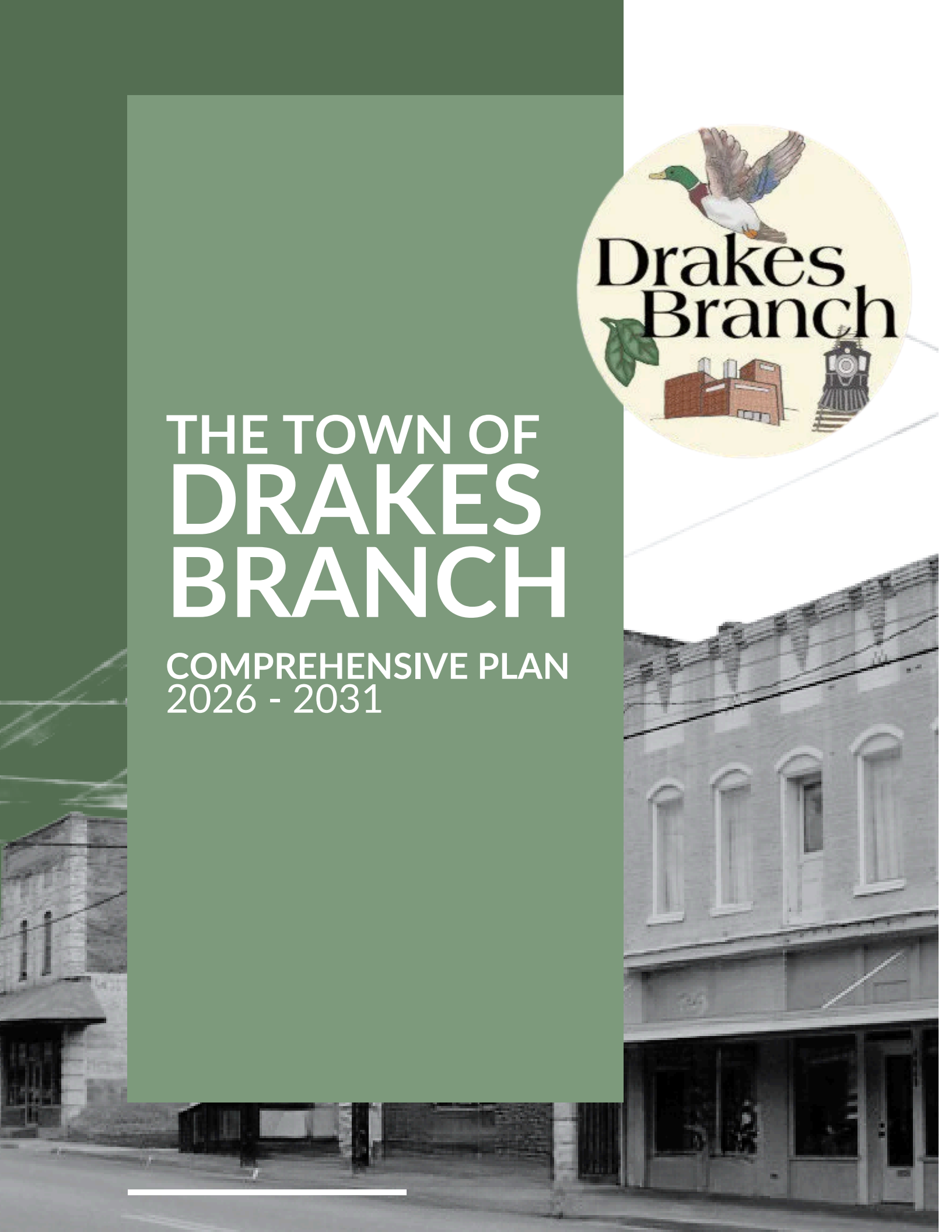


THE TOWN OF DRAKES BRANCH

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2026 - 2031



Acknowledgements Page

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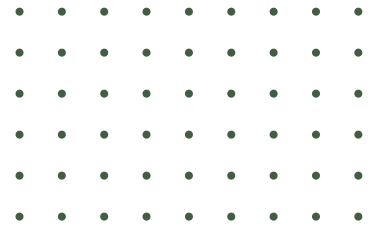
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Chapter One

Introduction



Purpose and Legal Basis of the Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is an official public document that outlines a community's goals for physical, social, and economic development. It provides a detailed assessment of the locality's assets—including its people, financial resources, natural features, housing, and public facilities—and identifies current and future needs in each of these areas. The plan also establishes strategies for managing these resources effectively to meet those needs. While it does not serve as a fixed blueprint, the Comprehensive Plan functions as a guiding document to inform decision-making and shape the community's long-term growth.

In Virginia, Comprehensive Plans are the primary tools used by towns, cities, and counties to direct future development. Governed by § 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia, these plans are considered "living documents," reviewed at least every five years—or more often as needed—to reflect changing conditions and community priorities. The Comprehensive Plan should serve as a critical reference for Town staff, elected officials, and appointed leaders as they evaluate land use applications, develop budgets, and make other key decisions that affect the locality's future.

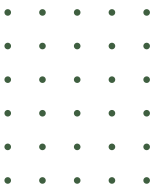
For the Town of Drakes Branch, this Comprehensive Plan represents a collective vision for growth, preservation, and revitalization. Developed through careful analysis and community input, the Plan reflects the Town's commitment to balancing tradition with progress, supporting economic opportunity, and enhancing the quality of life for all residents over the coming decades.

Code of Virginia

Section 15.2-2223



"The Comprehensive Plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities."



Process for Plan Amendment Development and Adoption

Timeline



The Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) assisted the Town of Drakes Branch Planning Commission in updating the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan took 18 months to complete.

Kick-off Meeting

Reviewed Code of Virginia requirements, Comprehensive Planning process, and initial brainstorming of special issues

Community Meeting

Developed the Community Meeting exercise and flyers, held community meeting on May 28th at Municipal Building.

Community Input Survey

Developed and distributed the Community Input survey, Survey opened up on July 8th and will close on August 29th

Review Chapter 1

Review the Introduction section of the plan.

Review Chapter 2

Review the Community Profile section of the plan.

Review Chapter 3

Review the Community Resources section of the plan.

Review Chapter 4

Review the Transportation section of the plan.

Review Chapter 5

Review the Land Use section of the plan.

Review Chapter 6

Review the Special Policy Areas section of the plan.

Review Chapter 7

Review the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies section of the plan.

Review Chapter 8

Review the Implementation Section of the Plan.

Review Full Plan

Review the Drafted full plan.

Public Hearing

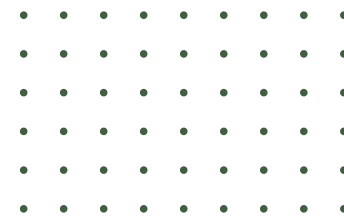
The Planning Commission held a public hearing to discuss the recommendation of the Plan. The recommendation of approval was made. The Town Council hosted a public hearing on the plan as well. The Town Council approved the Plan.

Plan Adopted

Methods of Identifying Issues

A range of issues that are facing the Town of Drakes Branch have been identified. Review and analysis of these issues by the public, the Planning Commissions and the Town Councils provided the basis for establishing the Town’s planning goals and policies for this Comprehensive Plan. For a more detailed review of all the input received from the issue identification methods, please refer to the Appendix materials.

The major issues outlined in this Plan were identified through four methods:



Community Input Survey

In July 2025, CRC staff and the Town distributed citizen input questionnaires at various locations throughout the Town. The Town also sent out a copy of the questionnaire flyer with the water bills. These surveys were available at the town office, post office, the bank, and other businesses across the Town. Additionally, a paper copy of the survey was made accessible at the Municipal building. Surveys were distributed on July 8, 2025, with a submission deadline of August 29, 2025. A total of 49 complete surveys were returned. The Commonwealth Regional Council staff tallied the responses, and the survey results were incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. The community input survey responses are included in Appendix I.

Community Meeting

On May 28, 2025, the Town of Drakes Branch hosted a public community meeting at the Town’s Municipal building. A total of 21 individuals attended these meetings, as recorded on the sign-in sheets. CRC staff conducted two exercises, the PARK and mapping exercises, to gather input. The input gathered from attendees was invaluable in shaping the survey instrument and updating the Comprehensive Plan. The community meeting responses are included in Appendix II.

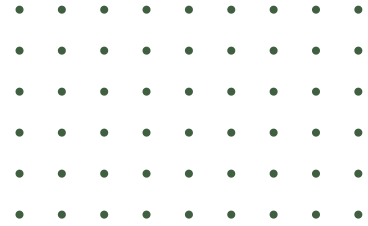
Research and Analysis of Available Data

CRC staff gathered and analyzed data across various aspects of the Town, including land use patterns, environmental features, transportation conditions, population growth trends, and capital facility needs. This information, much of which is included in this Plan, has been instrumental in deepening the understanding of key issues identified by local citizens and through other efforts, as outlined in this section.

Planning Commission Work Sessions

The Town’s Planning Committee held twelve work sessions from February 2025 to March 2026. During these sessions, the Commission reviewed citizen input and technical data, while providing its own analysis of the issues presented.

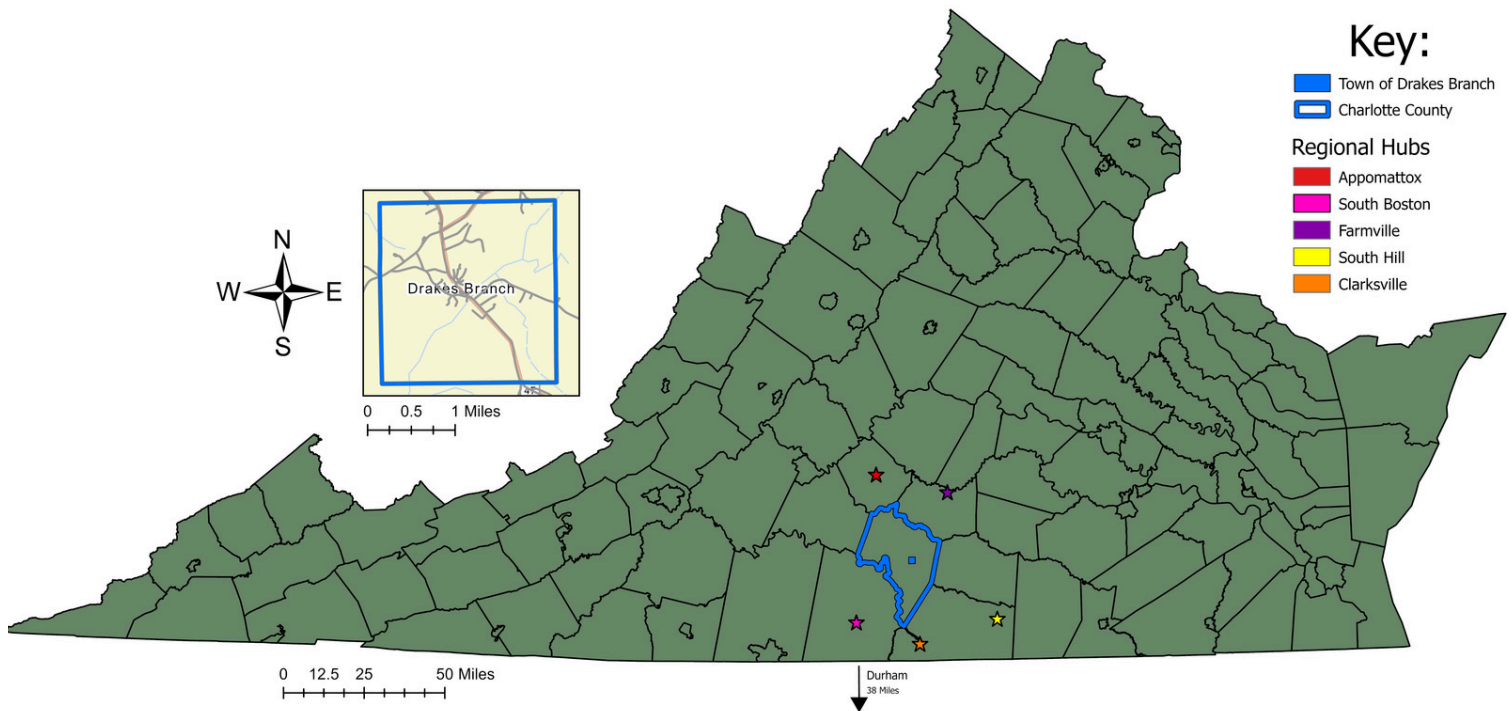
Community Profile



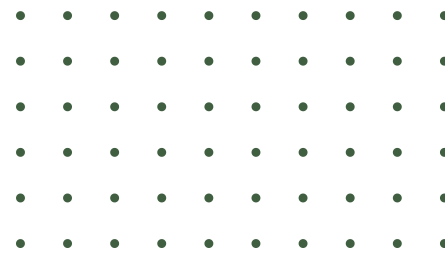
Location of the Town of Drakes Branch

Drakes Branch is located in the Piedmont region of South-Central Virginia. The Town is conveniently located within driving distance of several cities, including 52 miles from Lynchburg, 65 miles from Danville, 86 miles from Richmond, and 88 miles from Durham, North Carolina. The Town is also conveniently situated near several regional hubs. It is located 34.2 miles from South Boston, 29.5 miles from Farmville, 32 miles from Clarksville, and 32.6 miles from Appomattox. Situated in Charlotte County, it is one of four incorporated towns in the county. According to the 2020 United States Census Bureau, Drakes Branch has a population of 475 and covers about 4.1 square miles. Founded in 1853, the town is located along Virginia State Route 47, which connects to U.S. Highways 460 and 360, serving as a major travel route for residents and visitors alike.

Map of the Location of Drakes Branch



Map Created by: Commonwealth Regional Council, August 2025



History of the Town of Drakes Branch

The Town of Drakes Branch was founded in 1853 by Stephen Bedford, Jr. Bedford was granted a postal license to serve the thirty families within a two-mile radius of the future town, and this signified the founding of Drakes Branch.

In August of 1853, the settlement of Drakes Branch began to expand. This growth was mainly attributed to the construction of the R & D Railroad. This rail-line transported goods between Richmond and Danville, Virginia. During this time period, Drakes Branch established a railroad station/depot, a water tower, and two general stores. The general stores marked what would later become the commercial center of the town.

By the 1890's, the Town of Drakes Branch had recovered from the Union raid and returned to being a thriving rural community due to the Town's proximity to the railroad. In addition, the Town now included a number of rail and manufacturing establishments such as: a large tobacco factory, two warehouses, three prizeries, five stores, a foundry, two hotels, a blacksmithing facility, a school, and a number of churches. The railroad provided faster distribution of goods and services for the Town's primary source of income, dark-fired tobacco. A number of warehouses and prizeries were erected to support tobacco farmers in this region.

Early 1900's Main Street



Main Street, Drake's Branch, Va.
Published for W. S. Gregory, Jr., & Co., Drake's Branch, Va.

Source: Charlotte County Historical Society

In 1902, the Virginia General Assembly enacted by charter the Town of Drakes Branch as a corporate town by the name of Drakes Branch. The Charter noted that the Town of Drakes Branch would have the ability to exercise the powers conferred on towns of less than five thousand inhabitants.

The Town of Drakes Branch was the center of the dark-fire tobacco market until the 1930's when the Great Depression destroyed the market.

In the mid-20th century, the textile industry grew in the town bringing several jobs to the area. Burlington Textiles, a manufacturer based in Burlington, NC, operated a plant in the area, which closed in 1971. In 1972, WestPoint Stevens acquired the facility, transforming it into a plant specializing in the manufacturing of various textile products. Before its closure in 2005, the WestPoint Stevens plant employed approximately 450 people and completed full-scale textile product manufacturing.

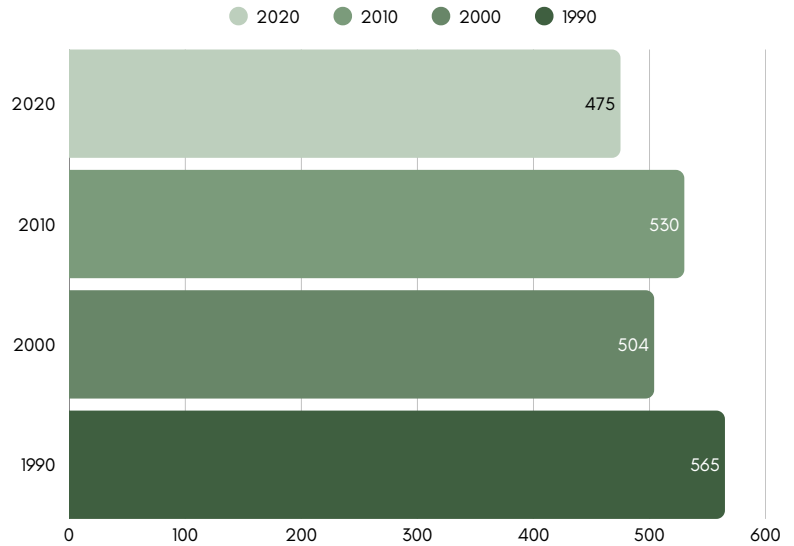
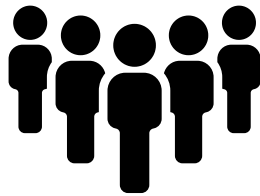
According to the Drakes Branch Town Charter, the Town shall consist of a Mayor, six Council Representatives, and such other officers as the council may deem proper and necessary for the government of the town and the conduct of its business.

Currently, the Town consists of a Mayor, six Council Representatives, a seven member Planning Commission, a Zoning Administrator, and two Town Clerks. The Town also employs three public works employees and a part-time Police Sergeant who serves the community. This is the only municipal police department in the county.

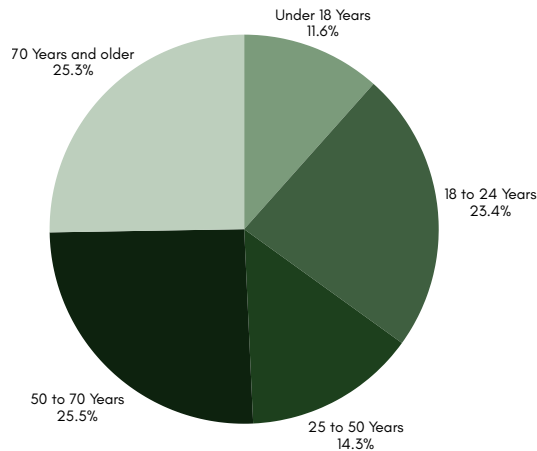
Demographics

Population

The Town of Drakes Branch’s population has slowly declined over the past 30 years. Since 1990, the Town population has experienced an 15.93% decrease. This population decline was caused by several factors including declining industry and demographic shifts.



Age

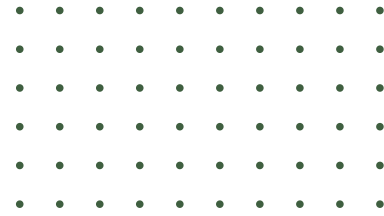


According to the most recent U.S. Census data, the Town of Drakes Branch has a median age of 50.5 years, which is notably higher than both the state median age of 38.4 years and the national median age of 38.2 years. Over half of the Town’s population (50.8%) is 50 years of age or older, indicating a disproportionately older population when compared to regional and national averages. This demographic trend suggests that the Town may experience increased demand for senior services, healthcare, and age-appropriate housing, while also facing challenges related to workforce sustainability and long-term population growth.

Race

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the racial composition of the Town of Drakes Branch has remained relatively balanced between White and Black or African American residents, with modest shifts over the past decade. In 2010, 55.7% of the population identified as White and 42.5% as Black or African American. By 2020, the share of White residents decreased to 48.6%, while the share of Black or African American residents declined slightly to 41.7%. At the same time, the proportion of residents identifying as Two or More Races increased from 1.1% in 2010 to 7.5% in 2020, reflecting a rise in multiracial identification. Small percentages of Asian, American Indian, and residents of Some Other Race were also reported. Hispanic or Latino residents represented 1.5% of the population in 2010 and grew to 3.8% in 2020. These shifts suggest a slow diversification of the Town’s population over the past decade, even as the overall population declined.

Source: 2023 American Community Survey, Five Year Estimates



Gender

The gender composition of the Town of Drakes Branch reflects a consistent imbalance favoring females. In the 2010 U.S. Census, 47.0% of the population was male and 53.0% was female, with a sex ratio of 88.8 males per 100 females. The 2020 Census reported nearly identical figures, again showing 88.8 males per 100 females overall and 91 males per 100 females among adults. By contrast, the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates indicate a widening gap, with 39.8% male and 60.2% female, yielding a sex ratio of 66.1 males per 100 females. Within age cohorts, the ACS shows an overrepresentation of males in the population under 18, but a substantial female majority among older adults, particularly those aged 65 and above. These data confirm that the Town’s overall population is predominantly female, a trend that has intensified over the past decade.



Income and Poverty

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the median household income in Drakes Branch, Virginia is \$19,620, which is significantly lower than both broader benchmarks. In Charlotte County, the median household income stands at \$48,892, representing roughly 62% of the national median and markedly higher than Drakes Branch.

Median Household Income



\$19,620

Town of Drakes Branch

\$48,892

Charlotte County

For context, the national median household income was approximately \$78,538 in 2023, underscoring the economic disparities: Drakes Branch’s figure is less than one-quarter of the national figure, while Charlotte County’s is a little over half.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey, the poverty rate in Drakes Branch, Virginia stands at approximately 28.8%, meaning nearly one in three residents lives below the federal poverty threshold—far higher than the state average of 10.2%. In Charlotte County, the poverty rate is lower but still significantly elevated, at 24.6%. These disparities underscore the severe economic challenges facing these areas.



Housing

Profile

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the Town of Drakes Branch has 318 total housing units. Of these, 235 units are occupied, with 138 owner-occupied and 97 are renter-occupied. The remaining 83 units are vacant. 267 of the 318 units were built prior to 1990 with the largest percentage (22.36%) of housing units being built between the years 1960 to 1969. This indicates that the town has a relatively mature housing stock. The median value of owner-occupied units is approximately \$119,100 and the median gross rent is about \$483 per month. The town’s homeownership rate stands at 58.7%, with an average household size of 2.05 for owner-occupied units and 1.98 for renter-occupied units.

Affordability

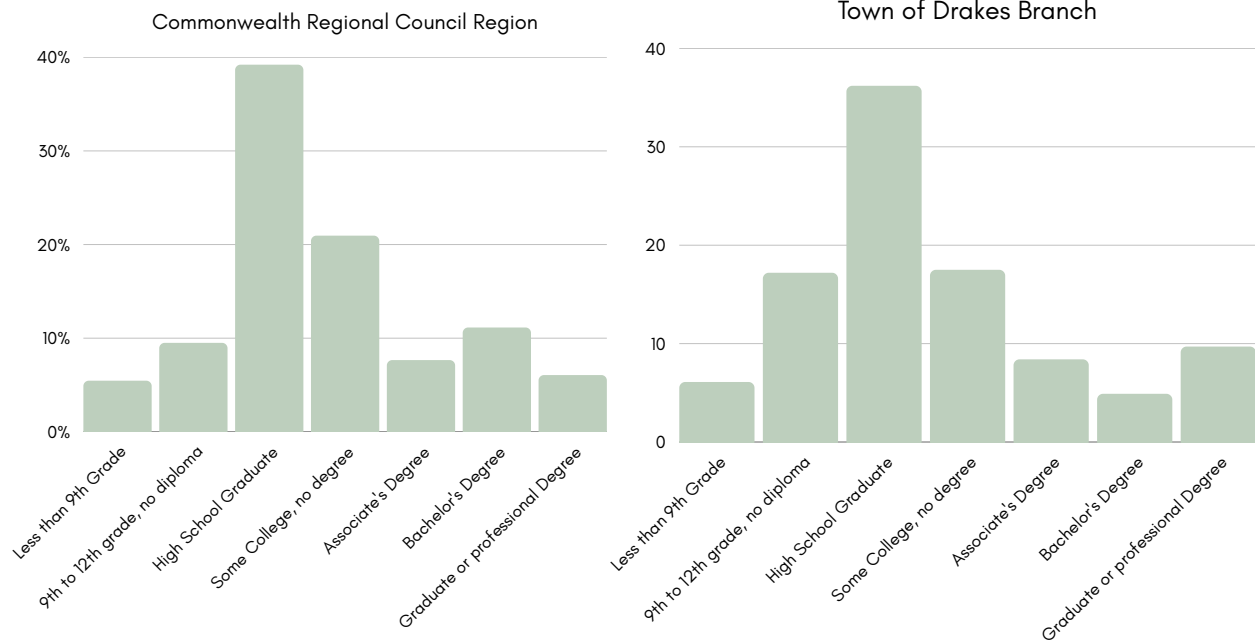
Using U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, a household is considered cost-burdened if it spends more than 30% of its gross income on housing costs, including rent or mortgage payments. In Drakes Branch, approximately 20.8% of individuals are considered cost-burdened, reflecting the proportion of residents who spend a significant share of their income on housing. While this rate is lower than the broader Charlotte County averages—where about 34% of mortgaged households and 42% of rental households are considered cost-burdened—it still underscores that a notable portion of the town’s population may face challenges in meeting other essential living expenses.

Education

Educational attainment in Drakes Branch reflects a community where most adults have achieved at least a high school education. Among residents aged 25 and older, 76.7% hold a high school diploma or higher, including 36.2% who are high school graduates and 17.5% who have completed some college without earning a degree. Postsecondary credentials are less common, with 8.4% holding an associate’s degree, 4.9% a bachelor’s degree, and 9.7% a graduate or professional degree. At the same time, 23.3% of adults have not completed high school, including 6.1% with less than a ninth-grade education and 17.2% who attended some high school but did not graduate. In total, 14.6% of adults hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, highlighting both the community’s strengths in secondary school completion and opportunities to expand higher education attainment.

By comparison, residents of the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) Region report somewhat higher levels of educational achievement overall. Regionwide, 85.0% of adults hold at least a high school diploma, compared to 76.7% in Drakes Branch. The share of residents without a diploma is lower across the region (15.0%) than locally (23.3%). High school graduates make up 39.2% of the population, while 21.0% have completed some college without a degree—both slightly higher than the figures for Drakes Branch. Associate’s degree attainment is nearly the same (7.7% regionwide versus 8.4% locally). However, the region reports a substantially higher share of bachelor’s degree holders (11.1% versus 4.9%). In contrast, Drakes Branch surpasses the region in graduate or professional degree attainment (9.7% versus 6.1%). Overall, 17.2% of adults in the CRC Region hold a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 14.6% in Drakes Branch. These differences suggest that while the region has stronger outcomes in undergraduate education, Drakes Branch stands out for its higher proportion of residents with advanced degrees.

