

TRANSPORTATION

Lexington's distinctive character depends, in part, upon the narrow and irregularly planned roadway system that links its buildings and forms its neighborhoods. Lanes, streets, sidewalks and paths created long ago give a feeling of history and tradition prized by residents, students, and visitors. Unlike wide, straight suburban thoroughfares, Lexington's streets establish a small scale that makes the City feel especially approachable and intimate.

Its ways, byways, paths and trails connect various districts, neighborhoods, and local landmarks into a coherent pattern. They also provide the vistas of historic architecture –the streetscapes–that make Lexington picturesque. As the City continues to develop, transportation in all its aspects will continue to shape and define Lexington: This plan considers streets, parking, footways, and alternates to the automobile (including bicycles and mass transit).

INTENTIONS

The following transportation plan recommends actions that

- 1) Encourage street and pathway design that moves persons, goods, and services safely and efficiently, with minimal traffic congestion.
- 2) Preserve traditional transportation routes, their character, and the historic, aesthetic, and environmental resources located along them.
- 3) Anticipate the consequences of growth and other changes both within and outside the city.
- 4) Protect neighborhoods from disruptive or incompatible traffic patterns.
- 5) Exploit or enhance the City's distinctive walkable character and ready access to natural resources.
- 6) Support energy-efficient alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle, such as public transportation, walking, and bicycling.
- 7) Acknowledge present limitations in state and local funding while allowing for future opportunities and new funding mechanisms.

THE LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The *Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan (the 2020 Plan)* was completed by the Virginia Department of Transportation in 2003. *The 2020 Plan* includes a traffic engineering study that evaluated the transportation system in Lexington and recommendations for transportation improvements “to best satisfy existing and future transportation needs” for the City. Attachment 8.1 at the end of this chapter summarizes that *Plan*, especially its conclusions and recommendations (page 8-42.) The appendix includes traffic counts, accident data, makes projections of future traffic volumes for key City streets, anticipates future roadway deficiencies and makes recommendations for their correction.

PRESERVING AND IMPROVING EXISTING ROADWAYS

GOAL: Street design that moves persons, goods, and services safely and efficiently, with minimal traffic congestion, but preserves historic streets and neighborhoods and takes advantage of their design.

Lexington is one of several historic Virginia communities struggling with contemporary transportation standards for streets initially created for horse and buggy traffic. The Commonwealth of Virginia provides 98% of the money for new road construction, widening of existing streets, and major repairs to or replacement of streets and bridges provided those projects have been included in the Virginia Department of Transportation’s Six Year Construction Program.

Arterial and Collector Streets

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has developed a functional classification system for roadways within the Commonwealth. Arterials are the most significant streets in the urban area. They serve the major centers of activity, constitute the highest traffic volume corridors, serve the longest trips, and carry the major portion of through traffic in the urban area. Main Street and Nelson Street are the principal local arterials. Collector streets provide access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial and industrial areas. They collect traffic and distribute it to the arterial system. Enfield Road and Houston Street are local examples of urban collectors. VDOT’s classification system is explained on page 8.4. A map of the City with these classifications indicated is provided as Figure 8.1 on page 8-5.

The Virginia Department of Transportation has established minimum standards for street widths for collector and arterial streets in urban areas. These include a minimum of 30 feet of pavement, curb and gutter within a 50 foot right-of-way for two lane streets and a minimum diameter of 100 feet for a cul-de-sac. Both construction and improvement of existing arterial or collector streets must meet these standards, if State funds are to be used to pay for their construction and maintenance.

Lexington has many streets that do not—and cannot--meet current VDOT standards. As an older, established community with little room to increase existing road widths, Lexington cannot hope to widen its roadways to meet state standards without mutilating the front yards, and even houses, of

the neighborhoods through which they pass. Changes conforming to these standards would adversely affect these neighborhoods and their historic character as well as increase the speeds of cars passing through them.

Non-standard streets are not just an important part of Lexington's charm. They can also benefit neighborhoods. Increasing or speeding traffic flow is not necessarily desirable. The very narrowness that regulation forbids actually provides an automatic and natural version of traffic-calming. While suburban areas must construct strategies to slow and control volume and speed of traffic in residential neighborhoods or city centers--such as speed humps and constricted lanes--narrow and irregular streets naturally accomplish these aims.

Recommendation: The Planning, Police, and Public Works Departments will identify, preserve, and enhance strengths of the existing road system, such as sudden narrowing that slows traffic flow, and plan small-scale strategies to improve as many problem intersections as possible. Attention should be paid to measures which improve safety and intersections, or reduce vehicle speeds or volumes as well as to those which facilitate traffic flow.

The VDOT standards classify streets according to their function, a strategy that ignores Lexington's actual traffic conditions. Here significantly substandard roads are expected to function as collectors, moving regional traffic loads. Dangerous walking and biking conditions, side-swiped cars, and on-the-curb roadside parking result. VDOT sometimes classifies streets as collectors, because they must carry regional traffic loads, even though the subject roads are not built or located to the physical standard for collectors. These streets' residential quality must be closely monitored and non-disruptive solutions sought that protect the homes and residents in and the travelers through all such areas.

For example, Walker Street carries ever-increasing traffic as more and more drivers use it as a connection between Nelson and Houston Streets. Though pedestrians also use this link, they do so at their own peril, without a sidewalk. Bringing Walker St. up to the VDOT's standard for a collector would widen it, to permit two-way traffic flow, parking along one side, and a sidewalk, also on one side.

Designing even limited widening without negative effect on the neighborhood would be a challenge. Almost all of Walker Street is residential. Many houses lack off-street parking, and most have small front yards. If the City intends to pursue widening, it will need active participation by residents in the design process.

Given the high cost of construction, other, less intrusive and costly options deserve consideration. Adding traffic calming measures to an already narrow street and providing a sidewalk could discourage through traffic, slow down cars passing through this residential neighborhood, and make walking safer and more pleasant. Alternatively, making Walker Street one-way from the entrances to Summit Square and Rockbridge Square to Houston Street could limit traffic and take advantage of the street's narrow width.

Recommendation: The City will work closely with neighborhood residents to design solutions that minimize costly construction and acknowledge the narrowness of streets and rights-of-way.

VDOT does have the option of waiving requirements and allow construction to lesser standards at a locality's request. With this in mind, the City has already expressed its concerns about the effects of road-widening and has refused to endorse VDOT plans for such work. VDOT has shown increasing willingness to work with Lexington to provide needed improvements that avoid destructive impact on neighborhoods.

Recommendation: The Planning and Public Works Departments should work closely with representatives from VDOT when the next Lexington Transportation Plan is developed to ensure that its recommendations accurately reflect local transportation needs and limitations.

Recommendation: The City will consistently seek waivers from VDOT, instead proposing alternative non-standard designs that improve or construct streets without destroying community character.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HIGHWAY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has developed a functional classification system for streets and highways in the Commonwealth. The system is first divided into rural and urban roadways. Lexington is included in the urban system. Their classification system for urban roadways is described below:

Principal Arterial - These roadways are the most significant streets in the urban area. They serve the major centers of activity, constitute the highest traffic volume corridors, serve the longest trips, and carry the major portion of through traffic in the urban area, providing continuity between rural arterials. Main Street and Nelson Street are examples of local principal arterials.

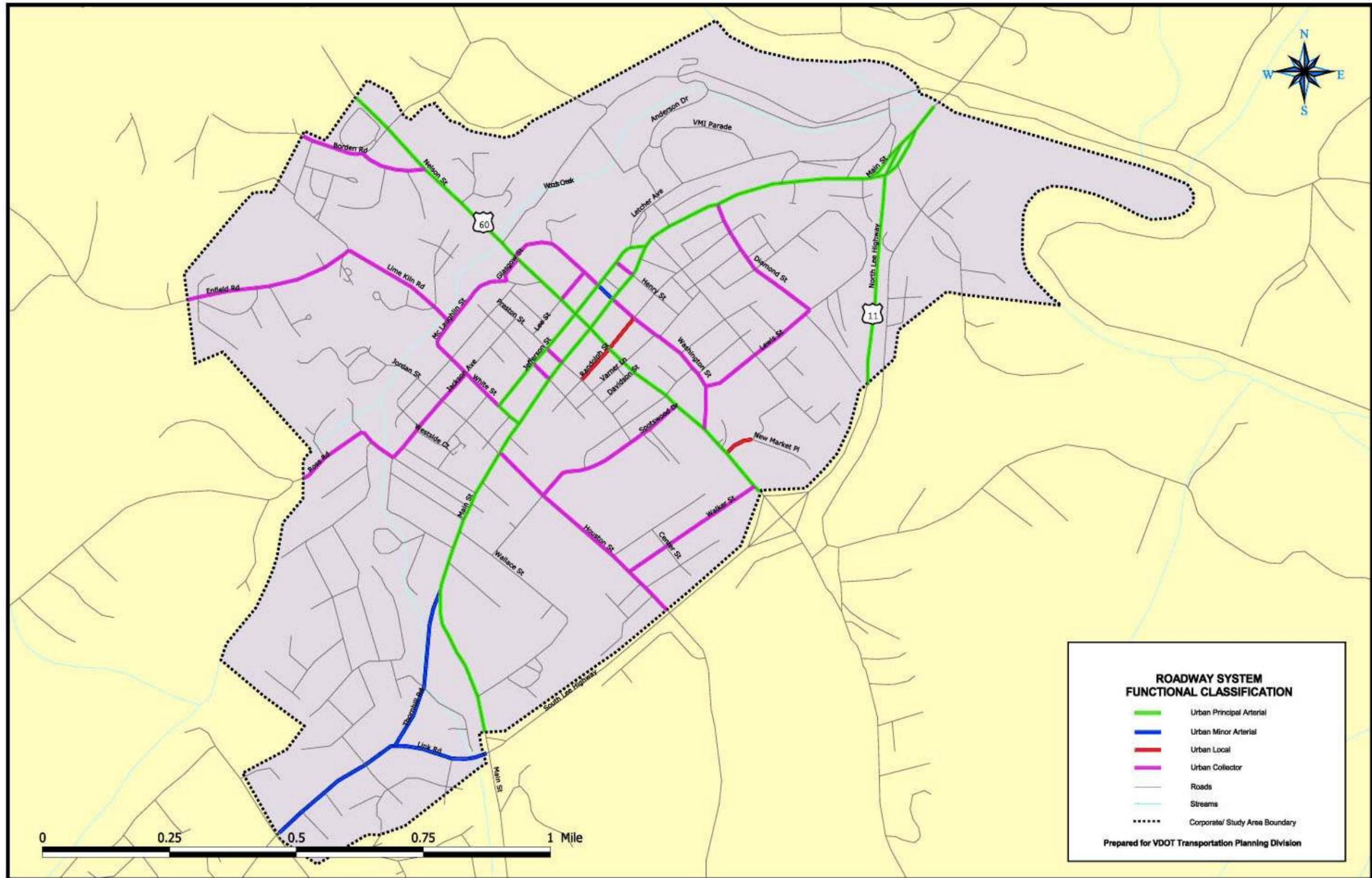
Minor Arterial - These roadways interconnect and supplement the principal arterial system with a greater emphasis on land access and a lower level of traffic mobility. They provide intra-community service as well as connecting rural collectors to the urban street system. Thornhill Road and Link Road are classified as minor arterials.

Urban Collector - These roadways provide access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial and industrial areas. They collect traffic and distribute it to the arterial system. Borden Road, Enfield Road and Houston Street are urban collectors.

Local - These streets provide direct access to adjacent land and provide access to the higher systems. Through traffic is discouraged. Johnstone Street and Edmondson Avenue are local streets.

This information as it relates to the City of Lexington is displayed in map form as Figure 8.1.

FIGURE 8.1
CITY OF LEXINGTON
VDOT FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR HIGHWAYS IN THE CITY OF LEXINGTON



Residential Streets

When evaluating street design, particularly in residential areas, the City should consider recent redefinitions of a street's function. In the past, residential streets were viewed as having two major functions, providing access and conveying traffic. This definition placed undue emphasis on the movement of traffic. Movement of vehicles is only one of a street's functions. The street--actually part of the neighborhood--also provides a visual setting for homes, a meeting place for residents, a play area for children, and a pathway for walking.

Properly scaled and designed streets and street improvements create more attractive communities. Any unnecessary width should be avoided. Excessive widths encourage greater vehicle speeds and add paved area, increasing construction and maintenance costs, stormwater runoff and heat buildup. Design should provide features that accept and treat street run-off, such as vegetated swales. Similarly, cul-de-sacs larger than a minimum radius of 40 feet should be discouraged, to restrict paving.

New streets or street widenings should consider their potential impact on the area and be responsive to natural features. Streets should be aligned and constructed to preserve the best features of the landscape, avoids destroying natural drainage patterns or special natural features. Entrances to residential areas from arterials and collector streets should allow convenient access without encouraging through traffic and allow for safe and convenient turning. The design standards for streets with curbs and gutters and those with shoulders and ditches are contained in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 on page 8-41.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should implement local standards for residential streets, which balance considerations of safety and efficiency, cost effectiveness, livability and community attractiveness. It should seek mechanisms within the City's land development regulations to implement these standards.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming refers to physical changes made to a street or roadway intended to reduce traffic speeds and/or the volume of cut-through traffic within a neighborhood. Traffic calming projects range from minor modifications of an individual street to comprehensive redesign of a road network. The reasons for installing one or more traffic calming measures are to reduce vehicular speeds, discourage the use of residential streets by non-resident drivers, improve the livability of neighborhood streets, and to promote safer conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Secondary benefits include creating more attractive residential streets, reducing the amount of pollution from vehicles, increasing the number of walkers and bikers, thereby reducing traffic volumes, reducing the frequency and severity of traffic accidents by reducing speeds and traffic flow; and reducing the need for police enforcement of traffic regulations.

Traffic calming tends to benefit neighborhood residents and walkers and disadvantage those driving through a residential neighborhood on a local street, especially those wishing to travel at higher speeds. Figure 8.2, page 8-8, lists and describes some traffic calming measures and provides a photographic example of each.

The City has been studying the concept of traffic calming and the measures which have been developed to implement it to evaluate its potential for addressing the problems associated with increasing through traffic and speeding on residential streets.

