

APPENDIX A:
COMPILATION OF GROUP DISCUSSION ITEMS

COMPILATION OF GROUP DISCUSSION ITEMS

All-Region Meeting

APRIL 28, 2001

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of "dot votes" beside that strategy.

PLANNING AND ZONING

Issues

- Competing land uses
- Maintaining urban/rural edge
- Decisions based on tax revenue rather than impact
- Lack of incentives to maintain farms
- Lack adequate local tools like purchase of development rights to preserve agricultural/open space
- Lack of regional planning
- Pressure from other counties
- Traditional villages at risk of being lost
- Commercial zoning on 29
- Lack of PUD provisions
- Current zoning threatened, inconsistent with plan
- Need for impact fees
- Tax structure favor development
- Comprehensive Plan not followed
- Citizen input

Ideas and Opportunities

Maintain urban/rural edge" (9)

- Encourage design guidelines for development (11)
- Develop regional future land use plan (10)
- Regional guidelines for rural planning (5)
- Landscape ordinances (4)

Lack of tools to protect agricultural farmland and open space

- Regional farm markets (7)
- Broaden local taxation beyond the real estate tax (5)
- Regional strategy meetings to share information (4)
- Comprehensive plan coordination between jurisdictions (4)
- Need Ag/Forest districts in every county (3)
- Need PDR program and funding! (2)
- Local land preservation rules

Lack of Regional Planning/"Competing Land Uses"/Commercial Zoning on 29"

- Coordinate Zoning regionally / esp. Rt. 29 (4)

Citizen Input

- PD 9 (RRRC) provide assistance to local planning (10)
- Better publicity (7)
- Educate public through regional planning academy (5)
- Public must participate in Comprehensive Plan
- Work with press
- Community meetings

Current Zoning Threatened, Inconsistent with Plan

- Enforce comprehensive plans (6)
- Develop implementation planning (3)
- Common definitions (1)
- Define centers
 - Village/service district concept of development
 - Architectural controls
 - State authorization for TDRs
 - Maintain urban/rural balance
 - Comprehensive planning with community input
 - Require affordable housing in developments
 - Infill development
 - Long-term vision (like Lee District/Cedar Run),
 - Transition from proffers to impact fees
 - Limit expansion on Route 29
 - Develop a Main Street program
 - Upgrade zoning to be consistent with plan, include sliding scale and cluster features

SCHOOLS, YOUTH SERVICES, AND RECREATION

Issues

- Need affordable day care
 - 1) Lack of activities for kids at risk
 - 2) Lack of recreation/swimming facilities
 - 3) School busing distances
 - 4) Schools don't prepare youth for technology job market
- Quality daycare - not just affordable: to meet diverse needs – evenings and weekends, etc
- Lack of activities for all kids – especially older kids (high school); lack of variety; distance to activities
- Lack of tax funding for youth programs / facilities and day care facilities
- Racism
- Retaining young people in the community
- School busing distances
- Schools don't prepare for technology job market
- School-to-work vocational training program

Ideas and Opportunities:

- Regional – centrally located recreation facility with a family orientation and should include an indoor swimming pool (4)
- A combination of support for families - a team approach (3)
- Develop formal regional education forums (2 dots)
- Minimum knowledge base for day care providers (1)
- Reassess educational program to meet broader community needs: develop an appreciation for diversity; career partners program; proactive with younger children; higher teacher salaries; high school/community college link to tech training (1 dot)
- School-to-work/vocational training programs
- Better use of existing school facilities for after school and community programs
- Develop an appreciation for diversity
- Be proactive with younger children regarding career training
- Career Partners Program (Culpeper) (150 applicants); publicize; support; expand?

TRANSPORTATION

Issues

- Transportation corridor on key roads (15, 29, 17, 28) for commuters
- VDOT plans to straighten roads
- VDOT and Route 29 future, by-pass will stimulate more rapid growth
- Mass transit could be a double-edged sword
- Traffic bottlenecks
- Alternative transport (bikes, walking)
- Air transport (small airports / local)
- Local traffic vs. drive through
- Availability of access vs. density of population
- Pattern of communications parallel the transportation corridor to detriment of village planning
- Rapid change in communications technology
- Transportation issues coming from outside regional boundaries
- Services not able to keep pace with growth
- State regulations vs. localities' ability to respond to citizen needs in a timely fashion / over-regulation

Ideas and Opportunities:

- Community trains. with 1 or 2 cars or use buses – expand commuter structure – don't need bells and whistles – simplify (5)
- Create atmosphere within counties to work together and understand larger federal organizations – DOT, FAA – be able to show that localities are behind projects (5)
- Eliminate Dillon Rule (4)
- Active not reactive planning (3)
- Regional effort to protect corridors – such as 29 (1)
- 5 counties work on 20-year plan: with VDOT, also FAA for airport planning, telecommunications, water and sewer, health systems, power companies, and environmental regions (1)
- Develop regional plans that emphasize *positive* values (see need to establish values, below) (1)

