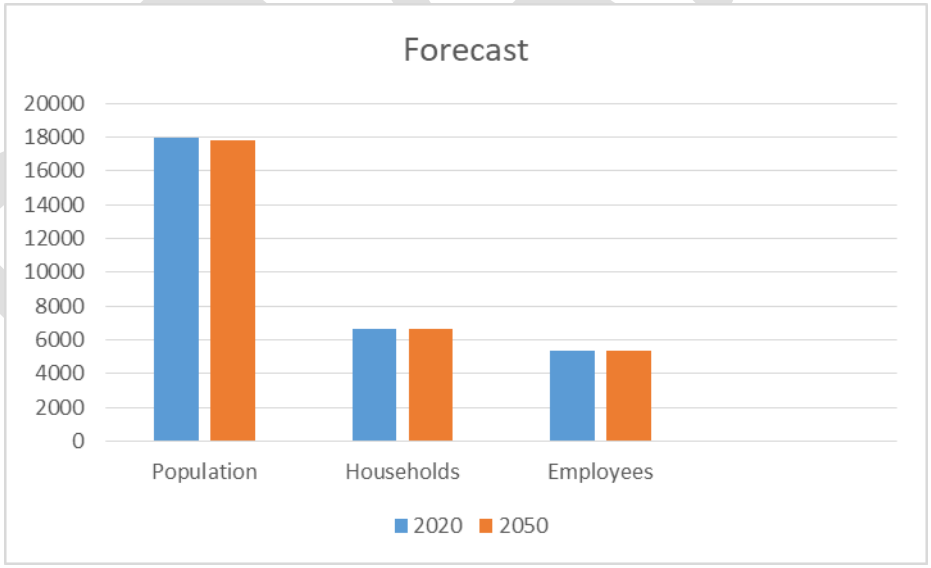
Land Use and Growth Management

Introduction

Southampton County has long been characterized by its bountiful natural resources, moderate climate, and proximity to key trade routes that have resulted in rural patterns of settlement traditionally based on agriculture and accessory services. Population growth has remained stable since the 1970 Census, with a population from the 1970 Census of 18,582 residents decreasing to a 2020 Census population of 17,966, a net decrease of 616. This is due in part to annexation of an area of the County into the City of Franklin and the closing of a correctional facility near Capron as well as a difference in how persons in a correctional facility are counted for 2020 Census purposes. The rest of the region, however, has grown during that time, in some cases significantly. The City of Franklin had a population increase of 15% during that period. Surry County's population grew by 10%. The City of Suffolk increased in population by 89%, and Isle of Wight County's population increased by 56%.

The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission's (HRPDC) population projection for Southampton County includes a decrease of 8% by 2050 to approximately 17,832 residents. HRPDC's projections include an increase of one (1) in the number of households in Southampton County, as well as an increase of five (5) in the number of County residents employed, in effect no change. The Population chapter of this Plan also indicates the population in the western and northern part of the County has decreased since the 2010 Census, while the population has increased in the southern and eastern part of the County. This population shift resulted in redistricting of the County's election districts, as discussed in the Community Facilities chapter.



Source: HRPDC

The number of persons per household in the 2000 Census was 2.78. The number of persons per household in 2010 was 2.76, while the number of persons per household in 2050 is anticipated to be 2.69. This decrease in household size may indicate the need for the County to look at other housing types rather than the single family detached home on a large lot as an alternative that may be attractive to future residents. A decreasing number of persons per household and perhaps a decreasing number of households with children may create a market

for housing types that include more attached single family residences, residences that are smaller located on smaller, more manageable lots, and residences that are closer to employment and commercial centers. The zoning ordinance was amended in 2019 to permit accessory dwelling units (ADUs), one per parcel, on any tract that contains a single family residence. ADUs provide housing alternatives for smaller households, as well as permitting owners of larger residences who no longer need as much space to construct a smaller residence on their property. This would permit the owner to stay on their property, but in a residence that is more suited to their smaller household. A decreasing number of households with children may also impact other decisions, including school siting, recreational and cultural offerings, and the need for professional services and commercial offerings. Yet even in light of these challenges, as we go forward into the future the people of Southampton County remain the most essential resource for forging and maintaining a vibrant community and preserving the values that make Southampton County a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

The Commonwealth of Virginia increased its population by 11.5% from 2000 to 2010 and 7% from 2010 to 2020. The Hampton Roads region has also experienced growth and development during this time period, largely tied to the extensive military presence, economic activity associated with the Port of Virginia, and an influx of retirees and new residents from other states. To accommodate the expanding population, housing construction has steadily moved into the outer areas of the region, including Southampton County, indicating that the spread of suburban-type development that is being slowed in some areas of the country has not been slowed in the Hampton Roads area. While the peak year for new home building in Southampton County was 2006 with 164 new home starts, the number of new home starts in 2022 was 68, on par with the numbers seen for many years prior to the 2006 peak, despite shortages in both materials and labor seen throughout the country, and rising home mortgage rates.

