



# *Williamson*

*A Community Profile of Current Conditions and Capacity*

**Prepared for the**

**West Virginia Blueprint Communities Initiative**

**April 2007**

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The city of Williamson is located in Southwestern West Virginia in Mingo County. The city is located along the Tug Fork River and was incorporated in 1905. Williamson was named after its founder who owned the land on which the town was located. Williamson grew rapidly during the first half of the twentieth century as an economic center and rail shipping center supporting the development of major coal deposits in the area.

The latest population estimate available (2005) for the municipality of Williamson reflects a population of 3,181 people. About twenty-one percent (20.8%) of the population is under 18 years of age and 22.4% is 65 years of age or older. There are 1,566 households in Williamson and about 900 families.

**Introduction:**

This community profile is provided for use by the Blueprint Team in order to provide a general overview of some of the more relevant measures of local conditions and community capacity. It is one of many tools you may find useful. The profile should be reviewed and kept in your community toolbox for future reference. Local Blueprint Teams will undoubtedly wish to examine some of the areas addressed in the profile in more detail once specific priorities are established for local community development. The profile should initially be useful in identifying areas of concern that may require further study and assessment by local citizens and later on it may provide guidance about measures that can be used to monitor progress.

The Williamson community profile is intended as a resource for community builders. It is a portrait of current conditions and local capacities. Information presented here can be useful to local Blueprint Community Team members and other community residents in considering where to invest time and energy and in establishing both short and long term priorities and goals for community improvements. However, the statistics and other information summarized here are no substitute for local initiative. Objective facts and individual perspectives must be considered in the context of local knowledge, opportunities and desires which can only be gleaned from community members. For example, if the general profile suggests recreational facilities as an area for development, local residents should be asked what types of recreational opportunities they would be most interested in and where any facilities should be located. It is important to know what types of facilities or programs would be used before making plans for development. If people are involved in the planning they will be more likely to be involved in the doing.

## A Few Words about Community Capacity and Capital:

Community Capacity may be defined as the level of resources, assets, human capital, and social capital available to a group of people (a community) to achieve the results they want and care about. "Community capacity, in a general sense, is what makes communities work. It is what makes well-functioning communities function well." (Chaskin, et.al., 2001). Capacity may be found in local people, in the strength of the relationships among people, in civic enterprises, in local institutions, in the value of property and buildings, in financial investment, and in the quality of the environment.

*"Community capacity is what makes well-functioning communities function well" – (Chaskin, 2001)*

Sufficient levels of community capacity are necessary prerequisites for successful community development. Community capacity can be measured and it can be built. The Blueprint Communities Program is focused on increasing community capacity in order to build stronger and more prosperous communities.

The community profile is organized by capacity domains - important areas of influence defined by the *West Virginia Community Development Gathering*. A domain of capacity may be thought of as a significant area of influence that affects the ability of a community to get things done. If capacity is lacking in any particular area it should be built so that available resources and investments can be optimally utilized. Each of the seven domains (areas of influence) of capacity is discussed in the profile based on selected quantitative data and the opinions of Blueprint Team members reflected in their on-line survey responses.

"Capital" is another term that is helpful in organizing information within the profile. We are generally familiar with financial capital, the monetary investment that is made available to build something useful. Other forms of capital discussed in the profile are no less important. Human capital, social capital, cultural capital, and environmental capital are all local resources that can be drawn upon to improve community conditions.

## *Human Capital*

Human Capital includes the health and well being of local residents as well as the knowledge skills and abilities of local people. There is considerable data available that can be used to measure health and well being. Much of the available data related to health and well being is accessible only at the county level. Thus, some of the measures of local health and well-being discussed here are reflective of Mingo County while others describe the health and well being of people residing in Williamson when local level information is available.

### *Health and Well Being of Local People*

#### **Healthy People:**

Three key measures of health were compiled for county residents. These measures include health insurance status, adult obesity, and low birth weight. Adult obesity which is defined as significantly exceeding recommended healthy weight is 34% in Mingo County. This is above the average for West Virginia (27.7%) and much higher than the average for the U. S. (22.8%). The number of adults without health insurance is also much higher than both the state (22.8%) and national (18.2%) averages at 32.4% of the adult population uninsured in Mingo County. The percentage of low birth weight babies (8.1% in Mingo County) is higher than the national average of 7.8% but lower than the WV statewide average of 9.3%.

Obesity and low birth weight are significant risk factors for major health problems and these measures should be of concern to residents of the county. Local residents may wish to look closer at this issue by talking to local health care professionals to get a more localized picture of the health status of Williamson residents. The high number of adults with no type of health insurance coverage is also an issue that should be of concern. Most children are able to qualify for health care insurance through public programs if they are not insured through a parent's employer; however, that is not the case for many adults residing in the state. Again, local health care professionals would have a good sense of the extent of this problem for city residents and they should be consulted.

#### **School Readiness:**

Research studies (Abecedarian, Perry Preschool, and Chicago Parent-Child Centers studies) over extended periods of time have documented the link between early childhood development and future success in school and later life. Two key measures of school readiness – that is early childhood development that prepares children for school – were considered. The percentage of kindergarten children enrolled in public preschool programs is a good measure of school readiness as is the rate of retention in preschool and kindergarten programs. Preschool enrollment as a percentage of kindergarten enrollment (2005-06) in Mingo County was 42.1% which is just under the statewide ratio of preschool enrollment to kindergarten enrollment (43.2%). This ratio is 40.3% at Riverside Elementary School located in Williamson.

