

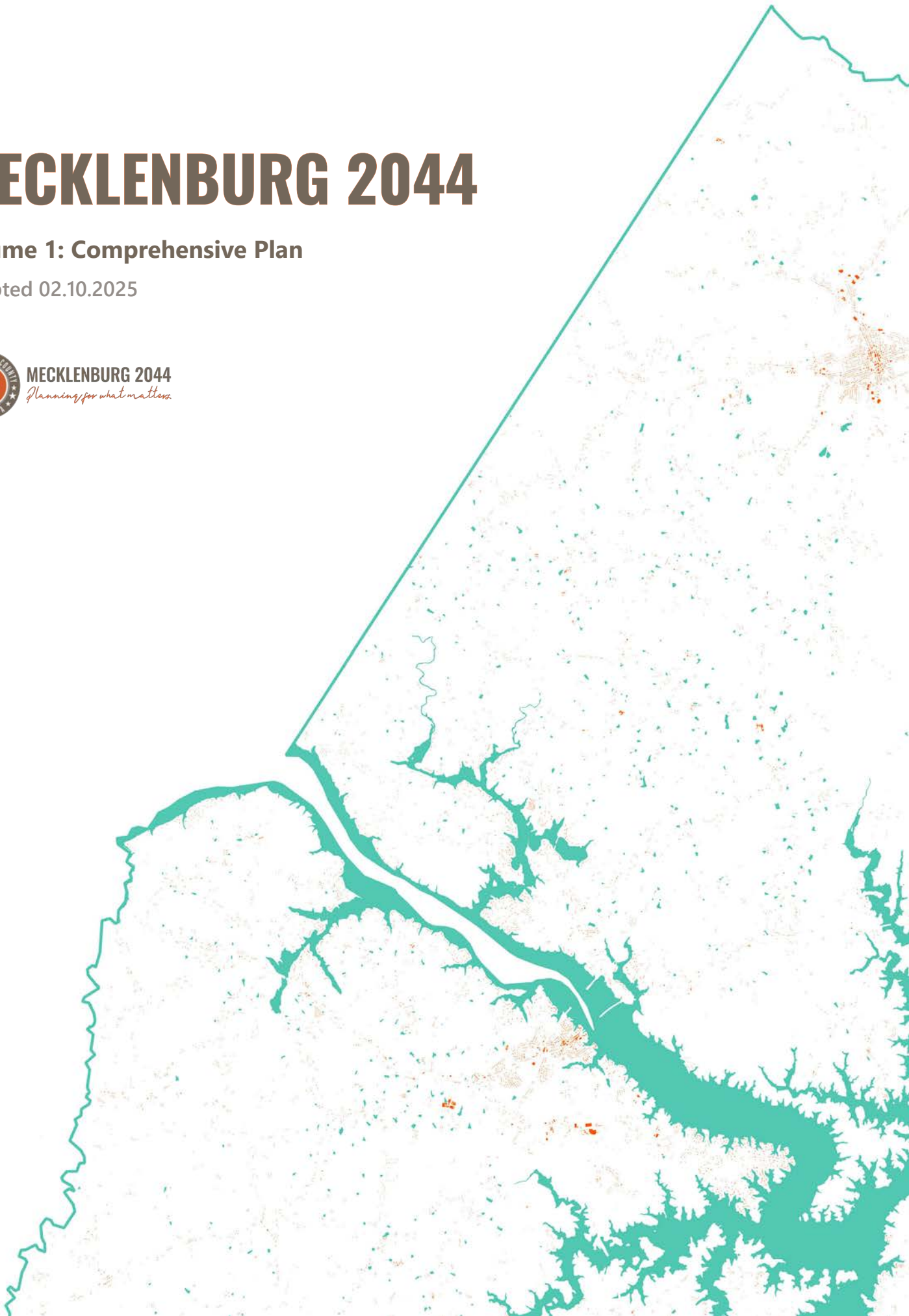
MECKLENBURG 2044

Volume 1: Comprehensive Plan

Adopted 02.10.2025



MECKLENBURG 2044
Planning for what matters



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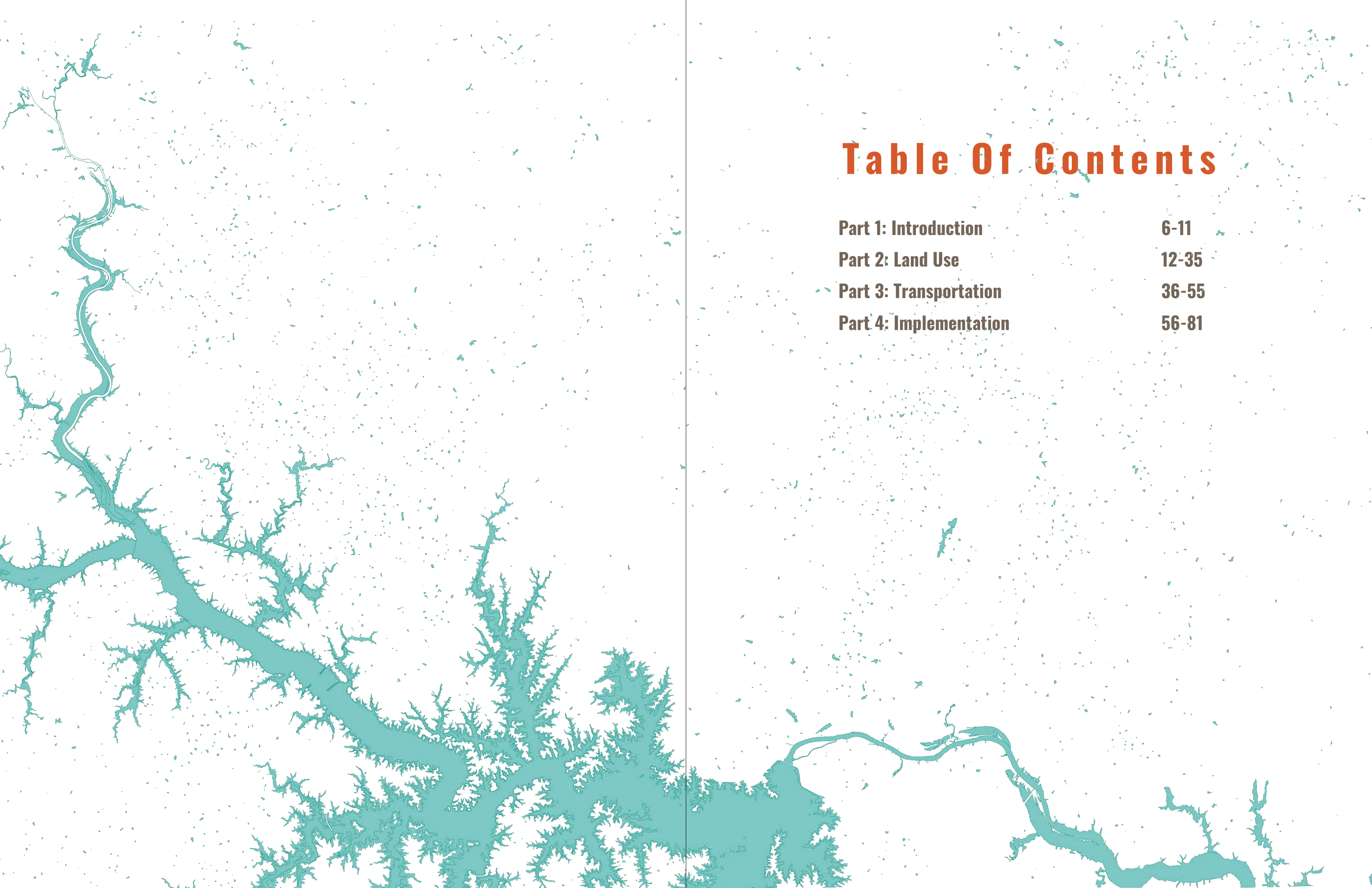


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An aerial photograph of a river system, likely a reservoir or a large river with many tributaries. The river is colored in a vibrant teal color, while the surrounding land is in shades of brown and tan. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom right, with many smaller tributaries branching off. The overall shape of the river system is somewhat irregular and complex.

PART 1: Introduction

Plan Overview
A Vision for 2044

Plan Overview

Background

A Comprehensive Plan is a vital tool for communities seeking to strategically plan for their future, address local challenges, and to identify tangible ways to improve quality of life for residents. The Comprehensive Plan, or ‘Comp Plan’ for short, offers a structured framework for guiding decision-making, allocating resources, and shaping the future of the community.

The name Mecklenburg County 2044 is used because the Plan envisions what the County might be like in 20 years, in the year 2044. The Plan outlines the County’s Vision for the future and sets out a list of Actions to implement the Vision.

Mecklenburg 2044 was developed from October 2023 - December 2024 and is the result of thorough research, analysis of demographic trends, forecasting growth, existing conditions analysis, and extensive community engagement. The Plan underscores the County’s dedication to preserving rural resources while fostering economic growth and investing in the future.

The 2044 Comprehensive Plan is a community-driven blueprint for Mecklenburg County’s future. It was crafted through extensive collaboration with local stakeholders, including high school students, local businesses, and retired residents, who share a passion for their community’s future and well-being.



Community members participate in Comp Plan roundtables in Bracey in May of 2024.

Plan Purpose and Rationale

Virginia State Code requires the local Planning Commission to review a Comprehensive Plan at least once every five years and to recommend the updated Plan to the Board of Supervisors for adoption. A Comprehensive Plan serves as an important tool for places like Mecklenburg County to make decisions related to growth and investment. The Plan integrates local issues including land use, transportation, housing, economic growth, downtown revitalization, and environmental and watershed protection.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a clear policy framework for decision-makers to evaluate development proposals, infrastructure investments, and zoning changes. The County’s elected Board of Supervisors will use the Comp Plan to guide decisions related to development proposals, such as requests to rezone properties, and to develop the County’s Capital Improvement Plan, so that these decisions help achieve the County’s Vision for the future.

With Mecklenburg County 2044, the County has established a Vision and Goals to guide future growth in a deliberate manner. The Vision is supported by specific Actions that the County and its partners can pursue in the years ahead. This approach allows the County to be intentional about investing in critical infrastructure such as public utilities and sidewalks

and quality of life improvements such as trails, parks, and recreational amenities.

By thoughtfully directing growth and protecting natural resources, the County aims to be the place where rural- and small-town life meets economic opportunity, and where people of all generations and backgrounds can call their home.

Relationship to Other Plans and Policies

Mecklenburg County 2044 establishes guidance related to topics of land use, transportation, housing, rural areas and resource preservation, and community facilities and infrastructure. More detailed policy documents and topic-specific plans should use the Comp Plan as a foundation upon which to build. Plans such as the Strategic Economic Development Plan and the Regional Transportation Plans provide detailed policies and strategies for implementation in their relative topic areas and build on the guidance established in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mecklenburg County 2044 also lays the groundwork for the County’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. These Ordinances include development regulations about what types of uses and buildings can be constructed on a property. They also include specifications for lot size, building height and size, and where a building can be placed on a lot. It is recommended that these Ordinances are updated following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that new growth and development is consistent with the recommendations from the updated Plan.

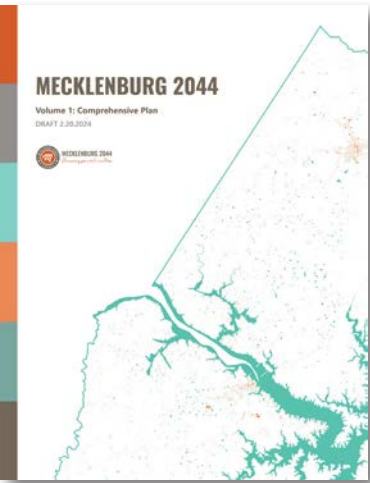
Plan Organization

Mecklenburg 2044 is divided into two volumes. Volume 1 – Mecklenburg County 2044 – includes the Vision, Future Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan, and the Implementation Plan, which includes Goals and Actions. Volume 2 – Mecklenburg County Community Story – consists of background information and data that helped inform the recommendations within Volume 1. Volume 1 serves as the primary guide for future decisions about County policies and investments and Volume 2 provides important background information and context.

The Plan is structured in this manner so that essential information is up front, which allows users to quickly access the material they need without having to navigate extensive data and background details.

Volume 1: Mecklenburg 2044

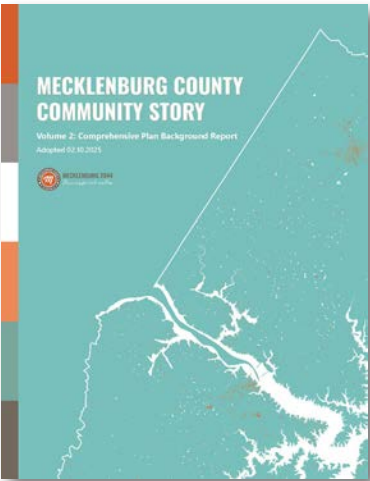
Volume 1 is the main body of the Comprehensive Plan and includes the recommendations for the future, looking ahead to the year 2044. Volume 1 includes:



- » The Vision for 2044
- » Future Land Use Plan
- » Housing & Rural Area Protection Guidance
- » Transportation Plan
- » Implementation Plan

Volume 2: Mecklenburg Community Story

Volume 2 includes the background information and analysis that were used to inform the forward-looking Plan elements. Volume 2 includes:



- » History of Mecklenburg County
- » Existing Conditions Maps
- » Demographic Information
- » Peer Communities Analysis
- » Population Projections
- » Community Input Summaries

Looking Ahead

The content on the following pages envisions a future for Mecklenburg County, looking ahead to the year 2044 and charts a course for the County and its partners to take to realize that Vision.

A Vision for 2044

Overview

Mecklenburg 2044 establishes a long-term Vision for the future of Mecklenburg County, looking ahead 20 years to the year 2044. This Vision guides decision-making related to future growth and development, transportation policy and investment, and quality of life investments throughout the Plan’s life-cycle.

The five Vision Elements are based on input from Mecklenburg County community members, County and town staff, and elected and appointed officials. Community members shared their perspectives on how they wanted the County to grow and develop in both the short-term and looking ahead 20 years.

These five Vision Elements reflect the community’s input and outline how Mecklenburg County can capitalize on its assets to become a place where rural and small-town life meets economic opportunity.

Applying the Vision Elements

The Vision provides the foundation for the remaining sections of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Plan, Transportation Recommendations, and the Implementation Section. The Vision Elements are used as an organizing feature of the recommended Goals and Actions included in Part 4 of the Plan. Each Action within Part 4 aligns with at least one Vision Element. Many Actions combine more than one Vision Element, thereby becoming higher priorities for implementation.

The symbols shown next to each Vision Element are used in the Plan to illustrate when a Plan recommendation aligns with one or multiple Vision Elements.



Mecklenburg County 2044: Where rural- and small-town life meets economic opportunity. Here’s what defines us:

A Rural Place: We will protect our rural landscape and resources including the County’s lakes and waterways, forests, productive farmlands, and historic and cultural resources. Future growth and development will be carefully sited and designed to protect our most valued resources.

Modern Infrastructure and Amenities: Mecklenburg County will have modern amenities including unparalleled recreational resources, high-speed internet, and modern public facilities, schools, libraries, and emergency services, supported by high quality transportation networks and well-functioning public utilities.

A Place for All Generations and Backgrounds: Residents of all ages and backgrounds will have access to high quality healthcare and education. People of all incomes will have access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing, economic opportunities, and cultural richness.

Thriving Business Environment: We will attract and nurture businesses, including small businesses, with cutting-edge technology, a skilled workforce, and quality places to live.

Vibrant Small Towns: Mecklenburg County will continue to partner with our towns to identify shared goals for the future. Towns will have prosperous main streets that are a hub of small business activity surrounded by thriving neighborhoods.

An aerial photograph of a river network, likely the Chesapeake Bay area, showing a complex web of waterways and surrounding land. A teal-colored rectangular area is overlaid on the top-left portion of the map. The title 'PART 2: Land Use' is positioned in the teal area on the right side.

PART 2: Land Use

Land Use Overview
Future Land Use Framework
Future Land Use Plan
Future Land Use Categories
Mecklenburg's Towns

Land Use

Purpose and Rationale

The Future Land Use Plan is an essential tool for helping the County achieve its Vision. The Future Land Use Plan provides overarching direction about which areas of the County are most appropriate for future growth and development and which areas of the County should be protected as farms, forests, and open spaces.

Mecklenburg County is a mostly rural County and community members have expressed a desire to keep it a rural place. While residents value the county’s rural lifestyle, they also conveyed a need for improved infrastructure, services, and access to vibrant downtowns.

The Future Land Use Plan outlines a growth pattern that aligns with the Vision of preserving rural areas of the County while providing the County’s residents access to high quality places to live. The Future Land Use Plan intentionally concentrates residential growth in areas where public water and sewer

service is already available or is able to be served by public facilities in the future. For the most part, these areas are adjacent to towns. The Plan also builds in an assumption that the towns will absorb some residential growth and most, if not all, future commercial growth.

Industrial land uses are strategically focused around existing industrial parks and areas with established industrial uses. This approach prioritizes industrial growth within existing industrial zones, preventing further encroachment into rural or undeveloped areas.

The Future Land Use Plan establishes a framework for strategic and cost-efficient growth in Mecklenburg County. By focusing new residential development within and near towns and concentrating industrial growth in appropriate locations, the Future Land Use Plan helps preserve Mecklenburg’s open spaces, farms, forests, and waterways, while providing residents with access to high quality places to live.



Land Use Elements

The elements of the Land Use section of this Plan include the Future Land Use Framework (pages 16-19) the Future Land Use Plan (pages 20-21) and the Land Use Categories (pages 22-28). The Land Use section also includes recommendations for supporting Goals related to housing needs, for protecting rural areas, and for partnering with the County’s towns to create more vibrant main streets.

The Future Land Use Plan should be used to guide future development decisions in Mecklenburg County. Property owners and developers hoping to build within the County should use the Future Land Use Plan to determine appropriate uses, forms, and designs for their projects. The County’s Planning Commission and elected Board of Supervisors will also use the Future Land Use Plan to guide decisions related to development proposals, such as requests to rezone properties.

While the Future Land Use Plan provides guidance, it does not contain regulations or strict rules. County staff and officials should review the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to identify where updates might be needed to better reflect the land use

recommendations of the Future Land Use Plan. It can also be used in the creation of a Design Standards Manual that can be used to guide the design of future development, streets, and associated infrastructure.

In addition, the Future Land Use Plan can help the Board make decisions about infrastructure investments. The Future Land Use Plan shows areas that may experience growth and change in the future and may need additional infrastructure to support that growth. The areas designated for residential and industrial uses may need upgrades to the street network and utilities to accommodate expected growth and change.

