



**CATLETT**  
SERVICE DISTRICT PLAN

Fauquier County Board of Supervisors  
*Adopted February 8, 2018*

The central graphic features a circular seal on the left and text on the right. The seal depicts an eagle with its wings spread, perched on a globe. Above the eagle is a clock tower. The text "FAUQUIER COUNTY" is at the top, "1759" is in the middle, and "VIRGINIA" is at the bottom. To the right, the title "CATLETT SERVICE DISTRICT PLAN" is written in large, bold, white letters. Below the title, the text "Fauquier County Board of Supervisors" and "Adopted February 8, 2018" is written in a smaller font.

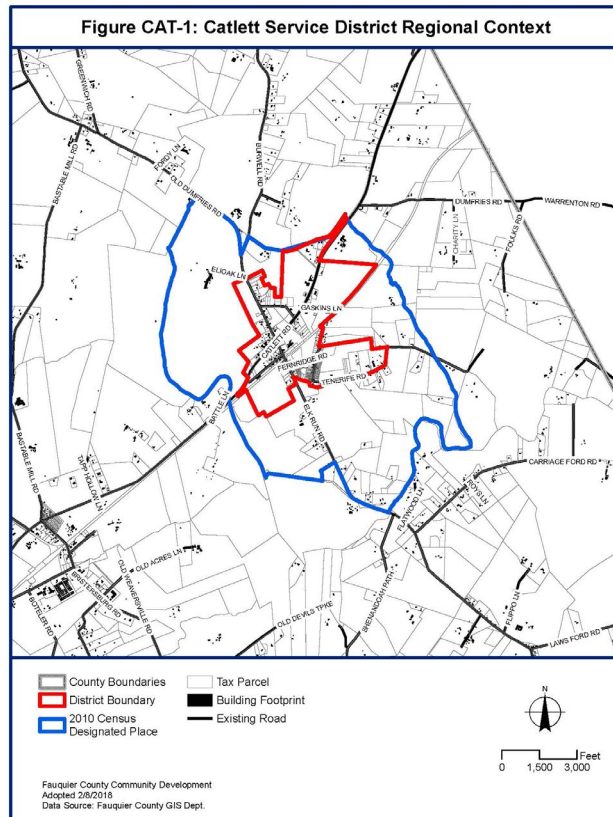
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## Catlett Village Service District Plan

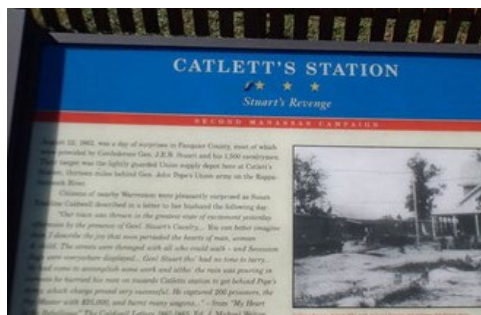
### Introduction & Background

This plan and its associated goals, objectives and actions provide guidance for future growth and development within Catlett.

The Catlett Village Service District Plan is part of Fauquier County’s overall Comprehensive Plan. Service District designations reflect the historical development patterns of the County during the past 200 years. They include incorporated towns like Warrenton, towns that are not incorporated like Marshall, as well as villages, such as Catlett. To maintain a compact and efficient pattern of development and to protect the County’s rural landscape, the County’s Service District framework is envisioned to absorb the bulk of the County’s growth. Catlett is a Village Service District and remains a unique community that would be best developed at a Village scale. In order to complement the existing development pattern, consideration should be given to rezoning requests which seek to utilize the ‘Village’ (V) and ‘Commercial-Village’ (C-V) Zoning Districts.



The Catlett Service District Plan was last revised in 2002. An update, the result of two years of work by citizens and staff, was finalized in 2009 but never adopted. A review and revision are now warranted, particularly as the County’s policy on the provision of public sewer in the area continues to evolve. The Plan recommends strategies to build upon the core component for limited future growth as was recommended in the 2009 draft. It has been updated to address the eight years in between, but the majority of the principles and goals established at that time still apply. Most important, this plan sustains the vision for Catlett as a tight-knit community.



