What are community assets?

Community assets are the special places, features, amenities, and resources that give a place its identity – the local things which, altogether, create value for a community by:
- enriching the local quality of life and providing a distinct sense of place; and
- providing creative opportunities for a strong place-based economy.

Asset Inventory: A method of mapping and analyzing the location of community assets. Asset inventory is the critical first step in developing a sustainable, place-based development strategy for a community.

Asset-based development strategy: A community framework for successfully navigating changes over time in ways that balance ‘growth and change’ with ‘rural preservation.’ Such a strategy provides one place-based framework for integrating two separate (and sometimes conflicting) community priorities:
- [sustained economic vitality] & [protection of rural character and sense of place]

Community assets are critically important to a community’s overall long-term success.

Successful communities protect local assets from undesirable change(s); sustainably utilize local assets to produce maximum value(s) and benefit(s); and prioritize the importance of local assets as essential elements of overall community prosperity.

What does a community best utilize its assets?

Asset Inventory: Basemap & Introduction
The Rockfish Valley benefits from a variety of infrastructure resources which promote public health, public safety, and a high quality of life. The infrastructure assets shown on this map include the following:

- public road system (maintained by VDOT)
- broadband fiber network (backbone from Colleen–Afton–Beech Grove)
- telecommunications towers (public and private)
- civic institutions (schools and community center)
- public services (fire & rescue and solid waste & recycling facility)
- sewer and water utilities (private service available in Nellysford area)
The Rockfish Valley is host to an incredible green infrastructure (GI) network which is comprised of the area’s environmental systems and features. The GI network provides critically important ecosystem services; and also contributes to the community’s public health and welfare, high quality of life, local sense of place, and the economic vitality of the area’s tourism industries. The Rockfish Valley’s GI network includes the following:

- water resources (surface water and groundwater)
- wetlands and floodplains
- forest resources
- soils
- “natural landscape network” of areas with highest ecological integrity and ecosystem values (as analyzed by VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, and as shown above; includes “GI cores” ranked from “C1” to “C5”)

Asset Inventory: Green Infrastructure
The Rockfish Valley contains an amazing concentration and variety of amenities and attractions. Altogether, these create a high quality of life, a unique sense of place, and an attractive setting for tourism and place-based economic development. These community assets include the following:

- trails and parks (public-national; public-local; and private-local)
- historic resources (rural historic districts and historic sites)
- Virginia Scenic Byways (151, 6, 664, 250, 48-BRP)
- Blue Ridge Mountain scenery and seasonal natural beauty
- craft beverage venues (wineries, breweries, cideries, distillery, roastery)
- agritourism and farm-to-table attractions
- four-season resort

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