

6.0 The People and the Place

This section of the Plan provides the existing characteristics of the community regarding the built environment, population, economy, types of services provided, and the natural environment. Section 15.2-2223 of the State Code states that in preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth. The elements included in this chapter are listed below.

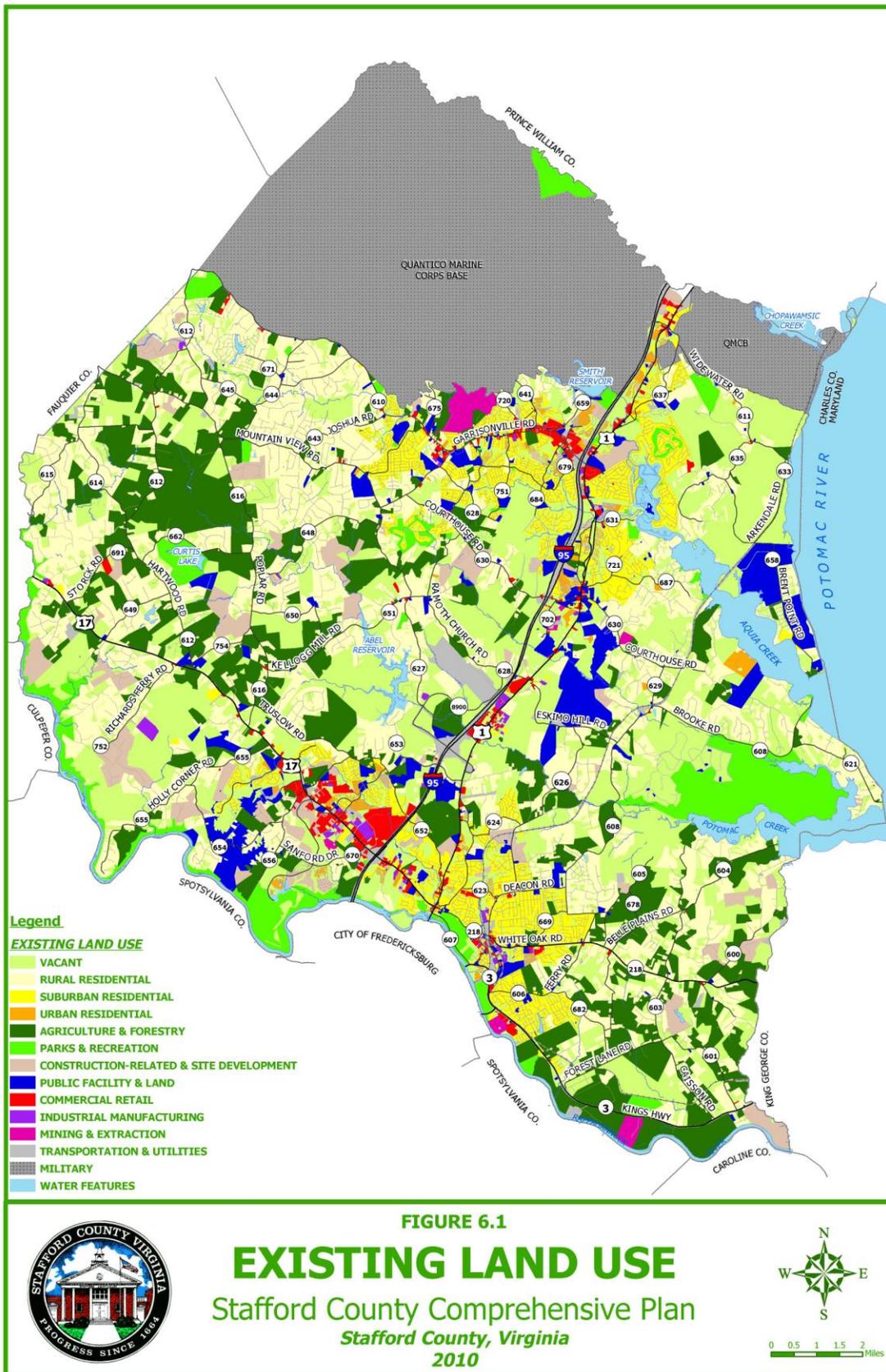
- Land Use
- Population
- Housing
- Economy
- Historic and Cultural Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Community Facilities
- Parks and Recreation
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Natural Resources

Please note that some of the data tables provided are based on data from the 2000 census. Updated information should be incorporated into this document when the 2010 Census information is released in the spring of 2011.

6.1 Land Use

The existing, observable land use of each parcel in Stafford County is important because it reveals the pattern of past growth, the location of areas that should be preserved and the potential locations for future development. The analysis of existing conditions forms the basis of the future land use plan for the County.

<u>Land Use</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Current Land Use● Zoning Districts● Future Zoning Buildout



6.1.1 Current Land Use

An inventory of land uses by parcel reveals how the land in Stafford County is currently being used and is helpful in identifying areas that should be preserved and potential locations for future development. Parcel mapping data was obtained from a data layer in the County’s GIS with a large number of very specific land uses. These were simplified into broad categories for ease of discussion.

Table 6.1 Stafford County Land Use – 2010

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Rural Residential	37,001	20.6%
Suburban Residential	9,131	5.1%
Urban Residential	1,126	0.6%
Commercial Retail	2,042	1.2%
Industrial and Manufacturing	437	0.3%
Parks and Recreation	7,330	4.1%
Public Facilities and Land	5,977	3.3%
Transportation and Utilities	8,905	5.0%
Under Construction/Land Development	5,411	3.0%
Mining and Extraction	796	0.4%
Agriculture and Forestry	22,527	12.6%
Military	32,656	18.2%
Vacant	39,675	22.1%
Water Features	6,338	3.5%
Total	179,352	100.0%

Source: Stafford County Planning and Zoning Department and design based planning, inc.

Stafford County consists of 179,352 acres that have been classified into 14 general land use categories and a brief description of each category is provided:

- Vacant
- Rural Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Urban Residential
- Under Construction/Land Development
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Public Facilities and Land
- Commercial Retail
- Parks and Recreation
- Industrial and Manufacturing
- Transportation and Utilities
- Mining and Extraction
- Military
- Water Features

Vacant Land

Vacant land is the largest land use category in Stafford County, accounting for approximately 22% (39,675 acres) of the County's land area. Vacant land is any land that is currently not being used and has not been set for the purpose of preserving open space. Large vacant areas are located throughout the County and have potential as development sites, open space buffers or recreational uses. Some parcels in the eastern central portion of the County are designated wetlands and should be protected from development.

Rural Residential

Rural residential is the second largest land use category in Stafford County, accounting for 20.6% (37,001 acres) of the County's land area. The rural residential category includes single-family detached dwellings on lots at least 1 acre in size. This land use is dispersed throughout the rural areas of the County outside of the Urban Service Area. The largest concentration of this type of land use is in the northwest part of the County, south of the Quantico Marine Base.

Suburban Residential

The Suburban Residential land use category includes single-family detached residential dwellings located within the Urban Services Area and is typically on ¼ to ½-acre sized lots. This land use accounts for 5.1% (9,131 acres) of the County and is located primarily in North Stafford, south of the Quantico Marine Base, and in the area north of the City of Fredericksburg.

Military

The military category represents the land occupied by Quantico Marine Base in the northern section of the County. Quantico Marine Base occupies 18.2% (32,656 acres) of the County's land area.

Agriculture and Forestry

Approximately 12.6% (22,527 acres) of the land area in Stafford County is classified as agricultural uses. This use is also dispersed throughout the County but larger parcels are located along King's Highway and Poplar Road and Hartwood Road.

Public Facilities and Land

This category refers to those uses that provide services to residents such as health, education, religion and public safety. Land under public ownership but not yet developed is also included in this category. Approximately 3.3% (5,977 acres) of Stafford's land area is devoted to this use.

Commercial Retail

Commercial uses include retail sales and services, auto sales and service, hotels, food and beverage establishments, financial institutions and offices. Land devoted to commercial use account for 1.2% (2,042 acres) of the County's land area. This land use is primarily located on Garrisonville and Warrenton Roads in the vicinity of I-95 and along Jefferson Davis Highway.

Urban Residential

The urban residential category includes apartment complexes, townhouses, condominiums and the common areas that surround them. This land use accounts for less than 1% (1,126 acres) of the County's land area. This land use can be found near the I-95 corridor.

Parks and Recreation

Recreation uses account for 4.1% (7,330 acres) of Stafford County's total acreage. The recreation category includes all public and private parks, marinas, golf courses and community centers in the County. Recreation sites vary in size and are located throughout the County.

