



Source: Albemarle County Community Development 2010

HISTORIC, CULTURAL, AND SCENIC RESOURCES

GOAL:

Albemarle's historic, cultural, and scenic resources will be preserved. Attractive entrance corridors will welcome visitors and residents to and within the County.

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VISION:

Albemarle County envisions a community with abundant natural, rural, historic, and scenic resources • healthy ecosystems • active and vibrant development areas • a physical environment that supports healthy lifestyles • a thriving economy • and exceptional educational opportunity for present and future generations.

Historic, Cultural, and Scenic Resources

Relationship to the Vision

Historic, cultural, and scenic resources create the jewel that is Albemarle County. They are key features for tourism and help provide the quality of life enjoyed by residents and business owners. School children learn the importance of preserving these critical features. Without preserved vistas and historic sites, Albemarle County could look like large-lot rural suburbia - the polar opposite of what Albemarle wishes to be. For that reason, economic development opportunities need to be expanded with care to ensure that new activities are compatible with and not destructive of these important resources.

Introduction

Albemarle is rich with cultural and historic resources that represent the County's heritage and establish a strong community identity. Cultural resources are the intangible and tangible representations of an area's behaviors, beliefs, and values. Art, architecture, music, and oral traditions from an area are cultural resources. Cultural resources also include physical features of the land that are important to a community. Historic resources also represent an area's culture.

As defined by the Albemarle County Historic Preservation Committee and based on criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, *historic resource* is defined as a place with architectural, engineering, archaeological, or cultural remains present in districts, sites, buildings, or structures that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Historic resources are associated with one or more of the following historical or cultural themes:

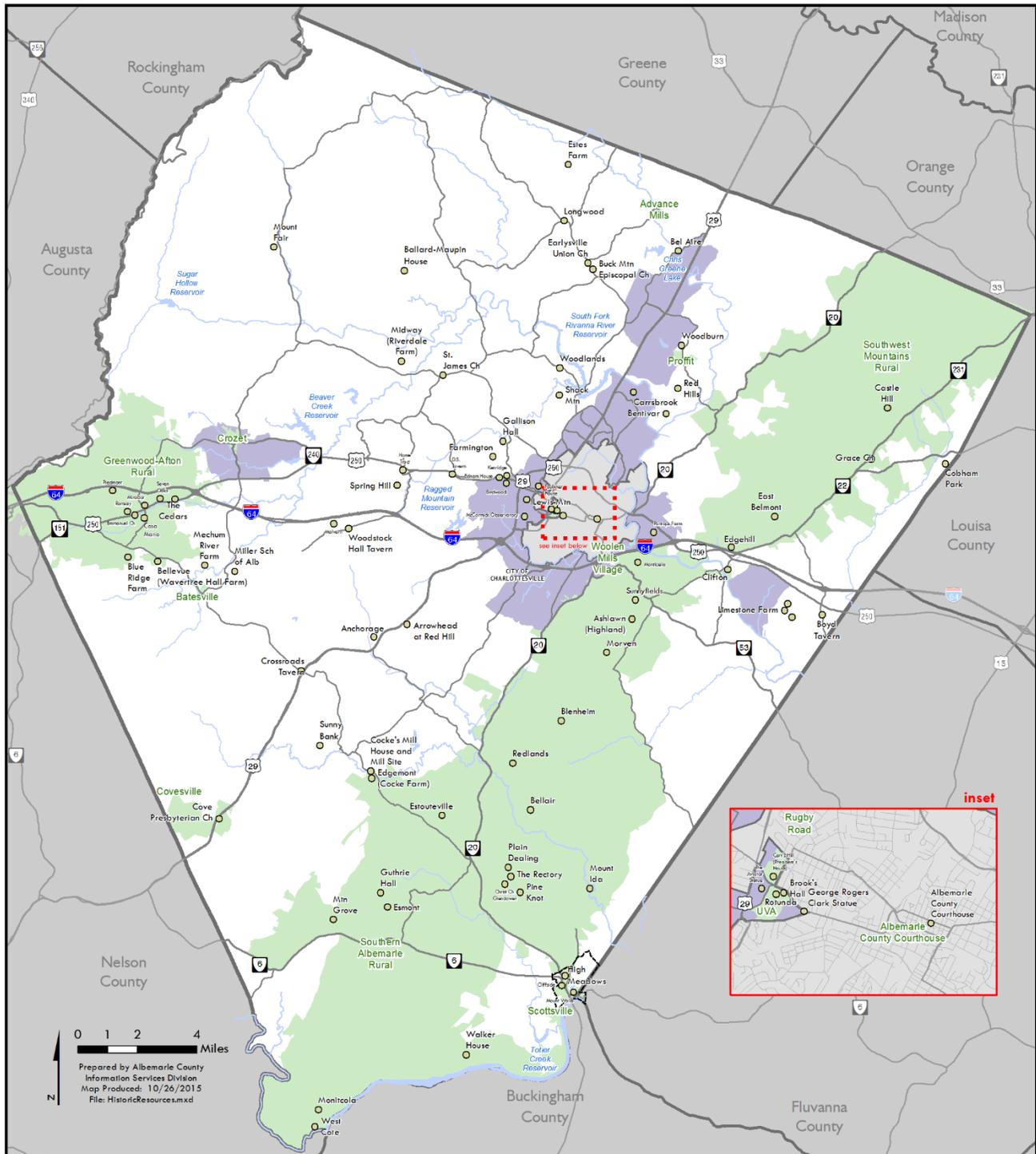
- Events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history;
- Lives of persons significant in our past;
- Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values; or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
- Information which is important to prehistory or has the potential to yield this information.

The resources include archeological sites from various time periods, ranging from 12,000-yearold hunting camps and former villages of the Monacan, to buildings and farms established early in this country's history, to post-World War II structures and sites. The resources include 81 individual properties listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register, all but one of which are also listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and 12 National Register Historic Districts that

encompass approximately 29% of the land area of the County. Albemarle is also proud to claim four National Historic Landmarks and one World Heritage site, which includes Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, the Rotunda, and the Academical Village at UVA.

