



September 16, 2025

Ms. Lorien Lemmon  
Conservation Planner - GIS Coordinator  
Clarke County Planning Department  
101 Chalmers Court, Suite B  
Berryville, VA 22611

Dear Ms. Lemmon:

Thank you for reaching out regarding whether Clarke County should update its Cost of Community Services (COCS) study, originally completed in 2018.

After reviewing the matter, my assessment is that an update at this time is not necessary. The relative fiscal impacts of different land use categories—residential, commercial/industrial, and agricultural/open space—tend to be quite stable over time. Unless the County has experienced dramatic shifts in population, land use patterns, tax structures, or service delivery costs, the ratios and findings from the existing study are unlikely to have changed in any meaningful way.

Given the costs associated with preparing a new study, I recommend relying on the current report until there are significant changes in the County's land use mix or fiscal environment that would justify a fresh analysis. The existing study continues to serve as a reliable tool for illustrating the fiscal value of farmland and open space to Clarke County.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this further or if you need additional context for communicating these points to stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Terance J. Rephann  
Regional Economist