Industrial and Manufacturing

Industrial land uses includes manufacturing and warehousing facilities, truck terminals, salvage yards and quarries. These account for 0.3% (437 acres) of the County's land area and are primarily located along Warrenton Road and Jefferson Davis Highway.

Under Construction/Land Development

This land use category identifies land that is under development and is in the process of being transformed, typically from a vacant or agricultural use to a more intense use. These areas cover 3.0% (5,411 acres) of the County.

Transportation and Utilities

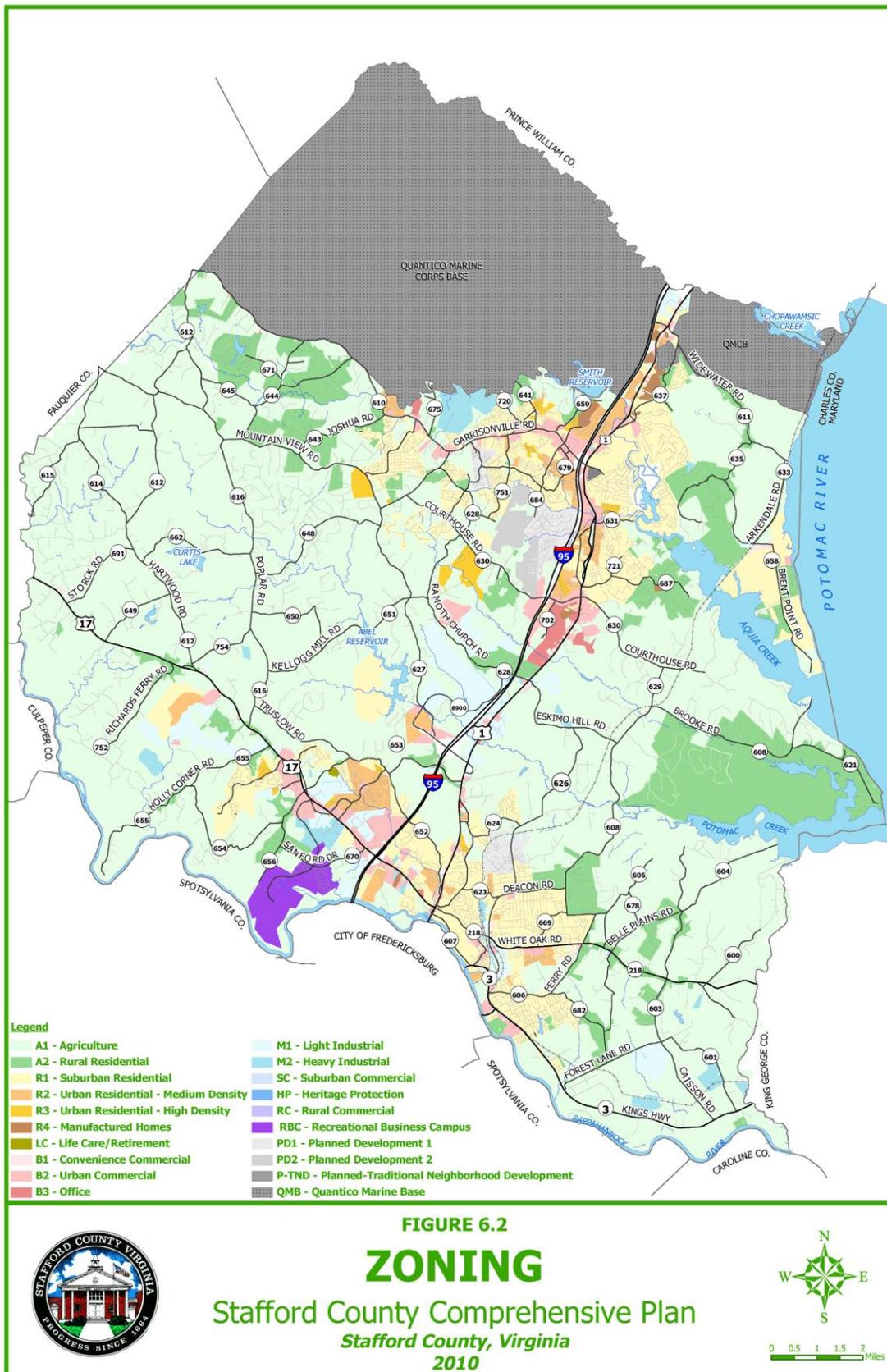
This land use category includes utilities and public works facilities that provide infrastructure support to residents. These uses include power lines, railroad lines, cell tower lots, commuter parking lots, airports, and right-of-ways. This land use accounts for 5.0% (8,905 acres) of the County's total acreage.

Mining and Extraction

This land use category includes the location of surface mining operations, which covers 0.4% (796 acres) of the County. These areas are located on the north side of Garrisonville Road and along King's Highway.

6.1.2 Zoning Regulations

Stafford County last recodified its Zoning Ordinance in 1994, and it routinely updates the Ordinance on a quarterly basis. The Zoning Ordinance establishes, among other things, permitted uses, minimum lot sizes, minimum front, side and rear setbacks for principal and accessory buildings, maximum building heights, maximum building and lot coverage, and maximum floor areas. The Zoning Ordinance is a critical tool for controlling the type, density, and design of development within the County. The Zoning Ordinance for Stafford County establishes 16 districts. The Ordinance contains provisions for the establishment of two types of planned development districts. In addition to these districts, there are eight overlay districts, which were created to protect resources and mitigate conflicts around certain facilities.



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The following table presents a breakdown of the zoning districts by area. The table was generated using the County's geographic information system (GIS), which summarized the parcel areas based on assessment data. This accounted for the area in which "No Data" was available. The Quantico Marine Base (QMB) is not a zoning district, but an area over which the County has no land use control.

Table 6.2 Existing Zoning Districts, Stafford County, VA

	Zoning District	Acres	Percent	
Rural	A1- Agriculture	87,884	49.0%	57.2%
	A2- Rural Residential	14,680	8.2%	
Residential	R1- Suburban Residential	14,391	8.0%	9.9%
	R2- Urban Residential - Medium Density	2,241	1.2%	
	R3- Urban Residential - High Density	837	0.5%	
	R4- Manufactured Home	324	0.2%	
	LC- Life Care/Retirement Community	22	0.0%	
Commercial	RC- Rural Commercial	5	0.0%	2.3%
	SC-Suburban Commercial	18	0.0%	
	B1- Convenience Commercial	303	0.2%	
	B2- Urban Commercial	3,180	1.8%	
	B3- Office	477	0.3%	
Industrial	M1- Light Industrial	3,980	2.2%	3.0%
	M2- Heavy Industrial	1,372	0.8%	
Planned Development/ Mixed Use	PD1- Planned Development	1,148	0.6%	1.6%
	PD2- Planned Development	716	0.4%	
	Planned - Traditional Neighborhood Development	35	0.0%	
	RBC- Recreational Business Campus	1,115	0.6%	
Other	HI- Heritage Interpretation	0	0%	
Unzoned Land	Military/Federal Land	33,056	18.4%	25.9%
	Street Right-of-Way &	7,230	4.0%	
	Waterways	6,338	3.5%	
TOTAL		179,352	100%	

Source: Stafford County Real Estate Data

Rural Districts

The County has two districts dedicated to rural development. These are the A-1 Agriculture District and A-2 Rural Residential District.

The **A-1** District allows for a greater number of uses, which are associated with agriculture and large lots, such as mulching facilities, sawmills, nurseries and slaughterhouses. The District occupies almost half (49%) of the County and is dominant in the western half and southeast portion of the County.

The **A-2** District is intended as a transition between agriculture and more intense development. Single-family homes and community facilities are permitted on lots of at least one acre. The largest A-2 area is located around

Brooke Road near Marlborough Point. Many of the A-2 areas exist as pockets within the A-1 District.

Residential Districts

There are five residential districts in Stafford County, which combined, represent roughly 10% of the County. The districts vary in residential use density. Community and public facilities are permitted in all of the districts.

The **R-1** Suburban Residential District is intended for single-family homes with a density of 1.5 units per acre. R-1 Districts are concentrated just south of the Quantico Marine Base and just north of Fredericksburg. Some R-1 Districts are scattered within the Agriculture District.

The **R-2** Urban Residential District allows duplexes and townhouse developments with a density of 3.5 units per acre. Most R-2 Districts are adjacent to R-1 developments.

