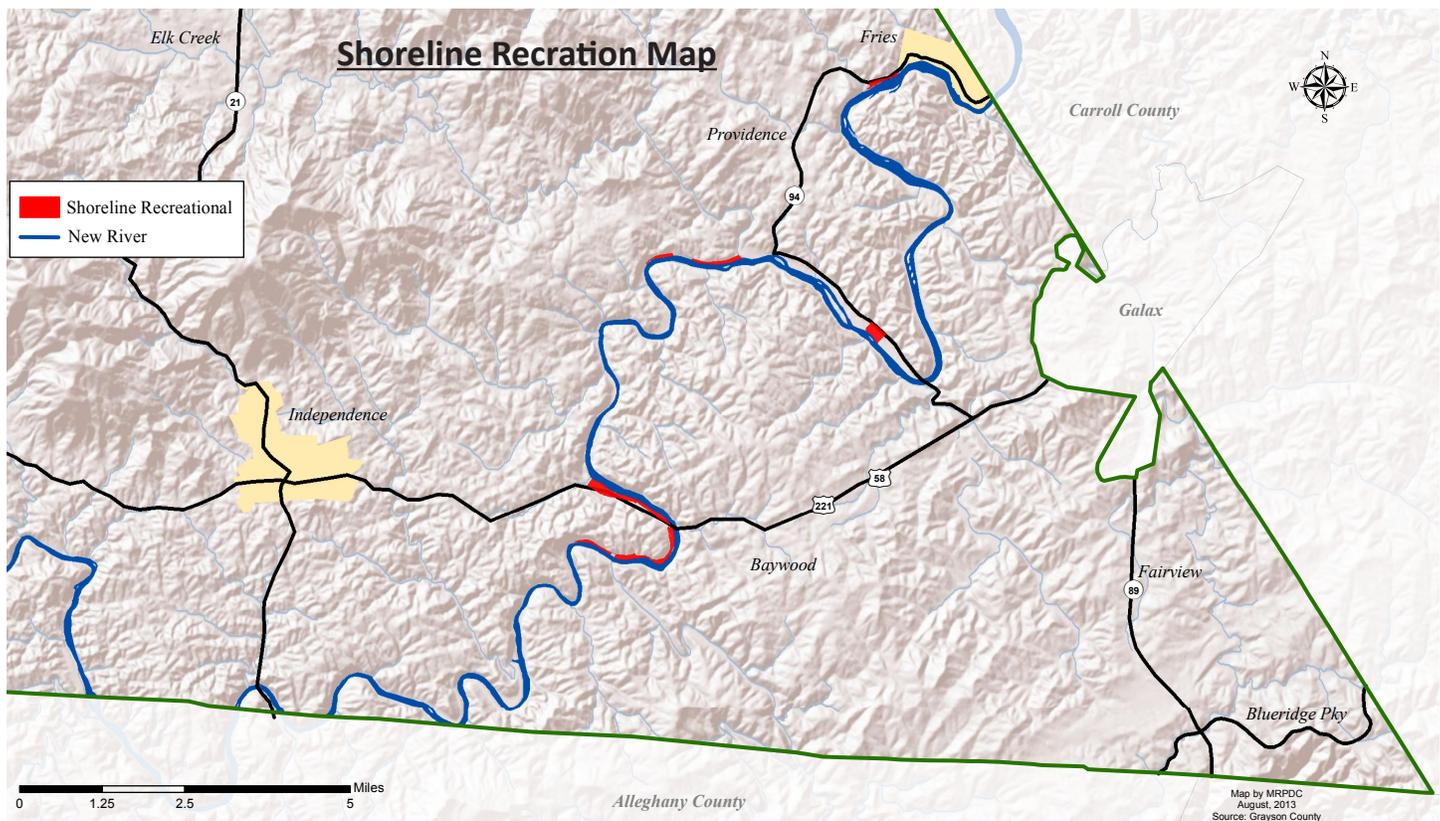
Summary

Land Use Ordinances and Codes play a critical role in guiding the development of land. They also serve the function of ensuring that local policy reflects state and federal mandates for soil and water protection and floodplain management. A comprehensive review and potential amendments to all five ordinances including the Zoning, Subdivision, Erosion & Sediment Control, Storm water Management, and Floodplain Ordinance to ensure that all of the ordinances compliment and align properly with each other and adhere to current standards.

- Zoning in Grayson County should reflect each community's character. Community based meetings should be developed to gauge public input regarding future vision for land use and policy.

- Existing zoning districts should be reviewed to evaluate whether or not they are being used and new zoning districts that may be necessary to achieve land use goals should be considered.

- The Zoning Ordinance should undergo a complete audit to evaluate the effectiveness of policy in achieving land use goals, ease the administration of the ordinance, to promote small business and to prevent undue burden for citizens in situations where regulations may not be necessary.

- The New River has been identified as a unique and positive asset to the county. Developing policy that reflects this value should be considered. The Shoreline Recreation District should be reevaluated to determine if it is meeting the goals and to ensure that it is in alignment with the Floodplain Ordinance.

- Reach out to commercial and industrial businesses in operation to identify establishments that require an official rezone to Commercial or Industrial District.

- Consider development of a Future Land Use map that can guide the Planning Commission in decisions regarding zone districts and special use permits.

- Conduct education and outreach to property owners in the FEMA designated floodplain.

- Conduct a suitability analysis to gauge how proposed development may affect land areas and to develop incentives for business development in areas conducive to development.

- Ridge top Development should be studied to determine if extra protection is needed.

- Develop a process for the review of proposed conservation easements based on land use suitability analysis and areas delineated for natural resource and agricultural land protection.

- Reduce the cost of identifying new county tax parcels by requiring surveyors to submit GIS compatible data for property division review and approval.

- Consider Enterprise zones and Empowerment Zones as tools for funding defined needs.

- An independent third party study of the proposed benefits and/or negative impact of use value taxation policy for Grayson County.

- Provide web based GIS layers for the public to learn about natural features, soil types, slopes, zoning classifications and other information needed for appropriate land use decisions.

Chapter 12

Public Input

The Public Input Process

The Grayson County Planning Commission, in recognition that public input is important for the development of the Comprehensive Plan designed three types of public input surveys; the Leadership Survey, the Citizen Survey and the Youth Survey. This chapter shares the three methods used and the results of these surveys.

Leadership Survey Overview

The Grayson County Planning Commission sponsored a leadership survey as a first step approach to understanding the issues facing the county.

The Leadership Survey was presented to 173 community leaders in Grayson County who are involved professionally or through civic involvement in the content areas of housing, land use, economy/employment, civic/community, transportation, education, healthcare and recreation, public health and safety, public facilities and services, agriculture, forestry/wildlife and county leadership.

The purpose of the leadership survey was to identify the major issues facing the county and to fully understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to/for the county. The respondents were given the opportunity to present comments on Grayson County in general and to submit strategies for improving the quality of life in Grayson County.

Of the 173 individuals who received the survey, seventy-two survey responses were received with a forty-two percent rate of return. The Planning Commission used this information to develop the citizen survey, youth survey and the action plan component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Citizen Survey Overview

The Citizen Survey evolved out of questions that the Planning Commission had about the residents of Grayson County such as: Where do people travel for work or school? What type of profession would they like to be employed in? What are the citizens recreational needs? What ideas can be utilized for improving education? Nineteen questions were used on the citizen survey.

To ensure that all residents had an opportunity to participate, paper copies were located at twelve survey station locations across the county with three survey stations located in each district. An online digital version was available at the www.plangrayson.com website.

The survey began on January 25, 2013 and lasted through March 25, 2013. To encourage participation, a direct door flyer was mailed to every mailbox in the county and several press releases were issued.

When the results were collected in April of 2013, there were:

Overall, 693 total surveys were used by Mount Rogers Planning District Commission to extrapolate the data as represented on the pages in this chapter.

Completed Surveys: 421 complete online surveys
29 complete paper surveys
450 total complete surveys

Incomplete Surveys: 50 incomplete online surveys
193 incomplete paper surveys (at least one question left unanswered)
243 incomplete surveys

The citizens of Grayson County stepped up to the challenge and the citizen survey was a great success. The completion rate achieved a ninety-nine percent confidence level at a +/- 5 confidence interval. The Grayson County Planning Commission would like to thank all of the citizens who participated and each of the businesses that allowed a survey station to be placed in their establishment.

Survey Box at Grant Computing Center
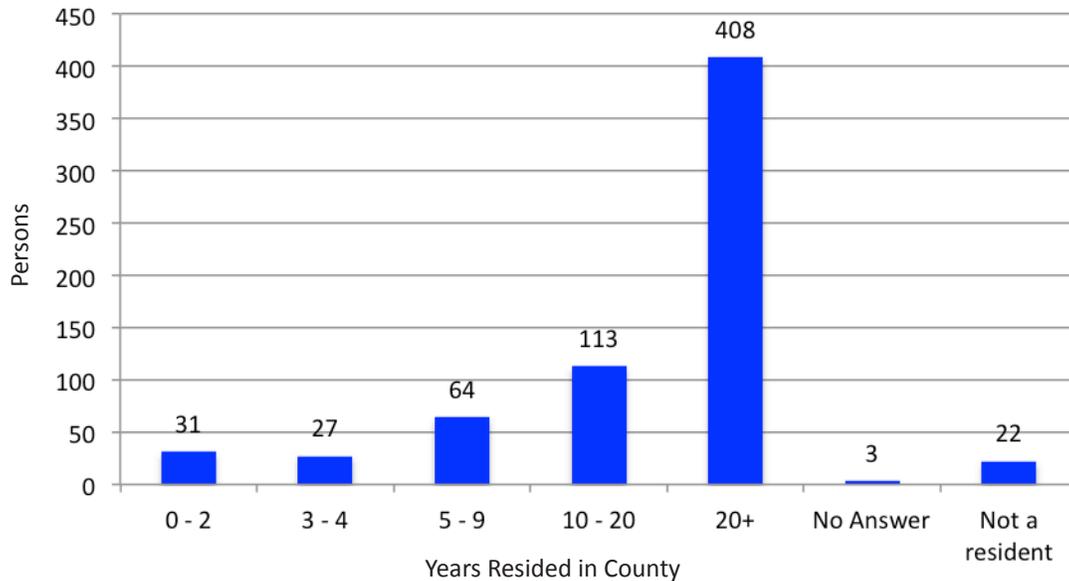
Citizen Survey-Age of Respondents

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Age of Respondents

Legend:
- Under 18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 44
- 45 - 65
- Over 65

Pie chart values: 1.2%, 6.9%, 24.1%, 41.5%, 26.3%
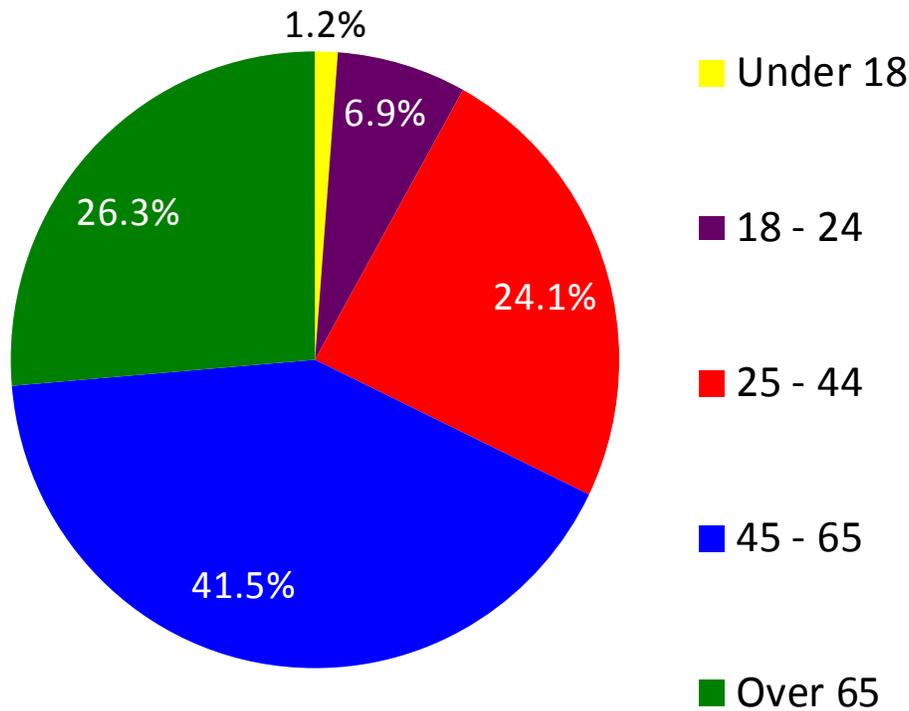
Respondents by District

District	Number	Percentage
Elk Creek	180	26.0%
Oldtown	123	17.7%
Providence	78	11.3%
Wilson	231	33.3%
Don't Know	28	4.0%
No Answer	28	4.0%
Not A Resident	25	3.6%
Total	693	100.0%

- 41.5 percent of respondents (277 persons) were between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five.
- Only 8.1 percent of respondents (fifty-four persons) were under the age of twenty-five.
- Twenty-eight respondents (four percent) did not answer the age or voting district questions.
- 612 respondents (88.3 percent) lived in Grayson County and knew in which district they lived.
- Twenty-five of the respondents (3.6 percent) were not Grayson County residents.

Citizen Survey-Residency & Housing

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Length of Residency

Bar chart titled "Length of Residency" with Y-axis "Persons" (0–450) and X-axis "Years Resided in County":
- 0 - 2: 31
- 3 - 4: 27
- 5 - 9: 64
- 10 - 20: 113
- 20+: 408
- No Answer: 3
- Not a resident: 22

Housing Type	Number	Percentage
Own Your Home	532	83.9%
Rent	66	10.4%
Other	36	5.7%
Total	634	100.0%

- 408 respondents (61.1 percent) have lived in Grayson County for twenty or more years.
- Fewer than ten percent of respondents moved to Grayson County in the past four years.
- 532 respondents (83.9 percent) own their home, while only sixty-six respondents (10.4 percent) rent their home.
- Of the respondents who do not rent or own, most live with family members.
- Based on the survey, the average age of the housing stock in Grayson County is fourty-two years.

District	Average Age of Home
Elk Creek	37.8 years
Oldtown	33.7 years
Providence	54.0 years
Wilson	47.3 years
Grayson County Average	42 years

Citizen Survey-Employment

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

- 29.7 percent of respondents were retired.
- 40.6 percent of respondents were employed full-time, while 7.1 percent were unemployed.
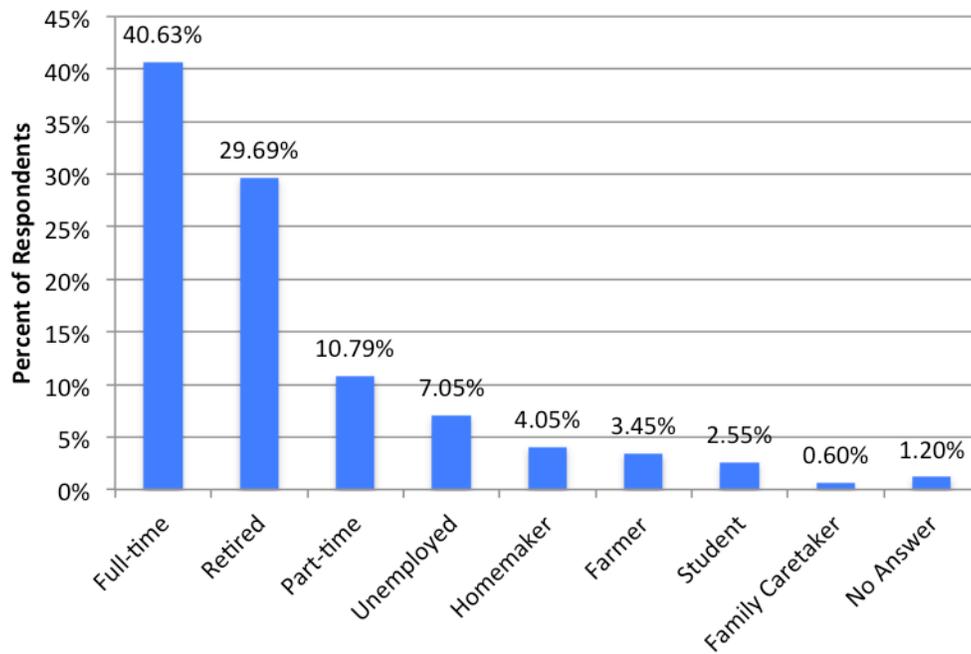
- According to respondents, 54.8 percent of those unemployed said that the lack of job opportunities is the greatest factor for unemployment.
- 19.4 percent of unemployed respondents identified health/disability as the second greatest factor.
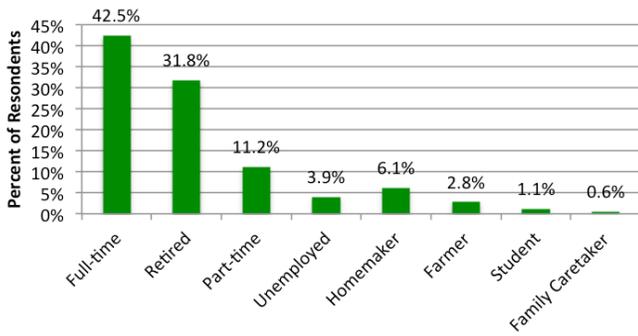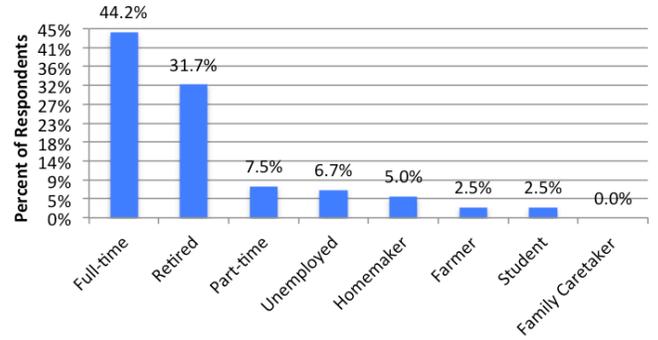
Reasons for Unemployment

Citizen Survey-Employment by District & Age

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

Employment by District

Elk Creek

Full-time	42.5%
Retired	31.8%
Part-time	11.2%
Unemployed	3.9%
Homemaker	6.1%
Farmer	2.8%
Student	1.1%
Family Caretaker	0.6%

Oldtown

Full-time	44.2%
Retired	31.7%
Part-time	7.5%
Unemployed	6.7%
Homemaker	5.0%
Farmer	2.5%
Student	2.5%
Family Caretaker	0.0%

Providence

Full-time	36.4%
Retired	33.8%
Part-time	14.3%
Unemployed	5.2%
Homemaker	3.9%
Farmer	5.2%
Student	1.3%
Family Caretaker	0.0%

Wilson

Full-time	38.3%
Retired	29.1%
Part-time	12.2%
Unemployed	10.0%
Homemaker	3.0%
Farmer	4.8%
Student	2.2%
Family Caretaker	0.4%

