



# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Goals, Objectives and Policies

*“Respectful of Our Past ...  
Optimistic for Our Future”*

Adopted September 21, 2006

Effective October 1, 2006

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES, WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF OCTOBER 1, 2006; AND TO APPROVE THE ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL REZONING GUIDANCE MATRIX, APPROVAL OF WHICH SHALL SUNSET SEPTEMBER 30, 2007**

WHEREAS, for the past eight months a joint Citizen Advisory and Technical Advisory Committee and Planning Department staff have been drafting Goals, Objectives and Policies to update the 1986 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the resultant document entitled “Guilford County Comprehensive Plan – Goals, Objectives and Policies, is the end product of numerous committee meetings, public forums, and citizen outreach efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan consists of five plan elements (future land use, transportation, housing, governmental coordination, and natural, historic and cultural resources) each with specific goals, objectives and policies; and

WHEREAS, the joint CAC/TAC committee has endorsed the plan as presented; and

WHEREAS, the Guilford County Planning Board recommended unanimous approval (7-0) of the Comprehensive Plan at a special meeting and public hearing on August 23, 2006, with the stipulation that the attached residential rezoning guidance matrix have a one-year “sunset” provision; and

WHEREAS, adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, as presented, is intended to provide a rational and responsible strategy to assist Guilford County with current and future growth and development issues; however it is clear that the policies in the plan are recommendations, and therefore not binding on Guilford County or the Board of County Commissioners.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Guilford County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt the “Guilford County Comprehensive Plan – Goals, Objectives and Policies” with an effective date of October 1, 2006; and to approve the attached residential rezoning guidance matrix with a one-year sunset provision, ending September 30, 2007.

ADOPTED this 21st day of September, 2006

# Guilford County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted September 21, 2006  
Effective October 1, 2006

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### **Guilford County Board of Commissioners**

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With sincere appreciation to the members of the Technical and Citizen Advisory Committees, particularly:

Lonnie Baxley, Jr.	Charles Mann
Candice Bruton	Craig McKinney
Chuck Folds	Dan O'Shea
Heidi Galanti	Marlene Sanford
John Higgins, Jr.	Mary Skenes
Kalan Kingsbury	Laura Smith
	Michael Wright

*“Respectful of Our Past... Optimistic of Our Future”*

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# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Future Land Use Element

Goal #1: Guilford County shall position itself to accommodate new growth and redevelopment that is efficient and cost-effective; improves the quality of life for residents; enhances economic vitality; is respectful to citizen based Areas Plans; supports creativity and innovative design; and protects and preserves the natural, historic, and cultural resources and assets of the County.

Objective 1.1: Continue to use community-based area plans as the cornerstone for future land use and policy decisions.

Policy 1.1.1: Planning staff will continue to utilize the future land uses depicted on citizen based Area Plans, in conjunction with the rezoning guidance matrix, as the basis for land use and policy recommendations. *[Planning staff/Planning Board, On-going]*

Policy 1.1.2: Existing Area Plans will be updated to reflect current jurisdictional boundaries, roadway improvements (existing and proposed), and emerging commercial areas, based on the following schedule: *[Planning staff/Planning Board, Per schedule]*

Southwest (1989) – fall 2006

Rock Creek (1988) – winter 2007

Alamance (1994) – spring 2007

Northwest (1998) – summer 2007

Northeast (2000) – summer 2007

Airport (2002) – fall 2007

Southern (2002) – fall 2007

Policy 1.1.3: Prepare, in conjunction with a citizen group, a Northern Lakes Area Plan, beginning in September 2006. *[Planning staff/Citizen group, beginning fall 2006]*

Policy 1.1.3.1: Develop consistent Land Use classifications for non-residential uses in conjunction with Area Plan updates. *[Planning staff, per Policy 1.1.2 schedule]*

Policy 1.1.3.2: Utilize consistent Land Use classifications to develop a rezoning guidance matrix for non-residential uses. *[Planning staff, fall 2007]*

Policy 1.1.4: Pursue a thorough review of Area Plan land use designations, and seek to consolidate into four Quadrant

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Future Land Use Element

Plans beginning January 2009, as follows: *[Planning staff/Planning Board, per schedule below]*

Southwest (south of I-40, west of 220) – 2009

Southeast (south of I-40/I-85, east of 220) – 2009

Northwest (north of I-40, west of Church Street) – 2010

Northeast (north of I-40/I-85, east of Church Street) -2010

Policy 1.1.5: At a minimum update Quadrant Plans every two years after adoption to reflect jurisdictional changes, and roadway / infrastructure improvements. More thorough updates or Plan amendments may be warranted. *[Planning staff/Planning Board, 2011]*

Objective 1.2: Encourage coordination among responsible entities in the timing of infrastructure improvements to afford the greatest latitude in future development options.