The **R-3** Urban Residential – High Density District allows the same uses as the R-2 District with a density of 7.0 units per acre. Overall, 0.5% of the county is designated as **R-3** and is primarily located near commercial areas south of Quantico Marine Base.

The **R-4** Manufactured Home District is reserved for manufactured home developments. They are located near the I-95 corridor north of Garrisonville Road.

The **LC** Life Care/Retirement Community District is intended to provide areas for the continuing care of the elderly, providing for transitional housing, progressing from independent units and culminating in nursing home care. Such districts are to be located only where approved water and sewerage are available and where transportation systems are adequate.

Commercial Districts

Stafford County has six commercial districts. The districts vary in the mix of retail and office development as well as intensity. Overall, 2.3% of the County is designated for commercial use.

The **B-1** Convenience Commercial District is intended for small commercial development that serves the surrounding population. These districts are scattered throughout the County with concentrations found on White Oak Road and Jefferson Davis Highway in both central and northern Stafford County.

The **B-2** Urban Commercial District allows high-density retail sales and service developments with a regional or County-wide market area. These retail

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centers are located along Garrisonville Road, Courthouse Road and Warrenton Road near interchanges off I-95.

The **B-3** Office District is intended to provide an area for professional offices near retail areas. These areas are spotted throughout the County with the largest concentration just added in the Courthouse area.

The **SC** Suburban Commercial District also provides a location for small retail businesses that serve the immediate neighborhood. The difference between the SC and B-1 districts is that the SC District need not be located near a major transportation network and it provides for a greater open space ratio. There are three small areas that are designated as SC Districts in Stafford County.

The **RC** district allows commercial uses at major intersections that serve the nearby rural population. Only two parcels are designated as the RC District.

Industrial Districts

Stafford County has two zoning designations for industrial uses. Together, they constitute 3.0% of the County's area.

The **M-1** Light Industrial District sets aside areas for certain business and industrial uses which are relatively free from offensive activities and are generally compatible with nearby residential uses. Industrial parks are encouraged within the M-1 District. The largest concentration of M-1 development is found in the center of the County around Jefferson Davis Highway. Other developments exist around Warrenton Road west of I-95, Cool Spring Road, Forest Lane Rd, and on Jefferson Davis Highway near the Quantico Marine Base.

The **M-2** Heavy Industrial District provides for the location of industrial uses that may not be compatible with residential uses due to potential nuisances or hazards. These districts are found in the southern section of the County, around Celebrate VA Parkway, and south of the Quantico Marine Base off of Garrisonville Road.

Planned Developments/Mixed Use

There are two types of Planned Development Districts. They allow for the creation of innovative neo-traditional developments with a mix of commercial and residential use. They differ in the size of the overall development, residential and commercial densities, and open space ratios.

The **PD-1** Planned Development District allows for greater residential density on developments less than 500 acres. The P-1 District has been utilized in the Park Ridge, Austin Ridge, and Leeland Station communities.

The **PD-2** Planned Development District is for developments between 500 and 850 acres. PD-2 developments are allowed a greater commercial density. A PD-2 District has been designated for the proposed Embrey Mill development on Courthouse Road near I-95.

The **P-TND** Planned – Traditional Neighborhood Development provides for areas of the county which are suitable for an approach to land-use planning and urban design that promotes the development or redevelopment of pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods with a mix of uses, housing types and prices, lot sizes and density, architectural variety, a central civic building and use, a network of streets and alleys that may include on-street parallel parking, and defined development edges.

The **RBC** Recreational Business Campus District provides an area for professional offices, executive housing, and senior housing as well as other developments that will benefit from a natural campus-like setting with open space. One RBC development is located at the end of Celebrate VA Parkway.

Other Zoning Districts

Areas of the County include unique characteristics and uses that may not conform with typical development design standards that apply across the County.

The **HI** Heritage Interpretation District was established for the purpose of reserving areas in all regions of the county for interpretation of heritage sites, retaining the setting and feeling of the cultural landscape, permitting restoration, preservation, conservation, education, research and business activities related to the operation of a museum and other historic sites, providing heritage tourism opportunities, and promoting the preservation and enhancement of unique Stafford County cultural resources.

Overlay Districts

In addition to the base zoning districts, the Stafford County Zoning Ordinance contains eight overlay districts. The purposes of the districts vary from protecting historical and environmental resources, reducing conflicts between established facilities, and mitigating potential hazards.

Overlay districts add a variety of standards to the underlying districts. These standards could include use restrictions, preservation requirements, or stricter density regulations. The following is a list of the overlay districts used in Stafford County:

- AD Airport Impact - Provides an overlay zone in areas subject to intense and/or frequent emissions of noise and vibration from airports and

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prevents obstructions of airport zones which may result in an air navigation hazard

- CB Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area - Provides an overlay zone to protect the valuable resources of and related to the Chesapeake Bay in accordance with the Virginia Code and adopted plans
- FH Flood Hazard - Provides an overlay zone with limitations on development in areas likely to be inundated by the 100-year flood event, as defined by current flood insurance rate maps for Stafford County to protect life and property and to prevent or minimize flood damage
- HC Highway Corridor - Provides an overlay zone along developed and rapidly developing high traffic road facilities where appropriate special standards would address access and design needs
- HG Historic Gateway Corridor - Is intended to implement the goals of the Comprehensive Plan by protecting cultural resources by guiding new development along major entrance routes to the designated areas
- HR Historic Resources - Is intended to provide for the protection of historic resources in the County
- MZ Military Facility Impact - Is intended to provide an overlay zone to address the interaction between military facilities and surrounding land uses
- RP Reservoir Protection - Is intended to provide an overlay zone that requires best management practices and other protective measures in areas critical to the integrity of public water supplies, rivers, streams and other sensitive features

Conditional Zoning

The Zoning Ordinance for Stafford County allows a developer to request a change in the zoning designation on a piece of property. In most zoning cases, voluntary proffers made by the applicant are included with the request. Proffers are intended to mitigate negative impacts of the land use proposal on the surrounding community. A proffer could be the construction of roads, provision of infrastructure, dedication of open space, or a cash contribution in lieu of the actual provision of an improvement. Generally, in order for a conditional zoning change to be approved, the proffer must be reasonably related to the requested zoning change and the zoning change must not adversely affect the character of the area in which it is located. The County Board of Supervisors is responsible for deciding zoning change requests following a public hearing and a recommendation of the Planning Commission on the request.

6.1.3 Future Build-out Under Existing Zoning

To assess the impact the current zoning regulations would have on future land development in the County, a build-out analysis was conducted. This assumes that all available land builds out to its maximum potential based on the maximum allowable densities.

Table 6.3 Inside the Urban Services Area

ZONING DISTRICTS	EXISTING DWELLING UNITS	FUTURE DWELLING UNITS			TOTAL BUILDOUT (EXISTING PLUS FUTURE)	FUTURE COMMERCIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE
		IN APPROVED SUBDIVISIONS	BASED ON ZONING POTENTIAL	TOTAL		
AGRICULTURE	1,028	2,013	1,922	3,935	4,963	0
RURAL RESIDENTIAL	1,052	6	654	660	1,712	0
CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL	29	0	0	0	29	3,803,715
URBAN COMMERCIAL	112	0	0	0	112	48,989,368
OFFICE	16	0	0	0	16	8,132,147
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	20	0	0	0	20	35,616,141
HEAVY INDUSTRIAL	2	0	0	0	2	11,901,145
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT 1	1,905	355	1,196	1,551	3,456	0
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT 2	0	1,602	0	1,602	1,602	0
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	16,544	980	5,408	6,388	22,932	0
URBAN RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY	7,469	0	1,348	1,348	8,817	0
URBAN RESIDENTIAL HIGH DENSITY	3,219	575	0	575	3,794	0
MANUFACTURED HOMES	1,399	0	396	396	1,795	0
RECREATIONAL BUSINESS CAMPUS	25	409	848	1,257	1,282	36,842,479
SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL	0	0	6	6	6	38,727
TOTAL	32,820	5,940	11,778	17,718	50,538	145,323,722

