

CHAPTER 3¹
LAND USE PLAN**FOR PUBLIC
COMMENT AUG 18**

A. PURPOSE OF THE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is that component of the Comprehensive Plan that establishes policies on the future use of land. It contains two types of documents. First, a "Future Land Use Planning Area Map" is prepared which identifies the four major land use areas and also delineates several potential development conditions that may be expected over a period of time. Included also are more detailed Future Land Use Plans for each of the individual designated villages. Accompanying the Land Use Planning Area Map is a set of general development policies for each classification shown on the Plan. After the Land Use Plan has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors, it has the following clearly defined functions:

1. It represents the vision community leaders have for future use and development of land within the County. That vision is expressed in the Future Land Use Plan Map this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and its accompanying land use policies.
2. The Land Use Plan serves as a guide to any change in character of individual properties as they change from one use to another over time.
3. It provides a rational basis for establishing zoning and other land use and development regulations.
4. It provides a broad set of policies that can be used in making public and private decisions on projects that come before the government.
5. It becomes a valuable tool of communication between citizens and the local government on matters concerning land use and development.

B. COMPONENTS OF THE LAND USE PLAN

The first step in developing a land use plan for Northumberland County is to identify a set of components that can be used as building blocks to define the fundamental structure of the plan. Each component has these qualities - it identifies a spacial area that can be delineated on the land use map and it establishes one or more general development or use policies for each area so designated. This section establishes four-five building blocks of the general Land Use Plan as follows²:

1. Rural Uplands: that area of the county that lies landward from the topographic feature known as the "Suffolk Scarp" (see Figure 1.3) and which generally is above 50 feet in elevation above sea level.
2. Rural Low Shelf: the remainder of the County lying seaward from the Suffolk Scarp and generally lies between zero and 50 feet above sea level.

¹filename = Chapter_3.Rev2

²The protection of the Chesapeake Bay and other water quality issues is addressed in Chapter 5.

- 3. Shoreline Conservation Area: an area extending from the edge of tidal waters 1,000 feet inland. This area overlaps both the Rural Low Shelf and the Rural Uplands in many places.
- 4. Villages: areas of concentrated development that have become commercial hubs or areas of distinctive community identity.
- 5. Overlays: areas of particular interest with special land use considerations such as transportation corridors and reservoirs.

The remainder of this section suggests general development policies that would be appropriate for each of these ~~four~~ five areas. In addition to the specific policies stated below, all policies applicable to a Resource Protection Area, RPA, or Resource Management Area, RMA, under the Chesapeake Bay Regulations Act and its implementing ordinances apply.

Figure 3.1 presents these Land Use Planning Areas that are each discussed in the subsequent sections.

Space for the Land Use Planning Areas map Fig 3.1

1. Policies for the **Rural Uplands**

a. Agricultural and Forested Areas

Agricultural areas are areas that are cultivated for crops or cleared for that purpose. Agricultural lands occupy about a third of the total area of Northumberland County - more than 60 square miles. **Forested lands** include lands used for growing timber commercially and woodlands that are part of family farms or other acreage. Forested lands comprise nearly-over half of the acreage of the County, nearly 65,000 acres.

Recommended policies for agriculture and forested lands are as follows:

- (1) Agricultural and forested lands shall be managed and conserved to preserve the quality of these resources. The and minimize the potential degradation of water quality through improper operation shall be minimized. Agriculture and farming operations are to be conducted under a program designed to minimize water pollution. This policy may be implemented through:
 - (a) Best Management Practices: that promote an effective method of controlling point and nonpoint pollutant levels consistent with the State's environmental quality goals.
 - (b) Nutrient Management Practices: that provide optimum nutrient application rates, times and methods based on soil analysis results and expected crop yields.
 - (c) Soil and Water Conservation Plans: designed to reduce soil erosion and to prevent excessive levels of nutrients and pesticides from entering the groundwater and Chesapeake Bay.
 - (d) Conservation Easements shall be encouraged to protect farmland, forests, riparian zones, natural areas and historic sites. These easements ensure current owners that their property remains largely undeveloped into perpetuity and provide financial benefits to landowners who protect their land.
- (2) The County will cooperate with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality in the monitoring and enforcement of "Pollution Abatement Permits" including the 100 foot buffer for large animal raising operations.
- (3) Land used for commercial raising of animals on a large scale shall be in accordance with prevailing County policies and discouraged where adjacent to streams.
- (4) Conversion of forest lands into nonforest uses shall ~~be done to~~ minimize removal of existing forests. Commercial and industrial sites should be selected in areas most

³~~This is an estimate based on the following: 33 percent is in farmland; 11 percent is in commercial forests; between 5 and 10 percent is in development; and an undetermined (small) amount is in pastureland.~~

compatible with these policies such as village support areas and Enterprise Zones.

- (5) Where commercial forests are cut for sale, selective cutting of timber as an alternative to clear cutting is the preferred method as a means of minimizing potential soil erosion.

b. Residential

Residential development in the Rural Uplands is a mixture of farm dwellings, random lots along public roads, and small subdivisions. Permanent dwelling types include both conventionally built single-family units and manufactured housing units established as permanent housing. In addition, there isare a large number of "single-wide" mobile homes. While most of the latter are located on individual lots, some are in mobile home parks.

Recommended policies for residential development in the Rural Uplands are as follows:-

- (1) A primary farm dwelling that is located on the same farm is considered to be part of the farming use and is not subject to most residential development policies.
- (2) Subdivisions known as "family subdivisions" shall conform to the requirements of Va. Code Section 15.1-466,12.

(3) Large residential subdivisions should be designed using concepts of Traditional Neighborhood Development which include the following features:

- Compact form that encourages walking
- Streetscape designed for pedestrians
- Buildings set close to the sidewalk
- Narrow connected streets
- Neighborhood parks and open spaces
- Mix of housing types and price ranges
- Architecture that reflects the nature of the County
- Compatible non-residential uses, including neighborhood retail.

