

TOWN OF PENNINGTON GAP, VIRGINIA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

YEAR 2025
VISION FOR THE FUTURE

**Prepared for the Town Council of the Town of Pennington Gap, Virginia
by the Town of Pennington Gap Planning Commission
with technical assistance provided by the
LENOWISCO Planning District Commission**

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Town of Pennington Gap Comprehensive Plan

AUTHOR: Town of Pennington Gap Planning Commission

SUBJECT: A plan for the physical development of
the Town of Pennington Gap, Virginia

DATE ADOPTED:

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The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Pennington Gap is a community guide for orderly growth and development. Statements of the Goals and Objectives section of the plan are intended to aid public and private decision makers in promoting the most beneficial arrangements of land use and related public services. The plan was developed through an inventory and analysis of existing conditions leading to policy determinations that best achieve the community development aspirations of the citizens of Pennington Gap, Virginia.

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Town of Pennington Gap, Virginia
Comprehensive Plan

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INTRODUCTION

A. LOCATION/HISTORY

The Town of Pennington Gap is located in extreme Southwestern Virginia. The town itself is situated in the Central portion of Lee County with the Kentucky state line approximately seven miles from the Town's corporate limits. Jonesville, the county seat of Lee County, is just six miles to the west and Big Stone Gap, in adjacent Wise County, is 16 miles to the east. U.S. Routes 58 and 421, as well as many secondary roads, serve the Town.

The major stream flowing through the Town is the North Fork of the Powell River. The 2000 Census of Pennington Gap reported a population of 1,781 and 811 households. The Town serves as a central retail trade center for Lee County. The primary employment bases for the Town are coal mining and service industries.

The Town of Pennington Gap came into existence with the extension of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad's Cumberland Valley Division in 1890. The Town is named for the mountain pass that is situated nearby. As far as can be ascertained, the name "Pennington" came from an early settler to the areas.

Soon after the coming of the railroad, the Town was incorporated in 1892. The total land area of the Town is 1.44 square miles (922 acres)

B. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

In accordance with section 15.2.2223 of the Code of Virginia, "The comprehensive plan shall be general in nature, in that it shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown on the plan and shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be in use...Such plan, with accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter shall show the planning commission's long range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:

The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use...

The designation of a system of transportation facilities...

The designation of a system of community service facilities...

The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal...

An official map, a capital improvement program, a subdivision ordinance, and a zoning ordinance and zoning district map."

Further, as a minimum "in the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the local commission

shall survey and study...use of land, characteristics and conditions of existing development, trends of growth or changes, natural resources, population factors, employment and economic factors, existing public facilities, drainage, flood control and flood damage prevention measures, transportation facilities, the need for housing..."

Within the context of the State enabling legislation governing the preparation of a comprehensive plan this planning document represents a resource of pertinent community data in addition to its primary function - a guide for the local growth and development of the Town of Pennington Gap.

The Comprehensive Plan is prepared for design year 2025 for the Town of Pennington Gap. The Plan is intended to reflect the current objectives of local officials and citizens of Pennington Gap and current conditions, but will also set forth a series of long range objectives to allow for anticipated conditions occurring within the next twenty years.

C. PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Pennington Gap Comprehensive Plan consists of three major sections.

The first section presents a profile of the community including a brief review of related plans and activities that may have an influence on planning for the Town, physiographic and natural features, population characteristics and trends, local economy and employment data, and a housing and neighborhood analysis. The community profile serves as a basis for analysis of the physical development potential and the social economic well being of the Town of Pennington Gap.

The second major section of the Plan presents the goals and objectives as determined by the existing land use, transportation, utilities and community facilities and summarizes major findings of the background analysis in terms of planning factors which influence future development.

The third major section of the plan deals with specific implementation of plan recommendations throughout the zoning and subdivisions ordinances and capital improvements program.

SECTION I - PROFILE OF COMMUNITY

A. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Parks and Recreation Areas

Leeman field, located in Pennington Gap, offers many recreational opportunities. The Town of Pennington Gap is responsible for the daily upkeep and maintenance of the Park. The Park has basketball courts, tennis courts, a walking path, swimming pool, skate park, pavilions, picnic tables and public restroom facilities. The Park also has several little league baseball fields.

Recreational opportunities are also available at Cumberland Bowl Park which is located in Jonesville and also at Wilderness Road State Park and Jefferson National Forest.

2. Libraries

Libraries provide an important recreational and educational service for the public. These facilities can be used at no charge and are enjoyed by all age groups. Pennington Gap is served by the Lee County branch of the Lonesome Pine Regional Library System. The library has seven full time employees and is open 54 hours per week. The Lee County Branch of Lonesome Pine Regional Library houses the second largest number of hardback volumes in the Lonesome Pine Regional Library network. The library also contains a large amount of paperbacks, periodicals, records and cd's microfilm and videos for public use.

3. Town of Pennington Gap Water Treatment Plant

The Pennington Gap Water System is owned and operated by the Town of Pennington Gap. The principal source of water is the Powell River. The Town has a plant capacity of over 1.2 million gallons per day. The Plant presently has one emergency backup source of water; Cold Springs.

The present system has approximately 1,300 connections located within the boundaries of the town. The system also provides water service to areas outside of the Town's limits

4. Town of Pennington Gap Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Town of Pennington Gap has a wastewater treatment plant with a design capacity of 600,000 gallons per day. The system serves approximately 1,000 connections primarily

within the corporate limits of the Town.

