



Franklin  
County's

LAND DEVELOPMENT  
ORDINANCE UPDATE

# Interim Report

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presented to the  
Franklin County  
Board of Supervisors  
May 18, 2010



**Franklin  
County's**

**LAND DEVELOPMENT  
ORDINANCE UPDATE**

The Department of Planning & Community Development is pleased to present this Interim Report to the Board of Supervisors regarding the update of Franklin County's Land Development ordinances.

This Interim Report highlights significant progress through May 18, 2010.



## The Project

Franklin County, Virginia, is currently updating its code requirements related to land use and development – commonly known as the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances. These ordinances help to guide growth and development by governing how land is used, arranged, and built upon. The ordinances play a vital role in protecting property rights by mitigating the potential impacts of development, and by establishing clear expectations for investment decisions.

The process of updating Franklin County's land development ordinances will take approximately two years, with intense public input and in-depth analysis of various growth management strategies.

## Background

Franklin County's current system of land development regulation dates to the adoption of the Subdivision Ordinance in 1979. The PUD Ordinance was adopted in 1981 to promote the creative design of large-scale developments. The County adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1988.; zoning currently applies to about half of the land area of the County. These land development ordinances have been amended over the years, and are now the subject of a comprehensive review.

## Project Scope

The Land Development Ordinance Update consists of six phases or "tasks."

1. Project Initiation: seeks to identify critical issues, and involves the formation of a Technical Advisory Committee to help review draft code language and other project assumptions.
2. Demand/Capacity Analysis: uses GIS modeling to understand patterns of development across the County. Includes an analysis of land availability, market demand, and the effects of regulation under various growth scenarios.
3. Diagnosis: explores the ways in which existing regulations meet, or fail to meet, the demand for development. Establishes a framework for how new regulations should relate to demand and land capacity.
4. Public Outreach: uses a variety of approaches to maximize public input. Meetings will be held in all parts of the County, and will include multiple ways for citizens to learn and become involved.
5. Recommendations: the consultants will offer a series of recommendations based on best practices and reflecting the County's unique character.
6. Draft Ordinance Language: Planning staff will write the ordinance, with input and guidance from the consultants.

## Project Schedule

Task #	2009		2010				2011		Task Status
	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	
1. Project Initiation	■	■							Completed
2. Demand/Capacity Analysis		■	■						Completed
3. Diagnosis		■	■	■					In Progress
4. Public Outreach			■	■					In Progress
5. Recommendations				■	■				<i>Expected July 2010</i>
6. Draft Ordinance Language					■	■	■	■	<i>July 2010 through June 2011</i>

### Task 1 – summary of actions

- Project scope developed by staff, PC & BOS, April 2009
- Proposals from planning consultants received, May 2009
- Planning consultants selected, June 2009
- Consultants conduct first community visit, August 2009
- Project “kick-off” meetings with BOS & PC, August 2009
- BOS, PC agree to “geography-specific” approach, August 2009
- BOS appoints Technical Advisory Committee, November 2009

### Task 2 – summary of actions

- Staff begins compiling demographic information, October 2009
- GIS data collected for Demand/Capacity model, October 2009
- Staff, consultants begin building GIS model, November 2009
- Technical Advisory Committee's first meeting, January 2010
- TAC assesses future residential demand, February 2010
- TAC assesses land suitability & desirability, March 2010
- Staff completes Demand/Capacity mapping, April 2010

### Task 3 – summary of actions

- Consultants and staff review existing codes & plans; consider alternative regulatory approaches; August - September 2009
- TAC explores “geography-specific” approach to land development regulation, with an emphasis on geographic context, developmental opportunities and constraints (i.e. land suitability and desirability), and the degree of local support for various regulatory approaches; January – March 2010.
- Staff completes Demand/Capacity mapping, illustrating common themes and indicating areas of the County where various regulatory techniques may be appropriate; April 2010.

### Task 4 – summary of actions

- Staff launches project newsletter (“The Toolkit”), August 2009
- Staff creates project website, September 2009  
[www.franklincountyplanning.org](http://www.franklincountyplanning.org)
- Staff discusses project with local civic organizations, including Homebuilders Association, Rotary Club, and Sierra Club.
- Staff, consultants & TAC develop meeting format and strategy for public outreach; meetings to be held in each Magisterial District in late Spring 2010.

## Task 1: Project Initiation

### Consulting team selected to guide project

In June 2009, Franklin County selected the consulting team of Clarion Associates, McBride Dale Clarion, and Stone Engineering to help guide the Land Development Ordinance Update. The consultants provide significant experience in land use planning, growth management, quantitative analysis, and ordinance development.

The consultants are helping to identify alternative regulatory approaches, based on a Demand and Capacity model for future growth and development in Franklin County. Although the County's Planning staff will actually write the ordinance, the consultants will offer valuable insights regarding ordinance structure and innovative planning techniques.



**Roger Waldon, FAICP**  
Clarion Associates  
Chapel Hill, NC

Roger Waldon is a Principal in Clarion's Chapel Hill office. Mr. Waldon served as Planning Director for the Town of Chapel Hill for 21 years, directing the Town's comprehensive planning, ordinance writing, and development review functions. He has prepared growth management strategies for Hanover County and Fredericksburg, VA; Hillsborough, Union County, Johnston County, and Iredell County, NC; Rock Hill and Beaufort County, SC; and Tupelo, MS. He has developed neighborhood plans in Chapel Hill and Wake Forest, NC. Mr. Waldon is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and author of *Planners and Politics*. He is a frequent speaker at state and national planning conferences.



**C. Gregory Dale, FAICP**  
McBride Dale Clarion  
Cincinnati, OH

C. Gregory Dale, FAICP, is a founding Principal with McBride Dale Clarion in Cincinnati, Ohio. Mr. Dale has extensive experience in planning and development regulation. Mr. Dale manages planning projects and activities for public and private sector clients throughout the nation, including comprehensive plans, land use plans, and land use regulations. He is co-author of *The Citizen's Guide to Planning*, and is a frequent speaker at the national planning conferences. In 2004, Mr. Dale was inducted as a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners for individual achievement in the field of urban and rural planning at the American Planning Association's (APA) National Planning Conference in Washington, D.C.



**Dean Stone, PE, MS**  
Stone Engineering  
Rocky Mount, VA

Dean Stone, P.E., M.S., is a native of Franklin County. He received his B.S. and MS in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech. Stone Engineering was established in 1998 to provide civil engineering services to the Franklin County area. Since 1998, the firm has expanded to serve not only Franklin County, but all adjoining counties including Bedford, Henry, Roanoke, Pittsylvania, and Patrick counties. Mr. Stone and his firm have designed subdivisions and public roadways, developed site plans for commercial and industrial development, designed water supply and sewer systems, and developed a variety of environmental management plans for facilities in Virginia and North Carolina.



**Craig Richardson**  
Clarion Associates  
Chapel Hill, NC

Role: Ordinance language development



**Chad Meadows, AICP**  
Clarion Associates  
Chapel Hill, NC

Role: Ordinance language development



**Leigh Anne King, AICP**  
Clarion Associates  
Chapel Hill, NC

Role: Public outreach facilitation

#### Franklin County Planning Staff:

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**Daniel Slone, Esq.**  
McGuireWoods  
Richmond, VA

Role: Legal review; "Smart Growth"



**Emily Crow, AICP**  
McBride Dale Clarion  
Cincinnati, OH

Role: GIS & demographic analysis

## Task 1: Project Initiation

### Project begins with BOS & PC kick-off meetings

The effort to update Franklin County's Land Development ordinances officially began in August 2009 with a visit by the project consulting team. The Board of Supervisors held a kick-off discussion with the project consultants on August 25, 2009, at the Franklin Center in downtown Rocky Mount.



