



Glasgow Community Strong

Project Summary & Action Plan

Prepared by the Glasgow Community Strong Committee and
the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

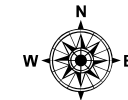
July 2016



Town of Glasgow

Reference

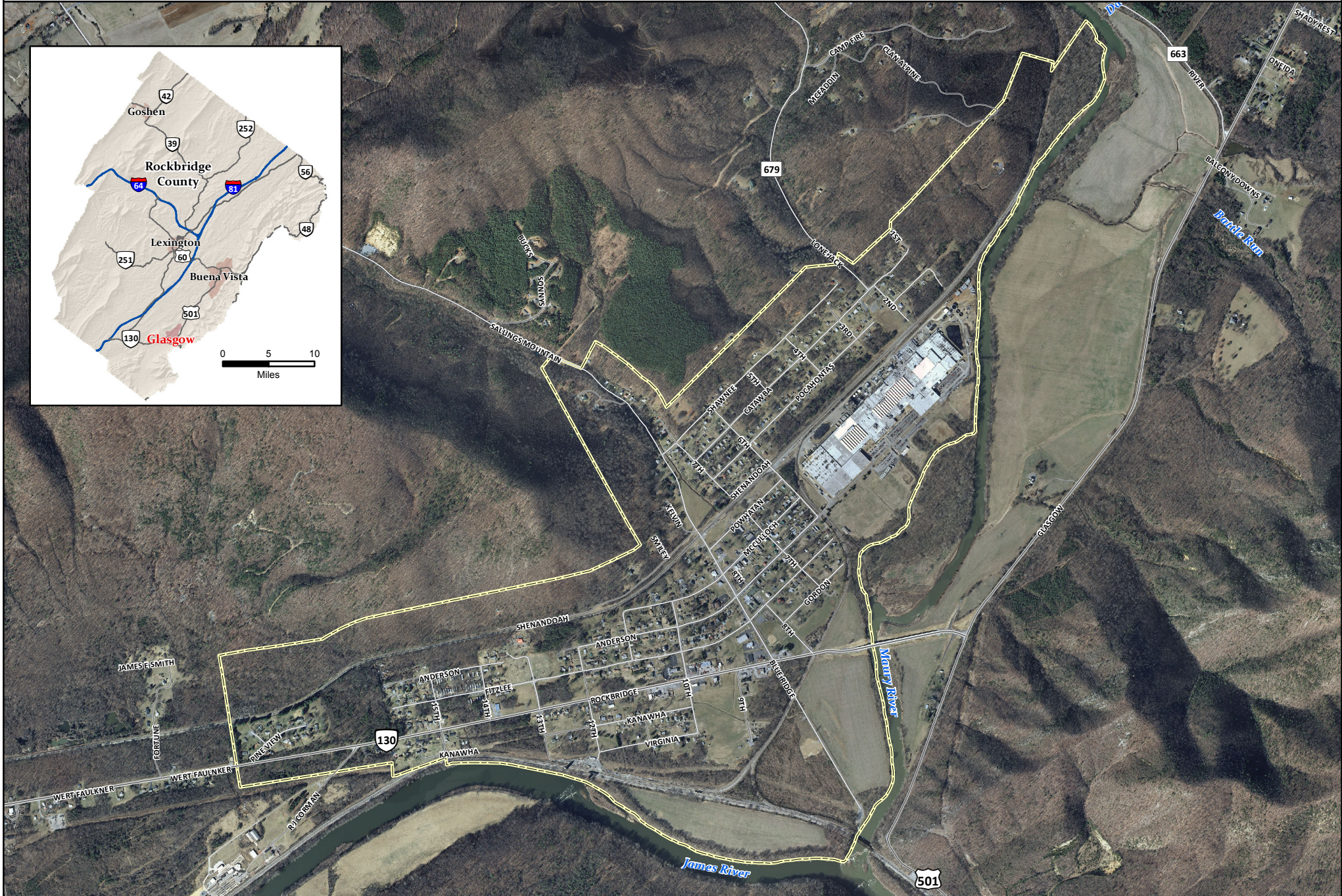
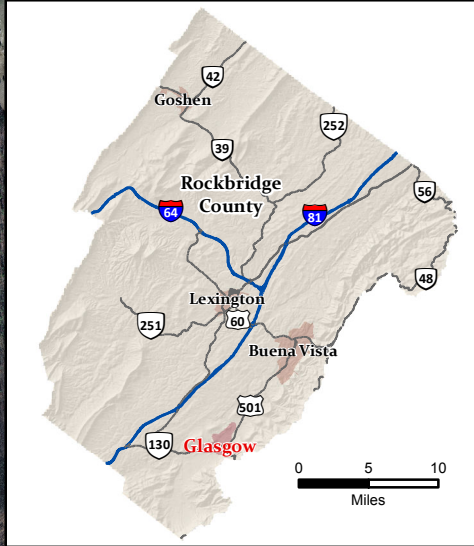
- US/State Road
- Secondary Road
- Other Road
- ▭ Glasgow Town Limits



