

LAND USE

This plan describes general land use concepts for the future development of Frederick County. It describes the general development patterns that are occurring and those planned for Frederick County. As planning continues each year, more specific concepts will be developed for interchange areas, corridors, rural community centers, and other areas. Such plans will combine planning for land use with planning for roads and facilities.

The primary land use concept in the plan divides the County into rural and urban areas. A major concept is the Urban Development Area. The Urban Development Area defines the general area in which sewer and water services will be provided and in which more intensive forms of development will occur.

In general, areas to be planned for urban development or for other forms of development can be determined based on the location of existing facilities and uses and on the physical characteristics of the land. By carefully evaluating these and other factors, a land use plan can be adopted which is reasonable and sustainable against challenge.

Urban Development Area

There is a need to appropriately designate the general location of planned urban development. This designation should include the areas that will contain more intensive development and that will need to be provided with utilities, improved roads, and other urban facilities. By designating the urban development area and confining urban development to that area, the County can determine where to direct special and intensive efforts at providing facilities and services.

To determine the shape, location, and size of the urban development area, the existing patterns of land use, the suitability of land for development, and the existing and planned sewage facilities must be considered. The drainage areas in the eastern half of the County, including all that might reasonably be provided with sewer and water service, have been evaluated. Each such drainage area has been evaluated according to existing development and zoning, the location of existing sewer and water facilities, the potential for future development, and the availability of land suitable for development. These evaluations have been used to group drainage areas and portions of drainage areas into a reasonable proposal for an urban development area.

It is particularly important that the urban development area contain enough land to accommodate the development that can be realistically expected during the next five to ten years. There is a need to provide for a diversity of types of locations for a wide range of development types. Sufficient land needs to be included in the urban development area to provide a competitive

land market and to provide for consumer choice. In addition, providing sufficient land in the urban development area can decrease development pressures in the rural areas.

There are a number of drainage areas in the County that currently contain sewer and water facilities, including the following:

- Abrams Creek, east of Interstate 81
- Abrams Creek, inside of the Route 37/Interstate 81 loop
- Upper Opequon, east of Interstate 81 and south of the Opequon Creek main branch
- Upper Opequon inside the Route 37/Interstate 81 loop and in the Route 11/Route 37/Interstate 81 interchange area
- Redbud Run inside the Route 37/Interstate 81 loop
- Redbud Run north of Route 37 (Stonewall Industrial Park)
- Wrights Run, west of Route 636
- The Senseny Road area
- Stephens Run (a small portion)
- Buffalo Lick Run (western portion)
- Sulphur Springs Run (western portion)

These areas should be included in the urban development area. The boundaries of these areas can be easily defined where they follow drainage divides. However, in some cases boundaries are not defined by drainage divides and need to be defined in some other way, such as by following roads, streams, and other features.

Combining the above drainage areas, we can estimate that there are over 16,000 acres of land contained in the proposed Opequon plant service area. Within this area there are 2,701 dwellings, 1,230 acres of land vacant and zoned RP (with a potential of approximately 3,700 new dwellings on the land currently zoned RP), and a total of 13,544 acres vacant. There is obviously sufficient land in this area to contain the new dwellings that can be accommodated using planned facilities.

Because it is developed in a large lot suburban pattern, the Apple Pie Ridge area is included in the urban development area. However, there is no current intention to serve that area with public sewerage.

It is not necessary to include the Hiatt Run and Clearbrook-Hot Run areas or the Abrams Creek area west of Winchester and east of Route 37 to provide sufficient land. The sewage disposal problems in these areas should probably be solved with smaller, more localized solutions than the extension of new mains. These can be considered for inclusion in the urban development area during the next revision of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Opequon Creek, Stephens Run, and Wrights Run areas can be combined to form the planned Parkins Mill-Stephens Run sewer service area. This area would contain 1,594 dwellings, with 1,199 acres of vacant land zoned RP.

DRAINAGE AREAS

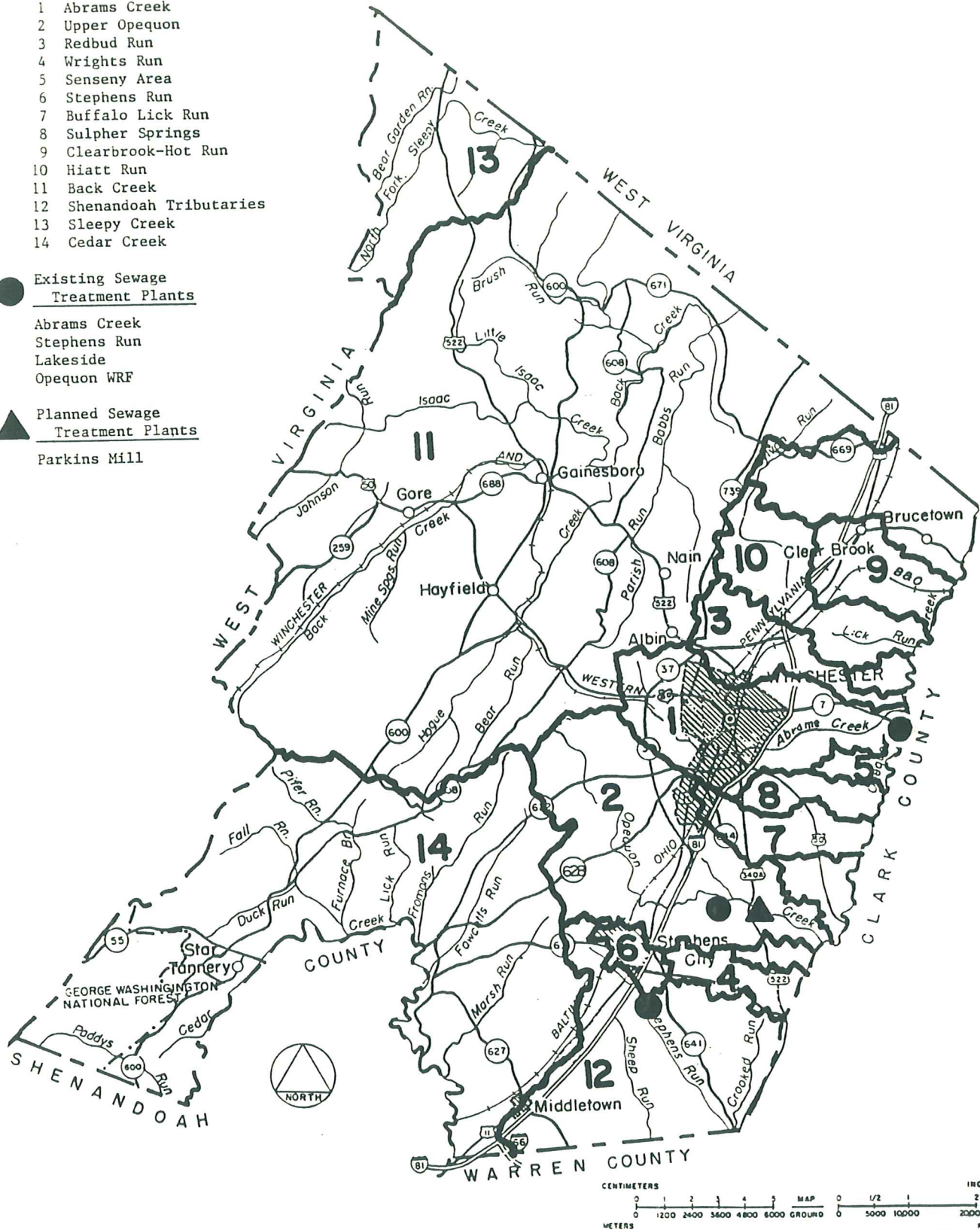
- 1 Abrams Creek
- 2 Upper Opequon
- 3 Redbud Run
- 4 Wrights Run
- 5 Senseny Area
- 6 Stephens Run
- 7 Buffalo Lick Run
- 8 Sulpher Springs
- 9 Clearbrook-Hot Run
- 10 Hiatt Run
- 11 Back Creek
- 12 Shenandoah Tributaries
- 13 Sleepy Creek
- 14 Cedar Creek

