

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The 2002 General Plan for Prince George’s County states that, except for the provision of high-quality schools, quality economic development is the highest countywide priority. In Subregion 6, the recognition is that rural areas also act to strengthen urban and suburban areas by serving as a local, secure source for agricultural and forest products, mineral resources, tourism and recreation opportunities, etc. Reinvigorating these industries will provide jobs and contribute to a more diversified economy in the subregion and county.

Creating a sustainable region requires developing a dynamic, sustainable economy to support the communities that participate in it, while also finding ways in which economic activity can contribute to restoration of ecological function rather than environmental degradation. Solutions must address problems creatively and holistically, conserving resources while providing economic development opportunities for current and future generations. The long-term implications of decisions must be considered in addition to the short-term ones, particularly as they relate to providing needed infrastructure and development opportunities, creating a favorable business climate with predictable regulations and adequate incentives, having a dynamic, trained workforce, and more.

Sustainability goals that relate to economic development in Subregion 6 include:

- Work toward an economy that is healthy, diversified, and globally competitive, that enhances ecosystems rather than degrades them, that provides all citizens with ample opportunities for fulfilling work, and that increases the county’s tax base.
- Preserve the current and future diversity of opportunities for economic development available in the Developing and Rural Tiers through strategic planning and clustering of industry, employment, and retail around existing development and transportation networks.

The development pattern recommendations in the General Plan and the land use recommendations in this master plan set the framework for future economic development. With the public employment at Joint Base Andrews (JBA) and in Upper Marlboro, along with the private employment around those areas, Subregion 6 has a strong employment base from which to work. Economic development in the Developing Tier portion of the subregion is focused on these employment areas.

EMPLOYMENT

Industrial development around JBA is a mix of smaller businesses, many operating out of former single-family homes, and larger employment parks. The Future Land Use Map

expands industrial lands east of JBA in acknowledgement of the potential for future employment growth in this area as well as the need to promote a land use that is compatible with the negative noise impacts from JBA. New industrial development should be focused on consolidating parcels to create new employment parks to attract major employers with higher-paying jobs.



An office building just outside the Town of Upper Marlboro.

This area represents a significant opportunity for employment growth because of the reallocation of personnel to JBA related to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The number of personnel assigned to JBA is expected to increase by 2,700 before 2020. A portion of this increase (400 positions) is due to BRAC and is expected by 2011. The balance is related to Department of Defense reassignments to be completed by 2018. In addition, “spin-off” jobs can also be expected. While much of this growth can be absorbed by the new development planned for Westphalia, some employment uses are expected to locate in the area of Subregion 6 north and east of the base.



Industrial employment areas are conveniently located near Joint Base Andrews.

Prince George’s County initiated a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) with JBA in fall 2008. This study will make recommendations to ensure a future balance between community interests and the military mission at JBA. The traffic patterns in this area, which have changed with the upgrading of the base’s commercial entrance on Dower House Road, will be closely investigated as part of this study. In order to more adequately serve both the base and future employment uses in this area, the widening of Dower House Road will need to be addressed.

The area to the east of the Town of Upper Marlboro along MD 725 also represents an opportunity for increased employment. In addition to government employment, there is a significant amount of industrially zoned land in the northwest quadrant of MD 4 and US 301. Development of this area is fragmented and much of the land is underutilized with older commercial miscellaneous uses that have developed over the last 40 years. Given its key location, the area offers an opportunity for revitalization and redevelopment to attract higher quality jobs. With the upgrading of US 301, planned relocation of MD 202, and the area’s location at the entrance to the county seat, plans should be developed to promote and incentivize

a better mix of uses. This plan recommends that an action plan for the US 301/MD 725 industrial area and the commercial shopping centers along US 301 be conducted to build on recommendations in this master plan.

Additional infrastructure improvements will be necessary to support new development in this area. In order to attract new development and retain existing businesses, the county should promote a modern communications system to serve the area. The installation of fiber optic cable to provide broadband service is essential to attracting modern industries.

The county must also develop and implement economic development strategies and programs to attract more private employers that will improve the tax base as well as provide quality jobs to area residents.

POLICY 1

Intensify and grow economic development at strategic locations zoned for industrial and commercial uses to increase employment opportunities, income, and the tax base within Prince George's County and the subregion.

