

DAVIDSON COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE 2009

Davidson County, North Carolina



Prepared For:
Davidson County Board of Commissioners

Prepared By:
Davidson County Planning Department
Piedmont Triad Council of Governments

Adopted: October 13, 2009

Updates in Red



PIEDMONT TRIAD
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Davidson County Land Development Plan Update

The Davidson County Land Development Plan was developed with the cooperation of the citizens of Davidson County, the County Board of Commissioners, the County Planning Board, and the County staff. This plan serves as a guide to help the community make land use decisions and to provide for the orderly growth and development of the County. The plan will be reviewed and revised periodically by the County Board of Commissioners after formal adoption, as conditions within the County's planning jurisdiction change over time.

Adopted this ??th day of ?, 2009 by the Davidson County Board of County Commissioners.



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Paul M. Kron – Planning Director
Kristen Selikoff – GIS Planner
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Russell M. Smith, Ph.D. - Planner

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Davidson County **Land Development Plan Update**

1. INTRODUCTION

Davidson County, North Carolina has a population of 156,000 people, and has seen continued growth over the last half century. Davidson County's growth has begun to impact the quality of life of County residents. The last fifty years has seen countryside turn into subdivisions and large manufacturing employers move away.

Even with these changes the County finds itself in the enviable position of being able to plan for the future development of the County. Davidson County has been proactive and developed a plan to address the challenges the County faces. The Davidson County Land Development Plan was approved and has been used by citizens, staff, and elected officials over the past eight years. However, recently several issues have been identified by the County Commissioners and County Staff that need to be readdressed. As a result, this document was commissioned and includes new ideas and strategies for dealing with the strategic issues of Economic Development, School Facilities, and Agriculture and Rural Area Preservation.

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

The Davidson County Land Development Plan Update is a guide for making strategic decisions about the orderly growth and development of our community. The plan serves as:

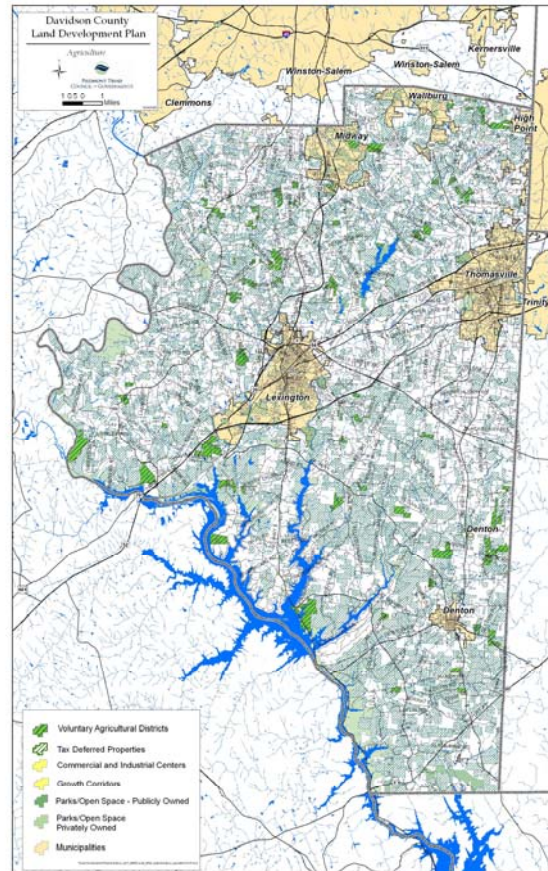
1. A Source of Information – containing information on local demographics, economics, housing, environmental constraints and development suitability, infrastructure, and existing and proposed land use patterns and policies.
2. A Guide to Likely Government Decisions – including a general County-wide growth strategy, and specific land development goals, policies, and recommendations to help guide public and private development decisions, giving greater insight and predictability concerning likely government actions.
3. An Opportunity for Community Involvement – active participation of the County Commissioners, Planning Board, staff and citizens during plan preparation help to ensure community values are represented and embodied in the plan.
4. An Outline of Strategic Actions – a guide for potential land development ordinance recommendations and revisions and a range of activities to implement the vision, goals, policies and recommendations outlined in the plan.

1.2 Planning Period

Twenty Years: 2008 – 2028

1.3 Planning Area

The plan encompasses the entire County (552 square miles) with the exception of the following municipalities and any accompanying extraterritorial planning jurisdictions: Denton, High Point, Lexington, Midway, Thomasville, and Wallburg.



1.4 Organization of the Plan

Section 1 – Introduction and Overview: Summary of plan purpose, process, and scope.

Section 2 – Existing Conditions: Detailed analysis of the factors affecting the County.

Section 3 – Community Input: Framework of values based on Steering Committee and citizen input.

Section 4 – Issues, Goals, and Strategies: Detailed examination of the three major issues confronting Davidson County including the development of general goals, strategies and policies for implementation in the County.

Section 5 – Plan Implementation: Recommendations for implementing, using and revising the plan.

1.5 Planning Process and Methodology

A detailed analysis of existing conditions was conducted to ensure the plan responds adequately to the most relevant and current land development issues and trends. Computerized mapping and database technology, known as geographic information systems (GIS) was utilized to map and analyze a wide variety of demographic, economic, environmental, and urban service growth factors. General population, housing, and economic data was updated from the *Davidson County Land Development Plan*, to provide a better understanding of how best to strategically plan for Davidson County's future growth.

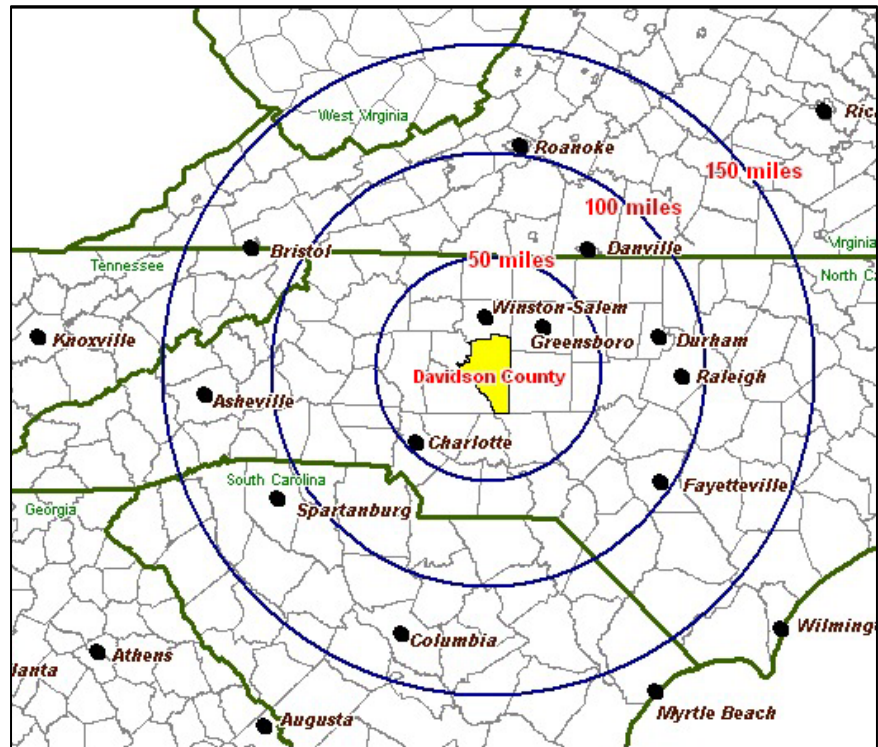
Environmental growth factors were mapped and analyzed to identify the most suitable sites for urban development in the County. A detailed map of existing land uses was developed to identify land development patterns and trends. Physical landscape features including topography, hydrology, and soil limitations were mapped to identify the most appropriate and feasible sites for future growth. Vacant or under-utilized sites located out of the 100-year flood plain and with gentle slopes and few soil limitations were considered prime development sites and most suitable for future growth. Urban service areas including existing and planned roads and existing and planned water and sewer systems were mapped. The provision and maintenance of roads, water services, and sewer services are three of the most influential and expensive factors driving growth. Therefore special attention was paid to analyzing the potential effects of major planned road projects and the potential expansion of water and sewer services.

Extensive input from the Steering Committee and citizens was used to identify core community values and to build ownership of and support for the plan. This framework of community values was applied to the detailed analysis of existing conditions and used to draw conclusions and make land development recommendations. Recommended general growth strategies and guidelines were developed to provide a strategic, proactive vision of where and how the community wishes to grow.

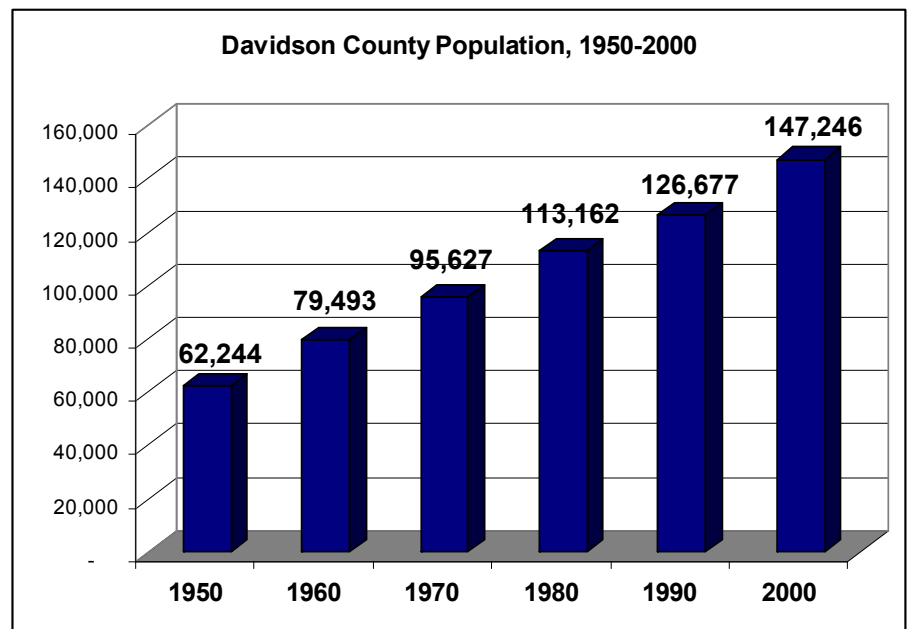
2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 Population

Davidson County has a population of just over 156,000 people, but its central east coast location puts it in close proximity to a number of other large urban areas. Almost three million people live within a 50 mile radius of the county, 6.5 million within a 100 mile radius, and over 11.5 million people live within a 150 mile radius.



The County's population has more than doubled in the past 50 years, growing by an average of approximately 1,700 people per year. In the 1990's, the population growth rate was higher, averaging over 2,000 new residents per year. So far this decade, growth has slowed to about 1,500 people per year.



Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of population & housing.

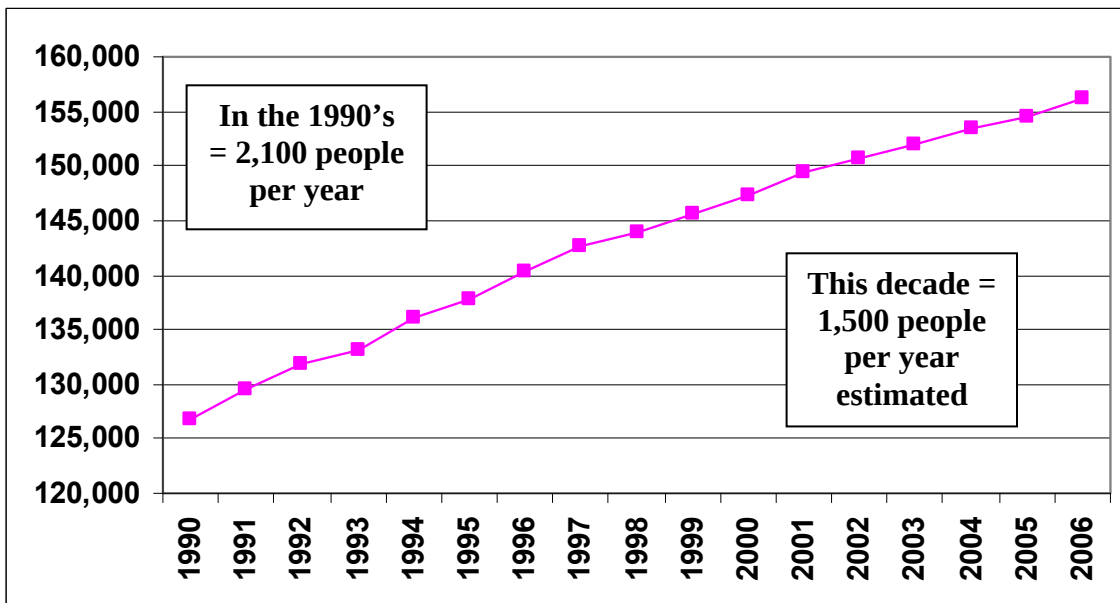
Davidson County Population Growth Rates

	Average Annual Growth	% Growth
1950's	1,700	27.7%
1960's	1,600	20.3%
1970's	1,800	18.3%
1980's	1,400	11.9%
1990's	2,100	16.2%
This decade	1,500	10.2%
Next decade (projected)	1,600	10.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of population & housing, NC Office of Budget & Management, projections issued in 2006.

Davidson County's population growth is highly correlated with economic conditions. In early 2000, prior to the recession of 2001, demographers were projecting that Davidson County would add approximately 1,850 people per year through 2010. In 2000 and 2001, the county did add about 1,860 people per year. From 2002-2005, however, Davidson County's annual growth rate slowed to an average of about 1,250 people per year. Improving economic conditions since 2005 led to an increase in population growth. In 2006, the county added an estimated 1,700 additional residents.

Average Annual Population Growth per Year



Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer's Office.

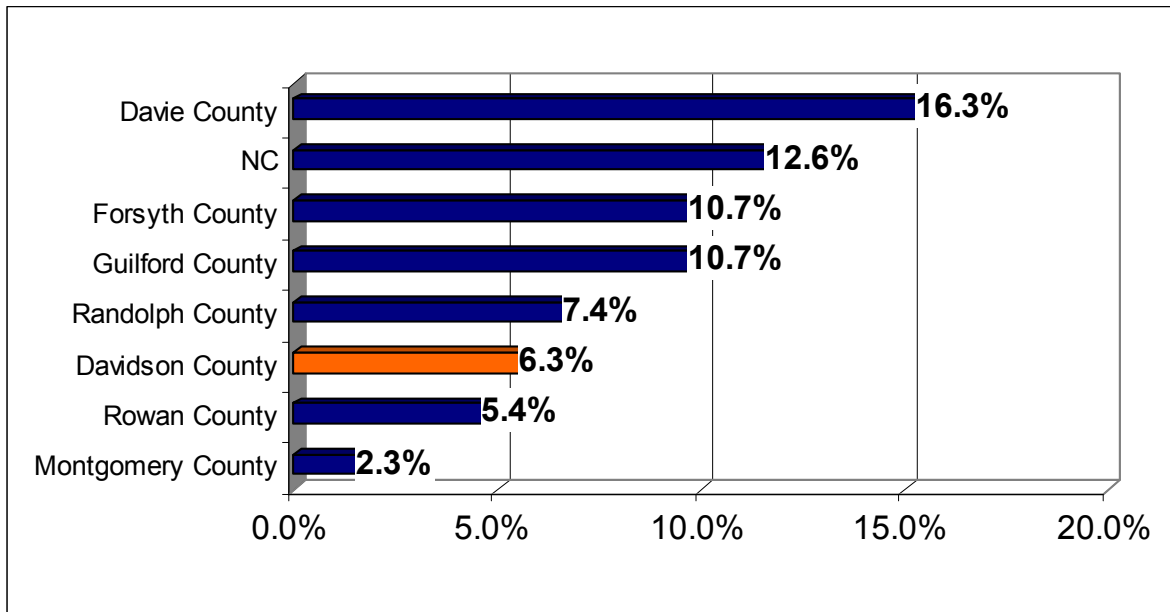
The County's growth rate is lower than the state average and lower than most neighboring counties. Only Montgomery and Rowan have seen lower growth rates since 2000.

Comparison Growth Rates

	Population			Growth Rates	
	1990	2000	2007	1990-2000	2000-2007
Davidson County	126,677	147,246	156,530	16.2%	6.3%
Davie County	27,859	34,835	40,516	25.0%	16.3%
Forsyth County	265,878	306,067	338,774	15.1%	10.7%
Guilford County	347,420	421,048	465,931	21.2%	10.7%
Montgomery Co.	23,346	26,822	27,451	14.9%	2.3%
Randolph County	106,546	130,454	140,145	22.4%	7.4%
Rowan County	110,605	130,340	137,383	17.8%	5.4%
NC	6,632,448	8,049,313	9,061,032	21.4%	12.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of population & housing, Population Estimates Division, 2006.

Population Growth Rates from 2000-2007



Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Division, 2007 estimates released in March of 2008.

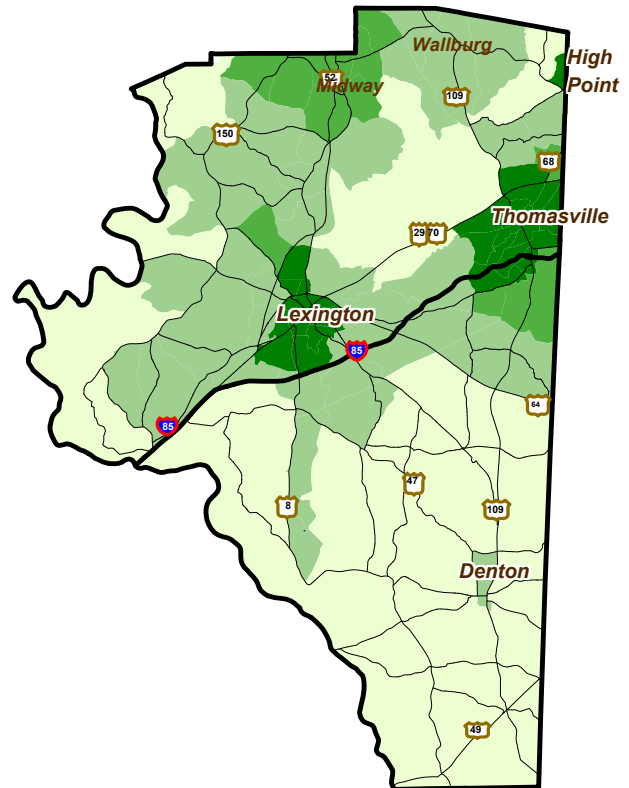
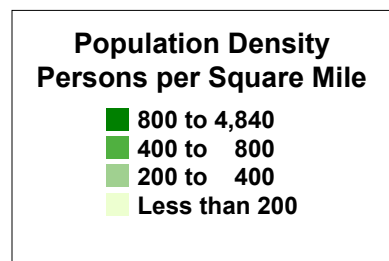
Population Density

Davidson County has a population density of 283 people per square mile, up from 254 people per square mile 10 years ago. By 2010, the density is expected to grow to 295 people per square mile, and by 2030, there are expected to be more than 350 people per square mile. The county is gaining approximately 3 people per square mile every year.

Population densities are highest in Thomasville and in Lexington. In general, areas in northern Davidson are more densely populated than the southern portions of the county. More densely populated areas also tend to follow major roads within the

county. Densities are highest along I-85 between Thomasville and Lexington, US Highway 52/Hwy 8 from Winston-Salem/Midway to Southmont, Highway 109 from Wallburg to Thomasville, and Highway 150 from Winston-Salem to Tyro.

Population Density by Area within Davidson County



Source: 2000 Census, data mapped at the block group level.

Density Comparison, Davidson & Neighboring Counties

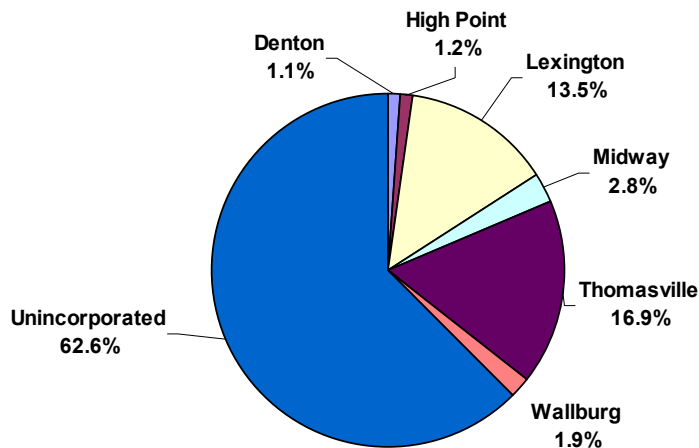
	Persons per Square Mile			Change in Density	
	1990	2000	2007	1990-2000	2000-2007
Davidson County	229.40	266.65	283.47	37.25	16.81
Davie County	105.05	131.35	152.78	26.30	21.42
Forsyth County	648.96	747.05	826.88	98.09	79.83
Guilford County	534.41	647.67	716.71	113.26	69.04
Montgomery County	47.54	54.62	55.90	7.08	1.28
Randolph County	135.30	165.66	177.96	30.36	12.31
Rowan County	216.28	254.87	268.64	38.59	13.77
NC	136.14	165.22	185.99	29.08	20.77

Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of population & housing, Population Estimates Division, 2007

2.2 Municipal Population & Growth

Municipalities in Davidson County include Thomasville, Lexington, Midway, Wallburg, High Point (part), and Denton. Two new towns have incorporated since 2000. Wallburg incorporated in 2004 and Midway incorporated in 2006.

Population of Incorporated Areas within Davidson County, 2006



25 year ago, 14% of residents lived in Lexington, 13% in Thomasville, 1% in Denton, and 72% in unincorporated areas. Wallburg and Midway were not incorporated, and High Point's proportion was negligible (less than a half of a percent). Basically, the proportion of residents living in Lexington and Denton has not changed, but the proportion living in Thomasville and High Point has grown the most.

Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, issued in 2007.

Population Growth in Davidson County Municipalities

	2006	2000	% Growth
Davidson County Total	155,348	147,250	5.5%
Denton	1,700	1,450	17.2%
High Point (part)	1,791	1,163	54.0%
Lexington	20,927	19,953	4.9%
Midway	4,427	4,198	5.5%
Thomasville	26,285	19,788	32.8%
Wallburg	2,910	2,818	3.3%
Unincorporated Areas	97,308	97,880	-0.6%

Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer, issued in 2007

Between 1990 and 2000, the fastest growing township in Davidson County, as measured by change in the number of people per square mile, was Arcadia, followed by Thomasville. Over the past 30 years, the fastest growing townships were Arcadia, Midway, and Wallburg.

