Chapter One: Introduction

Charlottesville has the reputation as one of the top places in the United States in which to live, work, play, and raise a family. It has been featured on national television as one of America's top ten cities and has been recognized in countless magazines including:

- **Arts and Entertainment Television** listed Charlottesville among the top ten cities in the nation that have it all. The City was ranked 6th in the November 21st broadcast.
- Once again **Money Magazine** has ranked Charlottesville as one of the "Best Places to Live in America".
- **Explorer Magazine** has named Charlottesville as the best place to raise an Outdoor Family.
- **Travel 50 and Beyond** ranked the City in its top ten list of places to retire.
- **Modern Maturity Magazine** has ranked Charlottesville one of the Best College Towns in the Country.

Yet, while recognized by others as an outstanding place to be, the community has recognized that there are improvements needed if it is to maintain that reputation and if all its citizens are to realize its greatness.

The community has determined that it desires to be "world class" in all aspects – from quality of life to its delivery of services to its citizens. Those things that made it home to three Presidents are things which must be preserved and enhanced. The mountains, the landscape, the architecture, the environment are all things that brought generations to this community. They must be sustained if Charlottesville is to achieve its promise of a "world class" City.

Charlottesville, like many other communities in the United States, has been experiencing uneven physical development patterns that have far reaching impacts on our neighborhoods. That is, while some parts of the City have undergone rapid and intense growth of property values, other parts have experienced deterioration and blight due to both lack of financial investment and increased human neglect.

Development in the region has brought the benefits of economic growth, but has also brought increased demands for utilities, road improvements and other public services at ever increasing costs. Development has also created urban sprawl, contributed to traffic congestion, and increased flooding and erosion at public and private expense. Those things happening in the region have impacted the future of Charlottesville.

Faced with the prospect of continued development and the need to conserve neighborhoods while, at the same time, promote economic prosperity, the Charlottesville Planning Commission has developed a comprehensive plan to help guide the physical growth of the City for the next twenty-five years. The Plan consists of the following:

1. An inventory and assessment of current, social, economic, and environmental factors effecting growth and neighborhood stability in the community.
2. A statement of goals and policies which serve as a broad directive for future growth and neighborhood improvement and preservation.
3. An implementation strategy that provides an explanation of how the goals and policies will be put into action.
4. A series of eighteen neighborhood plans which are mini-comprehensive plans for each of the neighborhoods.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Comprehensive Plan is based on principles of sustainability. All policies, goals, objectives and actions are evaluated and considered in the context of sustainability issues and the guiding principles that follow. The guiding principles of the plan have been developed by a community that is concerned about its future, and about the future of its children. While development with its resultant job creation is critical, it must be balanced against the overriding concern for protection of the environment. A buzzword among planners today is "sustainability". Simply stated, this means meeting human needs with the carrying capacity of the earth. On the local level, it means meeting the growth needs of Charlottesville within the limits and capacity of Charlottesville. It means

realizing that there is a reason God put streams, wetlands, plants, and animals on earth here with us. When the balance of these things is disturbed, our human way of life is disturbed for the same fate.

In 1994 jurisdictions in the region created the Thomas Jefferson Sustainability Council. The Council created the Thomas Jefferson Sustainability Accord in 1998 based upon the following assumptions and with the principles that follow. The Accord is incorporated into this plan by reference; it speaks to the overriding theme of this document.

Assumptions

- That sustainability implies responsibility for life in all its forms as well as respect for human work and aspirations.
- That all members of this community have a shared future; we are dependent on each other in ways that are both complex and profound.
- That the ideals of preservation and protection on the one hand, and of economic vitality and opportunity on the other, are not in conflict: in a sustainable future, they are linked together.
- That communities can assume control of their destinies and by their own intention become stronger, healthier, more livable places.
- And finally, that our ability to see the needs of the future is limited. Therefore, any attempt to define sustainability should remain as open and flexible as possible.

Principles

- In a Sustainable Community, individual rights are respected, and community responsibilities are recognized.
- In a Sustainable Community, all human and natural needs are respected and conflict among the community's human members is resolved through consensus building.
- The Community is a collection of diverse human and other biological interests.
- In a Sustainable Community, achieving social, environmental, economic, and political health has inter-generational costs and benefits, which must be weighed.
- In a healthy society, these benefits outweigh the costs.
- In a Sustainable Community, the integrity of natural systems is protected.
- In a Sustainable Community, the interdependence of social, environmental, economic and political systems at all levels is understood.
- In a Sustainable Community, the impact of each generation's actions on the social, environmental, economic and political health of future generations is acknowledged.
- In a Sustainable Community, the members understand that there are limits to growth.

The following is a discussion of the concept of sustainability and the policies that are key to achieving sustainable development. Much of the text has been taken from documents prepared by and for the American Planning Association. It has been edited for inclusion in this document and is included to show the City of Charlottesville is driven by a commitment to these principles.

1. ISSUE

The technological advancements that human society has made since the beginning of the industrial era have created changes unprecedented in earth's history. Many of these advancements have had positive effects upon living conditions for humans, as evidenced by increased, improved health care, and generally improved access to adequate food and shelter.