- (3) The average lot size for new residential subdivisions shall be not less than one (1) acre but no single lot within such subdivisions shall have an area not less than three-fourths (3/4) of an acre. Except that Clustering and Open Space Development shall be permitted with suitable green space provided to the residents as alternatives to individual large lots.
- (4) Large residential subdivisions shall be planned to the extent possible so new lots front on new streets. Cul-de-sac streets and reverse-frontage lots are suggested should be required as alternatives to using a major highway for access to residential lots⁴.

⁴ This policy would reduce the number of new subdivision lots established along public roads and result in safer access to the residential units and a reduction in driveway cuts into major roads. The number of lots that would trigger this policy should be very small, perhaps three lots.

- (5) New residential subdivisions established on existing secondary roads shall provide more than the minimum frontage and additional area if necessary to minimize traffic hazards resulting from direct access of driveways to heavily-traveled roads.
- (6) Subdivisions developed along the banks or shores of non-tidal streams that empty into tidal streams shall be developed under the same performance standards as those that apply to the Resource Protection Area including application of Low Impact Development, LID, principles for groundwater run-off.

c. Commercial/Industrial

Industrial sites are best located in areas which have facilities that are designed to serve industry and where they do not cause adverse impact to adjoining uses. Industrial sites must have access to good public roads; have adequate water supply and wastewater disposal capability. At present, the only areas equipped with both utilities are the Callao and Reedville areas. Smaller industries and "cottage industries", however are encouraged to locate anywhere in support areas and Enterprise Zones in the County and where soils and water supply are favorable. Heavy water users should be discouraged unless they are associated with a reservoir for their water supply.

Wherever the business is located in the County, roadside signs and lighting shall conform to the requirements established for the Highway Corridor Overlay District discussed in Section B.5. (B) below.

The preferred designated location for retail and service businesses that are intended to serve a large sector of the County's population and which are likely to generate considerable traffic is in the areas designated as villages and their support areas.

This remaining group includes commercial or industrial use that lies outside the designated village areas. They include the following types: (1) random retail or service businesses located along primary highways but outside village areas; (2) country or convenience stores established on secondary roads serving local communities; or (3) random industrial uses.

- ~~(1) The preferred location for retail and service businesses that are intended to serve a large sector of the County's population and which are likely to generate considerable traffic is in the areas designated as villages.~~
- ~~(2) Country stores and convenience stores intended to serve only a local community within the County are expected to be located at random locations throughout the Rural Uplands and preferably near intersections of feeder roads to the residential communities to be served.~~
- ~~(3) Industrial sites are best located in areas which have facilities that are designed to serve industry and where they do not cause adverse impact to adjoining uses. Industrial sites must have access to good public roads; have adequate water supply and wastewater disposal capability. At present, the only area equipped with both utilities is the Reedville area. Smaller industries and "cottage industries", however~~

~~could locate anywhere in the County where soils and water supply are favorable.~~

2. Policies for the **Rural Low Shelf**

This area lies seaward of the Suffolk Scarp but overlaps the Shoreline Conservation Area, the next classification. The official name of this area is "the low marine terrace." It ranges generally from 10 to 15 feet above sea level but may extend in places up to 50 feet. Development in the area is now and is expected in the future to be about the same as that in the Rural Uplands described above. A few waterfront subdivisions have streets and lots that extend into this area but most of the waterfront development falls within the Shoreline Conservation Area.

This shelf has extensive areas where the soil is unsuited for septic tanks (Figure 1.45); a high shrink-swell ratio (Figure 1.56); and a high water table (Figure 1.4013). As was the case with the rural uplands, development of subdivisions with small lots fronting along existing roads ~~should shall~~ be avoided because they decrease the rural qualities of the area and increase traffic hazards. Because of the high water table, streams and the underground water supply are more vulnerable to pollutants ~~for streams~~ than in the higher lands. Development should be done carefully in areas with poor soils as well as areas with steeper slopes.

Policies for development and use of land on the Rural Low Shelf are ~~generally~~ the same as those described for the Rural Uplands. Additional policies or exceptions follow:

- (a) Development is intended to be a general mix of low-density residential and agricultural. Residential development should be dispersed or arranged in clusters to avoid excessive development along existing road frontage.
- (b) Development near streams should avoid steep slopes, ~~and~~ avoid excessive removal of natural vegetation and maintain riparian buffers.
- (c) New subdivisions with larger lots or clustering with a large amount of green space is ~~are~~ encouraged.
- (d) Heavy water users should be discouraged use deep wells unless they are associated with a reservoir and recycle the water if feasible.
- (e) Large scale commercial raising of animals is discouraged.
- (f) Except for country stores and convenience stores, commercial and industrial sites unrelated to marine activities should not ~~are not expected to~~ be established in this area.
- (g) Large subdivisions shall be served by a public water system supplied from deep wells and a community sewage system.
- (h) Similar to the Rural Uplands, ~~t~~The average lot size for new residential subdivisions shall be not less than one (1) acre but no single lot within such subdivisions shall have an area not less than three-fourths (3/4) of an acre. Except that Clustering and

Open Space Development shall be permitted with suitable green space provided to the residents as alternatives to individual large lots.

3. Policies for the **Shoreline Conservation Area**

The Shoreline Conservation Area extends approximately 1,000 feet from the sea level waterline and stretches the full distance of the County's shoreline. This strip contains an area of approximately ~~83~~100 square miles and contains nearly all of the subdivisions previously identified as "shoreline subdivisions" (Figure 1.2). Not all of this strip is developable because it contains much of the Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area as well as significant areas subject to tidal flooding.

This area is host to most of the planning issues the County will face during the coming decade and beyond. First, it is the area where the most demand for upscale housing has occurred and is likely to occur during the next decade and beyond. Second, there are physical conditions (high water table, poor percolation, shrink-swell soils, gradually rising water levels and shoreline erosion) that present serious constraints to subdivision development. Planning policies must therefore focus on how new development can be accommodated while avoiding serious problem areas and protecting environmentally-sensitive areas.

