

CHAPTER 8 LAND USE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the existing land use patterns and to present a land use vision for future development. To this end, one of the primary functions of this chapter is to recommend policies regarding the future use of land and areas where some degree of change in land use is encouraged or anticipated. It provides a recommended map of future land uses as well as detailed goals, objectives, and strategies to implement the map and encourage quality development.

Background

In order to develop the future land use map for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the Comprehensive Plan Working Group examined how land is currently used in the town, how it is zoned and what the 1999 Comprehensive Plan showed for future land use. Geographic Information System (GIS) maps were prepared by the Northern Shenandoah Regional Commission depicting these existing and future land uses. Of particular interest were the areas where properties have become part of the town through boundary line adjustments. Residential and commercial growth patterns were also of interest and were studied to identify trends in growth patterns.

Existing Land Use

In January 1991, an inventory was made of the existing land uses within the town. This map was updated by the town staff and the Comprehensive Plan Working Group and is presented in this chapter. Since 1991, 869 residential units in 34 subdivisions have been approved for construction. Additionally, significant highway commercial growth has occurred west of I-81 including a new Wal-Mart, Lowes Home Improvement Center, Tractor Supply, Muhlenberg

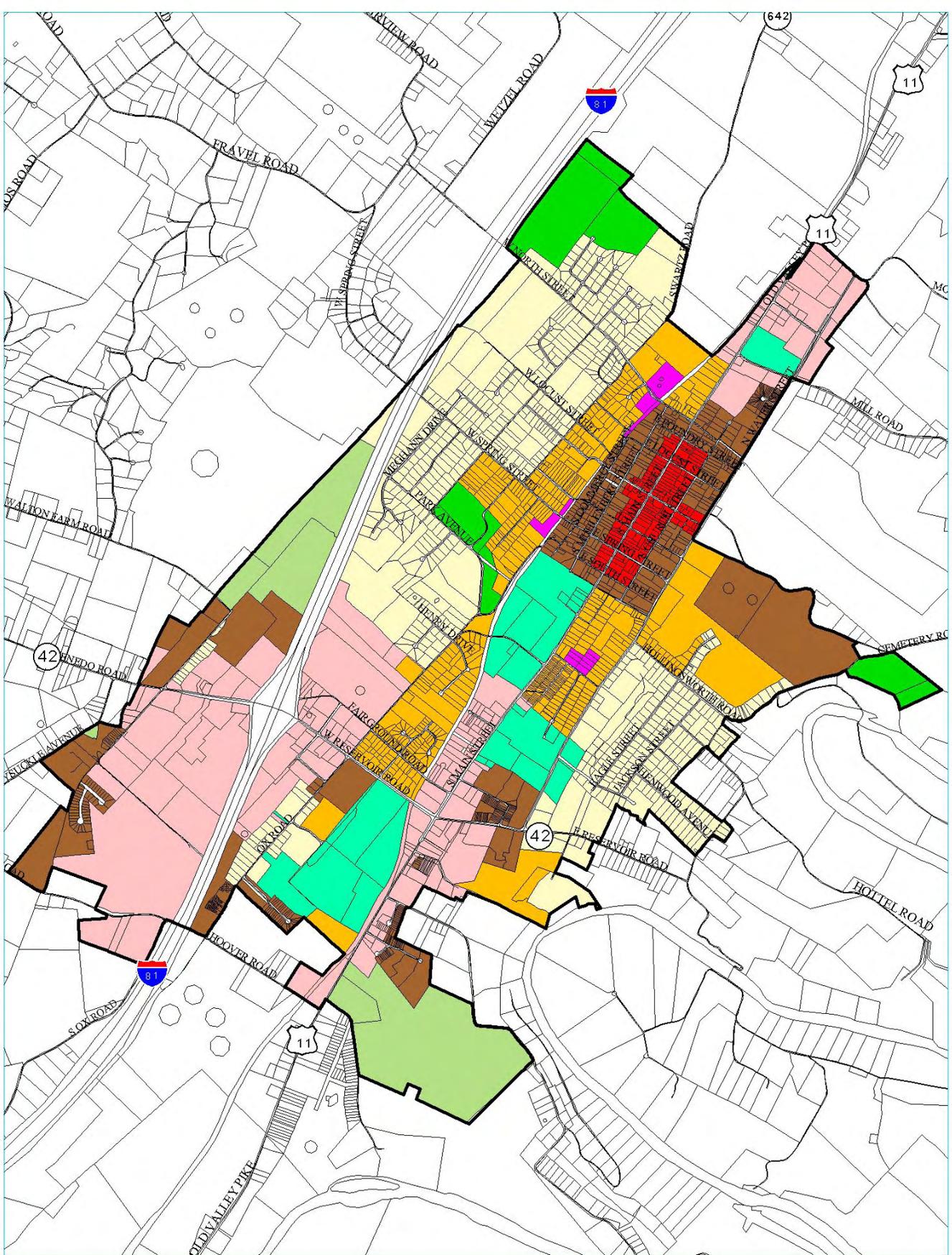
Ford, Cracker Barrel restaurant, a convenience store, and a variety of other smaller commercial entities. From this data and map, the Northern Shenandoah Regional Commission compiled the data presented in Table 8-1 and *Existing Land Use Map*.

