

CHAPTER 10.

HOW IS PROPERTY USED IN FLOYD COUNTY?

Historical Background

Traditional accounts suggest that the first English explorers came down the Little River into what would become Floyd County around 1654. While traders passed through to meet with the Cherokees of eastern Tennessee for several decades, settlement did not begin in the area until the mid-18th century. Early settlers came to the community almost exclusively for the purpose of establishing farms. When compared to many areas of Appalachian America, the County offered an abundance of land suited to agriculture. The soil was well adapted to grains and grasses, encouraging livestock-raising. Tobacco and fruits were favored crops (Houston, 1996).

The lack of coal or large timber resources in Floyd County meant that rail service was never developed here like it was in other parts of southwest Virginia. In turn, the absence of rail precluded the large-scale industrial and commercial development experienced in localities surrounding Floyd County in the first half of the twentieth century. Consequently, the County began to lose population to other areas offering better employment opportunities. Floyd County eventually gained some local industry, primarily textile and lumber-related. However, this segment of the economy, in the wake of global competition, dramatically declined by the dawning of the 21st Century.

Existing Property Use

Property use in the County is largely agricultural and residential, with some commercial/industrial in and around the Town of Floyd and in the communities of Check and Willis. Yet residential properties are scattered down virtually every one of the 620 miles of state roads in the County. This is visible on the property use maps below, where “suburban residential” (residential parcels less than 20 acres and shown in light yellow) are widely dispersed, and parcels designated “Agriculture over 99 acres” (shown in dark green) and “Agriculture 20-99 acres” (shown in light green) appear to dominate the County’s landscape. A close comparison of changes from the 2002 map and 2009 map, though, reveals that many large parcels have been converted to residential parcels.

As of 2009 there were 13,496 parcels in the County, of which 9,082 were smaller than 20 acres. Agriculture properties combined (20 or more acres) constituted 3,736 properties, this difference is increasing as evidenced in Table 61 and 62 and Maps 38, 39 and 40. From 2002 to 2009, there was a loss of 27.1% of large Agricultural (99+ acre lots) tracts, while the number of smaller parcels (typically residential) increased by 29.4%. Table 62 below reflects the changes in just a two year period. This loss of farmland if it continues at this pace, threatens the viability and future of agriculture in the County. See inset on Right to Farm Laws and Nuisance Laws in Virginia.

Table 61
Floyd County Property Use Parcel Changes from 2002 to 2009

Acreage	2002 Parcels	2009 Parcels	Amount Change	Percent Change
Residential	7,016	9,082	2,066	29.4%
Commercial\Industrial	101	198	97	96.0%
AG 20 to 99 Acres	3,410	3,200	(210)	-6.2%
AG Over 99 Acres	735	536	(199)	-27.1%
Tax Exempt	416	480	64	15.4%
Subtotal	11,678	13,496	1,818	15.6%
No Data	479	48	(431)	-90.0%
Total	12,157	13,544	1,387	NA

Source: County Landbook ("Class1 field") and NRVPCD Analysis, 2010

Table 62
Floyd County Property Use Acreage Changes from 2007 to 2009

Classification	2007 # Acres	2009 # Acres	Amount Change	Percent Change
Residential Housing	39,385.5	41,565.9	2,180.4	5.5%
Commercial/Industrial	423.7	453.5	29.8	7.0%
Ag. 20-99 Acres	119,882.5	119,111.6	-770.9	-0.6%
Ag. 99+ Acres	61,499.7	58,645.6	-2,854.1	-4.6%

Source: County Landbook _____ and NRVPCD Analysis, 2010

When residential development occurs near working farms, neighbors may complain about the smells and noises that are a natural part of farming. Virginia has Right to Farm laws that can help provide farmers a defense if neighbors claim "nuisance" and sue. Unfortunately, the Right to Farm laws do not prevent the lawsuits, which can be very expensive for farmers, and they also do not guarantee victory in court for farmers. See inset on Right to Farm Laws and Nuisance Laws in Virginia.

Agricultural Uses and the Virginia Right-to-Farm Statute

As non-agricultural uses move ever closer to and surround farms, complaints of sounds and smells are inevitable. Virginia has a Right-to-Farm statute, **but it is only a *defense to nuisance suits which might be brought against farms, it does not prevent nuisance suits.*** As stated in Virginia Code §3.2-302(B), there is no provision to limit “the right of any person to recover damages” claimed against a farm for nuisance (see below). If neighboring landowners bring a lawsuit against an agricultural operation and it is found to be a nuisance, courts have the option of closing the operation, altering the way it conducts its business, or assessing penalties to compensate the neighboring landowner for the nuisance. Even if a lawsuit fails, the cost of defending against the suit could threaten or even close the farming operation.

§ 3.2-301. Right to farm; restrictive ordinances

In order to limit the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed to be a nuisance, especially when nonagricultural land uses are initiated near existing agricultural operations, no county shall adopt any ordinance that requires that a special exception or special use permit be obtained for any production agriculture or silviculture activity in an area that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. Counties may adopt setback requirements, minimum area requirements, and other requirements that apply to land on which agriculture and silviculture activity is occurring within the locality that is zoned as an agricultural district or classification. No locality shall enact zoning ordinances that would unreasonably restrict or regulate farm structures or farming and forestry practices in an agricultural district or classification unless such restrictions bear a relationship to the health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens. This section shall become effective on April 1, 1995, and from and after that date all land zoned to an agricultural district or classification shall be in conformity with this section.

§ 3.2-302. When agricultural operations do not constitute nuisance

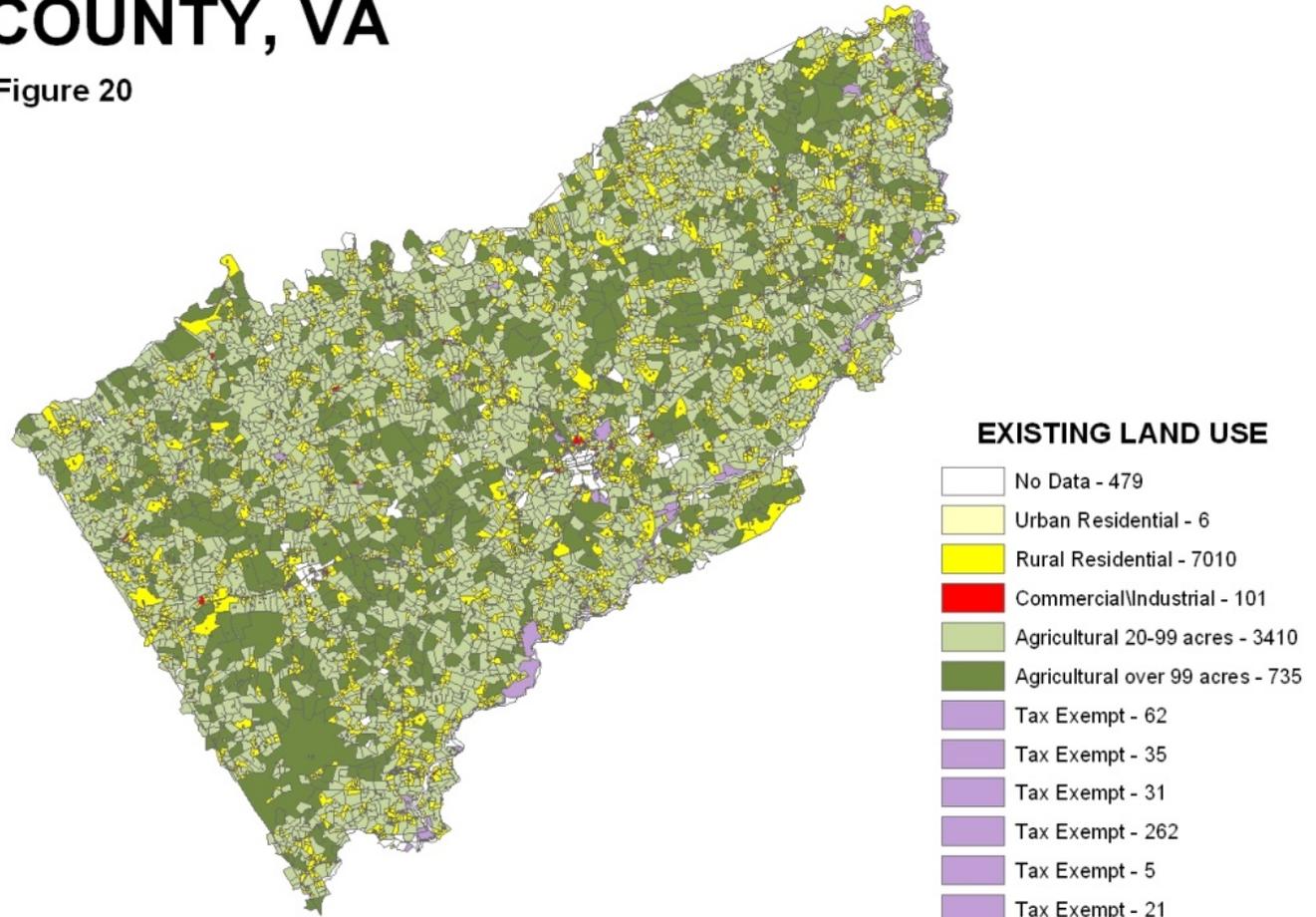
A. No agricultural operation or any of its appurtenances shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, if such operations are conducted in accordance with existing best management practices and comply with existing laws and regulations of the Commonwealth. The provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from the negligent or improper operation of any such agricultural operation or its appurtenances.