However, there is mounting scientific evidence that we are using earth's resources faster than they can be replenished, and many of the challenges created by human activity are fundamentally altering the natural systems upon which human life depends. What this appears to indicate is that the current human way of life, providing unprecedented wealth for one-fifth of the human population while another fifth remains in absolute poverty, is not sustainable in the long term.

The environmental and social consequences of modern lifestyles are not always apparent, largely because they occur at a scale and in a time frame that we as individuals cannot readily comprehend. Bringing these global issues down to an individual level may make them more understandable.

Modern society's overuse and misuse of resources are akin to an individual who habitually spends more than he or she earns, thereby continually drawing down his or her financial resources, or accumulating debt. Although this individual may appear to be wealthy in the short term, a time will come when the money in the bank runs out and the debts must be paid. Most of us would agree that this individual is not truly wealthy and that such a lifestyle is unsustainable.

In much the same way, when all of society uses resources in such a way that the earth cannot replenish them, we create an illusion of progress; in reality we are reducing global resources wealth by degrading the resources upon which we depend – in effect, drawing against the larger global bank account. What we are really doing is amassing not wealth, but debt – debt that future generations will have to pay.

The reasons that our lifestyles are unsustainable are varied and complex. Here are a few of the key factors contributing to unsustainability.

Consumption: Over the last 40 years, the increase in per capita energy and material consumption has increased even faster than the world's human population. Scientists estimate that our present consumption level is exceeding the earth's carrying capacity by 30%. We are making up that difference by depleting "natural capital". The United States leads the world in material consumption and waste generation. The "ecological footprint" (estimated amount of land to support consumption and waste generation patterns) of the typical U. S. resident per year is 25.5 acres, compared to 6.9 acres for the average world resident and 2 acres for the average resident in India.

Population Growth: The world's human population is growing at a rage of 385,000 per day. Almost all of this growth (98%) is occurring in developing nations. Many developing nations remain impoverished because economic development cannot keep pace. Even in the United States, where the growth rate is relatively modest, 1.1% of the nation's population will double in roughly 60 years.

Dependence upon Non-Renewable Resources: Modern economics rely on a host of substances (both "natural", such as mercury, and manufactured, like plastics) that are not part of the nature's cycle of growth and decay. Because these substances are not renewable, their supplies are constantly diminishing. Moreover, because many products made from these substances (and by products of their use) do not degrade or are not assimilated into nature's cycle, they accumulate in the biosphere as pollution or garbage.

Pollution: The use of natural and manufactured substances that accumulate in the ecosphere and are not part of nature's cycle cause environmental pollution in various forms. Carbon dioxide has increased 30% over its natural occurrence in our atmosphere. Poisonous elements mined from below the earth's crust, such as cadmium and lead, are found at five and eight times, respectively, their natural rates in the ecosphere. Many of these are toxic in ways that we do not understand.

Environmentally and Socially Destructive Development Patterns: Human development often fails to respect the natural processes upon which we depend, thereby damaging or destroying the systems that support us. The typical suburb paves over land that was once the habitat of other species. It also reduces opportunities for social interaction, once as easy as walking down the street to go to the corner store. Today, fewer than 10% of daily commute trips in the U. S. are by walking or bicycling.

Inequities in Resources Distribution: The gap between "have" and "have nots" continues to widen through the world. Between 1960 and 1994, the disparity in per capita income between the richest and poorest fifth of the world's nations rose from 30:1 to 78:1. The historic solution to poverty – economic growth – has generally served to exacerbate inequities, while degrading the resources upon which all life depends. In this way, lack of equity diverts our attention from the larger issue of sustaining the natural systems upon which our economic activity depends.

The root cause of the problems described above is human failure to recognize the fundamental limits to earth's ability to withstand alternations to its natural systems. Modern society has forgotten that humans are not inherently in conflict with nature, but rather are part of nature. Our policies and actions therefore fail to reflect the important linkages among a healthy economy, social well being and the environment.

These global problems are reflected in – and are affected by – localized unsustainable activity in communities and regions through the United States and in other regions of the earth. Many of these environmentally, economically and socially unsustainable practices are directly connected to local decision-making. Some examples are summarized as follows:

Suburban Sprawl: Current growth in urban and suburban land use far exceeds the population growth in many major metropolitan centers in the U. S. Between 1970 and 1990, for example, metropolitan Chicago's population grew by 4% while the amount of land dedicated to housing grew by 46%. During that same period, Cleveland's population fell by 11% but developed land still increased by 33%. This trend has resulted in increased costs for public services, the decline of central cities, increased vehicle miles traveled and emissions of carbon dioxide, and the destruction of farmland and open space.

Segregation/Unequal Opportunity: Communities all over the United States continue to be largely divided along racial lines, both physically and socially. As a result, minority groups continue to have less access to economic opportunities, adequate food and shelter, and needed services. Nationwide, nearly 28% of people of color live below the poverty level, as compared to about 11% of whites.

Loss of Agricultural Land and Open Space: From 1970 to 1990, more than 19 million acres (30,000 square miles) of rural lands were developed. Every year, construction transforms 400,000 acres of high quality farmland. This amounts to 45.6 acres every hour of every day. Such development weakens the agriculture basis upon which people depend, as well as the natural resources upon which all life depends.