Table 8-1
Land Area of Existing Land Uses

Land Use	Area (acres)	% of Area
Commercial - Central Business District	46.45	2.1%
Highway Commercial	494.5	22.4%
Institutional	170.92	7.8%
Light Industrial	13.86	0.6%
PUD Planned Unit Development	177.31	8.0%
R-1 Low Density Residential	558.3	25.3%
R-2 Medium Density Residential	312.51	14.2%
R-3 High Density Residential	327.56	14.9%
Parks and Recreation	102.15	4.7%
Total	2216.44	100%

Note: 12.19 acres of street and railroad right-of-way are also contained in the town.

Shenandoah County's assessor maintains data on each property in the town, including how it is currently used. This data was accessed and categorized into the town's land use categories. From this data, the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission compiled statistics on the vacant acreage in each land use category, which are depicted in the following table and pie chart.



Existing Landuse

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Woodstock, VA

July 1, 2007



Map Data Provided by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission

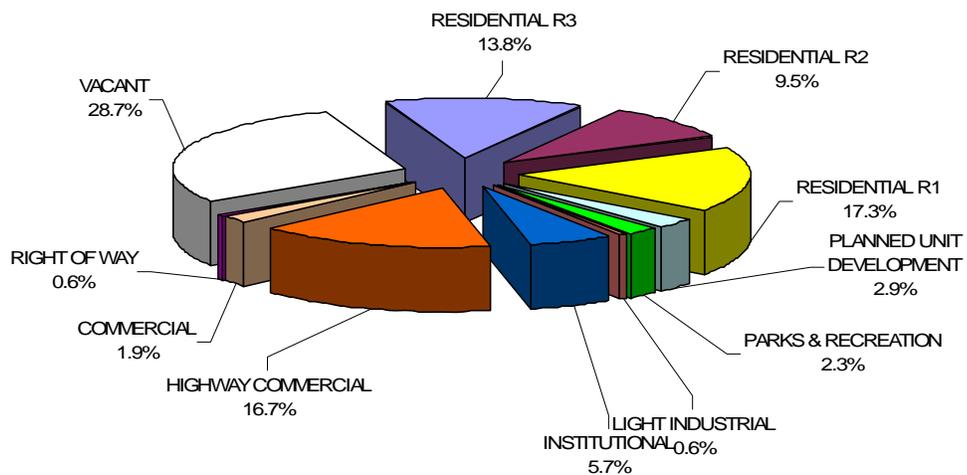
Legend

- Woodstock Town Boundary
- Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Institutional
- Light Industrial
- PUD
- Park & Recreation
- R-1 (Low Density Res.)
- R-2 (Medium Density Res.)
- R-3 (High Density Res.)

**Table 8-2
Vacant Land Area in Existing Land Uses**

Land Use	Area (acres)	Area Vacant (acres)	% Vacant
Commercial - Central Business District	46.45	5.03	10.8%
Highway Commercial	494.5	123.66	25.0%
Institutional	170.92	45.32	26.5%
Light Industrial	13.86	0.0	100.0%
PUD Planned Unit Development	177.31	113.50	64.0%
R-1 Low Density Residential	558.3	173.81	31.1%
R-2 Medium Density Residential	312.51	101.85	32.6%
R-3 High Density Residential	327.56	20.58	6.3%
Parks and Recreation	102.15	0.0	0.0%
Total	2216.44	635.02	28.7%

Vacant Land in Existing Land Use Area



In addition to the aforementioned land uses, the town has also established an historic district. Woodstock's Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register in 1995. The town has not established a town historic overlay zoning district to date. The historic district is shown on *Historic District Map*.

