

Memorandum

To: Town of Mineral Planning Commission
From: Curtis Scarpignato, Regional Planner
Date: January 22nd, 2024
Reference: Technical Memo – Review of 2018 Comprehensive Plan / State Code Compliance Audit

MEMO: Review of 2018 Comprehensive Plan / State Code Compliance Audit

Executive Summary:

The TJPDC finds that due to recent changes to Virginia State Code, the Town of Mineral's 2018 Comprehensive Plan would not comply with current regulations. Specifically, the current Comprehensive Plan does not address strategies for providing broadband infrastructure, strategies for promoting affordable housing, and strategies for promoting manufactured housing. These are areas that the Town will need to incorporate into its upcoming, updated comprehensive plan. TJPDC staff also reviewed the current plan for opportunities for improvement and paths to incorporate best practices into the updated plan.

Overview of Existing Plan:

The Town's current comprehensive plan was adopted in 2018. Since then, the Virginia State Code has been amended to change the requirements of comprehensive plans. As a result, the new comprehensive plan must incorporate a handful of new considerations: strategies for providing broadband infrastructure, strategies for promoting affordable housing, and strategies for promoting manufactured housing.

As written, the Town's comprehensive plan provides background on the goals and requirements of comprehensive planning and the history of the town. The plan outlines a vision for the town and 6 goals as part of that vision. Under those goal areas are several objectives, such as calming traffic. The plan provides recommendations for Walton Park that are no longer relevant and will need removal. The plan provides discussion of the Town's finances, but limited discussion of other existing conditions. Additional discussion of existing conditions will be incorporated into the new plan. The current plan also includes some graphics showing desired improvements and photos of the town.

Recommendations:

Based on review of the current comprehensive plan, staff have identified several opportunities for improvement:

- Update demographic information with greater details to contextualize the community in its past, present, and future state.
- Incorporate more concrete recommendations for actualizing elements of the plan, where feasible.
- Consider emerging priority issues, such as resiliency, equity, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Embark on a more systematic evaluation of the existing conditions of the town as required by code. "A comprehensive plan is adopted or amended only after careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions, trends of growth, and the probable future requirements of the area" (*Virginia Code* § 15.2-2223).
- Proactively plan to accommodate growth in areas that are most well-suited to handle the needs of additional development.