Table 6.4 Rural Areas

ZONING DISTRICTS	EXISTING DWELLING UNITS	FUTURE DWELLING UNITS			TOTAL BUILDOUT (EXISTING PLUS FUTURE)	FUTURE COMMERCIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE
		IN APPROVED SUBDIVISIONS	BASED ON ZONING POTENTIAL	TOTAL		
AGRICULTURE	6,038	1,423	9,477	10,900	16,938	0
RURAL RESIDENTIAL	3,580	104	1,817	1,921	5,501	0
CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL	7	0	0	0	7	535,030
URBAN COMMERCIAL	5	0	0	0	5	696,481
OFFICE	0	0	0	0	0	522,203
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL	3	0	0	0	3	2,206,706
HEAVY INDUSTRIAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	1,270	225	446	671	1,941	0
URBAN RESIDENTIAL- MEDIUM DENSITY	38	0	408	408	446	0
URBAN RESIDENTIAL- HIGH DENSITY	168	0	58	58	226	0
MANUFACTURED HOMES	12	0	81	81	93	0
RECREATIONAL BUSINESS CAMPUS	0	0	1	1	1	48,963
RURAL COMMERCIAL	0	0	0	0	0	130,885
SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL	1	0	0	0	1	282,727
TOTAL	11,122	1,752	12,288	14,040	25,162	4,422,996

Table 6.5 Summary

TOTAL IN GROWTH AREA	32,820	5,940	11,778	17,718	50,538	145,323,722
TOTAL OUTSIDE GROWTH AREA	11,122	1,752	12,288	14,040	25,162	4,422,996
GRAND TOTAL	43,942	7,692	24,066	31,758	75,700	149,746,718

6.1.4 Findings

- Stafford County consists of 174,291 acres
- The land use categories that accounts for the largest land areas in Stafford County are vacant land (20.8%), rural residential (20.4%), military (19%) and agriculture (13.6%)
- Stafford County’s Zoning Ordinance includes: 19 zoning districts, including 4 planned development/mixed use districts and eight overlay districts

6.2 Population

An understanding of current and expected future population allows the locality to adequately prepare for its potential impacts on land use and community resources. This section examines several characteristics of the population of Stafford County. Using data obtained from the US Census Bureau, Stafford County is compared to surrounding counties, the City of Fredericksburg, and the State as a whole, to get an understanding of its current characteristics and future role within the State.

Over the last five decades, as the population in Stafford County has grown, the character of the landscape has also changed. The once primarily rural County is being transformed through the development of suburban and urban centers. The challenge for the County is to accommodate growth while maintaining the quality of life residents have come to expect; a component of which is the availability of an adequate amount of open space.

6.2.1 Historical Trends

In 2000, the population in Stafford County was 51% higher (92,446) than it was in 1990 (61,236). During that same time period, all comparison areas experienced population increases, but only Spotsylvania County had a greater population increase (58%) than Stafford County. The population of Stafford County increased at a significantly faster rate than the State as a whole (14%).

Table 6.6 Population Change 1950-2000
(Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1990-2000
Stafford County	11,902	16,876	24,587	40,470	61,236	92,446	51.0%
Fauquier County	21,248	24,066	26,375	35,889	48,741	55,139	13.1%
King George County	6,710	7,243	8,039	10,543	13,527	16,803	24.2%
Prince William County	22,612	50,164	111,102	144,703	215,686	280,813	30.2%
Spotsylvania County	11,920	13,819	16,424	34,435	57,403	90,395	57.5%
City of Fredericksburg	12,158	13,639	14,450	15,322	19,027	19,279	1.3%
State of Virginia	3,318,680	3,966,949	4,648,494	5,346,818	6,187,358	7,078,515	14.4%

Source: US Census Bureau and design based planning, inc.

As indicated in the table above, Stafford's population has steadily increased since 1950. However, the rate of increase has slowed somewhat since 1980. Between 1970 and 1980, Stafford's population increased by 65%. The rate of change in the population decreased to 51% between 1980 and 1990 and

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remained the same for the 1990 to 2000 period. Overall, the County has experienced a doubling of its population for every 20 year period since 1950.

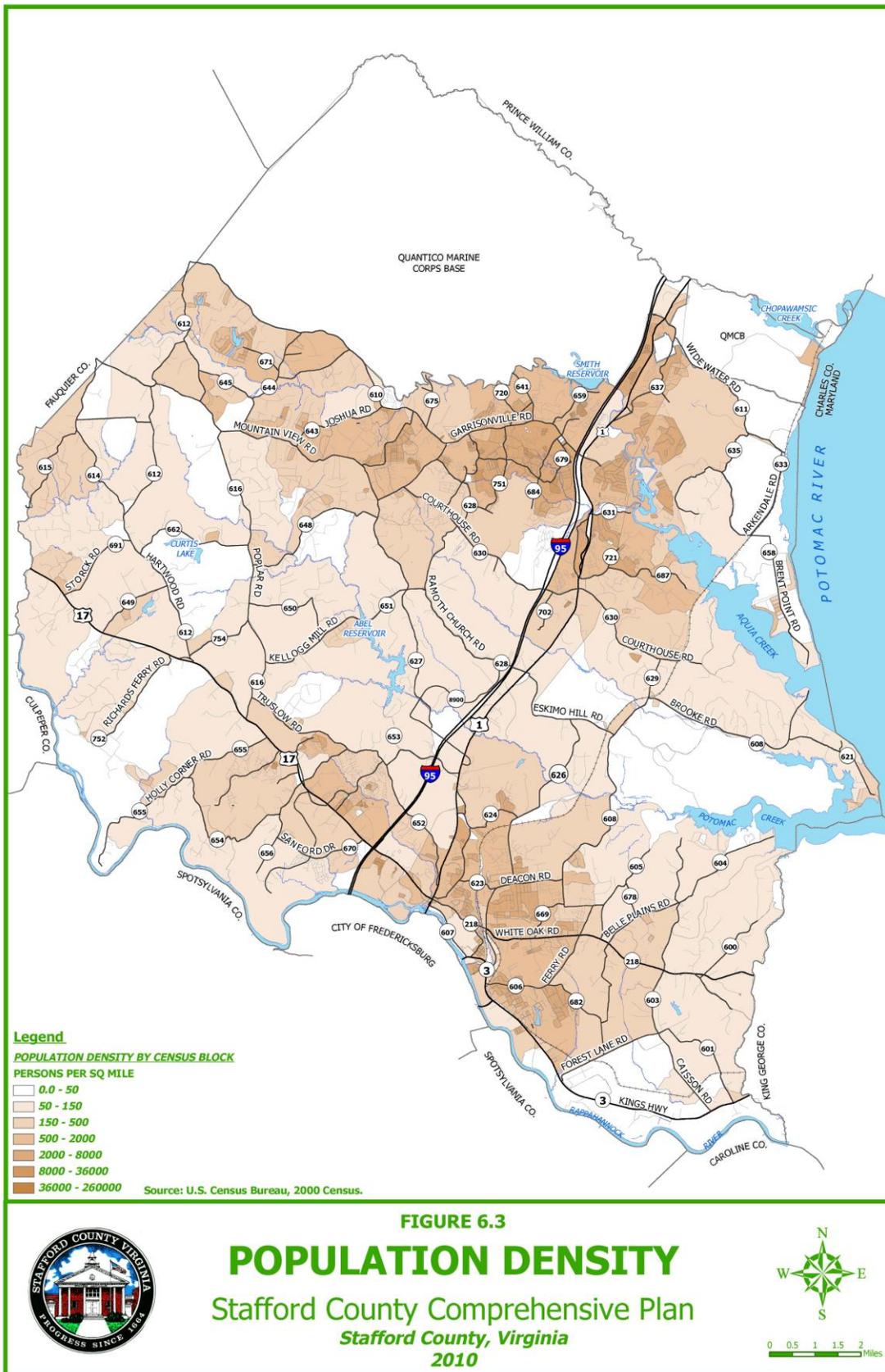
Table 6.7 Population Estimates and Projections
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	2000 Census	July 1, 2009 Census Estimate	2010 VEC Projection	2020 VEC Projection	2030 VEC Projection	Percent Change 2000 to 2030
Stafford County	92,446	124,166	135,806	176,710	218,772	136.6%
Fauquier County	55,577	68,010	72,685	89,318	107,168	92.8%
King George County	16,803	23,557	23,580	30,120	37,393	122.5%
Prince William County	283,811	379,166	401,323	515,235	609,935	114.9%
Spotsylvania County	90,395	120,977	134,163	175,402	217,797	140.9%
City of Fredericksburg	19,279	23,193	22,371	25,116	28,518	47.9%
State of Virginia	7,104,078	7,882,590	8,010,342	8,917,575	9,825,288	38.3%

Source: US Census Bureau and Virginia Employment Commission

According to population projection figures prepared by the Virginia Employment Commission, continued growth is expected for Stafford County's population between 2000 and 2030, but at a slower rate than was experienced during the previous two decades. Stafford's population was expected to grow by 47% between 2000 and 2010, by 30.1% between 2010 and 2020, and by 23.8% between 2020 and 2030. A similar pattern of continued growth was also projected at the state level, but at a slower rate than the County. The State's population was projected to grow by approximately 12.8% between 2000 and 2010, 11.3% between 2010 and 2020, and 10.2% between 2020 and 2030.

