

# 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, as shown in Figure 1.1. Directing this growth into the Development Areas 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 both new development and redevelopment in the Development Areas 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 11 Development Areas. Further discussion of the Neighborhood Model can be found in the Land Use Plan Section of the Comprehensive Plan (page 204).

## The Places29 Master Plan

The 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. This Master Plan is an adopted component of the Land Use section of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

[Figure 1.1. Albemarle County's eleven Development Areas.]

[Figure 1.2. The four Northern Development Areas included in Places29: Neighborhood 1, Neighborhood 2, Hollymead, and Piney Mountain.]

A framework master 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 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 Master Plan guides future development of the area for many decades into the future. To implement specific Plan recommendations, 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 ten years and those that will be done during the second ten years of the planning period.

The Future Land Use Map 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—in some cases, well beyond the original 20-year timeframe. The 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.

## Implementation of the Places29 Master Plan

The Master Plan's 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 and 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 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.

## 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. It describes current land use patterns and the current status of the transportation network.

In **Chapter 4, The Future Land Use Plan and Transportation Network**, the land use designations are defined, integrated with the transportation network, and shown on the Future Land Use Map. Land use intensity and urban form are described, then related to the transect. The

role of Parks & Green Systems is explained and related to the map. The chapter continues with a description of the future transportation network and the development capacity that results from the land uses and transportation linkage. The chapter concludes with an explanation and example of how to use the maps and tables.

**Chapter 5, Place Types**, introduces the concepts of Neighborhoods and Centers that are used throughout this plan. After defining and illustrating these concepts, the chapter concludes with an explanation of walking sheds and the relationship of the place types to the transect.

**Chapter 6, Community Facilities and Services**, describes the current status of schools, libraries, water and sewer, parks, utilities, and other facilities, and how they will be provided to support the Northern Development Areas during the timeframe of the Master Plan.

**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 a table how this Master Plan will be carried out. This chapter addresses implementation strategies and priorities, and funding options for the provision of needed infrastructure over the Master Plan's 20-year timeframe.

**Appendix A, Glossary of Terms Used in the Master Plan** will include definitions of planning terms and any other terms needed to understand the Plan.

**Appendix B, Recommended Transportation Improvements** is a list describing each of the improvements included in the Implementation Table in Chapter 8. The additional information about each improvement will enable readers of the plan to understand what each improvement is and how it differs from others with similar names or locations.

**Appendix C, Public Participation Program Events and Summary** lists the events at which public input has been sought, including the dates and locations of the events.

The documents listed below are incorporated into this Master Plan by reference and are available separately:

The US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study Final Report, dated August 18, 2008.

The Access Management Report for US 29 (Transportation Study Technical Memo 11), dated May 25, 2007.

*Transportation Funding Options*, a report prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, dated October 10, 2005.

*29H250 Phase 2 Report*, Draft, prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, dated September 15, 2004.

*29H250 Intersections Study*, prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, dated May 2003.

## Two Important Notes

### Places29 and the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study

The 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 text incorporated in the Places29 logo, “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 the 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. The 29H250 studies are incorporated by reference into this Master Plan (and are available separately from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission).

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

### 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 the page. Instead, because of the shape and size of the Master Plan area, maps in this document have **North to the right**. In other words, when the entire Plan area is shown on a single page, the City of Charlottesville is to the left and Greene County is to the right.