THE COMMUNITY VISION

The result of the extensive research, analysis, and public outreach summarized in this chapter “Guide The Isle” is a list of themes that define the overall direction of *Envisioning the Isle*. These themes are incorporated throughout each of the chapters and guides the individual goals of each chapter. The icons on the next page will be used throughout the Plan to show the interrelatedness of each chapter and how each theme is being addressed.

PLAN THEMES


PRESERVED AGRICULTURAL LAND AND RURAL CHARACTER


A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORK


HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITY


MANAGED GROWTH


STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY OFFERING DIVERSE SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT CHOICES


PROTECTED NATURAL RESOURCES


PREMIER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR ALL RESIDENTS


NUMEROUS PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES


PROTECTED HISTORIC RESOURCES


RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DESIGN


CHARACTER OF NEW DEVELOPMENT RESPECTS EXISTING COMMUNITY IDENTITY


ACCESS FOR ALL CITIZENS TO THE RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES NECESSARY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES DESPITE THEIR AGE, RACE, GENDER, OR LIFESTYLE CHOICE


HOUSING OPTIONS MEET THE NEEDS, PREFERENCES, AND FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES OF ALL COUNTY CITIZENS

GUIDE
THE ISLE



Envisioning the Isle *is an official public document adopted by the Isle of Wight County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. This document is a general, long-range, dynamic policy and implementation guide for decisions concerning the overall growth and development of the County. It will serve as a catalyst and guide to the establishment of, or revisions to, other ordinances and planning tools.*

GUIDE THE ISLE

Envisioning the Isle is an official public document adopted by the Isle of Wight County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. This document is a **general**, **long-range**, **dynamic** policy and implementation guide for decisions concerning the overall growth and development of the County. It will serve as a catalyst and guide to the establishment of, or revisions to, other ordinances and planning tools.

The Plan is comprehensive because the elements cover the entire range of development and preservation issues which can be influenced significantly by the County Board of Supervisors and other governing authorities and agencies. The Plan is **general** because the recommendations are broad. The Plan is **long-range** because consideration is given to the problems and opportunities which may arise over the next twenty years. The Plan is **dynamic**, because it can be amended to adapt to new situations and meet new challenges over time.

As the County grows and changes over the next twenty years, *Envisioning the Isle* will serve as a guide for making public and private decisions regarding the character of Isle of Wight's growth and development. *Envisioning the Isle* is a culmination of a cooperative effort, pulling together the knowledge and skills of a diverse body of citizens, elected officials, and public agencies. This Plan represents a future vision of Isle of Wight along with recommendations for achieving that vision. **The ideas of *Envisioning the Isle* are a distillation of the community's many priorities, identified through extensive public outreach. *Envisioning the Isle* is not intended to be a static document. It should be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect new development trends, shifts in the economy, or changes in the community's goals and objectives.**

The Importance

Planning is a powerful tool to obtain sustainable development. Planning informs infrastructure and services investments and balances demands for growth with the need to protect the environment. The right policies on density, land use, and the layout of infrastructure and services can make a difference in delivering the quality of life citizens of Isle of Wight County have come to expect. Proper planning facilitates collaboration between the community and its local government to take its vision and develop the tools to implement it.

The Legal Basis

The preparation of a Comprehensive Plan is the legal responsibility of the County Planning Commission under Virginia Planning Enabling Legislation, Title 15, Article 2-2223. Any ordinance pertaining to the use of land or the growth and development of the County should conform to the goals, objectives, and policies as they are presented in this Plan.

Virginia State Code establishes that the Comprehensive Plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing the 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 the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The Use

Comprehensive Plans, including *Envisioning the Isle*, are not a zoning ordinance, but rather a high-level tool for the County to guide future policy and development decisions. *Envisioning the Isle* should ultimately be used as a guide for daily and long-term decision making. The County should refer to the recommendations outlined in the Plan for daily decisions such as considering zoning and development requests, purchasing land, or constructing new infrastructure or public facilities. For developers or investors, *Envisioning the Isle* should provide broad concepts and policies that encourage and promote growth in accordance with the community's vision.