Two traffic calming measures have been constructed as pilot projects to evaluate their suitability and effectiveness in response to requests from residents concerned about neighborhood traffic problems. Both of these measures were installed on Ross Road: a speed hump has been constructed near the City limits to reduce the speed of traffic entering the City; a speed table with a crosswalk on top has been installed at the Ross Road/Stonewall Street intersection to improve pedestrian safety, especially for children crossing at this intersection to reach Waddell Elementary School and those wishing to use the Woods Creek Trail. The City continues to evaluate the performance of these measures.

The City continues to receive requests for the installation of additional measures to address traffic problems throughout our residential neighborhoods, especially on those Streets with a significant volume of through traffic such as Houston Street, Walker Street, Jackson Avenue and North Randolph Street. The City will carefully consider and evaluate all requests.

**FIGURE 8.2
Traffic Calming Measures**

Traffic Calming Measures		
Devices and Techniques	Description	Picture
Speed Humps	Rounded raised pavement devices placed across roadways to slow and/or discourage traffic.	
Speed Tables / Textured Pavement / Raised Crossings	Flat-topped speed humps often constructed with a brick or other textured material to slow traffic.	
Bulbouts / Neckdowns / Chockers	Curb extensions at intersections that reduce curb-to-curb roadway travel lane widths.	
Chicanes / Lateral Shifts	Curb extensions that alternate from one side of the roadway to the other, forming s-shaped curves.	
Center Islands	Raised islands located along the centerline of a roadway that narrow the width at that location.	
Police Enforcement	Involve employing the services of law enforcement agencies to impose the local safe vehicle laws, including those for posted speeds and traffic signal/signs.	

STRATEGIES FOR FUNDING IMPROVEMENTS

GOAL: Continued improvements, despite present limitations in state and local budgets.

Local solutions, which cost far less than adhering to an unrealistic set of standards, may be the only way that Lexington can afford to address weaknesses in its transportation system. Virginia's budget for new transportation construction and expansion does not meet present needs, and demands, state-wide, are increasing. Thanks to reduced funding, more and more of the available monies are being used for maintenance of the existing system, leaving less for new project development.

The 2007 Virginia General Assembly provided the first significant transportation funding package for the Commonwealth in 20 years. If all of its funding mechanisms are implemented, it will result in more than \$1 billion a year for transportation. Unfortunately, this additional funding does not solve Virginia's long-term transportation funding problems. A recent VDOT study concluded that a full solution will still require an additional \$1 billion per year, and even then VDOT will divert more than \$200 million from the construction program every year to meet basic highway maintenance needs. One-time infusions of money cannot resolve the problem of inadequate funds. A permanent solution must include long-term dedicated funding for transportation.

Current state funding does not even cover essential work required to keep the City's transportation system in safe and sound condition. A case in point is the East Nelson Street bridge. The bridge, constructed in 1938, provides important access to downtown Lexington and carries through traffic on Route 60. Recent inspections found extensive deterioration of both the steel and concrete structural components of the bridge. Short-term repairs have been undertaken, but its condition is so unsafe that the City must replace this bridge as soon as possible. As a result, this project has been placed on VDOT's Six-Year Improvement Program, to be replaced when sufficient funds accumulated; **however given the present rate at which funds are being accumulated for this project, sufficient funds may not be accumulated for at least a decade.**

The Virginia Department of Transportation Six Year Improvement Program is the Commonwealth Transportation Board's plan for the use of funds anticipated to be available for highway construction, public transit, airports, and ports over a six-year period. The Board's first priority for these funds is the maintenance and safety of existing highway systems. New construction—such as the East Nelson Street bridge—is the last priority for funding.

Any available funding for new construction is distributed to the Nine Transportation Districts within the Commonwealth and then to the units of local government within those Districts. The Lexington City Council sets priorities for any funds allocated to the City. Because most projects exceed the financial resources available for a particular year, they are programmed for multiple years--construction only begins when the total estimated project cost has accumulated. At present funding levels, accruing the necessary funds for replacing the East Nelson Street bridge through annual allocations would take approximately ten years.

As a result, the City must use its own funds for this work. City Council had voted to construct a North-bound entry to the Route 11 by-pass and had set aside City funds for that purpose. Faced

with a badly deteriorated bridge, Council has discontinued pursuit of the new by-pass access at this time and will instead use funds intended for that work to replace the East Nelson Street bridge.

Recommendation: City Council should join with other localities and groups in support of an adequate, strategic, and long-term state transportation budget.

Preserving traditional streets requires careful attention to their context. The *2020 Transportation Plan* relies on traffic engineering standards that ignore proposed improvements' impact on surrounding residential and commercial neighborhoods. As a result, several of the *Plan's* recommendations have already been rejected by the Planning Commission and City Council. The City prefers less invasive projects that, while they may not meet these traffic engineering standards, respond better to land-use realities and minimize improvements' impact.

Such planning for the existing road system can be accomplished cost-effectively in-house. The City Public Works and Police Departments already review intersections and areas near intersections to identify small-scale improvements to enhance safety and improve traffic flow.

Transportation planning must acknowledge that, even the most careful identification and analysis cannot ensure that all of the transportation system's problems can be remedied. It is not practical to require that houses or retaining walls be demolished. Restricting parking adjacent to problem intersections may exacerbate existing parking problems on some streets. As an older, established, built-up community, we will have to accept that there are situations which will limit our ability to resolve many of these street problems.

Recommendation: Public Works will address traffic problems with small, cost-effective changes, such as intersection improvements; selected widening where possible; additional turning lanes, limited drainage improvements without curb and gutter, improved striping, traffic-calming strategies and sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety.

CITY-COUNTY PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Pro-active joint City-County solutions to potential transportation problems anticipated on Lexington's perimeter.

Since very little vacant land remains within the City limits and because the City is precluded from annexing land, most growth in the area will continue to occur in the County around Lexington's perimeter. Consequently, transportation problems created by development cannot be solved by the City alone.

For example, one principal growth area straddles the city-county line where Country Club Road intersects Route 251 (known as Thornhill Road within the City limits). A left turn lane has already been constructed on Thornhill Road at the entrance to the Weatherburn housing project. Other improvements will be necessary to alleviate bottlenecks along Route 251 and ease turning movements from new development in this area. In order for this project to be constructed within both jurisdictions at the same time, the city and the county must coordinate the programming of the VDOT construction dollars allocated to each.

Recommendation: The City should widen Thornhill Road from where it narrows near McCormick Street to the City limits, to provide for left-turn lanes. These turn lanes would be required to support the development of the remaining vacant land on the southeast side of Thornhill Road as the volume of traffic on Route 251 and Thornhill Road increases.

Recommendation: The City Planning Department should work with the County Planning Department to provide turning lanes at Country Club and Birdfield Roads.

The increased emphasis being placed on joint planning efforts by the local jurisdictions should provide the City the opportunity to increase the recognition by Rockbridge County that the City has a legitimate interest and concern in transportation decisions beyond our borders which will impact on local residents and businesses.

Much residential development near the City in Rockbridge County has been to the City's north and south, where existing City streets provide residents of these developments access to Lexington for employment, shopping and recreation. Much of the future development in the greater Lexington area will occur southwest and west of the City, where considerable vacant land remains.

Ross and Enfield Roads will provide access to the City and adjacent commercial areas for those living in new housing in these areas. Neither of these roads can carry significantly increased volumes of traffic. Both have limited widths and rights of way, and both pass through residential neighborhoods in the City.

Widening Ross and Enfield Roads would mean taking required rights of way from the front yards of houses. And widening would bring higher volumes of traffic and, in turn, increased noise, difficulty entering streets from driveways, and unsafe conditions for pedestrians and children playing in yards will come with more cars. Instead, emphasis should be placed on getting traffic to Thornhill Road to reduce the traffic demand on Ross Road. Rockbridge County has begun to require developers of land between Ross Road and Collierstown Road (Route 251) to construct portions of what will ultimately be a collector road connecting these to roads. It is essential that this process be continued until the entire length of this road has been constructed.

Recommendation: Rockbridge County has begun to require developers of land in this area to construct portions of what will ultimately be a collector road connecting Ross Road and Route 251 within the County. Any rights-of-way required to make road improvements should be dedicated during the County's subdivision review process.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should work with the County Planning Department to explore possible secondary improvement projects that could encourage traffic toward Collierstown Road and West Midland Trail. Roads considered could include Union Run, Spring Valley Road, and Beatty Hollow. The Planning Department should encourage the County to preserve additional right of way along existing roads that connect Route 251 with Ross and Enfield Roads (and eventually Route 60) to enable widening these roads in the future, as improved connections to Routes 251 and 60.

Recommendation: The Planning and Public Works Departments should cooperate with Rockbridge County to improve pedestrian and vehicular connections between the City and the Country Club area.

The Virginia Department of Transportation, Rockbridge County, and the City have explored building a western by-pass connecting Route 251 and Ross Road extended and ultimately joining West Midland Trail (Route 60). It would forestall traffic problems within the City caused by increased numbers of cars entering Lexington from these development areas. VDOT has identified possible routes for such a road; however, given the present state of funding for transportation in Virginia, money required to build such a road is unlikely to come from an allocation.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should ask Rockbridge County to locate and designate a right-of-way for a possible western by-pass in its official planning documents, to allow the County to require dedication of land as it reviews and approves development proposals in the area. Reserving the right-of-way will allow this road to be built, should funding become available.

Major commercial development has increased traffic at the intersection of East Nelson Street and the Route 11 By-pass, producing frustrating and dangerous congestion. Left turns are especially difficult as a result of traffic volume. The lack of left turn lanes on Nelson Street compounds the problem. Although this interchange is in Rockbridge County, immediately adjacent to the City limits, City residents must endure the limitations of the current intersection. Its problems deserve prompt attention because, like the East Lexington Bridge, this area serves as an entry point for residents and visitors coming into Lexington.

Recommendation: The Planning and Public Works Departments should work with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Rockbridge County to design an upgrade of the Route 11 By-pass/Nelson Street interchange. The project should include development of design elements that enhance this entrance to Lexington.

EAST LEXINGTON AREA

Given the extreme shortage of buildable land in Lexington, the East Lexington area of the City represents a likely possibility for development. This area already contains a neighborhood with narrow streets and shallow front yards. To protect the quality of the surrounding neighborhood, modifications or additions to East Lexington streets must be carefully designed.

- The extension of Campbell Lane should be limited because of the limits of the existing street. Development served by this extended street should be limited to adjacent properties at existing single family home densities.
- Any significant new development of the Donald property in Rockbridge County should be accessed by a new road from McCorkle Drive, perhaps at or near the current Donald's Heating and Air Conditioning facility. This new road should not connect through to Campbell Lane.

- Any significant development on the County portion of the Donald land should be served by a new road that accesses McCorkle Drive directly, rather than passing through existing neighborhoods.
- Any new road(s) serving the County portion of the Donald tract should not extend through to connect with Campbell Lane.
- A connection between Allen Avenue and Campbell Lane should be made when the vacant land in this area is developed to distribute new traffic between these existing streets.

New street design in East Lexington should minimize the width of new street(s) since they will connect to narrow existing streets. Distributing increased traffic over more than one street might better minimize through traffic. Unless mandated by VDOT, any new streets should not have curb and, if density merits, have a sidewalk on only one side. Consideration should be given to the McCorkle Drive/East Midland Trail intersection, where increasing traffic volume is making the turn from McCorkle onto Midland Trail increasingly difficult.

Recommendation: The City should only permit development in East Lexington that avoids overloading existing streets and/or changing their character and that provides street-design consistent with the existing neighborhood's character.

ENTRY CORRIDOR AND DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

GOAL: Increased commercial activity and tourism in Lexington.

GOAL: Easier, more obvious, and attractive access to downtown, parking, Washington & Lee, VMI, and special destinations for those unfamiliar with Lexington.

Walkability and Wayfinding

To remain viable, Lexington's downtown needs more shoppers. Few things frustrate both drivers and pedestrians more than getting lost, and few affect visitors' feelings about a community more than the ease—or lack of ease—with which they find their way. The term “wayfinding” describes the means used to help people unfamiliar with an environment find their way in it and easily locate destinations. It establishes logical traffic and walking patterns that enable people to move easily from place to place without confusion.

Wayfinding depends on a carefully developed, easy to read, coherent system of public signage. It also provides physical cues such as trash receptacles and bicycle racks. A wayfinding system predicts what visitors will find at particular destinations, encouraging people to go where they already want to go--and where the City would like them to go.

Lexington would benefit greatly from the development and implementation of a comprehensive wayfinding system, primarily for the downtown area. Presently, a driver traveling from Interstate 81 into downtown encounters four different symbols and names for the Visitors' Center. Introducing and maintaining consistent logos throughout the transportation system would greatly assist those unfamiliar with the community.

In addition, the Lexington Police Department has to post extensive signage, to ensure that people ticketed can be convicted for their violations. In a forest of traffic-related information, drivers frequently miss directional signs, thereby contributing to local traffic problems. Periodically, City staff conducts a sign-by-sign review to identify which signs are necessary and which can be eliminated or incorporated into others without endangering the safe flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

There is presently limited signage for the numerous off-street parking facilities located throughout the downtown. The City's wayfinding system should include “trail blazer” signs that direct motorists to off-street lots and “site” signs located at each parking site, indicating the type of parking being provided

Similarly, clear, direct signage to the appropriate entrances and parking areas for the two college campuses, as well as to other frequently visited public destinations would facilitate movement to and within the downtown for tourists, visitors, and shoppers visiting from other areas. A well-thought-out, coordinated wayfinding system for the City would create a strong positive first impression, improve visitor satisfaction, increase the number of return visitors, and encourage and boost retail sales in the downtown.

The system should include features specifically intended to guide pedestrians and cyclists. Its design should place signage and amenities so that they can be readily recognized and used by persons on foot or on bicycles.

Recommendation: The City Planning Department should work closely with Rockbridge County, VMI, and Washington & Lee to develop a well-designed, attractive, and comprehensive wayfinding system.

Recommendation: Public restrooms available for use by cyclists and walkers—such as those planned for Jordan’s Point Park—will be clearly indicated within this system.

GOAL: A more walkable City seen as a destination for non-vehicular tourism.

A comprehensive wayfinding system offers an opportunity to create a connected system of sidewalks, paths, and trails and to make the City streets safer and more welcoming for non-vehicular transport. Lexington’s planning has traditionally emphasized convenient parking, as critical to downtown’s economic health; however, since the City’s last Comprehensive Plan, studies have established that walking matters as much, or more. They have shown that:

- 1) The most successful shopping districts are those which provide the most comfort and pleasure for walkers.
- 2) Improving walking conditions in a community significantly increases retail sales.
- 3) Such improvements raise property values.