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Sources:
FEMA, VGIN, DCR, Rockbridge County
Map produced by CSPDC, January, 2015
For Planning Purposes Only



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I. Introduction

The Glasgow Community Strong initiative began in January 2015 with a partnership between the Town of Glasgow and the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC), to provide professional assistance to the Town for its community and economic development needs. Over the course of a year, a group of stakeholders met to identify priorities, and strategically plan near term strategies that would set the Town on the path to achieving its long-term vision, as established in its Comprehensive Plan. The committee of stakeholders was made up of a representative cross-section of the citizens of Glasgow, including Town Council members, Town employees, the public school system, local business, Rockbridge County, and the Concerned Citizens of Glasgow. Names of the committee members can be found in Attachment A. This planning initiative was supported by a Rural Community Development Initiative grant made to the CSPDC by the United States Department of Agriculture, and received approval from the Glasgow Town Council to proceed before it was initiated.

II. Planning Process

The CSPDC facilitated a series of meetings that culminated in the development of the Action Plan, found below. The purpose of the meetings was to lead the committee through a process that would enhance the Town's capacity to undertake community and economic development activities, ensuring the vitality of the Town, now and in the future.

Initial meetings focused on the process logistics, and identifying and assessing current priorities that are most important to the Town's future. The priorities identified by the Glasgow Community Strong Committee included **beautification**, **economic development**, and **recreation**. After the priority issues were identified, the committee assessed the vision, background/history, and possible strategies and solutions for each. A summary of these assessments can be found in Attachment B. Next, the CSPDC facilitated meetings in which committee members were presented with resources, such as funding options, partnerships options, and technical resources that were applicable to the priority issues identified. A summary of the topics covered in these meetings can be found in Attachment C. Finally, the committee participated in the development of the Action Plan, and discussed the implementation process.

Interest from the broader community in working on these issues was confirmed with a survey that the committee members were instrumental in conducting. Community survey results can be found in Attachment D. Committee members were also asked to share information about this initiative with their civic networks, including the full Town Council, early in the process and as it progressed, as appropriate.

III. Action Plan

Below is a three-year work plan that was developed by the Community Strong (CS) Committee. The committee was asked to identify strategies and steps that would put the Town on the path to achieving its long-term vision. Rather than an exhaustive list of strategies, the committee was asked to develop a short-term action plan that would generate momentum for community development projects that could be built upon in future years. See Attachment E for a geographic representation of many of the strategies, tasks, and projects identified in the work plan below.

