



LAND USE

The Land Use Element is the culmination of the previous chapters set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. That vision of population, housing, economic development, green infrastructure, historic resources, and transportation is implemented in a physical development sense, by the future land use map. The Land Use Element memorializes Sumter's policy approach to *what* type of development should be encouraged, *where* that development should be located and, of equal importance, *how* that development should look from a design perspective.

The Land Use Element is the primary tool when making land decisions. By and large, new land uses should be consistent with those land uses encouraged or supported by the Comprehensive Plan. However, this Plan and its Land Use Element should be used as a flexible policy guide and not as a rigid regulatory document. So in essence it is quite different than the Zoning Ordinance (although they do go hand-in-hand). The Future Land Use map is not intended to illustrate parcel-specific land uses. Instead, in most cases, broader, area-based interpretations are recommended.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan represents a departure from the approach taken in Sumter's first Land Use Plan required under the 1994 Planning Enabling Act. The new Plan makes every effort to support individual property rights, to encourage new businesses and the expansion of existing business, and to place the interests of the community as a whole on equal footing with individual real estate and development interests. The new Plan also stresses simplicity in the Land Use Map combined with clearer, written policy direction.

Historical Growth Pattern & Existing Conditions

For the past two decades, Sumter's growth pattern has followed the saying once popularized by journalist Horace Greeley: "Go West, Young Man." Sumter has grown in a westerly fashion, away from downtown and toward Shaw A.F.B and Columbia. Half a dozen or more subdivisions such as Timberline (380 total units), Carolina Palms (170 units), Hunters Crossing (540 units), Linwood (314 units), Foxcroft (254 units), and Wintergreen (264 units) have been approved to the west along Patriot Parkway, Loring Mill Road, McCrays Mill Road, Carter Road, Mason Road, etc. All told, since 2000 over 5,400 new housing units have been approved in the City and County. This does not include individual home sites or manufactured homes.



Approved Residential Pipeline

As of June 2009, over 36 active subdivisions were at some phase of build-out:

Table LU-1

SUBDIVISION NAME	TOTAL Units Approved	Units Built	Units Remaining	% Complete
Arbors	110	7	103	6%
Ashbrook	103	21	82	20%
Banberry	31	11	20	35%
Beach Forest	330	93	237	28%
Beckwood Shires	47	21	26	45%
Beech Creek	225	102	123	45%
Carolina Palms	170	54	116	32%
Casey Villas	60	38	22	63%
The Cove	153	2	151	1%
Edens I	258	0	258	0%
Foxcroft	254	142	112	56%
Garden Gate	178	50	128	28%
Gingko Hills	153	121	32	79%
Hampshire Estates	42	34	8	81%
Homeland Village	47	0	47	0%
Hunters Crossing	540	145	395	27%
Kel-Sam	80	56	24	70%
Knights Village	177	120	57	68%
Lakewood	269	253	16	94%
Linwood	314	96	218	31%
Loringwood	30	21	9	70%
Mayfield	61	45	16	74%
Magnolia Courtyard	30	4	26	13%
Patriot Landing	88	35	53	40%
Park Place	43	33	10	77%
Patriot Village	82	73	9	89%
Pocalla	225	5	220	2%
Rolling Hills II	88	31	57	35%
Reserve at Mill Run	39	5	34	13%
Stillwater	74	27	47	36%
Stonecroft	236	38	198	16%
Summit	35	10	25	29%
Timberline	380	141	239	37%
Williamsburg	220	65	155	30%
Wintergreen	264	253	11	96%
Totals	5436	2152	3284	40%

Source: City-County Planning and City-County Building Departments; Note: Active defined as subdivisions over 20 units



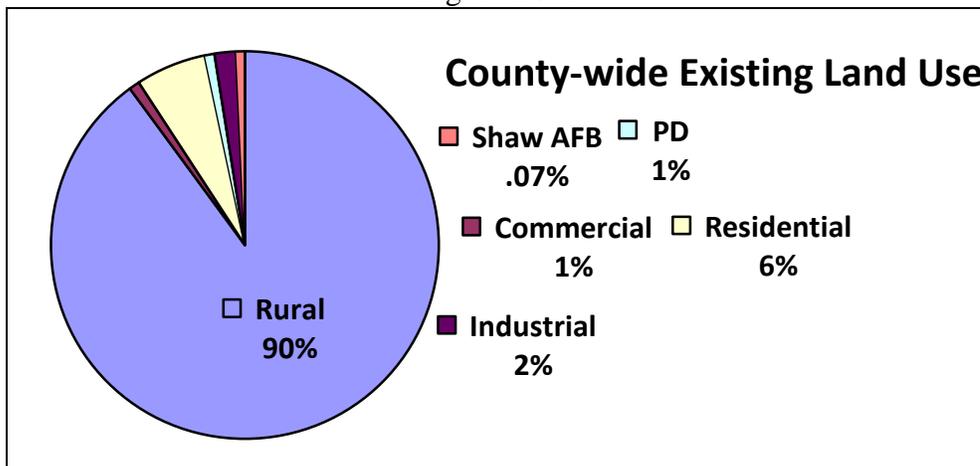
There can be no doubt that this suburban pattern has had a negative effect on Sumter’s first- ring neighborhoods and on Downtown Sumter itself. The data clearly suggests that Sumter’s population growth during this period has been flat, at best. Job creation has been slow. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that much of the new residential development was a response to move-up demand buoyed by hyper mortgage availability and not due to new population growth. Left behind are increasingly difficult conditions for older neighborhoods: blight, abandonment, increased crime, and other code enforcement challenges.

