

## 1. Introduction

Albemarle County has a longstanding commitment to growth management. Since the adoption of the first Comprehensive Plan in 1971, County policy has been to direct growth into the 11 designated Development Areas, as shown in Figure 1.1. Directing this growth into the Development Areas conserves the balance of the County as Rural Areas and enables the County to protect the agricultural and scenic resources found in those Rural Areas.

The County recognizes the Development Areas as places where a variety of land uses, facilities, and services exist and are planned to support the County's future growth. Of the County's 726 square miles, only 35—or about 5 percent—are included in the Development Areas. Planning efforts channel growth into these Development Areas in order to facilitate economical service delivery and to promote neighborhood-style development as the preferred design.

In 2001, the County adopted the Neighborhood Model to guide the form of development. The Neighborhood Model recommends that both new development and redevelopment in the Development Areas follow these 12 principles:

1. Pedestrian Orientation
2. Neighborhood Friendly Streets and Paths
3. Interconnected Streets and Transportation Networks
4. Parks and Open Space
5. Neighborhood Centers
6. Buildings and Spaces of Human Scale
7. Relegated Parking
8. Mixture of Uses
9. Mixture of Housing Types and Affordability
10. Redevelopment
11. Site Planning that Respects Terrain
12. Clear Boundaries with the Rural Areas

The Neighborhood Model also recommends that a master plan be prepared for each of the County's 11 Development Areas. Further discussion of the Neighborhood Model can be found in the Land Use Plan Section of the Comprehensive Plan (page 204).

### The Places29 Master Plan

The Master Plan covers the four Development Areas north of the City of Charlottesville: Neighborhood 1, Neighborhood 2, the Community of Hollymead, and the Community of Piney Mountain, as shown in Figure 1.2. This Master Plan is an adopted component of the Land Use section of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

