



Cumberland County Comprehensive Plan Vision, Goals & Objectives

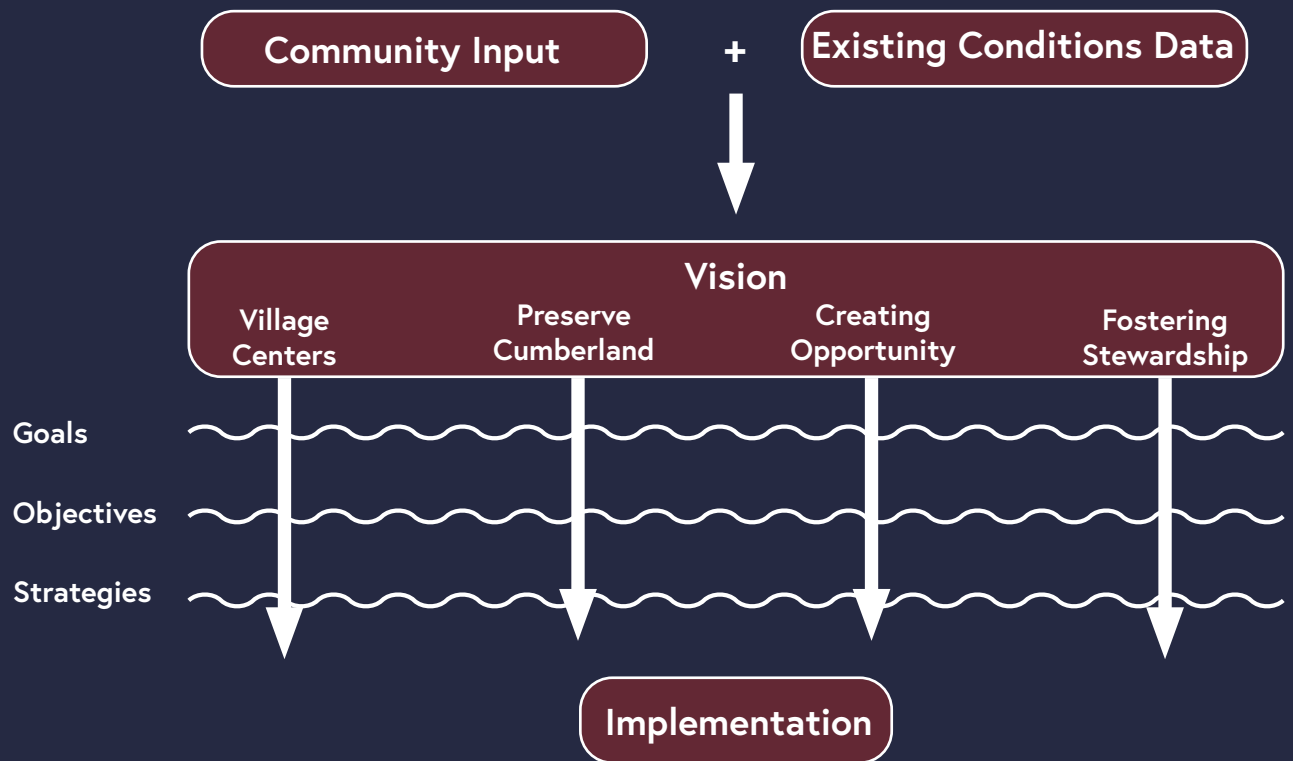
October 16, 2023

Page intentionally left blank.

Cumberland County Vision Statement

*“To ensure safety, opportunity,
and prosperity for all residents
while respecting and preserving
the rural, historical, and
agricultural heritage of
Cumberland County.”*

Plan Structure



The Plan + The Vision for Cumberland County

The Draft Vision Statement for Cumberland County and its accompanying goals, objectives, and strategies are presented in this document. These words set the tone and direction of the plan and help with the organization for the rest of the chapters. This document is the first step towards drafting the full plan.

The vision statement is an important piece of the comprehensive plan, derived from the community's expressed needs and desires. It sets the tone and direction of the document by outlining the high level aspiration the County wishes to achieve. The vision statement speaks to the community's desire to create opportunities while preserving its agricultural heritage. The plan will seek an increased effort to promote quality economic development, new public spaces, and other amenities that will make life in the County's Villages more safe, enjoyable, and prosperous.

Drafting the Plan + Establishing a Vision

The Comprehensive Plan update is based on both empirical data and community visioning. The Existing Conditions Report is a collection of data and analysis that sets the foundation for drafting the plan document. Public engagement is also solicited and analyzed during this time to provide more information. From this, the plan is drafted directly in response to both the community's desires and what the Existing Conditions report reveals. The Draft Vision and its accompanying goals, objectives, and strategies are at the beginning of the Comprehensive Plan document. These words set the tone and direction of the plan and help with the organization for the rest of the plan's chapters.

Turning the Vision into Reality: Inspiring Pride in Cumberland

The Plan features a strong vision for the future of Cumberland County. The vision itself is reflective of the community's desires and sets the course for the future. Beneath the vision are four thematic areas: Village Centers, Preserve Cumberland, Creating Opportunity, and Stewardship. These topics explain how Cumberland will reach and implement its vision. The goal's objectives and strategies will explain how it will be achieved.

One repeatedly mentioned fact about the County was that there are three distinct areas. The area north of Farmville considers itself part of the Town. The center of the County considers the Cumberland court house area to be their main hub. In the northern portion of the County, the Cartersville community has a strong local identity. All areas of the County head off in their respective direction for shopping, recreation, or employment often outside of Cumberland itself.

This vision and the rest of the Comprehensive Plan seek to promote the County's identity as a unifying force while preserving the rural character and uplifting the community's village centers as areas for opportunity and growth. Through this, the plan is to inspire pride in the County and make it known as a wonderful place to live.

Page intentionally left blank.

