

CHAPTER 1

ABOUT THE PLAN

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Full Stride to 2045 is the Town of Bowling Green’s Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is the Town’s most important document for guiding future land use and development – along with associated aspects of daily life including housing, parks and recreation, community facilities and services, and economic development – over the next ten to twenty years. While not an ordinance, the Plan is an officially adopted policy document intended for use by Town staff, the Planning Commission, Town Council, public agencies, developers, and the general community.

As the Comprehensive Plan is implemented over time, it facilitates rational and responsive decision making. Although it has no direct regulatory effect, it provides both Town leaders and the community with a rationale and guidance for ordinance updates and capital improvements.

Full Stride to 2045 is based on data analysis, current Plan diagnostics and community and stakeholder input. The Plan describes the community’s long-term vision for itself along with goals, strategies, and actions to aid Bowling Green in achieving this vision.

Legal Basis for the Plan

The Code of Virginia, or state law, requires all localities to adopt a Comprehensive Plan. Code of Virginia §§ 15.2-2223 and 15.2-2224, among others, outline the required and optional Plan elements and offer a general framework for Plan activities. Typical elements of the Comprehensive Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Future land use planning maps and recommendations for development.
- A comprehensive system of transportation facilities, including maps and cost estimates for improvements.
- Strategies to provide a system of community service facilities.
- Areas and implementation measures for the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of affordable housing.
- A plan to protect sensitive environmental areas.

VIRGINIA CODE

§15.2-2223

“The Comprehensive Plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.”

State requirements for Comprehensive Plans also recognize that community development is ongoing and ever-changing. For this reason, Code of Virginia § 15.2-2230 requires localities to review the Comprehensive Plan every five years and amend as needed to ensure its continued applicability and usefulness to the community.

Plan Jurisdiction

Relationship to Other Plans and Policies

Bowling Green 2050 is tied to past and present planning efforts, including plans, policies, and ordinances. This Plan includes data, ideas, and recommendations from existing plans, studies, and strategic documents. In turn, the Plan informs and influences future updates to all Town land development regulations and decisions. The Plan guides development of the annual budget, capital improvements, resource preservation plans, other strategic plans, and amendments and enforcement of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Further, zoning and subdivision matters, land use decisions, and environmental and historic resource protection initiatives will all rely on the contents of the Plan.

ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCES

The Town of Bowling Green's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances are the primary tools used to realize the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. While *Full Stride to 2045* articulates Bowling Green's ideal vision, goals, objectives and strategies for land use and development, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances serve to directly regulate the location, form, and character of development. The Plan should therefore guide all updates to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. These Ordinances should also be reviewed in their entirety on an annual basis to ensure that they align with the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, when a development or rezoning application is submitted to the Town, the Town Council and the Planning Commission must ensure that the application meets the specific standards of the Town's ordinances and contributes to the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a multi-year planning and budgeting tool used by local governments to identify, prioritize, and fund major capital projects over a defined timeframe, typically five years. The Town of Bowling Green does not currently maintain a formal CIP. Instead, capital projects and infrastructure investments are planned and funded through the Town's annual budgeting process and longer-term financial planning efforts. Each year, the Town identifies priority capital needs and evaluates them alongside operating expenditures during budget development. This process allows Town Council to allocate funding based on immediate needs, available revenues, and evolving community priorities.

While this approach does not follow a fixed five-year CIP structure, it still enables the Town to consider the timing, cost, and funding sources for major projects. Multi-year projects may be phased through successive annual budgets, and funding strategies may include local revenues and grants. Regular budget cycles provide an opportunity to reassess priorities and adjust planned investments as conditions change. *Full Stride to 2045* plays an informative role in guiding these decisions. It helps identify priority projects, inform long-term investment goals, and may assign responsibility for implementation. By aligning annual and multi-year budgeting decisions with the vision and priorities of the Capital Improvements Plan, the Town can ensure that its financial resources are directed toward projects that support community goals and long-term sustainability.

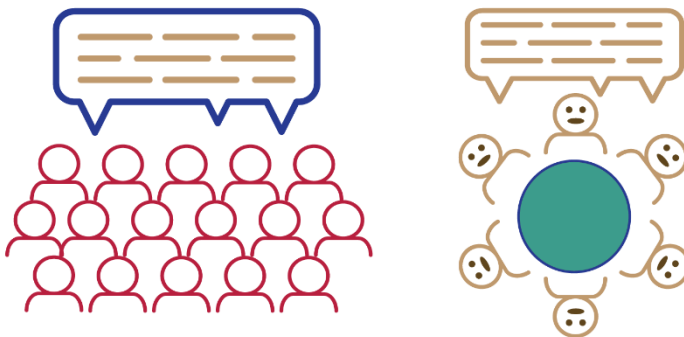
OTHER PLANS AND STUDIES

Local, regional, and state plans, studies, and initiatives all inform the planning process, while the Comprehensive Plan informs the development of future planning initiatives.

[insert plans & studies graphic]

Creating the Plan

Full Stride to 2045 is the culmination of [redacted] months of research, data analysis, and stakeholder input. Throughout the planning process, steps have been taken to ensure that the revised Plan clearly defines the Town of Bowling Green's vision and goals for today and the future. The Town of Bowling Green is committed to continuing the promotion of the *Full Stride to 2045*'s vision and engaging the community in the Plan's implementation.



[insert project schedule graphic]

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The first step to writing a data-driven, community-informed Plan was to gather robust data about Bowling Green through research and outreach. Extensive research was completed to provide quantitative data about current conditions.

A history of the Town of Bowling Green and a summary of existing conditions can be found in Chapter 2 [Community Profile](#).

PLAN FORMULATION

The Bowling Green Planning Commission is ultimately responsible for reviewing and recommending the proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan, as directed in Code of Virginia §15.2-2223. Plan drafting was conducted through a collaborative approach between Town staff, including the Berkley Group planning consultant. The Planning Commission and Town Council reviewed drafts and provided input and guidance during regularly scheduled work sessions from November 2025 through [December 2026](#).

PUBLIC REVIEW

Comprehensive Plans are a product of the community's input, as interpreted through the lens of appointed and elected decision makers. As such, the Plan follows a public review and refinement period that ensures the Plan accurately represents the community's vision for Bowling Green.

Editor's Note: This section will be drafted following the completion of the public review phase in the end of 2026.

REFINEMENT AND ADOPTION

Editor's Note: This section will be drafted at the time of public hearings for Plan consideration and adoption.

Using the Plan

Comprehensive Plans are community documents used by a variety of individuals and stakeholders. The Comprehensive Plan serves the community best when it is consistently referenced to make recommendations and decisions. The Planning Commission's annual review of the Plan's Implementation Matrix (**Chapter 10**) will track progress by measuring achievements and will prioritize strategies, including identifying any necessary amendments needed to meet community goals.

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