



Rural Lands Plan

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8



Overall Intent

- ▶ Protect the County's rural character while growing its rural and agricultural economy to better serve the County's people and protect its heritage





Key Concepts



- Enhance farm economy
- Protect rural character, environmental, cultural and visual resources
- Maintain strict controls over new development in rural areas
- Support appropriate tourism while minimizing impacts –
 - agritourism, ecotourism and heritage tourism



Enhance Farm Economy

Table C.1 Direct and Total Economic Impacts of Virginia Agriculture and Forestry-Related Industries by Locality, Output 2015 (\$ Millions)

Agriculture		Forestry		Agriculture & Forestry	
Direct	Total	Direct	Total	Direct	Total
\$255.8	\$296.6	30.1	39.9	285.9	336.5

54% of county in
ACTIVE FARMLAND
(228,000 acres)

82% FAMILY OWNED!

FAUQUIER DAIRY:

#5

in Virginia

FAUQUIER BEEF:

#8

in Virginia

ECONOMIC IMPACT:

#36

in Virginia

Enhance Farm Economy

- ▶ Continue active support by providing agricultural assistance, community education, marketing strategies and other programs
- ▶ Support the preservation of rural land base for agriculture through land use taxation, PDRs, conservation easements, sliding scale zoning, non-common open space
- ▶ Utilize “Home Grown” logo branding to implement signage program building awareness of Fauquier as an agricultural community
- ▶ Continue education and training programs through schools and Fauquier Education Farm
- ▶ Promote the Farm Link Program



Enhance Farm Economy

- ▶ On-Farm Value Added Activities
 - ▶ Allow range of on-farm uses on working farms
 - ▶ Streamline permit and approval processes, support in application filing
 - ▶ Continue to promote direct marketing efforts
- ▶ Wayside Stands
 - ▶ Evaluate current limiting zoning requirements
- ▶ Equipment and Services
 - ▶ Encourage businesses such as equipment sales, rental and repair, veterinary services, product storage
 - ▶ Promote cooperative infrastructure such as cold storage, processing and equipment co-ops, meat and produce processing, with standards

Enhance Farm Economy

- Aggregation Facilities
 - Explore appropriately scaled collection and distribution facilities, with standards
- Equine and Other Animal Activities
 - Support strong equine and animal-related activities while managing potential environmental impacts
- Transportation
 - Movement of farm equipment



Rank 3rd
among VA counties
for revenue from
sale of horses

Protect Environmental, Cultural and Visual Resources

► Viewshed Protection

- Analyze and designate primary viewshed corridors
- Maintain scenic quality of current traditional form and settlement patterns
- Preserve open space resources during development process