Table of Contents

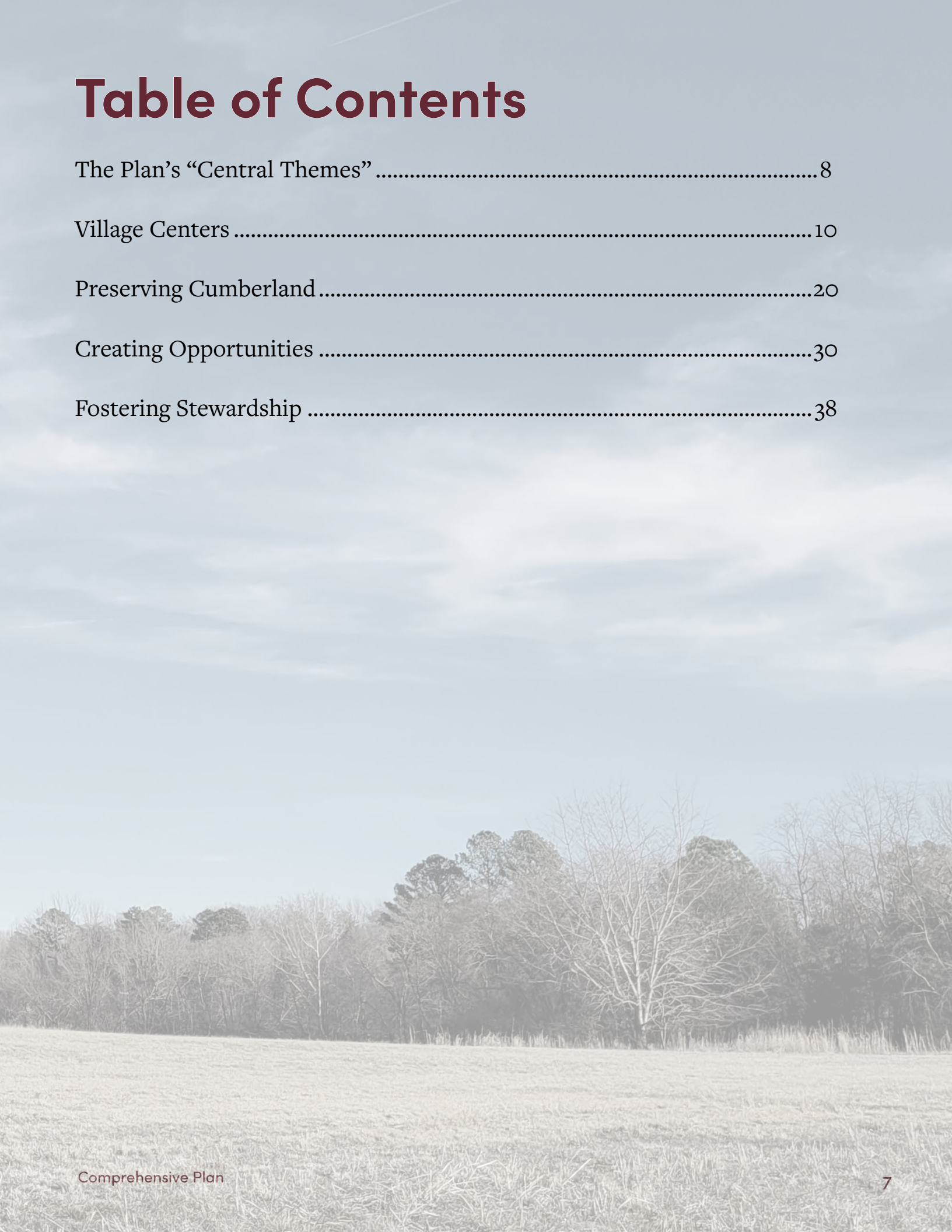
The Plan’s “Central Themes”8

Village Centers10

Preserving Cumberland20

Creating Opportunities30

Fostering Stewardship38

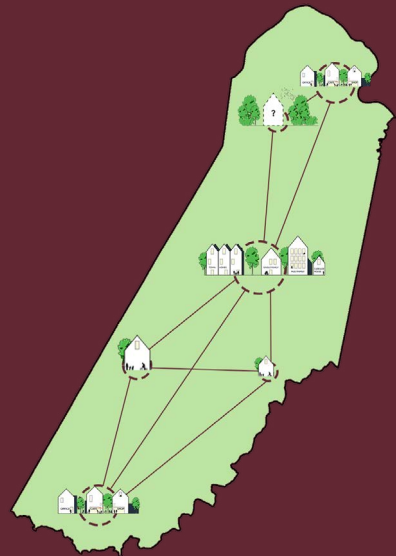


“Central Themes”

The Comprehensive Plan’s many objectives and strategies found underlying the Vision statement will be organized under four central themes to help explain how the Plan seeks to improve quality of life in Cumberland County.

Village Centers

Directing growth to central village centers will help create local environments for Cumberland’s citizens to thrive in. Rather than allowing development to sprawl across the County and encroach on agricultural areas, high quality development can be maintained in specified village centers. These village centers include the Randolph area, north of Randolph, the Cartersville area in the north of the County, Cobbs Creek Reservoir area also in the north of the County, identified “Rural Crossroads” throughout the County, and Cumberland’s namesake and central court house area.



Preserve Cumberland

Cumberland is fortunate to not have the issues many other localities face due to its strong rural preservation. These objectives focus on preserving the quality of the County’s soil, air, and water, and maintaining the rural character and agricultural economies. Achieving these goals will make Cumberland an excellent place to live for future generations.



Creating Opportunities

All localities need opportunities for their community. Whether it's finding housing, a new job, a place to start a business, everyone needs opportunities to make a life for themselves. These goals will provide Cumberland with the policy framework to attract and retain businesses, provide new employment, or allow families to find an affordable place to live. Over time, this will make the County stronger and more competitive amongst its neighbors.

Fostering Stewardship

Cumberland County is a special place with a strong sense of community. Everyone may not agree on the ways to resolve an issue, but they do want to live in a prosperous and successful County. The objectives under this theme help the County provide for great services and amenities that will build an even stronger sense of community and allow for all members to care and feel cared about into the future.



Village Centers

Cumberland will be home to vibrant “village” communities, where residents and visitors can dine, shop, and gather. These “nodes of development” provide centralized access to housing, commerce, or amenities while protecting the County’s rural countryside from development that would take the land out of agricultural use. Together, they work to improve Cumberland’s overall sense of county-wide identity while allowing for local distinction. By constraining development primarily to the village center, the County can more efficiently target where transportation improvements are needed for safety and begin focusing on creating a network to facilitate movement between them. The designated village centers are:

Cumberland (Court House)

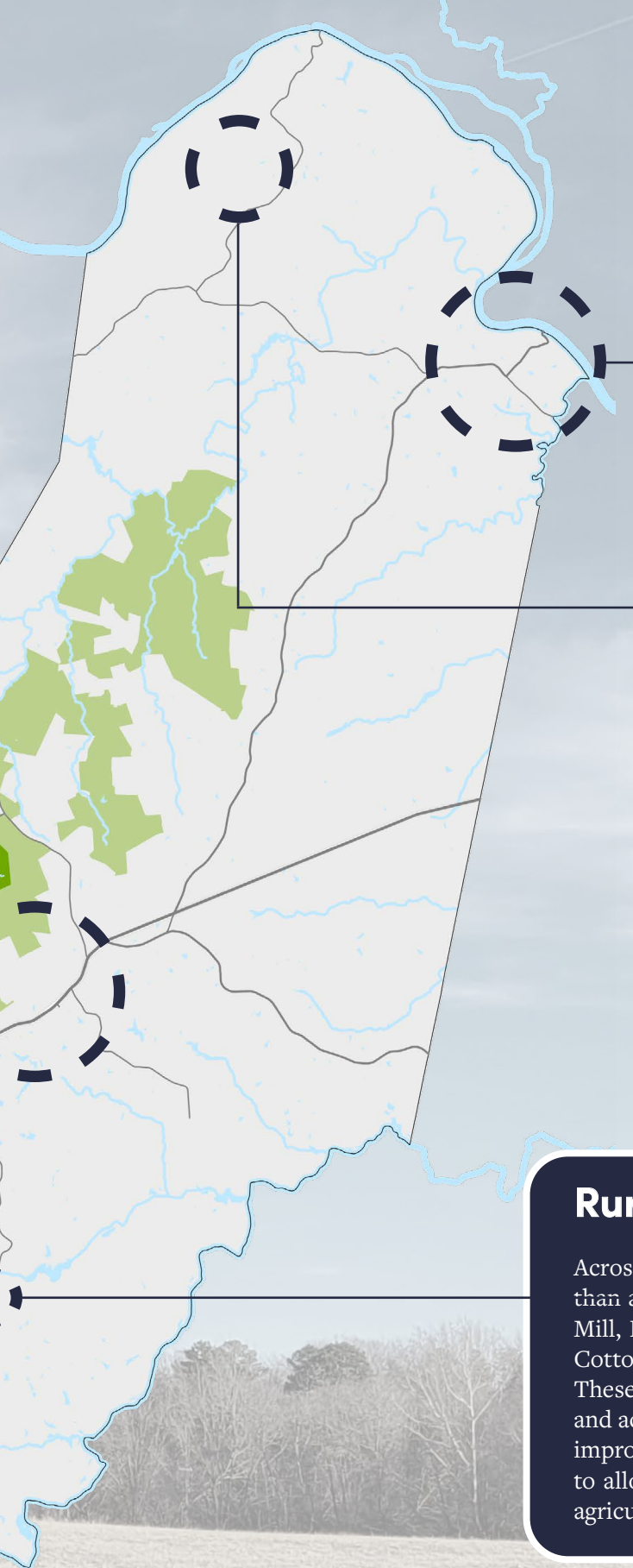
This is the County’s most significant growth center. As the County seat, namesake, and historic heart of the County, the Cumberland court house area provides a targeted area for new mixed, commercial, and residential growth with amenity-filled public spaces for the community to gather.

Randolph

This village center generally encompasses the developed area north of Randolph. The growth in this center should be supportive of development related to its proximity to Randolph while supporting a community with amenities and public space, commercial units, diverse housing options, and comfortable pedestrian and alternative transportation connections to the Town of Farmville.