The consulting team, consisting of Greg Dale of Cincinnati-based McBride Dale Clarion, Roger Waldon of Chapel Hill-based Clarion Associates, and Dean Stone of Rocky Mount-based Stone Engineering, met with the Planning Commission later that evening.

The Board and Planning Commission discussions focused on the identification of critical issues, strategies for public involvement, and innovative techniques for managing future growth and development. Decision-makers agreed that the updated Zoning and Subdivision ordinances should be easier to use, highly predictable, and tailored to address the specific needs of various areas within the County. Rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach, the new ordinances will recognize that different parts of the County experience different demands and pressures, and therefore require different and innovative approaches.

### Consultants tour Franklin County, offer initial observations

The consulting team conducted a tour of Franklin County in August 2009, offering early observations about the ways in which development codes can shape community character.

The team of Roger Waldon, Greg Dale, and Dean Stone toured the County in preparation for discussions with the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission.

The consultants visited each of the County's seven magisterial districts, taking time to observe significant development projects, visit local gathering places, and engage local citizens about their thoughts related to growth and development.

Among other things, the consultants noted the following:

- The entire County is already subject to some degree of regulation, although the nature and extent of control varies from place to place.
- People in different parts of the County have varying expectations. Generally, residents of more densely-populated areas look to development codes for protection against incompatible uses, while rural landowners rely on codes to ensure future land value.
- These interests are not mutually exclusive. Codes can be differentiated to recognize place-specific needs.

- Although the desire for regulation varies with geography, nearly everyone agrees that some protections are needed against high-impact "game-changers." The focus should be on determining acceptable levels of impact in each distinct area of the County.



*Roger Waldon, of consulting firm Clarion Associates, tours the Smith Mountain lake shoreline.*

## Task 1: Project Initiation

### Board appoints Technical Advisory Committee

In November 2009, the Board of Supervisors appointed a citizen advisory committee to assist in the technical aspects of code development. The committee consists of more than 40 citizens and stakeholders from all parts of the County, representing a range of personal and professional interests, including :

- Neighborhood / Residential
- Development / Real Estate
- Land Planning / Engineering
- Agricultural / Rural
- Environmental / Conservation

The Technical Advisory Committee serves as a sounding board for Planning staff and the project consultants. The TAC will help analyze assumptions about the County's future growth potential, and will offer constructive feedback on the implications of various regulatory techniques.

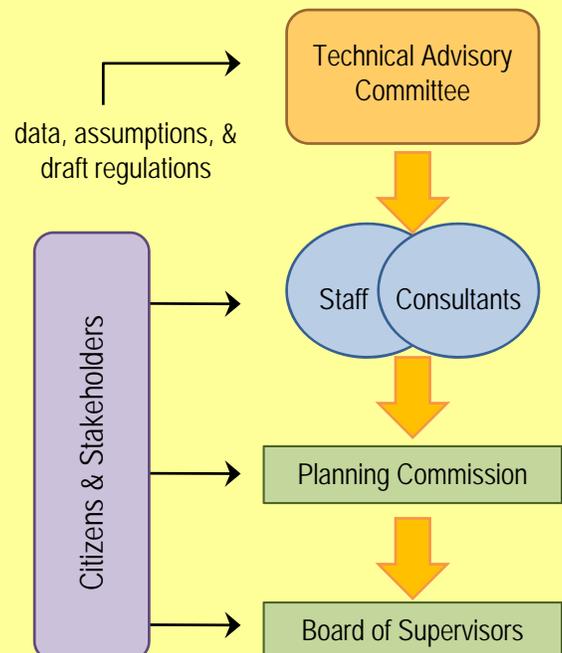


The Technical Advisory Committee held four meetings in the first quarter of 2010 to review and analyze assumptions about future residential demand and land capacity. The meetings were held at the Franklin Center in downtown Rocky Mount on the following dates: January 28<sup>th</sup>, February 4<sup>th</sup>, February 18<sup>th</sup>, and March 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Members of the Technical Advisory Committee

Russ Bassett	Brian Hamilton	Jim Miller
Deedee Bonderant	Holly Hartman	Paul Miller
Barry Bridges	Dan Hodges	Thad Montgomery
Charles Brown	Shirley Holland	Phil Nester
Bill Brush	Daphnie Jamison	Lucinda Scruggs
Tim Bird	David Johnson	Jim Seidelmann
Bob Camicia	Florella Johnson	Ron Shiflett
Sarah Capps	Phyllis Johnson	Stan Smith
Warren Chace	Charles Jordan	Lois Spencer
Steve Cuppy	Dan Krupp	Glen Stevens
Steve Dorr	Charlie Marshall	Gale Taylor
Erich Faber	Angie McGhee	Carolyn Thomas
Tom Fansler	Jim McKelvey	Brian Whitaker
Lars Hagen	Larry Meadors	Ron Willard II

### Roles & Responsibilities of the Technical Advisory Committee



## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### Overview of Demand/Capacity Methodology

Franklin County's Land Development ordinances play an important role in directing growth and arranging development. The ordinances tell us how much development is possible or desirable in a given area, and how a given development should relate to its surrounding context.

Decisions regarding the direction and arrangement of growth should not be arbitrary. They should have some rational basis in the land's capacity to support such development. As stewards of the land, we need to take into account a range of impacts, including how the proposed development will affect the environment, transportation networks, public infrastructure, and the delivery of services.



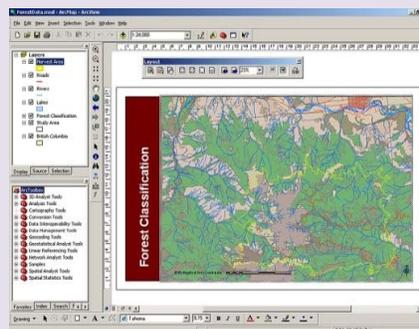
During the first quarter of 2010, the Technical Advisory Committee held a series of meetings to assess the demand for residential development over the next 20 years. The TAC sought to answer questions such as, "How many new residents are we likely to have? How many dwelling units will it take to house them? Where will these future residents want to live?"

To answer these questions, the TAC examined various data sources to extract population trends, then projected a range of population growth (high, medium, and low growth scenarios) through the year 2030. The TAC then reviewed assumptions about where this growth will go, based on a series of factors related to land suitability and desirability.

### Mapping the demand for development and the capacity of the land, using GIS

Using GIS and detailed demographic information, Franklin County hopes to anticipate the demand for new development in order to understand the implications for housing, services, jobs, and other community needs.

This analysis will help the County to draft land development regulations that more accurately reflect the future demand for development, while recognizing the limitations of the land. Once the new ordinances are in place, this GIS analysis will help decision makers better understand the cumulative effects and impacts of each development project.



Maps are essentially a collection of shapes – points (addresses), lines (roads), and polygons (parcels). GIS works by assigning data to each of these shapes, allowing the user to sort the shapes by data type or intensity.

The Technical Advisory Committee used detailed population forecasts to project the future demand for housing in Franklin County. The TAC also analyzed various geographic factors that influence the housing market.

Staff used these inputs to create a series of maps indicating areas of the County that are more likely, or less likely, to receive future residential growth. This distinction between areas of high-, moderate-, and low-growth potential points the way to a more tailored regulatory approach, with ordinances better reflecting real-world demand.

## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

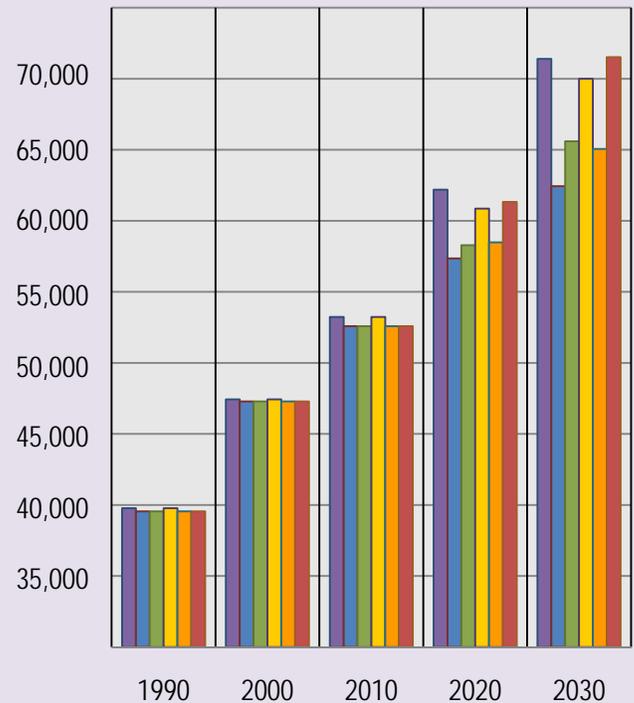
### Anticipating Residential Demand

The Technical Advisory Committee began with an analysis of future residential demand, based on various population projections for Franklin County through the year 2030. The TAC compared six different data sources, including:

- projection prepared by the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC)
- projection prepared by Woods & Poole Inc. (W&P)
- projection based on the last 10 years of growth in Franklin County
- projection based on the last 40 years of growth in Franklin County
- VEC projection using Franklin County as a % of the Roanoke region
- W&P projection using Franklin County as a % of the Roanoke region

Based on the most conservative population projection, Franklin County can expect about 10,000 new residents over the next 20 years, and would need an additional **4,583** dwelling units to accommodate these new residents.

Based on the most optimistic population projection, Franklin County can expect about 19,000 new residents over the next 20 years, and would need an additional **8,648** dwelling units.



### Diverging Population Projections for Franklin County, 2010 to 2030

Method of Population Projection	2030 Population	Average annual % change	# of new residents over next 20 years	# additional dwelling units needed		
Straight-line projection, 40-year annual average (1.55%)	71,522	1.55 %	18,940	<b>8,648</b>	Highest	
Direct source, Woods & Poole projection	71,395	1.48 %	18,166	<b>8,295</b>	↑ ↓	
As % of Roanoke region, using Woods & Poole projection	69,992	1.43 %	17,410	<b>7,950</b>		
As % of Roanoke region, using VEC projection	65,593	1.11 %	13,011	<b>5,941</b>		
Straight-line projection, 10-year annual average (1.07%)	65,056	1.07 %	12,474	<b>5,696</b>		
Direct source, Virginia Employment Com. projection	62,443	0.86 %	10,037	<b>4,583</b>		Lowest

## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### TAC conclusions regarding Residential Demand

After careful review of the data, the Technical Advisory Committee concluded that the standard statistical methods for projecting future population are too high, given the depth of the current economic recession. While opinions varied about the timing and strength of an eventual recovery, all agreed that the highest estimate – 19,000 new residents over the next 20 years – is well above realistic expectations.

The TAC focused instead on more plausible scenarios reflecting high, medium, and low annual growth rates. The TAC's highest growth rate of 1.2% per year would yield about 14,100 new residents over the next 20 years, requiring 6,469 new homes (or about 323 new homes per year.) The lowest scenario would yield about 6,700 new residents, requiring 3,052 new homes (or about 153 new homes per year.)

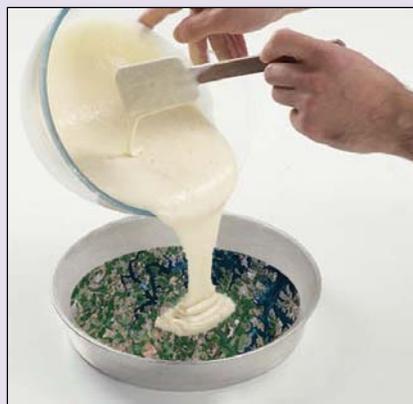
2010 Population	Average annual growth rate over next 20 years		2030 Population (Projected)	# of new residents over next 20 years	# of additional dwelling units needed over next 20 years	average # of new dwelling units needed per year
52,582	High	1.2 %	66,749	14,167	6,469	323
52,582	Medium	0.9 %	62,901	10,319	4,712	236
52,582	Low	0.6 %	59,265	6,683	3,052	153

### Land Suitability + Land Desirability = Land Capacity

Having established a realistic range of future population growth, the Technical Advisory Committee began evaluating the growth potential of distinct regions within Franklin County.

Much like pouring batter into a cake pan, we can envision the wave of future residents pouring into the undeveloped landscape of Franklin County.

In this sense, we can think of the County as a container for residential demand. The TAC attempted to estimate the size, shape, and behavior of this container – in short, its capacity.



The land's capacity to accommodate future development can be evaluated using the following factors:

**1) Suitability** – the physical opportunities or constraints that determine how much development the land can support, and how costly it is to develop. Suitability also takes into account the community's values, such as which land characteristics should be protected or utilized.

**2) Desirability** – the market's perception of how valuable the land is based on its physical characteristics, access to infrastructure, convenience, and proximity to amenities. In real estate terms, it's all about "location, location, location."

## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### Variables affecting Residential Suitability

#### Septic Capacity

The Technical Advisory Committee began its examination of land suitability by assessing the septic capacity of various soil types in Franklin County. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, soils here are rated as "somewhat limited" or "very limited" in terms of their ability to accommodate septic waste, which in turn governs the potential density of residential development. For the purposes of this study, the TAC rated "somewhat limited soils" a score of (20) points, while "very limited" soils received (0) points.

