

CHAPTER 4: ZONING & LAND USE

■ INTRODUCTION

An inventory of existing conditions is a necessary prerequisite for the development of a Comprehensive Plan. The Commonwealth of Virginia recognized the significance of such an inventory in Section 15.1-447 of the Code of Virginia (as amended) which requires that the following surveys and studies be made in the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan:

Use of land, preservation of agricultural and forestal land, production of food and fiber, characteristics and conditions of existing development, trends of growth or changes, natural resources, groundwater, surface water, geologic factors, population factors, employment, environmental and economic factors, existing public facilities, drainage, flood control and flood damage prevention measures, transportation facilities, the need for affordable housing, and any other matters relating to the subject matter and general purposes of the comprehensive plan.

Previous chapters of this Comprehensive Plan have inventoried natural resources and have examined the growth and population factors of the County. Chapter 5 will address employment and economic factors. This chapter will discuss the history of zoning and existing land use in the County. It will also examine the need for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and rural lands.

■ FAUQUIER ZONING HISTORY

Formal planning and zoning in Fauquier County began on December 14, 1950, when the Board of Supervisors appointed the first Planning Commission with instructions to prepare an ordinance and map to "protect the agricultural heritage of the County and to provide for future population growth." The first Subdivision Ordinance was adopted on August 3, 1951. The first significant Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map were adopted on August 11, 1955. The original ordinance and map provided for a predominance of conservation and residential zones with some commercial areas along the highways and near the towns. The residential zones were located on all major highways in the County.

On May 9, 1968, the County adopted significantly revised Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances. A revised Zoning Map was adopted on August 20, 1970. All of these Ordinances were recommended in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted in 1967. The subsequent Zoning Map reflected the zoning recommendations of the 1967 Plan, which included an increased amount of conservation zoning; the reintroduction of the Agriculture District; and the designation of urban growth areas or "service districts." The commercial and industrial areas were zoned as planned; however, the residential land in the service districts was zoned to a holding density of SR-1 (.9 DU/Acre) until central sewerage disposal and water would be available making development to planned densities feasible. In May of 1981, the County

underwent a comprehensive rezoning. The new ordinance redefined the zoning categories, reduced the size of the service districts and Conservation zones, and substantially increased the area in the Rural Agricultural zones. The areas devoted to village zoning were also expanded and settlement areas (R-1 zone) were created. Areas for future expansion were shown in the service districts and villages. The resulting configuration of service districts and villages encouraged orderly growth emanating from existing towns and villages. The County's existing zoning is discussed in greater detail below.

■ EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

The information on [Map 4.1](#) was taken from a US Geological Survey CARETS map. The map has been updated using information from a LANDSAT demonstration project flown in 1981, and ground verification as recent as 1985. [Map 2.9](#) in Chapter 2 indicates that most of the 651 square miles in Fauquier County are open and forested lands. The State periodically conducts an inventory of the Commonwealth's forestall resources. A summary of the last two inventories is provided in Table 4.1. As pointed out in the 1967 Plan:

The County's population holding capacity in relationship to its geography and size(651 square miles) is "astronomical," generally beyond the reach of today's skills in planning to accurately predict the exact use of all the land ultimately.

The statement above is still true and relevant to this revision. The challenge is to plan for future growth in areas around existing towns and transportation nodes where the provision of services is most economical. By so planning, the County will provide for growth so that it will not come at the sacrifice of natural resources, or be the cause of significant change in the character of the County. Such a planning strategy will serve to attain the planning goals of the County, encourage the economical use of resources, and allow for maximum flexibility with respect to the "ultimate" land use options for future generations based on future needs. The individual land use plans for the service districts and villages and settlements are found in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively.

[Map 4.2](#) is a generalized zoning map for the County. An inventory of each of the County's districts is provided in each section addressing residential, commercial, and industrial zoning. For the most part, County zoning reflects existing land use. Each of the County's three incorporated Towns has independent control over its own zoning and land use planning.

Table 4.1: Fauquier County Forest and Non-Forest Land Use

Year	All Land	Timberland	Woodland	Reserved Timberland	Forest Land Total	Non-Forest Land
1986	416,570	180,056	—	—	180,056	236,514
1992	416,570	174,154	—	1,034	175,188	241,382

Note: All figures are in acres.

Source: Forest Statistics for the Northern Piedmont of Virginia, 1986 and 1992.

Definitions:

1. Timberland. Land as least 16.7% stocked by forest tree of any size, or formerly having had such tree cover, not currently developed for non-forest use, capable of producing 20 cubic feet of industrial wood per acre per year and not withdrawn from timber utilization by legislative action.
2. Woodland. Forest land incapable of producing 20 cubic feet per acre per year of industrial wood under natural conditions, because of adverse site conditions.
3. Reserved timberland. Forest land sufficiently productive to qualify as timberland, but withdrawn from timber utilization through statute or administrative designation.
4. Non-forest land. Land that has never supported forests and land formerly forested where timber production is precluded by development for other uses.