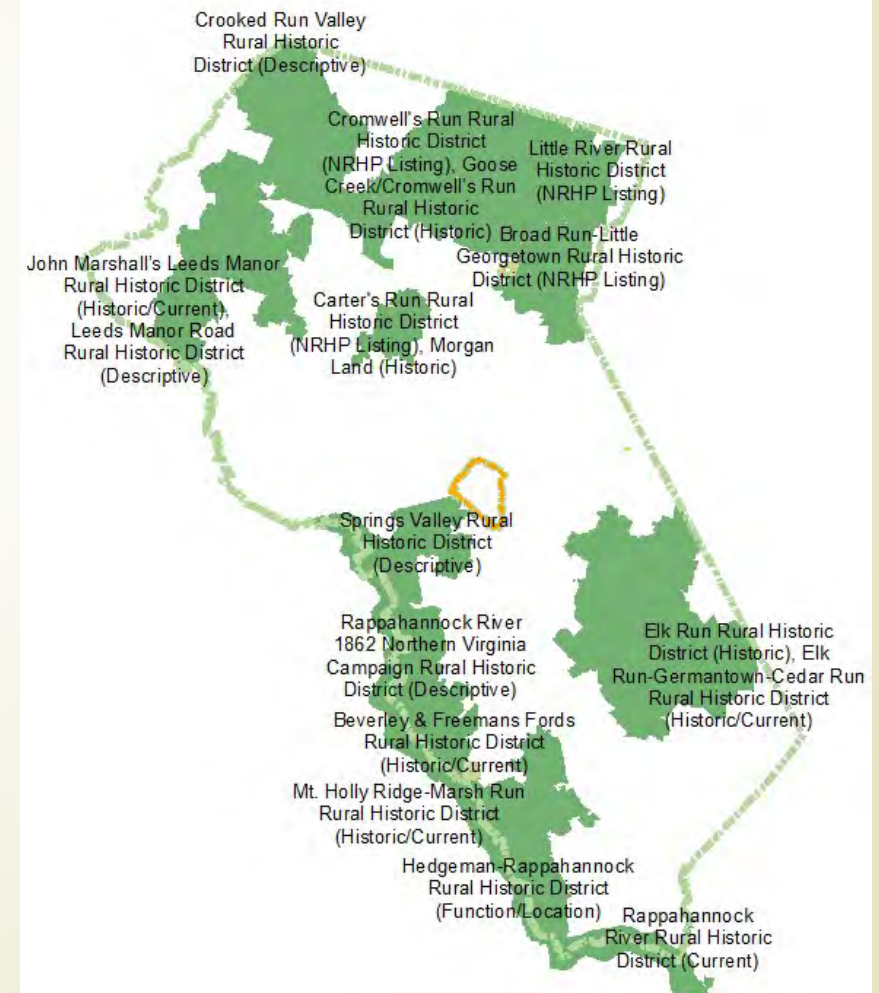
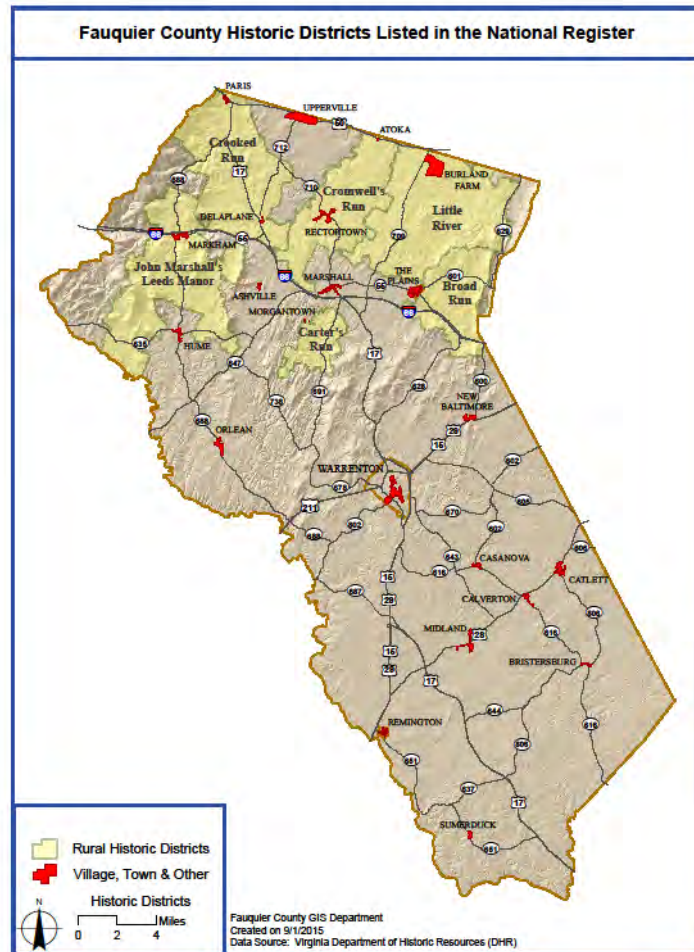
Protect Environmental, Cultural and Visual Resources

➤ Rural Historic Resources

- Continue inventory of historic and cultural resources
- Evaluate defining characteristics in each rural historic district and explore site planning and design controls
- Consider potential for establishing highway corridor overlays in rural historic districts establishing standards to protect key design elements



Protect Environmental, Cultural and Visual Resources





Protect Environmental, Cultural and Visual Resources

- ▶ Water Resources and Groundwater Protection
 - ▶ Support efforts to improved water quality in streams
 - ▶ Monitor the impact of groundwater withdrawals and aquifer recharge
 - ▶ Support programs for BMPs around wellheads and water sources
 - ▶ Develop wellhead protection standards
 - ▶ Locate new public water supply wells outside of development areas
 - ▶ Support rainwater harvesting
 - ▶ Identify opportunities for impounded water



Protect Environmental, Cultural and Visual Resources

► Septic and Wastewater Management

- Study impact of alternative treatment systems on groundwater quality
- Encourage development of environmentally compatible alternative or communal systems to address failing septic systems
- Evaluate linkages between impaired streams and adjacent failing septic to prioritize where alternative systems may be most beneficial to addressing water quality issues
- Support legislation for disclosure to home buyers of alternative systems

► Dark Sky Protection

- Support and strengthen standards to reduce light pollution caused by uplighting, excessive lighting, glare and light trespass
- With community groups, educate community on value of the dark sky and technical lighting topics.

