

STANLY COUNTY

SECTION 6: LAND USE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the report discusses recommendations that address the issues summarized in Section 5 of this report. Section 6 contains the following information:

- Principles to guide long-range land use planning on a countywide basis;
- Descriptions of the Land Use Categories proposed for the Stanly County Land Use Plan; and
- A summary of growth management and implementation strategies and tools identified to support the Land Use Plan recommendations.

Section 7 provides an implementation plan to guide the achievement of the plan goals and recommendations and is included at the end of this report.

Introduction

The Land Use Plan Recommendations are intended to guide the direction and character of long-range development in Stanly County over the next 20 years. It is a tool to be used by both public and private decision-makers that take part in the process of managing growth and development of Stanly County. These recommendations take into consideration a wide range of current and future development patterns. The plan will directly serve as a framework for land use and zoning decision-making for the study area identified in Figure 1-2 by elected and appointed commissions and boards as well as county staff. Figure 6-1 illustrates the long-range Land Use Plan Recommendations for Stanly County.

The Stanly County Land Use Plan was developed through an evaluation of the existing physical and socioeconomic environment, current development trends, and public input. The constraints and opportunities presented earlier in this report have been addressed in the plan recommendations. The plan attempts to balance the reality between existing conditions and the possibilities of future development patterns. The Land Use Plan for Stanly County is illustrated in Figure 6-1.

Principles of the County Land Use Plan

The County Land Use Plan responds to a series of issues and opportunities that were defined through both the analysis of existing conditions and the extensive community input that was completed earlier in the planning process.

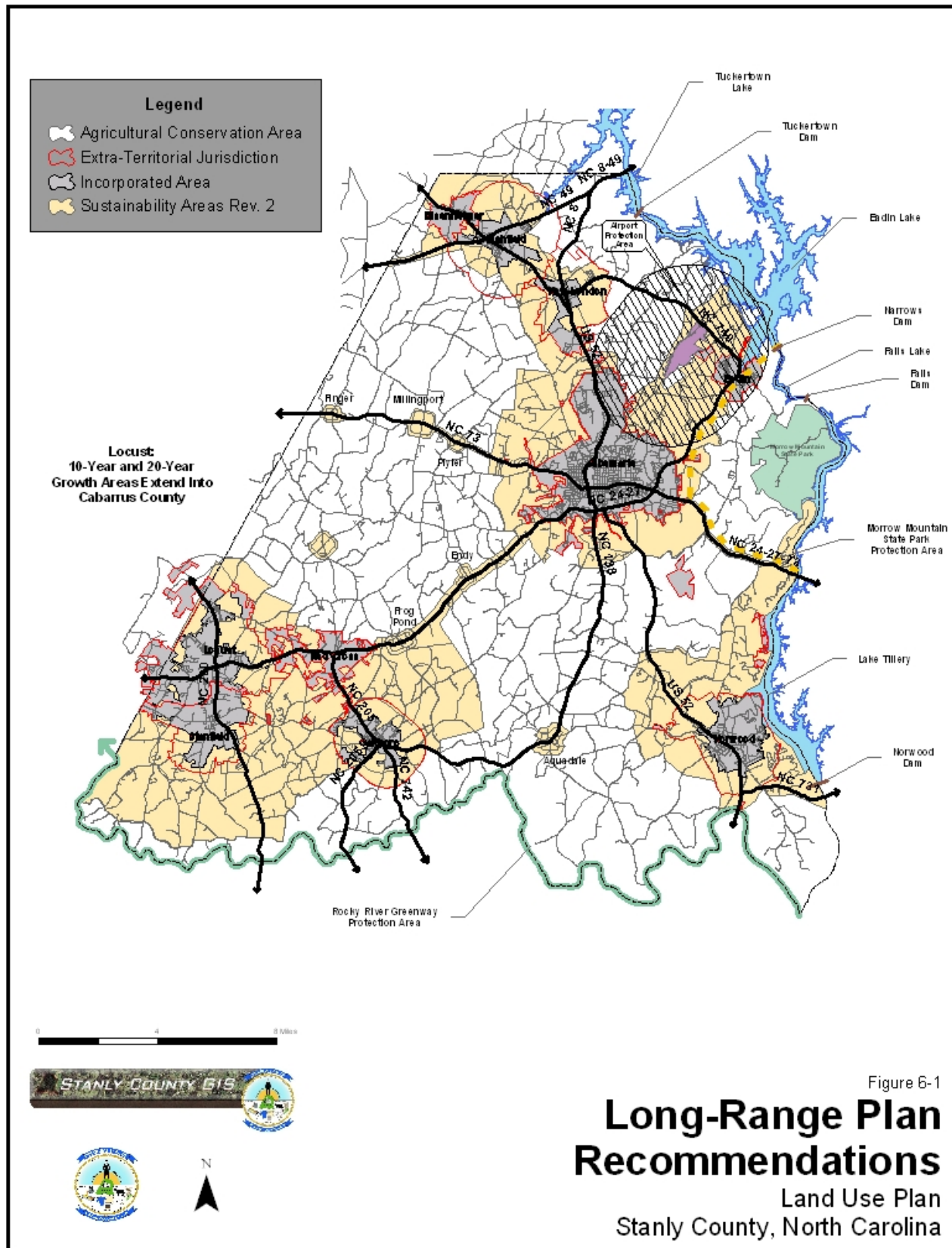
Many residents expressed concern that future development in Stanly County will continue to encroach upon open areas and farmland. Many others were fearful of Stanly County becoming another Charlotte/Mecklenburg County with its accompanying traffic, sprawl, higher housing costs, and other negative manifestations of urban development. At the same time, many citizens have voiced concerns over the lack of jobs, industry and overall growth within the county. Thus, a balance must be struck to ensure a sustainable tax base.

Although residents generally agreed that it would be impossible and undesirable to stop development in the county, the question remained: How can new development be managed so that the unique physical and social qualities that define the rural areas of Stanly County as well as the collection of cities and towns can be preserved?

Through a series of nine basic planning principles, the Land Use Plan addresses the proposed transition from medium to relative dense development patterns in Stanly County's ten municipalities and other population centers to the rural, farming landscape of much of the rest of the county.

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Figure 6-1 Land Use Plan



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The Land Use Plan is designed to guide future development so that Stanly County's character is not lost to the gradual and insidious effects of rural sprawl. The plan attempts to lay out a program to preserve the county's natural attributes, quality of life, and productive agricultural land. The Land Use Plan attempts, through a series of general principles and specific recommendations, to promote and retain Stanly County's assets through the logical location of intensive land uses, the recognition of agriculture as an essential element of the overall community, and the conservation of open spaces and sensitive lands.

The Land Use Plan also recommends a close association between land use decision-making and public infrastructure investment. While the Land Use Plan does not make specific recommendations for future roadway improvements, specific recommendations for utility capital improvements, or specific recommendations for community facility investment, it does seek to coordinate these endeavors within an overall program guided by the Land Use Plan.

Table 6-1 provides a summary of the nine land use principles guiding the land use plan recommendations. Each principle is described in detail below:

Table 6-1. Stanly County Land Use Plan Principles.

- 1. Future growth in Stanly County should be directed to the county's existing cities, towns, and other established population centers.**
- 2. Protect agriculture, agri-business, and tourism as an essential element of Stanly County's future in terms of culture, economy, and land use.**
- 3. Focus development to areas of the county where the physical conditions of the land can naturally support and are appropriate for non-agricultural land uses with a strong focus on air quality, water and sewer, and transportation.**
- 4. Protect Stanly County's unique natural and cultural resources including Morrow Mountain, Rocky River, and other historic sites. Concentrate on building re-use.**
- 5. Use long-range planning for public water and sewer, tax breaks, public utilities, TIP NC DOT infrastructure, and emergency/safety service as an opportunity for community building in the county.**
- 6. Encourage land use patterns that provide a compact mix of land uses at a higher intensity of development. Promote useable open space and discourage unintended consequences.**
- 7. The provision of parks, recreation, and open space needs to be an element of future land use planning in Stanly County. A comprehensive recreation plan is already underway for Stanly County.**
- 8. Use the Land Use Plan recommendations to promote the economic development of Stanly County through a balance of traditional economic development practices, and the recommendations of the Regional Economic Partners such as COG, Chamber of Commerce, Connect, Small Business Association, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.**
- 9. Cooperation between the county, communities, and other entities offers the best solution to future land use planning in Stanly County. Encourage towns to be involved in the county plan.**

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1. Future growth in Stanly County should be directed to the county's existing cities, towns, and to other established population centers.

Historically Stanly County's development pattern focused on the small cities and towns located in every corner of the county. Regardless of the emergence of the industrial economy through the "cotton mills in the cotton fields" initiative a century ago, or the arrival of the railroad, or the improvement of roadways linking Stanly County to outlying markets, the majority of the population living in the county lived in or near what are today's ten incorporated municipalities: Albemarle, Badin, Locust, Misenheimer, New London, Norwood, Oakboro, Red Cross, Richfield, and Stanfield. Other, much smaller population centers include unincorporated towns and crossroad settlements such as Aquadale, Endy, and Millingport.

A central recommendation of the Stanly County Land Use Plan is to encourage development in the ten cities first, then to areas adjacent to them. Where utilities and good roadway access is available, development should be focused toward the larger towns and Aquadale, Endy, Finger, Frog Pond, Ridgecrest and Millingport, as well. This recommendation is based on the reasoning that all these communities are the portions of the county that are most likely to be capable of absorbing and sustaining new development with the least amount of public investment.