Albemarle is fortunate to be able to claim these highly prominent resources, but the lesser known resources also contribute significantly to the County's history, character, and identity. Recognizing and protecting this broad spectrum of historic resources is important so that all segments of the County's history are represented and are understood as contributors to that unique place we know as Albemarle County. An enduring and equitable program of protective measures should balance regulation with voluntary techniques, education, and incentives. The County's 2000 Historic Preservation Plan presents a framework for such preservation efforts, in addition to summarizing the County's history and providing a list of properties on historic registers. The plan evaluates a wide range of preservation tools and techniques and encourages heritage tourism. As outlined in the plan, a comprehensive recognition of the broader range of Albemarle's cultural resources, together with an active heritage tourism program, can establish the mutually productive results of improved economic development and ongoing preservation of historic buildings.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan summarizes the primary points of the [2000 Historic Preservation Plan](#). Strategies shown in this Comprehensive Plan are detailed in the Preservation Plan and should be followed. The full text of the 2000 Plan, which will be updated in the future to reflect accomplishments since the original adoption of the Plan, is included as an Appendix to the Comprehensive Plan.



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 Prepared by Albemarle County Information Services Division
 Map Produced: 10/26/2015
 File: HistoricResources.mxd

- Historic Landmarks
- Historic Districts
- Development Areas
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Major Streams
- Major Water Bodies

**Figure 1:
 Historic Properties Designated
 by Virginia or Listed on the
 National Register of Historic Places**

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Objective 1: Continue to identify and recognize the value of buildings, structures, landscapes, sites, and districts that have historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural significance.

The relatively large number of Albemarle County historic resources listed in the State and National Registers are examples of successful preservation efforts in the County and attest to the commendable efforts of their owners. Over the years, historic resource surveys have identified buildings and sites in Albemarle that are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. However, there is no consolidated or updated list of these properties. In addition, many property owners are not aware of the historic significance of their properties, and many historic resources are demolished, leaving no record behind. To help counteract these effects, the following strategies are recommended:

Strategy 1a: Maintain a permanent Historic Preservation Committee and re-establish the full-time Historic Preservation Planner position to assist in implementation of the Preservation Plan.

The Board of Supervisors first appointed members to a permanent Historic Preservation Committee in 2001 to provide assistance and advice on the County’s historic preservation efforts. In 2003, the County hired its first Historic Preservation Planner; however, in 2008 that position was left unfilled and was subsequently eliminated through staffing reductions in force at that time. Although the Committee and the County continue to document historic resources, progress is slow in implementing the Historic Preservation Plan. Reestablishing the Historic Preservation Planner position will help with resource documentation, implementation of the Plan, and project review.

Strategy 1b: Compile and maintain a current and comprehensive information base on Albemarle County’s prehistoric, historic, and cultural resources for use by all County departments and the public.

The County has incomplete and scattered records, which makes accessing complete and accurate information difficult. The County’s Geographic Information System (GIS) currently includes incomplete identification of historic resources that are listed in the State and National Registers, and no information on the potential historic significance of non-listed properties. This means that County staff may obtain inaccurate information about historic resources on properties under review, and property owners may alter or destroy resources they do not know warrant special treatment. The Historic Preservation Committee has been working to update the system to accurately reflect the status of contributing and non-contributing properties in registered historic districts, but the process is slow. This work should be

Livability Project

Charlottesville and Albemarle County have made a commitment to enhance the historic character of the region by fostering community awareness of our historic and cultural resources and promoting the preservation of designated structures and areas.

In cooperation with the City of Charlottesville, the County should:

- *Prepare and maintain coordinated information detailing requirements, responsibilities, and support programs for eligible, significant, and designated resources.*
- *Collaborate on tourism outreach related to historic resources.*
- *Prepare, maintain, and make publicly available a single map of formally designated City and County historic resources to be made available as a layer on both City and County data systems.*
- *Encourage designation of historic buildings, sites, districts, structures and objects through State and federal programs.*
- *Encourage local historic designations where appropriate, in cooperation with neighborhoods.*
- *Collaborate with the University of Virginia, Ash Lawn-Highland, Monticello, and other community organizations on historic preservation matters.*

completed, expanded to include potentially eligible resources, and regularly updated as part of the work of the Committee and the Historic Preservation Planner.

Strategy 1c: Document as fully as possible all historic resources prior to demolition and retain historic records. Complete documentation with the assistance of County staff, the Historic Preservation Committee, local preservation groups, applicants, and property owners.

Albemarle County has no local historic preservation regulations and, as a result, has no mechanism to either prevent demolition of historic resources or to require that owners document their historic resources prior to demolition. At this time, the Historic Preservation Committee's focus is on establishing a written and visual record of the historic resources for which demolition permits are received. Such documentation helps to ensure that Albemarle's history is not forgotten. Current efforts are limited by the availability of committee volunteers and staff resources and by the lack of both a requirement for documentation as well as a provision for legal access by Committee members to historic properties in order to do such documentation. Rehiring a Preservation Planner would also help in this endeavor.

Objective 2: Pursue additional protection measures and incentives to preserve Albemarle's historic and archaeological resources in order to foster pride in the County and maintain the County's character.

Albemarle County has few protection measures and limited incentives to encourage owners to preserve resources on their property. Although examples of successful preservation efforts in the County exist, the number of resources destroyed in recent years suggests that continued reliance solely on voluntary preservation measures will not be adequate to protect all significant resources. Instead, a combination of strategies is necessary, including voluntary techniques, regulation, education, and financial incentives.

Strategy 2a: Encourage landowners to pursue voluntary methods of preservation and conservation, including requesting landmark and district designations, offering conservation easements, and providing tax and other financial incentive programs, as outlined in the adopted 2000 Historic Preservation Plan and its updates. Pursue historic district designations in cooperation with the surrounding neighborhoods and in partnership with the City of Charlottesville, where applicable.

Although there are no regulatory mechanisms in place, a level of historic preservation can be attained through voluntary measures. These include designation on the State and National Registers of individual properties, districts, sites, structures and objects. Such designation promotes preservation by increasing awareness of the importance of the historic resources and by making tax incentives available. Establishing conservation easements is another voluntary preservation method that is available to property owners. Many property owners are unaware of these voluntary ways to ensure that their historic properties can be enjoyed by future generations and to preserve Albemarle County's history.