Previous plans have called for significant growth and development in Catlett. The estimated build-out population in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan varied from 2,812 to 5,200 residents in 1,339 dwelling units, along with 86 acres reserved for commercial uses and 143 acres for industrial uses. The service district boundaries covered an area totaling approximately 800 acres. In 2002, the Plan was revised to reduce the population at build-out to 900, but increased the acreage to 1,360. This iteration reduces the size of the district to 492 acres and an

estimated build-out population of 400. The “blackjack” soils in this region of the County combined with the restrictions of the State’s Occoquan Policy for the discharging of wastewater have made the provision of public sewer facilities problematic. For decades, these soils have plagued property owners in their attempts to treat their sewage on-site. In 2017, the Board of Supervisors approved a sewer treatment facility with limited capacity for Catlett and Calverton to address the health, safety and welfare issues posed by failed and failing sewage systems.

**Existing Characteristics**

The 2010 Census Designated Place of Catlett had 296 residents living in 125 housing units. Very little development has occurred since that time with the principal constraining factor being the local soils, which are not conducive to conventional septic and drainfield designs.

Catlett is located on Route 28, about three miles from the Prince William County line and two and a half miles east of the Village of Calverton. It is a rural village that grew from a now-abandoned railroad stop. Its location near the Fauquier and Prince William County border makes the village a natural entrance feature to the County. It is a place with a strong sense of community and a distinct visual identity, a village in which its citizens take great pride.

Built on a 1715 land grant to John Catlett, Catlett maintains its historic rural village core, located close to the railroad depot and served by roads to area farms. Even today, businesses tend to remain close to the road and rail lines. Catlett’s neighborhoods are generally centered on local churches such as Oak Shade Baptist Church and Trinity United Methodist Church. Local residents are strongly committed to this village-style, people-friendly scale, with modest business development and services for the surrounding rural area and travelers using Route 28.



*Oak Shade Baptist Church*



*Trinity United Methodist Church*



*Elk Run Road - Intersection at Rt. 28*

The intersection of Elk Run Road and the railroad represented the core of the original settlement and its legacy remains in the older commercial buildings that stand around the intersection. Supporting this core are the residential properties that extend to the south along Elk Run Road to Tenerife Road and along Prospect Avenue. These are densely platted lots with homes close to one another. In the future, a road network, platted in this vicinity, would serve the unbuilt lots between Elk Run Road and Prospect Avenue.



*Catlett Market and Deli*

With the demise of the railroad and the rise of the automobile, newer commercial development has occurred along the Route 28 corridor. Examples of this can be seen at the Catlett Market and Deli complex, Fauquier Bank, and more recently Golden Rule Center and Dollar General. Additionally, residential development has spread down Old Dumfries Road, though not as densely as that found south of the railroad tracks.



*Catlett Volunteer Fire-Rescue Station*

As the hub of the surrounding agricultural community, Catlett’s civic land uses include a post office, fire station, rescue station, a combined fire and rescue station as well as trash convenience facilities. Churches of varying ages are scattered throughout the service district.

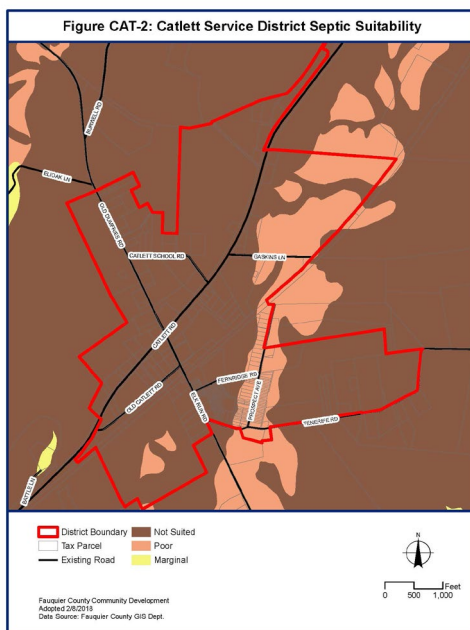
The growing commuter traffic on Route 28 poses a significant threat to the preservation of the core of Catlett. Widening 28, advocated by some, would seriously impact properties situated centrally in the village. The speeds of commuters traveling along this road, along with the volume of traffic, continue to be of concern to the residents of Catlett.



