

# History of The Green Line

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July 2, 2024, City Council Briefing



CITY OF  
**VIRGINIA  
BEACH**

# Presentation Overview

- What is the Green Line?
- Land Use South of the Green Line
- 1979 – 2024 Comprehensive Plans – History of the Green Line
- Current Comp Plan – Public engagement feedback
- Discussion

# What is the Green Line?

Recognizing the importance of preserving Virginia Beach's rural area, in 1979 the City introduced the "Green Line" urban growth management tool and established planning policies to channel growth and infrastructure improvements to the northern half of the city. The Green Line runs mainly along Princess Anne Road.

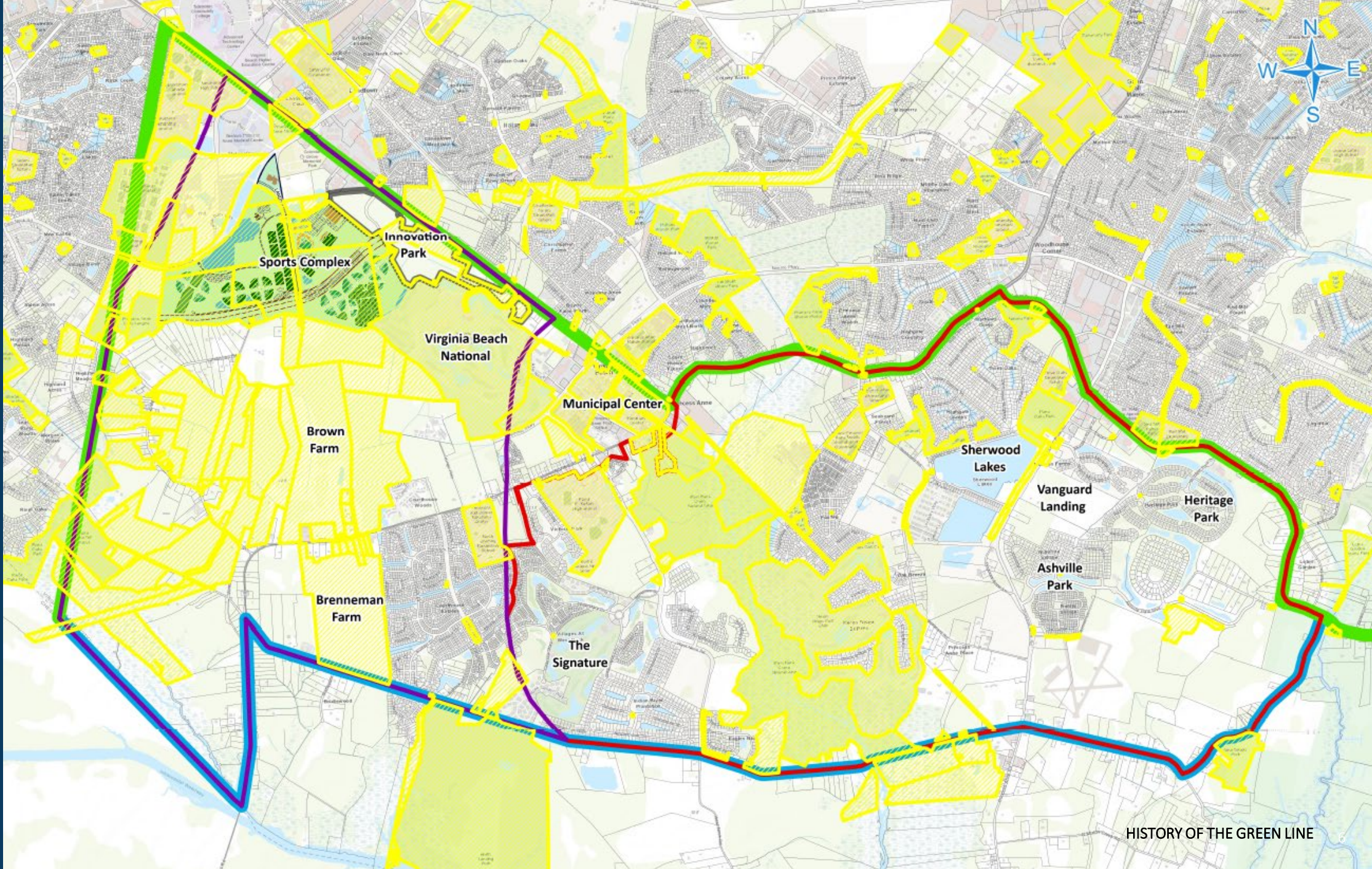


# Land Use South of the Green Line

- The Green Line has not changed since it was first established in the 1985 Comprehensive Plan.
- Below the Green Line, the Blue Line is located along Indian River Road and identifies the area where public utilities ends.