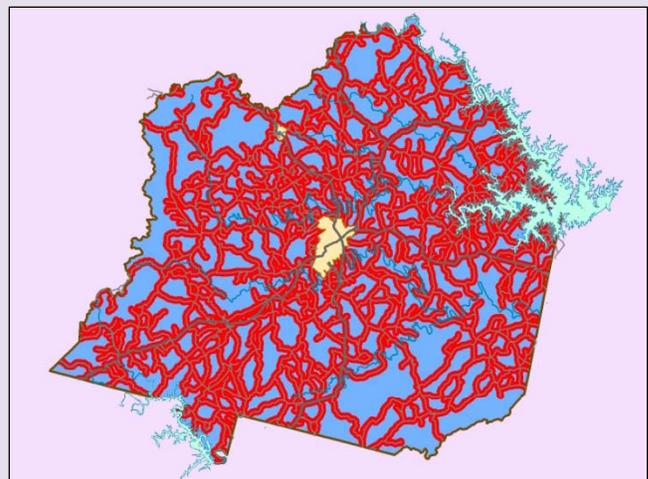
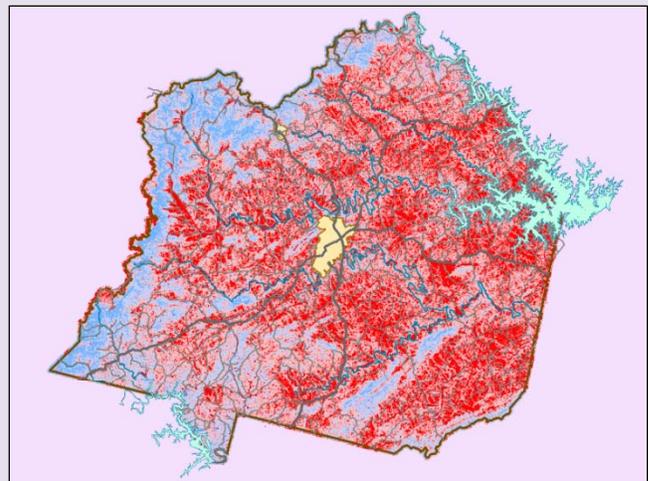
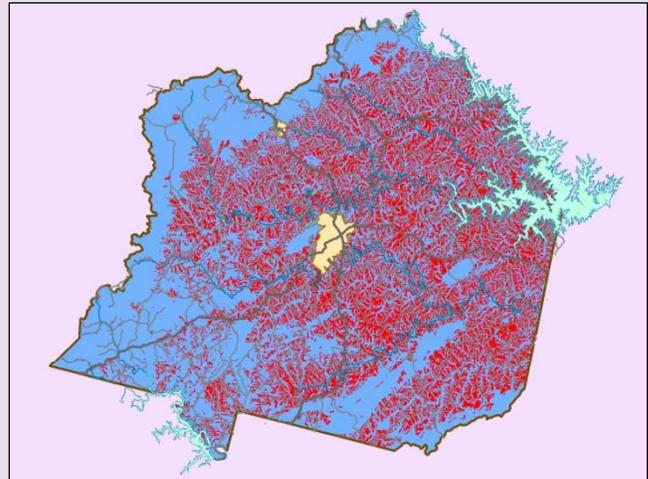
#### Topography

Given Franklin County's rolling terrain, the potential density of residential development is often a function of how steep the land lays. In general, steeper terrain makes it difficult to install new roads, accommodate septic drain fields, and find suitable housing sites. For the purposes of this study, the TAC rated land according to the following scale for topography:

- 0 – 2 % slopes = (20) points.
- 3 – 7 % slopes = (15) points
- 8 – 15 % slopes = (10) points
- 15- 25 % slopes = (5) points
- > 25 % slopes = (0) points

#### Access to Public Roads

Land suitability can also be understood in terms of the cost of developing the land. Infrastructure costs, such as road construction and the extension of utilities, are typically passed along to the end buyer. Areas with high infrastructure costs are therefore more expensive to develop, and can be considered less suitable. In Franklin County, proximity to the existing network of public roads – along with associated utilities – tends to lessen infrastructure costs, thereby making land more suitable for development. The TAC rated land within ¼ mile of existing public roads a score of (10) points; land without access to public roads received a score of (0).



## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### Variables affecting Residential Desirability

#### Commuting Patterns

The Technical Advisory Committee began its examination of land desirability by assessing commuting patterns to major areas of employment (generally, Roanoke and Rocky Mount.) The TAC rated land based on the following commute times:

- within 20 min. of Roanoke *and* 10 min. of Rocky Mount = (20) points
- within 20 min. of Roanoke *or* 10 min. of Rocky Mount = (15) points
- within 40 min. of Roanoke *and* 20 min. of Rocky Mount = (10) points
- within 40 min. of Roanoke *or* 20 min. of Rocky Mount = (5) points
- more than 40 min. to Roanoke *and* 20 min. to Rocky Mount = (0) points

#### Urban Amenities

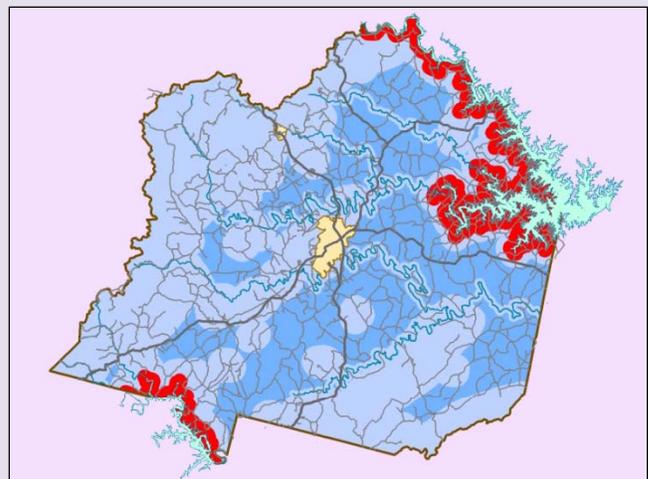
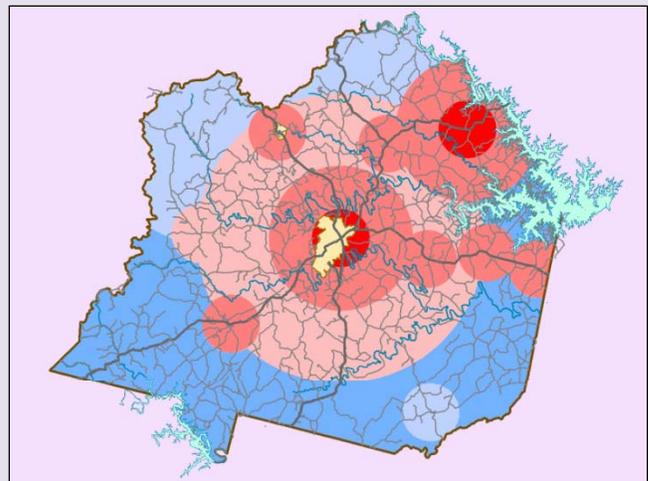
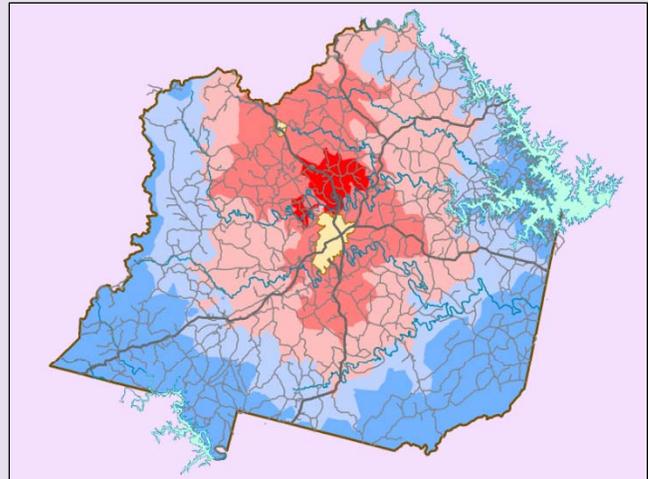
Although many new residents choose Franklin County in order to get away from urban pressures, the market for residential land is still influenced by proximity to urban amenities such as shopping, recreation, culture, public services, and public safety resources. The TAC rated land based on the following index of urban amenities:

- within 2 miles of Rocky Mount or Westlake = (20) points
- within 5 miles of Rocky Mount or Westlake = (15) points
- within 2 miles of Boones Mill, Ferrum, and most village centers = (15) pts
- within 10 miles of Rocky Mount or 2 miles of Calloway = (10) points
- within 2 miles of Snow Creek village center = (5) points
- within 20 miles of Roanoke = (5) points
- all others = (0) points

#### Natural Advantages

In the larger marketplace for residential land, many newcomers choose Franklin County for its scenic mountain beauty, rural character, and miles of waterfront shoreline. To the extent that new residents are looking for natural advantages in selecting home sites, the TAC rated land based on the following:

