

# Looking Ahead

## Recommended directions for new initiatives

Out of the series of community planning conversations undertaken in 2010, we united around four directions for new undertakings. The project ideas offered here are done so with a hope of fostering more discussions and creating renewed energy to make Meadowview a more vibrant and lively place to call home. We understand that economic development is about more than job creation and that building a strong community for tomorrow's families involves work and projects of many kinds. Still, the things on which we build, the assets and strengths to which we can lay claim, remain the same—the good people of this place, our belief in the work we share, the responsibility of the people of the present to return to our children a place, a community, that they will know this is a community that cares.

In these suggested directions we sought ways of building on those characteristics and qualities that give our community its unique identity.

**1. A cluster of lively retail and civic places in the Square and capitalizing on the Railroad Depot.** We'd like to bring more life to the Square by providing people with different things to do there. A branch library, an ice cream and coffee shop, and perhaps a retail shop or other site related to local culture, agriculture and our location on the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail could foster more vitality in the heart of our community.

**2. Develop a walking trail.** We are situated in an area with abundant trails such as the Salt Trail and the Virginia Creeper Trail. We know plans are underway in Abingdon for an urban trail system. Wouldn't it be great for the people of Meadowview to also have a place to walk without being in traffic? A walking path would give residents opportunities for exercise and socializing. With benches, historical signage and nice lighting, a trail could greatly enhance community life.



**3. New community and educational opportunities at the Williams Homestead.** Meadowview First has been fortunate to acquire the Williams property. This house and land could be another focal point of activity, possibly as an educational facility. If connected to the Square by a walking path, this community resource could extend the range of foot travel and offer another venue for programs to bring local and neighboring residents together.

**4. Venues and ventures in locally grown food and other avenues for strengthening relationships of people and land.** We know we live in a great place—how can we create more opportunities for people to develop relationships with, and within, this abundant area? We seek additional ways of building on our agricultural heritage through new enterprises rooted in the landscape we love.

**Taking part in one or more of the planning conversations were:** Fred Buckles, Darrell Martin, Bill Mink, Randy Pennington, Lori Price, Phyllis Price, Annalisa Raymer, Tal Stanley and Anita Taylor.

**Photo credits.** Page 1: Meadowview Applebutter Festival, Fred Buckles. Page 2: Depot, scan of print located in Meadowview Community Center. Page 2: Preparation for Clinic and Center opening, Washington County News. Page 3: Meadowview Farmers' Guild General Store, <http://www.meadowviewfarmersguild.com/>. Page 3: Meadowview Health Clinic, <http://www.meadowviewva.org/clinic.html>. Page 4: Farmers Market, [www.realpeopleeatlocal.com](http://www.realpeopleeatlocal.com).

# Building on our past, creating our future

## Meadowview, VA



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agricultural wealth, the  
people of Meadowview  
bear witness to a  
remarkable heritage of  
community spirit.

Meadowview First is a citizen nonprofit organization committed to working for sustainable community and economic development. On behalf of Meadowview First, a group of local residents recently came together for a series of conversations to discuss the question: "What vision of the future may best serve our community now and for the generations to come?"

The group offers this invitation to anyone interested in joining the discussion. For more information, or to add your ideas, please contact Meadowview First, Post Office Box 530, Meadowview, Virginia 24361, or call Tal Stanley at (276) 944-6900. The Meadowview website is: <http://www.meadowviewva.org/mvfirst.html>.

## A grounded heritage

### Meadowview's roots in farming, rail and civic community



Meadowview is located in one of the most fertile valleys east of the Mississippi River. A temperate climate, abundant ground water, gentle and pleasing topography helped to make this a rich and vital farming community. Livestock, fowl, wheat, corn, small grains, apples, tobacco, and more—all could flourish here in a plenteous abundance. Long before the arrival of the railroad in the middle 1850s, the first European settlers had established in this place prosperous farms and homesteads. In 1857, the rail line linking Bristol with Lynchburg and, by connection, to the urban areas of Baltimore, Richmond and the northeast, opened cash markets for the products of this valley, and Meadowview, relocated and renamed from the village's first location on the Great Wagon Road nearly a mile to the south, became a vital shipping point.

In addition to its agricultural wealth, the people of Meadowview also bear witness

to a remarkable heritage of community spirit. Here is a place where people looked after each other, in which all took responsibility for the children of the place, where those families who struggled through difficult times were supported, carried, and cared for by their neighbors. The Town Square and Depot, more than the economic center of the community, were also its common ground, its shared space. For persons who lived within walking distance, and for families who lived on farms in the surrounding countryside, the Meadowview Town Square (known locally as "Meadowview Bottom"), offered opportunities to meet, know, affirm and build the character of this place.