A look at any map of the county tells this story. Fifteen of Stanly County's schools are located within the corporate boundaries of several of the county's municipalities, or within one mile of them. Additional schools in Aquadale, Kendall Valley, Ridgecrest and Endy, are located within an unincorporated community. Stanly County's institutions of higher learning—Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, and Stanly County Community College in Albemarle—are also located within established population centers. Most post offices are located within a city or town, and all but one of Stanly County's 15 fire stations is located within or near a city or unincorporated town.

The cities and towns of Stanly County also contain the most extensive road systems. Generally these roads are designed to provide a higher level of service than the farm-to-market roads in rural areas. Since many of the road systems in these communities are based on a grid system, they are easily expandable and can accommodate a greater influx of traffic, particularly during peak times.

Expanding existing utility systems in communities throughout the county offers the best solution to providing affordable drinking water distribution and sewage treatment services to existing and new citizens in Stanly County. Stanly County's water and sewer distribution and collection infrastructure are centered on distribution systems located within these communities.

In support of this principle, strip commercial development along major highway corridors such as NC 24/27, NC 73, NC 49, and US 52 will need to be avoided unless proper access management can be implemented. Presently an excellent model for this exists in the study area since historically small-scale commercial activity has centered on smaller towns and crossroad settlements at major intersections along these corridors. Examples on the NC 24/27 corridor southwest of Albemarle include Red Cross and Endy. On NC 73 west of Albemarle, they include Plyler, Millingport, and Finger. Many other examples can be found in the county. While each one of these examples may not be able to support commercial activity—in some cases these towns and settlements will be undesirable places to develop—they do present a good model for future consideration.

Focusing development to cities and towns also provides a means to help achieve the second major Land Use Plan principle, protecting Stanly County's farmlands.

2. Protect agriculture, agri-business, and tourism as an essential element of Stanly County's future in terms of culture, economy, and land use.

Stanly County's history and culture is bound to the legacy of an agriculture economy. Agriculture and agri-business continues to play an important role in the county's economy, and

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is the second-largest single land use in the Land Use Plan study area. That role is slowly being threatened by the sprawling effects of low- to moderate-density residential development in all parts of the study area.

Stanly County is not being threatened by urban sprawl like Cabarrus and Union Counties. Stanly County's sprawl problem is more tied to rural sprawl wherein agriculture farmland is increasingly interspersed by large-lot single-family residential properties as well as limited commercial and public/semi-public development. On many terms agriculture is as incompatible with residential development as an industrial activity such as a foundry or a mill. Farms produce noises, smells, dust, and other potentially unpleasant effects as a normal course of their operation. Unfortunately, the state of North Carolina does not afford its farmers the protection of "right to farm" laws like other states. These laws protect farmers from nuisance complaints by residential neighbors. Agri-businesses are also supported by a road network specifically designed to meet the needs of the agricultural economy. Farmers often experience conflicts with drivers as large machinery is moved from field to field and from farm to market. Because of these factors, for farming to continue to be marginally profitable and free of nuisances in Stanly County, large areas of farmland need to be conserved to provide a critical mass that will reduce the number of farmer-suburbanite and farmer-driver conflicts. While the Land Use Plan will encourage the preservation of individual properties, emphasis will also be placed on protecting farmland on a holistic basis.

In many places, farmland is viewed as open space awaiting development for more-intensive development such as housing, retail, or other more intensive development activity. This viewpoint belies a couple of important facts about farming in Stanly County. First, farming isn't simply an occupation, but an employment and lifestyle that supports the framework of communities that exist in Stanly County. In relative terms, farming is not a large employer in the Stanly County community. While only 2.1 percent of Stanly County workforce counted themselves as employed by the agricultural/forestry/fisheries industries in the U.S. Census in 2000, in 1999 there were 55,000 acres of farmland in Stanly County that produced an estimated \$61 million in cash receipts (North Carolina Department of Agriculture). In 2006, the cash receipt were estimated to have increased to \$66 million.

Second, Stanly County, like most developing rural counties, is more than likely unprepared for the ramifications of build-out of all agricultural lands in the study area. According to the Land Use Plan Phase 1 Report, approximately 63,542 acres of land is used for farming within the Land Use Plan study area, or approximately 36 percent of the study area. This land, along with an additional 89,048 acres of wooded land, were they to be fully developed under present zoning, would result in an additional 358,567 residents to the Stanly County population over the next century. Appendix B provides an explanation of the manner in which this figure was calculated.

Before moving on, it is important to discuss the issue of prime farmland relative to the preservation of farmland areas in Stanly County. Section 3 of this report discusses extensively the issue of prime farmland in the county. Approximately 20 percent of the county's land area (including municipalities outside of the study area) is defined as those soils that "...are best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops (USDA)."

The land recommended for farmland protection is not necessarily limited to these areas just as farming in Stanly County is not limited to prime farmland. As a matter of fact, using the scientific definition of prime farmland would limit the ability of Land Use Plan to meet the first defining principle of the plan. A significant percentage of "prime farmland" is located in or near the corporation limits or ETJs of several cities and towns in the county particularly on the north side of Locust, Millingport, New London, and Richfield. While this land may be worthy of protection and preservation, retaining this land for farming could potentially accomplish two unacceptable outcomes. First, preserving this land would draw development away from these communities where it is most desirable. Urban services such as utilities, schools, and parks could become underutilized or underfunded because natural growth areas are preserved. Secondly, preserving this land would divert development to areas of the county where it is undesirable.

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3. **Focus development to areas of the county where the physical conditions of the land can naturally support and are appropriate for non-agricultural land uses with a strong focus on air quality, water, sewer and transportation.**

Generally, natural land conditions in Stanly County do not present a serious limitation to development activity from excessively steep terrain, wetlands, floodplains, or other natural constraints as in other parts of North Carolina. From a development perspective this makes Stanly County an attractive place to build homes, neighborhoods, and communities.

The rolling topography of the county is advantageous to development since existing grades naturally encourage good drainage and provide for scenic views and vistas. This in turn limits the amount of wetland regulated by the Federal government. Those that do exist are fairly limited to small-scale land areas that do not constraint development activity on a wholesale basis. As indicated in Section 4 of this report, floodplains in the county are limited to the valleys of the Yadkin-Pee Dee River and Rocky River, as well as their tributaries. As the topography of the county is rolling to steep in nature, there are not the wide floodplains typically associated with portions of North Carolina to the east. As certain areas of the county experience more intensive development activity, areas subject to flooding may expand.

4. **Protect Stanly County's unique natural and cultural resources including Morrow Mountain, Rocky River, and other historic sites. Concentrate on building re-use.**

In addition to the county's inventory of farmlands, Stanly County is home to several natural and cultural resources that present unique county, state, and national preservation opportunities. Among these resources is the Uwharrie Mountains of eastern Stanly County, and in particular Morrow Mountain State Park. While the state park has been protected since its creation in the 1930s, the vicinity of the park also needs protection to not only enhance the experience of visiting the park, but also to preserve potential natural habitats from permanent destruction. Some of these habitats are documented, however a comprehensive countywide natural resources inventory will be completed in the near future to identify lands of Botanical Significance and worthy of protection.

Historic and cultural resources in the county also need to be protected in conjunction with the Land Use Plan. Resources such as the land associated with the Battle of Colson's Ordinary, pre-historic settlements associated with the Badin, Mountain, Pee Dee, and Stanly people, as well as other historic and cultural resources.

5. **Use long-range planning for public water and sewer, tax breaks, public utilities, TIP NCDOT infrastructure, and emergency/safety service as an opportunity for community building in the county.**

Along with zoning and land use planning, community decision-making on road, utility, and community facility infrastructure investment play the most significant role in defining where and when development will occur within a given area. This is one of the strongest tools counties and cities collectively have in promoting or discouraging development in one area of the jurisdiction, and/or discouraging it in another. While this principle is a corollary to a previous Land Use Plan principle, this principle proposes that community investment in roads, public utilities, schools, parks and recreation, and emergency services focus on using these investments to building communities in Stanly County.

As for roads, Stanly County needs a road system that supports the objectives of the Land Use Plan as well as improving access to outlying areas of the central North Carolina region. Several major road improvement projects are planned or programmed that will improve linkages to the region in virtually all directions on the compass. Among the most important is the widening of NC 24/27, a project that will more closely link Stanly County to the eastern portion of the

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Charlotte metropolitan region. Improvements to NC 49, US 52, and NC 24/27/73 east of Albemarle will improve the transportation linkages in the future.

Another potential roadway project, the widening of NC 73 west of Albemarle to four lanes has not been formally included in the NCDOT project list. This project needs to be seriously considered in light of the fact that NC 73 crosses through the heart of the Millingport “rolling Kansas” farmlands of west-central Stanly County. This roadway project will greatly improve access from Stanly County to Interstate 85 in Concord.

Schools play an important role in the lives of Stanly County families each and every day and also offers the opportunity to use new school construction as a centerpiece for new community development.

6. Encourage land use patterns that provide a compact mix of land uses at a higher intensity of development. Promote useable open space and discourage unintended consequences.

The first five Land Use Plan principles provided general recommendations for development patterns in Stanly County. This principle addresses the character of development within those areas of Stanly County where development is desired. For these areas a pattern that encourages a mixed-use land use strategy is encouraged. In the last 50 years, communities have developed in a homogeneous pattern of residential neighborhoods physically separated from commercial districts, industrial areas, and other land uses. It should be pointed out that this pattern is a fairly recent phenomenon that bears little resemblance to the traditional manner in which Stanly County developed.

