

## **CHAPTER 4 – PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

This chapter provides the land use and preservation planning framework for the county’s overall farmland preservation model. This chapter describes the county’s land use policies for the unincorporated portions of Jefferson County, focused in particular on farmland preservation and growth management. Most policies relate to particular areas of desired future land use, such as the Farmland Preservation Areas and 15 Year Growth Areas. The policies and maps in this chapter will guide county decision making on future development, preservation, and land use changes.

This plan and its included maps do not identify in detail the specific types of land use that are allowed or encouraged in different parts of the county. For example, they do not show areas appropriate for residential versus commercial development or provide any detail within cities and villages. Instead, within the unincorporated areas this level of details is included in the county zoning ordinance and town plans, and within incorporated areas and their proposed growth areas as defined within city and village Comprehensive Plans.

### **Farmland Preservation Plan Map and Categories**

To protect and preserve agricultural land, Jefferson County has created a long-term land use vision. This vision outlines specific land uses across the county in unincorporated areas (see **Figure 1**) that will ensure growth is managed in partnership with agricultural preservation through the planning horizon. To achieve this goal, the county has categorized land into Farmland Preservation Areas (see **Appendix B** for detailed maps), 15 Year Growth Boundaries, Rural Hamlets, and Rural Development Areas (see **Figure 2**). Additionally, overlay categories such as Urban Service Areas, Limited Service Areas, and Environmental Corridors are included to guide growth in such a way to preserve natural and agricultural resources. Each of these land use categories and overlay zones are detailed below, along with criteria for mapping.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA	
<b>DEFINITION</b>	<p>Areas of existing agricultural uses or agricultural-related uses, that are actively used for farming and are considered agricultural producing lands, that should be preserved for agricultural or agricultural-related uses through the planning horizon of the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan.</p>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve agricultural producing lands in the long-term.</li> <li>• Preserve the rural character and aesthetic quality of Jefferson County.</li> <li>• Provide equity and fairness to owners of land with comparable resource and location characteristics.</li> <li>• Minimize nonagricultural development on prime farmland.</li> <li>• Maintain the integrity of agricultural districts allowing for accepted agricultural practices.</li> <li>• Protect existing farm operations from encroachment by incompatible uses.</li> <li>• Maintain farmer eligibility for farmland preservation incentive programs.</li> </ul>
<b>MAPPING CRITERIA</b>	<p>Quality Farmland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on areas with concentrations of prime farmland (shown in <b>Figure 3</b>)</li> <li>• Identify land is currently being farmed</li> <li>• Consider PACE application evaluation criteria</li> <li>• Consistency with Plans</li> <li>• Consistency with other applicable elements of the County Comprehensive Plan, as well as town, city, and village comprehensive plans to the extent possible</li> <li>• Consideration of the 2012 County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan’s future land use category and current zoning</li> <li>• Outside Planned Growth Areas</li> <li>• Outside of a current city or village limit</li> <li>• Not meeting the criteria for a 15 Year Growth Area</li> <li>• Proximity to existing agricultural infrastructure</li> </ul>