Policies for development and use of land within the Shoreline Conservation Area are the same as those described for the Rural Uplands. Additional policies or exceptions follow

~~Recommended Policies within the Shoreline Conservation Area are as follows:~~

- (a) Development that may be permitted by the County's development regulations shall be planned to preserve the natural beauty, wetlands and other natural resources along the shoreline and adjacent lands.
- (b) New subdivisions shall be planned to minimize shoreline erosion resulting from construction and use of property. Shoreline erosion reduction measures that employ vegetation are preferred over structural features.
- (c) New subdivisions should be planned, whenever feasible, to provide public access to the Chesapeake Bay including beaches, boat ramps, fishing points and other water-oriented recreational activities. The establishment of community facilities for the common use of the residents within subdivisions is recommended as a means to reduce the number of individual boat houses and piers.
- (d) The average lot size for new residential subdivisions shall be not less than one (1) acre but no single lot within such subdivisions shall have an area not less than three-fourths (3/4) of an acre. Except that Clustering and Open Space Development shall be permitted with suitable green space provided to the residents as alternatives to individual large lots.

- (e) Multiple family dwellings, condominiums and cluster home development should include green space equivalent to one (1) acre per unit, shall utilize principles of Low Impact Development, LID, for surface water runoff, shall be compatible with the environment and should meet County Architectural Guidelines.
- (ef) Performance standards of the Chesapeake Bay RPA should be enforced without exception and continue to apply to all subdivisions developed in the Shoreline Conservation Area and adjacent to all flooded land associated with designated reservoirs.
- (fg) New water-oriented enterprises that help the economic development of the County and support tourism, sports fishing, or other water-related activities are encouraged to be established at sites where they can be accommodated by deep water and appropriate access.

4. Policies for Villages

~~As discussed here,~~ Vvillages are the key locations along major highways where commercial, public and residential uses are concentrated. ~~Seven-Nine~~ locations ~~were~~ are identified for recognition in the Land Use Plan as villages: Village, Callao, Lottsburg, Heathsville, Lilian, Burgess, Wicomico Church, Reedville and North Kilmarnock.

Each village has a different makeup and arrangement of uses but most of them have features in common. ~~Four-Six~~ are located at major crossroads; Reedville is at the intersection of highway and water commerce; and North Kilmarnock is an extension of the Town of Kilmarnock. Villages serve as "commercial hubs", or "town centers" in which both commercial and public services are grouped. Three villages, Callao, Heathsville and Burgess, appear to be more strategically located to play a dominant role for business and institutional service centers. Callao and Burgess are dominant because they are the "gateways" to Northumberland County's commercial corridor (Route 360). Heathsville is important because it is the county seat. Lottsburg, Lilian and Wicomico Church are located at less dominant intersections and their roles appear to serve a more community-related purpose. Village is a community located in both Richmond and Northumberland County that sits astride Route 360. North Kilmarnock (that portion of Northumberland County along Route 200 that lies outside the corporate boundary of Kilmarnock) is simply a planned extension of the that town into Northumberland County. This village has the potential for becoming a retail hub because of the large market within Kilmarnock and vicinity.

Reedville has unique characteristics apart from the other village centers. It is located at another type of crossroad, one where water and land commerce meet. While this is a classic location for a town with a full mix of commercial, industrial and residential development, Reedville has developed primarily as a water-related job center and it's supporting residential community. Except for a bank, restaurants, convenience stores, auto services and bed and breakfast places, Reedville does not have a concentrated business core.

a. Framework of Village Policies

As a first step in identifying policies for villages, it is important to recognize some features

that all have in common- among which are the following:

- (1) Villages are more intensely-developed areas than the remainder of the County and each one has the potential of serving as a "town center" for a part of the County. As the focal points of a community, they are the logical places in which to locate commercial and governmental services, parks and community recreation facilities.
- (2) A "commercial hub" marks the primary identity of each village and most of the commercial and governmental services are found within these hubs. Residential uses are also part of the village structure but they currently consist mostly of older homes. Most of the new residential development of the County has been established outside the villages in waterfront communities.
- (3) The County has designated areas immediately beyond the commercial hubs are called "support areas". The support areas extend along the major roads approaching the village and include a mixture of commercial, governmental, service and residential uses.

Beyond the support areas, the land use is a mixture of farms, forests and occasional residential development. The areas surrounding the villages have the potential for development as extensions of the villages.

- (4) In addition to and frequently overlapping both the commercial hub and the support area are Enterprise Zones established by the State of Virginia and ratified by the Board of Supervisors subsequent to a public hearing. Various economic incentives are provided to prospective businesses bringing new employment to the County.
- (5) One of the important reasons to identify villages and their support areas is to control sprawl along the primary highway corridors in order to retain the rural character of the County. A clear edge should be maintained between the villages and the countryside. Growth should be channeled into the existing village areas
- (46) A limiting factor to future growth of the more strategically-located villages is the absence of public sewerage systems. The exceptions are Reedville and Callao. Septic tanks offer only limited capacity for development of major commercial development or expansion of existing development.
- (7) Although not limiting at present, in the long term the lack of sustainable water supplies may limit future growth.
- (58) Areas designated as "commercial hubs" and "support areas" and "Enterprise Zones" for villages are intended as a guideline to future development within the village areas. While the areas so designated are not intended to be

interpreted as planned zoning districts, subject to further analysis and review and the normal zoning change process of the County. ~~the designated areas may be significant factors in evaluating whether changes should be made in the zoning map.~~

- (9) Residential subdivisions located within villages and village support areas should be designed using the concepts of Traditional Neighborhood Development presented above for Rural Uplands and should meet Architectural Guidelines..

b. Callao:

Callao is a commercial area located at the intersection of U.S. Route 360 and VA Route 202. It is the commercial gateway to Northumberland County from the west. The area contains more than 40 business places showing a mix that is common to the downtown areas of many communities. They include both retail and service businesses. In addition, there is a post office, fire station, rescue squad, a former elementary school building and site, and a nearby public ~~park and~~ golf course serving the village. Residential development extends along all four legs of the streets that intersect at Callao. The village is served by a private central water system ~~but no~~ and a new central sewerage system.