Long range planning is essential to ensure that orderly development occurs at a pace that does not exceed the services that have to be provided but that encourages desired growth in appropriate locations to bolster the County's tax and employment base. Growth management must be continually refined to achieve efficient patterns of development consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in this comprehensive plan.

Land Use

Southampton County is widely known for its rural character, significant historical and cultural contributions, and abundant natural resources. Existing land use patterns have been largely influenced by the topography of the County. Vast portions of the County have remained devoted to agriculture and forestry while a majority of the residential development has occurred in the eastern portion of the County, close to the City of Franklin and the County's towns, villages and communities. Map 8-1 depicts current land use in Southampton County.

Single family residential development continues in Southampton County, both in existing neighborhoods and along rural secondary roadways. In the existing platted subdivisions, construction activity has increased in recent years. The Regency neighborhood, located partially in Franklin and partially in the County, has renewed construction activity after a number of years with no new homes, and all but a handful of the County lots have been built out recently. Several recent neighborhoods in the County, including Bethel Farms, Country Roads, Pines of Ivor, and Sandy Creek, are close to build-out after increased construction in recent years as well. Platted lots in existing subdivisions are increasingly difficult for potential residents to find. This leads to an increase in requests for the creation of new lots through the family transfer process and the existing homesite process, as well as through the zoning map amendment process to create lots with Rural Residential zoning. This scattered development

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pattern leads to increasing concerns about conflicts between the existing agricultural and forestal uses and residential development, the loss of productive agricultural land, and increasing traffic concerns. No new single family detached residential subdivisions have been created since the as-yet-unbuilt Benson Woods subdivision in 2010. No new multifamily structures have been created since prior to that time as well. Higher density residential properties may be necessary to address the affordable housing shortage described in the Housing chapter, to provide affordable and workforce-priced housing for County residents. Location in areas served by public water and sewer may be appropriate.

Commercial development continues along the County's transportation corridors. Long-standing, family-owned, enterprises have re-purposed existing structures or built new structures to expand their businesses, including Parker's Peanuts and Belmont Peanuts. Several self-storage facilities have been constructed, both near Southampton Parkway and near the Town of Newsoms. A number of warehouse-type properties along Southampton Parkway have been renovated and re-opened in recent years, including an auto repair facility, a gym, batting cages, and a personal care/yoga studio. A tornado spawned by Tropical Storm Isaias in August 2020 damaged or destroyed a number of homes and businesses along Southampton Parkway and in the County's Southampton Business Park. The Virginia Department of Agriculture building in the Business Park was repaired and re-opened. Several homes and businesses on Southampton Parkway have been renovated, with businesses including The Peanut Patch and Dairy Queen, and have since re-opened. Grigg's Lawn and Tractor constructed a new building. Several parcels along Southampton Parkway in the area damaged by the tornado have been cleared of damaged buildings, and await redevelopment.

Businesses in and around the towns have undergone ownership changes and renovations in recent years, bringing new opportunities to the residents in those areas. A veterinarian's office has been constructed in the Ivor area along US 460, as well as a Dollar General store. Several businesses along US 460 have undergone renovations in recent years. Businesses in the towns of Newsoms and Boykins have undergone renovations and ownership changes in recent years. Courtland may see commercial growth once the courthouse renovations are complete and court functions return to the center of town.

New industrial ventures have been established and more are being planned. The County's industrial park on Rose Valley Road, Southampton Commerce and Logistics Center, has Enviva as an occupant, a major pellet manufacturer whose products in large part leave the United States through their port in Chesapeake. A tire demanufacturing plant is planned for the County's industrial park as well. The Solenis Company, located on Shady Brook Trail, plans an expansion on property within the Commerce and Logistics Center as well. To provide further industrial property, the County has exercised an option to purchase the Beale Farm property across Rose Valley Road from the Enviva plant, a site of approximately 200 acres for further industrial or manufacturing development. Strong concerns from property owners in the area of the Beale Farm property were raised during the zoning map amendment for the property. However, the Industrial Plan designation, in place since at least 1988, was used to justify approval of the zoning amendment.

