

# **Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy**



Adopted  
April 5, 2010

# County of Davie



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# Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy

The Growth Enhancement Strategy is a systematic approach that provides the Davie County Board of Commissioners, Planning Board, and Planning Staff guidance when executing land use policies.

## IN THIS PLAN

- Existing Situation • Growth Demographics • Growth Issues • Growth Patterns and Maps • Rural Growth • Voluntary Conservation • Existing Zoning and Planning • Subdivision Design • Interconnection • Land Improvement Report • Heritage and Scenic Protection • Growth Enhancement Areas • Policy Guidelines • Existing Land Uses • Commissioners' Resolution

## Existing Situation

We are living in a challenging time in Davie County. Major economic, social and land use changes are occurring at a tremendous pace. Rapid development is changing the face of our community. Anticipating our future and planning for the inevitable change has become more important than ever. Given the accelerated pace of change and development in our community, the Davie County Board of Commissioners has requested the preparation of the Growth Enhancement Strategy to help guide development of the county well into the oncoming years. This Growth Enhancement Strategy will serve as a 10-15 year guide for public policy decisions concerning the overall growth and development of Davie County. This Growth Enhancement Strategy focuses on the physical growth and development of Davie County but also addresses quality of life issues such as the preservation of our heritage assets in an increasingly fragile rural environment.

**The OBJECTIVES of the Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy are:**

- A. To encourage quality and sustainable growth;
- B. To accommodate new growth while preserving the heritage and rural resources of Davie County; and
- C. To maintain a healthy balance between economic viability and livability by recognizing the direct connection between development and our county's quality of life.

Several overall development themes are woven together through policy guidelines reflected in the Growth Enhancement Strategy. Managing residential growth by smarter subdivision design and location are emphasized. The Growth Enhancement Strategy stresses the need to redirect major residential development into growth centers that will be more accessible to public infrastructure. Retaining our distinctive Davie County community character and quality of life by protecting farmland, open space, and our natural heritage resources are important elements of this plan.

**The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy is not a detailed, lot by lot, site-specific land use plan as reflected by zoning maps. Instead, the Strategy provides broad policy statements that will, when combined with designated Growth Enhancement Areas, form an overall growth enhancement philosophy for Davie County. The Strategy provides options to land owners and developers that will still accomplish growth enhancement objectives.**

Although adopted by the Board of Commissioners as an official public document, the Growth Enhancement Strategy is not a development ordinance and does not carry the force of law. This does, however, serve as a very effective guide for zoning and growth-related decisions in Davie County.





# Davie County Growth Demographics

Davie County is the fastest growing county in the Piedmont Triad region of North Carolina and the 18th fastest growing county of the 100 counties in North Carolina. Within Davie County there are three individual municipalities: Bermuda Run, Cooleemee, and Mocksville.

## Population Growth Due to Migration New Residents Moving In

	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2010 (projected)
Total Growth	3,260	6,976	7,922
Natural Increase	850	854	1,051
Net Migration	2,410	6,122	6,871
Migration Rate	9.8%	22.0%	19.7%

Source: US Census Bureau and the NC State Office of Management and Budget, projections issued in June 2008

Total Area	266.54 sq. miles
Land Area	264.89 sq. miles
Population Density	153 people per square mile
Elevation	866' above sea level
Latitude	35' 52" N
Longitude	80' 34" W
County Seat	Mocksville
<i>Source: USGS</i>	

Davie County is situated just 15 miles from Winston-Salem, 40 miles from Greensboro, 60 miles from Charlotte and 98 miles from Raleigh. Davie County is also served by an excellent road network including: Interstate 40, NC Highway 801 and US Highways 601, 64 and 158. The close proximity to urban areas and dependable road network led Davie County to experience a large portion of the population commuting out of the county to work.

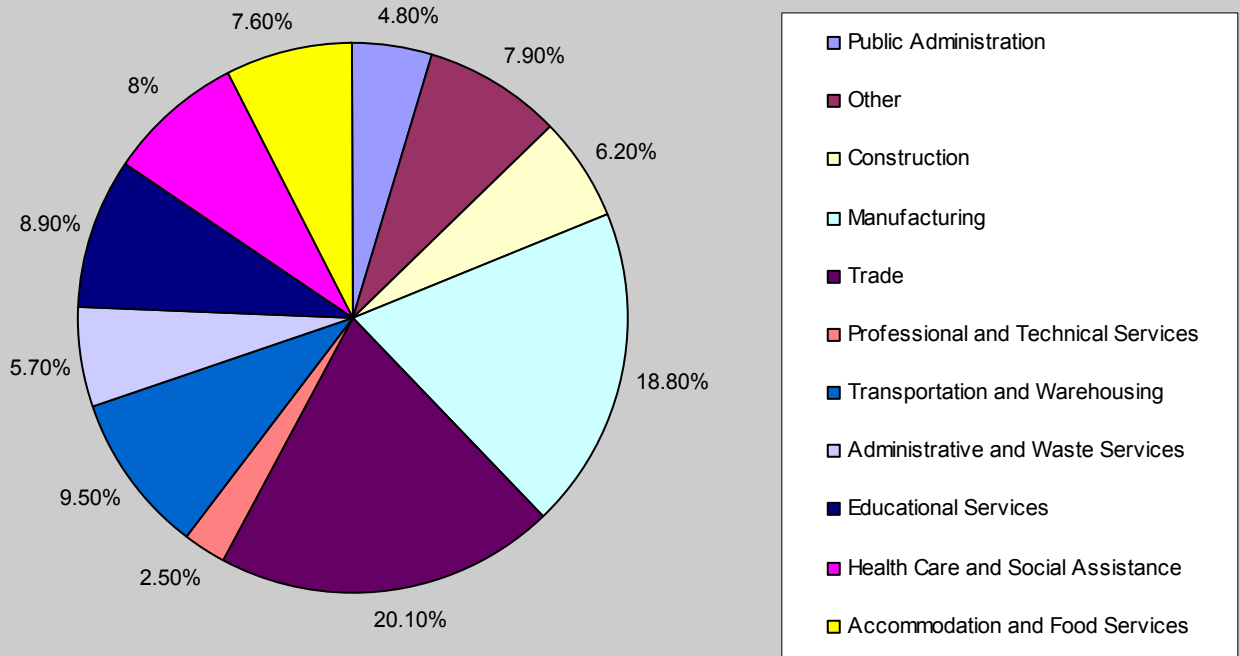
## Commuting Summary for Davie County

Total Out Commuters	8,924
Total In Commuters	2,982
Total non-commuters	7,710
Persons working in county	10,692
Employed residents	16,634
Net commuting	-5,942
% of employed residents who are out-commuters	53.9%

Source: 2000 Census, Journey to Work Files



## Employment by Industry within County



Source: Employment Security Commission of NC Employment & Wages in NC by NAICS code, 2007

The 2007 population of the county was projected to be 40,516 marking a 16.3% increase from the 2000 population of 34,835.

During the time period 1998-January 2010, the Davie County Board of Commissioners have considered 104 requests for property rezonings at public hearings. Of those, 26 were rezoning a property from Residential Agricultural (R-A) and 43 were rezoning properties from Residential-20. These numerous requests to change from predominately agricultural and rural uses speaks to the growth within the county.

In the last twenty years development throughout the Triad Region has grown considerably. The Environment North Carolina Policy and Research center estimates that 24% of cropland and forest land was transformed during that time. That translates to a loss of 283,000 acres of cropland and 123,000 acres of forest land. Overall, it is estimated that North Carolina loses 325 acres of crop and forest land per day to development.

The 2007 Census of Agriculture listed the number of farms in Davie County to be 627. This is an 11% decrease from the 705 farms in the 2002 census. They also estimated an 8% decrease in land used for farming activities. However, the census found a 3% increase in the average size of Davie County farms. In 2007 the average farm size was 111 acres compared to 108 acres in 2002. The 2007 Census of Agriculture listed a considerable increase in the value of production. There was a 30% increase in market value of production from \$14, 035,000 in 2002 to \$18,304,000 in 2007. This translated to a 47% average increase per farm. In 2002 each Davie County farm produced an estimated \$19,908 and this grew to an estimated \$29,193 per farm in 2007.

A selection of major employers in August 2008 included: Davie County Schools, VF Jeanswear, Jockey International, Ingersoll-Rand, Wal-Mart, Crestwood Farms, County of Davie, Davie County Hospital, and Avgol America.

# Growth

**Economic development and related residential growth is essential to maintaining the quality of life enjoyed by Davie County residents. However, the cost of growth in Davie County can be viewed from different perspectives in that a cost to some may be considered a benefit to others.**

The type of residential growth occurring in Davie County has primarily been medium to large-lot single-family residential land subdivisions. Traditionally, increases in the property tax base created by industrial and commercial developments have offset, somewhat, the demands created by residential development. Almost all public costs of residential development are covered by the general property tax revenues collected each year.

Residential subdivision development of a tract of land is viewed by the landowner or developer as an asset from a monetary gain, while an environmentalist sees the clearing and grading of wooded areas as a detriment (cost) to the community in the loss of natural areas. The homes built within a development are a benefit to those seeking to relocate to an area, while long-time residents see in-migration as a change for the worse.