Better walking conditions also strengthen tourism, since many tourists select destinations precisely because they offer opportunities for walking, rather than driving. With gas prices soaring, communities that allow visitors to avoid driving can only grow in popularity.

Though the automobile is the principal means of travel in Lexington, almost everyone does some walking and/or cycling daily. Walking serves as a basic means of transportation for those who do not drive or own cars, especially school-aged children, seniors and persons with disabilities. Within the City, walking and cycling are often the fastest and most efficient ways to perform short trips. Many residents who live within walking distance of downtown or their work places choose to walk or bike rather than drive. Some simply enjoy healthy exercise and the casual opportunities for people to meet and interact that attractive streets with safe walking and cycling provide.

Studies have shown that walking is up to three times more common in a community with pedestrian-friendly streets. As a result, communities that improve walking conditions can significantly reduce vehicular travel, which, in turn, reduces traffic congestion, demand for parking, and the need to locate parking on the commercial district’s valuable land. Improving walking conditions thus is the cheapest way to bring more shoppers into downtown without the infrastructure costs associated with automobile use. Many of Lexington’s narrow streets already feel pedestrian-friendly. Wide roads, fast vehicular traffic, and high traffic volume discourage walking. Ideally, all City roadways should be made safe for cycling and walking.

The absence of sidewalks along busy streets discourages foot traffic and puts pedestrians at higher risk. In the past, walking within Lexington was hindered by the lack of sidewalks in some parts of

the City. To address this deficiency, the City has made sidewalks an integral part of its Capital Improvement Program for the past decade. Public Works has built sidewalks in the commercial area along East Nelson Street, along Wallace Street to the Brewbaker Sports Complex and Maury River Middle School, and along McLaughlin Street. Sidewalks have also been constructed along Donald Street, Enfield Road, Lime Kiln Road, North Main Street, Pendleton Place, Ross Road, Spotswood Drive, Thornhill Road, West Nelson Street, White Street and Wills Road.

Recommendation: Public Works will accelerate work toward its goal of having sidewalks along at least one side of every street, except for local streets within residential neighborhoods.

Simply having sidewalks is not enough to encourage foot or wheelchair traffic. Some sidewalks feel too exposed to traffic, though they are actually safe. Landscaping and amenities that create a feeling of separation from the roadway may be needed, to encourage walkers.

In built-up areas of the City, especially downtown, light and utility poles, signs, fire hydrants and other infrastructure interrupt sidewalks, limiting their use. In many places, inadequate width bars wheelchairs. The City is presently exploring the engineering and economic feasibility of placing the utilities underground along Randolph Street between Nelson and Washington Streets. Burying utilities would both enhance the appearance of this important block and make its narrow sidewalks more usable.

Recommendation: In addition to reviewing intersections, to identify vehicular problems, the Planning, Public Works, and Police departments should work together to identify ways to improve pedestrian mobility and safety.

Recommendation: Examine the neighborhoods within ½ mile of commercial areas to determine where improvements to pedestrian linkages are needed.

Hazards include potholes, sewer grates, missing curb cuts, missing route links and uneven or cracked sidewalks. Utilities such as light poles and fire hydrants, as well as mail boxes, should be kept out of new sidewalks and, where feasible, removed from existing ones.

Recommendation: Public Works should develop a “spot improvement program” to reduce hazards along major pedestrian and bicycle routes through small-scale, low cost improvements. Larger projects may be funded by grants, property-owner participation and other non-general fund revenues.

Recommendation: When study shows that existing sidewalks are underused, the Planning Department should consider additional design features to make walkers feel more secure.

Work to improve walkability should engage the community in identifying specific problems and possible solutions. Individual user surveys can allow those using specific walking routes on a regular basis to identify specific problems and barriers to pedestrian travel. The City can then develop small, focused projects to address these problems and prioritize projects for possible funding and implementation.

A potential model for this work is already in place. The Lexington City Public Schools have received a Safe Routes to Schools grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). This grant will engage a consultant to inventory and evaluate the existing infrastructure for walking and biking within a 3/4 mile radius of both Waddell and Downing schools. The evaluation will include sidewalks, pathways, traffic directions on streets, crosswalks, stop and yield signs, other significant signage, approximate sight distances and another other physical structures which affect walking and biking. Based on this evaluation, priority improvement projects to enhance walking and biking will be developed, including schematic designs and preliminary cost estimates to enable future funding and implementation. This project could serve as the basis for expanding similar analysis throughout the City.

Recommendation: The Planning, Police, and Public Works Departments should use the Safe Routes to Schools project as the basis for expanding similar analysis throughout the City. A focused community-wide evaluation of the quality of walking conditions--including safety, comfort, and convenience--should also address problems of access for people with special needs, including those using wheelchairs, walkers and strollers.

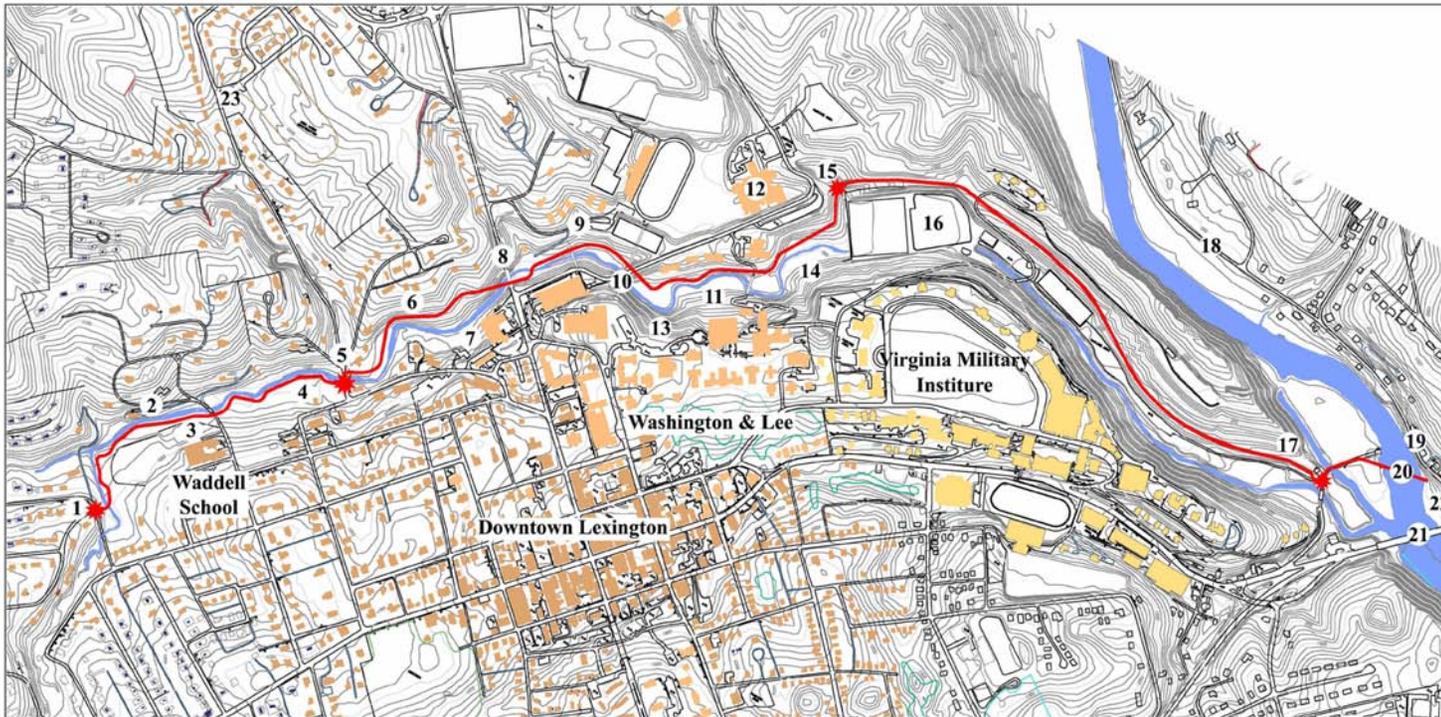
Pathways and Trails

City residents and visitors enjoy access to a number of walking trails both in the City and extending into the county. These include:

- The Woods Creek trail - a 2.4 mile walking trail along Woods Creek through the heart of Lexington, extends from Waddell Elementary School , through the campuses of Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute to Jordan's Point Park on the banks of the Maury River. A detailed map of this trail and its context are shown on Figure 8.3, page 8-18.
- The Brushy Hills Preserve walking trails - a network of hiking trails through the preserve located approximately 3 miles west of Lexington.
- The Chessie Trail - a 6 mile walking trail along the Maury River extends from the north side of the Maury River opposite Jordan's Point Park to Buena Vista. This trail, presently owned by VMI was constructed on the abandoned C&O railroad corridor. There have previously been bridges across the Maury River at Jordan's Point which utilized the abandoned piers for the railroad bridge and trestle which spanned the river and the Point to connect the Woods Creek and Chessie Trails. These bridges have all been lost to floods. Efforts continue to construct a new bridge or develop another means of access.

The City should continue to support and encourage efforts to link these extensive, significant and beautiful trail systems. In addition to a connection across the Maury River, there may be possible additional extensions to current trails which have not yet been considered. The City should continue to be alert to opportunities to expand its trail network. Extending the trail network has immediate benefits for residents of the Rockbridge area.

**FIGURE 8.3
CITY OF LEXINGTON
WOODS CREEK TRAIL**



Trail Features

1. Ross Road Trailhead
2. Duck Pond
3. Waddell Roots and Shoots Garden
4. City Playground
5. Lime Kiln Road Bridge
6. Historic Millrace
7. Washington & Lee Fine Arts Center
8. Route 60 Bridge
9. Washington & Lee Sororities
10. Washington & Lee Footbridge and Historic Stone Rail Bridge
11. Washington & Lee Dell
12. Washington & Lee Law School
13. Stream Stabilization Project

Trail Length: 2.1 miles

14. Washington & Lee Biofiltration Project
15. Washington & Lee/Virginia Military Institute Line
16. Virginia Military Institute Patchin Field
17. Historic Millrace
18. Furrs Mill Road
19. Historic Covered Bridge Abutment
20. Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
21. Route 11 Bridge
22. Chessie Bridge to Buena Vista
23. Fairwinds Stormwater Retrofit
- ★ Public Access Points

Woods Creek Trail

The Woods Creek Trail parallels the creek for 2.1 miles through Lexington from Ross Road to Jordan's Point Park. The trail winds past Waddell Elementary School, through Woods Creek Park, the campus of Washington and Lee university and the post of the Virginia Military institute before ending at Jordan's Point Park and the banks of the Maury River. Walking along the trail, you can see the young trees and shrubs planted by citizen volunteers to re-establish a riparian buffer to protect Woods Creek. This riparian buffer provides natural habitats for many animals, birds and amphibians along the creek. The rain garden constructed on the Washington and Lee University campus to intercept and treat runoff from nearby streets and parking lots is also immediately adjacent to the trail.

The Brushy Blue Greenway

A greenway is a linear corridor of open space that is designed and developed for non-motorized transportation and recreational use. They are often located within existing natural or man made corridors such as rivers, streams, valleys, ridges and the like. Abandoned rail road lines are often used to create greenway corridors. Greenways may accommodate a variety of non-motorized transportation including walking, biking, horses, roller-blades and cross country skiing. Greenways accomplish many purposes for a community including transportation, economic development, education, conservation and recreation

The Brushy Blue Greenway is a vision for interconnecting the existing trail systems located in Rockbridge County, Lexington and Buena Vista - from the Brushy Hills walking trails on the west to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail to the east. The Brushy Hills trails, the Woods Creek trail, the Chessie Trail and the Levee Walk in Buena Vista are the existing segments of the proposed system. These trails would be interconnected with new trails to complete the system. The existing trails would also be upgraded to a multi-use greenway trail. The completed system would be approximately seventeen miles long. .

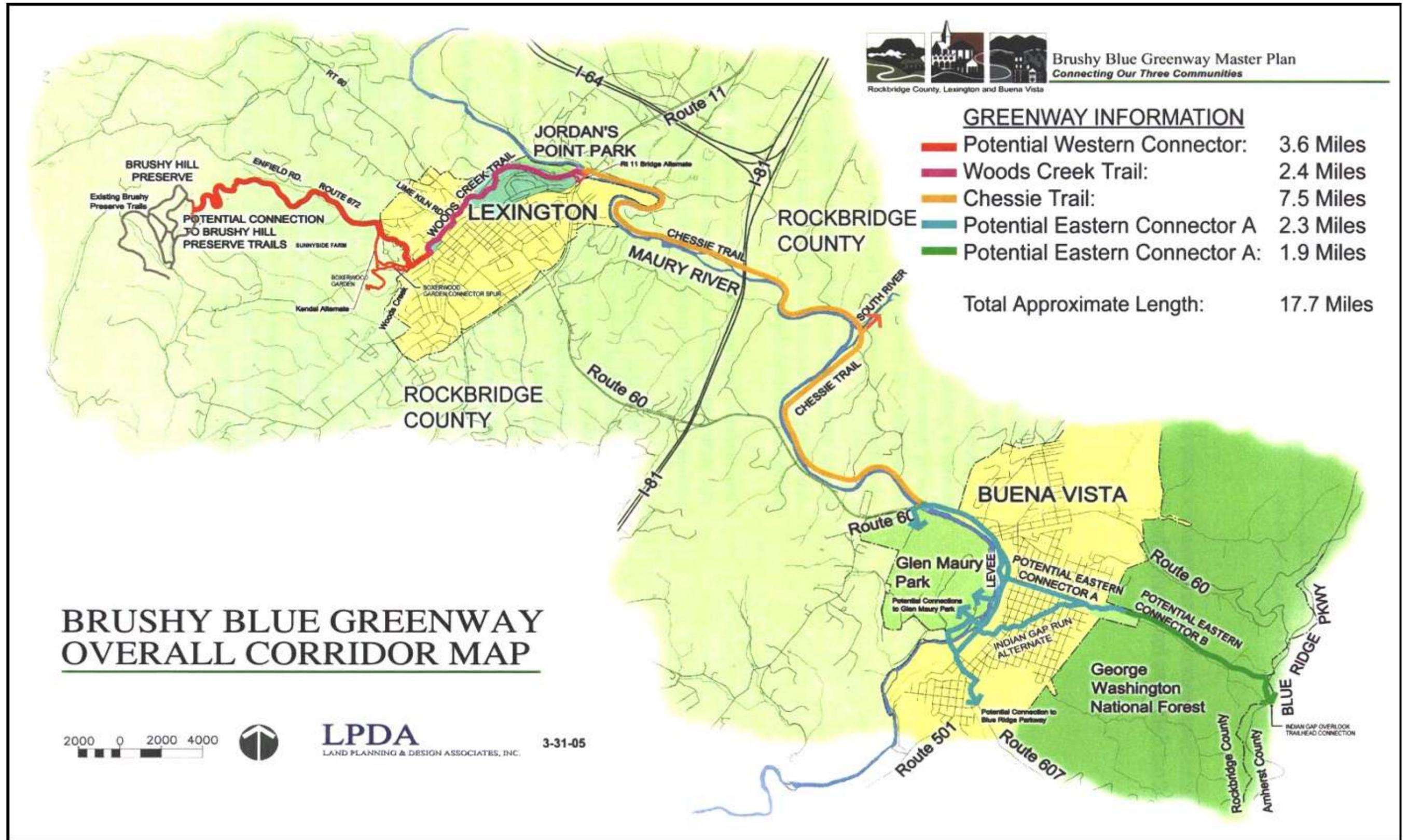
A Brushy Blue Greenway Master Plan was prepared in 2004 to provide a framework for the development of this greenway. This Plan depicts the main greenway corridor alignment, makes recommendations for trail improvements, new trail routes and trail amenities. The Master Plan and its associated cost estimates are intended to be used as a planning tool to guide further planning and greenway implementation efforts. Figure 8.4 is a map which shows the existing trails and illustrates how they can be expanded to create the entire greenway corridor

Other Trails

There are other more informal, less well known trails in and near Lexington. Washington and Lee University has a system of running trails located primarily on the less developed back campus. There is also an informal trail on the VMI back campus which includes a walk along the Maury Cliffs. Across the river, to the north in the Hunter Hill area, VMI retains a system of running trails that could be expanded to provide a pedestrian link to Rockbridge County High School.

Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute both have very walkable campuses and are located astride the Woods Creek Trail. With some careful planning, it should be possible to use these campuses to provide improved pedestrian access from the Woods Creek trail and areas to the north and west of these campuses to the Diamond Hill area and specifically to improve walking access to Lylburn Downing Middle School

FIGURE 8.4
BRUSHY BLUE TRAIL



Expansion of the Local Trail System

The City should continue to evaluate its paths and trails, which usually do not follow streets. Multi-use trails--which accommodate walking, jogging and bicycling--go where roads do not or cannot. Public trails have been shown to:

- 1) Stimulate tourist activity.
- 2) Increase property values.
- 3) Help attract knowledge-based businesses, whose employees typically value amenities such as environmental quality, access to greenspace, and outdoor recreation.

Bicyclists also need off-road paths, which appeal to many people, especially those who are not comfortable sharing roadways with vehicles. Developing and promoting mountain bike riding also serves to broaden outdoor recreational options for tourists. Several off-road projects have been proposed, including upgrading and improving the Chessie Trail which presently bans bicycles.

The City already has a partial trail system that could be integrated with other pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connected to popular destinations including Lexington's parks, schools, colleges, and commercial areas. If connected with regional trails outside the City, a coherent trail system would allow visitors and residents to move in and out of town easily, providing easy access to the area's natural resources. Lexington has the potential to become a walking and cycling destination, without incurring significant costs.

Goal: Explore possibilities for expanding the City's local trail network

Recommendation: Working with Rockbridge County, the Planning and Public Works Departments should complete the City's trail system by linking it with other walkways and bikeways and with trails in the County.

Priority Projects

- Ross Road - The key to extending the Woods Creek trail to the west towards Kendal, Boxerwood, and ultimately to the Brushy Hills is an improved sidewalk or trail connection along Ross Road from its junction at Stonewall Street to Rebel Ridge Road. The present sidewalk is narrow, requires that Ross Road be crossed twice, and has several steps to address grade problems. As a result, the sidewalk is not usable by those with handicaps. This will not be a simple or cheap improvement. But a carefully thought out plan to widen and improve pedestrian safety along this connection will open up the possibility of further extensions to the north and west. It would also provide walkers who currently come from Kendal to use the Woods Creek trail, greatly improved, safer route. Figure 8.5 illustrates how this could be accomplished.
- Pathway through Kendal to the Confederate Cove area - Kendal has already providing a mowed pathway from their residential complex to Rebel Ridge and Ross Roads. Working with Kendal management and homeowners, it should be possible to design and install an extension of that path north and west to the Confederate Cove area. Completion of this link would allow people living in this area to access the Woods Creek trail and Waddell Elementary School without having to walk down Enfield Road. See Figure 8.6, page 8-23.

FIGURE 8.5
POSSIBLE TRAIL LINKS
THE MISSING LINK

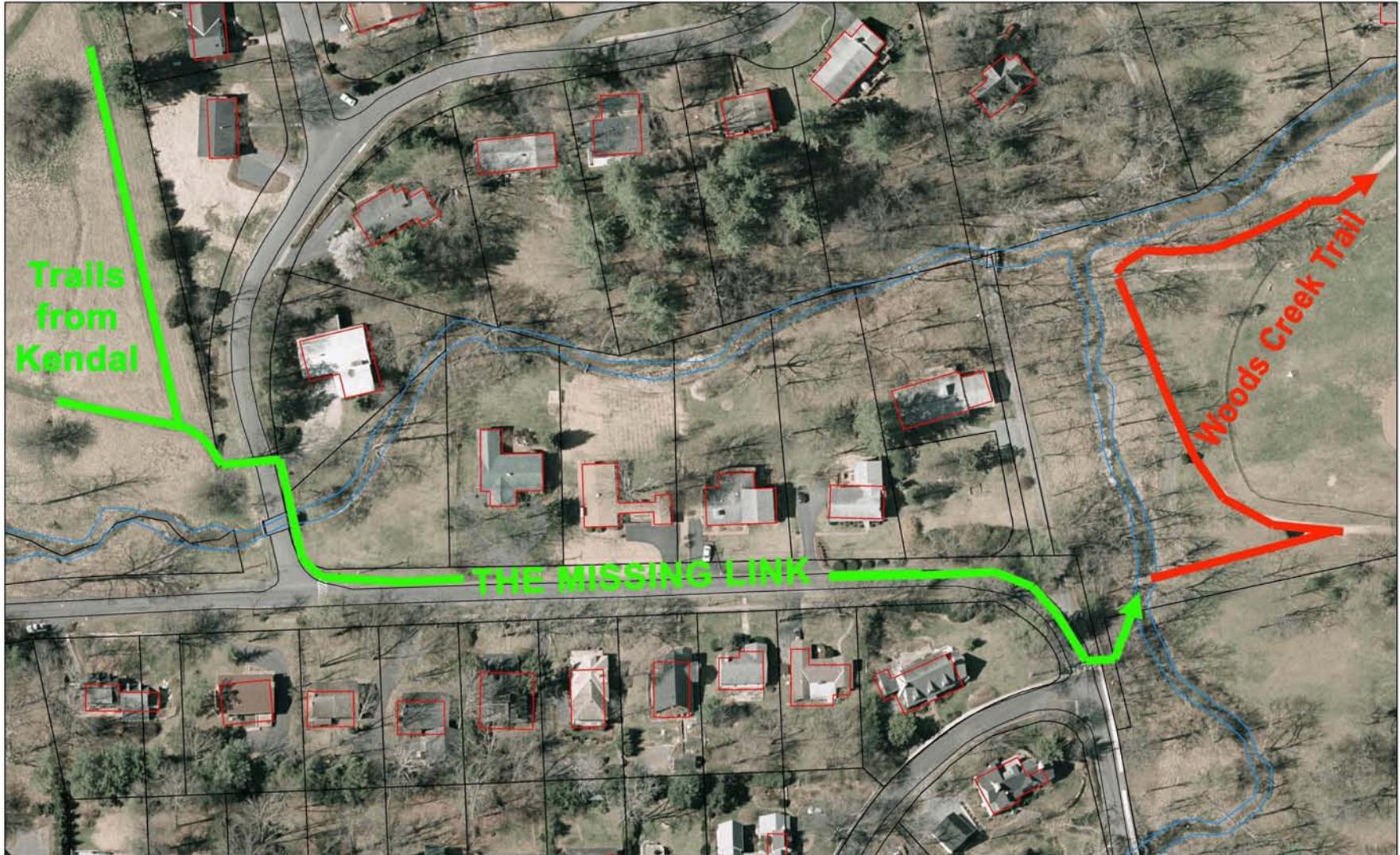
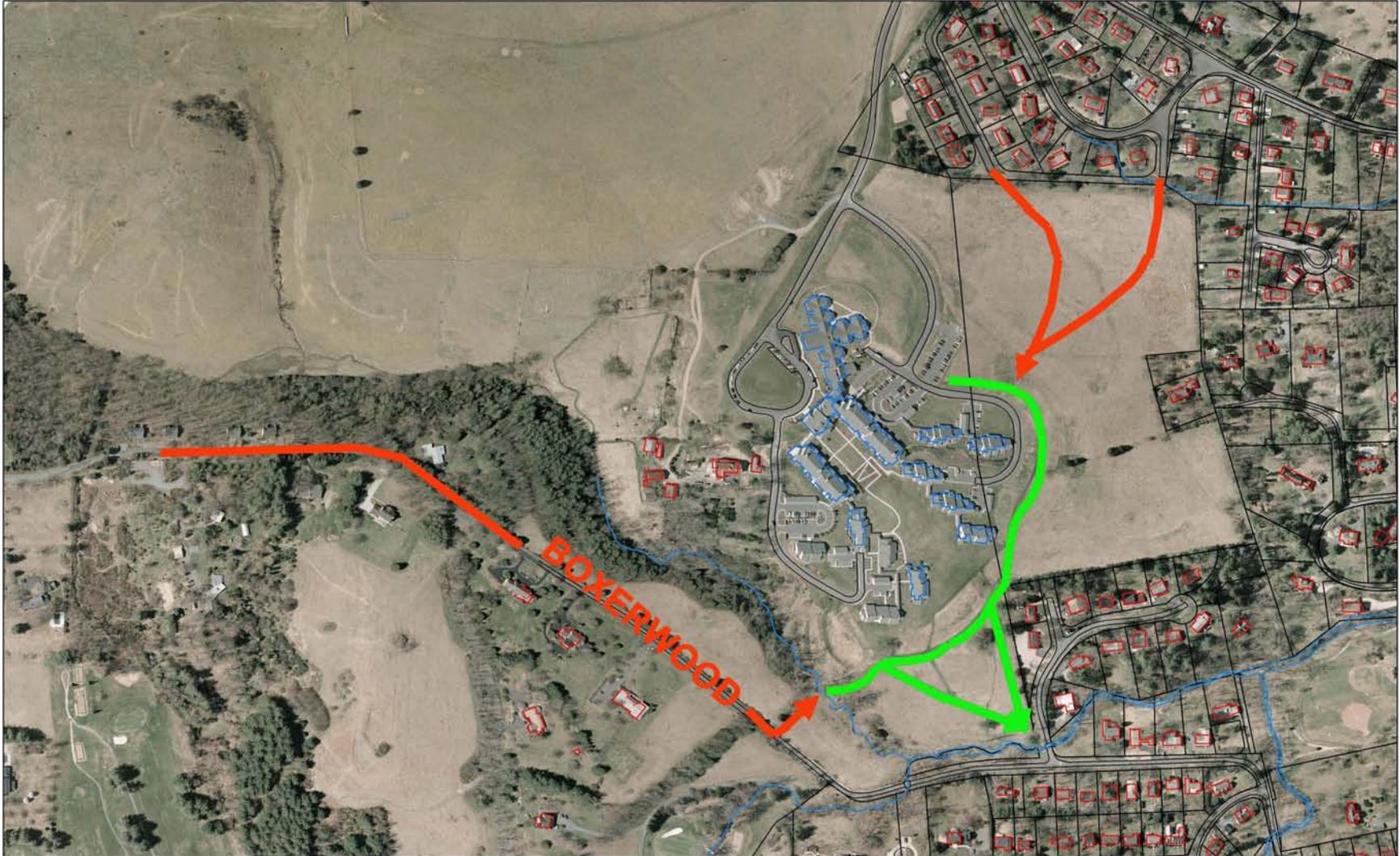


FIGURE 8.6
POSSIBLE TRAIL LINKS
KENDAL AND BOXERWOOD



- Extension of the Woods Creek trail to Boxerwood - Boxerwood, a 31 acre arboretum and nature center, is within easy walking distance of the City. Presently, the only route to walk is along Ross Road extended. It should be possible, working with Kendal and other landowners, to find and improve a route for a trail to access this facility with its extraordinary collection of plants and its valuable educational programs. Again, see Figure 8.6 page 8-23, for an illustration of how this connection might be made.
- Complete the connection from Fairwinds to the Woods Creek trail - A short pedestrian trail has been constructed from the end of the cul-de-sac at the eastern end of Colonnade Avenue in Fairwinds to and then to Catalpa Place to allow residents of this community to walk to the Woods Creek trail without having to walk along Lime Kiln and Enfield Roads. This trail could be continued directly down hill to access the Woods Creek Trail. This connection is shown in Figure 8.7 on page 8-25.
- Reconnecting the Woods Creek and Chessie Trails - There have been foot bridges across the Maury River which have linked the Woods Creek and Chessie Trails; however, they were all destroyed by floods. Over \$500,000 was raised to construct a bridge capable of withstanding flooding, including a large Transportation Enhancement (TEA-21) and contributions from both W&L and VMI. Unfortunately, the bridge which was designed and put out to bid, ended up costing over \$300,000 more than that. Efforts to reduce the scope of the project to bring it within the budget were unsuccessful. The present focus is on providing improved access from both of these trails to the upstream ends of the Route 11 bridge and to seek permission to widen the sidewalk on that side of the bridge. This idea is shown graphically on Figure 8.8, page 8-26.

Recommendation: Working with Rockbridge County, the Planning and Public Works Departments should complete the City's trail system by linking it with other walkways and bikeways and with trails in the County.