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure that adequate amounts of land are available for economic development while avoiding over-zoning land as commercial that encourages sprawl and inhibits revitalization efforts.
2. Capitalize on employment growth at Joint Base Andrews and the Town of Upper Marlboro government employment center to promote compatible infill development that will attract an improved mix of private employment.
3. Work with business and property owners to take advantage of county, state, and other incentives; financing programs, grants, etc., to spur redevelopment.
4. Support redevelopment and revitalization of existing employment areas rather than greenfield development.
5. Encourage the consolidation of properties to promote the development of planned employment parks to attract major employers.
6. Investigate the appropriateness of creating minimum-size standards in industrially zoned areas to discourage the development of small, fragmented employment areas, particularly the conversion of single-family homes to industrial uses.
7. Promote public/private partnerships to encourage private development near government facilities.

8. Create incentives, including the funding and construction of critical roads, to promote the intensification of employment growth in these centers.
9. Study further development opportunities and strategies for redeveloping the industrial areas.
10. Study the Melwood commercial area to develop recommendations for the revitalization and potential new development. Consider future improvements to Dower House Road and compatibility with Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington.

POLICY 2

Attract a diversity of new jobs and employers to the subregion, retaining and supporting existing employers so that residents have employment options near their homes.

STRATEGIES

1. Plan for the installation of modern communications infrastructure throughout key employment and industry clusters in the subregion.
2. Continue to support the attraction and retention of federal government installations at Joint Base Andrews, especially those which spin off and support business in the private sector.
3. Use public and private resources and partnerships to attract, support, and train employees in all employment sectors, but especially those that support BRAC needs.
4. Encourage the development of business incubators that can support other employment or community revitalization goals.
5. Implement incentive programs to attract new businesses that employ high-wage earners in Subregion 6.
6. Expand the county's minority-owned businesses as part of the development of employment uses.
7. Reduce energy demand from employment activities by co-locating enterprises that can convert waste to energy, attracting employers committed to reducing energy usage in their operations, using local suppliers whenever possible.
8. Investigate opportunities for promoting green industries.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture in Subregion 6 is an important rural industry with countywide economic impacts. It is a geographically expansive and culturally important economic activity in the subregion. As of 2002¹, the subregion supported approximately 210 farms generating nearly \$5.7 million in sales and supporting approximately 525

¹ The most recent Census of Agriculture

jobs. The success of agriculture in the subregion, and indeed the county, is predicated on access to high-quality agricultural soils, strong markets for farm output, and access to service and supply industries.

The State of Maryland's Tobacco Buyout Program, initiated in 2000, has created a period of realignment and uncertainty in the agriculture industry that has impacted both its structure and profitability. Farm income fell, with the average farm losing nearly \$3,500 per year between 1997 and 2002. The consequences are a dramatic decline in farm profitability and investment as farmers seek alternatives to tobacco production as the primary cash crop, which historically provided up to 65 percent of farm income.

Farmers are looking toward their suburban and urban neighbors as a source of new markets, and are crafting their farm transition plans to meet the demands of these consumers. The structural change is toward smaller and more nimble farm operations that often offer a more diversified array of goods such as produce, livestock, equine, and agritourism events rather than traditional grain and tobacco operations.

Through the public input for the Subregion 6 plan, farmers and other rural landowners raised several issues that are important to the future growth of the agricultural industry:

- In order to effectively manage an agricultural transition, farmers need to have a suite of regulatory and incentive-based tools available to them to protect access to productive land as a means for expansion and growth. In addition, farmers are concerned that land use policies such as down-zoning would reduce the equity in the land base and their ability to use that equity to finance growth and retirement.
- Farmers indicated a need to adapt to modern production and marketing techniques by integrating processing, retailing, agritourism, and production into their on-site operations.
- With the increased residential development that has occurred in the Rural Tier, farmers indicated a strong desire to have the necessary legal protections to practice the business of agriculture. Such protections include better protection from nuisance claims and an arbitration system to keep such claims out of the courts and reduce the cost of legal defense.
- Farmers need the ability to use land for a greater variety of agriculturally related uses such as farm-based marketing and processing, consolidation of livestock for shipment or sales, wine grapes, and agritourism. This would allow farmers to specialize their production base and production infrastructure



A cluster of agricultural buildings near Nottingham.

while expanding their capacity to sell local farm products (some produced by other farmers in Prince George's County) at on-farm retail stands.