Sponsored by the RAPPAHANNOCK-RAPIDAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (RRRC)

- Create a structure to identify, develop, establish regional values
- Develop a process for localities to look at larger common issues
- Provide commuter/passenger rail service
- Address route 15&20
- Direct growth through road construction
- Use TEA-21 grants to enhance transportation
- Education of the IDEAS population
- Encourage fed. govt. to increase rail
- Do regional enhancement efforts; start with regional commissions
- Joint partnerships between localities and developers
- Regional perspectives need to be integrated into local comprehensive plans
- Have one retired VDOT employee working with each locality

INFRASTRUCTURE, UTILITY AND WATER RESOURCE

Issues

- Services not able to keep pace with growth
- Lack of water supply, utilities to support village development concept
- Communication infrastructure
- Water/sewer services are controversial, may be a way to control growth
- Uncertain water supply
- Poor infrastructure in town (water, sewer)

Ideas and Opportunities

- Develop water supply strategy and funding
- Coordinated regional approach to water and sewer service

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, & TOURISM

Issues

- Lack workforce trained for clean high-technology business
- Not enough jobs to retain skilled young people
- Not enough high-paying jobs
- Entertainment, shopping and restaurant opportunities unexploited
- Expand tourism opportunities
- Better pay: "living wage" affects all issues
- Better pay for all care-givers: childcare and retirement community, which provides support for the service industry
- Need to bring in higher-paying jobs for the tax-base, and create a balanced mix with industry
- Need to balance land owned by outsiders; large farms are an impossibility

Ideas and Opportunities

- Establish county and regional *agricultural* committees linked to economic development, technology, open space, and tourism; the regional group should have grant-writing potential (6 dots)
- Pursue grants regionally (4 dots)
- Develop regional and county websites for tourism, farm tours (2 dots)
- Develop niche markets to take advantage of smaller parcels of land (3 dots)
- Identify niche markets (2 dots)
- Routinely report the work/discussions of a Regional Committee and information from public forums to local governments (2 dots)
- Promote and market specialty farming (eg vineyards, wineries) (2 dots)
- Explore and document how other regions have made dollars with preservation and open space (2 dots)
- Develop incubators for industry telecommuting (2 dots)
- Attract industry that will increase tax base (2 dots)
- Provide incentives for entrepreneurs (2 dots)
- Educate the public and students about the value of scenic property (1 dot)
- Match vocational education to high-tech jobs, use human resources
- Promote agriculture and tourism together
- Annual farm tours, and grants to promote agri-tourism
- Develop cultural and heritage tourism, festivals
- Strengthen and promote agricultural interests: e.g. regional farmer's market
- Crop sharing
- Encourage new sections of business, such as financial, new businesses
- Encourage the development of a technology infrastructure
- Educate the community so that the community will "grow technology" at home and invest in community's technology
- Attract clean, low-impact industry
- Develop Vint Hill (former Army base) as industrial center
- Promote community as retirement location
- Create "one-stop" central shopping area

HOUSING

Issues

- Lack of affordable housing and elderly housing
- Affordable housing for those who work in the county (teachers, firefighters, police)
- Need housing affordable for those getting started
- Limited rental housing
 - Need affordable housing for service industry employees (hotels, restaurants, other)
 - Need a definition of "affordable housing" in realistic terms
 - Single mothers need more childcare facilities at affordable prices; transportation is another concern for single mothers.

Ideas and Opportunities

- Set goal of providing 20% affordable housing, and tie housing to employment (5 dots)
- Provide incentives for rehabilitating property with tax credits for affordable housing (4 dots)
- Expand the habitat concept; combine with rehabilitation projects. Have a "renter" emphasis rather than owner emphasis (4 dots)
- Communicate all of these ideas back to the Counties' Boards of Supervisors and economic development experts (3 dots)
- Plan for integrated housing (affordable mixed with other types) (3 dots)
- Provide transitional housing and provide financial training, support services, and mentoring for families such as credit counseling (3 dots)
- Provide education for the community about affordable housing to address stigma (1 dot)
- Involve economic experts (1 dot)
- Examine current programs: promote Main Street and infill programs (1 dot)
- Require affordable housing in developments
- Start by examining zoning and village concept
- Home ownership increases citizens' stake in the community

NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Issues

- Air and water quality – residential development (lots of trash from residents)
- Light pollution
- Cell phone towers (new technology can eliminate the need for these)
- Power lines
- Acid streams
- Impacts of waterways – nutrient rich water
- Viewsheds (ugly things that have to have)
- Loss of wildlife/habitat
- Species diversity / wetland protection
- More education interaction of all these things
- Preservation of Green Infrastructure range territory (not clustering little parks)
- Soil quality preservation
- Governmental decision-making – who's really making the choices
- Agricultural runoff / management practices
- Residential runoff

Ideas and Opportunities

- Need for regional *agreements*, not just regional planning - more communication among the players (4)
- Develop dedicated source of state and local funding (no dots, but designated as top priority)
- Preservation of green infrastructure (4)
- Designate Rappahannock as a "green space" (2)
- Monitoring development and recreation on regional rivers (2)

- Educate public (2)
- Looking at whole watershed rather than just parts of waterways (1)
- Explore Rappahannock River recreation possibilities
- Protect watersheds
- Use new technology to eliminate cellular towers
- Improve monitoring waterways
- Use technology to disseminate information to all citizens
- Way to get the data / information to people who will actually do something about it (a feeling that those who receive data now do not take action).
- Do a groundwater study of the Potomac to the James
- Possibly need more dams
- Need find funding

PRESERVATION (OPEN SPACE, HISTORIC, ETC.)

