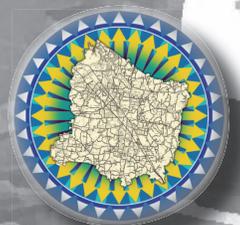


**FINAL DRAFT**

*Rutherford County*  
**Comprehensive Plan**

**December 13, 2010**

Rutherford County, Tennessee







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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Rutherford County Board of Commissioners 2006 - 2010

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### Historic Photographs

Courtesy Rutherford County Archives, Shacklett's Historic Photograph Collection





## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

### RUTHERFORD COUNTY IN THE YEAR 2035

Rutherford County is widely recognized as a desirable place to work, raise a family and enjoy life in Middle Tennessee. Superior schools, vibrant rural communities, protected landscapes and a strong community spirit create a quality of life that is the envy of the region. Pride in the community is evident. The county is financially secure due to a strong industrial base and a wide variety of commercial services. Over the last several years, the county has enjoyed success in attracting the headquarters of major corporations, further diversifying the economic base. Important keys to a strong local economy are careful planning of employment sites along major transportation routes, an educated and motivated workforce and a variety of available housing choices.

The county has enjoyed great success in guiding development to appropriate areas that protect sensitive resources, takes advantage of previous infrastructure investments and strengthen rural communities. County leaders adopted development policies to

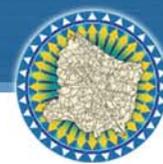
encourage more dense and mixed use development in villages and rural communities. Communities such as Kittrell, Christiana and Lascassas have benefitted from growth and investment creating stronger centers that retain their historic qualities and relationship to the larger county. Centers and villages are compact, attractively designed and walkable. They have good access to jobs and shopping and are desirable places to live. Guiding development to the county's traditional communities and settlements has provided other benefits, a primary one being a lessening of development pressures on rural areas of the county that are not prepared for growth.

Over the last several decades, there has been increased awareness of the importance of natural systems and the cultural heritage

and this is reflected in better resource protection. Protecting and enhancing resources is a major community goal and its importance is reflected in the county growth management system. Rutherford County has also moved decisively in providing transportation options and encouraging sustainable developments. The county works in partnership with Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne and Eagleville in coordinating a county-wide greenway and bikeway system, using both scenic rural roads and stream corridors. The county provides incentives to sustainable building practices and has written water conservation measures into the building code and subdivision regulations.

Rutherford County was able to achieve their long term goals by articulating how the county should grow and what policies and practices were necessary to achieve its citizens' vision for the future. The process for achieving county goals took time and patience. It was a process that continues to this day and enjoys strong community support. The road map for this journey was





the 2011 Rutherford County Comprehensive Plan. Writing the Comprehensive Plan began in 2009, partially in response to decades of rapid growth that was quickly changing the face of Rutherford County. Hundreds of citizens came together to participate in writing the plan which reflected a consensus opinion of the preferred development strategy. Once the plan was complete, the county devised the necessary regulatory tools and processes to implement the plan. The county continues to update the plan on a regular basis, as opportunities are identified and concerns become known.





## CHAPTER II. A CITIZEN-BASED PLANNING PROCESS

From the beginning of the planning process, Rutherford County leaders were committed to preparing a plan that was citizen-based – a ground up rather than top down document. Because the plan is a primary tool for development decision-making over the next several years, community leaders understood that broad public participation and support was critical to plan success. Assisted by planning staff and the PB planning team, citizens guided its preparation, developed the key strategies, achieved consensus on the plan’s direction and recommended it to the Planning Commission and County Commission for consideration.

It will be the job of elected and appointed officials in Rutherford County to ensure that the plan is faithfully implemented in policies and actions.

County leaders and planning staff developed a robust strategy for citizen engagement and public involvement. Their goal was to include every citizen, business and organization from throughout the county in preparing the Comprehensive Plan. To accomplish this, they employed traditional and emerging forms of communication in encouraging public involvement. They involved the print media, electronic media, web and blog outlets, public meetings, open

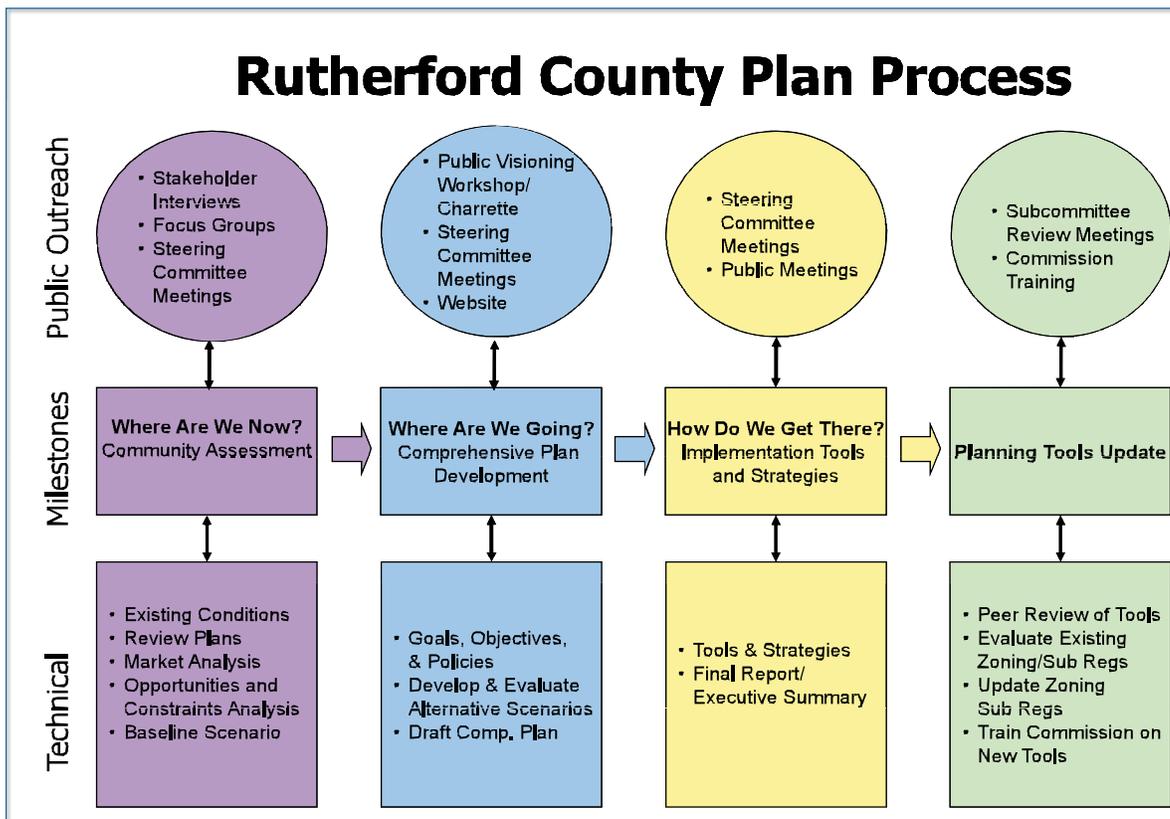
house meetings, individual and group interviews and public meetings – and did this consistently over the one and one-half year long plan development process.

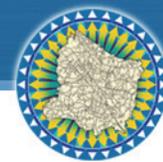
Hundreds of Rutherford County citizens have participated in preparing the Comprehensive Plan. A summary of the public participation process is described below.

### WEB & BLOGOSPHERE

County planning staff established links from the county website dedicated to the Comprehensive Plan ([http://rutherfordcountyttn.gov/planning/comp\\_pla.htm](http://rutherfordcountyttn.gov/planning/comp_pla.htm)) Information on progress in

preparing the plan, upcoming meetings, interim deliverables and related information were routinely posted to the website. To make this a truly interactive process, a blog was established to encourage expressions of opinion and commentary on various plan elements.





## COMMUNITY SURVEY

The purpose of the community survey was to solicit input and ideas from members of the community who might not be able to attend or are not comfortable in a public meeting. A survey was developed and posted on the website that asked both closed end (yes or no, agree or disagree) questions and provided opportunity for open-ended comments.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The planning team conducted a series of individual and group interviews with staff from neighboring jurisdictions, including Murfreesboro, LaVergne, Smyrna and Eagleville to share ideas on development strategies and to ensure intergovernmental cooperation was carefully coordinated. These jurisdictions remained involved throughout the planning process thereby expressing a commitment to intergovernmental coordination. The planning team also conducted a series of interviews with organizations and stakeholder groups to better understand their concerns and hopes for the plan. County planning

staff developed an initial list of interview candidates, and this was added to as additional groups were identified. Stakeholder interviews completed included:

- Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce
- Rutherford County Farm Bureau
- Rutherford County Historic Society
- Heritage Partnership
- Rutherford County Homebuilders Association
- Stones River Watershed Association
- National Park Service at Stones River Battlefield

- Rutherford Neighborhood Alliance
- Rutherford County School Board
- Rutherford County Bicycle Club

## OPEN HOUSES

Rutherford County is large and geographically diverse and this can present challenges in engaging all citizens from all parts of the county in the planning process. To counter this, county planning staff organized a series of open house and focus groups meetings to move the discussion to different parts of the community. The county was divided into four quadrants and an open house was organized in each. All of the open houses generated good discussions, and several were very well attended with over 50 participants. Open houses and the date of the meeting were:

- Lascassas, June 30, 2009
- Buchanan, July 1, 2009
- Rockvale, July 7, 2009
- Smyrna, July 8, 2009

**Rutherford County Comprehensive Plan**

*Make Plans Now to Attend an*

# Open House

**to discuss**  
**Issues and Opportunities**  
**Facing You & Your Community**

**June 30, 2009 at 6:00 PM**  
**Lascassas Elementary School**  
 6300 Lascassas Pike  
 Lascassas, TN

For more information, contact:  
 Mr. Doug Demosi  
 Rutherford County Planning  
 Department  
 615.898.7730

Rutherford County, Tennessee



## PLANNING DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH

County planning staff initiated a series of community outreach meetings to reinforce the commitment to taking the planning process out into the county. They prepared presentation materials of plan elements and set up a booth at community events. An important benefit of this effort was it better connected planning staff with the community and permitted more one - on - one conversations between county residents. Community outreach meeting locations and the dates of the meetings were:

- Walter Hill Fish Fry, August 1, 2009
- Lacasses Fish Fry, August 8, 2009
- Kittrell Ham Breakfast, August 15, 2009

## PLANNING COMMISSION & COUNTY COMMISSION BRIEFINGS

County planning staff, with the periodic participation of the planning team updated the Planning Commission and County Commission on the planning process. This provided the media and citizens additional opportunities to learn and comment on the process. A critical milestone with both bodies was the approval of the vision and goals statement of the comprehensive plan, which

occurred early in the planning process.

## STEERING COMMITTEE & PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is the front line working group for the project. They are composed of a diverse cross section of the community representing different geographic areas, interests, races and genders. Their leadership was critical in developing a plan that has broad-based community support. They analyzed the data with care, listened to different voices in the community, brought ideas to the process and reached critical decisions by consensus. The Steering Committee met at regular intervals in preparing the plan. All meetings were advertised and open to the public. Steering Committee meetings included:

- May 18, 2009
- September 21, 2009
- October 22, 2009

- January 14, 2010
- February 10, 2010
- March 9, 2010
- May 14, 2010
- June 21, 2010
- September 20, 2010

The Steering Committee will stay involved through the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and during development of implementation tools: the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.





**The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee led an extensive public participation effort to prepare the plan.**





### III. RUTHERFORD COUNTY'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Rutherford County is a special place. Set amidst a location with beauty, abundant natural resources and a rich history, the county joins its people and the land in a way that makes it unique within Middle Tennessee.

Recognition of this uniqueness is the reason why this Comprehensive Plan has been prepared. County citizens and political leadership have set out a path to retain and enhance the values, culture, landscape and opportunities that define Rutherford County. The way forward begins with the common purpose and shared understanding of our desired future. This is the vision statement that lays the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Writing a vision statement is a key milestone in development of the Comprehensive Plan. Both the process of developing the

vision statement and the value statement have been created through a collaborative process and are valuable steps. In developing the vision statement, the community has identified the

values of Rutherford County and strives to articulate them in clear, understandable language. Our values statement describes what we believe is important; what should remain unchanged and what should change; and how we will collectively pursue our vision.

**Vision**

**Rutherford County seeks sustainable growth that protects our natural and historic resources, while preserving our values, qualities and culture.**

**Values Statement**

Rutherford County is a unique place in Middle Tennessee. Our values reflect who we are and what we believe in. These values and beliefs will guide our actions as we pursue our goals and aspirations. We are committed to maintaining the best qualities of Rutherford County for future generations while we recognize the inherent rights of property owners and we will wisely manage our resources to achieve our goals.

Our land is our most precious resource. It defines who we are and is the driving force in the shape and character of our many communities. Our communities are set amid compelling historic and scenic resources. Our pastures, streams, forests and caves add beauty and economic value to our communities. Our sense of place is defined by our resources, and we will administer responsible policies to protect and enhance our resources.

Growth that is consistent with our stated values is critical to our future and our economic prosperity. Development in Rutherford County will be guided to suitable areas where services can be efficiently provided. We will support growth that is sustainable, provides employment opportunities and economic stability, and reflects the character and scale of our communities. We are committed to a responsive local government, transparent decision making and an engaged citizenry.



Public civic engagement uncovered divergent opinions and beliefs on what the way forward for Rutherford County should be – and we believe these differences should be valued and respected. More importantly, the process revealed a deep appreciation of what Rutherford County embodies in its communities of distinction and strong agreement of what goals and values county residents hold dear. These are articulated in the Vision Statement. The Vision Statement and related strategies were reviewed by the public and the Steering Committee and then forwarded to the County Commission for review and were adopted. The Vision, Values Statement, and Goals and Objectives are the guiding framework for the Comprehensive Plan.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Ten goal statements were developed to express the desires of the stakeholders and citizens. Each goal statement appears as a numbered statement in the blue boxes below. Each goal statement is followed by a list of multiple objectives which describe how the goal will be achieved. Objectives are listed in the colored boxes below each goal statement.

### Goal Statement 1:

Ensure growth policies that recognize land is a limited resource and that growth should occur where suitable land use and public services can be economically provided

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 1:

- A.** Revise the county's growth management tools, including zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations;
- B.** Guide development to create commercial and residential nodes rather than residential sprawl;
- C.** Analyze cost, benefit and policy implications of development impact fees;
- D.** Discourage development in areas with marginal soils, inadequate public services or inadequate transportation;
- E.** Maintain the traditional rural character of Rutherford County and guide development to areas identified as suitable for higher densities;
- F.** Work with the School Board to locate new schools closer to existing and planned housing;
- G.** Where feasible, locate new community services and facilities, such as recreational facilities, in concert with school sites to create anchors and connections for new and existing communities; and
- H.** Establish growth and development policies that respect individual property owner's rights while seeking consensus on future development goals.



**Goal Statement 2:**

Cultivate an environment attractive to new business investment and retention and expansion of existing businesses

**Objectives associated with Goal Statement 2:**

- A.** Adopt economic development policies that contribute to broader county goals of economic stability, resource protection and that define and encourage a high quality of life;
- B.** Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure appropriate land and resources for recruitment and retention of businesses;
- C.** Cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions in securing land, access to transportation and infrastructure to attract employers;
- D.** Provide good schools, community facilities, housing choices and a high quality of life to attract employers;
- E.** Build on the excellent reputation of Rutherford County schools and partner with Middle Tennessee State University to identify skill sets for existing and emerging job markets that create employment opportunities within the County;
- F.** Designate and reserve optimal employment areas from inappropriate development using the Comprehensive Plan; and
- G.** Adopt appropriate design standards for commercial, office and related uses to promote attractive, functional and sustainable development.

**Goal Statement 3:**

Strengthen rural communities

**Objectives associated with Goal Statement 3**

- A.** Recognize the history and importance of rural communities in planning and zoning documents;
- B.** Adopt zoning and development controls requirements, via overlay districts, to encourage redevelopment of rural communities; and
- C.** Protect visual qualities that contribute to a positive experience when entering rural communities.





#### Goal Statement 4:

Protect and enhance open spaces in a connected network of parks, trees and stream corridors in creating a healthy environment

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 4:

- A.** Investigate the feasibility of establishing a county land trust;
- B.** Encourage dedication of conservation easements for irreplaceable resources;
- C.** Develop a pilot scenic corridor management plan on one or more high quality corridors; and
- D.** Integrate county greenways into a consolidated Murfreesboro and Rutherford County system.



#### Goal Statement 5:

Provide neighborhoods that create a sense of community and connectedness

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 5:

- A.** Provide on and off street bike and pedestrian connections between development areas;
- B.** Discourage development that functions to create isolated islands in the rural landscape;
- C.** Allow for a mixture of uses that compliments existing and planned community character; and
- D.** Encourage land to be reserved for schools within or adjacent to subdivisions in high growth areas.

#### Goal Statement 6:

Conserve and enhance significant natural landscapes and historic and cultural resources

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 6:

- A.** Adopt guidelines for identification, evaluation and protection of irreplaceable resources as part of the land development process;
- B.** Create an overlay district to protect sensitive natural areas from development;
- C.** Create a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program; and
- D.** Adopt "right to farm" protection in development regulations.



**Goal Statement 7:**

Provide transportation options

**Objectives associated with Goal Statement 7:**

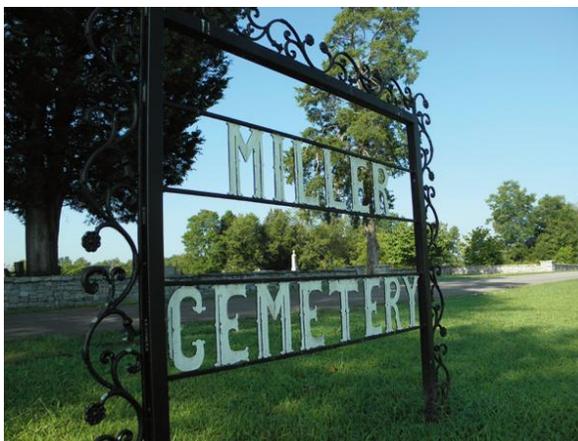
- A.** Expand the non-motorized transportation routes in all county municipalities and other parts of the county;
- B.** Participate in efforts to evaluate commuter rail between the county and downtown Nashville;
- C.** Expand bus service to population centers within the county;
- D.** Continue to administer policies to ensure adequate right-of-way is dedicated when development takes place adjacent routes to be upgraded;
- E.** Review right-of-way policies to facilitate all appropriate modes of transportation;
- F.** Limit development along roads with an inadequate level of service until funds or improvements to roads are in place; and
- G.** Select major transportation corridors for development as Gateway Districts into communities.

**Goal Statement 8:**

Provide infrastructure that efficiently delivers necessary service in designated growth areas

**Objectives associated with Goal Statement 8:**

- A.** Adopt facility service requirements to apportion the cost of growth appropriately;
- B.** Implement water-saving requirements in zoning and building codes; and
- C.** Investigate emerging technology for on-site sanitary sewer service.





### Goal Statement 9:

Maintain and enhance community and regional partnerships

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 9:

- A.** Formalize cooperative land use and development planning discussions with county municipalities;
- B.** Seek opportunities to consolidate services through intergovernmental agreements;
- C.** Seek a more collaborative working relationship between the School Board and the County Commission, and other municipalities; and
- D.** Collaborate with county municipalities in planning for development within urban growth boundaries.

### Goal Statement 10:

Ensure county development-decision making is transparent, fair and accountable to residents and taxpayers

#### Objectives associated with Goal Statement 10:

- A.** Expand use of internet-based tools for robust civic engagement; and
- B.** Establish continuing education for Planning Commission members, Board of Zoning Appeals members, and County Commissioners.

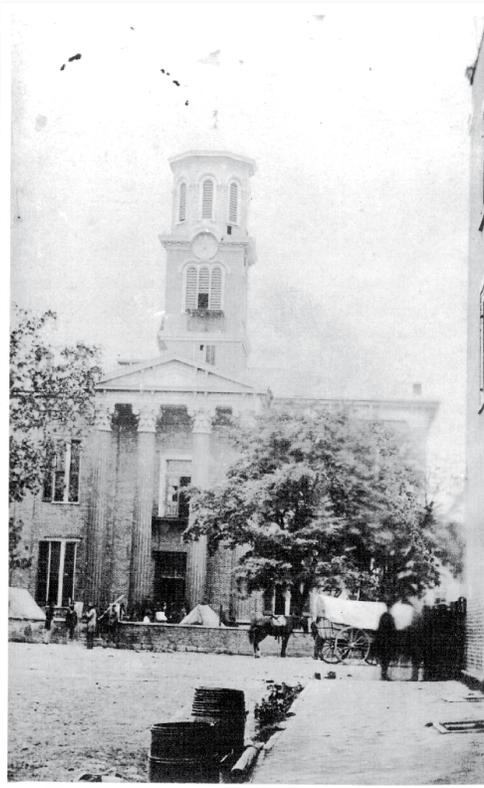




## CHAPTER IV. RUTHERFORD COUNTY'S HISTORY

As in most Tennessee counties, early settlement revolved around the ability of the land to support its inhabitants. Proximity to water, fertile lands, presence of trees and other potential building materials, all combined to help the earliest settlers after the Native Americans decide where their future communities should be built. Obstacles such as difficult soils, floods, and other hazards were part of the community-building process and were issues to be overcome if the community was to survive. In Rutherford County, first and foremost was the suitability of the land for growing crops and raising stock. According to Goodspeed's History of Tennessee, published in 1886 and 1887:

*"The soil of this county is exceedingly fertile, being either of a black or brownish red color; the latter color is doubtless due to the iron oxides contained in it. Although there are many places where the ground is apparently covered with Stone, yet by careful husbandry there are few places that cannot be made to yield a rich harvest to the careful and industrious husbandman. Fields that have been cultivated for nearly a century, and are apparently worn out by the cultivation of corn and cotton, are soon reclaimed by a few years' growth of red clover, or by seeding in the blue-grass, make excellent grazing lands."*



Credit: Library of Congress LC-BB151-10020

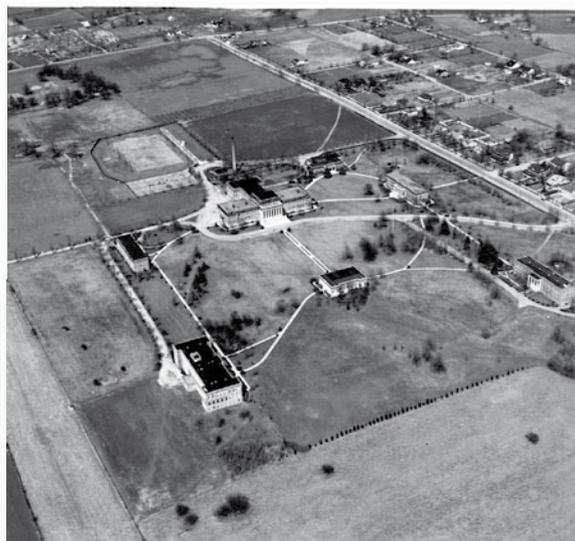
1863

Prior to settlement, Rutherford's lands were prime hunting and fishing lands for several Native American tribes. Rutherford County, named for Griffith Rutherford, a North Carolina legislator, Indian War soldier, and Chairman of the legislature of the Territory South of the River Ohio (later Tennessee), was created in 1803 from parts of Davidson, Williamson, and Wilson Counties.





After the Revolutionary War, much of Rutherford County was divided through land grants to Revolutionary War soldiers, some of whom sold the grants to others. Like most counties, communities were settled in Rutherford County based on common factors: access to water, railroad lines, or location along toll pikes and other regional travel ways. The Stones River was a transportation route as well as source of water and fish. The first county seat, Jefferson, was on its banks, but is now under the waters of Percy Priest Lake, which was created to control downriver flooding. The rail line that connected Nashville to Chattanooga became a draw for settlers, including present-day Laverne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro.



Long a part of Nashville's urban fringe, rapid growth in Davidson County and transportation improvements have transformed Rutherford County into a bedroom community of Greater Nashville, albeit one with a strong local industrial and job base.





## CHAPTER V. ECONOMIC & DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

### PEOPLE

#### State Trends

Based on figures compiled by the US Census Bureau, Rutherford County and its municipalities have a current combined 2008 population of 249,270, thus placing Rutherford as the fifth highest of Tennessee's counties by population (see Table 5.1). With combined municipal populations of 165,637 (based on certified populations by the State of Tennessee), unincorporated Rutherford County contains 83,633 residents.

#### Rutherford County & the Nashville Region

Rutherford County as a whole has experienced tremendous growth in every decade since 1970. The County has grown 319% since 1970, based on the estimated 2008 population. By comparison, the State of Tennessee has increased 58% in the same period. Growth in Davidson County and its contiguous counties has been steady since 1980. Table 5.2 shows the increase in the region as a whole, and the individual county population changes. For comparison purposes, Rutherford County is reviewed against Wilson County, Williamson County, Sumner County, Robertson County, Montgomery County, Cheatham County and Davidson County. In terms of each County as a percent of the total region,

Rutherford County has seen the most dramatic increases, both in absolute numbers and in percent of the region. From 1980 to the most recent 2008 US Census estimates, Rutherford County has increased its population by more than 165,000 persons, or a percent increase of almost 200%. Neighboring Williamson County has also seen a similar rate of growth, albeit with slightly smaller absolute numbers, but still more than tripled their 1980 population. The other counties

that were evaluated experienced growth that ranged from 75% to over 95% of their 1980 population. Metropolitan Davidson County has grown as well, but not at the pace of its adjacent counties. By contrast, Tennessee's growth over the same period was 35.37%.

#### Rutherford County & Municipalities

These growth figures lead to a trend line that suggests Rutherford County remains on track as one

Table 5.1: Population - 20 Largest Tennessee Counties		
County	2000	2008 (est.)
<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>5,689,283</b>	<b>6,214,888</b>
Shelby County	897,472	906,825
Davidson County	569,891	626,144
Knox County	382,032	430,019
Hamilton County	307,896	332,848
<b>Rutherford County</b>	<b>182,023</b>	<b>249,270</b>
Williamson County	126,638	171,452
Sumner County	130,449	155,474
Montgomery County	134,768	154,756
Sullivan County	153,048	153,900
Blount County	105,823	121,511
Washington County	107,198	118,639
Wilson County	88,809	109,803
Bradley County	87,965	96,472
Madison County	91,837	96,376
Sevier County	71,170	84,835
Maury County	69,498	81,938
Anderson County	71,330	74,169
Putnam County	62,315	71,160
Greene County	62,909	66,157
Robertson County	54,433	64,898



**Table 5.2: Population Change & Rate of Growth**

County	1970 Population	% Change	1980 Population	% Change	1990 Population	% Change	2000 Population	% Change	2008 Population	% Change 1980-2008
Rutherford	59,428	41.45%	84,058	41.06%	118,570	53.52%	182,023	36.94%	249,270	196.55%
Cheatham	13,199	63.77%	21,616	25.26%	27,140	32.32%	35,912	9.70%	39,396	82.25%
Davidson	448,003	6.65%	477,811	6.90%	510,784	11.57%	569,891	9.87%	626,144	31.04%
Montgomery	62,721	32.88%	83,342	20.59%	100,498	34.10%	134,768	14.83%	154,756	85.69%
Robertson	29,102	27.21%	37,021	12.08%	41,494	31.18%	54,433	19.23%	64,898	75.30%
Sumner	56,106	52.91%	85,790	20.39%	103,281	26.30%	130,449	19.18%	155,474	81.23%
Williamson	34,330	69.26%	58,108	39.43%	81,021	56.30%	126,638	35.39%	171,452	195.06%
Wilson	36,999	51.53%	56,064	20.71%	67,675	31.23%	88,809	23.64%	109,803	96.85%

of the fastest growing counties in the nation and the fastest growing county in Tennessee. Leading credence to that trend is a recent report, issued in May 2009 by the US Census Bureau, which placed Rutherford County as the 57th fastest growing county in the United States at the time of the report, and first in growth in Tennessee.

Rutherford County is home to four municipalities: Murfreesboro (the County seat), LaVergne, Smyrna,

and Eagleville. Each of these municipalities has seen population increases. Table 5.3 shows all Rutherford County municipalities and their population history since 1970. As the county seat, Murfreesboro has been the largest city in the County, and with the special census of 2007, crossed the 100,000 person threshold to a population of 100,575. This number represents a 46% increase over the 2000 population. Both Smyrna and LaVergne, located between

Murfreesboro and the Davidson County border, have experienced growth rates of 568% to 835% respectively over the period from 1970-2008. Even Eagleville, small by comparison, maintained a positive growth rate during the period despite its isolation from the other incorporated areas.

Of interest is the unincorporated portion of Rutherford County, which is the portion of the population not directly under the jurisdiction of any city or town in the County.

**Table 5.3: Rutherford County & Municipalities Population History 1970-2008**

Municipality	1970	% Change	1980	% Change	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2008	1970-2008
Murfreesboro	26,360	24.60%	32,845	36.77%	44,922	53.19%	68,816	46.15%	100,575	281.54%
Smyrna	5,698	55.12%	8,839	54.40%	13,647	87.36%	25,569	48.90%	38,073	568.18%
LaVergne	2,825	94.51%	5,495	36.47%	7,499	149.19%	18,687	41.42%	26,427	835.47%
Eagleville	437	1.60%	444	4.05%	462	0.43%	464	21.12%	562	28.60%
Rutherford Whole	59,428	41.45%	84,058	41.06%	118,570	53.52%	182,023	36.94%	249,270	319.45%
Rutherford Unincorporated	24,108	51.13%	36,435	42.83%	52,040	31.60%	68,487	22.12%	83,633	246.91%
Tennessee	3,923,687	17.01%	4,591,120	6.23%	4,877,185	16.65%	5,689,283	9.24%	6,214,888	58.30%
Unincorporated as % of total	40.57		43.35		43.89		37.63		33.55	



In unincorporated Rutherford County, density per square mile is 163 people per square mile, based on 2008 population estimates, compared to 407 people per square mile for the entire County. The density figure is an average, but even then, parts of the county have grown to be more dense than other areas. An analysis by census tract shows that, as expected, the census tracts with the greatest population density are those along I-24, in the Murfreesboro/LaVergne/Smyrna corridor.

Density, expressed on Figure 5.1 as population per square mile, increases from a low of 49 persons per square mile in the southeast areas of the county and 80 persons per square mile in the Eagleville area, to the 499 to 996 persons per square mile range in the LaVergne

and Smyrna tracts, to the highest densities of 2,091 to 5,322 persons per square mile in Murfreesboro and its immediate vicinity.

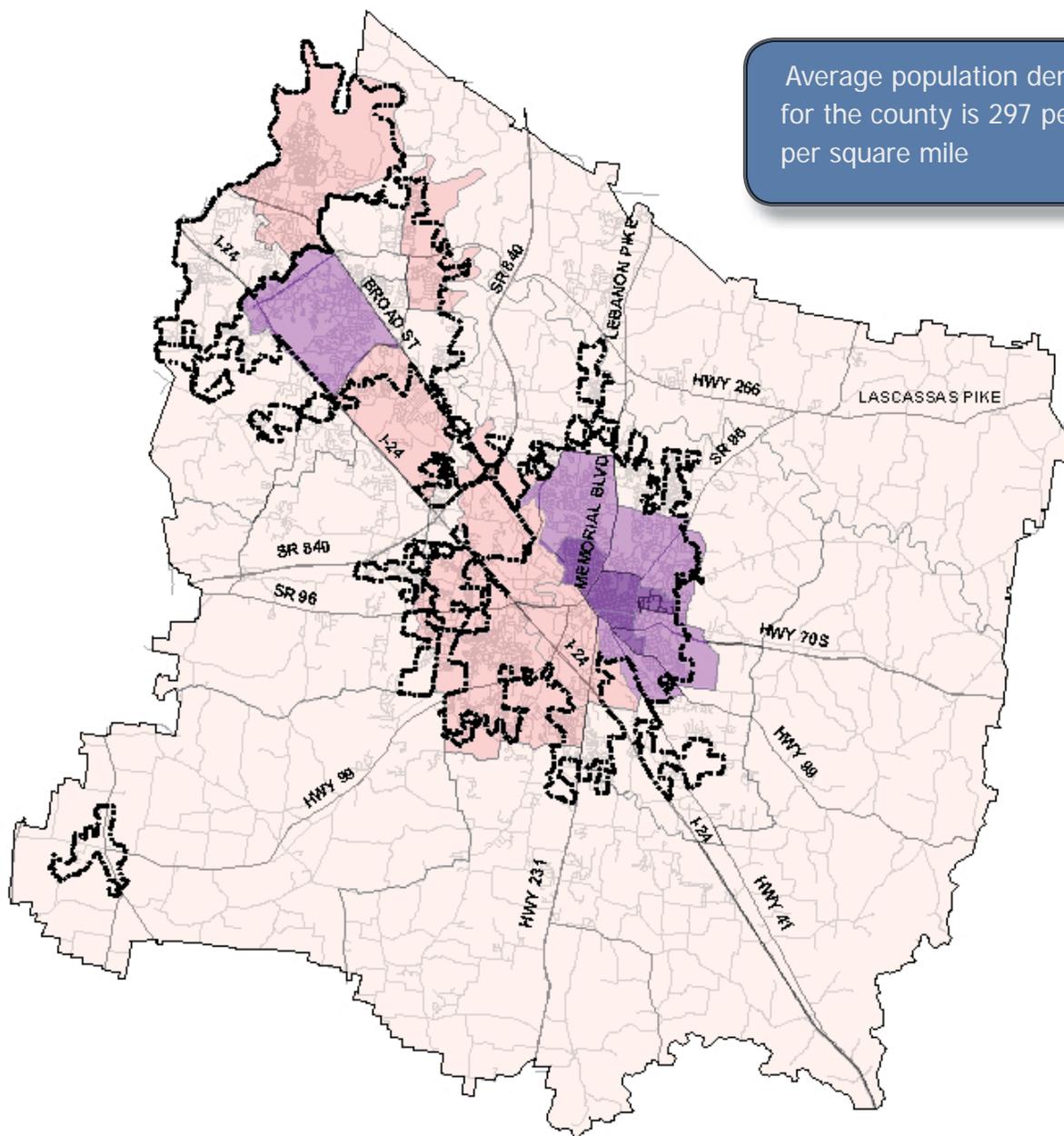
Within the Nashville region, other counties have also shown increases in density; data is shown in Table 5.4. While Davidson County remains the most population-dense county by far, Rutherford County has surpassed all other comparison counties since 1980 in its population density per square mile.

Table 5.4: Changes in Population Density by Selected County, 1970-2000

County	Land Area in Square Miles	1970 Population per Square Mile	1980 Population per Square Mile	1990 Population per Square Mile	2000 Population per Square Mile
Rutherford	612	97	137	193	297
Cheatham	305	43	70	89	117
Davidson	508	881	940	1006	1121
Montgomery	539	116	154	186	250
Robertson	476	61	77	87	114
Sumner	534	105	160	193	244
Williamson	593	57	98	136	213
Wilson	567	65	98	119	156
State of Tennessee	41,328	94	111	118	137



Figure 5.1: Density per Census Tract



	0 - 500 person/square mile
	501 - 1000 persons/square mile
	1001 - 2500 persons/square mile
	2501+ persons/square mile
	City Limits

**Rutherford County  
Density per Census Tract  
2000**

N  
  
0 2 4 8 Miles



## Income

Households within Rutherford County and the selected comparison counties have experienced an increase in average household income, but also an increase in the population whose income is below poverty level. Figure 5.2 shows household income by census tract from 2000. Table 5.5 gives the most recent census estimates (2007) for number of total households, their median income, and the percent of the total population living below poverty level. As a point of comparison, figures compiled from 2002 are also provided (Table 5.6) and show the increasing number of those living below poverty despite rising household incomes.

Within Rutherford County, the distribution of household incomes from high to low by census tract (Figure 5.2) shows a clustering of both the highest and lowest household incomes within the City of Murfreesboro, with mid-range to high income households are in the remainder of the county, especially around the LaVergne and Smyrna tracts.

**Table 5.6: Poverty and Household Income, 2002**

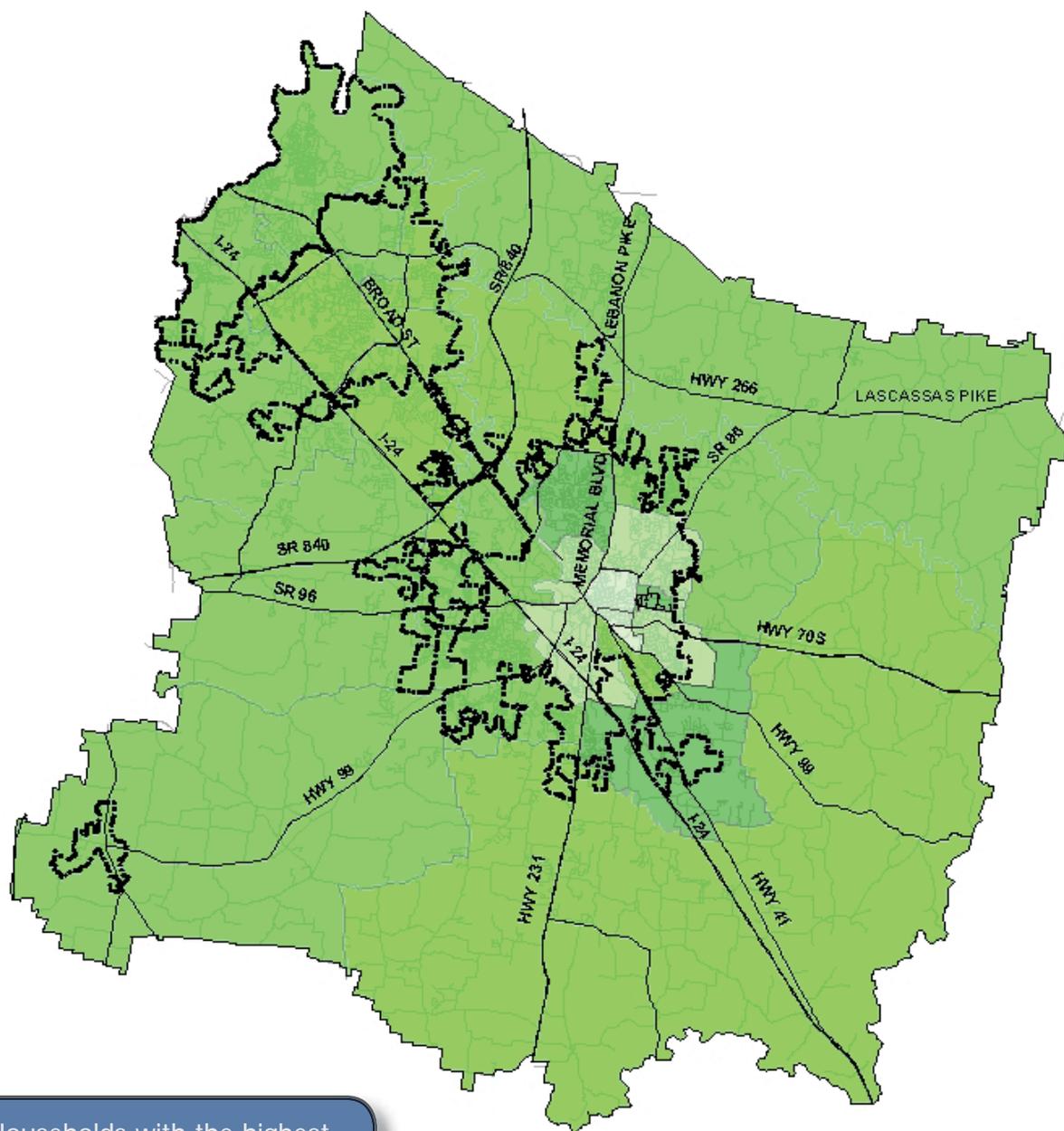
County	Percent of Population Below Poverty Level	2002 Median Household Income
<b>Rutherford</b>	9%	\$47,451
Cheatham	9%	\$46,728
Davidson	11%	\$44,486
Montgomery	11%	\$39,504
Robertson	10%	\$43,619
Sumner	9%	\$45,928
Williamson	5%	\$75,210
Wilson	8%	\$51,061
<b>State of Tennessee</b>	14%	\$37,129

**Table 5.5: Poverty and Household Income, 2007**

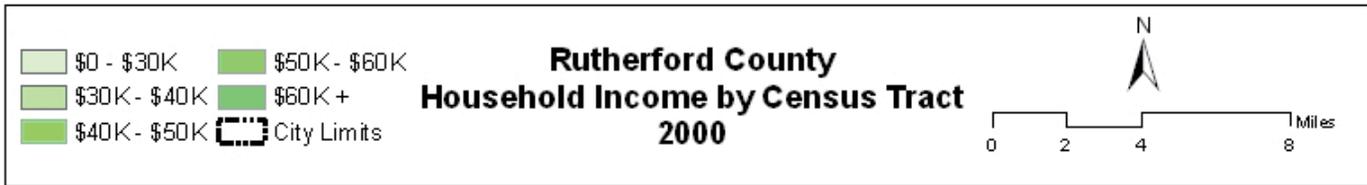
County	Percent of Population Below Poverty Level	2007 Median Household Income	Total Number of Households
<b>Rutherford</b>	12.6%	\$50,623	87,993
Cheatham	11.5%	\$48,058	14,054
Davidson	15.1%	\$44,486	248,006
Montgomery	12.9%	\$49,248	57,090
Robertson	10.8%	\$50,242	22,876
Sumner	9.9%	\$52,970	56,519
Williamson	4.9%	\$84,205	56,624
Wilson	6.6%	\$60,503	38,816
<b>State of Tennessee</b>	15.9%	\$41,821	2,382,975



Figure 5.2: Household Income by Census Tract



Households with the highest incomes and lowest incomes are clustered in and adjacent Murfreesboro





## Education

Educational attainment (Table 5.7) continues to improve both within Rutherford County, the region and the State as a whole. In 2000, 81.8% of Rutherford County residents age 25 and over had at least a high school degree. By 2007, Census estimates show that number rising to 86.7%. For Tennessee as a whole, the numbers rise from 75.9 to 80.9%. While Rutherford County's educational attainment is on the rise, the numbers lag behind those for Williamson and Montgomery Counties. The percent of residents holding a bachelor's degree or higher has also increased since the 2000 census, and by a greater percentage than the state as a whole. The only Middle Tennessee comparison county to experience a decline in percent of population over 25 holding bachelor's degrees or higher was Cheatham County.

## JOBS

### Regional Economy

The Middle Tennessee Region, anchored by Davidson County, has attracted new residents and new jobs at a rate far exceeding that of Tennessee as a whole. From 1980 to 2000, the region saw nearly an 88 percent increase in employment growth and 45 percent growth in population (Greater Nashville Regional Council, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy,

**Table 5.7: Education Attainment, Population 25 and Over**

County	Percent high school graduate or higher (2007)	Percent high school graduate or higher (2000)	Percent bachelor's degree or higher (2007)	Percent bachelor's degree or higher (2000)
Rutherford	86.7	81.8	25.6	22.9
Cheatham	78.5	75.4	14.5	15.1
Davidson	84.3	81.5	32.3	30.5
Montgomery	90.5	84.3	22.7	19.3
Robertson	79.7	74.8	12.7	11.9
Sumner	84.2	78.9	22.2	20.8
Williamson	93.2	90.1	49.2	44.4
Wilson	86.3	80.9	22.1	19.6
State of Tennessee	80.9	75.9	21.7	19.6

*Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Census 2000 Summary File 3, Educational Attainment, 2007 American Community Survey Estimates*

2007). Those numbers also reflect a shift in the types of jobs held by residents, following the national pattern of decreased emphasis on manufacturing and an increase in trade and service jobs. This pattern does not hold for every individual county, as many are still far more dependent on shrinking manufacturing positions. Davidson County's dominance as a base for the health care industry, music business, tourism trade and, along with Williamson County, emerging concentrations of corporate headquarters has influenced the satellite counties to some degree. Davidson County's ability to draw workers from surrounding counties depends on an available workforce with the skills necessary to perform these functions. As the following

sections note, the surrounding counties struggle at different levels to attract more "white collar" jobs into their counties as well, as those positions tend to increase per capita and household incomes which then influences retail and service activity and thus the retail tax base. Most communities base their economic development efforts on linking education with future employable skills.

The types of jobs a community attracts directly impacts the land use and infrastructure needs of the area. The on-going documentation of infrastructure gaps by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations provides a baseline to evaluate one of the key factors in attracting and retaining industry and is also



Table 5.8: Rutherford County Employers

Rank	Employer	Location	Product / Service	Employees
1	Rutherford County Government (includes school employees)	Murfreesboro	Government	5,100
2	Nissan North American, Inc.	Smyrna	Cars/Trucks	4,400
3	Middle Tennessee State University	Murfreesboro	State University	2,208
4	State Farm Insurance Companies	Murfreesboro	Insurance	1,665
5	Alvin C. York Medical Center	Murfreesboro	VA Medical Center	1,563
6	Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc.	LaVergne	Vehicle Tires	1,466
7	Middle Tennessee Medical Center	Murfreesboro	Medical Center	1,300
8	Verizon Wireless	Murfreesboro	Wireless Phone Customer Service	1,122
9	Asurion	Smyrna	Wireless Device Refurbishing	1,098
10	City of Murfreesboro	Murfreesboro	Government	988
11	Cinram, Inc.	LaVergne	Multimedia Devices	900
12	General Mills/Pillsbury	Murfreesboro	Refrigerated Baked Goods	850

2009, the recession had claimed more jobs, leaving Rutherford County with an unemployment rate of 9.2 percent, with Tennessee's overall unemployment at 9.9 percent.

Rutherford County and its municipalities have been fortunate to be home to several large employment centers, from major manufacturing to medical care to academics. Given the current economy, an accurate listing of employers and employment levels is a moving target; however, the ten largest employers as of April 2009 are shown in Table 5.8.

### Commuting Patterns

The location of jobs and workers with the skills to perform them

influences the number of workers who commute in and out of each county for work. For purposes of this section, Rutherford County's relationship to its immediate neighbors within the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Clarksville Metropolitan Planning Organization is particularly relevant. In 2000, there were over 101,000 people over the age of 16 in the labor force in Rutherford County. Over 31,000 of them traveled to work locations, as

useful in evaluating future land use needs. Rutherford County's own assessment of its economic future will depend on realistic reporting of suitable land and supporting infrastructure, the supply of local and commuting workers, and the more qualitative "quality of life" features that attract investment but protect those features deemed valuable by the residents.

### Labor Force

As recently as June 2007, Rutherford County enjoyed a robust employment picture, with an unemployment rate of 3.9 percent, even below the Tennessee state rate of 4.6 percent. By April 2008, the recent economic downturn that has inflated unemployment figures across the nation, state and region, had increased the County's unemployment rate to 4.7 percent, which was still better than the state unemployment rate of 6.0 percent. Still, by April of



Table 5.9: Prevalence of Commuting to Jobs in Other Counties

	Rutherford County	LaVergne	Murfreesboro	Smyrna	Rest of County
Total Workers	112,513	13,330	44,368	16,170	38,645
Work in Rutherford County	73,020	5,360	32,773	8,445	26,442
Commute to jobs in other counties	38,555	7,686	11,351	7,629	11,889
Percent commuters	34.3%	57.7%	25.6%	47.2%	30.8%

Source: American Community Survey, estimates for 2005-2007. Not shown are those who worked outside Tennessee.

summarized in Table 5.9, in the selected comparison counties.

The counties listed across the top of Table 5.10 are the County of Destination for commuters; the column at left is the County of Origin for commuters. As expected, Rutherford County sends the vast majority of its commuters to Davidson County, over 70 percent of total commuters. Williamson County receives the next highest number of commuters, followed by Wilson County. In turn, both Williamson and Wilson Counties send most of their commuters to

Davidson County as well, followed in both cases by Rutherford County, indicating the high level of reciprocity between the four counties. This information is depicted graphically in Figure 5.3.