Zoning

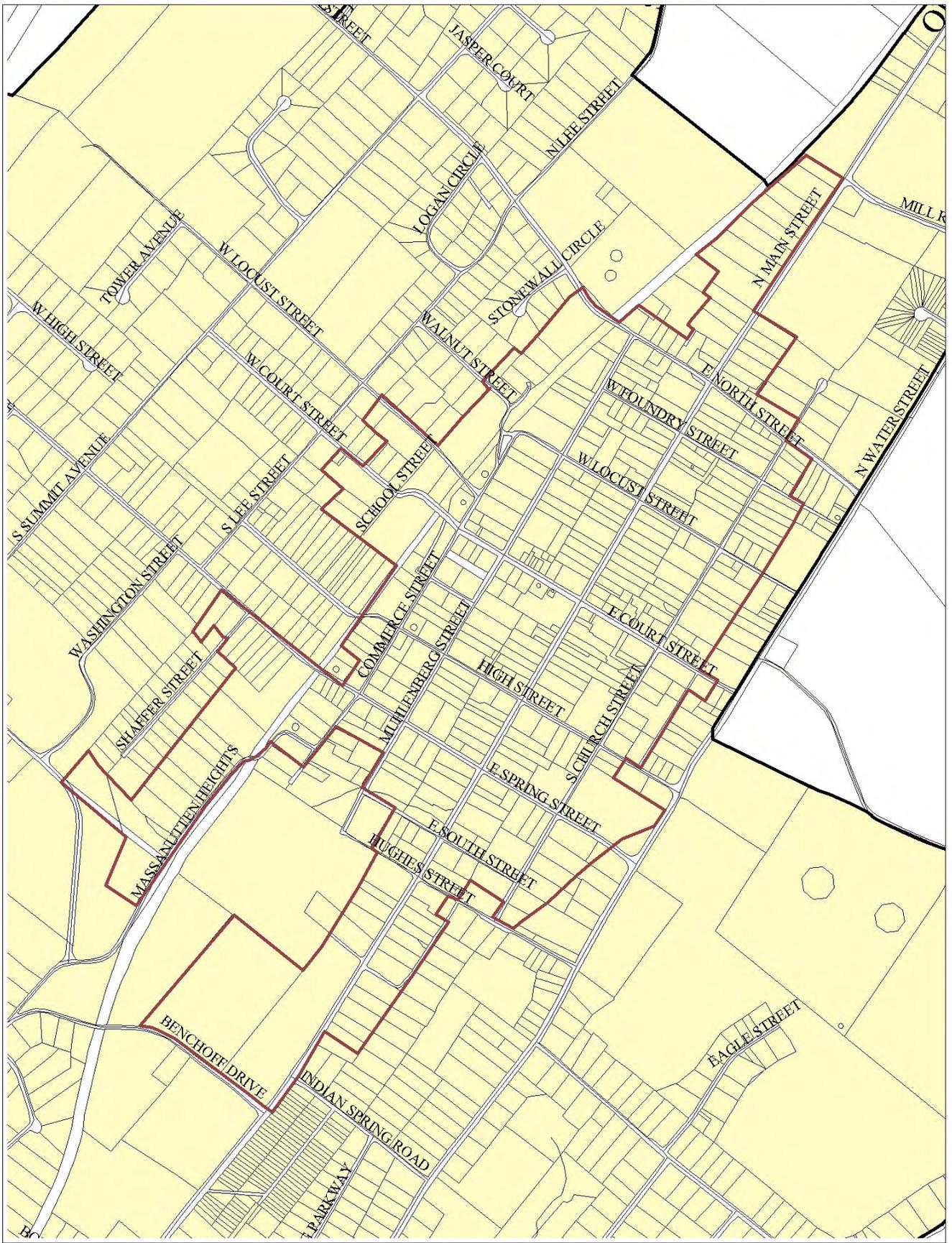
The town's zoning ordinance and accompanying Official Zoning Map identifies the types of uses currently permitted in the town for both developed and vacant lands, and therefore determines to a great extent future land uses. Woodstock's zoning ordinance contains provisions for eight zones including three residential, one medical-hospital center, two business and two industrial zones. In addition, a flood conservation overlay district shown on the *100 Year Flood Plain Map* regulates areas within the 100-year flood plain. Table 8-2 summarizes the town's existing zoning classifications.