Birdsong has constructed a substantial peanut warehouse on Rose Valley Road, which is currently being enlarged. A second peanut/grain drying/storage warehouse, with a capacity of 350,000+/- bushels, is under construction in that area for Meherrin Agricultural and Chemical Company, along General Thomas Highway. The Converting Innovation Center, formerly owned by International Paper, re-opened during the summer of 2015 as a peanut butter manufacturing plant owned by Hampton Farms. A number of sand mining operations have opened or reopened in recent years, to serve the road building and industrial users in the area. One

asphalt plant is planned for the Branchville area, and a second major plant, Curtis Contracting, is located west of Ivor, using both US 460 and a rail spur to transport materials. Interest has been increasing in industrial properties located along Camp Parkway and in the area south of Southampton Parkway near the Love's Travel Center development in Franklin. One 100MW solar installation was constructed just north of Boykins and Newsoms and has been operational since 2018.

Overall, Southampton County remains largely in use for agriculture and forestry outside of the incorporated towns. Less than ten (10) percent of the land base has been converted into uses other than agriculture, forestry, open space or conservation. Since 2017, over 160,000 acres have been approved as part of the 39 Voluntary Agriculture and Forestal Districts in the County. These districts protect agriculture and forested land from development for the period of the District, typically ten (10) years. These Districts also protect land in the Districts from development on abutting properties that may have a negative impact on the protected land. The Districts are more fully discussed and depicted in the Agriculture chapter of the Plan.

Land use decisions are very important because they determine what activities may occur in a particular area. Some uses, including commercial and industrial, can create different planning challenges than others. Minimizing the conflicts between differing uses to ensure the health, safety and general well-being of a community is paramount in creating and sustaining viable communities. With this statement as a general goal, specific categories have been created to better educate the public as to the needs and demands associated with a particular use and the interaction among the uses.

Recent land use changes in Southampton County have resulted in a citizenry that is determined to preserve the rural nature of the landscape while remaining cognizant of the fact that change is inevitable and is in part necessary to maintain the quality of life in the County, including increases in the industrial sector. The desire to engage the public in open discussions about how to best manage future land development primarily in the residential realm has resulted in the development of a proactive approach that is uniquely tailored to the goals and objectives of Southampton County. The Rural Residential zoning designation with its attendant development requirements is a direct outgrowth of the changing rural landscape and the desires of the citizens to retain such landscape and its agricultural utility while still permitting limited residential growth. The design guidelines in the Planned Office and Industrial zoning designation were an outgrowth of a request for approval of an industrial park along Camp Parkway in an area surrounded by residences, a school, and a house of worship. The adoption of stringent utility scale solar regulations after the approval and construction of the utility scale solar facility in the County was in direct response to issues and concerns raised during the review period as well as now that the facility is operational. Zoning amendments follow the adoption of land use regulations, to help put the guidelines of the land use plan into action.

Land use designations are broad categories that spell out the types of uses that are considered appropriate in specific areas. Zoning designations are development parameters that determine specific permitted uses and the spatial requirements, such as setbacks, parking, and other physical requirements that must be met to develop property. For example, the Commercial land use designation may include several types of commercial or office zoning designations, as well as limited industrial designations. A medium density land use designation may have within it property developed in a number of zoning designations that permit a range of housing types ranging from single family detached or attached units to multifamily structures, all developed under their own specific zoning requirements.

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Land uses classifications are described below. While these uses do not represent zoning districts, they do help provide the framework on which future zoning applications may be considered and discussed. Not all land uses are necessarily compatible with each other absent other development considerations and standards. These development considerations and standards are found within the Zoning Ordinance. Careful deliberation must be undertaken when reviewing projected changes to the land use plan. When viewing the objectives of the individual property owner and their rights to utilize their property in the highest and best use, careful consideration must be given to the overall goals and objectives of the entire county in order to create a harmonious balance that best serves all parties involved while mitigating unwanted impacts. It is through this open process of education and discussion that all sides may have the opportunity to present their views on current and future uses that may be located in Southampton County.

Agriculture/Forest/Open Space/Rural Residential

Agricultural land is one of the most valuable and abundant of all the County's natural resources. The main purpose of this land use classification is to facilitate existing and future farming and silviculture operations and to preserve the natural environment. Uses are generally restricted to agriculture and others that are compatible with the existing land use pattern, such as forestry, natural resource extraction, passive and active recreation, and other conservation uses. Limited low-density residential development and accessory units may be permitted subject to the current options outlined in the Rural Residential section of the Zoning Ordinance. Rural residential development is appropriate in areas not served by municipal water and wastewater services.

