

The background of the slide is a photograph of a rural landscape. It features rolling green hills under a cloudy sky. In the foreground, there is a field with a single hay bale. The overall scene is a typical farm landscape.

**Carroll County Farm Bureau  
Annual Membership Meeting**

**Using Planning to  
Protect Farms**

**Webb Flowers  
Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent  
Carroll County Extension**

# Key Ag Themes From Comprehensive Plan

- Ag is important
- Ag is threatened
- Ag needs to be protected
- The County needs the tools to protect ag (and protect public tax dollars and promote economic development)

# Agriculture Is Our Heritage!

- Agriculture is Carroll County – it's critical to our economy and the major force behind historic development patterns
- Farms created agricultural sales of nearly \$34 million, employing 1,194 people (2007 Census)
- Supporting agriculture is important even for those not actively employed in agriculture
- Import more Food or grow it here in Carroll Co.?
- The total economic impact of agriculture in Carroll County was estimated to be \$155 million (2007)

# Carroll County Ag Highlights

- Pumpkins #1 in VA
- Vegetables (all categories) #4 in VA
- Tomatoes #4 in VA
- Cattle & Calves #5 in VA
- Fruit (all categories) #7 in VA
- Apples #8 in VA

# Carroll County Ag Is Changing

*(it's not getting easier to farm)*

- 1969 Carroll Co. 651 Farms with Dairy Cattle
- 2000 Carroll Co. 21 Dairies
- 2010 Carroll Co. 8 Dairies
- 1970s Carroll Co. 2,229 Farms with Beef Cattle\*
- 2010 Carroll Co. 859 Beef Farms
- 1970s Carroll Co. 133 Cabbage Farms on 2,200 Acres\*
- 2010 Carroll Co. 7 Cabbage Farms on 344 Acres

\* Data from retired Extension Agent

All other data from USDA NASS AG Census

# **Carroll County Ag Is Changing** ***(it's not getting easier to farm)***

- 1969 Carroll Co. 57 Apple Farms on 1,206 Acres
- 2007 Carroll Co. 37 Apple Farms on 468 Acres
- 1969 Carroll Co. 31 Peach Farms on 155 Acres
- 2007 Carroll Co. 33 Peach Farms on 150 Acres

# **New Specialty Crops Being Grown and Marketed in Carroll Co. Virginia**

- 2010 Carroll Co. 3 Broccoli Farms on 90 Acres
- 2007 Carroll Co. 13 Pumpkin Farms on 518 + Acres
- 2010 Carroll Co. Winter Squash, Gourds & Decorative Vegetables on 200 + Acres
- 2010 Carroll Co. 6 Greens Farms on 165 Acres

# **Carroll Co. Specialty Crops Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow**

- Coming Back to Carroll Co. Green Beans?
- In The Future in Carroll Co. Blueberries, Raspberries, Blackberries?
- Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Carroll Co. is the Home of the Largest Active  
Cherry Orchard East of Mississippi River

Established in Cana 1908

# **New Food Safety Marketing Innovation utilized in Carroll Co.**

- 2010 Carroll County Has 5 Fruit and Vegetable Producers GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) Certified
- 2010 Carroll County Has 3 Fruit and Vegetable Wholesalers and Packers GAP Certified
- 2010 Carroll County Has 116 Beef Producers Beef Quality Assured Certified