A WALK ON THE TRAIL

The Updates

The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be a living document that allows flexibility for changes in political, economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, as well as any other unforeseen circumstances that may ultimately influence or change the priorities and perspective of the community. To ensure that the Plan continues to reflect the goals of the community and remain relevant, the Plan must be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that its elements are still appropriate, and the associated goals, policies, and actions are still applicable.

Annual Progress Reporting

Once the Plan is adopted, County staff, with the assistance of the Planning Commission, should prepare a yearly progress report for presentation to the Board of Supervisors. This practice will ensure that the goals of the Plan are regularly reviewed, and any necessary changes or clarifications are identified. It is also important to provide ongoing monitoring between the Plan and the County's implementing regulations to maintain consistency among all documents.

Evaluation Report

In accordance with Virginia State Code, Title 15, Article 2-2230, every five years the Planning Commission should prepare an evaluation report with input from County staff, various County departments and other municipal boards and councils. The report should evaluate the existing Plan and assess how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The purpose of the report will be to identify the Plan's successes and shortcomings, look at what has changed over the last five years, and make suggestions on how the Plan should be modified to best accommodate those changes.

The Chapters

The Comprehensive Plan takes into consideration all relevant local and regional information, including past and present planning efforts and studies, to ensure coordinated community-wide recommendations. The community-wide issues and the community-guided vision for the County, detailed on page 3 of this document, influenced the organization of the document. The chapters were organized to emphasize the accomplishment of these visions and to allow both residents and planners to easily locate areas of interest throughout the document.



SMITHFIELD STATION

The Process

A key objective throughout the *Envisioning the Isle* process has been involving the citizens of Isle of Wight County. Development of the Plan was driven by input received from citizens. This section summarizes the public engagement process and details how the input guided this document.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Almost 2,000 survey responses over an 18-month period
- Over 400 in attendance at *Envisioning the Isle* public meetings
- Approximately 450 individuals receiving emails with updates
- Over 40 community meetings
- Presentations to neighborhood associations, Windsor High School, Chamber of Commerce, Citizens Association, and the Smithfield Farmer's Market

The Public Engagement

The public engagement process was assisted by a citizen task force. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force was a 20-member, Board of Supervisors-appointed group that assisted with the public participation process and provided feedback during each phase of the planning process. Members' interests and expertise spanned all the themes identified throughout the plan. The Planning Commission and each election district were represented.

The broader public engagement process was open to all residents, land owners, and business owners within the County to identify the most important issues, opportunities, and existing characteristics of the County that should be addressed, preserved, and enhanced. It was conducted in a four-part process to ensure that the public was able to give direction and stay updated on the process.



SUNSET ON
THE PAGAN RIVER
BY MARK EDWARDS

OUTREACH METHODS TO OUR CITIZENS



MAILER SENT TO ALL ADDRESSES WITHIN THE COUNTY



ADVERTISEMENTS ON THE COUNTY'S CABLE CHANNEL



POSTS ON MULTIPLE SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS



MESSAGES SENT ON THE COUNTY'S TEXT ALERT SYSTEM



ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS



DIGITAL AND HARD-COPY SURVEYS LOCATED IN KIOSKS



FLYERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY



DEDICATED PROJECT PAGE ON COUNTY WEBSITE



INCLUSION IN ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

Local Roots, Global Reach
ISLE OF WIGHT
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

JUNE 1
Joint Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors Meeting

JUNE 22
Carrsville Public Forums

JUNE 29
Windsor Public Forums

JULY 13
Smithfield Public Forums

JULY 26
Rushmere Public Forums

JULY 27
Carrollton Public Forums

JUNE & JULY 2017
Additional Meetings with Community Groups

AUGUST 2017
Envisioning the Isle chosen as the Plan's new name

NOVEMBER 30
Task Force Project Update/Guidance

SUMMER 2017
(WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO ISLE OF WIGHT)
PUBLIC FORUM #1

