

### Purpose

The future land use component of the Hanover County Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future land development. Different land use designations are depicted geographically on the *General Land Use Plan* map which reflect the desire to encourage compatibility of different uses, ensure efficient infrastructure development, and to preserve natural and cultural resources.

*The General Land Use Plan designations are not intended to be site specific, but are to be used as a guide for zoning deliberations so that changes are consistent with the long range plan for the County.*

The General Land Use Plan designations are not intended to be site specific, but are to be used as a guide for zoning deliberations so that changes are consistent with the long range plan for the County. The *Zoning District Map* of Hanover County, Virginia, is the official map of zoning classification by individual parcel. The General Land Use Plan map does not change a parcel's zoning classification, nor does it impact continuation of existing legal land uses or other uses permitted by existing zoning. Amendments to the Zoning District Map,

and the provisions that regulate the zoning district uses should be consistent with the guidelines specified in the Comprehensive Plan, including the land use designations shown on the General Land Use Plan map and detailed in this section.

The General Land Use Plan complements the goal of maintaining the independent but harmonious balance between the suburban and rural areas of the County as stated in Section 1, Growth Management. This is achieved by directing higher residential densities and more intensive non-residential uses to the designated Suburban Service Area (SSA) while encouraging uses intended to maintain the character and agricultural integrity into the rural area. The suburban area is identified as properties located within the defined boundaries of the SSA and the rural area being properties outside the SSA.

This section addresses the goals, objectives and strategies for the rural and suburban areas striving to reflect the different attributes that contribute to the distinct environments and characteristics of each.

### Rural Area

Hanover County is predominantly a rural locality in terms of land area. Although the Suburban Service Area (SSA) is planned to accommodate 70 percent of future residential development, it only accounts for about 22 percent of the land area within the County. Through the years, much of the planning focus has been within the SSA to ensure growth is appropriately planned and sufficient infrastructure and services are in place to meet growth demands.



County residents have expressed a significant connection to Hanover’s rural heritage and lifestyle, regardless of where they reside within the county. It is important that the rural areas of the county remain an integral and vital component to Hanover’s culture and economy.

From an aesthetic perspective, rural landscapes provide open spaces which allow opportunities for passive and active recreation while preserving natural, historical, and cultural features. These open spaces also provide important environmental contributions such as the maintenance of stream and wetland buffers, wildlife habitats, and opportunities for natural vegetation to thrive.

From an economic perspective, agriculture and forestry activities contribute greatly to the state and local economy. These activities have a multiplier effect. In addition to direct agricultural sales such as grains, beef, poultry, and dairy to end user markets, farming operations also rely on local sources for equipment, materials, and other related supplies. In turn, the suppliers provide local employment opportunities. The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service describes these economic dynamics as “direct”, “indirect”, and “induced” economic effects.

According to the Weldon Cooper Center, Hanover County’s total Agricultural and Forestry economic impacts accounted for over \$780 million in 2015. Likewise, these two economic centers also accounted for over 4,000 jobs, and \$242 million in local agriculture and forestry related industries.

### Goal

Hanover County will continue to be recognized for a vibrant rural environment that is characterized by the following:

- < Viable agricultural and forestry resources that significantly contribute to the local economy
- < Communities of well-planned spacious low density residential development within the rural planning area that is reflective of a rural character
- < Business and employment hubs that serve the needs of the rural community
- < Preserved natural, cultural, and historical resources

### Objectives

- < Review land use regulations to ensure opportunities to create local markets for agricultural and forestry products are widely made available throughout the rural areas of Hanover County
- < Provide opportunities for commercial and residential development that complement and preserve the rural and cultural characteristics of the area
- < Continue to utilize zoning techniques which encourage the preservation of open space, agricultural and forestal areas, cultural areas, historic features, and environmentally sensitive areas
- < Investigate Economic Development opportunities to promote and expand agricultural and forestry production within Hanover County

Map Color:

White

### Agricultural Land Use



A major portion of the area outside of the SSA is designated for agricultural use where provision of public water and sewer service is not planned. Appropriate uses would be farming, forestry, Agricultural Forestal Districts, public or semi-public uses that serve the community, small scale agricultural and forestry related businesses, low-density single-family residential development and residential cluster development consisting of both residential and conservation areas. Overall residential density in the Agricultural area cannot exceed a density of one unit per ten acres by-right or generally no greater than one unit per 6.25 acres with an approved rezoning; lots as small as two acres in area may be created for family homesteads and in limited instances on smaller parcels.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: A-1, RC, AR-6, A-1 Cluster (in areas shown as Rural Conservation on the *Growth Management, Conservation and Suburban Development Plan* map)**