Visit any city or town in Stanly County and central North Carolina and the traditional pattern is visible, be it a larger community such as Albemarle, or a smaller town such as Norwood. Residential neighborhoods are located in close proximity of older commercial areas. Schools are truly neighborhood entities and are the focus of the community.

Using this type of development pattern is beneficial for a number of reasons. First, mixed-use development activity encourages pedestrian circulation for routine daily activities. While the vehicle will never be replaced as the primary choice for mobility in the county, promoting mixed uses could conceivably reduce vehicle trips associated with the school-age population, to parks and recreation facilities, daily retail shopping needs, and services.

Second, a mixed-use development pattern can influence the long-range potential for transit services in the county. Generally transit systems do not flourish where development is sprawled over long distances. More compact development increases the potential for better serving the transportation needs of citizens as they go to work.

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7. **The provision of parks, recreation, and open space needs to be an element of future land use planning in Stanly County. A comprehensive recreation plan is already underway for Stanly County.**

In a similar vein to those community services identified in a previous Land Use Plan principle, parks and recreation facilities can play a role in defining the future of the county. Presently most parks and recreation facilities are focused on the city of Albemarle with several of the towns obtaining grant funds over the past 8 years to build regional and community parks.

A needs assessment contained in a countywide Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan completed in 1999 indicated that substantial investment is needed to meet projected population increases in the county over the next 20 years. The needs assessment identifies priorities for parks and recreation development for community parks, recreational complexes, and special purpose facilities for park and recreation sub districts within the county. One interesting pattern identified in the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan is that most new facilities will be constructed in or near existing population centers. Other facilities will be sited at existing school facilities including major recreation centers located at high schools within the county. In this manner the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan recommendations support the principles of the Land Use Plan. Figure 6-2 illustrates the recommendations of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

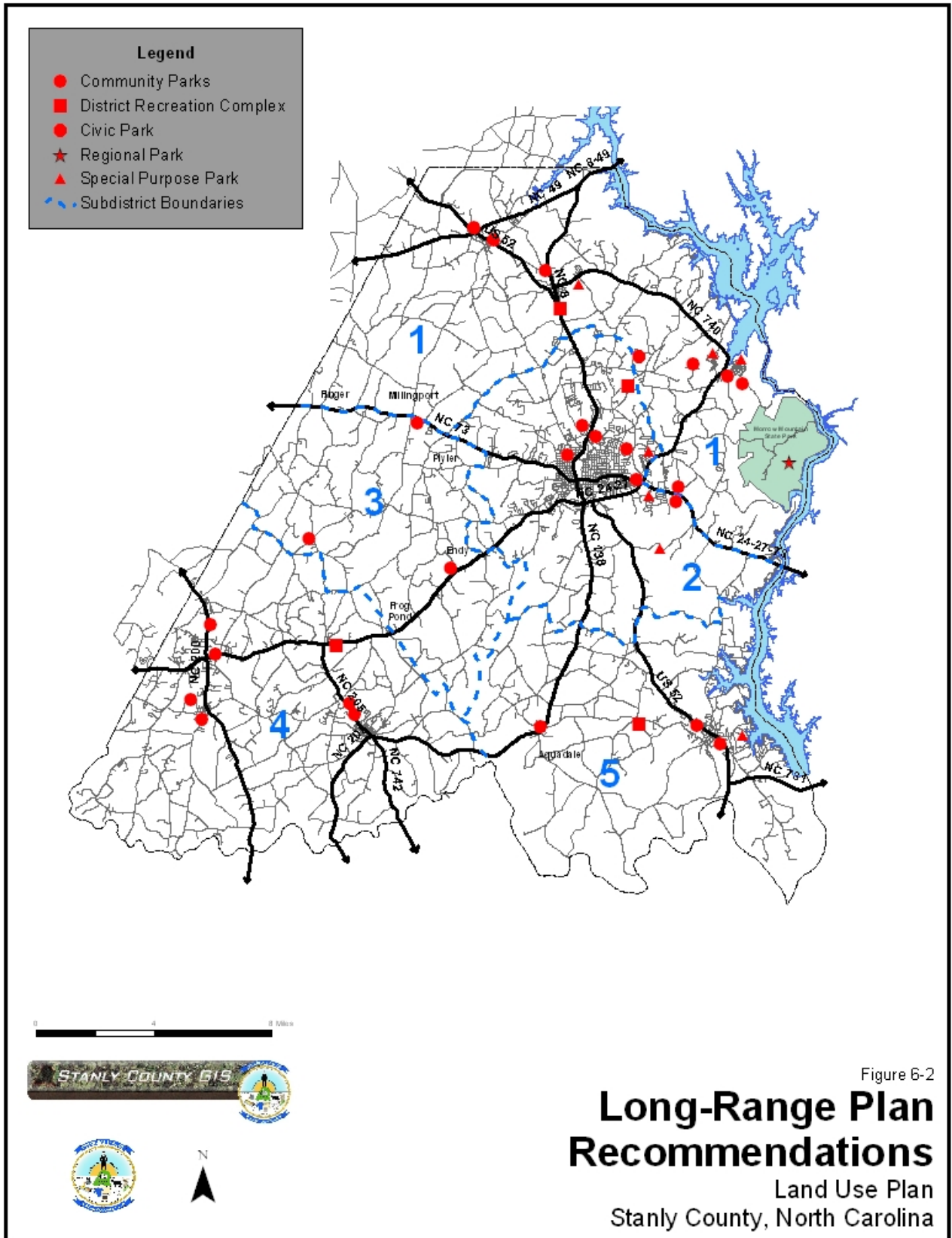
In addition to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, the Land Use Plan recommends that a series of park and recreation facilities will also be needed to meet the needs of a growing Stanly County population. One recommendation is to provide public access to the growing Tillery Reservoir area in southeastern Stanly County. Another recreation opportunity that needs to be examined in Stanly County is the provision of greenways. Greenways are multi-purpose parklands that serve the following purposes:

- They can help conserve and protect natural environments from intensive development activity,
- They can provide recreational opportunities such as trails for bicycling or walking, canoeing, nature viewing, or horseback riding,
- They can provide a linkage between parks, natural areas, schools, residential neighborhoods, and shopping area, and
- They can help educate people as living classrooms in the community.

Stanly County is working in conjunction with the Carolina Threadtrail initiative to provide connectivity with communities within and surrounding Stanly County to create a network of trails. These trails will connect environmental, historical, and cultural sites throughout the region.

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**Figure 6-2
Parks and Recreation**



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8. **Use the Land Use Plan recommendations to promote the economic development of Stanly County through a balance of traditional economic development practices, and the recommendations of the Regional Economic Partners such as COG, Chamber of Commerce, Connect, Small Business Association, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.**

Economic development practices in Stanly County were discussed extensively in the development of the Land Use Plan. Regardless of the approach, the long-range economic health and stability of Stanly County is a central purpose of the Land Use Plan. Because of this, the Land Use Plan seeks a balance between ongoing efforts to promote economic development in the county alongside the eco- and enviro-tourism initiatives included in the Central Park Plan.

First, our attention will turn toward the traditional model of economic development. Simply stated, the recommendations of the Land Use Plan do not conflict with this model. Growth of all kinds—residential, commercial, and industrial—is strongly encouraged in all municipalities and designated growth areas in Stanly County. Ample land has been identified for growth in these areas in both the short-range and long-range. These areas represent the areas that are the most advantageous to industrial development due to transportation infrastructure, utility capacity, and a nearby workforce.

The goal of the Central Park Plan concept is to provide a sustainable local economy for the seven-county Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project Region. In addition to Stanly County, the Region includes Anson, Davidson, Montgomery, Randolph, Richmond, and Rowan Counties. The mission of the Central Park NC “Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project” is “to promote and support efforts that balance economic development and environmental management in the Uwharrie Lakes Region (Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project).”

The Central Park Plan identifies many priorities to guide both local and regional decision-making to promote the concept. Many of these priorities, if not all, parallel those of the Stanly County Land Use Plan. They include the following:

- Create communities rather than ‘developments,’
- Ensure the economic vitality of existing small communities before allowing stand alone or strip commercial or residential development,
- Set aside monies for public open space, and
- Support master planning and creation of definitive town images and boundaries (Yadkin-Pee Dee Lakes Project).

Continuing cooperation with the Regional Economic Partners such as COG, the Chamber of Commerce, Connect, Small Business Association, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service is very important to balanced prosperity.

9. **Cooperation between the county, communities, and other entities offer the best solution to future land use planning in Stanly County. This includes encouraging towns to be involved in the County Land Use Plan.**

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Stanly County, as mentioned throughout the Land Use Plan process, is not alone among North Carolina counties in feeling the pressure of growth and development seemingly beyond their control. What could make Stanly County unique is the manner in which future county development is tied to the needs and desires of its member communities.

Simply stated, the objectives of the Land Use Plan cannot be met without the involvement and cooperation of all the political jurisdictions represented in the county. For example, protecting working farmland will not be possible without the cooperation of Stanly County's cities and towns in avoiding expansion of utilities and other urban services through the farm country. Conversely, to achieve the same goal, Stanly County will need to remain firm on accepting only compatible development in the farmland preservation area. Other institutions, such as those that are responsible for road and school construction, as well as park and recreation development, will also need to continue to be engaged in the long-range land use planning process.

