

Land Use Element – Goals, Policies and Strategies

Goal LU-1: Actively manage the context, scale and direction of growth in York County to be consistent with available and planned infrastructure and services while also supporting economic development goals.

LU-1 Policies/Strategies:

- LU-1.1: Utilize available growth management strategies to facilitate orderly, planned development that is consistent with the availability and capacity of existing and planned infrastructure and services. See Figure 1: *Growth Management Strategies Toolkit* for more information on potential strategies.
- LU-1.2: Encourage municipalities to direct higher intensity development within and adjacent to existing urban areas and to promote consistency with municipal plans where appropriate for county also.
- LU-1.3: Support policies that direct the majority of growth to areas within the Urban Services Boundary.
 - LU-1.3.1: Discourage rezoning of lands outside the adopted Urban Services Boundary to higher intensity residential uses.
 - LU-1.3.2: Monitor growth trends and produce an annual report to determine the effectiveness of land use policies.
 - LU-1.3.3: Annually review and report on the Urban Services Boundary, taking into consideration land availability, economic development opportunities, efficiency of utility service provisions, transportation capacity, and agricultural interests.
- LU-1.4: Focus commercial and residential growth within and in close proximity to existing and planned Town, Community, Neighborhood, and Rural Centers.
 - LU-1.4.1: Encourage a mix of housing types in appropriate locations:
 - Near existing or planned centers on the Future Land Use Map
 - Where utility and transportation infrastructure capacity exists
 - Compatible with the scale, orientation and character of existing development
 - Using various housing types (i.e. cottage homes, townhomes, or apartments) enables mitigation of impacts on sensitive natural resources (i.e. mature trees, riparian areas, water quality, etc.)
 - LU-1.4.2: Consider a new zoning category that allows for high density residential where appropriate.

<h3>Growth Management Toolkit</h3>	
<p>Urban Services Boundary</p> <p>An Urban Services Boundary (USB) was adopted as part of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan and is used by the county to designate areas that should receive utilities and urban services and those areas that should remain rural. A revised USB is included on the Future Land Use Map.</p> <p>► See LU-1.3 and the Utilities Element for policy and strategies related to the Urban Services Boundary</p>	<p>Traffic Impact Analysis</p> <p>A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is a mechanism that requires a new development over a certain size to study potential impacts to roadways and other transportation facilities so that these impacts can be mitigated. TIA reports can provide a basis for requiring off-site transportation improvements and justifying transportation related impact fees.</p> <p>► See the Transportation Element for policies and strategies related to Traffic Impact Analysis</p>
<p>Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance</p> <p>An Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) ties approval of a new development to the availability and adequacy of public facilities and services.</p> <p>► The legal framework for implementing an APFO would need to be studied to determine its feasibility. Coordination with the York County School system and the South Carolina legislature may be needed to implement this type of ordinance.</p>	<p>Moratorium</p> <p>A development moratorium is a temporary hold or severe restriction, for a defined period of time on the issuance of building permits, approval of land use applications or other permits and entitlements. When considering a moratorium, it is necessary to anticipate legal challenges and define the area to which it applies, why the restriction is necessary and when it will be lifted. Typically, the time period does not exceed 18 months and the completion of a plan or infrastructure project is scheduled to occur in the interim.</p> <p>► Due to the near certainty of legal challenges and economic costs, moratoriums should be considered only when other strategies have failed.</p>

Figure 1: Growth Management Strategies Toolkit

- o LU-1.5: Consider updates to the Future Land Use Plan Map as needed to account for changes

that could result from investment in major infrastructure projects, particularly those that have been funded.

- LU-1.5.1: Update the Future Land Use Plan Map whenever the Urban Services Boundary is amended and utility service is extended.
- LU-1.5.2: Update the Future Land Use Plan Map when the Gaston Garden Parkway (or equivalent) is funded in Gaston County to US-321.

Goal LU-2: Promote a balanced mix of uses that support a strong and diverse tax base and the creation of jobs throughout the county.

LU-2 Policies/Strategies:

- LU-2.1: Encourage non-residential development in Employment Areas to promote job growth throughout the County.
- LU-2.2: Support commercial and residential uses as a limited component of Employment Areas on the Future Land Use Map provided the following criteria are met:
 - Proposed commercial and/or residential areas are planned in a manner that complements the employment uses in terms of compatibility between uses and compatibility of vehicular and truck access.
 - The total land area devoted to the proposed commercial and/or residential uses does not occupy land more than 25% of available land area designated for Employment
 - Proposed commercial and/or residential areas are located within one mile of an interstate interchange or the intersection of two major thoroughfares
- LU-2.3: Coordinate with the municipalities and other providers to ensure adequate utility service can be provided to key employment areas as identified on the land use map.
 - LU-2.3.1: Conduct “hot spot” utility studies in conjunction with utility providers to ensure land highly suitable for industrial or office development can be adequately served.
- LU-2.4: Create a compact, mixed-use zoning district option in the zoning ordinance that allows for more flexibility, encourages pedestrian-friendly development and includes a combination of residential, retail and office components.
 - (See figure X (to be added later) for mixed-use development concept example and general design principles.)
- LU-2.5: Allow for small-scale commercial, retail, service, office uses and/or mixed use development at locations outside of an existing or planned Town, Community, Neighborhood, and Rural Center, provided the following conditions exist:
 - The building footprint of proposed non-residential development is less than 40,000 square feet
 - Site has access to adequate utilities

- Site has access to a minor or major thoroughfare and access to another street that is classified as a collector level or higher
- Proposed use is part of a planned development (i.e. via a Planned Development District as defined in the Zoning Ordinance or equivalent)
- Site is located at least one mile from existing and planned Town, Community, Neighborhood, and Rural Centers

Goal LU-3: Promote quality development that is environmentally responsible and compatible with local character.