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Map 40: Floyd County Property Use, 2002

FLOYD COUNTY, VA

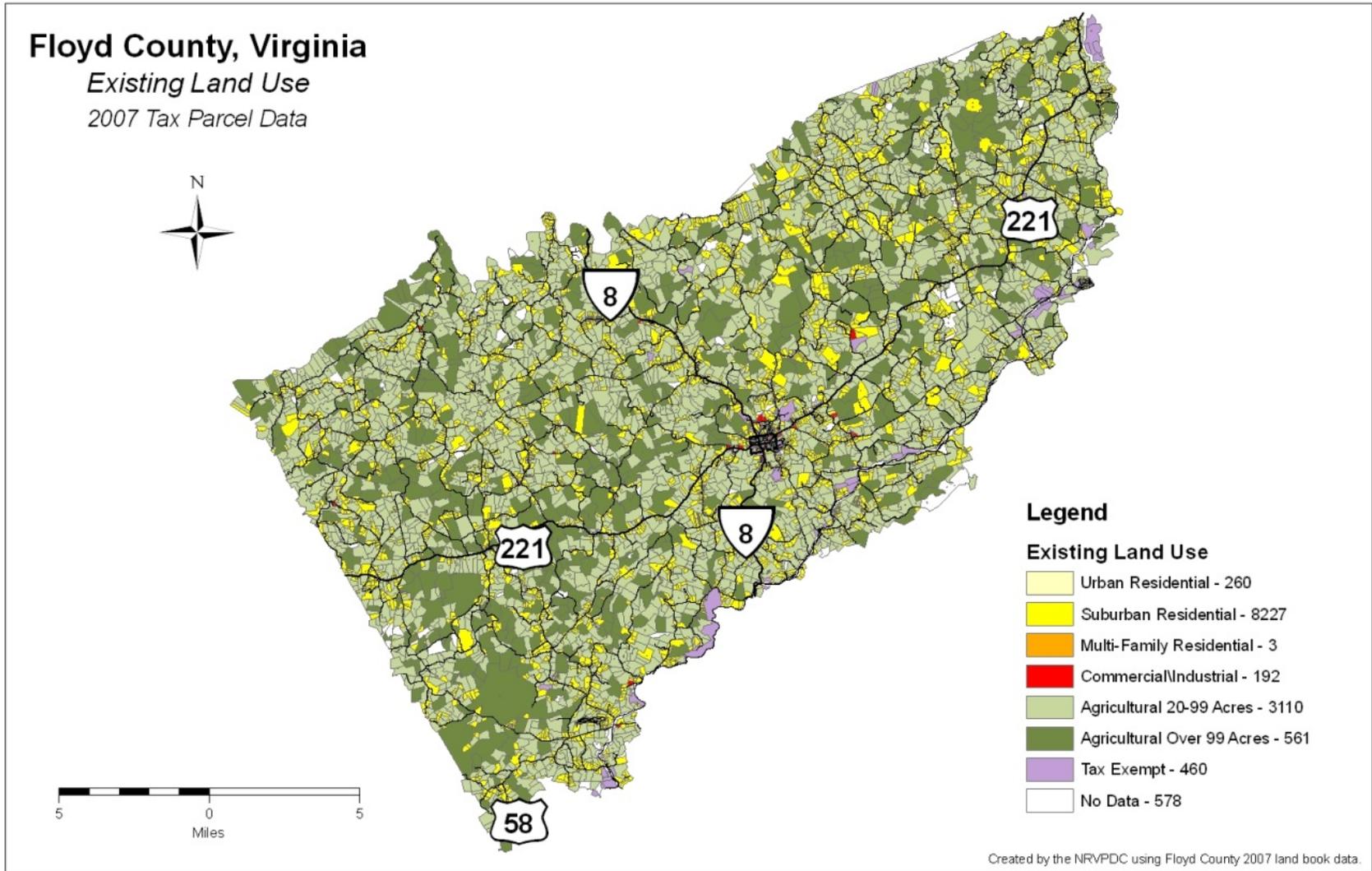
Figure 20



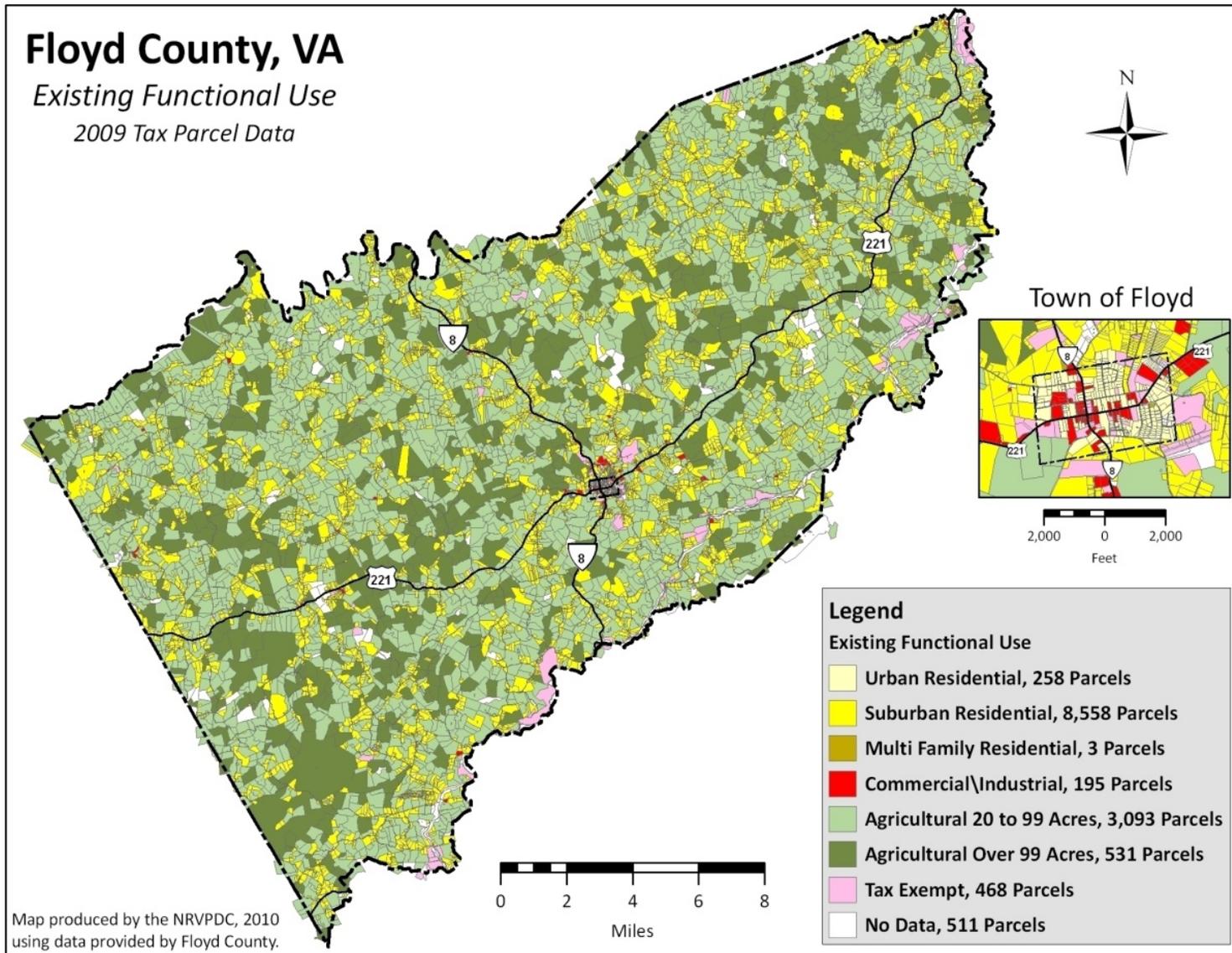
Map produced by the NRVPCD, 2002, using tax parcel mapping and County land book information.