### Strategies

- < Identify productive agricultural and forest land based on recent soil and forest surveys
- < Encourage the preservation of prime and important agricultural and forest lands whenever possible through techniques such as the designation of Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD) or dedication of Conservation Easements and Open Space Easements
- < Encourage the use of clustering techniques for residential development to protect the rural character and cultural resources, preserve open space, enhance agricultural/forest opportunities, and reduce the loss of prime and important soils to development
- < Achieve quality rural residential neighborhoods by encouraging site and subdivision layouts that are sensitive to existing topography and land forms
- < Ensure provisions for adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Expand opportunities for the sale and market of agriculture and forestry related products and services



### Rural Village Land Use Map Color:



The Rural Village designated land use is for commercial uses that provide necessary services for the surrounding rural community and for compatible rural residential development. New development should complement the scale and character of existing development within the village. Villages are also characterized by low density residential development situated on smaller lots within and in close proximity to the designated Rural Village.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: A-1, AR-6, B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3**

## Strategies

- < Maintain a sense of place and unique character in the designated village areas. New development should complement the existing community with regard to scale, architecture, materials, color, and texture
- < Promote economic development and historic preservation by encouraging the adaptive reuse of historic structures for local businesses
- < Encourage a mix of uses, including neighborhood commercial, residential, as well as churches and other civic buildings
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares



## Rural Commercial Node Land Use

Map Color:



The Commercial and Business Industrial designations located outside the Suburban Service Area are typically small nodes of commercial activity serving the local population. These rural commercial nodes are typically located at road intersections and are scaled to complement the character of the existing community. Uses typically consist of convenience and smaller grocery stores and general retail, banks, and professional offices, all of which serve the surrounding community.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3**

## Strategies

- < Support uses that provide the rural community with convenient retail, service, and employment opportunities scaled to meet the needs of the local community
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses and transition appropriately
- < Ensure new structures are compatible and scaled to complement the character of the existing community

# Suburban Service Area



## Goal

Hanover County's designated Suburban Service Area (SSA) will be a premier suburban community characterized by the following:

- < Compact and contiguous development that maximizes the efficient use of public facilities
- < Convenient and safe accessibility to homes, services and employment centers
- < Sustainable building development through the use of energy efficient technologies and quality building materials
- < A variety of housing options that meet the demands of a developing workforce and satisfies population demand trends
- < A suburban community with viable business/employment centers that attract and retain businesses
- < A community with a diverse local economy that provides an expanding tax base and employment opportunities for its citizens
- < A suburban environment with abundant and usable open space that is a prominent feature in residential communities, and located and designed to provide opportunities for preservation of open spaces, cultural, historic, and environmental resources, for active and passive recreation, and social interaction

## Objectives

- < Provide distinctive land use designations strategically located inside the SSA that are intended to provide opportunities for residential and non-residential development that is convenient and safe, conducive to viable business/employment centers, and designed to meet the diverse housing needs of changing population demographics
- < Provide opportunities for commercial, industrial, and residential development to occur in a compact and contiguous manner that maximizes existing and planned infrastructure
- < Continue to utilize zoning techniques which encourage open spaces that protect and preserve sensitive environmental and historic features

## Suburban General Land Use

Map Color:



**(1.5 - 3 dwelling unit per acre density)**

The Suburban General designated land use includes attached and detached single family dwelling residential development within the SSA. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing and future residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS (B-1, BO may be considered when immediately adjacent to an existing non-residential land use designation)**



## **Suburban High Land Use**

Map Color:



**(3 - 7 dwelling unit per acre density)**

The Suburban High designated land use includes attached and detached homes, townhomes, and multi-family development within the SSA.

This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: RS, RM, MX**

## **Multi-Family Land Use**

Map Color:



**(8-15 dwelling unit per acre density; maximum of 15 dwelling units per acre within a self-contained Mixed Use zoning development)**

The Multi-Family designated land use includes townhouses, multi-family development, and self-contained mixed-use development within the Suburban Service Area. This designation is intended to accommodate the housing expectations and changing trends for existing residents and projected population increases through flexible lot sizing, variable density, provision of recreational areas, and preservation of open space.