Population & Density by Township within Davidson County

	Population		
	2000	1990	1980
Abbott's Creek	7,666	6,285	5,948
Alleghany	655	506	412
Arcadia	8,521	6,400	4,753
Boone	4,483	3,383	2,745
Conrad Hill	8,918	8,076	6,894
Cotton Grove	7,945	7,318	5,618
Emmons	6,846	6,338	4,745
Hampton	698	614	351
Healing Spring	2,484	1,644	1,303
Jackson Hill	1,029	790	618
Lexington	31,175	29,408	28,860
Midway	11,606	9,897	8,392
Reedy Creek	4,659	3,563	3,043
Silver Hill	5,917	4,658	3,451
Thomasville	36,071	30,802	30,139
Tyro	7,852	6,376	5,418
Yadkin College	721	619	472

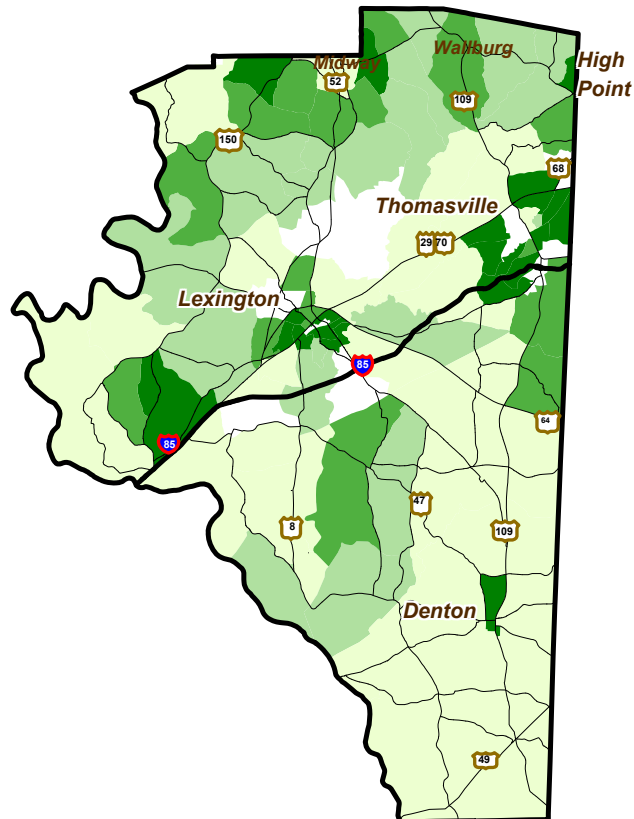
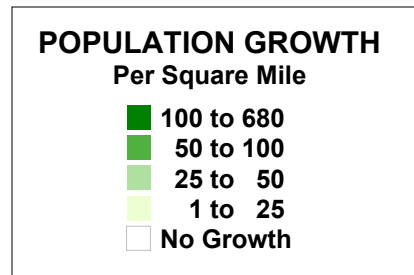
Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of Population & Housing.

Township Density & Growth

	Persons per square mile				Change in Density	
	2000	1990	1980	1970	1990-2000	1970-2000
Abbott's Creek	255	209	197	123	45.8	131.3
Alleghany	27	21	17	12	6.1	14.9
Arcadia	403	303	225	114	100.4	289.7
Boone	126	95	77	54	31.0	72.9
Conrad Hill	218	197	168	135	20.5	83.1
Cotton Grove	185	170	131	90	14.6	94.7
Emmons	130	121	90	85	9.7	45.2
Hampton	102	90	51	37	12.3	64.8
Healing Spring	66	43	34	26	22.2	39.2
Jackson Hill	42	32	25	24	9.8	18.4
Lexington	566	534	524	516	32.1	50.0
Midway	337	288	244	174	49.7	163.4
Reedy Creek	221	169	144	103	51.9	118.3
Silver Hill	180	142	105	58	38.4	122.0
Thomasville	558	476	466	447	81.5	110.5
Tyro	214	173	147	105	40.2	108.9
Yadkin College	142	122	93	72	20.1	69.9

Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census of Population & Housing.

Population Growth per Square Mile 1990-2000



Source: 1990 and 2000 Census of Population & Housing
Data mapped at the block group level.

2.3 Components of Population Growth

Davidson County has historically enjoyed a relatively high migration rate. In the 1990's, more than two-thirds of the county's growth was attributable to new persons moving into the county. Following the recession of 2001, the migration rate slowed. Demographers now predict that net migration this decade will be roughly half that seen in the 1990's.

Earlier this decade, demographers were projecting Davidson County would grow by almost 19,000 people this decade. Following the economic slowdown and net job losses posted in the county, projections have since been revised downward. Population projections for Davidson County are highly dependent on the economy, more so than other counties or regions with a more diverse job base.

2006 estimates from the US Census Bureau indicate that 60% of Davidson's County migration is domestic migration, i.e., persons moving in from another part of the US. Another 40% of migration is international, or persons moving in from another country.

**Population Growth Due to Migration
(New residents moving in)**

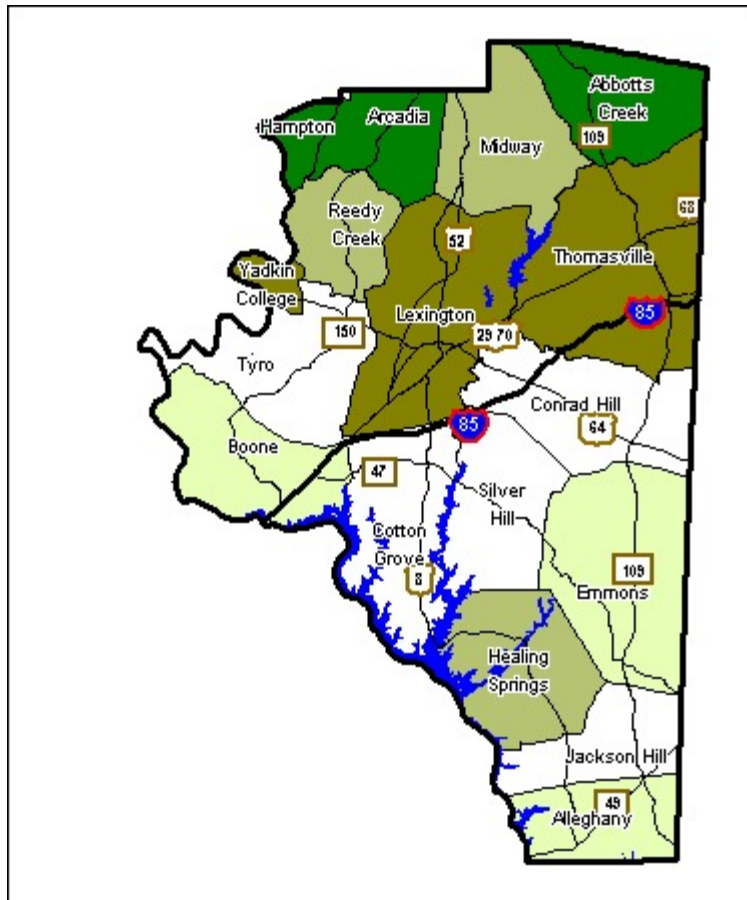
	1980- 1990	1990- 2000	2000- 2010*	2010- 2020*
Total Growth	13,515	20,569	13,230	15,335
Natural Increase (births less deaths)	6,166	6,491	5,926	6,210
Net Migration (net of persons moving in versus persons moving out)	7,349	14,078	7,304	9,125
Net Migration as a % of total growth	54.4%	68.4%	55.2%	59.5%
<i>Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, projections issued in the fall of 2007.</i>				

Newcomers

Approximately one of every six Davidson County residents is a “newcomer”, defined as having moved into the county during the past five years. Of the newcomers, most have moved into Davidson County from another county in NC – predominantly from Guilford County and Forsyth County. Newcomers were mostly likely to settle in the northern tier of the county, particularly in the Abbott’s Creek, Arcadia, and Hampton townships.

**Davidson County Population in 2000
By Place of Residence in 1995**

Same House	82,874	60.2%
Newcomer to County	25,225	18.3%
Lived outside NC	10,198	7.4%
Moved from elsewhere in the South	4,356	3.2%
Moved from the Northeast	1,774	1.3%
Moved from the Midwest	680	0.5%
Moved from the West	647	0.5%
Moved from elsewhere (including foreign country)	2,741	2.0%
<i>Source: 2000 Census, survey of residents age 5 and older by prior place of residence.</i>		



Newcomers to Davidson County

% of population new to county since 1995

- 23% or more
- 20% to 23%
- 17% to 20%
- 13% to 17%
- Less than 13%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing. Data mapped at the township level.

2.4 New Residential Construction within Davidson County

Building permits issued for new residential construction indicate that 6,254 new housing units were built within the county from 2000-2006. About 6% of permits were issued by the City of Lexington, another 20% by the City of Thomasville, and the remainder in the balance of the county. The average value of permits issued in the balance of the county was roughly twice as high as the value of new housing in Thomasville and Lexington.

Residential Building Permits issued January 2000 - December 2006

	Permits issued for new residential housing	Value of Permits issued (000s)	Average Value
Lexington	365	\$ 32,346	\$ 88,619
Thomasville	1,228	\$ 104,434	\$ 85,044
Balance of County	4,661	\$ 757,538	\$ 162,527

Source: US Dept of Commerce, Census Bureau, Annual Building Permits Survey.

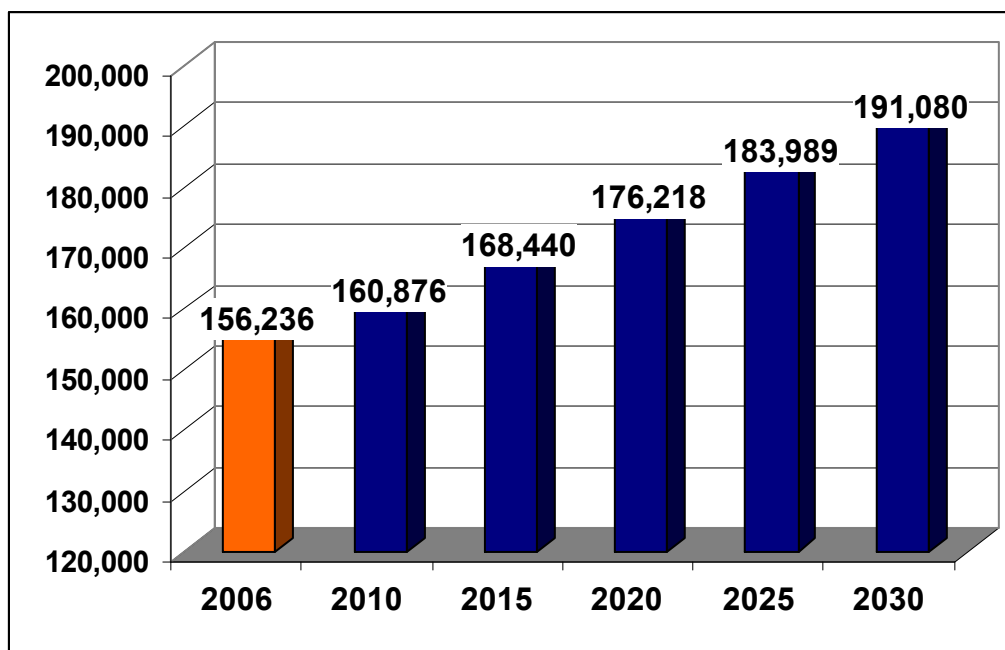
More residential housing permits have been issued in Davidson County than in neighboring counties of similar size. The average value of new housing units is slightly lower than in Davie or Rowan Counties, but higher than in Randolph or Forsyth.

**Building Permits Issued for New Residential Construction
in Neighboring Counties
January, 2000-December, 2006**

	New Housing Units	Total Value	Average Value
Davidson Co.	6,254	\$894,318,000	\$142,999
Davie Co.	2,492	\$388,127,000	\$155,749
Forsyth Co.	18,182	\$2,258,426,000	\$124,212
Guilford Co.	27,553	\$4,029,943,000	\$146,261
Montgomery Co.	733	\$138,269,000	\$188,634
Randolph Co.	5,054	\$576,724,000	\$114,112
Rowan Co.	4,712	\$745,525,000	\$158,218

Source: US Dept of Commerce, Census Bureau, Annual Building Permits Survey.

2.5 Projected Population



Within the next 15 years, Davidson County should top 175,000 in population. By 2030, the county is expected to be near 200,000 in population. Slightly slower growth rates, similar to those seen so far this decade, are expected to persist through 2030.

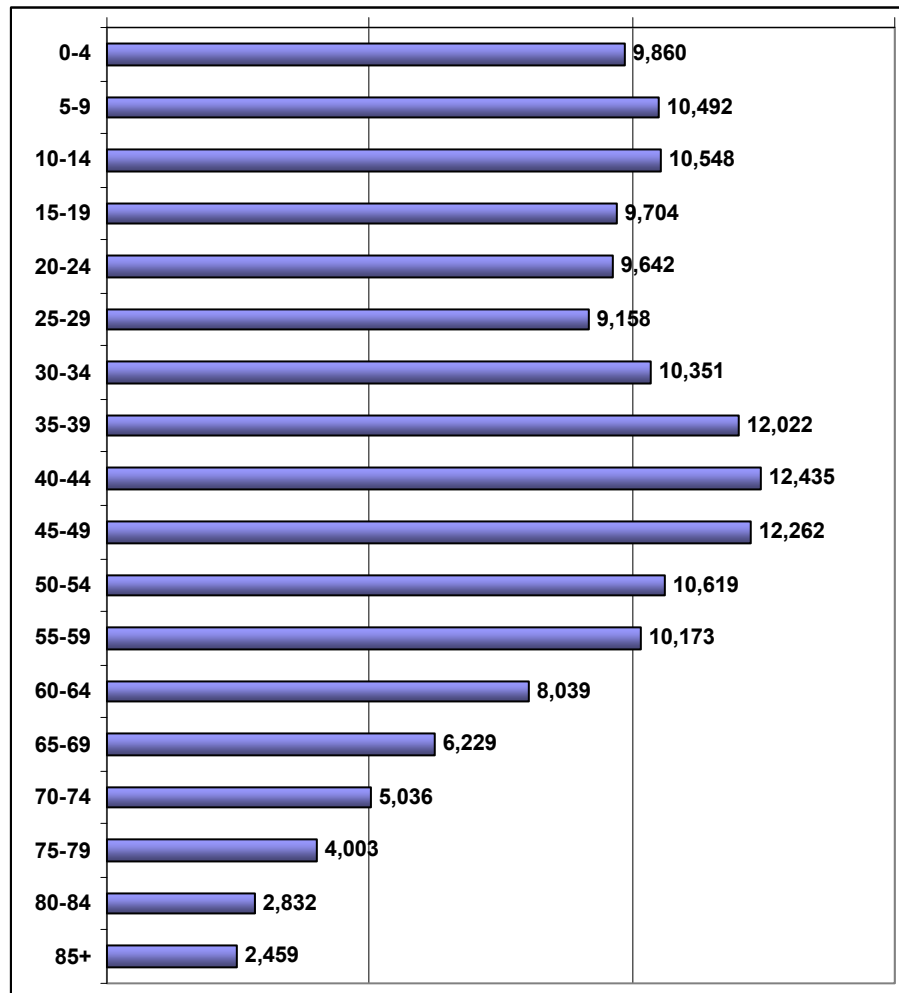
Projected Population for Neighboring Counties

	Projected Population			Projected Growth Rates		
	2010	2020	2030	thru 2010	thru 2020	thru 2030
Davidson Co.	160,876	176,218	191,080	3.6%	13.2%	23.0%
Davie Co.	43,354	50,846	58,682	8.8%	27.6%	47.3%
Forsyth Co.	351,864	394,528	439,967	6.0%	18.9%	32.6%
Guilford Co.	476,055	533,495	593,830	6.0%	18.8%	32.2%
Montgomery Co.	28,273	30,299	32,486	2.8%	10.2%	18.1%
Randolph Co.	145,072	162,178	180,076	4.7%	17.0%	29.9%
Rowan Co.	139,253	152,160	165,647	3.5%	13.1%	23.1%
NC	9,485,138	10,850,228	12,274,433	7.1%	22.5%	38.5%

Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer. Issued in October of 2007.

2.6 Demographics

Population Distribution by Age Range, 2006



The three largest age groups in the county are those ages 40-44, 45-49, and 35-39. One of every six county residents is school age, while one of every seven is elderly.

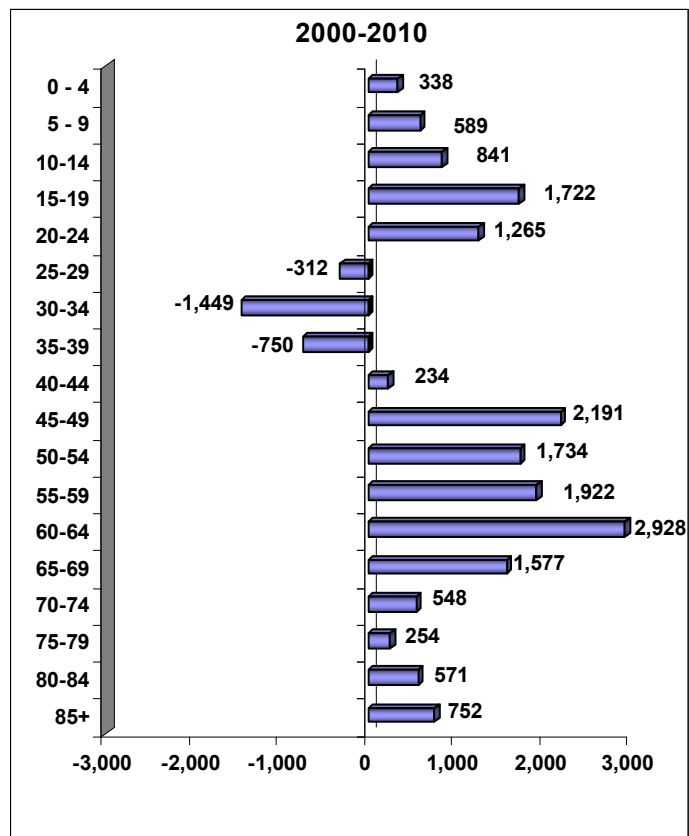
Of the working age population (18-64), 45% are under the age of 40 while 55% are 40 or older.

Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer's Office, issued in 2007.

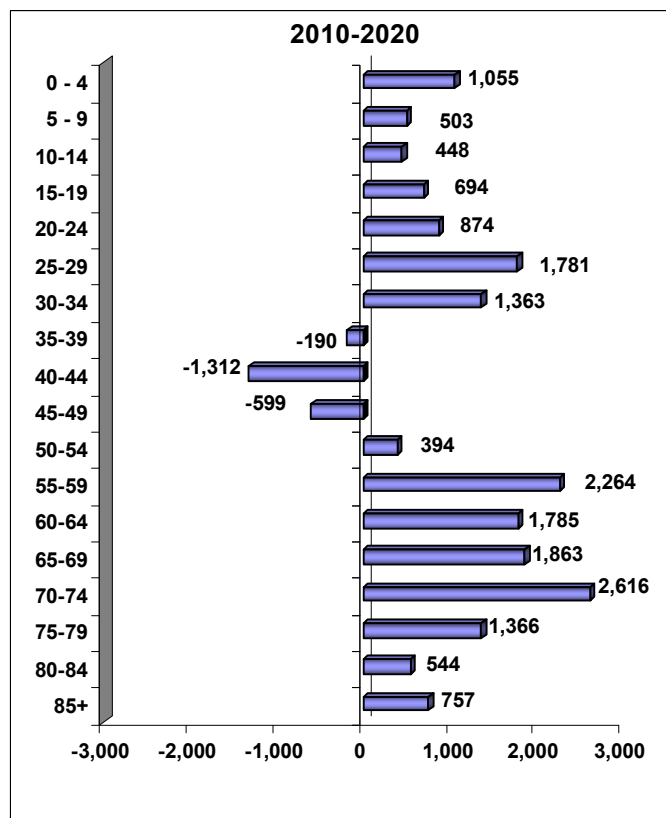
The older adult population (ages 45 plus) in Davidson County is growing faster than those under the age of 45. The age group that is projected to gain the most is those ages 60-64, followed by those ages 45-49. All age ranges over the age of 45 are expected to see increases, while those ages 25-39 are on the decline.

The county is also seeing larger increases in the high school and college age population. Preschool, elementary, and middle school age children are also increasing, but at lower rates than older youths.

Projected Population Change by Age Range



Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer. Projections issued in the fall of 2007.



In the upcoming decade, the highest growth is expected in those ages 55 - 74, followed by those ages 25-34. Schools should get a slight reprieve on growth, but because persons age 25-34 will be increasing, the preschool age population is also expected to increase at a fairly high rate.

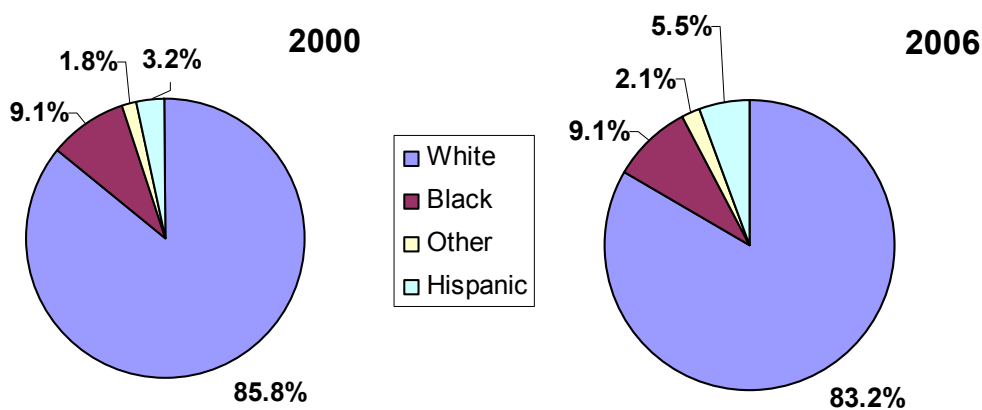
Persons age 35-49 are expected to decline between 2010 and 2020.

Source: NC Office of Budget & Management, State Demographer. Projections issued in the fall of 2007.

2.7 Race & Ethnic Origin

The majority of residents in Davidson County (83%) are non-Hispanic whites. The largest minority group is Black/African American (9%). However, the number of Hispanics in the county continues to grow rapidly. In 1990, there were 602 Hispanics in Davidson County. As of 2006, there were an estimated 8,612 Hispanics living in Davidson County – a growth rate of 1331%. Hispanics have accounted for 43% of the total growth seen in Davidson County this decade. Assuming current growth rates continue, Hispanics will become the largest minority group in Davidson County sometime in the next 10-12 years.

Davidson County Population by Race & Ethnic Origin



Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Division, 2006. Estimates issued in June of 2007.

Population Growth by Race & Ethnic Origin

	2006	2000	Growth rate
Total	156,236	147,246	6.1%
White	138,188	130,768	5.7%
Black	14,432	13,558	6.4%
American Indian	657	573	14.7%
Asian	1,620	1,361	19.0%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	31	33	-6.1%
Multi-racial	1,308	953	37.3%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	8,612	4,765	80.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Division, released in June of 2007.

2.8 Households & Housing Characteristics

The proportion of households made up of families, and in particular families with children under 18, is on the decline in the county. Married couple families with children under the age of 18 make up only one in five households. Households comprised of a person living alone are on the increase.

Characteristics of Households in Davidson County			
	2006	2000	1990
Families	68.5%	73.1%	76.0%
Married Couples with Children under 18	19.7%	24.3%	28.6%
Married Couples without Children	34.0%	33.7%	33.6%
Single Parent Households	7.7%	8.4%	8.3%
All Other Families	7.1%	6.7%	5.5%
Non-Families	31.5%	26.9%	24.0%
Persons Living Alone	27.0%	22.9%	21.0%
Households with Children under 18	31.0%	36.0%	37.3%
Households with Older Adult(s) 65+	23.0%	22.7%	22.2%
Average Household Size	2.52	2.50	2.56
<i>Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006, Decennial Census of Population & Housing, 1990 & 2000.</i>			

Housing Characteristics in Davidson County		
	2006	2000
Homeowner vacancy rate	2.5%	1.4%
Rental vacancy rate	5.4%	6.4%
% Owner Occupied	75.3%	74.2%
% Renter Occupied	24.7%	25.8%
% Crowded (more than 1 person per room)	2.6%	2.4%
Median Value - Owner Occupied Units	\$ 120,100	\$ 98,600
Median Rent	\$ 564	\$ 464
<i>Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006, 2000 Census of Population & Housing.</i>		

The economic downturn in the earlier part of this decade has had some effect on housing vacancies within the county, particular when analyzing vacancy rates on owner occupied units (primarily single family dwellings as

opposed to multi-family structures).. There were 6,636 vacant housing units in the county in 2006, up from 4,276 in 2000. In 2000, 6.8% of housing units in the county were vacant, while the 2006 data showed 9.8% of all units vacant. Just over 1,000 vacant units in the county are categorized as being for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Davidson County has the highest proportion of single family structures among neighboring counties, and it also has one of the higher proportions of homeownership. Home values are typically lower than in counties to the north, but higher than those to the south and east.