### Sectors and Changes

Employment by sector, documented in 2000 by the US Census Bureau, shows that Rutherford County's employment base tracked very closely to the State and region (see Table 5.11: Employment Sectors). Within the Middle Tennessee region, and specifically comparing Rutherford to other counties

adjoining Davidson, Rutherford reveals that its employable adults are skewed toward management and sales positions. Census estimates for 2007 show very little change.

Table 5.10: Number of Commuters by County, 2000

County of Origin	Cheatham	Davidson	Montgomery	Robertson	Rutherford	Sumner	Williamson	Wilson
Cheatham	-----	10,567	402	224	198	311	670	98
Davidson	750	-----	403	619	6,837	2,859	16,448	3,151
Montgomery	847	4,968	-----	950	84	41	97	102
Robertson	430	11,100	383	-----	280	1,784	340	237
Rutherford	99	25,297	24	90	-----	421	3,870	1,568
Sumner	133	26,168	150	1,262	933	-----	1,013	92
Williamson	211	24,921	38	62	1,506	208	-----	220
Wilson	48	20,626	41	50	1,988	885	723	-----

Source: Greater Nashville Regional Council

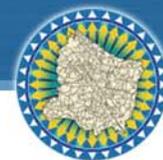
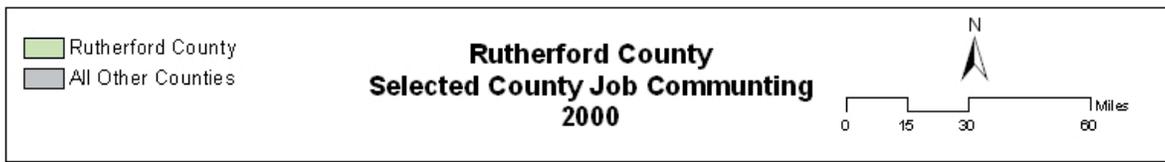
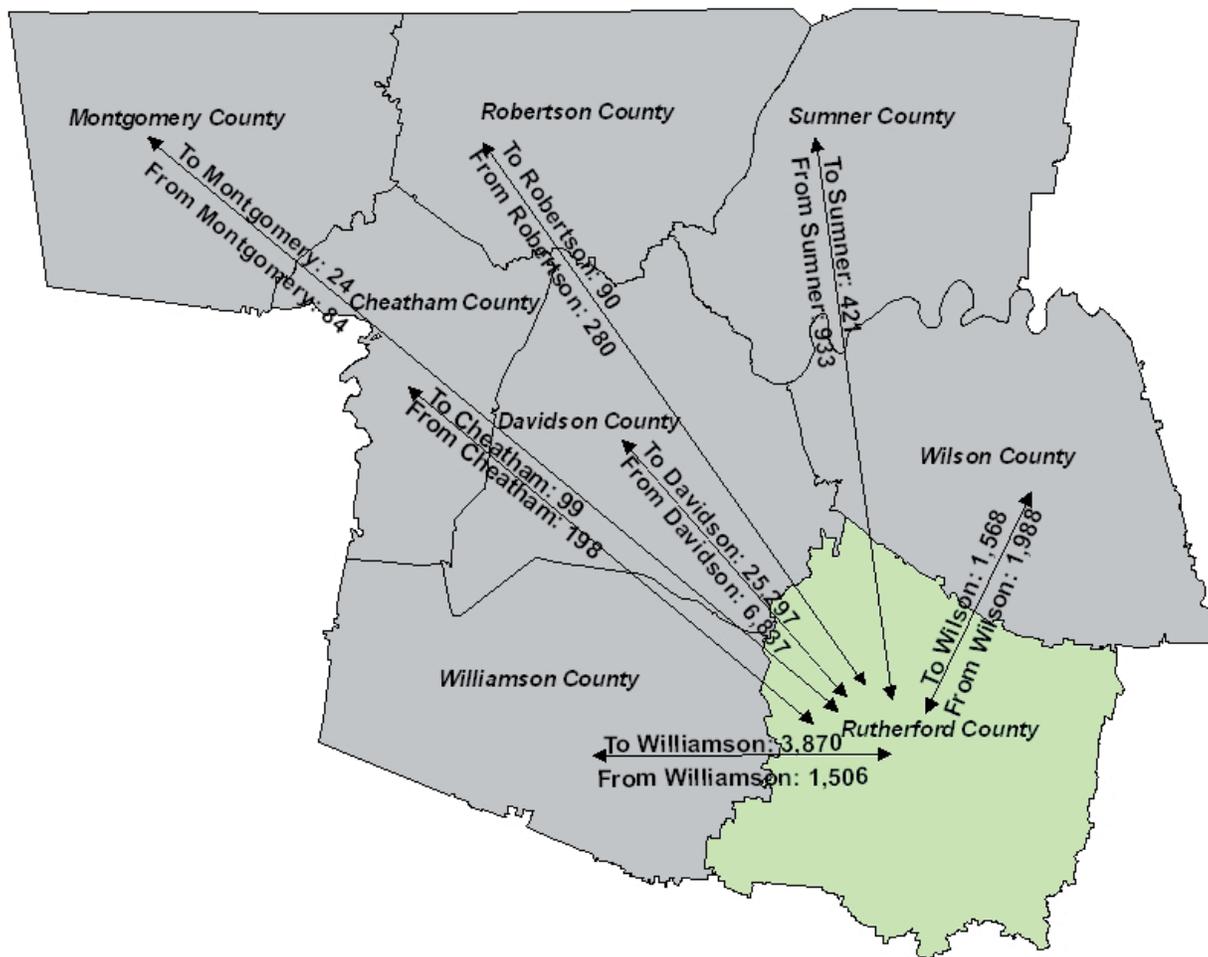


Figure 5.3 Rutherford County Selected County Job Commuting, 2000

More than 31,000 Rutherford County residents commute to jobs outside the county. More than 70% commute to Davidson County.





## HOUSING

### Distribution & Density

The previous sections have shown the increased residential densities in Rutherford County, with areas of highest density in and around Murfreesboro, Smyrna and Lavergne, and concentrated along Interstate 24 and the parallel Nashville Highway (Murfreesboro Road). These areas are also the concentrations of commercial and industrial uses and jobs within the County.

### Trends & Types of Housing

Single-family detached housing makes up the majority of the housing stock, at nearly 73,000 units of approximately 102,000 housing units in Rutherford County

(US Census Estimates, 2007). Almost all multi-family housing is located in the municipalities. In 2000 there were 66,443 dwelling units built, meaning the County added 35,266 housing units in seven years (an increase of more than 50 percent).

Building permit records provide a general sense of the ability of the County to attract new development and the strength of the housing market to support construction. In 1990, for example,

Rutherford County issued 1,360 residential permits for a total of 1,437 housing units. By 2000, that

number increased to 2,573 permits, reaching a high point of 4,067 residential building permits in 2005. As the housing market worsened,



**Table 5.11: Employment Sectors Census Year 2000, Percent Distribution by Population for Selected Industries**

County	Management	Service	Sales/ Office	Farming/ Fishing	Construction	Production/ Transportation	Agriculture	Manufacturing	Government
Rutherford	30.5	12.6	28	0.2	10.3	18.4	0.7	19.2	13.2
Cheatham	27.4	13.4	24.9	0.6	16.8	17	1	14.6	14.4
Davidson	37.2	13.8	28.5	0.1	8.4	11.9	0.2	9.3	12.2
Montgomery	27.3	16.6	25.8	0.4	11	18.9	0.8	16.1	21.9
Robertson	24.7	12.3	27.6	1.1	13.1	21.1	2.7	21.2	11.5
Sumner	30.2	11.4	29.5	0.4	10.8	17.7	0.8	17.5	11.6
Williamson	46.0	9.7	27.9	0.3	6.8	9.3	0.9	12.0	9.7
Wilson	31.7	11.2	29.5	0.2	10.4	17	0.8	16.4	11
Tennessee	29.5	13.7	26.1	0.6	10.3	19.9	1.2	18.9	13.9
2007 Estimate									
Rutherford	30.4	13.3	27.9	0.3	10.1	17.9			



the number of building permits reflects the growing housing supply and reduction in land converted to residential use: only 1,387 residential building permits were issued in 2008 (US Census Bureau).

### Affordability

Rutherford County has added to its housing stock by over 53% from 2000 to 2007. The dwelling units, mainly single-family, have been in response to a historically strong market in terms of price. The median value of owner-occupied housing in Rutherford County for Census year 2000 was \$113,500. Within the County, Figure 5.4 shows the median value by census tract from 2000. As with density and income levels, both the highest and lowest extremes are found within Murfreesboro, with clusters of housing in the \$75,000 - \$100,000 range in Smyrna and Lavergne as

well. The unincorporated areas have an average value of \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Rutherford County's home values compared to an average of \$125,200 for Davidson County and the seven contiguous counties. While the values are now somewhat dated, the comparison is still valid to show Rutherford County home values in relation to the other counties. Table 5.12 shows the average owner-occupied dwelling unit value from 2000, and compares Rutherford County to area counties. As the information shows, Rutherford County's average owner-occupied home value falls in the middle between Williamson, Wilson, Sumner, and Davidson on the higher end, and Cheatham, Robertson, and Montgomery on the lower end. The statewide average is \$93,000.

Table 5.12: Median Home Value Owner-Occupied Housing, 2000	
County Location	Median Value
Rutherford	\$113,500
Cheatham	\$109,100
Davidson	\$115,800
Montgomery	\$85,100
Robertson	\$107,300
Sumner	\$125,800
Williamson	\$208,400
Wilson	\$136,600
Regional Average	\$125,200
Tennessee	\$93,000

Source: US Census 2000

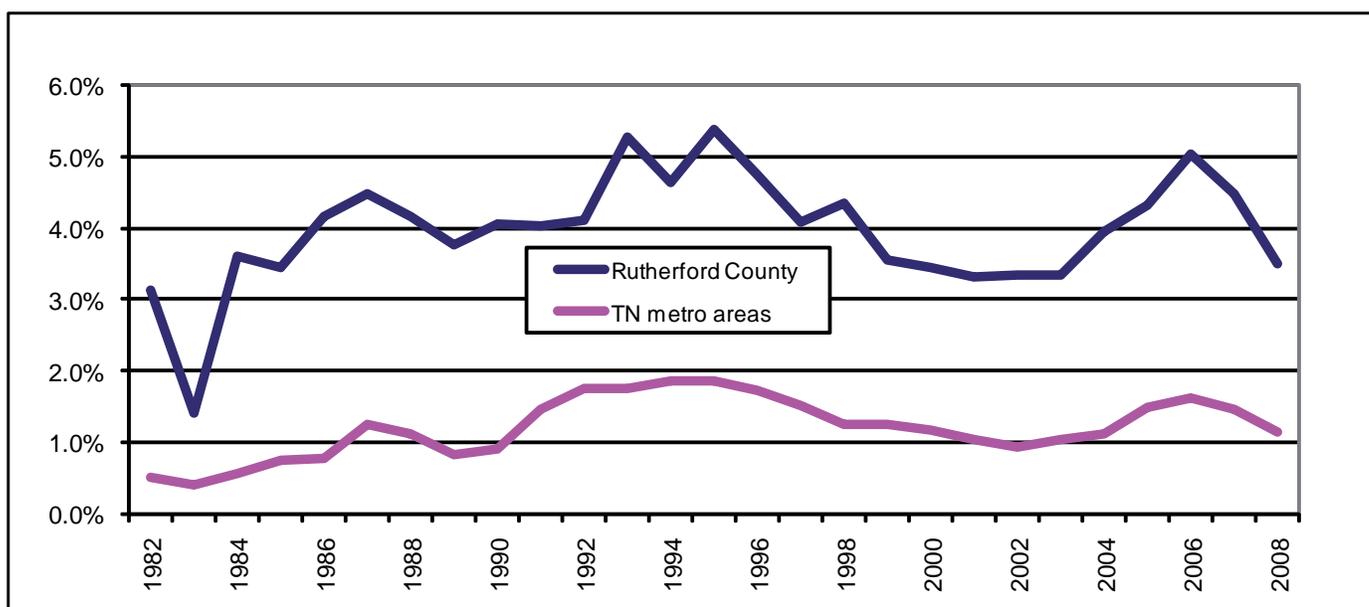


Figure 5.4: Population Growth Rate for Rutherford County and Tennessee Metropolitan Areas (annual %)

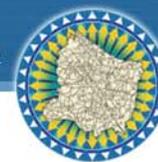
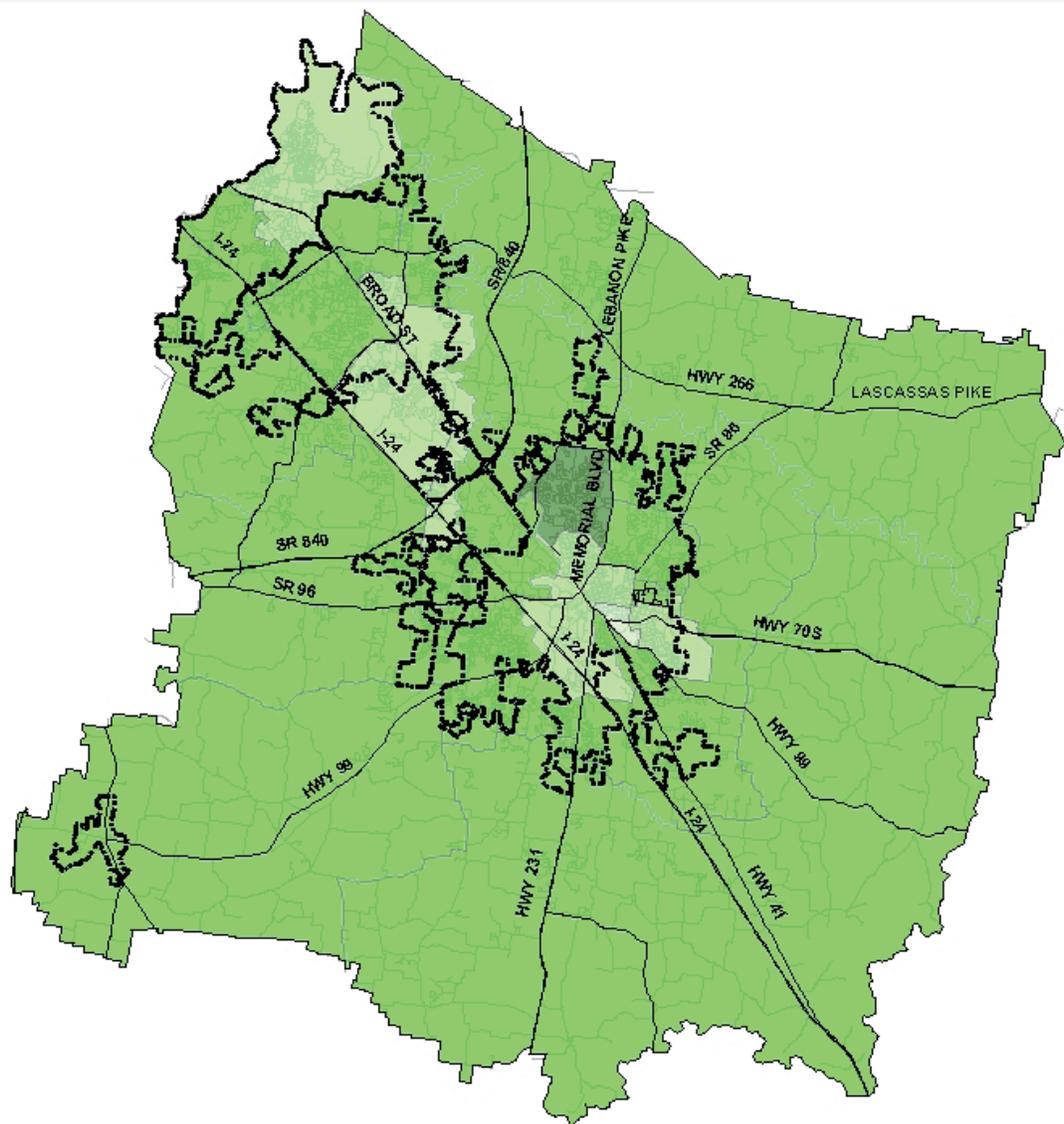


Figure 5.5: Rutherford County Median Home Value

Similar to income statistics, the highest and lowest home values are in or adjacent Murfreesboro. Over 70% of housing in Rutherford County is single family.



	0 - 75,000
	75,000 - 100,000
	100,000 - 150,000
	150,000 - 200,000
	City Limits

**Rutherford County  
Median Home Value**

0 2 4 8 Miles



Table 5.13: Employment and Payroll by Industry for Rutherford County

	Payroll Employment					Total Payroll (million dollars)				
	Employment Growth					Payroll Growth				
	1990	2000	2008	1990-2000	2000-2008	1990	2000	2008	1990-2000	2000-2008
<b>Total, all industries</b>	39,006	66,467	85,838	27,461	19,371	907.6	2,058.1	3,567.0	1,151	1,509
Goods-Producing	17,652	24,224	25,692	6,572	1,468	526.0	1,021.4	1,617.9	495	596
Natural Resources & Mining	142	83	94	(59)	11	3.1	2.6	3.2	(0)	1
Construction	1,568	3,203	4,218	1,635	1,015	31.0	95.8	170.2	65	74
Manufacturing	15,943	20,938	21,381	4,995	443	491.8	923.0	1,444.5	431	521
Service-Providing	21,353	42,243	60,145	20,890	17,902	381.6	1,036.7	1,949.1	655	912
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	8,588	15,044	21,176	6,456	6,132	156.9	395.5	700.7	239	305
Information	448	3,483	3,064	3,035	(419)	9.0	107.9	181.8	99	74
Financial Activities	2,128	2,909	4,006	781	1,097	47.5	100.9	178.9	53	78
Professional & Business Services	3,009	7,728	12,176	4,719	4,448	62.6	164.0	386.0	101	222
Education & Health Services	3,510	5,979	8,177	2,469	2,198	73.2	174.4	324.6	101	150
Leisure & Hospitality	2,903	5,585	9,582	2,682	3,997	22.0	62.8	121.5	41	59
Other Services	763	1,510	1,936	747	426	10.4	31.1	55.0	21	24

## SUBURBAN RUTHERFORD COUNTY

Thousands of county residents commute daily to jobs in other counties, primarily Davidson County, relying on commuting routes such as Interstate 24 and the Murfreesboro Highway. According to Census Bureau, more than 31,000 workers commute to jobs in other counties, approximately one-third of the county's employment base. Not surprisingly, the proportion of

commuters to employment rises for LaVergne and Smyrna, as both cities are much closer to Nashville than Murfreesboro. According to the same data, 58 percent of LaVergne workers commute to jobs outside the county (7,600 workers), as do 47 percent of Smyrna workers (also 7,600 workers). The prevalence of commuters drops to 25 percent for

Murfreesboro (11,300 workers) and 30 percent for the remainder of the county (11,800 workers). Interestingly, the largest number





Table 5.13 (continued)

	Average pay per employee		
	1990	2000	2008
	<b>Total, all industries</b>	23,300	31,000
Goods-Producing	29,800	42,200	63,000
Natural Resources & Mining	22,000	31,800	34,500
Construction	19,800	29,900	40,300
Manufacturing	30,800	44,100	67,600
Service-Providing	17,900	24,500	32,400
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	18,300	26,300	33,100
Information	20,100	31,000	59,300
Financial Activities	22,300	34,700	44,600
Professional & Business Services	20,800	21,200	31,700
Education & Health Services	20,800	29,200	39,700
Leisure & Hospitality	7,600	11,200	12,700
Other Services	13,700	20,600	28,400

## INDUSTRIAL RUTHERFORD

Employment by industry more than doubled from 1990, rising from 39,000 to nearly 86,000 in 2008. The contribution of the goods-producing industry, primarily construction and manufacturing, as a source for job growth shifted dramatically during this period. During the 1990s, nearly one-fourth of the new jobs were created in the well-paying goods-producing industry. And when the goods-producing industry generates a job, the impact on the community far exceeds that of a new job in other sectors because the goods-producing worker is paid so much more. In 2008, for example, average pay in the goods-producing industries was \$63,000 for Rutherford County, nearly double that of \$32,400 in the service-providing industries. More pay per worker results in more spending on food, eating out, clothing, furniture, housing, entertainment, and transportation, and a higher-paid goods-producing worker is more likely to live in a more expensive home. This is important, because the county government's budget depends heavily on local sales tax and property tax revenues; a higher-paid worker will spend more and own a more expensive home, thus creating more tax revenue relative to his or her additional

of workers travel from residences in the unincorporated areas of the county and Eagleville. Workers choose to commute because of

lower housing costs, quality of life considerations, and concerns about the quality of public schools.





Table 5.14: Large Counties with the Highest Prevalence of Manufacturing\*, 2007

Ranking	County	Manufacturing Prevalence**	Type of County	Metropolitan Area
1	Trumbull, OH	39.7%	Central	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman OH-PA
2	Ottawa, MI	38.0%	Central	Holland-Grand Haven, MI
3	Sedgwick, KS	35.0%	Central	Wichita, KS
4	Macomb, MI	32.7%	Central	Warren-Troy-Farmington Hills, MI
5	Durham, NC	31.8%	Central	Durham-Chapel Hill, NC
6	Lorain, OH	31.2%	Suburban	Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH
<b>7</b>	<b>Rutherford, TN</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	Suburban	Nashville, TN
8	Gaston, NC	29.7%	Suburban	Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord, NC-SC
9	Anoka, MN	29.2%	Central	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI
10	Lake, OH	28.8%	Central	Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH

\*Among all counties in the U.S. with population size of 200,000 or larger

\*\*Manufacturing payroll as a percent of total payroll

Source: Data from Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S.

Table 5.15: Employment and Payroll in Manufacturing, Rutherford County, 2008

Sector	Employment	Payroll (Million dollars)
Total Manufacturing	21,381	1,444.5
Food	1,956	91.0
Paper manufacturing	228	12.6
Printing	443	16.6
Plastics and rubber products	1,922	107.2
Nonmetallic mineral products	329	13.3
Fabricated metal products	928	45.3
Machinery	1,818	94.4
Computer and electronic products	503	21.9
Transportation equipment	9,814	854.3
Furniture and related products	700	29.6
All other	2,740	158.2

Source: County employment and wages, Bureau of Labor

demand for services in comparison with lower-paid workers.

A significant shift occurred in the 2000s, with the share of new jobs generated by the goods-producing industry falling from one in four new jobs to just one in thirteen new jobs. Of the 19,400 new jobs created, 17,900 were in the services-providing sectors, with just 1,500 new jobs in the goods-producing industry. The shift of job growth from goods- to services-industries could have greatly diminished total payroll growth, so important for county tax revenues, except for the large increases in pay per worker that occurred in the goods-producing industry. Consequently, the goods-producing share of total payroll growth declined, but not dramatically,



from 43 percent 1990-2000 to 40 percent 2000-2008. Thus, growth of average pay in manufacturing and construction compensated for slower job growth, nearly maintaining the industry's contribution to the growth total payroll. The concern is this: what happens if wage growth slows in the goods-producing industry? The consequence would be lower growth of total payrolls and less growth of tax revenue for the county government.

Manufacturing is a very important as a source of payroll and employment for Rutherford County, quite unusual for a large suburban county. In fact, Rutherford is the

7th most manufacturing-intensive, ranking at the 98th percentile, of the 300 largest counties in the United States. And of the ten largest counties most dependent on manufacturing, only three are suburban counties like Rutherford County.

The abundance of manufacturing jobs in Rutherford County can be attributed to a variety of factors including access to markets, access to major interstate highways, availability of labor, amenities for workers, access to higher education institutions, and proximity to Nashville. Figures for 2008 show more than 21,000 workers

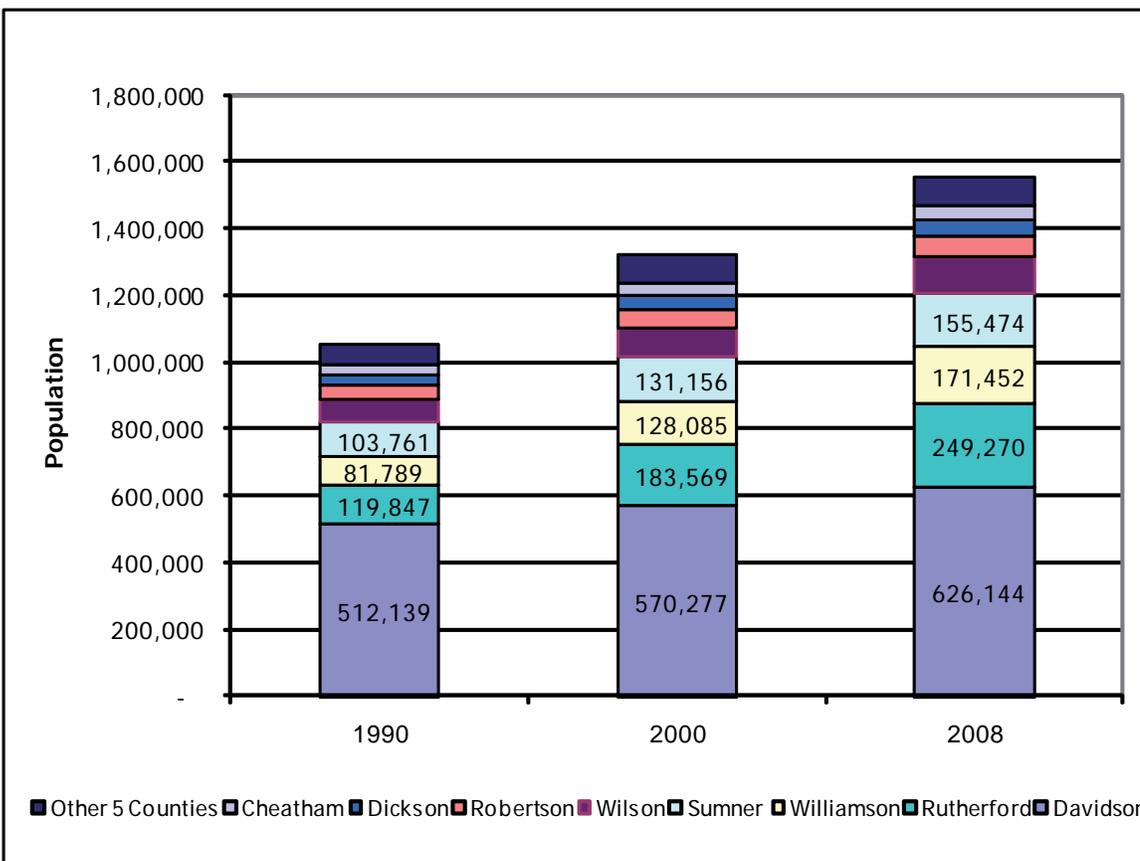
employed by manufacturing, generating a payroll of \$1.4 billion. More recently, Rutherford manufacturing has taken hits just like the other major manufacturing centers, losing hundreds of jobs in recent years with employers such as Whirlpool and Pillsbury.

Motor vehicle assembly and parts manufacturing is the largest single sector, accounting for 46 percent of employment and 59 percent of manufacturing payroll. Motor vehicles are very important, but not as dominant as one might think. Other portions of manufacturing generate thousands of jobs and more than one-half billion dollars in payroll, including rubber

manufacturing (Bridgestone-Firestone), machinery manufacturing, furniture, and fabricated metal products. Rutherford's manufacturing job base is relatively diversified, even with the dominant role of Nissan.

Importantly, Nissan signaled a vote of confidence in Rutherford County this year, announcing an

Figure 5.6: Nashville MSA Population by County





investment of \$1 billion and 1,300 new jobs at the Smyrna plant to build lithium-ion batteries and the new Nissan Leaf, a zero-emission all-electric vehicle. Work on the battery plant began in 2009, while the Leaf will begin local production in 2012.

### CAMPUS RUTHERFORD

Higher education has a crucial role explaining growth in Rutherford County. Enrollment growth for Middle Tennessee State University has been very strong over the long-term, with enrollment headcount rising 33 percent during the



past ten years (1999-2009). As enrollment grows, so does local demand for housing, food, clothes, transportation, and entertainment, thus boosting jobs and payroll in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County. The fall 2010 enrollment at MTSU was 26,400 students, far surpassing expectations. According to a Business and Economic Research Center (BERC) at MTSU study, of the approximately 22,000 MTSU students living off-campus, 42 percent reside in Rutherford County, adding thousands to the county's population for nine months of the year and creating challenges

in terms of traffic congestion and occasional law enforcement issues.

MTSU students not only add to total household expenditures in Rutherford County, but also present a very important source of labor for Nashville-area

employers. Many students work part-time or full-time within driving distance of MTSU. And research has shown that most MTSU graduates secure jobs within the multi-county area; many employers in the Nashville and mid-state areas employ MTSU graduates.

### ISSUES FACING RUTHERFORD COUNTY

Within the context of continuous long-term growth, Rutherford County continues to grapple with a number of issues, most of which are not new but will continue to set the stage for policy decisions in the coming decades. Five issues identified for additional discussion are:

1. Achieving and maintaining income growth,
2. Accommodating student growth while maintaining quality in public schools,
3. Developing retail and food service establishments,
4. Managing housing growth, and
5. Accommodating a changing population.

Table 5.16: Population by Age Group for Rutherford County

Age group	1990	2000	2008	Change in population	
				1990-2000	2000-2008
Under 5	8,934	13,656	19,390	4,722	5,734
5-13 years	16,204	24,404	32,935	8,200	8,531
14-17 years	6,635	10,051	13,783	3,416	3,732
18-24 years	16,789	24,008	28,019	7,219	4,011
25-44 years	40,767	60,967	78,126	20,200	17,159
45-64 years	19,230	35,315	56,582	16,085	21,267
65+ years	10,011	13,622	20,435	3,611	6,813

Source: Census Bureau



## ACHIEVING & MAINTAINING INCOME GROWTH

Per capita income is an important measure of the standard of living of a nation, state, or county. An area with growing income per capita is better able to provide for the needs of its population than one with flat or falling per capita income. By this standard, Rutherford County has faced challenges during the past few decades in comparison with other large counties in the United States. For example, since 1990 the median large county (population of 200,000 or more) experienced a nearly doubling of per capita income, while Rutherford's per capita income rose 81 percent, ranking the county in the bottom quartile.

The primary explanation for low per capita income growth is slow growth of average pay per worker. On this measure, Rutherford County's growth placed very low, at the 16th percentile, in comparison with the 300 largest counties in the United States 1990-2007. Part of the reason for the slow growth of average pay gets back to the fact that Rutherford is a fast-growing commuter county; a significant portion of job growth has been in businesses that provide services to the rapidly

growing number of households, including well-paying jobs in areas such as health care, but also many lower paying jobs in restaurants, retail trade, entertainment, and personal services.

Local officials are well aware of this trend, as highlighted in the research by the BERC in 2001. Since that time, citizens and business leaders in the county, working with the city governments of Murfreesboro, Smyrna, and LaVergne, initiated the Destination Rutherford campaign to target the development of higher-paying jobs. These efforts may be having an impact, as Rutherford's ranking improved to the 32nd percentile over 2000-2007.

Part of the Destination Rutherford effort is the recruitment of higher-paying office jobs, preferably regional or national headquarters. The Gateway development near I-24 and the new Medical Center Parkway was designed with headquarters in mind. The area now includes a shopping center,

a convention center and hotel, numerous upscale restaurants, new Class A office space, and construction of the Middle Tennessee Medical Center, moving from near downtown Murfreesboro.

## ACCOMMODATING STUDENT GROWTH WHILE MAINTAINING QUALITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Both the City of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County operate schools in the county, but Rutherford County schools have many more students and is experiencing much more growth. Rutherford County is currently in the process of building two new middle schools and transitioning Central Middle School in downtown Murfreesboro to a magnet middle and high school.

Enrollment in Rutherford County schools jumped from 23,705 in 2000 to 33,799 in 2008, a 43 percent increase. By contrast, statewide enrollment in K-12 public schools increased just 5.6 percent.

County schools have added 1,261 new students each year on average, the equivalent of three large new elementary schools every two years.

County finances feel the strain of meeting the demand for new schools and the associated cost of additional teachers, administrators, and support staff. Education





costs for the county rose 90 percent from 2000 to 2008, with about half the increase due to rising enrollment and the other half due to increased costs per student, primarily teacher and staff compensation. Spending per student rose 4.5 percent annually during this period, but most of the increase spending was soaked up by the rising cost of living. After adjusting for inflation, spending per student in the Rutherford County schools rose just 1.7 percent annually. During the same period, the average increase after inflation across Tennessee was 2.5 percent annually, substantially higher than Rutherford County. And, Rutherford began the decade with a level of spending per student already lower than the state average, \$5,147 for Rutherford compared with \$5,462 for the state in 2000, a difference of \$315 per student. By 2008, the spending gap had increased to \$998 per student.

County schools receive revenue from the federal, state and county governments. State funding is determined by the BEP (Basic Education Plan) formula set by state law. Local funding derives overwhelmingly from two sources: the local option sales tax and the property tax. By state law, local schools receive one-half the collections from the local option sales tax, with the other half received by the city government or county government, depending on

where the actual sales transaction occurred. The half of the local option sales tax for schools is split between the Rutherford County schools and Murfreesboro City Schools on a per student basis.

Rutherford's reliance on property tax as a share of local school revenue has declined from 62 percent in 2000 to 54 percent in 2008. Consequently, reliance on sales tax revenue is on the rise, up from 37 percent in 2000 to 45 percent in 2008. The relative shift away from property tax towards sales tax helps hold the line on property tax increases, but with a cost: the school revenue stream becomes more volatile, because sales tax collections dip much more during recessions than do collections from the property tax. Thus, local revenues for schools become more volatile.

## DEVELOPING RETAIL & FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Developments such as The Avenue in Murfreesboro and the extensive development of retailing and food service along Sam Ridley Parkway in Smyrna have significantly improved the retail and food service opportunities in Rutherford County. Retail and food service expansion has played an important role in slowing the leakage of spending from Rutherford County,

income that is spent by Rutherford residents in surrounding counties. As a result, sales tax revenue collected by Rutherford County has been impacted less during this recession than of neighboring counties that compete for the local spending dollar, in particular Davidson County and Williamson County. During fiscal year 2008, local option sales tax collections for Rutherford gained 4.9 percent with the opening of significant new retail and food service, compared with a 0.9 percent decline for Davidson County and a decline of 2.4 percent for Williamson County. In the subsequent fiscal year, the recession dropped Rutherford's local option revenue 8.1 percent, a difficult decline to manage, but significantly smaller than the 11.9 percent decline and 9.8 percent drop for Davidson County and Williamson County, respectively. Retail and food service development has helped to cushion the impact of the recession on the Rutherford County budget.





Employment in retailing and food service has grown more quickly than in other industries in Rutherford County. During the 1990s, for example, employment in retail rose 7.6 percent annually and 8.2 percent in food services and drinking places, compared with 5.5 percent for total payroll employment. Both total employment and retail slowed considerably 2000-2008, but food services and drinking places hardly slowed at all, growing by 7.0 percent annually.

## MANAGING HOUSING GROWTH

Population growth is clearly the most important driver explaining the growth of new housing in the 1990s and 2000s, but is not the whole story. Rutherford's rapid housing growth has depended on both greater population and also fewer persons per household; as the average household size falls, the demand for new housing rises. The consequence of falling household size is that the number of housing units grew somewhat more quickly than population in the 1990s, and substantially more quickly than population in the 2000s. This occurred because the number of persons occupying a housing unit, the average household size, was declining.

A number of reasons can explain the decline in household size. First, income gains over time

help make housing costs more affordable, encouraging purchases of single-family homes. Second, demographic changes are occurring with the older portion of the population growing faster than the younger cohort of adults. And third, much lower mortgage rates compared with the 1980s and financial market innovations made home ownership more attractive during the past two decades. And as the cost of financing a home declines, members of a household



are more likely to strike out on their own.

Average household size for occupied housing dropped just 1.6 percent in the 1990s, from

2.69 to 2.65 persons per unit, but fell 4.9 percent from 2000 to 2008, dropping from 2.65 to 2.52, according to figures from the Census Bureau. A relatively small decline can have a large impact on the demand for housing: over the interval 2000-2008, the drop in household size increased the demand for owner-occupied housing by 4,700 units, an amount larger than one-year's demand attributable to population growth alone.

Financial innovations related to the housing market boomed in the early 2000s, including subprime mortgages, Alt-A mortgages, and option ARMs, with little regard for the creditworthiness of the borrower. The collapse of the housing market, beginning in 2005 and continuing to the early months of 2009, had the effect of reversing the secular decline in household size. Mortgages will not be as easy to obtain for the foreseeable future, thus further declines in household size will probably not be as rapid as occurred in the 2000s.

The epicenter of new housing construction shifted in the late 2000s towards the rural (unincorporated) portions of the county. The share of new single-family building permits issued for



unincorporated areas of Rutherford County increased rapidly in the decade of the 2000s, even through the housing construction meltdown. After declining early in the decade, the rural share of new construction increased in almost every year thereafter, reaching 35.6 percent of all new single-family units for 2009 compared with just 15.0 percent in 2003. Additionally, the homes built in the rural areas are larger and more expensive than in the cities. The share of the total construction cost of new homes has increased even more rapidly than the number of units, rising from 18.3 percent in 2003 to 44.2 percent in 2009. The average home in the unincorporated areas is more expensive because it is larger, built with more expensive materials, or both, compared with homes constructed within city limits. By 2009, spending for the average rural home was 24 percent higher than for the average home in one of the cities in Rutherford County. The shift towards unincorporated areas could be attributed to a number of influences including the availability of undeveloped land, lower tax rates (no city property tax in the unincorporated areas), and a growing preference for rural living. For whatever reason, the trend towards rural living has grown rapidly and is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

## ACCOMMODATING A CHANGING POPULATION

Increased diversity has come with population growth, as favorable housing costs in Rutherford County have encouraged a more diverse mix of in-migrants. To be sure, 83.6 percent of the population is white, and most of the population growth consists of white households.

But the number of black, Asian, and Hispanic residents is growing more quickly than the white population, especially since 2000: non-whites generated 26 percent of Rutherford's population growth from 2000-2008, compared with a much lower 16 percent during the 1990s. The Hispanic population's share of growth more than doubled during this period, and the share of growth by blacks nearly doubled.

Cultural differences enrich a community, but also may present challenges for the provision of public services, especially when language differences are present. For example, the growth of the Laotian and Hispanic communities in Rutherford has created the need for multi-lingual public servants in law enforcement and the public schools.

The second important characteristic of population change is the changing age distribution for Rutherford County. Surprisingly, even though public school enrollment has grown very rapidly, the school age population is not

the fastest growing segment of the population; not even close. In fact, one age group is growing very quickly, those persons between 45 years and 64 years of age. This cohort's share of county population has grown by an average annual rate of 6.2 percent during the period 1990-2008, much faster than any other age category and much greater than the respectable average of 4.2 percent for all age groups. This 45-64 age cohort includes what we can term the experienced workforce plus some adults in early retirement. As this fast growing group gets older, the cohort in the older 65+ group will quickly swell, with important implications for housing needs and demand for public services.

The growing number of retirees will increase demand for low-maintenance housing and increase demand for easy access to shopping, entertainment, and health care. Housing needs will tend towards single-story low-maintenance homes, preferably within short walking distance to shopping and with access or transportation to health care providers. These requirements describe very little of the housing available today in Rutherford County. Presently some housing exists in multi-family dwellings geared to above-average income retirees, but very little of this is located within easy access to shopping and health care services.



Developments that focus on low maintenance and easy access to in-demand services will likely achieve great success in the coming years, while those that do not will face a very challenging market.





## CHAPTER VI. RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

Before Rutherford County can determine how it wants to look and function in the future, it is necessary to assess where it is now. The purpose of analyzing existing conditions is to present a factual foundation upon which the rest of the Comprehensive Plan is built.

An inventory of resources and existing conditions in Rutherford County is essential to establishing a

#### A Community Assessment includes:

- An analysis of existing development patterns;
- An evaluation of current community plans, policies, activities, and development patterns to ensure there is consistency between all the various documents;
- An evaluation of historic development patterns and community characteristics that define the places and resources that make the County unique;
- An analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities; and
- A list of potential issues and opportunities Rutherford County may wish to take action to address.

baseline from which to plan for the future. An inventory of data about existing conditions was analyzed for each element of the comprehensive plan including: an inventory of existing land use; infrastructure including transportation systems and utilities; community facilities and services; and agricultural, natural and cultural resources.

### PLACES

#### Rutherford's Changing Landscape

From the early settlements that depended on lumber, corn, dairy cattle and sheep, to the present, Rutherford County has supported its citizens using the land. The main crop might now appear to be single-family residences and retail establishments, but where and to what density land is settled is still a function of the land itself and its ability to support development. From the early days of clearing land and raising crops to the present-day practice of clearing land to build homes and businesses, the landscape and natural features of the County have shaped development patterns. A 2001 report by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations quotes the Southern Environmental Law Center estimates that between 1992 and 1997, 60 acres per day were converted from open space

to developed lands, for a total of over 100,000 acres in the 10-county Middle Tennessee area that includes Rutherford County, with Rutherford in one of the leading spots in both amount of land converted and greatest percentage of total land converted. These numbers continue to the present day, and give pause to consider the long-term impacts of growth.

#### Existing Land Use

Rutherford County, including municipalities, encompasses over 612 square miles of land. Of that, unincorporated Rutherford County is approximately 480 square miles. The predominant developed land use is low density single-family residential. While many parcels of land are still vacant, current zoning permits large scale, low density residential development. The base zone in the County is R-15, which allows single-family residential on 15,000 square foot lots (see Figure 6.1).

Of the unincorporated area, over 430 square miles of the total 480 are zoned for some level of residential use, with 90% being zoned for R-15 density building lots; approximately 7.9 square miles are zoned for either commercial or industrial use. Future non-residential uses are allowed through a joint rezoning/conditional use permit process. While most non-residential uses are approved with



an accompanying change in zoning, some are approved with only a conditional use permit. This process makes separating land uses from zoning designations difficult.

According to property assessment records, approximately 245 square miles are designated as single-family residential, less than 1 square mile for mobile homes, less than 1 square mile for duplexes and 4 square miles for commercial uses (which includes industrial-zoned properties). This leaves over 230 square miles of land for public/semi-public and institutional uses, as well as land not designated for other uses (see Figure 6.2).

### Large Undeveloped Tracts

While existing development is a major focus of analysis, lands that have yet to be developed will be the primary target of new development policies. The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has analyzed the amount of land yet to be developed in each county of its region. In all of Rutherford County, over 18,000 parcels totaling over 249 square miles of land are undeveloped. Over 72 percent are less than ten acres in size. Only 1,535 parcels are fifty acres or greater. Figure 6.3 shows the locations of undeveloped properties, grouped by size. Table

6.1 provides a breakdown of numbers of parcels by size.

### Unincorporated Rutherford County & its Communities

Rutherford County contains several unincorporated communities whose settlement pre-dates the current municipalities, even if some of them have all but disappeared today. Many of the rural communities had other common elements: a cotton gin, churches, rural schools and, eventually, post offices.

Some of the communities are still distinguishable today, while others have been overtaken by the suburban landscape or annexed by one of the municipalities. Notable communities include Walter Hill, Kittrell, Lascassas, Milton and Readyville on the eastern side of the County; Christiana and Buchanan to the south of Murfreesboro; and Rockvale and Salem in the west and southwestern portions of Rutherford County. Notable African-American communities were Shiloh, Hickory Grove and Walter Hill.

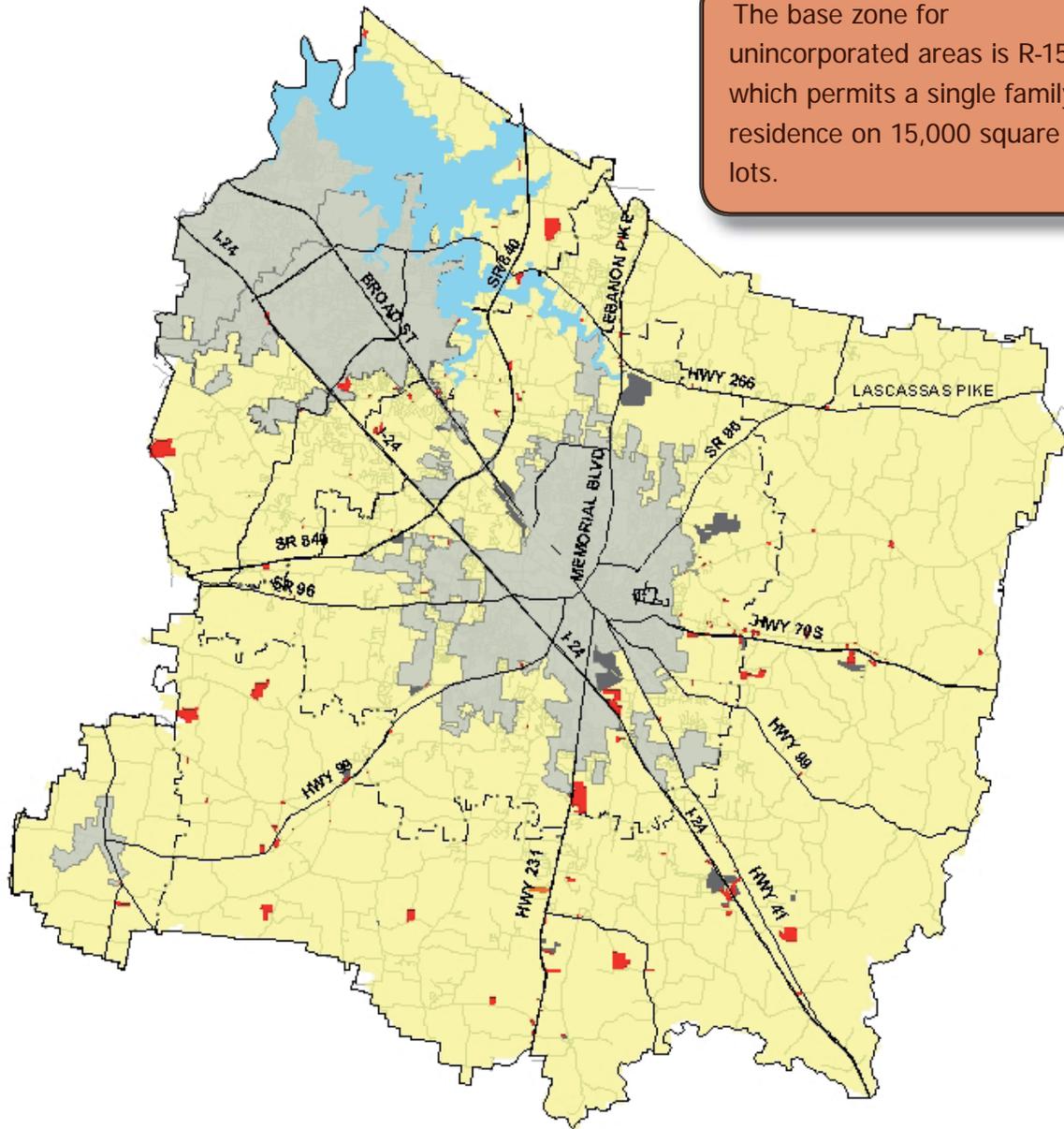
These communities were all essential parts of the fabric of Rutherford County at different times in its past.

Number of Parcels	Size	Percent of Total Undeveloped
1,535	> 50 acres	8%
1,381	25-50 acres	8%
2,230	10-25 acres	12%
13,193	<10 acres	72%



Figure 6.1: Rutherford County Zoning and Urban Growth Boundaries

The base zone for unincorporated areas is R-15 which permits a single family residence on 15,000 square foot lots.