Cumberland County



Cartersville

This village center on Cumberland County's northern end has a strong local identity, historic architecture, and a prominent place along the James River. While some growth is anticipated here to add commercial and residential options, it is expected to be less dense than the other village centers.

Cobbs Creek Reservoir

While currently under development, the Cobbs Creek Reservoir will be a potential catalyst for new development and attract many visitors. Growth in this area will be oriented towards keeping new construction near the reservoir itself.

Rural Crossroads

Across all of Cumberland, residents of the County live no further than a stones throw from a nearby named "Rural Crossroad." Trent's Mill, Hatcher, Hamilton, Whiteville, Ashby, Stoddert, Raines Tavern, Cotton Town, or Angola, are all examples of this type of village center. These village centers are very targeted to the crossroads they are along and accommodate smaller scale stores or new housing units that help improve quality of life across Cumberland. They are not intended to allow sprawling growth to encroach on the rural countryside and agricultural economy.

Goal 1: Foster Community Identity



Create a united and local sense of identity both in Cumberland as a County and in sub-communities.

Cumberland’s long north to south orientation lends itself to some challenges. It was often mentioned that those living in the northern part of the County will go to Goochland County to shop or participate in events. Those in the central Cumberland area of the County, will often go east to Powhatan to do their shopping. Those in the Randolph area think of themselves as members of the Town of Farmville community. While identifying with multiple places is not a problem, it

appears that Cumberland County’s self-identity needs reinforcement. Cumberland is not its neighbors and may have similar or completely different challenges unique to its residents. The historic name “Cumberland” may be utilized across the country, but there is only one Cumberland County, Virginia. It is a special place with beautiful landscapes and hardworking, compassionate people.

Obj. 1.1 Provide for local event planning in each village center/core

- a. Continue efforts of the Human Services Committee to communicate and provide unified services throughout the County.
- b. Continue to provide County centric marketing with community specific events and programs.

Obj. 1.2 Allow for each village center core to have its own sub-branding beneath the County level hierarchy

- a. Provide incentives and promote the participation in the Cumberland Courthouse Square Historic District Design Guidelines so that the surrounding environment is developed in a style sympathetic and supportive of the historic character of the public buildings.
- b. Promote high quality architectural and site designs that are compatible with the village a proposed project is located in. Encourage cohesive landscaping, signage, and scale of development that are tied to the village’s identity.
- c. Cumberland County to design and install village specific signage along roadways that mimic existing County branding and signage.

Obj. 1.3 Encourage and support cohesive community design

- a. Encourage sidewalks where appropriate.
- b. Seek out alternative transportation funding opportunities to fund, design, and construct sidewalks or other improvements.

Goal 2: Use Land Efficiently



Land will be utilized in pursuit of an optimal potential, including preserving land where it makes sense and developing land where it is conducive to a vibrant community.

Growth should be guided to Cumberland's identified "village centers" of Cumberland Court House, Randolph, Cartersville, Cobbs Creek Reservoir, or limited to one of the County's named "Rural Crossroads," of Raines Tavern, Cottontown, Stoddert, Trent's Mill, Hatcher, Ashby, or Whiteville. Within these village centers, taking cues from "Traditional Neighborhood Design," development should follow compact, mixed-use, and walkable design to accommodate new opportunities for Cumberland's residents and visitors. "Sprawl" development that

erodes the rural landscape and takes away from the County's agricultural heritage outside of the identified village centers should not be approved. Cumberland is in a fortunate position to have avoided "sprawl" development thus far, though the population needs more opportunities for commerce and employment. Compact and mixed-use development also allows for the more efficient delivery of utilities and services, whereas "sprawling" development often cannot pay for the cost of infrastructure required to sustain it over time.

Obj. 2.1 Develop a plan for the Cobb's Creek area, and rezone immediately after plan adoption to stay ahead of development or speculative property acquisition

- a. Coordinate and maximize recreational use of the Cobbs Creek Reservoir with local development creating a self-sufficient community.
- b. Identify and develop utility capabilities and infrastructure.

Obj. 2.2 Develop intentional Small Area Plans for each village center/core

- a. New growth should be targeted to villages and other designated growth areas.
- b. Coordinate plans and policies to guide new development into Designated Growth Areas.
- c. Work to address water and sewer capacity in the court house area and along Route 45.

Obj. 2.3 Provide for open public spaces to socialize or gather around the village center/cores

- a. Identify locations and develop according to the Public Facility and Parks and Recreation Master Plans.
- b. Encourage developers to set land aside for potential public uses as part of proposed development.

Obj. 2.4 Ensure the preservation of natural areas and open space in conjunction with the TND master planning process

- a. Encourage reuse of existing buildings.
- b. Encourage density towards the center of villages and taper to less density at the edges of villages.

Goal 2 continued

Obj. 2.5 Promote growth and Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) within the Cumberland Courthouse Village Development Area

- a. Establish appropriate locations to satisfy Village Development Area developable acreage requirements in the Courthouse Village Development Area for residential and commercial land uses with development densities that promote Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) growth.
- b. Promote a mix of diverse residential types and non-residential land uses that reflect TND planning objectives.
- c. Plan for the phasing of new TND development within the Courthouse development area consistent with anticipated population and employment growth.
- d. Explore financial and other incentives to encourage development within the Village Development Area rather than scattered throughout the outlying agricultural areas.
- e. Evaluate the potential for the Village Development Area to serve as a receiving area for any future Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program established by the County.
- f. Prioritize funding for housing, economic development, public transportation, and infrastructure projects within the Village Development Area.
- g. Develop applicable Overlay Districts for use in implementing traditional neighborhood design.

Obj. 2.6 Encourage and support cohesive community design

- a. Encourage sidewalks where appropriate.
- b. Begin to consider installing public amenities such as street trees, sidewalks, fencing, lighting, and street side furniture.

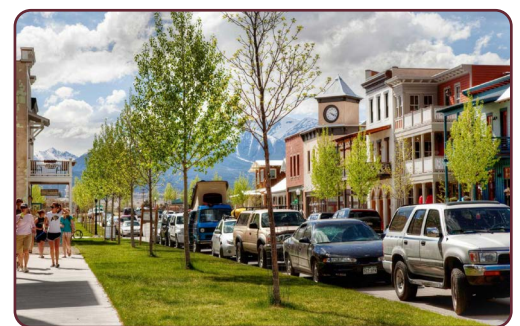
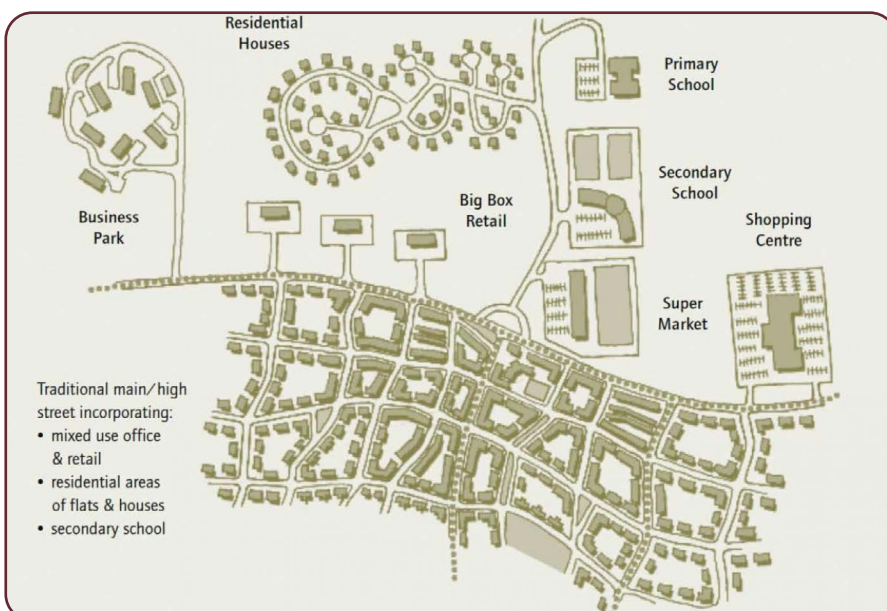


Illustration of Traditional Neighborhood Design vs. Sprawling Development

Source: The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment and the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU)

Goal 3: Create Village Centers



Cumberland's growing nodes will become "Village Centers" for the community with more specific designed plans for public spaces and walkable streets.