In strict terms of land development, public costs of growth will include schools (increasing student populations requiring additional classroom space and entire schools); public safety services such as fire, police and emergency services; general administration such as tax collection, public records, planning and inspections; social services; health services; solid waste, and many other services either voluntarily provided by local government, or mandated by the state government as necessary for the local government to provide. Growth, if not well planned, can potentially lead to overburdening the available revenue sources, so that as unrestricted development occurs, existing funding is inadequate and may cause a reduction or degradation of the level and quality of service over time.

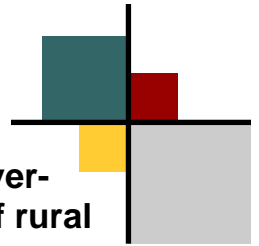


**Opinions about residential costs and their effect on Davie County tend to vary depending upon the attitudes and beliefs of the particular individuals, groups or community.**

**An additional cost of development using current land use planning policies has been the loss of open space, negative impacts on active farmland, encroachment onto our natural or environmental areas, increased automobile commuting times caused by traffic congestion, the loss of rural character of the area and the loss of other types of physical, environmental, and natural heritage assets not easily noticed when development occurs.**



# Current County Growth Patterns



The predominant pattern of development in Davie County over the past twenty-five (25) years can best be described as rural sprawl. This type of Davie County development can best be defined as unlimited, large-lot or large-tract growth occurring far from areas to be served by public infrastructure and generally consuming more land and resources needed to create a livable and functional county.

This type of rural residential development usually begins as a healthy sign of growth, but if left unmanaged, it can threaten growth and Davie County government's ability to continue to provide cost-effective services to maintain a high rural quality of life.

The general economic boom of the 1990's has accelerated this pattern of rural development in Davie County. Maps included with this plan reflect the current growth trend patterns in Davie County.

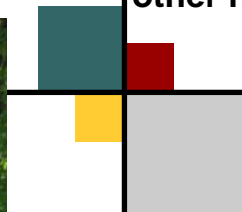
While there is no universally, accepted definition of rural sprawl, in Davie County it has come to mean a pattern of residential development that includes:

**A. Large-lot subdivisions that lack streets interconnecting between other rural subdivisions;**

**B. Large-lot residential subdivisions served by a privately maintained road network;**

**C. Unlimited construction in rural areas far from existing or future public services; and**

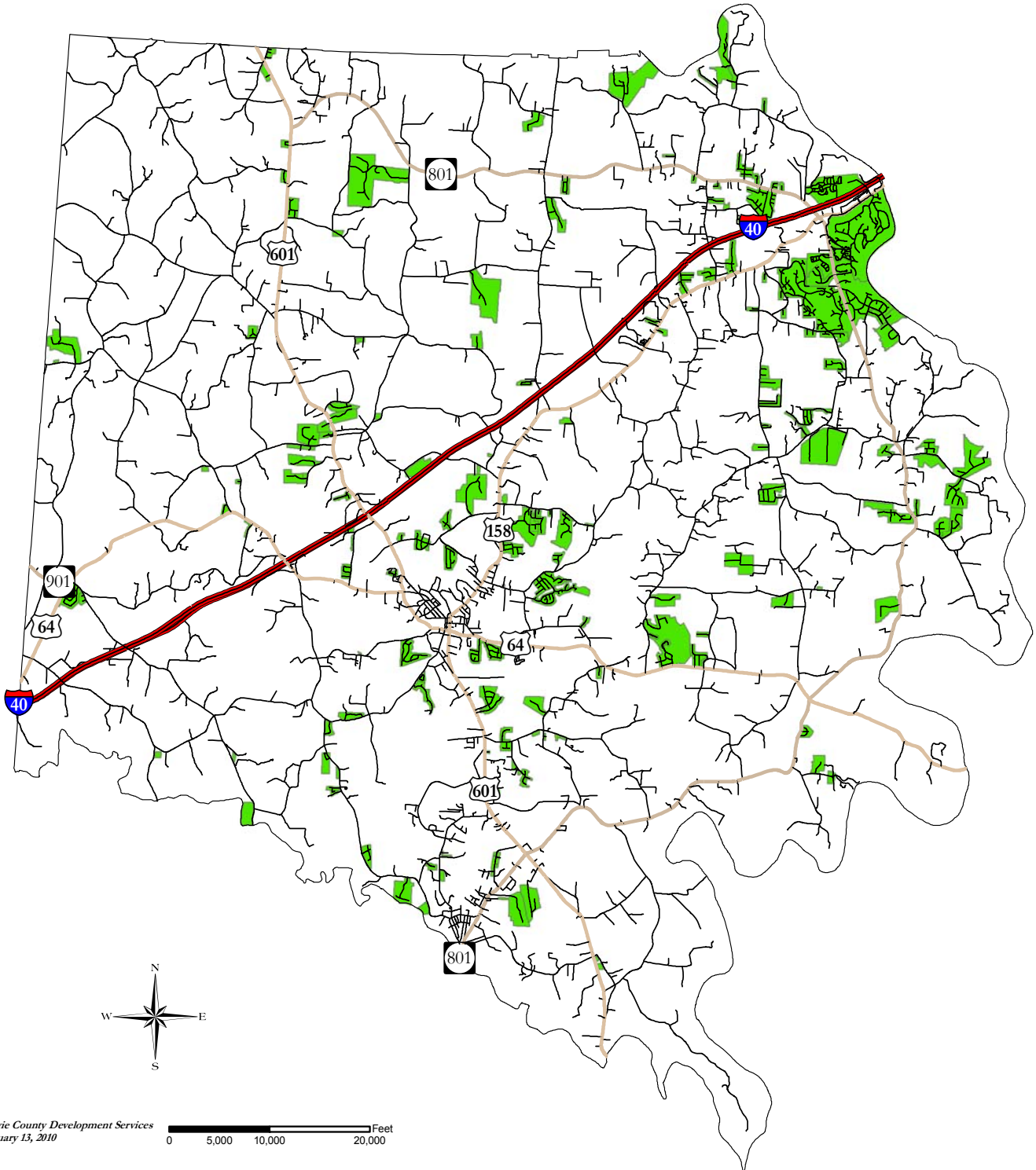
**D. Standard subdivision lot layout with no consideration of open space or other natural heritage assets.**



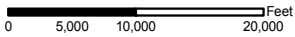
As the population of Davie County continues to grow, the issues of residential development patterns have resulted in a closer examination of the effects of intense development on our rural quality of life. The traditional concerns expressed at County public hearings have been about the loss of farmland, open space, and increased traffic congestion. These concerns have expanded to also include a number of economic, environmental and heritage asset impacts of major residential communities located in remote rural areas.



# Davie County Subdivisions



Davie County Development Services  
January 13, 2010



Davie County has compiled this map from various sources and makes no warranties or representations, expressed or implied, in fact or in law, including without limitations the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Users are encouraged to notify the GIS Department of inconsistencies in the map so that corrections can be made in future printings.

**How can our current growth trends affect Davie County?**

- Traffic congestion
- Service costs of new residential development can exceed tax revenue generated
- Loss of open space and farmland
- Loss of natural heritage assets
- Difficulty in anticipating schools, classroom space and utility infrastructure

The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy attempts to outline growth enhancement corridors and policies that outline sustainable development principles by re-shaping residential growth patterns to strengthen our local economy, enhance our rural communities and protect the environment and our natural heritage assets.

The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy is a calculated approach to development planning because it does not end with a few specific zoning ordinance revisions. The policies and development corridors outlined in the Strategy should provide the County Planning Board, Board of County Commissioners, school board, municipalities and other interested entities with some level of predictability in the growth patterns that occur in Davie County.

**The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy has been developed to address two overriding concerns:**

**A. The potential decline of Davie County’s special quality of life unless specific action is taken to prevent it; and**

**B. The continued challenge of providing a high level of public services while keeping taxes at a reasonable level.**



## Interconnection of Development Decisions

New roads should be designed to effectively distribute rural traffic and prevent overloading and undue congestion. It is also desirable for open space and heritage asset preservation to connect in a larger network that will maximize the desired benefits.

**A key principle in the Growth Enhancement Strategy for Davie County is to approach development decisions not as isolated individual issues, but as part of a larger interconnecting framework of building sustainable growth within the county.**



## Land Development Report

Development policies outlined in the Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy are intended to encourage long-term planning among property owners, developers and local governments. The Land Development Report is a key component of major development rezoning requests. Its use will allow the Davie County Board of Commissioners, County and Town Planning Boards, related agencies and staff to better determine the feasibility of a development proposal.