A virtually unlimited land supply, permissive annexation policies, and unconstrained utility expansion have encouraged a move away from a more compact identifiable City form, but so has the prospect of new housing opportunities, perceptions about school and crime, and closer proximity to Shaw A.F.B. For whatever reason, the resulting land use pattern has segregated the Sumter Community by race, income, and education. Correspondingly, older residential and commercial corridors continue on a downward, opposite trajectory when compared with the dynamic western growth pattern.

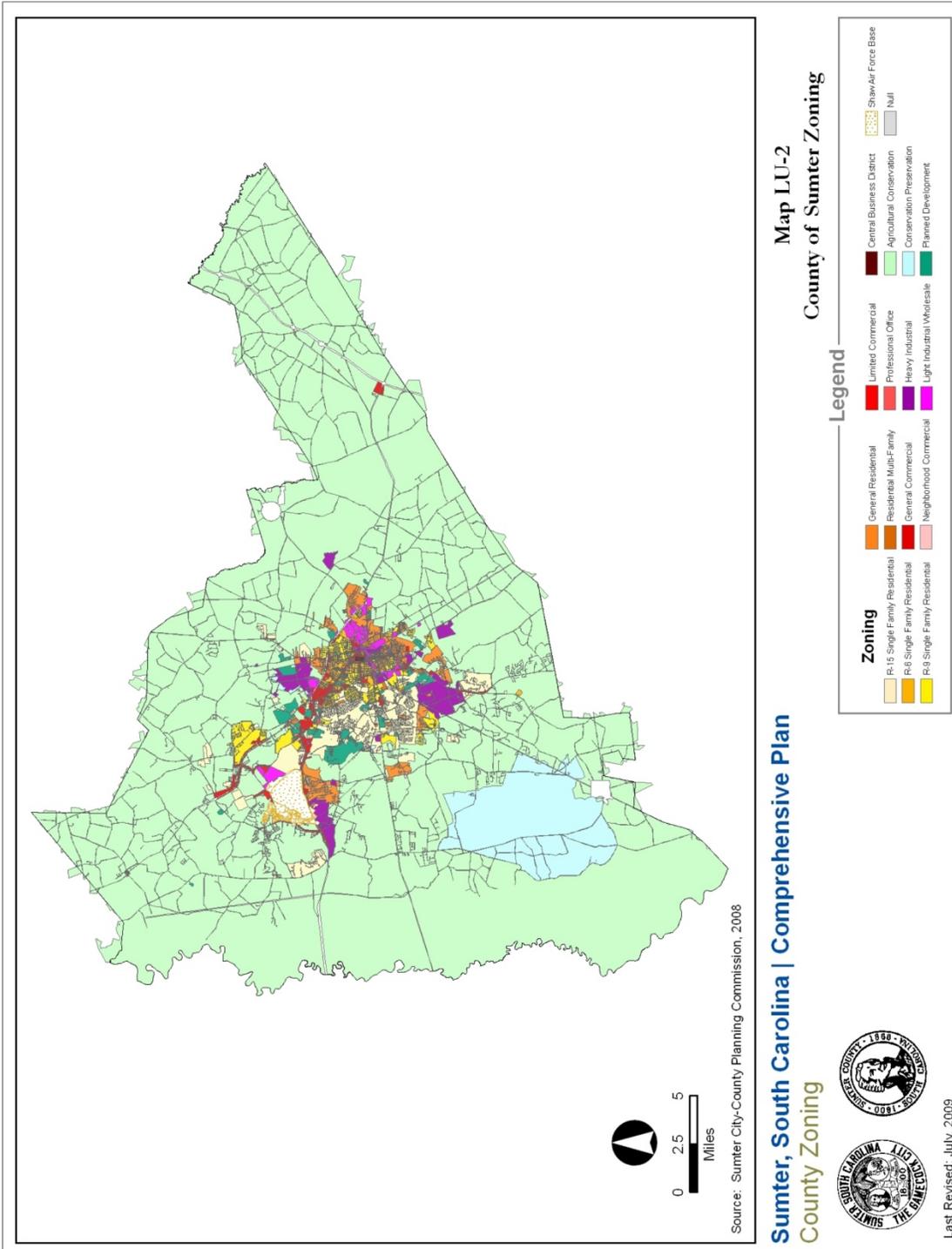
Sumter’s existing land use closely mimics the City and County official zoning map and is therefore characterized by a strict separation of uses by type. Sumter has distinct industrial, commercial, residential, and rural land uses which are seldom integrated or mixed together. This is outdated “Euclidian” zoning, defined by an early 20th Century zoning case in the City of Euclid, Ohio. This pattern contributes to urban blight, suburban sprawl, and large scale public service and infrastructure issues.

Sumter is primarily a rural, sparsely developed community. Notwithstanding the City of Sumter and its urban/suburban character, Sumter is dominated by rural land uses. According to the existing zoning map, 90% of the land uses in the City and County are rural—either in Agricultural Conservation or Conservation preservation zoning districts:

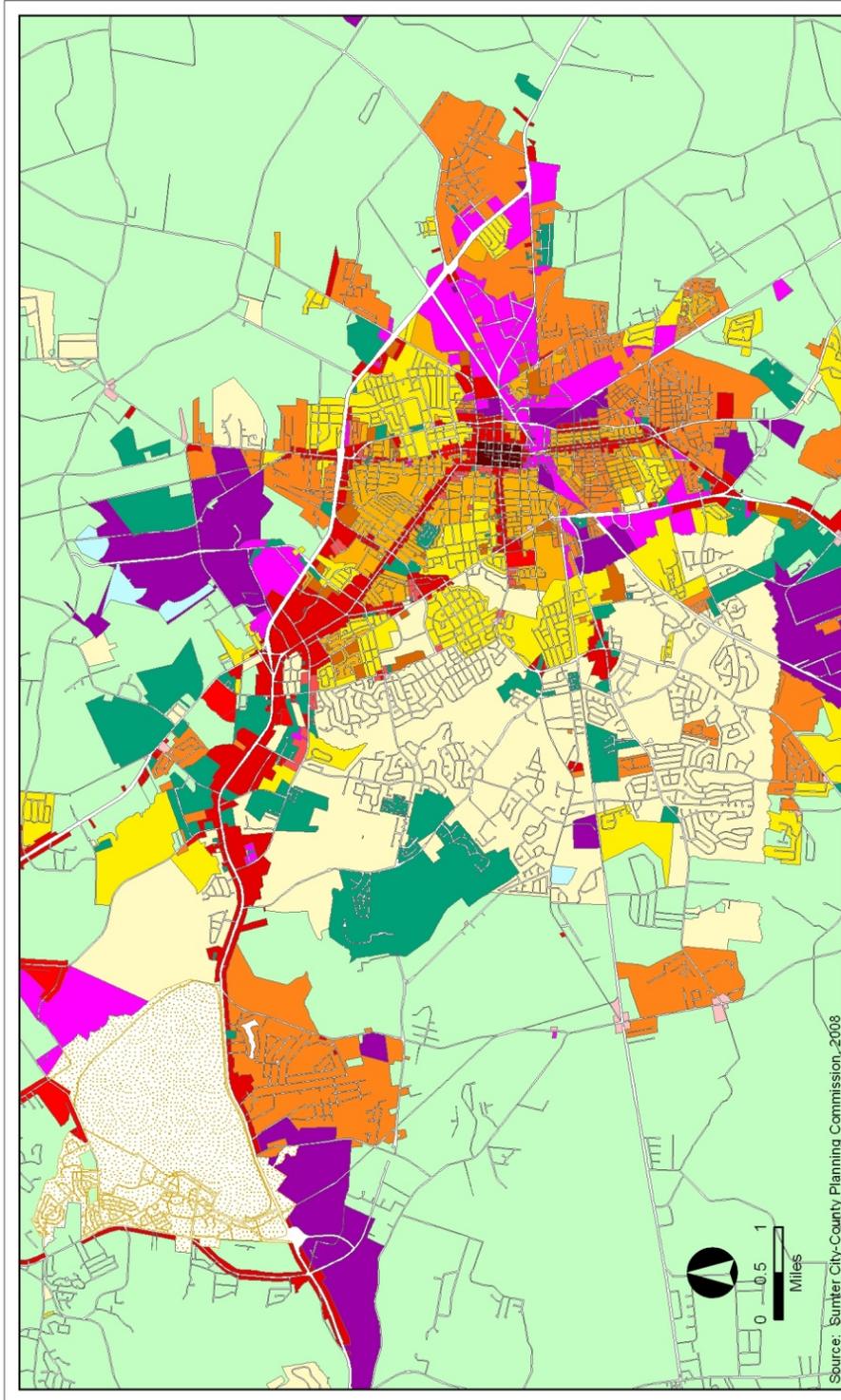
Figure LU-1



Source: Sumter City-County Planning Department GIS



Land Use Element



Source: Sumter City-County Planning Commission, 2008

Sumter, South Carolina | Comprehensive Plan
City Zoning

Map LU-3
City of Sumter Zoning

Legend

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| R-15 Single Family Residential | Limited Commercial | Central Business District | Shaw Air Force Base |
| R-6 Single Family Residential | Professional Office | Agricultural Conservation | Null |
| R-3 Single Family Residential | Heavy Industrial | Conservation Preservation | Planned Development |
| R-8 Single Family Residential | Light Industrial/Wholesale | Neighborhood Commercial | |



Last Revised: July, 2009

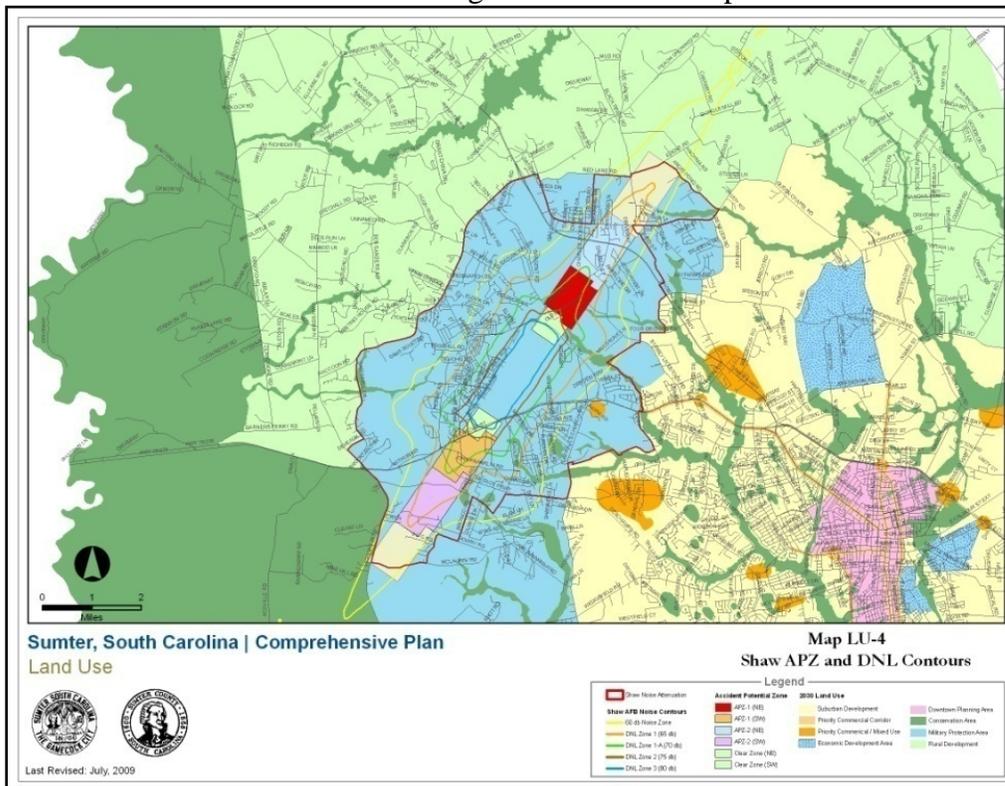


Based on the Active Subdivision Chart, 40% of all approved subdivision lots, in subdivisions yet to be built out, have constructed homes on them. Over three thousand units are still permitted to be built. This count does not include individually platted parcels or multi-family opportunities.