- Princess Anne Commons and the Transition Area are located between the Green Line and Blue Line:
  - The Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) is a zoning overlay district within Princess Anne Commons.
- Examples of development below the Green Line are the Municipal Center, Innovation Park (Light Industrial) and several Residential Communities (Heritage Park, Sherwood Lakes, Courthouse Estates).

# Land Use South of the Green Line

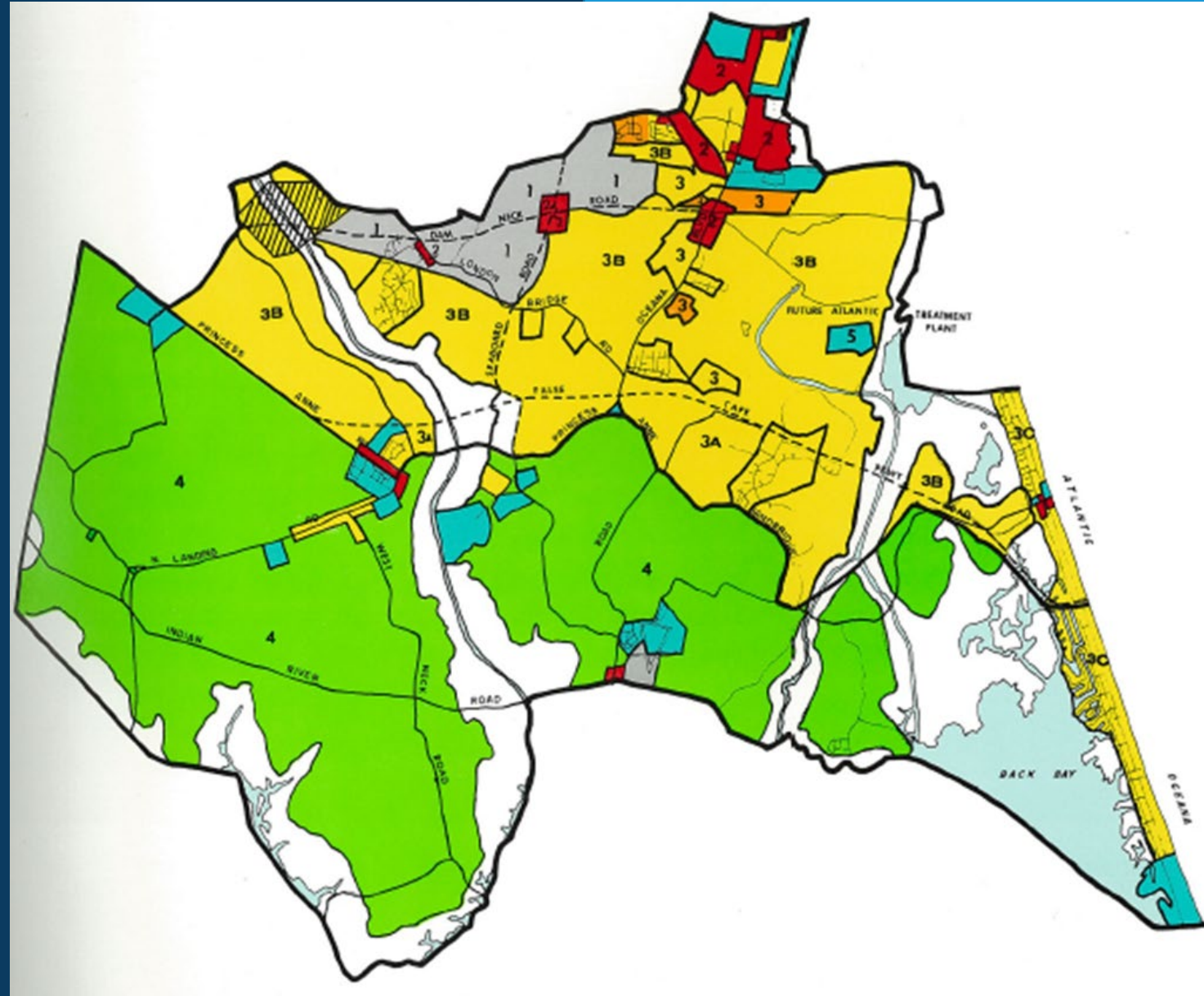
- In the Transition Area, zoning for residential development is typically 1 unit/acre with 50% open space and for non-residential, 30% open space, and 10,000 sq. ft building footprint.
- In the ITA, zoning is 1 unit/15 acres and the preferred land uses are identified in the ITA and Vicinity Plan (2017).
- Transition Area Design Guidelines provide guidance for the Municipal Center, Pungo Village, and Historic Nimmo Church.