Depletion and Degradation of Groundwater Resources: Groundwater over pumping is occurring in many of the nation's regions. In California, groundwater overdraft averages 1.6 billion cubic meters per year, which amounts to 15% of the state's annual groundwater use. Depletion of the High Plains Aquifer System, which underlies nearly 20% of all irrigated land in the U. S., totals 325 billion cubic meters while current annual depletion is estimated at 12 billion cubic meters. Despite progress made under the Clean Water Act, carcinogens have been found in wells in fourteen different states throughout the Corn Belt and many of the nation's waterways remain badly polluted.

Traffic Congestion and Smog: Vehicle-clogged roadways and deteriorating air quality diminish quality of life and health for millions of Americans in cities, suburbs, and outlying areas. Since 1970, vehicle miles traveled have increased by 121%; more than four times the population growth over the same period. Traffic congestion is estimate to cost the nation $168 billion in lost productivity. Although air quality has improved in several metropolitan areas due to more stringent emission standards, 46 million Americans continue to live in counties that do not meet federal air quality standards.

Disproportionate Exposure to Environmental Hazards: Low income people continue to be disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards in urban and rural areas. In Los Angles County, California, minorities are three times as likely as whites to live within half a mile of a large, hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal facility. Nationwide, black children from poor families are five times as likely to have dangerous blood levels than wealthier white children. White children from households with annual incomes of under $6,000 are three times as likely as white children from families with incomes over $15,000 to have dangerous blood levels of lead.

Sustainability in Development

Not everyone agrees about what constitutes sustainable human activities. Still, the United Nations' Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development provides a useful starting point, emphasizing the importance of including intergenerational equity in our present day decisions.

> *Sustainable development: development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

The economist Herman Daly describes sustainable development as **progressive social betterment without growing beyond ecological carrying capacity**. Daly differentiates this from growth, which is an increase in size through material accretion. Development that is sustainable does not deplete the finite natural resources upon which human societies depend, nor undermine the ability of natural systems to support human health and basic quality of life for current and future generations.

Sustainability in development is the state of human activity that does not degrade the basis for life. Because our current lifestyles do not appear sustainable (as discussed above), sustainability certainly does not mean a static state. It implies a state of continual change that moves us toward a condition in which our lifestyles are compatible with the cycles and processes of nature. This requires a regenerative planning and design approach to development that provides for continuous replacement of the energy and materials used.

Sustainability in Communities

Sustainability in communities means a dynamic balance between meeting the essential human needs through a just and efficient distribution of resources and goods, which minimizes waste and protects and restores natural ecosystems.

To achieve sustainability, a connected, holistic approach to community planning is needed. This approach must recognize that a healthy environment, strong economy, and viable social structure are not in conflict, but rather are mutually dependent upon one another. Planning must move beyond excessive fragmentation and specialization, which lack a broader view of how the various pieces fit together, toward a systems approach that recognizes the fundamental links among all of the issues that we deal with on a daily basis. A good question to ask to determine whether our approach to planning is sustainable is – does my solution solve other problems or create new ones? Sustainable solutions to planning problems should solve other problems as well.

Though sustainability in communities and community planning can take many forms, characteristics include the following:

- A future oriented prospective, recognizing appropriate limits to human development;
- Organization around natural, not political boundaries;
- A participatory approach to planning and community decision-making;
- Resilient, diverse, and self-sufficient local economies that meet the needs of residents and build on the unique characteristics of the community;
- Expansion of choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility for the needs of disadvantaged groups and persons;
- Recognition of the importance of education, both for children and throughout people's lives;
- A widely held ethic of stewardship that strongly encourages individuals, institutions, and corporations to take full responsibility for the economic, environmental, and social consequences of their actions, balancing private and individual rights with nature and the public good;
- Leadership in the development and implementation of policies that support global sustainability.

The above text provides general and descriptive understandings of sustainability and sustainable communities. However, they do not give specific direction of how to attain them. Therefore, it is useful to have a framework, or "compass" to develop a comprehensive, systematic approach to move toward sustainability, applicable to the broad range of planning topics and all levels of planning and policy making.

Comprehensive master planning, development regulations, and zoning ordinances are tools employed by the planning profession to protect residential neighborhoods from uses considered detrimental to and inconsistent with a "suitable living environment". Comprehensive planning seeks a balance between the need for land resources to accommodate economic development and the need to provide housing for different types of households. Early planning efforts focused on providing and protecting residential uses. However, contemporary

urban planning practice has often focused on promoting and protecting traditional single family residential development, sometimes to the detriment of other housing needs. In some communities, planning tools have also perpetuated patterns of racial and economic segregation.

The location of housing affects many critical elements of life in society. The location of housing determines the public schools your children can attend. Education continues to be the primary vehicle for upward socio-economic mobility and for escaping the growing, permanent underclass that drains so many resources from our economy. The location of housing determines access to jobs. People who cannot live within a reasonable commuting distance of where the jobs are, are candidates for underemployment or unemployment. The location of housing determines the safety of the family and the security of the home. The location of housing determines how much it will appreciate in value. Homeownership is the largest investment most American households ever make. Appreciation in home value continues to be the major source of wealth in the United States.

