

## Natural Resources Element – Goals, Policies and Strategies

***Goal NR-1: Protect and preserve natural wildlife habitat, agricultural and timberland areas through the use of growth management techniques.***

### Zoning and Growth Management

Review, evaluate, and amend existing ordinances and land use policies to ensure they protect and preserve our natural resources.

#### NR-1A Land Use Policy Strategies

1. Review annually and amend if necessary the Urban Services Boundary to continue focusing development within areas that are or can be served by existing utilities thus protecting rural and ecologically sensitive areas. (LU)
2. Ensure protected open space, agricultural, scenic, historic and cultural areas are given a distinct open space/agricultural land use designation. (LU)
3. Create a countywide, multijurisdictional trail and greenway plan.
4. Support goals and implementation strategies of the Broad River Management Plan and Catawba River Corridor Management Plan
5. Periodically reassess the methodology of distributing county recreation fund tax revenues to ensure that recreation funds are distributed in a manner that supports/promotes implementation of comprehensive plan objectives.
6. Explore re-use or shared use of rail line rights-of-way for trails (Bike, Pedestrian, Equestrian)
7. Establish County-recognized blueways along the Broad and Catawba rivers and seek state recognition—ties to open space
8. Study the feasibility of creating a sensitive watershed overlay zone for all York County waters draining into Lake Wylie

#### NR-1B Ordinance Strategies

1. Annually evaluate and revise, if necessary, existing ordinances that seek to protect and preserve the natural environment; such as: conservation subdivisions, tree ordinances, landscaping and buffer requirements, amenities that include trails that connect internally and externally to greenway/trail networks and open space requirements.
2. Annually evaluate and revise, if necessary, land development codes to establish requirements, incentives and trade-offs to developers in exchange for open space, trails, habitat and watershed protection and greenway easements.
3. Evaluate the need for the use of an open space zoning district designation for areas designated for parklands, conservation and open space.

4. Adopt context sensitive residential density and design standards that promote physical activity, protection of sensitive habitats, steep slopes, and watersheds.
5. Assess the effectiveness of current stream buffer requirements and consider requiring buffers to all perennial and/or intermittent streams in York County.
6. Review current standards for the development of landfills and mining or mineral extraction activities to ensure adequate protective measures for the adjacent communities are provided.
7. Adopt a Broad River Buffer overlay to protect its water quality and scenic value.
8. Adopt design incentive provisions and the necessary mechanisms to allow developers to donate a fee in-lieu instead-of the required open space dedication for residential developments not located along proposed greenways and dedicated open space.
  - Infill developments
  - Smaller commercial residential developments
9. Study the feasibility of adopting a Transfer of Development Rights program
  - to promote densities in more urbanized areas
  - to protect natural, scenic, rural, areas from urban growth pressures.
10. Create context sensitive trail section details and definitions for development of neighborhood and regional scale connected trail systems;

***Goal NR-2: Protect the natural environment from potential damaging stormwater through the County's Stormwater Management Plan.***

Review and revise the Stormwater Management Plan as necessary to meet or exceed all State and Federal regulations.

**NR 2 Stormwater and Erosion Control Strategies**

1. Continue to implement the Stormwater Management Plan Best Management (SWMP) Practices and revise from time to time, as necessary, to meet current standards to include:
  - Public Education - Continue to implement, and revise if necessary, a comprehensive stormwater educational outreach program that includes the goals and objectives of the program as they relate to at least three high priority community issues with potential to decrease the pollutants of concern's effect on water quality.
  - Public Involvement and Participation - Include the public in the planning and implementation of activities related to the development and implementation of the SWMP.
  - Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) - Continue to implement and enforce a program to detect and eliminate illicit discharges into the SMS4 Permit.
  - Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control – Implement, review, and revise as necessary the adopted Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Ordinance.

