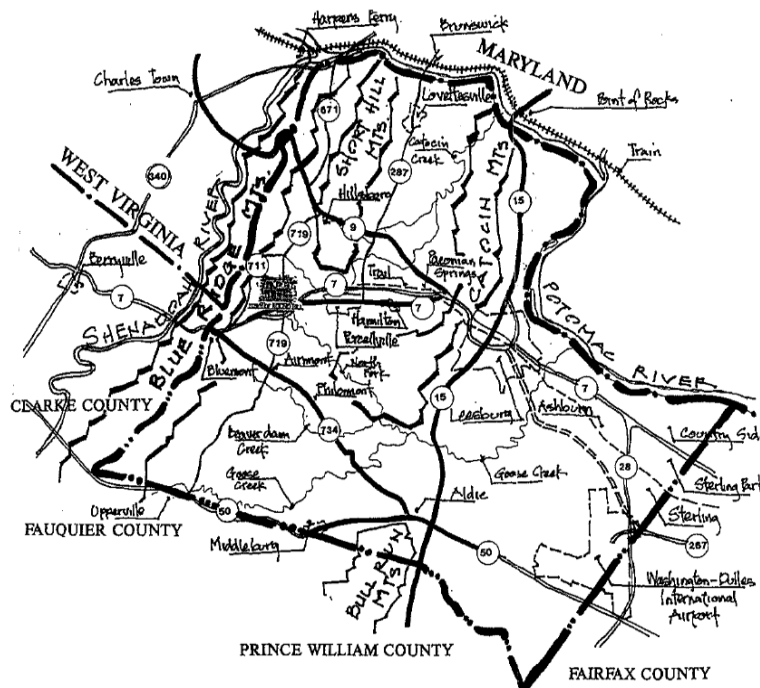


Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Section 1: Welcome to Round Hill

As people drive down Harry Byrd Highway going west towards Winchester or east towards Leesburg, they may never know that just beyond the tree line is a secret treasure tucked away between a lake and the mountains: the Town of Round Hill. Round Hill is a charming historic town that is surrounded by Loudoun County farmland and modern neighborhoods. Round Hill is an oasis from the hustle and bustle of city life. Visiting Round Hill can feel like stepping back in time because much of the town was built over 60 years ago. Residents take pride in their homes and love to share their hometown spirit with neighbors and visitors. Round Hill is a great place to live and raise a family in the quiet suburbs of western Loudoun County. Residents enjoy living in a gateway to fun and adventure because it is centrally located to numerous outdoor activities such as hiking, kayaking, golfing and more. The future of Round Hill depends on its ability to protect its unique identity while balancing the needs and demands of the community.



Section 2: Location

The Town of Round Hill was incorporated on February 5, 1900, and is one of the seven incorporated towns of Loudoun County. Refer to “Map 1-1 Location” for Round Hill’s exact location in Loudoun County.

Round Hill is located in Western Loudoun County, Virginia approximately 51 miles west of Washington, D.C. and is considered a part of the Washington Metropolitan Area. The county seat of Loudoun County is Leesburg, Virginia which is located 12 miles to the east. Berryville, Virginia is located 12.5 miles to the west. Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia is located 17.3 miles to the north. Middleburg, Virginia is located 16.7 miles to the south. It is strategically located off of Harry Byrd Highway (also known as Route 7).

Section 3: What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a document that guides planning and development in and around the planning district. It is a local government’s guide to community, physical, social, and economic development. It is not meant to serve as land use regulations, but instead provides a basis for zoning and land development ordinances, which will be revised and updated to reflect the character of this plan. It is based on a community vision that portrays the dynamics, unique qualities, and concerns of a community to achieve the long-range planning goals for the general development of the locality. It represents how residents see their community.

The comprehensive plan promotes orderly growth by providing a framework for decisions about land use, infrastructure, natural resources, housing and other factors that are vital to a healthy and livable community.