Policy 1.2.1: Review availability and delivery of essential public services, including roads, schools and water/wastewater facilities, in conjunction with land use petitions and applications. *[Planning staff/Service providers, On-going]* (See Housing policy 2.2.1)

Policy 1.2.2: Guilford County will seek and maintain active participation on all MPO's serving the County. *[Planning staff, On-going]* (See Transportation policy 2.1.1)

Policy 1.2.3: Investigate in conjunction with the Guilford County Public Schools collaborative school siting planning and evaluation methods currently utilized in other North Carolina counties. *[Planning staff/School District, initiate winter 2007]* (See Governmental Coordination policy 1.1.4)

Policy 1.2.4: Work closely with the cities of Greensboro, High Point and Burlington to track infrastructure upgrades, existing and proposed distribution lines, and available capacities for water and wastewater facilities. *[Planning staff, initiate tracking system winter 2007]* (See Housing policy 2.2.2)

Objective 1.3: Complement and enhance the economic vitality of rural Guilford County farms while providing for expanded economic opportunities, through prudent regulations and sound land use decisions. (Also see Housing objective 1.2 )

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Future Land Use Element

- Policy 1.3.1: Planning staff will investigate and develop text amendments, as deemed appropriate, to both Rural Family Occupation and Agricultural Tourism sections of the Guilford County Development Ordinance. Particular emphasis will be paid to bona fide farm sites. *[Planning staff/Planning Board, fall 2006]*
- Policy 1.3.2: Review and recommend additional permitted commercial uses, with or without development standards, to the AG section of the Table of Permitted Uses. *[Planning staff/Planning Board, fall 2006]*
- Policy 1.3.3: Research transfer and/or purchase of development rights policies and procedures for presentation to appropriate governing bodies. *[Planning staff, spring 2009]* (See Housing policy 2.4.6)
- Objective 1.4: Seek coordination and compatibility of land use plans among Guilford County, its incorporated cities and towns, and neighboring jurisdictions.
- Policy 1.4.1: Coordinate comprehensive planning efforts with Greensboro, High Point, incorporated towns, and neighboring jurisdictions to promote thoughtful and complementary land development patterns and policies. *[Planning staff/Partners, On-going]* (See Governmental Coordination policies 1.2.2 and 1.2.3)
- Policy 1.4.2: Collaborate with the City of Greensboro to achieve meaningful advancement of their adopted “Growth at the Fringe” policies contained in their 2025 Comprehensive Plan. *[Planning staff/City staff, On-going]* (See Housing 1.2.1)
- Policy 1.4.3: Reference adopted Land Use Plans and recommended uses and densities/intensities, when applicable, in conjunction with rezoning staff reports presented to the Planning Board. *[Planning staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.4: Encourage participation by representatives of local jurisdictions during the update process for Area Plans. *[Planning staff, per update schedules]*

## **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

### Future Land Use Element

Objective 1.5: Recognize and respect the unique characteristics of Guilford County's unincorporated and emerging communities.

Policy 1.5.1: In conjunction with Policy 1.1.4, staff will conduct sub-area plans and studies for existing and emerging communities as needed. *[Planning staff, per Area Plan schedules]*

Policy 1.5.2: Investigate the use of design standards and developer incentives to maintain and enhance the character of Guilford County's historic crossroads communities and emerging activity centers. *[Planning staff/Design Community, spring 2007]*

Policy 1.5.3: Consider traditional neighborhood design principles in appropriate locations, including mixed uses, pedestrian-friendly streets and commercial areas, and transit-oriented development. *[Planning staff/Design Community, fall 2007]* (See Housing policies 1.1.1 and 1.2.1)

Objective 1.6: Guilford County will be an active partner in the planning and implementation of large-scale multi-jurisdictional land use initiatives such as the Heart of the Triad and transit-oriented development.

Policy 1.6.1: Provide policy and technical assistance and staff support for regional land use planning efforts. *[Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.6.2: Recommend Development Ordinance amendments and Area/Quadrant Plan changes to support and implement regional plans endorsed and adopted by Guilford County. *[Planning staff, when deemed appropriate]*

Policy 1.6.3: Identify interim growth management strategies to provide viable planning alternatives to support and advance long-range regional land use plans (e.g., Heart of the Triad). *[Planning staff/PART, On-going]* (See Transportation 2.1.2 and Governmental Coordination 1.3.3)

Policy 1.6.4: Continually seek opportunities for joint collaboration to attract new economic growth and prosperity for the County and the Triad region. *[CED/Economic Development Partners, On-going]* (See Transportation objectives 2.3 and 2.4)

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Transportation Element

GOAL #1: Support a functional countywide transportation network that is environmentally sound in design and promotes safety, efficiency, and choice for the residents and visitors of Guilford County.

Objective 1.1 Seek to maximize the functionality and efficiency of current and future network components.

Policy 1.1.1 Present for adoption the “Collector Street Plan” for unincorporated Guilford County. *[MPO/Planning staff, fall 2006]*

Policy 1.1.2 Encourage the adoption of the “Collector Street Plan” by other affected municipalities in Guilford County. *[MPO/Planning staff, fall 2006/winter 2007]*

Policy 1.1.3 Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Guilford County Public Schools to require consultation of potential school sites/expansion projects to identify possible impacts to the local transportation network prior to acquisition. *[Planning staff/GCPS staff, initiate winter 2007]* (See Future Land Use policy 1.2.3)

Objective 1.2 Identify and overcome system “gaps” that inhibit the provision of a seamless transportation network throughout Guilford County, and beyond.

Policy 1.2.1 Obtain and/or compile maps of existing and proposed transportation network components; identify geographical and service area gaps. *[PART/MPO’s/Planning staff – On-going]*

Policy 1.2.2 Provide staff assistance, as requested, to support local and regional transportation planning efforts. *[Planning staff – On-going]*

Objective 1.3 Thoughtfully review existing development regulations and standards related to transportation, leading to prudent changes that support and encourage environmentally sound design and modal options.