~~The absence a central sewerage system may be the most critical factor to future growth of this commercial area. Existing soil conditions are reportedly inadequate to accommodate septic tank at a scale to support major additions to the commercial area.~~ As a gateway village to Northumberland County, Callao ~~has the potential of should becoming become thea~~ dominant business center for the western part of the County.

Specific goals for the development of Callao are as follows:

- (1) Callao is to be designated as the "western gateway" to Northumberland County.
- (2) ~~The need for a public sewerage system is to be evaluated to serve the central commercial hub. Develop plans for a sustainable water supply from a reservoir developed on Lodge Creek.~~
- (3) Parking arrangement and traffic flow within the commercial hub is to be improved to minimize conflict between through traffic and parked traffic. *Traffic problems within the commercial area are complicated by the use of head-in parking in front of the businesses. While this arrangement represents a convenience for the users of the businesses which should not be overlooked as a desirable feature, the interference between parking and periodic heavy traffic creates an unsafe situation for both moving vehicles and pedestrians.*

As more land is needed for development, there is an abundant supply all around the town center. While it is now used mostly for agricultural purposes, ~~if now that~~ Callao is served by a public sewerage system ~~at a future date~~, some of these agricultural lands may be expected to be converted to housing or other urban-type uses.

~~⁵The language used here is stated as it would appear in an adopted document, although the reader will recognize that this is only a draft document to be reviewed and edited prior to adoption.~~

Figure 3.2 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Callao and vicinity.

PAGE FOR CALLAO LAND USE PLAN [Fig 3.2](#)

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c. Lottsburg

Lottsburg is located about three miles east of Callao on U.S. Route 360. While there is no strong retail core in Lottsburg, this village contains a number of uses that serve both the immediate and larger neighborhoods. The main focus of the village lies between where Route 614 enters from the north and exits to the south. Ace Hardware located on ~~the south leg of~~ Route 614-360 is a major building supplier. Several other business establishments consisting of a restaurant, clothing store, convenience store, office and automobile shop are found in Lottsburg. A group of public uses, including a post office, school board office, solid waste facility, VDOT service facility and a church, is also located within the upper development area of the village. In addition, the Holly Graded School is a significant historic site that is listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

The commercial hub in Lottsburg may have only limited potential for growth as a major commercial area. This is likely because of its close proximity to Callao and Heathsville which have stronger commercial strength. Yet the support area around Lottsburg has demonstrated potential for development with selective facilities that serve countywide markets. The School Board office and ~~a~~ the major building supplier provide a core employment base that could be expanded by other major employers.

Specific goals for Lottsburg are as follows:

- (1) Promote the village as an employment center with emphasis on businesses and services that serve county-wide markets or serve public services.
- (2) Utilize historic Holly Graded School to promote the village as part of a county-wide historic tour.
- (3) Promote the addition of more service businesses such as those serving the agricultural and building industries of the County.

Figure 3.3 presents the future land use plan for Lottsburg and Vicinity

MAP OF LOTTSBURG LAND USE PLAN [Fig 3.3](#)

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d. Heathsville

Heathsville is the County Seat and primary center of governmental services for Northumberland County. The "commercial hub" contains many businesses and public offices and the Northumberland Public Library. Businesses range from small shops, banks, food stores, offices, used cars, architects, computer services, newspaper office, to contractor's offices. The Old and New Courthouse and Sheriff's office are the predominant public offices located within this hub. Social Services and Health offices ~~however,~~ are located within the support area in addition to the Northumberland County High School. ~~Recent-Other~~ commercial development within this village includes a Food Lion grocery and a Family Dollar store. ~~A new Northumberland Public Library and a planned new County Administration building.~~ These developments, together with existing commercial development within and near Heathsville, enhance the county seat as a ~~potential-major~~ commercial growth site.

Heathsville has many older buildings of historical significance including the Rice's Hotel and HewlettHughlett Tavern that ~~is undergoing (in 1995-1996) have undergone~~ restoration and renovation and the historical Heathsville Forge Blacksmith Shop has recently been completed- Other historic landmarks that are on the historic registers include St. Stephen's Church and Springfield (Figure 1.89).- An historic district has been established and approved for the federal register for the Heathsville area.

A private water system serves Heathsville but there is no central sewer to serve the area. Although soils are reasonably satisfactory for septic tanks, ~~the development of the village into a larger commercial complex is limited until a public sewerage system is established.~~

Specific goals for Heathsville are as follows:

- (1) Designate Heathsville as a major village center.
- (2) Seek funding ~~The need~~ for a public sewerage system ~~is to be evaluated~~ to serve the central commercial hub.
- (3) Utilize historic Rice's Hotel and HewlettHughlett Tavern and the Blacksmith Shop to promote Heathsville as part of a county-wide historic tour.
- (4) Provide for residential growth within the proximity of the village beyond the commercial hub and support area. ~~(keyed to the availability of public sewer).~~
- (5) Develop plans for a sustainable water supply from a reservoir developed on Crabbe Mill Stream.

Figure 3.4 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Heathsville and vicinity.

MAP OF HEATHSVILLE LAND USE PLAN – [Fig 3.4](#)

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e. Burgess

Burgess is to the east of Northumberland County what Callao is to the west - the first major "gateway" to the County. It is a commercial village located at the intersection of U.S. Route 360 and VA Route 200. The area contains more than 25 business places which include both retail and service businesses. The mix of uses is varied as might be found in the downtown of any small town. The variety of businesses ~~in~~ ~~1995~~ currently includes:

dry cleaning	medical office	marine sales/service
banks	office park	restaurants
hardware store	cabinet shop	auto repair/gas
convenience store	medical supply	accounting service
thrift store	air conditioning shop	medical offices

There is also a post office, the former Fairfield Elementary School building and site and several churches within the village area.