The Land Development Report is a growth enhancement tool that can be applied with other policies and standards outlined in the Growth Enhancement Strategy to discourage over-development in areas that will not have adequate public infrastructure. The Land Development Report will encourage better monitoring of public facility levels as they relate to the projected development. Specific public facilities to be monitored shall include: **water resources, public education, traffic analysis, housing patterns, public safety, emergency services, sewer capacity and working farm impacts.**

**Growth enhancement and the efficient provision of public facilities is a countywide issue. Development policies must be coordinated between Davie County and its municipalities to be effective.**



# Voluntary Conservation Strategies for Private Land Owners

Most of the remaining natural, agricultural, historic, and open land resources in Davie County exist thanks to the stewardship of private land owners. Only a small percentage of Davie County's total land area is protected by public parks. Safeguarding these rural and natural land resources is primarily the private landowner's responsibility.

Although managed privately, much of this rural open space is valued by the public for its contribution to community interests, enjoyment of natural landscapes and diverse native ecosystems and wildlife, outdoor recreation, water quality, control of soil erosion, productive farms, forests, and other scenic and aesthetic attributes.

Davie County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. As a result, private land owners increasingly find themselves under intense economic and development pressures that affect the future of their land. Unfortunately, once natural habitats and productive farms and forests are developed, they can seldom be reclaimed.



Today, there are several options for a landowner who desires to preserve property that contains significant conservation, scenic, historic, or open space value. Private Land Trusts are nonprofit organizations dedicated to conserving and protecting natural resources. They can identify and protect the places that make our rural communities special: our farms, greenways, historic landscapes, stream corridors, and other natural heritage assets. A growing number of local land trusts use voluntary methods to assist landowners in achieving their long-term conservation and financial goals.

**Davie County has a strong tradition of private property rights and responsibility. Many landowners take pride in managing and protecting their properties.**

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**Each individual decision to conserve property is a personal one. It involves individual financial and tax circumstances, the land resource itself, and, most importantly the owner's vision for the future of the land.**



## **Voluntary Agricultural Districts**

Perhaps no segment of the Davie County community has experienced more change in the past twenty (20) years than the farmer. Although affected by adverse circumstances, farming and the existence of farmland remain important components of Davie County. In addition to their economic contribution, they are a way of life for many families, serving as that special rural setting for a significant part of Davie County's population. Farms also serve as the visual backdrop of scenic beauty and open space for the county.

Through its Cooperative Extension offices, the Growth Enhancement Strategy encourages estate planning and conservation strategies that will facilitate long-term maintenance of farms. The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service is actively involved in voluntary farmland preservation programs. Davie County, with the assistance of the Cooperative Extension Services, may establish a Farmland Preservation Program as allowed under NCGS106 Article 61 (Preservation of Farmland).

Another method of farmland protection is the establishment of Voluntary Agricultural Districts. These specialized Agricultural Districts are allowed under North Carolina law so that development and growth will be accompanied by protection of farms from non-farm development and other negative impacts of properly managed farms. The Voluntary Agricultural District is a way of recognizing the importance of agriculture to the economic and cultural life of Davie County.

## **Rural Growth Management**

Rural Growth Areas reflected in the Growth Enhancement Map delineate areas where significant high-intensity residential growth is discouraged and not anticipated for ten (10) to fifteen (15) years. They are also areas where maintaining the rural character and the natural heritage asset resources are important.

### **The Rural Growth Areas were selected based on the following criteria:**

- The relative abundance of large, undeveloped tracts not experiencing significant residential development encroachment, demand, or pressures;
- The natural, scenic, historic or other heritage assets contribute to the special characteristics of an area requiring special conservation and management;
- The existence of special watershed or other environmental restrictions;
- The lack of adequate primary road systems to support intense development; and
- The absence of future public infrastructure expansions.

# Existing Conventional Zoning and Land Use Planning

Current County zoning regulations are a standard blueprint for development. They establish basic standards for residential subdivision development such as minimum lot sizes and minimum housing setbacks. Current land use regulations do little to actively protect open space with the specific goal of preserving and protecting rural character. The main reason that current residential subdivision development in Davie County consists of nothing more than house lots and streets is because zoning and subdivision design standards requires a developer to provide nothing more.

Conventional zoning is not always an effective management tool. Rigid dimensional requirements ensure that nothing is left over to become open space.

Current County zoning regulations assign a development designation to every acre of land, generally residential, commercial or industrial. The only lands which are not designated for development are flood plains and other environmentally sensitive areas.

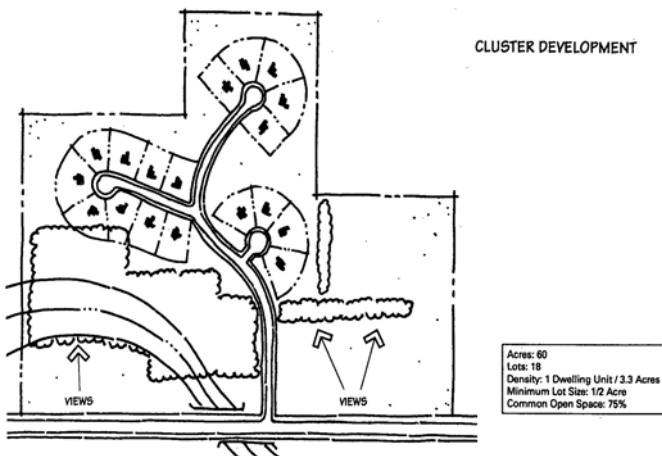
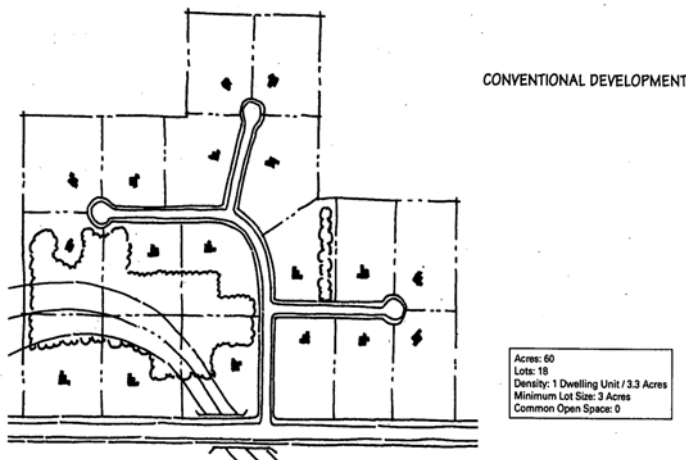
## Open Space or “Cluster” Design

Open Space zoning is based on the technique of “clustering” development. The basic principle of cluster development is to group new homes into part of a development parcel so that the remainder of the land can be preserved as unbuilt open space and heritage preservation areas. Open Space

residential subdivision zoning allows the same overall amount of residences that is already permitted by the zoning district; however, the key difference is that this technique require the new residences to be located only on a portion of the parcel. The remaining open space is permanently protected by recorded easements.

Often, “cluster” or Open Space design is used in Rural Growth Areas when there are certain types of irreplaceable natural heritage assets and other natural resources which are extremely important to protect. In addition, clustering allows flexibility in layout so that a developer can avoid impacting scenic features or special rural landscapes.

The Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy and related Open Space design zoning regulations incorporates a system of density bonuses as rewards for meeting growth management and community goals. For instance, if density bonuses are earned by providing extra open space, public access to open space, or preserving a unique heritage feature on the property that the public values, then more residences can be approved.



This incentive approach can be an effective way to achieve public goals while lowering the cost of housing and land development.

Open Space subdivision design can also be an effective way to set aside land for not just open space, but also “Future Development” for when public water and sewer are available at the site. This can be done to accommodate the higher densities in Primary and Secondary Growth Areas, thereby alleviating development pressures on Rural Growth Areas. In Primary and Secondary Growth Areas a development may build a first phase to the density that can be supported on well and septic tank fields, then years later, when public water and sewer are available to the site, develop the remainder of the site, which has been clearly noted on the subdivision plat as “Future Development Phase”, and convert all or part of the subdivision to public utilities.

Natural open space growth management and zoning requirements can be a practical and effective alternative in ensuring that Davie County will not ultimately become a seamless web of residential subdivisions.



Developing the same site (as the left), but using open space subdivision design principles that yield the same number of houses while conserving common areas and woodland.



A standard subdivision uses most of a development site for housing lots.

The Growth Enhancement Strategy promotes a system of incentives that encourages a developer to reserve open space by coupling clustering techniques with density bonuses in the subdivision.