FIGURE 8.7
POSSIBLE TRAIL LINKS
FAIRWINDS

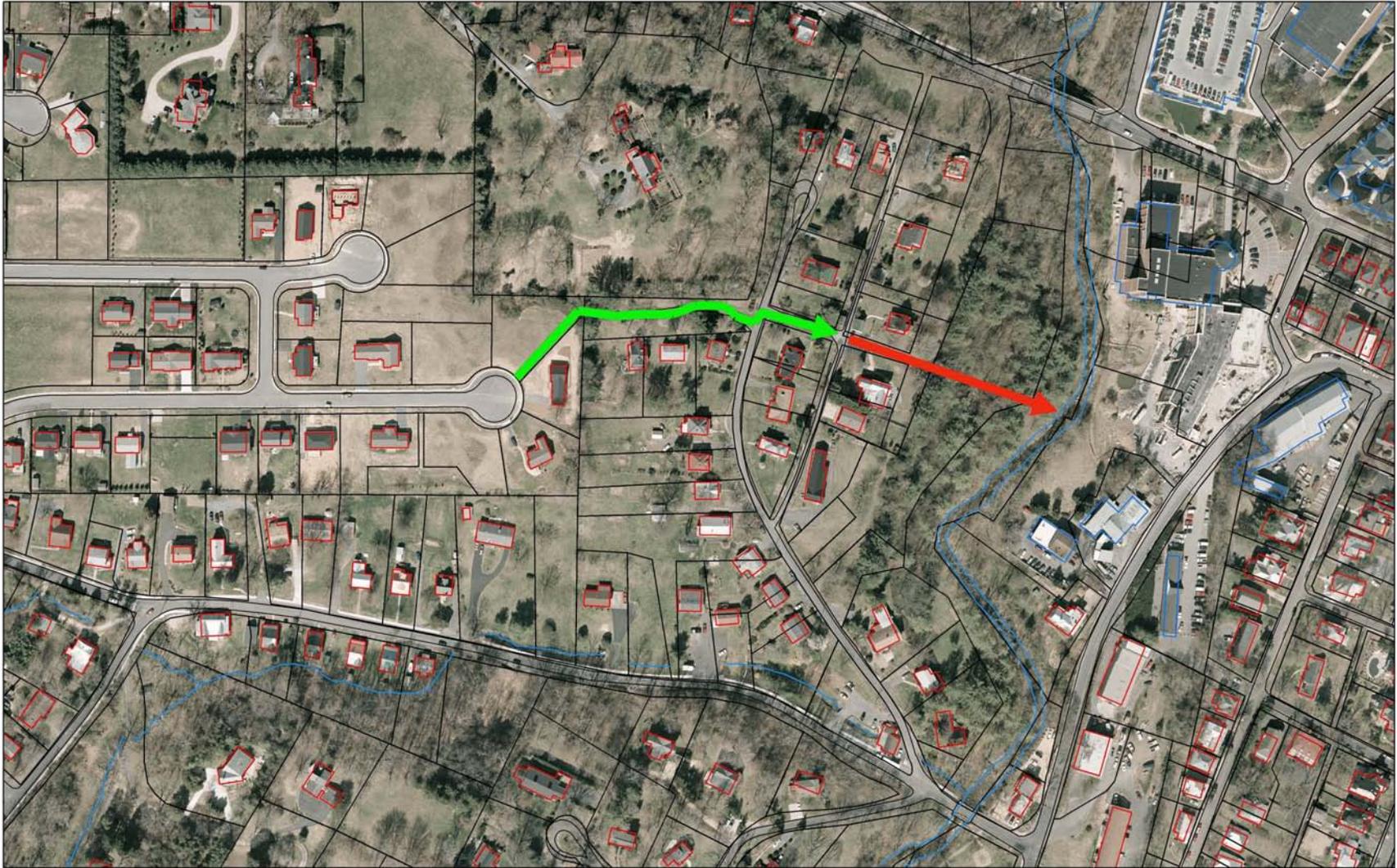


FIGURE 8.8
PATHWAY RECONNECTING THE WOODS CREEK AND CHESSIE TRAILS



Jordan's Point Park - Masterplan

City of Lexington, Virginia

October 25, 2006

Bicycles

GOAL: A network of safe and convenient bikeways within Lexington that allows residents to substitute bicycles for cars and attracts bicycle tourism.

Another way to move more people without additional automobiles is to provide a network of safe, convenient bikeways. Many people already ride bicycles in and around Lexington. Some adults and many young people use their bikes as a basic means of mobility, riding them to and from schools or jobs. Many recreational riders cycle for fun as well as a way to exercise. Lexington already hosts many bicyclists who participate in organized recreational rides through the Valley.

At present, thanks to the age of the City, its many narrow streets and limited rights of way, and extensive use of streets for automobile parking, Lexington lacks safe routes for bicycles within the City and especially within the downtown. The very limitations that make Lexington dangerous for bicyclists make improving routes within the City very challenging. Nevertheless, new policies urge such improvements.

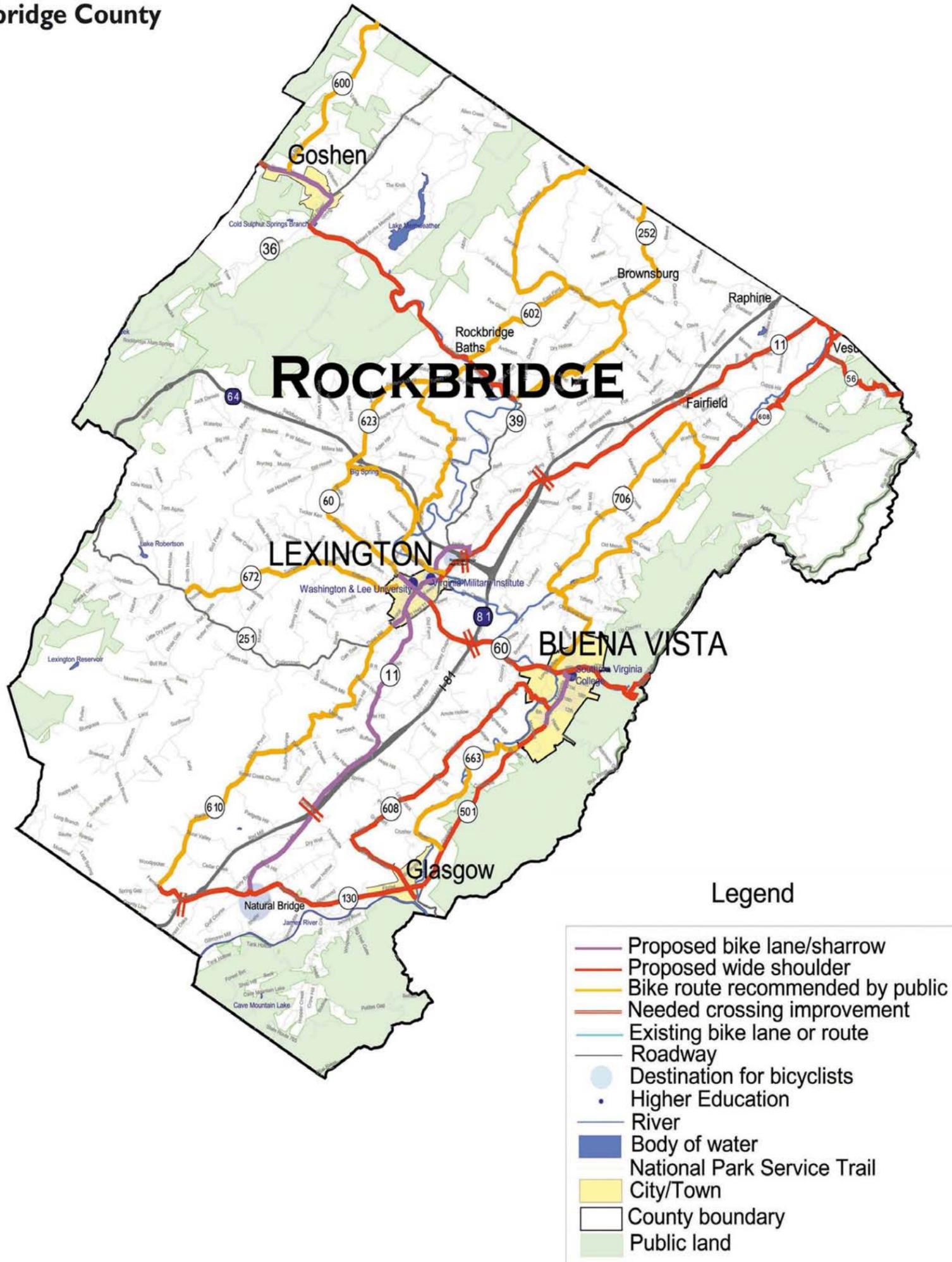
In 2004, the Commonwealth Transportation Board adopted a new state policy for integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into roadway projects. This policy essentially reversed previous VDOT policies which required substantial public and political support for bikeways and sidewalks to be *considered* for inclusion in transportation projects. The new policy states that “*VDOT will initiate all highway construction projects with the presumption that the projects shall accommodate bicycling and walking.*” It essentially requires bikeways and sidewalks whenever a roadway project occurs in an urban or suburban area. For the past 10 years, Federal transportation policies have provided a consistent source of funding.

Thanks to the VDOT policy’s lead and increasing interest in cycling, Lexington has an opportunity to build a reputation as a destination for people seeking an active vacation. The Central Shenandoah Valley is positioning itself as a bicycle touring destination. Bicycle touring is a low-impact tourist activity that brings dollars to small town businesses, museums, and other cultural institutions, but does not add to automobile traffic and pollution. A *Central Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Plan (Plan)* was prepared by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission in 2006 with input from representatives from each political jurisdiction within the Planning District, including Lexington and Rockbridge County. The *Plan*, shown as Figure 8.9 on page 8-28, is intended to ensure that bicyclists can use the roadway network in the future, even as continuing regional growth expands the system to accommodate additional traffic.

The *Plan* details a comprehensive network of cycling facilities connecting neighborhoods, communities, and key destination points. The *Plan*’s study concludes that bicycling has the potential to be very convenient in established urban areas such as Lexington, Staunton and Waynesboro because these jurisdictions have higher building densities, streets with lower motor vehicle speeds and a concentrated mix of offices, stores, parks and residences. The downtown streets and narrow neighborhood streets of these communities are most often two-lane roads with parking on both sides and speed limits set at 25mph.

**FIGURE 8.9
PROPOSED BICYCLE NETWORK**

**Central Shenandoah Valley
Proposed Bicycle Route Network
Rockbridge County**



Creating bike lanes or paths is the number one strategy likely to encourage greater rates of bicycling in the region. Where possible, off-street parking minimizes the need for parking lanes on the street and allows the creation of bicycle lanes, while also reducing vehicular accidents. In Lexington, such opportunities are limited by narrow street widths, on-street parking, and limited building setbacks.

Nevertheless, proper planning can create safe bicycle routes. Painted sharrows—symbols combining a bike icon and a chevron that indicates the direction of travel—mark a lane shared by cars and bicycles, where there is not enough space to create separate bike lanes. Sharrows alert motorists to expect and accept cyclists as users of the roadway. This treatment, illustrated in Figure 8.10, would suit many Lexington streets.

Residents want to be able to ride to schools and shopping, as well as tourist/cultural sites. When asked to identify destinations they would like to reach by bike, they most frequently cited Rockbridge County High School, grade schools, public libraries, and shops, including coffee shops and bookstores.

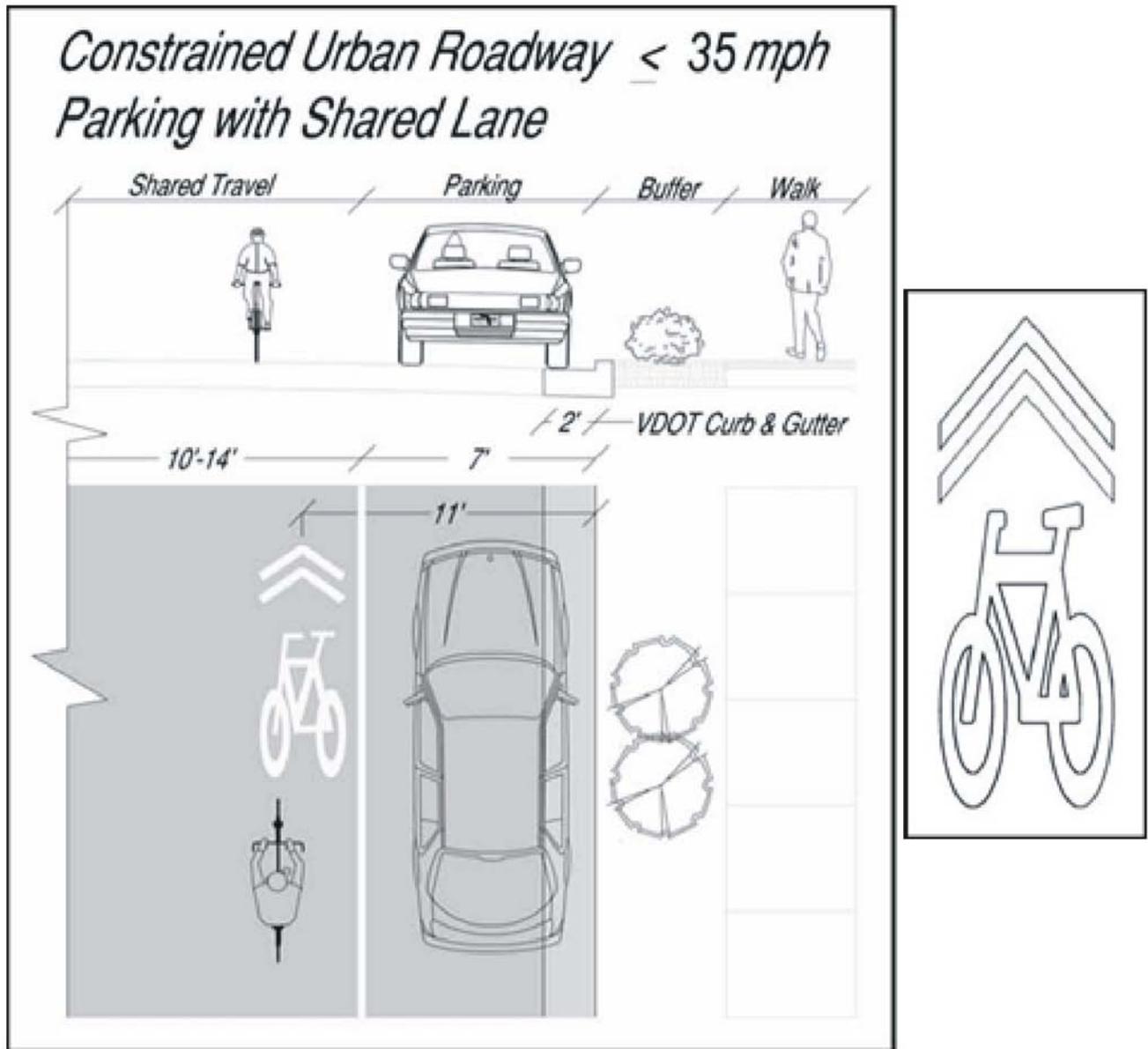
A bicycle route within the city could also connect Lexington with other cities and towns, via Route 11, which runs from Shenandoah County, through Lexington, to Natural Bridge. Route 11 would be a powerful attraction for bicycling tourists, as it connects many of the region's tourist destinations. The Lee Highway's becoming a bicycle corridor would require bike lanes and paved shoulders along its entire length; but within Lexington, the route could be created inexpensively by clear marking with sharrows.