Strategy 2b: Continue to find ways for preservation of historic structures and sites to be financially viable for property owners.

Rehabilitation, restoration, and maintenance of historic structures can be costly. These high costs combined with limited options for using historic properties, particularly in the Rural Areas where the majority of the County's historic buildings are located, threaten these valuable resources. A greater variety of allowable uses for historic buildings and sites could encourage historic property owners to spend the money required to maintain, rehabilitate and restore these buildings. Objective 5 in the

Rural Area Chapter provides guidance for use of restaurants and artist residencies in the Rural Area. Additional uses that can be accommodated in older buildings and sites while maintaining conformity with Rural Area goals, objectives, and strategies should be considered.

Strategy 2c: Consider adopting regulatory measures for preservation and conservation such as those outlined in the adopted 2000 Historic Preservation Plan and its updates.

The surest method of protecting the County's outstanding collection of historic and cultural resources is through the adoption of a historic overlay district in the Zoning Ordinance, as recommended in the 2000 Historic Preservation Plan. Although listing in the State and National Registers can promote preservation, such listing provides little or no protection for the historic resources so honored. Furthermore, many important resources are not yet recognized by listing in the registers. Local historic district zoning is the primary means by which government can provide legal and effective protection for historic resources and their settings. The Board of Supervisors will decide when this method might be appropriate.

Strategy 2d: Practice good stewardship of the historic resources under County control by using recognized practices for the preservation of historic resources.

The County owns several historic properties and has responsibilities as an active participant in the historic community. One of those responsibilities is setting an example for the community in its stewardship of County-owned historic resources. By maintaining and rehabilitating these resources in appropriate ways, the County can set an example that historic buildings can contribute significantly to everyday life.

Objective 3: Provide educational programs in the community about historic resources and preservation.

County residents and visitors are reminded daily of Albemarle's rich history when they view structures and landscapes that have remained practically unchanged for hundreds of years. Successfully communicating the value of Albemarle's historic resources helps engender in the community a sense of common responsibility for those resources.

Strategy 3a: Develop and engage in heritage education programs that foster community pride, good citizenship, a strong school curriculum, and stewardship of the County's historic resources.

Heritage education programs can raise the community's awareness, increase its knowledge, and encourage responsibility, thereby encouraging the survival of the County's historic resources for the benefit of future generations. Heritage education makes historic preservation more secure. To communicate the value of these resources to all segments of the community, three types of educational programs should be pursued: school programs, adult programs, and community events. The Historic Preservation Committee and the Preservation Planner can help develop and present these programs.

Strategy 3b: Use a variety of tools (brochures, videos, workshops, lectures, the internet, oral histories, a comprehensive database) to educate and provide guidance to County residents, property owners, County boards and committees, and County staff about the County's historic resources and its preservation policies.

Preservation education can take multiple forms. Creating a wide variety of tools to convey the historic preservation message can help ensure that a clear message reaches a diverse audience.

Strategy 3c: Partner with the City of Charlottesville to prepare and maintain coordinated information on requirements, responsibilities, and support programs for historic resources that are designated, eligible to be designated, or otherwise historically significant to the community.

Many of the County's resources are related historically, physically, and visually to resources in adjacent communities, including the City of Charlottesville. Sometimes, this proximity can generate confusion regarding policies and requirements, but it can also provide an opportunity for capitalizing on preservation education. Providing easily accessible, coordinated information can help clarify requirements and opportunities for preservation.

Objective 4: Promote regional cooperation in preservation and conservation efforts, including the promotion of heritage tourism.

Albemarle County is not alone in its wealth of historic resources. Nearby localities, including the City of Charlottesville, Orange County, and Fluvanna County, also contain numerous historic and cultural resources. The 2000 Historic Preservation Plan and the Livability Project both emphasize the "total community effort" concept, and identify individual citizens, businesses, schools, government officials (County, City, and State), various interest groups, and preservation organizations as important players in regional preservation. The role of the County government in this partnership is to integrate historic preservation fully into the planning and implementation process. Incorporation of this preservation plan into the Comprehensive Plan will help ensure that future public policy decisions reflect the value of historic resources to the community.

An existing example of a successful partnership is the Journey Through Hallowed Ground, a four-state 180-mile long and 75-mile-wide historic, natural, and scenic region stretching from Gettysburg, PA, through Maryland and Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. Recognized by Congress as a National Heritage Area in 2008, the Journey encompasses more historic sites than any other region in the nation.

Strategy 4a: Create and strengthen partnerships among all interest groups, including, but not limited to, the City of Charlottesville, U VA, County and State officials, nearby counties, local businesses, historic sites (like Ash Lawn-Highland and Monticello) and community organizations to collaborate on and forward the cause of historic preservation and to promote heritage tourism throughout the County and the region.

Because Albemarle and nearby areas are rich in historic resources, opportunities for partnering with other organizations are ripe. The proximity of such culturally rich localities points to the benefit of forming partnerships among the public, private and institutional sectors of the larger community to support and strengthen the local preservation efforts. For example, with the help of the Historic Preservation Committee, the County could explore designating a Heritage Area such as the Jefferson, Monroe, and Madison corridor (in cooperation with Orange County), or the Rivanna River corridor (in cooperation with the City of Charlottesville and Fluvanna County).

Strategy 4b: Prepare and maintain a single map of formally designated City and County historic resources and make it available as a layer on both City and County data systems.

Many visitors and residents appreciate the numerous historic resources of the City and County; however there is no single map showing all resources. A single map illustrating both City and County historic resources offers multiple benefits, such as easier navigation for tourists and improved understanding of potential impacts of proposed development. Economic development professionals in the City of

Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and others, could develop joint maps of historic resources for use at the Chamber of Commerce and visitor centers. Development of these relationships may result in statewide tourism activities.

Objective 5: Help protect Monticello's Viewshed.