The following sections discuss the existing land use categories and zoning districts in detail. The future land use planning needs of the County, based on projected economic and population growth of the County will also be examined.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

The 1987 Comprehensive Plan predicted residential development would continue to increase; to date, no "peak", as forecast in the 1967 Plan, has materialized. It also stated that since 1970, residential development has been both rural and suburban in nature and largely in the form of single family dwellings.

Distribution of Residential Land Uses

As a result of the County's policy to direct and concentrate growth into service districts, the majority of residential zoning is contained within the service districts, villages and settlements. Correspondingly, the majority of the residential development and population growth has occurred in the service districts. As discussed briefly in Chapter 3, approximately 79% of the population growth from 1980 to 1990 occurred within the service districts, villages and settlements. Detailed housing information for the individual service districts will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

A map showing the distribution of subdivisions containing 15 or more lots is included in Appendix D.

Parcel size distribution throughout the County as of January 1, 1975 through June 1985 indicates that most of the suburban-type subdivisions have been platted in the Warrenton-New Baltimore areas, whereas rural development has been scattered throughout the County, primarily along roads and in "large lot" subdivisions. The 1990 Census characterizes the County's housing stock as 4.6% rural farms, 83.5% as rural non- farms and 11.9% as urban.

Table 4.2 lists the total number of parcels by size for 1980, 1985, and 1988. Numbers for 1990- 1992 are not broken down by size however a total of 7,959 lots were created between 1980 and 1992.

Residential Zoning

The County Zoning Ordinance contains the following residential categories:

Table 4.2: Fauquier County Land Parcel Size 1980, 1985, 1988, 1991, & 1992						
Acreage	1980	1985	1988	1990	1991	1992
0-19	14,927	16,915	19,314	NA	NA	NA
20-50	1,554	1,654	1,783	NA	NA	NA
51-100	775	771	811	NA	NA	NA
101-200	534	521	530	NA	NA	NA
201-300	202	190	193	NA	NA	NA
301-400	103	97	96	NA	NA	NA
401-500	42	42	38	NA	NA	NA
500+	66	60	65	NA	NA	NA
Total	18,203	20,250	22,830	25,568	26,012	26,162

Source: Fauquier County Commissioner of Revenue.

1. Rural Residential (RR-2) District reflects the existence of rural residential development and/or those areas where agriculture and forestal activity is not the predominant use, and the soils and lot sizes are not generally suited for same.
2. Village (V) District -reflects the existence of small communities which historically have provided social activities and limited retail services to the rural areas. The regulations are designed to recognize the mixed use character of the village, encourage its rural service functions, and to provide for appropriate expansion of the village while maintaining its rural qualities. In addition to allowing home occupations by right, this district can accommodate cottage industries where appropriate.
3. Residential (R-1, R-2, and R-4) Districts - are intended to promote and maintain single family residential communities, planned unit developments (PUD) at similar densities, and non-residential uses consistent with the density, size, and character of the districts. The R-2 and R-4 Districts are restricted to those areas designated as service districts. The R-1 District is a general purpose District to be used in settlements and other areas of similar character.
4. Townhouse (TH) and Garden Apartment (GA) Districts are intended to promote and maintain multi-family residential communities at various densities and to permit non-residential uses consistent with the density and character of the District. These districts are restricted to those

areas designated as service districts and require the provision of central water and sanitary sewer systems.

5. Manufactured Dwelling Park (MDP) District is intended to accommodate the need for manufactured dwelling housing in an environment which promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of its inhabitants. The district requires the provision of central water and sanitary sewer systems.

The current total acreage of each residential zoning category for the entire County, and for the individual Service Districts are provided in [Figure 4.1](#) and Table 4.3.

■ HOUSING INVENTORY AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Number of Dwelling Units and Housing Distribution

As mentioned earlier in this Chapter, the majority of residential land use and residential zoning exists in the service districts, villages and settlements. Chapter 3 discussed the population growth that occurred in the five active service districts between 1980 and 1990. It also discussed the population growth within the service districts, villages and settlements as a percentage of the total County population.

Building Activity by Type of Dwelling Unit and Structural Characteristics

Between 1985 and 1991, single family dwelling units accounted for an average of 91% of new dwelling units constructed. According to the 1990 Census, approximately 84% of the County's housing stock was single family detached units. Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 summarize the distribution of new dwelling types and type of construction and structural characteristics of the County's housing stock in 1990 respectively.

Housing Value

According to the 2000 Census, the median value of housing in Fauquier County was \$146,500. Table 4.6 compares median value of housing for Census years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000. Fauquier experienced the 5th and 9th greatest increase in median value in the State between 1970 to 1990 and 1980 to 1990 respectively.