The percentage of pre-K and kindergarten students who are retained in Mingo County (not promoted to the next grade) is a second measure of school readiness. The retention rate in public preschool and kindergarten programs in Mingo County for the 2003-04 school year was 30%. This is an extremely high rate of retention and it significantly exceeds the state average of 12.2%. The high retention rate at the preschool and kindergarten level may reflect a lack of early childhood

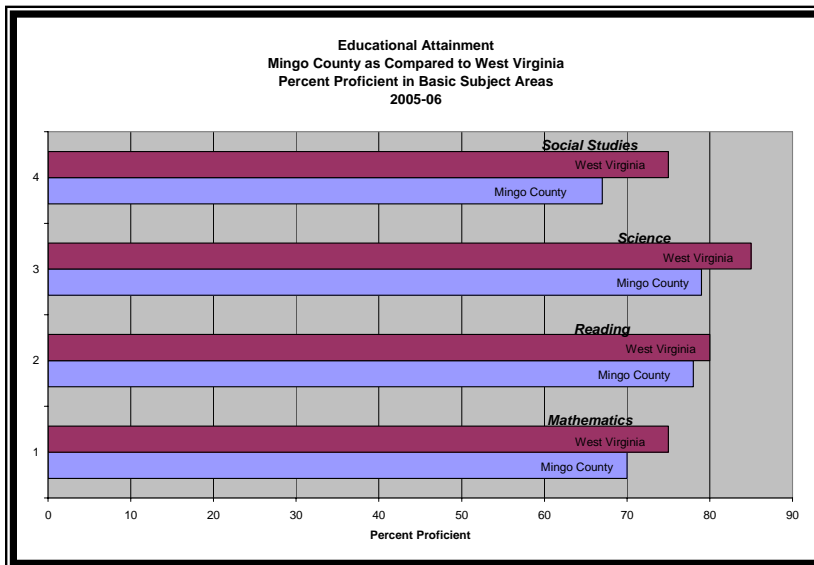
development programs in the Williamson area. Current statistics (2005-06) related to retention in preschool and kindergarten programs for local elementary schools serving the Williamson area or for young children residing in town might be obtained from school officials in order to explore this issue further.

School readiness may be a significant area of concern for the Williamson area based on the high retention rate in 2003-04. We can conclude that many children are not prepared for school if nearly one-third of them are retained in preschool and kindergarten for a second year. Given the importance of early childhood development as a predictor of future success; the Blueprint Team may wish to examine this area more closely. Preschool and kindergarten teachers and Principals at local elementary schools would be the best sources of information about how prepared children are when they enter school.

**Educational Attainment and Access:**

Success in school may be measured by looking at several key indicators of continued education and achievement in the public schools. Measures selected for the profile include education levels of the population, high school graduation rates, students going on to college, and test scores on standardized testing.

One fourth of the adult residents of Williamson (25.5%) did not complete high school. This is a little higher than the statewide percentage (24.8%) and significantly higher than the U. S. population as a whole (19.6%). Over seventeen percent (17.6%) of Williamson residents over the age of 25 years hold a college degree. This is more than the statewide average of 14.8% but less than the national percentage of 24.4%. The high school graduation rate in Mingo County for 2006 was 85.8% which is a little higher than the statewide rate (84.6%).



For the 2005-06 school year, test scores for students in Mingo County indicate that county students achieved at a lower rate than the state averages in all basic subject areas. The chart shows the percent of Mingo County students testing at a proficient level and compares that to the percent of students determined to be proficient statewide. See Chart.

Test data for students attending schools located in Williamson is generally consistent with the county wide levels of proficiency.

Students at Riverside Elementary test a little higher than the county average but the scores of students at Williamson Middle School and Williamson High are under the county average for student proficiency.

Young people in Mingo County appear to be going on to college at a lower rate than the state average. One measure of the college going rate is the percentage of high school graduates who take college entrance exams. In 2006, 58.4% of Mingo County high school graduates took the ACT college entrance exam; the percentage of students taking the ACT test statewide is much higher at 64%. The composite ACT score for Mingo County students at 18.9 is below the state average of 20.6.

*Based on the measures considered for Educational Attainment and Access, Mingo County students appear to be less prepared when they enter school, do less well in attaining proficiency in basic subject areas, and go on to college at a lower rate than is the case, on average, across the state.*

The Blueprint Team may want to further explore measures related to educational attainment and access with the larger community to determine if this is an area where Williamson residents need to build local capacity.

### **Community Safety:**

The overall crime rate for West Virginia as a whole is one of the lowest in the nation at 28.98 crimes per 1,000 population. Crimes reported by the Williamson Police Department are at a rate of 29.21 per thousand population which is just over the state average (2005 Uniform Crime Report). The Williamson Police Department reported 2.49 drug and narcotics offenses per 1,000 pop. in 2005. The violent crime rate for the city of Williamson in 2005 was 4.04 per 1,000 pop. which is higher than the state average of 2.73 per 1,000 and approaches the national rate of violent crime which is 4.69 per 1,000 pop.

There are seven sex offenders with a Williamson address listed in the WV Sex Offender Registry. This is a rate of 2.20 per 1,000 population which exceeds the state average of 1.39 per thousand.

Based on the most recent crime statistics available (2005) Williamson appears to have a higher incidence of crime than the state averages. Of course, not all safety issues are related to crime and local people are in the best position to assess any safety concerns community residents may have. Discussions with local law enforcement officers could better inform this issue as would discussion with local residents about any concerns they might have.

### **Family Stability:**

Two measures of family stability were researched for the community profile – domestic violence investigations and the ratio of marriages to divorces. Mingo County statistics indicate a rate of investigations related to domestic violence of 8.99 per 1,000 households. This is about half the statewide rate of 16.39 per thousand households. The ratio of marriages to divorces in Mingo County is 1.45 marriages to every divorce. This is at the statewide ratio of 1.49 marriages to each divorce.

A third measure of family stability that was selected for review is the rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect, however; reliable data at the county or local community level is not publicly available. Local child protective services workers can provide considerable insight into this issue.

Families in the Williamson area appear to be reasonably stable based on the limited measures available. If family stability is an area of concern for the local Blueprint Team it is recommended that local social services professionals are consulted to obtain information about the extent of family problems in the community.