LU-3 Policies/Strategies:

- LU-3.1: Study policies that would improve the type of open space in new developments in order to provide recreational opportunities and protect the rural character of the County.
 - LU-3.1.1: Develop and adopt requirements and standards intended to retain usable and connected open space within new developments.
 - LU-3.1.2: Modify regulations and guidelines to increase the requirements for active and passive open space in new developments.
- LU-3.2: Improve the design of future development and redevelopment.
 - LU-3.2.1: Evaluate the benefits of improved design guidelines and/or subdivision standards to improve the design of residential, commercial and industrial development.
 - LU-3.2.2: Develop design guidelines in support of improved designs.
- LU-3.3: Encourage environmentally responsible growth and development beyond the existing buffer requirements for the Catawba River, Broad River, Lake Wylie and its primary tributaries.
 - LU-3.3.1: Consider the adoption of a watershed protection overlay ordinance for the Lake Wylie watershed that limits disturbed area, built upon area and/or impervious surface in new development.
 - LU-3.3.2: Promote the utilization of Low Impact Development techniques to generate less runoff from developed land while also reducing storm-water maintenance costs and protecting water quality. Common practices can include:
 - Rain and rooftop gardens,
 - Vegetated swales, buffers and tree preservation,
 - Permeable pavers,
 - Minimizing land disturbance,
 - Slope reduction
- LU-3.4: Encourage development in Municipal Infill areas that is compatible with existing neighborhoods.
 - LU-3.4.1: Support rezonings that are consistent with adopted municipal plans and the scale and density of existing neighboring land uses.

Goal LU-4: Preserve rural character in areas near and beyond the adopted Urban Services Boundary, while providing opportunities for compatible rural development.

LU-4 Policies/Strategies:

- LU-4.1: Maintain rural and agricultural areas.
 - LU-4.1.1: Allow a limited amount of commercial development in areas designated for Rural Centers (See description of Rural Centers...).
 - LU-4.1.2: Discourage rezonings of rural lands (i.e. lands designated as Rural Residential (RR) and Agricultural (AG) on the Future Land Use Map) to higher intensity residential uses (unless rezoning allows a Conservation Subdivision—see LU-4.2).
 - LU-4.1.3: Encourage rural population growth to occur in and around existing rural towns and settlements.
 - LU-4.1.4 Discourage expansion of water / sewer and other public facilities that could increase development pressure in areas identified on the land use map that should remain agriculture and in some cases rural residential, except where needed due to unsafe well / septic conditions.
- LU-4.2: Facilitate the development of Conservation Subdivision in areas with scenic or natural assets and access to utilities.
 - LU-4.2.1: Modify development regulations to include incentives to encourage this type of development. Incentives could include flexibility in lot size and configuration and/or density bonuses for proposed developments that preserve substantial amounts of open space that encompass valuable natural features.
 - LU-4.2.2: Prepare design guidelines for Conservation Subdivision that demonstrate how development can be sensitively integrated while avoiding or mitigating impacts to the natural features. Consider these general design guidelines such as:
 - Open space requirements that exceed underlying zoning districts (i.e. >40%)
 - Conservation Subdivision design that will protect water quality, key natural or cultural features
 - Clustering of development away from key natural features such as riparian buffers, mature upland and floodplain forest, rock outcroppings, vernal pools, viewsheds from rural roads, etc.

Conservation Subdivisions

Overview

Conservation Subdivisions are residential subdivisions and/or master planned communities that demonstrate how development can be sensitively integrated into the countryside while avoiding or mitigating impacts to natural or cultural features that exist on the site. These developments typically have a larger percentage of open space than conventional development and are meant to be located between suburban and rural areas in order to maintain the rural character of the county.

Target Areas

- Target areas include lands that meet two or more of the following criteria:
 - Are located in Rural Residential, Single Family Residential and Neighborhood Residential areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan.
 - Are located within 1-2 miles of the Urban Services Boundary (inside or outside)
 - Are located in watersheds that drain to Lake Wylie (Beaverdam Creek, Crowder's Creek, Allison Creek, Little Allison Creek) or the Catawba River (east of Rock Hill)
 - Areas with exceptional scenic or agricultural value (Fishing Creek basin southwest of Rock Hill)
 - Areas with key natural features such as riparian buffers, mature upland and floodplain forest, rock outcroppings, vernal pools, viewsheds from rural roads, etc.

Figure 2: Conservation Subdivision Overview