The Square became the place where neighbors were made. This three-part intersection of agricultural abundance, the railroad, and a vital civic culture is Meadowview's legacy, but, more importantly, it helps to shape our vision for the future in this place.

## Community Identity

### Qualities of Place

As we work to create our future, an appreciation of Meadowview's unique identity can guide new endeavors.



### Meadowview, Va.

- **A place of community, church and civic activity and architecture.**

Just as Meadowview's caring nature is expressed through active congregations, organizations and the Civic Club, the community's built environment is enhanced through multiple churches, locally-owned businesses and community facilities. The Square serves as a focal point and gathering space.

- **A community with a farming past, present and future.**

Whether at the garden section of the hardware store, the local-foods restaurant or the annual Apple Butter Festival, Meadowview is a place which recognizes and values the bounty of the land.

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## A springboard of accomplishments

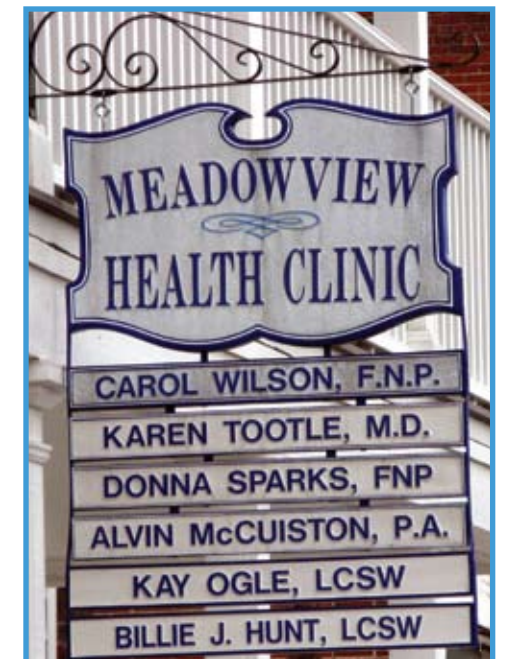
*Not resting on our laurels, but having much to celebrate!*

A people with a can-do attitude, we are used to hard work and willing to undertake big jobs for this community. Not given to think a plan or goal is beyond us, we believe in each other, and we carry that belief into action as a community that cares.

For many decades, the Meadowview Civic Club has worked to maintain the town square, paving the area, insuring that the grounds were well kept, and taking on other projects for the common good. In 1994, the Civic Club began sponsoring the Meadowview Apple Butter Festival which has become the community's homecoming, a time not only to renew friendships, but to celebrate the strengths and resources we share as the people of this place. In 1996, citing the need for a gathering place for community members and events, the Civic Club launched another nonprofit organization, Meadowview First, to explore what would be required for such a development and to oversee the work to achieve this vision.

In the years that followed, with wide

community support and enthusiasm, Meadowview First undertook door-to-door surveys, fundraising events, community planning sessions, and a host of other projects to move us closer to our vision for a community center. In the process, we learned that the most desperate need among our people was adequate healthcare. We decided we had to find a way to provide healthcare to all our people. Such work was essential before we could ever realize our dream for a revived and vital local economy benefiting all our people. So we went to work. With a mandate from the Commonwealth of Virginia, between June and December of 2005, the people of Meadowview raised \$850,000 as a match to the state's grant of \$700,000. On July 22, 2006, the community broke ground for the Meadowview Health Clinic and Community Center. On July 21, 2007, the community officially opened our sliding scale health clinic, community center, and adult education, tutoring, and computer facility. In May 2010, more than 900 persons received medical attention at the Meadowview



Health Clinic, and dozens of families and individuals took advantage of other services and opportunities at the community center. Yet, all along, the people of Meadowview knew this was but one more step on a journey to make this a safe, healthy, and good place for our children and grandchildren, long years in the future.

Now we are ready to take the next steps and continue that journey.

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### Community Identity: Qualities of Place

- **A community fostering health, education and collaboration.**

Through partnerships and cooperation, Meadowview is able to accomplish more than might be expected for a community this size. After-school tutoring, G.E.D. classes, health services, fire protection and local events are hallmarks of life here.

- **A community interested in linking and connecting.**

As we seek to grow, we're interested in multiplying the ways we connect to one another and reach out to others. From greeting those who cycle through on the Bicentennial Bike Route, to fostering businesses as part of the community, we promote neighborliness.

