

*CHAPTER XII:*  
**IMPLEMENTATION**

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**PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION LINKAGES**

The adoption of this Comprehensive Plan serves as only one element of a continuous growth management process for Smithfield. In pursuit of a "growth by design" policy, land use implementation responsibilities must be intelligently shouldered by both the public and private sectors alike. This process must be carefully orchestrated over an extended timeframe inasmuch as development occurs incrementally. The Plan serves as the urban design framework around which relevant future land use decisions are based. Its implementation must be directed by growth management tools -- zoning, subdivision and site plan ordinances, architectural guidelines, etc. -- which are fully integrated into the Plan's "vision" for the Town. The concept of "linkage" between the Plan and those tools has been a dominant planning theme in this Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to capture a vision of the future of the Town of Smithfield. As such, it provides a basis for a wide variety of public and private actions and decisions which should be undertaken in the Town over time. The Plan shall serve as a dynamic document designed to provide flexibility and adaptability to change in the coming years as the community continually evolves. The Plan provides general guidelines and recommendations for Town leadership with regard to its implementation of long range planning goals and objectives in its day-to-day regulatory, management and service operations, as well as its capital improvement programming. It is hoped that the Town Staff and the Town's elected and appointed decision-makers will refer to the Plan as part of their ongoing decision-making and planning processes so that issues will be evaluated with respect to their long-range impact upon Town residents and businesses, Isle of Wight County and its residents and existing land uses, public utilities, finances and transportation systems.

The Future Land Use Plan element provides a specific conceptual future development pattern for the Town. This established pattern should not be viewed as being "etched in stone". Local market conditions and citizen values with respect to growth management, economic development and environmental conservation may change over time in response to evolving economic and political pressures. The Plan must subsequently be responsive to these changes. Hence, it should be updated every five years as required by State Code in order to allow the Town Council and Planning Commission an opportunity to reassess its vision for the future and respond to these changes as they occur. Therefore, the Plan is not a document which encourages regimentation. Instead, it should serve merely as a guide which encourages future patterns of development which, in turn, provide for orderly and efficient levels of community growth within the social, political, economical and historical context that defines Smithfield and makes it so unique in Tidewater.

The real impact of the Comprehensive Plan will ultimately be measured by the degree to which the Plan's implementation recommendations are translated into reality. These recommendations, no matter how

carefully crafted, can have little impact on guiding future growth and development in the Town in the absence of future implementation by Town leadership.

The following is a summary of the major implementation recommendations outlined in the 1999 Smithfield Comprehensive Plan.

### **ZONING ORDINANCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Of the various legal devices available for implementation of the Plan, zoning will probably receive the most attention during the coming years and will reach most pervasively into the lives of Town residents. While the truth of this is more obvious with respect to the overall distribution of land uses and the protection of natural resources, zoning can also be useful in many small ways to improve the quality of development. The extent to which zoning can improve living conditions and guide the growth of the Town in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan will be largely dependent upon the attitudes and interests of the people of Smithfield as expressed by themselves and through their enforcement. The problems will be varied since Smithfield is an attractive community with the potential for different kinds of development. But if the people of Smithfield truly desire an orderly, efficient land use development pattern which channels development into designated areas and protects valuable water resources and sensitive environmental areas, then zoning is available to implement a program which will accomplish these objectives.

In concert with the update of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town substantially revised its Zoning Ordinance in 1998. Drastic changes were made to the Ordinance in order to properly regulate land use in the three annexation areas brought into the Town in 1998, as well as to aid in the implementation of the recommendations of this Plan. Several existing zoning districts were modified and three new districts were written to more efficiently guide new development in rural areas of the Town. Modern standards in lot configuration, design, site planning, stormwater management, net developable area calculation and slope regulations were also added to the Ordinance in an attempt to properly implement the land use recommendations incorporated into the Future Land Use Plan.

