



Places 29

DRAFT Vision Statement and Goals

October 27, 2005

Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles for the Northern Development Areas Master Plan are an essential part of the plan. Both were developed from a combination of community input and policies manifest in the County's Comprehensive Plan. They are to be used in conjunction with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The County recognizes the impact of the vision and guiding principles on the City of Charlottesville and the University of Virginia, as well as on the region as a whole.

Vision Statement

Albemarle County's Northern Development Areas will feature compact development organized into neighborhood and employment centers. These centers will be walkable and mixed-use; they will offer a variety of housing choices, high quality retail, and employment opportunities. They will be connected by an attractive, efficient, and accessible multimodal transportation system. In the midst of this urban-style development, parks and open spaces will provide a sense of respite and contribute to an overall excellent quality of life.

Guiding Principles

Development

1. As stated in the Comprehensive Plan, the County has chosen to focus future development in the Development Areas to the greatest possible extent in order to lessen development pressure on the Rural Areas. The four Northern Development Areas are intended to develop in a compact, urban form—this will support portions of the Development Areas becoming lively mixed-use centers similar in character to a “downtown” or “main street”.
2. The natural environment and the character of the County’s rural areas are valuable features which should be preserved.
3. The four Northern Development Areas form a corridor centered on US 29 North. As development in the corridor, and elsewhere increases, the additional traffic it generates must be addressed by this master plan.
4. By improving on the current configuration of neighborhoods, places of employment, and shopping areas, the community seeks to create a pattern of walkable places with a diverse range of uses. Pedestrian and bicycle connections and facilities should improve access and ensure safety.
5. The Northern Development Areas can expect a combination of new development, infill development, and redevelopment to take place subject to this master plan. It is essential for this development to follow the principles of the County’s Neighborhood Model; to respect and work with the terrain, not destroy it.
6. Preserving the character of existing neighborhoods while improving the quality, diversity, and affordability of new housing is important. Housing located close to employment centers, shopping areas, transportation, and recreation is important for the Northern Development Areas.
7. The Northern Development Areas community values high quality design, which respects the scale and character of existing development and adjacent open space.
8. It is important to provide infrastructure at or before the time it is needed to serve new development.

Transportation

9. A high-quality transportation system will serve users across the entire spectrum, from local trips to regional ones, and it will be multimodal—including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access. In particular, improvements to the US 29 corridor should recognize and address the road’s multiple purposes. The system will also address the movement of freight by truck, train, and air.

10. Future development of the transportation system is an opportunity to increase the connectivity of places and land uses currently separated by US 29 and other high-traffic roads, such as Hydraulic and Rio roads. The future transportation system can also enhance the connectivity between neighborhoods, recreational amenities, and community facilities throughout the area. The road network that will best serve the Northern Development Areas includes US 29, roads that are parallel to US 29, and good east-west connecting roads.
11. Safety and aesthetics are important for new and existing streets.
12. Public transit is now available in some parts of the Northern Development Areas and is an important alternative form of transportation in the future.

Open Space and Community Amenities

13. The community values the expansive views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and other vistas; they add to the quality of life. They should be preserved through careful delineation and protection of viewsheds.
14. The Northern Development Areas community values a well-connected network of accessible public open spaces, greenways, and trails that will be created by preserving the existing open spaces and adding new ones, and making connections between open spaces in the Development Areas and surrounding Rural Areas and the City of Charlottesville.
15. The County's public facilities, such as libraries and schools, are both a source of pride and a resource. These facilities should be convenient and accessible to neighborhoods and employment centers.