Educational Attainment (Population 25 and over)



Source: 2023 American Community Survey, Five Year Estimates

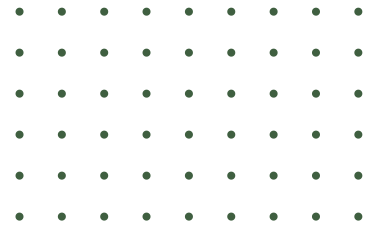
Employment

Unemployment data for the Town is not available for the U.S. Census, therefore the data used for this analysis is for the County at which the Town resides. Charlotte County's labor market reflects both regional economic patterns and the unique characteristics of a predominantly rural community. As of 2024, the County reported an unemployment rate of 3.5%, which is modestly higher than the statewide rate of 2.9%. While unemployment levels remain relatively low, the gap between Charlotte County and Virginia indicates some local challenges in aligning workforce skills with available job opportunities. Employment within the County is heavily influenced by agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, education, healthcare, and small business enterprises, which together form the backbone of the local economy. Many residents also commute to neighboring counties for employment, underscoring Charlotte County's role within a broader regional labor market.

Charlotte County's workforce is highly mobile, with commuting playing a central role in the daily lives of residents. According to the American Community Survey, the average one-way commute for county residents is 31.2 minutes, nearly nine percent longer than the statewide average. A large share of residents (54.3%) travel outside of the county for employment. The vast majority of workers, 84.6%, drive alone to their jobs, while another 8.9% participate in carpooling. Public transportation use is virtually nonexistent at 0.3%, reflecting both the rural character of the county and the absence of transit infrastructure. At the same time, a growing portion of the workforce, 9.1%, works from home, highlighting the increasing role of telework in the local economy. Notably, 12.8% of residents experience "super commutes" of more than one hour each way, further emphasizing the importance of reliable transportation networks. These commuting patterns reveal both the opportunities and challenges of a rural workforce, with implications for transportation planning, infrastructure investment, and economic development strategies.

Chapter Three

Community Resources



Introduction

Community facilities and services are made possible by individuals, families, businesses and industries working together to serve residents. The provision of such facilities and services is usually determined by the tax income that can be obtained from local population and businesses.

The following inventory analysis summarizes the public resources for which the County has primary responsibility and control. However, it also considers other important resources and activities of other levels of government such as federal and state agencies. In addition, some private or quasi-public facilities such as educational institutions and some utility systems are important resources for the local community and must be taken into account when analyzing the full range of public resources available to the citizens of this locality.

Town Administration Facilities

Administrative and Other Town Owned Facilities /Services

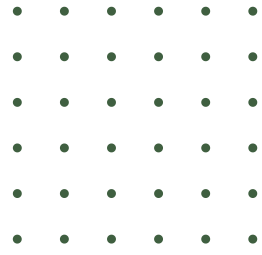
The Town of Drakes Branch owns several buildings located within the Town limits.

- Drakes Branch Municipal Building
- Fire Station
- The Public Works Department
- Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Metal Storage Shed (at Public Works Department)
- The Welcome Center (Pavilion)
- Well Building #1 (Storage Only)
- Well Building#2
- Well Building #3 (Storage Only)
- Well Building #4
- Well Building #5
- Well Building #6
- Well Building #7
- Drakes Branch Museum
- Drakes Branch Ladies Club Building
- Former Charlotte Gazette Building (Future Food Hub)

Other properties owned by the Town include the following:

- The Vietnam War Memorial
- Town Lake (approximately 100 acres) and adjoining land (approximately 100 acres)
- The Town owns 8 ½ acres of property right outside of the Town limits which is known as the “Town Dump.” This was once an above ground dumping ground.
- The Town purchased 3 ½ acres on Virginia Primary 47 for a 400,000 gallon elevated storage water tank.
- The Town leases property to the County of Charlotte for the site of a “Charlotte County Convenience Center” (Recycling/Trash Disposal Collection Site).
- 10 acres on Isabella Street

Services provided by the Town include basic Town services such as the following: the collection of Town taxes and fees, and residential garbage/recyclable pickup every Wednesday. Furthermore, the Town pays the electric bill for the street lights located within the Town and has a part-time Town Police Sergeant.



Library System

The Town of Drakes Branch does not have a local library within Town limits, it has a small free resident book exchange at the Pavilion. The residents of the Town are served by the Charlotte County Public Library System. The public library has four locations within Charlotte County - Keysville, Charlotte Court House, Phenix, and Wyliesburg. The closest library is located in the Town of Charlotte Court House (approximately 5 miles away). These branches provide programs and amenities including books, computers/internet service, free Wi-Fi hotspots, and fax and copy services.

Healthcare Facilities

Hospitals

The Town of Drakes Branch does not have a hospital system located within the Town. Town residents are in close proximity to other healthcare facilities. These hospitals include:

- Centra Southside Community Hospital, Farmville, VA
- Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital, South Boston, VA
- Centra Lynchburg General Hospital, Lynchburg, VA
- Virginia Baptist Hospital, Lynchburg, VA
- VCU Community Hospital, South Hill, VA
- Duke University Hospital, Durham, NC

Providers

There is no healthcare providers located within the Town of Drakes Branch. However, Town residents are in close proximity to the following health providers located in other neighboring towns within Charlotte County:

- Central Virginia Health Center - Charlotte Court House, Charlotte Court House, VA
- Court House Medical Center, Charlotte Court House, VA
- Centra Medical Center - Keysville, Keysville, VA
- Keysville Pediatrics, Keysville, VA
- Dr. Billy M. Rutherford, DDS, Keysville, VA (Dentist)
- Keysville Chiropractic Wellness Center, Keysville, VA
- Specialty Providers located in regional hubs such as Farmville, South Boston, South Hill, and Lynchburg

Pharmacies

There is no pharmacies located within the Town of Drakes Branch. However, Town residents are in close proximity to the following pharmacies located in other neighboring towns within Charlotte County:

- Charlotte Pharmacy, Charlotte Court House, VA
- Walgreens, Keysville, VA

Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

There is not a nursing and rehabilitation center located within the Town of Drakes Branch. The Wayland Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Keysville, Chase City Rehabilitation in Chase City, and The Woodland in Farmville are all locally accessible by residents.

Educational Facilities

Children residing in Drakes Branch attend Charlotte County Public Schools, which serve the entire county. While specific enrollment figures for Drakes Branch are not available, Charlotte County’s K-12 system educates over 1,500 students enrolled in the three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Students living in the Town of Drakes Branch have the option to attend one of three elementary schools: Bacon District Elementary, located at 840 Bacon School Road in Saxe, VA; Eureka Elementary, located at 315 Eureka School Road in Keysville, VA; or Phenix Elementary, located at 400 Red House Road in Phenix, VA. All elementary schools serves students from pre-k through fifth grade. All students in the County attend Central Middle School and Randolph Henry High School is located in Charlotte Court House, VA. Central Middle School serves students from sixth through eighth grade. Randolph Henry High School serves students from ninth to twelfth grade. In addition to public school options, private and faith-based schools are located within Charlotte County and in surrounding counties, providing alternative educational opportunities for residents.

Higher education opportunities are accessible regionally. Nearby institutions include Longwood University in Farmville, approximately 30 miles northeast, enrolling over 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students, and Hampden-Sydney College, a private four-year college located four miles south of Farmville. Additionally, the Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC) campus in Keysville, roughly 11 miles northeast, provides workforce development and higher education programs accessible to Drakes Branch residents.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

Police service is provided to residents of the Town of Drakes Branch by a part-time Town Police Sergeant, the Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office, and the Virginia State Police.

Fire Department

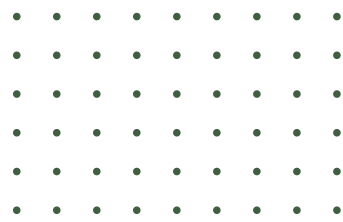
Fire protection for residents in the Town of Drakes Branch and Charlotte County is provided by volunteer fire departments. The Town is served by the Drakes Branch Volunteer Fire Department. However, the County’s other fire departments are available to provide assistance as needed. The fire station is located on Drakes Main Street and serves as an Advanced Life Support (ALS) First Responder unit.

Rescue Squad

Emergency Rescue Squad services are provided to residents in the Town of Drakes Branch by the Charlotte County Rescue Squad. The organization utilizes a combination of volunteer members and paid staffing to provide coverage throughout the county. Charlotte County Volunteer Rescue Squad operates three ambulances and an Advanced Life Support vehicle out of three stations around the county, with the main station located in Keysville and two satellite stations in Wyliesburg and Phenix. Charlotte County Rescue Squad runs more than 2,000 calls for service annually and is dedicated to providing citizens with the highest level of care.

Museum

The Drakes Branch Museum is housed in the old State Bank of Charlotte County on Main Street in Drakes Branch, Virginia. The museum honors the railroad, the industries, the churches, the schools, and the farms that have been a part of the proud history of the community.



Manufacturing

Located in the Town of Drakes Branch is Custom Made Inventory (CMI), a packaging solutions company. This company is located at the former West Point Steven’s plant.

The Drakes Branch Facility is approximately 376,000 SF and is located on 71.00 acres. The facility is located in an area that is zoned manufacturing (industrial). The Town of Drakes Branch is also home to Milligan Custom Cabinetry, a custom wooden cabinet company. Drakes Branch Mfg., a lumber processing and finishing company, is located just outside town limits but is connected to town water services.

Solid Waste Collection/Landfill

The Town of Drakes Branch provides garbage (residential garbage only) pickup for its residents/businesses every Wednesday. For business, the Town only accepts household waste. The Town hosts both “Spring & Fall Cleanups,” where the town accepts non-household waste; such as yard waste, furniture, and appliances.

Furthermore, located in the Town of Drakes Branch is a solid waste collection and recycling site (called “convenience centers”). This center accepts household waste (except yard waste and hazardous material) and recycle newsprint, aluminum, other metal, cardboard, glass and tires. The solid waste is trucked to regional landfills for final disposal. Recyclable material is trucked to commercial recycling locations.

Electric Services

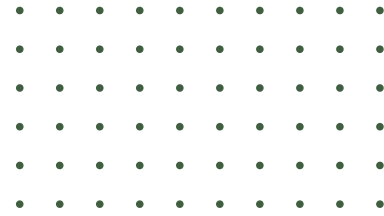
Electricity is supplied to residents of the Town of Drakes Branch by Dominion Virginia Power. Southside Electric Cooperative has one (1) substation located outside the Town Limits on WestPoint Stevens Road. Southside Electric Cooperative also has another substation located outside the Town Limits on Highway 59.

Public Utilities Infrastructure

Wastewater System

The Town’s wastewater system is primarily composed of vitrified clay pipe and brick manholes. Improvements were made in 2010 in several small areas, replacing select sections with ductile iron pipe and concrete manholes. In 1991, a 1,100-foot clay interceptor to the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) was also replaced with ductile iron pipe as part of the Plant’s expansion. The town’s wastewater system also has a main line to Charlotte Court House, to service both the jail and administration buildings. At present, the Town of Drakes Branch wastewater system serves 250 customers.

The current STP, constructed in 1991, has a design capacity of 0.10 MGD and a current average use of 0.06 MGD. It utilizes an extended aeration activated sludge process to meet Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit requirements. Sludge generated at the plant is dewatered on sand drying beds and then transported for disposal at the Amelia County Landfill.



Water System

The Town of Drakes Branch’s water system is comprised of a network of wells, an elevated storage tank, and distribution piping. This water system is has quality control testing done both monthly, and yearly; based on State of Virginia requirements. The original system—including the wells, elevated tank, and most of the distribution lines—was constructed in 1952. Over the decades, minor line extensions and additional wells have been installed. In the 2010's the town updated its water tank, and from late 2023 into early 2024 the town upgraded all of its water meters. In total, the Town has operated seven (7) wells to supply its water system. The map below illustrates the existing water system layout. At present, the Town of Drakes Branch water system serves 251 customers.

Recreation & Community Life

Sports Leagues

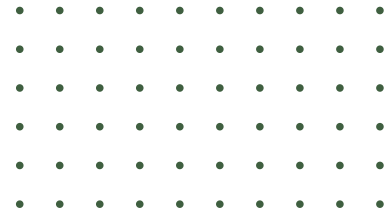
The Town of Drakes Branch nor Charlotte County has its own Recreational Department. Town youth can participate in local sports through the various youth leagues and organizations or through the public school systems. Organized baseball, softball, soccer, basketball, football, and cheerleading are run by various volunteer youth organizations. There is a local baseball and softball field located on West Point Stevens Road in Drakes Branch. This field is operated by the Drakes Branch Dixie Youth League. Other youth organization facilities are located in nearby localities.

The local extension office that is located in Charlotte Court House also offers a variety of youth activities through the 4-H program. Other activities, including scouting, are also available through the public school system & local civic and religious organizations.

Spiritual & Faith-Based Facilities

Faith-based organizations play an important role in the social and cultural life of Drakes Branch. The town’s churches and ministries serve as centers for worship, community gatherings, volunteer outreach, and local support programs.

Drakes Branch is home to a variety of Christian congregations representing several denominations and worship traditions. Local facilities include Organ Hill Church, Drakes Branch Baptist Church, Saint Michael’s Church, Gethsemane United Presbyterian Church, Tabernacle Baptist Church, and Drakes Branch Presbyterian Church. In addition, Detox Your Life Ministry provides faith-based personal growth and recovery programs, while ACCA (Area Christian Community Association) supports collaborative ministry and outreach across the region. These institutions collectively strengthen community ties, offer charitable assistance, and contribute to the town’s quality of life through both spiritual and civic engagement.



Local & Regional Events

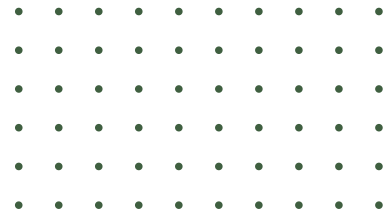
Drakes Branch hosts a series of annual events that strengthen community ties and draw visitors from across Southside Virginia. The 100-Mile Yard Sale, a major statewide route that passes directly through town, brings a surge of shoppers, vendors, and travelers each summer, creating opportunities for local businesses and residents to participate in a regional tradition. Each fall, the Truckers Parade Against Cancer rolls through the area with a large convoy of decorated trucks, raising substantial funds for cancer support services while bringing families and spectators together.

The Town also honors local veterans through its annual Veterans Parade and Celebration along Main Street, featuring participants from civic groups, youth organizations, and regional partners. During the warmer months, the Drakes Branch Farmers Market activates the town's public pavilion with fresh produce, baked goods, handmade items, and a welcoming space for residents to gather on a regular basis. Collectively, these events contribute to the town's small-town character, support local engagement, and enhance Drakes Branch's role as a community hub within the region.

State Parks

Several Virginia State Parks lie within 30+/- miles of Drakes Branch, offering recreation, education, heritage interpretation, and nature-based tourism. Key sites include:

1. Staunton River Battlefield State Park (Halifax & Charlotte Counties)
 - a. Preserves the 1864 Battle of Staunton River Bridge; visitor centers, interpretive trails, and wildlife observation.
2. Staunton River State Park (Halifax County)
 - a. Cabins, camping, boating access to the Dan/Staunton River-Kerr Lake system, trails, and International Dark Sky designation.
3. Occoneechee State Park (Mecklenburg County, near Clarksville)
 - a. Extensive lake access on Buggs Island/Kerr Lake; fishing, boating, camping, cabins, and equestrian trails.
4. Twin Lakes State Park (Prince Edward County)
 - a. Swimming beach, cabins, family recreation, trails, and interpretation of the park's Civil Rights-era history.
5. Sailor's Creek Battlefield State Park (at the corner of Prince Edward, Nottoway, and Amelia County)
 - a. Museum and trails interpreting one of the final battles of the Civil War.
6. High Bridge Trail State Park (Prince Edward, Cumberland & Nottoway Counties)
 - a. 31-mile rail-trail with the iconic High Bridge over the Appomattox River; hiking, bicycling, and equestrian use.



State Forests

Two State Forests within the region provide sustainably managed timberlands, watershed protection, biodiversity, and multi-use public access.

1. Charlotte State Forest (Charlotte County)
 - a. 5,919 acres located about three miles west of Drakes Branch. Contains Roanoke Creek and Wards Fork Creek, which converge near the center. Public access includes hunting, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.
 - b. Permit note: A Virginia State Forest Use Permit is required for hunting, fishing, trapping, horseback riding, and mountain biking.
2. Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest (Prince Edward County)
 - a. Virginia's oldest state forest (>6,400 acres) north of Keysville/south of Farmville. Offers hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and forestry education and is adjacent to Twin Lakes State Park, forming an interconnected recreation complex.

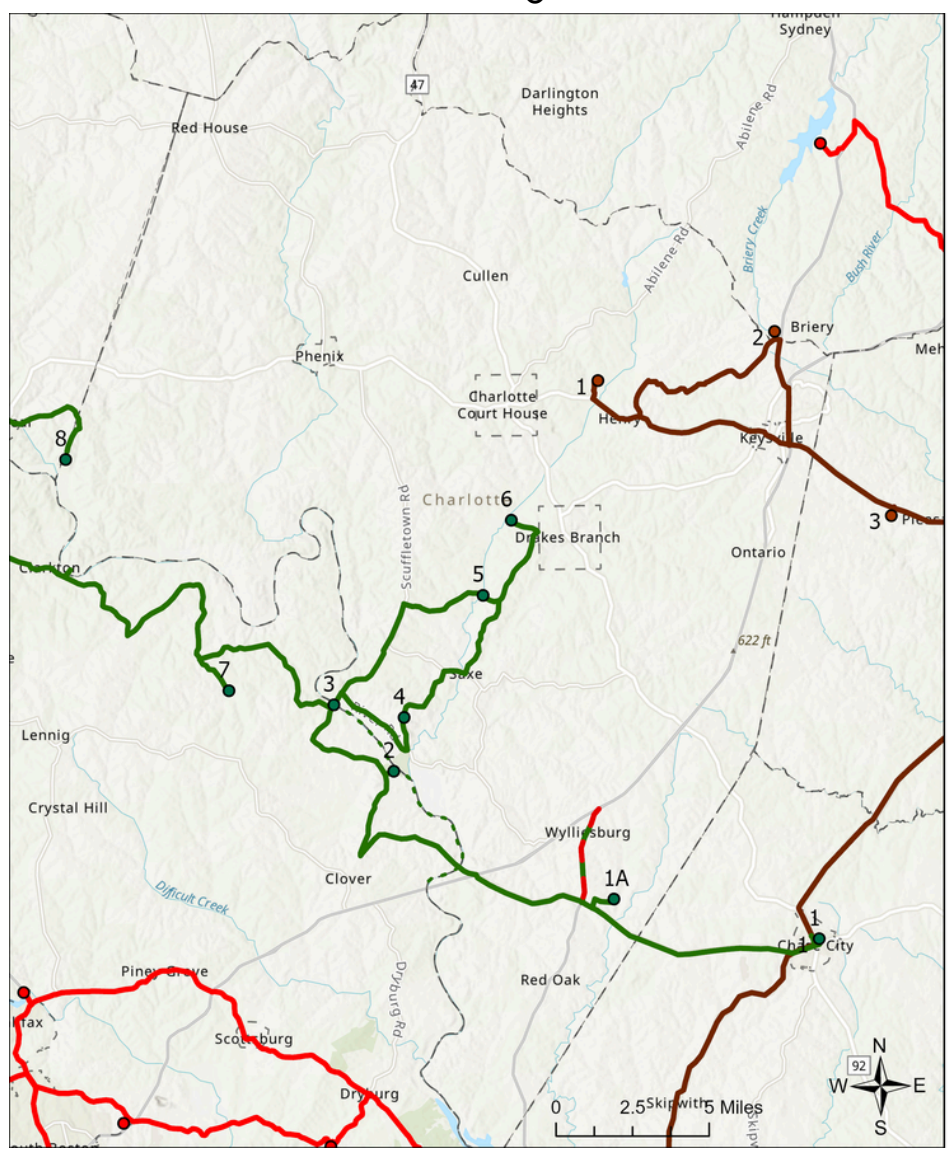
Wildlife Management Areas

WMAs are managed by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) to conserve wildlife and habitats while allowing compatible public use (e.g., hunting, fishing, wildlife observation). Within Charlotte County, the following WMAs are accessible to Drakes Branch residents:

1. Cargills Creek Wildlife Management Area – Lower end of Charlotte County.
 - a. Situated near the Roanoke/Staunton River and Kerr Lake system; provides public hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities in bottomland and riparian habitats.
2. Hogan Creek Wildlife Management Area – Adjacent to/just east of Cargills Creek WMA at the lower end of Charlotte County.
 - a. Similar habitat composition with access to riparian corridors connected to the Kerr Lake backwaters.
3. Briery Creek Wildlife Management Area – Prince Edward County, just across the Charlotte County line.
 - a. Offers fishing, hunting, and wildlife observation around Briery Creek Lake, a popular reservoir managed for largemouth bass and waterfowl habitat.



Regional Bird & Wildlife Trails



Staunton River loop

- Staunton River Loop Trail Sites
- Staunton River Loop
- Staunton River Loop - Access
- - - Staunton River Loop - Boat Access

- 1: MacCallum More Museum and Gardens
- 1A: CornerStone Farm
- 2: Staunton River Battlefield State Park
- 3: Scenic Portion of Staunton River
- 4: Mulberry Hill Plantation/Staunton River Battlefield State Park
- 5: Mossingford Road Marsh
- 6: Double Bridges Marsh
- 7: Lake Conner
- 8: Red Hill The Patrick Henry National Memorial

Roanoke-Meherrin Loop

- Roanoke-Meherrin Loop
- Roanoke-Meherrin Loop Trail Sites

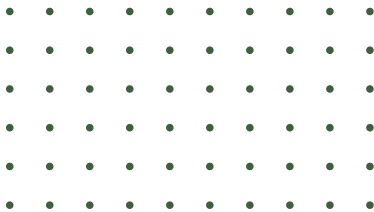
- 1: Greenfield
- 2: Briery Presbyterian Church and Headwaters of Briery Creek
- 3: Hidden Pond Farm

Virginia Birding Wildlife

- Other Virginia Birding & Wildlife Trail Loops
- Virginia Birding Wildlife Trail Sites

Map Created by CRC - December 2025
Sources: DWR, DCR, VDOF

Natural Resources



Land Surface

The Town of Drakes Branch is situated in the Piedmont Province, an area characterized by rolling terrain. Covering 4.1 square miles, the Town is surrounded by hills and sits at an elevation of 375 feet above sea level. Two streams flow within the Town limits, Drake’s Branch and Twitty’s Creek, adding to the area’s natural landscape.

Climate

The Town of Drakes Branch experiences a generally moderate climate. Average annual temperatures in the area vary by season, with January being the coolest month and July the warmest. National Weather Service (NWS) Data is not available for the Town of Drakes Branch. Data is available from NWS for the Nearby Town of Keysville. The average annual temperature was 57.4°F. During January, the average high temperature was 47.6°F, while in July, the average temperature reached 88.4°F. The highest recorded temperature was 106°F in 1954, and the lowest was -8°F in 1985. The average annual rainfall totaled 43.85 inches. The table below summarizes temperature and weather trends for the Town.

Month	Total Precipitation Normal (inches)	Mean Max Temperature Normal (°F)	Mean Min Temperature Normal (°F)	Mean Avg Temperature Normal (°F)
January	3.17	47.6	26.1	36.9
February	2.34	52.1	28	40.1
March	3.9	59.3	34.1	46.7
April	3.37	69.5	43.6	56.6
May	4.23	76.7	52.3	64.5
June	3.68	83.7	62.8	73.3
July	4.34	88.4	67.1	77.8
August	3.91	87.2	65.5	76.4
September	4.3	81.3	58.4	69.9
October	3.75	71	46.2	58.6
November	3.43	59.6	35.2	47.4
December	3.43	50.8	29.7	40.3
Annual	43.85	68.9	45.8	57.4

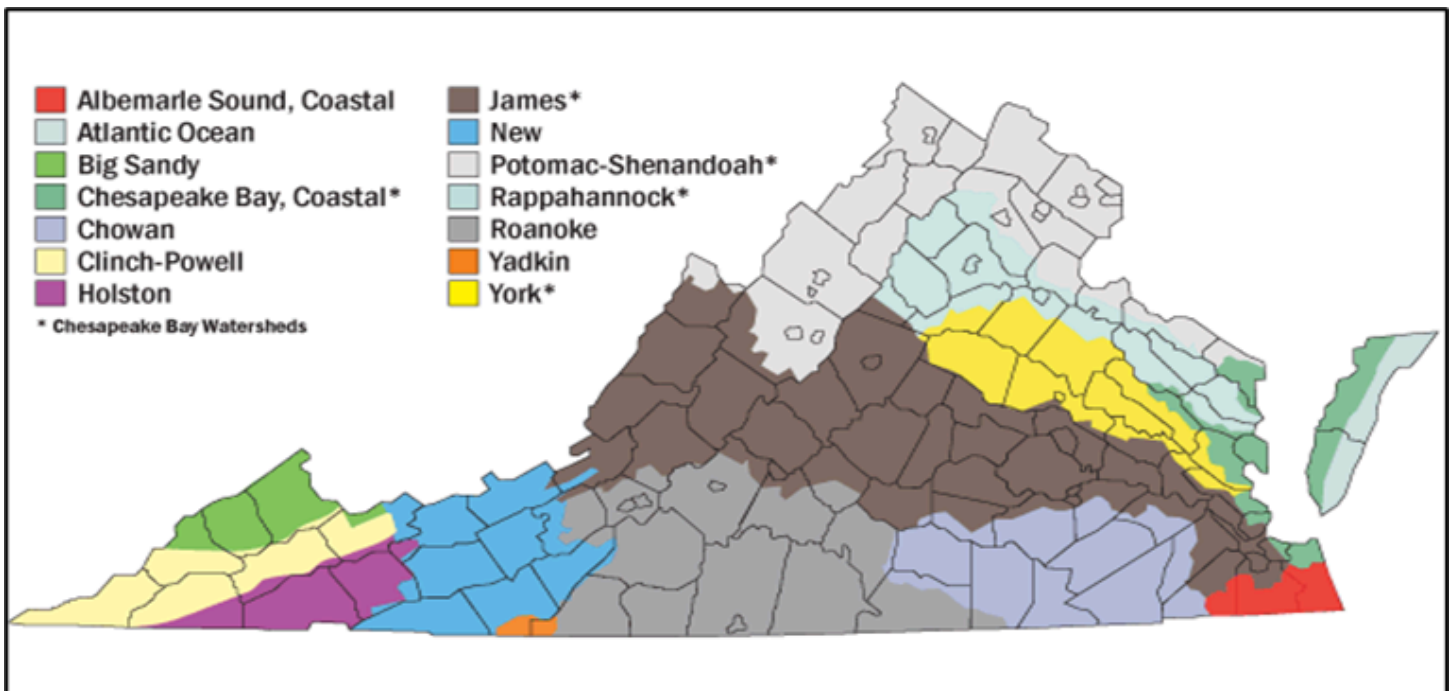


Watersheds

The Roanoke River Basin encompasses approximately 6,393 square miles, or about 15% of Virginia’s total area. It is bordered by the James River Basin to the north, the Albemarle-Chowan River Basin to the east, and the New River Basin to the west, with the Virginia-North Carolina state line forming its southern boundary. The Roanoke River originates in the Blue Ridge Mountains of eastern Montgomery County and flows generally east-southeast through the City of Roanoke, eventually exiting Virginia near the Mecklenburg-Brunswick County line. From there, it continues southeast across North Carolina before entering the Albemarle Sound. Within Virginia, the river is commonly called the Staunton River, particularly downstream of Leesville Lake.