Existing Sewage Treatment Plants

- Abrams Creek
- Stephens Run
- Lakeside
- Opequon WRF

Planned Sewage Treatment Plants

- Parkins Mill



FREDERICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

DRAINAGE AREAS

Table 7
Proposed Drainage Areas to be Included
In the Urban Development Area
Frederick County
1987

Drainage Area	Dwellings	Vacant RP Land (Acres)	Potential RP Dwellings	Vacant Land Zoned B&M (Acres)	Total Vacant Land (Acres)	Total Land (Acres)
Abrams, East of 81	1343	434	1302	122	2735	3649
Abrams, Inside 37 & 81	209	155	465	115	1119	1299
Redbud, Inside 37 & 81	224	91	273	642	1258	1587
Redbud, North of 37	79	107	321	490	1649	1986
Sensenev Area	334	138	414	0	1663	1977
Sulphur Springs	280	230	690	190	2056	2640
Buffalo Lick Run	232	75	225	471	3064	3338
Total Abrams Creek-Opequon Regional	2701	1230	3690	2030	13544	16476
Opequon, East of 81, South Branch	652	965	2895	0	2631	2916
Opequon, Inside 37 & 81	106	43	129	85	1595	1907
Stephens Run	133	11	33	35	219	302
Wrights, West of 636	703	180	540	18	458	1077
Total Parkins Mill-Stephens Run	1594	1199	3597	138	4903	6202
Total for Urban Development Area	4295	2429	7287	2168	18447	22678
Consider for addition with later revisions of Comprehensive Plan:						
Abrams, West Winchester	103	0	0	0	2270	2413
East of 37	362	0	0	28	2833	3417
Clearbrook-Hot Run Area	148	84	252	60	3211	3486
Hiatt Run	47	4	12	26	2253	2345
Opequon, East of I-81, North of Opequon Crk.	21	0	0	0	1104	1167
Redbud, East of I-81	41	26	78	0	1258	1443
Wrights, East of 636						
Source: Frederick County Planning and Development						

There could be over 3,500 additional dwellings on land zoned RP. This area contains sufficient land to allow the projected additional dwellings that could be accommodated.

There are other areas that could be potentially included in the Parkins Mill-Stephens Run service area. The Upper Opequon drainage area that is east of I-81 and north of the main branch of the Opequon could be served by gravity flow to the Parkins Mill plant. However, the capacity that is available for expansion in this area is limited. In addition, this portion of the drainage area is undeveloped with no existing road network. This portion of the drainage area could be added to the sewer service area at a later time, particularly when expansion of the Parkins Mill plant is planned.

The eastern portion of the Wrights Run area, along Route 277, could also be added at a later time. The portions of the Opequon area west of I-81 contain important agricultural areas including the South Frederick Agricultural and Forestal District and should not be included in the urban development area.

The proposed urban development area is drawn primarily according to the existing development patterns, existing sewer facilities, and physical characteristics. It is not expected that the urban development area will be fully developed during the planning period under consideration. More urban land needs to be provided than will actually be developed to maintain a competitive housing and real estate market. However, the area has been limited because of the limitations in the capacity of sewage treatment plants, roads and other facilities.

Issues:

There is a need to carefully designate an urban development area which contains appropriate and sufficient areas to accommodate projected urban development and to provide an area in which efforts to provide urban services and facilities can be concentrated.

Development in the Urban Development Area needs to be continuously monitored to determine the need for facilities or for expansion of the Urban Development Area.

Suburban Residential Land Uses

The majority of land in the urban development area will be used for suburban residential uses. Suburban residential land in Frederick County includes land zoned RP, Residential Performance which is served by public sewer and water. Suburban residential development in Frederick County has occurred in the eastern portions of the County in the vicinity of Winchester and the Town of Stephens City.

It has been estimated that there are 4,744 acres of land in the County zoned RP with sewer and water service available. Of this land, 2,221 acres (47%) are estimated to be used for residences and 2,523 acres (53%) remain vacant. Approximately 2,000 acres of this suburban residential land is in the Ash Hollow-Redbud-Senseny Road area to the east of Winchester. Approximately 2,300 acres are in the Fredericktowne-Lakeside area east of Stephens City.

Area	Suburban Land (Acres)	Homes (Acres)	Homes (Homes)	Vacant (Acres)	Vacant (%)	Potential New Homes (3 per acre)
Ash Hollow-Redbud-Senseny	2070	926	1723	1144	55.3%	3432
Inside Rt. 37 I-81 Loop Sunnyside	323	154	186	169	52.3%	507
Kernstown	103	60	106	43	41.7%	129
Fredericktowne-Lakeside	2248	1081	1561	1167	51.9%	3501
Total	4744	2221	3576	2523	53.2%	7569

Source: Frederick County Department of Planning and Development, September, 1987.

It is estimated that there are nearly 3,600 homes in suburban residential areas in Frederick County. Using the average gross density of recent RP developments, 3 units per acre, there is a potential for nearly 6,000 additional dwellings on the existing vacant suburban residential land.

In 1983, the R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-6 residential districts in the Frederick County zoning ordinance were replaced by the RP, Residential Performance zoning district. Performance zoning does not organize land uses into higher and lower districts. Instead, performance zoning uses a minimum number of districts and imposes minimum levels of performance on each land use. In performance zoning there are specific standards concerning how each use is to be provided. Such standards include provisions on buffering and screening,

environmental protection, recreational facilities, dimensional requirements, and other factors. Performance zoning is primarily concerned with insuring that development meets certain minimum standards.

Issues:

There is a need to determine what densities are appropriate for suburban residential development in order to properly design policies and regulations.

Sufficient land needs to be provided for suburban residential development. However, providing too much suburban land may make the provision of adequate roads, sewers and other services inefficient. The County needs to carefully consider the patterns and amount of suburban land in relation to plans for the expansion or improvement of facilities.

Intrusions of non-residential uses or of residential uses of different types or densities can have a significant negative impact on existing residential areas. Appropriate separation between uses is needed.

Development in locations which have steep slopes, floodplains, or other unique environmental features can have a negative impact on the physical environment and on the residents if development is not carried out in a manner that recognizes the need to protect these features.

Performance standards are needed to guarantee the highest quality of suburban development that is reasonable and feasible.

Business and Industrial Land Uses

The urban development area will also contain substantial areas of land used for business and industrial uses. Business and industrial uses are also located outside of the urban development area.

Employment projections suggest that there will be substantial rates of growth in employment in the various economic sectors in Frederick County during the next ten years. These projections of employment growth imply that there will be a corresponding growth in requirements for business and industrial space. There is an ample supply of vacant land zoned for manufacturing, wholesaling, trucking, and office expansion. Some need to expand areas of land zoned for retail, service, and commercial uses at certain locations can be expected.