Monticello is among the many important Albemarle County historic sites. It is a National Historic Landmark and is the only house in the United States designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is part of the same UNESCO World Heritage Site that extends to the Rotunda and Academical Village at the University of Virginia. Because of its significance as part of American history and its economic contribution to the community, Monticello stands out as resource that deserves special recognition. As the home of Thomas Jefferson and the only house in the United States designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Monticello reflects the interests, values, and attitudes of its owner and the times in which he lived. It draws approximately half a million visitors each year, and the Rotunda and Academical Village, at the core of the University of Virginia grounds, draw additional students, families, and visitors. Monticello's elevated location near the County's Development Areas means that the view from that mountaintop is subject to significant change. Albemarle County, therefore, has a cultural responsibility and an economic interest in helping to protect Monticello's viewshed.

Strategy 5a: Make available to the public the Monticello Viewshed Map that represents all properties potentially visible from the Monticello mountaintop.

In 2012, the Piedmont Environmental Council assisted the Foundation by creating a "Monticello Viewshed Map" that delineates the areas where development might be visible from the Monticello mountaintop, based on visual measurements. The inclusion of the Viewshed Map in the County's mapping system (available on the County's website) will facilitate property owners, developers, and the Foundation in making preliminary determinations regarding a property's visibility from Monticello.

Strategy 5b: Help land developers with properties potentially visible from the Monticello mountaintop connect with the Thomas Jefferson Foundation (TJF) to help prevent negative visual impacts on the Monticello viewshed.

To help preserve this resource and the rural view from Monticello, TJF prepared guidelines for development located within the viewshed of the Monticello mountaintop. These voluntary guidelines, which are available from the Foundation and can be found in the [Reference Documents](#), are intended to help property owners and land developers work with the Foundation to preserve important views for tourists who visit Monticello.

To help prevent negative visual impacts to the view from Monticello, TJF has requested that the County notify it of new projects under review, including special use permits, requests for rezoning, and public projects, so that the Foundation will be able to contact the owners and developers directly to clarify the extent of visibility and to discuss the Foundation's guidelines for reducing visual impacts, as necessary. County staff should also strongly encourage applicants with development proposals for properties on the Monticello Viewshed Map to consult with the TJF about any potential visual impact of the project.

Strategy 5c: When reviewing discretionary land proposals, consider impacts on Monticello’s viewshed and encourage mitigation measures that are consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Plan.

Discretionary land proposals include rezoning applications, special use permits, and reviews on public projects for conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. As part of staff review of discretionary proposals, reports to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors advise on how well a project meets the intent of the various goals, objectives, and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan. Strong consideration of how a proposed development affects the Monticello viewshed should be given when reviewing development proposals in the viewshed. Impacts to Monticello should be part of staff reports provided to the Commission and Board and should indicate whether an applicant has contacted TJJ or if TJJ has any comments on the proposed project.

Strategy 5d: When revising zoning and subdivision regulations, consider the impacts of new regulations on Monticello’s viewshed.

From time to time, Albemarle County revises and updates its land use regulations to better implement the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Plan. Many different resources of the County may be affected by changes in the regulations. The County weighs the impacts of how new regulations to achieve one goal may affect goals for different parts of the County or County’s resources. The TJJ has requested that the County also be mindful of how new regulations may affect their viewshed.

Scenic Resources

Albemarle’s scenic quality is largely dependent on its agricultural, forestry resources, natural resources, and historic resources. The combination of open and forested areas, natural scenes and ordered landscapes provide a variety of visual experiences that Albemarle’s residents have long appreciated. Clean water and clean air contribute to the County’s scenic resources. Preserving and planning for scenic resources is done for the enjoyment of current and future residents and tourists.

The County’s scenic resources are highly valued and contribute to both quality of life and the tourism economy. Existing regulations only go so far in protecting these resources. Greater ability to regulate aesthetics is desired to help preserve these qualities. Strategies for protecting the various types of County scenic resources are addressed in this section.

Objective 6: Continue to protect and enhance scenic resources for residents and tourists.

The County’s preserved scenic resources are largely the result of the County’s commitment to its growth management policy ([hyperlink](#)) which directs growth to its designated Development Areas and seeks to preserve its Rural Areas for agriculture, forestry, and natural resource conservation. The preservation of agricultural and forestry lands, described more fully in the Rural Area Chapter ([hyperlink](#)), preservation of natural resources, as articulated in the Natural Resources Chapter ([hyperlink](#)), and preservation of historic resources and their settings are the most effective types of scenic protection. Maintaining and improving air quality is particularly important for protection of scenic resources.

Scenic resources contribute to the community’s desirability as a place to live, enhance and protect property values, and contribute to the overall quality of life. Albemarle’s scenic quality is largely dependent on its agricultural and forestry resources and its historic resources. The combination of open and forested areas, natural features, and ordered landscapes provide a variety of visual experiences that Albemarle’s residents have long appreciated.

Albemarle’s scenic resources are important to visitors, as well as its residents. The Blue Ridge Mountains and Albemarle’s historic structures in their rural settings contribute to a year-round tourism industry. Visitors to these destinations gather a lasting impression of Albemarle as they travel the County’s scenic roadways. Greenways provide a firsthand opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy scenic streams such as the Rivanna River.

Strategy 6a: Continue to promote voluntary measures to protect scenic resources.

Preservation of scenic resources often occurs indirectly as the result of natural resource protection or through voluntary measures. Voluntary measures that protect scenic resources in Albemarle County include:

- Conservation easements and historic easements, which are intended to preserve open space and historic resources;
- Agricultural/Forestal Districts, which are intended to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands for aesthetic purposes, among others; and
- Rural Preservation Developments, which are reviewed for conservation of natural, scenic or historic resources.

In addition, the use value taxation program (land use tax) indirectly, but effectively, helps protect scenic areas through the maintenance of agricultural and forestal areas. Honorific designations, such as State Scenic River, Virginia Byway, Virginia Landmarks Register, and National Register of Historic Places, do not impose restrictions, but serve to draw attention to scenic resources and thereby encourage their protection. Continued promotion of these measures by County officials, staff, and volunteers can have a significant impact on scenic resource protection.