Table 4.3: Service District Residential Zoning Acreage Summary (1993)

	R-1	R-2	RR2	R-4	GA	MDP	TH	Total
Bealeton	411.10	244.69	-	314.55	24.52	113.67	21.90	1,130.43
Calverton	260.30	-	-	-	-	-	-	260.30
Catlett	488.31	-	-	-	-	-	-	488.31
Marshall	434.47	549.71	-	300.19	-	-	45.83	1,330.20
Midland	405.02	-	-	-	-	-	-	405.02
New Baltimore	6,093.39	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,093.39
Opal	155.12	-	-	-	-	-	-	155.12
Remington	715.95	467.29	-	135.18	-	-	25.25	1,343.67

Warrenton	3,767.84	589.29	-	547.62	-	-	15.42	4,920.17
Total Acreage	12,731.50	1,850.98	-	1,297.54	24.52	113.67	108.40	16,126.61
Total County Acreage	19,188.39	1,892.26	358.21	1,297.54	24.52	113.67	86,095.00	

Source: Fauquier County Planning Staff/G.I.S.

Vacancy Status

According to the 1990 Census, 6.8% or 1,207 of the total 17, 716 housing units were vacant. Of these vacant units, 254 were classified as homes used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Water Supply and Sewage Disposal

Table 4.7 summarizes water supply source and sewage disposal for housing units in the County for Census years 1970, 1980, and 1990. The percentage of total housing units being served by sewer increased from 18.5% in 1970 to 26.7% in 1990. The percentage of housing units being served by a public or private water system rose from 26.7% to 37.5% during the same period.

Prior to the early 1970's, the County's housing stock consisted almost entirely of single family housing on septic tanks with individual drainfields, and to a large extent, individual wells. With the upgrading and expansion of sewer facilities in Warrenton and Remington/Bealeton, providing a more diverse housing mix became possible in these locations. Such a mix is desirable to attract growth to the service districts; to encourage densities that will alleviate pressures to develop in rural areas; and to facilitate effective "town planning" techniques.

Fauquier County ordinances require subdivision lots of less than one acre in size or subdivisions with seven or more lots to be served by central water systems. The plans for such systems must be approved by the Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA), the State Health Department and, in certain cases, the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). It is recommended and preferred that a single entity such as the WSA provide service on a regional basis; however, County ordinances allow the WSA to decline to accept and operate such central systems in which case they may be privately owned and operated.

The WSA is currently instituting a plan that will tie together independent water systems and create a loop around the New Baltimore Service District. A ground storage tank on Baldwin Ridge will add reliability to the system and will provide sufficient capacity for fire suppression.

Year	Single Family	Townhouse	Mobile Home	Apartment	Duplex	Total
1985	701	24	30	2	2	759
1986	163	14	44	6	1	829

1987	675	0	34	7	0	716
1988	736	0	8	0	4	748
1989	515	12	4	78	1	610
1990	285	0	3	101	1	390
1991	186	0	8	0	0	194
Totals	3,861	50	131	194	9	4,246

Source: Fauquier County Zoning Office

■ **SUBSTANDARD HOUSING**

Based on the 1990 Census, 2.04% of the housing stock in Fauquier County is classified as substandard due to a lack of complete plumbing facilities, and 1.56% of the housing stock is classified as substandard due to a lack of complete kitchen facilities. The percentages as well as the number of substandard units have been reduced somewhat since 1980 as new homes have been built with complete plumbing facilities and a significant number of remodeling permits have been issued for the addition of bathroom facilities to existing houses.

A task force was assembled in 1975 to study sub-standard housing throughout the County. The task force determined that the substandard housing problem was mostly a scattered one. The solution therefore needed to be different from that of the familiar federally subsidized apartment complex, and must be geared to individual preferences, situations, and expectations. The 1975 task force recommended that the Board of Supervisors pursue the following course of action:

1. Participate in governmental housing assistance programs; funding for the Fauquier Housing Corporation;
2. Participate in housing rehabilitation programs; examine ways to reduce construction costs;
3. Provide central sewerage for the Occoquan sub-watershed;
4. Examine zoning in the villages; and
5. Establish a Housing Advisory Group.

■ **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

In July 1992, the Board of Supervisors appointed an affordable housing task force to aid the Board in developing initiatives to increase the availability of affordable housing in the County.

The task force presented an interim report to the Board of Supervisors in July 1993. Based on the interim report recommendations, the County has:

- Adopted the State's Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) goals (adopted September 1993); and,

- Petitioned the General Assembly to extend the enabling legislation for affordable housing ordinances to Fauquier County.

The Final Report of the task force is expected to be presented to the Board of Supervisors in the early part of 1994 and includes the following recommendations:

- Increase densities allowed in service districts and upgrade water and sewer services within the districts;
- Provide density bonuses for developments including affordable housing;
- Permit single-room occupancy housing in service districts; and,
- Streamline the administrative process for developments including affordable housing.

The task force is expected to develop more specific recommendations for ordinance changes to effect these recommendations.