- within ¼ mile of Smith Mountain Lake = (10) points
- within ¼ mile of Philpott Lake = (10) points
- within ½ mile of Smith Mountain Lake = (5) points
- within ½ mile of Philpott Lake = (5) points
- within 1 mile of mountainous areas (>25% slope) = (5) points
- all others = (0) points



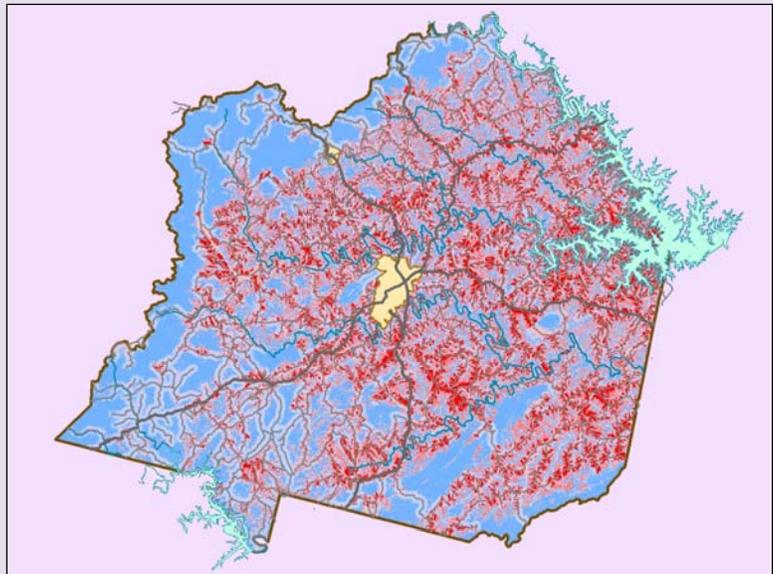
## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### Residential Suitability – composite

The Technical Advisory Committee's analysis of residential land suitability indicates a strong correlation between soil quality and slope, with areas of steeper slopes typically exhibiting the poorest soils for septic capacity, and flat lands generally exhibiting the best soils.

Areas of highest suitability are found in the central and eastern portions of the County. These areas also constitute prime lands for agriculture, highlighting the potential conflict between growing residential demand and the County's desire to preserve its best farm land.

Septic Capacity	20
Topography	20
Public Road Access	10
<hr/>	
Suitability Total:	50

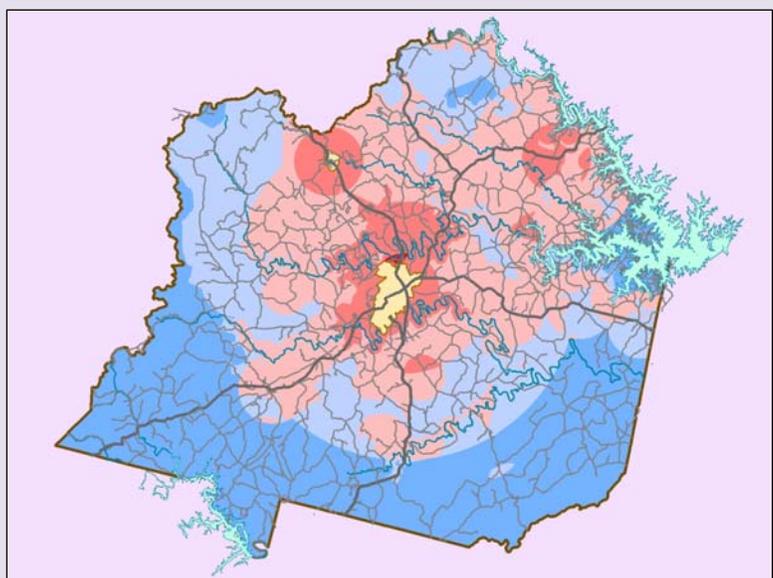


### Residential Desirability – composite

The Technical Advisory Committee's analysis of residential land desirability indicates a strong market preference for land in the northern half of the County, including areas around the Town of Rocky Mount, the village of Westlake, and along the northern sections of Rt. 220.

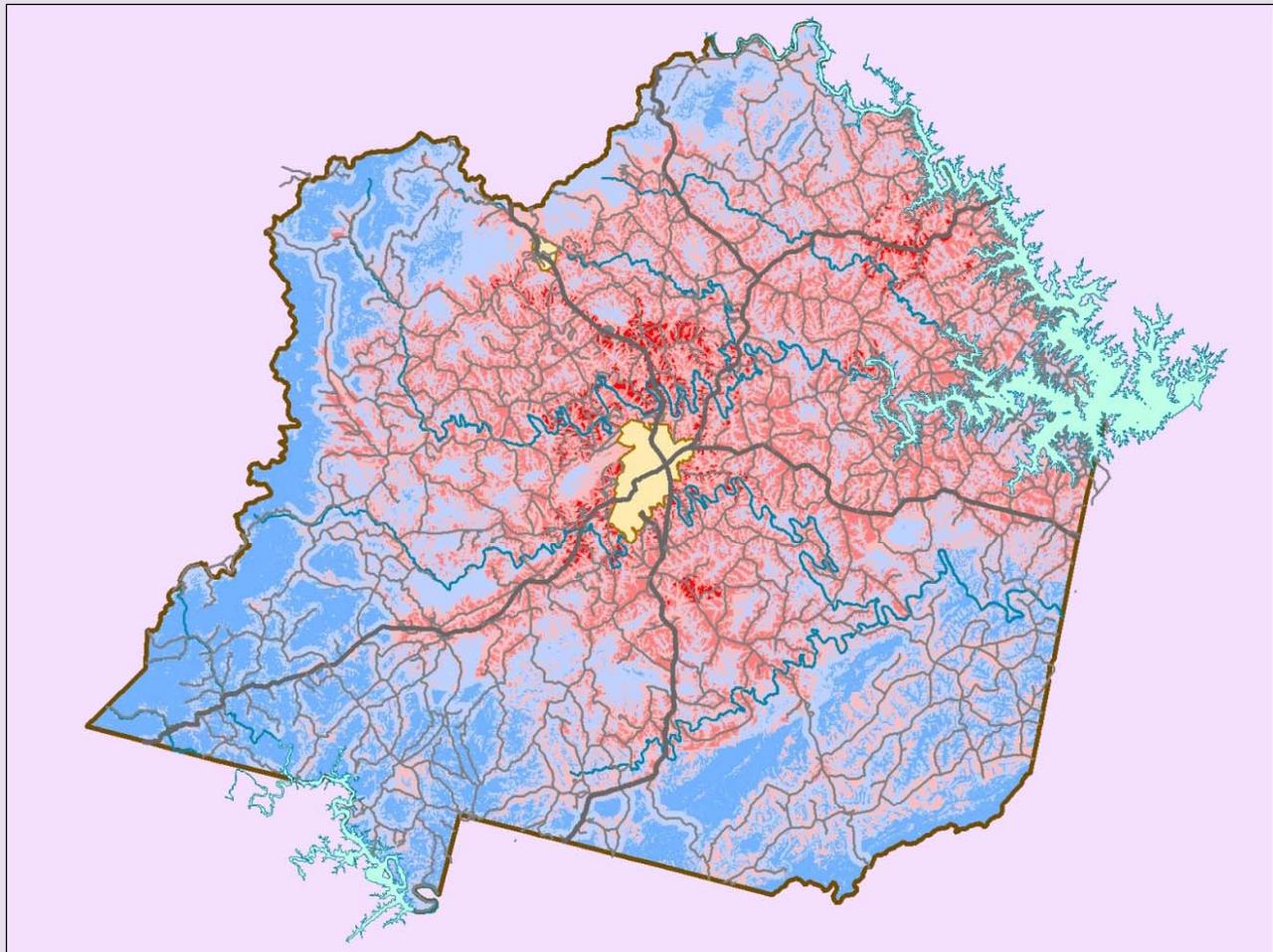
The study indicates very little demand for residential development in the southern half of the County. Although some newcomers may prefer the rural surroundings, the study suggests that the majority of new residents will seek more suburban areas.