Strategy 6b: Support enabling legislation for Albemarle County to provide for a scenic protection and tourist enhancement overlay zoning district.

In Albemarle County, aesthetic protection takes place through several zoning regulations. Some roads and streams are protected with the Entrance Corridor Overlay regulations and the Scenic Streams Overlay District. To a lesser extent, protections are provided through the critical slopes regulations and the site plan landscaping and screening requirements. Aesthetic protection is one of the stated objectives of the Rural Areas zoning district and, although the Water Protection Ordinance is a regulation intended to protect a natural resource, it also indirectly protects scenic resources. The required stream buffers, which preserve indigenous vegetation to protect the water quality, also protect the scenic quality of the streams. When a special use permit or rezoning is requested in an Entrance Corridor District or other designated area, decision makers consult the Comprehensive Plan for guidance on mitigating impacts.

Because of the importance of scenic protection and tourism enhancement, Albemarle County supports enabling legislation for the County to provide greater protection through a scenic protection and tourist enhancement overlay zoning district. As the County pursues options to protect the visual quality of land as an aesthetic and economic resource, this legislation would provide a method to ensure greater protection of visual resources and scenic areas than currently exists.

Strategy 6c: Work with the City of Charlottesville, the University of Virginia, and other regional bodies to more consistently enhance the visual quality and multi-modal experiences along scenic corridors. Focus on Entrance Corridors, shared boundaries, the creation of distinctive destinations, urban area walkability, and consistent signage.

The County shares scenic resources with the City of Charlottesville and UVA. Collaboration among the various boards and commissions can help protect and enhance these scenic resources. For example, consistent and coordinated signage, landscaping, and pedestrian amenities can enhance the visual quality and multimodal experiences along the corridors. Enhancing and improving the scenic and historic character of each corridor, while connecting historic resources, such as Monticello, Ash Lawn-Highland, the University of Virginia, and Court Square, within the community can bolster tourism. As part of the Livability Project, community input revealed a desire for Entrance Corridors that were improved, especially at the City-County boundary, as well as clear differences between the Rural Area and densely developed areas, and coordinated guidelines for ease of use by the development community. These concepts were supported by the Planning Commissions, which identified a consistent approach to signage as a good place to start in joint planning for these important shared resources.

Objective 7: Maintain or improve the visual quality of all of Albemarle’s roadways.

For residents and visitors alike, the visual attractiveness of what is seen while driving on a road creates a lingering impression. Albemarle County prides itself on being visually attractive. The County works to identify and protect the elements that make traveling the County roads an enjoyable experience and reflective of the County’s commitment to resource preservation. There are specific roads in the County that stand out as exceptionally scenic corridors. Roads outside of the designated Development Areas reflect the character of the rural countryside and contribute to the scenic quality of the Rural Area. Some of these rural roads are corridors into and through historic areas of the County. These roads usually serve as major tourist routes and offer scenery representing the best of Albemarle’s varied terrain, water features, forests, agricultural uses, and architectural and landscape design heritage. Some of these roads may be historic routes of travel in the region. Currently, scenic road designations include State-designated Virginia Byways and State Scenic Highways and locally designated Entrance Corridors.

Strategy 7a: Pursue additional scenic road designations to promote tourism and to maintain the visual quality of the County’s scenic roads.

Albemarle County has a number of scenic roads that have been designated as important on a State and national level. A State Scenic Highway is a road built within a protected scenic corridor and located, designed, and constructed in order to preserve and enhance the natural beauty and cultural value of the countryside. Skyline Drive, with portions located in Albemarle County, is one of five such scenic highways in Virginia. It was constructed in conjunction with Shenandoah National Park and was also designated a National Scenic Byway in 2005. Other State scenic highways are the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Colonial National Parkway, the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Corridor, and the George Washington Memorial Parkway. State Route 20 and State Route 53 in Albemarle County are part of the Journey Corridor.

A Virginia Byway is an existing road with high aesthetic or cultural value, leading to or lying within an area of historic, natural, or recreational significance. A Virginia Byway designation does not place any restrictions upon properties along the Byway. The primary purpose is to give formal recognition to deserving roads and to further the creation of a system of roads to promote tourism and public appreciation of natural and historic resources. Maps of the currently designated Virginia Byways can be

obtained from the Virginia Department of Transportation. In Albemarle, these byways include portions of Route 614, Route 250, Route 151, Route 6, Route 20, Route 53, Route 800, and Route 601. Portions of Route 20, Route 231/22, and Route 53 are also American Byways.

The *Virginia Outdoors Plan* is Virginia's official document regarding land conservation, outdoor recreation, and open space planning. The 2014 Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies the following roads as potential routes that should be evaluated for consideration as Virginia Byways in Albemarle County:

- Route 626 (James River Byway);
- Route 810 (from Crozet to Stanardsville); and
- Route 692/712 (Plank Road).

The County should continue to pursue designations for these roads. In addition, the County should pursue protections for other roads, such as the portion of Route 614 (Sugar Hollow Road) west of Whitehall, which possess exceptional scenic, aesthetic, and historic characteristics and are assets to the County, but which have not yet been identified in the 2014 Virginia Outdoors Plan.

Strategy 7b: Take an active role in the design of Virginia Department of Transportation road improvements and bridges on scenic roads.

When public funds are involved, the County has some influence over certain aspects of the design of improvements proposed for bridges and scenic roads in the County. Ways in which scenic roads can be preserved and enhanced include:

- In the Rural Area, retain existing vegetation adjacent to roadways and retain trees on hillsides and ridges to preserve the natural horizon and visual character of the area;
- Landscape and re-vegetate graded areas with native species;
- Protect the settings of historic structures with appropriate setbacks and buffering;
- Maintain natural corridors along streams to protect the visual qualities of watercourses; and
- Avoid crossings of scenic streams by roads, utilities, and the like. Where such crossings are necessary, particular care should be exercised to maintain visual character.

By taking an active role in the design phase of projects, the County can help ensure that important features of scenic roads are preserved.

Strategy 7c: Consider whether additional setback is needed along scenic highways in the Rural Area.

