



County of Albemarle
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Albemarle County Planning Commission

FROM: Long-Range Planning Team, Albemarle County Planning Division

RE: May 24, 2022 Planning Commission Work Session – Land Use Buildout Analysis Initial Findings

In November 2021, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to begin work on the Comprehensive Plan Update: Albemarle County 2044 (AC44), in accordance with the Project Goals and Phasing Plan (Attachment A). The first phase of AC44 is 'Plan for Growth', which is focused on a review and update to the County's Growth Management Policy. The Growth Management Policy comes from the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The current policy directs new residential and commercial growth to the designated Development Areas, which currently cover about 5% of the County's land area.

One element of the AC44 Phase 1 work is to evaluate the current Development Areas to establish a baseline understanding of their potential capacity to accommodate future growth. Staff has been working with a consultant team from Kimley-Horn and Associates to conduct a Land Use Buildout Analysis to understand the theoretical buildout potential of the Development Areas, with a focus on future land use designations.

Additionally, the 2015 Comprehensive Plan has the following relevant recommendations for the Land Use Buildout Analysis (referred to as the 'capacity analysis'):

- Chapter 8 Objective 4: Use Development Area land efficiently to prevent premature expansion of the Development Areas.
- Chapter 8 Strategy 4a: Continue to monitor building activity in both the Development Areas and the Rural Area to gain information on the rate of residential and non-residential development in the County.
- Chapter 8 Strategy 4b: Update the capacity analysis every two years to ensure adequate residential land exists to meet new housing needs.

The Land Use Buildout Analysis is designed to establish an understanding of the County's 20-year population growth projections (and the associated needs for new housing, businesses, and services) compared with the maximum theoretical buildout potential of land within the County's designated Development Areas. The Analysis is based on the Comprehensive Plan's future land use designations for Development Area parcels (found within the Development Area Master Plans). The analysis utilizes assumptions based on existing conditions, current trends, and historical development patterns within the County to estimate buildout totals for each of five real estate categories: residential, retail, office, industrial, and hotel. The approved and proposed residential development projects, or the 'development pipeline' are also included in the residential buildout estimates.

A summary of the methodology, assumptions, and initial findings from the Land Use Buildout Analysis are provided in Attachment B. The attachment also summarizes some of the limitations of the findings and some of the current challenges with developing a property to its maximum buildout potential based on a property's future land use designation.

Staff will be seeking input from the community and stakeholders on the study's findings to further supplement this analysis. Following community input and considerations related to equity and climate action, the final analysis will be used in the evaluation of and possible update to the County's Growth Management Policy.

Attachments:

A - [AC44 Phasing Plan & Goals](#)

B - [Land Use Buildout Analysis - Summary Initial Findings](#)