*Catlett Convenience Site*

### Environmental Resources

The United States Geological Survey lists 25 physiographic provinces within the Lower 48 States. Catlett lies within the Piedmont Provinces. Further diversifying and complicating the region’s geology is a series of basins known as the Triassic Basins. A sizeable portion of one of these Triassic Basins, known as the Culpeper Basin, lies within Fauquier County. Although the Culpeper Basin is not recognized as an official separate physiographic province, it does provide a greater level of specificity to the region encompassing Catlett than the Piedmont Province. The Culpeper Basin is characterized by a nearly flat sediment-filled basin interspersed by a system of intrusions consisting of weather-resistant dikes.



Deriving their characteristics from underlying bedrock and local climatic conditions, soils should be an integral component of the planning process, since they affect erosion characteristics, structural support for building foundations, and infiltration of sewer septic systems; in addition, soils form the basis for agricultural production, construction and economic development. Figure CAT-2 illustrates soil conditions that generally are not suitable for drainfields. The community has had a historic and continuing problem with failing drainfields for homes and businesses, as also experienced by neighboring Calverton. Both communities have been the subject of several environmental and engineering studies to solve the established problem.

These failing drainfields have in turn led to water quality concerns. Traditionally, water quality issues are separated into two categories based upon where the concern originated: point and non-point source. Point source might be wastewater and contaminants from a factory being pumped into a nearby stream. Point sources that discharge into water often have a

direct affect upon surface water quality. Since the passage of the Clean Water Act (CWA), point sources have been permitted, monitored and remediated, dramatically reducing such pollution. Now, the extent of non-point sources is becoming more apparent. The source problem for a non-point contaminant often is not a single entity, such as a factory, but the multitude of small or chronic households and other dispersed

activities occurring throughout the watershed. When taken as a whole, these activities may even exceed the contaminants that came from any one point-source discharge. Non-point sources can be more difficult to correct, requiring assessment and location of multiple smaller sources and remedying numerous situations rather than simply applying one solution. Failing drainfields, which release bacteria such as E. coli into water, are just one example.

## Historic Resources

The Village of Catlett was established along the Orange and Alexandria Railway (now the Norfolk Southern) that was constructed through the region in 1852. Originally called Colvin's Station, the community was renamed Catlett's Station in 1855. Because of its strategic location only nine miles southeast of Warrenton, at the intersection of Cedar Run, Catlett Road (Route 28), Elk Run Road, Old Dumfries Road, and the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, Catlett grew into a busy communication, commercial, and transportation center.

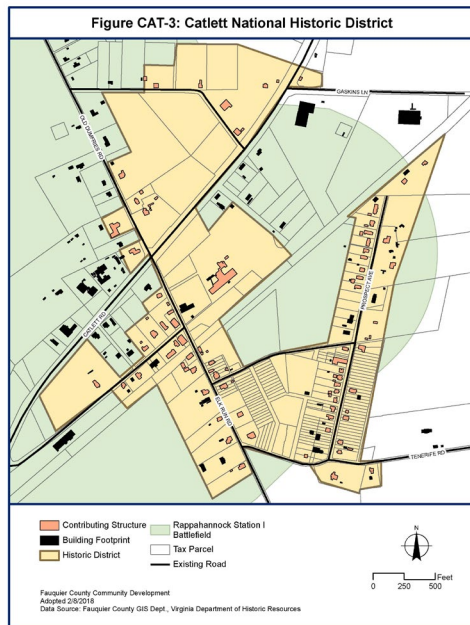
Catlett played a significant role during the Civil War; it was the site of Union troop encampments during the first and second battles of Manassas, as well as skirmishes, resulting in the destruction of the train depot and other buildings. After the war, the railroad accounted for a number of local jobs, many of which were filled by Irish immigrants who settled in and around Catlett during the late 19th century. The 1870 census identified two wheelwrights, several blacksmiths, and a coach maker, indicating that Catlett was a small but significant transportation center where such services would be required. During the early 20th century, dairy farming grew to be one of the largest economic generators in and around Catlett, manifested in the thriving dairy farms that are still in operation today and the construction of the small Catlett creamery, which stored cream from the local farmers until it could be transported by train to market.