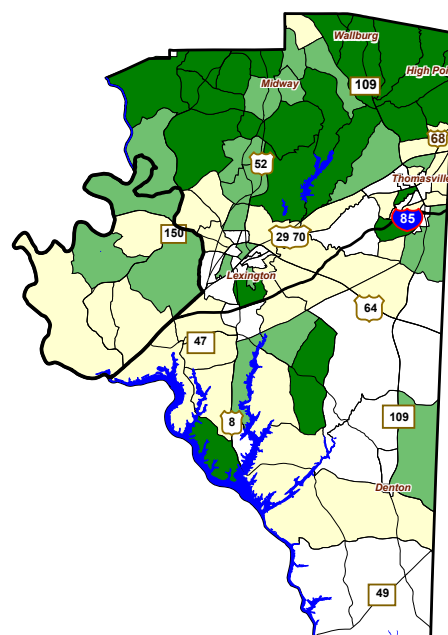
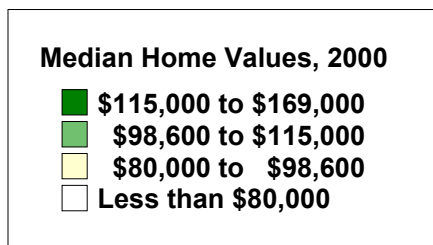
Housing Comparison Data						
	% Vacant	% Owner Occupied	% Single Family	% Multi-Family	% Mobile Home/Other	Median Home Value
Davidson	6.8%	74.2%	72.9%	9.4%	17.7%	\$ 98,600
Davie	8.0%	83.3%	71.1%	5.1%	23.8%	\$ 116,200
Forsyth	6.9%	65.6%	70.5%	19.5%	10.0%	\$ 114,000
Guilford	6.5%	67.2%	69.6%	21.6%	8.8%	\$ 116,900
Montgomery	30.4%	76.7%	60.9%	3.9%	35.2%	\$ 77,200
Randolph	6.9%	76.6%	65.4%	9.3%	25.3%	\$ 94,700
Rowan	7.5%	73.6%	69.0%	10.3%	20.7%	\$ 95,200
NC	11.1%	69.4%	67.4%	16.0%	16.6%	\$ 108,300

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing.

Median Home Values

(Owner Occupied Structures Only)

Home values vary considerably among various areas within Davidson County. Typically, the highest home values are in the northern sections of the county, particularly the Wallburg and Arcadia communities. Certain areas around High Rock Lake also have higher than average home values.



Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, data shown at the block group level.

2.9 Education

In 2006, almost 80% of adults age 25 or older had a high school diploma in Davidson County. This is up significantly from 1990, but still lags the state average by about 2%. The gap was 6% in 1990, so Davidson County is closing the gap. However, there is an even bigger gap in the proportion of Davidson County residents who have a 4-year college degree when compared with the state average. Only one in eight Davidson County adults has a college degree, compared with 22.8% (or almost one in four) NC residents. The proportion of college graduates is advancing more rapidly in NC overall than in Davidson County.

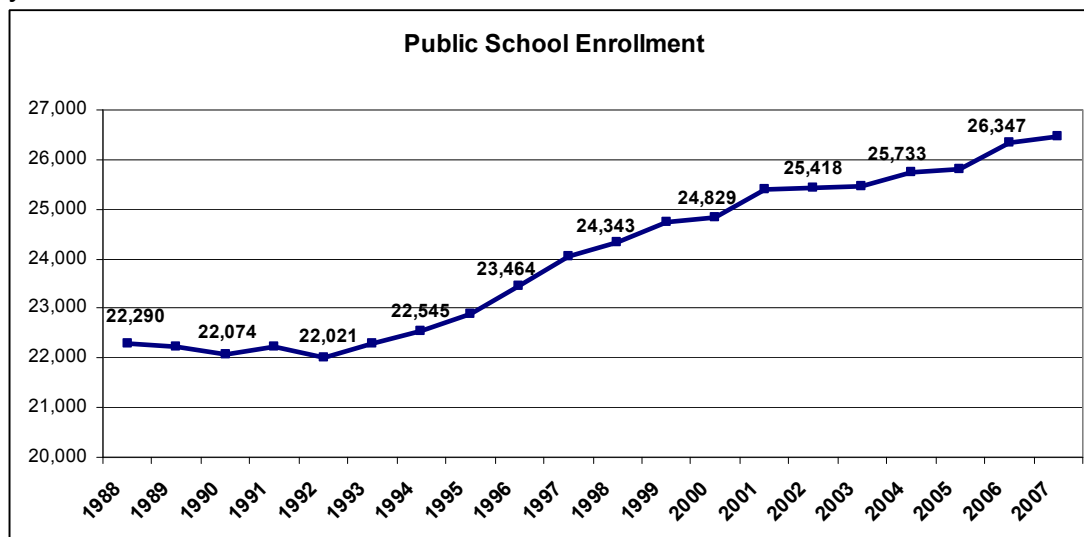
Educational Attainment

% of High School Graduates	2006	2000	1990
Davidson County	79.3%	72.0%	64.2%
NC	82.0%	78.1%	70.0%
% College (4 year) Graduates	2006	2000	1990
Davidson County	14.1%	12.8%	10.0%
NC	24.8%	22.5%	17.4%

Source: 1990 & 2000 Census of Population & Housing, American Community Survey, 2006.

Public School Enrollment, past 20 years

Public school enrollment in Davidson County grew rapidly between 1992 and 2001. In less than 10 years, an additional 3,500 students were added to school rosters. Between 2001 and 2005, enrollment grew, but at a much slower pace. Since 2005, however, school enrollment figures have begun to escalate a little more. As of 2007, approximately 26,500 students are being educated in the 3 school systems in the county.



Source: NC Department of Public Instruction.

Enrollment by School System, Davidson County

From 1990 to 2000, enrollment increased in all three school systems. From 2000-2007, enrollment has increased by approximately 2000 students in the county system, 260 in the Thomasville City school system, and it has declined by about 170 in the Lexington City School system. As of 2007, per pupil expenditures for the three school systems in Davidson County was as follows: Davidson County – \$6,323; Lexington City - \$9,078; Thomasville City - \$9,053

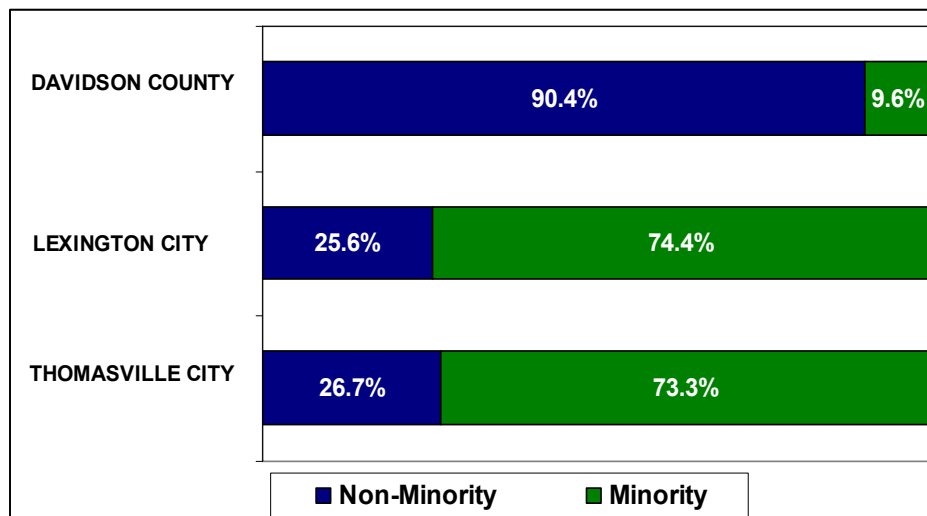
School System Enrollment

	Enrollment		
	1990	2000	2007
Davidson County	16,620	18,755	20,731
Thomasville City	2,147	2,334	2,593
Lexington City	2,990	3,269	3,096

Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, first month enrollment figures shown.

School Enrollment by Race

The Davidson County school system is predominantly white. Less than 10% of students in the Davidson County Schools are minority versus almost 75% of students in both the Thomasville and Lexington City systems.



Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, first month enrollment figures for the 2007-08 school year. Non-minority is defined as non-Hispanic whites.

Average School Size by Type

	High School	Middle School	Elementary School
Davidson County	847	778	600
Lexington City	737	711	395
Thomasville City	710	584	607
NC	989	666	510

Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, School Report Cards, 2006-07.

Davidson County elementary schools and middle schools tend to be larger than the state average. The largest elementary school in the county is Southwood with just over 1000 students. Of the 22 elementary schools in the county, 15 are larger than the

state average.

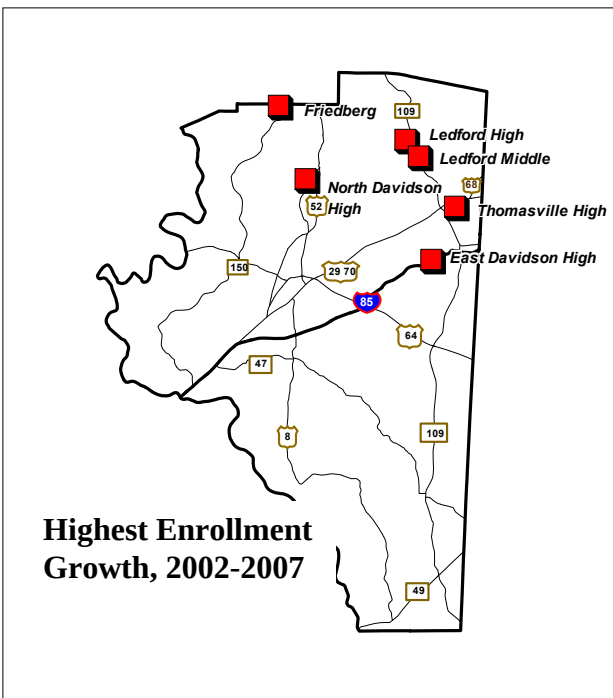
The largest middle school in the county is North Davidson Middle with over 1200 students. Of the 8 middle schools in the county, five are larger than the state average. North Davidson is also the largest high school in the county, by far, with over 1500 students. Only two high schools, North and Ledford, are larger than the state average.

Growth in school enrollment in the past five years, ranked by growth

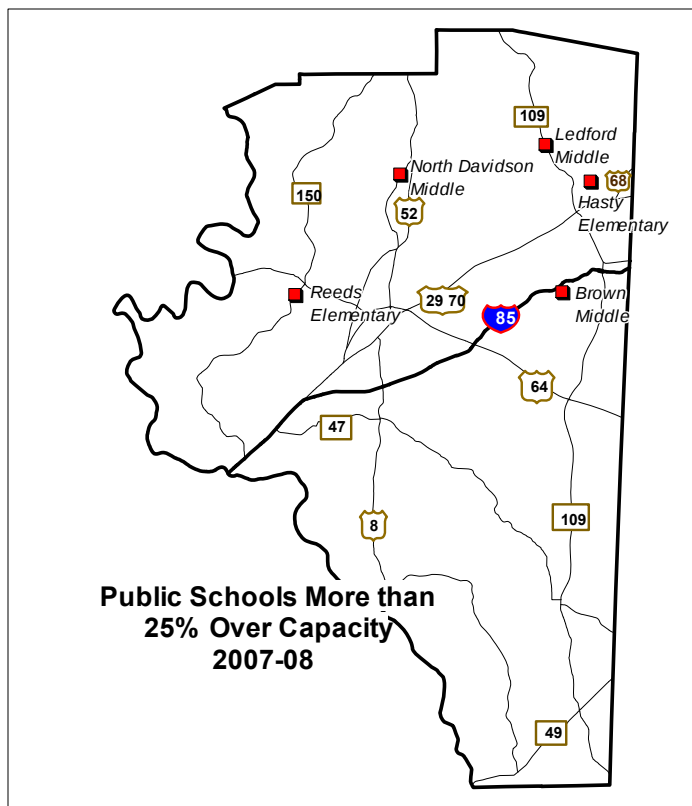
School		System	Enrollment 06-07	Enrollment 01-02	Change, past 5 years
North Davidson High	High	County	1,593	1,380	213
Ledford High	High	County	1,048	860	188
Thomasville High	High	Thomasville	710	570	140
Friedberg Elementary	Elementary	County	511	378	133
East Davidson High	High	County	976	863	113
Ledford Middle	Middle	County	879	767	112
Extended Day	Middle/High	County	147	63	84
Southwood Elementary	Elementary	County	1,065	1,026	39
Davis-Townsend Elem.	Elementary	County	571	540	31
West Davidson High	High	County	782	751	31
Southwest Primary	Elementary	Lexington	371	342	29
Central Davidson High	High	County	952	927	25
Reeds Elementary	Elementary	County	698	676	22
South Davidson High	High	County	491	475	16
Midway Elementary	Elementary	County	589	579	10
Thomasville Middle	Middle	Thomasville	584	575	9
Stoner-Thomas	All	County	84	76	8
Pilot Elementary	Elementary	County	545	539	6
Northwest Elementary	Elementary	County	644	639	5
North Middle	Middle	County	1,212	1,213	(1)
Churchland Elementary	Elementary	County	617	619	(2)
Lexington Middle	Middle	Lexington	711	720	(9)
Silver Valley Elementary	Elementary	County	269	279	(10)
Central Middle	Middle	County	797	812	(15)
Thomasville Primary	Elementary	Thomasville	638	657	(19)
Denton Elementary	Elementary	County	526	550	(24)
Pickett Primary	Elementary	Lexington	354	381	(27)
Lexington High	High	Lexington	737	764	(27)
Welcome Elementary	Elementary	County	667	697	(30)
South Lexington Primary	Elementary	Lexington	405	447	(42)
South Middle	Middle	County	402	446	(44)
Charles England Inter.	Elementary	Lexington	486	543	(57)
Brown Middle	Middle	County	759	819	(60)
Tyro Middle	Middle	County	621	691	(70)
Liberty Drive	Elementary	Thomasville	575	646	(71)
Brier Creek Elementary	Elementary	County	398	*	n/a
Friendship Elementary	Elementary	County	418	**	n/a
Davidson Early College	High	County	85	***	n/a
Hasty Elementary	Elementary	County	529	659	**
Wallburg Elementary	Elementary	County	873	822	**
Fair Grove Elementary	Elementary	County	679	1,016	*
* Brier Creek - new elementary school to relieve overcrowding at Fair Grove					
** Friendship - new elementary school to relieve overcrowding at Hasty and at Wallburg; Both schools would have been high growth schools had a new school not been built.					
*** New alternative education setting					
Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, School Report Cards for 2001-02 and 2006-07.					

High Growth Schools

Six schools in Davidson County have added more than 100 students in the past 5 years. All high growth schools are located in the northern and eastern parts of the county. The six highest growth schools are... North Davidson High, Ledford High, Thomasville High, Friedberg Elementary, East Davidson High and Ledford Middle. Two new elementary schools have been built in the past six years: Brier Creek (East Davidson area - to relieve overcrowding at Fair Grove) and Friendship (Ledford area - to relieve overcrowding at Hasty and Wallburg). Hasty and Wallburg would have also been designated as high growth schools between 2001-02 and 2006-07 (more than 100 new students enrolled in 5 years) had a new school not been built in the area.



School Capacity



School capacity is sometimes difficult to pinpoint exactly due to changing class size requirements, school configurations, special education classes, and teacher allotments. However, according to data provided by the three public school systems in the county, 19 of the 40 public schools in Davidson County are over capacity: 17 overcrowded schools are in Davidson County, one is in Lexington, and one is in Thomasville. The most overcrowded schools, as measured by percentage over capacity, are... Ledford Middle (52%), North Middle (37%), Reeds Elementary (35%), Hasty Elementary (34%), and Brown Middle School (29%). Construction or expansion plans are underway to alleviate overcrowding at Reeds, Hasty, and Brown Middle.

The highest proportion of overcrowded schools in Davidson County now is at the middle school and high school level.

Aggressive construction and expansion efforts in the past 10 years have served to almost eliminate major problems at the elementary level.

Public School Capacity and Enrollment Information, 2007-08

Name	System	Capacity	Mobile Units	Enrollment	Built / expanded	Expansion plans
Brier Creek Elementary	County	500	0	406	2003	
Brown Middle	County	612	6	792	1975, 1980	12 classroom addition planned 2009 completion
Central Davidson High	County	882	10	977	1972, 1999	12 classroom addition planned 2008 completion
Central Middle	County	702	1	785	1957, 1964, 1995	
Churchland Elementary	County	616	5	620	1951, 1967, 1976, 2000	Redistricting to occur with opening of Tyro Elementary
Davidson Early College	County	n/a	0	85	at DCCC (opened in 2006)	
Davis-Townsend Elementary	County	550	1	567	1996	
Denton Elementary	County	506	0	512	1951, 1953, 1969, 1975, 1978	
East Davidson High	County	903	6	953	1963, 1966, 1986, 1994	12 classroom addition planned 2009 completion
Extended Day	County	125	0	121	1930	
Fair Grove Elementary	County	902	1	625	1956, 1969, 1981, 1994	
Friedberg Elementary	County	550	0	528	2001	
Friendship Elementary	County	550	0	458	2005	
Hasty Elementary	County	418	8	559	1988	8 classroom addition planned 2008 opening
Ledford High	County	924	2	1057	1975, 2003	
Ledford Middle	County	594	7	905	1957, 1994	
Midway Elementary	County	594	2	582	1963, 1968, 1985, 1996	
North Davidson High	County	1365	12	1538	1952, 1963, 1968, 1970, 1977, 1991	
North Middle	County	882	11	1208	1967, 1977, 1991	
Northwest Elementary	County	792		646	1995	
Pilot Elementary	County	550	1	535	1951, 1958, 1975	
Reeds Elementary	County	506	9	685	1951, 1961, 1975, 1994	Redistricting to occur with opening of Tyro Elementary
Silver Valley Elementary	County	264	2	280	1955, 1965, 1995	
South Davidson	County	864	5	857	1987	8 classroom addition planned 2009 completion
Southwood Elementary	County	924	9	1069	1979, 1995	Redistricting to occur with opening of new elementary school, 2009
Stoner-Thomas	County	n/a	1	86	1958, 1972, 1977, 1987	
Tyro Middle	County	576	1	632	1958, 1964, 1994	
Wallburg Elementary	County	836	4	914	1967, 1994, 1999	7 unit pod & new cafeteria planned; completion date unknown
Welcome Elementary	County	748	1	680	1952, 1996	
West Davidson High	County	840	1	786	1978, 1987, 2003	
Charles England Intermediate	Lexington	580	0	466	1951, 1957, 1962, 1973	Facility outdated, replacement school to open by 08-09.
Lexington High	Lexington	855	0	820	1951, 1957, 1968, 1970, 1973, 1987	
Lexington Middle	Lexington	880	0	696	1966, 1974	
Pickett Primary	Lexington	420	0	323	1956, 1995, 2001	
South Lexington Primary	Lexington	470	0	470	1960, 1964, 1994, 2000	
Southwest Primary	Lexington	360	0	387	1976, 1998	

Liberty Drive	Thomasville	704	8	640	1951, 1998	
Thomasville High	Thomasville	860	0	715	1958, 1961, 1968	2 science labs, offices, media center construction.; planned 2008 completion
Thomasville Middle	Thomasville	761	0	552	1975	
Thomasville Primary	Thomasville	661	0	681	1991	12 classroom addition & resource rooms, planned 2008 completion
<i>Source: Davidson County, City of Lexington, and City of Thomasville Public Schools, March 2008.</i>						

Public School Construction & Expansion

Expansion plans for the schools continue. Tyro Elementary School is set to open in the fall of 2008 in the west Davidson area. Redistricting will occur to move students from Reeds and Churchland to the new Tyro Elementary School. Tyro Elementary will have an initial capacity of 550 students and a core capacity of 750 students.

Also set to open in the fall of 2008 is new 8-classroom wing (11,000 square feet) at Hasty Elementary. A new third grade wing is being added at Thomasville Primary. Expansion is also underway for new classroom and administrative space at Thomasville High and 12 additional classrooms (17,100 square feet) at Central Davidson High.

For the Davidson County schools, four additional projects are now in the bidding stages. First, construction on a new Central Davidson area elementary school in the Southmont area will begin soon. The school is tentatively planned to open in the 2009-10 school year with an initial capacity of 550 students and a maximum capacity of 750 students. Plans are also underway for classroom expansion (approximately 19,000 square feet each/12 additional classrooms) at East Davidson High School and Brown Middle School, and an 8-classroom addition at South Davidson. Following the bid process, construction on these projects could begin by the summer of 2008. Finally, plans are underway to add more modular classroom space and a new cafeteria at Wallburg Elementary.

More tentative plans include a new high school/middle school somewhere in the north Davidson area to serve students from both the North Davidson and Ledford districts. However, this project is still in the feasibility stage as of spring, 2008 and is currently unfunded.

2.10 Income & Poverty

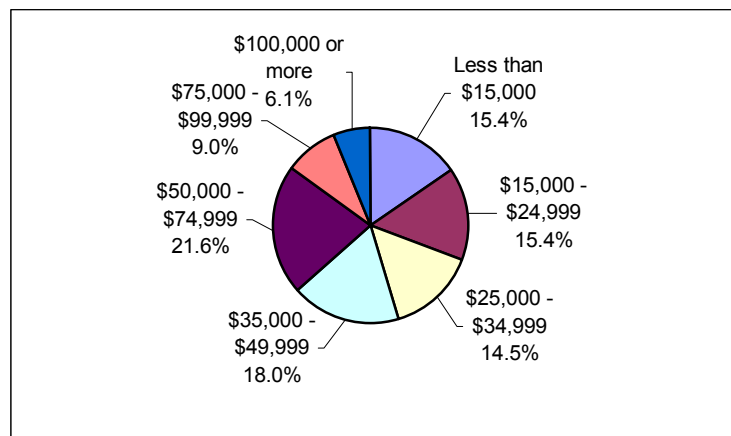
Median household income in Davidson County is slightly lower than the NC average. Due to the lagging economy, income growth this decade has been slower than in the 1990's. Davidson County's household income growth has mirrored state growth, and is rising faster than income in Guilford, Randolph, or Montgomery Counties. Davie, Rowan, and Forsyth Counties have seen higher household income growth so far this decade.

	Median Household Income			% change	
	2005	2000	1990	2000-2005	1990-2000
Davidson County	\$40,219	\$38,640	\$27,913	4.1%	38.4%
Davie County	\$45,835	\$40,174	\$29,659	14.1%	35.5%
Forsyth County	\$45,123	\$42,097	\$30,449	7.2%	38.3%
Guilford County	\$42,539	\$42,618	\$30,148	-0.2%	41.4%
Montgomery Co.	\$33,795	\$32,903	\$22,682	2.7%	45.1%
Randolph County	\$36,824	\$38,348	\$27,130	-4.0%	41.3%
Rowan County	\$39,926	\$37,494	\$26,354	6.5%	42.3%
North Carolina	\$40,781	\$39,184	\$26,647	4.1%	47.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, small area income & poverty estimates for 2005 (released in 2007) and the 1990 and 2000 decennial census.

Household Income by Range, Davidson County

Davidson County's proportion of low-income households is almost the same as the state average. However, Davidson County has a higher proportion of moderate and middle-income households than NC, and a lower proportion of higher income households.



Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing.

