Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan
2015

BACKGROUND
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Introduction + Context
Albemarle County has many attributes that have defined its unique character and continue to make it a desirable place to live, work and play. Its nationally and world recognized historic landmarks, university, scenic beauty, natural resources and local enterprises have made the County one of the nation’s most attractive places to reside and popular places to visit. This attractiveness and popularity has been both a catalyst for and the result of a strong tradition of protecting and enhancing Albemarle’s features while planning for anticipated population and business growth.

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to set forth County government policy that helps guide public and private activities as they relate to land use and resource use. As the means to carry out this purpose, the Plan is the County’s most important policy document. It establishes the blueprint for future decisions regarding resource protection, land use and development, transportation systems, public facilities and utilities, economic development, housing, and public services.

Over time, the County’s Comprehensive Plan has established one overarching policy--growth management. The County’s Growth Management Policy emphasizes the importance of channeling growth and creating livable, enjoyable places in the Development Areas and protecting the resources and character of the designated Rural Area. The County recognizes the importance of the rights of individual property owners and works to incorporate these rights into County initiatives on behalf of the larger community. Balancing individual rights with those of the larger community are important parts of growth management. Periodic reviews and amendments to the Plan have not changed this emphasis. Early in the development of this Plan update, the Planning Commission reaffirmed this policy and focused on strategies that can be both effective and measurable in carrying out the goals and objectives set forth in the Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is a 20-year plan and is the result of a dynamic planning process. Because the Plan is for the citizens of the County, by necessity, the process reflects many diverse interests. In developing the 2015 Plan, the County’s Planning Commission conducted over 50 public input meetings, and the Board of Supervisors held 18 meetings, which have been archived in the Reference Documents. While the Plan cannot totally satisfy the particular interest of every citizen, active participation from individuals and groups is essential to create a Plan that addresses the health, safety, and welfare of the County citizenry in a fair and equitable manner.

Maintaining a balance between the diverse individual and collective interests of the County’s citizenry in a growing, changing community can be challenging. With the guidance of an ultimate vision along with goals, objectives and strategies supporting that vision, the Comprehensive Plan can better prepare the County to meet these challenges.

Comprehensive planning does not end with this document. A number of actions, such as ordinance amendments, working with volunteers, and capital expenditures will need to take place in order to implement the Plan. These actions are identified throughout the Plan. In addition, the Plan’s priorities will be subject to ongoing monitoring, and may be amended by future action.

The Comprehensive Plan
State law governing the development of a Comprehensive Plan (Virginia Code § 15.2-2223) requires every county, city, and town to adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of its territory.
Figure 1: Land Use and Planning Milestones in Albemarle County, Virginia 1944 – 2015