It will take years for the Future Land Use Plan to be realized. Successful implementation will require collaboration among the County, the development community, residents, and other stakeholders. The Plan will be carried out piece by piece over time, as private development occurs. While it’s possible full achievement of the County’s Vision may take decades, the Future Land Use Plan will help ensure that future development is orderly, coordinated, and steadily moves the County towards its long-term Goals.



Future Land Use Framework

Balancing Growth & Rural Area Protection

The Future Land Use Framework lays out a pattern of growth and preservation that aims to concentrate residential and commercial development within and near the County’s towns. This growth pattern will help to foster high-quality residential areas for the County’s current and future residents that will place housing in close proximity to local jobs, commercial centers, public utilities, and public facilities such as schools and parks. Strategically locating new housing within and near towns will also enable the

County and towns to efficiently deliver high-quality infrastructure and services to new and existing neighborhoods.

Conversely, this growth pattern aligns with the County’s Vision of protecting rural resources. By concentrating development within areas that are already developed or adjacent to developed areas, the County should prevent farmland and forests from being converted to other uses, such as low-density suburban or commercial strip development. Protecting rural areas also safeguards the health of the County’s streams, rivers, and lakes,

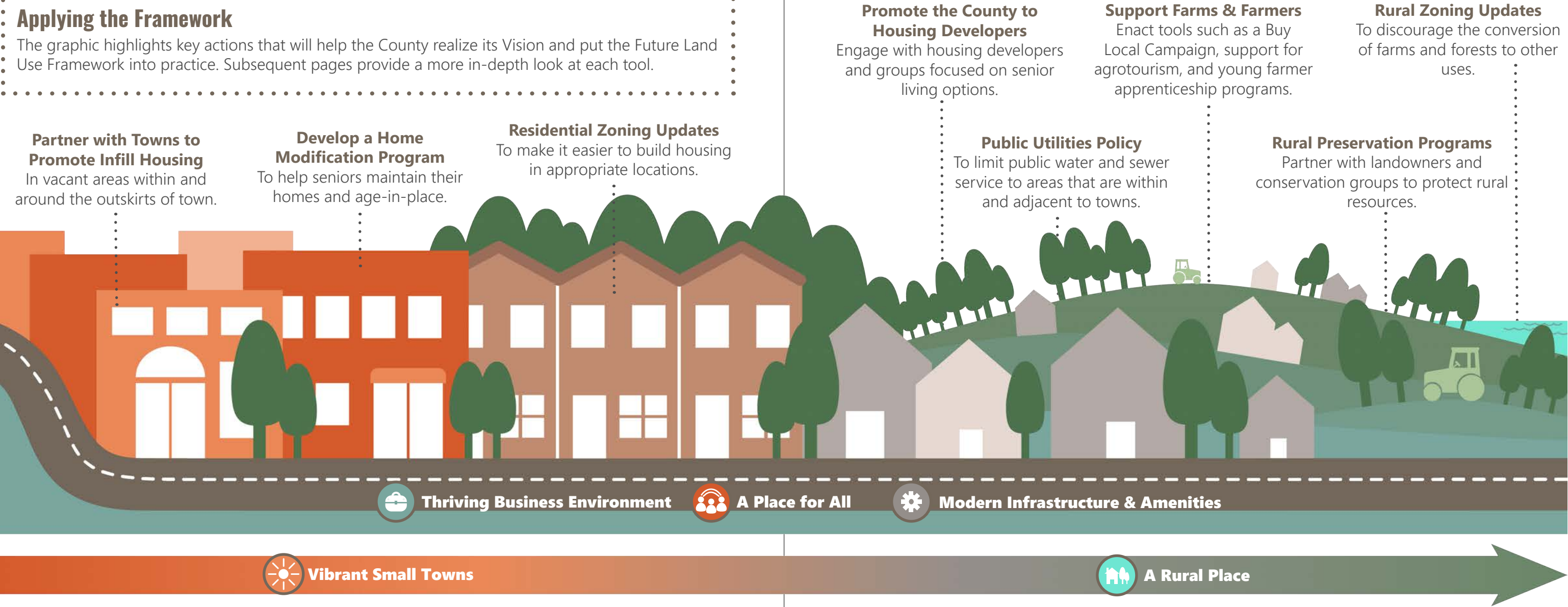
which serve as vital sources of drinking water for the region and offer significant cultural, economic, and recreational benefits to the County.

These complementary steps of directing new housing and commercial growth toward towns while protecting rural resources form the foundation of the County’s Land Use Framework. County staff, officials, and partners should keep this overarching Framework in mind as they make decisions regarding proposed development, investment, and policy and regulatory changes moving forward.

The County’s Future Land Use Framework is a direct embodiment of the 2044 Vision. The graphic demonstrates the core tenants of the Framework: to direct residential and commercial growth towards towns and to protect rural resources. The graphic shows how the Vision Elements of Vibrant Small Towns and A Rural Place complement and support each other and how the other Vision Elements align with these.

Applying the Framework

The graphic highlights key actions that will help the County realize its Vision and put the Future Land Use Framework into practice. Subsequent pages provide a more in-depth look at each tool.



Tools to Support Housing

Throughout the community engagement process, residents expressed concerns about the affordability and availability of housing in Mecklenburg County. Many shared concerns about rising housing costs, particularly the steep increase in rental housing costs. Others shared concerns about the lack of single-family homes in the County for sale, leading to many workers commuting from other places to jobs within Mecklenburg County. Additionally, seniors articulated concerns about limited opportunities for aging-in-place and senior housing options, making it difficult to downsize when maintaining a large home becomes challenging for older residents.

Expanding housing options in Mecklenburg County is crucial to enhancing the quality of life for residents, attracting new workers, and achieving the Vision of making Mecklenburg a welcoming place for people of all ages and backgrounds. The following strategies can help reduce barriers to new housing development and actively support housing growth in the County.

Residential Zoning Updates

The County should review and amend its Zoning Ordinance to eliminate obstacles to housing development and facilitate the construction of new housing, particularly smaller, more affordable units. This could involve reducing or eliminating minimum lot sizes, maximum setbacks, minimum parking requirements, and maximum density requirements. Additionally, the County should examine the types of housing permitted by-right within residential zoning districts to ensure a variety of housing options can be built in these areas, including single-family homes, townhouses, apartments, and accessory dwellings. Allowing clustered subdivisions and ‘cottage court’ style housing developments can also alleviate the burden and costs associated with owning large tracts of land for single-family homes.

Promoting the County to Housing Developers

Recent economic growth in Mecklenburg County has strained the housing market. Workers have been moving to the County for local jobs, leading to increased demand for existing housing. Meanwhile, new housing development has not kept pace with demand, resulting in long commutes for many workers. Despite Mecklenburg’s economic growth,

housing developers have shown little interest in investing in the County.

Proactively promoting the County as a desirable location for new housing development to regional developers and housing partners can help raise awareness of local needs and attract builders. Outreach should include contact with housing developers and agencies that focus on senior housing and age-in-place communities. Additionally, the County should further advance this effort by ensuring that local zoning and infrastructure are in place to support appropriate housing development.

Develop a Home Modification Program

Implementing a home modification program is a cost-effective way to assist seniors with remaining in their homes. Home modifications specifically designed for seniors can help them age in place by adapting their homes to accommodate their changing mobility and health needs. The County should seek ways to partner with local agencies and organizations like senior groups and healthcare providers to develop a home rehabilitation program that includes outreach to older residents, home assessments, collaboration with local contractors, and financial assistance tailored to homeowners’ affordability.

Partner with Towns to Promote Infill Housing

Mecklenburg’s towns are well suited for infill residential development with sufficient infrastructure and available vacant land to accommodate new growth. The County should collaborate with each town to review zoning regulations and identify infrastructure needs, ensuring that necessary tools are in place to facilitate the construction of new housing that is closer to services like schools, fire/rescue stations, jobs, and shopping. Building near town centers can also contribute to downtown revitalization by attracting more customers to local businesses.

In addition, the County should continue to collaborate with local partners, such as the Southside Planning District Commission to maximize the utilization of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grants and other federal housing programs to address local housing needs, including housing rehabilitation, rental assistance programs, and affordable housing development.

Tools to Protect Rural Areas

Preserving the County’s rural landscape and resources requires preventing the conversion of rural lands to other uses. The County should take a proactive approach to protect rural areas from future development. Below are some tools the County should implement to protect its rural areas.

Zoning Updates

The County should amend its Zoning Ordinance to restrict industrial, commercial, and suburban residential development within Rural and Rural Conservation Land Uses. Updates should include new standards to protect streams and waterways, such as implementing stream buffer requirements. To reduce the conversion of land to suburban development patterns, the County should increase minimum lot sizes and incorporate conservation subdivision standards. Regulations for solar development should be adjusted to limit the scale of new solar projects to the amount of energy needed on-site, rather than allowing for large-scale solar facilities. Community and utility-scale solar projects should be confined to industrial areas of the County.

Public Utilities Policy

One of the most effective tools to limit new development in the County’s rural lands is to adopt a policy defining where public utilities should be sited and where residents are permitted to connect to public utilities in the County. Limiting public water and sewer service to areas that are within and adjacent to towns, within areas that are designated for a non-rural land uses on the Future Land Use Plan, and setting a maximum distance that services should be provided from existing utility lines will ensure that rural lands are protected from higher intensity development. The County should also put limits on where privately owned central water and

sewer systems can be sited to further prevent sprawl in rural areas.

Rural Conservation Programs

Rural Conservation Programs are initiatives designed to preserve and protect the natural resources and agricultural lands in rural areas. These programs often involve partnerships between governments, landowners, and conservation organizations to help maintain the integrity of rural landscapes. Some examples of Rural Conservation Programs could include a purchase of development rights program, conservation easements programs, adopting an agricultural and forestal district program, or land acquisition programs to preserve rural lands as public parks, wildlife refuges, or recreational areas.

Supporting Farms and Farmers

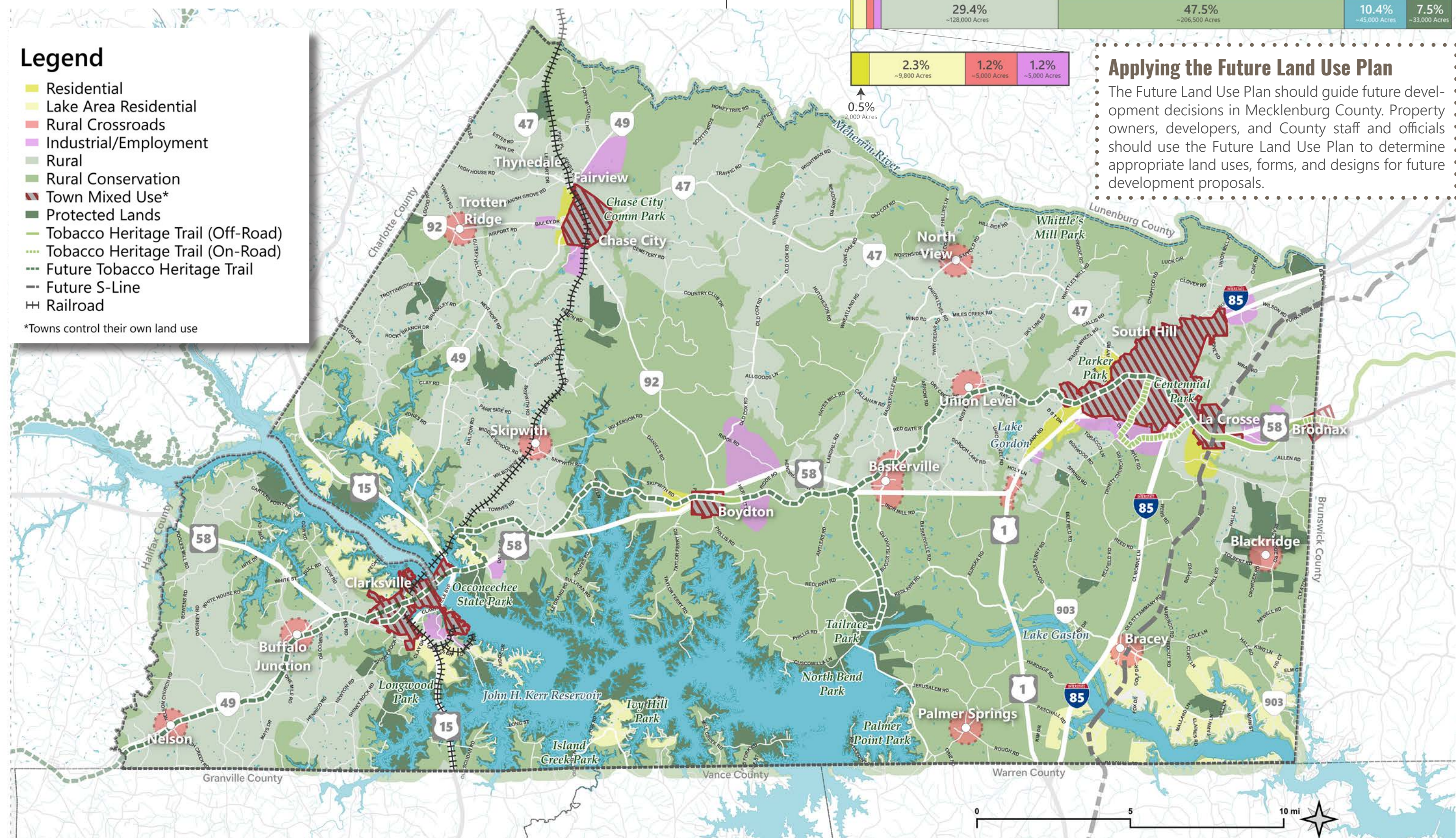
Another important aspect of protecting the County’s rural and agricultural lands is to ensure that farmers have the tools they need to keep their farms viable. Over the years, Mecklenburg has seen a sharp reduction in the number of farms. In 1950 the County had over 4000 separate farms. In 2022 at last count, there were less than 400 farms. In addition, the average age of farmers in the County continues to increase.

To counteract these trends, the County should actively seek ways to reduce barriers to farming while partnering with local organizations such as Farm Bureau and the Virginia Cooperative Extension to support farmers. Specific actions should include creating a Buy Local campaign to support the sale of locally grown products, updating local ordinances to ensure that agricultural zoning districts allow agrotourism activities, and working with local partners to foster mentorship and apprentice programs to connect experienced farmers with aspiring young farmers.



Supporting farms and farmers can help preserve the County's rural heritage and ensure the viability of local crops.

Future Land Use Plan



Residential



Intent & Description

Residential areas are where a variety of new housing is recommended. Residential growth is preferable within towns and adjacent areas where public water and sewer are available to support growth. Areas designated as Residential should be designed to encourage a variety of housing types.

Primary Uses

Single-family detached houses, townhouses, multi-plexes, apartments, and accessory dwellings.



Secondary Uses

Small-scale commercial, institutional, or retail uses such as daycares or small offices, home based businesses, parks, trails, and open spaces.



Planning & Design Guidance

- » Encourage a variety of housing types within new development.
- » Allow infill development, including accessory dwellings units within existing residential neighborhoods.
- » Require new street networks to be interconnected, with connections to existing streets and stub-outs to adjacent areas that are undeveloped.
- » Require sidewalks on both sides of streets.
- » Incorporate greenway trails and open spaces to provide access to nature.
- » Reduce setbacks and encourage houses to be built close to the street to promote walkability.

Lake Area Residential



Intent & Description

Lake Area Residential areas are those near the County's lakes with existing residential uses and opportunities for future residential development. Lake Area Residential areas should be designed to limit impacts to the County's waterways.

Primary Uses

Low-density residential development such as single-family homes, clustered residential subdivisions, small-scale apartment buildings or condos, or aging-in-place communities.



Secondary Uses

Small institutional or commercial uses may be appropriate when designed to limit impacts.



Planning & Design Guidance

- » Protect and enhance tree canopy, especially adjacent to streams and lakes.
- » Locate new home sites outside of stream buffers, floodplains, and areas of intact forest.
- » Locate new home sites in areas where there is an existing street network to reduce land disturbance and runoff.
- » Cluster new homes and protect natural features within open space easements.
- » Require construction of trail networks to connect neighborhoods to recreational amenities and to provide lake access, where applicable.
- » Encourage "low impact development practices" such as green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff and reduce impervious surface.
- » All development near the lakes should follow guidance of United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or Dominion Energy, where appropriate.

Rural Crossroads



Intent & Description

Rural Crossroads are small mixed-use areas adjacent to an intersection of a significant County road or highway. Rural Crossroads are intended to provide convenient access to goods and services for surrounding residents.

Primary Uses

Small shops, retail business, restaurants, offices, agricultural businesses, service stations, and institutional uses such as fire/rescue stations, schools, or post offices. Clustered residential uses such as single-family homes, townhouses, or apartments over top of shops are also encouraged.



Secondary Uses

Small-scale light industrial uses may be appropriate, if impacts to adjacent rural and residential areas are mitigated, though public utilities may not be available.

Planning & Design Guidance

- » Encourage a mix of uses within close proximity to one another.
- » Encourage agricultural businesses and services to locate in Rural Crossroads to protect surrounding farms and forests.
- » Locate buildings close to the street and to follow historic building patterns, where appropriate.
- » Require sidewalks or trails with new development to allow people to walk between businesses and adjacent amenities. New sidewalks should be built to VDOT standards for future VDOT maintenance.
- » Encourage reuse of historic structures within Rural Crossroads rather than demolition of these structures.
- » Most Rural Crossroads will not have access to public water and sewer and development should be limited to what can be handled by well and septic systems.



Industrial/Employment



Intent & Description

Industrial/Employment areas are intended for industrial and employment-generating businesses to locate. Often these areas need access to utilities that support businesses such as public water, wastewater, power, and access to paved roads or highways.

Primary Uses

Industrial and light industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehousing, technology companies, data storage facilities, and offices. Utility-scale solar may be co-located with other industrial uses.

Secondary Uses

General services businesses, retail, commercial uses, and institutional uses. Temporary housing may also be appropriate, especially when providing housing for contractors or construction workers.



Planning & Design Guidance

- » Screen industrial sites and parking areas from primary roadways, Rural, Rural Conservation, and adjacent residential areas and towns.
- » Site buildings, parking areas, and stormwater facilities to avoid perennial streams. With new development, restore stream buffers on site, where appropriate.
- » Where applicable, development within Industrial/Employment areas should contribute to safety improvements of the County's roadways.
- » Where applicable, development within Industrial/Employment areas should contribute to the County's parks and greenways network with construction and dedication of trails and greenways on or adjacent to industrial sites.