The Zoning Map should remain generally consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. Within the overall pattern of land use established by the Plan, there is nonetheless, considerable room for variation between the Plan and the Zoning Map. The land use categories need not be identical and the one need not be amended every time the other is changed. Nevertheless, given the fact that the Zoning Map was revised during the Comprehensive Planning Process, great care was taken by the Planning Commission to ensure that the Map follows the land use allocations recommended in the Future Land Use Plan. As a result, there are few instances where a discrepancy exists between the recommended land uses and the existing zoning. The only significant discrepancy that has been identified between the maps is the zoning designation for the Pinewood Heights neighborhood. After much debate during the revision of the Zoning Map, the Town Council decided that the neighborhood should retain its existing attached residential zoning designation. During the development of the Future Land Use Plan, Town officials have become convinced that future redevelopment of the neighborhood is inevitable and that the Town's clear objective

is to develop an equitable and financially strategy through which the land could be redeveloped for heavy industrial uses. The first step in this process has been implemented in this Plan by placing the recommended future land use designation of heavy industry on the subdivision. The next logical step would be to rezone the parcels to I-2 (Heavy Industrial). Although the rezoning of the neighborhood to an I-2 designation would not necessarily guarantee the expedient conversion of the land, it would show that the Town is committed to fulfilling its stated goal and objective for the community.

In many other cases in the Town, the timing of a rezoning change to best implement a land use change will require repeated judgments by the Smithfield Planning Commission and the Town Council. In addition, the system of review of individual projects by special use permit process or by means of special exceptions will require separate decisions based on the guidelines of the Plan and the Zoning Ordinance and existing conditions of the location where the change is proposed.

An important part of Smithfield's continuing planning effort will be the recommendations of the Planning Commission regarding proposed changes, the continuing effort to keep these changes within the overall perspective of the Comprehensive Plan and the continuing effort to study and adjust implementation devices and programs which can assist with accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **OFFICIAL MAP**

If the Town is to strengthen its posture in planning for (and reserving) rights-of-way for future public roads, infrastructure and facilities, as well as improving the existing street network and community facilities, an Official Map should be prepared. The Official Map is a means by which proposed roads and infrastructure may be mapped and the rights-of-way and easements reserved for future acquisition. In satisfying the requirements of the Virginia enabling law, an Official Map must be based on an aerial and/or field-survey which establishes the metes and bounds of the proposed improvement.

To establish such areas for reservation and acquisition, any given public improvement which qualifies for official mapping would have to be planned to a "preliminary plan and plat" level of detail. For transportation projects, any Official Map effort should be accompanied by a detailed traffic improvement plan for the Town and should address those specific high-priority projects which are most strongly held to be in the public interest but where right-of-way reservation could otherwise be problematic.

#### **SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE**

The regulations of the Town's Subdivision Ordinance are primarily concerned with the platting of lots, the layout of streets, the location of public spaces and construction of public improvements associated with the process of subdividing land. In addition, the Ordinance contributes to the maintenance of clear and accurate land records. Subdivision Ordinances also typically respond to the need to protect the floodplains, wetlands and other sensitive environmental areas. These environmental issues and

conservation matters are intricately associated with the Comprehensive Plan and its policies on the overall pattern of growth and the prospects of expenditures for public facilities.

The Town's Subdivision Ordinance was also significantly revised in concert with the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Modern provisions for required subdivision improvements, subdivision design standards and plat and plan requirements were incorporated into the revised Ordinance, as were new checklists which will help streamline the subdivision application and review processes. The new Ordinance also incorporates greater detail on design standards for both public and private streets, as well as conditions relating to when other public improvements (such as sidewalks and curb gutter) would be required.

### **INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COOPERATION**

The concept of "regionalism" in planning is widely promoted within the Town and surrounding jurisdictions. Regional approaches to schools, libraries, parks and recreation programs have been successfully orchestrated and implemented by and between the Town and Isle of Wight County. In the coming years inter-jurisdictional cooperation will need to focus more intensively on planning with respect to environmental and transportation issues.

#### **Regional Plans and Activities**

Current and future planning efforts for the Town of Smithfield will be largely influenced by the planning activities of neighboring jurisdictions. Isle of Wight County, of which Smithfield is an integral part, has its own planning agenda and Comprehensive Plan. Since development-related issues often impact Town and County residents alike, it is in the best interest of both jurisdictions to coordinate their planning efforts whenever possible, and to seek common ground and solutions to development-related problems as they arise.