Policy 1.3.1 Review and recommend changes to off-street parking requirements/standards in the Development Ordinance; provide credits/reductions for projects that incorporate pedestrian, bicycle, transit facilities, or which exhibit

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Transportation Element

innovative design that advance adopted Plan goals, objectives and policies. *[Planning staff, fall 2006]*

Policy 1.3.2 Review and recommend changes to subdivision standards in the Development Ordinance that will enhance safety, “calm traffic”, improve efficiency, and promote connectivity. *[Planning/NCDOT staff, summer 2007]*

Policy 1.3.3 Review and recommend changes to landscape/buffering standards in the Development Ordinance that will address noise impacts, reduce air pollution, and promote safe, aesthetically pleasing design. *[Planning staff, fall 2007]*

Policy 1.3.4 Review and consider changes to the Development Ordinance related to Fire Apparatus Access Road standards contained in the 2000 International Fire Prevention Code Appendix D. *[Planning/Fire Marshall staff, TBD]*

Objective 1.4 Encourage transportation improvements that will respect and support the rural ambiance and character of Guilford County.

Policy 1.4.1 Investigate opportunities with NCDOT to establish or modify “context sensitive” roadway design standards, speed limits, signage, et cetera, for rural areas of Guilford County. *[NCDOT/Cooperative Extension/Planning staff, summer 2007]* (See Housing policy 1.1.1)

Objective 1.5 Support non-motorized modes of transportation and system linkages throughout Guilford County and adjoining areas.

Policy 1.5.1 Assist in public awareness efforts to advise citizens of Guilford County of existing and future trail systems. *[CED staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.5.2 Annually pursue funding sources to support the expansion and/or connectivity of trail systems throughout Guilford County. *[CED staff/MPO, each grant cycle]*

Objective 1.6 Encourage the use of clean fuels and clean fuel technologies.

Policy 1.6.1 Review contents of the “Early Action Compact” document, evaluate and seek continuation of successful strategies and initiatives to address air quality issues. *[PTCOG/PART/Planning staff, On-going]*

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Transportation Element

Policy 1.6.2 Investigate public/private opportunities to promote the use and availability of clean and alternative fuels throughout Guilford County. *[CED staff, On-going]*

GOAL #2: Foster initiatives and innovations that will enhance and expand Guilford County's role as the mid-Atlantic transportation/distribution hub.

Objective 2.1 Actively partner with PART, MPO's, NCDOT, and the Airport Authority to advocate for necessary federal, state and local funding to support necessary enhancements to, and expansions of, Guilford County's transportation network.

Policy 2.1.1 Guilford County will seek and maintain active participation on all MPO's serving the County. *[Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 2.1.2 Guilford County will actively participate in all regional transportation efforts (PART, Heart of the Triad, et cetera). *[Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 2.1.3: Guilford County will request quarterly meetings between planning and Airport Authority staff to exchange information of mutual interest. *[Planning staff/Airport Authority staff, beginning winter 2006]*

Objective 2.2 Support efforts that promote Guilford County as the mid-Atlantic transportation/distribution hub.

Policy 2.2.1 Guilford County will work with, and support, promotional efforts which advocate, and advance, the County's position as the Mid-Atlantic transportation/distribution hub. *[Chamber of Commerce, Partnership Organizations, On-going]*

Policy 2.2.2 Incorporation of "Mid-Atlantic transportation/distribution" language in County economic development outreach efforts/publications. *[CED, On-going]*

Objective 2.3 Identify existing development regulations or standards related to transportation/distribution that require change to better position Guilford County to compete in a national and global economy.

Policy 2.3.1 Investigate development standards in competitive locations. *[Planning staff, beginning fall, 2006]*

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Transportation Element

Policy 2.3.2 Propose changes to existing development regulations or standards related to transportation/distribution in the Development Ordinance to better position Guilford County to compete in a national and global economy. *[Planning staff, spring 2006]*

Objective 2.4 Advocate the importance of existing and future transit services within and adjacent to Guilford County, and seek funding sources and opportunities to support on-going maintenance and system expansions (Guilford County Transportation Department, PART, High Point and Greensboro Transit Systems).

Policy 2.4.1 Endorse funding proposals that will expand transit services to unincorporated areas of Guilford County. *[PART/Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 2.4.2 Support budget requests and funding proposals that will enhance and expand transportation services for seniors, the disabled, and others seeking access to County programs and services (e.g., Public Health, Social Services, etc.).*[Guilford County Transportation Dept., On-going]*

Policy 2.4.3 Assist PART in locating remote parking sites throughout Guilford County to advance expansion of transit services. *[PART/Planning staff, as requested]*

Policy 2.4.4 Support, when necessary, Development Ordinance amendments that will allow T.O.D. (transit oriented development) development activities and land uses to complement innovative transportation/transit advancements. *[Planning staff, fall 2008]*

Objective 2.5 Acknowledge and advocate the importance of existing and future railway resources and facilities throughout Guilford County and North Carolina.