WINTER 2017/ SPRING 2018
(WHERE AND HOW SHOULD WE GROW)
PUBLIC FORUM #2

OCTOBER 24
Planning Commission Project Update

JANUARY 18
Board of Supervisors Project Update

JANUARY 25
Windsor Public Forums

JANUARY 30
Carrsville Public Forums

FEBRUARY 6
Rushmere Public Forums

FEBRUARY 8
Smithfield Public Forums

FEBRUARY 13
Carrollton Public Forums

MAY 22
Planning Commission Project Update

MAY 30
Task Force Project Update/Guidance

JUNE 14
Board of Supervisors' Project Update

SEPTEMBER 11
Rushmere Public Forums

SEPTEMBER 18
Carrsville Public Forums

SEPTEMBER 27
Smithfield Public Forums

OCTOBER 2
Windsor Public Forums

OCTOBER 3
Carrollton Public Forums

OCTOBER 17
Chamber of Commerce Student Leadership Institute Meeting

NOVEMBER 2
Planning Commission Project Update

NOVEMBER 7
Task Force Project Update/Guidance

NOVEMBER 15
Board of Supervisors' Project Update

DECEMBER 11
Planning Commission Scenario Guidance

FALL 2018
(PREFERRED SCENARIOS)
PUBLIC FORUM #3

SUMMER/ FALL 2019
(CRAFTING THE PLAN)
PUBLIC FORUM #4

AUGUST 27
Planning Commission Project Update

SEPTEMBER 5
Board of Supervisors Project Update

SEPTEMBER 11
Windsor Open Houses

SEPTEMBER 12
Carrsville Open Houses

SEPTEMBER 16
Carrollton Open Houses

SEPTEMBER 17
Rushmere Open Houses

SEPTEMBER 18
Smithfield Open Houses

NOVEMBER 26, 2019
Planning Commission Public Hearing Date

JANUARY 16, 2020
Adoption Date by the Board of Supervisors

PUBLIC FORUM 1

What's Important to Isle of Wight

The initial outreach took place from June to August 2017. The purpose of the outreach was to inform the public of the planning effort and gain feedback from the public on their priorities for the future of the County.

- **Kickoff Meeting.** The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors held a joint meeting on June 1, 2017. Staff presented the Commissioners and the Supervisors the mapping exercise and presentation that were going to be given at the public forum.
- **Survey.** Participants were asked to complete the following statements:
  - In the future, I would like Isle of Wight to...
  - The best things about Isle of Wight are...
  - The worst things about Isle of Wight are...
  - Growth and development in Isle of Wight should...
- **Public Meetings.** Ten meetings were held by County planners at five locations throughout the County (Rushmere, Smithfield, Carrollton, Windsor, and Carrsville). These meetings included a brief presentation describing the reason for long-range planning, a mapping exercise asking participants to identify the important locations throughout the County, and the previously mentioned survey.
- **Community Group Presentations.** Local community groups were given the opportunity to have planning staff attend one of their meetings. The group was given the same presentation and mapping exercise given in the public meetings. Participants could ask staff any questions related to the new Plan. Community group presentations included the Windsor High School earth science class, the Carrisbrooke HOA, and the Isle of Wight Citizens Association.
- **Community Kiosks.** The surveys were available at seven locations throughout the County during the summer of 2017. Individuals were able to complete the paper survey even if unable to attend any of the meetings.
- **Farmer's Market Display.** County planners set up a survey-taking station and provided the previously mentioned survey to customers attending the Smithfield Farmer's Market.
- **Plan Naming Contest.** Survey participants were given the option to suggest a name for the new Plan. Out of 114 responses, *Envisioning the Isle* was chosen as submitted by Leigh Abbott-Leaman of Smithfield.
- **Task Force Meeting.** County planners met with the appointed task force members to explain their role in the Comprehensive Planning process, the importance of the Comprehensive Plan, and gain their input on the best ways to reach the public.