Rail transportation made Catlett a convenient shipping hub, contributing to the village's prosperity. However, the proximity to the railroad also made the buildings particularly vulnerable during the Civil War. Indeed, just one building survived the war. Prospect Acres, at the northern terminus of Prospect Avenue, just south of the railroad tracks, is considered the oldest dwelling in Catlett. The original log section of this house was constructed around 1855 by Richard Colvin who owned 163 acres that straddled the railway and included the first train station. Although the station no longer stands, Catlett's historic buildings and structures from the late 19th through the mid-20th centuries endure and inform the character of the village.

These include:

- Route 28 Cedar Run Bridge including Civil War Historic Marker
- Old Catlett Road: Oak Shade Baptist Church and Cemetery & Neighborhood
- Old Dumfries Road Neighborhood & the Trinity United Methodist Church
- Elk Run Road: Wright's Manufacturing and Golden Rule Travel Company



The most concentrated area of historic buildings was included in the Catlett Historic District, listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register in 2007 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2008. It is comprised of approximately 118 acres, 76 properties and over 130 resources that have been designated as “contributing” to the period of significance (1855-1958). Figure CAT-3 shows the boundary of the historic district and the contributing and non-contributing buildings, which were last surveyed in 2007. Contributing buildings range from residential properties and their associated outbuildings (e.g. smoke houses, well houses, chicken coops, barns, and garages), including the Edmonds Place, which was originally constructed as a boarding house ca. 1870; the Waite House, constructed by Harlan Waite, a local builder, around 1880; and the home and office of Dr. Harnsberger (ca. 1897), to commercial properties, such as the Trenis Store (ca. 1866); Ensor’s Store (ca. 1910); Wilson’s Store (ca. 1920); and the Wilson Farm Meat Company building (ca. 1935), and religious properties, like the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church [Cedar Run United Methodist Church] (ca. 1872) and the Catlett Community Cemetery (ca. 1871).

Although a number of nearby historic farmsteads and other resources including but not limited to, the Cedar Run Bridge, Oak Shade Baptist Church, Catlett School, Terry House, Jehoash Presbyterian Church, and Weaver’s Store, were not included within the boundary of the district, they are still worthy of preservation and should be considered during development plan review.

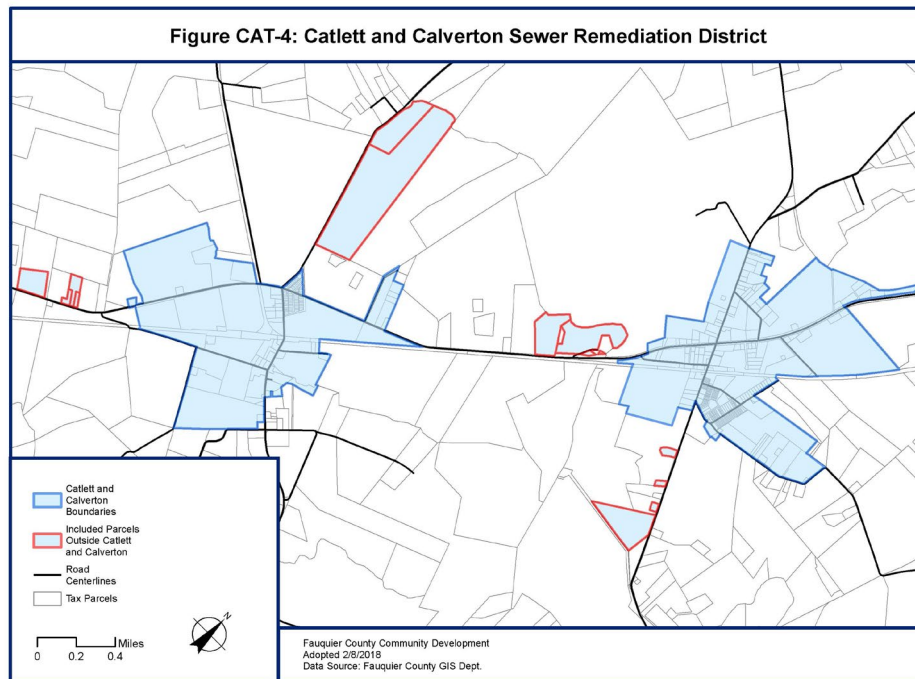
The Catlett National Register District is an honorific designation with no regulatory nor review of land use applications. The designation affords property owners the opportunity to apply for federal and/or state historic rehabilitation tax credits. The Catlett Historic District is an asset worth protecting for future generations. Continuing to have local pride for historic resources will foster stewardship.