In Frederick County, most business and industrial uses are located in the vicinity of the Interstate 81 interchanges and interchanges on Route 37. Retail, service, and office uses, along with land zoned for such uses tend to be located immediately adjacent to the interchanges with frontage on the arterial highways. Manufacturing, trucking, and wholesale uses and industrial zoning is also located in the vicinity of the interchanges but usually beyond the retail areas. The warehouses and trucking uses in the B-3, Industrial Transition District and vacant B-3 land tends to be located to the rear of retail areas or in the large industrial areas.

The interchanges at Route 7 and Route 50 east have particularly large areas of land zoned for retail and other business use. The area at the Route 522 North interchange on Route 37 also has substantial such areas.

Table 9 Business and Industrial Land Use in Eastern Frederick County, 1987	
Category	Acres
Retail, Services and Offices	292
Warehousing, Wholesaling Trucking and Construction	317
Manufacturing	344
Vacant B-1 Land	26
Vacant B-2 Land	355
Vacant B-3 Land	14
Vacant M-1 Land	1675
Vacant M-2 Land	320
Source: Frederick County Planning and Development	

In the County there are 292 acres in retail, service or office uses. There are 317 acres in warehousing, trucking and construction uses, and 344 acres of land in manufacturing. There are 1,675 acres of vacant land zoned M-1 Manufacturing Limited, 355 acres of vacant land zoned B-2, Business General, and 320 acres of vacant land zoned M-2, Industrial General. There are small areas of vacant land zoned B-1, Neighborhood Business, and B-3, Industrial Transition.

Most manufacturing uses are located in one of several large industrial areas in the County, including the following:

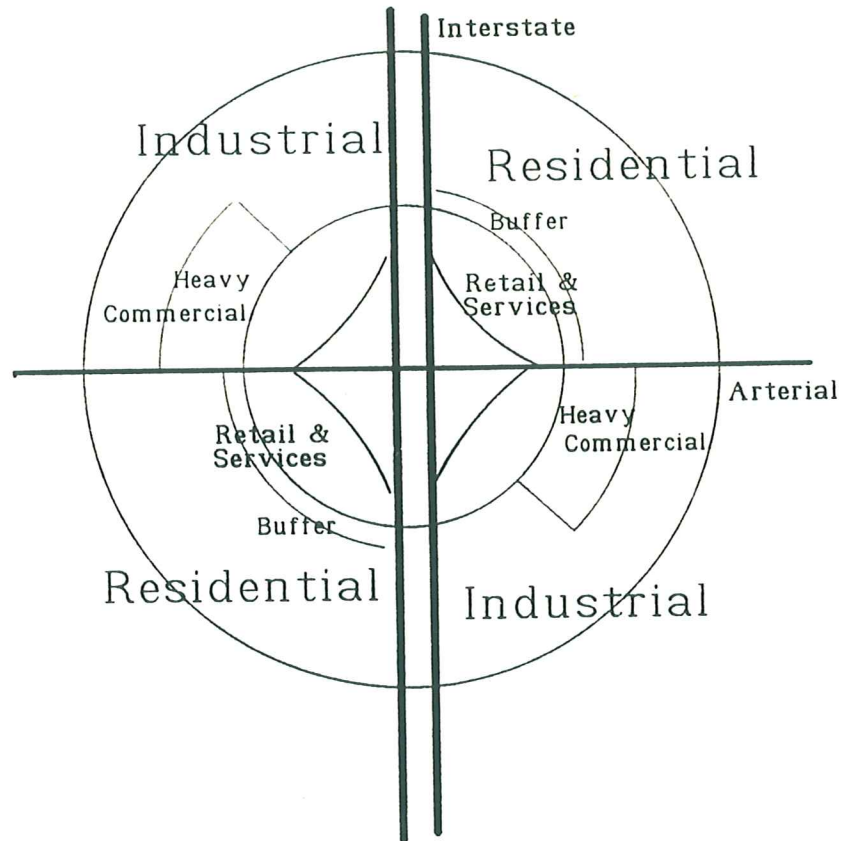
- Stonewall Industrial Park
- Fort Collier, Route 11 North, and other Areas within the Interstate 81 -
Route 37 Loop
- Route 11 South - Kernstown area
- Route 50 East - Airport area

Other substantial industrial areas are located at Clearbrook and Middletown.

Mining for limestone, crushed stone, clay, shale, and sand is occurring in the County. The limestone mining occurs along the limestone belt that is east of Little North Mountain and West of Interstate 81. Shale mining occurs in other areas. Other mining primarily is carried out in the western portions of the County.

Figure 5

Idealized Interchange Development Pattern



Retail and service areas need to be located with easy access to sufficient markets and to have good visibility from major thoroughfares. Retail and service uses generate more traffic on a per acre basis than other types of business. Care should be taken in the placement of new business areas, and appropriate roads and access improvements should be provided to serve such areas. Retail entrances on arterial highways should be limited so that turning movements can be channeled to locations that are properly controlled.

Business and industrial uses need to be provided with sufficient parking, along with safe pedestrian access. Uses on arterial highways should have larger front setbacks than uses on collector roads. Insufficient setbacks on arterial highways can contribute to traffic congestion and confusion and can reduce safety.

Large land areas are needed for well-planned shopping centers and industrial parks. Shopping centers should be designed as architectural units and should not be assemblages of miscellaneous styles. Uses should be grouped to maximize merchandising, and well designed centers are needed to assure comfort, convenience, and safety.

Industrial parks should be planned to provide for a compatibility of uses, good access, and sufficient maintenance and management. Industrial parks should be provided with their own private restrictions. Different types of business and industrial uses need to be separated, and business and industrial uses need to be properly separated from residential uses.

Business and industrial areas need to be served by public sewer and water. Water service is particularly critical in order to provide for fire protection. Certain industrial uses require increased sewerage capacity.

Nothing can contribute more to blight in a commercial or industrial area than uncontrolled outdoor storage of debris, refuse, or other materials. Storage should occur in structures or should be properly screened. In general, open areas should be properly landscaped.

Issues:

There is a need to provide a sufficient quantity and diversity of business and industrial sites to maintain a competitive market.

Planning is needed concerning the possible location of new business and industrial areas.

Policies are needed concerning the limits of expansion of business and industrial areas from the interchanges along arterial highways.

Business and industrial uses need to be separated from residential uses, and certain business and industrial uses need to be separated from each other to avoid problems that such uses can cause for each other.

Necessary facilities and road improvements need to be provided for planned business and industrial uses.

There needs to be an appropriate classification and grouping of business and industrial uses to insure appropriate patterns of development.

There is a need to insure appropriate quality of development through the use of performance and design standards.

Policies are needed concerning how to deal with new requests for large mining operations.

Sufficient sewer and water capacity is needed for business and industrial growth.

Rural Community Centers

Rural community centers are relatively small centers of population and activity in the rural areas of Frederick County. Following the adoption of the 1982 Plan, the Rural Community Center Committee of the Frederick County Planning Commission was formed which proceeded to define rural community centers and to study their characteristics. The Committee held public meetings in 1984 and 1985 to solicit opinions on development policies and developed some recommendations on policies for the rural community centers.