Commuting Patterns	20
Urban Amenities	20
Natural Advantages	10
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Desirability Total:	50



## Task 2: Demand / Capacity Analysis

### Summary of Residential Land Capacity



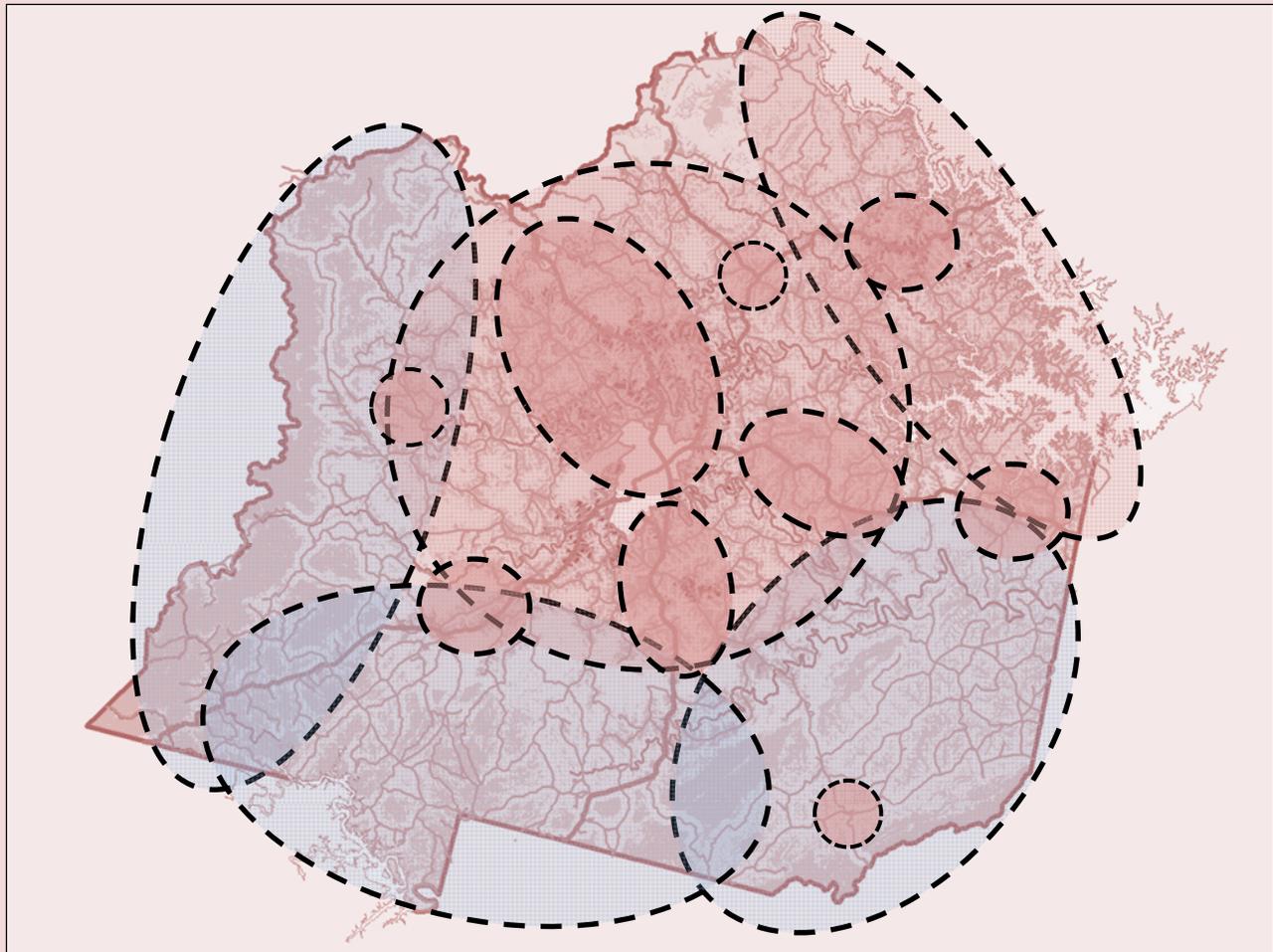
By adding together the composite scores for residential suitability and desirability, the study concluded with a final composite map of Residential Land Capacity. This map is meant to indicate areas that are more likely or less likely to receive future residential demand. In general, the areas with the highest potential for new residential development are located near the Town of Rocky Mount, the village of Westlake, and in the Wirtz area. In addition, areas around Boones Mill, Calloway, Ferrum, Burnt Chimney, Glade Hill, Union Hall, and Penhook are considered favorable for new development.

score	description	acreage	
 80 - 100	Highest residential potential	8,292	2%
 60 - 80	High residential potential	82,108	18%
 40 - 60	Moderate residential potential	143,021	31%
 20 - 40	Low residential potential	144,598	32%
 0 - 20	Lowest residential potential	77,074	17%

This map is not meant to indicate that areas with lower scores are undesirable, or will see no residential growth. Rather, it suggests that - in the marketplace for residential land - the majority of that demand will gravitate toward higher-scoring areas.

## Task 3: Diagnosis

## Geography-Specific Approach to Land Development Regulations



Early on in the Update process, the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission expressed a strong desire to achieve a more tailored set of regulations, recognizing the unique characteristics and needs in distinct areas of the County.