Citizen Feedback. The top five priorities resulting from the initial community engagement exercise were:

- School system and facilities;
- Preservation of agricultural lands;
- Compact development and smart growth;
- Economic development and
- Environmental protection.

A more in-depth summary and full listing of each response is included in the appendix.



MAIN STREET COVER BY TINA L. HILL

PUBLIC FORUM 2

Where and How Should We Grow

The second series of public forums took place in January and February 2018. The purpose of the outreach was to gain feedback from the community on how they believe growth in the County should take place over the next twenty years.

- **Survey.** County planners created eight different scenarios based on the recurring themes below. These themes were created from feedback in the first round of public input. Each of these scenarios is located on the following pages and focuses solely on one of the priorities established during the first public forum. Larger scenario maps can be found in the appendix. Participants were asked to complete the survey by giving their likes and dislikes about each scenario:
    - Agricultural Preservation
    - Central and Southern Growth
    - Economic Development
    - Environmental Preservation
    - Maximized DSD
    - No Growth
    - DSD Alternative Growth
    - Small Towns and Villages
- **Public Meetings.** Ten meetings were held by County planners at five locations throughout the County. These meetings included a presentation explaining the scenarios and an opportunity to complete the previously mentioned survey.
- **Task Force Meeting.** The County planners met with the appointed task force members to present the results of the second phase of public input. The task force members felt that additional efforts needed to be made to reach a wider audience, resulting in a mailer being sent to all County residents prior to the third public forum.

Citizen Feedback. There were a series of themes and issues which were consistent throughout responses to the surveys. These themes were used in the creation of *Envisioning the Isle* and the issues are addressed in either maps or the text of the document. A more in-depth summary and full listing of each response is included in the appendix.

CAPTURED IN THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP:

- Agricultural preservation
- Environmental preservation
- Preservation of flood-prone and other vulnerable areas
- Growth management
- Rural character preservation
- Additional locations where commercial, office, and industrial uses can be considered
- Potential village centers where expanded land use options may be appropriate

ADDRESSED IN THE POLICIES:

- Agricultural preservation
- Environmental preservation
- Protection of flood-prone and other vulnerable areas
- Growth management
- Rural character preservation
- Transportation
- Emergency management services and law enforcement
- Schools
- Character of development
- Budgetary impacts and fiscal viability

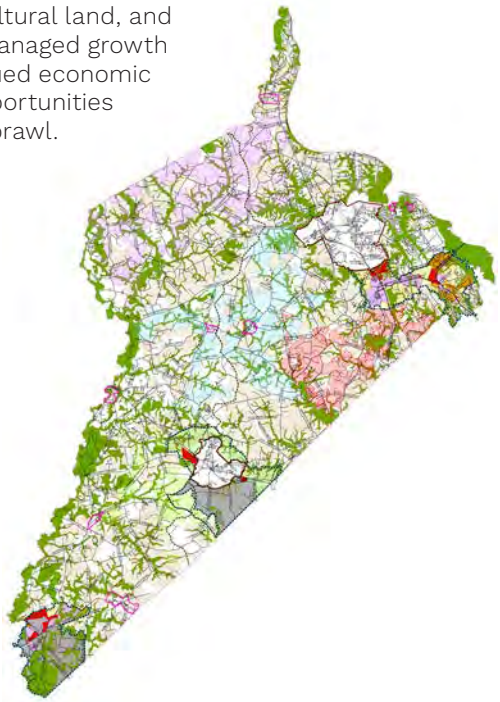
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Focus on preservation of important farm soils, large tracts of land, and rural character.