Low Density Residential

This use comprises suburban-type development in and around defined planning and community areas. This category encompasses single-family detached structures and accessory units, as well as appropriate recreational facilities, and is the predominant residential use pattern found in the more suburbanized parts of the county, including the incorporated towns. Residential development can present many challenges, including the provision of adequate roads and transportation, adequate provision of services such as schools and public safety, preservation of the natural environment, utility service provisions, and the interaction between new development and existing development. Low density residential development shall be encouraged but not limited to areas that are or can be served by municipal water and wastewater services, and costs of extension of services not available but necessary shall be borne by the developer. Low density residential development in this category is limited to one (1) to three (3) units per developable acre. While Low Density residential development is not typically associated with Mixed Use areas, the location of Low Density development adjacent to Mixed Use areas may be appropriate.

Medium Density Residential

This use is comprised of higher density development and includes smaller lot detached and attached single family housing and accessory units, as well as multifamily residential development. Medium density residential development shall be limited to areas that are or can be served by municipal water and wastewater services. The costs for any extension of such services will be borne by the developer. With a changing demographic base, an aging population, and the increased cost of both new housing and the infrastructure to serve such new housing when developed away from existing infrastructure, the need to explore alternatives to single family large lot detached structures remains a vital concern. The location of medium

density residential uses in close proximity to commercial nodes that provide or could provide the necessary infrastructure may be appropriate in various places within the noted Planning Areas and adjacent to and within Mixed Use areas. Medium density residential development in this category is limited to three (3) to eight (8) units per developable acre. Density bonuses for the development of senior housing may be available through provisions in the Zoning Ordinance.

Manufactured Home Parks

Several manufactured home parks are located in the county and consist of owner occupied structures as well as rental units. The higher density of these facilities may require special consideration when reviewing new proposals. New manufactured home parks shall be served by municipal water and wastewater service, and costs for such municipal water and wastewater service extension shall be borne by the developer of such manufactured home parks should capacity not exist to service the park. No new manufactured home parks shall be approved that do not use municipal water and wastewater service, and no expansions of existing manufactured home parks shall be approved without municipal water and wastewater service for the expanded area. The requirement for municipal water and wastewater service does not apply to individual manufactured homes located on individual lots in zoning districts that permit such development.

Commercial

This classification represents existing business and projected future locations that may be suitable for future development. U.S. Route 58 and U.S. Route 460 are major thoroughfares that help facilitate the development of commercial enterprises. Future considerations for commercial development should recognize the need for controlled access, proximity to residential centers, and should be clustered at significant intersections and near the incorporated towns to avoid commercial strip development. The need for municipal water and wastewater services will be dependent on the development proposed, and the costs for extension of such services may be borne by the developer. Commercial elements are often found and are appropriate within and adjacent to areas designated for Mixed Use Development.

Mixed Use

This classification includes compact nodes of development that include a mix of commercial, office, public, and medium density residential uses in varying proportions. These districts may be considered and located in areas that provide or could provide the infrastructure necessary for such mixed use development patterns. Mixed use areas are appropriate at significant intersections and shall be located in areas able to be served by municipal water and wastewater services and transportation facilities. Residential development in this category is limited to three (3) to ten (10) units per developable acre, including detached and attached single family housing, as well as multi-family housing. Density bonuses for the development of senior housing in such areas may be available through provisions in the Zoning Ordinance. Mixed use areas are encouraged to incorporate elements of traditional neighborhood development, including pedestrian friendly road design, connectivity of road and pedestrian networks both within the area and with abutting properties, and preservation of natural areas as appropriate. The need for municipal water and wastewater services will be dependent on the development proposed, and the costs for extension of such services may be borne by the developer. Mixed use areas shall be developed in conjunction with a master development plan as outlined in the County Code. The Mixed Use designation shall be approved on a site-by-site basis after review by the Planning Commission and approval by the Board of Supervisors in conjunction with an approved master development plan.

Employment Center

The Employment Center designation encompasses property adjoining or in near proximity to transportation corridors, including US 460, US 58, US 671, and rail corridors. This designation includes industrial and manufacturing uses, compatible office and commercial uses, and limited medium density residential uses in the outlying areas of the district. The Employment Center areas are designed to attract public and private infrastructure investment. General industrial and resource extraction operations are included in this designation. Business park-type development, with light industrial, research and development, warehousing, and office uses in a campus-like setting is included, as well as commercial enterprises that support the industrial and office development and the surrounding area. The need for municipal services is dependent on the type of development planned, and extension of those services may be borne by the developer. This designation allows outdoor storage of materials as part of an industrial or resource extraction operation, but outdoor storage such as a vehicle salvage operation is not included. Institutional uses are generally limited, except uses that directly serve the industrial and office uses in the district, such as fire stations, day care centers, and vocational schools. Medium density residential uses may be appropriate near the boundaries of the Employment Center areas that abut similar development outside of the area.