Priority Focus Area: Recreation					
WHAT: Activity/Task		WHO: Lead role	WHEN:		
			2016	2017	2018
Goal: Better developed and promoted recreational assets in the Town for use by its citizens and visitors.					
Strategy A: Further establish a public park on the riverside property.					
a.	Negotiate lease or ownership of property with CSX Railroad.	Town Manager	x	x	
b.	Name property/park. Crowdsourcing name ideas, which will serve to draw attention to the new facility.	Parks & Recreation Committee, Council for final approval	x	x	
c.	Promote new facility - add to town website (at same time as town redoes its website), cover in town newsletter, inform Rockbridge Tourism, social media.	Town Manager & Town Administrative Assistant		x	x
d.	Extend walking trail (provided that CSX allows this). Coordinate with the interpretive design. Seek CSX and/or Dominion Foundation grant funds.	Town Forces	x	x	
e.	Implement interpretive design developed by local Girl Scout. Seek CSX or Dominion Foundation grant funds. Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund and Upper James Roundtable are also possibilities for funding this task.	Town Manager		x	
f.	After allowable uses are determined (Strategy A, step a.), determine need for additional improvements and/or a facility rental policy.	Parks & Recreation Committee			x
Strategy B: Design and construct a Virginia LOVE sign.					
a.	Determine the best location for the sign. Debate the pros and cons of more than one location option. Discuss the purpose of the sign, amount of exposure it would get, risk of vandalism, etc. when considering location.	Parks & Recreation Committee		x	
b.	Obtain cost estimates for the LOVE structure by consulting other communities that have constructed one, and by contacting the artist(s) that may work on the project.	Parks & Recreation Committee		x	

Priority Focus Area: Recreation				
WHAT: Activity/Task	WHO: Lead role	WHEN:		
		2016	2017	2018
c. Apply for a LOVEworks grant from Virginia Tourism Corporation.	Parks & Recreation Committee		x	
d. Crowdsource additional funding for the project using a website tool, such as Kickstarter, Gofundme, or similar. Promote the fundraiser through social media, local businesses, town newsletter, etc. Provide a concept drawing when promoting the fundraiser.	Parks & Recreation Committee		x	
e. Enter into contract with artist to complete the sign.	Parks & Recreation Committee / Town Manager / Town Council		x	
Strategy C: Continue to pursue grants for the multiuse trail.				
a. Stay in touch with the CSPDC about grants available for this type of project.	Town Manager	x	x	x
b. Develop funding strategy that considers the provision of matching funds.	Town Manager, Town Council	x	x	x
c. Apply for funds.	Town Manager, CSPDC is available to assist	x	x	x
Strategy D: Develop a multipurpose field (soccer, football, lacrosse, baseball, etc.) at the Community Center.				
a. In absence of current interest from the Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization, solicit funding from other possible partners to develop multi-use athletic field.	Concerned Citizens of Glasgow		x	
b. Determine the need for equipment, improvements, and maintenance for the field, and funding resources available to the Concerned Citizens, the Town, and other partners for these activities. Research maintenance requirements for athletic fields of this kind. Budget for these items.	Concerned Citizens of Glasgow, in cooperation with financial partners		x	
c. Purchase equipment; make necessary improvements.	Concerned Citizens of Glasgow			x
d. Develop facility conduct policy; distribute to all users.				x
e. Identify person responsible for scheduling field use.	Concerned Citizens of Glasgow			x
f. Add new facility to town website (including conduct policy), and cover in town newsletter.	Concerned Citizens of Glasgow			x

Priority Focus Area: Beautification					
WHAT: Activity/Task	WHO: Lead role	WHEN:			
		2016	2017	2018	
Goal: Take measures to reduce visually unappealing uses of property that negatively affect the Town’s image. Do not allow poor property management to negatively affect the value of other properties, or the Town, as a whole.					
Strategy A: Enforce existing Town ordinances and codes to reduce the number of derelict structures, improperly stored household items, unkempt yards, etc.					
a. Review and update the Town’s code of ordinances, with special attention focused on authority to disallow derelict structures, and appropriate penalties for violations of the code.	Town Manager, Town Council, Legal Counsel		x	x	
b. Engage with the County leadership regarding enforcement of the building code.	Town Manager	x	x	x	
Strategy B: Investigate zoning changes that would provide for a diversity of lot sizes available for development.					
a. Determine appropriate area(s) in residential zones where larger lot sizes are desirable.	Planning Commission, Technical assistance from CSPDC			x	
b. Raise the minimum lot size in the zoning code in these areas.	Planning Commission, Technical assistance from CSPDC			x	
c. Work with the County to adjust lots to conform to new code.	Planning Commission, Technical assistance from CSPDC			x	
Strategy C: Address the frequent flooding and erosion issues that occur in the northeast neighborhoods.					
a. Consult with CSPDC on funding available for drainage and water quality improvement projects.	Town Manager		x		
b. Develop a funding strategy that includes the provision of matching funds.	Town Manager, Town Council		x	x	
c. Apply for funds.	Town Manager, CSPDC is available to assist		x	x	