RESPONSE

Prioritize protecting the rural character by preserving environmental resources, agricultural land, and jobs. Focus on managed growth to ensure continued economic development opportunities and to prevent sprawl.



CENTRAL & SOUTHERN GROWTH

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Encourage growth in the Windsor and Camptown Development Service Districts (DSD) by shifting development demand to those areas.

RESPONSE

Focus on managed growth to ensure that the central and southern areas are given the opportunity to thrive without limiting potential economic growth in the northern region.



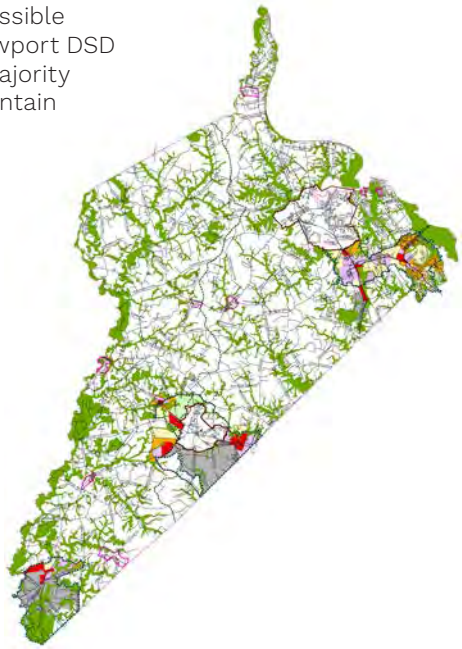
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Focus on job creation and the growth of non-residential uses that contribute to the tax base.

RESPONSE

Focus diverse opportunities for economic development in the Windsor DSD and possible expansion of the Newport DSD while allowing the majority of the County to maintain its rural character.



ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Create connections between conservation areas, preserve forested wetlands and flood prone areas, buffer wetlands outside of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA), and prioritize environmental protection.

RESPONSE

Prioritize preserving environmental resources by increasing the protection of wetlands, floodplains, and other vulnerable areas.



MAXIMIZED DSDS

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Allow DSDs to maintain their size for as long as possible by increasing the intensity of the land uses within the boundaries.

RESPONSE

Maintain a focused development pattern in order to allow the majority of the County to remain rural.



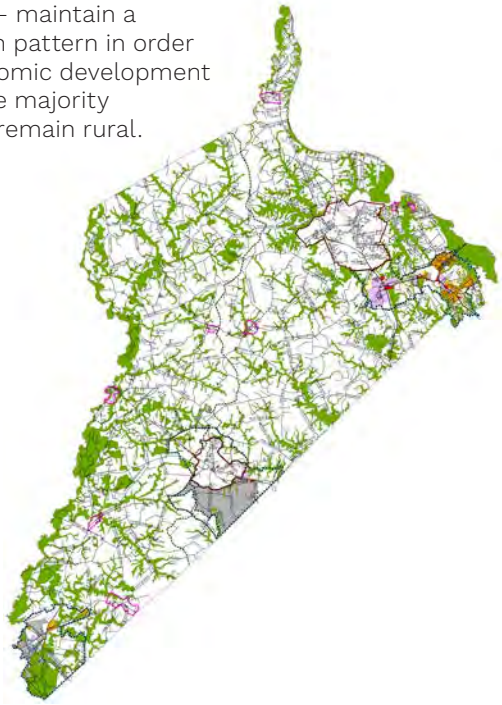
NO GROWTH

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Limit or stop future growth within the County by converting existing land uses within DSDs to Rural Agricultural Conservation (RAC) on all properties which do not have a previously approved rezoning.

RESPONSE

Minimal growth — maintain a controlled growth pattern in order to allow for economic development while allowing the majority of the County to remain rural.



DSD ALTERNATIVE GROWTH

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Reshape development areas to locate more intense land uses around key intersections and locate less intense land uses farther from “core” areas.