Commercial	Urban Growth Boundaries
Industrial	City Limits
Mixed	Percy Priest Lake
Residential	

**Rutherford County  
Zoning & Urban  
Growth Boundaries**

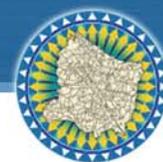
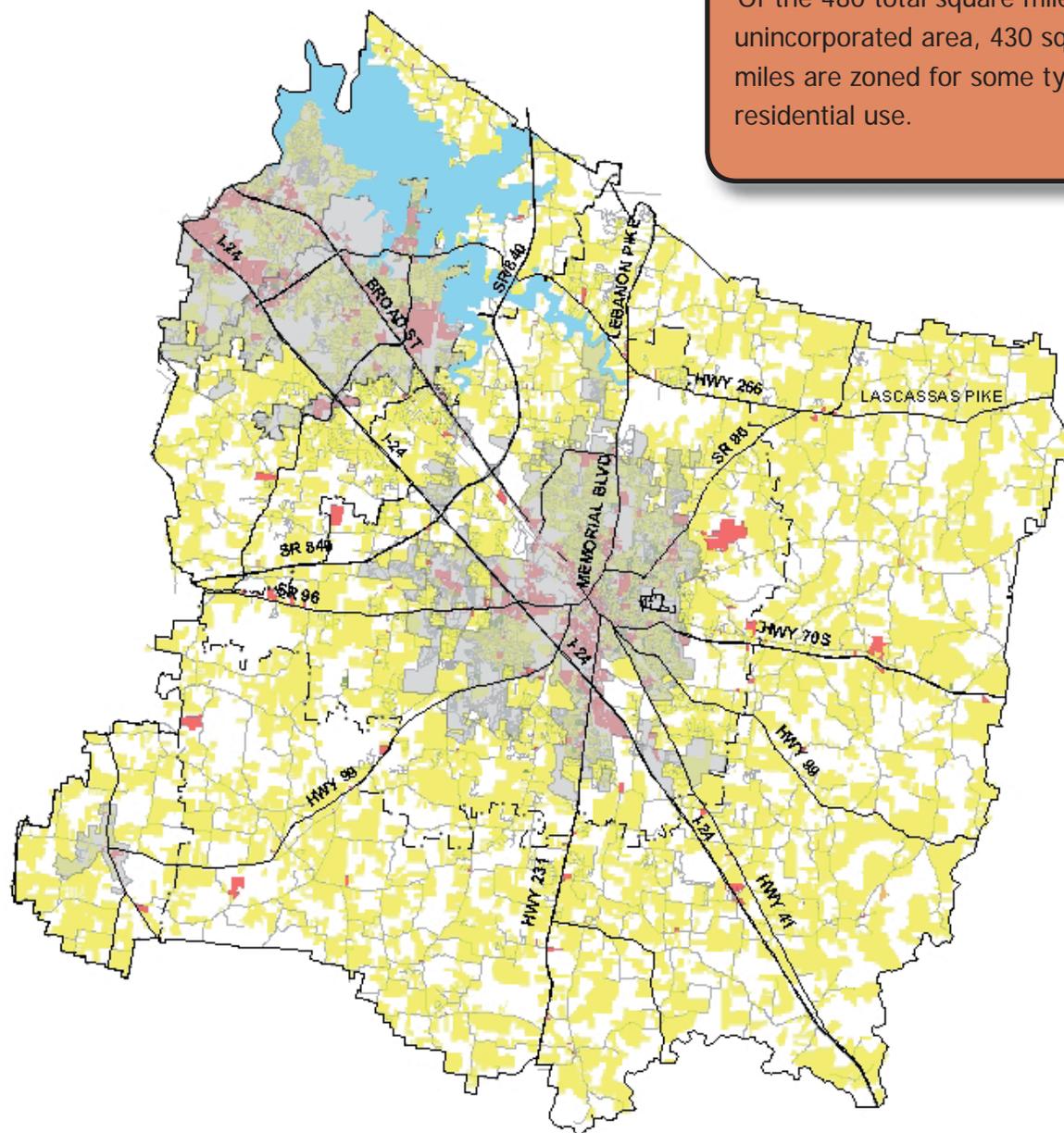


Figure 6.2: Rutherford County Property Designations

Of the 480 total square miles of unincorporated area, 430 square miles are zoned for some type of residential use.



Commercial	Percy Priest Lake
Mobile Home	City Limits
Residential (Single Family)	
Residential (2+ Units)	
Urban Growth Boundaries	

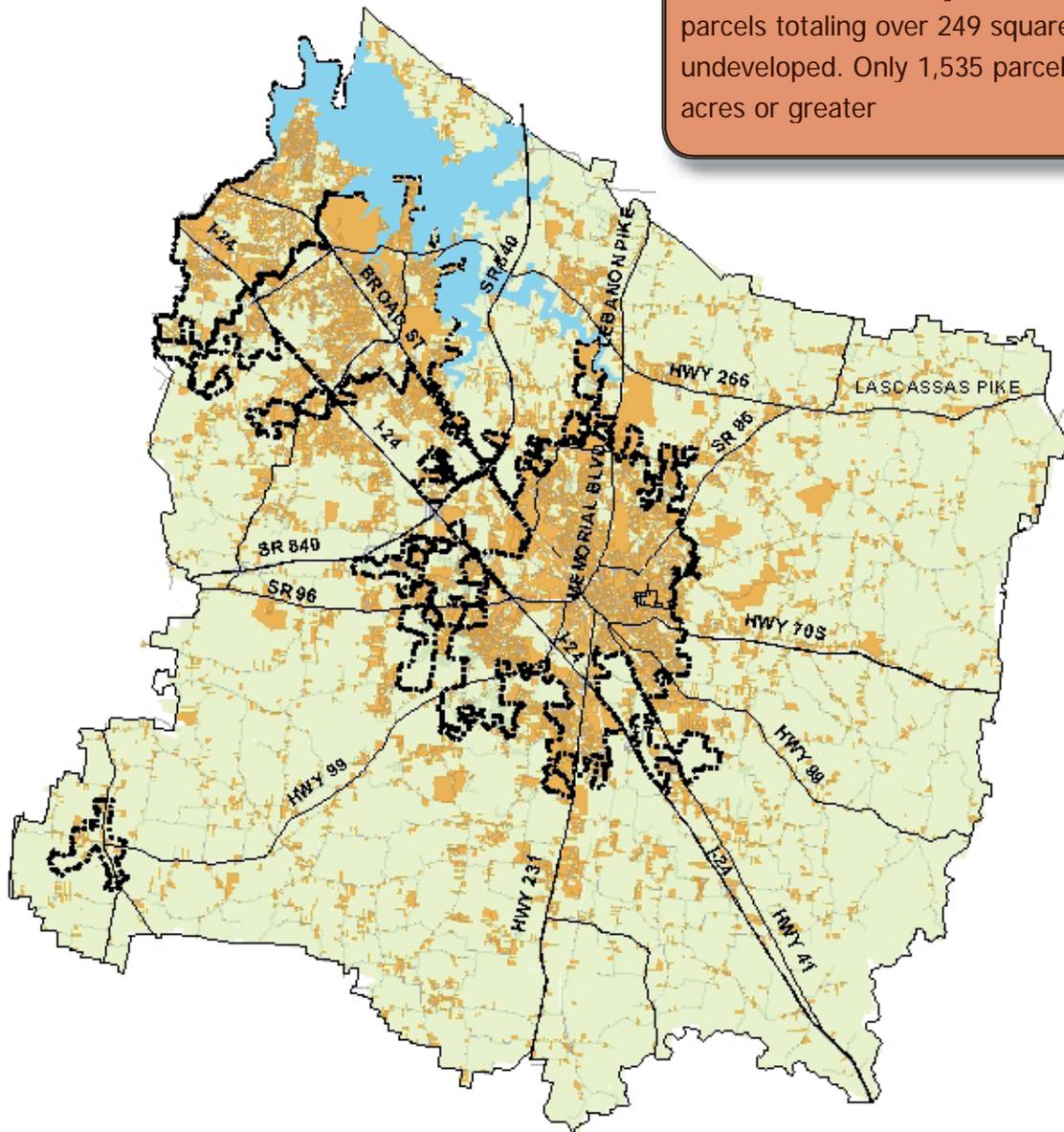
**Rutherford County  
Property Designations**

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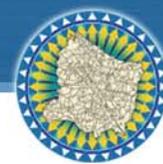


Figure 6.3: Rutherford County Land Development

In Rutherford County, over 18,000 parcels totaling over 249 square miles are undeveloped. Only 1,535 parcels are fifty acres or greater



Percy Priest Lake	<h3>Rutherford County Land Development</h3>
City Limits	
Undeveloped	
Developed	



## The Cities

### Murfreesboro

Population: 100,575  
(as of July 2009)  
Land Area: 48.49 square miles  
(Rutherford County GIS)

Murfreesboro is Rutherford County's largest city and the sixth largest city in Tennessee. Murfreesboro, originally called "Cannonsburg", was founded in 1812 and officially incorporated in 1817. It was not the first county seat, as that title was held by the old community of Jefferson. The seat of power moved to Murfreesboro and the City became the capital of the State of Tennessee from 1819 to 1826. In 1826, Nashville was designated State capital. Murfreesboro grew as access to it increased via transportation routes such as the Nashville, Murfreesboro and Shelbyville Pike, the first turnpike in the county, chartered in 1832. By 1851, the first rail line, the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis, was in operation.

With the later addition of cultural and academic institutions, such as the State Teachers College (now Middle Tennessee State University), Murfreesboro's place as a center of commerce and government was established. Today, Murfreesboro is home to over 100,000 residents, and occupies an important place in the economic fabric of Middle Tennessee as evidenced by its

status as the second largest county for employment growth from 1980-2000 (Greater Nashville Regional Council, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2007) and hosts the second largest employment figures behind Davidson County. The City is a diverse mix of residential housing types, neighborhood and regional shopping and retail centers, academic campuses, and both minor and major manufacturing and corporate centers, such as the Gateway office/corporate headquarters development.

### LaVergne

Population: 26,427  
(as of July 2009)  
Land Area: 15.92 square miles  
(Rutherford County GIS)

The City of LaVergne has been settled since the late 1700's, although its current charter dates only to 1972. Over 26,000 people called LaVergne home in 2008. LaVergne is located along Interstate 24 between Smyrna and Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County, and hosts large employment centers such as Bridgestone-Firestone, Cinram, and Ingram Book Company. Given that LaVergne's boundaries are confined from future expansion by the Town of Smyrna, Smyrna's Urban Growth Boundary and the Davidson County line, LaVergne's growth has been infill-oriented, resulting in the

second highest municipal densities in the County.

### Smyrna

Population: 38,073  
(as of July 2009)  
Land Area: 25.86 square miles  
(Rutherford County GIS)

The Town of Smyrna is located between Murfreesboro and LaVergne along Interstate 24. Smyrna has roots as an agricultural community, whose growth was fueled by access to waterways (Stones River) and transportation routes (Nashville-Chattanooga rail line, Dixie Highway). Establishment of the Stewart Air Base in 1941 began a period of industrialization and growth that has continued through the building of the Nissan manufacturing facility in the 1980's, and subsequent growth in residential and commercial construction. Smyrna is the second largest municipality in Rutherford County in both land area and population.

### Eagleville

Population: 562  
(as of July 2009)  
Land Area: 1.7 square miles  
(Rutherford County GIS)

Eagleville is located in the southwest corner of Rutherford



County on State Route 99. Eagleville has been a settlement since the late 1700's, with a focus on tobacco production and, later, lumber. The town's location away from the more populated areas and travel corridors in the central portion of the county has left Eagleville as a quintessential small town. The current community features several small retail businesses and seeks to entice

tourist traffic for those interested in exploring antique stores and other such small town amenities.

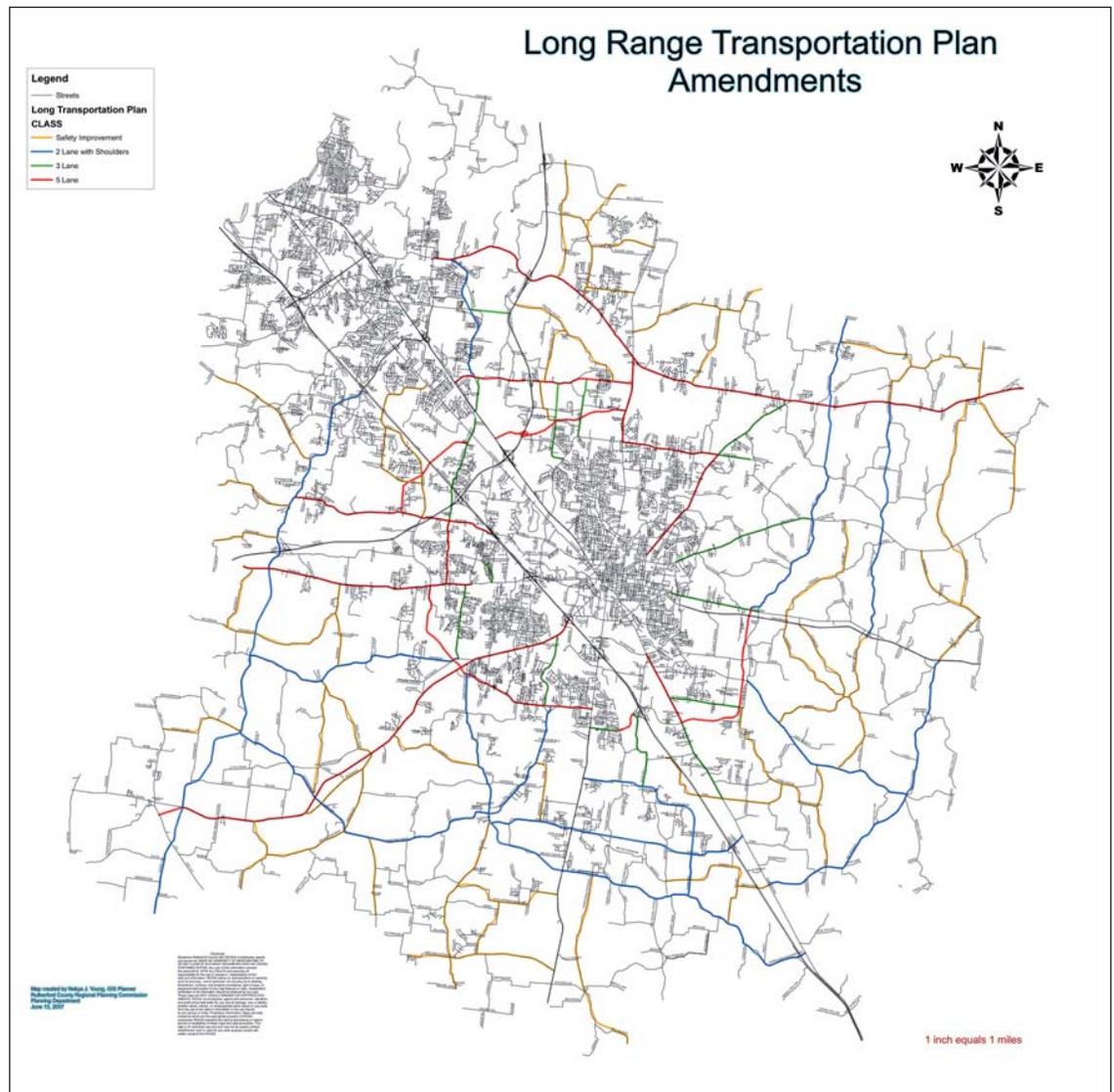
## TRANSPORTATION

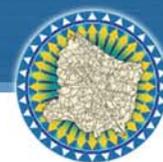
### Transportation Planning

The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization has prepared the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the greater Nashville area. This

multimodal plan, designed to meet the existing and future demands on the metropolitan Nashville transportation network, was adopted in 2005 and is a 25-year plan for the five-county region composed of Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson Counties as well as the cities of Spring Hill in Maury County and Springfield in Robertson County. The horizon year for the Long

Figure 6.4: Long Range Transportation Plan Amendments





**Table 6.2: Rutherford County Long Range Transportation Plan Projects**

Location	Termini	Description	Horizon Year
Almaville Road (SR 102)	Franklin Road (SR 96) to I-24	Widen 2 lane road to 5 lanes	2016
Jefferson Pike (SR 266)	Nissan Blvd (SR 102) to SR 840	Widen 2 lane road to 5 lanes	2016
Joe B Jackson Parkway	Shelbyville Pike (US 231) to I-24	New 5 lane roadway	2016
Jefferson Pike (SR 266)	SR 840 to Memorial Blvd (SR 10)	Widen 2 lane road to 5 lanes	2025
Jefferson Pike (SR 266)	Memorial Blvd (SR 10) to Lascassas Pike (SR 96)	Widen 2 lane road to 5 lanes	2025
Christiana Connector Route	SR 10 to US 41	New 5 lane roadway and I-24 interchange	2025
NW Loop Road	Burnt Knob Road to Florence Road	New 5 lane roadway and I-24 interchange	2030
New Lascassas Highway (SR 96)	Compton Road (SR 268) to Jefferson Pike (SR 266)	Widen 2 lane road to 3 lanes	2030
Manchester Hwy (US 41/SR 2)	Joe B Jackson Pkwy to county line	Widen 2 lane road to 3 lanes	2030
State Route 96	SR 840 to Overall Creek	Rebuild 2 lane road as 5 lane road	2030

Range Transportation Plan is 2030 and includes intermediate analysis years for specific transportation projects for 2006, 2016, and 2025.

The LRTP estimates future changes in population and employment in the metropolitan area in 2030 and then estimates anticipated future traffic volumes. The final plan consists of improvements to satisfy the future transportation demands and to satisfy the air quality standards for the region. Table 6.2 shows specific projects in Rutherford County that are included in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

In addition to the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning

Organization's Long Range Transportation Plan, Rutherford County has a Long Range Transportation Plan that includes the unincorporated areas of the County. Improvement projects in the Rutherford County LRTP apply to arterial, collector, and local roads but are not assigned a specific year for completion. These projects are separated into safety, two-lane roadway, three-lane roadway, and five-lane roadway improvement classes. The plan is shown on Figure 6.4.

The following planning studies and resources also provide additional information on existing transportation characteristics and future planning strategies in

Rutherford County and the State of Tennessee.

- City of Murfreesboro Major Thoroughfare Plan
- Town of Smyrna Major Thoroughfare Plan
- TDOT Average Daily Traffic volumes
- TDOT Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data
- TDOT Tennessee Roadway Information Management System (TRIMS) database
- TDOT Long Range Transportation Plan



## Roadway Network

The US highway system is comprised of all types of roads ranging from high capacity multi-lane freeways to urban streets and even unpaved rural roads. All of these roads are classified based upon their physical characteristics, the overall function of the roadway, and the mobility or access that is provided by each roadway. The

roadways in Rutherford County are classified into four categories:

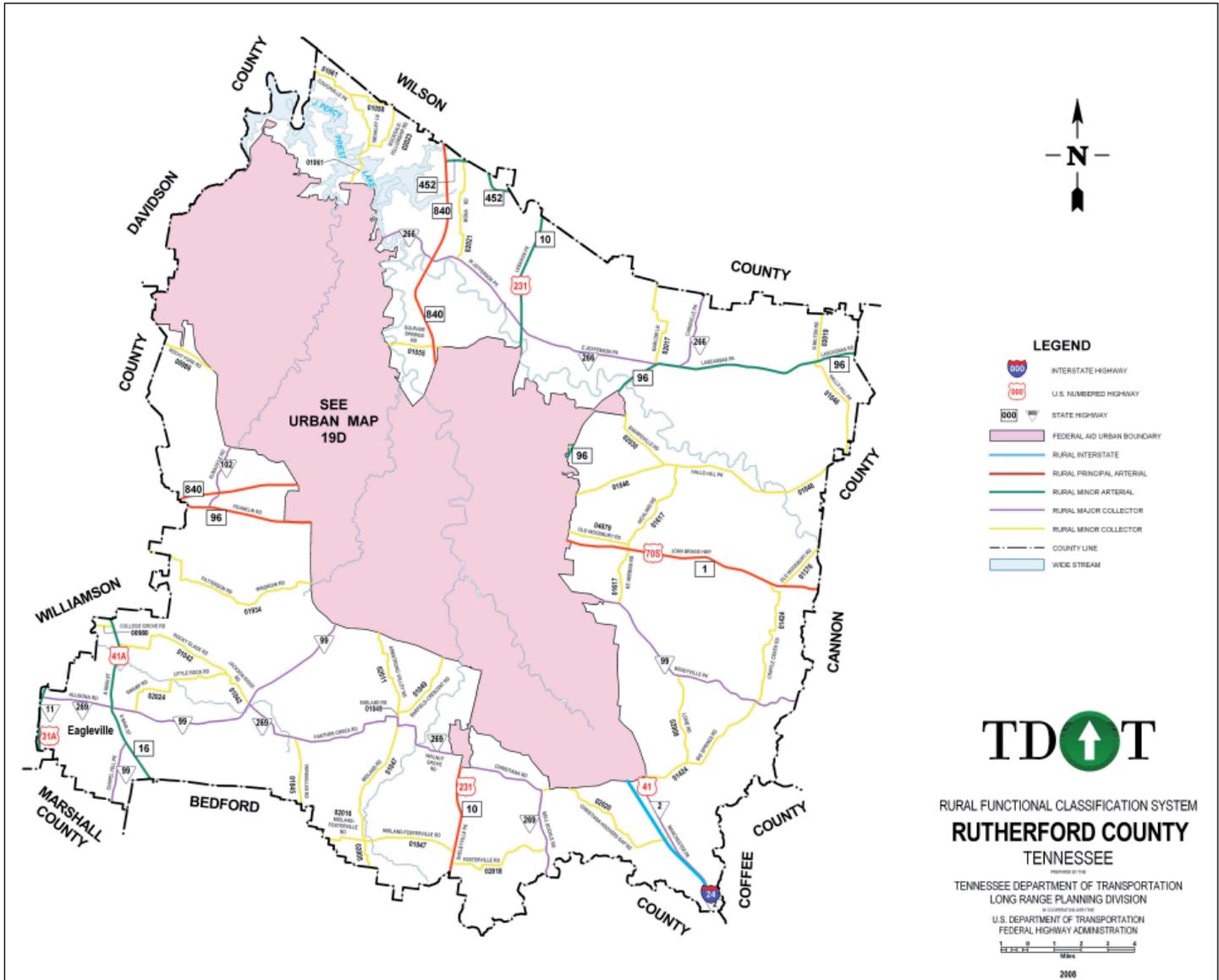
### Freeways

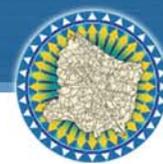
A freeway is a divided multi-lane roadway that is used for through traffic and has no direct access to adjacent parcels of property. Access is provided at grade-separated interchanges. Interstate 24 and SR 840 are the only freeways in Rutherford County.

### Arterials

Arterial roads carry large volumes of traffic between major activity centers. They are designed to carry traffic between neighborhoods or regional development centers and have intersections with collector and local roads. Arterials also generally provide the majority of connections to freeways. Examples of arterial roads in Rutherford County are Shelbyville Highway (US

Figure 6.5: TDOT Rural Classification System for Rutherford County





Highway 231), John Bragg Highway (US Highway 70S), Lascassas Pike (State Route 96), and Franklin Road (State Route 96).

### Collectors

A collector road has the primary purpose of collecting traffic from local roads or neighborhoods to activity areas within communities. They also carry traffic to arterial roads and freeways. Examples of major collector roads in Rutherford County are Almaville Road (State Route 102), Salem Highway (State Route 99), Christiana Road (State Route 269), Manchester Pike (US

Highway 41), Bradyville Pike (State Route 99), and Jefferson Pike (State Route 266).

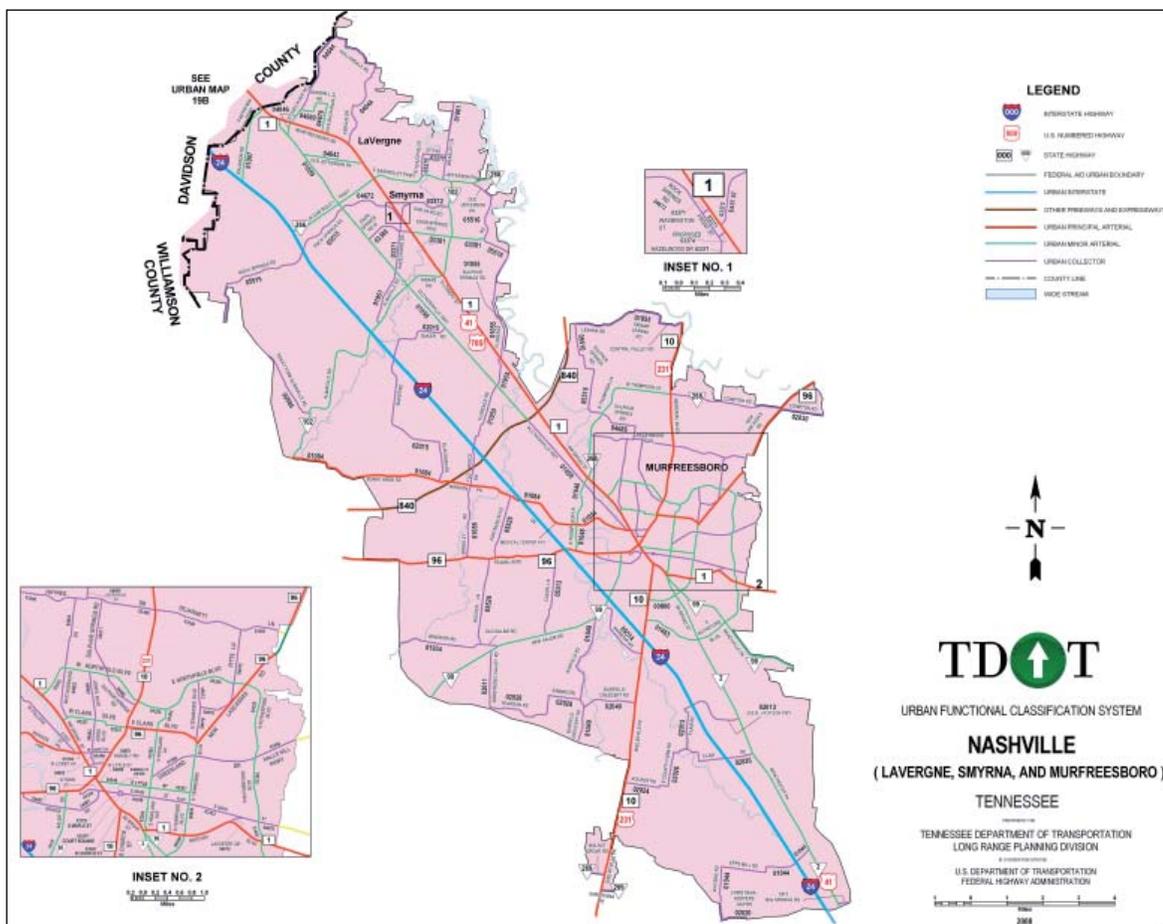
### Local Roads

The remaining roads in Rutherford County are classified as local roads. A local road is defined as a road that primarily provides access to adjacent parcels of land. Local roads have lower traffic volumes and are not intended to have significant amounts of through traffic.

The Federal Highway System, which includes interstates and other

federal-aid routes, are typically classified as freeways, arterials, and collectors. This hierarchy of road classification is useful in allocating funds and establishing design standards. Typically, local roads and some collector roads are paid for through local taxes. Examples of important minor collector or local roads in Rutherford County are Patterson Road, Rocky Glade Road, Midland Road, Fosterville Road, Big Springs Road, Halls Hill Pike, Couchville Pike, and Rocky Fork Road. Other collectors, arterials, and freeways are paid for jointly by local, state, and federal funds.

Figure 6.6: TDOT Urban Classification System for Nashville



The Long Range Planning Division of TDOT prepares functional classification system maps for each rural county and major urban area in the state. In Rutherford County, the rural and urban areas have been separated into two maps that show the interstates, arterials, and collector roadways in the county. These maps, prepared by the Tennessee Department of



Transportation, are shown on Figures 6.5 and 6.6.

### Daily Traffic Volumes

The Tennessee Department of Transportation has historically conducted average daily traffic (ADT) counts in Rutherford County on an annual basis. The location of each station is determined by TDOT. Freeways and arterials generally have several count stations along them. Additionally, there are some stations located on collector and local roadways. In 2008, TDOT conducted traffic counts at over 250 stations in Rutherford County. Figure 6.7 shows Rutherford County’s traffic volumes according to the TDOT traffic counts conducted in 2007 and 2008.

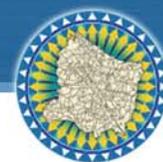
### Traffic Patterns & Commuter Trends

Earlier sections of this report have documented the rate of growth in Rutherford County. In 2000, Rutherford County was the fastest growing county in the state of Tennessee and was ranked as the 20th fastest growing county in the United States by the US Census Bureau at that time.

Figure 6.7 demonstrates that many of the busiest roadways in Rutherford County are located in Murfreesboro, Smyrna, and LaVergne. In addition to these areas having an urban character,

they are located on an important commuter corridor for Nashville and Davidson County and ultimately a much larger area. The Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce estimates that in 2005 approximately 35,000 Rutherford County residents commuted to jobs outside the county, while approximately 20,000 residents of other counties were employed in Rutherford County. Earlier discussion about commuting patterns documents the relationship between Rutherford County and several adjoining counties to highlight immediate job locations. Tables 6.3 and 6.4 break down commuter trips to and from Rutherford County to all other Tennessee counties.

Table 6.3: Work Trips to Rutherford County		
County A	County B	Trips to Rutherford
Davidson	Rutherford	6,837
Cannon	Rutherford	2,322
Wilson	Rutherford	1,988
Bedford	Rutherford	1,885
Williamson	Rutherford	1,506
Coffee	Rutherford	1,298
Sumner	Rutherford	933
Warren	Rutherford	551
DeKalb	Rutherford	345
Maury	Rutherford	336
Robertson	Rutherford	280
Marshall	Rutherford	279
Cheatham	Rutherford	198
Dickson	Rutherford	178
Smith	Rutherford	167
Franklin	Rutherford	163
Hickman	Rutherford	160
Montgomery	Rutherford	84
Macon	Rutherford	80
Putnam	Rutherford	78
Lincoln	Rutherford	73
Giles	Rutherford	65
Grundy	Rutherford	64
Shelby	Rutherford	49



**Table 6.4: Work Trips from Rutherford County**

County A	County B	Trips from Rutherford
Rutherford	Davidson	25,297
Rutherford	Williamson	3,870
Rutherford	Wilson	1,568
Rutherford	Coffee	571
Rutherford	Bedford	560
Rutherford	Sumner	421
Rutherford	Maury	413
Rutherford	Warren	389
Rutherford	Cannon	306
Rutherford	Marshall	211
Rutherford	Dickson	117
Rutherford	DeKalb	100
Rutherford	Cheatham	99
Rutherford	Franklin	91
Rutherford	Robertson	90
Rutherford	Shelby	82
Rutherford	Macon	49
Rutherford	Grundy	25
Rutherford	Montgomery	24
Rutherford	Giles	19
Rutherford	Smith	14
Rutherford	Lincoln	9
Rutherford	Putnam	7
Rutherford	Hickman	--

### Multimodal Infrastructure & Transit Services

The Smyrna/Rutherford County Airport Authority operates the Smyrna Airport serving public and private clients. Located on 1700 acres, it is the third largest airport in Tennessee. This airport includes two runways which are 8,000 feet and 5,500 feet in length, and is a joint use facility with numerous business centers, twenty-two aircraft hangars, and Tennessee Army National Guard flight training areas.

The Murfreesboro Municipal Airport, located on Memorial Boulevard, serves commercial operators, the business community, local aircraft operators and owners and other traffic. The Aerospace Department of Middle Tennessee State University, one of the top aviation programs in

the nation, is the airport's largest tenant.

Rail service to Rutherford County is provided by CSX Transportation. The cities of LaVergne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro are located on the CSX mainline between Nashville and Chattanooga. The US Bureau

of Transportation Statistics reports that this rail line currently carries over 40 million gross tons per mile. Daily rail freight service is provided by CSX to many industries in the cities of LaVergne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro.

The City of Murfreesboro's public transportation department started the Rover service in April 2007 by establishing bus transit operations on six different routes within the city. The Rover bus service operates Monday through Friday from 6 am to 6 pm with each of the six routes being served twice per hour during peak hours. The City of Murfreesboro's Public Transportation Department's map of the six Rover service routes is shown on Figure 6.8.

### WATER & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

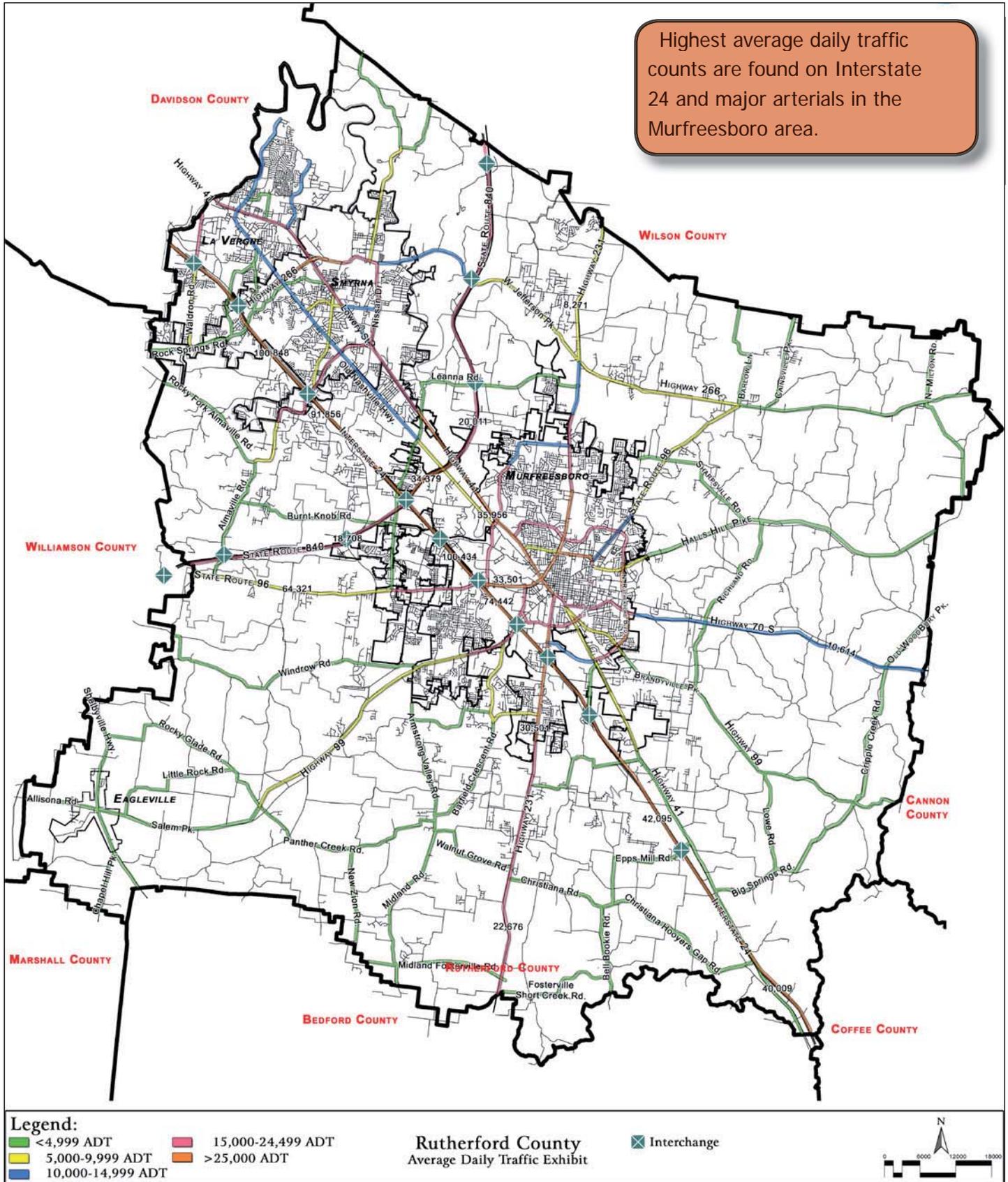
Public water and wastewater services in Rutherford County are provided by four entities: the City of LaVergne, the Town of Smyrna, the City of Murfreesboro and the Consolidated Utility District. Figure 6.9 shows the locations of water storage tanks, pressure zones, pump stations and sewage treatment facilities.

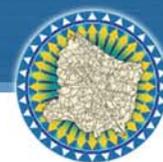
#### Water

The City of LaVergne utilizes the Percy Priest Reservoir of the Stones River for its potable raw water source and is currently permitted for a maximum withdrawal of 18



Figure 6.7: Rutherford County Average Daily Traffic





million gallons per day (MGD). The City operates a water treatment plant with a capacity of 10 MGD. Potable water storage consists of four tanks within the distribution system with a total capacity of 4.1 MGD. The distribution system is comprised of approximately 60 miles of pipe. The system serves 11,325 customers, most of which reside within the city limits.

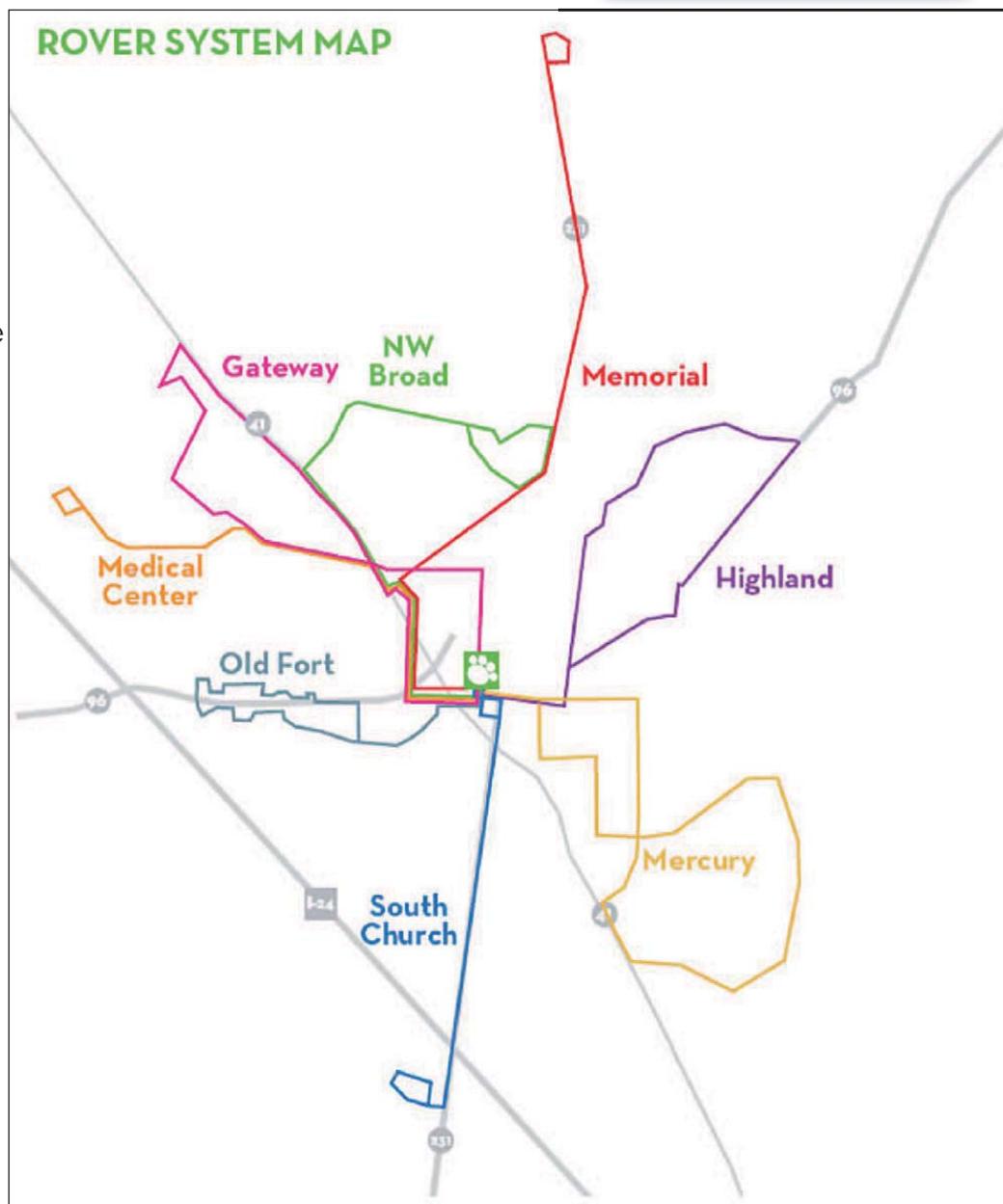
average daily water production is approximately 11 MGD. Potable water storage consists of five tanks within the distribution system with a total capacity of 12 MGD. The distribution system is comprised of approximately 400 miles of pipe. The system serves approximately 26,000 customers, most of which are located within the city limits.

Murfreesboro Public Transportation Department's Rover System operates six routes in Rutherford County.

Figure 6.8: Rover System Map

The Town of Smyrna utilizes the Percy Priest Reservoir of the Stones River for its potable raw water source. The Town operates a water treatment plant with a capacity of 15.2 Million Gallons per Day (MGD). Potable water storage consists of six tanks within the distribution system with a total capacity of 10.5 MGD. The distribution system is comprised of approximately 319 miles of pipe. The system serves approximately 13,200 customers, most of which reside within the town corporate limits.

The City of Murfreesboro utilizes the Percy Priest Reservoir and the East Fork of the Stones River as its potable raw water sources and is currently permitted for a maximum withdrawal of 18 Million Gallons per Day (MGD). The City operates a water treatment plant with a capacity of 20 MGD. Current





The Consolidated Utility District utilizes the Percy Priest Reservoir of the Stones River for its potable raw water source and is currently permitted for a maximum withdrawal of 16 Million Gallons per Day (MGD). The District operates a water treatment plant with a capacity of 16 MGD. Average daily production of the plant is approximately 12 MGD. Potable water storage consists of 14 tanks within the distribution system. The distribution system is comprised of approximately 1,350 miles of pipe and 16 water booster stations. The system serves 46,500 customers comprised of approximately 41,000 residential and 5,500 commercial / industrial.

The residents, businesses, and industries located within Rutherford County rely exclusively on the Stones River and its Percy Priest Reservoir impoundment. The Reservoir is regulated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and withdrawal permits require approval of USACE and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation – Division of Drinking Water Supply (TDEC – DWS). Adequate raw water supply exists at this time; however continued growth will necessitate evaluation and development of alternative water supplies, conservation, reuse, or a combination of these alternatives deemed to be the most cost effective. Distribution system

improvements to satisfy area specific demands will be required as well on a case-by-case basis.

### Wastewater

The City of LaVergne operates a sanitary sewer collection system. The collection system consists of approximately 26 miles of lines. Wastewater treatment is handled by Metropolitan Nashville Water Services. The system serves approximately 10,000 customers, most of whom reside within the city limits.

The Town of Smyrna operates a sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant. The collection system consists of approximately 196 miles of lines. The wastewater treatment plant has a capacity of 5.85 MGD and discharges treated effluent to River Mile 6.65 of Stewart Creek. The system serves approximately 12,300 customers, most of which reside within the city limits.

The City of Murfreesboro operates a sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant. The collection system consists of approximately 300 miles of lines. The wastewater treatment plant has a capacity of 16 MGD and discharges treated effluent to the West Fork of the Stones River. The system serves approximately 25,000 customers, most of which reside within the city limits.

The Consolidated Utility District

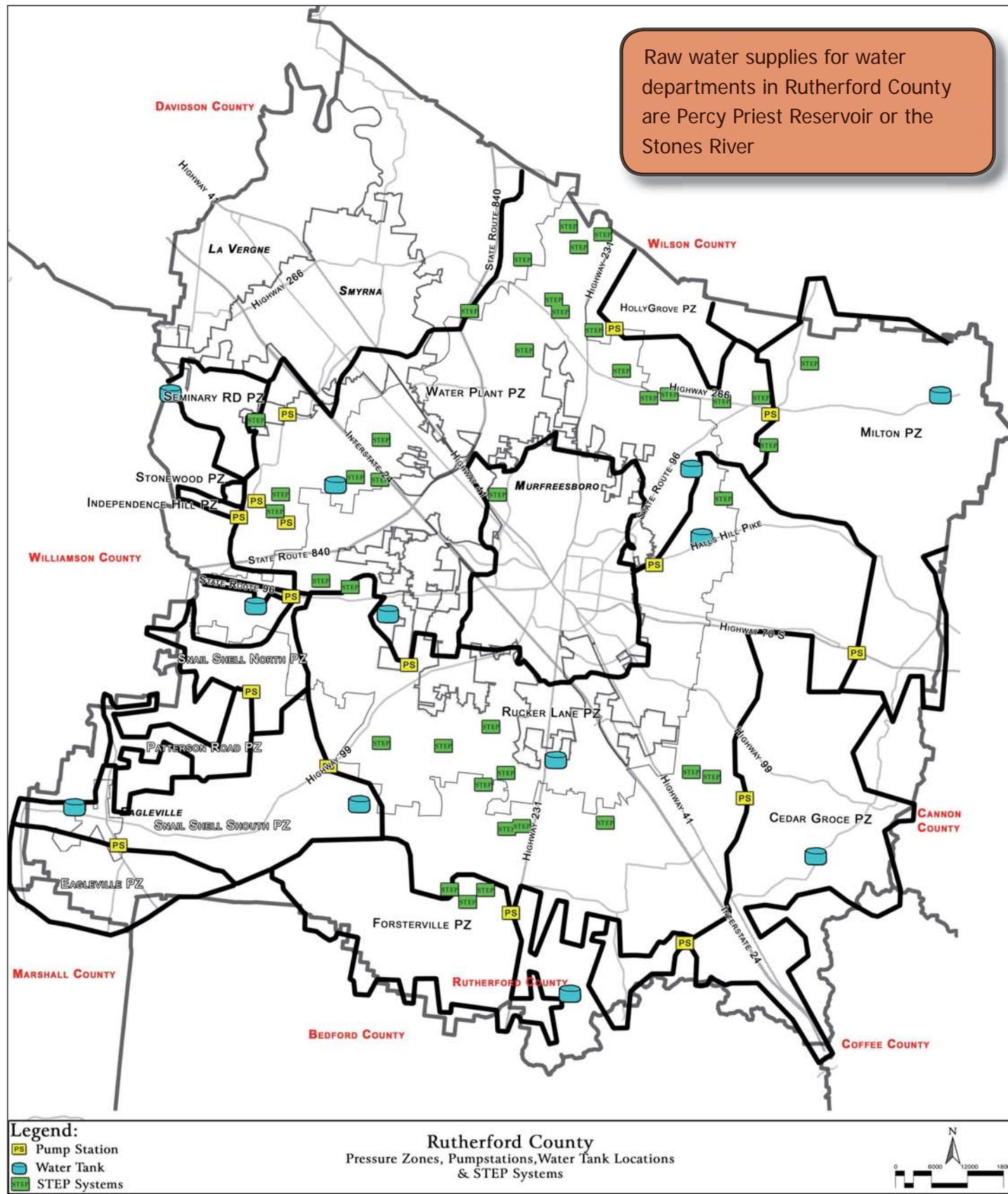
does not operate a centralized collection system and wastewater treatment plant. Sanitary sewer collection, treatment and disposal are provided through a series of 38 on-site systems which provide for localized collection through a combination of septic tank effluent pumps (STEP) or septic tank effluent gravity (STEG) units and small diameter pressure or gravity lines. Treatment is achieved through use of a combination of re-circulating sand filter, fine filter and disinfection. Final treated effluent disposal is by land application via drip land disposal. These systems are scattered throughout the county and are constructed on an as needed basis as part of individual residential developments.

Limited centralized and decentralized wastewater collection and treatment access is available to land outside the corporate limits of LaVergne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro. The remainder of the unincorporated county is primarily served by individual septic systems.

