WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §8A-1-1

§8A-1-1. Legislative findings.

(a) The Legislature finds, as the object of this chapter, the following:

(1) That planning land development and land use is vitally important to a community;

(2) A planning commission is helpful to a community to plan for land development, land use and the future;

(3) A plan and a vision for the future is important when deciding uses for and development of land;

(4) That sprawl is not advantageous to a community;

(5) A comprehensive plan is a guide to a community's goals and objectives and a way to meet those goals and objectives;

(6) That the needs of agriculture, residential areas, industry and business be recognized in future growth;

(7) That the growth of the community is commensurate with and promotive of the efficient and economical use of public funds;

(8) Promoting growth that is economically sound, environmentally friendly and supportive of community livability to enhance quality of life is a good objective for a governing body; and

(9) Governing bodies of municipalities and counties need flexibility when authorizing land development and use.

(b) Therefore, the Legislature encourages and recommends the following:

(1) The goal of a governing body should be to have a plan and a vision for the future, and an agency to oversee it;

(2) A governing body should have a planning commission, to serve in an advisory capacity to the governing body, and promote the orderly development of its community;

(3) A comprehensive plan should be the basis for land development and use, and be reviewed and updated on a regular basis;

(4) A goal of a governing body should be to reduce sprawl;

(5) That planning commissions prepare a comprehensive plan and governing bodies adopt the comprehensive plans;

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(6) Governing bodies, units of government and planning commissions work together to provide for a better community;

(7) Governing bodies may have certain regulatory powers over developments affecting the public welfare; and

(8) Based upon a comprehensive plan, governing bodies may:

(A) Enact a subdivision and land development ordinance;

(B) Require plans and plats for land development;

(C) Issue improvement location permits for construction; and

(D) Enact a zoning ordinance.

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