Rural



Intent & Description

The purpose of the Rural land use is to preserve the County’s rural landscape and to support the rural economy. Rural Lands are those dedicated to agricultural uses, forestry, and natural features such as forests, streams, and meadows.

Primary Uses

Farms, forests, forestry/silviculture, open space, natural areas, rural home sites, parks, trails, and institutional uses and utilities.



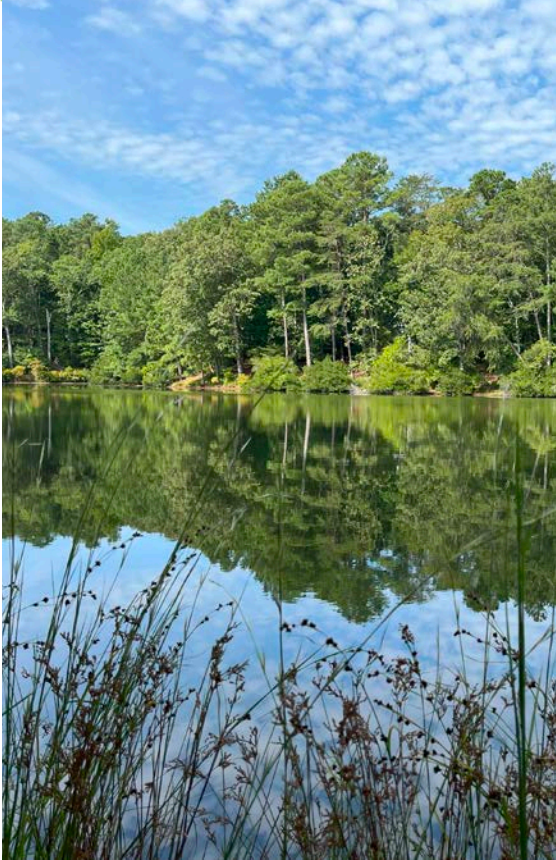
Secondary Uses

Agricultural businesses, agrotourism operations, and small rural subdivisions. Small-scale solar facilities may be appropriate in some areas, contingent upon site design, and ability to mitigate impacts to surrounding rural land uses and water resources.



- Planning & Design Guidance**
- » Discourage the conversion of large tracts of forest and prime agricultural lands to other uses.
 - » Cluster rural home sites to limit impacts to forests and farms.
 - » Establish and protect stream buffers on all perennial streams and encourage voluntary measures to reduce erosion in rural areas.
 - » Solar facilities that provide on site power may be appropriate when impacts to waterways, forests, and farmland can be appropriately mitigated.
 - » Do not site community or utility-scale solar in Rural land use areas.

Rural Conservation



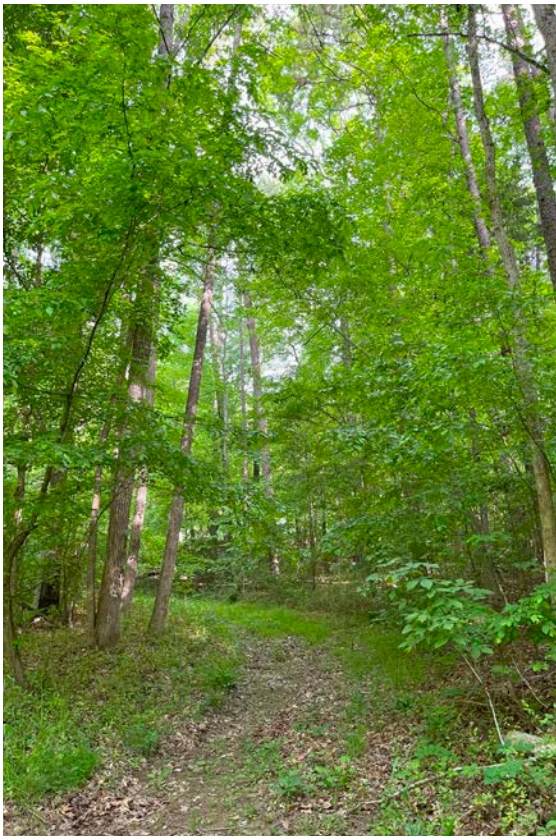
Intent & Description

Rural Conservation areas are set aside for the preservation of forests, wildlife habitats, farms, and open spaces, and for the protection of the County’s water resources. These areas coincide with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) highest priority forestlands and areas identified as ecological cores, which consist of large patches of natural land with at least one hundred acres of interior cover.

The Rural Conservation land use areas are focused on protecting areas of the highest conservation values especially those adjacent to the County’s lakes, rivers, and streams. By concentrating conservation efforts in these areas, the County can make the biggest impact towards protecting its waterways and natural resources.

Primary Uses

Forests, forestry/silviculture, open spaces, natural areas, parks, trails, farms, and institutional uses.



Secondary Uses

Rural home sites and small-scale agricultural businesses may be appropriate when sited and designed to protect environmental and agricultural resources. Utility and community-scale solar is not appropriate in Rural Conservation.

- Planning & Design Guidance**
- » Protect and enhance tree canopy, especially adjacent to streams and lakes.
 - » Establish and protect stream buffers on all perennial streams, including on working farms and encourage voluntary measures to reduce erosion and runoff in rural areas.
 - » Locate new rural home sites outside of stream buffers and floodplains. Home sites should also avoid areas of intact forests.
 - » Encourage the use of conservation easements to protect Rural Conservation areas.
 - » Do not site community or utility-scale solar within Rural Conservation land use areas.

Protected Lands



Intent & Description

Protected lands are those that have formal protections in place that prevent them from being developed. These include areas that are owned by state or federal agencies, such as land adjacent to Kerr Lake owned by the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), land adjacent to Lake Gaston owned by Dominion Virginia Power, parks and wildlife areas owned by the Virginia Department of Conservation (DCR), and privately owned properties that are permanently protected by conservation easements.

Primary Uses

Parks, wildlife management areas, forests, open space, natural areas, farms, waterways, trails and greenways, and recreational facilities.

Planning & Design Guidance

- » Few buildings are expected, though community-serving uses such as visitors centers and public facilities may be appropriate.
- » When needed, buildings should be sited to protect natural resources and to blend in with the natural surroundings.
- » Protected lands accessible to the public should connect with nearby public amenities through a network of trails and greenways.
- » Public access should be maintained in good repair for continuous access (for example, clearing brush from trails, maintaining planks on walkways, clearing fallen logs from the lakes, etc.)

Honoring the Past and Looking to the Future

Strategic land use planning is crucial for creating authentic and high-quality places while preserving Mecklenburg County’s rural and historic fabric. Rural area protection, outdoor recreation, and historic preservation are interconnected elements of the County’s identity. By safeguarding its rural heritage, the County can directly connect with its past while creating new opportunities for the future.

Mecklenburg County’s outdoor recreation opportunities are deeply rooted in its history and rural heritage. The Tobacco Heritage Trail, for instance, is a testament to the County’s tobacco-growing past. Today, the trail offers a chance to connect with nature while learning about the region’s history. By leveraging these unique resources, the County can continue to enhance the quality of life for its residents, while honoring and protecting its rural heritage.

By preserving its historic resources, Mecklenburg County can not only honor its heritage but also address housing needs. The conversion of historic buildings into housing has proven to be a successful strategy in the County and its towns. The County should continue to support initiatives that promote historic preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures. This can help the County honor its past while creating authentic, high-quality places for current and future generations.

By carefully considering how its land and resources are used, developed, and protected, the County can safeguard natural landscapes, create vibrant recreational spaces, support housing goals, and preserve its cultural heritage for future generations.

Partnering with Mecklenburg’s Towns

Protecting Rural Areas means that most new development should happen in or near the County’s towns. New growth in the towns will not only protect the County’s rural resources, it will also revitalize main streets and downtowns by bringing new people and families to support local businesses.

There are six independent towns in Mecklenburg County. Each town has its own comprehensive plan and controls zoning within its boundaries. Decisions

about where and how new growth occurs within towns are made by each individual Town Council. However, the towns and County work closely together to provide services and infrastructure to County and town residents.

The County and towns should continue to work together to support shared goals, such as building out the parks and greenways network, making strategic investments to support local main streets, and carefully considering and coordinating about the location and type of new development within and adjacent to towns.

Each town’s distinctive characteristics, history, and culture should be celebrated and enhanced. Strategic decisions regarding future investments and policy and development decisions can collectively contribute to achieving the County’s Vision towards revitalizing main streets and fostering vibrant small towns.

The following section highlights opportunities and assets that the County can help preserve and promote for each town, along with some shared goals for the County and towns to consider as partnership opportunities moving forward.



Encouraging infill housing development, especially within historic structures within the County’s towns, can help support downtown businesses and increase housing supply for the County and its towns. Pictured above: a former school building in Boydton.

Boydton



County Courthouse in central Boydton.



Ruins from the original Randolph Macon College site.

Community Assets & Opportunities

Boydton is a small yet historically significant town centrally located in Mecklenburg County. It serves as the County seat and civic center. The County Courts, County Administrative Offices, a branch of the Mecklenburg County Library, County Health Department, and a new public safety building that will house the Sheriff’s Department and the Emergency Services Department (currently under development) are all located in Boydton.

Boydton was the original home of Randolph Macon College, which left Boydton after the Civil War. Remnants of the college still stand near the intersection of U.S. 58 and West Jefferson Street. The Old Brunswick Circuit Foundation (OBCF), a nonprofit organization, acquired the site in 2009 and is working to preserve the ruins.

Boydton is also home to Boyd’s Tavern, built in 1790. This historic landmark served as the County’s original jail and courthouse. Today, Boyd’s Tavern is owned and operated by the Boyd Tavern Foundation, which hosts events, tours, and offers the inn for rental.

Recent streetscape improvements have created a welcoming atmosphere for both residents and visitors to Boydton. In addition, the town’s proximity to the new high school and middle school, Kerr Lake Reservoir, and the Tobacco Heritage Trail makes it an ideal location for future residential growth with ample space for new housing within its borders.

Shared Goals:

1. Identify final alignment and secure funding for the section of the Tobacco Heritage Trail extending west of town between the existing segment and the Skipwith Road to Rudd’s Creek portion of the Tobacco Heritage Trail, which is currently funded and soon to be built.
2. Work with town officials to identify areas where new housing can be built in a way that respects the town’s historic fabric; update town ordinances to support and encourage appropriate infill development and ensure adequate infrastructure is in place.
3. Encourage and support the growth of small businesses in downtown store-fronts.
4. Continue to support efforts to protect the town’s historic resources and identify opportunities for adaptive reuse.

Brodnax



Public mural in Brodnax.

Community Assets & Opportunities

Brodnax, Virginia, stands as a distinctive border town, divided between Mecklenburg County and Brunswick County. Brodnax was founded in the early 19th century and named after William H. Brodnax, a prominent local figure who served in the Virginia House of Delegates and the state militia. The town developed as a railroad stop on the Atlantic and Danville Railway, and it quickly became a bustling center of commerce and trade.

Today, Brodnax is an agricultural hub and trail town that can take advantage of the benefits offered by the Tobacco Heritage Trail. This trail provides not only recreational opportunities for walking, biking, and exploring the natural landscape but also serves as a living connection to the town’s agricultural heritage, which has deeply influenced its development.

In recent years, downtown Brodnax has undergone improvements, including a new town clock and ongoing renovations to the historic railroad depot as a Tobacco Heritage Trail attraction with a museum, playground, and visitor facilities. Other public projects completed in 2016 include water system upgrades on Route 58, Governor Harrison Parkway, to replace aging water lines and install fire hydrants serving downtown and a residential neighborhood (funded by approximately \$1.5 million from the Community Development Block Grant and USDA Rural Development).

Shared Goals:

1. Actively market the Tobacco Heritage Trail to attract a diverse range of visitors and outdoor enthusiasts to the County and town.
2. Continue to explore opportunities for industrial development west of town along Route 58 to promote job creation.
3. Continue to expand the Tobacco Heritage Trail westward to enhance inter-town connectivity between Brodnax, La Crosse, South Hill and other County amenities.
4. Work with town to identify needs and shared goals towards downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and infill housing development.

Clarksville



Downtown Clarksville.

Community Assets & Opportunities

The area known today as Clarksville was initially inhabited by the Occoneechee Indians; however, once the area’s temperate climate and fertile soils were discovered by European settlers, the Occoneechee were forced to flee the area. As Europeans transformed the area and built out its tobacco infrastructure, Clarksville became one of the most productive tobacco markets in Virginia.

The construction of Kerr Lake in the 1950s reshaped Mecklenburg County and positioned Clarksville as Virginia’s only lakeside town. The lake has redefined Clarksville’s culture and economy as one of outdoor recreation and tourism, with the town offering ample opportunities for boating, fishing, camping, and hiking. Clarksville also hosts a variety of regionally significant fishing tournaments and annual festivals.

Clarksville is strategically positioned for waterfront living. Its well-preserved downtown area makes it a prime location for mixed-use developments that integrate residential areas with local businesses. Many of the historic buildings along Main Street remain intact and offer opportunities for live work and small business growth. The combination of Clarksville’s historic appeal and its proximity to the lake creates a compelling environment for future development and enhanced public access to the lake for residents and visitors.

Shared Goals:

1. Expand public access to Kerr Lake, improve and clean up the shoreline area adjacent to town, and implement safety measures.
2. Enhance connectivity between Clarksville and Occoneechee State Park.
3. Explore opportunities for greenway connectivity between Clarksville and the Granville County, NC greenway network along the abandoned rail line.
4. Work with town officials to identify needs and shared goals towards downtown revitalization, infill housing development, and waterfront mixed use development in Clarksville.
5. Continue to support efforts to protect the town’s historic resources and identify opportunities for adaptive reuse.

Chase City



Southside Roller Mills building.



Historic MacCallum More Museum and Gardens.

Community Assets & Opportunities

Chase City was established in 1873 and named for Salmon P. Chase, United States Chief Justice. Like many of Mecklenburg’s towns, Chase City also boasts a rich agriculture heritage. The arrival of the Atlantic, Richmond, and Danville Railroad in 1883 fueled rapid commercial growth as Chase City served as a hub for the Piedmont region’s tobacco trade, lumber mills, and other agricultural activities.

The town’s agricultural legacy is reflected in the historic buildings that still stand including the Southside Roller Mills (circa 1912) and the large Banner Tobacco Warehouse. The Chase City Warehouse and Commercial Historic District covers nearly 27 acres along Chase City’s Main Street and the railroad lines. The Historic MacCallum More Museum and Gardens is also on the National Historic Register and serves as the town’s visitors center.

During its prominence in the early 20th century, Chase City was the County’s largest population and employment center. However, declines in the railroad, tobacco market, and the construction of I-85 rerouted much of the local trade and commerce away from Chase City.

Despite its rich heritage and former economic success, many storefronts along Chase City’s Main Street sit vacant today. Local residents and nonprofit organizations are working to revitalize historic buildings, such as the Mecca Theater downtown.

Shared Goals:

1. Work with town officials to identify needs and shared goals towards downtown revitalization in Chase City, including conducting an inventory of vacant and underutilized commercial buildings.
2. Seek partnerships with town and local organizations to support the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Chase City.
3. Explore opportunities to improve inter-town bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between Chase City and Clarksville and between Chase City and South Hill.
4. Partner with DCR and town officials to enhance conservation efforts along the Meherrin River Scenic River Corridor and to improve public access, including investigating the possibility of creating a public access point and boat launch near Chase City.

La Crosse



Downtown La Crosse.

Community Assets & Opportunities

La Crosse derived its name from its status as a place where two railroads cross. Its history has long been intertwined with the railroad, which was founded in the late 1800s. The railroad junction attracted local businesses and residents and the town was officially incorporated in 1901.

La Crosse experienced a decline in commerce and population with the decline in railroad traffic in the 20th century, and the eventual closure of the CSX rail line and removal of the tracks in 1980. Today, La Crosse is located at the intersection of I-85 and Virginia Route 58.

Present day La Crosse is emerging as a gateway to outdoor recreation. It is becoming a trail hub town that attracts hikers and cyclists with its proximity to trails and outdoor amenities, including a 13-mile segment of the Tobacco Heritage Trail, east of town.

La Crosse’s future may still be intertwined with the railroad, as the new Richmond to Raleigh (R2R) rail line is proposed along the former alignment of the CSX tracks through La Crosse. Though final station locations have yet to be identified, La Crosse has the potential for a future stop in town. A R2R stop in La Crosse would connect Southside Virginia to the rail corridor and could bring new opportunities for residential and commercial growth in La Crosse and Mecklenburg County.

Shared Goals:

1. Collaborate with La Crosse officials to advocate for and plan a rail station within the town. This effort should involve:
 - » Meeting with state officials to promote the advantages of locating a station in La Crosse.
 - » Working with state officials to acquire sufficient land for the station and associated parking.
 - » Conducting a zoning audit to ensure that areas adjacent to the station in the town and County allow for appropriate-scale infill development to foster walkable and transit-oriented development patterns.
2. Continue to develop and enhance segments of the Tobacco Heritage Trail to make La Crosse a more attractive destination for tourists and solidify its position as a multimodal transportation hub within the County.
3. Work with town to identify needs and shared goals towards downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and infill housing development.

South Hill



Centennial Park in South Hill.

Community Assets & Opportunities

South Hill is the largest town in Mecklenburg County. Founded in 1889, it quickly became a thriving center for agriculture and commerce, particularly the tobacco and lumber industries. The town’s growth was further fueled by the addition of major US highways including U.S. 1, U.S. 58, and I-85.