Burgess is more spread out than the other villages. Its core "commercial hub" is located at the intersection of U.S. 360 and VA 200 and includes the intensive commercial development near that intersection. But strip development along Route 200 is quite extensive and for that reason has been added to the support area of this village.

The absence of public sewer does not appear to be a limiting factor on the growth of this area at this time. That is perhaps owed to the existence of better soils in this area plus the fact that development extends along both sides of more than a mile of primary highway frontage in addition to its Route 360 frontage. If public sewers were available perhaps a more focused commercial development near the 360/200 intersection may have been possible.

Specific goals for Burgess are as follows:

- (1) Designate Burgess as the eastern "Gateway Village" to Northumberland County.
- (2) Promote a more focused commercial complex near the intersection of the two primary roads.
- (3) Improve the visibility of the intersection to better identify Route 200 as it is approached from Route 360 (both directions).
- (4) The need for a public sewerage system is to be evaluated to serve the central commercial hub.
- (5) Provide for residential growth within the proximity of the village beyond the commercial hub and support area ~~(keyed to the availability of public sewer)~~.

- (6) Develop plans for a sustainable water supply from a reservoir developed on Syndors Mill Creek.

Figure 3.5 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Burgess and vicinity

MAP OF BURGESS LAND USE PLAN [Fig 3.5](#)

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f. Wicomico Church

Wicomico Church is located about five miles south of Burgess on VA Route 200. Located about halfway between Kilmarnock and Burgess, the main focus of the village is on community service to the area lying south of the Great Wicomico River.

Existing commercial development ~~(1995)~~ includes ~~sd~~ two convenience stores, several small retail stores, ~~newspaper-real estate~~ office, electric and plumbing shop, ~~hair style shops~~, Kubota Tractor dealer, machine shop and marine repair service. Public uses include three churches.

Because of its location between two strong commercial areas (Kilmarnock and Burgess), Wicomico Church has not developed as a strong business center. Except for the tractor dealer and ~~newspaper-real estate~~ office, the village serves mostly a neighborhood function. But the existence of several established churches makes the village a popular place of assembly for the community activities.

Specific goals for Wicomico Church are as follows:

- (1) Promote the village as the primary supply and service center for the area south of the Great Wicomico River. The potential for additional growth is linked to the rate of development on several of the creeks extending into the County's shoreline from the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Wicomico River.
- (2) With the cooperation of the churches that are located within the village, Wicomico Church can function as a "community center" for the southern portion of the County.
- (3) Add other public community services as they can be provided (i.e., branch library or bookmobile, fire/rescue facilities, etc.)
- (4) Develop plans for a sustainable water supply from a reservoir developed on Mill Creek.

Figure 3.6 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Wicomico Church and vicinity.

⁶ At this writing, PMA does not have information of community services which may already be provided to this community.

Map of Wicomico Church Plan [Fig 3.6](#)

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g. Reedville

It has been mentioned that Reedville is a different kind of community than the other five villages. This is an old village which was built around water-related and fishing industries or operations. The land use is mostly residential but many private homes have been converted to bed and breakfast places which are very popular during the summer months.

The main peninsula that first established Reedville is designated as a Historic Area and is registered on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district starts at Crowder Street and runs to the water containing lots on both sides of Route 644.

The area covered by the Reedville Future Land Use Plan contains all lots between Routes 360/657 and the branches of Cockrell Creek that border on each side of Reedville. The tax map of this area shows 248 lots. The area covered by these lots is of 218 acres. The average density is 1.14 lots per acre. The highest density found in any one block was four lots per acre.

Two areas are identified as commercial hubs because of the unique geography:

- (1) ~~Identify an~~The area at the entrance to Reedville (intersection of Routes 360 and 657) ~~as a~~is one commercial area. The area shown includes commercial uses presently in place at this location and includes a slightly larger area for additional businesses.
- (2) ~~Identify another~~The other commercial area is at the tip of the Reedville Peninsula. This area also reflects existing commercial and industrial patterns. The term commercial as used here is broad enough to include banks as well as marine railways.

Specific goals for Reedville are as follows:

- (~~3~~1) Within the Historic District establish guidelines for retaining the original "town character" in buildings as they are modified, constructed or reconstructed.
- (~~4~~2) Within the areas designated as residential, include the establishment of "bed and breakfast" inns within the definition of "residential."

⁷A small area of Reedville located within the area formed by Route 657, South Avenue, Morrison Avenue and Route 644 contains smaller lots (69 lots on 117.25 acres, an average of 4 lots per acre). This calculation was done as a test of one of CBLAB's criteria for Intensively Developed Areas, or IDAs. The criterion requires a density greater than four dwelling units per acre. This test demonstrates that in the worst case situation, there is no area in Northumberland County that has a density greater than four dwelling units per acre; therefore, it is concluded that Northumberland County has no Intensively Developed Areas as defined by CBLAD criteria.

(3) Develop a long term sustainable water supply for the village of Reedville.

Figure 3.7 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Reedville and vicinity.

MAP OF REEDVILLE PLAN [Fig 3.7](#)



h. North Kilmarnock

This is a potential future village within the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. Because of its proximity ~~of to~~ a substantial market area, both resident and tourist, the potential exists for the establishment of a major village in this area. Subject to availability and agreement of the Town, the area has perhaps the ~~most early~~earliest potential to be served by public sewer which is very important, almost essential, to the development of a substantial business complex.

In addition to its commercial potential, the North Kilmarnock Village also could be developed as a planned residential community. It offers perhaps the best opportunity in the County for the development of ~~ana~~ modern planned unit development mixed with residential, recreational and commercial facilities.