Single family housing can be affordable housing. The issue is how that housing is developed and where. Land use regulations that dictate large lot sizes or specify architectural amenities often circumscribe lower-cost housing from communities. Creative development of clustered housing, and use of small lot sizes for homes are examples of planning tools that can lower housing costs, and make efficient use of land and resources.

The location of housing affects transportation and the environment. New housing that is developed far away from existing urban services forces residents to drive to work, thereby increasing air pollution and utilizing limited resources to develop new roads and highways instead of maintaining existing facilities. In addition, the development process for residential uses frequently occurs without sufficient regard to the natural environment. Housing can create significant demands on the environment due to the resources that are used, such as water, energy, and raw land.

Strong communities are built of strong neighborhoods. Strong neighborhoods combine social public spaces, social infrastructure, economic opportunity, urban services, and a decent place to live. With a complementary social fabric that encourages interaction and support, strong neighborhoods personify the "suitable living environment" that was the goal of the 1949 Housing Act. Decent places to live come in many shapes, styles and price ranges. Healthy communities feature a diversity of housing options, locations, and cost to provide appropriate housing for all citizens whatever their life stage or income status. Unfortunately, federal housing policy has grown increasingly biased in favor of universal homeownership, at the expense of ongoing support of rental housing options for those who may not be ready for, or elect to become owner/occupants.

Strong neighborhoods contribute to property taxes, safe communities, a stable workforce and an environment that invites economic opportunity. For these reasons, planners are concerned with housing quality, affordability and choice, not just as a matter of social equity, but as a fundamental element of community viability. This concern calls for effective and coordinated planning and public policies that integrate housing wholly into the decision making process alongside public works, community facilities and services, and public schools, environmental quality, economic development, and transportation.

The cost to society if it fails to address basic housing needs is enormous. Growing bodies of research on welfare reform and homelessness agree that without a safe, secure, and affordable home, it is difficult for many people to obtain and maintain employment, stay mentally and physically healthy, and grow as a functional family. Increased demands on health and welfare resources are only one example of the impact on publicly funded services.

Poor quality housing, whether due to age related deterioration, neglect, or poor quality construction, impacts the entire neighborhood. The result is islands of disinvestment, characterized by high concentrations of socially and economically disenfranchised people, isolated from economic opportunity as well as suitable living environments.

Over time, housing in most communities has acquired a distinct stratification by density and quality, reflecting relative price ranges. The strata do not necessarily lie in nearly defined layers. While some cities do reflect the classic theory of concentric circles of outward growth, accompanied by decline of the central city, just as many do not. In many communities, the quality and value of housing are unrelated to the age of housing. In western cities,

in particular, new housing is often of far inferior quality compared to central city housing built in the early part of the century. Nevertheless, stratification is evident.

Revitalization of urban areas is inexorably linked to the quality of the housing stock and requires targeted programs and incentives to promote rehabilitation and new development. However, for these measures to be effective, they must be combined with effective planning and code enforcement. Unfortunately, many cities divide these functions among separate departments, and the planning and implementation of community revitalization strategies is fragmented and uncoordinated.

To effect sustainable development plan policies should be amended to include and support the following:

Land Use Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals by promoting:

1. Compact development that minimizes the need to drive.
2. A mix of integrated community uses – housing, shops, workplaces, schools, parks, civic facilities (within walking or bicycling distance).
3. Human scaled development that is pedestrian friendly.
4. Development oriented around public transit.
5. Home based occupations and work that reduce the need to commute.

B. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature through:

1. Guiding development to existing developed areas and minimizing development in outlying, undeveloped areas.
2. Maintaining a well defined "edge" that is permanently protected from development.
3. Remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites and other developed lands that suffer from environmental or other constraints.
4. Preservation and enhancement of natural ecosystems.
5. Creation of financial and regulatory incentives for infill development; elimination of disincentives.

C. Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by:

1. Eliminating disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities.

Transportation Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals, through:

1. Reduction in vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled through compact, infill, and mixed use development.
2. Use of alternatives to the drive-alone automobile, including walking, bicycling, and public transit.
3. Development and use of vehicles powered by renewable fuel sources.
4. Local street designs that encourage pedestrian and bicycle use and discourage high speed traffic.

B. Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by:

1. Providing affordable, efficient transportation alternatives for low income households, elders, and others comprising 30% of the national population that cannot or do not own cars.

Housing and Building Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals through:

1. Solar oriented design of development.
2. Use of regenerative energy heating and cooling source alternatives to fossil fuels.
3. Provision of housing near places of employment.
4. Selection of building materials with low "embodied energy", which require less energy intensive production methods and long distance transport.

B. Reduced dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances through:

1. Use of chemical free and toxic free building materials.
2. Reduction of waste and recycling of building waste materials and resident recycling.
3. Landscape design standards that minimize waste materials and resident recycling.

C. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature through:

1. Reuse of existing buildings and sites for development.
2. Compact and clustered residential development.
3. Removal of code obstacles to using recycled materials for building.
4. Water conservation measures, to minimize environmentally destructive side effects of developing new water sources.
5. Responsible stormwater management that reuses and restores the quality of on-site run off (example – construction marsh or wetlands systems).
6. Reduction or elimination of impervious paving materials.
7. Use of recycled building materials, helping to minimize the mining of virgin materials.

D. Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by providing for:

1. Communities and housing developments that are socially cohesive, reduce isolation, foster community spirit, and sharing of resources (example – cohousing).
2. Housing that is affordable to a variety of income groups within the same community.
3. A diversity of occupants in terms of age, social, and cultural groups.

Economic Development Policies should:

A. Encourage businesses that reduces dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals; for example, businesses that:

1. Reduce employee and product transport vehicle trips.
2. Use of regenerative energy alternatives to fossil fuel, or that are working to reduce dependence on fossil fuel.
3. Do not use or are reducing the use of cadmium, lead, and other potentially toxic metals and minerals that can accumulate in the biosphere.
4. Are locally based or home based, reducing or eliminating the need to commute.

B. Encourage businesses that reduce dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances – for example, enterprises that:

1. Actively seek ways to minimize the use of toxic manufactured substances.
2. Meet or exceed clean air standards.
3. Minimize or reduce the use of chemicals and employ proper disposal and recycling mechanisms for these.
4. Use agricultural methods that reduce or minimize use of pesticides, herbicides, and manufactured fertilizers.
5. Use by-products of other processes or whose wastes can form the raw materials for other industrial processes.

C. Encourage businesses that reduce activities that encroach upon nature – for example, enterprises that:

1. Use recycled or by-products of other businesses, minimizing the use of virgin raw materials.
2. Prevent activities that emit waste or pollutants into the environment.
3. Use agricultural approaches that build up rather than deplete topsoil, and conserve or minimize water use.
4. Maintain natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation, minimizing disruption of natural systems.

D. Encourage businesses that meet human needs fairly and effectively – for example, enterprises that:

1. Fulfill local employment and consumer needs without degrading the environment.
2. Promote financial and social equity in the work place.
3. Create vibrant community based economics with employment opportunities that allow people economic self determination and environmental health.
4. Encourage locally based agriculture, such as community support agriculture, providing a nearby source of fresh, healthy food for urban and rural populations.

Open Space/Recreation Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, minerals, by:

1. Providing recreational facilities within walking and bicycling distance.
2. Using local materials and native plants in facility design to reduce transport distances.

B. Reduced dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances – for example:

1. Use alternatives to chemical pesticides and herbicides in park and facility maintenance (example – integrated pest management).

C. Activities that reduce encroachment upon nature, such as:

1. Funding for open space acquisition.
2. Preservation of wilderness areas.
3. Urban gardens, community gardens.
4. Preservation of wildlife habitats.
5. On-site composting of organic waste.
6. Restoration of damaged natural systems through regenerative design approaches.
7. Creation of systems of green spaces within and among communities.
8. Development of responsible alternatives to landfilling of solid waste.

Infrastructure Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, minerals, by promoting:

1. Facilities that employ renewable energy sources, or reduce use of fossil fuel for their operations and transport needs.

B. Reduced dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances by promoting:

1. Treatment facilities that remove or destroy pathogens without creating chemically contaminated by-products.

C. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature, through:

1. Promotion of innovative sewage and septic treatment that discharges effluent meeting or exceeding federal drinking water standards while minimizing or eliminating the use of chemicals (example –

greenhouse sewage treatment facilities).
2. Recognition of the "cradle to grave" costs of waste generation and disposal.
3. Promotion of and removal of regulatory barriers to composting and gray water reuse systems.

D. Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by:

1. Cleaning, conserving, and reusing wastewater at the site, neighborhood or community level, reducing the need for large, expensive collection systems and regional processing facilities.

Growth Management Policies should support:

A. Reduced dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals by promoting:

1. Development near existing transport systems, minimizing need for new road and highway construction.

B. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature by promoting:

1. Appropriate development and population growth policies linked to carrying capacity of natural systems and community facilities.

C. Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by promoting:

1. Fair and equitable growth management policies maintaining diversity in local populations and economies.

Floodplain Management Policies should support:

A. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature by:

1. Guiding development away from floodplains.
2. Preserving or restoring wetland areas along rivers for natural flood control.

Watershed Planning Management Policies should support:

A. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature, such as:

1. Preservation and enhancement of water quality.
2. Reduction in water use.
3. Recharge of groundwater basins.
4. Use of flood control and stormwater techniques that enhance and restore natural habitats.
5. Prevention of wetlands destruction and restoration of degraded wetlands.

Resource Conservation Policies should support:

A. Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals and minerals by:

1. Minimizing energy use.
2. Encouraging the development of renewable energy sources.
3. Discouraging the use of products that utilize packaging derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources.
4. Promoting the recycling of waste materials derived from non-renewable, non-degradable resources.
5. Developing community gardens that reduce the need for long-range transport of food and associated consumption of fossil fuels.

B. Reduction of activities that encroach upon nature – for example:

1. Promoting the preservation and planting of trees and other vegetation that absorb carbon dioxide and air pollutants.

Planning Processes/Education Policies should:

A. Support activities that reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, underground metals, and minerals – for example:

1. Encouraging and enabling people to use transport other than gasoline powered vehicles.

B. Support activities that reduce dependence upon chemicals and unnatural substances – for example:

1. Educating citizens and public servants about both short and long term risks associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials.