**Table 8-2
Land Area by Existing Zoning**

Land Use	Area (acres)	% of Area
B-1 Central Business District	45.01	2.2%
B-2 Highway Commercial	242.08	11.8%
MC-1 Medical Hospital Center	33.04	1.6%
R-1 Low Density Residential	833.03	40.7%
R-2 Medium Density Residential	397.31	19.4%
R-3 High Density Residential	252.23	12.3%
I-1 Light Industrial	184.51	9.0%
I-2 Heavy Industrial	44.42	2.2%
Total	2044.53	100%

Notes: 1. 12.19 acres of street and railroad right of way are also contained in the town.

2. Total area of zoning does not equal total area of existing land use due to formatting of GIS data



Historic District COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Woodstock, VA

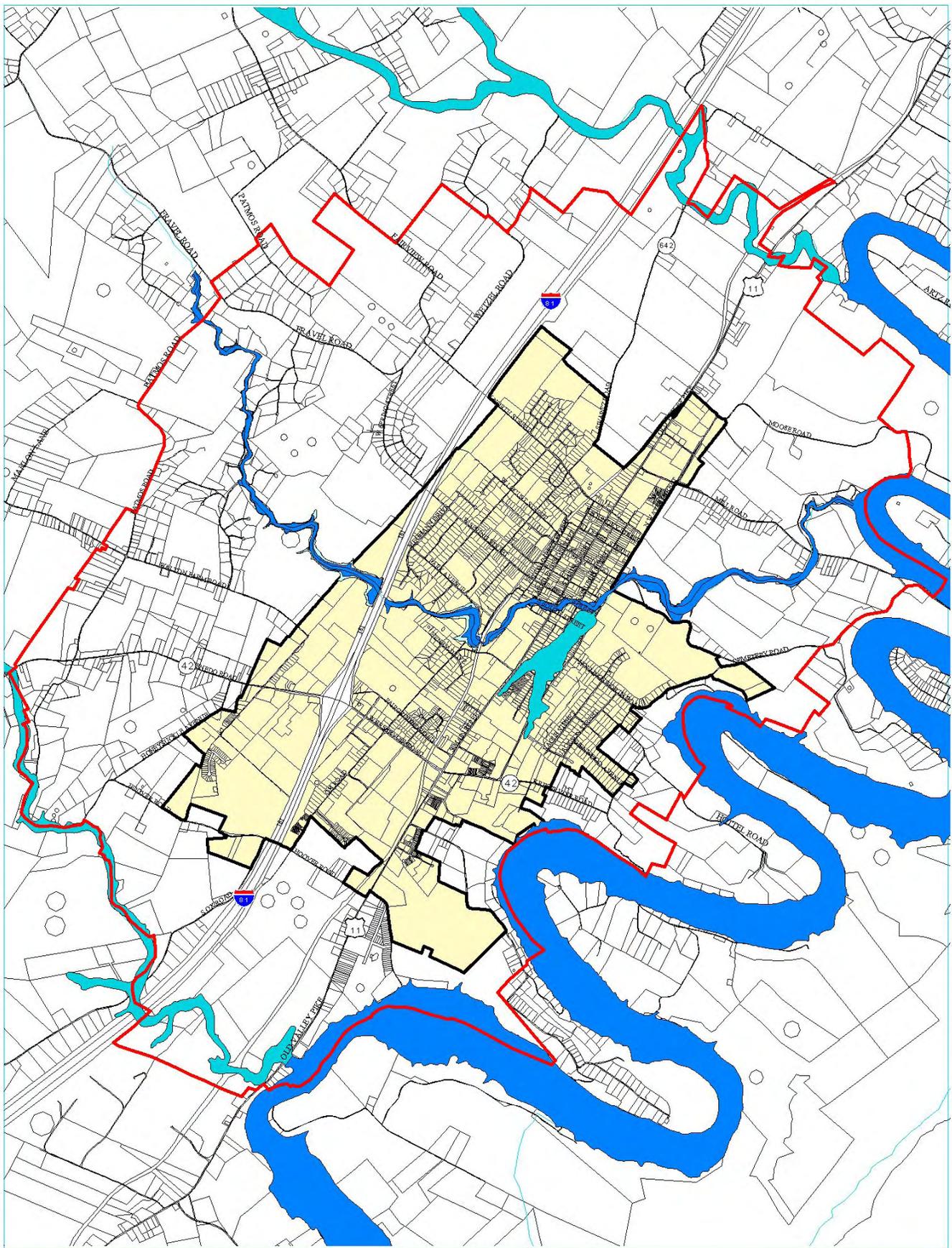
July 1, 2007



Map Data Provided by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission

Legend

- Historic District Boundary
- Woodstock Town Boundary
- Town of Woodstock



100 Year Flood Plain COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Woodstock, VA

July 1, 2007



0 0.5 Miles



Map Data Provided by the Northern
Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission.

Legend

Special Flood Hazard Areas Inundated
By 100-Year Flood

- 0.2 % Annual chance flood hazard
- A- No base flood elevation determined
- AE-Base flood elevation determined
- Water
- Urban Growth Area
- Woodstock Town Boundary
- Town of Woodstock