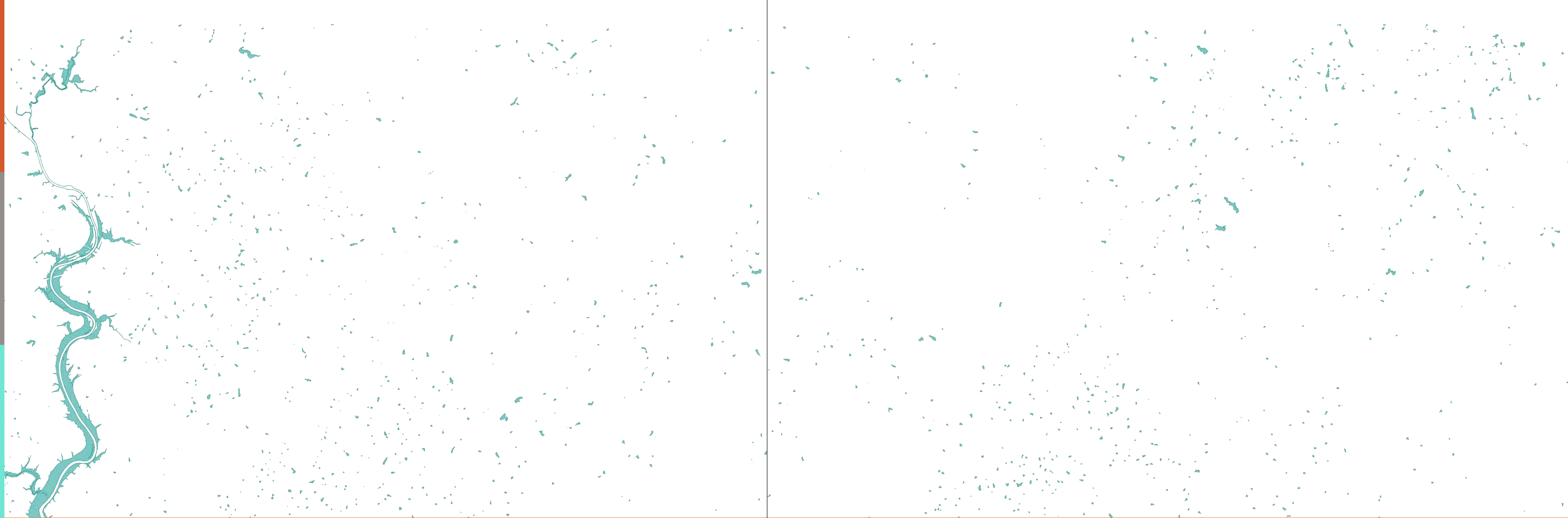
South Hill is just over an hour drive from both Richmond and the Triangle Region. As such, it has become a convenient stop for those journeying between the larger cities.

South Hill still retains some of its historic fabric, including several downtown buildings that have been preserved and adaptively reused, such as the former South Hill High School building that has been converted to lofts and a restaurant. Recent community investments, like the South Hill Market Square, which hosts a weekly farmers’ market and Centennial Park, which hosts various festivals and events, have contributed to the vibrancy of downtown South Hill.

Despite retaining its historic downtown, in recent years growth on the periphery of South Hill has been in the form of auto-oriented, commercial strip development. While convenient for travelers, this dispersed, retail-heavy form of development can be unsafe for pedestrians and drivers and lacks living and working spaces for locals.

Shared Goals:

1. Partner with DCR and town officials to enhance conservation efforts along the Meherrin River Scenic River Corridor and to improve public access, including improvements to Whittle’s Mill Park.
2. Collaborate with town officials to evaluate the town’s sidewalk network and identify areas where sidewalk infrastructure can be improved to enhance walkability within the town and adjacent areas of the County.
3. Assess the feasibility of creating bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Route 903/Goode’s Ferry Road between the Brunswick County line and South Hill.
4. Extend the Tobacco Heritage Trail west of town and consider opportunities for a trailhead at Union Level.
5. Work with town to identify needs and shared goals towards downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and infill housing development, and residential development in the vacant outskirts of town.



PART 3: Transportation



- Transportation Overview
- Existing Network
- Transportation Priorities
- Future Network
- Secondary Roads Paving Plan
- Active Transportation
- Public Transit

Transportation

Purpose & Goals

The Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan charts a course for a safer transportation network that offers more choices for getting around. This Plan prioritizes enhanced safety of the current network and building out more trails and greenways as essential components of the transportation network. By focusing on the safety of the County's streets and highways and investing in more multimodal transportation options, the County can support its Vision, especially the Vision Elements of Modern Infrastructure and Amenities and A Place For All Generations And Backgrounds.

While most residents use personal vehicles to get around the County, this Plan lays the groundwork for a future where residents have expanded transportation choices. By building out portions of the Tobacco Heritage Trail, adding bicycle and pedestrian facilities to existing streets, and exploring opportunities for passenger rail, the County can create more choices for residents to get around while preserving capacity on the County's streets.



Tobacco Heritage Trail trailhead in Boynton.

The Transportation section pulls recommendations from existing plans and policies, such as the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. This section also establishes criteria for identifying future improvements and includes a prioritized list of projects for the County to focus on in the coming

years to support the Goals of enhancing safety throughout the County, expanding transportation options, and developing a more extensive network of greenways and trails.

Planning Context

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is responsible for the ownership, maintenance, and upkeep of the majority of Mecklenburg County's streets, as well as related infrastructure like culverts and bridges. In addition, some streets in the County are private streets, with maintenance being the responsibility of the residents along that street, such as in the case of a subdivision with private streets maintained by a Homeowners' Association.

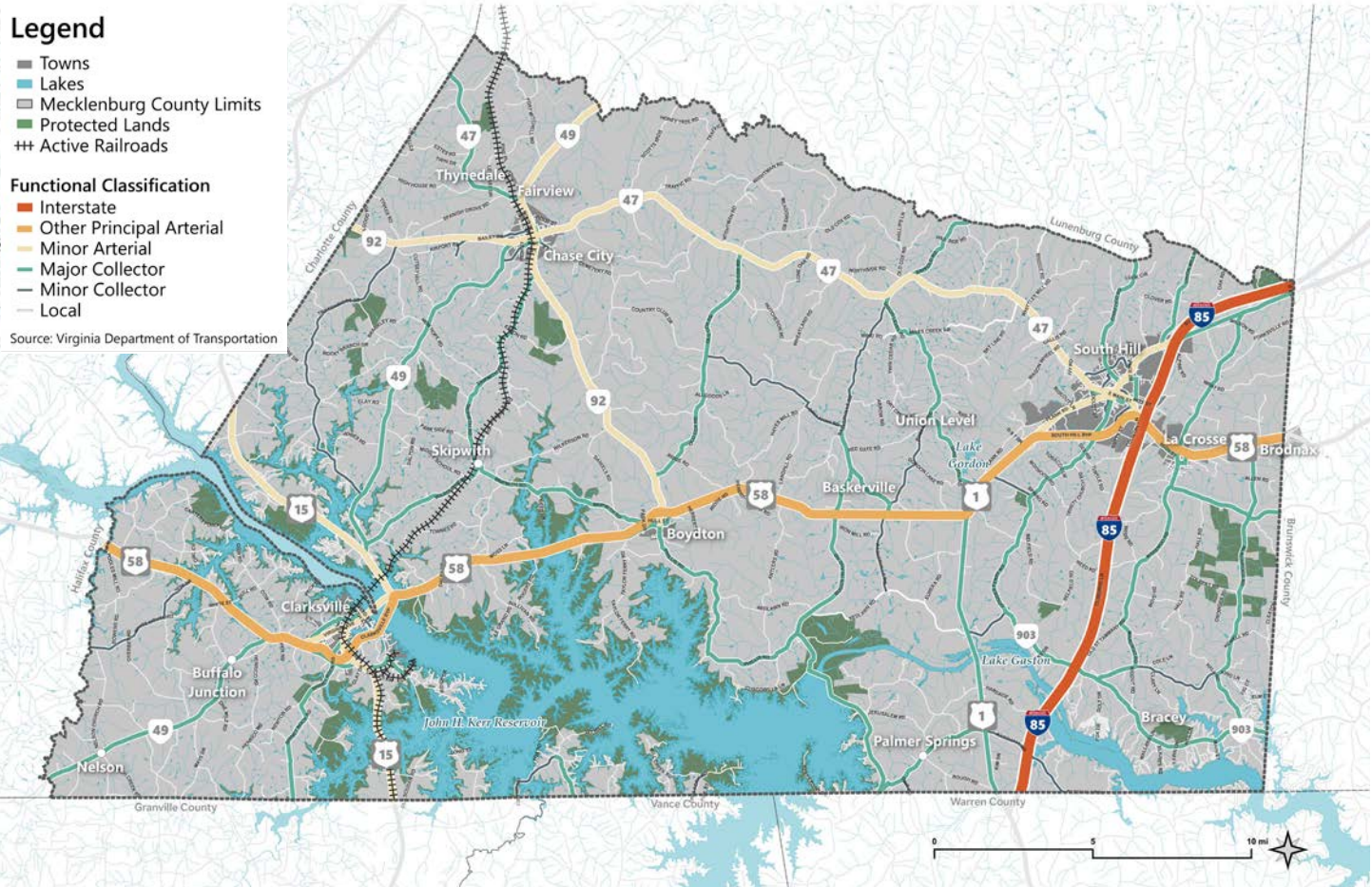


Route 664 in Union Level has a functional classification of a Major Collector.

VDOT partners with local governments by providing financial assistance, participating in collaborative planning, and offering technical support for local transportation initiatives.

The recommendations in this section should be used to identify future projects that the County can pursue in collaboration with VDOT. The County should use the recommendations to apply for financial assistance from VDOT through programs such as Smart Scale, Revenue Sharing, or Transportation Alternatives to fund the design and implementation of the recommended priorities. In addition, the County should remain proactive in addressing local needs as they arise by continuing to evaluate and invest in the safety and accessibility of the County's transportation network.

VDOT Functional Classification



Existing Network

Network Classification

VDOT categorizes streets and highways into different classes based on their intended purpose and function within the transportation network. This classification system helps in efficient planning, design, and maintenance. The map above shows the functional classification for streets and highways within Mecklenburg County with a description of each classification below.

VDOT Functional Classifications

Interstate: A highway that connects two or more states that is part of the nationwide U.S. Interstate Highway System. Interstates are typically high-speed, controlled-access roadways designed for long-distance travel.

Principal Arterial: High-capacity streets and highways designed for long-distance travel between

major cities and urban areas. They often include interstates, freeways, and expressways.

Minor Arterial: These streets connect smaller urban areas and serve as collectors for traffic from local streets. They typically carry higher traffic volumes than collectors.

Major Collector: These streets collect traffic from local streets and feed it into arterial streets. They serve as distributors between rural areas and urban centers.

Minor Collector: Streets that serve as collectors of traffic from local streets and or other collectors and they handle lower traffic volumes and speeds than major collectors.

Local: Streets primarily used for access to residential, commercial, and industrial areas. They have lower traffic volumes and speeds compared to other classifications.

Network Needs & Deficiencies

The map at right highlights ‘deficiencies and needs’ that have been identified through two other planning processes: the 2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan and the VTrans Statewide Transportation Plan. Below is a description of each planning process and how it is used:



The 2045 RL RTP was adopted in August 2021.

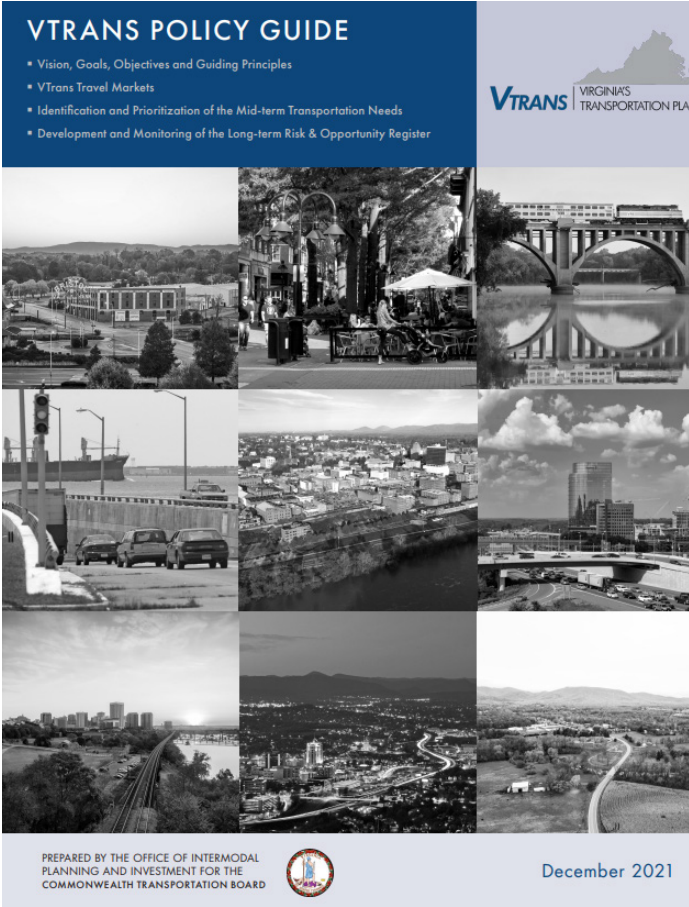
2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP): The RL RTP is a regional plan outlining transportation needs and priorities for the localities within the Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC). The SPDC serves the counties of Brunswick, Halifax, and Mecklenburg, and the twelve towns located within those counties. The RL RTP was developed by the SPDC through collaboration between VDOT, the local governments within the SPDC, and the public.

The RL RTP looks ahead to the year 2045 and identifies transportation funding priorities for the region and for individual localities. The RL RTP is intended to be used to guide future transportation projects and funding decisions and the PDC and individual localities use the recommendations to determine projects they will pursue further for design and construction assistance.

VTrans Statewide Transportation Plan: VTrans is Virginia’s comprehensive plan for transportation. It outlines the Commonwealth’s vision, goals, and strategies for improving transportation infrastructure

and systems. It sets the overall vision and objectives for transportation in Virginia, and identifies the most critical transportation needs based on factors like congestion, safety, and economic development.

VTrans is used to guide the distribution of funding for transportation projects through programs like Smart Scale and Revenue Sharing. While it’s not a direct funding source itself, VTrans provides the essential framework for allocating funds to local projects within Virginia.

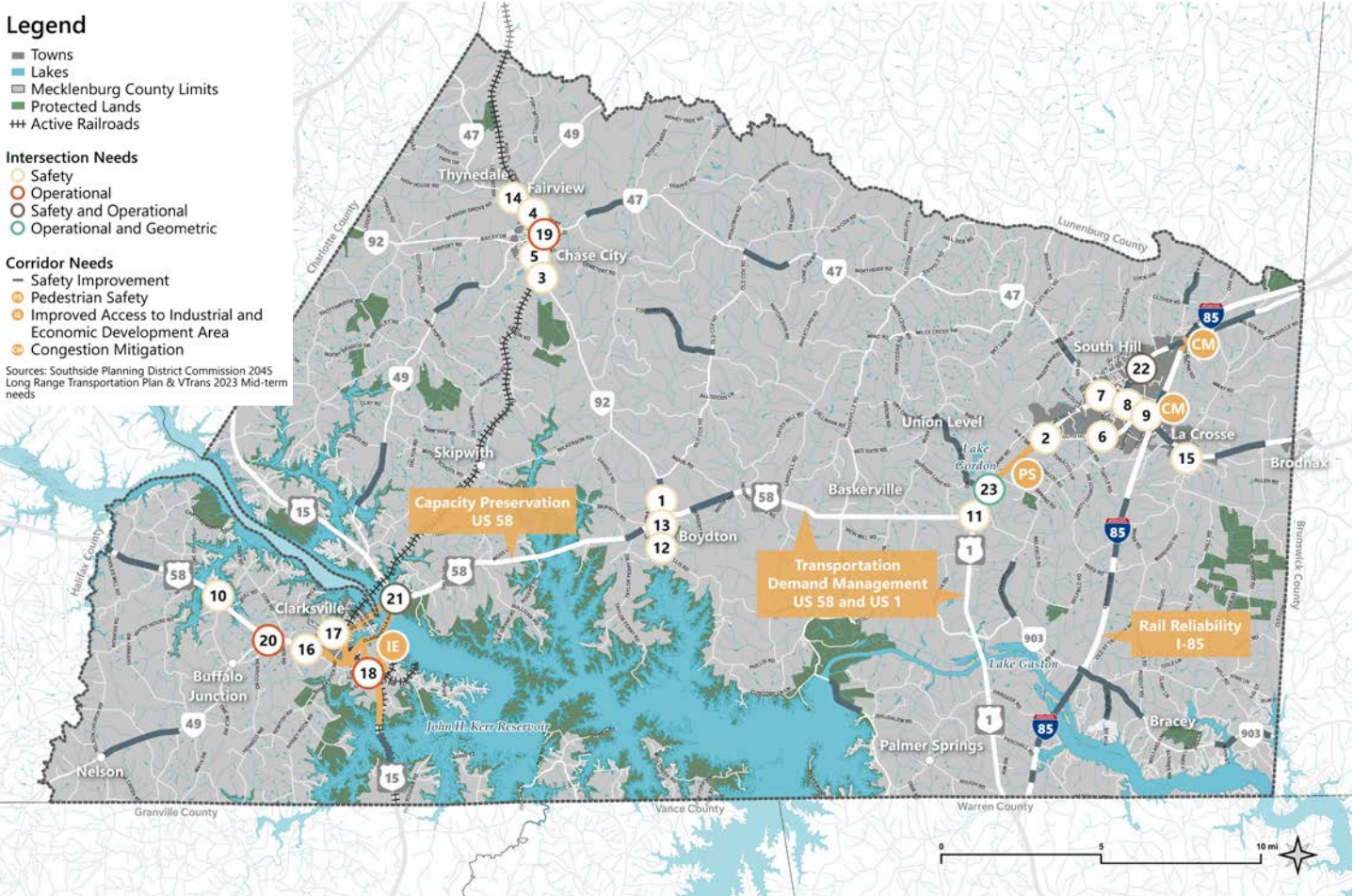


VTrans’ County-level data is available on their website with an online mapping tool.

Network Trends

Generally, capacity and congestion are not major issues on Mecklenburg County’s roadways. Some minor areas for congestion mitigation are identified at the South Hill I-85 interchange. VTrans has identified other deficiencies including capacity preservation on Route 58, which is an indication that it currently has sufficient capacity and work should be done to preserve that capacity. The primary

County Streets Deficiencies & Needs



ID	Deficiency	Location	Description
1	Safety	US 58/VA 92	Short-term trim trees on SW corner; Mid-term install street lighting on south side of intersection, improve WB right turn lane for trucks; Long-term reconstruct intersection with appropriate turn lanes.
2	Safety	US 58/VA 780	Long-term reconstruct roadway to improve alignments.
3	Safety	VA 92/VA 688	Long-term reconstruct intersection to tie VA 688 in at a more desirable angle (90 degrees).
4	Safety	VA 49/VA 47/ Dodd St	Mid-term increase turning radius in southeast corner.
5	Safety	VA 49/VA 92/VA 47	Mid-term continue to monitor for turning radii improvements and install pedestrian improvements.
6	Safety	US 58/Maple Lane	Short-term improve turn radii for northbound and eastbound approaches; Long-term lengthen westbound left turn lane and consider signalization.
7	Safety	US 1/Main St	Long-term consider converting to right-in/right-out on Main St with a median divide.