1944 First Planning Commission created
1949 First Subdivision Regulations adopted
1963 Last successful annexation by City of Charlottesville
C.1965 Beaver Creek Reservoir built by Albemarle County Service Authority to provide water to Crozet
1967 Department of Planning and Community Development established
1969 First Zoning Ordinance adopted
1971 First Comprehensive Plan adopted, first Growth Areas established
1973 Use value [land use] taxation enacted
1974 New Subdivision Ordinance adopted
1975 Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Ordinance enacted
1976 Reservoir “runoff control” ordinance adopted; major comprehensive plan revision adopted; First Comprehensive Plan update, Growth Areas slightly reduced in area
1977 First capital improvements program (CIP) adopted; Urban stormwater ordinance adopted; Position of Watershed Management Official created; Decision by Board of Supervisors to build Crozet sewer interceptor
1978 Growth area Land Use Plan amendments adopted [removed most land areas draining to any water supply from the growth areas]
1980 Current Zoning Ordinance and zoning maps adopted [first major revision to the Zoning Ordinance, based on the Comprehensive Plan]
1982 Annexation agreement with City of Charlottesville (including revenue sharing) ratified Comprehensive Plan updated; Downzoning of all lands located outside of growth areas [zoning now matched Comprehensive Plan, except in jurisdictional area]
1985 CATS (Charlottesville Area Transportation Study) adopted by Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); Land Use Regulation Committee (LURC) Report completed, addressing improvements to County development review procedures
1986 Three Party Agreement signed (formalized cooperative planning procedures among the City, County and University)
1988 Crozet sewer interceptor goes on line
1989 Comprehensive Plan Updated
1990 Rural Preservation Development added to Rural Areas zoning district
1991 Architectural Review Development added to Rural Areas zoning district
1993 Lickinghole Basin completed [for sedimentation control]
1994 Town of Scottsville boundary adjustment
1996 Land Use Plan for Comprehensive Plan adopted
1997 Development Area Initiatives Steering Committee (DISC) established
1998 Water Protection Ordinance adopted; Subdivision Ordinance revised
1999 Natural Resources and Cultural Assets Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan revised and adopted
2001 The Neighborhood Model adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2001 Parking requirements reduced; alley regulations adopted; cell tower regulations adopted all in Zoning Ordinance
2003 Neighborhood Model Zoning District adopted
2004 Crozet Master Plan adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2005 Subdivision Ordinance updated to require sidewalks, curb & gutter, and interconnections in the Development Areas
2005 Monticello Historic District adopted
2007 Rural Area Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan adopted
2008 Pantops Master Plan (Neighborhood 3) adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2008 Downtown Crozet zoning district adopted
2008 Driveway standards established in Zoning Ordinance
2009 Water Protection Ordinance revised to expand stream buffers to all streams in the Rural Area
2010 Village of Rivanna Master Plan adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2010 Crozet Master Plan Update adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2011 Places 29 Master Plan adopted (Neighborhoods 1&2, Hollymead and Piney Mountain) adopted into Comprehensive Plan
2012 Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations require counties to adopt state programs and new criteria for stormwater management
2013 Site plan regulations revised to remove Planning Commission review
2014 Water Protection Ordinance revised to reflect state criteria for stormwater management, Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES), and mandates for local authorities to review and enforce general construction permits
2014 Flood Hazard Overlay District updated to reflect FEMA requirements and adopted
2014 Critical Slopes Overlay District for the Development Areas adopted
2015 Comprehensive Plan Update adopted
It also requires that the Comprehensive Plan be reviewed every five years. Regardless of State Code requirements, it is important to periodically revisit and update the Plan to ensure that it is consistent with community views and addresses current issues.

**Brief History of Planning in Albemarle County**
Albemarle County has been planning for many years, beginning about 70 years ago with establishment of the first Planning Commission. Key planning activities have included adoption of the first subdivision regulations in 1949, hiring the first professional planning staff in 1967, adopting the first zoning ordinance in 1969, and adopting the first Comprehensive Plan in 1971. Successive Comprehensive Plan updates occurred in 1977, 1982, and 1989. After 1989 came a series of “updates” which included the Land Use Plan for the Development Areas in 1996, Natural and Cultural Resources in 1999, and the Neighborhood Model adoption in 2001. The first Master Plan was adopted in 2004 for Crozet and the Master Plan for Pantops was adopted in 2007. The Rural Area Plan was also adopted in 2007, along with some updates to Natural and Cultural Resources. Other Master Plans were adopted in 2011. Each amendment to the Comprehensive Plan was followed with changes to development regulations to help achieve Comprehensive Plan goals. Figure 1 provides information on planning milestones and reflects the County’s longstanding commitment of planning for the future.

**Regional Planning and Albemarle County**
Albemarle County planning is influenced by the larger region within which the County is located. The County participates in a number of regional planning and service delivery organizations, including, but not limited to, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District (TJPDC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development, and the Housing Directors Consortium. Cooperative. Working together, these organizations enable the exchange of information, coordinated planning for the future, avoiding duplication of services, and greater efficiency in the provision of infrastructure.

**Figure 2: Geographic Area of Thomas Jefferson Planning District**

Source: TJPDC, 2013
Planning and Coordination Council
One of the most important regional cooperative activities involves the County, the City of Charlottesville, and the University of Virginia (UVA). Established in 1986, the Planning and Coordination Council (PACC) exists to promote cooperation in planning and community development among the City the County, and UVA. PACC began with a “Memorandum of Understanding,” which is provided in the Reference Documents. The three-party agreement established areas where collaborative planning would take place – Areas A, B, and C. The areas are defined as follows:

**Area A** – All properties now owned by UVA and its related foundations that are used for educational purposes, as designated on the Map, which was last updated in 2012.

**Area B** – Land that lies at the boundaries of the University in either the City or the County, or has otherwise been designated as part of Area B, and on which the activities of any or all three of the parties might have a significant effect, as designated on the Map. Development in these areas continues to be guided by the current City and County Comprehensive Plans and the current University of Virginia Grounds Plan.