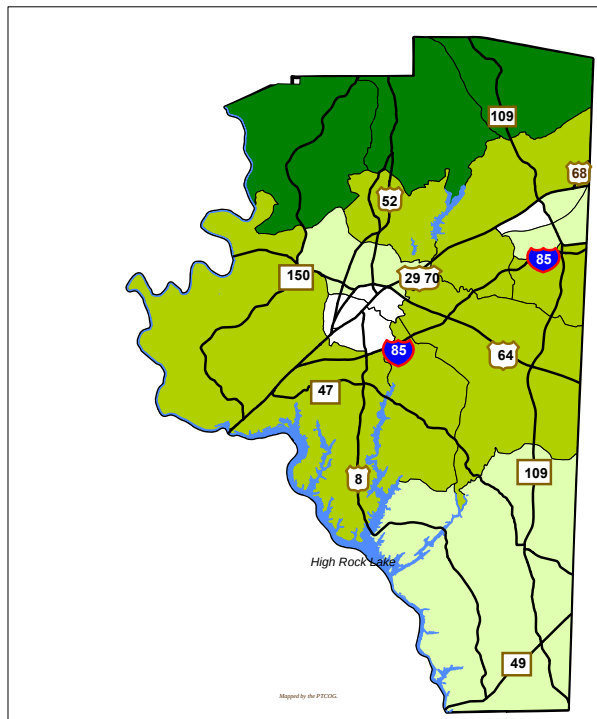
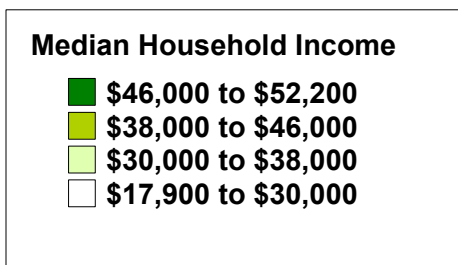
Household Income by Range

	Davidson County	North Carolina
Less than \$25,000	30.8%	30.7%
\$25,000 - \$74,999	54.1%	51.0%
\$75,000 or more	15.1%	18.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

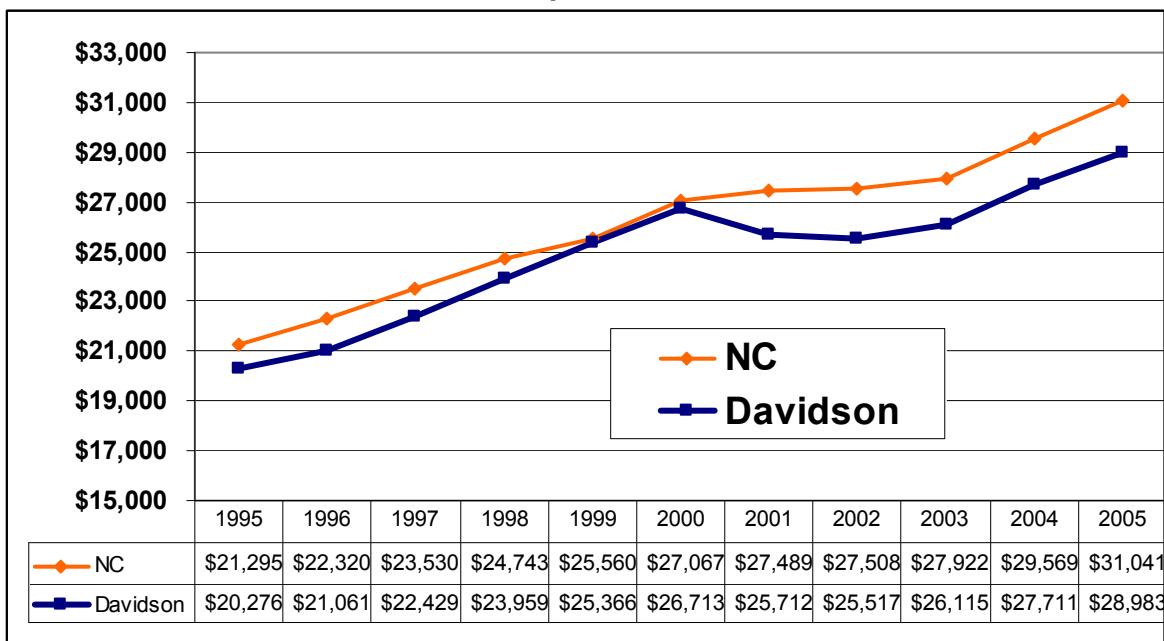
Median Household Income by Area

The lowest median household incomes in Davidson County are in sections of Lexington and Thomasville. The highest median incomes are in the northern sections of the county in the Wallburg, Midway, Arcadia, and surrounding communities.



Source: 2000 Census, data shown at the census tract level.

Per Capita Income



Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2005 figures released in 2007.

After dropping sharply in the early part of this decade, per capita income has recently been rising at about the same rate as the NC average. Still, per capita income in Davidson County trails the state average by just over \$2,000. At the beginning of this decade, prior to the recession, per capita income lagged the state average by just \$300.

Poverty

Percentage of All ages in poverty			
	2005	2000	Change
Davidson County	12.6	10.1	2.5
Davie County	10.8	8.6	2.2
Forsyth County	14.2	11	3.2
Guilford County	14.9	10.6	4.3
Montgomery County	20.7	15.4	5.3
Randolph County	14.6	9.1	5.5
Rowan County	15.1	10.6	4.5
North Carolina	14.9	12.3	2.6

Source: US Census Bureau, small area income & poverty estimates division.
Data released in 2007.

The poverty rate within the county is on the increase, rising from 10.1% in 2000 to 12.6% in 2005. However, Davidson County's poverty rate is not increasing as quickly as the rate seen in surrounding counties. Montgomery and Randolph have seen the biggest increases in poverty, while Davie and Davidson have seen the smallest jumps in the poverty rate.

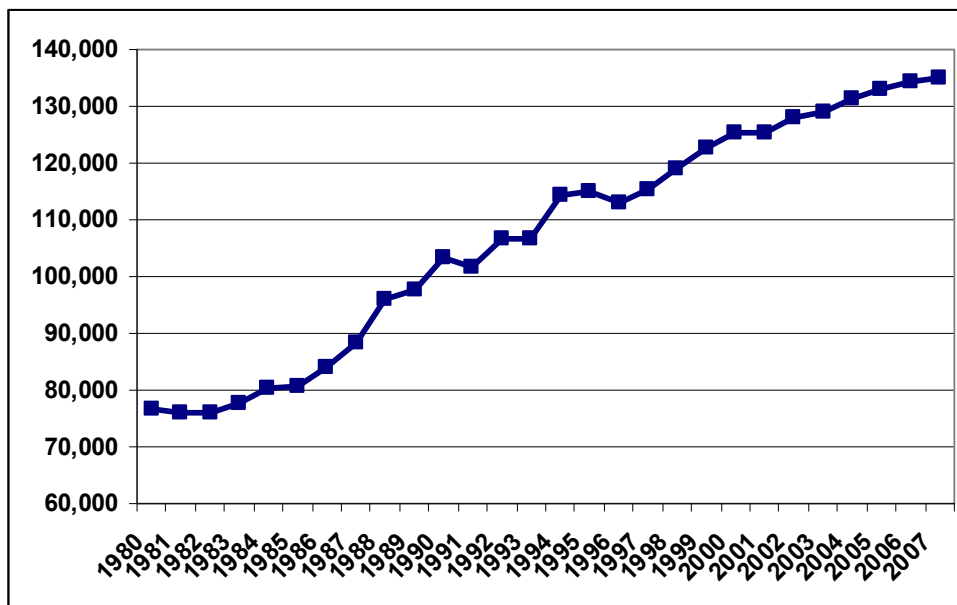
2.11 Miscellaneous Growth Factors: Disability Status

A total of 29,431 persons age five and older in Davidson County reported a disability in the 2000 Census. Not surprisingly, the highest proportions of disabled residents were those ages 65 and older, with 45.2% reporting a disability.

Disability by Type by Age		
Age 5 - 15	1,735	8.1%
Age 16-64	35,362	21.5%
Age 65+	16,660	45.2%

Source: 2000 Census.

Registered Vehicles



As of 2007, there were 134,939 vehicles registered in Davidson County. The estimated number of people age 16 and older in Davidson County was 124,180.

Because of limited public transportation

in Davidson County, living in a household without a vehicle equates to lack of access to many services, including recreation and employment opportunities. Census figures show that 3,548 Davidson County households (6.1%) have no vehicle available. Another 27.5% have one vehicle available, while 66.4% have two or more vehicles available. 40% of households without a vehicle are headed by persons age 65 and older.

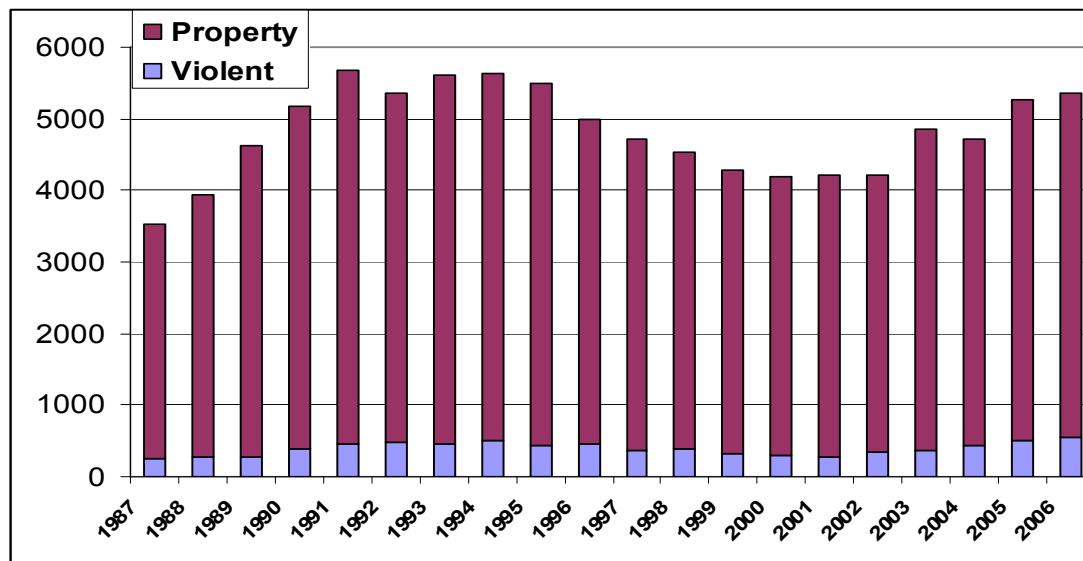
Crime Rates per 100,000 people (by Type)

	Violent	Property	Total
2000	308	3,884	4,192
2001	282	3,940	4,222
2002	338	3,866	4,204
2003	356	4,490	4,846
2004	441	4,288	4,729
2005	515	4,754	5,269
2006	549	4,809	5,358

Source: State Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports.

Historically, approximately 8-8.5% of Davidson County's crime is violent crime.

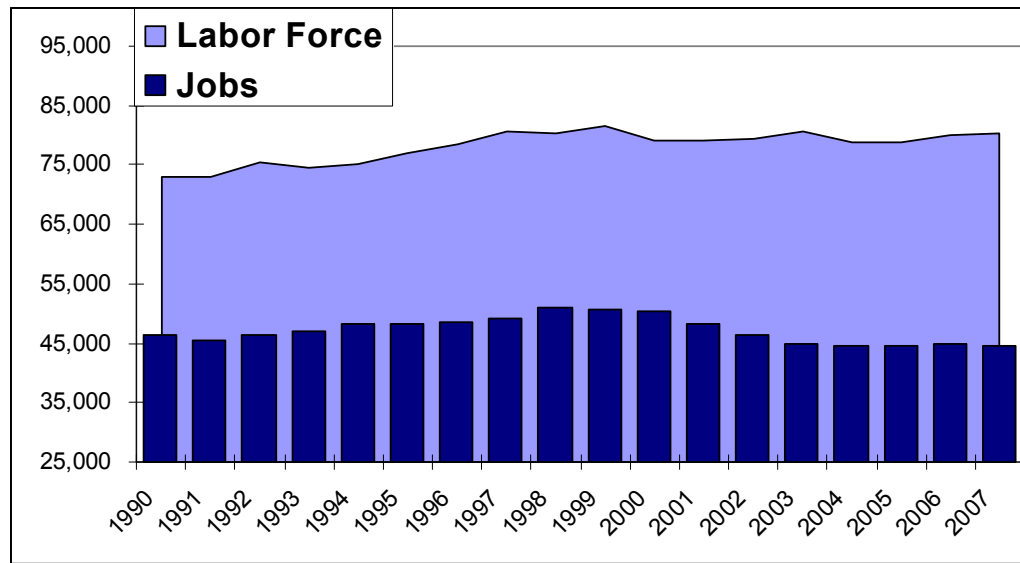
Historical Crime Rates by Type



Source: State Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports.

2.12 Labor Force, Employment, and Jobs

Davidson County has a labor force of just over 80,000 people. After rising steadily throughout the 1990's, the county's labor force peaked in 1999 with 81,700 workers. The labor force then gradually declined



Source: Employment Security Commission of NC, Labor Market Information Division.

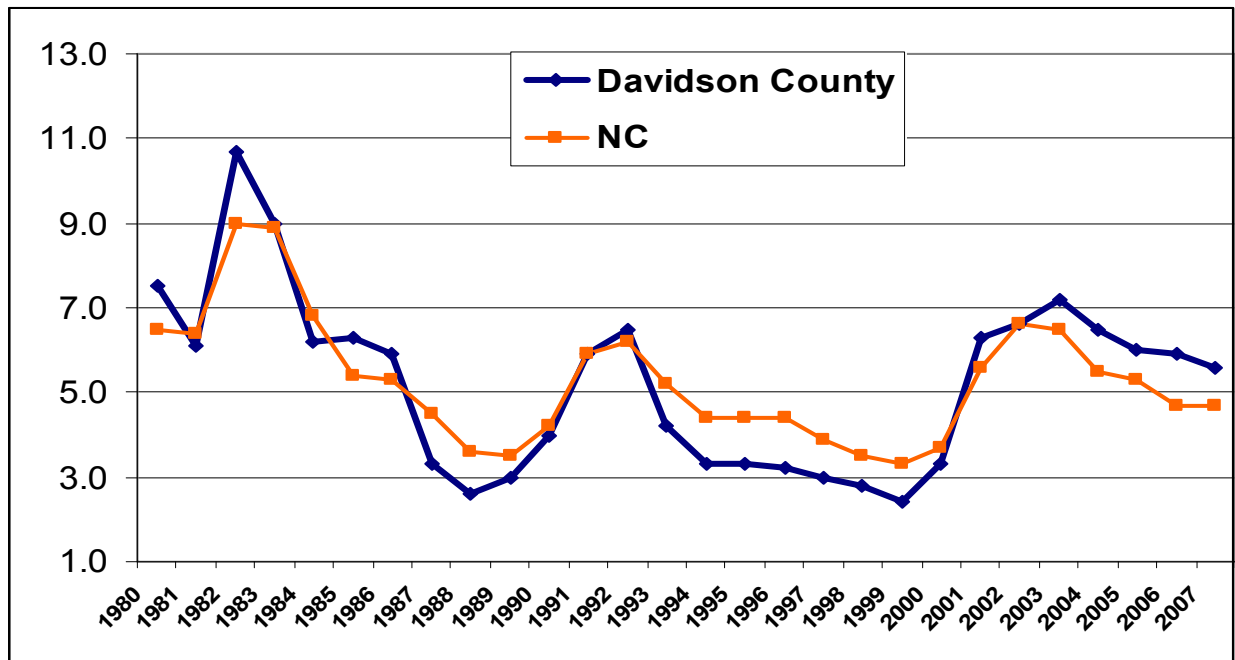
through 2004 to hit a low of 78,400 workers. In the past three years, the labor force has increased by about 1,800 workers.

As of the second quarter of 2007, there were 44,250 jobs in Davidson County according to the Employment Security Commission of NC. Because the labor force is almost double the number of jobs in the county, large numbers of workers commute outside of the county to work each day. The NC Employment Security Commission shows the number of jobs in Davidson County peaking in 1998 at 51,400. Since that time, the county has experienced numerous closings and layoffs in the furniture and textile industries. Between 1998 and 2004, Davidson County lost 6,897 jobs (net). Since 2004, job growth numbers have been positive, showing a net gain of approximately 350 jobs.

Unemployment Rate

The county's unemployment rate tends to closely mirror economic downturns. Recessions hit the US economy in the early 1980's, the early 1990's, and in 2001. The County's un-employment rate typically spikes during economic downturns, and in general, jumps higher than the NC average unemployment rate. Prior to this decade, Davidson County's economy tended to rebound from recessions better than the state overall. In the late 1980's and throughout most of the 1990's, Davidson County enjoyed a lower unemployment rate than the state overall. However, since 2001, Davidson County's unemployment rate has remained higher than the state average.

Historical Unemployment Rate



Source: Employment Security Commission of NC, Labor Market Information Division.

From 2000-2006, Davidson County showed a net job loss of 5,593. A number of industry sectors lost jobs, but the predominant job loss was seen in manufacturing, and in particular, furniture manufacturing. Large job losses have also been seen in retail trade and transportation and warehousing. The biggest job gains have been seen in administrative and waste services (a category which includes temporary workers) and accommodations and food services. However, these two industry sectors have the lowest average annual wages.

Employment and Job Growth by Industry

Industry	Employment			Avg. Annual Wage
	2006	2000	Change	2006
Total All Industries	44,855	50,448	(5,593)	\$ 29,380
Total Federal Government	180	256	(76)	\$ 45,084
Total State Government	1,007	875	132	\$ 27,924
Total Local Government	5,441	5,379	62	\$ 32,708
Total Private Industry	38,229	43,939	(5,710)	\$ 28,912
By Industry Classification				
Agriculture, Forestry, & Mining	110	98	12	\$ 27,430
Utilities	129	148	(19)	\$ 45,279
Construction	2,664	2,359	305	\$ 29,549
Manufacturing	13,375	19,392	(6,017)	\$ 32,855
Wholesale Trade	1,588	1,552	36	\$ 42,365
Retail Trade	4,849	5,324	(475)	\$ 21,386
Transportation and Warehousing	1,322	1,725	(403)	\$ 34,991
Information	313	417	(104)	\$ 41,655
Finance and Insurance	736	759	(23)	\$ 36,309
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	279	334	(55)	\$ 21,244
Professional & Technical Services	732	701	31	\$ 38,964
Management of Co. & Enterprises	849	1,065	(216)	\$ 59,074
Administrative & Waste Services	2,240	1,770	470	\$ 15,124
Educational Services	4,584	4,274	310	\$ 30,662
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,309	4,002	307	\$ 29,772
Arts Entertainment and Recreation	471	474	(3)	\$ 40,661
Accommodation & Food Services	3,213	2,886	327	\$ 11,260
Public Administration	2,058	2,157	(99)	\$ 33,803
Other	1,037	1,011	26	\$ 21,483

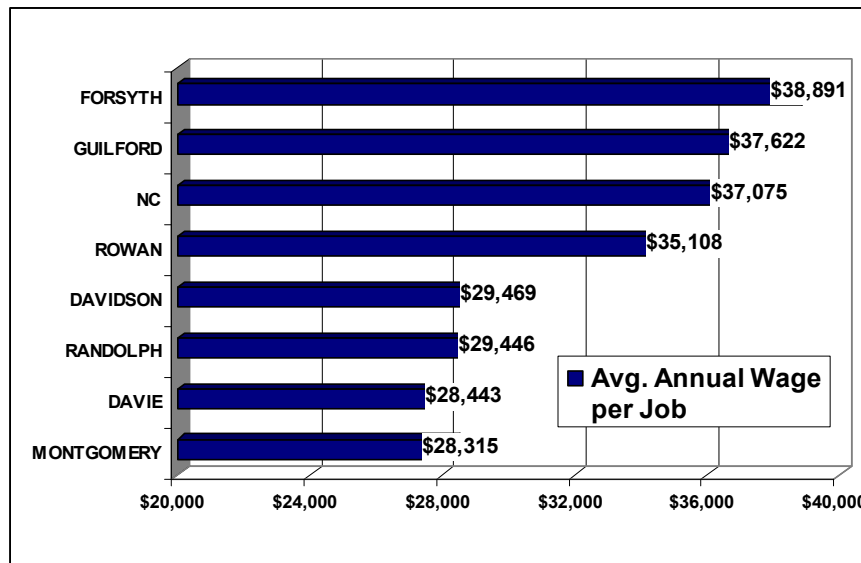
Source: Employment Security Commission of NC, Labor Market Information Division, Employment & Wages in NC by Quarter.

Announced Business Closings & Layoffs since 2000

	Employees Affected
Textiles/Apparel	290
Furniture	4,656
All other manufacturing	1,296
Transportation/Warehousing	279
Retail Trade	659
All other	357
Total	7,537

Source: Employment Security Commission of NC., 2000-March of 2008.

Wages



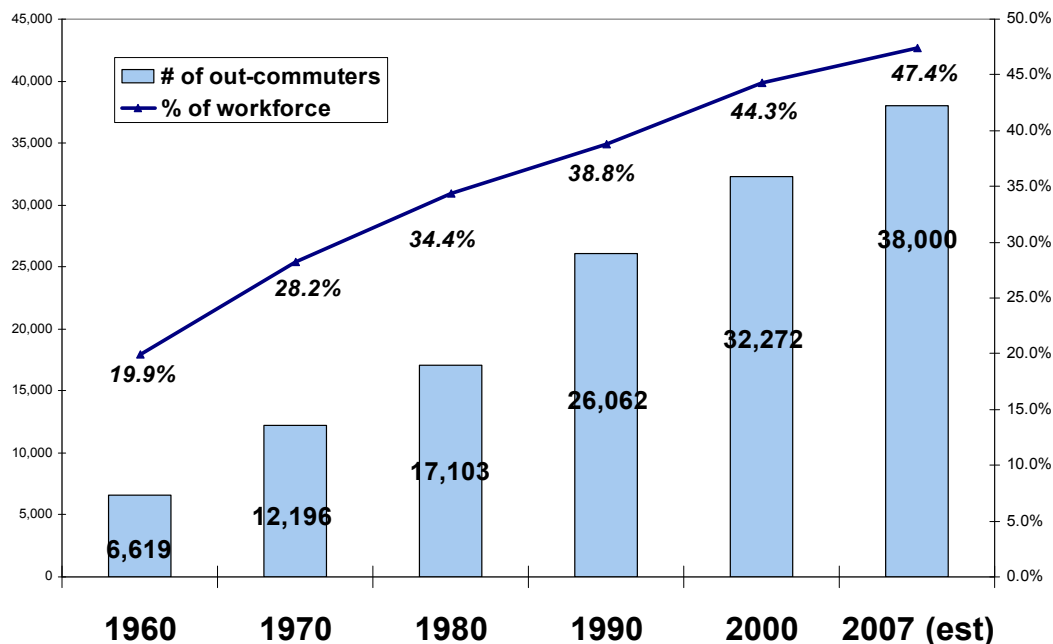
Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, data as of 2005.

The average annual wage in Forsyth and Guilford County is \$8,000-\$10,000 than in Davidson County. Wages in Rowan County are also higher. Average wages in Davidson County, though, are slightly higher than in Randolph or Davie County. Because Davidson County's labor force is larger than the number of

jobs in the county, and because jobs outside the county tend to pay better, Davidson County has the second largest net number of out-commuters in NC.

2.13 Commuting Patterns

As of 2007, it is estimated that approximately 38,000 people commute outside of Davidson County to work each day. It is projected that by 2010, almost half of the county's labor force will work outside the county.