The Plan anticipates slow, even flat growth in the near term. From a land use perspective, this is a reality that cannot be ignored: There will be some continued demand for new home construction further and further away from the city center. Yet, absent job creation or measurable population growth this practice is unsustainable. For the community, it represents a zero sum gain—there are clear winners and losers. Facing the most daunting challenge are the older neighborhoods, closer to downtown. Building further north and west, without corresponding population growth, leaves behind neighborhoods burdened by neglect, foreclosure, crime and declining property values.

Finally, two primary land use characteristics will continue to dominate Sumter’s development future: low, poor-soiled, swamp and wetland areas to the east and Shaw A.F.B. and Poinsett Electronic Range to the west. Each is a significant constraint to suburban development. There appears to be little market desire to move eastward toward I-95, and some low density residential in the area near Poinsett. However, Shaw, in particular is experiencing significant development pressure.

Shaw Air Force Base Existing Conditions w/ Proposed Land Use





Summary Approach

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan offers a potential break from the rigid land use policies of the past. The new plan reduces and renames the Land Use designations to focus on the character of development in each new Planning Policy Area. Basically, Sumter is defined by three primary land uses: Urban, Suburban, and Rural. Within these areas, some characteristics of each are present as are two other critical land uses: sensitive Conservation Areas and the Military Protection Areas. The 2030 Plan reduces from eleven to five the number of specific land use categories on the map. Yet, the Plan adds deeper policy details for citizens, property owners, developers, and decision-makers alike. These policies, perhaps more so than a simple color on a map, are designed to guide land use decisions.

Public comment received during the process identified a host of issues. However, three primary issues rose above all others:

1. Sumter should identify ways to encourage, support, and implement projects with a mix of uses. Additionally, infill projects should be encouraged even if the uses introduced are of a different type than existing or adjacent uses. In these cases, site design, landscaping, and architecture should play an important role in the decision-making process.
2. Sumter's physical, visual appearance is in desperate need of a makeover. Abandoned houses, seas of asphalt, power lines, vacant industrial brownfields, non-conforming commercial sites, outdoor storage, weeds, and absent landscaping dominate the local landscape.
3. The protection of Shaw Air Force Base and its mission is of paramount importance to the community. It is our economic lifeblood and all reasonable land use measures should be employed to eliminate incompatible uses and prevent the encroachment of uses that jeopardize Shaw's mission.

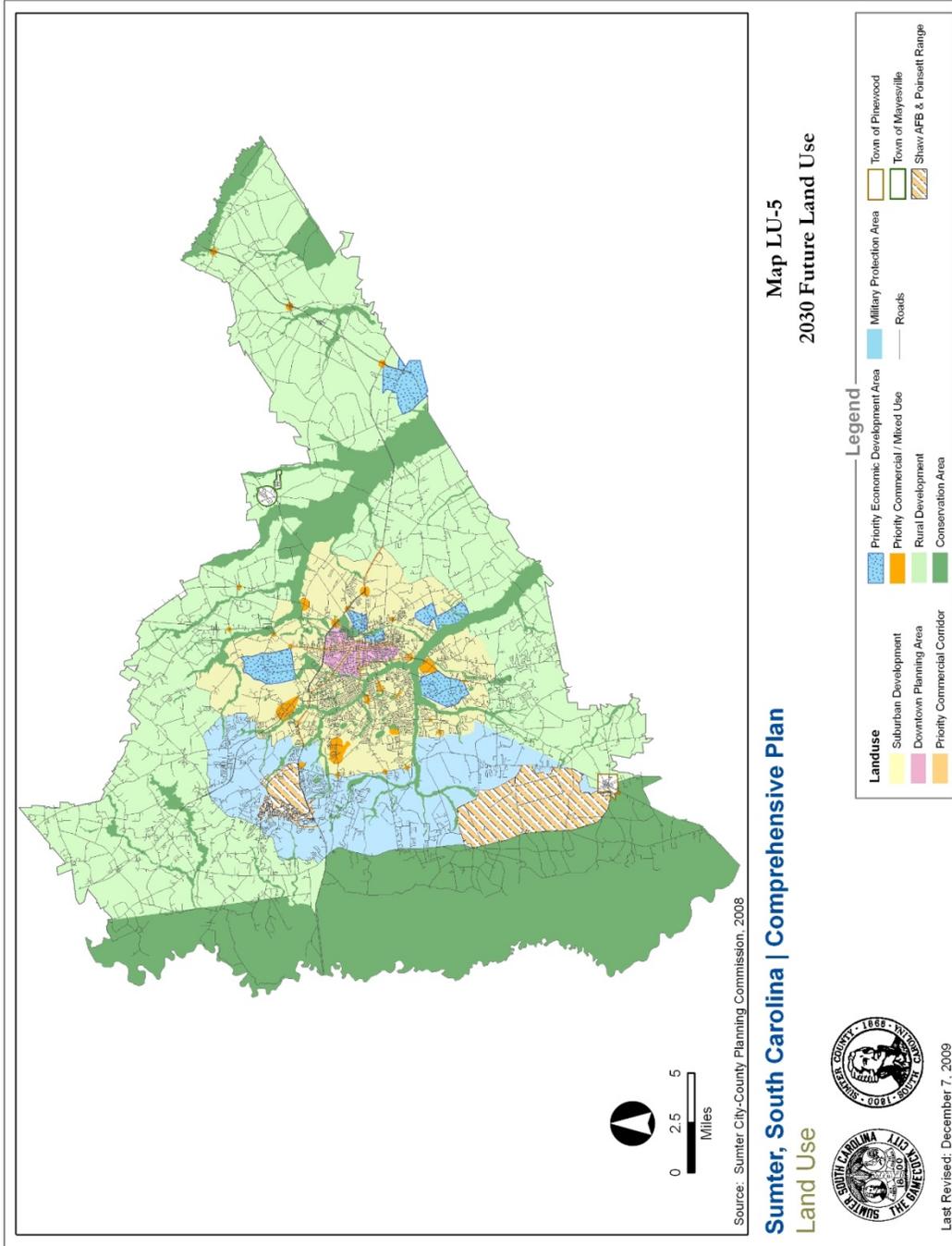
Along with these three challenges, the Plan attempts to strike a balance between establishing new areas for future growth (it is after all a 20 year plan), and directing development to locations that already have infrastructure in place. This Plan hesitates to use the popular phrase "smart growth" as the concept carries different meanings for different groups. However, the total approach does propose a more efficient, compact, less sprawling pattern of development. Yes, property rights and the invisible market hand are important. Yet, this Plan attempts to balance those rights in a fiscally prudent manner. New residential and commercial development increase the costs of providing public services including police, fire, recreation, health, and other government services.