**Area C** – All land on the Map not included in Areas A and B.

A map of Areas A and B is provided in Figures 4 and 5. Joint planning by the City, the County, and UVA takes place for Area B. In the County, plans for Area B are reflected in the Development Area Master Plans and also in the Rural Area Chapter of this Plan. These recommendations have been approved by the City of Charlottesville City Council and the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors. This successful regional planning effort, and continued participation in PACC, remains a priority for the County.

**Regional Sustainability and Livability**
Sustainability is a term that reflects the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability has been an ongoing theme in the County, as well as in the region. For over 40 years, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) has provided Albemarle County with many opportunities to cooperate with regional partners to work out solutions to matters of shared importance to the future of the County and the region. One such effort, the Thomas Jefferson Sustainability Council, created in 1994, grew out of the 1990-1992 Thomas Jefferson Study to Preserve and Assess the Regional Environment. The Sustainability

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**Figure 3: Sustainability Accords**

The Sustainability Council developed the 1998 Sustainability Accords that were adopted into the County’s Comprehensive Plan in 1998 and reaffirmed in 2007. These fifteen Accords continue to be important aspirational principles of the County.

1. Encourage and maintain strong ties between the Region’s urban and rural areas, fostering healthy economic, environmental, social, and political interactions.
2. Strive for a size and distribution of human population that will preserve the vital resources of the Region for future generations.
3. Retain the natural habitat required to support viable plant and animal communities that make up the Region’s biological diversity.
4. Ensure that water quality and quantity in the Region are sufficient to support the human population and ecosystems.
5. Optimize the use and reuse of developed land. Promote clustering in residential areas and the integration of business, industry, recreation, residential, and open space.
6. Promote the consideration of appropriate scale in all development and land use decisions.
7. Retain farmland and forest land for the future.
8. Broaden the use of sustainable forestry practices among loggers and landowners.
9. Promote the sale of locally produced farm and forest products in local, national, and international markets.
10. Develop attractive and economical transportation alternatives to single occupancy vehicle use.
11. Promote the conservation and efficient use of energy resources.
12. Provide, at all levels, educational opportunities open to every member of the community.
13. Ensure that every member of the community is able to obtain employment that provides just compensation, mobility, and fulfillment.
14. Increase individual participation in neighborhood and community organizations.
15. Encourage greater understanding of sustainability issues as they affect individuals and the Region, using formal and informal education and local media coverage.
Council included 34 members who represented Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson Counties, and the City of Charlottesville. This diverse group of farmers, business people, foresters, environmentalists, developers, and elected officials was given the charge to “describe a future where our economic, human, social, and environmental health are assured.”

The Council addressed the areas of human population, basic human needs, economic development, transportation, land development, waste, values, ethics, community awareness, inter-dependence/balance, government, natural environment, and agriculture/forestry. These items have been woven into the County’s Comprehensive Plan through specific objectives and strategies that relate to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

As a next step in moving toward more implementable sustainability initiatives the County, the City of Charlottesville, and the University of Virginia began work on a U.S. Housing and Urban Development funded Livability Implementation Plan in 2011. The project, known as the Livability Project, has provided cross-cutting strategies for land use, parks and recreation, and transportation. A full copy of the report, which includes the Livability Project Goals, a Performance Measurement System, A Recommended Toolkit of Code and Ordinance Changes, and Actions for Community Health and Livability is found in the Reference documents.

The report also identifies the two areas both the City and the County wish to work on jointly over the next five-year period. These two areas are the Rivanna River corridor on the City’s eastern border and overcoming physical barriers to walkability. Expectations for planning in the Rivanna River Corridor are described in the Parks and Recreation, Greenways, Blueways, and Green Systems Chapter. Developing ways to overcome physical barriers to walkability can be found in the Transportation Chapter.