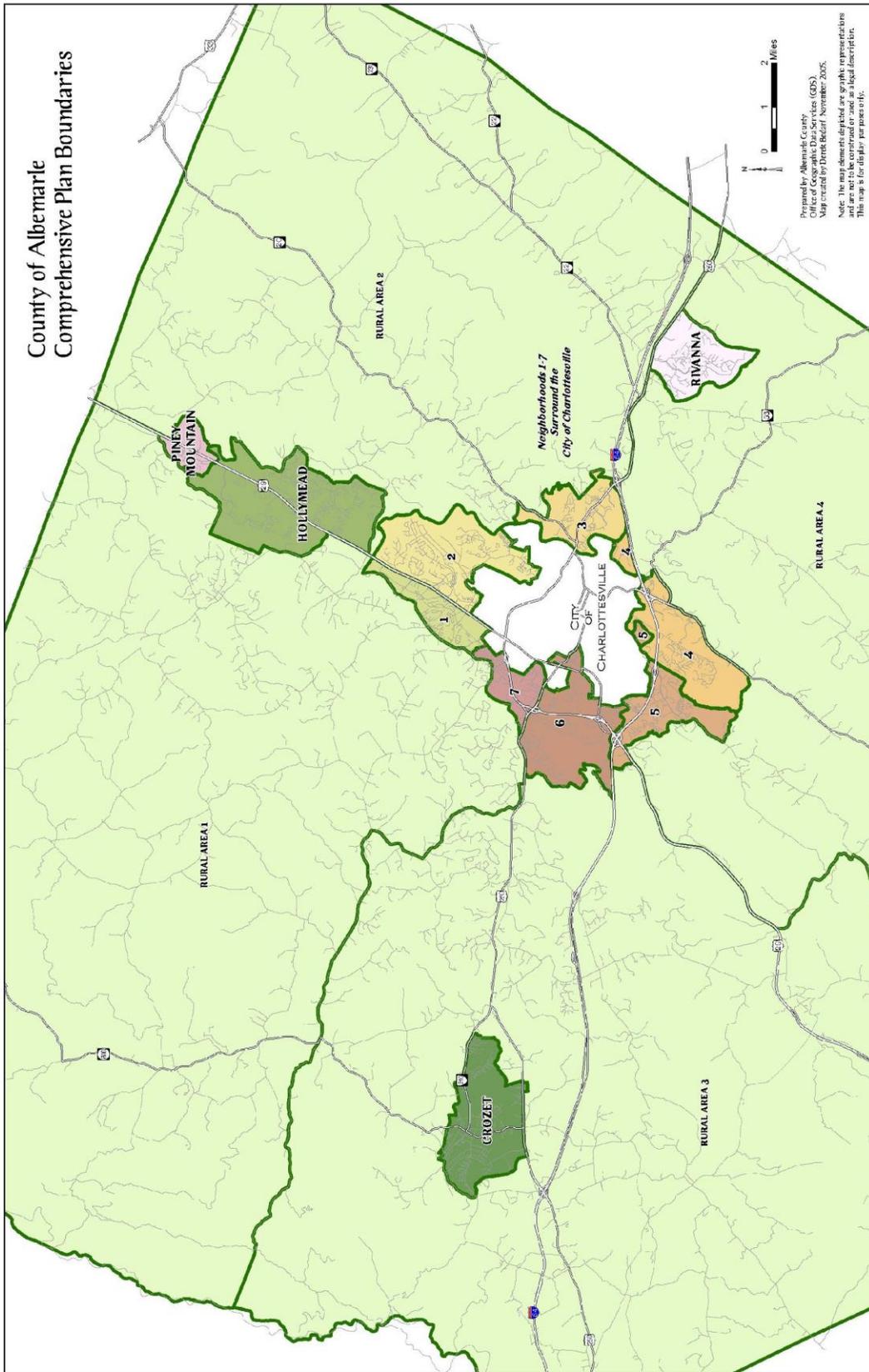


Figure 1.1. Albemarle County's eleven Development Areas.



## **The Places29 Vision and Timeframe**

The Master Plan guides development of the Places29 area by setting forth a vision of the desired ultimate future condition for the area. There is no timeframe for the vision; in fact it may be decades before the area builds out in fulfillment of it.

However, to implement specific Plan recommendations, such as the recommended transportation improvements and community facilities, the plan relies on a 20-year planning horizon. This 20-year period is based, in part, on the longest realistic population projections available to the County. A 20-year period is also consistent with state requirements, the County's Comprehensive Plan, and established planning practice. The Master Plan includes an implementation program that groups recommendations into those that will begin during the first five years, those that will begin during the second five years, and those that will begin during the second ten years of the 20-year implementation timeframe.

The Future Land Use Map is based on the very long-term vision of the community's future, setting out possibilities that may not be realized until decades after the plan is adopted—in some cases, well beyond the original 20-year timeframe. The Future Land Use Map shows how the area ultimately should develop, recognizing that some elements of the plan will be implemented many years in the future. The timing of these elements depends on how market demands and other circumstances influence the pace of development.

## **Implementation of the Places29 Master Plan**

The Master Plan's implementation program involves a variety of public and private sector groups and sets priorities so the Plan can evolve in a logical and sequential fashion. Some of these recommendations may include new or expanded community facilities and services, changes to regulations, new or expanded utilities, different types of open space and recreational opportunities, and transportation connections throughout the community that could take the form of roads, sidewalks, or trails. The implementation program will be used as a general guide to determine when and in what order the different plan elements will be realized. It is important to recognize that these improvements and facilities would be needed whether there was a Places29 Master Plan or not. The Plan provides the organization and coordination that will help ensure the improvements and facilities are ready when they are needed.

Implementation of the recommendations in this Master Plan will take place in several different forms: through County capital expenditures, public-private partnerships, land use decisions, private sector investments, community initiatives, and programs and services provided by the County. It is also important to recognize that implementation of this Plan begins during a period of fiscal difficulty and restricted funding for many of the projects needed to support existing, approved, and expected future growth in the Places29 area.