Wastewater service in the county is limited by the already taxed assimilative capacity of the Stones River and the relatively limited supply of land suitable (e.g. sufficient soil depth and type) for treated effluent disposal by the land application method. A significant increase in the availability of wastewater services may, in reality, require coordination



Figure 6.9: Rutherford County Pressure Zones, Pump Stations, Water Tank Locations & Sewage Treatment Plants





of decentralized treatment systems and some form of beneficial reuse of treated effluent.

## OTHER UTILITIES

### Utility Providers

Multiple companies in Rutherford County provide cable television, electric, natural gas, and telephone services. The table below provides a summary of these providers and their general service locations.

## AGRICULTURAL, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Environmental Quality

#### *Floodplains*

Floodplains are those lands adjacent to rivers and streams that are subject to periodic inundation by water. The amount of land subject to flooding and the exact limits of a floodplain are influenced by the land uses within the watershed and the types of soils and land cover present. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through Flood Insurance Rate Maps, defines the

geographic boundaries of varying levels of flood risk in Rutherford County. Those areas are depicted in Figure 6.10. Rutherford County's floodplains are relatively narrow bands of lands buffering the streams and rivers in the county. Approximately 43,203 acres of land (over 67.5 square miles) are included in identified floodplains. The area consists of named and unnamed streams, creeks and rivers.

Table 6.6 lists named water bodies that form the basis of the floodplains in Rutherford County. This listing does not include several unnamed tributaries and streams. A full listing of water bodies and floodplain elevations is contained in the 2006 Flood Insurance Study for Rutherford County, issued by FEMA.

#### *Watersheds & 303(d) Streams*

All land is included within a watershed, which is defined as the geographic area that drains water to a stream, river, or lake. Watersheds are identified by numerical Hydrologic Units. Most of Rutherford County is contained within the Stones River watershed, which is itself composed of 13 smaller units. The Upper Duck and Harpeth River watersheds comprise the southwest portion of the county, and slivers of the Lower Cumberland River and Caney Fork watersheds are located on the east and west edges of the County.

As watersheds carry water, the condition of the streams and rivers is paramount. In Tennessee, the Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Water

**Table 6.5: Utility Service Providers**

	LaVergne	Smyrna	Murfreesboro	Rutherford County
<b>Cable</b>	Comcast	Comcast	Comcast	Comcast
<b>Electric</b>	Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Cooperative and Nashville Electric Service	Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Cooperative	Murfreesboro Electric	Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Cooperative
<b>Natural Gas</b>	Nashville Gas Company and Town of Smyrna	Town of Smyrna	Atmos Energy Corporation	Atmos Energy Corporation
<b>Telephone</b>	TDS Telecom and AT&T	AT&T	AT&T	AT&T

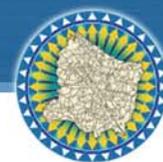
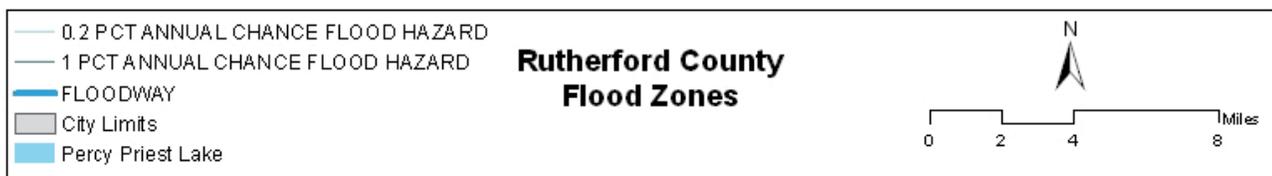
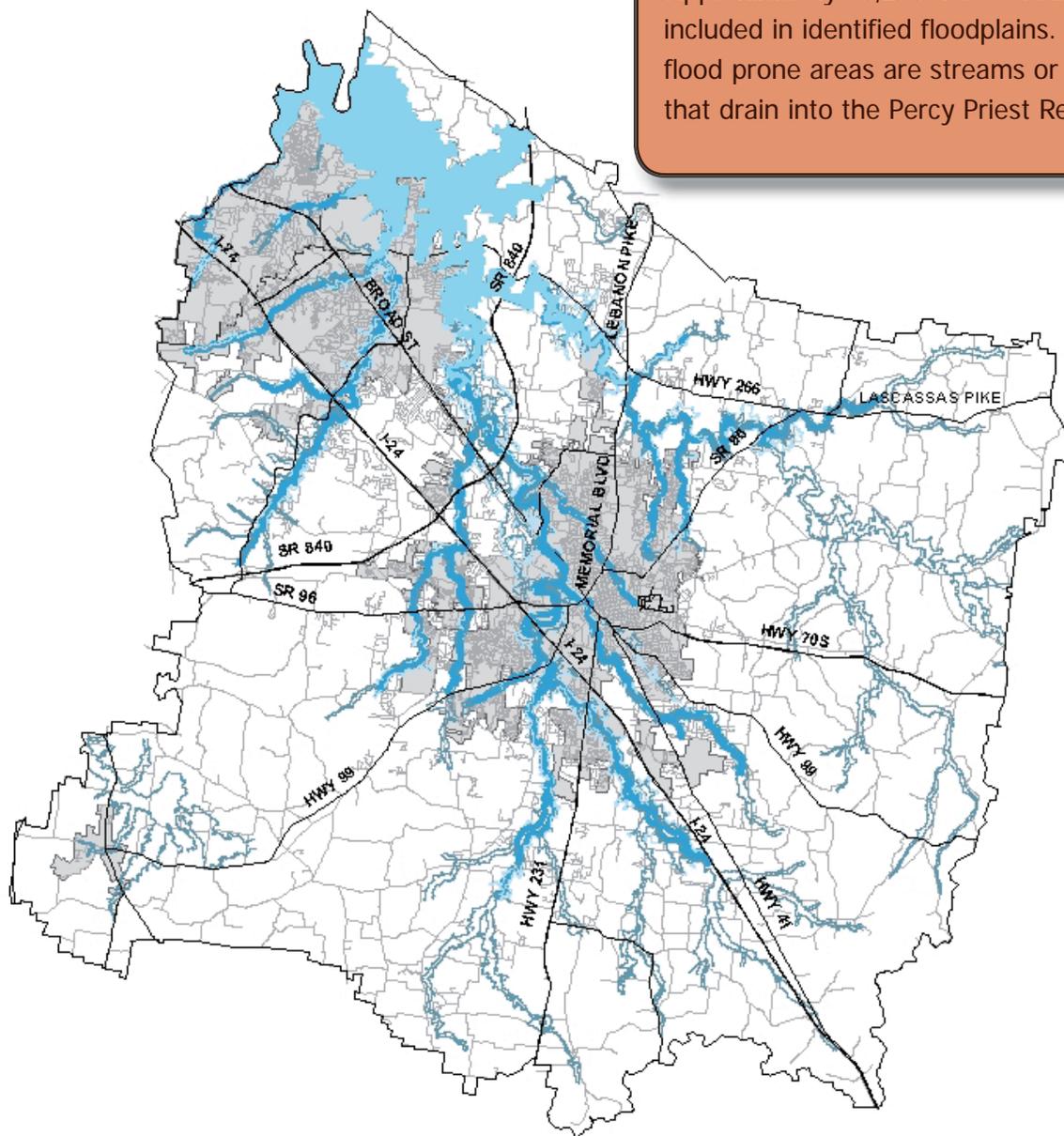


Figure 6.10: Rutherford County Flood Zones

Approximately 43,203 acres of land are included in identified floodplains. Almost all flood prone areas are streams or tributaries that drain into the Percy Priest Reservoir.





Pollution Control prepares a list of impaired streams as required under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Those waterways which have become impaired, and which either partially or fully support one or more of the uses designated by the Tennessee Water Quality Control Board are shown. Streams which are not polluted, which have not been assessed, or for which an effective control strategy is in place are not placed on the list.

Figure 6.11 shows the 303(d) streams and watersheds in Rutherford County.

### Soils

A major factor in evaluation of areas for development is the type of soil and the capabilities of the soils present. Every county is made up of a variety and mixtures of soils. Each has unique properties in regard to load-bearing capacity, drainage and other attributes. For purposes of this study, the suitability of soils for septic tanks is shown. Figure 6.12 shows areas of Rutherford County where the soils are either very limited or somewhat limited for use for septic tank absorption fields are shown. As the map shows, almost the entirety of

Rutherford County falls into one of these two categories.

## Agricultural & Natural Resources

### Agriculture

Figure 6.13 shows areas of Rutherford County where the soils are classified as prime farmland. Almost 242 square miles of land are classified as prime farmland.

Land in the County that has been converted to non-agricultural use, primarily single-family residential, comes at the expense of agricultural properties. For example, in 2002, the US Census Bureau reported a total of 2088 farms in Rutherford County, occupying 210,754 acres. Average size of farms in 2002 was 100.96 acres. By 2007, the number of farms had fallen approximately 27% to 1525, and the total acres in farms had fallen approximately 22% to 164,411. The average farm size increased only approximately 6% to 107.81 acres per farm.

### Century Farms

In keeping with Rutherford County's long agricultural history, twenty-five farms currently hold the status of Century Farms, those farms recognized by the State of Tennessee as being in continuous operation at least 100 years by the same family. Table 6.7 lists Century Farms in Rutherford County.

**Table 6.6: Named Water Bodies**

Andrews Creek	Armstrong Branch
Bear Branch	Big Springs Creek
Bradley Creek	Bushman Creek
Cheatham Branch	Christmas Creek
Concord Branch	Cripple Creek
Dry Branch	Dry Creek
Dry Fork	Dry Fork Creek
East Fork Stones River	Fall Creek
Finch Branch	Harpeth River
Henry Creek	Hurricane Creek
Kelly Creek	Long Creek
Lytle Creek	McElroy Branch
McKnight Branch	Middle Fork Stones River
Murray Branch	Olive Branch
Overall Creek	Panther Creek
Puckett Creek	Reed Creek
Rocky Fork Creek	Short Creek
Stewart Creek	Stinking Creek
Wades Branch	West Fork Stones River

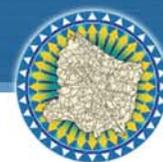
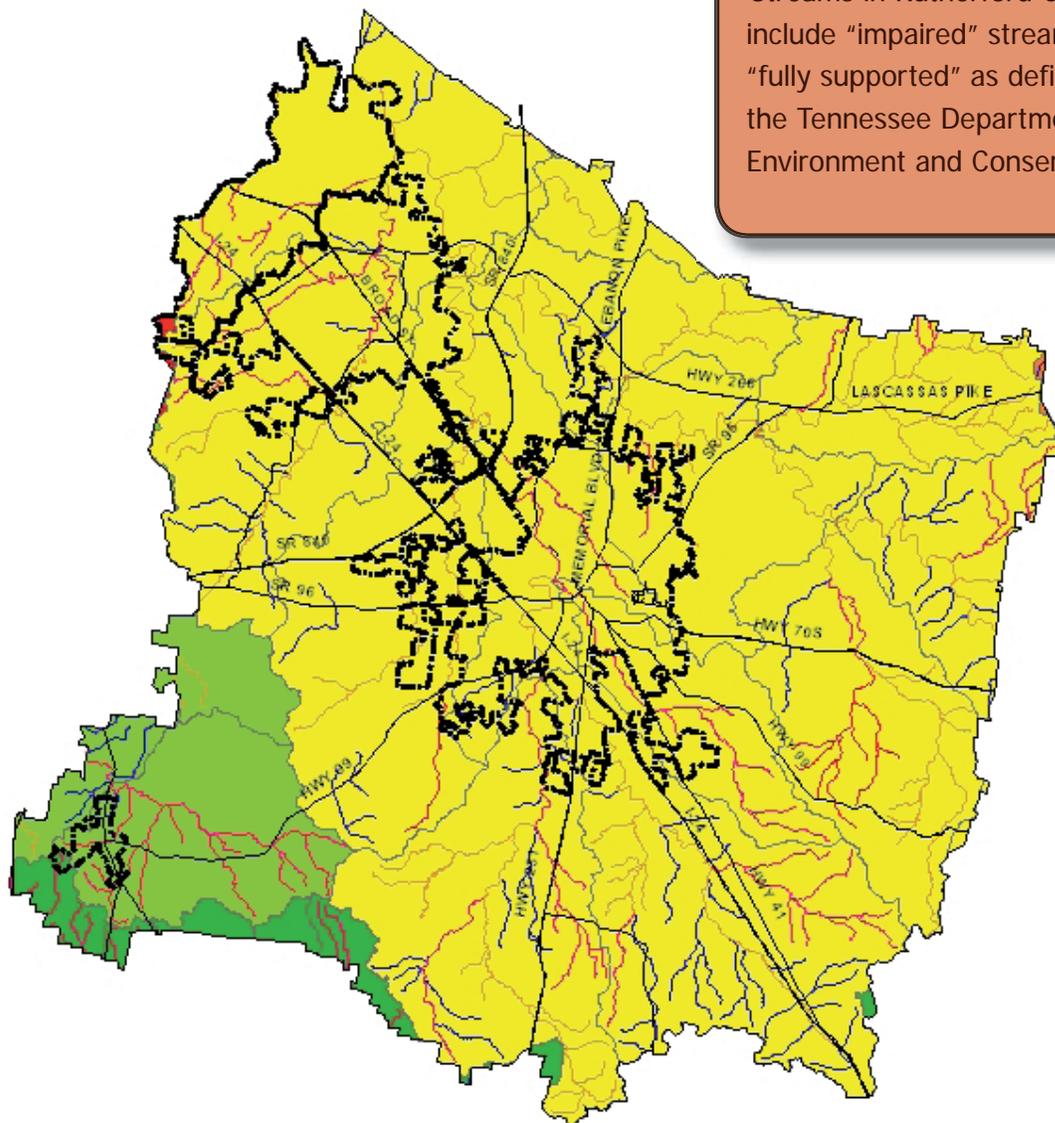


Figure 6.11: Rutherford County 303D Streams & Watersheds

Streams in Rutherford County include "impaired" streams and "fully supported" as defined by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.



Caney Fork River	<b>Stream Classification</b>	<b>Rutherford County 303D Streams &amp; Watersheds</b>	 0 2 4 8 Miles
Hapeth River	Dry		
Lower Cumberland River	Fully Supporting		
Stones River	Not Assessed		
Upper Duck River	Not Supporting		
City Limits			



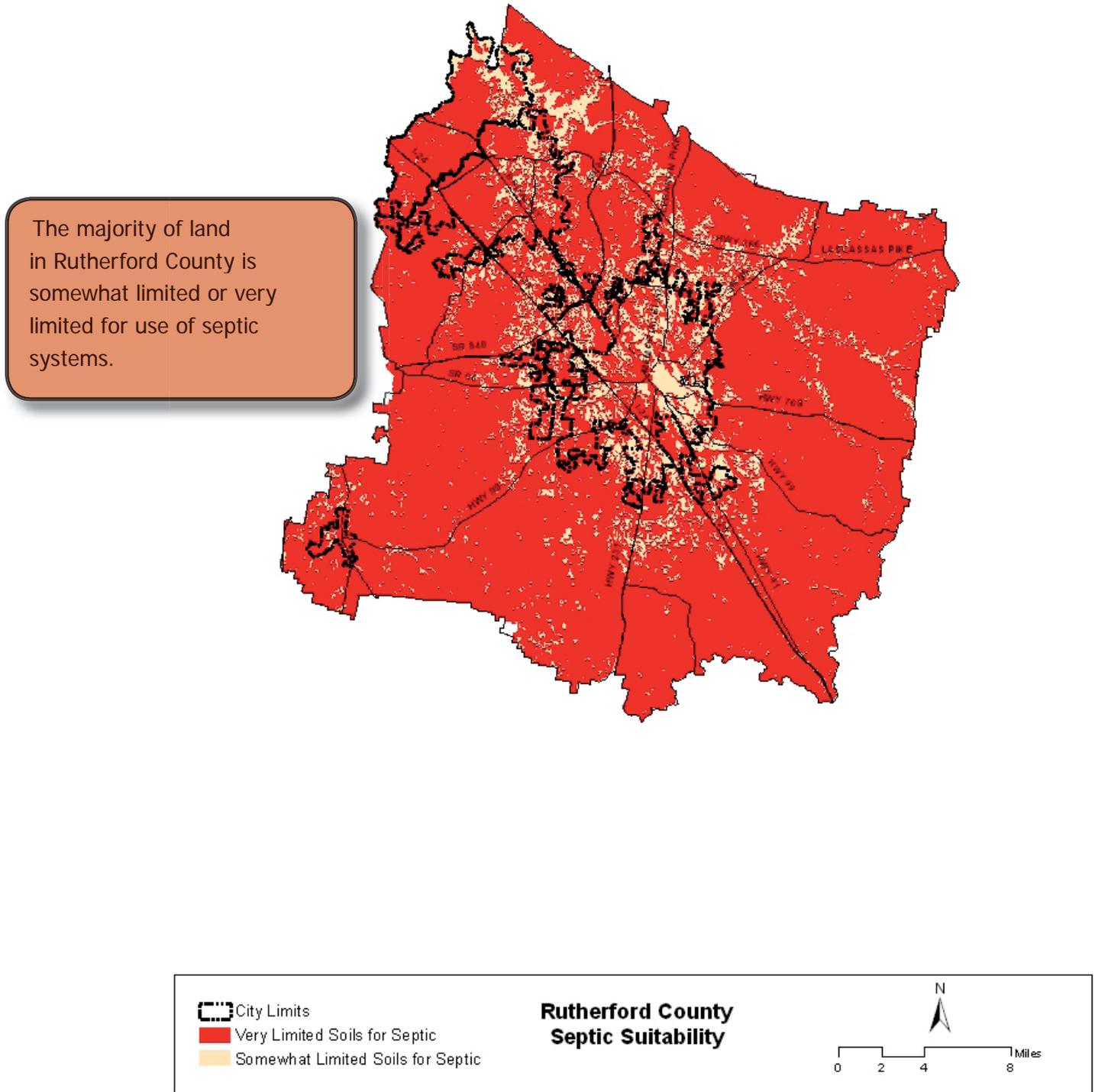
*Managed Lands*

Within Rutherford County, several tracts of land serve purposes for wildlife refuge and management, water resource protection, and protection of rare

or endangered plant life. Both through the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency and the State of Tennessee's Department of Environment and Conservation,

these lands have varying degrees of protection, and are not available for private development. Lands designated as Wildlife Management Areas and State Natural Areas

Figure 6.12: Rutherford County Septic Suitability





are mapped on Figure 6.14; lands affected by the Natural Heritage Inventory Program are being mapped by the State and will be available soon.

### Wildlife Management Areas

The Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency maintains a total of over 11,438 acres in the Percy Priest Lake area in the form of Wildlife Management Areas. They preserve critical habitats for waterfowl and other animals. In addition, these lands are open to seasonal hunting, fishing and public access. Wildlife Management Areas also serve to prohibit development adjacent to Percy Priest Lake, contributing to water quality.

### Natural Areas Program

In 1971, the Tennessee General Assembly passed the Natural Areas Preservation Act, legislation which "... finds that in the countryside of Tennessee there are areas possessing scenic, scientific, including biological, geological and/or recreational values, and which are in prospect and peril of being destroyed or substantially diminished by actions such as dumping of refuse, commercialization, construction, changing of population densities or similar actions, there being either

Figure 6.13: Rutherford County Prime Farmland

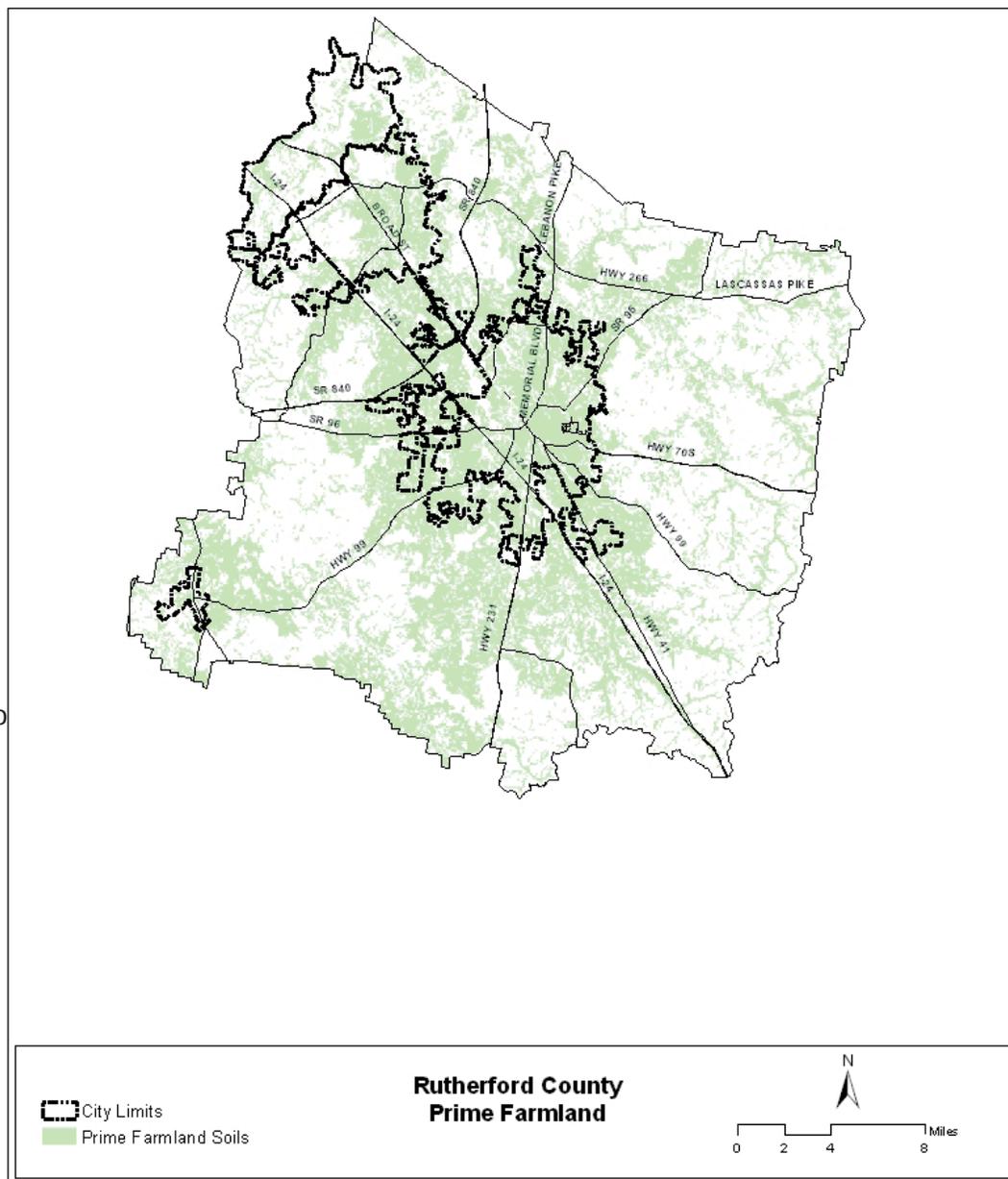


Table 6.7: Rutherford County Century Farms		
Batey Farm	Gamewell Farm	Riverside Farm
Bennett Place	Gooch Farm	Sanders Farm
Caff-E-Hill Farms	Gordon Farm	Smith Farm
Castlewood	Jones Farm	Sugg Farm
Cates Farm	Lane Farm	Tarpley Farm
Drake Farm	Lawrence Farm	Thomas Jackson Farm
Druggin Farm	Marlin Farm	Wild Acres Farm
Elmwood Farm	Murray Farm	
E.S. Williams Farm	Raymond Murray Jernigan Farm	

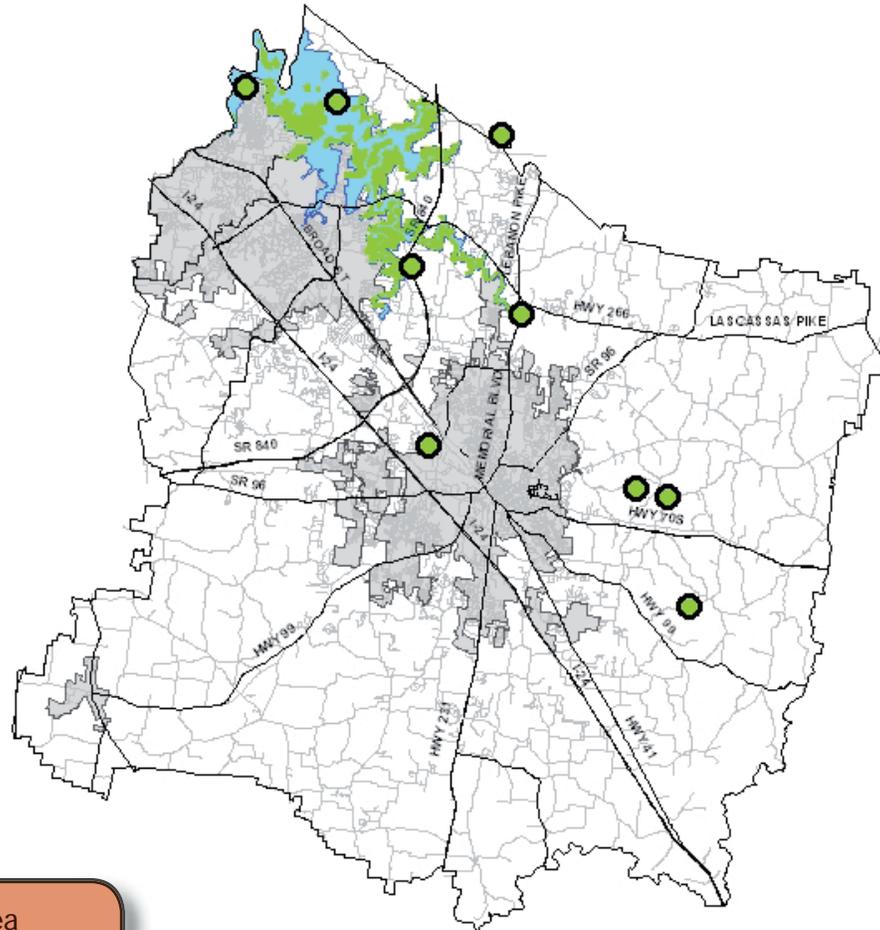


no regulations by the state or by local governments or regulations which are inadequate or so poorly enforced as not to yield adequate

protection to such areas. It is the intention of the general assembly to provide protection for such areas.”

Since its inception, seventy nine areas of Tennessee, representing well over 100,000 acres of land, have been protected. Within

Figure 6.14: Rutherford County Managed Lands



The Percy Priest Lake Area Wildlife Management Area is over 11,438 acres in size and is administered by the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency.

	State Natural Areas	<b>Rutherford County Managed Lands</b>	 0 2 4 8 Miles
	Percy Priest Wildlife Management Areas		
	Percy Priest Lake		
	City Limits		



Rutherford County, nine areas are designated State Natural Areas, providing protection for rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal life. The nine designated areas in Rutherford County are listed in Table 6.8.

### Tennessee Natural Heritage Inventory Program

The Natural Heritage Inventory Program, through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, maintains rare plant listings in Tennessee. Through extensive field investigations, research and management activities, the Division seeks to prevent imperiled species of plants and animals from becoming further imperiled, to effect the recovery of federally listed species so that they may be de-listed, and to prevent the extirpation of critically imperiled species. There are currently seventy eight known rare plant species in Rutherford County. A GIS database will be made available by the State soon.

### Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are unique to each County, and provide a context for the County's people and history. Without careful consideration and preservation, these resources can be lost to time and progress. Several projects are underway that seek to identify and preserve these important features of the past. Figure 6.15 depicts those resources for which a spatial representation could be obtained.

### National Register of Historic Places

Rutherford County has nearly fifty properties that are National Register-eligible. A listing is provided in Table 6.9. These listings represent important places, events, structures and people in Rutherford County history. Figure 6.15 shows the location of these properties, and groups the properties by type, such as residence, church, etc.

### National Historic Trail – Trail of Tears

Beginning in 1838, Rutherford County was part of the infamous "Trail of Tears", one of several routes taken by Federal troops as they conducted the forced removal of over 16,000 Cherokee people from their native lands in Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and North Carolina to Oklahoma. The detachments followed various paths, by land and water, with one of the routes, the Northern Route, passing through Rutherford County. At the east end of the County, the route split, with one section following what is now a portion of the Old Nashville Highway, and the other section avoiding toll roads of the day by passing through the old community of Jefferson. Both routes converged again near LaVergne and continued on through Davidson County. Under brutal conditions, estimates are that over 4,000 Cherokee perished along the way, marking this episode as one of the saddest in U.S. history. Commemoration of Rutherford County's portion of the Trail as a valuable part of American history contributes to the cultural understanding of the past and Rutherford's place in it. The route of the Trail of Tears in Rutherford County is depicted in Figure 6.15.

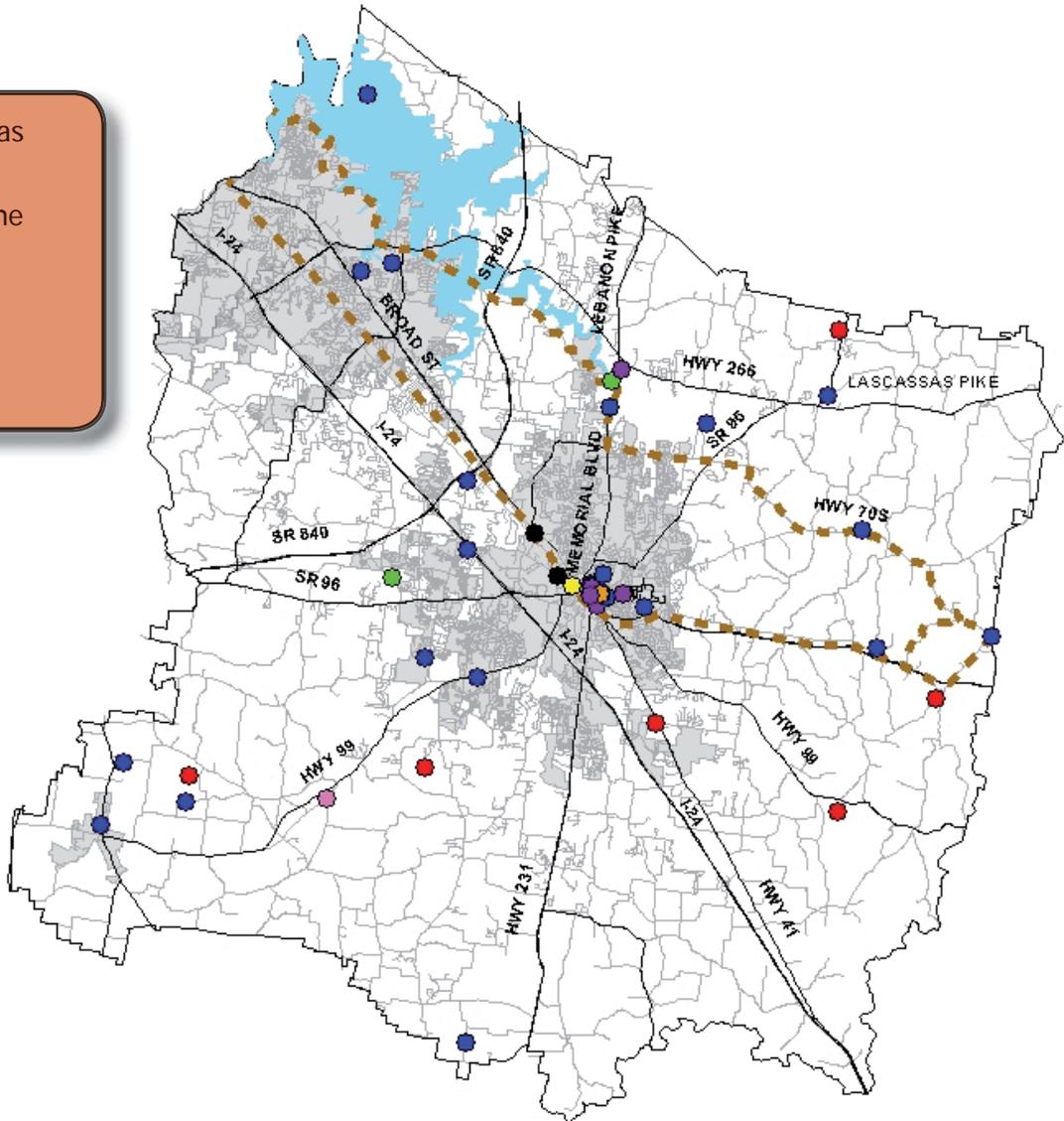
**Table 6.8: Designated State Natural Areas in Rutherford County**

Sunnybell Cedar Glade	Flat Rock Cedar Glade
Overbridge	Manus Road Cedar Glade
Stones River Cedar Glade	Walter Hill Floodplain
Gattinger's Cedar Glade and Barrens	Fate Sanders Barrens
Elsie Quarterman Cedar Glade	

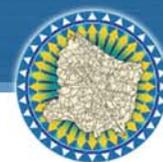


Figure 6.15: Rutherford County Cultural & Historic Resources

Rutherford County has nearly 50 properties that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



Church	Military Sites	<b>Rutherford County Cultural &amp; Historic Resources</b>	 0 2 4 8 Miles
Residence	Commercial		
Cemetery	Trail of Tears		
Historic District	City Limits		
Farm	Percy Priest Lake		
Public Facilities/Structures			



**Table 6.9: National Register of Historic Places Properties in Rutherford County**

Name	Address	Location
Morgan House		Christiana
Rucker, Benjamin House (Rucker-Betty House)	3978 Betty Ford Road	Compton
Jordan, William B. Farm (Jordan-Floyd-Presswood Farm)	2665 Taylor Lane	Eagleville
McCord, William Harrison House	US 41A	Eagleville
Scales, Absalom House	TN 16 on Rocky Glade Road	Eagleville
Williamson, Thomas House	2253 Little Rock Road	Eagleville
Brown's Mill	Brown's Mill Road	Lascassas
Dement House (Colonial Acres)	Cainsville Pike	Lascassas
Jarman Farm (Penuel Farm)	Cainsville Pike	Lascassas
Allen Chapel AME Church	224 S. Maney Avenue	Murfreesboro
Arnold-Harrell House (Daffodil Hill)	1710 E. Main Street	Murfreesboro
Beesley Primitive Baptist Church	461 Beelsey Road	Murfreesboro
Black, Thomas C., House (Evergreen; Old Black Place)	4431 Lebanon Road	Murfreesboro
Boxwood (Thomas J.B. Turner House)	Old Salem Pike	Murfreesboro
Bradley Academy	415 S. Academy Street	Murfreesboro
Childress-Ray House	225 N. Academy Street	Murfreesboro
Collier-Crichlow House	511 E. Main Street	Murfreesboro
Collier-Lane-Crichlow House (House of Mayors)	500 N. Spring Street	Murfreesboro
Crichlow Grammar School	400 N. Maple Street	Murfreesboro
E.C. Cox Memorial Gym	105 Olive Street	Murfreesboro
East Main Street Historic District	E. Main, E. Lytle, College, University, E. Vine Street	Murfreesboro
Elmwood	US 70S/41	Murfreesboro
First Presbyterian Church	210 N. Spring Street	Murfreesboro
Fortress Rosecrans Site	Stones River	Murfreesboro
Henderson, Logan Farm	3600 Manchester Pike	Murfreesboro
Jones, Enoch H. House (Harvey House)	6339 Halls Hill Pike	Murfreesboro
Landsberger-Gerhardt House (Fite-Anderson House)	435 N. Spring Street	Murfreesboro
Lytle Cemetery	739 NW Broad Street	Murfreesboro
Marymont	TN 99	Murfreesboro
Middle Tennessee State Teachers College Training School	923 E. Lytle Street	Murfreesboro
North Maney Avenue Historic District	N. Maney/N. Highland Avenues/E. College Street/N. Academy Avenue	Murfreesboro



Table 6.9: National Register of Historic Places Properties in Rutherford County

Name	Address	Location
Oaklands Historic House Museum	N. Maney Avenue	Murfreesboro
Palmer, Gen. Joseph B. House	434 E. Main Street	Murfreesboro
Rutherford County Courthouse	Public Square	Murfreesboro
Rutherford Health Department	303 N. Church Street	Murfreesboro
Smith, Robert Andrew Farm	2568 Armstrong Valley Road	Murfreesboro
Spence, John C. House	503 N. Maples Street	Murfreesboro
Stones River National Battlefield	US 41	Murfreesboro
Walter Hill Hydroelectric Station	US 231 at Stones River	Walter Hill
Caff-E-Hill Farm	3783 Cripple Creek Road	Readyville
Macon, Uncle Dave House	US 70	Readyville
Murray Farm (Murray-Jernigan Farm)	9409 Bradyville Road	Readyville
Ready, Charles House (The Corners)	US 70S	Readyville
Rockvale Store	8964 Rockvale Road	Rockvale
Idler's Retreat (Dillon-Tucker-Cheney House)	112 Oak Street	Smyrna
Ridley's Landing (Ridley-Buchanan House)	Jones Mill Road@Stones River	Smyrna
Sam Davis House	TN 102	Smyrna
Providence Primitive Baptist Church	256 Central Valley Road	Walter Hill

### *Cemeteries*

An important part of a community's history is its cemeteries and burial grounds. Many cemeteries are encroached upon by development due to lack of good information on their exact locations and boundaries. Many of the county's cemeteries were mapped in years past, but not all. An existing resource for many of the cemeteries is Rutherford County Cemeteries, by Susan Daniels, republished in 2005 by the Rutherford County Historical

Society. To complete the listings of cemeteries, Rutherford County Archives is working with the Bradley Academy Museum to locate the old slave and African-American cemeteries. Once completed, a GIS-based layer of information will be available.

### *Historic Structure Survey*

In the early 1980's, the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University conducted a visual survey of Rutherford County to document

historic structures (1930's and older at the time). Over 4,000 structures were identified, photographed, and a narrative description prepared. Rutherford County Archives has received a grant from the Tennessee Historic Commission to scan and upload those files from the 1980's and create a GIS layer to be available to the public. The project should be in its final stages by fall 2010.



## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

There are four exhibits in this section depicting 1) school zones and school locations (Figure 6.16); 2) emergency medical services and hospitals (Figure 6.17); 3) fire departments, rescue facilities and police departments (Figure 6.18) and 4) parks and community centers (Figure 6.19). The existing facilities generally follow the population corridor of Interstate 24, LaVergne, Smyrna and Murfreesboro in a northwest to southeast pattern.

### Schools

The county is served by the Rutherford County School Board, with most of their schools within the current city limits of LaVergne, Smyrna and Murfreesboro. This is especially the case with upper educational facilities, such as high school and middle school facilities.

The City of Murfreesboro has a board of education that primarily serves K-6 grades within the City of Murfreesboro limits. Again, the schools tend to follow the population corridor of Interstate 24 with a few elementary schools located in the more rural parts of the county to the north, east and south of Murfreesboro.

The Rutherford County school system responds to growth patterns and available funds when determining the need and locations for new facilities. At the time of this inventory, three new schools have been approved for construction along with various renovation projects for existing facilities. A new high school has also been targeted for the Stewarts Creek area, although neither design work nor construction funds have been approved. Table 6.10 lists the projects scheduled for

the 2009/2010, 2010/2011, and 2011/2012 fiscal years.

### Public Safety

#### *Hospitals & Emergency Medical Stations*

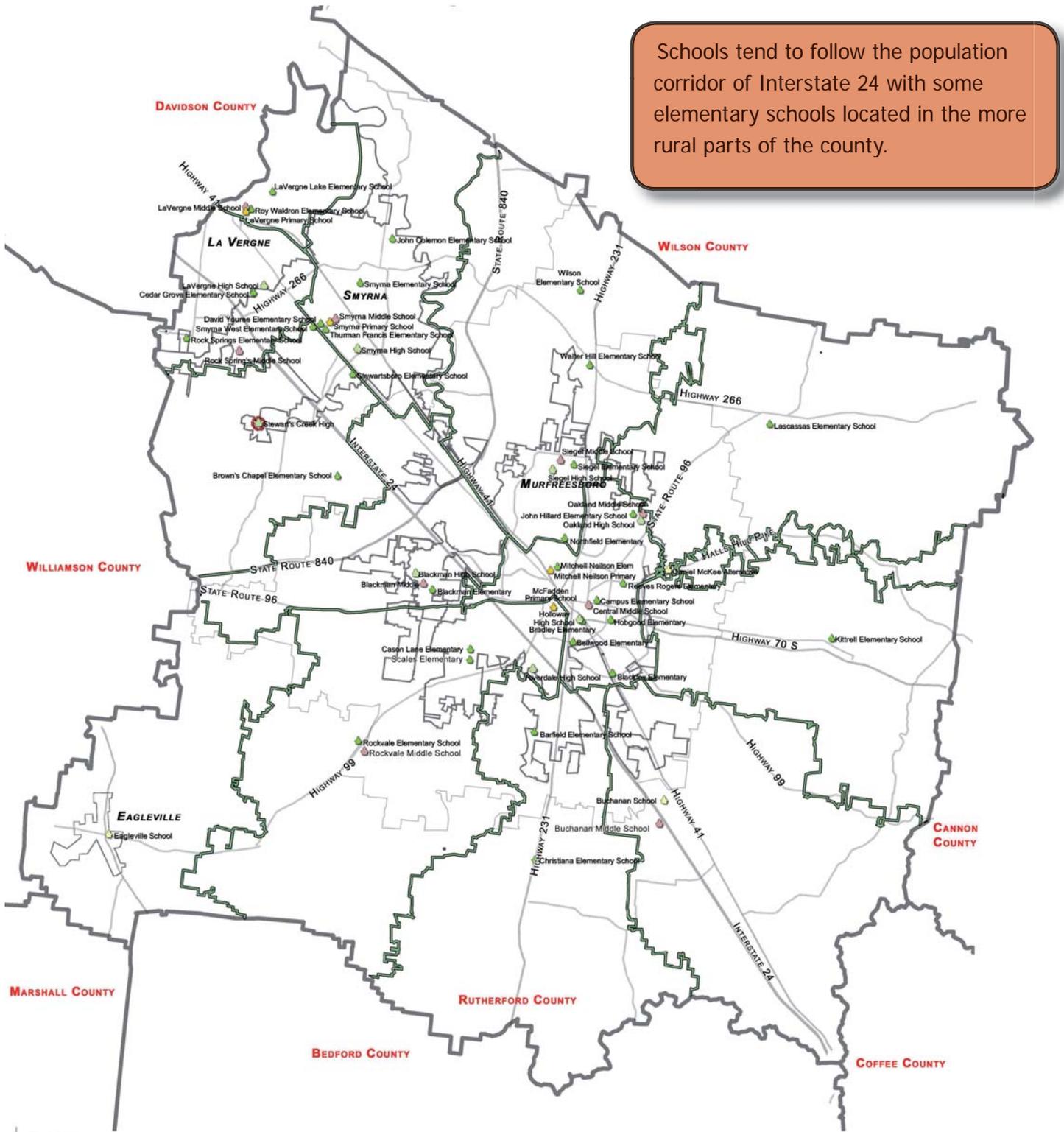
The two major hospitals are located within the Town of Smyrna and City of Murfreesboro. There are also Rutherford County Emergency Medical Service Stations, only two of which are located outside any city limits. These are along Highway 231 and Highway 41 in the southeastern portion of the county. The western half of the county is served adequately between the facilities within the city limits; however, to the east of the county and to the north of Murfreesboro, while having a lesser population, there is a lack of facilities of any type.

**Table 6.10: Rutherford County School Projects**

Fiscal 2009/10 Projects:	Fiscal 2010/11 Projects:	Fiscal 2011/2012 Projects:
Brown's Chapel Elementary School	North Corridor middle school	Stewarts Creek High School
McFadden renovation	Buchanan middle school	David Youree renovation
Major capital repairs	Buchanan land for future high school	Smyrna Primary renovation
	Central Middle renovation	
	John Coleman renovation	
	Smyrna middle renovation	
	Major capital repairs	



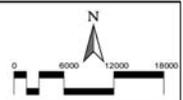
Figure 6.16: Rutherford County School Zones & Locations



Schools tend to follow the population corridor of Interstate 24 with some elementary schools located in the more rural parts of the county.

- Legend:**
- Elementary Schools
  - Primary Schools
  - Middle Schools
  - High Schools
  - K-12 Schools
  - New Schools

**Rutherford County**  
School Zones and Locations





### *Police/Fire Departments/ Rescue Facilities*

The three larger municipalities have their own city police departments patrolling within the city limits. The Rutherford County Sheriffs Department has one central office within the City of Murfreesboro on New Salem Highway. There are no substations at this time, nor can any plans be determined for future ones located elsewhere in the county.

Murfreesboro and Smyrna have their own fire departments. LaVergne contracts with a fully-paid privately-owned fire department. The rest of the county is served by volunteer fire departments which have been located throughout the county along major arterial roads or highways. These appear to have been distributed in an effort to proportionally serve the current population densities within the county.

### *Parks & Community Centers*

The only parks available for Rutherford County residents are city parks within the city limits of the four incorporated communities. There are two parks north of Murfreesboro within the urban growth boundary that are outside the city limits and two community centers on the west side of the city limits of Murfreesboro. There are several recreation areas along Percy Priest Lake that are maintained by the

Corps of Engineers and several golf courses. Due to the lack of other facilities, these golf courses are one of the few existing recreation opportunities. There are no other passive or active recreation facilities or community centers in the county.

The surrounding municipalities have park and recreation departments that are responsible for the recreation facilities within their jurisdiction. At this time, Rutherford County does not have a department that oversees recreational facilities, resulting in the lack of land specifically dedicated for park and recreation activities.

Rutherford County, like many counties, has a number of communities that are not incorporated but identifiable by many citizens. These areas maintain active citizen groups that have participated in the various planning efforts undertaken by both Rutherford County and other incorporated cities within the county. A number of these communities, including Blackman, Almaville, Lascassas, Leanna, Rockvale and Kittrell, have community centers that serve as gathering areas for planned events and public outreach programs for their area. These centers serve to help maintain the identity of these unique hamlets within the county.



Figure 6.17: Rutherford County Medical Services & Hospitals



Hospitals in Rutherford County are located in Smyrna and Murfreesboro. Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services have 12 locations county-wide.