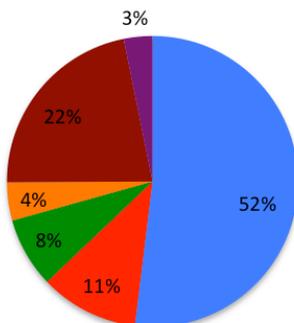## Employment by Age
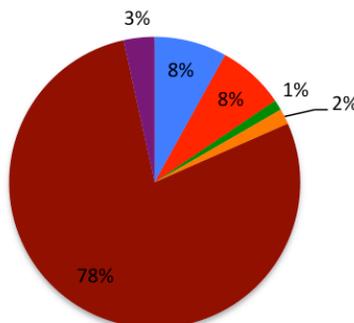
Under 18
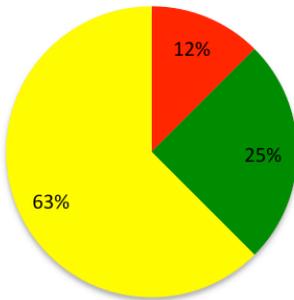
18 - 24
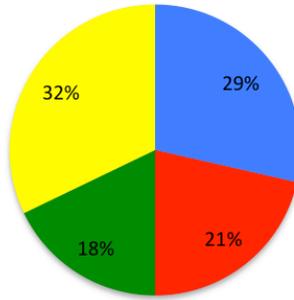
25 - 44
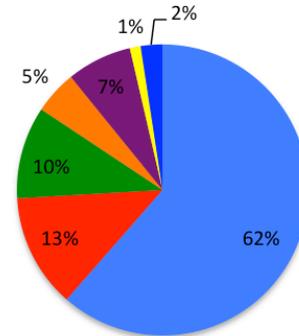
### 45 - 64

65 or older

- Full-time
- Part-time
- Unemployed
- Farmer
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Student
- Family Caretaker

Citizen Survey-Availability of Public Services

District	Public Water	Public Sewer	High-Speed Internet	Cellphone
Elk Creek	12.8%	11.7%	66.1%	77.8%
Oldtown	32.5%	9.8%	80.5%	85.4%
Providence	32.1%	29.5%	66.7%	78.2%
Wilson	13.2%	1.8%	50.0%	25.9%
Don't Know	35.7%	28.6%	50.0%	64.3%
County Average	20.3%	10.8%	62.3%	60.1%

Availability of Services
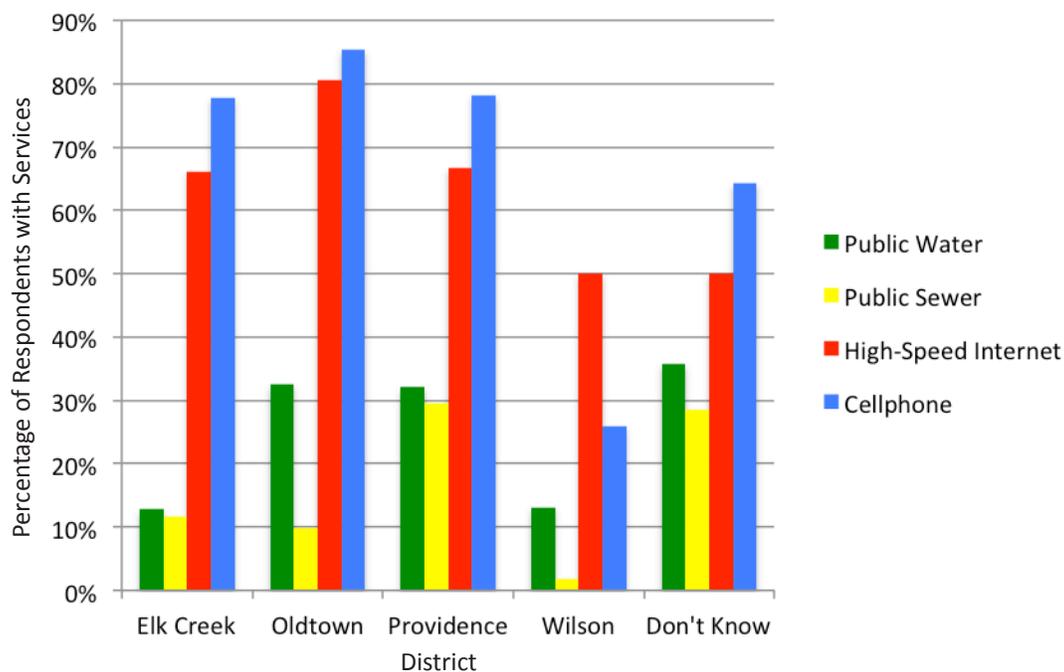
- Availability of public water and sewer is limited throughout Grayson County.
- Public water and sewer service in Grayson County is available from systems operated by the towns of Fries, Independence, Troutdale and the City of Galax.
- Respondents in the Wilson district reported very limited cellphone availability (25.9 percent).
- Cellphone availability was relatively high in all other districts.
- High-speed Internet availability was relatively high in all districts; however, respondents from the Wilson district reported only fifty percent availability.

Citizen Survey-Distance to Employment or School

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Where Respondents Travel to for Employment or School by District
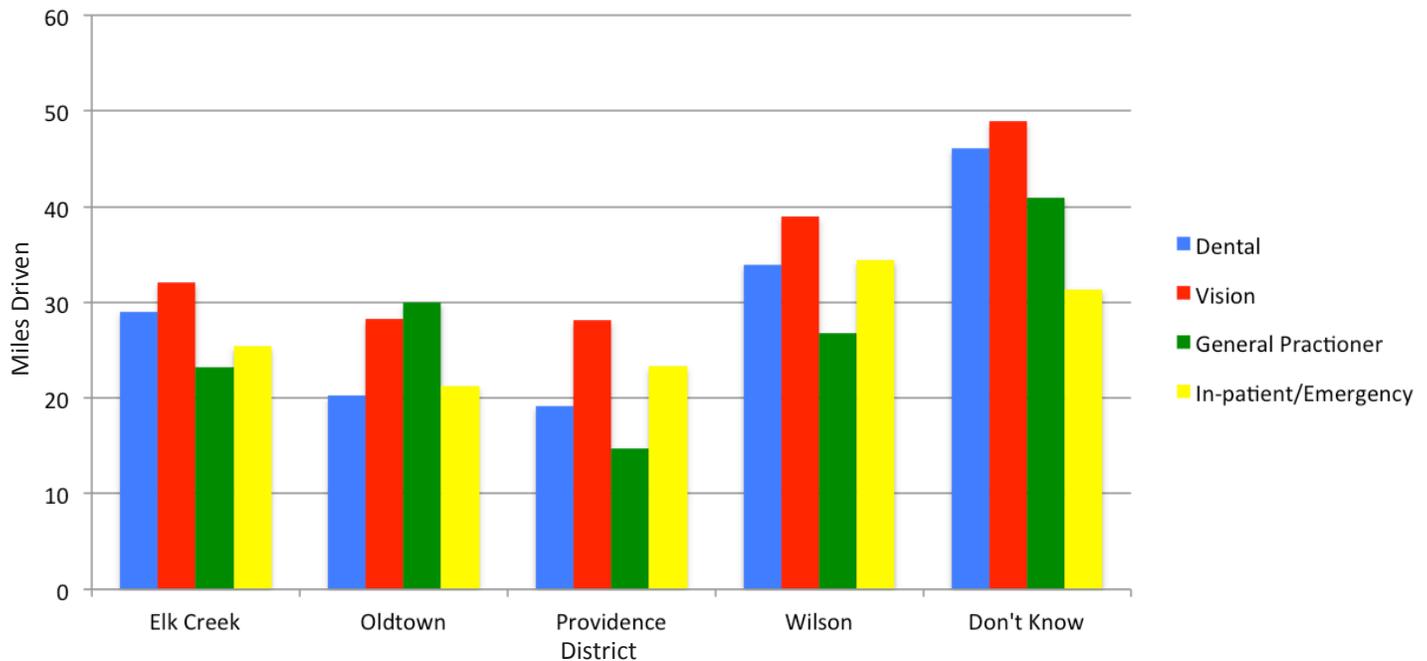

- 18.4 percent of employed or student respondents (184 persons) travel within Grayson County for work or school.

- 22.5 percent of employed or student respondents travel outside the immediate region for work or school.

- Of the respondents who listed "other" as a place for work or school, a majority travel to North Carolina.

District	Average Miles to Work or School
Elk Creek	33.60 mi
Oldtown	41.80 mi
Providence	25.40 mi
Wilson	45.90 mi
Don't Know	48.70 mi
County Average	39.08 mi

- The City of Galax is the primary place of work or school outside of Grayson County for respondents, with 9.8 percent of total respondents traveling to the city.

- Respondents in the Wilson district travel the farthest for work and school at an average of 45.9 miles one way, while respondents in the Providence district travel the shortest distance at an average of 25.4 miles one way.

- When asked, 48.8 percent of respondents are not interested in a rideshare program that could reduce travel costs.

Citizen Survey-Distance to Medical Services

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Average Miles Traveled (One Way) to Medical Services

District	Dental	Vision	General Practitioner	In-patient/ Emergency
Elk Creek	29.03 mi	32.05 mi	23.20 mi	25.38 mi
Oldtown	20.21 mi	28.27 mi	30.02 mi	21.21 mi
Providence	19.17 mi	28.12 mi	14.76 mi	23.29 mi
Wilson	33.97 mi	38.94 mi	26.77 mi	34.45 mi
Don't Know	46.05 mi	48.90 mi	40.96 mi	31.36 mi
County Average	29.69 mi	35.26 mi	27.14 mi	27.14 mi

- Overall, respondents residing in Grayson County travel an average of thirty miles one way for medical services.

- Respondents in the Providence district travel the shortest distance for medical services.

- Vision and dental services require longer travel times for Grayson County residents than general practitioner and in-patient/emergency care.

Citizen Survey-Desired Job Types

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Respondents were asked to prioritize the top three most desired jobs types. The chart below shows the combined results of all priorities selected by respondents:

Type of Jobs Desired

Legend:
- Agricultural/forestry
- Call Center/customer service
- Distribution Facility
- Education
- Health care
- Manufacturing
- Professional/office
- Retail
- Senior care/senior services
- Tourism-related/recreation

- Professional/office and agricultural jobs are the most desired jobs by survey respondents.
- Tourism, education, and manufacturing jobs were also highly desired fields.

Respondents were asked to rank the top three most desired jobs types. The table below shows the job types as prioritized by respondents:
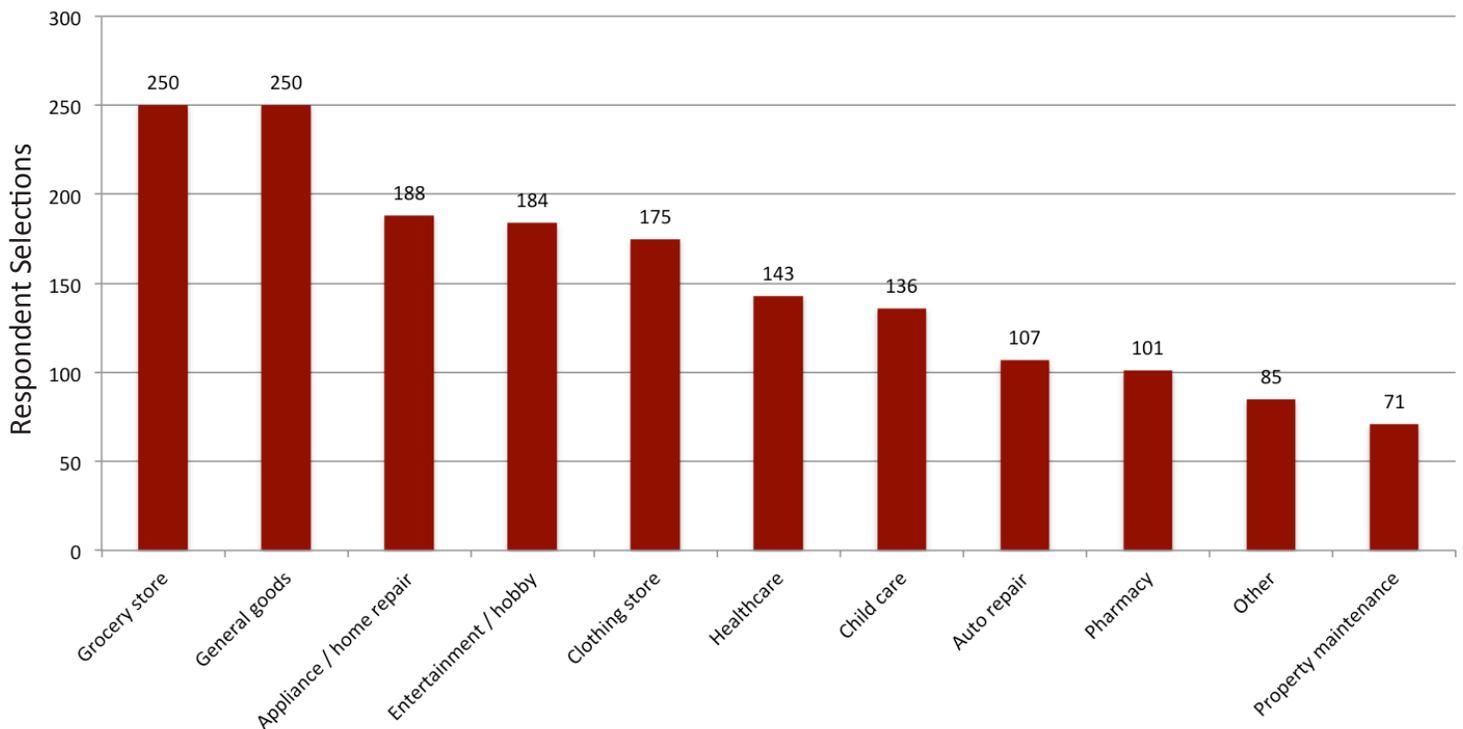
Type of Job	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture/forestry	9	23.1%	6	15.8%	6	16.7%
Call center/customer service	1	2.6%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
Distribution facility	3	7.7%	2	5.3%	1	2.8%
Education	5	12.8%	6	15.8%	4	11.1%
Health care	8	20.5%	2	5.3%	4	11.1%
Manufacturing	2	5.1%	6	15.8%	1	2.8%
Professional/office	4	10.3%	7	18.4%	5	13.9%
Retail	2	5.1%	3	7.9%	5	13.9%
Senior care/senior services	0	0.0%	1	2.6%	4	11.1%
Tourism-related/recreation	5	12.8%	5	13.2%	5	13.9%
Total	39	100.0%	38	100.0%	36	100.0%

- Agriculture/forestry and health care jobs were selected as the most desired job types under priority 1.
- The most desired job type under priority 2 was professional/office jobs, followed by agriculture/forestry, education, and manufacturing jobs.
- Agriculture/forestry jobs were the most desired job types under priority 3, followed by professional/office, retail, and tourism-related jobs.
- Agriculture was ranked as the top priority job desired by 18.6 percent of respondents.

Citizen Survey-Businesses Needed in Grayson County

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of businesses most needed in their community:
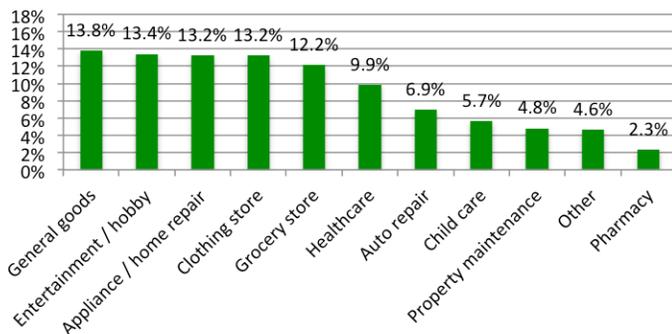
Businesses Needed

- Respondents selected grocery store and general goods as the most needed business types in their communities.
- Appliance/home repair, entertainment/hobby, and clothing store were also selected as needed businesses.
- Property maintenance was selected by the fewest number of respondents.
- Respondents who selected 'other' as an option listed a variety of needed businesses, including several responses related to convenience (gas stations, restaurants, etc.)
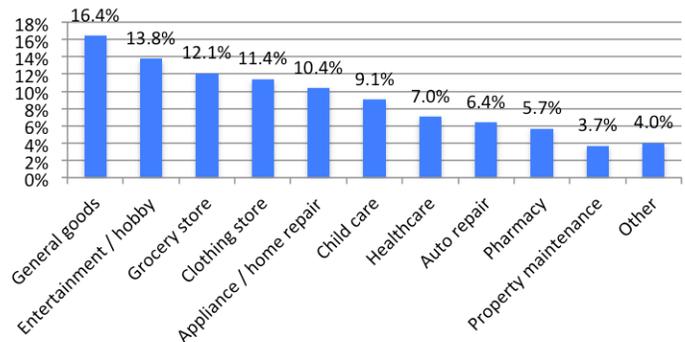- Businesses that would bring jobs was also a common theme among 'other' as a response.

Citizen Survey-Businesses Needed by District

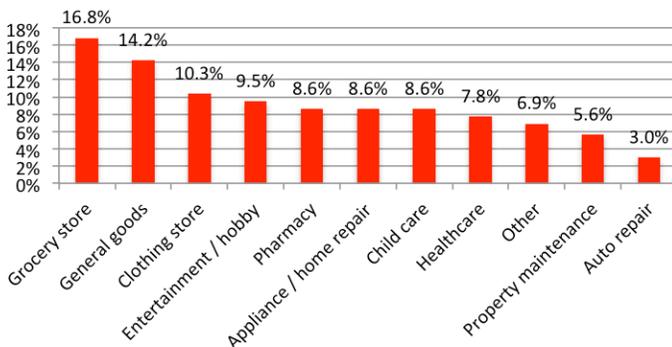**Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of businesses most needed in their community:**
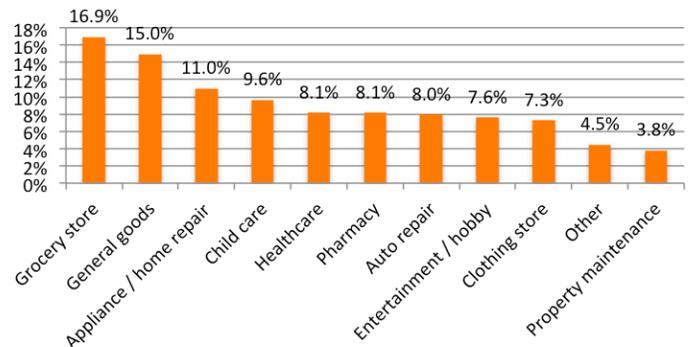
Elk Creek

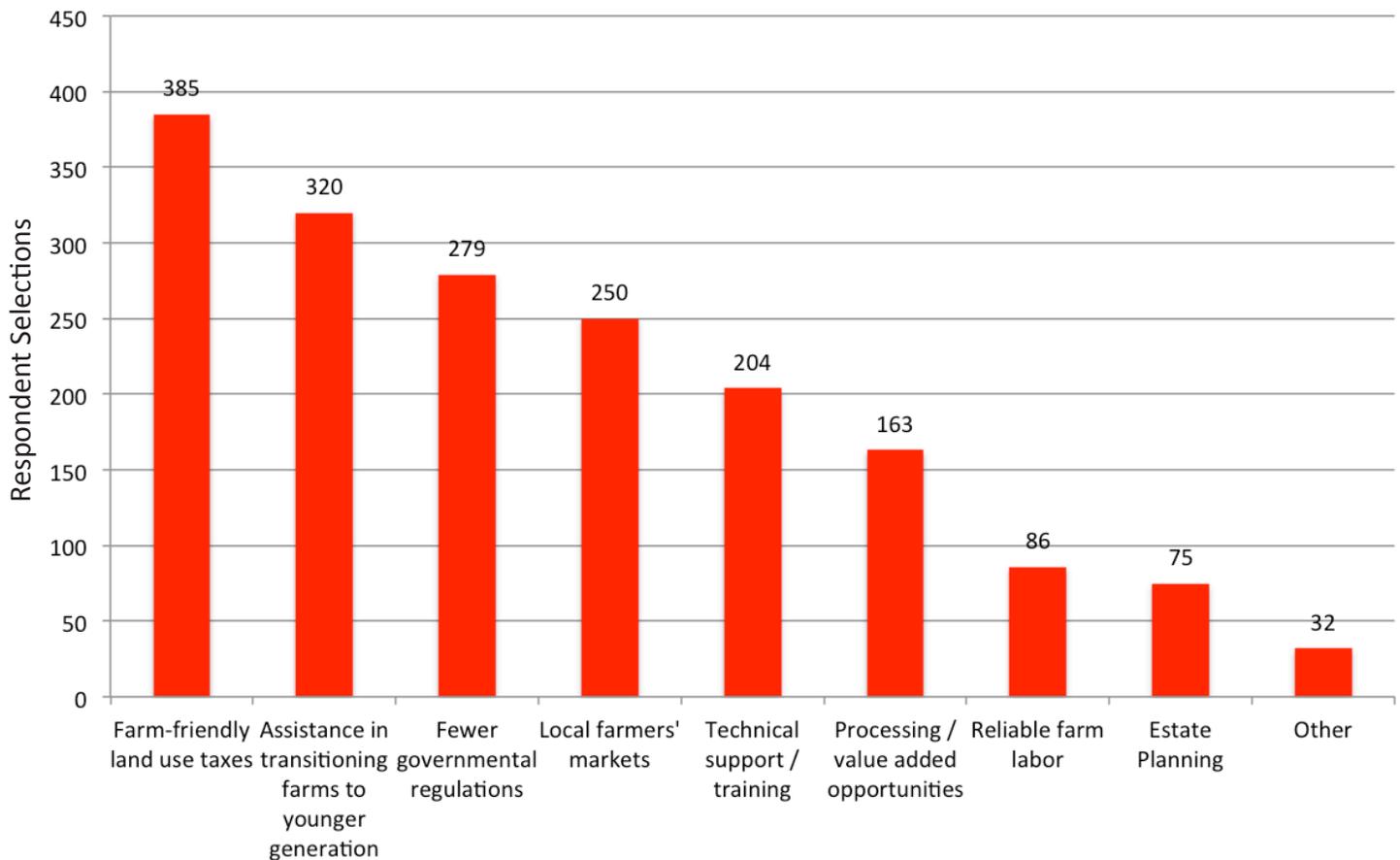### Oldtown

Providence

Wilson

- Respondents in Elk Creek selected general goods, entertainment/hobby, appliance/home repair, and clothing stores as the primary businesses needed in the community.
- Respondents in Oldtown selected general goods as the most needed business type in the community, followed by entertainment/hobby and grocery store.
- Respondents in Providence selected grocery store as the most needed business type in the community, followed by general goods and clothing store.
- Respondents in Wilson selected grocery store as the most needed business type in the community, followed by general goods and appliance/home repair.