C. Support activities that reduce encroachment upon nature through:

1. Educational efforts to reduce levels of consumption and waste generation at the household and community levels.

D. Support meeting human needs fairly and efficiently by:

1. Integrally involving local community residents in setting the vision for and developing plans for their communities and regions.
2. Establishing avenues for meaningful participation in decision making for all citizens and in particular for historically disadvantaged people.
3. Providing for equitable educational opportunities for all members of society.
4. Promoting retraining of those displaced in the short term by a shift to a more sustainable economy.
5. Providing best available economic, social, and environmental data and indicators on impacts, alternatives, costs, and benefits for decision making.

2. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This Plan was prepared so that the important neighborhood and development issues in the community might be studied and analyzed with the intent of providing proper courses of public action and partnership with its citizens and neighborhood associations, as well as to comply with state regulations which require local planning.

The overall purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide realistic guidelines for future development and neighborhood stability with specific consideration given to the:

- Protection of the long-range interest of citizens through the anticipation of possible changes in such areas as transportation, housing, energy, economic and industrial bases, and other related factors;

- Protection of all valuable community resources including such diverse resources as unique natural features, historic structures, established neighborhoods and recreational areas;

- Coordination and general allocation of public expenditures to maximize their effectiveness by adequately determining future needs and resources;

- Maintenance of proper coordination among various planning and administrative bodies to avoid conflict between neighborhoods, land use, transportation, housing, utilities, services, conservation, community facilities and other problems at the local, county, regional, state and federal levels; and

- Establishment and implementation of specific local policy objectives, which are consistent with, and complementary to, regional, state, and federal land use policies as expressed in existing and future plans

and programs.

- Recognition and protection of the property rights of individuals through the use of plans and policies which fairly protect the rights of the individual while furthering sound planning principles.

The Comprehensive Plan should serve to coordinate private development with present and future policies as may be reflected through zoning, capital improvement programs, code enforcement and other similar means.

3. CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

To provide a comprehensive framework for establishing or modifying local policies, improving existing conditions and maintaining adequate coordination of public programs, this report will include a discussion of the following processes used in its preparation:

- A description of the Comprehensive Planning process including data needs, establishment of planning periods, proposals for formulating policies and recommendations, and a description of the various planning stages used to develop the Plan;

- An explanation of the neighborhood involvement process used in the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

- A summary of relevant findings from the inventory and assessment of existing conditions;

- The development of goals, policies, and program recommendations to implement proposed policies and community development measures; and

- A description of implementation procedures and an action plan to be used following Plan adoption, and the means by which policies will be coordinated with other local planning programs.

- Appendices include plans for each of the eighteen neighborhoods and the corridor study, parking study, traffic calming report, community survey, and CATS update. This plan does not specifically address social or education issues. This is a departure from past plans. However, the Planning Commission feels that other boards and agencies are addressing those issues and that efforts will be coordinated best in other settings.

4. USE OF THE PLAN

This Plan may be effectively used in a variety of ways. First, and foremost, it should serve as a guide for the government and neighborhoods of Charlottesville in making decisions about land use and urban development related matters. Secondly, the Plan may serve as a source of information for private sector entities concerned with the location, timing, and intensity of new development. Third, it is important that the Plan be used as a means of coordinating local government activities including capital improvements programming, community and economic development activities, zoning, housing initiatives, transportation improvements, open space utilization, and community facility plans aimed at improving our neighborhoods and quality of life. Because this Plan presents an outline for the pattern, intensity, and timing of land uses, it should be used as the primary source of information for those persons engaged in urban policy making and administration.

5. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

To develop the Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission conducted an 11-month study of community characteristics and needs. This effort was organized into a planning process that included participation by departmental staff, public officials, and especially local neighborhood residents. Unique to this planning process is the fact that the plan was developed through a series of meetings with eighteen neighborhoods to formulate the one Comprehensive Plan. The major elements of this process are discussed in the following sections.

Another unique factor of this Comprehensive Plan is that while the planning staff and the neighborhoods were working on the neighborhood plans, there were several studies being performed by various consultants that have been blended into the Comprehensive Plan. The Consultants worked as adjunct members of the staff as they prepared their studies. Their work was reviewed by and coordinated with the work of the Planning Commission.

The studies that are a part of this plan are as follows:

> **The Corridor Study:** This work was prepared by Torti Gallas and Partner's, CHK in association with Robert Charles Lesser Company and Land Planning and Design. The study looked at fifteen commercial corridors and proposed urban design solutions to deal with market realities. The study included a market analysis of the community and projections of future development opportunities. Those market possibilities were then applied to each of the corridors.
>
> **Parking Study:** Rich and Associates was commissioned by the City to analyze parking needs in the downtown, Court Square and West Main Street areas. The study looked at current conditions and future build-out projections to determine the need for parking. Recommendations from that study have been incorporated into this document including new public parking locations and changes in policy and regulations.
>
> **Traffic Calming Report:** Wilbur Smith and Associates was hired to review the City traffic calming program and make recommendations regarding procedures and the process for traffic calming. Nine typical streets were examined and three alternative design solutions were examined for each type of street. The recommendations are contained in a traffic calming handbook and excerpts are in this report.