Industrial

These uses provide significant employment opportunities for people in the County and make important contributions to the County's tax base. Location requirements can be very critical and can vary based upon the specific proposed use. The close proximity of major highways, railroads, and airports as well as adequate public utilities including natural gas and broadband service must be considered when projecting future industrial locations. The need for municipal water and wastewater services will be dependent on the development proposed, and the costs for extension of such services may be borne by the developer. The County owns one industrial park east of Southampton Parkway, off Agri-Park Drive. The County's larger industrial park is located south of US 671, and additional property is under a purchase option to expand the park. Consideration for the location of further County and private industrial parks is appropriate to provide for the economic development of the County and continued job growth for residents. Sensitivity to adjoining properties and the ability to mitigate potential adverse effects associated with industrial use is a major factor in appropriate site design guidelines. The development of new industrial prospects should concentrate on a regional approach with emphasis on local involvement and participation. These partnerships are critical for diversifying the tax base and providing positive economic opportunities for the citizens of Southampton County and should be coordinated through the objectives and strategies outlined in this plan. Industrial uses in appropriate scale may be located within or adjacent to Mixed Use areas.

Institutional

This classification includes government owned buildings, facilities owned by utility systems, public and private schools, hospitals, day care centers for adults and children, houses of worship and related facilities that may be associated with the house of worship, public and private or commercial parks and recreational or historic facilities, refuse collection sites, public safety institutions and other uses that serve the public and the community. This district may also include limited residential uses such as nursing homes and adult care facilities as well as other types of group living facilities. The range of Institutional uses requires siting considerations to assure their appropriate locations within the community. The need for municipal water and wastewater services is dependent on the proposed use, and the costs of extension of such

services may be borne by the developer. The ability to provide these services and facilities is contingent upon sound planning practices to help make certain that the demand for these facilities and services does not exceed the ability of the government or its entities to provide them. Institutional elements may be appropriate within or adjacent to Mixed Use areas. Future investments in the public types of these facilities is an important component of the Capital Improvements Plan and should be a high priority for the public sector in addressing the future needs of Southampton County.

Growth Management

The purpose of creating a development management plan is to help guide the progression of land use towards goals and objectives that are largely shaped by the people of a county. Land development trends can influence many of the variables that when placed together, help form the identity and affect the quality of life of a community. Through implementation of the future land use plan, the county is able to encourage the efficient delivery of public services and assist in establishing a framework that guides future land use decisions in a manner that promotes the general wellbeing of all people.

Southampton County is anticipated to grow slowly in the coming years. As described in previous chapters, population projections and current growth trends show that the population, households, and employment will increase very little in the planning timeframe that goes to 2050. However, new homes and businesses continue to locate in the County, replacing homes and non-residential properties that have passed their useful life. The need to manage development is increasingly important in terms of the financial costs associated with providing services to the new development and encouraging economic growth**.** Maintaining the agricultural land base that helps influence the rural quality of life, providing quality educational services, expanding economic opportunities, and preserving the natural environment continue to be some of the foremost goals of the County. The strategies listed at the end of this chapter help shape the overall policy of land development in the County and their influence is reflected in land use decisions. In past plans, the County had indicated that future growth should occur in areas that are close to the existing towns and the City of Franklin. This theme remains very relevant in this comprehensive plan as the resources needed to support this scale of development and the impact it has on the quality of life for the people of Southampton County are considered. By working cooperatively with the incorporated towns, the City of Franklin, and the Hampton Roads region, Southampton County will be better prepared to meet the challenges ahead.

The future land use map contains many significant features designed to reinforce the principles and goals of managing land use for the protection of the health, security, and general wellbeing of the public. The purpose of projecting future land use is to define areas in the county that are best suited for specific uses, including agriculture, residential, institutional, commercial, mixed use, industrial and conservation.

The inclusion of a future land use map in the comprehensive plan does not change existing zoning classifications, nor is it intended to do so. The Southampton County Future Land Use Map (Map 8-2) provides a basis for helping determine whether a proposed application for a change in zoning is in accordance with the projected use envisioned by Southampton County. While every effort is made to promote sound long range planning principles through creation of the future land use map, there may be circumstances in which a projected use may cause the plan map to need to be revised. Any amendments to the future land use map are subject to public hearings and should be reviewed carefully to ensure that the overall goals of Southampton County remain in good standing.

When viewing the future land use map several key features are noted. These features include general areas for future growth and development and are labeled as Planning Areas and Community Areas.

Planning Areas

Planning areas are defined zones where current development patterns, current zoning, existing transportation systems, and existing or planned utilities and services indicate the continuation of more intensive development activity. While not all of the area encompassed within a planning area will develop during the planning period due to environmental constraints, economic factors, and/or community concerns, planning areas offer a glimpse of where conditions may allow development to occur within the regulatory framework established by the County at present or in the future, as it is confronted with trends and changing circumstances.

