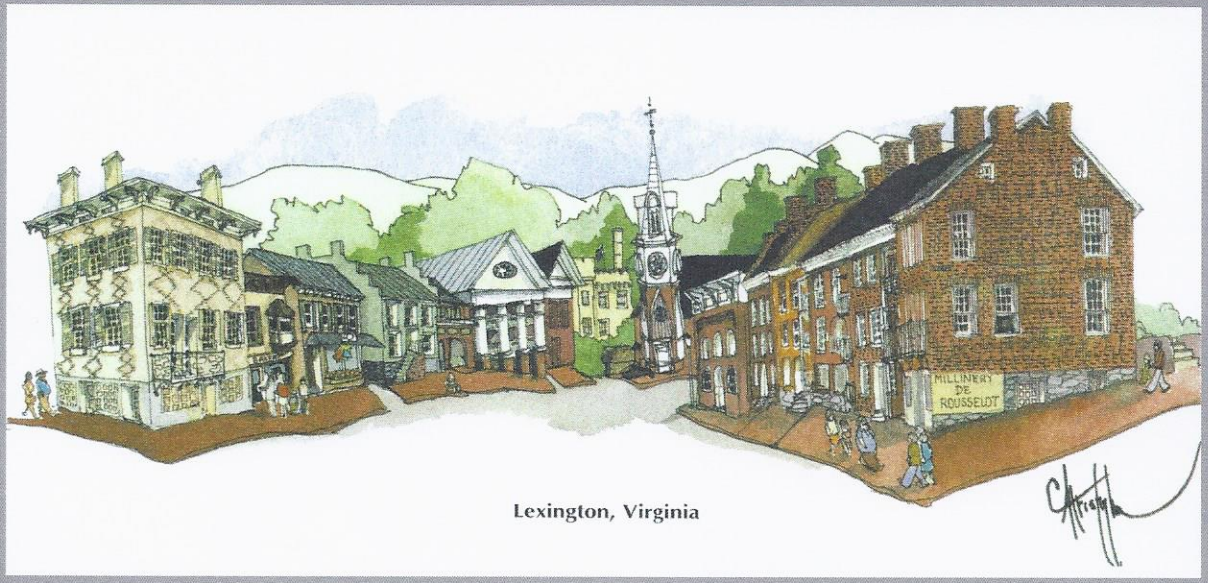
Comprehensive Plan

of the
City of Lexington
Virginia



Lexington, Virginia

Comprehensive Plan
City of Lexington

Table of Contents

CHAPTER **PAGE**

Introduction: 2007 ..... 1 - 1

The Reasons for a Comprehensive Plan ..... 1 - 1
Legal Basis for a Comprehensive Plan ..... 1 - 2
History of Local Planning Efforts ..... 1 - 3

Lexington - Past and Present: 2007 ..... 2 - 1

A Unique and Special Community ..... 2 - 1
History ..... 2 - 3
Historic Preservation In Lexington ..... 2 - 9
Historic Buildings and Historic Districts ..... 2 - 12
Goals and Objectives ..... 2 - 13

Natural Resources: 2007 ..... 3 - 1

Physiography ..... 3 - 1
Topography ..... 3 - 3
Soils and Soil Suitability ..... 3 - 5
Mineral Resources ..... 3 - 7
Water Resources ..... 3 - 7
Water Quality ..... 3 - 9
Storm Water Runoff and Storm Water Management ..... 3 - 14
Inflow and Infiltration ..... 3 - 15
Floodways ..... 3 - 16
Sinkholes ..... 3 - 18
Climate ..... 3 - 19
Air Quality ..... 3 - 19
The Urban Forest and Urban Greenspace ..... 3 - 21
Preservation of Important Natural Features ..... 3 - 23
Future Planning for a Green Infrastructure ..... 3 - 24
Goals and Objectives ..... 3 - 25

Population and Demographics: 2007 ..... 4 - 1

Population from 1990 to 2000 ..... 4 - 2
Permanent Population in 2000 ..... 4 - 2
Trends in Households ..... 4 - 3
Population Characteristics ..... 4 - 4
Population by:
Age ..... 4 - 4
Ethnicity ..... 4 - 4
Gender ..... 4 - 5
Marital Status ..... 4 - 5
Educational Attainment ..... 4 - 5
Poverty ..... 4 - 6
Population Distribution ..... 4 - 7
Population Change in Adjacent Areas ..... 4 - 8
Understanding and Interpreting the Statistics ..... 4 - 9
Population Projections ..... 4 - 10
Census Count and Projections ..... 4 - 10
Population Projections for the City of Lexington ..... 4 - 11
Total Population ..... 4 - 11
Population Distribution ..... 4 - 11
Accuracy of Projections ..... 4 - 12
Population Projections for Rockbridge County ..... 4 - 13
Accuracy ..... 4 - 13
Issues ..... 4 - 14
Declining School Age Population ..... 4 - 14
Increasing Elderly Population ..... 4 - 14
Increasing Demand for Labor ..... 4 - 15
Policies to Effect these Projections ..... 4 - 15
Impact of Continuing Residential Development in Areas Surrounding the City on Traffic on City Streets ..... 4 - 16
Goals and Objectives ..... 4 - 17
Tables and Figures: Index
Tables and Figures ..... 4 - 20 through 4 - 45

Housing ..... 5 - 1

The Local Housing Context ..... 5 - 1
The Current Housing Situation ..... 5 - 1
Housing Problems ..... 5 - 7
Age and Condition of Housing ..... 5 - 7

Housing - continued

Availability of Affordable Housing ..... 5 - 9
Section 8 Voucher and Certificate Program ..... 5 - 11
R. E. Lee Building ..... 5 - 11
Lexington House ..... 5 - 11
Mountain View Terrace ..... 5 - 12
Gladys House ..... 5 - 12
Student Housing ..... 5 - 12
Limited Amount of Vacant Land ..... 5 - 13
Current Housing Initiatives ..... 5 - 13
Housing Rehabilitation ..... 5 - 13
Construction of New Housing for Low- and Moderate-Income Families ..... 5 - 16
Expansion of the City's Housing Supply ..... 5 - 16
Student Housing ..... 5 - 16
Other Housing Efforts ..... 5 - 18
Future Housing Policy Initiatives ..... 5 - 18
Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing ..... 5 - 18
Conserving the Existing Housing Stock ..... 5 - 21
Student Housing ..... 5 - 23
Goals and Objectives ..... 5 - 24

Economy ..... 6 - 1

The Economic Context ..... 6 - 1
The Current Economic Situation ..... 6 - 1
Population ..... 6 - 2
Income ..... 6 - 2
Employment Characteristics ..... 6 - 8
Diversity of Major Employment Sectors ..... 6 - 14
Manufacturing ..... 6 - 14
Government ..... 6 - 16
Retail Trade ..... 6 - 16
Tourism ..... 6 - 18
Labor ..... 6 - 19
Labor Availability ..... 6 - 19
Commuting Patterns ..... 6 - 19
Available Occupations ..... 6 - 20
Wages ..... 6 - 20
Labor Attitudes ..... 6 - 24
Local Financial Institutions ..... 6 - 24
Other Local Financial Sources ..... 6 - 25

Economy - continued

Local Budgets ..... 6 - 25
Bonded Debt as a Percentage of Real Property Valuation ..... 6 - 26
Economic Development Initiatives ..... 6 - 27
Overall Economic Goal ..... 6 - 27
Quality of Life ..... 6 - 27
The Regional Economy ..... 6 - 28
The Fantus Report ..... 6 - 31
Rockbridge Area Economic Development Commission ..... 6 - 33
Virginia Employment Commission ..... 6 - 34
Lexington - Rockbridge County Chamber of Commerce ..... 6 - 35
Rockbridge Citizens' Strategic Planning Commission ..... 6 - 35
The Current Employment Situation ..... 6 - 35
Future Employment ..... 6 - 36
The Role and Value of Education ..... 6 - 39
Increasing the Skills of those currently in the Workforce ..... 6 - 41
The Tech Prep Program ..... 6 - 42
Satellite Center for Dabney Community College ..... 6 - 44
Lexington Visitors Bureau ..... 6 - 45
Continued Support for Efforts to Encourage Tourism ..... 6 - 45
Development of a General Aviation Airport ..... 6 - 45
Value of the Qualities of Lexington and Rockbridge County ..... 6 - 46
Greater Lexington Area ..... 6 - 47
Development of a Light Industry/Business Park ..... 6 - 47
Development Plans for the Route 11 and 60 East Corridors ..... 6 - 48
Public Works Improvements ..... 6 - 50
New Wastewater Treatment Plant ..... 6 - 50
Reconstruct East Lexington Bridge ..... 6 - 50
Improvements to the Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System ..... 6 - 50
Lexington ..... 6 - 51
Lexington Report: An Assessment, Targeting and Marketing Strategy Analysis ..... 6 - 52
The Downtown ..... 6 - 52
Lexington Downtown Development Association ..... 6 - 53
Lexington Visitors Center ..... 6 - 54
Downtown Lexington Market/Feasibility Study ..... 6 - 54
Downtown Hotel and Conference Center ..... 6 - 57
Continued Restoration and Preservation Efforts ..... 6 - 58
Downtown Parking ..... 6 - 59
Additional Retail Activity in the Downtown ..... 6 - 59
Retention of Professional Offices and Services ..... 5 - 60
Additional Residential Development ..... 5 - 60

Economy - continued

East Nelson Street Commercial Area ..... 5 - 60
The South Main Street/Route 11 Commercial Corridor ..... 5 - 61
The McLaughlin Street Commercial/Industrial Area ..... 5 - 62
Other Economic Development Possibilities ..... 5 - 63
Conclusion ..... 5 - 65
Goals and Objectives ..... 5 - 65

Land Use: 2006 ..... 7 - 1

Current Land Use ..... 7 - 1
Present Zoning ..... 7 - 5
Vacant Land ..... 7 - 10
Institutional Master Plans ..... 7 - 13
Virginia Military Institute's Current Master Plan ..... 7 - 13
Washington and Lee University Master Plan ..... 7 - 18
Surrounding Land Use ..... 7 - 21
Implementation of Land Use Recommendations contained in the City's Previous Comprehensive Plan ..... 7 - 29
Land Use Goals, Objectives and Recommendations ..... 7 - 31
Transition Area between the Downtown Commercial District and the Residential Area along Randolph and Massie Streets ..... 7 - 31
The Block Bounded by Nelson, Glasgow and McLaughlin Streets ..... 7 - 35
Potential Development and Redevelopment Areas ..... 7 - 38
East Lexington Bluffs Area ..... 7 - 38
The South Main Street Commercial Area ..... 7 - 42
The East Lexington Street Commercial Area ..... 7 - 44
City-owned Property adjacent to the Rescue Squad Building ..... 7 - 46
Vacant Land on the Interior of the Block adjacent to Brebaker Field ..... 7 - 46
VMI and Washington and Lee Development Plans ..... 7 - 49
Virginia Military Institute ..... 7 - 49
Washington and Lee University's Preliminary Master Plan ..... 7 - 53
Cooperation between the Two Institutions ..... 7 - 55
City Input into County Land Use Decisions in the Areas affecting the City ..... 7 - 56
Future Land Use and Special Planning Areas ..... 7 - 58
Implementation Tools ..... 7 - 61
Planned Unit Development ..... 7 - 61
Conditional Use Permits ..... 7 - 62
Conditional Zoning ..... 7 - 72
Possible Creation of a Housing and Redevelopment Authority ..... 7 - 62
Conclusion ..... 7 - 63
Goals and Objectives ..... 7 - 64

Transportation ..... 8 - 1

The Virginia Department of Transportation: Highway Classification System ..... 8 - 1
The Virginia Department of Transportation Six Year Improvement Program:
Fiscal Years 1994-95 thru 1999-2000 ..... 8 - 2
City of Lexington 2010 Transportation Plan ..... 8 - 5
Improved City Participation in the Development of Plans and Programs
for Roads beyond the City Boundaries ..... 8 - 6
Virginia Department of Transportation: Standards for Urban Roadways ..... 8 - 6
Review and Evaluation of the Existing Road System ..... 8 - 8
The "Western By-Pass" ..... 8 - 9
The East Lexington Bridge ..... 8 - 10
Route 11 By-Pass/East Nelson Street Interchange ..... 8 - 11
Residential Streets ..... 8 - 11
Design Principles ..... 8 - 12
Design Standards ..... 8 - 12
Public and Private Streets ..... 8 - 14
Modifications to Current VDOT Roadway Standards ..... 8 - 15
Sidewalks ..... 8 - 15
Route 11 By-Pass ..... 8 - 16
Trail Network ..... 8 - 16
A Bus Station ..... 8 - 17
A General Aviation Airport for Lexington and Rockbridge County ..... 8 - 17
Excessive Signage ..... 8 - 18
Goals and Objectives ..... 8 - 18

Community Facilities and Services ..... 9 - 1

City Facilities ..... 9 - 1
Water System ..... 9 - 2
Sewer System ..... 9 - 2
Solid Waste ..... 9 - 3
Fire and Rescue Services ..... 9 - 5
Law Enforcement ..... 9 - 6
Administration of Justice ..... 9 - 6
Parks and Recreation ..... 9 - 7
Library ..... 9 - 12
Education ..... 9 - 12
Consolidation ..... 9 - 20
Human Services ..... 9 - 21
Cultural Activities ..... 9 - 22
Goals and Objectives ..... 9 - 23

Government ..... 10 - 1

The City ..... 10 - 1
Local Government in Virginia ..... 10 - 1
The Independent City ..... 10 - 2
The County ..... 10 - 2
The Town ..... 10 - 3
Organization of Lexington City Government ..... 10 - 3
Annexation in Virginia ..... 10 - 4
Boundary Line Adjustment by Agreement ..... 10 - 5
Voluntary Settlements of Annexation, Transition or Immunity Issues ..... 10 - 5
Boundary Changes of Towns and Cities ..... 10 - 5
Moratorium on City Initiated Annexations ..... 10 - 6
City Initiated Annexations ..... 10 - 6
The City of Lexington, Rockbridge County Revenue Sharing and Waiver of Annexation Rights Agreement ..... 10 - 6
City Finances ..... 10 - 8
Revenues ..... 10 - 8
Expenditures ..... 10 - 11
Revenue and Expenditure Projections ..... 10 - 15
General Fund Balance ..... 10 - 17
Bonded Debt ..... 10 - 18
Local Revenue Generating Capacity ..... 10 - 21
Conclusion ..... 10 - 24
Financial Goals ..... 10 - 24
City versus Town Status ..... 10 - 25
Goals and Objectives ..... 10 - 27

INTRODUCTION

THE REASONS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Everybody plans. People make financial plans, travel plans, and work plans that reflect personal goals and objectives. Plans help them to organize their time and resources and work towards their goals in a logical fashion. By planning, they are able to understand where they are now and what they must do, both now and in the future, to achieve their goals. They can then put together a plan of action that will enable them to accomplish these tasks. Planning saves time, effort and money.

Planning makes sense for communities as well as for individuals and households; however, community planning involves more factors than personal planning and is intended to serve the best interests of the local population. Planning is an organized way of determining what a community's needs are and then setting goals and objectives for future development of the community designed to meet those needs. Planning is a way of aspiring for effective and efficient change to make the community a better place to live.

A comprehensive plan shows the current positive and negative aspects of the community. It offers guides to spending public money, for improving community life, and indicates where each type of private development should occur in order to protect and enhance local character and quality of life. By planning, a community will begin to realize that its economy, housing base, environment, and historic qualities are closely related to those annoying or pressing problems such as traffic congestion, low water pressure, and limited employment opportunities.

Planning can help a community direct its efforts toward common and pressing problems. It provides a means to draw people into local policy making and helps local elected officials make effective decisions. To be successful, a plan should reflect a consensus concerning the needs and goals of the community.

Planning will help a community think regionally. As the community addresses local problems, it will realize that some of these problems are larger and more complex than originally anticipated and that they are shared with the county and adjacent municipalities. It may become apparent that the solution to these problems will require cooperative efforts.

A comprehensive plan also serves as the basic planning document upon which implementation tools, such as zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations, are based. These documents are more detailed, containing specific requirements, whereas the plan is more concerned with the overall reasoning upon which these requirements are based.

Planning demonstrates that a community cares about itself and its citizens - about the housing needs of people of all age groups and income levels, about the community's neighborhoods, character and environment, and caring that future residents will enjoy the same, if not better,

quality of life as that of prior generations.

LEGAL BASIS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN VIRGINIA

The requirements for and the procedures by which a Virginia municipality prepares a comprehensive plan are contained in Article 4 of Title 15.1 of the Code of Virginia. A comprehensive plan is general in nature, but should cover all aspects of community development. According to the State Code, the plan may include, but is not limited to: (1) designating areas for various types of public and private development; (2) designating a comprehensive system of transportation facilities; (3) delineating a system of community service facilities including schools, parks, and public buildings; and, (4) designating areas for renovation and other special community programs. It designates the approximate location and character of each feature shown in the plan and should present the long-range recommendations for the general development of the land area covered by the plan.

The comprehensive plan has the following legal status once it is adopted by the local governing body:

> ... it shall control the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature shown on the plan. Thereafter, no ... (improvement), whether publicly or privately owned, shall be established, constructed, or authorized, unless and until ... submitted to and approved by the local commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted comprehensive plan or part thereof ...

Thus, the plan is the general guideline for community development and the City has the authority to approve or disapprove proposals for development based on conformance of those proposals with the plan.

The comprehensive plan is part of an on-going community development process. As such, the state code requires that " at least once every five years, the comprehensive plan, or the completed parts of it, shall be reviewed by the local commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan." This requirement ensures that the plan reflects current conditions as they relate to the community development process.

HISTORY OF LOCAL PLANNING EFFORTS

The first comprehensive plan for the City of Lexington was adopted in 1975. It was prepared for the City by the Division of State Planning and Community Affairs, Local and Regional Planning Section.

In 1980, the Lexington City Council directed the Lexington Planning Commission to undertake an update of the original plan. The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission was retained by Council to provide technical assistance and the resultant comprehensive plan was adopted in 1985.

In 1990, at the request of the Lexington City Council, a review of the comprehensive plan was undertaken and an update of the plan authorized. Lexington's Director of Planning and Development, serving as staff advisor to the Planning Commission, directed a comprehensive review and revision of the comprehensive plan. This Plan was adopted on June 15, 1995.

The Planning Commission and the City's Department of Planning and Development have been revising and updating the Comprehensive Plan for the past few years. Several chapters of the plan are nearing completion. Because of the special significance of the Land Use chapter, which comprises the heart of the plan, the City decided to adopt this chapter while work continues on the balance of the plan.

Among the steps taken to update this chapter were a "land use forum" to which the community was invited to discuss issues and concerns as well as make recommendations concerning local land use, meetings and discussions with local institutions including Washington and Lee University, Virginia Military Institute and Rockbridge County, and a community survey which was sent to every household in the City.

Additional forums, meetings and public hearings will be conducted as the remaining chapters are presented to the community and to City Council for review and adoption.

LEXINGTON - PAST AND PRESENT

A UNIQUE AND SPECIAL COMMUNITY

An underlying theme of this Comprehensive Plan is the unique and special character of the City of Lexington.

The City has a rich history and an abundance of significant architecture represented in its buildings. This architectural heritage has been chronicled in *The Architecture of Historic Lexington*, written by Royster Lyle and Pam Simpson.

The historic core of the City is a Nationally Registered Historic District, as are the Washington and Lee Colonnade and the Virginia Military Institute Post. The City has taken major steps to restore and protect these resources. All overhead utility lines have been placed underground along Main Street and brick sidewalks reinstalled. The Architectural Review Board reviews all proposed changes to the exterior of buildings in the downtown. The result is a charming town with a strong character which is extremely attractive to residents and visitors.

Two of Virginia's highly respected education institutions, Washington and Lee University (W&L) and Virginia Military Institute (VMI), are located in Lexington. Washington and Lee University is a national ranked liberal arts and science institution with two undergraduate divisions and a School of Law. Virginia Military Institute is one of 15 state-supported institutions of higher education. The Virginia Military Institute Research Laboratories, a nonprofit organization, performs scientific and engineering investigations and research for industry and government.

An abundance of cultural activities contribute to the area’s charm. The Lime Kiln Theater presents a professional theatrical and concert series through the summer months in an outdoor amphitheater. FAIR, Fine Arts in Rockbridge, is an umbrella organization which includes groups interested in promoting arts in education, orchestra, dance, and drama. Several additional community organizations, such as the Rockbridge Arts Guild, Rockbridge Community Chorus, Rockbridge Historical Society and Historic Lexington Foundation, sponsor other cultural activities.

The Lenfest Center for the Performing Arts at Washington and Lee University opened in 1991 and is a state of the art facility devoted to the fine arts. The Washington and Lee Theater Arts Department is nationally recognized for its quality. Virginia Military Institute also offers theatrical productions throughout the school year. Both W&L and VMI provide lectures, concerts and art exhibits, most of which are available to the general public and many of which are free.

A number of special interest clubs and organizations are active in Lexington and the surrounding areas of Rockbridge County and nearby Buena Vista, Natural Bridge and Glasgow. Opportunities for participation abound, whether interests are in civic activities; history; gardening and other hobbies; conservation; recreation; service to children, the elderly or the homeless; political action; healthcare; or the well being of animals.

Both W&L and VMI sponsor a full array of sports teams. VMI is now a member of the Big South Conference and W&L the Old Dominion Athletic Conference. As a result, there are numerous collegiate athletic events in the area, many free.

Located at the southern end of the Great Valley of Virginia, Lexington and surrounding Rockbridge County possess great natural beauty. The abundance of recreational opportunities available to Lexington and area residents contribute greatly to the enjoyable quality of life.

Opportunities for outdoor recreation abound. Residents have access to natural areas in the County such as the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, the Goshen Wildlife Management Area, Little North Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Goshen Natural Area, Brushy Hill Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The George Washington National Forest contains 45,250 acres in Rockbridge County and the Jefferson National Forest includes 21,192 acres in the County. Together, these two National Forests compose over 17% of the total land area of the County.

The Maury River provides excellent opportunities for swimming, canoeing and fishing. Lake Robertson, owned by the Virginia Game Commission, is operated by Rockbridge County as a recreation facility. The secondary roads in the County, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the trails in the National Forests provide excellent biking.

There are more than 100 culturally and historically significant sites in the Rockbridge County area. The best known are the Cyrus McCormick Farm, Natural Bridge of Virginia, Lee Chapel on the campus of Washington and Lee University, the home of Stonewall Jackson, the Virginia Military Institute Post, and the George C. Marshall Museum.

The Virginia Horse Center is located three miles from Lexington. The Horse Center is a 600-acre facility with permanent stabling for 750 horses, an indoor arena with seating for over 4,500, ten other show arenas, two cross country courses and two campgrounds. The Center hosts major horse shows and sales, grand-prix jumping classes, dressage exhibitions, breed shows, and 4-H judging competitions. The Horse Center also serves as the site for the Rockbridge Regional Fair.

Lexington has carefully attended to its heritage while still moving forward into the 21st Century. Citizens can take pride in their successful efforts to create opportunities which make Lexington culturally significant. Living in Lexington is, in fact, living in a unique and special community. Those who live in this unique and special community are aware, as they enjoy daily activities, that the present is deeply influenced by Lexington's past.

HISTORY

Indian legend has it that the beauty of the Shenandoah Valley so awed the heavens that each star cast the brightest jewel from its crown into the valley's limpid waters, there to sparkle and shine ever after in a gesture of celestial benediction. Thus, arose the valley's name: Shenandoah - Clear-Eyed Daughter of the Stars.

Europeans discovered the Shenandoah Valley in 1716 when Virginia's Governor Spottswood and his band of explorers, the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, gazed into it from the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Settlement of the valley began in the 1730's when Scots-Irish and German immigrants moved south from Pennsylvania through the valley and into what would become Rockbridge County. The earliest settlers followed a well-worn Indian path into the Shenandoah, and this route down the center of the valley - called the Great Wagon Road - continued to function as the primary thoroughfare for trade and travel. This same course is followed today by U.S. Route 11, the Valley Pike. Many of these settlers built homes and farms on land made available by Benjamin Borden, the recipient of a royal land grant that included much of the county.

The Virginia Legislature created Rockbridge County in 1778 and named Lexington as its seat. Lexington was named in honor of the Battle of Lexington-Concord, which had occurred only three years before. The town was located in the center of the county where the Great Wagon Road crossed the North River at Gilbert Campbell’s Ford. There were strong springs in the area but the deciding factor on the site location was Isaac Campbell’s donation of land.

The name Rockbridge was derived from the popular eighteenth century name for Natural Bridge - Rocky Bridge. Thomas Jefferson, a member of the state legislature, owned the tract that included Natural Bridge and is reported to have played a part in choosing the name.

The original town, which was 1300 feet long and 900 feet wide, was laid out in a grid pattern and included what is today the greater part of Lexington's Central Business District (CBD). Three streets running more or less north and south - Randolph, Main, and Jefferson Streets - were intersected by Henry, Washington, and Nelson Streets, forming four interior blocks. All but one of the streets were named for men prominent in the new nation's struggle for independence. A central block was designated for a courthouse and jail.

Many of the first buildings, including a courthouse, were constructed of logs. Before the community was 20 years old, a massive fire destroyed almost all of the town. The town was quickly rebuilt. The new buildings were mostly brick in the nineteenth century style which still dominates in the historic section of the city. In 1804, only eight years after the fire, a visitor to the area wrote: "Lexington is a handsome little village with good buildings," though he complained that he couldn't get any pie in the town.

The first bridge over the North River (now called the Maury River) serving Lexington was a toll bridge constructed by Colonel John Jordan, probably in 1834. The tolls collected were too high for some travelers, who continued to ford the river.

Martin's *Virginia Gazetteer* of 1835 reports that Lexington had Presbyterian and Methodist Churches, a printing office, five shoemakers, four taverns, four carpenters, three hatters, two tanneries, two tin-plate works, two cabinetmakers, two wheelwrights, two jewelers, two blacksmiths, and one bricklayer. Three libraries were open to the public. There were about 150 dwellings and nearly 900 inhabitants.

Lexington was incorporated in 1841.

Almost from the beginning, Lexington's main industry has been education. The various Valley of Virginia boys' academies, which were the predecessors of Washington and Lee University, go back to the early days of settlement.

In the early 1790's, Liberty Hall was built just to the west of the town to house the academy headed by the Reverend William Graham, a Presbyterian minister. The building burned in 1802. The massive stone walls of the structure can still be seen from West Nelson Street. In 1803, the college moved to its present location in Lexington.

When George Washington made a sizeable gift to the college's endowment, Liberty Hall's name was changed to honor the country's first president. At the end of the Civil War, the trustees of Washington College offered General Robert E. Lee the presidency of the institution. During the five years before his death in 1870, Lee modernized the college's curriculum, attracted much needed funding, and added several new buildings to the campus. After Lee's death, the trustees renamed the college Washington and Lee University (W&L).

Today, Washington and Lee University enjoys a reputation for academic excellence and has an enrollment of 1,700 undergraduates and 350 law students.

In 1816, three arsenals were established in Virginia by the General Assembly for the purpose of housing arms. One of these was built in Lexington. This brought a real change to this rather remote Valley town and the presence of state militiamen was, at times, a concern to the native Lexingtonians.

By the mid 1830's, a prominent Lexington lawyer and Washington College graduate, John T. L. Preston, advocated the establishment of a state military school at the arsenal. After much debate, locally and in the legislature, Virginia Military Institute (VMI) was founded and its first cadets were enrolled on November 11, 1839.

The first years under superintendent Francis H. Smith were difficult ones, but by 1849 VMI had proved itself a viable experiment and Smith called on New York architect Alexander Jackson Davis to create the new Barracks in the then popular Gothic Revival form. VMI

prospered during the pre-Civil War days. Among its faculty was Major Thomas J. Jackson, soon to become the South's famous hero, "Stonewall" Jackson.

The Corps of Cadets played a key role in the Battle of New Market in 1864. That battle remains a special part of the VMI tradition. In retaliation, Union forces later burned VMI and briefly occupied the town, but the area largely escaped the worst of the war's destruction.

From its start, VMI has prescribed to a rigid military lifestyle for its cadets while at the same time requiring high academic standards in engineering, the sciences, and liberal arts. Today, with its reputation of academic excellence and military training, VMI has an enrollment of 1,249.

In the 1850's, Main Street was lowered ten feet from its previous level at the Courthouse to its existing grade at the bottom of the hill at its junction with Jefferson Street. A close look at the Alexander-Withrow House and the Dold building, across the street, reveals the bricked up doorways on what are now their second stories. The exposed foundations on the present first floors of several other buildings are further indications of this change.

At the time of the Civil War and for many decades thereafter (well into the early twentieth century), Lexington’s population was approximately 30% black. In 1860 the white population of Lexington was 1,438. Its black population of 696 was mostly slaves but included 91 free blacks.

By 1860, a series of dams, canals and locks made the Maury River, a tributary of the James River, navigable up to Lexington. The fortunes of both Lexington and the county changed dramatically with the sudden ease of transport all the way to Richmond.

Lexington was an important port from 1860 to the 1880's, when the railroad arrived. Canal boats 15 feet wide and 95 feet long were drawn up the river by mules. In addition to farm produce and flour from local mills, canal boats shipped considerable quantities of iron from the then thriving iron industry. The waterfront at East Lexington and Jordan's Point became a thriving, active commercial center. The first commercial operations sold for cash or traded household or farm products for produce which could be shipped on the canal.

General Hunter's Union troops burned the buildings at Jordan's Point when they raided Lexington in 1864. The people of Lexington burned the covered bridge which crossed the Maury River at Jordan’s Point in an effort to prevent the Union troops from entering the city. The rebuilding of the bridge was not begun until 1870. It was not completed until about 1879.

The county's primarily agricultural economic base continued to diversify in the 1880's with the arrival of the railroad. The first train from Richmond chugged into East Lexington in 1881; however, the station was ultimately built near the future site of the Castle Hill Hotel rather than at Jordan's Point. This decision, and the ever-present threat of flooding on the

island, led to the eventual decline of the Point as an industrial and commercial center for the City.

The Lexington Land Company was formed late in a speculative real estate boom which hit the county in the early 1890's. The Company purchased 1,275 acres immediately west of the town, along the railroad and the river to the east. This land included Honeysuckle Hill, Castle Hill, Sunnyside, the old golf course (now “Fairwinds”) and Mulberry Hill and extended north to the Maury River. It extended east, beyond the old covered bridge, and included land beyond the railroad line. The Company constructed the Hotel DeHart, a sprawling ornate structure of stone, brick and wood later known as Castle Hill which was reached by a bridge over Woods Creek. According to the prospectus of the Company:

> There are already at Lexington one of the best equipped wood working mills in the state, a foundry with two cupolas, a machine shop with the latest iron working machinery complete, a chair factory doing a large and profitable business, a vegetable and a fruit canning factory whose products stand at the very head of the market, two large flouring mills, two corn mills and two plaster mills and one ice factory which supplies the neighboring town.

Lots were actively marketed in the spring and summer of 1891. There were few buyers. According to the *Proceedings of the Rockbridge Historical Society, Volume 5*, "Within less than a year from its inception, Lexington's great boom was in a state of collapse, with nothing to show for it but a vast, empty hotel, a ready-made site for tennis courts, a wide expanse of unsold lots, and a financial tangle of the first order."

The Hotel DeHart was never opened as a hotel but remained boarded up for nearly two decades. In 1908 until the early 1920's, it was used as a student dormitory and as a summer hotel. It was about to be converted to a boys’ boarding school when it was consumed in a spectacular early morning fire in September of 1922.

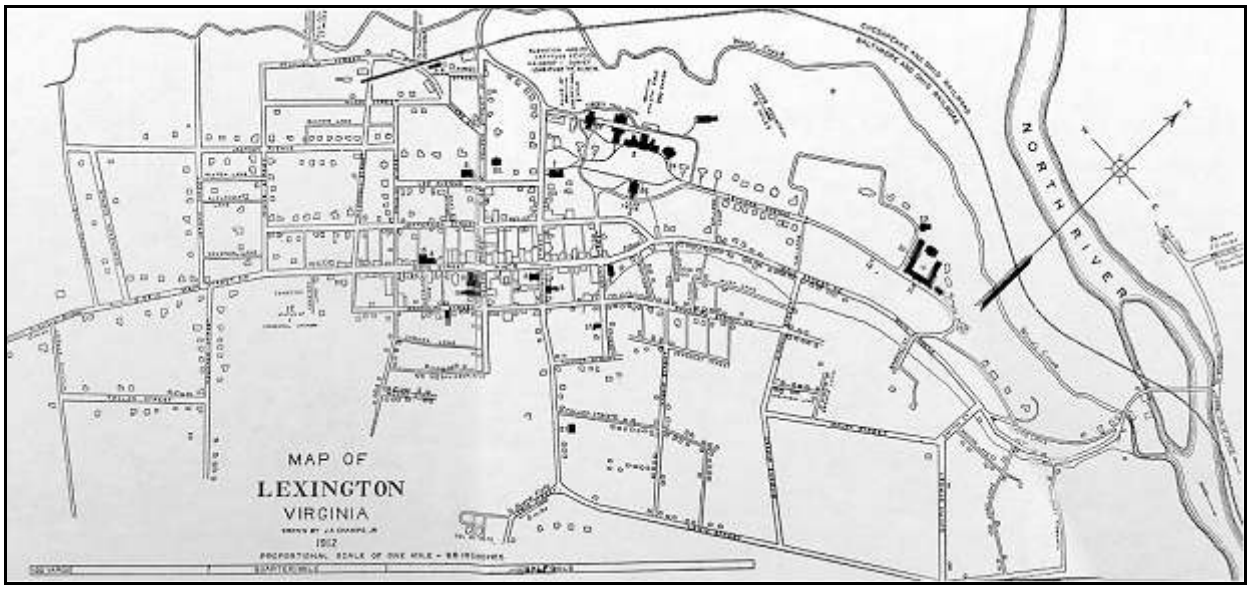


Figure 2.1 Town of Lexington, 1912

John Letcher described Lexington in the early 1900's in his book *Only Yesterday in Lexington, Virginia*. The town was more compressed and smaller than it is today, as shown in Figure 2.1 above. Woods Creek was the boundary on the west side of town. Edmondson Avenue was the farthest street to the south, though houses were strung out on either side of Main Street to the present site of the Lutheran Church. On the east side of town there were no buildings beyond Col Alto, which could only be reached by way of Washington Street. After it reached Col Alto, the street became a narrow country road leading to Buena Vista and Buffalo Forge

The north boundary of the town was the river where Main Street came to the south end of the covered wooden bridge. The north end of Lexington near the river was a much busier place than it is today. There was a general store, creamery and water powered flour mill. A railroad spur came across the highway into the mill grounds which were on the point of land between Woods Creek and the millrace after it left the turbine. The only paved streets in the town were in the business section where the stores and shops were concentrated along the same streets as they are today. There were six passenger trains and two freight trains arriving and departing daily. Lexington had a population of about 4,000 people.

The block of Main Street situated between the First Baptist Church and the Court House was home to black entrepreneurs for much of the twentieth century. One notable business was the grocery store operated by Harry Walker in the building we now call the Willson-Walker

House, located at 30 North Main Street. Walker's grocery store was quite successful. One of his major clients was Virginia Military Institute.

The black neighborhoods were called Green Hill (Tucker, Massie, Henry, Fuller and part of Randolph Street and Marble Lane); Diamond Hill (Diamond, Maury, Lewis, High, and North Randolph Streets); and, Centreville or Mudtown (Varner Lane and Taylor, East Preston, Moore, and Davidson Streets).

In 1935, a new bridge was built over the Maury River at East Lexington. It was meant to take the traffic from the old covered bridge, a historic landmark that survived until 1947. The present Route 11 going up the hill from the bridge was constructed after the bridge was completed. The Route 11 by-pass was constructed in 1955 and 1956, giving drivers the option of going around rather than through the town.

The B&O's rail line from Staunton to Lexington was abandoned in 1942. The rails were melted down to provide steel for the war effort. The final vestige of railroad service was washed away by hurricane Camille in 1969, which ruined the C&O's line along the Maury River and destroyed the wooden trestle at East Lexington. A recreational trail, the Chessie Trail, was constructed along the old railroad bed between Lexington and Buena Vista in 1981.

Lexington became a City on January 1, 1966. Early in that same decade, commercial shopping areas began to be constructed along East Nelson Street. At one point there were three supermarkets located in this area. The area now serves as a second major commercial center within the City.

During the 1960's a number of the businesses located downtown were owned and operated by black entrepreneurs. Woven into the fabric of a vibrant downtown retail center,were physicians, barbers, butchers, innkeepers and restaurateurs who comprised a black middle class. This community began to diminish as black entrepreneurs began to die and many of their children moved away in search of jobs. The decline was exacerbated when black public school teachers left Lexington in the wake of school desegregation for teaching jobs elsewhere.

Interstate I-81 was constructed through the heart of the Shenandoah Valley in the early 1960's. Two Lexington exits were provided. The arrival of the Interstate meant that I-81, rather than Route 11, was the major north-south artery connecting urban areas in the Valley. It also meant that the valley became a major conduit for through truck and automobile traffic. I-64 west to Charleston, West Virginia was completed in 1978. Its interconnection with I-81 is just north of Lexington. Thus, Lexington is located adjacent to the junction of major north-south and east-west highway networks.

Today, Lexington serves as the retail, cultural and a historical center of Rockbridge County, as well as the home of local government and the courts. In recent years the addition of major shopping centers to the north and east of the city has changed the character of retail business

in the Central Business District. But thanks to imaginative programs by Historic Lexington Foundation, Lexington Downtown Development Association (disbanded in 2006) and others, Lexington's downtown has not only survived but continues to serve as a focal point for the tourist trade and the area's economy.

According to *Virginia's Shenandoah Valley*:

> For a town of 7,000, Lexington offers a surprising array of culture and history. Much of the historic downtown architecture is well preserved, and there is evident pride in the area's heritage. Much of Lexington's charm, to say nothing of its payroll, springs from its two famous schools: Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute. Together, they are the city's only real industry, as well as the source of plays, films, lectures and the kind of intellectual vitality - and occasional snobbery - that only a college town seems to breed.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN LEXINGTON

Perhaps, the first historic preservation project in Lexington was the rebuilding of Virginia Military Institute (VMI) after the Civil War. When Union General David Hunter occupied Lexington in June 1864, the barracks and other institute buildings were burned. After the war, VMI's first order of business was repairing and rebuilding. None of the severely damaged pre-war structures were torn down; all were reconstructed. The faculty supported the rebuilding by contributing part of their salaries to help in the effort.

VMI undertook a second major preservation project in 1914, when it adopted the plan by Bertram G. Goodhue to redesign the Post and create what we today know as the Parade Ground. In order to do that, three of the original residences designed by A. J. Davis in the 1850's were measured, disassembled, the parts numbered and rebuilt. Those three residences were reassembled along the perimeter of the Parade Ground and occupied by the Superintendent, the Dean and the Commandant - in that order, left to right, as viewed from the Parade Ground. The quarters located closest to Barracks, formerly occupied by the Commandant, was demolished in 1966 to make room for Lejeune Hall.

Three local organizations have been particularly important in preserving Lexington's heritage: the Rockbridge Historical Society, the Ruth Anderson McCulloch Branch of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), and Historic Lexington Foundation.

In 1939 the Rockbridge Historical Society was formed, in part, as an effort to save the old Nannie Jordan House on Main Street. Thought to be one of the oldest frame structures in the community, local leaders, including Ruth Anderson McCulloch, organized to try to save it,

but it was the Depression and there was little money to be had. The building was lost, but the historical society was born.

Local preservationists were also unable to save the Old Blue Hotel, which was demolished by Washington and Lee University (W&L) in 1947. That same year, the Society gained a home when the Castle on Randolph Street was donated to the group. The ca. 1790 building is one of the oldest in the community. It served as the Society's headquarters until 1974. Today, the Rockbridge Historical Society owns and maintains three properties: the Castle, the Sloan House and the Campbell House, which is maintained as a community museum.

The APVA is the oldest preservation organization in Rockbridge County. The first chapter was founded in 1896 with efforts to preserve Old Monmouth Church. The local chapter was reactivated in 1935 in an effort to save the old covered bridge in East Lexington. The most recent revival of the APVA in Lexington took place in 1964, when several important historic houses, including the Barclay House and the Alexander-Withrow House, were threatened with demolition. The houses were saved.

As a local chapter of a state-wide organization, the APVA was not allowed to own property. Thus, the Historic Lexington Foundation (HLF) was formed as an organization that could own property, receive legacies, and raise funds for preservation. The APVA did not disband, instead it focused on documenting local buildings, cemeteries and other resources, gathering material on their histories, and using its educational efforts to encourage preservation.

It was the threat that the old Barclay House might be torn down by a national fraternity that spurred the creation of the Historic Lexington Foundation in 1966. The Alexander-Withrow House was its first effort with a Revolving Fund. Using the area of lower Main Street between Washington and Henry Streets as the "Pilot Block," HLF bought and restored seven properties in the 1970's including the Central Hotel, the Jacob Ruff House and the Dold Building. The buildings were purchased, stabilized and the exteriors conserved, then they were sold with protective easements to sympathetic buyers who undertook the interior restorations.

In the mid-1970's, HLF undertook the project of restoring the Stonewall Jackson House to its 1850's appearance and then owned and operated it until 1995, when the Stonewall Jackson Foundation was formed.

HLF then returned to its primary mission of preservation. Recent projects have included the Miller's House at Jordan's Point and the Roberson-Phalen House on Jefferson Street. HLF's goals have always been to preserve historic properties and to enhance the beauty of Lexington, but these goals have also included encouraging others in similar efforts. The appearance of downtown Lexington gives ample evidence of HLF's success.

In 1971, the City established the Historic Downtown Preservation District. In 1973, the Architectural Review Board was created to provide design oversight.

In 1973, the older parts of the town's residential area, the central business district, Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute were entered into the National Register of Historic Places. The conclusion of the report on which this designation was based stated: "The beautiful setting of the Valley, indeed the overall aesthetic impression of Lexington, is not essentially changed since the later-nineteenth century. Lexington has in abundance - if in fragile equilibrium - what other communities aspire to; she is what other Valley towns were thirty years ago.

In 1974, the city undertook a five-year capital project that included the redesign of traffic lights, burying utility wires and the installation of new brick sidewalks in the downtown.

More recent preservation efforts include:

- Preservation of the building once housing the Lyric Theater. Demolition had been requested by the previous owner and denied by the Architectural Review Board. The building was converted into nine condominium residences (1997);

- Restoration of Lexington Presbyterian Church by its membership after it was gutted by fire (2002);

- The building once housing the Sheridan Livery Stable was renovated and converted into a restaurant and inn (1997);

- Col Alto, constructed in 1827 for James McDowell who served as the Governor of Virginia, was restored and made a part of a hotel (1997). The grounds along Nelson Street remain much as they appeared at the turn of the century.

- The building once housing the old jail, adjacent to the Courthouse, was renovated and an addition added to provide office space (1996);

- The Davidson-Tucker house was restored and updated by the Stonewall Jackson House Foundation to serve as offices for the adjacent Stonewall Jackson House, now operated as a museum (1974 and, most recently, 2004);

- The train station was moved across the street by Washington and Lee to enable the University to expand the Lenfest Center and is now being renovated for contemporary office use (2005);

- The Roberson-Phalen House, on Jefferson Street, was purchased by HLF, the exterior restored and the building recently sold for private use (2006); and

- Most recently, the Dutch Inn, located on Washington Street, was completely renovated and updated (2006).

Other preservation related efforts are worthy of note. In 2006, the City established two Residential Historic Neighborhood Conservation Districts. Architectural Review Board approval is now required for demolition of any building within these districts as well as for any new buildings constructed within these districts. Creation of these districts was the result of coordinated efforts involving the City Planning Commission, HLF, the Rockbridge Historical Society and other local citizens committed to local historic preservation.

Responding to concerns initially expressed by HLF regarding the possibility of a catastrophic downtown fire similar to those which had occurred in several other historic downtowns, the City hired and trained a local fire marshall and established a process of regular inspections of both commercial and residential buildings in the downtown.

As a community, Lexington can be proud of its preservation efforts and successes. Buildings which can be seen while walking through the downtown area or driving through the residential neighborhoods bear evidence of Lexington's dedication to preserving its architectural history.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The City of Lexington is well known for its outstanding architecture and remarkable record for historic preservation. Buildings in the downtown central business district, such as the Presbyterian Church, the Alexander-Withrow Building, the Willson-Walker House, and the Stonewall Jackson House, have gained national attention. Many of the handsome residences along Lee Avenue, South Main Street, Jefferson Street, and Jackson Avenue have been restored and add greatly to the architectural distinctiveness of the town.

The National Register of Historic Places, administered by the U. S. Department of the Interior, designates properties of local, state, and national significance. The Virginia Landmarks Register, administered by the Virginia Department of Historical Resources, is the Commonwealth's officially designated list of buildings, sites, structures, and historic districts that reflect the state's historical, architectural and archaeological significance.

There are three nationally registered historic districts within the City: Virginia Military Institute Historic District*; Washington & Lee University Historic District*, and the Lexington Historic District. The following individual properties within the City are included on the Virginia Landmarks Register and/or the National Register of Historic Places (as of March 2007): Alexander-Withrow House; Blandome; Col Alto; First Baptist Church; Stonewall Jackson House; Lee Chapel*; Lexington & Covington Turnpike Toll House; Lexington Presbyterian Church; Lylburn Downing School (ca. 1927 portion); Mulberry Hill; Reid-White-Philbin House; Stono; and the Virginia Military Institute Barracks*. (An asterisk {*} denotes National Historic Landmark status.)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There is no doubt that the local government, local preservation organizations, and the broader community recognize the value of the historic character of this community and the contribution of each of its historic buildings to the economic vitality and quality of life in this community. This plan recognizes the role and value of preservation and also acknowledges that there may be times when, to meet other goals, needs or requirements, a building may have to be demolished to achieve other community purposes.

GOAL: Encourage and support local preservation, rehabilitation, and beautification efforts in the City.

There are significant Federal and State tax credits available to those who restore historic buildings to meet the standards contained in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings which can have significant beneficial economic benefits and facilitate appropriate renovation of those buildings.

Many tax related programs are complicated and require the advice and participation of someone who understands the details. HLF has agreed to serve as the local contact for possible use of this program to facilitate the major restoration of significant buildings in Lexington. (Federal Tax Credits are being used by the new owner of the Sheridan Building to undertake significant renovations to that building.)

GOAL: Promote the use of federal, state, and local preservation incentives.

Previously, the Lexington Downtown Development Association, as a qualified member of the Virginia Main Street Program, received free design assistance from an architectural firm with expertise in historic preservation. Since LDDA has been disbanded, the City is no longer eligible for this program. It will require a commitment of significant local resources to replicate this program. HLF has expressed interest in funding such a program.

GOAL: Consider providing design assistance to downtown businesses and property owners.

In the past all of the local banks participated in a revolving loan fund to finance building upgrades in the downtown. With the transfer of decision making from Lexington to regional centers as local banks have been acquired by larger institutions, support for this effort has not been sustained since local managers can no longer make commitments. It is not likely that this program can be reconstituted. HLF has periodically managed a revolving loan fund to assist in the renovation of historic buildings. The most recent renovation was funded by private donations, foundation grants and a $40,000 donation from the City. The fund has been used to assist in the renovation of the Lyric Theater and the Roberson-Phalen House and the purchase of the Miller's House, which HLF subsequently gave to the City of Lexington

for use as an interpretive museum at Jordan's Point Park. Financial support, for rehabilitation or renovation, is currently available from this loan fund.

GOAL: Encourage the Historic Lexington Foundation and/or local lending institutions fund and sponsor a rehabilitation loan pool for downtown buildings.

The City has made significant investments in public improvements to enhance the historic character of the community. It should continue to identify and fund projects to accomplish this objective. One such project which has been identified is streetscape improvements along Randolph Street, between Nelson and Washington Streets. Possible improvements are the underground installation of utility lines, improved pedestrian access and enhancements around the new Courthouse.

GOAL: Continue to invest in public infrastructure improvements to further enhance the historic character of Lexington.

The City owns and maintains several historic buildings and historic sites including the Ruffner School, Stonewall Jackson Cemetery, Lylburn Downing Community Center and the Miller's House at Jordan's Point. The City also owns Jordan's Point Park, an historic site with artifacts from the industrial era remaining, including the wharf wall, the gauge dock, the abutment for the covered bridges that served Lee Highway, and the remaining foundations of the mills and warehouses which once occupied this land.

Plans have been completed for the restoration of the Miller's House, the last remaining structure at Jordan's Point. The City is committed to this restoration. The covered bridge abutment is completing restoration from damage caused by flooding of the Maury River. A preservation and maintenance plan is being completed for the many fine rock walls and foundations which remain at Jordan's Point. The City should continue to ensure that all of these facilities continue to receive the level of maintenance that they deserve.

GOAL: Remain a responsible steward of city-owned historic properties

The City's present design guidelines used by the Architectural Review Board are general in nature. Many communities with similar interest in historic preservation have prepared more detailed design guidelines focused more on the nature of the specific buildings in that community. The City has not had the staff or the resources to prepare detailed design guidelines. If the City received Certified Local Government (CLG) status, funding assistance should be available for such an effort. The City would look for leadership in this effort from local preservation groups.

GOAL: Work with Historic Lexington Foundation and other local preservation groups to apply for and receive Certified Local Government (CLG) status from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to gain access to dedicated federal funds for preservation projects and planning

GOAL: Produce and disseminate Design Guidelines to assist property owners planning renovation, rehabilitation, new construction, or other substantive changes for historic properties.

Many communities with extensive historic resources and a strong local commitment to those resources, prepare a Comprehensive Heritage Preservation Plan to amplify the contents of their Comprehensive Plan related to historic preservation. The City should consider this as the ultimate goal of the planning efforts previously described. This plan would be prepared in partnership with the local preservation organizations active in the City and would include public participation in its development.

GOAL: Consider the possibility of the ultimate development of a Comprehensive Heritage Preservation Plan, in concert with local history and preservation organizations, that supports economic vitality, enhances quality of life and fosters community pride and awareness.

NATURAL RESOURCES

An important aspect of the City's quality of life is its natural environment. Natural beauty contributes to the attractiveness of Lexington and the surrounding area. Local soils, vegetation and other natural features are essential components of our community. Although almost fully developed, the City retains a network of streams and woodlands. Most of the neighborhoods of the City are also blessed with large numbers of mature trees. Several creeks flow through the City and the Maury River comprises the northern City limits. Views of the surrounding mountains are visible from much of the City.

This chapter will describe and evaluate the various features making up the local natural environment, indicate the mechanisms by which the City is ensuring their protection and make recommendations for additional steps which might be taken to better protect its natural resources.

GOAL: Maintain the quality of life by preserving the natural environment and protecting against environmental hazards.

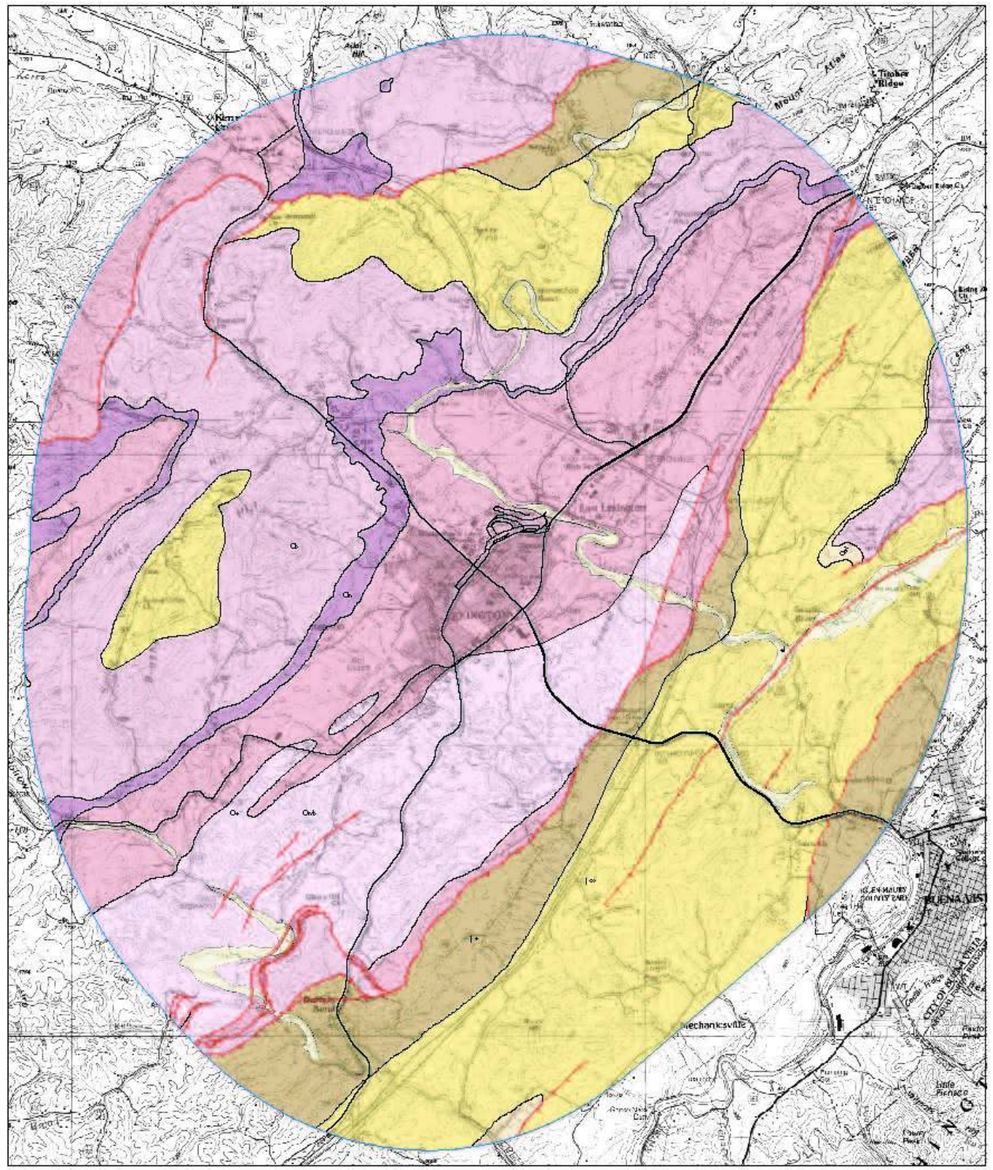
GOAL: Continue to work to be a good steward of our natural resources and a good neighbor to other communities whose environment, including their watersheds, air quality, and view sheds, may be impacted by our activities.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

The physiography of an area is a description of its geology and other related natural phenomena. Each physiographic province or natural physical subdivision is controlled essentially by its structural geology and has a unique land form which is different from other physiographic provinces. Geologists recognize five different physiographic provinces in Virginia.