The following criteria were used to designate rural community centers:

1. Proximity to and access to collector or arterial routes.
2. Existing concentration of private commercial services within the center.
3. Existing concentration of public services within the center.
4. Access from concentrations of existing population.
5. Actual population growth in the area.
6. Access from concentrations of potential population (subdivided lots).
7. Proximity to other areas which could act as community centers.
8. Physical characteristics of land in the area.
9. Public perceptions.
10. Existing public facilities, churches, and civic clubs.

The potential rural community centers identified, included the following:

Gore
Reynolds Store
Gainesboro
Round Hill
Clearbrook/Brucetown
Stephenson
Star Tannery
Armel
Shawneeland/North Mountain

Whitacre
 Cross Junction
 Albin.

	Gaines- boro	Round Hill	Gore	Clear- brook Stephenson Bruce- town	Armel
1. Housing					
Single Family Dwelling	122	266	101	346	158
Mobile Homes	13	14	23	229	26
Total Housing Units	135	280	124	575	184
2. Lots Size (Acres)					
Average	13.00	2.76	7.50	3.97	6.23
Average Residential	2.56	1.34	2.36	1.38	1.92
3. Population					
Estimated Population	466	966	427	1948	635
4. Land Use					
Residential	288	338	220	545	354
Commercial	5	36	8	52	3
Mixed	5	46	4	80	7
Industrial	30	19	12	411	0
Public/Semi-Public	63	22	9	98	6
Agricultural/Open	381	352	386	1414	608
Vacant/Wooded	808	284	549	217	473
Total	1580	1097	1188	2817	1451
Source: Frederick County Planning and Development					

Provisions should be made in County policies to recognize the rural centers and to accommodate the differences between each center. Many of the centers are now zoned for agriculture, which is not necessarily appropriate in relation to the functions of some of the centers.

The Committee recommended that Armel, North Mountain/Shawneeland, and Reynolds Store/Whitacre/Cross Junction be treated similarly as the surrounding areas. The recommendations for all other community centers suggest that additional

commercial development will occur in the rural community centers. Only the recommendations for Gore suggest encouraging increased amounts and densities of housing in relation to surrounding rural areas.

Recommendations for all centers, except Gore, suggest that impacts of mobile homes be minimized by increasing separation between mobile homes and traditional housing types. The recommendations for Gore suggest continuing to treat mobile homes similarly as traditional single family types. The recommendations for all rural community centers promote improved public services. The recommendations for the Round Hill Community Center place particular emphasis on increased road improvements and the provision of public sewer and water service. Water and sewer issues are also important in the Clearbrook, Stephenson, and Brucetown areas. Because of recent development, there is a need to reconsider including Albin as a potential rural community center.

Issues:

There is a need to determine to what extent rural community centers will be the primary location of commercial and service uses in the rural areas.

The extent to which additional commercial development should be allowed in each Rural Community Centers needs to be determined.

There is a need to determine whether additional housing growth should be encouraged in each center.

What density of housing development should be allowed in each center?

There is a need to determine whether mobile homes should be restricted in each center.

The extent to which the provisions of public services to rural community centers should be improved needs to be determined.

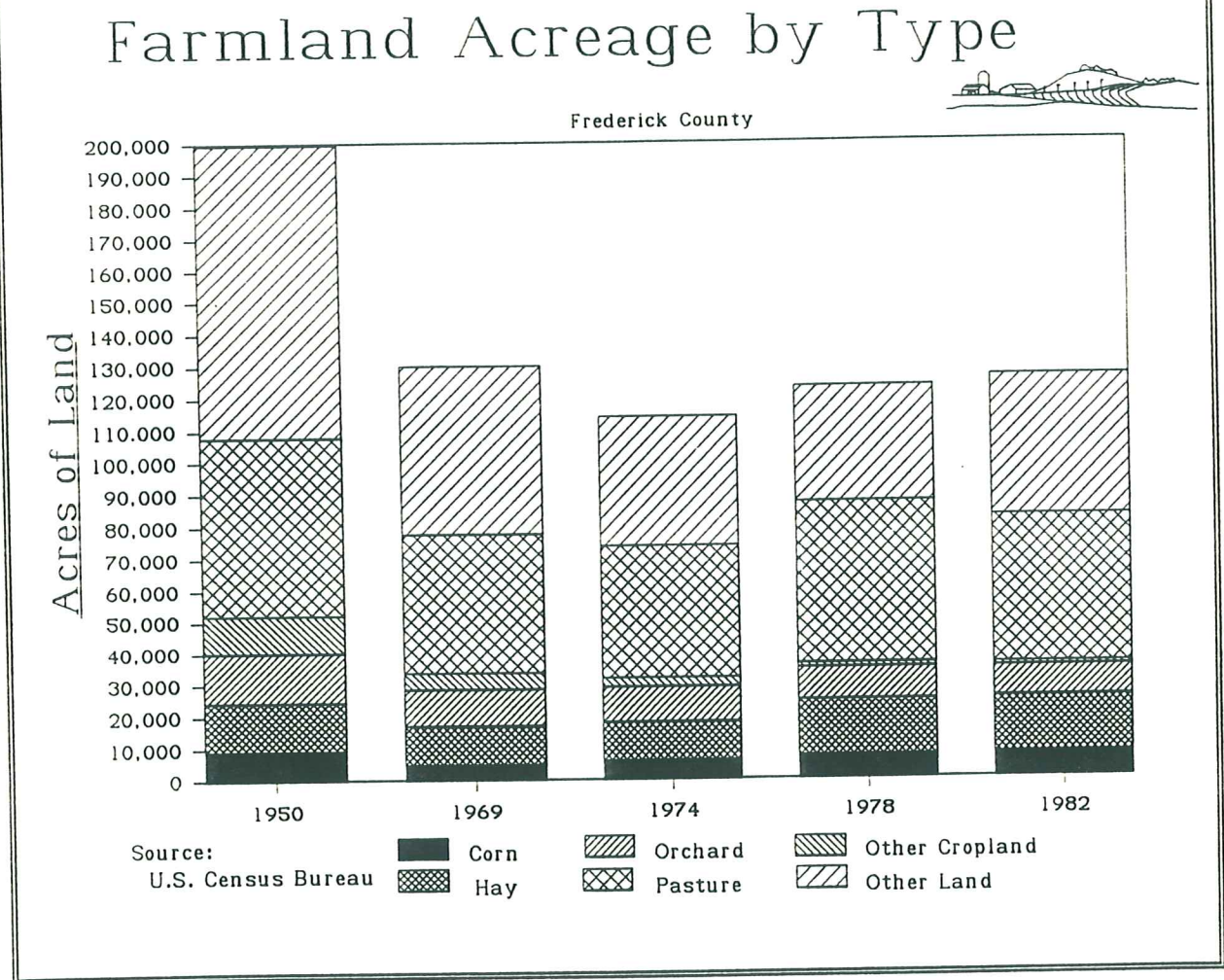
Rural Areas

In terms of land area, Frederick County, Virginia is predominantly rural in character. In Frederick County, rural areas can be defined as all areas not within the designated Urban Development Area of the Comprehensive Plan. In the County the primary land uses in rural areas are agriculture and forests. Rural areas show a population growth pattern consisting of widely scattered, large lot residential development.

Many residents of Frederick County are attracted to the natural beauty and special lifestyle found in rural portions of the County. Excessive or inappropriate development in these areas can reduce their value and attractiveness. At the same time, the rural areas play an important role in the County's economy, through the income generated by agriculture.