To a large extent, this process of constructive dialog on the future of Stanly County is already in place. As part of the process to develop these draft recommendations, the cities of Stanly County were all invited to provide an estimation of where they would see themselves 10 and 20 years down the road. Representatives from nearly all the cities have participated in the public involvement process. These developments are extremely positive in fostering a long lasting and constructive relationship for the future of Stanly County.

Land Use Categories

The categories used for the Land Use Plan for Stanly County (see Figure 6-1) are described below. As indicated in Table 6-2, the land use categories proposed for the Land Use Plan present general land use recommendations for different areas of the study area. Specific land uses are not indicated for each of these categories (see Table 6-2). The purpose of these general recommendations is to identify areas of Stanly County where development is and is not encouraged over the next 20 years

Growth Areas

The growth areas identified on Figure 6-1 represents those areas of Stanly County where growth and development is encouraged over the next 10-20 years. Growth areas are identified for each of the ten cities located within Stanly County and surrounding some unincorporated towns.

Within the growth area, development densities are encouraged from a minimum density of four dwelling units per acre. For those portions of the growth area located nearer the city center, higher development densities are to be expected and encouraged.

Each growth area will include land uses in addition to residential development. Commercial development is encouraged as is industrial development. New community facilities such as schools, libraries, and post offices are also encourage as are churches, neighborhood and community parks, and other activities that support safe and pleasant residential neighborhoods. Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is encouraged as a solution to promote good community design for developments at the density of four dwelling unit per acre or higher. Although the principles and philosophy behind TND are discussed later in the report, TND promotes a mix of land uses that in turn encourages walk ability. TND is compatible with the growth area since most existing communities in Stanly County, most of which were designed and built prior to World War II, were developed using TND principles as a fundamental matter of design. To promote use of the TND development model, density bonuses should be considered, particularly when a given development includes a healthy mix of land uses and/or includes community facilities such as a school.

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Table 6-2. Summary of Generalized Land Use Categories.

Generalized Land Use Category	Characteristics
Growth Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes existing municipal boundaries, ETJs, and development area outside of these areas. • Growth encouraged in 10-20year period after adoption of plan. • Majority of future growth in county encouraged for this area. • Highest residential development density recommended for the county: overall rate of two to four dwelling units per acre or higher. • Mixed land use pattern encouraged. • Traditional neighborhood design (TND) recommended, particularly adjacent to existing cities and in close proximity to smaller towns and crossroads settlements. • Full array of urban services provided to residents with the potential for expansion. • Schools, libraries, post offices, and other community facilities serve as the focus of the towns, or for residential neighborhoods in larger cities. Generally development activity lies outside present ETJs. • Low density-residential development encouraged at rate of two to four dwelling units per acre. • Urban services are generally provided, but their distribution may not be universal in areas further from town. • Conservation development model encouraged to protect sensitive natural areas and historic/cultural resources at periphery of these areas.
Sustainability Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes majority of study area. • Farmland and agri-business protection highest priority for this area. • Low-density residential development encouraged at rate of one dwelling unit per acre. • Non-agricultural/residential development activity discouraged. • Utility infrastructure and other urban services discouraged. • Conservation development model encouraged in limited instances. • Transfer of development rights and purchase of development rights available as resources to protect farmland in the agricultural conservation area.
Special Protection Areas	<p>Albemarle-Stanly County Airport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage industrial and other development compatible with long-range development of airport complex. • Investigate expanding jurisdiction of the Airport Overlay District within the Stanly County Zoning Ordinance to exclude potentially incompatible land uses. <p>Morrow Mountain State Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect vistas and viewsheds associated with the immediate vicinity of the state park. • Investigate development of overlay district for inclusion in Stanly County Zoning Ordinance. <p>Rocky River Greenway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect Rocky River as regional multi-purpose greenway opportunity linked to Charlotte/Mecklenburg County as well as Union and Cabarrus Counties. • Provides linkage between Stanly County cities and towns.
Source: Woolpert LLP, 2002.	

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Most of the growth areas for the ten towns were drawn in cooperation with representatives from the cities. As a result, the size of the primary growth areas reflect the specific wishes and needs of each community as well as the realities of growth and development patterns some of these communities are already experiencing. Although there are some exceptions, the position of the boundaries of the primary growth areas corresponds well to the existing ETJs exercised by six of the ten incorporated cities. Albemarle, Red Cross, Misenheimer and Badin do not presently exercise an ETJ. The long-range recommendations were completed before the incorporation of the Town of Red Cross.

In addition to encouraging growth around the ten incorporated cities, primary growth areas are also proposed for the following unincorporated towns and crossroad settlements:

- Aquadale
- Endy
- Finger
- Millingport
- Frog Pond
- Plyler

While the size of the primary growth areas for these towns is considerably smaller than those of the incorporated cities, placing primary growth areas in these areas encourages the moderate continuation of existing development patterns already found in these places. Also, encouraging development in these towns and crossroad settlements, all of which are located on major roadway corridors in the county (i.e., NC 24/27, NC 73, NC 49, US 52) allows for rural commercial development at strategic places along these important transportation roads.

It should be noted here that a portion of the primary growth areas lies within the ETJs. For example, most of the growth area surrounding Norwood, Oakboro, and Richfield are well within their respective ETJs. As such, these areas are theoretically outside the Land Use Plan study area and the jurisdiction of County Planning Board and Board of County Commissioners.

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Sustainability Area

The sustainability area includes the majority of the study area. The chief purpose of the conservation area is to protect farmland from rural sprawl today and from urban sprawl in the future. The conservation area is also intended to protect woodland areas as well as open space in this portion of the study area. As it is expected that development pressure will extend into Stanly County from Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Union Counties, it is anticipated that urban sprawl will begin to be experienced in the vicinity of Finger, Millingport, and Ridgecrest at the end of the 20-year planning period.

Low-density residential development will be permitted in the conservation area. The present permitted development density of the R-A, Residential-Agricultural Zoning District, a zoning district that encompasses the majority of the study area, allows single-family residential development at the rate of one dwelling unit per 30,000 square feet and 40,000 in the watershed areas.

A development density of one dwelling unit per acre is encouraged for this area. To allow for flexibility in applying this density recommendation, the one-acre development density shall be expressed as an average development density over a single property. In this way, lot sizes will not be required to be a minimum of one acre in size. For example, from an existing 20-acre "parent" lot, a total of 20 lots of varying size may be created. These lots may be less than one acre in size, or at least the minimum necessary to allow for the safe operation of a well, septic system, and back-up septic system on the lot as determined by standards established by the Stanly County Environmental Health Department.

This will allow farmers to continue to operate their farm and sell portions of their property to their children or for income. As a general rule, major subdivision should be discouraged as a "use by right"

In addition to this flexible one-acre zoning requirement, it is encouraged that farm protection and preservation programs be encouraged to sustain the rural way of life in Stanly County. Examples of programs include purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, and conservation easements. Conservation development may be an appropriate model for application in the agricultural conservation area when land is located in close proximity to a secondary growth area, such as near an unincorporated town or crossroad settlement. Explanations of each of these implementation strategies and tools are provided later in this report.

Figure 6-3 provides an illustration of the manner in which the flexible development density system proposed in the conservation area.

Special Protection Areas

The final generalized land use category illustrated in Figure 6-1 is a series of special protection areas intended to protect unique assets found in Stanly County. Three such areas are identified on the Land Use Plan map:

Stanly County Airport Protection Area—Land in the vicinity of Stanly County Airport is rapidly developing, particularly on the southwest side of the airport near Albemarle. It is recommended that land associated with the airport approaches be protected to preserve the long-range sustainability of the airport. In addition to serving the needs of the airport, this area is also an ideal location for industrial development within the study area.