The list of recommended Livability Project Goals is provided in Figure 6. The goals have been integrated into each Chapter of the County’s Comprehensive Plan. They are intended to guide future actions of each community by providing direction on future planning activities of both communities. Working together, the City and the County can continue to make the larger community more livable and sustainable.
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Figure 4: Map of Areas A and B

AREA A
and
AREA B

Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville
and
University of Virginia

Approved by PACC April 30, 2012
Prepared by
City of Charlottesville

Neighborhood Development Services
January 2012

Source: Planning and Advisory Council 2012
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Figure 5: Adapted Map of Areas A and B

- Area A in Charlottesville
- Area A in Albemarle Development Areas
- Area B in Charlottesville
- Area B in Albemarle Development Areas
- Area B in Albemarle Rural Areas

Legend:
- Development Areas
- Parcels
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Major Streams
- Major Water Bodies

Map adapted to Albemarle County GIS Mapping from PAGC approved map dated January 19, 2012

Prepared by Albemarle County Information Services Division
Map Produced: 10/1/2013
File: Areas_A_and_B_Complexes.mxd
Map adapted to Albemarle County GIS Mapping from PAGC approved map dated January 19, 2012
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Economic Development
Recognize the necessity of vibrant regional economic relationships and will work together toward a strong, diversified economy creating stability and opportunities for advancement in our communities by:
- Continuing to coordinate staff efforts to support regional economic development, including collaboration with the University of Virginia.
- Improving opportunities for employment centers that are connected to community amenities, housing, and services in the City and in the County’s Development Areas.
- Coordinating with education partners – elementary, middle, high schools, as well as Piedmont Virginia Community College and the Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center, to provide training for locally based jobs.
- Supporting a range of businesses in identified target industry areas (biotechnology and medical, business and financial, information technology & defense, and agribusiness).  
- Encouraging land use practices and policies that promote vibrancy in the local economy through cultural industries including heritage tourism, entertainment, agritourism, local food, and art, and entertainment.
- Improving opportunities for entrance and re-entry into, and advancement within the workforce by encouraging a diversity of training and placement programs designed to help all citizens, regardless of education or income, secure and retain jobs in our community.
- Identifying opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurship and develop policies that encourage innovation.

Entrance Corridors
Work together to more consistently enhance the visual quality and multi-modal experiences along the corridors by:
- Enhancing communication among the University of Virginia and City and County Boards and Commissions related to proposed changes within Entrance Corridors and other shared boundaries.
- Creating distinctive destinations and places through multiple means, such as landscaping and urban area walkability.
- Establishing a coordinated signage.
- Coordinating continuity of corridor guidelines between the City and County.
- Enhancing and improving the scenic and historic character of each corridor while considering historic resources, such as Monticello, Ash Lawn-Highland, the University of Virginia, and Court Square, within the community.

Environment
Continue to promote a community of green neighborhoods, healthy waterways, clean air, and sustainable natural resources by:
- Air Quality
  - Encouraging multi-modal transportation & focus development and redevelopment in urban areas that are supported by multi-modal transportation facilities that will help to reduce emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.
  - Encouraging industries to be clean and environmentally responsible.
- Water Quality
  - Protecting drinking water supplies and associated watershed protection areas.
  - Improving water quality of all of our waterways.
  - Recognizing the connection between land use practices and water quality in decision making.
  - Coordinating actions intended to address and meet all appropriate water quality standards.
- Stormwater
  - Improving stormwater infrastructure and reducing stormwater runoff.
  - Encouraging low-impact development techniques and practices through land development regulations, education, and incentives.
- Agriculture
  - Improving viability of local agriculture through concentrating development in the City areas identified for greater intensity of use and higher densities and County Development Areas, while strengthening measures that protect agriculture in the Rural Areas.
  - Recognizing the shared interests between the City and County in promoting a strong local food economy.
- Vegetation and Biodiversity
  - Recognizing the benefits of biological diversity and encouraging the retention and use of native plants.
  - Encouraging establishment, maintenance, and replanting of urban tree canopy in the developed areas as a means of protecting and preserving the visual and ecological benefits as well as supporting stormwater runoff reduction efforts.
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation
  - Continuing to develop resource and energy conservation strategies and practices applicable to both public and private facilities.
- Disposal Practices
  - Promoting re-use and recycling.
  - Encouraging programs to eliminate roadside litter.

