



Appendix D. 1981 Land Use Element Policies

1981 LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES

CATEGORY: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND ENERGY

- 1.1 Protect the following significant Public Interest Districts and Resource Protection Areas from adverse development impacts and require management of these areas in ways that will prevent internally generated negative impacts from affecting surrounding land:
- Wetlands;
 - Floodplains and alluvial soils;
 - Steep slopes;
 - Natural Areas, and wildlife corridors and habitats;
 - Historic and archaeological sites, including:
 - ◇ sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
 - ◇ sites included on the State's National Register study lists;
 - ◇ sites designated as a local historic landmark;
 - ◇ areas designated as a local historic district; and
 - ◇ areas identified as having a high potential for archaeological remains.
 - Publicly owned parkland (Eno River State Park);
 - Water reservoir buffer land (lands around University Lake and Cane Creek Reservoir);
 - Research oriental lands (Duke Forest); and
 - Lands placed by individual property owners into conservation easements.
- 1.2 Restrict or prohibit uses in flood hazard areas which are dangerous to health, safety and property due to flood heights or velocities. Protect the function of the floodway to provide passage for the 100-year flood without increasing flood levels upstream.
- 2.1 Maintain and protect land which contains valuable renewable resources such as productive agricultural areas, managed forest areas and potential reservoir sites by directing incompatible development away from these areas.



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- 2.2 Protect non-renewable resource lands from incompatible development and allow their use in a safe and reasonable manner according to performance standards designed to ensure a sufficient level of environmental protection.
- 3.1 Encourage site planning and design alternatives for building development which reduce the demand for artificial heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting.
- 3.2 Modify land development regulations to eliminate impediments to the introduction of more energy- efficient design and construction.
- 3.3 Encourage energy-efficient industry to locate or expand in the County in the appropriately designated land use plan areas.
- 3.4 Encourage the design, siting, construction and management of public buildings and public housing in a manner which conserves energy and/or uses non- polluting renewable energy sources when economically feasible.
- 3.5 Develop educational and public information programs to increase awareness of the potential for the design, construction and rehabilitation of commercial and residential structures which are energy efficient and/or use non-polluting renewable energy sources.
- 4.1 Facilitate the use of non-polluting renewable sources of energy by removing local administrative and legal barriers to their use.

CATEGORY: GROWTH

- 5.1 Utilize the following locational criteria to designate the most appropriate location for the various Land Use Plan Categories: natural environment constraints (land slope, hydrology, flora and fauna, soil conditions); availability of public services and utilities; transportation system access and capacity; impact on energy resources; existing land uses; presence of productive agricultural or forested land; appropriate population densities; and the presence of historic or cultural features.
- 5.2 Guide growth to achieve a maximum amount of infill development in the urbanizing areas of the County while maintaining the integrity of the existing and future open space and recreational system. The purpose of infill will be to minimize sprawl development and promote a more compact urban form. Secondary purposes will be to reduce transportation energy costs in addition to reducing public services costs. The Chapel Hill Township component of the Land Use Plan will be based on the assumption that 75% of the suitable vacant land in the Towns' existing urban area will be developed; however, the goal will be to achieve 100% infill.
- 5.3 Direct intensive land uses to existing urban areas designated Transition areas and away from areas which are suitable for



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- continued agricultural uses and which are protected as water supply watersheds and water quality critical areas.
- 5.4 Maintain the unique identity and character of rural crossroad communities in Orange County. Allow development at these locations which is appropriate for each community and will not exceed the capacity of the natural or man-made systems to support it. The following crossroad communities have locational attributes which make them suitable to accommodate new commercial and residential growth at a limited, community scale: Caldwell, Schley, the Village, Carr and White Cross.
- 5.5 Designate land in areas changing from rural to urban in character which could reasonably be developed to accommodate urban-type densities, but are currently not completely served by urban systems such as water and sewer lines, as Transition areas. These areas will be further classified into 10-Year and 20-Year Transition areas to reflect the most appropriate sequence of development as this area changes from rural to urban and services are extended.
- 5.6 Allocate development in areas designated Ten and Twenty Year Transition Areas proportional to land requirements projections.
- In Cheeks and Hillsborough Townships, the ratio of areas designated Ten and Twenty Year Transition to land requirements projections for residential acreage is approximately 2.5:1.
- In Eno Township, the ratio of areas designated Ten and Twenty Year Transition to land requirements projections for residential acreage is 4:1.
- In Chapel Hill Township, land designated Ten and Twenty Year Transition outside the planning jurisdictions can accommodate 25% of the projected population increase during the plan period.
- 5.7 Designate the rural, low density land surrounding the urban areas, but beyond the Transition Areas, as Rural Buffer. This area will remain rural in character, will not require urban services and will maintain farming or rural non-farm residential development as the most appropriate land use. Future consideration will be given to designating Rural Buffer areas around other Towns in the County.
- 5.8 Designate land in the rural areas suitable for low-density residential development, but not particularly suitable for agricultural uses, that is not dependent on urban services and to which urban services will not be extended within the next twenty years as Rural Residential.
- 5.9 Allocate development in areas designated Rural Residential proportional to land requirements projections for the respective townships.