The planning areas outlined on the future land use map are expected to serve as the predominant activity centers for the County. Investments in the business and employment sectors, infrastructure development, and public facility planning will be directed to these specific geographic locations. These investments will not only be made by the public sector, but will be dependent upon substantial cooperation from the private sector as well.

Lands located within a planning area are not granted "by right" approval to develop. Current ordinances require that any newly proposed lots for residential development be zoned for residential use through the Rural Residential zoning process or a zoning map amendment to another appropriate zoning designation based on the housing type and density planned. This requires a formal application and public hearings before any decisions are made. As the County developed the growth management strategy contained in this updated plan, it remained cognizant that development will occur and sought to direct growth to areas where future utility expansions and other infrastructure investments may occur while preserving the majority of the land base for open space and agricultural operations, thus protecting the character and viability of the outlying rural areas. Note that areas within the Planning Areas that are also within the limits of an incorporated town are bound by the zoning ordinances and planning guidelines of the specific town. Areas within a Planning Area but outside of the corporate limits of a town are governed by the County's Plan and ordinances.

Three planning areas are defined on the future land use map. These planning areas are located in the northern, central and southwestern portions of the county. A more detailed description of each of these planning areas follows.

<u>Ivor Planning Area</u>

This planning area is situated along the U.S. Route 460 corridor which is a major thoroughfare connecting Interstate 95 with the Hampton Roads region. The incorporated Town of Ivor is centrally located in this planning area and currently operates a municipal water system. The town is expected to serve as the hub for future activities in this portion of Southampton County, and a number of services exist along U.S. 460 and on S.R. 616 within the Town of Ivor. Expansion of water service beyond the corporate limits will require cooperation among Southampton County, prospective applicants, and the Town of Ivor. Currently, there is no sewer service available for this planning area. A system will need to be developed in order to accommodate future industrial growth and corresponding commercial and residential development. There are limited industrial opportunities absent municipal water and waste water services, although almost 1,500 acres of land has been designated for industrial development in a series of County land use plans for well over twenty years.

Courtland Planning Area

This is the largest of the planning areas, not only in terms of population but also in geographic size. The incorporated Town of Courtland, which is also the county seat, is located along the western portion of this designated area. This planning area is expected to see the most residential, commercial and industrial activity during the coming years. Significant features of this planning area include the county's premier industrial corridor encompassing Rt. 671 southwest from Franklin to the Nottoway River. An emerging commercial corridor is developing along Southampton Parkway, running east from Courtland towards the boundary with the City of Franklin.

The Town of Courtland contains a significant residential population, as well as a retail center and other scattered retail/service uses, a senior living center, and the County administration center. The courthouse is undergoing extensive renovations and additions, and will reopen to the public in early 2024. A renovated courthouse may induce new retail and service development in and around Courtland.

Substantial investments in public facilities include a 750-student elementary school, a wastewater treatment facility and the extension of waste water services along Camp Parkway, and development of the County's industrial park. The County industrial park and the surrounding area are within an Enterprise Zone as established by the Commonwealth of Virginia to encourage economic development. The Southampton Business Park off US 58 at Agri-Park Drive is within an Enterprise Zone as well. The Enterprise Zone designation provides potential development the opportunity to take advantage of a number of both State and local incentives, encouraging nonresidential development in areas most suited for it. Additional investments from the private sector are also beginning to take shape as companies realize the advantage of major transportation routes, the proximity to the Port of Virginia and the greater Hampton Roads region and the opportunities this will inevitably present. The availability of municipal water and waste water services, as well as a planned natural gas line and the potential for broadband service, makes this area attractive for a variety of private investors.

Boykins-Branchville-Newsoms Planning Area

This corridor contains three of the County's incorporated towns. A major capital investment was completed to upgrade and expand the public water and sewer systems, and upgrades to the Boykins waste water facility have been completed. The connectivity offered by three major transportation routes, Route 671, Route 186 and Route 35, offers excellent opportunities for the location of industrial, business and residential development. However, an increase in the number of tractor trailers through the heart of the towns' centers raises concerns from the elected officials about the livability of those corridors. Capacity in the existing wastewater treatment plant ensures that development can occur in a managed fashion. The individual towns also offer additional services existing in varying forms and include sidewalks, solid waste services, streetlamps and public safety. Boykins and Newsoms are home to retail and service offerings that serve the southern areas of the County, and all three communities are home to a number of houses of worship.

The Town of Newsoms and the County are working together to revitalize areas within and just outside the town limits. A drainage study lead to plans to correct long-standing stormwater problems, with correction financed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Renovations and replacement of homes in the area is underway as well, including the removal of the former school. The goal of such neighborhood improvement

investments by DHCD is to revitalize communities, through investments in housing, blight removal, and infrastructure improvements.

