

## **CHAPTER 3: HENRICO TODAY**

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Before creating a plan, it is important to first understand where the county is today, what forces have shaped it over the years, and how the county is likely to change in the future. This chapter assesses existing population and development trends, including a planning forecast overview of forecasts for planning purposes. This chapter also presents a brief overview of the existing public services, utilities and infrastructure conditions. Additional information on these topics is also presented in the individual Plan chapters and Appendices.

### **POPULATION**

Henrico County has sustained a period of steady population growth for over thirty (30) years, with an average annual population increase of about two percent (2%). From 1990 to 2000, the county grew by approximately twenty percent (20%), from a population of 221,287 to 267,024. The fact Henrico County has maintained such a steady percentage of growth over such an extended period of time is a good indicator that future population should continue to grow at a similar rate. The county annually prepares an assessment of population and housing growth in the *Continuing, Comprehensive and Coordinated Transportation Data Report (3-C Report)*. Based on the approved *2006 3-C Report*, the county's estimated population was 299,443. Additional information on population composition and trends is provided in Appendix A: Demand Analysis.

### **HOUSING**

The *2006 3-C Report* established that approximately sixty-six percent (66%) of household populations were living in detached single-family units and the other thirty-four percent (34%) were living in multi-family or attached units. The total housing stock in the county at the end of 2006 was estimated to be 125,972 units (up from 123,457 recorded in 2005) with 82,577 single-family units and 43,395 multi-family units, which included attached and owner-occupied units. Both single- and multi-family housing units had relatively low vacancy rates. Estimates show that non-apartment vacancy rates were around 1.6% and apartments had vacancy rates of 6.0%. Additional information on housing characteristics is provided in Appendix C: Demographics.

### **EMPLOYMENT**

In 1990, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported that Henrico County had 142,290 jobs, and by 2000 employment had reached 194,040 jobs. This is a forty-four percent (44%) increase in the number of jobs in the county during this ten (10) year period. County employment increased at a greater rate than the growth of the population, which increased approximately twenty percent (20%) during the same period. Employment sectors that showed the greatest growth from 1990 to 2000 included Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Services. Farm Employment, Mining and Federal Military Government were sectors that lost jobs over this same time period.

## LAND USE

The changing demographics, changes in housing market demand and new developments in technology have contributed to changing land use patterns over the last fifteen (15) years. The county has seen steady influxes of both new residents and new businesses, creating an increase in the percentage of developed land in the county. Areas considered relatively rural in the 1980’s and the early part of the 1990’s are now thriving suburban communities. Growth brings with it both challenges and benefits, and the changing land use patterns reflect a decade of strong growth.

Information from the *1990 and 2006 3-C Reports* were compared to identify changes in the county’s land use patterns. **Table HT-1** (below) illustrates the existing 2006 land use inventory and compares it to the data from 1990. The Existing Land Use Map also illustrates current land use patterns.