Citizen Survey-Supporting the Agricultural Economy

Respondents were asked to choose the top three options that would support the agricultural economy the most in Grayson County:
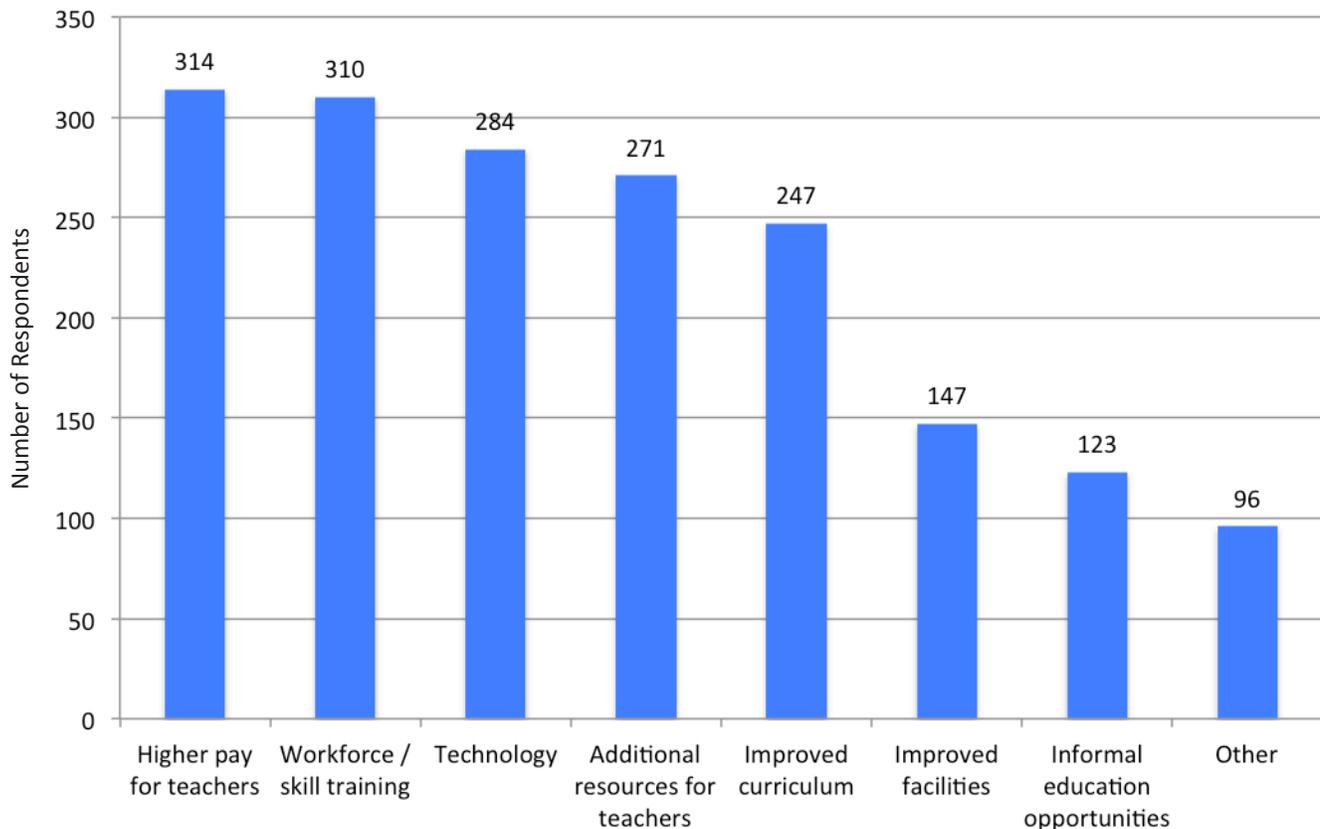
Support the Agricultural Economy

- Respondents selected farm-friendly land use taxes as the option that would most support the agricultural economy in Grayson County.
- Assistance in transitioning farms to younger generations was identified as an important option by respondents.
- Respondents felt that estate planning and reliable farm labor would provide the least amount of support for the agricultural economy.

Citizen Survey-Improving the Public School System

Respondents were asked to choose the top three options to improve the public school system:

Improve the Public School System

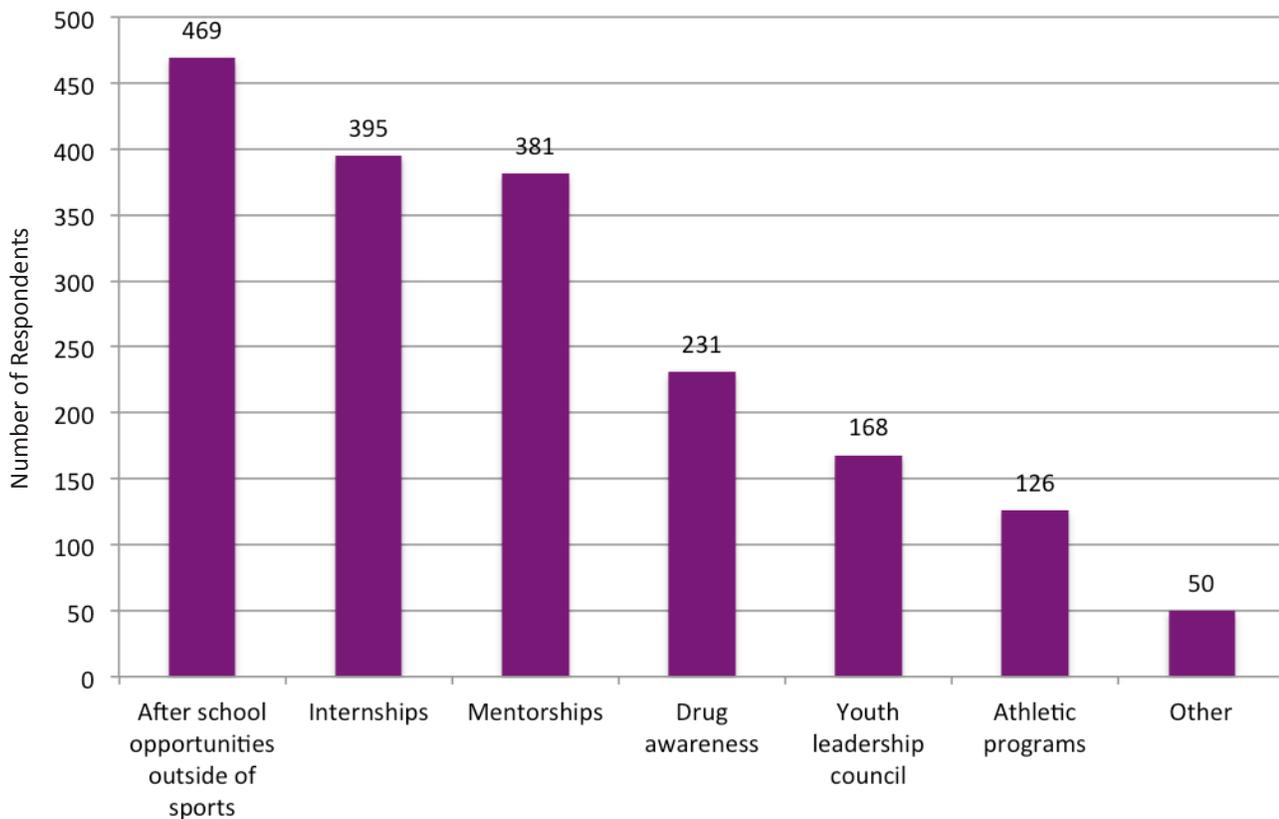- Higher pay for teachers and adding workforce/skill training courses were selected as the most favorable methods for improving the public school system.
- Improving facilities and adding informal education opportunities were the least favored options.
- Respondents that chose 'other' as an option listed ideas that included more discipline, elimination of SOLs, and improved transportation for students.

Citizen Survey-Youth Programs

Respondents were asked to choose the top three programs they would like to see developed for Grayson County's youth:

Youth Programs

- 'After school opportunities outside of sports' was the program selected by the most respondents.
- Respondents were interested in both 'internships' and 'mentorships' for the county's youth.
- 'Athletic programs' received the fewest number of selections by survey respondents.
- Respondents that selected 'other' as an option provided responses that focused on additional business training, part-time jobs, extracurricular activities (environmental/outdoor, volunteer opportunities, and music).

Citizen Survey-Lifelong Learning Programs

Grayson
COUNTY · VA

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of programs for lifelong learning they would most like to see in Grayson County:
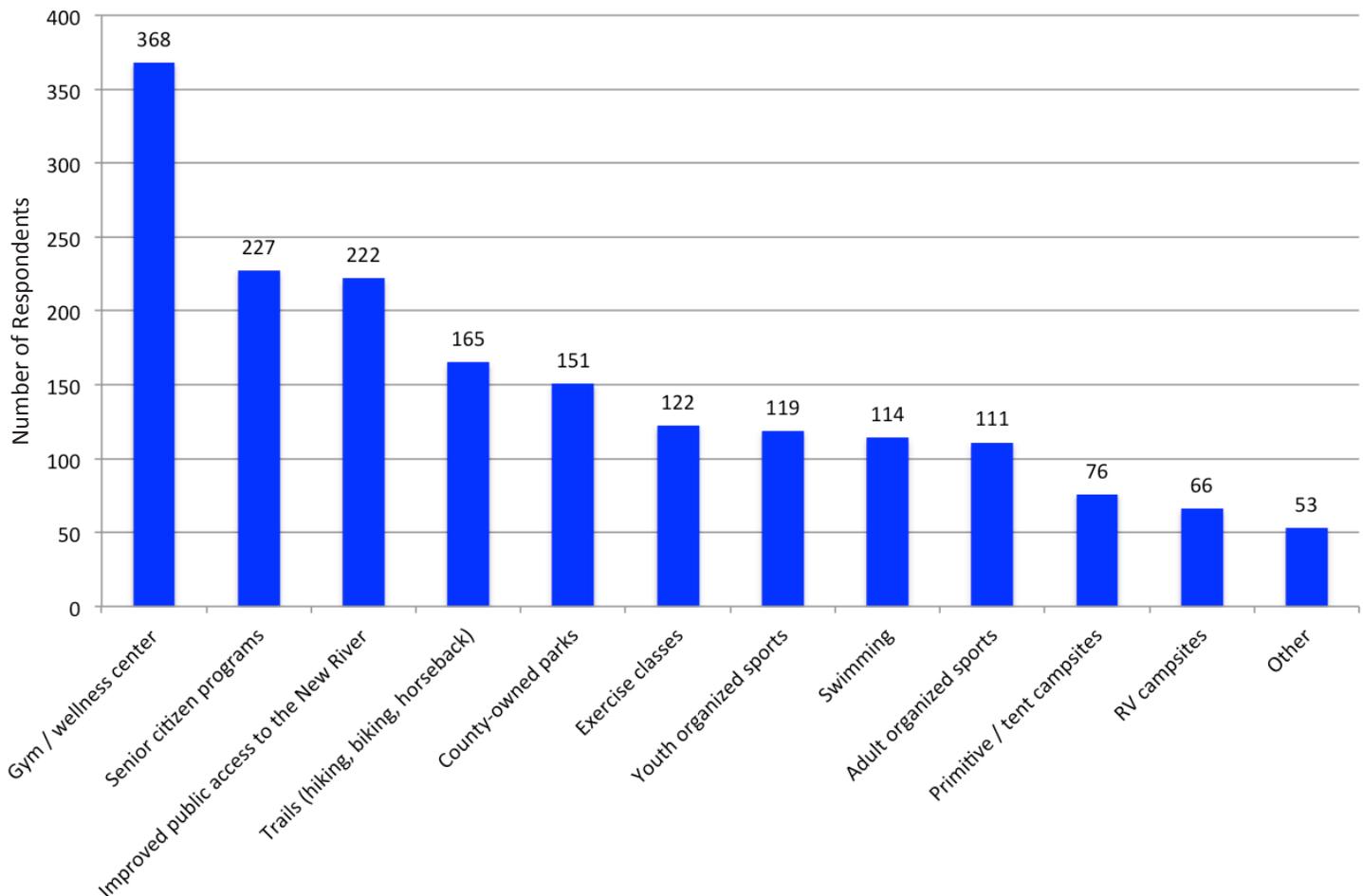
Lifelong Learning Programs
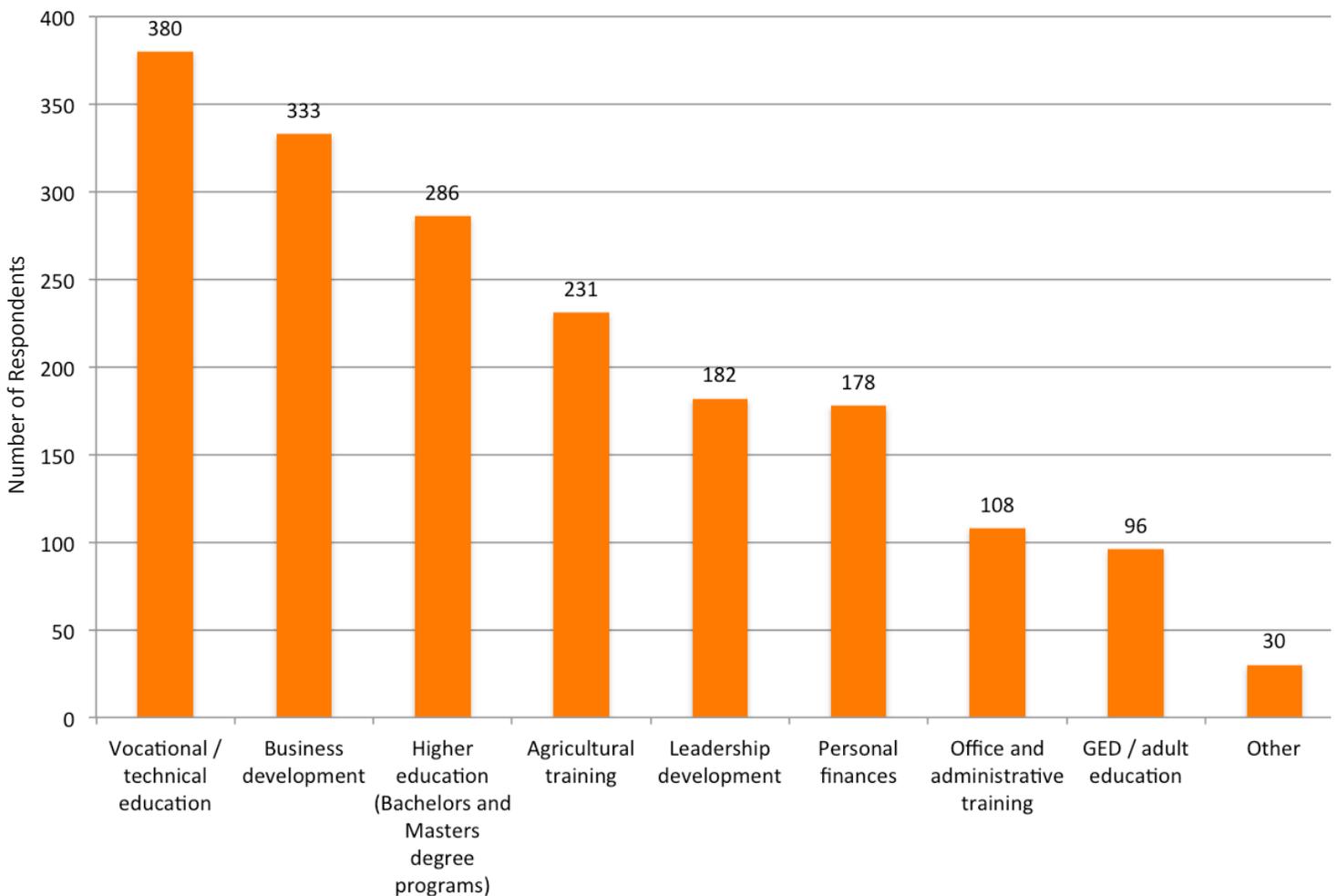
- Respondents are most interested in additional vocational/technical education programs in Grayson County.
- Business development programs received high interest by respondents.
- Respondents were least interested in GED/adult education, office, and administrative training programs.

Citizen Survey-Recreational Needs

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of recreation most needed in Grayson County:

Recreation Needs

Bar chart titled "Recreation Needs" with Y-axis "Number of Respondents" (0 to 400):
- Gym / wellness center: 368
- Senior citizen programs: 227
- Improved public access to the New River: 222
- Trails (hiking, biking, horseback): 165
- County-owned parks: 151
- Exercise classes: 122
- Youth organized sports: 119
- Swimming: 114
- Adult organized sports: 111
- Primitive / tent campsites: 76
- RV campsites: 66
- Other: 53

- A gym/wellness center was chosen by respondents as the most needed type of recreation in Grayson County.
- Senior citizen programs and improved public access to the New River were identified by respondents as important recreation needs.
- Primitives/tent campsites and RV campsites were low priorities for respondents.