An Enterprise Zone as established by the Commonwealth of Virginia includes the commercial district in Boykins and extends towards Branchville and includes the asphalt plant near Branchville. Boykins developed an economic restructuring and marketing plan with the help of a planning grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development to guide the redevelopment of the downtown area.

Community Areas

Community Areas are places clustered near and around existing historically-commercial centers and include volunteer fire departments, civic organizations, religious establishments, recreational facilities, postal facilities, and other relevant service enterprises. Community areas offer a sense of place and identity and have structured land use patterns that have steadily progressed since the original creation of Southampton County. These community areas provide a range of housing types and densities that are more suburban and town-like in nature than the surrounding agricultural areas.

Water utility systems of differing capacity exist in these areas and may offer potential opportunities for limited expansion, although various constraints do currently exist, including the lack of municipal waste water services. Lands located within community areas, like planning areas, are not granted "by right" development. Future development should be consistent with the individual character of each of these areas and should occur at a density and type that is relatively limited and of an infill nature. Three community areas are identified: Sedley, Capron and Drewryville. Capron is an incorporated town and therefore adopted its own zoning ordinance that governs development within the corporate limits.

Sedley Community Area

Founded in 1907 as a company town for the Surry Lumber Company, this village is located in the eastern portion of the County, north of the City of Franklin. Although described as a village, this connotation does not carry an official incorporated status. A private water utility system serves the village and surrounding areas and continued operation and expansion will require additional improvements, although no municipal wastewater service is available. A volunteer fire department, several small service oriented businesses, churches, and recreational fields are located in Sedley, as well as Hubs Peanuts, a major peanut processing facility.

Capron Community Area

One of the six incorporated towns in the county, Capron has a rich history largely resulting from its function as the location of a train station and depot. Limited commercial development is currently centered along Main Street, including a feed store, post office, and municipal building. Additional service oriented development is centered at the intersection of Main Street and Southampton Parkway. The Town operates a municipal water system and is served by a volunteer fire and rescue station. The Capron Community Area is shown on Map 8-2e. The incorporated limits of the Town of Capron are within the Capron Community Area, but do not include the entire Capron Community Area.

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Drewryville Community Area

This small community is located just east of the City of Emporia on US 58, Southampton Parkway. Its existing development resulted from and was influenced by the railroad. The area is primarily residential in nature and is served by a county water system. Although there exists a water system for the Drewryville area, Drewryville is not an incorporated town and is bound by the development regulations of the County. A commercial food and fueling store is located at the intersection of Drewry Road with Southampton Parkway. Future development should be similar in scope and character as existing development. The US Post Office that was on Drewry Road was damaged by fire and has since been replaced.

Other Community Centers

Other community centers exist in the County and should be recognized for their existing development, sense of place and history, commercial enterprises, and religious establishments. Limited residential zoning may exist and future growth should consist of development on existing parcels or limited low-density development under the Rural Residential ordinances. Limited water and waste water services are available in some of these areas, and extension of such services shall be provided by a developer should there be a need for extension. These community centers are not incorporated towns, so development in these areas is guided by Southampton County development regulations. These community centers include the following places:

Adams Grove
Berlin-Dory
Burdette
Edgehill
Little Texas
Scottswood
Sebrell
Kingsdale

Conclusion

Southampton County is experiencing changes in its land use patterns that are influenced not only by the population increase being experienced by the Country, but by the patterns and variables found in the Hampton Roads region as a whole. As localities east of the County continue to develop, development continues to be pushed to the west. As the Port continues to grow, truck traffic increases through the County. Utility scale solar development will continue to draw interest to the County, although the utility scale solar zoning requirements seek to direct such development in a scale that lessens its impact on the County's agricultural and forested land. Because change is inevitable, careful evaluations are now being made to determine how these changes will affect the people, opportunities, and quality of life in Southampton County. The future will hold significant challenges and opportunities for Southampton County. In preparing for these issues, the County can best serve the future needs of its citizens by defining the areas that will accommodate growth and change in a manner that balances preservation of community character with the need for sustainable economic investment and opportunity.

Goals:

Population

Ensure that population growth is consistent with County goals to sustain the viability and vitality of Southampton County.

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Implementation Strategies

a) Support programs and incentives to achieve modest but consistent growth in population.
b) Review population growth information regularly to seek trends that will help County deliver needed services to a changing population.
c) Encourage development that is compatible with the population densities and reasonable rates of growth and available resources.

Housing

Ensure the development of residential areas in Southampton County that offer a variety of housing densities, types, sizes, costs, and locations to accommodate current and future needs.