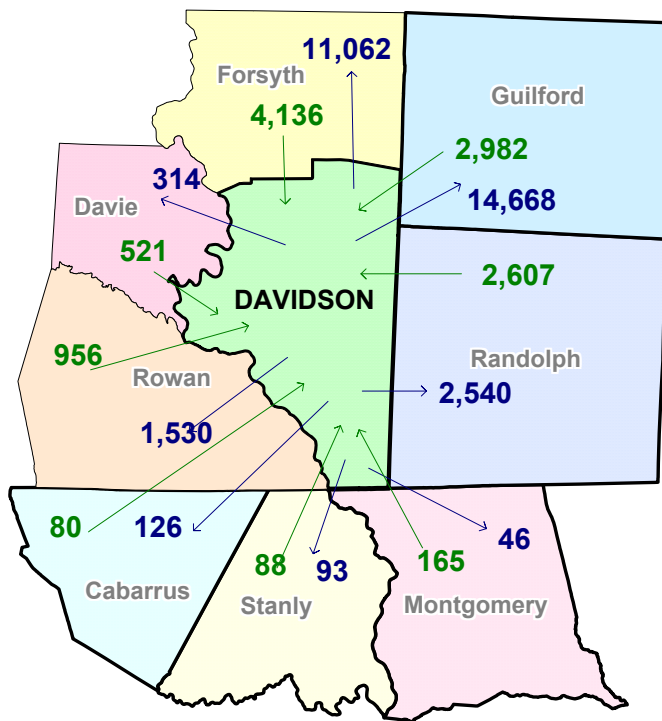


Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census, journey to work data. 2007 estimates from the PTCOG regional data center based on labor force and job growth trends.

2000 Commuting Statistics Statistical Summary for Davidson County

	2000	1990	Change
Total Out-Commuters	32,272	26,062	6,210
Total In-Commuters	13,134	8,220	4,914
Total Non-Commuters	40,621	41,265	(644)
Persons working in County	53,755	49,485	4,270
Employed Residents	72,893	67,327	5,566
Net Commuting	(19,138)	(17,842)	(1,296)
% of employed residents who are out-commuters	44.3%	38.1%	
% of those employed in the county who are in-commuters	24.4%	16.6%	

Source: US Census Bureau, decennial census of population & housing; Journey to Work data.



Daily County to County Commuting Patterns for Davidson County

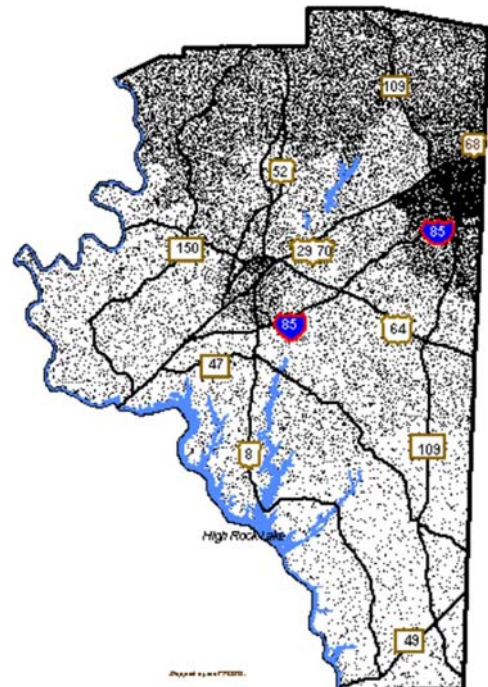
The largest commuting out-flows are to Guilford County and Forsyth County. Commuting into Guilford County has risen faster than commuting into Forsyth County.

Source: 2000 Census, Journey to Work Data

Commuting Out-flows from Davidson County

Each dot represents a worker who commutes outside of Davidson County for employment.

The largest concentrations of out-commuters are in Thomasville. Large numbers of Thomasville residents commute to jobs in High Point and Greensboro. Commuting out-flows are also higher in the northern sections of the county. Communities like Wallburg, Midway, and Arcadia have high proportions of out-commuters.



Source: 2000 Census,
Journey to Work Data.

2.14 Other Economic Factors

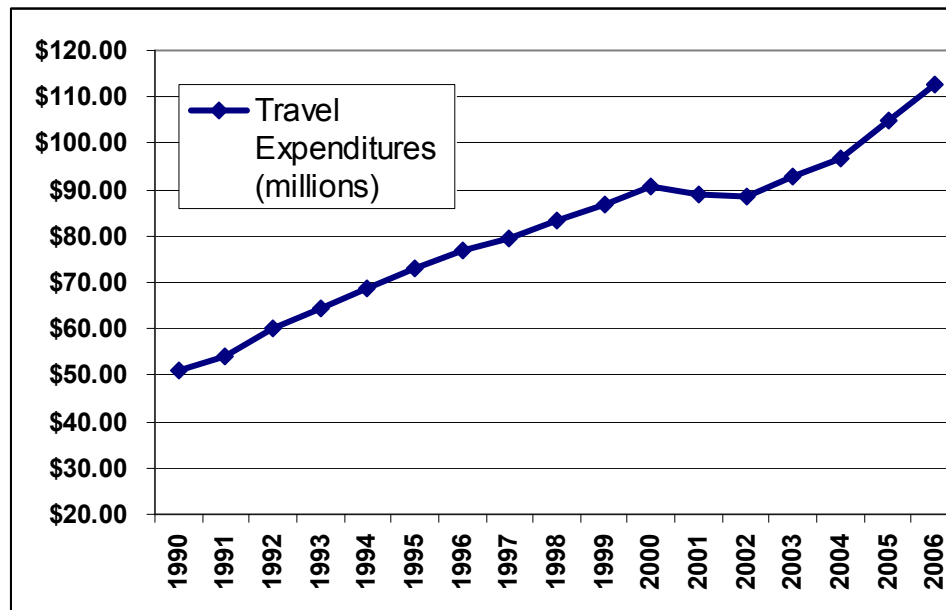
The number of businesses in Davidson County rose between 1997 and 2002. The proportion of businesses owned by females is increasing, now accounting for approximately one of four businesses. However, the number and proportion of businesses owned by other minority groups declined between 1997 and 2002.

Survey of Minority Business Owners in Davidson County

	2002	1997
All Firms	11,601	9,521
Female-Owned	2,964	2,124
Black/African American Owned	236	335
All Other Races	Suppressed	Suppressed

Source: US Census Bureau, Economic Census.

Travel Expenditures in Davidson County since 1990



In millions. Source: NC Department of Commerce.

	2006	2000	% change
Travel Expenditures *	\$112.60	\$90.80	24.0%
Local Tax Receipts * from Tourism	\$3.80	\$3.20	18.8%

** In millions. Source: NC Department of Commerce.*

After falling in the earlier part of this decade, travel and tourism expenditures in Davidson County have rebounded sharply. As of 2006, the county received almost \$4 million in local tax receipts from tourism related expenditures.

2.15 Land Use

Land Area (sq. miles) by Municipality

Lexington	17.9
Thomasville	16.6
Midway	7.6
Wallburg	5.7
Denton	1.8
High Point	2.3
Balance of County	500.2

Source: NC Office of State Budget & Management, 2006

Davidson County's total area is 566.8 square miles. There are 14.6 square miles of water, leaving a total land area of 552.2 square miles. Fifty-two square miles of that total is in municipalities, leaving a balance of just over 500 square miles under county jurisdiction.

Farms and Farmland

The US Census of Agriculture shows 164 square miles (or approximately 105,000 acres) of farmland in Davidson County. Contrary to popular belief, Davidson County is not currently losing active farmland. In fact, farmland in Davidson County has expanded in the past 10 years. In 1900, well over 90% of Davidson County acreage was in farm land. By 1940, approximately 70% of land area in the county was in farms. The rise in manufacturing and the suburbanization of the county led to a rapid decline in farm land through the early 1990's. However, in the past 10 years, the trend seems to be slowly reversing. Between 1982 and 1992, the county lost more than 22,000 acres of farmland (or roughly one-fifth). Since then, the land in farms has been on the rise. Between 1992 and 2002, 12,605 acres of farmland was added in Davidson County.

Farms & Land in Farms

	2002	1997	1992	1987	1982
Farms	1,138	929	864	1,042	1,214
Land in Farms (acres)	104,797	98,971	92,192	96,307	114,261
Cropland (acres)	57,769	55,974	53,826	56,981	64,583
Woodland (acres)	31,520	33,147	28,327	27,090	34,871
Pastureland – (acres)	27,424	26,678	26,381	27,354	30,800

Source: US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Census.

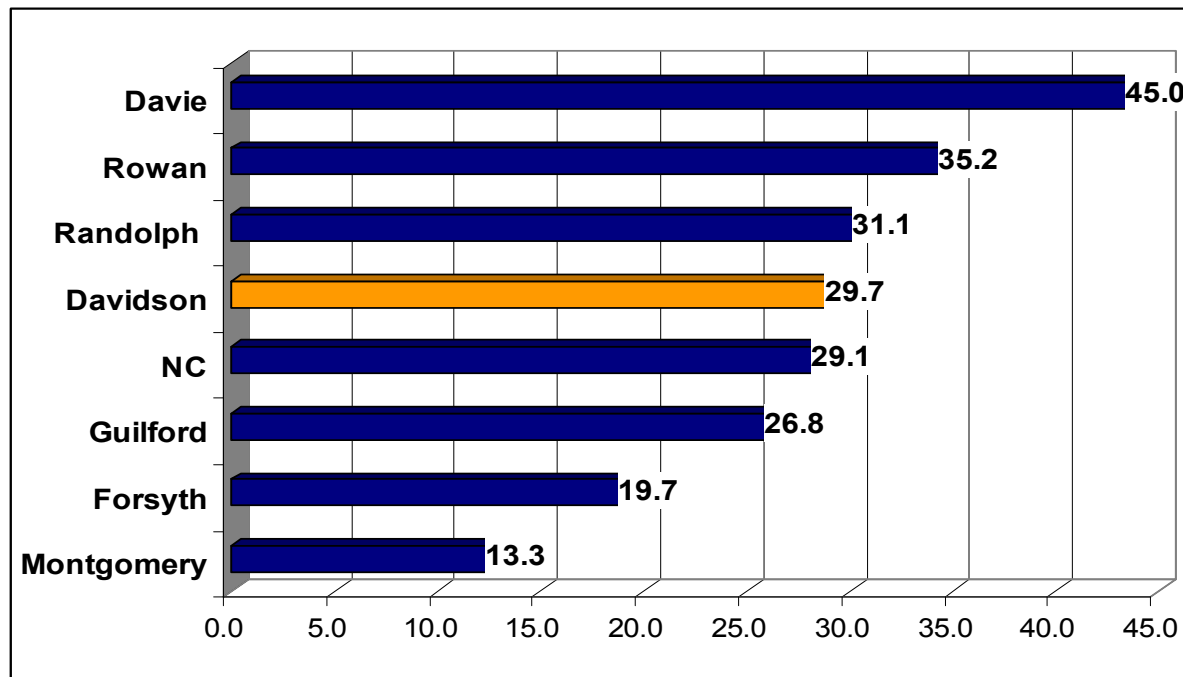
An Historical Look at Total County Land Area in Farms

1900	93.1%
1920	88.2%
1940	69.5%
1978	34.7%
1982	32.3%
1987	27.2%
1992	26.1%
1997	28.0%
2002	29.7%

Source: US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Census; data unavailable for the county in 1950 and in 1960.

Davidson County's proportion of land area dedicated to farms is roughly equal to the state average. The urban counties to the north of Davidson have a lower proportion of land area in farms, while the remainder of Davidson's neighboring counties (except Montgomery) has a higher proportion of their total land area in farmland. Montgomery County has a high proportion of its land area classified as forestland.

Farm Acreage as a Percentage of Total Land Area



Source: US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Census, 2002.

The number of tobacco farms is declining in Davidson County. Farms primarily devoted to growing grains like wheat, barley, corn, etc. are also declining. Livestock farms, especially those raising horses and goats, are increasing. Davidson County now ranks 8th (of 100 NC counties) in the number of horse farms.

Selected Farms by Type of Crop/Livestock

	1992	2002
Tobacco	160	98
Hay	555	757
Corn	252	169
Wheat	111	66
Barley	82	39
Oats	126	70
Vegetables	65	89
Orchards	10	23
Nursery/Greenhouse	22	75
Cattle	539	650
Poultry	36	41
Horses/Ponies	142	279
Goats	27	70

Source: US Census of Agriculture.

Parks & Recreation Comparison

The NC Department of Parks & Recreation shows a total of 1,821 acres (2.8 square miles or one-half of a percent of the total land area) designated as parks. Davidson County has about half the local park acreage of the two most similar neighboring counties: Randolph and Rowan. Only Montgomery and Davie Counties have more residents per acre of public park. The county fares somewhat better in public athletic fields. Only Guilford and Forsyth have more athletic fields. Only Davie County has fewer trail miles than Davidson does.

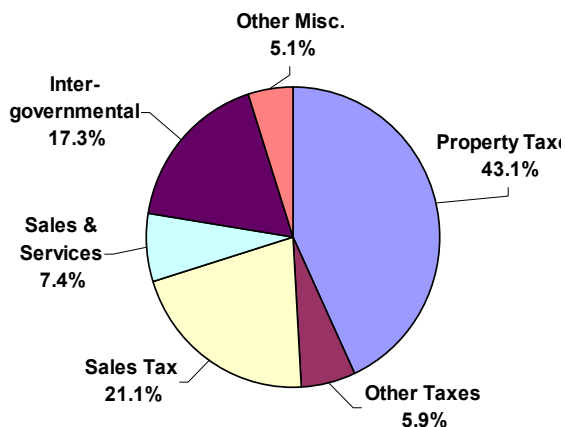
	Local Park Acreage	Residents per Acre	Public Athletic Fields*	Picnic Shelters	Playgrounds	Trail Miles
Davidson Co.	625	236	42	19	21	1.5
Davie Co.	115	303	12	4	1	0
Forsyth Co.	3,639	84	117	69	64	48.3
Guilford Co.	9,460	45	95	61	40	40
Montgomery Co.	82	327	14	3	5	61.5
Randolph Co.	1,595	82	33	18	14	17.3
Rowan Co.	1,161	112	42	27	21	8.5

* includes baseball, softball, football, soccer, and multi-use fields; data compiled via a 2002 survey.

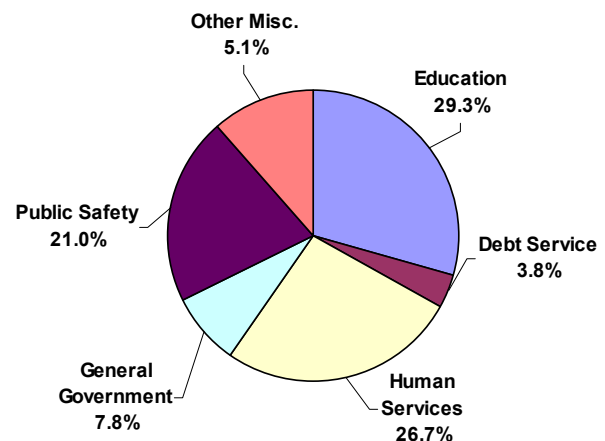
Source: NC Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2003-2008, NC Division of Parks & Recreation.

2.16 Public Revenues & Expenditures

**Revenues by Source in 2007
(excluding debt proceeds)**



Expenditures by Function, 2007



Source: NC Department of State Treasurer, Municipal & County Government Division.

Among neighboring counties, Davidson has the third lowest tax rate, the second lowest per capita revenues, and the second lowest per capita expenditures. Only Randolph County has lower revenues and expenditures per capita than Davidson.

Local Government Comparison Data

	Effective Tax Rate*	Per Capita Revenues	Per Capita Expenditures
	per \$100 valuation	(5 year average)	(5 year average)
Davidson County	0.5400	\$879	\$807
Davie County	0.6204	\$1,236	\$1,199
Forsyth County	0.6520	\$1,161	\$1,113
Guilford County	0.6411	\$1,294	\$1,264
Montgomery Co.	0.4466	\$1,088	\$1,127
Randolph County	0.5177	\$803	\$788
Rowan County	0.5937	\$998	\$966
* adjusts the tax rate to account for differences in when counties do property revaluations.			
Source: NC Association of County Commissioners, 2007-08 tax rate survey; NC State Treasurer's Office, 2007 financial reports.			

2.17 Existing Land Use

Land uses were mapped and analyzed to identify existing land development patterns within Davidson County. An existing land use map was developed using data from the County Tax Department's records obtained in the Spring of 2008 (see *Map 1 - Davidson County Existing Land Use*). The table below shows the acreage and share totals for each major land use category within Davidson County. Acreage and percentage numbers are based on the land area within tax parcels, and do not include land area within road and railroad rights-of-way. The Residential land use category contains only site built homes and manufactured homes on parcels of less than 5 acres. Additional existing land use categories include: Agricultural/Vacant, Commercial/Office, Industrial, Institutional/Public, Open Space/Recreational, and unknown.

Acreage & Share Totals for Existing Land Use Categories

Existing Land Use	Acres	Share (%)
Residential	142,399	41.1%
Mobile Home	19,743	5.7%
Mobile Home Park	689	0.2%
Multifamily	1,202	0.3%
Institutional / Public	6,330	1.8%
Utilities	2,554	0.7%
Commercial	2,932	0.8%
Office	954	0.3%
Industrial	6,487	1.9%
Parks/Open Space	483	0.1%
Vacant	149,646	43.2%
Unknown	3,587	1.0%

Source: Davidson County Tax & GIS Departments, 2008

The following sub-section provides a more detailed description of the approximate amounts and general patterns of existing residential and non-residential land uses throughout the county's planning jurisdiction.

Residential – About 47.3 percent of the study area (164,033 acres) is occupied by site-built and manufactured single-family homes. The majority of these residences are located along primary roads in the county and also near existing municipalities.

The Table below presents the main types of buildings or facilities included in each major non-residential land use category. The primary factor used in determining an existing land use designation was the County Tax Department's current land classification records.

Facilities Included in Major Non-Residential Land Use Categories Institutional / Governmental – schools, churches and church-owned facilities, governmental properties, and cemeteries Commercial / Office - retail services, restaurants, automobile dealers, automobile service facilities, offices and convenience stores Industrial – manufacturing, saw mills, gas and oil storage, mining and quarrying, public utilities, landfills, and airports
--

Institutional / Governmental – About 1.8% of the study area (6,330 acres) is categorized as institutional / public uses. Church facilities and schools are the most prevalent institutional uses found in the study area.

Commercial / Office – Approximately 1.1% of the land within the study area is being used for commercial / office purposes (3,886 acres). The predominate commercial / office development pattern in the county study area consists of stand alone convenience stores, gas stations and small, locally-owned business establishments. Most commercial / office uses within the county are scattered along primary roads.

Industrial – Approximately 1.9% (6,487 acres) of industrial land uses lie within the study area. A variety of other smaller industrial uses are scattered throughout the county.

Parks and Open Space – The recreational land use category contains 483 acres or approximately 0.1% on the study area. This category includes land that is currently being used for golf courses and campgrounds. Davidson County's planning jurisdiction contains multiple golf courses that provide much of the county's recreational acreage. Additionally, Boone's Cave Park offers county residents a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a day in the park.

2.18 Land Development Suitability

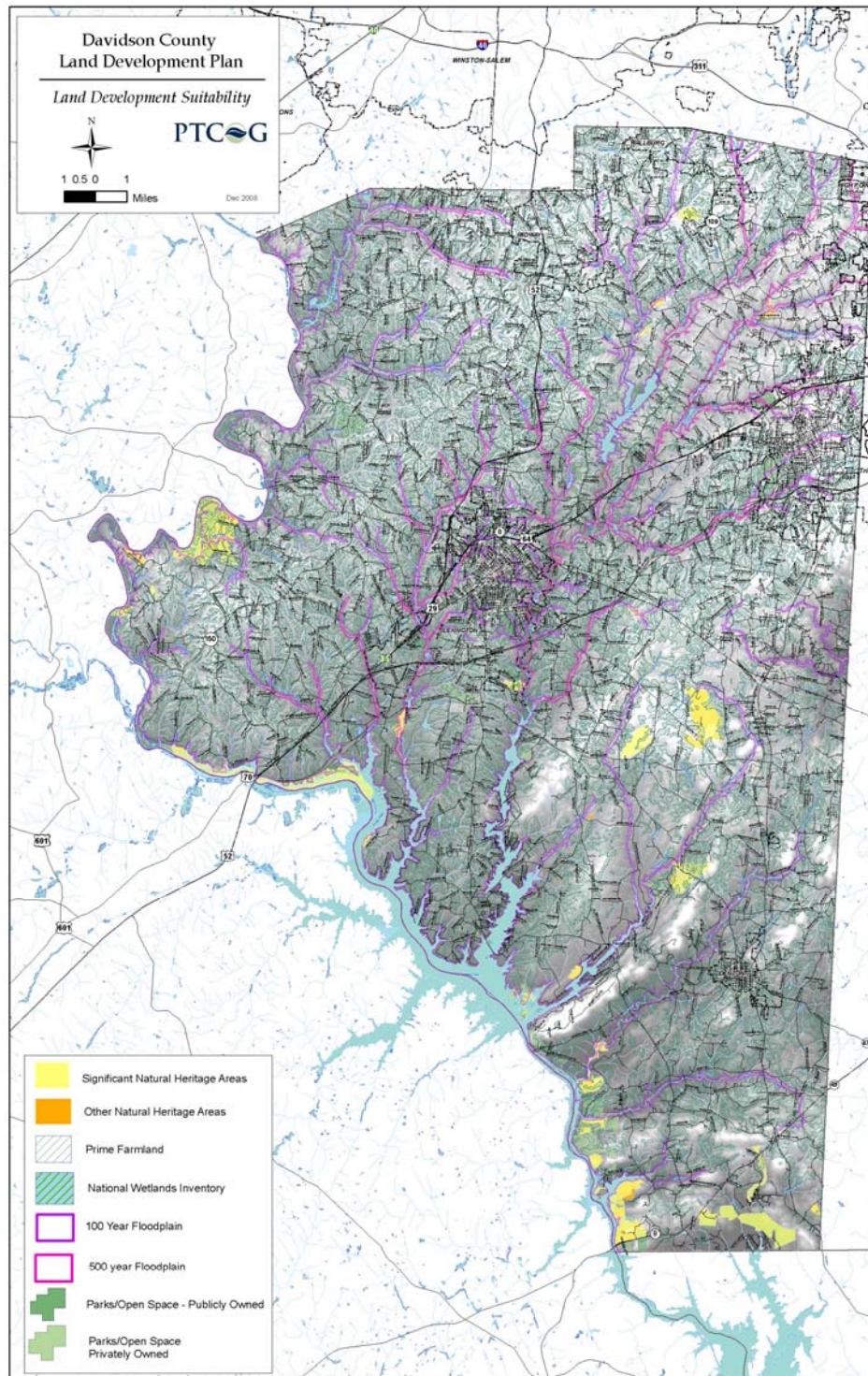
Two key environmental growth factors—steep slopes and flood hazard areas—were mapped and analyzed to identify physical limitations and regulatory constraints affecting future land development (see *Map 2 – Land Development Suitability*). Each of these factors has a varying degree of negative impact on potential new growth, and often can be mitigated with additional expense and design. For example, building a subdivision in a flood hazard area can be overcome by reserving flood prone lands, grading and filling approved flood areas, building homes above the base flood elevation, and utilizing public sanitary sewers. Results of this analysis were used to determine the potential suitability of vacant land for higher intensity development, and to formulate strategies for future growth.

In general, unfavorable areas are not as conducive to higher intensity development (i.e., higher intensity uses such as dense subdivisions and industrial/commercial developments) as favorable areas. Overall, the Land Development Suitability Map on the following page indicates that Davidson County is not severely constrained by environmental factors, and higher intensity development is feasible in select areas. The two environmental growth factors are discussed separately in more detail below.