**Carroll County & SW VA Farmers Mkt. is  
hub for East Coast Produce Market**

# Breaking up farms starts innocently



# Suburban living in the country



# Non-ag homes surrounded by farms. What could go wrong?



# Creeping sprawl includes suburban conveniences



**Here comes the neighborhood!**



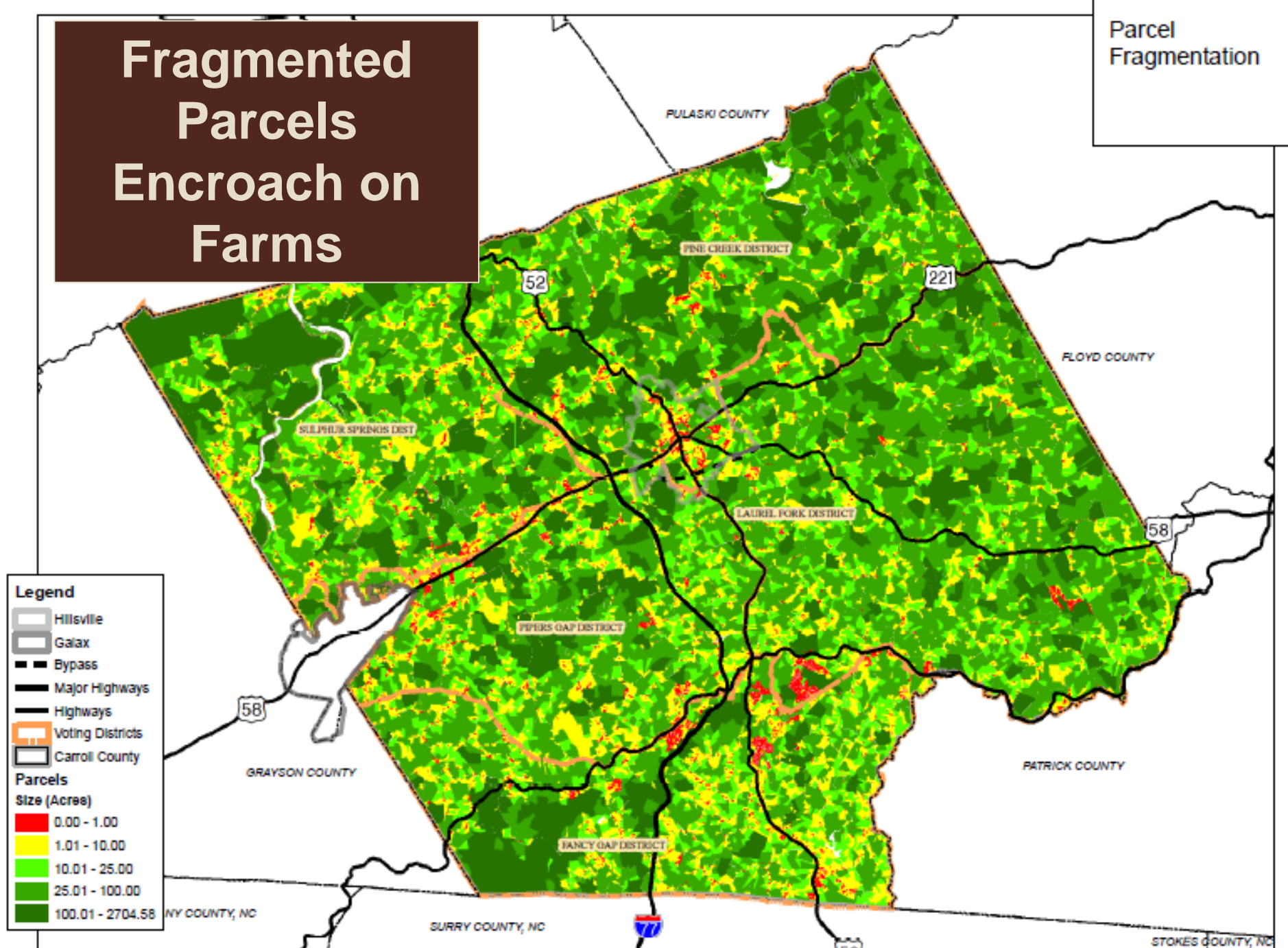
**Past practices show that farms and  
agricultural investment are not  
adequately protected**

**The 2010 Comprehensive Plan Focus  
Group Sessions All Shared the  
Importance of Protecting Agriculture in  
Carroll County**

**We Need to Work Together to Finalize  
the Plan to Protect Ag and Establish  
Viable Tools for County Government to  
Implement to Protect and Benefit  
Agriculture, Industrial Growth &  
Residences, If We Don't Our Neighbors  
Will**

# Fragmented Parcels Encroach on Farms

Parcel  
Fragmentation



**Legend**

- Hillsville
- Galax
- Bypass
- Major Highways
- Highways
- Voting Districts
- Carroll County