Historic Preservation
Enhance the historic character of the region by fostering community awareness of our historic and cultural resources and promoting the preservation of designated structures and areas by:
- Preparing and maintaining coordinated information detailing requirements, responsibilities and support programs for eligible, significant cultural resources.
- Collaborating on tourism outreach related to historic resources.
- Preparing, maintaining, and making publicly available a single map of formally designated City and County historic resources - available as a layer on both City and County data systems.
- Encouraging designation of historic buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects through state and federal programs.
- Encouraging local historic designations where appropriate in cooperation with neighborhoods.
- Collaborating with the University of Virginia, Ash Lawn-Highland, Monticello, and other community organizations on historic preservation matters.

Housing
Have a range of housing types that support various incomes, ages, and levels of mobility. These housing types should be connected to community amenities, parks, trails and services in the City and in the County’s Development Areas by:
- Developing joint City-County housing goals, both for market-priced and affordable units.
- Exploring the idea of a Regional Housing Authority.
- Encouraging mixed income communities.
- Facilitating collaboration and coordination among various housing staff, committees, builders, and organizations to ensure an appropriate range of housing choices for all community members.
- Developing policies to encourage housing opportunities suitable for healthy aging and for people with disabilities located in close proximity to community services and amenities, recreational resources, and connected to multi-modal transportation corridors.
- Promoting housing located near employment centers in the City and County Development Areas and optimal multi-modal transportation links between those areas and major employment centers.
- Increasing the range of housing type choices, focusing especially on the creation of additional workforce (60%-120% AMI), affordable housing (25%-60% AMI), and deeply affordable (0%-25% AMI) units in the City and the County.

Land Use
Support neighborhoods and places that allow residents to live, work, and play near their homes and where attention to the character of new development and redevelopment enhances quality of life by:
- Encouraging development and redevelopment in areas of the City and County identified for significant and greater intensity of use, and in County Development Areas where appropriate in order to preserve open space, rural areas, and agricultural areas.
- Promoting patterns that encourage multi-modal transportation opportunities.
- Coordinating City and County Development Areas land use and infrastructure planning.
- Maintaining the distinct character of the Rural Areas.
- Continuing to actively participate in the PACC, which brings City, County and University leaders together to discuss issues of common concern and interest, as a means of decision coordination.
- Establishing policies that provide for consideration of development impacts on the neighboring locality and shared community resources.
- Creating a unified vision for land uses adjacent to the Rivanna River that supports the river corridor as a destination while ensuring the protection and improvement of the river’s waterway.

Parks and Recreation
Provide a system of high quality public parks, recreation facilities and programming to meet the needs of all residents of the community by:
- Sharing community visions
  - Exploring shared-use facilities as a first option when contemplating new or replacement recreation facilities within either jurisdiction.
  - Exploring the possibility of a Regional Park Authority to manage shared resources including, but not limited to Ivy Creek Natural Area and Darden Towe Park.
  - Developing and implementing a shared vision for parks, trails, and recreation opportunities associated with the Rivanna River.
  - Working with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to develop a shared vision for recreation opportunities associated with Biscuit Run State Park.
- Encourage healthy choices among all of our residents.
  - Creating multi-modal connections to and between parks and recreation areas and employment centers.
- Coordinate shared parks and recreation resources.
  - Utilizing existing Needs Assessment documents to initiate a collaborative Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment.
  - Evaluating existing user fees associated with all parks, facilities, and programs to explore reciprocity programs.
  - Coordinating with UVA to identify both active and passive recreation opportunities that may be shared with the larger community.
  - Creating a common City-County park, recreation and programming "amenity matrix," and an associated map of amenity locations.
  - Creating a regional plan to address need for additional recreation facilities.

Transportation
Promote regional multi-modal and accessible transportation options by coordinating transportation planning between Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia through the Metropolitan Planning Organization by:
- Storing transportation data in the same format.
- Coordinating collection of transportation data to facilitate sharing of information through Charlottesville, Albemarle County, the University of Virginia, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- Creating and expanding transit network efficiency and use.
- Coordinating building the sidewalk network across City-County boundaries and addressing barriers to pedestrian connectivity.
- Providing community education regarding transportation options.
- Collaborating to strengthen intrastate and interstate rail and air transportation opportunities.
- Coordinating to provide and enhance multi-modal connections between employment centers and areas of high residential density.
- Creating dedicated bike-pedestrian connections across physical barriers within the community for:
  - Rivanna River
  - Route 250 – East and West
  - Interstate 64
  - Railroad network
  - City and VDOT system connection
  - Route 29
**Town of Scottsville**

Issues of regional interest and sustainability are not limited to PACC, the TJPDC, or the Livability Project. The Town of Scottsville, which is the only incorporated area in the County, is a designated area for development in the County. It is located in the southeastern corner of Albemarle County and the northwestern corner of Fluvanna County. The portion to the northwest of the Albemarle-Fluvanna County boundary line, wholly within Albemarle County, comprises approximately 961 acres and 536 residents; the portion to the southeast of the Albemarle/Fluvanna County line that lies within Fluvanna County includes approximately 18 acres and 19 residents. Scottsville property owners, residents, and business owners pay real estate and property taxes to the County in which their property lies.