HISTORY OF THE GREEN LINE

# 1979 Comprehensive Plan

- The term “Green Line” was not mentioned, but land-use policies were established to discourage the extension of urban facilities into agricultural areas.
- This proposed land-use plan established a border between single-family residential (yellow) and agricultural uses (green) along what is currently designated as the “Green Line.”



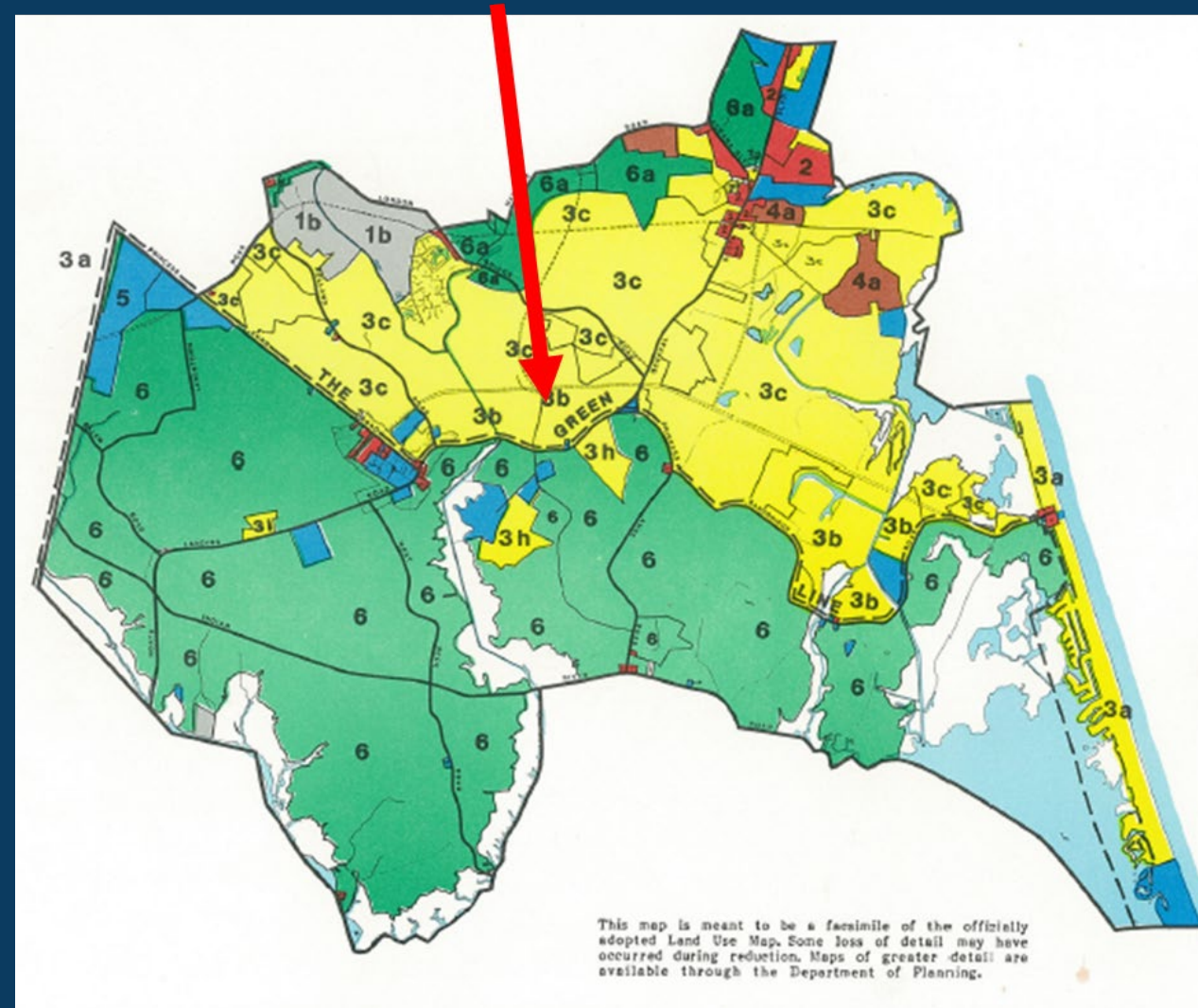
# 1985 Comprehensive Plan

- The strategy was to “minimize the conflicts which arise from the location of incompatible uses in close proximity to one another” (pg. 2).

## Rules and Regulations:

- “The Green Line is not a permanent feature but is subject to change as conditions and community standards related to adequacy of facilities north of the Green Line change” (pg. 3).
- The border of the Green Line was to be evaluated bi-annually by City Council (pg. 3).

“Green Line”  
established  
on Map





# 1991 Comprehensive Plan

## Strategy: Maintain the Green Line

- “The need to move the Green Line for the sake of residential expansion does not now exist” (pg. I-8).
- Since the Green Line was established, it helped the City address the backlog of roadway needs but are not yet at the point of desirability for the adequacy of the system and should not yet direct CIP projects south of the Green Line. However, a state law allows for public facility commitments from developers as part of conditional rezoning applications (pg. I-8).



# 1991 Comprehensive Plan Cont'd

## Recommendation:

- Due to inadequate roadways, the need for CIPs to correct existing roads, and adequate supply of developable land north of the Green Line with no pressure from local housing market, this Comp Plan determined the Green Line should not be relocated (pg. I-8).



# 1997 Comprehensive Plan

## Strategy: Maintain the Green Line

- “The Green Line has been rigidly adhered to by City Council in the formulation and implementation of the city's land use and CIP planning. This strategy has enabled the city to apply the full effect of the urban section of the CIP to needs north of the Green Line” (pg. 43).

## Policies to Ensure the Effectiveness of the Green Line:

- “It is the policy not to spend city funds for adequate public facilities South of the Green Line except to support the needs of the rural population or to support development that would expand the tax base or amenity base, and not to encourage growth that would rely on such facilities” (pg. 43).
- Create a relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and the CIP to define reasonable expectations and understand level of service.