- The service and supply industries in the county have significantly diminished since the loss of the tobacco market. The lack of infrastructure particularly influences emerging industry clusters such as equine, wineries, organic produce, and horticulture, whose small size makes scale-efficient purchases difficult and forces farmers to travel farther and pay more for inputs. Increasing the presence of support industries is important to the overall redevelopment of the agricultural economy.
- Young and beginning farmers, and nontraditional agricultural operations such as agritourism and aquaculture, need access to capital to finance their operations. They typically cannot access traditional funding sources such as commercial banks but are critical players in today's agricultural economy that should not be overlooked.

In response to the above issues, M-NCPPC worked with a consultant to produce an agricultural market analysis in the fall of 2008. The findings are intended to become a cornerstone of future agricultural development programming and market support. The report, entitled *Prince George's County Strategic Program for Agricultural Development (SPAD)*, was completed in early 2009. Recognizing both the prominence of Subregion 6 in the agricultural sector, as well as the other critical resource lands and unique agricultural industry sectors outside of the subregion, the report and recommendations are countywide in scope. Many of the recommendations were already included in the plan in this chapter and, to some extent, in the Land Use and Development Pattern chapter.

SPAD offers additional detail on the transition that the agricultural industry continues to undergo and the challenges and opportunities at hand as the tobacco buyout comes to an end. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to the industry are enumerated fully in the SPAD. Weaknesses identified parallel many of those mentioned in this plan (e.g., an aging farm population, high land values, and parcel fragmentation). Strengths include the county's large, relatively wealthy population, strong local demand, strong food manufacturing employment, and more. Also elaborated on are external opportunities and threats, such as growth in the demand for "local" food, the rise of nontraditional sectors, the continued rising cost of agricultural inputs, and uncertainty in labor laws.

In addition to the SWOT analysis, the countywide economic impact of agriculture is discussed on a sector-by-sector basis looking at equine, livestock and poultry, horticulture, produce, field crops and forage, and dairy activity in the county. Data on food

manufacturing is also provided, which together with food wholesale in the county, remain prominent but weakening sectors and sources of employment. Although broader than Subregion 6, implementing the SPAD recommendations could leverage these existing industries to increase markets for rural production, enhancing the position of both.

Recommendations fall into four broad development categories: market, business, economic, and regulations and policy. All major recommendations are mentioned in the master plan policies and strategies in this chapter. Recommendations for regulatory reform to the Zoning Ordinance to permit a broader range of modern agricultural activities, identified as a top priority by community members in the subregion, are discussed earlier in the Development Pattern and Land Use chapter.

POLICY 3

Improve economic options for farmers by expanding the uses and activities that can be undertaken on farms and the regulatory protections for their operations.

STRATEGIES

1. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to expand the definition of agriculture and ensure it permits a broad array of agricultural and agricultural-related uses to support the economic viability of farming (see Development Pattern and Land Use chapter).
2. Minimize conflicts between agriculture and non-agricultural uses.
 - Limit development in the Rural Tier.
 - Strengthen the county right-to-farm policy (Code Section 30-101) to include the following measures:
 - An affirmative declaration of the county's intent to protect the rights of farms to carry out generally accepted agricultural practices.
 - Notification requirements for new residents in the Rural Tier that it is an agricultural industry area and that agriculture, as a normal course of business, may produce inconveniences, odors, and disruptions to other uses.
 - A provision for dispute resolution through an agricultural arbitration board to protect farmers from spurious claims.
3. Work with elected leaders and state officials to advocate for farm-friendly changes to state health policy and programs to enhance on-farm processing capacity, develop voluntary, scale-appropriate traceability standards to enhance consumer confidence in food safety, implement a local food purchasing preference standard for county institutions, and more.

4. Support state-level changes to tax policy to better facilitate intergenerational farm transfer and create additional incentives for forestry and equine breeding.
5. Investigate state and county-level transportation policies and programs that require clarification and modification to enhance the competitiveness of county farmers.

POLICY 4

Modernize the county's agricultural economy by transitioning it from its historic tobacco base to a more urban, market-driven agricultural base comprised of new enterprises and product markets.

STRATEGIES

1. Create an agricultural marketing position to lead the implementation of the *Prince George's County Strategic Programs for Agricultural Development (SPAD)* in the county and subregion to support agricultural transition and local farmers, equine interests, and other resource industries.
 - Identify and convene partners from the county, state, nonprofit, and private sectors to assist in implementation efforts.
2. Develop an agricultural marketing program to implement the broad recommendation of the SPAD for enhanced market access.
 - Improve regional market access at wholesale and retail levels.
 - Leverage the Southern Maryland Trails tourism brand, coordinated by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, to better integrate county agricultural programs with this, and other, region wide agricultural development and marketing initiatives. Integrate the promotion of county historic resources to capitalize on shared opportunities for agritourism and heritage tourism, where appropriate.
 - Create retailer-supported marketing system.
 - Improve long-term functionality of the Cheltemham Farmers Market.
 - Evaluate the feasibility of development a public/private agritourism, retail, and culinary arts center.
 - Create an outreach and public relations program for agricultural and equine enterprises to raise citizen awareness.