Policy 2.5.1 Educate elected officials, and the public at large, on the important role rail provides to Guilford County in terms of freight movements and passenger services. *[MPO Staff/Planning staff, TBD]*

Policy 2.5.1.1 Guilford County will participate in any railway study, including high speed rail, envisioned to traverse through the county. *[Planning staff, when deemed appropriate]*

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Transportation Element

- Policy 2.5.2 Thoughtfully consider public/private ventures to enhance and expand rail service (including high-speed rail) serving Guilford County. *[MPO/Planning staff, when opportunities arise]*

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Housing Element

- Goal #1 Provide current and future residents of Guilford County with a variety of housing options and opportunities.
- Objective 1.1 Thoroughly review and revise, as necessary, existing development procedures, regulations and standards that inhibit creativity and/or flexibility in the provision of housing options and opportunities.
- Policy 1.1.1 Investigate with NCDOT alternative design standards that accommodate choice and flexibility in roadway construction. *[NCDOT/ Planning staff, summer 2007]*  
(See Transportation policy 1.4.1)
- Policy 1.1.2 Draft an “Affordable Housing Density Bonus System”, including matrix, for possible inclusion in the Development Ordinance. *[Planning staff, summer 2008]*
- Policy 1.1.3 Collaborate with Guilford County Environmental Health Department to recognize creative wastewater technologies, and to insure consistency between regulations of Departments. *[Environmental Health/Planning, On-going]*
- Objective 1.2 Identify, in conjunction with the cities of Greensboro and High Point, potential in-fill/under-developed sites within unincorporated fringe areas where density bonuses or incentives would be appropriate.
- Policy 1.2.1 Collaborate with the City of Greensboro, to achieve meaningful advancement of their adopted “Growth at the Fringe” policies contained in their 2025 Comprehensive Plan. *[Planning staff/City staff, On-going]* (See Future Land Use policy 1.4.2)
- Policy 1.2.2 Develop and present for adoption a “rezoning guidance matrix” to assist in the review of land development petitions and recommended densities. The “guidance matrix” will incorporate such factors as future land use categories, the provision of public utilities, advancement of adopted Plan objectives and policies, and future annexation potential. *[Planning staff, concurrent with Plan adoption]*
- Policy 1.2.3 Establish, in conjunction with the cities, a joint team to expedite the review and approval process for income

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## Housing Element

eligible projects with public water/sewer access. *[Planning staff/City Planning staffs, initiate spring 2007]*

Objective 1.3 Guilford County will continue to collaborate with and support public, private, and not-for-profit service providers to maximize their funding opportunities and programmatic successes.

Policy 1.3.1 Remain an active partner in the provision of HOME, Scattered Site, and CDBG housing programs and projects throughout the County. *[CED staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.3.2 Maintain active participation on the task force to resolve “chronic homelessness”; promote adoption of the resultant “Ten-Year Plan”; and support initiatives contained in the adopted “Ten-Year Plan”. *[Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.3.3 Exploration of federal, state and local grant/funding opportunities to expand and enhance the provision of housing programs and services throughout Guilford County. *[Greensboro Housing/CED/Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.3.4 Consider the waiver of building fees, site development fees, and other regulatory fees, in conjunction with the review of income eligible housing projects. *[Planning staff/BOCC, summer 2008]*

Policy 1.3.5 Advocate the waiver of non-County fees (e.g., water/sewer tap fees, etc.) for income eligible housing projects. *[Planning staff/BOCC, summer 2008]*

Objective 1.4 Provide for the continuation, and expansion, of group housing opportunities.

Policy 1.4.1 Continue to provide for, and consider expansion (with or without development standards) of group housing opportunities within zoning districts contained in the Development Ordinance. *[Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.4.1.1 Develop GIS layer to track the locations of approved group housing sites to ensure compliance with minimum separation requirements contained in the Development Ordinance. *[Planning/GIS staff, summer 2008]*

# GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Housing Element

- Policy 1.4.2 Review options and opportunities for farm labor and migrant labor housing. *[Planning Department, fall 2008]*
- Objective 1.5 Diligently enforce the N.C. State Building Code, the Rehabilitation Code, and all other applicable life/safety codes.
- Policy 1.5.1 Guilford County will adopt and diligently enforce the most current version of the N.C. State Building Code, Rehabilitation Code, and all other applicable life/safety codes. *[Inspection Division/Fire Marshall, per DOI adoption schedules]*
- Policy 1.5.2 Carefully evaluate the advantages/disadvantages related to minimum housing standards, and consider adopting such standards for implementation and enforcement thereof. *[Planning Department, spring 2007]*
- Objective 1.6 Partner with the real estate and lending communities to promote awareness of fair housing laws and nondiscriminatory practices related to the sale and rental of housing throughout Guilford County.
- Policy 1.6.1 Guilford County will assist in the posting and distribution of materials related to fair housing laws and nondiscriminatory housing practices. *[Planning & Development, immediately]*
- Policy 1.6.2 Incorporation of website linkages to consumer information sites related to fair housing laws and nondiscriminatory housing practices. *[Planning Department, fall 2006]*
- Goal #2 Partner with stakeholders to promote a building environment that embraces excellence, supports new technologies, and will proactively respond to challenges to keep Guilford County competitive both regionally and nationally.
- Objective 2.1 Diligently monitor and assess new construction technologies that are structurally sound yet environmentally friendly (e.g., LEED), for potential application in Guilford County. *[Planning & Development/AIA/Design Community, initiate dialogue winter 2007]*
- Policy 2.1.1 Organize a multi-disciplinary team to review and recommend acceptance of new construction technologies,

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## Housing Element

materials and practices. [*Inspections/Planning and Environmental Health, beginning fall 2006*] (See Natural Resource policy 1.8.1)

Policy 2.1.2 Encourage and support local research of new and evolving changes in construction technologies by local colleges and universities. [*Planning/Colleges, initiate dialogue winter 2007*] (See Natural Resource policy 1.8.3)

Objective 2.2 Fairly and accurately assess the demands for, and on, services to support new residential development.