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Figure 6-3

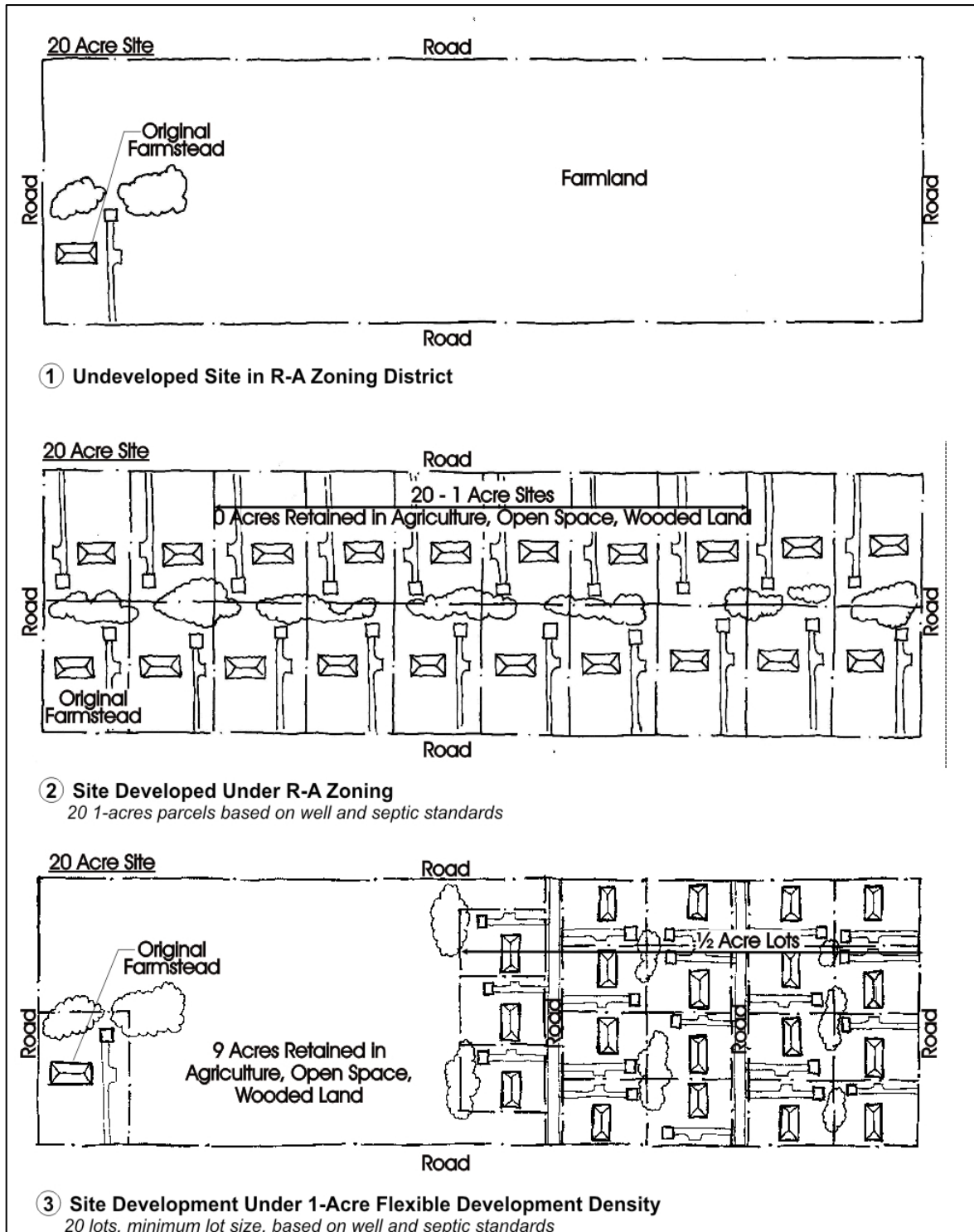


Figure 6-3 Images 1, 2, and 3 illustrate the recommendations for the conservation area relative to existing zoning for a typical 20-acre lot. In the top illustration, a 20-acre lot is used for farmland along with the original farmstead. The lot possesses frontages on all sides. The middle image illustrates the development of the same 20-acre lot under the R-A, Residential-Agriculture Zoning. Each lot meets the minimum lot size of approximately one dwelling unit per acre, and no farmland is protected. The bottom image illustrates the same development using a one-acre flexible development density. Twenty lots are created from the original lot, with the minimum lot size determined by the minimum land area necessary to accommodate a well, septic system, and back-up system. Minimum lot sizes may be less than the one acre indicated. Under this scenario nine

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Presently an overlay zoning district protects the airport from tall structures. It is recommended that the existing overlay zoning district be expanded to provide further protection to the airport by encouraging compatible land uses (such as industrial development) while discouraging others.

- **Morrow Mountain State Park Protection Area**—Morrow Mountain State Park remains one of the most important assets in Stanly County since its creation in 1935. The Morrow Mountain State Park Protection Area is recommended to protect and enhance this valuable resource from incompatible development at the park boundary. Views and vistas to and from the park should be protected, as should the Valley Drive State Scenic Byway that passes on the west side of the state park. Ridgelines in the area should be protected.
- **Rocky River Greenway Protection Area**— The Rocky River Greenway presents a unique opportunity to link southern Stanly County with a regional greenway to Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Union Counties and the Charlotte metropolitan area. A multi-purpose greenway is recommended for this corridor, a greenway that ultimately would link to the Yadkin-Pee Dee River at Norwood.

The greenway proposed for the Rocky River Protection Area—as discussed in Land Use Plan principle #7 above—can serve a multitude of functions and take on a multitude of roles for the county. Those functions and roles can define the manner in which the greenway develops, be it as a natural conservation area to protect the Rocky River and its sensitive habitats, or to serve as a linear park with trails and infrastructure supporting walking, biking, canoeing, and other activities.

Regardless, the concept of developing a greenway along the Rocky River was presented by county residents throughout the Public Input Meeting process as a way of preserving this important corridor. The greenway concept is a natural outgrowth of the work of Frederic Law Olmsted and his “emerald necklace” regional linear park systems in Boston, Massachusetts, and Cleveland, Ohio a century ago. Greenways systems have blossomed throughout the county in the last quarter century. Many of the more successful systems can be found in North Carolina, such as in Raleigh. The Carolina Thread trail initiative should help in connected points and places of interest.

The greenway could also serve as a means to link existing or future recreational areas in southern Stanly County. The greenway will pass in close proximity to cities such as Norwood, Oakboro, Stanfield, and Locust, as well as the town of Aquadale. The greenway could provide a backbone to link all these communities. On a grander scale, the greenway could tie into regional parks and recreation facilities in the Charlotte region.

Examples of information to include and conservation strategies for a Wildlife Habitat Conservation Plan include:

- Stanly County GIS can run an analysis of wildlife habitats (in the Toolbox Conservation Data) that are visible from scenic byways. The County would be adding to the aesthetic beauty experienced by visitors by targeting conservation options to these areas.
- Working with NC Department of Transportation and the Rural Planning Organization to avoid sensitive areas and to construct wildlife underpasses.
- Utilizing data on sensitive habitats and species to inform decisions on where to encourage development of future built infrastructure such as roads, water lines, sewer lines, etc.
- Incorporating Green Growth Toolbox data layers in the county GIS system and using these data to inform development permit decisions.
- Creating incentives programs for private landowners to conserve land such as tradable development rights.
- Identifying land use planning measures that would conserve priority areas and would receive support from landowners and leaders.

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- Identifying regions of the county that support concentrations of sensitive habitats and species, and encourage land uses within those regions that are compatible with maintaining those habitats.

Growth Management and Implementation Strategies and Tools

The Land Use Plan and its supporting principles refer to several growth management and implementation strategies and tools that are available to Stanly County as a resource for realizing the plan goals and objectives. These strategies include the following:

- Agricultural districts,
- Conservation development,
- Conservation easements,
- Transfer of development rights,
- Purchase of development rights,
- Traditional neighborhood design,
- Cost of community services,
- Impact fees, and
- Adequate public facilities ordinance.

A description of each of these strategies is described below.

Agricultural Districts

Agricultural districts are voluntary measures that allow farmers and property owners to protect themselves from nuisance complaints and lawsuits associated with the normal operation of the farm. This “right to farm” measure allows farmers who agree to enter into a 10-year agricultural conservation easement between the owner and the county so that non-farming activities are prohibited for that period. The creation of not more than three lots that meet the planning and zoning laws of the county are permitted under this measure. Only land that is best suited for farming (soil conditions, climate, growing season), and actively managed under Soil Conservation Service erosion practices for highly erodible land may be entered into this program. The property owner may revoke the agricultural conservation easement at any time.

The Stanly County Commissioners recently adopted a Farmland Protection Plan for the county.

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Conservation Development

Conservation development is a tool and a design process that helps to preserve significant natural features of a particular site where growth is expected. In this way it is not necessarily compatible with farmland protection, but more a resource protection mechanism for individual sites.

By focusing development within the site in areas where there are minimal natural features, other more significant natural features can be retained. As a result, homes are clustered together in certain areas which leave open spaces on the rest of the site. This process allows the existing underlying densities of the site to be developed, but preserves valuable natural features. Minimum open space requirements for conservation developments can range up to 60 percent or higher based on the gross land area of a site. This compares to 20 or 25 percent minimums for conventional residential subdivisions.

The conservation development model was conceived by planners and designers in the Connecticut River Valley of western Massachusetts in the late 1980s. Its proponents noted that large percentages of homebuyers in golf course communities, upwards of 30 percent of the gross land area, did not necessarily golf, but purchased their home to enjoy the associated open space of the golf course. Its most famous practitioner is Randall Arendt of the Natural Lands Trust, although a similar program called "The Countryside Program" has been operating successfully in Northeastern Ohio since the mid-1990s.

How It Works

To encourage conservation development, zoning codes must provide the conservation development model as an option to developers and property owners. Typically conservation development is encouraged using a basic Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance as a foundation.

After an ordinance is adopted outlining the principles, the design process begins. The design process involves four major steps:

1. Identify the land that should be permanently protected based on a specific site analysis and also the communities' values. The precise location of features to be preserved such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands, stream corridors, farmland, scenic views, etc. should be noted. The balance of the site becomes "potential development areas."
2. Identify the specific location for housing sites, within the potential development areas, so as to maximize their view of open spaces and natural features.
3. Layout the streets and informal pedestrian trails that access the developed areas.
4. Record permanent conservation easements on the open space lands' title documents (Rural by Design).

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Strengths

The following strengths have been associated with the conservation development model:

- Preserves a high percentage of natural features (e.g., woodlands, steep slopes, view sheds, streams and rivers) and open spaces for the community as valuable features are identified and accommodated within the design process.
- Market based pricing for home sites as there is no government regulation of the prices.
- The existing underlying / full densities are retained on the site. The density is clustered within smaller areas of the site rather than spread out throughout the entire site.
- Is an efficient use of suitable lands for development as septic fields are located in areas with well drained soils rather than spread the drain fields throughout the site including in areas with poorly drained soils.
- The design parameters are voluntary, or if the community desires, could become mandatory under certain criteria such as sites that are larger than a certain size.
- No public expenditures are needed to preserve lands as developer and homebuyers create the open spaces by buying homes that are clustered together.
- The program is simple to implement because only one landowner/developer is needed per site.
- The design principles reduce development costs by concentrating development on the site and minimizing road and infrastructure costs.
- Reduces possible government review costs by not necessarily crossing wetlands etc. and as a result eliminating the need for government review of wetlands crossing/mitigation.
- Site plan review time is not any more stringent of a process than what currently exists for subdivision development.