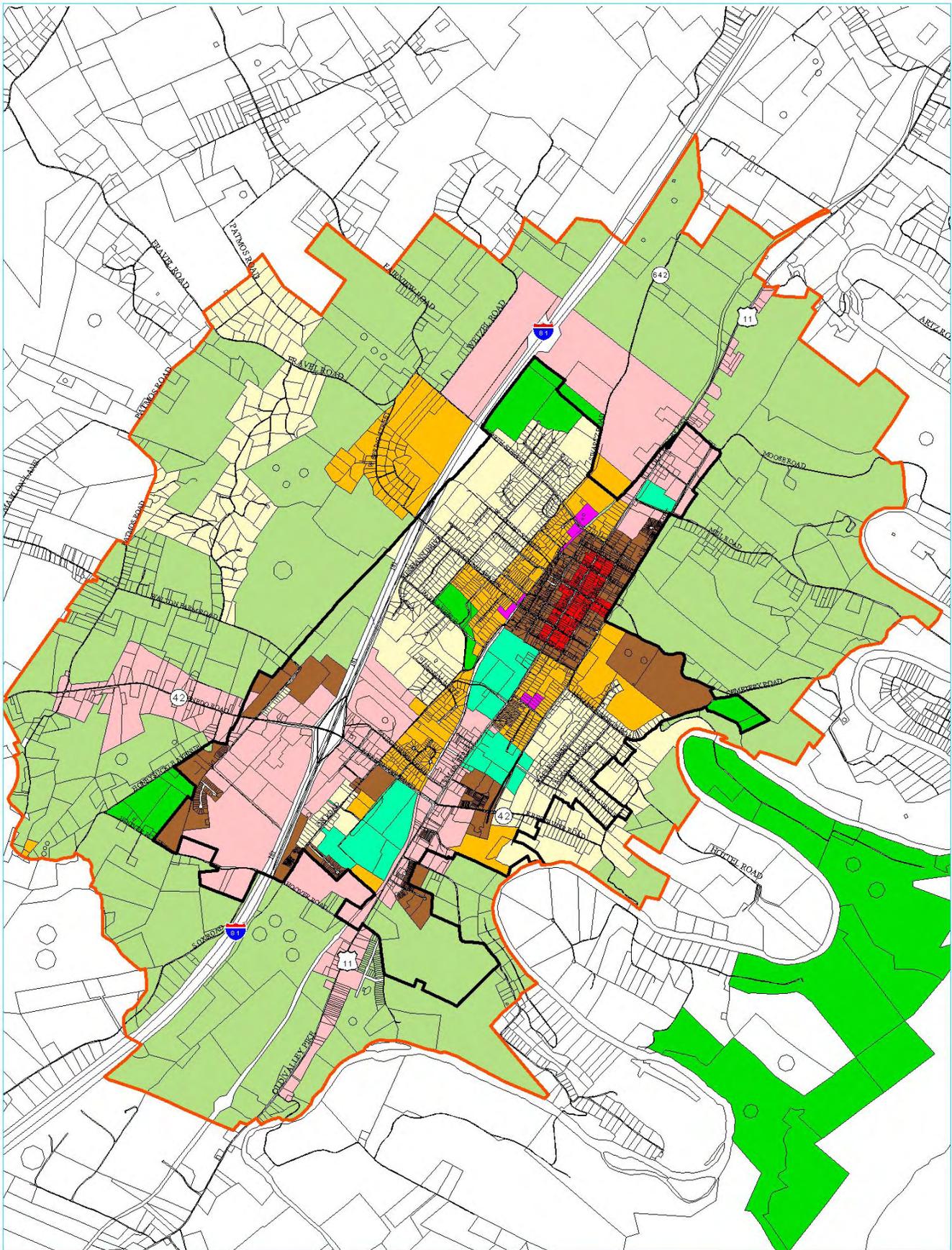
Future Land Use

Woodstock is the County Seat and the major governmental and retail center in Shenandoah County. Therefore, significant growth is expected to continue and has been planned for the next 20 years. Because much of the town is already developed, the existing land use plan and future land use plan are very similar inside of the existing town boundary. However, major differences can be found in the Urban Growth Area that surrounds the town. The Urban Growth Area is that area where the Comprehensive Plan Working Group anticipated additional town growth through boundary line adjustments resulting in development activities. The Urban Growth Area boundary encompasses areas adjacent to the existing town where town services can effectively be extended and/or provided. The area also possesses attractiveness for development which will necessitate town services, and therefore require inclusion in the town limits. The pattern of land use change (growth) is expected to extend north, south and east of the existing town as shown on the *Future Land Use Map*, and as summarized in Table 8-4.

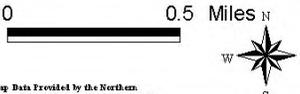
Table 8-4
Land Area of Future Land Uses
Existing Town Area with Urban Growth Area

Land Use	Area (acres)	% of Area
Commercial - Central Business District	46.45	0.5%
Highway Commercial	1071.06	12.2%
Institutional	170.92	1.9%
Light Industrial	13.86	0.2%
PUD Planned Unit Development	4684.03	53.2%
R-1 Low Density Residential	1007.31	11.4%
R-2 Medium Density Residential	483.37	5.5%
R-3 High Density Residential	332.96	3.8%
Parks and Recreation	994.98	11.3%
Total	8804.94	100%

Note: 12.19 acres of street and railroad right of way are also contained in the town.



Future Land Use
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
 Town of Woodstock, VA July 1, 2007

0 0.5 Miles N

 W S E

Map Data Provided by the Northern
 Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission



Legend

Woodstock Town Boundary	PUD
Commercial	Park & Recreation
