

Lancaster County Virginia



Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by the
Lancaster County Planning Commission

Adopted by the
Lancaster County Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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District 2	Mantua	Ernest W. Palin, Jr.
District 3	Bayside	Jason D. Bellows
District 4	Christ Church	William R. Lee
District 5	White Stone	William (Bill) Smith

The “Draft Plan” was prepared under the direction of the Lancaster County Planning Commission.

PLANNING COMMISSION

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At Large (BZA)		Steven M. Sorensen

County Staff principally responsible for updating the Plan

Don G. Gill	County Administrator
Olivia Hall	Director, Planning & Land Use
Crystal L. Whay	Clerk to the Board

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Northern Neck Planning District Commission Warsaw, VA

INTRODUCTION

CY 2024 UPDATE

LANCASTER COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Board of Supervisors adopted the current Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan on January 25, 2024. As required by §15.2-2230 of the Code of Virginia, a review was initiated in November 2018. It was widely recognized by government and interested members of the public that the pace of development had increased dramatically since the 2013 review, so an exhaustive overhaul of the current Comprehensive Plan was necessary at this time.

Given the fact that the economy has been thriving since the last update, it was determined that the issues raised during that review are still applicable today. Those issues centered on the following themes:

- Preserve rural character and heritage of the County
- Protect natural resources
- Control the character of development
- Preserve and increase public access to the water and to community facilities
- Seek a greater mix of housing with emphasis on more affordable workforce housing
- Improve the planning process
- Pursue economic development and increase the number of jobs with benefits and higher paying opportunities
- Expand recreational and health care services for young people and working age adults
- Improve educational and training opportunities

With these themes in mind, work began on the update. Chapters 1-6 were reviewed for consistency, currency, and quality of presentation. With the exception of public access to the water and economic development, which required greater attention, there was no attempt to make significant changes to these chapters. These chapters received an extensive review in 2016 by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the requirements of these agencies for a comprehensive plan were met. These chapters were and are intended to set the stage for the last chapter that guides future development.

Chapter 7 was the most significant modification to the existing comprehensive plan during the 2013 update and addressed the following:

- Citizen input not addressed in the previous chapters;
- Clearly designated primary and secondary growth areas;
- Limits of extension of municipal water and wastewater into the County;
- Specific direction for revising, modifying or adding to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances.
- Solar Ordinance was implemented.
- Short-Term Rental Ordinance was implemented.
- Lancaster 2035 Committee was created.

Summarizing, the objectives going into this review and update to the Comprehensive Plan were that it would more effectively deal with the changed environment created by a stagnant economy, and would more effectively guide decisions that must be made in the present or near term to achieve long range goals. The resulting vision guiding this update to the comprehensive plan and new or modified ordinances that will flow from it is as follows:

We envision Lancaster County as a highly desirable and economically successful rural region with all age groups represented, well known for its heritage, the arts, water and nature-based recreation facilities, tourism assets and health care communities. We have a vibrant school system which continually pursues excellence as an attraction for young families. The county is known for its focus on family values, a safe living environment, attractive and affordable living venues. It is business-friendly environment where entrepreneurial incentives perpetuate business retention and job creation. Volunteerism is abundant in all aspects of community life.

Lancaster County, a highly desirable place to live, work and play!