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses have been identified for the conservation development/design model:

- Not necessarily the appropriate model to protect farmland except on a site-by-site basis.
- Could potentially introduce nuisance complaints from homeowners where it is used alongside agricultural areas.
- Although popular in the northeast, it is a relatively new model and generally unfamiliar to developers/landowners, and financial institutions.
- Is dependent on strict enforcement of planning and development objectives.

Figures 6-4 through 6-6 provide an illustration of the conservation development model.

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Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement or instrument in which the landowner retains ownership of private property but conveys certain specified rights in the land (e.g. restriction on future use of the land) to a land conservation organization or a public body. Typically these rights are transferred to a not-for-profit land trust.

How It Works

The transferred interest in the land can be in the form of a restriction, easement, restrictive covenant or condition and is outlined in a deed, will, or other legal instrument. The landowner initiates any documents that are prepared. By preparing and recording a conservation easement, lands can be preserved by the existing landowners while the development rights are restricted.

Strengths

The following strengths have been associated with the conservation easement:

- Conservation easements are a voluntary program to preserve open space lands as landowners can choose whether or not to participate.
- Market based values are utilized for compensation of landowners in exchange for placement of a conservation easement.
- Does not require any public expenditures for implementation as private citizens and land trusts or other entities may purchase the easements.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses associated with conservation easement programs include the following:

- Landowners may not want to participate in the program.
- Easement terms could include a time limit such as 99 years rather than in perpetuity. This could lead to expiration of easements and the land possibly returning as a possible development site unless a perpetual easement is arranged.

Transfer of Development Rights

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) is a tool to focus growth in certain geographic areas of a city, county, or region while at the same time, preserving other geographic areas that are deemed valuable to preserve as natural, scenic or rural farmlands. As one of several rights that are tied to land, development rights can be separated from a parcel and transferred or shifted to other sites. The overall amount of development is not restricted but it is shifted to other areas, so there is no gross increase in development densities for the city, county, or region.

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Figure 6-4

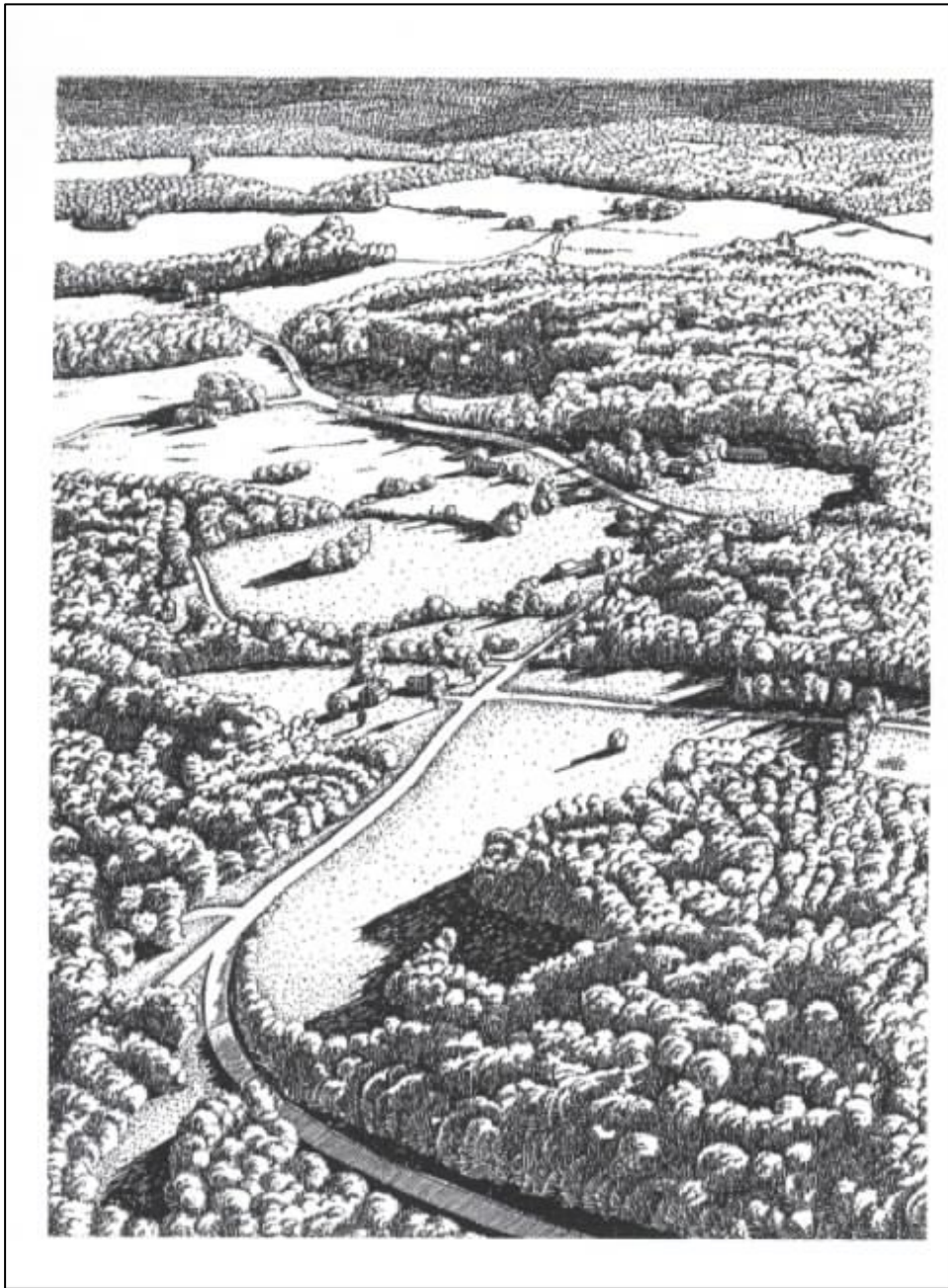


Figure 6-4 *Illustrates a typical rural site prior to development.*

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Figure 6-5

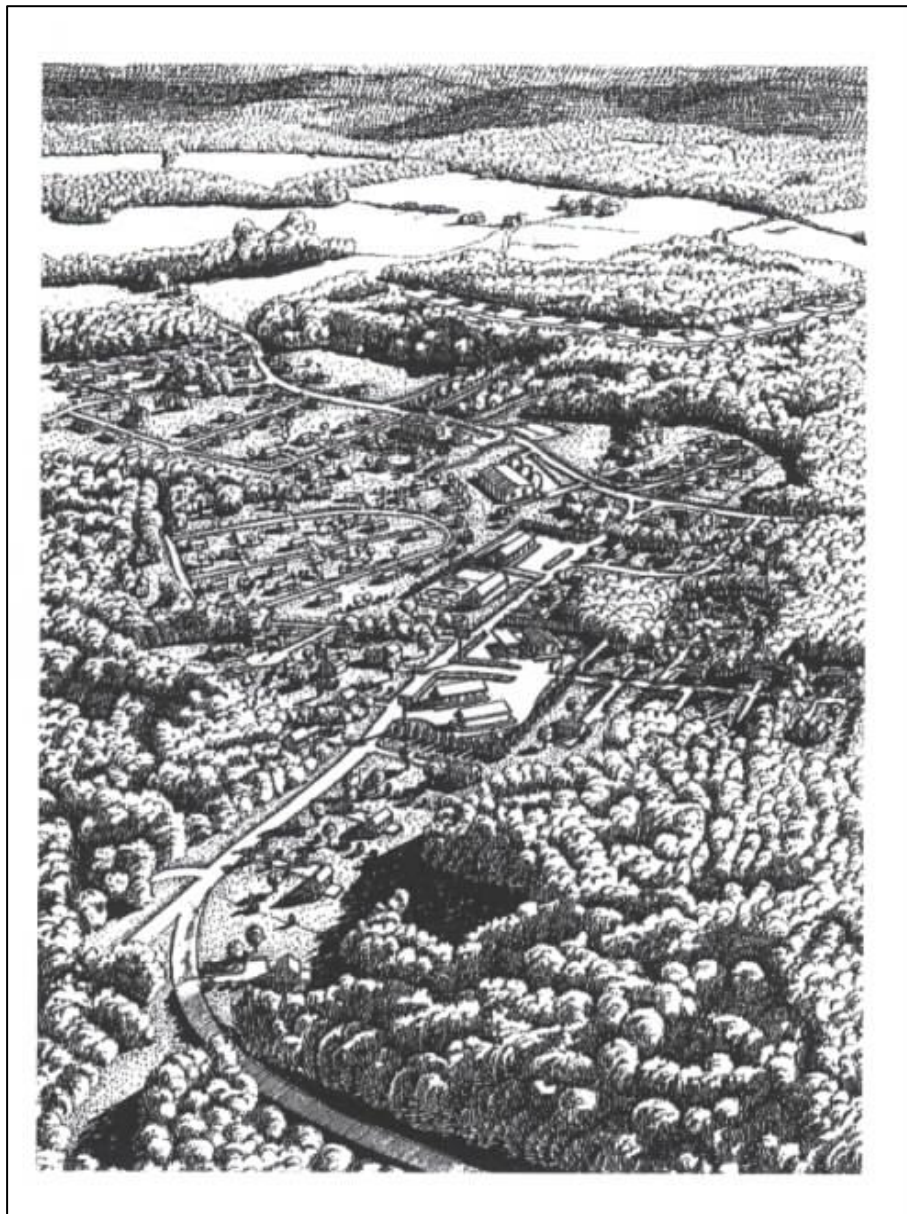


Figure 6-5 *Using conventional development, open space, forested lands, and other features are conserved without general regard for the natural lay of the land.*

