

CHAPTER 10
FUTURE LAND USE

DETERMINING FUTURE LAND USE AMOUNTS

There are many factors that can affect future land use needs. Population growth, past trends, existing zoning, as well as anticipated development affect the amount of land set aside for different types of uses. In addition, the county's goals and objectives, as discussed in Chapter 9, as well as its attitudes toward change play a role in shaping future growth.

Agriculture and Forest Lands

Agriculture lands are farming operations and pasture lands. Forest lands are occupied by trees and managed for forest products, environmental benefits, wildlife and/or recreation. These lands are typically lost to development if development controls are not put into place to protect them. The county seeks to preserve its rural character by centralizing development into growth centers thereby relieving the pressure on agriculture and forest lands.

Residential

Rural residential housing is found scattered throughout agricultural and forestal areas of the county. A large portion of the County is zoned Agricultural (A-1) and used for residential purposes. For these reasons, rural residential housing is not shown on the Existing Land Use Map as a separate land use. The zoning and subdivision ordinances allow for one acre lot sizes within the Agriculture Zoning District (A-1). Based on these ordinances and past trends, rural residential housing likely will continue to be a popular type of residential development. Development controls have been put in place to restrict residential development in Agricultural areas, such as not allowing major subdivisions (as defined in the Zoning Ordinance) with the goal of reducing the risk of widespread sprawl throughout the County. Sprawl can destroy rural character and drain the County's ability to provide services.

For purposes of estimating future land use needs, the County assumes that 15 percent of all future residential development until 2035 will be rural residential while the remaining 85 percent will be neighborhood residential. This assumption marks a direct shift from current policies. The County seeks to break from historic growth patterns, which encourage sprawl and consume agriculture and farm lands, by establishing development controls which direct growth to neighborhood residential areas within development centers.

Neighborhood residential consists of smaller lots served by an internal road system, or cul-de-sac thereby encouraging the creation of a neighborhood, including multi-family housing. Neighborhood Residential is the preferred form of residential development because it centralizes growth thereby preserving rural character by reducing the strain on surrounding agriculture and forest lands, providing for more orderly and attractive development patterns and allowing the County to focus services which allows for the

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more efficient use of tax dollars. Neighborhood residential growth is increasing and the County desires to encourage this type of development, especially as part of Development Centers where higher densities that support water and sewer services are encouraged. Single family housing likely will continue to be preferred over multi-family housing. However, multi-family development is also encouraged.

Commercial

Historically, the County has had very little commercial development. Commercial land within the County typically consists of country stores with gas pumps, antique shops, garages, greenhouses, banks, marinas, and retail and professional services. Commercial development per person is very low in Charles City County when compared to neighboring localities. However, the County desires to encourage commercial growth in areas that are categorized and prioritized as follows (from highest to lowest priority): Development Centers, which allows centralization of more intensive commercial and residential uses; neighborhood service areas, which are centered around locally important transportation nodes and established neighborhoods that emphasize denser residential development with limited non-intensive commercial uses; and, in the immediate area of commercial anchor businesses (such as the River's Rest Marina / Hideaway Area) and at the corners of rural high traffic intersections (identified as Routes 5 and 106; Herring Creek area; Routes 5 and 614; and Routes 155 and 614) as long as any proposed commercial development is considered to be in harmony with the character of the surrounding area.

Charles City County's rich history, cultural, and scenic qualities is a great asset to the business community. Historic commercial businesses (i.e. B & B establishments, plantations and related businesses) are expected to increase because of the growing popularity and promotion of tourism and ecotourism in the County and across the State. In addition, the Capital to Capital trail along Rt. 5 will bring many tourists through the County allowing others to see the beauty and history that the County has to offer. However, it should be noted that historic commercial growth will eventually taper off because of the limited number of historic properties.