ID	Deficiency	Location	Description
8	Safety	US 58 Bus/VA 47/ Maple Ln	Mid-term reconstruct median to accommodate a westbound left turn lane at Maple Lane.
9	Safety	US 58 Bus/VA 47/ Hammer St	Short-term install crosswalks and incorporate pedestrian phasing as part of signal operations; Long-term continue to monitor for roadway improvements.
10	Safety	US 58/VA 734	Long-term monitor for improvements to intersection.
11	Safety	US 58/US 1	Long-term monitor for improvements to intersection.
12	Safety	Washington St/ Finch Ln	Mid-term monitor for intersection improvements.
13	Safety	Washington St/ US 58 Bus	Mid-term monitor for intersection improvements, specifically sight distance.
14	Safety	N Main St/ VA 47	Mid-term monitor for intersection improvements.
15	Safety	Pine St/Main St	Long-term monitor for intersection improvements.
16	Safety	US 58/Virginia Ave	Long-term monitor for intersection improvements and turn lanes.
17	Safety	Virginia Ave/ Woodland Dr	Extend EB turn lanes on Virginia Ave and make other intersection improvements as warranted.
18	Operational	US 15/VA 722	Long-term apply access management techniques to consolidate entrances/exits along US 15 in the NB direction.
19	Operational	VA 47/ VA 49/ Fourth St	Long-term install signal at intersection when warranted by traffic volumes.
20	Operational	US 58/VA 49	Long-term consider an acceleration lane on US 58 E and extend left turn lane on US 58 WB.
21	Safety / Operational	US 58 Bus/US 15/ VA 49	Short-term improve signage, pavement markings, and consider rumble strips; Mid-term install a roundabout.
22	Safety / Operational	US 1/E Ferrell St	Long-term reconstruct all approaches to improve right turn radii and upgrade to signalized intersection.
23	Operational / Geometric	US 58/VA 664	Long-term monitor for intersection improvements.

goal for streets south of Clarksville is to enhance access for economic development. Route 58 and Route 1 are prioritized for Transportation Demand Management, which means finding alternatives to driving like public transit, walking, and biking to reduce traffic congestion. However, the most pressing issue across Mecklenburg County’s streets is safety.

Safety deficiencies and needs are identified along stretches of Route 58, Route 47, Route 903, and Interstate 85, as well as a few other segments throughout the County. Most of the deficient inter-sections in Mecklenburg also identify a safety need.

The focus on improving safety along Mecklenburg’s streets is paramount for saving lives and preventing serious injury. In 2023, Mecklenburg County recorded nine motor vehicle fatalities, resulting in a death rate of 0.43 per 1,000 licensed drivers. This figure places Mecklenburg County at the 19th highest ranking among Virginia’s 97 counties, indicating a relatively high rate of fatal crashes compared to the state average. Because of this, a key goal of this Plan is to improve safety of the County’s streets and highways.

Future Transportation Network

Plan Components and Purpose

While VDOT maintains the majority of the County’s street network, the County takes an active role in planning for the future network and identifying needed improvements. By collaborating closely with VDOT and engaging with the community, Mecklenburg County has identified transportation improvements that can improve the safety of its streets and highways and offer more choices for getting around.

To guide decision-making related to the future transportation network, this section incorporates four detailed topics, each including a map, list, and /or description:

- » Transportation Priorities
- » Recommended Street Improvements
- » Secondary Roads Paving Plan
- » Active Transportation & Public Transit

Each of these topics consolidate recommendations from the RL RTP, the Secondary Six Year Improvement Plan, and the SPDC’s Active Transportation Plan, titled “The Pathway Forward.” Some topics also include newly recommended projects that have been identified through this planning process.

Decision Making Framework

The purpose of this section is to provide a resource to help the County make informed decisions about transportation investments. The Transportation Priorities should be used as a starting point for implementation. These priority projects have been identified through the Comprehensive Planning process as the overall highest priority transportation projects County-wide. These are projects that the County can pursue in partnership with VDOT to enhance safety and promote active modes of transportation. The County should prioritize and expedite the implementation of all identified transportation recommendations, including secondary road improvements.

The transportation recommendations are meant to lay the groundwork for network improvements. As the County has the opportunity to make investments in its transportation network, it should continue to prioritize enhancing network safety and promoting active transportation modes as core objectives.



VDOT’s 2019 US 58 Arterial Preservation Plan outlines projects to improve safety and preserve capacity along the corridor. Pictured above: US 58 across from Mecklenburg High and Middle Schools.

Transportation Priorities

Prioritizing Safety & Greenways

The Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan outlines a strategy for creating a safer and more accessible transportation network that offers a wider range of travel options. This includes enhancing the safety of existing roadways and expanding the network of trails and greenways as essential components of the County’s Future Transportation Network.

A wide range of facilities are included in the recommended transportation improvements: projects that improve roadway safety and capacity, paving of unpaved rural roads, construction of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and multi-modal transportation improvements, such as improved access to high speed rail. While all are essential, the priorities identified below center on improving safety of existing streets and expanding multi-modal access.

These priorities were determined through a comprehensive process that considered community input, existing plans and recommendations, and funding availability. While secondary road paving is recommended in this section, it’s not listed as a top priority due to its limited impact on safety and multi-modal

accessibility. However, the County should continue to invest in paving qualifying unpaved roads in a timely fashion.

The table below lists the six transportation priorities. Each of the identified priorities involves planning or design work to ensure that future transportation facilities are safe, efficient, and align with the County’s needs. By conducting thorough planning and design, the County can make informed decisions about resource allocation and prioritize projects that will have the greatest positive impact.

The planning and design phases of many of the priority projects are eligible for state or federal grants. Completing these initial stages can also unlock future funding opportunities for the County. For example, the Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan qualifies for federal funding with a 20% local match. Once the plan is finalized, the County could be eligible for additional implementation funds from USDOT.

The following table lists the transportation priorities, some possible funding sources the County could pursue to support these efforts, and potential partnership opportunities for the County to consider.

Transportation Priorities: Planning & Implementation

Priority Project	Partners	Funding Sources
Complete a Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and implement the top priority safety interventions. <i>*See CP-3 in the Implementation Section of this Plan for more information.</i>	All County towns, Southside PDC, VDOT	US Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program
Conduct a County-wide Greenway and Outdoor Recreation Plan with the Goals of planning and implementing a connected greenway and open spaces network, providing inter-town connectivity, and improving access to recreational amenities such as Kerr Lake, Lake Gaston, and the Meherrin River. <i>*See CP-4 in the Implementation Section of this Plan for more information.</i>	All County towns, Southside PDC, VDOT	U.S. EPA’s Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC), VDOT’s Growth & Accessibility Planning (GAP) Technical Assistance Program

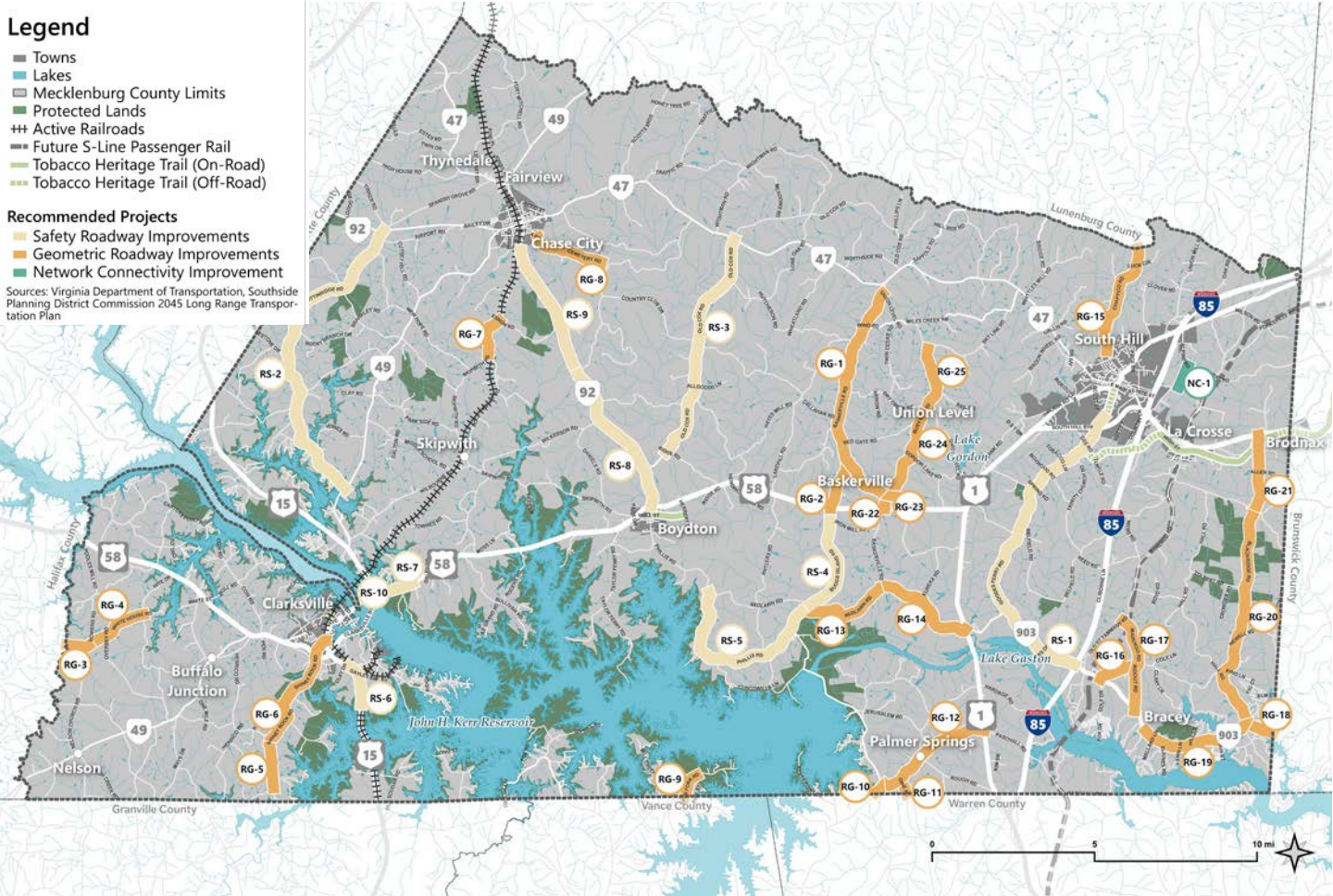
Transportation Priorities: Design & Implementation

Priority Project	Partners	Funding Sources
Work with state officials to advocate and plan for the inclusion of a La Crosse station in the plans for the Richmond to Raleigh (aka R2R) intercity passenger rail line connecting Richmond, VA to Raleigh, NC.	Town of La Crosse, Town of South Hill, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority	The R2R program is funded through state and federal sources. Mecklenburg County’s role in advocating for a station will involve staff time.
Conduct a feasibility study to assess and design facilities for bicycling and walking along Route 903 / Goode’s Ferry Road between the Brunswick County line and South Hill. Determine optimal facility types, alignment options, project phasing, and a realistic funding plan. <i>*Facility type and alignment can be identified in conjunction with the Greenways & Outdoor Rec Plan.</i>	Town of South Hill, Southside PDC, VDOT	VDOT’s Growth & Accessibility Planning (GAP) Technical Assistance Program, VDOT’s Transportation Alternatives
Design and implement the Tobacco Heritage Trail segment from Clarksville to Occoneechee State Park and from Occoneechee State Park to Rudd’s Creek.	Town of Clarksville, Virginia Department of Conservation (DCR), Southside PDC, VDOT	VDOT’s Growth & Accessibility Planning (GAP) Technical Assistance Program, VDOT’s Transportation Alternatives
Revisit and update the design and cost estimate for Tobacco Heritage Trail crossing of US 58 West of Boydton to connect to Rudd’s Creek segment and apply for funding.	Town of Clarksville, Southside PDC, VDOT	Implementation support could include Smart Scale or VDOT’s Revenue Sharing Program



A future segment of the Tobacco Heritage Trail will connect downtown Clarksville to Occoneechee State Park.

RLRTP Recommended Street Improvements

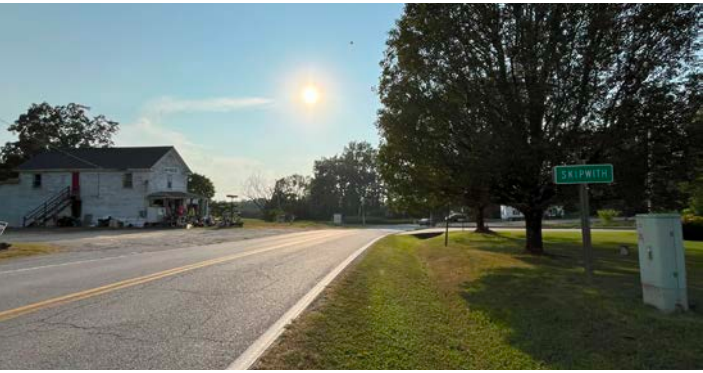


RLRTP Recommended Street Improvements

The map and table for Recommended Street Improvements include projects that are identified in the 2045 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP). The map identifies and assigns each project a number and identifies whether the project is a safety improvement or geometric roadway

improvement. The table includes a description of the recommended projects.

It should be noted that the RLRTP is undergoing an update as of the writing of this Plan. It is likely that once the new 2050 RLRTP is adopted, there will be changes to the recommended projects. Once updated, that Plan should be used as an additional resource to guide decisions related to transportation improvements.



Most secondary roadways in the County lack shoulders or dedicated space for walking or bicycling; pictured above Skipwith Road (left) and New Hope Road (right).



Recommended Roadway Improvements Project Descriptions

ID	Description	ID	Description
RS-1	Reconstruct VA 903 from I-85 ramp to 1368 Goodes Ferry Rd to two-lane standards and include improvements to accommodate a bike route.	RG-1	Reconstruct Baskerville Rd (VA 669) from Busy Bee Rd (VA 673) to Union Level Rd (VA 664) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-2	Reconstruct Trottinridge Road (VA 609) from VA 49 to VA 92 to two-lane standards.	RG-2	Reconstruct Wooden Bridge Rd (VA 674) from US 58 to Baskerville Rd (VA 669) to address geometric deficiencies and accommodate additional traffic to new school.
RS-3	Reconstruct Old Cox Rd (VA 660) from Ridge Rd (VA 608) to VA 47 to improve vertical and horizontal alignment.	RG-3	Reconstruct White House Rd (VA 602) from Halifax County line to Bowens Rd (VA 789) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-4	Reconstruct Buggs Island Rd from Mays Chapel Rd to Iron Mill Rd to two-lane standards to improve vertical and horizontal alignment, with appropriate turn lanes.	RG-4	Reconstruct White House Rd (VA 602) from Bowens Rd (VA 789) to Hite Dr/White House Rd (VA 735) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-5	Reconstruct Phillis Rd from Buggs Island Rd to Redlawn Rd to two-lane standards to improve vertical and horizontal alignment, with appropriate turn lanes.	RG-5	Reconstruct Shiny Rock Rd (VA 723) from Williamson Rd (VA 814) to Union Chapel Rd (VA 728) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-6	Reconstruct US 15 from Burlington Dr to Mt Ararat Rd (south intersection) to current standards to improve vertical and horizontal alignment, with appropriate turn lanes.	RG-6	Reconstruct Shiny Rock Rd (VA 723) from Union Chapel Rd (VA 728) to US 15 to address geometric deficiencies including full-width lanes and shoulders.
RS-7	Reconstruct US 58 Bus/US 15/VA 49 from VA 364 to Jeffress Rd.	RG-7	Reconstruct Skipwith Rd (VA 688) from Rocky Mt Rd (VA 689) N to Enson Rd (VA 686) to address geometric deficiencies (10-foot lanes).
RS-8	Reconstruct VA 92 from US 58 to Hunters Ln (VA 679) and improve roadway to accommodate the increasing truck traffic.	RG-8	Reconstruct E Sycamore St/Cemetery Rd (VA 600) from Country Club Dr (VA 671) N to Chase City to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-9	Reconstruct VA 92 from Hunters Ln (VA 679) to Chase City and improve roadway to accommodate the increasing truck traffic.	RG-9	Reconstruct Epps Fork Rd (VA 717) from NC state line to Mill Creek Rd (VA 826) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RS-10	US 58 Bus/US 15/VA 49 Short-term improve signage, pavement markings, and consider rumble strips; Mid-term install a roundabout.	RG-10	Reconstruct Rock Church Rd (VA 715) from Buggs Island Rd (VA 4) to Palmer Springs Rd (VA 712) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

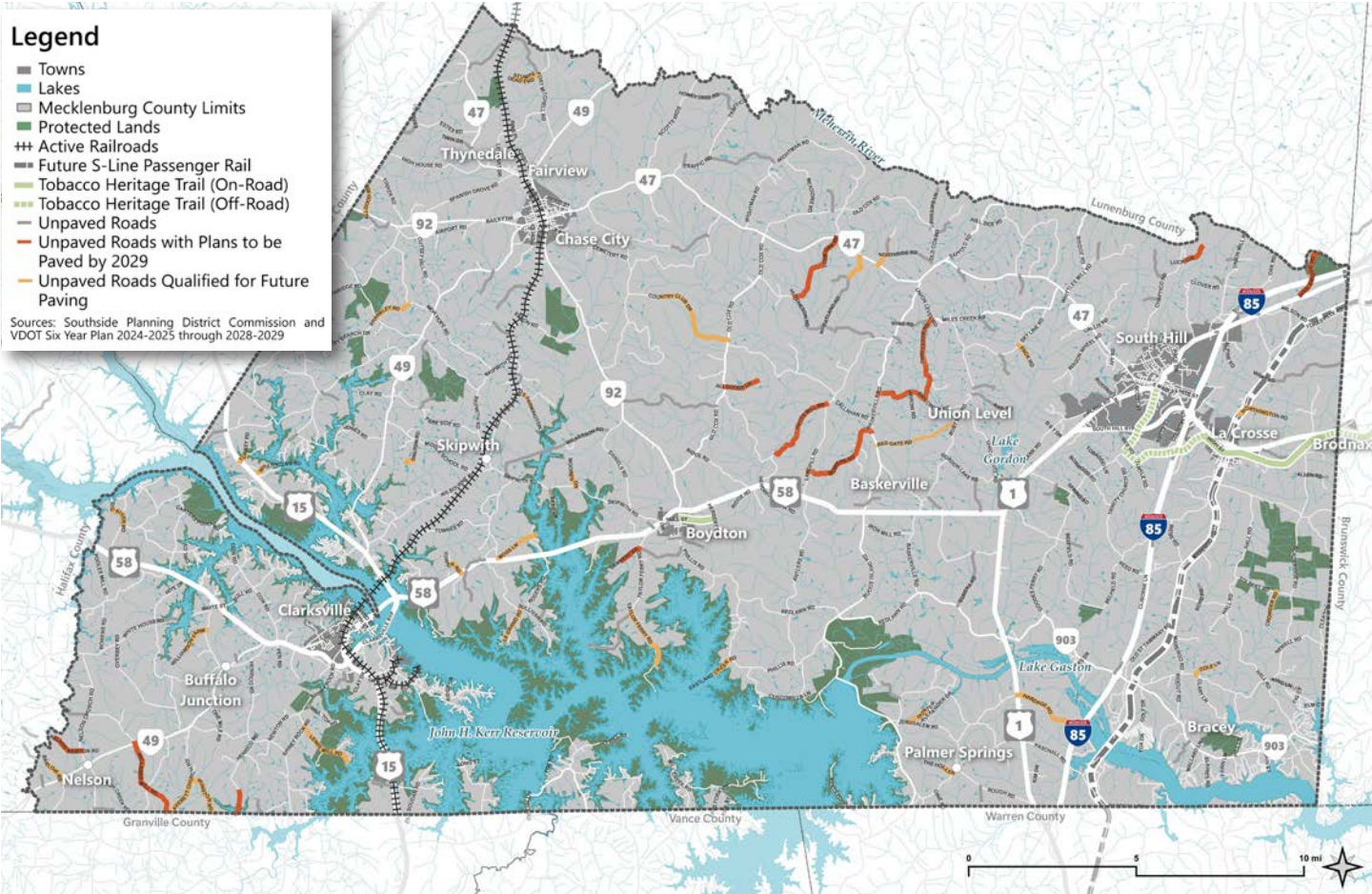
ID	Description
RG-11	Reconstruct Oine Rd (VA 714) from NC state line to Palmer Springs Rd (VA 712) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RG-12	Reconstruct Palmer Springs Rd (VA 712) from Rock Church Rd (VA 715) to US 1 to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RG-13	Reconstruct Redlawn Rd (VA 615) from Buggs Island Rd (VA 4) to Baskerville Rd (VA 669) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RG-14	Reconstruct Redlawn Rd (VA 615) from Baskerville Rd (VA 669) to US 1 to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RG-15	Reconstruct Chaptico Rd (VA 637) from North Edge Dr to Lunenburg County line to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
RG-16	Reconstruct Nellie Jones Rd (VA 619) from VA 903 to Marengo Rd (VA 618 W) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).
RG-17	Reconstruct Ridout Rd/Marengo Rd (VA 618) from VA 903 to Old St Tammany Rd/Marengo Rd (VA 617) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes).