Policy 2.2.1 Review availability and delivery of essential public services, including schools, emergency services, roads, and water/wastewater, in conjunction with land use petitions and applications. [*Planning Department/Service providers, initiate tracking system winter 2007*] (See Future Land Use policy 1.2.1)

Policy 2.2.3 Establish baselines for essential public services, then track and tabulate changes, on a quarterly basis, incorporating new land use petitions/applications per Policy 2.2.1 and other pertinent data or service improvements. [*Planning Department/Service providers, spring 2008*]

Policy 2.2.3 Prepare Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Guilford County and the School District as described in Transportation Element Policy 1.1.3. [*Planning Department/School District, beginning winter 2007*] (See Future Land Use policy 1.2.3)

Objective 2.3 Guilford County will actively participate in local and regional forums addressing current and future housing needs, challenges and market trends.

Policy 2.3.1 The County will attend local and regional forums, to track current and future housing needs, changes and market trends. [*CED, On-going*]

Objective 2.4 Promote “context sensitive” development that respects and protects the natural, historic, and cultural assets and amenities of Guilford County.

Policy 2.4.1 Support clustering for projects with significant environmental challenges to afford the greatest protection

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Housing Element

- of natural resources. *[Planning staff, On-going]* (See Natural Resource policy 1.1.1)
- Policy 2.4.2 Consider the creation of a “Rural Estate” zoning district to allow large lot (e.g., 5+ acres) subdivisions with development standards/regulations that promote land stewardship. *[Planning Department, spring 2007]*
- Policy 2.4.3 Incorporate buffering requirements into the Landscape Code for new projects/subdivisions located adjacent to bona fide farms. *[Planning Department, spring 2007]*
- Policy 2.4.4 Include participation by the Open Space, Parks, and Historic properties planners on the Technical Review Committee (TRC). *[Planning/CED, On-going]*
- Policy 2.4.5 Support the Voluntary Agricultural District program and individuals seeking bona fide farm status for their property. *[Cooperative Extension/Planning, On-going]*
- Policy 2.4.6 Investigate the “Purchase of Development Rights” program in Forsyth County for possible application in Guilford County. *[Planning Department, spring 2009]* (See Future Land Use policy 1.3.3)
- Policy 2.4.7 Review Mixed-Use development standards in the Development Ordinance, and pursue amendments as deemed necessary, to foster more creativity in design and housing options. *[Planning Department, winter 2007]* (See Natural Resource policy 1.2.2)

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Governmental Coordination Element

Goal #1: Guilford County shall seek to maximize the effective and efficient provision of governmental programs and services by coordinating implementation and delivery efforts internally and with external partners.

Objective 1.1: Enhance intra-agency relationships within Guilford County government to improve the coordination of policies and programs, minimize the duplication of services, and to provide superior customer service to citizens and businesses.

Policy 1.1.1: Coordinate Planning and Environmental Health Department review and approval procedures and regulations to provide consistent, efficient and timely responses to projects serviced by private septic and/or well systems. *[Environmental Health/Planning, On-going]*

Policy 1.1.2: Advocate endorsement and implementation of a single, integrated geographical information system platform (ESRI) for Guilford County applications in conjunction with the Information Services and Tax Departments. *[IS/Tax/Planning, beginning fall 2006]*

Policy 1.1.3: Expand upon the availability and delivery of essential public services provided by Guilford County in conjunction with land use petitions and application presentations. *[Planning Department/Service Providers, winter 2007]* (See Housing objective 2.2)

Policy 1.1.4: Investigate in conjunction with the Guilford County Public Schools collaborative school siting planning and evaluation methods currently utilized in other North Carolina counties. *[Planning staff/School District, initiate winter 2007]* (See Future Land Use policy 1.2.3)

Objective 1.2: Collaborate with Guilford County cities and towns, adjacent jurisdictions, quasi-public and governmental agencies, on issues that affect the County and its citizens, resources, and quality of life.

Policy 1.2.1: Continue to provide sound planning and inspection services to our town partners. *[Planning & Development staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.2.2: Coordinate comprehensive planning efforts with Greensboro, High Point, incorporated towns, and

## **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

### Governmental Coordination Element

neighboring counties to promote thoughtful and complementary land development patterns and policies. *[Planning Department/Partners, On-going]* (See Future Land Use policy 1.4.1)

Policy 1.2.3: Initiate, in concert with identified partners, other non-land use related Comprehensive Plan policies/actions within stated implementation timeframes. *[Planning Department/Partners, per specific policy timeframe]*

Policy 1.2.4: Explore with neighboring Inspections Departments and Community Colleges the opportunity to establish a Triad location (with instructors) to provide local continuing education seminars for inspection staff. *[Inspection Departments, fall 2006]*

Policy 1.2.5: Complement the Airport Authority's (PTIA) planning efforts to minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and promote non-residential growth efforts within the airport noise cone as depicted on the Airport Area Plan, as amended. *[Planning Department, On-going]* (Transportation policy 2.1.3)

Objective 1.3: Guilford County shall continue to actively partner with agencies engaged in issues of regional importance, including land use, transportation, housing, and open space preservation.