Industrial

Light (i.e. light manufacturing, trucking operations) and heavy industrial (i.e. landfill, sand and gravel operations, tire recycling, saw mills, ports) growth is expected to continue, especially in light of the expansion of Ft. Lee. In addition, the County's access to Interstate 64, the Roxbury Industrial Park, the relatively low land prices, as well as the potential of barging along the James River all make Charles City an attractive place for industrial development.

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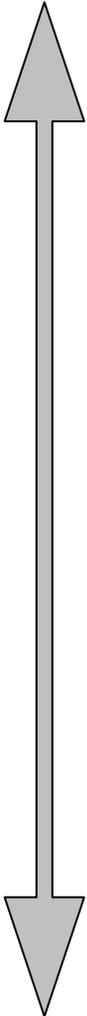
Public/Semi-Public

Public/semi public uses typically consist of transportation, community facilities and utilities as well as public open space. Transportation which is made of road networks is anticipated to be focused due to the policy of directing growth within development centers. Community facilities and utilities are made up of the lands allocated to local, State and Federal government buildings, fire stations, transfer stations, schools and churches. Most of these cost tax dollars to maintain therefore the County wishes to centralize these as much as possible within development centers in order to provide services to citizens with the least amount of tax dollars. Public open space includes the wildlife management area, wildlife refuge area, the fish hatchery and existing County park land. Public open space is encouraged throughout the County both within development centers as well as agriculture and forest areas throughout the County.

FUTURE LAND USE PATTERNS

The County has established six future land use patterns as follows:

Highest
Intensity



Lowest
Intensity

- **Development Centers:** The primary focus for future growth where high intensity development is intentional and planned and infrastructure is planned or provided.
- **Neighborhood Service Areas:** Located around crossroads and other community anchors that provide limited space for high density residential development and associated neighborhood commercial activities. These are areas where citizens from the outlying rural areas may come to get goods and services without having to drive to development centers. Public, government sponsored water and sewer infrastructure is not planned for these areas. However, as Neighborhood Service Areas grow overtime it is anticipated that some may take on the aspects of and become development centers.
- **Industrial Corridor Overlay District:** A 500 foot wide buffer along the entire length of Route 106 measured from the centerline of the roadway extending west and east. The purpose of the overlay is to manage access, signage, landscaping and uses along the identified industrial purpose roadway.
- **Industrial Reserve:** Large tracts located along a section of Route 106 and reserved for future industrial uses that cannot locate within Roxbury Development Center.
- **Landfill Reclamation Area:** The parcel(s) currently permitted and being used as the landfill. Once the landfill reaches its permitted capacity, the disturbed land will be properly reclaimed, monitored, and utilized as an area for public recreation.
- **Rural:** The majority of the land area within the County is designated to remain rural. Public water and sewer, community facilities and road improvements are not anticipated. Farm and forestry operations predominates this area with limited commercial and industrial development.

DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

A *Development Center* is an area of the County with a geographic delineation, or designated boundary line, within which development of a higher intensity is intentional and planned, and infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to serve such development is provided or planned. These centers provide the primary location for major employers and smaller businesses that serve the daily needs of all County residents. Each development center is further defined by the businesses primary market area, the existing types and sizes of businesses found there as well as those likely to locate there in the future.

Development within these areas encourages the blending of the new with the existing and is planned at densities that support the installation of affordable centralized utilities where they do not currently exist. Potential uses are limited only by the design characteristics of the particular Development Center. Care must be taken to assure that proper site planning and necessary buffering and separation of uses is accomplished.

Development Centers are a means to geographically indicate where more development is appropriate. Benefits of Development Centers are as follows:

- 1) Leveraging private infrastructure investments and public tax dollars to provide the biggest bang for the buck by concentrating development;
- 2) Adding certainty to the development process and encouraging investment by clearly delineating where infrastructure is planned and will be provided;
- 3) Concentrating jobs, residential and commercial uses, and community facilities and services to make life more affordable.
- 4) Stimulating community development patterns that support more accessible public transit;
- 5) Relieving development pressure on rural lands to preserve forest and agricultural;
- 6) Encouraging long-term strategic thinking about a community's future.