**Utilities**

Much of Catlett is served by public water through the Fauquier County Water & Sanitation Authority (WSA). The treated well water is piped to, and stored at, a water tower on Old Dumfries Road. As of 2017, the public water system serves 74 residential and business properties, and has a capacity of 62,000 gallons per day. In 2017, the Board of Supervisors approved a sewer treatment facility for Catlett and Calverton with a capacity of 80,000 gallons per day, which represents 308 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs). This facility is slated to begin construction in 2018 and be operational in 2019. While there is not a defined allocation ratio, it is intended that the majority of the capacity will be utilized by Catlett properties.



*Catlett Water Tower*



## Land Use

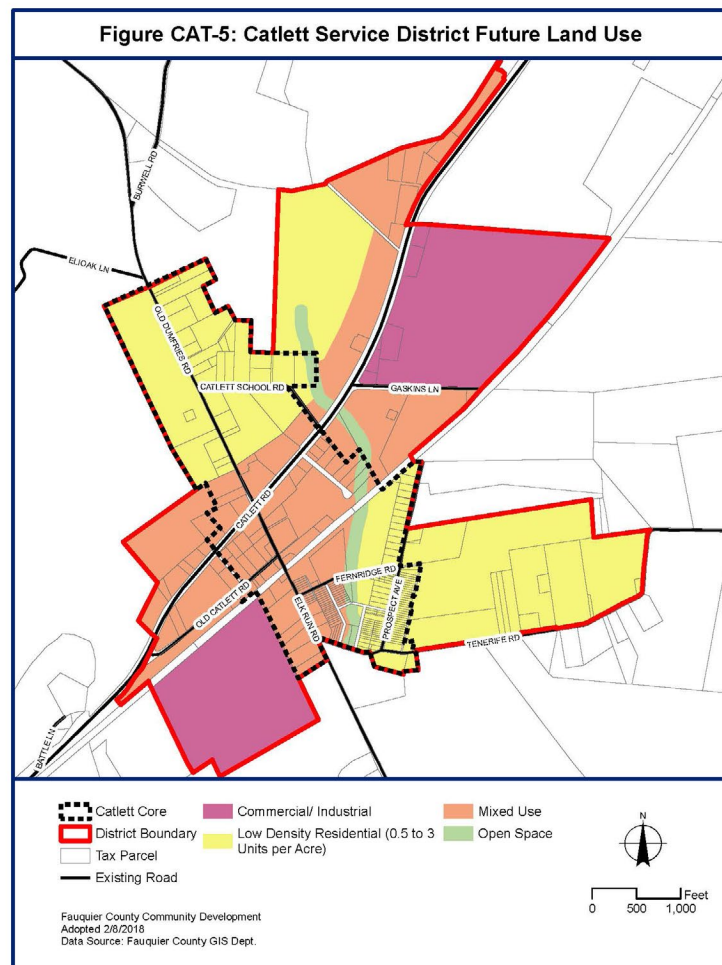
A variety of land uses are appropriate and even necessary for the realization of the community. Figure CAT-5 represents the Land Use Plan for Catlett. Development is envisioned to follow a traditional land use pattern with a relatively dense mixed-use core transitioning to less dense residential development and lower density commercial/industrial development on the periphery. Detailed descriptions of development within the land uses are provided below.

Catlett's long-established development scale and community character are envisioned by residents to inform future development. This is particularly important within the designated core. New business and residential development within the core consists primarily of infill. As such, it should build upon historic neighborhood patterns, architecture and pedestrian scales that exemplify the village character.