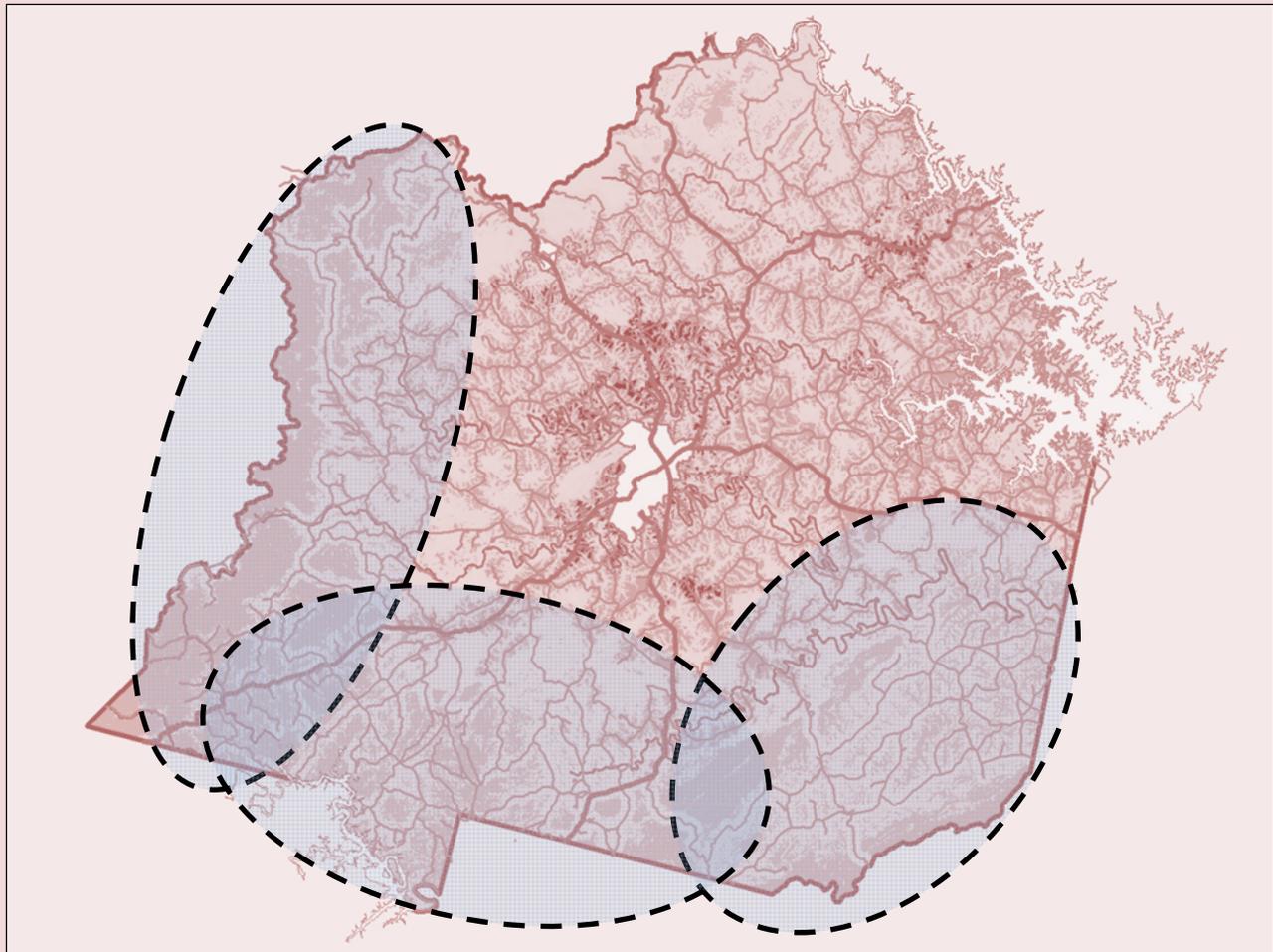
The Demand/Capacity analysis completed in Task 2 begins to point the way toward such a “geography-specific” approach. Areas with the highest residential growth potential could be treated distinct from areas with lower residential growth potential. Commercial nodes and village centers could have their own sets of regulations, in furtherance of a unique theme or identity.

The map above is meant to illustrate the concept of a “geography-specific” code. It does not imply an agreed-upon direction or arrangement for regulation.

Assuming that residential development in Franklin County typically occurs at a density of about one unit per acre, the Demand/Capacity analysis indicates that the County will need between 3,000 to 6,500 acres to support residential demand over the next 20 years. The Demand/Capacity model shows that there is ample “high-potential” land to accommodate this demand, suggesting “low-potential” areas should not experience much growth pressure.

## Task 3: Diagnosis

### Geography-Specific Approach: Agricultural, Conservation & Rural Residential Areas



#### **Agricultural, Conservation & Rural Residential Areas**

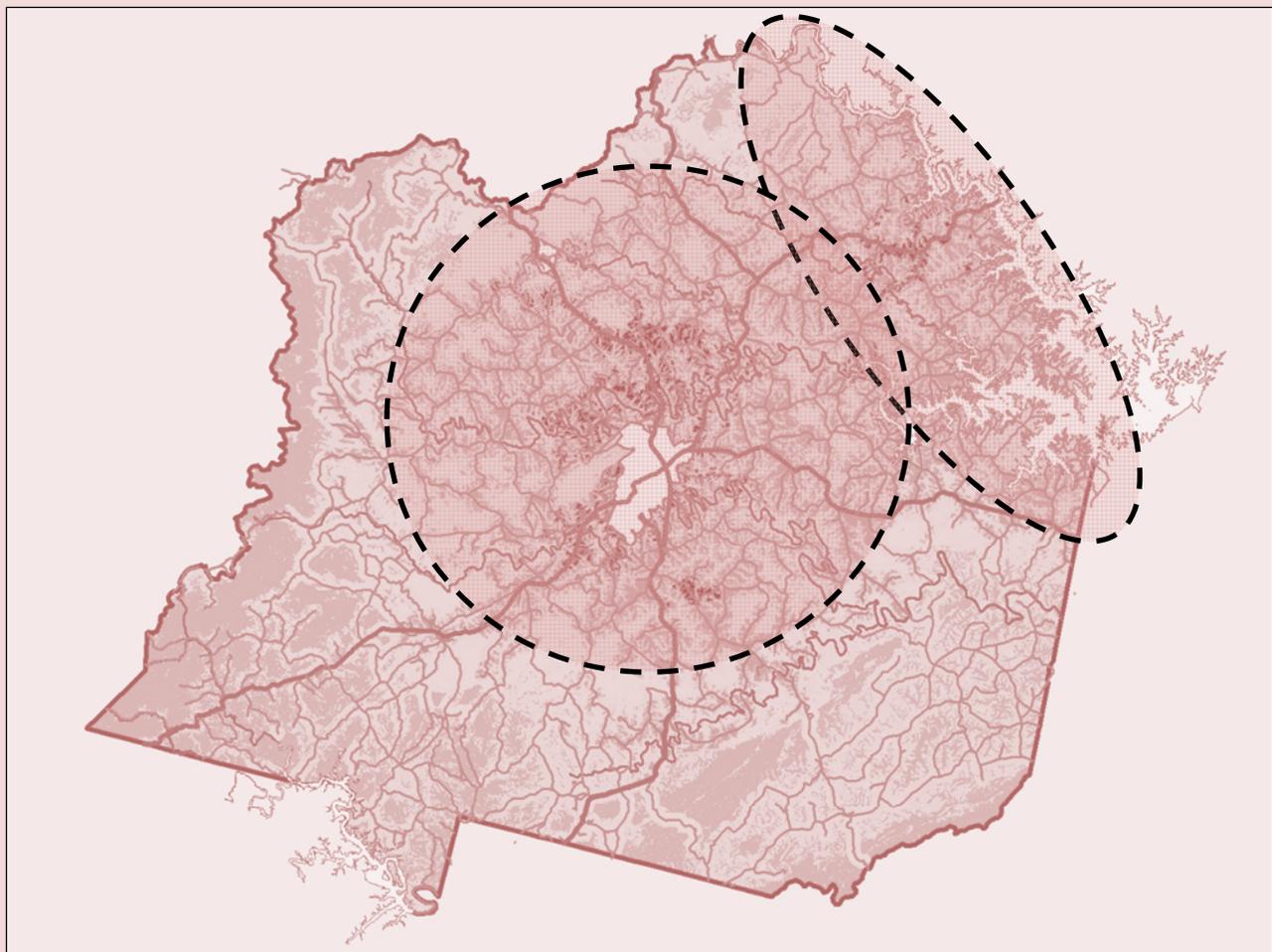
The Residential Demand analysis predicts a county-wide need for 153 to 323 new homes per year over the next 20 years. According to the Demand/Capacity model, a limited portion of this growth will occur in the southern and western areas of the County. New residential development in these areas is likely to follow the existing rural housing pattern, with low residential densities. Large-scale subdivisions are unlikely. Where new subdivisions do occur, they will tend to be remote, relatively small, and have little impact on the surrounding context.

Land development regulations in these areas should recognize and promote the compatible co-existence of a variety of uses, including agricultural, rural residential and small business uses. Residential density controls are generally unnecessary, since the demand for residential development does not appear to be significant in these areas (and thus will naturally produce a sparse development pattern.)