ID	Description
RG-18	Reconstruct VA 903 from Brunswick County line to Blackridge Rd (VA 626) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes) and incorporate improvements to accommodate a bike route.
RG-19	Reconstruct VA 903 from Blackridge Rd (VA 626) to Cannon's Ferry Rd (VA 614) to address geometric deficiencies (11-foot lanes) and incorporate improvements to accommodate a bike route.
RG-20	Reconstruct Blackridge Rd (VA 626) from VA 903 to Canaan Church Rd (VA 624 S) to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
RG-21	Reconstruct Blackridge Rd/Regional Airport Rd (VA 626) from Canaan Church Rd (VA 624 N) to US 58 to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
RG-22	Upgrade Baskerville Rd from US 58 to Busy Bee Rd to enhance connections to US 58 and to safely accommodate expected increases in truck traffic.
RG-23	Upgrade Busy Bee Rd from Baskerville Rd (VA 669) to Cedar Grove Rd/Busy Bee Rd (VA 663) to enhance connections to US 58 and to safely accommodate expected increases in truck traffic.
RG-24	Upgrade Busy Bee Rd from Cedar Grove Rd/Busy Bee Rd (VA 673) to Union Level Rd (VA 664) to enhance connections to US 58 and to safely accommodate expected increases in truck traffic.



Completing a Safe Streets for All Plan could help the County identify safety improvements on its secondary streets and would allow the County to pursue additional federal grants to implement the Plan’s recommendations. Pictured above: a pedestrian lane on Sinai Road (Route 654) in Halifax County (photo source VDOT).

Secondary Roads Paving Plan



Unpaved Secondary Roads

The Virginia General Assembly provides dedicated funding for paving secondary streets and sets rules for paving eligibility. Unpaved roads with a traffic volume of more than 50 vehicles per day can qualify for paving. VDOT conducts traffic counts every three years on unpaved roads to determine which unpaved roads are eligible for funding. The counting is done on a rolling basis.

Virginia allocates funds to counties based on the number of eligible unpaved roads in each locality. It is the Board of Supervisors’ responsibility to adopt a six-year secondary improvement plan outlining which roads will be paved, subject to available funding. The Board typically chooses the roads to be paved based on the highest vehicle counts. They also prioritize unpaved roads that were selected to be paved back in 2006-2007, but we not able to be paved due to lack of funding during the recession.

The paving process takes several years. A road added to the six-year plan in a given year typically will not be paved until the sixth year of that plan.

The map above and table below shows the current Six Year Secondary Road Plan that was adopted by the Board in 2024, highlighting the unpaved roads that are scheduled to be paved.

Unpaved Secondary Roads

Road Name	AADT	Year Paving is Planned
Allgood Lane	97	2024
Dry Creek Road	57	2024
Hayes Mill Road	68	2025
Lone Oak Road	20	2026
Bowers Road	72	2027
Henrico Road	72	2029
Lambert Road	116	2029
Luck Circle	54	2029
Twin Cedar Road	61	2029
Wilson Newton Road	87	2029
Willards Mill Road	168	2029
Dixie Bridge Road	102	2029

Unpaved Secondary Roads > 50 AADT,
Not Currently Scheduled for Paving

Road Name	AADT
Moss Lane	111
Barlow Road	102
Brankley Road	93
Stumps Dead End	88
Wheatland Road	88
Hunter Alexander Drive	87
Northington Road	87
Wharncliff Road	75
Northside Road	72
Lewis Mill Road	72
Averett Church Road	70
Turkey Road	67
Tower Road	67
Cole Lane	67
South Farmington	67
Crowder Road	66
LeGrand Road	64
Hardage Road	63
Country Club Drive	60
Red Gate Road	60
Winston Road	59
Eastland Creek Road	57
The Holler	57
Dalton Road	57
Taylor Ferry Road	56
Moores Drive	54
Pack Road	54
Williamson Farm Road	53
Big River Road	52
Allgood Road	50

Investing in Secondary Roadways

The 2045 RL RTP identified 35 roadway improvement projects in Mecklenburg County, most of which would require extensive roadway reconstruction. While these projects are important for the County in the long-term, securing funding will be challenging. State and federal resources for this type of work are limited, and many of these projects may not qualify for competitive programs like Smart Scale.

In order to prioritize safety and to address the high rate of fatalities and injuries on County roadways, the County should consider completing a Safe Streets for All plan. Safe Streets for All is a federal program aimed at creating safer and more accessible transportation networks for everyone, regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel.

Rural areas present unique challenges for transportation safety, and focusing on solutions unique to the County’s rural context can help reduce injuries and deaths on County roadways. Solutions to improve street design on rural roadways can include better visibility, wider shoulders, and appropriate curves. It could also include street lighting, reflective paint, rumble strips, and other safety measures.

Completing a Safe Streets for All Plan could help the County focus on improvements that do not require full roadway reconstruction that can be implemented at lower costs compared to many of the identified RL RTP projects. This approach could identify more feasible short-term solutions for the County to pursue to improve safety for travelers.

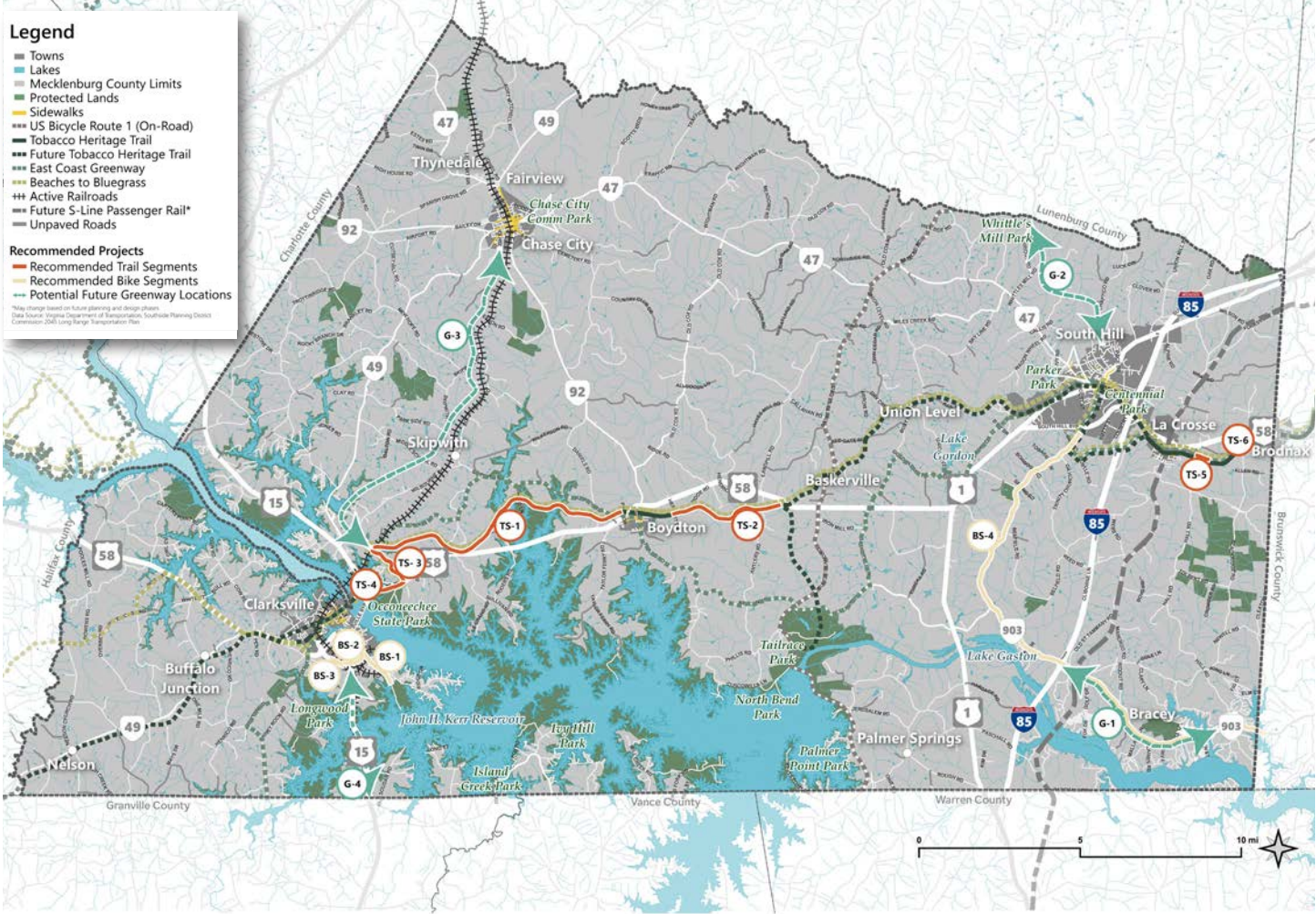
Localities can apply for federal grants to develop Safe Streets for All Plans with minimal local matching funds required. Upon plan completion, the County becomes eligible for additional funding to implement the plan’s recommendations.

Active Transportation

Tobacco Heritage Trail and The Pathway Forward

In addition to street improvements for vehicular travel, the County also has plans for its active transportation network, which incorporates facilities for bicycling and walking. A key component of this network is the Tobacco Heritage Trail, a planned

Active Transportation Network Plan



shared-use path that will be developed in phases across multiple counties in Southside Virginia.

In 2024 the Southside Planning District Commission completed an Active Transportation Plan for the region, The Pathway Forward. The map and table include projects from The Pathway Forward and from the 2045 RL RTP.

Mecklenburg County’s active transportation projects focus on prioritizing and constructing segments of the Tobacco Heritage Trail near Boydton as well as improving existing segments of the Tobacco Heritage Trail that are in need of maintenance and safety improvements. These projects are identified by name and number on the map above and table on the following page.

The regional transportation plans also include recommendations for on-street bicycle facilities.

Route 903, Highway 15, and Burlington Drive south of Clarksville are identified as locations for future bicycle facilities. More planning and design work is needed to determine the appropriate facility type and design for these segments.

Future Greenways

As demonstrated by the data and confirmed by numerous County residents, the predominant mode of transportation within the County is the personal vehicle. The majority of respondents to the online survey cited the absence of adequate facilities as the primary barrier to walking or bicycling in Mecklenburg County.

Through the engagement opportunities for this Plan, community members shared their desire for more opportunities to walk and ride a bicycle safely on County roadways. While people acknowledged

Active Transportation Network Project Descriptions

ID	Type	Description	Source
BS-1	Bike, on-street	Study/Plan for bike accommodation along Old National Hwy	The Pathway Forward (2024)
BS-2	Bike, on-street	Study/Plan for bike accommodation along Burlington Drive	The Pathway Forward (2024)
BS-3	Bike, on-street	Study/Plan for bike accommodation along Hwy 15	The Pathway Forward (2024)
BS-4	Bike, on-street	Study/Plan for bike accommodation along Goode’s Ferry Rd (Rt 903)	The Pathway Forward (2024)
TS-1	Trail	Extend Tobacco Heritage Trail from Boydton town limits to Rudd’s Creek (segment already funded) and beyond to Jeffress Rd.	2045 LRTP & The Pathway Forward (2024)
TS-2	Trail	Extend Tobacco Heritage Trail from Herbert Dr Trailhead east to Antlers Rd.	2045 LRTP & The Pathway Forward (2024)
TS-3	Trail	Extend the Tobacco Heritage Trail by installing on-road facilities on Jeffress Rd running from the Sandy Creek area to US 58	2045 LRTP
TS-4	Trail	Extend the Tobacco Heritage Trail from the intersection of US 58/Jeffress Rd to Occaneechee State Park	2045 LRTP
TS-5	Trail	Mill and repave segment of Tobacco Heritage Trail	The Pathway Forward (2024)
TS-6	Trail	Enhance Tobacco Heritage Trail crossing/road markings to increase visibility on Regional Airport Rd	The Pathway Forward (2024)
G-1	Greenway trail or on-street facility	Study the feasibility of a bike/ped route along Route 903 in Bracey as an on-street shoulder or adjacent shared use path.	New recommendation
G-2	Greenway trail or on-street facility	Study the feasibility and determine the alignment of a bike/ ped route between South Hill and Whittle’s Mill Park	New recommendation
G-3	Greenway trail or on-street facility	Study the feasibility and determine the alignment of a bike/ ped route between Chase City and the Tobacco Heritage Trail.	New recommendation
G-4	Greenway trail	Study the feasibility of a shared use path along the rail line connecting Clarksville to Granville County, NC.	New recommendation

that not every County street or highway will have bicycle lanes and sidewalks, they emphasized a desire for opportunities to safely ride a bicycle to the lakes and to and from towns.

In response, opportunities for potential future greenways are included on the Active Transportation Map as conceptual lines. The intent for these greenways are to improve accessibility to County amenities, such as the lakes, parks, and waterways and to strengthen inter-town connections.

Future greenways can be facilities along or adjacent to existing streets, such as shared use paths, trails within abandoned rail lines, or they can be greenway trails that follow natural features such as a stream. Additional study is needed to determine the appropriate alignment and locations for the County’s future greenways network. To facilitate this, the County should consider completion of a greenways planning effort that determines future greenway routes and alignments, appropriate facility types, potential funding sources, and to further prioritizes

additional segments of the Tobacco Heritage Trail to design and build.

Investing in greenways is a crucial part of supporting the Plan’s Vision. These facilities enhance public health by encouraging active lifestyles and they create safer and more accessible communities for people of all ages and abilities, directly in support of the Vision Element to create A Place for All Generations and Backgrounds.

Greenways and trails also serve as economic catalysts, drawing visitors to support small businesses as well as bringing employees to the area. By prioritizing recreational amenities and greenways, the County can create a more attractive living and working environment for its residents. This investment, combined with its ongoing support for schools and education, has the potential to attract more businesses and employees to the County. By completing a greenways plan and making substantial investments in these facilities, the County can accelerate progress towards its Vision.



Existing segment of the Tobacco Heritage Trail near the Boydton Trailhead.

Public Transit

Bus Service

Mecklenburg County currently offers limited public transportation options. The Lake Area Bus (LAB) provides door-to-door, on-demand bus service within South Hill, La Crosse, and Brodnax for a small fee. Additionally, the Lake County Area Association on Aging (LCAAA) offers non-emergency medical transportation for seniors within the County and region.



Lake Area Bus and Lake County Area Association on Aging (LCAAA) provide transit for those living in certain towns (photo source LCAAA).

Given feedback highlighting the need for improved mobility, especially among youth and seniors, expanding transportation services should be a long term goal for Mecklenburg County. The County should identify opportunities to expand access to existing services and to enhance public awareness of these resources.

High Speed Rail

The Richmond-to-Raleigh (R2R) high-speed rail project has the potential to transform transit access to and from the County and to expand inter and intra-County transportation options for residents and commuters. The R2R project aims to connect Richmond to Raleigh via high speed rail and, once fully operational, it will significantly reduce travel time between the two cities.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority is in the early stages of designing the rail corridor in Virginia. This includes determining the exact route and locations for train stops. A 30% design plan is currently under

development. While La Crosse has been considered as a potential stop, final decisions about stops and station locations have not been made.