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

In Little River, Cheeks, Hillsborough, Eno and Bingham Townships, the ratio of areas designated Rural Residential to land requirements projections for residential acreage is 2:1.

In Chapel Hill Township, land designated Rural Residential can accommodate 9% of the projected population increase during the plan period.

- 5.10 Designate land in areas where the prevailing land use activities consist of agriculture and forestry and which should continue in these uses as Agricultural Residential.
- 5.11 Designate activity nodes of various types and functions at the intersections of major arterials and/or collectors in order to accommodate different intensity levels of commercial and industrial development.

These nodes include both existing and proposed nodes. New activity nodes will be located using the locational criteria specified in Policy 5.1, in response to proposed development activity.
- 5.12 Utilize activity nodes to promote clustered development and to discourage strip development.
- 5.13 Identify activity nodes as the only places appropriate for non-farm related commercial and industrial development.
- 5.14 Designate existing and proposed Urban activity nodes in urban areas. In the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro these nodes will correspond with the "activity centers" identified by the Towns.
- 5.15 Designate two types of nodes in the Transition areas: Commercial Transition and Commercial-Industrial Transition.
- 5.16 Designate Rural Community, Rural Industrial and Rural Neighborhood activity nodes in Rural Residential and Agricultural-Residential areas.
- 5.17 Designate land focused on designated road intersections within Rural Residential or Agricultural-Residential areas that is appropriate for small scale commercial uses as Rural Neighborhood activity nodes.
- 5.18 Designate land focused on designated road intersections within Rural Residential or Rural Agricultural Areas that is appropriate for industrial activities and which has good access as Rural Industrial activity nodes.
- 5.19 Designate land in water supply watersheds which encircles the water supply impoundment and which drains directly into the impoundment and into the main channels of trunk streams feeding the impoundment as Water Quality Critical Areas, not suitable for moderate to high density residential development or non-residential development.
- 6.1 Provide for a sufficient amount of suitable land to accommodate the expansion and growth of commercial and industrial uses in the County.



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- 6.2 Select industrial sites in the Transition Areas on the basis of the capacity of supporting systems, such as water and sewer lines and good highway or rail access, and the absence of detrimental environmental or social impacts.
- 6.3 Locate industrial sites in the Rural Residential and Agricultural-Residential areas along the U.S. 70/I-85 highway and rail corridor to take advantage of the corridor's locational attributes. A limited number of small scale industrial nodes, not requiring urban-type services, are appropriate elsewhere in the County where good access exists.
- 6.4 Prohibit new industrial uses in the area designated Rural Buffer.
- 6.5 The Economic Development zoning district is not appropriate in the area designated Rural Buffer.
- 6.6 The following areas in the County are identified as appropriate for commercial uses and have been designated as Commercial Transition Activity Nodes: Timberlyne (CHT-1); North Office Park (CHT-2); Homestead Road (CHT-3); Weaver Dairy (CHT-4); St. Mary's (HB-3); Harmon-Young (HB-4); and Duke Forest (Eno-3).
- 6.7 The following areas in the County are identified as appropriate for industrial uses and have been designated as Commercial-Industrial Nodes: Efland Center (CK-1); Miles North (CK-2); Miles South (CK-3); and Harmon Young (HB-4).
- 6.8 Five Rural Community activity nodes have been designated: White Cross (BH-2); Caldwell (LR-1); Schley (LR-2); Carr (CG-1); and Village (CG-2).
- 6.9 The following Rural Neighborhood Activity Nodes have been designated: Toler's Store (CG-3); Villine's Store (LR-3); Walnut Grove (CG-5); Underwood's Store (LR-3); Fairfield (CK-4); Coleman Loop (HB-1); Law's Store (ENO-1); Adam and Eve (BH-1); Oak Grove (BH-3); and Calvander and Blackwood Station as part of the Orange County-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Joint Planning Area Land Use Plan.
- 6.10 The following Rural Industrial activity nodes have been designated: Major Business Forms (HB-2) and Prospect Hill (CG-6).
- 6.11 The following Economic Development (Transition) Activity Nodes have been designated: I-40/Old NC 86 (HB-5); I-85/Buckhorn (CK-5); and I-85/US 70 (ENO-2).
- 7.1 Protect and maintain the public economic, social and environmental benefits provided by a vital farming community. Address the problem of increasing tax burdens on agricultural lands through property tax relief to farmers under the Use Value Law.
- 7.2 Minimize the negative impacts of proposed public projects on farming operations and on productive farmland. Public review of projects proposed by entities which have the power