Lexington lies in the Great Valley which is part of the Valley and Ridge Physiographic Province. This province is bounded on the west by the Appalachian Plateau, which includes the Appalachian Mountains, and on the east by the Blue Ridge Province. Here, sharp ridges of resistant sandstone alternate with broad valleys underlain by easily eroded limestone, dolomite and shale. Both ridges and valleys are the product of intense folding of ancient sea sediments which occurred during the formation of the Appalachians some 250 to 300 million years ago and the erosion which has occurred in the millenniums since. The forces that folded and buckled the ancient Appalachian ranges also graced the Great Valley with a diverse topography. Ridges of various heights and orientations dissect it, creating hundreds of valleys, each with its own waterway to drain it. The range of elevations and moisture conditions in the valley gives rise to a host of different vegetation types which, in turn, leads to a great variety of wildlife habitats. A map of the geology of the area is presented as Figure 3.1.

FIGURE 3.1
MAP OF AREA GEOLOGY



GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES IN A 5-MILE RADIUS OF LEXINGTON

al — **ALLUVIUM**
Unconsolidated clay, sand and gravel.

Omb — **MARTINSBURG FORMATION**
Upper: Sandstone, siltstone, and shale, light- to medium-gray; distinctive Orthorhynchata zone near top of unit. Sandstone, fine-grained, thin-bedded; Lower: limestone, argillaceous, light-gray, very thick- to thin-bedded. Up to 1 500 feet thick.

Oe — **EDINBURG FORMATION**
Collierstown limestone: limestone, coarse-grained, fossiliferous; Liberty Hall facies: limestone, black to dark-gray, aphanitic, interbedded with thin black shale; Lantz Mill facies: limestone, black, thick-bedded, medium- to coarse-grained, nodular weathering; Bolenburt Member: limestone, reddish-weathering, massive, fossiliferous. 500 to 1250 feet thick.

Oln — **LINCOLNSHIRE FORMATION AND NEW MARKET LIMESTONE**
Lincolnshire Formation: limestone, dark-gray, fine- to coarse-grained, with bedded black chert; Mirat facies: limestone, light-gray, coarse-grained, fossiliferous, very thick-bedded; New Market Limestone: limestone, aphanitic, light-gray, very thick- to medium-bedded. 100 to 435 feet thick.

Ob — **BEEKMANTOWN FORMATION**
Dolostone, light- to medium-gray, very thick- to medium-bedded, fine-grained, distinctive butcher-block jointing on weathered surfaces, black bedded chert, beds of white massive chert near top of unit, with some interbeds of limestone, light-to medium-gray. This unit has Knoxville facies west of the Staunton Fault. 1500 to 2000 feet thick.

Ost — **STONEHEDGE FORMATION**
Limestone, dark-gray to black, fine-grained, with black chert along bedding. 300 to 500 feet thick.

Ꞓco — **CONOCOCHEAGUE FORMATION**
Limestone, medium-gray, thin- to very thick-bedded, fine-grained, with lesser amounts of light-gray, fine- to medium-grained dolostone, and calcareously cemented, fine-to medium-grained sandstone. Silty laminae stand out in relief on weathered surfaces. 2000 to 2500 feet thick.

Ꞓe — **ELBROOK FORMATION**
Dolostone and limestone, thin-bedded, fine- to medium-grained with pink and green shale. 1325 to 2300 feet thick.

Ꞓwbs — **WAYNESBORO AND SHADY FORMATIONS UNDIVIDED**
WAYNESBORO FORMATION Shale, maroon, green, and gray, interbedded with limestone, fine-grained, medium-gray, minor black chert nodules, and dolostone, light- to dark-gray, fine- to coarse-grained, calcareous. Approximately 1 200 feet thick.
SHADY FORMATION Dolostone, dark-gray, very thick-bedded, impure, white-weathering with minor limestone beds. 1000 to 1 500 feet thick.

Contact, exact
Contact, approximate
Contact, covered
Fault, exact
Fault, approximate
Fault, covered
5miClip_VDOTPrimary

Data Sources

Geology: Unpublished Rockbridge County 1:50,000-scale Geologic Map. Geology by Edgar Spencer and Gerald P. Wilkes. Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, in progress.

1

Disclaimer
This dataset is provided as is. Variable conditions arising from physical sources used to develop the data may be reflected in the data. It is designed for use at the designated scale and should not be enlarged or used for making site-specific decisions. Users must be aware of possible errors in scale, resolution, rectification, positional accuracy, development methodology, and other circumstances specific to this dataset when using information contained herein. Distribution of this map is intended for information purposes and should not be considered authoritative for navigational, engineering, legal or other site-specific uses.

0 1 2 Miles

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy
Division of Mineral Resources
June 2007

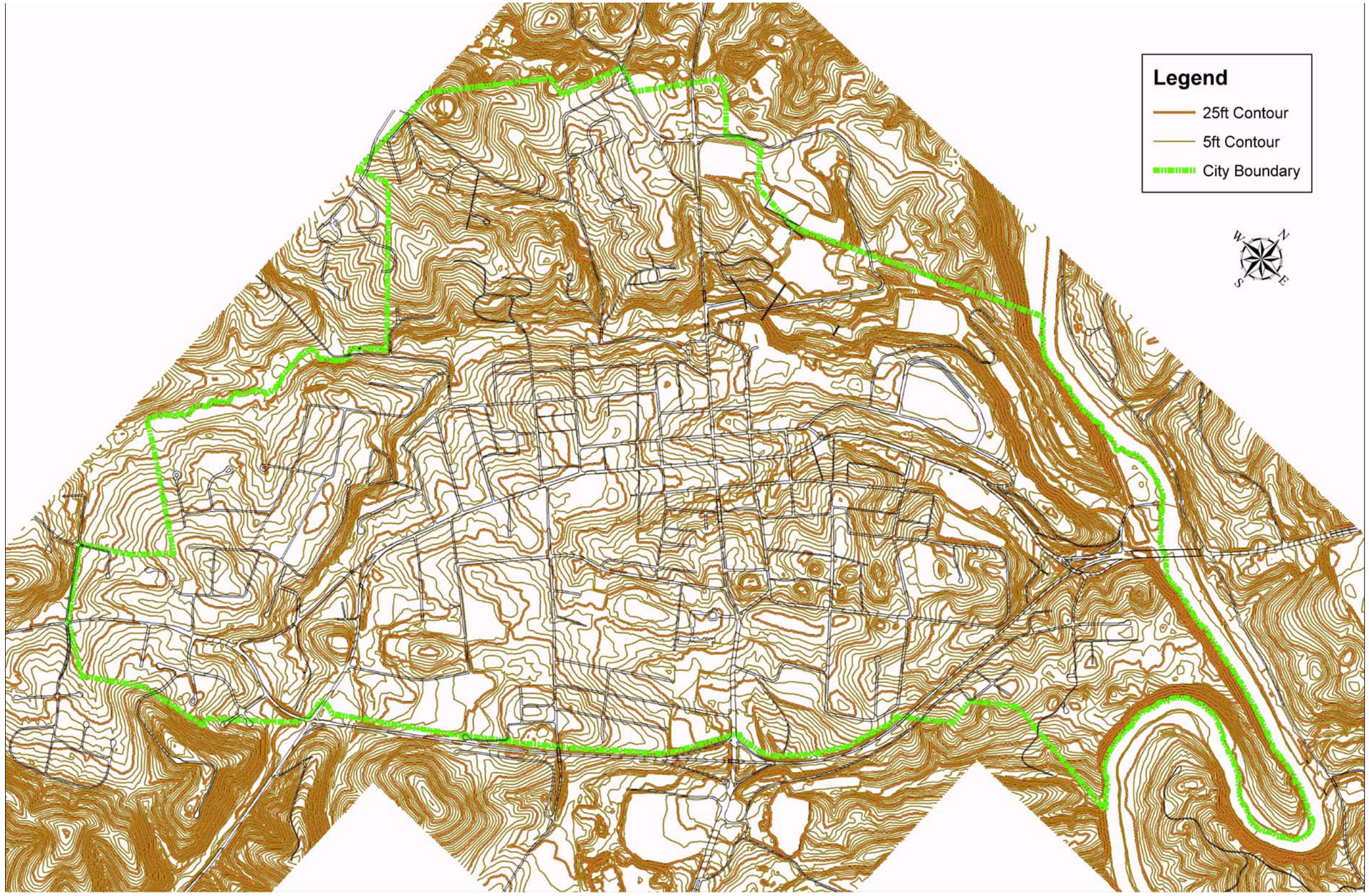
TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the area is characterized by rolling hills and valleys, with the Allegheny Mountains (House Mountain, Hogback, Short Hill, North Mountain, Jump Mountain, etc.) to the west. Elevations in the City range from 890 feet along the Maury River to 1,185 feet on the western edge. The majority of the terrain in the City is rolling with moderate slopes. There are a few areas within the City limits with slopes exceeding 25 percent. These steep slopes are especially susceptible to erosion which creates natural constraints on their development. The engineering and construction requirements for providing sound, safe structures on these slopes further inhibits their development.

A map showing the topography of the greater Lexington area is provided as Figure 3.2.

OBJECTIVE: The City should use its development tools, such as site plan and subdivision review, to carefully monitor development on steep slopes to minimize soil erosion and the loss of significant natural environmental features

FIGURE 3.2
Topography of the Greater Lexington Area



SOILS AND SOIL SUITABILITY

The identification and location of various soil types determines what limitations or special capabilities each soil type has, and what the effects of development on a particular soil type might be. Soil type influences such things as drainage, erodibility, fertility, building foundation strength, and the suitability of septic tank wastewater disposal systems. All of these are important when considering the nature and extent of development that should occur within an area.

Valley carbonate soils dominate in the Lexington area. These are calcareous soils derived from limestone and dolomite which make up the major portion of the Great Valley. The most common soils found in the area are of the Chilhowie-Frederick Series and the Frederick-Hagerstown Series. These soils range from moderately deep to deep and are generally well drained. Topsoils are commonly silt loams and silty clay loams, while subsoils are mostly clays and silty clay loams. These soils are rated as moderate regarding significant building restrictions based on features such as low strength, high shrink-swell potential for heavy clay soils, severe slope and shallow depth to rock. The City Building Code requires that soil tests be conducted and footers be designed by a licensed professional if there is any concern about the bearing capacity of the soils at a building site.

The potential for soil erosion exists whenever land is disturbed for development, usually by grading. Exposure of bare soils to hard rains dramatically increases the amount of erosion and sedimentation which may occur. Lexington, with its characteristic sloping terrain, is faced with potential soil erosion problems whenever development occurs. The principal mechanism for addressing this concern is the City's Erosion and Sediment Control regulations, which require that a plan be prepared for all construction specifying how erosion will be minimized and how sediment will be controlled on the site. A performance bond must be posted for all construction, except single-family homes, to ensure that the measures indicated on the plan are properly installed and maintained. The City's Subdivision Regulations and site plan review process are secondary mechanisms to address this problem.

Figure 3.3 is a map showing the soil types in the greater Lexington area.

GOAL: Collaborate with Rockbridge County to assure that local erosion and sediment ordinances are uniform, regularly upgraded to reflect the latest standards and ~~aggressively~~ enforced within the Woods Creek watershed and other local watersheds.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue to utilize and aggressively enforce regulations designed to minimize soil erosion and control storm water runoff.

FIGURE 3.3
Map of Local Soils

Legend

4 **Alonemill Fine Sandy Loam**
Slopes: 0% to 3%, occasionally flooded

9 **Pits, Quarries**

20C **Chilhowie - Rock Outcrop Complex**
Slopes: 2% to 15%

20E **Chilhowie - Rock Outcrop Complex**
Slopes: 15% to 60%

21B **Frederick Silt Loam**
Slopes: 2% to 7%

21C **Frederick Silt Loam**
Slopes: 7% to 15%

21D **Frederick Silt Loam**
Slopes: 15% to 25%

23C **Hagerstown Silt Loam**
Slopes: 2% to 15%,
very rocky

24C **Hagerstown - Rock Outcrop Complex**
Slopes: 2% to 15%,
very rocky

51A **Alonemill - Clubcaf Complex**
Slopes: 0% to 3%,
frequently flooded

61C **Chilhowie Silty Clay Loam**
Slopes: 7% to 15%

61D **Chilhowie Silty Clay Loam**
Slopes: 15% to 25%

Note: Only those soils and slopes within and immediate to the City of Lexington are included on this Legend

SOURCE: United States Department of Agriculture, NRCS

MINERAL RESOURCES

Mineral resources are limited in the Lexington area. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a number of minerals were mined in the area. These included iron ore, manganese ore, tin ore, and sandstone. The only significant mining done today is that of limestone and shale quarrying.

WATER RESOURCES

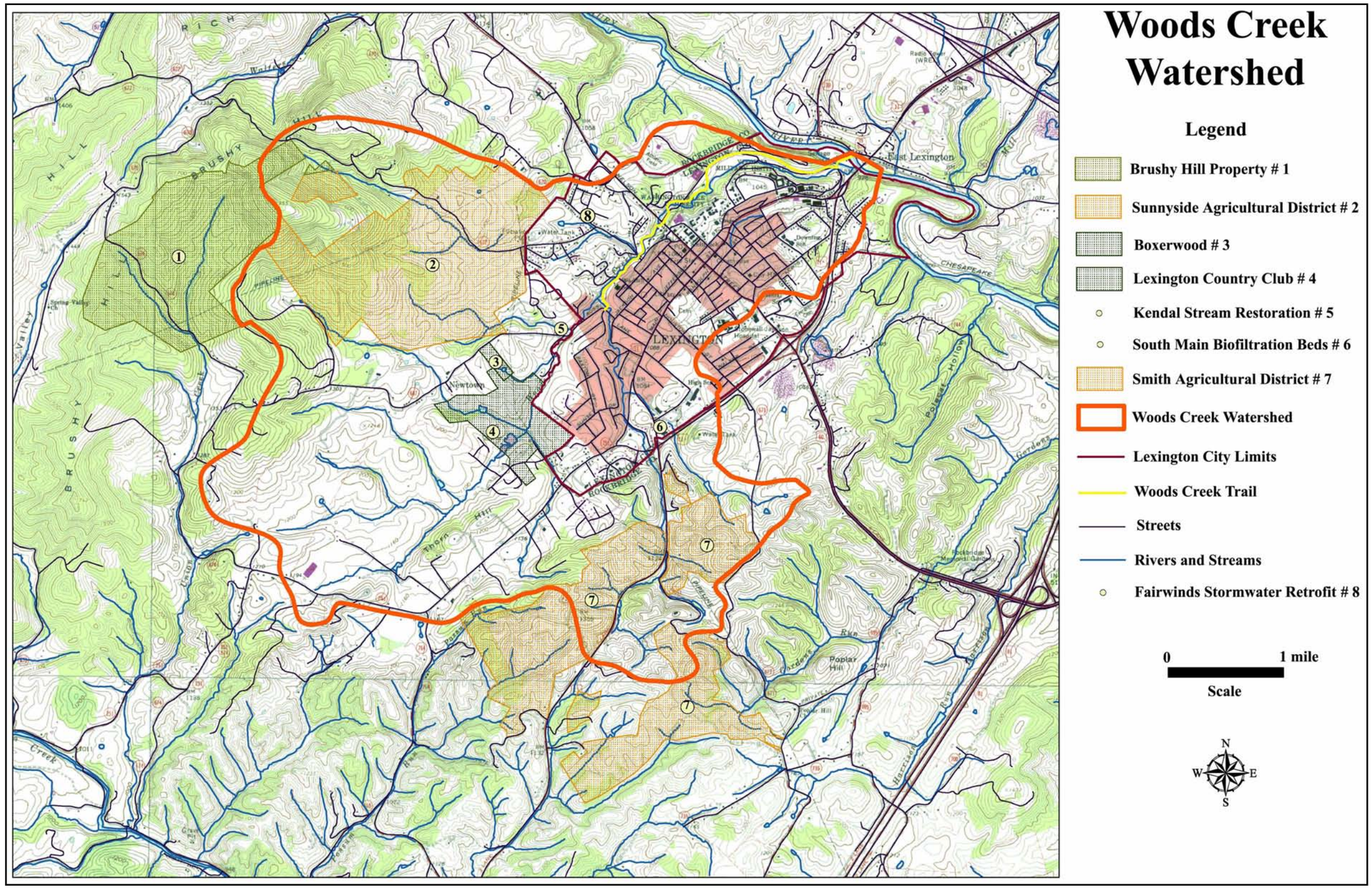
Most of the City is drained by Woods Creek and its tributaries including Sarah's Run, Spring Branch, and Town Branch. Woods Creek joins the Maury River at Jordan's Point.

The McCorkle Watershed receives surface water from a small area in the southeast corner of the City, including the East Nelson Street commercial corridor, Central Elementary School, and Evergreen Cemetery. This water flows out of the City to the southeast into an unnamed creek which parallels McCorkle Drive as it flows to the Maury River.

Because all the surface water in the City eventually flows into the Maury River, Lexington is part of the Maury River drainage area or watershed which drains 103,450 acres. Because the Maury feeds into the James River which, in turn, feeds into the Chesapeake Bay, all of the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County are within the James River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

The Woods Creek Watershed drains a 5.2 square mile area that includes parts of Rockbridge County and much of the City of Lexington. Its headwaters span from the Brushy Hills to the hills comprising Jacob's Ladder to the east of Route 11 South. Creeks and other water resources within the Woods Creek Watershed include Sarah's Run, Spring Branch, Town Branch and several small, unnamed spring branches and intermittent streams. Land use in the upper reaches is primarily woodland and agricultural fields. The Lexington Country Club golf course and its surrounding suburban residential development are in this watershed.

FIGURE 3.4
Woods Creek Watershed



Water Quality

Water quality and stream health in Woods Creek have declined significantly in recent decades. These water quality problems are closely associated with the uses being made of the land in the watershed.

The agricultural areas in the upper reaches of the watershed are mostly used for hay and for grazing cattle. When livestock are permitted to graze right to the stream banks, they destroy the buffer of native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants which protect the streambank and filter out pollutants from surface runoff entering the stream. When they enter the stream to drink, their waste contributes fecal coliform bacteria and unwanted nutrients to the water. Livestock and farm equipment also compact the soils reducing their permeability. Fertilizers and herbicides used on agricultural fields can also be washed into nearby streams. The Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service both, work with farmers to implement programs to address these problems.

In the more urban parts of the watershed, especially where Woods Creek and Sarah's Run flow through Lexington, other problems arise. As forests and farmlands have been converted to residential and commercial use, there are significant increases in the volume, rate and frequency of stormwater runoff. Much of the ground in these areas is covered by impermeable surfaces like roads, rooftops, and parking lots. Runoff is increasingly converted from sheet flow across the ground into ditches and pipes which focuses the runoff into limited areas. In areas where the native streambank vegetation has been removed, this leads to increased downstream flooding and erosion along the banks of creeks which are carrying higher water volumes.

This runoff contains pollutants such as petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, and chlorides from the streets, pesticides, herbicides, nitrogen, and phosphorous from residential back yards, and sediment from construction sites. All of these pollutants have adverse effects on the health of Woods Creek. Nitrogen and phosphorous from fertilizers feed algal blooms, depriving fish and other aquatic organisms of dissolved oxygen. Sediment can clog streams, stagnating flow and reducing water quality. Hydrocarbons from gasoline and oil, chlorides from road salt, herbicides, pesticides, and heavy metals such as lead are poisonous to aquatic life, and do not simply "go away" when water flows out of Woods Creek, but persist and can cause problems for years. The temperature of runoff from impermeable surfaces and an absence of trees and shrubs shading the creek leads to an increase in the temperature of the water which also contributes to a decline in stream health.

Since 2003, local citizen volunteers involved with the Virginia Save our Streams program have been conducting periodic water quality testing at two sites in Woods Creek located within the City to evaluate its ecological health. Their testing protocol involves sampling benthic macroinvertebrates, organisms which live in and on the streambed. By determining the types and numbers of these macroinvertebrates, it is possible to indirectly estimate stream health since different species will predominate depending on water quality. Recent results of this testing are reported in Table 3.1 and represented graphically in Chart 3.1.

TABLE 3.1
Maury Watershed Monitors
Water Monitoring Scores as of 1/07*

Woods Creek Water Monitoring Scores													
Site 11: above the confluence of Sarah's run													
Test Date	1/5/02	9/9/03	3/18/04	6/13/04	1/2/05	4/9/05	7/23/05	9/18/05	12/31/05	3/11/06	4/1/06	7/25/06	10/14/06
Score	11	9	6	11	9	11	12	11	11	6	8	9	10
Site 12: adjacent to the Route 60 bridge													
Test Date	9/9/03	12/29/03	3/24/04	6/28/04	10/1/04	12/18/04	3/26/05	9/24/05	12/30/05	6/6/06	7/2/06	9/30/06	1/14/07
Score	6	10	10	10	9	4	11	6	6	7	8		4

Ecological Score:
Acceptable: 9-12
Marginal: 8
Unacceptable: 0-7

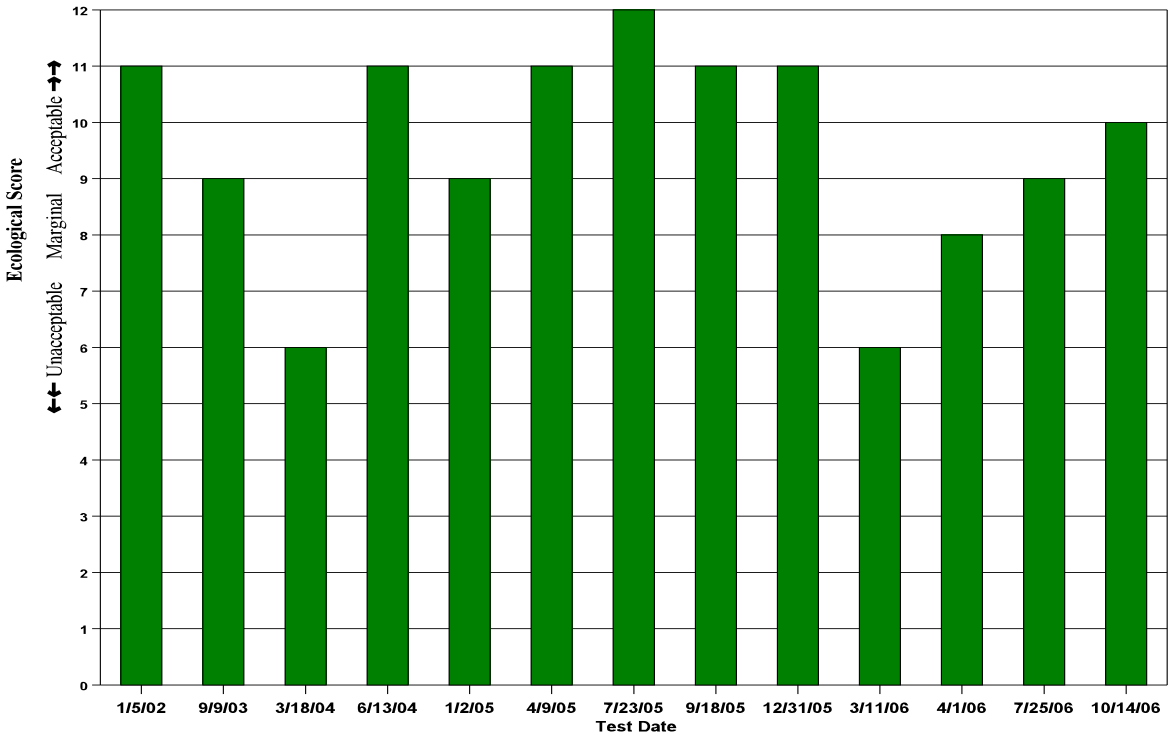
Fish Kills in Woods Creek**:
June, 1998
April, 2003
July, 2006

Proposed Site 13 (Department of Environmental Quality): **Test Date - 4/30/05** **Ecological Score - 6**
under bridge at Jordan's Point Park, before Woods Creek enters the Maury River

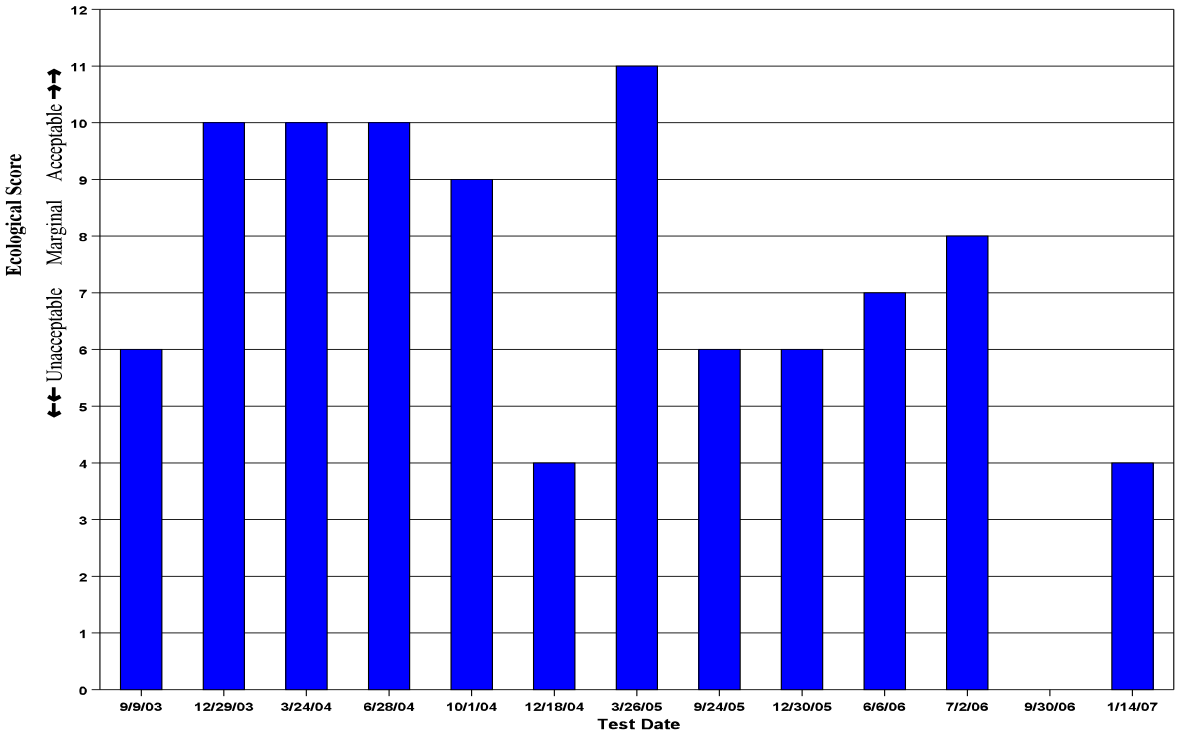
*Source: VASOS webpage: www.vasos.org
**Reported to DEQ

CHART 3.1
Water Monitoring Scores

Woods Creek Site 11: above confluence with Sarah's Run



Woods Creek Site 12: adjacent to Route 60 bridge



The Woods Creek 11 site is located on Woods Creek immediately above its' confluence with Sarah's Run; Woods Creek 12 is located adjacent to the Route 60 bridge just above the Washington and Lee campus. An "acceptable ecological" score is between 9 and 12, an 8 is described as a "gray zone", and a score of 0 to 7 is an "unacceptable ecological score". As the data demonstrates, the biological health of these portions of Woods Creek clearly continues to decline. Scores have been in the "unacceptable" range for the last two years, with the most recent test reporting a 4, well into the unacceptable range.

A succinct summary of the problem was provided by a biologist with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality who was asked to comment on the recent macroinvertebrate sampling result:

> An urban stream will remain impaired as long as high volumes of stormwater are delivered by pipes directly to the stream from impervious surfaces. Our cities were designed (and continue to be designed) to move water safely away from people, not to deliver it in an environmentally sound way to our streams. Without a chance to enter the ground, water will reach the stream with excess velocity and without any natural filtration through the soil. This is a double-whammy on the streams biota, and only the most tolerant will survive in that environment. In my opinion, without tackling this problem, you will not see long-term improvement in Woods Creek's benthic community.

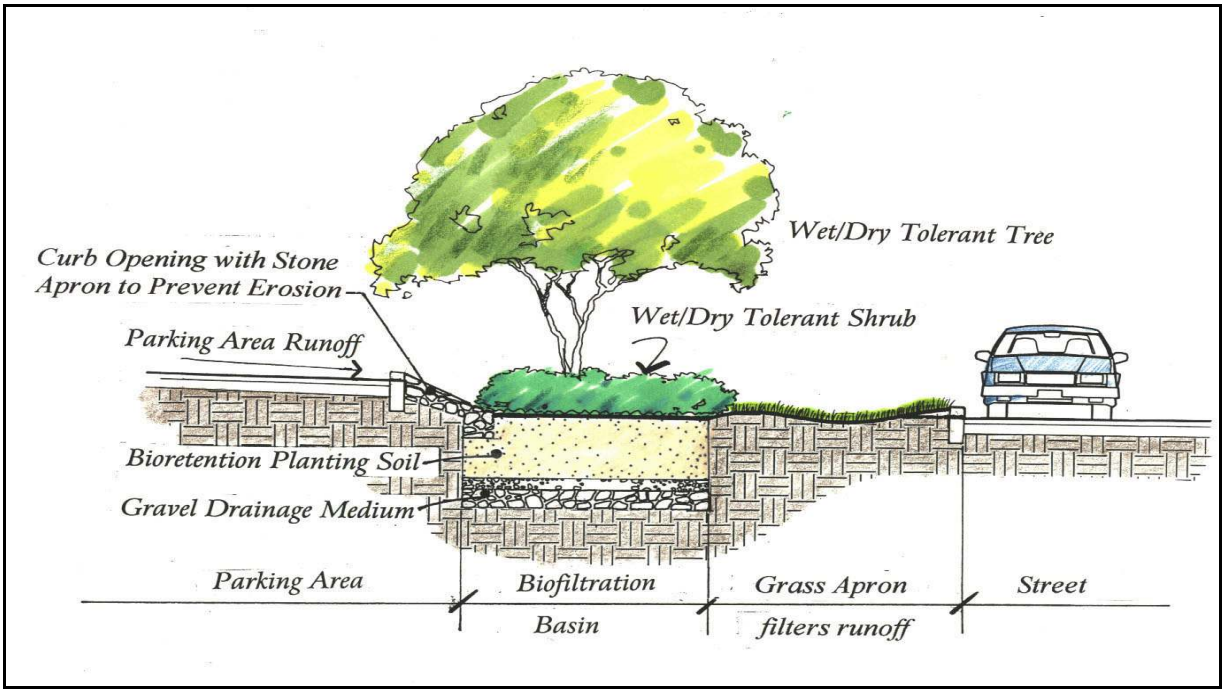
Recognizing that the long term health of Woods Creek, a critical local natural resource, was seriously threatened, the City of Lexington, in cooperation with Rockbridge County, developed a strategy to preserve and enhance the health of Woods Creek and its watershed, which it has been working to implement since 2001.

The first component of this strategy is to reestablish the "riparian buffer", a permanent area of trees, shrubs and other vegetation, along the banks of Woods Creek and its tributaries, to reduce the impact of upland sources of pollution by trapping, filtering, and converting sediments, nutrients and other chemicals contained in water runoff. Adequate buffers are estimated to be nearly 70 to almost 100 percent effective at filtering nutrients and sediment from runoff. Riparian buffers also moderate runoff and protect the stream bank. In the parts of the watershed where agriculture is the main land use, these buffers should be supplemented by measures to protect the streams from livestock by fencing and providing alternative water sources. Buffers have been reestablished along most of the publicly owned portions of Woods Creek, most planted by community volunteers. Because not everyone is comfortable walking in such natural areas manicured access pathways through the buffer must also be established and maintained.

OBJECTIVE: The City should create and maintain a number of groomed access points through the riparian buffer to Woods Creek between Ross Road and Lime Kiln Road to provide enhanced access to the creek.

In the urbanized portion of the watershed the use of "bioretention and biofiltration" facilities or "rain gardens" is being encouraged. These are man-made depressions in the ground used for landscaping as well as to improve water quality and are suitable for residential, commercial and industrial land uses. They collect water runoff from surrounding impervious surfaces, such as roofs and paved areas, and store it, permitting it to be filtered and slowly absorbed by the soil. Their purpose is to reduce the volume and increase the quality of water entering conventional storm drains and nearby streams. The City of Lexington has taken the lead in promoting and constructing rain gardens. Five have been constructed along South Main Street as part of the City's urban beautification project. Others have been constructed at Kendal and at the entrance to Fairwinds, where a stormwater management pond was modified to incorporate biofiltration and bioretention. Washington and Lee University has also installed several on their campus. The parking lots being constructed by Virginia Military Institute also incorporate bioretention and biofiltration.

FIGURE 3.5
Rain Garden



The City and Boxerwood Educational Association have prepared a "how-to" manual for homeowners to enable them to incorporate small rain gardens into their landscape. Collectively, numerous individual rain gardens would provide substantial neighborhood and community-wide environmental benefits.

The City is also working to make homeowners aware of practices which contribute to polluted runoff including the improper use and disposal of house and yard chemicals and excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides.

The City and the Boxerwood Educational Association annually sponsor **Woods Creek Restoration Day** in late April. The focus of this day is to train and assist community volunteers in the planting and care of a renewed riparian buffer along the banks of Woods Creek. Education concerning problems and opportunities in the watershed is a second focus. Over 150 people have participated in this event each year.

The City is revising its development regulations to require biofiltration and bioretention as part of the stormwater management strategy for future construction projects.

The City has also prepared a brochure containing a map of the watershed, describing its problems as well as the strategies and projects undertaken by the City and its partners to address these problems.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue its efforts to address the declining water quality in Woods Creek and its watershed including restoration of the riparian buffer along streams, installation of bioretention and biofiltration facilities for new and existing development, and community education and involvement.

OBJECTIVE: Support efforts to improve the Woods Creek water quality monitoring system to document changes in water quality and flow to better assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures, provide adequate warning of any increases in impairment and provide an accurate basis for identifying specific sources of excessive runoff and pollutants.

Storm Water Runoff and Storm Water Management

As has been previously described, increased urbanization leads to a significant increase in the amount of impervious surfaces, which leads directly to increases in the volume, velocity and rate of surface water runoff during and after significant rainfalls. These changes lead to increased stream bank erosion in downstream channels, as well as a significant increase in pollutants contained in that runoff. The increased volume of runoff, as well as the increased rate of that runoff, leads to increased streambank erosion and high peak flows and decreased groundwater recharge.

State and City regulations require that the problems associated with stormwater runoff be addressed when development occurs. Developers of property are required to control rainfall runoff in order to protect downstream property, ensure that downstream storm drains and channels can adequately handle the volume of runoff, and preserve natural creek channels.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has established minimum standards for stormwater management. State law permits localities to adopt more stringent standards. The State regulations address only the quantity and rate of stormwater which may be discharged from a site. Again, the regulations also allow localities to adopt regulations which require that water quality also be addressed.

The stormwater management regulations for the City should be updated to require that water quality measures be incorporated for stormwater management plans for all new development. Because much of the development within the watershed is taking place in the headwaters in Rockbridge County, the County should also be encouraged to adopt these regulations.

OBJECTIVE: Update the City's stormwater management regulations to require that water quality measures be addressed for all significant new development and encourage Rockbridge County to adopt these regulations for the entire Woods Creek Watershed.

OBJECTIVE: Consider the creation and implementation of a City best practices integrated pest management program to minimize use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, cleaning products, road salt and other pollutants.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to collaborate with Rockbridge County to implement water quality improvement goals throughout the Woods Creek Watershed.

OBJECTIVE: Work with Rockbridge County to designate the Woods Creek Watershed as one of special concern, subject to specific ordinances tailored to address water quality improvement concerns.

Inflow and Infiltration

Inflow and infiltration are terms used to describe the ways that surface water makes its way into sanitary sewer pipes.

Inflow is stormwater that enters sanitary sewer pipes through direct connections. These are primarily sump pumps, downspouts from roof gutters and foundation drains. This water should be allowed to soak into the ground (possibly by using a rain garden) rather than being directed into the sewer system. These improper connections can contribute significant amounts of water to sewer systems. (An 8 inch sewer line can carry the waste from up to 200 homes, but the downspouts from 6 homes can overload the capacity of that same pipe).

Infiltration is groundwater that enters sanitary sewer systems through leaks or cracks in the sewer pipes or manholes. These problems may be caused by deterioration, loose joints, root infiltration or other damage. Because sewer pipes are routed along creeks, they are especially susceptible to infiltration when flooding covers pipes and manholes with water.

Wet weather increases inflow and infiltration and can fill sewer pipes to capacity. If sewer lines become overloaded, manholes can pop open releasing wastewater onto the ground and into streams. These overflows release potential pathogens, such as fecal coliform, into streams.

The City's sewer system experiences major inflow and infiltration problems during hard rains, especially when the rain is accompanied by flooding. There are major sewer lines along both

Woods Creek and Sarah's Run. Manholes along both of these creeks have overflowed with wastewater during periods of high water. These releases may further impair streams, as well as impact the health of residents and wildlife.

The City has a major ongoing program to seek out and correct inflow and infiltration problems. Significant resources are invested each year to correct any problems which are discovered. Much of the system is over 25 years old and continued deterioration of the pipes in the system will occur. As a result, the City expects that continued detection and correction of inflow and infiltration into the system will be required.

OBJECTIVE: The City should aggressively continue its program to identify and correct sources of inflow, leaks and infiltration into its sanitary sewer system.

OBJECTIVE: The City of Lexington should support efforts to prevent pollutants from being disposed of into storm drains which empty into local creeks and then into the Maury River.

FLOODWAYS

The Maury River and its tributary streams in the Lexington area are subject to flooding during times of heavy rains or quick thaws. Figure 3.6 delineates the estimated, historical 100 year floodplain within the area. This estimate is based on limited data under historical conditions and does not indicate what the 100 year flood plain will be under changing conditions such as increased development within the watershed or climate change.

The City's Zoning Ordinance regulates development within the floodplain. These regulations prohibit most development and activities from locating in areas subject to flooding and requires that those uses, activities and developments which may locate in flood prone areas be protected against flooding and flood damage.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue to aggressively enforce local regulations designed to regulate development within the floodplain

OBJECTIVE: Consider updating current stormwater management regulations, in concert with Rockbridge County, to limit the expansion of the 100-year flood plain resulting from continuing development and increasing storm water runoff.

FIGURE 3.6
The 100 Year Floodplain
City of Lexington

SINKHOLES

Lexington is part of a large karst region characterized by caves, sinkholes, sinking creeks, and large springs. Over millions of years, water working down through the underlaying limestone and dolomite dissolves the rock and creates passageways and caves. When a cavern becomes large enough, its roof cannot provide enough support and a cave-in results, creating the steep walled, closed depressions on the ground surface known as sinkholes. When a sinkhole is formed, surface runoff is channeled into it and joins the groundwater. There are several known sinkholes in the City.

There are three potential problems associated with development in karst regions: subsidence, sinkhole flooding, and water pollution. First, these regions present the potential hazard of surface subsidence or collapse. To reduce the risk of collapse or subsidence, development on existing sinkholes should be avoided and test borings should be made before any development is undertaken in areas where sinkholes are thought to exist.

Sinkhole flooding has two possible causes: the plugging of natural sinkhole drains by sediment and the overwhelming of natural sinkhole drains by increases in runoff caused by artificial surfaces. The plugging of the drains is often the result of insufficient erosion control during construction. The increased runoff which causes flooding is generally due to the presence of roads, parking lots, and structures. Much of the precipitation which would have percolated through a vegetated soil cover is introduced rapidly into surface and subsurface drainage networks (through sinkholes) and exceeds the capacity of the natural drain, thereby resulting in overflows. There are no known instances of sinkhole flooding in the City.

Another possible problem associated with development in karst regions is the potential for pollution of groundwater because rain which falls into areas drained by sinkholes is channeled directly into the subterranean aquifer.

CLIMATE

Lexington enjoys a moderate climate with cold, but not extreme, winters and generally warm summers. Daytime temperatures during the summer average in the 70s , with nighttime lows averaging in the 50° F range. The annual mean temperature averages about 56° F. Extremes of 102° F and -8° F have been recorded.

The growing season, defined as the period between the average date of the last freezing temperature in spring (April 26), and the average date of the first freezing temperature in the fall (October 11), is 168 days. However, freezing temperatures have occurred as late as May 28 and as early as September 21.

The annual precipitation averages 38 inches. Monthly mean rainfall is generally two to three inches during the winter months and three to four inches during the summer months. The average snow accumulation is approximately 22 inches per year. Prevailing winds in the area are primarily from the southwest but, during the cold months, winds frequently come from the northwest.

AIR QUALITY

The quality of the air is a significant factor in determining the quality of life of an area. People who have the choice generally prefer not to live in areas in which there are significant pollutants in the air. Because quality of life is important both to citizens presently living here and as a fundamental component of the City's economic development strategy, the City should actively involve itself in decisions and measures affecting local air quality.

In the Great Valley of Virginia, which includes Rockbridge County and Lexington, two factors - weak winds and thermal inversions - sometimes combine and create stagnant air conditions. These stagnant air periods generally last four or five days before being cleared out by a storm system. Although this has proven to be a problem in other areas in the United States, there is currently no significant problem with air pollution locally during these stagnant air periods, as defined by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

The National Clean Air Act of 1970 and its subsequent amendments required the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish ambient ceilings for six significant air pollutants. At high levels, these pollutants can injure humans by causing respiratory and cardiovascular problems, harm the environment by impairing visibility, and by causing damage to animals, vegetation and buildings. The EPA has established regulations setting permissible levels of these pollutants in the air.

These national standards have been adopted by the Virginia State Air Pollution Control Board as air quality standards for the State. Virginia has also been required to identify areas of the State which meet and do not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. While there

are areas in the region that have designated as non-attainment areas according the the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Lexington and Rockbridge County are not among them.

The Environmental Protection Agency has promulgated standards which limit the increases above established baseline levels for certain pollutants. These allowable increases are called Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) increments. The regulations require that the total increases in ambient concentrations from all PSD permitted sources must not exceed these PSD increments. Depending on the anticipated level of emissions, any proposed activity which has the potential to increase any of the air pollutants regulated under the Clean Air Act may be asked by the Department of Environmental Quality to prove by statistical and computer modeling techniques that it will not cause the area in which it proposes to locate to exceed any of the established standards. This analysis must address the existing ambient air quality, potential impacts from the proposed source and potential cumulative impacts from other sources of air pollution near the site.

As a result, Rockbridge County and the City must be concerned about the development of new industries locating anywhere in the Shenandoah or New River Valleys if they release significant amounts of air pollutants and, as a result, utilize a significant portion of the remaining PSD increments. This concern is necessary because the development of air polluting industries elsewhere could preclude the development of industries in the local area which would only make a minor contribution to air pollution if there are no remaining PSD increments. Because of the regional nature of air quality, the City by itself, can do little to change these patterns; however, the City can actively participate in processes and programs aimed at limiting and controlling air polluting activities.

The City of Lexington is in an area identified as having a high probability of the presence of radon. Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, chemically inert, radioactive gas. Naturally occurring, low levels of uranium occur widely in the earth's crust. The Surgeon General of the United States has issued a health advisory about the health risk from exposure to radon from indoor air, since more than 20,000 Americans die from radon-related cancer each year. The International Building Code, which the State of Virginia has adopted as its building code, specifies control measures for new construction to reduce radon entry and means which can be undertaken in existing buildings to reduce the presence and entry of radon. There are test kits available to test homes to find out if radon is present.

OBJECTIVE: Protect local air quality by participating in Federal, State and regional initiatives to control air pollutants and improve air quality

One of the principal sources of pollutants in the City is automobiles. Efforts to promote more efficient traffic movement will help restrict air pollution.

OBJECTIVE: Implement transportation strategies which help enhance local air quality.

THE URBAN FOREST AND CITY GREENSPACES

The extent, character and health of a city's trees, shrubs and open spaces are keys to the environmental health of a community. The urban forest includes trees and associated plants. Lexington also has areas of unforested green spaces notably in parks and recreation areas. Together these two areas comprise a green infrastructure, a network that sustains clean air and water, cools summer "heat islands", and enriches the quality of life for residents. Greener communities are measurably better in the quality of their air, water, energy and public health.

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, recommends that communities do the following to establish and maintain a healthy urban forest: create a data layer devoted to trees in the city's geographic information system and create a formal process for tracking tree cover; adopt public policies, regulations, and incentives to increase and protect the urban forest; and establish a tree canopy goal to be considered as part of every development project.

American Forests, a national organization that works to protect, restore and enhance the natural capital of trees and forests, recommends the following generic tree canopy guidelines for specific zoning categories:

- Suburban residential zones 50 percent
- Urban residential zones 25 percent
- Business districts 15 percent

The current tree inventory only measures trees on public property, a small percentage of the city's total urban tree cover. The City is currently applying for a grant to assess canopy coverage through the City Arborist's Office. A product of that grant will be a map describing not only the urban tree canopy, but also the extent of the city's green infrastructure.

The City has taken a number of steps to protect and expand its urban forest. The Lexington Tree Committee was created in 1996 as a committee of the Historic Lexington Foundation to promote the planting of trees in the City with their focus on the downtown and the commercial entrance corridors. The committee actively looked for possible sites for trees and raised funds for their planting. Over 300 trees were planted as a result of their efforts. They also championed the creation of the City's first Tree Ordinance which was adopted in 2000 and revised in 2005.

Among the purposes of the Tree Ordinances are the following:

- Establish and maintain the maximum sustainable amount of tree cover on public and private lands in the City;
- Maintain City trees in a healthy and non-hazardous condition through good arboricultural practices;
- Promote conservation of tree resources;

- Foster community awareness and support for a local urban forestry program and foster good tree management on privately owned properties.

The Tree Ordinance also mandated the creation of a City Tree Board and the hiring of a City Arborist.

The responsibilities of the City Arborist include:

- Developing a comprehensive Tree Management Plan which governs tree planting, maintenance and removal of trees planted along City streets and in public areas, and making provisions for educating the public about trees.
- Directing municipal tree-care operations
- Conducting community outreach and education programs
- Providing advice to City residents concerning the care and maintenance of privately owned trees.

In addition to the Arborist, the City of Lexington employs a part-time, seasonal gardener, who is an employee of the Department of Public Works. This employee is responsible for the upkeep of plant beds throughout the city, including the rain gardens.

The Tree Board has the following responsibilities:

- Reviewing and approving requests for planting or removing trees within the Central Business District;
- Conducting community outreach and education programs
- Assisting with the development, revision and evaluation of the Comprehensive Tree Management Plan;

A tree inventory of close to 900 public trees was completed in 2002 and will be updated in 2007. These trees have been added as a separate layer on the City's computerized mapping system. A comprehensive Tree Management Plan was created in 2003 and will be updated in 2008. This plan governs tree planting, maintenance, and removal of trees planted along City streets and in public areas, and makes provisions for educating the public about trees.

The City's site plan review regulations, which require that a site plan be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission for all new construction and additions to existing structures for all buildings except one- and two-family residences, include a requirement for a landscape plan. The Entrance Corridor Overlay Districts, which incorporate the East Nelson Street and South Main Street commercial corridors, also require that a landscape plan be approved. The City's Subdivision Regulations require that street trees be included in all residential subdivisions. The City Tree Ordinance protects trees planted in subdivisions or as part of a site plan. All of these tools provide the City with the ability to require that trees be planted as part of private development projects.

Since 2000, Lexington has been recognized annually as a Tree City, USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

OBJECTIVE: Protect existing tree stands and encourage additional planting of trees, not only along streets but throughout the community.

Trees improve air quality by cleansing the air of pollutant gases and particles and by storing carbon; therefore, implementing this objective will also serve to enhance local air quality.

PRESERVATION OF IMPORTANT NATURAL FEATURES

The natural features which have been identified and described in this Chapter play a major role in determining the quality of life for local residents. It is important that the City take action when necessary to ensure that significant natural features be preserved and protected.

The City's site plan review requirements, planned unit development provisions and conditional use process provide the tools to review development plans and ensure that important natural resources are identified and preserved. The floodplain regulations are another tool. Conditional rezoning can also be utilized to protect key features. Planned unit development can be used to encourage buildings, roads and utilities to be laid out in ways which preserve significant natural features.

OBJECTIVE: Utilize the City's development regulations to require that new development identifies, preserves and protects important natural features.

Stream valleys are usually unsuited for development because of their flooding potential. These areas are attractive natural areas well suited for active and passive recreational activities. Woods Creek Park and the trails through the W&L campus and VMI Post, with the connection to the Chessie trail, are excellent examples of this strategy. The City should strive for a continuous and interconnected system of public open space within the City with connections to other existing systems. An interconnected system of open space is more usable than distinct, unconnected pockets of open space.

The City of Lexington has taken a leadership role in promoting public awareness of environmental health and sustainability issues through the sponsorship of workshops and environmental education programs for all ages, such as established by partnering with Boxerwood, by developing and distributing leaflets, pamphlets and a rain garden manual, and the installation of educational signage at water quality improvement sites.

OBJECTIVE: Protect and enhance the City's open space system.

OBJECTIVE: Consider more extensive use of conservation tools such as riparian easements and conservation easements to permanently protect important local natural features

FUTURE PLANNING FOR A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Natural resource planning has traditionally focused on protecting important individual natural features. A new approach, called "green infrastructure" planning has been evolving in recent years. Green infrastructure is defined as a network of open spaces, woodlands, stream corridors, wildlife habitat, parks and other natural areas that sustain clean air, water quality and natural resources which enrich the quality of life for communities and their residents. The concept of green infrastructure also repositions open space protection from a community amenity to a community necessity since it emphasizes the idea that the elements of a green infrastructure network need to be protected over the long term to sustain local environmental health and quality of life.

An important concept in green infrastructure is the importance of linking these green spaces to preserve and connect natural areas to benefit biodiversity, counter habitat fragmentation and connect parks and other green spaces for the benefit of people. Green infrastructure planning also encourages more walkable communities by seeking ways to connect its components.

Green infrastructure planning differs from conventional approaches to open space planning because it looks at conservation values and actions in concert with land development, growth management and planning for the built infrastructure. As a result, it offers an innovative tool to land conservation challenges since it seeks to plan land development and land conservation together in a way that is consistent with natural environmental patterns. Green infrastructure planning provides a framework for development as well as helping to restore and protect naturally functioning ecosystems.

Green infrastructure planning should be integrated into this chapter when it is updated. Developing a participatory community process to identify our green infrastructure and create such a plan is possible and has merit since it will allow those living and working here to identify the components which are important to them. The Rockbridge Area Conservation Council (RACC) has pledged its participation in the planning process leading up to the adoption of a green infrastructure plan. RACC, Boxerwood and other local organizations could partner with the City to create a process designed to bring together organizations, individuals, and agencies to identify the components of our local green infrastructure

GOAL: Encourage local environmental and community groups to work together, with the assistance of City staff, to engage the community in a planning process to create a green infrastructure plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives are contained in the Natural Features chapter:

GOAL: Maintain the quality of life by preserving the natural environment and protecting against environmental hazards

GOAL: Continue to work to be a good steward of our natural resources and a good neighbor to other communities whose environment, including their watersheds, air quality, and view sheds may be impacted by our activities.

OBJECTIVE: The City should use its development tools, such as site plan and subdivision review, to carefully monitor development on steep slopes to minimize soil erosion and the loss of significant natural environmental features

GOAL: Collaborate with Rockbridge County to assure that local erosion and sediment ordinances are uniform, regularly upgraded to reflect the latest standards and enforced within the Woods Creek watershed and other local watersheds.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue to utilize and aggressively enforce regulations designed to minimize soil erosion and control storm water runoff

GOAL: The City should create and maintain a number of groomed access points through the riparian buffer to Woods Creek between Ross Road and Lime Kiln Road to provide enhanced access to the creek.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue its efforts to address the declining water quality in Woods Creek and its watershed including restoration of the riparian buffer along streams, installation of bioretention and biofiltration facilities for new and existing development, and community education and involvement.

OBJECTIVE: Support efforts to improve the Woods Creek water quality monitoring system to document changes in water quality and flow to better assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures, provide adequate warning of any increases in impairment and provide an accurate basis for identifying specific sources of excessive runoff and pollutants.

OBJECTIVE: Update the City's stormwater management regulations to require that water quality measures be addressed for all significant new development and encourage Rockbridge County to adopt these regulations for the entire Woods Creek watershed.

OBJECTIVE: Consider the creation and implementation of a City best practices integrated pest management program to minimize use of toxic chemicals including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, cleaning products, road salt and other pollutants.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to collaborate with Rockbridge County to implement water quality improvement goals throughout the Woods Creek Watershed.

OBJECTIVE: Work with Rockbridge County to designate the Woods Creek Watershed as one of special concern, subject to specific ordinances tailored to address water quality improvement concerns.

OBJECTIVE: The City should aggressively continue its program to identify and correct sources of inflow, leaks and infiltration into its sanitary sewer system.

OBJECTIVE: The City of Lexington should support efforts to prevent pollutants from being disposed of into storm drains which empty into local creeks and then into the Maury River.