Maintain Strict Control Over New Development in Rural Areas

- Maintain sliding scale density and non-common open space, and hydrogeologic testing to protect character, integrity and agricultural potential
- Develop standards for design and layout of non-common open space
- Encourage connectivity of non-common open space among adjacent parcels to maintain blocks of land for its future agricultural potential
- Develop design manual on good site planning and design for small subdivisions



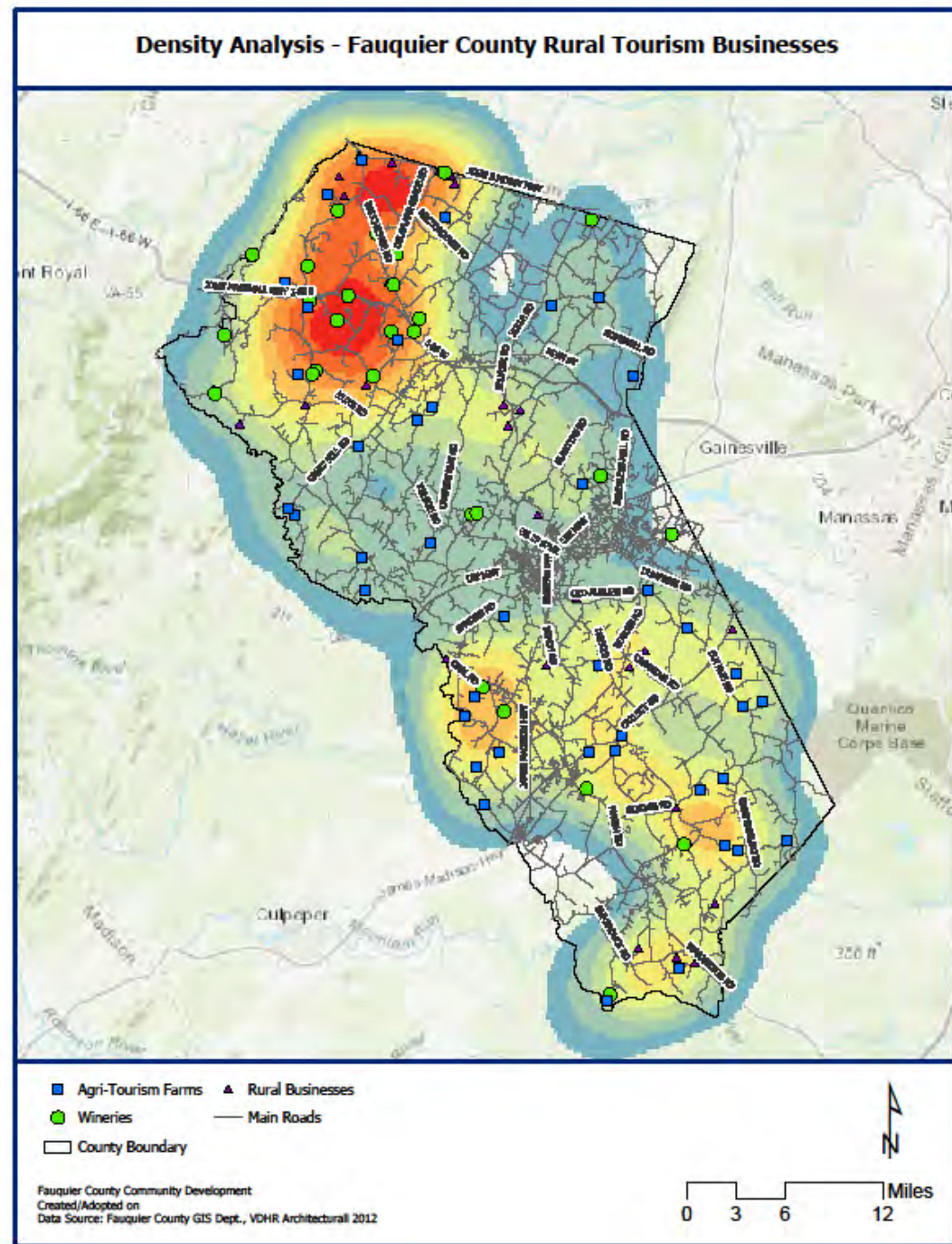
Support Appropriate Tourism While Minimizing Impacts