3. Implement SPAD recommendations for business development, agricultural producers in the subregion, industry sector, and county.’
 - Develop a farmer recruitment program to both attract farmers to Subregion 6 and assist with the development and financing of new and expanding operations.
 - Support agribusiness concept incubation and technology transfer to encourage entrepreneurship at the farm level.
 - Create a small farm research and training board.
 - Support entrepreneurship and on-farm skills development.
 - Facilitate integration of agriculture within broader capital markets.
4. Implement SPAD recommendations for economic development to develop policies and infrastructure to support agricultural industry sector growth.
 - Develop an agribusiness retention, expansion, and attraction plan that includes improved linkages between agricultural production and the research and development capacity at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, among other regionally significant institutional partners.
 - Integrate agriculture within economic development lending programs to enhance access to development capital, such as those provided by the Small Business Initiative Program administered by Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation.
 - Support agribusiness cluster development.
 - Enhance labor force motivation.
 - Support regional agricultural leadership development.
 - Create an alternative energy development program.

POLICY 5

Adopt a broader food systems² approach to be applied in land use and economic development planning which will put the subregion at the center of opportunities to produce and process food for individual businesses (restaurants) and institutional consumers in Prince George’s County and beyond.

² Food systems generally refers to activities beginning with food production to processing, distribution, wholesaling/retailing, consumption, and, eventually, the disposal of food waste. Attention to food systems planning is growing and is of interest to a number of different individuals and entities concerned about access to local supplies of safe, reliable, affordable, and healthy food.

1. Encourage participation in a countywide effort to develop a framework for food systems planning that recognizes the challenges and assets of urban, suburban, and rural areas.
2. Identify market, community garden, and other agriculturally related opportunities for development and implementation in the Developing Tier portion of the subregion.

EQUINE INDUSTRY

Equestrian activities are an important part of the culture and history of Prince George’s County, yet this rural industry sector remains disaggregated, invisible to many segments of the community, and poorly understood, largely due to its structure. Because the industry is more fragmented and therefore less cohesive than other agricultural sectors, its needs and interests are not as clearly understood, and there is often no representative voice.

Despite recent efforts by the State of Maryland and Prince George’s County to develop a profile of the industry’s private and public assets, there are still information gaps in what is known about the equestrian industry in the county. As of 2007, Prince George’s County had the fourth largest inventory of horses in the state with nearly 7,500 horses, valued at \$63 million, housed, trained, and otherwise maintained on 1,170 equine operations covering 11,700 acres³. Data is needed on industry investment and expenditure patterns, as well as its growth potential.

The equine racing industry in Prince George’s County is an important subsector and is closely related to the success of Maryland’s equine racing industry, which provides a source of purses and sales. This sector, however, is declining as larger purses in West Virginia and Delaware are drawing breeding and training activity out of Maryland. The downstream effects may be felt in other segments of the equine industry that rely on a local supply of thoroughbred genetics. These include the performance horse including hunts, dressage, and hunter/jumpers, all of which are popular in the region.

The Prince George’s Equestrian Center is a major industry asset in the Mid-Atlantic states and has long been a center of activity for the performance horse industry in Subregion 6. Changes in the facility and its use over the last decade, however, have led to fewer equestrian activities occurring on-site, with some events moving to sites outside of Maryland.

The facility is developing a new master plan to address the change in facility use and configuration which may further influence equestrian development in the subregion.



One of the many horse farms in the subregion.

³ 2002 Maryland Equine Census

Much of the equine-related-activity occurs in the Rural Tier and contributes to the success of general agricultural operations through the sale of hay and forage. Horse boarding revenue is an important nonfarming source of revenue for some farmers and the sale of feed and tack keep agricultural operations such as Southern States and Gayer's Saddlery active in the subregion. These impacts strongly influence the economic health of the traditional agricultural sectors.

The following policies and strategies are designed to support the preservation and development of the equine industry.

POLICY 6

Improve the understanding of equine activities in the county and improve access to existing infrastructure for equestrian users.