5. Public Safety

The residents of Pennington Gap are served by three law enforcement agencies; the Lee County Sheriff's Department, The Pennington Gap Police Department and the Virginia State Police. All three focus as separate law enforcement bodies, however, in any situation which calls for interdepartmental assistance there is complete cooperation.

The Pennington Gap Police Department has jurisdictional responsibility over all of the areas within the Town's corporate limits. The Department answers approximately 250 calls per month.

The Town of Pennington Gap also is a member of the Regional Jail Authority which allows housing of inmates to take place at the Regional Jail facility that is located in Duffield, Virginia.

Pennington Gap also has a volunteer fire department. The Department answers any calls within the Town's corporate boundaries and also will answer calls outside of the Town's limits. The Department has a mutual aid agreement to respond when requested by other surrounding area departments. Pennington Gap has an ISO rating of eight inside the corporate limits and an ISO rating of nine within a five mile radius of their station.

The Town is also served by the Pennington Gap Volunteer Rescue Squad and several private rescue services.

6. Medical Services and Facilities

Lee County health care facilities consists of a County hospital located in Pennington Gap, four health care clinics, a respiratory clinic, 26 doctors , 4 dentists, and a County health department.

Lee Regional Medical Center is a four story, eighty-six bed, acute care facility located on U.S. Alternate Highway 58 in Pennington Gap. In 1977, Lee County Community Hospital, Inc., a non-stock, non-profit, corporation, acquired an older building and equipment from Humana of Virginia, Inc., which had owned the hospital in the 1970's. The hospital moved to its current location in 1983. Lee Regional Medical Center is governed by a board of directors from Lee County, which is the facility's primary service area.

The hospital offers 24-hour a day emergency services, inpatient and outpatient medical and surgical services, a 6-bed intensive care unit, traditional obstetrics unit and delivery room, home health services, CT scans, MRI, radiology services, physical therapy and respiratory care, patient and staff education programs, laboratory, pharmacy, Medical Arts Building, and

linkages with other larger hospitals in the region including helicopter transport services from a heliport located on the premises.

The hospital has a medical staff of 20 physicians including specialists in internal medicine, general surgery, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, urology, radiology, pulmonology, pathology and family practice.

The adjacent Medical Arts Building houses physician's offices, the physical therapy and respiratory care departments, a chapel/meditation area, waiting area, a maintenance and storage area and additional space which can be developed for more office suites.

Like many other small rural hospitals throughout the country, Lee Regional Medical Center is being challenged to provide quality care to all of its patients and still maintain financial viability. About 65 percent of the hospital's patients are Medicare beneficiaries. Any reduction in payment levels by the federal government would worsen an already serious situation for the hospital. The hospital is experiencing no other problems at the current time.

The Lee County Health Department was built in 1971 and is located on Hill Street in Jonesville. It is one of three health departments in the LENOWISCO Health District. The Health Department is staffed with Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Public Health Nurses, Environmental Health Specialists, Dentist, Nutritionists and support staff. They play a major role in protecting the health of all of the residents of Lee County. This is accomplished in a variety of ways including preventative health measures, primary care services and health promotion and education.

The Western Lee County Health Clinic was founded in 1974 and operates a primary care clinic in Ewing. The two Community Health Clinics share administrative services, a computer system, some medical equipment, case management services, and the skills of a health care team consisting of three internists, two family practitioners, one pediatrician, three dentists, three nurse practitioners, and six registered nurses. All of the physicians employed by St. Charles and Western Lee maintain privileges at the Lee County Community Hospital. The Community Health Clinic offers services in general medical care, X-rays and lab work, dental care, health education, pharmaceutical services and preventative medical services.

7. Education

Pennington Gap is served by five elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. Lee County also has one career and technical school.

Grades K-5

Dryden Elementary School
Elk Knob Elementary School (Grades K-6)

	Stickleyville Elementary School (Grades 7-12)
	Keokee Elementary School
	St. Charles Elementary School
Grades 6-8	Pennington Gap Middle School
	Jonesville Middle School
Grades 9-12	Lee County High School
	Thomas Walker High School (Grades 7-12)

The Lee County Special Education Program offers classes for educable mentally challenged, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, speech and visually impaired and also has a program designed for the hearing impaired.

8. Wireless Telecommunication Providers

The recent development of new devices and services for voice, data, and multi-media communication have generated a demand for better wireless communication services. Increasing demand and competition among wireless service providers has prompted them to seek additional facilities in order to expand the capacities of their systems and to upgrade to digital technology. Currently there are two wireless telecommunication providers in Lee County. This number is certain to grow as the demand for wireless communication services increases and competition among providers' advances.

9. Business and Commercial District Merchants and Establishments

The Town of Pennington Gap, though a small town, has a vast array of commercial establishments, businesses and local merchants. The Town is unique in the fact that it has such a variety of commercial and retail establishments and still is able to maintain a "small town" feel. At the time of this Plan the following establishments/ businesses are presently in operation:

<u>BEAUTY SHOPS</u>		<u>FITNESS CENTERS</u>	
421	Sonny's Hairstyling	421	ALL Fitness
E. Morgan	Shear Obsession	E. Morgan	Wright Fitness
	Cutting Edge		
	Valarie's Beauty Shop	West Gate	Curves