Apple production, along with other fruit production, was the largest single category of agricultural production, in terms of dollar value, in the County in 1982. Approximately 58% of the market value of agricultural production in recent years has been fruit production. Most of the rest of the agricultural production involved livestock.

Figure 6



In 1982, according to the United States Agricultural Census, there were 126,087 acres of farmland in Frederick County. The estimates of farmland acreage show that the total amount of farmland decreased steadily and significantly between 1950 and the early 1970's. However, between 1974 and 1982, the acreage of farmland remained relatively constant at about 120,000 acres. Most of the reduction in farmland acreage that occurred in the 1950's and 1960's was probably due to the selling or development of marginal land or forestland for purposes other than farming.

Most of the prime agricultural soils in Frederick County, as defined and mapped by the United States Soil Conservation Service, are located in the limestone belt running north-south throughout the County east of Little North Mountain and west of Interstate 81. Most of the orchards and other cropland in the County are located in this area, although some are located in other areas.

There are a number of support activities in the County that are particularly important to the local agricultural economy. There are at least seven permanent farm markets that sell local produce. There are at least seven farm implement and supply dealers in the Winchester-Frederick County area and at least twelve fruit packing operations.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, there were 130,947 acres of forest land in Frederick County in 1986. The majority of this forest land is private, non-industrial forest land. Since the late 1960's, there has been some reduction in the acreage of forest land in the County. Most of the forest land acreage in Frederick County is located west of Little North Mountain, where forest is the predominant land use.

A relatively large variety of uses are currently allowed in rural areas in the County. Care should be taken to avoid potential conflicts between these various uses. Other localities have found that certain levels of residential uses conflict with agricultural uses. New residents of rural areas sometimes find agricultural and forestry activities objectionable. Excessive residential development can reduce the efficiency of agriculture

Development activities, involving non-agricultural land uses, are occurring on a continuous basis in the rural areas in Frederick County. Most of this development activity is in the form of new residences. An estimated 1,100 new lots, ten acres in size and smaller, have been created in the rural portions of Frederick County since 1982. In addition, there are a significant number of these smaller lots that were created before 1983. It is probably safe to estimate that as many as 2,000 new homes have been constructed in the rural portions of the County since 1982.

The Virginia Code (Title 15.1, Chapter 11) states that Planning Commissions should study the preservation of agricultural and forestal land in preparing the Comprehensive Plan. It also states that zoning ordinances should be designed to provide for the preservation of agricultural and forestal lands. To be effective, attempts to preserve valuable farmland should be consistent with an ongoing comprehensive planning process.

The conversion of agricultural and forestal land to non-agricultural uses is obviously affected by conditions in the national agricultural economy and by the profitability of farming. The County is fortunate at the present time to have a strong and diversified agricultural base. Additional attempts to further diversify agricultural activities might further strengthen the local agricultural economy.

In 1977 the General Assembly passed the Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act. The purpose of this act is to conserve and protect agricultural land and to encourage its development for the production of agricultural and forestal products. Under this act, any landowner may apply to the County to have their land included in an agricultural and forestal district. Such districts are voluntary for landowners but must be approved by the County.

The primary statutory benefit of the agricultural district is that it limits the ability of local governments and state agencies to enact laws or regulations, use eminent domain or take other actions which would interfere with the use of the land in the district for agricultural or forestal purposes. Under the Code, local governments may choose to restrict non-agricultural development in the agricultural district.

Frederick County has the South Frederick Agricultural and Forestal District consisting of 15,014 acres located west of Stephens City, which was first approved in 1980. It includes a total of 86 farmers bound together in a voluntary agreement to preserve farmland. This district is located in the band of prime land east of Little North Mountain. There is a great deal of other land in that band of prime land and at other locations that could usefully be included in agricultural and forestal districts.

Rural land that is developed should be developed in a fashion and at a density determined by the unique natural characteristics of the site and by the capacity of the land to carry the proposed use. A particularly important capacity factor is the ability of the soils on a site to accommodate sewage disposal. Other factors, such as floodplains, and steep slopes, determine the impact the development will have on the rural environment. Rural development densities should be established according to carrying capacity factors.

The carrying capacity concept has already been effectively incorporated by the County into land development regulations in the suburban areas. In the RP, Residential Performance District, only a certain portion of the areas containing certain environmental features can be disturbed. This approach allows natural features to affect how much development can actually occur on a site. This approach could also be effectively applied to rural development. Special care should be taken to avoid the general impacts of large numbers of rural residences.

The large lot approach currently used in rural areas wastes rural land. Lots five acres in size serve no purpose for most single family dwellings. Such lots can potentially take a great deal of land out of productive use without providing sites for very many new homes. An approach that would allow smaller lots while not increasing the total numbers of new dwellings would be appropriate. However, to allow smaller lots, some method needs to be devised to limit the total number of potential lots.

Rural development regulations should provide adequate street access to new home sites in rural areas. If the street situation is not addressed at the time of development, it will certainly have to be addressed by the County and State at some point in the future. Appropriate provisions should also be made for drainage, lot layout, and sewage disposal. Rural residents deserve to be provided with necessary protections and facilities.

Certain commercial uses are appropriate in rural areas. However, as in urban areas, these uses should be properly developed so that safe access is provided and so that adverse impacts on surrounding roads and land are avoided.

Issues:

How should the County support and promote agriculture?

How much and what kinds of non-agricultural activities should be allowed in rural areas?

What kinds of development standards should rural residential and other non-agricultural uses meet?

How can we protect and enhance the rural environment in Frederick County?

Miscellaneous Land Use Issues

Manufactured housing is a major source of affordable housing in Frederick County. In the zoning ordinance, mobile homes are treated identically with traditional single family dwellings in the agricultural zoning districts but are not allowed in the residential districts. Mobile home parks are allowed in the MH-1, Mobile Home Community District. There are requirements for mobile home parks concerning density, lot size, spacing, common areas, and the design of private streets. These requirements are in need of improvement.

Signs can affect the character of areas and the value of properties. Excessive numbers of signs in business areas can make them difficult to notice or read and can make highway frontages cluttered and confusing, causing potential traffic hazards. There should be adequate setbacks for signs. The existing sign regulations in the County do not adequately address these issues.

Conflicts occur when incompatible uses and zoning districts are adjacent. These conflicts can be addressed by requiring sufficient buffer distances between the incompatible uses. Screening, in the form of plants, walls or mounds, can also be used to block the vision of adjoining uses or to reduce noise or other impacts. The density and type of plant materials used, the height of the screen, and the depth of the screening are particularly important factors. A strip of mature woodland of sufficient depth is a particularly effective screen which can be relied on to remain with minimal maintenance.