Note: map not to scale.

Map 41: Floyd County Property Use, 2007



Map 42: Floyd County Property Use, 2009



Subdivision Ordinance

Currently the County’s primary regulatory mechanism for property development is the Subdivision Ordinance. In general, the Subdivision Ordinance is a limited tool and does not determine use. For example, any type of use can occur on any parcel of land in Floyd County as determined by the buyer of that land (the only exception being on parcels with conservation or scenic easements.) Additionally, any number of residences can be built on a single parcel; this has occurred in the County and poses challenges for the provision of services.

A subdivision ordinance legally controls only the size, shape and orientation of new parcels, not how it can be used. It cannot prevent divisions of land based on location, quality of roads, highest and best use (like farming), distance from schools or emergency services. Also, it cannot limit the number of parcels that can be created from a parent tract, as long as each new parcel meets a specific standard. Zoning is used in most Virginia localities to guide use and density. (See table below for a comparison of Subdivision Ordinances and Zoning Ordinances.)

Table 63
Legal Capacities of Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances

	Subdivision Ordinance	Zoning Ordinance
Can control size, shape and orientation of NEW parcels to	YES	YES
Can control Use of Parcels	NO	YES
Development standards can vary by land traits and location	NO	YES
Can deny proposed development if roads aren't sufficient	NO	YES
Can require developer pay for needed infrastructure if from AG to residential	NO	YES
Can limit number of stick built dwellings on one parcel	NO	YES

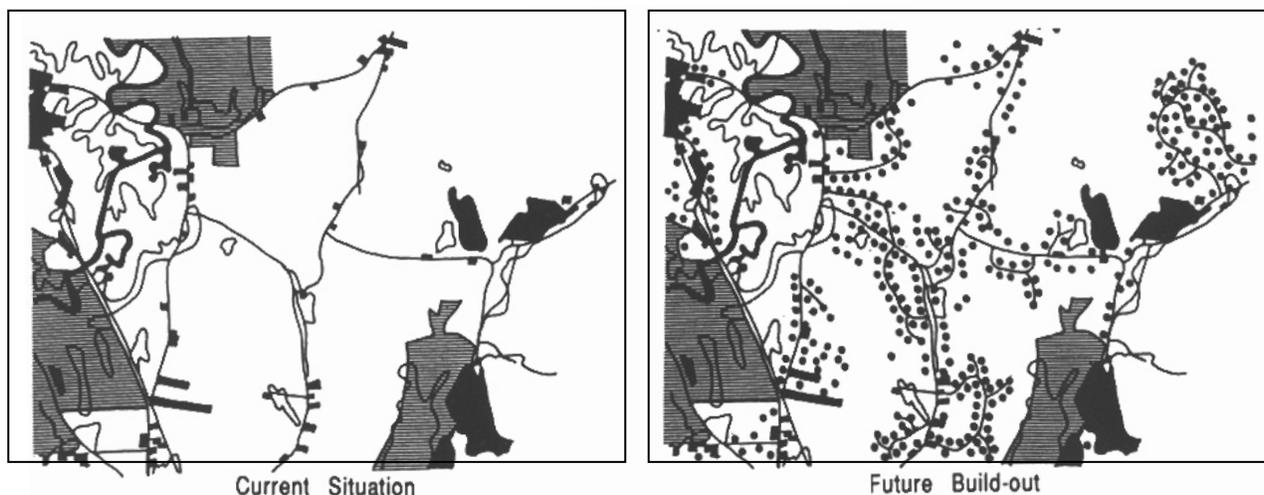
Last updated in 2002, the Subdivision Ordinance tries to encourage new residential street development rather than having multiple new residents’ driveways open onto one stretch of road, which may or may not be well-suited to any driveways. Unfortunately, since the adoption of the updated Ordinance, only one or two new subdivisions has included a new

residential street. Otherwise, all development continues to be down existing roads, often maximizing the number of parcels allowable and resulting in multiple residential points of entry in close proximity and sometimes with limited site distance (the Virginia Department of Transportation must provide a residential access for individual lots). Moreover, many of the large farms recently divided have been down small gravel roads, where land is cheaper for the developer but more expensive for local government to serve.

Other concerns expressed with the Subdivision Ordinance are as follows:

- That the family subdivision provision, which is intended to make it easy to keep land in families, is actually used to circumvent the ordinance for people intent on selling outside the family. Other counties address this concern by setting minimum ownership time periods before and/or after a family conveyance (with some stated exceptions) and requiring an affidavit be signed by the grantor and grantee.
- That doing a small division of land is too difficult. Particularly the requirement to pre-perk any non-family lots under 25 acres; 5 acres or less may be more reasonable.
- That many small parcels will not have adequate sites for well/s, especially during droughts; wells should be developed before the property is divided on small parcels.
- That not allowing development on private roads is resulting in road-side stripping (that is, many adjacent driveway entrances onto state roads which decreases safety.)
- That cluster or open-space subdivisions should be encouraged if water, wastewater and access concerns are met.
- That the Ordinance is cumbersome and difficult to interpret.
- That if the County were built-out exactly as allowed by the current Subdivision Ordinance (not including family subdivisions), it would have over 18,000 two-acre lots down every mile of state road in the County (620 miles, including gravel roads.)

Figure 34
Sample Build-Out Analysis



Trends Affecting Property Use

The first comprehensive survey of land use in Floyd County was made by the New River Valley Planning District Commission in 1970. The Commission predicted that a number of trends in land use were developing:

1. A move away from farming to manufacturing as the major employer;
2. The emergence of vacation home construction in the County;
3. A national trend of former urban dwellers seeking new lifestyles in rural communities;
4. An increasing acceptance of mobile homes as an alternative to the traditional single family house; and,
5. An overspill of development from surrounding areas, particularly Roanoke and Montgomery Counties.

These trends did “reshape the look” of the County and Town, and most of them are continuing today. Additional trends that also have or will affect the County are:

- Free trade and global competition, virtually eliminating all basic textile jobs, traditional lumber-related jobs, and increasing domestic competition for remaining industry, such as food and technology.
- Population growth across age categories, and “aging” of population.
- The power and prevalence of current information technology, requiring that virtually all employees be technologically savvy and allowing new home-based businesses and telecommuting.
- The importance of local entrepreneurs and enterprises in diversifying the economy.
- The increase in tourism in the region, and particularly in local craft shops and bed-and-breakfasts.
- Volatile energy prices and ever-growing demand.
- Tightening land use restrictions in neighboring jurisdictions and the natural movement of residential development and potentially dangerous industries to unregulated localities.
- Nationally poor economic conditions limiting employment and credit.