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- of eminent domain should include explicit consideration of the impact of such actions on agricultural activity.
- 7.3 Minimize the relocation of bonafide farming operations caused by non-farm development.
 - 7.4 Provide adequate amounts of available vacant land in and near existing urban areas for intensive land uses to minimize the need for farmland consumption and direct such uses away from viable farming operations and concentrations of prime farmland.
 - 7.5 Direct residential, commercial and industrial growth away from farming areas to minimize inflation of rural land values and tax assessment which can price farmers out of the land market.
 - 7.6 Discourage the location of new non-farm development, particularly more intensive residential development, within farming areas to minimize the incidence of complaints and nuisance suits against farm operations.
 - 7.7 Provide adequate amounts of vacant land at activity nodes accessible to farming areas for commercial land uses serving the existing and future commercial needs of the farming community.
 - 7.8 Encourage more effective forest management practices with consideration to discouraging inappropriate clear-cutting, providing renewable energy resources and protecting wildlife habitats.
 - 7.9 Encourage agricultural related commercial and industrial uses consistent with the zoning district Agricultural-Services (AS) to locate at activity nodes, but allow their occurrence anywhere in the Agricultural-Residential plan areas.

CATEGORY: HOUSING

- 8.1 Encourage the construction and rehabilitation of a diverse range of housing types in response to the needs of various household sizes and incomes.
- 8.2 Encourage the location of various housing types according to the accessibility of public services and commercial uses. Multi-family housing should be built in Urban and Transition Areas where urban-type services are available. Lower density (a minimum of one dwelling unit per acre) non-farm housing is most appropriate in rural and community areas outside of productive farmland areas.
- 8.3 Encourage the provision of a range of affordable and suitable low-income housing by means of development incentives in order to provide a balanced housing stock for the residents of Orange County.



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- 8.4 Support the provision of housing assistance for households in need through technical assistance and coordination with public organizations responsible for housing in the County.
- 8.5 Recognize the Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan as the basic guide for the allocation of assisted housing to the County. The Housing Assistance Plans for the County and for the Towns will serve as the guide for the allocation and distribution of housing within the County.
- 8.6 Assist the Orange County Community Development Block Grant Program in concentrating its efforts and resources in those areas of the County occupied by low and moderate-income households and having the most severe housing and community development needs.
- 8.7 Support the use of individual mobile homes as a useful housing resource in the County by affording these homes the same locational opportunities as single-family units meeting the State Building Code.
- 8.8 Require that all new housing built or located in Orange County meet the minimum standards specified in the State of North Carolina Building Code, as well as Department of HUD and FmHA standards when required.
- 8.9 Encourage the location of high density housing within one-half mile of the center of the activity nodes in the Chapel Hill 10 and 20 Year Transition areas.
- 8.10 Discourage medium and higher density residential development in the rural areas of the County.