Given the limited resources available at the time of plan adoption, the County has identified four (4) transportation improvement projects that are essential to move forward on over the next five years. These projects are:

1. Design and construct improvements to US 29 from Hydraulic Road to the 250 Bypass and pursue sources of funding for construction of Hillsdale Drive Extended (both projects are in the City)

2. Design/engineering for the widening of US 29 from 4 to 6 lanes between Polo Grounds Road and Towncenter Drive
3. Design of Berkmar Drive Extended, including the bridge over the South Fork of the Rivanna River
4. Expansion of transit service (including hours of operation, headways, extension of service to unserved areas, and supporting infrastructure, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and shelters)

It should be noted that all of the transportation improvements recommended in this Plan are considered necessary, based on the latest traffic modeling, in order to maintain and improve the flow of traffic through the Places29 area over the 20 years of Plan implementation. With each five-year Plan update, the need for these improvements will be reevaluated through an update of the transportation modeling. The focus of Plan implementation will be on the projects in the first five years, as well as the “Ongoing” projects.

### **Rio29 Small Area Plan**

At the time of its adoption, a High Priority Implementation Project in Places29 was to “prepare a Small Area Plan for the area around the intersection of Rio Road and US 29” (see Implementation Chapter pg 8-11, and listed project #18). This Small Area Plan has subsequently been completed, and on December 12, 2018 the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the Rio29 Small Area Plan as an addendum to the Places29 Master Plan. As such, the Rio29 Small Area Plan is an update to the Places29 Master Plan and replaces the original Places29 recommendations for the area within the boundary of the Small Area Plan, as depicted in the addendum and noted on the Places29 maps on the following pages.

### **Organization of This Master Plan**

Following this introductory chapter, the Master Plan continues with the **Vision and Guiding Principles** presented in **Chapter 2**.

**Chapter 3, Existing Conditions and Future Trends**, presents the background information on demographics and projections that form the foundation of the Master Plan. It describes current land use patterns and the current status of the transportation network.

In **Chapter 4, Future Land Use Plan and Transportation Network**, the land use designations are defined, integrated with the transportation network, and shown on the Future Land Use Map. The role of Parks & Green Systems is explained and related to the map. The chapter continues with a description of the future transportation network and the development capacity that results from the land uses and transportation linkage.

**Chapter 5, Place Types**, introduces the concepts of Neighborhoods, Centers, and areas around Centers that are used throughout this Plan.

**Chapter 6, Community Facilities and Services**, describes the current status of schools, libraries, water and sewer, parks, utilities, and other facilities, and how they will be provided to support the Northern Development Areas.

**Chapter 7, Design Guidelines for the Places29 Area**, provides direction for the appearance of the Entrance Corridors and for boundary conditions.

**Chapter 8, Implementation**, outlines how this Master Plan will be carried out. This chapter addresses implementation strategies and priorities for the provision of needed infrastructure over the Master Plan’s 20-year timeframe. It concludes with a List of Implementation Projects that serves as a master list of those projects needed to support development in the Places29 area.

**Appendix 1, Glossary of Terms Used in the Master Plan** will include definitions of planning terms and any other terms needed to understand the Plan.

**Appendix 2, Implementation Project Descriptions** is a list describing each of the improvements included in the List of Implementation Projects in Chapter 8. The additional information about each improvement will enable readers of the plan to understand what each improvement is and how it differs from others with similar names or locations.

**Appendix 3, Roadway Cross Sections** shows road cross sections for each segment of US 29, for boulevards/four-lane roads, and for avenues/two-lane roads.

The documents listed below are incorporated into this Master Plan by reference and are available separately:

**Appendix 4, The Access Management Report for US 29** (Transportation Study Technical Memo 7), dated May 25, 2007.

**Appendix 5, The US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study Final Report**, dated August 18, 2008.

**Appendix 6, 29H250 Phase 2 Report, Draft**, prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, dated September 15, 2004.