The Town of Drakes Branch lies within the Middle Roanoke segment of the Roanoke (Staunton) River Watershed. Twitty’s Creek, a tributary of Roanoke Creek and ultimately the Roanoke (Staunton) River, flows directly through the Town.

Watersheds



Source: Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Website

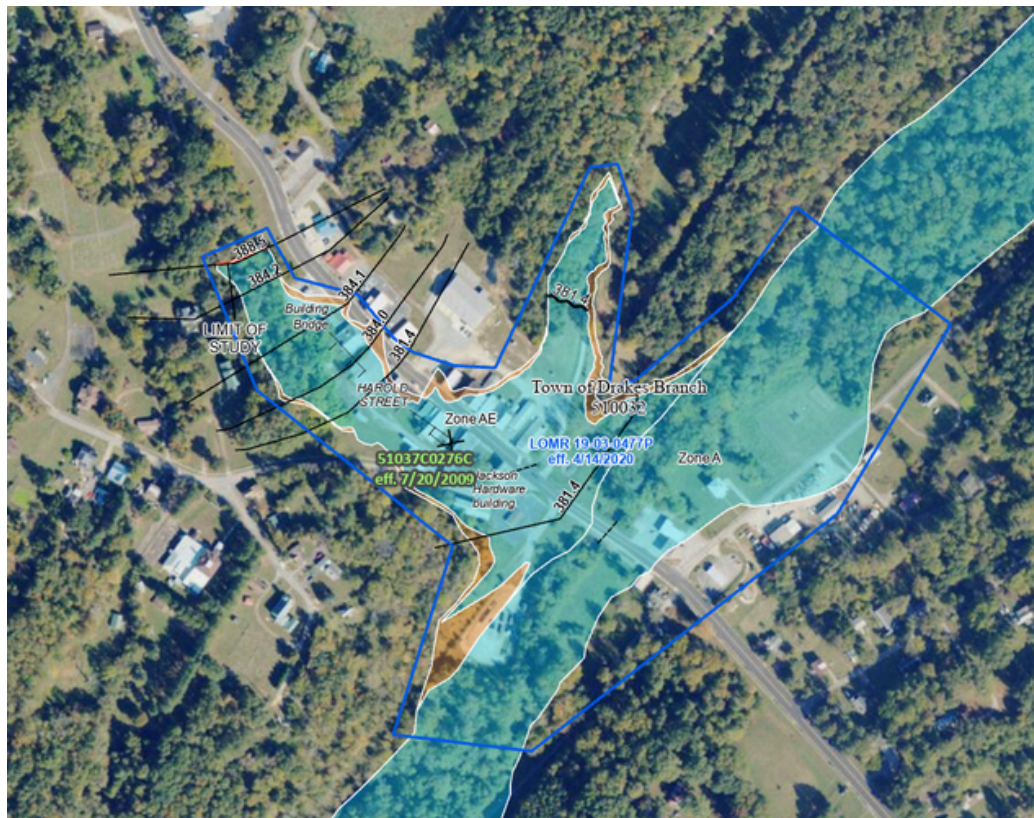
Flood Zones

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) releases annual data identifying areas prone to flooding, and base flood information is available for the Town of Drakes Branch. The map below displays the FEMA-designated flood zones within the town. Zone A represents areas subject to a one (1) percent annual chance of flooding where base flood elevations have not been established. Zone AE represents areas subject to a one (1) percent annual chance of flooding with established base flood elevations. Zone X represents areas of minimal to moderate flood risk.

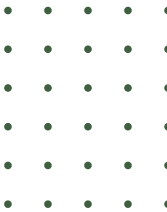
In addition to FEMA-mapped flood hazards, the Town of Drakes Branch is located downstream of Roanoke Creek Dam #72A (VA DCR Inventory No. 037002), also known as the Drakes Branch Reservoir, which is classified as a High Hazard impounding structure under Virginia Dam Safety Regulations. According to the dam’s Emergency Action Plan (EAP), portions of the Town of Drakes Branch lie within the dam-break inundation zone associated with a potential failure of the dam. The inundation mapping identifies impacts to Main Street (Route 47) and multiple residential, commercial, and public properties within the town limits during modeled dam-breach scenarios.

The Roanoke Creek Dam is regulated by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and the Town maintains an adopted Emergency Action Plan that establishes notification procedures, evacuation coordination, and emergency response protocols in coordination with Charlotte County emergency services. While dam failure is considered unlikely, the presence of mapped inundation areas underscores the importance of emergency preparedness, land-use coordination, and consideration of flood and dam-safety risks in future planning decisions, particularly in low-lying areas along Twittys Creek and Main Street.

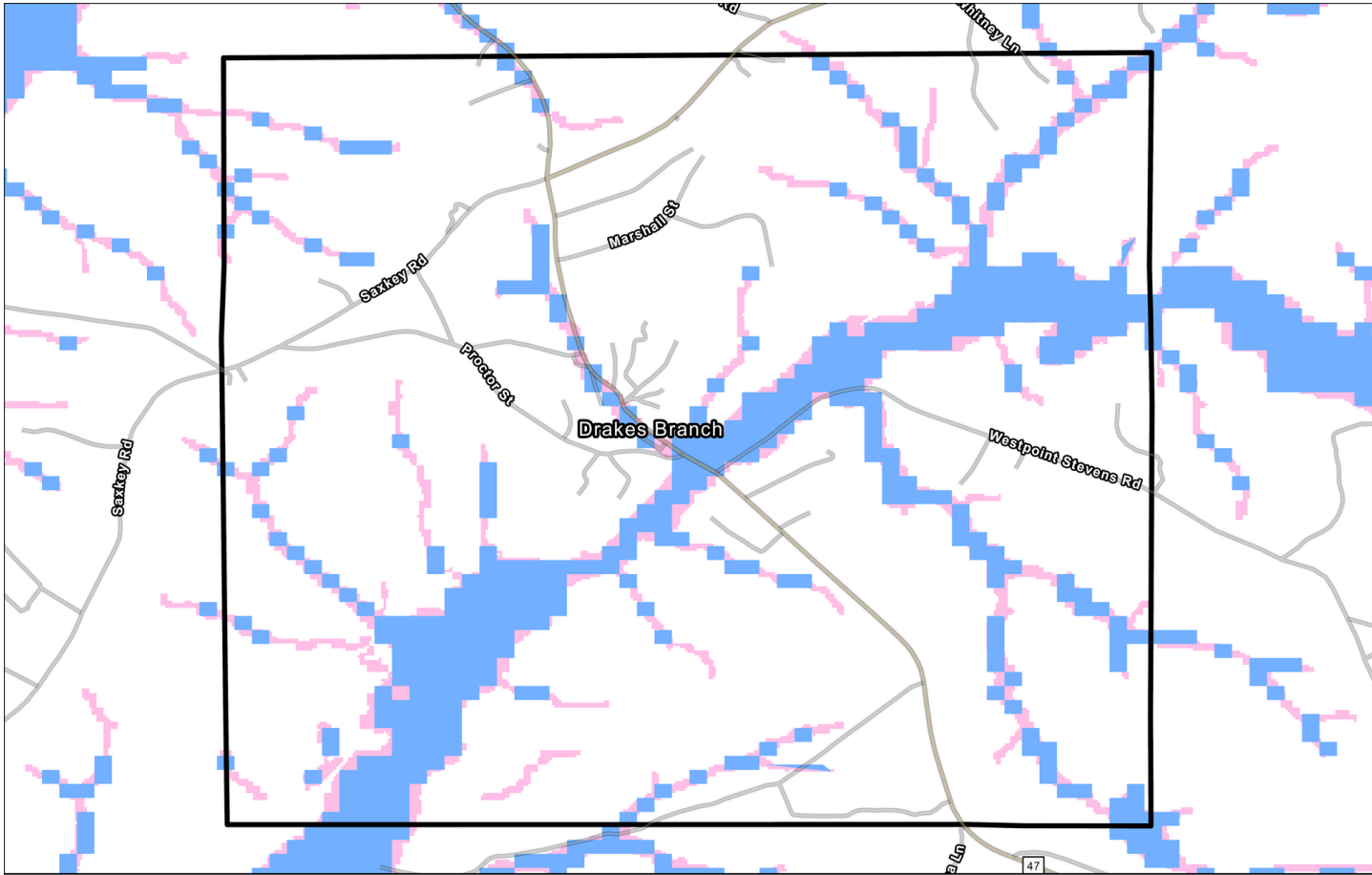
Flood Zones within Drakes Branch



Map created by: FEMA



DCR Fathom Flood Hazard Map



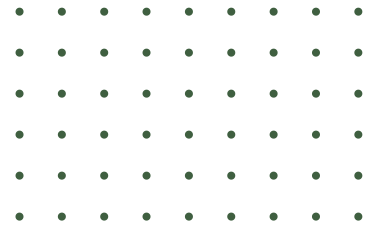
0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Map created by CRC - December 2023
Source: DCR

Town of Drakes Branch
Fathom Flood Hazard Extent, Virginia
1% AEP (100-yr) Flood Extent
0.2% AEP (500-yr) Flood Extent

Chapter Four

Transportation



Introduction

Several factors must be considered in analyzing the transportation facilities for the Town of Drakes Branch. A transportation system must first and foremost be safe and efficient. Residents expect to be able to transport themselves and materials quickly and safely. The relationship between transportation and existing or proposed land use activities is also critical. Certain land uses require more transportation infrastructure than others, influencing facility placement and investment.

Chapter 729 of the 2012 Acts of Assembly amended Virginia Code sections 33.2-214 and 15.2-2223 to require transportation elements in comprehensive plans. Localities must ensure alignment with statewide transportation plans (VTrans), the Six-Year Improvement Program, and Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) route selections.

Virginia Code Authority



§ 15.2-2223 (Comprehensive Plan; Scope and Purpose)

“The comprehensive plan ... shall designate the general ... location, character, and extent of each feature, including any road improvement and any transportation improvement ... As part of the comprehensive plan, each locality shall develop a transportation plan ... including, as appropriate, roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, ... and public transportation facilities.”

§ 33.2-214 (Six-Year Improvement Program)

“The Board ... shall integrate land use with transportation planning and programming ... If the Board determines that a local transportation plan described in § 15.2-2223 ... is not consistent with the Board’s Statewide Transportation Plan ... the Board shall notify the locality ...”



VTrans Overview

VTrans is the long-range, statewide multimodal policy plan that lays out overarching Vision and Goals for transportation in the Commonwealth. It identifies transportation Investment Priorities and provides direction to transportation agencies on strategies and programs to be incorporated into their plans and programs.

The first VTrans plan was adopted nearly 20 years ago, and it has been updated several times since then. The Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), VDOT, and DRPT have worked closely and continuously with partner transportation agencies over the past 20 years to build the strong relationships and technical expertise needed to support and implement effective results-oriented updates to VTrans. By working together to establish, implement, and regularly update the VTrans vision, goals, and policies, Virginia's transportation agencies and decision makers have created a solid, dependable framework for continuous improvement.

The 2021 Update of VTrans marked a departure from product-based planning to more process-based planning. The plan is differentiated between mid-term (0-10 years) and long-term planning (20+ years). The 2021 Update included **three** significant policies:

Policy for the Identification and Prioritization of VTrans Mid-term Needs: The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) established policies to identify and prioritize capacity and safety-related transportation needs using performance-based planning to provide transparency and clarity to local and regional partners.

Policy for the Development and Monitoring of VTrans Long-term Risk & Opportunity Register: The policy included five steps to identify, analyze, and monitor powerful and transformative trends that impact the transportation system. It marked a departure from the practice of forecasted traffic and acknowledged uncertainty associated with large societal factors, referred to as Megatrends, on Virginia's transportation system.

Strategic Actions: The Strategic Actions are intended to ensure that the Commonwealth achieves its transportation Vision, Goals, and Objectives by addressing mid-term (0-10 years) and long-term (20+ years) planning issues.

The plan also established InteractVTrans to deliver VTrans-related outputs in a digital and more accessible format.

While there are no roadways in the Town limits of Drakes Branch identified by the VTrans system, VA route 47 south of Drakes Branch has been identified as having Safety Improvement deficiencies.

During the VTrans Updates, VDOT works with the 21 Planning District Commissions (PDCs) throughout the Commonwealth to evaluate the state's rural multimodal transportation system and to recommend a range of improvements that address existing and future needs including reviewing regional long-range transportation plan.

Roadways

Transportation for the Town of Drakes Branch consists primarily of its roadways. Presently, the major roadways in this area are:

- **Virginia Route 47:** a two-lane undivided roadway, serves as the major through road for Charlotte County, and serves as Drakes Branch’s Main Street. This roadway connects with U.S. Route 360 to the south of town, continuing north from Drakes Branch it goes through Charlotte Court House and then Pamplin, where it connects with U.S. Route 460.
- **Virginia Route 59:** a two-lane undivided roadway, leads from the Town of Drakes Branch in an East-northeastern direction to Keysville and connecting to VA Route 40.
- **Virginia Route 637:** a two-lane secondary roadway, leads from the town of Drakes Branch in a South-southwestern direction to the unincorporated town of Saxe
- **Virginia Route 623:** a two-lane secondary roadway, leads East from the Town of Drakes branch, to U.S. Route 360.

Maintenance

Beginning in 2002, the Department adopted an asset management approach to planning, budgeting, and execution of maintenance and operations. Under this approach, maintenance and operations budgets are developed and distributed based on the quantity and cost of work needed to preserve, maintain, and operate at a target condition or level of service for roadway assets VDOT is responsible for. Data on asset inventory (counts and total quantities) are collected by contractors and VDOT staff either on an annual or on-going basis. Statistical extrapolation is used to fill gaps where data has not been collected.

VDOT performs maintenance work on assets and provides services which it groups into five categories based on functional similarity:

Work Category

Roadway
 Traffic and Safety
 Emergency Response
 Roadside
 Facility, Equip, and Other Services

Example assets and services

Pavement, bridges, shoulders, tunnels
 Guardrails, signs, markings, signals, lighting
 ITS assets, snow and ice removal, incident response
 Vegetation, drainage, barriers
 Rest areas, ferries, equipment, administration

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains and provides maintenance funds for the Town of Drakes Branch's road system. The criteria for the amount of funding depend on whether a road is classified as primary or secondary. Primary roads are a statewide network connecting cities, towns and other points of interest. They include all roads with state and federal route numbers below 600 and numbered roads that serve as extensions to primary roads. All other public roads in the area are secondary roads.

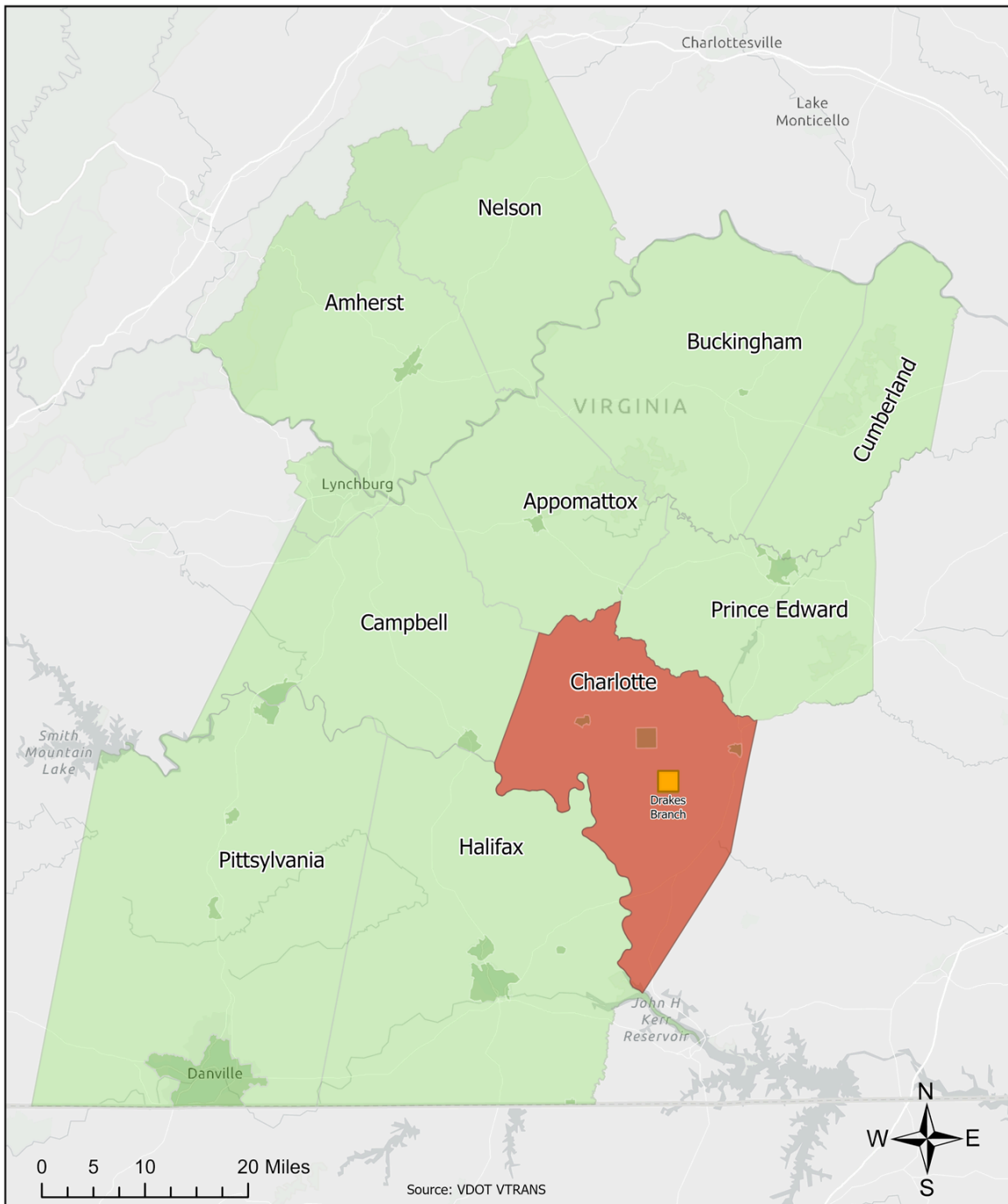
Maintenance activities can be described as:

- **Ordinary Maintenance**—work that preserves roadway assets, corrects minor defects or problems, and extends the life of the asset.
- **Planned Preventive Maintenance**—any planned activity performed in advance of a need or repair or in advance of accumulated deterioration. PM is planned, cyclical, not condition based, and does not add structural capacity to the pavement structure.
- **Repair/Corrective Maintenance**—work that is required to return a damaged or deteriorated asset to design functionality and capability.
- **Restore/Replace Activities**—the replacement or complete restoration of assets that cannot be repaired.
- **Major Rehabilitation**—applies to bridges and pavement only. This work includes full depth reconstruction where the entire pavement asset is removed and replaced. The work may also include restoring structural integrity or correcting major safety defects for bridges and pavements.

VDOT uses inventory and condition data, as well as unit cost of maintenance, replacement, operations activities, and performance targets to determine the quantity and cost of activities needed to reach and maintain the network of assets at a targeted level of condition or level of service. The Statewide maintenance and operations allocation is then distributed to the nine construction districts using district level information from the needs assessment. District allocations are distributed at the program level. Districts then distribute funds from their allocation to their residencies, area headquarters, and district offices. Once each organizational unit in the maintenance and operations program receives their budget, they develop more detailed plans for where the money will be spent over the course of the fiscal year. The detailed budgets are then uploaded to the financial management system where they are managed against expenditures

There are nine (9) construction districts in the State. The Town of Drakes Branch is within the Lynchburg District. This District covers the Cities of Lynchburg and Danville, as well as a total of ten (10) counties. The counties include: Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Cumberland, Charlotte, Halifax, Nelson, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward

VDOT Lynchburg District



Map created by: Commonwealth Regional Council - October 2025





Highway Functional Classification Plan

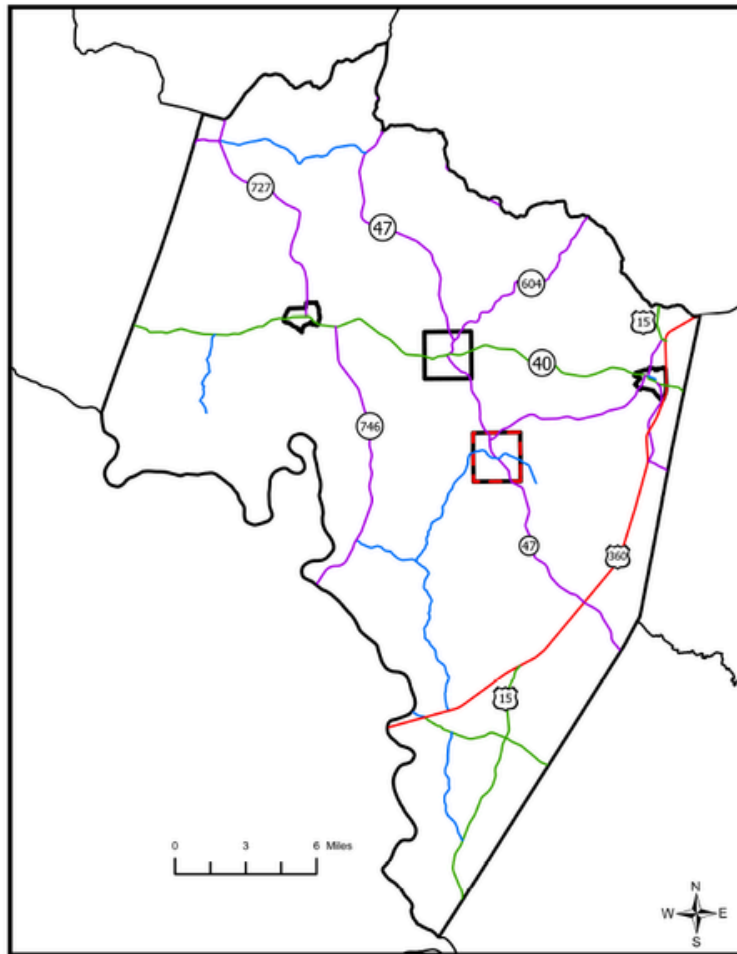
Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Basic to this process is the recognition that individual roads and streets do not serve travel independently in any major way, but serve as part of an overall network. Most travel involves movement throughout the network of roadways. It becomes necessary to determine how this travel can be channelized within the network in a logical and efficient manner. Functional classification defines the nature of this channelization process by defining the part that any particular road or street should play in serving the flow of trips through a highway network.

The Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD) is responsible for maintaining the Commonwealth's official Federal Functional Classification System. TMPD determines the functional classification of the road by type of trips, expected volume, what systems the roadway connects and whether the proposed functional classification falls within the mileage percentage thresholds established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Functional class impacts several factors including:

- Functional classification determines road design features. Applicable geometric design standards of the VDOT Road Design Manual (which adopts the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) 2011 Green Book's design level-of-service guidance on pages 2-66 and 2-67), as well as local and/or Subdivision Street Requirements relating to 24 VAC 30-91, collector or arterial standards.
- The eligibility of federal transportation funds for road improvements and maintenance.
- The frequency of VDOT maintenance inspections and prohibitions on vehicle parking on certain roads to reserve through lanes for peak period use.
- Development and/or maintenance of local roads, which are ineligible for federal funding and responsibilities for this class of roads are private, local and/or state government concerns.
- Access management features (spacing-frequency and/or type of access such as interchanges, intersections, and roadside entrance, exit and/or driveway points).
- Eligibility for traffic calming measures.
- Data-record group types, such as mileage table records for certain road classes.

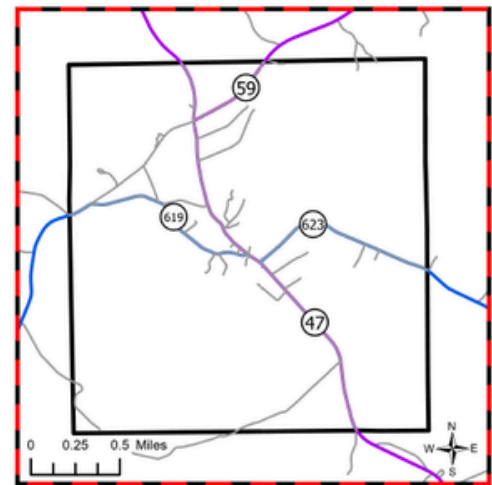
Charlotte County



Source: VDOT

Map created by: Commonwealth Regional Council - October 2025

Town of Drakes Branch



Charlotte County

- Major Collector
- Minor Arterial
- Minor Collector
- Other Principal Arterial

Town Of Drakes Branch

- Major Collector - 2.92 Miles
- Minor Collector - 2.25 Miles

Other Principal Arterials (Highlighted in Red)

The classification of Other Principal Arterials differs based on whether the facility is located in an urban or rural area. In rural areas, Other Principal Arterials serve corridor movements of substantial statewide or interstate travel and provides an integrated network without stub connections (dead ends). This network connects all or nearly all Urbanized Areas and a large majority of Urban Clusters with populations of 25,000 and over.