Issues

- Need to protect scenic byways
- Lack tools to preserve agricultural and open space
- Historical aspects
- Preserve traditional town centers

Ideas and Opportunities

- Make open space more of a public resource
- Designate Rappahannock as region's rural, open green space
- Find ways other than zoning to protect open space
- Pursue conservation funding
- Preserve/renovate historic buildings
- Conservation easements

Scenic By-ways

- Establish working regional groups on issues to take to Richmond as a group (15)
- Historic connections (connecting historic places) (9)
- Regional greenway plan (8)
- Viewshed protection tools (8)
- Need to go to Richmond (2)
- High growth should be away from rivers
- Public access

Historical Aspects

- Regional historic district (6)
- Take advantage of historic/architectural sites and structures (5)
- Share ideas and strategies
- Surveys

Preserve Town Centers

- Encourage infill (7)
- Town historic districts (3)
- Provide room for towns to grow out (2)
- Discuss all topics regionally

VIABILITY OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Issues

- Projection of no farms by 2010
- Lack of incentives to maintain farms, pressure on agricultural lands
- Aging farmer population not being replaced
- Increasingly difficult for young farmers to make it
- Farmers are not creating the problems – residential development
- Need more funding to do best management policies
- Lack of incentives to keep farming / pressure on agricultural lands
- Projection shrinking farmland
- Aging farming population not being replaced
- Young farmers unable to maintain farms
- Processing happens out of state – extra cost/time
- Policy of clearcutting rather than reforestation

Ideas and Opportunities

- Zoning that supports agriculture (7)
- PDR program – so that younger farmers can afford to buy farmland without breaking it up (6)
- Encourage students in agriculture – keep curriculum going throughout grades (4)
- Ag. marketing – what are products? – get word out (for example – call for hay) (4)
- Need more funding to do Best Management Practices (4)
- Help from State / get State out of way (3)
- Finding emerging markets / give farmers business plan (2)
- Looking for products more viable to produce (1)
- Fund VA Outdoor Program – connects PDR and environment (1)
- Fund VA Land Conservation Fund (1)
- Promote agriculture as economic base
- Provide incentives to keep family farms
- Promote specialty and low-risk farming
- Protect and diversify agriculture
- Dedicated source of state funding PDR's (purchase of development rights)
- Set up system to educate farmers and general public
- Connecting existing resources / making use of what is there
- Get funding from businesses
- Encourage farm bureau participation in more areas of concern for farmers; more active FB

REGIONAL VOICE IN RICHMOND AND WASHINGTON

Issues

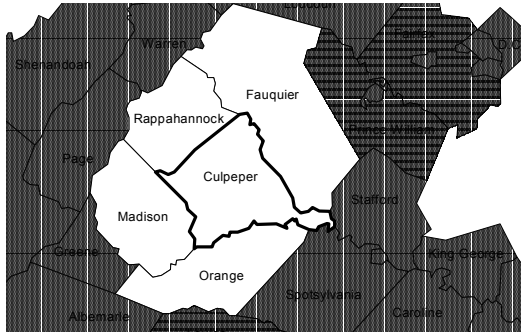
- Dillon rule limits local control, esp. environmental
- Unfunded mandates
- Need state authorization for TDRs
- Supreme Court ruling that doesn't allow counties to ban sludge
- Lack of growth management tools
- Low representation in legislature due to low population
- State education funding impacted by changing composite index
- Lack of enabling legislation
- Insufficient diversity among elected leaders
- Limited local coffers

Ideas and Opportunities

- Consistent regional policy
- Regional plan review
- Address incompatible policies
- Forums for regional discussion
- Regional connections to growth management
- Re-evaluate Dillon Rule
- Closer look at local power
- Involve legislators in/with PDCs

APPENDIX B:
COUNTY SUMMARY REPORTS

CULPEPER COUNTY Meeting Summary*



BASIC FACTS			
	1980	1990	2000
Population	22,620	27,791	34,262

RRPDC Regional Comparisons	
•	Fastest growth rate 1990-2000 (23%)
•	Largest number of new residents (6,471)
•	Captured 36% of RRPDC growth 1990-2000
•	Highest retail sales gain 1993-1998 (69%)

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Culpeper County residents participating in the meeting give the area very high marks. One describes it as offering “the best of several worlds” – a beautiful setting of farms and mountains, a town that serves as a regional center for shopping, services and facilities, and people that are open and friendly. The 2000 Census figures show the area to be growing significantly and that is putting pressure on the community to do more to protect its special character and to serve its citizens. Town and county governments, as well as the state, are being asked to rise to the challenge with participants favoring a cooperative attitude and approach wherever possible.