All roads must be considered cycling facilities unless cycling is expressly prohibited and should accommodate bikes as well as possible. All Lexington streets and trails need to be evaluated for potential hazards, including narrow traffic lanes; dangerous storm drain grates with openings parallel to the direction of travel; and traffic signals which are not sensitive enough to detect a bicycle. Fixing these problems would demonstrate the City's commitment to including bicycles in its transportation network.

Recommendation: The Planning and Public Works Departments should evaluate streets and rights of way to identify and implement inexpensive ways to make streets safer for and more inviting to bicyclists.

Safety can only be improved if bicyclists follow the basic rules of the road and drivers have greater respect for bicyclists who are lawfully using the City's roadways. A number of existing sources offer funding and assistance in integrating bicycle and pedestrian safety education into schools.

FIGURE 8.10
SHARROW SYMBOL AND STREET PLAN



Recommendation: The Police Department should assist the City's elementary and middle schools in incorporating bicycle and pedestrian safety into existing curricula.

Recommendation: The City School Board should ask Rockbridge High School to incorporate "Share the Road" and bicycling safety concepts into its driver education course. Currently, high school programs are the only source of driver education for most citizens of the region.

Experienced local bikers often have evolved "safe" routes to their usual destinations. These routes often use local streets to avoid high traffic volume arterials or constrained roadways like many of those within the downtown. Developing a local Bicycling Map identifying these routes and sharing it with others would also be a good early step for enhancing bike use.

Recommendation: Working with local cyclists, the Planning Department should establish clearly identified bicycle-friendly routes through and about town.

Secure bike parking encourages bicycle travel, particularly at such common destinations as employment centers, stores and schools. Similarly, bike parking at historic and recreation areas supports bike tourism. At public destinations such as schools, parks, libraries, transit stops, community centers, and shopping centers, it encourages reaching these destinations by bicycle, rather than by car.

Recommendation: The Public Works Department should install bicycle racks along designated cycling routes and encourage tourist destinations and property owners to do so.

Lexington is home to two universities located in the high-density portion of the city, which generate a substantial number of vehicle trips. Because most students live in close proximity to campus, they offer the possibility of reducing traffic congestion by replacing vehicle trips with bicycling trips. The *Plan* proposes working with officials at colleges and universities throughout the region to identify, evaluate and prioritize cost-effective strategies for walking and cycling to and from school. It cites the example of Cornell University, whose flagship bicycle promotion program has encouraged as many as 40% of students to bike or walk, even in hilly, often snowy Ithaca, NY.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should work with Washington & Lee and VMI administrators and students to identify current obstacles to bicycling and to promote bicycling, rather than driving, to and around campus.

Both students and visiting bicyclists need recreational rides that promote Lexington's and the region's tourism destinations. Routes recommended for recreational riding include recreational loops outside the boundaries of the region's cities and towns. Popular riding routes vary in length and topography, are known to be scenic, and often have a parking facility available nearby, such as a public school, or community center. A recreational network would include routes into and out of Rockbridge County's cities and towns, including Lexington, as access to these popular loops.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: A public transportation system by an established provider that meets Lexington's specific needs.

The greater Lexington area needs public transportation services to provide access and mobility for those—including the disabled and the elderly—who cannot afford their own vehicles, do not or cannot drive, and cannot walk or bicycle. Lack of transit options puts low-income families and individuals at a significant economic disadvantage. As fuel costs increase, more and more people will likely find owning and operating a private vehicle unaffordable. In Lexington and Rockbridge County, limited population size and its dispersal throughout the area make creating and operating viable public transit difficult.

Some local public and private agencies already provide focused transportation services for their clients. These include the Rockbridge Community Services Board, the Rockbridge Occupational Center, the Maury River Senior Center, Kendal at Lexington, a local retirement community which provides bus service for its residents, Washington and Lee University (the Traveler which provides transportation service for students), Dabney Lancaster Community College, the Rockbridge County and Buena Vista school systems, and the Rockbridge Area Transportation System (RATS).

The only regular transit service for Lexington, Rockbridge County, and Buena Vista is operated by the Rockbridge Area Transportation System (RATS). RATS provides specialized door-to-door, demand responsive, wheelchair and non-wheelchair transportation service for local residents who have disabilities, are elderly, or are non-drivers to medical appointments, place of employment, or civic or social appointments.

This system does not presently support mobility for the general public. RATS contract work for Medicaid is self-supporting. The remaining community service transportation is funded through rider fares, federal/state grants, local government, United Way, and donations from individuals, churches, and civic organizations. Presently, 90% of RATS trips are health-care related. RATS also provides limited transportation for employment and other purposes. RATS has taken the lead in investigating ways to develop a coordinated system linking all publicly supported agencies providing specialized transportation.

The City of Lexington, Rockbridge County, and Buena Vista with technical support from the RATS staff have been given a grant by the Virginia Department of Rail and Transit to conduct a feasibility study for developing an area-wide deviated fixed-route system. In such a system, vehicles travel a basic fixed route, picking up and dropping off people anywhere along the route. If requested, the vehicle can deviate from its fixed route to pick up or deliver a passenger. This kind of service works well in small urban and rural areas. Here, such a system would serve both cities as well as key activity and employment centers within the county.

The proposed study will estimate unmet transit needs in the area and recommend ways to meet these needs. Recommendations will include the type of service, possible routes, service frequency, and hours of service. They advocate initiating a basic level of service and expanding service as these initial routes become established.

Implementing improved transit service for the area will require organizational changes, which may

include additional staff and additional vehicles as well as a new or expanded management structure. Or needs may be better met by an existing regional provider such as Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) or Virginia Regional Transit (VRT), a non-profit organization dedicated to creating “access to mobility through direct passenger service, transit management, and contracted transit related services for public and private organizations.” VRT provides transit services to many jurisdictions in the northern area of Virginia and as far south as Staunton and Augusta, Rockingham and Highland Counties. Their services, tailored to specific communities’ needs, range from vehicles following fixed routes to curb-to-curb demand service. VRT’s goal is to support the growing needs for transit within their expanding service area.

Recommendation: Having received the results of the Rockbridge Area Transportation Study, the City administration should work with Buena Vista and Rockbridge County concerning ways to implement its recommendations. The goal would be to provide expanded, affordable mass transit which better responds to local needs.

AFFORDABLE PARKING IMPROVEMENTS

GOAL: Maximum use of all available parking.

Lexington, like many cities throughout the country, has long exempted new development from providing parking in the downtown, leaving the City to provide adequate parking. Impressions of just how much parking Lexington needs differ widely. Providing more free parking to alleviate what is perceived as a parking shortage has become the most common recommendation for improving downtown. Table 8.3 on page 8-34 contains the type of parking in the City and the number of spaces. This information is displayed graphically in Figure 8.11 on page 8-35.

Studies suggest, however, that while parking matters, it should be viewed as subservient to the needs and functions which draw people downtown. People come downtown not for parking, but for the wide variety of functions conveniently clustered there, including stores, restaurants, entertainment, tourist attractions, services, housing, government functions and offices.

Concentrating activities, buildings and services and cultural activities in a small area increases efficiency and maximizes economic health by attracting large numbers of people and minimizing the distances they must travel. These concentrated downtown entities succeed in part because of the synergistic benefits that downtown proximity to other nearby activities provide. Many small businesses depend on walk-in traffic which is highest in the downtown.

Providing downtown parking requires balancing the increasing demands of those needing a place to park, while sustaining and enhancing the qualities of a healthy downtown, including a higher density, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and a strong sense of place. Providing parking should not detract from the unique features that make the downtown a lively place to visit, work, shop and live.

Simply increasing parking by creating open lots or cavernous parking structures can damage the collective sense of place and charm that distinguishes the downtown from other commercial areas. Surface parking or parking structures can disrupt and degrade the urban fabric, creating asphalt voids or blank concrete walls amid engaging storefronts. Parking lots and structures should not be located on busy pedestrian streets, major commercial streets or at key intersections.

Though the majority of downtown visitors arrive by car, every driver becomes a walker, once the car is parked. Parking feels more convenient when it is planned, designed and located with the pedestrian in mind. Similarly, parking structures should present retail or other commercial uses along the street to keep the area active at street level, maintain visual interest, and provide revenue through the lease or sale of commercial space. Integration of commercial uses into a parking structure can range from small newsstand, coffee shops or corner stores on the street face to larger retail spaces to mixed uses which include offices.

**Table 8.3
Parking by Type of Space**

Type pf Parking Space	Number of Spaces
12 Hour Parking	151
4 Hour Parking	45
2 Hour Parking	408
10 Minute Parking	58
Handicapped Parking	9
Reserved Parking	95
Private Parking	295
Residential Parking	38
Loading Zone	2
Regional Jail	1
TOTAL PARKING SPACES	1102

**FIGURE 8.11
CITY OF LEXINGTON
DOWNTOWN PARKING**



Recommendation: The Planning and Public Works Departments should evaluate existing parking and design small-scale improvements with pedestrian appeal.

A parking structure is presently being constructed as part of the new courthouse facility. Some of its spaces will be reserved for courthouse use. The balance will be made available to the public without charge.

Recommendation: The Planning Department should work with the County to develop signage and amenities that make the Randolph Street parking structure pedestrian-friendly and create clear and attractive access to downtown from the structure.

In 2003 the City retained a consultant to prepare a parking management plan for the downtown commercial core. The consultant pointed out several interesting aspects of the present use of the City's parking. Typical small cities' downtown areas provide about 75 spaces per 1,000 people. Lexington has more than twice this number of spaces per 1,000 people.

Peak parking use in Lexington occurs on weekdays between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. During the study, approximately 75% of the total spaces were typically occupied during this period. Eighty-three (83%) of the on-street parkers stayed for two hours or less, which compares favorably to national averages.

On the other hand, thirteen (13%) percent of these parkers exceeded the posted time limits for their spaces. In other words, spaces intended for high turnover were being occupied by long-term parkers. Removing these long-term parkers from short-term on-street spaces would increase the availability of on-street parking by almost two-thirds.

Studies have estimated that each on-street space represents \$17,000 to \$20,000 in gross annual sales. Most parkers who exceeded their posted times were downtown business owners or their employees. It is clear that many downtown business people and their employees do not recognize the true cost of displacing customers by occupying convenient spaces.

One of the realities of downtown parking is the lack of knowledge and understanding by the public concerning parking availability and the best ways to utilize it. A recent nationwide survey found that the typical public perception of downtown parking is that there is simply not enough parking available. Education and promotion are the most effective ways to address this problem.

A series of articles in local newspapers and newsletters (the Chamber of Commerce's periodic newsletters to downtown business and property owners for instance) can address topics such as:

- The value of on-street parking spaces and the impact of long term parkers occupying those spaces during peak periods
- How time limits encourage parking turnover and that enforcement is necessary to ensure that turnover

A parking map can educate people about availability and location of the various types of parking in the downtown and guide them to appropriate parking locations. This map should be supplied to the Visitors' Center and to downtown merchants for use by their customers and employees.

Recommendation: The Police and Planning Departments should work with the Chamber of Commerce to educate downtown businesspeople about the economic impact of squandering available parking spaces and to create a parking map.

Recommendation: Parking enforcement makes time limit zones effective. The Police Department should more aggressively enforce the City's downtown parking regulations, especially violations of short-term parking spaces.

The 2003 downtown parking management plan concluded that an additional 130 to 140 parking spaces would be needed to support future growth within the downtown. Approximately that number of spaces is being provided in the parking garage being constructed at Nelson and Randolph Streets. This garage should have a significant impact on the current utilization of the parking available within the downtown both because of the significant number of spaces being provided as well as their location on the edge of the downtown. It will take some time for the community to adapt to the presence of this facility and to learn to make effective use of it. Once new parking patterns have stabilized the City should conduct another parking demand and utilization study to evaluate how effectively the various types of parking in the downtown are being utilized and make needed adjustments to its parking regulations.

Possible Ways to Respond to Additional Parking Demand in the Downtown

At some point in the future the amount of parking available in the downtown may become insufficient to meet the total demand. This might be the result of significant new development in the downtown especially if that development were to use existing surface parking. The 2003 parking study also evaluated this possibility.

On-street parking spaces, considered the most desirable, cannot be increased. Where existing public and private parking areas abut, these lots can often be combined and redesigned to provide significant increases in the number of spaces provided. The National Wholesale site has been identified as the mostly likely possibility for implementing this strategy.

Putting a parking structure on the National Wholesale Lot would require demolition of a building fronting on Jefferson Street—an action inconsistent with the parking principles developed for the downtown. This lot is also located farther from demand and from the core of the downtown and is presently in multiple private ownership. It is, therefore unlikely that this site would be developed as structured parking.

The National Wholesale lot is, however, a good candidate for a public-private partnership to reorganize and improve it as an interior surface parking lot. Approximately 30 additional parking spaces could be created. Landowners could lease their land to the City; and, in exchange the City would improve, maintain and manage the lot for an agreed period of time. Some spaces would be leased back to surrounding land- and business- owners so that they do not lose access to their spaces as a result of the partnership.

Recommendation: When more parking spaces are needed, the Planning Department should negotiate with property owners and pursue redesign and improvement of the National Wholesale Lot.

Study indicates that the City will not need to construct an additional parking structure anytime soon, if ever. If a second downtown parking structure should become necessary, the most promising location for one is the McCrum's Parking Lot, where an additional 135 spaces could raise the location's capacity to over 200 parking spaces. The site is well-suited relative to parking demand and future development activity. Pedestrian access to surrounding streets is good. Though a structure here would require multiple access points to Jefferson Street, study indicates that its construction would cost less than construction on other possible downtown sites.

