



Route 17 in Chesapeake’s Rural Overlay District affords distant views of agricultural land and tree lines.



Ballahack Road is one of the country roads in the Rural Overlay District.



White clapboard siding and standing seam metal roofs are traditional architectural features in the Rural Overlay District.

Intent

The Rural Overlay District lies south of the city’s urban service boundary and has been historically agricultural in nature. This district also contains the Northwest River, a major drinking water supply for the city, as well as U. S. Naval Air Landing Field (NALF) Fentress. The 2026 Comprehensive Plan envisions this district as an area of preserved farmland, natural areas, and small-scale rural communities and compatible employment uses. These guidelines address appropriate development within the rural overlay district.

Features essential to preservation of the rural character of the City of Chesapeake include distant views of the countryside, topography, natural

drainage patterns, country roads, open space including agricultural fields and pastures, fences and hedgerows, barns and other farm buildings. Preservation of agriculture as a continual economic activity is different from the retention of the visual character of agriculture.

The purpose of the Rural Overlay District is to preserve Chesapeake’s rural character and to provide a regulatory mechanism through which development can occur with minimal environmental impact. Toward this goal, the City of Chesapeake encourages creative development techniques and flexibility not generally found in conventional subdivision ordinances.

This chapter has been prepared with particular reference to the following two documents:

1. Heyer, Fred. Planning Advisory Service Report Number 429: “Preserving Rural Character.” American Planning Association, December 1990.
2. “Southern Watershed Area Management Program: Rural Area Preservation Program.” Final Report, September 30, 2001.