Although population continues to grow, the County has experienced a decline in the rate of increase in recent years. Based on the July 1, 2009 estimates, it is unlikely the County population will increase to 135,806 in 2010, as projected by the Virginia Employment Commission.



6.2.2 Composition

In 2000, Stafford County’s population was primarily white (80%, not including individuals of Hispanic origin) and there was an almost equal proportion of males and females. Among comparison areas, Fauquier County and Spotsylvania had less racially diverse populations (87% and 81% white, respectively), while Prince William County had the most racially diverse population (65% white). Although Stafford County was predominantly white in 2000, the percentage of non-whites increased between 1990 (11%) and 2000 (20%). Most comparison areas experienced a similar pattern of increased diversity. The table that follows summarizes major population characteristics in 2000.

Table 6.8 Population Characteristics – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
White*	80.1%	87.1%	76.4%	64.6%	81.2%	71.1%	70.1%
Black*	11.7%	8.2%	18.9%	18.5%	11.8%	20.3%	19.4%
Hispanic	3.4%	2.1%	2.1%	9.7%	2.6%	4.8%	4.6%
Male:	50.4%	49.2%	50.8%	49.9%	49.3%	45.0%	49.0%
Female:	49.6%	50.8%	49.2%	50.1%	50.7%	55.0%	51.0%
Under 18 years	31.5%	26.8%	27.7%	30.4%	29.9%	17.7%	24.5%
18 to 34 years	21.3%	18.1%	21.7%	24.8%	20.9%	38.3%	24.1%
35 to 50 years	28.1%	26.9%	25.8%	26.7%	26.4%	18.4%	24.7%
50 to 64 years	13.2%	17.6%	15.2%	13.5%	14.7%	12.6%	15.5%
Over 65 years	5.8%	10.6%	9.6%	4.6%	8.1%	13.1%	11.2%
Median Age	33.1	37.8	35.1	31.9	34.3	30.3	35.7
High School Diploma	51.5%	51.9%	52.8%	50.0%	55.3%	45.6%	46.4%
Associate Degree	7.4%	5.6%	3.9%	7.3%	5.7%	4.1%	5.6%
Bachelor's degree	18.8%	18.2%	15.6%	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	17.9%
Post Graduate Degree	10.8%	8.8%	8.1%	11.2%	6.8%	12.6%	11.6%

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc.

*Does not include individuals of Hispanic Origin

In 2000, 32% of the population in Stafford County was under the age of 18. This was a higher percentage than all comparison areas. At the other end of the spectrum, Stafford County had a lower percentage (6%) of residents over 65 years of age than all comparison areas except Prince William County (5%). The median age of residents in Stafford was 33.1 years, which was lower than most comparison areas including Spotsylvania County (34.3 years), the State (35.7 years) and Fauquier County (37.8 years). The percentage of the population in Stafford County that was 50 years of age or older increased from 16% in 1990 to 19% in 2000.

Stafford County residents, 25 years and older, had a higher level of educational attainment than most comparison areas in 2000. Thirty seven percent of residents had earned an associate degree or higher and 30% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Among comparison areas, only Prince William County had a higher percentage of residents with an associate degree or higher (39%).

6.2.3 Findings

- Stafford County's population has more than doubled over every 20 year period between 1950 and 2000, and by more than 50% between 1990 and 2000
- The Virginia Employment Commission projects that Stafford County's population will grow at more than three times the rate of the State as a whole between 2000 and 2030
- In 2000, the median age of residents in Stafford County was 33.1 years, which was lower than the State as a whole
- Stafford County residents had a higher level of educational attainment than most comparison areas in 2000

6.3 Housing

Housing conditions in Stafford County are evaluated to ensure that there is adequate housing for current and future residents of the County. This is accomplished through a review of the total number of housing units, total units in each structure, median age of the housing stock, housing occupancy and vacancy, number of building permits issued, value of housing and median contract rent.

6.3.1 Housing Availability

Stafford County had 31,405 housing units in 2000, 96% of which were occupied. Owners occupied more than 80% of units. Stafford’s occupancy rate was higher than all comparison areas except Prince William County. Of the County’s 4% vacant units, most were for sale (34%) or rent (24%). Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units in Stafford County increased by 53% (10,876 units) while the population increased by 51% (31,210 persons). All comparison areas also had increases in the number of housing units, but only Spotsylvania County had a higher rate of increase (63%) than Stafford County.

Table 6.9 Housing Characteristics – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Total Housing Units	31,405	21,046	6,820	98,052	33,329	8,888	2,904,192
Occupied	96.1%	94.3%	89.3%	96.4%	93.9%	91.2%	92.9%
Owner occupied	80.6%	76.2%	71.8%	71.7%	82.2%	35.5%	68.1%
Renter occupied	19.4%	23.8%	28.2%	28.3%	17.8%	64.5%	31.9%
Vacant	3.9%	5.7%	10.7%	3.6%	6.1%	8.8%	7.1%
For rent	23.7%	13.8%	16.7%	26.6%	22.9%	60.8%	23.5%
For sale only	34.2%	20.3%	10.8%	34.9%	24.2%	16.4%	15.9%
Rented or sold, not occupied	15.2%	7.6%	19.2%	8.6%	10.0%	9.2%	9.7%
For seasonal, rec. or occasional use	14.1%	33.1%	36.5%	9.8%	29.6%	7.9%	30.6%
Other vacant	12.7%	25.2%	16.7%	20.0%	13.2%	5.7%	20.3%
Average Household Size	3.01	2.75	2.7	2.94	2.87	2.09	2.54

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc.

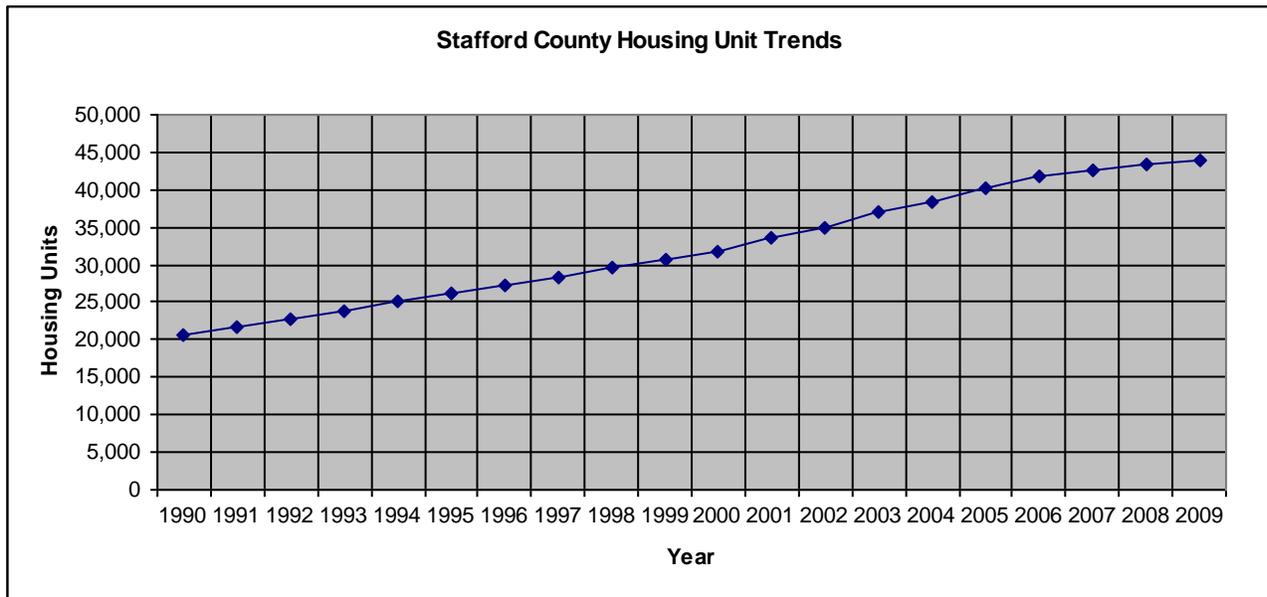
Over the last nineteen years, housing units in the County increased from 20,529 in 1990 to 43,838 in 2009. Over the ten year period from 1990 to 2000, the County experienced an annual increase of 1,129 housing units. During the last decade from 2000 to 2009, an annual increase of 1,202 housing units occurred. While the unit increase has been consistent from

decade to decade, the rate has slowed in recent years. From 2006 to 2009, an annual increase of 684 housing units occurred. The annual housing unit data is provided in Table 6.10 and the accompanying chart.