OBJECTIVE: The City should continue to aggressively enforce local regulations designed to regulate development within the floodplain.

OBJECTIVE: Consider updating current stormwater management regulations, in concert with Rockbridge County, to limit the expansion of the 100-year flood plain resulting from continuing development and increasing storm water runoff.

OBJECTIVE: Protect local air quality by participating in Federal, State and regional initiatives to control air pollutants and improve air quality

OBJECTIVE: Implement transportation strategies which help enhance local air quality

OBJECTIVE: Protect existing tree stands and encourage additional planting of trees, not only along streets but throughout the community

OBJECTIVE: Utilize the City's development regulations to require that new development identifies, preserves and protects important natural features.

OBJECTIVE: Protect and enhance the City's open space system.

OBJECTIVE: Consider more extensive use of conservation tools such as riparian easements and conservation easements to permanently protect important local natural features

GOAL: Encourage local environmental and community groups to work together, with the assistance of City staff, to engage the community in a planning process to create a green infrastructure plan.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Population analysis and projections are basic elements of community planning. Information on past, current and projected future population is extremely important for planning land use patterns, economic development, and community facilities, as well as, anticipating demands for all services, including housing. Evaluation of the dynamics of population change over the past several decades, provides insight into the patterns of change which have occurred within the City.

The basic source for information within this chapter is the Census of Population and Housing which is performed every ten years by the US Bureau of the Census. Access to the most recent information is vital to successful planning, therefore updating this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan as soon as the information obtained in the 2010 Census is released should be a priority.

Tables and charts are included at the end of this chapter which provide a complete perspective on the local population, including how it has changed over time. The text describes those population characteristics which are most relevant from a planning perspective. There are also references throughout the chapter to the tables and charts which report the information being described in the text.

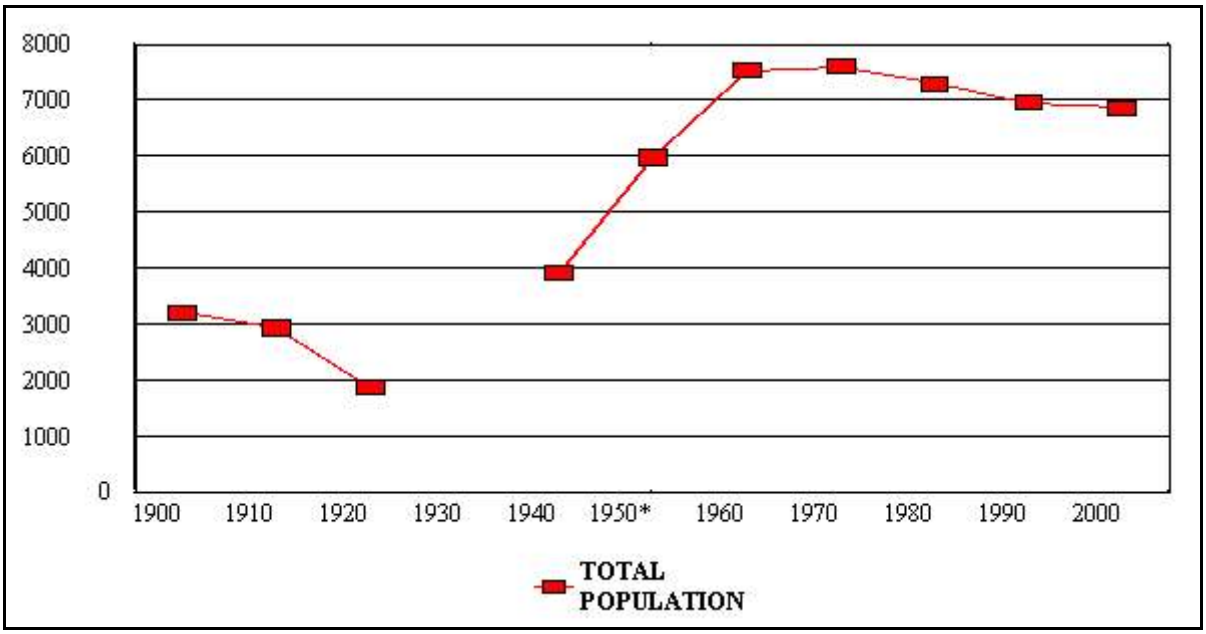
Since 1950, the census data has included the cadets at Virginia Military Institute, as well as those students at Washington and Lee University who live on campus or elsewhere within the City. In some instances, the inclusion of students and cadets makes it difficult to secure a clear picture of the characteristics of permanent City residents. The commentary which follows will identify situations in which the inclusion of these groups may introduce biases into the data.

POPULATION FROM 1900 TO 2000

The City of Lexington's population grew between 1940 and 1960, increasing from 3,914 to 7,537, a gain of 93%. Stabilizing between 1960 and 1970, the population began to decline between 1970 and 1980 and continued to decline to 6,867 in 2000, the last year for which statistics are available. The downward trend in population has resulted in the loss of 730 people since 1970, or 9.6% of the City's peak population. The decline in population slowed from a loss of 333 persons between 1980 and 1990, then a loss of 92 people between 1990 and the year 2000.

See: Table 4.1, page 4-20.

Figure 4.1
POPULATION 1900 - 2000



Source: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia
No population statistics are available for 1930
**NOTE: The population statistics have included the cadets at Virginia Military Institute and those Washington and Lee students who live on campus in the City since 1950.*

PERMANENT POPULATION IN 2000

Virginia Military Institute (VMI) records indicate that there were 1,334 cadets enrolled on April 1, 2000, the date of the 2000 census. Washington and Lee reports that a total of 1,159 students were living in University-owned housing, including residence halls, fraternities and sororities and apartments and that there were 557 students living in off-campus housing within the City on that date. This included those enrolled in the Law School.

Subtracting these students from the 2000 Census Bureau population figures provides an estimate of the number of permanent City residents at that time. The permanent population of the City of Lexington is estimated to have been 3,813 persons on April 1, 2000.

TRENDS IN HOUSEHOLDS

The number of households in the City of Lexington has continued to increase, despite the decrease in population over the past three decades. During this period the number of households has increased from 2,135 in 1970 to 2,232 in 2000.

The increase in the number of households at the same time that the total population has declined is explained by the size of the average household within the City, which has continued to decrease over the past 30 years. The average household size was 2.79 persons in 1970 and 2.06 in 2000.

National population trends also reflect smaller households which have been attributed to several factors:

- the declining number of children per family
- the increase in the number of one person households
- the increase in divorce, resulting in the formation of two smaller household units
- the aging of the baby boom generation at the same time as life expectancy continues to increase slightly

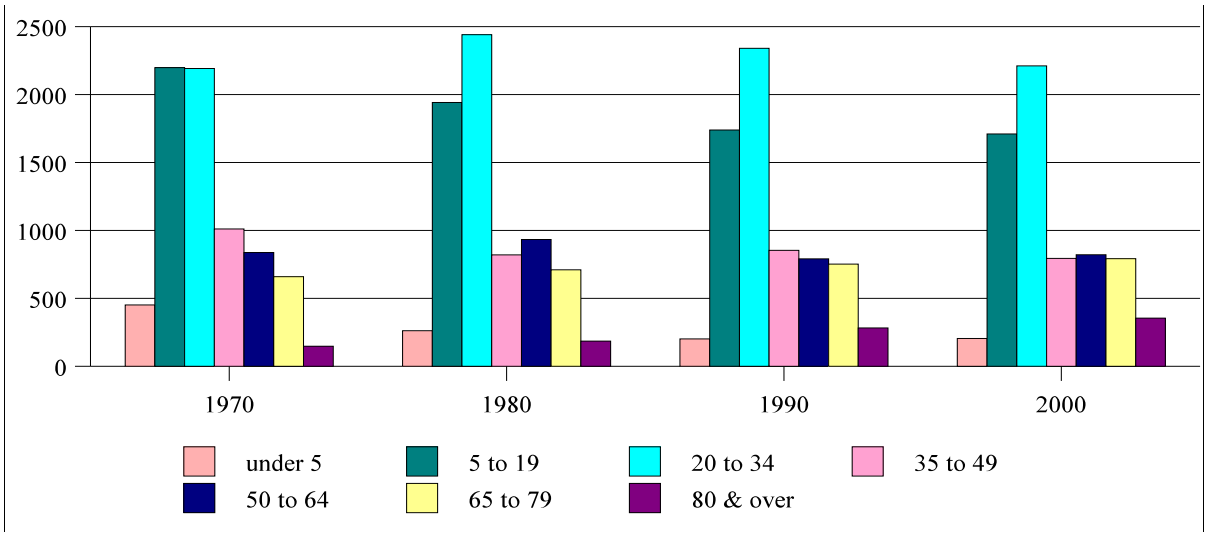
All these factors are likely to have affected the number of households within the City.

In 2000, 142 people lived in Nursing Homes, the only Institutional Housing within the City. This is a significant increase from 28 reported in 1990. At that same time, there were 396 persons over the age of 65 living alone. In 2000, 2,118 people were reported to live in College Dormitories (including Barracks at VMI).

See: Table 4.2, page 4-20; Table 4.3, page 4-21

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

FIGURE 4.2
POPULATION BY AGE: 1970-2000



Source: US Census Bureau

Population by Age

The two charts above reflect the population of the City of Lexington by age, as recorded by the US Census and projected by the Virginia Employment Commission.

School-aged children, ages 5 to 19, have been declining since 1970 and projections indicate that this will continue for the next 25 years.

The primary workforce for the area is composed of age groups, ages 20 through 64. The projections reflect an increase in those persons aged 20 to 34. There has been a slow, steady decline in the 35 to 49 age group which projections indicate will continue until 2030. In the age category of 50 to 64, the numbers show a decrease from 1980 until 2000. Projections for the next two and a half decades indicate increases in the age group 50 to 64.

Both recent Census counts and the projections show an increase in those persons aged 65 and older. A subset of this age group, those persons aged 80 and over, also has shown an increase in numbers and the trend continues with the projections for the next 25 years.

See: Table 4.4, page 4-22; Figure 4.9, page 4-41

Ethnicity In 1990, 87% of the City's population was White, 12% was Black and approximately 1% was some other race, two or more races or other ethnic group. In 2000, these numbers had changed little. Eighty six percent (86%) of the population was White, 10% was Black and almost 4% was of other races, a combination of two or more races, or

other ethnic groups. The addition of the category of a "combination of two or more races" may account for the decline in the percentage of Blacks and the increase in the percentage of those persons who report their ethnicity as a combination of two or more races.

The only racial or ethnic groups not evidencing decreases were Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Other Race or of a heritage of two or more races, or Hispanic or Latino.

See: Table 4.5, page 4-23 for information and Census categories

Gender In 1990, 58.6% of the population within the City of Lexington was male. This percentage dropped to 55.1% by the year 2000. This differs significantly from national trends, where females had a slight majority.

This anomaly is explained by the predominantly male enrollment at Virginia Military Institute which accepted its first female students in 1997 and the higher percentage of male student enrollment at Washington and Lee University, which became co-educational in 1989. In 2000, Washington and Lee University's student body, including undergraduates and law students, consisted of 43.4% females and 56.6% males. The Virginia Military Institute's enrollment consisted of 95% males and 5% females.

See: Table 4.6, page 4-24; Figure 4.10, page 4-42

Marital Status Slightly more than half (51%) of City residents over the age of 15 have never been married. Within this category, 61% are males and 39% are females. This proportion includes the student populations at both institutions of higher learning. These figures may not be adequately generalized to the overall population as VMI is predominantly male and requires cadets to remain single.

These figures reflect an increase in the number of married and widowed people and a divorce rate that has more than doubled than that reported in 1990.

See: Table 4.7, page 4-25

Educational Attainment In 1990, 72.8% of the residents of the City had graduated from High School or had some post secondary education. This percentage increased to 77.1% by 2000. The percentage of persons holding a bachelor's degree or higher level of education was at 32.1% in 1990 and increased to 42.6% by the year 2000.

The City of Lexington has a higher percentage of persons per capita with post-secondary degrees than the Rockbridge County area, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States, a factor likely explained by the presence of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute within the City.

See: Table 4.8, page 4-26

Poverty The classification of "below poverty" means the total household income is less than that established by the federal government's official definition. These numbers are updated annually, to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index. The number and percentage of persons and households living in poverty seems erroneous as it reports no teens between the ages of 12 to 17 and no single, male head of households as living in poverty. The number of persons living below the poverty level may be skewed, especially in the age groups containing college-aged persons, as students residing in the City are included in these figures.

General Population These numbers may be skewed, especially in the age groups containing college-aged persons, because it includes students residing in the City.

A mathematical estimate of the number of persons aged 18 to 24 living below the Poverty Level significantly lowers the number of persons and percentage of people living in poverty. Adjusting the age group in which most college aged students would fall, lowers the number of persons living below the poverty level from 995 to 529. This adjustment lowers the population for which poverty was determined from 4613 to 3814, and the percentage of persons living below the poverty level within the City from 21.6% to 13.9%. (These figures are for illustrative purposes only.)

Married Couple Families One hundred twenty four (124) persons (14.1%) under the age of 74, with incomes below the poverty level, live as Married Couple Families. At age 75 and over, only 4 persons in Married Couple Families are living below the poverty level.

These 128 people are contained in 43 families, with 17 (39.5%) having related children under the age of 18. Of these 17 families, 9 (53%) have related children under the age of 5 and 26 (60.5%) have no related children under the age of 18.

Female Householder One hundred sixty (160) women, with incomes below the poverty level, live as Female Householder, with no spouse present. One hundred forty-three (143, 89%) are aged 65 or under. Six (4%) are within the age category 65 to 74, with ten (6%) in the age category 75 and over.

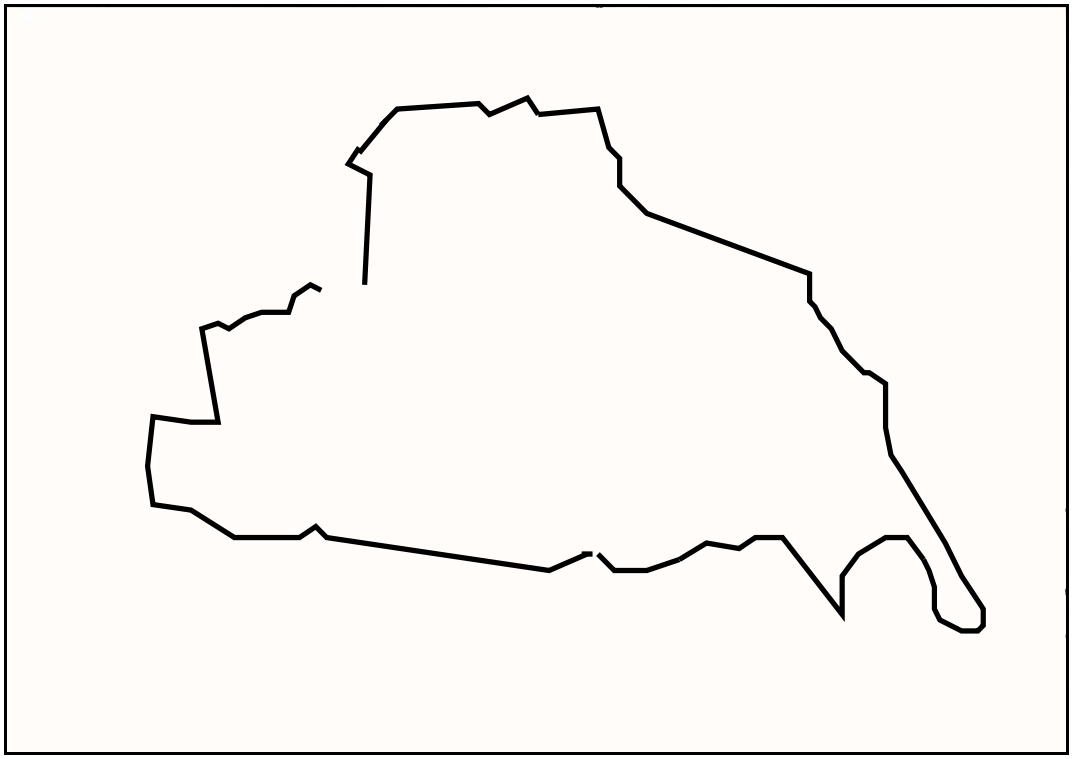
These women live in 49 families, with 85.7% (42) in households containing related children under the age of 18. Within the households with related children, 54.7% (23) contain related children under the age of 5. Seven families (14.3%) have no related children under the age of 8.

Unrelated Individuals There are 708 unrelated Individuals with incomes below the poverty level living in the City of Lexington. Six hundred ten (610, 86%) are under the age of 65. Sixty-eight (10%) are between the ages of 65 to74, with the remaining 30 (4%) aged 75 or over.

See: Table 4.9, page 4-27; Table 4.10 page 4-28; Table 4.11, page 4-29; Table 4.12, page 4-30, Table 4.13, page 4-31 and Table 4.14, page 4-32

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

FIGURE 4.3
CITY OF LEXINGTON
CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS



The largest number of people live in Census Block Group 2. This Census Block Group includes the campus of Washington and Lee University, the Virginia Military Institute Post and a small section of the City in which there is a concentration of student rental property. As a result, a large number of persons between the ages of 15 to 24 reside in this area.

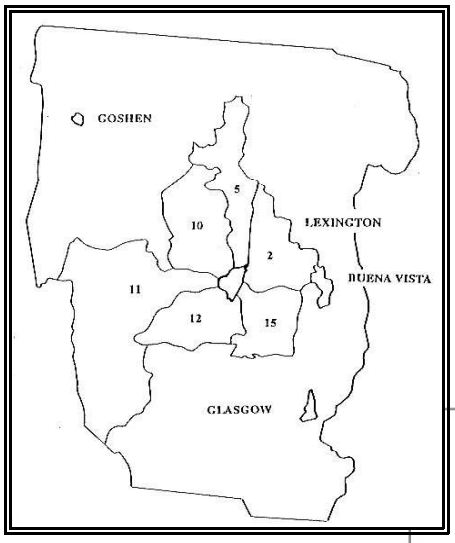
From 1990 until 2000, there have been small changes in population within the Census Block Groups. Block Group 3 is the only Census Block Group which reflects growth which continued from 1980 until 2000. The Fairwinds subdivision is located in this area. All of the homes in this area have been constructed since 1980. New homes continue to be built in this subdivision.

With the exception of Block Group 4, the area around Waddell Elementary School, all the Block Groups contain White, Black or African American and some other race. However, within each Block Group, the majority of the population is White. Housing studies undertaken between 1990 and 1997 support the findings of the Census, with a significant number of Black residents located in the neighborhoods of Diamond Hill, Green Hill and Centerville located in Block Groups 1, 2 and 6, respectively.

See: Table 4.15, page 4-33; Table 4.16, page 4-34; Table 4.17, page 4-34; and, Larger map - page 4-43

POPULATION CHANGE IN ADJACENT AREAS

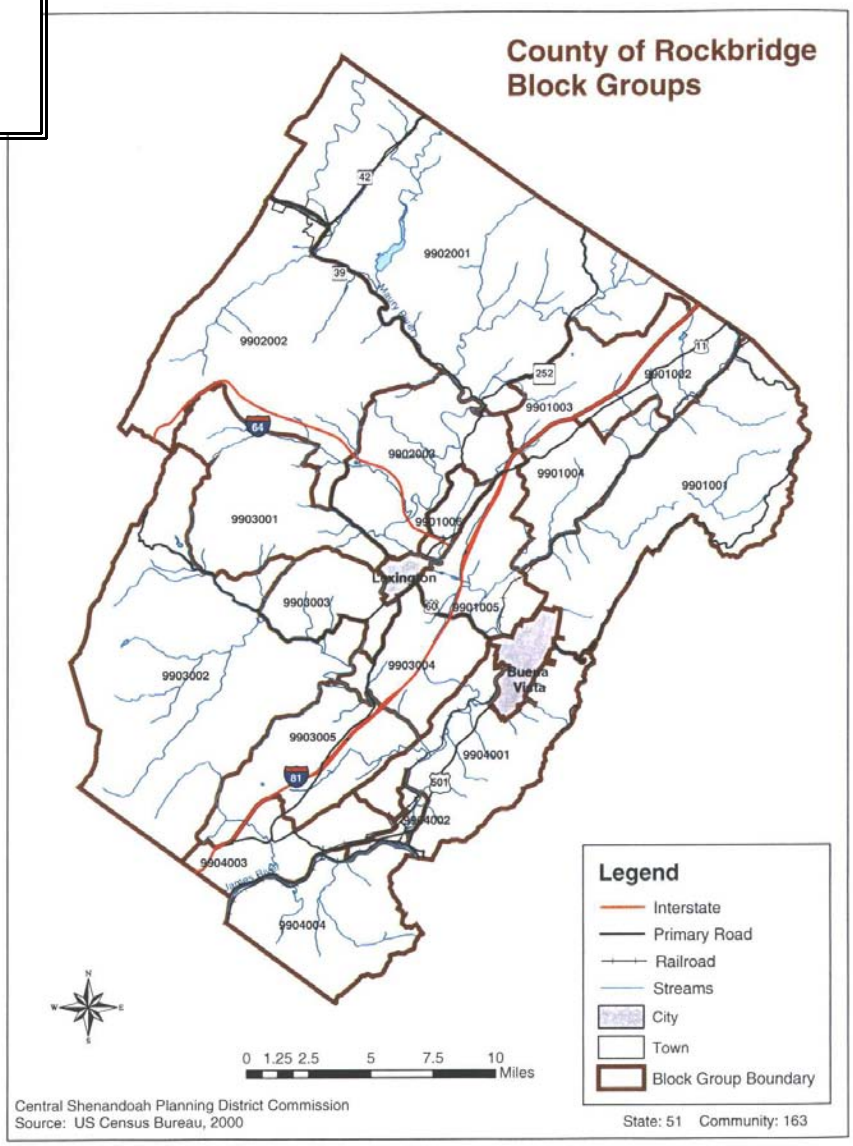
FIGURE 4.4
ENUMERATION DISTRICTS



Data concerning population in the areas of Rockbridge County surrounding the City of Lexington in 1970 and 1980 was reported utilizing Enumeration Districts.

Beginning with the 1990 Census, population information for these areas was collected using Census Tracts and Block Groups.

FIGURE 4.5
CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS



Due to the change in collection methods, comparisons of population cannot be made between population information gathered employing the Enumeration District concept and the Census Tract and Block Group concept.

The population within the Rockbridge County area increased by 3,410 persons or 11.1% between 1970 and 2000.

See: Table 4.18, page 4-35; Table 4.19, page 4-35; and Larger Maps, page 4-44 and 4-45

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING THE STATISTICS

A number of factors have contributed to the decline of the City's population over the last 20 years.

The dominant factor in restraining growth within the City during the past 20 years was the limited amount of vacant land remaining within the City limits. As a result, the majority of new housing construction has taken place in Rockbridge County adjacent to the City. Initially this development was focused on the southwestern border in projects such as Birdfield, Cedar Grove and Country Club Estates. Other subdivisions such as Stoneview and Mount Vista have been developed out Route 60 West. Recently, subdivisions including Maury Cliffs and Riverbend have been created to the north of the City near the Maury River. The statistics reported above indicate that the population of the greater Lexington area has grown significantly over the last 20 years, even though this growth has not reflected itself within the City.

The influx of recently retired people into the City has continued. These older families are attracted by Lexington's charm, its cultural and recreational opportunities, and its lower housing prices relative to the areas from which they have come. This trend also leads to smaller sized households since these families typically no longer have children living at home.

Another significant factor which has affected the population of the City is the nationwide trend toward smaller sized families. For the last decade the average family size in this country has declined by approximately 0.05 persons per year. The decline in average household and family size in Lexington has greatly exceeded that for the nation as a whole. There are two likely factors contributing to this decline.

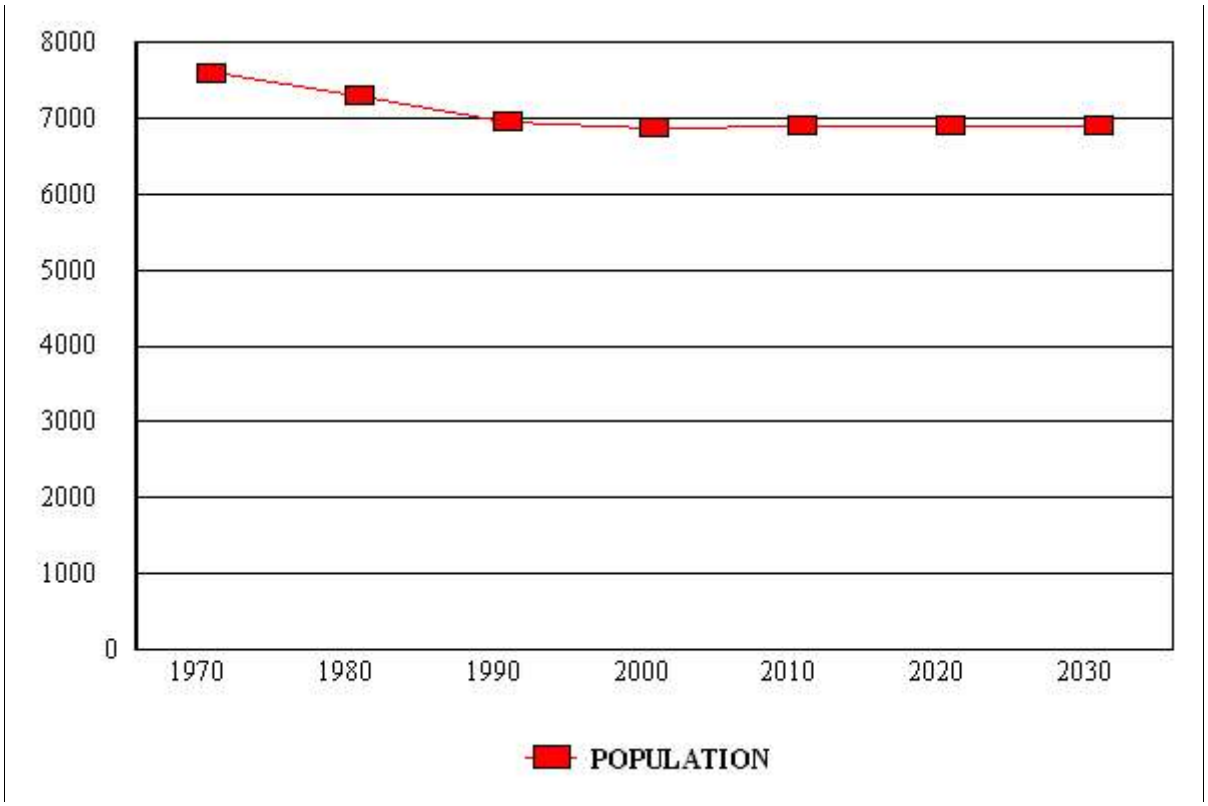
First, the number of jobs in Lexington, as in most smaller cities, is limited. A limited economic base usually means that most of the younger people just entering the job market must leave the community in search of employment. As a result, a portion of the families of childbearing age are lost, thus reducing the number of children which will be raised in the community and further reducing family size.

Secondly, if a person takes a job in a small community, she or he usually keeps that job for between 20 and 40 years, which is about twice the rearing time for children. This tends to create a long term cyclical effect on the population structure causing it to fluctuate over time. This may well explain at least some of the fluctuations in the percentages of the population in the 25 to 60 age group.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections are estimates of the likely future population of an area. These estimates are only one possible course for future population change. Projections do not attempt to reflect optimal growth trends but to anticipate what can reasonably be expected if recent trends in migration, female fertility and mortality continue for the next thirty years. As a result, they are intended to provide insight into what may occur in the absence of any significant changes in these trends.

FIGURE 4.6
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS: 1970 - 2030



Source: Virginia Employment Commission

CENSUS COUNTS AND PROJECTIONS

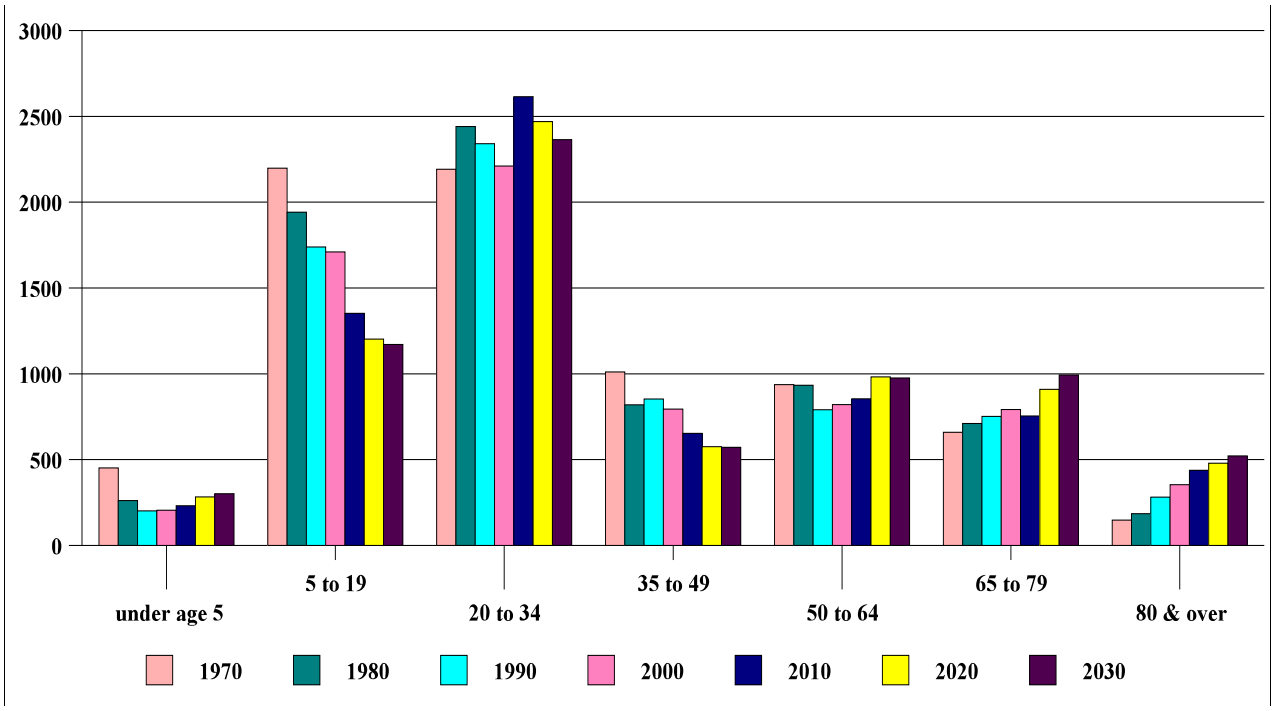
As with other projections, population projections have differing degrees of reliability. Generally, projections for large localities are more reliable than for smaller ones. Projections for areas experiencing rapid growth or decline are likely to be less accurate than for more stable communities. The farther into the future projections are carried, the less accurate they are likely to be.

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) is mandated by State law to produce short and long range population projections for use by state agencies and the general assembly. Their projections utilize the cohort component method which assumes that population change is the

result of three factors: births, deaths, and migration by people into and out of the area. Projections are developed using base data from the 1990 and 2000 censuses. Birth rates and survival rates are applied to the 1990 population to calculate a 2000 survived population. The difference between these calculations and the 2000 census numbers is assumed to be migration, which is used to develop estimated migration rates. These migration rates, along with birth and survival rates are applied to the 2000 census numbers to project into the future. This process is utilized to project the population for 10 year intervals. The intervening year projections are interpolated between the projections and the base line. The VEC has developed population projections for both the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

Population Projections for the City of Lexington

FIGURE 4.7
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE: 1970 - 2030*



Source: Virginia Employment Commission
*Projections: 2010, 2020, 2030

Total Population The population for the City of Lexington is projected to remain relatively stable through the end of this decade and over the next 20 years. In 2000, the City's population was 6,867 persons. The projections predict that the City will contain approximately 6,900 people from 2010 to 2030.

Population Distribution The number of people age 19 and under is expected to continue to decline over the next 30 years. Projections indicate that these decreases will become apparent by the end of this decade, a loss of 330 people or 17% of the young people in that

age group. This decline is anticipated to continue into 2030. Projections predict an overall loss of 443 young people or a decrease of 23.1% over the period from 2000 until 2030. Within this age group, the largest drop is in children aged 15 to 19. Projections indicate there will be a loss of 37.2% or 485 persons within this high school aged group.

Projections for working aged persons, ages 20 to 64 years, reflect a small increase from 2000 to 2030. This predicted increase of 2.3% is comprised of a 4.2% (102 people) increase within the age group of 20 to 39 years and a 1.1% (15 people) loss in the age category of 40 to 64 years.

The greatest projected increase is in the age group of 65 and over, resulting in an increase of 389 people or a percentage increase of 34.6%. By the year 2030, the percentage of older adults is expected to surpass that of children of the age 19 and younger.

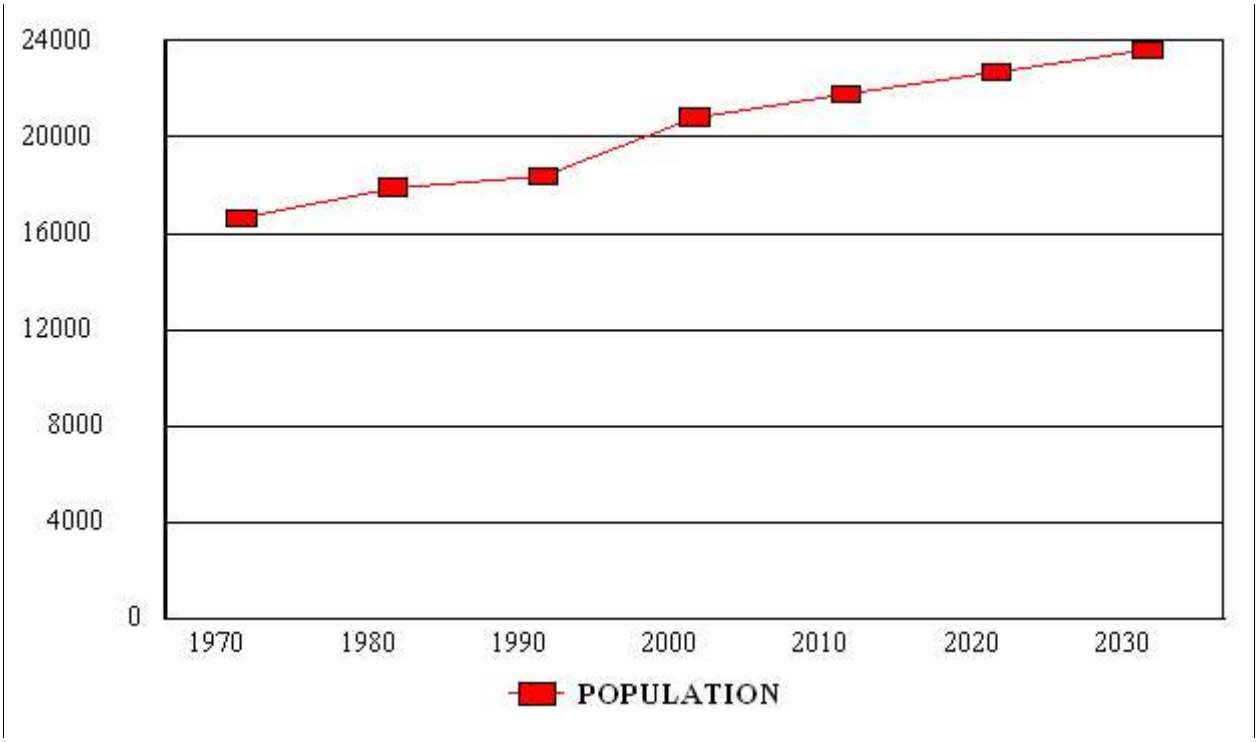
See: Table 4.20, page 4-36; Table 4.21, page 4-37

Accuracy of these projections As we have previously stated, population projections reflect what can reasonably be expected if recent trends in migration, female fertility and mortality continue for the next thirty years. We do not believe that the VEC projections reported above accurately reflect the characteristics of the future population of Lexington for several reasons.

The first is technical. The projections do not effectively deal with the approximately 2,500 college students who reside in the City. In order for the cohort component technique, utilized by the VEC, to be accurate, these students must be removed from their respective cohorts before the birth, mortality and migration statistics are applied to project these cohorts into the future. This is because these students come and go from the City to be replaced by others. They are not a permanent component of the City's population base.

Since 1970, the effect of new housing construction and, consequently, new households in the City, has been neutralized by declining household size. As a result, although we have had an increased number of households, the overall population of the City has declined slightly. We do not believe that further growth will be offset by continued declines in the household size. As a result we anticipate that the population of the City will increase slightly over the coming decades as new housing units are constructed within the City. An additional factor that will influence future growth is the limited amount of vacant land remaining in the City, which is discussed in the Land Use chapter of this plan.

FIGURE 4.8
POPULATION AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS: 1970 - 2030
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY



Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Population Projections for Rockbridge County

Population projections for Rockbridge County indicate continued growth at a steady pace of approximately 4% over the next three decades. From 2000 until 2030, the overall increase in population is projected to be an increase of 13.4%.

These projections vary significantly from the actual increase from 1980 until 1990, which was 2.5%, and from the 1990 to 2000 increase, which was 13.4%.

The greatest increases from 2000 until 2030 are predicted in the age group of under 5 years (44.2%), those persons aged 60 to 64 years (43.9%), the age group including 80 to 84 years old (61.2%), and those persons aged 85 and over (56.5%.) Projections for the City of Lexington also indicate increases in these age categories.

Significant decreases are predicted in the age categories 10 to 14 (-24.4%), 35 to 39 (-34.5%) and 40 to 44 (-36.9%.) Predictions for the City of Lexington indicate decreases in these same age categories.

Accuracy Again, we do not believe that these projections are an accurate reflection of the amount of population growth likely to occur within Rockbridge County. These projections reflect a growth rate of approximately 4% for each decade between 2000 and 2030. The

growth rate between 1990 and 2000 was 13.4% and the rate of land development activity within the County has continued to increase since 2000. There has also been increasing activity within the County by larger, more regional land development companies. In the past, the majority of the land development was undertaken by local companies. One impact of this shift is likely to be more sophisticated regional marketing of the area by these companies leading to even more people moving into the area from elsewhere

ISSUES

DECLINING SCHOOL AGE POPULATION

One of the primary reasons Lexington chose to become a City was to be able to establish its own school system. The City continues to operate its own elementary and middle schools. There are questions concerning the continued viability of these schools as a result of continuing declines in the number of school age children living in the City. In 1990 there were 399 City children in these two schools. That number had declined to 342 children in 2000 and was 339 in 2005

One major concern is having a sufficient population to offer a diverse educational program. City schools have been able to maintain an adequate student base by accepting tuition students from outside the City limits. The number of tuition students has increased from 83 in 1990 to 139 in 2005.

This issue will be discussed in detail in the Community Facilities chapter later in this Plan

See: Table 4.22, Page 4-38 and Table 4.23, Page 4-39

INCREASING ELDERLY POPULATION

The number of residents aged 65 and over increased from 1,034 in 1990 to 1,126 in 2000. The projections predict that there will be 68 additional residents in this age group by 2010, another 195 by 2020 and 126 more by 2030. The City should plan to meet the unique needs of this group.

Senior citizens are a very diverse group varying greatly culturally, politically, socioeconomically as well as in other ways. They will want to continue to live an active and independent lifestyle as much as possible. Many will want to “age in place,” if not in the same house, at least in the same community.

Planning issues including housing type and cost, expanding needs for health care and senior support services, and an increasing demand for alternative transportation modes including enhanced pedestrian comfort and safety. These and other issues will be addressed throughout this plan.

Most congregate housing, such as Kendal, requires acreage not available within the city limits. However, we can anticipate proposals for some smaller scale facilities that may be at densities higher than found in most of Lexington. To meet the challenge of making sure this

higher density housing fits within the community fabric and lessens community controversy, the city must:

- create mechanisms that assure that new multi-family housing proposals undergo more detailed review to assure compatibility with the scale and character of the nearby area and traffic impacts are minimized; and

- identify currently underutilized areas that would be suitable for development.

To meet accessibility and transportation needs for the aging population, the larger senior housing projects typically have a shuttle bus system. Smaller projects may not have the scale to support a shuttle bus, thereby moving that responsibility increasingly to government. It poses the dilemma as to the advantages of larger scale projects further away from town which can provide transportation services versus smaller scale projects in town that require more city services.

INCREASING DEMANDS FOR LABOR

The population of Rockbridge County, and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista is projected to grow from 34,047 in 2000 to 38, 238 in 2030, an increase of 12.3%. However, shortly after 2010 the total population between the ages of 20 and 64, the core of the eligible work force is projected to begin to decrease. This has implications for economic growth since a key component of economic development is an available work force. This will be discussed more completely in the Economy chapter of this plan.

See: Table 4.24, page 4-40

POLICIES TO EFFECT THESE PROJECTIONS

The VEC population projections are intended to reflect what can reasonably be expected if recent trends in migration, female fertility and mortality continue for the next thirty years. As a result, they provide insight into what may occur in the absence of any major change. They are not intended to represent optimal growth trends or to suggest what is most desirable for our community. Public policy can and will influence these trends. In the goals and objectives section, we will propose ways that the City can respond to the changing population of the City as well as influence future population trends and patterns.

Two of the basic trends underlying these projections are the continued aging of the City's population and continuing reductions in family size. While we believe that we have a responsibility to plan to meet the needs of our elderly citizens, we also believe that we should continue our efforts to retain and attract young families with children and to offer opportunities to young adults to remain in our community. This will help us maintain an active, vibrant community. Two key components of a strategy to achieve this goal are housing which is affordable to young working adults and families and a diverse economy which provides a range of job opportunities with adequate pay to enable those who want to stay here or move here to do so.

The City has a stated goal to retain as well as attract young families with children. Means to achieve this goal are outlined in both the Housing and Economy Chapters

IMPACT OF CONTINUING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS SURROUNDING THE CITY ON TRAFFIC ON CITY STREETS

Rockbridge County's population grew by almost 2,500 people between 1990 and 2000. Over 45% of that growth, 1,125 people, occurred in the census tract block groups immediately surrounding Lexington. Rockbridge County has approved the creation of additional 270 residential lots in this area since the 2000 census.

One impact of this growth has been increased traffic on the streets of Lexington, many of which were not constructed to handle the volume of traffic that they are presently or will be experiencing as continued growth occurs around the City. This will be discussed in greater detail in the Transportation and Land Use chapters which follow in this Plan.

The city should request the formation of a joint advisory committee of city and county officials to review development proposals within a designated area near the edges of both the city and county. The intent is to identify impacts, opportunities and solutions for the consideration of the decision-making body.

POPULATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Population goals and objectives are statements concerning whether Lexington wishes to grow, and if so, how rapidly and in which segments of the population. They also suggest both policy and programmatic recommendations concerning how the City should respond to likely changes in the makeup and magnitude of the local population.

The City's population has been declining since 1970.

GOAL: Continue to emphasize and improve the quality of life in Lexington including its sense of community, physical attractiveness, quality schools, and cultural and recreational opportunities in order to attract families, small businesses with a professional orientation, and clean industry.

The principal problems confronting young people desiring to remain in Lexington or wishing to move here are limited affordable housing and limited job opportunities.

GOAL: Encourage young people to stay in Lexington or return after serving in the military, receiving training in a trade, or continuing their education beyond high school.

OBJECTIVE: Work to increase employment opportunities in the Lexington area.

This objective will be expanded in the Economy Chapter of this plan.

OBJECTIVE: Stimulate the development of affordable and moderately-priced housing for both homeownership and rental.

This objective will be expanded in the Housing Chapter of this plan.

OBJECTIVE: Seek to attract families with children of all ages.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage early childhood education opportunities to maximize developmental potential.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage the development of safe, affordable, quality childcare for working families.

There has been a decline in the diversity of the population of the City since 1970

GOAL: Encourage the continued diversification of the City's population by race, age and ethnic groups.

GOAL: Respond to the variety of physical, recreational and educational needs of all City residents.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to respond to the needs of an aging and older population.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage recreational and educational programs designed for all citizens, from our youngest to our oldest.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to support the public school system.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage participation in programs offered by Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage students from Washington and Lee University and cadets from Virginia Military Institute to continue participating in community service projects benefitting City and County residents.

GOAL: Anticipate and plan for changes in population and demographic characteristics

OBJECTIVE: Closely monitor demographic trends within the city and nearby county areas

OBJECTIVE: Work with regional and state agencies to improve population forecasting tools

OBJECTIVE: Plan city services and facilities with the understanding that the region is entering a new era of growth and available population forecasts may not be accurate

GOAL: Assure high quality educational opportunities for Lexington students

OBJECTIVE: Retain the City school system

OBJECTIVE: Upgrade or replace school facilities as needed

OBJECTIVE: Invest in technological innovations in educational programs, including staff training

OBJECTIVE: Retain excess capacity in school facilities to handle any long-term, unexpected changes (increases in school-age population; fill available excess capacity with tuition students)

GOAL: Help "aging in place"

OBJECTIVE: Encourage home design, such as wider doorways, that improves accessibility for those with mobility limitations

OBJECTIVE: Identify programs to help low-income seniors make accessibility improvements to their homes

OBJECTIVE: Research and publicize financial assistance programs to help low-income seniors with home utilities, property taxes, prescription drugs and other living costs

OBJECTIVE: Anticipate a higher demand for medical and health services, including emergency response, non-emergency transportation, and an increase in need for doctors, nurses and home healthcare providers

OBJECTIVE: Improve the sidewalks and crosswalks, as appropriate, to improve walkability for senior citizens and those with mobility limitations

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS
Tables and Figures*

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
4.1	Population Change: 1900 - 2000.	4-20
4.2	Average Household Size: 1970 - 2000.	4-20
4.3	Household Characteristics: 2000.	4-21
4.4	Population by Age: 1970 - 2010.	4-22
4.5	Population by Race/Ethnicity: 1970 - 2000.	4-23
4.6	Population by Age and Gender: 1970 - 2000..	4-24
4.7	Marital Status by Gender: 2000.	4-25
4.8	Educational Attainment: 2000.	4-26
4.9	Poverty Threshold in the United States. by Age, Household Size and Presence of Children	4-27
4.10	Poverty Status by Age and Household Type: 1999.	4-28
4.11	Poverty Status by Family Type. and Presence of Children: 1999	4-29
4.12	Poverty by Age: 1999..	4-30
4.13	Poverty Status by Age and. Percentage of Population	4-31
4.14	Poverty Status by Age. Adjusted for Student Population: Age Category 18 to 24	4-32
4.15	Population Distribution by Age and Gender. by Census Block Group	4-33
4.16	Population Distribution. by Census Block Group: 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000	4-34

4.17 Population by Race/Ethnicity.. 4-34
by Census Block Group

4.18 Population Change by Census Tract and Block Group 4-35
1990 and 2000

4.19 Population Change by Enumeration District. 4-35
1990 and 2000

4.20 Projected Age Group Characteristics.. 4-36
2000 - 2030

4.21 Projected Age Group Characteristics: Rockbridge County. 4-37
2000 - 2030

4.22 Enrollment in City Schools: 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005. 4-38

4.23 Enrollment in City Schools:1990 - 2006. 4-39

4.24 Projected Age Group Characteristics: Lexington - Buena Vista - 4-40
Rockbridge County: 2000 - 2030

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE

4.9 Population by Age: 1970 - 2000. 4-41
Projected: 2010

4.10 Population by Age and Gender: 1970 - 2000.. 4-42

MAP		PAGE

4.3 Block Groups. 4-43

4.4 Enumeration Districts. 4-44

4.5 Census Block Groups.. 4-45

***Unless noted, all Tables and Figures are for the City of Lexington.**

TABLE 4.1
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION CHANGE
1900 - 2000

YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	NUMBER CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
1900	3203	---	---
1910	2931	-272	-8.5%
1920	2870	-61	-2.1%
1930	N/A	N/A	---
1940	3914	---	---
1950*	5976	2062	52.7%
1960	7537	1561	26.1%
1970	7597	60	0.8%
1980	7292	-305	-4.0%
1990	6959	-333	-4.6%
2000	6867	-92	-1.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia
*Student Population first included in 1950 and included in subsequent decades.

TABLE 4.2
CITY OF LEXINGTON
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
1970 - 2000

YEAR	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
1970	2135	2.79
1980	2179	2.38
1990	2172	2.18
2000	2232	2.06

Source: US Census Bureau, Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

TABLE 4.3
CITY OF LEXINGTON
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS
2000

TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	2232	
Family Households	1080	48.4%
Nonfamily Households	1152	51.6%
HOUSEHOLDS TYPE		
Family Households	1080	48.4%
- with own children under 18 years	408	18.3%
Married-couple Family	823	36.9%
- with own children under 18 years	298	13.4%
Female Householder, no husband present	197	8.8%
- with own children under 18 years	87	3.9%
Householder, undefined in Census DP-1[1]	60	2.7%
- with own children under 18 years[2]	23	1.0%
Nonfamily Households	1152	51.6%
- Householder not living alone	237	10.6%
- Householder living alone	915	41.0%
- Age < 65 years	519	23.2%
- Age 65 years & over	396	17.7%
GENERAL HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS		
Persons in Households	4598	
Average Family Size	2.76	
Average Persons per Household	2.06	

Source: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia
Nonfamily Households: Householder living alone or with non-relatives only.
1 and 2: Derived from available information. No specifics available from Census Reports DP-1 and P-27.

TABLE 4.4
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY AGE
1970 - 2010

	1970		1980		1990		2000		2010		CHANGE 1970-1980		CHANGE 1980-1990		CHANGE 1990-2000		Projected Change 2000-2010	
AGE	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
under 5	452	5.9%	262	3.6%	201	2.9%	205	3.0%	220	2.9%	-190	-42.0%	-61	-23.3%	4	1.2%	15	7.3%
5-9	468	6.2%	280	3.8%	222	3.2%	195	2.8%	201	2.6%	-188	-40.2%	-58	-20.7%	-27	-12.2%	6	3.1%
10-14	465	6.1%	332	4.6%	235	3.4%	213	3.1%	213	2.8%	-133	-28.6%	-97	-29.2%	-22	-9.4%	-	-
15-19	1265	16.7%	1330	18.2%	1282	18.4%	1302	19.0%	1178	15.5%	65	5.1%	-48	-3.6%	26	2.0%	-124	-9.5%
20-24	1554	20.5%	1691	23.2%	1789	25.7%	1683	24.5%	2096	27.6%	137	8.8%	98	5.8%	-106	-5.9%	413	24.5%
25-29	370	4.9%	419	5.7%	274	3.9%	309	4.5%	342	4.6%	49	13.2%	-145	-34.6%	35	12.77%	33	10.7%
30-34	268	3.5%	331	4.5%	278	4.0%	219	3.2%	216	2.8%	63	23.5%	-53	-16.0%	-59	-21.2%	-3	-1.4%
35-39	305	4.0%	287	3.9%	300	4.3%	225	3.3%	208	2.7%	-18	- 5.9%	13	4.5%	-75	-25.0%	-17	-7.6%
40-44	331	4.4%	236	3.2%	280	4.0%	245	3.6%	270	3.6%	-95	-28.7%	44	18.6%	-35	-12.5%	25	10.2%
45-49	375	4.9%	297	4.1%	273	3.9%	324	4.7%	333	4.3%	-78	-20.8%	-24	-8.1%	51	18.68%	9	2.8%
50-54	336	4.4%	312	4.3%	227	3.3%	296	4.3%	276	3.7%	-24	-7.1%	-85	-27.2%	69	30.39%	-20	-6.8%
55-59	337	4.4%	342	4.7%	262	3.8%	268	3.9%	337	4.5%	5	1.5%	-80	-23.4%	6	2.29%	69	25.7%
60-64	264	3.5%	279	3.8%	302	4.3%	257	3.7%	434	5.7%	15	5.7%	23	8.2%	-45	-14.9%	177	68.9%
65-69	288	3.8%	281	3.9%	304	4.4%	276	4.0%	378	5.0%	-7	-2.4%	23	8.2%	-28	-9.2%	102	36.9%
70-74	203	2.7%	232	3.2%	236	3.4%	253	3.7%	282	3.7%	29	14.3%	4	1.7%	17	7.2%	29	11.5%
75-79	168	2.2%	197	2.7%	212	3.0%	243	3.5%	227	3.0%	29	17.3%	15	7.6%	31	14.6%	-16	-6.6%
80-84	86	1.1%	102	1.4%	149	2.1%	176	2.6%	186	2.4%	16	18.6%	47	46.1%	27	18.1%	10	5.7%
85+	62	0.8%	82	1.1%	133	1.9%	178	2.6%	201	2.6%	20	32.3%	51	62.2%	45	33.8%	-23	-12.9%
TOTAL	**7597**		**7292**		**6959**		**6867**		**7598**		**-305**	**-4.0%**	**-333**	**-4.6%**	**-92**	**-1.3%**	**685**	**9.9%**

Source: US Census Bureau
Projections: Virginia Employment Commission. Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

TABLE 4.5
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY
1970 - 2000

Race	1970		1980		1990		2000		CHANGE 1970 - 1980		CHANGE 1980 - 1990		CHANGE 1990 - 2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	6391	84.1	6378	87.5	6027	86.6	5906	86	-13	-0.2	-351	-5.5	-121	2
Black or African American	1190	15.7	896	12.3	811	11.7	713	10.4	-294	-24.7	-85	-9.5	-98	-12.1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3	<0.1	0	0	22	<0.1	18	0.3	-3	-100	22	220	-4	-18.2
Asian*, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander*	5	0.1	12	0	89	1.3	133	1.9	7	140	77	641.7	44	49.4
Other Race or Two or More Races	8	0.1	6	0.1	10	0.1	97	1.4	-2	-25	4	66.7	87	870
TOTAL	**7597**		**7292**		**6959**		**6867**		**-305**	**-4**	**-333**	**-4.6**	**-92**	**-1.3**
Hispanic or Latino (of any Race)***	0	0	82	1.1	62	0.9	109	1.6	82	820	-20	-24.4	47	75.8

Source: US Census Bureau
***Asian: includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and other Asian**
****Other Pacific Islander: Guamanian or Charmorro, Samoan, Other Pacific Islander, NONE**
*****Hispanic or Latino of any Race includes: Mexican, Puerto Rican; Cuban; or other Hispanic or Latino Race**
INDIVIDUALS MAY REPORT MORE THAN ONE RACE.