In 2011, the Fauquier County Architectural Review Board developed an architectural pattern book titled *Catlett Village, Fauquier County, Virginia: Existing Patterns of Development*. This resource will guide the design of new development within the historic village and the service district, and ensure that proposed new development does not diminish the integrity of the historic resources.

While new development outside of the core should still consider the existing patterns of development, density and intensity of development in the peripheral portions of Catlett may vary to meet other stated goals of the Village Service District.





### Mixed Use

The center of the community is located at the intersection of Route 28, Old Dumfries and Elk Run Roads. Designated ‘Mixed Use,’ this area is envisioned for a horizontal mixing of uses within the vicinity, rather than the vertical mixing of uses within a single structure that is typically associated with the term. Here the residential and commercial uses should be mixed in a manner consistent with the historic development patterns. In the core area a dense mix of uses should be encouraged to foster the long-term development of Catlett. Where the grocery store, bank and gas/convenience mart are located on Route 28, similar commercial growth will be encouraged. Green spaces, pocket parks, sidewalks and bicycle accommodations will provide human scale and a sense of place to this otherwise auto-centric roadside strip. Extra care should be made in the design of these developments not to ‘strip out’ Route 28. Appropriate transitions to and interactions with the residential development behind it is imperative.



*Historic Commercial Development at the Intersection of Old Catlett & Elk Run Rd*



*Sidewalk in front of Dollar General*

In the core Mixed Use area, commercial and residential buildings will have small side and front yards. The expected shapes and massing of the buildings should mirror the existing development and project an “in-town” feel and image. Primary entrances should face the street. Two-story buildings should be encouraged and one-story buildings will aid in a transition to the residential neighborhoods beyond.

Much of the identified Mixed Use area has existing commercial zoning and can be expected to develop according to those zoning districts. The transitioning of existing commercially zoned land to a solely residential use should be discouraged. Residentially zoned land within the Mixed Use area should ideally be developed more densely than the underlying Residential 1 (R-1) zoning and should follow the guidance outlined below.



***Low Density Residential (0.5 – 3 units per acre)***

In keeping with Catlett’s small town character, infill parcels within the existing core residential development should conform to principles of “traditional neighborhood design” (TND). These include narrower, tree-lined streets with parallel parking along at least one side of the street. Sidewalks should be added as development and redevelopment occur. Homes should address the street with front walks that meet the sidewalk and, in many cases, front porches or stoops. Variety in building setbacks from the street, height – one to two stories – and even size of lot on which they are built will contribute to the feel of a traditional village growing organically. Garage doors should not be facing the street unless the garages are pulled back substantially from the front plane of the houses, or pulled back behind houses altogether. The curb cuts for driveways should be limited in width to one car and widen only when level with the setback of the house. Shared curb cuts are an appropriate option. Public open spaces, pocket parks, playgrounds and walking paths will enhance the pedestrian experience and sense of place.



*Aerial View of Existing Development along Prospect Avenue*

Varied lot sizes, streetscaping and architectural styles are just a few ways that different neighborhoods can create their own unique identities. Traditional neighborhood design can be implemented effectively at varying densities depending on terrain and other natural characteristics. The existing residential development along Prospect Avenue and south of the railroad tracks is approximately two to three units per acre while north of the tracks is a little less dense at one to three units per acre. In light of Catlett’s constrained public sewer capacity, approximately three residential units per gross acre is probably the densest new development should go in order to keep with the traditional neighborhoods that already exist.

Three units per acre is more density than the by-right zoning permits; however, proposals with strict design controls could be considered. Where greater density is desired, such a request should come to the County in the form of an application for rezoning. The submission should include a detailed Code of Development that assures all development will be constructed in accordance with strict architectural standards embracing TND principles and the characteristics of the existing neighborhoods.

Residential development outside of the core should be developed at a much lower density with a maximum of one unit per acre. They should have a sufficient density to indicate a transition from the surrounding rural lands and be more suburban in their development as well as sidewalks and bicycle and pedestrian connections to Catlett’s core.

**Commercial/Industrial**

The approximately 122 acres earmarked for commercial/industrial development will provide Catlett with a balance of land uses that are necessary for a sustainable community, adding employment opportunities and tax base to the County.