Minor Arterials (Highlighted in Green)

Minor Arterials provide service for trips of moderate length, serve geographic areas that are smaller than their higher Arterial counterparts and offer connectivity to the higher Arterial system. Classification is based on whether the facility is in an urban or rural area. In rural areas, Minor Arterials link cities and large towns, along with other major traffic generators, and form an integrated network providing interstate and inter-county service. The design in rural areas typically provides for relatively high overall speeds, with minimum interference to the through movement. Minor Arterials are spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, so that all developed areas within the state are within a reasonable distance of an arterial roadway. They also provide service to corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those served by rural collectors or local systems.

Major Collector (Highlighted in Purple)

Major Collector routes are longer in length; have lower connecting driveway densities; have higher speed limits; are spaced at greater intervals; have higher annual average traffic volumes; and may have more travel lanes than minor collectors may. In rural areas, Major Collectors provide service to any county seat not on an arterial system, to larger towns not directly served by higher systems. Major Collectors also link these places to nearby larger towns and cities or with arterial routes and serve the most important intra-county travel corridor.

Minor Collector (Highlighted in Blue)

In rural areas, minor collectors are spaced at intervals, consistent with population density. Minor Collectors collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector road. Minor Collector facilities provide service to the remaining smaller communities and link local traffic generators with their rural hinterland.

VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)

The Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) is a document that outlines planned spending for transportation projects proposed for construction development or study for the next six years.

The SYIP is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs for the immediate fiscal year.

The SYIP also identifies planned program funding for the succeeding five fiscal years. The CTB allocates funds for the first fiscal year of the SYIP, but the remaining five years are estimates of future allocations. Fiscal years start July 1 and end June 30.

Public Input

Throughout the SYIP development process, there are various points of coordination with regional, metropolitan, and local groups, as well as opportunities for public participation. Development of the SYIP begins in the Fall and the CTB hosts a series of meetings seeking public comment on transportation projects and priorities. The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) carry out various project selection processes and projects are recommended for funding in the Draft SYIP presented to the CTB in the Spring. The CTB hosts a series of public hearings to receive feedback on proposed projects and recommends adjustments to the Draft SYIP as necessary. A Final SYIP is presented to the CTB for adoption in June.

Project Selection

The SYIP contains projects selected for funding through the statewide prioritization process, as well as projects funded through other programs including bridge, paving, safety, and other special federal and state programs. The SYIP also includes projects that are funded by others but administered by VDOT. Candidate projects can be submitted for consideration through the SMART Portal. Individual projects are selected for funding and included in the SYIP, which is adopted by July 1 of each year.

In general, it is the intent of the CTB that projects included in the SYIP are to be fully funded through construction and delivered according to the established budget and schedule. If a locality or metropolitan planning organization requests the termination of a project or fails to advance a project to the next phase, then the locality or localities within the metropolitan planning organization may be required to reimburse the Department for all funds expended on the project.

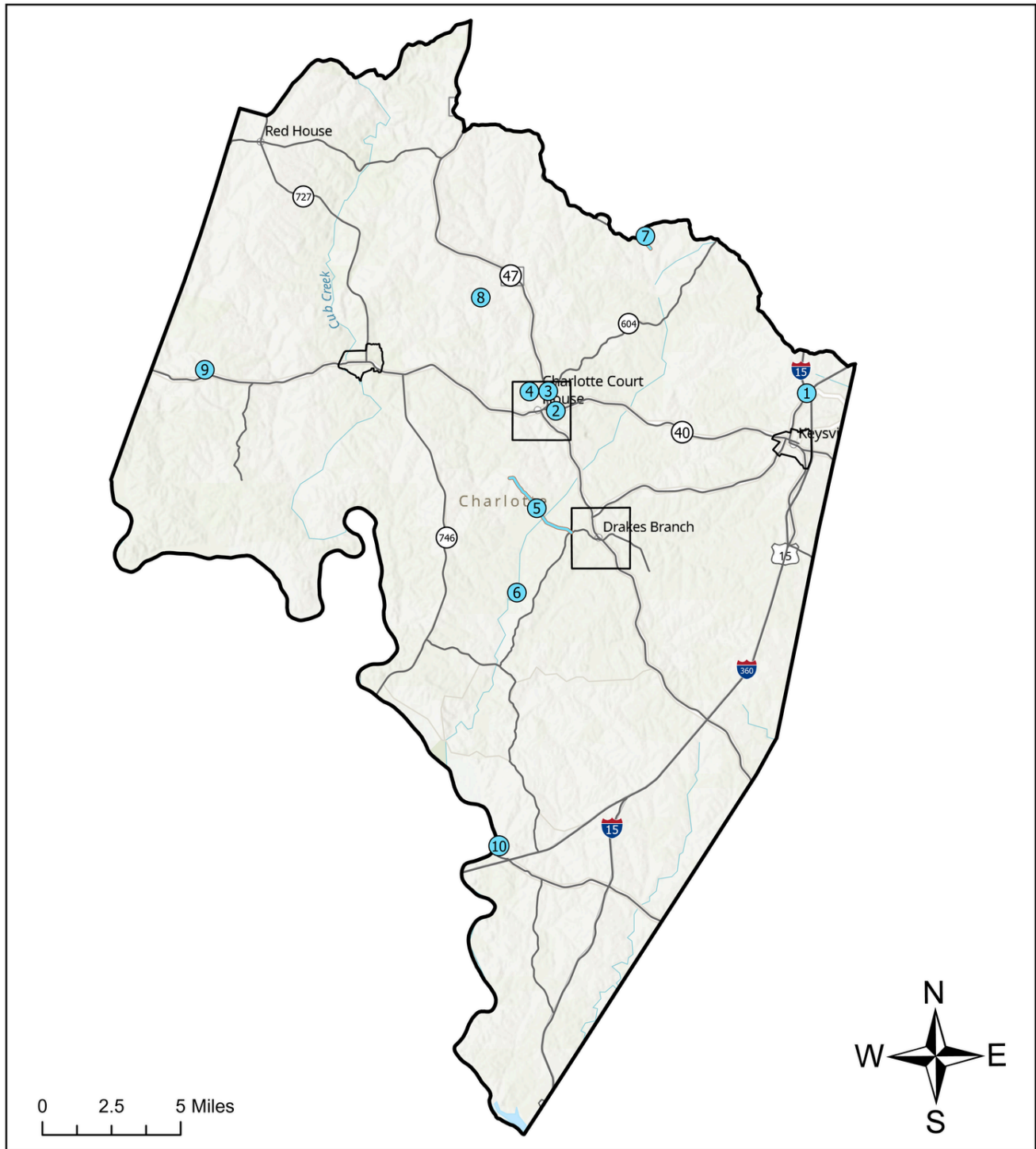
The following chart lists Charlotte County's projects included in the SYIP for FY 2025:

SYIP FY25 Projects - Charlotte County

ID	Description	Route	Estimated Project Value
1	#SMART18 - RTE 15 - CONSTRUCT ROUNDABOUT AT RTE 360	15	\$6,706,731.00
2	MAIN STREET PHASE III A STREET IMPROVEMENTS	40	\$5,238,454.00
3	TAP21 RTE 47 - CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK	47	\$454,765.00
4	VHSIP25 RTE 47 - CONSTRUCT SIDEWALK	47	\$1,270,000.00
5	RTE 619 - RURAL RUSTIC (SURFACE TREAT NON-HARDSURFACE)	619	\$280,000.00
6	#SGR25VB - RT 642 BRDG & APPR OVER ROANOKE CREEK FED ID 4920	642	\$7,245,596.00
7	RTE 707 - RURAL RUSTIC (SURFACE TREAT NON-HARD SURFACE)	707	\$90,000.00
8	RTE 728 - RURAL RUSTIC (SURFACE TREAT NON-HARD SURFACE)	728	\$67,500.00
9	RTE 766 - RURAL RUSTIC (SURFACE TREAT NON-HARDSURFACE)	766	\$66,150.00
10	#SGR18VB - RT 92 BRIDGE & APPR OVER STAUNTON RIVER Fed 4851	92	\$27,043,000.00
	CHARLOTTE COUNTYWIDE - TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	N/A	\$48,462,196.00

Various sections of the Code of Virginia provide localities the opportunity to administer transportation projects financed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and to supplement the funding of projects within their jurisdictions.

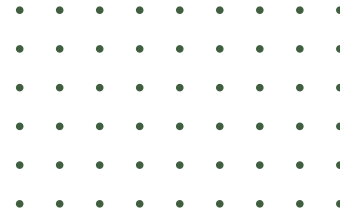
Charlotte County Six Year Improvement Plan



Created by: Commonwealth Regional Council, March, 2026

Public Transportation

Residents of the Town of Drakes Branch have limited access to public transportation. This is a common characteristic of the region as a whole. Services are extremely limited in the Commonwealth Regional Council planning district, with vast areas and many communities not served by the limited transportation systems that do exist. Expansion could enhance workforce mobility and access to services.



Rail Service

No local passenger rail service exists for the Town of Drakes Branch. However, the Buckingham Branch Railroad travels through the neighboring Town of Keysville, and parallels U.S. Route 360. The Buckingham Branch Railroad (BB) operates the Virginia Southern Division, a 59-mile freight line between Burkeville and Clarksville. It provides local freight services with transload sites in Keysville and Clarksville. Passenger service is available via Amtrak in Charlottesville, Danville, Lynchburg, Petersburg, and Richmond.

Motor Freight Carriers

The Town of Drakes Branch is served by many national and regional motor freight carriers.

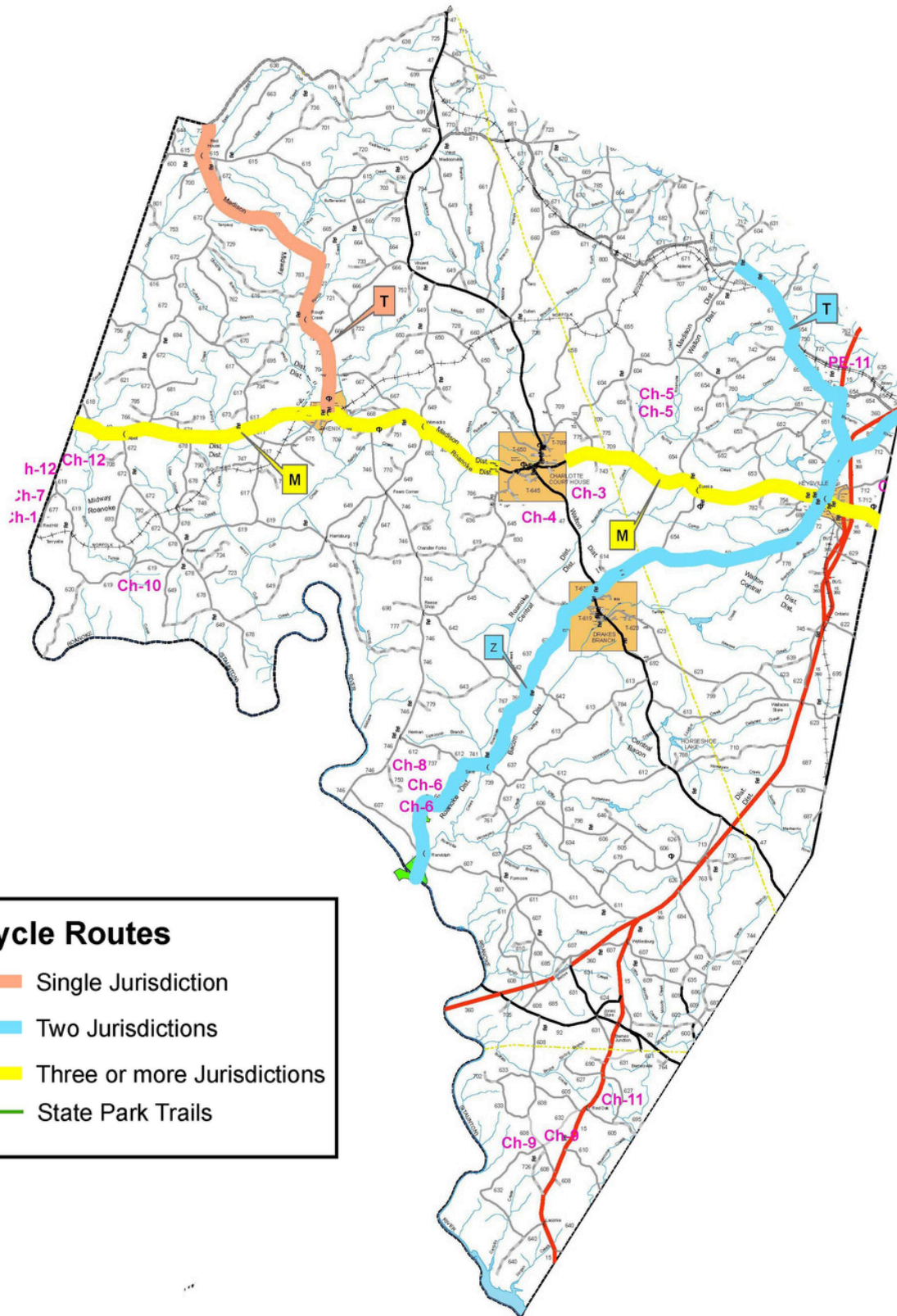
Airports

The Town of Drakes Branch, as well as Charlotte County as a whole have no airports. Nearby airports include Blackstone, Farmville, and Crewe; commercial service is available in Lynchburg, Richmond and Raleigh-Durham.

Regional Bicycle Plan

In June 2000, the Piedmont Planning District Commission (PPDC) prepared the Piedmont Regional Bicycle Plan in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Virginia Department of Transportation. The FY 2002 Rural Transportation Planning Grant under the Rural Transportation Program funded the project. In order for any locality or region to be eligible for VDOT funding for highway projects, including bicycle facilities, the local government participating must have an adopted bicycle plan.

Charlotte County: Regional Bike Plan Map



Bicycle Routes

- Single Jurisdiction
- Two Jurisdictions
- Three or more Jurisdictions
- State Park Trails

Map created by: Commonwealth Regional Council - 2010

Regional Bike Paths

Route	COUNTIES	DESCRIPTION
A	Amelia, Nottoway and Lunenburg	Route 1 (existing)
B	Amelia, Cumberland, Prince Edward and Buckingham	Lee's Retreat
B1	Nottoway	Lee's Retreat
C	Lunenburg	Rt. 40 linking Lunenburg Court House to Victoria and Kenbridge
D	Buckingham	Route 604 and 606 linking Yogaville and the James River State Park
E	Prince Edward	Farmville/Hampden Sydney to Darlington Heights/Five Forks - Rt. 643 in Farmville to Rt. 658 to 639 to 660 to 665 to 692 to 643 back to Farmville
F	Prince Edward	Longwood College to Hampden Sydney College - Route 643 - Back Hampden Sydney Road (travel W on High Street from Longwood College) to Hampden Sydney College, Rt. 665 to Rt. 630 to Rt. 628 back to Longwood College
G	Cumberland	River Road (Rt. 600) to Stoddard and Angola to 638 to Rt. 45 to Rt. 636 to Plank Road (Rt. 600) back to Farmville
H	Farmville	Historic Farmville (Third Street, Milnwood Road, Main Street, High Street)
M	Charlotte	Route 40 from Campbell County to the West to Lunenburg County to the East.
N	Prince Edward/Amelia	Rice/Sailor's Creek - Rt. 619 at Rice to Rt. 618 to Rt. 617 to Rt. 600 back to Rice.
P	Prince Edward	Prospect Loop - Rt. 626 from Prospect to Rt. 625 to Rt. 609 to 651 to 608 to 460 to 608 to 626 back to Prospect
Q	Prince Edward	Prospect to Elam - Rt. 626 at Prospect to Rt. 657 to Elam to Rt. 627 to 609 to 626 to 708 to 652 to 460 back to Prospect
S	Prince Edward	Briery Creek and Wildlife Management Area Mountain Bike Trail
T	Charlotte	Rt. 15 North from Keysville to Prince Edward County line, Rt. 747 to connect to Rt. 604.
U	Prince Edward	From Farmville travel 460 East to Rt. 696 to 636 to 637 to 630 to 665 to 692 (Hampden Sydney College) to 658 to 643 back to Farmville
V	Cumberland	Brown's Store on Rt. 45 north to Rt. 640, 660, 639, 631, 641, 642, 600, 643 to 13. Cross Rt. 60 to Rt. 728, 624, 623, 622, 650, 629, 633, 632 to 634 to Rt. 45. Middle Connector: Rt. 629, Rt. 60, 670, 669, 631 to Rt. 639 intersection.
V-Alt.	Cumberland	Connector
V-Alt.	Cumberland	Connector to Cumberland Court House
W	Cumberland	From Ashby on Rt. 45 follow Rt. 616 to 45 to Rt. 690 to Rt. 612 to Rt. 608 to Rt. 624 to Rt. 625 to Rt. 45.
X	Buckingham	Travel Rt. 15 South from Fluvanna/Buckingham County line to Rt. 640 to Rt. 638 to connect to Lee's Retreat at Rt. 636.
Y	Charlotte	Travel Rt. 727 from Appomattox/Charlotte County line South to the Town of Phenix to connect to Rt. 40.
Z	Charlotte/Lunenburg	Tobacco Heritage Trail (existing and proposed)



Safety

Transportation safety is a critical component of an effective roadway network. A safe transportation system helps protect residents, visitors, and businesses while supporting reliable mobility throughout the community. Crash data maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) provides valuable insight into roadway safety conditions and helps identify locations where safety improvements may be beneficial.

Crash data for the most recent five-year period were reviewed to evaluate traffic safety conditions within the Town of Drakes Branch. During this period, 17 traffic crashes were recorded within the Town limits and nearby roadway segments.

The distribution of crash severity within Drakes Branch was as follows:

- Property Damage Only (PDO): 10 crashes (58.8%)
- Visible Injury: 5 crashes (29.4%)
- Severe Injury: 1 crash (5.9%)
- Fatal Crashes: 1 crash (5.9%)

The majority of crashes resulted in property damage only, which is consistent with crash patterns commonly observed in rural communities where traffic volumes are relatively modest. However, the presence of injury and fatal crashes indicates that roadway safety remains an important planning consideration.

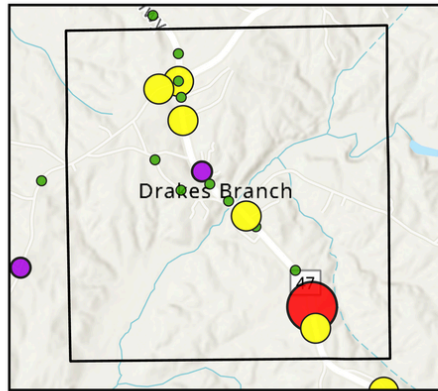
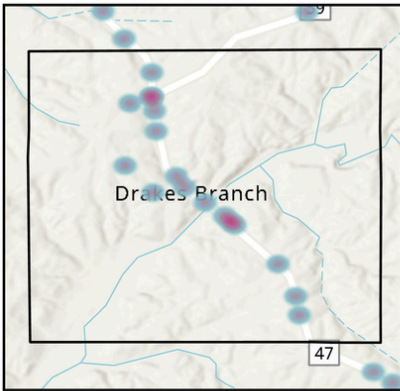
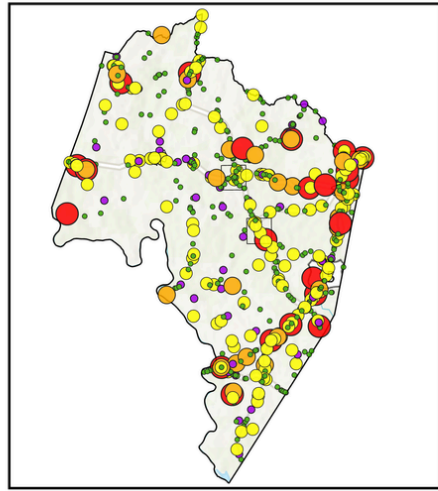
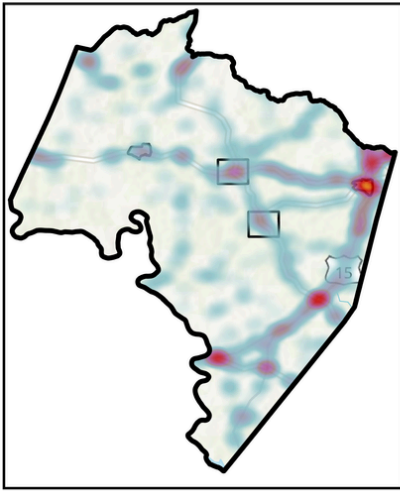
Many crashes occur along the Town's primary transportation corridor, Virginia Route 47, which serves as both the community's main street and a regional connector through Charlotte County. As the Town's primary route for local and through traffic, Route 47 experiences the highest concentration of vehicle activity and access points.

When compared to Charlotte County as a whole, the distribution of crash severity within Drakes Branch is generally similar. Countywide crash data indicate that approximately 62 percent of crashes result in property damage only, with smaller shares involving injuries or fatalities.

The map below illustrates the location and severity of crashes within the Town of Drakes Branch and the surrounding area.

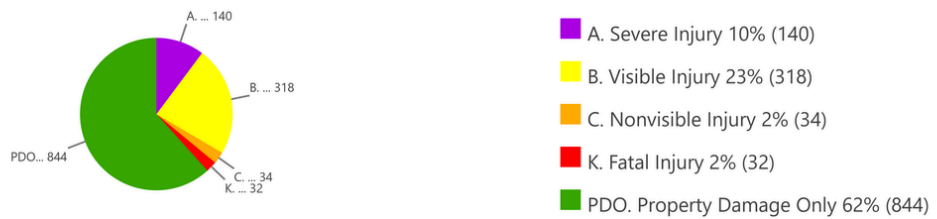
These data provide an important foundation for identifying potential safety improvements. Future efforts may include continued coordination with VDOT to evaluate roadway signage, pavement markings, intersection visibility, and other engineering or operational improvements that could help reduce crash risks.

Crash Severity

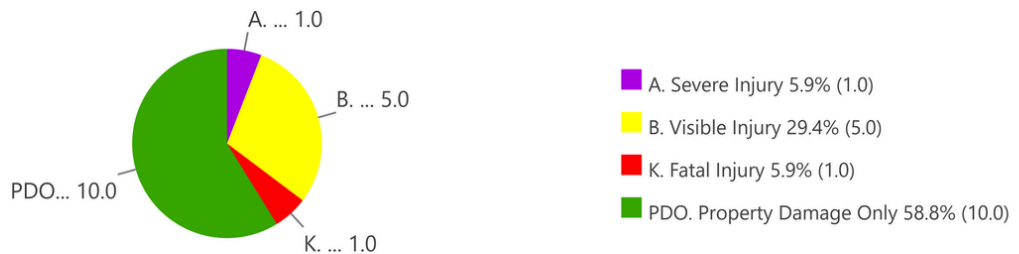


Created by: Commonwealth Regional Council, March, 2026

Charlotte County Crashes by Severity



Drakes Branch Crashes by Severity





Operations

In addition to transportation safety, the operational performance of the roadway network is an important consideration in planning for future growth and mobility. Roadway operations affect travel efficiency, accessibility, and the ability of residents, businesses, and visitors to move throughout the Town and surrounding region. Two common measures used to evaluate roadway operations are Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) and Level of Service (LOS).

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)

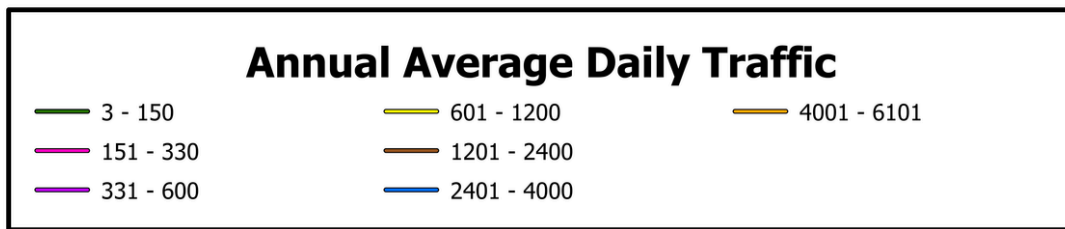
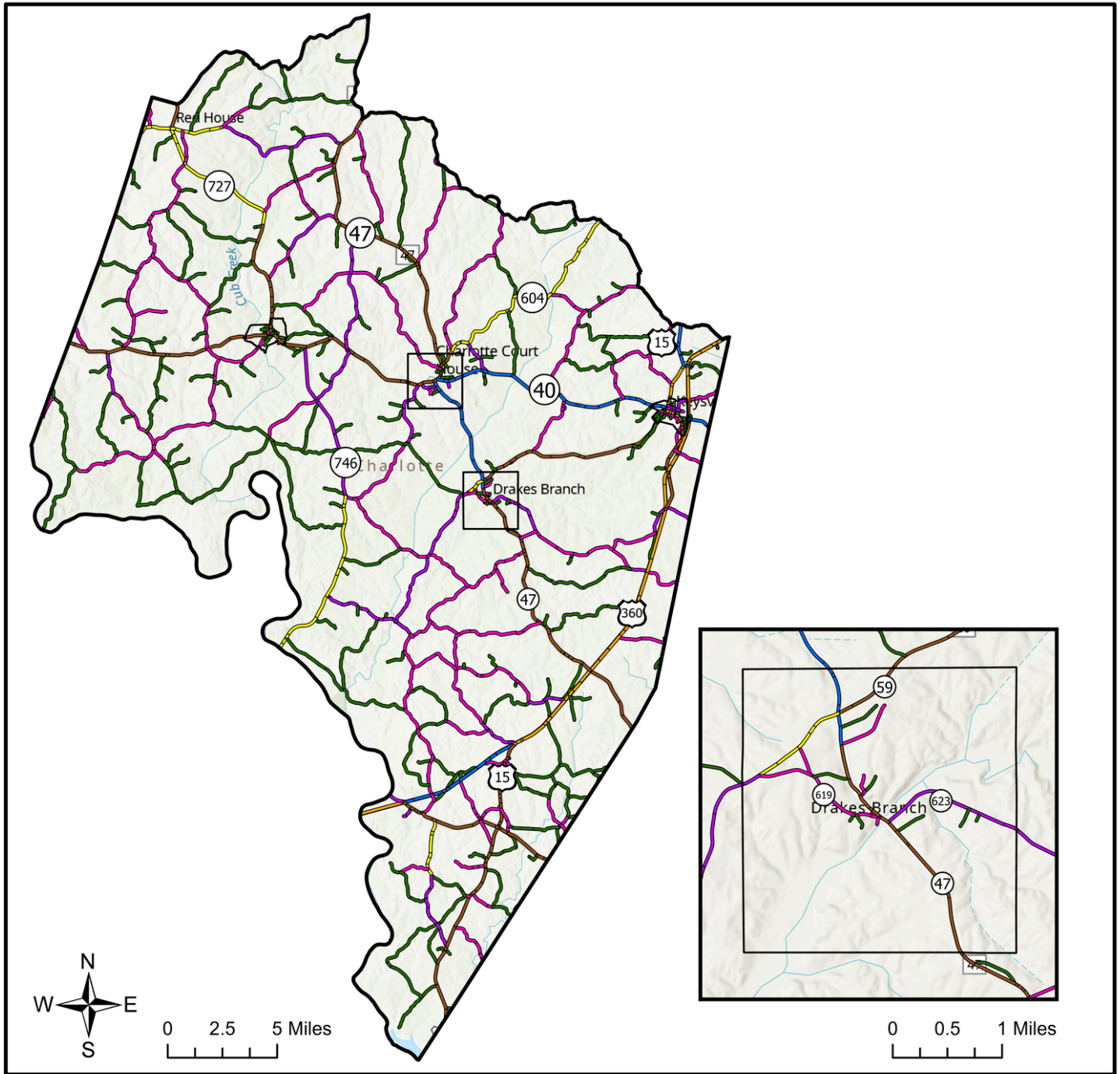
Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) measures the average number of vehicles traveling on a roadway segment during a typical day over the course of a year. AADT is commonly used to understand traffic patterns, evaluate roadway function, and identify corridors that may require continued monitoring over time.