Parcel Ownership

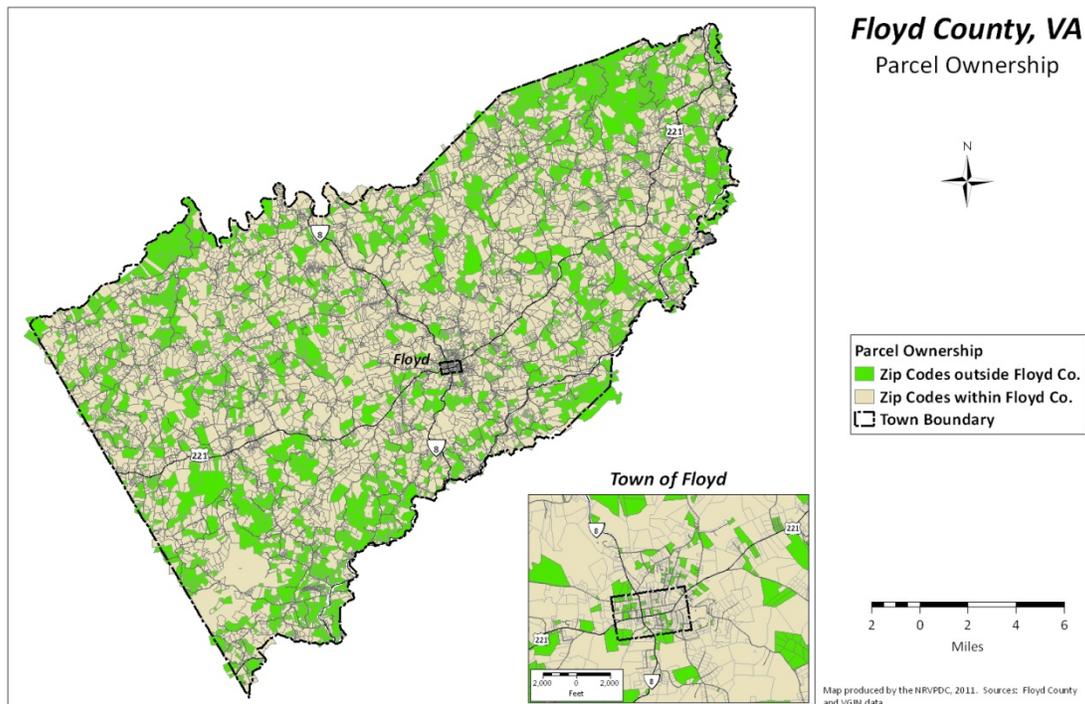
Utilizing land records for Floyd County, an analysis was completed to identify the number of properties owned by persons residing in Floyd County. This was completed with the assumption that property whose tax ticket will be mailed to a Floyd County zip codes in 2011

is also occupied by that person; this is not always the case. (Zip codes do not follow County lines, but zip codes used for Floyd County here were 24072, 24079, 24091, 24105, 24120, 24138, 24149, and 24380.)

Map 41, Floyd County Parcel Ownership, illustrates in green the parcels with owner's zip codes outside of Floyd County, with tan illustrating parcels with owner's zip codes inside of Floyd County. There are 13,811 total parcels in Floyd County of which 27% (3,690 parcels) have owners whose zip codes are outside of Floyd County. Additionally, there is a total acreage of 240,948 in Floyd County, of which 33% (79,605 acres) are owned by non-residents. While this number of parcels is up substantially from 2002, the rate of outside parcel and acreage ownership is not much different than 2002 (was 29% and 34%, respectively then).

This analysis is beneficial when determining Floyd County policies related to solid waste collection and disposal, future transportation demands, and the need for community facilities in outlying areas.

Map 43 Floyd County Parcel Ownership

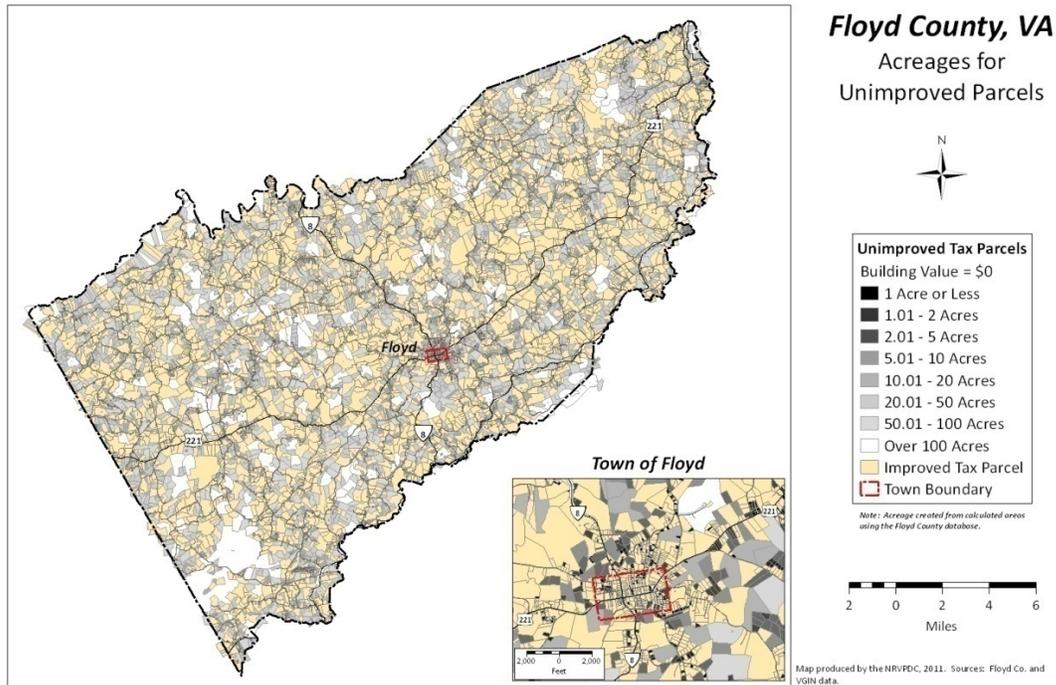


Available Building Lots

An analysis was completed identifying parcels in Floyd County that currently do not have any improvements. These are all properties that are theoretically available for future home sites (note further, that the County does not limit how many stick-built dwellings can be constructed on a single parcel) without any further subdividing of land in the County. Due to limited density development in some areas and higher density in others this analysis also provides information allowing for future planning of infrastructure and other community facilities. Assumptions made in the analysis do not include the potential for uses on lands that may hinder development (e.g. farming activities on adjacent properties without improvements, conservation easements limiting development, etc.)

Map 42, Floyd County Unimproved Parcels, illustrates the parcels with no recorded improvements. As of January 2011, there were 13,811 total parcels in Floyd County of which 42.6% (5,887) parcels do not have an associated improvement value. Additionally, there is a total acreage of 240,948 in Floyd County, of which 43.4% (104,548 acres) do not have an associated building value.

Map 44 Floyd County Unimproved Parcels



**Table 64
Floyd County Unimproved Parcels by Acreage Size, 2011**

Acreage	Unimproved Parcels	Improved Parcels
Up to 1 acre	1,497	1,467
1.01 to 2 acres	580	1,291
2.01 to 5 acres	859	1,527
5.01 to 10 acres	669	967
10.01 to 20 acres	725	804
20.01 to 50 acres	1008	1,068
50.01 to 100 acres	405	555
100.01 acres and greater	144	245
Total	5,887	7,924

Source: Floyd County data and NRVPCD Analysis, 2011

This analysis shows parcel fragmentation, already identified previously, from subdivision activity. Many of these parcels may not be prime for development, yet in recent years, most larger new subdivisions (partitioning of lands rarely with provision of new road or infrastructure.) and houses have gone in places like these, farthest removed from services. Given the current number of parcels already available and the inefficiencies of serving sprawling sites, new land policies should be considered.