### **Economic Security:**

Perhaps the most telling component of family and individual well being is economic security. Unemployment, poverty, and a general lack of financial resources places families under severe stress that often leads to other problems. This, in turn, leads to depleted levels of human capital within the community. Five measures of economic security are included in the profile.

The most recent (January 2007) unemployment rate for the area is 4.9%. This is between the state and federal rates of 4.8% and 5.0% respectively. Additional information about jobs and local industries will be discussed later in the profile in relation to financial and manufactured capital.

The poverty rate in Mingo County is higher than the state as a whole and much higher than the national average. In 2003, 24.7% of all families in Mingo County were estimated to have household income below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate for all families in West Virginia (2003 estimates) is 18.5% and for the nation it is at 12.7%.

More local poverty statistics for families residing in Williamson are available from the 2000 Census data. The 2000 census is the most recent accurate data available for local rural areas and it reflects the poverty situation in Williamson in 1999. The poverty rate in the city of Williamson for all families reflected by the 2000 census was 22.1% (nationally it was 9.2%); however, the rate for families with children living in Williamson was much higher - 42.1% in poverty in 1999. Families with young children (under the age of five) are in even worse financial shape as is reflected by a poverty rate of 67.4%. Nationally, 13.6% of families with children under age five were in poverty in 1999. The 2000 census data also documents a total of 64 families living in Williamson headed by a female with no husband present who have a child under age five years. All of these families (100%) were below the poverty level in 1999.

Per capita annual income in Williamson in 1999 was \$15,303. This is lower than the state average of \$16,477 and much lower than the national average of \$21,587. These figures from the 2000 census are dated yet they provide a basis for comparison of average personal income per resident.

Data from 2000 also indicate that 26.3% of households have a severe burden related to housing costs as defined by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A severe cost burden is defined as low income families who pay more than 50% of their household income for housing. This rate in Williamson was higher than both the statewide percentage with severe housing cost burden (21.3%) and the national figure of 25.8% of households.

A further measure of economic security is the *Universal Living Wage*. This is the hourly wage necessary to afford housing based on Fair Market Rents in any particular area assuming that someone works 40 hours per week and 52 weeks per year. For Mingo County this wage is \$7.75 per hour for a one bedroom apartment. The current federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour although the Congress appears ready to increase it to \$7.25 over a two year period.

Generally speaking, many families in Williamson do not appear to be economically self-sufficient. The quantitative data tells us that a high number of families with children in Williamson do not have an adequate level of household income and that this is a severe problem for families with young children and families headed by unmarried females.

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Health and Well Being:**

Responses to the survey from nine members of the Blueprint Community Team average -0.07 for the statements related to community capacity in this domain. (See appendix A for an explanation of survey scoring and interpretation of this average score.) The average score for this domain would indicate that there is little or no capacity present within this domain when the five components of health and well being discussed above are considered together. The team perceptions about health and well being of local people indicate that people in the community feel safe; however economic security, the health of local people, and education are all seen as deficit areas (negative capacity scores). These perceptions are generally reflected in the more objective quantitative data discussed above.

### **Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities of Local People**

Indicator areas related to using and enhancing skills knowledge and abilities of local people, citizen engagement, and data driven decision making are included in this domain of capacity. Some information is available in existing data sets that can provide us with county level measures of citizen engagement; however, measures relating to using and enhancing skills knowledge and abilities will, at least for the present, need to be identified locally. The perception of Blueprint Team members as reflected in the survey results is one measure of this domain and team members are encouraged to consider relevant local information and knowledge to identify other measures.

There are no current depositories of local information about how people use and enhance their skills. The Blueprint Communities Training Program is an example of local people (the Blueprint Team) enhancing their skills and the participation of team members in the program is a positive measure of local capacity in this area. The level of participation on local boards, task teams, work teams etc. is another such measure that can be assessed locally. Other useful measures of this domain where information may be known to the Blueprint Team or information could be collected locally might be participation of citizens in community meetings; training programs offered locally in areas of leadership development, group facilitation or planning; number of local community members who have participated in such training, or observations about how local government or town meetings are conducted. Are there local opportunities to gain leadership skills? Are citizens encouraged to participate in local town meetings? Are diverse parts of the community represented and are all opinions welcomed?

### **Citizen Engagement:**

Measures of citizen engagement have been compiled for consideration by the Blueprint Team members. Some information is available in existing data sets related to participation in elections and volunteerism. Participation in elections is often used as a measure of citizen engagement. In 2004 (a

Presidential election year), 61.2% of registered voters in Mingo County cast a ballot. Voter turnout in Mingo County was a little under the statewide voter turnout of 65.9%. An additional measure of citizen participation is the percentage of the voting age population that actually registered and exercised their rights as a citizen to vote for their elected officials. In Mingo County the percentage of the voting age population that voted in the 2004 election was also less than the state or national turnout. 51.6% of the voting age population voted in Mingo County as contrasted to 54.7% in West Virginia and 55.5% across the nation.

Volunteerism is another measure of this domain for which we have some limited data. Mingo County residents participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program at a lower rate than the state average – 3.4 volunteers per 1,000 population in Mingo County and 13.2 per 1,000 statewide. Another measure of citizen involvement is the number of persons expressing interest in volunteering through the state registry maintained by the WV Commission on National and Community Service. This registry reflects 9.9 Mingo County residents per 1,000 population which is just over the state average of 9.1 per 1,000.