TABLE 4.6
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY AGE AND GENDER
1970 - 2000

	1970				1980				1990				2000			
	MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE	
AGE	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
under 5	226	3.0%	226	3.0%	146	2.0%	116	1.6%	91	1.3%	110	1.6%	105	1.5%	100	1.5%
5-9	229	3.0%	239	3.1%	140	1.9%	140	1.9%	108	1.6%	114	1.6%	103	1.5%	92	1.2%
10-14	235	3.1%	230	3.0%	173	2.4%	159	2.2%	135	1.9%	100	1.4%	92	1.3%	121	1.8%
15-19	1017	13.4%	248	3.3%	1151	15.8%	179	2.5%	940	13.5%	342	4.9%	881	12.8%	421	6.1%
20-24	1299	17.1%	255	3.4%	1494	20.5%	197	2.7%	1391	20.0%	398	5.7%	1178	17.2%	505	7.4%
25-29	190	2.5%	180	2.4%	191	2.6%	228	3.1%	151	2.2%	123	1.8%	154	2.2%	155	2.3%
30-34	133	1.8%	135	1.8%	161	2.2%	170	2.3%	138	2.0%	140	2.0%	120	1.7%	99	1.4%
35-39	162	2.1%	143	1.9%	148	2.0%	139	1.9%	136	2.0%	164	2.4%	117	1.7%	108	1.6%
40-44	140	1.8%	191	2.5%	105	1.4%	131	1.8%	137	2.0%	143	2.1%	110	1.6%	135	1.9%
45-49	187	2.5%	188	2.5%	157	2.2%	140	1.9%	122	1.8%	151	2.2%	156	2.3%	168	2.4%
50-54	158	2.1%	178	2.3%	128	1.8%	184	2.5%	104	1.5%	123	1.8%	131	1.9%	165	2.4%
55-59	155	2.0%	182	2.4%	163	2.2%	179	2.5%	123	1.8%	139	2.0%	125	1.8%	143	2.0%
60-64	99	1.3%	165	2.2%	111	1.5%	168	2.3%	117	1.7%	185	2.7%	110	1.6%	147	2.1%
65-69	110	1.4%	178	2.3%	97	1.3%	184	2.5%	137	2.0%	167	2.4%	123	1.8%	153	2.2%
70-74	63	0.8%	140	1.8%	75	1.0%	157	2.2%	96	1.4%	140	2.0%	97	1.4%	156	2.3%
75-79	57	0.8%	111	1.5%	63	0.9%	134	1.8%	67	1.0%	145	2.1%	88	1.3%	155	2.6%
80-84	32	0.4%	54	0.7%	35	0.5%	67	0.9%	38	0.5%	111	1.6%	60	0.9%	116	1.7%
85 +	11	0.1%	51	0.7%	23	0.3%	59	0.8%	31	0.4%	102	1.5%	41	0.6%	137	2.0%
Gender Total	**4503**	59.3%	**3094**	40.7%	**4561**	62.5%	**2731**	37.5%	**4062**	58.4%	**2897**	41.6%	**3791**	55.1%	**3076**	44.9%
Annual Total	**7597**				**7292**				**6959**				**6867**			

Source: US Census Bureau: 1970, 1980, 1990: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia: 2000

TABLE 4.7
CITY OF LEXINGTON
MARITAL STATUS BY GENDER
2000

STATUS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Population age 15 years and over	3541	2716	6257
Never Married	2162	1057	3219
Married	1140	1034	2174
Spouse Present	886	851	1737
Spouse Absent*	254	183	437
Separated	29	47	76
Other	225	136	361
Widowed	87	370	457
Divorced	152	355	507

Source: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia
***Spouse Absent includes Separated and Other**

TABLE 4.8
CITY OF LEXINGTON
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
2000

AGE OVER 25	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
No Schooling Completed	40	24	64
Nursery School through Grade 4	18	5	23
Grade 5 & Grade 6	55	61	116
Grade 7 & Grade 8	69	76	145
Grade 9	20	43	63
Grade 10	37	62	99
Grade 11	44	73	117
Grade 12, No Diploma	26	99	125
High School Graduate, including GED	243	324	567
< 1 Year College	47	85	132
1 or More Years College, No Degree	69	185	254
Associate Degree	83	97	180
Bachelor Degree	315	377	692
Master Degree	182	208	390
Professional School Degree	48	22	70
Doctoral Degree	180	68	248
TOTAL	**1476**	**1809**	**3285**

SOURCE: US Census, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

TABLE 4.9
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POVERTY THRESHOLD IN THE UNITED STATES
BY AGE, HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND PRESENCE OF CHILDREN
1999

Family Size	Weighted Average	Related Children Under the Age of 18								
		None	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8≥
1	8,501									
age <65	2,667	8,667								
age 65≥	7,990	7,990								
2	10,869									
age <65*	11,214	11,156	11,483							
age 65≥*	10,075	10,070	11,440							
3	13,290	13,032	13,410	13,423						
4	17,029	17,184	17,465	16,895	16,954					
5	20,127	20,723	21,024	20,380	19,882	19,578				
6	22,727	23,835	23,930	23,436	22,964	22,261	21,845			
7	25,912	27,425	27,596	27,006	26,595	25,828	24,934	23,953		
8	28,967	30,673	30,944	30,387	29,899	29,206	28,327	27,412	27,180	
9 or more	34,417	36,897	37,076	36,583	36,169	35,489	34,554	33,708	33,449	32,208

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey
*** Age of Householder**

TABLE 4.10
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POVERTY STATUS BY AGE AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE
1999

TOTAL POPULATION FOR WHICH POVERTY STATUS IS DETERMINED: 4613	INCOME BELOW POVERTY LEVEL					
	Age under 65		Age 65 - 74		Age over 75	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Married Couple Families	124	14.1%	0	0.0%	4	9.1%
Male Householder, no Spouse	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Female Householder, no Spouse	143	16.3%	6	8.1%	10	22.7%
Unrelated Individuals	610	69.6%	68	91.9%	30	68.2%
TOTAL	**877**		**74**		**44**	
	INCOME AT OR ABOVE POVERTY LEVEL					
	Age under 65		**Age 65 - 74**		**Age over 75**	
	#	**%**	**#**	**%**	**#**	**%**
Married Couple Families	1828	66.4%	243	59.5%	196	42.9%
Male Householder, no Spouse	96	3.5%	0	0.0%	7	1.5%
Female Householder, no Spouse	292	10.6%	15	3.7%	95	20.8%
Unrelated Individuals	537	19.5%	150	36.8%	159	34.8%
TOTAL	**2753**		**408**		**457**	

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

TABLE 4.11
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POVERTY STATUS BY FAMILY TYPE AND PRESENCE OF CHILDREN
1999

TOTAL FAMILIES LIVING BELOW AND AT OR ABOVE POVERTY STATUS: 1092	Income in 1999 below Poverty Level		Income in 1999 at or above Poverty Level	
	#	%	#	%
MARRIED COUPLE FAMILY	43	100%	832	100%
With Related Children under age 18	17	39.5%	312	37.5%
- under age 5 years only	8		70	
- under age 5 years and 5 - 17 years	0		44	
- aged 5 - 17 years only	9		198	
No related children aged under 18 years	26	60.5%	520	62.5%
MALE HOUSEHOLDER	0	0%	35	100%
With Related Children under age 18	0	0%	22	62.9%
- under age 5 years only	0		8	
- under age 5 years and 5 - 17 years	0		0	
- aged 5 - 17 years only	0		14	
No related children aged under 18 years	0	0%	13	37.1%
FEMALE HOUSEHOLDER	49	100%	133	100%
With Related Children under age 18	42	85.7%	60	45.1%
- under age 5 years only	23		6	
- under age 5 years and 5 - 17 years	19		0	
- aged 5 - 17 years only	0		54	
No related children aged under 18 years	7	14.3%	73	54.9%
TOTAL	92		1000	

SOURCE: US Census Bureau: 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

TABLE 4.12
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POVERTY STATUS BY AGE
1999

TOTAL POPULATION FOR WHICH POVERTY STATUS IS DETERMINED: 4613	Below Poverty Level	At or Above Poverty Level
Under 5	60	151
5 Years Old	8	29
6-11 Years Old	25	180
12-17 Years Old	0	269
18 to 24 Years Old	537	242
25 to 34 Years Old	71	412
35 to 44 Years Old	40	432
45 to 54 Years Old	50	578
55 to 64 Years Old	86	460
65-74 Years Old	74	408
75 Years Old and Over	44	457
Total	**995**	**3618**

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2000: PCT - 142.

TABLE 4.13
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POVERTY STATUS BY AGE AND PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION

TOTAL POPULATION FOR WHICH POVERTY IS DETERMNED: 4613	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Above Poverty Level	% Above Poverty Level
Under 5	60	28.4%	151	71.6%
5 years old	8	21.6%	29	78.4%
6 to 11 years old	25	12.2%	180	87.8%
12 to 17 years old	0	0.0%	269	100.0%
18 to 24 years old	537	68.9%	242	31.1%
25 to 34 years old	71	14.7%	412	85.3%
35 to 44 years old	40	8.5%	432	91.5%
45 to 54 years old	50	7.9%	578	92.1%
55 to 64 years old	86	15.8%	460	84.2%
65 to 74 years old	74	15.4%	408	84.6%
75 years and older	44	8.8%	457	91.2%
TOTAL	**995**	**21.6%**	**3618**	**78.4%**

SOURCE: US Census

TABLE 4.14
POVERTY STATUS BY AGE
ADJUSTED: AGE CATEGORY 18 TO 24

TOTAL POPULATION FOR WHICH POVERTY IS DETERMINED: 4114[1]	Below Povery Level	% Below Poverty Level	Above Poverty Level	% Above Poverty Level
Under 5	60	28.4%	151	71.6%
5 years old	8	21.6%	29	78.4%
6 to 11 years old	25	12.2%	180	87.8%
12 to 17 years old	0	0.0%	269	100.0%
18 to 24 years old[2]	71	13.3%	209	86.7%
25 to 34 years old	71	14.7%	412	85.3%
35 to 44 years old	40	8.5%	432	91.5%
45 to 54 years old	50	7.9%	578	92.1%
55 to 64 years old	86	15.8%	460	84.2%
65 to 74 years old	74	15.4%	408	84.6%
75 years and older	44	8.8%	457	91.2%
TOTAL	**529**	**12.9%**	**3585**	**87.1%**

SOURCE: US Census
% within the age group, not a percentage of the total population.
1: Total based on Adjustment for Age Category 18-24.
2: Mathematical Adjustment for Age Category 18-24 is based on the average % Below Poverty for all other age categories

Total of Percentages, All Categories excluding 18-24: 133.3%
Dividing by remaining number of Age Categories: ÷ 10
Yields Average % Below Poverty: 13.3%

Number in age Category 18-24: 537
Multiplied by Average % Below Poverty: x 13.3%
Yields Adjusted Number: 71

TABLE 4.15
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE AND GENDER BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP
2000

AGE	BLOCK GROUP											
	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
under 5	17	12	13	14	19	21	25	9	7	8	46	20
37749	20	10	13	0	8	0	42	15	8	0	17	13
37907	24	26	0	0	22	33	9	33	15	6	36	59
15-19	36	35	638	165	180	152	14	9	8	12	15	29
20-24	49	41	900	145	127	215	10	19	61	70	27	15
25-29	34	7	33	42	29	26	12	21	6	13	31	0
30-34	13	16	18	15	39	14	21	9	13	26	35	30
35-49	40	26	15	5	10	0	0	24	10	0	0	48
40-44	25	32	0	0	38	43	11	24	19	20	45	37
45-49	32	23	26	0	38	25	14	36	8	16	50	42
50-54	19	50	10	18	8	53	26	22	33	0	39	47
55-59	17	39	26	10	12	13	39	49	30	17	32	20
60-64	37	4	24	10	19	18	14	36	7	17	19	32
65-69	11	24	9	5	21	20	23	9	12	43	43	60
70-74	14	0	5	8	6	21	15	14	19	26	33	61
75-79	13	6	0	22	31	10	0	19	13	29	46	70
80-84	0	36	16	0	16	11	9	35	0	35	15	32
85+	0	22	0	8	0	10	8	31	0	23	22	34
Gender Total	**401**	**409**	**1746**	**467**	**623**	**685**	**292**	**414**	**269**	**361**	**551**	**649**
Block Total	**810**		**2213**		**1308**		**706**		**630**		**1200**	

SOURCE: US Census

TABLE 4.16
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUP
1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000

Block Group	1970	1980	% CHANGE	1990	% CHANGE	2000	% CHANGE
1	1,145	991	-13.4	847	-14.5	810	-4.4
2	2,497	2,667	6.8	2,235	-16.2	2,213	-1.0
3	876	846	-3.4	1,253	48.1	1,308	4.4
4	961	777	-19.2	721	7.2	706	-2.1
5	862	857	-0.6	739	-13.8	630	-14.8
6	1,256	1,154	-8.1	1,164	0.9	1,200	3.1

SOURCE: US Census

TABLE 4.17
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY
CENSUS BLOCK GROUP
2000

	BLOCK GROUP					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
White	486	1925	1211	697	489	1144
Black or African American	294	189	77	0	96	49
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	6	0	7	0
Asian	21	37	5	0	12	0
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	24	9	0	0	0
Two or More Races	9	38	0	9	26	7
Total	**810**	**2213**	**1308**	**706**	**630**	**1200**

SOURCE: US Census

TABLE 4.18
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION CHANGE BY CENSUS TRACT AND BLOCK GROUP*
1990 and 2000

	1990	2000	CHANGE	% CHANGE
Census Tract 9901, Block Group 5	979	1,197	218	22.3%
Census Tract 9901, Block Group 6	1,103	1,073	-30	-2.7%
Census Tract 9902, Block Group 3	1,077	1,549	472	43.8%
Census Tract 9903, Block Group 1	813	922	109	13.4%
Census Tract 9903, Block Group 3	979	1,172	193	19.7%
Census Tract 9903, Block Group 4	892	1,055	163	18.3%
TOTAL	5,843	6,968	1,125	19.3%

SOURCE: US Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing; US Census, Census 2000
***Starting in 1990, Census Tract and Block Group information was used for tabulation purposes, replacing the Enumeration District concept for rural areas employed in previous censuses. (SOURCE: Documents Center, University of Michigan)**

TABLE 4.19
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION CHANGE BY ENUMERATION DISTRICT
1970 and 1980

ENUMERATION DISTRICT	POPULATION	
	1970	1980
2	1,207	940
5	547	626
10	886	1,046
11	1,218	1,349
12	839	1,081
15	869	895
TOTAL	5,566	5,937

SOURCE: 1990 Comprehensive Plan, City of Lexington

TABLE 4.20
CITY OF LEXINGTON
PROJECTED AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS
2000 - 2030

Age Group	2000		2010 (projected)		2020 (projected)		2030 (projected)		Number Increase 2000 - 2030	Percent Increase 2000 - 2030
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
under age 5	**205**	**3.0%**	**232**	**3.4%**	**283**	**4.1%**	**302**	**4.4%**	**97**	**47.1%**
5 - 9	195	2.8%	153	2.2%	170	2.5%	193	2.8%	-2	-0.9%
10 - 14	213	3.1%	168	2.4%	160	2.3%	160	2.3%	-53	-24.8%
15 - 19	1,302	19.0%	1,032	15.0%	871	12.6%	817	11.8%	-485	-37.2%
Total Age 5 - 19	**1,710**	**24.9%**	**1,353**	**19.6%**	**1,202**	**17.4%**	**1,171**	**17.0%**	**-539**	**-31.5%**
20 - 24	1,683	24.5%	1,960	28.4%	1,605	23.3%	1,512	21.9%	-171	-10.2%
25 - 29	309	4.5%	493	7.1%	628	9.1%	540	7.8%	231	74.9%
30 - 34	219	3.2%	162	2.4%	237	3.4%	312	4.5%	93	42.6%
35 - 39	225	3.3%	145	2.1%	129	1.9%	173	2.5%	-52	-22.9%
Total Age 20 - 39	**2,436**	**35.5%**	**2,760**	**40.0%**	**2,598**	**37.7%**	**2,538**	**36.8%**	**102**	**4.2%**
40 - 44	245	3.6%	203	2.9%	165	2.4%	145	2.1%	-100	-40.7%
45 - 49	324	4.7%	305	4.4%	282	4.1%	254	3.7%	-70	-21.7%
50 - 54	296	4.3%	288	4.2%	306	4.4%	279	4.0%	-17	-5.7%
55 - 59	268	3.9%	294	4.3%	346	5.0%	343	5.0%	75	27.9%
60 - 64	257	3.7%	273	4.0%	330	4.8%	354	5.1%	97	37.6%
Total Age 40 - 64	**1,390**	**20.2%**	**1,362**	**19.7%**	**1,428**	**20.7%**	**1,375**	**19.9%**	**-15**	**-1.1%**
65 - 69	276	4.0%	281	4.1%	332	4.8%	367	5.3%	91	32.9%
70 - 74	253	3.7%	257	3.7%	290	4.2%	307	4.5%	54	21.5%
75 - 79	243	3.5%	217	3.2%	287	4.2%	319	4.6%	76	31.2%
80 - 84	176	2.6%	200	2.9%	212	3.1%	256	3.7%	80	45.5%
Total Age 65 - 84	**948**	**13.8%**	**956**	**13.8%**	**1122**	**16.3%**	**1,249**	**18.1%**	**301**	**31.8%**
Total Age 85 & OVER	**178**	**2.6%**	**238**	**3.4%**	**267**	**3.9%**	**266**	**3.9%**	**88**	**49.4%**
Total Population	**6,867**	**100.0%**	**6,900**	**100.0%**	**6,900**	**100.0%**	**6,900**	**100.0%**	**33**	**0.5%**
Total Age19 & under	**1,915**	**27.9%**	**1,585**	**23.0%**	**1,485**	**21.5%**	**1,472**	**21.3%**	**-443**	**-23.1%**
Total Age 20-64	**3,826**	**55.7%**	**4,122**	**59.7%**	**4,027**	**58.4%**	**3,913**	**56.7%**	**87**	**2.3%**
Total Age 65 & Over	**1,126**	**16.4%**	**1193**	**17.3%**	**1,389**	**20.1%**	**1,515**	**22.0%**	**389**	**34.6%**

Prepared by: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
Source: Virginia Employment Commission, May 2003.
Subparts may not add to total due to rounding.

TABLE 4.21
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY
PROJECTED GROUP CHARACTERISTICS
2000 - 2030

Age Group	2000		2010 (projected)		2020 (projected)		2030 (projected)		Number Increase 2000 - 2030	Percentage Increase 2000-2030
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
under age 5	**1123**	**5.4%**	**1,395**	**6.4%**	**1566**	**6.9%**	**1620**	**6.9%**	**497**	**44.2%**
5 - 9	1,231	5.9%	1,017	4.7%	1,100	4.8%	1290	5.5%	59	4.8%
10 - 14	1,387	6.7%	1,179	5.4%	1,070	4.7%	1049	4.4%	-338	-24.4%
15 - 19	1,329	6.4%	1,170	5.4%	1,271	5.6%	1384	5.9%	55	4.1%
Total Age 5 - 19	**3947**	**19.0%**	**3366**	**15.4%**	**3441**	**15.2%**	**3722**	**15.8%**	**-225**	**-5.7%**
20 - 24	1,196	5.7%	1,585	7.3%	1,634	7.2%	1,620	6.9%	424	35.4%
25 - 29	1,163	5.6%	1,990	9.1%	2,067	9.1%	2,092	8.9%	929	79.8%
30 - 34	1,258	6.0%	966	4.4%	1,264	5.6%	1,596	6.8%	338	26.9%
35 - 39	1,562	7.5%	1,063	4.9%	875	3.9%	1,023	4.3%	-539	-34.5%
Total Age 20 - 39	**5179**	**24.9%**	**5605**	**25.7%**	**5840**	**25.7%**	**6330**	**26.8%**	**1151**	**22.2%**
40 - 44	1,667	8.0%	1,490	6.8%	1,161	5.1%	1,052	4.5%	-615	-36.9%
45 - 49	1,612	7.7%	1,653	7.6%	1,428	6.3%	1,307	5.5%	-305	-18.9%
50 - 54	1,539	7.4%	1,654	7.6%	1,693	7.5%	1,548	6.6%	9	0.6%
55 - 59	1,274	6.1%	1,518	7.0%	1,705	7.5%	1,719	7.3%	445	35.0%
60 - 64	1,208	5.8%	1,406	6.5%	1,627	7.2%	1,738	7.4%	530	43.9%
Total Age 40 - 64	**7300**	**35.1%**	**7721**	**35.4%**	**7615**	**33.5%**	**7364**	**31.2%**	**64**	**0.9%**
65 - 69	1026	4.9%	1,143	5.2%	1,290	5.7%	1,400	5.9%	374	36.5%
70 - 74	916	4.4%	1,024	4.7%	1,136	5.0%	1,200	5.1%	284	31.0%
75 - 79	662	3.2%	647	3.0%	847	3.7%	923	3.9%	261	39.4%
80 - 84	365	1.8%	467	2.1%	493	2.2%	588	2.5%	223	61.2%
Total Age 65 - 84	**2,969**	**14.3%**	**3,281**	**15.1%**	**3766**	**16.6%**	**4,111**	**17.4%**	**1142**	**38.5%**
Total 85 & OVER	**290**	**1.4%**	**432**	**2.0%**	**472**	**2.1%**	**454**	**1.9%**	**164**	**56.5%**
Total Population	**20,808**	**100.0%**	**21,800**	**100.0%**	**22,700**	**100.0%**	**23,600**	**100.0%**	**2,792**	**13.4%**
Age 19 & under	**5,070**	**24.4%**	**4,761**	**21.8%**	**5,007**	**22.1%**	**5,341**	**22.6%**	**271**	**5.3%**
Age 20-64	**12,479**	**60.0%**	**13,326**	**61.1%**	**13,455**	**59.3%**	**13,694**	**58.0%**	**1,215**	**9.7%**
Age 65 & Over	**3259**	**15.7%**	**3,713**	**17.0%**	**4,238**	**18.7%**	**4,565**	**19.3%**	**1,306**	**40.1%**

Prepared by: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
Source: Virginia Employment Commission, May 2003.
Subparts may not add to total due to rounding.

TABLE 4.22
CITY OF LEXINGTON
ENROLLMENT IN CITY SCHOOLS
1990, 1995, 2000, 2005

Enrollment Trends				
	Count as of September 30			
School - Residency	1990	1995	2000	2005
Elementary - Resident	269	270	211	208
Elementary - Tuition	57	53	75	78
Elementary - Total	326	323	286	286
Middle School - Resident	130	138	131	131
Middle School - Tuition	26	26	31	61
Middle School - Total	156	164	162	192
Elementary & Middle School RESIDENT TOTAL	399	408	342	339
Elementary & Middle School TUITION TOTAL	83	79	106	139
Elementary & Middle School TOTAL	482	487	448	478

Source: Lexington City Schools

TABLE 4.23
CITY OF LEXINGTON
ENROLLMENT IN CITY SCHOOLS
1990 - 2006

Enrollment Trends																	
	Count as of September 30																
School - Residency	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006*
Elementary - Resident	269	274	275	264	264	270	262	244	231	230	211	229	229	226	223	208	228
Elementary - Tuition	57	50	50	54	49	53	47	45	53	62	75	83	73	72	73	78	85
Elementary - Total	326	324	325	318	313	323	309	289	284	292	286	312	302	298	296	286	313
Middle School - Resident	130	136	138	137	140	138	137	151	141	144	131	134	119	125	123	131	102
Middle School - Tuition	26	28	22	22	22	26	24	21	21	20	31	36	45	53	57	61	80
Middle School - Total	156	164	160	159	162	164	161	172	162	164	162	170	164	178	180	192	179
Elementary & Middle RESIDENT TOTAL	399	410	413	401	404	408	399	395	372	374	342	363	348	351	346	339	330
Elementary & Middle TUITION TOTAL	83	78	72	76	71	79	71	66	74	82	106	119	118	125	130	139	165
Elementary & Middle School - TOTAL	482	488	485	477	475	487	470	461	446	456	448	482	466	476	476	478	492

Source: Lexington City Schools
* No explanation available for increase in enrollment at Waddell Elementary School, 2006

TABLE 4.24

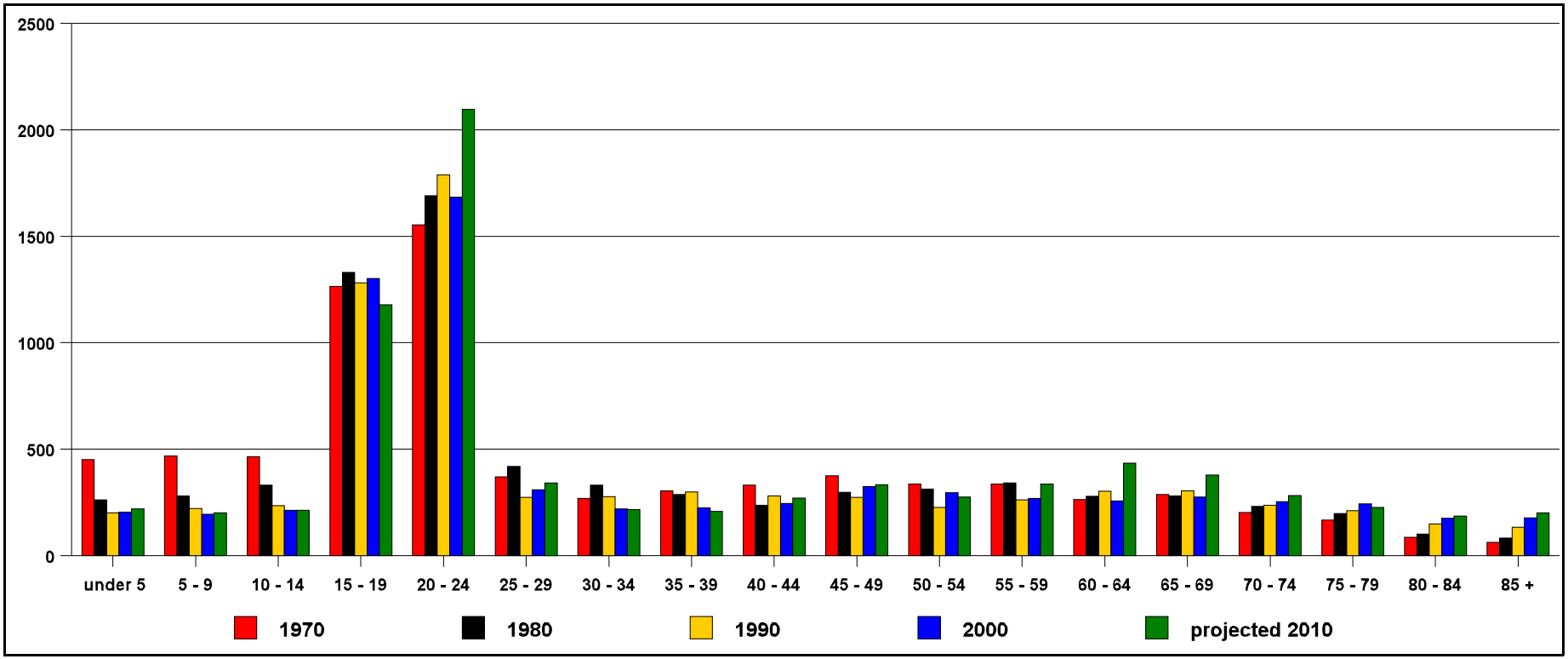
LEXINGTON - BUENA VISTA - ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY COMBINED
PROJECTED AGE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS
2000 - 2030

Age Group	2000		2010 (projected)		2020 (projected)		2030 (projected)		Number Increase 2000-2030	Percent Increase 2000-2030
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
under age 5	**1,705**	**5.0%**	**1798**	**5.1%**	**2029**	**5.6%**	**2,082**	**5.4%**	**377**	**22.1%**
5 to 9	1792	5.3%	1,807	5.1%	2,062	5.6%	2,225	5.8%	433	24.2%
10 to 14	1,993	5.9%	1,732	4.9%	1,935	5.3%	2,188	5.7%	195	9.8%
15 to 19	3,121	9.2%	2,825	8.0%	2748	7.5%	3,065	8.0%	-56	-1.8%
Total Age 5-19	**6,906**	**20.3%**	**6364**	**18.1%**	**6745**	**18.5%**	**7478**	**19.6%**	**572**	**8.3%**
20 to 24	3319	9.7%	3405	9.7%	2,918	8.0%	3152	8.2%	-167	-5.0%
25 to 29	1798	5.3%	2,209	6.3%	1,877	5.1%	1,876	4.9%	78	4.3%
30 to 34	1,939	5.7%	2,077	5.9%	2,116	5.8%	1,830	4.8%	-109	-5.6%
35 to 39	2,203	6.5%	1,844	5.3%	2,259	6.2%	1,931	5.0%	-272	-12.3%
Total Age 20-39	**9,259**	**27.2%**	**9,535**	**27.2%**	**9,170**	**25.1%**	**8,789**	**23.0%**	**-470**	**-5.1%**
40 to 44	2,342	6.9%	1,932	5.5%	2,138	5.9%	2,182	5.7%	-160	-6.8%
45 to 49	2357	6.9%	2,235	6.4%	1,930	5.3%	2,347	6.1%	-10	-0.4%
50 to 54	2,317	6.8%	2,444	7.0%	2,063	5.7%	2,266	5.9%	-51	-2.2%
55 to 59	1,912	5.6%	2,400	6.8%	2,382	6.5%	2,036	5.3%	124	6.5%
60 to 64	1,817	5.3%	2,222	6.3%	2,462	6.7%	2,066	5.4%	249	13.7%
Total Age 40-64	**10745**	**31.6%**	**11233**	**32.0%**	**10975**	**30.1%**	**10897**	**28.5%**	**152**	**1.4%**
65 to 69	1590	4.7%	1722	4.9%	2,252	6.2%	2241	5.9%	651	40.9%
70 to 74	1,416	4.2%	1,484	4.2%	1,876	5.1%	2,080	5.4%	664	46.9%
75 to 79	1,124	3.3%	1,199	3.4%	1,320	3.6%	1,725	4.5%	601	53.5%
80 to 84	684	2.0%	792	2.3%	832	2.3%	1,050	2.7%	366	53.5%
Total Age 65-84	**4,814**	**14.1%**	**5,197**	**14.8%**	**6,280**	**17.2%**	**7,096**	**18.6%**	**2,282**	**47.4%**
Total Age 85 & OVER	**618**	**1.8%**	**992**	**2.8%**	**1,302**	**3.6%**	**1,896**	**5.0%**	**1,278**	**206.8%**
TOTAL	**34,047**	**100.0%**	**35,119**	**100.0%**	**36,501**	**100.0%**	**38,238**	**100.0%**	**4,191**	**12.3%**
Age 19 & under	**8,611**	**25.3%**	**8,162**	**23.2%**	**8,774**	**24.0%**	**9,560**	**25.0%**	**949**	**11.0%**
Age 20-64	**20,004**	**58.8%**	**20,768**	**59.1%**	**20,145**	**55.2%**	**19,686**	**51.5%**	**-318**	**-1.6%**
Age 65 & Over	**5,432**	**16.0%**	**6,189**	**17.6%**	**7,582**	**20.8%**	**8,992**	**23.5%**	**3,560**	**65.5%**

Prepared by: Central Shenandoah Planning Commission

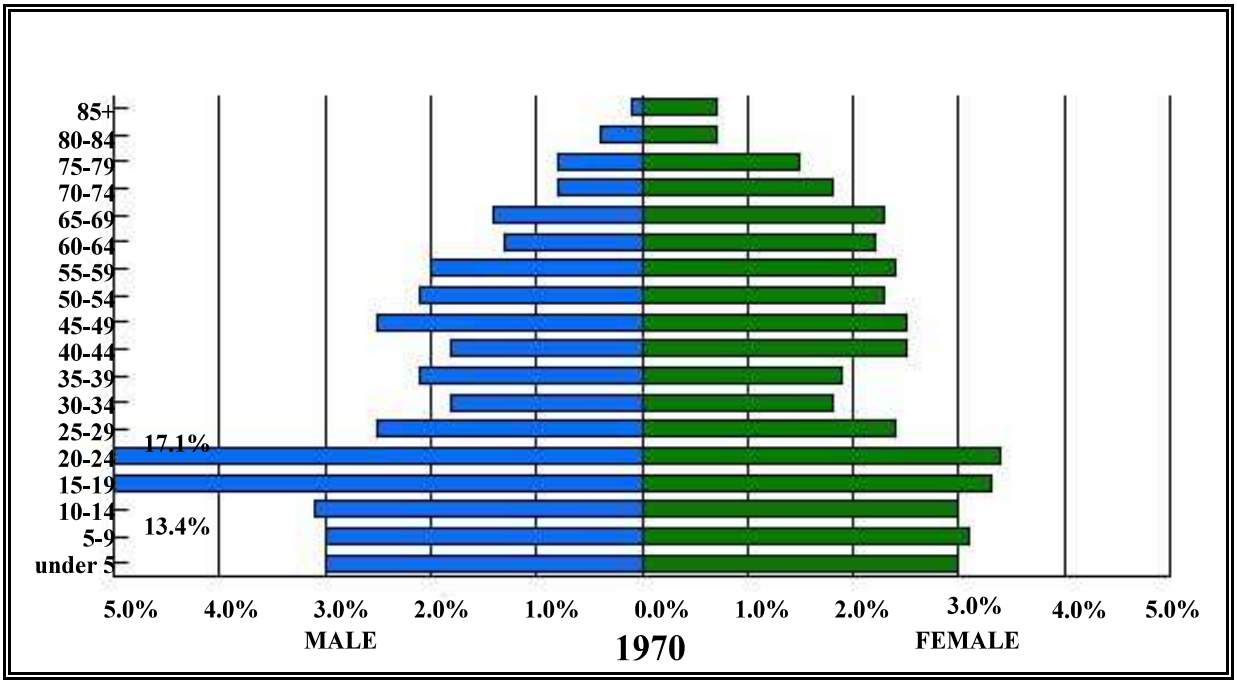
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., Washington, DC. Copyright 2005. Woods & Poole does not guarantee the accuracy of this data. Use of this data and the conclusions drawn from it are solely the responsibility of the user. Subparts may not add to total due to rounding

FIGURE 4.9
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY AGE: 1970 - 2000
POPULATION PROJECTION BY AGE: 2010

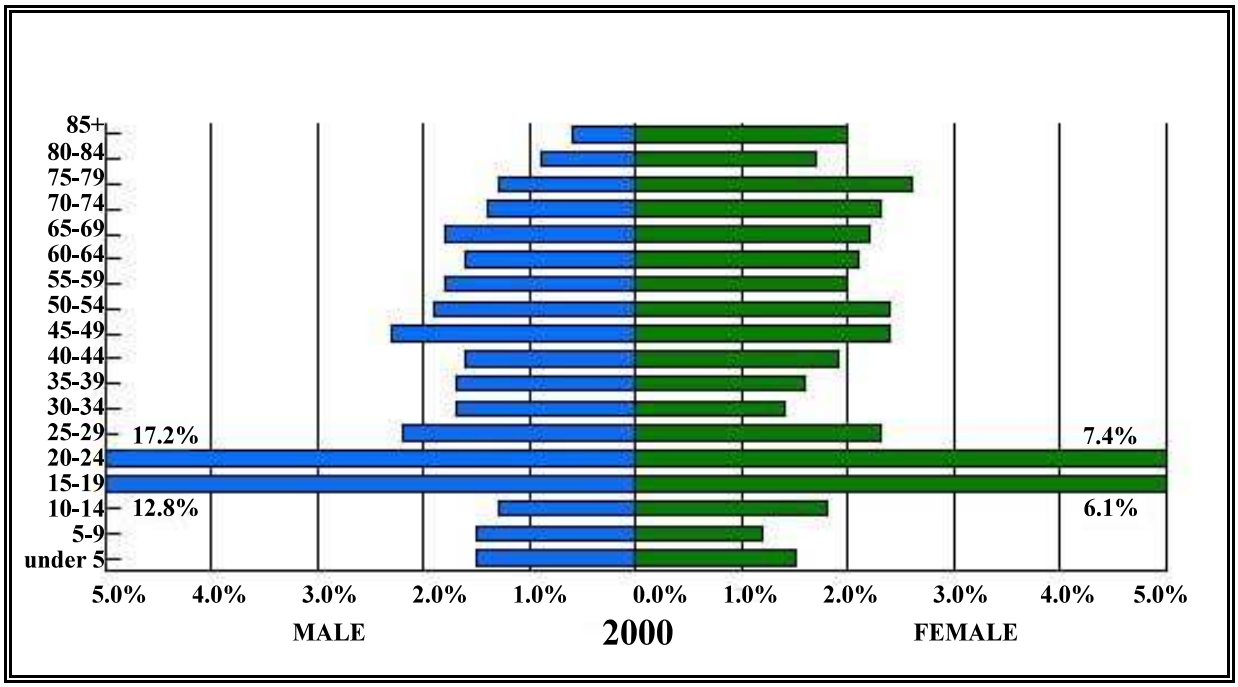


Source: US Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

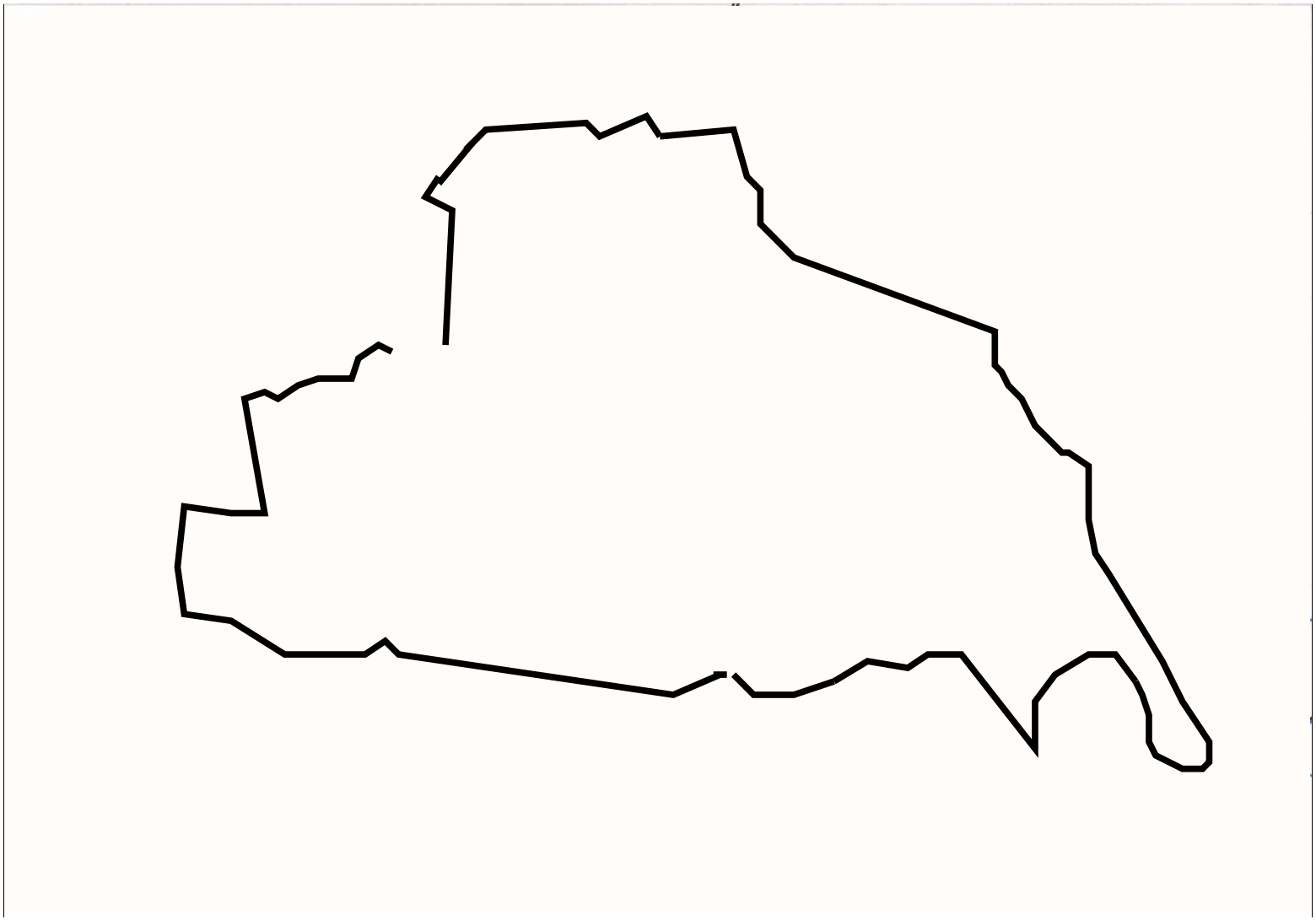
FIGURE 4.10
CITY OF LEXINGTON
POPULATION BY AGE AND GENDER
1970 and 2000



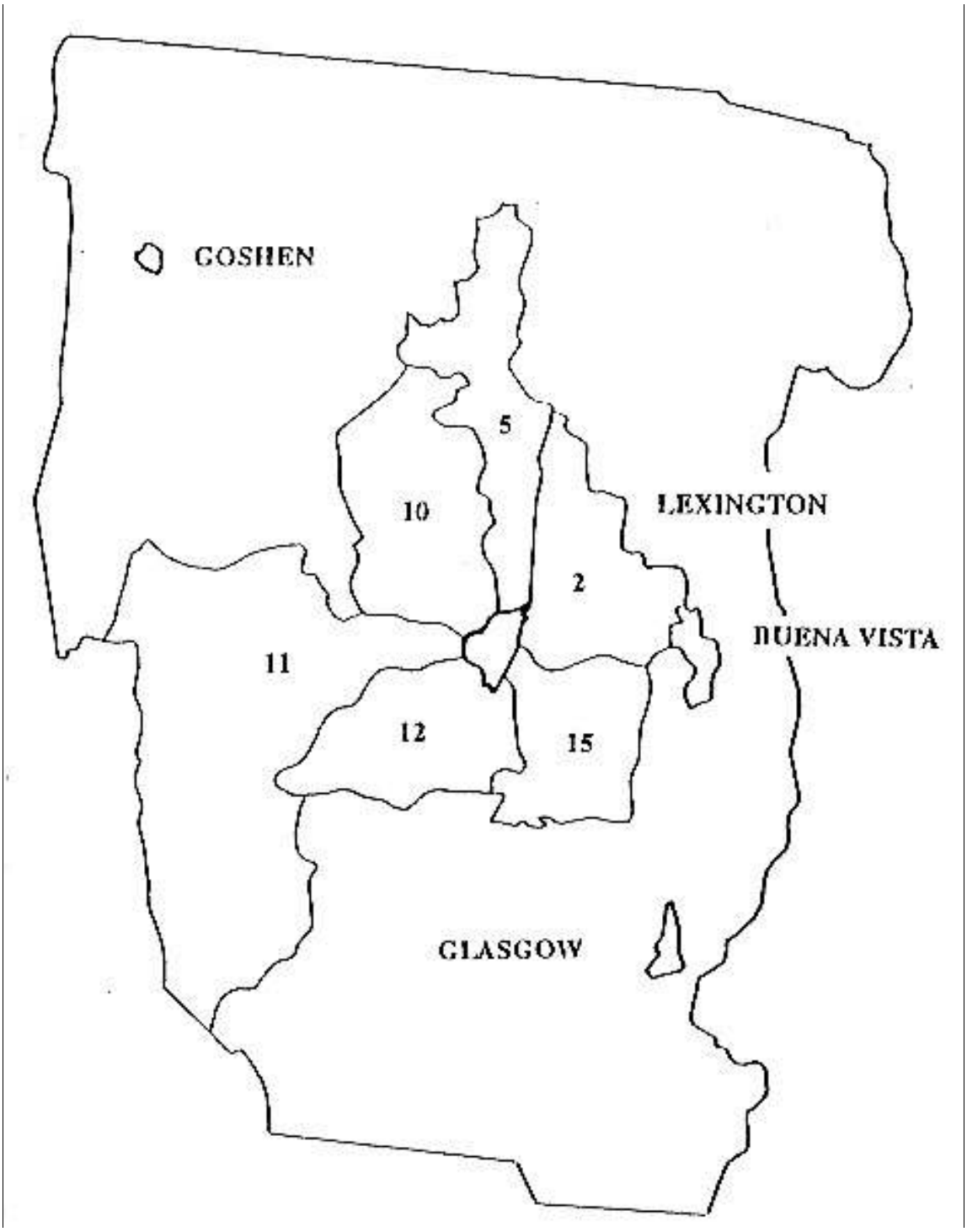
1.0%



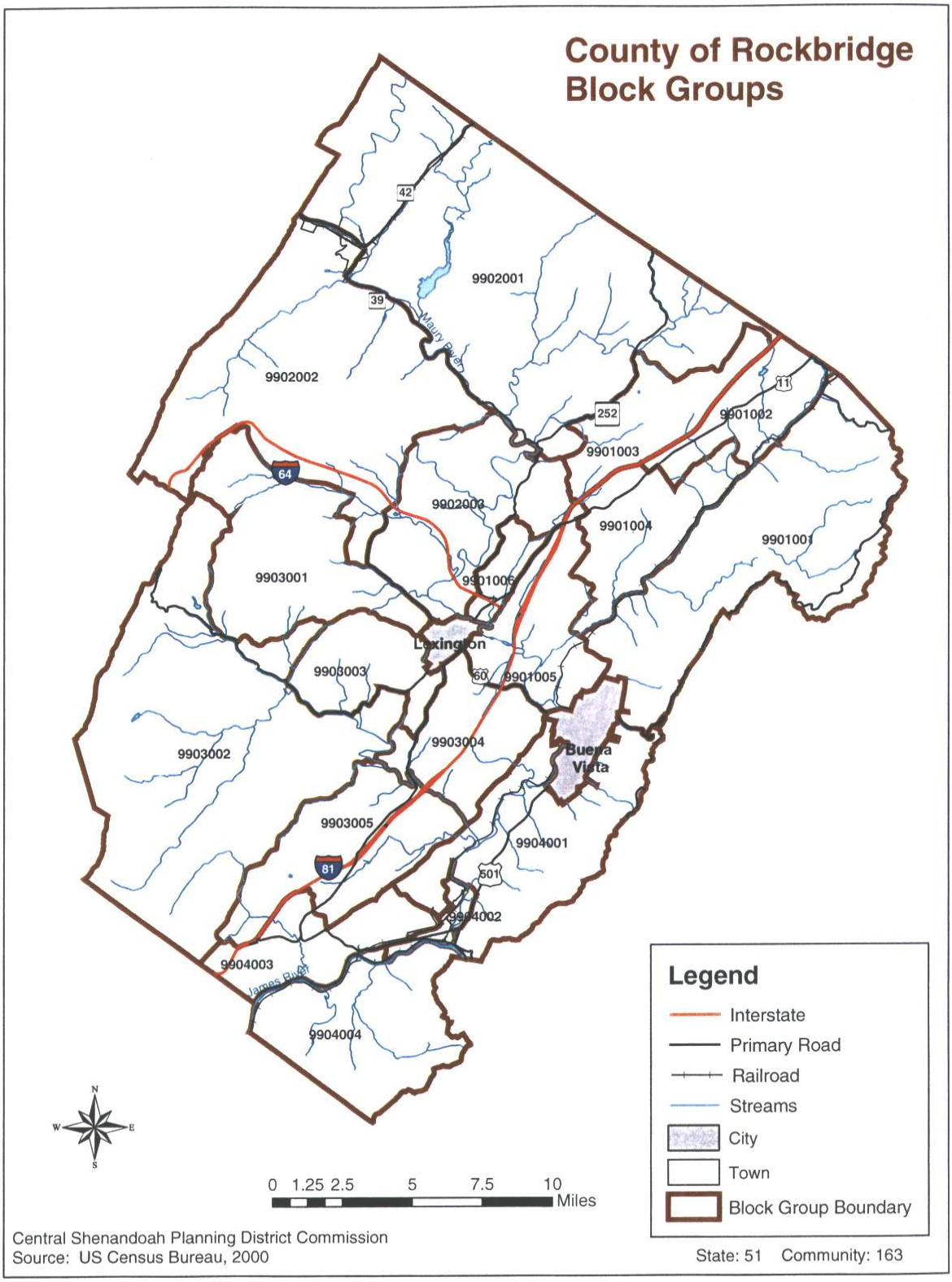
ENLARGEMENT
FIGURE 4.3
BLOCK GROUPS
CITY OF LEXINGTON



ENLARGEMENT
FIGURE 4.4
CITY OF LEXINGTON
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY
ENUMERATION DISTRICTS



ENLARGEMENT
FIGURE 4.5
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY
CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS



HOUSING

Twenty years ago, many individuals in and around Lexington believed there was no vacant land within the City's boundaries for construction of new residences. In the subsequent decade, 75 new residences were built. Ten years ago, most individuals believed that there was, unquestionably, no land available on which to build. In the subsequent ten years, 95 residences were constructed. Today, most would agree, with certainty, that there is no vacant land within the City's boundaries for construction of new residences. Yet, even as the reader scans these lines, building permits for housing with the City limits are being pursued.

The continuing addition to our housing stock is to be celebrated. New housing adds to the tax base and contributes, beyond sheltering families and individuals, to the overall quality of life, the vibrancy of our community, and the overall economic well-being of Lexington. While the housing stock has increased and there is much to commend in the diverse range of housing, challenges remain. For example, the quality of life residents enjoy attracts new residents, which results in an increase in housing prices, making home ownership in the City unattainable for many of those who serve our community.

This chapter focuses, first, on how Lexington's traditional housing and its history benefit the City and why the traditional housing patterns of our community should be protected. The chapter then moves to areas where proactive attention is warranted.

The evolution of housing in Lexington has included subdivision of land, mixed housing styles, varied footprints, and widely varying prices–all in the same neighborhood. While fewer vacant parcels are available, it is predicted that entrepreneurial efforts coupled with a continuing desire to live within the City's boundaries will result in additional residences coming onto the tax roster over the next decade. With those yet-to-be added homes will come even greater housing diversity and, in some areas, increasing housing density. This chapter will not lament the lack of buildable land. It will show that the City's density represents an advantage, not a problem.

Prior consideration of Lexington's housing viewed the lack of large tracts of land on which housing could be built as the defining problem. Thinking has shifted to seeing that former "problem" as conferring enviable advantages that less dense communities do not have. Study has shown that

1. Cities can comfortably provide housing for all, when properties of different values, architectural styles and sizes mix together within neighborhoods. Newly built neighborhoods of affordable, similar houses, on the other hand, struggle to find financing and acceptance.

2. Commercial districts retain and expand their economic viability when citizens can walk from their homes to work and shopping.
3. New commercial development succeeds best when it is close to, or includes, housing.
4. Denser housing conditions reduce over-reliance on automobile traffic.
5. Re-purposed existing structures fit easily and ecologically into existing streetscapes, avoiding stark uniformity.
6. Well-planned dense housing can strengthen a city's tax base and help support economic development.

Rather than being a liability, the City's densely-packed existing housing should be viewed as an advantage and used to help drive its economic growth.

INTENTIONS

The housing plan, presented in this chapter, recommends actions that:

1. Take advantage of Lexington's existing dwellings, their age, density, variety, and proximity to commercial activity.
2. Preserve and extend our tradition of diverse housing patterns.
3. Maintain Lexington's special character, which includes housing a diverse population of all economic levels, ages, and physical abilities.
4. Recognize the need for government partnerships to address affordable and workforce housing needs, while ensuring that government does not compete with the private sector when it is capable of meeting market demands.
5. Explore available mechanisms to enable City employees and those in critical professions, and working in Lexington (such as teachers, nurses, and law enforcement), to live within the City limits if they desire.
6. Encourage the continued development of a variety of housing types to increase housing diversity and choice, provide for increased housing density in appropriate areas and maximize the use of vacant land.
7. Recognize that housing is a regional issue and encourage cooperation among local jurisdictions to address housing problems and needs.
8. Encourage environmentally responsible Green Construction.

DETERMINING HOUSING NEEDS

Housing information is collected by the Census Bureau every decade on the long version of the census form which is distributed to one in six households. The 2000 Census housing data is presented in **Appendix 1** following this chapter. It includes data on total and occupied housing units, persons per housing unit, value of owner-occupied units and contract rent for rental housing. Some of this data is reported for Rockbridge County and Buena Vista as well as the Commonwealth as a whole. The remainder is reported only for Lexington. This Chapter will be

updated to include the 2010 Census housing data when it is released.

GOAL: Maintain accurate and current information about housing needs.

Recommendation: Replace outdated census information contained in this plan with newly released census data as it becomes available.

A housing unit is defined by the Census Bureau as "a house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms or single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall." As of April 1, 2000, the date of the last census, Lexington contained 2,376 housing units.

An additional 95 housing units have been constructed in Lexington since that date. By April 2009, Lexington had 2,471 housing units. The number of owner-occupied houses has increased over the past 40 years, from 989 houses in 1960 to 1, 232 houses in 2000, an increase of 243 homes. The proportion of rental property has remained fairly stable as a percentage (42%) of total units throughout the years. There were 1,000 renter occupied housing units in 2000.

Student housing remains a significant component of the City's housing market. Student demand has led to increased investor interest and higher sales prices for many houses intended for student rental, since the economic return for houses rented to students is greater than the return for family rentals. Working families and the elderly have traditionally competed with investors of student housing for the same housing stock.