- Legend:**
- Rutherford County Emergency Medical Services
  - Rutherford County Hospitals
  - Service Districts

**Rutherford County**  
Emergency Medical Services & Hospitals

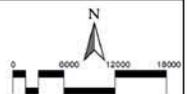
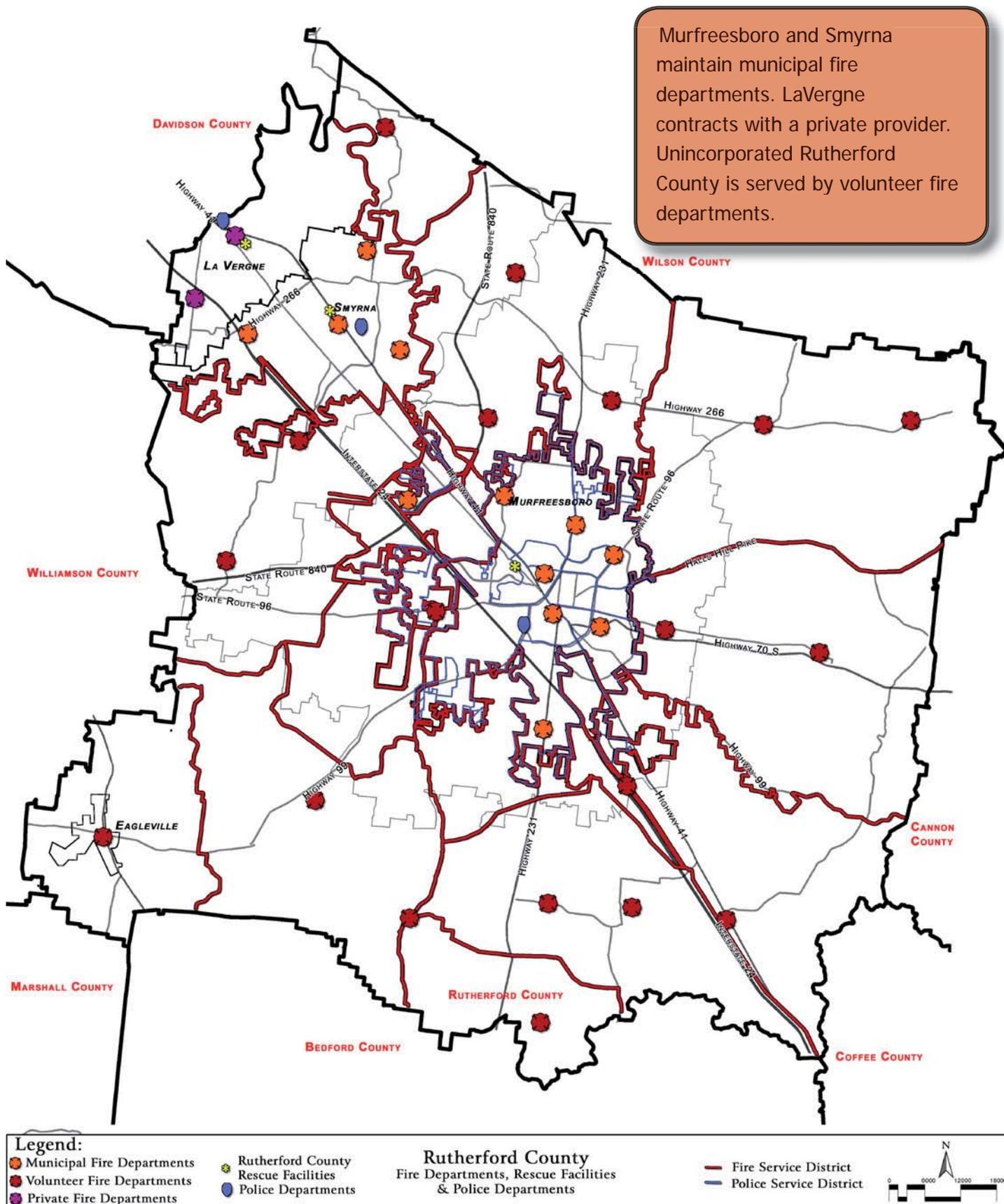




Figure 6.18: Rutherford County Fire Departments, Rescue Facilities & Police Departments





### *Outdoor Recreation Opportunities*

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Rutherford County is home to many hunters and fishermen, and is an attraction to those from outside the County as well. According to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, over 145,000 acres of Rutherford County are forested and therefore considered huntable, although the lands are mostly in private ownership. With access to the 22 square miles of Percy Priest Lake, in addition to the local streams and rivers, Rutherford County is an attraction for hunters and fishermen. Over 31,000 licenses were purchased for hunting and fishing in 2008, ranking Rutherford County ninth in the state for license sales during that period, and demonstrating the potential for enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities.

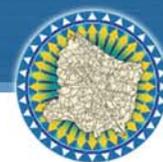
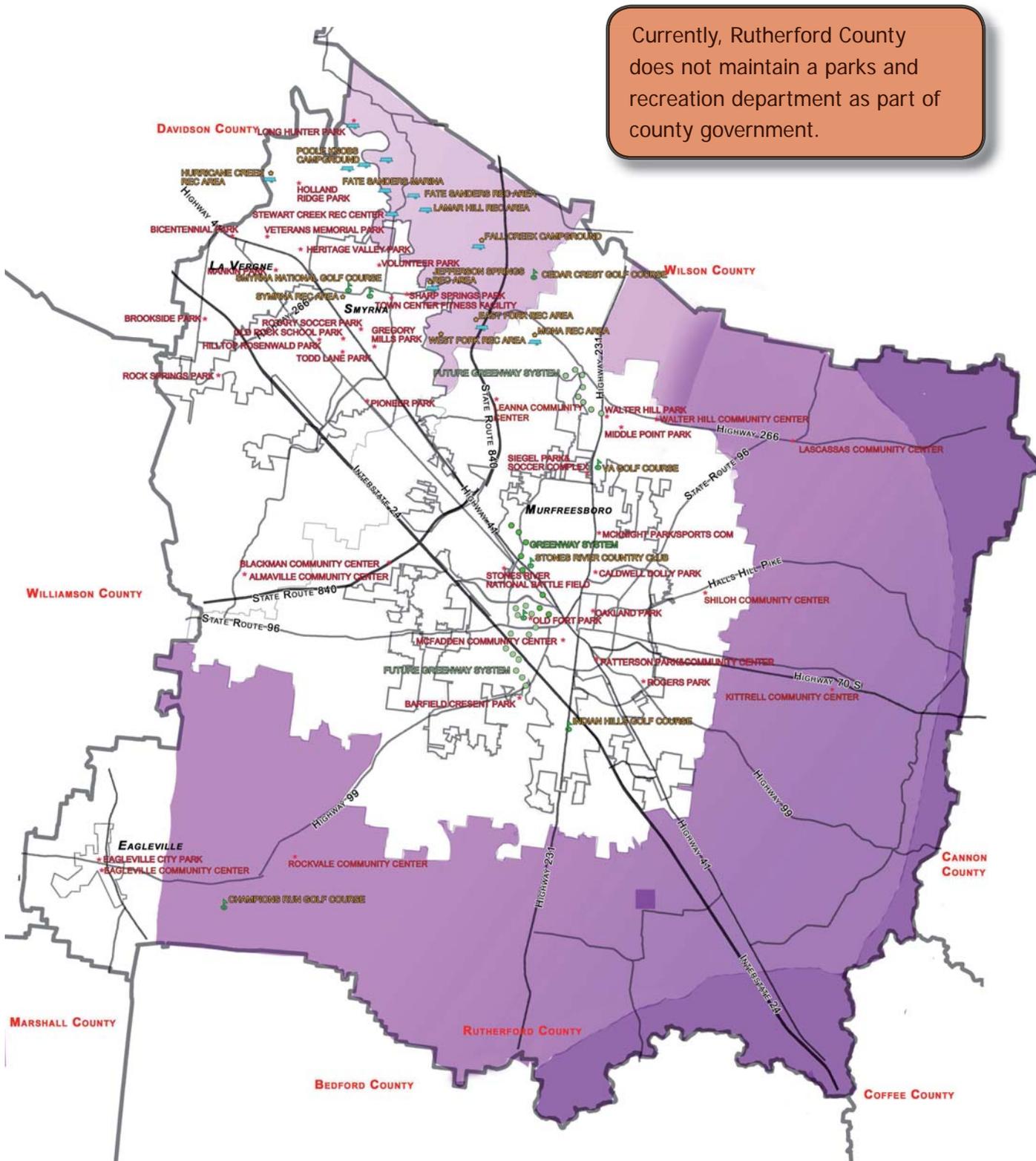


Figure 6.19: Rutherford County Parks & Community Centers



Currently, Rutherford County does not maintain a parks and recreation department as part of county government.

**Legend:**

- \* Parks & Community Centers
- 🌳 Golf Course
- Recreation Areas
- 🚤 Boat Ramp

**Rutherford County  
Parks & Community Centers**

- Area's Significantly Under served
- Area's Under served
- Area's Adequately Served



## CHAPTER VII. ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

### RUTHERFORD COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIOS

Three scenarios depicting future growth in Rutherford County have been prepared for evaluation. All three share some common assumptions:

- Each future scenario is based on the same set of population, job, and household projections, through the year 2035. These numbers are a total County population of 409,986, representing 163,719 households, and 226,453 jobs.
- Each scenario will recognize constraints on the location of development based on floodplains, and areas of excessive slope. Additionally,

the two alternative scenarios to the Base Case (No Action) will recognize the presence of prime farmland soils, wildlife management areas, state natural areas, and locations of rare and endangered plant and animals.

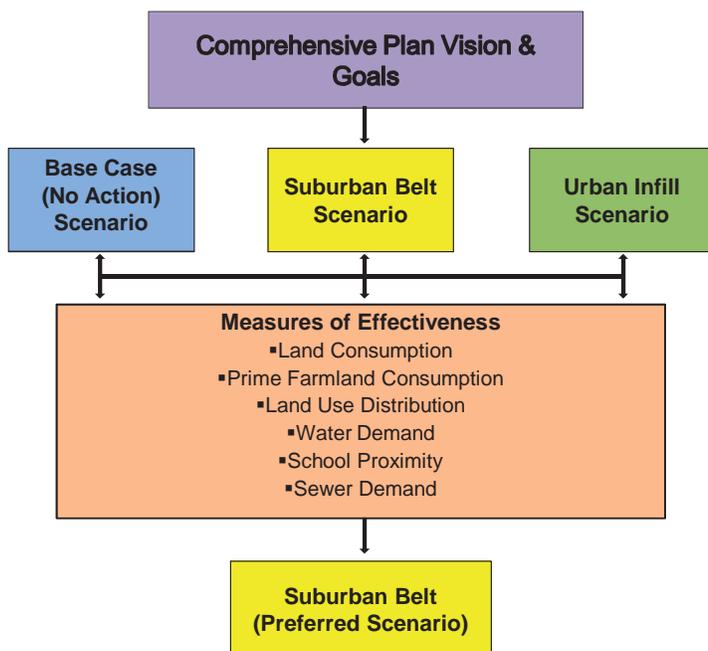
To help compare the scenarios, the goals and concerns of the County have been expressed where possible in terms that can be measured, known as Measures of Effectiveness. The Measures will be used in combination with the more qualitative assessments of each scenario allowing the Steering Committee to evaluate scenarios against common criteria in selecting the Preferred Alternative.

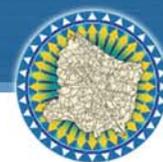
In scenarios other than the Base Case, new growth will be assigned to locations in the County that are divided into Character Areas and Center Types. The Character Areas are Urban, Urban Fringe, Suburban, Rural, and Conservation. Each Area will have different development characteristics in terms of the land uses and densities. They reflect existing and planned infrastructure, as well as current development already on the ground.

The Rutherford County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has decided that Character Areas will be used in conjunction with Centers to organize future growth. Centers are compact, mixed-use, walkable areas that utilize growth potentials of existing infrastructure and development nodes to attract and organize future growth in livable, less auto-dependent and environmentally sustainable patterns. They include Employment Centers, Activity Centers, Village Centers, and Rural Centers. Each center has its own purpose, its own mix of uses at different densities, and anticipates growth that is organized and compact will have fewer detrimental effects on the environment, transportation, and county services.

The following pages provide graphic and narrative descriptions of character areas, center types and

### Scenario Development Process





corridors that are used in the Urban Infill and Suburban Belt scenarios. Centers, character areas, and corridors are not reflected in the Base Case (No Action) alternative that reflects a continuation of current development practices.

### A. Center Types

#### 1. TRADITIONAL TOWN CENTER



##### Traditional Town Center Land Uses Allowed

- Single-Family Residential @ 10 units/acre
- Multi-Family Residential @ 10 units/acre
- General Commercial, Office, Industrial @ 0.9 FAR (Ex. 10,000 sq. ft. lot with 1-story building)
- Mixed-Uses @ 10 residential units/acre on 1/2 of total lot area; 0.9 FAR (non-residential)
- Institutional/Public Facilities

##### POTENTIAL CENTERS

##### Traditional Town Center

- Murfreesboro

#### 2. VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



##### Village Neighborhood Center Land Uses Allowed

- Single-Family Residential @ 4 units/acre
- Multi-Family Residential @ 10 units/acre
- General Commercial, Office, Industrial @ 0.5 FAR (Ex. 10,000 sq. ft. lot with 5,000 sq. ft, 1-story building)
- Industrial @ 0.2 FAR
- Mixed-Uses @ 10 residential units/acre; 0.5 FAR (non-residential)
- Institutional/Public Facilities

##### POTENTIAL CENTERS

##### Village/Neighborhood Centers

- Walter Hill
- Eagleville
- Joe B. Jackson at John Bragg
- Stewart Creek (Smyrna)



### 3. RURAL CENTER



#### Rural Center Land Uses Allowed

- Single-Family Residential @ 3 units/acre
- Multi-Family Residential @ 5 units/acre
- General Commercial, Office, Industrial @ 0.2 FAR (Ex. 10,000 sq. ft. lot with 2,000 sq. ft. 1-story building)
- Mixed-Uses @ 5 residential units/acre; 0.2 FAR (non-residential)
- Institutional/Public Facilities

### 4. MAJOR ACTIVITY CENTER



#### Major Activity Center Land Uses Allowed

- Multi-Family Residential @ 5 units/acre
- General Commercial, Office, Industrial @ 0.9 FAR
- Mixed-Uses @ 5 residential units/acre on 1/2 of total lot area; 0.9 FAR (non-residential)
- Institutional/Public Facilities

#### POTENTIAL CENTERS

##### Rural Centers

- Lascassas
- Rockvale
- Christiana
- Midland
- Fosterville
- Kittrell
- Milton
- Bradyville
- Rucker
- Barfield
- Couchville Pike
- Rocky Glade Road/Chapel Hill

#### POTENTIAL CENTERS

##### Major Activity Center

- Property adjacent Nashville Super Speedway

### 5. MAJOR EMPLOYMENT CENTER

#### Land Uses Allowed

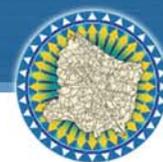
- All non-residential @ 0.9 FAR



#### POTENTIAL CENTERS

##### Major Employment Center

- Almadillo
- Epps Mill
- Jefferson Pike at 840



## B. Corridors

### 1. URBAN CORRIDOR



#### Urban Corridor Land Uses Allowed

- All non-residential @ 0.9 FAR
- Mixed-Uses @ 10 residential units/acre on ½ of total lot area; 0.9 FAR (non-residential)

#### POTENTIAL CORRIDORS

##### Urban Corridors

- Veterans Parkway
- Lascassas Pike (downtown to Compton)
- Compton
- John Bragg to Veterans Parkway
- Manchester Highway to Big Springs
- Jefferson Pike at 840

### 2. SUBURBAN CORRIDOR



#### Suburban Corridor Land Uses Allowed

- 5 Residential units/acre, 0.2 FAR (non-residential)

#### POTENTIAL CORRIDORS

##### Suburban Corridors

- Lascassas Pike (Compton to Cainsville)
- Halls Hill Pike (MTSU to Sharpsville Road)
- John Bragg

### 3. RURAL OR SCENIC CORRIDOR



#### Rural or Scenic Corridor Land Uses Allowed

- 1 single-family residential unit/acre
- General Commercial @ 1.0 FAR
- Industrial @ 0.1 FAR
- Mixed-Uses @ 1 residential unit/acre, 0.1 FAR (non-residential)

#### POTENTIAL CORRIDORS

##### Rural/Scenic Corridors

- Lascassas Pike - Cainsville Pike to Rutherford County Line
- Halls Hill Pike - Sharpsville Road to Rutherford County line
- Sharpsville Road
- Lowe
- Cripple Creek
- Big Springs
- Manchester Highway past Big Springs



## C. CHARACTER AREAS

### 1. GENERAL URBAN CHARACTER



#### General Urban Character Land Uses Allowed

- 10 residential units/acre, 0.9 FAR (non-residential)

### 2. SUBURBAN CHARACTER



#### Suburban Character Land Uses Allowed

- 3 residential units/acre, 0.2 FAR (non-residential)

### 3. RURAL CHARACTER



#### Rural Character Land Uses Allowed

- 1 single-family residential unit/acre

### 4. CONSERVATION CHARACTER



#### Conservation Character Land Uses Allowed

- 1 single-family residential unit/5 acres



Figure 7.1: Rutherford County Land Use - 2008

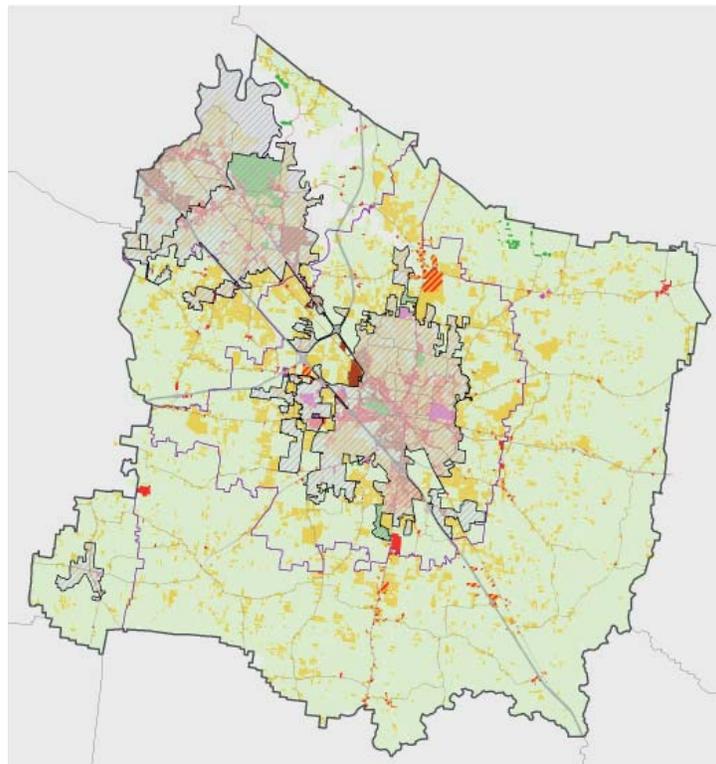
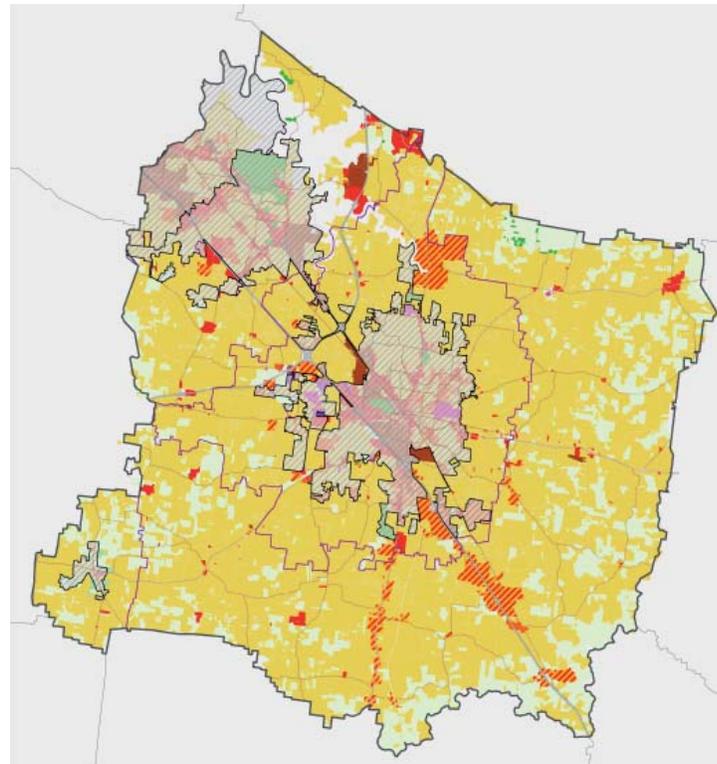


Figure 7.2: Rutherford County Land Use - Base Case (2035)



**Legend**

**Land Use**

- IND-Industrial
- O-Office
- GC-General Commercial
- IPF-Institutional/Public Facility
- MU-Mixed Use
- MFR-Multi Family Residential
- SFR-Single Family Residential
- AGR-Agriculture/Not Developed
- OS-Open Space

**Network 2008**

- Expressway
- Ramps
- Arterial
- Major Street
- City Boundary
- UGB



**BASE CASE SCENARIO**

The Base Case represents the “no action” alternative as depicted by the MPO in their Future Land Use map for Rutherford County depicted above in Figure 7.2.

The Base Case Scenario provides limited guidance on where development should occur using “suitability factors” that help

decide which parcels and areas are more “suitable” than others to accommodate new growth. These factors include whether or not land is in proximity to major intersections, floodplains, areas of excessive slope (over 25 percent), rare plant and animal species, parks, water, sewer, existing development and employment, among others. Also taken into

account is the type and locations of existing development based on current zoning trends and any land use policies in place. The result is a map that shows 2035-levels of development based on current trends and suitability factors. Under this scenario, new growth will follow the same pattern as past growth, which is largely low-density, scattered development

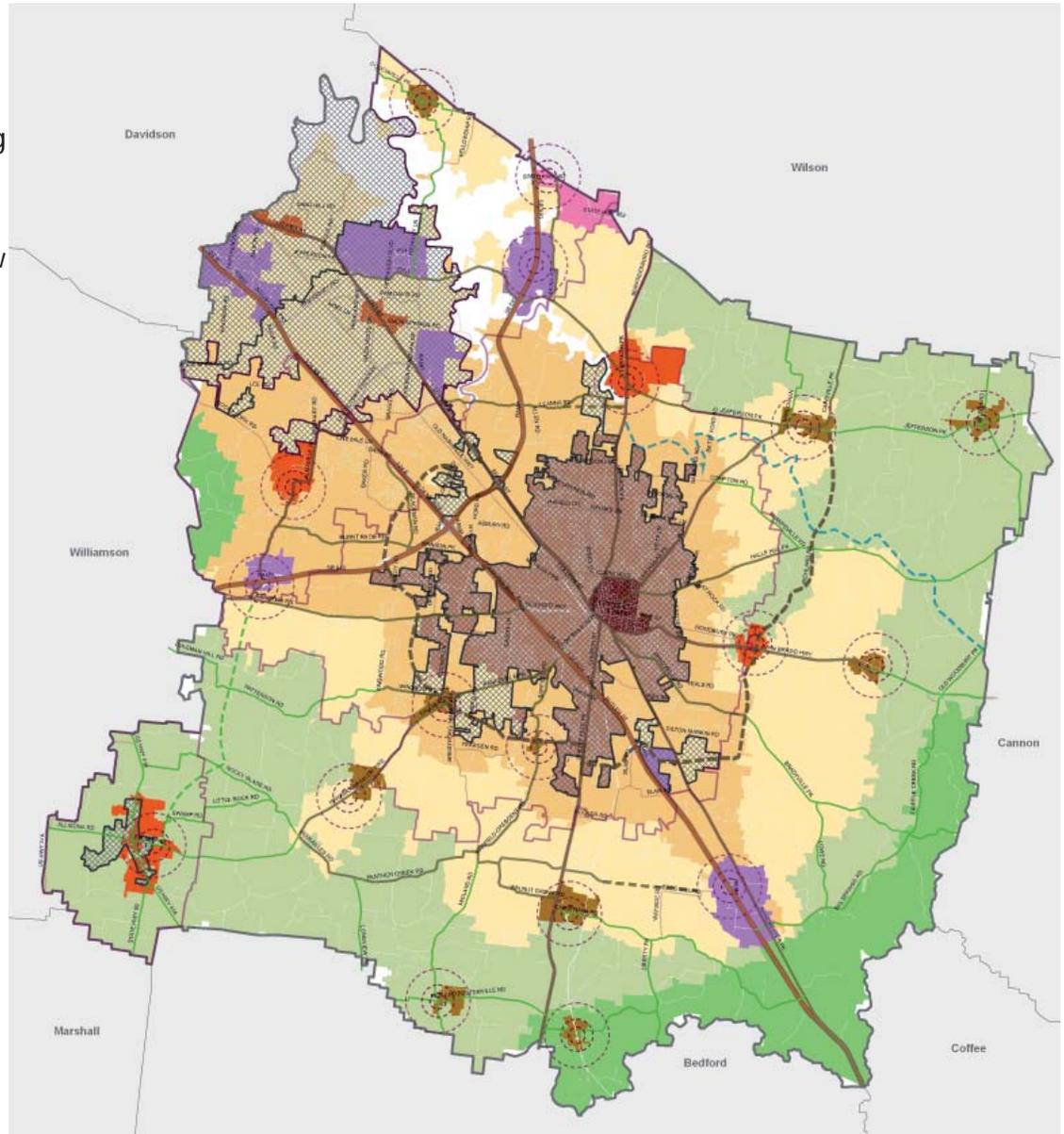


Figure 7.3: Suburban Belt Scenario - Centers and Character Areas

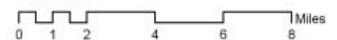
in all areas of the County. Residential and non-residential uses will occur at random locations, adding to the loss of agricultural land, endangering historic and cultural resources. New areas of development will compete with existing rural communities and require further expansion of water and sewer systems.

### SUBURBAN BELT SCENARIO

This scenario represents a development pattern that encourages high density growth within one mile of Murfreesboro, and within the Urban Growth Boundary of Smyrna, and recommends an Employment Center designation south of Murfreesboro on I-24 into an Urban Fringe Character Area. Development within this character area will be at densities and with a mix of uses similar to those inside the cities, but slightly less dense. The development densities currently allowed today county-wide would be carried forward to the Suburban character area, the next “belt” of growth that extends outward from



Centers and Character Areas	Corridors
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #800000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> TTC - Traditional Town Center	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #800000;"></span> Limited Access
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF4500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> V - Village Center	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #808080;"></span> Urban
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8B4513; border: 1px solid black;"></span> RC - Rural Center	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #4682B4;"></span> Suburban
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF69B4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> AC - Activity Center	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Rural Scenic
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #8A2BE2; border: 1px solid black;"></span> EC - Employment Center	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Urban (Proposed)
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #D2691E; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GU - General Urban	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Rural Scenic (Proposed)
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GUF - General Urban Fringe Area	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Suburban (Proposed)
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFD700; border: 1px solid black;"></span> SU - Suburban Character Area	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Blue way (Proposed)
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R - Rural Area	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> City Boundary
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #32CD32; border: 1px solid black;"></span> CA - Conservation Area	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> UGB
	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Quarter Mile Buffer
	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> Half Mile Buffer
	<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px dashed #4682B4;"></span> One Mile Buffer



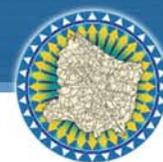


Figure 7.4: Urban Infill Scenario - Centers and Character Areas

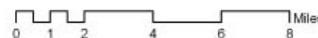
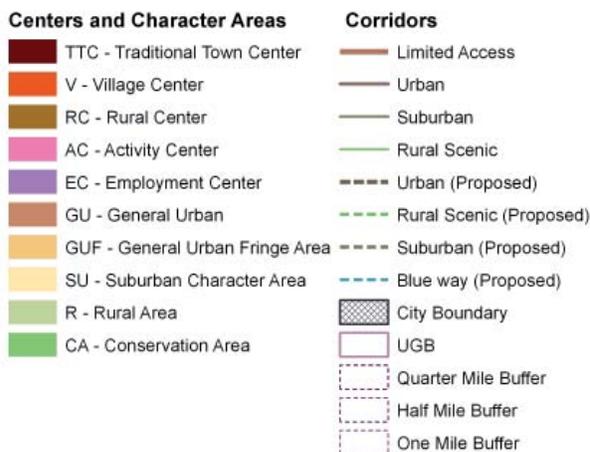
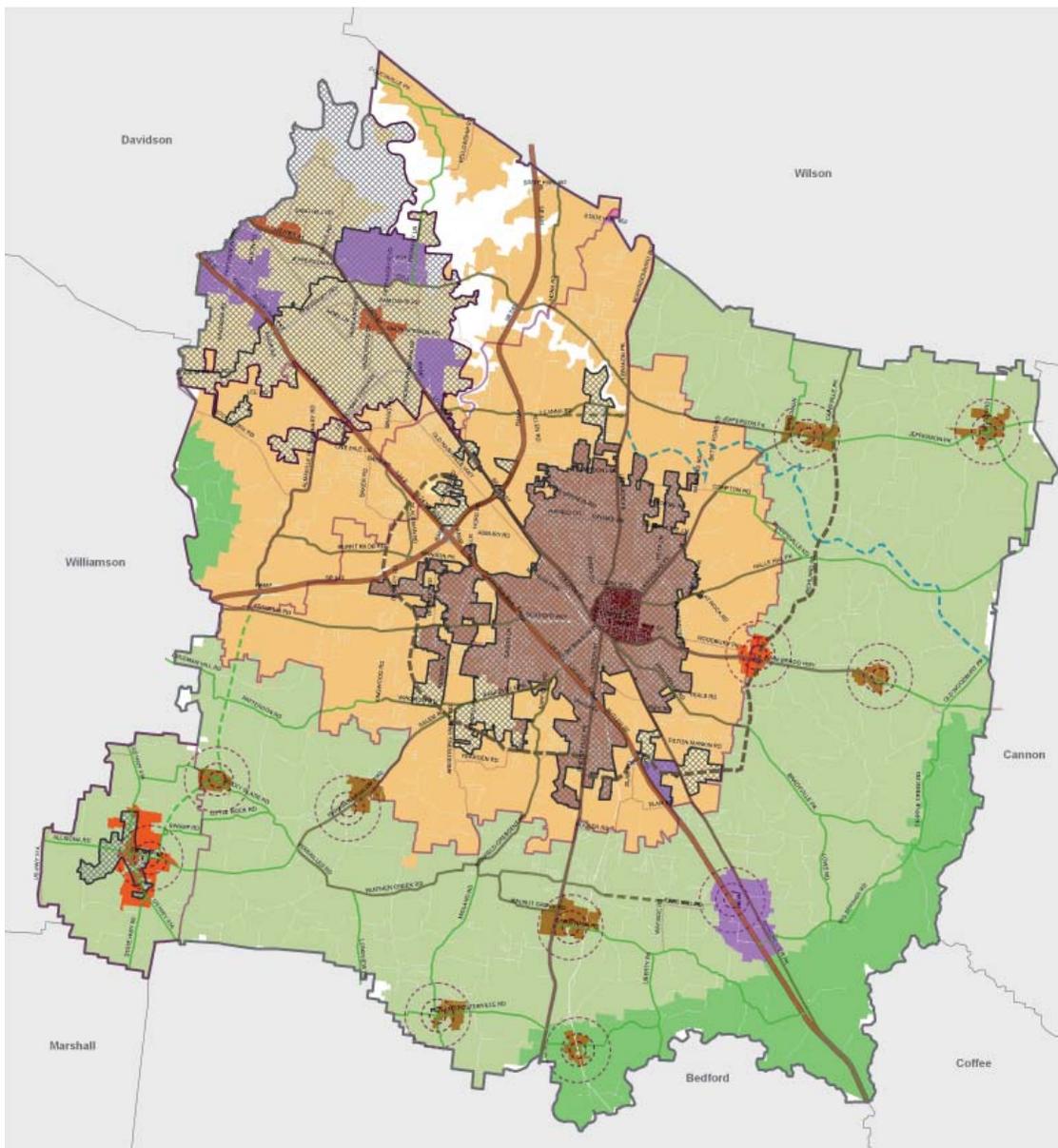
the Urban Fringe into lands that already have experienced suburban-type development patterns. This area was identified during a Steering Committee workshop, and is a transition between lower density on the edges and higher densities immediately adjacent to Smyrna, LaVergne, and Murfreesboro.

The outer “belt” of development, rural, would have much lower densities, with areas on the county edges labeled for “conservation” due to slope and soil issues.

There are slightly fewer “centers” identified in this scenario to model the effects of placing a majority of new houses and job sites into more concentrated settings.

## URBAN INFILL SCENARIO

This scenario is intended to reflect a development pattern that encourages higher densities inside the Urban Growth Boundaries of Smyrna





and Murfreesboro, encourages the creation of rural “nodes” or “centers” outside of the UGBs to concentrate non-urban growth, encourages low development densities outside UGBs and centers, and creates conservation areas to discourage growth where the land is steep and floodplains are present.

More dense, urban-style development is recommended for an area roughly approximating the Urban Growth Boundaries of Murfreesboro and Smyrna, and labeled a General Urban Fringe Area. Within those growth areas, new development nodes are established to concentrate jobs and residences, north of Murfreesboro on Jefferson Pike, east of Murfreesboro on Highway 70 (John Bragg Highway) and south of Smyrna along Almadale Road. Smaller areas of concentrated growth are also planned adjacent to Murfreesboro. The intent is not to identify specific parcels, but rather to evaluate the impacts of a denser development pattern in general locations.

Sections of the County beyond the General Urban Fringe Area are labeled Rural Character Areas. Rural centers are created based on existing and likely development. These centers would have the majority of new development located in a more

compact design, encouraging walkability, connectivity and a closer proximity of jobs to new employment opportunities. A Village Center is placed around Eagleville to help build density for future infrastructure planning, and to encourage the development of a jobs and housing center outside of the I-24 communities to the northeast. Within the Rural Character area and outside the Centers, development will be lower density and directed toward existing roads and highways.

Two areas are labeled for Conservation. These areas are approximate, and depend on the actual location of lands where excessive slope or soil conditions are considered a development barrier.

### MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

Each scenario is modeled using CommunityViz®, a GIS-based software tool that analyzes proposed land use patterns and documents the effects based on specific measures. For Rutherford County, the following Measures of Effectiveness have been created based on input gathered from stakeholders, the public at large, and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. They helped the Steering Committee decide which scenario best meets

the Goals and Vision of the Comprehensive Plan. The measures are:

#### MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

1. Number of acres consumed by new development (land consumption);
2. Percent of new growth in half-mile proximity to schools;
3. Amount of prime agricultural land converted to development;
4. Land use distribution;
5. Percent of new growth in proximity to sanitary sewer service areas; and
6. Water consumption per dwelling unit of residential growth, or per square foot of non-residential growth.

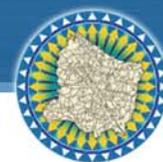


Figure 7.5: Existing (2008) Land Consumption

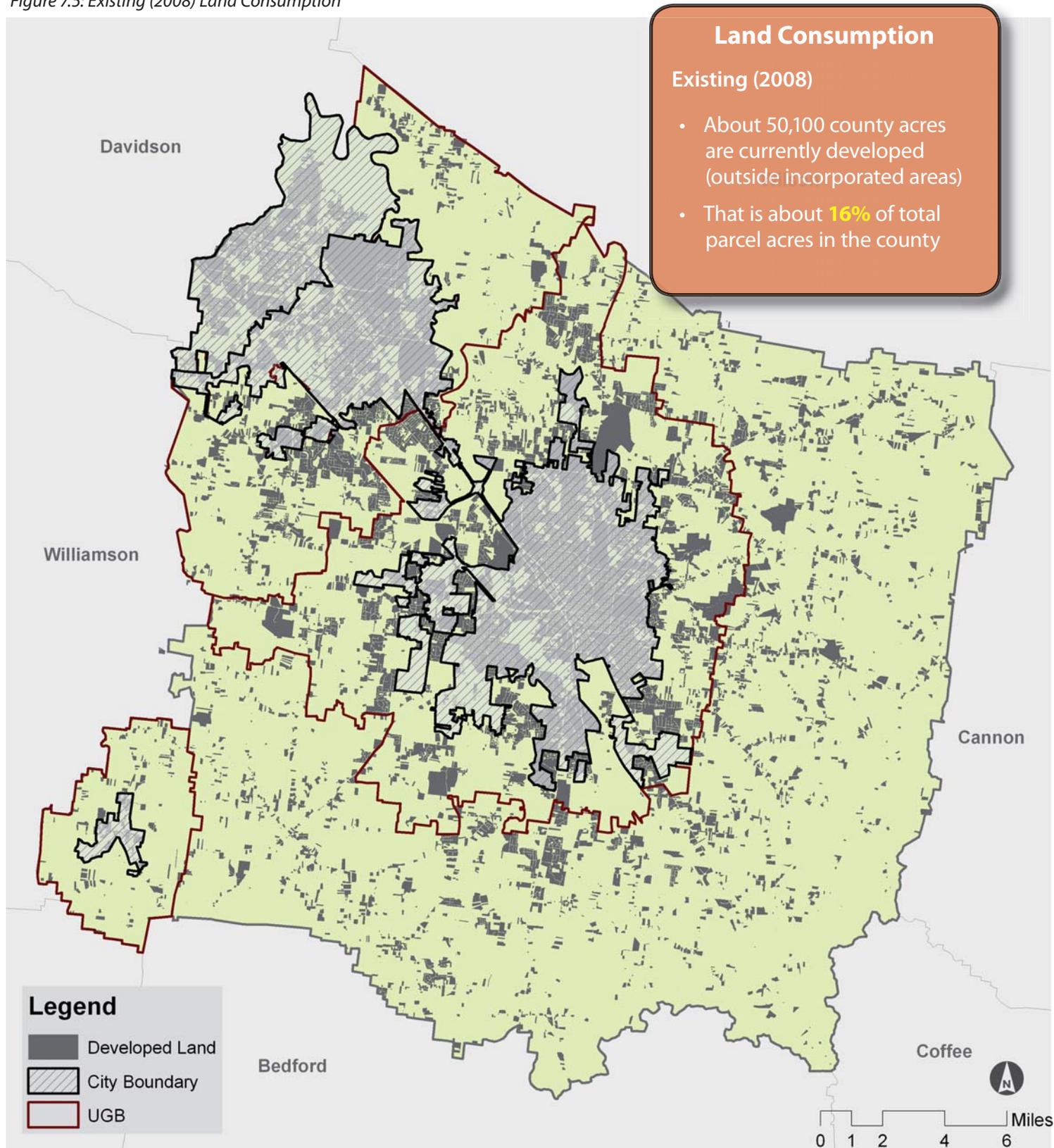
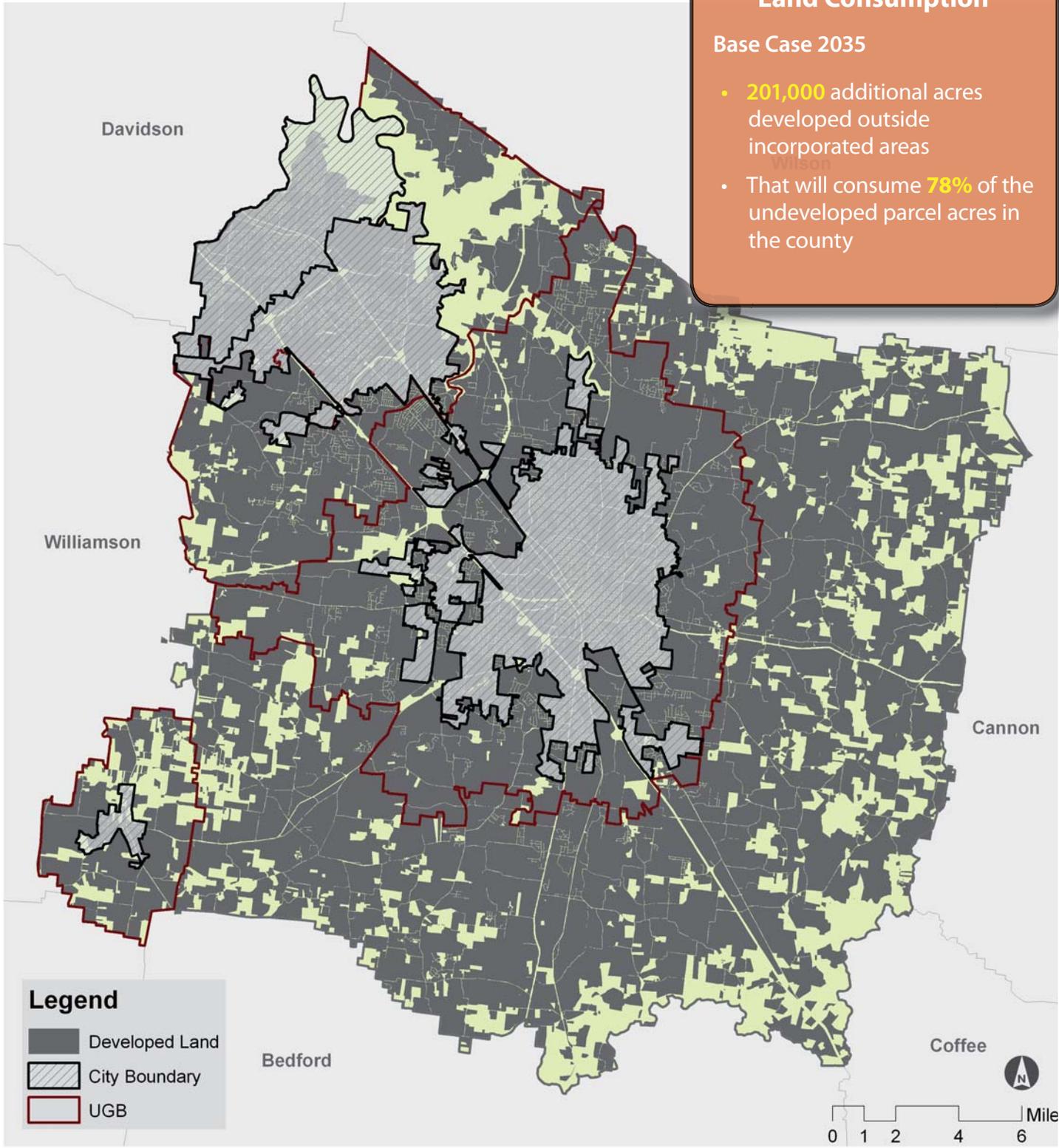




Figure 7.6: Future Land Consumption - Base Case Scenario 2035

**Land Consumption**  
 Base Case 2035

- **201,000** additional acres developed outside incorporated areas
- That will consume **78%** of the undeveloped parcel acres in the county



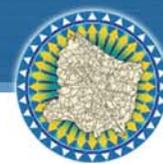
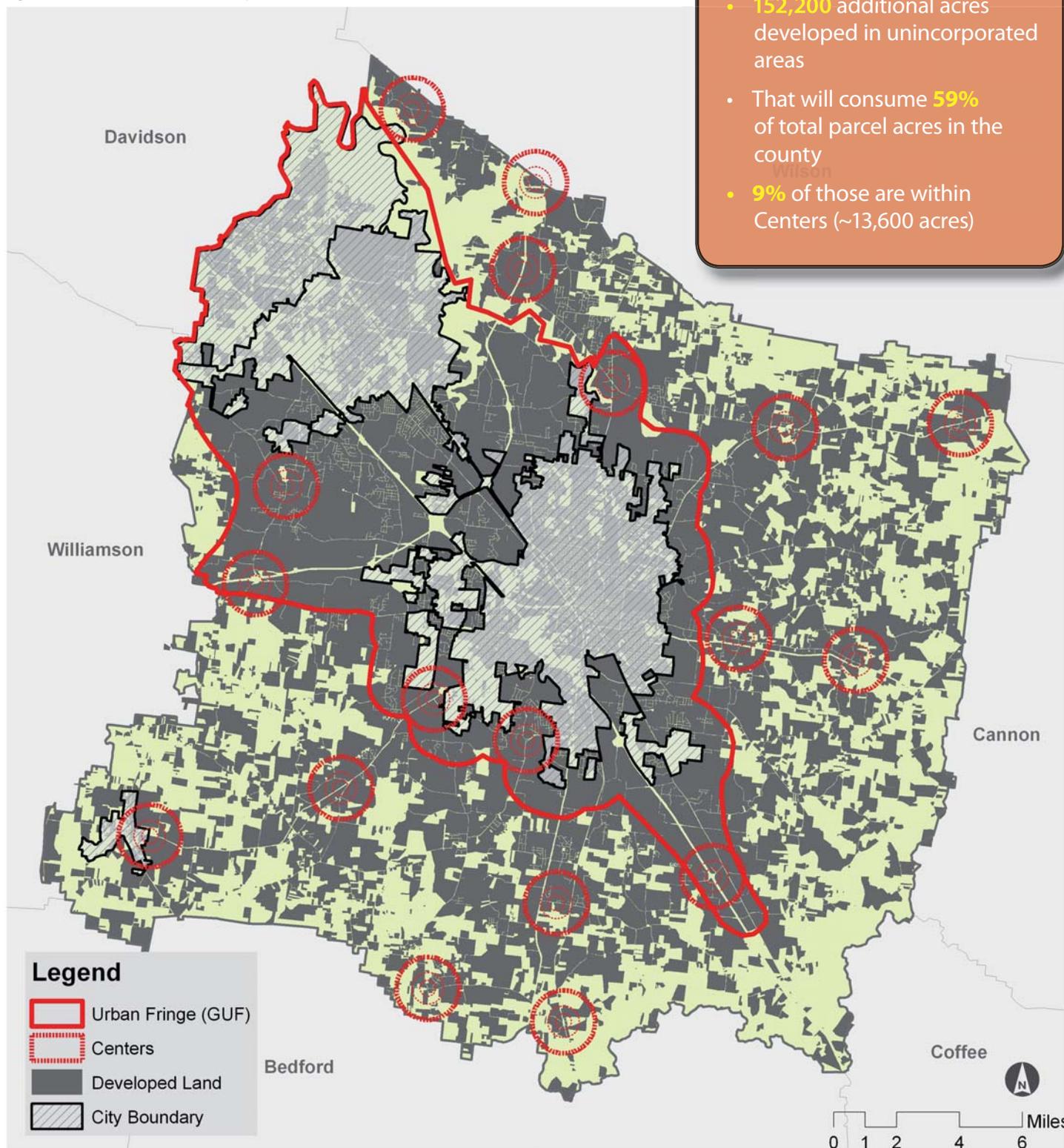


Figure 7.7: Future Land Consumption - Suburban Belt Scenario



### Land Consumption

#### Suburban Belt Scenario

- **152,200** additional acres developed in unincorporated areas
- That will consume **59%** of total parcel acres in the county
- **9%** of those are within Centers (~13,600 acres)

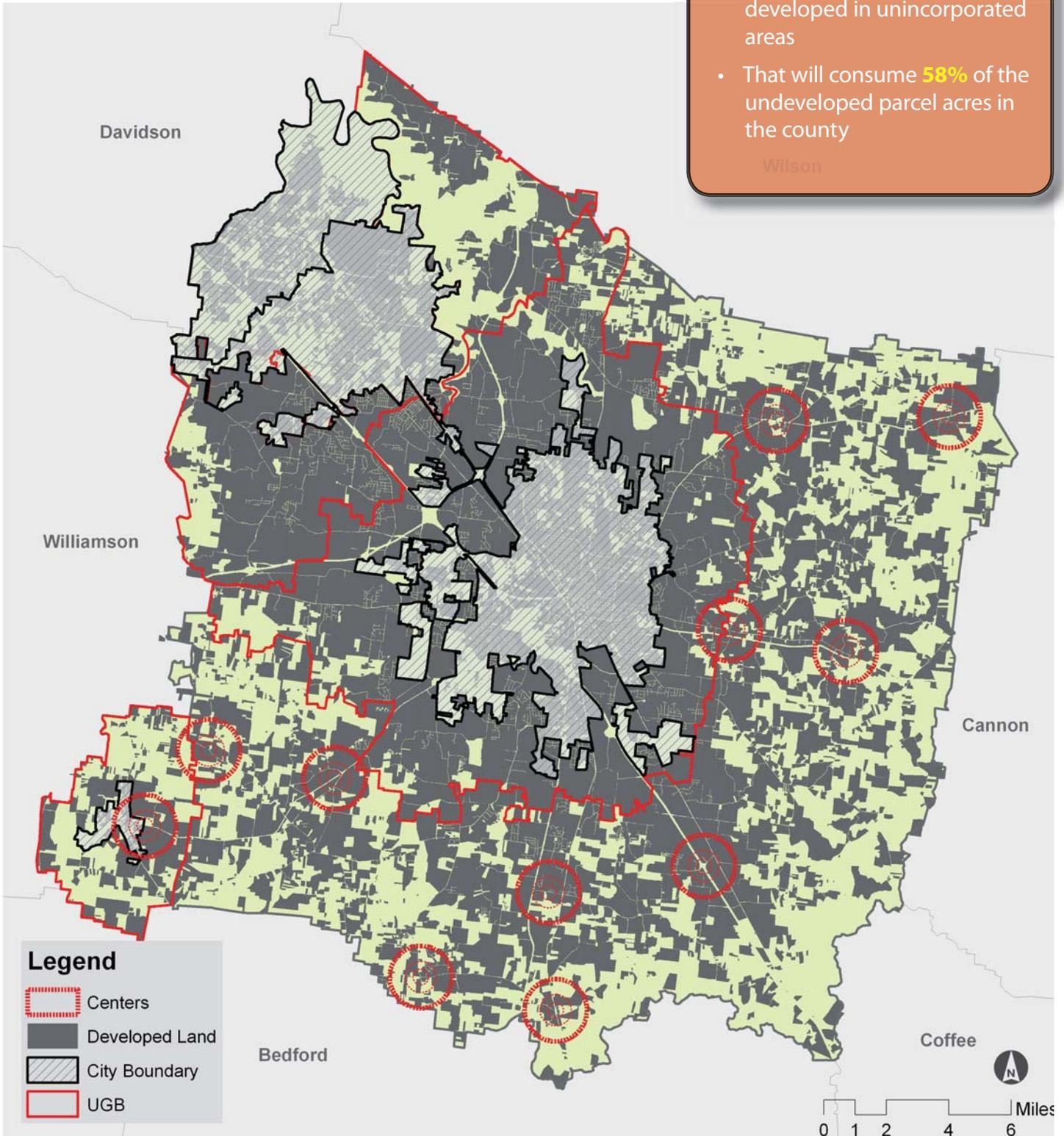


### Land Consumption

#### Urban Infill Scenario

- 150,300 additional acres developed in unincorporated areas
- That will consume 58% of the undeveloped parcel acres in the county