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Knowledge and Abilities of Local People:**

The countywide measures reported above related to voting and volunteerism drawn from available data provide some useful information; however, we are forced for the most part to rely on the perceptions of Blueprint Team members about the level of capacity in this domain as reflected in their survey responses. Based on the survey responses of the team members, a small degree of capacity exists in the Williamson community within this domain. The average score for this domain was +0.11 indicating team members believe some local capacity is present at a low level. Team members did not express a clear consensus of opinion related to the five variables related to local skills, knowledge and abilities. Some team members see more capacity in this area than others. Most team members seem to believe that community meetings are held when people can attend but the extent of community involvement in local issues and the extent of local opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge is not clear based on the survey responses. The team may want to discuss these issues among themselves in order to better understand the different point of view expressed in their survey responses. It may also be useful to develop strategies to build capacity in this domain through local workshops or training programs focused on leadership development, assessment and community planning. Providing opportunities for local citizens to actively participate in issue focused community discussions and planning is another way to build skills and knowledge and also get a diversity of opinion and ideas related to community goals and priorities.

## ***Social Capital***

*“Although some...continue to believe that healthy economies create vibrant communities, in fact, the reverse is more often the case. A strong community is a prerequisite for creating a healthy economy because it alone produces social trust.”*  
(Jeremy Rifkin, 2000)

Two domains of community capacity make up social capital – ***Relationships and Interpersonal Communications*** and ***Community Initiative Responsibility and Adaptability***.

These domains address levels of shared values, trust, connectedness, participation, collective vision, leadership planning, and sense of hope in the community. There are currently few if any sources of local data that effectively measure these important components of community capacity. One measure that may be useful was secured from school survey data. Young people in Mingo County were asked if they participate in community activities such as scouts, sports teams, youth clubs, etc. Participation in such activities is one way social capital is built among young residents in the community. For 2004-05, students at Williamson Middle School and at Williamson High School reported that they participate in community activities at a higher rate than the statewide rate for all students. The rate of participation at the middle school was 34.2% of students and at the high school it was 30.2%. The statewide rate is 26.7%.

With the exception of this one measure of relationship building in the community state and national data sets are not particularly useful in measuring this domain. We can gain some insight into this domain of local capacity through the perceptions of Blueprint Team members (survey data). However, the levels of social capital are best considered locally by observing local interactions among people, identifying local leaders, and encouraging a collective vision and plan for the community. Are public issues discussed in local newspapers or community forums? How many adults attend youth activities? Are community gatherings routine events and are new members of the community welcomed at community events? Are local organizations and local government connected to one another and engaged in joint planning to improve the community? Does the community work (and play) well with other communities in Mingo County? Do community residents resolve disagreements amicably and trust one another? The Blueprint team can develop its own local measures of social capital by asking themselves these types of questions and then asking: how would we know?

Local information can also be gathered by talking to local government officials or agency directors about their vision for the community and how they plan for the future. Is there a collective vision for local development? How many citizens are engaged in discussions about the future? What is the level of resources dedicated to planning by local organizations and local government?

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Relationships and Interpersonal Communications:**

The responses of Blueprint Team members related to this domain of community capacity indicate a low level of existing capacity. The average score for this domain across the five variables is +0.13. Team members generally agreed that there was some level of trust within the community and also agreed that the community is not well connected to outside resources; however the team perception about how local people cooperate with one another and work together is not clear from the team members' survey responses. This is another area the team should discuss among themselves to better understand how they perceive local relationships and the willingness of local people to work together on community projects. Capacity related to relationships and interpersonal communications within the community can be built by engaging more local residents in activities that provide opportunities to build relationships and trust.

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Community Initiative, Responsibility, and Adaptability:**

Team members see this domain as lacking capacity. The overall average score for this domain is +0.07. No strong consensus emerged from the survey responses as some team members saw this domain more positively than others. Team members generally agreed that local people look forward to the future and this sense of hopefulness is an important component of this domain that can be built upon. Issues related to a collective shared vision for the community, the level of participation by local citizens in community projects, and diversity of representation on local boards may be areas for discussion by team members to determine if capacity needs to be built in these areas.

Based on the Blueprint Team member responses to survey statements related to social capital, this is an area of capacity that should be further assessed by the team. Specific strategies to build relationships and trust among community members and to increase levels of community involvement in planning and priority setting may result in a more prosperous community.

## *Cultural Capital*

### **Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life**

This is another domain where existing databases offer little useful information. The 2000 census data does reflect some degree of cultural diversity within the population of Williamson. 13.6% of the population report themselves as Black or African American and 34 persons are of Asian descent (1.0%). Almost four percent (3.8%) of the town population reported speaking a language other than English in the home.

Mingo County has one museum located in the county and five libraries. Forty-seven people in the county are employed in the Arts, Entertainment, or Recreation sector.

Quality of life issues are best assessed locally. Crime rates (previously addressed in the profile as a safety issue) and issues related to clean air and water that will be discussed under the heading of environmental capital are aspects of quality of life in addition to local heritage recreational opportunities and cultural opportunities.

#### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life:**

Blueprint Team members believe the quality of life in Williamson is generally good. The average score for this domain is +0.47. This score indicates a moderate level of capacity related to cultural diversity and quality of life. Heritage preservation and local values are seen as strong components of this domain while access to recreational opportunities is seen as weak. There was no clear consensus about how team members see access to cultural enrichment in the community. Team members may wish to assess how other community members see these issues as plans are developed. Do community residents want more local recreational opportunities? If so, what types of recreational facilities would be used by community residents? Is access to live music performances and the arts important to local people? How can the positive aspects of good quality of life issues be leveraged to assist with community development? What types of projects or activities could increase the quality of life and cultural diversity within the community?

## *Financial and Manufactured Capital*

### **Investments in Community and Financial Resources**

A significant number of measures have been identified from existing data sets to describe levels of community capacity and current conditions within this domain.

#### **Financial Investments:**

Data obtained from the WV Secretary of State Business Organization Information System indicates that 10.53% of the for-profit businesses in Williamson have been started within the past year. The statewide percentage of new business start ups is 4.18%; thus, the level of new business activity in Williamson may be an indication of positive economic activity within the community. It is difficult to interpret this measure without knowledge of the local community since some new business startups could be a result of other business failures. This is an area where local knowledge is necessary to interpret this measure in the context of local business activity.