**Parcels**

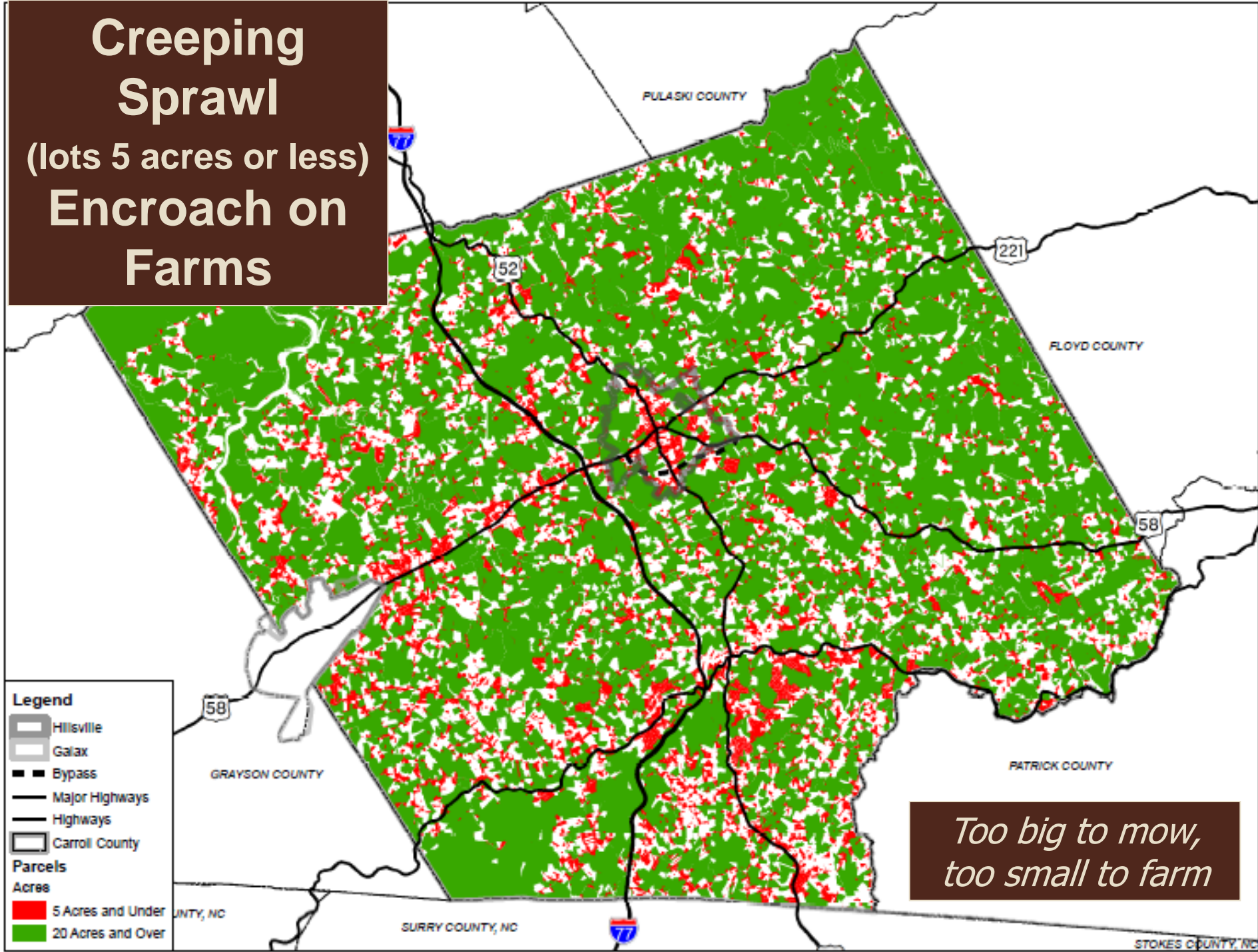
**Size (Acres)**

- 0.00 - 1.00
- 1.01 - 10.00
- 10.01 - 25.00
- 25.01 - 100.00
- 100.01 - 2704.58

# Creeping Sprawl

(lots 5 acres or less)

# Encroach on Farms



# The Impact of Creeping Sprawl

- In the Ag Protection Tier, there are 15,000 parcels that are 5 acres or less
  - That means a potential of 15,000 additional homes!
- In the Planned Growth Area Tier, there are 7,500 parcels that are 5 acres or less
  - That means a potential 7,500 additional homes!