Figure 35 provides a snapshot of the cost of serving residences in the County versus the cost of serving farm/forest and commercial properties.

Figure 35
Floyd County Cost of Community Services Study
By Joe Powers, 2010
Executive Summary

The Floyd County Planning Commission is working on a new Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and development in the County. As part of this planning effort, a Cost of Community Services (COCS) study was conducted to look at the fiscal contribution of existing land uses in the County. This study analyzes revenues and expenditures on a land use basis for fiscal year 2009 (July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009). It examines revenues by land use and the financial demands of public services (e.g. public safety, government administration, schools, courts, etc.) and shows the cost of providing these services to residential, commercial, and farm/forest land uses. This COCS methodology has been used by the American Farmland Trust and the Piedmont Environmental Council in the preparation of similar studies for several Virginia counties.

The COCS study found that in Floyd County:

- ✓ 88% of county revenue in FY 2009 was generated by residential land uses; 6% was generated by commercial land uses; and 6% by farm/forest land uses.
- ✓ 95% of county expenditures went to provide services for residential land use compared with 3% for commercial land uses and 2% for farm/forest land uses.

In other words, on average for each \$1 in revenue from residential properties in Floyd County in FY 2009, the county spent \$1.09 providing services to those lands. For each \$1 received from commercial land uses, the county spent 45 cents; and for each \$1 received from farm/forest land uses, the county spent 35 cents providing services.

The COCS study findings demonstrate that a balance of land uses is necessary to ensure fiscal stability. While residential development contributes the largest amount of county revenue, its net fiscal impact is negative because the total expenditures for residential land use exceed its revenues. On the other hand, farm/forest lands make a positive contribution, even though agriculture and horticulture lands in the county are under Virginia's land use assessment and taxation program and are thus taxed at a reduced rate.

Study Findings

	FY 2009	Residential Development	Commercial Development	Farm/Forest Lands
Total Revenues	\$ 30,657,726	\$ 27,082,617	\$ 1,768,373	\$ 1,806,736
Total Expenditures	\$ 31,033,006	\$ 29,595,801	\$ 804,528	\$ 632,677
Net Contribution (Rev – Exp)	\$ (375,280)	\$ (2,513,184)	\$ 963,845	\$ 1,174,059
Land Use Ratio*		1: 1.09	1: 0.45	1: 0.35

* Cost for each \$1 of revenue generated

Future Property Use

As of now, the vast majority of land in Floyd County is available for any future use chosen by the highest bidder, regardless of the impact to neighbors' investment or the County's expenses. (The main exceptions to that are lands owned by federal and state government, those under easement, those covered by deed restrictions or those in floodplains.) This leaves the County vulnerable to uses chosen by developers or owners who may never live in the community.

Planning Tools Available

While some development guidance is provided by the subdivision ordinance, floodplain management ordinance, Erosion and Sediment Control ordinance, manufactured home park ordinance, and land use valuation in the County, it is important to know that these do not control use generally. There are other planning tools available, however (see below as adapted from Managing Growth and Development in Virginia, VAPA, October 2010.). Some of the tools allowed by the Code of Virginia include:

- Use Value Assessment and Taxation: uses discounts in property tax assessments to promote and preserve agricultural, forestal and/or open space lands. It is a voluntary program requiring a minimum of 5 acres for agricultural or open space and a minimum of 20 acres for forests. The County currently allows agricultural "land use" on the honor system. Rollback taxes must be paid when the property is removed from the program. "State aid to localities for K-12 education is calculated on a formula, called the Local Composite Index; since the taxes are technically deferred, it uses the full value of real estate in determining a locality's ability to pay (it does not recognize land use valuation.) Note: Virginia Code Section 58.1-3231 states, regarding a Land-Use Plan, "such ordinance may provide that the special assessment and taxation be established on a sliding scale which establishes a lower assessment for property held for longer periods of time . . . "
- Agricultural and Forestal Districts: are areas enabled by a locality in which owners voluntarily protect agricultural and forestal land for a period from 4 to 10 years. In return, owners get "Land Use" valuation and certain protections from development encroachment. Landowners must assemble at least 200 acres of contiguous land and be approved for a district by the local governing body.
- Conservation Easement: "is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or government agency that limits the use of the land by recording deed restrictions that severely restrict further development. Each easement is unique in terms of acreage, description, use restrictions, and duration; these terms are negotiated by the owner and the easement holder." Easements are generally forever. They bring state

and federal tax incentives to the owner. Also, land under easement should be assessed and taxed using land use valuation; the Local Composite Index does recognize this loss as diminishing a locality's ability to pay. Easements must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. *See more info below.*

- Capital Improvement Plan: “outlines the multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements and related costs to help guide the locality’s decisions on how to allocate available funds over a 5-year period.”
- Regulation of Mountain Ridge Construction: localities, according to § 15.2-2295.1 of the Code of Virginia, may by ordinance, provide for the regulation of the height and location of tall buildings or structures on protected mountain ridges. The ordinance may be designed and adopted by the locality as an overlay zone superimposed on any preexisting base zone. “Protected mountain ridge,” as defined in the Virginia Code, means a ridge with (i) an elevation of 2,000 feet or more and (ii) an elevation of 500 feet or more above the elevation of an adjacent valley floor “outlines the multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements and related costs to help guide the locality’s decisions on how to allocate available funds over a 5-year period.”
- Zoning: divides a locality into specific districts and establishes regulations concerning use as well as placement, spacing and size of land and buildings within respective districts. It is “the quintessential tool of comprehensive plan implementation.” The following are also available through zoning:
 - ~Conditional Use Permits: while some uses are defined as “by right” or automatically allowed in a given zoning district, others are “conditional uses,” meaning that they are allowed only when certain conditions are met, such as provision for parking and traffic.
 - ~Cash Proffers: are a tool for managing the fiscal impacts of growth. Used with conditional zoning, proffers are voluntary offers by the developer to mitigate the impacts of a re-zoning. Proffers may include land, infrastructure, cash or other conditions or constraints on the use of the property.
 - ~Level of Service Standards: “specify the public facilities needed for new residential developments in an effort to determine if those facilities are adequate to support a proposed rezoning.” In other words, if adequate schools, roads, libraries, parks, public transit or water and sewer systems are not available, the rezoning is denied.
 - ~Impact Fees: are an effort to make growth pay its own way. Unlike proffers which are voluntary offers for conditional changes, impact fees are mandatory costs to be paid by the developer for utilities, roads or other public facilities. Fees can be collected for both “by-right” development and rezoning.
 - ~Sliding Scale: a tool wherein the number of parcels that can be created is determined by the size of the original parcel. Some localities set minimum size (e.g. 25 acres) or maximize size (e.g. 3 acres) or both.
 - ~Urban Development Areas: are locations where greater density is encouraged; most

often these are areas where public water and sewer are available or planned.

~Density Bonuses: reward well-planned developments with additional parcels.

~Transfer of Development Rights: “is a concept in which some or all of the rights to develop a parcel of land in one district (the sending district) can be transferred to a parcel of land in a different district (the receiving district.) It is a tool used to preserve farmland, water resources and open spaces where a locality wishes to limit development.