STRENGTHS

The greatest strengths of Culpeper County that emerged from the discussions are its natural beauty and countryside, the friendly and talented people, and the town that anchors and provides a central focal point for the area. Enthusiasm for the area is immediately evident even when there are differences of opinion about priorities. Other points include:

- Scenic beauty: the land, the mountains, the farms and forests, streams
- Heritage and history: Indian history, colonial and civil war connections, historic churches, examples of historic preservation
- The people: warm, friendly, forward looking, involved, diverse mix (long term and new comers), generous, giving of themselves, great place for families, safe, 4th of July spirit
- Planning: a blend of new development and countryside/agriculture, reasonable zoning, a permitting system in place
- Town : shopping, restaurants, medical care, library, revitalized and restored Main Street, community college
- Location: not far from more urban centers, Charlottesville/Northern Virginia
- Economy: is adapting to new technologies, is attractive to new industry, great potential for eco-businesses and firms linked to agriculture

ISSUES

As positive as participants are about the area, they are not blind to the issues that face the community. Growth and its consequences characterize much of the discussion. Expanded services, taxes, visual pollution, and transportation top the list of issues along with preserving the features that citizens so value about the area. Thus far many feel that a balance of old and new has been maintained but are concerned about the future. Issues include:

- Growth: signs of sprawl, maintaining urban/rural edge, pressure on ag lands, lack of incentives to maintain farms, expectations of newcomers, rights of long term residents, decisions based on tax \$ rather than impact, NIMBY, increased bureaucracy, lack tools like purchase of development rights
- Infrastructure needs: water supply, utilities and schools to support a village concept of development, public transportation, traffic bottlenecks, state funding inadequate, secondary road issues, rail or other alternatives needed
- Environmental degradation: light pollution, cell phone towers, Dillon Rule limitation, state not always sensitive to local concerns
- Government: focused on present challenges more than future needs, town/county cooperation not always in evidence, need for leadership, enforcement frequently lacking, tax fairness, teacher salaries
- Economy: tourism not fully exploited, lack high paying jobs, entertainment sector is weak, some areas lack economic development
- Human services: need activities for youth/elderly/poor kids/at-risk kids, park / recreation/swimming facilities are deficient, retraining needed for hi-tech jobs, affordable day care, an end to racial bias, overcome tax resistance

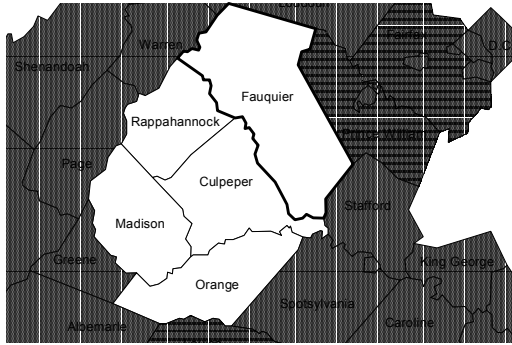
OPPORTUNITIES

Without underestimating the challenge, participants are optimistic that many of the issues facing the area can be successfully addressed. Smart growth and greater cooperation are two recurrent themes. Some of the specific ideas include:

- Greater cooperation: build consensus through visioning processes, build awareness, empower citizens, develop many partnerships, negotiate
- Smart growth: keep the focus of the county on downtown, employ the village concept, use architectural controls, protect watersheds, obtain state authorization for TDR
- Public services: make centralized public services available, establish career academies, develop rail and alternative transportation, serve the youth and the elderly to a greater degree
- Environmental: make Culpeper an example, value quality of life, make open space more a public resource, be a green laboratory, conduct agri-tours
- Economy: exploit tourism, attract people with quality salary and security who become a community resources and leaders, expand local foundation capacity, tap non-tax sources of funding, promote a technology center, see agriculture as economic base, innovate in agricultural marketing, use the media to publicize successes

* This is a summary of a meeting held on Saturday February 24 at the Culpeper Middle School attended by approximately 30 participants. This meeting is an early part of a larger Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Partnership/PDC project to develop a regional vision statement for the area. Future meetings are at Culpeper Middle School on April 28 and May 19. This summary has been prepared by the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia. 804-924-1970

FAUQUIER COUNTY Meeting Summary*



BASIC FACTS

	1980	1990	2000
Population	35,889	48,860	55,139

Regional Highlights

- Greatest population growth since 1970 (101%)
- Greatest out-commuting in region (49%)
- Greatest regional traveler spending (\$45,400)
- Lowest percent loss of farmland (-5%)

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Fauquier County participants prize their quality of life, which largely derives from the unusually beautiful landscapes throughout the county, the strong sense of community, and a steady, healthy economy. While they generally feel that Fauquier has managed its growth relatively well thus far, there is a sense of urgency that if their quality of life is to be protected, then the county must stay ahead of its growth with good planning. Some common issues that emerged are protecting farmland and open space, the need for affordable housing, providing quality education, and activities and opportunities for youth and seniors. Other issues were less clear; is technology industry desirable to provide clean jobs, or will it contribute to more growth? Should there be more recreational opportunities, or does this reflect an undesired urbanization of the county? Overall, participants indicated a sense of being at a critical turning point where important choices in the next years will determine the future of the county.