The Development Centers are Roxbury and Courthouse. A detailed description about the specific types of development the County encourages within each of the designated Development Centers follows.

ROXBURY

The Roxbury Development Center, located on both sides of Roxbury Road (Route 106) in the northwest corner of the County, has traditionally been the County's industrial hub and one of the major employment centers. The County's industrial park as well as several other industrial activities is located in this development center.

Proximity and easy access to transportation systems such as roadways, railways and nearby shipping ports, and possible future installation of centralized water and sewer

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service make this an ideal location for business parks, industrial parks, and commercial businesses that support industrial development.

COURTHOUSE

The Charles City Courthouse is located in the south central portion of the County. This center is now, and will continue to be, the governmental and public educational center of the County. The John Tyler Memorial Highway (Route 5), a designated Virginia Scenic Highway, and Courthouse Road (Route 155) transit the area. A portion of the Capital to Capital bikeway, running from Williamsburg to Richmond, is within the right of way of the Scenic Highway.

The newly opened County Visitors Center, future County library and schools complex provide educational opportunities to both residents and non residents. High density single family and multi-family housing is anticipated to be the primary type of residential development in this area. Professional and commercial uses providing goods and services for tourist, residents and County workers are also located in this area. Offices and other support services, especially those related to governmental activities, education and tourism are encouraged to locate in this area.

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE AREAS

While more intentional and concentrated growth is directed toward Development Centers, there is a recognized need for basic goods and services throughout the County. This requires a greater concentration of people than is typically found in Rural Areas. Over the years neighborhoods have grown around the commercial activities designed to meet these needs, many near a transportation intersection. As more people came, more residences were built and the commercial goods and services activities grew to include general stores, garages, professional offices, personal services and other light commercial uses. In many cases these communities include community centers, houses of worship, and public facilities, e.g., schools, parks, emergency services, etc. This Comprehensive Plan identifies these Neighborhood Service Areas (NSAs) on the Future Land Use Map.

Commercial and higher density residential growth is expected to continue in Neighborhood Service Areas as long as it is compatible with and serves surrounding uses without overwhelming the neighborhood or further degrading its rural character. Any development proposal must be geographically connected well enough to reasonably expect it to be incorporated into the existing neighborhood. Developers will be allowed to install private decentralized water and wastewater treatment systems, but the extension of government sponsored public water and wastewater treatment systems into NSAs is highly unlikely, except as required to address threats to the public health. New roadside residential development is discouraged in NSAs.

ROUTE 106 INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has designated Route 106 as an industrial corridor. VDOT designed and built the road to safely carry the extra weight of industrial trucks and heavy equipment. Route 106 provides direct access from industrial areas inside and outside of the County to major transportation nodes such as airports, railroad spurs, interstate highways and port facilities. This corridor is economically significant to the County, region and the State. The County seeks to protect the integrity of Route 106 as an industrial corridor and thereby designates the Route 106 Industrial Corridor Overlay District.

Overlay districts are typically developed in conjunction with the preparation of a comprehensive land use plan. An overlay district is an additional zoning requirement(s) that is placed on a geographic area but does not change the underlying zoning. Overlay districts are used to impose development restrictions in specific locations in addition to standard zoning requirements.

The Route 106 Roxbury Industrial Corridor Overlay District will run the entire length of Route 106; however, regulations of the overlay district will differ along Route 106 depending on if it is within the Roxbury Development Center, a Neighborhood Service Area, the Industrial Reserve Area, or the areas outside of those development boundaries. The Industrial Corridor Overlay District is shown on the future land use map as a 500 foot buffer on either side of Route 106. The specific regulations of the overlay district will be developed and the current zoning ordinance will be amended following the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

In general, the design guidelines and regulations established for the overlay district will encourage proper site design, traffic control, and planning standards. In some areas of the corridor where industrial uses are priority, regulations will discourage proposed uses that may someday conflict with industrial uses as well as limit the potential negative impacts of industrial uses on surrounding existing land uses. In other areas of the corridor, where residential and commercial uses are planned, the overlay district regulations will encourage design guidelines that create a sense of place while also creating a harmonious blend between the outlying industrial uses that share the corridor. Access Management regulations that are conducive to maintaining traffic flow of industrial trucking will be key in protecting the economic viability of the corridor while providing for the blend of uses the County seeks to sustain along Route 106.