In addition to Isle of Wight County, the policies and plans of other regional jurisdictions and agencies will influence Smithfield's future growth. These range from the broad, physical planning efforts undertaken by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission to the more specific site plans of local industries and regional utility districts (HRSD). A brief review of the most significant planning efforts and activities which may affect recommendations contained in this Comprehensive Plan for Smithfield are outlined below.

#### **Isle of Wight Comprehensive Plan**

The current Isle of Wight County Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the County Planning Commission and adopted in May 1991. The County is currently in the process of updating this Plan. The existing County Plan sets forth a site-specific growth management strategy for the urbanizing, rural and environmentally sensitive areas of the County. Its land use prescription for the urbanizing portion of the county adjacent to Smithfield is of the greatest interest to Town leaders, businessmen and citizens.

### Development Service Districts

The Land Use Plan Map indicates designation of three strategically located Development Service Districts which generally coincide with portions of the major transportation corridors and potential future Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer service areas. Areas designated as Development Service Districts generally have served and are expected to continue to serve as the principal residential, commercial and employment centers of the County. These areas comprise the most suitable locations for future growth and development. Growth in and around these areas will prevent the outward sprawl of development into other County areas, and concentrate future residential growth in areas where residents can be economically provided with utilities, services and employment. In addition, the impact upon the County road system will be minimized since families will have the opportunity to be located physically close to the jobs and services which they require. These considerations, plus the need to preserve the open character of the County's outlying rural areas, indicate that the areas designated as Development Service Districts should accommodate most of the County's residential, commercial and industrial growth through the year 2010.

Most of the land directly east of Smithfield, from the town limits to the Suffolk city line (Rescue and Battery Park excluded), has been designated as part of the "Northeast Development Service District". One of three such growth districts in the county, the Northeast Development District is further recognized as having the strongest potential for extensive urban development. In support of this growth, the Land Use Plan calls upon the county to be "proactive with respect to infrastructure" by encouraging the provision of central water and sewer facilities, either through public initiative or through private development interests. The balance of the land surrounding Smithfield in the County has been planned for Rural/Agricultural Conservation use, which is consistent with the Town Plan's Community Conservation land use classification.

For many years, lack of centralized sewage facilities have hinder the county's growth plans. It now appears, however, that with eventual construction of the HRSD pipeline (1995), public sewer can feasibly be provided to much of the Northeast Development District over the next five to fifteen years. Such a scenario of course, contingent on the timely completion of the regional interceptor and agreeable arrangements between HRSD, the County and private development interests in regard to construction of pump stations, trunk lines and laterals. Beyond the specifics of Isle of Wight Land Use Plan, other goals and objectives are stated that pertain directly to the future Smithfield. These include the following:

- Coordinate County growth management plans with the plans and policies adopted for the Town of Smithfield.
- Extend Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) sewer line within the designated Development Service Districts accommodate economic development. As a priority, HRSD sewer service should first be extended into the Northeast Development Service District.

Smithfield and Isle of Wight share a great number of common goals with respect to environmental quality, housing and community development. In the years ahead, many planning-related decisions will impact

residents of both the County and the Town. It is therefore of utmost importance that the two entities cooperate on inter-jurisdictional issues and work together. Specific opportunity areas where Smithfield and Isle of Wight County can effectively plan together are outlined throughout this document and should serve as a basis for closer ties with Isle of Wight County.

**Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD)**

In May 1991, a historic agreement was reached between the Town's largest private industry, Smithfield Foods, and the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD). In order to comply with new Federal pollution standards specified in the Chesapeake Bay Protection Act, Smithfield Foods has agreed to pump wastewater from its slaughterhouse and meat processing plants to HRSD's Nansemond treatment plant in Suffolk. HRSD has satisfactorily demonstrated to the State Water Control Board (SWCB) that it can treat the company's wastewater and meet the required phosphorous limit reduction standards at an annual cost of \$1.5 to \$1.7 million, with additional pre-treatment by Smithfield Foods. This new system was completed in 1998 and Smithfield Foods began sending its waste to the Nansemond treatment plant that same year. It is anticipated that this new treatment and disposition system will lead to dramatic improvement in water quality in the Pagan River and its tributaries in the Smithfield area.