Table 6.10 Annual Housing Unit Trends (1990 – 2009)
Stafford County VA

Year	Housing Units	Year	Housing Units
1990	20,529	2000	31,820
1991	21,658	2001	33,479
1992	22,787	2002	34,973
1993	23,916	2003	36,982
1994	25,045	2004	38,427
1995	26,175	2005	40,220
1996	27,304	2006	41,787
1997	28,433	2007	42,595
1998	29,562	2008	43,322
1999	30,691	2009	43,838

* Values between 1990 and 2000 are based on a linear increase of 1,129 housing units per year between the actual decennial census counts. From 2000 to 2009, the data is based on building permit data.



A variety of housing is available in Stafford County, but the predominant housing type is the single-family detached dwelling. Single-family detached units accounted for 76% of all dwellings, followed by single-family attached at 11%. Among comparison areas only Fauquier County had a higher percentage of single-family units. The City of Fredericksburg had the lowest percentage of single-family units (49%), which was consistent with its urbanized, higher density setting.

The People and the Place

The housing stock in Stafford County is relatively new. Over 40% of the homes in Stafford County were constructed between 1990 and 2000, 25% were constructed during the 1980s and 17% during the 1970s. Among comparison areas, only Spotsylvania had a similar construction pattern with 45% of homes constructed during the 1990s, 28% during the 1980s and 16% during the 1970s.

Table 6.11 Units in Structure – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
1 Unit - Detached	76.2%	85.1%	73.9%	53.9%	79.0%	41.7%	62.3%
1 Unit - Attached	11.3%	5.9%	3.8%	26.8%	7.2%	7.4%	9.6%
2 Units	0.5%	1.6%	1.5%	0.7%	0.3%	4.6%	2.1%
3 or 4 Units	1.4%	1.5%	2.7%	1.2%	0.8%	4.6%	3.3%
5 to 9 Units	2.4%	0.8%	3.4%	3.6%	1.0%	10.5%	5.0%
10 to 19 Units	2.8%	1.8%	1.3%	9.1%	2.0%	20.9%	5.3%
20 to 49 Units	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	1.1%	0.4%	3.7%	1.7%
50 or more Units	0.3%	0.6%	0.1%	1.7%	1.8%	6.0%	4.2%
Mobile Home	4.6%	2.1%	12.7%	1.8%	7.4%	0.6%	6.4%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Median Year Home Built	1987	1979	1979	1983	1988	1968	1975

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc.

Residential and commercial development is continuing in Stafford County. The table that follows indicates the number of new construction permits that were issued between 2000 and 2007. Residential construction permits have been issued for single-family, mobile home/agriculture, townhouse, duplex, multi-family and condominium dwellings. New residential development remained strong through 2005, but has since experienced a decline, consistent with the national economic slowdown.

Single family (55%) and multi-family dwelling units (28%) were the primary housing types being constructed. The number of permits that were issued each year varied, averaging to over 1,700 dwellings annually through 2007, and construction values have generally increased. In 2002, residential construction peaked with building permits being issued for 2,096 units. 2006 reflected the start of the housing and economic downturn with only 860 permits issued, compared to 1,641 the prior year.

Table 6.12 Permit Activity 2000-2009
(In Millions of Dollars)

New Construction	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Residential	1,970	1,581	2,096	1,398	1,981	1,641	860	758	413	516
Residential Construction Value	\$205	\$227	\$293	\$243	\$315	\$375	\$239	\$188	\$87	\$114
Commercial	24	27	44	151	68	86	81	60	47	38
Commercial Construction Value	\$15	\$51	\$15	\$55	\$45	\$552	\$96	\$110	\$51	\$33
Industrial	N/A	8	20	20	35	34	20	14	6	2
Industrial Construction Value	N/A	\$4.6	\$7.8	\$3.2	\$15.2	\$11.1	\$6	\$14	\$0.75	\$0.05

Source: Department of Public Works

According to the US Census Bureau, Stafford County had approximately 41,791 housing units in 2006. This represents a 33% increase from 2000 when that figure was 31,405 units. In 2005, according to the Stafford County Department of Economic Development, 810,000 sq. ft. of commercial and industrial space was added. As of April 2006, over 700,000 sq. ft. was under construction while an additional 2 million sq. ft. was undergoing site plan review.

6.3.2 Value and Rent

In 2000, the median value of a home in Stafford County was \$156,400, which was higher than all comparison areas except Fauquier County. The median monthly contract rent was \$707, which was higher than all comparison areas except Prince William County (\$755). Renters spent more of their income on housing than homeowners in 2000. This was true in all comparison areas.

Table 6.13 Housing Value and Median Rent – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Less than \$50,000	0.5%	0.8%	2.2%	0.5%	1.1%	3.1%	6.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	11.8%	11.2%	28.1%	11.9%	23.6%	27.8%	30.6%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	15.2%	11.8%	21.3%	18.8%	22.5%	14.6%	13.1%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	17.9%	17.8%	18.1%	19.1%	19.6%	10.3%	11.6%
\$150,000 to \$174,999	18.2%	16.6%	10.3%	12.8%	11.8%	12.5%	8.8%
\$175,000 to \$199,999	14.7%	10.8%	6.3%	9.7%	7.3%	8.9%	6.7%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	17.8%	22.2%	9.9%	21.9%	10.5%	14.6%	13.9%
\$300,000 to \$399,999	2.7%	4.6%	2.6%	3.9%	2.0%	3.3%	5.0%
\$400,000 to \$499,999	0.5%	2.5%	0.7%	1.0%	0.7%	3.3%	2.1%
\$500,000 or more	0.8%	1.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.9%	1.5%	2.1%
Median value	\$156,400	\$162,700	\$123,200	\$149,600	\$128,500	\$135,800	\$125,400
Homeowners who Spent over 30% of Household Income on Housing in 1999	20.8%	20.2%	17.8%	22.7%	21.7%	22.2%	20.3%
Median Contract Rent	\$707	\$594	\$527	\$755	\$679	\$583	\$550
Renters who Spent Over 30% of Household Income on Housing in 1999	31.8%	31.2%	20.6%	32.2%	33.9%	41.3%	33.9%

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc.

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, housing is generally considered affordable if costs do not exceed 30% of household annual income. In 2000, Stafford County had a higher median home value and median contract rent than most comparison areas. In 1999, 32% of renters and 21% of home owners in Stafford County spent 30% or more of their income on housing; a decrease from 1989 when those figures were 38% and 28%, respectively. In 1999, a lower percentage of residents in Stafford spent over 30% of their income on housing than Spotsylvania County, Prince William County, the City of Fredericksburg, and the State as a whole.

Recent Real Estate Trends

To assess real estate trends in recent years, home sales data from Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc. was reviewed. Home sales data was derived from public records provided by County offices.

As indicated in the table that follows, average sale price and home sales volume peaked between 2005 and 2006, after which a severe drop occurred. From 2005 to 2007, home sales volume was cut in half, decreasing from 2,962 units to 1,473 units. Since 2006, average sales prices have seen a decline from \$395,473 to \$244,769 in 2009.

Table 6.14 Home Sales (2004-2009)
Stafford County, VA

Year	Total Sold	Average Sale Price	Median Sale Price
2009	1,835	\$244,769	\$229,000
2008	1,614	\$294,951	\$272,950
2007	1473	\$375,959	\$360,000
2006	2032	\$395,473	\$380,000
2005	2962	\$388,836	\$379,000
2004	2861	\$303,613	\$290,000

Source: Metropolitan Regional Information System's Inc. – MLS Resale Data

6.3.3 Findings

- Over 96% of housing units in Stafford County were occupied in 2000 and 81% were owner-occupied
- Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units grew at a slightly faster rate than the population
- In 2000, most dwellings in Stafford County were single-family detached units
- In 2000, over 40% of Stafford's housing stock had been constructed between 1990 and 2000
- Significant residential and commercial development occurred between 2000 and 2005
- The amount of new residential development has declined since 2005
- In 2000, the median value of homes in Stafford was higher than all comparison areas
- In 2000, renters in all comparison areas spent a higher percentage of their income on housing than homeowners
- Housing was generally affordable in the County in 1999; almost 70% of residents in Stafford spent less than 30% of their income on housing
- Housing values peaked in 2006 with an average home sale price of \$395,473.