Policy 1.3.1: Strengthen involvement in regional transportation planning efforts by participating in the Technical Coordinating Committees of Guilford County's three MPOs (Greensboro MPO, High Point MPO, Burlington-Graham MPO). *[Planning Department, On-going]*

Policy 1.3.2: Establish Staff/PTCOG liaison to coordinate demographic database accessibility through the Department's website and assist with 2010 census requirements. *[Planning Department/PTCOG, fall 2007]*

Policy 1.3.3: Provide policy and technical assistance and staff support for regional land use planning efforts, such as the Heart of the Triad Master Plan. *[Planning Department/ CED/PART, On-going]* (See Transportation policy 2.1.2)

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Governmental Coordination Element

Policy 1.3.4: Continue to implement the recommendations of the Guilford County Open Space Report. *[CED/Open Space Committee/Piedmont Land Conservancy, On-going]*

# **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

## Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources Element

Goal #1: To seek a balance between the built environment and the protection and preservation of the County's natural, historic, and cultural resources through prudent management, public education, participation and outreach, appropriate regulations and enforcement, and active partnerships with stakeholders.

Objective 1.1: Promote "context sensitive" development that respects and protects the natural, historic, and cultural assets and amenities of Guilford County.

Policy 1.1.1: Support clustering for projects with significant environmental challenges to afford the greatest protection of natural resources. *[Planning staff, On-going]* (See Housing policy 2.4.1)

Policy 1.1.2: Utilize the County's GIS system to create and/or update map layers locating natural assets and amenities, protected lands, current and future parks, dedicated open space, and places of historic and/or cultural significance. *[GIS/Planning/CED, beginning spring 2007]*

Policy 1.1.3: Create incentives that recognize or reward innovative project designs that respect, assimilate, and protect on-site and adjacent assets and amenities, natural, cultural, historic and recreational. *[Planning staff, spring 2007]* (See Future Land Use objective 1.5 and Transportation objective 1.3)

Objective 1.2: Thoroughly review and revise, as necessary, existing development regulations and standards to promote creativity and/or flexibility in project design to better integrate natural and built components.

Policy 1.2.1: Review the Subdivision section of the Development Ordinance, and pursue amendments as deemed necessary to foster more creativity and infuse land stewardship. *[Planning staff/Design Community, initiate fall 2006]*

Policy 1.2.2: Review Mixed-Use Development standards in the Development Ordinance, and pursue amendments as deemed necessary, to foster more creativity in design. *[Planning Department, winter 2007]* (See Housing policy 2.4.7)

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- Policy 1.2.3: Create incentives to stimulate development of infill and underdeveloped sites with public water and/or sewer access. *[Planning staff/City staff, fall 2006]* (See Housing objective 1.2)
- Policy 1.2.4: Utilize the County’s Environmental Review Board in conjunction with the drafting of future Development Ordinance amendments. *[Planning & Development staff/ERB, as deemed appropriate]*
- Objective 1.3: Pursue prompt remedial or corrective actions in regard to infractions involving soil erosion, illegal dumping, watershed, and floodplain regulations; prudently utilize enforcement procedures, as deemed necessary, to obtain compliance.
- Policy 1.3.1: Utilize scheduled site inspections to assure on-going project compliance with erosion control, watershed protection, and floodplain regulations. *[Planning & Development/CED staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.3.2: Provide timely investigations and responses to citizen generated complaints regarding potential violations of environmental regulations. *[Planning & Development / Environmental Health staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.3.3: Follow the progression of enforcement procedures, as stated in the Development Ordinance, to resolve situations of non-compliance. *[Planning staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.3.4: Work collaboratively with external agencies charged with environmental enforcement responsibilities (e.g., NC Division of Water Quality) on issues outside the scope of local control. *[NCDENR/Planning & Development staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.3.5: Increase responsiveness to citizen complaints regarding landfills and illegal dumping by pursuing a Memorandum of Understanding with NCDENR for local enforcement and inspections. *[CED, On-going]*
- Objective 1.4: Promote the expansion, restoration, and protection of Guilford County’s land, water, and air resources through respectful management of development, acquisition of sensitive areas, responsible waste management, and public education.

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- Policy 1.4.1: Review contents of the “Early Action Compact” document, evaluate and seek continuation of successful strategies and initiatives to address air quality issues. *[PTCOG/PART/Planning staff, On-going]* (See Transportation policy 1.6.1)
- Policy 1.4.2: Use the County’s Open Space Committee to evaluate and rank potential sites for public acquisition utilizing dedicated bond funds. *[CED/Open Space Committee, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.3: Provide support to the Environmental Review Board and Open Space Committee to foster public education efforts and promote land stewardship campaigns. *[Planning & Development/CED staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.4: Explore alternative funding sources to support and expand open space acquisitions. *[CED/Open Space Committee, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.5: Support retention of viable agricultural areas by encouraging traditional and nontraditional farm uses, including for example agri-tourism, organic farming, and viniculture; provide technical assistance in conjunction with Cooperative Extension, state and federal programs, and conservation organizations. *[Cooperative Extension/Planning staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.6: Diligently protect the County’s surface water resources by thorough watershed and erosion control plan review and site inspections, delineation and protection of stream corridors, timely investigations of alleged violations, and adherence to use restrictions within watershed tiers. *Planning & Development staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.7: Continue annual stormwater pond maintenance inspection program. *[Planning & Development staff, On-going]*
- Policy 1.4.8: Survey County owned properties and inventory water quality devices thereon as required pursuant to NPDES Phase II. *[Planning & Development staff, fall 2006]*
- Policy 1.4.9: Incorporate drought-tolerant and native species into the landscape code for usage around water-bodies, within farm