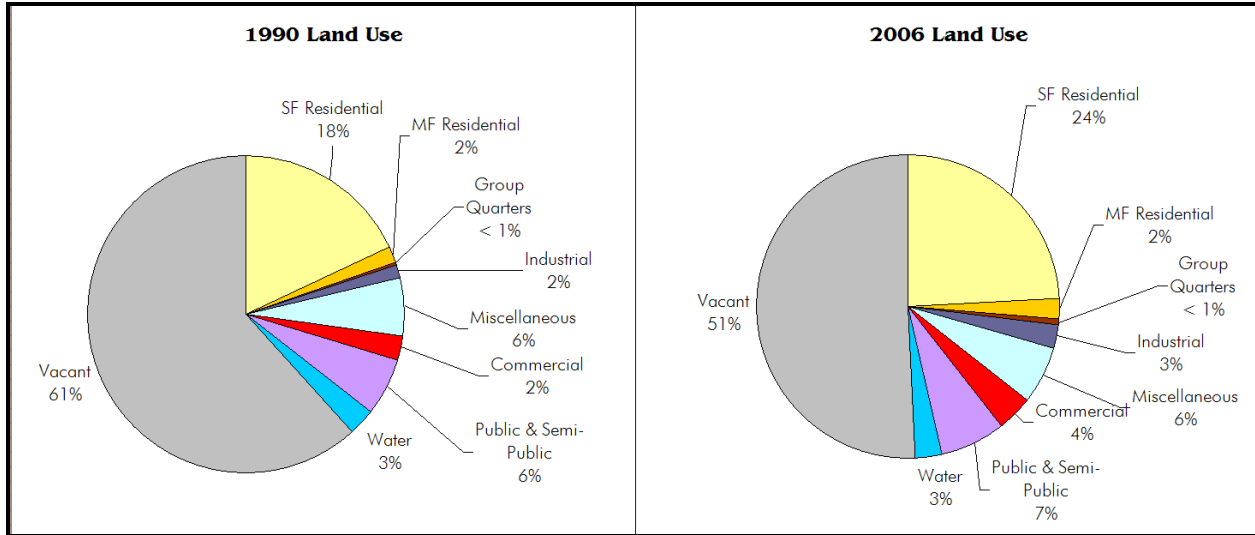
**TABLE HT-1: CHANGE IN LAND USE ACREAGE BETWEEN 1990 AND 2006**

|                                  | 1990      | 2006       | Change     |         |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------|---------|
|                                  |           |            | Actual     | Percent |
| <b>Population</b>                | 221,287.0 | 299,443.00 | 78,156.00  | 35.32%  |
| <b>Housing Units</b>             | 95,420.0  | 125,972.00 | 30,552.00  | 32.02%  |
| <b>Acreage:</b>                  |           |            |            |         |
| <b>Single-Family Residential</b> | 28,072.6  | 37,626.94  | 9,554.34   | 34.03%  |
| <b>Multi-Family Residential</b>  | 2,882.5   | 3,801.15   | 918.65     | 31.87%  |
| <b>Group Quarters</b>            | 270.6     | 459.8      | 189.20     | 69.92%  |
| <b>Industrial</b>                | 2,514.1   | 4,028.72   | 1,514.62   | 60.25%  |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>             | 8,928.4   | 9,549.62   | 621.22     | 6.96%   |
| <b>Commercial</b>                | 3,810.6   | 6,061.73   | 2,251.13   | 59.08%  |
| <b>Public &amp; Semi-Public</b>  | 9,181.3   | 10,910.89  | 1,729.59   | 18.84%  |
| <b>Water</b>                     | 4,341.4   | 4,353.00   | 11.60      | 0.27%   |
| <b>Vacant</b>                    | 96,199.1  | 79,446.32  | -16,752.78 | -17%    |

Source: 1990 3-C Report, 2006 3-C Report.

The charts presented in **Figure HT-1** illustrate the percentage of land use change by type between 1990 and 2006. The charts show these uses as a percentage of the overall county acreage, which is just over 156,000 acres. In 2006, due to a boundary shift with Goochland County, Henrico County gained 37.58 acres.

FIGURE HT-1: 1990 AND 2006 PERCENTAGE OF EXISTING LAND USES



Source: 1990 3-C Report, 2006 3-C Report.

Most of the land in the county is classified as "vacant" even though a significant amount of this land may be in agricultural use. As expected, the amount of land classified as "vacant" has been decreasing: at the end of 1990, sixty-one percent (61%) of the county was classified as vacant; by the end of 2006, this figure stood at fifty-one percent (51%). It should be noted that not all "vacant" land can be considered "developable" since it includes areas in flood plain, wetlands and other sensitive lands, which are otherwise restricted in terms of development. A detailed Capacity Analysis which accounted for these constrained areas is included in Appendix B. The second largest land use category, by acreage, is single-family residential. While single-family residential land use did not grow at the fastest rate, it did achieve the greatest gain as a percentage of all land uses during the time period studied.