Additionally, there are many studies previously conducted that were utilized in the development of this plan. These reports serve as resource material and guidance for the plan. In many cases, policy and recommendations were drawn directly from those documents. Studies utilized are listed below:

6. DATA NEEDS

Information which is necessary for comprehensive planning relates primarily to current physical development patterns and expected future trends. Data at the regional level provides a framework for planning considerations at the local level. Likewise, economic and population data indicates growth rates and anticipated changes. Other data which is essential to evaluate existing conditions and future land use needs includes community structure (existing land uses, housing, natural systems, and historic resources), transportation, and supporting facilities (parks, community facilities, and utilities).

Relevant planning data was collected and extensively analyzed by the Planning Commission. The data will then be used to assess current conditions, and formulate the Plan's goals, policies, and implementation strategy. One concern with this plan is that census data used is from 1990. A major goal of the first plan update will be to include relevant 2000 data.

7. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING PERIODS

A great deal of effort was put into the development of a Comprehensive Plan which is both responsive to current development trends, and anticipates long-range requirements for developable land and related public improvements. To distinguish between immediate and long-range needs, two planning periods were established: a short-range period to 2005 which reflects development trends that are underway or imminent and more immediate ways to protect and enhance neighborhoods; and a long-range period that extends beyond 2005 for which policies should be formulated to direct anticipated growth and present long range policies aimed at improvement of our neighborhoods. These two planning periods were used in the analysis of community resources and in the formulation of proposals regarding the timing of future development.

8. POLICY FORMULATION

The end result toward which the Comprehensive Planning Process has been directed is to give guidance to decisions that affect the quality of life in our neighborhoods and community and includes recommendations for the location, timing, and intensity of development, and the establishment of standards for assessing the desirability of development proposals.

Policy recommendations are useful only when supported by descriptive data that has been gathered and analyzed in an objective manner. This has been the case in the development of this Plan. The goals, policies, and strategies that are put forth in the Plan are strengthened by the presence of a solid base of background data pertaining to socio-economic conditions, natural and cultural resources, community facilities, and land use patterns.

DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING STAGES

The Comprehensive Planning Process has been divided into five general stages discussed below.

STAGE ONE: Inventory and Assessment

The first stage of the Comprehensive Planning Process involved the collection and analysis of data from existing sources and materials. This data was essential to the development of the Plan as it provided both information on existing conditions and a basis for establishing expected trends. These materials are assembled in their respective elements (population, economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, housing, land use and urban design) which serve as a summary reference document for various present and future planning activities.

In the development of the plan previously prepared studies were analyzed by the staff. These included the following:

Comprehensive Plans from 1979, 1985, 1990, 1995

Venable Area "B" Study

JPA Area "B" Study

Fontaine Area "B" Study

Lewis Mountain Area "B" Study

West Main Street Study

Neighborhood Protection Task Force

To facilitate planning for an area the size of Charlottesville, the City was divided into five planning districts, each of which exhibits different characteristics of socio-economic conditions, land use patterns, and environmental characteristics. These five districts are shown on the map, "Planning District Boundaries".

STAGE TWO: Goals and Policies

The second stage in the Comprehensive Planning Process consisted of the formulation of cohesive goals and policies to direct future growth. These goals and policies address all of the planning elements that were included in the inventory and assessment section with the exception of Demographic Characteristics. In addition, a preliminary statement of key planning issues was prepared for each of the planning elements. The issues were reviewed with area residents and representatives of the community through various meetings and public hearings as described in the next section. The feedback that the planning commission received from the participants in these sessions was used to help shape the final goals and policies.

STAGE THREE: Implementation Strategy

The third stage of the Comprehensive Planning Process involved the creation of an implementation strategy that was used to put the goals and policies into action. This Plan includes short-range and long-range policy recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the public and private sectors, and maps showing the recommended location, intensity and timing of development. These actions have been categorized according to the planning element that they address, and consist of codes and ordinances, operational changes, capital improvement projects, and additional planning studies. Means for coordination have also been developed in conjunction with implementation of proposals.

STAGE FOUR: Distribution for Public Implementation and Private Use

The fourth stage of the Comprehensive Planning Process involved the preparation of a final report, public hearings, adoption by the Planning Commission, and actual public implementation and private use of the Plan. Hopefully, the Plan will guide public sector programs and neighborhoods by indicating the intent of the City and its residents in directing growth, improvements, and redevelopment. The actual usefulness of the Plan, however, will depend upon public commitment and private support for meeting Plan objectives and for improving existing conditions in our community.

STAGE FIVE: Annual Review and Update

The fifth stage of the Comprehensive Planning Process is the annual review and update of the Plan. It will be the responsibility of the Planning Commission to review each of the Plan Elements on an annual basis, and to recommend policy adjustments when necessary. Additionally, each city department and neighborhood will be asked to review the Plan Elements and recommend implementation strategies, which can be used to further advance Plan objectives. The implementation strategies will then be presented to the City Council for review and amendment. Those actions previously implemented will be deleted and actions for another year will be added.

RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

The various neighborhood plans were developed as part of the process to prepare the Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan. This process to develop the plans began in February, 2000 and continued until the Spring of 2001 when the plans were adopted by the Charlottesville City Council. The Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan presents an overall framework for the entire ten square mile area of the City. This framework establishes programs, policies, and identifies actions which are applicable to the entire community or are needed to benefit the Charlottesville community. The neighborhood plans are each one of eighteen neighborhood plans adopted as supplements to the Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan. Specific policies, projects, programs, and regulatory recommendations are contained in the neighborhood plans. Each neighborhood plan has been adopted as part of the Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan. Status as part of the Comprehensive Plan assumes that the goals, policies and objectives of the neighborhood plans will be carefully weighed as part of future consideration within the particular neighborhood.