- Cluster development: is the clustering of dwelling units in a residential subdivision leaving the remainder available as agricultural or forestal working lands or open space. The remainder may be held in common with deed restrictions or easement preventing growth. Can be voluntary or mandatory. Can help protect working lands, but do not completely protect rural land from the effects of sprawl.
- The “2232” Review: according to Section 15.2-2232 of the Virginia Code, the comprehensive plan ‘shall control the general and approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown” and “unless a feature is already shown on the adopted plan, no street or connection to a street, park or other public area, public building or public structure, public utility facility or public service corporation, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be constructed, established or authorized until its location has been approved by the local planning commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- Service Districts: are legally defined geographic portions of a jurisdiction established by the governing body. In these special service districts, more services may be provided such as water and sewer facilities, sidewalks, garbage removal and disposal, fire-fighting equipment, but also higher taxes may be charged. These can be done individually or jointly by localities.
- Fiscal Impact Analysis: is used to forecast the net operating expenditures and capital outlays for public services required to serve a proposed development. Best used in preparing other planning documents, such as level of service standards.
- Revenue Sharing (Tax sharing): is the sharing of revenues between jurisdictions. Can be used to settle boundary or governmental transition issues related to growth.
- Enterprise Zones: are economically distressed areas as defined by Virginia Code that have entered into a partnership with state government to provide incentives for improved economic conditions. They must be approved by the Governor.

See Appendix D for a ten-page summary called *Tools to Implement the Comprehensive Plan in Virginia*.

It should also be noted that public infrastructure investments, such as water and sewer, can be a tool to help encourage development in certain areas.

Conservation Easements

As already mentioned, Virginia Code (10.1-1009, 1010, et al), has given landowners an option and tax incentives to keep their land from development in perpetuity; the tool is conservation easements. Easements are seen as a public value of protecting “rare” and/or “unique” conservation values associated with a particular parcel of land.

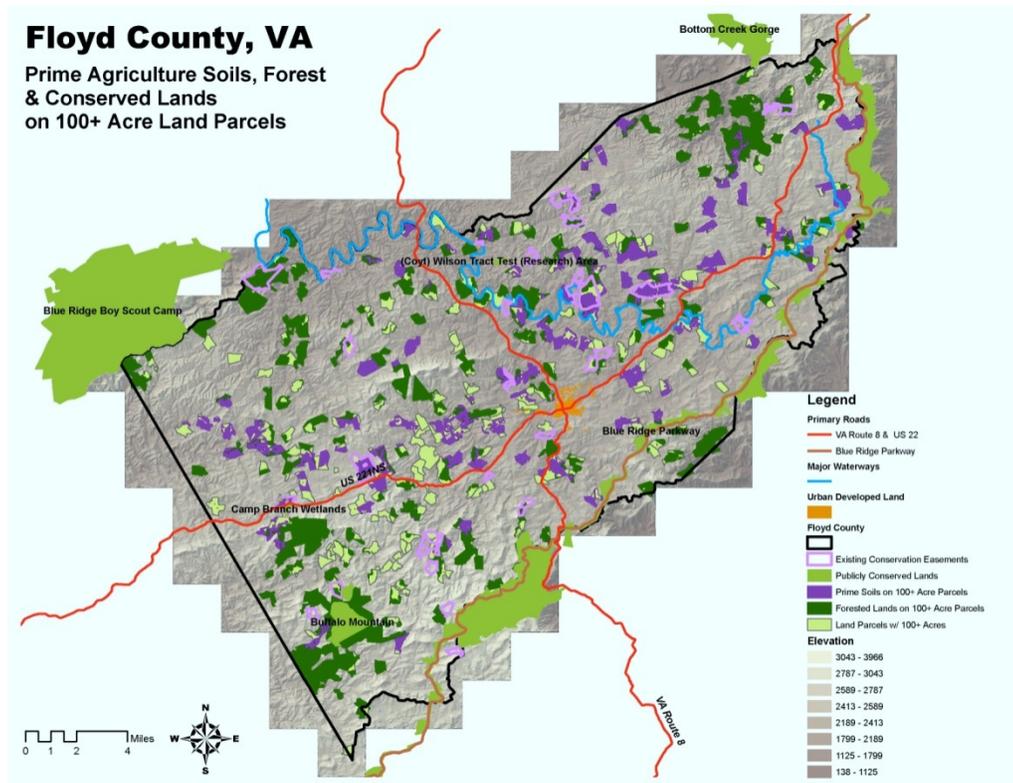
The Code of Virginia does require that the easements be in conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. It is, therefore, critical that the County differentiate between areas that are appropriate for conservation easements (important farmlands, large forest tracts or other important natural resources areas) and those that are not (areas that are well-suited and located for development.) Further, though it does not recognize revenue lost to Land Use Valuation, Virginia recognizes the fore-gone revenue due to Conservation Easements in its Composite Index that determines local school funding percentages.

Recommendations

Guiding development and limiting service cost escalations will require some difficult decisions. While preserving flexibility for land owners is important, those freedoms must be balanced by the responsibilities to adjacent landowners and the community at-large. Continuing with virtually unlimited development options has its risks and its costs, both now and later. Most citizens who participated in the community input sessions strongly favored the use of more planning tools over loss of farmland, haphazard development, depletion of water supplies and increasing costs of community services.

With available GIS tools, it is possible to identify areas based on a series of factors. For example, when prime agricultural soil data is combined with 100+ acre land parcels, high priority agricultural lands emerge. Note the following map, prepared by the New River Land Trust (2010) shows prime agricultural soil, 100+ acre parcels, and private or publicly protected lands in Floyd County.

