

Youth Participation Contest

What is a comprehensive plan?

A comprehensive plan is Washington county's blueprint for the future. Once adopted, it may be utilized as a guide for elected and public officials and provide the framework for evaluating future land use and public investment proposals. Although required by the Code of Virginia, the comprehensive plan can be so much more to the county! Preparation of the Plan offers the opportunity for the public to work with county leaders and staff to develop a vision for development that can be implemented in a responsible and considerate way.

Youth Participation in Community Planning

The theory or America's democratic process is that ordinary citizens can resolve the pressing public issues and answer the social questions of the day. Civic competence is a prerequisite for assuming what Jefferson termed "the office of the citizen." Meaningful learning through real life applications develops practical knowledge. Engaging children and youth in experiential learning enhances their sense of community, place and belonging, as well as their enhancing their lives.

(From "Youth Participation in Community Planning" by Ramona Mullahey, Yve Susskind and Barry Checkoway)



Dear Parent/Teacher,

Washington County is in the process of updating the twenty year comprehensive plan and all members of the community— citizens, elected and appointed officials, people involved in designing and building developments and our **YOUTH** – can play a meaningful part in the process. We are calling the process **PLAN·Washington County.** Our kids represent a very important constituent group! Today's children will, one day, inherit the communities that we plan and it is in our best interest to consult with them!

There are several ways for young people to be involved in the process with the following goals in mind:

- 1. To give young people the opportunity to speak out about issues that concern them let them know that they are critical to the future of our community.
- 2. To engage youth with civic leadership and provide exposure to topics important in community planning such as social studies, history, government, geography and GIS (Geographic Information Systems), environmental science, economics, architecture and engineering, and transportation planning.
- 3. To gauge values for their desired future community—we want them to stay in Washington County!

The following pages contain activities for youth involvement. The county will award a first, second and third place prizes for those who submit an entry to the **PLAN·Washington County** contest by **November 15, 2013.** Three prizes (1st, 2nd, 3rd) will be awarded in the following age groups—Grades 1-4, Grades 5-8, Grades 9-12.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you,

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PLAN·Washington County Entry Form

First Name:	Last Name:
Address:	
School:	Teacher's Name:
(Must be a resident or st	udent in Washington County to win.)
Grade at time of submission:	Phone Number:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	
Arts Area (Grades 5-12 Only):	
Poster Essay V	ideo Photography Mixed Media Project



Why **PLAN**?

Washington County is making a plan for the future! The plan will help shape our county and will help our leaders make decisions about how our county will grow and change in the next twenty years. It will determine where houses are built and where new roads go. In twenty years, you will be a grown up! You will be shopping and buying a house and driving to work. Let's draw a picture and show the county where you would like to live as a grown up and what will be important to you!

Contest Requirements

Children in grades 1-4 must submit a drawing of what they want Washington County to look like in the future, twenty years from now. The drawing should be no smaller than 8.5"x11".

Entries should address the following:

- Who will live in our County?
- How will we get around? Will we walk, bike or skateboard? What will we drive?
- What types of homes, businesses, farms and parks would you want there to be?
- What will our buildings look like?



Why **PLAN**?

Washington County is making a plan for the future! The plan will help shape our county and will help our leaders make decisions about how our county will grow and change in the next twenty years. The process of planning is complex and includes the work of the county government, neighborhood groups, real estate developers, business people, farmers and many others to make the community the best place it can be to live!

The comprehensive plan that the county is working on has an outlook of twenty years. The plan will make sure that the county grows in a way that roads can handle the traffic that new buildings create, that neighborhoods are protected, that there are enough stores to buy the things we need, and that everyone can find a house or apartment. The plan must also consider factors that change over time such as population and the availability of land and infrastructure such as the public water and sewer supply. This is called shaping a community's growth.

As the plan focuses on the next twenty years, the county needs your assistance! The decisions made today will impact the community that you will inherit. It's hard to imagine now but in twenty years you will be a grown up and will be buying a house, shopping and driving to work. Here's the chance to let the county know what issues concern you and what you feel will be important in your future. What do you want Washington County to look like in 20 years?

Contest Requirements

Youth in grades 5-8 must submit either an essay or a poster depicting what they imagine Washington County to look like in the future, twenty years from now. If a poster is submitted, it should be no smaller than 8.5"x11".

Entries should address the following:

- Who will live in our County?
- How will we get around? Will we walk, bike or skateboard? What will we drive?
- What types of homes, farms and parks would you want there to be?
- What types of businesses will be here? Will there be offices, stores, restaurants, industries?
- What will our buildings look like?
- What natural and cultural resources will be important?
- What public services will we need such as police and fire protection? Where will our water come from?



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As the plan focuses on the next twenty years, the county needs your assistance! The decisions made today will impact the community that you will inherit. Here's the chance to let the county know what issues concern you and what you feel will be important in your future. What do you want Washington County to look like in 20 years?

Contest Requirements

Students in grades 9-12 may submit either a written essay or visual arts project (drawing/illustration, photography, mixed-media or video) depicting what they imagine Washington County to look like in the future, twenty years from now. Entries may address the following:

- Who will live in our County? How will things change as our population ages?
- How will we get around? Will we walk or bike? What will we drive?
- What types of homes would you like to see? Where will our parks be located and what amenities should they have?
- What types of businesses will be here? Will there be offices, stores, restaurants, industries? Where do you want to be employed?
- Agriculture is very important to Washington County, how will we preserve and use our farmland?
- What will our buildings look like?
- What natural and cultural resources will be important?
- What public services and facilities will be important in the future? Will we need more police and fire protection, libraries, or hospitals? Where will we get our water?
- Show what you love about Washington County.
- Show what you would like to see added to make you stay in the county or move back after college.



What? Please make plans to attend a community meeting and participate in the comprehensive planning process to create a blueprint for Washington County's future!

Why? Great communities are created through decades of planning! The comprehensive plan process allows citizens and local decision-makers to respond to changing community needs in a thoughtful manner.

Who? It takes all of us! You, your neighbors, the business community....it takes all of us to make a great plan.

When? All meetings will be held from **6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** The meeting format is designed so you may stay the entire time or leave after a brief presentation. Please come, even if you only have 30 minutes to spend!

August 29, 2013 – Damascus Middle School September 5, 2013 — Glade Spring Library September 19, 2013 – Greendale Elementary School October 1, 2013 – John Battle High School October 15, 2013 – Valley Institute Elementary School October 17, 2013 – Green Spring Fire Department November 7, 2013 – Abingdon High School

Kid's Corner! Bring your whole family to take part in "Plan-Washington County". A "Kid's Corner" will be available at each meeting with activities to keep children entertained so parents can participate in the meeting activities.

Questions?

Please call (276)525-1345 or email cmarshall@washcova.com



More Information

www.washcova.com/compplan