Citizen Survey: New or Improved Facilities/Services

Grayson
COUNTY·VA

Respondents were asked to choose the top three types of new or improved facilities or services Grayson County should pursue:

Preferred New Facilities or Services
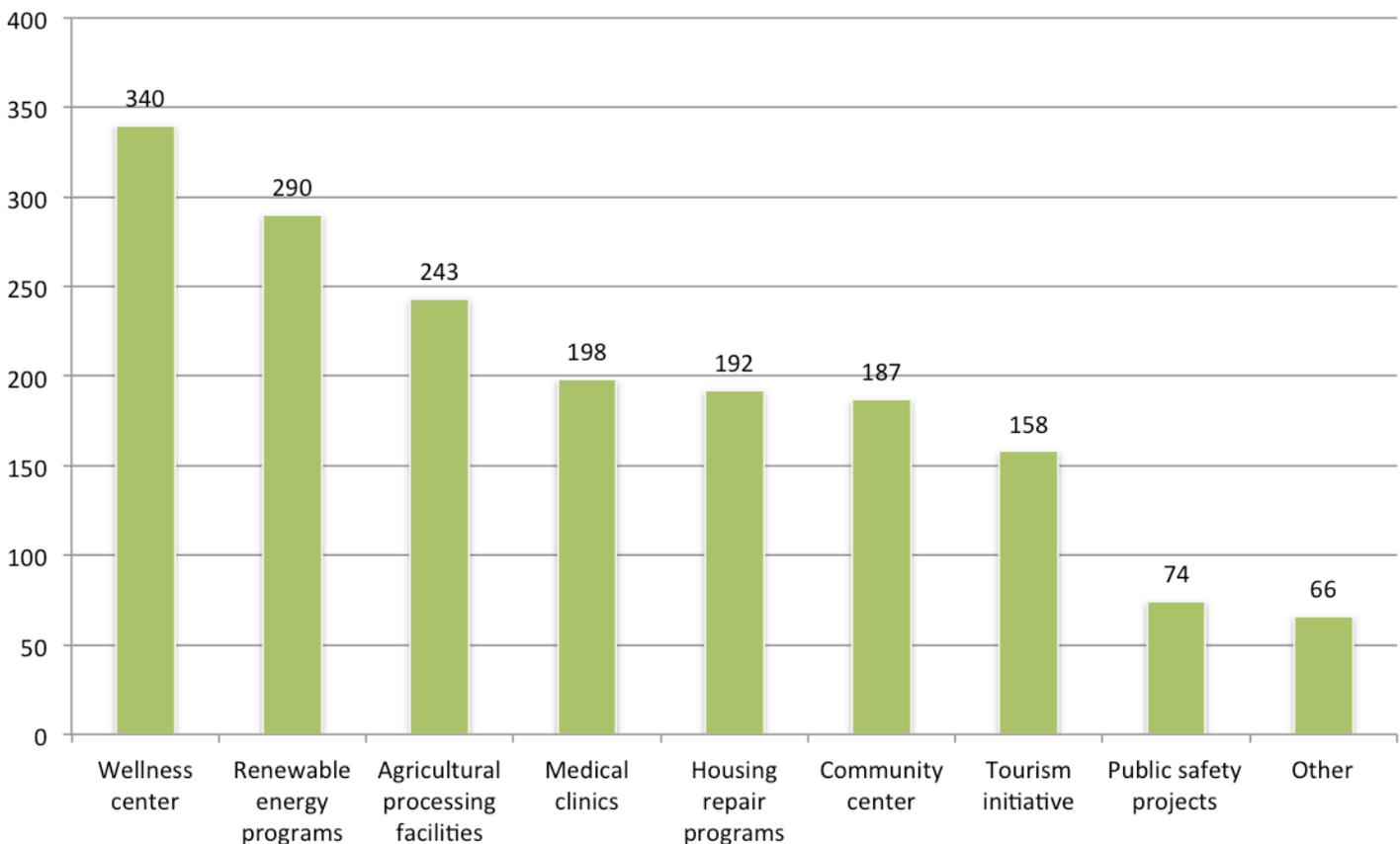
- A wellness center was the top priority of respondents, followed by renewable energy projects.
- Agricultural processing facilities was also among the top three facilities or services selected by respondents.
- Public safety projects was received the lowest priority by survey respondents.
- Respondents that selected the "other" option listed responses that covered items such as business development, high speed internet, government services, and education.

Youth Survey Overview

In the Leadership Survey process the Planning Commission identified the issue of out migration of youth as a primary concern for the future of the county. The 2010 Census showed that the median age of citizens was higher than the typical U.S. county (46.7). A Youth Survey was designed to gauge input from young people on topics such as; preferred job types, businesses and services needed in the county, preferred methods for improving the public school system, youth programs, lifelong learning, recreation needs, strengths and weaknesses of the county, ideas for improving the county and where they saw themselves in 5 years and in 10 years.

It was important to compare the youth perspective with the adult citizen survey. As a result, several questions were addressed in both surveys and the results are available for comparison.

The Grayson County 4-H Extension Agent, Erin Farmer, facilitated the youth survey which was completed by thirty-nine high school seniors and juniors at Grayson County High School. Mount Rogers Planning District Commission extrapolated the data into the following pages.
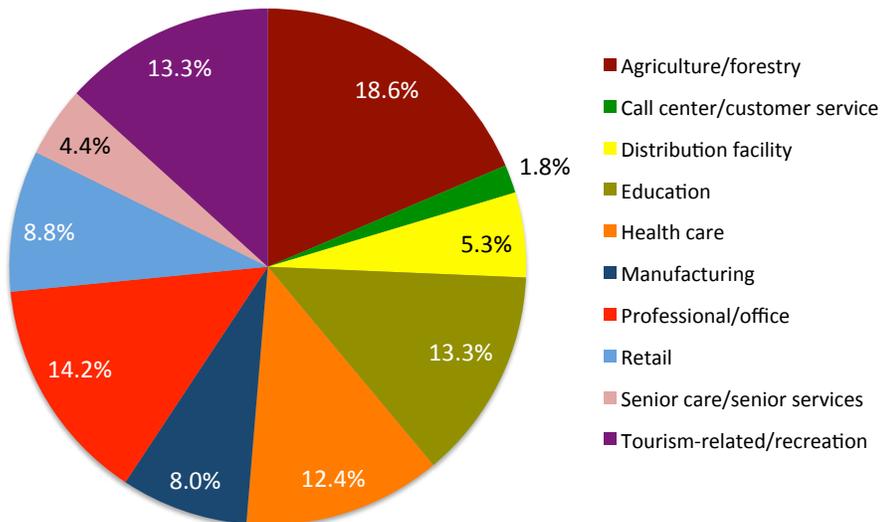
The Grayson County Planning Commission would like to thank the Grayson County Extension Service, the School System and the students who completed the Youth Survey.

Youth Survey-Desired Job Types

Respondents were asked to prioritize the top three most desired jobs types. The chart below shows the combined results of all priorities selected by respondents:

Type of Jobs Desired

Legend:
- ■ Agriculture/forestry
- ■ Call center/customer service
- ■ Distribution facility
- ■ Education
- ■ Health care
- ■ Manufacturing
- ■ Professional/office
- ■ Retail
- ■ Senior care/senior services
- ■ Tourism-related/recreation

- Professional/office and agricultural jobs are the most desired jobs by survey respondents.
- Agriculture was ranked as the top priority job desired by 18.6 percent of respondents.
- Tourism, education, and health care were also highly desired fields.

Respondents were asked to rank the top three most desired jobs types. The table below shows the job types as prioritized by respondents:
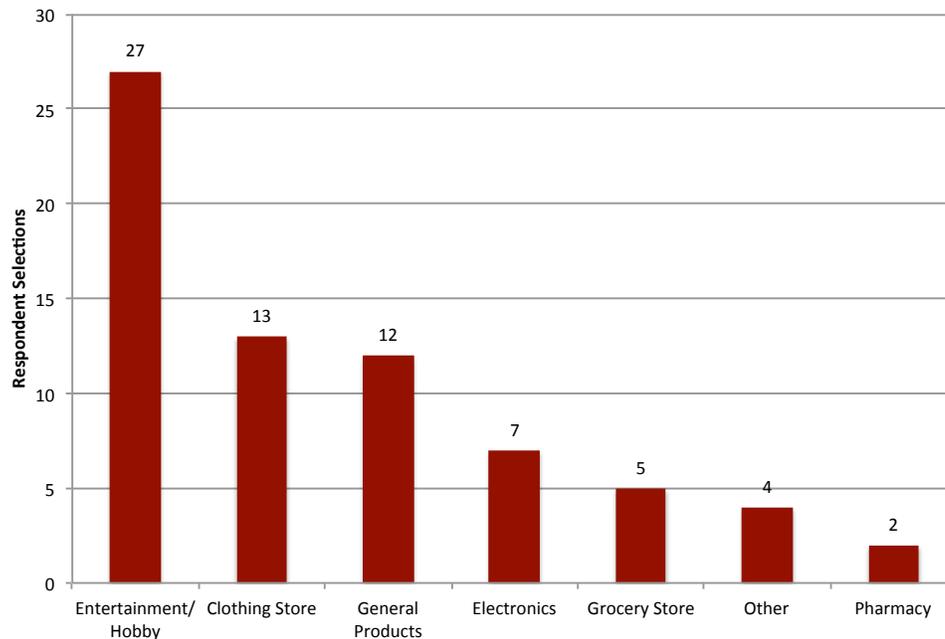
Type of Job	Priority 1		Priority 2		Priority 3	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture/forestry	9	23.1%	6	15.8%	6	16.7%
Call center/customer service	1	2.6%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
Distribution facility	3	7.7%	2	5.3%	1	2.8%
Education	5	12.8%	6	15.8%	4	11.1%
Health care	8	20.5%	2	5.3%	4	11.1%
Manufacturing	2	5.1%	6	15.8%	1	2.8%
Professional/office	4	10.3%	7	18.4%	5	13.9%
Retail	2	5.1%	3	7.9%	5	13.9%
Senior care/senior services	0	0.0%	1	2.6%	4	11.1%
Tourism-related/recreation	5	12.8%	5	13.2%	5	13.9%
Total	39	100.0%	38	100.0%	36	100.0%

- Agriculture/forestry and health care jobs were selected as the most desired job types under 'Priority 1'.
- The most desired job type under 'Priority 2' was professional/office jobs, followed by agriculture/forestry, education, and manufacturing jobs.
- Agriculture/forestry jobs was the most desired job type under 'Priority 3', followed by professional/office, retail, and tourism-related jobs.

Youth Survey-Businesses Needed in Grayson County

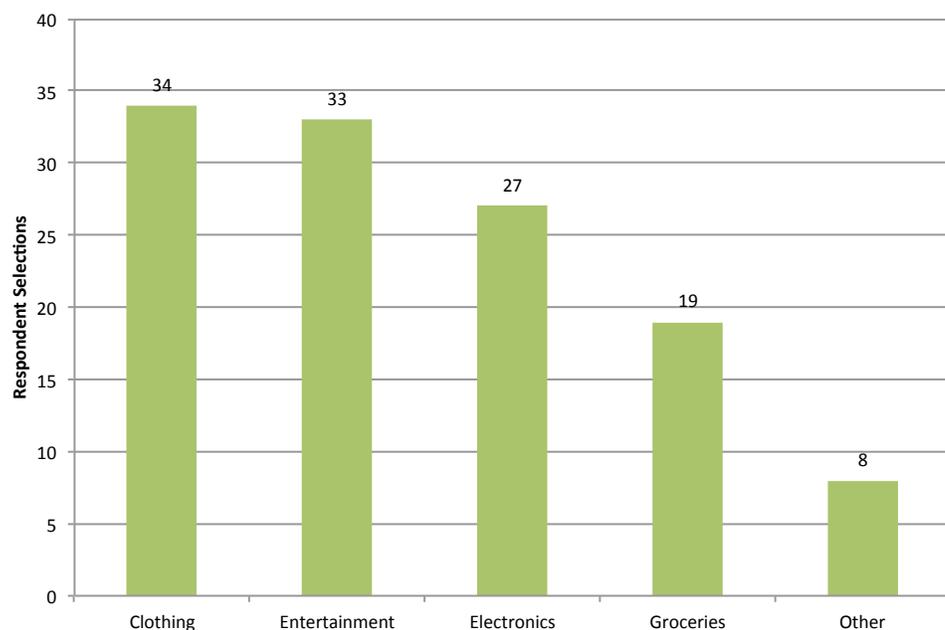**Respondents were asked to choose the type of business most needed in their community:**

Retail Businesses Needed

Chart values — Entertainment/Hobby: 27, Clothing Store: 13, General Products: 12, Electronics: 7, Grocery Store: 5, Other: 4, Pharmacy: 2

- Respondents selected entertainment/hobby as the most needed business type in their communities.
- Clothing store and general products stores were selected as needed businesses.
- Pharmacy was selected by the fewest number of respondents.
- Respondents who selected 'other' as an option provided the following responses: sports store, arcade, decent restaurants, and all of it.

Respondents were asked to identify the types of retail goods typically purchased outside of Grayson County:

Goods Purchased Outside of Grayson County

Chart values — Clothing: 34, Entertainment: 33, Electronics: 27, Groceries: 19, Other: 8

- Clothing and entertainment were the two types of retail goods purchased outside of Grayson County by the most respondents.
- The following types of goods were listed by respondents who selected 'other' as an option, athletic equipment/apparel, sports equipment, nicer resturants, firearms, fuel and feed, ATV's, guns, vehicles, everything except things you can buy at Wal-mart, and all of the above.

Youth Survey-Improving the Public School System

Respondents were asked how the public school system in Grayson County can be improved:
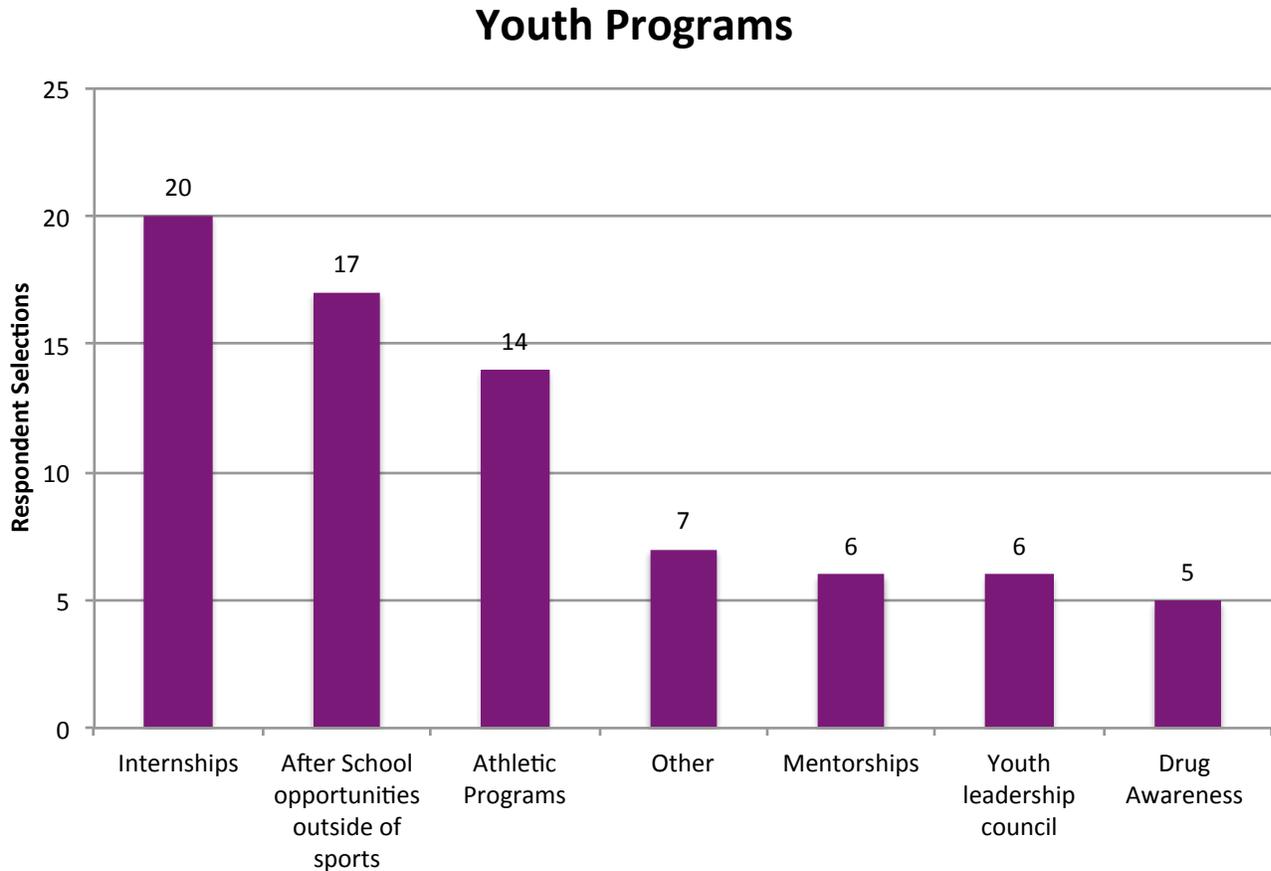
Improve the Public School System

- Improve facilities, technology, and workforce/skill training were selected as the most favorable methods for improving the public school system.
- Higher pay for teachers was the least favored option.
- Respondents that chose 'other' as an option listed ideas that included better lunch menu options, air conditioning, and cleaner schools.

Youth Survey-Youth Programs

Respondents were asked to select the programs they would like to see developed for Grayson County's youth:

Youth Programs

- Internships was the program selected by the most respondents.
- Respondents were also interested in after school opportunities outside of sports and athletic programs.
- Drug awareness programs received the fewest number of selections by survey respondents.
- Respondents that selected 'other' as an option provided the following responses: more art related things (art and music), a "teen hangout" non-school related, camps for people who just graduated high school to give them a break and prepare them for the future, chess club, wellness center, horse shows, and job opportunities for teenagers.

Youth Survey-Lifelong Learning Programs

Respondents were asked to choose the types of programs for lifelong learning they would most like to see in Grayson County:

## Lifelong Learning Programs
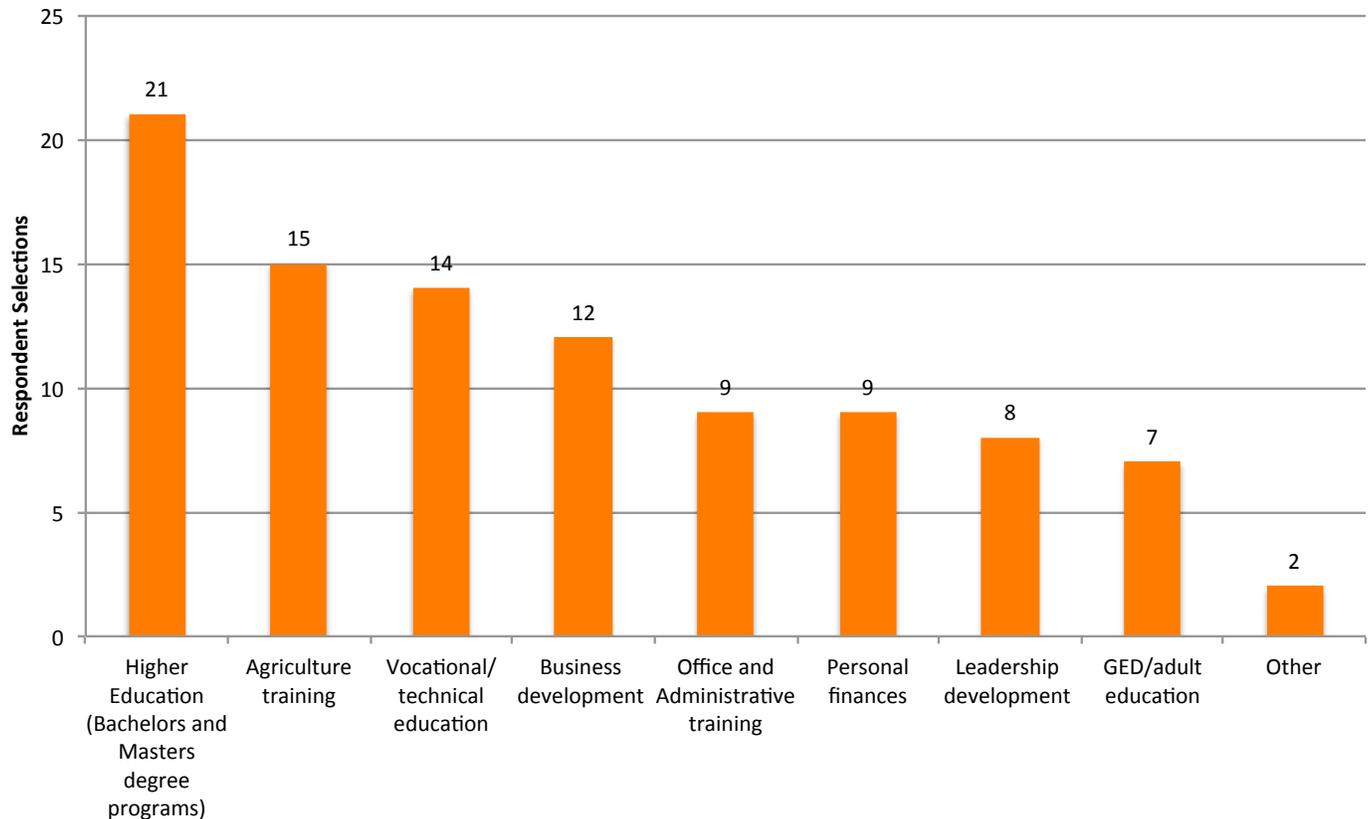
- Respondents are most interested in higher education (Bachelors and Masters degree programs) in Grayson County.
- GED/adult education programs received low interest by respondents.
- Two respondents selected the "other" option and listed art programs or degree programs in fields that are not common such as marine science and physics.