**Table HT-1** also illustrates that the group quarters residential land use category increased at a greater rate than single-family uses; however, its percentage of overall land use remained the same. This difference can be partly attributed to the increased demand for assisted living facilities, reflecting a growing number of residents requiring these services. This increase helps Henrico County as it strives to provide a variety of housing options.

Both commercial (retail and office uses) and industrial land uses increased by over fifty percent (50%) and were among the highest growth rate categories. Increases in these two (2) categories depict the health of the nonresidential sector of Henrico County's economy. Overall, existing land uses are typical of a suburban locality with a balanced economy. While the single-family uses may be the most prevalent, they have not dominated to the point where Henrico has become a bedroom community.



EXISTING LAND USE MAP

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## **NATURAL, CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Henrico County is rich in natural, cultural and historic resources. A vast array of conditions and features contribute to the natural, cultural and historic context of the county. Among these are the county's unique geology, which includes wetlands, varied topography, the Chickahominy and James Rivers, and lands within Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas. The county's geographic location and proximity to Richmond have resulted in a rich resource of cultural and historic landmarks including national battlefields. In order to ensure sustainability, these resources must be balanced with economic development. Many of the resources are accounted for in the Capacity Analysis and other Plan policies.

## **RECREATION & PARKS**

The Division of Recreation and Parks exists to enhance the quality of life and foster a sense of well-being and community for the citizens of Henrico County. This is accomplished through management of resources and by facilitating leisure services and recreational opportunities in safe and well-maintained environments. The Division offers a variety of quality programs and facilities, which change seasonally to meet the leisure needs of Henrico residents. The Division has a full-time staff of one-hundred seventy (170) with an additional three-hundred (300) seasonal part-time employees. To accomplish their objectives, the Division is composed of three (3) sections: Recreation Services, Park Services and Administration.

**The Recreation Services Section** manages programs for the residents of the county in the areas of general community, youth, senior adults, outdoors, special events, sports, therapeutics, nature, history, historic preservation and cultural arts. This section also provides training and expertise to youth and adult sports associations. In addition, this section manages the following county facilities: Belmont, Confederate Hills, Deep Run, Dorey, Hidden Creek and Twin Hickory Recreation Centers, as well as Three Lakes Nature Center and Aquarium, the Armour House and Gardens, the Henrico Theatre, the museum at Meadow Farm/Crump Park, Osborne Landing and Deep Bottom boat ramps, Belmont Golf Course and Walkerton Tavern.

**The Park Services Section** oversees the county's park system of over 3,569 acres and maintains the Division's athletic and recreation facilities including turf management for athletic fields. Furthermore, this section is responsible for the maintenance of county historic facilities, including the Clarke-Palmore House, Cedar Hill, the Armour House, Meadow Farm and Walkerton.

**The Administration Section** oversees all personnel, fiscal and technology management issues, provides planning, research, and project management related to the development of new facilities and programs, and provides community relations and marketing. The Division of Recreation and Parks also oversees two (2) Citizen Advisory Committees appointed by the Board of Supervisors: the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission and the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Henrico County's goal has always been to provide outstanding public services to attract new residents and businesses. The following is a brief summary of the various county services and agencies, which contribute to Henrico County's high quality of life. Additional levels of service details and operational information is provided in Chapter 11: Public Facilities & Utilities.

### Schools

The county is served by the Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) system which has risen to the challenge of a growing population. The school system has welcomed approximately 16,500 new students since 1990 while managing to increase the level of educational services and reduce class sizes in elementary schools (where many of the new students have entered the system). Class sizes in both elementary and secondary schools are between twenty (20) and twenty-two (22) pupils/teacher.

The school system consists of seventy (70) facilities and includes:

- Forty-five (45) elementary schools,
- Thirteen (13) middle schools,
- Nine (9) high schools, and
- Three (3) technical centers

In the fall of 2006 HCPS employed 6,206 employees, of which 3,634 were teachers who averaged twelve (12) years teaching experience. HCPS actively works with other departments in the county to plan for future growth and a continued level of excellence.