For their part, the counties are obliged to provide to Scottsville residents and property owners the same level of service provided to other County residents and property owners. To this end, schools, police protection (supplemental to the Town’s Police Department), fire and rescue protection, social services, library services, park and recreational services, and utilities are provided by Albemarle County to the Town. Unlike the designated Development Areas, however, Scottsville has its own governance. Land use and zoning are within the purview of the Town and not the County.

Although it is an incorporated area within the County, Scottsville serves a unique function for Albemarle County. By providing amenities, shopping areas, employment locations, and community services, it serves both Town and County residents. Strategies for cooperation and collaboration may be found in the [Development Areas Chapter](#). A link to the Town of Scottsville’s Comprehensive Plan is provided in the [Reference Documents](#).
The County Today

Planning for Current and Future Populations

The current and future residents of Albemarle are the people for whom planning is done. Figures 8 – 14 provide historic and current information on key characteristics of the population. These figures are regularly updated in key documents found on the County’s website. Current information reveals the following:

- The population is growing. In 2012, there were approximately 104,000 people living in the County, representing about 19,000 more than in 2000. This increase represents an average annual growth rate from 2000 of 1.5%. Approximately 11,000 residents of the County are students at the University of Virginia (UVA) who live both on and off campus.

- The population is aging. In 1970, the largest age group was aged 5 – 19. In 2010, the largest group was aged 40 - 64. In 1970, seniors aged 65 and older comprised less than 5,000 persons. Now they are almost 15,000 persons. The number of adults in the 40 – 64 and 65+ age groups has consistently grown since 1970 while the groups that were less than 40 years of age showed no clear trend.

- The racial composition of the County is also changing. In 2010, Albemarle County’s population was approximately 78% Caucasian, 10% Black, 6% Hispanic, and 5% Asian or other nationality. In 1980, 85% of the population was Caucasian and about 3% was Hispanic. The percentage of Blacks has not changed.

- Albemarle County residents, overall, continue to have higher incomes than most residents in Virginia and the United States. In 2013, the estimated per capita income was over $37,000, while the U.S. per capita income was approximately $28,000. Median household income was approximately $68,000 while the U.S. median household income was just over $53,000.

- Households with the highest incomes are increasing with the highest growth occurring in the households making over $150,000 per year. There were almost eight times as many households in this category than there were in 1990. Income in Albemarle County generally comes from earnings, although this is not universally the case as anecdotal evidence indicates many residents have unearned income. Households in the lowest income category also increased; however this category also contains many of the students at UVA who have little or no income of their own.

- Unemployment continues to be low in Albemarle County, typically, about one-half the national rate. The stability of Albemarle County’s employment base has helped keep unemployment at lower levels than those of the State and nation. Figure 14 seems to indicate that the economic downturn that began in 2007 has reversed course, and economic growth is occurring again in Albemarle County.

- The County’s economic base continues to be fairly diverse. Although government-related jobs comprised the largest employment sector in Albemarle County in 2011, due primarily to the large presence of UVA, Albemarle County, and the Department of Defense, other sectors also provided jobs. Retail trade was the second highest employment sector. The third highest sector was in healthcare. Other industries that provided more than 1,500 jobs in Albemarle County in 2011 include accommodation and food services, professional and technical services, construction,
manufacturing, and other services. These larger industries are comprised of higher skill occupations or support occupations for highly skilled employees.