CATEGORY: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- 9.1 Develop and implement a cooperative joint planning process among the County municipalities and those organizations responsible for water and sewer lines to guide the extension of lines in accordance with the land use plans and policies of the affected jurisdictions.
- 9.2 Establish Urban Service Areas for Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Hillsborough, Mebane and Durham which will correspond with the 10-year and 20-year Transition Areas. Water and sewer lines should be directed to those areas which contain and are appropriate for higher density levels of residential, commercial and industrial development.
- 9.3 Prohibit the establishment of public water and sewer services in the areas designated Water Quality Critical Area, except to address emergency situations.
- 10.1 Manage Orange County's water supplies so that available resources are balanced with existing and projected needs.
- 10.2 Adopt and implement policies which specify land use patterns and intensities of development in water supply watershed and



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

watershed critical areas that will minimize potential adverse impacts on water quality.

- 10.3 Designate prime reservoir sites, based on an evaluation of water resources throughout the County, to protect those areas from adverse development impacts and to insure that inappropriate restrictions are not placed on a large population of the land area and land resources of the County.
- 10.4 Support programs which help to protect water quality, such as the Soil

Conservation Service and the County's Erosion Control programs.

- 10.5 Encourage efforts to monitor the quality of water in Orange County streams.
- 10.6 Cooperate with other public and private bodies in promoting water quality legislation programs.
- 10.7 Support educational efforts which serve to increase citizen understanding of water quality problems and the need for water conservation.
- 10.8 To minimize further degradation of University Lake water quality, commercial and industrial land uses should not be permitted in the University Lake watershed. Industrial uses are also inappropriate in the Cane Creek watershed, and any commercial uses in the Cane Creek watershed should be small-scale in nature, designed to provide basic services to residents of the immediate area, and located outside of the watershed critical area to minimize potential adverse impacts on water quality.

There shall be no more than one Rural Neighborhood Activity Node, and no Activity Nodes of any other type, established in the Cane Creek watershed.

- 10.9 Direct urban development pressures in the I-85/US 70 corridor within the Upper Eno watershed in Cheeks Township to the areas designated

Ten and Twenty-Year Transition, and away from the areas designated

Watershed Critical Area. Non-residential and higher-density residential development in the Transition Areas should utilize Best Management Practices (BMP's) for stormwater control, in order to minimize potential adverse impacts on the water quality of existing and proposed reservoir sites in this watershed.

- 11.1 Identify the type of sewage disposal facilities appropriate for an area as a function of the magnitude of present and future demand; the distribution of users; and the capacity of the natural environment to absorb the impact.
- 11.2 Identify service by centralized water and sewer systems (Towns of Hillsborough and Mebane, Orange-Alamance Water Systems Incorporated and Orange Water and Sewer Authority)



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- as most appropriate at the higher-density levels which occur in the Urban and Transition Areas.
- 11.3 Develop a process to ensure that buyers of property in the County are fully informed about the on-site sewage disposal characteristics of the site on their property.
 - 11.4 Allow on-site disposal in low-density and rural areas where soil conditions are acceptable. In rural areas with unacceptable soils, state-approved on-site sewage disposal systems will be required.
 - 11.5 Facilitate the use of alternatives to the traditional septic system on land unsuitable for septic tanks and not served by public sewer. Elimination of administrative and informational barriers to the use of safe, sanitary alternative on-site-disposal systems within the County should be encouraged.
 - 11.6 Allow ground absorption sewage disposal systems of 30000 gallons per day or more design capacity and package sewage treatment plants with a design capacity of 3000 gallons per day or less as appropriate only in the areas designated Ten and Twenty Year Transition and Rural Residential.
 - 11.7 Develop and implement a process whereby the responsibilities and duties adjunct to the operation and management of package sewage treatment plants are specified as a requirement to the permitting process for such facilities.
 - 11.8 Prohibit package sewage treatment plants in the areas designated Water Supply Watershed.
 - 11.9 Establish an on-site wastewater treatment inspection program within the portions of water supply watersheds designated as Water Quality Critical Areas.
 - 12.1 Improve and promote the use of existing highway and transportation facilities as opposed to developing extensive new conventional transportation systems.
 - 12.2 Encourage arrangements of land uses that facilitate the expanded use of non-auto modes of travel, the increased occupancy of autos and the development and utilization of an energy-efficient transport system.
 - 12.3 Develop alternative, safe, energy-efficient transportation systems to discourage dependence on automobiles. Encourage the provisions of bikeways, walkways and supportive facilities such as bicycle parking zones. Wherever feasible, acquire pedestrian and bikeway easements with public utility easements as long as the primary use of the easement will remain intact.
 - 12.4 Improve transportation services for human service agency clients in the County through coordination and utilization of available resources, while maintaining or reducing present system costs. Encourage the use of private transportation