Issues:

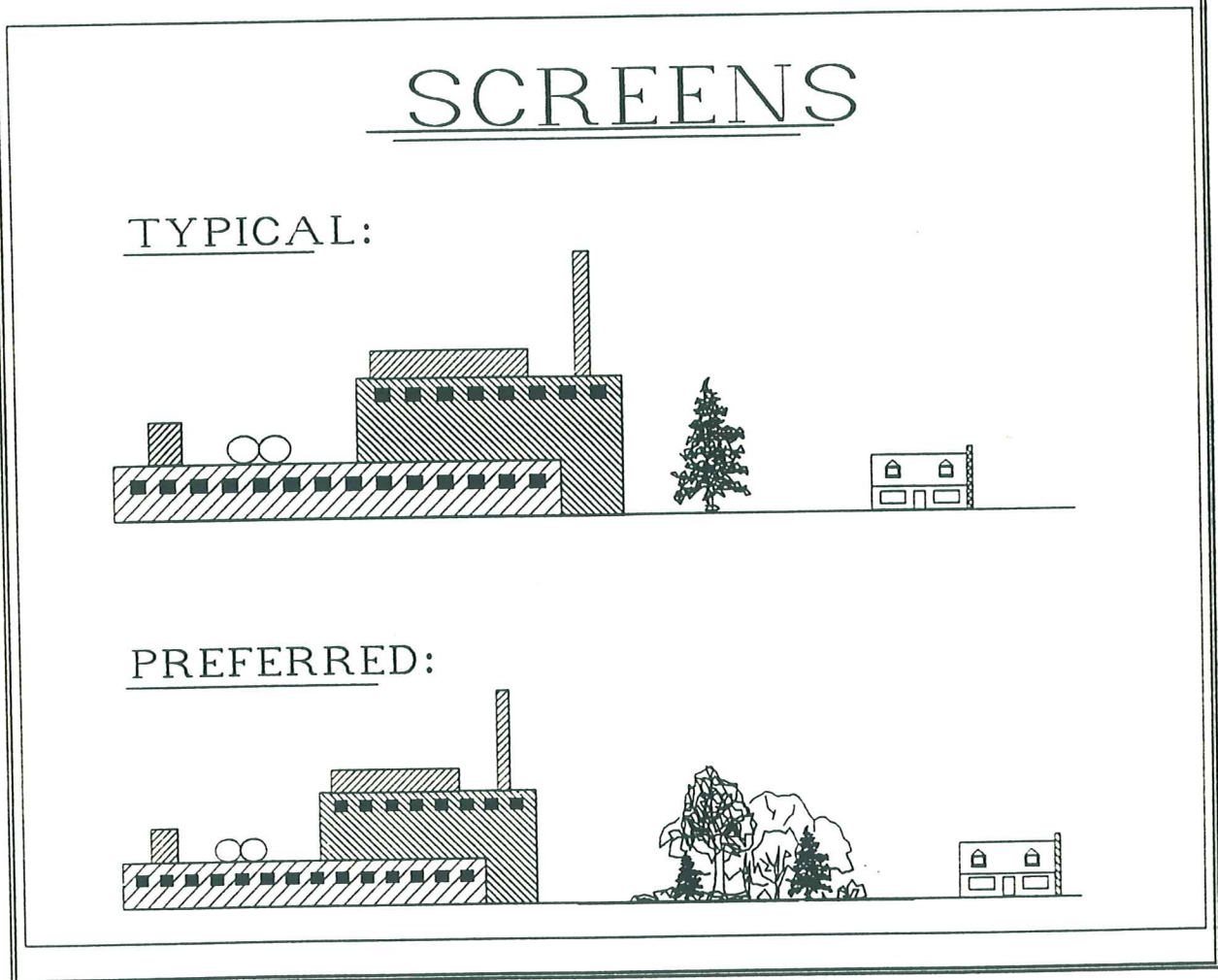
Better policies and procedures are needed to deal with junked automobiles.

Some additional controls on the placement of signs in the business corridors along our primary highways are needed.

How much right does a non-conforming use have to be made conforming through rezoning?

Appropriate measures for buffers and screening are needed.

Figure 7



Residential development is not appropriate in areas adjacent to the airport where noise is above acceptable standards.

If the R-4 district is to be used, improved procedures, plan requirements, and performance standards are needed.

If new R-5 areas are to be established, if existing R-5 areas are to be expanded, or if substantial new development is to occur in R-5 areas, improved procedures, plan requirements, and performance standards are needed.

Land Use Concepts

The following land use concepts are reflected in the land use plan map.










The Urban Development Area will primarily contain areas intended to be provided with sewer and water service. It will contain areas of higher density and intensity development. The Urban Development Area should be primarily confined to the eastern areas underlain by the Martinsburg shale formation. Suburban residential development will be the predominant land use in the urban development area. Special efforts should be undertaken to provide roads and facilities with sufficient capacity in the Urban Development Area. New urban development should be approved in the Urban Development Area when utilities and roads with sufficient capacity have been provided.

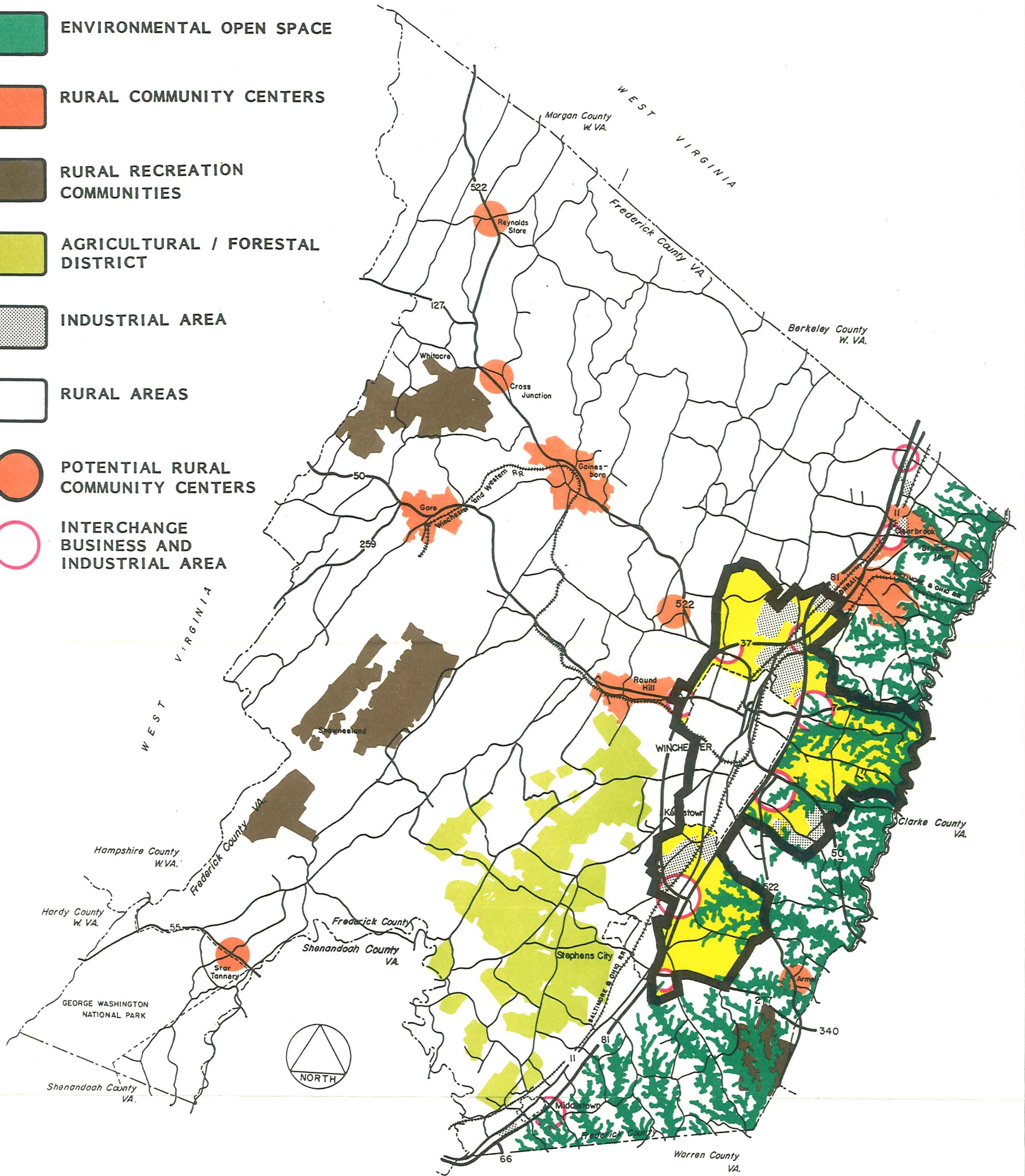
Most of the County will continue to be rural areas used for agriculture, forests, or low density residential uses. Certain types of business and industrial uses may be located at scattered rural locations if appropriate, safe access is available and if adverse impacts on surrounding uses and the rural environment can be avoided. Such business locations will primarily include major intersections or locations with recent or existing business activity. Such rural business and industrial uses should be types of uses that provide services to rural areas or that are more appropriate to rural than to urban areas.