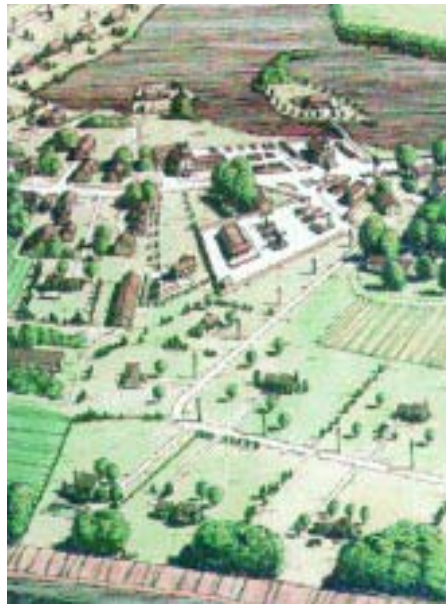


# Rural Lot Subdivision and Growth Management

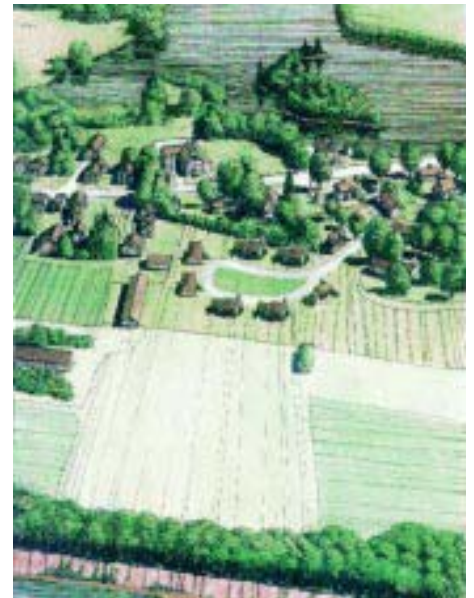
The Rural Lot Subdivision Option has been provided to allow flexibility in the Rural Growth Areas where cluster open-space design is not desired. Rural lots, because of their size, offer opportunities for preserving unique and sensitive environmental features, as well as the scenic and historic character of Rural Growth Areas. Instead of the subdivided land being preserved as undivided open space (as in Open Space or “cluster” developments), these same features are located on lots in individual ownership. Open space and groundwater recharge areas are protected through careful siting of the principal residence and accessory uses through subdivision plat notations and related deed restrictions.



An undeveloped rural area



Development based on standard zoning and subdivision regulations



Development of the same area using conservation development tools

## Mixed Use Developments

The basic zoning standards currently utilized in Davie County emphasize the separation of land uses that are normally deemed to be “incompatible”. However, in a large rural area such as Davie County, the unintended consequences of this system have been the segregation of residential areas from convenient rural shopping and have increased the dependence and travel distances required by automobiles.

The policies outlined by this Growth Enhancement Strategy envision the mixing of compatible land uses (such as rural neighborhood retail and service establishments within general residential areas) with the goal of reducing automobile travel distances and promoting better livability in the rural communities.



### Specific Growth Enhancement Policies Utilized in Rural Growth Areas should:

- Preserve elements of the county’s rural character and minimize perceived density by diminishing views of new development from existing roads by the use of buffers and open space;
- Provide greater efficiency in the setting of services and infrastructure by reducing road lengths, utility runs, and the amount of paving for development;
- Preserve open land, including those areas that contain unique and sensitive features such as natural areas, wildlife habitats, steep slopes, streams, wetlands, and flood plains;
- Minimize site disturbance and erosion through retention of existing vegetation and avoiding development of steep slopes;
- Encourage creativity of design of residential subdivisions by allowing for greater flexibility and creativity in the design, provided that the development is not greater than that normally allowed in the zoning district; and
- Reduce adverse impact to active farming lands by design considerations in new residential subdivision lots.

## Scenic Roads/Corridor Protection

Public perception of Davie County’s rural quality of life is often based largely on what can be seen from an automobile. A line of tall shade trees or a stone wall alongside a road may have as much or more significance to the appearance of a rural area as might woodlands or open fields somewhat farther away from the traveler’s eye. This is not to suggest that woods or open fields are insignificant, but rather to point out that a number of fairly common or typical roadside features often taken for granted do indeed play a critical role in shaping the mental images of the places in which we live and work. “The view from the road” is more than a phrase because, for most of us, it comprises virtually everything we know about the natural and human-made features of our community.

Because roadside land is so easily and relatively inexpensive to develop, it is often the first to be converted to residential, commercial or industrial uses. The importance of maintaining designated scenic roads through individual road/corridor plans is a key to enhancing that special rural quality that is Davie County. Scenic road protection policies are a feature of the Growth Enhancement Strategy.



## Meeting The Challenge

As reviewed in this plan, growth has affected Davie County in many ways, both positively and negatively. New residents bring new talents and opportunities for the community. These new residents stimulate the local Davie County economy with additional purchases of goods and services, particularly housing, which helps to expand the county economic base. However, new residential growth also brings increasing demands on public resources and quality of life issues.

Without sustainable growth and development, Davie County would face an uncertain future. The challenge of the Growth Enhancement Strategy policies and guidelines is to find a way to accommodate growth without jeopardizing our county's other resources.

**“Sustainable growth” is a term that is often used but has many different meanings. In context of the Davie County Growth Enhancement Strategy, sustainable growth refers to the interconnected policies that accommodate new development while preserving the natural heritage resources of Davie County without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.**

Davie County has actively, even aggressively, met the challenge to balance growth with resource protection. The County enforces health regulations that, among many other benefits, help us oversee well and septic tank placement.

The County's Soil and Water Conservation Service and the Cooperative Extension Program work with farmers and other agricultural enterprises to reduce runoff, erosion and other types of pollution. The County enforces subdivision regulations that help to protect future homeowners. They protect surrounding lands and resources by reducing or controlling development impacts such as runoff and erosion. Davie County citizens also benefit from the enhanced 911 emergency system, which helps us to respond more quickly and efficiently to reports of spills, contamination, fire and other threats to our resources.

Although we have made a great deal of progress, we need to do more. In order to protect and enhance our quality of life, we must work harder to conserve our rural character while accommodating growth and development. We must also work smarter to protect our land and water resources.

Since 1973, the County has instituted many new development programs designed to manage growth in our fast-changing county:

- Countywide zoning and land use development planning;
- Watershed protection programs;
- Flood zone and storm water management programs;
- Centralized land records and permitting system with advanced GIS capability;
- Enhanced 911 with Countywide addressing;
- Well protection programs; and
- Active participation in intergovernmental agreements between the County and municipalities.

# Davie County Land Use Ordinances

The **Davie County Zoning Ordinance** contain zoning districts and corresponding conditional use districts. The County's zoning regulations provide an extensive table of permitted and special uses for each district; provisions for special uses; provisions for area, yard, building, off-street parking, loading and sign requirements; provisions for non-conforming uses and a Zoning Board of Adjustment; and a section containing administrative and legal provisions. The vast majority of the county is zoned Residential Agricultural.

The **Davie County Subdivision Ordinance** provides for the orderly subdivision of land in Davie County by assuring the appropriate layout and use of land; assuring safe, convenient, and economical circulation patterns; providing for the dedication or reservation of adequate street right-of-way, utility easements, and sites for public facilities; assuring the proper installation of streets and utilities; avoiding inappropriate concentrations of population; and assuring proper legal description, identification, monumentation and recordation of property boundaries. These regulations provide legal provisions, procedures for approval or preliminary and final plats, general requirements, and minimum design standards and requirements for improvements to approval of final plats.

The **Davie County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance** promotes the public health, safety, and general welfare by seeking to minimize losses due to flood conditions. These regulations contain provisions designed to restrict or prohibit uses that are dangerous to health, safety, and property due to water and erosion hazards, or which cause increases in erosions or flooding; require that uses be protected against flood damage as they are constructed; control the alteration of flood plains and stream ways that accommodate flood water; control filling, grading, dredging, and development that may increase erosion or flooding; and prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers that might divert flood waters or increase flood hazards to other lands.

The **Davie County Watershed Ordinance** is used to impose higher development standards around or upstream from drinking water supplies than generally imposed on land uses in the planning area. The intent is to maintain current development patterns in order to prevent the risk of pollution from more intense land uses (urbanization). The classifications of watersheds are based on current or expected land development patterns. A W-S III will have a low to moderate intensity pattern and a W-S IV will have a moderate to high land use intensity pattern. Because the risk of pollution is directly related to the proximity to the water supply, development standards are higher in the critical area than in the balance of the watershed.



# DAVIE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**Countywide Zoning and Land Use Planning:** In effect since 1973, the Land Development Plan, on which the County's zoning is predicated, calls for the majority of watershed areas to be zoned rural/residential to ensure low-density development. More intensive development is directed to established urban areas where public services may be more readily available.

**Watershed Protection Program:** Watershed and Critical Areas of existing and proposed watersheds have been protected since 1987. This has been very helpful in educating the public and "conditioning" developers to watershed protection.

**Flood Damage Prevention:** Davie County land use programs restrict or prohibit certain types of development within designated flood plains and regulate the construction of barriers that might increase flood hazards to other lands. County programs involving expanded storm water management will continue to evolve as part of smart environmental programming.

**Centralized Permitting System with Advanced GIS Capability:** Davie County's centralized and computerized system for issuing all development permits enhances the capability of the County to accurately track and monitor development occurring in the county.

**Enhanced 911 and Emergency Services System:** The County's automated 911 system ensures quick notification of public officials and EMS personnel in case of emergencies, including a hazardous threat to the water supply. This centralized system also facilitates coordination of effort among responding agencies.

**Well Protection Program:** To support its position of reliance on groundwater and the need to protect existing supplies, the County has a Private Well Protection program. The program has rules governing the construction and abandonment of private well water supplies. Additional Environmental Health staff have been hired to enforce this program and assist residents in ensuring higher quality water.





# Who Uses The Growth Enhancement Policies?

The Growth Enhancement Policies contained in this plan have been designed for regular use in making public and private decisions about growth and development.