Specific goals for the North Kilmarnock Area are as follows:

- (1) Development within the area is to be guided by ~~ana~~ comprehensive land development plan and economic plan consistent with present day trends for planned communities.
- (2) Such development should be undertaken in coordination with the Town of Kilmarnock.
- (3) The primary focus of development should be in two areas: (i) to establish a substantial job base within the County within the framework of the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and (ii) to expand residential opportunities for both existing and new residents.
- (4) The concept of such a planned community is not limited to a single site development; a comprehensive approach might consider various groupings of uses such as focusing the more intensive uses along the major highway while locating residential components in more remote rural or waterfront areas.

Figure 3.8 presents the Future Land Use Plan for North Kilmarnock and vicinity.

Page for N. Kilmarnock Map. Fig 3.8



i. Lilian

Lilian is located about 4 miles from Heathsville on US Route 360 at the intersection of VA Route 646. Located between Heathsville and Burgess, the focus of the village is on community service to the local area, to traffic on Route 360 and traffic to Lilian Lumber 2 miles down Route 646.

Specific Goals for Lilian are as follows:

- (1) Continue to act as the primary supply and service center for the neighboring community.
- (2) Encourage small businesses to locate in the commercial zone.

Figure 3.9 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Lilian and vicinity.

Page for Lilian Map Fig 3.9



j. Village

Village is located on Route U.S. 360 at the Richmond County line and State Route 600. The focus of the village is on the local community, serving traffic on Route 360 and also as a commercial hub near the geographic center of the Northern Neck. Richmond County has also designated Village as a village in their Comprehensive Plan

Located in Village is a restaurant, real estate office, cleaning service, service station, convenience store, marine sales and a roadside stand for produce.

Village does not have a clearly defined area for a Commercial Hub within Northumberland County therefore the commercial area of Village is identified as a support area.

Specific goals for Village are as follows:

- (1) Work with Richmond County to coordinate development within the village.
- (2) Continue to act as the primary supply and service center for the neighboring community.
- (3) Encourage small businesses to locate in the commercial zone.

Figure 3.10 presents the Future Land Use Plan for Village and vicinity.

Land use map of Village, Figure 3.10



5. Policies for Special Areas

There are three categories of elements of the County that require special attention for land use planning:

- (A) The Historical and Archeological Areas;
- (B) The Highway Corridor down the spine of the County; and
- (C) The Areas identified for Reservoirs.

Each of these is discussed in detail in the sections below

(A). Historic and Archeological Resources

Thirteen sites within Northumberland County are designated as "Historic Landmarks" and are listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. Two of these sites, Heathsville and Reedville, have been designated as "Historic Areas." These sites are identified in Figure 1.9 and listed and further discussed in Section 7 of Chapter 1.

Additional sites of historic interest have been identified in connection with surveys done in advance of state highway projects. VDOT is now required to identify sites that potentially have historic significance whenever a major project is in the planning stage. Sites that are identified are recorded in a data base held by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

If a particular site meets certain requirements, it may be "nominated" for the National Register of Historic Places. Once a site is accepted and recognized as an historic landmark, it is then protected by law from destruction or significant modification. The primary focus of this plan relative to historic and archeological sites is on those facilities that are accepted for the National Register at present or in the future.

Policies for historic and archeological sites are as follows.

- (a) No development shall be permitted that would result in the removal or modification of an established historic landmark or a building within a historic district except within the policies established in Section 15.1-503.2 of the Virginia Code.
- (b) Continue the identification of historic and archeological sites by completing a county-wide inventory as provided through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Based on the findings of that study, prepare a historic resources management plan as a component of the Comprehensive Plan.

(B). Highway Corridor Overlay District

(1) Introduction

The major corridors of Route 360 and Route 200 serve two functions in the County: as a major

thoroughfare through the County and as local streets. Each of the highways functions as a main street at numerous places, even though they are not always called "Main Street". All of the villages have developed along this corridor.

Shallow building setbacks, on-street parking, and frequent intersecting streets and driveways give these areas their small localities character, and foster significant pedestrian activity. As the thoroughfares transition to local streets, the roadway cross-sections and lane configurations also change.

The conflicts between these two primary functions raise difficult issues in planning for long-term regional transportation needs. Efforts to facilitate the movement of through traffic have the potential to degrade pedestrian safety and accessibility in village areas. Furthermore, conventional solutions such as highway widening and bypasses may erode small town character. At the same time, pedestrian and traffic calming improvements could potentially degrade the functionality of these major thoroughfares. The goal is to plan solutions that serve both needs.

(2) Corridor Protection

The purpose of a Highway Corridor Overlay District, HCOD, is to protect the major roadway corridor in the County in a manner to be compatible with both needs outlined above.

As the area's only transportation lifelines, the primary corridors along Routes 360, and 200 warrant special attention and protection. These roadways dramatically affect the County and Region's quality of life, impacting safety, mobility, economic prosperity, and community character. They should be seen as valuable and limited resources that demand ongoing management and evaluation.

From a vehicular standpoint, the major corridors provide access to work, shopping, schools, and hospitals. Unmanaged development has the potential to degrade the capacity, function, and safety of the roadways, negatively impacting access and mobility. Although long-term capacity is not a major issue for the majority of the Northern Neck, certain areas will experience congestion within 20 years as discussed in Chapter 4.

Furthermore, side-friction in the form of unmanaged access could dramatically reduce the ability of major roadways to carry people, goods, and services. Finally, roadway geometry in certain locations (especially where the roads transition into small localities) raises operational concerns that will be exacerbated by even moderate increases in traffic. The lack of funding for major improvements makes effective corridor management even more important.

These thoroughfares should be seen as economic development tools, to be marketed as safe and efficient linkages. Degradation of these facilities, in the form of unmanaged access, could severely impact the ability of the County and the Northern Neck to attract and retain viable businesses. In addition, because heritage tourism is becoming a primary component of the County's economic development strategy, safe and efficient access to historic and recreational sites is critical. Corridor protection thereby supports regional economic initiatives.