STRATEGIES

1. Improve the equestrian facilities at the Prince George's County Equestrian Center to compete with similar equestrian facilities in the Mid-Atlantic with a focus on reestablishing the Prince George's Equestrian Center as a premier show and event facility.
2. Work with the Department of Parks and Recreation and industry partners to develop additional equestrian trails to enhance the reputation of the county as an equestrian activity center (see the Transportation Systems and Public Facilities chapters.)
 - Improve access to existing park infrastructure by expanding horse trails and outdoor arena capacity in Patuxent River Park.
3. Develop a marketing and education program to promote the industry and improve the community's understanding of its role in the local economy and opportunities for recreational uses and enjoyment.



The track at the Equestrian Center/ Show Place Arena was at one time a premier training facility for thoroughbred race horses.

POLICY 7

Facilitate the economic development of the equine industry by making the county a center of activity at all levels of the industry.

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct an equine survey to assess the conditions, financial impact, and needs of the industry and support marketing efforts.
 - Inventory the full range of industry activities from recreational trail riding and performance events, to training and breeding facilities, to equine subsectors, including service and support infrastructure.

2. Facilitate land access for equestrian activities and the development of equestrian infrastructure through the creation of financial and business development incentives. Such programs could include breeder incentives and capital financing for arenas and event facilities, as well as financing trail development and access easements.
 - Support state-level policy enhancements in the equine industry centered on the development of a Maryland Breeders Incentive Program that improves the financial returns for thoroughbred and standard-bred racing in Maryland. Such incentives will allow Maryland breeders and trainers to remain competitive in the marketplace and stem the loss of the industry to neighboring states.
3. Develop and implement a marketing campaign in collaboration with the recommended agricultural marketing program to recruit additional equine operations and retain existing operations.
 - Develop a database and interactive map of publicly accessible equine facilities such as riding arenas, boarding stables, leg-up facilities, and lay-ups.

FORESTRY

Forestry is a small but significant economic activity in Subregion 6. Forest cover accounts for approximately 50,000 acres, or nearly 52 percent, of total land cover in the subregion, a little over 30,765 acres (60 percent) of which is in deciduous tree stands. Forestry therefore represents an important economic use that provides income opportunities for land owners as well as environmental benefits. Greater consolidation of woodlands in the future can yield additional environmental benefits and competitive advantages for industry. Some large forested areas are in public ownership and management such as at the federal Globecom site, Cedarville State Forest, and Patuxent River Park. The forestry industry employs approximately 40 persons and generates \$4.2 million in annual output (see Subregion Analysis chapter). There is one sawmill in Brandywine, though further manufacturing of wood products generally occurs outside the area.

Forest quality in the subregion is mixed. According to the United States Forest Service's Forest Inventory Assessment only 50 percent of the forestland productivity is rated as "good" or "fair" and none is rated "excellent." This situation is a subset of several management and environmental issues beginning with poor timber stand management, limited local markets for forest products, and dispersion of forestry soil types.

POLICY 8

Utilize a multifaceted approach to improve forest productivity.

STRATEGIES

1. **Protect the resource.** Producing high quality forest resources begins with protecting high quality forest soil types while improving the landowner management techniques. The priority preservation area (PPA) is intended in part to protect forest soil types (see Development Pattern and Land Use chapter).
2. **Improve timber quality.** Since the subregion currently supports many low-value species, improving timber quality may involve the harvest of invasive species and low-value succession trees that overgrow old farm fields. Such a harvest lends itself to on-site lumber milling, pulpwood operations, and biomass energy development. There is no current biomass⁴ market in the county, and on-site milling requires a special exception, making it unlikely given the dispersed nature of the resource.
3. **Enlarge the market.** Without improvement to the forest products marketplace, there will be little demand for local timber products beyond removal of the highest value hardwood species and cyclical pulpwood extraction. While this will not mean the end to the forest products industry in the subregion, it will contribute to low productivity forestry activities and limit the income opportunities of rural landowners.

The following actions are designed to support the preservation and development of the forestry industry.

POLICY 9

Protect, maintain, and create large contiguous blocks of timberland capable of supporting long-term commercial forestry activities by protecting prime forestry subsoil types.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop the PPA program which is intended in part to protect forest soil types.
2. Explore options to create additional tax incentives that will support timber management activities.

⁴ Forest biomass generally consists of noncommercial thinning, logging waste, brush removal, sawdust, and urban wood sources.