RESPONSE

Create target growth areas to encourage economic growth opportunities while decreasing intensity bordering existing RAC areas.



SMALL TOWN/VILLAGES

GOAL OF SCENARIO

Maintain existing small town feel and sense of community while allowing existing villages the opportunity for additional growth.

RESPONSE

Consider key village centers for further development while maintaining the rural character for the majority of the County.



PUBLIC FORUM 3

Preferred Scenarios

Staff developed two preferred scenarios based on the community's likes and dislikes gathered during Public Forum 2. The third series of public forums took place in September and October 2018. The purpose of the outreach was to ask the community to choose from two potential scenarios for multiple key locations throughout the County.

- **Intergovernmental Meeting.** Prior to releasing the scenarios, County planning staff met with planning staff from the Town of Windsor and Town of Smithfield to discuss any possible conflicts with their respective Comprehensive Plans.
- **Survey.** County planners created two scenarios for ten key locations. Respondents were asked to select their preferred scenario. Participants were also given the opportunity to comment on any location within the County that they did not believe was adequately addressed in any of the included scenarios.
- **Public Meetings.** Ten meetings were held by County planners at five locations throughout the County. These meetings included a brief presentation summarizing the planning effort and showing two different future growth scenarios based on the input received during the second forum. The presentation also included a transportation study and fiscal viability study showing the projected impacts from each of the scenarios. After the presentation, attendees completed a survey based on the scenarios.
- **Student Leadership Institute Presentation.** A special presentation was given to students in the Chamber of Commerce Student Leadership Institute. This presentation covered more information on the planning profession and detailed the differences between the options in each of the scenarios. Students were walked through the survey and given the chance to ask questions and provide input.
- **Task Force Meeting.** County planners met with the appointed task force members to review feedback from the third phase of input. Staff also presented a draft outline of the Comprehensive Plan and asked for volunteers to serve on committees assisting with the development of individual chapters of the plan.
- **Planning Commission.** There were a number of questions on the survey which had a marginal difference in the number of respondents preferring one option over the other. During a regularly scheduled public meeting, the Commissioners evaluated these options and decided which scenario would best serve these key areas.

Citizen Feedback. The responses to the ten scenarios echoed sentiments that had been voiced in previous public forums. Respondents continued to favor maintaining the rural nature of areas in the central and southern portions of the County while being divided on the best way to control growth in the Newport DSD. The only topic that was specifically mentioned by respondents as not being adequately addressed in the scenarios was an increase in development near the County Courthouse to provide more food and retail options for residents living in the central portion of the County. A more in-depth summary and full listing of each response is included in the appendix.