Finally, as primary gateways and highly visible travel-ways, these corridors dramatically impact community character. Visitors and residents alike are left with lasting impressions of the Northern Neck based on the aesthetic quality of the roadways. Although certain roadway sections display the negative characteristics of a commercial strip, the corridors remain primarily rural and small town in nature. The County has an opportunity to preserve this character and to address existing deficiencies associated with non-conforming areas.

(3) Corridor Protection Policies

Corridor protection involves both roadway techniques and land use techniques and requires coordination between County officials and the Virginia Department of Transportation. This section discusses both access and land use policies, and establishes a framework for collaboration.

(a) Access Management Policies

Although traffic volumes are expected to increase over time, and while certain road segments will experience congestion, highway capacity on most corridor sections is not expected to be an issue into the foreseeable future. The primary concern for maintaining the safety and efficiency of travel in the corridors therefore becomes access to existing and future land uses in the corridors. Access management techniques include a broad range of treatments designed to provide highway access while preserving the safety, function, and efficiency of roadway corridors. Since these involve the highway right-of-way, they are the responsibility of VDOT. The following list identifies some common considerations and techniques used for access management:

- Turn Lanes
- Driveway Spacing and Consolidation
- Corner Clearance
- Sight Distance
- Crossover Spacing and Consolidation
- Median and Crossover Width
- Inter-Parcel Connection
- Local Road Connections
- Correcting Existing Access Deficiencies

Each of these items has a recommended VDOT specification to improve or maintain access. The County should work with VDOT to undertake an access management plan and program to identify specific roadway improvements to be made by VDOT in the Corridor and to set standards for the future.

(b) Land Use Management Policies

Along with effective access management, several important County land use policies will help protect the County's transportation artery. These policies will positively impact the aesthetic quality of development, and will also promote corridor safety by minimizing potential distractions associated with cluttered signs, inadequate setbacks, and glaring lights.

Setbacks

The proximity of development to roadways has a direct impact on safety and visual quality. To encourage development at desired locations while maintaining corridor integrity, the County should adopt standards for setbacks. These standards should apply not only to principal structures, but also to all site development, such as outbuildings, parking areas, and gasoline station canopies. On rural highway segments, 50' should be seen as the minimum front setback; standards for side and rear yards should also be implemented.

In the villages, traditional shallow setbacks should be required for buildings; parking should be placed to the rear of lots in these areas.

Signs

Unmanaged signs not only cause visual clutter and distract drivers; they also compete with each other to the detriment of all. The County should adopt standards to manage the location, size, and number of signs. On rural roads, monument-type signs should be favored over pylon-type signs, and all signs should include complementary landscaping. In addition, the standards should require that signs complement the material, color, and style of the building in which the business is located. In towns and villages, on-structure signs and small freestanding signs should reflect the pedestrian scale of these areas.

Lighting

Inappropriate lighting can impede driver visibility, erode corridor character, and create a nuisance for adjacent properties. The localities should adopt standards to manage exterior lighting sources including but not limited to:

- lighting for parking, access drives, and walkways;
- gasoline station canopy lighting; and
- internally and externally illuminated signs.

In general, lighting should not direct glare on adjacent roadways or parcels, and should not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at property lines. Lighting other than security lighting should be subject to time-of-day restrictions.

Landscaping

Well designed and maintained landscaping is a critical part of corridor protection. Preservation of existing vegetation and of large trees in particular, can dramatically improve development quality and help maintain roadway character. The County should adopt standards for preserving, planting, and maintaining vegetation as part of site development.

Architecture

The County's character is defined in part by the traditional/rural nature of its buildings. New development and redevelopment should incorporate elements that reflect these styles. Specifically, development in the corridors should rely on clapboard or brick siding, pitched roofs, and double-hung windows. In addition to implementing basic standards, the County should consider commissioning architectural surveys to provide additional detail and guidelines and develop Architectural Guidelines for buildings located in Commercial Hubs and Support Areas.

Viewsheds

The proposed access management and land use policies will apply to the corridors in an overlay fashion, setting standards for development throughout the County. In addition to this approach, the County should pursue a viewshed analysis to identify critical areas that warrant preservation based on their visibility, defining features, and contribution to local character.

Retrofitting

While the proposed standards apply in a straightforward manner to new development, managing the redevelopment of built-up areas will prove more difficult and will require coordination over time. The County should adopt standards for bringing non-conforming sites closer to compliance as redevelopment occurs. These standards should encourage redevelopment while establishing thresholds for compliance.

(4) Highway Corridor Overlay District

A Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCOD) should be established for the purpose of protecting the County's major roadway corridors, which directly impact the public health, safety, and welfare. As the transportation lifelines of the community, these routes provide access to schools, jobs, and other destinations. They also facilitate the provision of emergency services, and foster tourism and economic development. As resources made possible through public investment, such roadways warrant protection in order to preserve their safety, capacity, and function. Finally, as visible elements of the County, they require management to protect and enhance community character.

The HCOD should apply to Routes U.S. 360 from the County Line in Village to Reedville and Route 200 from the intersection with Route 360 in Burgess to the County line at North Kilmarnock. Any development abutting these routes and requiring site plan or subdivision approval should be subject to these requirements. The HCOD shall also apply to redevelopment, which shall include measures to bring non-conforming sites into compliance in accordance with the final ordinance.

Large developments consisting of multiple parcels (including but not limited to shopping centers and business parks) shall be treated as individual development projects and should be included in the HCOD. Logical extensions of such developments shall also be subject to the HCOD regulations, regardless of whether they abut the highway.

To ensure adequate coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the County should seek comments from the Residency Administrator or his/her designated representative on the proposed roadway, driveway, and circulation systems.

To translate the corridor protection policies into law, the County will need to amend its zoning ordinances to include specific standards for access and land use management. The available model ordinance, in the form of a Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCOD) should be reviewed, modified to meet the unique County environment, and adopted.