Highway Commercial	R-1 (Low Density Res.)
Institutional	R-2 (Medium Density Res.)
Light Industrial	R-3 (High Density Res.)

The future land use plan represents the town's vision and policy for what it would like to be as opposed to what current regulations allow. In some cases, the future land use plan recommends land uses that are different from what current zoning will allow. This Future Land Use Plan recommends growth patterns and is the official land use policy map of the Comprehensive Plan. It is to be used as a guide in decisions on such matters as rezonings, special use permit proposals, and the location of public facilities.

The demand for all types of development is dependent upon the local, regional, and national markets at the time it is contemplated. Changing policies of the town, nearby jurisdictions, and other factors such as interest rates play important roles in helping to establish the amounts and types of development which will occur at any particular time.

The Urban Growth Area represents where and how the town anticipates growing over the next 20 years. The single biggest element of change to the existing land use pattern is the increase in area of the Planned Unit Development category. The Planned Unit Development growth is desired because it mixes land uses and thereby reduces the demand for additional highway capacity. These Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) should only be developed on large tracts of land.

The second biggest change to the existing land use pattern is in the Parks and Recreation category. The growth in the Parks and Recreation is due to the increase in size of the town's Fairview Park and Riverview Park, and the creation of a new town park west of I-81 and south of Reservoir Road. Additionally, a new state park, the Seven Bends State Park, has been created east of town with access to the park being provided along Reservoir Road. Table 8-5 shows the change in land area that result with the future land use plan implementation.