Youth Survey-Recreational Needs

Respondents were asked to select the type of recreation most needed in Grayson County:
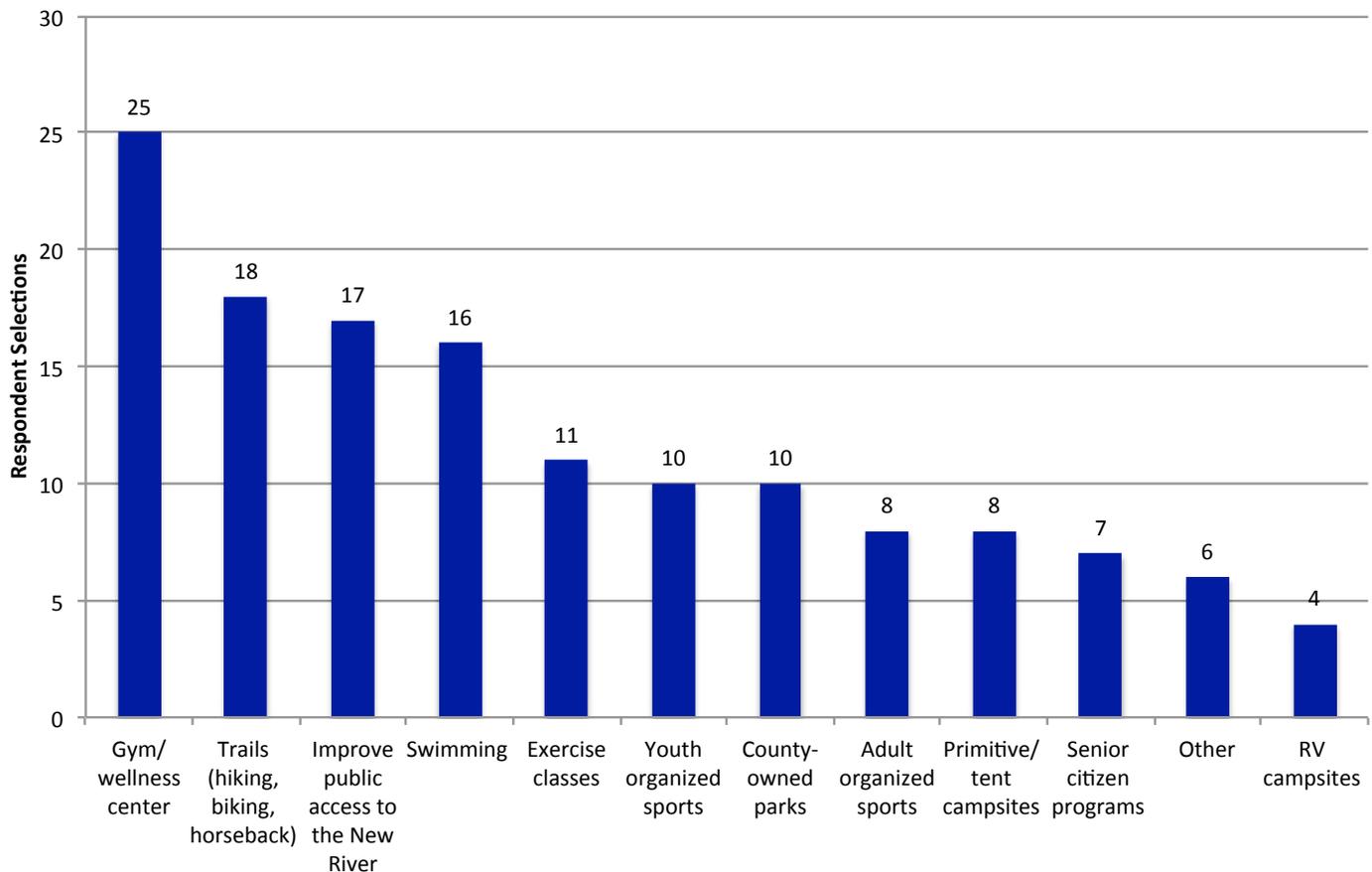
Recreation Needs

- A gym/wellness center was chosen by respondents as the most needed type of recreation in Grayson County.
- Trails, improved public access to the New River, and swimming were identified by respondents as important recreational needs.
- RV campsites was the lowest priority for respondents.
- Respondents who selected 'other' as an option listed the following needs: jobs at gas stations near the New River, some sort of gaming center where mutiple sets of computers and game consoles are set up, paddle boats, paint ball arenas, atv tracks, horse shows, and a track.

Youth Survey-Making Grayson County More Appealing

Respondents were asked what would make Grayson County more appealling to young residents:

- Telling them about the things to do.
- Places like a wellness center. I would go and hang out there everyday. We just need a fun place that is here all the time and not here maybe once a year if we are lucky.
- A gym/wellness center, so they won't have to make a trip to Galax.
- My group of friends are into hiking and being outdoors. It would be nice to have some trails close by, besides Grayson Highlands State Park.
- Activities like concerts or skateparks. Give kids something to do besides drugs.
- I believe Grayson County should have a boxing gym.
- Clean up the meth. Movie theatre. Game Store.
- A bar or club
- Maybe some kind of club for people to go to or a bar, like Macado's in Galax.
- A clothing store or an electronic store. Better recreational facilities. Wider variety of things for graduates, like adult sports.
- Nicer equipment for the school (new desks and books). Teachers who teach! We have some that do not belong.
- Maybe more recreational stuff. I know a lot of people that like to go to the Y in Galax because they have more opportunities then Grayson.
- An arcade or game room. Some where for high school kids to take up time.
- More job variety. A Water park, mall, or a new movie theater. We only have one and it's not that great.
- I think there needs to be some sort of hangout for teens. When there is nothing to do, some teens choose to drink or do drugs because there isn't anything better to do.
- Young adults who are into agriculture and farming. They have places to appeal to them than for those who are not into these types of things. More buildings for different forms of hobbies could be made. (parks,internet café,music areas)
- More things to do. Something to keep you away from negative choices.
- Have something to do. Give us jobs like at a movie theater or something like that.
- If it had more opportunities. There are no jobs, no fun stuff, like shopping and resturants.
- More job opportunities and more entertainment. Young people need places to interact and hang out.
- Group activities, like kayaking trips, events like after prom but at a better time.
- What I mentioned earlier about the video game center would be great.
- More things for the youth to do. Movie theatreor rec center
- More activities involved around sports
- I don't see why it isn't. I'm sure kids in the city would die to live here. I'm sure it's only because its hard to find jobs.
- A wellness center for kids to work, play basketball, and to have fun
- More things to do. The more opportunitites, the better
- More camping resorts, paddleboats, shopping, trails, swimming, community centers, gyms.
- Have better places to eat. Build a place that teens would want to hangout at, like a Burger King, teen club, or a small shopping place.
- A local Y with many varieties of things to do in it.
- Jobs
- Better advancement opportunities. Young people want a chance at being successful
- Have more recreational places
- More activities, festivals, truck pulls
- More things to do, and more opportunities. Maybe a gym with a pool indoors. Also, a pet store would be very nice. I know lots of people who have to drive to Galalx for fish or pet supplies.
- More freedom on the weekends
- A mall
- More places to hangout or go
- More jobs and more parks

Youth Survey-How to Accomplish Improvements

Respondents were asked how the improvements to make Grayson County more appealling could be accomplished:

- Advertisement
- We would just have to put it into motion. Raise money and just get it done.
- Building one near the school like Galax has.
- Mainly by the community coming, it would be an easy project for the people willing to do it.
- By placing a mall or something to do in areas naked of jobs and activities.
- Boxing rings could be put in rec centers and gyms could be built.
- Police do some good investigating. I'm not sure about the movie theater or game store.
- They can't. Too many old folks that won't approve of it.
- Have someone who is willing to run it and have a place for it.
- Funding for a rec-park would help not only with the facilities but for the things for graduates to do and for adult sports as well.
- We'll find better people in the hiring committee. Ge money out of taxes for the new/more modern equipment.
- Maybe by taking a survey like this and asking them what they want to be improved around here.
- If everyone worked together.
- Getting people to help build stuff. Do surveys for everyone.
- There are pleny of spaces to be used! The old zumba place for example. Arcade, anyone? Movie night for 18 and under? Simple solutions.
- Turning buildings that are to sale into areas that are for sale and creating these places.
- Getting drugs off the streets and make more activities for younger adults
- By building businesses that teenageers could work at/visit
- They could be accomplished by making Independence bigger with more things to do.
- By bringing in more entertainment and jobs.
- A good start is by getting our opinions and looking for the opinions of various local individuals.
- Maybe a donation fund
- By the Board members wanting to drawl youth instead of making it a retirement community.
- I think it could be accomplished by building a wellness center for the activities.
- I think if we could have a mini mall that it would be great for people to have jobs and more opportunities.
- By working with the rec department
- Just bring more things in to the community
- With everyones help and a little bit more money, we can save up and make these things happen.
- The community could come together and help out. Or could raise money through grants.
- Set great fundraisers, volunteers
- Build small family businesses
- More jobs offered to the public
- By advertising and donations
- Letting the younger age decide on things we can do and make happen. The old age people just want it quiet and nothing to go on.
- By using some tax money to build these things that help bring more income.
- Grants
- I don't know
- Use some of the county grants

Youth Survey-A Strength of Grayson County

Respondents were asked what they consider to be a strength of Grayson County:

- The scenery and attitude of the people.
- It is a great place to grow up. I have lived here my whole life and I love it. Everyone knows each other and they are all willing to help each other out.
- High School sports and its view from Grayson Highlands
- Farming
- Recycling places and agriculture
- Beautiful scenery, good community, low crime rate, low population number
- Low crime rates. We don't have a bunch of gangbangers running around shooting up the place.
- Everybody knows everybody
- The parks and all of the outdoors, wild game, fishing
- Rec-park (even though it is small) high school athletic programs
- I enjoy being a police officer's daughter and being known. I think a huge strength is everyone knowing everyone and their families. Also I love the backroads and like you said- the southern hospitality! Just the small community "home" feeling you get when here.
- Space. Lots and lots of space. I'm not a big fan os having a lot of people near me so I'm more comfortable here. Also the people. They are super nice and most can respect each other.
- Not sure
- Nature, the fresh clean air and it's peacful
- I love the people here. Everyone is caring and giving. If you are nice and good as well, people end up going out of their way to help you. The scenery is beautiful and peaceful.
- The atmosphere. The fresh mountain air is sure to draw people here.
- The scenary, the river, less crime. Cheaper to live
- Everyone is friendly and it feels safe here
- Grayson has awonderful strength of not being to populated. You have a great country atmosphere and good friendly people.
- I consider the southern hospitality and beauty of Grayson county to be its strengths. It's nice to know people and to have people that would help you. Grayson is also one of the most beautiful places.
- Hometown feeling, not crowded, nature
- Pretty low crime rate; I've only seen two crimes in my lifetime and both were theft.
- The vast amounts of land for farming. I like not being in the city. The community strength that everyone will help you out if you need it.
- I consider all the agriculture to be a strength. Without the ag this county wouldn't have anything
- It's peaceful. I don't have to lock my doors at night. You don't have to go on a trip to go fishing or hunting. I can ride my horse down the road with no worries.
- Large amounts of land and farming opportunitites
- The isolation and the feeling of the mountains
- All the people and beautiful farmland in this area. We have some of the best people in this area
- I honestly don't think there is any
- The views are amazing, the fishing, hunting and opportunity to enjoy nature
- All the nature, Grayson County is a great place for people who enjoy the outdoors it doesn't need to be chopped down and have all kinds of stores built.
- Tourism, sight seeing
- I like that we have trails and we have a lot of resturants with comfort foods and such
- Football, not a whole lot
- Closeness of community members
- Good people, strong community
- We are very hard to find

Youth Survey-A Weakness of Grayson County

Respondents were asked what they consider to be a weakness of Grayson County:

- That there are things to do but no one knows what they are. No Jobs
- There is not a lot of activities for kids and adults to do. We do have after school programs, but there is just nothing for us to really do outside of that.
- No access to gym or wellness center until the city of Galax or Wytheville.
- It's a rural area. Not a lot of things or hobbies to do.
- Jobs, jobs, jobs. Drugs and no activities
- Pollution, not a lot to do, school looks old, road systems are very bad.
- All the methamphetomine. It's everywhere. I've heard people talking about it everyday since the 10th grade. It's not in the school but surrounding areas.
- Low employment. No jobs
- Lack of jobs. Nothing for teens to do around here. Most people go to Galax to hang out.
- It is very small in terms of youth activities there isn't many job opportunities (at least not that I know of) for younger adults.
- That if you don't play a sport and are big with the people you're not relly treated fairly. Also some of the "hicks" make me want away from here. I do not like how the schools have outdated material, terrible lunch and few jobs non-ag pertaining.
- Not having a lot of things going on around here. Ilove the woods and all but I would definitely like more options instead of just dirt bike riding or horseback riding.
- People not caring or trying. People that can work,but just live off the government
- There are not enough jobs I want to major in art or game design/graphic design. You cant get that here.
- There isn't a whole lot to do, as far as being a teenager goes. Adults go to work and come home most of the time, but young people have more time on ther hands and less brains to make the right choices.
- The location. When I was a kid, I knew Grayson Couty as the place where my grandmother lived. Even friends and teachers didn't know a thing about what there was here or even where it was on the map.
- Drugs are a big weakness
- There is nothing to do. You have to drive forever to get/do anything
- Grayson does not have much to do. You need recreational places so you can swim, bike, hangout, and spend some quality time.
- I consider the limited amount of jobs and money to be a weakness. I don't want to live some where where I would have to struggle because I wasn't making hardly any money. It is also hard to find a job around here in the first place.
- Not much advertised tourism activities, lack of shopping opportunities
- No jobs involving technology or computers. If they exist, they are very infrequent
- You have to go out of the county to shop
- Not enough services for the citizens. I feel like we should provide services such as a wellness center or more opportunities to purchse clothing and groceries.
- No jobs. No one can afford stuff they like and if you have money you get taxed more. It is sad for rich people to work hard for their money for it just to be taxed away.
- Its lack of a community or wellness center for people
- The distance to travel to receive goods
- Nothing to do that appeals to our eyes. We are young we like to get out and explore and make new adventures
- There is nothing to do.
- The fact there is nothing to do with a large group of your friends
- Not enough resources, if there were more camps, people could have Grayson County as a tourist attraction.
- Too few jobs
- We don't have a lot of industry, there are not very different kinds of job offers
- No jobs
- Lack of things to do. Having to go to galax for almost everything that you do. Could replace a few teachers that seem to hate their job.
- Not a lot of businesses
- There is nothing to do
- There are no jobs

Youth Survey-Where Do You See Yourself?

Respondents were asked where they see themselves in 5 years and in 10 years:

Five Years?	Ten Years?

Five Years?

- In college working on a veterinarian degree.
- I hope to be working with major sports teams (trainer).
- Studying for a Mastersin Marine Science
- Rocky Mountains, Nursing
- In Maine with culinary Job
- College, taking welding classes.
- I see myself in the Airforce
- Coast Guard
- Going to school for game warden
- Marines. Or in a more suburban area that isn't huge and over-bearing or too small and rural
- Campbell University for Pharmacy
- Honestly, I do not know yet
- Graduate with a good job
- Out of grayson
- College graduate with a high paying job
- VCU major in biology
- Probably still here with my family attending college
- Roanoke-finishing police academy
- Here in Grayson County
- Graduating college
- Back at Grayson, looking for a job
- Desperately trying to get a job
- Hopefully finished with college
- Radford University
- Hopefully still here with a better job
- Graduating college
- Still in college working towards my Dr. Degree
- College
- In a big city or still in college
- Police academy
- In a bigger city/college
- Finishing up school
- In college to become a chef
- In the army or police officer
- BSN- nursing
- U.S.M.C
- Working
- Border patrol in Texas or CIA in Washington

Ten Years?

- Working in a vet office
- Have a family and raising my kids in a community like this.
- Coaching tennis in a place that can provide a job for my chosen field.
- Same place hopefully
- In Maine due to bad economy here.
- Being a welder for an industry or company
- Hopefully signing my second contract with the Airforce
- Local detective/Federal Marshall
- Being a full time game warden
- Suburban area
- Probably right back here
- Hopefully back here if I do go anywhere after high school
- family and happy with the career I chose
- I don't know maybe somewhere else
- Coming back to think about starting a family
- Living in Newport News working as a pharmasist
- Out of school/college having a good job
- Working somewhere in VA or NC in law enforcement
- In another State
- Living close to where I found a job, possibly married with kids
- Working either in Grayson or Galax
- Stuck in the office of a company I don't care about.
- Established income and house, possibly married
- Somewhere around Grayson county teaching
- Here with my own house and farm
- Teaching at a high school
- Opening my own phyisical therapy practice in Grayson county
- Back in Grayson county
- Working in either DC or in Europe
- Patrolling on roadsides of Colorado
- Working- bigger city
- Working in business
- Hopefully traveling the world with my cooking show
- Army if not police officer
- Steady job as anurse
- U.S.M.C
- Police service
- Chilling at my summer house in Alaska

Chapter 13
Goals & Action Plan

Introduction & Goals

Through the development of the chapters, the public input process from Grayson County citizens, and as a result of numerous planning commission meetings with department heads and community leaders; common themes emerged that were deemed critical to the future of Grayson County. The Grayson County Planning Commission identified a list of prevailing goals structured around those themes. The following goals are equally important and support the strategies of the plan:

a) Support life-long learning opportunities.

b) Educate and prepare tomorrow's youth for the regional workforce.

c) Protect the natural and cultural assets of the county.

d) Improve infrastructure throughout the county.

e) Strengthen the local economy and increase job growth.

f) Improve citizen's quality of life and promote healthy lifestyle choices.

g) Continue efforts to provide safe communities.

h) Establish reasonable, predictable, and sustainable land-use policy and tools.

i) Prepare for issues relating to dynamic shifts in population demographics.

j) Promote a responsible and efficient use of government resources.

k) Utilize local and regional partnerships.

The pages that follow recommend strategies that complement the goals listed above. The strategies are listed by three priority groups: 1, 2, and 3. Responsible parties have been recommended to manage the individual strategies and see them through completion.