**Significant changes from the 1999 Plan include:**

- Simplification of Land Use categories
- Broader policy descriptions
- Expansion of the Military Protection Area to preserve Shaw A.F.B and Poinsett Range
- Directing suburban development density only to places where public water and sewer is available or planned to be available
- Re-focus on the importance of downtown Sumter and its surrounding neighborhoods
- Expansion of Conservation areas for both the protection of valuable resources and rich farmland
- Movement away from homogenous, single-use land use designations by encouraging a mix of uses.
- Introduction of new environmental, historic preservation, and housing policy initiatives
- A Comprehensive Community Facility and Priority Investment Element

The Plan takes great care to ensure there is adequate guidance for the community, especially in the suburban area, where most growth is expected to take place. Here, the Plan introduces the concept of priority investment areas, consistent with the State Planning Enabling law. Effectively, these areas are focal points, nodes, and priority areas where the community wants to see new commercial, industrial or mixed use development.

Finally, the Plan is only as good as the tools developed for its implementation. The primary planning tool for both the City and County is the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance. The best formula for the successful implementation of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan is one which prioritizes the development of a new regulatory structure, including a new zoning ordinance and revised development standards. This Plan makes no stronger recommendation.





Land Use Descriptions

Downtown Planning Area (DPA)

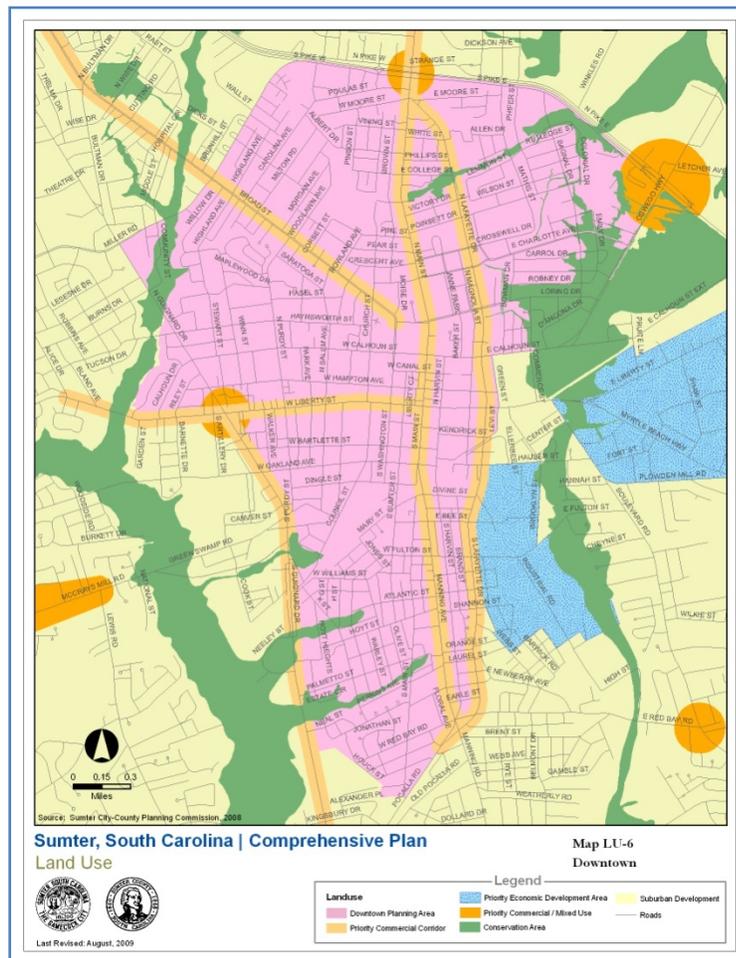
This area represents the historic core of the City of Sumter and Sumter County. For decades the downtown area has been the center of government, commerce, spirituality, and healthcare. It includes a separated mix of commercial, industrial, and residential uses that are representative of the City's pre-1950s development. It is the home of the Central Business District and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Surrounding residential neighborhoods, including the Hampton Park local Historic District, reflect a rich architectural flavor. The primary goal of the Downtown Planning Area is to achieve a city center which promotes and encourages a design focused, flexible urban core dominated by retail, office/institutional, and residential uses. This designation supports an intentional true mix of residential, commercial, healthcare, and civic land uses at relatively high densities. It includes both the City Center area dominated by Main Street, but also surrounding commercial, industrial and residential areas.