To aid in the effective use of this plan, the following examples explain how different users can employ the policies in deciding upon a typical rezoning request:

**Landowners.** To determine development of potential lands owned and the possible impact of surrounding property.

**Developers.** A developer or property owner can petition for a rezoning request that is consistent with County policy, thereby increasing the chances of rezoning approval and minimizing guess work and wasted time.

**Planning Department Staff.** Prior to a regular meeting of the Planning Board, members can make their own determination as to the consistency of the rezoning request with the Growth Enhancement Strategy.

**Planning Board.** At the meeting, the Board will review and decide upon the petition, using the Strategy as a foundation for recommending approval or denial. The Board may also choose to give different weight to different policies, and where policies appear to conflict, the Board will decide which policy should be followed.

**Board of County Commissioners.** In its legislative authority to rezone property, the Board of County Commissioners has the final decision on whether a rezoning request is consistent with the Growth Enhancement Strategy. Over time, a record of policy interpretations will form a foundation for consistent decision making throughout the land use planning process.

**The General Public.** The public should incorporate the Growth Enhancement Strategy in their initial planning for future land uses. When specific requests are made, the Strategy can be used as supporting information.

# Summary of Growth Enhancement Areas

## **Area 1. Primary Growth Area**

The primary county growth area is located adjacent to municipal limits or regulatory areas and generally extends along major urban/transportation corridors within the county. It includes areas that are likely to have access to urban infrastructure services, such as water and sewer, within the foreseeable future. The Primary Growth Area is predominantly mixed use that will include residential and commercial development. Higher urban type density level can be anticipated in this area.

## **Area 2. Secondary Growth Area**

Transitional residential development is predominant in this area with major subdivisions scattered between agricultural and commercial land use patterns. Both public water and sewer infrastructure access is unlikely within the immediate future. The availability of large undeveloped tracts can substantially alter the development character of established residential areas.

## **Area 3. Rural Growth Area**

This specialized area is characterized by traditional agricultural operations, pasture land, forestry, and open space scattered non-farm residences on large tracts of land. Rural scenic vistas are a natural part of the landscape. There is normally an abundance of large, undeveloped tracts not experiencing significant residential development encroachment or pressure. There are natural, scenic, historic, or other heritage assets that contribute to the special characteristics of the area that might require special conservation and management. Land use changes in this area should be designated to protect the rural character and discourage premature public infrastructure demands by sustaining groundwater recharge capacity.

## **Area 4. Municipal Growth Area**

The Municipal growth area is contained within the corporate limits of extraterritorial planning and zoning jurisdictions of municipalities located within Davie County. Mixed high-density urban growth is anticipated in these planning areas. Coordinated intergovernmental planning for land use, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, and economic development is strongly encouraged between the County and the municipalities.

## **Area 5. Conservation Area**

This area is of mixed density and impervious surface coverage and is regulated by both the North Carolina Watershed development laws and Davie County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Primary development considerations are to protect public drinking supplies. Unlike other growth areas, Conservation Environmental Areas overlay parts of all other growth management designations.

# Summary of Growth Enhancement Areas

Growth Areas	Area Characteristics	Development Considerations	Development Policies
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Area 1: Primary Growth Area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close to municipalities and central business districts</li> <li>• Likely to have access to both public water and sewer in the foreseeable future.</li> <li>• Predominately mixed use including, residential and commercial.</li> <li>• Highest density residential development</li> <li>• Prime site for office and commercial locations</li> <li>• Adjacent to primary and interstate roads.</li> <li>• Prime site for industrial locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spill-over growth from municipal areas most likely.</li> <li>• Expanding public infrastructure network.</li> <li>• Numerous possibilities for incompatible development</li> <li>• High density residential development creates demands of total infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize retail strip development</li> <li>• Encourage planned business/industrial parks</li> <li>• Minimize incompatibilities by requiring buffers and screens</li> <li>• Promote growth of tourism, retail sales and related industries</li> <li>• Use transition development zones as a buffer between incompatible uses</li> <li>• Identify and protect prime economic development sites</li> <li>• Mixed land uses</li> <li>• Conventional subdivision development anticipated</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Area 2: Secondary Growth Area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium density</li> <li>• Unlikely to have access to both public water and sewer within the foreseeable future</li> <li>• Predominately residential</li> <li>• Contains scattered agricultural lands</li> <li>• Land available for development</li> <li>• Transitional land use patterns likely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of groundwater contamination from over-development and poor soils</li> <li>• Some possibilities of incompatible development</li> <li>• Incompatible development can disrupt established residential patterns</li> <li>• Provision of both water and sewer expensive</li> <li>• Mixed development may occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect the character of established residential areas</li> <li>• Safeguard existing natural land and groundwater resources</li> <li>• Utilize buffering between commercial and residential areas</li> <li>• Promote tourism and related areas</li> <li>• Direct major subdivision developments to areas with adequate infrastructure</li> <li>• Mixed land uses</li> <li>• Flexible and conventional subdivision designs anticipated</li> </ul>

# Summary of Growth Enhancement Areas

Growth Areas	Area Characteristics	Development Considerations	Development Policies
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Area 3: Rural Growth Area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural density</li> <li>• Predominately agricultural and rural residential</li> <li>• Unlikely to have access to urban services such as public water and sewer</li> <li>• Large undeveloped tracts</li> <li>• Undisturbed natural area</li> <li>• Prime agricultural operations</li> <li>• Large residential lots</li> <li>• Access primarily by secondary roads</li> <li>• Contains natural, historic or other heritage assets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural pastoral nature contributes to the county's quality of life</li> <li>• Inaccessibility to both public water and sewer require well planned development</li> <li>• Conflict among incompatible land uses can be extreme</li> <li>• Prime farm and forestry lands contribute to rural quality</li> <li>• Over-development will cause loss of prime farmland and rural lifestyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize farms and woodlands as an integral part of the County's open space system</li> <li>• Require dedicated open space as a buffer between incompatible land uses</li> <li>• Rural lots and Open Space residential subdivisions are anticipated</li> <li>• Preserve elements of county's rural character by minimizing perceived subdivision density from existing road.</li> <li>• Encourage best forest management plans prior to subdivision approval.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Area 4: Municipal Growth Area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located within the limits of extraterritorial regulatory jurisdiction</li> <li>• Municipal urban density is expected</li> <li>• Mixed land uses normally associated with urban centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure expansions directly affect growth within county primary areas</li> <li>• Numerous possibilities for incompatible development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage density to alleviate development pressures in areas without water and sewer</li> </ul>



# Summary of Growth Enhancement Areas

Growth Areas	Area Characteristics	Development Considerations	Development Policies
<p><b>Area 5: Conservation Growth Area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed density</li> <li>• Mixed use, including residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural</li> <li>• Undisturbed natural areas</li> <li>• Contains public drinking water supplies</li> <li>• Overlays other Growth Management Areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum density and percent impervious coverage allowed is set by NC Environmental Management Commission</li> <li>• Development in floodways may lead to storm damage</li> <li>• Intense development may have negative impact on public water supplies</li> <li>• Storm water management is a priority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforce statewide watershed protection laws</li> <li>• Discourage development in 100 year flood plain</li> <li>• Direct industrial development to areas distant from reservoirs</li> <li>• Promote low density residential development to protect groundwater resources</li> </ul>



# Davie County

## Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

### Economic Development

**Policy 1.1** The County will encourage new and expanding industries and businesses which (1) diversify the local economy, (2) utilize more highly skilled labor force, (3) increase area residents' incomes, and (4) encourage businesses which are good community neighbors.

**Policy 1.2** The benefits of economic development will be balanced against possible detrimental effects such development may have on the quality of life enjoyed by area residents

**Policy 1.3** Appropriate educational and training programs will be encouraged to help unemployed and underemployed local residents to take advantage of business expansion and new development.

**Policy 1.4** Davie County will support coordination of economic development resources with various local agencies and seek regional coordination and interaction between areas with a shared economic interest.

**Policy 1.5** Planning and development decisions will be based on the principle of promoted investment in Davie County to expand employment opportunities while preserving and improving the quality of life for all county residents.

### Public Infrastructure

**Policy 2.1** The County will coordinate, monitor, and balance the County's water resource needs against land use demands to ensure a prudent approach to water resource management and the environment.

**Policy 2.2** The County will ensure long-term, high-quality water supply resources within Davie County by recognizing water resource and infrastructure management as a comprehensive effort, encompassing both surface water and groundwater, addressing both quality and quantity.

**Policy 2.3** The County will promote linkage between storm water management, clean drinking water, flood control, pollution control and erosion.

**Policy 2.4** The County will encourage new major conventional residential subdivision developments to be 1) located in growth areas targeted for public infrastructure expansion within five years or 2) in cluster subdivisions designed to reduce infrastructure extension distances.

# Davie County Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

**Policy 2.5** The County will ensure that land development decisions are made to protect surface and groundwater resources through protection, preservation, and development enhancement.

**Policy 2.6** The County will ensure that spill containment and hazardous materials response programs are up-to-date and adequate.