### Division of Police

The Division of Police is primarily responsible for traditional law enforcement duties and protection of county residents and businesses through the latest philosophies of community policing, crime prevention through environmental design, and the use of computer technologies to analyze crime data and assist in police management. The Division of Police has three (3) major commands: Uniform Operations, Investigative Operations and Support Operations.

**Uniform (or Community) Operations** provides twenty-four (24)-hour uniformed response to calls, provides patrol activities, traffic and criminal law enforcement, and preliminary investigation of certain criminal offenses. This is the largest Division section.

**Investigative Operations** is primarily responsible for criminal investigations, organized crime/covert section, and specialized aerial, canine, and marine patrols. Additionally, Investigative Operations oversees the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) special services unit, school resources, crossing guards, community officers, crime prevention and neighborhood watch.



**Support Operations** is primarily responsible for the operation of Emergency Communications. The command is also responsible for fleet and property management, warrants, personnel, training academy, and firing range operation, plus a research and development unit, police planning, animal protection, and management of the animal shelter.

The Division of Police operates out of two (2) District Headquarters. District I which serves the eastern portion of the county and is currently headquartered in the Fair Oaks facility on Eastpark Court. This facility became operational in 2004 and replaced the district headquarters formerly at Dabbs House. District II encompasses the western portion of the county and is headquartered at the Public Safety Building at the intersection of Parham and Shrader Roads. This facility also serves as the Division's main headquarters. The Henrico Animal Protection Unit is located near the county's Eastern Government Center. In 2004, District II was divided into West and Central Stations. No new facilities were immediately constructed for this new station area. Additional information on the capital facilities for the Division of Police is included in Chapter 11: Public Facilities and Utilities.

The Henrico County Division of Police is nationally accredited with eight-hundred eighteen (818) authorized positions, and operates its own academy producing well-trained and highly qualified officers.

### Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff is elected at-large by county residents and the position is a legislated constitutional officer pursuant to *Code of Virginia §15.2-1600*. The Sheriff's Office is one of the Commonwealth's largest with a 2006 roster of two-hundred seventy-nine (279) sworn and forty (40) civilian staff. The Sheriff's Office is responsible for the security of the county's two (2) regional jails, the courthouse and fourteen (14) judges and administering the civil process. The county's jails have capacity for housing approximately six-hundred seventy-seven (677) inmates in the western facility and five-hundred twenty-eight (528) inmates in the eastern facility. In 2006, the average daily population was 1,226, representing an average holding of just over 101.7 percent (101.7%) of capacity. Expanded housing for female inmates, particularly special purpose housing, is desired.

### Division of Fire

The Henrico County Division of Fire is a component of the Public Safety Department. The Division of Fire responds to all types of emergencies including: fire, medical, hazardous materials and water emergencies. There are four-hundred ninety-nine (499) career firefighters and twenty-one (21) support positions responsible for the countywide protection. The Division currently operates out of twenty (20) fire stations located throughout the county. Additional information on the capital facilities for the Division of Fire is included in Chapter 11: Public Facilities & Utilities.

## Libraries

The Henrico County Public Libraries provide free access to collections of information in a variety of media formats. They also provide reference and information services in person, by phone and by email. Computer services and software are provided to the public free of charge.

The Library System provides information services at eleven (11) locations including:

- Five (5) branch libraries,
- Four (4) area libraries,
- The municipal government and law library, and
- A bookmobile.

The Library facilities offer a unique and unparalleled resource to the community by providing public meeting spaces, educational resources and informal community gathering areas.