Priority Focus Area: Economic Development				
WHAT: Activity/Task	WHO: Lead role	WHEN:		
		2016	2017	2018
Goal: Encourage the development of a commercial sector in Glasgow, especially with businesses related to outdoor recreation tourism and those that contribute to a positive quality of life (pharmacy, bank, etc.).				
Strategy A: Create environment that is supportive of businesses and services.				
a. Strengthen business networks by encouraging local participation in Chamber of Commerce offerings, such as hosting Business After Hours events in Glasgow.	Local businesses		x	x
b. Encourage local businesses to participate in the offerings of the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center.	Town Manager			x
Strategy B: Update and enhance Town website to reflect an organized, functional, responsive Town government. Include promotional information for the Town as well.				
a. Develop a consistent heading/subheading format.	Town Manager		x	
b. Consider consolidating some of the links in the left side bar to create fewer. Some can be added to the menu for other links.			x	
c. Update all sections and pages with consistent fonts and color scheme.			x	
d. Include pictures/videos of the rivers and mountains to help with developing the Town’s brand as an outdoors destination.			x	
e. Create a tab for promoting local businesses. Develop a map that labels the locations of local business, institutions, parks, and other amenities.	Potential intern task		x	x
Strategy C: Increase visitor traffic through Glasgow.				
a. Update Rockbridge Tourism about new businesses, events, and amenities, so they can be promoted.	Town Manager or his/her designee	x	x	x
b. Source sharable content about Glasgow’s amenities, such as YouTube videos of Balcony Falls, pictures and stories about the dinosaurs, Farmers Market press coverage, etc. and share these with Rockbridge Tourism.	Potential intern task		x	
c. Use social media and town website to promote local businesses, events, and amenities.	Town administration, Volunteer/intern (social media)	x	x	x

IV. Action Plan Implementation & Evaluation

The Action Plan was presented to the Town Council on July 12, 2016, and made available to the public for comment for a one-month period. The Town Council adopted at its meeting on October 11, 2016. Moving forward, the Community Strong Committee should be chaired by the Town Manager, a Town Council person, or an individual that is dedicated to serving the Town and has good communication with the Town Council. The committee should have regularly scheduled meetings, such as monthly or quarterly, depending on the activities underway at the time. After the Town Council adopts the plan, the committee should be reformulated with a representative cross-section of five to six community members that can commit to participate for the three-year period of the plan timeframe. Members that served to formulate the plan should be welcomed to continue to serve. After the three-year period, new members should be solicited to relieve any members who wish to step down. The committee may choose to create task-oriented subcommittees that may dissolve after the completion of a task or project. The committee should report to Town Council and the public, at appropriate times, to keep the Town leadership and citizens informed of major actions and progress, seek approval from Town leadership when necessary, and solicit public input, as a top priority.

Most of the strategies included in this plan will require some level of funding to implement. The CSPDC is the Town's resource for federal and state grant programs. The CSPDC can assist with applying for and managing these funds and projects, at the Town's request. Private funds may also be appropriate and helpful for some tasks. In many cases, this would mean fundraising by the community, which will require leadership from the Community Strong Committee. Finally, local funds provided by the Town are indispensable in implementing the strategies identified in the plan. In many cases, local funds can be leveraged to obtain other public and private funding.

The Community Strong Committee should revisit this Action Plan in the third year to assess progress, setbacks, barriers, and next steps. The committee, in consultation with the Town Council and the public, should determine whether the priority issues and strategies are still relevant, and undergo a process to repopulate the work plan with the most logical next steps at that time. The CSPDC is available to provide facilitation services to renew the plan, when the time comes.

V. Conclusion

The Community Strong Committee worked diligently to develop this plan because its members are motivated to increase the vibrancy of their Town. The planning process was a success, due in large part to the cooperative nature of the relations between the committee, Town staff, Town Council, and the public; qualities that will also be vital to the movement, as it progresses into implementation. The priority issues identified in the plan are interconnected, in that achieving beautification and recreation goals will create conditions more favorable for economic development. Likewise, developing the local economy will provide more resources to the Town for beautification and recreation. Thus, progress made on one issue, can be seen as progress made on all of them.