Protection for locally designated scenic highways was previously provided through the County Scenic Highway overlay zoning district, which required increased setbacks for structures and parking lots, and additional sign regulations. That provision was deleted in 1992, following the adoption of the Entrance Corridor (EC) overlay district in 1990. The motivation for removing the County Scenic Highway overlay district was the belief that the Entrance Corridor overlay would provide a broader and more effective measure of protection for scenic highway corridor. At the time the EC was adopted, all designated Scenic Highways were established as Entrance Corridors. Since that time, however, other scenic roads have been identified that could potentially benefit from protection. Study is needed on whether these

roads should have additional controls, such as a 150 foot setback. More information on this topic is provided in [Strategy 8a](#).

Objective 8: Maintain the visual integrity of Albemarle’s Entrance Corridors.

Entrance Corridors are arterial streets and highways that are significant routes of tourist access to the County and access to many of the County’s and City’s historic landmarks, structures, and districts. Some of these historic resources are Monticello, Ash Lawn-Highland, the Rotunda and Academical Village at the University of Virginia, and the County’s 12 National Register Historic Districts.

The EC overlay district helps to implement the Comprehensive Plan’s goal to preserve the County’s scenic resources because they are essential to the County’s character, economic vitality and quality of life. Maintenance of the visual integrity of the County’s roadways takes place by using design guidelines. It provides for review of new construction along designated roads by an architectural review board under design guidelines. Entrance Corridor Guidelines "guide" how the EC regulations are implemented and administered. They reinforce the County’s goal of preserving scenic resources and help ensure that new development will be compatible with the County’s natural, scenic, historic, architectural, and cultural resources. A map identifying the Entrance Corridors is provided in Figure 2.

There are important distinctions between the EC regulations and the previous Scenic Highway zoning regulations. EC regulations may be applied only to “arterial streets or highways found to be significant routes of tourist access.” A road may not qualify based on classification alone. Scenic Highways were established for a distance of 150 feet on each side of the right-of-way of three specific routes:

- US Route 250 from the western corporate limits of the City of Charlottesville to the western Albemarle County border;
- VA Route 20 from I-64 south to the corporate limits of the Town of Scottsville; and
- VA Route 6 from the corporate limits of the Town Scottsville westward through several discontinuous portions of Albemarle County.

EC regulations do not specify a setback, whereas the Scenic Highway zoning regulations required a 150-foot setback. In this regard, the EC regulations provide more flexibility, but may overlook an important technique for visual protection. Because EC regulations do not apply to residential buildings unless a site plan is required, single-family detached homes do not fall under EC review. This situation means that houses may be built fairly close to the roadway and have features that are not compatible with the Entrance Corridor. More information on this aspect is found in Strategy 7a. Continuing to regulate new development in the Entrance Corridor helps the County take a more active role in preserving historic and scenic character that impacts tourism and quality of life.

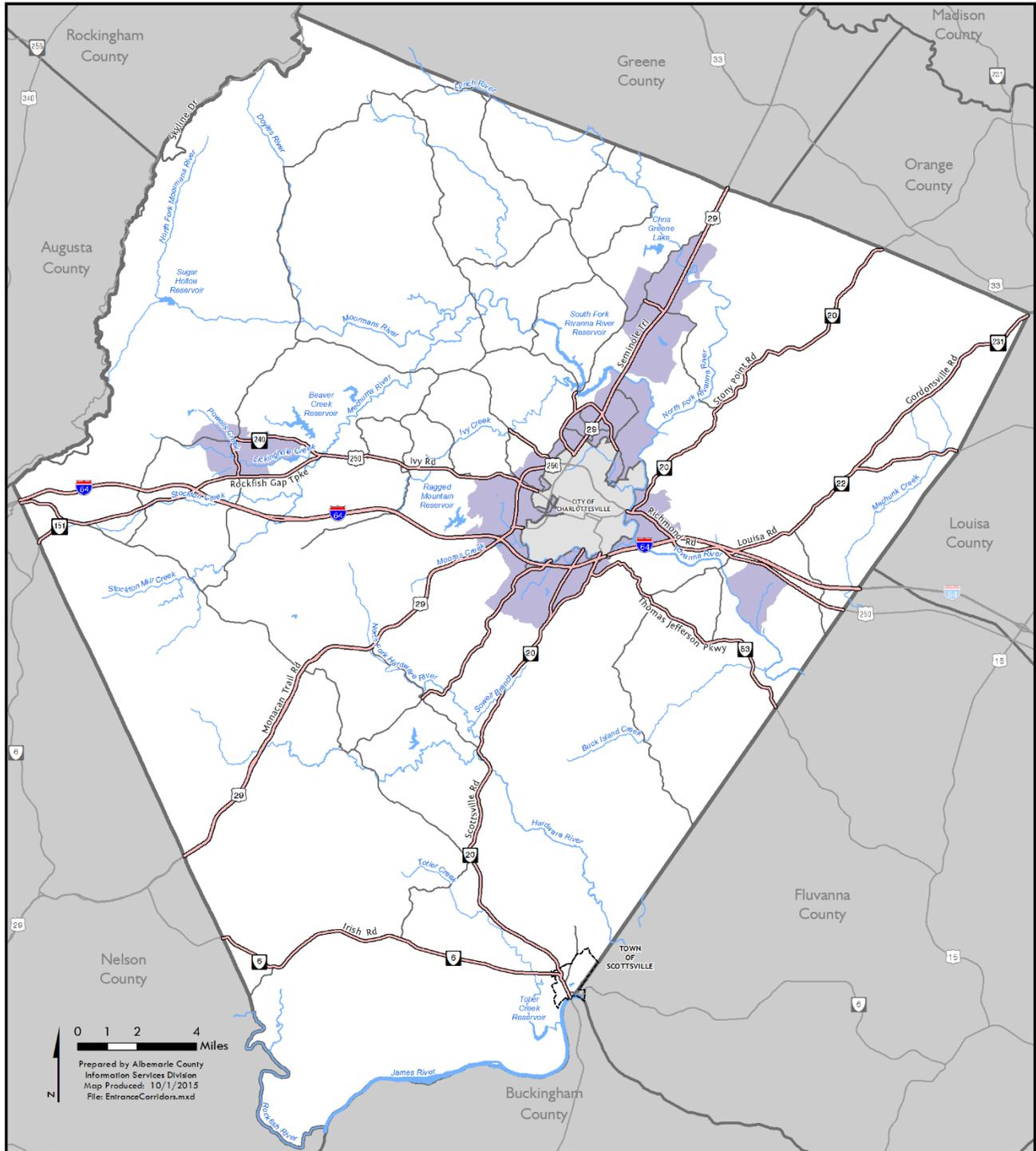


Figure 2: Entrance Corridors



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Strategy 8a: Taking into consideration the former Scenic Highway regulations, review the EC guidelines for effectiveness in protecting the integrity of exceptionally scenic EC road corridors, such as Route 250 East, Route 250 West, and Route 22/231.

