



Piano-key subdivisions should be avoided to preserve open space and maintain the rural character of existing roads.

Implementation Techniques

Implementation techniques to protect the Rural Overlay District's rural character include the City of Chesapeake's 2026 Comprehensive Plan's designated land use, circulation pattern, and open space for the district. Other implementation techniques are defined in the land development ordinances as well as the development review process. In order to preserve the rural character and natural resources, use of innovative development implementation techniques is encouraged by the City. Such implementation techniques include cluster development which differs from the conventional 'piano key' approach.

Development plans should be driven by existing conditions. Applicants must

provide a preliminary design assessment which should consist of a graphic and narrative site features inventory which includes significant site features such as critical areas, vistas, wetlands, floodplains, slopes, tree lines and tree masses, rare and endangered species habitats, drainage courses, waterway buffers, and any additional features uniquely affecting a site. Rare and endangered species habitat should be protected. Existing natural features will be retained and enhanced through restoration. Open space and conservation areas should be contiguous between the site and adjacent areas. This method should be coupled with reduced building envelopes. Sensitive areas outside the reduced building envelopes

should be placed in conservation easements.

Future non-agricultural development which is incompatible with the rural landscape should be guided to the Urban and Suburban Overlay Districts by such mechanisms as the urban service boundary. Accepting the fact that some development is inevitable, preserving rural character is obtainable when development goals are clearly defined and approached creatively. The master plan, land development ordinances, and development review process can produce the desired result through the joint and cooperative efforts of owners, developers, and the City.

Table 1. Development in the Rural Overlay District

Goals	Objectives
Minimize Visual Impact	1. Structures should not be placed in open fields; the visual impact should be minimized with a preserved or restored natural buffer.
	2. Locate buildings adjacent to tree lines and woodland edges.
	3. Residences should not front directly on off-site existing streets.
	4. Cluster residences to preserve open space and active agriculture.
	5. Maintain a minimum setback from waterbodies.
Retain Rural Features	1. Incorporate existing farm roads into development plans.
	2. Preserve to the greatest extent possible fences, hedgerows, tree lines, and natural vegetation to protect these landscape features during construction.
	3. Preserve and reuse existing agricultural structures where feasible.
	4. Retain treed areas between roads and buildings, and protect these areas during construction.
	5. Prepare a stormwater management plan to control chemical pollutants, such as hydrocarbons and fertilizers.
	6. Monitor water quality.
	7. Design wastewater treatment facilities to protect surface water and groundwater.
Minimize Site Disturbance	1. Minimize disturbance for construction of roads, basins, residences, and other improvements.
Restore Natural Features	1. Restore natural features such as streams, wetlands, and forested areas where possible.

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Table 1 provides a summary of goals and implementation techniques.