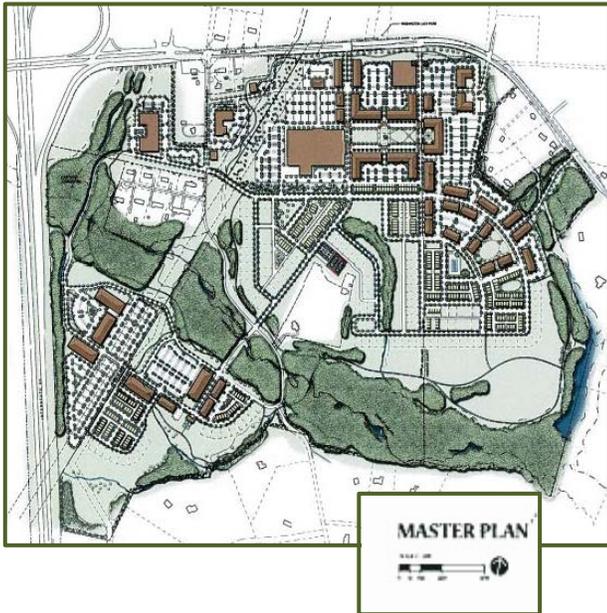
**Compatible Zoning Districts: RM, MX**

### Residential Land Use Strategies

- < Achieve quality neighborhoods by encouraging the use of high quality construction techniques and materials
- < Community design should incorporate concepts outlined in Section 4, Active Living and Healthy Neighborhoods
- < Promote the interconnection of communities to enhance vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and reduce demand along existing and proposed thoroughfares
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to ensure the stabilization or reinvestment of older subdivisions
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Ensure provision of contiguous open space designed for passive and active recreation that is conveniently and centrally located for residents, and encourage the preservation of cultural resources and environmental features such as wetlands and Resource Protection Areas, scenic viewsheds, and existing trees/vegetation
- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses and residential density and non-residential uses should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- < Promote variation in building elevations through diverse but complementary architectural forms, materials, colors, and texture
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to assure that the maximum achievable residential density is no more than 15 units per acre in the Multi-Family designations

### Multi-Use Land Use

Map Color:



The Multi-Use designated land use is for a master planned community characterized by employment intensive uses including office and business parks, professional offices, limited industrial, and limited retail uses. One of the primary objectives of any development proposal for a multi-use project should be the creation of employment opportunities for Hanover's workforce.

The master plan for the community should follow the conceptual plan requirements of the various zoning districts where applicable, and in addition to the ordinance requirements, the master plan should be evaluated against the criteria set forth below.

In addition, when a particular zoning district does not have a conceptual plan requirement, development of a detailed conceptual plan incorporating the desired design elements should be encouraged.

The purpose of master planning a multi-use project is to ensure the arrangement of land uses is integrated into an attractive and functional development. Consideration of projects smaller than 20 acres should be discouraged unless ancillary to a larger development, while the assemblage of such parcels should be encouraged to lessen the likelihood of road stripping and inefficient extension of public facilities necessary to support the project.

Residential uses may be incorporated, into a multi-use development, but they are not required. It is generally expected that the residential component of such a community would include a variety of housing types. Within a multi-use development, the area zoned for residential uses generally should not exceed 50% of the total area of the development. The maximum density for any multi-family residential component of the project shall be no greater than 15 dwelling units per acre. Density shall be calculated only upon that portion of the project devoted to residential use. Retail uses may be incorporated into development proposals but should not exceed 25% of the non-residential square footage when located within a mixed residential and commercial development proposal.

**Compatible zoning designations: RS, RM, MX, O-S, B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3, BP, M-1**

### Multi-Use Land Use Strategies

- < Ensure land uses are harmonious with surrounding uses; residential density and non-residential uses should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
- < Community design should incorporate concepts outlined in Section 4, Active Living and Healthy Neighborhoods
- < Ensure provision of an integrated transportation system to accommodate motorized and non-motorized methods of transportation including roads, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and walking trails comprehensively interconnecting all proposed uses within the project and where appropriate, with the surrounding areas
- < Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
- < Promote distinction in commercial building elevations through architectural form and use of durable building materials
- < Promote active living that encourages physical activity and exercise as outlined in Section 4, Active Living and Healthy Neighborhoods
- < Promote variation in building elevations through diverse but complementary architectural forms, materials, and colors
- < Achieve quality and sustainable residential neighborhoods by encouraging the use of quality construction materials and techniques
- < Ensure provision of contiguous open space designed for passive green space areas, active recreation, and social interaction that is conveniently and centrally located for residential and non-residential uses, and encourage the preservation of cultural resources and environmental features such as wetlands and Resource Protection Areas, scenic viewsheds, and existing trees/vegetation
- < To the extent practical, environmental and cultural resources should be integrated into the community as an amenity to enhance aesthetics and for the enjoyment of residents and employees

### Multi-Use Land Use Strategies, Cont'd.

- < Design Mixed-use developments to provide a wide range of housing types, to address the changing needs of existing and future residents of the County
- < Mixed-use developments should be designed to fit into the fabric of the community while creating a separate “sense of place” for the specific project, accomplished through extension of existing roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and connections of open spaces
- < Project phasing shall be done in a manner that ensures the primary emphasis of this designation is business and professional uses through an appropriate balance of residential and non-residential construction within a master planned development; establishing the residential development shall not disproportionately precede business or professional development within a project
- < Policies and ordinances should be evaluated to assure that the maximum achievable residential density is no more than 15 units per acre

### Commercial Land Use

Map Color:



The Commercial designated land use is for commercial development throughout the County that serves citizens safely and conveniently with differing levels of business activities. The designation is intended for retail shopping, personal service uses, medical, and office uses to be developed either as a unit or on individual parcels to serve a relatively small area, a community of several neighborhoods, or a wide area of the County or region. Commercial areas are generally located along major arterial and collector roads and at the junctions of major thoroughfares. Self-contained Mixed Use zoning development is appropriate for the Commercial designation with residential density not exceeding 15 dwelling units per acre.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: O-S, B-O, B-1, B-2, B-3, MX**

Map Color:



## Destination Commerce Land

The Destination Commerce designated land use is for commercial uses that are regional in scope and unique in character, dependent on Interstate visibility and access, and drawing from an area far beyond the boundaries of the County and Richmond Region for clients and customers.

Accessory uses to Destination Commerce would include restaurants, hotels, service stations, convenience stores, and other uses that serve and complement the destination commerce development. A project that seeks to utilize sign provisions specific to Destination Commerce must be a unified development of at least one hundred (100) acres consisting primarily of Destination Commerce uses and ancillary commercial uses.



Compatible Zoning Districts: B-1, B-2, B-3, M-1, M-2

## Planned Business Land Use

Map Color:



The Planned Business designated land use generally consists of areas fifty (50) acres or more, which are master planned, developed, and operated as integrated facilities for one or more business or limited industrial uses, with consideration to transportation facilities, circulation, parking, utilities, aesthetics, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. Projects should be comprised of limited industrial, office, institutional, and commercial uses, along with retail and service uses that are ancillary to a master planned development.

## Land Use

Self-contained Mixed Use zoning development is appropriate for the Planned Business designation with residential density not exceeding 15 dwelling units per acre. Properties consisting of 30 or fewer acres may be considered for BP zoning if the Board makes the finding that the property can meet the standards for such development. For properties which do not qualify for BP consideration, the OS District may be considered.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: BP, MX, OS**

### Business-Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Business-Industrial designated land use is for business integrated with industrial that includes all commercial uses, offices and general light industry. Typical locations are along a major arterial or areas with convenient access to major thoroughfares. The designation provides flexibility in zoning to promote development and redevelopment. Higher standards are expected to mitigate impacts or complement the character of development in specified areas of the County.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: BO, B-1, B-2, B-3, O-S, M-1, M-2, BP**



### Limited Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Limited Industrial designated land use category is for business and manufacturing that includes general light industry, transportation terminals, warehousing, and similar low-intensity uses and relatively free from offensive uses. Locations typically provide access to major thoroughfares. Higher standards are expected to mitigate

impacts or complement the character of development in specified areas of the County. Certain commercial uses would be permitted, primarily for the service of employees in the district.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: BP, OS, M-1, and M-2**

## Industrial Land Use

Map Color:



The Industrial designated land use is for a full range of industrial uses that takes into consideration the existing and future character of the area. These industrial centers should be located near major thoroughfares to facilitate the movement of goods.

**Compatible Zoning Districts: M-1, M-2, M-3**

## Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategies

- < Support development that achieves the goals of the County's Economic Development Strategic Plan (The Economic Development Strategic Plan can be found at <http://www.hanovervirginia.com> )
- < Support new planned neighborhood commercial districts that are harmonious with and complement surrounding residential areas
  - Intensity of commercial and industrial uses should be evaluated to assure the appropriate transition of uses;
  - Where allowed with MX or Multi-Use development, residential density should transition appropriately to adjoining uses
  - Encourage distinction in building elevations through architectural form, building materials, color, and texture
  - Promote pedestrian and bicycling connections between shopping centers and nearby residential communities by encouraging the construction and/or installation of trails, sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle parking facilities
- < Encourage development of commercial corridors that are attractive and inviting for businesses
  - Use of landscaping, buffers, harmonious architecture, consistent signage
  - Ensure provision of adequate and safe vehicular access to thoroughfares
  - Promote interconnectivity of adjoining commercial uses
  - Minimize linear spread of commercial activities along thoroughfare frontages

### **Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategies, Cont'd.**

- < Support and direct development of attractive industrial or business parks in areas where multiple businesses and industry can benefit from close proximity and accommodate industrial impacts
  - Ensure environmental quality and safety
- < Support the development of regional commercial centers in close proximity to Interstate highway interchanges
  - Encourage appropriate uses in the Destination Commerce designation which require visibility and access from an interstate highway
  - Develop attractive and permissible highway signage consistent with the planned architecture for the development
- < Encourage strong districts for commerce and services in existing commercial corridors locations, such as Ashland, Mechanicsville, and Rt. 30
  - Encourage redevelopment of older commercial centers
  - Create and implement strategies for the support and expansion of small businesses
  - Identify opportunities to protect unique characteristics while providing modern services