There has been concern whether the EC regulations protect the scenic quality of designated roads, specifically Route 250 West, as effectively as the previous Scenic Highway regulations. In recent years, concerns have been expressed about the integrity of Route 250 East and Route 22/331. In 2005, a citizens' group recommended developing specific EC guidelines to maximize protection of the unique characteristics of individual roads. A particular concern is the impact that new developments, including single-family residential developments, have on traditional frontage treatments along the corridors. In many cases, hedgerows and other traditional streetscapes are lost to turn lanes and entrances, and the scenic views established by the traditional edge treatments are replaced by sustained views of sprawling residential developments with their backs turned toward the road. A comparison of the former Scenic Highway regulations with the EC regulations should be undertaken to determine if significant protective measures were inadvertently eliminated. Recommendations for stricter zoning regulations in the ECs could result.

Strategy 8b: Continue to use the Entrance Corridor design guidelines to help maintain the integrity of Entrance Corridors in Albemarle County.

The EC guidelines have been successful in ensuring the compatibility of new development with existing resources and, based on this success, their use should continue. However, updates are needed in several areas to coordinate the Entrance Corridor Guidelines with plans that have been adopted since the Guidelines were first established, to address the vastly different characters of some of the corridors, and to consider new corridors as the County develops.

Strategy 8c: Update EC Design Guidelines to better reflect expectations of the Neighborhood Model for the Development Areas, including, but not limited to, recommendations on ways to provide for relegated parking without buildings turning their backs to the Entrance Corridor and on coordinating landscaping requirements with utility corridors.

The Neighborhood Model was adopted in 2001. Since that time, zoning and subdivision regulations have been modified and continue to be modified to allow for, and in some cases require, design elements that better support density. EC Design Guidelines support many aspects of the Neighborhood Model; however, more clarity is needed regarding the application of Neighborhood Model guidelines to infill along entrance corridors, relegated parking, building setbacks, landscaping, and street trees. The Neighborhood Model Design Guidance, which is appended to the Comprehensive Plan, provides guidance and expectations for relegated parking and orientation of buildings that can be applied to the Entrance Corridors.

Strategy 8d: Develop corridor-specific guidelines for all Entrance Corridors to reflect the unique character of each corridor.

The existing character of designated Entrance Corridors varies widely, from urbanized Route 29 North to relatively undeveloped Route 250 West. At the same time, many corridors share similar characteristics. The development of corridor-specific EC guidelines, considered for several years, is one means of maximizing protection of the unique characteristics of individual roads.

Strategy 8e: Use recommendations from Development Area Master Plans for frontage treatments of ECs to guide decision-making.

Each of the Development Area Master Plans contains recommendations for the appearance of the ultimate streetscape on ECs. Some of the Master Plans are more specific than others; however, expectations for rural streetscapes and urban streetscapes are articulated in all of the Master Plans. Development Area Master Plans have made recommendations about the expected character of some of the corridors. These recommendations should be used when developing corridor specific plans.

Strategy 8f: Consider additional EC designations as appropriate, or as road classifications change, for roads such as the John Warner Parkway, Route 614 (Sugar Hollow Road), Route 692/712 (Plank Road), and Route 810 (Brown's Gap Turnpike).

The John Warner Parkway, Route 614 (Sugar Hollow Road), Route 692/712 (Plank Road), and Route 810 (Brown's Gap Turnpike) are all highly visible roads for visitors and residents in the County. Increased usage and nearby development has prompted the need to consider designating these corridors as ECs. Bringing the roads into the Entrance Corridor Overlay District will help to ensure that the visual integrity of these roads is not diminished with new development adjacent to the roads.

Objective 9: Protect the scenic quality of Albemarle's rivers and streams.

Albemarle's streams and rivers are part of the scenic quality of the County as well as important natural resources. They provide drinking water, as described in the Natural Resources Chapter ([hyperlink](#)) and Community Facilities Chapter ([hyperlink](#)) as well as recreational use. As described in the Parks, Recreation, Greenways, Blueways, and Green Systems Chapter. Scenic stream designations include State-designated Virginia Scenic Rivers and locally designated Scenic Streams.

Strategy 9a: Pursue Virginia Scenic River designations for rivers meeting State criteria.

The Scenic Rivers Act of 1970 provides for the identification, protection, and preservation of rivers or sections of rivers that possess natural or pastoral beauty of high quality. Protection and management of the river rests with the local government, but all state and local agencies must consider the recommendations of the Department of Conservation and Recreation regarding planning for the use and development of the Scenic River and related land resources. The Act requires that an advisory board of local residents be appointed by the Governor for each designated scenic river to advise the director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation on plans and proposals, including federal or State projects that could alter the scenic river. A state designation does prohibit construction of a dam or other structure that impedes the natural flow.

The following rivers are designated as Virginia Scenic Rivers in Albemarle:

- Moormans River (from the Charlottesville (Sugar Hollow) Reservoir to its junction with the Mechums River);
- Rivanna River (from the South Fork Reservoir to the Fluvanna County line); and
- Rockfish River (from the Nelson County line to the James River).

The 2014 Virginia Outdoors Plan recommends that the following rivers or segments be evaluated to determine suitability for designation as Virginia Scenic Rivers in Albemarle:

- Mechums River;
- James River; and
- Rivanna River

from the headwaters to its confluence with the South Fork. The County should review these river segments for potential Scenic River designation.