W. Morgan Vickie's Hair Designs

West Gate Modernette

Kentucky St. Hairquarters

RESTAURANTS

E. Morgan Long John Silvers
Pizza Hut
McDonalds
Hardees
Subway
Rooster's Pub

Riverbend Hong Kong Buffett
El Centenario

Industrial Ruby's Country Steakhouse

Main St. Foggy Hollow Music Co. &
Coffee Shop

GROCERY STORES

Riverbend Food City

E. Morgan Grabeel's IGA

FURNITURE STORES

W. Morgan Home Appliance & Furniture
Creech's Furniture
Bailey-Robbins Furniture
Hartley Furniture

421

Riverbend

W. Morgan

PHARMACIES

Rite Aid

Taylor's Cumberland
Drug

Pennington Pharmacy
John C. Marion Pharmacy

DEPT. & MISC. STORES

421 Silver Dollar

Riverbend Family Dollar

E. Morgan Cuz's Tobacco
Advance Auto Parts
Deb's Fruit Market
Anna Lee Shoppe
Pennington Thrift Shop
Williams Auto Parts
C & A Carpet

Main St. Wild Mtn. Thyme
Gibson's Dept. Store

Kentucky St. Pullin Ink

W. Morgan Radio Shack
Brewer's Mtn. Made Crafts
Whigmaleeries
Dollar Wise
Zion's Rentals
Sears
GB's Computer Sales

West Gate Pet Fort
J. C. Penney's Catalog
Eden's Variety

CAR/MOWER REPAIR

421 Gary's Small Engine Repair

E. Morgan Standard Auto

Kentucky Davis Transmission
Mountain Machine & Motor

W. Morgan Mark's Alignment & Wrecker
C & A Auto Service

VIDEO RENTALS

West Gate Movies N
More

GAS STATIONS

421 Sunoco
E. Morgan Exxon Petro
Plus
Exxon
Appco

W. Morgan Sunoco

CAR DEALERS

E. Morgan BJ Motor Co.

LAUNDRY SERVICE

E. Morgan Tidy K Laundry

ACCOUNTING

E. Morgan Parson's Accounting
H & R Block

W. Morgan Kirk, Fortner,
Smalley, Livesay
& Assoc., LLC

Main St. Diana Pope, CPA

Family Tire Service

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Riverbend Friendship Home Medical
W. Morgan Medi-Home Care
Squad
Universal Health Care
West Gate Southern Home Respiratory

AMBULANCE

E. Morgan Friendship
Ambulance
Kentucky St. Lee Co. Rescue

BANKS

E. Morgan FNB Southeast
Powell Valley Bank
W. Morgan Farmers & Miners Bank
Lee Bank & Trust

CARWASHES

E. Morgan Magic Wand
W. Morgan Family Wash
House
Auto Clean
Kentucky St. C & M Car Wash

CHURCHES

E. Morgan United Methodist Church
First Baptist Church
Free Pentecostal Church
W. Morgan First Christian Church
Calvary Baptist Church

REALTORS

E. Morgan Fannon Land & Auction
W. Morgan Lee Auction
James Livesay Real Estate
Kentucky St. Browning Enterprises

MEDICAL/DENTAL OFFICES

E. Morgan Roy Shelburne, DDS
Robert Haynes Chiropractic

SIGN SHOPS

E. Morgan The Sign Shop

Dr. Roberson, DDS West Gate Daniels Glass & Signs
W. Morgan Botts & Botts Optometry
West Gate Wellmont Rehab. Center

PAWN SHOPS

E. Morgan Liberty Sport & Pawn
W. Morgan First Va. Pawn & Gold

ATTORNEYS

W. Morgan George Cridlin, Esq.
Williams Law Office

FUNERAL HOMES

E. Morgan Province Funeral Home
Willow Rd. Sturgill Funeral Home

INSURANCE

E. Morgan Herndon Insurance
W. Morgan Hayes Insurance
Nationwide Insurance
West Gate Williams Ins. & Investment

FLORAL SHOPS

E. Morgan Angela's Flowers
W. Morgan Norton Floral
Judy's Floral & Gifts
West Gate Lacey's Designs & Floral

MOTELS

Industrial Dr. Convenient Inn

HOSPITALS

Lee Regional Medical Center

OTHER ESTABLISHMENTS

Augusta's Special Occasion

Cash Today

Gap Mini Storage

Lee Co. Life Center

Edward Jones Financial Service

KCG Call Center

WSWV Radio Station

Old Dominion Power Co.

U. S. Post Office

Powell Valley News

B. Related Plans and Activities

Current and future planning efforts for the Town of Pennington Gap are influenced by planning activities of neighboring jurisdictions, Lee County and regional agencies and authorities. Planning activities which affect the future development of the Town of Pennington Gap may range from the general, comprehensive plans of neighboring jurisdictions to the more specific site plans of industries or commercial developments. A brief review of related planning efforts and activities that may affect recommendations contained in the Town of Pennington Gap Comprehensive Plan are outlined as follows.

1. Lee County Comprehensive Plan

The current Lee County Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Lee County Planning Commission with assistance from the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission and was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 2003.

County-wide statistics on physical characteristics, natural resources, the economy and population, land use and land use suitable, housing, public water and sewer, community facilities and transportation form a basis for goals and objectives. These goals for development in the County, including its incorporated towns provide a foundation for specific comprehensive plan recommendations.