Interchange areas will continue to be centers of business and industrial activities. Uses in each of these areas should be carefully planned to avoid conflicts and to insure that roads and facilities are adequately provided. Well-planned shopping centers are the preferred manner of providing new business areas. Plans should be developed for interchange areas which address land use, roads, and facilities.

Most additional industrial uses should be located in interchange areas and in the vicinity of the existing large industrial areas and parks. Most new industrial areas should be provided in the form of carefully planned industrial parks. Industrial uses should be located where appropriate access and facilities are available. In general, industrial development will follow the interstate 81 and rail corridors.

LEGEND

-  **URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARY**
-  **ENVIRONMENTAL OPEN SPACE**
-  **RURAL COMMUNITY CENTERS**
-  **RURAL RECREATION COMMUNITIES**
-  **AGRICULTURAL / FORESTAL DISTRICT**
-  **INDUSTRIAL AREA**
-  **RURAL AREAS**
-  **POTENTIAL RURAL COMMUNITY CENTERS**
-  **INTERCHANGE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL AREA**



FREDERICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LAND USE PLAN

As land is developed in the urban development area in the eastern portions of the County, the stream valleys are being preserved as environmental open space. This approach contributes to the protection of floodplains and water quality and provides a continuous system of greenspace. This approach should be continued.

Rural community centers are identified. Specific policies have been developed for these centers. Potential rural community centers have also been identified. These should be evaluated and plans should be prepared for each according to need.

The Agricultural and Forestal District is identified. Other areas should be included in such districts.

Large scale, planned residential developments with urban densities that are proposed outside of the urban development area should be reviewed as revisions to the Comprehensive Plan requiring changes to the urban development area boundaries. Additional policies and procedures for planned developments may be considered later after planned development policies and standards are reviewed. Requirements for large scale, planned developments should be reviewed.

LAND USE POLICY

General Policies

Goal 1 - Develop land according to the characteristics of the land and the facilities available.

Goal 2 - Develop land in accordance with standards that provide for appropriate quality of development.

Strategy 1 - Initiate and maintain a process of joint planning with the City of Winchester and the Towns of Stephens City and Middletown for land adjacent to those municipalities.

Strategy 2 - Use performance standards to guarantee development of appropriate quality while promoting creative development.

Strategy 3 - Different types of land uses should be adequately separated.

Implementation Methods:

1. Hold joint meetings between the Frederick County Planning Commission and the Commissions of the City of Winchester and the Towns of Stephens City and Middletown, or use joint subcommittees, to review plans, regulations, and development proposals of joint interest. Communications between staffs on these issues should be increased and formalized.

2. Review ordinances on at least an annual basis to insure that sufficient performance standards are active to provide environmental protection and appropriate quality of development.
3. Review ordinance provisions for buffers and screening. When possible, uses of different types should be separated by natural or man-made barriers such as stream valleys, woodlands or highways. When such barriers are not available appropriate buffers and screening should be used.
4. Revise the ordinances regulating mobile home parks to improve performance standards. Incorporate appropriate buffers and screening between mobile home parks and surrounding uses. Allow the expansion of existing mobile home parks and develop standards for locating new parks.
5. Ordinances should be reviewed to provide adequate standards for all land uses including signs and junked automobiles.
6. The subdivision ordinance should be reviewed to insure an orderly development process and to insure that streets and facilities of appropriate design are provided.
7. Use the Capital Improvements Plan to carefully plan land use according to existing and planned facilities and to provide appropriate facilities for areas planned for development.
8. Developers should be required to prepare masterplans for all major developments in the urban areas. Planned development districts should be reviewed to insure that sufficient performance standards are provided.
9. Policies and standards should be developed to address the likelihood of proposals for major developments outside of the urban development area.
10. Adequate administration and enforcement procedures should be employed to implement policies and regulations.

Urban Development Area

Goal - Confine urban forms of land development to the urban development area.

Goal - Provide sufficient land in the urban development area to provide for a diversity of urban locations and for a competitive market for urban land.

Goal - Provide efficient and environmentally sensitive use of land in the urban development area.

Strategy 1 - Include drainage areas or portions of drainage areas in the urban development area if existing sewer facilities are present or planned in the drainage area, if urban development already exists in the drainage area, and if the physical characteristics of the drainage area are appropriate.

Strategy 2 - Monitor development in the urban development area to insure that sufficient land is available for urban development.

Strategy 3 - Use performance standards in the development ordinances to insure appropriate and environmentally sensitive development in the urban development area.

Strategy 4 - Plan for roads and facilities with sufficient capacity in the Urban Development Area.

Implementation Methods:

1. Use the general urban development area boundaries to evaluate the appropriateness of development proposals. Allow urban and suburban uses in the Urban Development Area.
2. Develop a geographic database for the County which is continuously updated from permit and other information and which can be used to monitor development trends in the County.
3. Using information in annual reports on conditions in the County, review the boundaries of the urban development area on an annual basis.
4. Review the development ordinances to insure that sufficient performance standards are provided for urban development.
5. Insure that Road Improvement Plans and the Capital Improvements Plan recognize the needs of the Urban Development Area.

Suburban Residential Areas

Goal - Provide sufficient land and a diversity of locations for a wide range of suburban housing types.

Goal - Provide sufficient performance standards for suburban residential development to protect the environment, avoid adverse impacts, and provide livable neighborhoods.

Strategy 1 - Provide for sufficient suburban residential land in the urban development area based on the capacity of roads, sewers, and other facilities and on the physical characteristics of the particular site. Allow suburban residential development as the predominant land use in the urban development area.

Strategy 2 - Average housing densities should be maintained at levels similar to those that have occurred in the recent past. Care should be taken to avoid an excessive range of possible densities on particular sites beyond the average densities. Ordinances should be reviewed to insure appropriate densities.

Strategy 3 - Plans and ordinances should be designed to minimize development costs and to encourage efficient patterns of development that will minimize the public costs of development.

Strategy 4 - Performance standards should be used to guarantee the highest quality of suburban residential development that is reasonable and feasible, while allowing and promoting flexibility and innovation. Such standards should provide environmental protection and protection from adverse impacts.

Strategy 5 - Existing residential areas should be adequately separated from non-residential uses or residential uses of different types or densities.