Forest at Aquasco Farm site.

POLICY 10

Promote economic development opportunities for private forest holdings that employ a sustained yield and harvest approach to forest stand management.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop landowner outreach and training programs to improve forest management as well as the adoption of best management practices relative to environmental conservation.
2. Increase financial returns to landowners by encouraging more active timber stand management and improvements to timber stand quality.
 - Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance to ensure it contains relevant definitions of commercial and noncommercial forest uses and activities, as well as provisions supportive of forest industry development, best commercial forest management practices, etc.
 - Include right-to-forest provisions in the strengthened right-to-farm policy recommended in the agriculture section of this chapter.
 - Develop a forestry industry marketing campaign in collaboration with the recommended agricultural marketing program.
3. Improve the markets for timber and biomass materials that support long-term succession of forests and improvements to forest quality.
 - Evaluate the potential for use of biomass fuels at county facilities such as schools, administrative, and recreational facilities to create a baseline demand for local biofuels.
 - Consider county economic development incentives to the forest products industry to include incentives for commercial adoption of biomass heat and power.
4. Recruit new forest product businesses to Subregion 6 that fit within the community context, add value to local timber markets, and support the retention of existing businesses.
 - Attract timber management operations and wood products manufacturing to improve service and supply infrastructure and enhance market outlets.

SAND AND GRAVEL

Sand and gravel deposits are significant generators of economic activity in Subregion 6 with five mine operators generating approximately 60 jobs and representing approximately 14 percent of the total state output in the mining industry sector (see Subregion

Analysis chapter). The major sand and gravel deposits are associated with the Brandywine geological formation (see Map 10).

Subregion 6 continues to have development potential for sand and gravel due to its large undeveloped resource reserves and relatively low development pressure. As of August 2008, the subregion supported approximately 2,600 acres of active mines plus an active application for an additional 27 acres of new activity. There were approximately 4,440 acres of closed and reclaimed mines.

As a key input to construction, sand and gravel is an essential element of the development in the Washington region. Because of its high weight-to-size ratio, sand and gravel is most cost effective to extract, process and transport near its end use: that is, locally. Aggregates contribution to the local economy is likely to increase as neighboring counties, particularly Anne Arundel County, reduce sand and gravel output due to mine closures. Furthermore, as transportation costs continue to rise, sand and gravel operations located within the Washington, D.C., metropolitan marketplace will have a competitive advantage over outlying sources of aggregates in Virginia and the Eastern Shore. The region's sand and gravel industry faces several issues and challenges:



This former sand and gravel mine is in the process of being reclaimed.

- Access to new mining capacity is becoming limited as land is parcelized for development and broken up into uneconomical units of production.
- Mining places a traffic burden on a rural road system that is also increasingly used by commuters, creating traffic conflicts.
- Public opinion of the effectiveness of mine reclamation often puts the community at odds with the industry, although many of the mine reclamation issues cited by the public as poor practice are, in fact, related to mining activities that predated current regulations.
- As land resources become scarce, sand and gravel operators increasingly compete for land with other resource-based industries, such as agriculture and forestry. Of particular concern to the industry is the growing demand for permanent agricultural land conservation activity whereby easement language may restrict access to sand and gravel resources. Such restrictions are common in state land conservation programs. Over time, costs associated with these issues could lead to disinvestment in the industry and its eventual relocation.

POLICY 11

Provide commercially viable access to sand and gravel resources and direct economic development support to associated operations.

STRATEGIES

1. Prevent the preemption of mineral resources extraction by other uses through the implementation of a mineral overlay zone (see Development Pattern and Land Use chapter).
2. Improve access to financial and work force development incentives.
 - Integrate sand and gravel industry within traditional economic development programming such as tax credits and abatements, workforce assistance, streamlined permitting, and assistance with state and federal small business financing.

POLICY 12

Improve community integration of the sand and gravel industry.

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct community outreach to improve understanding of the sand and gravel industry and to improve industry integration within the rural communities. Traffic, noise, and dust generated by operations must be addressed, along with post-extraction uses. The financial benefits that property owners can receive from pursuing mineral extraction prior to development or some other compatible, rural land use, should also be considered.
2. Involve community members in reviewing new and expanding projects, and in developing requirements for identifying post-reclamation uses as part of an amended special exception process. This work should be done in conjunction with the sand and gravel industry, landowners, government officials, etc., so that post-reclamation land use activities are established in the PPA and all other land where septic systems will be the only means of sewage disposal.