While the policy elements of this plan are part of the Comprehensive Plan, each neighborhood Plan also contains provisions that are part of the Comprehensive Plan, but do not apply to the City of Charlottesville. Although they are adopted by the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, they are specific actions to be performed by the residents of the neighborhood and/or the neighborhood association. These plans are intended to provide guidance to the City and to the neighborhood.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In order to prepare a plan, which is fully responsive to the needs of community residents, the Planning Commission carried out an extensive program of citizen review and participation. The objectives in encouraging citizen participation were to assist local residents in understanding the planning process to allow citizens to decide the future of their community, to incorporate public input into the formation of policies for the future, and to transmit these comments to the Planning Commission and the elected body.

EXTENT OF INTERACTION AND INVOLVEMENT

Citizen participation is considered an important element in the Comprehensive Planning Process. The Process emphasized open and free distribution of information relating to procedures being used and actions being considered. Emphasis was also placed on encouraging public involvement in the formulation of goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

The following neighborhoods formed the centerpiece for the planning efforts. While meetings were not restricted to members of the associations, the association worked with City staff to insure widespread participation. After plan completion, the association will be the nucleus through which implementation is accomplished.

- Barracks/Rugby/Kellytown/Greenleaf Neighborhood
- Belmont Neighborhood
- Fifeville Neighborhood
- Fry's Spring Neighborhood
- Greenbrier Neighborhood
- JPA Neighborhood
- Johnson Village Neighborhood
- Lewis Mountain Neighborhood
- Locust Grove Neighborhood
- Martha Jefferson Areas Neighborhood Plan
- North Downtown Residents Association
- Ridge Street Neighborhood
- Rose Hill Neighborhood
- Starr Hill Neighborhood Association
- Venable Neighborhood
- WCEH Neighborhood
- Woolen Mills Neighborhood

Representatives of these and other groups contributed a substantial amount of time to reviewing proposals and were important sources of information for determining future development strategies.

Neighborhood meetings were conducted during the months of February through September. Although all neighborhoods did not start in the same place, staff and the Planning Commission used a similar process of facilitated meetings to accomplish the plan development with each neighborhood. Meetings were arranged as follows:

Community Meeting #1 – The Kickoff: This meeting was held on a Saturday morning and was attended by over 300 citizens. At the meeting, attendees identified those things that they believe make up an ideal community.

Neighborhood Meeting #1: At this meeting, each neighborhood did a recap of the community kickoff and evaluated the ideal community statements. Residents took cameras to take photographs of things they like and dislike about their neighborhood.

Neighborhood Meeting #2: At this meeting the photographs were returned and discussed to begin the thought process for the formulation of neighborhood and community issues. Residents also performed a SWOT exercise where they were asked to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to their neighborhood.

Neighborhood Meeting #3: The third series of meetings was used by each neighborhood to identify the key issues facing the neighborhood and the community. Using the SWOTS as a basis, the residents developed key issue statements.

Community Meeting #2: A second community wide meeting was held in June with two purposes. The first was to have community residents come together to agree on those previously identified issues that were issues facing the entire community, and those that were specific to their neighborhood. The second purpose

was to review the draft "guiding principles" prepared by the Planning Commission and provide input on their final form.

Neighborhood Meeting #4, 5: These meetings gave residents the opportunity to develop implementation strategies to address the neighborhood issues in the previous meeting. Some neighborhoods were able to do this in one meeting while others took two meetings.

Neighborhood Meeting #6: The final neighborhood meetings were used to review plan drafts prepared by the planners. At this meeting, residents were given the opportunity to review the work that they had done since February and to make any final changes prior to the Planning Commission public hearing.

Community Meeting #3: At the final community meeting, the Planning Commission presented the final draft of the Plan to the citizens of the community. Residents were given the opportunity to see the final draft and to give comments to the Planning Commission prior to submission to the City Council.

The Planning Process involved over 700 residents of Charlottesville during its development. Staff and the Planning Commission conducted approximately 100 meetings with neighborhoods over the course of eight months. While attendance was greater than has ever been involved in a comprehensive planning process in Charlottesville, efforts will be made to continue to build greater citizen involvement through the implementation and review process.

Although final decisions regarding policy objectives for community improvement must lie with the elected officials, participation by local citizens in the formulation and initial review of these objectives has helped to ensure that the needs of residents were addressed.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

In addition to the many neighborhood meetings that were held, the City conducted a survey of its citizens during the summer of 2000. A summary of the survey is in Chapter 5 and the complete survey is Appendix "A" to this plan.

CONCLUSION

The Comprehensive Planning Process began on February 12, 2000 with a community-wide kick-off event. Then, for the next eleven months, there were a series of meetings with neighborhoods to develop a draft plan. The draft plan was presented to the Planning Commission, which reviewed and then recommended it for adoption to the City Council. The City Council conducted a public hearing and then adopted the plan. That plan will form the basis for decision making for the next twenty years.