



Figure ES-1: Future Land Use Map

3. Introducing Greater Flexibility for Land Use Patterns

While the Land Use Element does raise expectations for development quality, there are also provisions in the Plan which remove present regulatory impediments and introduce greater flexibility and opportunities for innovation in design to respond to market preferences. For example, in urban and suburban locations of the County, the plan provides opportunities for increased density, a wider array of housing types and mixed use options that are not currently available, such as subdivisions which include “walk-to” neighborhood commercial uses and a variety of housing types to appeal to changing lifestyles, an aging population and changing housing preferences. Likewise, in rural areas landowners and developers will have the choice to cluster development on smaller lots in conservation development, which promotes voluntary retention of scenic rural open space by offering a greater number of smaller clustered lots in return for the protection of the open space. In addition, this element recommends the creation of a new optional agricultural zoning district, with a density of one (1) dwelling unit per no less than 40 acres, as a tool available to landowners who wish to protect prime agricultural land.

In the Plan, these are offered as options to more flexibly respond to market preferences as land owners, developers and builders see fit, and should not be interpreted as mandates.