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- providers as part of the human services system in addition to serving the needs of the general public.
- 12.5 Encourage DOT to reassess the need for I-40 and the corridor selected with respect to its human and natural environmental impact on the County.
 - 12.6 Undertake a feasibility study to (1) determine the level of need for a general aviation facility to serve the County and (2) examine locational alternatives for a facility given a determination of sufficient need.
 - 12.7 Develop a Highway Classification System to classify major roads by function for purposes of effective long range planning including the evaluation of highway capacity. The functional classification includes: Interstate, arterial, collector, subcollector, minor, local, private and alley.
 - 12.8 Encourage the use of loop roads and cul-de-sacs and discourage the use of cross connectors in the Chapel Hill joint planning area in accordance with the Town of Chapel Hill's policies respecting residential neighborhood integrity.
 - 13.1 Locate parks and recreational facilities close to residential areas to reduce long trips for recreational purposes.
 - 13.2 Encourage the multiple use of existing public and institutional buildings and grounds for recreation as well as their primary uses.
 - 13.3 Require developers to provide for adequate open space suitable for active/passive recreation in residential developments.
 - 14.1 Develop a process for the coordination of planning activities by the School Board, Planning Board and Planning Department to provide for the future space needs and appropriate location of schools to meet the long-term education needs of Orange County residents.
 - 14.2 Require residential developers to set aside an adequate amount of acreage to meet future school facility needs.
 - 15.1 Evaluate the solid waste collection system presently used by the County in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. Recommend alternative systems or means to improve the existing system based on this evaluation.
 - 15.2 Encourage the recycling of solid waste when feasible.
 - 15.3 Acknowledge the value of solid waste as an energy resource and encourage recovery measures when feasible.
 - 16.1 Ensure the provision of adequate public safety protection standards for residential, commercial and industrial development.
 - 16.2 Include in applied site design standards for residential, commercial and industrial development appropriate road



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

- design standards to ensure adequate emergency vehicle access to the development.
- 16.3 Insure that all state roads in the County receive non-duplicated names to be posted on signs at intersections and that all houses are numbered in order to improve the response time of emergency vehicles.
- 17.1 Undertake a comprehensive effort to inform and involve the citizens of Orange County in the land use planning process. The basic components of this process include: regular and special public hearings; direct citizen input to the Board of County Commissioners and Planning Board; special citizen task forces and committees to work on certain problems; and the Township Advisory Councils to advise the Planning Board on land use planning matters at the Township level. It will also include a systematic effort to inform and notify the general public, through special news features as well as public meeting notices in newspapers of local circulation, of significant planning activities.
- 17.2 Develop and implement a cooperative joint planning process among the County municipalities and those organizations responsible for the provision of water and sewer services to provide for the orderly transition from rural to urban development around the municipalities.
- 17.3 Adopt the Orange County Land Use Plan and Map as the long-range planning framework and guide to development in the County.
- 17.4 Review the Orange County Land Use Plan periodically to assure that it remains an up-to-date and workable framework for land use development.
- 17.5 Provide an annual status report on the implementation of the Plan to the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners for Orange County.
- 17.6 Develop and implement a process for complete review of the Plan on a two-year basis which will include land use and demographic data collection and analysis, a progress report and citizen involvement to evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan and proposed amendments as appropriate.
- 17.7 Implement the Orange County Zoning Ordinance in accordance with the Goals, Policies and proposed Land Use Plan Map contained in the Plan.
- 17.8 Review of proposed amendments to the Goals, Policies and Map of the Land Use Plan and implementing ordinances will be by the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners and involve citizen participation procedures.
- 17.9 Develop a process to deal with requests for modification of the Plan. The burden of proof for such a change should be placed upon the petitioner seeking such action. The applicant must show that the requested change is (1)



Appendix D: 1981 Land Use Element Policies

consistent with the Goals and Policies, (2) compatible with the land use pattern, and (3) in the public interest.