Traffic data for Drakes Branch indicate that Virginia Route 47 carries the highest traffic volumes within the Town and functions as the community's principal transportation corridor. Depending on the segment, traffic volumes along Route 47 range from approximately 1,700 to 2,400 vehicles per day. Other important corridors carry lower volumes, including Route 59 at approximately 1,387 vehicles per day, Route 637 at approximately 469 vehicles per day, and Route 623 at approximately 477 vehicles per day. Segments of Route 619 (Proctor Street) carry comparatively low volumes, generally ranging from approximately 194 to 215 vehicles per day.

These traffic volumes are consistent with Drakes Branch's rural character and relatively modest development pattern. While Route 47 serves as the Town's primary travel corridor and experiences the highest traffic activity, overall traffic volumes in the Town remain low compared to more urbanized communities.

AADT Map on following page.

Charlotte County AADT



Created by: Commonwealth Regional Council, March, 2026

Level of Service (LOS)

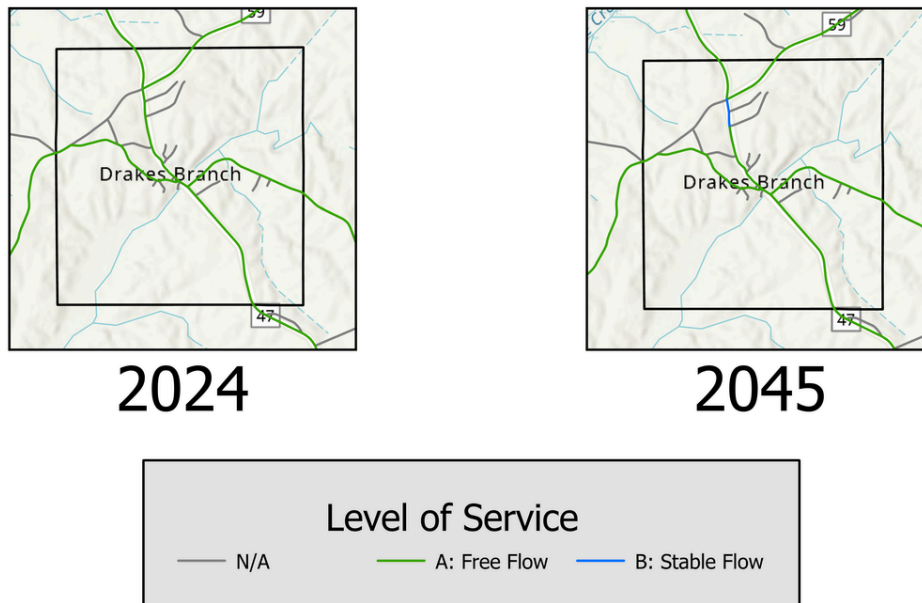
Level of Service (LOS) is a performance measure used to describe how efficiently a roadway operates based on traffic volume, roadway capacity, and travel conditions. LOS ratings range from A to F, with LOS A representing free-flow conditions and LOS F indicating severe congestion and delay.

Based on the roadway operations data reviewed for Drakes Branch, the Town's transportation network currently performs at a high level. In the current year (2024), modeled roadway segments within the Town operate at LOS A, indicating minimal congestion and generally uninterrupted traffic flow.

Projected future-year conditions also remain favorable. Most roadway segments in Drakes Branch are expected to continue operating at LOS A throughout the planning horizon. A limited number of segments along Route 47 are projected to shift to LOS B in future years, particularly on portions of the corridor carrying the Town's highest traffic volumes. However, LOS B still reflects stable traffic flow and acceptable operating conditions, indicating that significant congestion is not anticipated.

Overall, the available data suggest that Drakes Branch's roadway system has sufficient capacity to accommodate expected traffic volumes during the planning period. Continued monitoring of traffic conditions along Route 47 will remain important, particularly as travel patterns or development activity change over time.

Drakes Branch LOS



VDOT Funding Programs

SMART SCALE:

Purpose

SMART SCALE is a statewide program that distributes funding based on a transparent and objective evaluation of projects that will determine how effectively they help the state achieve its transportation goals.

Funding

There are two main pathways to funding within the SMART SCALE process—the Construction District Grant Program (DGP) and the High Priority Projects Program (HPPP). A project applying for funds from the DGP is evaluated against other projects within the same construction district. A project applying for funds from the HPPP is evaluated against projects statewide. The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) then makes a final decision on which projects to fund.

Eligible Projects

Projects must address improvements to a Corridor of Statewide Significance, Regional Network, Safety or Urban Development Area (UDA) that meet a need identified in the statewide long-range transportation plan known as VTrans. Project types can include highway improvements such as widening, operational improvements, access management, intelligent transportation systems, technology operational improvements, transit and rail capacity expansion, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and transportation demand management, including park and ride facilities

Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted through the SMART Portal by regional entities including Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOS) and Planning District Commissions (PDCs), along with public transit agencies, and counties, cities, and towns that maintain their own infrastructure.

Evaluation Criteria

There are six factors evaluated for all projects: Safety, Congestion Mitigation, Accessibility, Environmental Quality, Economic Development, and Land Use.

Funding Cycle

Eligible Applicants are invited to submit project applications according to the SMART SCALE Biennial Schedule. For each SMART SCALE cycle, basic project information submitted via as a pre-application must be submitted by April 1 of the calendar year, and final applications must be submitted by August 1.

Each program operates on distinct application cycles (typically biennial or annual) and uses the VDOT SMART Portal for submissions.

Virginia Highway Safety Improvements Program (VHSIP)

Purpose

The Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program (VHSIP) provides funding using a data-driven strategic approach to reduce the motorized and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads (state or locally maintained) in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Funding

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2024 after program administration costs, funding will be allocated in accordance with the Commonwealth Transportation Board's (CTB) adopted investment strategy as follows:

- At least 54 percent for infrastructure projects that address a hazardous road location or feature and address an identified highway safety problem;
- At least 29 percent for strategies and activities to address behavioral causes of crashes that result in fatalities and severe injuries; and
- The remaining amount for eligible purposes identified in the CTB approved investment strategy.

The VHSIP funds will be available to localities based on the proportion of fatalities on local versus VDOT maintained roads. Local roads account for approximately 20 percent of all fatal and serious injury crashes on Virginia highways, therefore local safety projects are targeted to receive up to 20 percent of VHSIP funds

Eligible Projects

The current VHSIP focus is on Spot and Systematic Safety Improvements including, but not be limited to:

- Edge-line Rumble Strips on the primary system
- Center-line Rumble Strips on the primary system
- Pavement Shoulder Wedge
- Chevrons and Curve Visibility enhancement
- High-visibility signal backups
- Flashing Yellow Arrows
- Un-signalized Intersection signage and marking
- Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
- Pavement markings, traffic control devices and other enhancements on two-lane rural roads
- Other systemic/hybrid safety improvements

Eligible Applicants

Both VDOT and localities can apply for VHSIP funding. All safety proposals submitted for consideration may use the SMART Portal and follow the VHSIP Implementation Guidelines. VDOT Traffic Operations Division is responsible for managing the process and conducting network screening, scoring and selection of VHSIP projects.

Evaluation Criteria

VHSIP projects are selected based upon the pre-screening criteria and risk factors across an entire roadway network or all locations where investment of VHSIP funds may yield highest rate of return in terms of reducing deaths and serious injury.

Funding Cycle

The funding cycle for the Highway Safety program will be every year. Applications are generally accepted August through October of each year. Funding includes both state and federal sources.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Purpose

This program is intended to fund community-based projects that expand non-motorized travel choices and multi-modal travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of transportation infrastructure. The Program does not fund traditional roadway facility or maintenance projects. Instead, it emphasizes constructing and expanding active transportation facilities that provide equitable accommodations for all users. Outcomes of the supported projects lead to quality-of-life benefits for residents, alternative mode accessibility, safety, reductions in pollutants and emissions, and the expansion of recreational facilities.

Funding

TAP funds are only available on a reimbursement basis. The program will reimburse up to a maximum 80% of the eligible project costs and requires a minimum 20% local match. The design of a TAP project must meet or exceed VDOT and/or American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design standards, depending upon the project location. Urban localities responsible for street maintenance are required to comply with AASHTO standards while localities with VDOT-maintained roadways are required to comply with VDOT standards. Funding is allocated statewide and to specific population areas as set forth in federal regulation. Funds are awarded by the CTB and the MPOs in Virginia's Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).

Eligible Projects

On- and off-road trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation;
Construction, planning, and design of projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers to access daily needs;
Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized transportation users (Rails-to-Trails);
Construction of turnouts and viewing areas, which are comprised of a project that supports a qualifying logical terminus with independent utility;
Community improvement activities, including:

- Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising,
- Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities, solely to preserve and protect the structure according to historic preservation standards,
- Vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control, and
- Archaeological activities relating to impacts from a transportation project

Environmental mitigation activities, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement and mitigation to:

- Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, or
- Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats;

Safe routes to school projects including:

- Infrastructure-related projects
- Noninfrastructure-related activities

Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways (Boulevards from Divided Highways).

Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted through the SMART Portal by local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource or public land agencies, school districts, local educational agencies, schools, tribal governments, metropolitan planning organization, and any other local/regional entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails.

Evaluation Criteria

- Project funding/Resources
- Project concept.
- How the project affects the transportation network.
- Sponsor's experience administering federal-aid projects.
- Project's readiness to proceed

Funding Cycle

VDOT solicits TAP applications every two years, in the spring of odd-numbered years, a two-year funding cycle. The application process includes a mandatory pre-application submitted in the summer, followed by a full application in the fall for eligible pre-applications.



Revenue Sharing

Purpose

This program provides additional funding for use by a county, city, or town to construct, reconstruct, improve, or maintain the highway systems within such county, city, or town and for eligible rural additions in certain counties of the Commonwealth. Locality funds are matched, dollar for dollar, with state funds, with statutory limitations on the amount of state funds authorized per locality.

Funding

Application for program funding must be made by resolution of the governing body of the jurisdiction requesting funds. Project funding is allocated by resolution of the CTB. The Revenue Sharing program will match, dollar for dollar, eligible project costs up to limitations specified in CTB Policy.

Eligible Projects

- Supplemental funding for projects listed in the adopted Six-Year Program
- Construction, reconstruction, or improvement projects not including in the adopted Six-Year Program
- Improvements necessary for the specific streets otherwise eligible for acceptance into the secondary system for maintenance (rural additions).
- Maintenance projects consistent with the department's operating policies.
- New hard surfacing (paving).
- New Roads

Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted through the SMART Portal by any county, city, or town in the Commonwealth. Evaluation Criteria:

- Priority 1: Construction projects that have previously received Revenue Sharing funding.
- Priority 2: Construction projects that meet a transportation need identified in the Statewide Transportation Plan (VTRANS) or projects that will be accelerated in a locality's capital improvement plan
- Priority 3: Projects that address deficient pavement resurfacing and bridge rehabilitation.
- Priority 4: All other eligible projects

Funding Cycle

Applications for Revenue Sharing funding are accepted on a biennial basis in odd numbered years through VDOT's SMART Portal. The pre-application Preliminary project information must be provided with a pre-application also submitted through VDOT's SMART Portal. The application process includes a mandatory pre-application submitted in the spring, followed by a full application in the fall for eligible pre-applications.

State of Good Repair Program -Bridge

Purpose

The State of Good Repair (SGR) – Bridge program provides funding for National Bridge Inventory (NBI) bridges that are structurally deficient and owned by VDOT and/or localities.

Funding

Funding is allocated to each District based on needs for VDOT and locality owned bridges. Allocation of the funding is based on a prioritization methodology as approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Funding includes both state and federal sources.

Eligible Projects

Bridges eligible for SGR-Bridge funding are identified as Structurally Deficient Structures in the NBI. A list of eligible structures is posted online in January of each year.

Eligible Applicants

Applications for SGR Local Bridge funding may be submitted through the SMART Portal by jurisdictions that maintain their own infrastructure. Requests for SGR VDOT Bridge funds are managed by VDOT's Structure and Bridge Division.

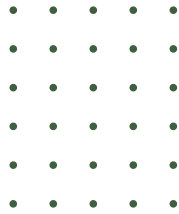
Evaluation Criteria

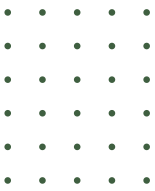
The SGR-Bridge program requires prioritization of eligible bridges based on five factors:

- 1.Importance - Measures the relative importance of each bridge to the overall highway network
- 2.Condition - Measures the overall physical condition of each bridge based on the condition of each individual element
- 3.Design Redundancy - Measures four important factors: Fracture Critical (redundancy), Scour Susceptibility, Fatigue, and Earthquake vulnerability
- 4.Structural Capacity - Measures the capacity of the structure to convey traffic, including the effects of weight restrictions, vertical clearance, and deck width
- 5.Cost Effectiveness - Measures the cost-effectiveness of the required work. Each factor is further weighted. Bridges are scored based on a scale of 0.0 (lowest priority) to 1.0 Highest priority.

Funding Cycle

The application period typically opens the first week of October and closes by mid-December each year. A notification of the application period is sent to eligible localities each year.





State of Good Repair Program - Pavement

Purpose

The State of Good Repair (SGR) – Pavement program provides funding for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of deteriorated pavements on the interstate and primary systems, including primary extensions.

Funding

Funding is allocated to each District based on needs for VDOT and locality owned pavements. Allocation of the funding is based on a needs prioritization methodology as approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). Funding includes both state and federal sources.

Eligible Projects

Routes eligible for SGR VDOT Paving funds are on the interstate and primary systems with a Critical Condition Index (CCI) less than 60. Routes eligible for SGR Local paving funds are municipality maintained primary extensions with a CCI less than 60. A list of eligible routes is posted online in January of each year.

Eligible Applicants

Applications for SGR Local Paving funds may be submitted through the SMART Portal by municipalities that maintain primary extensions. Localities may select from a list of eligible segments added to the SMART Portal each year. Segments funded in previous years are removed from the list of eligible segments.

Evaluation Criteria

SGR Local Paving projects are prioritized within each district based on the following criteria: Pavement Condition, Traffic Volume, National Highway System Designation, and Past Expenditures on Pavement by Locality.

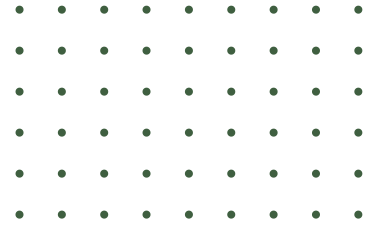
SGR VDOT Paving projects are prioritized within each district based on the following criteria: Road System, Traffic Count, Condition, and Potential for Immediate or Near-term Further Degradation.

Funding Cycle

The SGR-Pavement application cycle occurs annually. Applications for local paving open in October. Funding includes both state and federal sources. There is a cap of \$1.5 million per locality per cycle for SGR local pavement allocations.

Chapter Five

Future Land Use



Introduction

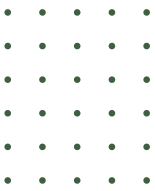
The purpose of land use planning is to guide both the development and conservation of land. Land use is much more than the division of land. Rather, land use involves every aspect of daily life including where residents live, work, relax, and the transportation network used to move between these places. Land use planning is a fundamental tool in determining where new businesses should locate, where housing should concentrate, and what infrastructure is needed to support the needs of residents.

Land use planning is essential for Drakes Branch’s residents and the Town’s 1,280 acres as it plans for any residential and community growth in the future. The land use plan will be used to guide decisions regarding land use policies, procedures and code revisions by both elected officials and town staff. The land use plan is not intended to stop growth and development, but rather to manage it so that resources such as open space, as well as taxpayer dollars, are not wasted. The land use plan is an opportunity to anticipate and address future challenges before problems arise.

The Relationship Between Future Land Use and Zoning

In Virginia, future land use planning and zoning ordinances are two distinct but interconnected tools that local governments use to guide and manage development. The Future Land Use Plan, contained within the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, provides a long-term vision for how Drakes Branch should grow and evolve. It identifies where residential neighborhoods, local businesses, industrial areas, public spaces, and natural areas are most appropriate, helping to shape the Town’s overall physical and economic character. The accompanying Future Land Use Map (FLUM) visually represents these intended land use patterns. It is a policy guide—not a regulatory document—and is used to inform public decisions about land development, infrastructure investment, and community improvements.

Zoning, by contrast, is the legal framework through which this vision is implemented. Authorized under §15.2-2280 of the Code of Virginia, the Town’s zoning ordinance divides Drakes Branch into zoning districts and establishes the specific uses, dimensional requirements, and development standards allowed in each. Zoning has the force of law and governs what property owners may build or operate on a given parcel. It is administered through permitting, review, and enforcement to ensure compliance with adopted standards.



While the Future Land Use Map and zoning ordinance serve different purposes, they work together to achieve a consistent, orderly pattern of growth. The Future Land Use Plan sets the community's long-term direction, while zoning manages development on a day-to-day basis. When property owners request rezoning or conditional use permits, the Town uses the Future Land Use Map to evaluate whether the proposal aligns with the community's broader vision and the suitability of existing infrastructure and surrounding land uses.

Over time, the Town's zoning map and ordinance may be updated to better reflect the intent of the Future Land Use Plan. Conversely, as local conditions and priorities evolve, future updates to the Comprehensive Plan may adjust the land use designations to reflect new opportunities or constraints. Maintaining this close relationship between the two ensures that Drakes Branch can manage growth responsibly, preserve its small-town character, and support a balanced mix of development and conservation.

Current Land Use Categories

The 2010 Comprehensive Plan established seven (7) major geographical land use categories.

Residential Areas

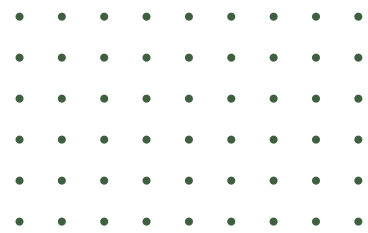
Residential areas are properties whose primary use is human habitation. This includes single-family housing, multi-family housing and mobile homes, and can be either owner-occupied or rental properties.

Business/Commercial Area

This area consists of properties used for transactions of wholesale and retail trade and services, but also includes publicly owned properties and religious facilities. Most of the businesses and public/government facilities within the Town are located along Town's main business corridor (Virginia Primary 47)

Future business and commercial development would continue to be focused along this corridor. As this area is developed in the future, the Town will need to take steps to assure that future development does not adversely impact pedestrian/vehicular safety or the flow of traffic.

Furthermore, as the commercial areas are developed, the Town will want to pay attention to development and the use of large signs, flapping pennants and other sight distraction devices. These devices, if not planned properly, can cause hazardous driving conditions and adverse aesthetics to the visual appearance of the Town. General business and commercial uses are essential to any community; however, they must be located with care.



Mixed Use Areas

These areas would encompass a variety of uses including, but not limited to, residential (including single family and multi-family), business/commercial; and public facilities/open spaces.

Industrial Areas

Industrial areas consist of properties used for the manufacturing, processing, or reprocessing of raw materials. In the Town of Drakes Branch, industrial uses can be broken into two (2) categories - Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.

Light Industrial areas are intended to accommodate “non-offensive” industries which would have minimal environmental, noise, or other impacts on surrounding areas and thus, could be located adjacent to different land uses (including residential areas). Light industrial uses may include such things as a blacksmith/welding or machine shop, a pharmaceutical or medical laboratory, a lumber yard, furniture or upholstery shop, a farm supply store, an automobile dealer, or an auto repair shop.

Heavy Industrial areas are intended for industries that are not compatible with other land uses due to their appearance, noise, risk of harmful discharge, risk of fire or explosion, or other potential hazards. Examples of heavy industrial uses include chemical and plastic factories, metal fabrication shops, mining, junkyards, recycling centers, and industrial machinery.

Public/Open Spaces

These spaces are used for recreational purposes and/or public gathering spaces.

Historic District

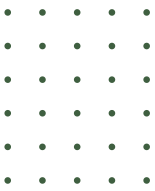
The Town of Drakes Branch’s Historic District encompasses portions of the original downtown corridor along Main Street, which historically served as the center of commercial and civic activity. The district includes several structures and parcels of architectural and cultural significance. However, the area was severely impacted by flooding during a past hurricane event, placing much of Main Street within the 100-year FEMA flood zone. As a result, multiple buildings have been or are scheduled to be removed due to safety and structural concerns.

Moving forward, the Town may wish to evaluate the current boundaries of the Historic District to determine whether adjustments or relocations are warranted. Considerations should include the potential for establishing a new heritage area outside the floodplain, such as through the preservation or adaptive reuse of historically relevant structures elsewhere in town. The long-term goal is to ensure that Drakes Branch continues to celebrate its heritage while promoting resilience, safety, and economic revitalization.

Wastewater Plant

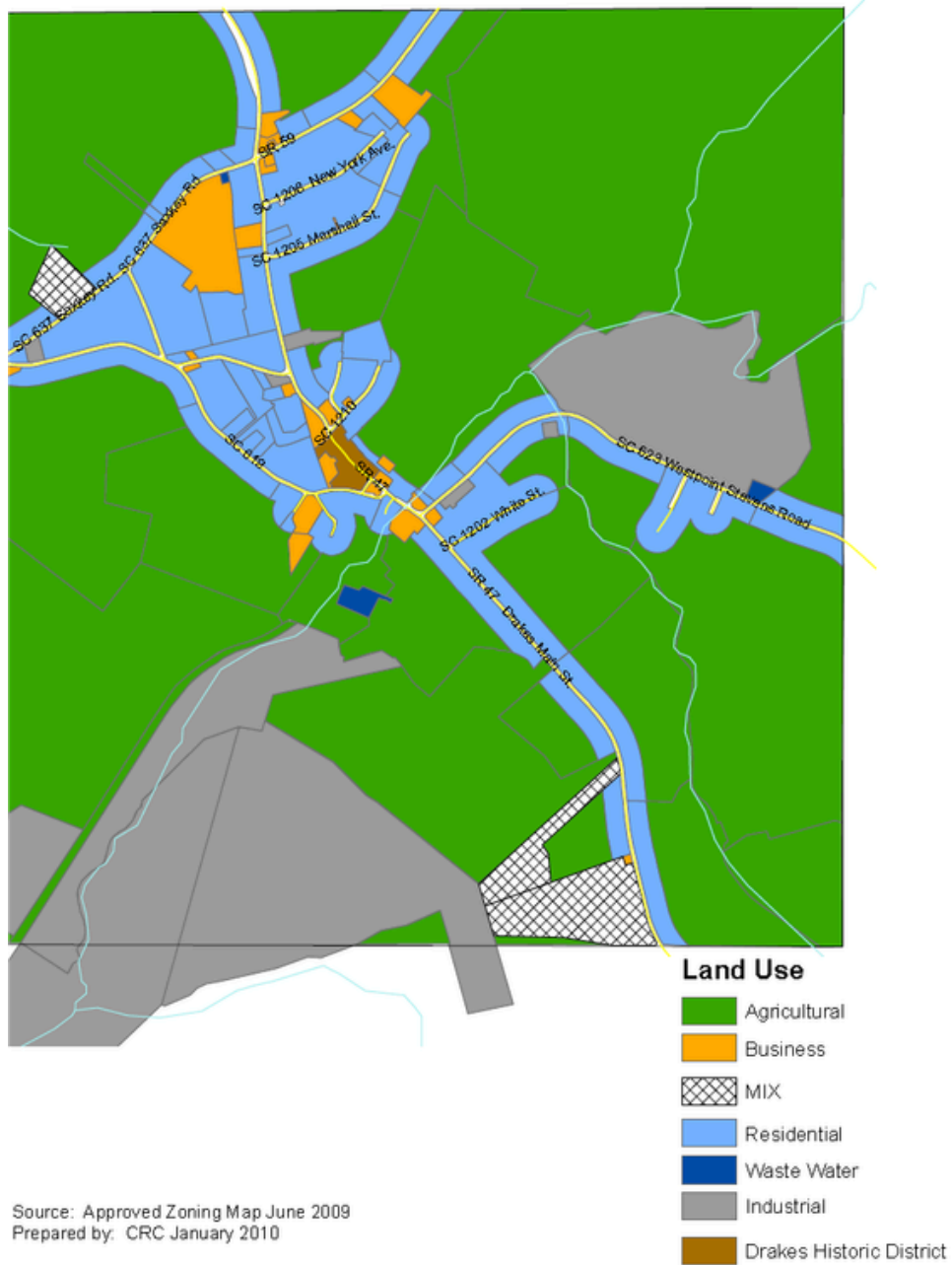
The Town of Drakes Branch operates a municipal wastewater treatment facility located within a specifically zoned “Wastewater” land use area. This designation recognizes the essential public utility function of the facility and ensures that surrounding land uses remain compatible with its operation. The Wastewater zone is intended to provide adequate space for current operations, potential upgrades, and necessary buffers to protect adjacent uses from odor, noise, or environmental impacts.