6.4 Economy

The economy of Stafford County is evaluated through an examination of characteristics such as labor force, industries of employment, occupations of residents and their income levels. Employment characteristics reveal which industries are important to the economic viability of the locality. The income characteristics of residents are an indicator of the County's financial stability and its ability to pay for governmental services. Multiple income characteristics are usually examined because no one statistic accurately demonstrates the economic character of an area.

6.4.1 Labor Force

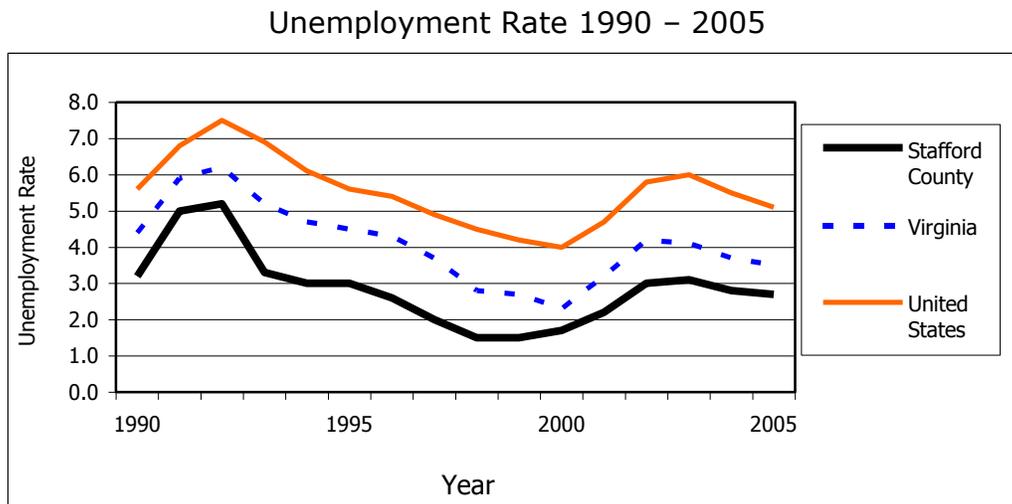
In 2000, Stafford County had a higher percentage (76%) of its residents 16 years of age or older in the labor force than all comparison areas except Prince William County. The size of the labor force provides an indication of the availability of workers in the community for businesses seeking to relocate into the area.

Table 6.15 Labor Force Characteristics – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Total	66,359	42,007	12,632	204,002	66,138	16,157	5,529,980
In labor Force	50,424	29,446	8,723	157,254	47,747	10,906	3,694,663
Unemployed	1,387	745	345	4,460	1,501	1,035	151,125
Percent in Labor Force	76.0%	70.1%	69.1%	77.1%	72.2%	67.5%	66.8%
Percent in Labor Force Unemployed	2.8%	2.5%	4.0%	2.8%	3.1%	9.5%	4.1%

Source: US Bureau of Census and design based planning, inc.

The unemployment rate is an indicator of the level of employment in the area. The graph that follows shows that between 1990 and 2005, Stafford County has consistently had a lower unemployment rate than both the State and Nation as a whole. Stafford County's unemployment rate has been 3% or less since 1994.



Source: US Department of Labor – Local Area Unemployment Statistics – 2005

6.4.2 At-Place Employment

In 2000, the primary employment sector in Stafford County was public administration (16%). Stafford County had a higher percentage of jobs in this employment sector than all comparison communities except King George County (21%). Other important employment sectors for Stafford County were retail trade (11%), construction (10%), and health care and social assistance (9%). The primary employment sectors within the State as a whole were retail trade (11%), manufacturing (11%), and health care and social assistance (10%).

Table 6.16 Industries of Employment – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	0.3%	4.0%	2.0%	0.3%	0.7%	0.3%	1.3%
Construction	10.0%	11.5%	10.3%	8.9%	9.6%	6.4%	7.3%
Manufacturing	4.6%	6.3%	6.9%	4.7%	5.7%	4.8%	11.3%
Wholesale trade	2.7%	3.4%	2.5%	2.2%	3.8%	3.1%	2.7%
Retail trade	11.3%	11.1%	11.7%	12.0%	13.1%	13.2%	11.4%
Transportation and warehousing	4.2%	4.1%	3.8%	4.7%	4.8%	2.1%	3.8%
Utilities	0.8%	0.8%	1.4%	0.8%	1.9%	0.5%	0.8%
Information	3.5%	5.4%	1.9%	5.1%	2.6%	2.7%	3.8%
Finance and insurance	5.0%	4.4%	3.4%	3.7%	7.0%	7.2%	4.8%
Real estate and rental and leasing	1.9%	2.5%	2.3%	1.9%	1.5%	1.9%	1.8%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	8.5%	9.6%	9.6%	11.3%	6.9%	8.7%	8.3%
Management of companies and enterprises	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Administrative and support and waste management services	3.2%	2.9%	3.2%	3.9%	3.0%	3.5%	3.3%
Educational services	8.1%	7.7%	5.3%	6.9%	7.7%	12.6%	8.6%
Health care and social assistance	8.6%	8.2%	6.4%	8.6%	7.9%	9.2%	9.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.6%	2.0%	0.8%	1.3%	1.4%	2.4%	1.5%
Accommodation and food services	4.7%	3.4%	3.8%	4.9%	5.6%	8.7%	5.7%
Other services (except public administration)	5.3%	5.1%	3.5%	5.4%	5.0%	4.2%	5.4%
Public administration	15.5%	7.6%	21.3%	13.2%	11.8%	8.4%	8.3%

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc.

The highest paying employment sectors in 2004 were management of companies and enterprises (\$82,539), utilities (\$73,040), and finance and insurance (\$73,010), based on national average salaries generated by the US

Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. The lowest paying industries of employment were accommodation and food services (\$19,934), agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (\$26,371) and retail trade (\$28,216). Employment sectors important to Stafford County had the following average salaries: public administration \$46,941; retail trade \$28,216; construction \$41,945; and health care and social assistance \$40,328.

Occupations of Stafford County Residents

In 2000, the predominant occupation types for Stafford County residents, regardless of their work location, were professional and related occupations (24%), management, business and financial occupations (17%) and office and administrative support (15%). A similar pattern was noted among comparison areas.

Table 6.17 Occupations – 2000
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	16.9%	18.5%	10.8%	18.0%	14.7%	11.7%	15.5%
Professional and related occupations	24.1%	21.0%	27.2%	23.2%	20.2%	25.6%	22.7%
Healthcare support occupations	1.1%	1.0%	1.4%	1.1%	1.2%	1.5%	1.6%
Protective service occupations	3.9%	2.2%	2.4%	3.4%	3.1%	2.5%	2.1%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	3.6%	3.1%	3.6%	3.5%	4.1%	6.7%	4.3%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	2.0%	3.1%	3.1%	2.4%	2.6%	3.8%	3.0%
Personal care and service occupations	2.7%	3.5%	1.9%	3.0%	2.4%	3.0%	2.7%
Sales and related occupations	10.3%	10.6%	9.2%	10.2%	11.6%	12.8%	10.5%
Office and administrative support occupations	15.4%	14.8%	15.2%	17.5%	15.9%	14.0%	14.9%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.1%	1.3%	0.9%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%
Construction and extraction occupations	7.1%	7.8%	7.3%	6.1%	6.7%	5.8%	5.8%
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4.6%	4.7%	4.1%	4.1%	5.2%	3.0%	3.9%
Production occupations	3.0%	3.6%	5.3%	3.0%	5.0%	4.3%	7.0%
Transportation and material moving occupations	5.0%	4.7%	7.8%	4.2%	7.2%	5.2%	5.5%

Source: US Census and design based planning, inc

6.4.3 Resident Income

Per capita and median household incomes are two measures of a community’s wealth. Per capita income better reflects the wealth of the community while median household income better reflects the distribution of income within the community. Per capita income is determined by dividing the total income of residents by the population. The median household income is the level at which the number of households with higher incomes is equal to those with less.

In 1999, Stafford County had a median household income of \$66,809 and a per capita income of \$24,762. Among comparison areas, Stafford County had the highest median income but Fauquier County (\$28,757) and Prince William County (\$25,641) had higher per capita incomes. Stafford County had the lowest poverty rate (3.5%) among all comparison areas and the City of Fredericksburg had the highest (15.5%) in 1999.