Data from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act database lists 12 new home mortgages per 1,000 housing units in the Williamson area during 2005. Local banks could provide further insight into the level of new homes being constructed in the area. The state average for new home mortgages in 2005 was 32 per 1,000 occupied units and the national figure was 75 per 1,000.

#### **Local Financial Resources:**

One measure of local financial resources is deposits in local banks. Local information for Williamson residents is not easily available but this measure for Mingo County was calculated from available 2004 data at \$14,627 in per capita deposits (average deposits per county resident). The state average per-capita deposit is significantly lower at \$12,472. Mingo County has thirteen banking locations in the county and a total of \$398 million dollars in total deposits (2004 data).

Another measure of local financial resources is the average wage per job. Mingo County residents' earnings are, on average, above the state average at \$35,935 per job held. The state average is \$30,879 (2005 data).

These measures tend to indicate a higher than average level of local financial resources in Mingo County than may be available in many other parts of the state.

#### **Access to Outside Financial Resources:**

Several measures of federal spending and investment of federal financial resources in the area have been identified. This data is most recently available for Mingo County (2004). One measure of federal investment in the county is federal transfer receipts. These federal payments are made to individuals for unemployment benefits, retirement, social security, disability payments, and other forms of payment not attributable to earnings from work. The "federal personal transfer receipts" for 2004 averaged \$6,870 for each person in the county (per-capita receipts). This is close to the state average of \$6,929. Mingo County residents are about as dependent on federal government programs as people in the state as a whole.

Federal per-capita spending in Mingo County for salaries and benefits of federal employees, military personnel, procurement contracts, grants and other forms of investment was \$9,833 per person in 2004. This is more federal investment than the state per capita average of \$8,364. Federal grant funds received in Mingo County during 2004 totaled \$90,222,000. These grant funds include grants made directly to local governments or organizations as well as federal grant funds distributed by state government to the county.

**Business Efficiency:**

One measure of business efficiency is retail sales. The Economic Census of 2002 reported per capita retail sales in Mingo County as \$4,502. Statewide average retail sales were more than twice this amount at \$9,277 per capita. Mingo County residents most likely purchase a substantial portion of their goods and services in other counties.

Job creation and changes in net employment are other measures that can be used to assess business efficiency within the county. Some job loss was experienced in the number of county-based jobs over the four year period from 2000 to 2004. During that period there was a loss of 751 jobs; however, during 2005, Mingo County had a net gain of 226 jobs. There were 575 new jobs created in 2005. Average new hire earnings are reported at \$2,863.25 per month. Data available indicates a fairly stable level of total jobs within Mingo County in recent years. These measures for the county would tend to indicate a fairly stable job market within Williamson during 2005; however, local conditions within the town could be different that the county figures would indicate.

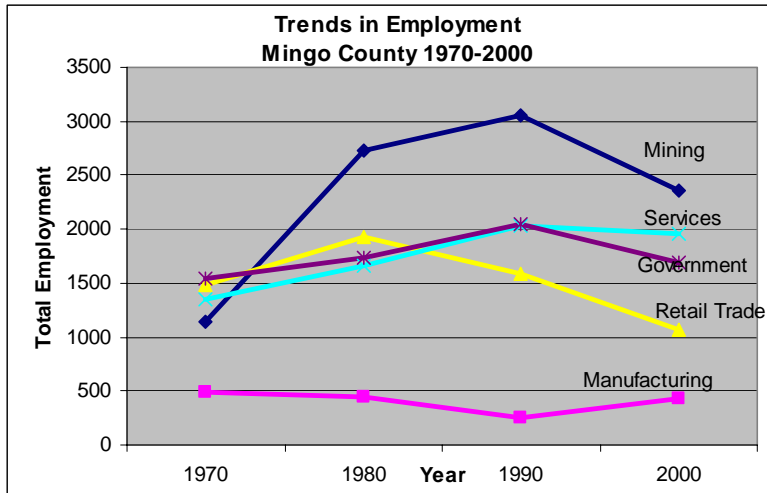
**Business Diversity:**

Business diversity within the county is reflected in the number and types of business establishments and in the types of jobs available. Non-farm business establishments in Mingo County in 2004 totaled 549. The 2002 Survey of Business Owners conducted by the Census Bureau included 504 businesses with employees. Within the city of Williamson, the WV Secretary of State Business Organization Data System lists 209 for-profit businesses and 47 registered non-profit organizations.

Employment in Mingo County for 2004 (the most recent available data) reflects a total employment of 9,213 persons. 84% of the employment is in private sector jobs while government employment accounts for 16%.

2000 Census data for the town of Williamson reports 1085 local residents (over age 16 yrs.) employed. Williamson residents' occupations in 2000 were listed as:

- Management and Professional – 39.5%
- Service Occupations – 18.2%
- Sales and Office – 28.7%
- Farming, fishing & forestry – 0.0%
- Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance – 8.2%
- Production, Transportation – 5.3%



**Trends in Employment 1970 to 2000:**

If we look closer at selected industries over a thirty year period the total employment in Mingo County within these particular industries increased during the period (7,972 total jobs in 1970 and 9,948 jobs in 2000). Local trends in type of employment are significant in understanding the local economic conditions. Employment in mining increased from 1970 to 1990 and then fell from 1990 to 2000. Jobs in the service sector and government jobs show an overall increase during the period while jobs in retail trade fell. The relatively few manufacturing jobs available were stable during the period. Data in recent years indicates that the number of jobs have continued to trend in the same directions during the period 2000 through 2004 as was seen between 1990 and 2000. See chart showing trends in these selected industries over the thirty year period.

the service sector and government jobs show an overall increase during the period while jobs in retail trade fell. The relatively few manufacturing jobs available were stable during the period. Data in recent years indicates that the number of jobs have continued to trend in the same directions during the period 2000 through 2004 as was seen between 1990 and 2000. See chart showing trends in these selected industries over the thirty year period.