Figure 7.8: Future Land Consumption - Urban Infill



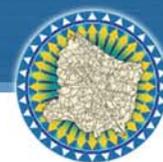
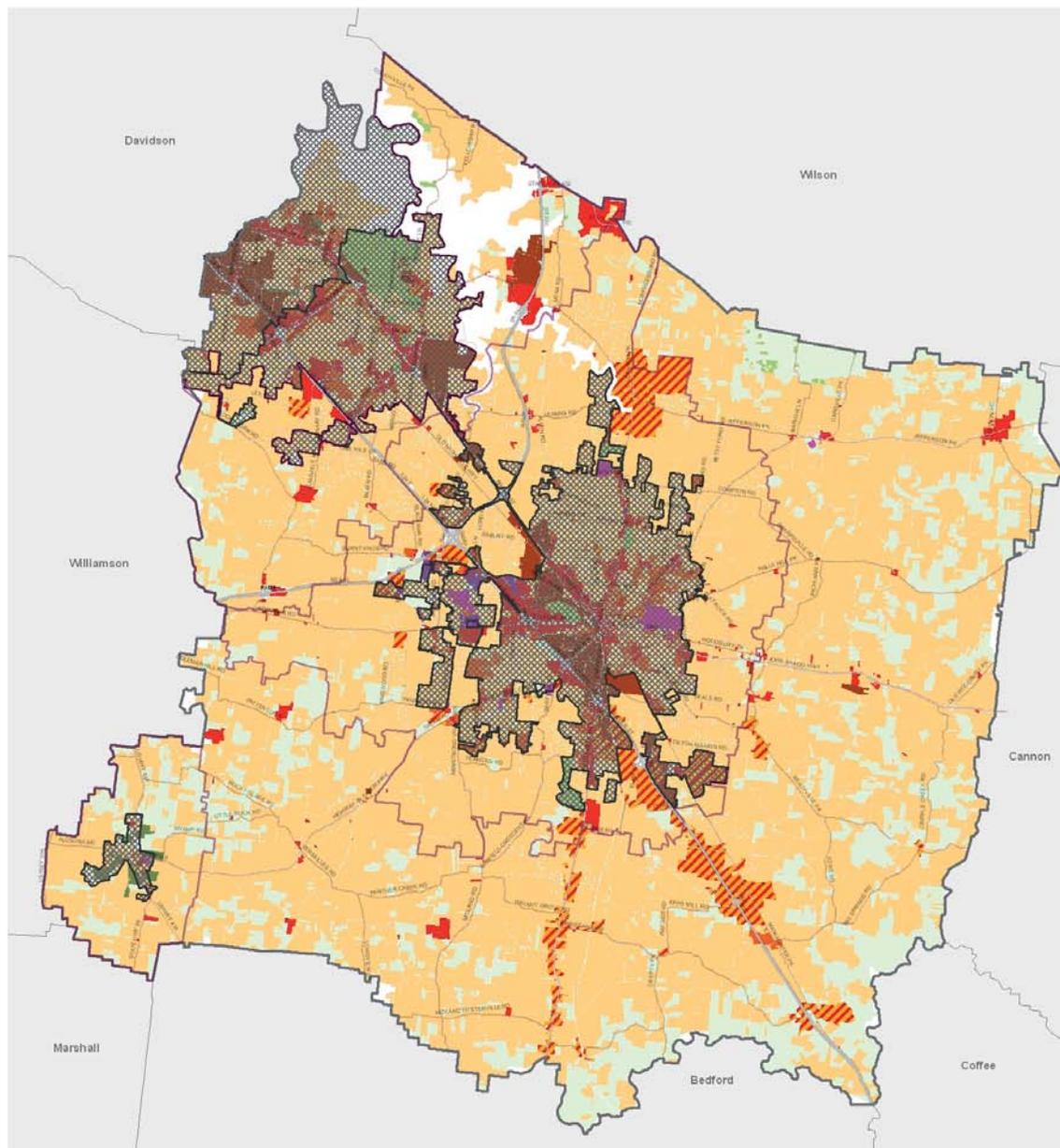


Figure 7.9: Land Use Distribution - Base Case



### Legend

#### Base Case Land Use Allocation

- IND-Industrial
- O-Office
- GC-General Commercial
- IPF-Institutional/Public Facility
- MU-Mixed Use
- MFR-Multi Family Residential
- SFR-Single Family Residential
- AGR-Agricultural / Res Farm
- OS-Open Space
- Not Developed
- UGB
- City Boundary

### Land Use Distribution

Land use distribution under the Base Case Scenario continues current patterns of unmanaged low density "sprawl" type development

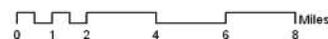
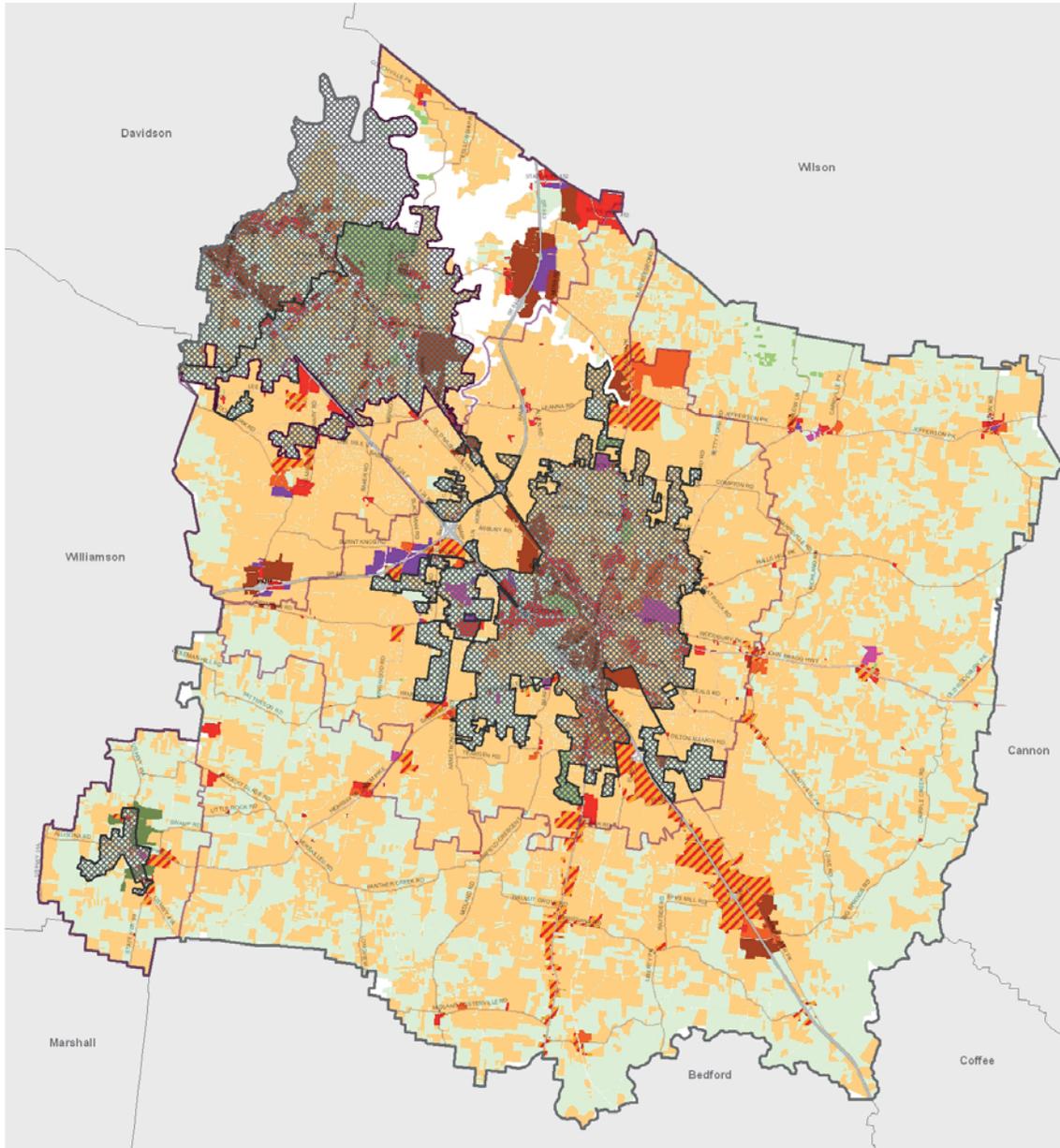




Figure 7.10: Land Use Distribution - Suburban Belt Scenario



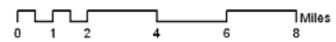
**Legend**

**Suburban Belt Land Use Allocation**

- IND-Industrial
- O-Office
- GC-General Commercial
- IPF-Institutional/Public Facility
- MU-Mixed Use
- MFR-Multi Family Residential
- SFR-Single Family Residential
- AGR-Agricultural / Res Farm
- OS-Open Space
- Not Developed
- UGB
- City Boundary

**Land Use Distribution**

Land use distribution under the Suburban Belt Scenario recommends a stepped transition from higher to lower densities moving toward edges of the county



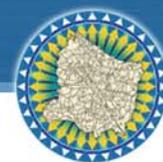
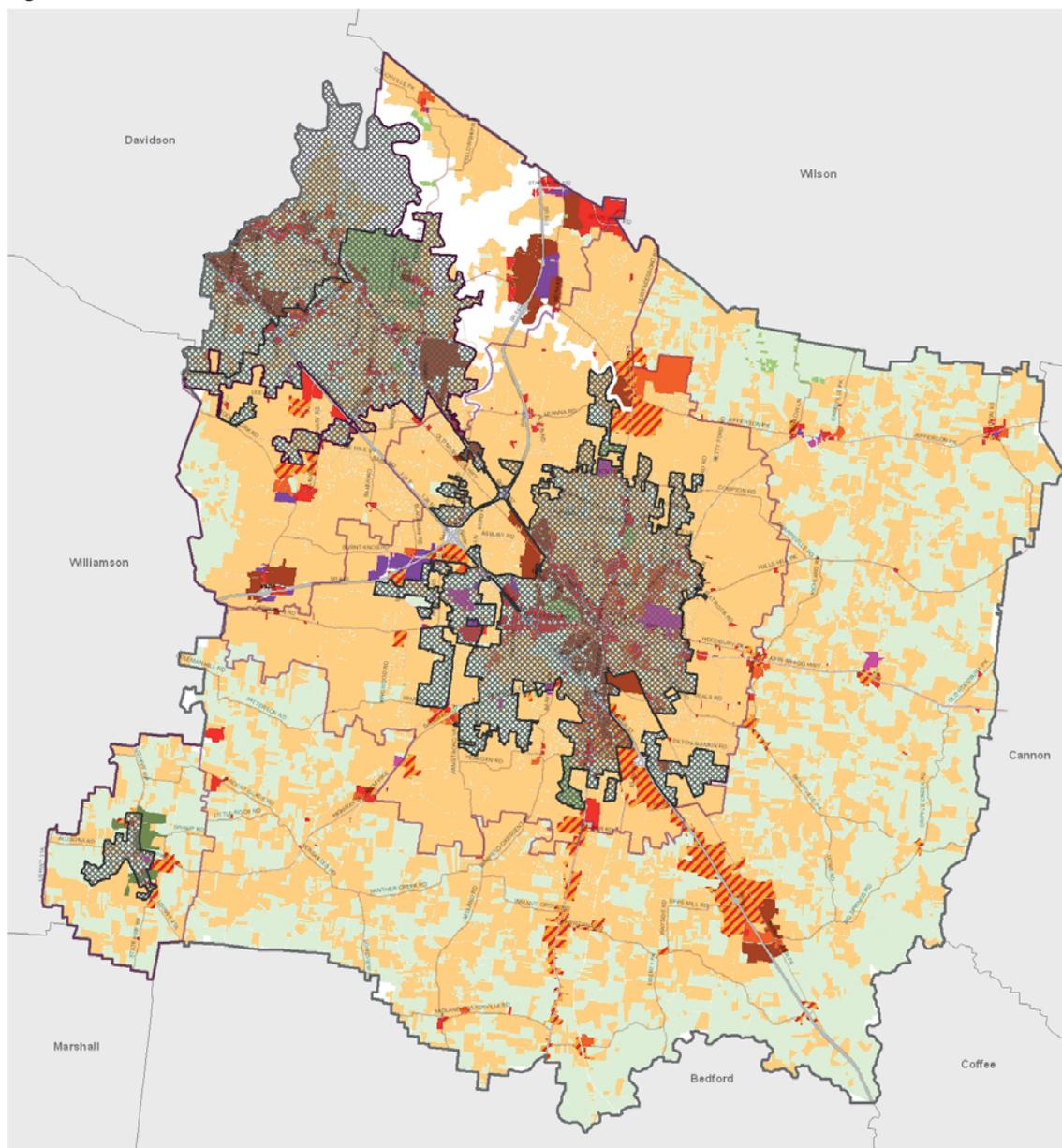


Figure 7.11: Land Use Distribution - Urban Infill Scenario



### Legend

#### Urban Infill Land Use Allocation

-  IND-Industrial
-  O-Office
-  GC-General Commercial
-  IPF-Institutional/Public Facility
-  MU-Mixed Use
-  MFR-Multi Family Residential
-  SFR-Single Family Residential
-  AGR-Agricultural / Res Farm
-  OS-Open Space
-  Not Developed
-  UGB
-  City Boundary

### Land Use Distribution

Land use distribution under the Urban Infill Scenario recommends higher densities in Urban Growth Boundaries

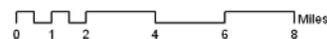
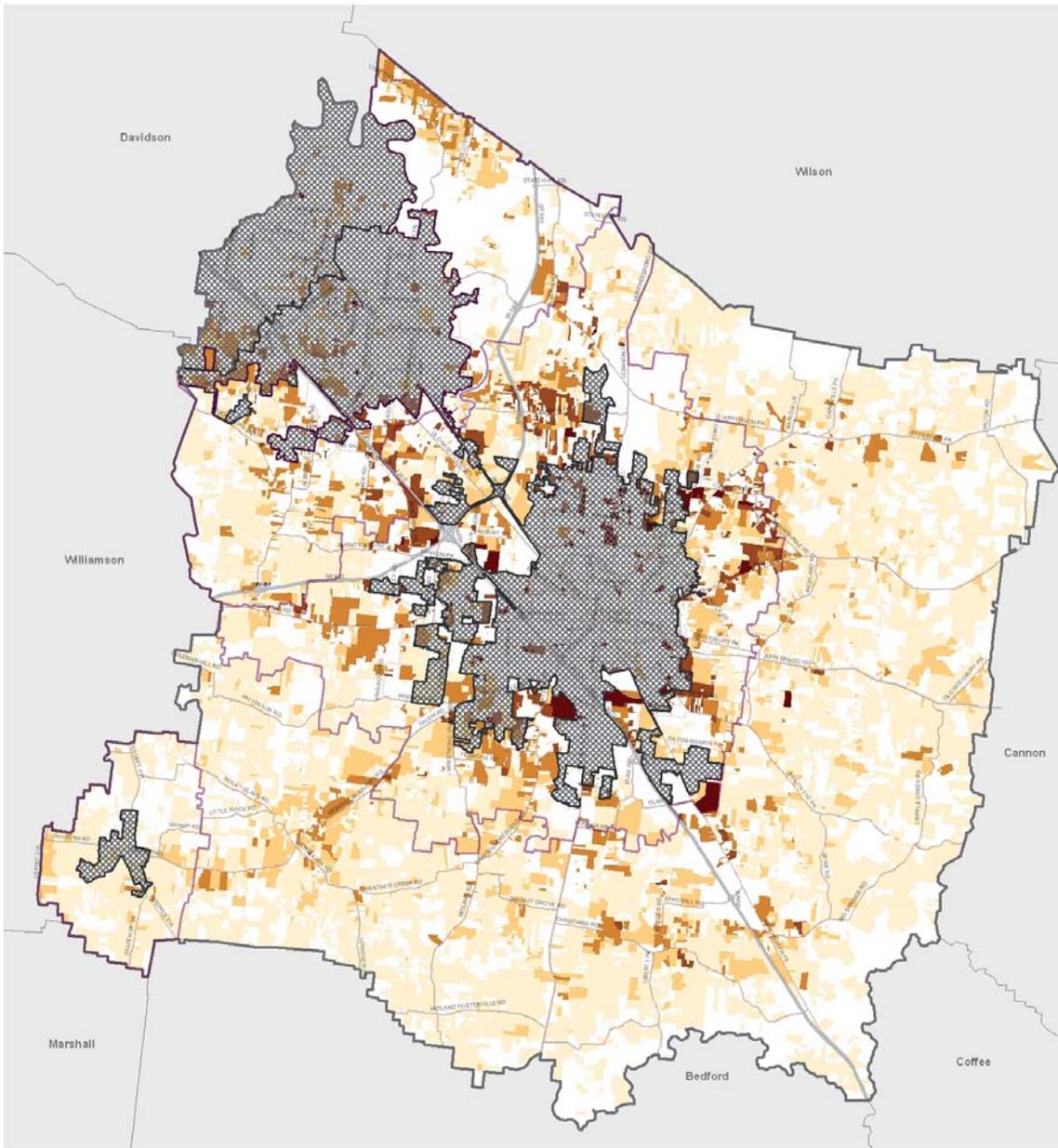




Figure 7.12: Residential Development - Base Case Scenario



**Legend**

- UGB
- City Boundary

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities

**Residential Development**

Base Case Scenario

- Dispersed lower density residential patterns
- 65% of new households in UGB

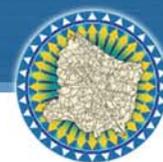
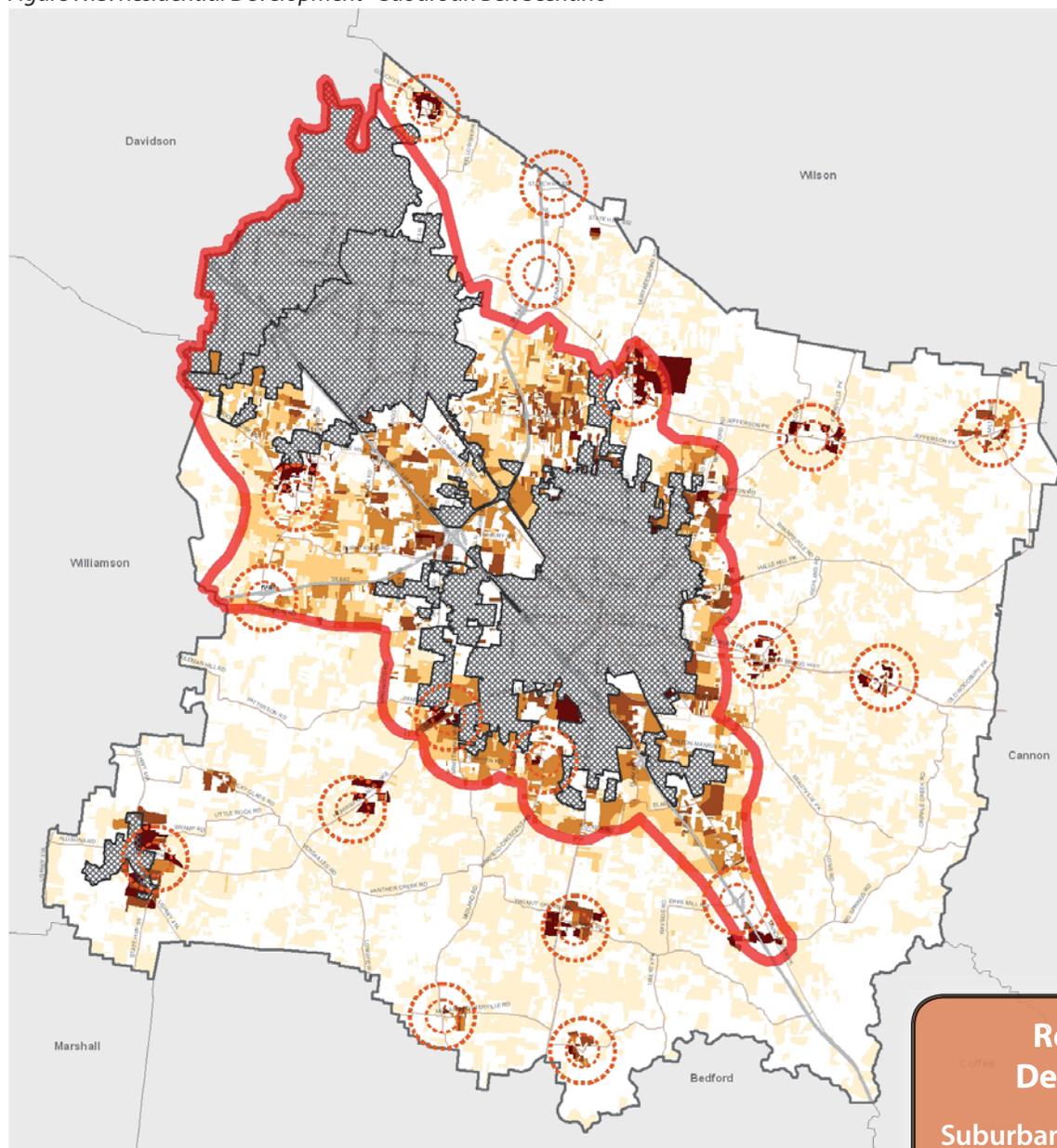


Figure 7.13: Residential Development - Suburban Belt Scenario



**Residential Development**  
Suburban Belt Scenario

- Compact development in centers and urban fringe
- **11,250 (24%)** of new households in centers
- **38,200 (85%)** in the county in centers + Urban Fringe (about 1-mile buffer from existing city boundaries except along I-24 and between cities)

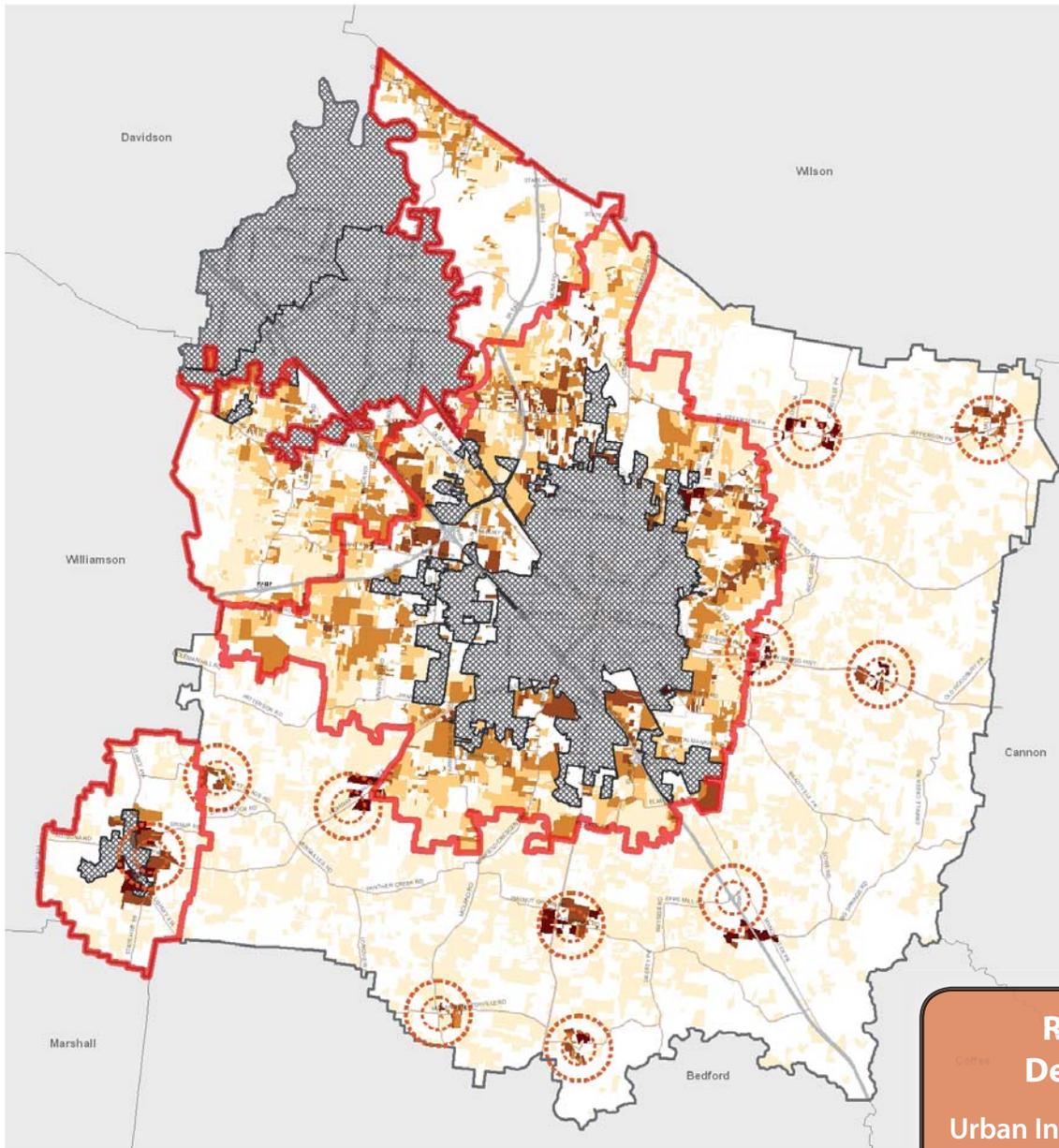
**Legend**

- GUF
- City Boundary
- Centers\_HalfMileBuffer
- Centers\_OneMileBuffer

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities



Figure 7.14: Residential Development - Urban Infill Scenario



**Legend**

- UGB
- City Boundary
- Centers\_HalfMileBuffer
- Centers\_OneMileBuffer

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities

**Residential Development**

**Urban Infill Scenario**

- Development within UGB
- **7,900 (15%)** of new households in centers
- **31,600 (71%)** in the county in centers + Urban Fringe (about 1-mile buffer from existing city boundaries except along I-24 and between cities)
- 81% of new households in UGB

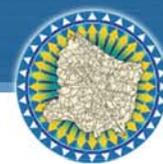
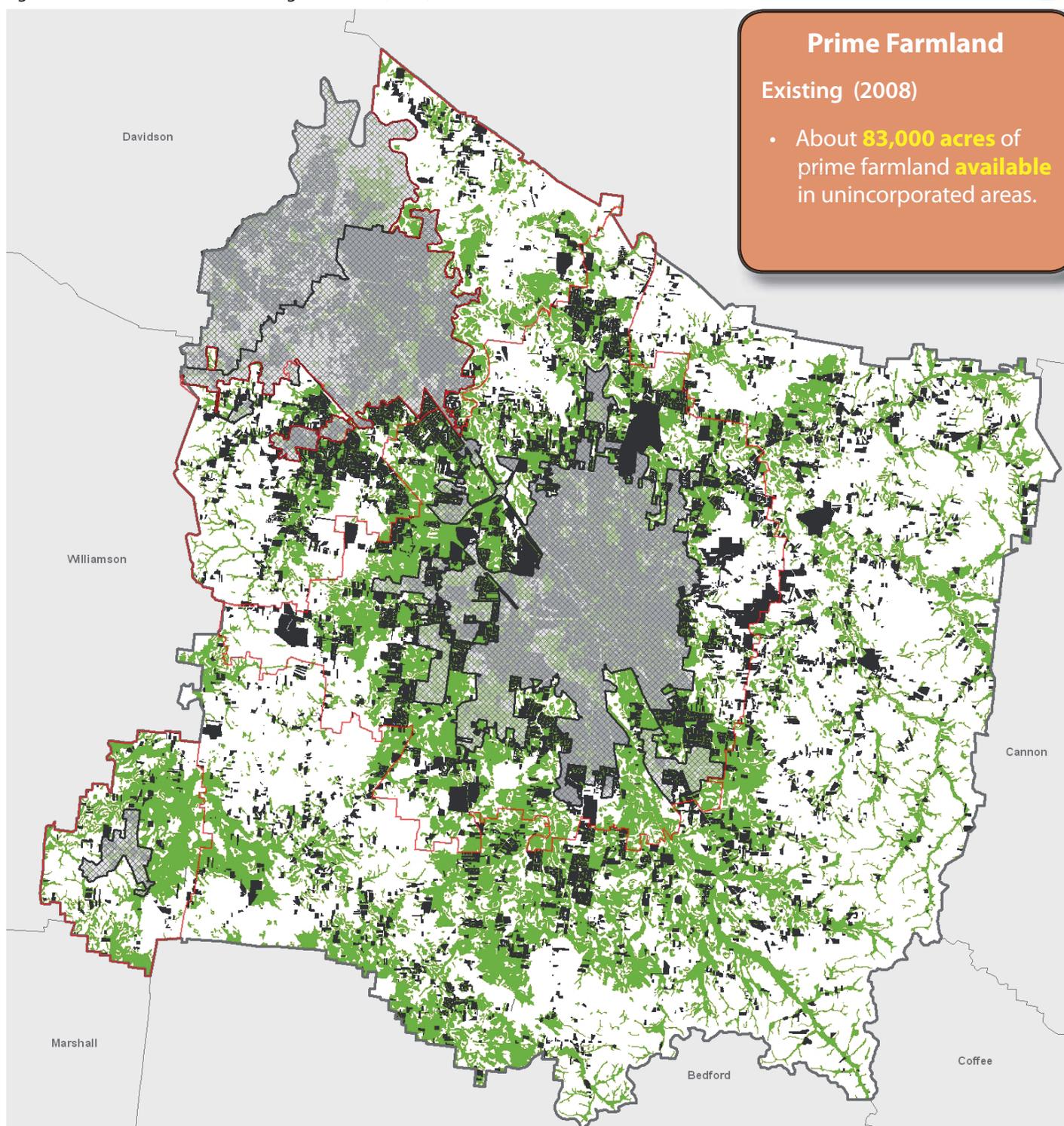


Figure 7.15: Prime Farmland - Existing Condition (2008)



### Legend

-  UGB
-  City Boundary
-  Developed Area
-  Prime Farmland Soil

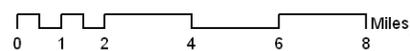
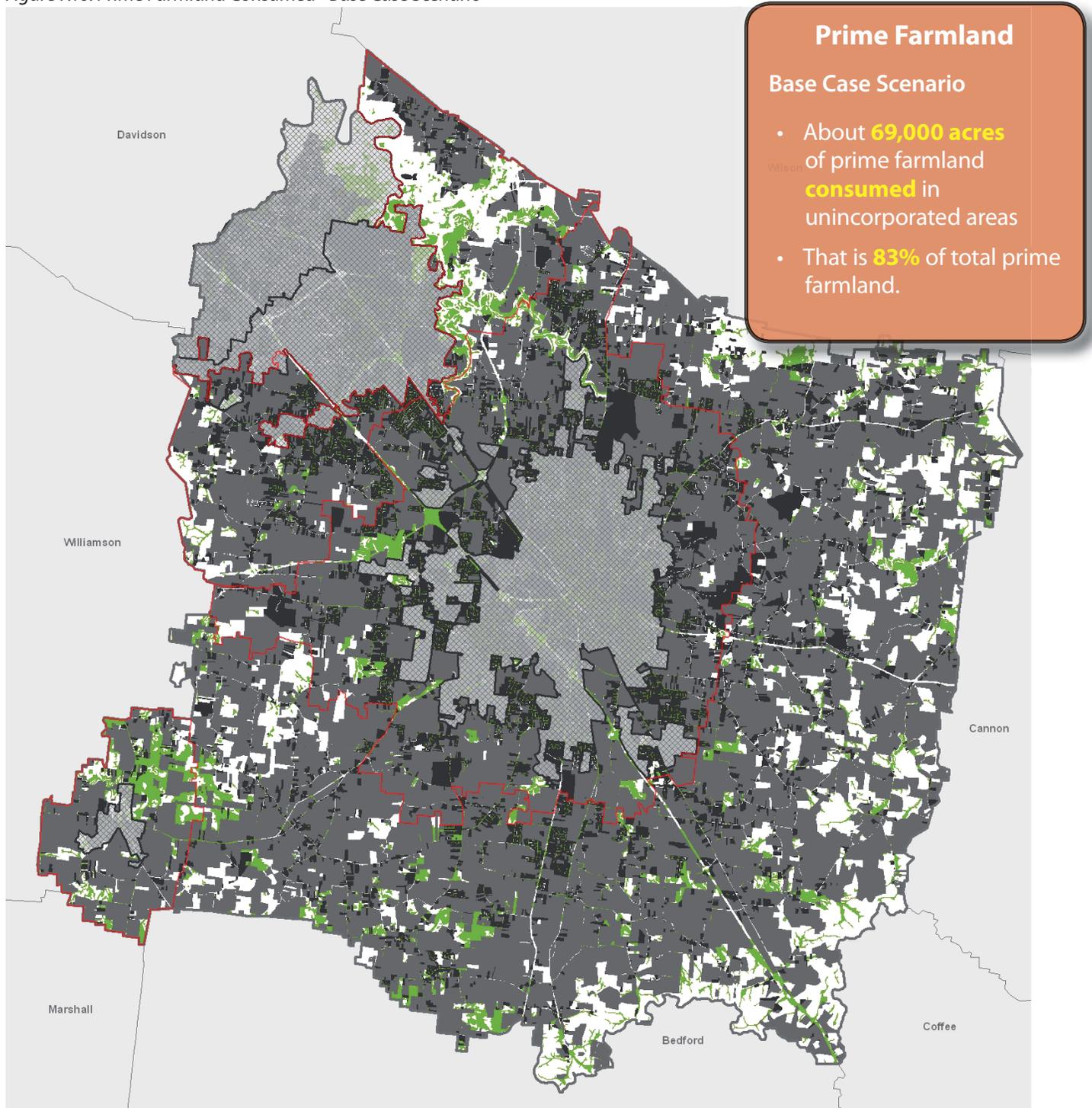




Figure 7.16: Prime Farmland Consumed - Base Case Scenario

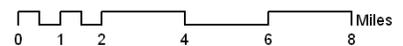


**Prime Farmland**  
**Base Case Scenario**

- About **69,000 acres** of prime farmland **consumed** in unincorporated areas
- That is **83%** of total prime farmland.

**Legend**

- Prime Farmland Soil
- Developed Area (Existing)
- Developed Area
- UGB
- City Boundary



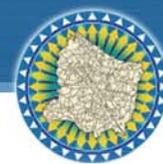
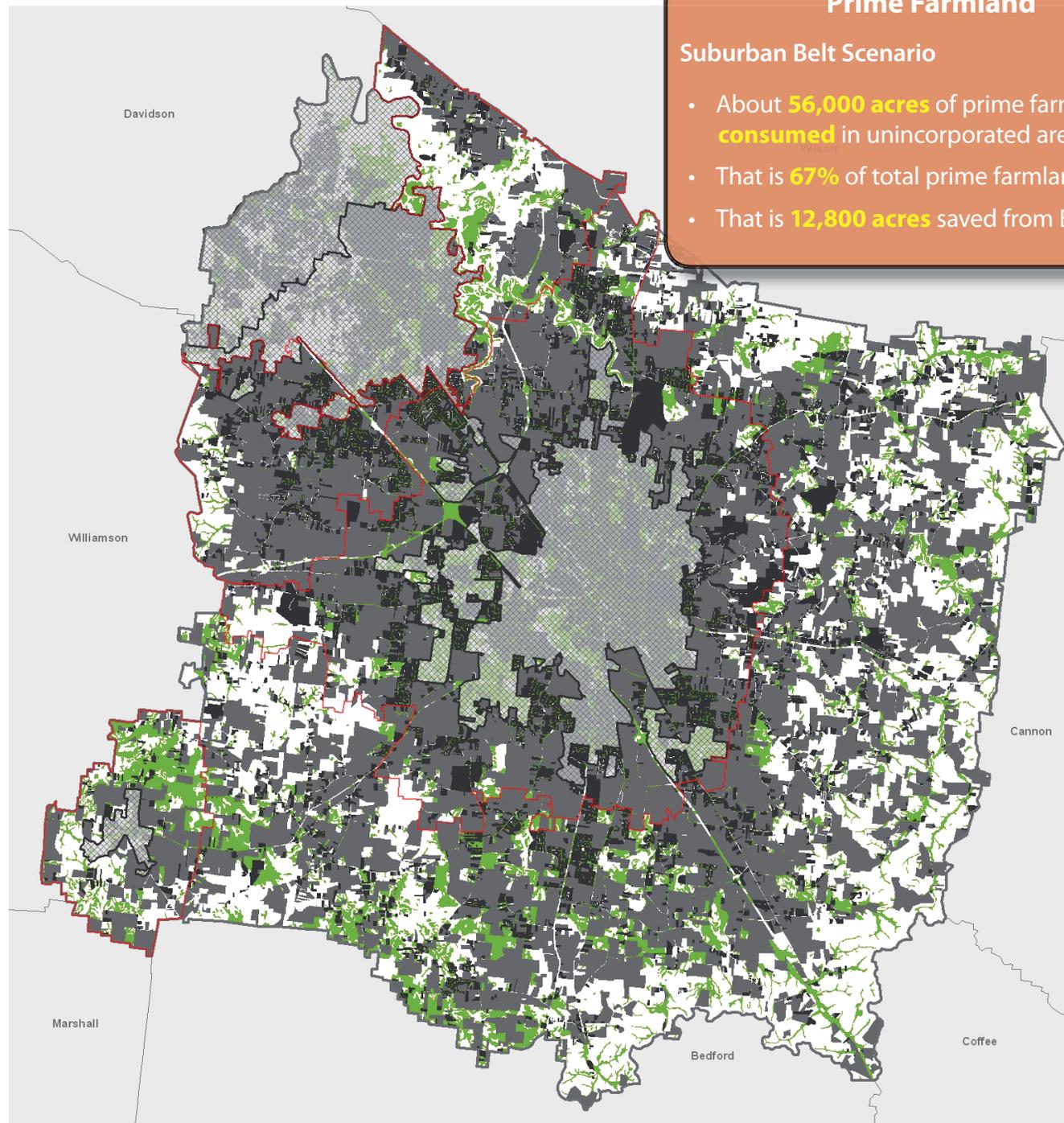


Figure 7.17: Prime Farmland Consumed - Suburban Belt Scenario



### Prime Farmland

#### Suburban Belt Scenario

- About **56,000 acres** of prime farmland **consumed** in unincorporated areas
- That is **67%** of total prime farmland.
- That is **12,800 acres** saved from Base Case

### Legend

- Prime Farmland Soil
- Developed Area (Existing)
- Developed Area
- UGB
- City Boundary

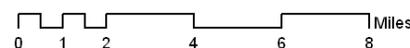
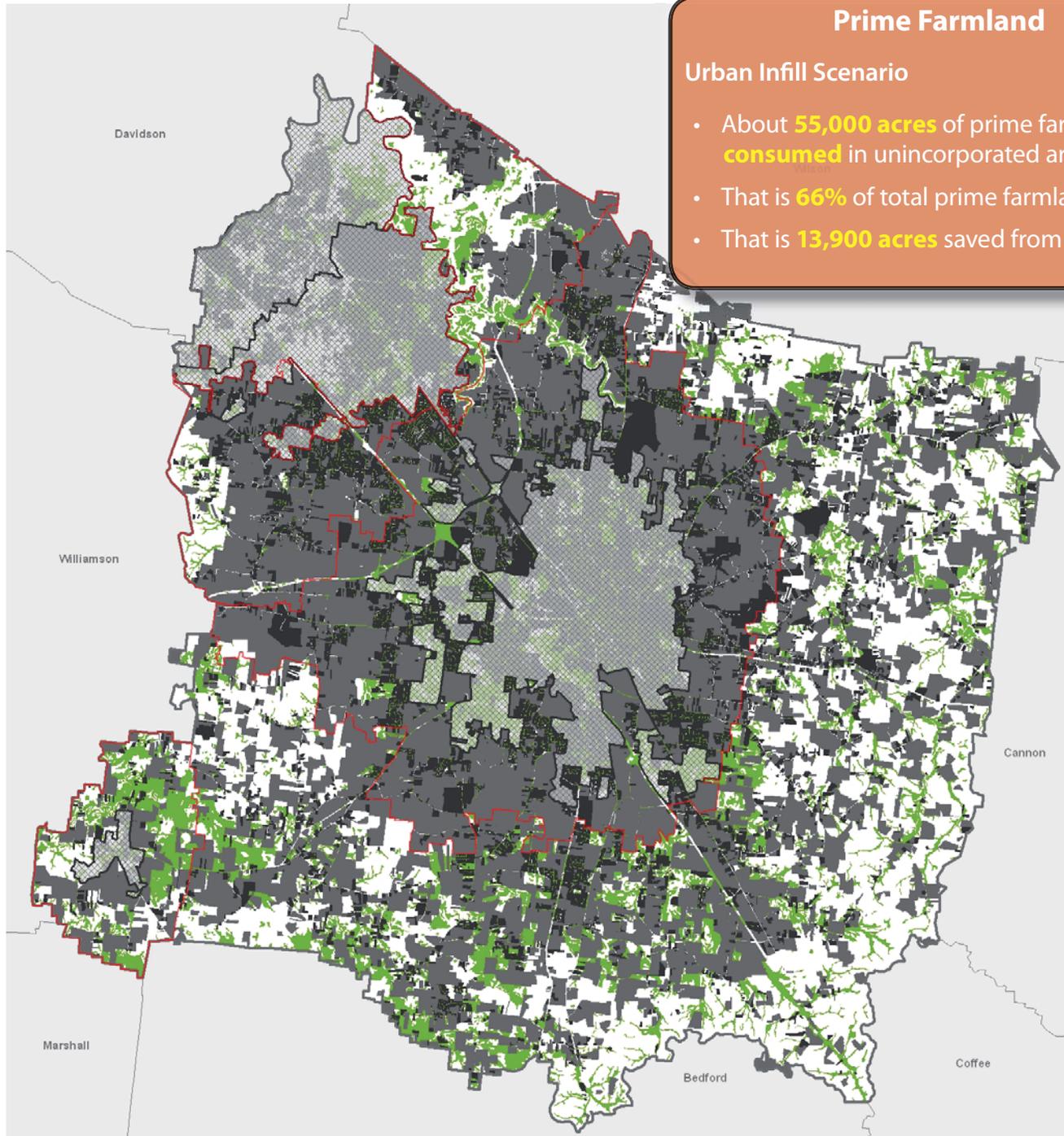




Figure 7.18: Prime Farmland Consumed - Urban Infill Scenario



**Prime Farmland**

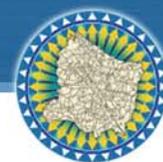
**Urban Infill Scenario**

- About **55,000 acres** of prime farmland **consumed** in unincorporated areas
- That is **66%** of total prime farmland.
- That is **13,900 acres** saved from Base Case

**Legend**

- Prime Farmland Soil
- Developed Area (Existing)
- Developed Area
- UGB
- City Boundary



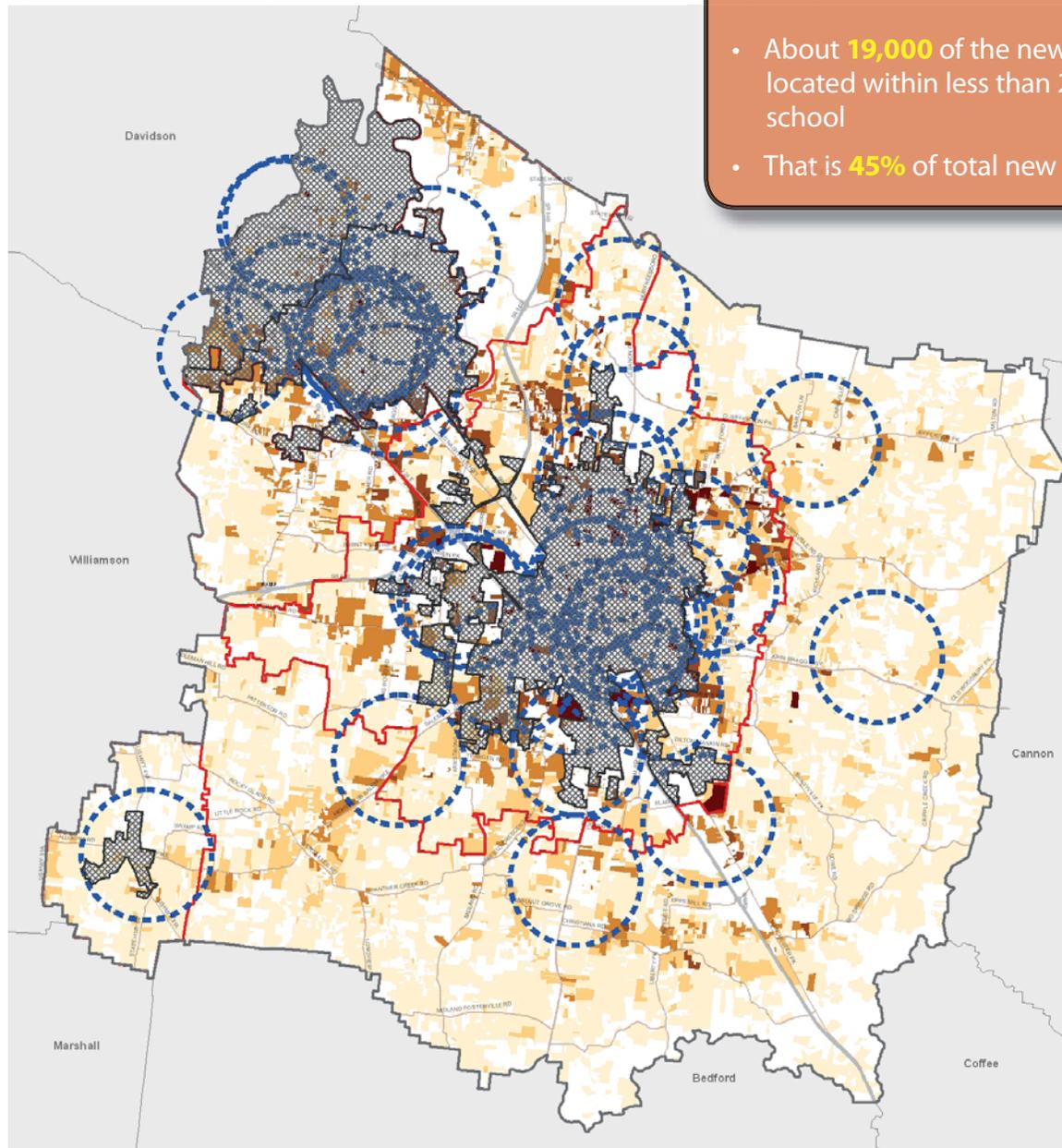


## School Proximity

### Base Case

- About **19,000** of the new households located within less than 2 miles from a school
- That is **45%** of total new household