Over the last several decades, housing in Lexington has become increasingly expensive. Owner-occupied housing has appreciated noticeably in the past twenty years. The median value of owner-occupied housing within the City of Lexington was $74,500 in 1999 and $131,900 in 2000 an increase of 77% (not adjusted for inflation). The median value of homes sold in Lexington in 2008 was $244,900 according to the Virginia Board of Realtors. This was an additional increase of 85% since 2000.

GOAL: Formulate housing policies which respond to the changing demographics of the community

Housing demand changes with shifting demographics (changes in cohort size, aging, natality and mortality patterns, family formation and dissolution, economic vitality, and in/out migration patterns) and from the changing housing wants of existing households.

For example, the mini-boom, over the past ten years, in construction of larger homes and in the substantial revitalization of historic, larger single family homes was driven by demand from middle-aged Baby Boomers with older children who wanted to trade up to larger homes. The boom was further fueled by retirees relocating from the North East to Lexington. That demand is predicted to diminish over the next decade, as a much smaller cohort (Gen-Xers) replaces the

Baby Boom generation and as both those Boomers, now aging into retirement, and early retirees seek low/no maintenance residences. The "trade-up" home buyers who dominated the market during the housing mini-boom of the first decade of this century will decline as a force driving demand. The largest net increase in housing demand will come from younger, less affluent households, generating a need for affordable rental housing and starter homes.

The number of households headed by people age 75 and older will continue to increase rapidly; however, like early retirees and empty nesters, the members of this group move far less often than younger households do. As a result, new households will create more net demand for housing than will aging households. These demands will reshape residential development patterns.

Recommendation: Assure that City housing policies encourage suitable housing for new households

Housing Affordablity

The housing market is cyclical, varying between a seller's market when there are more buyers than homes for sale--resulting in increased prices--and a buyer's market where there is a surplus of housing inventory and homeowners reduce asking prices to ensure sale of their houses.

The most recent housing cycle began in about 1995 and is culminating now with a decline in demand and prices. In a traditional cycle, it would be anticipated that demand and prices would again begin to grow. An immediate return to a seller's market, though, is unlikely. The demographic shift to household growth among younger households coupled with an increase in housing demand among both younger and older households creates new and different housing demands. Both groups, young and older, have, on the whole, incomes below Lexington's median income. Their lower income suggests that the next demand may be for housing that differs from the bulk of Lexington's available housing stock. To ensure a stable population, local government may have to focus on the development of affordable housing opportunities to meet these needs.

Housing is considered affordable when direct housing cost (monthly mortgage or rent) does not exceed 30% of a household's income. When combined with utility costs, taxes and insurance, total housing costs should not exceed 35% of household income. When monthly expenses for a dwelling exceed 35% of household income, that housing is considered to be unaffordable for that household.

In a perfectly balanced housing market a household making the area's median income can afford the median priced house for that area. Those making less than the median income cannot. Thus, if half of the population can afford the median income home for an area, that area is considered to have a balanced housing market. Table 5-1 reflects the relationship between median household income and median housing price in Lexington for 2000 and 2007, the last year for which these statistics are presently available.

TABLE 5-1
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME VS ABILITY TO PAY
CITY OF LEXINGTON
2000 & 2007

Year	Median Household Income	Ability to Pay	Median Sales Price
2000	$31,046	$122,000	$131,900
2007	$38,217	$170,000	$244,913

Source: Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission and Section 8 Housing Affordability Calculations

As Table 5-1 reports, the median household income for Lexington increased by 23.1% between 2000 and 2007; but the median sales price for a house in Lexington increased by 85.7% during the same period. While the local housing market was close to being in balance in 2000 - a household making 107% of the median income could purchase the median priced house - the affordability gap has subsequently increased. In 2007, a household had to make over 150% of median income to purchase the median priced house.

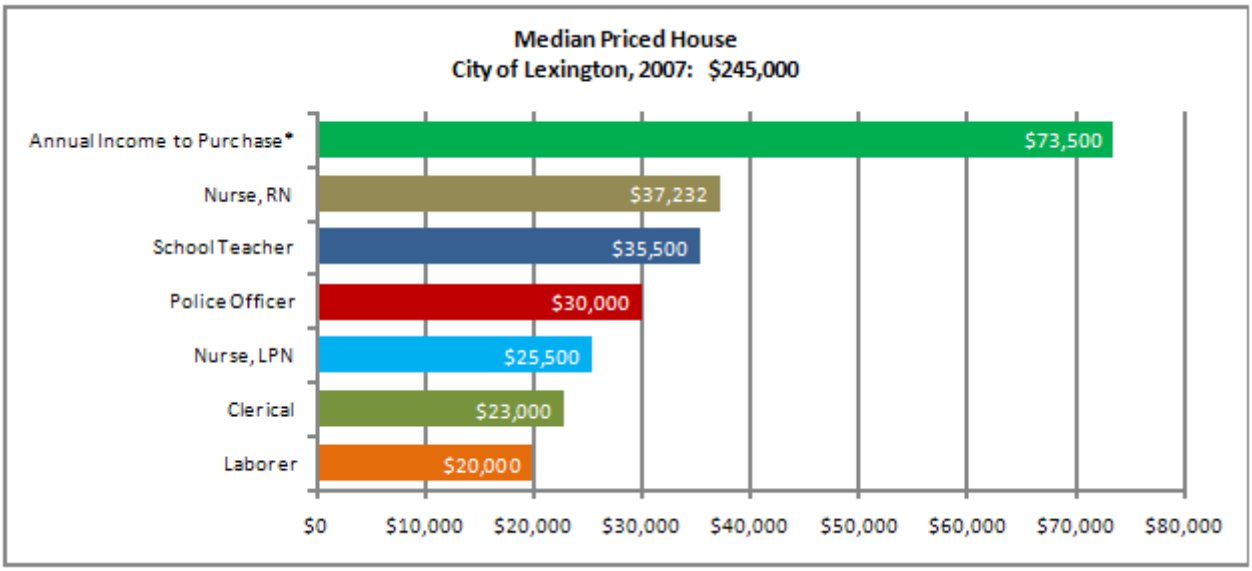
As home prices and rental rates in Lexington have increased faster than income, finding a place to live has become a City-wide problem. Families at or below the median can no longer purchase a median priced home in the City at a price at or below 30% of their income. As a result, an increasing number of gainfully employed workers who contribute to the economic and social well being of our community have a difficult time finding affordable housing in Lexington. The nature of the problem is reflected in Figure 5-1.

Figure 5-1 demonstrates the difficulty of finding affordable housing for many of the critical jobs in the local economy. Application of the established ability to pay criteria (30% of household income) for those in the professions highlighted above suggest that few in these professions could afford a house at less than half the value ($122,500.00) of the median priced house. The maximum house an entry level teacher could afford in 2007 was $150,000. And comparing entry-level income with that of an established professional shows that a teacher entering employment at $35,500 and receiving an annual increase of 3% would, at the end of ten years, be earning $47,709. Using Lexington's past twenty-year housing increases as a loose guide, during that same period, housing costs would have increased by more than 3% annually.

If families find it difficult to purchase a home that meets their needs located near their work they may seek a place to live farther away. Distance requires longer commutes and increases congestion on local roads. As fuel costs increase, low-wage workers will find commuting ever greater distances more difficult. Lacking public transportation, they may seek employment closer to their new residences.

FIGURE 5-1
ABILITY TO PAY AT ENTRY LEVEL INCOME FOR SELECTED PROFESSIONS
MEDIAN PRICED HOUSE
CITY OF LEXINGTON
2007

Source: Entry Level Salaries as reported by employers in Lexington and the Lexington area.



Nurse, RN and Nurse, LPN updated 7/7/10

*Annual Income needed to purchase median priced house.

High housing costs affect not only individuals and families but also communities. Lack of affordable housing undermines a community's overall health. For a community to thrive, the businesses within that community must be competitive, and the people employed by those businesses must earn at least enough to afford basic necessities including adequate, affordable housing. A workforce housing gap makes it more difficult to attract quality workers.

CURRENT HOUSING INITIATIVES

The City has a history of working to assure affordable, quality housing and has employed a number of strategies to address local housing needs and problems. The most successful have upgraded the condition of existing residences.

THRESHOLD, THE CITY'S HOUSING COMMISSION

Threshold, Lexington's Housing Commission was created in 1988. Threshold is charged with addressing the housing needs of City residents, especially those of low- and moderate-income families, the elderly, and the handicapped by coordinating and administering local housing programs, and recruiting public and private developers to construct and rehabilitate houses to meet theses needs.

Threshold has used Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, local funds, and a variety of mortgage programs including Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development funds, as well as funds provided by local banks. With the help of these resources, Threshold has completed a number of housing-related initiatives.

Through Threshold, the City received five Community Development Block grants totaling over $2,800,000. These funds were augmented by over $1,700,000 contributed by the City, local banks, and Habitat for Humanity. Utilizing these funds, Threshold rehabilitated 95 privately owned houses occupied by eligible low and moderate income families. Twenty vacant, dilapidated houses were purchased, comprehensively rehabilitated, and resold to eligible families. Fifteen new houses were built and sold. Threshold staff worked with purchasers to obtain below market interest rate mortgages utilizing Federal and State programs as well as local banks.

Threshold continues to manage the local housing rehabilitation oopportunites fund described below. Most recently, Threshold has rehabilitated two older homes and is offering them for sale to eligible families. Money from the sale of these houses will be returned to the fund for future projects selected to meet the housing needs of this community.

Threshold continues to monitor available funding assistance from Federal, State, and nonprofit agencies for possible use in Lexington. Threshold is also providing the leadership for the creation of a public/private partnership to develop a mixed income housing project on Thompson's Knoll. Community Development Block Grant funds are being sought for this project. More information concerning this project is provided later in this chapter.

LEXINGTON'S HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FUND

The City maintains a Housing Opportunities Fund, initially established with a transfer of money from the City's General Fund. Additional money came from revenues generated from the sale of properties purchased and rehabilitated by Threshold through the Community Development Block

Grant Program as well as from the sale of new housing units constructed by Threshold. The amount of money in this fund continues to ebb and flow depending on Threshold's current activities. Because the focus of Threshold's work is on assisting low and moderate income families, rehabilitated houses are often sold for less than the total cost of their acquisition and rehabilitation leading to a reduction in the total amount of money returning to this fund. Currently there is about $100,000 circulating through the fund.

Recommendation: Continue to manage the Housing Opportunities Fund in a way which maximizes the benefits provided by this money.

Recommendation: Work with local banks and other possible funding sources to create a revolving loan fund to finance local rehabilitation.

Recommendation: Formalize a development plan to solicit funds from the private sector to increase the Opportunities Fund.

Habitat's interest free mortgage system is a possible model for such a loan fund.

RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM

In 2006, the City of Lexington adopted a rental housing inspection program which requires the inspection of all of the residential rental units in six designated districts as well as the multi-family complexes located in Lexington. The districts were selected because of the presence of a large number of older houses and a high percentage of rental housing units. The program also provides for the inspection of properties located outside an inspection district based on observations of City staff or complaints from landlords, tenants or the general public. **A similar program has recently been adopted by the City of Buena Vista.**

The focus of the program is protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the community by ensuring the maintenance of decent, safe and sanitary living conditions for rental properties within the City. The Virginia Uniform Statewide Property Maintenance Code is utilized for inspection purposes. Focus is on health and safety issues. The cosmetic condition of the property is a secondary consideration. Figure 5.2 shows the current rental inspection districts.

GOAL: Continue to emphasize housing maintenance and, when necessary, rehabilitation as the primary way to ensure the preservation of older houses within the City.

Recommendation: Further decline of existing housing should be arrested through Code Enforcement efforts that require continued maintenance of older, deteriorating structures.

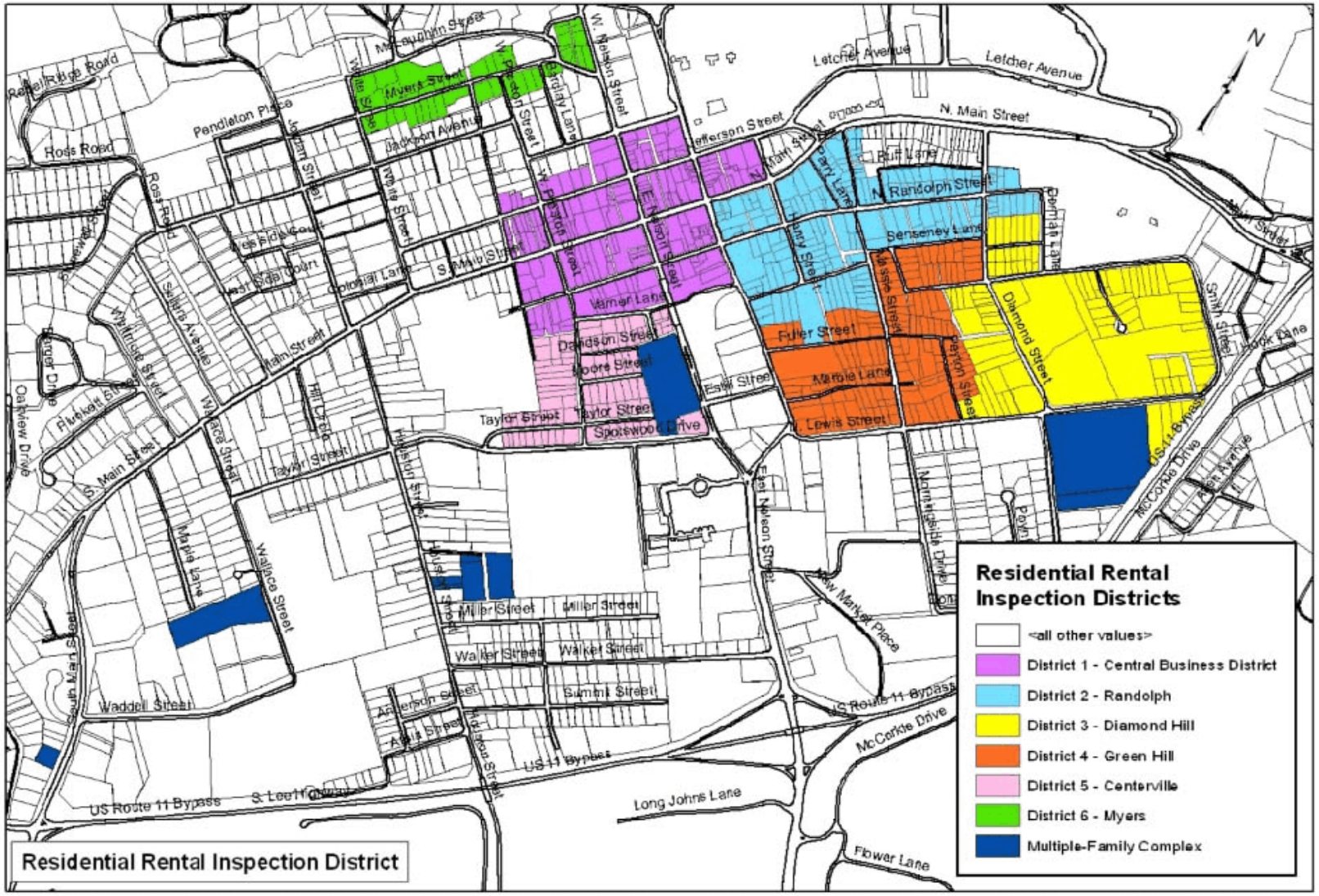
Although vacant structures are not addressed through the rental inspection program, they are also

subject to the requirements of the Property Maintenance Code. Vacant, deteriorating structures are a blight on the neighborhoods in which they are located. They also represent an unused housing resource.

Recommendation: Utilize the Property Maintenance Code to address deteriorating, vacant houses.

Recommendation: The City should require and assist property owners, when necessary, to upgrade the physical condition of deteriorated structures.

FIGURE 5-2
RESIDENTIAL RENTAL INSPECTION DISTRICTS



TOTAL ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (TAP)

TAP, headquartered in Roanoke, provides a variety of services, including housing related activities, to the citizens of Alleghany, Bath, Botetourt, Roanoke, Rockbridge, and Craig Counties and the Cities of Roanoke, Salem, Buena Vista, Clifton Forge, Covington and Lexington. They have recently opened an office in Lexington and have been expanding their activities in the local area. Their housing-related activities include weatherization and emergency home repairs.

TAP has operated a weatherization program for houses owned and occupied or rented by lower-income families in the City and surrounding area. Weatherization services are designed to reduce the cost of heating and air conditioning and improve the quality of life for recipients. Houses are insulated, weatherstripping is installed, doors and windows are repaired or replaced to reduce air infiltration, heating units and flues are inspected and repairs are initiated where needed.

TAP's emergency home repair program is intended to improve living conditions for low -income families, the disabled, and the elderly by removing barriers to habitability and accessibility in their homes. Repairs are limited to those that affect the health and safety of residents. Eligible home repairs include underpinning of houses and mobile homes, securing porches and handrails, roof, floor and structural repairs and installation of handicap accessibility features.

TAP has also established a rental eviction prevention fund to help prevent families in need from being evicted from their homes.

Other housing-related TAP activities include emergency utilities assistance and homeownership education.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Since its founding in 1989, Rockbridge Area Habitat for Humanity has built 11 of its 40 homes in Lexington. Five of the Lexington homes were built on lots donated by the City of Lexington to Habitat. The other six lots were purchased directly from the land owners.

Rockbridge Habitat builds safe, decent and affordable houses with partner families and the community. All Habitat partner families have a housing need, a demonstrated ability to pay the mortgage, and a willingness to help build their own home. The income levels for prospective Habitat homeowners are between 25% and 60% of area median income; using a family of four persons as an example, the total household income for a Habitat partner family in 2009 will range between $14,375 and $34,500.

Habitat homeowners purchase their homes with a 20-year, zero-interest, no-profit mortgage. The remaining equity in the home is secured by a forgivable second mortgage. Mortgage revenues are used by Rockbridge Habitat to cover costs of new Habitat homes in the area.

The City of Lexington has provided financial and technical support to Rockbridge Habitat. Building on their shared successes, Rockbridge Habitat and the City of Lexington continue to explore ways to partner or work together to address affordable housing needs in the City.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Section 8 Voucher and Certificate Program - The Section 8 Voucher and Certificate Program is managed locally by Rockbridge County through is Rental Assistance Office which provides rental assistance throughout the Rockbridge County area, including Lexington, Buena Vista, Glasgow, Natural Bridge and Goshen. The Section 8 program is overseen by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered on a state level by the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA).

The vouchers or certificates are assigned to program participants. Use of vouchers are not restricted to a specific locality. Participants locate their own housing. The unit must be inspected to assure that the dwelling meets minimum housing quality standards established by HUD. Participants pay rents based on income and family size. The program pays the balance of the rent to the landlord.

Rockbridge County has an allocation for 139 families. Twenty of these vouchers are being utilized within the City of Lexington. The waiting list for participation in this program typically exceeds 200 persons.

Affordable Housing Projects - Lexington has a limited number of affordable housing projects developed to meet the housing needs of low and moderate income persons. These are:

Lexington House Apartments - Located adjacent to a residential neighborhood and near medical facilities, Lexington House is a HUD Section 8 residential facility sponsored by the Virginia Housing Development Authority. Residents must meet Section 8 Income Guidelines and be elderly or handicapped. Lexington House Apartments contain a total of 78 one bedroom units. The waiting list averages 17 persons.

Mountainview Terrace Apartments - Mountain View Terrace is a 39 unit apartment complex located off Lewis Street, within the Diamond Hill neighborhood. The project is subsidized by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Residents must meet HUD Section 8 Income Guidelines.

Windemere Apartments - Windemere is located on Wallace Street in a residential neighborhood, near Maury River Middle School and across the street from the City's recreation

facility, Brewbaker Field. Constructed with financing from the USDA Department of Rural Development, Windemere consists of 38 one bedroom apartments. Tenants must be elderly, handicapped or disabled. Rents are based on income, utilizing federally prescribed income limits. Currently, there are no vacancies and the wait for an apartment is approximately six months.

GOAL: Provide opportunities for adequate housing for the area's low and moderate income residents.

Temporary Housing

Lisa's House - Lisa's House is a shelter for abused women and their children. Built with a grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, combined with other funds, the shelter started accepting clients in 2000. Operated by Project Horizon, Lisa's House can accommodate up to 14 women and children.

There is presently no shelter for homeless persons in Lexington or Rockbridge County. This is considered an unmet need.

IMPROVING HOUSING THROUGH REGIONAL COOPERATION

Political boundaries are rarely a significant factor for families and individuals choosing a place to live. While some may be influenced by the characteristics of a political jurisdiction, such as the quality of the schools in Lexington or the rural character of Rockbridge County, many others will be influenced by the distinctive characteristics of available housing. Whether the structure is located in the City or in Rockbridge County may be a secondary consideration.

Much of the greater Lexington area's new housing is being constructed outside the City. Rockbridge County has approved the creation of over 330 new building lots within a one mile radius of Lexington since 2000. Building permits have been issued for the construction of over 200 homes on these new lots. See Figure 7-8 in the Land Use chapter for a map showing the location of these projects. One of the principal reasons for this is the limited number of large tracts of vacant land within Lexington.

Because of these interrelationships, the City needs to forge partnerships with Buena Vista and Rockbridge County to address important housing issues such as the need for affordable housing, including workforce housing in the region.

Recommendation: Efforts should be made to maximize the public's access to existing housing.

A regional housing assistance office created and operated by the 3 local jurisdictions, with

funding shared by all 3, could provide a wide range of services to assist local residents and employees in finding suitable, affordable housing. This office could be operated by a single staff person. A regional housing assistance office would:

- Work with local realtors to establish and maintain a list of accessible rentals and properties for sale.

- Offer assistance to low- and moderate-income potential purchasers by helping them obtain favorable mortgage rates.

- Provide down-payment and closing-cost assistance for first-time homebuyers, with money available from various state and federal sources.

- Conduct educational activities to inform the public about federal tax incentives for first-time-buyers, energy credits, and rehabilitation tax credits.

- Offer counseling to help potential buyers and renters with limited, weak, or bad credit strengthen their credit applications and references.

- Sponsor educational activities to teach renters how to locate appropriate housing and how to be responsible long-term tenants.

- Encourage local realtors to identify accessible housing in their advertising.

Recommendation: Work with Buena Vista and Rockbridge County to create a Regional Housing Assistance Office.

POSSIBILITIES AFFORDED BY EXISTING STRUCTURES

When people think of housing in Lexington, most think primarily of single family homes. In fact only 68% of the total units in Lexington are single family dwellings. Another 9% are in duplex structures with two units per building. These include upper- income duplex units in 60 West and Weatherburn, as well as small apartments added to single family dwellings in single family neighborhoods throughout Lexington.

The remainder are in multiple-family buildings ranging from 3 units to over 50 units. These buildings take many forms. Large houses throughout the community have been converted into multiple apartments. Downtown apartments and condominiums include the Lyric, the R. E. Lee and the Dutch Inn. Other apartments occupy the second and third floors of buildings throughout the downtown. More traditional multiple family apartment buildings are located throughout Lexington on streets such as South Main Street, Lewis Street, Myers Street, McLaughlin Street, Nelson Street, Houston Street, Wallace Street, and on Providence Hill.

GOAL: Conserve the City's existing housing stock.

Both the local rental inspection program and Threshold's rehabilitation program have shown that many housing deficiencies result in squandered energy, consuming valuable financial resources and further reducing an owner's ability to correct the deficiencies.

Weatherization significantly reduces residential energy use. With reduction of energy usage, residents can save significant amounts of money on their utility bills, and national efforts to reduce the use of nonrenewable energy are addressed. This is critical for low and moderate income families who may be dealing with high housing costs already. A comprehensive weatherization project can reduce the energy use of a house by 20 to 35%. Because older single family homes comprise the majority of the City's housing stock, their energy inefficiencies must be addressed if operating costs are to be reduced and national energy improvement goals are to be met.

New comprehensive weatherization techniques view a house as a whole system in which energy impacting systems are examined and improved simultaneously. Diagnostic techniques have improved as well. As a result, homes weatherized only five years ago can benefit from new knowledge and technology and save, again, on further reduced energy use. By way of example, the Threshold housing rehabilitation program which emphasized weatherization was completed over a decade ago. Those same houses would likely benefit, again, from an energy evaluation using new knowledge.

As part of the federal stimulus package adopted in 2009, money has been allocated for weatherization of homes occupied by low and moderate income families. Up to $16,000 per house is available in the Valley. Total Action Against Poverty (TAP) is the administrator of this program for Lexington. Threshold has begun to identify ways to make local homeowners aware of these funds and to encourage them to utilize this important service.

Finally, the City has a small set-aside for its Safe and Sound program which provides necessary repairs to prevent structural deterioration for low income families. Patches to roofs has been one use of the funds.

Recommendation: Partner with Historic Lexington Foundation and other local organizations to educate the public about heating systems, window-repair systems, storm windows, insulation, roof ventilation, and other energy-saving features suitable for existing buildings.

Recommendation: As resources become available, renew the Safe and Sound program to address the need for basic home repairs and to assist with home modification.

POSSIBLE COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO INCREASING HOUSING COSTS

A number of strategies have been developed by communities nationwide to address proactively emerging housing problems. Those which seem appropriate for active consideration by the City are described below.

Recommendation: Consider new approaches for increasing the supply of affordable housing

MIXED INCOME HOUSING

Over the past decade, some communities have turned to mixed income housing as an alternative to traditional affordable housing initiatives. Mixed income housing is comprised of housing units with differing levels of affordability, typically a mix of market rate units with housing units that are available to low and/or moderate families at below market rates. There is no single formula for mixed income housing; the mix of affordable and market rate units differs among communities depending on the local housing market.

While proposals for fully subsidized housing projects often draw strong, heated public opposition, opposition to mixed income development is less frequent when mixed income developments contain a limited percentage of subsidized housing. In addition to creating housing units for occupancy by lower income households it also contributes to the diversity and stability of the neighborhood in which it is located.

Increasingly, all levels of government recognize the need for affordable housing opportunities and have identified mixed income housing as a positive option for creating such opportunities. Federal, state and local governments offer a variety of tools and incentives to encourage or require mixed income housing development. Financially, it is more feasible to develop mixed income housing because these projects can afford higher land and development costs. In addition, mixed housing neighborhoods tend to be more stable than neighborhoods containing only low income housing.

The public strategies developed to encourage and facilitate mixed income housing include:

- Smaller, affordable units within a complex of larger market rate units. This permits buyers who may eventually graduate to larger units in the same development.

- Density bonuses to permit an increased number of units within a project (typically 10 to 20 percent). This can reduce the cost per unit for land and provision of infrastructure.

- Some number of low and moderate income families with forgivable second mortgages in an otherwise market rate development (in effect, a subsidy).

- A mandate set-aside of a certain number (typically 10 to 20 percent) in a market rate development through inclusionary zoning requirements.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed-use refers to developments and zoning districts that contain a variety of uses. Mixed-use development integrates a variety of land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live. When commercial and public activities and housing are in close proximity to one another, alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking, become viable. The mix also provides a more diverse population and commercial base. It can enhance the vitality and perceived security of an area by increasing the number of people on the street. Mixing uses helps streets, public spaces. and pedestrian-oriented retail become places where people meet. Attracting pedestrians back onto the street helps stimulate community life.

Mixed land uses can convey substantial fiscal and economic benefits. Commercial uses in close proximity to residential areas often reflect higher property values and, therefore, help raise local tax receipts. Businesses recognize the benefits associated with areas able to attract more people and enjoy increased economic activity when there are more people in an area to shop. In a service economy, communities find that mixing land uses makes neighborhoods attractive to workers who increasingly balance quality of life criteria to determine where they will settle. Mixed use projects are still not authorized in most traditional zoning ordinances. These principles, while illegal in many localities, are traditional in Lexington.

GOAL: Encourage neighborhoods that are walkable, affordable, accessible, distinctive, and true to the significant historic context of the community in which they are located.

Recommendation: New development should blend into and enhance the unique spaces that it inhabits. This is especially important in Lexington, with its distinctive qualities and strong sense of place.

Recommendation: Evaluate the impact of parking associated with new development to minimize its effects on adjacent neighborhoods.

New projects should provide the following:

- In-scale development that fits the local context.

- Buildings in the neighborhood center placed close to the street.

- Parking lots that rarely front the street. Parking is relegated to the rear of buildings or the interior of blocks.

- Proximity to shops and offices of sufficiently varied types to supply the weekly needs of a household.

- Commercial establishments, parks, schools, and civic buildings that are located among or within walking distance of homes.

- A variety of dwelling types, usually houses, townhouses, and apartments, so that younger and older people, singles, and families, and people with a range of income levels may find places to live in close proximity.

- Most dwellings within a five-minute walk of the center, an average of roughly 1/4 mile.

- Streets that disperse traffic by providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.

- Narrower streets with crosswalks, streetscaping, and other traffic-calming measures to create an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles.

- Residences with narrow front setbacks, front porches, and detached rear garages or alley-loaded parking.

These principles can be used to upgrade and revitalize existing commercial areas and surrounding neighborhoods as well as for new construction. Combining residential and commercial successfully does not require a wholly undeveloped site, and such projects do not have to be completed by a single entity. The key to effective infill and redevelopment is designing new elements that connect fully with the old. Both South Main and East Nelson provide opportunities to further implement mixed use development.

The East Nelson Street commercial area and environs

This area is one of the City's three principal commercial centers. It contains a full range of retail activities including groceries, a pharmacy, a hardware store, auto parts store, other general retail, as well as several fast food restaurants. Surrounding activities include Central Elementary School, the hospital, and a hotel. It is a convenient walk from this area to the downtown. The surrounding residential area contains mostly single family homes. The East Nelson Street apartments are adjacent. There remains a limited amount of vacant land available for development in this area.

This area is identified as an area for potential development and redevelopment in the Land Use chapter of this plan (see pages 7-42 and 7-43). The development of an overall urban design concept plan and design standards for new construction as well as redevelopment is recommended in that chapter to enable integrated design throughout this area.

The South Main Street commercial core and surroundings

This area is one of three principal commercial centers in Lexington. Commercial uses include restaurants, a motel, a grocery store and the Farmer's Co-op. The uses surrounding the commercial core include Brewbaker Field and the City's two swimming pools, Maury River Middle School, the City fire station, and residential neighborhoods containing primarily single family homes but also some multiple family apartment buildings. There is also a limited supply of vacant land available for development.

This area is also discussed in the Land Use chapter (pages 7-44 and 7-45). Recognizing that there will likely be additional development, as well as further redevelopment and expansion of underutilized parcels a design plan and design manual is also recommended for this area.

Recommendation: The City should plan to integrate housing into the South Main and East Nelson commercial areas both to strengthen their economic vitality and to improve residents' access to local goods and services.

This can be accomplished by emphasizing the following principles:

- Reorient activity on sites to face the street.
- Establish street and pedestrian patterns that connect with the surrounding community.
- Use site planning and architectural elements to make redeveloped or upgraded commercial sites fully part of the community.
- Integrate multiple uses including employment and housing within the area.
- Provide a range of housing types to provide homes for people of all ages and incomes.

GOAL: Use historic neighborhood design principles to facilitate the redevelopment and expansion of the downtown and the East Nelson Street and South Main Street commercial areas into vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods with higher densities, a mix of housing types and a range of complementary uses.

The advantages of utilizing these guidelines for infill and redevelopment include:

- improving the potential for development in Lexington's existing commercial centers and adjoining sites
- increasing development densities within a concentrated area to promote the ability to work, shop, and live in one neighborhood

- providing economical opportunities for mixed use redevelopment of existing properties
- encouraging reuse and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure
- compact development or redevelopment which conserves land, integrates uses, and fosters a sense of place

These and other similar principles should be utilized in the development of the design plans for these areas Utilizing these studies, new zoning regulations to implement these plans should then be developed.

The zoning regulations required to implement quality mixed use neighborhoods typically include three different types of regulatory standards to accomplish the design principles: Performance Standards, Design Guidelines, and Form-based Standards. Form-based zoning creates the physical context, Design Guidelines allow for more specific control of the built elements, and Performance Standards ensure the best management of the land and built environment.

By adopting the three types of regulatory standards as part of a mixed use overlay zone instead of the conventional zoning standards, the City would be able to more closely regulate the design and character of new development and redevelopment. The result would be better utilization of land area, improved tax benefits, and lower capital costs.

Recommendation: Create overlay zones for these areas with guidelines that require projects to combine uses, keep buildings close together, improve walkability, mix dwellings of different types and costs while matching their design to Lexington's look and scale, using the City's existing infrastructure.

Examples of redevelopment studies using these guidelines appear in this document as **Appendix 2.**

The Downtown

Lexington's downtown is one of the historical models upon which these historic development concepts are based. Significant numbers of housing units are contained in the upper stories of buildings throughout the downtown. The rate of rehabilitation and upgrading of these units has increased during the last decade. There are presently over 140 dwelling units in the downtown located in over 40 buildings. The Lyric Residences, the Dutch Inn, the Sheridan Building and the First American Bank Building have been rehabilitated.

GOAL: Increase residential occupancy downtown

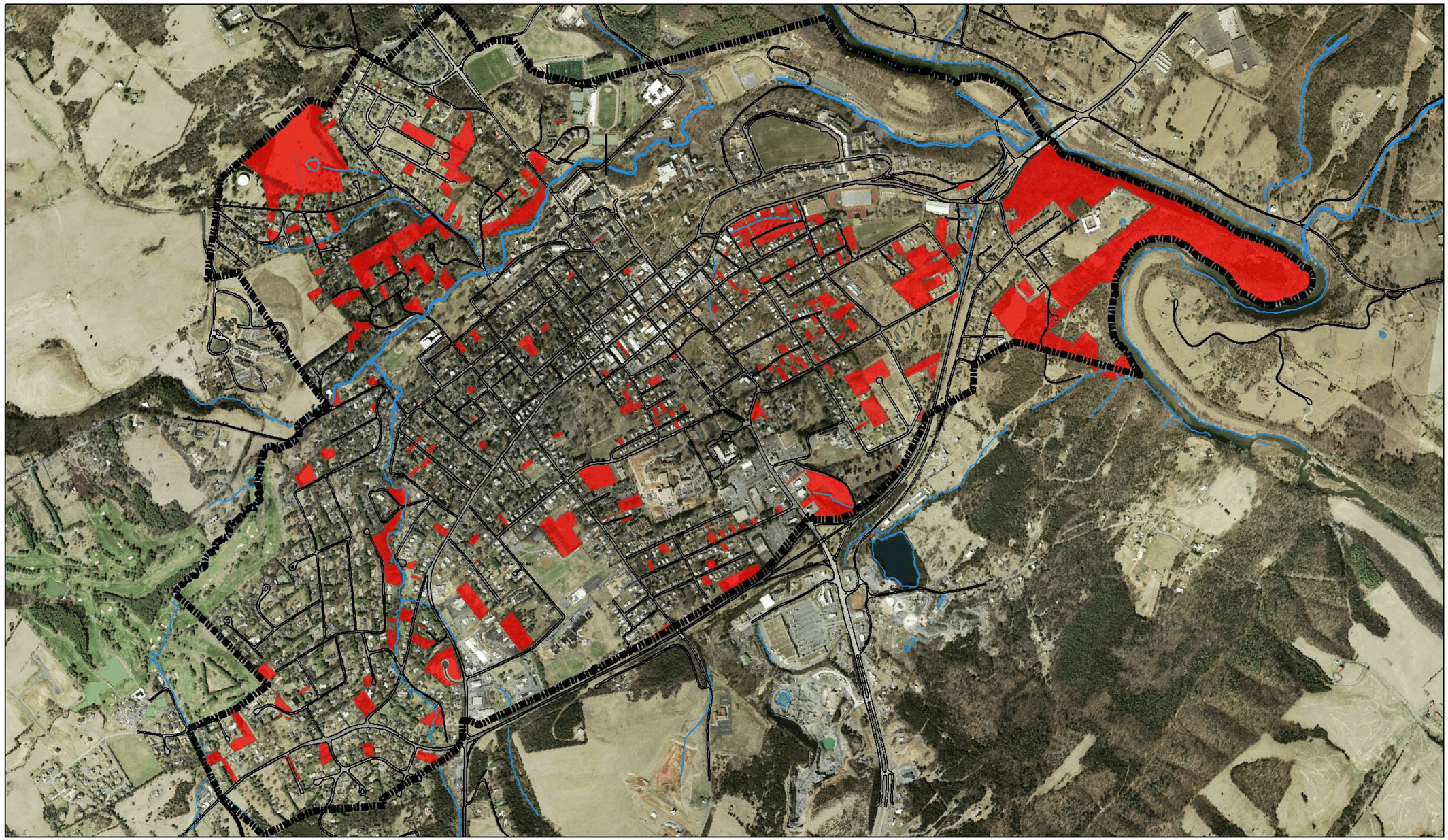
Recommendation: Identify all buildings with developable upper-story spaces; inform all owners of rehabilitation tax credit and other cost-saving programs.

Recommendation: Advise owners of historic buildings of performance-based ways to meet fire code requirements.

MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF REMAINING VACANT LAND

Remaining vacant land is shown on Figure 7-3, Vacant Land, contained in the Land Use chapter of this plan. The majority of vacant land is in small parcels or individual lots scattered throughout the City. Only 6 tracts of vacant land exceeding five acres in size remain in the City. Development of these tracts is challenging for a variety of reasons including limited access, natural features such as steep slopes and sink holes, excess rock, and limited utility availability.

FIGURE 5-3
VACANT LAND



Infill development is the process of developing vacant land or underutilized parcels within existing urban areas that are already largely developed. Ideally, infill development involves more than the piecemeal development of individual lots. Instead, a successful infill development strategy should focus on the task of creating complete, well-functioning neighborhoods. Successful infill development is characterized by overall residential densities high enough to support improved transportation choices as well as a wider variety of services and amenities. It can increase cultural, social, recreational and entertainment opportunities, gathering places, and return vitality to older commercial centers and neighborhoods. Attention to the design of infill development is essential to ensure that new development fits the existing context and gains neighborhood acceptance.

The alternative to infill development is sprawl - the continued use of more land than is necessary to accomplish a given development goal. Sprawl is the use of resources and land in excess of what is needed to create a comfortable, livable and functional city. Sprawl costs cities more money because it requires additional paving and road maintenance costs, extensive sewer and storm drain construction and costs for the many other services local governments provide.

GOAL: Add housing without creating the perception of incongruous housing types or greater density.

Several ways of accomplishing this goal particularly suit Lexington.

Single Family Homes with Secondary Units - The inclusion of a smaller, secondary unit on the same site as a single family detached home adds housing units without creating the perception of a different home type, or greater density. Secondary units provide income to the primary homeowner, and thus can allow homeownership to buyers who would otherwise not be able to afford a home. Secondary units may be considered more desirable to certain groups of tenants than larger apartment buildings, and the cost to construct, manage, and maintain them is less than for multifamily apartments.

The two most common ways to accommodate a secondary unit are within the main house, usually at grade, or in a separate structure about the size and scale of a double car garage. As a variation, small apartments have been developed above garages and on an upper floor with a separate access stairway.

Accessory dwelling units - These dwelling units typically exist on the same lot with a larger single family dwelling. Most conventional zoning allows these units only in neighborhoods that were developed in the 19th and early 20th century, when many houses were constructed with a detached garage or carriage house which was easily converted.

The benefits of this type of dwelling include providing rental income to property owners, and providing for additional reasonably priced housing for certain income and family groups. Accessory dwellings are not to be viewed as a replacement for larger single family dwellings; rather, they offer opportunities to address the need for units of this type through the conversion of ancillary structures in existing neighborhoods or through new construction on lots in conjunction with a larger house.

Examples of these two housing types as well as other higher density, more compact development types are contained in **Appendix 3**.

Recommendation: Permit garage and upper story apartments in selected residential districts.

Recommendation: Permit housing structures ancillary to larger houses in selected residential districts.

The Cottage Community - Cottage neighborhoods are clusters of houses that are significantly smaller than the national average. The cottages may be as small as 700 - 800 square feet—an appealing option for those who don't want to live in larger single family houses. The cottages require smaller lots so more units may be built on a site. Residents benefit from shared amenities such as parking, landscaping, and shared community space. Cottage communities avoid otherwise undifferentiated development, and provide opportunities for young and elderly singles and couples and young families to be added to the housing mix. This addresses a shifting demographic: 60% of all households in the U. S. are composed of 1 or 2 persons. This approach allows pocket communities to fit into established close in neighborhoods in a way which supports the efficient use of urban residential land. Representative site plans and photographs of two existing cottage communities are contained in **Appendix 4.**

While the specific aspects of cottage communities vary from community to community, they share common strategies:

- They are authorized either as a conditional use in existing single family residential districts or are created as an overlay zoning district which may be applied to a specific site after review by the Planning Commission and authorized by the city governing body.
- They authorize up to 2 cottage units for each single family home permitted in the district.
- Most ordinances specify both a minimum and a maximum number of units in the project (for instance a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 12).
- A maximum unit size is specified (typically from 800 to 1,000 square feet).
- Both public and private open space is required.
- The common open space is required to provide a centrally located focal point for the cottage housing development as well as provide a sense of openness.
- The cottages are located around this open space and their main entrances open onto it.
- The number of required parking spaces varies from 1.25 to 1.5 for each unit.

- Parking is located in small clusters around the periphery of the development. The number of spaces in each small lot is limited and landscaping or architectural screening of the lot is required.

GOAL: In-fill construction on already vacant land should be used to increase housing units available for rental and home ownership.

Recommendation: Explore modifying the zoning ordinance to allow higher densities in ways which do not adversely effect the neighborhoods in which they could be built.

ZONING STRATEGIES TO ENCOURAGE NEW AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING

Nationally, two principal innovative zoning strategies have been developed to address the need for workforce and affordable housing - density bonuses and inclusionary zoning.

Density Bonuses – A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits developers to increase the maximum allowable development on a property in exchange for helping the community achieve public policy goals. Density bonuses are often used to increase the supply of affordable housing for working families or senior households. Density bonuses may vary from project to project, but may not exceed a designated limit (generally 10% to 20% over the base density). The additional cash flow from these bonus units offsets the reduced revenue from the affordable units. These bonuses are provided at no cost to the local government.

Recommendation: New residential development should suit the scale and appearance of existing neighborhoods, provide compact and pedestrian friendly design, and preserve the City's traditional mix of housing types and costs.

Planned Unit Development - In 1990, The City added a Planned Unit Development (PUD) section to its Zoning Code. These PUD provisions are designed to encourage flexibility and innovation in the development of both large and small tracts of land. The PUD concept involves parcels of land planned as an overall unit rather than as an aggregate of individual lots with design flexibility from traditional siting requirements such as side yards, setbacks and height restrictions.

GOAL: Encourage new construction which includes houses at a variety of price points.

Recommendation: Use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to enable creative and efficient use of the remaining tracts of vacant land within its borders.

Recommendation: Carefully implement the PUD process to ensure that approved projects reflect suitable site planning and design and are appropriate for the neighborhood context.

Recommendation: Encourage PUD proposals that mix housing types.

Recommendation: Proposals should be encouraged to develop different types of compatible land uses including housing close together in appropriate locations, to shorten trips and facilitate alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling and public transportation.

Recommendation: Extend and develop path and sidewalk networks, to connect residential properties with commercial ones.

Recommendation: Work with shopping centers to develop pedestrian access.

Recommendation: PUD review should ensure that the scale and design of land uses including housing of diverse types are compatible with each other.

GREEN HOUSING

According the U.S. Green Building Council a green house is "a high performing home that is energy and water efficient, has good indoor air quality, uses environmentally sustainable materials and uses the building site in a sustainable manner." Although green housing presently accounts for a small percentage of the total housing market, the National Homebuilders Association believes that it is the wave of the future

One of the largest national players in the workforce housing industry is Enterprise Green Communities. One of their primary goals is to make environmentally sustainable development the mainstream in this portion of the housing market. They have developed the Green Communities Criteria, a national framework for healthy, efficient, environmentally smart affordable homes.
These criteria were created to implement the following concepts:

- **An integrated design process** in which green building strategies are considered from the earliest stages of project planning.

- **Locations** that conserve resources, take advantage of existing infrastructure and civic amenities, are close to transportation, and contribute to the fabric of healthy, livable communities.

- **Site improvements** that minimize harm to the environment, enhance health, conserve natural resource, improve operational efficiencies, and promote walking, cycling, and public transportation.

- **Energy efficiency** in every phase and aspect of development, including efficient construction methods, design and insulation of units for efficient heating and cooling, installation of Energy Star appliances, and use of efficient lighting inside and out.

- **Water conservation** including water efficient appliances and fixtures, low-water landscaping, and making use of rainwater and graywater where appropriate.

- **Materials that are beneficial to the environment**, including reuse and recycling on the construction site, and use of building products and techniques that contribute to more durable, healthy and resource efficient buildings.

- **Creation of a healthy living environment** that is easy to maintain and keep clean, relying on safe, biodegradable materials that make for a healthy dwelling, especially for sensitive groups such as children, seniors and those with respiratory problems.

- **Sustainable operations and maintenance**, including plans and policies that maximize efficiencies, and training for employees and residents in how to maintain and preserve the property's value.

Green housing offers many benefits:

- **Greater energy efficiency** - Energy costs for low and moderate income families have outpaced their incomes in recent years. Homes which are more energy efficient cut utility costs by significant amounts each year. Homes with water conserving energy appliances and fixtures and low-cost maintenance techniques lead to additional cost savings. Homes with added insulation and quality windows reduce monthly heating and cooling costs. Using solar energy to provide heat and hot water provides free energy from a renewable source.

- **Environmental benefits** - Residential heating and cooling make up 20% of the U.S. yearly energy use. Most of that energy comes from greenhouse gas producers like oil and coal. Green homes reduce our dependence on conventional energy sources as they use less energy and generate some or all of their energy needs through alternative energy sources such as the sun, geothermal energy or wind. Homes sited within walking distance to schools, jobs and services reduce family transportation costs. Infill housing which directs development to areas with existing infrastructure reduces development costs.

- **Affordable Living**- Green building and affordable housing are natural partners. Although green construction may cost slightly more than conventional construction (generally 3 to 5%), over time low income homeowners will benefit from lower utility bills, reduced maintenance costs, and healthier environments. Threshold has emphasized reducing operating costs as a core component of its local housing efforts both for rehabilitation of existing housing units and for the new houses it has built.

The City and Threshold received a planning grant in 2009 from Enterprise Green Communities to develop a plan for a green, mixed income, community at Thompson's Knoll in the Diamond Hill community. The site plan developed through this process and the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria Check List on which it is based are reported in **Appendix 5**.

GOAL: Encourage the use of green building techniques for all new houses built in the City especially for housing intended for low and moderate income families

Recommendation: Threshold should continue to utilize green principles to the extent possible in its affordable housing programs

Recommendation: The City and Threshold should continue to explore possibilities for the creation of a green, mixed income housing project in Lexington

STUDENT HOUSING

Student housing offers particular challenges. Washington and Lee University's housing policy requires all freshman to live in their dormitories and all sophomores to live in university housing including dormitories, fraternities and sororities or theme houses. Juniors and seniors either live in the surrounding community or in fraternities and sororities. All students (cadets) at Virginia Military Institute are housed on post in Barracks.

In 1990, approximately 360 undergraduate students from Washington and Lee University lived off campus in the City. Today, this number is approximately 600. At the same time, there were approximately 210 students enrolled in the Law School living in Lexington. Today 394 Law School students live off campus in the City. There are 95 students living in the sororities on the W&L campus. The fraternity houses, located in two main areas within the City, house 266 students (Spring, 2009).

All fraternities and sororities are required to employ an adult, non-student resident manager. The University's Security Staff now includes the fraternities and sororities in its regular round of security checks and targets Greek residences during celebratory weekends. The Buildings and Grounds Department conducts regular inspections of fraternity and sorority properties to assure cleanliness and maintenance.

There may be fundamental lifestyle differences between students occupying houses in residential neighborhoods and their surrounding neighbors, many of whom work and are homeowners whose major financial investment is their home. Periodic parties, late night comings and goings, and noise are often aspects of college student life which may conflict with neighbors who must keep more regular schedules.

On street parking may also become a problem. In areas where residents must park on the street, a greater burden is placed on the available parking space if a house is occupied by a number of students, each with a car. Parking problems become exacerbated when students or other residents along a street have guests.

The City has made a number of changes to its Zoning Ordinance to maintain the quality of life in its residential neighborhoods with a concentration of college residents. Among those have been

reductions in the number of unrelated individuals who may occupy a dwelling. That number is presently 3 persons in most of the City's residential districts and 4 in the downtown.

GOAL: Maintain and improve the quality of life in residential neighborhoods with large numbers of student renters. It should ensure that all citizens reside in neighborhoods that are calm, clean, and safe places to live.

Recommendation: Work with Washington & Lee to develop educational and other cooperative programs that foster quiet, clean neighborhoods where students are residents.

Recommendation: Retain the current limit on the number of unrelated individuals who may occupy a single dwelling and continue to limit or even reduce the number of authorized large capacity houses.

List of Appendices

5.1 2000 Census of Housing Data ..... 5 - 30

5.2 Design Studies
Illustrating the Conversion of Aging Strip Commercial Centers into
Contemporary Multiple Use Neighborhoods Utilizing
Traditional Neighborhood Principles ..... 5 - 38

5.3 Visualizing Density ..... 5 - 43

5.4 Site Plans and Photographs of
Two Existing Cottage Communities ..... 5 - 49

5.5 Enterprise Green Communities Checklist and
Site Plans for Mixed Income Housing Project on
Thompson's Knoll Emphasizing
Green Communities Principles ..... 5 - 54

APPENDIX 5.1

2000 CENSUS OF HOUSING DATA

Housing information is collected by the Census Bureau every decade on the long version of the census form which is distributed to one in six households.

Dormitories, fraternities and sororities at Washington and Lee University and the Barracks at Virginia Military Institute are not included in the housing statistics reported throughout this chapter. The Census Bureau classifies this type housing as *group quarters*. However, the houses on the Washington and Lee University campus and the Virginia Military Institute Post are included, as are the Woods Creek Apartments at W&L. These units are included as the occupants have the ability to live and eat separately and have separate entrances for each unit.

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

A housing unit is defined by the Census Bureau as a house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms or single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other individuals in the building and which have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall.

Table 5.1 reflects the total number of housing units for Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. These numbers are also distributed between occupied and vacant housing units.

TABLE 5.1
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS IN SELECT LOCALITIES
1990 and 2000

LOCALITY	TOTAL HOUSING UNITS		OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS		VACANT HOUSING UNITS	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Lexington	2,311	2,376	2,172	2,232	139	144
Buena Vista	2,494	2,716	2,404	2,547	90	169
Rockbridge County	7,975	9,550	7,202	8,486	773	1,064
Virginia	2,496,334	2,904,192	2,291,830	2,699,173	204,504	205,019

SOURCE: US Census provided by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Sixty five housing units were created in the City between 1990 and 2000. The majority of these were new single family homes built in the Fairwinds and Penrith subdivisions, both of which were developed during this period.

An additional 95 housing units have been constructed in Lexington since April 1, 2000 when the 2000 census was conducted. These included 6 units in duplex structures (2 units per building) and 6 attached townhouse units. The balance, 79 units, were single family homes. The majority of the single family dwellings were in the Fairwinds and Penrith subdivisions although homes were built throughout the City on the remaining vacant lots. Four of the duplexes were constructed in Weatherburn located on Thornhill Road which has been approved for 44 units in 22 buildings.

There were 2,471 housing units in Lexington as of April, 2009.

OWNER AND RENTER OCCUPANCY

TABLE 5.2
OCCUPANCY BY OWNERSHIP
CITY OF LEXINGTON
1960 - 2000

	YEAR									
	1960		1970		1980		1990		2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Owner Occupied	989	50.1	1,172	51.9	1,228	51.4	1,192	51.6	1,232	51.8
Renter Occupied	876	44.7	963	42.6	953	39.9	980	42.4	1,000	42.1
Vacant	94	4.8	125	5.5	203	8.7	139	6.0	144	6.1
TOTAL	**1,959**		**2,260**		**2,389**		**2,311**		**2,376**	

SOURCE: US Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Information, University of Virginia

The number of owner occupied houses has increased significantly over the past 40 years, from 989 houses in 1960 to 1, 232 houses in 2000, an increase of 243 homes.

The number of rental housing units has increased by 124 units in the last 40 years. The proportion of rental property has remained fairly stable as a percentage of total units.

There were 144 vacant housing units, or 6.1% of the total number of units in 2000. This figure is deceptive since it includes unoccupied housing units not being marketed, units for seasonal or recreational use and “other” vacant units.

VACANCY RATES

At the time of the 2000 census the vacancy rate for units for being marketed for sale within the City was 2.1%. The rental vacancy rate was 3.6%. These statistics are from the 2000 census. The current vacancy rates may be higher because of the current economically depressed housing market.

Both of these vacancy rates are considered by housing professionals as less than is optimum for a housing market. A vacancy rate of from 5% to 7% is considered to be desirable to afford those seeking housing an adequate choice. When the rate drops below 5% it becomes harder for those looking for a place to live to find a place that meets their needs and preferences. Also a tight market generally leads to higher sales prices and rents as the limited supply leads to increased competition for the better units.

MEDIAN VALUE OF HOUSING

TABLE 5.3
MEDIAN DOLLAR VALUE / OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING
CITY OF LEXINGTON
1960 - 2000

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Value	$44,500.00	$56,350.00	$67,000.00	$74,500.00	$131,900.00
Increase from prior Census		$11,850.00	$10,650.00	$7,500.00	$57,400.00
Percentage Increase		26.62%	19.89%	11.19%	77.05%

SOURCE: US Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

The median value of owner-occupied housing within the City of Lexington increased by $57,400 or 77% from 1990 until 2000. Although, not adjusted for inflation this still represents a dramatic increase.

The median value of homes sold in Lexington in 2008 was $244,900according to the Virginia Board of Realtors. This was an additional increase of 85% since 2000.