**Highway Corridor Overlay Districts**

The County has established Highway Corridor Overlay Districts designed to protect its primary entrance corridors from future sprawl development. The Town should follow the County's lead and designate its own primary entrance corridors with a similar overlay district. These corridors could logically follow the routes identified by the County and would afford the Town the opportunity to protect its primary tourism corridors and entranceways into the Historic Area from the impacts of additional sprawl development and help the Town more efficiently regulate existing uses along the corridors. The corridors along the following routes for a distance of 500 to 1000 feet from the right-of-way are designated by the County as Highway Corridor Overlay Districts:

- Route 17
- Route 10/32
- Route 258
- Route 460
- Route 58

The County reserves the right to establish additional routes in the future as determined appropriate. In the County's Ordinance, the future development of lands within the Highway Corridor District is subject to the standards of the particular base zoning district in which they occur, as well as the following standards that are specific to the Highway Corridor District. These standards are not intended to restrict or prevent the construction of buildings within each Corridor, nor to require the removal of existing structures. The Highway Corridor Design Standards do not contain setback requirements, although certain minimum setbacks will be required to protect highway rights-of-way and maintain sight clearances for traffic safety.

Standards specific to the Highway Corridors should provide for:

- Increased buffering requirements, which provide for a mix of canopy, tree and shrub level plantings, to partially screen buildings and parking areas from view;
- Special standards for signage height, design, size and materials; and
- Lights to maintain and enhance visual qualities.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Capital Improvements are new or expanded physical facilities for the community that are of relatively large size, are relatively expensive and are permanent in nature. Examples relating to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations are street improvements, public buildings and park improvements.

The Town's Five Year CIP is reviewed by Town Council annually, and is adopted by Council as a part of the Town's annual budget. The Comprehensive Plan should be consulted annually by the Town Council and the Town Manager in the development of the Capital Improvements Program.

The following list of capital improvement projects are supported by the recommendations developed within the Comprehensive Plan:

- Continue to revise zoning, subdivision and site plan controls as needed to achieve compatibility with the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop a comprehensive parking study for the downtown business district and historic area.
- Incorporating compatible regulatory and design guidelines, expand the existing Historic Preservation Overlay (HP-O) zoning district to include a new Entrance Corridor Overlay (EC-O) district, and coordinate the implementation of these districts for the regulation of future development along the major Town's entrance corridors.
- Prepare a detailed topographic and physical mapping inventory of the Town and create a GIS data base for use in public and private planning activities.
- Pro-actively enforce property maintenance and zoning regulations to protect the viability and value of all property within the Town.
- Develop inter-jurisdictional growth management efforts with Isle of Wight County emphasizing the creation of a unified procedure for design review for all properties within a mile radius from the new Town boundary.

- Effectively utilize existing regional and State agencies and boards focused on economic development and tourism attraction to better market Smithfield for these opportunities.
- Initiate and adopt a strategic development plan and a capital improvements plan for newly annexed properties to ensure that future development patterns will be consistent with the existing character of Smithfield.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Specific improvement projects recommended by the Plan are summarized below:

### 1. Entrance Corridors Improvements and “Gateway” Project

Undertake design and improvements of the Town’s entrance gateways, with a focus on the Route 10 Bypass/Route 258 intersection.

Action: Staff/consultant to prepare guidelines study  
Timeframe: 4-6 months (design study); 6-8 months (construction)  
Approvals: Town Council to adopt budget;  
Estimated Cost: \$15,000 (gateway design study)  
Start-up Date: FY 99

### 2. Tourism/Historic District Ordinance

Prepare and adopt Historic Tourism Corridor zoning overlay district and update of the existing Historic District zoning and design guidelines; prepare and adopt design review manual for the Entrance Corridors to the Town.

Action: Consultant to prepare ordinance and design guidelines  
Timeframe: 2-3 months  
Approvals: Town Council to adopt ordinance  
Council to authorize design guidelines study  
Estimated Cost: \$15,000 (design review manual); ordinance underway  
Start-up Date: FY 99

### 3. Waterfront Management Plan

Update the Town’s Waterfront Management Plan and identify properties for future joint development opportunities and/or land acquisition.