Table 8-5
Percent Change in Land Area between
Existing Land Use and Future Land Use

Land Use	% Change
Commercial - Central Business District	0%
Highway Commercial	113.2%
Institutional	-4.4%
Light Industrial	-38.9%
PUD Planned Unit Development	3976.6%
R-1 Low Density Residential	52.0%
R-2 Medium Density Residential	86.2%
R-3 High Density Residential	8.0%
Parks and Recreation	824.4%

The categories of land use shown on the *Future Land Use Map* and are described below.

Low Density Residential

These areas consist of single-family detached dwellings with a maximum density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Low density sections are found mainly in and around well established neighborhoods. The low density residential areas are designed to maintain the existing character of neighborhoods and to provide traditional areas for home ownership.

Medium Density Residential

The medium density residential areas are designated in areas near major thoroughfares or commercial areas. Most of these areas have been developed or are approved for development of a variety of housing types such as single-family and duplexes. Depending on the specific site characteristics, densities in these areas may range from 1 to 8 units per acre.

High Density Residential

A number of areas in the town have been developed in high density residential use, mostly townhouse buildings at densities ranging from 12 to 15 dwelling units per acre. Many of these clusters of multifamily development and adjacent areas approved or planned for such development are identified as high density residential on the *Existing Land Use Map*.

Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development category includes both existing and proposed mixed use areas with the majority of the Urban Growth Area being made up by this land use. Downtown is an existing area that exhibits and is planned to continue to contain a mix of land uses.

Planned Unit Development areas shown on the *Future Land Use Map* are intended to combine residential and non-residential uses in planned neighborhoods where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces will ensure development compatibility. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments. Live-work developments combine residential and office / service uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. Live-work spaces may be combined in the same building or on the same street. All buildings have a similar residential scale. Traditional neighborhood development permits integrated mixing of residential, retail, office and employment uses to create a neighborhood with the following characteristics:

- The design of the neighborhood allows residents to work, shop, and carry out many of life’s other activities within the neighborhood.
- The proximity of uses allows residents to walk, ride a bicycle, or take transit for many trips between home, work, shopping, and school.

- A variety of housing types is provided at a range of densities, types (multifamily, townhouse, and single family), and costs.
- Neighborhoods are heterogeneous mixes of residences in close proximity to commercial and employment uses.
- The neighborhood includes a retail, office, employment, and/or entertainment core to provide economic and social vitality, as well as a major focus and meeting place in the community.
- The circulation system serves many modes of transportation and provides choices for alternative transportation routes. Streets, alleys, and pedestrian and bike paths connect to the surrounding area. Streets and alleys generally follow a grid pattern to provide these route choices and connections. Traffic calming techniques may be used to reduce vehicle speed and increase pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- A system of parks and open spaces, with civic, public, and institutional uses is included to create a high quality of life and civic identity for the community.
- The cluster concept is embraced so as to concentrate development in environmentally suitable areas and to preserve and protect important environmental and cultural resources.

The gross residential density in areas outside downtown should not exceed 12 units per acre though all types of residential units are permitted: single-family detached, single-family attached and apartments. Apartments are permitted only if single-family detached and attached units are also provided and together cover a greater percentage of the project site.

Commercial

Commercial uses include retail, office, wholesale, or service functions. Restaurant and lodging uses are also included. These areas are generally found along the town's major travel corridors. The largest concentration of commercial land use is located along

Reservoir Road and west of I-81 near Wal-Mart and Lowes. The Commercial land use area is planned to have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.4 or greater.

Industrial

These areas are comprised of land and structures used for light and general manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, high-technology, research and development and related activities. They include the major existing and future employment areas of the town.

Institutional

Lands designated for development by certain nonprofit and public institutional uses such as hospitals, schools, offices of nonprofit organizations, and community assembly are designated as institutional.

Conservation, Recreation and Open Space

The town's parks are included in this category as well as the Seven Bends State Park.