2. LENOWISCO Regional Planning District Commission

LENOWISCO - taken from Lee-Norton-Wise-Scott Redevelopment Authority - was organized as a Planning District Commission in 1969 and currently operates under the Regional Cooperation Act, Title 15.2 of the 1950 Code of Virginia. Its primary purpose is to promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social, and economic elements of the district by planning and assisting its three counties, one city and fifteen incorporated towns to plan for the future. The Commission's Board of Directors consists of 15 members appointed by their respective localities. LENOWISCO is a multi-purpose association of its constituents for mutual benefits, and as such, operates a broadly based planning and economic development program for the region. The Commission formally plans for the orderly growth in the towns and surrounding areas of the District, while pursuing programs for the economic and social development of the entire area. LENOWISCO serves as the communicator between local governments and federal and state agencies, provides technical assistance and acts as a clearinghouse for federal grant applications. The Commission also acts as a databank, collecting and analyzing economic and environmental data for the region.

In compliance with the Regional Cooperation Act, one of the primary duties of the Planning District Commission is the preparation and adoption of a Strategic Plan for the region. LENOWISCO completed its first regional plan entitled the 1970 Regional Land Use Plan, unanimously adopted by its local units of government in April 1973. This plan has recently been updated by LENOWISCO. The Regional Water Quality Management Plan has also been prepared by LENOWISCO and serves as a major policy document regarding water quality issues in the region. From 1972 to 1978, the Commission had special authority to implement the Overall Economic Development Plan that promulgated a Growth Center concept.

The counties and city of the District organized the Duffield Development Authority to implement the industrial park at Duffield, a designated growth center. LENOWISCO has also been instrumental in providing direct services to the Town of Pennington Gap in the procurement of federal/state funds for recreation and utility system improvements

3. Virginia Department of Transportation

The Virginia Department of Transportation revises its six-year plan each year. The Town of Pennington is a participant in the Department's Rural Program and maintains projects on the list for implementation. The Virginia Department of Transportation 2020 plan outlines solutions and specific land use suggestions to relieve current traffic problems. The most up to date information regarding transportation project priorities for the Town of Pennington Gap can be found on the Virginia Department of Transportation web site at:

www.vdot.gov

C. ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Pennington Gap's natural resources include topography, climate; and its geological, natural and hydrological features. Development activities are often influenced by natural resources. For example, steeply sloping areas may make roadway construction to costly and soils may have insufficient bearing capacity for buildings. Likewise, natural resources are affected by the intensity of development. Effects may include increased surface drainage, soil erosion or air and water pollution.

1. Climate

Pennington Gap's climate is characterized by a moderate, continental climate, with fairly cool winters and warm, moist summers. The winters are short and cold, with occasional warm spells; the summers are warm, with occasional very hot days. Summer evenings and nights are usually cool and pleasant. The average frost-free season is 182 days. The prevailing winds are westerly (from the west and southwest).

2. Geological Features

Pennington Gap is located near the dividing point between the Valley and Ridge physiographic province of Virginia, a region characterized by linear east-west to northeast tending valleys and parallel mountain ridges, and the Cumberland Mountain section of the Appalachian Plateau. The Cumberland Mountain section is distinguished by its relief and altitude and is higher than the Cumberland Plateau farther to the west. Stone Mountain is underlain by sandstone that has resisted weather. In contrast, much of the intermountain area is underlain by shale and limestone, both of which are less resistant to weathering than sandstone.

3. Natural Features

Pennington Gap is located in a valley formed by Poor Valley Ridge and Stone Mountain at the north and a series of smaller ridges to the south. Most of the topography surrounding the town is extreme with elevations that range between 1,300 feet and 1,600 feet above sea level. The median elevation of the town is 1,400 feet.

Air pollution is presently not a significant problem in Pennington Gap. There are no major facilities located within the Town which influence air quality.

4. Hydrological Features

A watershed is defined as all land and water within the confines of a drainage basin. Pennington Gap is located in the North Fork Powell River watershed. A smaller drainage basin which occurs in the Town is Cane Creek, which originates above Ben Hur and flows from a west to east direction through the southern portion of Pennington Gap. Water that flows from the Town's rooftops, streets, paved and open areas eventually reaches these systems.

Floodplains are normally dry land areas adjacent to a body of water that are subject to flooding. The extent of Pennington Gap's floodplains has been determined by the National Flood Insurance Program and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The National Floodplain Insurance Program offers property owners federally subsidized flood insurance. Flood insurance is required before obtaining federally related financial assistance from just about any federal agency and/or program.

D. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

According to the U.S. Census of Population, the incorporated Town of Pennington Gap had a population of 1,781 in 2000. This figure represents a decline of 10 percent from a 1990 population count of 1,922. The decline in population from 2000 to 1990 is not only occurring in the Town of Pennington Gap, but also in the surrounding areas. A summary of the Town of Pennington Gap population trends compared to Lee County, LENOWISCO and the Commonwealth is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Population Trends
1950-2000

Year	Pennington Gap	Lee Co	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1950	2,090	36,106	120,0823,318,680	
1960	1,799	25,824	100,2293,966,949	
1970	1,886	20,321	84,816	4,651,448
1980	1,716	25,956	99,644	5,346,797
1990	1,922	24,496	91,520	6,187,358
2000	1,781	23,589	91,019	7,078,515

Table 2 outlines the age distribution of the population and the percentage of each age

group of the total population of the Town of Pennington Gap in comparison with Lee County. This distribution is taken from the Population Census information available from 1990 and 2000.