**Policy 2.7** The County should link land use and capital improvement programs to channel growth where adequate water supplies exist.

**Policy 2.8** The County should develop and implement a cooperative joint planning process among neighboring municipalities responsible for shared or linked water and sewer services. The objective is to guide extensions that align with the land use and growth management policies of the participating jurisdictions.

**Policy 2.9** The County will encourage the use of rural lot subdivision designs in those areas where it is found necessary to maximize the infiltration of precipitation to a private well water field and insure sustainable groundwater supplies.

## **Industrial Development**

**Policy 3.1** Industrial development should not be located in areas that would diminish the desirability of existing and planned residential uses, nor should major subdivisions be allowed to encroach upon existing or planned industrial sites without appropriate buffers.

**Policy 3.2** Industrial development will be on land that is physically suitable and has unique location advantages for industry. Advanced planning for the identification of such land will be encouraged.

**Policy 3.3** Heavy industrial sites will be separated from non-industrial areas by natural features, green belts and/or other suitable means.

**Policy 3.4** Light industrial sites will be located in urbanized areas to take advantage of available services and to reduce home-to-work distances. Careful design and/or buffering shall be required to insure compatibility with surrounding areas.

**Policy 3.5** Warehousing, storage and distribution facilities should have direct access to appropriate thoroughfares and be visually buffered.

**Policy 3.6** New industrial development will be encouraged to locate in existing and planned industrial parks.

# Davie County Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

## Commercial Development

**Policy 4.1** Commercial development will be encouraged to occur in clusters or planned shopping centers to minimize the proliferation of “retail strip” locations.

**Policy 4.2** Highway-oriented commercial uses will be clustered along segments of arterial streets and contain land uses that are mutually compatible and reinforcing in use and design. They will be designed in a way that minimizes signage, access points and excessive lengths of commercial strip development.

**Policy 4.3** Rural area commercial development should be limited to neighborhood business uses, farm supply stores, and generally accepted rural business establishments.

**Policy 4.4** Commercial uses will be encouraged to develop by consolidation and deepening of existing commercially zoned property, only when such consolidation and deepening can be developed in a way that lessens the effect of incompatibility with adjoining residential land uses.

**Policy 4.5** Effective buffering and/or landscaping will be provided where commercial development adjoins existing or planned residential uses.

**Policy 4.6** Compatible land uses such as rural neighborhood retail and service establishments located close to general residential areas will be considered during the rezoning process with the general goal of reducing automobile travel distances and promoting better livability in the community.

**Policy 4.7** The County will encourage the use of rural business overlay districts to provide locations where compatible rural land uses such as neighborhood retail and service establishments can be located in general proximity to established rural residential areas with the goal of reducing automobile travel distances and promoting better livability in the rural community.

**Policy 4.8** Office and institutional development will be encouraged to locate as transitional land use between activities of higher and lower intensity.

**Policy 4.9** Linear striping of offices along rural thoroughfares will be discouraged in favor of planned office parks or clusters of offices with common access, parking, etc.

## Residential Development

### - ALL GROWTH AREAS -

**Policy 5.1** An Impact Analysis will be required of all applicants proposing major subdivision development. The analysis will include a basic review of the expected impact to Davie County as it relates to public infrastructure, environment and community compatibility.

# Davie County Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

**Policy 5.2** Major subdivision development, which does not have access to either public water or sewage facilities, should locate in areas where soil and geological characteristics are conducive to the long term support of an on-site well and septic tank systems.

**Policy 5.3** Innovative and flexible land planning techniques will be supported as a means of encouraging development configurations which are more desirable and which may better safeguard existing natural land and water resources.

**Policy 5.4** The protection of viable rural neighborhoods will be encouraged by compatible residential development to insure the continued existence as a major housing source and as a reflection of the long-term quality of life in Davie County.

**Policy 5.5** Development in designated flood zones shall be avoided. Subdivision lots that are partially within designated flood zones shall compute the minimum lot size as that area located outside the flood zone.

**Policy 5.6** Open space flexible subdivisions will be encouraged.

**Policy 5.7** The County will encourage a system of incentives that encourages a developer to reserve open space by coupling clustering techniques with density bonuses in the subdivision.

**Policy 5.8** Land that has been clear cut or forest harvested and is planned for major subdivision should retain a natural vegetative buffer zone along property lines fronting state roads.

## - PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GROWTH AREAS -

**Policy 5.9** Factors to be considered in major subdivision approval in Primary and Secondary Growth Areas will include suitability of soils, access to major thoroughfares, the potential availability of public services and facilities and community compatibility.

**Policy 5.10** Residential subdivisions will, in order to promote efficiencies in the delivery of urban services such as water and sewer, be encouraged to develop in a fashion which minimizes "leap frog" development (i.e. leaving large vacant areas between developments).

**Policy 5.11** Residential neighborhoods in Primary and Secondary Growth areas that have become infused or surrounded by non-residential uses may undergo an orderly conversion through the rezoning process from residential use to higher-density residential use or other compatible alternative land uses.

## - RURAL GROWTH AREAS -

**Policy 5.12** The County will preserve scenic views and elements of the county's rural character by minimizing perceived density by minimizing views of new development from existing roads through use of natural buffers and open space.



# Davie County

## Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

**Policy 5.13** The County will provide incentives to preserve open land, including those areas that contain unique and sensitive features such as natural areas, wildlife habitats, steep slopes, streams, wetlands and flood plains.

**Policy 5.14** The County will minimize site disturbance and erosion through retention of existing vegetation and avoiding development of steep slopes.

**Policy 5.15** The County will encourage creativity in design of residential subdivisions by allowing for greater flexibility in the design, provided that the development is not greater than that normally allowed in the district.

**Policy 5.16** The County will create compact neighborhoods accessible to open space amenities and with a strong community identity.

**Policy 5.17** Open space subdivision design will be encouraged to maintain the special features that contribute to the rural character, such as preservation of scenic view, woodlands and farmland.

**Policy 5.18** New driveway connections will be designed in a way to minimize new locations on existing public roads.

**Policy 5.19** Each lot in a subdivision planned for single-family residential development will be designed to contain well and septic tank system on the same lot as residence unless alternate system is approved through “open space” design.

### **Environmental Quality**

**Policy 6.1** Development activities in the 100-year floodplain shall be discouraged. If development must occur, low-intensity uses such as open space, recreation, and agricultural activities shall be preferred.

**Policy 6.2** Industries producing excessive noise, odor, air and water pollution, or other harmful impacts shall be discouraged, unless such adverse impacts can be sufficiently mitigated.

**Policy 6.3** The location of hazardous waste storage and disposal facilities within the Davie County Planning Area shall not be supported.

# Davie County

## Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

**Policy 6.4** Protection of public water supply watersheds and the water quality critical areas shall be considered in rezoning and development proposals. Industrial and heavy commercial development shall not be promoted within the water critical areas of Davie County.

**Policy 6.5** Site plans will be provided that design built-upon areas to specifically minimize stormwater runoff impact to streams and other receiving waters.

**Policy 6.6** Stormwater impact will be minimized by designing new development in a manner that minimizes concentrated stormwater flow through maximizing the length of stormwater sheet flow through vegetated buffer areas.

**Policy 6.7** County planning and development decisions will be interconnected to insure that concentrated development is located in upland areas and, to the maximum extent possible, away from surface waters and drainageways.

**Policy 6.8** Stormwater runoff will be designed in a manner that it will be transported from the development by vegetated conveyances to the maximum extent possible.

**Policy 6.9** The County will consider ways to preserve buffers and other sensitive areas through density averaging and/or conservation agreements.

**Policy 6.10** The County will clearly define land areas that are appropriate for development, as well as defined areas of environmentally sensitive, natural, or heritage asset land areas that need special protection.

### **Planning Coordination**

**Policy 7.1** To foster communication and involvement between landowners, the development industry, the public and Davie County government, the public will be made aware of proposed developments at the earliest opportunity. The objective is to encourage public involvement in land use and development decisions at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Policy 7.2** The County will approach land use and economic development decisions, not as isolated individual issues, but as part of a larger interconnecting framework of building sustainable growth within Davie County.

**Policy 7.3** Planning and development decisions that preserve natural areas and open space are encouraged.

**Policy 7.4** The County will support transportation improvements that will seek to interlink new and existing residential, commercial, and recreational areas.

# Davie County Growth Enhancement Policy Guidelines

**Policy 7.5** The County will seek land use decisions that provide affordable housing while maintaining a choice of compatible housing types across the county.

**Policy 7.6** The County will actively participate in local and regional efforts to educate the community about impacts of stormwater discharge on waterbodies and what efforts are needed to reduce stormwater pollution.

**Policy 7.7** The County will support local and regional efforts in promoting the development of transportation systems which provide transportation choices, enhance mobility, encourage economic development, and protect the manmade and natural environments of the county and region.

## **Scenic Corridor Protection**

**Policy 8.1** The County will adopt special scenic corridor protection regulations when necessary and appropriate to preserve and enhance the appearance of roadways whose unique qualities and natural features merit special consideration or protection.