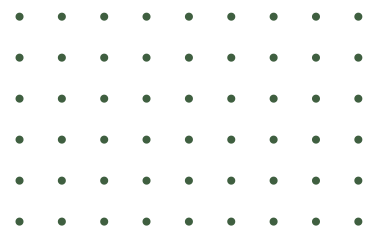
Future land use policies should maintain this area for public utility use only and consider potential infrastructure improvements or expansions consistent with state and federal environmental standards. This designation also supports long-term planning for sustainable wastewater management and environmental protection within the Town’s service area.



Current Land Use

See the map below for the current land uses in the Town of Drakes Branch





Future Land Use

Per the Code of Virginia, the Town of Drakes Branch Planning Commission is authorized to prepare and recommend a plan for the development of the Town. This plan shows a long range plan for the general development of the Town. It may designate the following:

- Areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, conservation, recreation, public service, flood plain, and drainage;
- A comprehensive system of transportation facilities such as streets, roads, highways, and parkways;
- A system of community service facilities such as parks, playgrounds, public buildings, etc.; and
- Area of special public works, renewal or development projects.

The future land use plan is based upon the concerns and interests of the citizens, as well as sound planning principles. The purpose of the future land use plan is to guide decision-makers in land use changes as they relate to code amendments, new zoning district classifications, applications for change in zoning, economic development and other aspects of community planning. Future land use considers past and present land use and development trends to determine how to plan for the future.

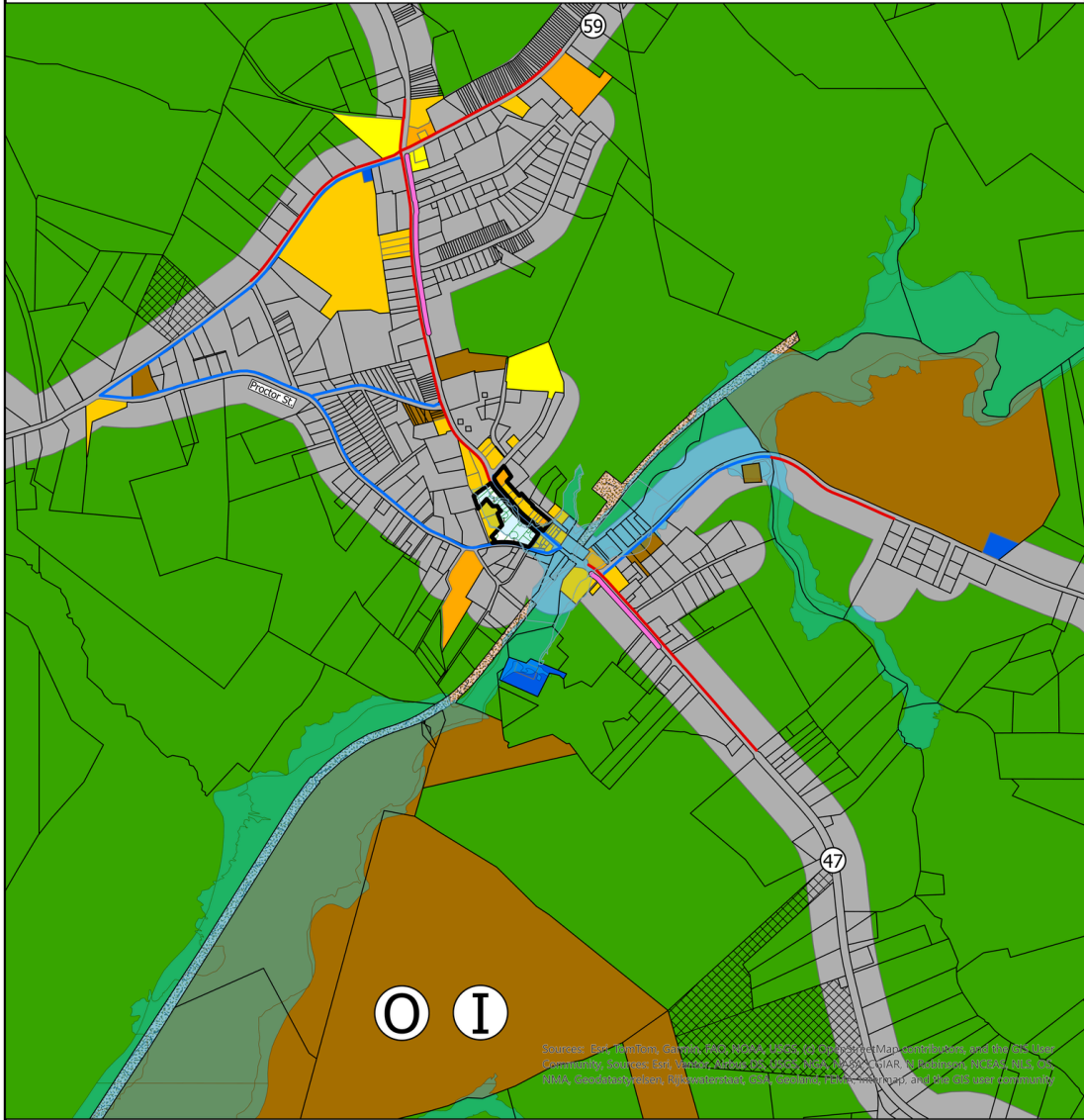
The future land use plan seeks a way to balance new growth and development, while maintaining Drakes Branch's small-town character and the functionality/viability of its road network and available public utilities/infrastructure. The guiding principle to achieve this balance is to concentrate different types of uses in specific areas. One benefit from this is to prevent the intermingling of incompatible land uses. In addition, concentrating businesses into a defined area limits the unwanted effects of business/commercial traffic in residential areas.

The Future Land Use Map is very different from the maps that have been developed in previous sections of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment. These maps are how things are now. The Future Land Use Map involved public policy decisions - decisions that directly affect private land.

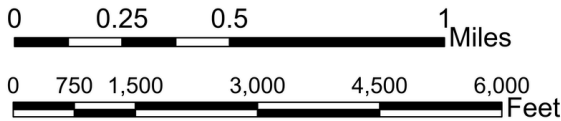
Some basic principles govern the development of a future land use plan. They are as follows:

- Existing Use
- Use Compatibility
- Land Demand
- Environmental Opportunities and Constraints
- Transportation Influences
- Trip Generation
- Development Capacity Analysis
- Downtown Plan
- Neighborhood Plans
- Redevelopment Plans
- Agricultural Preservation
- Historic Preservation
- Areas Not Likely to Develop
- Institutional Development
- Areas Around Airports
- Floodplains and Hazard Areas.

Drakes Branch



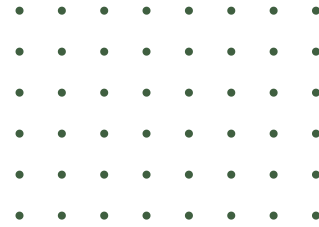
Source: ESRI, Bentley, Google Maps, NEMA, FEMA, USGS, and other map contributors, and the GIS user community. Sources for zoning include the Local Government GIS, GISAR, in Robeson, NC 2204, GIS, the NEMA, Geodatabase, Government, USA, Google, and other map contributors, and the GIS user community.



Created by: Commonwealth Regional Council - Jan. 2026

Key		Zoned Areas	
	S - Sidewalk		FEMA Flood Zone
	B - Business Centers		A1 Agricultural
	Growth Area		B1 Light Business
	Historical District		B2 General Business
	Other:		R1 Limited Residential
	1. Solar Farm		R2 General Residential
	2. Data Centers		M1 Industrial
	Industry and Manufacturing Facilities		Mixed R1, R2, A1
			Public Utilities
			Walking Trail
			Preservation Area

Future Land Use Map Designations



The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) illustrates the Town of Drakes Branch’s long-term vision for development, redevelopment, and conservation. It provides a generalized overview of desired land use patterns within the Town and serves as a guide for evaluating future zoning decisions, infrastructure investments, and community planning efforts. The map is not parcel-specific, and a mixture of land uses may exist within any given designation. The exact boundaries and location of future land uses will ultimately be determined by the zoning ordinance and, when applicable, through review by the Planning Commission and Town Council. These reviews will consider the compatibility, benefits, and potential impacts of proposed uses on surrounding neighborhoods and the broader community.

In addition to guiding growth, the Future Land Use Map encourages infill development—the reuse or redevelopment of vacant, underutilized, or previously developed parcels within the existing built-up area. Infill strengthens established neighborhoods, makes efficient use of public infrastructure, and reduces development pressure on open space and agricultural lands. By promoting thoughtful infill and coordinated land use planning, Drakes Branch seeks to preserve its small-town character while supporting sustainable growth and economic revitalization.

Residential Areas (Limited R1 & General R2)

Description:

Residential areas consist primarily of housing developments designed to accommodate the Town’s population and future growth. These areas may include a mix of single-family homes, duplexes, and multi-family units that support a range of income levels and housing needs. Residential land use promotes safe, accessible, and well-maintained neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community.

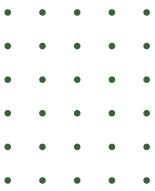
Primary Uses:

- Single-family homes
- Duplexes and townhouses
- Multi-family housing
- Community parks and small open spaces

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Encourage a variety of housing types to meet diverse community needs.
2. Ensure compatibility between new developments and existing neighborhood character.
3. Promote pedestrian connectivity and access to public services.
4. Maintain infrastructure capacity for utilities, transportation, and stormwater.
5. Support infill and redevelopment that strengthens existing residential areas.
6. **Limited R1** - Minimum Lot Sizes:
 - a. 1,500ft² if connected to Town Water & Sewer
 - b. 20,000ft² or 0.5 acres if on Well & Septic
7. **General R2** - Minimum Lot Sizes:

<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. All Lots served by Town Water & Sewer<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. One Unit - 8,000ft²ii. Two Units - 10,000ft²iii. Each additional Unit - +1,200ft² each	<ol style="list-style-type: none">b. All Lots served by Well & Septic<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. One Unit - 12,000ft²ii. Two Units - 15,000ft²iii. Each additional Unit - +1,200ft² each
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Business/Commercial Area

Description:

Business and Commercial areas include the Town's primary centers for retail, office, and service-oriented activities. These zones provide essential goods, services, and employment opportunities for residents and visitors, fostering economic vitality within Drakes Branch.

Primary Uses:

- Retail stores and shops
- Professional and medical offices
- Restaurants and cafes
- Personal and business services
- Lodging and tourism-related enterprises

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Encourage redevelopment and infill along key corridors to strengthen the Town's commercial core.
2. Encourage developments with pedestrian accessibility, landscaping, and adequate parking.
3. Limit commercial sprawl by concentrating development in designated commercial nodes.
4. Encourage shared access and coordinated signage among adjoining businesses.

Mixed-Use Areas

Description:

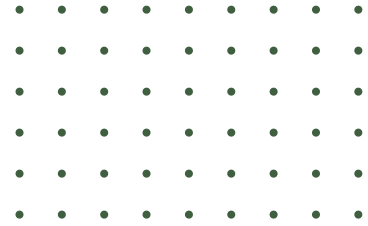
Mixed-Use areas integrate residential, commercial, and public uses to create vibrant, walkable centers. These areas are designed to promote compact development patterns that encourage economic growth, social interaction, and efficient land utilization.

Primary Uses:

- Residential (single-family and multi-family)
- Retail and office spaces
- Restaurants and entertainment venues
- Public and civic facilities
- Parks and pedestrian corridors

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Encourage vertical and horizontal integration of land uses.
2. Design pedestrian-friendly streetscapes with sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping.
3. Promote infill development consistent with existing scale and form.
4. Incorporate public spaces and community gathering areas.
5. Support mixed-use projects that enhance the Town's identity and sense of place.



Industrial Areas

Description:

Industrial areas are designated for the production, processing, and distribution of goods and materials that support Drakes Branch's economic base. These areas accommodate a range of industrial uses, categorized as either Heavy Industrial or Light Industrial, to ensure compatibility and efficient land use planning.

Primary Uses:

- Manufacturing and assembly operations
- Warehousing and distribution
- Equipment repair and fabrication
- Agricultural and forestry-related industries
- Research and development

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Locate industrial areas near transportation corridors to support access and reduce conflicts.
2. Require buffers and screening between industrial and residential or commercial uses.
3. Provide adequate infrastructure, utilities, and stormwater management.
4. Encourage redevelopment of underutilized industrial sites and adaptive reuse of facilities.
5. Maintain compliance with environmental and safety standards.

Light Industrial

Definition:

Light Industrial uses involve smaller-scale or less intensive operations that create minimal environmental or noise impacts. These areas often serve as a transition between commercial and heavier industrial uses and support small business growth.

Additional Guidelines:

- Encourage attractive site design and architectural consistency with adjacent uses.
- Require screening and landscaping to preserve community aesthetics.
- Support reuse or infill of existing industrial buildings.
- Minimize operational impacts such as noise, odor, and traffic.
- Promote flexible site layouts to accommodate expanding enterprises.



Preservation Area

Description:

Preservation Areas are public and open space that provide essential recreational, cultural, and environmental benefits to the community. These spaces support public health, stormwater management, and social connectivity.

Primary Uses:

- Parks and recreational facilities
- Greenways and trails
- Community centers and civic spaces
- Conservation lands and natural resource protection areas

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Preserve and enhance existing open spaces and natural features.
2. Improve connectivity between parks and neighborhoods.
3. Incorporate stormwater management features and green infrastructure.
4. Promote public art, signage, and interpretive elements.
5. Collaborate with regional partners for long-term maintenance and funding.

Historic District

Description:

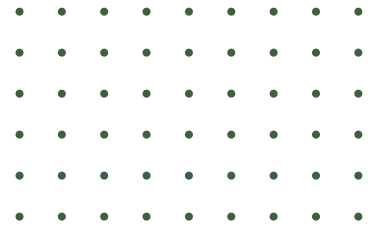
The Historic District encompasses portions of the original downtown corridor along Main Street, historically serving as the Town's civic and commercial center. Several parcels and structures hold architectural and cultural significance. However, much of this area lies within the 100-year FEMA flood zone, and significant flood damage from a past hurricane has resulted in the loss or planned removal of several buildings.

Primary Uses:

- Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures
- Small-scale commercial and civic activities
- Tourism and cultural interpretation
- Public gathering spaces or memorial areas

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Evaluate existing Historic District boundaries and consider relocation or adjustment outside the floodplain.
2. Encourage preservation or adaptive reuse of remaining historically significant structures.
3. Support redevelopment efforts that balance cultural preservation with resilience and safety.
4. Coordinate with state and federal preservation programs for funding and technical assistance.
5. Promote compatible infill development that enhances the Town's historical character.



Public Utility

Description:

The Town of Drakes Branch operates a municipal wastewater treatment facility located within a specifically zoned “Wastewater” area. Consider renaming to “Public Utility.” This designation recognizes the critical public utility role of the facility and ensures surrounding land uses remain compatible. The area provides space for current operations, future upgrades, and protective buffers to minimize odor, noise, and environmental impacts.

Primary Uses:

- Public wastewater treatment operations
- Utility infrastructure and maintenance facilities
- Access and service corridors for maintenance vehicles

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Maintain the Public Utility area exclusively for public utility use.
2. Preserve sufficient buffer zones to protect adjacent residential and industrial uses.
3. Ensure compliance with state and federal environmental standards for water quality and discharge.
4. Plan for potential capacity upgrades to accommodate future growth or regional service needs.
5. Integrate best management practices to reduce odor, noise, and stormwater impacts.

Agricultural Areas

Description:

Agricultural areas include the rural lands that support farming, forestry, and open space around Drakes Branch. These areas preserve the community’s agricultural character, maintain working landscapes, and provide a buffer between the Town and surrounding countryside. Development in these areas should remain low-density and compatible with ongoing agricultural activities.

Primary Uses:

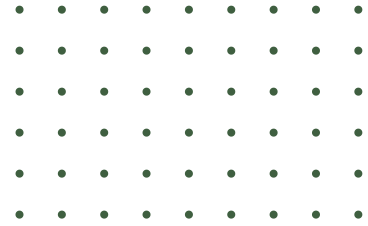
- Crop production and livestock operations
- Forestry and timber management
- Farmsteads and rural homesteads
- Agribusiness and value-added agricultural uses
- Open fields, conservation lands, and natural areas

Development Tools & Strategies:

1. Protect prime farmland and limit encroachment of incompatible uses.
2. Support agricultural best management practices to maintain soil and water quality.
3. Encourage agribusiness and farm diversification to strengthen the rural economy.
4. Maintain low-density development patterns consistent with agricultural operations.
5. Utilize conservation tools to preserve working lands and rural character.

Chapter Six

Special Policy Areas



Introduction

The Town of Drakes Branch uses Special Policy Areas to guide decisions related to land use, infrastructure investment, economic development, and community character. These policies help the Town proactively manage growth, maintain its small-town identity, and ensure that new development aligns with the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Each policy area includes a concise overview and targeted strategies that support effective long-term planning and decision-making.

Policy Area 1 – Current and Future Land Use

Managing future growth requires a coordinated approach that places new development in suitable locations while preserving the Town’s character and ensuring safety, access, and adequate infrastructure.

Key Strategies:

- Maintain zoning and subdivision ordinances that reflect the Future Land Use Map and guide development toward appropriate densities and locations.
- Strengthen connectivity between Downtown, neighborhoods, and key destinations.
- Evaluate rezoning and conditional use requests along major corridors with emphasis on access, traffic impacts, and overall compatibility.
- Continue using recommendations from past economic revitalization efforts to inform redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities.
- Coordinate with VDOT on future enhancements, including pedestrian improvements and streetscape upgrades.
- Recognize the potential land use and economic impacts of the correctional facility and plan proactively for related housing, infrastructure, and commercial needs.



Policy Area 2 – Land Use and Transportation Integration

Land use decisions shape transportation needs, and transportation conditions influence development patterns. Drakes Branch must balance land use and mobility to support economic opportunity, accessibility, and public safety.

Key Strategies:

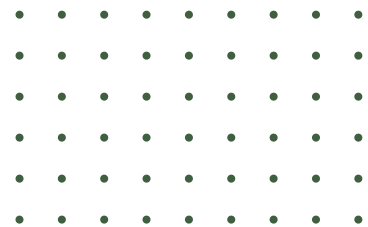
- Define activity centers, neighborhoods, and mobility corridors that distinguish between pedestrian-oriented and auto-oriented areas.
- Update ordinances to encourage compact development patterns and mixed-use areas where appropriate.
- Adopt design principles that support walkability, bicycle access, and transit-ready development.
- Require detailed transportation planning—including internal road networks, pedestrian routes, and bicycle connections—early in the subdivision and development review process.
- Support slower vehicle speeds in residential and mixed-use areas to improve safety.
- Coordinate transit-related planning with higher-density areas and key employment or service destinations.

Policy Area 3 – Pedestrian Linkages and Connectivity

A connected pedestrian network improves safety, access, and overall quality of life. Drakes Branch can strengthen walkability and create a more cohesive community by expanding and improving pedestrian facilities.

Key Strategies:

- Extend pedestrian routes from one end of Town to the other, using grant opportunities such as VDOT enhancement programs.
- Incorporate walkability recommendations from prior revitalization studies.
- Require pedestrian facilities; such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and internal connections in new residential and commercial developments.
- Integrate pedestrian improvements into the Town’s Capital Improvement planning.



Policy Area 4 – Business Corridor Development

Virginia Primary Route 47 is the Town’s primary gateway and commercial corridor. Its appearance, functionality, and safety significantly influence economic development and community identity.

Key Strategies:

- Maintain ordinances that ensure safe and well-designed access along the corridor.
- Review future rezoning or conditional use requests for their traffic, access, and visual impacts.
- Consider developing a corridor design manual to guide façade improvements, new construction, and site layout.
- Evaluate opportunities for expanded parking through partnerships or strategic site use.

Policy Area 5 – Economic Development and Job Creation

The Town seeks to strengthen its commercial base, expand workforce opportunities, and improve overall economic resilience.

Key Strategies:

- Support heritage and outdoor recreation tourism as a means to attract visitors and customers.
- Encourage local agri-business ventures, including farmers markets and special events.
- Partner with regional institutions, such as SVCC and Longwood University, to expand workforce training opportunities.
- Pursue business development and recruitment opportunities in sectors aligned with community needs, including health care and elder care services.
- Maintain ongoing coordination with county, regional, and state partners to advance business growth and investment.



Policy Area 6 – Affordable Housing

Ensuring housing options for a range of income levels is important for long-term community sustainability.

Key Strategies:

- Support mixed-type residential development that integrates commercial and civic uses.
- Utilize state and federal programs to encourage new affordable housing and rehabilitate existing homes.
- Consider density bonuses or similar incentives to increase the availability of affordable units.
- Continue working with nonprofit organizations to expand local housing opportunities.
- Explore additional tools, such as inclusionary zoning, to promote development of income-diverse neighborhoods.

Policy Area 7 – Main Street Flood Impact Redevelopment Area

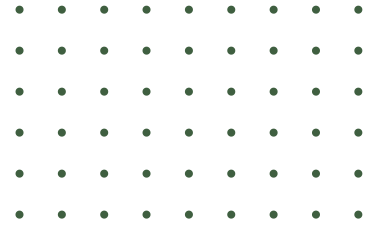
The Town is pursuing the purchase and demolition of multiple flood-damaged Main Street structures located within the expanded flood zone. This project presents an opportunity to reduce long-term flood risk, remove blight, and support reinvestment in a highly visible area of Downtown.

Key Strategies:

- Use the acquisition and demolition project to reduce exposure to flood hazards and improve public safety.
- Convert the cleared site to a resilient use that aligns with floodplain management requirements, such as open space, green infrastructure, or community amenities.
- Coordinate with state and federal partners to explore funding for mitigation, demolition, and site redevelopment.
- Use the project as a model for future flood-related redevelopment and hazard mitigation activities.
- Evaluate long-term opportunities for Main Street revitalization that leverage the improved safety, aesthetics, and resilience of the corridor.

Chapter Seven

Goals & Objectives



Introduction

The Goals and Objectives chapter serves as the policy foundation of the Town of Drakes Branch Comprehensive Plan. The goals articulate broad, long-range outcomes the Town seeks to achieve, while the objectives identify more specific and measurable actions that support each goal. Together, they provide guidance for decision-making related to land use, infrastructure investment, environmental stewardship, economic development, and community well-being.

These goals and objectives build upon the existing character of Drakes Branch, community input, and the analysis presented in Chapters 1 through 6. They also reflect current and emerging conditions, including ongoing flood mitigation efforts in the downtown area associated with the FEMA floodplain project along Main Street. Where appropriate, objectives emphasize resilience, public safety, and long-term sustainability.

Goal 1: Preserve the Small-Town Character and Quality of Life

Goal Statement: Maintain and enhance the small-town character of Drakes Branch while ensuring a safe, attractive, and livable community for residents of all ages.

Objectives:

- Encourage development patterns that are compatible with the Town’s historic scale, design, and community character.
- Protect established residential neighborhoods from incompatible land uses.
- Support community spaces, parks, and recreational opportunities that contribute to quality of life.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly environments and public gathering spaces, particularly in and around the downtown area.



Goal 2: Promote Safe, Orderly, and Sustainable Land Use

Goal Statement: Guide land use and development in a manner that is orderly, efficient, and consistent with the Town’s long-term vision.

Objectives:

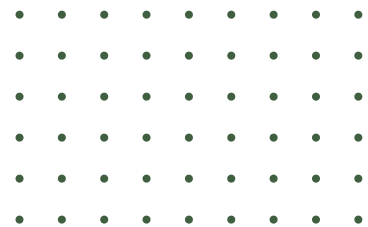
- Direct growth toward areas adequately served by existing or planned public infrastructure and services.
- Encourage infill development and redevelopment where appropriate.
- Ensure zoning and land use regulations reflect the Comprehensive Plan’s Goals.
- Balance residential, commercial, agricultural, and public land uses to support community needs.

Goal 3: Enhance Environmental Stewardship and Flood Resilience

Goal Statement: Protect natural resources and improve the Town’s resilience to flooding and other environmental hazards.

Objectives:

- Support implementation of flood mitigation and floodplain restoration projects, particularly along the waterways of Twittys Creek and Drake’s Branch within the downtown area.
- Convert flood-prone properties into permanent open space or green infrastructure where feasible.
- Preserve and enhance waterways, wetlands, and riparian buffers to improve water quality and reduce flood impacts.
- Encourage development practices that minimize environmental impacts and promote stormwater management.
- Coordinate with regional, state, and federal agencies on floodplain management and hazard mitigation initiatives.



Goal 4: Strengthen the Downtown and Community Identity

Goal Statement: Foster a vibrant and resilient downtown that serves as a focal point for civic life while adapting to long-term floodplain conditions.

Objectives:

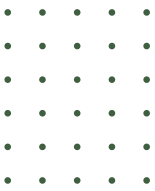
- Support strategic redevelopment and land reuse in the downtown area following flood mitigation activities.
- Integrate public green space, trails, and open areas into the downtown to enhance aesthetics and functionality.
- Encourage compatible commercial and civic uses outside of high-risk flood areas.
- Use downtown improvements to reinforce the Town’s identity and sense of place.
- Develop an Economic Restructuring Plan to support business district redevelopment

Goal 5: Support Economic Stability and Local Opportunities

Goal Statement: Promote a stable local economy that supports small businesses, employment opportunities, and long-term fiscal health.

Objectives:

- Explore and support opportunities to diversify and strengthen local revenue sources in order to enhance the Town’s long-term fiscal sustainability and ability to maintain public services and infrastructure.
- Encourage small-scale commercial and service-oriented development that meets local needs.
- Support revitalization efforts that align with floodplain management and land use policies.
- Coordinate with Charlotte County and regional partners on economic development initiatives.
- Promote adaptive reuse of existing structures where feasible and appropriate.