The primary goal of the Round Hill Comprehensive Plan is to protect and improve the quality of life of its citizens by providing for the public health, safety, convenience and welfare of the town.

The Round Hill Comprehensive Plan is a projection and a recommendation for the development and type of land use activities for the immediate and distant future. These recommendations are based on existing conditions, anticipated population and economic changes, and the desires of the citizens of Round Hill as expressed principally through the Round Hill Planning Commission and the Round Hill Town Council. The policies expressed in this plan are intended to be the basis of the Round Hill Zoning Ordinance and Round Hill Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which are used to implement the plan. The plan should also be used by the commission and Town Council in considering rezoning and development proposals, road and public facility locations, and capital improvement program decisions and budget recommendations.

Planning is a difficult process which balances the public interest with private property rights; however, the plan must be more than a listing of each property owner’s wishes. A good plan identifies problems and conflicts.

The major issue and opportunity facing Round Hill today is growth in the surrounding Loudoun County area and how that growth will affect the town's quality of life. This plan considers all actions affecting development including utilities, transportation, community facilities, economic development, public finance and the environment.

This plan uses a number of maps to graphically display the planning concepts contained in the plan. These maps are conceptual in nature and are not intended to be 100% accurate. Therefore, some features, such as boundary lines and the location of current and future facilities, are shown in the general areas in which they exist or are planned to be constructed.

Section 4: Legal Basis and Use of the Plan

The comprehensive plan is developed in accordance with the Code of Virginia, as amended. The Virginia General Assembly has recognized the need for local planning by requiring that every local government in the commonwealth adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory under its jurisdiction. Section 15.2-2223 of the Code states in part that:

“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.”

The legislative goal of Chapter 11 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, is to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community. The achievement of the goal has been found by the Virginia courts to be a permissible state objective.

In placing this requirement on local governments, the legislature demonstrated that, in its judgment, local development issues are the best handled at the local level of government and that the comprehensive plan provides one means of doing this. Section 15.2-2223 of that chapter further states:

“The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.”

While the plan should be flexible enough to accommodate the unforeseen and allow response to changing conditions, it should contain standards and policies which provide sufficient guidance to elected and administrative officials. The comprehensive plan is becoming increasingly important as a legal basis for making land use decisions. Therefore, a well-developed plan, with specific standards and policies, encourages consistency in Town land use decisions.

Section 5: Relationship to Other Plans & Studies

The Round Hill Comprehensive Plan consists of the comprehensive plan itself and several related documents, which are shown below, which are incorporated by reference.

- Round Hill Area Management Plan (1990)
- Streetscape Master Plan (2004)
- Stormwater Master Plan (2005)
- Route 719 South Area Plan (2005)
- National Register of Historic Places Registration (2008)
- Town Park Master Plan (2011)
- Water System Planning Study (2014)
- Loudoun County Design Charrette Report (2015)
- 2014 Community Survey Report
- 2015 Public Input Survey Report
- 2016 Retail Market Study

Section 6: Goals and Objectives

Round Hill's last comprehensive plan update was adopted in 1993. Following a 2004 boundary line adjustment with Loudoun County, the Town amended its comprehensive plan in 2005 to address the expanded town limits. This plan is the product of the first major update of the comprehensive plan in over 20 years.

The Town has a significant interrelationship with and interest in the Greater Round Hill Area, as shown in Map 12-1 as the regional planning area outside of town limits.

The Town faces three challenges when planning for the future. The first challenge is how to manage growth and development within the town limits. The second challenge is how to influence growth within the Greater Round Hill Area. The third challenge is how to retain Round Hill's strong identity as a separate and viable governmental entity within Loudoun County. This plan provides the Round Hill Planning Commission and Round Hill Town Council with the framework necessary to address these three challenges.