## **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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buffers, and other appropriate areas. *[Planning staff/Cooperative Extension, spring 2007]*

Policy 1.4.10: Support public information campaigns related to water conservation/use reduction efforts. *[Municipal service providers/Environmental Health, On-going]*

Policy 1.4.11: Acquire information concerning the quality and quantity of groundwater resources to form baseline information for future monitoring purposes. *[NCDENR, annual estimates]*

Policy 1.4.12: Support efforts to protect existing forested areas and to establish new forest growth, especially in areas buffering streams, lakes, and other wetlands; in areas of steep slopes; in areas buffering agricultural uses; and in critical natural habitats. *[Open Space Committee, On-going]*

Policy 1.4.13: Investigate opportunities to incorporate “firewise” landscaping design standards into the Development Ordinance. *[Planning/EMS staff, spring 2007]*

Objective 1.5: Seek a continuous open space system throughout Guilford County and beyond, preserving wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, and uplands of significant ecological value and/or greenway connections.

Policy 1.5.1: Continue to implement recommendations of the Guilford County Open Space Report. *[CED, On-going]*

Policy 1.5.2: Incorporate Development Ordinance requirements of floodplain dedication, when applicable, during the review, approval and recording of new subdivisions. *[Planning staff, spring 2008]*

Policy 1.5.3: Continue to support, both with staff and technical resources, the Haw River State Park initiative and other multi-jurisdictional open space and recreational initiatives. *[CED/Open Space Committee/Planning staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.5.4: Update the County’s “Future Open Space and Parks” Map. *[CED/GIS, winter 2007]*

Objective 1.6: In conjunction with interested stakeholders, support public information/awareness endeavors to promote land stewardship and alternative means of private land dedication and preservation.

## **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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Policy 1.6.1: Provide linkages on the Department’s website for non-governmental and not for profit entities engaged in private land dedication and preservation endeavors. *[CED/Planning, fall 2006]*

Policy 1.6.2: Support alternatives such as conservation easements, “less-than-fee simple” transactions, and life estates, to promote land stewardship and private land dedication/preservation. *[CED/Planning/Piedmont Land Conservancy, On-going]*

Policy 1.6.3: The County will participate in local and regional forums designed to enhance public awareness of land stewardship alternatives. *[CED/Planning, On-going]*

Objective 1.7: Collaborate with regional efforts to address multi-jurisdictional issues such as air quality, stormwater management, solid waste, Jordan Lake nutrient loading, and NPDES Phase II.

Policy 1.7.1: Guilford County will participate in regional efforts that address multi-jurisdictional environmental issues such as air quality, stormwater management, NPDES Phase II and Jordan Lake nutrient loading. *[Planning & Development staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.7.2: The County shall seek partnerships with other affected jurisdictions to develop mutually beneficial, cost-saving strategies, to address environmental issues. *[Planning & Development staff, beginning winter 2007]*

Policy 1.7.3: The County will host local forums to educate design professionals and other stakeholders on emerging environmental regulations, and their impact on future land development. *[Planning & Development staff, On-going]*

Policy 1.7.4: Investigate alternative funding/revenue sources to help offset future costs associated with Guilford County’s compliance with un-funded State and Federal environmental mandates. *[Planning & Development staff, spring 2007]*

Objective 1.8: Encourage the use of clean fuels and clean fuel technologies; support new construction methods, materials, and practices that are structurally sound yet environmentally friendly.

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Policy 1.8.1: Organize a multi-disciplinary team to review and recommend acceptance of new construction technologies, methods, materials and practices that are environmentally friendly. [*Inspections/Planning and Environmental Health, beginning fall 2006*] (See Housing policy 2.1.1)

Policy 1.8.2: Investigate public/private opportunities to promote the use and availability of clean and alternative fuels throughout Guilford County. [*CED, On-going*] (See Transportation objective 1.2)

Policy 1.8.3: Encourage and support local research of new and evolving changes in construction technologies by local colleges and universities. [*Planning/Colleges, initiate dialogue winter 2007*] (See Housing policy 2.1.2)

Objective 1.9: Acting as the lead agency, the County will continue to partner with local municipalities to implement and update the County's solid waste management plan, in order to ensure the protection of the public health and the environment.

Policy 1.9.1: Continue and expand existing public education programs that encourage proper disposal of solid waste and discourage littering and illegal dumping. [*CED, On-going*]

Policy 1.9.2: Increase responsiveness to solid waste-related citizen complaints by instituting a Memorandum of Understanding and Delegation of Authority with NCDENR for local landfill inspections, by amending the County Solid Waste Ordinance to add strength to enforcement and to mirror the MOU, by pursuing cooperation from cities and towns to inspect and investigate environmental matters within the incorporated areas of the County, by implementing a surveillance program for illegal dumping and by enforcing state and local environmental laws and ordinances. [*CED, spring 2007*]

Policy 1.9.3: Expand recycling and disposal options, and ensure the availability of solid waste services for all County residents. [*CED, On-going initiative*]

Policy 1.9.4: Ensure that all current and future state recycling mandates and landfill bans are properly implemented. [*CED, On-going*]