Table 6.18 Income Characteristics – 1999
Stafford County, VA and Comparison Areas

Household Income	Stafford County	Fauquier County	King George County	Prince William County	Spotsylvania County	City of Fredericksburg	State of Virginia
Less than \$25,000	10.5%	14.5%	19.3%	10.0%	14.7%	34.4%	24.6%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	22.2%	23.5%	30.9%	23.6%	26.7%	31.4%	28.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	25.7%	23.5%	22.6%	24.6%	26.4%	17.1%	20.3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	20.7%	14.6%	15.3%	18.2%	17.1%	7.0%	11.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.5%	15.2%	8.5%	17.0%	11.4%	5.6%	9.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3.4%	4.2%	2.0%	4.4%	2.2%	2.3%	3.0%
\$200,000 or more	2.0%	4.4%	1.5%	2.2%	1.6%	2.2%	2.7%
Median Household Income in 1999	\$66,809	\$61,999	\$49,882	\$65,960	\$57,525	\$34,585	\$46,677
Per Capita Income in 1999	\$24,762	\$28,757	\$21,562	\$25,641	\$22,536	\$21,527	\$23,975
Percent Below Poverty	3.5%	5.4%	5.6%	4.4%	4.7%	15.5%	9.6%

Source: US Census Bureau and design based planning, inc.

According to the US Census Bureau, Stafford County’s median household income in 2003 was \$75,456 compared to \$50,028 within the State as a whole.

6.4.4 Business Activity

The number of businesses in Stafford County grew by 38% between 2000 and 2005, from 1,394 to 1,928, according to statistics provided by the Stafford County Department of Economic Development. Between March 2000 and March 2005, 6,336 new jobs were created, a 27% increase. During the same time period, the State's rate of new job creation was 2% annually compared to the County's rate of 5%.

Table 6.19 Major Private Sector Employers - 2005
Stafford County, VA

Firm	Type	Number of Employees
Anteon Corporation	Government Technology Services	91
Applied Ordnance Technology	Defense Engineering Support	120
BAE Systems	Weapon Systems	200
Battelle	Research & Development	130
Coca Cola Bottling Company	Sales and Distribution	110
Dominion Virginia Power	Electricity	152
Federal Express & Federal Express Ground	Delivery Service	95
Fredericksburg Auto Auction	Dealer Auction	175FT/400 PT
GEICO Insurance	Regional Headquarters	3,900
Hilldrup United Moving and Storage	United Van Lines	200
Intuit, Inc.	Computer Services	625
Lifecare	Medical Transports	250
McLane Mid-Atlantic	Retail Distribution	850
MTC Services Corporation	Defense Research & Development	170
Northrop Grumman	Information Technology/Logistics	300

Source: Stafford County Economic Development

6.4.5 Quantico Marine Corps Base

The Quantico Marine Corps Base is home to the Marine Corps Combat Development Command and the Presidential Helicopter Squadron. Quantico occupies 32,753 acres in Stafford County. Over 6,000 Marines are stationed at the base and most live with their families in the surrounding area. The Base also employs approximately 7,500 civilians. Quantico has an annual military payroll of \$348 million and an annual civilian payroll of \$471 million. Approximately 3,000 new jobs are expected by 2011 as a result of actions Congress took during its most recent round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) activities.

The FBI Academy and the FBI National Crime Lab are also located on the Quantico Marine Corps Base. The FBI National Crime Lab relocated to Stafford in 2003 and has over 900 employees. The Marine Corps University and several

advanced training schools are also located at Quantico. The Marine Corps Systems Command is a tenant on the base that has both civilian and military employees and an annual budget of \$2 billion.

6.4.6 *Agriculture*

Although agriculture's economic role has been diminished in the County, it is still a defining characteristic of the area. According to the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture, the most recent year for which information was available, Stafford County had 233 farms in operation that occupied 19,816 acres of land. The average farm size was 85 acres and the market value of production was \$2,798,000. Each of these statistics showed an increase between 1997 and 2002. In comparison with the last census in 2002, the number of farms in operation decreased from 236, the number of acres being farmed decreased from 26,128, the average farm size decreased from 111 acres and the market value of production saw a slight increase from \$2,485,000.

6.4.7 *Comprehensive Economic Strategic Plan*

The Stafford Department of Economic Development and Tourism engaged a consultant in 2006 to assist in drafting the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan. The purpose of the Plan is four-fold:

- Assist the County in attracting new businesses and industries to aid in community growth
- Develop employment opportunities in Stafford for County residents
- Diversify the tax base
- Enhance Stafford's quality of life.

The Plan included 51 recommendations that are sustainable because they promote consistent and long-term growth, and strategic, because they are designed to reach the County's long-term objectives. Recommendations were organized into the following economic areas:

- Marketing
- Interdepartmental Cooperation
- Community Communication
- Tourism
- Development Sites
- Business Retention Efforts
- Business Recruitment Efforts
- Process

The Plan includes a review of existing economic development efforts, a review of current economic conditions and an assessment of the forces that shape the economy of Stafford now. These include an assessment of the large – and growing – impact of the military on Stafford from Quantico Marine Corps Base and also from Fort A.P. Hill in Caroline County, and Dahlgren. Additionally, the

Plan recognizes defense contracting among private sector players as an important and growing influence on Stafford County. An equally important and growing sector is relocation of Federal employees as new buildings meeting post-9/11 building standards are constructed farther and farther from Washington, D.C.

An analysis of the potential private sector development efforts found Stafford should focus on development of the wholesale trade and transportation, and warehouse industries. Distribution center locations are central to a company's overall success as distribution center costs can be as much as 60 percent of a company's total distribution expense. Stafford's location could be strategic for companies including those currently located in Northern Virginia. The Plan acknowledges companies are moving out of the northeast because of delays caused by traffic jams. However, it does not note the traffic problems associated with I-95 in Stafford.

The Plan's analysis of compensation finds that workers in Stafford are generally compensated at a lower rate than workers in Virginia and the nation as a whole. Stafford workers commute from the County to higher-paying jobs elsewhere to support lifestyles they earn with median incomes 43 percent higher than the State median in 2000 and 59 percent higher than that of the Nation.

High growth employment sectors in 2000 to 2003 developing within Stafford according to a shift-share analysis executed for the Plan include professional, scientific and technical services and administration, support, waste management and remediation services. Other growth areas include construction, wholesale and retail trade, transportation and warehousing, educational services and arts, entertainment and recreation. Manufacturing suffered jobs losses, as did management of companies and enterprises, although that sector's employment base is relatively small to begin with.

The shift-share and cluster analysis found the following industries "of note", showing potential for employment growth:

- Finance and Insurance
- Professional Business or Technology Firms
- Wholesale Trade
- Construction
- Arts Entertainment and Recreation (although tempered by its lower-paying job status)

Four opportunity sites are identified by the Plan: Boswell's Corner; the Courthouse area; Historic Falmouth; and Southern Gateway. With 2,400 civilian and 500 military jobs potentially moving to Quantico through the most recent round of BRAC, Boswell's Corner is poised for explosive growth. The area is now the focus of concentrated high-quality growth.

Similarly, the Courthouse area, which is the nerve center of Stafford County but never developed as a downtown, is on the verge of explosive growth. This is evident with the hospital development, as well as continued expansion of the County's headquarters including the new Public Safety Building and Fire and Rescue Station under development. Both the Economic Development Plan and the public input for this Comprehensive Plan identified the Courthouse area as a location where local residents would like to see higher density, pedestrian-friendly growth.

6.4.8 Findings

- Stafford County has had a significantly lower unemployment rate than the State and the Nation for over a decade
- In 2000, the primary employment sector for residents of Stafford County was education, health and social services
- The most common occupation type for County residents in 2000 was professional and related occupations at 24% of the workforce
- Stafford County had the highest median income and lowest poverty rate among comparison areas in 1999
- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of businesses grew by 38% and new jobs increased by 27% in Stafford County
- Job creation occurred at a faster rate in Stafford County than the State as a whole from 2000 to 2005
- The County's annual revenues and expenditures have grown in line with its population
- The County's Comprehensive Economic Development Plan identified a series of 51 recommendations aimed at increasing the County's economic competitiveness, increasing employment opportunities and diversifying the local economy
- Boswell's Corner, the Courthouse area, Historic Falmouth, and the Southern Gateway are special planning areas