This plan was adopted by the Town Council of Glasgow on October 11, 2016, however, no action identified in this plan shall be construed as mandatory, nor does it obligate the Town Council to commit

any funds to its implementation. The plan is a guide for future actions, and the Council may consider allocation of funds for individual projects and activities, at its discretion.

Attachment A

Glasgow Community Strong Committee

Ruby Clark

Monica Dock

Brandy Flint

Natalie Harris

Reese McClanahan

Jeff Rankin

Francesco di Rinaldi

Bill Rolfe

Attachment B

Assessment of Priority Issues Summary

Priority: Economic Development

Economic Development	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ AT Community/Outdoor recreation/Outdoor supplies stores▪ Small shops▪ Pharmacy/Bank/Dentist▪ Consistent Town image (website)▪ Business networking
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aging of business owners – others leaving▪ Have something to retain/bring back▪ No defined downtown district▪ Lack of branding/promotion▪ Location outside of floodplain (commercial business district)▪ Underutilized vacant homes
Solutions/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Define downtown district▪ Developing brand – outdoor destination▪ Rockbridge 2020 Plan – tie into efforts▪ SCCF – entrepreneurial spirit▪ Natural Bridge Hotel▪ Develop partnerships▪ Town asset inventory

Priority: Community Beautification

Community Beautification	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Drainage/flooding issues, then tackle landscaping▪ Town schedule for maintenance▪ Communication▪ Maintained gateways▪ Addressing abandoned houses and vacancies▪ Bring investments through aesthetics and attractiveness
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lack of enforcement/continuity▪ Lack of steady leadership/continuity▪ Vacancy▪ Change of home ownership▪ Lack of branding/token landmarks/draw/attraction
Solutions/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Town clean-up day – 1 or 2 times a year▪ Community wide yard sale▪ Inventory of problem properties▪ Code/Ordinance for structures and properties▪ Enforcement▪ Parade of homes for sale/for rent – advertising what is available▪ ROW Master Plan – landscape architect (students)▪ VDOT partnership

Priority: Outdoor Recreation

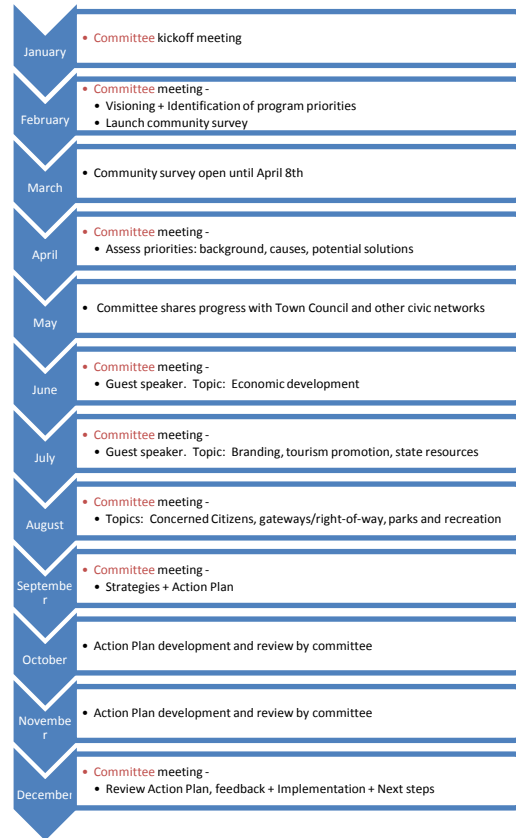
Outdoor Recreation	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Marketing what is available▪ All-purpose field
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Existing park with ballfields▪ Close to many amenities: National Forest, wilderness areas, Appalachian Trail, Natural Bridge
Solutions/Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ River park▪ River event▪ Signage▪ Parks and Rec Committee▪ Piggyback on current initiatives▪ Promote what you have▪ Tourism partnership▪ All-purpose field (underutilized land in the floodplain)▪ Biking – build upon hiking▪ Motorcycles

Attachment C



Glasgow Community Strong Program, 2015 Schedule

Goal: Engage citizens and leaders in community development to advance Town goals.