Topographic Slope Limitations

Potential future land uses are quite variable in their sensitivity to steep topographic conditions (see *Map 2 – Land Development Suitability*). Structures such as houses and small commercial and institutional buildings may have more topographic flexibility because their small footprints require less grading than large industrial buildings, shopping centers, and schools. Another consideration is the land value of developable sites. For high-value sites such as those designated for industrial or commercial use, the costs of grading typically represent a smaller share of total development costs than on lower value sites. Thus, a developer proposing a project on a commercial site may view it as economically feasible even if steep topography calls for excessive grading. As a “middle ground” estimate for most land uses, a 20% slope (20 feet of fall per 100 horizontal feet) was used as the threshold for steep slope limitations. Steep slopes are widely scattered throughout the county’s jurisdiction, but they are generally concentrated along the major river banks and tributaries making these areas inappropriate for higher intensity uses. Additionally, property located near the Uwharrie Mountains, in the southern portion of Davidson County contain areas subject to steep slope limitations.

Map 2 – Land Development Suitability



Flood Hazard Area Limitations

Development suitability is also affected by the location of a flood plain. Areas within the floodplain where the chance of being flooded is one percent or greater in any given year are called special flood hazard areas (SFHAs). For regulatory purposes, SFHAs are divided into zones - the floodway and A zones. The floodway area is the river or creek itself and the area very near the river or creek that carries the flood waters. The A zone is the area that would be inundated during a 100-year flood.

Flood damage prevention regulations require special site planning and construction standards to minimize the threats to personal safety and damage to property caused by flooding (see *Map 9 – Development Limitations*). SFHAs are designated on the official maps issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and establish base flood elevations to use in meeting the construction standards specified in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. For obvious reasons, development is not allowed in an area designated as a floodway. Outside of the floodway, any fully enclosed space in a new residence or mobile home must be situated above the designated base flood elevation. Accessory structures (e.g. sheds, detached garages) may be built within SFHAs if special criteria are met. Non-residential structures are allowed if they are certified as floodproofed or watertight by a professional engineer or architect.

The Flood Damage Prevention regulations in Davidson County require a Flood Development Permit for any development activities proposed within SFHAs. The lowest floor elevation of any new structure or substantially improved existing structure, is required to be a minimum of two feet above the base flood elevation in all SFHAs. In areas where the base flood elevation is not available, the lowest floor elevation (including the basement) is required to be at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade. All encroachments to SFHAs (including fill material or structures) must be located at least twenty feet away from the top of the bank or five times the width of the stream, whichever is greater. The regulations also set out procedures for obtaining a Floodplain Development Permit.

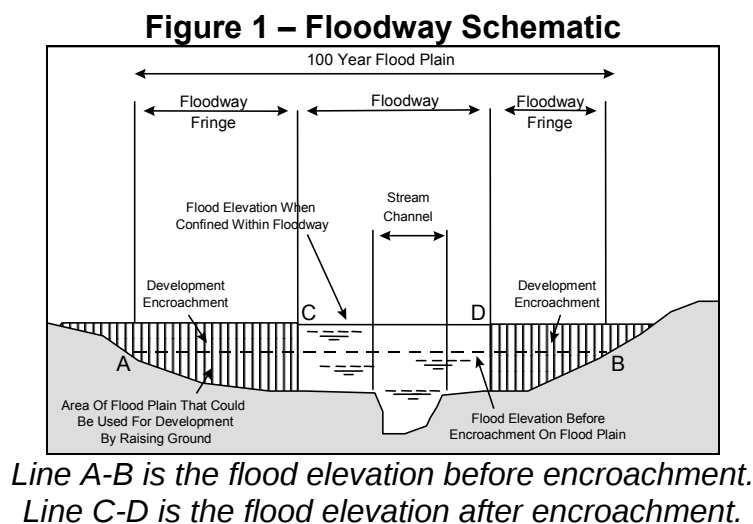
The Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 mandate the purchase of flood insurance as a condition of Federal or federally regulated financing for acquisition and/or construction of buildings in SFHAs. These Acts prohibit Federal agency lenders, such as the Small Business Administration (SBA) and United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Housing Service, and Government-Sponsored Enterprises for Housing (such as Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae) from making, guaranteeing, or purchasing a loan secured by real estate or mobile home(s) in a SFHA, unless flood insurance has been purchased and is maintained during the term of the loan.

The County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which promotes sound development practices within areas vulnerable to potential 10, 50, 100, and 500-year flood events. A flood event refers to the probability that a flood will occur

in any 10, 50, 100, or 500-year period. Each of these events has a 10, 2, 1, and .02 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded during any year respectively. For example, the likelihood of a 10-year flood event occurring every year is 10%. This does not mean that every 10 years a flood of that magnitude will occur; the actual probability is much higher.

To help protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to minimize losses due to flooding, local jurisdictions may prohibit development within all areas of special flood hazard (100-year flood zones) and unmapped areas subject to periodic flooding within the County jurisdiction. The 100-year floodplain area is divided into a floodway and a floodway fringe. The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain that must be kept free of encroachment so that a 100-year flood can be carried without substantial increase in flood heights. The area between the floodway and the 100-year floodplain boundaries is called the floodway fringe. The floodway fringe encompasses the portion of the floodplain that could be completely obstructed without increasing the water-surface elevation of the 100-year flood more than 1 foot at any point. Minimum federal standards limit such increases to 1 foot, provided hazardous velocities are not produced.

An immediate increase in water-surface elevation of the 100-year flood may not be increased more than 1 foot due to individual obstruction in the floodway fringe. However, each new development affects the whole system in many ways. Development encroachment within floodplains reduces the flood-carrying capacity, increases the flood heights and velocities, and increases flood hazards in areas both up and down stream from the development itself (*see Figure 1 – Floodway Schematic*). Similar effects occur when areas are “reclaimed” from the floodplain by adding fill and increasing elevation. Although individual property rights are an important focus of this plan, caution is given to permitting short-term individual economic gain at the expense of other property owners up or down stream.



3. COMMUNITY INPUT

A cornerstone of any successful future land development plan is public involvement. As a result the Davidson County Planning Department and the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments (PTCOG) jointly sponsored two community meetings designed to gather citizen input into the update of the Land Development Plan. Prior to conducting the two community meetings the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning Board were surveyed to identify the strategic issues that would be addressed during the Land Development Plan Update. The goal of the two community meetings was to collect Community Values concerning land development and potential growth patterns in the County on the issue of Economic Development, School Facilities, and Agriculture and Rural Preservation. This section of the plan presents the results of the two community meetings.

3.1 Purpose of Gathering Community Input

The Community Meetings were sponsored in an effort to gather community input that will guide the update of the Davidson County Land Development Plan. Specifically, the meetings were designed to:

1. Serve as a valuable source of information concerning the community's values, likes, dislikes, and dreams.
2. Guide government decisions on future land use regulations, patterns, and needs.
3. Allow and encourage citizen input into the land development planning process.

3.2 Community Meetings Format

The community meetings were jointly hosted by the Davidson County Planning Department and the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments. The meetings were held at the Davidson County Community College, which served as a central location for the community to gather. Additionally, the meetings attempted to gather a broad cross-section of community interests into the planning process. Below is a list of the dates of the two community meetings.

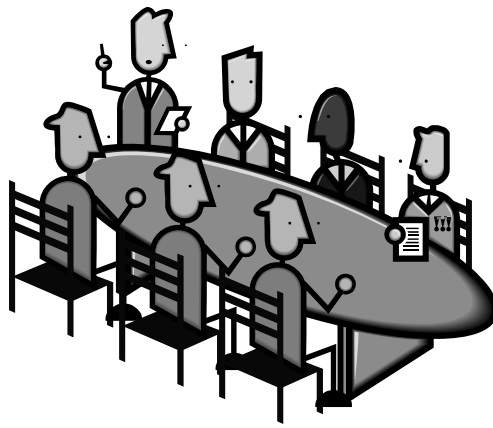
- April 3, 2008 Davidson County Community College
- April 10, 2008 Davidson County Community College

Each meeting began at 6:30pm and concluded at approximately 8:30pm. The agenda for each of the meetings was exactly the same. A sample agenda is provided in the Appendix of this document. The focus of the Community Meetings themselves consisted of three components:

1. An individual exercise to gather general background information on the participants feelings on specific development related topics;

-
2. A small group exercise to identify what efforts should be undertaken to improve economic development, school facilities, and agricultural and rural area preservation in Davidson County, and
 3. A review of the meeting results and public comment period.

Upon completion of the small group exercise the participants were asked to prioritize the ten most important ideas that were developed during the meeting. These ideas will be critical to the developing a successful Land Development Plan update that reflects the wants and desires of the public.



3.3 Community Meeting Results

The following is the compilation of the results of the general information questions asked of all attendees to the two community meetings held in 2008 in Davidson County.

1. How much population growth (over the next 20 years) would you like to see in Davidson County?

-15% (132,500)	0% (156,000)	+15% (180,000)	+30% (203,000)	+45% (226,000)
0%	19%	64%	8%	9%

- *Community Meeting attendees would like to see Davidson County grow moderately over the next 20 years.*

2. Davidson County is in a strong position to attract and influence the type of growth that it wants.

Strongly Disagree	41%
Disagree	12%
No Opinion	2%
Agree	41%
Strongly Agree	4%

- *The participants of the Community Meetings were divided on statement #2 with 41% strongly disagreeing and 41% agreeing that Davidson County can attract and influence the growth that it wants.*

3. New land development should be required to pay its own way.

Strongly Disagree	2%
Disagree	4%
No Opinion	9%
Agree	26%
Strongly Agree	59%

- *The majority of Community Meeting participants believed that new land development should be required to pay its own way.*

4. Farmland and agricultural areas should be protected from encroaching development.

Strongly Disagree	10%
Disagree	13%
No Opinion	5%
Agree	22%
Strongly Agree	51%

- *Slightly more than half (51%) of the residents attending the Community meetings strongly agreed that farmland and agricultural areas should be protected from new development.*

5. Davidson County should focus on attracting alternative industries that have not been traditionally part of the local employment base.

Strongly Disagree	4%
Disagree	0%
No Opinion	0%
Agree	35%
Strongly Agree	61%

- *Almost all (96%) of the residents that attended the two community meetings agreed or strongly agreed that Davidson County should focus on attracting alternative industries.*

6. Developers should be encouraged to provide school sites to help prevent overcrowding in local schools.

Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	4%
No Opinion	0%
Agree	26%
Strongly Agree	70%

- *97% of the residents that attended the two community meetings agreed or strongly agreed that developers should be encouraged to provide school sites to ease overcrowding.*

7. School facilities and capacities should influence growth and development decisions.

Strongly Disagree	8%
Disagree	2%
No Opinion	0%
Agree	17%
Strongly Agree	73%

- *Almost three quarters (73%) of the participants attending the community meetings strongly agreed that school facilities and school capacities should factor into development decisions.*

8. Agriculture should be viewed as a viable economic activity.

Strongly Disagree	0%
Disagree	8%
No Opinion	0%
Agree	25%
Strongly Agree	68%

- *More than 93% of the Community Meeting participants believe that agriculture should be viewed as a viable economic activity.*

9. Davidson County should focus on becoming a bedroom community for surrounding areas.

Strongly Disagree	50%
Disagree	38%
No Opinion	4%
Agree	6%
Strongly Agree	2%

- *88% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that Davidson County should focus only residential development and become a bedroom community for surrounding cities.*

10. Which of these issues is the most important for Davidson County?

Economic Development	School Facilities	Agriculture & Rural Preservation
44%	11%	45%

- *Community Meeting participants felt that both Agriculture & Rural Preservation (45%) and Economic Development (44%) were the two most important issues for Davidson County.*

11. Davidson County should preserve open space.

Strongly Disagree	7%
Disagree	2%
No Opinion	2%
Agree	23%
Strongly Agree	66%

- *Davidson County residents attending the Community Meetings felt strongly that open space should be preserved in the County.*

12. How would you improve the quality of life in Davidson County (open/write-in question)?

- *Radically reduce the scope and power of government (3 votes).*



3.4 Top Ten Ideas

Below is a summary of the results of the small group workshop and prioritization of ideas exercise conducted at both community meetings. The roughly 80 attendees were asked to identify potential ideas that would improve economic development, school facilities, and agriculture and rural preservation efforts in Davidson County. Results of this exercise were posted, and participants were asked to identify their top ten ideas by voting with colored dots. The top results of those votes are shown below.

“Top Ten” Ideas

Rank	Idea
1	Add new policy “Eminent domain shall never be used to achieve economic development goals.”
2	Support and Promote Voluntary Agriculture Districts
3	Offer economic incentives for agricultural and rural preservation
4	Recruit for higher paying jobs (e.g. medical, high tech, auto manufacturing)
5	Enact measures to protect water quality
6	Offer incentives for revitalization efforts (downtowns, brownfields, old industrial sites).
7	Require developers to donate a percentage of land or payment in lieu of to go towards new school construction.
8	Considering deleting all existing policies.
9	Identify specific economic development corridors and spend money to attract industry/jobs.
10	New development must preserve 10-15% for buffering

The community meetings generated numerous ideas on how to improve economic development, school facilities, and agriculture and rural preservation in Davidson County. Residents cherish the rural spaces and abundant natural resources that can be found in the County and also want the County to provide economic opportunities for future generations. In particular, attendees believed that the Land Development Plan should include proactive measures to help spur economic growth, improve school facilities, and protect agriculture and rural preservation.

3.5 Conclusions

Approximately 80 people attended the two community meetings held in Davidson County during April of 2008. Overall, the Community Meetings provide the Davidson County Planning Department and the PTCOG with valuable public input into the planning process. The community input collected at the meetings will be synthesized with the existing conditions to provide a foundation for the land development plan. In the coming months the Land Development Plan Update Steering Committee will begin to examine the existing conditions report generated for Davidson County and review the ideas and thoughts generated at the two community meetings.

Policies for Growth and Development

Part of the Davidson County Land Development Plan

The following pages contain the Policies for Growth and Development of the Davidson County Land Development Plan. These policies are presented largely in response to growth issues identified by the public and further discussed by the Land Development Plan Steering Committee.

The Policies of the Land Development Plan are designed to provide a basis for future decisions regarding general development, capital improvements, rezoning requests, subdivision approvals and other related matters. The intention is to establish agreed upon principles from which a coordinated strategy for development can be implemented. A brief definition of a Policy Statement follows:

Policy Statements: *Brief statements of local government principle designed to achieve legitimate public objectives related to the issue.*

The following glossary is intended to convey the specific meaning of these key words as used in the Land Development Plan Policy Statements.

- (1) adequate: sufficient to achieve the intended purpose or prevent harm
- (2) allow, authorize: official action to let something happen
- (3) control: to regulate
- (4) discourage: to not favor
- (5) encourage: to foster, to promote
- (6) may: provides the option, but not required
- (7) prohibit: not allowed
- (8) reasonable, reasonably: not extreme
- (9) require: to mandate a standard
- (10) shall: mandatory, not optional
- (11) should: preferred but not required
- (12) significant: determined by quantity or relative impact

Are there specific terms used to describe different types of roads?

The following terms for specific types of roads may be used in the policy statements:

- (1) limited access roadway: access available only at separated grade intersections with on ramps and off ramps, very large traffic volumes
- (2) arterial: a major roadway, access available at at-grade intersections only, large traffic volumes
- (3) collector street: a mid-level street, with moderate traffic loads, often times serving to collect traffic from interesting minor streets and “deliver it” to a major street or highway
- (4) minor street: a side street or lightly traveled street, usually residential.

Policies for Growth and Development

Part of the Davidson County Land Development Plan

Policy Section 1: Economic Development

Historically, Davidson County has had a similar experience in its economic evolution as the rest of the country. An economy that was originally based on agriculture transitioned into a manufactured based economy that served the County well for more than half a century. Today, Davidson County, like many communities, is grappling with the evolution of a manufacturing economy shifting to an economy based on the service industry.

However, even with these changes, Davidson County remains committed to providing its residents quality places of employment. As a result, the County employs a proactive approach to economic development that has paid dividends in recent years as traditional manufacturing economy jobs have been successfully replaced with employment opportunities for the 21st century. In 2007, the Thomasville-Lexington Micropolitan Area was ranked No.1 by *Site Selection* in its annual rankings of small towns across the United States. “By capturing 30 corporate real estate projects that meet the criteria for inclusion in the Conway New Plant Database, the Thomasville-Lexington micro beat out every other small town in the nation.”

Davidson County’s location provides it with a competitive advantage over many other communities. Located in the Piedmont Triad region of North Carolina and bordering the Charlotte Metropolitan Area, Davidson County offers proximity to larger urban areas without the inherent costs of those addresses. Additionally, Davidson County’s traditionally based manufacturing workforce provides potential employers with quality, hardworking employees that can get the job done.

An opportunity and challenge facing future economic development efforts in Davidson County has been the success of previous initiatives to provide ready to build sites for prospective clients. At the time of this publication many of the industrial and business parks developed by the County have either reached or are nearing capacity. As a result, future planning must ensure the provision of additional acreage for new efforts and the expansion of existing sites. Davidson County has been extremely successful retaining and recruiting quality companies to the County. The following Strategies and Policies will provide a roadmap for the continuation of these successes.

Economic Development Policies

Policy 1.1: New and expanding industries and businesses should be encouraged which: 1) diversify the local economy, 2) train and utilize a more highly skilled labor force and 3) increase per capita income.

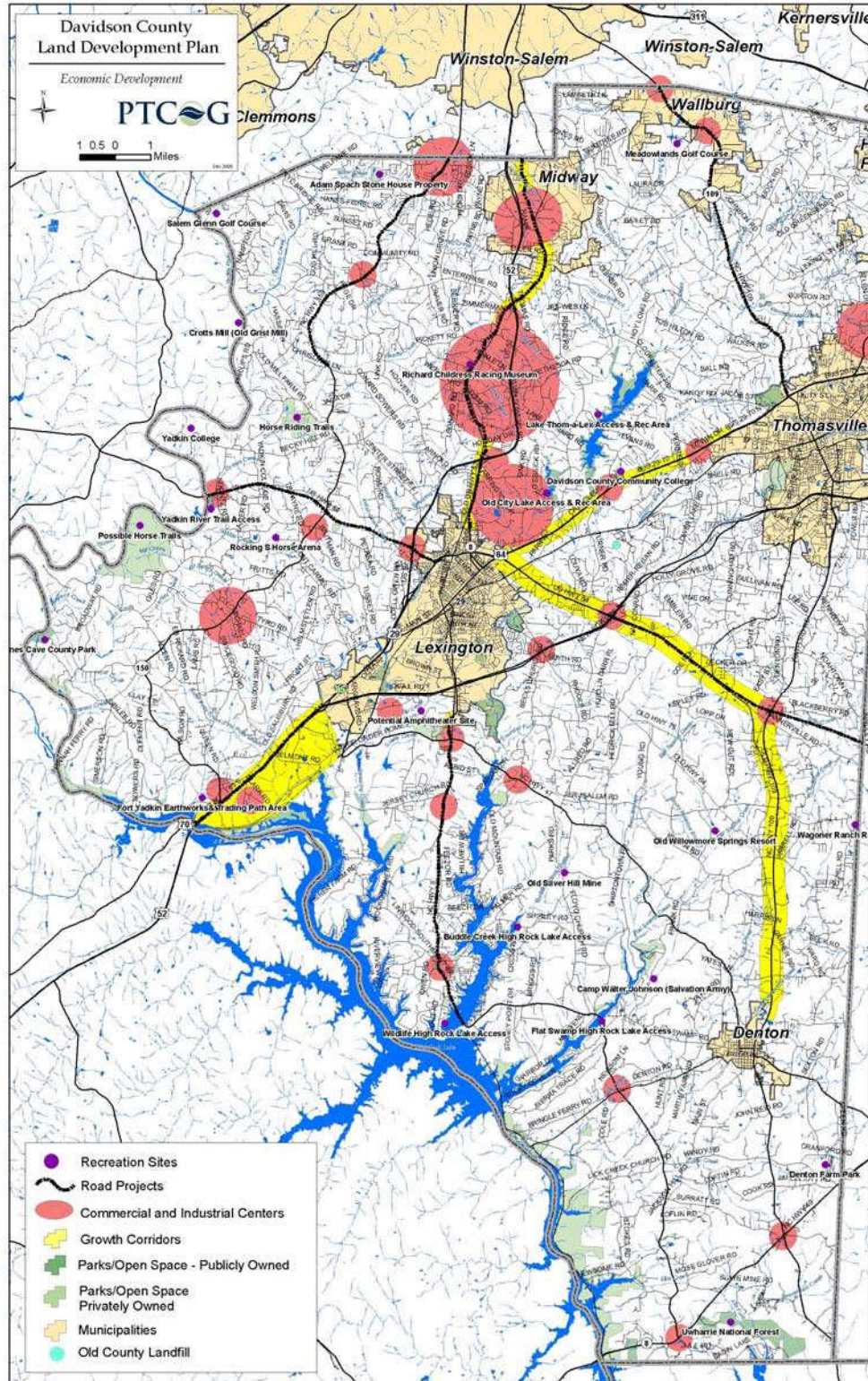
Policy 1.2: The County should protect, enhance, and encourage a high quality of life and image as an effective component of an economic development and diversification strategy.

Policy 1.3: Specific transportation corridors and strategically located intersections may be the focus of coordinated County policy and capital expenditures for the purpose of economic development.

Policy 1.4: The continued growth of the area’s tourism industry should be encouraged and further explored through concerted cooperation.

Policy 1.5: Economic development efforts should encourage the revitalization and reuse of currently unused or underutilized structures, sites and infrastructure in appropriately located areas.

Map 3 – Economic Development



Policy 1.6: The County should encourage coordination of economic development resources among various local institutional agencies and seek regional cooperation and interaction among areas with shared economic interests.

Policy 1.7: Small business start-ups, expansions and spin-offs should be encouraged in appropriate locations.

Policy 1.8: The County endorses a pro-business/pro-growth attitude.

Policy 1.9: Continued improvements to the Davidson County Airport should be supported.

Policy 1.10: Protect and obtain more acreage for future industrial parks (see Economic Development Map).

Policy 1.11: Seek financial incentives for redevelopment of Davidson County's community centers (downtowns), brownfields, and industrial sites.

Policy 1.12: Develop training programs through the Davidson County Community College that leverage the assets of existing businesses and industries.

Policy 1.13: Protect Davidson County's water quality and plan for its quantity as we grow.

Policy 1.14: Develop a plan for providing an adequate water supply for future growth and development.

Policy 1.15: Update the Zoning Ordinance to allow mixed use developments in order to encourage future growth by providing greater flexibility.

Policy 1.16: Coordinate County policies and capital expenditures to focus economic development within designated transportation corridors and strategically located intersections and development centers.

Policy 1.17: Coordinate water and sewer service within the Land Development Plan Economic Development Corridors and Development Centers.

Policy 1.18: Develop a county-wide GIS clearinghouse of data, information, and maps.

Policy 1.19: Digitize existing and proposed water and sewer lines for the entire county.

Policy 1.20: Conserve and protect lands within designated Environmental Resource Areas.

Policy 1.21: Explore High Rock Lake as an untapped resource for attracting visitors and new development in the county.

Policy Section 2: Transportation

Davidson County is in the middle of the Piedmont Crescent and a good distribution point in the Carolinas. Interstate 85 and an excellent secondary road system that ties the entire county together benefit the area. Davidson County has joined other local governments in a 13 county region to form PART (Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation) in order to identify and implement alternative transportation modes within the region. Davidson County will strive to minimize future increases in traffic congestion and air pollution. The county is interested in future opportunities for enhanced rail service and in the studies conducted by the Rail Division of the NC Department of Transportation. Continual improvements to the existing transportation infrastructure include: (in no prioritized order)

- (1) Widening of Highway 8 from High Rock Lake Bridge to the city limits of Lexington to a 3 and 4 lane highway*
- (2) Widening of NC Highway 109 to a 4 lane linked to Interstate 73*
- (3) Widening of NC Highway 150.*

Future transportation concerns that will need to be addressed could include the following:

- (1) Air quality standards for ozone*
- (2) No connection between US 52 and US 64*
- (3) No adopted thoroughfare plan for Davidson County*
- (4) Alternatives to the automobile for transportation in Davidson County*
- (5) Uncoordinated commercial development and road access hamper movement capabilities of county roads.*

The study of Davidson County's transportation assets and needs led to the following transportation policies:

Transportation Policies

Policy 2.1: Transportation planning should be employed to encourage a hierarchical, functional transportation network and to promote the proper arrangement of land patterns by controlling the location of streets, roads, rails, and other modes of transportation.