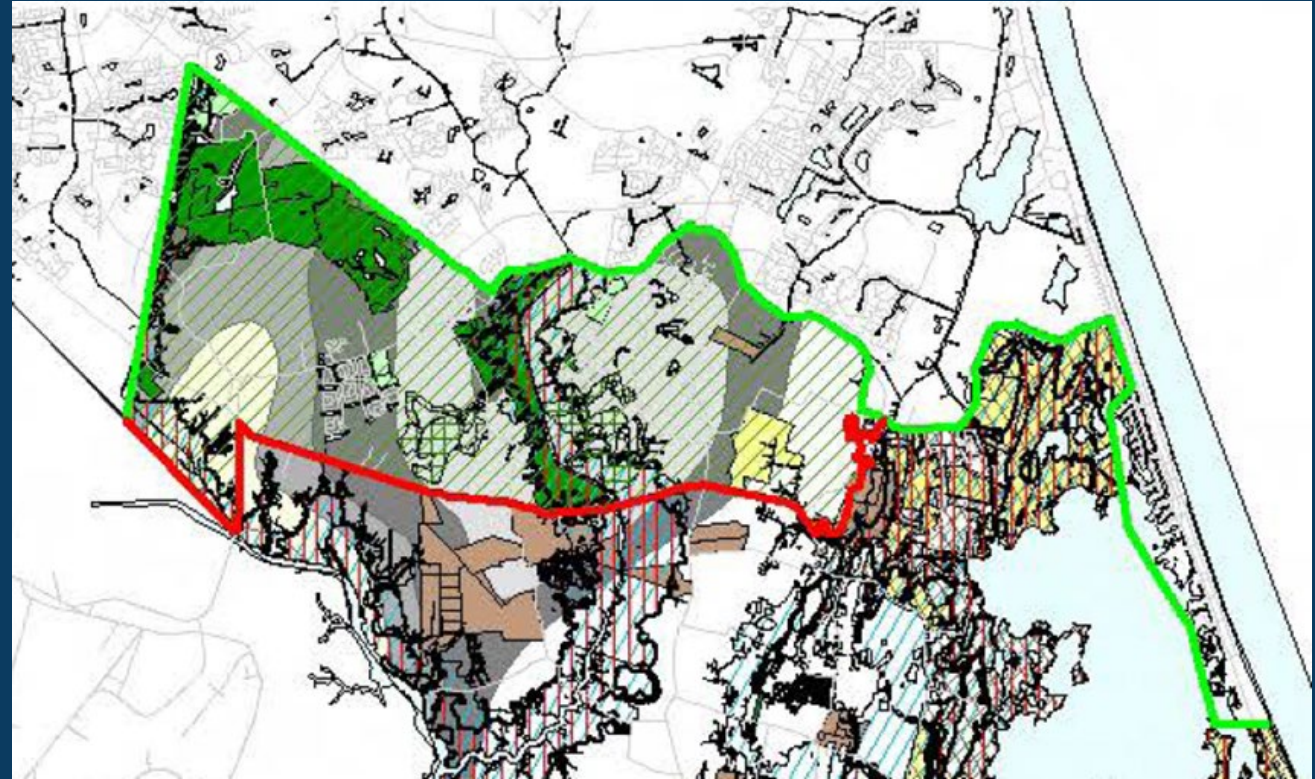
# 2003 Comprehensive Plan

Strategy: “Retain the Green Line in its current location” (pg. 19)

- Role of the Green Line:
  - Defend against sprawl and separate the northern and southern parts of the city.
  - Shortage of undeveloped land north of the Green Line (pg. 6); redevelopment will be key to future growth (pg. 33).
    - Redevelopment strategy and Rural Preservation policy go hand in glove
    - Redevelopment north of Green Line allows for protection of rural areas and vice versa
- This strategy has “enabled the city to apply maximum effect of the CIP to needs north of the Green Line” (pg. 19).