Implementation Methods:

1. Monitor residential development each year to insure that sufficient appropriate sites are available for suburban residential development.
2. Monitor the density of suburban residential developments each year and make appropriate revisions to development regulations to insure that the average densities and range of densities do not increase significantly.
3. Monitor development costs and review regulations to insure that development costs do not increase unnecessarily and to insure that appropriate facilities are provided.
4. Appropriate separation in the form of natural or man-made barriers or buffers and screening should be provided when residential uses adjoin different types of uses. Review ordinances to insure adequate separation.
5. Review development and performance standards on an annual basis to insure that they are protecting the environment, deterring impacts, and promoting development of sufficient quality.
6. Open space should be provided in suburban residential developments to protect environmentally sensitive land, to control density, and to provide open areas for the enjoyment of residents.

Business and Industrial Areas

Goal - Provide sufficient land and a diversity of locations for business and industrial uses.

Goal - Carefully locate and limit business and industrial areas to avoid conflicts with other uses and to avoid traffic impacts.

Goal - Provide sufficient performance standards for business and industrial uses to protect the environment, avoid adverse impacts, and provide quality business and industrial areas.

Strategy 1 - Provide sufficient land and appropriate sites for more intensive forms of business and industrial uses such as shopping centers and industrial parks in the vicinity of limited access interchanges, existing business and industrial areas, and the airport.

Strategy 2 - Provide locations for substantial expansion of retail, service, and office uses in the County.

Strategy 3 - Provide safe and efficient access to business and industrial areas.

Strategy 4 - Provide appropriate regulations and performance standards to properly classify and group business and industrial uses, to promote well planned shopping centers and industrial parks, to provide appropriate separation between different uses, to promote flexibility and creativity in design and to guarantee sufficient quality of business and industrial development.

Implementation Methods:

1. Evaluate business and industrial developments according to the appropriateness of the site in relation to surrounding uses and the interchange development pattern.
2. Develop specific plans for interchange and corridor areas, combining land use and traffic considerations. Provide land for substantial expansion of business and industrial uses.
3. Work with the Sanitation Authority, through the capital improvements planning process, to insure that sufficient sewer and water capacity are available for expansion of business and industrial uses.
4. Review the full range of possible business and industrial uses to insure that potential uses are accounted for and properly classified and grouped.
5. Review performance standards in relation to site design, buffers and screening, road access, environmental protection, and outdoor storage.

6. Review performance standards to determine the extent to which they promote well-planned shopping centers and industrial parks.
7. Allow neighborhood business uses in the vicinity of residential areas. Such uses should be limited to small areas at any particular location.
8. Undertake a study to develop standards to evaluate proposals for new EM, Extractive Manufacturing areas.

Rural Community Centers

Goal - Let identified rural community centers serve as service centers for rural areas in order to encourage their continued value to the County.

Goal - Have policies for each rural community center reflect the particular characteristics of each center and the desires of their residents.

Strategy 1 - Provide for more commercial uses in the Gore, Gainesboro, and Roundhill community centers at a scale and nature that is appropriate for each community center.

Strategy 2 - Provide for individual review and approval of commercial development in the rural community centers.

Strategy 3 - Insure that future residential development is at a scale and density that is appropriate for each community center.

Strategy 4 - Use incentives to encourage housing growth in the Gore community center.

Strategy 5 - Avoid incentives to encourage housing growth in the Gainesboro and Clearbrook-Brucetown-Stephenson community centers.

Strategy 6 - Continue the mixture of traditional single-family detached homes and manufactured homes or mobile homes in the Gore community center.

Strategy 7 - Minimize the impacts of the continued mixture of traditional single-family detached homes and manufactured or mobile homes in the Gainesboro, Roundhill, and Clearbrook-Brucetown-Stephenson community centers.

Strategy 8 - Recognize and implement public improvement needs in the rural community centers.

Strategy 9 - Treat the Armel, North Mountain-Shawneeland, Star Tannery, and Reynolds Store-Whitacre-Cross Junction rural community centers similarly to the surrounding areas.

Strategy 10 - Review the potential for including Albin as a rural community center.

Implementation Methods:

1. Structure plans, ordinances, and land use approvals to recognize the need for more commercial uses in the Gore, Gainesboro, and Roundhill community centers. Review uses allowed in the agricultural zoning districts and allow rezoning and conditional use permit approvals to promote village commercial development areas.
2. Structure plans, ordinances and the capital improvements plan to encourage housing growth and subdivision activity in the Gore community center.
3. Make provisions for the review and approval of commercial and residential proposals in the Gore, Gainesboro, Roundhill, and Clearbrook-Brucetown-Stephenson community centers. Include provisions for notification or advertisement of reviews and approvals.
4. Insure that mobile homes are treated similarly to traditional single family homes in the Gore community center.
5. Allow housing at rural levels and structure the capital improvements plan not to encourage housing growth in the Gainesboro and Clearbrook-Brucetown- Stephenson community centers.
6. Discourage speculative rezoning proposals for commercial and industrial uses in the Clearbrook-Brucetown-Stephenson community center.
7. Recognize the importance of primary highways to the development of rural community centers.
8. Provide improved sewer and water service to existing development in the Roundhill and Clearbrook-Brucetown-Stephenson areas by methods that will promote the land use policies proposed.
9. Undertake a study of the Albin area for inclusion as a rural community center.

Rural Areas

Goal - Maintain agriculture as a significant portion of the County's economy.

Goal - Maintain the rural character of areas outside of the urban development area.

Goal - Provide appropriate performance standards for land development activities in the rural areas.

Goal - Protect the rural environment.

Strategy 1 - Include the promotion and support of local agriculture in general economic development policies and activities.

Strategy 2 - Promote the inclusion of additional land in agricultural districts.

Strategy 3 - Avoid land uses in important agricultural areas that will conflict with agriculture, but allow uses which are appropriate in rural areas and which support agriculture.

Strategy 4 - Provide regulations and performance standards that will protect the rural environment, maintain the character of rural areas and provide rural development of appropriate quality.

Implementation Methods:

1. Provide information on procedures for agricultural and forestal districts and actively support and actively promote the inclusion of additional bona fide agricultural and forestal land in districts.
2. Avoid large, higher density developments in important agricultural areas to avoid conflicts with agriculture.
3. Allow a variety of support activities for agriculture in the rural areas.
4. Continue to allow new rural housing developments in a variety of types of locations and in average densities that are not substantially increased over current average densities. Review ordinances to insure that appropriate types of rural housing developments are allowed.
5. Review ordinances to insure that adequate performance standards are provided in relation to rural development to protect important environmental features, including prime agricultural soils.
6. New rural residential developments should be provided with adequate sewage disposal methods, roads, and other facilities. Provide better policies concerning rural sewage disposal. Develop rural road standards.
7. Develop information on the rural environment to estimate the carrying capacity of rural areas. Define the density and types of development allowed based on the carrying capacity.
8. Develop an approach to rural residential development which will provide an alternative to the large lot approach to provide a more efficient use of rural land.
9. Review the ordinances to insure that performance standards are present to promote development of appropriate quality.

10. Instead of exempting certain types of land divisions from classification as a subdivision, all divisions should be considered to be subdivisions and design standards should be varied for different types of divisions according to their size, density, and impact.

11. Rural business uses should be developed in conformance with performance standards similar to those used for urban businesses. Review the ordinances to insure proper standards.