KEY AREAS



ALONG LEES MILL ROAD

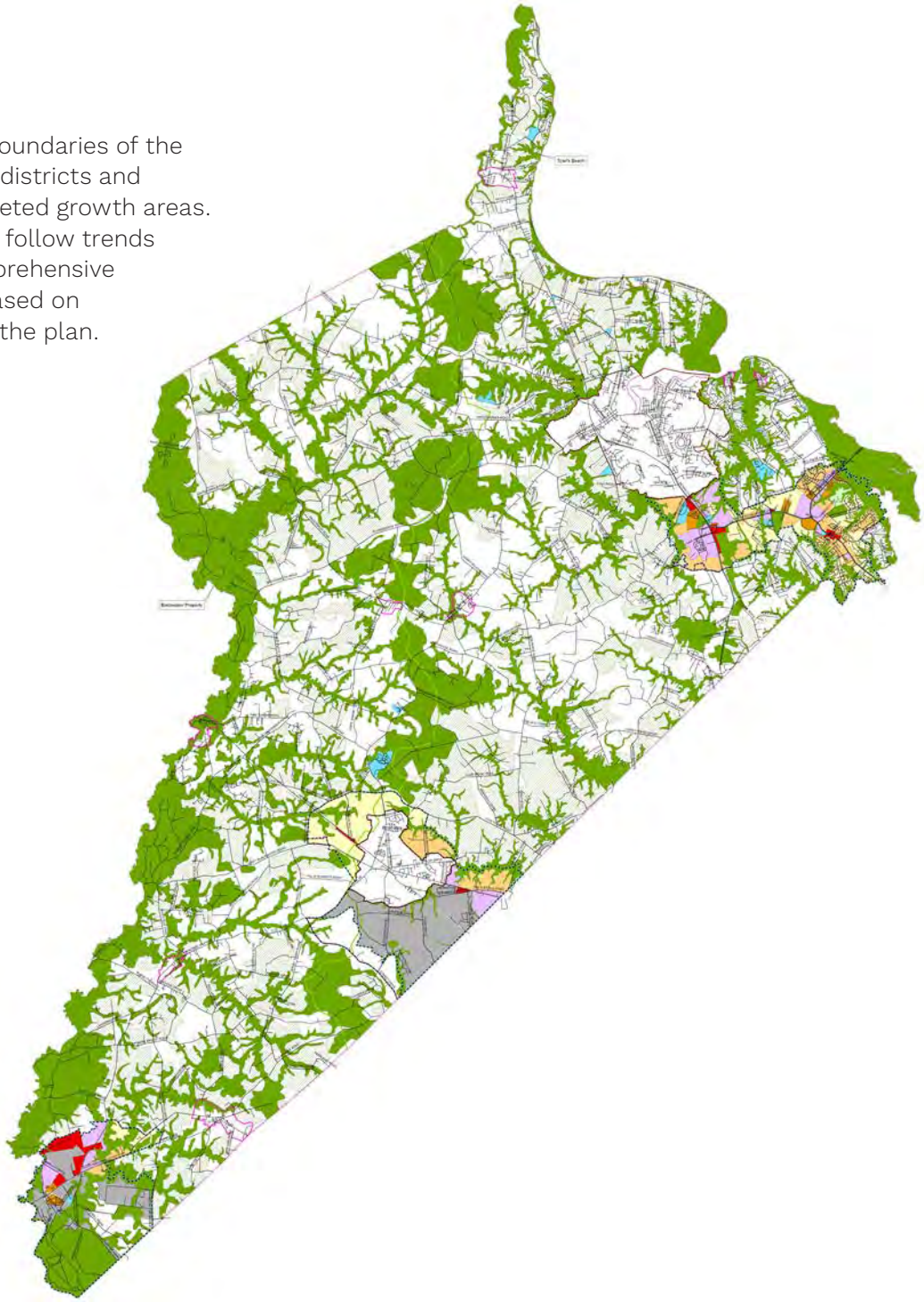


INTERSECTION OF CAMPBELL'S CHAPEL ROAD & BREWER'S NECK BOULEVARD

Scenario 1

This scenario maintains the boundaries of the existing development service districts and establishes no additional targeted growth areas. Development would primarily follow trends established in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan with some exceptions based on growth in the years following the plan.

Priorities Include: Prioritize maintaining agricultural preservation, environmental conservation, and low-density residential growth in less populated areas. This scenario was chosen by the respondents and Planning Commission for the key areas shown below.





ALONG NEW TOWNE HAVEN LANE



CAMPTOWN DSD

Scenario 2

This scenario capitalizes on existing and proposed infrastructure and services like streets, water, and emergency services. While it reflects some trends of past development, it shifts and expands locations for new development to reduce the cost and other negative impacts of growth.

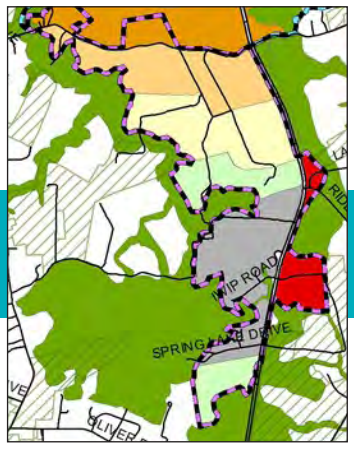
Priorities Include: Concentrate mixed use and commercial land uses in areas with existing development pressures and take advantage of existing and proposed infrastructure. This scenario was chosen by the respondents and Planning Commission for the key areas below.