Table 2
Population Age Distribution
Town of Pennington and Lee County

<u>Age Group:</u>	<u>1990</u>				<u>2000</u>			
	<i>Pennington</i>		<i>Lee Co</i>		<i>Pennington</i>		<i>Lee Co</i>	
	<u>Gap</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Lee Co</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Gap</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Lee Co</u>	<u>%</u>
Under 5	100	5.2	1521	6.2	99	5.6	1,374	5.8
5-17	303	15.8	4831	19.72	262	14.7	3,955	16.77
18-20	88	4.6	1030	4.2	57	3.2	861	3.65
21-24	97	5.0	1149	4.7	75	4.2	1,067	4.52
25-44	495	25.8	7085	28.92	453	25.44	6,478	27.46
45-54	215	11.2	2750	11.23	247	13.9	3,522	14.9
55-59	81	4.2	1154	4.7	114	6.4	1,429	6.1
60-64	111	5.8	1143	4.67	90	5.1	1,262	5.3
65-74	230	12.0	2160	8.82	176	9.9	1,923	8.2
75-84	153	7.9	1290	5.27	157	8.8	1,286	5.5
85 and Over	49	2.5	383	1.56	51	2.9	432	1.8

Table 3 shows the population distribution by race for the Town of Pennington Gap taken from both the 1990 Census of Population and the 2000 Census of Population.

Table 3
Population by Race
Town of Pennington Gap

<u>Race</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>%</u>
White	1,851	96.3	1,697	95.1
Black	62	3.2	60	3.5
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	0	0	7	0.4
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	5	0.3
Hispanic	9	0.5	12	0.7

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

The largest single industry group of employed residents in the Town of Pennington Gap and Lee County at one time was mining. However, the trend in the last several years for Pennington Gap residents has shown an increase in more professional and financial fields. It should be noted that a substantial decline has taken place in retail trade employment. Since 1980 there has been almost a 50% decline in retail trade services.

Table 4
Employment by Industry Group
Town of Pennington Gap
Total Persons Employed – 16 years and Older

Industry/Group	1980	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Hunting, & Mining	83	77	38
Construction	32	31	52
Manufacturing	43	75	41
Wholesale Trade	8	12	5
Retail Trade	125	134	63
Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities	33	23	17
Information	N/A	N/A	34
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	25	30	39
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services	N/A	N/A	47
Educational, Health, & Social Services	145	159	126
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, & Food Services	25	33	24
Other Services (except Public Administration)	21	28	45
Public Administration	21	26	39

Table 5 provides an overview of similar County-wide labor force characteristics for

comparison to the Town of Pennington Gap statistics.

Table 5
Employment by Industry Group
Town of Pennington Gap/Lee County
Total Persons Employed – 16 Years and Older

Industry/Group	Town of Pennington Gap		Lee County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Hunting, & Mining	77	38	1314	789
Construction	31	52	496	792
Manufacturing	75	41	1566	1,009
Wholesale Trade	12	5	201	190
Retail Trade	134	63	1,146	909
Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities	23	17	450	526
Information	N/A	34	N/A	140
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	30	39	211	340
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services	N/A	47	N/A	384
Educational, Health, & Social Services	159	126	1,479	2,074
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, & Food Services	33	24	201	361
Other Services (except Public Administration)	28	45	498	359
Public Administration	26	39	365	464

Educational and Health Services are the largest single employment group for residents of both the Town of Pennington Gap and Lee County. The Lee County School system and Lee County Hospital are the largest two employers for residents of the Town of Pennington Gap.

Table 6 shows that rates of unemployment in Lee County and the surrounding area have been cyclical in nature. It further illustrates the relationship between Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District, and the state of Virginia in terms of unemployment rates as compared with the percentage of Labor Force Participation Rate. The unemployment rate for Lee County has decreased significantly since 1980, while LENOWISCO and the state of Virginia also have had decreases in the unemployment rate since 1980.

**Table 6
Unemployment Levels**

Year	Lee County		LENOWISCO		Virginia	
	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate
1980	7.1%	59.2%	8.1%	47.0%	5.0%	64.1%
1990	4.8%	41.9%	9.9%	48.9%	4.3%	68.9%
2000	3.8%	44.1%	4.5%	46.2%	2.4%	64.5%

Income Characteristics

Tables 7, 8, and 9 illustrate income characteristics for the Town of Pennington Gap, Lee County and the LENOWISCO Planning District as well as the state of Virginia.

Table 7 compares the Average Weekly Wage for Lee County, LENOWISCO, and the state of Virginia from March 1993 to March 2000.

**Table 7
Average Weekly Wages
Total All Industries**

Year	Lee County	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1993	\$331	\$380	\$463
1994	\$342	\$398	\$490
1995	\$366	\$419	\$518
1996	\$371	\$418	\$526
1997	\$405	\$448	\$571
1998	\$421	\$446	\$584
1999	\$442	\$468	\$638
2000	\$492	\$500	\$661

Table 8 presents the average per capita income level for the Town of Pennington Gap,

Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District, and the state of Virginia.

Table 8
Per Capita Income

Year	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1980	\$5,629	\$4,540	\$9,216	\$19,126
1990	\$9,545	\$7,837	\$14,578	\$21,653
2000	\$13,742	\$13,625	\$20,014	\$23,975

Table 9 shows the percentage of the population that have an annual household income below the federally mandated Family Poverty Level for the Town of Pennington Gap, Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District and the state of Virginia.

Table 9
Family Poverty Level

Year	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1980	19.7%	16.9%	16.9%	9.2%
1990	21.9%	19.6%	19.2%	7.8%
2000	28.3%	20.2%	18.8%	7.0%

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

Table 10
Median Value of Housing

Year	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1980	\$34,400	\$29,100	\$29,750	\$48,000
1990	\$44,787	\$39,847	\$39,700	\$90,400
2000	\$57,300	\$56,900	\$63,900	\$125,400

Table 11 shows the Total Housing Units for the localities of the Town of Pennington Gap, Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District and the state of Virginia.