Figure 7.19: School Proximity - Base Case Scenario



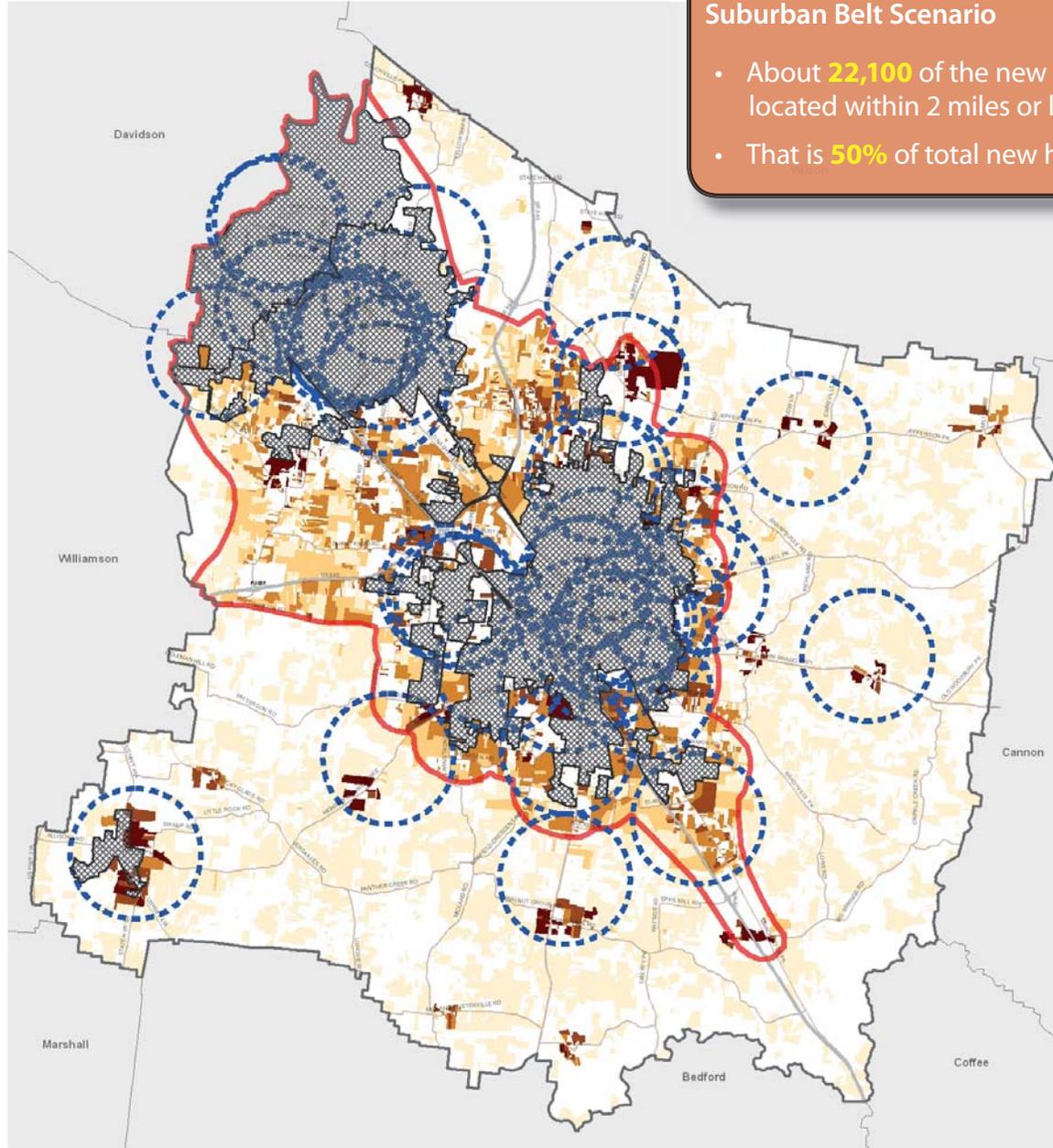
### Legend

- City Boundary
- RuthCo\_GA\_Landmarks\_pt\_2\_Schl\_2mi\_Buf
- UGB

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities



Figure 7.20: School Proximity - Suburban Belt Scenario



**School Proximity**

**Suburban Belt Scenario**

- About **22,100** of the new households located within 2 miles or less from a school
- That is **50%** of total new households

**Legend**

- 2 Miles from School
- City Boundary
- Urban Fringe (GUF)

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities

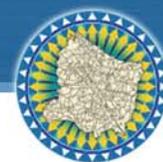
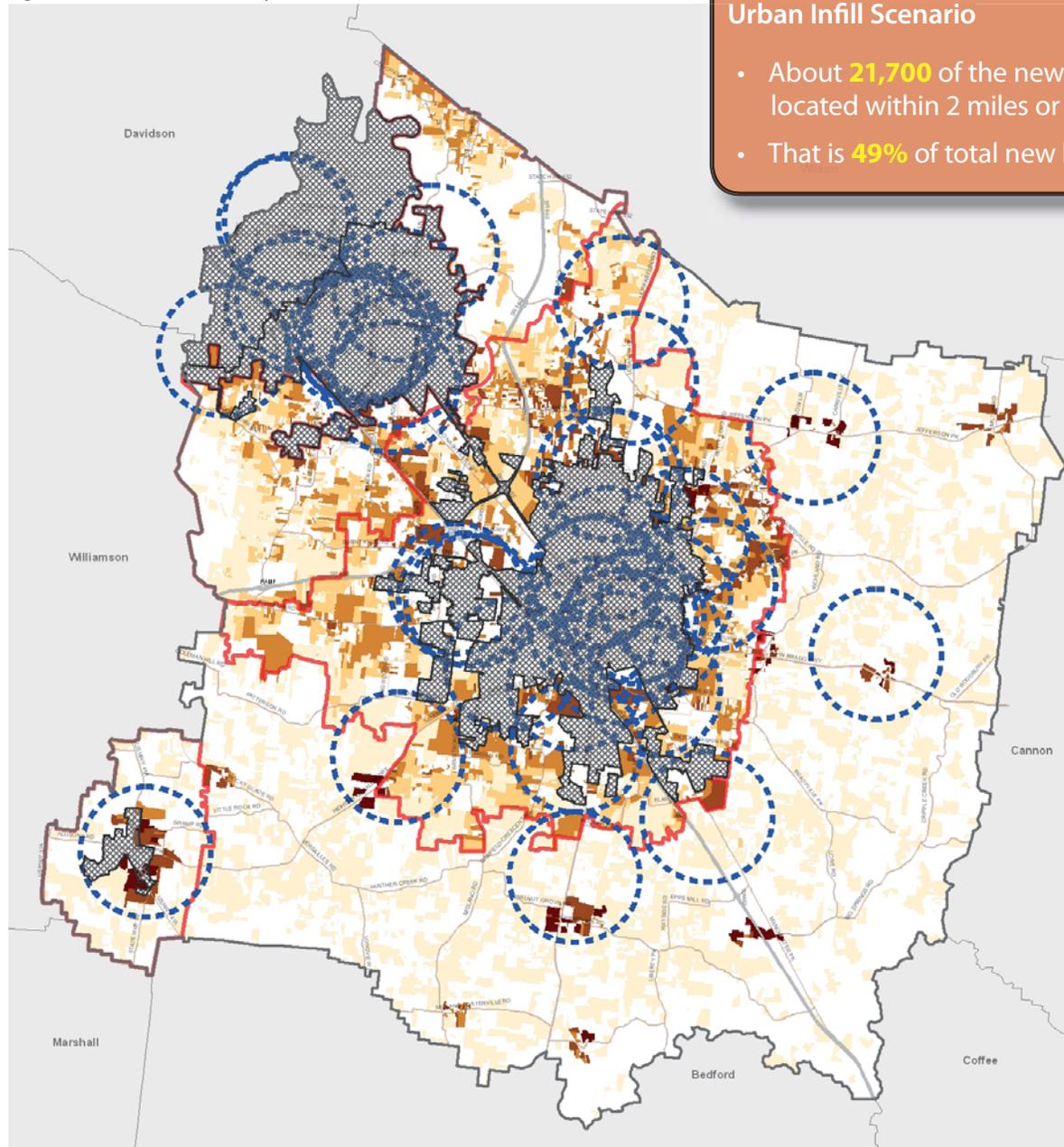


Figure 7.21: School Proximity - Urban Infill Scenario



**School Proximity**

Urban Infill Scenario

- About **21,700** of the new households located within 2 miles or less from a school
- That is **49%** of total new households

**Legend**

- 2 Miles from School
- City Boundary
- UGB

Note: darker shading denotes higher residential densities



### Water Demand\*

#### Base Case

- 15.6 million gallons per day of additional water
- 10.2 million gallons per day in UGB area
- 5.4 million gallons per day outside UGB area

#### Suburban Belt Scenario

- 15.6 million gallons per day of additional demand
- 11.4 (73%) million gallons per day in UGB area
- 4.2 (27%) million gallons per day outside UGB area

#### Urban Infill Scenario

- 15.6 million gallons per day of additional demand
- 12.6 (81%) million gallons per day in UGB area
- 3.0 (19%) million gallons per day outside UGB area

### Sewer Demand\*

#### Base Case

- 11.2 million gallons per day of additional demand
- 7.3 (65%) million gallons per day in UGB area
- 3.9 (35%) million gallons per day outside UGB area

#### Suburban Belt Scenario

- 11.2 million gallons per day of additional demand
- 8.2 (73%) million gallons per day in UGB area
- 3.0 (27%) million gallons per day outside UGB area

#### Urban Infill Scenario

- 11.2 million gallons per day of additional demand
- 9.0 (81%) million gallons per day in UGB area
- 2.1 (19%) million gallons per day outside UGB area

\* These statistics are based on allocation of the 2035 MPO Forecast (i.e. less than full build out).

Measures of effectiveness for water demand are based upon water consumption per dwelling unit of residential growth and per square foot of non-residential growth.

Measures of effectiveness for sewer demand are based upon percent of new growth in proximity to sanitary sewer service areas.



## SELECTION OF PREFERRED SCENARIO

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee met on June 21, 2010 to discuss growth scenarios for Rutherford County. The Base Case (no action) and two additional scenarios were evaluated for their desirability and effectiveness in helping to achieve community goals that were developed earlier in the planning process. The CommunityViz® modeling software provides comprehensive quantitative data of potential impacts for different growth strategies on land use, natural features, financial implications and related criteria. Desirability of different scenarios is calculated as Measures of Effectiveness, or the extent to which a scenario can achieve community goals.

The Steering Committee voted to recommend the Suburban Belt scenario be selected as the preferred alternative. The vote by Steering Committee members for this alternative was nearly unanimous. Steering Committee comments on selecting the Suburban Belt as the preferred alternative included:

1. The scenario represented an incremental change and not a radical departure from current development practices;
2. The scenario best matches with existing development policies and previous

development decisions in areas outside of Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB);

3. Infrastructure may be already available or planned in areas designated for suburban type development;
4. The scenario provides an ability to protect sensitive natural areas and cultural and historic resources from undesirable impacts;
5. The scenario should reduce development pressures in designated rural areas; and
6. The scenario is fairly consistent with existing and planned development within the Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB).

Based on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, the planning team was directed to prepare policies and action items for implementation of the Suburban Belt scenario. This scenario identified proposed centers, character areas and corridors.



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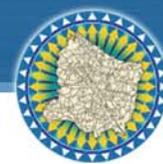


Figure 7.22: Suburban Belt - Proposed Centers and Character Areas

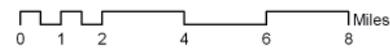
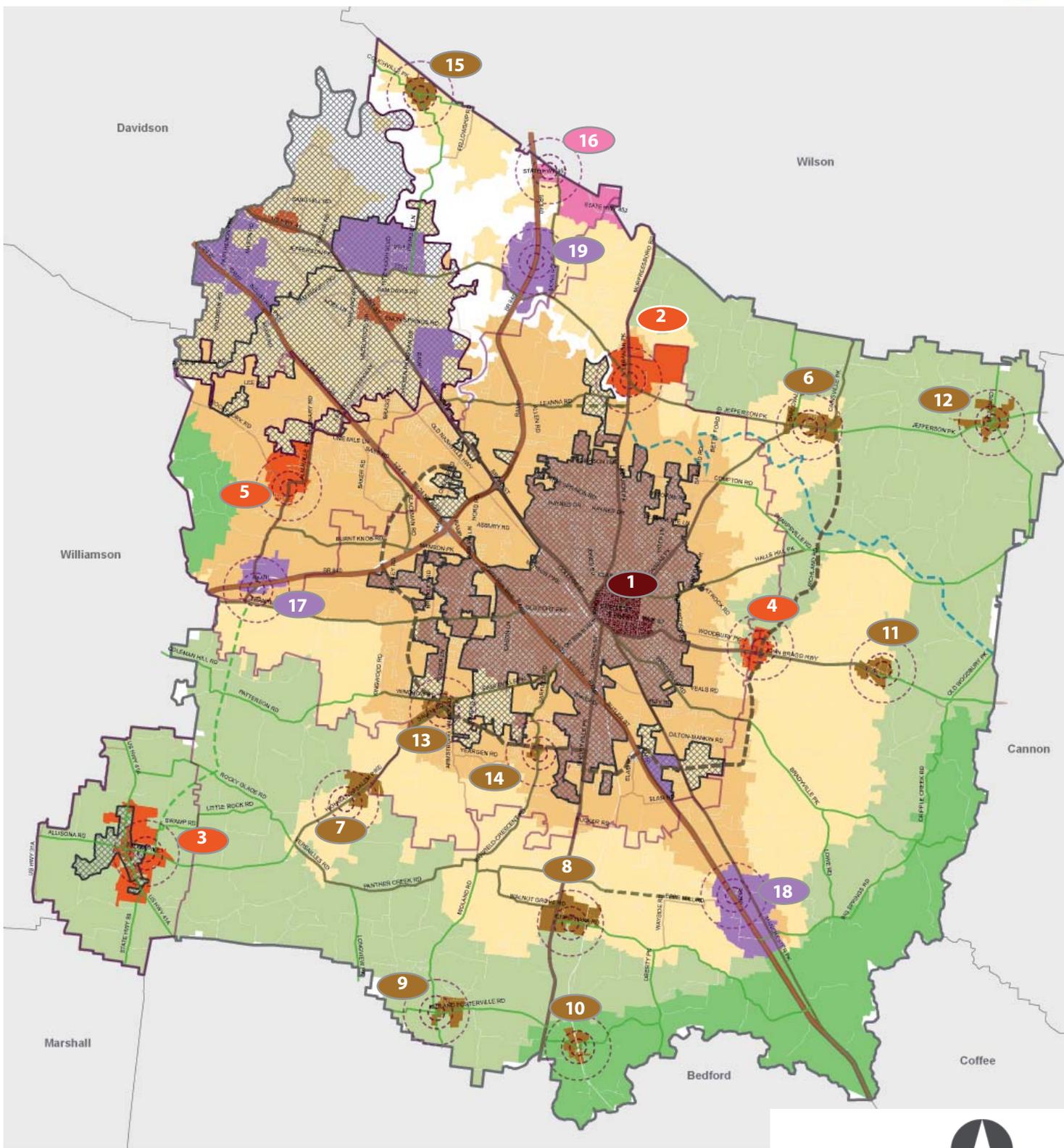




Figure 7.22 depicts the following Proposed Corridors, Centers and Character Areas listed below:

### PROPOSED CORRIDORS

#### Urban Corridors

- Veterans Parkway
- Lascassas Pike (downtown to Compton)
- Compton
- John Bragg to Veterans Parkway
- Manchester Highway to Big Springs
- Jefferson Pike at 840

#### Suburban Corridors

- Lascassas Pike (Compton to Cainsville)
- Halls Hill Pike (MTSU to Sharpsville Road)
- John Bragg

#### Rural Scenic Corridors

- Lascassas Pike - from Cainsville Pike to Rutherford County line
- Halls Hill Pike - Sharpsville Road to Rutherford County line
- Sharpsville Road
- Lowe
- Cripple Creek
- Big Springs
- Manchester Highway past Big Spring

#### Proposed Corridors Legend

<b>Corridors</b>	Quarter Mile Buffer
Limited Access	Half Mile Buffer
Urban	One Mile Buffer
Suburban	
Rural Scenic	
Urban (Proposed)	
Rural Scenic (Proposed)	
Suburban (Proposed)	
Blue way (Proposed)	
City Boundary	
UGB	

### PROPOSED CENTERS

#### Traditional Town Center

Murfreesboro

#### Village/Neighborhood Centers

Walter Hill

Eagleville

Joe B. Jackson at John Bragg

Stewart Creek (Smyrna)

#### Rural Centers

Lascassas

Rockvale

Christiana

Midland

Fosterville

Kittrell

Milton

Rucker

Barfield

Couchville Pike

#### Major Activity Center

Property at Nashville Super Speedway

#### Major Employment Centers

Almaville

Epps Mill

Jefferson Pike at 840

#### Proposed Centers Legend

<b>Centers and Character Areas</b>	TTC - Traditional Town Center	GU - General Urban
V - Village Center	GUF - General Urban Fringe Area	
RC - Rural Center	SU - Suburban Character Area	
AC - Activity Center	R - Rural Area	
EC - Employment Center	CA - Conservation Area	



## FISCAL IMPACT OF BASE CASE AND ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS

Three land use planning options were developed and modeled using CommunityViz®. The three scenarios were:

- 1) Base Case Scenario (No Action);
- 2) The Suburban Belt Scenario; and
- 3) The Urban Infill Scenario.

The Base Case Scenario examines the pattern of development that is projected to occur if no policy changes are implemented. The outcome of the Base Case Scenario consists of more sprawl, more low-density development, and more development in the rural areas compared with either the Urban Infill or Suburban Belt Scenarios.

The Suburban Belt Scenario contemplates less dense development within the Murfreesboro urban area compared with the Urban Infill Scenario. Urban development would occur within the Smyrna urban growth boundary (UGB) and within one mile of the Murfreesboro city limits. Larger portions of the rural areas would be developed compared with the Urban Infill Scenario.

The Urban Infill Scenario consists of channeling growth into the present urban growth boundaries for Murfreesboro and Smyrna. Growth in rural areas would be concentrated in nodes or centers,

with low density development encouraged outside the urban growth boundaries and the rural centers.

Two important factors that determine the fiscal impact of the new land-use policies on the county's budget are 1) the amount of future growth and 2) the distribution of growth between the urban areas and the rural area of the county. To estimate future growth, projections for population, employment, and households were obtained by the planning team from the Metropolitan (Nashville) Planning Organization. As part of the initial assumptions of the comprehensive planning process, it was determined that the same levels of growth, as described by the projections, would be assumed for each of the three planning alternatives. In addition, the distribution of growth between urban and rural areas was also assumed identical among scenarios. In other words, the rural area of the county is assumed to experience the same amount of growth regardless of scenario.

Consequently, an analysis of potential fiscal impacts is effectively limited to examining the impact of the alternative growth patterns within the rural area (planning for growth within the urban areas-- Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, Eagleville--is the purview of the

various municipal governments, and not the Rutherford County government). In other words, what is the fiscal impact of more diffuse, less concentrated growth in rural areas as compared with more dense growth? The answer is that the impact on the overall county budget will be minimal, because only a few services could expect to experience potential impacts; these include school bus transportation and ambulance transportation. Other services which could be impacted include fire protection, public safety and utilities.

The county school system provides transportation for many students by contract with private providers. Conceivably, if growth is channeled to centers with higher population densities in the rural areas, the school system could potentially experience lower student transportation costs since more children could be picked up along a given route, as compared with the base case scenario. If housing growth is channeled to more dense developments, it is reasoned, the school system may be able to reduce costs compared to unfocused, less dense, housing development.

The available evidence for Tennessee does suggest that higher pupil density could reduce transportation costs per pupil, but the strength of



the relationship is modest. The data suggests that higher pupil density per mile is associated with lower per pupil transportation costs, but the relationship is not convincingly strong. Factors other than population density are also important. For example, a significant consideration in the process of establishing the number of bus routes is socio-economic equity: we desire to have schools that exhibit diversity commensurate with the community. Accommodating this goal may require more routes or longer routes than suggested simply by population density considerations.

Ambulance transportation costs are the other potential cost savings. One could argue that more densely packed housing development should help reduce ambulance transportation costs in comparison with less dense development. However, ambulance transportation is very different from school bus transportation. For example, an ambulance does not follow a route; for each emergency call received, a vehicle is dispatched from an ambulance station to a home or business, picks up the injured party, and transports to the hospital on a case-by-case basis.

One means to reduce transportation costs is to reduce distance travelled per run by locating additional ambulance

stations in rural areas closer to the expected centers of population growth. This would generate two benefits: 1) the average response time would decline, benefitting the patient, and 2) the distance to a given destination would decline, reducing transportation costs per trip. However, lower transportation costs must be weighed against additional costs required to build the new ambulance stations, acquire vehicles, and hire personnel. From a purely economic point of view, the potential transportation cost savings could easily be outweighed by the annual costs of operating additional ambulance stations.

Consequently, potential cost savings from higher population density in rural areas are difficult to establish with any degree of certainty. We conclude that the fiscal impacts of the three alternative land-use scenarios will be very similar. Population growth and the urban/rural shares of growth are assumed to be the same across scenarios.

A careful review of the county's budget reveals that only a few categories of county government expenditures might be sensitive to the urban/rural distribution of growth. In fiscal year 2009, these distribution-sensitive expenditures amounted to just 8 percent of spending for primary county government services, dropping to

3 percent if schools are included. The point is that the vast majority of county expenditures provide services county-wide; the scenarios under consideration will have no effect on these expenditures. Major expenditure categories that will change little across scenarios include law enforcement, social services, administration of justice (courts), and schools (for the most part). On the revenue side, major tax revenue streams for the county budget include local option sales tax for schools, property tax, wheel tax, and the development tax; these four sources of tax revenue account for 95 percent of locally-originating tax revenue for the county in fiscal year 2009. These revenues are collected county-wide and will not differ by scenario.

The projections estimate total county population will rise to 409,986 and the number of households will increase to 163,719 households by 2035, compared with 2009 population of 257,048 and 103,781 households. The projections and CommunityViz® model estimates predict much more development in rural areas (areas not currently in cities) than has occurred in the past. In fact, of new households expected in the county between 2008 and 2035, 64 percent will be located in the (current) unincorporated areas (65 percent of growth in the



unincorporated area is expected to occur within the UGB, with the remaining 35 percent in rural areas outside the UGB).

A few items in the budget will potentially experience change due to expected growth in the rural areas, including local option sales tax collections for primary government, solid waste expenditures, and county road and bridge maintenance. These impacts are analyzed in a separate portion of this plan.

In brief, the fiscal impact of any of the three scenarios is the difference between the past and the future, regardless of the scenario. That is, little difference in fiscal impact is expected among the three scenarios; the important difference is between the future (any scenario) and the past.

### **SOME FISCAL IMPACTS OF EXPECTED RURAL GROWTH IN RUTHERFORD COUNTY**

Without question, anticipated growth will exert major impacts on county government revenue and expenditures for the foreseeable future; this is not a surprise, as the county has been dealing with the demands of a burgeoning population for many years. What is different is that a large portion of future growth is expected to occur in the rural areas of the county,

according to the planning team's projections used for this plan. This means that county government revenue generated in rural areas and expenditures for services provided to the rural population may well behave differently in the future compared with the past.

This report accomplishes two tasks: 1) estimates the fiscal impact of the baseline scenario compared with the past as pertaining to the rural areas, and 2) examines the sensitivity of fiscal impacts to a shift in the assumed urban/rural distribution of growth.

Rutherford County's rural area is expected to grow much more quickly than the urban area (Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, and Eagleville) during the planning period 2008-2035. A few categories of expenditures and revenue are at least somewhat sensitive to changes in this shift of the rural growth rate. The demand for solid waste services will rise with rural population growth, for example, as will wear and tear on county roads and bridges; both will create demand for additional expenditures. On the revenue side, the portion of local option sales tax designated for primary government

is collected completely in the rural (unincorporated) areas.

### **REVENUE RELATED TO RURAL GROWTH**

The planning team estimated growth of two types of revenue related to rural growth: local option sales tax revenue for primary government and property tax revenue. Although other categories of tax revenue are larger, including wheel tax, development tax, and sales tax for schools, these taxes are collected county-wide. Local option sales tax revenue for primary government, on the other hand, is collected only in the unincorporated areas and thus is very sensitive to rural growth and is an important source of funding for county solid waste expenditures. We estimate property tax revenue because this is a source of funding for county roads and bridges.

### **LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX REVENUE**

Local option sales tax collections are distributed evenly between schools and local governments; school systems receive half the revenue, with local governments receiving the other half depending on the physical location of the point-of-sale. Since the vast majority of sales-tax collecting business establishments, mostly retailers, are located within incorporated areas (Murfreesboro,



Smyrna, LaVergne, and Eagleville), the vast majority of this portion of this revenue stream is received by city governments. The county's two school systems (Murfreesboro City Schools and Rutherford County Schools) share the school portion of local option sales tax revenue in proportion to attendance (more precisely, average daily attendance, or ADA).

Data indicates that the rural (unincorporated) areas enjoy very little presence of retailing; although the rural area comprises 32 percent of the county's population, just 4.8 percent of the local option sales tax are collected in these areas of Rutherford County. If the population growth expected for the rural areas materializes, and city limits do not expand beyond present boundaries, the portion of collections for local option sales tax in the rural areas will rise considerably.

Of interest is in the portion of local option sales tax collected in the unincorporated areas, since fully half this revenue stream benefits Rutherford County primary government. In fiscal year 2008, these collections were \$4,762,000, amounting to 6 percent of tax revenue available for primary government expenditures. Presently, this revenue stream provides partial funding for solid waste, debt service, county roads,

and the general fund.

The forecast for local option sales tax for primary government depends on growth in the number of sales-tax paying business establishments in the unincorporated areas. The planning team prepared projections of new retail establishments in these areas by total square footage. Square footage is expected to grow somewhat from 2008 to 2015, rising nearly 300,000 square feet from 2015 to 2025, with growth doubling during the next ten year interval 2025 to 2035 to more than 600,000 square feet. Assuming sales average \$180 per square foot, at the low range for most retailers, growth of taxable sales is expected to rise. Multiplying estimated sales by the local option sales tax rate of 2.75 percent for Rutherford County, we find that local option sales tax collections for primary government are expected to rise by \$332,000 by 2015, \$1.472 million from 2015 to 2025, and \$3.25 million from 2025 to 2035.

### ESTIMATING GROWTH IN PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

Property tax revenue is collected county-wide and so will not vary among scenarios. However, this revenue is important for county roads and bridges; consequently we estimate future property tax revenue attributable to growth.

We assume growth in property tax revenue is attributable entirely to an increase in the number of tax-paying entities, as measured by growth in square feet of floor space. Further, we assume that property values per parcel remain constant, and that the tax liability per parcel remains fixed. Thus, the only way in which property tax revenue can increase in this analysis is through growth in the square footage of tax-paying establishments and households.

Property tax growth is estimated both for businesses (office, retail, and industrial) and households

**Property Tax Formula for Business Properties**

**Growth in Square Feet X  
Improvement Price per Square Foot X  
Assessment Rate X  
Tax Rate.**

(residential). For business properties, we used the following formula:

Expected growth in square feet was developed by the planning team. We calculated improvement price per square foot from data obtained from the Rutherford County assessor. We used an assessment



rate of 40 percent of market value for business properties and a tax rate of \$2.78 per hundred dollars of

government, including school bond debt service.

county government budget are convenience centers and the landfill. The landfill is available free of charge for all county residents. Convenience centers accept household waste, appliances, and recyclables, and are also available to all county residents free of charge. Unlike the landfill, however, the demand for services from convenience centers varies depending on location within the county. The City of Murfreesboro is the only local government in Rutherford County that provides curbside solid waste service.

Households and establishments in the other areas (Smyrna, LaVergne, and unincorporated areas) either contract with a private solid waste company or utilize a convenience center operated by county government. The effect of this situation is that demand for convenience center services is much higher in Smyrna, LaVergne, and north and south Rutherford County, and much lower near Murfreesboro. Thus, to the extent that county growth occurs less in Murfreesboro relative to the rest of the county, the demand for convenience center services will also grow.

Although county spending for convenience centers has increased over the years, a better measure of spending over time would adjust both for inflation (the cost of providing the service)

Reviewing the Rutherford County budget, one finds that most of the services offered by the county are not dependent on location, but are offered county-wide. Law enforcement and the judicial system operate county-wide, for example, as does the county clerk and human

services. The ambulance system operates county-wide. As for the schools system, high school is county-wide, and the county educates most of the K-6 children.

In all, we estimate that just 8 percent of primary government expenditures could be sensitive to the location of growth, falling to 3 percent of total expenditures when the county school system is included. However, we did identify two categories of expenditures that are at least somewhat sensitive to whether growth is rural or urban:

- 1) solid waste and 2) county roads.

### SOLID WASTE

The county operates a landfill for construction waste, storm debris, and lawn debris. The county also operates a number of waste convenience centers. Rutherford County does not provide curbside collection for households or business establishments.

The two largest expenditure items for solid waste in the

### Property Tax Formula for Residential Properties

$$\text{Growth in Number of Housing Units} \times \text{Average Square Feet} \times \text{Improvement Price per Square Foot} \times \text{Assessment Rate} \times \text{Tax Rate.}$$

assessed value.

Estimates for residential property tax growth were calculated in a similar manner:

We used the assessment rate of 25 percent for single-family and non-commercial multi-family residences and 40 percent for commercial multi-family residences, along with a tax rate of \$2.78 per hundred dollars of assessed value.

Based upon this formula, property tax revenue rises by \$21.4 million between 2008 and 2015, \$30.8 million from 2015 to 2025, and \$30.5 million from 2025 to 2035.

### EXPENDITURES FOR RUTHERFORD COUNTY

County government expenditures can be separated into two general categories: spending for schools, and spending for primary government, including everything but schools. Spending for debt service is included in primary



and the demand for the service. For example, spending should be adjusted for the rising cost of providing convenience center services over time. Payroll and benefits costs rise from year to year, for example, increasing the cost of providing services from convenience centers. In addition to inflation, spending should be adjusted for population growth, our measure of demand. When inflation-adjusted spending per capita remains level over time, we may conclude that the real quantity of services offered is keeping up with demand.

### MIDDLE POINT LANDFILL

Operated by Allied Waste, Middle Point landfill accepts waste from Rutherford County government and the City of Murfreesboro free of charge. In addition, Middle Point pays a fee to Rutherford County based on tons disposed originating outside the county. Before the recession began in 2007, the fee had averaged at least \$1 million annually. The fee declined in 2008 and 2009 due to the recession; fewer purchases creates less waste. Thus, Middle Point generates two benefits for the county budget: reduced cost (no tipping fees), and a source of revenue.

These benefits will eventually end when the landfill reaches the end of its useful life. Under the present

configuration, Middle Point could reach capacity in about 25 years, near the conclusion of the planning period for the Rutherford County Comprehensive Plan.

Presently, solid waste expenditures are funded by several revenue sources including local option sales tax (for primary government), revenue from Middle Point landfill, tipping fees from the county landfill, and revenue from the state government.

### IMPACT OF GROWTH ON THE SOLID WASTE BUDGET

Demand for services at the convenience centers is assumed to increase in proportion with county population growth excluding Murfreesboro, since Murfreesboro offers curbside collection. We also assume that expenditures per capita remain constant throughout the planning period in real (inflation-adjusted) terms. Demand growth exceeds revenue growth for both 2015 and 2025. By 2035, revenue growth catches up with demand; by 2035, revenue growth, buoyed by growth of local option sales tax revenue, somewhat exceeds demand.

The critical factor explaining revenue growth is the expected rise in local option sales tax for primary government, as retail development accelerates in the rural areas. Expected revenue growth will

be less than projected if: 1) the expected growth of new retail in the rural areas does not materialize, and 2) city limits, particularly for Murfreesboro and Smyrna, extend in the future to incorporate some or all of the new retailers.

### COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGES

The expected shift of future growth to the rural areas will generate a large rise in traffic, increasing wear and tear on existing county-maintained roads and bridges. This section estimates future expenditures and revenues for county road maintenance. The bottom line is that current sources of revenue designated for this purpose will not keep up with needed expenditures.

Revenues presently designated for county roads are drawn from several sources, including the wheel tax, local option sales tax, property taxes, and state revenues (gasoline tax). Over the years, expenditures for county roads are strongly associated with population growth; more population causes more traffic, and additional wear and tear on county roads and bridges. Thus, required maintenance for county roads and bridges should rise along with population growth.

County road and bridge maintenance expenditures have not kept up with population growth



after adjusting for inflation. In fact, inflation-adjusted expenditures for fiscal year 2009 of \$17.68 per capita are second-lowest during the past seventeen years.

Additional rural growth will have negative impacts on funding for county roads and bridges. Demand rises quickly in the unincorporated areas as population rises, but growth of revenue designated for county roads and bridges does not keep pace with demand. Growth in the rural areas will strain resources presently designated for county roads and bridges.

## SCHOOLS

The magnitude of growth anticipated in the underlying growth assumption will cause substantial increases in school age population, increasing enrollment in county schools. But since anticipated school enrollment growth will be the same for all three scenarios, school enrollment does not offer a means to choose between scenarios. However, the cost of accommodating additional students in the county will present the county's largest challenge in terms of the budget, and so deserves attention in this report.

Given the population growth projections, we estimate that growth in the numbers of school age children attending county schools of 12,000 K-6, 3,000 in 7th and 8th grades, and 5,600

in grades 9-12. Assuming new schools are needed to accommodate these new students, this could result in the need to build 19 new schools in the county school system by 2035, including those already in the planning stages. We estimate that financing for new schools could add annual expenditures of \$18 million to presently scheduled debt service by 2025, and \$23 million by 2035. It should be noted that presently scheduled debt service for the county is already expected to decline substantially after 2015 as bonds mature and are paid off; currently scheduled debt service payments for 2010 are estimated at \$39.8 million, falling to \$14.8 million by 2025 and \$3.6 million by 2030. Thus, much more room to add debt service for schools will exist after 2015, barring the need to borrow for other potential major projects (county buildings, major roads, and so on).

## SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

Identical rural growth for all three scenarios has been a critical assumption of the county comprehensive planning process. To what extent is the fiscal analysis sensitive to this assumption? How much might county expenditures and revenues change if the distribution of growth differs from this assumption? To pursue this issue, we pose the question:

what if county population grows somewhat less in Murfreesboro and somewhat more in other parts of the county (Smyrna, LaVergne, and rural areas) than expected by the projections shared by the three scenarios? More specifically, what if population in the county-less-Murfreesboro grows by an average of 2.4 percent annually instead of 2.3 percent suggested by the base case projection; this means that Murfreesboro would grow by 0.8 percent annually instead of 1.0 percent.

While this shift of growth appears relatively minor, the upshot is that county schools would receive more K-6 enrollment than the Base Case Scenario and Murfreesboro would receive less. We estimate that approximately 4,200 additional K-6 students would be shifted into Rutherford County schools between 2008 and 2035 compared with the Base Case Scenario. Assuming new schools would be required to accommodate these students, at least four more K-6 schools would be required during this period over and above those required by the Base Case Scenario.

## CONCLUSION

The demand for services in the rural areas will grow more rapidly than in the past, since a larger portion of future growth is expected to occur outside present municipal limits. Two services



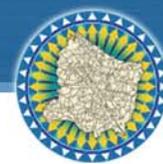
in particular are more sensitive to rural growth: solid waste and county roads. More rapid population growth in rural areas and, in general, areas not including Murfreesboro, will increase the demand for solid waste services. At the same time, faster rural growth will cause local sales tax revenue for primary government to rise, an important source of funds for solid waste. Expected revenues and needed expenditures, or demand, for convenience centers could approximately balance assuming local option tax revenue for primary government rises as much as expected.

The demand for road services will also increase much more than in the past, causing more wear and tear on county roads and bridges. Revenues presently designated for county roads are unlikely to increase as quickly as needed expenditures, causing a mismatch between revenue and expenditure.

Population growth anticipated by the projections will cause the need to build additional schools, adding an estimated \$18 million to annual debt service payments by 2025 and \$23 million by 2035. Present debt service payments are scheduled to decline substantially after 2015, leaving room for additional debt service needed for schools.

The scenario analysis assumes that rural area growth is identical

among scenarios. If this assumption is relaxed, a modest rise in the annualized growth rate from 2.3 percent to 2.4 percent in the all-but-Murfreesboro portion of Rutherford County will shift some K-6 students to county schools, increasing the number of new schools needed.





## CHAPTER VIII. PLAN POLICIES & ACTION STEPS

This chapter will discuss plan policies and describe Action Steps recommended for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Ten plan goals have been developed – each one related to a specific community need or desired outcome. Each goal has several objectives; each objective is a specific measurable activity that is necessary to accomplish the goals. To better discuss policies and Action Steps, the 10 plan goals have been consolidated into four broad categories as described below. Following a brief overview of each category is a table listing specific Action Steps relating to each of the four policy categories.

- A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
- B. Economic Development
- C. Transportation & Community Connections
- D. Facilities & Services

### A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

- Rutherford County has experienced over 300% growth since 1970, more than five times the growth rate of the State of Tennessee. Rutherford County is the second most populous county in the Middle Tennessee region, after Davidson County, and has the second highest density in the Middle Tennessee region. However, a larger percent of

Rutherford County households lived below the poverty line in 2008 than in 2002.

- While Rutherford County has increased the percent of population who are high school graduates and holders of bachelor's degrees or higher, it has maintained a third place ranking among Middle Tennessee comparison counties.
- While the current economy has no doubt slowed the rate, in the mid-1990's Rutherford County was converting 60 acres per day from open space to developed lands, mostly low to medium density residential. Today, over 90 percent of land in Rutherford County is zoned for approximately three dwelling units per acre. Many of the older communities that formed Rutherford County have either disappeared or lost their distinguishing characteristics, also altering the cultural and physical landscape of the County.
- The majority of Rutherford County is located within the Stones River Watershed. Several miles of stream are classified as Not Supporting and are thus included on the 303(d) list per the Clean Water Act.
- Most of Rutherford County contains soils with moderate to severe limitations on septic tanks usage.

- The majority of soils that are suitable as prime farmland are located in the areas of greatest commercial and residential density.
- The number of farms and farmland acreage continues to decrease.
- Lands under the protection of the State as Wildlife Management Areas are limited to lands adjacent to Percy Priest Lake.
- Rutherford County has only recently begun organizing and documenting its cultural and heritage resources to provide a baseline of information.

### B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES:

- Rutherford County competes for higher-paying, high-skilled jobs in a very competitive regional setting and in a currently volatile and downward-trending job market. Rutherford's employment by sector is close to state averages, but is more heavily reliant on manufacturing than most other counties. Rutherford County sends 2.65 workers to other counties for every worker who commutes into Rutherford County.
- Rutherford County has added significantly to its housing stock since 2000; however the over-all median value of owner-occupied housing is in the bottom half of the Davidson County region. The average age of approximately 35% of the housing stock is less than nine



years old. Virtually all multi-family housing is located within the corporate limits of the municipalities. Clusters of lower-valued housing correspond to clusters of lower-income households in the vicinity of Smyrna and Murfreesboro. The regional home value average is almost 35% higher than the State average; however, Rutherford County is below the regional average.

### C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTION ISSUES:

- The need to conduct maintenance and improvement projects on the County's existing roads to address existing issues and plan for future use was cited at several community meetings.
- Planning for transit and multimodal (sidewalks and bike lanes) transportation should occur now so that these elements can be incorporated into future county projects and other private developments.
- In the more densely developed, urban areas of the county, transportation improvements and infrastructure are not keeping pace with the development and growth.

### D. FACILITIES & SERVICES

- There is a limited source of suitable soils that allow for the implementation of the current STEP system permitted by the Consolidated Utility District.

- There is a need for all providers of sanitary sewer in Rutherford County to work together on a comprehensive service plan/ approach for the provisions for sanitary sewer service to areas anticipated for growth.
- Water resources are available, however, there is a finite capacity as a result of current resources. Additional options for source may be required depending on the extent of future growth.

#### (Schools Issues)

- Coordination of planning for new school locations should occur as the county continues to grow. Current schools still have a number of portable classrooms serving current student population.
- Understanding the impact that new school locations have on the communities and existing infrastructure in which they are located is lacking. Appropriate infrastructure needs to be planned to accommodate anticipated development that accompanies new schools.

#### (Public Safety Issues)

- The northeast, southeast, and southwest quadrants of the county lack adequate coverage as it relates to the number of emergency medical service facilities serving these parts of the community.
- The Rutherford County Sheriff's Department currently has one central facility serving a large geographical area.

#### (Parks and Community Centers Issues)

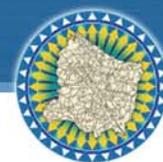
- The northeast, southeast and southwest quadrants of Rutherford County are severely lacking in access to structured passive and active recreation opportunities.
- The lack of a Parks and Recreation Department within the Rutherford County government limits the ability for both the planning and eventual management and maintenance of organized recreational facilities.
- There is an abundance of natural resources in Rutherford County that offer opportunities for recreational activities. Opportunities exist to link these to existing recreational facilities in adjoining municipalities.
- Tools to identify, evaluate and protect natural and historic properties are inadequate.



**Table 8.1: Goal Statements & Goal Categories**

Goal No.	Goal statement is about...	Goal falls into this broad category...
1	Growth Policies	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
2	Business environment	B. Economic Development
3	Rural communities	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
4	Open space protection	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
5	Neighborhoods	C. Transportation & Community Connections
6	Natural landscapes/historic & cultural resources	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
7	Transportation options	C. Transportation & Community Connections
8	Infrastructure	D. Facilities & Services
9	Partnerships	D. Facilities & Services
10	Accountable government	D. Facilities & Services
Goals and policies are discussed in the following order:		
1	Growth Policies	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
3	Rural communities	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
4	Open space protection	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
6	Natural landscapes/historic & cultural resources	A. Community Identity & Quality of Life
2	Business environment	B. Economic Development
5	Neighborhoods	C. Transportation & Community Connections
7	Transportation options	C. Transportation & Community Connections
8	Infrastructure	D. Facilities & Services
9	Partnerships	D. Facilities & Services
10	Accountable government	D. Facilities & Services

The Comprehensive Plan identifies ten goals for achieving the vision for the future. Goals have been consolidated into four broad categories to better discuss policy recommendations and action steps. The table above describes how plan goals have been consolidated.



**Table 8.2: Key Implementation Steps**

**Community Identity & Quality of Life - Goal Statements 1, 3, 4 & 6**

	Action	Primary Responsibility / Major Stakeholder	Priority Ranking
A.	Adopt and/or update small area plans for designated Villages and Centers	Rutherford County Planning Commission Planning staff	<b>1</b>
B.	Implement a Transfer of Development Rights program for rural areas	Planning staff Planning Commission Municipal Governments The Land Trust of Tennessee	<b>3</b>
C.	Develop guidelines to protect hillsides and ridgetops in new developments	Rutherford County Planning Commission Planning and Engineering staff	<b>2</b>
D.	Adopt standards for identification and protection of historic and cultural resources	Planning staff Rutherford County Historical Society	<b>2</b>
E.	Adopt appropriate design guidelines for commercial, office, multi-family and related development	Planning staff Planning Commission Rutherford County Commission	<b>1</b>
F.	Strengthen natural resources (streams, slopes, trees) protection standards in the new zoning ordinance	Planning and Engineering staff Rutherford County Commission	<b>1</b>
G.	Consider historic district designation for selective community centers	Planning staff Rutherford County Historic Society	<b>3</b>
H.	Locate new community facilities in community centers	Rutherford County School Board Rutherford County Commission Emergency/Public Service Agencies	<b>2</b>

**Priority Ranking Legend**

- 1 - Priority action that should be initiated in the near term
- 2 - Important item but not critical to plan implementation
- 3 - Desirable item to be initiated as time and resources are available

Community Identity and Quality of Life are the top priority items--four out of ten plan goals are related to this subject area.



**Table 8.3: Key Implementation Steps**

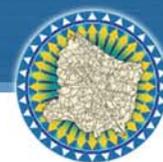
**Economic Development Issues - Goal Statement 2**

	Action	Primary Responsibility / Major Stakeholder	Priority Ranking
A.	Investigate feasibility of adopting right-to-farm protection in Rutherford County	Planning staff Rutherford County Farm Bureau	<b>2</b>
B.	Review plan and permit approval process so it is less complicated and easier to follow	Planning and Engineering staff	<b>1</b>
C.	Permit tourism and community event uses by right in rural areas of the county	Rutherford County Planning Commission Rutherford County Commission Planning staff Chamber of Commerce/Tourism Entities	<b>2</b>
D.	Protect optimal employment areas from inappropriate development	Rutherford County Planning Commission Rutherford County Commission Planning staff Rutherford County Industrial Board	<b>2</b>
E.	Increase use of web-based systems for development review and approval and information sharing	Planning staff IT staff	<b>2</b>
F.	Examine feasibility of a county land trust	Planning staff The Land Trust of Tennessee	<b>3</b>

**Priority Ranking Legend**

- 1 - Priority action that should be initiated in the near term
- 2 - Important item but not critical to plan implementation
- 3 - Desirable item to be initiated as time and resources are available

A key plan goal is reserving sites along the interstate and major arterial roads for industrial and related job-producing uses. The Rutherford County Industrial Board and Chamber of Commerce are important stakeholders in this effort.



**Table 8.4: Key Implementation Steps**

**Transportation & Community Connectivity Issues - Goal Statements 5 & 7**

	Action	Primary Responsibility / Major Stakeholder	Priority Ranking
A.	Keep the major thoroughfare plan current so it is consistent with land use recommendations	Planning and Engineering staff Rutherford County Road Commission	<b>1</b>
B.	Implement overlay districts for protecting viewsheds along key county roads	Rutherford County Commission Planning and Engineering staff	<b>2</b>
C.	Require non-motorized connections (biking and walking) in new developments to create better connected communities	Rutherford County Commission Planning staff Nashville MPO	<b>2</b>
D.	Develop a bike and pedestrian master plan for Rutherford County	Planning and Engineering staff Municipal governments	<b>2</b>
E.	Develop a pilot scenic corridor management plan for one high quality corridor	Planning staff Rutherford County Road Commission TDOT	<b>3</b>
F.	Develop a county-wide greenway system and integrate the system into the existing greenway system	Planning staff Municipal Governments Nashville MPO	<b>3</b>
G.	Extend ROVER bus service to developing population centers throughout the county	Planning staff City of Murfreesboro	<b>3</b>
H.	Stay involved in regional transit planning initiatives by Nashville MPO	Planning staff	<b>1</b>

**Priority Ranking Legend**

- 1 - Priority action that should be initiated in the near term
- 2 - Important item but not critical to plan implementation
- 3 - Desirable item to be initiated as time and resources are available

Several action steps relate to making greater investment in non-motorized transportation (biking and walking) and remaining actively involved in transit planning initiatives.