Recommendation: If and when another parking garage is needed, the City should seek funding for a structure located on the McCrum's Lot.

The National Wholesale Lot and the McCrum's Lot structure present possibilities for private-public partnership. Ideally, the City would like to add as many living units as possible downtown, most of which will require at least one and perhaps two cars. Any addition to lodging—such as an hotel—would also bring with it a need for parking. Increasing the number of persons living or staying downtown offers important possibilities for strengthening local businesses; however, positive economic impact declines if taxpayers must pay to create parking spaces.

Recommendation: If lodgings or new housing units downtown require parking, the City should expect developers to pay for construction of necessary spaces. The Planning and Public Works Departments should work closely with developers to find creative ways to keep such costs as low as possible.

Many recommendations in this chapter point to ways to strengthen downtown without adding additional parking. The key to keeping downtown healthy is building on its strengths—on its compactness, its walkability, its vibrancy, its human scale. Parking is important, but not as important as providing higher density residential development downtown, making sure buildings see active use, keeping services and activities downtown, minimizing underutilized land (such as surface parking lots), and creating a downtown conducive to walking and biking. These strategies have succeeded in cities throughout America.

INTERSTATE 81

GOAL: Reduced traffic congestion and improved safety on I-81 without negative effect on Lexington and its transportation system.

Interstate 81 (I-81) begins in Dandridge, Tennessee and extends 325 miles through Virginia northward into Canada. It is one of the major trucking routes in the United States providing a major link between southern economic hubs and northeast markets. Originally I-81 was designed for 15% large truck traffic. Recent data shows the roadway carrying an average of 26% trucks with up to 35% in some sections. In Virginia, maintaining consistent speeds is difficult because of the mountainous topography and the high volume of heavy trucks. Deteriorating road conditions have led to much study and discussion concerning possible expansion of I-81 in Virginia and has made I-81 an important issue in Lexington's transportation planning.

Because I-81 is part of the Interstate system which is primarily federally funded, changes to the highway must comply with federal laws including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Under NEPA the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) launched an I-81 Corridor Improvement Study in 2004. This study evaluated existing and future traffic and identified problems and deficiencies along the Interstate. The study also identified potential solutions to the problems identified. Data and findings of the study were documented in a report called the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Tier 1 DEIS).

In 2003, Lexington City Council adopted two resolutions, which were forwarded to VDOT for consideration in the development of their DEIS. These resolutions urged VDOT to explore fully the potential for moving more freight by rail. The resulting reduction in the number of trucks on I-81 would improve highway safety, reduce the amount of diesel fuel consumed for freight transportation, and improve air quality in Virginia by decreasing engine emissions. The City requested that VDOT and other appropriate agencies work with their counterparts in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and West Virginia to explore a viable rail alternative.

In April, 2006 the City of Lexington City Council and Planning Commission sent a joint letter to the Virginia Department of Transportation expressing their views concerning the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), as drafted. The City argued that the DEIS failed to address fundamental issues adequately, focusing solely on widening I-81, rather than on seeking more balanced solutions such as the potential for additional railroad freight to reduce heavy truck traffic. City Council and the Planning Commission urged the Virginia Department of Transportation to undertake additional analysis and secure more information.

The City also expressed concern that introducing tolls on I-81 would divert traffic, especially large trucks, onto US 11. It urged VDOT to consider the impact of a lengthy construction process and an 8-lane expanded I-81 on tourism, local businesses, and quality of life in Lexington and Rockbridge County.

In the end, the DEIS identified 211 combinations of highway and rail improvements that could solve I-81's capacity and safety problems. They included adding lanes and making rail improvements, as well as segregating heavy trucks from other vehicles. The study suggested collecting tolls as a means for paying for these extremely expensive improvements and attempted

to determine the impact that charging tolls would have on surrounding roads used by drivers seeking to avoid those tolls.

After due consideration, in October 2006 the Commonwealth Transportation Board directed VDOT to implement safety and operational improvements to existing I-81 by constructing not more than one or two general purpose lanes in each direction, located only where needed, to meet future traffic demand. There is presently no funding or time table for this widening. The CTB also directed the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to conduct a study with Norfolk and Southern Railway to identify short term rail improvements and to study potential long term diversion of truck traffic to rail. The data resulting from this study will be taken into consideration in future VDOT studies of traffic demand on I-81.

No final decision was made concerning charging tolls, although the report did conclude that using tolls to help pay for future widening projects appears to be a feasible funding option. To keep the option to charge tolls alive, the CTB also directed VDOT to continue its I-81 tolling application process to comply with federal law. Again, no decision has yet been made about whether to charge tolls.

The I-81 Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement was approved in June of 2007 by the Federal Highway Administration. This approval allows VDOT to continue with planning for the possible improvements outlined in that report. Several locations with steep grades have been identified where climbing lanes could help traffic flow and enhance safety. Two of these are priorities - northbound I-81 in Rockbridge County near Fairfield and southbound in Montgomery County. These truck climbing lanes could be ready for construction in late 2008. Federal funding is available to help build climbing lanes.

Virginia rail officials have begun a \$57 million project to shift some of the freight moving on I-81 to adjacent trains. This project will install new track and signaling equipment to remove current bottlenecks to the railroad system which presently limit the movement of goods. State and rail officials are expected to consider even larger investments in rail infrastructure. The I-81 Freight Rail Study authorized this year is expected to identify the full scope of the truck diversion possible as well as to identify further improvements to the rail system intended to maximize its potential for diverting freight traffic from I-81 to rail.

Recommendation: City Council should continue to monitor closely the decision-making process shaping future improvements to I-81 and actively participate in that process by sharing its perspectives with VDOT.

Recommendation: City Council and the Planning Department should continue to urge that VDOT's impact study include the many towns and cities within 10 miles of I-81.

TRANSPORTATION
Attachments, Tables and Figures

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TABLE 8.1
VDOT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION STREET
WITH CURB AND GUTTER

Projected Traffic Volume	Minimum Design Speed	Minimum Width Curb to Curb (3)	Clear Zone
Up to 400	20 mph	28 feet (1)	1.5 feet
401-2000	25mph	36 feet	1.5 feet
2001-4000	30 mph	40 feet (2)	6 feet

- Notes: (1) 26 feet allowed for streets with less than 400 vehicles per day with local approval
(2) 36 feet allowed for streets internal to the subdivision with local approval
(3) Pavement widths may be reduced if on street parking is not allowed

TABLE 8.2
VDOT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION STREET
WITH SHOULDERS AND DITCHES

Projected Traffic Volume	Minimum Design Speed	Minimum Pavement Width	Minimum Shoulder Width	Clear Zone
Up to 400	20 mph	18 feet (1)	4 feet	1.5 feet
401-2000	25mph	22 feet	6 feet	1.5 feet
2001-4000	30 mph	24 feet (2)		8 feet

- Notes: 1. When pedestrian facilities are provided behind ditches, shoulder width may be reduced to a minimum of 2 feet
2. Clear zone widths may be reduced with the concurrence of the VDOT resident engineer where terrain or social/environmental impact considerations are appropriate

Attachment 8.1
SUMMARY: CITY OF LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The *Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan* (the 2020 Plan) was completed by the Virginia Department of Transportation in 2003. The 2020 Plan includes a traffic engineering study that evaluated the transportation system in Lexington and recommendations for transportation improvements “to best satisfy existing and future transportation needs” for the City. This section summarizes that *Plan*, especially its conclusions and recommendations.

Quantifying Traffic Congestion

Standard traffic engineering level of service analysis rates traffic operations on a scale from A to F. An “A” represents excellent traffic flow with minimal delays and an “F” represents failure in traffic operations and very high levels of delay. For areas such as Lexington, VDOT rates levels of service A, B, or C as acceptable. Levels of service D, E, and F represent deficient operations. For the 2020 Plan, the level of service rating was simplified to designate either acceptable (A) or unacceptable (U), traffic operations.

Current traffic

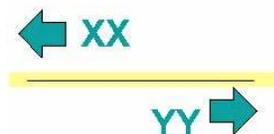
Traffic counts were conducted at 19 intersections and on 28 roadway segments in the spring of 2001. Three traffic peaks: 7 to 9 am (AM peak), 11 am to 1pm (mid-day peak), and 4 to 6 pm (PM peak) weekdays were counted, as well as the average daily traffic for each roadway section and each intersection evaluated for the report. The average daily traffic determined by these counts is shown on Figure 8.12, page 8-47. Maps showing the AM peak, Mid-day peak, and PM peak are contained in an appendix at the end of this chapter.

Traffic projections

Traffic projections were made to analyze the operations of the City’s street system in 2010 and 2020 based on an analysis of historic traffic data for the period from 1980 to 2001. A trend-line analysis was performed and traffic growth rates for local roadways were developed. These growth rates were analyzed and checked against population and employment projections. The average daily traffic projected for the year 2010 is shown on Figure 8.13, page 8-48. Average daily traffic projections for 2020 are shown on Figure 8.14, page 8-49. Maps showing the projected AM, Mid-day and PM peaks for 2010 and 2020 are also included in the appendix at the end of the chapter.

Reading the Maps

As previously indicated, the traffic counts and projected future traffic contained in this report are presented on a series of maps immediately following this page as well as in an appendix at the end of the chapter. The numbers which report these peak hour volumes are shown on both sides of each street segment to indicate the volume of traffic traveling in each direction for that segment. The counts for each direction are located on the same side of the road as vehicles would be traveling in that direction. See the graphic below for a visual representation of how this traffic data is presented.



Existing Roadway and Intersection Deficiencies

Utilizing the traffic counts and applying level of service criteria described above, the report identified both roadway segments (a length of street usually from intersection to intersection) and key intersections within the City which were deficient. All of the roadway segments were found to be operating at an acceptable level of service. Two intersections were found to be deficient:

- Jefferson Street and Washington Street intersection - during Mid-day and PM peak hours.
- Nelson Street-Washington Street-Glasgow Street intersection during the AM peak hours

Roadway Safety

Roadway safety was assessed based on a review of the records of all traffic accidents which occurred between January 1997 and December 1999 to identify safety concerns which could be addressed by more modest traffic improvements. Lexington had 573 accidents on public roads over the study period. Buena Vista had 220 accidents during the same period. Higher traffic volumes and a more compact downtown are the likely explanation for this difference.

Four locations were identified as deficient based on the occurrence of five or more accidents in a one year period or an increasing trend in accidents over the study period. These locations and their accident statistics are shown in Table 8.4.

**TABLE 8.4
FREQUENT ACCIDENT LOCATIONS**

Intersection	Number of Accidents			
	1996	1997	1998	Total
Jefferson Street and Nelson Street	21	13	16	50
Main Street and Washington Street	12	10	7	29
Jefferson Street and Washington Street	7	11	7	25
US 11 By-pass and North Main Street	8	6	8	22

Anticipated Roadway and Intersection Deficiencies in 2010

Level of service criteria were also applied to the projections of anticipated future traffic for 2010. No roadway segments were anticipated to be deficient in 2010. Again, two intersections were determined to be deficient:

- Jefferson Street and Washington Street intersection: Mid-day and PM peaks hours
- Nelson Street-Washington Street-Glasgow Street intersection: AM and PM peaks hours

Anticipated Roadway and Intersection Deficiencies in 2020

Utilizing the same process, the 2020 Plan predicts that the following roadway segments will be deficient in 2020 during the peak hours indicated:

- Main Street from Wallace Street to White Street: southbound during the AM peak and northbound during the PM peak
- Main Street from Letcher Avenue to the Route 11 northbound ramp: AM peak hours

Summary of Deficiencies Identified by the *Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan*

The 2020 Plan identified local street deficiencies using three criteria: **insufficient capacity** creating an unacceptable level of service, **safety** measured by high accident rates, and **geometric deficiencies** such as limited sight distances, obstructions near the travel way, or limited pavement width. A summary of the existing deficiencies and projected future deficiencies, and the reasons for them, are reported below.

Recommendations for immediate action:

- South Lee Highway and Main Street: install warning signage to improve safety
- Nelson Street from Glasgow Street to Lewis Street, Washington Street from Nelson Street to Lewis Street, and Lewis Street from Nelson Street to Washington Street: to improve traffic flow in Lexington's Central Business District, the Plan recommends converting Nelson Street and Washington Street/Lewis Street into a one-way pair, with eastbound traffic on Nelson and westbound traffic on Washington Street/Lewis Street.
- Ross Road from Jackson Avenue to the City limits: widen the roadway to current VDOT standards to correct geometric deficiencies

Existing deficiencies:

- Walker Street from Houston Street to Nelson Street: geometric deficiencies
- Ross Road from Jackson Avenue to the City limits: geometric deficiencies
- Jefferson Street and Washington St. intersection: safety and inadequate capacity during the Mid-day and PM peaks
- Nelson Street-Washington Street-Glasgow Street intersection: inadequate capacity during the AM peak
- Jefferson Street and Nelson Street intersection: safety
- Main Street and Nelson Street intersection: safety
- South Lee Highway (Route 11 By-pass) and Main Street intersection: safety
- Lee Highway ramps and Nelson Street intersections: safety and geometric deficiencies

Additional deficiencies anticipated by 2010:

- Jefferson Street and Washington Street intersection: inadequate capacity during the Mid-day and PM peaks
- Nelson Street - Washington Street - Glasgow Street intersection: inadequate capacity during the AM and PM peaks

Additional deficiencies anticipated by 2020:

- Main Street from Wallace Street to White Street: inadequate capacity during the AM and PM peaks
- Main Street from Letcher Avenue to Route 11 north bound ramp: inadequate capacity during the AM peak
- Jefferson Street and Washington Street intersection: inadequate capacity during the Mid-day and PM peaks
- Nelson Street - Washington Street - Glasgow Street intersection: inadequate capacity during all three peaks
- Jefferson Street and Preston Street: inadequate capacity during the Mid-day and PM peaks
- Jefferson Street and Nelson Street intersection: inadequate capacity during the PM peak

All of these deficiencies are mapped on Figure 8.15, page 8-50.

Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan Recommendations

The plan makes recommendations to respond to the deficiencies identified above. These are presented for the same time frames as the deficiencies.