INDUSTRIAL RESERVE AREAS

In addition to the Roxbury Development Center, the County seeks to encourage additional areas for industrial growth. While the Roxbury Development Center is planned for a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, the County recognizes the need to allow for an area to accommodate heavy industrial uses which are not

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compatible with other uses such as residential. The Industrial Reserve areas are meant to delineate where the County would like to see heavy industrial uses as well as closely related commercial uses. These areas are meant to be buffered from surrounding residential uses in order to avoid any negative impacts of incompatible uses.

The Industrial Reserve Areas are shown on the future land use map as defined boundaries that do not follow parcel lines. The County chose to be flexible with the boundaries of the Industrial Reserve Areas so that they may grow as appropriate for the needs of the County. These Industrial Reserve boundaries are meant to serve as a guide; individual parcel designations along the periphery of those boundaries will be decided within the context of a rezoning application.

LANDFILL RECLAMATION AREA

This area is comprised of approximately 1,100 acres that has and/or is currently permitted to be used by the existing landfill. The area is located directly east of Barnetts Road and south of Cool Hill Road and is accessed via Chambers Road. Even though the current use(s) of the land is intensive in nature, once the landfill reaches maximum capacity there are plans to reclaim the land and use it for recreational and public purposes. The landfill reclamation area is not part of the Roxbury Development Center and does not support future commercial or industrial uses within its designated boundaries. Land surrounding this designated area is developed with single family dwellings that are oriented on existing public road corridors. Recreational plans will be created for the site in the future to determine its final use.

RURAL AREAS

Rural Areas are the majority of the County, i.e. the area outside of Development Centers, Industrial Reserve and Neighborhood Service Areas. Rural areas typically contain large tracts of land dedicated to forestry and agricultural uses, conservation lands and similar dedicated easements. Clustered and low density residential uses are allowed, however the conversion of rural areas into Neighborhood Service Areas or Development Centers is discouraged. Industrial uses related to farming, forestry, or mineral extraction is allowed in Rural Areas provided the development is compatible with the rural nature of the area, adequate infrastructure is provided, and such development cannot otherwise locate in a designated industrial area.

Where development is permitted, it must be undertaken with a very deliberate and professionally responsive recognition of the value of rural areas and their contribution to quality of life.