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Figure 6-6

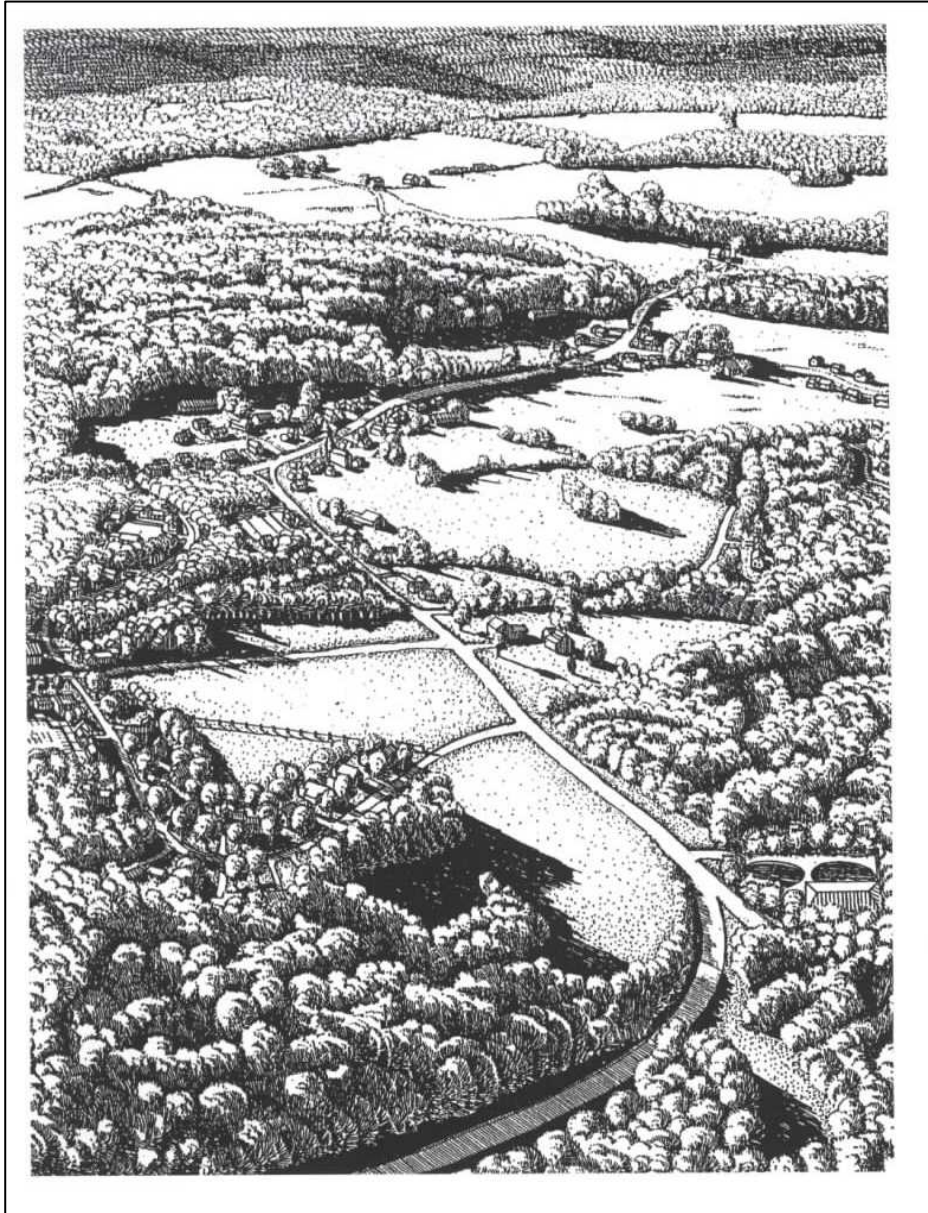


Figure 6-6 *Using conservation development, development activity is clustered so that valuable resources—forests, pastures, etc.—can be preserved.*

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TDRs are similar in concept to cluster site development: where homes are concentrated in one area and natural features are preserved, although the TDR model works at a much larger scale.

How It Works

Through a community planning process, areas are identified for perpetual preservation as natural or rural lands, (these are referred to as “sending areas”), and other areas are identified for development at densities greater than the current zonings allows, (these are referred to as “receiving areas.” In the sending area, restrictions are placed on what the landowners can develop; however, these landowners are assigned transferable development rights which they may sell.

When the development rights are sold, the land in the sending area becomes restricted through a permanent conservation easement recorded with the parcel’s title. In the receiving area, the acquired development rights permit additional density to be developed that is greater than what is permitted under the current zoning. As a result, TDRs preserve certain areas for rural and natural lands and focus the development in other areas.

Strengths

Strengths of the TDR system include the following points:

- Minimal public expenditures are needed to purchase land because the private sector predominantly implements deals to transfer development to different sites
- Market oriented, incentive driven based approach to trades/transactions because the private sector buys the development rights and landowner sells the development rights. There is not any government involvement in the transaction between a willing buyer and willing seller aside from title recording.
- The program could be a voluntary program rather than a government mandated program. Landowners and developers can choose whether or not to participate as opposed to zoning and other models.
- The program provides a foundation for efficient control of growth and the resulting infrastructure investments as resources are focused in the more intensely developed areas instead of scattered in a leapfrog pattern of rural sprawl throughout the county.
- Provides for a long-range balance between the economic development needs of the community and the need to protect land resources because both needs are met through the proactive planning process.
- If a farmer or landowner can still own the land for uses other than on-site development even though he may have sold the development rights.

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses have been identified in the implementation of the TDR system:

- TDRs are perceived as a complicated program due to the need to organize the framework for the transfer of development rights between sites within the system of title recording.
- Requires staff resources to implement, monitor and maintain, be it a public agency or other entity.

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- Requires planning commitment up front to identify and justify appropriate sending and receiving areas within the county.
- Requires political commitment on the part of elected decision-makers to adopt and implement the plan and the supporting public policies.
- Can only thrive in situations where receiving areas are capable of absorbing increased development activity.
- Requires private sector support to actually utilize and implement the transfer of development rights from rural areas to areas designated to receive additional development.

Purchase of Development Rights

Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs) is a growth management tool to preserve lands that are deemed valuable to the community as rural, scenic or natural lands. As one of several rights that are tied to land, development rights can be purchased/separated from a parcel and in the case of PDRs then permanently retired. As a result, the development potential for that site is permanently eliminated and the land is preserved as rural or scenic.

How It Works

The development rights are typically purchased by a governmental entity, land conservancy, or land trust. Permanent restrictions are placed on the parcel prohibiting further development. The development rights are permanently retired.

Strengths

The following strengths are associated with the employment of PDRs:

- The ability of public entities and land preservation groups to target specific areas to preserve can be an efficient allocation of resources as the most critical lands will most likely be preserved first.
- Public money is not necessarily required because land conservancies and land trusts, which are private organizations, may employ the PDR system themselves. Public entities are not necessarily required to participate in the system.
- The program is voluntary in nature as buyers and sellers can choose whether or not to participate.
- The program does not mandate prices for development rights as market based values are utilized for the transactions.

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses have been identified with the PDR system:

- Public expenditures may be needed to execute a purchase, although public participation is not required.
- Requires public and political support to initiate and implement, if public dollars are used
- Ability to preserve land is limited by the amount of public money available, if public dollars are used.

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Traditional Neighborhood Design

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is a pattern of development and design that provides neighborhoods that are walk able in scale and mixed in use. This walk ability is a result of an interconnected street network, streets with sidewalks and street trees, and smaller residential setbacks; while a mix of uses results from residential uses being located “above the store” on the second floor. If this model sounds familiar, it is because it is the model of design for most all cities, towns, and other population centers in Stanly County before World War II.

TND, which is also known as the new urbanism, or neo-traditional design, was popularized by Andreas Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk of the firm DPZ in Miami, Florida in the late 1980s as a reaction to the unmitigated sprawl development model practiced in the U.S. since the 1950s. TND-planned communities have been developed throughout the country including several in the Charlotte region (Vermillion in Huntersville). The plan for the city of Locust is based on TND principles.

Hamlets in Stanly County are typically focused at the intersection of two major roads and many times can be a focal point for the surrounding countryside. Additional growth of a hamlet, based on traditional neighborhood principles, can create a regional pattern of growth where pedestrian oriented development is focused around the hamlets while the surrounding farmlands or countryside is preserved as open space. In these cases the TND model can be combined with the conservation development model (discussed above) to provide a smooth transition from relatively dense hamlets to medium density residential development to open countryside.

How It Works

As part of an overall county plan that outlines the concept, future development could be concentrated near, or as part of existing hamlets, instead of sprawling out over the countryside. The appropriate implementation mechanisms would be required to be adopted such as a land use plan that outlines the traditional neighborhood planning principles, a transfer of development rights policy, an updated zoning ordinance, and building design guidelines. The combination of these elements provides the framework to guide growth in this manner.