Attachment D

Glasgow Community Strong Survey Tabulation

Question 1	Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Glasgow? For the purpose of this survey, quality of life refers to the well-being of the community and your personal satisfaction with it.	
	1 (Excellent)	1
	2	10
	3	9
	4	11
	5	3
	6 (Very Poor)	1

Question 2	What contributes positively to the quality of life in Glasgow?	
	Some of Glasgow's strengths and assets are friendly people, beautiful scenery, recreational opportunities, and low crime. The library and ball fields are excellent and used by many.	
	Friendly community to live in.	
	The environment. The valley is beautiful. You can see the mountains in the distance. Also, living in the town is convenient. In terms of stores/gas stations.	
	The new career staff for Glasgow Rescue is a positive for our community. Much more calls will be answered. Good job!	
	I like living here but this town has went to the dogs. Clean up the town and have things for seniors.	
	Restaurant - Scotto's - hot meals; Grocery Express - providing food; Offering low cost of living to disable and senior maybe bring something like that for young adults - under same rules.	
	Nothing except for the fire department.	
	People, older ones need to have some source of transportation to other places. Entertainment is nice, music in the park.	
	Good churches, good doctors.	
	I can say nothing really. There is nothing I can say I really like about Glasgow.	
	The only contributes that positively impact Glasgow is the small neighbor. The size of town makes it impossible for serious problems such as gangs, kidnappings, trafficking of any real nature.	
	Small town feel.	
	Rivers, mountains, community.	
	Great public relations in town government and public works.	
	Being a small town.	

Question 2, continued	Ball field and park and Scotto's.
	Views and beauty.
	What about a bank?
	Regular trash removal; Pleasant Town Hall folks; Library facilities; Real people; Disposal facilities; General tidy maintenance; View mountains (cursing drugs at Nick Field could be dealt with)
	View; Rivers; Dollar General; Scotto's; Gas Station
	Neighbors - small town feel.
	The willingness to help when folks list a wish is cheerfully done!
	Community activities.
	Small family setting. Good churches. Good doctors. Good people protect their elders.
	The public library and Dollar General.
	Small close knit community, friendly citizens.
	Public involvement; Sense of "safety" for all citizens of the town
	Quiet neighborhoods
	Neighbors helping neighbors
	Being able to buy food items, and gas, to mail and get mail, all in Town limits
	Places of worship
	Emergency services
	Organized events (baseball tournaments, summer concert series)
	Sense of "safety" for all citizens of the town

Question 3	If there was something you could change or improve, what would it be?
	If I could change things to improve Glasgow it would be employment opportunities, more involvement of our youth in town sponsored programs, and better drainage.
	Overall community participation in the growth/development of the town. More town events.
	I would like the playground to be open to all ages. Not just children...
	Needs more for young kids to do.
	Fix up this town to make better. This town has went to the dogs.
	We need to offer things that keep people in our town. People can't afford high rents. I would like a larger place, but can't afford it due to income.
	Everything. Town needs to be more involved in there community.
	More business here would be good.

Question 3, continued	More businesses; Tear down clean up vacant houses and businesses, enforce owner to clean up property; Need a new bank; Improve drainage issues; More street lights.	
	The "community." Something interesting that everyone could actually enjoy.	
	I would change the infrastructure, I've noticed that a large quality of the town's infrastructure is outdated and very much obseleted.	
	Fill all the empty building. Tear down dilapidated buildings.	
	More social events.	
	Better and more places to eat.	
	Having more industrial and commercial and having police.	
	Get BB&T back or at least work with or engage talk with BB&T for an ATM	
	More businesses. Clean up sub-standard housing.	
	Have more interesting things to interest the older people - we need a drug store and more competition in businesses.	
	More children entertainment.	
	Appearance of what is around. Bring businesses back to Glasgow - bank, more varieties of food like breakfast. How we work together.	
	Better police initiative and follow up on problems.	
	Trying to draw people to utilize empty buildings across from Grocery Express.	
	More young people to get involved.	
	Need better police protection. Need to assign or ask (volunteers) to check on our elders.	
	A new town council and mayor. More stores, etc. Employment opportunities for people that do not have college degrees. Less music in the summer (music in the park etc.)	
	More culture, restaurants, job opportunities.	
	That there were not so many empty houses sitting around, when so many people are in need	
	Streets, water drainage, upkeeping of older, unused buildings	
	Would do a festival to attract more then just Glasgow residents.	

