



PRESERVING CHATHAM COUNTY'S RURAL AESTHETIC

According to Chatham
County resident polling:

Maintaining rural character
ranked #1 as we develop
our area

Trees are a major component
of any rural landscape




Our current rules for development do little to protect existing tree cover.



There is enormous pressure
to build along our county
corridors





Our rules for development need
to be changed to keep more of
our existing tree cover

A dirt path winds through a lush green forest. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a bright, airy atmosphere. The path is surrounded by dense foliage and tall trees. The text "And preserve our rural character" is overlaid in white with a slight shadow effect.

And preserve our
rural character

Appearance Commission
members have determined
the best way
to protect our corridors:

A Visual Mapping
of Existing Trees


Why Aerial Mapping?

**With this terrific tool we can show
developers examples of good buffer
practices**



**As well as undesirable
buffer practices**





**Excessive Tree
Removal Causes
Unwanted
Expensive
Problems:**

- Flooding
- Polluted—Sediment filled water (*much more expensive to treat*)
- Diminished Wind Protection
- Reduced Carbon Sequestration
- Lack of Noise Reduction

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, leafy trees. Sunlight is filtering through the canopy, creating a bright, hazy atmosphere. The foreground is filled with green grass and small plants. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Advantages of
Ensuring
Heavy Tree Cover:**

Improved Marketability
Greater Noise Buffering
Higher Carbon Sequestration
Reduced Flooding
Optimal Wind Protection

**With aerial images,
we can determine
the best
Site Specific
buffer requirements**

Potential development sites have a variety of existing tree cover:

A photograph of a young pine forest. The trees are green and have long, thin needles. The sky is blue with white clouds. The text is overlaid on the image in white, bold font.


Some properties, with younger, less varied, varietal planting will need to maintain deeper buffers to create opaqueness

A photograph of a dense forest with various types of green trees. The sky is a clear, light blue. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

Others with more established
and varied planting could
require less depth in buffering

We propose
to divide this
aerial imaging process
into phases:

- Phase One - 15/501 from Pittsboro to Orange Co.
- Phase Two - Hwy 64 from 15/501 to Wake Co.
- Phase Three - Hwy 64 from 15/501 to Siler City
- Phase Four - 15/501 from Pittsboro to Sanford
- ***Subsequent Phases to be determined***



**Can we count on you, our
Commissioners, to support and
fund our efforts to protect
Chatham County as it develops?**

◆ Stormwater is a leading cause of water pollution.

This runoff can kill aquatic life, and make our waterways an unhealthy place to live, work, and play.

One of the fundamental ways to minimize runoff is to retain existing tree cover

Polluted waters and sediment filled water are more expensive to treat

- * A tree can absorb as much as 48 pounds of carbon dioxide per year and can sequester 1 ton of carbon dioxide by the time it reaches 40 years old.

Some of the most effective trees for carbon sequestration are:

Pine (Ponderosa, red, white and Hispaniolan pines)

Oak (Scarlet, Red and Virginia Live Oak)

Douglas fir

Bald Cypress

Common Horse-chestnut

Black Walnut

London Plane

American Sweetgum

The insistence that no one out there knows how to solve problems of the rural economy is a false and misleading one. There are decades of research that have identified paths forward that rural communities are already following and flourishing on.

While rural regions may not be swimming in investment capital, they are awash in local pride and tight-knit communities.

Many research studies have found that connections within a local community (i.e., bridging social capital) are one of the most valuable assets leading rural businesses to success. Place-making, a collaborative process to rethink public spaces to maximize their value for everyone, has become another favorite tactic of rural economic developers.

What's more, there are still some economic sectors where the demand in rural areas is higher than the supply. As the second-largest economic sector providing jobs in rural counties, manufacturing continues to be a great resource for local economies. With recent pushes for "green" and domestic manufacturing, rural manufacturers are facing nationwide shortages of workers. At the same time, a new Gallup poll finds that many urban-dwellers actually want to move to rural areas.

The ability to attract high-tech companies has become a yardstick for measuring the success of a region. There are indeed major barriers to convincing large companies to relocate to rural areas, as Porter notes in his op-ed, such as access to talent and broadband infrastructure. But economic developers and municipalities in rural America aren't stupid, and don't believe that they can compete with supercities to draw in this development. A focus on single industries, such as mining in the upper midwestern United States, already destroyed many rural economies (and their environments) in the 20th century. Progressive rural communities that are thinking about these problems don't see tech as a sole savior.