Cumberland's growing village centers will be areas where all of the community can come and participate in events, enjoy local parks, or walk around and catch up with neighbors. By encouraging development in concentrated centers, it preserves the surrounding countryside while still providing all of the opportunities that new growth and development brings

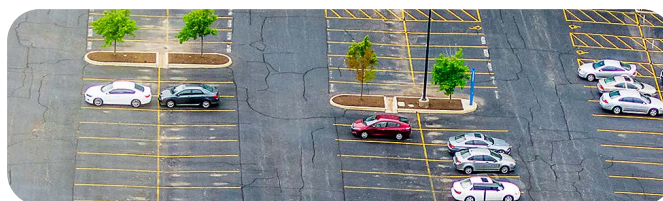
for the local population. This could be new amenities, new businesses, tourism opportunities, re-use of historic buildings, or more. Within the centers the street grid and building design can follow new guidelines that create safer, more walkable, and interesting streets.

Obj. 3.1 Establish a street grid as opportunities become available in each village center/core that provide more residential, commercial, or mixed-use development opportunities

- a. Allow for walking and biking in the core areas with sidewalks/bike lanes. Improve, pedestrian, horse and buggy accommodations and alternative transportation in line with the National Association for City Transportation Officials design guidelines for best practices within the Randolph, Cumberland court house, and Cartersville areas.
- b. Complete the trail connection from the Court House to Bear Creek Lake State Park.

Obj. 3.2 Reduce setbacks and parking requirements in the cores.

- a. Decrease the amount of "negative space" around the core areas – space that primarily serves to separate activities and structures.
- b. Create design guidelines for "big box" stores that encourage better parking lot design and building architecture.
- c. Eliminate and reduce requirements for buffer yards and setbacks in "village center" areas such as Randolph, Cumberland court house, and Cartersville that increase the amount of distance between varying uses. Encourage better spatial organization through the reduction of building setbacks, lot widths, and front and side yards, and the incorporation of smaller lot sizes.
- d. Study parking stock, reduce and reform parking standards. Encourage parking to be located in ways that do not inhibit pedestrian or alternative transportation access to the use, particularly in the "village center" areas.
- e. Amend zoning districts and subdivision ordinance to promote and permit reduced setbacks and parking requirements



Changing parking minimums can support economic development and sustainability.

Photo by eyfoto/iStock/Getty Images Plus, APA

Goal 3 continued

Obj. 3.3 Create new public open spaces in Village Centers, with amenities such as seating areas or play elements.



Play area and seating next to new town homes.

Source: The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), award winning design by Smith Gee Studio.

- a. County should acquire land in the Courthouse area for a public park or square, which can offer passive recreational benefits as well as programmable space for events like a farmers market.
- b. Restore the “Old Jail” building as a County “Welcome Center/Visitors Center.”

Obj. 3.4 Develop small area plans for village centers.

- a. To achieve the vision of the village centers as dense, traditional, walkable areas with a mix of uses, more details need to be worked out. To give these important areas the attention they deserve, a “small area plan” should be created. This process should involve outreach to property owners in the area, and should focus on the mix of uses, the public realm, and architectural details. Small area plans should include details regarding streetscape improvements, desired mix of uses, guidelines for architectural design, and other features that will guide development and County decisions.



A typical street in Bristol, VT. From Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods.

Credit: Richard Amore, CNU

Goal 4: Ensure Safe and Efficient Transportation Choice



Almost everyone in rural areas like Cumberland are reliant on cars to get around. However, not everyone has access to cars, such as younger children, the elderly, and those who cannot afford a car. Improving transportation options and safety for all populations in Cumberland will improve access, improve health, and community safety and security.

Everyone should be able to get around Cumberland County safely. Whether you walk, bicycle, drive a car, or horse and buggy, it should be with convenience and confidence that you will arrive at your destination. When automobile-centered planning became the movement of the last few decades, roads were planned without any accommodation for other modes of

travel. Despite this, many people still use other methods of transportation along rural roads. Ensuring that car travel is managed at safe speeds, intersections are improved, and making land use decisions that target growth can help make Cumberland a more prosperous, enjoyable, and safe place to live or work.

Obj. 4.1 Plan for a County-wide multi-modal transportation system that will effectively serve the current and future needs of Cumberland County

- a. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to achieve the appropriate upgrade of existing unimproved, graded and drained, gravel and soil surfaced roads within Cumberland County.
- b. Seek grant funding for the implementation of special transportation enhancement projects.

Obj. 4.2 Improve opportunities for alternative transportation

- a. Secure funding and create trail from Courthouse to Bear Creek State Park.

Goal 4 continued

Obj. 4.3 Improve opportunities for safe travel by walking, particularly in the Village Centers

- a. Ensure that new development in village centers includes sidewalks.
- b. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to provide lanes or shared use paths in Village Centers for alternative transportation use.
- c. Work with VDOT to reduce speeds in Village Centers.
- d. Research and pursue sources of funding pedestrian and alternative transportation infrastructure.

Obj. 4.4 Work with VDOT to improve safety at key intersections

- a. Work with VDOT, expressing the need for pedestrian and alternative transportation safety across the entire County, even if safe standards are not fully implemented or adopted at the state level.



Extruded curb treatments, like these in Kuna, Idaho, are used in other rural areas to create safe pedestrian walkways without the full cost of sidewalks. Photo by Don Kostelec, APA

Obj. 4.5 Work with local property owners and developers to ensure pedestrian and alternative transportation accommodations are facilitated with new development.

- a. Incorporate pedestrian-friendly road and street designs within new developments.
- b. Reduce subdivision street widths and turning radii at streets intersections, and provide standards for enhanced street landscaping, pedestrian improvements, and pavement design.
- c. Establish connectivity between internal road and pedestrian networks within Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) projects, providing a grid rather than cul-de-sac street pattern.
- d. Promote the interconnection of new TND streets with existing streets and roads.
- e. Explore opportunities for “through-route” easement connections across properties that do not necessarily follow the existing road network, but make travel by walking or biking more convenient.



Above: Examples of locations for continued improved streetscapes and pedestrian-friendly road designs.

Below: Existing road and pedestrian networks in Cumberland County.



Preserve Cumberland

Cumberland preserves its rural character and agricultural economy for future generations, providing farmland, forests, environment, and recreational opportunity. Rural character in the Cumberland is about more than farming or the aesthetic value of open space. It is a mosaic of resources and values, including natural systems, public expenditures, lifestyle choices, local history and culture. Cumberland’s rural character has historically been preserved by the economic value of the land for agricultural use. However, the current interplay between growing nearby populations, diminishing agricultural profits, and the attractiveness of the rural landscape to nearby communities for more affordable housing or lifestyle is creating strong pressures for non-agricultural development. Ultimately, protection of rural character will require “limiting what’s out there.” The amount of development the landscape can accommodate while maintaining its character is directly related to the development’s location, design, and use.

Preserve Rural Character + Economies

The County has done a great job protecting its rural character thus far. This has prevented the development of “sprawling” growth along major roads typical of many other localities both in Virginia and across the country. Preserving arable land has enabled many localities to embrace agriculturally based tourism opportunities including farm-to-table restaurants, wineries and breweries, or other attractive uses for locals and visitors to enjoy. Cumberland is in the beginning of embracing these opportunities and these objectives will ensure that rural areas are preserved and growth is guided to where it makes sense.



Preserve + Protect the Natural Environment

Preserving clean soil, water, and air are all essential for providing for a healthy and high quality of life for Cumberland’s citizens. The objectives and strategies in this chapter outline the steps the County can take to ensure that the environment is protected from pollution and that future generations may enjoy excellent living conditions. While agricultural uses are one of Cumberland’s planning goals, often the use of fertilizers can cause issues with stormwater runoff in local waterways. This is an example of an area where interests need to be balanced using the latest research and standards to protect the County’s prosperity.