**Cultivating Entrepreneurship:**

Limited data is available in this area. Some measure of entrepreneurship within the town of Williamson may be implied from the 7.1% of residents that owned their own business in 2000 although this statistic may not be directly related to entrepreneurial activity.

**Community Resident Assets:**

Resident assets may be measured to some extent by looking at the value of owner occupied housing. For most home owners their home is the greatest asset they have. In 2000, 55.5% of Williamson residents owned their homes. This is below the state average of 75.2% and the national home ownership rate of 66.2%. The value of owner occupied homes in Williamson is low compared to state and national average values. The average value of the homeowner’s property in Williamson was \$68,310 in 2000 while the average value of owner occupied housing statewide was \$86,995 and nationally it was \$158,934.

The average value of farm land and buildings in Mingo County is much less than state averages although census data also indicates that there are few if any working farms in the county. The 2000 census of agriculture documents an average value for farm land and buildings in Mingo County of \$33,722. The average value of farm land and buildings in West Virginia was \$231,999.

**Community Infrastructure:**

Community infrastructure is an area where local resident knowledge is generally better than available statistics drawn from large data sets. Blueprint Team members can most likely assess infrastructure issues fairly accurately based on their own local knowledge or by gathering local data related to public buildings, highway repairs, the age of water and sewer systems, new school facilities, etc.

The 2000 census data provides some information about housing in Williamson. Over sixty percent (62.1%) of the housing units were built prior to 1960 and 31.4% were built in 1939 or earlier. Most occupied houses are heated with natural gas (61%) or electricity (36.4%) and 21 occupied housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities in 2000.

The percentage of workers in Mingo County who commute outside the county to work is 16.8%. This is below the state average (20.2%). Average travel time to work is a little more than the state average at 29.6 minutes. Net commutation (persons coming into the county to work minus those leaving to work) is +476. These figures tell us that most Mingo County residents work at locations in the county.

Other measures of local community infrastructure should be examined by the Blueprint Team. One measure of the increase in local assets is the number and type of building permits sought by local residents. This data should be locally available and is good measure of investment being made to increase the value of homes or business property.

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Investments in the Community and Financial Resources:**

Survey responses of the Blueprint Team members reflect a low to moderate level of capacity in this domain. The average score for this domain was +0.27. As is the case with other domains addressed through the survey, some Blueprint Team members perceived elements of this domain differently than others. Team members agreed that a good business idea would be supported by local banks but there was a lack of consensus about whether local residents had opportunities to learn about starting a business. Some team members do not think local businesses generally do well in the community. Increasing entrepreneurial skills through some type of training and/or mentoring and other activities related to promoting entrepreneurial activity in the community may be a way to build additional capacity in this area.

## *Environmental Capital*

### **Sustainable Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits**

Local environmental issues are another area where existing data sets are not particularly useful for local communities. Information about environmental quality is available from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Environmental Protection as well as the State Department of Natural Resources but it is often reported for regions or metropolitan areas and the data is difficult to interpret for relevance to local rural areas.

Recent grant awards (for 2007) from the REAP Office of the State Department of Environmental Protection to address environmental issues did not address any projects in Mingo County. These grant awards to address environmental issues are a measure of local activity related to environmental issues within the county but the absence of any grant awards in the county is not necessarily an indication of lack of such activity.

The percentage of surface waters with impaired or threatened uses is 23.8% in Mingo County. This is the eighth highest county percentage in the state and county residents may wish to explore water quality issues further as they work to preserve the environmental capital present in the area. The highest percentage of impaired or threatened surface waters for counties in West Virginia is 55.1% and the lowest is 5%.

There was no information available for Mingo County related to toxic releases into the environment from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. No releases of toxic chemical substances into the air or landfills were reported within the county.

There were no significant environmental clean up sites listed for the Williamson area in state and federal databases.

Local environmental issues may be monitored and potential problems identified through local projects to monitor water quality and bio-diversity. Local schools might be encouraged to conduct tests on local streams or conduct wildlife counts as student science projects. Recycling is another area of activity that can help to maintain a high quality environment. Any local environmental organizations operating within the area should be included in visioning and planning for local development.

### **Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Sustainable Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits:**

This domain of community capacity is seen by the Blueprint Team members as an area of low to moderate capacity with an overall score of +0.27. Four of the five variables used to calculate the team perception about this domain were seen as positives. The Blueprint team believes local residents see environmental issues as important considerations in planning for development but there was a lack of consensus about whether the environment was really important to people.

## **Appendix A**

### **Methodology and Technical Information**

A Capacity Assessment Framework was used as the basis for constructing a community profile for each of the ten West Virginia Blueprint Communities. The framework is based on a community capitals model and it addresses levels of capacity - that is stores of capital- that might be drawn upon to improve local conditions. Seven domains or “areas of influence” effecting community capacity were defined by a group of stakeholders known as the “Community Development Gathering” in West Virginia during 2006. These domains were adapted from work done by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development at Iowa State University. To the extent possible, measures for each domain were selected from relevant existing databases and these selected measures are discussed in the profile. The community profile discusses current conditions in the context of five capitals, seven domains and defined indicator areas that say something significant about each of the domains of interest. This framework is included as Appendix B.

Compiled and published information at the level useful for local assessment and planning is very limited for some areas of influence that determine local community capacity. Consequently, domains relating to social capital, cultural capital, and environmental capital are more difficult to measure using existing data sets. Given this lack of good information readily available for some of the defined domains, a survey was developed to assess the opinion of key informants about the levels of capacity within each of the Blueprint Communities. Blueprint Community team members were asked to complete the web-based survey in order to secure information about how the team members see their community and identify (from the perspective of the team members) areas where local capacity appears to be present. Because of the makeup of the Blueprint Teams, the Blueprint Community Team members are considered to be appropriate key informants knowledgeable about the local community.

