# ATTACHMENT B – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Chapter 3 GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**ALBEMARLE COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Promote the efficient use of County resources through a combination of:

A. Protecting the elements that define the Rural Area:
   - Agricultural resources
   - Forestry resources
   - Land preservation
   - Land conservation
   - Water supply resources
   - Natural resources
   - Scenic resources
   - Historical, archaeological, and cultural resources and

B. Promoting the Development Areas as the place where a variety of land uses, facilities, and services exist and are planned to support the County's future growth, with emphasis placed on density and high quality design in new and infill development.

**Chapter 4 NATURAL RESOURCES**

**History of Watershed Protection in Albemarle County**

The County's water resources programs include stormwater management (including water quality treatment, and channel and flood protection), erosion and sediment control, stream buffer protection, collection of groundwater information, capital projects, public education, illicit discharge detection and elimination, and infrastructure maintenance. These activities are a result of comprehensive planning and regulations to protect water resources since the 1970s. In 1980, most land in water-supply watersheds was designated rural in order to prevent and reduce pollution and development potential in the Rural Area was restricted. In 1982, the Crozet and Ivy development areas, both located in water-supply watersheds, were further reduced. In 1998, the County adopted a Water Protection Ordinance (WPO) that strengthened stream buffers, updated stormwater treatment criteria, and better connected water quality protection to land use issues. The WPO was amended in 2014 to implement new State stormwater and pollution prevention programs. The County's zoning ordinance has provided flood protection measures since 1980, which were strengthened by the WPO. In 2014, the zoning ordinance was amended to implement new FEMA requirements for protecting floodplains, which are on most major streams in the County.

**Objective 2: Protect air quality.**

Strategy 2a: Help protect local and regional air quality by reducing the County's carbon footprint and by promoting alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles, such as walking, bicycle use, ride-sharing, and public transit services.

**Strategy 5b: Continue to protect critical slopes in the Rural Area.**

Critical slopes are areas with a slope of 25% or greater. Protecting these slopes improves soil retention, helps to retain forests, and enhances water quality. In the Rural Area especially, clearing, grading, building, cropping, and overgrazing of critical slopes can result in extensive erosion and landslides or sloughing of soil and rock; excessive stormwater runoff, increased siltation and sedimentation (which affects the health of aquatic ecosystems); loss of aesthetic resource; and, in the event of septic system failure, a greater travel distance for septic effluent (which affects both drinking-water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems). Protection measures for critical slopes include: continuing to prohibit construction on critical slopes except where necessary to build or access the first dwelling on a parcel; providing education materials to the public about critical slope protection. Standards for designing public roads and building County projects are found in the Appendix.

**Chapter 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Objective 1: Promote economic development activities that help build on the County's assets while recognizing distinctions between expectations for the Development Areas and the Rural Area.**

**Strategy 1b: Promote agriculture, forestry, and agribusiness enterprises in the Rural Area that help support the Rural Area goals for a strong agricultural and forestal economy.**

**Objective 4: Ensure that there is sufficient land to accommodate future business and industrial growth, and plan for infrastructure to serve employment areas where these businesses are located.**

**Strategy 4a: Provide a strategic assessment of properties available for existing business expansion, start-up industries, and desirable locations for target industries. Continue to assess the quality of the areas designated for business and industry to ensure that there is land for business and industrial growth with parcels of suitable size, topography, location, and infrastructure.**

**Strategy 4b: Encourage development of business and industrial uses in the Development Areas on appropriately zoned land and consider proactively rezoning land to allow for light industrial uses that have been identified on master plans**.

**Chapter 7 RURAL AREA**

**Land Use Plan for the Rural Area**

Policy and Zoning Ordinance changes are recommended to promote the County's preferred uses for the Rural Area, including supportive uses for agriculture, historic preservation, tourism, crossroads communities, and strengthening land conservation initiatives. The strategies discussed in this Chapter all share the goal of helping to keep the Rural Area rural.

**Chapter 8 DEVELOPMENT AREA**

**Objective 2: Create a physical environment that supports healthy lifestyles through application of the Neighborhood Model Principles**

Respecting Terrain and Careful Grading and Re-grading of Terrain Strategy

**Strategy 2p: Encourage developers to design buildings that fit into the terrain rather than flattening the land for trademark buildings.**

Albemarle County's mountains, streams, and valleys provide spectacular views and makes the Rural Area a place of beauty and tranquility. In the Development Areas, a similar topography provides character but also presents significant challenges for development. The strategies listed in this section address the desire to retain certain features of landscape as it is developed. This principle also notes the need for attention to final finished grades when grading is essential.

Albemarle County's hilly terrain can be advantageous to builders and developers. More interesting and potentially functional buildings can be designed when some of the features of the existing landscape are retained. In addition, grading costs can be lowered when sites are not "flattened" for large single-story buildings. These features give Albemarle its own character and separate it from the myriad of communities with franchise buildings and large parking lots lining primary streets. Developers should carefully consider the costs of designing buildings that work with the terrain and compare the design costs to grading costs. If the difference is minimal, a better result may be achieved through an individualized building design.

**Objective 4: Use Development Area land efficiently to prevent premature expansion of the Development Areas**