

# Rural Zoning in Fluvanna County

Board of Supervisors  
Discussion  
November 7, 2012

Fluvanna County  
Dept. of Planning & Community Development



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# Overview

**Since the 1990s, the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and Fluvanna County residents have discussed methods of managing growth in rural areas.**

**Many residents are concerned that rapid development threatens the unique character of Fluvanna County's rural areas and negatively impacts their quality-of-life.**

**•Discussion Topics:**

- Current Development Trends in Rural Areas**
- History of Rural Preservation Issues in Fluvanna County**
- Growth Management Tools for Rural Areas**

# Part I: Current Development Trends in Rural Areas

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# Population Growth

Fluvanna County

## Fluvanna County Population (1970 – 2010)

Census	Population	% Change from Previous Census
1970	7,621	5.5
1980	10,244	34.4
1990	12,429	21.3
2000	20,047	61.3
2010	25,691	28.2

## Population Projections

Year	2009 Comp. Plan (Virginia Employment Commission)	Weldon Cooper Center (Preliminary Projections: October 2012)
2010	28,971 (2010 Census: 25,691)	-
2020	37,433	29,009
2030	47,010	31,839
2040	-	34,537

# Building Permits

Fluvanna County

## Building Permits for New Homes by Planning Area

<b>Planning Area</b>	<b>Number of Building Permits for New Homes (2001 – 2011)*</b>	<b>% of Building Permits (2001 – 2011)*</b>
Community Planning Areas	1,462	55.5
Primary Residential Areas	263	10.0
Rural Residential Areas	444	16.9
Rural Preservation Areas	464	17.6
Total Countywide	2,633	100.0

\*Primary residential areas were designated within the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, but were removed from the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

# Subdivision Activity

Fluvanna County

## Subdivision Activity by Planning Area (2001 – 2011)

Year	Community Planning Area	Primary Residential Planning Area	Rural Residential Planning Area	Rural Preservation Planning Area	Total
2001	21	70	11	43	145
2002	26	69	13	98	206
2003	67	40	97	172	376
2004	67	63	91	199	420
2005	228	102	115	501	946
2006	32	44	250	392	718
2007	79	17	75	418	589
2008	80	4	33	33	150
2009	2	0	48	40	90
2010	40	0	45	30	115
2011	6	0	2	14	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>3,777</b>

\* Primary Residential Planning Areas were eliminated in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

# Development Activity: Quick Facts

Fluvanna County

- **2,633 new homes** were constructed in Fluvanna County from 2001 to 2011 (32.8% increase from 2000 Census).
- **3,777 lots were created** between 2001 and 2011.
- There are **6,181 vacant parcels** in Fluvanna County, totaling 104,377.15 acres, with an average size of 16.89 acres.
- There are **36 lots** approved between 2004 and 2011 that have not been recorded.
- There are **27 major subdivisions** submitted since 2004 that have had a sketch plan or preliminary plan approved, but have not received final approval. These 27 major subdivisions contain **1,332 lots**. Most of these subdivisions (24 of 27) are rural cluster subdivisions.

# Development Potential: Current Zoning

Fluvanna County

5,000 parcels with 5 acres or more (178,349.90 acres) (March 2012).

178,349.90 acres

- 5% (8,917.5 acres) for roads and other infrastructure
- 20% (35,670.0) unbuildable due to environmental conditions (wetlands, steep slopes, etc.)
- 12,488.6 acres in conservation easements

121,273.8 developable acres within parcels with 5 acres or more

121,273.8 acres x 0.5 dwellings per acre = 60,636.9 dwellings

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**Approximately 60,636 lots could be created on existing parcels with 5 acres or more, if the assumptions above are accurate.**

With an average household size in Fluvanna County of 2.58 (2000 Census), 60,636 new houses could cause a population increase of 156,440 (+608.93% increase from 2010 population).

# Part II: History of Rural Preservation Issues in Fluvanna County

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# Development Activity: Quick Facts

Fluvanna County

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>November 1998</b>                 | Agricultural & Forestal District (AFD) Program Created   |
| <b>March 1999</b>                    | First Heritage Forum Held  |
| <b>November 1999</b>                 | Second Heritage Forum Held   |
| <b>April 2002</b>                    | Third Heritage Forum Held  |
| <b>April 2004</b>                    | Changes to the zoning and subdivision ordinance require major subdivisions in the A-1 zoning district to be clustered                  |
| <b>November 2004</b>                 | Proposed Rural Preservation zoning district and changes to the A-1 zoning district were rejected by the Board of Supervisors           |
| <b>June 2006</b>                     | Conservation Easements program Created   |
| <b>March 2010</b>                    | Five (5) public meetings, sponsored by the Fluvanna County Planning Department, held countywide to discuss rural zoning issues         |
| <b>March 2010 –<br/>October 2010</b> | The Rural Zoning Task Force (RZTF), appointed by the Board of Supervisors, develops recommendations for managing growth in rural areas |

# Rural Zoning Task Force (RZTF)

Fluvanna County

The Rural Zoning Task Force (RZTF) developed recommendations for managing growth in rural areas.

- May 2010: Board of Supervisors appoints RZTF
- Sept./Oct. 2010: RZTF makes recommendations to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Based on the recommendations of the RZTF, the Planning Commission developed 3 new rural zoning districts in 2011. These zoning districts utilized several growth management tools:

- Limited the number of divisions permitted per parcel;
- Accommodated the future implementation of a Transfer of Development (TDR) program; and
- Revised the existing regulations for rural cluster subdivisions.

# Part III: Managing Growth in Rural Areas

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# Growth Management in Fluvanna County

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Fluvanna County is already using the comprehensive plan, zoning, and other policies to help protect rural areas by:

- Establishing designated growth areas (Community Planning Areas) in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan;
- Administering a Conservation Easements Program;
- Administering an Agricultural & Forestal District (AFD) program;
- Utilizing a Land Use Taxation program;
- Requiring major subdivisions to be designed as rural clusters; and
- Establishing significant setback and frontage requirements.

# Comprehensive Plan: Rural Areas

Fluvanna County

**11 goals** and **25 implementation strategies** within the 2009 Comprehensive Plan relate to rural zoning and rural preservation.

These goals and strategies are found within the *Natural Environment, Land Use, Community Design, Infrastructure, Housing, and Economic Development* chapters.

There are two (2) land use classifications for rural areas within the 2009 Comprehensive Plan:

- Rural Residential (1 unit per 2 acres)
- Rural Preservation (1 unit per 5 acres)

# Growth Management across Virginia

Fluvanna County

Other Virginia localities are using the following tools to manage growth in rural areas:

- Permit major subdivisions only in residential zoning districts;
- Require major subdivisions to connect to public utilities;
- Allow for large-lot subdivisions with reduced improvements;
- Downzone rural areas, reducing permitted density;
- Implement sliding-scale zoning;
- Limit the number of divisions per parcel;
- Create an overlay district for select areas;
- Create a Transfer of Development Rights program; and/or
- Revise the existing regulations for rural cluster subdivisions.

# Next Steps

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# Next Steps

The Planning Commission has expressed interest in working with the Board of Supervisors to amend the rural zoning regulations, to help protect these areas from premature and incompatible development.

**The Planning Commission would like the Board of Supervisors to provide input regarding the county's rural zoning policies.**

- Should the Planning Commission pursue changes to existing rural zoning regulations?
- Are there any particular growth management tools the Board of Supervisors would like the Planning Commission to further investigate?