Goals of the Plan are to:

- a. Provide a guide for the many public and private decisions that create the future town;
- b. Promote the interests of citizens-at-large rather than those of individuals or special groups;
- c. Enhance the town's physical environment;
- d. Develop a coordinated, well planned system of public services and utilities;
- e. Evaluate short term actions against long term goals; and
- f. Fulfill the legal requirements of Chapter 11, Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, and the boundary line agreement.

Objectives of the Plan are:

- a. To provide a planning framework by developing and updating plans that encourage the orderly growth of the community, wherein the demands for various uses can be accommodated in a harmonious manner.
- b. To provide a safe, efficient, accessible road and pedestrian network which will meet the needs of residents and businesses in the Greater Round Hill Area and which provides adequate transportation linkages to the region.
- c. To conserve and protect the natural, architectural, historical and archaeological endowments of the town while prompting the provision of appropriate public facilities, utilities and services in a manner which causes the least environmental, social or community discord.
- d. To manage the level and timing of development in Round Hill in order to promote fiscally balanced growth which will not unduly strain county or town resources including county and town budgets, the natural environment, the transportation network, public facilities or utilities.
- e. To provide a visionary plan for cohesive, orderly growth that maintains and enhances the town's scale, character, fabric and its sense of rural atmosphere within the urban limit line. To encourage all future development located inside the Round Hill Urban Limit Line to be sensitive to the spirit of this visionary plan.
- f. To provide for adequate light, air, convenience of access and safety from fire, flood and other dangers.
- g. To provide guidance to annex areas or adjust boundary line areas serviced by town utilities.

Section 7: Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

The Round Hill Comprehensive Plan includes the following major elements:

- Natural Resources
- Heritage Resources & Community Character
- Housing & Community Development
- Economic Development
- Community Facilities
- Public Utility System
- Transportation
- Land Use & Growth Management
- Greater Round Hill Area

Each of these elements are paired with a set of goals, objectives and actions, as well as policies recommendations and preferences.

Goals are general statements concerning an aspect of the Town's desired ultimate physical, social and/or economic environment. Goals set the tone for land development and town

management decisions in terms of the residents' desired quality of life. Objectives express the kinds of action that are necessary to achieve the stated goals without assigning responsibility to any specific action. These goals and objectives are followed by policies and recommendations to help clarify the specific position of the Town regarding a particular objective, and will outline strategies for the Town to undertake to achieve the applicable stated objective.

Section 8: Identity of Round Hill

The concept of preserving the identity of Round Hill is the underlying theme of the Round Hill Comprehensive Plan. This plan defines identity as:

“An environment with separate and unique features that creates memorable moods and human experiences, protects family and community life, and establishes a sense of place by way of visual and natural elements that are experienced and observed.”

The 2014 Community Survey helped define the identity of Round Hill to use as the basis of many of goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

The 2014 Community Survey asked questions that would help residents explain how they see the “identity” of Round Hill. A question about regional tourism helped put in perspective how residents view Round Hill in a larger context: 46% of survey respondents said that the Town should focus on its role in the “Northern Virginia Wine Region” and 46% of survey respondents want the town to be memorialized as the “Gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains.”

The 2014 Community Survey also asked residents questions about their hobbies, interests, and passions as another way of discovering the “identity” of Round Hill because the residents are at the heart of Round Hill. Many residents listed a variety of outdoor activities and active sports as their hobbies. Residents enjoy living close to the mountains, biking trails, parks, sports facilities and other outdoor amenities.

The 2014 Community Survey found that there is a strong connection between residents and their hometown, Round Hill:

- 40% of survey respondents moved to Round Hill to escape the “hustle and bustle” life of Fairfax County or Eastern Loudoun County to relocate to a quiet, small rural town.
- 64% of survey respondents said that the “small town feel” was one of the most important factors in deciding to move to Round Hill.
- 45% of survey respondents said the “quality of life” in Round Hill is “excellent” and 48% said quality of life in Round Hill is “good.” In other words, 93% of survey respondents rank Round Hill with a “good” or “excellent” quality of life. It is their quality of life that they care about and want to protect.