STRENGTHS

The three greatest strengths of Fauquier might be characterized as its great physical beauty, its key location as the "Gateway to Virginia" near national parks and Washington D.C., and the sense of community that derives from a friendly small town atmosphere, trust, and active citizenry. From one perspective, Fauquier county might be noted for its arts, history and horses.

- Natural physical beauty, clean environment, night sky, no billboards
- Steady economy: farming still largest industry; clean industry
- Good workforce
- Arts, history, horses; strong tourism efforts for vineyards, horse racing, small towns,
- Heritage and natural resources: historic small town atmosphere, John Mosby Heritage Area, Elk Run preservation, Civil War, gold vein
- Transportation assets: airport, rail opportunity, Circuit Rider program (public bus system)
- Good location near parks, Washington DC, and higher education
- Responsive local government; good planning: use of zoning to preserve farmland and keep growth in service districts
- Community values: safety, trust, strong volunteer base, "remarkable citizens who care."
- Diversity of interests, backgrounds, occupations.
- Good schools and good medical care
- Variety of housing opportunities

Sponsored by the RAPPAHANNOCK-RAPIDAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (RRRC)

ISSUES

The overriding issue for participants is how to manage growth in Fauquier County so that its physical beauty and small town atmosphere are preserved. Other common issues are to ensure that planning provides for services, housing, education and jobs to match the rate of growth.

- Controlling growth; pressures from neighboring counties
- Maintaining local control; lack of enabling legislation ; Dillon Rule constraints
- Services not able to keep pace with growth
- Communication infrastructure
- Transportation corridor: traffic on key roads (15, 29, 17, 28) for transients and commuters; local access;
- Jobs: need more employment opportunities in county; create opportunities for youth to stay
- Workforce retention, especially in schools
- Affordable housing, especially for people who actually work in the county (teachers, firefighters, police, etc.)
- Expand Tax base beyond real estate: attract clean industry; hi-tech fixation
- Maintaining balance of urban/rural and diversity
- Permitting process difficult, especially for child care
- Bussing distances
- Preservation of historic resources
- Recreational opportunities, services, and other activities for youth/ seniors
- Water/sewer: controversial - may be a way to control growth
- Division within County: north/south
- Projection of no farms by 2010
- Lack of regional planning
- Water
- Air quality

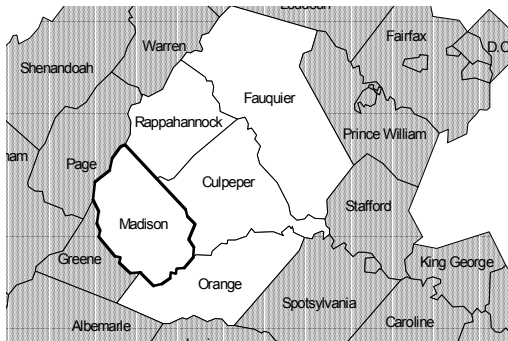
OPPORTUNITIES

Participants felt that Fauquier County is at a turning point where the county has the opportunity to "get it right" as much as it does to "get it wrong." The two greatest areas of focus were ways in which local government could use planning to control and manage growth, as well as how to facilitate economic development compatible with the local character.

- Planning and governance
 - Responsible growth and planning, with community input
 - Comprehensive planning: slower rate of growth, long-term vision (like Lee District/ Cedar Run); (Bealeton, Marshall)
 - Provide incentives to "keep the family farm;" minimize farmland loss
 - Purchase of development rights
 - Transition from proffers to impact fees
 - Redevelopment and infill
 - Require some amount of affordable housing and assisted living in development plans.
 - Tax relief for the elderly.
 - Publicize service district concept
 - Define limits of service districts
 - Learn from Gainesville
 - Pursue possible conservation funding
 - Recognize agrarian base close to metropolitan area
 - Provide school-to-work programs
- Economy
 - Tourism: heritage, ecotourism, cultural, agricultural
 - Promote specialty farming and low-risk farming
 - Promote vineyards and wineries
 - Stay proactive with clean industry
 - Use youth as a resource, not drain: youth corps
 - Market value-added products
 - Vint Hill (former army base ideal for high tech companies)
- Preserve history, open land, agriculture; Protect scenic by-ways
- Transportation
 - Promote small scale busses; regionalize
 - Mass transit (e.g. rail) - but could be double-edge sword
- Explore equity funding for public servants regionally
- Graying population - resource, challenge and opportunity

This is a summary of a meeting held on Monday February 26 at the Lord Fairfax Community College in the Town of Warrenton attended by approximately 55 participants.