Question 4	What would you like to see as the focus for neighborhood efforts?	
	Improve community appearance	24
	Maintain affordable housing choices for all income levels	11
	Provide a variety of housing opportunities (apartments, duplexes, single-family detached, etc.)	13
	Improve infrastructure (sidewalks, water/wastewater, drainage structures, street lights, etc.)	18

Question 5	What is most important to Glasgow's future?	
	Provide/Enhance recreational opportunities	17
	Promote alternatives to automobile transportation (bicycling, walking, public transit)	5
	Retain or bring back young adults to live here	14
	Citizen engagement	13
	Grown in population	6
	Preserve its history	5
	Increase visitors to the town	7
	Protect or restore the natural environment	2
	Increase local job opportunities	21
	Foster business development	12
	Increase flood mitigation efforts	4
	Other: Let people have chicken in fence in lot with house//FESTIVALS!!! Something interesting//If you take care of letters I and J, C will happen	

Question 6	How long have you lived in Glasgow?	
	Less than a year	1
	1-5 years	7
	6-10 years	4
	11-20 years	3
	Over 20 years	18
	Not a resident, but I own a business, land or property in Glasgow	1
	No answer given	1

Question 7	What is your age?	
	Less than 18	0
	18-24	5
	25-44	7
	45-64	14
	65 and older	8
	No answer given	1

Additional Comments	Please use the space below to share any additional comments about your vision for Glasgow.
	I am pretty satisfied with Glasgow. More sidewalks would be nice. (25-44)
	Great place to live with a lot of potential. Increase citizen involvement with Town decisions. (18-24)
	In my opinion there is too much "in fighting" among different volunteer groups. Each group is trying to raise money for themselves, which is understandable, but they hurt each other by not working together. Stop working against each other! (45-64)
	I feel there is zero sense of community here. Nothing interesting. Except the baseball (which I don't even like). We need something annually to do, like a festival of sorts. Not to mention zero jobs. That's one reason I'm looking to move. There is NOTHING HERE! (18-24)
	Personal I love this town, but due to inadequate work opportunities and variety of jobs. Also I find forced out of the community to find such opportunities. (18-24)
	Public opinion counts. (25-44)
	Lovely town. Clean playground up. Stopping young people from destroying it. Using foul languages when parents have small children there. Would love to see some kind of meet and greet occasions. (45-64)
	Having jobs and stores to keep young adults here. It would grow Glasgow, and make plenty opportunities! (45-64)
	Old video store on 130 needs to be torn down. Unlicensed vehicles need to be cleaned up (no wheels, wrecked, unrunnable). Have several clean-up days per year. (45-64)
	Low income should be addressed. Too much money spent on projects unnecessary. (65+)
	I would like to see the town clean up, like these old houses. Have something for seniors.
	This use to be a family town where you knew everyone on every street rather you were black or white. I like to see our town grow in residence and in business. See people together for the common good for our community. Like to also thank those who spay and neuter their animals and try to clean our town of to many cats. This is a must. We need to condemn those that are going over and beyond.
	It needs to be a town that is friendly to young people, not just the elderly. The noise pollution should also be controlled. More places with access to free public Wi-Fi. More opportunities for community involvement.
	We really like residing in Glasgow. Enjoy the small town benefits. However would like more restaurants and jobs. Manufacturing but hard to get manufacturing jobs. Without flood mitigation almost impossible to get flood mitigation. Expanding from the Federal government today's economic climate! Think you guys are doing a good job with resources available too.
	The Town Council persons need to separate their personal beliefs and religion on to the town proper. Remove all buildings at owners expensive that is not or had not been used in one year or two (eye sore). Thank you for asking our opinion.

Attachment E

Community Strong Action Plan Glasgow, Virginia