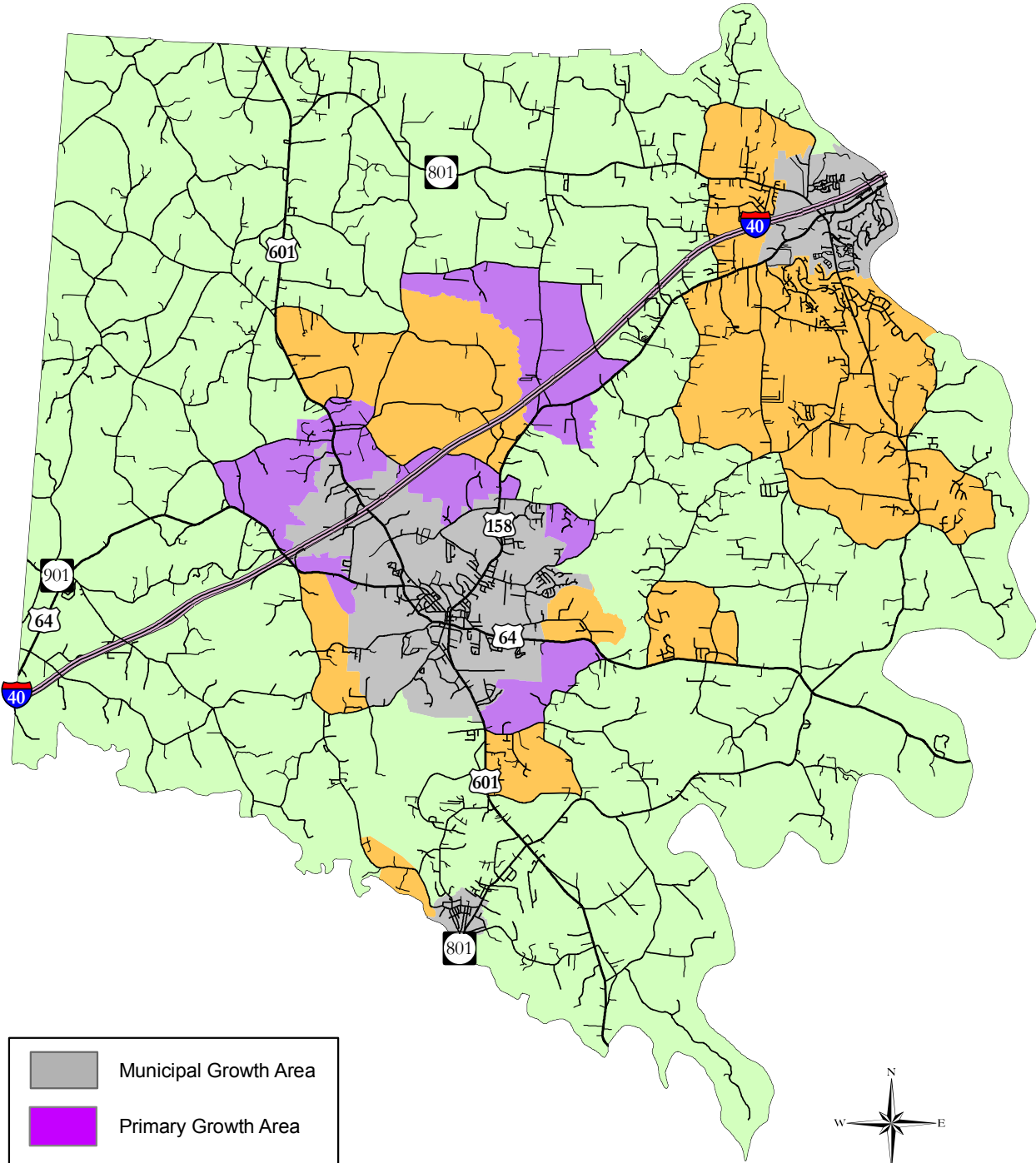
**Policy 8.2** Development issues of special consideration in scenic corridors may include land use, traffic movement, access, environment, heritage assets, signage, landscaping and other factors that may affect visual quality and aesthetics.

**Policy 8.3** The County will recognize the value of special scenic corridors as an entryway to Davie County which can influence the perception of individuals or firms considering residence or investment in the county . The County will initiate planning coordination with local municipalities in the enrichment or possible extension of established scenic protected entryways,

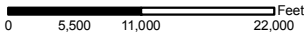
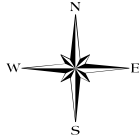
**Policy 8.4** Special planning consideration will be given in the establishment of scenic corridor overlay zones to the preservation of Davie County's heritage assets and resources that have been determined to be unique, fragile, or locally significant elements of the county 's natural or cultural environment.

**Policy 8.5** A study of each proposed scenic corridor will be prepared by the County Development Services Department describing the specific standards of the corridor. The study can be requested by petition of residents along the proposed corridor or upon action of the County. The study shall be forwarded, along with a recommendation from the Planning Board, to the County Commissioners for a public hearing.

# Growth Enhancement Map



- Municipal Growth Area
- Primary Growth Area
- Secondary Growth Area
- Rural Growth Area
- Conservation Area



Davie County Development Services  
February 3, 2010

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## Existing Land Uses

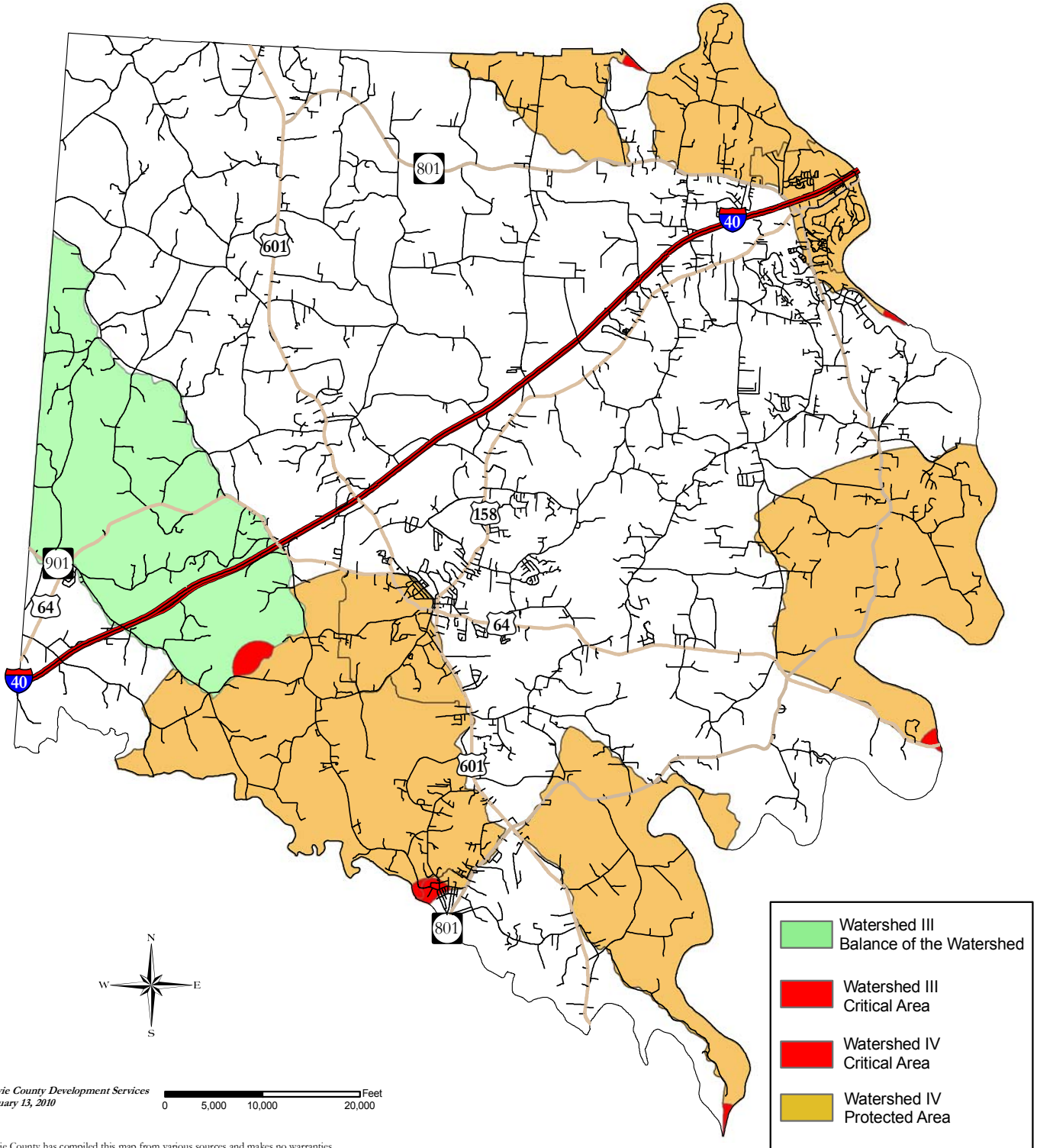
Existing land use zoning areas are mapped and analyzed to identify land development patterns within all of Davie County. There are 153,351 acres within the Davie County planning and zoning jurisdiction out of the total 167,207 acres in the county. 13,855 acres are within the planning and zoning jurisdictions of the municipalities.