# 2003 Comprehensive Plan Cont'd

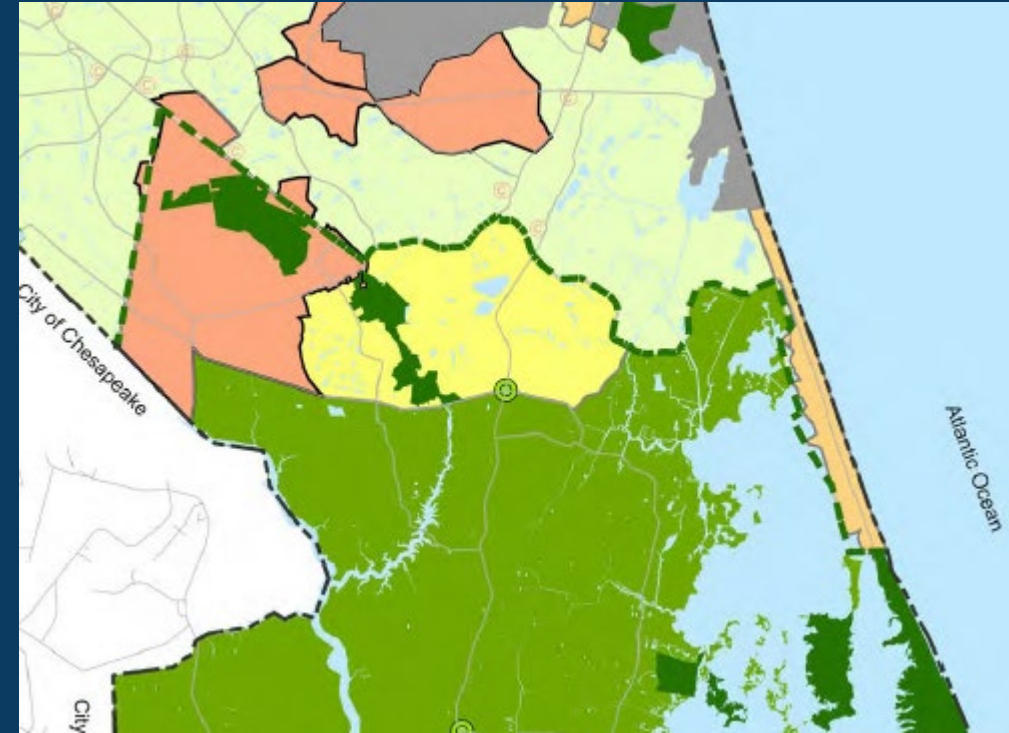
- The Green Line is not intended to prevent investments that would assist with basic health, safety, and welfare concerns due to existing or longstanding conditions.
- Because Princess Anne Commons is located south of the Green Line and provides great levels of benefit to residents of the city, it “needs to be supported with adequate infrastructure to accommodate this” (pg. 33).



# 2009 Comprehensive Plan

## Strategy: Maintain the Green Line

- Acts as the boundary that separates the more urbanized northern area of the city from the Princess Anne Commons, Transition Area, and Rural Area.
- “The extension of urban services for the purposes of supporting suburban and urban density residential development is not intended south of this line” (pg. A-1.4).
- “The extension of sewer and water utilities is not intended south of Indian River Road (Rural Area Line)” (pg A-1.4).