Agritourism
Ecotourism
Heritage Tourism



Economic Impact	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change
Employment	1,702	1,685	1,715	1,782	1,836	8.0%
Expenditures	\$160 million	\$156 million	\$162 million	\$168 million	\$174 million	8.8%
Local Tax Receipts	\$2.6 million	\$2.6 million	\$2.7 million	\$2.8 million	\$3.0 million	15.4%
Payroll	\$30.2 million	\$30.1 million	\$31.1 million	\$33.0 million	\$34.9 million	15.6%
State Tax Receipts	\$7.4 million	\$7.2 million	\$7.6 million	\$8.1 million	\$8.5 million	14.9%

Rural Tourism Businesses



Support Appropriate Tourism While Minimizing Impacts

- ▶ Protect historic, cultural and natural resource based tourism activities and assets, and support the wine trail, farm tours, interpreted battlefield site and similar opportunities
- ▶ Rural tourism enterprises should support activities that derive value from the resources on the property – historic structure, agriculture
- ▶ Tourism activities should be of appropriate size considering the infrastructure of the rural area, not obstruct views of significant features
- ▶ Event facilities should enhance the historic and agricultural nature of the County and contribute to their preservation and enhancement



Support Appropriate Tourism While Minimizing Impacts – Agritourism

- Review existing regulations to minimize impediments to agritourism business and impacts onto adjoining properties/community
- Consider allowing larger farm markets by SE, while maintaining focus on locally produced products
- Limit agritourism enterprises to operating farms with a defined minimum of land in cultivation



Support Appropriate Tourism While Minimizing Impacts – Ecotourism

- Identify potential assets that could be developed to support the ecotourism industry
- Facilitate public accessibility to recreational activities by enhancing opportunities on County parkland near natural assets
- Encourage recreational uses on the Rappahannock
- Identify appropriate areas where public access would support these recreational uses
- Support ecotourism through partnerships with state and federal lands to create compatible and ecologically sound tourism opportunities



Support Appropriate Tourism While Minimizing Impacts – Heritage Tourism

- ▶ Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures in appropriate locations
- ▶ Explore strategies to encourage adaptive reuse for cottage industries, artist and craftsman residences
- ▶ Build relationships to support heritage/cultural tourism opportunities in the County
- ▶ Encourage rural hospitality businesses such as bed and breakfast and country inns of limited size and scale, preserving rural character and minimizing impacts while offering services to support rural tourism



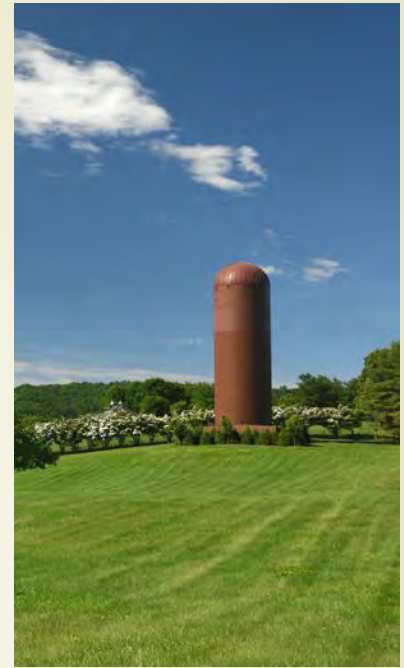
Wineries, Breweries, Distilleries, Cideries

- ▶ Support wineries, cideries, distilleries and farm breweries as part of agricultural support activities
- ▶ Ensure such activities are truly compatible with the local farm economy and need a rural location to be successful
- ▶ Consider approaches to limit the proximity of “events-oriented” wineries to one another, exploring road, neighborhood and other impacts
- ▶ Develop consistent regulations for all forms of alcohol-related events
- ▶ Consider scaling the number/size of events to the amount of acreage in cultivation



Other Rural Business

- Commercial uses should generally be directed to towns and service districts
- Continue supporting expansion of broadband while managing visual impacts of cell towers
- Continue to promote the County's enterprise centers for fledgling home businesses
- Ensure contractor and vehicle-oriented home businesses minimize visual and other impacts
- Consider small scale supportive uses in rural settlements, such as "country" stores, small business offices, day care, plumbing services



Vision

Fauquier County honors and protects its natural and cultural resources, agricultural heritage and rural landscape while building a sustainable rural economy