**But the County only needs  
2,000 additional homes to  
accommodate projected growth**

# What this means...

- There is more than enough land area to accommodate new development in planned growth areas
- Encroaching into ag areas is not necessary

# Why you should be concerned about nuisance...

- A nuisance lawsuit involves a neighbor suing a farmer to force him to stop doing a farming activity or force him to pay damages for his farming activities
- If your farm is found to be a nuisance, courts can close the farm, force how you farm or assess penalties to compensate the 'neighbor' for the nuisance
- Even if a lawsuit fails, the cost of defending against the lawsuit could threaten or close the farm

# Why Virginia's Right-To-Farm law is not enough...

- The right-to-farm statute is designed to protect agricultural operations
- But, Virginia's right-to-farm statute is only a legal defense to nuisance suits
- It does not prevent nuisance suits
- There is no provision to limit “the right of any person to recover damages” against a farm for nuisance

# Is this why we're talking about The Carroll County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning? **YES!**

- Farmland is disappearing
- Farms are disappearing
- Farm employment is decreasing
- Our economy and heritage depend on Ag
- Planning and Zoning are the best and most efficient ways to Protect AG and Promote Industrial Growth Simultaneously with Balance!

# The County's Role

- Protect ag from excessive encroachment by residential and other non-agricultural land uses
- Reduce development pressure to convert farmland to non-ag use
- Provide flexibility – the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations must accomplish local needs

# Doesn't the County have a Plan?

- A Comprehensive Plan protects AG by being an effective guide for decision-makers
- The existing Carroll County Comprehensive Plan is a data document - it was primarily designed to provide information
- The proposed Comprehensive Plan is a guide - its primary purpose is to provide direction and a plan for implementation

# **The 2010 Carroll Co. Comprehensive Plan Supports:**

- **Agriculture**
- **Existing Industry**
- **Prospective Industry**
- **Residences**

## **All Need:**

- Fair Balance On Who Their Prospective Neighbors Will Be to Avoid Nuisance Complaints
- Fair Balance to Protect Their Investment

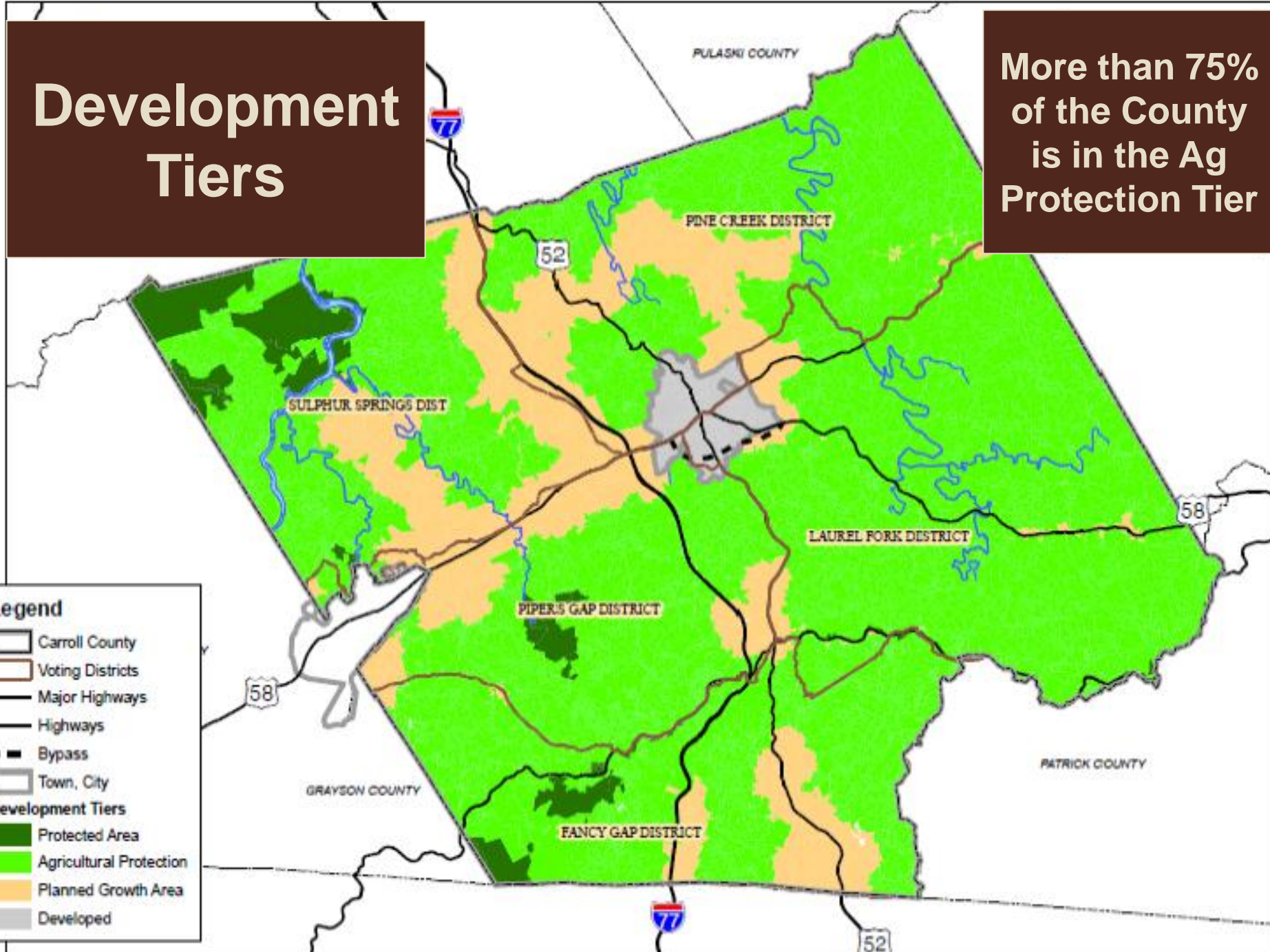
The 2010 Comprehensive Plan uses  
*Development Tiers* and  
*Community Service Areas*  
to protect Ag and public investment