Downtown Planning Area Policies

1. The City will support an intentional, integrated mix of uses at urban densities in an effort to encourage an active, lively, 24-hour downtown environment.
2. Surrounding residential neighborhoods will be protected from further decline through a variety of practices, including but not limited to:
 - a. Targeted codes enforcement
 - b. Development of market-based incentives for infill development
 - c. Focused Neighborhood Planning
 - d. Streetscape, sidewalk, and signage enhancements
 - e. Strengthening of adjacent commercial corridors: Manning Avenue, Main St., Liberty St., Washington St., and Broad St.
 - f. Consideration of expanding the residential historic districts to ensure design protection and preservation of distinct architectural resources.
3. The City will continue to support downtown commercial revitalization through a variety of practices, including but not limited to:
 - a. Development of market-based incentives for infill development
 - b. Recruiting targeted retail, office, healthcare, entertainment, and other commercial uses



- c. Identifying opportunities to amend current building code to encourage second story residential uses and other compatible uses
 - d. Ensuring adequate, safe, off-street parking locations
 - e. Streetscape, sidewalk, and signage enhancements
 - f. Consideration of expanding the Central Business District to ensure design protection and preservation of distinct architectural resources.
4. The City will support the adaptive reuse of existing and former brownfield sites. New, clean industrial or manufacturing uses are encouraged.
5. Government, Schools, Public, Civic, and other Institutional uses will be highlighted, visually connected, and protected in the Downtown Planning Area. These land uses will be strongly encouraged to locate in the Downtown.





Suburban Development Planning Area (SD)

The Suburban Development Area encompasses a large area surrounding the historic core of Sumter. The area is characterized by the influences of modern suburban development: the separation of distinct commercial, residential, and industrial areas. Functionally, this pattern of development amounts to a strict separation of homogenous residential enclaves; strip commercial corridors and; finite, stand alone, employment centers. The pattern requires multiple automobile trips for all aspects of life: work, play, worship, and shopping. Moreover, the development pattern dictates the expensive expansion of public services, schools, and utility infrastructure to serve a more spread out community. It is largely inefficient and costly to local government and its citizens.

The continued spreading westward of low density, residential subdivisions and strip commercial development also increases the threat of encroachment and incompatible uses to Shaw A.F.B. With the next generation of fighter plane, the F-35, on the horizon and scheduled for Shaw within the next ten years, extreme care should be taken when adjudicating land use actions adjacent to the base, regardless of planned land use designation.

The primary objective of the Suburban Development designation is to scrutinize and manage the existing development patterns, foster intentional mixed-use development and identify new commercial and industrial locations where form and design are a focus, all in a more efficient manner. The current westerly leap frog approach is discouraged; infill and redevelopment in areas already suited with roads and infrastructure are more strongly encouraged.

Suburban Development Planning Area General Policies

1. The City and County will support an intentional mix of uses at medium densities in order to encourage development that offers residential, commercial, recreational, and employment uses in close or reasonable proximity to one another.
2. New development in the suburban area is intended to be served by public utilities. The City and County support the extension of public water and sewer to areas designated for suburban development.
3. Low density development on private well and septic (one unit per acre or more) is appropriate adjacent to the rural planning area and military protection area, or in cases where environmental constraints dictate that low density residential is more appropriate.



4. New residential development shall incorporate design characteristics including but not limited to:
 - a. Mix of residential housing types and design diversity
 - b. Residential density of 3-4 units per acre (single family); 6-12 units per acre (townhouse; duplex); 12-18 units per acre (multi-family).
 - c. Passive and Active open space developed through the conservation design process
 - d. Pedestrian connectivity with sidewalks and trails
 - e. Non-residential components such as institutional, employment, and commercial should be integrated along with residential in larger projects and Planned Developments
5. Supportive neighborhood retail and other small scale commercial opportunities are encouraged in Priority Commercial areas *and* other areas adjacent to residential uses in areas at major intersections and where commercial uses complete a block. Where proposed, design, form, and details will be paramount in the land use process.
6. Larger, destination retail, employment, or other commercial uses shall be directed to Priority Commercial Areas and Priority Commercial Corridors *and* to major intersections and arterial corridors such as Broad St., Lafayette St., Guignard, and McCrays Mill Road.
7. Industrial, light-industrial, warehouse, automotive repair, and uses with a dominant outdoor storage component should be directed to established areas with like uses.
8. All new development is expected to mitigate its impacts on public services, community facilities, schools, and transportation networks.
9. Employment and Economic Development centers are directed to the suburban planning area either in the existing industrial parks identified in the Economic Development Chapter or where adequate infrastructure exists to accommodate the proposed uses.
10. The City and County continue support for design improvements along Sumter's major corridors. The City and County will consider changes to the Highway Corridor design review district in an effort to strengthen implementation tools and ensure quality design related to architecture, signage and landscaping.
11. The City and County will examine opportunities to encourage, incentivize or require design improvements to non-conforming structures, sites, and parking lots.



12. The City supports neighborhood scale and corridor based planning activities on an ongoing basis to provide more specific land use guidance and more directed public input.

Suburban Development Policy Area: Priority Investment Areas

Priority Investment Areas are identified in the Suburban Development Area in an effort to more acutely identify, direct, and concentrate new development opportunities. The concept of Priority Investment Areas stems from the 2007 amendment to the South Carolina's Comprehensive Planning Act. These are areas where the City and County want to direct new development beyond existing, established corridors or areas. In doing so, the City and County may relax certain requirements, waive regulatory burdens, or develop incentives to direct development to these locations.