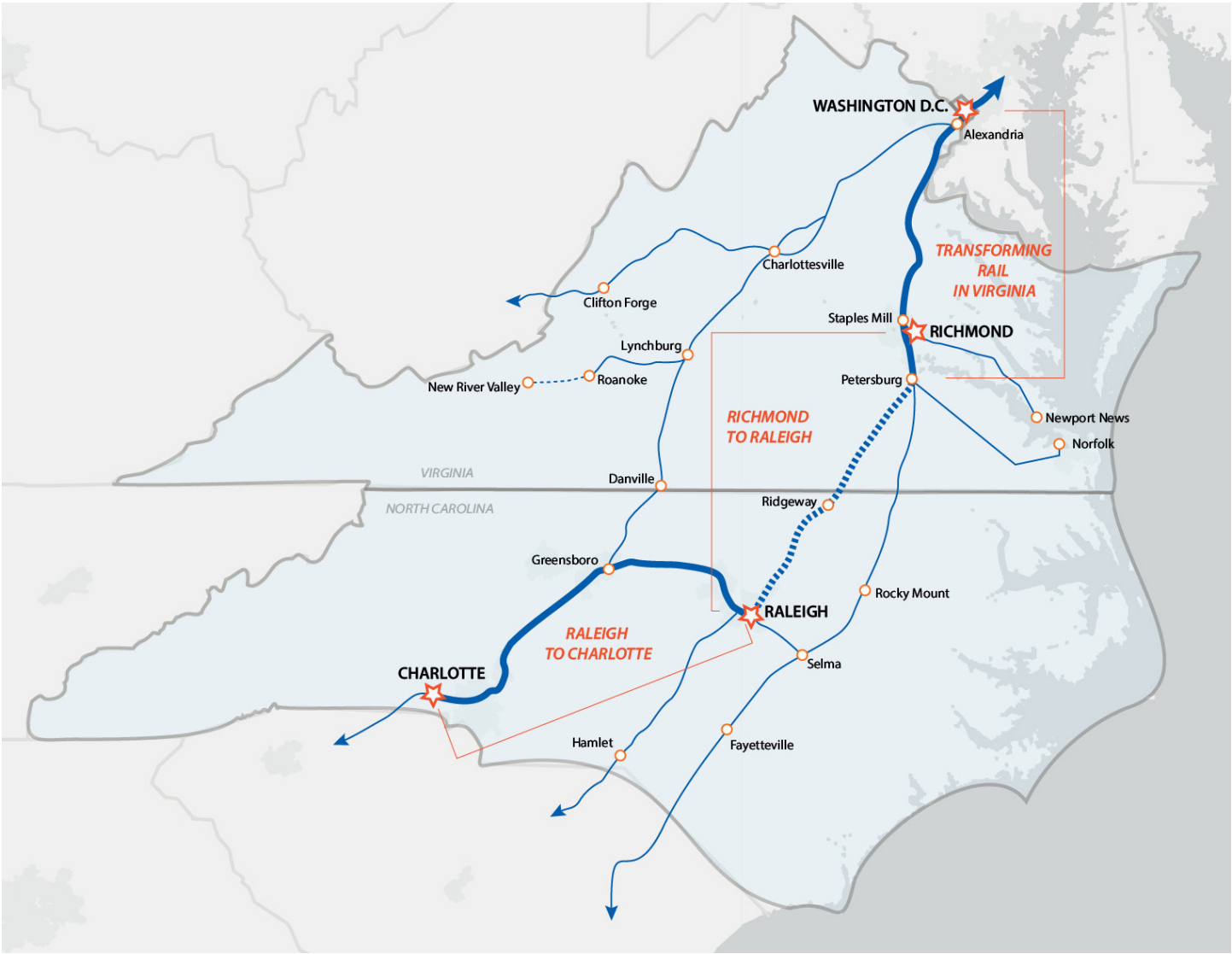
La Crosse is strategically positioned in Southside Virginia and would be an ideal stop along the R2R. Serving as a crucial halfway point between Raleigh and Richmond, a stop in La Crosse would improve regional connectivity and bolster tourism in Southside Virginia providing easy access to Kerr Lake and Lake Gaston.

By locating a stop in La Crosse, employees who commute from other localities would have access to Mecklenburg’s jobs and contract positions. Currently, Microsoft is one of Mecklenburg County’s largest employers and is continuing to grow their workforce in the County. Conversations with Microsoft’s leadership have indicated that between 60-75% of Microsoft’s workers are commuting to Mecklenburg County from elsewhere. Adding a high speed rail stop in La Crosse with the potential for a circulator shuttle to Microsoft locations would reduce commuting traffic and serve as a safer and more convenient commuting option for workers.



The Commonwealth is in the process of upgrading passenger rail service in Virginia, which will include high speed rail between Richmond and Raleigh.

Furthermore, a R2R stop in La Crosse could help increase the medical workforce in Mecklenburg County. Service between Richmond and La Crosse could offer an opportunity for VCU health employees to commute to the County on certain days to help fill critical gaps in local healthcare services. Overall,



The R2R Project aims to revitalize the S-Line corridor for high-speed rail between Richmond, VA, and Raleigh, NC. A future rail station in La Crosse would provide a halfway sopping point between the two cities. (Photo source: Virginia Passenger Rail Authority).

providing a direct link to major urban centers, Southside Virginia would experience economic revitalization, attracting new businesses, industries, healthcare workers, and residents.

The proposed location for an R2R station within La Crosse is primed for development. Properties adjacent to the station have seen recent infill projects and redevelopment of historic buildings that are ongoing, including proposed lodging, which demonstrates the town’s momentum.

La Crosse has ample space for developing a station adjacent to the rail line and can support the needed infrastructure and growth, such as opportunities for parking, housing, retail, mixed use, as well as multi-modal transportation. A circulator service

could connect R2R riders to local employers like Microsoft, addressing the challenge of a significant portion of the workforce commuting from outside the County. Additionally, the station’s proximity to the Tobacco Heritage Trail, a growing regional trail network, will enhance connectivity to other towns, lakes, and industries.

An R2R stop in La Crosse would connect Southside Virginia to the rail corridor, driving economic growth in Mecklenburg County and the region. The County should maintain its commitment to securing an R2R station in La Crosse as the project progresses.

An aerial photograph of a river network, likely a delta or estuary, with a red line tracing a path through the waterways. The map is divided into four quadrants by a central vertical and horizontal line. The top-left and bottom-left quadrants show a dense network of small, branching waterways. The top-right quadrant shows a more open area with fewer, larger waterways. The bottom-right quadrant shows a large, winding waterway. The red line starts in the top-left, moves down, then right, then down again, following a specific path through the waterways.

Implementation Overview
Goals & Actions
Catalyst Projects

PART 4: Implementation

Implementing the Vision

Overview

This section of the Plan lays out tangible steps that the County and its partners can take to implement the Vision for 2044 and the corresponding Land Use and Transportation Plans. Achieving the Vision will require sustained commitment from County officials, staff, residents, local businesses, developers, and other partners and organizations.

The information contained in the following pages is intended to give the County and its partners specific steps to implement the Plan and a recommended timeline to achieve the desired Vision. More details about each piece that makes up the Implementation section are provided below.

Vision Elements, Goals, and Actions

The Vision for 2044 is made up of five Vision Elements. In this section, each Vision Element is supported by multiple Goals and Actions that provide a framework for the County’s work in achieving the Vision.

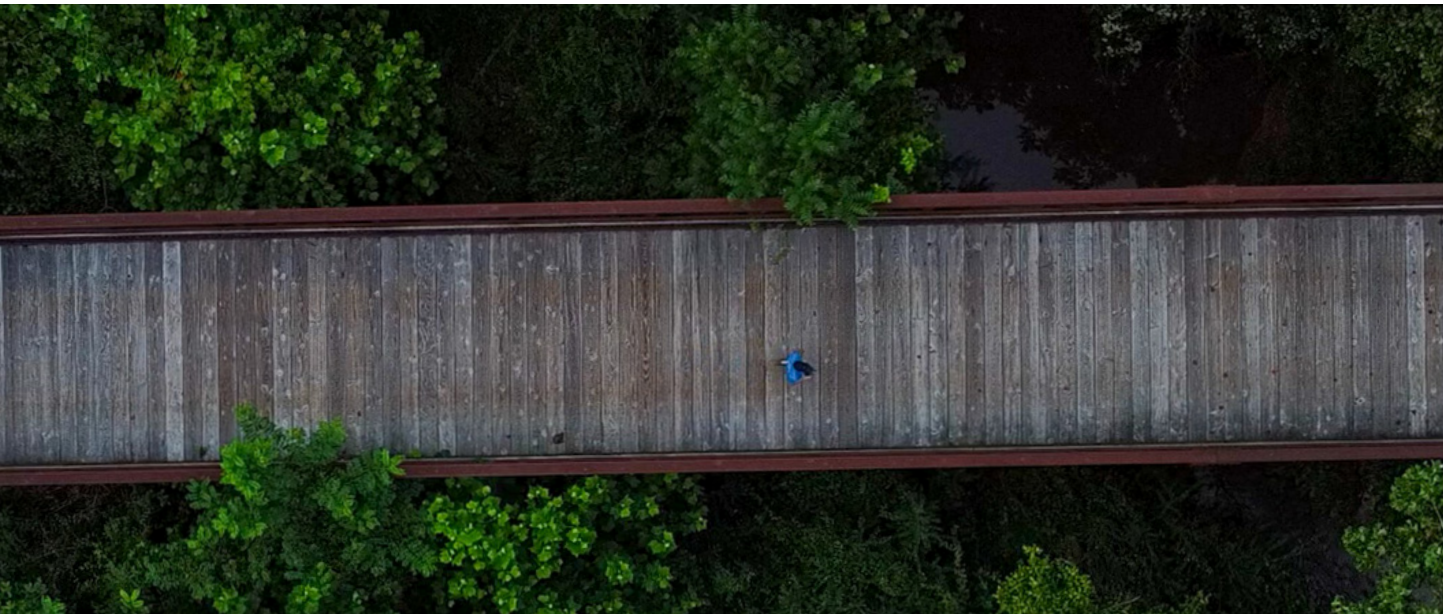
Goals are high level but measurable objectives that the County should aim to accomplish in support of the associated Vision Element. Progress towards Goals can be monitored and evaluated and while Goals can be achieved independently, they are

typically realized more effectively through a series of smaller, incremental steps.

In this Plan, these smaller, incremental steps are called Actions. Actions are specific, concrete projects that the County and its collaborators can complete to contribute to the Plan Goals and Vision. Actions may involve policy revisions, capital projects, or regulatory adjustments, like updating the County’s Zoning Ordinances. Actions also have a defined start and finish and they culminate in a tangible outcome like a new trail or updated County policy.

Suggested Timing & Priority

The list of Actions on the following pages are organized by Vision Element. The Actions are each assigned a priority / timing of either Catalyst, First Five Years, Long-Term, or Ongoing. Catalyst Projects are the highest priority Actions that have been identified based on community input, planning analysis, and the project’s ability to catalyze implementation of the Vision, the Land Use Plan, and the Transportation recommendations. Catalyst Projects are crucial projects that will drive the implementation of this Plan and are those Actions that are most likely to have a significant positive impact on Mecklenburg County in the near term.



Aerial of Boydton bridge segment of the Tobacco Heritage Trail.

While Catalyst Projects are identified as the most important Actions the County can take, they may or may not be the first Actions to be completed after Plan adoption. Many of the Catalyst Projects require partnerships with other agencies or jurisdictions, such as the downtown revitalization pilot program or establishing a public beach on one of the County’s lakes. Both of these projects will require successful collaboration with others, such as with town officials or the Army Corps of Engineers. As such, the timelines are not entirely within the County’s control, and may take longer to complete; however, County staff and officials should make every effort to advance these projects as quickly as possible.

Actions that are assigned a priority of First Five Years are expected to be able to be completed within five years of Plan adoption. Actions that are assigned a priority / timing of Long-Term are likely to be completed within 5-15 years of Plan adoption, though the County may advance efforts to complete these projects on a shorter timeline where possible.

Lastly, Actions listed as Ongoing are often efforts that the County is already doing and should continue, or those items that the County should commence doing as soon as possible after Plan adoption and continue throughout the Plan’s lifespan.

The proposed timing and sequence of implementation outlined in this Plan were informed by the needs identified during the planning process and the County’s anticipated capacity for funding and executing projects. However, it’s important to recognize that circumstances can change. The County should remain responsive to local needs and be prepared to make adjustments when needed. Regular progress assessments and periodic review of the Plan’s recommendations will help maintain its relevance and effectiveness in addressing local needs and changing circumstances.

SYMBOLS KEY

The following pages present tables that outline Goals and Actions, categorized by Vision Element. Some Actions contribute to multiple Vision Elements, and these are indicated in each table using symbols to represent each Vision element. The Symbols Key is indicated below for easy reference.

















VISION ELEMENTS:


-  **A Rural Place**
-  **Modern Infrastructure & Amenities**
-  **A Place for All**
-  **Thriving Business Environment**
-  **Vibrant Small Towns**

Suggested Timing / Priority











- » Catalyst = Completed as soon as possible.
- » First Five Years = 0-5 years from Plan adoption.
- » Long-Term = 5+ years from Plan adoption
- » Ongoing = Begin or continue as soon as possible and sustain efforts throughout the life of this Plan.




Goals	Actions	Timing / Priority	Vision Elements
Reduce the conversion of working farms and forests to other uses.	Update the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to limit industrial, commercial, and suburban residential development within the County’s Rural and Rural Conservation Land Uses.	Catalyst CP-1	 
	Encourage smaller-scale or community-scale solar facilities to co-locate with industrial, commercial, and residential land uses where impacts can be appropriately mitigated.	Ongoing	
	Do not extend public water and sewer to areas of the County designated for Rural and Rural Conservation on the Future Land Use Plan, unless adjacent to an Interstate or major transportation corridor.	Ongoing	 
Protect and restore forested areas, wildlife habitats, and drinking water resources.	Update the Zoning Ordinance to encourage protections of natural resources and farms. This can include adding stream buffer standards, larger minimum lot sizes, and incorporating conservation subdivision standards.	First Five Years	 
	Adopt lighting standards within the Zoning Ordinance to limit lighting impacts and spillover in the Rural and Rural Conservation areas.	First Five Years	
	Partner with local organizations to implement an agricultural conservation program. Explore tools such as purchase of development rights, conservation easements, or property acquisition to protect properties with significant environmental and agricultural resources.	First Five Years	
	Partner with DCR and the towns of South Hill and Chase City to enhance conservation efforts along the Meherrin River Scenic River Corridor and to improve public access, including improvements to Whittle’s Mill Park.	Long-Term	 
Protect historic and culturally significant structures, landscapes, and properties while allowing appropriate reuse.	Conduct a County-wide inventory of historic resources (including towns) and develop strategies for protection and reuse of historic structures.	Long-Term	
	Partner with local organizations to support and promote reuse of historic structures with the County and its towns.	Long-Term	 
Support the agricultural economy.	Work with schools and local organizations such as Farm Bureau and Virginia Cooperative Extension to foster mentorship and apprentice programs to connect experienced farmers with aspiring young farmers.	Catalyst CP-2	 
	Encourage and support local agrotourism initiatives, farm events, and farmers’ markets that promote rural land use and the sale of local products and ensure that agricultural zoning districts allow agrotourism activities.	First Five Years	
	Create a Buy Local campaign to support the sale of locally grown products.	Long-Term	




















Modern Infrastructure and Amenities

Goals	Actions	Timing / Priority	Vision Elements
Modernize public facilities and utilities within the County and its towns.	Continue to invest in and modernize public water and sewer service in areas within and adjacent to towns.	Ongoing	
	Continue to update and modernize each of the County’s elementary schools.	Ongoing	
	Continue to support the buildout of the broadband network until every County household and business has access to reliable high-speed internet.	Ongoing	
	Collaborate with towns to enhance fire, rescue, and emergency services by investing in necessary facilities, equipment, and technology.	Ongoing	
Improve safety of the County’s streets and highways.	Apply for funding through the US Department of Transportation to complete a Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and implement the top priority safety interventions.	Catalyst CP-3	
	Work with VDOT and the Town of Clarksville to reevaluate the design for the US 58 Bus/US 15/VA 49 intersection, update cost estimates, and secure funding to implement the intersection improvements.	First Five Years	
	Implement targeted safety improvements to the US 58 corridor to continue to improve the safety of this important transportation linkage through Mecklenburg County.	Long-Term	
	Require industrial developers to improve County streets and mitigate impacts associated with construction and post-construction activities to ensure that County streets can safely accommodate the increased traffic volume and heavier vehicles resulting from the development.	First Five Years	
	Prioritize the paving of all eligible unpaved roads within the County, completing these projects as soon as possible.	Ongoing	
	Contribute local funds to implement safety improvements to County streets and pursue matching funds from the Commonwealth through the Revenue Sharing program.	Long-Term	




















Modern Infrastructure and Amenities

Goals	Actions	Timing/ Priority	Vision Elements
Improve access to parks and recreational facilities and amenities, including greenways and trails.	Conduct a County-wide Greenway and Outdoor Recreation Plan with the goals of planning and implementing a connected greenway and open spaces network, providing inter-town connectivity, and improving access to recreational amenities such as Kerr Lake, Lake Gaston, and the Meherrin River.	Catalyst CP-4	   
	Seek collaboration with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Dominion Virginia Power, and/or the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to identify a suitable location for at least one public swimming beach in Mecklenburg County and explore potential grant funding opportunities for construction and implementation.	Catalyst CP-5	 
	Design and implement the Tobacco Heritage Trail segment from Clarks-ville to Occoneechee State Park and from Occoneechee State Park to Rudd’s Creek. Pursue grant programs such as the Commonwealth’s Growth & Accessibility Planning (GAP) Technical Assistance Program.	First Five Years	 
	Partner with DCR and the towns of South Hill and Chase City to enhance conservation efforts along the Meherrin River Scenic River Corridor and to improve public access, including improvements to Whittle’s Mill Park.	Long- Term	 
Increase the availability of facilities for walking, bicycling, and transit.	Work with Commonwealth officials to advocate for the inclusion of a La Crosse station in the plans for the Richmond-to-Raleigh (aka R2R) intercity passenger rail line connecting Richmond, VA to Raleigh, NC. Partner with La Crosse town officials and private developers to plan and prepare for an R2R station in La Crosse. Ensure that County and town land use plans and zoning regulations provide opportunities for town-scaled transit-oriented development and ensure ample space for the station and necessary infrastructure.	First Five Years	 
	Mandate safe and connected street designs for new subdivisions and residential neighborhoods. Ensure new developments include sidewalks on both sides of streets, that streets connect to adjacent streets or “stub-out” to property lines, and that new development contributes to the construction of trails that link residential areas to nearby greenways, parks, or other public amenities.	First Five Years	  
	Conduct a feasibility study to assess and design facilities for bicycling and walking along Route 903 / Goode’s Ferry Road between the Brunswick County line and South Hill. Determine optimal facility types, alignment options, project phasing, and a realistic funding plan.	Long- Term	 