Goal 6: Maintain and Improve Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Goal Statement: Ensure that public facilities and infrastructure are safe, reliable, and adequate to serve current and future residents.

Objectives:

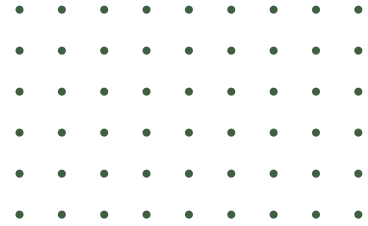
- Support the planning, construction, and maintenance of sidewalks and pedestrian facilities that improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity between neighborhoods, downtown, and community destinations.
- Maintain and improve water, sewer, and stormwater systems to meet community needs.
- Coordinate infrastructure planning with land use decisions.
- Support transportation improvements that enhance safety and connectivity.
- Incorporate resilience and hazard mitigation considerations into infrastructure investments.

Goal 7: Encourage Cooperative Planning and Implementation

Goal Statement: Promote coordination among local, county, regional, and state partners to effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Objectives:

- Use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for public and private decision-making.
- Regularly review and update plan policies to reflect changing conditions.
- Coordinate with Charlotte County, regional organizations, and state agencies on shared initiatives.
- Seek grant funding and technical assistance to support implementation of plan goals.



Goal 8: Encourage Affordable Housing Options

Goal Statement: Encourage safe, quality, and affordable housing options that serve residents of all ages and income levels while preserving Drakes Branch’s rural character and small-town scale.

Objectives:

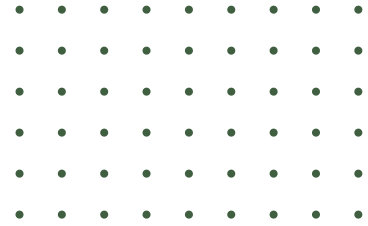
- Encourage a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and limited multi-family development, to meet diverse housing needs.
- Direct higher-density residential development to areas with existing infrastructure, utilities, and adequate access, while protecting established neighborhoods.
- Support partnerships with nonprofits and regional organizations to expand affordable and workforce housing opportunities.
- Promote infill development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings that are not located in the floodplain for residential or mixed-use purposes.
- Ensure new residential development is compatible with surrounding land uses through appropriate scale, design, and buffering.
- Encourage the development, placement, and long-term maintenance of quality manufactured housing in appropriate locations as an affordable housing option that is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and consistent with the Town’s rural character.

Plan Implementation

The goals and objectives outlined in this chapter are intended to be implemented through zoning regulations, capital improvement planning, grant-funded projects, and ongoing coordination with partners. Progress toward these goals should be evaluated periodically to ensure the Comprehensive Plan remains responsive to community needs and conditions.

Chapter Eight

Implementation



Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Drakes Branch is intended to serve as a practical, action-oriented guide for public decision-making. Adoption of the Plan does not conclude the planning process; rather, it establishes a framework for ongoing coordination, evaluation, and implementation. This chapter outlines the primary tools, responsibilities, and processes the Town will use to carry out the goals, objectives, and strategies identified in Chapters 1 through 7.

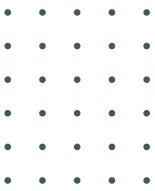
Implementation is an ongoing effort that requires coordination among Town Council, the Planning Commission, Town staff, residents, regional partners, and state and federal agencies. The policies and actions described in this chapter are designed to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a living document that informs day-to-day decisions, long-term investments, and future plan updates.

Relationship to Other Plans and Programs

The successful implementation of the Town of Drakes Branch Comprehensive Plan requires coordination with:

- The Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan
- Regional plans and initiatives led by the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC)
- State and federal programs related to transportation, housing, hazard mitigation, and economic development
- Capital planning and budgeting processes at the local and regional levels

Consistency between these plans strengthens grant competitiveness, improves intergovernmental coordination, and ensures that public investments support shared priorities.



Regulatory Tools

Zoning Ordinance Updates

The Town’s zoning ordinance is one of the primary tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The ordinance should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with:

- The Future Land Use Map
- The land use policies outlined in Chapter Five
- The goals and objectives in Chapter Seven

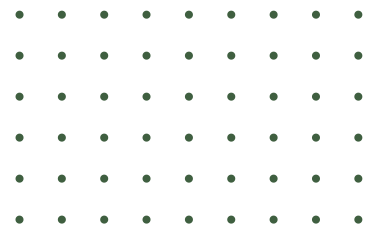
Priority considerations include development compatibility, access management along major corridors, floodplain considerations, mixed-use development standards, and provisions that support affordable housing and infill redevelopment.

Subdivision Ordinance Updates

The subdivision ordinance provides standards for the creation of lots, streets, utilities, and public improvements. Updates should ensure that new development:

- Coordinates with available infrastructure and public services
- Incorporates pedestrian connectivity and safe internal circulation
- Reflects stormwater management and environmental protection best practices
- Supports compact, efficient development patterns where appropriate

Together, zoning and subdivision regulations should work in tandem to advance the Town’s long-term vision while protecting public health, safety, and welfare.



Capital Improvement Planning

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

The Town should develop and maintain a multi-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as a central implementation tool. The CIP links planning priorities to funding decisions and provides a transparent framework for scheduling infrastructure investments.

Key focus areas for capital planning include:

- Water, wastewater, and stormwater system maintenance and upgrades
- Sidewalks, pedestrian connections, and streetscape improvements
- Public facilities, parks, and community spaces
- Flood mitigation and hazard reduction projects

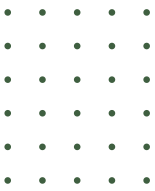
Review the CIP annually as part of the Town's budgeting process and updated to reflect changing needs, funding opportunities, and project readiness.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Effective implementation depends on continued coordination between the Town Council and Planning Commission. Regular joint work sessions are encouraged to:

- Review progress toward Comprehensive Plan goals
- Evaluate development trends and rezoning requests
- Discuss infrastructure needs and capital priorities
- Identify emerging issues that may warrant plan amendments

The Town should also maintain strong partnerships with Charlotte County, Commonwealth Regional Council(CRC), and state agencies such as Virginia Department of Transportation(VDOT), Department of Conservation and Recreation(DCR), Department of Housing & Community Development(DHCD), and Department of Environmental Quality(DEQ) to support planning, funding, and project delivery.



Strategic and Organizational Planning

In addition to comprehensive planning, the Town is encouraged to use strategic planning practices to guide short and medium-term actions. Strategic planning focuses on prioritizing limited resources, identifying implementation partners, and sequencing actions to achieve measurable outcomes.

Opportunities include:

- Public-private partnerships for downtown and corridor redevelopment
- Collaboration with nonprofit organizations and faith-based groups
- Coordination with educational institutions and workforce partners
- Community-led initiatives that build local capacity and engagement

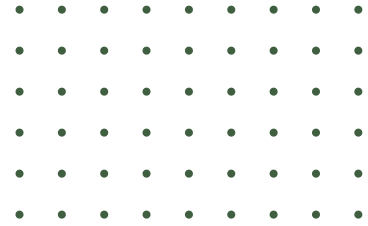
Strategic planning efforts should complement the Comprehensive Plan and help translate long-range goals into achievable projects.

Plan Review and Amendments

The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains responsive to community conditions and priorities. At a minimum, the Town should:

- Conduct an annual informal review of implementation progress
- Complete a more comprehensive review at least once every five years, consistent with Virginia law

A clear policy for plan amendments should be maintained to guide how proposed actions or development requests that differ from the Plan are evaluated. This provides transparency and predictability for residents, staff, and the development community.



Monitoring and Accountability

Implementation success depends on regular monitoring and accountability. The Town should track progress by:

- Linking capital projects and regulatory actions to specific plan goals
- Using the Comprehensive Plan as a reference for staff reports and decision-making
- Periodically reporting on implementation progress to Town Council and the public

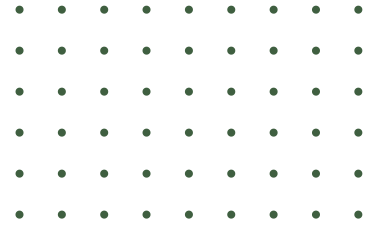
Where feasible, grant funding and technical assistance should be pursued to support plan implementation and reduce the financial burden on local taxpayers.

Implementation Matrix (2026-2031)

The following matrix summarizes priority actions for implementing the Comprehensive Plan over the 2026-2031 planning horizon. The matrix is intended to guide coordination, budgeting, and project sequencing, and should be reviewed annually as part of the Town's Capital Improvement Program and budget process.

- Table on next page -

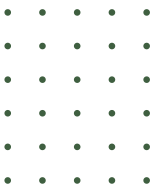
Focus Area / Related Goals	Priority Actions	Lead & Key Partners	Primary Tools	Timeframe
Plan Governance & Accountability (Goal 7)	Annual plan review; maintain amendment procedures	Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Staff	Annual work sessions; staff reports referencing Plan goals	Ongoing
Zoning Alignment (Goals 1,2,4,6,8)	Update zoning to match FLUM, flood risk, housing goals	Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator, Town Attorney	Zoning ordinance and map amendments	0-2 yrs
Subdivision & Development Standards (Goals 2,3,6)	Improve connectivity, pedestrian safety, stormwater standards	Planning Commission, Town Staff, VDOT (as needed)	Subdivision ordinance; development review standards	1-3 yrs
Capital Improvement Planning (Goals 6,7)	Develop CIP to align with plan priorities and resilience	Town Council, Planning Commission, Town Staff	CIP; annual budget process	Ongoing
Downtown Flood Impact Redevelopment (Goals 3,4)	Complete mitigation actions; plan resilient site reuse	Town Council, Town Staff, DCR, FEMA, County partners	Floodplain compliance tools; site reuse plans	0-5 yrs
Stormwater & Green Infrastructure (Goals 3,6)	Apply BMPs in development review and capital projects	Town Staff, Planning Commission, DEQ, SWCD	VSMP-aligned review practices; CIP	1-3 yrs
Water & Wastewater Reliability (Goal 6)	Implement asset management; prioritize system upgrades	Public Works, Town Council, VDH, DEQ, SWCD	Asset management planning; CIP	0-3 yrs
Housing & Neighborhood Stability (Goals 2,6,8)	Encourage infill, rehab, and affordable housing partnerships	Town Council, Planning Commission, Nonprofits	Zoning incentives; grants; partnerships	1-5 yrs
Transportation Safety & Walkability (Goals 1,2,6)	Advance pedestrian safety and corridor improvements	Town Staff, VDOT, CRC	CIP; development review; VDOT programs	1-3 yrs



Best Practices for Plan Implementation

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan should reflect recognized best practices used by Virginia localities and state and federal partner agencies. Key principles include:

- **Integration with Capital Planning:** The Capital Improvement Program should serve as the primary mechanism for translating plan priorities into funded projects, with annual updates to reflect changing conditions, readiness, and funding opportunities.
- **Hazard Mitigation and Flood Resilience:** Flood mitigation actions should be embedded in zoning, subdivision review, capital planning, and redevelopment decisions rather than treated as stand-alone initiatives. Ongoing coordination with Federal Emergency Management Agency(FEMA) and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) supports compliance, risk reduction, and access to technical assistance.
- **Stormwater and Environmental Management:** Development review and public projects should reference current Virginia Stormwater Management Program (VSMP) standards and best management practices promoted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).
- **Utility Asset Management:** Long-term reliability of water and wastewater systems is best supported through asset management practices that link system inventories, condition assessments, and renewal schedules to financial planning and capital programming, consistent with guidance from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).
- **Downtown and Community Revitalization:** Implementation efforts related to downtown recovery and business corridor reinvestment should align with state economic development and community revitalization practices, including preparation of targeted plans such as an Economic Restructuring Plan where appropriate.
- **Monitoring and Adaptation:** The Comprehensive Plan should be treated as a living document, with regular monitoring of progress and periodic updates to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.



Summary of Key Implementation Actions

To implement this Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Drakes Branch should:

1. Maintain zoning and subdivision ordinances that reflect the Future Land Use Map and adopted plan policies.
2. Prepare, update, and use a Capital Improvement Program to guide infrastructure investment and grant pursuit.
3. Coordinate regularly between the Planning Commission and Town Council to review implementation progress.
4. Engage county, regional, state, and federal partners to advance shared priorities and improve funding competitiveness.
5. Integrate flood resilience, environmental stewardship, and infrastructure reliability into everyday decision-making.
6. Monitor outcomes and adjust implementation strategies as community conditions evolve.

Through consistent application of these tools and practices, the Comprehensive Plan will continue to guide growth, investment, and decision-making in support of Drakes Branch’s long-term vision, resilience, and quality of life.

The Town of Drakes Branch

Community Meeting Summary Report



Prepared By:

Commonwealth Regional Council

200 Heartland Rd

Keysville, VA 23947

(434) 392-6104

June 6, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Residents were invited to participate in this community meeting, held on May 28, 2025, at the Drakes Branch Town Hall, as part of the process to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the meeting was to gather public input to help guide the development of goals and strategies that reflect the community's vision for the future.

Publicity for the event included the distribution of flyers designed by Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) staff and posted throughout the town. The Town also sent a copy of the flyer to each resident that receives a water bill.

At the start of the meeting, staff from the CRC gave a brief presentation outlining the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan and explaining how such a plan helps manage growth, protect community values, and inform decision-making. Following this overview, 21 attendees were divided into two groups. Each group participated in two interactive exercises designed to collect local perspectives:

1. The Preserve, Add, Remove, Keep (P.A.R.K.) Exercise to identify specific community features and areas for attention.
2. The Mapping Exercise visualizes locations for future growth, protection, and community development priorities.

Each group completed both exercises in rotation. Rather than using individual worksheets, participants engaged in open group discussions and recorded ideas collaboratively on large flip chart pages visible to all attendees. CRC staff facilitated these discussions, documented comments, and provided large-scale maps, handouts with instructions and examples, and other supporting materials to guide the activities. Input gathered from this meeting will directly inform the direction of the Comprehensive Plan, ensuring that the updated document is grounded in the lived experience, values, and aspirations of Drakes Branch residents.

P.A.R.K. Exercise

As part of the public engagement activities, meeting participants completed a P.A.R.K. exercise — a tool used to encourage discussion around community values and priorities. Attendees were asked to identify what aspects of Drakes Branch should be:



Each group completed the exercise in open discussion, recording their ideas on large flip charts visible to all. The following list reflects the full set of input collected during the meeting.

Preserve

- Small Town Feel
- Safety
- Karate School
- Private Businesses
- Town Police Department
- Ball Field
- Free Library Post
- Local Churches
- Farmers Market Pavilion
- Museum
- Isabella Street – Keep from Eroding
- Existing Green Spaces
- Gas Stations
- Bank
- Laundry Mat
- Car Dealerships
- Restaurant
- Kids Park/Playground
- Bulk yard Debris Pickup Service
- War Memorial
- Birding Wildlife Trail
- National Forest
- Community

Remove

- Vacant Homes
- Disabled Cars
- Yard Blight
- Feral / Stray Animals – especially cats

Add

- Sidewalks on side Streets
- Children’s Activities
- Adequate Safety Lighting
- Community Theater
- Bingo Hall
- Community Events / Festivals
- Housing Expansion
- Access to the lake
- Enclosed Farmers Market
- Town Décor – Flags, Banners, Wreaths, etc.
- Grocery Stores & Restaurants
- Ordinance on Limiting dogs in town
- Enforcement of the grass height ordinance
- Community Cornerstone Restaurant – Old Tastee Freeze
- Community Produce Gardens
- Bed & Breakfast / Small Hotels
- RV Park
- Community Movie Nights with Food
- Murals and Artwork
- VA “LOVE” sign
- Exposure to state park nearby

Keep Out

- Air Brakes / Jake Brakes on Main Street
- Loud Music and Parties
- Low Quality Thrift Stores
- Buzzards
- Businesses that are Obscene

Mapping Exercise

In addition to the P.A.R.K. discussion, participants took part in a Mapping Exercise designed to spatially capture their ideas for growth, development, and key community facilities. This interactive activity gave residents the opportunity to engage directly with a large-format map of Drakes Branch, helping to visualize how and where the town should grow and improve.

The exercise included two main tasks:

- **Establishing Target Growth Areas**

- Attendees were asked to identify areas of the Town where new development should be concentrated in the future. These “growth zones” are places where infrastructure improvements and development incentives could be prioritized. Participants used red markers to designate these areas directly on the map.

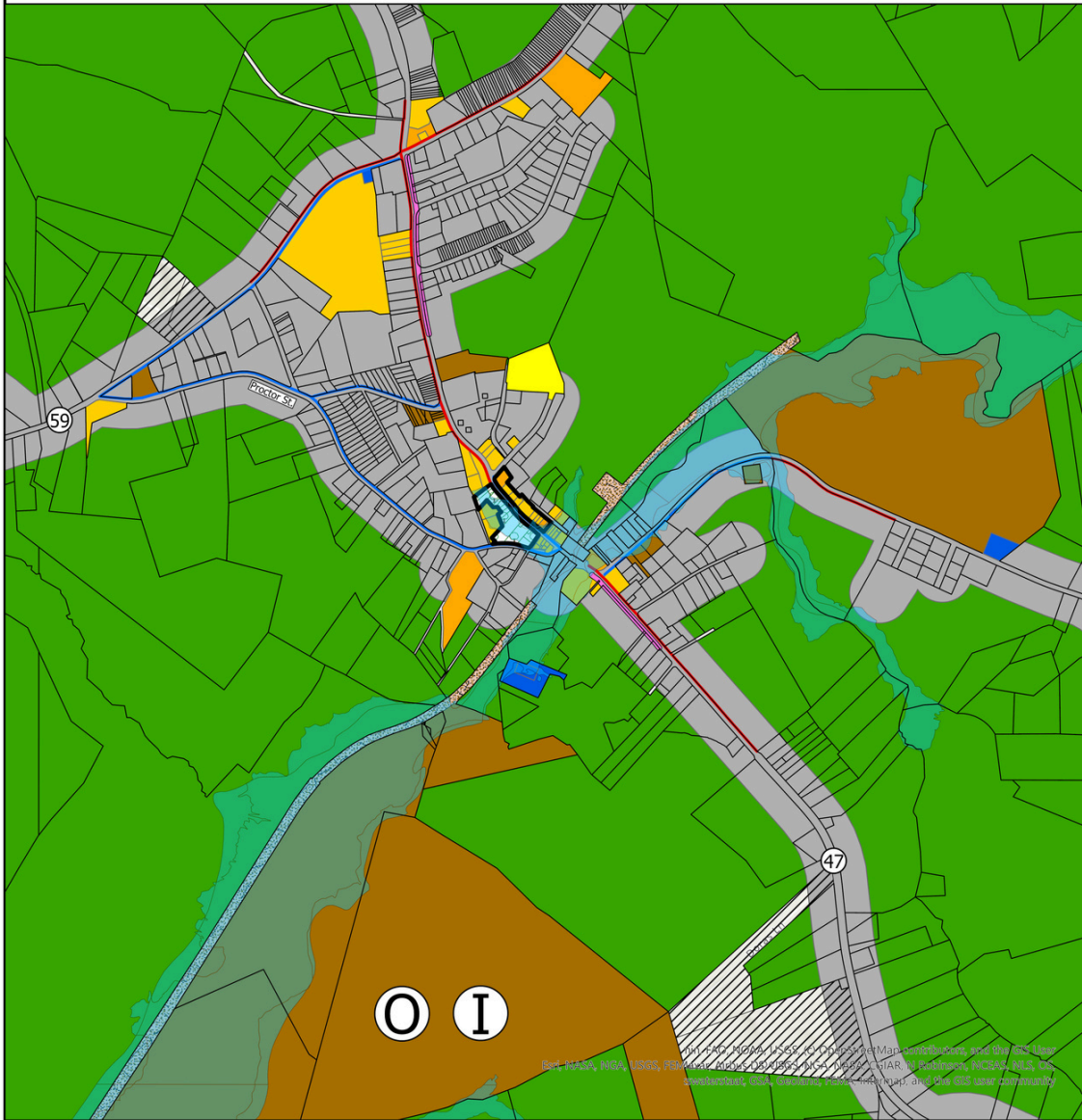
- **Locating Desired Facilities**

- Using different color markers, participants were invited to identify ideal locations for new or improved community facilities. Each letter corresponded to a different category of use. Not all categories were used in this exercise. These categories include:
 - Business and Job Centers (B)
 - Community and Recreational Facilities (C)
 - Grocery Stores (G)
 - Restaurants & Retail (R)
 - Multipurpose Trails (T)
 - Industry and Manufacturing (I)
 - Streetscape Improvements (S)
 - Preservation Areas (P)
 - Other / Special Requests (O)

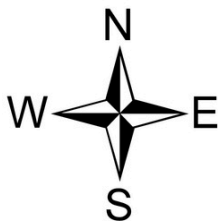
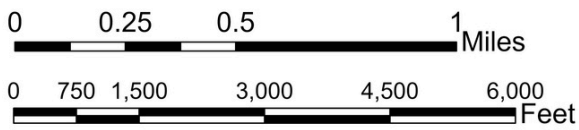
Participants labeled features using the appropriate letter codes and wrote in additional ideas as needed. The mapping exercise sparked valuable conversations about land use, redevelopment potential, infrastructure priorities, and the community’s broader vision for Drakes Branch.

The results from this activity were compiled into the following map, which reflects the combined input from all attendees and will serve as a visual guide for future planning efforts.

Drakes Branch



Map data: National Institute of Standards and Technology, Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, SwireHightop, General Electric, IGN, etc. Imagery © Mapbox, OpenStreetMap contributors, SwireHightop, etc. All rights reserved. © 2014 Esri, Inc. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.



Key

- S - Sidewalk
- B - Business Centers
- Growth Area
- Historical District

- O Other:
 1. Solar Farm
 2. Data Centers
- I Industry and Manufacturing Facilities

Zoned Areas

- A1 Agricultural
- B1 Light Business
- B2 General Business
- R1 Limited Residential
- R2 General Residential
- M1 Industrial
- Mixed R1, R2, A1
- WW Waste Water
- Walking Trail
- Preservation Area

Drakes Branch Comprehensive Plan

CITIZEN SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT



Prepared By:
Commonwealth Regional Council
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Executive Summary

The Drakes Branch Community Input Survey, conducted in summer 2025, gathered 49 responses from residents and stakeholders. The results provide valuable insight into the town's demographics, housing needs, satisfaction with public services, and economic opportunities. Key findings are outlined below.

Community Profile

Most survey respondents are long-time residents of Drakes Branch, with 34 living in town and 15 reporting residency of over 20 years. The population reflects a balance across age groups, though seniors (65+) and adults aged 50–64 made up the largest share of respondents. Homeownership is strong, with 42 out of 48 respondents owning their homes, primarily single-family dwellings.

Housing and Residency

Single-family housing remains the dominant form of housing, and residents expressed continued support for this type. However, there was also notable interest in diversifying the housing stock, particularly through senior housing options (14 mentions) and mixed-use housing over businesses (11 mentions). A smaller share of respondents supported alternatives such as townhomes, tiny homes, and modular housing.

Public Facilities and Community Services

Residents expressed high satisfaction with emergency services, especially fire protection, which received overwhelmingly positive ratings. Water, sewer, EMS, and waste management services were also rated positively. By contrast, ratings for town appearance, community events, and town communication leaned negative, signaling areas of concern. When asked to rank priorities for the future, residents placed the highest importance on fire and rescue (4.2), cell service (4.1), internet service (4.0), and public water and sewer (4.0).

Economy Results

The survey revealed that most retail spending leaves Drakes Branch, with 36 respondents saying that only 1–25% of their monthly retail spending occurs locally. Residents frequently shop outside the county for groceries, clothing, furniture, and dining. Local strengths include automotive repair and banking. When asked about desired businesses, respondents most often requested retail stores (22 mentions), restaurants (21 mentions), and a grocery store (21 mentions), along with additional services such as a pharmacy, professional services, and small lodging options.

Key Takeaways

- Drakes Branch residents are proud of their community's strong base of homeowners and long-term residents.
- There is broad support for maintaining single-family housing while also addressing needs for seniors and considering mixed-use development.
- Public services such as fire protection are viewed positively, but improvements are needed in appearance, events, and communications.
- Economic development efforts should focus on expanding retail, dining, and grocery options to capture more local spending.

Overall, the survey results provide a clear picture of resident priorities and highlight opportunities for growth and improvement as the Town of Drakes Branch updates its Comprehensive Plan.

Introduction & Methodology

To support the Town of Drakes Branch Comprehensive Plan update, the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) designed and administered a Community Input Survey in summer 2025. The survey was intended to capture resident opinions on housing, public facilities, community services, and economic development priorities.

Survey Distribution

- *Flyers Posted:* CRC staff developed and distributed survey flyers throughout the Town to raise awareness.
- *Utility Bill Inserts:* Printed flyers were provided to Town staff for inclusion in upcoming water bill mailings.
- *Paper Copies:* Hard-copy surveys were made available at the Drakes Branch Town Hall/Municipal Building for residents without internet access or who preferred a physical form.
- *Digital Access:* The survey was also distributed online to broaden participation.

Engagement

- The survey was launched following community input exercises at a May 28th public meeting, where residents participated in PARK (Preserve-Add-Remove-Keep) and Mapping activities to identify priorities.
- Input from those interactive sessions informed the survey questions, ensuring alignment with local concerns and planning needs.

Timeline

- *Launch:* July 2025
- *Promotion:* July-August 2025 through flyers, mailers, and Town Hall access.
- *Closure:* September 2025, when the survey was officially closed and responses compiled.