Policy 2.2: The County should encourage street connections between adjoining residential neighborhoods, as well as connections between parking lots of adjoining commercial developments.

Policy 2.3: The County should continue to review new development proposals to ensure adequate ingress and egress for traffic safety and turning movements.

Policy 2.4: Street patterns should be designed so as to protect the integrity of the neighborhood, accentuate focal points and interesting vistas, while allowing for smooth traffic flow within the neighborhood and onto arterials with a minimum of congestion at access points.

Policy 2.5: A program of improvements and maintenance to maximize the use of existing roadways should be utilized as a cost effective and environmentally sound means of meeting area transportation needs.

Policy 2.6: Sidewalks, trails, bikeways, public transit and other means of transportation may be encouraged.

Policy 2.7: Continued improvement and appropriate expansion of area airport facilities should be encouraged. Such expansion should be carefully planned to minimize potential land use conflicts or hazardous conditions.

Policy 2.8: Efforts to implement safety improvements at all at-grade railroad crossings shall be encouraged.

Policy 2.9: The County should continue to be interested and informed on alternative modes of transportation.

Policy 2.10: Davidson County should develop and implement a thoroughfare plan.

Policy Section 3: Water and Sewer Services

Davidson County's focus on the provision of sewer services is to encourage efficient cost and effective patterns of growth utilizing sewage treatment development corridors. Preferred patterns of growth are in or near existing urban areas with an on-going interest in providing sewer services to as many of the county's public school sites as possible.

Rather than using the term "countywide sewer" better terminology might be "sewage treatment service areas." Sewer service providers in Davidson County are the City of Lexington, the City of Thomasville, the Town of Denton, and the WSUC (Winston Salem Utilities Commission). The City of High Point has a sewage treatment facility that Davidson County may have the opportunity to jointly work with in the future. Package treatment plant technology and operational organization offer some hope of allowing for greenspace residential development and is one avenue the county could explore. Such plants have the potential to fill the technological void between the individual septic nitrification field and the distant, expensive centralized sewage treatment plant.

Another issue in the county is potable water. Though it is widely available throughout the county it is not without limitations. Davidson Water, Inc. is a consolidation of five rural water systems and one of the first rural water systems in the nation. It serves all developed areas in Davidson County outside the municipalities of Lexington, Thomasville, and Denton. The Handy Sanitary District serves the areas south of Denton. Due to the service area size there has resulted a less than optimal volume of water for firefighting and inadequate water pressure in some areas. Improvements in the infrastructure could include new water towers, or booster pumps in low-pressure areas. Water system planning efforts must address water volume and pressure in the short term and the adequacy of raw water supply in the long term.

Role of Other Sewage Treatment Service Providers

While complete information on other water and sewer service providers in Davidson County is provided in the Growth Factors Analysis section of this plan, the following information is presented here in summary fashion:

- (1) The City of Lexington's sewage treatment plant is operating at approximately 60 percent of capacity. There is considerable opportunity for infill development within the existing city limits of Lexington, already serviced with water and sewer.*
- (2) The City of Thomasville has developed preliminary plans to extend water and sewer services to much of northeastern Davidson County.*
- (3) The Town of Denton also has sewage treatment capability. The Board of County Commissioners recently participated financially with the Town in the expansion of the Town's existing sewage treatment plant. This expansion has allowed the Town to accommodate new industry.*

With water and sewer concerns at the forefront of infrastructure development, the following policies were developed:

Water and Sewer Service Policies

Policy 3.1: County concerns regarding piped potable water shall focus on the sufficiency of raw water supplies over the long term, and the adequacy of water volume and pressure over the short term.

Policy 3.2: Centralized sewer services should be concentrated within existing municipalities, villages, communities and nearby targeted growth areas, where development densities would make the provision of services economically efficient. In addition, such services may also be encouraged along designated major highway corridors to encourage economic development.

Policy 3.3: Centralized sewer services may generally not be extended to properties in rural and active agricultural areas in order to protect the limited capacity of the service providers.

Policy 3.4: Centralized sewer services may be extended to rural properties and active agricultural areas only to support major economic development projects or to eliminate imminent public health problems.

Policy 3.5: Major extensions of sewer services that could result in scattered, non-directed development and costly provision of other urban services should be discouraged.

Policy 3.6: The County shall support the provision and/or expansion of centralized sewer services when capacity is available and when such services:

- (1) Will result in the development of new or expanded industry and the creation of permanent jobs in numbers commensurate with the expenditure required.
- (2) Will result in a positive payback to the county's taxpayers, in terms of the taxes generated by the new development versus the costs incurred.
- (3) Will serve to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains or water supply watersheds.

Policy 3.7: Greenspace development away from centralized sewage treatment facilities may employ package sewage treatment plants or other alternative sewage treatment systems as a means of achieving more efficient land use.

Policy 3.8: The County should encourage the development of sewer services that employ water reuse technologies for agriculture and other uses.

Policy Section 4: Industrial Development

Davidson County's favorable position for industrial development is derived from its access to major interstate highways and its position in the Piedmont Crescent. Land appropriate for industrial use should focus on rail sidings, road access, water, sewer, natural gas, electric utilities, soil suitability, topography, avoidance of the floodplain and other physical factors. Compatibility with residential development must be given consideration. Planning for economic growth by identifying future industrial sites in terms of specific locational standards falls into four categories:

Heavy Industries are generally large physical plants with extensive land requirements and low worker to land ratios. They need direct access to major transportation facilities. Heavy industries should be directed to locations remote from incompatible non-industrial land uses such as residential, office, institutional and commercial uses not related to the industry. However, some forms of office and commercial development may be an appropriate transitional use between heavy industrial and residential areas. Direct access to major transportation facilities such as highways and rail service should be provided to heavy industry. These facilities may also act as buffers or transitional land between heavy industry and non-industrial use.

Light Industries generally have smaller physical plants, lower land requirements and higher worker to land ratios. Their flexibility in location enables them to take advantage of available services and minimize home to work travel distances since they typically don't require large land areas, have lower adverse environmental impacts, and can be located within urban areas. Light industry should have access to major

highway, rail and air facilities if possible. When properly designed light industry does not introduce additional traffic into residential streets and can be compatible with nearby residential areas.

Warehousing, storage and distribution facilities are essential components of most urbanizing areas, traditionally accompanying both heavy and light industry. Many new forms of these facilities have emerged, such as mini-warehouses, along major thoroughfares in a community. They should be properly landscaped and buffered as to not detract from the overall image of the area.

Business or Industrial Parks are typically planned developments to accommodate several businesses or light industries in a well-organized setting. They should be encouraged to allow for mixed uses including commercial uses (restaurants, drug stores, etc.)

The policies set forth are a direct result of the rising need to monitor industrial development.

Industrial Development Policies

Policy 4.1: The County should encourage a public service and regulatory environment conducive to industrial development, compatible with environmental quality considerations and the availability of public financial resources.

Policy 4.2: New industrial development should not be located in areas that would diminish the desirability of existing and planned non-industrial uses, nor should new incompatible non-industrial uses be allowed to encroach upon existing or planned industrial sites.

Policy 4.3: Industrial development should be located on land that is physically suitable and has unique locational advantages for industry. Advanced planning for the identification of such land should be encouraged.

Policy 4.4: Heavy industrial uses should be separated from incompatible, non-industrial areas by natural and man-made features such as green belts, major transportation facilities, transitional land uses, and/or other suitable means.

Policy 4.5: Light industrial uses may be located in or near existing built up areas to take advantage of available services and to minimize home to work distances. Careful design and/or buffering should be encouraged to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

Policy 4.6: Davidson County should encourage industries that are compatible with the area's land, water and air quality resources, and that provide higher paying jobs to the existing labor force.

Policy 4.7: Warehousing, storage and distribution facilities should have convenient access to appropriate thoroughfares, and should be visually buffered according to their location. Access to such facilities should not be through a residential neighborhood.

Policy 4.8: New industrial development should be encouraged to locate in existing and/or planned mixed-use industrial parks.

Policy Section 5: Commercial and Office Development

Implementing planned concentrations of commercial, office, and higher density residential development near major intersections require amendments to the Davidson County Zoning Ordinance and provision of water and sewer services. Beneficial commercial development can be accommodated in a manner that adds value to a community. It should be grouped in existing town centers or planned clusters to avoid stripping

and destroying the rural character of the county. Commercial signage should be ground level and monument style, while parking lots could be placed to the side or rear of the commercial buildings. It is reasonable to expect adequate landscaping and trees due to the high visibility of commercial and office development. A natural buffer area should be left along both sides of the highway when possible. This buffer can also be instrumental in reducing stormwater runoff. Offices and institutional developments should be used as buffers between large-scale commercial uses or major highways and residential use. These areas should be planned and built at the outset. However, adaptive reuse in quiet rural or suburban roadway areas with increased urbanization is encouraged. Intensive strip commercialization is undesirable in these areas. Thus architecturally compatible and residentially scaled planning would occur resulting in a design that would be compatible with nearby residential properties. Such measures to ensure this compatibility may include:

- No bright lights
- Does not generate high traffic volumes
- Do not have nighttime hours.
- Retention of trees and a well landscaped parking areas
- Architecture of buildings of a scale and design sympathetic to residential area
- Carefully controlled access

To implement more efficient and effective commercial and office development, these land use policies should be set forth:

Commercial and Office Development Policies

Policy 5.1: Commercial and office development should be encouraged to locate in planned shopping centers and mixed use office parks to minimize the proliferation of strip development.

Policy 5.2: Large commercial centers should be encouraged to locate adjacent to the intersections of major freeways and arterials and convenient to mass transit routes, if available; planned concentrations of employment and housing should be encouraged to locate convenient to these centers.

Policy 5.3: New incompatible commercial encroachment within or immediately adjoining existing residential areas shall be strongly discouraged. However, mixed use developments, planned from the outset, which allow for a compatible mixture of uses based on scale, design, buffering or other factors, are encouraged. Further, non-residential businesses may be located adjoining considerations similar to a newly planned mixed use development.

Policy 5.4: Neighborhood and convenience commercial centers should be encouraged to locate on a collector street or secondary street at the intersection of an arterial street and be near other neighborhood facilities such as schools and parks.

Policy 5.5: Highway oriented commercial uses should be clustered along segments of highways and contain land uses which are mutually compatible and reinforcing in use and design; they should be designed in such a way as to minimize signage, access points, and uncontrolled strip development.

Policy 5.6: Rural areas commercial development should be limited to local convenience stores, farm supply stores, and generally accepted rural business establishments.

Policy 5.7: Commercial uses should be encouraged to develop by consolidation and expansion of existing commercially zoned property, when such consolidation and expansion does not encroach upon a viable residential area.

Policy 5.8: Strip development along the area's major streets and highways shall be discouraged. Existing strip development should be reduced and/or zoning should be made more restrictive when redevelopment opportunities permit. New strip development on isolated single lots along major streets and highways may be discouraged.

Policy 5.9: Effective buffering and/or landscaping shall be provided by new commercial or office development adjoining existing or planned residential uses.

Policy 5.10: Architecturally compatible, residentially scaled office and institutional development may be located as a transitional use between large-scale commercial uses or major roadways and residential areas off the road. Under specified conditions, this policy may be applied to the conversion of pre-existing residential properties located along major thoroughfares where, due largely to traffic exposure, homes may have become unsuitable for residential occupancy. In such instances, adaptive reuse of existing residential structures shall be viewed more favorably than demolition and new construction.

Policy 5.11: Businesses should be encouraged to coordinate their site designs with other nearby businesses. Design factors should include, at a minimum, shared or connected parking and access, convenient pedestrian and vehicular movement, and consistent sign standards.

Policy Section 6: Housing and Neighborhood Development

Due to population growth, Davidson County must put in place guidelines for housing and neighborhood development needs. The County should discourage the development of residential areas in isolated locations remote from services. The County should have different housing types at different densities to meet differing housing needs in order to accommodate a variety of buyers at various income levels and taste. The County should support a wide range of development forms including site built single family units, multi-family units, as well as manufactured homes in well planned developments. The County's development regulations should address the placement of manufactured homes as residences and/or storage. Manufactured homes fill a very real need for affordable housing for a large segment of the population. The County should establish certain minimum standards for consistent site placement and set-up such as a permanent foundation for new or relocated manufactured homes. Consideration should be given to exempting from the permanent foundation requirement, manufactured homes on leased land or mobile home parks. In these cases, vinyl skirts should be considered. The County should also address the growing problem of mobile homes used for storage and abandoned mobile homes. (There is already an Ordinance in place to address junk cars, the County could consider expanding this to abandoned mobile homes).

The County should encourage accessory and infill housing. Many large lots afford ample opportunity for attractively designed garage apartments or detached granny flats. These flats are small single story residential living units normally detached from the principal residence, usually located in the rear yard at ground level for ease of access. Granny flats are suited for senior citizens or disabled citizens wishing to maintain a semi-independent lifestyle. This type of housing would also encourage the use of public transit, if available, to meet the needs of the non-driving population while encouraging the working age people to also use the bus system, if available. Affordable housing units could be provided without the cost of building expensive infrastructure.

Another viable movement is the rehabilitation of older neighborhoods and downtown rejuvenation. This provides much needed housing, increasing the tax base while minimizing increases in government service cost. Davidson County currently has basic standards set for residential development, which provides an opportunity to encourage more desirable forms of development that consumes less land while maintaining a relatively low density. Greenspace development should be encouraged. This is a form of residential

development that reclaims a large portion of its acreage in permanently dedicated greenspace (open space) by clustering homes into compact areas, leaving the balance of the property in its natural state. Greenspace development can minimize the environmental impacts of new development on land and water resources; as Davidson County has an estimated 48% of its land area in protected watershed areas.

Greenspace development curtails many expenses associated with extending infrastructure such as road, water and sewer to conventional, suburban, large lot sprawling development. Specific advantages of greenspace development include:

- (1) Shorter streets and shorter water and sewer lines, making for less costly infrastructure development.
- (2) Utilities are less costly to install and maintain such as telephone, TV cable, etc.
- (3) School bus pickups, mail delivery and garbage collection is more efficient and less costly.
- (4) When developed in conjunction with neighborhood shops, alternatives to automobile transportation increase accomplishing a significant decrease in traffic growth and congestion.
- (5) Greenspace development provides for greater security and safety, placing homes on suited sites while leaving fragile more costly areas in permanent open space. this draws neighbors together socially and security wise.

There are ways of dealing with sewage treatment in these areas:

- (1) Homes can be clustered with each home's nitrification lines leading outward away from grouping.
- (2) Larger developments can employ private package treatment plants or community based common (shared) nitrification fields with an interconnected collection system.
- (3) Central sewer services can be provided to some developments.

Davidson County must accommodate this increasing population growth, thus putting into effect the following policies:

Housing and Neighborhood Development Policies

Policy 6.1: The County should encourage development to occur at densities appropriate for their location. Location factors shall include whether the development is within the county's protected water supply watershed, the type of sewage treatment available to the site, and the proximity of the site to existing urban services.

Policy 6.2: All developments in the unincorporated county should be encouraged to employ greenspace development as an environmentally sound, economically cost effective, and visually attractive alternative to large lot (i.e. 10,000 to 40,000 sq. ft.) suburban sprawl.

Policy 6.3: The protection and rehabilitation of viable neighborhoods should be encouraged to ensure their continued existence as a major housing source. Housing should be encouraged to meet or exceed minimum standards for health, safety and welfare.

Policy 6.4: Proposed residential development that would expose residents to the harmful effects of incompatible development or to environmental hazards shall be prohibited.

Policy 6.5: Manufactured housing may be located according to appearance criteria and development standards consistent with nearby properties.

Policy 6.6: Innovative and flexible land planning and development practices shall be encouraged to create neighborhoods which better safeguard land, water, energy and historic resources.

Policy 6.7: Factors in determining preferred locations for higher density residential development shall include: close proximity to employment and shopping centers, access to major thoroughfares and transit systems, the availability of public services and facilities, and compatibility with adjacent areas and land uses.

Policy 6.8: The County should not allow significant new development to locate on new or existing unimproved, private roads until improvement of such roads to state standards is completed.

Policy 6.9: Housing for retirees may be placed in locations (1) that are convenient to urban services, including medical care, and (2) that allow for transportation alternatives to the automobile, if available.

Policy 6.10: Davidson County may seek to encourage the development and appropriate placement of a variety of housing types, including site built homes, apartments, townhouses, duplexes, granny flats, garage apartments, accessory living units, and manufactured homes.

Policy 6.11: The County shall discourage the inappropriate use of manufactured or site built homes for storage or their abandonment without proper disposal.

Policy Section 7: Development Standards, Generally

Davidson County should meet the need for improvement in the county's existing land use controls by:

- (1) Addressing the need for better, more consistent enforcement of zoning ordinance and other developmental ordinances.
- (2) The need to preserve farmland.
- (3) The need to properly manage manufactured home placements.
- (4) The need to control commercial strip development along major roadways.

Davidson County's economic future is largely based on the physical environment and image, which determine the quality of industries and the caliber of future residents drawn to the area.

Policies for Development Standards, Generally

Policy 7.1: Development activities in the 100-year floodplain or near lakes and streams shall be carefully controlled. If development must occur, low intensity uses such as recreation and agriculturally related activities (adequately buffered) shall be preferred.

Policy 7.2: The County should discourage new development from occurring in locations not properly served by adequate fire protection services, including locations lacking a reliable water supply of sufficient volume, and fire hydrants reasonably spaced.

Policy 7.3: Generally, land uses on opposing sides of the same street right of way should be of a compatible nature. To affect this principle, zoning district lines should generally not run down the centerline of streets, but rather follow rear property lines, streams, railroad rights of way or other logical features of the landscape. Nothing in this policy shall justify, however, the expansion of an existing, poorly located zoning district to a location across the street.

Policy 7.4: Zoning districts adjoining major streets should be of sufficient depth to allow for properly planned industrial, commercial, office, residential, or mixed-use developments, as appropriate.

Policy 7.5: Access to higher intensity development should generally not be permitted through an area of lower intensity development. For example, access to a multi-family development, major park facility or other large traffic generator should not be permitted through a single family residential neighborhood.

Policy Section 8: School Facilities

Official projections forecast continued growth in Davidson County, with the population expected to reach 175,000 within 15 years, and nearing 200,000 by the year 2030. Approximately one of every six current residents moved here within the past five years, most settling in the northern communities around Hampton, Arcadia, and Abbotts Creek. This influx of residents in a concentrated area has placed a strain on Davidson County Schools.

One might assume that the property taxes from new residences would be a boon to the County, however, with the average value of these housing units at only \$143,000 and the tax rate at only .54 per \$100 valuation, revenues often do not fully cover the cost of schooling new students, much less provide additional funds for new school facilities. Studies have shown that the optimal school size for elementary schools is 250-400; for middle schools is 450-600; and for high schools is 600-1200. While Lexington and Thomasville city Schools are for the most part within these parameters, many of the County schools exceed these ideal numbers, and 23 currently exceed even their basic classroom capacity. In such cases, the County has purchased mobile units or pods to provide additional classrooms, but these are far from desirable, as they often lack restrooms and must be evacuated in certain weather conditions.

The most pressing issue to be addressed by the Land Development Plan is that adequate school facilities are constructed to keep pace with the continued population growth attributable to new construction. The issue is complicated by the lopsided population growth pattern, which may cause resentment among other County residents if they are asked to pay more in the form of a bond or increased taxes when their local community will not reap any benefit. For reference, the most recent school bond was passed in 2005. Most of the construction to be paid for by that bond is now nearing completion. The bond did not include sufficient funding for a new middle/high school to relieve severe overcrowding in the northern County schools.

While some have suggested that a merger of the three school systems might alleviate some of the funding and overcrowding issues, studies have shown that costs to the County school system would actually increase in the case of merger, and overcrowding would not be addressed because the concentration of new population growth is geographically distant from the city schools.

Policies for School Facilities

Policy 8.1: The County supports advanced planning for the location of new public schools. Such advanced planning should incorporate age-specific population projections.

Policy 8.2: Davidson County encourages offers of land for the siting of new schools, particularly in conjunction with new development. Acceptance of such properties should be based on approved criteria and cooperative planning with the County school administration.

Policy 8.3: The County supports the long term goal of connecting all public schools to centralized sewage treatment systems.

Policy 8.4: Traffic management and safety in the vicinity of public schools shall be recognized as a priority and supported.

Policy 8.5: Davidson County supports the co-location and joint development of public park facilities in cooperation with public schools.

Policy 8.6: Develop a Technical Review Committee (TRC) that will meet monthly to discuss and comment on proposed and planned developments (The school system, NCDOT, Utility providers, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Health Department, Inspections, and other agencies should be invited to these meetings).

Policy 8.7: Engage the Davidson County Planning Department in all school planning projects and support advanced planning for the location of new public schools in high growth areas.

Policy 8.8: Require existing school facilities and school capacities to be factored into future development decisions.

Policy 8.9: Establish a joint commission (County and School District) to investigate potential funding mechanisms to pay for growth:

- Sales Tax
- Property Tax
- COP – Certificates of Participation
- Bonds
- Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances
- Industry pays for new schools
- Develop Niche Public Private Schools
- Grant School District Tax Authority
- Developers donate a percentage of land for a school site

Policy 8.10: Seek new State legislation that would enable Davidson County to have input into High Point's and other out of county municipalities annexation of Davidson County property and the subsequent impact on the fiscal health of the County School System.

Policy Section 9: Paying for Growth

Davidson County has grown at a brisk pace creating a demand for services and infrastructure. The County's long and short-range capital improvement plan should be continued as a routine part of the annual budget setting process. Cost estimates and sources of funding should be summarized in the plan for the approximate year(s) in which expenditures are anticipated. Davidson County has three basic alternatives to deal with the cost of growth:

- (1) Raise Taxes*
- (2) Allow the quality of services to deteriorate*
- (3) Use revenue sources tied more directly to the growth.*

Coordination with county municipalities and water districts are critical. Therefore the policy on paying for growth is:

Policy 9.1: The County shall support planning and budgeting for capital facilities, with particular emphasis on park land, storm water management facilities, schools, sewage treatment systems, and airport development.

Policy Section 10: Agricultural and Rural Area Preservation

In Davidson County the trend for years has been toward fewer farms. However, the number of agricultural related

enterprises has actually increased during the period 2000 to 2006 and the acreage of farmland was reported to be on the rise between 1992 and 2002. Livestock production including horses, goats, poultry, and cattle continued to grow as did the number of vineyards and wineries. Forestry and horticulture are active parts of the county's current economy. The number of farms in Davidson County increased 31.78% during the aforementioned 10 year period and the number of acres in cropland, woodland, and pastureland also grown.

The production of food, fiber, and fuel is an industry that makes a major contribution to the county's economy, and therefore should be supported and enhanced. It provides income to owners of land on which commodities are grown; to farm and forestry workers who grow the county's diverse agricultural products; to on-farm and off-farm workers engaged in the production, packaging, distribution and marketing of agricultural products; to workers in facilities and services that provide seed, feed, fertilizer, supplies and equipment to growers; to workers who add value to agricultural products through large and small scale processing operations. Productive farms employ managers, farm laborers, accountants, feed consultants, veterinarians, and equipment suppliers. They supply food for processors, restaurants, grocery stores, and direct marketing at reasonable costs.