A Place for All Generations & Backgrounds

Goals	Actions	Timing/ Priority	Vision Elements
Create opportunities for residents to “age in place” and have access to different housing options for different life stages without having to move out of the County.	Explore partnership opportunities with local and regional housing developers and organizations to construct an age-in-place community, a senior housing community and/or opportunities to develop a local home modification program.	Long- Term	
	Work with local partners and agencies to establish a home modification program to accommodate changing mobility and health needs and to prevent displacement.	Long- Term	
	Collaborate with towns to ensure that appropriate zoning is in place to encourage infill development within towns and to allow a variety of housing types such as single-family, duplexes, accessory dwelling units, apartments, and townhouses in walkable town locations.	Long- Term	
Expand the supply and variety of housing available for County residents so that there are housing options affordable to all ranges of income.	Update the County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to eliminate barriers to the construction of housing in appropriate locations. This could include: reducing or eliminating minimum lot sizes, maximum setbacks, and parking requirements, and allowing a variety of housing types by-right within all residential zoning districts.	Catalyst CP-1	 
	Proactively rezone properties that are designated for residential in the Future Land Use Plan to reduce barriers to building housing and to promote better alignment of land uses.	First Five Years	
	Promote Mecklenburg County as a location for new housing, with emphasis on single-family homes that meet the needs of local workers and reduce commuting burdens.	First Five Years	 
	Leverage federal housing program funds to rehabilitate existing housing stock and create new affordable housing units.		 
	Implement the recommendations of the Regional Housing Analysis.	Ongoing	 
Improve access to educational, social, recreational, and cultural programming for all ages.	Partner with schools and local organizations to expand educational and social programs for County youth, including after-school activities, summer camps, job training, and internship programs.	Ongoing	  
	Collaborate with towns and local organizations such as the YMCA to offer a variety of social, recreational, and educational opportunities for all residents. Prioritize the needs of youth and seniors by conducting a County-wide survey to identify their specific requirements and develop tailored programs.	Ongoing	 



A Place for All Generations & Backgrounds


























Goals	Actions	Timing/ Priority	Vision Elements
Increase the availability of healthcare services and facilities within the County.	Work with regional healthcare providers to explore solutions to local healthcare needs such as providing mobile health clinics and establishing permanent facilities including an urgent care center and other community needs.	Catalyst CP-6	 
	Promote the County as a desirable destination for medical professionals and healthcare providers.	Ongoing	
	Collaborate with towns to invest in optimal service delivery for fire, rescue, and emergency services.	Ongoing	 
Increase opportunities for entertainment, dining out, and access to goods and services for residents of all ages.	Support local arts organizations, festivals, and events to enhance quality of life and provide opportunities for cultural and social enrichment.	Ongoing	 
	Continue to invest in and promote the County’s attractions, events, and recreational opportunities to attract visitors and boost local businesses.	Ongoing	 
	Reduce obstacles for small businesses and commercial retailers locating in towns and encourage infill housing to enhance the economic viability of these businesses.	Long-Term	 



Thriving
Business
Environment

Goals	Actions	Timing/ Priority	Vision Elements
Diversify the County's economic base.	Implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan.	Ongoing	
	Continue to invest in site readiness for the County's designated industrial land and take actions such as proactively rezoning land designated for Industrial Land Use in the Future Land Use Plan.	Ongoing	
Increase the proportion of local jobs staffed by Mecklenburg County residents.	Strengthen the County's partnership with SVCC to expand access to job training programs and dual enrollment opportunities for high school students.	First Five Years	
	Collaborate with SVCC to form partnerships with other Virginia Community College System schools, focusing on providing training and programs that complement and enhance SVCC's offerings.	Long-Term	
	Collaborate with local businesses to identify specific training needs and ensure educational and training programs align with the most in-demand skills within the local market.	Long-Term	
	Partner with County schools and local businesses to connect high school students with internship opportunities with local employers.	First Five Years	



Goals	Actions	Timing/ Priority	Vision Elements
Revitalize Main Streets and downtowns.	Partner with towns to create a pilot program for collaboration around Main Street revitalization.	Catalyst CP-7	   
	Support and partner with towns to invest in a connected network of open spaces, greenway trails, and recreational amenities.	First Five Years	   
	Partner with towns and local organizations to support the protection and reuse of historic buildings within towns, including adding qualifying structures to the National and State historic registers.	Long-Term	 
	Partner with local Chambers of Commerce to provide resources and support that foster the growth of small businesses in towns.	Ongoing	   
	Partner with towns and VDOT to implement pedestrian and bicycle improvements to create walkable neighborhoods and to improve pedestrian infrastructure within towns.	Ongoing	  
Funnel most retail, commercial, and residential growth into Mecklenburg County's towns.	Update the County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to limit commercial and retail uses within the County's agricultural zoning districts.	First Five Years	 
	Collaborate with towns to remove barriers to infill development and redevelopment within towns. This could include technical support to complete area plans, local ordinance audits, ordinance updates, or support for local Main Street Programs.	First Five Years	  
	Partner with town economic development staff to pair local small businesses and start-ups with available sites within towns.	Ongoing	 
	Limit extension of public water and sewer services to the areas designated as Rural and Rural Conservation on the Future Land Use Plan.	Ongoing	

Catalyst Projects

CP - 1	Complete an Update to the County’s Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances
CP - 2	Support and Enhance Farming Mentorship & Apprentice Programs
CP - 3	Complete a Safe Streets for All Plan
CP - 4	Complete a Greenways & Outdoor Recreation Plan
CP - 5	Establish a Public Swimming Beach
CP - 6	Meet Local Healthcare Needs
CP - 7	Establish a Town-County Collaboration Pilot Program

Overview

The following pages include a more detailed description of each of the Catalyst Projects. These projects reflect community priorities and play an important role in achieving the Plan Vision. Catalyst Projects are projects that provide critical infrastructure, amenities, or are the highest need planning and policy projects that the County can complete to move the Plan Vision forward.

The chosen number and types of Catalyst Projects was deliberate, reflecting those that could realistically be finished within the first few years of Plan adoption. It’s important to note that several projects will require collaboration with other partners, which can affect the Project’s timeline. County staff and officials should actively work to accelerate Catalyst Projects to the best of their ability.

The following pages include a more detailed description of each Catalyst Project as well as relevant information such as the type of project (Capital, Policy, or Planning Project), estimated

time for completion, possible funding sources, and relevant partners that the County would need to involve in planning or implementation.

Cost Estimates

Estimated cost ranges are also provided for each project. These are general estimates and do not include potential external funding sources like state or federal funds, or grants that could offset the County’s costs. The cost estimates are in 2024 dollars and are best guesses; however, these figures are likely to change due to inflation, fluctuations in material and labor costs, or unforeseen circumstances that could affect the project’s progress. The following ranges are used for the cost estimates:

- \$: <\$500,000
- \$\$: \$500,000 - \$2,000,000
- \$\$\$: \$2,000,000 - \$5,000,000
- \$\$\$\$: \$5,000,000 - \$10,000,000
- \$\$\$\$\$: >\$10,000,000

CP-1 Complete an Update to the County’s Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances

Actions	Update the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to limit industrial, commercial, and suburban residential development within the County’s Rural and Rural Conservation Land Uses. Update the County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to eliminate barriers to the construction of housing in appropriate locations. This could include: reducing or eliminating minimum lot sizes, maximum setbacks, and parking requirements, and allowing a variety of housing types by-right within all residential zoning districts.
Project Type	Policy Project
Cost Estimate	\$: <\$500,000
Estimated Timeline	1-2 years
Possible Funding	County general fund
Partners	This will be primarily a County led initiative but collaboration with local stakeholders including town staff and officials will be key.

Description

Mecklenburg County’s current Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances were adopted in 1990, with minor amendments made periodically since then. A key step to implementing the Future Land Use Plan is to update these Ordinances following Plan adoption to bring local regulations up-to-date and to ensure that future growth and development are consistent with the Plan.

Two Actions related to Zoning Ordinance updates are identified as Catalyst Projects. These Actions are specifically focused on increasing housing choice and local housing supply and making changes to agricultural zoning districts to preserve rural resources. In addition, multiple other Actions call for updates to the Zoning Ordinance, such as adding lighting standards to protect dark skies in the rural areas, adding stream buffer standards to protect water resources, requiring industrial developers to improve County streets concurrent with development, and requiring sidewalks in residential areas.

By updating the County’s development ordinances to reflect the Future Land Use Plan and recommen-

dations related to housing and rural area protection, the County can ensure that future development aligns with the Vision for 2044. Zoning updates will place new construction, housing, and businesses in suitable areas of the County to support the Plan’s Goals of fostering vibrant small towns and protecting rural areas.



Updating the County’s Zoning Ordinance will direct housing growth to areas adjacent to towns and protect the County’s rural resources.

CP-2 Support and Enhance Farming Mentorship & Apprentice Programs

Action	Work with schools and local organizations such as Farm Bureau and Virginia Cooperative Extension to foster mentorship and apprentice programs to connect experienced farmers with aspiring young farmers.
Project Type	Policy Project
Cost Estimate	\$: <\$500,000
Estimated Timeline	2-3 years
Possible Funding	USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program; Governor’s Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID) Planning Grant
Partners	Farm Bureau, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Mecklenburg County Schools, Farm Service Agency, Farm Credit

Description
This project will address the critical need to bridge the gap between experienced farmers and the next generation. It is especially important for Mecklenburg County, where the aging farming population poses a challenge to the long-term sustainability of local agriculture. By creating mentorship and apprentice programs and supporting existing programs, Mecklenburg County can help educate a new generation of farmers who are equipped with the skills and knowledge to carry on these vital jobs.

Given Mecklenburg County’s rich agricultural history, preserving the continuity of farming is crucial for maintaining local food systems, supporting the agricultural economy, and safeguarding the agricultural traditions that define the County’s heritage and culture.

Partnerships with Mecklenburg County Schools, Farm Bureau, and the Virginia Cooperative Extension will ensure that the programs are tailored to local needs. Working with these groups to expand existing programs and to focus on outreach and recruitment will be critical to the success of the program.

Potential funding sources include federal programs such as the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, as well as the state-level Governor’s Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID) Planning Grant. Involving local organizations and stakeholders will not only provide additional financial support but will also expand the reach and impact of the project across the community.



The Mecklenburg Agriculture Advisory Committee meets regularly to discuss current issues facing local farmers.

CP-3 Complete a Safe Streets for All Plan

Action	Apply for funding through the US DOT to complete a Safe Streets for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and implement the top priority safety interventions.
Project Type	Planning Project
Cost Estimate	\$: <\$500,000
Estimated Timeline	1-2 years
Possible Funding	U.S. Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program
Partners	Explore the possibility of partnering with towns, adjacent Counties, and/or the SPDC

Description
Mecklenburg County is among the bottom 20% of Virginia counties for vehicular crash fatalities per capita. Throughout the planning process, residents shared their concerns about safety of roadways, such as those without painted centerlines and those that were either unlit or lit poorly.



A Safe Streets for All Plan will help the County prioritize and invest in safety upgrades to its secondary streets.

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) is a Federal grant program that offers financial assistance for planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational projects aimed at preventing fatalities and serious injuries on roadways for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, motorists, and commercial vehicle drivers.

The SS4A program would support the creation of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan that identifies the most pressing roadway safety issues in Mecklenburg County and the implementation of projects and strategies to address these concerns.

There are two types of funding available through the SS4A program:

- 1. Planning and Demonstration Grants** provide Federal funds to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan or carry out demonstration activities to inform the development of an Action Plan.
- 2. Implementation Grants** provide Federal funds to execute projects and strategies outlined in a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan to address specific roadway safety issues.

It is recommended that the County first pursue a Planning and Demonstration Grant to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and then apply for an Implementation Grant to assist with the implementation of the strategies identified in the Action Plan.

CP-4 Complete a Greenways & Outdoor Recreation Plan

Action	Conduct a County-wide Greenways and Outdoor Recreation Plan with the goals of planning and implementing a connected greenway and open spaces network, providing intra-town connectivity, and improving access to recreational amenities such as Kerr Lake, Lake Gaston, and the Meherrin River.
Project Type	Planning Project
Cost Estimate	\$: <\$500,000
Estimated Timeline	1-2 years
Possible Funding	U.S. EPA’s Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC)
Partners	The County should pursue collaboration with towns in this effort.

Description
Throughout the planning process, Mecklenburg County residents expressed a strong desire for increased outdoor recreational opportunities. In order to facilitate additional investment in this area, the County should complete a Greenways and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan.



A Greenways and Outdoor Recreation Plan will help the County determine opportunities to improve access to existing resources, such as the Meherrin River. Pictured above: Whittle’s Mill Park.

The purpose of this planning effort would be to assess existing facilities and programming and to identify areas for improvement. This Plan can also be used to accelerate the planning and design associated with other active transportation priorities such as segments of the Tobacco Heritage Trail, bike/ped facilities along Route 903, and greenway connectivity to Granville County, North Carolina.

The Greenways and Outdoor Recreation Plan should include the following elements:

- 1. **Analysis** of the distribution of parks and connectivity of greenways and trails to identify gaps and overlaps. Changes can then be made to ensure all residents have access to public recreational amenities.
- 2. **Opportunities for partnerships** with towns and other partners, such as the YMCA and County schools. These collaborations help the County facilitate better resource sharing and more efficient implementation.
- 3. **A community engagement survey** and analysis of current and projected recreation trends from both local residents and tourists to ensure that investments align with local needs and preferences.

CP-5 Establish a Public Swimming Beach

Action	Seek collaboration with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Dominion Energy, and/or the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to identify a suitable location for at least one public swimming beach in Mecklenburg County and explore potential grant funding opportunities for construction and implementation.
Project Type	Capital Project
Cost Estimate	\$\$: \$500,000 - \$2,000,000
Estimated Timeline	2-3 years
Possible Funding	DCR’s Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); DCR’s Open Space Recreation & Conservation Fund; U.S. EPA’s Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC); The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) operates a Regional Access Program; National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (NPS-RTCA) program
Partners	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and/or Dominion Energy

Description
The public engagement process, specifically engagement targeted at Mecklenburg County middle and high school students, highlighted a lack of entertainment and activities for young people in the County. Despite having over 800 miles of shoreline along the County’s lakes and rivers, public beach access remains limited. The majority of the shoreline in the County is privately owned or under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or Dominion Energy.

Partnering with the USACE or Dominion as well as the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is a logical first step to creating a public beach in Mecklenburg County. Through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), DCR coordinates the funding of and provides technical assistance to localities throughout Virginia.



The County currently lacks a public beach with a designated swimming area and facilities.

CP-6 Meet Local Healthcare Needs

Action	Work with regional healthcare providers to explore solutions to local healthcare needs such as providing mobile health clinics and establishing permanent facilities including an urgent care center and other community needs.
Project Type	Policy & Planning Project
Cost Estimate	Cost is dependent upon County’s role in this Action and possible incentives to attract healthcare providers; Costs could be staff time, cost of land, or tax incentives.
Estimated Timeline	Unknown
Possible Funding	Health Access Grants from the Virginia Health Care Foundation; Basic Human Needs Grant from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation
Partners	Virginia Department of Health, VCU Health, Southside Behavioral Health, other regional healthcare providers

Description

This project aims to improve healthcare access in Mecklenburg County by addressing critical gaps in the availability of medical services. The County should take a multi-pronged approach to accomplish this Action. In the short-term, the County should collaborate with regional healthcare providers to implement temporary solutions such as mobile health facilities and pop-up clinics. In addition, the County should actively seek partnerships to establish permanent healthcare facilities such as an urgent care center within the County. This could include the County promoting Mecklenburg as a viable location for services and/or providing incentives such as land for a new facility or tax incentives.

Seeking both short-term and permanent solutions to enhance access to healthcare can help residents to access preventive care, decrease local emergency

room visits, and can help ensure that residents have access to timely medical care. Improving healthcare infrastructure is a needed step towards supporting a healthy, thriving population and attracting new residents and businesses.

There are various funding sources that the County and its partners could explore for this project, such as Health Access Grants from the Virginia Health Care Foundation, which work to increase access to healthcare for those who live in rural areas, as well as the Basic Human Needs Grant from the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, which supports projects providing access to medical and mental health services. Collaborations with local organizations, regional hospital systems, and public health agencies would further enhance the project’s viability.



Community members identified a need for urgent care facilities in Mecklenburg County.

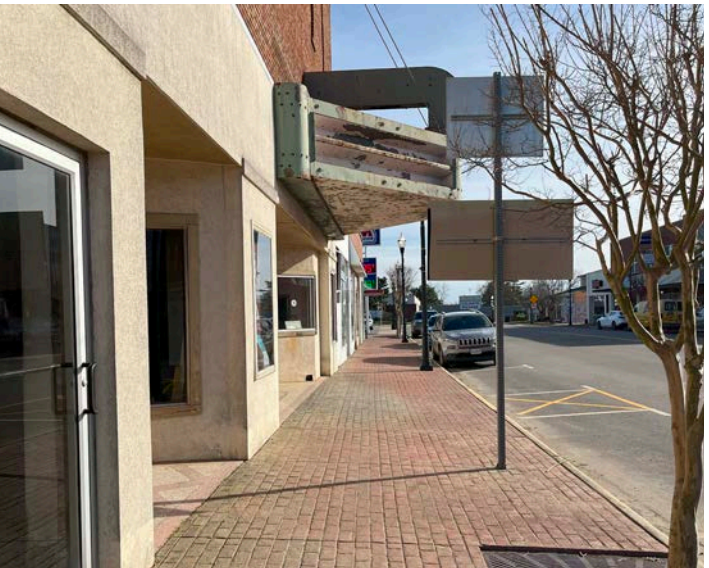
CP-7 Establish a Towns & County Collaboration Pilot Program

Action	Partner with towns to create a pilot program for collaboration around Main Street revitalization.
Project Type	Policy, Planning, and Capital Project
Cost Estimate	\$\$\$: \$5,000,000 - \$10,000,000
Estimated Timeline	2-5 years
Possible Funding	Virginia Main Street, Main Street America
Partners	Towns, local small businesses, and non-profit organizations

Description

One of the most common themes to emerge from the community feedback was the desire to see more vibrancy and activity within the downtowns of Mecklenburg County’s towns. People shared a desire to see fewer vacant buildings and to have more opportunities for dining and entertainment within downtowns rather than having to leave the County for shopping, dining, and entertainment.

The Towns & County Pilot Program aims to test out a program for the County and towns to partner to identify shared goals and foster investment towards downtown revitalization. This program should include the following elements:



Mecklenburg County and its towns should work together to find ways to fill empty storefronts and revive downtowns (downtown Chase City, pictured above).

- 1. Collaboration.** Localities should create an inter-governmental committee with representatives from each of the towns and the County. This committee would meet on a frequent basis to design program elements and create a process for collective decision making.
- 2. Locally-Driven Planning.** Before taking action, each town should work on a downtown needs assessment to identify needs and strategies for reducing downtown vacancies, fostering small business growth, and creating walkable, vibrant main streets. The County could partner with towns in this effort by offering technical assistance to those that may lack the staff resources to develop local plans.
- 3. Implementation.** The County and towns should identify a reserve of money to provide a dedicated, one-time funding source to invest in a top priority need for each town that was identified in the joint planning effort. Funds could be from local general funds, grant funds, or from partnerships with private entities.
- 4. Program Evaluation and Next Steps.** At the conclusion of the first three steps, the County and towns should collectively evaluate the pilot program to determine its effectiveness and opportunities for ongoing collaboration.