# Development Tiers

More than 75% of the County is in the Ag Protection Tier

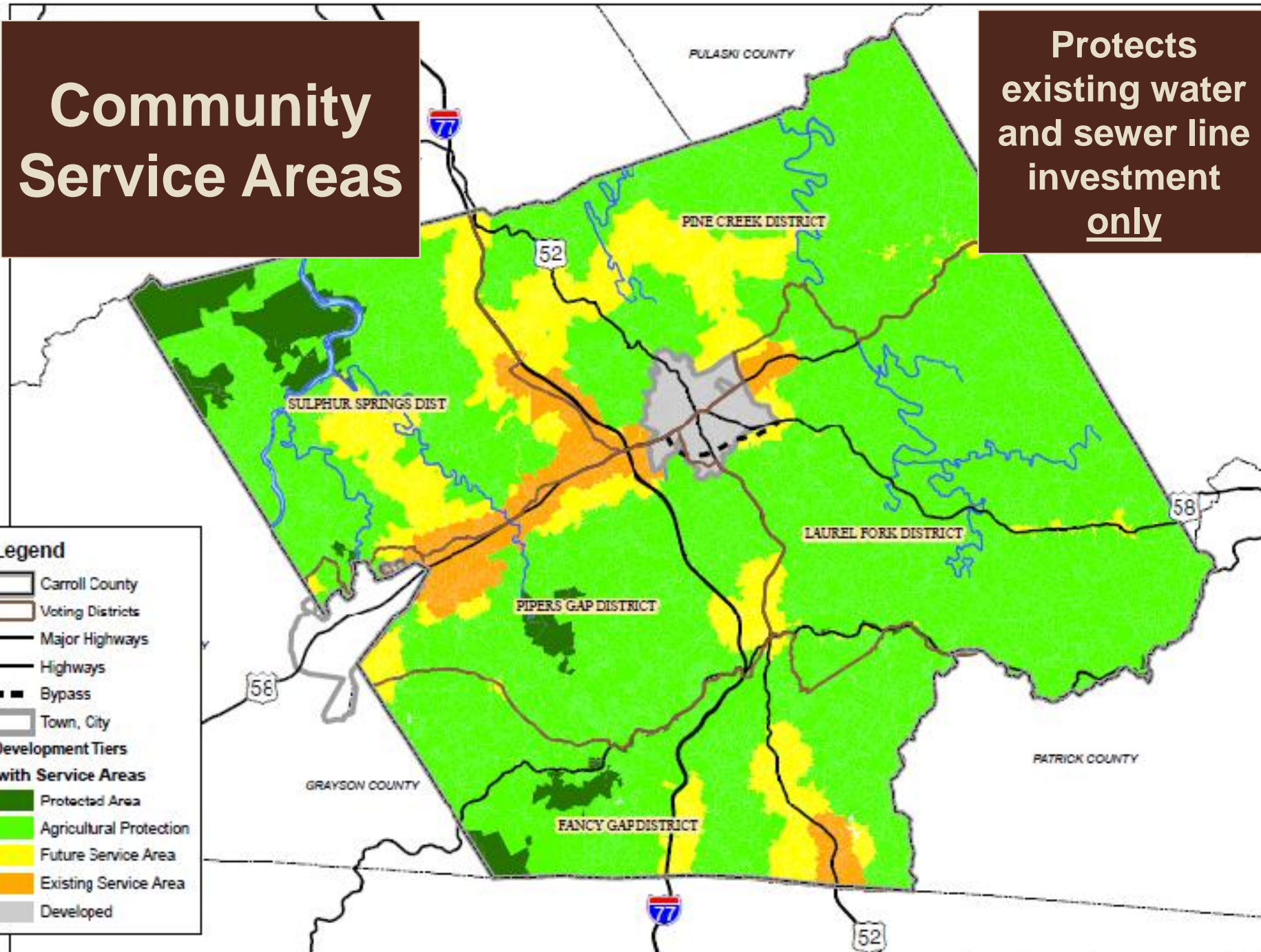
**Legend**

- Carroll County
- Voting Districts
- Major Highways
- Highways
- Bypass
- Town, City
- Development Tiers**
  - Protected Area
  - Agricultural Protection
  - Planned Growth Area
  - Developed



# Community Service Areas

Protects existing water and sewer line investment only



# Ag costs less to serve and produces more net revenues

- The Virginia Piedmont Environmental Council
  - Agriculture and Forestry Land uses \$.11 to \$.21 in County Services of every \$1 in taxes it raises
  - Residential uses \$1.16 to \$1.39 in County Services of every \$1 in taxes it raises
  - Industry and Commercial Property uses \$.20 to \$.97 in County Services of every \$1 in taxes it raises

**But the Comprehensive Plan,  
*alone*, can't adequately protect  
farms and agriculture  
In Carroll County**

# Why consider Ag Zoning?

- The County needs a coordinated, fair approach to protect everyone's interests
- Zoning's flexibility means that it can be changed to respond to changing circumstances, to include Ag, Industry, Commercial and Residential
- **You** get to define what it means in Carroll County with Bottoms Up Approach

# What is Ag Zoning?

- Ag Zoning is specifically designed from the outset to address only those needs that keep farms farming
- Approach this not as regulating agriculture, but protecting agriculture!
- “Grandfather Clause can be important”



**NOTICE TO  
REAL ESTATE PURCHASERS  
IN DUPLIN COUNTY**

**DUPLIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS**

Duplin County has established agricultural districts to protect and preserve agricultural lands and activities. These districts have been developed and mapped to inform all purchasers of real property that certain agricultural activities, including but not limited to, pesticide spraying, manure spreading, machinery and truck operations, livestock operations, sawing and similar activities may take place in these districts any time during the day or night. Maps and/or information on the location and establishment of these districts can be obtained from the Cooperative Extension Service Office, County Planning Department, Register of Deeds, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Farm Service Agency Office and the County Tax Department.

**Real Life  
Solution  
Example  
to Our  
South**

# In closing...

- The viability of farming is threatened by encroaching non-ag development *moving in too close for comfort*
- There is adequate capacity and infrastructure in growth areas to accommodate non-ag development
- The County needs the tools to protect farms, protect public investment and attract jobs

# What's next?

- Review the Plan, get comments to Ronald Newman
- Final Draft Plan Workshop October 12<sup>th</sup> Working Session for Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission, with Listening Session for Public
- Public Hearing on November 18<sup>th</sup>
- Adoption on December 14<sup>th</sup>



**Carroll County can't protect farms  
without Farm Bureau and farmer support.**

**Get involved.**

**Stay involved.**

**Make this your Plan.**

To get more info on The Carroll County Comprehensive Plan go to:

**[www.planccarrollcounty.org](http://www.planccarrollcounty.org)**

**Or Contact Ronald Newman at 276-730-3008 or  
[rnewman@carrollcountyva.org](mailto:rnewman@carrollcountyva.org)**