- Promote the use of Low-Impact Development (LID) and Best Management Practice Implementation (BMPs) by developers, farmers, timber companies, and any other groups whose activities may cause land disturbances.
    - Ensure development codes do not prohibit LID practices.
    - Consider providing incentives for utilizing LID standards such as reduction in open space, etc.
  - Post-Construction Stormwater Management for New Development and Redevelopment - protect receiving waters from the discharge of pollutants, after construction is completed, by reducing pollutants to the maximum extent possible to protect water quality and to satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the permit. New development and significant redevelopment projects that disturb greater than one acre as well as projects that are less than one acre, but that are part of a larger common plan are subject to this minimum control measure
  - Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations -Continue to implement an operation and maintenance program with the ultimate goal of preventing or reducing pollutants from County operations into the storm drain system. These pollution preventative measures will be performed at York County buildings, including the government offices, recycling/waste disposal centers, etc.
2. Continue to implement the monitoring and assessment plan for each of the identified TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Load) and submit it to SCDHEC Bureau of Water as required under the current MS4 permit.
  3. Identify any new TMDLs and incorporate them into the permit requirements, and a monitoring and assessment plan developed within 12 months of the effective date of the TMDL.

***Goal NR-3: Protect, promote, and preserve the conservation of natural resources to promote outdoor nature-based recreation and to encourage and promote tourism emphasizing natural resources in York County.***

**NR 3A York County Forever Strategies (CR)**

1. Identify and prioritize key parcels of land and corridors that should be acquired and protected as open space through the York County Forever program.
2. Continue to partner with appropriate public and private conservation entities and municipalities to develop a contiguous network of trails and open space areas throughout the county.
3. Continue to educate the public and the development community regarding the benefits of open space and the potential rewards it may offer.
4. Study the feasibility of the county establishing a wetland mitigation bank program to hold and redistribute monies collected to preserve/enhance wetlands from public development projects and use proceeds to help fund future open space preservation efforts.

5. Implement the Western York County Scenic Byway Plan that will:
  - Promote the County’s rich cultural history
  - Promote the County’s rich and unique natural characteristics
  - Promote the County’s historic communities
  - Create economic development opportunities through tourism
6. Study the feasibility of York County Forever facilitating the recordation of conservation easements for platted and dedicated open space within newly created conservation subdivisions.
7. Examine the feasibility of reorganizing YCF and the Cultural and Heritage Museum of York County:
  - Consider the cost, benefits, and efficiencies/inefficiencies
  - Evaluate potential improvement/reduction in funding sources

#### NR 3B Parks, Recreation and Open Space Strategies

1. Consider establishing a York County Department to administer and coordinate the management and maintenance of county owned and managed land and facilities located in the unincorporated areas of the county.
  - Utilize Recreation Tax District as a funding mechanism.
  - Create or utilize civic volunteer organizations to assist in trail and park maintenance.
  - Improve existing open space facilities to accommodate active and passive recreation opportunities for county residents and visitors.
  - Study the feasibility of facilitating the creation of a multijurisdictional park(s) and recreation district(s) or agency/non-profit partnership for the purpose of providing or supplementing funding of land acquisition for parks, open space, and recreation opportunities to unincorporated urbanized areas of the county (e.g. Tega Cay – Fort Mill area and Lake Wylie).
  - Identify underserved areas of the county (Quality of access to recreation/open space) and encourage partnerships/agreements between the School Districts and municipal/non-profit agencies to provide recreation opportunities that will promote physical activity.
    - Establish a funding mechanism for open space conservation and programming.
    - Build partnerships with other municipalities, agencies, and non-profit organizations to provide funding by utilizing the recreation tax.
    - Continue to pursue multi-pronged open space grant funding opportunities.
2. Promote the planning and construction of a connected trail network of open space properties throughout York County.
  - Implement the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan through coordination with municipal partners and facilitate initiatives that will support Carolina Thread Trail dedication, acquisition, and purchase of trail and greenway easements.
  - Continue to support the Nation Ford Greenway effort.

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- Explore possible rails-to-trails network connection opportunities.
- Continue to implement and expand the bicycle-pedestrian plan.
- Encourage developers to create and provide public access to open space areas to include parks, greenways, and trails.
- Promote the donation of conservation easements to establish trail connections.