Figure 8: Population Growth in Albemarle County 1960 - 2010

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 9: Population by Age Group

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 10: Change in Median Household Income in Albemarle County, Charlottesville, and Virginia 1990 - 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Albemarle County</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>United States</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>$36,886</td>
<td>$33,328</td>
<td>$30,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>$50,749</td>
<td>$46,667</td>
<td>$41,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$63,474</td>
<td>$59,330</td>
<td>$50,221</td>
</tr>
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010
**Figure 11: Median Household Income in Albemarle County 1990 - 2010**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010

**Figure 12: Average Annual Unemployment Rates 2000 - 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Albemarle County</th>
<th>Charlottesville</th>
<th>Charlottesville MSA</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2010

**Figure 13: Employment by Industry**

(larger than 1,500 jobs)

Source: Virginia Employment Commission 2011
Expectations for the Future

Population change is dependent on in-migration, out-migration, births, and deaths. Migration patterns typically relate to availability of jobs. With the County’s growing economy, the population is expected to increase in the future. To project future populations, the County has typically relied on the Virginia Economic Commission (VEC). In 2012, the VEC contracted with the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service to produce projections for all localities in the State. The 2012 projections are provided in Figure 15.

With this future population, the following changes will also likely take place:

- For the near future, growth will probably occur at a rate of about 1.5% per year. When this rate might change is unknown. The further into the future one attempts to project, the more difficult projecting becomes. Growth at UVA and with the federal defense agencies will likely have the most influence.

- As with the rest of the United States, the percentage of seniors in the population will continue to grow. It is expected that the 40 – 64 age group will begin to diminish as the 65+ age group grows. The 18 – 24 age group will likely grow in conjunction with UVA.

- The racial composition will continue to change and racial diversity will likely increase. More Hispanics will live in the County in the future, based on nationwide trends.

- Albemarle County residents will continue to have higher incomes than most residents in the State and the United States. This prediction is based on past trends and there are no indicators of change in this indicator.

- Households with the highest incomes will also likely increase, at least for the near term. This prediction is also based on past trends.
• Unemployment will continue to be low, following its historic trend in the County.

• The County’s employment makeup will likely increase in diversity, as a result of efforts to target specific industries for assistance and support. Jobs in health care are expected to increase with expansion projects at the UVA Health System and the relatively recent relocation of the Martha Jefferson Hospital to Albemarle County. Research and development will continue to occur and grow as a result of proximity to UVA. Defense jobs will increase as long as the federal government operates Rivanna Station in Albemarle County. Manufacturing may also increase as a result of the County’s economic development activities. Also, smaller boutique farms are expected as the local food movement continues to grow.

The County has prepared the Comprehensive Plan update for the next 20 years based on these expectations for the future.

This Document
When work began on the 2015 update, the Comprehensive Plan was divided into five different sections: Natural and Cultural Resources; Land Use Plan for the Development Areas; Rural Area Plan; Economic Development Policy; and Affordable Housing Policy. Each of the first three sections included multiple appendices. This update has brought the different chapters together under the single vision for the County and provided consistency within and among chapters.

This 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update contains two volumes - a Summary and the Plan. Information on these two volumes, as well as the Reference Documents, is provided below.

Summary of the Plan
The Summary is an abridged version, containing only the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Plan. It contains the Plan’s expectations and those actions required to achieve the expectations. Because of its brevity, it can provide a general understanding of the Plan’s flow. Unlike the full Plan, it does not provide explanations as to why the goals, objectives, and strategies exist or show details on how to implement the Plan. The Summary has extracted the most important parts of the Plan but is not intended to be used in place of the Plan.

The Plan
The Plan provides details to the Summary. It explains what is important to the County and why it is important. It provides guidance on how the strategies will be used to achieve the objectives and goals. This Chapter is an introduction to help set the context for the Plan. The succeeding chapters are: Growth Management; Natural Resources; Historic/Cultural/Scenic Resources; Economic Development; the Rural Area; the Development Areas; Housing; Transportation; Parks and Recreation, Greenways, Blueways, and Green Systems; and Community Facilities.

The order in which these chapters appear is intentional. The County’s growth management goal sets the stage for all of the other goals. Natural resource protection, scenic, historic, and cultural resources represent the highest set of priorities from residents in citizen surveys conducted for many years. The chapter on economic development follows resource protection because a thriving economy is both affected by and affects all other aspects of planning. Land use expectations follow with the Rural Area Chapter and the Development Area Chapter. Because the Rural Area covers 95% of the County and contains most of the natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources of the County, it is first. The Development Areas Plan follows,
which sets the context for chapters on housing, transportation, parks and recreation, and other community facilities and services.