In order to further increase the amount of affordable housing in the County, in early 1994 the Board of Supervisors stated their intent to give thirteen acres of County owned land at Botha to the Fauquier Housing Corporation and the Fauquier chapter of Habitat for Humanity so that these two non-profit housing groups could utilize the property to build affordable housing for income eligible County residents.

Table 4.6: Median Value of Housing 1970-1990					
	Median Housing Value			Percent Change	
	1990	1980	1970	1970-1990	1980-1990
Fauquier	146,500	66,800	18,500	691.89%	119.31%
Fairfax	213,800	95,200	35,300	505.70%	124.60%
Loudoun	170,200	71,100	25,300	572.70%	139.40%
Prince William	138,500	65,000	24,400	467.60%	113.10%
Rappahannock	89,300	39,100	9,600	830.20%	128.40%
State	91,000	48,000	17,100	432.16%	89.58%

Source: Virginia Abstract 1992-93 Edition.

Table 4.7: Fauquier County Water Supply Source				
	Source of Water			
	Public or Private System	Individual Drilled Well	Individual Dug Well	Other
1990	6,643	10,041	759	273
1980	4,001	6,922	948	646
1970	2,269	5,381	*	777

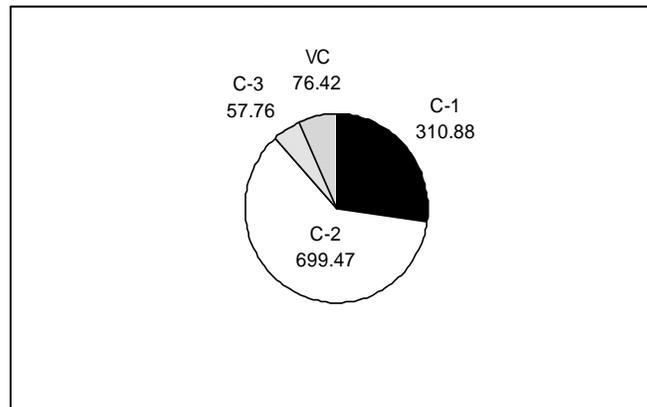
Sewage Disposal				
	Public Sewer	Septic Tank or	Other	Total

		Cesspool		
1990	4,721	12,592	403	17,716
1980	2,956	8,4,9	1,082	12,517
1970	1,561	5,184	1,682	8,427

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Note: * = Individual Dug and Drilled Well figures combined for this year.

Figure 4.2: Fauquier County Existing Commercial Zoning in Acres



Source: Fauquier County Department of Community Development.
 Note: Does not include Town of Warrenton commercial zoning figures.

■ COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Existing Commercial Land Use and Zoning

There are approximately 1,144 acres of land throughout the County, primarily within the service districts, villages and settlements which are zoned for various commercial uses. The County Zoning Ordinance contains the following commercial categories:

1. Commercial Neighborhood (C-1) District- generally a town center type district allowing neighborhood commercial activities and some residential uses. Its main purpose is to provide areas for neighborhood type retail and service convenience shopping. The areas should be located so as to provide pedestrian access from nearby neighborhoods. The size should relate to the neighborhoods served and the configuration should allow for internal pedestrian movement.
2. Commercial Highway (C-2) District contains general commercial uses where vehicle access is the norm; the district should serve both local needs and those of the motoring public.
3. Commercial Shopping Center, Community/ Regional (C-3) District - designed for large shopping center needs as they relate to a trade area and its interrelationship with the planned growth areas. Site access, availability of public utilities, and internal pedestrian movements are also considerations in area designation.
4. Village (CV) District -designed to allow commercial activities appropriate to the needs of the villages, recognizing the rural service function of such communities.

The majority of the commercially zoned land in the County is located in the service districts. Figure 4.2 summarizes the existing commercial zoning for the entire County and Table 4.8 summarizes commercial zoning for the service districts, villages and settlements.

Existing commercial activity in the County is either community or highway oriented; no regional commercial facilities presently exist. The largest commercial centers are located in the Town of Warrenton. Warrenton contains the largest highway commercial center in the County. Two highway-related commercial centers exist on Route 29 at New Baltimore and at Opal. Some highway commercial activity also exists at Marshall and Remington. Remington, Bealeton, and Marshall are the other locations presently providing for community retail needs with a small center located at Catlett. Other community retail is scattered throughout the County and can be categorized as "general store" type activity.