Implementation Strategies

d) After completion of a housing study to determine the unmet housing needs of County residents, seek ways to address unmet housing needs. Higher density may be appropriate in areas served by public water and sewer.
e) Plan for a diversity of housing choices, including single-family housing on smaller lots, apartments, and townhouses in the towns or near the towns where public services and utilities are available, in order that County residents may have decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Discourage such housing in outlying areas.
f) Encourage housing choices in areas accessible to jobs and services. With the average new home value in 2022 over $218,000 and the average family in the County able to afford a home in the $126-158,000 range, alternatives may be necessary to allow County residents to remain in the County in appropriate housing.
g) Encourage through density bonuses the construction of nursing homes and housing for the elderly and persons with differing abilities in mixed use areas.
h) Encourage the rehabilitation or replacement of housing in poor condition and offer assistance to the towns for such programs.
i) Continue to work with the Department of Housing and Community Development to secure state funds to improve homes and neighborhoods.
j) Require new manufactured home parks to be served with municipal water and sanitary sewer service to provide needed infrastructure to residents of high density development.
k) Encourage the provision of water, sewer, and residential services within planned development areas to funnel growth into these areas.
l) Consider re-establishing Planned Development District zoning for residential development. Encourage such zoning in areas able to serviced by public water and sewer.
m) Discourage residential development in areas dominated by environmentally sensitive features or agricultural operations.
n) Encourage the use of Federal and State housing assistance for construction and rehabilitation projects.
o) Discourage the subdivision of property and the construction of houses in areas that will result in the loss of valuable farmland and interfere with agricultural practices on adjacent farmland, recognizing the “family transfer” process to provide housing opportunities for the immediate family of the farmer.

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p) Encourage the provision of adequate services and facilities in residential developments by enforcing the subdivision ordinance and study amendments to the subdivision ordinance as may be necessary to ensure the provision of such services and facilities.
q) Continue and refine as necessary the Rural Residential zoning classification to limit residential development's encroachment into agricultural areas.

Future Development

Ensure that future development occurs in an efficient and serviceable manner, which is protective of Southampton County's predominantly rural character.

Implementation Strategies

r) Encourage moderate, consistent growth in non-residential uses, to serve the community and grow and diversify the employment base.
s) Encourage development of County and private industrial/manufacturing parks to provide employment opportunities for residents and an increase to the County's non-residential tax base.
t) Preserve the best agricultural land and protect it from uses that are adverse to agriculture.
u) Encourage commercial uses to group together at intersections along the major thoroughfares, rather than to scatter randomly along either the major thoroughfares or other County roads. Encourage and facilitate mixed use areas and live/work/recreate areas to maximize utilization of existing and planned infrastructure.
v) Encourage the development of residential communities, commercial concentrations, and industrial uses where the services and facilities that are required for such development are located or are planned for expansion, in areas accessible to jobs and services.
w) Improve the quality of development and redevelopment through improved site planning and design standards.
x) Emphasize community planning and industrial development that is designed to economize the costs of roads, utilities, and land use.
y) Recognize and evaluate the importance of and impact on utilities, schools, and other community facilities when reviewing future development proposals.
z) Make planning and development decisions that account for the special characteristics and identity of each community. Encourage development that provides a sense of place that is uniquely Southampton County.
aa) Encourage innovative design proposals that complement natural and man-made features.
bb) Encourage the preservation and protection of lands needed in the future for roads, parks, schools, and other public facilities in private development plans.
cc) Monitor programs at the federal, state, regional, and local levels that may affect County goals and participate in individual and cooperative efforts to ensure that such programs support achievement of County goals and/or do not adversely impact the County's ability to achieve those goals.
dd) Utilize the zoning ordinance to direct intensive land use development areas where the efficiency of transportation systems, utility services, and community facilities will be maximized and their costs minimized.
ee) Study the adoption of highway corridor overlay zoning districts and mixed use areas as necessary.

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ff) Encourage members of the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals to participate in applicable State sponsored certification programs.
gg) Consider scheduling annual meeting between County Board of Supervisors, City Council, both Planning Commissions, and Franklin-Southampton Economic Development Inc. to encourage shared vision and cooperation.
hh) Seek to work with abutting localities with regard to planning for areas of common concern, i.e., Camp Parkway and US 58 with Franklin, both ends of US 460 with Isle of Wight and Surry/Sussex Counties.
ii) Work with Greensville County with regard to development and expansion of the Emporia/Greensville County airport.
jj) Seek increased protection for areas threatened by large-scale development through means such as the Rural Historic District designation.
kk) Assist towns that may seek economic revitalization through participation in the Main Street program through the Department of Housing and Community Development.

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