Strategies

Priority I

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
1	Comprehensive Plan Accountability- conduct yearly assessment of the county's progress in achieving the goals and strategies. The findings shall be drafted and submitted as an Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors.	f and j	Planning Commission, County Administration
2	Support efforts, where feasible, to encourage the development of advanced communication infrastructure; broadband, wireless internet, and cell coverage/towers.	b, d, e, f, g, k	Wired Road Authority, County Administration, Board of Supervisors
3	Continue support of regional economic development authorities and small business incubators/development centers.	b, e, k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority
4	Continue recruitment efforts of industries to the Wildwood Industrial Park, Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park and the Grayson County Industrial Park.	e and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, Industrial Development Authority
5	Encourage efforts to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place and operating at the Wildwood Industrial Park, Grayson County Industrial Park, Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park, and other industrial developments where they align with Grayson County's best interest.	d, e, and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, Industrial Development Authority
6	Reduce county debt and maintain a healthy county budget by using tools such as fundraising, grant writing, and progressive loan management; develop partnerships and new revenue streams to fund county projects.	j and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
7	Support a Capital Improvement Program that ensures efficient operation of county departments, facilities and projects.	d, f and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
8	Develop and implement a comprehensive financial policy that includes an effective and transparent budgeting process.	j	County Administration, Board of Supervisors
9	Maintain a healthy general fund balance to protect against financial calamity.	j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
10	Require a code of ethics and a code of conduct for all county board authorities, commissions, and employees.	j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration

Strategies

Priority I

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
11	Support volunteer emergency services to ensure that all residents can receive timely emergency assistance.	g	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
12	Prioritize school system capital projects with net cost savings as identified in the previous energy audit.	b, d and j	Grayson County Public Schools
13	Provide advanced technology and technology infrastructure to schools and students. Consider donation infrastructure to get free items.	b and d	Grayson County Public Schools
14	Offer diverse after school programs to include non-athletic activities such as ag/forestry, career readiness, arts and craft internships, college courses, leadership training, trade skills and advance degree programs.	b, e and k	Grayson County Public Schools, Extension Service, Community Volunteers
15	Consider performance based salaries and incentive salaries to attract/keep high performing teachers.	b	Grayson County Public Schools
16	Increase Career & Tech Education Program and consider other trade based youth/adult programs to educate "workforce ready" population for local employment or for small business development. May include; AC&Refrigeration, Masonry, Landscaping, Building Trades, EMT, Criminal Justice, Property Mgmt, Ag/Forestry, Home Health/Medical, Culinary Arts	a, b, e, f and k	Grayson County Public Schools, Extension Service, Community Volunteers, Workforce Development- WCC
17	Partner with established colleges to offer a "satellite campus" in Grayson County for advanced degrees and long distance learning.	a, b, e, f and k	Grayson County Public Schools, Regional Higher Education Institutions
18	Consider vacant spaces/buildings to utilize for advanced learning, trade education, small business development, community centers, mentorship/internship headquarters, and other programs.	a, b, and j	Grayson County Public Schools, County Administration, Community Volunteers
19	Assess the unmet needs of the elderly and develop a strategy to mitigate concerns and meet future needs.	f and i	Virginia Department of Health & Human Services, County Admin
20	Review existing zoning districts and consider new zoning districts to achieve community land use goals.	e and h	Planning Commission
21	Conduct a Zoning Ordinance review and consider amendments for ease of use and to achieve land use goals.	c and h	Planning Commission

Strategies

Priority I

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
22	Conduct Feasibility Study for school system "Early Diversion Program". Program will identify students who may benefit from career/ technical training programs.	b	Grayson County Public Schools
23	Create inventory of the privately owned commercial and industrial sites and assist, where possible, with infrastructure needs or marketing to spur economic development.	d and e	County Administration, Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority, Industrial Development Authority
24	Promote small business development by encouraging creative financing programs such as revolving loan funds.	e and k	Board of Supervisors, IDA, County Admin
25	Continue to support web based GIS for citizens use.	d and j	County Administration, Commissioner of Revenue
26	Proceed with Phase II and Explore Phase III of the Independence Pedestrian and Bike Trail.	d and f	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Recreation Board
27	Conduct education and outreach to floodplain property owners.	c and g	County Administration
28	Review and amend land use ordinances to ensure that they are aligned with each other and meet state and federal criteria. Align the ordinances with land use goals.	c and h	Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors
29	Support the development of a Community Fitness/Wellness Center to provide opportunity for exercise and physical fitness.	d and f	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Recreation Board
30	Improve county tax parcel boundaries and records to accurately reflect the county.	j	Commissioner of Revenue

Strategies

Priority II

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
31	Create a multidisciplinary committee to research techniques/programs that prevent the cycle of poverty. The study should include how poverty relates to lack of employment, education, lifestyle choices, substance abuse, personal responsibility/work ethic and social services.	e, f, g, j and k	Board of Supervisors
32	Develop a better understanding of Comprehensive Services Act and assess funding risks to the county budget. Promote avenues to reduce this risk, including lobbying the General Assembly to limit local government social program responsibility.	a and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
33	Continue efforts to support the Twin County Airport (TCA).	d, j and k	Board of Supervisors
34	Encourage small businesses and other types of economic development through asset based development. (use of asset inventory)	c, e, and f	County Administration, Small Business Development Center
35	Partner with regional tourism initiatives such as The Crooked Road, Round the Mountain, and other organizations accountable for increasing tourism.	e, f, and k	County Administration
36	Actively promote cultural events such as festivals, markets, music and other communal activities that are regional attractions to Grayson County.	c, e, and f	County Administration
37	Create a committee of stakeholders and volunteers to analyze the causes of agricultural loss and to recommend policies/strategies to encourage farming, agriculture land retention & strategies to improve ag/economics.	c and h	Planning Commission, Extension Service
38	Develop a suitability analysis to determine prime farmland and consider policies to protect and encourage the farming of this land in future land-use decisions.	c and h	Planning Commission, Extension Service
39	Support local food initiatives and consider collaborating with local farmers and regional agricultural organizations to create a regional food hub that will transport and market local agricultural products.	e, f, and k	County Administration, Extension Service
40	Reduce long term cost to the county by improving efficiency of facilities, services, and work flows.	j	County Administration

Strategies

Priority II

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
41	Bolster the county Geographic Information System (GIS) to improve land-use planning and county efficiency. Use GIS to understand guardrail needs for reoccurring safety concerns.	d, g, h and j	County Administration, Commissioner of Revenue
42	Continue to have Grayson County representation on local and regional boards, commissions, and partnerships in which Grayson County has a responsibility, association, or investment in said endeavor.	j and k	Board of Supervisors
43	Ensure that all county departments draft and utilize standard operating procedures to improve efficiency and information exchange.	j	County Administration
44	Continue partnerships with non-profit, private, state, federal, regional collaborations, and localities to leverage funds and resources necessary to improving our communities.	f, j and k	Board of Supervisors
45	Consider the extension of water and sewer lines to communities with gaps in service or when environmental health threats necessitate action	c, d and f	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
46	Evaluate county water infrastructure throughout the county and develop a maintenance schedule to ensure that services remain viable.	d and j	County Administration
47	Support efforts to reduce crime and substance abuse in Grayson County.	f and g	Board of Supervisors, Sheriff Department
48	Encourage countywide efforts to reduce waste and increase recycling.	c and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
49	Support strategies to prolong the life of the regional landfill by increasing recycling/reuse of materials for ALL partners in the Solid Waste Authority.	c, j and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
50	Evaluate local incineration of trash and/or transfer station as an option to reduce trips to the landfill.	c and j	County Administration
51	Support initiatives that expand the recycling program and the ability to collect revenue. Consider investing in a truck to haul products and a glass recycling/crushing process to capture revenue from this wastestream.	c and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration

Strategies

Priority II

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
52	Continue to support the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service and public libraries as valuable educational opportunities for the county.	a, b, and k	Board of Supervisors
53	Create a task force to analyze the environmental health of the county. In particular, as it relates to septic tank issues/straight-piping, the lack of a full time environmental health officer. Ensure that the programs offered by the Health Department align with the needs of the county.	c and f	Board of Supervisors, Health Department
54	Develop School System Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize transportation and facility improvement projects.	b, d and j	Grayson County Public Schools
55	Develop internship/mentorship program for youth to gain experience/build resumes. Combine with leadership training.	a and b	Grayson County Public Schools, WCC, Small Business Development Center
56	Reach out to second home, retirees, professionals and other potential volunteers to lead education programs in; trades, business, leadership /after school/intern ect..	a and b	Grayson County Public Schools, County Administration
57	Understand the challenges for repeat offenders and the needs for those in the Criminal Justice System to re-enter society as productive citizens.	f and g	County Administration, Board of Supervisors, Sheriff Department
58	Develop an information system/network for county residents to learn about lifelong learning opportunities already offered by area organizations. Support workshops and programs already offered for lifelong learning.	a and k	Grayson County Public Schools, County Administration, Extension Service
59	Work with agencies and educational institutions to develop job skill training programs to meet identified gaps in the local workforce.	a, b, e, and k	County Administration, Grayson County Public Schools, Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority
60	Require all county appointments to attend leadership training within the first two years of appointment.	a and j	Board of Supervisors
61	Require all Board of Supervisors to attend the National Association of Counties BOS training within one year of service and require Advanced Training for Board or Supervisor Chair.	a and j	Board of Supervisors
62	Achieve Certified Crime Prevention Community Status	f and g	Sheriff Department, Board of Supervisors

Strategies

Grayson COUNTY·VA

Priority II

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
63	Expand the Recreation Department programs and facilities to include adult/senior programs and outdoor recreation.	a, f, and i	County Administration, Board of Supervisors, Recreation Board
64	Develop an Environmental Health Loan Program - a low interest revolving loan fund to assist citizens with high cost projects needed for environmental health issues including septic system replacement, demolition of hazardous buildings, and junk removal.	c and f	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Regional partners
65	Host community meetings and utilize key pad polling to gauge citizen input on land use and zoning restrictions.	h	Planning Commission
66	Survey other communities to gather input on strategies for attracting medical clinics and services. Support private investment in medical services and clinics where possible.	e, f, and i	County Administration
67	Sponsor a suitability analysis for land-use types and develop a future land use map based on the recommendations of the suitability analysis.	c, e, f, h and j	Planning Commission
68	Develop policy for the review of conservation easement applications when county approval is needed.	c and h	Planning Commission, County Administration
69	Amend administrative process for rezones to include site plans and review/interaction with VDOT for rezone applications.	h	Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors
70	Collaborate with land use agencies who provide technical assistance such as the New River Soil & Water Conservation District, VDOF, USDA NRCS, USDA FSA, and other similar organizations.	c, h and k	County Administration, Extension Service
71	Survey small business owners to understand the needs of these businesses and leverage resources to assist these needs.	e	County Administration, Small Business Development Center, Industrial Development Authority
72	Support AEP's 5 year Plan for utility improvements in Grayson County.	d, e and f	Board of Supervisors

Strategies

Priority II

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
73	Support initiatives that create employment through value add/processing of local agriculture and forestry resources.	c and e	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Industrial Development Authority
74	Sponsor independent third party study of the proposed benefits/negative impacts of use value taxation.	c and j	Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission

Strategies

Priority III

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
75	Understand energy costs across the county and support initiatives that reduce energy use. Promote alternative energy technology and efficiency.	c, f and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
76	Support the Independence Community Initiative for development of McKnight Park as part of tourism development.	e, f, and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
77	Create a tourism brand for outdoor recreational assets on the western end of Grayson County to promote tourism and small business development.	c, e and f	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
78	Promote foster parenting in the community.	j and k	Board of Supervisors, Social Services
79	Complete an inventory and a review of natural and cultural assets of the community.	c and e	Planning Commission
80	Consider a full time visitor/tourism center.	e	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
81	Consider expanding efforts of agritourism initiatives.	e and k	County Administration
82	Consider collaboration between Grayson County and local historical societies/organizations to promote important historical/cultural resources of the county.	c, e, f and k	County Administration
83	Consider creating a tourism business network to improve professionalism and networking of businesses associated with tourism.	e and k	County Administration
84	Bridge the Tourism and Recreation Departments to ensure that visitors can access local recreational offerings.	e, j and k	County Administration
85	Continue improving the government website to facilitate the exchange of information in an accurate and efficient way.	d and j	County Administration
86	Consider a spay/ neuter ordinance to address the taxpayer cost for animal control and support educational programs about responsible animal ownership. Partner with animal welfare organizations to find homes for unwanted pets.	g and j	County Administration, Board of Supervisors

Strategies

Priority III

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
87	Explore successful models/programs that break the cycle of poverty and replicate these programs.	f and j	Board of Supervisors, Social Services
88	Support and expand activities of the Day Report Program to prevent repeat offenders and assist them with transitioning back into the community.	f, g and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
89	Work with the school system to provide afterschool leadership development academy to encourage the next generation of leaders.	a and b	Grayson County Public Schools
90	Utilize crime statistic data and GIS to identify, prescribe and treat areas of acute criminal activity.	g and j	Sheriff Department, County Administration
91	Expand DARE program into the higher grades in conjunction with School Resource Officer program. Consider "scared straight" as part of this program in partnership with River North Correctional Facility.	f, g, j and k	Sherriff Department
92	Support private investment in Assisted Living Developments and other housing infrastructure needed for elderly and aging, where possible.	d, f and i	Board of Supervisors
93	Create information clearinghouse for citizens in need of building repair and energy improvements by connecting them with established organizations such as Rooftop, People Inc, Rural Development, HUD, and others.	f and k	County Administration
94	Build social capital by encouraging the formation and growth of civic clubs that address community needs. Topics may include scholarships, affordable housing, and other social issues.	a, f and k	County Administration
95	Collect data on ridgetop development and analyze data to determine if future threats exists.	c and h	Planning Commission
96	Consider amendments to the subdivision ordinance to require surveys and/or land division data in digital AutoCAD dxf files.	j	Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors
97	Consider participation in regional Enterprise Zone to encourage local investment and business development.	e, j and k	County Administration

Strategies

Priority III

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
98	Study how lighting choices impact the night sky and consider policy to protect dark skies as a local asset.	c and f	Planning Commission
99	Partner with Towns to expand bicycling and pedestrian transportation options.	c, d, f, i and k	County Administration, Board of Supervisors
100	Analyze the need for Park & Ride locations and support public transit/ridesharing infrastructure when cost effective.	c, d, f, i and k	County Administration, Board of Supervisors
101	Provide County representation at Commonwealth Transportation Board meetings to lobby for transportation funding and ensure adequate representation.	d and j	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
102	Consider policy that reduces strip development and multiple entrances to the state highways for safety concerns.	h and g	Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors
103	Consider incentive program to remove pre-76 manufactured homes that may be unable to meet current building codes.	f and g	Board of Supervisors, County Administration, Planning Commission
104	Consider resolution for "Clean Grayson Month" to promote civic and public actions to clean up the county.	c, f, j and k	Board of Supervisors, County Administration
105	Gauge the support for a local office park to accommodate those without internet who may be in need of personal office and when space is needed for business development.	e	County Administration, Blue Ridge Crossroads Development Authority, Industrial Development Authority
106	Evaluate the potential to transition the Industrial Development Authority to an Economic Development Authority.	e and k	County Administration, Industrial Development Authority
107	Encourage tourism by supporting the Blue Ridge Discovery Center, Matthews Farm Museum and/or other natural & cultural history museums as tourism development.	c, e and f	Board of Supervisors
108	Consider a new sheriffs building or a criminal justice center that attaches to the County Courthouse and/or other strategies to improve courthouse security.	g and j	Board of Supervisors, Sheriff Department

Strategies

Priority III

Strategy Identifier	Strategy Description	Goals Assisted	Responsible Party
109	Consider workforce development program to meet the local farm/forestry labor needs and plan accordingly.	a, b and e	County Administration, Grayson County Schools
110	Evaluate the need for web based clearinghouse of ag/forestry assets and networks to promote this economy. (producers, value add products, active farms, local food infrastructure & transportation options for food products)	d and e	Extension Service, County Administration

Appendix 1-Grayson County Transportation Plan VDOT Submittal 2013 Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Plan (Appendix A)

A. Introduction

The purpose of this section of the Comprehensive Plan is to assess Grayson County's existing transportation system, its future needs, and to recommend a set of transportation strategies that can best meet current and future transportation needs.

B. Transportation System

Roadways discussed in this system, with the exception of Interstates 77 and 81, are identified as arterial, collector, or local routes. The distinction between these functional classifications (arterial, collector and local routes) is based on whether the road primarily serves "through traffic" or provides direct access to adjacent land. Roads in cities and towns with populations over 5,000 receive an "urban" designation from Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and those with populations less than 5,000 are designated as "rural." Please note that all segments of roadway in this study area have a rural designation.

Roads and Highways

The main transportation infrastructure that serves the citizens of Grayson County is its road system. The system utilizes a combination of interstate (through nearby access points), primary, and secondary roads to serve the needs of residents. These road classifications have a strong influence on the location of future development and economic activity within the study area. The following section provides background data, traffic volumes and trends, VDOT's Six-Year Plan key improvements, and concludes with a summary of existing conditions, future needs, and opportunities.

Interstate

Although there are no segments of interstate highways in Grayson County they are included in this plan because of their importance to county residents for the purposes of access to employment centers, medical treatment and emergency centers, major airports, and for major shopping destinations.

The Federal Highway Administration defines an interstate highway as a "limited access" road designed for high-speed travel, is divided at its center, and has a minimum of four lanes. Interstate 81 extends from Interstate 40, just east of Knoxville, Tennessee and terminates at the Canadian border. In Virginia, Interstate 81 extends for a total of 325 miles from the Virginia-Tennessee border near Bristol to the Virginia-West Virginia state line near Winchester. Designated the Crescent Corridor, it is categorized as a corridor of statewide significance. Interstate 77 (Western Mountain Corridor of Statewide Significance) extends for a total of 611 miles from Columbia, South Carolina to Detroit, Michigan. In Virginia, Interstate 77 extends approximately 69 miles, from the North Carolina border in Carroll County to the West Virginia border in Bland County. Interstate 77 includes a high volume (49,000 Annual Average Daily Traffic), eight-mile overlap with Interstate 81 in Wytheville/Wythe County. Interstate access is available to Interstate 81, in Marion at Exit 45; to Interstate 77, eight miles east of Galax, at Exit 14, and the Interstate 77/81 overlap in Wytheville at Exits 73 and 80.

Traffic volumes on both Interstate 81 and Interstate 77 have risen dramatically since their construction. In Southwestern Virginia, commercial freight vehicles are a primary contributor to the dramatic rise in the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume. The most recent data indicates that this single element of roadway use accounts for approximately 25 percent of the AADT total (see Table VIII-1, AADT Volumes).

Primary

Rural primary (arterial) highways are defined as roads that range from two-lane, multi-lane, and divided highways with controlled points of access. These roads are designed to move higher volume traffic at greater speed between rural and areas of concentrated urban development. The US 58, 221/21 routes, and the VA 16, 89, 93, 94, 97, and 274 routes serve Grayson County as its key arterial primary highways.

Of these roads, US 58 (Southside Corridor of Statewide Significance) and US 16 provide travelers the most favorable east-west route, while US 221/21 and 94 provide the preferred means to move from north to south. The traffic volume on US 58 ranges from 6,400 AADT at the Town of Independence's east corporate limit to 7,900 AADT, at the intersection of US 58/VA 94, just west of Galax. The traffic volume on US 221/21 is approximately 1,700 AADT at Independence, and US 21's AADT is 1,300 at the Wythe County line. The level of traffic on VA 94 between US 58 and the Town of Fries is 2,500 AADT.[1]

Secondary

A rural secondary road or "collector" can have two to four lanes and is usually undivided. Secondary roads absorb traffic from lightly traveled local roads and busier primary roads. Generally, these facilities have fewer restricted access points to adjacent properties than either the primary or interstate systems. In Grayson County there are approximately 338 secondary roads in the study area. These roads have number designations in the range of 600 to 9999 with traffic volumes ranging from 10+ or - AADT to 2,000+ AADT.