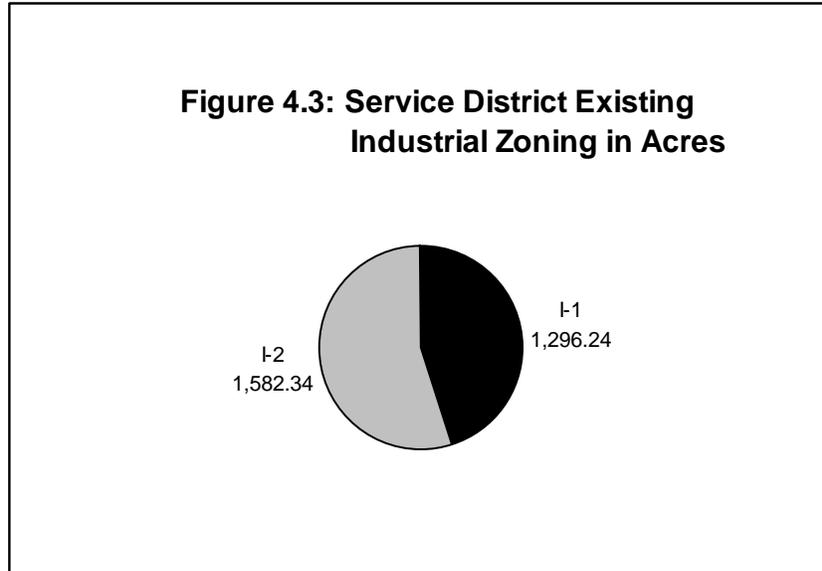
■ INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Existing Industrial Land Use and Zoning

There are approximately 2,880 acres of industrially zoned land in Fauquier County. The County has adopted the following zoning districts for industrial activities:

1. Industrial Park (I-I) District -designed for industries where the primary activity is conducted within completely enclosed structures. The district allows for public-access type industrial uses, and commercial uses generally related to the industrial activities. In general the district contains uses which have minimal environmental impacts.
2. Industrial General (I-2) District -designed for heavier industries where operation and/ or significant storage is outdoors or in a partially enclosed area. Public access uses are discouraged in the district because of the nature of uses permitted.

The majority of the industrially zoned land in the County is located in the service districts. Figure 4.3 and Table 4.9 summarize the existing industrial zoning in the entire County as well the service districts, villages, and settlements.



Source: Fauquier County Department of Community Development.
 Note: Does not include Town of Warrenton industrial zoning figures.

Table 4.8: Service District Existing Commercial Zoning Inventory in Acres

	C-1	C-2	C-3	Total
Bealeton	20.21	10.74	—	75.94
Calverton	27.64	51.15	—	78.79
Catlett	53.93	23.30	—	77.23
Marshall	61.40	65.57	—	126.97
Midland	13.30	9.36	—	22.66
New Baltimore	58.75	122.92	—	181.67
Opal	—	158.16	—	158.16
Remington	8.57	3.35	—	11.92
Warrenton	—	101.97	—	101.97
Total Acreage	243.80	546.52	44.99	835.31
Total County				
Acreage	310.88	699.47	57.76	1,068.11

Source: Fauquier County Planning Staff/G.I.S., 1993

Table 4.9: Service District Existing Industrial Zoning Inventory in Acres

	I-1	I-2	Total
Bealeton	—	269.25	269.25
Calverton	93.39	301.52	394.91
Catlett	152.57	—	152.57
Marshall	174.30	241.05	415.35
Midland	334.42	345.08	679.50

New Baltimore	20.08	50.05	70.13
Opal	138.75	—	138.75
Remington	83.99	42.72	126.71
Warrenton	153.83	—	153.83
Total Acreage	1,151.33	1,249.67	0.00
Total County Acreage	1,296.24	1,582.64	2,401.00
Source: Fauquier County Planning Staff/G.I.S., 1993.			

■ AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL LAND USE

Being an industry, agriculture could have been included in the industrial portion of this chapter; however, because it is the major land use category in the County, and because its problems and needs are different than other "industrial" uses, it is discussed separately.

Agricultural and Rural Zoning

The County Zoning Ordinance contains the following agricultural and rural zoning categories:

1. Agriculture (RA) District -generally contains those areas where agriculture and forestry are the predominant uses or where significant agricultural lands or large lot farmette type residential development exists. The regulations are designed to assist in the protection and preservation of the agricultural uses and to mitigate land use conflicts between agricultural and appropriately limited residential development.
2. Conservation (RC) District -contains those mountains which are environmentally sensitive, have physical limitations, and contain much of the County's timber resources. The regulations are designed with emphasis on the conservation of those areas to minimize the potential adverse impacts of development while providing for compatible very low density residential uses.

[Figure 4.4](#) and [Table 4.10](#) summarize the existing rural zoning for the entire County and for the individual service districts.

Agricultural Trends

According to the 1987 Agricultural Census, 58% of the County is dedicated to agricultural use. The Agricultural Census is taken every five years; data from the 1987 census is summarized in [Tables 4.11](#) through [4.15](#).

Crop, dairy, beef, and horse farming constitute the major sectors of farming within the County. [Map 4.3](#) indicates the location of those farms that are involved in the dairy and cattle feedlot industries; [Map 4.4](#) indicates the location of beef cattle and horse farms. Much of the crop farming in the County is associated with dairy, beef, or horse farming.