Provide Excellent Recreational Assets

Parks, trails, fields, courts, and other recreational amenities are also essential for improving quality of life in Cumberland. These amenities provide every member of the community of all ages with a place to live an active life and stay healthy. They also offer the opportunity to allow residents to enjoy Cumberland's outdoors by improving access to rural settings or waterways. Parks also become social places, providing for a place for neighbors to meet one another and build community and pride in the County that they call home.



Preserving Cumberland for its future generations means many different things, yet together they are all related in making the County a great place to live. Ensuring that Cumberland's water, air, and soils remain protected and clean is important for the community's health. Protecting historic and cultural sites throughout the County is important to continue to educate and share Cumberland's story with new generations. Preventing the loss of the County's agricultural economy and rural countryside maintains the character of the area while also creating growth in targeted locations.

Goal 5: Preserve Rural Character & Economies



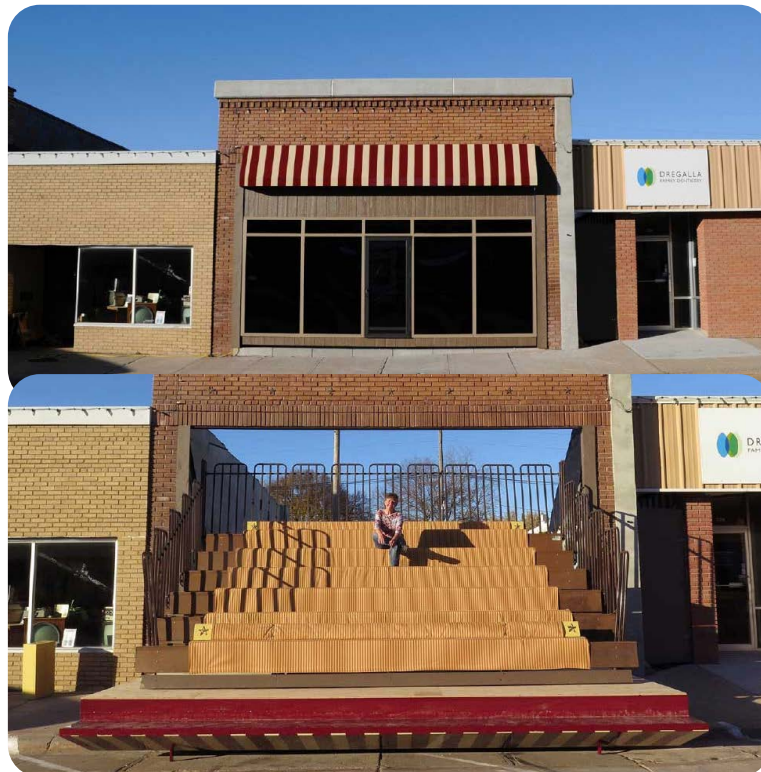
Preserving rural character and economies may help to maintain the unique identity and culture of the county. By encouraging strong local businesses, protecting natural resources, and promoting agri-tourism, the community can begin to sustain itself economically and attract new residents who value a rural lifestyle. These efforts can also help to preserve the land and environment for future generations.

Obj. 5.1 Maintain the rural character of the County through the preservation of Cumberland's scenic, agricultural, and natural resources for the optimal benefit of current and future citizens.

- a. When appropriate, guide residential development to: Minimize visual impact with roadway buffers; include significant open space; plan placement of new buildings; preserve natural features on site; be sensitive to existing topography and land forms; minimal clearing, grading, and impervious surfaces; clustering of building lots.
- b. Preserve open space of scenic, agricultural, and natural significance through the use of federal, state, and local programs.
- c. Provide incentives to encourage development within designated Village Centers.

Obj. 5.2 Encourage the preservation and use of historic resources within the County, including historic sites, churches, cemeteries, homes, and community facilities

- a. Market and support agriculture related businesses (agri-business) as part of the County's tourism efforts.
- b. Focus on developing agri-tourism assets.



Lyons, Nebraska preserved a vacant building on their main street by turning it into a community storefront theatre.

Source: Matthew Mazzotta.,
CNU

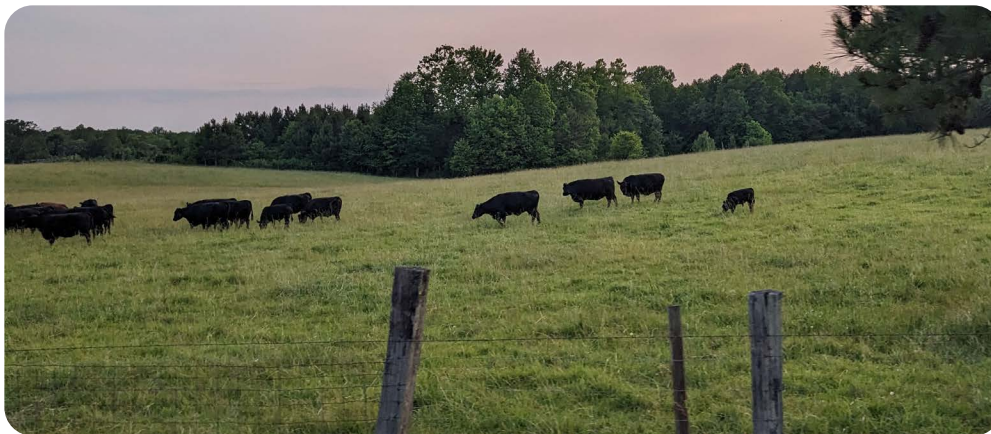
Goal 5 continued

Obj 5.3 Preserve the historic Cumberland court house area along with all of the historic buildings

- a. Permit and promote the use of “pop-up” temporary uses in vacant buildings in the Courthouse area until a permanent use is interested in the location.
- b. Re-develop the “Old Jail” into a County Welcome Center.
- c. Seek grant funding or historical tax credits to assist homeowners in renovating and preserving historic homes.

Obj 5.4 Understand and preserve working agricultural supply chains and support businesses

- a. Support the Cumberland County Agriculture & Producers Initiative.



Local and regional food systems are critical aspects of healthy, resilient, and equitable communities.

Obj. 5.5 Ensure that the character of Route 60 is maintained

- a. Review the Zoning Map and consider recommendations for changing zoning along Route 60.

Obj. 5.6 Amend subdivision ordinance to ensure that new residential development is in keeping with rural character

- a. Amend the subdivision ordinance to add clustering, buffers, open space preservation, and mode choice in new residential development.

Goal 5 continued

Obj. 5.7 Strengthen protections for Cumberland’s agricultural assets through land use and zoning policies, encourage the preservation and expansion of the agricultural economy.

- a. Update the Cumberland County Zoning Ordinance to reflect the Future Land Use Map and land use designations.
- b. Amend zoning ordinance to allow working farms to diversify their income through compatible uses such as farm based sales, agritourism, farm events, and other agricultural enterprises.
- c. Explore the development of new agricultural product opportunities and industries supporting local farming including those relating to processing of agricultural produce, packaging, marketing and transportation.
- d. Protect prime agricultural lands through compliance with state and federal requirements and provide incentives for the implementation of agricultural best management practices.
- e. Strengthen the zoning ordinance to more effectively regulate and limit development in agricultural areas that are incompatible with agricultural interests.
- f. Amend zoning map to establish large lot zoning and conservation areas in appropriate locations.
- g. Review the Zoning Ordinance to allow for “agriculture-adjacent” businesses, such as maintenance, manufacturing, warehousing, or parts stores to be developed.
- h. Promote local agricultural products through the expansion of the county farmers’ market and increased opportunities for the sale of local products within the county.
- i. Support the Cumberland County Agriculture & Producers Initiative.



Volunteers at the Beacon Food Forest in Seattle, which combines aspects of native habitat rehabilitation with edible forest gardening.