MADISON COUNTY Meeting Summary*



BASIC FACTS			
	1980	1990	2000
Population	10,232	11,949	12,520
RRPDC Regional Comparisons			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second lowest growth rate 1990-2000 (5%) • Second smallest number of new residents (571) • Captured 3% of RRPDC growth 1990-2000 • Lowest median home price 1999 (\$110,000) 			

Overall Assessment

Despite what is only modest growth by regional standards, participants are very concerned about growth and its consequences. Change is relative and participants fear that emerging trends will compromise the natural beauty and quality of life that currently exists in the county and town. Much of the concern focuses on commercial development along highway Route 29 and brings up images of strip development found elsewhere in the state. Concern is also expressed for how this impacts the town of Madison. Participants place great faith in the potential power of planning and zoning to make a crucial difference for the future of their community.

STRENGTHS

The natural features and beauty of Madison County’s piedmont setting, the quality of life and sense of place, and the central location in the state are features that participants note when asked about the area’s strengths. Other points are as follows:

- Natural and cultural resources: mountains, open space, farmland, woods, clean air and water, piedmont soils, wildlife, timber, fishing, hunting, historic attractions, oldest Lutheran church, scenic by-ways, views Robinson/ Rapidan/ Hughes rivers
- Quality of life: slow growth rate, small population fosters sense of community, a safe community, good place to raise kids, lack of “big box” stores, sense of personal space and significance, strong church community, rural lifestyle
- Human character: friendly, trusting, volunteerism (fire company, library, Habitat for Humanity, schools, MACA)
- Education: good schools, met SOL early
- Economy: comparatively low taxes, low unemployment, B&B business opportunities, growing artist community, people able to hang on to farms, tourist business potential
- Setting: “ close enough but far enough away”, accessible to D.C., ocean, national park, access to nearby world class health care and university, near Monticello, Montpelier, civil war sites
- Planning: comprehensive plan and zoning in place

ISSUES

Participants see what may be the beginnings of changes that will detract from the assets described above. There is a sense that a prompt response is needed before momentum goes too far. The planning capacity to deal with change is seen as lacking and is a priority for many if the qualities of the place are to be maintained. Some tension may exist between those seen as newcomers and long term residents. Specific issues include:

- Changes of concern: increasingly difficult for young farmers to make it, fear of change itself and need to bring groups together on planning, business exodus from the town, acid streams, air quality/visibility issues, VDOT and route 29 future, eventual by-pass if trends persist, attractiveness will stimulate more rapid growth
- Planning capacity shortfalls: commercial zoning on 29, current ordinance consistency with plan, no PUD provisions, performance standards needed, inadequate protection of viewsheds, limited protection of open space, plan needs strengthening, lack of a county planner
- Infrastructure and service needs: lack of public water, poor infrastructure in town (sewer, water, roads), no youth center, youth leave area for recreation, no senior center, lacking in cultural activities, limited rescue services in some areas, need more health/medical facilities
- Labor force issues: lack workforce trained for clean technology business, hard to keep skilled young people, local jobs don't pay living wage, need housing affordable to those getting started or of limited means, limited rental housing, too much emphasis on bringing in industry instead of growing our own, tourism and restaurant opportunities unexploited
- Governmental capacity: better balance of tax, residents and jobs, better working relations with VDOT, insufficient diversity among elected leaders, limited local coffers, unfunded mandates

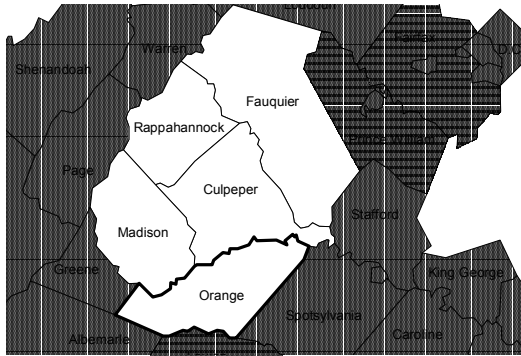
OPPORTUNITIES

Participants consistently see improved community planning as the best way to address their concerns. Some of their specific ideas include:

- Vision for the community: no strip malls, limit expansion on 29, infill development in town, focus growth on serviced areas, county and town working together to make town the centerpiece, starting a Main Street program
- Activities sought: recreational facilities, quality grocery store/restaurants/inn, a Va. tourist center, area events (eg horses, countryside, festivals)
- Rural area goals: conservation easements, no new growth areas, but others mentioned small satellites with own infrastructure and planned development combining farms and limited housing
- Investment in planning: hire a county planner, assess opportunities, develop a sustainable vision, strengthen comprehensive plan, take a citizen-up approach, upgrade zoning to be consistent with plan, include sliding scale and cluster features, adopt entrance corridor zoning with design review, don't overzone, make it harder to rezone