Table 11
Total Housing Units

Year	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1980	748	9,652	6,942	2,020,941
1990	931	10,263	38,038	2,496,334
2000	947	11,086	42,179	2,904,192

Table 12 illustrates the Total Housing Units by Type for the localities of the Town of Pennington Gap, Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District and the state of Virginia.

Table 12
Housing Units by Type

Year/Type	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
1980	748	9,659		
Single Family Units	491	7,382	28,747	1,437,748
Multi-Family Units	138	348	2,434	466,868
Mobile Homes	119	1,929	5,696	95,460
1990	917	10,263		
Single Family Units	579	7,564	26,664	1,750,777
Multi-Family Units	187	415	2,520	568,893
Mobile Homes	151	2,161	8,410	155,429
2000	947	11,086		
Single Family Units	624	8,049	N/A	1,810,353
Multi-Family Units	163	422	N/A	625,422
Mobile Homes	160	2,615	N/A	185,282

Table 13 shows the number of housing units built by year for the localities of the Town of Pennington Gap, Lee County, the LENOWISCO Planning District, and the state of Virginia.

Table 13
Number of Housing Units by Year Built

Year	Town of Pennington Gap	Lee Co.	LENOWISCO	Virginia
Prior 1939	178	1,666	10,466	353,597
1940-1949	100	1,000	5,612	231,235
1950-1959	107	1,069	4,738	339,662
1960-1969	115	1,091	4,905	457,798
1970-1979	209	2,637	10,042	589,187
1980-1989	117	1,939	6,936	579,721

SECTION II - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The long-range goals and related short-range objectives presented below serve as the centerpiece for this planning document. Such goals and objectives build upon opportunities and problems identified through analysis of background materials and provide guidance for the adoption of specific policies to implement plan recommendations.

A. Environmental Goals and Objectives

Goal: Enhance the setting of the Town; promote a greater awareness of the natural beauty, history and positive attributes of the area.

Objectives:

1. Actively promote appreciation and use of scenic and surrounding areas in the town through development of passive recreation opportunities.
2. Promote environmentally sound and aesthetically pleasing development through judicious review of proposed site and building plans.
3. Promote inclusion of the installation of signage welcoming visitors to the Town and that promote the character and history of the Town.
4. Encourage and support cleanup efforts of area streams and rivers including educating residents on the need for removal of straight pipe disposal of waste. This could include taking steps necessary with the Virginia Department of Health and other local and state agencies to implement mandatory wastewater system hookup to the Town's wastewater system where no other approved alternative exists.

B. Transportation Goals and Objectives

Goal: Promote solutions to relieve current traffic problems and support specific land use objectives as outlined in the Virginia Department of Transportation 2020 Transportation Plan.

Objectives:

1. Coordinate ingress-egress of all development plans with future highway improvements.
2. Work closely with VDOT officials in planning new routes and making improvements to existing routes that will alleviate traffic congestion and vehicular conflicts in

coordination with future transportation planning.

3. Provide new access roads into appropriately zoned areas to stimulate planned potential residential and commercial development.
4. Work with VDOT officials throughout the planning, development and construction of the Route 58 bypass to make sure the project design and construction, work harmoniously with the growth and development plans of the Town.

C. Housing Goals and Objectives

Goal: Provide opportunities to increase the supply, quality, and affordability of housing for residents.

Objectives:

1. Encourage the construction of new middle class single-family and multi-family housing in designated areas suitable for such development through the provision of utilities and roads.
2. Encourage the general maintenance and upkeep of existing residences through the enforcement of local housing code, as well as the ordinance on abandoned vehicles and yard maintenance.
3. Provide incentives for general neighborhood improvements and individual property rehabilitation by targeting comprehensive public improvement programs in neighborhoods exhibiting the greatest need.
4. Develop a set of specific design standards to be applied in the future development of subdivisions and mobile home parks.
5. Adopt neighborhood revitalization programs for blighted areas.

D. Public Facilities Goals and Objectives

Goal: Expansion and Development of existing and future public facilities to improve quality

of life for citizens and visitors of the Town of Pennington Gap while focusing on the heritage and history of the Town.

Objectives:

1. Investigate the possibility of hiring a possible Downtown Main Street Coordinator to help develop the Downtown area with emphasis on the rich history of the Town.
2. Develop more recreational/cultural facilities for the residents and visitors of the Town through redevelopment of the theatre in Town and the construction of a public use gymnasium.
3. Investigate the possibility of improving the existing or constructing a new fire hall.

Goal: Provide community facilities/events that commensurate with the needs of the present and future population.

Objectives:

1. Begin a campaign to create a “name brand” for the Town of Pennington Gap that can be used to market the area for tourism.
2. Changing or finding a new identity or image for the Town to move forward into the next 25 years.

E. Economic Growth Goals and Objectives

1. Encourage the development of a lodging/motel facility in the Town to better capitalize on visitors to the area.
2. Begins to use the natural heritage and environment as economic development tools. Primary focus should be placed on “ecotourism” type businesses that can capitalize on what Pennington Gap already has (ie. ATV trails).
3. Assist the Lee County Industrial Development Authority and encourage them to focus on Pennington Gap as an area that can be a leader in the development of technology based industry recruitment.