Road System Breakdown

Grayson County's road network consists of approximately 767 miles of roads. Approximately 16.4 percent (108 miles) of these roads are

[1]Virginia Dept. of Transportation - Daily Traffic Volumes, Jurisdiction Report 38, 2012.

designated as primary highway facilities, and the remaining 83.6 percent (659 miles) of roadways are designated as secondary facilities. All 108 miles of primary roads in the study have a hard surface cover. However, only 46 percent (300 miles) of the secondary roads have a hard surface, 37 percent (245 miles) have an all-weather surface, and 17 percent (113 miles) have a light surface (109 miles) or are unsurfaced (4.3 miles).

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains all recognized roads in the study area and posts speeds on roadways based on such factors as location, traffic volume, pedestrian volume, safety, and hazardous terrain issues. The speed on all secondary roads is 55 miles per hour unless otherwise posted. Please note that no light-surfaced or unsurfaced road is posted with a black-and-white speed limit sign. However, all drivers on these roads are required to maintain a safe speed.

Rural Rustic Roads

The 2002 Session of the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation that revised *Section 33.1-70.1* of the state code (1997 Session) that became effective July 1, 2003. The initial section of Code known as the "Pave-in-Place" legislation has been left intact, and now has added language that authorizes what is known as the "Rural Rustic Road" legislation.

The Rural Rustic Road legislation represents an evolutionary change in the focus of VDOT's program to improve and pave dirt and gravel roads throughout the rural sections of the Commonwealth. The legislation is largely based on American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) published *Guidelines for Geometric Design of Very Low-Volume Local Roads (ADT less than or equal to 400)*.

Eligibility guidelines for the rural rustic roads program are as follows:

•Must be an unpaved road within the State Secondary System.

•Must carry at least 50 but not more than 500 vehicles per day.

•Must be a priority line item in an approved Secondary System Six-Year Plan, even if the funding is not from normal secondary construction allocations.

•Governing body of the county, in consultation with the VDOT Resident Engineer or designee, must designate a road or road segment as a Rural Rustic Road.

•Roadway or sub-section must be predominantly for local traffic use.

•The local nature of the road means that most motorists using the road have traveled it before and are familiar with its features.

•The Board of Supervisors will endeavor to limit growth on roads improved under the Rural Rustic Road program and will cooperate with VDOT through its comprehensive planning process to develop lands consistent with the rural rustic road concepts.

•Requires a special Resolution designating the road as a Rural Rustic Road by the Board of Supervisors.

Traffic Volumes

VDOT's Traffic Engineering Division in Richmond and Bristol provided the following volume information. The traffic count data indicate that the highest levels of traffic are found in the eastern and the lower midsections of the study area. Substantially less traffic volumes are found in the less developed areas in the northern and western sections.

Table VIII-1, *Annual Average Daily Traffic Counts for Selected Roadways in Grayson County – 2012*, below, presents traffic volume data for the study area.

TABLE VIII-1
ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNTS[1]
GRAYSON COUNTY
BY SELECTED ROADWAYS
2011

ROADWAY	FROM	TO	DISTANCE	2011 AADT
Interstate 77	NC Line	Ft. Chiswell	33 mi.	21 – 37,000
Interstate 81	Marion Ex. 45	Wytheville Ex. 70	25 mi.	23 26,000
Interstate 77/81 (overlap)	Ex. 40 & 72	Ex. 32 & 80	7.0 mi.	49,000
US 58	US 21	ECL Independence	1.2 mi.	6,400
US 58	VA 94	WCL Galax	1.4 mi.	7,900
US 221/21	NC Line	CL Independence	3.4 mi.	1,700
US 21	US 58	NCL Independence	0.5 mi.	1,800
VA 16	WCL Troutdale	Smyth Co. Line	0.8 mi.	1,100
VA 89	NC Line	SCL Galax	4.9 mi.	3,500
VA 97	ECL Galax	Carroll Co. Line	0.8 mi.	2,300
VA 274	US 58	VA 94	7.4 mi.	810
SR 606	SR 1001	ECL Fries	0.2 mi.	4,300
SR 607	NCL Galax Gap	Carroll Co. Line	0.3 mi.	1,400
SR 613	NC Line	SR 785	1.6 mi.	1,500
SR 626	SR 622	US 58	0.1 mi.	1,100
SR 805	SR 881	SR 648	0.6 mi.	1,100
SR 1001	VA 94	SR 1005	.21 mi.	3,900
SR 1101	US 21	SR 1131	.24 mi.	1,100
SR 1124	US 58	SR 685	.33 mi.	1,200

1. The Virginia Department of Transportation, Traffic Engineering Division.

Road Design Standards

Design standards for roads are established by VDOT. Required minimum right-of-ways (ROW) standards are based on the annual average daily traffic volumes (AADT) and the physical constraints of the project area. These standards serve as key land-use development and design guidelines. VDOT maintenance funds are only available for road facilities that meet its right-of-way design standards.

Table VIII-2, *Roadway Design Standards by*

TABLE VIII-2
Roadway Design Standards[1]
By Traffic Volume

AADT	ROW
Up to 250	40'±
251 – 400	50'±
401 – 5,000	60'±
Over 5,500	80' – 120'±

1. VDOT, Traffic Engineering Division

Traffic Volume, above, presents vehicle volume thresholds and related right-of-way values required for VDOT to assume maintenance responsibilities for roads and other related infrastructures.

Process to Effect Secondary Road Improvements

Grayson County has two categories of road projects within its secondary road system: (1) state maintained road projects and (2) local road projects. To be included in the State's Six-Year Improvement Program, county officials coordinate with VDOT to prioritize, plan and construct its road improvement projects. Local road projects are those that may be initiated by county officials. Theses can take place on narrow road facilities that do not have sufficient right-of-way to be eligible for state maintenance, or they can also be projects that are constructed as the result of new private development. Only projects that follow VDOT construction guidelines are eligible for state maintenance funds through the county's secondary road maintenance allocation. (See Figure VIII-1.)

Key Road Projects

The US 58 Corridor Program represents the most significant road project in Grayson County. The Corridor Program calls for widening and four-laning upgrades to existing US 58 facilities and other related roads (VA 16, Rt. 603 and 725). A new alignment designed to bypass the Town of Independence is also part of the planned US 58 system improvements. Currently, state funding limitations continue to compromise the ability of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and VDOT to determine an anticipated completion date for large sections of roadway within the study area.

In 2012 the entire length of Rt. 58 through Grayson County was proposed to be included in the National Highway System as part of the newly initiated (July 1, 2012) program called MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century.) The National Highway System includes the Eisenhower Interstate Highway System as well as other roads important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility.

In addition, a need for improvements in VA Rt. 89 south of Galax has been recognized as it is a major route into North Carolina, a destination for major medical services and other commercial venues, for the people in Grayson County. While the Virginia segment of the road is improved to primary highway standards, the NC segment has many sharp, switchback type curves with steep descents. It is imperative that Inter-State Cooperation be emphasized in all future road improvement plans and construction.

Virginia Rt. 21 north of Independence is another heavily utilized road that Grayson County residents use to access work, higher education, and I-81. It has been, and remains, a priority

for improvements for all future years of funding distribution.

U.S. Scenic Highways

For driving pleasure, Virginia offers beautiful scenery year-round and can be enjoyed on

Figure VIII-2. Blue Ridge Parkway Route

several nearby roadways. The closest National Scenic Byway to Grayson County is the *Blue Ridge Parkway*. The Blue Ridge Parkway was constructed during the Great Depression and is the nation's longest rural roadway as it extends 469 miles along the crests of the Southern Ap-

palachian Mountains between the Shenandoah and Great Smokey Mountain National Parks. The Parkway traverses 217 miles through Virginia and allows visitors to travel from its beginning at the southern end of the Shenandoah National Park to the North Carolina border, near Fisher's Peak.

In Virginia, the Parkway offers spectacular views and interesting examples of Appalachian culture at places such as Humpback Rocks and Mabry Mill. The *Appalachian Trail* can also be reached from the Parkway at more than 20 overlooks and parking areas in the Commonwealth and provides opportunities to hike sections of this popular national scenic trail.

Virginia Scenic Byways

The Virginia Byways program began in 1972 and mirrors the federal program as a way to promote the Commonwealth's substantial natural beauty, historical places, and areas of social significance to travelers who desire a pace that will enhance their experience. Currently, about 2,600 miles of roads have received Virginia Byway designation.

Byways effectively stimulate local economies by attracting visitors to lesser-known destinations. Travelers can follow the highlighted byways on state transportation and scenic road maps to visit and tour the wineries, explore the Civil War battle sites and other historical attractions, and experience the majestic natural scenery that connect the region's vast recreation resources. Two designated scenic byways pass through the Jefferson National Forest and the Mount Rogers Planning District region. These are the *Mount Rogers and the Big Walker Mountain Scenic Byways.*

The *Mount Rogers Scenic Byway* is divided in two sections. The first begins at the Town of Troutdale and goes west along Va. 603 and Va.

600 for approximately 13 miles through Grayson and Smyth counties to Rt. 58. This scenic route traverses the heart of the Mount Rogers National Recreational Area with scenic, open, rural countryside characteristics. The second section leads 32 miles east from the Town of Damascus to the community of Volney. This section follows US 58 in Grayson and Washington counties. This route offers the excellent access to the "High Country" of the national recreation area as it passes the southwest slopes of Whitetop Mountain, the second highest peak in Virginia, at 5,570 feet.

The map and photograph inset of a hiker on the Appalachian Trail details the scenic roadway alignments for the Southern Highlands section of the Virginia Scenic Byway system.
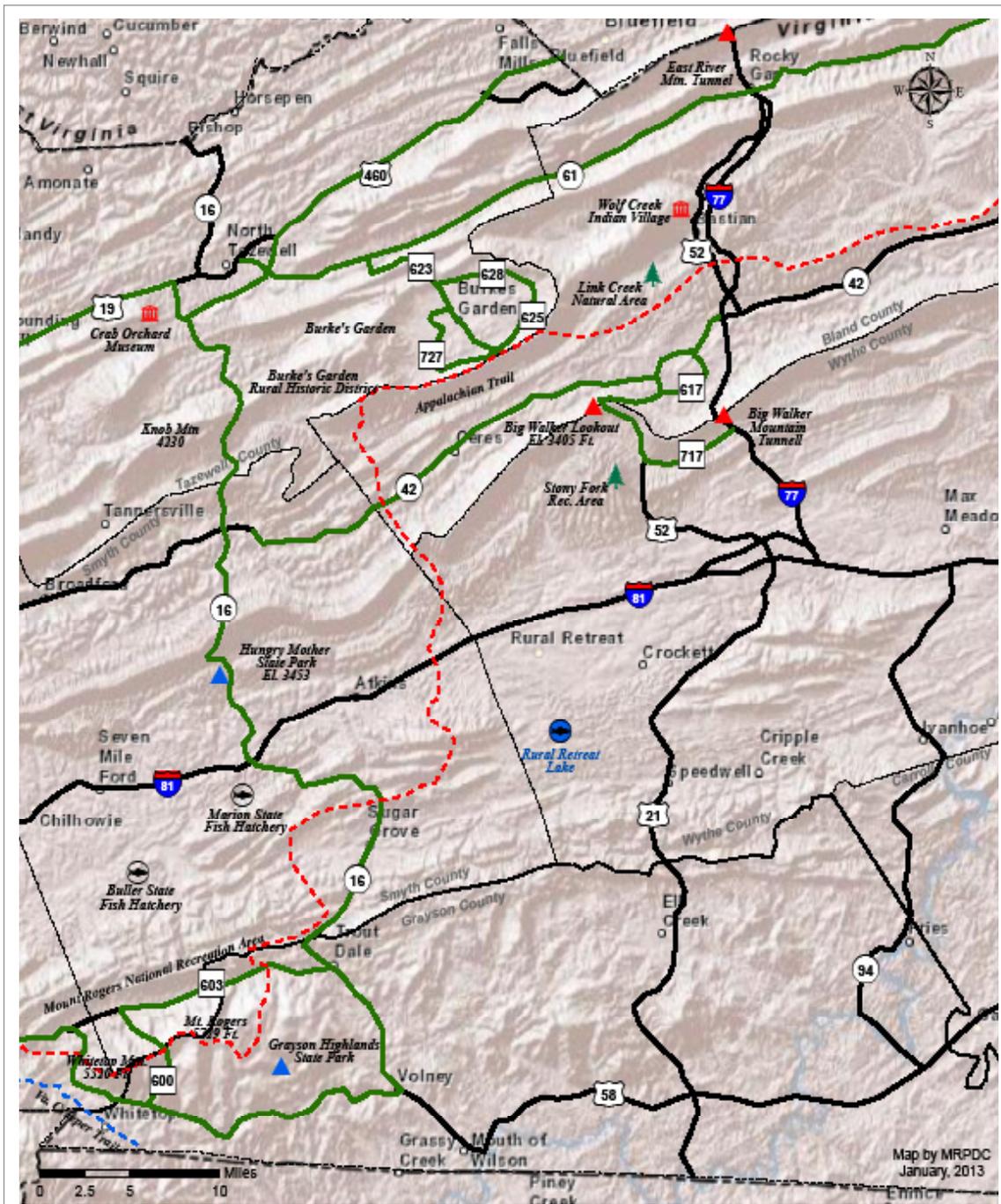

Figure VIII-3. Map of Virginia Southern Highlands Scenic Byways.

Air Travel

Charlotte/Douglas International Airport (CDIA) is the region's premier airport. CDIA is located approximately 140 miles from Independence and is sited seven miles west of uptown Charlotte. The nation's 6th busiest airfield in the world in 2010 based on traffic movements offers non-stop domestic and international passenger service and averages over 700 flights daily to serve over 30 million passengers annually. It serves seven domestic and 3 foreign airlines. The airport offers a main terminal with 1.8 million square feet of space; non-stop service to 146 cities, through 14 air carriers; utilizes five concourses with 98 aircraft gates; and has 17,000 public, bus, and taxi parking spaces. As of 2010 there are 4 runways, up from 3 previously. In 2012 a new international terminal is under construction and a new shuttle system will be built to connect both terminals and all parking facilities.

CDIA fast facts:

•Serves the fifth largest urban region in the U.S

•6,000,000 persons live within a 100 mile radius

•Second largest financial center in the U.S.

•50 percent of the U.S. population is within a two hour flight or one-day drive

Piedmont Triad International Airport, located approximately 102 miles southeast of Independence, about seven miles west of Greensboro, North Carolina, primarily serves the Piedmont area of North Carolina and portions of Southwest Virginia. In 2011 it served 1.8 million passengers. The Piedmont airport offers:

•Non-stop service to 18 cities

•Passenger terminal with 296,000 square feet of public area on two levels

•65,000 square feet of area on the underground service level

•25 aircraft parking positions adjacent to the two concourses

•The main runway length is 10,001 feet

•The secondary crosswind runway length is 6,380 feet

•A new third runway parallel to the main runway is 9,000 feet

The Roanoke Regional Airport, located approximately 109 miles northeast of Independence, is another full-service airport that offers a wide range of services for all aviation types and is the primary commercial airport serving a large portion of Western Virginia. Roanoke Regional Airport offers non-stop service to a dozen major cities, as well as connecting services to major air-transportation hubs. General Aviation services at Roanoke Regional Airport include the following:

•A full-service Fixed Base Operator

•24-hour-a-day services

•Hangar and heated hangers storage

•Engine repair and maintenance

•Executive and Pilot Lounges

•Pilot training

Tri-Cities Regional Airport, located approximately 95 miles southwest of Independence, near Blountville, Tennessee, is another of the region's primary full-service commercial airports and serves as a gateway to Southwest Virginia, East Tennessee, Western North Carolina, and parts of Kentucky.

Tri-Cities Regional Airport offers non-stop service to five major hubs, primarily Charlotte, Atlanta, and Chicago. With one connection you can get most anywhere in the United States and many destinations abroad. Tri-Cities Regional Airport property covers 1,040 acres with another 89.05 acres in easements. It includes:

•A terminal building of approximately 97,300 square feet

•A 23,000 square foot cargo building

•Eight conventional hangars ranging in size from 8,000 to 28,000 square feet of storage space

•Fixed-base operator, domestic and charter facilities

•An 8,000 foot primary runway and a 4,447 foot secondary runway
The main runway is being completely repaved

beginning in October 2012, with installation of new in-pavement lighting systems. Eighteen months will be required to complete the $20 million project.

General Aviation

The *Twin County Airport (TCA)* provides general aviation services locally and is jointly owned by Grayson and Carroll Counties and the City of Galax. The airport has a 4,203 foot long runway and is located seven miles northeast of Galax. Planned expansions at the airport include a new terminal and commercial leasing service.

TCA's operational statistics show that there are 12 aircraft based at the field. Ten are single-engine, one multi-engine, and one helicopter. Aircraft arrivals and departures average 46 per day. Of these, 53 percent are transient general aviation, 44 percent are local general aviation, two percent are air taxi, and less than one percent is military. TCA offers full-service fixed base operations, hanger storage, engine repair and maintenance, and pilot training.

The *Mountain Empire Airport (MEA)* provides general aviation services locally and is jointly owned by Smyth and Wythe Counties and the Towns of Marion and Wytheville. It is located about 35 miles north of Independence, near the Town of Rural Retreat. Its 5,280-foot lighted asphalt runway provides an excellent landing location for corporate, charter, and air freight jets that service local corporate and general public customers. The airport is accessible from US 11 with signs on both US 11 and Interstate 81.

A $3+ million-dollar parallel taxiway addition has allowed MEA to increase the number of aircraft arrivals and departures by virtue of its enhanced takeoff, landing, and taxiing capabilities. The long-range plan for the facility includes additional space for hangars for corporate aircraft. A new passenger terminal building with offices was opened in September 2012.

Rail Services

Passenger Rail Service is not currently available in the Southwest Virginia region and the nearest passenger service (Amtrak) stations are located in Danville and Lynchburg with a direct bus connec-

tion from Roanoke to Lynchburg daily each way. However, the United States Congress has approved legislation that directs Amtrak to partner with the Commonwealth of Virginia and freight railroad corporations to construct the operating agreements necessary to launch passenger rail service from Bristol to Richmond and Washington, D.C.[2]

The 2000 General Assembly allocated $9.3 million for the TransDominion Express rail project, which with stops in Abingdon, Marion, Wytheville, Pulaski, Radford, and Christiansburg, could increase heritage tourism travel into the area. An added benefit would be decreasing traffic congestion on Interstate 81. As of October 2012, the Commonwealth had invested in capital improvements and operating costs to initiate service from Lynchburg to Washington, D.C. This service operates along the proposed TDX corridor.[3]

Commercial *Freight Rail Service* is not available in Grayson County. However, the Norfolk Southern Railway Corporation operates a Class A Mainline that passes through the nearby towns of Wytheville, Rural Retreat, and Marion. Numerous rail sidings and spurs are available to serve industrial customers throughout the region. Regional terminal facilities for the main line are based at Bristol and Radford. Norfolk Southern provides bulk, mixed freight, containerized piggyback and team track services.

Transit & Taxi

Grayson County Public Transit, a service of *District Three Public Transit* in Marion, operates a limited schedule of bus service for a reasonable fare to the citizens of Grayson County. Regular routes are available for the Towns of Fries, Independence, Troutdale, and the Whitetop community. Figure VIII-6, below, presents a current schedule for the County's transit system.