In addition to the direct economic contributions of agriculture and forestry, they offer other benefits to the county. Supporting agriculture is a wise environmental strategy. Landowners using sound soil and water conservation practices protect soil from erosion and water from contamination. Open farm and forest lands provide a recharge of our ground water and supply critical habitat for local wildlife. Forests sequester carbon, improving our air quality. Farms provide a link to the heritage of communities and enhance quality of life. Rural landscapes featuring picturesque farms, forests, fields, and open space encourage tourism and can be an economic incentive.

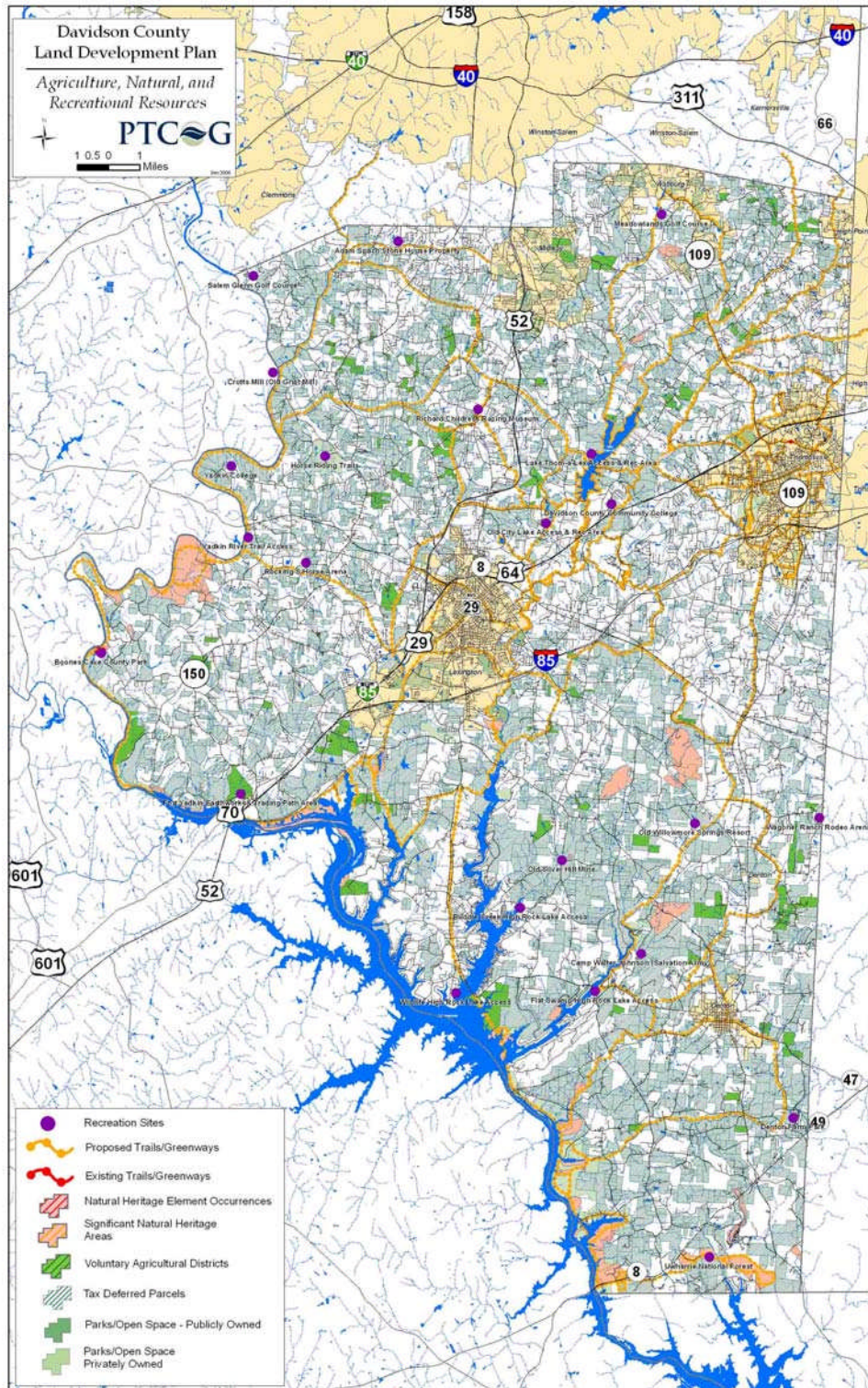
1. Farmland is an important natural resource and needs to be protected.

- ☐ Agricultural land is a finite resource. Once it is converted to other purposes it is not returnable to the original use without major costs. Prime agricultural land should be preserved through conservation easements, land trust purchases, and other feasible means of assuring its future in farming.
- ☐ The county should be proactive in preserving the most valuable and potentially productive land, both farm and forest, by offering conservation easement payments as an alternative to conversion before property is removed from PUV tax status.
- ☐ The county needs to be sure zoning complies with goals to reduce rate of high density growth into rural areas and protect the environment.
- ☐ The county should encourage the development of a food security plan to assure the sustainability of fresh, safe and healthy locally grown foods. It should use this plan to encourage food production and in its land use considerations.
- ☐ Agricultural land that is no longer being farmed/forested by owners should be listed in a land clearinghouse information center so that other operators have the opportunity to lease or purchase the land for continued agricultural purposes. Special assistance should be made available to younger/new farmers to acquire land, perhaps through lease to own contracts property tax.

2. Farmland is an important economic asset.

- ☐ Farmers need to make a profit to stay in business. To that extent, county land use decisions should be farmer-friendly, encouraging the sustainability of agriculture. Decisions should consider the impact on farmers such as increased traffic, pollution, decreased value as farmland, increased cost of farmland, or limitations for production of certain products.

Map 4 – Agriculture, Natural and Recreational Resources



Agricultural and Rural Area Preservation Policies

Policy 10.1: Agriculture and very low-density residential activities may be the preferred land uses in rural and active agricultural areas.

Policy 10.2: Rural and active agricultural area lands having a high productive potential may be encouraged to conserve, to the extent possible, for appropriate agricultural use.

Policy 10.3: Farms and woodlands should be recognized as an integral part of the planning area's open space system, and the preservation of family farms should be encouraged.

Policy 10.4: When new residential development occurs on property adjoining a farm operation, the residential development shall incorporate a vegetated buffer strip along the farm side of the development.

Policy 10.5: Seek funding for the development of a Rural Preservation Plan in conjunction with the Voluntary Agricultural District Board to examine new and emerging market strategies that allow farms to be financially sustainable contributors to the local economy.

Policy 10.6: Encourage the use of locally grown products in local eateries and public entities (i.e. schools, prisons, etc.).

Policy 10.7: Protect agricultural and rural lands that have a high productivity potential from encroaching urban/suburban development (see Agriculture, Natural and Recreational Resources Map).

Policy 10.8: Encourage new high density developments to locate in compact, targeted growth areas near existing towns and cities and in other areas designated for Economic Development.

Policy 10.9: Support the use of conservation easements as a viable alternative in protecting farmland.

Policy 10.10: Investigate the use of Transfer of Development Rights to guide growth into desirable locations.

Policy 10.11: Encourage all municipalities and business developed communities to establish Farmers Market sites for local marketing of farm and forestry products.

Policy Section 11: Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation can be a significant part of a community's economic development strategy as it applies to tourism interest. Within Davidson County historic preservation is focused primarily within the municipalities of the area at this time.

Historic Preservation Policies

Policy 11.1: Local efforts to identify, designate and preserve sites and buildings of particular historic significance should be supported as a means of enhancing their economic, cultural and tourism value to the area.

Policy 11.2: Multiple and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources may be encouraged.

Policy 11.3: Development of the tourism potential of the area's architectural and historic resources should be encouraged.

Policy 11.4: The destruction of significant architectural, historic and archaeological resources in the planning area should be encouraged.

Policy Section 12: Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Davidson County generally lacks recreational facilities though it does own a few ball fields around the county. Davidson County needs a master-parks and recreation plan incorporating widespread citizen involvement, public-private partnerships, and the need to balance park improvements around the county. Davidson County may consider a provision in its subdivision regulations regarding land dedication and/or fees in lieu of land dedication, which could help fund parks and open spaces.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Policies

Policy 12.1: Future park development and open space preservation should be planned to provide for the proper distribution of recreation and open space opportunities within the planning area.

Policy 12.2: In determining future sites for park, recreation and open space facilities, multiple objectives for natural area conservation, visual enhancement, promotion of cultural and historic preservation, watershed and flood prone area protection should be considered.

Policy 12.3: The County should help protect wildlife areas, including hunting areas, particularly in the southern part of Davidson County, by directing growth to locations in or near existing urban areas.

Policy 12.4: The identification and appropriate recreational development of a system of open space greenways and hiking trails within the county should be encouraged. The use of (1) natural corridors such as streams and floodplains, and (2) man-made corridors such as utility and transportation rights of way and easements, should be emphasized.

Policy 12.5: Land acquisition for new recreation sites in advance of need should be encouraged to achieve desirable locations at cost effective levels.

Policy 12.6: All new residential development should provide for adequate open space and recreation area in proportion to the demand created by the development. This may be determined according to the number of dwelling units in the development and/or by a percentage of the total acreage in the development. (Davidson County presently has no such Ordinance)

(Also see Policy 8.5 concerning co-location and joint development of county parks in conjunction with school facilities.)

Policy Section 13: Community Appearance

An attractive community not only enhances the quality of life but is also an important tool in attracting visitors and desirable businesses to the area. Components of community appearance can include a multitude of visual images, one of which is highway entry corridors. The County may wish to establish general development standards that apply to commercial development anywhere in the county. The County should adopt minimal landscaping standards to include special controls over signage, parking lot landscaping and tree preservation among other features. Utility poles, wires, and communication towers are already under new county standards.

To aid in the development of an attractive community the following community appearance policies are:

Community Appearance Policies

Policy 13.1: The important economic, tourism, and community image benefits of attractive major entryway corridors into Davidson County should be recognized. Such entryway corridors should receive priority attention for improved appearance and development standards, including landscaping, signage and tree preservation.

Policy 13.2: Landscape improvements at existing and new commercial developments, particularly as related to breaking up and softening the appearance of expansive parking areas, should be encouraged.

Policy 13.3: Sign policies and standards should be periodically updated to enhance community identity and create a high quality business image.

Policy 13.4: New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and sites should be encouraged to enhance the neighborhood and architectural context of the surrounding area.

Policy 13.5: The significance of street trees in providing visual relief, summer cooling, improved air quality and livability should be recognized through public policies to encourage their planting and maintenance.

Policy 13.6: The placement of utility wires underground shall be encouraged, where feasible, in all public and private developments.

Policy 13.7: The County shall continue to carefully regulate the size and placement of communication and other towers in Davidson County.

Policy Section 14: Water Quality

Forty-eight percent of Davidson County is in protected watershed areas, which are subject to special land development controls. One issue that needs to be addressed is the advisability of placing centralized sewage treatment services in the county's protected watershed areas. Fundamentally, water quality can be impacted by two sources of pollution: point source and non-point source. Examples of point sources of pollution are outfall from industrial operations and municipal sewage treatment plants. Examples of non-point sources include stormwater runoff from urban development, golf courses, farmland, etc. Land use practices should employ reasonable means of limiting non-point source pollution into county surface water. The policies of this plan call for the use of the best management practices to retain and filter pollutants from paved surfaces and fertilizers, pesticides, and sediments from landscaped areas. Also the use of dry swales instead of curb and gutter to collect and retain stormwater rather than directing it to piped stormwater systems. Phase Two of the Environmental Protection Agency's Stormwater Management rules are to be in place in Davidson County by 2003 which require a set of designation criteria to be developed and applied. Compliance with the rules may have a sweeping effect on the way subdivisions, shopping centers, and new roads are built and maintained. High Rock Lake management plans and Abbotts Creek monitoring continues to be among the county's water quality focus as well.

Water Quality Policies

Policy 14.1: Runoff and drainage from development, forestry and agricultural activities shall be of a quality and quantity as near to natural conditions as possible, with special emphasis given to protected watershed areas.

Policy 14.2: Development that preserves the natural features of the site, including existing topography and significant existing vegetation, should be encouraged.

Policy 14.3: The development of a countywide comprehensive drainage and flood management plan, including public and private actions in support of plan implementation, should be encouraged.

Policy 14.4: The County's stormwater management standards shall be consistent with reasonable best management practices as may be promulgated by the State of North Carolina.

Policy 14.5: The environmental benefits of properly designed, naturally vegetated roadside drainage swales shall be recognized. Curb and gutter shall be reserved to developments that are urban in character (i.e. less than 10,000 square foot lot sizes) and that are served by adequate stormwater collection, retention and slow release facilities.

Policy 14.6: The County supports policies, plans and actions which will serve to extend the life span and water quality of the county's water supply and recreational lakes by reducing sedimentation and erosion, and by controlling the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff entering the lake.

Policy 14.7: Stormwater runoff, as it affects water quality in the Yadkin River, High Rock Lake and other area streams, shall receive a high level of priority in development review and standards.

Policy 14.8: Local, state and USEPA efforts to improve water quality in Abbotts Creek and other area streams shall be supported.

Policy 14.9: Davidson County supports the efforts of the Davidson County Soil and Water Conservation District and the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist land users in the county in implementing best management practices that will protect and improve water quality.

Policy 14.10: Water quality issues for all proposed developments should be considered prior to approval.

Policy 14.11: Land uses that could be considered harmful or potentially harmful to water quality should be discouraged from locating near streams that run within local water supply watershed areas.

Policy Section 15: Air Quality

The United States Environmental Protection Agency has been clamping down on violations of national clean air standards. Davidson County is included among other counties in the state, which are required to include air quality emissions as part of the routine annual state vehicle inspections program. The growth and development policies of this plan include a range of options to reduce dependency on the automobile, including encouraging mixed-use developments and compact growth near job centers.

Air Quality Policies

Policy 15.1: Davidson County may focus its industrial recruitment efforts on businesses and industries that have a clean air quality impact.

Policy 15.2: Davidson County supports innovative alternative fuel programs designed to reduce air emissions, and provide for cost effective alternatives to traditional dependency on foreign oil.

Policy Section 16: Solid Waste Management

Davidson County operates a profitable, efficient landfill with a projected life span well into the 21st Century. Recycling efforts have been successful and continue to expand. The County adopted special use requirements that severely constrain any hazardous waste facility from ever coming into Davidson County.

Solid Waste Management Policies

Policy 16.1: Local area requirements for solid waste disposal facilities should be anticipated through advanced planning; facilities shall be located and designed so as not to adversely impact significant natural or man-made resources.

Policy 16.2: Research and development of recycling and resource recovery programs, whether public or private, should be encouraged and supported.

Policy 16.3: The location of regional waste facilities, including but not limited to hazardous waste storage and disposal facilities, shall not be supported within Davidson County.

Policy Section 17: Planning Coordination

Davidson County strongly favors local intergovernmental efforts between the county, its municipalities and adjoining local government jurisdictions in order to address key issues such as land development and use, transportation, utilities, water supply and quality, air quality, law enforcement, schools, economic development, recreation, and tourism development.

Policies for Planning Coordination

Policy 17.1: Coordinated inter-governmental planning for land use and development, transportation, utilities, water supply, water quality, air quality, law enforcement, education, economic development, recreation and tourism development should be encouraged.

Policy 17.2: Public involvement should be encouraged in decisions on land use and development by making the public aware of proposed developments at the earliest opportunity. The County should encourage communication between developers and the general public to resolve disputes.

Policy 17.3: Special planning for smaller areas of the county may be employed, as appropriate, to foster public involvement in the production of closely tailored, action oriented plans and programs.

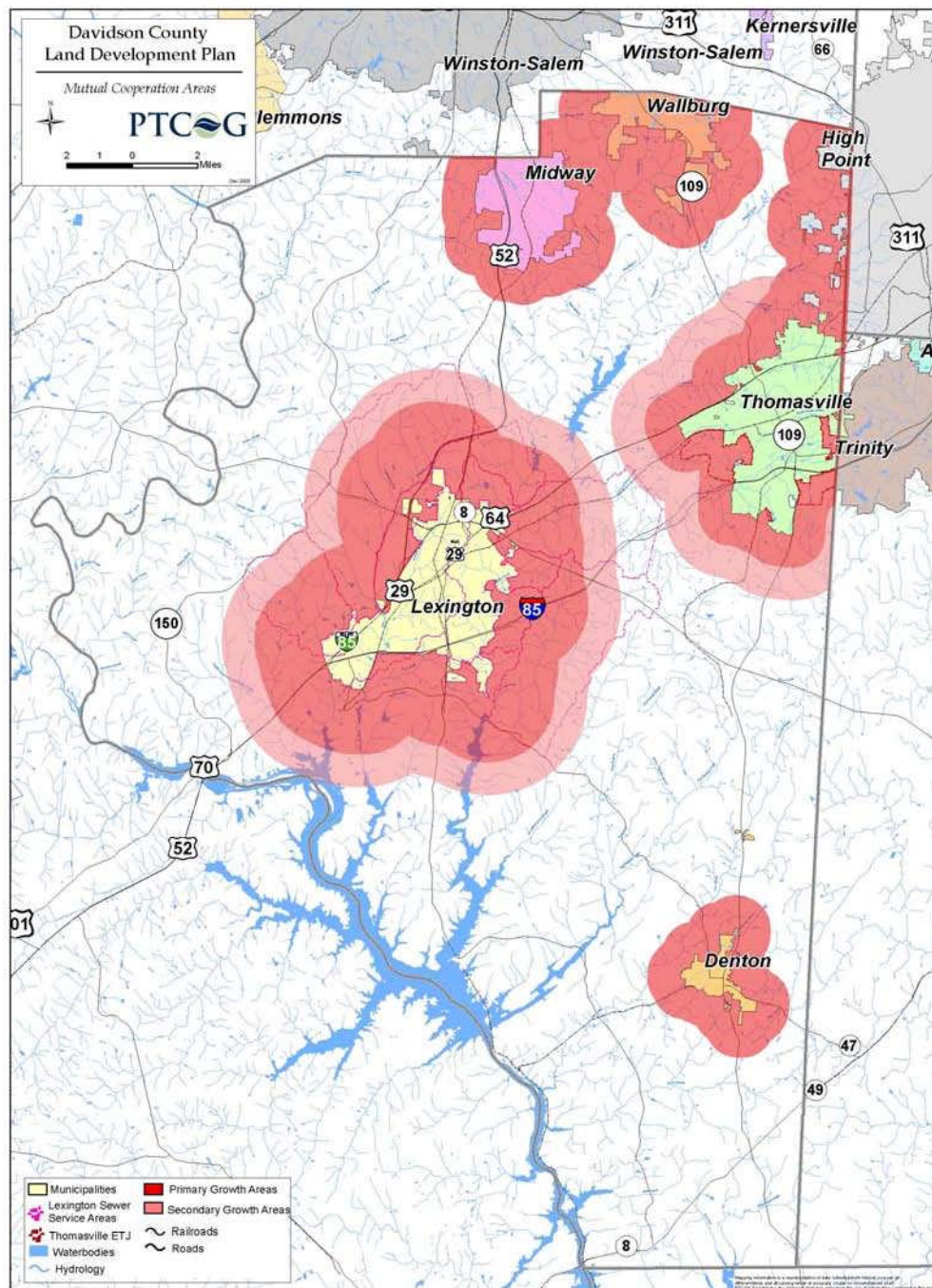
Policy 17.4: Plans for specific functions, such as transportation, parks and recreation, school facilities, water and sewer services, and the like should be implemented as part of a comprehensive planning program and economic development strategy for the county.

Policy 17.5: The County shall actively pursue negotiated urban service agreements with area municipalities.

Mutual Cooperation Areas

Throughout the planning process, numerous people identified the need for more communication and cooperation between the County and municipalities in Davidson County. In an effort to provide for that

Map 5 – Mutual Cooperation Areas



Perceived needed increase in communication and cooperation among the multiple jurisdictions and political entities within Davidson County, several Municipal Cooperation Areas have been identified on the accompanying map. These areas shall be responsible for planning and shaping the logical and orderly development and coordination of local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the county and its communities. Municipal Cooperation Areas shall take the following items into consideration when making any public decisions regarding property within their boundaries:

- 1) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural, open space, recreational tourism and economic development lands.
- 2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- 3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
- 4) The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.
- 5) The existence of or planned thoroughfare improvements on either an MPO or RPO planning document.

The Mutual Cooperation Areas identified on the accompanying map should also be used to inform citizens about potential areas in which annexation may occur. This map serves as a plan for the future orderly growth of the jurisdictions within Davidson County and can help to resolve “turf wars.”

Future agreements between the County and these jurisdictions within the Mutual Cooperation Areas may take the form of:

- Exploring annexation agreement lines.
- Developing universal development standards, and
- Creating a Unified Development Ordinance.

The accompanying map shows a dark red mutual cooperation area for each of the municipalities within the County. This area highlights potential municipal growth in over the next twenty years. A lighter shade of red has also been shown around Lexington and Thomasville that shows these two larger cities potential for future municipal growth because of their ability to provide services in these areas (see Mutual Cooperation Area Map).

Implementation

Recommendations for Implementing the Plan

To aid in the effective use of the Land Development Plan several actions will need to be taken.

- (1) Hold workshops for the County Commissioners and Planning Board on how the plan can be used upon adoption. These workshops can review different parts of the plan during scheduled meetings.
- (2) Implement a “Staff Recommendation” on all planning related items that come before the Planning Board and County Commissioners. The staff recommendation will include an analysis of how the item being considered is viewed by the Land Development Plan.
- (3) Make the necessary changes to the Davidson County Regulations that are recommended in this plan.
- (4) Inform citizens of the goals and policies established with the adoption of the Land Development Plan.

How to Use the Davidson County Land Development Plan

To aid in the effective use of this document, the following explains for example, how different users can employ the strategies and policies in deciding upon a typical development requests and planning for the future of Davidson County:

As Used by the Developer

The developer or property owner can submit a development request that is consistent with County policy, thereby increasing the chances for approval, and minimizing guess work and time wasted.

As Used by the County Staff

The Davidson County staff reviews development requests, recommends that the request be approved or denied, and prepares a report for the Planning Board. In making their decision and report, the staff reviews relevant planning documents, including plans adopted by the County. Using the adopted policies will facilitate the County staff's review of the request. The staff will be able to point out those policies that support the request, and those that are in conflict with the request, thereby shaping the overall staff recommendation.

As Used by the Davidson County Planning Board

Prior to the regular meeting, each Planning Board member can make his or her own determination as to the consistency of the proposed request with the County's adopted Land Development Plan. As always, the Planning Board should take into account the true intent of the policies, but may choose to give different weight to different policies.

As Used by the General Public

Residents of Davidson County can and should reference specific policy statements when speaking in favor of or in opposition to a development request and other growth related issues.

As Used by the Davidson County Board of Commissioners

The Davidson County Board of Commissioners can and should reference the Land Development Plan when making decisions on future funding of County programs (i.e. parks, recreation, schools, etc.), reviewing potential development regulations, determining important community issues, and for guiding the overall development of Davidson County. Over time, a track record of policy interpretation forms a consistent foundation for decision making.

Amending the Plan

As the Land Development Plan is used and development occurs in Davidson County, it will be necessary to make revisions to the plan in order to keep it current. A major development, new road, or water and/or sewer extension can drastically change an area of the planning jurisdiction. It is recommended that the County periodically review the Land Development Plan to examine the changes that have occurred and to recommend any revisions. This section outlines procedures applicable to such amendments.

Form of Application

Requests for an amendment to the plan must be submitted in writing to the Davidson County Planning Department at least 15 working days prior to the next meeting of the Planning Board. Applicants shall specify the reasons why the proposed amendment is in the public interest. Notice of the hearing date upon which the County Commissioners will consider approval of the amendment shall be required. All proposed amendments shall be reviewed by the Planning Board prior to final action by the County Commissioners.