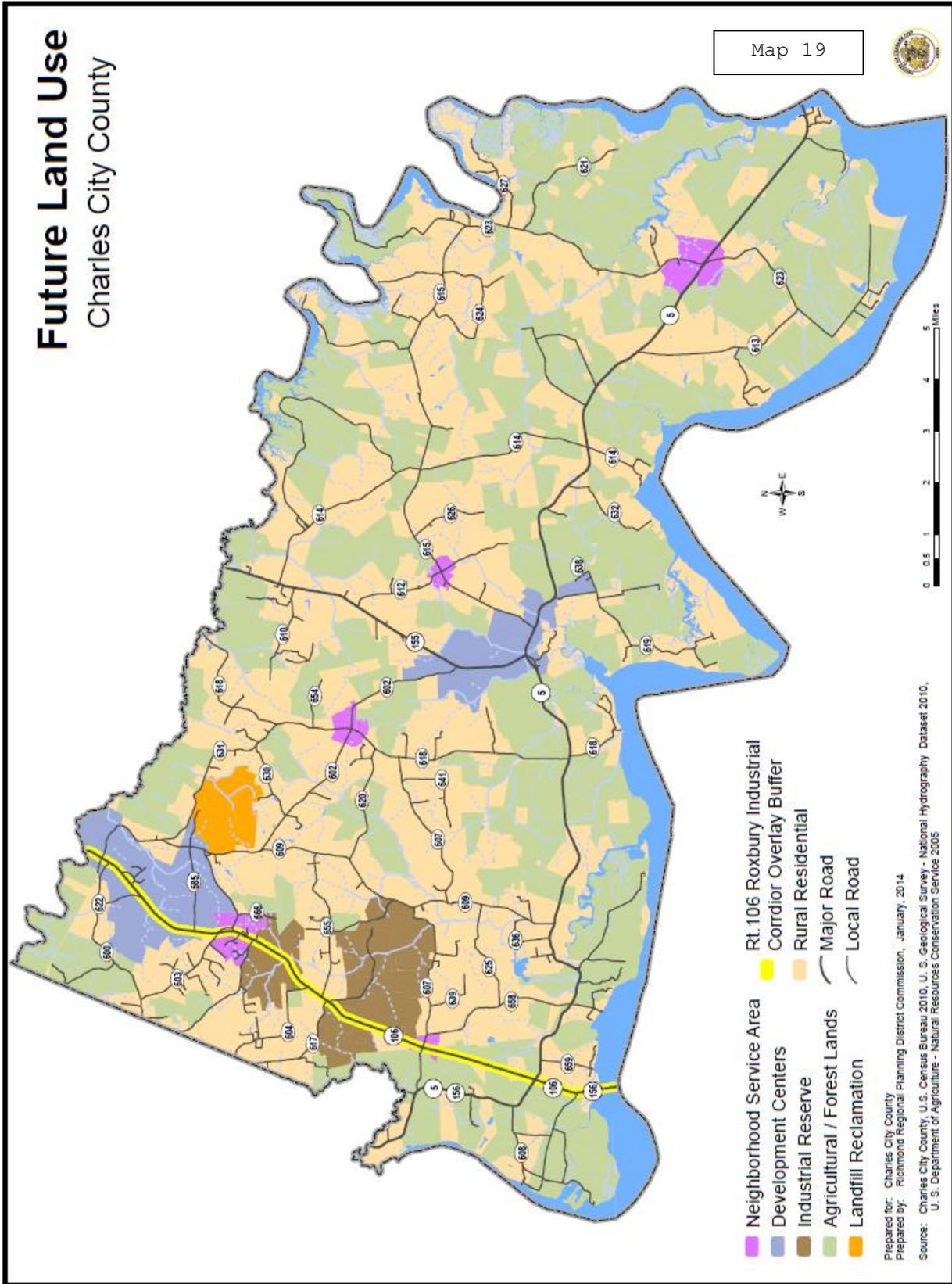
FUTURE LAND USE MAP

An important part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan is the Future Land Use Map. This map graphically portrays the desired future land use pattern based on the goals, objectives, strategies and policies set forth in the Plan. Together, the map and written text in this document serve as development guidelines for public and private decisions regarding land development. They also serve as informational tools for the general public.

The Future Land Use Map is shown in **Map 19**. In reviewing the Future Land Use Map, five points must be kept in mind:

1. The Map is a guide. The purpose of the Map is to assist in making development decisions; it does not dictate what decision will be made. The Map is to assist in making zoning decisions, but it is not a zoning map.
2. The Map is general in nature. Boundaries between land use categories are approximate locations, not precise property lines.
3. The land use categories shown on the map and described in this section are very general. They do not list every permitted or excluded use as done in the zoning ordinance.
4. The Map represents a long term view of the County. This Map attempts to look 20 years into the future. Many things will happen before the year 2035. This is why a periodic review of the Map is necessary. State law requires a review of comprehensive plans at least once every five years.
5. Adoption of the Future Land Use Map does not rezone any property nor does it permit the use of property for uses not allowed by the current zoning classification. The zoning, and currently permitted uses, on any tract remain until the property is rezoned by the Board of Supervisors after Planning Commission review and public hearing.

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