Recommendations for 2010:

These recommendations include projects that are intended to correct existing deficiencies but will require a number of years to plan and fund . Two projects are recommended:

- Walker Street from Houston Street to Nelson Street - widen the street to current VDOT standards and construct sidewalks to correct existing deficiencies, including narrow pavement and lack of sidewalks
- Lee Highway and Nelson Street: Intersections formed by the Lee Highway ramps and Nelson Street were determined to be deficient from both a safety and a geometric standpoint. The Plan recommends improving the geometry of this interchange to eliminate both deficiencies. The recommended improvements at this location include widening the end of each off ramp to provide two-lane approaches to Nelson Street, widening Nelson Street near the two intersections to accommodate traffic going to and coming from the Lee Highway ramps, and installing traffic signals at both intersections when warrants are met.

Recommendations for 2020:

These recommendations are intended to support the long term needs of the community. One project is recommended:

- North Lee Highway and Main Street: construct ramps to allow for travel from northbound Main Street to southbound Lee Highway, and from northbound Lee Highway to southbound Main Street to improve traffic flow and facilitate ease of traffic movement.

Local Projects:

All of the projects recommended above would be funded primarily by VDOT with limited City financial support. In addition, the plan endorsed several projects not eligible for VDOT funding for inclusion in the City's capital improvement program:

- Washington Street and Randolph Street intersection: install traffic signal. This project has been completed by the City.
- Main Street and Diamond Street intersection: install a traffic signal to increase intersection capacity to accommodate projected growth in traffic. The City continues to monitor this intersection to determine when additional traffic may warrant the installation of these signals

- Main Street and Henry Street intersection: install a traffic signal to increase intersection capacity to accommodate projected growth in traffic

All of these projects are mapped on Figure 8.16, page 8-51.

City Response to the Plan

This Plan was submitted to the City for review and comment. The City advised VDOT, as well as the consultant firm responsible for preparing the Plan, that converting Nelson Street and Washington Street from two-way traffic to a one-way pair has been discussed many times and has been resoundingly rejected by the community as a solution to possible problems created by future increases in traffic through the downtown.

The Plan acknowledges that the City of Lexington does not support the proposal to make Nelson and Washington Streets a one-way pair or the recommendation to widen Ross Road.

The City also noted that while Ross Road and Walker Street will require some improvement, widening them to the widths proposed would create unacceptable adverse impacts on the neighborhoods through which these streets pass. Widening these streets to 30 feet would take significant land from front yards and might require that some houses be taken.

VDOT requested that the Lexington City Council adopt the proposed Plan. City Council refused to adopt the Plan due to strong disagreement with the recommendations as described above.

Other 2020 Plan Recommendations

The Plan acknowledges that the construction of a by-pass that extends from Thornhill Road to the north and west, tying into Route 60 west of Lexington (the “Western bypass”, to be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter), might offer some relief for the deficiencies that several of their proposals were intended to address. The Plan recommends that the study area for the next transportation plan be expanded to include portions of Rockbridge County, and include the County in coordination efforts so that this by-pass can be considered for inclusion in the long-range transportation plan.

FIGURE 8.12
2001 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

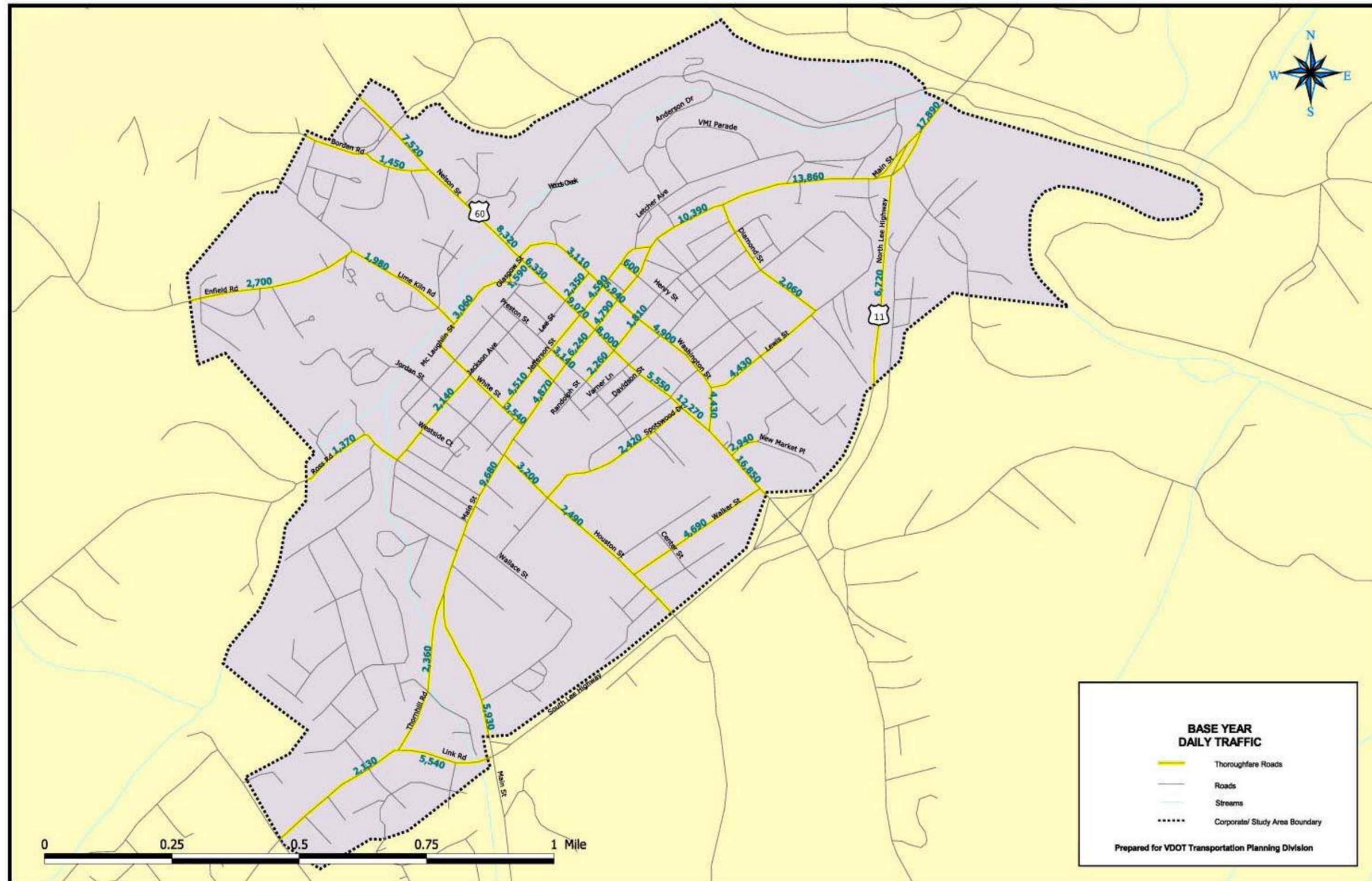
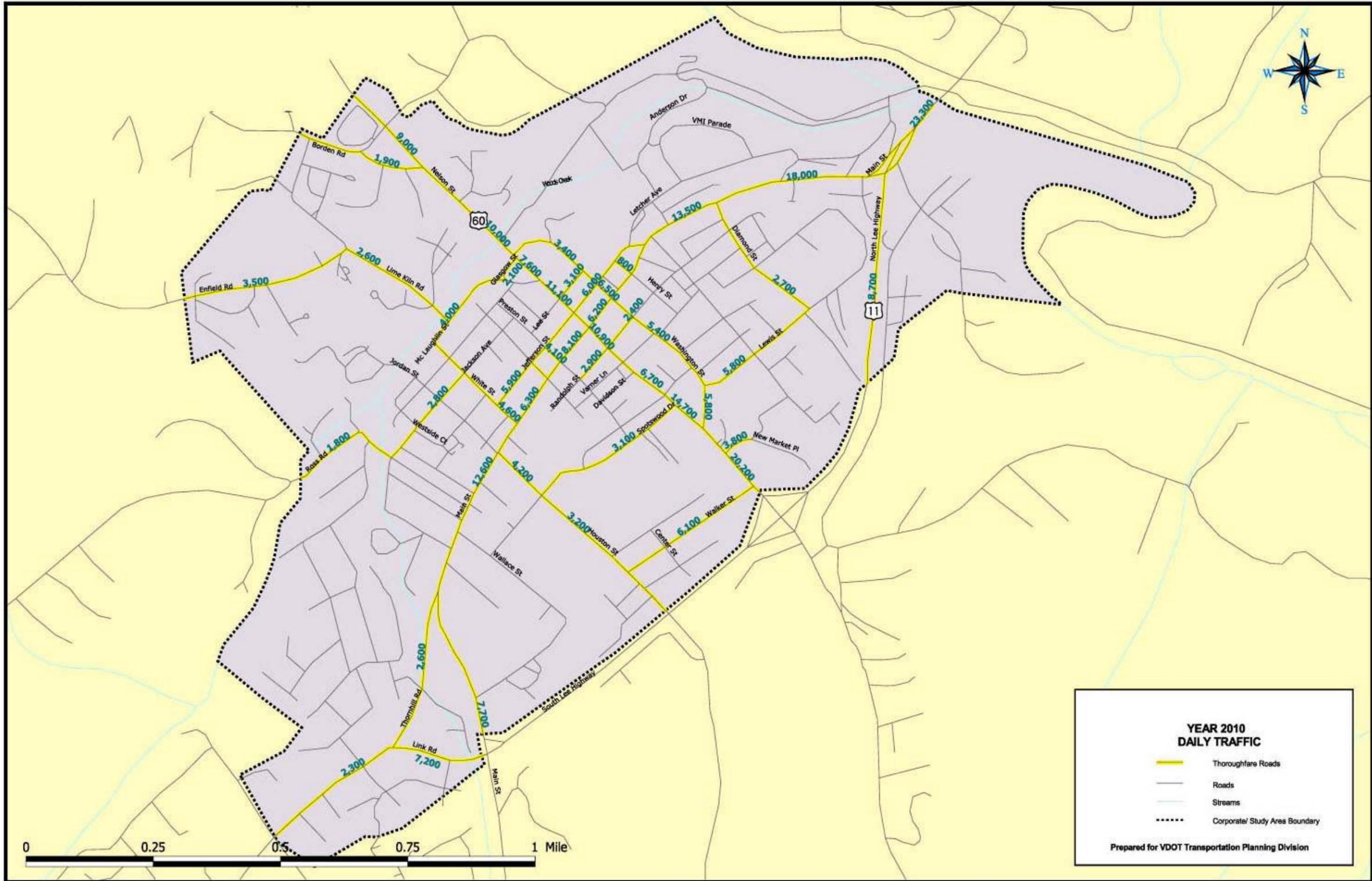
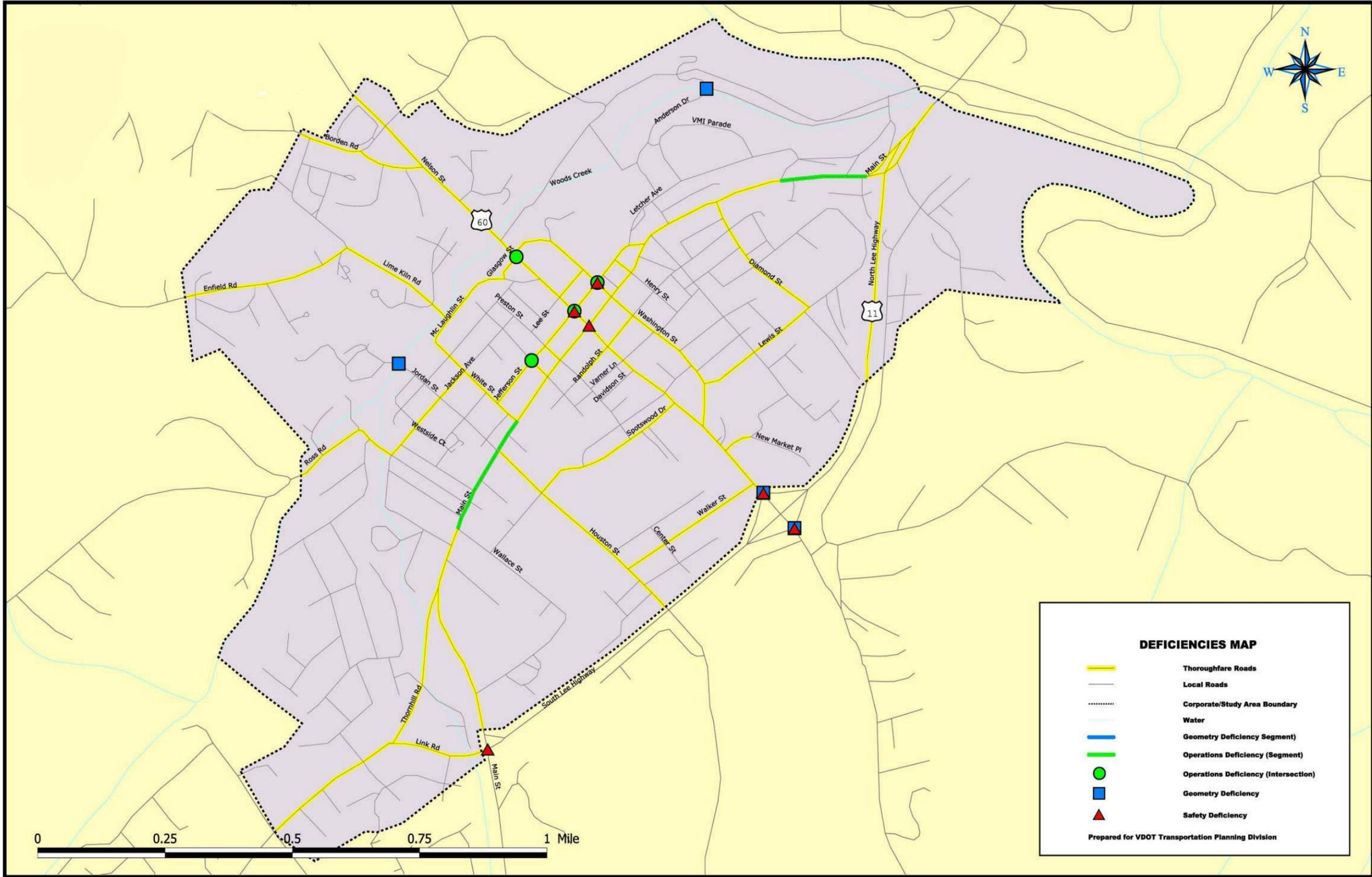


FIGURE 8.13
2010 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN



**FIGURE 8.15
EXISTING AND ANTICIPATED DEFICIENCIES
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**



**FIGURE 8.16
RECOMMENDATIONS
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