Photo by Sandy Pernitz, APA

Goal 5 continued

Obj. 5.8 Explore the feasibility and interest in establishing policy tools within Cumberland County to conserve and protect prime farm and forestlands

[Strategies to be further researched with full draft comprehensive plan]

Obj. 5.9 Assess current incentives for agriculture, horticulture, and forestry land uses and determine how to modernize these measures without compromising County revenue streams.

Obj. 5.10 Connect the public with education and access to share the importance of agriculture to the County.

- a. Strengthen agricultural education and support county-wide.
- b. Collaborate with the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Cumberland County Parks & Recreation, and the Peter Francisco Soil and Water Conservation District to provide event programming and other learning opportunities.

Goal 6: Preserve + Protect the Natural Environment



Preserve the environment in Cumberland by protecting the quality of Cumberland's ground and surface water, soil, and air, effectively managing the County's natural resources for the benefit of current and future citizens.

Obj. 6.1 Consider implementing a variety of mechanisms, programs, and policies to preserve Cumberland's environment

- a. Research and utilize federal, state and local programs to preserve open space of scenic, agricultural, and natural significance.
- b. Create policy and other incentives to encourage development primarily within designated growth areas such as around Cumberland court house, Randolph, and Cartersville. Outside of these areas, strictly limit development.
- c. Work with federal, state, and local agencies to implement nutrient management measures to protect ground and surface waters.
- d. Enact zoning/land use regulations to restrict development in environmentally sensitive areas, including sensitive areas along the James River and Appomattox River.
- e. Work with the Department of Conservation and Recreation to have the James River, where it forms the County's northern border, included in Virginia's Scenic Rivers System.

Goal 6 continued

Obj. 6.2 Enforce existing environmental standards and provide incentives where applicable.

- a. Enforce soil sediment and erosion control and stormwater management regulations to protect surface waters.
- b. Protect rivers and streams through compliance with state forestry requirements and provide incentives for the implementation of agricultural and forestry best management practices.
- c. Provide incentives to encourage regular pumping of septic systems.

Obj. 6.3 Update County-wide energy policies.

- a. Consider future policy around utility scale energy projects, in addition to the existing Solar Ordinance.
- b. Amend County ordinances, regulations and policies to accommodate alternative forms of energy.



Solar and other types of development do not need to threaten or challenge existing agricultural activities or culture.

Credit: Abobe stock

Goal 7: Provide Excellent Recreational Assets



The County will strive towards an excellent and well-maintained system of parks and recreational facilities and improve public access points to public waterways across the County for citizens of all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

Obj. 7.1 Cumberland will utilize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to pursue funding and timely implementation of recreational assets to enhance public health and quality of life in the community.

- a. Explore feasibility of establishing public/private partnerships, special authorities, boards or committees to help develop, maintain and operate parks, recreation and open space facilities within Cumberland County.
- b. Utilize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify needs and funding through the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Obj. 7.2 Public restrooms, concessions, picnic benches, and grills are all ways to improve or otherwise co-locate County amenities. New public access points may also be acquired and planned for improvement.

- a. Seek opportunities to fund the co-location of public restrooms, concessions, playscapes, or other amenities to improve the diverse ways Cumberland's park spaces can be used, maintained, and secured.

Obj. 7.3 Work with state agencies to develop and promote Cumberland State Forest, Bear Creek Lake State Park, and High Bridge State Park.

- a. Cultivate relationships at Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), the Virginia Department of Recreation (DCR),



High Bridge Trail, Randolph, Virginia

Credit: VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Goal 7 continued

Obj. 7.4 Maintain scenic and natural buffer areas along and adjacent to the James, Willis and Appomattox rivers.

Obj. 7.5 Develop a long-term plan and conduct community engagement for the Cumberland Community Center to address the need for additional youth and senior services and recreational and fitness facilities.



For more information, please see the County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Bike trail in Bella Vista, Northwest Arkansas

Credit: Adobe stock



Walking trail through a forest

Credit: Adobe stock

Creating Opportunity



Create Diverse Economic Opportunities

Cumberland County residents want to start businesses, work jobs, and make a living for their families. However, this can be difficult to find within the County itself. During the public engagement process, residents expressed challenges with their commutes, inability to see how a business could be profitable in Cumberland, and their having to do shopping outside of the County. At different scales of large economic development projects and small like starting new local businesses, the County needs to diversify and grow its local economy. With this plan, growth and opportunity do not have to come at the expense of other important goals, such as preserving agricultural land. Local economic development may even enhance it by growing the market demand for locally grown goods.



Create Opportunities for Retail, Service, and Jobs

With Cumberland residents doing most of their shopping outside of the County for goods and services, the locality is missing out on collecting revenue that it can use to improve quality of life inside its borders. At a variety of scales, County residents need local economic opportunities to gain experience, provide an income, and learn skills. Pursuing this goal will require a variety of approaches including looking at the Zoning Ordinance, examining local resources for business assistance, and creating materials to try and attract new businesses to the County with ready sites. There is no one solution that will completely improve the economy in Cumberland, however, by taking the approach that a diverse economy is desirable and guiding new uses to where they are deemed appropriate, the current conditions can change.

Improve Housing Opportunities

Cumberland County's housing stock is currently predominantly single family detached houses. While comparatively affordable to other areas of Virginia, this situation can change very quickly if growth pressure from Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Randolph, or Richmond begins to impact the County. To be proactive, the County can encourage diverse types of housing including single family attached or multifamily units within the previously mentioned village centers. These allow for people from varying walks of life, whether a young professional or an elderly person looking to downsize, to be a part of the community. It also expands the local economy in these village centers and creates new business opportunities.



Goal 8: Create Diverse Economic Opportunities



The majority of Cumberland residents do not work inside the County. The lack of economic opportunities means less young adults move back to Cumberland after education or stay in Cumberland to find a job.

Investing in diverse economic opportunities within the county was a high priority for many residents.

Obj. 8.1 The County will encourage the economic development in well-connected village centers such as Randolph, Cumberland, and Cartersville.

Obj. 8.2 The County will encourage the development of service and retail businesses to meet the needs of the current and future population of the community.

- a. Develop an asset-based economic development strategy that identifies target businesses and long-term economic goals.
- b. Support the County's economic development strategy with an incentive program to attract desired businesses, this could include tax incentives, reduced utility hook-up fees, expedited permitting, or others.
- c. The County will explore the feasibility of site improvements for the Cumberland Business Park and Riverside Industrial Parks and monitor the success of both parks and acquire new land for additional sites as needed.
- d. Promote the County's available business and industrial sites such as Riverside Industrial Park, Cumberland Business Park, Cartersville an the Farmville Regional Airport through marketing to prospective industries and businesses.
- e. Explore developing an incentive program for industries and businesses that offer competitive wages and other benefits.
- f. Seek additional food industry uses such as restaurants or groceries that are particularly sought after as both employers and contributors to quality of life in the community
- g. The County will study and identify gaps in the goods and services available within its jurisdiction to determine what uses are missing and plan for how to "fill the gaps."
- h. Ensure that every "village center" has a diverse mix of uses that include "Third Places," or places that are not home or work where people can spend time. Examples of this include coffee shops, bars, or restaurants.



Small town brick storefronts along historic Ely, Nevada, USA.

Credit: Abobe stock

Goal 8 continued

Obj. 8.3 Cumberland County will capitalize on its natural and cultural resources to create a thriving hospitality, recreation, and eco-tourism industry for both residents and visitors.

- a. Allow for the development and expansion of nature-based recreation facilities to accommodate hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, biking, and equestrian activities or more, incorporate these uses as part of the County's branding and marketing.
- b. Capitalize on the economic development potential of water-based recreation on the Appomattox River, James River, Bear Creek Lake, and Cobb's Creek Reservoir.
- c. Open a Visitor's Center or tourism office in the "Old Jail" to develop its full potential as a tourism destination.
- d. Study and explore the feasibility of promoting the development of a local beer and wine industry.
- e. Explore amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the development of "agri-tourism" opportunities, where local farms are encouraged to co-locate accommodation with food and learning experiences.
- f. Improve marketing efforts to bring tourists and tourism related business by continuing use of the County's brand, social media presence, and distribution of promotional materials.
- h. Collaborate with non-profits, state and local agencies, or other groups to promote nature-based, cultural, and historical tourism within the County.
- i. Designate a scenic highway in Cumberland County (i.e. Rt. 13 and possible other secondary roads). Develop standards that enhance the natural beauty and rural viewsheds along highways.