The information discussed in the community profile was compiled from existing data sets and from analysis of survey results solicited from local Blueprint Team members. The profile is a portrait of current community conditions and existing areas of capacity with some historical trend information related to key indicators when such trends in the data appear helpful in understanding current community conditions.

#### **Methodology for Analysis of Survey Responses:**

Blueprint Team members were asked to complete a survey in order to measure beliefs held by each of the team members related to 35 measures of local capacity. The survey is composed of a series of 35 statements. Each of the seven domains of community capacity defined in the framework is measured by five statements contained in the survey. Survey respondents (Blueprint Community Team members) were asked to evaluate each statement based on their personal knowledge of the larger community (county or town designated as a Blueprint Community) and choose the degree to which they agree or disagree with the 35 statements using a five point Likert scale. Responses for each statement can range from “strongly disagree” to strongly agree”.

Individual survey responses were analyzed to produce a composite score for each of the thirty-five variables. For purposes of analysis individual responses were scored from -2 to +2. Responses were scored as follows: “a response of strongly disagree was assigned a value of -2, disagree was valued at -1, neither agree or disagree received 0 value, a response of agree was valued +1, and strongly agree was assigned a value of +2. The average of the assigned values for each team was then used as the team score for each individual statement (variable). Finally, a score was calculated for each of the seven domains by averaging the team scores of the five variables related to each domain. The score for each domain is based on a total of five variables multiplied by the number of team members responding. Thus, if eight team members completed the survey the score for the domain is based on a total of 40 responses (5 variables X 8 team members). Domain scores can range from minus two (-2.0) if all respondents strongly disagree to plus two (+2.0) if all respondents strongly agree. For any given statement it is highly unlikely that the average response will approach either -2 or +2. In general, positive domain scores indicate capacity is present and negative scores indicate the community lacks capacity in the area defined by the domain. Higher scores are interpreted as indicative of higher levels of capacity.

Since this “capacity score” was derived from the opinion of a small number of key informants, it is reflective only of the collective belief or opinion of the Blueprint Team members about the level of capacity that exists within the designated Blueprint Community. Survey results are used to supplement the more objective quantitative data related to community capacity when such data is available.

## Appendix B - Framework for Assessing Community Capacity

<i>Capacity Domains (Areas of Influence)</i>	<i>Indicator Areas</i>
<i>Human Capital</i>	
<b>1. Health and Well-Being of Local People</b>	1(a) Healthy People 1(b) School Readiness 1(c) Educational Attainment & Access 1(d) Community Safety 1(e) Family Stability 1(f) Economic Security
<b>2. Skills, Knowledge, and Ability of Local People</b>	2(a) Using Skills, Knowledge, Abilities 2(b) Enhancing Skills, Knowledge, Abilities 2(c) Citizen Engagement 2(d) Data-driven Decision Making
<i>Social Capital</i>	
<b>3. Relationships and Interpersonal Communication</b>	3(a) Shared Values 3(b) Participation 3(c) Internal Connectedness 3(d) External Connectedness 3(e) Trust 3(f) Ability to Solve Problems
<b>4. Community Initiative, Responsibility, and Adaptability</b>	4(a) Shared Vision 4(b) Leadership 4(c) Planning 4(d) Building on Local Resources 4(e) Seeking alternative ways to improve 4(f) Sense of Hope
<i>Cultural Capital</i>	
<b>5. Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life</b>	5(a) Heritage 5(b) Arts 5(c) Recreation 5(c) Spirituality
<i>Financial and Manufactured Capital</i>	
<b>6. Investments in Community and Financial Resources</b>	6(a) Financial Investments 6(b) Local Financial Resources 6(c) Access to Outside Financial Resources 6(d) Resource Mobilization 6(e) Business Efficiency 6(f) Business Diversity 6(g) Cultivating Entrepreneurship 6(h) Community Resident Assets 6(i) Community Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing</li> <li>- Facilities</li> <li>- Water/Sewer</li> <li>- Transportation</li> <li>- Communications</li> </ul>
<i>Environmental (Natural) Capital</i>	
<b>7. Sustainable, Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits</b>	7(a) Air Quality 7(b) Water Resources 7(c) Biodiversity 7(d) Soil 7(e) Landscape (sense of place) 7(f) Ecosystem Knowledge and Appreciation

## Appendix C

### *Data Sources and References*

Data and information used within the community profile has been drawn from a wide range of secondary data sources. For purposes of the Blueprint Community Profiles, secondary data is defined as information and statistics collected by government agencies or private organizations that are useful in describing and measuring the defined domains or areas of influence of local community capacity.

A great deal of data is readily available through internet based websites and documents that are related to the defined domains of community capacity. Some of this data is readily available at the local community (municipality) level, some is available at the county level, and some is only available for regional or statewide areas. Some of the information referenced within the community profile is reported at the county level since that is the geographic unit of analysis that is generally available to the public. Local communities also operate within the larger context of the county in which they are located. Thus, county level data is often useful in providing measures of local capacity and community conditions. In cases where the designated Blueprint Community is a town or city, information is reported for that smaller geographic area when the specific small area measure could be obtained.

Over fifty data sets were reviewed in order to identify relevant measures that would provide local Blueprint Teams with meaningful information about their community. The information compiled within the profile paints a portrait of current community conditions and provides guidance for planning and priority setting. Since the data profile is organized under seven areas of influence (or domains) that collectively define community capacity, the profile also provides some level of insight into specific areas (domains) where local capacity may need to be built.

Much of the information reported in the community profile is drawn from publicly available data sets published on the Internet by federal and state agencies. Local Blueprint Teams may wish to access one or more of these sites for further information or more detailed information about specific local issues determined to be an area of concern or identified as a priority for local planning. The community profile provided for use by the Blueprint Team is designed to provide a general overview of some of the more relevant measures of local conditions and community capacity. Once the Blueprint Team begins to focus on specific areas for community development, additional or more detailed information about that area may be useful. Therefore, the most useful and comprehensive data sites reviewed in developing these profiles are listed on the following pages with web addresses.