There are several reasons for this included the increasing cost of land, the continued increase in the cost of building materials and the continuing trend of building ever larger houses. In 1960

the average size of a 3 bedroom house was 1,200 to 1,400 square feet. The typical size for such a house today is over 2,000 square feet.

VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING

TABLE 5.4
VALUE FOR OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
CITY OF LEXINGTON
2000

VALUE	NUMBER OF HOUSES*	PERCENTAGE
Less than $40,000	0	0.0%
$40,000 to $49,999	18	1.5%
$50,000 to $59,999	27	2.3%
$60,000 to $69,999	124	10.5%
$70,000 to $79,999	116	9.8%
$80,000 to $89,999	86	7.3%
$90,000 to $99,999	45	3.8%
$100,000 to $124,999	133	11.3%
$125,000 to $149,999	145	12.3%
$150,000 to $174,999	100	8.5%
$175,000 to $199,999	76	6.6%
$200,000 to $249,999	128	10.9%
$250,000 to $299,999	90	7.6%
$300,000 to $399,999	50	4.2%
$400,000 to $499,999	23	2.0%
$500,000 to $749,999	17	1.4%
$750,000 to $1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%

SOURCE: US Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

***2000: Number of Housing Units responding to Survey: 1,178**

The 1990 Census Survey reported 195 housing units under the $40,000 threshold. The 2000 Census Survey counted no houses priced under $40,000. In 1990 there were only 3 houses valued at $500,000 or more. The 2000 Census reports 17 such houses.

RENTS

Table 5.5
MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT
CITY OF LEXINGTON
1960 - 2000

	RENT	% INCREASE
1960	$169	
1970	$214	26.6%
1980	$189	-11.7%
1990	$284	50.3%
2000	$356	25.4%

SOURCE: US Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

TABLE 5.6
RATES OF RENTAL HOUSING
CITY OF LEXINGTON
2000

RENTAL RATE	# UNITS	PERCENTAGE
Less than $100	35	3.4%
$100 to $149	56	5.4%
$150 to $199	55	5.3%
$200 to $249	90	8.7%
$250 to $299	116	11.2%
$300 to $349	114	11.0%
$350 to $399	128	12.4%
$400 to $449	44	4.2%
$450 to $499	52	5.0%
$500 to $549	76	7.3%
$550 to $599	19	1.8%
$600 to $649	43	4.2%
$650 to $699	32	3.1%
$700 to $749	0	0.0%
$750 to $799	13	1.3%
$800 to $899	16	1.5%
$900 to $999	35	3.4%
$1,000 to $1,249	32	3.1%
$1,250 to $1,499	8	0.8%
$1,500 to $1,999 or more	0	0.0%
No Cash Rent	36	3.5%

SOURCE: US Census of Population and Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 indicate that rents have kept pace with the increasing costs of housing within the City of Lexington. Again these numbers have not been adjusted for inflation, so a direct comparison is not possible. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of housing units

available at the lower rental rates. In 1990, 261 houses were rented at rates less than $200. By 2000, that number had decreased to 146 houses.

In 1990, the largest percentage of rental housing was rented at rates between $250 and $299. By 2000, the highest percentage of rental housing was rented at rates between $350 and $399. Only 4 housing units were rented at rates of $1,000 or more in 1990. That number had increased to 40 by 2000.

STRUCTURES

Table 5.10 lists the number of structures within the City and the number of housing units within those structures. Included in this table are the number of vacancies for each type of structure.

TABLE 5.7
UNITS IN STRUCTURE
CITY OF LEXINGTON
2000

UNITS PER STRUCTURE	OWNER-OCCUPIED	TENANT-OCCUPIED	VACANT	TOTAL
1- DETACHED	1,169	343	91	1,603
1-ATTACHED	44	19	6	69
2	5	123	22	150
3 or 4	0	147	5	152
5 to 9	0	149	14	163
10 to 19	0	30	0	30
20 to 49	0	70	0	70
50 or more	0	110	6	116
Mobile Home	0	9	0	9
Boat, RV or Other	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,218	1,000	144	2,362

SOURCE: US CENSUS, 200 Census of Population & Housing, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia

When you think of housing in Lexington, you think primarily of single family homes. In fact only 68% of the total units in Lexington are single family dwellings.

Another 9% are in duplex structures with two units per building. These include upper income duplex units in 60 West and Wendemere as well as small apartments added to single family dwellings in single family neighborhoods throughout Lexington including Providence Hill.

The remainder are in multiple family buildings ranging from only 3 units to over 50 units. These buildings take many forms. Large houses throughout the community have been converted into multiple apartments, including on South Main Street, Jackson Avenue, Myers Street and Randolph Street. There are downtown apartments and condominiums including the Lyric, the R. E. Lee and the recently renovated Dutch Inn. Other apartments are located on the second and third floors of buildings throughout the downtown. There are also more traditional multiple family apartment buildings located throughout the Lexington including on South Main Street, Lewis Street, Myers Street, McLaughlin Street, Nelson Street, Houston Street and Wallace Street and on Providence Hill.

APPENDIX 5.2

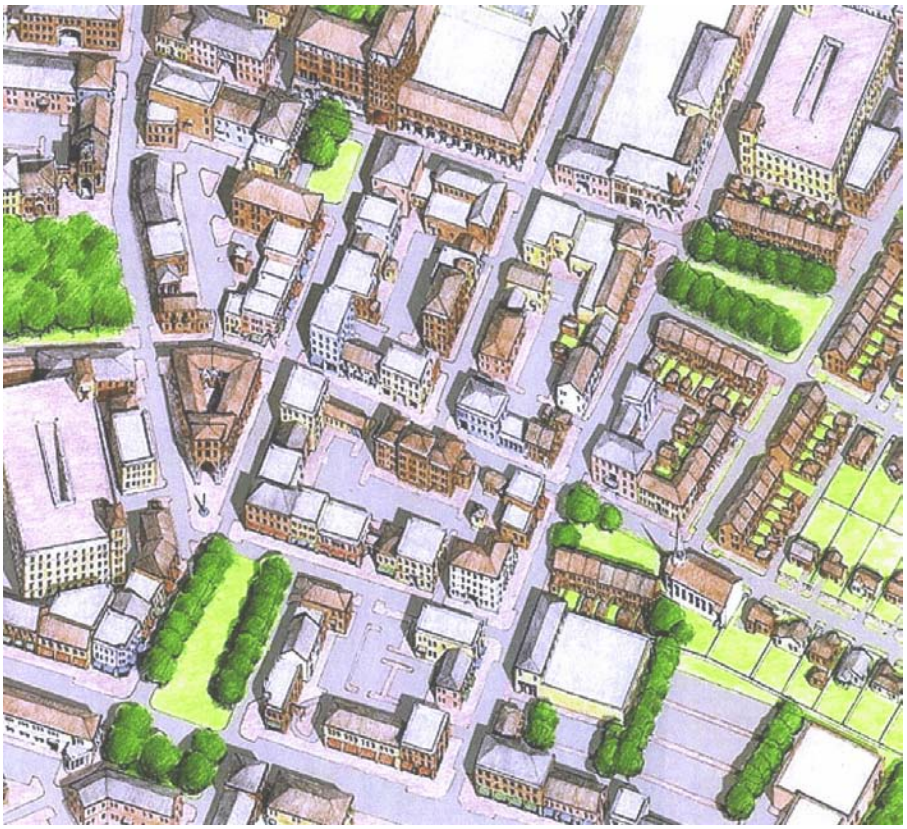
DESIGN STUDIES ILLUSTRATING THE CONVERSION OF AGING STRIP COMMERCIAL CENTERS INTO CONTEMPORARY MULTIPLE USE NEIGHBORHOODS UTILIZING TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following design studies illustrate how existing commercial strips such as East Nelsons Street and South Main Street can be converted, over time, into vibrant mixed use neighborhoods with higher densities, a mix of housing types and a range of complementary uses.

Following are examples of design studies which illustrate what the transformed streetscape might look like.

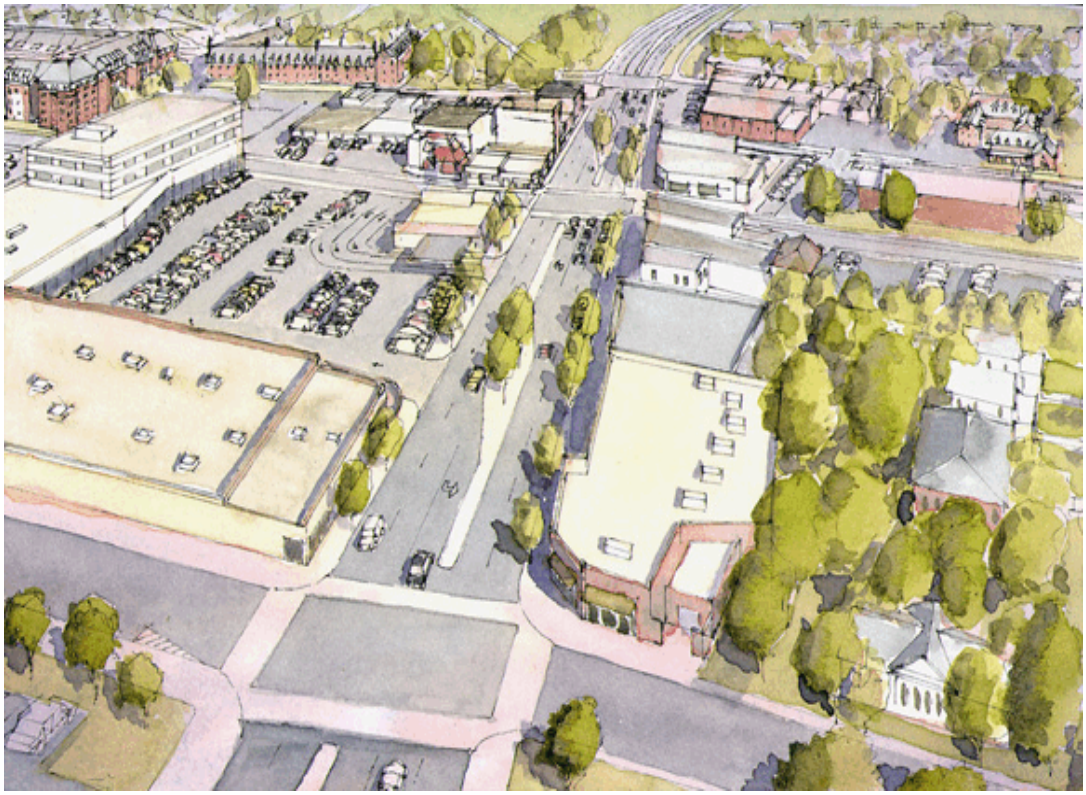
APPENDIX 5.2, continued

Existing: Chattanooga, TN - Eastgate Center



Proposed: Chattanooga, TN - Eastgate Center

APPENDIX 5.2, continued



Existing: College Park, MD - Downtown

Proposed: College Park, MD - Downtown

APPENDIX 5.2, continued

Existing: College Park, MD - Hollywood Commercial District

Proposed: College Park, MD - Hollywood Commercial District

APPENDIX 5.2, continued

Proposed: Beaufort, SC - Boundary Street

Proposed: Fort Myers, FL - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Veronica S. Shoemaker Boulevards

Source: Dover, Kohl & Partners

APPENDIX 5.3
VISUALIZING DENSITY

Many communities, including Lexington have amended their zoning ordinances to preserve the character of their neighborhoods and their municipality. Lot sizes and lot widths have been increased to better conform to surrounding development. In many cases, these requirements prevent affordable housing from being built because the larger lots are cost prohibitive for modestly priced houses. Housing remains available to wealthier citizens but is more difficult for those with more modest incomes to afford. While there was no conscious intent to exclude lower income households, it has been an intended result.

Two groups who have actively promoted higher densities as ways to address these issues are the Enterprise Green Communities program and the Affordable Housing Design Advisor, a partnership which includes the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the American Institute of Architects. Both have established minimum densities for various housing types to be suitable for compact housing. These recommendations are presented in Table 5-12.

TABLE 5-12
MINIMUM DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE FOR VARIOUS COMPACT HOUSING TYPES

COMPACT HOUSING TYPE	GREEN COMMUNITIES	AFFORDABLE HOUSING DESIGN ADVISOR
Single family detached	6	7-20
Single family with secondary unit		17-24
Multiple units, single family appearance	10	8-22
Row houses		10-20
Multiple family walk ups	15	10-20
Multiple family elevator buildings		20+

The Affordable Housing Design Advisor has developed design criteria and case studies for 6 different types of compact housing. All of the case studies are for affordable housing projects. Emphasis is on successful projects which have been built throughout the country. Each of these is briefly described below with examples of each type. For those who are interested, the City of Lexington Office of Planning and Development has the complete report.

Compact Single Family Detached Homes - "Compact" single family lots are defined as smaller than 1/8 acre, or around 5,000 to 5,5000 square feet or even less. Lots of this overall area are typically 50 by 100 feet, or 45 by 120 feet. Street frontage of 45 to 50 feet allows for a single garage plus living room to front the street, with side setbacks of 5 to 10 feet. Alternatively, they allow for an 8 - 10 foot wide driveway on one side of the lot to give access to a garage at the rear of the lot, and for a 25 to 30 foot wide house with an entry plus one or two rooms facing the street.

To achieve densities above 8 units per acre excluding streets (about 6 units per acre including streets) requires shrinking the width of the lot or depth of the lot or both. Using one strategy, "narrow but deep" lots 30 feet wide and 75 to 100 feet deep are used to reduce lot sizes and increase density. As lot widths narrow, there are more homes fronting a given length of street, which reduces street related infrastructure costs per unit, but increases the challenge of getting sufficient frontage for both cars and ground level rooms. Using another strategy ,"wide but shallow" , lots are kept at 45 – 50 feet wide or more, but with depths reduced to 60 feet. This pattern keeps the homes spread further apart along the street, which resolves some of the visual and vehicular access issues of narrower lots, but is less efficient from a street infrastructure perspective, and may also compromise rear yard depth.

The case studies show a wide range of possible densities, from 7-21 units per acre. Two examples are shown below.

Metro Square - 21 units per acre

Self Help Homes - 14 units per acre

Single Family Homes with Secondary Units - The inclusion of a smaller, secondary unit on the same site as a single family detached home adds housing units without creating the perception of a different home type, or greater density. Secondary units provide income to the primary homeowner, and thus can allow buyers who would otherwise not be able to afford a home to obtain ownership. Secondary units may be considered more desirable to certain groups of tenants than larger apartment buildings, and the cost to construct them and to manage and maintain them is less than for multifamily apartments.

The benefits of secondary units are being rediscovered, but the housing type is an old one. The two most common ways to accommodate a secondary unit are within the main house, usually at grade, or in a separate structure about the size and scale of a double car garage. As a variation, historically, small apartments been developed above garages, or even on an upper floor with a separate access stair. Two examples of this strategy are shown below

MLK Homes - 24 units per acre

Aggie Village - 17 units per acre

Aggie Village - Secondary cottages

Multiple unit buildings with single family appearance - Buildings that contain several units, but are designed to appear like a single family home, can be seen as more in character with some neighborhoods than either row houses or walkup garden apartments. The strategy of achieving density through this model represents a revision of older patterns once found in many America cities and an application to new situations of an old "prezoning" pattern in many cities of having duplexes, Triplexes, and even larger "plexes" on corner sites, or within the shell of older buildings that have been subdivided to create separate apartments within.

These types of buildings are often found between traditional single family detached districts and commercial or apartment housing districts. They can also be found along the "grand boulevards" that trolleys traveled and once had large estate homes. As wealthier families continued to move further out of cities, their former homes were often subdivided into apartments. New apartments made to look like older homes were then used to fill in between these older homes.

The case studies show that a wide range of densities can be achieved using this building type, from 7 – 22 units per acre, mirroring the range of detached homes. The case studies show how this housing type allows for preservation of onsite open space or the meeting of context requirements in a manner that would not have been achieved using the detached house model.

Willows Homes - 21 Units per acre

Hyde Street Co-op - 22 units per acre

Row Houses - The row house offers the advantage of both economical construction and potentially higher land use efficiency by attaching a series of units in a row with party walls on two sides. While attached and often narrower than a detached ho use, the row house still offers the visibility of an individual front door, an individual back yard, and no other family living above or below. The rowhouse does eliminate the option of side windows except at end units, and therefore its depth is more limited than for detached or semi-detached units. Densities for rowhouses vary from 10 to 30 units per acre. Although in this region most rowhouses, or townhouses, have pseudo-colonial architecture, as the case studies show they may reflect a wide range of architectural styles.

With some exception, the sales value of rowhouse and attached style ownership units is lower on a per bedroom or per square foot basis than for detached units, due primarily to market preferences for light and air on multiple sides, and misgivings about the potential for noise and pest transmission between units.

Willowbrook Green - 19 units per acre

Southside Park Co-housing - 20 units per acre

Multifamily Walkup Flats and Apartments - Generally up to 3 stories in height and often organized around some form of community open space, this housing type varies from 16 to over 30 units per acre. This is the type of multiple family housing predominantly found in Lexington. Again, a wide variety of architectural styles is possible and available open space organized efficiently and attractively for community use.

Open Doors - 19 units per acre

Dove Street - 38 units per acre

Multifamily Elevator Apartments - Generally four stories or higher, elevator apartments can be from 20 to over 80 units per acre. The only true example of this housing type in Lexington is the R. E. Lee Building on Main Street in downtown. This will be a difficult housing type to fit into the City because of the building height needed to make these buildings economical. The impact on the skyline of Lexington, which is valued and should be preserved makes it a challenging to find suitable sites for elevator buildings. Some of the selected examples are 4 stories high which might be more appropriate for Lexington than taller buildings of this type.

Plaza del Sol - 76 units per acre

Langham Court - 80 units per acre

APPENDIX 5.4

SITE PLANS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF TWO EXISTING COTTAGE COMMUNITIES

Cottage communities are able to fit into established neighborhoods in a sensitive way which also supports the efficient use of remaining urban residential land.

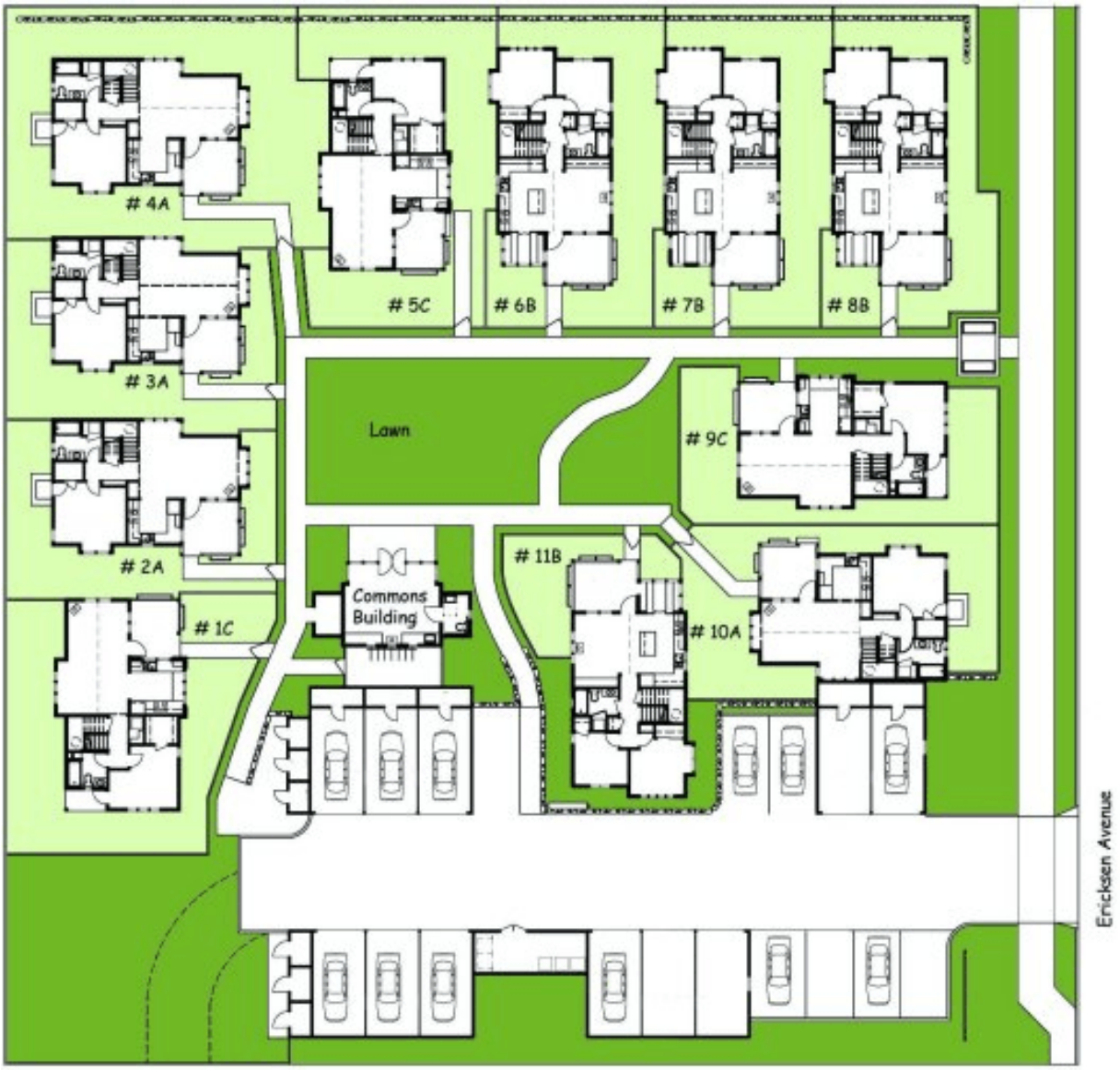
Danielson Grove - Kirkland, WA

1. Site Size:	**97,929 SF/2.25 acres**
DU/Acre:	**7**
Number of Homes:	**16**
Square Footage Range:	**651 - 1500 SF**
Land Use Code Provision:	**Innovative Housing Demonstration Code**

APPENDIX 5.4, continued

Ericksen Cottages - Bainbridge Island, WA

1. Site Size:	**39,772 SF**
DU/Acre:	**12**
Number of Homes:	**11**
Square Footage Range:	**1049-1090 SF**
Land Use Code Provision:	**Mixed Use Town Center, Ericksen District Zone**



APPENDIX 5.4, continued

APPENDIX 5.5
ENTERPRISE GREEN COMMUNITIES CRITERIA CHECKLIST
and
SITE PLAN FOR MIXED INCOME HOUSING PROJECT ON THOMPSON'S KNOLL EMPHASIZING GREEN COMMUNITIES PRINCIPLES

Green Communities Criteria Checklist

Developer Name:
Project Name:
Address (Street/City/State):

Yes	No	?			Maximum Points
			Integrated Design Process		
			1.1	**Green Development Plan** Submit document outlining options explored in the design phase with multi-disciplinary team including a qualified green design expert.	Mandatory
Yes	No	?	**Location and Neighborhood Fabric**		
			2.1a	**Smart Site Location: Proximity to Existing Development** Locate on site with access to existing roads, water, sewers and other infrastructure within or at least 25 percent contiguous to existing development.	Mandatory *except infill site or rehabs*
			2.1b	**Smart Site Location: Protecting Environmental Resources** Do not locate new development within 100 feet of wetlands; 1,000 feet of a critical habitat; or on steep slopes, prime farmland or park land.	Mandatory *except infill site or rehabs*
			2.1c	**Smart Site Location: Proximity to Services, New Construction** Locate projects within a ¼ mile of at least two, or ½ mile of at least four community and retail facilities.	Mandatory *except infill site or rehabs*
			2.2	**Compact Development** Achieve densities for new construction of at least six units per acre for detached/semi-detached houses; 10 for town homes; 15 for apartments.	Mandatory *except infill site or rehabs*
			2.3	**Walkable Neighborhoods: Sidewalks and Pathways** Include sidewalks or suitable pathways within a multifamily property or single-family subdivision linking residential development to public spaces, open spaces and adjacent development.	Mandatory
			2.4	**Smart Site Location: Make Use of Passive Solar Heating/Cooling** Orient building to make the greatest use of passive solar heating and cooling.	5
			2.4b	**Smart Site Location: Grayfield, Brownfield or Adaptive Reuse Site** Locate the project on a grayfield, brownfield or adaptive reuse site.	10
			2.5	**Compact Development** Increase average minimum densities to meet or exceed: seven units per acre for detached/semi-detached; 12 units for town homes; and 20 for apartments.	5
			2.6	**Walkable Neighborhoods: Connections to Surrounding Neighborhoods** Provide three separate connections from the development to sidewalks or pathways in surrounding neighborhoods.	5
			2.7	**Transportation Choices** Locate project within ¼ quarter mile radius of public transit service, or ½ mile radius from a fixed rail or ferry station.	12
Yes	No	?	**Site Improvements**		
			3.1	**Environmental Remediation** Conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and provide a plan for abatement if necessary.	Mandatory
			3.2	**Erosion and Sedimentation Control** Implement EPA's Best Management Practices for erosion and sedimentation control during construction.	Mandatory
			3.3	**Landscaping** Select native trees and plants that are appropriate to the site's soils and microclimate and locate to provide shading in the summer and allow for heat gain in the winter.	Mandatory *if providing landscaping*

Page 1

Yes	No	?			
			3.4	**Surface Water Management** Capture the first ½ inch of rainfall that falls in a 24-hour period.	5
			3.5	**Storm Drain Labels** Label all storm drains or storm inlets to clearly indicate where the drain or inlet leads.	2
Yes	No	?		**Water Conservation**	
			4.1a	**Water Conserving Fixtures: New Construction** Install water-conserving fixtures with the following specifications: toilets – 1.6 gallons per flush; showerheads – 2.0 gallons per minute; kitchen faucets – 2.0 GPM; bathroom faucets – 2.0 GPM.	Mandatory
			4.1b	**Water Conserving Fixtures: Moderate Rehab** Install water-conserving fixtures with the following specifications for toilets and shower heads and follow requirements for other fixtures wherever and whenever they are replaced: toilets – 1.6 gallons per flush; showerheads – 2.0 gallons per minute; kitchen faucets – 2.0 GPM; bathroom faucets – 2.0 GPM.	Mandatory
			4.2	**Efficient Irrigation** If irrigation is necessary, use recycled gray water, roof water, collected site run-off or an irrigation system that will deliver up to 95 percent of the water supplied.	Mandatory *if irrigation is necessary*
Yes	No	?		**Energy Efficiency**	
			5.1a	**Efficient Energy Use: New Construction** Meet Energy Star standards.	Mandatory
			5.1b	**Efficient Energy Use: Moderate Rehab** Perform an energy analysis of existing building condition, estimate costs of improvements, make those with a 10 year or shorter payback.	Mandatory
			5.2	**Energy Star Appliances** If providing appliances, install Energy Star labeled appliances.	Mandatory *if providing appliances*
			5.3a	**Efficient Light: Interior** Install Energy Star-labeled lighting fixtures in all interior units and use Energy Star or high-efficiency commercial grade fixtures in all common areas.	Mandatory
			5.3b	**Efficient Light: Exterior** Install daylight sensors or timers on all outdoor lighting.	Mandatory
			5.4	**Electricity Meter** Install individual or sub-metered electric meters.	Mandatory *except for zero bedroom units*
			5.5a	**Additional Reductions in Energy Use: New Construction** Exceed Energy Star standards.	10
			5.5b	**Additional Reductions in Energy Use: Moderate Rehab** Produce the same energy improvement report and recommendations required in item 5.1, but extend the maximum payback period to 14 years.	10
			5.6a	**Photovoltaic (PV) Panels** Install PV panels to provide at least 10 percent of the project's estimated electricity demand.	15
			5.6b	**Photovoltaic (PV) Ready** Site, design, engineer and wire the development to accommodate installation of PV in the future.	2
Yes	No	?		**Materials Beneficial to the Environment**	
			6.1	**Construction Waste Management** Develop and implement a construction waste management plan to reduce the amount of material sent to the landfill.	5
			6.2	**Recycled Content Material** Use materials with recycled content; provide calculation for recycled content percentage based on cost or value of recycled content in relation to total materials for project.	14

Page 2

Yes	No	?			
			6.3	**Certified, Salvaged and Engineered Wood** Use at least 50 percent (by cost or value) wood products and materials that are certified in accordance with the Forest Stewardship Council, salvaged wood, or engineered framing materials.	10
			6.4a	**Water-Permeable Walkways** Use water-permeable materials in 50 percent or more of walkways.	5
			6.4b	**Water-Permeable Parking Areas** Use water-permeable materials in 50 percent or more of paved parking areas.	10
			6.5a	**Reduce Heat-Island Effect: Roofing** Use Energy Star-compliant and high-emissive roofing and/or, install a "green" (vegetated) roof for at least 50 percent of the roof area; or a combination of high-albedo and vegetated roof covering 75 percent of the roof area.	5
			6.5b	**Reduce Heat-Island Effect: Paving** Use light-colored/high-albedo materials and/or an open-grid pavement with a minimum Solar Reflective Index of 0.6 over at least 30 percent of the site's hardscaped area.	5
Yes	No	?	Healthy Living Environment		
			7.1	**Low / No Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) Paints and Primers** Specify that all interior paints and primers must contain low or no VOC.	Mandatory
			7.2	**Low / No VOC Adhesives and Sealants** Specify that all adhesives and sealants must contain low or no VOC.	Mandatory
			7.3	**Formaldehyde-free Composite Wood** Do not use any composite wood that has exposed particleboard (which contains added urea-formaldehyde), unless the exposed area has been sealed.	Mandatory
			7.4	**Green Label Certified Floor Covering** Do not install carpets in basements, entryways, laundry rooms, bathrooms or kitchens. If using carpet, use the Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label certified carpet and pad.	Mandatory *if providing floor coverings*
			7.5a	**Exhaust Fans – Bathroom: New Construction** Install Energy Star-labeled bathroom fans that exhaust to the outdoors which has a humidistat sensor or timer, or operates continuously.	Mandatory *except for moderate rehabs*
			7.5b	**Exhaust Fans – Kitchen: New Construction** Install Energy Star-labeled power vented fans or range hoods that exhaust to the exterior.	Mandatory *except for moderate rehabs*
			7.6	**Ventilation: New Construction** Install a ventilation system for the dwelling unit that provides 15 cubic feet per minute of fresh air, per occupant.	Mandatory *except for moderate rehabs*
			7.7	**HVAC Sizing** Size heating and cooling equipment in accordance with the Air Conditioning Contractors of America Manual, Parts J and S.	Mandatory
			7.8a	**Water Heaters: Mold Prevention** Use tankless hot water heaters or install conventional hot water heaters in rooms with drains or catch pans piped to the exterior of the dwelling and with non-water sensitive floor coverings.	Mandatory
			7.8b	**Water Heaters: Minimizing CO** Specify direct vented or combustion sealed water heaters if the heater is located in a conditioned space.	2
			7.9	**Cold Water Pipe Insulation** Insulate exposed cold water pipes in climates and building conditions susceptible to moisture condensation.	Mandatory
			7.10a	**Ventilation: New Construction** In wet areas, use materials that have smooth, durable, cleanable surfaces. Do not use mold-propagating materials such as vinyl wallpaper and unsealed grout.	Mandatory

Page 3

			7.10b	**Materials in Wet Areas: Tub and Shower Enclosure** Use one-piece fiberglass or similar enclosure or, if using any form of grouted material, use backing materials such as cement board, fiber cement board, fiberglass-reinforced board or cement plaster.	Mandatory
			7.11a	**Basements and Concrete Slabs: Vapor Barrier** Provide vapor barrier and 4 four inches of gravel for a capillary break under all slabs.	Mandatory *except for rehabs*
			7.11b	**Basements and Concrete Slabs – Radon: New Construction** In EPA Zone 1 areas, install passive radon-resistant features below the slab along with a vertical vent pipe with junction box available, if an active system should prove necessary.	Mandatory
			7.12	**Water Drainage** Provide drainage of water to the lowest level of concrete away from windows, walls and foundations. Foundation walls should be carefully waterproofed on the exterior to avoid moisture migration.	Mandatory
			7.13	**Garage Isolation** Provide a continuous air barrier between the conditioned (living) space and any unconditioned garage space. In single-family houses with attached garages, install a CO alarm inside the house on the wall that is attached to the garage or is outside the sleeping area.	Mandatory
			7.14	**Clothes-Dryer Exhaust** Clothes dryers must be exhausted directly to the outdoors.	Mandatory
			7.15	**Integrated Pest Management** Seal all wall, floor and joint penetrations to prevent pest entry. Provide rodent and corrosion proof screens (e.g., copper or stainless steel mesh) for large openings.	Mandatory
			7.16	**Lead-Safe Work Practices** For properties built before 1978, use lead-safe work practices during renovation, remodeling, painting and demolition.	Mandatory
			7.17a	**Healthy Flooring Materials: Alternative Sources** Use non-vinyl, non-carpet floor coverings in all rooms.	5
			7.17b	**Healthy Flooring Materials: Reducing Dust** Install a whole-house vacuum system with high-efficiency particulate air filtration.	2
Yes	No	?	Operations and Maintenance		
			8.1	**Building Maintenance Manual for Owner** Provide a manual that includes the following: a routine maintenance plan; instructions for all appliances, HVAC operation, water-system turnoffs, lighting equipment and other systems that are part of each occupancy unit; an occupancy turnover plan that describes in detail the process of educating the tenant about proper use and maintenance of all building systems; and information on how to maintain the green features of the site, including paving materials and landscaping.	Mandatory
			8.2	**Occupant's Manual** Provide a guide for homeowners and renters that explains the intent, benefits, use and maintenance of green building features, and encourages additional green activities such as recycling, gardening and use of healthy cleaning materials.	Mandatory
			8.3	**Homeowner and New Resident Orientation** Provide a walk-through and orientation to the homeowner or new resident that reviews the building's green features, operations and maintenance.	Mandatory

Page 4

APPENDIX 5.5, continued

Economy Chapter

Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lexington

Lexington

ECONOMY

Economic assets determine the ability of any community to sustain or grow. The same assets also set a limit, by virtue of tax revenue, on public investment that local government can make in the community. Lexington has enjoyed a relatively stable economic base; has benefitted from a strong base; and has consistently and carefully invested in its infrastructure for the benefit of all who take advantage of its quality of life. That said, we are in a period of economic uncertainty and need to plan wisely from a solid base of knowledge to ensure that economic vitality remains a defining characteristic of Lexington in the years ahead. To that end, economic resources must be fully identified, understood and cultivated, if Lexington is to ensure a healthy economy and to encourage thoughtful economic growth.

This chapter considers our "economic context," reviews earlier economic development initiatives, investigates the means by which residents earn a living, documents income levels, businesses and industries in our region, considers the economic strengths and revenue collection levels of local governments, and identifies areas where Lexington should focus its attention to ensure long-term economic vibrancy.

THE ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Lexington's economy extends well beyond the boundaries of the City. Many City residents work in Rockbridge County or Buena Vista and many of the people who work in Lexington live in the County or in Buena Vista. Therefore, it is useful to look at economic information for all three localities.

We discuss three distinct economic areas in this chapter recognizing, though, that there is great fluidity, permeability, and intra-reliance among the three:

- **The City of Lexington (City or Lexington),** which is limited to within the City limits

- **Greater Lexington Area,** which includes the City and the commercial centers which have developed around it; and

- **Regional Economy (Region)**,which is considered to be all of Rockbridge County including the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista.

Information is reported separately for Rockbridge County, Lexington and Buena Vista, when available. The Region represents aggregated data for Rockbridge County and the cities of

Lexington and Buena Vista. Data will also be presented for the Central Shenandoah Planning District (CSPDC) (representing Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge and Rockingham Counties and the Cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton and Waynesboro) as well as for the state of Virginia.

The majority of this data is presented in the end of the chapter with references to the appropriate table throughout, so that the facts behind the recommendations can be more completely understood.

HISTORY OF PAST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Lexington has a history of working toward economic well-being for the city and its residents. Each effort appears appropriate for its time; however, no one initiative served as a single, final answer, suggesting that for Lexington to remain competitive and economically viable, on-going efforts of a different nature will be needed in the future.

The following is a brief overview of earlier initiatives that found some measure of success.

LEXINGTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Lexington Downtown Development Association (LDDA) was incorporated in 1985. It identified possibilities for improvement of the economic viability of downtown Lexington. LDDA participated in the Main Street program, a National Trust for Historic Preservation program which envisions public/private partnerships working together for downtown revitalization within the context of historic preservation.

LDDA had a professional staff and conducted business through committees composed of members. Funding was by assessment of member businesses along with a significant contribution from the City. Free design recommendations for facade restoration and paint colors for commercial buildings in the downtown were available through the State's Main Street design coordinator. LDDA also managed a downtown facade improvement grant program with funds provided by Historic Lexington Foundation (HLF). Staff met with owners of potential businesses to assist them in locating in the downtown as well as with operators of existing business to help them deal with challenges and respond to business opportunities. Lexington was held as a model community by the State's Main Street Program staff.

As with most organizations, early success was followed by organizational challenges of membership, funding, equity, volunteers, and leadership. Downtown business community members eventually recommended that LDDA be disbanded and its funds be made available to the Chamber of Commerce to operate a downtown marketing and promotions program. LDDA disbanded in 2006 and its funds were transferred to the Chamber.

THE ROCKBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP

The Rockbridge Area Economic Development Commission (RAEDC) was created in 1980 by the City Councils of Lexington and Buena Vista and the Board of Supervisors of Rockbridge County to create additional job opportunities for all Rockbridge Area citizens and to strengthen and diversify the area economy. RAEDC was made up of three members appointed from each jurisdiction and was staffed by a full-time executive director and a secretary/assistant. The Commission was funded on a per capita basis by the three jurisdictions. Its name was subsequently changed to The Rockbridge Partnership to better reflect its mission and the national trend of eliminating “economic development” from the title of economic commissions.

The principal function of the Commission was to work within guidelines agreed upon by the three jurisdictions to "seek, entice, promote and maintain sufficient and suitable employment producing activities in the area, achieve an improved rate of employment, and enhance the tax base of the respective political jurisdictions".

The Partnership was focused on two areas: 1) retention of existing industries and 2) attracting new industry. It was precluded by its By-Laws from soliciting or assisting commercial or retail business and from encouraging tourism. Because of these policy decisions as well as limited resources, the promotional materials prepared and utilized by the Partnership were primarily geared to basic manufacturing.

After several years of debate about the benefits of the program, the City of Buena Vista decided to withdraw from the Partnership. Lexington and Rockbridge County later determined that the Partnership should be abolished and that each jurisdiction would manage its own economic development initiatives. The Partnership was formally disbanded in 2009.

CURRENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Since 2009, Lexington, Buena Vista, and Rockbridge County have managed their own economic development efforts. An ad hoc committee composed of the manager/administrator of each jurisdiction as well as the city/county staff person assigned to conduct that locality's program serve as the core of area economic development efforts. These paid staff are joined by representatives from the Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber), the Regional Tourism Program, the Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP), and Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC), to ensure coordination among the governments and other regional agencies in economic development.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce is a business membership organization consisting of small and large businesses, professionals and individuals who care about the well being and growth of our community. Its mission is to promote and encourage business and commerce and assist with business development in the Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge area.

The Chamber provides information for those interested in starting a business with information provided by partnering agencies such as SCORE (Service Corp of Retired Executives), SBA (Small Business Administration) and the SBDC (Small Business Development Center). The Chamber offers a wide range of programs, services and opportunities to network among area businesses. The Chamber sponsors various business, informational and legislative events throughout the year including a "State of the Community" breakfast (featuring both local and state elected officials). Educational as well as business and political forums are scheduled throughout the year to help keep membership informed of latest programs.

The Promotions and Marketing Manager is responsible for marketing, advertising, promotions, and public relations for the businesses located in downtown Lexington. This includes the planning, coordination and marketing for special events, the production of in-house marketing materials, regular contributions to print media, web site, and social media. This role replaces the earlier LDDA efforts. Currently, a "shop local" campaign concentrates on local awareness of the many benefits to the community of shopping in Lexington.

The Promotions and Marketing Manager is also responsible for working with existing and potential new business in the downtown to support business retention and growth and is responsible for serving as the liaison between the downtown business community and City government.

LEXINGTON AND ROCKBRIDGE AREA TOURISM OFFICE

The Lexington Visitor Center located in Lexington's historic downtown area is operated by Lexington and the Rockbridge Area Tourism Development which also operates the Buena Vista Visitor Center. Rockbridge Area Tourism is staffed by a full-time Executive Director, Marketing Director, and Marketing Assistant as well as approximately 12 part-time Travel Counselors who also serve as Tour Guides. The tourism program budget is primarily derived from .8% of meals and lodging gross receipts in Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County. Additional revenue come from grants, guide service, and advertising space rental. The FY 10-11 budget was $586,958.

The Visitor Centers have exhibits, maps, brochures, restaurant menus, events calendars and more to help showcase the area, Travel Counselors undergo training to learn to assist and direct visitors in a warm, welcoming, efficient, and knowledgeable manner. Rockbridge Area Tourism also provides complimentary itinerary-building services for group tours and provides Tour

Guides for a nominal fee. The Lexington Visitor Center serves thousands of walk-in visitors on an annual basis.

Rockbridge Area Tourism assists visitors in a variety of ways. The tourism website (www.lexingtonvirginia.com) is used by over 300,000 people each year. Its E-Newsletter is sent to around 5,000 subscribers. Facebook (www.facebook.com/lexingtonva) has more than 7,500 friends and Twitter (www.twitter.com/lexington) followers have surpassed 7,500 followers and continue to grow steadily. In addition, Rockbridge Area Tourism prints and distributes 150,000 copies of the Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County *Visitor Guide* each year.

Rockbridge Area Tourism also partners with other organizations to leverage marketing dollars. Events, attractions, travel packages and area businesses are posted on the Virginia Tourism Corporation website (www.virginia.org) which has an annual hit-rate of over 6 million users. Brochures are produced through the Shenandoah Valley Travel Association and the Blue Ridge Parkway Association.

SHENANDOAH VALLEY PARTNERSHIP

The Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP) is a public/private partnership providing marketing and business assistance for the Shenandoah Valley region. Through regional cooperation, SVP brings together business, government and education leaders to promote new investment, strengthen existing business, and guide labor force development to ensure a healthy economic future for the region. The SVP serves the Virginia counties of Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, Rockingham, and Shenandoah and the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, and Waynesboro.

Shenandoah Valley Partnership's Regional Strategic Initiatives

The Central Shenandoah Valley's Regional Strategic Initiatives were developed through a regional strategic planning process in the 1990s. In order to maintain the region's Strategic Initiatives as a living document, approximately 70 endorsing organizations are annually given an opportunity to review the initiatives, offer amendments, and endorse the revised initiatives. The Regional Strategic Initiatives are used by the Planning District Commission and others in long-range planning, grant writing and decision-making.

These initiatives have five areas of focus: 1) Environmental, 2) Economic Development, 3) Inter-Governmental Cooperation and Partnership, 4) Infrastructure, and 5) Community.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Several State agencies also have a significant role in economic development efforts throughout the Commonwealth including in the Great Valley.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership was established to foster expansion of the State's economy. Their staff provides a link between businesses looking for a site in Virginia and local communities seeking new business and industry. They provide individually tailored research for suitable land and buildings within the Commonwealth and coordinate site visits of those locations deemed to be most suitable. The Partnership also employs professionals in business development finance, technical services, research, and marketing to assist those seeking to locate a business in Virginia. They market Virginia businesses and products both domestically and internationally. They also maintain the most current market, economic and demographic information for use by potential business developers.

The Commonwealth also has a number of on-line resources to assist emerging and expanding small businesses. These include an interactive guide to creating a business plan, information about starting and expanding a business, financing, workforce development opportunities, legal requirements and listings of available government sources created to support Virginia's small business community.

THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION

The local economy cannot be evaluated without also considering national economic trends since they significantly impact economic activity within the region.

This chapter is written as the national economy recovers from what has been repeatedly described as the worst recession since the Great Depression. Unemployment, nationally, hovers near 10 percent. Financial markets have struggled and financing for new economic investment is difficult to obtain. Housing construction and sales are down and prices for existing housing have dropped significantly. Mortgage delinquencies are at an all time high. Although the recession may technically be over, its effects are expected to linger for some time.

The recession has had an equally significant economic impact at both the state and local levels. Localities have been challenged by lowered value in existing housing stock, absence of significant new construction, and flattened business revenue, all resulting in a reduced tax base.

At the State level, Virginia has a long-held resistance to enact new taxes. No new taxes coupled with lowered revenue collection as a result of the recession means the State is providing reduced funding to localities. Reduced funding has not been accompanied by a relaxation of State required services, leaving localities to identify ways to provide for the unfunded State mandates. At the time of this writing, there is no relief in sight from the State level; localities must find their own way to meet state requirements with significantly smaller coffers. Most localities have done this by reducing services, cutting expenses, and freezing pay rates. This response, while necessary, will not be adequate to meet longer-term citizen needs–especially if revenues, as projected, do not return to pre-recession rates until well into 2015.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Lexington has more jobs than it has City residents to fill them. This discrepancy exists, in part, because individual decisions about employment and housing are usually regional in nature. People are comfortable living in one jurisdiction and working in another. So, while the creation of well-paying jobs with good benefits in our region is critical for Lexington's economy, not all these jobs need to be in Lexington. The entire region benefits from new income-generating jobs anywhere within it.

As a result, Lexington should not attempt to create or implement an economic development plan in isolation. We must work to involve the public, business, and educational sectors in partnerships to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation. We should maintain and expand our connections with the County and Buena Vista, as well as the Shenandoah Valley Partnership and the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission. Finally, any economic development strategy should recognize and respond to the significant restructuring of the economy–away from manufacturing–which has resulted from technological progress and social change.

The following sections identify specific economic development goals, objectives, and strategies; however, each is linked to one overarching goal, noted below:

OVERALL ECONOMIC GOAL: Capitalize on the City's assets and its unique small town character in order to increase employment opportunities, raise salaries and expand local revenue.

> **RECOMMENDATION: Work with our regional partners on larger scale projects that can create larger numbers of jobs within the region.**

Emphasis on the special quality of life in this area should be a key component of any economic development strategy.

GOAL: Take advantage of Lexington's strengths.

Higher education, tourism, medical and professional services; small entrepreneurial businesses; and our successful commercial areas (downtown, East Nelson Street, and South Main Street) represent our core economic strengths. (See Tables 6-2, 6-4, 6-14 and 6-15)

> **RECOMMENDATION: Focus on the expansion of existing core economic components**.
>
> **RECOMMENDATION: Continue efforts to improve commercial areas (downtown, East Nelson Street, and South Main Street).**

RECOMMENDATION: Work with medical and professional services to identify opportunities for expansion.

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage the formation of an entrepreneurial council that would serve as a resource for identifying economic development strategies and as a resource for individuals and partnerships interested in new entrepreneurial activities.

RECOMMENDATION: Work with the newly formed entrepreneurial council to identify local government barriers to entrepreneurial efforts and work to eliminate those barriers where feasible and logical.

Because of the limited amount of vacant land remaining for new development, the City should take steps to facilitate and maximize infill development and the reuse and redevelopment of underdeveloped properties. (See the Land Use Chapter for statistics)

RECOMMENDATION: Ensure new development makes efficient, effective, and architecturally appropriate use of the limited supply of vacant land.

All economic development efforts should recognize and respond to the significant restructuring of the economy that is following technological change. The majority of recent regional and national growth has been and will continue to be based on new, continuously evolving technology. (See Tables 6-22, 6-24, 6-25, and 6-26)

CREATING A NEW ECONOMMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

GOAL: The Rockbridge region should develop a focused, coordinated strategy of economic development designed to respond positively to the changing nature of the national economy.

Our strategy of economic and community advancement must be distinct and future oriented. Additionally, Lexington's success is tied to the success of Buena Vista and Rockbridge County. Collaboration is essential.

RECOMMENDATION:: Develop and implement strategies by sharing ideas and resources directly with Buena Vista and Rockbridge County, the Chamber of Commerce, other local civic and business groups and the area's colleges and universities.

RECOMMENDATION: Create a plan to ensure a diverse blend of industry sectors that a) minimizes the diminishing role of manufacturing, b) uses existing skills, c)

facilitates adoption of emerging skills, and d) ensures the region is not overly-reliant on any one industry sector.

INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF AREA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The presence of two undergraduate universities within our borders; Dabney Lancaster Community College and Southern Virginia University in the region; and James Madison University, Radford University, Virginia Tech and the University of Virginia within two hours of Lexington is an untapped resource. The City should leverage these resources.

GOAL: Each of the area's colleges should be invited to identify means by which it can assist local efforts to stimulate economic development.

RECOMMENDATION: Involve W&L and VMI more effectively in fostering and supporting technology-based development through the generation of commercially viable ideas and problem solving for local companies.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify mechanisms to attract businesses and organizations that have symbiotic relationships and connections with higher education in Lexington.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify mechanisms to attract friends of W&L and VMI with business interests to the region.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop initiatives to increase the number of conferences held in Lexington in association with the Universities.

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage Dabney S. Lancaster to continue to focus on, improve the quality of, and expand programs and technical courses to train skilled, knowledgeable workers.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify influential leaders in Lexington, Buena Vista, and Rockbridge County who understand the means and the mechanisms to forge partnerships with the institutions named in this section.

NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

The Department of Labor predicts rapid changes in the nature of the job market. It expects growth will be in professional, technical and sales fields requiring the highest education and skill levels. Of the fastest growing job categories, all but one, service occupations, require more than the median level of education, of those growing more slowly than average, none requires more than the median education. Ranking jobs according to skill, rather than education, illustrates the

rising requirements more dramatically. When jobs are rated according to the math, language and reasoning skills they require, only 27 percent of all new jobs fall into the lowest two skill categories while 40 percent of current jobs require these limited skills. By contrast 41 percent of new jobs are in the three highest skill groups compared to only 24 percent of current jobs. (See Tables 6-22, 6-24, 6-25, and 6-26)

As the economy grows more complex and more dependent on human capital, the standards set by our educational system must be raised.

Economic transformation cannot occur unless the workforce is prepared. The best investment in the area of economic development is in education to prepare a technically proficient work force capable of adapting rapidly to evolving technologies.

Additionally, challenges are presented by America's aging population. The Manpower Development Commission report states that "the most important population change will be the drop in the number of young people, ages 18 to 24, who represent new entrants to the labor force. This means that the workforce will age and a growing percentage will be 45 years old and over. The education and skills of those currently in the workforce will therefore assume greater importance in determining the competitive position of the South's economy in the next decades."

> **RECOMMENDATION: Improve the educational preparation and job skills of all workers.**
>
> **RECOMMENDATION: Partner with educational institutions and appropriate agencies, such as the Virginia Employment Commission, to provide training opportunities for older workers to ensure they remain employable.**
>
> **RECOMMENDATION: Increase the quality and quantity of training provided the current workforce, expanding the focus of education reform to include education for adults.**
>
> **RECOMMENDATION: Encourage public and private partnerships to develop adult education and training programs that respond to new demands of current and emerging jobs.**

THE TECH PREP PROGRAM

Tech Prep in Virginia develops career pathways or programs of study that begin in high school and continue through an associate or baccalaureate degree, a journeyman's license, a post-secondary level industry certification, or a state license. Tech Prep programs are designed to prepare the emerging workforce for higher education and entry into high wage, high demand, or high skills career fields.

Tech Prep in Virginia is a federally funded grant program administered by all 23 community colleges in the Commonwealth on behalf of local consortia comprised of secondary and postsecondary education partners, local employers, and regional economic and workforce development entities. In Rockbridge County, the Tech Prep Program is a partnership between Rockbridge and Parry McCluer High Schools and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. Tech Prep Career Pathways serve Career and Technical Education (CTE) students from high school through community college or an apprenticeship. Tech Prep students are initially identified as high school CTE students enrolled in a dual-enrollment course. CTE provides a collaboration between career/technical and academic disciplines at the high school and post secondary levels.

The program involves a four to six year program of study that begins in high school and ends with a postsecondary credential, such as an associate or baccalaureate degree. Each Tech Prep Career Pathway contains academic and CTE courses at the secondary and postsecondary level. All Tech Prep Career Pathways prepare participants for high demand occupational fields, such as Engineering Technology, Allied Health, and more. Tech Prep programs are aligned with national career clusters and pathways.

Additional features of the Tech Prep program include college credits through dual-enrollment, early college placement testing, certifications and licensures, business-based learning including internships, cooperative education, and career coaching.

DABNEY S. LANCASTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE (DSLCC)

Community colleges are our best hope for retooling the current workforce. They can translate employers' changing needs into effective training for workers.

Local companies currently work with DSLCC to identify and certify curricula that help students meet basic job requirements. Successful completion of certified courses of study enables employees to transfer their basic skills, as job demands change. Worker training remains a core mission for DSLCC.

Beyond the traditional college offering, DSLCC offers dual-enrollment in high school/community college classes, on-site at area high schools. High school juniors and seniors can enroll, jointly, in math, English, science, and social science courses to complete high school graduation requirements and the foundation of a liberal arts degree. Local students have been able to graduate from high school with their first-year college requirements already completed.

> **RECOMMENDATION: Encourage area businesses to explore partnerships for job/skill training with DSLCC.**

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage area high school students to participate in dual–enrollment courses through DSLCC.

RECOMMENDATION: Partner with DSLCC to identify the most significant skills/knowledge needed in existing and emerging workforces and to offer basic courses to area residents.

MIDDLE COLLEGE

The Middle College Program is an initiative of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) designed to offer educational opportunities for individuals who have not completed high school. Individuals without a high school degree can increase their income and employability by simultaneously pursuing a GED, community college education, and a workforce certification in a college environment. The program offers targeted remedial courses, access to workforce readiness courses, enrollment in community college courses applicable to a degree or industry-based certificate, and comprehensive support services. (See Figure 6-2, Table 6-10)

Currently 8 community colleges in Virginia have established programs. These programs demonstrate the success of this educational model:

- over 70% of active students have received a GED
- Over 50% of GED completers are enrolled in a post-secondary education program
- Nearly 60% of the GED completers earned a Career Readiness Certificate

RECOMMENDATION:: Establish a Middle College as part of Dabney S. Lancaster Community College specifically to serve the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista and the County of Rockbridge.

KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS AND STRATEGIES

Tourism

The City is a partner in a well-respected, high quality regional tourism development program. Support for this program must continue. And, Lexington must do its part by making the City even more attractive to visitors. This is essential, given informal discussions concerning moving the visitors' center closer to the Interstate when the Center's current lease expires. The City must make the strongest possible case for keeping the visitors' center within Lexington.

GOAL: Ensure that the Visitors' Center remains in downtown Lexington with convenient parking for all types of vehicles.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue emphasis on friendly, welcoming customer relations on the part of all of our businesses and citizens.

RECOMMENDATION: Improve signage to improve the experience for those visiting Lexington.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue the focus on the attractiveness of downtown Lexington and the entrance corridors.

RECOMMENDATION: Expand outdoor and recreational activities available in this region.

Small Businesses

Small, entrepreneurial businesses, whether located in the downtown area or in individual homes, have been a major component of Lexington's economy since the beginning of our community. Small businesses are a significant source of income and jobs if properly encouraged. Recent studies have shown that the largest component of job growth has been the development and expansion of local small businesses.

Three focus groups composed of small business owners and local entrepreneurs were convened in 2010 to assist the City in updating its economic development plans. Each group was asked to discuss four questions:

- What are the advantages of doing business in and around Lexington?
- Are there any barriers to doing business that the City could or should assist in removing?
- What one or two things do you feel that the City could or should do to enable a business such as yours to survive and thrive?
- What advice would you offer the Planning Commission and City Council on strengthening Lexington's economy?

Their responses suggest that the City should continue active dialog with local entrepreneurs in order to understand better the effect that governmental decisions and regulations have on creating and expanding Lexington's businesses. The Chamber of Commerce can be a good tool for this communication, but direct focus groups should also be used. Periodic surveys of local small businesses can also provide useful information and identify ways that the community can support and encourage small business growth. (See Appendix 1: Summary of "Economy" Focus Groups, Page 6-54.)

People starting new businesses or operating existing small businesses need to know much more than how to produce a product or provide a service. They must develop knowledge of business planning, finance, marketing, and many aspects of the law including employment, taxation, safety at work, environmental standards, and more. Providing access to training and support can

help business owners access better basic knowledge. To conserve resources, local government should support the provision of these services rather than providing them directly. James Madison University's Small Business Center is one possible source for this type of training. Dabney Lancaster could develop an increased emphasis in this area as well.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop strategies to assist in developing businesses, including start-up technical assistance, financing mechanisms, and health insurance options.

RECOMMENDATION: Identify and organize workshops and training programs to provide technical advice on business management.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide information about and links to online programs offering assistance to emerging and expanding small businesses.

There are a number of online programs offered by State and regional economic development organizations which provide differing types of assistance to emerging and expanding small businesses.

RECOMMENDATION: Create a small business page on both the City and Chamber of Commerce web sites.

The City's web site should guide local entrepreneurs through the steps required to open a business in Lexington. This site could also provide links to the small business oriented web sites, available throughout the region and the state, which provide many forms of assistance for new and expanding businesses.

RECOMMENDATION: Evaluate and revise local regulations to support small business creation.

Continue discussions with existing and potential small business owners to determine if any of the City's regulations and requirements pose unnecessary difficulties in creating and operating their enterprises. For instance, the City's current home based business regulations forbid anyone other than members of the immediate family from working in the home. Other jurisdictions have liberalized these regulations to let a limited number of employees (typically 1 or 2) to work in the home.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide access to financial advice and assistance for small start- up businesses.

One of the biggest challenges for small business, especially for those just starting up, is access to capital. Access has become even more difficult because of the current recession. The City

should create opportunities to talk with local businesses about financing. The City should also meet with local bankers to get their perspectives on how best to facilitate increased funding.

RECOMMENDATION: Facilitate the creation of a "micro-enterprise" small loan program.

Some Cities have created small grant and loan programs to provide investment to suitable businesses startups. These might be at least partially funded by grants available from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to set up and operate "micro-enterprise" small-loan programs.

RECOMMENDATION: Facilitate the creation of business mentoring programs

Linking new and established small business owners provides benefits to both groups. Networks of mentors and businesses can create additional benefits by developing supplier linkages, establishing critical mass for employee training, and more.

"Buy local" Programs

When residents buy from a locally owned business rather than a national chain, significantly more money remains in the community and more of it is used to make purchases from other businesses and service providers, strengthening the economic base of the community. A recent analysis found that local merchants generated more than 3 times the local economic activity of competitive chain stores on equal revenue.

Lexington's special small businesses are an integral part of our distinctive character. In an increasingly homogenized world, entrepreneurs and skilled workers prefer to invest and to settle in communities that honor local businesses' distinctive characteristics.

RECOMMENDATION:: Actively support and participate in the Chamber of Commerce's "Locally in Lexington Program," a shop locally program focusing on the downtown.

BUILD A TECHNOLOGY-BASED ECONOMIC SECTOR

Our local economic development efforts should try to capture some of the growth being driven by technology.

Goal: The City should employ a mix of economic development strategies to build a local "niche" in the high-tech economy.

RECOMMENDATION: Invest in broadband and other telecommunications infrastructure necessary for technology development.

Adequate broadband capacity is a prerequisite for growth in the Information Technology sector. The City should continue to partner with the rest of the region through the Rockbridge Area Network Authority (RANA) to create an affordable high speed fiber optic connection to each business and residence in the City.

> **RECOMMENDATION: Focus on "grow your own" strategies for technology development.**

As in other economic development strategies, local entrepreneurial development deserves more attention than recruiting and marketing based strategies. Strategies for accomplishing this have previously been identified and discussed in the "Small Businesses" section.

> **RECOMMENDATION: Promote awareness of strides the Lexington area is taking in technology.**

Lexington can achieve some of the benefits of new technologies even before they are a reality. Businesses, entrepreneurs, and professionals will be more favorably disposed toward the Rockbridge area if they are aware of Lexington's (and the area's) commitment to broadband communications, solar power development, and other cutting-edge technologies.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Recognizing that creating jobs is inherently a regional issue, the City must work closely with Rockbridge County and the City of Buena Vista to coordinate our activities and to mutually support projects which will provide jobs for our region. The creation of the Rockbridge Area Network Authority, RANA, to provide affordable high speed access to all citizens is an example of this type of cooperation.

> **RECOMMENDATION: Staff from these localities should meet on a regular basis to exchange information about our individual efforts.**

> **RECOMMENDATION: The City should also continue its membership in the Shenandoah Valley Partnership.**

While the direct benefit of this organization to Lexington is not great, membership keeps us updated on regional activities throughout the Valley.

ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS -
ANOTHER WAY TO THINK ABOUT LEXINGTON'S ECONOMY

Economic base technique (EBT) is a widely used method for evaluating specific characteristics of a local economy. EBT assumes that any local economy can be divided into two sectors: (1) a "basic" or "exporting from the region" sector and (2) a "non-basic" or "service to the region" sector. Basic activities consist of industries which export most of their goods and services outside of the defined study area, thereby importing income into the area.

The technique assumes that local firms that export are the prime cause of local economic growth and the "economic base" of the local economy. Expansion of these activities generate more income for the locality and increase growth in all economic sectors. The local sector provides goods and services for and within the local community, depending on dollars already within the community.

A region's economy is strong when it exports more goods and services than it imports. The basic sector, generally, includes exporting firms such as mining and manufacturing enterprises (and often agriculture), federal and state government, and local firms that sell to tourists and temporary community residents, such as college students.

The non-basic sector consists of firms which provide goods and services primarily for consumption within the defined study area and are largely dependent on local economic conditions. Retail trade, local service industries, and local government activities are examples of supporting sector activity.

A "location quotient" (LQ) is used to analyze the strengths of an area's exports and imports by types of industries. Location Quotients are calculated for all industries to determine whether or not the local economy has a greater share of each industry than expected when compared to the national economy. Thus the location quotient method compares local employment to national employment. The LQ provides evidence for the existence of basic employment in a given industry for the local economy. A location quotient of 1.0 is indicative of a self-sufficient economic sector. Industries whose ratios are greater than unity (1.0) are regarded as export industries. These industries bring new money into the community. A LQ that is equal to 1 suggests that the local employment is exactly sufficient to meet the local demand for a given good or service. An LQ of less than 1 suggests that local employment is less than expected for a given industry. All of this employment is considered non basic, meeting only local demand.

Comparing a region's LQ with national norms is an exercise that can be very revealing. For example, comparing manufacturing LQ's for Rockbridge County and Buena Vista would reveal that those localities are disproportionately reliant on manufacturing when compared to national figures. Conversely, Lexington's manufacturing LQ would reveal that the City, proper, would feel little downside to a localized decline in manufacturing. A similar comparison, within education, suggests that should Virginia withdraw State funding for higher education or should

the trend to online education become greater, Lexington's economic base would be in peril while Rockbridge County would remain, to a great extent, untouched.

Table 6-1 shows the major industry sectors and their respective location quotients or LQ's. [Note: Caution should be exercised in using the location quotient technique to identify certain industries. Local industries such as hotels, forestry, or state and federal government may be dependent largely on non-local factors and can be assumed to be entirely basic, regardless of the location quotient value. Other industries such as local government may have a location quotient greater than 1.0 and be entirely dependent on the local economy.]

This chapter does offer sufficient opportunity to provide for a robust Economic Base Analysis; however, economic development planning would be greatly informed by such analysis.

Table 6-1
Location Quotients
Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County
2008

Industry	Lexington	Rockbridge County	Buena Vista
Natural Resources and Mining	ND	2.33	ND
Construction	.53	.99	ND
Manufacturing	ND	3.69	3.44
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	.55	1.06	.63
Information	.45	.18	ND
Financial Activities	.73	.35	.43
Professional and Business Services	.20	.19	.29
Education and health Services	3.36	.21	2.66
Leisure and Hospitality	1.67	1.93	.49
Other Services	1.27	.58	ND
Unclassified	NC	NC	NC
Footnote: (ND) Not disclosed; (NC) Not Calculated			
Location Quotient: Ratio of analysis-industry employment in the analysis area to base-industry employment in the analysis area divided by the ratio of analysis-industry employment in the base area to base-industry employment in the base area.			

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment Wages, 2008

In Lexington the major basic sectors are education and health services (LQ 3.36), leisure and hospitality (LQ 1.67), and other services 1.27. In Rockbridge County the LQ for natural resources and mining (this category includes agriculture and farming) is 2.33; manufacturing is 3.69; trade, transportation and utilities is 1.06; and leisure and hospitality is 1.93. In Buena Vista manufacturing is 3.44 and education and health services is 2.66.

Lexington's location quotients for education, health services, and leisure and hospitality are not surprising. They do, however, reinforce the importance of Washington and Lee University, Virginia Military Institute, Stonewall Jackson Hospital and its related medical services, and tourism to the local economy.

OBJECTIVE: Work with W&L and VMI Departments of Economics and W&L's School of Commerce to identify faculty and students capable of conducting and interpreting a full Economic Base Analysis.

EVALUATION OF AVAILABLE DATA CONCERNING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Among the indicators useful for analyzing local economic conditions are population trends, income for families and individuals, work force data, employment information, retail sales, and bank deposit information.

The most current figures for many of these indicators are provided by the 2000 Census, The University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's Regional Data Base and the US Census Website. The most current information is reported.

As was noted in the Population and Demographics chapter of this plan, the presence of over 2,000 students who attend college in the City distorts some of the available data. These influences will be noted in the text describing and interpreting that data.

MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS IN LEXINGTON AND THE ROCKBRIDGE AREA

Higher Education

Stated simply, higher education is an important economic driver in Lexington. The Rockbridge-Buena Vista-Lexington area has four major institutions of higher education. Virginia Military Institute (VMI), and the Washington and Lee University (W&L) are located in Lexington. Southern Virginia University and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College are located in Buena Vista.

Virginia Military Institute, a four year undergraduate college, has a current enrollment of 1,500 cadets, all of whom live in barracks on post. The Institute has approximately 700 employees, including subcontractors.

Washington and Lee University, a four year undergraduate university with a graduate law program, has approximately 2,150 students, 80 percent of which are undergraduate students while 20 percent are law school students. The University employs approximately 900 people.

Southern Virginia University, a four year college, had an enrollment of 645 students in fall of 2009. The university is one of the largest employers in Buena Vista, with more than 150 part and full-time employees.

There are 1,589 students enrolled at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. Five hundred ten (510) of those students take classes at the Rockbridge Regional Center located in Buena Vista. 35.8% of DSLCC students are residents of the local area.

These institutions provide significant economic benefits: increased demand for trade and services generated by students, employment, and cultural enrichment.

Tourism

Travel and tourism also contribute to the area's economic vitality; both have become a major activity especially in Lexington, with its many historic attractions. Tourists also gravitate to Rockbridge County, especially Natural Bridge, Goshen Pass and two National Forests. Buena Vista benefits from its proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway. Lexington, Buena Vista, and Rockbridge County all benefit from traffic along Interstates 64 and 81 that pass through the area and from visitation associated with the Virginia Horse Center, Washington and Lee University, Virginia Military Institute, and Southern Virginia University.

The Rockbridge area offers numerous and diverse attractions for residents and travelers alike. The southern portion of the County offers Natural Bridge of Virginia, Virginia Safari Park, and Natural Bridge Speedway and Drag-strip.

Historic Lexington and the Virginia Horse Center are in the County's center. Vista Links Golf Course is located nearby in Buena Vista. Hull's Drive-In Movie Theater, one of the few remaining in the country, is located just north of Lexington.

Northern Rockbridge offers Cyrus McCormick's Farm, Rockbridge Vineyards, and Wades Mill. The Blue Ridge Parkway, one of the most visited National Parks in the Country, winds along the County's eastern border.

Western Rockbridge County is home to Goshen Pass, where the Maury River begins its journey to the James River at Glasgow. The natural beauty of the area and its many cultural and recreational offerings, combined with a good highway system, ample lodging (nearly 2,000 rooms) and a growing commercial sector, have made Rockbridge County and the Cities of Buena Vista and Lexington desirable destinations for visitors.

Tourism is a source of significant revenue for the region. According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation, Lexington's meal and lodging tax produced $727,869 in taxes for 2005 and $803,607 in taxes for 2008. Rockbridge County's lodging tax generated $914,290 in 2005 and increased to $1,121,857 in 2008. The meals tax revenues in 2005 were $1,126,412 and $1,257,675 in 2008. Buena Vista's meals and lodging tax produced $153,082 in 2005; this figured increased to $197,797 in 2008.

This tax, which was three percent in 1986, is now four percent. Additionally, there are approximately 325 persons employed in food and lodging establishments in Lexington, 915 in Rockbridge County, and 40 in Buena Vista. There are approximately 90 accommodation-and-service related businesses in Rockbridge, 39 in Lexington and an additional 18 in Buena Vista. In 2008, travelers and tourists spent $3,435,699 in Buena Vista, $29,153,194 in Lexington and

$103,765,085 in Rockbridge County. The total amount spent by travelers comprises a significant part of the area's economy.

TABLE 6-2
TOURISM
2008

	ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY	BUENA VISTA	LEXINGTON	TOTAL AREA
Total Travel Expenditures	$103,765,085	$3,435,699	$29,153,194	$136,35,978
Travel-Generated Payroll	$16,340,396	$754,718	$5,627,935	$22,723,049
Travel-Generated Employment	916	39	326	1,281
State Tax Receipts	$4,625,425	$137,963	$1,162,567	$5,925,955
Local Tax Receipts	$2,397,647	$96,224	$1,052,328	$3,546,199

SOURCE: Virginia Tourism Corporation, 2008.

Manufacturing

At the close of the second quarter of 2008, 1,880 manufacturing jobs remained in Rockbridge County. They represent 27.3% of all County jobs and manufacturing is the largest employment sector in Rockbridge County. At 589 jobs, manufacturing provides 24.9% of Buena Vista's jobs but was not the largest employment sector in that locality. Lexington had 31 manufacturing jobs, only .6% of our employment.

As manufacturing continues to be sent to off-shore locations, the number of manufacturing jobs in the area will continue to decline both in real numbers and as a percentage of all jobs. It should be noted that in 2008, 8.7% of the national civilian workforce is employed in manufacturing (Bureau of Labor Statistics). In 2007, while US manufacturing accounted for 22% of world manufacturing, manufacturing accounted for only 11.7% of the U.S. GDP (Bureau of Economic Analysis, Commerce Department). This suggests that both Rockbridge County and Buena Vista rely disproportionately on manufacturing and remain, as a result, at increased risk should manufacturing sectors shrink further.

Services

In Rockbridge, the service sector employed 1,826 persons, or 26.5% of those employed in the County. Service for the area employed 4,392 persons (35.3 %) for the quarter. In Lexington the service sector employed 3,027 persons (59%). Service was the largest employer in Buena Vista, employing 950 persons and constituting 37.8% of the work force. These statistics are not good

news for the City's economy, since persons employed locally in the service sector were paid less than the average for the State.

Trade

In 1990, 2,829 persons were employed in trade, including retail and wholesale trade, in the Rockbridge region. This accounted for 19.8 percent of the total work force.

Table 6-3, "Measures of Wholesale Trade, 2002 and 1997," suggests that Lexington is now the major center of wholesale activity in the area, but wholesale trade has declined overall. Since 1982, Rockbridge County has lost nine wholesale businesses, Lexington has lost eight and Buena Vista has gained one.

Retail sales have been stronger in the Rockbridge-Buena Vista-Lexington area than the wholesale trade. As Table 6-4 depicts, 147 retail trade businesses in the area in 2002 represents a decrease from 240 in 1987. The decrease occurred in all three localities, with the majority being lost by Rockbridge County. On the positive side, Rockbridge County gained 17 new retail businesses since 2002, bringing the total to 62 as of June 30, 2010.

Significantly, per capita sales have increased from $5,788,000 in 1987, to $9,406,000 in 2002. Indeed, Lexington's per capita sales went from $12,414,000 to $15,836,000.

TABLE 6-3
MEASURE OF WHOLESALE TRADE
2002

	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	TOTAL SALES (000)	PER CAPITA SALES	TOTAL PAYROLL (000)
ROCKBRIDGE	6	*	*	*
BUENA VISTA	1	*	*	*
LEXINGTON % OF STATE	10 .10%	30,705 .04%	444	2,345 .05%
AREA % OF STATE	17.22%		*	*
STATE	7,712	69,267,796	950	4,503,110

MEASURE OF WHOLESALE TRADE
1997

	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	TOTAL SALES (000)	PER CAPITA SALES	TOTAL PAYROLL (000)
ROCKBRIDGE % OF STATE	10 .13%	**	**	**
BUENA VISTA % OF STATE	2 .03%	**	**	**
LEXINGTON % OF STATE	5 .06%	16,904	235	1,354
AREA % OF STATE	17 .22%	***	***	***
STATE	7,868	61,046,705	16,904	3,784,428

Source: 2002 Economic Census "Wholesale Trade Sales".
Note: * Data withheld, taxable sales is suppressed for confidentiality.

TABLE 6-4
MEASURE OF RETAIL TRADE
2002

	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	TOTAL SALES (000)	PER CAPITA SALES	TOTAL PAYROLL (000)
ROCKBRIDGE	45	171,961	8,246	15,172
BUENA VISTA	26	39,020	6,197	1,250
LEXINGTON	76	109,283	15,836	10,225
AREA	147	320,264	9,406	26,647
STATE	28,914	80,509,062	11,069	401,921

MEASURE OF RETAIL TRADE
1997

	NUMBER OF BUSINESSES	TOTAL SALES (000)	PER CAPITA SALES	TOTAL PAYROLL (000)
ROCKBRIDGE	79	165,330	8,486	13,927
BUENA VISTA	32	33,184	5,128	3,544
LEXINGTON	68	108,877	15,139	9,633
AREA	179	307,391	9,274	27,104
STATE	29,032	62,569,924	9,213	6,202,575

Source: 2002 Economic Census "Retail Trade Sales"

An examination of taxable sales reveals fluctuations in economic activity in the Rockbridge, Buena Vista, Lexington region in the past 15 years. Rockbridge has experienced the greatest growth: in 1993, total taxable sales were $115,062,762. By 2008 that figure increased by $97,596,150 to $212,658,912. Lexington City's taxable sales increased from $38,950,462, in 1993 to $49,671,674, in 2008, over a ten-million dollar increase in taxable sales for the city. Buena Vista City's taxable sales decreased from $24,363,835 in 1993 to $24,344,454 in 2008.

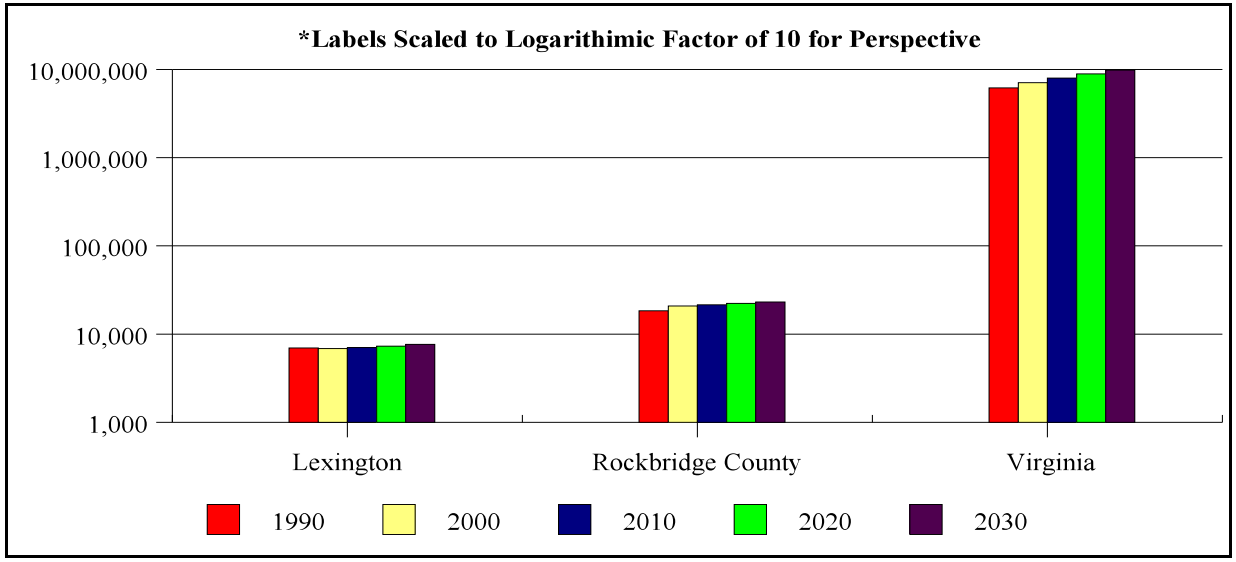
These figures offer insight into the changing nature of retail sales in the region. In part, they reflect the appearance and influence of big box retailers, including WalMart and Lowe's located in the county on the periphery of the City. These changes have reduced retail sales in Buena Vista. Lexington has dealt effectively with an initial loss of major downtown retailers by emphasizing the character and qualities which make its shopping area unique. Boutiques, restaurants, and specialty shops have replaced the configuration of regional department stores, hardware store, shoe stores and other resident-oriented businesses that once existed downtown.

POPULATION

Population trends and projections for are presented graphically in Figure 6-1 and in data format in Table 6-5 for Lexington, Rockbridge County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Both Lexington and Rockbridge County have grown and are anticipated to continue to grow at rates significantly less than for the Commonwealth as a whole.

The highest percentage of the total population is within the age groups of from 15 to 19 and 20 to 24. Within these age groups, the population is predominantly male; this anomaly can be explained by the presence of Virginia Military Institute which accepts female students but remains predominantly male. (Chapter 4: Population and Demographics provides further insight into student populations.)

FIGURE 6-1
TABLE 6-5
POPULATION CHANGE & POPULATION PROJECTIONS
LEXINGTON, ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, & VIRGINIA
2000-2030*



	Lexington		Rockbridge County		Virginia	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
1990	6,959		18,350		6,187,358	
2000	6,867	-1.32%	20,808	13.40%	7,078,515	14.40%
2010	7,055	2.74%	21,514	3.39%	8,010,239	13.16%
2020	7,315	3.69%	22,270	3.51%	8,917,396	11.32%
2030	7,664	4.77%	23,114	3.79%	9,825,019	10.18%

Source: US Census Bureau, Virginia Employment Commission

WAGES

There are various forms of income ranging from income producing property to investment income to earned income. The most accurate assessment of a community's economic health is found in evaluation of all income, income sources, and assets; however, that is beyond the scope of this chapter. While less robust, a, still, useful measure of Lexington's economic well-being is obtained when considering earned income for Lexington, Buena Vista, and Rockbridge County. The following begins a comparison of adjusted gross income.

Adjusted Gross Income

Adjusted gross income is the calculation of an individual's income tax liability. It is calculated by taking an individual's gross income and subtracting the income tax code's enumerated deductions.

The 2006 median adjusted gross income figures for the Rockbridge County-Buena Vista-Lexington area were lower than the State median for both individuals and married couples. Lexington and Rockbridge County had similar income figures. Those for Buena Vista were significantly less.

Table 6-6
Median Adjusted Income
1997-2007

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Virginia	48,078	50,849	53,745	56,530	57,619	57,924	59,205	62,109	67,160	70,335	72,637
Lexington	43,190	45,466	48,205	52,238	51,339	51,516	50,927	56,826	62,931	66,765	70,597
Buena Vista	35,648	37,839	38,426	40,412	39,930	40,782	38,810	41,391	43,049	44,055	44,051
Rockbridge County	35,611	37,389	39,123	41,252	41,595	42,011	42,741	45,149	49,875	52,015	54,841

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service & Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita income for the area has grown faster than the rate of inflation, indicating that incomes have increased in real-dollar terms.

Table 6-7
Per Capita Personal Income
2000-2008

Region	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Lexington-Buena Vista-Rockbridge Co.	22,107	23,345	24,302	25,768	27,445	28,446	30,457	30,546	32,348

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service & Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Wages

The average weekly wage for various categories of employment are presented in Table 6-8. Wages for the region and its jurisdictions are typically well below the averages for the state.

Table 6-8
Average Weekly Wage per Worker
(By Place of Work)
1st Quarter 2010

Category	Lexington	Buena Vista	Rockbridge County	State of Virginia
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting			$347	$503
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction*				$1,178
Utilities			$1,118	$2,036
Construction	$599	$500	$546	$831
Manufacturing	$292	$690	$642	$950
Wholesale Trade*		$1,134	$449	$1,247
Retail Trade	$348	$368	$384	$458
Transportation and Warehousing			$637	$783
Information	$400		$1,235	$1,618
Finance and Insurance	$1,176	$554	$714	$1,624
Real State, Rental and Leasing	$382	$249	$283	$807
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	$540	$451	$754	$1,671
Management of Companies and Enterprises				$2,224
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	$196	$382	$461	$641
Educational Services*			$397	$788
Health Care and Social Assistance	$603	$324	$526	$755
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	$314		$314	$464
Accommodations and Food Services	$239	$261	$239	$296
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	$580	$327	$433	$678
Government Total	$767	$741	$656	$1,031
Federal Government	$880	$933	$606	$1,500
State Government	$860	$738	$791	$838
Local Government	$561	$553	$570	$755
Unclassified				$721
All Industries	$663	$519	$501	$932

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 1st Quarter 2010
Note: * Data withheld, included in total

LABOR FORCE

The US Labor Force is defined as those people over the age of 16 employed in non-military jobs.

Information is provided below concerning the size of the labor force, educational attainment, and commuting patterns

Size of the Labor Force

TABLE 6-9
Rockbridge Region
Size of Labor Force

2005 & 2009

2005	2009
11,426	10,998

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Education

Figure 6-2
Educational Attainment
Population Aged 25 Years and Over

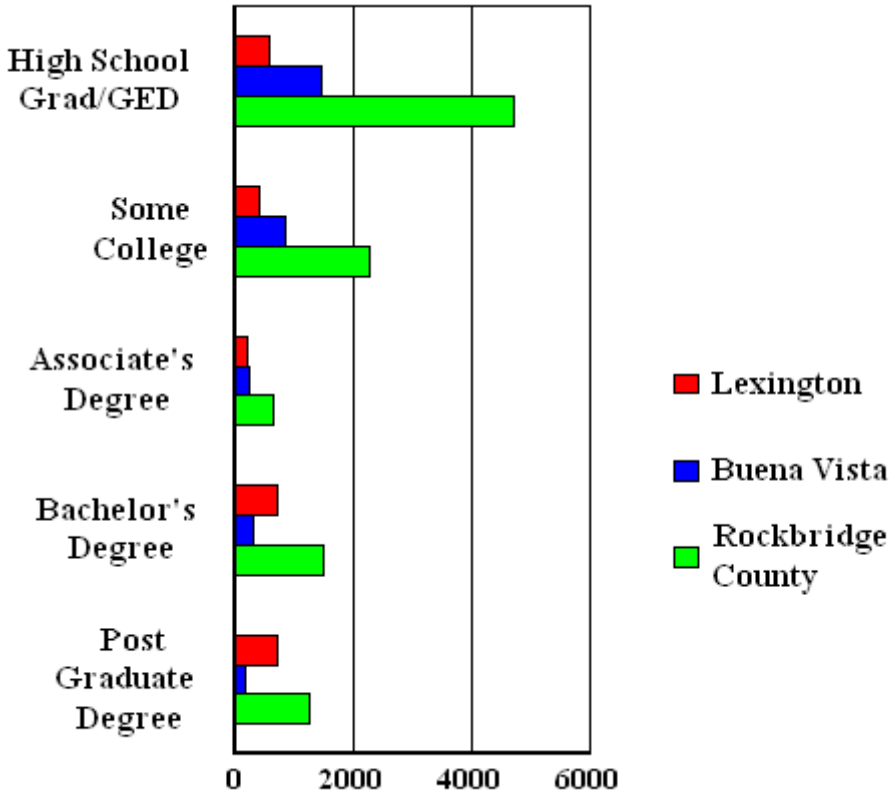


Table 6-10
Educational Attainment
Population Aged 25 Years and Over

	Lexington	Buena Vista	Rockbridge County
High School Grad/GED	567	1,446	4,708
Some College	386	832	2,261
Associate's Degree	180	210	638
Bachelor's Degree	692	281	1,486
Post Graduate Degree	708	164	1,236

Source: 2000 Census

Commuting Patterns

The fact that there are more out-commuters than in-commuters suggests that there are more workers in the region than there are jobs. Over 500 people go outside the County for work.

Figure 6-3
Commuting Patterns
Rockbridge County Area

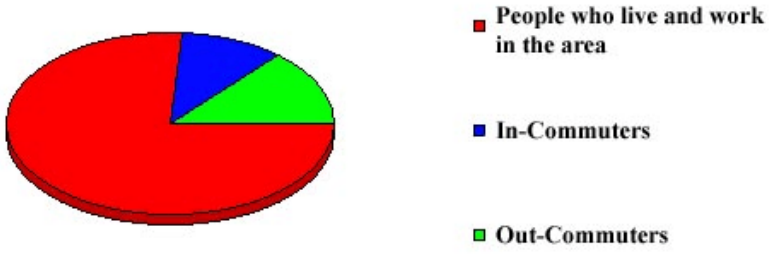


Table 6-11
Commuting Patterns
Rockbridge County Area

Rockbridge Region Commuting Patterns 2000		
People who live and work in the area	12,757	76.2%
In-Commuters	1,718	10.3%
Out-Commuters	2,273	13.6%
Net Out-Commuters (In-Commuters minus Out-Commuters	555	1.35%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 2000 Census

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Unemployment trends and rates are presented in the following figures and tables.

Unemployment within the Commonwealth as a whole has been significantly lower than for the nation as a whole during the current recession. The same cannot be said for unemployment within the City, which exceeds that of the State; moreover, local unemployment has not fallen as quickly as unemployment in the country as a whole.

Figure 6-4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDS
Lexington, Virginia, United States
1999 - 2009

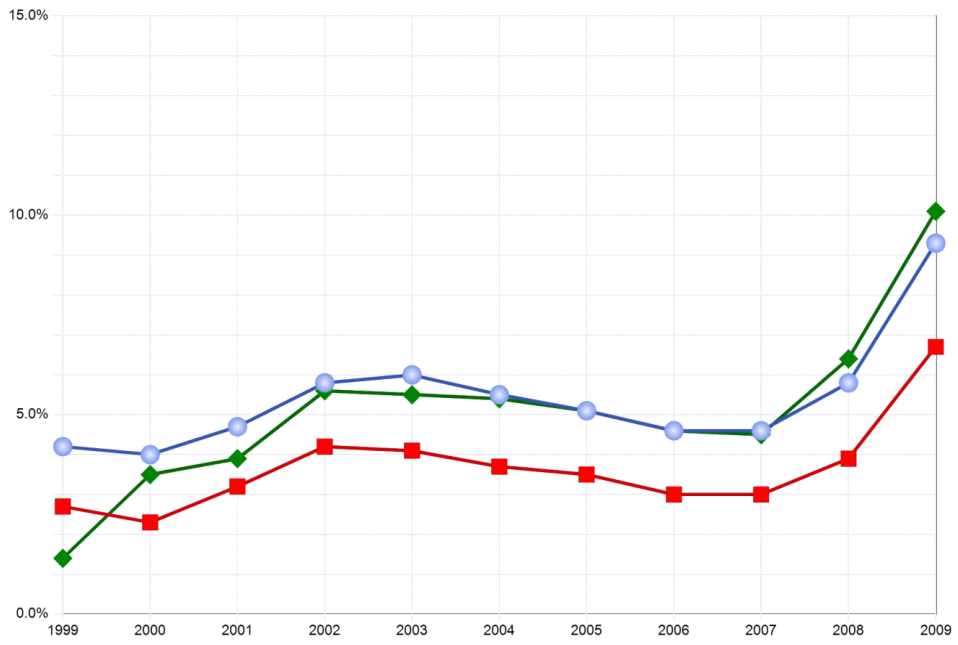


Table 6-12
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDS
Lexington, Virginia, United States
1999 - 2009

	Lexington City ◆	Virginia ■	United States ●
1999	1.4%	2.7%	4.2%
2000	3.5%	2.3%	4.0%
2001	3.9%	3.2%	4.7%
2002	5.6%	4.2%	5.8%
2003	5.5%	4.1%	6.0%
2004	5.4%	3.7%	5.5%
2005	5.1%	3.5%	5.1%
2006	4.6%	3.0%	4.6%
2007	4.5%	3.0%	4.6%
2008	6.4%	3.9%	5.8%
2009	10.1%	6.7%	9.3%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 6-5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDS
Lexington, Virginia, United States
September 2009 - August 2010

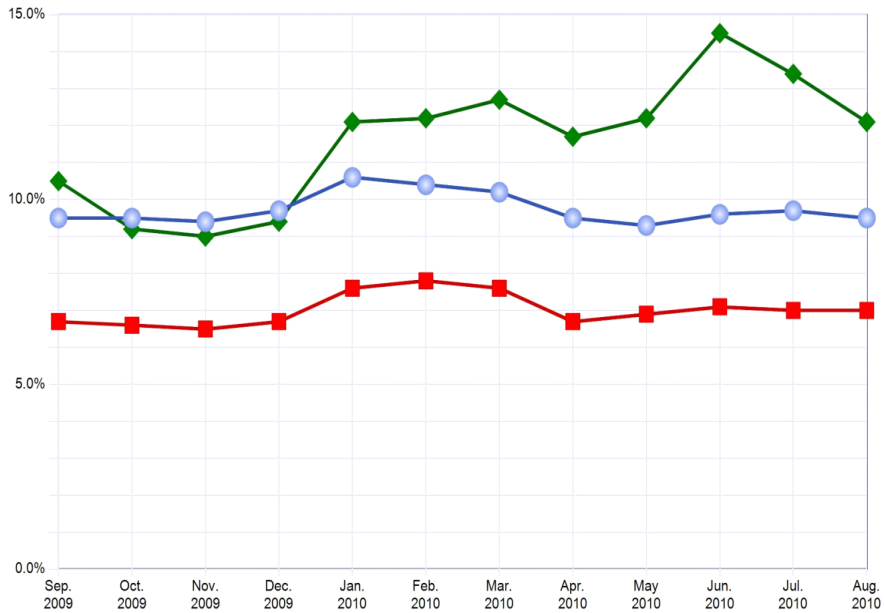


Table 6-13
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TRENDS
Lexington, Virginia, United States
September 2009 - August 2010

	Lexington City ◆	Virginia ■	United States ●
September 2009	10.5%	6.7%	9.5%
October 2009	9.2%	6.6%	9.5%
November 2009	9.0%	6.5%	9.4%
December 2009	9.4%	6.7%	9.7%
January 2010	12.1%	7.6%	13.6%
February 2010	12.2%	7.8%	10.4%
March 2010	12.7%	7.6%	10.2%
April 2010	11.7%	6.7%	9.5%
May 2010	12.5%	6.9%	9.3%
June 2010	14.5%	7.1%	9.6%
July 2010	13.4%	7.0%	9.7%
August 2010	12.1%	7.0%	9.5%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

CITY EMPLOYMENT

As reported in Table 6-14, Employment By Industry (by place of Work). The largest number of jobs in the City in 2008 were provided in the Services sector. Within this sector, there were 3,027 persons, representing 59.9% of those employed. Over all, the number of persons employed in the Services sector has increased by 1,499 persons since1990 when 1,528 people were employed in this area of the economy. The Services sector includes educational institutions, health care providers, legal, business, social and personal services, auto repair and amusements. Major employers in this sector include Washington and Lee University (Virginia Military Institute employees are reported in the government sector) and Stonewall Jackson Hospital. The offices of physicians, attorneys and other private service providers also contribute.

The second major employment sector in 2008 was Federal, state and local government. In 2008 within the City, 1,132 people (22% of the workforce) were employed in this sector. In 1990, 946 people were employed in the Government sector (25% of the work force). Although the numbers of persons employed has increased, the percentage of the workforce has decreased. Employers in the Government sector include Virginia Military Institute, other State agencies including the Health Department, Extension Service, Forestry Department, Transportation Department, the Division of Motor Vehicles and the ABC Store. Rockbridge County, which has its administrative offices in the City, and the City of Lexington, including its school system, are also included in the government sector.

The third major employment sector in 2008 was Wholesale and Retail trade which employed 454 persons or 8.8% of the workforce. 973 persons were employed by this sector in 1990, which was 26% of the workforce. This represents a significant decrease in the number of persons employed in this sector over the last decade and a half.

Given the modest population growth projections for the region and the City's emphasis on retail trade and services, its future viability will be dependent upon maintaining its position as the business and service center for the region and expanding its business and service base to business, residents and tourists. The City's ability to diversify its economic base is restricted by the limited amount of vacant land within its boundaries.

Table 6-14
Employment by Industry
Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County
2005

	Lexington	Buena Vista	Rockbridge County	Total	% of Area	% of VA
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	*	*	77	77	.5%	.4%
Mining & Quarrying	*	*	*	*	*	.2%
Utilities	*	*	*	*	*	.3%
Construction	141	12	494	647	4.4%	6.8%
Manufacturing	31	855	1,954	2,840	19.5%	8.3%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	443	195	1,244	1,882	12.9%	14.8%
Transportation & Warehousing	*	*	137	137	.7%	2.6%
Information	96	*	*	96	.7%	2.6%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	168	51	113	332	2.3%	5.3%
Services	2,816	1,113	1,777	5,706	39.1%	39.9%
Government	943	486	1,268	2,697	18.5%	18.3%
Total	4,703	2,757	7,129	14589	100%	100%

Employment by Industry
Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County
2008

	Lexington	Buena Vista	Rockbridge County	Total	% of Area	% of VA
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	*	*	69	69	*	.3%
Mining & Quarrying	*	*	*	*	*	.2%
Utilities	*	*	*	*	*	.3%
Construction	177	20	433	630	4.4%	6.1%
Manufacturing	31	589	1,880	2,500	17.4%	7.2%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	454	177	1,189	1,820	12.6%	14.6%
Transportation & Warehousing	*	*	130	130	*	2.8%
Information	55	*	32	87	*	2.4%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	180	55	118	353	2.5%	5.0%
Services	3,027	950	1,826	5,803	40.3%	42.4%
Government	1,132	471	1,177	2,780	19.3%	18.5%
Total	5,132	2,363	6,896	14,391	100%	100%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Data and Wages. 2nd Quarter 2005, 2nd Quarter 2008 provided by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
Note: * Data withheld, included in Total

The major employment sectors for the City are Government, (which includes those who work at VMI), services (which includes education for this table), and trade.

Manufacturing, trade, services and government are the major employers in Rockbridge County.

Health services, educational and social services are the largest employment sectors for Lexington residents.

Table 6-15
Employment by Industry by Place of Residence
Lexington, Buena Vista, Rockbridge County

	LEXINGTON	BUENA VISTA	ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY	AREA TOTAL	% of Area
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries & Mining	19	35	479	533	3.49%
Construction	112	173	858	1,143	7.47%
Manufacturing	126	998	2,172	3,296	21.55%
Transportation	39	91	436	566	3.7%
Wholesale Trade	32	41	270	343	2.24%
Retail Trade	195	336	963	1,494	9.77%
Information	43	45	111	199	1.30%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	31	61	351	443	2.9%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management	93	78	449	620	4.05%
Personal, Entertainment, Recreation Services	244	205	975	1,424	9.31%
Health Services, Educational, and Social Services	946	628	2192	3,766	24.63%
Other Services	130	198	548	876	5.73%
Public Administration	103	174	312	589	3.85%
TOTAL	2,113	3,063	10,116	15,292	100

Source: 2000 Census
Note: The Virginia Horse Center is classified under Personal Entertainment and Recreation Services

Table 6-16
Employers by Size of Establishment
Lexington and Virginia
1st Quarter, 2010

	Lexington	Virginia
0 to 4 employees	213	133,874
5 to 9 employees	78	37,205
10 to 19 employees	37	26,228
20 to 49 employees	30	18,807
50 to 99 employees	7	6,54
100 to 249 employees	***	3,533
250 to 499 employees	***	975
500 to 999 employees	1	389
1000 and over employees	***	221
	369	227,786

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 1st Quarter, 2010.

Table 6-17
Largest Employers
City of Lexington
November 2010

1	Washington and Lee University	20	BB&T Corporation
2	Virginia Military Institute	21	Lexington Prescription Center
3	Stonewall Jackson Hospital	22	Rockbridge Area Hospice
4	City of Lexington	23	Sigma Nu Fraternity
5	Lexington City Schools	24	G. C. Marshall Research Foundation
6	Kroger	25	The News Gazette Corporation
7	Heritage Hall	26	Administration of Kappa Alpha Order
8	The VMI Foundation	27	Salernos
9	Rockbridge Farmer's Co-operative	28	F. A. C. T.
10	Rockbridge Regional Library	29	Lexcare Pharmacy
11	Macado's, Inc	30	Bistro on Main
12	A I I Services	31	Perkins & Orrison, Inc
13	Virginia State Department of Health	32	University Cleaners
14	Wendnoke Corporation	33	Lexington Motel & Restaurant
15	Col Alto	34	Yellow Brick Road Early Learning Center
16	Pizza Hut	35	Domino's Pizza
17	Rockbridge Area Social Services	36	Rockbridge Area Transport, Inc
18	US Postal Service	37	Drs. Downey and Devening Primary Care
19	The Palms	38	Montessori Center for Children

Source: City of Lexington, Department of Planning and Development, November 2010
Updated from Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Table 6-18
Largest Employers
City of Buena Vista
November 2010

1	Pro Careers	23	Buena Vista Motel
2	Buena Vista City Schools	24	Bolling, Grose & Lotts Funeral Services
3	Southern Virginia University	25	Buena Vista Medical Associates
4	Modine Manufacturing Company	26	Stop-In Food Store
5	City of Buena Vista	27	Virginia Rural Water Association
6	Everbrite, LLC	28	Advance Auto Parts
7	GGNSC Buena Vista, LLC	29	Edgewater Animal Hospital
8	Fitzgerald Lumber and Logging	30	Healthcare Services Group
9	Shenandoah Hardwood Lumber, Inc.	31	Snap Fitness
10	Food Lion	32	The Hamilton Group, Inc.
11	Advanced Drainage Systems	33	Valley Program for Aging Services, Inc.
12	Hermetite Division	34	Rockbridge Area Occupational Center
13	Virginia Electric & Power Company	35	US Department of Agriculture
14	Aramark Refreshment Services	36	Widdifield's Save Station
15	Hardee's	37	May's Grocery
16	Peoplelink Staffing Solutions	38	Subway
17	Rockbridge Area Community Services Board	39	BB&T Corp.
18	PM Foods, Inc.	40	Commonwealth Mortgage Group, Inc
19	Central Dispatch - 911 (City of Lexington)	41	Dolgencorp, LLC
20	Kenney's	42	Don Tequila Two, Inc.
21	Brent D. Dryden, DDS PC	43	Mariner Media, Inc.
22	US Postal Service		

Source: City of Lexington, Department of Planning and Development, November 2010
Updated from Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Table 6-19
Largest Employers
Rockbridge County
November 2010

1	Mohawk ESV Incorporated	25	Hunter Hill
2	Rockbridge County Schools	26	Virginia Horse Center Foundation, Inc.
3	Aramark Campus, LLC	27	Natual Bridge Speedway
4	WalMart	28	Woodfin Oil Company
5	Hunter Defense Technology	29	Lexington Golf and Country Club
6	County of Rockbridge	30	W. R. Deacon and Sons Timber
7	Munters Corp.	31	Rockbridge Stone Products, Inc.
8	Natural Bridge of Virginia, Inc.	32	Spencer Home Center, Inc.
9	Town of Vesuvius	33	Fitzgerald Lumber and Logging
10	Virginia Department of Transportation	34	Hamilton Personnel Services
11	Sayre Enterprises, Inc.	35	North Fork
12	Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	36	Smiley Fuel City
13	White's Truck Stop	37	Manor of Natural Bridge
14	Stella Jones Corporation	38	Pink Cadillac Restaurant
15	Best Western	39	Randy Hostetter Excavating
16	WilcoHess	40	Hardee's
17	Blue Ridge Christian Home	41	Peebles
18	Burger King	42	Bank of Botetourt
19	Holland's General Contractors	43	Donald's Electric and Refrigeration
20	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice	44	Shenandoah Framing, Inc.
21	McDonald's	45	Goads Body Shop, Inc.
22	US Postal Service	46	Jefferson Florist Homestead
23	Stop-In Food Store	47	Papa Johns
24	Food Lion		

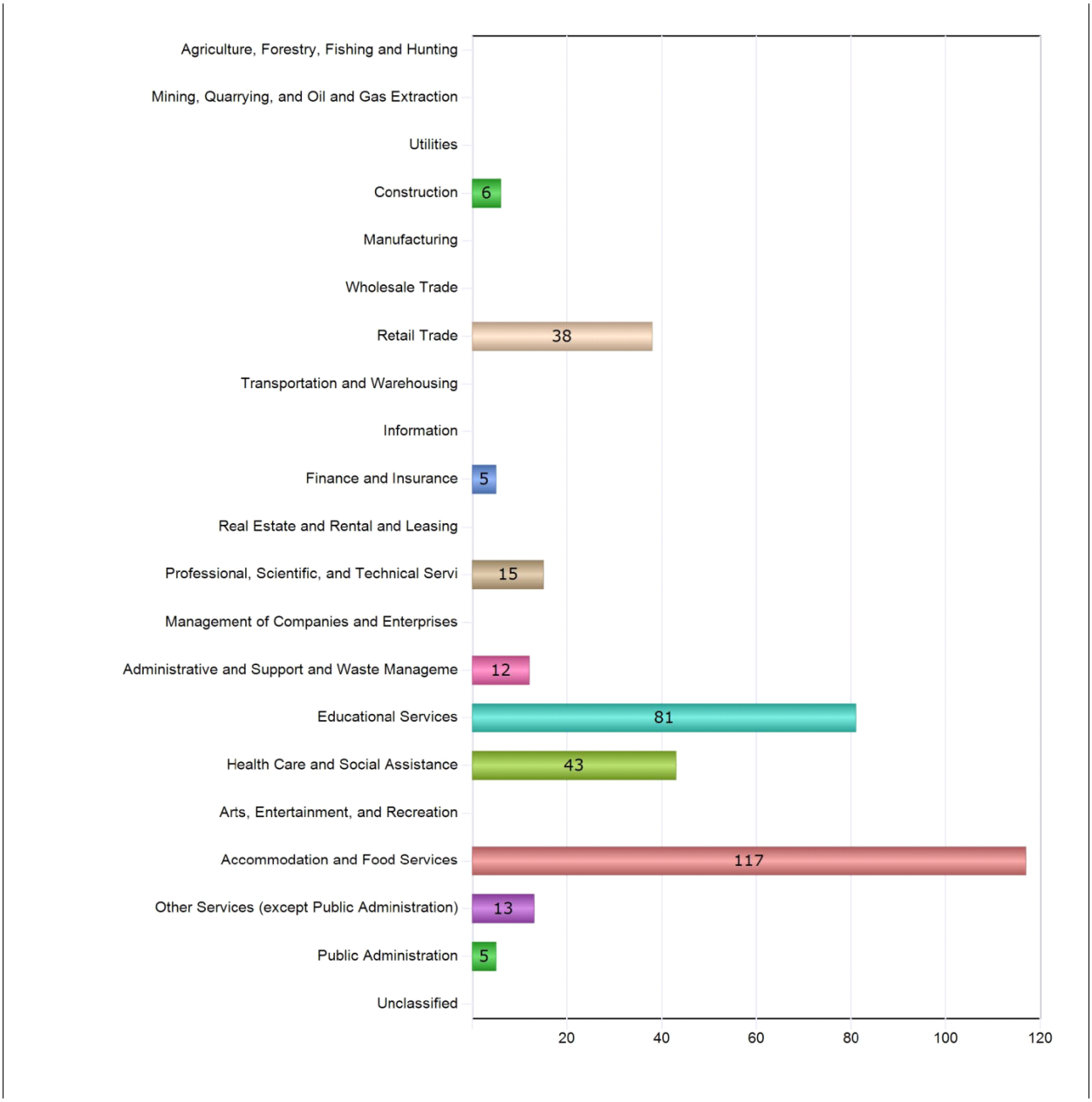
Source: City of Lexington, Department of Planning and Development, November 2010
Updated from Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Table 6-20
New Start Up Firms
Lexington and Virginia
1st Quarter 2007 - 1st Quarter 2010

	Lexington	Virginia
1st Quarter 2007	5	6,348
2nd Quarter 2007	1	3,128
3rd Quarter 2007	1	2,847
4th Quarter 2007		878
1st Quarter 2008	3	4,830
2nd Quarter 2008	2	1,899
3rd Quarter 2008	1	2,314
4th Quarter 2008	2	2,174
1st Quarter 2009	1	2,466
2nd Quarter 2009	2	2,467
3rd Quarter 2009	2	2,475
4th Quarter 2009	2	2,169
1st Quarter 2010	1	2,707

Source: Virginia Employment Commission. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 1st Quarter 2010
Notes: The following criteria were used to define new startup firms: 1.) Setup and liability date both occurred during 1st Quarter; 2.) Establishment had no predecessor UI Account Number; 3.) Private Ownership; 4.) Average employment is less than 250; and,
5.) For multi-unit establishments, the parent company must also meet the above criteria

Figure 6-6
City of Lexington
New Hires by Industry
4th Quarter - 2009



TOTAL	**345**

Source: US Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics Program, 4th Quarter 2009

Most of the new jobs in were in the food services, educational services, health care, and retail trade sectors.

OTHER MEASURES OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Several other measures of economic activity in Lexington and the Rockbridge region are presented below.

Taxable Sales

TABLE 6-21
TAXABLE SALES FOR REGION
CITY OF LEXINGTON
TAXABLE SALES FOR SELECTED LOCALITIES
2008

LEXINGTON

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF DEALERS	TAXABLE SALES
Natural Resources and Mining	0*	0
Manufacturing	0*	0
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	82	26,888,470
Professional and Business Services	0*	0
Rental and Leasing Services	18	410,814
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	0*	0
Accommodations and Services	39	17,006,083
Other Services	13	1,139,152
Unclassified	18	4,227,155
TOTAL	170	49,671,674

SOURCE: Virginia Department of Taxation, *Taxable Sales in Virginia Counties and Cities, Annual Report: 2008.*

BUENA VISTA

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF DEALERS	TAXABLE SALES
Natural Resources and Mining	0*	0
Manufacturing	0*	0
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	56	18,429,809
Professional and Business Services	0*	0
Rental and Leasing Services	6	107,073
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	0*	0
Accommodations and Services	18	5,039,406
Other Services	7	603,333
Unclassified	11	164,833
TOTAL	98	24,344,454

SOURCE: Virginia Department of Taxation, *Taxable Sales in Virginia Counties and Cities, Annual Report: 2008.*
*Data is withheld because locality has less than four dealers in a business classification, the taxable sales in that category is suppressed for confidentiality.

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF DEALERS	TAXABLE SALES
Natural Resources and Mining	7	174,674
Manufacturing	15	4,013,548
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	198	152,364,697
Professional and Business Services	10	859,189
Rental and Leasing Services	41	1,800,410
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	8	2,693,856
Accommodations and Services	90	40,832,778
Other Services	32	2,783,582
Unclassified	27	7,136,178
TOTAL	428	212,658,912

SOURCE: Virginia Department of Taxation, *Taxable Sales in Virginia Counties and Cities, Annual Report: 2008*.