Within each chapter, organization is consistent. The goal for each topic is found on the first page. An explanation of the relationship of the goal to the County’s overall vision follows on the next page. The joint City-County goals highlight the commitment of the two communities working together to achieve those goals. Following the introductory paragraphs in each chapter are the objectives and strategies. The strategies are “action items,” which include continuation of existing programs, enhancement of programs, and new initiatives. The text is supportive of the strategies and provides guidance and direction. The text carries the same weight as the strategies. The enhancements and new initiatives are activities that will make their way into the County’s Work Program over time. Annual Planning Commission reports to the Board of Supervisors will report on progress towards completion of these activities and achievement of the goals.

The Plan also includes an Implementation Chapter that shows how to bring the Plan to life. It begins with the voluntary actions of citizens. An explanation of regulatory measures follows along with funding mechanisms. The County’s priorities for actions are identified by chapter topic, as well as ways to measure success in coming years.

The Appendix is the final part of the Plan. It contains detailed recommendations on specific parts of the Plan. The Cash Proffer Policy, the Affordable Housing Policy, Master Plans, and the Neighborhood Model Design Guidance are a few examples in the Appendix. Each of the items in the Appendix is part of the Comprehensive Plan and carries the weight of the Plan.

Reference Documents
Reference Documents include several items. They are documents that can stand alone outside of the Plan, such as lists of soil categories or watersheds. Reference Documents also include copies of other plans and reports that have influenced the development of this Plan, such as the Capacity Analysis and the Target Industry Study. Reference Documents also include sources of information that can be used to further direct future work of the County, such as the 2004 Survey of Historic Crossroads Communities in Albemarle County. These documents are not part of the Comprehensive Plan, nor do they carry the weight of the Plan. Instead, they provide information that pertains to the Plan and other policies. They are included to enlighten the recommendations of the Plan.

Acronyms
Acronyms are used throughout this Plan. The first time in each chapter that an acronym is used it is preceded by its full name, such as the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC). Because so many different acronyms are used, a full list is provided in Figure 16.

Final Note about the Plan
The strength of a Comprehensive Plan directly relates to a community’s commitment to use it. Like a muscle, the more it is used, the stronger it becomes. Courts recognize the validity of land use decisions when they are guided by the Comprehensive Plan. Failure to consistently use the Comprehensive Plan erodes its substance. Albemarle County has a long history of carefully and thoughtfully planning for its future and then using its Plan as the basis on which to make important decisions. With the support of Albemarle’s citizens and continued use, this Plan will help Albemarle County remain the wonderful place its residents enjoy while growing into the future.
Figure 16: List of Acronyms Used in this Document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Acronym Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2035 VSTP</td>
<td>2035 Virginia Surface Transportation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AADT</td>
<td>Average Annual Daily Traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACE</td>
<td>Acquisition of Conservation Easements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACSA</td>
<td>Albemarle County Service Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
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<td>Ag/For</td>
<td>Agricultural and Forestal</td>
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<td>AHIP</td>
<td>Albemarle Housing Improvement Program</td>
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<td>ARB</td>
<td>Architectural Review Board</td>
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<td>Moore’s Creek Advanced Waste Water Treatment Plant</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMP</td>
<td>Best Management Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAN</td>
<td>Capital Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Charlottesville Area Transit</td>
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<tr>
<td>CATEC</td>
<td>Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Center</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Community Development Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDR</td>
<td>Department of Conservation and Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIP</td>
<td>Capital Improvements Program</td>
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<td>Commuter Information Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COB</td>
<td>County Office Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>COSS</td>
<td>Corridors of Statewide Significance</td>
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<td>CUBE</td>
<td>Center for Understanding the Built Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
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<td>Department of Environmental Quality</td>
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<td>DRPT</td>
<td>Department of Rail and Public Transportation</td>
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<td>Entrance Corridor</td>
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<td>Energy Star Courthouse Campaign</td>
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<td>FAA</td>
<td>Federal Aviation Administration</td>
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<td>Jefferson Area UNited Transportation</td>
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<td>Level of Service</td>
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<td>Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century [Act]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPO</td>
<td>Metropolitan Planning Organization</td>
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<td>OPDMD</td>
<td>Other Power-Driven Mobility Device</td>
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<td>Planning and Coordination Council</td>
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<td>PRFA</td>
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