## ***Federal Data Sites:***

- United States Bureau of the Census <http://www.census.gov>
  - USA Counties – Provides many data sets from decennial census and annual estimates organized by county  
Web address: <http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml>
  - American Communities Survey – Provides data from the annual American Communities Survey for larger geographic areas. Data is generally not available from the ACS for rural counties and towns in West Virginia.  
Web address:  
[http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?\\_program=ACS&\\_submenuId=&\\_lang=en&\\_ts=](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts=)
  - Consolidated Federal Funds Report – Provides information about a wide range of federal expenditures at state and county levels.  
Web address: <http://harvester.census.gov/cffr/>
  - Quarterly Workforce Indicators – Provides current and recent information about economic indicators and employment by quarter (every three months).  
Web Address: <http://lehd.dsd.census.gov/led/datatools/qwiapp.html>
  
- United States Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis – Provides detailed information about economic conditions, jobs, employment, labor markets, industry types, etc.  
Web Address: <http://www.bea.gov/>
  
- United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics – Provides information about labor markets, employment, occupations, economic conditions, etc.  
Web Address: <http://www.bls.gov/>
  
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Toxic Release Inventory – Provides detailed information about reported releases of toxic chemicals into the environment.  
Web Address: <http://www.epa.gov/triexplorer/>
  
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Call Reports and Thrift Financial Reports – Database of information about all FDIC insured Banks and Savings and Loans that contains detailed financial status reports by quarter.  
Web address: [http://www2.fdic.gov/call\\_tfr\\_rpts/search.asp](http://www2.fdic.gov/call_tfr_rpts/search.asp)
  
- United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service – Data by county about farms and farm products.  
Web address: [http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census/Create\\_Census\\_US\\_CNTY.jsp#top](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census/Create_Census_US_CNTY.jsp#top)
  
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting System – Local, state, and national statistics of crime.  
Web address: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/>

## *State Data Sites:*

- WV Department of Health and Human Resources - Bureau for Public Health; Health Statistics Center – Statistics related to births, deaths, marriages, divorces, etc.  
Web Address: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/vital04/index.htm>
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources – Office of Accountability and Management Reporting – Information related to recipients and expenditures for major social welfare programs.  
Web address: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/oamr/DAMRreports.htm>
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources - Bureau for Public Health; Behavioral Risk Factors Survey Reporting – Results of the Behavioral Risk Factors Survey addressing wide range of health status and health behavior indicators.  
Web address: [http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/BRFSS\\_2003/default.htm](http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/BRFSS_2003/default.htm)
- WV Coalition Against Domestic Violence – Statistics on prevalence of domestic violence in West Virginia.  
Web Address: <http://www.wvcadv.org/>
- WV State Police Uniform Crime Reports – Statistics on crime in West Virginia.  
Web address: <http://www.wvstatepolice.com/ucr/ucr.htm>
- Sex Offender Registry – Locations of known sex offenders in West Virginia.  
Web address: <http://www.wvstatepolice.com/sexoff/websearchform.cfm>
- WV Department of Education – Wide range of information about educational facilities, performance, accountability, enrollment, expenditures, personnel, etc.
  - Report Card Data – Accountability indicators, testing data, graduation rates, etc. for every school in West Virginia.  
Web address: <http://wveis.k12.wv.us/nclb/pub/rpt0506/pickreportcard.cfm>
  - West Virginia Education Information System – Detailed statistics for every school and county school district related to personnel, expenditures, facilities, enrollment, needy students, etc.  
Web address: <http://wveis.k12.wv.us/>
- West Virginia Secretary of State Business Organization Information System – Searchable database containing information about types and numbers of businesses registered in West Virginia.  
Web address: <http://www.wvsos.com/wvcorporations/>
- WV Department of Environmental Protection – Information about the environment including air quality, watersheds, waste sites, permits, etc. Information is provided on a regional basis.  
Web address: [http://www2.fdic.gov/call\\_tfr\\_rpts/search.asp](http://www2.fdic.gov/call_tfr_rpts/search.asp)

- WVDEP Enviromap Explorer – Interactive geographic information system containing environmental information for West Virginia regions and local areas including aerial maps (large files).  
Web address: <http://gis.wvdep.org/>
- WorkForce West Virginia Labor Market Information – Information drawn from federal and state data sets related to workforce, employment, and economic conditions in West Virginia.  
Web address: <http://www.wvbep.org/bep/LMI/default.htm>

### ***Private Organization Data Sites:***

- Universal Living Wage – Information about Fair Market Rents and household income levels necessary to afford housing.  
Web address: <http://www.universallivingwage.org/>
- Scorecard – This website compiles a wide range of information related to environmental pollution, air and water quality, and other environmental information about counties and local communities in the U.S.  
Web address: <http://www.scorecard.org/>

### ***Compiled Data Sets and Profiles for Counties and/or Local Municipalities:***

#### **Local Area Data Sets:**

- DataPlace - <http://www.dataplace.org/>
- EPodunk - <http://epodunk.com/>
- West Virginia Development Office State Data Center Profiles of WV places from 2000 Census - <http://www.wvdo.org/business/2000CensusProfiles.html>

#### **West Virginia County Data Sets and Profiles:**

- WorkForce West Virginia County Profiles - <http://www.wvbep.org/bep/LMI/CNTYPROF/DEFAULT.HTM>
- West Virginia Development Office State Data Center Profiles of WV counties from 2000 Census - <http://www.wvdo.org/business/2000CensusProfiles.html>
- West Virginia University Bureau for Business and Economic Research – County profiles of business and economic conditions. [http://www.be.wvu.edu/bber/data\\_profiles.htm](http://www.be.wvu.edu/bber/data_profiles.htm)