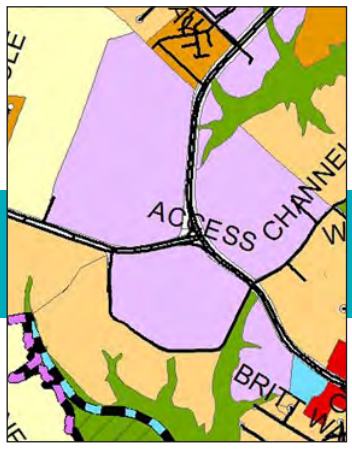
KEY AREAS



INTERSECTION OF CEDAR GROVE & ROUTE 17



ALONG ROUTE 10



INTERSECTION OF BREWER'S NECK BOULEVARD & ROUTE 17

PUBLIC FORUM 4

Crafting the Plan

The drafting of the Plan began in January 2019. Using the priorities identified throughout the three phases of public outreach, staff and committee members used past and current trends to identify ways to capitalize the County's strengths and mitigate identified weaknesses.

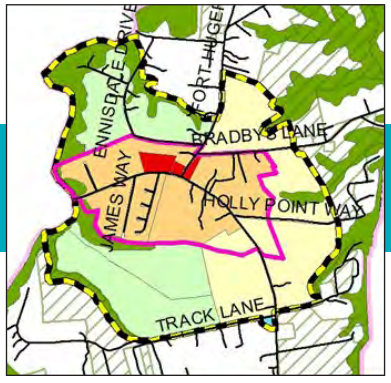
- **Development of the Plan.** Based on public input, County planners crafted the vision statement, goals, policies, and action statements to achieve the community's future priorities. Planners also drafted the chapters identifying existing conditions, future trends, input from survey responses, the task force committee, County staff, and subject matter experts.
- **Subcommittee Review.** The County planners initially met with staff from other County departments, Planning Commissioners, and task force members to discuss means to achieve the overall goals of the Plan. These subcommittees also reviewed and provided feedback on each draft of the Plan's chapters prior to the open houses.
- **Planning Commission Review.** Commissioners reviewed the Plan for alignment with community goals.
- **Open Houses.** Ten community open houses were held by County planners at five locations throughout the County. These open houses provided the community an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Plan. These meetings included a brief presentation summarizing the planning effort and explaining the organization of the Plan.

Plan Adoption

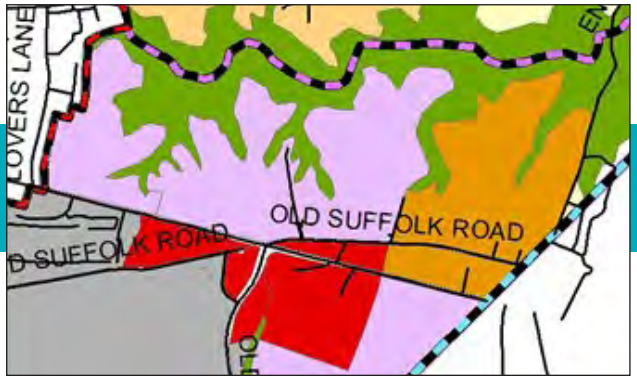
Citizens were given final opportunities to comment on the draft plan at the November 26, 2019, Planning Commission public hearing and the January 16, 2020, Board of Supervisors public hearing. The Board adopted the new Plan on January 16, 2020.



WINDSOR DSD



RUSHMERE VILLAGE CENTER



INTERSECTION OF OLD MILL ROAD & ROUTE 460