Corridor Enhancement Areas

Another aspect of future land use that was identified as important are the travel routes into and through the town, many of which lead to commercial destinations. Their quality and character strongly influence the town's accessibility, attractiveness, and economic vitality. This plan recommends that a special study of each of the Route 11 and Route 42 corridors be carried out to address such issues as:

- Land use and design quality
- Streetscape improvements
- Vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation
- Access management
- Development, redevelopment, and reuse opportunities

- Conservation of special features
- Improvements to utilities and public facilities
- Signage

Some areas of these corridors include residential areas, which may be under stress due to increased traffic along the corridor. It is particularly important that the corridor studies examine whether these areas should remain residential or be permitted to convert to nonresidential uses on a location-specific basis. Conversion to non-residential uses can result in building improvements along the corridor. On the other hand, continuous strips of retail and/or office uses can cause access management problems, with many commercial driveways causing dangerous traffic situations. Another consideration regarding conversion to non-residential use is the resultant expansion of the supply of potential retail/office sites in the town. If the demand is not high enough, the result may be spotty conversions that further destabilize neighborhoods. In some cases, existing residential areas along corridors can be improved by the installation of street trees and landscaping that buffer the houses from the road and by traffic calming measures.

Greenway Park System

This network of greenways/trails was envisioned as a strong interconnect between existing and future park areas, serving both recreational and environmental functions. It preserves vital elements of nature in the town – the streams, floodplains, and unique wooded sites. This alternative transportation system will connect the town parks with key town facilities, shopping areas and residential neighborhoods, providing visual relief from urban development and an attractive recreational environment. The recommended system is depicted in the town's Trail System Concept Plan.

Land Use Goals, Objectives and Strategies

This section states the manner and direction in which the citizens of Woodstock would like to see the town and its surroundings develop. The accompanying Future Land Use Map in this section illustrates the potential expansion of the land uses during the 2007-2027 planning period.

Goal Encourage well-planned land uses that enhance the town's unique history and small town character while adding to the town's tax base.

Objective 1 Identify vacant land with development possibilities and potential redevelopment areas, and encourage development that will be beneficial to the town both economically and aesthetically.

Strategy 1 Work with citizens to identify candidate properties for redevelopment and/or development projects that enhance the town's unique history and small town character.

Strategy 2 Develop a set of design guidelines for new development and redevelopment based on strategy 1. Such design guidelines might address:

- Landscaping
- Preservation of green space
- Preservation of historic resources
- Placement of buildings and parking lots
- Building bulk and height
- How buildings address the street
- Signage
- Lighting

Strategy 3 Remove the potential for development or redevelopment of incompatible uses by initiating appropriate rezonings or text amendments as needed.

Objective 2 Promote a balance of commercial/light industrial, residential and parks space in new development projects.

Strategy 1 Promote the development of mixed residential and mixed use areas as recommended on the Future Land Use Map and in the text of this plan.

Strategy 2 Revise the zoning ordinance to require landscape buffers, screening, or alternative architectural solutions to provide transitions between potentially incompatible land uses.

Objective 3 Create a zoning ordinance that incorporates newer forms of mixed-use type of development, such as Planned Unit Developments (PUD), to stimulate creative and efficient use and reuse of land.

Strategy 1 Develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for the development of mixed use neighborhoods as identified on the Future Land Use Map and in the text of this plan. Ordinance provisions would allow innovative residential building types and permit creative subdivision design solutions that promote neighborhood cohesiveness, walkability, connected street grids, community green spaces, and protection of historic and environmental resources.

Objective 4 Seek to increase the number of rehabilitated and re-used historic structures to business and residential uses.

Strategy 1 Work with citizens to identify design elements that define the town's unique character and sense of place or that would improve design quality. A community character survey would help in this effort.

Strategy 2 Develop a set of design guidelines for new development and redevelopment based on strategy 1. Such design guidelines might address:

- Landscaping
- Preservation of green space
- Preservation of historic resources
- Placement of buildings and parking lots
- Building bulk and height
- How buildings address the street
- Signage
- Lighting

Strategy 3 Advocate the maximize use of available tax credits associated with the rehabilitation of historic structures.

Objective 5 Create more space for community events that includes a major water feature.

Strategy 1 Identify locations for and promote the development of a recreational area which can serve a variety of purposes including large assemblies for special events.

Objective 6 Work with the county to effectuate the Urban Growth Area Future Land Use Plan for the areas surrounding the town.

Strategy 1 Establish an efficient process by which review of and action on development proposals and boundary line adjustments can be completed expediently.

Objective 7 Establish a park overlay zoning to identify and protect potential future park sites.

Strategy 1 Develop a zoning approach to require, permit and/or provide incentives for park lands, linear parks and trails, pocket parks and other recreation-oriented features as described in the plan text.