District *Three Senior Services* also provides limited, on-demand response for medical transit service to eligible clientele in Grayson County to local medical facilities. A new service began operation in April 2009, also by District Three. Called New Freedom,

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2 http://www.house.gov/transportation/railjuris.htm.
3 http://leg1.state.va.us/001/idx/ishtm193.htm.

it is a weekly, fixed schedule roundtrip to regional medical centers and shopping malls. Two of the routes serve citizens of Grayson County.   The service is open to the general public, not just low income, seniors or disabled individuals. One route originates in Marion and has scheduled stops in Troutdale, Volney, Mouth of Wilson, Independence, Galax, and Hillsville with a destination of Winston-Salem, NC medical facilities and Hanes Mall. With an approximate 4-hour window for medical appointments, the transit buses reverse the route. This route currently runs every Friday. A second route originates in Troutdale every Wednesday and follows the same pick up locations but travels to Roanoke area medical facilities and the Valley View Mall. Both trips are day-long events, 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. from the point of origination and cost an astounding $1.00 roundtrip. Reservations are highly recommended and can be made, and further information obtained, at (866)-238-4293 toll free or (276) 236-3055.

Private cab services are provided by three businesses in Galax and two in the Town of Hillsville.

Table VIII-3
Public Transit Route Schedule
Grayson County
Call 24 hours in advance for Reservations:
Toll Free: 1-866-238-4293 Round Trip Fare is $1

Area Served	Destination	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Independence	Galax	Every		
Troutdale	Marion			Every
Whitetop	Galax			Every
Fries	Galax		Every	

Route Time - 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
A Service of District Three Public Transit

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is the use of programs and services to make the entire transportation system (roads, HOV/HOT lanes, buses, trains, automobiles, etc.) more efficient. Grayson County does not currently offer TDM services however the Statewide Transit and TDM Plan envisions new TDM services by 2040. In non-urban areas, TDM programs are primarily residence based and focus on commuting within and outside the area. They usually focus on telework and long distance commutes and coordinate with neighboring employment areas. TDM programs can be administered by county governments, planning district commissions

or transit agencies.

Bus and Motor Freight

Atlantic Greyhound Bus Lines (an independent agent) provides passenger and package interstate transportation from its full-service bus terminals that are located in Max Meadows and Marion. Limited bus services are also available in Hillsville. Interstate and intrastate freight service is also available from numerous trucking companies that provide service in Grayson County.

Bicycle and Pedestrian

There is excellent access to numerous trail facilities within the study area for bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian activities. In addition to the walking trail located at the county's Ager Recreation Park, New River Trail State Park, Grayson Highlands State Park, Jefferson National Forest / Mount Rogers National Recreational Area, Matthews State Forest, Virginia Creeper Trail, Appalachian Trail, and the US Bicycle Route 76 also provide outstanding multi-use opportunities.

•*New River Trail State Park* is the state's only linear park and is 57 miles in length. The park is a rail conversion of a former Norfolk & Southern railroad line. The park stretches from the City of Galax to Fries and on to Pulaski, as it parallels the banks of the New River for approximately 39 miles.

•*Grayson Highlands State Park* is next to the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. Grayson Highlands was created in 1965. It was originally Mount Rogers State Park. The 4,822-acre park is located on US 58 between Independence and Damascus. Hiking, biking, and equestrian trail facilities are available for year-round use.

•*The Jefferson National Forest / Mount Rogers National Recreational Area* extends east to west across the entire length of Grayson County's northern boundary. This area includes many easy access points to the forest and its numerous campgrounds, picnic areas, and 400 miles of recreational trail facilities. Most Mount Rogers NRA's multi-use trail facilities are open for use throughout the entire year.

•The *Matthews State Forest* in Grayson County one

mile west of Galax on Rt. 58 was dedicated in 2001 as a demonstration forest for silvaculture research and for reintroduction of the American chestnut. It has 8 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, is a wildlife sanctuary, and serves as watershed protection.

•The *Virginia Creeper National Recreational Trail* is a 33.4-mile, multi-use facility, which connects the Virginia / North Carolina state line one mile east of Whitetop Station to the Towns of Damascus and Abingdon. It is available for use by hikers, cyclists, and equestrians.

•The *Appalachian National Scenic Trail* (AT) is a public footpath across over 2,000 miles of Appalachian Mountain ridgeline from Maine to Georgia. A beautiful section of this trail is located in the Mount Rogers NRA. Maintenance of the trail within the NRA is a partnership involving the Forest Service and the Appalachian Trail Conference.

•*US Bike Route 76*, a.k.a., the *Transamerica Trail*, is a well-known bicycle route that stretches 4,300 miles from the coast of Virginia to the coast of Oregon. The trail was established in 1976 as part of the U.S. Bicentennial celebration. Bike Route 76, a shared-use facility, is widely recognized as the greatest and most traveled bike trail in America. The trail's route passes through the Town of Troutdale, on State Road 603 after leaving Damascus on Rt. 58. It leaves Troutdale north on State Rt. 16 to Sugar Grove, then to Cedar Springs and Rural Retreat.

C. Transportation Challenges

•Grayson County does not have a four-lane connection through the county.

•Safety concerns are present on many roadways, such as line-of-sight problems.

•The current transportation system does not include safe networks for pedestrians and bicycles.

•The greatest constraint to development and road construction/improvements is severe slope. Over 60% of the County has land with slopes in excess of 20%. Road construction in areas of 15% or greater slope is expensive requiring extensive cutting and filling. It is difficult to manage stormwater runoff.

•Road construction that follows the natural topography reduces costs and runoff but leads to sight distance problems.

•Linear or "strip" development can lead to multiple entrances and intersections that are close together affecting safe access by the public and the traffic carrying capacity of the road.

•The absence of site plan review rules and procedures in the Zoning Ordinance makes it difficult to resolve Transportation Challenges prior to a project being ready to start construction.

•The County does not fully benefit from VDOT's transportation technical assistance by only requiring the rezoning applicant to have their commercial entrance permit reviewed by VDOT during the rezoning process.

D. Transportation Planning- Virginia, Mt. Rogers Region and Grayson County

The primary mode of transportation in Grayson County is the road system. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains, improves and develops state roads and road infrastructure. Transportation planning is a necessary component of maintaining the transportation infrastructure and the planning occurs on a statewide, regional and local level.

Virginia's 2035 State Highway Plan will include components of each region's (20 region across the state) Rural Long Range Plan. Grayson County is part of the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan. An important component of this plan is to identify local system deficiencies based on safety concerns, infrastructure improvements and meeting travel demands of each locality. A list of these recommendations can be found on the System Deficiency page in this chapter. The entire Mt. Rogers plan can be found at; http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/region_3_mount_rogers.asp

The **Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)** is a document that outlines planned spending for transportation projects proposed for construction development or study for the next six years. The SYIP

is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to **interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs** for the immediate fiscal year. The SYIP also identifies planned program funding for the succeeding five fiscal years. The CTB allocates funds for the first fiscal year of the SYIP but the remaining five years are estimates of future allocations. Fiscal years start on July 1 and end on June 30. The CTB updates the SYIP each year as revenue estimates are updated, priorities are revised, project schedules and costs change, and study results are known.

State law requires the development and publication of separate programs for the **secondary system** of state highways in each county, known as the **Secondary Six-Year Plan**. This plan is administered differently from the SYIP, as each county oversees their own secondary roads plan. Approved each year by the local Board of Supervisors or legislative body the Secondary Six-Year Plan reflects the needs of local citizens. Decisions on which projects are included in the plan are based on traffic counts, immediate safety needs, and projects that provide the most benefit for dollars spent. Funding allocations for the Secondary Six Year Plan for each locality is often insufficient to meet the needs of the locality. Even after a project is approved for the Secondary Six Year Plan, the project might be delayed for numerous reasons, including changes in local government priorities and needs, funding availability, escalating land costs and environmental concerns. Changes to both the Six Year Improvement Plan and the Secondary Six Year Plan may occur each year. As such these plans are constantly changing. The best source of information for understanding which projects are planned for the locality and the region is to visit the VDOT website or to contact the VDOT representative for the area.

To ensure that the state roads across Grayson County can meet the future needs of its residents, the Virginia Department of Transportation should consider supporting and funding recommended projects for Grayson County in the **Six Year Improvement Pro-gram**, the **Secondary Six Year Plan** and those projects determined **System Deficiencies as outlined in the 2035 Mt. Rogers Regional Plan**. Local projects in the Six Year Improvement Program (as determined by the CTB) can be found at http://syip.virginiadot.org/Pages/allProjects.aspx . The Secondary Six Year Plan (as of 2013) and the System Deficiencies for Grayson County (Mt. Rogers 2035 Plan) are found in the pages that follow.

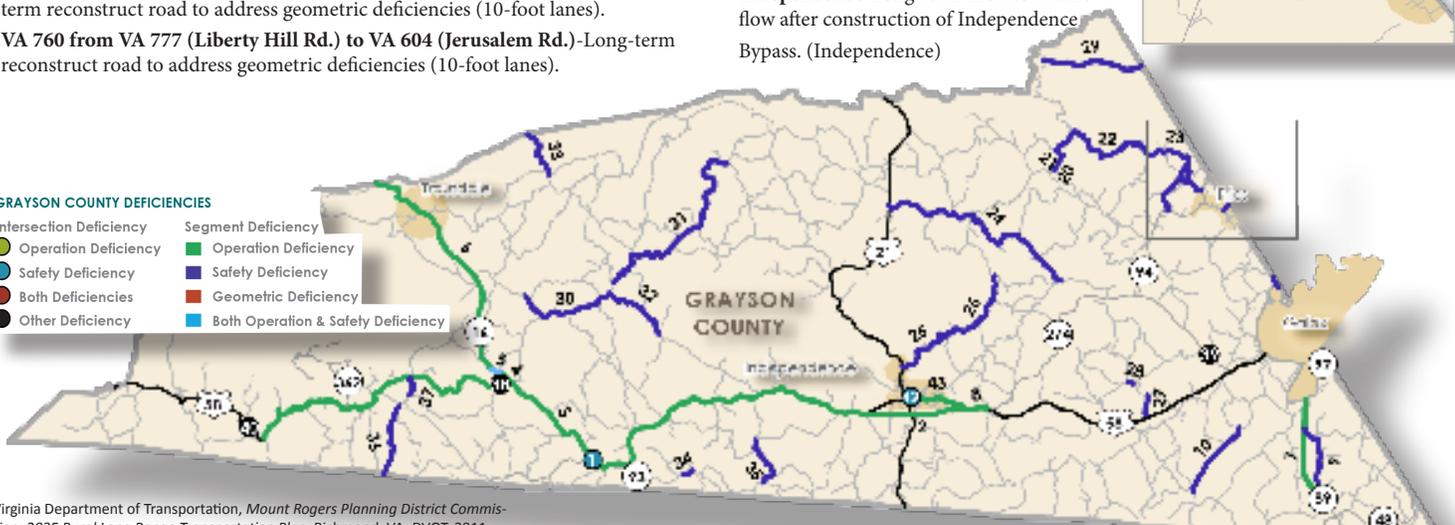This page was designed with information from the VDOT website. More information can be found at; http://www.virginiadot.org/default.asp

VDOT-Grayson County System Deficiencies

1 US 58/VA 16-Mid-term reconstruct intersection to improve sight distance and add turn lanes.

2 Proposed Independence Bypass from VA 703 to VA 888-Mid-term construct proposed Independence Bypass.

3 US 58 (Highlands Pkwy.) from VA 751 E. to VA 703-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

4 VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from US 58 N. to 0.21 Mi. N. VA 735-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (includingfull-width lanes and shoulders).

5 VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from 0.21 Mi. N. VA 735 to 0.20 Mi. S. VA 735-Short-term install guardrails; Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

6 VA 16 (Troutdale Hwy.) from 0.20 Mi. S. VA 735 to Smyth Co. Line-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

7 VA 89 (Skyline Hwy.) from VA 613 to SCL of Galax-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

8 US 58 (E. Main St.) from ECL of Independence to VA 888-Long-term monitor traffic flow after construction of Independence Bypass.

9 VA 821 from VA 89 S. (Skyline Hwy.) to VA 89 N. (Skyline Hwy.)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

10 VA 622 from VA 624 to VA 617-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

11 VA 607 from NCL of Galax to Carroll Co.-Line Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).

12 VA 815 (Tanglewood Rd.) from VA 94 (J.E.B Stuart Hwy.) to VA 647 (Stevens Creek)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

13 VA 647 (Stevens Creek) from VA 815 (Tanglewood Rd.) to VA 759-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

14 VA 647 (Stevens Creek) from VA 759 to VA 644-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

15 VA 647 from VA 644 to VA 770-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

16 VA 648 from VA 770 to VA 604-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

17 VA 644 (Freedom Ln.) from VA 94 (J.E.B Stuart Hwy.) to VA 770-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

18 VA 644 from VA 770 to VA 647 (Stevens Creek)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

19 VA 770 from VA 644 to VA 647-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

20 VA 777 (Liberty Hill Rd.) from VA 805 (Spring Valley Rd.) to VA 760-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

21 VA 760 from VA 777 (Liberty Hill Rd.) to VA 604 (Jerusalem Rd.)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

22 VA 604 (Jerusalem Rd.) from VA 760 to VA 644-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

23 VA 604 from VA 644 to VA 647-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

24 VA 660 from US 21 to VA 691-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

25 VA 654 (Peach Bottom Rd.) from US 21 to VA 686 W.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

26 VA 654 (Peach Bottom Rd.) from VA 686 W. to VA 695-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

27 VA 636 from 0.16 Mi. N. of US 58 to VA 623-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

28 VA 636 from VA 636 W. to VA 636 E.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

29 VA 602 from VA 653 to Carroll Co.-Line Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

30 VA 658 (Flatridge Rd.) from VA 731 W. to VA 601 S.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

31 VA 658 (Flatridge Rd.) from VA 601 N. to VA 670-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

32 VA 601 from VA 680 to VA 658 S. (Flatridge Rd.)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

33 VA 601 from S. VA 603 to Smyth Co. Line-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

34 VA 708 from VA 766 W. to VA 766 E.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (9-foot lanes).

35 VA 601 (Bridge Creek Road) from VA 708 S. to VA 711 N.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

36 VA 743 from N. Carolina State Line to VA 725 S.-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

37 VA 743 from VA 723 to US 58 (Highlands Pkwy.)-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).

38 US 58 Over Big Wilson Creek/Volney-Short-term replace bridge.

39 VA 94 Over New River, near VA 634-Short-term replace bridge.

40 US 58 over M. Fork Helton Creek-Short-term replace bridge.

41 VA 758 from VA 1001 (W. Main) to Carroll Co. Line-Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders). (Fries)

42 US 58/US 21-Mid-term reconstruct intersection to improve turn radius for trucks. (Independence)

43 US 58 (E. Main St.) from VA 802 to ECL of Independence-Long-term monitor traffic flow after construction of Independence Bypass. (Independence)

GRAYSON COUNTY DEFICIENCIES

Intersection Deficiency
- Operation Deficiency
- Safety Deficiency
- Both Deficiencies
- Other Deficiency

Segment Deficiency
- Operation Deficiency
- Safety Deficiency
- Geometric Deficiency
- Both Operation & Safety Deficiency

VDOT-Secondary Six-Year Plan

1. River Bend Rd. (Rt. 708): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $450,000
2. Hidden Valley Rd. (Rt. 831): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $220,000
3. Rock Creek Rd. (Rt. 685): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $4,099,232
4. Shale Hollow Rd. (Rt. 818): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $40,000
5. Spring Valley Rd. (Rt. 805): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $3,302,030
6. Old Ferry Rd. (Rt. 631): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $237,500
7. Clover Ln. (Rt. 874): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $30,000
8. Crackers Neck Rd. (Rt. 631): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $280,000
9. Freedom Ln. (Rt. 644): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $100,000
10. Route 94: Bore New 24" Pipe Under Road: Estimated Cost $30,000
11. Crestwood Drive (Rt. 799): Reconstruct: Estimated Cost $48,594
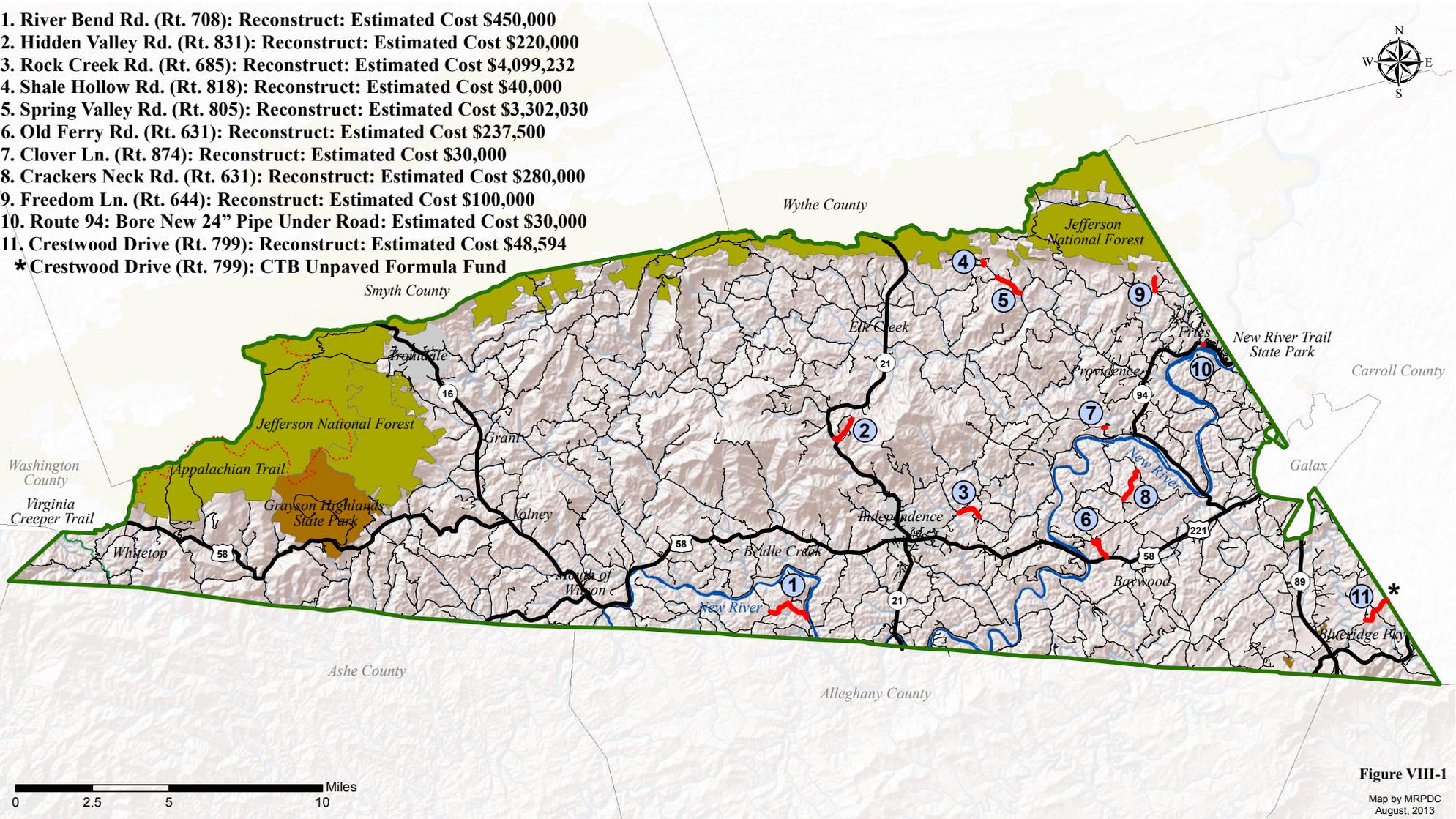   * Crestwood Drive (Rt. 799): CTB Unpaved Formula Fund

Figure VIII-1

Map by MRPDC
August, 2013