F. Wireless Telecommunications Goals and Objectives

Goals: To encourage managed development of wireless communication infrastructure, while at the same time not unreasonably interfering with the development of the competitive

wireless communication marketplace.

To maintain and preserve the residential character of the Town and its neighborhoods and to promote the creation of an attractive and harmonious community.

To ensure that wireless communication towers and related wireless communication facilities are compatible with surrounding land uses.

To provide a uniform and comprehensive set of standards for the development and installation of wireless communication towers, antennas and related facilities.

To promote public safety and to avoid the risk of damage to adjacent properties by ensuring that wireless communication towers and related wireless communication facilities are properly designed, constructed modified and maintained.

Objectives:

1. Minimize the adverse visual impacts of wireless communication towers and related facilities through careful design, siting, landscape screening and innovative camouflaging techniques.
2. Horizontally separate wireless communication towers from residential neighborhoods and visually sensitive areas to the extent necessary to minimize visual obstruction.
3. Encourage the use of alternative support structures, collocation of new antennas or existing wireless communication towers, camouflaged towers, and construction of towers with the ability to maximize additional providers.
4. Ensure that collocation opportunities are fully met before permitting new wireless communication towers.
5. Ensure timely removal of obsolete or abandoned equipment at no cost to residents of the Town.

G. Implementation Goals and Objectives

Goal: Make effective use of implementation tools provided to the Town to carry out plan goals and objectives.

Objectives:

1. Continue to review and revise the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years, so that it can be a useful guide for future growth and development.
2. Establish a set of procedures that will encourage systematic reference of proposed improvements to standards, goals and objectives set forth by the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Develop and use zoning and subdivision ordinances that establish practical land use regulations, standards for design, and environmental quality.
4. Develop a priority list of proposed major capital improvements and recommended program for accomplishment based on a fiscal forecast of the Town.

H. Land Use Goals and Objectives

Goal: Encourage harmonious and wise use of land through future development decisions.

Objectives:

1. Whenever practical, require aesthetic improvements such as trees, landscaped buffers and underground utilities to provide attractive divisions between conflicting land uses.
2. Consider the expansion beyond present corporate boundaries into areas most suitable for land development, which will strengthen the Town's tax base.

SECTION III - IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN

A. Administration of the Plan

The Pennington Gap Comprehensive Plan document represents the continuation of formal, organized planning for the Town and immediate planning area. The Plan should serve as a foundation for addressing local problems and recognizing future needs and demands of growth. The Plan offers an opportunity to the Town leaders to apply appropriate controls and direct both public and private investments in a logical manner to achieve short-range objectives and long range goals.

The following sections address legal status, policy and administration of the Pennington Gap Comprehensive Plan required to promote an efficient application of plan provisions.

B. Legal Status of the Plan

The following excerpts are taken from Title 15.2, Chapter 22 Code of Virginia, 1950 and support the legal foundation for the comprehensive plan.

15.2-2232 - Whenever the local commission shall have recommended a comprehensive plan or part thereof for the municipality and such plan shall have been approved and adopted by the governing body, it shall control the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan. Thereafter, unless such feature is already shown on the adopted master plan or part thereof no street, park or other public area, public building or public structure, public utility facility or public service corporation facility other than railroad facility, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be constructed, established or authorized, unless and until the general location or approximate location, character, and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the local planning commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted comprehensive plan or part thereof. In connection with any such determination the commission may, and at the direction of the governing body shall, hold a public hearing after notice as required.

C. Plan Adoption

The following provisions taken from Title 15.2 Chapter 22, outline the general procedures to be followed by the Town of Pennington Gap in adopting the Comprehensive Plan.

15.2-2225 - Notice and Hearing on Plan. Recommendation by local commission to governing body. Prior to the recommendation of a comprehensive plan or any part thereof, the local commission shall give notice and hold a public hearing on the plan. After such public hearing has been held the commission may approve, amend and approve, or disapprove the plan. Upon the approval of the plan, the commission shall by resolution recommend the plan to the governing body.

15.2-2226 - Adoption or Disapproval of Plan by Governing Body. After certification of the plan or part thereof, the governing body after a public hearing with notice as required shall proceed to a consideration of the plan or part thereof and shall approve and adopt, amend and adopt, or disapprove the same within ninety days after date of adoption of such resolution.

15.2-2227 - Return of the Plan to Commission; Resubmission. If such governing body disapproves the plan, then it shall be returned to the local commission for its reconsideration, with a written statement of the reasons for its disapproval.

The commission shall have sixty days in which to reconsider the plan and resubmit it with any changes to the governing body.

15.2-2228 - Adoption of Parts of Plan. As the work of preparing the comprehensive plan progresses, the local commission may, from time to time, recommend and the governing body approve and adopt, parts thereof, and such part shall cover one or more major sections or divisions of the municipality or one or more functional matters.

D. Maintenance of the Plan

15.2-2229 - Amendments. After the adoption of a comprehensive plan, all amendments to it shall be recommend, and approved and adopted, respectively. If the governing body desires an amendment it may direct the local commission to prepare an amendment and submit it to public hearing within sixty days after formal written request by the governing body.

15.2-2230 - Plan to be Reviewed At Least Once Every Five Years. At least once every five years, the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

Significant new developments, i.e. state highway proposals; location of new industry, shopping center, or residential subdivision; expansion of major public/private uses, etc., should trigger a re-evaluation of the adopted comprehensive plan. Review and appropriate revisions to the plan ensuring consistency with major proposals should be made to maintain it in a current condition. Changes in the plan should only be made in the best interest of established goals and objectives. Development proposals, which are contrary to the plan, require serious consideration within the context of the plan's provisions. The end result of unwarranted plan revision would be to leave the Town without any enforceable plan.