Action: Staff/consultant to update study  
Timeframe: 4-6 months (planning study);  
24-48 months (acquisition and project development)

Approvals: Town Council to adopt plan and budget  
Estimated Cost: \$10,000 (study update and economic feasibility study)  
Start-up Date: FY 2000

**4. Town Boat Landing and Dock**

Establish a location and design for a public, Town boat landing; pursue land acquisition required for this improvement.

Action: Staff and Council to evaluate site; retain engineer  
Timeframe: 2-3 months (location); 4-6 months  
(engineering)

4-6 months (construction)

Approvals: Town Council to approve budget  
Estimated Cost: \$8000-\$12,000 (survey and engineering)  
\$150,000 (10-15 slips)  
Start-up Date: FY 99-2000

**5. Code Enforcement**

Establish a comprehensive zoning, land use and building code enforcement program and hire a full-time code enforcement official.

Action: Manager to recommend program and job description  
Timeframe: 2-4 months (establish and hire for position)  
Approvals: Council to approve position and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: \$32,000-\$35,000 (starting staff salary and office startup)  
Start-up Date: FY 2000

**6. Downtown Parking Improvements**

Prepare a parking study for the Historic Downtown Area and undertake physical improvements to create convenient parking locations within the business district.

Action: Staff to prepare study of options and parking needs  
Timeframe: 2-3 months (study & engineering design);  
3-5 months (construction)

Approvals: Town Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: 30-50 spaces @ \$1000-\$1200 per parking space  
\$60,000 (exclusive of land costs)  
Start-up Date: FY 99 (location and design), FY 2000 (construction)

**7. Public Restrooms in Downtown**

Prepare a location and design study for public restrooms in the Historic Downtown Area; undertake construction improvements.

Action: Staff to prepare location study and design.  
Timeframe: 2-3 months (study & design); 3-5 months (construction)  
Approvals: Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: \$25,000/bathroom facility (exclusive of land costs)  
Start-up Date: FY 99 (design and construction)

**8. Pagan River Shoreline and Environmental Protection**

Pursue program to manage, protect and acquire (where necessary) the Town's Pagan River frontage; coordinate with private property owners to obtain conservation, construction and/or maintenance easements. Ensure that all shoreline activities by the Town are protective of the water quality in the Pagan River and the tidal wetlands.

Action: Staff to prepare recommendation to Council  
Timeframe: 4-6 months (initial staff recommendations)  
8-12 months (design); 36-60 months (construction)  
Approvals: Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: (estimate to be provided by Staff)  
Start-up Date: FY 2000

**9. Cypress Creek Access Project**

Pursue opportunities for a public access and preservation of scenic easements to Cypress Creek through Windsor Farms, while ensuring the protection of water quality in Cypress Creek.

Action: Staff to prepare recommendation to Town Council  
Timeframe: 2-3 months (staff recommendations)  
Approvals: Town Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: (estimate to be provided by Staff)  
Start-up Date: FY 2000

**10. Sidewalk and Bicycle Path Improvements**

Implement a comprehensive system of sidewalk improvements and bike trails throughout the Town.

Action: Staff/consultant to prepare study of options  
Timeframe: 3-4 months (comprehensive plan recommendations);  
4-6 months (engineering and easement acquisition);  
12-24 months (construction)  
Approvals: Town Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: (consultant currently under contract for Comp. Plan)  
\$200,000 (\$20-\$30 per lineal foot)  
Start-up Date: FY 99 (planning and design); FY 2000 (construction)

**11. Underground Utility Projects**

Implement to construction of underground electric and telephone utilities in the downtown historic areas.

Action: Staff to prepare study of options and priorities  
Timeframe: 4-6 months (design); 12-24 months (construction)  
Approvals: Town/Council to approve plan and adopt budget  
Estimated Cost: (estimate to be provided by Staff)  
Start-up Date: FY 99 (planning and design)

As a first step towards implementing this effort, a capital improvements program has been included on the following page. The worksheet represents a summary of the projects recommended for inclusion in the CIP by the Comprehensive Plan. Cost estimates and an expected allocation schedule is included for each year within the five year planning period. As each year of the program is completed, an additional year of improvements should be recommended by the Planning Commission for inclusion in the CIP. The Town should formalize the CIP process, as outlined in the following chart, so that the relation of capital improvement expenditures to the long-range Plan will become a routine process.