Map 45

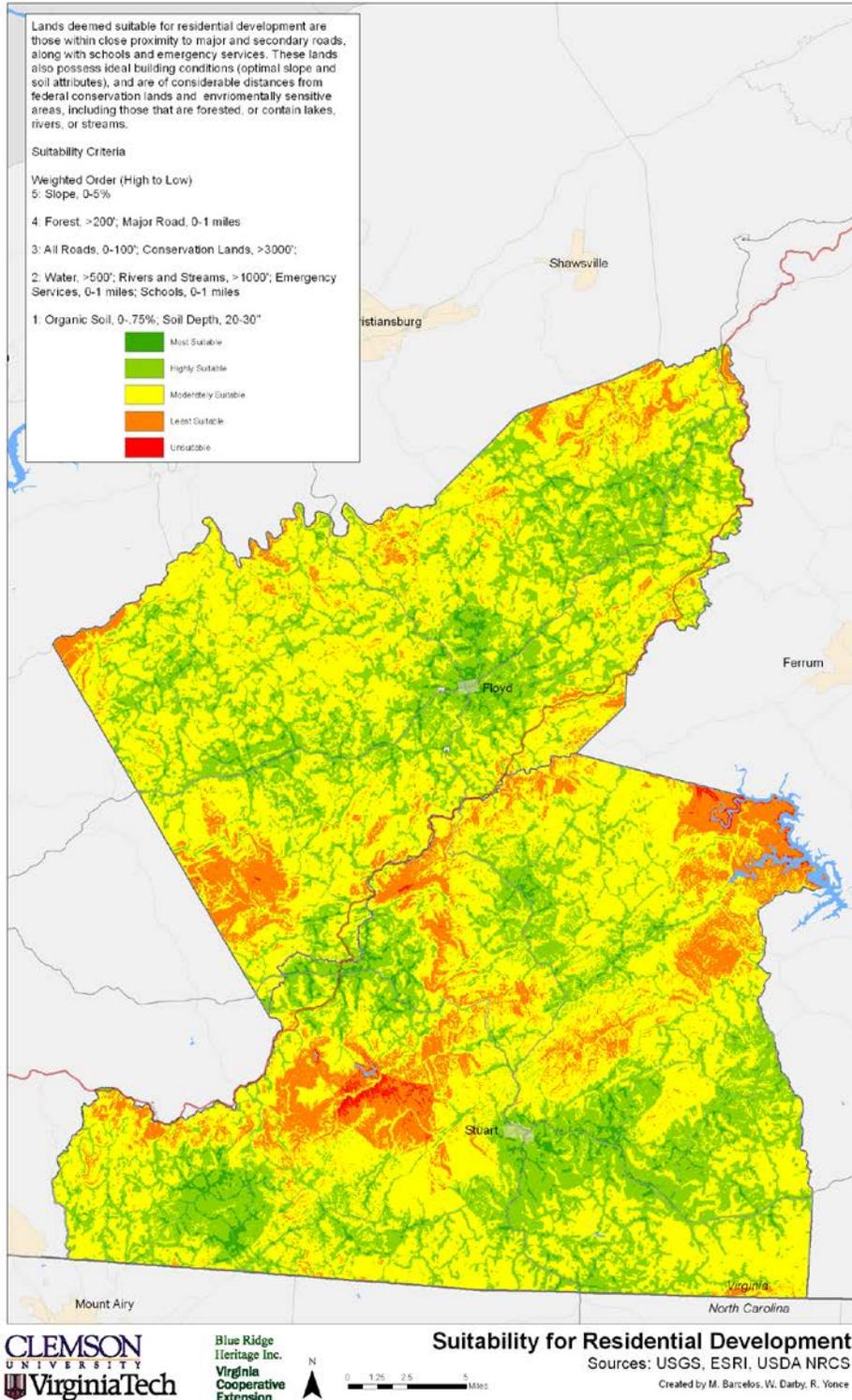


Source: New River Land Trust, 2010

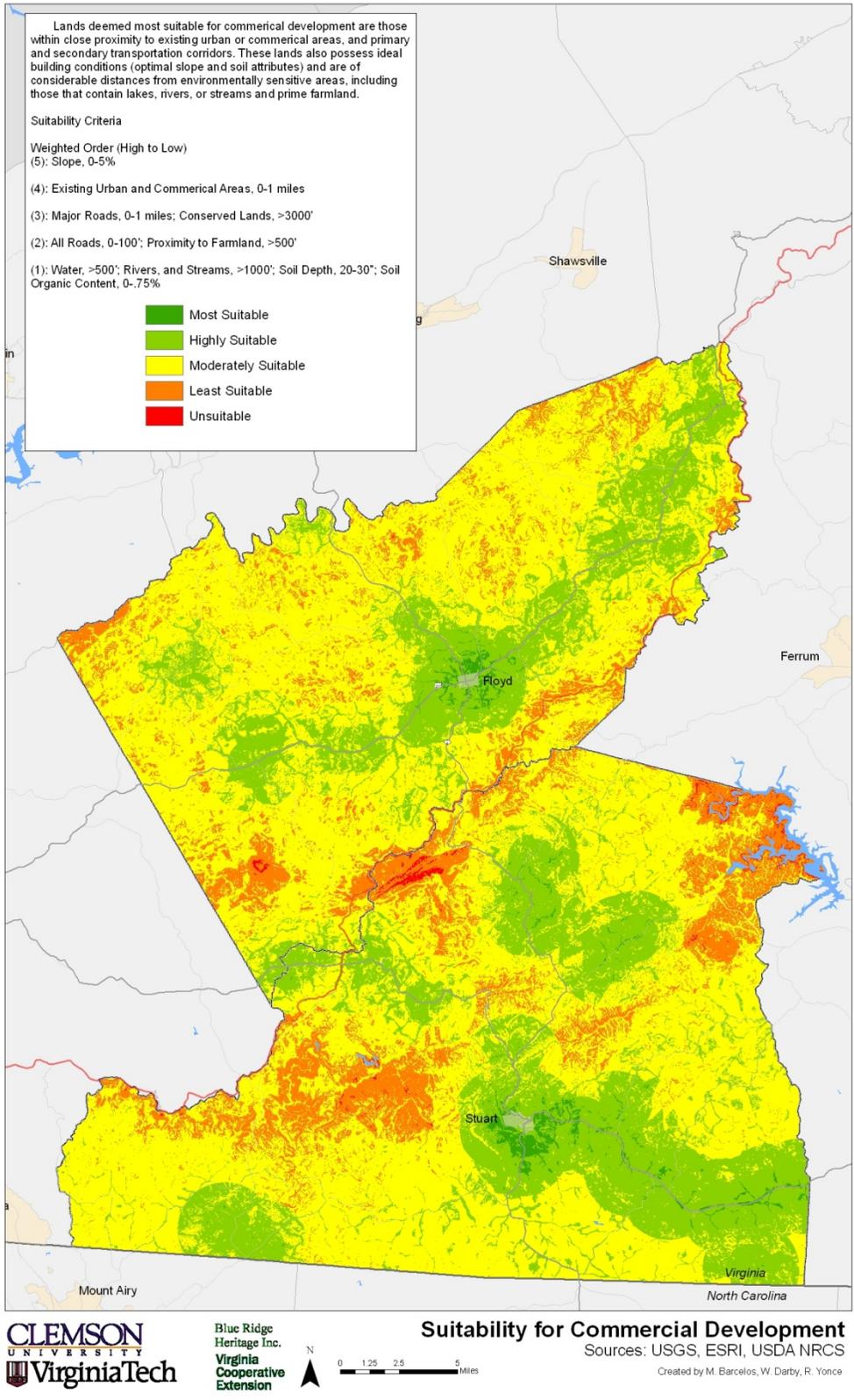
Likewise, areas best suited for development can be identified by looking at the availability of adequate groundwater (including centralized systems), proximity to schools, firehouses and other public safety services, existing road capacity, etc. Standards of measuring the capacity and/or proximity for public services in a specific location are known as Level of Service Standard, and they can be used to identify areas where growth is suitable and encouraged. For example, Maps 44 and 45 show areas best suited to residential and commercial/light industry, respectively, according to certain levels of service.

It has become increasingly important that the County use such tools to show where growth is preferred or supportable and what areas should be protected for agriculture and natural resources, as is shown in the Future Property Use Map, Map 46. This map is not a traditional future land use map, as there are currently no tools in place to direct growth. Instead this map shows general locations for all growth. Areas highlighted in white borders should be considered areas prime for growth, with other areas requiring additional infrastructure improvement or additional resources.

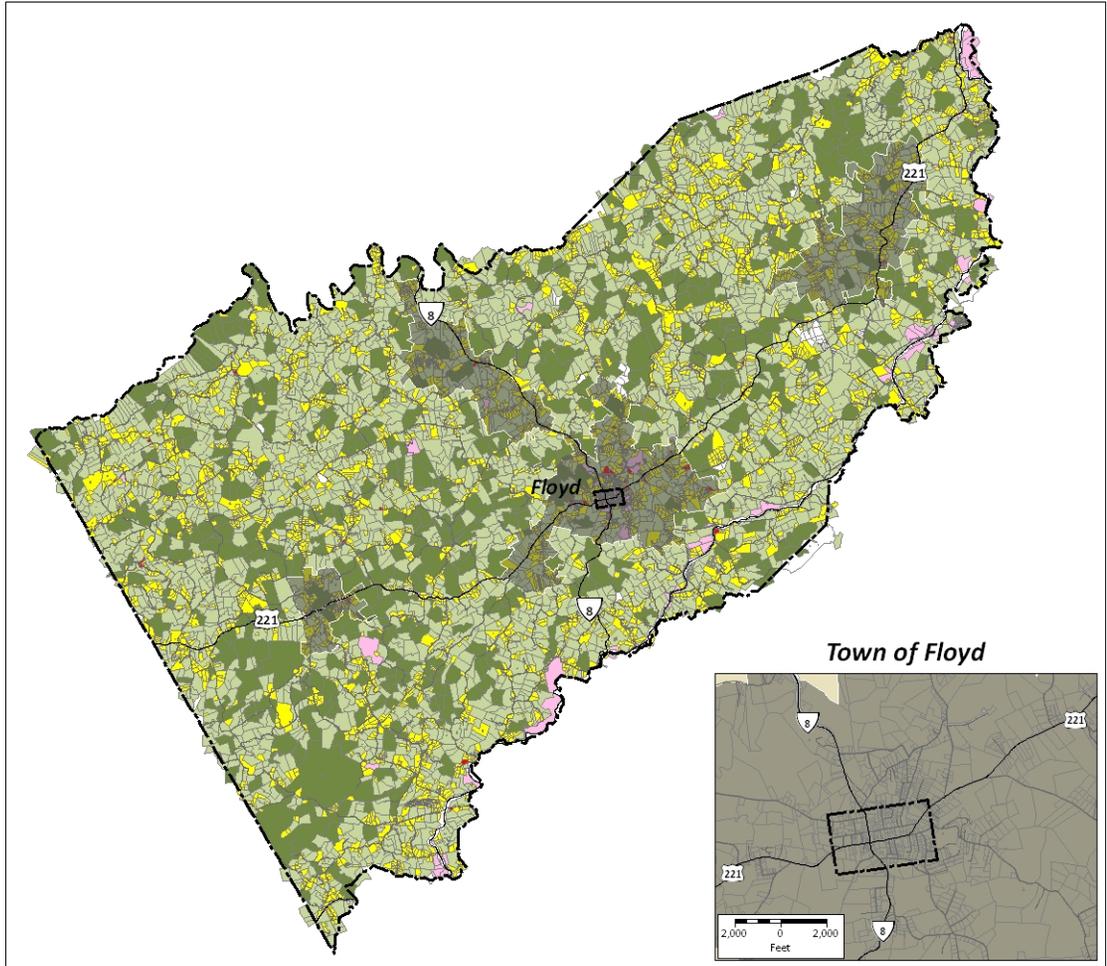
Map 46 Example of Residential Development Suitability Map