Goal 9: Create Opportunities for Retail, Service, and Jobs



Currently, Cumberland residents need to travel outside of the county for most goods and services, including groceries.

Community feedback has made it clear that residents want more opportunities to shop and patronize local businesses closer to home.

Obj. 9.1 Facilitate the conditions needed for new and small businesses, particularly in Village Centers.

a. Rezone all village centers, and make sure there are no unnecessary barriers to the creation of horizontal and vertical mixed use.

Obj. 9.2 The County will utilize all available resources to maximize the organization and effectiveness of economic development efforts.

a. Support the County's economic development strategy by reviewing relevant ordinances, regulations, and policies for consistency.

b. Develop an asset-based economic development strategy for the County which identifies target businesses and long term economic development goals.

c. Support the County's economic development strategy with marketing efforts and County branding to target desire businesses.

d. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the development of hospitality services in the County, including restaurants, hotels and motels, recreation-oriented businesses, bed & breakfast accommodations, or "eco-tourism" uses in appropriate locations.

e. The work of the Cumberland County Economic Development Authority, Cumberland Board of Supervisors, Cumberland Planning Commission, County staff and other appropriate groups will be coordinated through constant communication.

f. The County will coordinate with local economic development efforts at the regional and state levels. **[List of initiatives to be added with full draft.]**

g. Economic development will be coordinated with the capacity and resources available through other organizations, neighboring jurisdictions, regional organizations, state agencies, federal agencies, and the Commonwealth Regional Council.

h. Identify and consider acquiring additional industrial sites for future development.

i. Develop necessary infrastructure to support the development and sustainability of service and retail businesses.

j. Develop an incentive program to attract appropriate service and retail businesses to the County.

Goal 9 continued

- f. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to promote the development of multi-modal transportation systems to support the needs of economic development and community members safe access to employment.
- g. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to achieve the appropriate upgrade of existing unimproved, graded and drained, gravel and soil surfaced roads within Cumberland County.
- h. Locate commercially and industrially zoned lands based on appropriate planning criteria including: availability of utilities, vehicular accessibility, traffic volume counts, adjacent land uses, likely impacts on adjacent land uses and other environmental factors.



Sherman Avenue in the lakeside downtown area of the rural mountain city of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

Credit: Abohe stock

Goal 10: Improve Housing Opportunities



Whether downsizing or looking for a larger accommodation, all new and existing residents need to find housing. Diverse housing options allows for the elderly to “age in” their community, and it also allows for young people or new families to locate in Cumberland County.

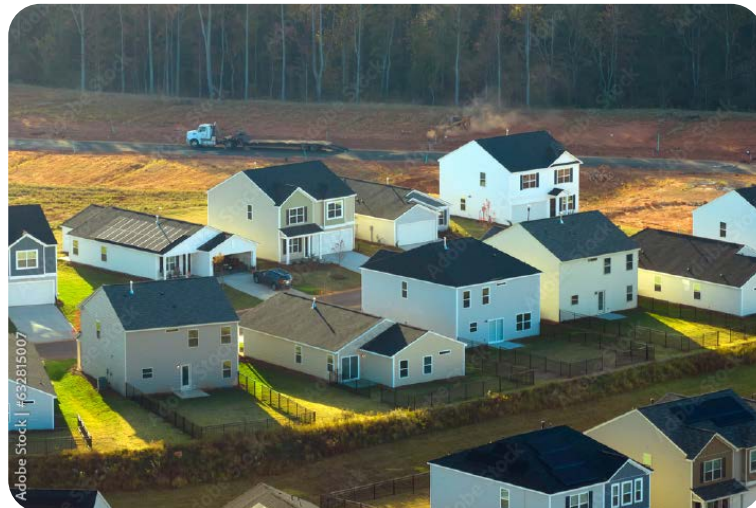
Obj. 10.1 Facilitate the development of diverse housing types

- a. Adopt zoning overlays and/or new zoning districts that allow for the development of single-family attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, 4-plexes, and 6-plexes by right in each village center.
- b. Amend the County’s Zoning Districts to allow for more multi-family housing options.

Obj. 10.2 Ensure that new housing development is well-connected to existing neighborhoods

Obj. 10.3 Incentivize the development of affordable housing for Cumberland county

- a. In accordance with the Code of Virginia Sec 15.2-2223.5, ensure that manufactured homes remain a source of affordable housing by preserving existing manufactured housing communities or providing for the creation of new manufactured home communities.
- b. The County will identify and utilize all state and federal funding sources to help low- and moderate-income residents to gain access to decent and standard housing opportunities.



Real estate development with houses under construction in South Carolina suburban area.

Credit: Aboobe stock

Goal 10 continued

Obj. 10.4 Explore the creation of a booklet of “pre-approved home designs” for core areas that would expedite the permitting and construction process for new home construction

Obj. 10.5 Support housing where it currently exists with services and other amenities equitably throughout the County.

a. The County will seek to establish public and private partnerships to preserve the existing housing stock.

Obj. 10.6 Strive to eliminate substandard housing through code enforcement.

Fostering Stewardship

Foster Community Trust

This plan is reflective of data and public input directly influencing what planning recommendations are made and presented to elected and appointed officials. It appears that Cumberland's community all have their own ideas about how power is expressed and how different outcomes are reached. This goal is to make the decision making process more transparent and clearly tied to planning documents so that all members of the public can see what decisions are reflective of. It also sets the objective for maintaining consistent engagement and input so that the community feels heard. Communication methods can also be improved so that everyone is aware of what is going on in the County. Over time, in coordination with the other goals of this plan, Cumberland can facilitate a high trust environment and reduce conflict.



Fiscal Stewardship

Cumberland's taxpayers should feel confident that their funds are being used in the best ways to improve their quality of life. This goal is centered around ensuring money is invested equitably across the community to address needs and that the Capital Improvements Plan is well utilized to provide detailed information on how funds are being spent. With excellent fiscal stewardship, the County can be excited about improvements to local facilities.

High Quality Public Facilities & Services

The County's residents enjoy quality public facilities and services, including schools, offices, parks, or emergency services. These objectives continue the efforts to provide quality facilities and seeks to set the groundwork for further improvements. Seeing how a community invests in itself is also a key factor in attracting visitors or further investment.



Supportive Utilities

Similar to fiscal stewardship, it is important that any growth coincides with planned utility improvements. These objectives seek to improve the infrastructure that supports life in Cumberland.

Goal 11: Foster Community Trust



To build trust across the community, decisions should be clearly tied to publicly available analysis and information.

Planning documents, such as this Comprehensive Plan, can guide the public to understand why certain decisions are made to balance the County's various interests.

Obj. 11.1 The Comprehensive Plan and other guiding documents will be consulted for considerate decision-making. Cumberland will ensure that trust is fostered in the County through social inclusion and that principles of stewardship and pride that are evident as a result of careful decision-making.

- a. The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed or updated by the County's Planning Commission every five years, according to the Code of Virginia.
- b. Public Facility Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and CCAP Initiative should be reviewed every three years in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan.

Obj. 11.2 Maintain consistent engagement. "The County will strive to flexibly address citizen needs and encourage innovation."