Strengths

The following strengths are associated with the TND model:

- TND can be a part of an overall county plan to help concentrate development in the hamlets and villages while retaining open spaces in surrounding areas.
- TND is an incentive/market based system as developers and land owners sell development rights to transfer development to hamlets based on market values.
- Environmentally friendly by concentrating development in small areas and preserving other open spaces rather than spreading development out over the whole county.
- Promotes walk ability and non-motorized modes of transportation as land uses are integrated on a site-specific basis.
- Is an efficient use of financial resources as road, water, and sewer infrastructure serving new development is concentrated in the villages rather than spread out in a haphazard pattern throughout the countryside.

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Weaknesses

Weaknesses of the TND model include the following:

- Requires adoption of several planning and implementation policies such as a land use plan, design guidelines and transfer of development rights to properly implement the concept.
- Requires political will and private sector support to draft, adopt, and implement each policy striving towards this development pattern.
- Although used throughout the U.S., TND is still relatively unfamiliar to developers, lending institutions, and other professions and institutions associated with the land development process.

Figures 6-7 and 6-8 provide an illustration of the TND model.

Cost of Community Services

Cost of community services (COCS) is the analysis of the revenues generated and costs to a municipality, county, or other political jurisdiction associated with the provision of community services to various forms of development. Different types of development, for example, office, residential, industrial, or public uses generate differing levels of revenue (income, sales or property taxes) for the local community and each land use has different needs as far as services required (public safety, education, roads etc.) by that particular land use. This type of study outlines the differences in revenue and cost of services by land use category. COCS can be used as a means to evaluate the practicality of land use strategies such as the conversion of farmland to a residential subdivision. It can also be used as a means to justify the imposition of impact fees associated with development.

COCS was developed by the American Farmland Trust (AFT), a non-profit organization devoted to the protection of farmland resources throughout the U.S. The first COCS study was completed by AFT for Madison Township, Ohio, a township located at the eastern edge of the growing Greater Cleveland metropolitan area in the early 1990s.

How It Works

COCS as practiced by AFT involves the following steps:

1. Identifying and defining the appropriate land use categories such as residential, office, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses.
2. Collecting relevant financial data on revenues (tax receipts, local receipts) and expenditures (public safety, health and human services, public works, education, government).
3. The results of this type of analysis generally show the following:
 - For every \$1.00 of revenue generated by residential uses the cost of services is \$1.10 to \$1.60.
 - For every \$1.00 of revenue generated by commercial uses, the cost of services is \$0.20 to \$0.30.
 - For every \$1.00 of revenue generated by farms/forest uses the cost of services is \$0.15 to \$0.40.

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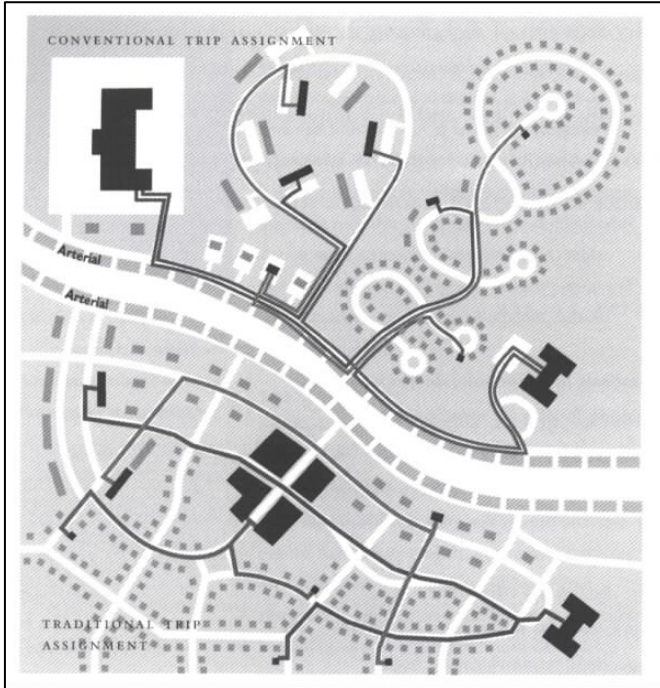


Figure 6-7 This image portrays a typical development site using conventional development and associated travel trips based on this design. The lower image portrays a similar site's travel patterns under TND.

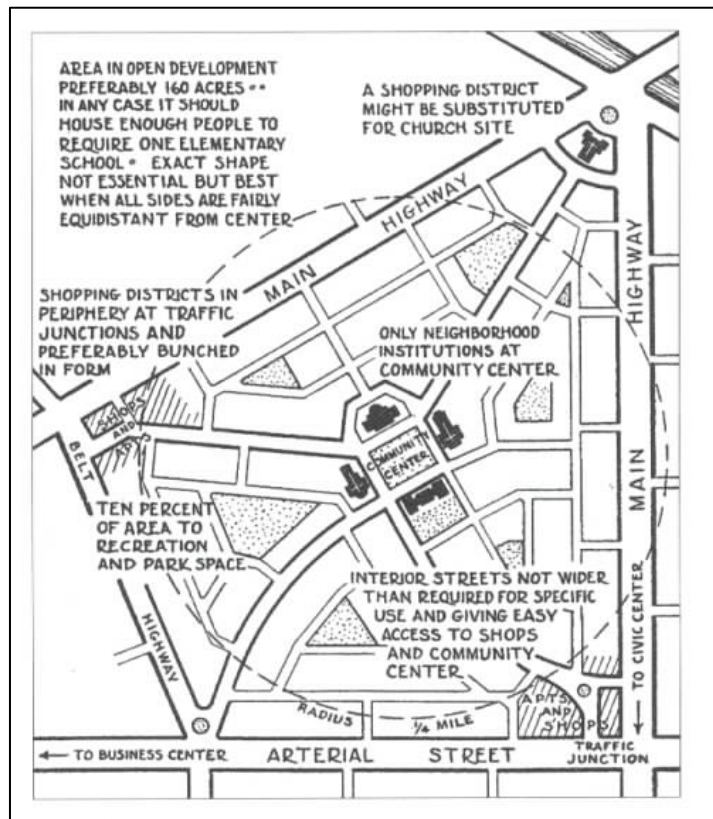


Figure 6-8 A typical neighborhood developed using TND.

Figures 6-7 and 6-8

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These are based on a series of COCS studies performed by the AFT and the New England Forest Consortium. Residential uses, because of their high demand on public services, generally cost municipalities more than they provide in revenues, while other land uses such as commercial and open spaces generate more revenue than they require in public services.

Strengths

The following strengths are associated with the performance of a COCS:

- This type of analysis can help prepare the community to strategically manage and or quantify growth based on the real financial costs versus real financial benefits of growth. It can be used as a preliminary step in the analysis of the feasibility of imposing impact fees to finance certain types of community services.
- This type of analysis can help a community appropriately plan infrastructure investments based on projected revenues of the individual land uses and to meet future budget requirements and

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses are associated with the COCS process:

- Strict use of a COCS may indicate that certain land uses or activities are ideal given the fiscal ramifications whether or not they are locally desirable and compatible with a plan.
- COCS is highly controversial to the development community.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a tool to help a community provide adequate levels of infrastructure for a growing community. Monetary fees or in-kind donations are paid by a developer to the municipality, city, or authority charged with managing a public utility or service such as water distribution or sewer collection and treatment systems. The revenue is then used to pay for upgrades to infrastructure that are needed to accommodate the additional demands on roads, parks etc. generated by a new development. Impact fees can be utilized to pay for road improvements, parkland acquisition, park improvements, utility upgrades, utility line extensions, schools, and other similar services.

How It Works

Based on the specific population associated with a new development, an analysis (such as a COCS as described above) is performed of how roads, parks and schools will be impacted by the new development. The questions asked include will the increase in traffic require larger roads and additional turn lanes, is more park land need to be acquired to provide open space and recreational opportunities, and are new schools required. As these questions are answered, the costs associated with each various improvement are noted and the developer is required to compensate the community and place funds in the impact fee accounts. As more and more development occurs, and the impact fee account balance rises, then the municipality can buy land needed for the park or pay for the road widening when it is needed.

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Strengths

Strengths associated with impact fees include the following:

- The private sector pays for the enhanced levels of service needed to accommodate new development rather than the public sector. Typically these charges are passed on directly to the consumer, such as a homebuyers rather than existing taxpayers.
- Infrastructure is in place or has funding when it is needed, rather than waiting years and years for funding through state grants etc.

Weaknesses

The following weaknesses are associated with impact fees:

- Impact fees should not be used to discourage development but to finance the services resulting from development activity where it is desired.
- If not properly calculated and imposed, impact fees can stifle development and negatively affect the tax base.
- Within the state of North Carolina, impact fees designed to finance schools, parks and recreation, and open space are not permitted without an act of the state legislature. Other public infrastructure may be funded by this mechanism.
- Possible haphazard location of road and other improvements unless a coordinated plan is developed in conjunction with use of impact fees.

Adequate Public Facility Ordinance

Adequate public facility ordinances provide a means in North Carolina to tie public facility funding for schools, roads, parks and recreation facilities, and open space acquisition and construction to new home construction. This bypasses the need to request an act of the General Assembly to specifically allow impact fees within Stanly County for such facilities. Adequate public facility ordinances are employed in several cities and counties in North Carolina. Neighboring Cabarrus County employs a basic form of this form of ordinance. Johnston County adopted such an ordinance to fund public facilities over a limited time frame. The Johnston County ordinance limits the number of housing permits annually within the county.

The Land Use Plan will provide more information regarding this growth management tool in an upcoming update to the plan report.