Map 47 Example of Commercial/Light Industry Suitability Map



Map 48: Future Property Use Map



Floyd County, VA Future Property Use



Legend

Future Property Use

- Urban Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Multi-family Residential
- Commercial\Industrial
- Agricultural 20-99 Acres
- Agricultural over 99 Acres
- Tax Exempt
- No Data
- Potential Growth Area
- Town Boundary



Map produced by the NRVPCD, 2011. Sources: Floyd County and VGIN data.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this plan and the public input received, a Land Policy task force should be established to work with the Planning Commission to make specific recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in the next 18 months with regard to other planning tools, including GIS, agricultural and forestal districts, zoning, cash proffers, level of service summaries, a future land use map and preferred future utility service areas. The task force would delineate areas based largely on the following tables (Tables 63 and 64), and then make specific recommendations for implementation. The need for this planning is due to a host of issues primarily related to the protection of the County's farms (see Figure 36), water supply, and quality of life, plus fiscal responsibilities.

Furthermore, based on the limited availability of public water and sewer in the County, the County should consider future purchase of lands for special opportunities, such as waste collection and recycling center/s, community center with recreation fields, and a one-stop health and human service facility.

Lastly, it would be helpful if the County's logo better reflected its goals, values and vision. The current emblem contains a plant with nurturing hands indicating "To Grow is to Prosper." While the plant is consistent with this new plan, the text could be more nuanced to indicate what or how it is important to grow, or the interplay of humans and nature (e.g. "Nurtured by Nature"). Other phrases or images could also reflect the County, such as Farms and Fiber (double-meaning) , "Harmony Found," or "Find Harmony in Floyd" (reflecting music, nature and community character); the latter may be better suited to tourism promotion rather than a County logo.) The Farm and Forest Task Force, the Land Policy Task and a tourism group should be asked to make recommendations regarding a new logo and/or tagline.

Table 65
Future Property Use Areas
Matrix

Land Use	Average Density / Lot Size	Uses	Agriculture & Forest Stewardship	Planned Growth Areas	Developed Areas
Agriculture/Forest lands	25 acres	Farm and forest lands to be protected from non-farm encroachment and development. Rural homes on large lots, or family subdivisions.	P		
Rural Residential	2-5 acres	Agriculture uses are permitted. Access to paved or chip-sealed roads are required for subdivisions. Clustering subdivisions are encouraged. Conservation and nuisance easements are encouraged and may be required as condition of subdivision.	P		
Community Residential	4 dwelling units per acre	Residential development in areas with public water and sewer and paved roads. Allowed only in developed or planned growth areas.		C	P
Rural Business		Limiting commercial serving needs of rural residents and/or farms. Uses include small retail, agricultural support operations, rural services and natural resource-based uses.	P		
Business/Commercial and Mixed Use		Small businesses, including technology and innovation businesses, and/or shopping centers which may be integrated with residential development. Generally served by central water and sewer and appropriate roads.		C	P
Unique Opportunity		Unique, site- or purpose-specific uses, not likely to be replicated in other locations, and benefiting from local attributes such as natural resources, viewsheds, access or recreational/environmental amenities. Non-residential uses range from light industry to energy to eco-tourism.	C	C	C

P = Permitted; C = Conditionally Permitted

adapted from draft Carroll County Comprehensive Plan 2010

**Table 66
Infrastructure and Improvement Requirements by Future Property Use**

	Agriculture and Forestland	Rural Residential	Community Residential	Rural Business	Business, Commerical, Mixed Use	Unique Opportunity
WATER						
Centralized		Yes	Yes		Yes	
Individual Well	Yes	Yes				
Site and Use Dependent				Yes	Yes	Yes
WASTEWATER						
Centralized		Yes	Yes		Yes	
Individual Septic	Yes	Yes				
Site and Use Dependent				Yes	Yes	Yes
TRANSPORTATION						
Legal Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grants of Right-of-Way and Easements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Arterial			Yes		Yes	
Paved Road			Yes		Yes	
Within 1/4-mile of a Paved Road				Yes		
Within 1/2-mile of a Paved Road		Yes				
Dust Control Required		Yes				
Site and Use Dependent					Yes	Yes
PUBLIC SAFETY						
Sheriff-Avg Response time of less than 8 minutes			Yes		Yes	
Sheriff-Avg Response time of 8 minutes or more	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes
Fire- Average Response time of less than 8 minutes			Yes		Yes	
Fire- Average Response time of 8 minutes or more	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes
Emergency Medical-Avg Response time of less than 8 minutes			Yes		Yes	
Emergency Medical-Avg Response time of 8 minutes or more	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes
Adequate Fire Flow			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN						
Curbs, Gutters, & Sidewalks			Yes		Yes	
Paved Parking					Yes	
Shared Parking					Yes	Yes
Drainage Detention/Retention Facility			Yes		Yes	Yes
Landscaping, Buffering			Yes		Yes	Yes
Open Space		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Cluster, Conservation Subdivision		Yes			Yes	Yes
Planned Development			Yes		Yes	
Density Bonus for Additional Open Space		Yes	Yes		Yes	
Density Bonus for Sustainability		Yes	Yes		Yes	
<i>adapted from draft Carroll County Comprehensive Plan</i>						

Chapter 10.

How Is Property Used in the County?

Summary and Conclusion

- Land is primarily used for agriculture, forests, residences and small businesses in the County.
- A large amount of agricultural land has been converted to residential lots in recent years.
- For farming to continue in the County, there must be good farmland that is available and affordable. Lands identified as well-suited for agriculture should be designated and protected as such by County land regulations.
- GIS layers overlaying agricultural and forest tracts as well as areas most efficiently reached with public services create guide maps for future land use policy.
- There are many additional planning tools available to the County, including agricultural and forestal districts, zoning (along with proffers, impact fees, etc.), and capital improvement plan.
- It is important to the fiscal health of the County to guide future land use by policy, as farm/forest lands and commercial properties bring in substantially more in revenue than the costs in services, whereas residences receive more in services than they pay in taxes.
- Based on the findings of this plan and the public input received, a Land Policy task force should be established to work with the Planning Commission to make specific recommendations in the next 18 months with regard to other planning tools. New policies should then be put in place to protect farms, forests and water and guide future development.
- To assure adequate space for future community facilities, such as solid waste and recycling, the County should consider acquiring more land in the future.
- A new or revised County logo should be developed to be more consistent with the County's goals.