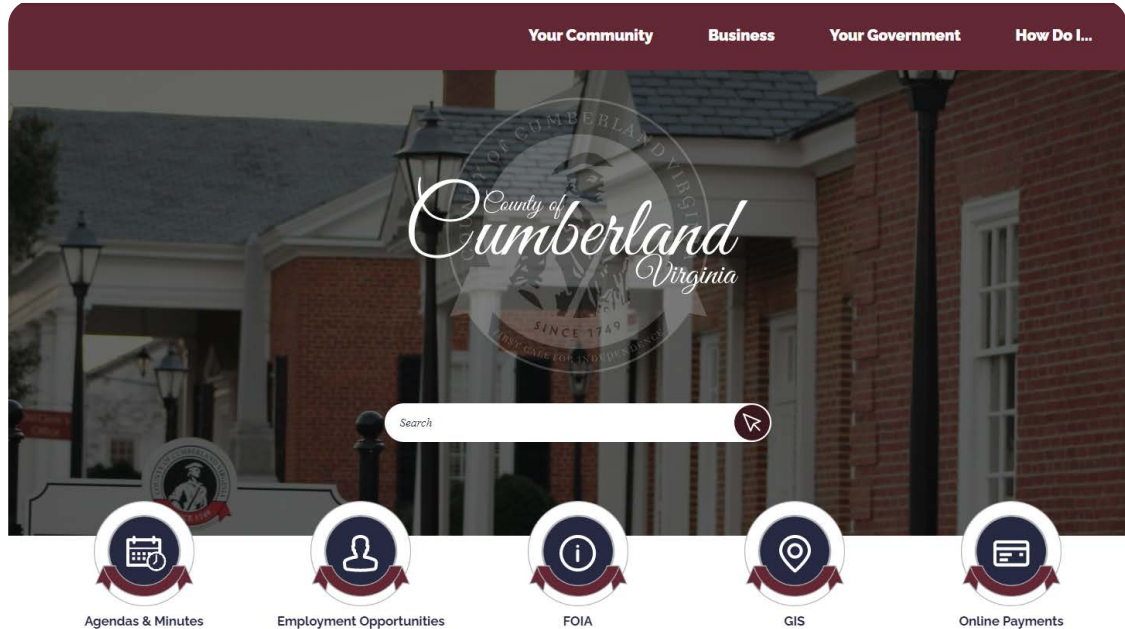
- a. Conduct "town halls" or surveys on resident satisfaction in every represented district. Keep data to ensure all voices in the community are being reached.
- b. Encourage community suggestions for "pilot projects" testing where, in areas such as Randolph, Cumberland, and Cartersville, new amenities such as outdoor seating areas, playspace, or 'pop-up' events or businesses could be located.
- c. Once the trail from the court house to Bear Creek Lake State Park is completed and fully implemented, monitor it for success and solicit suggestions.
- d. Continue to produce "Connect Cumberland" program guide.

Goal 11 continued

Obj. 11.3 “The County will be an excellent regional partner, coordinating with its neighboring partners to enhance quality of life for the local community and invite visitors.”

- The County will continue to engage with the Commonwealth Regional Council to identify trends and plan for the future.
- Study regional tourism trends to identify areas to further develop the County’s opportunities and recognition as a place to visit.
- The County will maximize other regional partnerships for Cumberland citizen benefit including Piedmont Regional Jail and Regional Economic Development efforts.

Obj. 11.4 Improve public outreach and communication through use of web and social media.



Goal 12: Fiscal Stewardship



Improving confidence and trust in local government includes ensuring that officials are stewarding funds sustainably. Visibility and openness about past issues and future plans can build trust in the county's use of their budget.

Obj. 12.1 Ensure that the County's resources are invested equitably across the community's represented districts, particularly in village centers.

- a. Utilize the County's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) program to ensure equitable investments county-wide.
- b. Ensure public participation for community based and publicly accessible community investments.
- c. As part of the staggered review of other planning documents, ensure efforts for equitable community engagement and placement of resources.



The Capital Improvement Plan should include funding for apparatus replacement, turnout gear, and air pack replacement for the fire and rescue stations.

Goal 13: High Quality Public Schools



Education is the cornerstone of the future of a community. While Cumberland County continues to have a very high quality education system, it is important that educational priorities are maintained into the future to ensure that public facilities, educational quality, and staff are maintained.

Obj. 13.1 Support the delivery of quality education through assisting in the attraction and retention of quality educators through County policy. This connects areas such as Housing” or park facilities and other amenities with the ability to make Cumberland the ideal place to work in education.

Obj. 13.2 Adopt and maintain a Capital Improvements Plan, to ensure the counties resources are invested equitably across the communities represented districts.

- a. Ensure that revenues adequately support current and future service and infrastructure needs.
- b. Ensure that all local government facilities are well maintained, efficient, and functionally appropriate to meet all requirements.
- c. Ensure that all school facilities are well maintained and meet all applicable standards; that facilities are efficient and functionally appropriate to meet current and foreseen instructional requirements at all grade levels; and that school facilities can accommodate appropriate technology advances in computers, telecommunications, the sciences and athletic facilities.

Obj. 13.3 Continue cooperative relationships with neighboring school divisions to share facilities and to improve overall cost effectiveness of school investments, where feasible.

Obj. 13.4 Secure funding for pedestrian and alternative transportation improvements in the vicinity of Cumberland County school facilities to connect the property with the rest of the court house area.

Obj. 13.5 Explore making public school facilities such as fields, tracks, or playgrounds, or other equipment available for public use outside of school hours.

Goal 14: Well Maintained Local Government Facilities



Improving confidence and trust in local government includes ensuring that officials are stewarding funds sustainably. Visibility and openness about past issues and future plans can build trust in the county's use of their budget.

Obj. 14.1 Continue to develop and fund a 25 year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Update the CIP every five years.

- a. Balance the 5 Year CIP as required by State Code.
- b. Update the CIP annually as part of the annual budget process.
- c. Identify one-time funding sources such as grants, donations, and in-kind sources to develop capital amenities.
- d. Identify CIP items that equitably serve residents while limiting impacts to County resources.

Goal 15: Efficient and Effective Emergency Services and Social Safety Net



Residents may not always know where to turn when they have a medical or personal crisis. Thus, emergency services and social safety nets are important to provide support and assistance to vulnerable individuals and families, ensuring basic needs are met and improving overall societal well-being. In addition, these services instill a sense of security and confidence in the community, fostering trust in local authorities and promoting a stable and resilient society.

Obj. 15.1 Adopt and maintain a capital improvements program for all emergency services facilities to ensure that those facilities, equipment and personnel are well maintained, efficient and functionally appropriate to meet current and foreseen needs of the citizens.

Obj. 15.2 Develop a long-term master plan for the County's emergency services facilities to accommodate the foreseen emergency requirements for all areas of the County. This would include the provision of appropriate and inter-operable communication systems and technology for E-911 and other emergency services.

Obj. 15.3 Support neighboring hospitals and emergency centers to help to develop the best possible emergency medical and long-term services for the citizens of Cumberland County and the surrounding region.

a. Maintain mutual aid agreements with neighboring jurisdictions and procedures for effective response and coordination of services in times of emergency.

Obj. 15.4 Support the development of other basic healthcare services within Cumberland County including medical, optical, dental, elderly care, pediatrics, and pharmacies. Review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure the ease of opening such facilities.

Obj. 15.5 Maintain established hazard mitigation measures to afford protection against the impacts of the full range of natural hazards (including floods, winds, and drought) and man-made hazards (such as hazardous materials and bio-solids).

Obj. 15.6 Maintain an up-to-date Emergency Operations Plan.

Goal 16: Supportive Utilities



Energy and infrastructure security overall is deeply connected to the lives of individual people. After all, entire communities have a stake in the success and reliable operation of their local utilities. By empowering and equipping utilities across the county with the knowledge, skills, resources, and technologies needed to bolster their utility, the county can make great strides toward improved access and operations of Cumberland County's utilities.

Obj. 16.1 Maximize the utilization of existing utility systems (sewer and water) in the Cumberland Court House Village Center area by connecting new users.

Obj. 16.2 Explore the feasibility of extending public water and sewer services to other high growth areas such as Cumberland court house, near Randolph, the Cobbs Creek Reservoir, or Cartersville.

Obj. 16.3 Improve voice, data and communications services and seek the expansion of high-speed internet throughout the entire county.

Obj. 16.4 Develop and maintain appropriate and cost-effective solid waste management facilities, services and programs to serve the needs of citizens, businesses, industries and the environment.

Obj. 16.5 Identify future water sources, ground and surface, for use by the citizens of Cumberland County.

See the Utility Rate Study in the Appendix for more information about utilities in the Cumberland Court House area.