	RA	RC	Total
Bealeton	272.06	—	272.06
Calverton	—	—	0.00
Catlett	—	—	0.00
Marshall	—	—	0.00
Midland	—	—	0.00
New Baltimore	747.01	—	747.01
Opal	5.16	—	5.16
Remington	351.82	—	351.82
Warrenton	90.33	—	90.33
Total Acreage	1,466.38	—	1,466.38
Total County Acreage	330,307.30	—	55,751.75

	1964	1969	1974	1978	1982	1987
Number of Farms	950	829	772	837	973	978
Land in Farms (Acres)	292,765	252,086	244,675	247,838	247,952	240,638
Cropland	143,050	130,307	129,613	137,667	135,736	123,054
Harvested	71,760	54,645	62,995	72,925	80,060	67,196
Pasture	63,168	66,708	62,362	58,832	82,872	47,683
Other (idle, fallow, etc.)	8,122	8,954	4,256	5,910	2,804	8,175
Woodland	75,040	63,580	57,809	57,594	59,024	53,752
Other Land (rangeland, house lots, etc.)	74,674	58,199	57,253	52,577	53,192	63,832
Percent of County Land in Farms	70.3	60.5	58.7	59.5	59.5	57.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

	1964	1969	1974	1978	1982	1987
Average Size of Farms in Acres	308	304	317	296	255	246
Farms with:						
1 to 9 acres	26	18	14	35	41	31
10 to 49 acres	156	135	136	155	236	289
50 to 179 acres	323	278	268	298	348	355
180 to 499 acres	286	263	217	205	209	188
500 to 999 acres	104	89	90	99	92	70
1000 acres or more	55	46	47	45	47	45

Total Number of Farms	950	829	772	837	973	978
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Source: Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service – Census of Agriculture 1964-1987.

Table 4.13: Fauquier County Farm Operators

	1964	1969	1974	1978	1982	1987
Type of Ownership						
Full Owners	723	639	559	569	656	735
Part Owners	167	139	162	212	267	181
Tenants	43	51	51	56	50	62
Type of Organization						
Individual & Family	NA	NA	NA	717	844	841
Partnership	NA	NA	NA	85	84	80
Corporation	NA	NA	NA	28	33	47
Other (Cooperative, Estate or Trust, Institutional, etc.)	NA	NA	NA	7	8	9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 4.14: Fauquier County Farms with Harvested Cropland

Number of Farms by Harvested Acre	1964	1969	1974	1978	1982	1987
1 to 9 acres	82	49	60	61	83	86
10 to 19	96	110	67	85	106	107
20 to 29	69	90	55	68	89	78
30 to 49	111	88	102	106	102	109
50 to 99	147	120	127	120	128	121
100 to 199	153	99	96	100	97	103
200 to 499	89	62	70	83	97	67
500 to 999	9	9	11	24	18	14
1000 acres and over	—	1	5	3	6	5
Total Farms with Harvested Cropland	756	628	593	650	726	690

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Table 4.15: Fauquier County Selected Crops by Acres Harvested

	1964	1966	1974	1978	1982	1987	1992*
Hay	40,097	27,986	32,641	39,462	44,429	41,876	47,200
Corn	16,317	17,473	22,914	18,820	18,950	9,621	15,900
Small Grains (1)	5,878	4,146	NA	3,105	NA	NA	NA
Wheat	2,943	2,685	4,215	2,116	3,118	3,336	3,800
Soybeans	9	277	1,456	2,020	4,277	2,232	2,700

(1) Other than wheat

*** Preliminary Data**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

These maps do not accurately show the extent to which agriculture dominates the landscape, nor do they reveal the full spectrum of agricultural activity that exists within the County. In recent years, agricultural industries have become more diverse. Due to proximity to the Washington metropolitan market, specialty agriculture has begun to evolve in Fauquier County. Examples of this recent trend include the following: the burgeoning wine industry; "pick-your-own" vegetable and fruit farms; nursery stock; Christmas trees; organically grown foods; and specialty livestock.

The agricultural industry is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Agricultural and Forestal Districts

The County adopted its first Agricultural and Forestal District in 1977. As of July 1992, approximately 81,600 acres had been organized into twelve Agricultural and Forestal Districts. These districts are important land use planning tools that allow the County to preserve large areas of agricultural, forestal, and open lands for eight year increments. In addition to the restrictions applied to land zoned for agricultural and conservation use, properties within Agricultural and Forestal Districts are subject to further restrictions designed to preserve the agricultural and rural integrity of the land.

Open Space and Conservation Easements

The Fauquier County Zoning Ordinance requires minimum open space to be provided for both conventional and clustered subdivisions. The purpose of the open space is to conserve scenic, natural, and historic resources including prime agricultural and forestal lands, environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains, steep slopes, rock outcrops and seasonally wet areas, predominant or unusual geologic features, and areas critical to the existence of important types of flora and fauna.