As the county's population has continued to grow, the Library System has responded with increased hours of operation and expansion of collection materials. The Library System currently has one-hundred seventy-two (172) permanent full and part-time employees and forty (40) hourly employees.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Henrico County's transportation system includes the road network, public transportation, airport services, rail travel and pedestrian travel. The county's road network is the most conspicuous of these modes of travel. Henrico County is one (1) of only two (2) counties in Virginia that is responsible for the roadways within its jurisdiction, with the exception of State routes and interstates. The roadways are managed by the Department of Public Works, which oversees the design, construction, and maintenance of the system. The Department is responsible for developing, improving and maintaining an efficient and safe transportation network and ensures that all engineering, construction and maintenance work for roads and transit service meets acceptable, achievable standards through the efficient use of capital expenditures.

### Roads

In 2006, the county had eight-hundred thirty-three (833) lane miles of roadways which are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and 3,225 lane miles of roadways which are maintained by the county.

### Public Transportation

Public transportation in Henrico County is provided by the Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) which has regularly scheduled stops along major transportation routes in the county. Transit service operates Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. GRTC also provides express park-and-ride service. Express buses serve four (4) park-and-ride facilities in the county and

provide peak hour transit service for commuters to and from downtown Richmond. GRTC's specialized transportation for the disabled provides curb-to-curb service from 6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., seven (7) days a week. Curb-to-curb para-transit is also provided for qualified county residents who are unable to use the fixed-route services.

### Rail Travel

An Amtrak station is located on Staples Mill Road and is one (1) of the three (3) stations serving the Richmond Metro area. Access is provided to the national Amtrak network via the Carolinian and Piedmont, Regional, and Silver Service/Palmetto routes. Ticketing and service is available twenty-four (24)-hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

### Airport Services

The Richmond International Airport is located in Henrico County and serves Central Virginia's air transportation needs, with service from nine (9) airlines providing over two-hundred (200) daily flights. Passengers can fly non-stop to over twenty-two (22) domestic destinations. With one (1) stop, passengers can fly to/from Richmond to major destinations world-wide. For those wishing to send cargo by air, Richmond International Airport's cargo facilities are growing at a fast rate. With over one (1) million square feet of cargo space, Richmond is poised to meet the increased demand for air cargo services. The airport is located in the eastern portion of the county and is easily accessed via Interstate-64, Interstate-295 and U.S. Route 60.

The airport is owned and operated by the Capital Regional Airport Commission, which is an independent governmental entity overseen by a fourteen (14) member multi-jurisdictional appointed commission. The Airport Commission includes members from Henrico, Hanover and Chesterfield Counties and the City of Richmond.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

The Department of Public Utilities manages the water and sewer utilities, as well as solid waste and recycling. The following is a general overview.

### Water and Sewer Services

Water and sewer services are provided to residents and businesses as new development occurs. New development may require additional infrastructure or infrastructure improvements, which developers are responsible for constructing and funding. Development outside the system may require new infrastructure, which developers are responsible for constructing and funding.

In 2007, the Department of Public Utilities provided water to 92,070 customers. The water system consists of approximately 1,400 miles of water mains and 11,221 total hydrants. Water is drawn from the James River and treated at the county's Water Treatment Plant which has the ability to produce fifty-five million

gallons of potable water per day (55 mgd), with an additional thirty-five million gallons per day (35 mgd) available from the City of Richmond.

The sewer system reaches 90,323 customers through 1,420 miles of sewer mains, which lead to the county's wastewater treatment plant (Water Reclamation Facility). The Facility has the capacity to treat seventy-five million gallons per day (75 mgd).

### Solid Waste

The Department of Public Utilities' Division of Solid Waste provides solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services throughout the county. The Division also provides subscription trash collection to over 35,000 homes. Subscription customers voluntarily sign up for the service and pay charges as part of their monthly utility bill. Bulky waste such as old furniture and appliances are collected when requested for a separate fee. Recycling is collected curbside at 80,000 homes through the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority. In addition, twelve (12) fire stations have drop-off centers for paper, glass, and metal recyclables.