Zoning District	Acreage	Percentage
Residential Agricultural (R-A)	121,285	73%
Residential 20 (R-20)	27,697	16.6%
Residential Suburban (R-12)	976	.6%
Residential Multiple Dwelling (R-8)	3	.002%
Residential Manufactured Home (R-M)	110	.07%
Highway Business (H-B)	684	.41%
Commercial Shopping (C-S)	11	.006%
Industrial 1 (I-1)	721	.43%
Industrial 2 (I-2)	1223	.73%
Industrial 3 (I-3)	169	.1%
Industrial 4 (I-4)	473	.28%
Municipal	13,855	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>167,207</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Proposed Growth Enhancement Areas

Area	Acreage	Percentage
Primary Growth Area	9,220	5%
Secondary Growth Area	26,792	16%
Rural Growth Area	120,123	71%
Municipal Growth Area	13,855	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>169,990</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Davie County Watershed

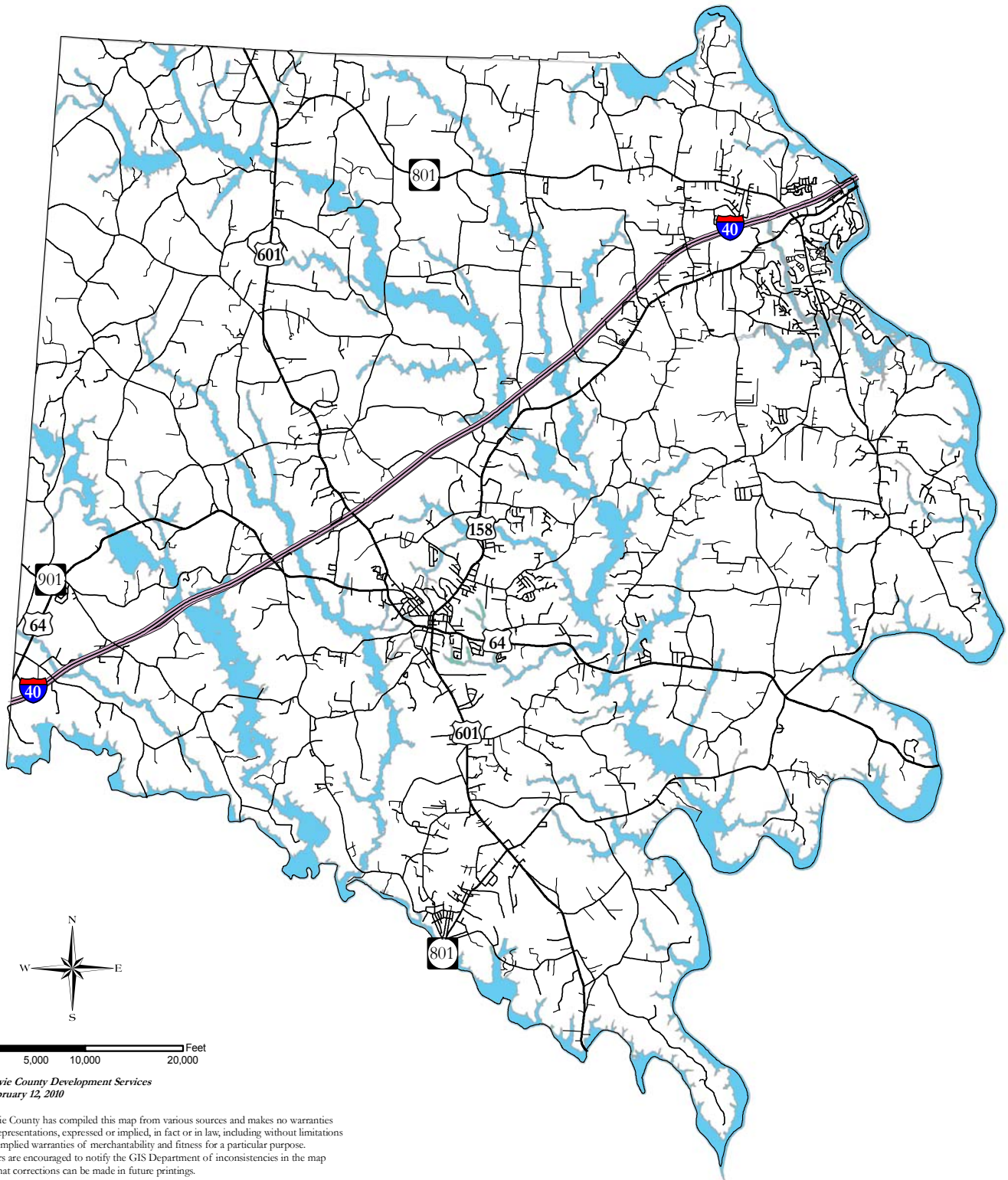


Davie County Development Services  
January 13, 2010

0 5,000 10,000 20,000 Feet

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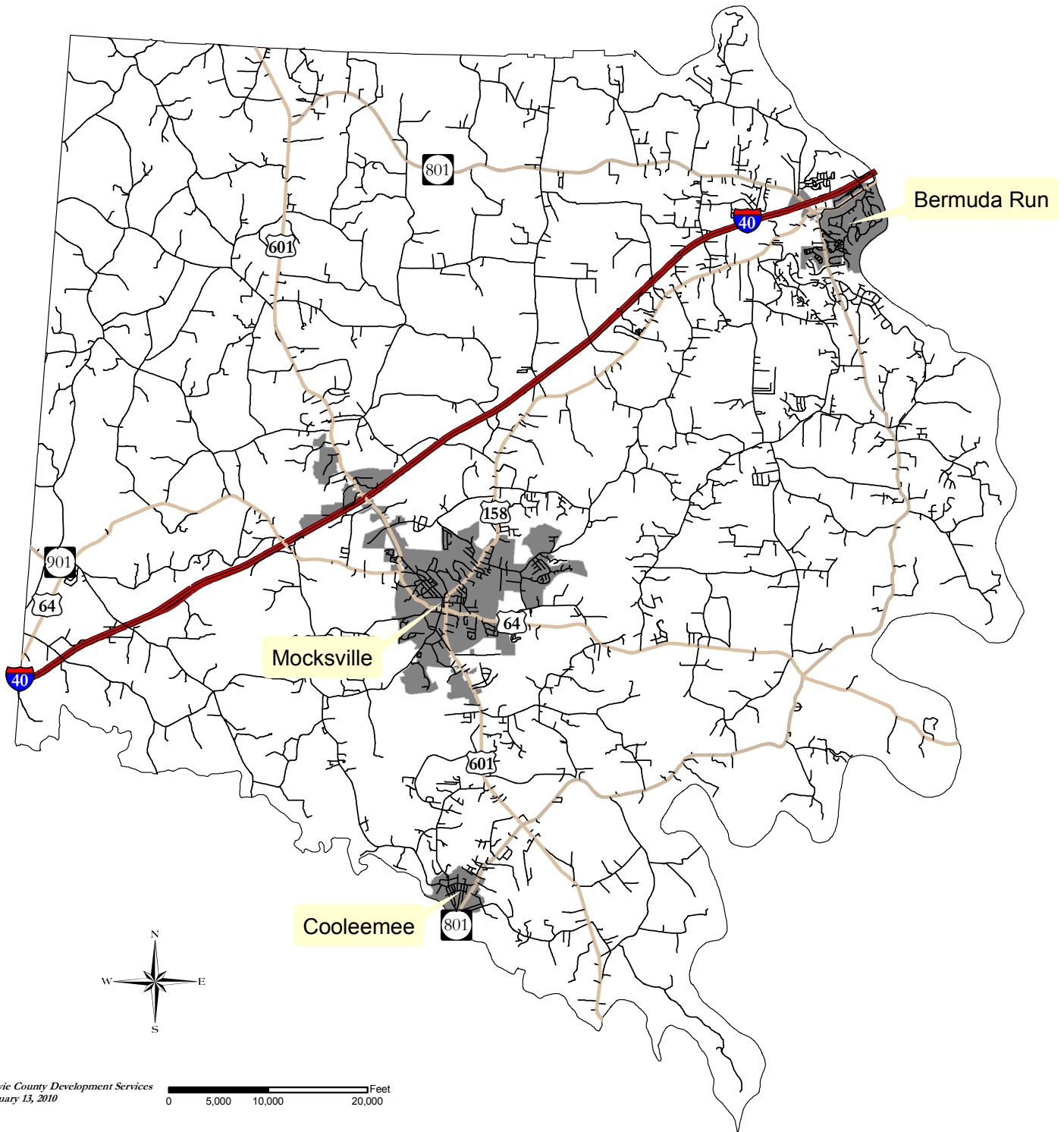
# Davie County Floodplain Map



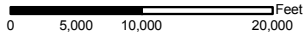
Davie County Development Services  
February 12, 2010

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# Davie County



Davie County Development Services  
January 13, 2010



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