**Table 8.5: Key Implementation Steps**

**Facilities & Services - Goal Statements 8, 9 & 10**

	Action	Primary Responsibility / Major Stakeholder	Priority Ranking
A.	Coordinate with local municipalities to better integrate land use, zoning and development policies within Urban Growth Boundaries	Rutherford County, Murfreesboro, Smyrna and LaVergne Planning staff	<b>1</b>
B.	Create a county wide parks and recreation department with full time staffing	Rutherford County Commission	<b>3</b>
C.	Develop standards for adequacy of public services as a requirement for new development	Planning Commission Planning and Engineering staff	<b>1</b>
D.	Prepare a county-wide parks and recreation master plan and integrate it into a county open space plan	Planning staff	<b>3</b>
E.	Adopt water conservation measures into subdivision regulations and the building code	Building Codes Department Planning Commission Planning and Engineering staff	<b>2</b>
F.	Increase coordination between Rutherford County and the School Board in siting new schools	Planning staff Rutherford County School Board	<b>1</b>
G.	Encourage developments and projects that support sustainability through LEED or similar sustainability certification	Rutherford County Commission	<b>2</b>

**Priority Ranking Legend**

- 1 - Priority action that should be initiated in the near term
- 2 - Important item but not critical to plan implementation
- 3 - Desirable item to be initiated as time and resources are available

Raw water supplies are a limited resource that may slow county growth. Rutherford County should adopt water conservation measures in the building code and subdivision regulations.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### Goal Statement 1:

Ensure growth policies that recognize land is a limited resource and that growth should occur where suitable land use and public services can be economically provided:

### OBJECTIVE 1.A

Revise the county's growth management tools, including zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations;

#### Strategy

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide for development decision-making, but is not a set of regulations that must be enforced. Implementation and interpretation of growth policy will come in the form of zoning and rezoning decisions, subdivision approvals or denials, infrastructure extension policies, growth boundary adjustments, street and road standards, among others. To receive the maximum impact from the Comprehensive Planning process, all growth management regulations, whether administered by the Planning Commission, County Board of Commissioners, or others should be consistent with each other and with the recommendations of the Plan. Individual decisions must be made based on timing, context, and intent, however, this Plan represents the culmination

of an active and thorough vetting of resources and community opinions, and all regulations and requirements should be reviewed in that light. The Plan recommends that growth management tools be periodically reviewed for conformance with this Plan's objectives and goals, and where they deviate, the reasoning should be expressly noted. Every reasonable effort to mitigate impacts should be made, and where it is shown that conditions have changed since the preparation of this Plan, the Plan itself should be reviewed for possible revision or update. The Comprehensive Plan, if adopted by the County Board of Commissioners per TCA 13-3-304, will provide legal incentive for consistent land use regulations.

#### Challenges:

- Development regulations can become captive to immediate, short-term interests rather than long-term, long-range goals.
- Development regulations not in sync with the Comprehensive Plan can be made compliant if the Plan itself is amended concurrently.
- Plan findings that are more general in nature are not always easy to translate into specific land use regulations and standards.

### OBJECTIVE 1.B

Guide development to create commercial and residential nodes rather than residential sprawl;

#### Strategy

Rutherford County has experienced almost 200% growth from 1980 to 2008, with projections for an additional 65% growth from 2008 to 2035. Growth at this rate provides both costs and benefits, with one of the costs being a change in the character and landscape of previously undeveloped areas. A carpet of subdivisions covers lands previously farmed or left vacant. Commercial uses dot the landscape. Residents travel longer and longer distances to work and shop, while the County must continually add services, and thus costs, to provide the necessary infrastructure. This growth pattern is considered counter-productive in the long term, and is no longer desirable as the predominate development pattern. The Plan recommends that future growth follow the pattern established in the Suburban Belt scenario selected as the preferred scenario of this Plan. A series of "centers" have been identified, each with suggested land uses and densities. Ten Rural Centers are recommended to concentrate future development around existing rural communities throughout the County as "nodes"



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

or “clusters” of development. Four larger Village centers are defined for concentrations of mixed-use developments that are intended to support community-building and provide medium-scale employment opportunities outside the municipalities. An Activity Center is recommended adjacent to the Wilson County line near the Nashville Motor Speedway to focus retail and service uses directly supporting the Speedway. Employment Centers for concentration of manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, retail, service, and office uses are created southeast of Murfreesboro on I-24, and in two locations northeast and south of Smyrna, near SR 840. While exact boundaries of the Centers are approximate, once established, future development regulations should enforce the strategy of increased density and range of uses within centers. Future residential development at the recommended densities should be guided toward Centers that allow such uses, and lands outside the Centers should be zoned to discourage inappropriate development. For Rural Centers, an approximate desirable size is one-half square mile; for Village Centers, an approximately desirable size is one square mile. For Employment and Activity Centers, size is more flexible, and will

depend more on the uses allowed within and outside of the Center. The edges of Centers will not form a perfect “circle”, however they will radiate from a core area or use, and through overlays and other regulatory tools will have a hard edge beyond which uses and densities will be appropriate for the Character Area in the background. While a range of uses and densities will still exist in Rutherford County, the purpose of establishing the Centers is to, through massing of buildings and mix of uses, create areas that are more desirable from both a consumer and developer’s point of view, while at the same time preserving the County’s ability to provide necessary infrastructure and services.

### Challenges:

- Community acceptance of increased density and mixed uses within centers.
- Coordination with zoning regulations to establish and maintain center boundaries.
- Landowner opposition to decreasing density outside centers.
- Establishing infrastructure extension policies that support nodal development.

### OBJECTIVE 1.C

Analyze cost, benefit and policy implications of development impact fees;

#### Strategy

Rutherford County has had a development fee in varying amounts since 1996. The County should impose a cost of services fee commensurate with the actual costs associated with new development.

#### Challenges:

- Acceptance by the development community of increased costs associated with development.
- Potential difficulty in precisely estimating the real costs associated with development.
- Possibility that increased impact fees will make home ownership less affordable for moderate income residents.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### OBJECTIVE 1.D

Discourage development in areas with marginal soils, inadequate public services or inadequate transportation;

#### Strategy

Since 2000 alone, Rutherford County's housing stock has increased by over 50%, with the majority locating in the unincorporated areas of the County. With the vast majority of property zoned for 15,000 square foot lots, some of that development has occurred on lands that lack the proper soils to support structures and roads, where public water, sewer, and schools are not present, or where the local or state street system can quickly experience a degradation in capacity. While the short-term gains of development are realized quickly (construction employment, local sales tax on building materials, etc) the longer-term costs are not as prompt to materialize. Preparation of this Plan has allowed a review of the longer-term effects of poorly managed development. The Plan recommends that areas deemed unacceptable for current levels of development due to natural or physical constraints, such as floodplains and areas of excessive slope, or where existing and imminent public services, including transportation, are lacking to support development, be identified

and subsequent zoning and other development regulations be applied that prohibit or discourage development until adequate infrastructure is present, or adequate environmental mitigation is provided.

#### Challenges:

- Landowner resistance to changes in development policy.
- Continual support by planning and elected officials to guide infrastructure away from environmentally-sensitive areas.
- Avoid premature development where infrastructure is not yet present.
- Coordination with infrastructure providers, including the county school system, on future growth areas and necessary policies to discourage premature growth.

### OBJECTIVE 1.E

Maintain the traditional rural character of Rutherford County and guide development to areas identified as suitable for higher densities;

#### Strategy

Rutherford County has been home to many communities since its establishment. Some of those communities became cities, others have lost population, identity and economic activity. Parts of Rutherford County are open and rural countryside, much appealing to long-time residents and visitors alike. The appeal has also extended to those looking to buy homes in Rutherford County and the development community that serves them. This appeal creates the inherent conflict between preservation and development, with development generally prevailing in recent decades. Through the extensive public engagement process, many of the citizens of Rutherford County expressed a desire to see the remaining rural landscapes of the County preserved while also continuing housing and commercial construction, but in more appropriate locations. The Comprehensive Plan responds to these issues by developing "Character Areas" that define the mix and density of uses outside of established Centers. These Character Areas define future



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

development patterns as General Urban (inside municipalities, not governed by this Plan); General Urban Fringe (an area roughly one mile from Murfreesboro corporate limits and including the Smyrna Urban Growth Boundary) that mirrors urban development patterns but to a lesser scale; Suburban (areas from the General Urban Fringe outward) that recognizes the predominate suburban development pattern already present; Rural, which will decrease density in areas outside the immediate reach of major utilities and services and includes areas that have not developed as intensely as others; Conservation, which are by definition those areas with excessive slope, poor soils for development, on the southeast and western edges of the County. By establishing Character Areas in the County, Rutherford will have a guide to those places that contain the rural and open landscapes that should be intruded upon minimally, as well as areas where development at the past suburban levels and even more urban levels, is appropriate. The Plan recommends that zoning, infrastructure, and subdivision policy be coordinated to guide the majority of future development to the appropriate Character Areas as identified in the Plan.

### Challenges:

- Re-setting the current density levels in Rural and Conservation Character areas from the 15,000 square feet minimum lot size to levels more appropriate to land suitability, infrastructure availability and the adequacy of the transportation system.
- Designing and enforcing development regulations that allow new construction and re-development, but in a manner that minimizes the intrusion on the rural landscapes and viewsheds, even in Suburban and Urban Character Areas.

### OBJECTIVE 1.F

Work with the School Board to locate new schools closer to existing and planned housing;

#### Strategy

School construction is a major expense for most communities. Site selection, school design, permitting, and construction take time and advance planning, but often times is not performed in concert with land use planning. The Plan recommends that the School Board and the Rutherford County Regional Planning Commission begin a regular dialogue and on-going partnership related to future planning for housing and impacts on the County school system.

#### Challenges:

- Gaining consensus on the need for short and long-term cooperation between planners and the school board.
- Aligning the methodologies used to project future population numbers and the locations of future housing.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### OBJECTIVE 1.G

Where feasible, locate new community services and facilities, such as recreational facilities, in concert with school sites to create anchors and connections for new and existing communities;

#### Strategy

Schools become focal points for communities, especially in rural areas. They host not only classrooms, but oftentimes community events and recreation opportunities as well. The transportation and infrastructure of a community must be designed to accommodate the students of driving age, parents, buses, maintenance, supply, and service personnel. The impact of a school can also extend to adjoining property and beyond. Given the central nature a school can have on a community's identity and way of life, especially in a physical sense, it is a logical step to view the school property and surrounding area in a manner that recognizes its importance as a community gathering spot. The Plan recommends that the School Board and the Rutherford County Planning Commission establish a partnership that allows future planning for both parties to be accomplished in coordination with each other. Future public services and capital improvements should be coordinated with the plans, financial

and otherwise, of the school board, recognizing their authority in school siting matters.

#### Challenges:

- Reaching agreement on the level of cooperation among planning bodies.
- Creating community support for multiple civic uses at centralized locations.
- Meeting the educational mission of school facilities while also accommodating community needs in recreation and other areas.

### OBJECTIVE 1.H

Establish growth and development policies that respect individual property owner's rights while seeking consensus on future development goals

#### Strategy

The essence of a successful Comprehensive Plan is community support. This support can be achieved only when citizens perceive the benefits of the Plan outweigh the costs, to themselves and to the community. Concern for the future cannot outweigh respect for current needs. Rutherford County has a long history of supporting private property rights, but is now concerned with the potential rights of future generations to a well-planned, prosperous County. The Plan represents a process by which citizens, developers, elected officials, and other parties can come together to share their concerns and goals. This process helps assure that whatever decisions are reached, they are reached with the proper understanding of each other's rights and needs. The Plan recommends that the County Planning Commission commit to regular reviews of the Comprehensive Plan, and that an active plan for public engagement be developed utilizing technology and existing community resources.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### Challenges:

- Broad goals may achieve consensus but how to reach them can easily result in an impasse.
- Translation of future goals into development regulations and policies can be difficult.
- Those unhappy with specific actions or regulations may seek relief through the political process rather than the planning process.
- All voices and points of view must be heard openly and equally, with the planning process used as a vehicle to engage all parts of the community.

**Goal Statement 3:**  
Strengthen rural communities

### OBJECTIVE 3.A

Recognize the history and importance of rural communities in planning and zoning documents;

#### Strategy

The character and unique features of Rutherford County can be attributed not only to the familiar cities and towns, but also to the smaller, more rural communities in the County. Lascassas, Christiana, Walter Hill and Kittrell may not be as recognizable as Murfreesboro or Smyrna, but they are every bit as important to the heritage and history of Rutherford County. Through this Comprehensive Plan, Rutherford County has used these rural communities to form the basis of its future land use strategy. These communities are now recognized for their value as independent “places” and plans are in place to support their continued development in a planned manner that involves the residents. Whether they are to be targeted for a greater mix of residents and jobs, or protected from encroachment by future development, these communities will continue to prosper in a way that contributes to the overall cultural and economic health of Rutherford County. Groups and agencies such as

the Rutherford County Archives work to preserve their heritage through creation of an historic structure archive that is currently underway. These efforts should be recognized and supported by local residents. The Plan recommends that efforts such as the Historic Structure Survey be supported by the County Planning Commission, Board of Commissioners and active historic and cultural organizations in Rutherford County. All future planning documents should use these and other materials for context and research, assuring that future development acknowledges and respects the rich history of Rutherford County.

### Challenges:

- Newer residents to Rutherford County may not appreciate or be cognizant of the importance of rural areas to the County’s development.
- Financial incentives for development may compete against preservation of rural areas.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### OBJECTIVE 3.B

Adopt zoning and development controls requirements, via overlay districts, to encourage redevelopment of rural communities

#### Strategy

The preservation of rural communities is a common theme that has emerged throughout this Comprehensive Plan. Development of low and medium-density residential housing on former farms or open spaces, with little coordination to future public services or supporting commercial uses and employment opportunities is at odds with the concept of a “community”. The Plan recommends that zoning regulations be developed that identify specific areas in danger of losing their sense of community, and creates development regulations for an appropriate mix of uses, density, and connectivity.

#### Challenges:

- Community buy-in on the boundaries of potential overlay districts.
- Lack of distinction in zoning regulations between areas to be protected and adjoining properties.
- Timing of infrastructure and community services to make appropriate density levels viable.

### OBJECTIVE 3.C

Minimize sprawl adjacent to rural communities that effectively diminishes their intactness and the entryway experience

#### Strategy

As a complement to the protection and encouragement of rural communities, the surrounding areas should be protected from further residential sprawl. Creating an environment that is economically and environmentally friendly to Rural and Village Centers cannot be accomplished if the same development pattern in the past carries forward. Also, part of the “rural experience” is the visual and emotional feel of moving from the less-developed areas into identified communities. The Plan recommends that in concert with the development of overlay districts to support compact, walkable rural communities, development regulations be adopted that effectively lower the density of the surrounding area, and defines a boundary for the community. The regulations should enforce these boundaries and provide both incentives and requirements for creation of “gateways” into communities.

#### Challenges:

- Community buy-in on the boundaries of potential overlay districts.
- Landowner opposition to changes in development densities outside community centers.
- Development and enforcement of infrastructure policies that expand infrastructure and services into communities, but away from outlying areas.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### Goal Statement 4:

Protect and enhance open spaces in a connected network of parks, trees and stream corridors in creating a healthy environment:

#### OBJECTIVE 4.A

Investigate the feasibility of establishing a county land trust;

#### OBJECTIVE 4.B

Encourage dedication of conservation easements for irreplaceable resources;

#### Strategy

Preservation of lands for open space, recreation, and environmental considerations is dependent on a cooperative relationship between land owners, concerned citizens and agencies, and local governments. A land trust is a vehicle to identify, protect, and manage properties with environmental, cultural, and historic importance that has been used successfully in Tennessee and other states. Local management of land trusts includes legal and financial responsibilities that can be a long-term goal, either by County government or other interested organizations. Groups such as the Stones River Alliance or the Farm Bureau should be approached for advisory roles. Conservation easements are a common tool used

to protect individual properties from future development, while also providing the current land owners tax incentives. Such easements do not necessarily prohibit all development on a tract of land, but their intent is conservation, thus the level of development under an easement is significantly less than without one. For example, when used in concert with development methodologies such as conservation subdivision design, both preservation and development can be experienced on the same tract of land. The Land Trust of Tennessee is a willing partner for Rutherford County in establishing a formal land protection process. The Plan recommends that Rutherford County work with the Land Trust to educate land owners and citizens on the benefits of conservation easements. The Comprehensive Plan should be the beginning step in a more detailed open space planning process that identifies sites of importance for possible protection. The County should establish partnerships with interested groups on larger land preservation goals.

#### Challenges:

- Misunderstandings of the benefits/costs of conservation easements.
- Landowner willingness to forgo development revenue in exchange for tax benefits.
- Establishing long-term support for legal and financial considerations of conservation easements and other land protection tools.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### OBJECTIVE 4.C

Develop a pilot scenic corridor management plan on one or more high quality corridors;

#### Strategy

Among the impacts that new development brings are the visual impacts to formerly undeveloped areas. Many rural landscapes in Rutherford County have been lost to development, a comment echoed in public meetings and citizen comments throughout the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. The rural way of life has distinct visual elements, including unobstructed views of farms, fields, forested lands, rivers and waterways, farm buildings and houses, churches and cemeteries, among others. Since these features are largely on private property, most people experience the visual pleasure of a rural landscape from the public rights-of-way of streets and roads. Protection of scenic elements does not have to come at the expense of development, and indeed can be an enhancement. The Plan recommends that one or more of the corridors identified as Rural/Scenic corridors be the subject of a specific corridor management plan that balances the visual and scenic appeal of a specific corridor or segment, with the development rights of current property owners. Measures should be incorporated that include

access management, setbacks, building form and use, and signage. Overlays can be developed through the zoning regulations that identify boundaries and spell out the relationship between the corridor, the visual and scenic goals, and any benefits or incentives to be offered to landowners.

#### Challenges:

- Creating a system that encourages voluntary participation rather than mandatory participation.
- Merging protection of viewsheds with the larger land preservation process, including the use of conservation easements.
- Achieving community consensus on viewshed protection goals and specific scenic features to be protected.
- Follow-up of pilot project to create long-term corridor management plans on other corridors.

### OBJECTIVE 4.D

Integrate county greenways into a consolidated Murfreesboro and Rutherford County system.

#### Strategy

There is a noted lack of parks and public recreation spaces in Rutherford County. Additionally, the lack of adequate pedestrian linkages adds to the dependence on automobiles for even short trips in compact areas. The growing popularity of greenways can serve the dual purpose of providing public open space and active recreation opportunities, as well as providing a safe alternative to short vehicle trips. The Comprehensive Plan supports the creation of Centers to concentrate future growth, leading to a density of population and land uses that makes greenway development feasible. Outside the Centers, connections to waterways add to the recreation and open space opportunities in the County. A blueway along the Stones River has been proposed in the past, and fits well with the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan. Blueways are protected areas along waterways that provide opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, wildlife and scenic viewshed enjoyment, camping, and even appropriate commercial supporting activities if carefully planned. A coordinated approach to river access, facilities for parking and campgrounds,



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

and subsequent retail and service uses will expand the commercial and recreation potential of the river. Increased visibility, use, and access will ultimately aid in the preservation of water quality to support viability. The general location of Village and Rural Centers near the river provides opportunities for connecting greenways and blueways, as well as offering suitable locations for support services and facilities. The Plan recommends that Rutherford County work with the City of Murfreesboro and all other municipalities to develop a coordinated system of greenways that cross jurisdictions. Potential locations are identified in the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle and Pedestrian Study. Rutherford County should also look to examples of blueways in Tennessee, such as the Tennessee River Blueway in the Chattanooga area, for examples of assembling the necessary rights-of-way, properties, and for maintenance and on-going management of the blueway.

### Challenges:

- Creating a financial and regulatory framework for planning, right-of-way acquisition, construction, and maintenance of greenways/blueways.
- Potential resistance from developers and landowners on the benefits of including greenways in development plans.
- Identifying and meeting environmental issues related to expanded river use.

### Goal Statement 6:

Conserve and enhance significant natural landscapes and historic and cultural resources:

### OBJECTIVE 6.A

Adopt guidelines for identification, evaluation and protection of irreplaceable resources as part of the land development process;

### Strategy

Rutherford County's long history of settlement means there are numerous structures and places that were important to the County's past, and are important in the future if Rutherford wishes to maintain its sense of history. In addition, there are numerous locations where rare and endangered plants and animals are located. These sites containing areas of specific and critical importance exist alongside natural landscapes that in general contribute to the remaining rural character of Rutherford County. The past few decades of growth have cost the County some of these sites, with many citizens now concerned with preserving what remains of Rutherford County's unique features. Some of these features have been documented by State agencies using GIS technology, some are documented locally, but all are important to future decision-making. The Plan



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

recommends that the Rutherford County Planning Commission, through its planning staff and with the participation of other agencies, define the significant resources within Rutherford County that should be referenced in all future planning studies. A geo-referenced database of features should be developed that consolidates information from all available sources.

### Challenges:

- Some features represent highly sensitive information that could be endangered by parcel-level mapping and distribution to the public.
- Reaching agreement on which resources to track and document.
- Maintaining an updated database.

### OBJECTIVE 6.B

Create an overlay district to protect sensitive natural areas from development

### Strategy

The planning process has helped the County define those natural features that impact development, or are impacted by development. These areas include lands that have excessive slope, areas of poor and unstable soils, floodplains, wetlands, impaired streams, and critical wildlife areas, among others. While development may not be completely precluded from all areas, it is a recommendation of this Plan that development should be guided toward more suitable lands. On lands with critical natural features, specific development techniques can be employed that would allow private use of the property while still protecting critical features (conservation subdivisions, easements, etc.). It is important that the tools and techniques to be employed, and the properties that fall under these guidelines, be identified before specific development plans are proposed. The Plan recommends that specific criteria be developed for determining the level of environmental sensitivity of parcels of land, and that those areas meeting the criteria be identified for mapping. Overlay districts, administered through

the Rutherford County Zoning regulations, should be developed, discussed, and adopted to define the natural features being addressed, and the specific measures available to administer the protection.

### Challenges:

- Landowner resistance to any restriction on development rights.
- Agreement on and proper identification of natural features deserving consideration.
- Balancing legal issues relating to property rights with environmental protection.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES:

### OBJECTIVE 6.C

Create a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program

#### Strategy

The phenomenal growth Rutherford County has seen in the past few decades has exacted a price in terms of land converted from agriculture, forestry, and general open space to developed uses. The past zoning policies have created expectations for many as to the economic potential of their properties and the “right” to develop land. While many agree that new policies are needed, those who own properties where development expectations may change may seek incentives for accepting a reduced development yield. Whether an individual tract or a large area that includes many parcels, the areas that may be identified by their environmental, historic, cultural or other features as requiring protection from development are mostly in private hands. Compensation for a reduced development potential can come in various forms, one of which is a Transfer of Development Rights, whereby the rights to develop property are separated from the ownership of the property itself, valued, then sold to property owners in areas where increased development density is acceptable. The “sending” and “receiving” areas of development rights must be

carefully identified at the outset, and the method of valuing the development rights, determining the costs associated with providing services and infrastructure to the receiving areas made, and the legal documentation must be carried out. Areas with high levels of existing development may be the first examined for their ability to accept more development, but as those areas may well be within the corporate boundaries of one of the municipalities, a county-wide program resulting from a partnership between Rutherford County and its municipalities is advisable. The Plan recommends that Rutherford County approach the municipalities in the County for their willingness to explore a TDR program, and that a task force of interested parties be created to review case studies of other TDR programs for their applicability to Rutherford County.

#### Challenges:

- Identification of “sending” and “receiving” areas and the criteria used to determine both must be developed.
- Creating an administrative framework for the program, i.e. handled by the County or City/County collaboration, or between private property owners.
- Determining the maximum density allowed in receiving areas, the infrastructure and services to support the density, and the method of compensation to local governments, service providers.



## A. COMMUNITY IDENTITY & QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

### OBJECTIVE 6.D

Adopt “right to farm” protection in development regulations

#### Strategy

The agricultural history of Rutherford County is an important part of its heritage and economy. While the size and nature of farms have changed over the years, agriculture is still a valued way of life that is often threatened and encroached upon by development. In response, zoning and other land use regulations attempt to achieve a balance between competing interests. Whether by omission or by design, these regulations may not elevate agriculture and farming uses to the level desired by the County. State legislation protects the agricultural uses of land from zoning restrictions, however, local regulations are desired that voice the majority opinion that agriculture and farming are desired land uses in most if not all zoning districts, and that land use restrictions applicable to other forms of development will not be applied to farm operations. The Plan recommends that future development regulations contain wording that establishes a “right to farm” in Rutherford County, and while meeting all environmental, health, safety requirements, nonetheless precludes regulations that favor other forms of land use or development over agriculture.

#### Challenges:

- Defining what is a “farm” and determining whether the intent is to extend preference to large-scale commercial operations can be difficult.
- Institutionalizing agriculture as a preferred land use will not resolve disputes between developed areas and properties and agricultural activities in relation to noise, odor, farm vehicles, etc.



## B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

### Goal Statement 2:

Cultivate an environment attractive to new business investment and retention and expansion of existing businesses:

#### OBJECTIVE 2.A

Adopt economic development policies that contribute to broader county goals of economic stability, resource protection and that define and encourage a high quality of life;

#### OBJECTIVE 2.B

Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure appropriate land and resources for recruitment and retention of businesses;

#### OBJECTIVE 2.C

Cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions in securing land, access to transportation and infrastructure to attract employers;

#### OBJECTIVE 2.F

Designate and reserve optimal employment areas from inappropriate development using the Comprehensive Plan.

#### Strategy

Sustainable economic development and sound land management policy are complimentary ideas. The Comprehensive Plan is an excellent vehicle to foster communication and cooperation between planners, citizens, and elected officials

throughout the County. This Plan contains policies that support resource protection, that promote the “quality of life” Rutherford County residents wish to see preserved, and seek to establish proper land use policies as a component of economic stability. By establishing appropriate centers for employment opportunities at various scales, proper infrastructure investments can be made. Subsequent residential and commercial areas can be planned that support the job centers, and provide a marketing tool for the Chamber and other officials that highlights Rutherford County’s commitment to coordinated future growth. The Rutherford County Planning Commission should be a key group that works closely with the economic development professionals in the County, as a source for data and trends that impact economic growth. In turn, the Planning Commission should hold joint meetings or training sessions with elected officials, Joint Economic and Community Development Board (JECDB) members, Chamber staff and others on planning topics of importance to all. The Plan recommends that the Rutherford County Planning Commission work closely with all economic development professionals in the County to assure that future

land use policy reflects the infrastructure, transportation, and other land use needs that will support sound economic growth. Regular meetings and training sessions should be scheduled with the Chamber, JECDB, and municipal planning commissions on topics of general and specific interest to the County.

#### Challenges:

- Achieving a county-wide vision for economic development may be difficult, as opposed to individual efforts of each city and town, and the County.
- Maintaining an appropriate balance of development and preservation can be difficult; case studies can help promote the concept of using preservation as an economic development tool.



## B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

### OBJECTIVE 2.D

Provide good schools, community facilities, housing choices and a high quality of life to attract employers

#### Strategy

The “quality of life” goal is one that is commonly stated but rarely defined. In its broadest sense, it alludes to a community that is desirable to live, work, and play in. It is a community where employment opportunities are coordinated with residential choices, and where the appropriate public services are either in place or will be in place to support both. Through the Comprehensive Plan, Rutherford County seeks to take a more proactive role in its future development. By coordinating with the providers of major public services, the County (and Murfreesboro) School Board chief among them, the future population can be accommodated with world class schools and educational programs that are built and maintained as economically as possible. Given that education choices are among the top decision points for new corporate locations, this coordination is critical to maintaining a high standard of living. The Plan recommends that county planning officials maintain regular contact with the Chamber of Commerce, the Rutherford

County School Board, and the Murfreesboro School Board to conduct strategy sessions that focus on how community planning and school planning interacts with economic development.

The Rutherford County Planning Commission should have input into the development of school location planning and development of County economic plans and goal-setting, by providing information on housing patterns, population projections, infrastructure planning and extension policies for new development. This information should be supported by a county-wide database of available development properties, housing information, etc.

#### Challenges:

- “Quality of Life” can be defined and measured in many ways. Specific measures, such as household income, education levels, available cultural and recreation opportunities, should be adopted into each planning group’s goals and visioning.
- Common ground between the County, the school board, and economic development professionals may not be easy to define and maintain on a long-term basis as leadership changes.

### OBJECTIVE 2.G

Adopt appropriate design standards for commercial, office, and related uses to promote attractive, functional, and sustainable development

#### Strategy

Promoting high-quality development is a strategy for attracting top quality employers, new affluent residents, and making Rutherford County a preferred place in the region. Improved development quality for commercial and office buildings and associated public areas will also encourage current employers and residents to stay in the County. To achieve this, new design standards are needed both to encourage and promote redevelopment where appropriate and to enhance overall development quality. To give Rutherford County a competitive edge, development quality can be enhanced through design standards that improve the appearance of buildings and parking areas, require additional landscaping and urban design amenities, call for attractive public spaces, and promote less visual clutter and scenic obstructions. The Plan recommends that areas of improvement include building height allowances, massing, and the introduction of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as a design standard in mixed-use and non-residential areas. Current



## B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

development regulations will require revising the current development standards regarding such issues as access, interior road design, location of buildings in relation to streets, location and design of parking areas, open space and public realm design. Care must be taken to maintain compliance with planning legislation regarding design requirements.

### Challenges:

- This recommendation introduces new elements and processes into the county's review process. Proper training of planning commissioners will be necessary to comply with legal restrictions on planning and zoning regulations.
- Creating effective and uncomplicated application of standards.
- Landowner and developer resistance to regulations beyond basic zoning requirements will require cooperation and outreach on costs versus benefits.

### OBJECTIVE 2.E:

Build on the excellent reputation of Rutherford County Schools and partner with Middle Tennessee State University to identify skill sets for existing and emerging job markets that create employment opportunities within the County

### Strategy:

The education opportunities, reputation, rankings, and funding have long been known to be key drivers for economic development. In turn, economic development requires a skilled workforce that will allow Rutherford County to compete for jobs in the future. Land management policies deal with the physical needs of employment such as transportation, utilities, relationship to housing, etc. but are usually reactive rather than proactive. This Comprehensive Plan seeks to better coordinate the physical needs of current employers with the emerging and yet-to-be-discovered needs of future employers. The Plan recommends that in order for Rutherford County to remain a premier employment center in Middle Tennessee, that the planning community work closely with County and Murfreesboro City Schools, as well as Middle Tennessee State University, to carefully examine trends in all employment sectors and look to education professionals for leadership on likely future

jobs and their land consumption needs. Spin-off businesses from existing jobs should be supported by flexible but well thought out policies on infrastructure expansions and supporting service and residential uses. Additionally, on-going educational programs in the County should be supported and encouraged to identify and grow the skill sets of the future. Economic development planning, such as that conducted by the Joint Economic and Community Development Board, should be supported by land development policies that are forward-thinking, and seek to both react to and influence demographics that will provide the workers for these jobs yet to come. Land use policy should also work closely with education institutions themselves to assure expansion opportunities as enrollment grows.

### Challenges:

- Coordination among county, city, education leaders on needs for off-campus housing, business development.
- Coordinating zoning policy on mixed-use and single-use areas with the emerging business needs of new technologies and business trends.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### Goal Statement 5:

Provide neighborhoods that create a sense of community and connectedness:

### OBJECTIVE 5.A

Provide on and off street bike and pedestrian connections between development areas

#### Strategy

The natural beauty and character of Rutherford County creates a pleasant setting for bicyclists and pedestrians. The challenge with some rural roads is to accommodate vehicles as well as those who want to experience countryside on a bicycle or on foot. The Plan recommends a bikeway master plan being developed with priority on the safest scenic corridors and proximity to school sites. Additionally, those corridors that lead to the Rural Centers and Villages should also be priorities.

Pedestrian accommodations should be planned and implemented at these designated Centers and Rural Villages. Also, where safety and density warrant, connections to school campuses should be made. It is of critical importance that priority be placed in those areas where a critical mass of residents and uses/destinations are located so as to not "dilute" efforts and resources along little-used corridors or routes of very low density with

few desirable destinations for those on foot or bicycle.

#### Challenges:

Coordination with County Planning, Engineering, Rutherford County Road Commission, and TDOT to formulate standards and site-specific designs for targeted areas.

Funding of pedestrian or bicycle improvements will need to be placed in the County's capital improvements program with priorities identified in the master plan.

### OBJECTIVE 5.B

Discourage development that functions to create isolated islands in the rural landscape

#### Strategy

Scenic rural Rutherford County can be adversely affected by isolated developments that have no relationship to their surroundings and are not developed in a comprehensive manner. It is for this reason that the plan recommends suburban, rural and conservation character areas. Policies related to land use, zoning and subdivision regulations in these areas should reflect different design criteria for these character areas. Conversely, incentives for development in ideal locations should be put in place so that housing and development pressures (commercial, industrial, office) are located in the Rural Centers, Villages, and along corridors in the suburban character area.

#### Challenges:

- Property rights of individuals/families that want to develop in areas where no development exists.
- Changes in economic or market conditions that stall or delay surrounding developments that would create unified neighborhoods leaving individual developments somewhat isolated, as other phases are delayed.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### OBJECTIVE 5.C

Allow for a mixture of uses that compliments existing and planned community character

#### Strategy

Historically, Rutherford County has villages and rural centers with mixes of uses that support the very concept of not leaving our neighborhood to have retail support, churches, and service industries. That is why it is important to allow, through land use policies and development incentives, mixed uses at these nodes.

Additionally, the areas just outside of villages and rural centers have predominantly been agricultural or had natural vegetative cover. These areas are largely farms and residential. The County must comprehensively look at the individual neighborhoods and economic factors that will influence large and small scale uses. Some of these will be appropriate in stand-alone zones or developments (such as business parks, industrial developments), while others will be neighborhood scaled (such as small stores, service centers, churches). Even a mix of residential products for different markets will have their appropriateness based on the community character and demand.

#### Challenges:

- Not all land owners in a given area slated for development wish to do so when the opportunity is presented; nor do land owners or developers in an area slated for the more rural community character choose to forgo development rights and economic returns to support those uses being located elsewhere.
- Larger scale uses must be buffered in a way to not adversely affect surrounding properties. Smaller scale community mixed-uses will need to be blended through architecture, landscaping and site controls for compatibility on a neighborhood or community scale.

### OBJECTIVE 5.D

Encourage land to be reserved for schools within or adjacent to subdivisions in high growth areas

#### Strategy

Location of schools is a source of debate in virtually every community in the state. Rutherford County, due to its success and growth, has not escaped these controversies. It should be noted, however, that the County has a professionally staffed Planning/Engineering office, as well as a competent school board and staff. The plan highly encourages a continual interaction between these departments through cooperative collaboration. Planning should be a shared process that identifies potential school sites and their subsequent impacts to the neighborhoods and communities. Having proposed school sites mapped, in general, would preclude many of the reactionary discussions that occur when a development or school site is proposed without the benefit of coordination.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### Challenges:

- Identifying possible school sites can cause speculative development and possible negative reactions from private landowners. The funding of schools and school facilities would affect the master plan and could create competition among communities, not unlike current processes.
- School sites are best located in geographically logical locations; however, infrastructure restrictions or limitations sometimes force school sites to be in less than ideal demographic locations.

### Goal Statement 7:

Provide transportation options:

#### OBJECTIVE 7.A

Expand the non-motorized transportation routes in all county municipalities and other parts of the county;

#### OBJECTIVE 7.E

Review right-of-way policies to facilitate all appropriate modes of transportation

#### Strategy

Planning for transportation has traditionally involved the evaluation of functional capacity and conditions of roadways. Transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of transportation received minor attention, if at all. In recent years, this mindset has changed for a variety of reasons. There is recognition that rights-of-way are confined in many instances, and very expensive in others. Air quality concerns now play a larger role in highway expansion plans, and a concern among many for more physically-active transportation options add to the study of non-motorized options. The incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian transportation options is an amenity in many new developments, but these options are fast becoming necessary in congested areas. The Nashville

Area Metropolitan Planning Organization completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Study in 2009 that is ground-breaking in its scale, and includes recommendations for increasing such travel ways in Rutherford County and larger MPO area. Elsewhere in this plan are recommendations for inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian planning to increase the connections between and within communities. These travel ways are also important to address transportation needs themselves. The plan recommends that consideration be given to non-motorized transportation options in future transportation plans, including local Major Thoroughfare Plans. The Rutherford County Planning Commission should consider the use of "Complete Street" design that incorporates all modes of travel within right-of-way planning. Future subdivision and zoning regulations should consider these needs in setting right-of-way dedication requirements, in the review of roadway capacities, and regulations dealing with building setbacks and sidewalk requirements.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### Challenges:

- Sidewalk, bicycle and pedestrian pathways add to development costs and can receive resistance from the development community.
- Achieving an appropriate density of uses that makes non-motorized travel feasible for other than recreation purposes.

### OBJECTIVE 7.B

Participate in efforts to evaluate commuter rail between the county and downtown Nashville

#### Strategy

The Nashville metropolitan region has grown tremendously in the last few decades, however, transportation options have remained limited. Automobile travel remains the most popular travel option by far. Until 2008, when the first commuter rail service (Music City Star) was initiated between downtown Nashville and points east into Wilson County, commuters from outside Davidson County had no options other than automobiles and limited bus service for their daily commute. Projections by the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, a regional transportation planning agency serving Rutherford and some portion of 6 other Middle Tennessee counties, show that both the I-24 corridor connecting Rutherford and Davidson Counties, and the parallel US 70S (Murfreesboro Road/Old Nashville Highway) corridor, will be among the most congested in the region. A 2007 Southeast Corridor High-Performance Transit Alternatives Study outlined the potential transit systems that could be built in the corridor. At the time, commuter rail was not seen as the most viable option, primarily due to cost factors. However,

in the last few years, funding options have increased with new legislative authorities given to local governments, and the recent fluctuations in oil and gas prices have provided renewed interest in commuter rail. Growth projections for Rutherford County require that transit be a realistic option for travelers and commuters to Davidson and other counties. The plan recommends that Rutherford County continue to advocate for continued study and priority in transit planning and funding with the Nashville Area MPO and affected local governments. Rutherford County should lead discussions on how coordinating land use policy with LaVergne, Smyrna, and Murfreesboro can channel anticipated growth to support Transit Oriented Developments at or near likely stops. TODs are a cutting-edge development technique in Middle Tennessee and can provide differentiation between Rutherford County and other counties for marketing, business recruitment, and potential federal funding.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### Challenges:

- Commuter rail is a long-term option, so that developers and citizens must be well-engaged to support making short-term decisions that support the longer view.
- Market forces may not support TOD developments at the present, allowing continued scattered development that may not place Rutherford County in the strongest position to demonstrate the need for commuter rail.
- Short-term transit options, such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) may compete for funding over commuter rail.
- Continued lobbying by other areas of middle Tennessee will compete for planning funds.

### OBJECTIVE 7.C

Expand bus service to population centers within the county

#### Strategy

The growth in rural areas of Rutherford County has placed a strain on the local road system. Residents who work in Murfreesboro, Smyrna, LaVergne, or outside the County must drive private vehicles or carpool on an individual basis. Within Murfreesboro, the Rover bus system provides service locally, but only within the corporate limits. However, the system can be expanded to provide service where it is economically feasible to do so. The Centers concept proposed in this Comprehensive Plan lends itself very well to concentrated populations that could make rural bus routes feasible. The Plan recommends that Rutherford County discuss the feasibility of working with the Murfreesboro Rover system to provide bus service to rural centers. Future development regulations should be developed that can accommodate the necessary right-of-way and stops to support bus service.

#### Challenges:

- Achieving a sufficient concentration of population to make a new bus route feasible

- Achieving sufficient potential ridership among population centers

### OBJECTIVE 7.D

Continue to administer policies to ensure adequate right-of-way is dedicated when development takes place adjacent to routes to be upgraded

#### Strategy

Whether to accommodate additional travel lanes, or make safety improvements to shoulders and curbs, or to provide room for bicycle and transit vehicles, obtaining adequate right-of-way is essential to all transportation projects. Therefore, obtaining right-of-way in the most cost-effective manner is also imperative to preserve limited funding for planning and implementation rather than purchasing land and buildings. The subdivision regulation process contains provisions for identifying future right-of-way needs, and requiring landowners and/or developers to dedicate appropriate right-of-way under certain development conditions. The needed right-of-way is based on the county's Major Thoroughfare Plan designations and accompanying standards in the subdivision regulations. If the property is not dedicated before new development takes place, the



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

alternative is to purchase the land or, even more costly and disruptive, to take the property under eminent domain. The plan recommends that the right-of-way dedication process should continue with regular reviews of the MTP and subdivision regulations, and should remain a part of the development process. Future roadway needs to be evaluated should include bicycle, pedestrian and transit needs, along with requirements for acceleration and deceleration lanes, and additional travel lanes that are publicly discussed as part of the MTP update process.

### Challenges:

- Land dedicated to right-of-way is land that cannot be included in development calculations, and is therefore costly to developers and landowners.
- Funding of transportation improvements or enhancements should be well-timed with right-of-way needs.
- Balancing motorized and non-motorized transportation needs can be difficult.

### OBJECTIVE 7.F

Limit development along roads with an inadequate level of service until funds or improvements to roads are in place

### OBJECTIVE 7.G

Select major transportation corridor for development as Gateway Districts into communities

#### Strategy

Rutherford County citizens have expressed their desire to preserve and enhance communities within their borders. An important feature of this community-building effort is incorporating transportation corridors as part of the fabric of a community, helping provide the sense of place that is so important. A pilot project is proposed to select a major corridor, such as Highway 99 between Eagleville and Murfreesboro, for development as a "Gateway" that connects these communities, and enhances the Rural Center proposed for Rockvale. Through careful development regulations, the relationship of buildings to streets, the preservation of scenic and cultural features, limitations on signage, and access management can be coordinated to highlight the urban, suburban, and rural characteristics of this part of the County and the highway itself. These actions help reinforce the centers and nodes, balance development and

preservation along the corridor, and lend to a well-planned ambiance intended to enhance property values and development potential. The plan recommends that a corridor such as Highway 99 be identified as a pilot Gateway Corridor, that is developed through a specific corridor management plan, coordinated with similar goals and policies in this Comprehensive Plan. A corridor overlay should be developed that brings together access management, careful selection of building setbacks and uses, signage standards, right-of-way and mobility options into a single development scenario. Coordination with the development community is essential, as are policies that carefully target infrastructure and services to build up the Centers, and preserve the rural portion of the highway, while allowing appropriate development along the suburban portion of the highway.



## C. TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY ISSUES

### Challenges:

- Establishing measurements or metrics to determine the success of the Gateway Corridor.
- Coordination among development regulations can be challenging (subdivision and access requirements, sign regulations, zoning bulk standards).
- Development pressure to continue “strip” development with many access points will defeat the purpose of the Corridor.



## D. FACILITIES & SERVICES

### Goal Statement 8:

Provide infrastructure that efficiently delivers necessary service in designated growth areas:

#### OBJECTIVE 8.A

Adopt facility service requirements to apportion the cost of growth appropriately;

#### OBJECTIVE 8.B

Implement water-saving requirements in zoning and building codes; and

#### Strategy

The Comprehensive Plan, through its processes, has demonstrated that one of the primary factors affecting growth in Rutherford County will be water and sewer availability. To that end, extensive coordination regarding County sanitary sewer systems and water availability will be key to providing the housing and business demands that the projected population increase will bring.

The Plan recommends a study to analyze the feasibility of County wide sanitary sewer systems, as well as review the use of private and/or public alternative systems, such as STEP systems and spray irrigation alternatives. These will need to be studied for appropriateness of the different development areas and soil

conditions as well as development types in the County. Capital investment programs necessary to fund these infrastructure upgrades should be prioritized to meet the County's goals and anticipated development.

The Plan recommends the County also create a task force to identify water services and improvements that will be necessary to meet future potable and fire protection demands. It is recommended that private developments, prior to final approvals, demonstrate adequate domestic and fire flows or alternative codes compliant systems so as not to burden existing or inadequate systems. Additionally, there are many water saving programs and building tools that are being developed and promoted through different avenues. Some of these are being written into building codes and landscaping standards. Projects that promote sustainability, such as LEED Certification or other green-building programs, offer a variety of tools that promote water savings within structures as well as in the landscape. These should be encouraged, and, in areas of the County with limited resources, required.

#### Challenges:

- The costs of traditional sanitary systems can be prohibitive and the continued maintenance of alternative systems can present their own challenges. The County needs to continually meet and coordinate with the respective utility providers.
- It can be difficult to have coordinated efforts on the various agency levels, including County engineering and the numerous utility providers.
- Developing building codes that do not cause extra costs and force development to occur in other jurisdictions, but still adequately protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Fire protection will be a crucial element in the future with limited water resources. Coordination with volunteer department fire marshals, building codes officials, engineering, and utility providers can be difficult and unwieldy.
- Devising a fair means of assessing impact or development fees for future developments that fund the real burden of associated impacts, while not discouraging developments in the County that would realize economic or community benefit. Often, jurisdictions try to fix "past sins" with proposed developments. Conversely, infrastructure investments that benefit landowners should be assessed accordingly (County adding



## D. FACILITIES & SERVICES

value to properties should be recognized).

- Capital investment programs necessary to fund infrastructure upgrades and expansions will be challenged just to address existing problems while trying to anticipate development impacts.

### Goal Statement 9:

Maintain and enhance community and regional partnerships:

#### OBJECTIVE 9.A

Formalize cooperative land use and development planning discussions with county municipalities;

#### OBJECTIVE 9.B

Seek opportunities to consolidate services through intergovernmental agreements;

#### OBJECTIVE 9.C

Seek a more collaborative working relationship between the School Board and the County Commission, and other municipalities; and

#### OBJECTIVE 9.D

Collaborate with county municipalities in planning for development within Urban Growth Boundaries.

#### Strategy

The Plan, through these various goal statements, recognizes that different bodies have their respective responsibilities and functions. These include the planning and engineering department, road commission, school board and various utility providers, among others. Routine interagency cooperation is critical to having all the elements that affect the built environment and

natural areas, as varied and complex as Rutherford County, remain successful.

The Plan recognizes past successful collaborations between the County and adjacent cities in developing thoroughfare plans and Urban Growth Boundaries. This momentum should be continued to land use policies, parks and recreation, and school sites, among other focuses. The coordination of different agencies in a developing and growing County can enhance the quality of life and project unified priorities among the different departments, thereby making decisions for public officials more successful. Examples include locating future community facilities, such as sheriff substation, EMS, or fire hall in a rural or village center to further increase civic presence and provide better response time. Greenways and trails could be studied to link nodes, schools, and community facilities with connections to existing and proposed municipal trails. Priorities would be in the Urban Growth Boundaries and suburban character areas.

The Plan recognizes that the County has no parks and recreation department and highly recommends that a department is



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created and/or some form of park commission should be established and perpetuated. At the very least, a permanently dedicated position in the Planning and Engineering Department would help to oversee proposed park and recreation facilities and, once developed, maintenance.

### Challenges:

- The large number of different agencies affecting the growth character of Rutherford County can be daunting. All the different county departments, service providers (fire, sheriff, EMS), and utility providers are sometimes difficult to bring together and gain consensus. Further, all of these functions within the adjacent municipalities just multiplies difficulties.
- Different departments and agencies will have different priorities and can also have “turf wars” if a cooperative spirit is not maintained.

### Goal Statement 10:

Ensure county development-decision making is transparent, fair and accountable to residents and taxpayers:

#### OBJECTIVE 10.A

Expand use of internet-based tools for robust civic engagement; and

#### OBJECTIVE 10.B

Establish continuing education for Planning Commission members, Board of Zoning Appeals members, and County Commissioners.

### Strategy

Rutherford County has successfully used the Internet and county web pages to facilitate interactive engagement and participation, as well as informative functions from the different departments. It would be anticipated that this would only improve as the technology and personnel are available to facilitate this goal. In an area as large as Rutherford County, having available on-line services can reduce trips and lead to greater community participation and awareness.

While Planning Commission members and Board of Zoning Appeals members are required by state law to have continuing education, it should be seen as an opportunity to promote and equip those decision-makers, as well as County Commissioners,

to fulfill the functions outlined in the plan. Additionally, workshops should be held with public hearings on a regular basis that addresses growth issues and revisits the comprehensive Plan. This keeps the plan a living document; continually being updated with citizen input. This also reduces the amount of negative, reactionary public hearings at rezoning and development proposals. The more successfully that public input is advertised and celebrated; the more participation and sense of ownership increase.

### Challenges:

- Keeping County information services simple and easy to use can be difficult given the varied ages and abilities of the citizens.
- Routine public hearings for Planning and visioning purposes can be poorly attended if there is no “flash-point” issue and vocal minorities can easily sway the appearance of public consensus.
- Planning Commission, County Commission and BZA members can be frustrated and disheartened with lack of achievable short-term and long-term goals. Continuing education can sometimes be irrelevant to objectives and policies.