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- Policy 1.9.5: Expand our solid waste management planning partnership by fostering relationships with other counties and cities in the Triad, for the purpose of developing regional solid waste management planning and programs. *[CED, spring 2007]*
- Policy 1.9.6: Assist with the distribution of public information related to recycling. *[CED, On-going]*
- Objective 1.10: To preserve, protect, enhance, and support historic and cultural resources throughout Guilford County.
- Policy 1.10.1: Continue to support the efforts of the Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission, as lead agency, in conjunction with other local public and/or private programs and services. *[Planning staff/GCHPC, On-going]*
- Policy 1.10.2: Increase public awareness and appreciation of Guilford County's rich historic and cultural traditions through outreach campaigns, websites, publications, and educational forums. *[GCHPC, On-going]*
- Policy 1.10.3: Pursue the creation and initial seed money for a "revolving fund" or similar low/no interest loan pool to support acquisition, restoration and maintenance of structures of significant historical value. *[Planning staff/BOCC, spring 2008]*
- Policy 1.10.4 Consider the waiver of building fees, site development fees, and other regulatory fees, in conjunction with the relocation or restoration of structures of significant historical value. *[Planning staff/BOCC, summer 2008]*
- Policy 1.10.5 Seek new and expanded partnerships with governmental and private organizations dedicated to historic preservation and the protection of cultural resources. *[Planning staff, On-going]*

# *ATTACHMENT A*

## Residential Rezoning Guidance Matrix

## REZONING GUIDANCE MATRIX - RESIDENTIAL

### REQUIRED ANALYSIS

### OPTIONAL ANALYSIS (\*Pre-Application Conference Required)

Applicable Area Plan Future Land Use Designation	Public Water & Sewer Available?	Public Sewer Only?	Community Well and/or Septic System?	Within a Watershed Critical Area (WCA)?	Base Range of Densities and Zoning Alternatives  (Dwelling Units Per Acre)	Adjacent to Existing Single Family Residential?	Adjacent to Existing Multifamily Residential?	Adjacent to Existing Commercial, Industrial or Institutional Uses?	Will Project Be Located on an In-fill or Underdeveloped Site?	Will Project Incorporate Affordable Housing Units?	Will Project Be Clustered and/or Provide Above Minimum Open Space?	Does Project Demonstrate Innovative or Context Sensitive Design?	Will Project be Mixed-Use?	Is Project Within Identified Primary Growth Area of Adjacent Municipality?	Does The Project Advance Other Comprehensive Plan Objectives and Policies?	Expanded Range of Possible Densities and Zoning Alternatives  (Dwelling Units Per Acre)
<b>Rural District or Residential / Agriculture</b>					<b>0 – 2</b> <b>RS-40, RS-30, RS-20, RPD</b>											<b>2 – 4</b> <b>CU-RS-20, CU-RS-15, PD-R, RPD</b>
<b>Residential Single Family</b>					<b>1 – 4</b> <b>RS-40, RS-30, RS-20, RS-15, PD-R, RPD</b>											<b>4 – 8</b> <b>CU-RS-15, CU-RS-9, CU-RS-7, PD-R, RPD</b>
<b>Residential Multifamily</b>					<b>4 – 12</b> <b>RS-9, RS-7, RS-5, RM-5, RM-8, RM-12, PD-R</b>											<b>6 – 26</b> <b>CU-RM-8, CU-RM-12, CU-RM-18, CU-RM-26, PD-R, PD-M, CU-GO-M</b>

\*\* See Reverse Side for Purpose and Intent Statement \*\*

## **Residential Rezoning Guidance Matrix – Purpose and Intent**

The Rezoning Guidance Matrix- Residential is intended to promote greater flexibility in land use decision-making, by recognizing that certain development characteristics will advance the goals of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan.

By using adopted Area Plans as a base for land use recommendations, and by determining compatibility with existing and proposed adjacent uses, the matrix creates additional land use development options and opportunities for applicants who are willing to incorporate certain characteristics or products into their developments. Specifically:

1. Projects located on in-fill or underdeveloped sites, as defined by the Planning Department, promote the efficient use of existing infrastructure and resources, and may be appropriate for higher-density development;
2. Projects that incorporate affordable housing contribute a much-needed product in unincorporated Guilford County, and can be provided at lower per-unit costs through increased overall densities;
3. Developments that utilize innovative and sustainable building practices, or contain a mix of uses that incorporate the safe and efficient provision of alternative modes of transportation, will help lower energy costs and improve air quality, and should be encouraged;
4. Projects that preserve Guilford County’s rural heritage by dedicating open space, or by exhibiting low-impact, context-sensitive design that respects and contributes to the rural landscape, will lessen the visual impact of new development and should be incentivized; and
5. Developments that show innovation in advancing other Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies should be encouraged by recommending greater flexibility in overall density.

It is important for users and citizens to understand that each development will be carefully considered on its own unique circumstances and merits. The purpose for having a range of “possible densities” is to recognize differences among developments, both in terms of internal attributes and amenities, and external factors and circumstances. There are no absolute values assigned to individual optional analysis categories, nor do the categories listed on the matrix limit consideration of other pertinent factors. Further, not all developments will warrant additional densities above those called for in the applicable Area Plan.

A pre-application conference is required for all projects seeking densities above those called for on the applicable Area Plan. Any project deemed eligible for additional density will be required to be presented for rezoning as a conditional use. Guilford County assumes no responsibility for rezoning requests that may be denied.