While minimal development controls are needed, residents in these areas have generally expressed a desire to control high-impact activities, such as industrial or large-scale commercial uses.

## Task 3: Diagnosis

### Geography-Specific Approach : Rural Residential & Suburban Residential Areas

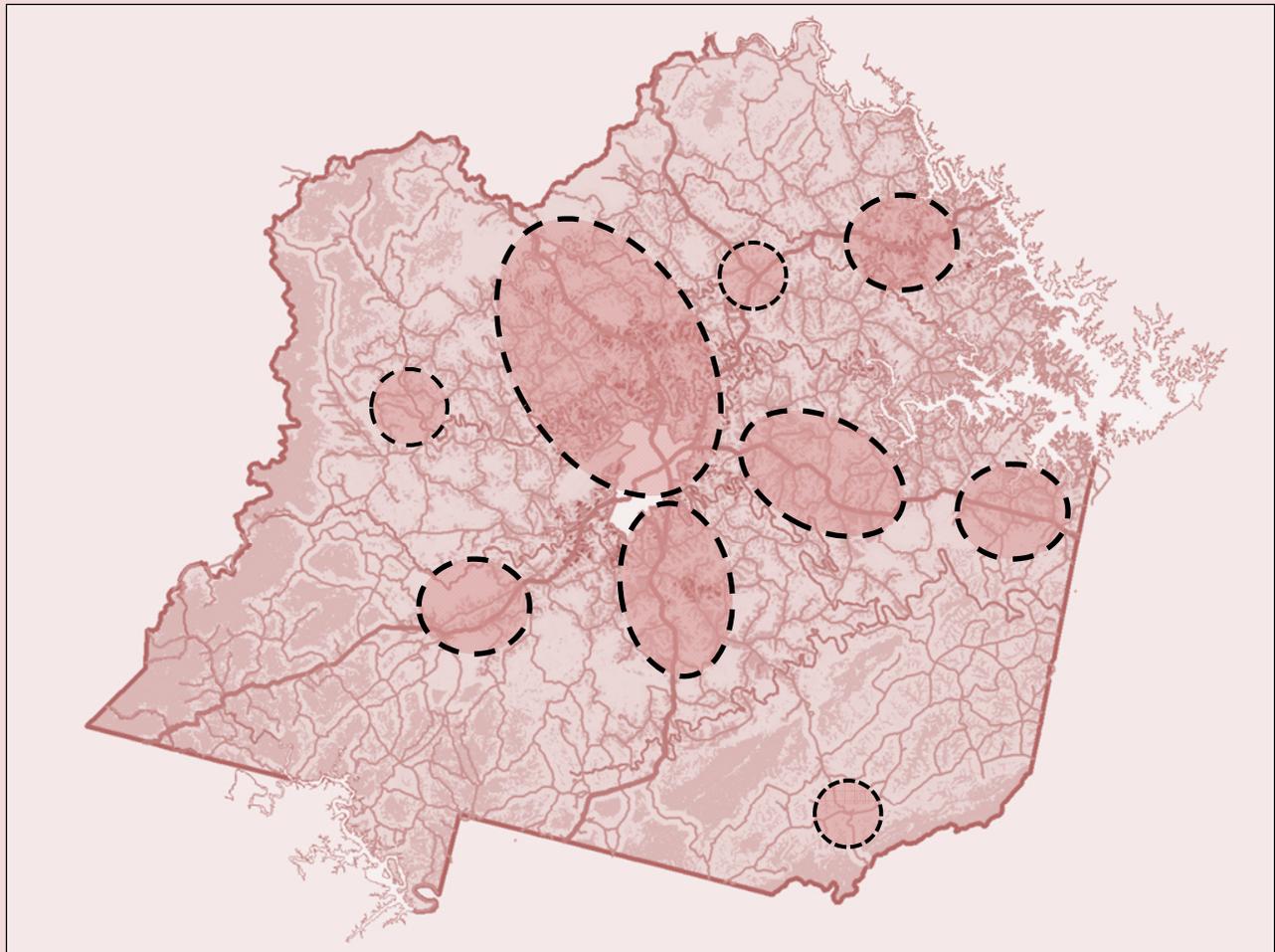


#### Rural Residential & Suburban Residential Areas

The Demand/Capacity model indicates that areas in the central and northern portions of the County, along with areas near Smith Mountain Lake, are positioned to receive the majority of residential growth over the next 20 years. These areas exhibit suitable soils, relatively flat terrain, good road networks, shorter commute times, and proximity to urban amenities. According to the model, these areas include nearly 100,000 acres of "high-potential" land – far more than will actually be needed to accommodate the next 20 years worth of residential growth.

Land development regulations in these areas should promote the continued existence of agricultural uses, but should also recognize that some agricultural land may be converted into residential subdivisions in the future. The focus should be on compatibility, scale, and impact on roads, schools, public services, and other public infrastructure.

Residents in these areas generally look to land development regulations to protect them from incompatible neighboring uses. Residential clustering may be an appropriate tool in these areas of the County.

**Task 3: Diagnosis****Geography-Specific Approach : Towns, Villages & Corridors****Towns, Villages & Corridors**

Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan calls for the development of unique town- and village-centers at historic gathering locations throughout the County. These could be promoted with individualized land development regulations, tailored to achieve a unique theme or market niche in each of the community nodes.

## Task 4: Public Outreach

### Upcoming Community Meetings

Planning staff and the project consulting team are preparing for an intensive public outreach campaign in June and July of 2010. The process will begin with a series of “open house” meetings in a central location, where citizens and stakeholders can drop by for informal one-on-one conversations with staff and consultants. The open house meetings are a chance for people to address specific concerns or ideas related to their own properties, neighborhoods, or communities. It is anticipated that the County will hold a series of open houses over the course of the same week, in order to accommodate citizens’ varied schedules.



Planning staff and the project consulting team will then travel around the County hosting public meetings in each of the seven Magisterial Districts. This is an opportunity to share with citizens at a local level the results of the Demand/Capacity analysis, and learn from people what they would like to achieve through the updated ordinances. Input gathered from these local meetings will help establish the framework for a “geography-specific” code.

Upon completion of the community meetings, the project consultants will facilitate a County-wide meeting in a central location to share their observations, test alternatives, and refine the geography-based approach.

### Meetings with local civic groups

Planning staff welcomes the opportunity to share news about the Update project with local neighborhood groups, civic groups, and professional organizations.

To date, staff has presented to the Roanoke Regional Home Builders Association, the Franklin County Rotary Club, and the Roanoke Valley Sierra Club.

Groups interested in learning more about the project may contact the Franklin County Planning Department at (540)483-3027, or by email at:

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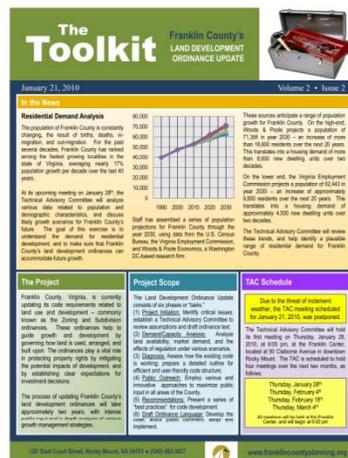
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### Land Development Ordinance Update website

Planning staff frequently posts information about the Update project on the Planning Department’s website at:

[www.franklincountyplanning.org](http://www.franklincountyplanning.org)

### The Toolkit



Be sure to visit the County’s website for recent issues of “The Toolkit,” a periodic newsletter with project features, schedules, and project status.