Participation

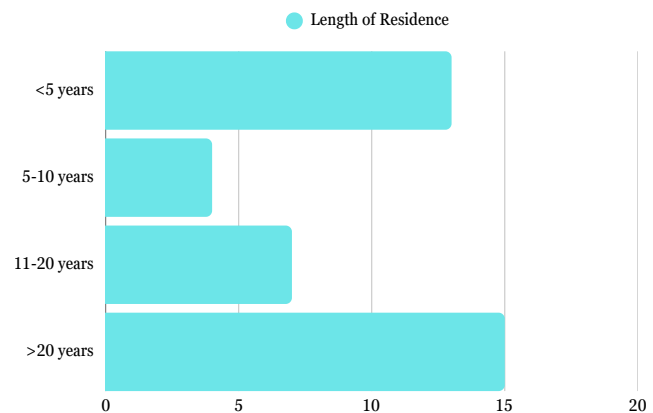
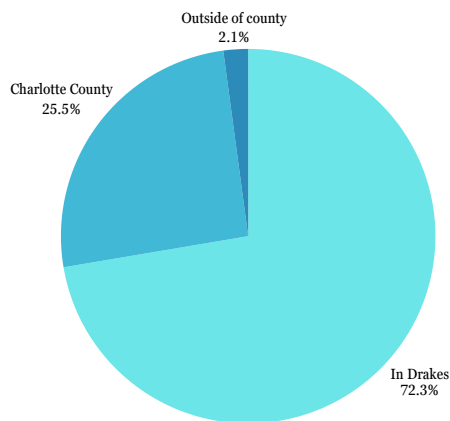
The Community Input Survey received a total of 49 responses, reflecting a diverse range of perspectives from residents.

Community Profile

The Community Input Survey responses reflect a diverse range of residents in and around the Town of Drakes Branch.

Residency

- **Majority Residents:** Most respondents (34) currently live in Drakes Branch, while 12 live elsewhere in Charlotte County, and 1 respondent lives outside the county.
- **Length of Residency:** The community includes both long-time and newer residents. Fifteen respondents have lived in Drakes Branch for more than 20 years, while 13 have lived there for less than 5 years. Seven respondents reported living in town for 11 to 20 years, and 4 for 5 to 10 years.

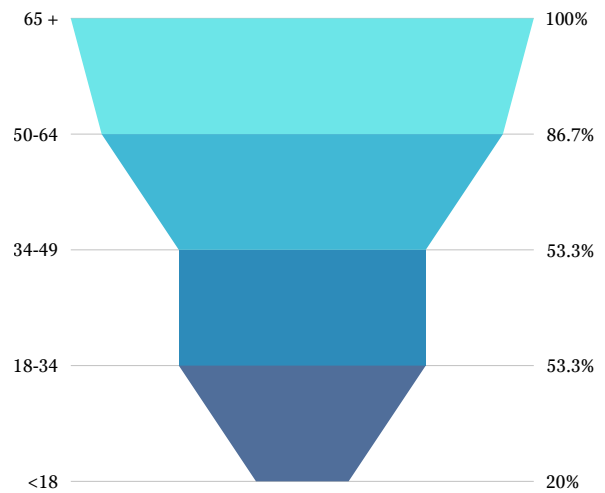


Work, Business, and Property Ownership

- **Employment in Town:** Only 8 respondents reported working in Drakes Branch, while 38 do not.
- **Business Ownership:** Just 3 respondents own a business in town, compared to 42 who do not.
- **Property Ownership:** A majority (28) reported owning property in Drakes Branch, while 16 do not.

Age Distribution

- The age profile shows strong representation across generations:
 - 65 or over: 15 respondents
 - 50 to 64: 13 respondents
 - 35 to 49: 8 respondents
 - 18 to 34: 8 respondents
 - Under 18: 3 respondents

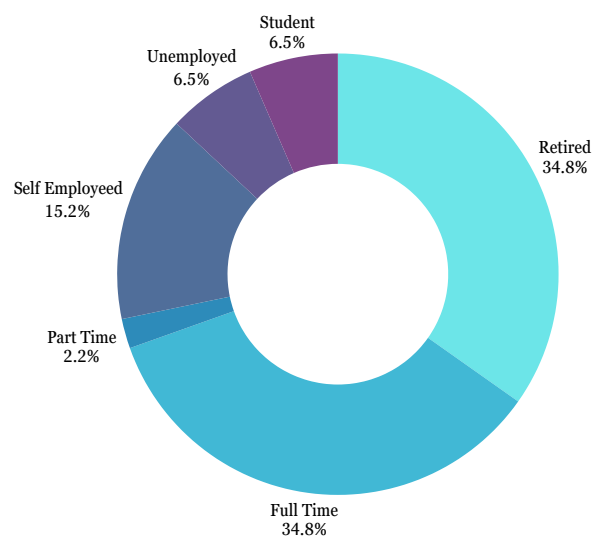


Housing Characteristics

- Housing Type: Nearly all respondents (43) live in single-family dwellings. A few live in apartments (2), mobile homes (1), or other arrangements (1).
- Tenure: Homeownership is dominant, with 42 respondents owning their homes and just 5 renting.

Employment Status

- The largest groups of respondents are retired (16) and full-time workers (16).
- Others include self-employed/business owners (7), students (3), not employed (3), and part-time workers (2).

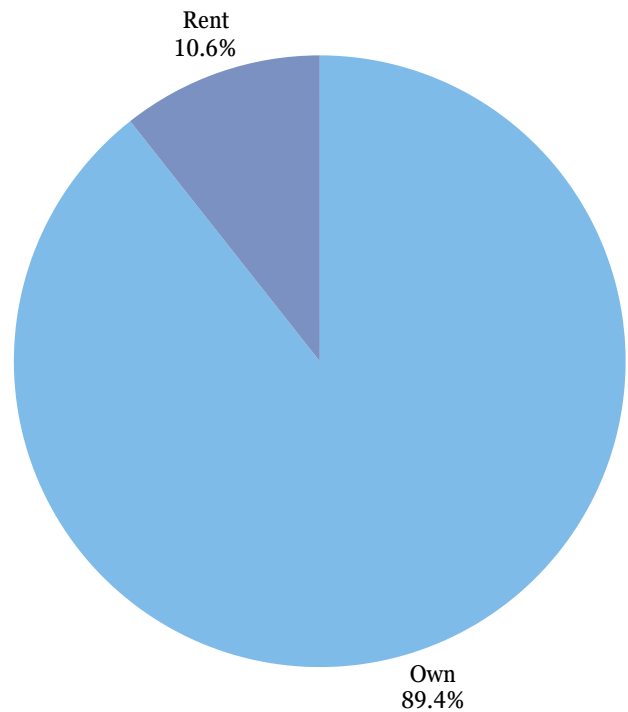
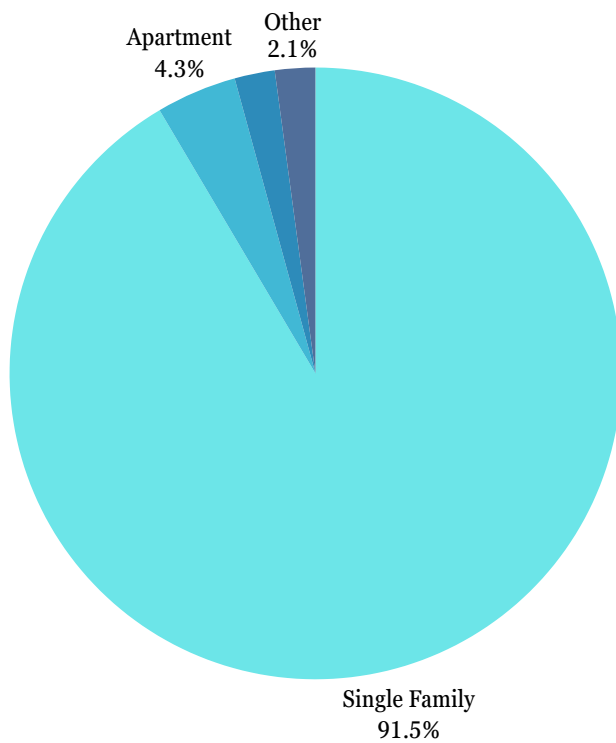


Housing and Residency

The survey results highlight both the current housing conditions in Drakes Branch and resident perspectives on future housing needs.

Current Housing Characteristics

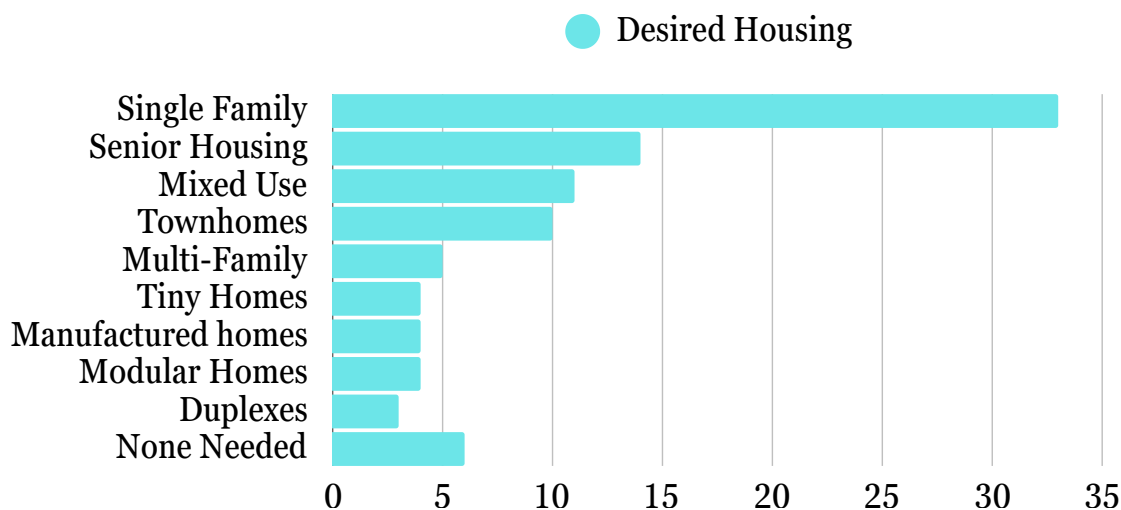
- *Housing Type*: The vast majority of respondents (43) live in single-family dwellings. A small number live in apartments (2), a mobile home (1), or other housing (1).
- *Tenure*: Homeownership is overwhelmingly dominant, with 42 respondents owning their homes and only 5 renting.



Desired Housing Stock

When asked what types of housing should be added in Drakes Branch, residents provided a mix of preferences:

- *Single Family Housing*: 33 mentions, showing strong support for continuing traditional housing.
- *Senior Housing Options*: 14 mentions, highlighting a need for age-friendly housing alternatives.
- *Mixed Use (Housing over businesses)*: 11 mentions, indicating interest in combining residential and commercial spaces.
- *Townhomes*: 10 mentions.
- *Multi-Family Housing Units (ex. Apartments)*: 5 mentions.
- *Tiny Homes*: 4 mentions.
- *Manufactured Homes*: 4 mentions.
- *Modular Homes (Double-Wide Trailers)*: 4 mentions.
- *Duplexes*: 3 mentions.
- *No Additional Housing Needed*: 6 respondents stated that the current stock is sufficient.



Key Insights

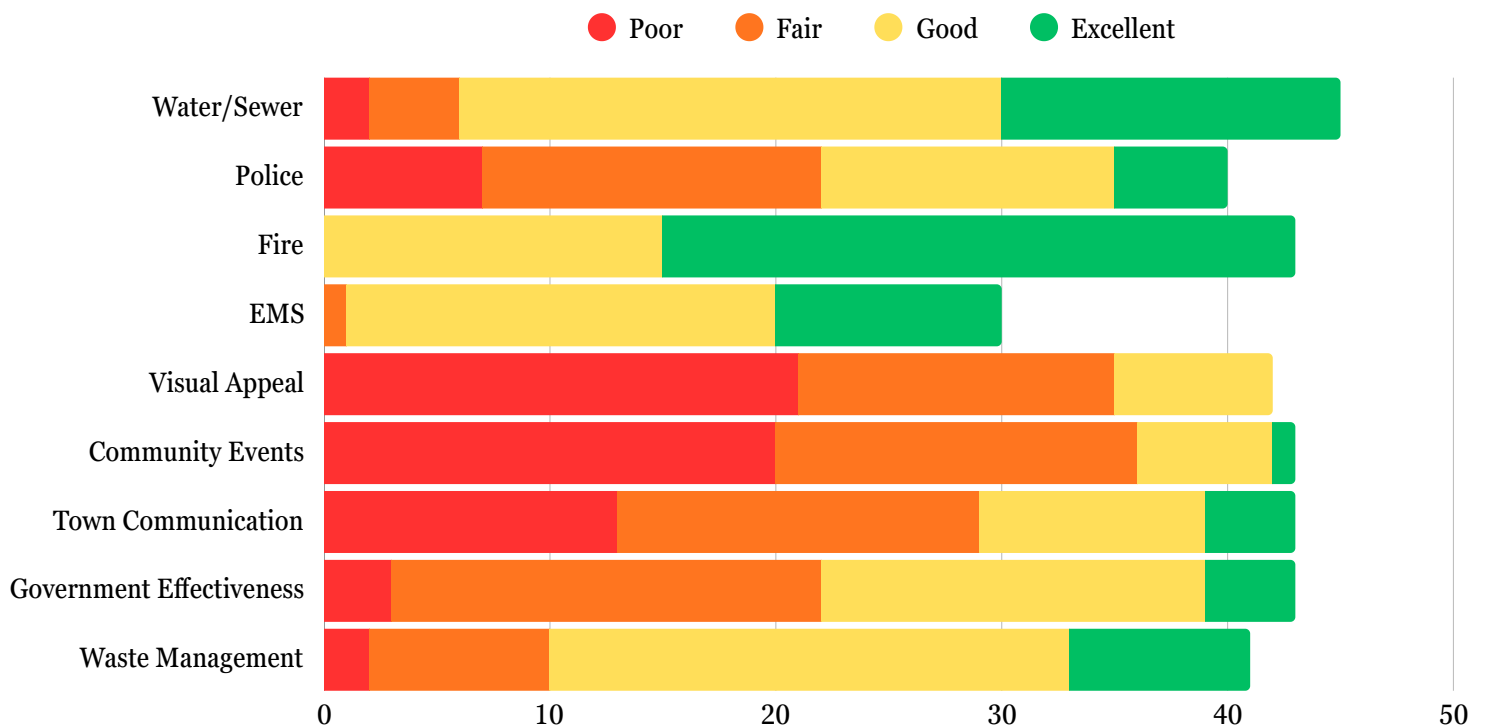
- Single-family housing remains the top priority, but there is also meaningful interest in diversifying housing stock, especially for seniors and through mixed-use development.
- A small but notable group of respondents expressed openness to alternative housing options such as townhomes, tiny homes, and modular housing.

Public Facilities and Community Services

Survey results show a wide range of satisfaction levels with existing town services, as well as clear resident priorities for future improvements.

Satisfaction with Town Services

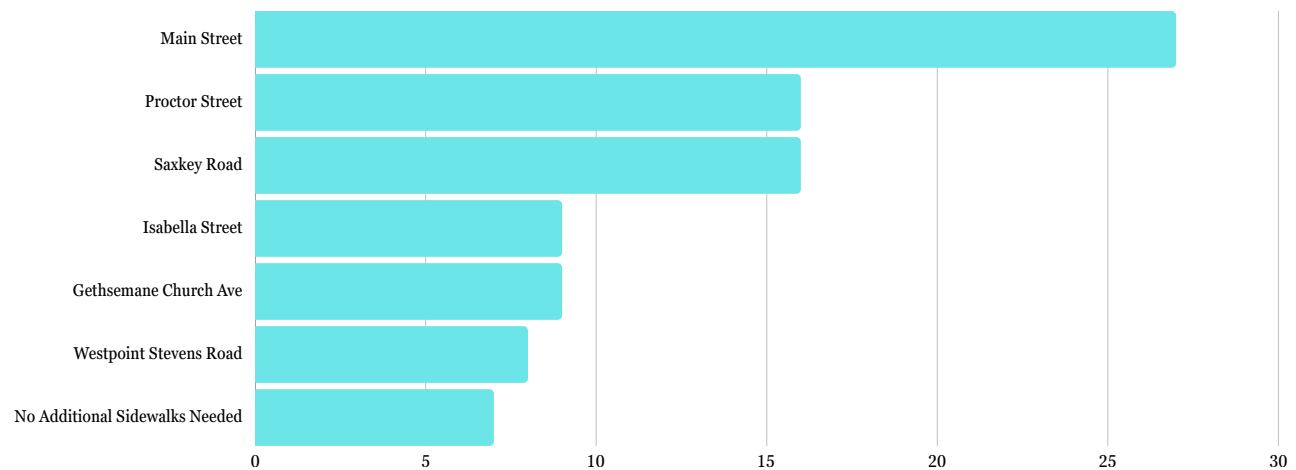
- *Water and Sewer*: Rated positively overall, with 24 respondents saying "Good" and 15 saying "Excellent." Only a handful rated services as "Fair" (4) or "Poor" (2).
- *Police Protection*: Ratings were mixed. While 13 rated police protection as "Good" and 5 as "Excellent," 15 rated it as "Fair" and 7 as "Poor."
- *Fire Protection*: Strongly positive ratings, with 28 "Excellent" and 15 "Good." Very few negative responses.
- *EMS*: Moderately positive, with 19 "Good" and 10 "Excellent." Only 1 rated it "Fair" and none rated it "Poor."
- *Visual Appearance of Drakes Branch*: Ratings leaned negative, with 21 "Poor" and 14 "Fair." Only 7 rated the appearance as "Good."
- *Community Events*: Responses were also negative overall, with 16 "Poor" and 20 "Fair." Very few rated events as "Good" (6) or "Excellent" (1).
- *Town Communication*: Mixed results, with 16 "Fair," 13 "Poor," 10 "Good," and only 4 "Excellent."
- *Town Government Effectiveness*: Generally balanced, with 19 "Fair," 17 "Good," 4 "Excellent," and 3 "Poor."
- *Waste Management*: One of the better-rated services, with 23 "Good," 8 "Fair," and 8 "Excellent." Only 2 rated it "Poor."



Sidewalk Expansion/Improvement Priorities

Residents were asked where they would like to see sidewalks expanded or improved. The most common responses were:

- Main Street – most frequently mentioned location.
- Proctor Street – frequently requested.
- Saxkey Road – frequently requested.
- Isabella Street – mentioned multiple times.
- Westpoint Stevens Road – noted by several respondents.
- Gethsemane Church Ave – mentioned occasionally.
- No Additional Sidewalks Needed – several respondents indicated they did not feel more sidewalks were necessary.



Desired Community Services & Amenities

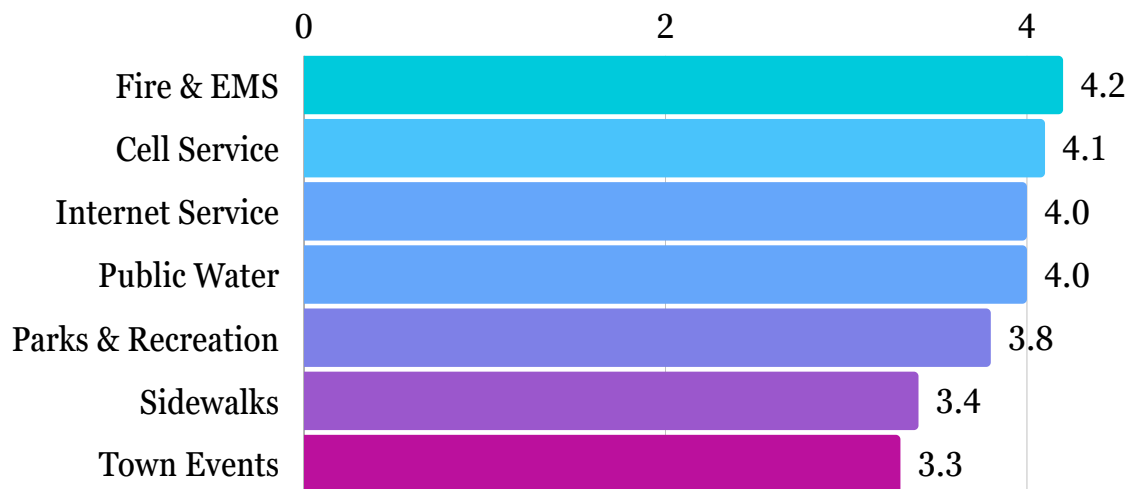
Residents identified a range of services and amenities they'd like to see added in Drakes Branch. The most common were:

- Walking Trails – overwhelmingly the top request.
- Expanded Sidewalk System – consistently mentioned.
- Outdoor Space for Events, Concerts, and Gatherings – highly requested.
- Parks/Playgrounds – frequently mentioned.
- Community/Recreational Center – noted by many respondents.
- Community Garden – suggested several times.
- Community Theater – mentioned occasionally.

Improvement Priorities (Average Scores, 1-5)

Residents were asked to rank priorities for improving public facilities and services. The highest priorities identified were:

- Fire and Rescue – 4.2
- Cell Phone Service – 4.1
- Internet Service – 4.0
- Public Water and Sewer – 4.0
- Parks and Recreation – 3.8
- Sidewalks – 3.4
- Town Events – 3.3



Key Insights

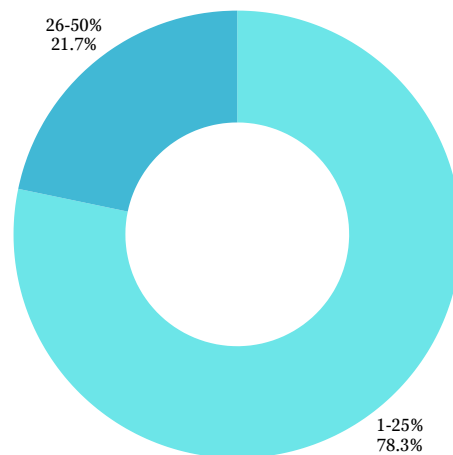
- Emergency services (fire, EMS, rescue) were rated highly and remain a top priority for residents.
- Town appearance, events, and communication received some of the lowest satisfaction scores, suggesting areas in need of attention.
- Infrastructure priorities center on improving utilities (water, sewer, internet, cell service) alongside recreation and sidewalks.

Drakes Branch Economy Results

Survey responses highlight both the current shopping patterns of residents and their preferences for future business development in Drakes Branch.

Local Spending

- A large majority of respondents (36) indicated that only 1–25% of their monthly retail spending occurs within Drakes Branch.
- Another 10 respondents said they spend 26–50% of their retail dollars locally.
- This suggests that most household spending is leaving the town, underscoring an opportunity to strengthen the local economy.



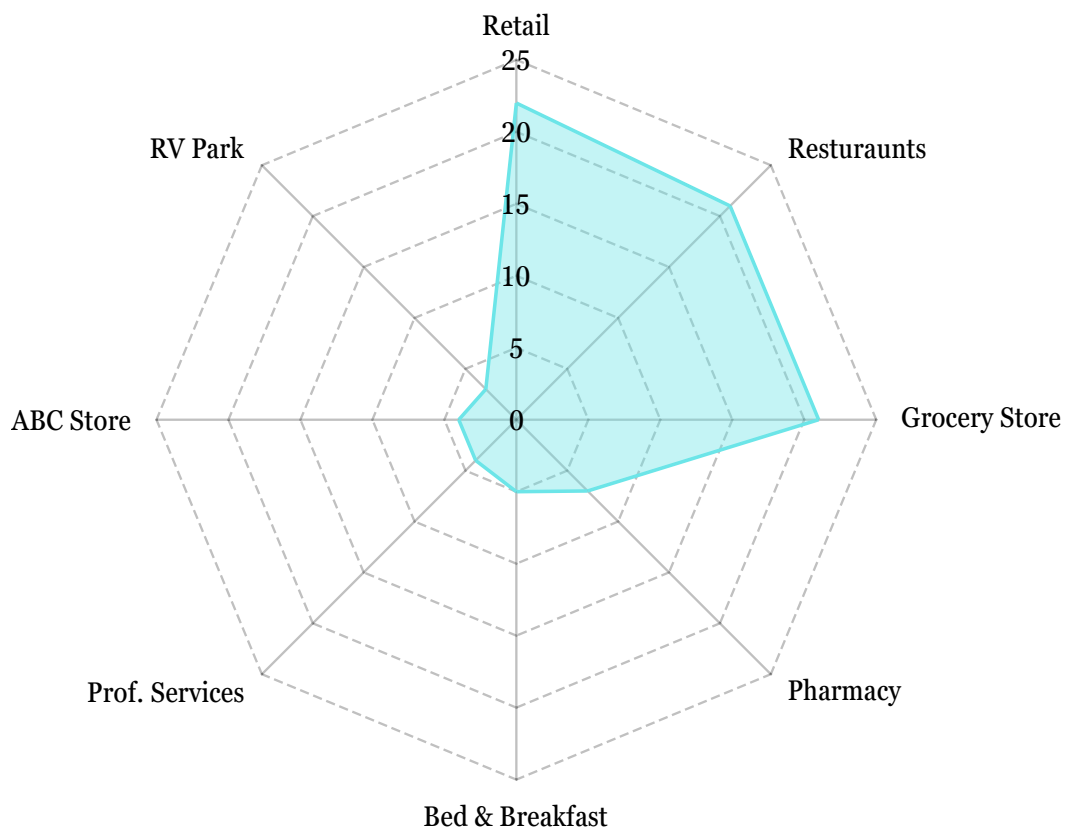
Shopping Patterns

- Groceries: Most residents shop in Charlotte County (28) or outside the county (12). Only 1 respondent reported buying groceries in Drakes Branch.
- Pharmacies: Split between Charlotte County (23) and outside the county (18).
- Automobiles (Sales): Most go outside the county (29).
- Automotive Repair: Drakes Branch shows strength here, with 23 respondents using local services.
- Furniture & Clothing: Overwhelmingly purchased outside the county (38 for furniture, 36 for clothing).
- Banking: More balanced—18 respondents use Drakes Branch banks, 20 go outside the county, and 6 use Charlotte County.
- Restaurants & Fast Food: Most residents travel outside the county for dining (34 for restaurants, 28 for fast food).
- Personal Services (dentist, hair, etc.): Primarily outside the county (31), with 13 choosing Charlotte County.

Desired Business and Industry

Residents expressed strong interest in expanding local business options:

- Retail: 22 mentions
- Restaurants: 21 mentions
- Grocery Store: 21 mentions
- Pharmacy: 7 mentions
- Bed & Breakfast / Small Hotels: 5 mentions
- Professional Services: 4 mentions
- ABC Store: 4 mentions
- RV Park: 3 mentions



Key Insights

- Drakes Branch residents currently shop elsewhere for most goods and services, especially furniture, clothing, and dining.
- The strength in local automotive repair and banking suggests existing assets to build on.
- Clear community demand exists for restaurants, retail, and a grocery store, which could help retain more local spending.