There are also two (2) public use areas with a more extensive recycling drop-off station. Public use areas are located in both eastern and western Henrico and offer recycling, waste disposal and other services to residents. The public use areas are used approximately 300,000 times each year for recycling and waste disposal. The Solid Waste Division also operates a landfill in the western area of the county. Each year the landfill accepts 100,000 tons of commercial waste from Henrico customers and the county's own operations (household refuse collection, construction, and county building refuse).

## **FORECASTS FOR PLANNING**

A series of forecasts were prepared for planning purposes based on historic trends in population, housing, and employment growth for planning purposes. The detailed methodology and trend information is provided in Appendix A: Demand Analysis. The consistent two percent (2%) annual population growth identified from historic trends is a good growth indicator for the next twenty (20) years. Key trends that may affect this rate are changes in the economy, and the level of development. As levels of available land decrease over time, the county may experience a slight slowing in the rate of growth.

### Population Forecasts

Several scenarios were forecasted to 2030 to establish a range for the future population. The selected scenario from the analysis employs a declining growth rate over the planning period. The recommended population forecasts are illustrated in **Table HT-2**.

**TABLE HT-2: RECOMMENDED POPULATION FORECASTS (FIVE YEAR INCREMENTS)**

| 2006*   | 2010    | 2015    | 2020    | 2025    | 2030    |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 299,443 | 320,463 | 345,901 | 370,537 | 394,223 | 416,846 |

| New Population Per Period |           |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 2006-2010                 | 2010-2015 | 2015-2020 | 2020-2025 | 2025-2030 | 2006-2030 |
| 21,020                    | 25,438    | 24,636    | 23,686    | 22,623    | 117,403   |

NOTES FOR TABLE

\*Accepted 2006 3-C estimated population

Source: Appendix A: Demand Analysis, Table 3

These population forecasts established the basis for estimating the demand for housing units and nonresidential land and building area. Because the population is forecasted to grow by over 117,000 people (2006-2030), the estimates for housing unit forecasts show a demand for over 48,600 new housing units by 2030. The estimated residential demand is shown in **Table HT-3** by housing type. These estimates reflect structure type and not ownership. (Single-family attached units include townhouses and condominiums, while apartments are included in multi-family units.)

**TABLE HT-3: NEW HOUSING DEMAND FORECAST**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| <b>Total Residential Unit Demand (New Units)</b> | 48,653 |
| <b>Single-Family</b>                             | 31,357 |
| <b>Multi-Family Units</b>                        | 17,296 |

Source: Appendix A: Demand Analysis, Table 10.

**Nonresidential Demand**

The demand for nonresidential development was forecasted using a comparison of the population forecasts to employment forecasts. The forecasted employees were then translated into demand for building area in commercial/retail, office, or industrial flex categories. **Table HT-4** shows the forecasted demand for nonresidential building area.

**TABLE HT-4: NONRESIDENTIAL DEMAND FORECAST (2030)**

|                          | 2006 Square Feet (Estimated Inventory) | Total Demand in 2030 | Demand for New Building Area |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Commercial/Retail</b> | 27,323,808                             | 39,170,221           | 11,846,413                   |
| <b>Office</b>            | 34,653,657                             | 54,881,079           | 20,227,422                   |
| <b>Industrial</b>        | 24,953,501                             | 32,838,261           | 7,884,760                    |
| <b>Total</b>             | 86,930,966                             | 126,889,561          | 39,958,595                   |

Source: Appendix A: Demand Analysis, Tables 15 and 17.

These forecasts were used to evaluate the feasibility of future land uses as presented in this Plan. The practicality of the Plan can be gauged by assessing its ability to accommodate anticipated growth. The forecasts were also used to help develop policies related to growth. These figures are presented for planning purposes and only reflect an estimate of what may happen in the future. Actual county growth will

be influenced by a number of outside factors. Fluctuations in the national and local economy, as well as development policies that are adopted can influence the future population, housing, and employment growth.

In planning for this forecasted growth and its impacts, the following Vision, Goals and Objectives were established to create a blueprint for the development of the Plan's policies.