E. Plan Implementation

Private property development and public improvement efforts can be coordinated with the plan through the use of applicable regulatory measures - zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, building and housing codes. An adopted Capital Improvement Program also

provides a mechanism for the local governing body to schedule public improvements in accordance with the plan over both a five-year period and on an annual basis.

15.2-2239 - Local Commissions to Prepare and Submit Annually Capital Improvement Programs to Governing Body or Official Charged with Preparation of Budget. A local commission may, and at the direction of the governing body shall, prepare and revise annually a capital improvement program based on the comprehensive plan of the municipality for a period not to exceed the ensuing five years. The commission shall submit the same annually to the governing body, or to the chief administrative officer or other official charged with preparation of the budget for the municipality, at such time as it or he shall direct. Such capital improvement program shall include the commission's recommendations, and estimates of cost of such facilities and the means of financing them, to be undertaken in the ensuing fiscal year and in a period not to exceed the next four years, as the basis of the capital budget for municipality. In the preparation of its capital budget recommendations, the commission shall consult with the chief administrative officer or other executive head of the government of the municipality, the heads of departments and interested citizens and organizations and shall hold such public hearings as necessary unless otherwise required.

15.2-2240 - Municipalities to Adopt Ordinances Regulating Subdivision and Development of Land. The governing body of any locality shall adopt an ordinance to assure the orderly subdivision of land and its development.

15.2-2280 - Zoning Ordinances Generally. Any locality may, by ordinance, classify the territory under its jurisdiction or any substantial portion thereof into districts of such number, shape and size as it may deem best suited to carry out the purposes of this article, and in each district it may regulate, restrict, permit, prohibit, and determine the following:

The use of land, buildings, structures and other premises for agricultural, business, industrial, residential, flood plain and other specific uses;

The size, height, area, bulk, location, erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, maintenance, razing or removal of structures;

The areas and dimensions of land, water, and air space to be occupied by buildings, structures and uses, and of courts, yards, and other open spaces to be left unoccupied by uses, structures, including variations in the size of lots based on whether a public or community water supply or sewer system is available and used;

The excavation or mining of soil or other natural resources. For the purpose of zoning, the governing body of a municipality shall have jurisdiction over the incorporated area of the municipality.

The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations for the Town of Pound accompany this plan document. Legal enforcement is explained within the text of these regulations. The

comprehensive plan must be used as the reference by which zoning requests, development proposals and the zoning of subdivision regulations are reviewed for approval or disapproval. Zoning and subdivision regulations are the tools intended to accomplish the plan's objectives.

F. Regional Review and Coordination

Local town planning requires coordination with other adjacent jurisdiction: Lee County, Regional, Federal and State development proposals and plans. Without coordination among these jurisdictions, the danger of planning efforts being duplicated or conflicting will result in ineffective programs and unnecessarily high development costs. The LENOWISCO Planning District Commission is the most appropriate agency to provide regional coordination and review of related plan.

G. Level of Professional Planning Assistance

Planning assistance is presently provided to the Town of Pennington Gap by the staff of LENOWISCO and through contracted services of private planning consultants for special projects. Communities with less than 10,000 population typically do not require an in-house planning staff to administer daily planning functions. Special needs of the local planning commission which may warrant additional planning assistance from LENOWISCO and/or a planning consultant in order to implement the adopted comprehensive plan may include the following:

1. Maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan - Unforeseen changes in development trends, population growth or effects of economic changes resulting from new industrial commercial development, annexation or consolidation; all would have a major impact on long range community planning which would need to be reflected in the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Expansion of Major Elements of the Comprehensive Plan - The need for neighborhood studies, a plan for the central business district, housing need analysis, economic development studies may evolve from the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Such special studies should be used to expand on plan generalities and be treated as amendments to the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
3. Review and Administration of Housing, Building, Zoning and Subdivision regulations and Development proposals which affect provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Assist in determining the most appropriate State and Federal assistance programs through which Pennington Gap may participate to aid in implementing proposed community improvements.
5. Promote local citizen involvement in planning by conducting public education

programs on the Comprehensive Plan and related planning process.

J. Public Education and Community Involvement

The Town of Pennington Gap should continue to expand a public awareness program to inform local citizenry, including local commission members, on local planning efforts and issues. The intent of such program is to solicit citizen participation in making planning decisions and to promote public support for existing and future community improvement efforts. A classroom-type program could be offered to adult and student groups through the Lee County Career and Technical Center through a series of lectures of citizens' advisory groups, civic organizations and other interested individuals. Local planning commission members should be encouraged to attend Planning Commissioner Institute training sessions offered periodically throughout the year by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD). Educational materials are also available from VDHCD, which should be distributed to local planning commissioners.

Additional measures, which can be promoted by the Town to increase public awareness of local planning, include the following:

1. Development of a brochure or graphic foldout depicting the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan on one side and an executive summary of major plan elements on the reverse side.
2. Exhibits and displays of important Plan elements placed in Town Hall, local bank lobbies, public schools, etc.
3. Newspaper coverage of comprehensive plan adoption process, highlights of land use and special zoning issues, in-depth series of articles on land use problems and opportunities in and around Pennington Gap, series of interviews with individuals in responsible positions in local and regional governmental agencies, business and industry who influence future land use decisions.