The report, *Intersections Study*, prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, dated May 2003, was also used in the development of this Master Plan.

## Two Important Notes

### Places29 and the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study

The Master Plan is the result of a public process and technical work, which were undertaken in combination with the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study. The Master Plan and transportation study were collectively known as “Places29” during the planning process. Work on the US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study was jointly sponsored by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Albemarle County, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), and the City of Charlottesville. The text incorporated in the Places29 logo, “Places29: Creating and Connecting Communities in Northern Albemarle” was chosen to emphasize the importance of linking transportation and land use planning in shaping the future of the Northern Development Areas. Places29 also recognizes that US 29 is a Highway of National Significance and plays an important role as a major regional and national travel corridor. The US 29 North Corridor Transportation Study is based on and incorporates the 29H250 Studies (Phases 1 and 2). These two studies were conducted by the same partners and focused on similar multimodal goals for the areas around the US 29, Hydraulic Road, and US 250 intersections. The 29H250 studies are incorporated by reference into this Master Plan (and are available separately from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission).

## Map Format

Most of the maps included in the Master Plan do not use the standard orientation in which North is at the top of the page. Instead, because of the shape and size of the Master Plan area, maps in this document have **North to the right**. In other words, when the entire Plan area is shown on a single page, the City of Charlottesville is to the left and Greene County is to the right.

## How to Use the Maps and Tables in this Master Plan

The Future Land Use Map and Parks & Green Systems Map should be used to understand the desired community structure for the Places29 area. Together with the Land Use Tables, the maps provide the information needed to determine what land use designations and densities/intensities are recommended in a given location. Both the maps and the tables give County staff, developers, property owners, elected officials, and the public the information to determine land uses and intensities by following three steps:

**Step 1:** Use the Future Land Use Map to determine:

1. The Land Use designation assigned to a specific property
2. Whether the property is located in a Center, in the area around a Center, or in the Uptown. If the property is located in a Center, the type of Center (Neighborhood Service, Community, or Destination) also needs to be noted.

**Step 2:** Use the appropriate Land Use Table to determine which primary and secondary land uses are recommended within a given Land Use designation. Use Table LU1 for property located in Centers and the Uptown and Table LU2 for property ***in areas around Centers***. In some cases, certain primary or secondary uses may only be recommended for properties larger than a certain size. Other conditions may include maximum sizes (in square feet) for a use or building footprint.

To use Land Use Table 1 (for property located ***in*** Centers), locate the type of Center across the top of the table. Then, look for the desired use on the left hand side of the table. The information in the box at the intersection of the appropriate column and row gives the requirements for the type of use in that Center type.

To use Land Use Table 2 (for property located ***in areas around*** Centers), locate the land use designation across the top of the table. Then, look for the desired use on the left hand side of the table. The information in the box at the intersection of the column and row gives the requirements for that type of use in that land use designation.

On the Land Use tables, the term “by exception” means that a larger building footprint or single land use might be supported for one of the Centers or areas around a Center if the larger building or use will fulfill the goals of the Master Plan and the Neighborhood Model, including walkability, compact development, interconnected streets, block and lot sizes, and so on. The decision on whether to allow a larger footprint building or allow other changes to building form or use will be made as part of the rezoning process; property owners seeking to rezone will need to include the request for larger footprint buildings in their application narratives and concept/application plans.

**Step 3:** Refer to the Parks & Green Systems Map to determine whether an additional open space may be required on or near the subject property. Whether an additional open space will be required as part of development on the subject property depends on the size of the individual property or overall project and the proximity of the property to a mixed-use center.

The Parks & Green Systems Map also provides information about stream buffers, areas of steep slopes, 100-year floodplains, and existing or proposed Greenways, bicycle facilities, and trails that may be recommended for the property.

After completing the steps above, the applicant should refer to Chapter 7, Design Guidelines for the Places29 Area to determine what other standards and guidelines, if any, apply to the site design and other physical aspects of developing the property.

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