- **Priority Economic Development Areas**. Economic Development projects are encouraged throughout the City and County, in new or previously established areas. However, the map identifies specific Economic Development nodes. The designation offers protection to the existing industrial parks and identifies additional locations based on input from the Sumter County Development Board. Industrial, Manufacturing, Research, Campus-style Office Headquarters and other major job creators are included in this category.
- **Priority Commercial/Mixed-Use Areas**. Commercial and Mixed-use areas or nodes are identified on the map to direct future, high quality commercial and mixed use development. The areas include anticipated green fields and established locations expected to re-develop with higher and better uses over time. As set forth in the broader suburban policies, continued commercial development is expected along the major corridors. New priority locations are designated for protection against undesirable uses such as industrial, automotive repair, or uses primarily engaged in outdoor storage. These locations encourage both destination retail commercial uses and neighborhood commercial uses as appropriate. Design, layout, impact on adjacent properties, landscaping, and architecture all play a vital role in determining context viability.
- **Priority Commercial Corridors**. A major theme of the 2030 Plan is to encourage development in new locations while simultaneously bolstering sagging, under-utilized corridors. Whereas the Priority Commercial areas represent more likely newer, growing areas, the Priority Commercial Corridors focus on existing corridors across our community. Sumter corridors have been host to a diversity of uses from large, destination retail uses to more base industrial outdoor storage uses. Many formerly prosperous commercial corridors have struggled in recent years, such as Broad St. (from Wesmark to Church St.) or Manning Avenue in the City. Many corridors are trending toward higher levels of vacancy, or



marginalization of retail uses. They are visually uninviting and face outright abandonment.

A new direction is necessary to reinvigorate these areas. Designation as a Priority Corridor is a start. Identical to the above Priority Commercial Areas, Priority Corridor locations are designated for protection against undesirable uses such as industrial, automotive repair, or uses primarily engaged in outdoor storage. These locations encourage both destination retail commercial uses and neighborhood commercial uses as appropriate. Design, layout, impact on adjacent properties, landscaping, and architecture all play a vital role in determining context viability.



City of Sumter, South Carolina | Comprehensive Plan
Land Use

Map LU-7
Suburban Development



Last Revised: January 21, 2013
Document Name: Suburban Development

Legend	
	Roads
	Shaw AFB & Pointsett Range
	Rural Development
	Downtown Planning Area
	Conservation Preservation
	Suburban Development
	Military Protection Area



Military Protection Planning Area (MP)

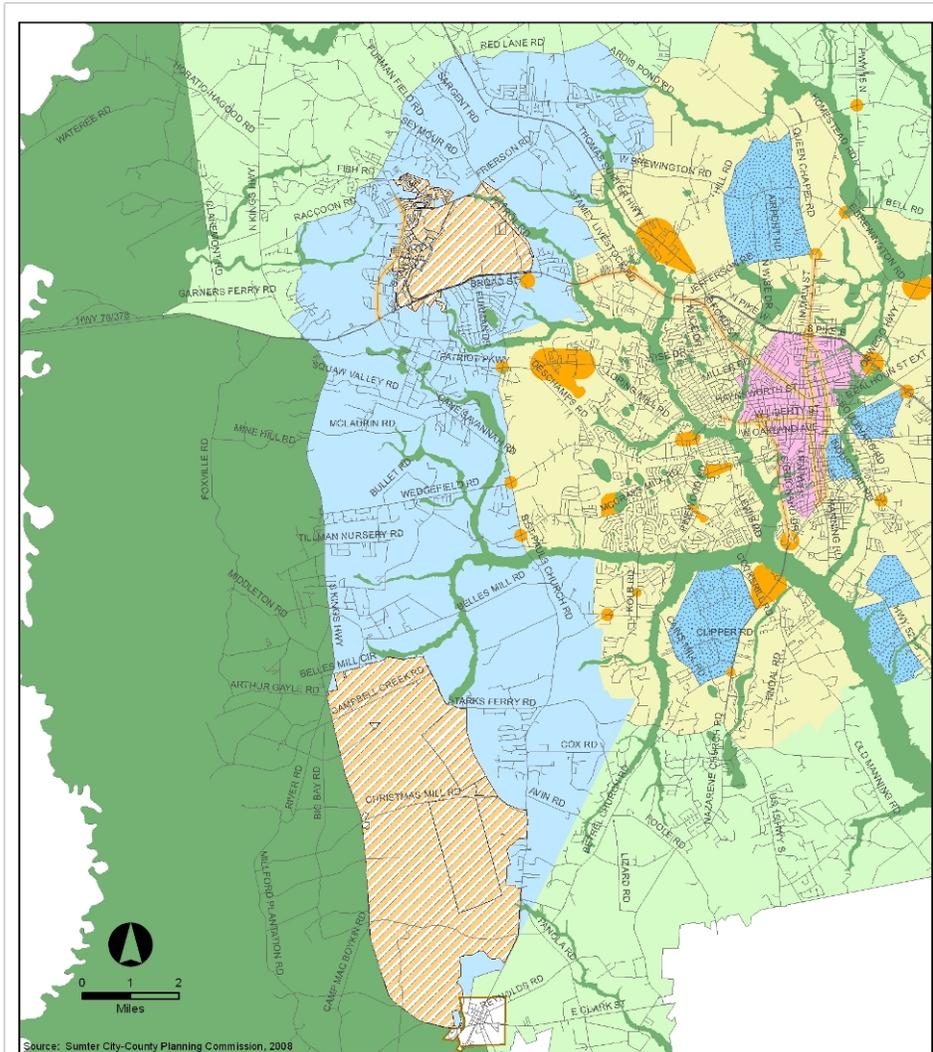
The Military Protection Planning Area is intended to protect Shaw Air Force Base and Poinsett Electronic Combat Range from encroachment of incompatible land uses and reduce the accident and noise potential to citizens in areas adjacent to these two critical military installations. Protection of Shaw A.F.B. mission is the community's primary goal in this area. The primary issue facing this planning area revolves around the future of the F-35 Lighting II (also referred to as the Joint Strike Fighter). This next generation aircraft is expected to arrive at Shaw within the next 10 years. Its noise impacts are unknown at this time. Great care should be taken in evaluating any land use application in this planning area as well as adjacent and surrounding planning areas. It is possible that prior to the arrival of the F-35, the Military Planning Area may need to be expanded to ensure protection of the Shaw mission.