(C) Reservoir Areas

In Chapter 1, Physical Conditions, Section B.1.f there is a brief discussion of the Engineering study of reservoirs in the County accompanied by Figure 1.11 that identifies the potential reservoirs with existing building footprints.

In Chapter 4, Public Facilities and Services, Section E.1 there is a further discussion of the water supply and identification of specific potential reservoirs in the context of the County's responsibility to assure an adequate fresh water supply.

In Chapter 5, Water Quality and Shoreline Protection Plan, Section B.3 there is a discussion of the overall situation regarding availability of fresh water and the recognition that reservoirs are a necessary source of fresh water and a recommendation regarding the importance of starting to bring the reservoirs on-line.

There are at least five important and non-controversial points to be recognized:

1. Artesian aquifer groundwater is a finite resource not expected to last much past mid-century. Problems will become increasingly severe in the lifetimes of children being born today as illustrated in scientific-based water availability and usage data included in the Statistical Appendix.
2. Reservoirs are the most desirable sustainable source of water for centers of population and for industry when the aquifer collapses. Shallow wells will continue to provide a sustainable source for citizens not within economic distance of a reservoir. Desalinization systems will be necessary for many citizens with waterfront property not near reservoirs.
3. Land prices will continue to increase and the cost of land acquisition will become increasingly expensive with the passage of time.
4. Development will continue and the choice of reservoir sites will become more limited and more difficult to sequester or reserve with the passage of time.
5. Reservoirs would be economic engines today even if not used immediately for water supply. Shorelines of reservoirs would increase in value significantly and provide jobs and economic opportunities for recreation facilities and fishing, restaurants, inns, and responsible development with Bay- Act restrictions.

From a point of view of land use planning the County should limit and control development by establishing a Reservoir Overlay District at the proposed reservoir footprints so that the option of constructing surface impoundments remains open. As discussed in Chapter 4, the most promising sites are as follows:

<u>Site</u>	<u>Serving</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Million gallons/day</u>
<u>Lodge Creek</u>	<u>Callao</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>1.05</u>
<u>Mill Creek</u>	<u>Wicomico Church</u>	<u>163</u>	<u>0.35</u>

<u>Sydnor's Mill</u>	<u>Burgess and points east</u>	<u>328</u>	<u>0.48</u>
<u>Crabbe Mill</u>	<u>Heathsville</u>	<u>310</u>	<u>0.56</u>

As a minimum, the area identified for these four sites, plus an area of 800 feet landward of these sites when the reservoirs are full should be included in the Reservoir Overlay District.

Reservoir sites and adjacent property should be permitted to develop only as consistent with maintaining a future public water supply

The policies for building in the Reservoir Overlay District should be as follows:

1. No construction to be allowed in the areas designated for the reservoirs including supporting infrastructure such as spillways.
2. Construction in the 800 foot area around the reservoirs should follow the Chesapeake Bay Act restrictions without exceptions.

C. HOW TO USE THE LAND USE PLAN

Although the Land Use Plan is only one component of the Comprehensive Plan, it is very important because of its long-range influence on the use and development of both privately and publicly-owned land. Its impact is greatest on privately-owned land because almost all of the County's area is in that category. The land use plan is also an important document with respect to the environment, particularly when read in context with the Water Quality Protection Plan which is the subject of Chapter 5. Functions of the Land Use Plan and general guidelines for its use are summarized in the following comments.

1. The first reason for the Land Use Plan's importance is that it establishes official long-range policies for the use and development of land for the entire County. According to Virginia statutes (Va. Code Section ~~15.1-466~~15.2-2223) which authorizes counties to do planning, the comprehensive plan focuses on the physical development of the territory and it is for the purpose of:

"...guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the [County] which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of ~~its~~the inhabitants including the elderly and persons with disabilities"

Among the specific components of the comprehensive plan authorized under this section is the following specific authority for a land use plan:

"The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted, housing; business; industrial; agricultural; mineral resources;

conservation, recreation, public service, floodplain and drainage, and other areas."

The Code requires that each community have a comprehensive plan, that it be reviewed every five years and updated as found necessary.

2. The Land Use Plan serves as a framework for establishing land use regulations which are the local laws that govern the use and development of land. The Land Use Plan and associated policies provide guidelines for preparing or updating Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. The Zoning Ordinance establishes how land may legally be used and the Subdivision Ordinance establishes requirements for subdividing land into lots and recording them in appropriate places. Both the land use plan and land use regulations should be reviewed together periodically and updated as appropriate. The Zoning Ordinance shall be updated to be compatible with this Land Use Plan.-
3. The Land Use Plan is used in making decisions on requests by property owners for a change in use of their properties. In many cases, a change in use requires a policy change (rezoning) by the governing body. The Land Use Plan should be one of the standard sources used during a rezoning process.
4. County-wide, the current zoning is out-of-date and not consistent with the Land Use Plan. The process for updating the existing zoning to incorporate the village/support area concept is first for each request to be reviewed to determine if the parcel is located in a village or support area. If so, the requested uses shall be compared to the permitted or conditional uses in the village or support area and if affirmative, the re-zoning would normally be approved or conditioned. By this process, as development proceeds, it will be in accordance with the Land Use Plan. If the proposal is for rezoning a parcel not in a village or support area, then the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors should follow the appropriate policies of this Land Use Plan.
45. After the Land Use Plan has been adopted by the Board of Supervisors it gains a legal status according to Section 15.1-456 of the Code. This Section provides that after the Board adopts a comprehensive plan, or part thereof, unless a feature is shown on the adopted plan, it must be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The Commission then determines whether that feature is substantially in accord with the adopted plan.
56. As a final item, the Land Use Plan should be interpreted to include a Water Quality Protection Plan (see Chapter 5) which is designed to address issues of the Chesapeake Bay preservation. This element of the plan is required by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act as established in the Regulations of the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board.