# 2016 Comprehensive Plan

## Strategy: Maintain the Green Line as a Growth Management Strategy (pg. 8)

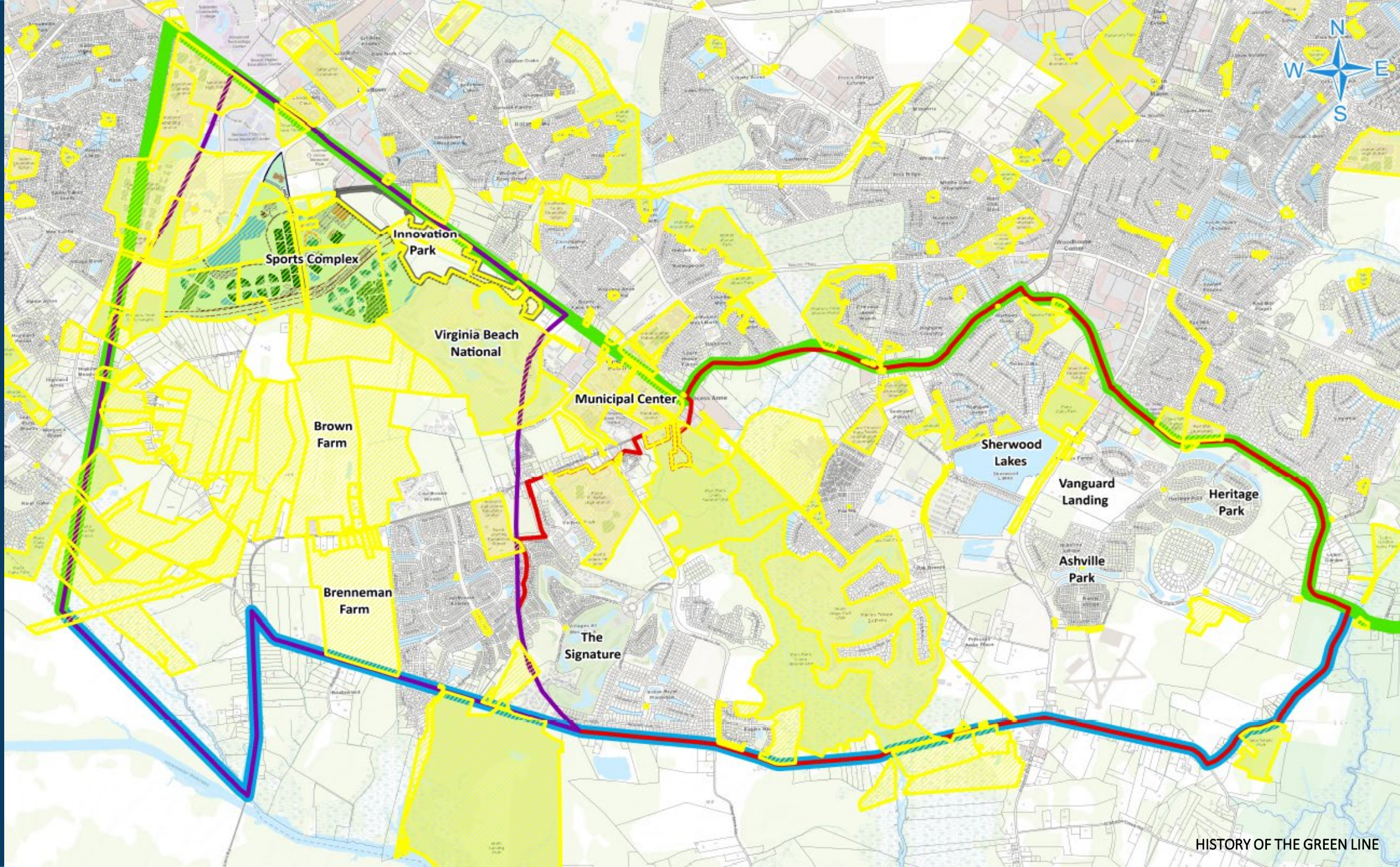
- “We have a need to re-evaluate the capacity of the area south of the Green Line to accommodate development as new revelations about changing environmental conditions and how we can develop land sustainably have come to light” (pg. 9).
- High groundwater table, flooding have changed development calculus in southern area of Virginia Beach.

Princess Anne Commons and the Transition Area are two key planning areas that are situated below the Green Line.

- “Planning and resourcing public infrastructure to support continued strategic economic development in Princess Anne Commons is a high priority” (pg. 13).
- Density in the Transition Area is strategically lower than north of the Green Line, but not as low as the rural area, south of Indian River Road.

# 2040 Comprehensive Plan (2024 Proposed Adoption)

- Current feedback from community input: Maintain the Green Line
- Strategies in the Plan (so far):
  - Balanced Growth
  - Build up, not out
  - Focus new development and redevelopment in SGAs, along major corridors, and in established centers
  - Preserve rural and agricultural land and enhance natural areas
- Staff and Consultant Team are working on policies for planning areas – clarifying and condensing recommendations for Rural and Transition Area are top of mind.
- The goal is to find a “happy medium” to identify areas that can provide additional economic development opportunities, while advancing Parks and Recreation initiatives and introducing innovative stormwater solutions.



# Discussion