

1. Introduction

Albemarle County has a longstanding commitment to growth management. Since the adoption of the first Comprehensive Plan in 1971, County policy has been to direct growth into the 11 designated Development Areas (see Figure 1.1). Directing this growth conserves the balance of the County as Rural Areas and enables the County to protect the agricultural and scenic resources found in those Rural Areas.

The County recognizes the Development Areas as places where a variety of land uses, facilities, and services exist and are planned to support the County's future growth. Of the County's 726 square miles, only 35—or about 5 percent—are included in the Development Areas. Planning efforts channel growth into these Development Areas in order to facilitate economical service delivery and to promote neighborhood-style development as the preferred design.

In 2001, the County adopted the Neighborhood Model to guide the form of development. The Neighborhood Model recommends that the Development Areas and new development follow these 12 principles:

1. Pedestrian Orientation
2. Neighborhood Friendly Streets and Paths
3. Interconnected Streets and Transportation Networks
4. Parks and Open Space
5. Neighborhood Centers
6. Buildings and Spaces of Human Scale
7. Relegated Parking
8. Mixture of Uses
9. Mixture of Housing Types and Affordability
10. Redevelopment
11. Site Planning that Respects Terrain
12. Clear Boundaries with the Rural Areas

The Neighborhood Model also recommends that a master plan be prepared for each of the County's Development Areas.

The Places29 Framework Master Plan

The Places29 Framework Master Plan for Albemarle County's Northern Development Areas ("master plan" or "plan") establishes a vision for accommodating ongoing growth in this part of the County. This master plan covers the four Development Areas north of the City of Charlottesville: Neighborhood 1, Neighborhood 2, the Community of Hollymead, and the

Community of Piney Mountain, as shown in Figure 1.2. The plan represents the first comprehensive application of the County's Neighborhood Model to the urban neighborhoods. It defines the desired spatial relationships between individual land uses and demonstrates the critical connection between land use and transportation. The influence of US 29 North and its profound impact on property values, land use patterns, transportation network, and community character create a specific set of challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities are best addressed in a plan that frames the future for the area and provides policy guidance and planning details to ensure that the area's growth is accommodated as envisioned by the current citizens of Albemarle County. This Master Plan is an adopted component of the Land Use section of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The framework plan format was chosen for the Places29 Master Plan because it supports an overarching long-term vision of the desired community structure, while guiding ongoing development. The framework plan format also provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate more detailed followup planning efforts. These efforts, called Small Area Plans, will enable the County to work with property owners in specific locations to encourage redevelopment and to coordinate land uses with transportation and access improvements.

The Places29 Timeframe

The Framework Master Plan guides future development of the area for many decades into the future. To implement specific recommendations of the master plan, such as transportation improvements and community facilities, the plan relies on a 20-year planning horizon. This 20-year period is based, in part, on the longest realistic population projections available to the County. A 20-year period is also consistent with state requirements, the County's Comprehensive Plan, and established planning practice. The master plan includes an implementation program that groups recommendations into those that will be done during the first five years, those targeted for completion during the second five years, and those that will be done during the remainder of the planning period.

The plan is based on a very long-term look at the community's future, setting out possibilities that may not be realized until decades after the plan is adopted—and, in some cases, well beyond the original 20-year timeframe. The framework master plan's future land use map shows how the area ultimately should develop, recognizing that some elements of the plan will be implemented many years in the future. The timing of these elements depends on how market demands and other circumstances influence the pace of development. In other words, the master plan's future land use map may include some features that will not be developed or built for decades.

Implementation of the Places29 Master Plan

The implementation program involves a variety of public and private sector groups and sets priorities so the master plan can evolve in a logical and sequential fashion. Some of these recommendations may include new or expanded community facilities, additional government services, changes to regulations, new or expanded utilities, different types of open space and recreational opportunities, and transportation connections throughout the community that could take the form of roads, sidewalks, or trails.

The implementation program will be used as a general guide to determine when and in what order the different plan elements will be realized. Implementation is a long-term commitment, with stages that will stretch well beyond the 20-year planning horizon based on when specific population levels, traffic levels, or other indicators are actually achieved.

Implementation of the recommendations in this master plan will take place in several different forms: through County capital expenditures, public-private partnerships, land use decisions, private sector investments, community initiatives, and programs and services provided by the County.

The County will review the master plan at least every five years. This review process will include an update of the demographics and premises on which the plan is based. Then, if necessary, adjustments may be made to the plan's recommendations.

Organization of This Master Plan

Following this introductory chapter, the master plan continues with the **Vision and Guiding Principles** presented in **Chapter 2**.

Chapter 3, Existing Conditions and Future Trends, presents the background information on demographics and projections that form the foundation of a 20-year master plan.

Chapter 4, Place Types, introduces the concepts of Neighborhoods and Centers that are used throughout this plan.

In **Chapter 5, Future Land Uses and Transportation Framework**, the Place Types and transportation concepts are applied to the Northern Development Areas as directed by the Vision and Guiding Principles.

Chapter 6, Community Facilities and Services, describes how schools, libraries, water and sewer, and other facilities will be provided.

Chapter 7, Unified Design Guidelines, provides direction on the urban form and the appearance of the Entrance Corridors and other areas covered in this master plan.

Chapter 8, Implementation, outlines in both text and tabular format how this master plan will be carried out. This chapter addresses Priority Areas, funding, and the provision of needed infrastructure over the master plan's 20-year timeframe.

Two Important Notes

Places29

The Framework Master Plan is the result of a public process and technical work, which were undertaken in combination with the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study. The master plan and transportation study were collectively known as "Places29" during the planning process. Work on the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study was jointly sponsored by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Albemarle County, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), and the City of Charlottesville. The title, "Places29: Creating and Connecting Communities in Northern Albemarle" was chosen to emphasize the importance of linking transportation and land use planning in shaping the future of Albemarle County's Northern Development Areas. Places29 also recognizes US 29's role as a major regional and national travel corridor. The US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study is based on and incorporates the 29H250 Studies (Phases 1 and 2). These two studies were conducted by the same partners and focused on similar multimodal goals for the areas around the US 29, Hydraulic Road, and US 250 intersections.

A detailed list of Places29 public events is given in Appendix A.

Map Format

Most of the maps included in the master plan do not use the standard orientation in which North is at the top of a map. Instead, because of the shape and size of the planning area, maps in this document have **North to the right**. In other words, the City of Charlottesville is to the left and Greene County is to the right.