An open space or conservation easement is a legal agreement made by a property owner which restricts the amount and type of development that may occur on the property, to protect historical properties, environmentally significant resources, scenic views, and rural landscapes. The majority of easements in Fauquier County are held by the Virginia Outdoor Foundation. Currently there are approximately 31,000 acres under open space and historic easements. [Map 4.5](#) shows the location of those properties protected by open space and/or conservation easements in Fauquier County.

■ LAND USE ASSESSMENT

Because of Fauquier County's longtime goal of preserving traditional agricultural uses and the County's

goal of preserving the environment and a rural way of life, the County has instituted Special Land Preservation Assessment Taxation (Land Use Assessment) for its citizens. In first enacting this program, the State legislature found that "an expanding population and reduction in the quantity and quality of real estate devoted to agricultural, horticulture, forest, and open space uses makes the preservation of such real estate a matter vital to the public interest..."

The Land Use Assessment program allows the County to reduce the amount of taxes one pays on properties engaged in agricultural, horticultural, or forestal production in order to promote the preservation of these types of land uses.

Under Fauquier County's ordinance, one qualifies for forest use by certifying that the land is being used in a planned program of timber management and soil conservation practices.

To qualify for open-space, the use of the property must be consistent with the County's Adopted Land Use Plan. According to the Virginia Code, a property that is subject to a recorded perpetual conservation, historical, or open-space easement held by any public body or a property which is part of an agricultural, forestal, or agricultural district approved by local government, shall be considered to be consistent with the Land Use Plan.

The Land Use Program in Fauquier County is well utilized. In 1993, \$8,655,767 was deferred through the Land Use Program out of a total tax base of \$40,072,590. Under the Land Use Program, if a change in use from a qualifying to a non-qualifying use occurs, or the land is rezoned to a more intensive use, a roll back tax for up to five (5) years previous is imposed. This allows the County to capture some of the deferred taxes.

The Land Use Program continues to help the County maintain its goals of preserving agricultural and open space in its planned rural areas. Presently, of the 25,549 parcels in the County, 3,726 are in the Land Use Program covering 266,485 acres. Table 4.16 compares land use assessments for the years 1988-1993; Table 4.17 shows acreage in land use assessment by year and land use category.

■ PROJECTED LAND USE AND ZONING NEEDS

Projected Residential Land Use Needs

Table 3.4 in Chapter 3 summarized the total number of households, families, persons per household, and persons per family for Census years 1970, 1980, and 1990. While the overall number of persons of child bearing age has increased due to the aging of the baby boom population, in the last twenty years a trend toward smaller families has emerged. Despite this trend, the construction and apparent demand for single

family dwelling units remains high. These trends are important when projecting future residential land use needs. The County's existing residential zoning acreage by category is shown in Figure 4.1.

Table 4.16: 1988-1993 Land Use Assessment Comparison in Acres

Category	1988	1989	% Change	Acreage Change	1990	% Change	Acreage Change	1991	% Change	Acreage Change	1992	% Change	Acreage Change	1993	% Change	Acreage Change
Agriculture	156,584	158,446	1.2	1,862	145,165	-8.4	-13,281	147,880	1.9	2,715	142,181	-3.9	-5,699	140,982	-0.8	-1,199
Forest	87,606	90,871	3.7	3,265	85,170	-6.3	-5,701	86,583	1.7	1,413	87,835	1.4	1,252	88,780	1.1	945
Non-Qualifying	8,880	8,941	0.7	61	8,500	-4.9	-441	8,137	-4.3	-363	7,486	-8	-651	7,071	-5.5	-415
Open Space	27	27	0	0	15,964	59,026	15,937	21,801	36.6	5,837	32,470	48.9	10,669	36,060	11.1	3,590
Horticulture	430	436	1.4	6	671	53.9	235	866	29.1	195	597	-31.1	-269	663	11.1	66
Total	253,527	258,721	2.05	5,194	255,470	-1.3	-3,251	265,267	3.83	9,797	270,569	2	5,302	273,556	1.1	2,987

Source: Fauquier County Commissioner of Revenue.

Table 4.17: Acreage in Land Use Assessment by Year and Land Use Category

Year	Agriculture	Forestral	Horticulture	Open Space	Non-Qualifying	Total Qualifying	% County Acreage	A & F Districts	Under Open Space Easements
1973	116,125	60,642	25	336	5,213	177,128	43	—	344.74
1977	130,477	71,705	459	10	6,798	202,651	49	—	466,341.00
1988	156,584	87,606	430	27	8,880	244,647	59	80,866	20,310.95
1989	158,446	90,871	436	27	8,941	249,780	60	76,008	24,158.46
1990	145,165	85,170	671	15,964	8,500	246,970	59	77,341	27,758.04
1991	147,880	86,583	866	21,801	8,137	257,130	62	81,583	28,831.10

Notes: The County’s first agricultural and forestall district was approved in 1977.

Source: Fauquier County Commissioner of Revenue.