*Golden Rule Center*

Commercial uses are anticipated to develop primarily along Route 28 and should be situated close to the road to identify the transition into the service district and to help with traffic calming. Ideally parking would be located to the rear of the buildings and uses should seek to consolidate their entrances to minimize conflict points with the traffic on Route 28. In a similar manner to the buildings described within the Mixed Use, the expected shapes and massing of the buildings should mirror the existing development and project an “in-town” feel and image. The primary entryways and doors should face the street. Two-story buildings should be encouraged, though one-story buildings are also appropriate to aid in

a transition to the residential neighborhoods beyond.

Industrial uses should be effectively screened from adjacent uses and entry gateways into the Village Service District. For this reason, a significant buffer along the northern, southern and western sides of the industrial properties along Route 28 could screen industrial uses from residents or travelers in that vicinity. Similarly, if developed industrially, the property on the southern end of the District should be screened on all sides as its location makes it visible to travelers on Route 28, Elk Run Road, as well as adjoining residences. While these areas are currently zoned for light industrial, it should be made clear that the intent of this land use is for cleaner, lower impact modern industrial and commercial uses and practices. Industrial properties should not directly access Route 28. For the industrial properties on the northern side of Catlett this means that Gaskins Lane should be utilized. On the southern side, a single access point to Elk Run Road should be utilized. Minimizing direct access to Route 28 should help to reduce the need to widen Route 28 to accommodate multiple sets of turn lanes.



*Exxon Station at Catlett Market and Deli Complex*

A variety of uses and development patterns could be appropriate in these locations provided they complement the scope and scale of Catlett and its existing development. Sidewalks should be provided along existing public streets and natural trails within the industrial area would be appropriate.

**Open Space**

With Cedar Run and the extensive floodplain areas in the rural lands surrounding Catlett, it is recommended that the floodplain become an established open space with park development linking to the neighborhoods with paths. This could become a greenway bisecting the village tying in to pocket parks and open space within the other land uses.

**Build-out Potential**

Regardless of land-use designation in Catlett, the service district’s build-out potential is constrained by the sewage capacity of 80,000 gallons per day. It is anticipated and intended that new commercial or industrial development in Catlett will utilize excess capacity only after existing structures with failing systems have been connected.

**Table CAT-1 Summary of Future Land Use Acreages and Residential Build-out Potential**

Land Use	Acreage	Potential Residential Units <sup>1</sup>	Existing Residential Units
Low Density Residential	113	56.5 (at 0.5 units/ac outside core)	47
	93	279 (at 3 units/ac inside core)	
Mixed Use	90	22.5 (at 0.25 units/ac outside core)	37
	62	93 (at 1.5 units/ac inside core)	
Commercial/Industrial	122	0	2
Open Space	12	0	0
Total	492	451	86

**Transportation**

There are no specific transportation improvements proposed in conjunction with the Catlett Village Service District Plan. Route 28 is the primary road through the Service District and may need improvements to accommodate increasing traffic and new development. These improvements should be evaluated against the goals detailed below as well as the Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Some are specifically supported through the actions below such as Action 2.3.1 which references traffic lights, roundabouts and a landscaped median as potential improvements. Others may not be specifically called for but may further the goals. For all transportation improvements, it will be important to return to Action 1.1.3, which should ensure that future Route 28 improvements do not adversely impact community historic resources and the village character of Catlett.

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<sup>1</sup> These build-outs are not actually achievable due to the sewer constraints. Actual residential build-out capacity is likely in the 120-150 unit range. This number will be determined by the utilization and distribution of sewer capacity.

## Vision Statement and Goals

While the County-wide Vision of “Fauquier County *is a thriving community that honors its natural and cultural resources, agricultural heritage and rural landscape while building a sustainable economy and promoting outstanding services and growth within defined service districts*” certainly applies to Catlett, it is appropriate that the district should have its own unique vision for the future that fits within the larger community’s vision.

***“Catlett will be a good place for people to live and work. It is a place with a strong sense of community and a distinct visual identity that honors its history. It will be a place that balances limited commercial development to support its residents, while retaining its essential village character.”***

The Comprehensive Plan’s Guiding Principles provide general guidance as to how to achieve both the County’s and Catlett’s visions for their future. The following goals, objectives, and actions for implementation have been developed to build on these principles.

Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principle A, Policy 3 directs the County to promote the identification, evaluation, registration and protection of heritage/historic resources, as well as the business opportunities presented by their rehabilitation and reuse.

### **Goal 1: Fauquier County should recognize and celebrate Catlett’s history.**

*Objective 1.1: Fauquier County should promote Catlett’s history.*

Action 1.1.1: Encourage “infill” residential and business development to be designed consistent with the platting, as well as the architectural form and character of the historic core portion of the village south of the railroad. Consider adoption of design guidelines for new development within this area.

Action 1.1.2: Integrate bike/pedestrian path design for any future Route 28 and village street improvements to help facilitate exposure of the historic properties, Civil War markers as well as the business community.

Action 1.1.3: Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to ensure that future Route 28 improvements do not adversely impact community historic resources and the village character of Catlett.

Action 1.1.4: Include Catlett in County tourism marketing efforts.

Action 1.1.5: Seek to highlight and preserve the existing churches within Catlett.

Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principal B, Policy 1 identifies the need to support special places such as Catlett through individualized plans such as this one.



*Jehoash Presbyterian Church*

**Goal 2: Fauquier County should recognize Catlett’s status as both a historic village community and a gateway to the County and preserve its unique village feel.**

*Objective 2.1: Promote a village feel throughout the service district.*

Action 2.1.1: Ensure development is consistent with the Catlett Land Use Map (Map Cat-4).

Action 2.1.2: Retain the existing historic structures in the historic section of Catlett and preserve the trees lining Prospect Avenue.

Action 2.1.3: Make Catlett bicycle and pedestrian friendly with sidewalks and bike paths.

Action 2.1.4: Encourage the creation and preservation on public open spaces wherever possible. Examples of this could include outdoor dining areas, pocket parks and a potential greenway trail.

Action 2.1.5: Promote commercial uses that serve either the local community or the passing commuter traffic on Route 28 and make sure they are varied to reinforce the mix of uses as well as be situated close to the road.

Action 2.1.6: Permit only clean industrial development that is low intensity to provide employment opportunities within the village. However, Catlett is not intended to be in competition with Midland, which is scheduled to be predominantly a non-residential community.

Action 2.1.7: Ensure that commercial development along Route 28 is not of a “strip development” or typical pad site nature.

Action 2.1.8: Utilize the developed architectural pattern book titled Catlett Village, Fauquier County, Virginia: Existing Patterns of Development, to evaluate development proposals.

Action 2.1.9: Consider development of a Form Based Code for Catlett.

*Objective 2.2: Promote a clear distinction between the Village Service District and the rural lands surrounding it.*

Action 2.2.1: Encourage the development of a well-defined hard edge of closely spaced buildings to contrast with the open space character of the surrounding countryside.

Action 2.2.2: Seek to design memorable gateways at the principal points of entry to Catlett along Route 28 and Elk Run Road.

*Objective 2.3: Ensure that Route 28 does not degrade the character of Catlett.*

Action 2.3.1: Use traffic calming measures such as reduced speeds, traffic lights, roundabouts, landscaped median on Route 28, reduced setbacks of buildings and the like to ensure that the village of Catlett is safe for its residents and travelers.



*Prospect Avenue*

Action 2.3.2: Ensure that access management techniques such as shared entrances with inter-parcel access and parking lot connectors are utilized to minimize driveway and commercial entrance impact on Route 28.

Action 2.3.3: Monitor the function and performance of Route 28 through Catlett to determine appropriate potential secondary road improvements so as to alleviate the need to widen Route 28.

Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principle A continues in Policy 4 to direct the County to “Safeguard the environment with water and air quality and natural resource management.”

**Goal 3: Fauquier County should achieve and maintain a clean and healthy natural environment in the Catlett Village Service District.**

*Objective 3.1: Protect the water quality.*

Action 3.1.1: Seek to provide remediation to address failing septic systems that pollute the groundwater.

*Objective 3.2: Protect the air quality.*

Action 3.2.1: Ensure that development, particularly industrial, prevents contaminants from impacting air quality.