* This is a summary of a meeting held on Wednesday evening February 28 at the War Memorial Building in the town of Madison attended by 14 participants. This meeting is an early part of a larger Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Partnership/PDC project to develop a regional vision statement for the area. Future meetings are at Culpeper Middle School on April 28 and May 19. This summary has been prepared by the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia, 804-924-1970

ORANGE COUNTY Meeting Summary*



BASIC FACTS			
	1980	1990	2000
Population	18,063	21,421	25,881
RRPDC Regional Comparisons			
•	Second fastest growth rate 1990-2000 (21%)		
•	Captured 25% of RRPDC growth 1990-2000		
•	Lowest median home price (\$110,000)		

Overall Assessment

Participants hold a very positive view of the quality of life in Orange County at the same time that they talk about what could be termed “growing pains”. There is strong agreement that the area’s history, its small town feel and the commitment of its citizens to the community are major assets. There is concern, however, about maintaining these assets in the face of what some fear is a trend toward becoming too much of a bedroom community without the balance of businesses, jobs and tax base to support desired and necessary services. High expectations are held of government officials and there is a belief that innovative public planning can achieve a worthy future if consensus is developed about the area’s future. Participants evidence high energy, a wealth of ideas and a desire to move forward together.

STRENGTHS

The greatest strengths of Orange County that emerged from the discussions are its history and heritage, its natural beauty and countryside, and its small town character. Its location half way between Washington, D. C. and Richmond and its proximity to Charlottesville are seen as assets for the opportunities available in these more urban settings but as liabilities from the standpoint of lack of support for local businesses and activities. Other points are as follows:

- Historic resources: Montpelier, civil war sites, historic farms/residences, traditional towns, the countryside, families living in Orange for generations
- Rural character: picturesque landscape, fields, good farm land, forests, streams, lack of widespread sprawl
- Small town feel: “real” small towns, active volunteer organizations, civic spirit, people who care, people who choose to live here, talented individuals, clean and safe communities, uncrowded, traffic still under control
- Location: removed but accessible to metropolitan centers for “city” benefits
- Cost of living: compared to other areas, taxes are still low, land is not excessively costly, housing is affordable
- Cultural resources: libraries, art center, recreation department, dance school, active churches, civic clubs, community college
- Economy: antique and gift shops, skydiving, Harley Davidson center, variety of employment opportunities, low unemployment, work ethic

ISSUES

Discussions reflect the “growing pains” that Orange County is experiencing as the second fastest growing county in the Rappahannock-Rapidan PDC. There is concern that residential growth is unbalancing the county: housing and a significant commuting population are not balanced by in-county jobs, tax base and increasing expectations for county and town public services. There is some frustration with the difficulty of achieving a unified vision for development that will complement and add to community character. There is optimism that this could be achieved, however. Other issues include:

- Trend toward bedroom community: residents expect services but county lacks tax base to support, retail sales are leaking to nearby areas, balance of traditional villages at risk of being lost
- Infrastructure needs: water supply is uncertain, differing attitudes about highway expansion, lack of coordinated regional approaches to water and sewer
- Education needs: need to improve quality, debate over best way to spend public funds, vocational/technical training needed, match education to quality jobs
- Community services: lack restaurants, shopping and entertainment to keep residents at home, lack recreation for youth and elderly
- Organizational capacity: lack a vehicle for bringing citizens, businesses and others together to develop a shared vision and then ways to fund and follow through to implement that vision
- Planning: don't have adequate local tools to preserve ag/open space and to build balanced communities, must invest more in planning, protect land owner rights, better plans and zoning, alternative ways of developing are not being explored, lack coordination with neighboring jurisdictions

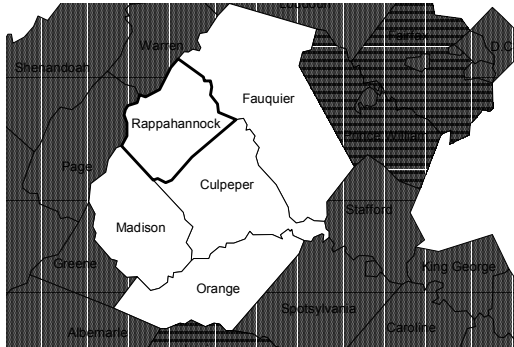
OPPORTUNITIES

Participants brought many ideas and suggestions to the table that will require extensive discussion and effort if they are to develop into workable policies and programs at the local and/or the regional scale. Some of the specific ideas include:

- Community character goal ideas
 - Protect and diversify agriculture
 - Establish live/work communities
 - Promote the village concept: residences, businesses and schools, less auto dependency
 - Balance growth with business and industry
 - Focus growth around existing development
 - Direct growth by investment in roads and infrastructure
 - Focus on where growth goes and what growth occurs
 - Preserve/renovate historic buildings
 - Be pro-active
- Tools to achieve these goals: revised plan, new zoning ordinance, greater architectural control over new development, seek grants to fund projects, find new ways to afford things we thought we could not afford, work with/learn from others on common issues
- Economy: develop tourism and recreation attractions, build on interest in history and natural resources, establish a place for low impact industry, capitalize on our human resources, add customers for local businesses, add missing businesses to fill in local availability
- Natural resources: explore Rappahannock recreation possibilities, develop water supply strategy and funding
- Infrastructure: provide commuter and passenger rail service, establish medical center/emergency center, address route 15 & 20 or an alternative solution, establish community recreation center, provide parks in each district