Strategy 9b: Review the effectiveness of County Scenic Streams zoning regulations and update them for consistency with the Water Protection Ordinance.

The Scenic Streams zoning overlay district was created to help conserve elements of the County's scenic beauty along scenic waterways. The entire length of the Moormans River from the bottom of the Charlottesville Water Supply Dam at Sugar Hollow to the confluence of the Moormans River with the Mechums River is protected with the Scenic Streams overlay. This overlay district provides stream protection by restricting construction, grading, and cutting of trees within 15 feet of the stream, and restricting construction and excessive cutting within 65 feet of the stream.

The [County's Water Protection Ordinance \(WPO\)](#) was adopted after the Scenic Streams zoning regulations were put in place. It requires a 100 foot buffer on all streams in the Rural Area. Both regulations have requirements related to the area on both sides of streams. The County Scenic Streams regulations should be evaluated for effectiveness in protecting scenic features of specific streams and revised if necessary. At a minimum, outdated regulations should be brought into conformity with the WPO. If, after reviewing the regulations, it still seems valuable to have scenic stream designations, pursue scenic protection for additional qualifying streams.

Objective 10: Preserve important views as they relate to tourism and recreational assets.

Many of the County's scenic views include the Blue Ridge Mountains. Maintaining this scenic feature is important to current residents and to future residents and tourists.

Strategy 10a: Study ways to protect scenic views of and from the Blue Ridge Mountains (Appalachian Trail and Skyline Drive), US Route 250, and Shenandoah National Park.

In the past, construction of highly visible structures occasioned public concern about the continued scenic quality of the mountain landscape. Concern for the quality of the mountains led to the adoption of a Mountain Protection Plan in the 1990s. An ordinance to protect mountaintops was considered for adoption in the 2000s. Although regulations to limit development on mountaintops were not adopted, visual impact on the horizon is still important to Albemarle residents.

In addition to overall mountaintop preservation, the County and the Shenandoah National Park have a mutual interest in protecting scenic views of and from the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah National Park. A study of this area was completed in 1993, which indicated that views from Skyline Drive, the Appalachian Trail, and US Route 250 are important to the County and the National Park Service. Ways in which these important views can be preserved should continue to be explored.

Objective 11: Protect the dark sky of Albemarle County as one of the many natural, scenic, scientific, and cultural resources for the benefit of residents, visitors, and the larger scientific community.

Historically, the night sky has been a source of beauty and value to people and cultures throughout the world. In the past century, scientific research has generated information and technology that is used in our daily lives. Protection of dark skies is important to help retain bird migration patterns, as well as to benefit leaf retention on deciduous trees. To remedy some problems related with outdoor lighting, a lighting ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 12, 1998. Dark skies are and continue to be a scenic resource to be protected.

Strategy 11a: Continue to pursue measures to reduce light pollution in the County caused by uplighting, excessive lighting, glare, light trespass, and inconsistent light, including, but not limited to, the development of guidelines to address these issues for street lights in the Development Areas. Such guidelines should focus on providing a safe and secure pedestrian environment.

Light pollution is the biggest threat to the dark sky. Light pollution obscures the view of the sky and primarily comes from overly bright and misdirected lighting sources. Terms often associated with light pollution are *urban sky glow*, *glare*, and *light trespass*. Simply defined, light pollution is too much light shining in the wrong direction, sometimes creating glare. Glare occurs when light is seen directly from the fixture or bulb, which can cause discomfort to the eyes and reduce the effectiveness of the emitted light. Glare can be taxing to the eye, and cause accidents. Other problems occur when light spills over property lines. This can illuminate adjacent grounds or buildings in an objectionable manner, interfering with the owner's enjoyment of his or her property, privacy, and view of the night sky. While the current lighting regulations have helped to improve the night sky since their adoption, more work is needed. Providing safe and secure nighttime pedestrian access requires provision of street lights in the Development Areas; however, street lights have the potential to create glare and shadowed areas, which are problematic to nearby residents, drivers, and pedestrians. Development of guidelines or regulations are needed for street lighting that protects the night sky as well as pedestrians. In addition, consideration should be given for reviewing the current ordinance to determine if it is effective and if other measures would increase its effectiveness for limiting glare and uplight from inadequately shielded lights and illumination at ground level. Research should take place on the successful work of other localities and the recommendations lighting practices from the Illuminating Engineering Society in order to have a safe, comfortable, and attractive nighttime environment.

Strategy 11b: Protect the McCormick and Fan Mountain Observatories through Dark Sky initiatives in the interest of scientific research, public education, and future economic development opportunities.

Albemarle County's protection efforts for the Dark Sky initiative extend from scientific protection to scientific research. When the Fan Mountain station near Covesville was constructed, Albemarle County became home to the only major optical observatory at a dark site east of the Mississippi River. The ability to see the stars clearly has been a strong part of the region's beauty and a significant influence on the County's development. It provides unique educational opportunities for local residents and students, which contributes to the region's economic competitiveness.

Strategy 11c: In cooperation with UVA and other interested parties, develop a community based educational program on the value of the dark sky and on technical lighting topics. Target individuals in the building materials, electrical contracting, design, construction, and associated industries, as well as individual homeowners.

To achieve effective protection of the dark sky, the value of both the dark sky and good lighting must be understood by all involved parties. An educational program that is proactive and that draws upon available community resources is needed.

Strategy 11d: Take a leadership role in protecting the Dark Skies by designing lighting in public building projects, including playing fields and parking lots, to serve as models of appropriate and efficient lighting; by adopting a resolution asking power companies to cease promotion of unshielded and inefficient outdoor lighting; and by exploring the feasibility of participating in the Environmental Protection Agency's Green Lights Program to promote energy efficiency in building design and maintenance.

The County has responsibilities as a leader and property owner. One of those responsibilities is setting an example for the community in its protection of the dark sky. By providing adequate illumination without over lighting, by using only shielded and efficient fixtures, and by actively encouraging other organizations to do the same, the County can set an example that good lighting and a dark sky are achievable.