Table 4.18 is a projection of new dwelling units needed over the 1990 to 2010 period based on an average annual growth rate of 2.0%. The number of additional dwelling units (DUs) needed to house the County population is derived by dividing the population projection by an average of 2.1 persons per DU. This planning factor number differs from census data showing the 1990 average of 2.89 persons per dwelling. It recognizes that a portion of existing population will move into new dwelling units. The 2.1 factor is for calculating dwelling units required for new projected population.

■ PROJECTED COMMERCIAL LAND USE NEEDS

Commercial activity in this planning period will probably not include the development of regional facilities due to Fauquier County's proximity to existing facilities in Prince William, Loudoun, and Fairfax counties. Warrenton will continue as the major commercial center with the possibility of expanding neighborhood facilities in Remington, Bealeton, Marshall, and New Baltimore to serve the needs of population growth in those areas.

The Comprehensive Plan has planned approximately 880 acres for commercial use; the planned acreage is located only in service districts and villages. Figure 4.2 shows the existing commercial zoning for the County by service district. More detailed discussions of the planned commercial growth for service districts have been included in Chapter 6.

The role of local government in local commerce varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. It ranges from no role whatsoever to public-private commercial partnerships. For those jurisdictions exercising regulatory control over land use, involvement begins with the planning process. Commercial zones and their general locations are established in the land use plan. This process often recognizes areas of long-standing commercial activity. These areas may either be planned for continued use and expansion or considered to be non-conforming in which case the land is determined to be better suited for another type of zoning. In the case of non-conforming uses, the specific commercial use would continue through that use's lifecycle, after which it would cease in favor of another more appropriate type of use based on the established zoning designation that would be designated in the Comprehensive Plan.

Standards for the amount and type of commercial use vary widely among jurisdictions depending on jurisdictional size and density. In the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1967, commercial zoning acreage needs were estimated to be between 0.25 and 0.50 acres per 100 persons. The locations of commercial areas are as important as the amount of space provided. The County should, in reviewing the land use plan for 1992 to 2010, examine the amount, type, and location of the existing commercial zoning. By doing such analysis, the proper mixture of commercial and other types of zoning to serve the needs of

residents can be made available which would in turn ensure a reasonable level of free market forces within the County. It should also be noted that commercial activity often adds to the tax base without creating additional residential tax burdens. This is also often the case with certain types of industrial activities. The amount of commercial zoning, therefore, should relate to accepted community design criteria, the impact of commercial activity on existing transportation resources systems, and the mixture of commercial types.

The Town of Warrenton has 289 acres planned for commercial uses or 13% of the Town's total land area. The Town of Warrenton's Comprehensive Plan indicates that twenty percent (20%) of this land was developed in 1986. Presently, the Town has approximately 253 acres of land zoned commercially.

To ensure that areas designated for development with low impact uses (such as residentially compatible businesses) will develop properly, a new commercial office category is proposed for addition to the Zoning Ordinance. Such a district would be created for non-retail administrative, business, professional office, and supporting accessory uses. The permitted uses in such a district would be of the type and design that would provide a buffer between heavier commercial uses and residential uses. This new commercial office zone would be utilized in the service districts, and several such locations have been proposed in the land use plans in Chapter 3.

Table 4.18: Fauquier County Projected Dwelling Units

Year	Projected Population	Total Housing Units
1990	48,741*	17,716
2000	59,415	22,800
2010	72,427	28,995

* Actual 199 Census Population

Commercial activity plays an important role in the local economy. The amount of commercial activity in an area is influenced heavily by the strength of the overall market economy as well as the market for the particular activity. There are many factors that control the amount of commercial activity in the County including the national and local economies, local demographics, and the proximity of existing commercial enterprises.

■ PROJECTED INDUSTRIAL LAND USE NEEDS

The Comprehensive Plan has approximately 2,688 acres planned for industrial use; planned industrial uses are provided only in the service districts. The County's existing industrial zoning by category is shown in Figure 4.3. More detailed discussions of the planned commercial growth for service districts

have been included in Chapter 3.

The industrial base is not expanding at the rate envisioned by the 1967 Plan and the following factors are among those responsible. First, Fauquier County is within the Washington metropolitan wage area which is significant in that an industry locating in the County would gain little with respect to personnel costs. Second, there is a relatively small pool of available labor, skilled or unskilled, due to the County's relatively low rate of unemployment. Finally, industrial development is also limited by the absence of central water and sewer lines to serve undeveloped sites.

National standards for determining the amount of industrial land which should be planned to serve a given population range from 0.5 acres/1 00 population (or 244 acres of industrial land) to five acres/ 100 population (which results in 2,440 acres of industrial land). Based on 1 acre/1 00 population, the County would need to provide only 488 acres of industrial zoning for the 1990 population of 48,741, well within the range of the previous standards, as compared with the 1,925 acres currently zoned, which is also within the range of those standards.

As stated in the 1967 Plan, there is no magic to these figures. However, there appears to be adequate land zoned and planned for industrial uses in Fauquier County. The issue remains whether public infrastructure will become available to industrially zoned areas so that they may develop as intended.