* This is a summary of a meeting held on Saturday February 17 at the restored Rail Station in the Town of Orange attended by approximately 45 participants. This meeting is an early part of a larger Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Partnership/PDC project to develop a regional vision statement for the area. Future meetings are at Culpeper Middle School on April 28 and May 19. This summary has been prepared by the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia. 804-924-1970

RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY Meeting Summary*



BASIC FACTS			
	1980	1990	2000
Population	6,903	6,622	6,983
Regional Highlights			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowest regional population density (27/sq.mi.) • Lowest regional sales tax base (\$23,573) • 2nd greatest percent loss in farmland (-18%) • Highest median home price (\$181,500) 			

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Participation in the Rappahannock County meeting illustrated one of the very strengths highlighted by its participants: that county residents are unusually active and engaged in community issues. With the lowest population in the planning district, over 55 people attended, as many as Fauquier and Orange counties. While they consider themselves ruggedly individualistic, the people of Rappahannock share a strong sense of community cohesion, high volunteerism, along with knowing and helping their neighbors. Their greatest common concern is to hold off the pressures of growth from surrounding counties.

STRENGTHS

The three greatest strengths of Rappahannock County might be characterized as its people, its unspoiled natural scenic beauty, and the local government responsiveness to local needs. Others include:

- People of Rappahannock: individualistic, diverse talents, volunteerism, strong cohesion
- Unspoiled natural scenic beauty and open space: blue ridge, farms, orchards, varied vegetation, small distinct villages, Shenandoah National Park (25% of county), headwaters of 7 rivers
- Low density and population growth
- No stoplights, development, fast food stores, 7-11's or Wal-Marts
- Still able to see wildlife
- 10% of county land in conservation easements
- Zoning ordinance helps preserve rural nature.
- Comprehensive plan requires policies to respect rural and scenic qualities of the county
- Tax base is still farming
- Only 67 miles from Washington D.C.
- Excellent climate.
- Deep history of places like the Town of Washington

ISSUES

The overriding issue for participants is how to protect Rappahannock from the mounting development pressures in surrounding counties, which they believe threatens its way of life, quality of community relationships, and rural culture.

- Decreasing county powers (Dillon rule and challenges to county powers)
 - Sludge ruling of Supreme Court that doesn't allow counties to ban sludge
 - Unfunded mandates
 - Lack of tools to stop growth and development
 - Low representation in state legislature due to low population
- Inability to stop growth and encroachment from surrounding counties
 - Cell towers and power lines
 - VDOT trying to straighten roads
 - Threats and challenges to current zoning
 - Competing land uses
- Changing demographics
 - Aging farmer population and lack of new farms will mean end of viable county ag.
 - Changing demands brought by newcomers
 - Changes in composite index impacts education funding from state
- Public processes like this visioning may threaten county values
- Lack of affordable housing, rentals, and housing for elderly
- Youth are moving out county: not enough jobs, and schools don't prepare youth for technology job market.

OPPORTUNITIES

Participants felt that Rappahannock County is now at a critical turning point, where it can decide to apply measures that will protect its scenic rural character through the next decades of growth. Failure to do so will mean the loss of its way of life and other key strengths.

- Designate Rappahannock County as the "rural, open green space of the Rappahannock-Rapidan Region, the place to grow food, have clean water, see wildlife.
- Pursue Economic Development Compatible with Rural Character
 - Tourism: scenic, heritage, equestrian, agritourism, craft-based, hunting, battlefields, Visitor's Center (like Nelson County), Shenandoah National Park.
 - Promote local villages, local crops, historical sites, and other sights
 - Use county for rural retreats (church, conferences, business retreats, etc.)
 - Promote and expand Fodderstock Race
- Pursue the Vermont/New Hampshire model of county-town cooperation in tourist activities, such as cross county skiing village to village
- Jobs for the young in these recreational areas
- Market county to the outside for these tourist opportunities
- Planning: take measures so county will stay rural, scenic, with agricultural and tourist economic, and viable community
 - Purchase of development rights
 - Village development planning
 - Find ways to protect open spaces other than zoning
 - Use TEA-21 grants for transportation enhancement, as in Sperryville

* This is a summary of a meeting held on Tuesday February 20 at the Rappahannock County Library near the Town of Washington attended by approximately 55 participants. This meeting is an early part of a larger Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Partnership/PDC project to develop a regional vision statement for the area. Future meetings are at Culpeper Middle School on April 28 and May 19. This summary has been prepared by the Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia, 804-924-1970.

Sponsored by the RAPPAHANNOCK-RAPIDAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (RRRC)