Military Protection Planning Area Policies

1. The City and County support commercial, agricultural, and industrial development in this area of a type which significantly limits the concentration of people.
2. The City and County support very low-density residential uses of one acre or more on private well and septic tank only. Public sewer infrastructure will not be extended to the Military Protection Area for residential uses.
3. The City and County will work with land conservation groups, the Air Force, and other partners to develop and implement land conservation, easement, and open space protection programs.
4. Existing residential zoning districts which are in clear conflict with these policies will be reviewed for potential rezoning implementation.
5. All new housing stock is expected to meet noise reduction and attenuation standards. The City and County will consider zoning amendments to restrict or prohibit the placement or replacement of mobile or manufactured homes in this planning area.
6. The recommendations adopted by City and County Council in the *1993 Joint Compatible Land Use Study for Shaw A.F.B.* and the *2002 Joint Compatible Land Use Study for Poinsett Range* are incorporated into the 2030 Comprehensive Plan by reference.
7. The City and County will continue to work with Shaw Air Force Base, the Office of Economic Adjustment, and the United States Air Force on the development of a revised Joint Land Use Study for Shaw Air Force Base.



- 8. The City and County will reevaluate the boundaries and policies of the Military Protection Area upon receipt of technical noise and flight data relative to the F-35.



Source: Sumter City-County Planning Commission, 2008

Sumter, South Carolina | Comprehensive Plan

Land Use



Last Revised: December 7, 2009

Map LU-8

Military Protection Area

Legend		
Suburban Development	Priority Economic Development Area	Military Protection Area
Downtown Planning Areas	Priority Commercial/Mixed Use	Shaw AFB S. Ponssett Range
Priority Commercial Corridor	Rural Development	Roads
	Conservation Areas	



Rural Development Planning Area (RD)

Sumter is as much a rural community as it is a suburban or urban place; more so, perhaps. Inasmuch as the County wants to preserve its rural and agricultural heritage, the Rural Development Planning Area is intended to support low-density residential development and selected non-residential and agricultural uses in a relaxed regulatory climate. As such, the current development pattern of large lots (one acre or more) located on rural roads and private drives is extended in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. In areas near the County's several towns and enclaves, rural villages if you will, including Pinewood, Mayesville, Wedgefield, Rembert, and Dalzell, higher density clusters may be supported, especially if development is a clear extension of the rural village pattern and if public water and sewer is available.

Rural Development Planning Area Policies

1. Residential densities shall be supported at one unit per acre or more. However, in an effort to consider steps toward a more environmentally sustainable community, the County will consider zoning ordinance amendments designed to encourage cluster development—the practice of allowing smaller lot sizes clustered more closely together, yet achieving the balance of the development in preserved open space.
2. Manufactured Homes and single family homes are appropriate in the Rural Development Planning Area.
3. Small scale, rural serving non-residential commercial uses are directed to locate at intersections with arterial roads or major crossroads. Agribusiness and other rural employment options are encouraged to locate at major crossroads as well. Non-residential site development shall follow conservation design techniques, focusing on preservation of natural features, a reduced footprint, and limits on impervious surfaces. Durable, dustless, all-weather surfaces are more appropriate typically than paved parking lots.
4. Schools, libraries, government facilities, police and fire stations should be located on arterial/major highways and at major intersections to better serve the community. The location of these facilities should be in relation to the populations that they will serve.
5. Public Sewer shall not be extended into the Rural Development Planning Area except when providing utilities to residential and non-residential uses alike in close proximity (500 feet) to Mayesville and Pinewood. Public water should only be extended for the purposes of health and safety, provided commercial and residential uses are being developed consistent with the Planning Area.



6. Development in the I-95 Corridor, particularly at the interchanges is strongly encouraged. The County will consider a specific I-95 Corridor Plan to address the land-use future of this critical economic development asset.

Conservation Planning Areas (CP)

Designated Conservation Areas protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas and prime agricultural lands from residential, industrial and commercial encroachment. Throughout the County, these areas should be preserved to ensure the protection of environmentally sensitive natural resources including floodplains, streams, wetlands, water bodies, state parks, historical buildings and sites, gardens, woodlands, and established natural recreational areas. Protection of these natural and agricultural resources contributes to the community's overall health and sustainability. Commercial agricultural activities and family farming are encouraged in this district.

Conservation Planning Area Policies

1. In Conservation areas adjacent to and surrounded by the Rural Development Planning Area, residential development is supported at rural low densities of one unit per five (5) acres or more on private well and septic.
2. Non-agricultural commercial uses are not supported in the Conservation Preservation Planning Area except along the U.S. 378 corridor or as otherwise noted.
3. Conservation areas adjacent to the Downtown and Suburban Planning Areas are characterized by floodplain, stream corridors, Carolina Bays, and wetlands. As a general policy, development should be limited in these areas. Where development is appropriate, low impact engineering and architectural design practices shall be incorporated into all projects.