Impact of Tourism

TABLE 6-22
CITY OF LEXINGTON
TOURISM FOR SELECTED LOCALITIES

		Buena Vista	Lexington	Rockbridge Co.	Area
Total Travel Expenditures	($000)	$2,090	$21,358	$60,276	$83,724
Travel Generated Payroll	($000)	$410	$5,282	$10,826	$16,518
Travel Generated Employment		30	368	738	1,136
State Tax Receipts	($000)	$120	$1,129	$3,626	$4,875
Local Tax Receipts	($000)	$52	$636	$1,600	$2,288

SOURCE: Virginia Tourism Corporation, 2000: provided by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Local Deposits in Commercial Banks

The local economy is directly affected by bank reorganization. Of the banks operating in the County in 1990, only the Bank of America and SunTrust remain. The Bank of Rockbridge, Central Fidelity Bank, CreStar, Patrick Henry National Bank and NationsBank were the other banks listed in 1990. One Valley Bank, Planters Bank and Trust, and Shenandoah National Bank were operating in the Lexington-Buena Vista- Rockbridge County area in 2000 but are no longer operating in this area or have been purchased by other financial institutions. NationsBank has been absorbed by the Bank of America. First Union merged with Wachovia in 2003 and is now owned by Wells Fargo.

TABLE 6-23
CITY OF LEXINGTON
COMMERCIAL BANKS SUMMARY OF LOCAL DEPOSITS
June 30, 2010

INSTITUTION	Buena Vista	Lexington	Rockbridge County	Total Area
Bank of America	$24,096,000			$24,096,000
Bank of Botetourt			$67,012,000	$67,012,000
Branch Banking & Trust	$25,567,000	$46,481,000	$105,846,000	$177,894,000
Carter Bank & Trust			$59,576,000	$59,576,000
Community Bank	$5,507,000	$10,209,000	$15,998,000	$31,714,000
Cornerstone Bank		$46,685,000		$46,685,000
Essex Bank			$12,593,000	$12,593,000
Stellar One Bank	$29,717,000		$25,426,000	$55,143,000
SunTrust Bank		$34,792,000	$21,668,000	$56,460,000
Wells Fargo Bank*		$84,308,000		$84,308,000
Woodforest National Bank			$490,000	$490,000
Total	$84,887,000	$222,475,000	$308,609,000	$615,971,000

SOURCE: FDIC Summary of Deposits, Table 10, *Deposits by County within State for each Bank and Banking Office, June 30, 2010*
*Previously Wachovia
NOTE: Does not include Savings and Loans

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The following tables provide employment projections for the Shenandoah Valley including the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County.

The economic sectors projected by the Virginia Employment Commission to grow in the next several years are health care and communications related. The majority of the job losses are projected to be in manufacturing.

Table 6-24
Total Employment by Industry
Shenandoah Valley **
Estimated 2008 - Projected 2018

	Employment			Percent	
	Estimated 2008	Projected 2018	Change	Total	Annual
Total, All Industries	226,979	253,505	26,526	11.69%	1.11%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	255	271	16	6.27%	0.61%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	393	364	(29)	-7.38%	-0.76%
Utilities	561	522	(39)	-6.95%	-0.72%
Construction	13,627	16,459	2,832	20.78%	1.91%
Manufacturing	36,476	34,258	(2,218)	-6.08%	-0.63%
Wholesale Trade	6,448	6,901	453	7.03%	0.68%
Retail Trade	28,186	29,972	1,786	6.34%	0.62%
Transportation and Warehousing	8,675	9,316	641	7.39%	0.72%
Information	3,017	3,166	149	4.94%	0.48%
Finance and Insurance	4,185	4,552	267	6.23%	0.61%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,437	2,760	323	13.25%	1.25%
Profession, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,252	6,928	1,676	13.91%	2.81%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,233	2,360	127	5.69%	0.55%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	7,524	8,885	1,361	18.09%	1.68%
Educational Services	24,834	29,822	4,988	20.09%	1.85%
Health Care and Social Assistance	24,662	32,319	7,657	31.05%	2.74%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,731	3,387	656	24.02%	2.18%
Accommodations and Food Services	20,300	22,625	2,325	11.45%	1.09%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	6,021	6,703	682	11.33%	1.08%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Projections, 2008 - 2018
Note: Projection data is for Shenandoah Valley. No data available for Lexington City.

** **Shenandoah Valley** consists of the following localities: Augusta County; Bath County; Frederick County; Highland County; Page County; Rockbridge County; Rockingham County; Shenandoah County; Warren County; Buena Vista; Harrisonburg; Lexington; Staunton; Waynesboro; and, Winchester.

Table 6-25
Total Employment by Major Occupation Group
Shenandoah Valley
Estimated 2008 - Projected 2018

	Employment			Openings		
	Estimated 2008	Projected 2018	% Change	Replace-ments	Growth	Total
Total, all occupations	226,979	253,505	11.69%	5,221	2,890	8,111
Management	7,925	8,379	5.73%	189	55	244
Business and Financial Operations	6,619	7,841	18.46%	132	123	255
Computer and Mathematical	2,137	2,674	25.13%	40	55	95
Architecture and Engineering	2,331	2,566	10.08%	50	24	74
Life, Physical, and Social Science	1,198	1,316	9.85%	35	15	50
Community and Social Services	2,622	3,204	22.20%	57	58	115
Legal	757	922	21.80%	12	17	29
Education, Training, and Library	15,290	18,605	21.68%	331	332	663
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	3,130	3,597	14.92%	79	50	129
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	11,302	13,998	23.85%	233	270	503
Healthcare Support	5,829	8,066	38.38%	65	225	290
Protective Service	4,201	4,775	13.66%	118	57	175
Food Preparation and Serving Related	19,028	21,729	14.19%	638	270	908
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	9,205	10,221	11.04%	151	102	253
Personal Care and Service	7,047	9,276	31.63%	178	223	401
Sales and Related	26,308	28,439	8.10%	810	215	1,025
Office and Administrative Support	32,418	35,380	9.14%	678	347	1,025
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	767	777	1.30%	20	4	24
Construction and Extraction	13,550	15,647	15.48%	237	211	448
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	10,601	11,517	8.64%	201	95	296
Production	25,948	25,243	-2.72%	535	56	591
Transportation and Material Moving	18,766	19,333	3.02%	435	87	522

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Projections, 2008 - 2018
Note: Projection data is for Shenandoah Valley. No data available for Lexington City.

Table 6-26
Growth Occupations
Shenandoah Valley
Estimated 2008 - Projected 2018

	Employment			Average Annual Openings			Average Annual Salary
	Estimated 2008	Projected 2018	% Change	Replace-ments	Growth	Total	
Personal Care and Home Health Aides	1,241	2,416	94.68%	16	118	134	$16,915
Athletic Trainers	51	83	62.75%	2	3	5	$44,550
Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	313	507	62.98%	6	19	25	$57,421
Aerospace Engineers	15	24	60.00%	0	1	1	$100,372
Physical Therapist Aides	65	94	44.62%	1	3	4	$30,469
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	146	210	43.84%	1	6	7	$77,450
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	88	126	73.18%	2	4	6	$32,770
Physical Therapist Assistants	159	226	42.14%	2	7	9	$43,629
Physician Assistants	114	162	42.11%	2	5	7	$83,169
Mental Health Counselors	294	417	41.84%	6	12	18	$45,295
Veterinarians	141	198	40.43%	3	6	9	$91,760
Dental Hygienists	164	229	39.63%	3	7	10	$63,969
Dental Assistants	386	535	38.60%	7	15	22	$29,693
Education Administrators, All Other	52	72	38.46%	2	2	4	$64,990
Personal Finance Advisors	130	178	36.92%	1	5	6	$79,969
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	470	641	36.38%	9	17	26	$26,527
Management Analysts	602	816	35.55%	10	21	31	$84,029
Medical Assistants	387	522	34.88%	4	14	18	$29,409
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	293	395	34.81%	3	10	13	$82,337
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	2,850	3,834	34.53%	28	98	126	$23,421

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Projections, 2008 - 2018
Note: Projection data is for Shenandoah Valley. No data available for Lexington City.

Table 6-27
Declining Occupations
Shenandoah Valley
Estimated 2008 - Projected 2018

	Employment			Openings		
	Estimated 2008	Projected 2018	% Change	Replace-ments	Growth	Total
Order Clerks	209	138	-33.97%	6	0	6
Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators	67	45	-32.84%	1	0	1
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	85	59	-30.59%	1	0	1
Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	49	37	-24.49%	0	0	0
Computer Operators	74	56	-24.32%	1	0	1
Photographic Processing Machine Operators	97	75	-22.68%	2	0	2
Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	36	28	-22.22%	1	0	1
Postal Service Clerks	143	112	-21.68%	3	0	3
Desktop Publishers	38	30	-21.05%	1	0	1
Machine Feeders and Offbearers	474	375	-20.89%	5	0	5
Cementing and Gluing Machine Operators and Tenders	108	86	-20.37%	3	0	3
File Clerks	216	172	-20.37%	5	0	5
Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	26	21	-19.23%	0	0	0
Post Masters and Mail Superintendents	82	67	-18.29%	2	0	2
Advertising and Promotion Managers	17	14	-17.65%	0	0	0
Electrical and Electronic Drafters	17	14	-17.65%	0	0	0
Prepress Technicians and Workers	277	229	-17.33%	4	0	4
Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	130	108	-16.92%	3	0	3
Pressers, Textile, Garment, and Related Materials	155	129	-16.77%	1	0	1
Bindery Workers	1,136	956	-15.85%	17	0	17

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Projections, 2008 - 2018
Note: Projection data is for Shenandoah Valley. No data available for Lexington City.

Appendix 1: Summary of "Economy" Focus Groups

Appendix 1: Summary of "Economy" Focus Groups

Overview: Many communities have recognized that the economic development model of the 1990s no longer meets the economic development realities of the 21st century. In the 1990s, local, regional, and state economic development offices used incentives to attract larger businesses to their areas. With over 2,000 economic development offices throughout the country pursuing approximately 200 active, viable leads, reliance on this model—especially for a community that can offer little in the way of incentives—may not make much sense.

What does seem to work for communities is a thre- pronged economic development approach:

1. Continue to work with state and regional economic development offices.
2. Engage in "economic gardening" (modeled after Littleton, Colorado's success) where efforts are made to expand existing businesses in the community.
3. Foster a responsive environment that attracts entrepreneurs and encourages individuals to create businesses in our community.

The City Manager and the Director of Planning & Development, in response to City Council's request for a economic development plan. sponsored an exploration of items "2" and "3" using area business owners as a source of expertise.

Three focus groups met, once each, during February and March. Members of the focus groups are Lexington business owners (small business, entrepreneurs). Additionally, one focus group member emailed over twenty entrepreneurs and business owners and posed the same questions. Their responses are included in the following.

The four questions:

1. What are the advantages to you of doing business in and around Lexington?
2. Are there any barriers to doing business that the City could or should assist in removing?
3. What one or two things, if any, do you feel that the City could or should do to enable a business such as yours to survive and thrive?
4. If you were advising the Planning Commission and City Council on strengthening Lexington's economy and its tax base, what advice would you offer?

Their responses were recorded by staff. Following the third focus group, the responses were grouped using affinity grouping and labeled.

There are a number of good ideas and recommendations that came from the focus groups. There are five areas which may merit greater discussion in the short term:

1. Initiate and support a "buy local, hire local" campaign.
2. Continue efforts to secure broadband internet access.
3. Support a marketing plan/campaign to attract entrepreneurs to the area.

4. Assure the upcoming review of the zoning ordinance by Planning Commission includes consideration of restrictions that unnecessarily hinder home-based businesses.
5. Consider zoning that section of South Main Street, from the existing commercial district to the "old library" building, as "professional services/residential."

Further review may uncover other areas for discussion.

Advantages

Quality of Life
Lexington Controlled Schools
Close enough to major airports
Social aspects: Smart, interesting people
Cultural opportunities
Urban social scene without the drawbacks
Quality of life
Hospital
Two excellent research universities
Sense of community
Local foods
Have to work to preserve local qualities
Supports local economy by buying locally
Paying teachers
Demographics
All the convenience of the City with all the quality of Lexington
Simply a nice place to be and live

Unique Brand

Distinctive
Charm
Historic Character
Downtown beauty
Adaptive re-use of buildings
Liveliness of Downtown
Historic Preservation reputation
Beautiful, distinctive setting
Small town
Historic nature
Community values history

Business
Importance of a Lexington address: it has cachet
Regional centrality: many communities reachable within one hour
Two colleges provide ready customer base
My business could be anywhere
Access to government offices (courthouse records, etc.)
Ease of movement
Convenience
Accessible: visible to people coming here
Having the Courthouse here
You can get the word out quickly
Stable economy linked to VMI and W&L
Main Street: walk-in traffic
Other local attractions: Horse Center, Natural resources, Interstate access
High number of creative capitalists and entrepreneurs
High amount of money on deposit in the immediate area
City staff are dedicated and responsive
Small town: direct customer contacts and relationships
Close proximity of businesses

Technology
Affordable multiple providers

Negative
There are no advantages to doing business in Lexington
Minimal infrastructure and no true promotion of the area
Business development work is actually just maintaining the status quo

Barriers to Doing Business

Street Parking
Not enough on-street parking
Marshall Foundation buses prevent customer parking when parked on Lee Avenue

Garage Parking
Not convenient
Is there a better location? McCrum's parking lot?
Lack of signage

Police
Police not ambassadorial, not welcoming
Perception that Lexington isn't a welcoming place, especially the police
Police should engage in community outreach
Police work for the City

Lack of conversation about what we want in police force and police chief
Concern about new chief's ability to change the culture of the department
Lack of welcoming, ambassadorial approach by police force
City Council, City Manager must make clear that the police force work as ambassadors for the City
Heavy handed policing has snuffed out what was once a rich nightlife

Taxes
Tangible property tax: takes too long to compile for such a relatively small amount
BPOL: Based on gross receipts. Pay BPOL on years when there is no profit
Personal property tax
Don't do anything to raise taxes
Eliminate BPOL

Zoning
Home businesses: are there restrictive covenants?
Review zoning ordinance. Do restrictions still apply? Need flexibility
Address home occupation statutes; positive rather than restrictive
Who to call when?
Communication with landlords
Let renters know about property maintenance codes
Be open to experimentation (ex: sandwich boards)
Change sign ordinance
ARB: Anxious moment, matter of taste, intimidating the 1st time. Need handbook.
Expedite approval process for building in town, especially at City Council level
Restrictive zoning prevents location of small businesses in houses

Transportation
Need transportation outside the area

Business Development
It won't happen just because we want it to
Business development must be a priority of mayor and City Manager
No true program of business development

Other
Recognize emerging barriers
Don't erect barriers
No free W-FI
Limited voice if you don't live in the City
Perception that Lexington is an unfriendly place
Better establish our Brand
Get beyond NIMBY

Smallness: downside of repeat sales
Tourism is dropping
Resistance to development

To Survive and Thrive

Business Development
Small business seminars using local talent
Tap into programs Sen. Mark Warner is developing for extending credits to hire Virginians
Retain youth locally

Marketing
Create a campaign to use local businesses first
Communication & education to buy local

Parking and Transportation
Address downtown parking issues
Change parking patterns of downtown business owners
Parking permits for business owners
Fundraising rickshaws to parking deck
Bike rentals
Shuttle bus for downtown
Go Green campaign
Keep business owners from parking in front of their businesses
Shuttle bus service; students ride for free
Shuttle bus between area restaurants and hotels
Shuttle bus from 11N to 11S
Shuttle bus from E to W
Transportation solution should include students/cadets with their contributions part of their activities fees
Pass the transportation plan
Add a "complete streets" provision to the transportation plan that public right-of-ways are for all the public
Whether driving, walking, in a wheel chair, or on a bike (see www.completestreets.org)
Use common sense approach to parking. If there's plenty of empty space, don't ticket one car parked too long

Guardianship
Make sure we keep our advantages

Downtown Experience
Effective pooper scooper laws
Effective cigarette butt control
Consistency

Develop RE Lee as a hotel
Downtown revitalization
Add more benches and downtown seating to encourage pedestrian traffic
Price of buildings in commercial district
Reduced taxes lead to reduced rents

Technology
Build technology infrastructure
Improve City web site: Keep end user in mind

University Assistance
Partner with W&L and VMI for small business assistance
Attract alumni through alumni magazines
Business incubator

Increase my business
Bring more businesses into the City
Professional business zone
Density by design

Feet on the street
How to bring more people into the City
Social media
Get marketing and PR linked
Lexington needs: slogan, motto, brand
The prettiest town in Virginia
Marketing
Integrated community calendar
    Chamber
    Visitors Center
    Advance notice of VMI, W&L, Horse Center events
Upgrade and improve the City's web site
Media and PR: lack of coherent marketing

Miscellaneous
Need a long-term strategic plan
Don't raise taxes
Communication: if something will affect a business, let them know (sign ordinance)
Attract small scale industry
Encourage manufacturing jobs
Eliminate taxes
Assist and encourage developers with project proposals
Get creative with zoning to avoid least desirable "by right" approach

Strengthening Economy and Tax Base

Opportunities
Emphasize natural resources
Promote open green spaces
Open Chessie Trail to bikes
Provide incentives
Collaborate with Rockbridge County around natural resources
Jacob's Ladder is mouth-dropping
Shuttle to and from Horse Center
Better engage with the Horse Center
Saturday FedEx delivery
Use the Chamber
    We have a lot of services and talent in Lexington
Form unified cooperative business councils
    Retail
    Service
Redevelop west side, from McLaughlin to Route 60 West, making entrance corridor more vibrant

Business Development
Promote Lexington as a good place to do business, w/focus on business catering to college students and retirees
Better signage and shopping guide at Visitors Center
Hire a qualified marketing manager for City to approach & interact w/major investment bankers and senior business
    People
Employ 'lateral thinking" whereby one still reaches destination of goal in spite of roadblocks
Have unified approach to attracting business
Enlist our congressmen & delegates to provide us with successful examples in practice elsewhere
Focus on colleges and tourism…there's very little need for people to come into City otherwise
Determine when we will allow for responsible future development
Work with entrepreneurs to maximize opportunities for growth, development
Create a brainstorming group of people to recruit businesses

City-wide
Increase walk-ability
Consider entire community: business and residents
Create position of small business liaison
Consolidate with County to reduce duplication of expenses and services
Continue emphasis on all community members
Work to improve our product

Housing
Affordable housing
Increased density

Downtown
Redevelop central block of downtown
Infill downtown
Expand downtown footprint
Mix vibrant downtown with vibrant self-employed
Second story residences
Second story artist lofts
Expand professional services zone downtown
Creative, temporary use of empty downtown space
Are services taking up retail space?
RE Lee Hotel (move current residents to renovated Red Carpet Inn)
Property maintenance is the right thing to do
Better balance renters and space
Link Artists in Hopkins Green to artists/studio tour (Gallery Crawl)
Link Woods Creek trail to downtown via stairway adjacent to Nelson Street bridge
    Promote
    Give it a catchy name
Inventory existing uses, identify what's missing, recruit
Agree on retail hours to be open
Lack of choice in merchandise, lack of competitive pricing
Lack of atmosphere (i.e., no hip but somewhat "old school")
Unjustifiably expensive to rent given small customer base
How do we make it easy & attractive for people to come downtown?
Create and maintain an atmosphere of southern hospitality and welcome
Promoting better signage for parking and clearly identify what's necessary to avoid fines
Attract big name retailer to anchor downtown
Add an arts and culture district

Technology
Increase technological aids
    Fast, cheaper, more effective
Increase infrastructure capacity
Staffing needs
Google is giving grants for ultra high-speed connectivity
Free WI-FI
Help with broadband infrastructure
Be a wired community

Taxes
Cap BPOL
BPOL on adjusted net
Be the only city in Virginia with a flat rate BPOL
Lower, stabilize, standardize
Eliminate license fees and taxes

Zoning
Consistency
No surprises: let them know regulations and zoning upfront
Loosen McLaughlin zoning to allow material storage
South Main, East Nelson, East Washington: Small office compatible (old library)
Encourage mixed use zoning and comp plan
Reduce permitting "red tape" to allow projects to move forward as it helps employ local contractors

Tourism
Find ways to increase tourism
Promote cultural tourism
    Art
    Music: Every Friday
    Create cultural identity and promote
    Branding
Create reasons for people to come here
Promote extended day festivals: 3 day festivals
Balloon Rally: link to downtown, provide shuttle service

VMI and W&L
Have them grant a token amount of money to City revenue based on value of services received
Draw on them for intellectual and student intern resources
Get them to sponsor/subsidize local business incubator system or entrepreneurial center (similar to Ball State)

Marketing campaign
Buy Local
Support local
Keep local money local
Try Lexington before buying online
Target DC & NJ with our quality of life
Market the advantages of Lexington
Promote what's unique about Lexington
Campaign: Talk to those who touch tourists and hear what the tourists are saying

Long-term commitment to marketing and branding campaign

Other notes
Commitment to our overall vision
Tightly focused strategic plan on economic development

LAND USE CHAPTER
of the
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The purposes of the land use chapter are to describe the existing land use patterns in Lexington, to recommend land use policies for future development which are compatible with the character of the community, and to propose mechanisms for the implementation of these policies.

The chapter first describes the current land use patterns and policies, including present land use, zoning, and vacant land in Lexington, the current master plans for future development at Washington and Lee University (W&L) and Virginia Military Institute (VMI), and the land use pattern in Rockbridge County within the immediate area of the City. It then presents issues, goals and recommendations for future land use decisions to preserve and enhance the character and economic vitality of Lexington, including changes to the present zoning map and ordinance, identification of vacant and underutilized land and proposals to encourage and facilitate its beneficial development, and better coordination with W&L, VMI and Rockbridge County. The future land use map which serves as the basis for the zoning map is then presented and the implementation tools available to the City described.

The land use chapter serves as a guide to decisions by the Planning Commission and City Council concerning private development proposals and the location of public facilities. It also provides the foundation for zoning and subdivision regulations which allow the City to implement its land use plan.

CURRENT LAND USE

The land use categories utilized for the evaluation of existing land use and a brief description of the uses in each category are presented below:

Single-family homes and duplexes - one and two family dwellings

Multiple-family dwellings - buildings with 3 or more dwellings

Manufactured home park - development, including streets, utilities and parking pads, for use by manufactured homes

Commercial -wholesale and retail businesses, hotels and motels

Office - finance, insurance, real estate, medical and health services, other professional and service related activities

Mixed use - buildings utilized for more than one of the following three purposes: commercial, office and residential

Industry - fabricating, assembly and repair activities

Transportation, utilities, communications - transportation and related transfer and maintenance facilities; electric, gas, water and waste disposal services including processing, storage and related facilities; public works facilities and maintenance yards

Institutional - hospitals, nursing homes, rescue squad facilities, churches, colleges and universities

Public buildings and open space - Federal, state and local governmental offices, post offices, libraries, public schools, police and fire facilities, parks, recreation areas, golf courses, cemeteries

Rights-of-way - public rights of way in the City used for streets and sidewalks

Vacant - undeveloped land

Numerous developed residential properties throughout the City are composed of more than one parcel of land. Often the house is built on one recorded lot and the second lot is integrated into the yard. If these vacant lots may be sold and built upon, they have been classified as vacant. If, however, the vacant lot is substandard in size or has no street frontage, then it was not considered vacant and has been classified as single-family residential. Land use information for each of these categories is displayed graphically in Figure 7.1, The Existing Land Use map and in Table 7.1, Land Use by Category, which reports the acreage and the number of parcels in each land use category.

FIGURE 7.1
EXISTING LAND USE
2006

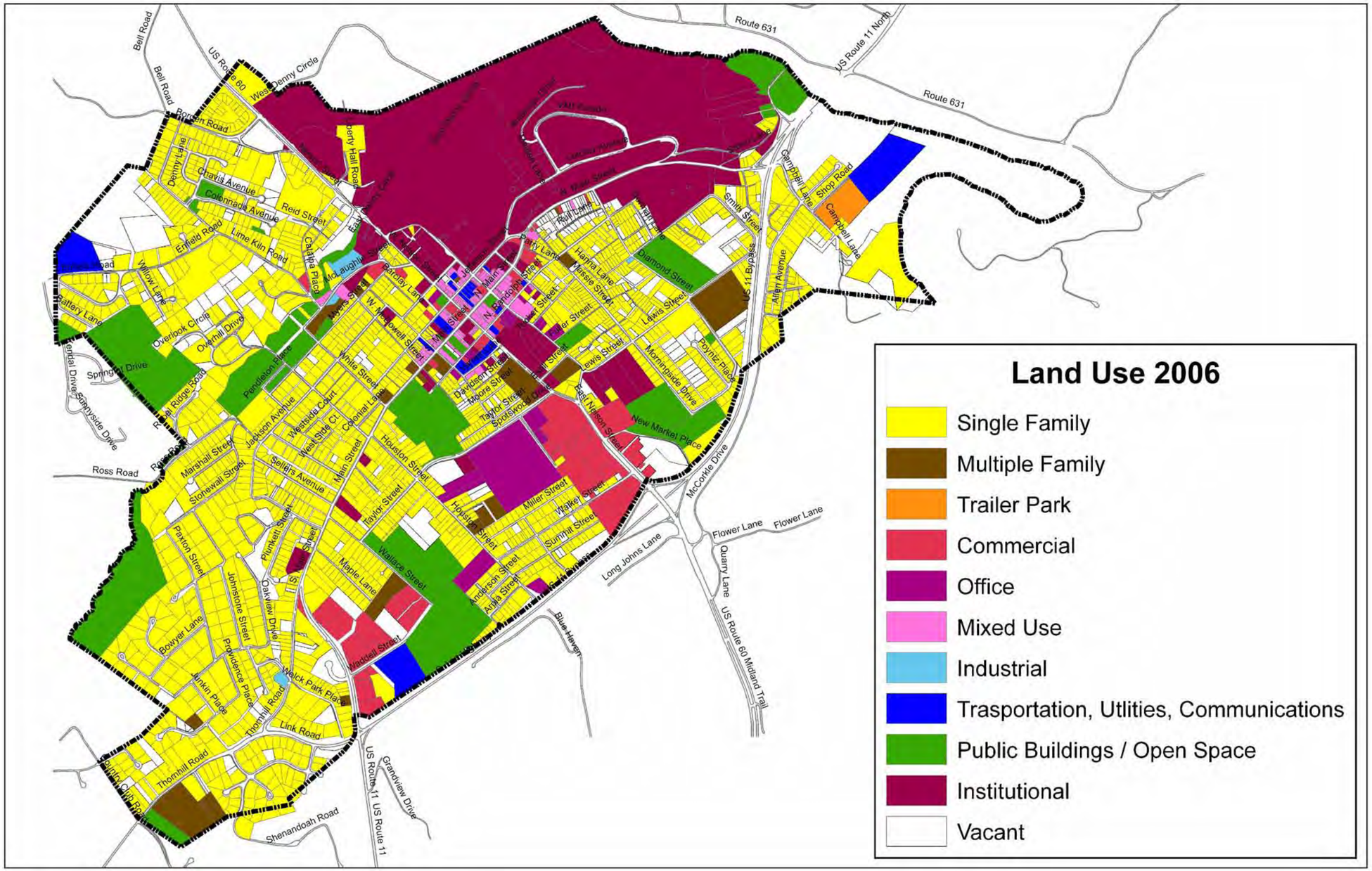


TABLE 7.1
LAND USE BY CATEGORY
2005

Land Use Classification	Acreage	Per Cent of Total*	Number of Parcels
Single Family Homes and Duplexes	612.20	38.57	1834
Multiple Family Housing	33.62	2.12	35
Manufactured Home Park	5.59	0.35	1
Commercial	56.32	3.55	79
Office	30.19	1.90	26
Mixed Use	12.45	0.78	114
Industry	3.17	0.20	5
Transportation Utilities Communications	24.64	1.55	26
Public Buildings and Open Space	150.62	9.49	42
Right of Way	167.30	10.54	0
Institutional	286.62	18.06	86
Vacant	204.47	12.88	352
Total	1,587.19	99.99	2,600

Source: City of Lexington Department of Planning and Development
* Total does not equal 100% due to rounding
Existing land use is also shown graphically on the map presented in Figure 7.1.

PRESENT ZONING

There are 11 basic Zoning Districts established in the City. A list of each of these districts and the uses authorized in each are:

Suburban Residential District (R-1A) - Low density residential uses; single family homes and primary residences with an accessory apartment, as well as compatible nonresidential uses such as schools, churches, parks and playgrounds, and libraries; care homes, bed and breakfast inns, and family home day care may be authorized with a conditional use permit

General Residential District (R-1) - Moderate density residential uses; single family and two family dwellings are authorized, as well as compatible nonresidential uses such as schools, churches, parks and playgrounds; care homes, family home day care, and bed and breakfast inns on Main, Nelson and Washington Streets may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Multiple-Family Residential District (R-M) - Medium density residential uses; single family homes, two family homes, townhouses and apartments and parks and playgrounds are authorized; care homes, tourist homes, boarding or lodging houses, bed and breakfast inns and fraternities and sororities may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Multiple-Family High-Rise District (R-H) - High density apartments and related nonresidential uses; single family homes, two family homes, high-rise apartments and limited medical and commercial establishments within high-rise apartments operated primarily for the use of the residents are authorized; care homes, tourist homes, boarding or lodging houses, bed and breakfast inns and fraternities and sororities may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Multiple-Family Mobile Home District (R-MH) - Medium density residential uses and mobile home parks and subdivisions; single family homes, two family homes, townhouses and apartments, mobile home parks and subdivisions, convenience establishments as part of a mobile home park or subdivision, churches, schools and parks and playgrounds are authorized

Professional Services-Residential District (PS-R) - Low density residential uses and professional services which are compatible with residential uses; single family and two family dwellings, schools, churches, parks and playgrounds, hospitals, nursing homes and clinics are authorized, as well as compatible professional office uses such as lawyers, doctors, dentists, engineers, accountants, etc.; pharmacies may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Commercial District (Central Business) (C-1) - Historic downtown business area; dwelling units above the first floor, apartments and townhouses, stores and shops, restaurants and bakeries, hotels and motels, personal service uses, banks and offices are authorized; drive-in facilities, theaters, game rooms, and take-out restaurants may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Commercial District (Central Business) (C-1A) - Historic area on the periphery of the downtown in which a wider range of commercial activity is authorized including drive-in facilities and other automobile oriented businesses; all of the uses permitted in the C-1 District are authorized; in addition service stations and take out restaurants are permitted. Conditional uses are the same as for the C-1 District

Commercial District (Shopping Centers) (C-2) - Commercial areas and shopping centers located away from the center of the city; shopping centers, wholesale and retail sales, restaurants, offices, personal service establishments, hotels and motels with up to 25 rooms, automobile sales, service and repair and light manufacturing activities are authorized; game rooms and theaters, building supplies, car washes, and hotels and motels with 25 rooms or more may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Commercial District (General Commerce) (C-3) - All of the activities authorized in the C-2 District are authorized, in addition storage warehouses, heavier manufacturing activities, and building materials sales and yards, are permitted; veterinary hospitals and kennels, welding and machine shops and aboveground petroleum bulk storage may be authorized with a conditional use permit

Residential-Light Commercial District (R-LC) - Light and medium density housing and light commercial operations; single family homes, two family homes, townhouses and apartments, parks and playgrounds, building supply outlets, repair and assembly shops, personal service uses and theaters are authorized; tourist homes, boarding or lodging houses, and fraternities and sororities may be authorized with a conditional use permit

In addition, there are two "Overlay Districts" in the City. These are districts which are superimposed on one or more of the existing districts described above. The provisions of these districts supplement the zoning provisions of the underlying district. These districts are:

> **Institutional District (I-1)** - a district established for Washington and Lee University and Stonewall Jackson Hospital which authorizes them to develop their campuses in accordance with a master plan submitted to and approved by the City
>
> **General Floodplain District (FP)** - restricting or prohibiting certain activities and development from locating within areas subject to flooding and requiring all of those uses which are permitted in the district to be protected against flooding and flood damage

Conditional use permits are required for uses which, because of their character, may or may not be appropriate for a particular location. They must be authorized by City Council after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission and are evaluated in terms of their impact on the surrounding neighborhood. City Council may deny a request for a Conditional Use Permit if it does not conform to standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance concerning the effects of the proposed use on the community and the surrounding neighborhood. They also have the power to attach specific conditions to the approval to reduce the effects of the use on adjacent properties.

The current Zoning Map of the City of Lexington is presented in Figure 7.2.

Information concerning the amount of land and the number of parcels contained in each of the zoning districts is presented in Table 7.2. This table reports the zoning for those portions of the City in the Institutional District (the main W&L Campus, the fraternity clusters at Red Square and Davidson Park) as Institutional rather than the underlying zoning districts (R-1, R-M and C-1A) since a Master Plan has been approved for these areas and development is being undertaken in conformance with that plan. The VMI campus is included in the Institutional District as well, although the land is technically zoned R-1. VMI, as a State institution, is exempt from the City's zoning regulations. Rather than include this property in the R-1 District and greatly increase the land area included in this district, it is included in that District within which it would most logically fall.

The parcels reported are those shown on the City's tax maps. In some cases, a tract of land in single ownership may be composed of several tax map parcels.

FIGURE 7.2
PRESENT ZONING

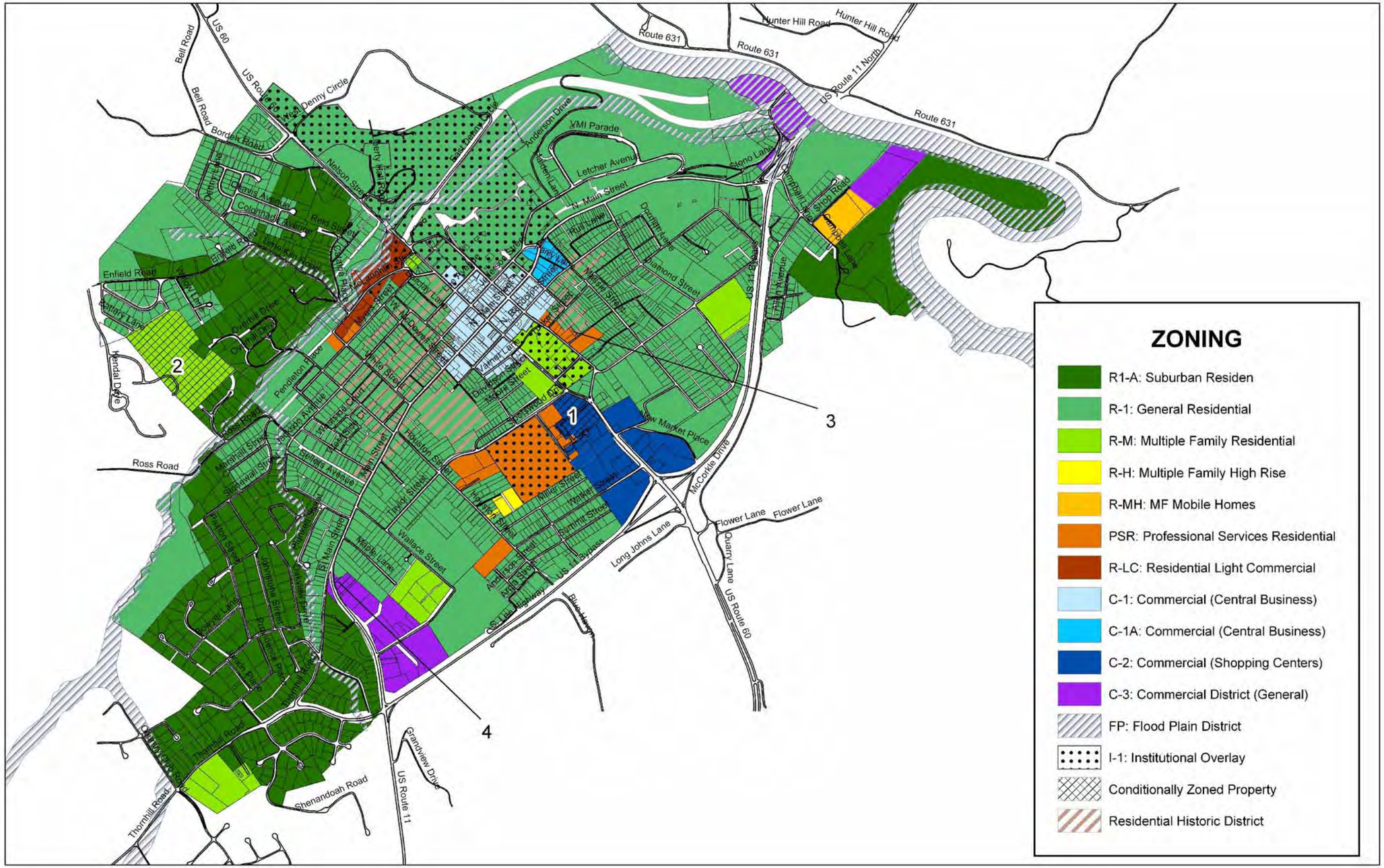


TABLE 7.2
LAND AREA BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION
2005

Zoning Classification	Acreage	Per Cent of Total*	Number of Parcels
General Residential (R-1)	849.04	59.78	1763
Suburban Residential (R-1A)	330.16	23.25	451
Multiple-Family Residential (R-M)	69.17	4.87	37
Multiple-Family High-Rise (R-H)	2.42	0.17	4
Multiple-Family Mobile Home (R-MH)	5.59	0.39	1
Professional Services-Residential (PSR)	34.24	2.41	24
Commercial District-Central Business (C-1)	30.70	2.16	212
Commercial District-Central Business (C-1A)	4.45	0.31	28
Commercial District-Shopping Centers (C-2)	39.41	2.77	32
Commercial District-General Commercial (C-3)	43.67	3.07	29
Residential - Light Commercial (R-LC)	11.34	0.80	19
Institutional Overlay**	151.47		53
Residential Historic Overlay**	97.70		212
Conditionally Zoned**	32.39		4
Total	1420.19	99.98	2600

Source: City of Lexington Department of Planning and Development
*Less than the total land area of the City because rights of way are excluded.
**Overlay Districts and Conditionally Zoned properties are not included in total.

VACANT LAND

Remaining vacant land in the City is presented in Figure 7.3.

The amount of vacant land and the number of vacant parcels in each of the City's Zoning Districts are presented in Table 7.3.

Vacant land in the Institutional District (the W&L campus and nearby fraternity clusters) is not included. This land is in a limited number of tracts and if developed will be developed for institutional purposes. Such development will essentially be "in-fill" where additional buildings will be sited adjacent to or among existing buildings.

FIGURE 7.3
VACANT LAND

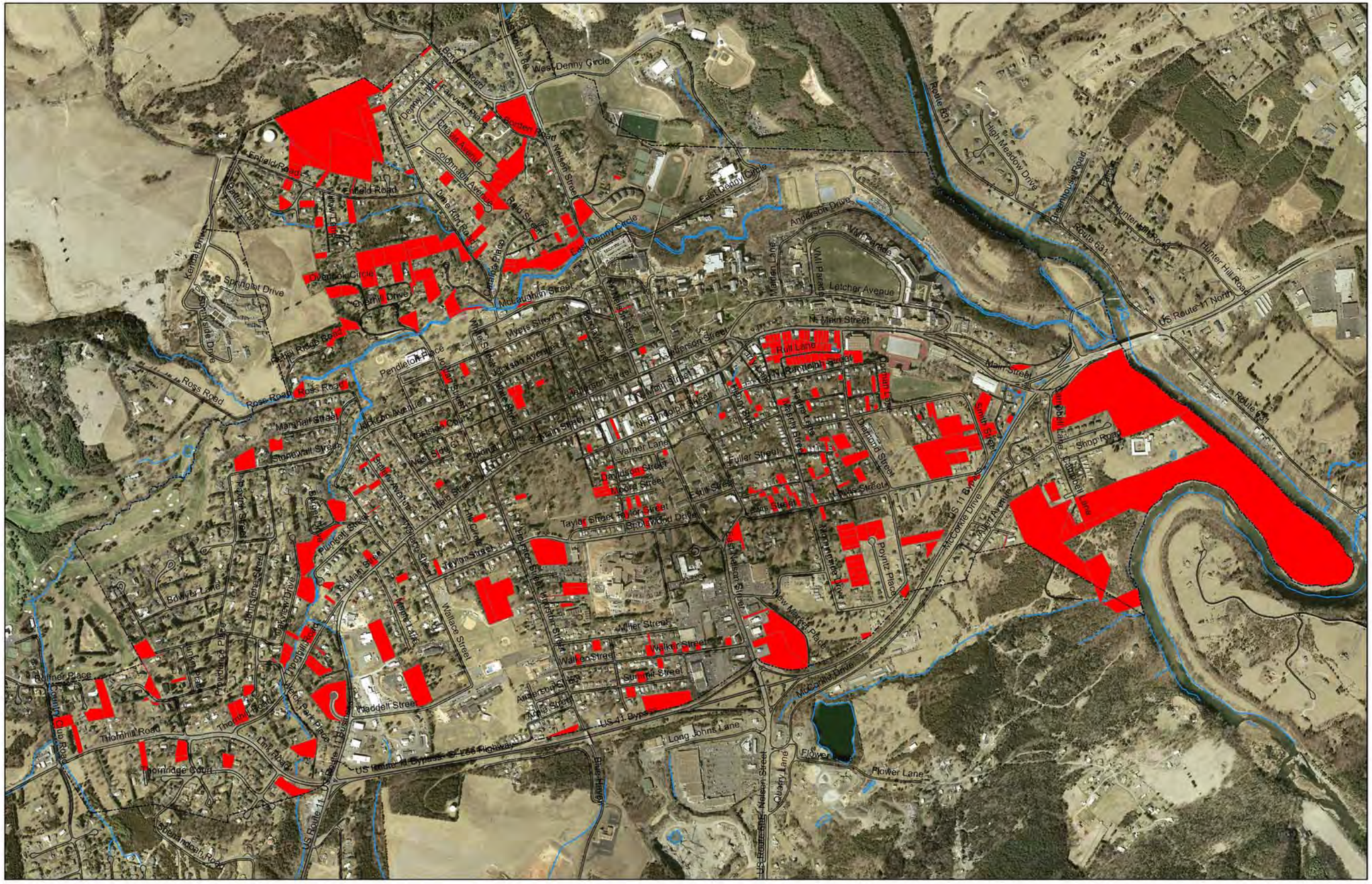


TABLE 7.3
VACANT LAND BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION
2005

Zoning Classification	Acreage	Per Cent of Total	Number of Parcels
General Residential (R-1)	119.91	58.64	263
Suburban Residential (R-2)	68.53	33.51	58
Multiple Family Residential (R-M)	3.70	1.81	5
Professional Services Residential (PSR)	2.50	1.22	2
Commercial - Central Business (C-1)	0.92	0.45	13
Commercial - Central Business (C-1A)	0.29	0.14	3
Commercial - Shopping Centers (C-2)	8.52	4.17	7
Residential - Light Commercial (R-LC)	0.10	0.05	1
Total	204.47	99.99	352

Source: City of Lexington Department of Planning and Development
* Total does not equal 100% due to rounding

INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLANS

The City recognizes and acknowledges the many positive economic, cultural, and aesthetic benefits to the City as a result of the presence of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute within our borders.

This section describes the current master plans for future development of Washington and Lee University (W&L) and the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), the two institutions of higher learning located within the City. Comments about and recommendations concerning these master plans are made later in this chapter.

Virginia Military Institute's Current Master Plan

The attached map, Figure 7.4, reflects VMI's current Master Plan. This plan differs fundamentally from their previous Master Plan which was described in the City's 1995 Comprehensive Plan. The emphasis in that plan was on the renovation of existing buildings. New buildings, where proposed, were within the confines of the existing campus (referred to as "post" when discussing VMI). Long term plans called for the construction of a new maintenance facility to be constructed on "North Post", located to the north of Woods Creek. Additional parking was to be constructed on the southeast side of Main Street on property presently owned or to be acquired by VMI. This parking was to be primarily for Cameron Hall, the VMI gymnasium, and Alumni Memorial Stadium, their football stadium.

The current **Virginia Military Institute Post Facilities Master Plan** was adopted in May of 2006. Its scope is more ambitious as it calls for major renovations and expansions to VMI's facilities. The last major capital projects at VMI were completed in 1988. VMI's plan calls for major upgrades throughout the post to support the Superintendent's Vision 2039 and improve and expand the physical infrastructure to 21st Century higher educational standards.

The intent of Vision 2039 is to enhance four major focus areas: "Academics, Military, Athletics, and Physical and Cultural Environment." The facilities improvements proposed are intended to facilitate the achievement of the core of VMI's mission statement: "the Virginia Military Institute shall provide to qualified young men and women, undergraduate education of the highest quality - embracing engineering, science, and the arts - conducted in, and facilitated by, the unique VMI system of military discipline."

Much of the new construction is proposed on land adjacent to North Main Street, one of the primary entrance corridors into the City. Kilbourne Hall will be expanded into the present Buildings and Grounds facility. The Building and Grounds Department has been relocated to Lackey Park, adjacent to the National Guard Armory in Rockbridge County. The Alumni Field grandstands are being upgraded, and improved team and concession facilities are being added. The five brick bungalows located along Institute Hill across from the present Buildings and Grounds building are being demolished and replaced by an 82 car surface parking lot.

FIGURE 7.4
VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
MASTER PLAN

MASTER PLAN UPDATE, MAY 2006

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

150' 0 100' 200' 300' N

CLARK • NEXSEN
Architecture & Engineering

Long term proposals include a surface parking lot for 98 cars between Main Street, the Science Center and Mallory Hall to provide additional staff, faculty, and visitor parking, as well as support the parking needs for athletic events.

A new Field House and Aquatic Facility is proposed south of Cameron Hall. Parking for 236 cars will be provided under the building. Preliminary elevations of these building are shown in Figure 7.5. As part of the improvements along North Main Street, the power lines were recently placed underground, improving the aesthetics of this entrance into the City.

The Master Plan also proposes significant modifications and additions to "North Post" (designated the "back post" on the previous plan) to the north of Woods Creek. This area presently includes Patchin Field and other athletic facilities, cadet parking, and storage for buildings and grounds. The Plan proposes a new baseball stadium, additional playing fields, enhancements to the leadership reaction courses, relocation of the firing range, a stormwater management facility, and improvements to Woods Creek. The plan also proposes an elevated soccer field with a new 380 car parking area located beneath it which will provide parking for all cadet cars and parking to support events. The playing fields will require extensive excavation into the slope to the north of Woods Creek to create sufficient flat area for these fields. These plans will require that the Woods Creek Trail be relocated between the access road and Woods Creek. The plan includes environmental improvements to Woods Creek and the Woods Creek watershed.

There are also several significant proposals for the main post or "Academic Row". A new Leadership and Ethics Center, to include a 500 seat auditorium and a conference center with a capacity of 800 people, is proposed behind Smith Hall. Previous drafts of the Master Plan included a second parking structure to support this facility; VMI planners indicate that parking will be provided on the grass of the Parade Ground when events in this building attract significant numbers of attendees from outside the post community. Up to 800 cars can be accommodated on the Parade Ground. Lejeune Hall is being demolished to provide for an addition to the barracks which will provide additional rooms to permit growth in the Corps of Cadets from 1350 to 1500 and will relieve overcrowding. Letcher Avenue is to become a pedestrian mall in front of the academic buildings and the barracks.

VMI also owns Lackey Park, located approximately one half mile north of Lexington. The eastern border of this property abuts Route 11 across from the College Square Shopping Center. The property contains approximately 80 acres. The National Guard Armory occupies a portion of this property. The VMI Physical Plant and the ROTC motor pool have recently been relocated there. The Master Plan for this property identifies a "tentative site" for parking for major events such as football games and parents weekends during inclement weather when the parade ground is closed. The remainder of the Lackey Park property will be retained for future use by the VMI ROTC departments and the National Guard for military exercises or to meet "future academic, athletic or economic development needs."

FIGURE 7.5
VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
PRELIMINARY ELEVATIONS OF BUILDINGS TO BE CONSTRUCTED ALONG NORTH MAIN STREET

PROPOSED FIELDHOUSE AND AQUATIC CENTER, MAY 2006

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

CLARK • NEXSEN
Architecture & Engineering

The Superintendent of VMI and his staff have shown a willingness and desire to maintain open communications with the City concerning their development proposals. Although, by State law they are not required to comply with local zoning and building regulations, they indicate their intent to seek the City's comments on future development plans. The City should ensure that this dialogue continues.

Washington and Lee University Master Plan

The Institutional District Article of the City's Zoning Ordinance authorizes institutions like Stonewall Jackson Hospital and Washington and Lee University to submit master plans for the development of their campuses for review by the Planning Commission and approval by City Council. When adopted, these master plans serve as supplemental zoning, authorizing buildings and uses contained in these plans to be constructed or established in conformance with the approved plan. Parameters such as use, lot area, setbacks and yards, and parking are controlled either by the Zoning Ordinance or by an approved master plan.

The current **Campus Master Plan for Washington and Lee University** was approved by the City of Lexington in February, 1998 and amended in July, 2003 as required by the Institutional District regulations. The Master Plan map is shown in Figure 7.6. Figure 7.7, Implementation Plan, highlights the projects proposed in that Master Plan

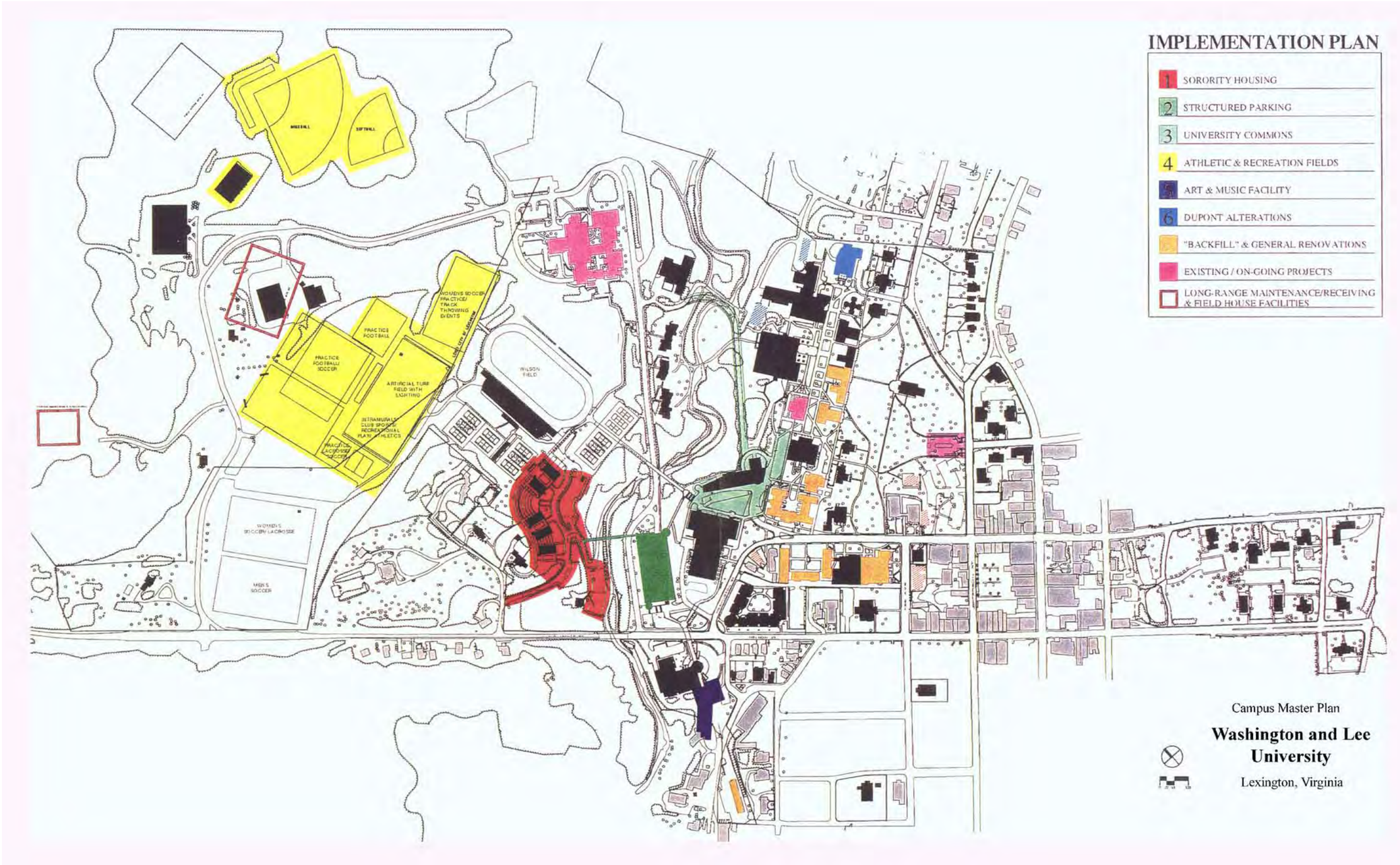
Much of what was proposed in this Master Plan has been accomplished. The most significant projects have been the construction of the parking garage adjacent to Nelson and Washington Streets, the construction of the Elrod Commons, and the removal of surface parking and creation of green space between Doremus Gymnasium and the new Commons building. Five Sorority Houses were constructed to the west of Woods Creek and a new pedestrian bridge constructed across the Woods Creek ravine to provide convenient access from the sororities to the parking structure. New athletic fields have been constructed on the western portion of the campus in the area dedicated to these types of facilities.

The 2003 Master Plan amendment expanded the Institutional District farther to the southwest between McLaughlin Street and Woods Creek to allow for the placement of a new Music and Arts building adjacent to the Lenfest Center.

All of the major new buildings proposed by this Master Plan have been constructed. The majority of the remaining projects proposed in the Master Plan are for the renovation of existing buildings.

FIGURE 7.6
CAMPUS MASTER PLAN
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

FIGURE 7.7
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY



SURROUNDING LAND USE

As the supply of vacant land in the City has dwindled, development in the Lexington area has increasingly taken place immediately surrounding the City in Rockbridge County. Residential development has included several subdivisions, as well as numerous houses constructed on individual lots fronting on improved roads. There have been over 300 new lots platted within a one mile radius of Lexington since 2000. Figure 7.8 shows the locations of these new subdivisions.

Three shopping centers have developed on large tracts in close proximity to the City following the national trend of commercial centers locating near urban centers where larger tracts of land are available for large buildings and parking lots on major access routes into the urban core. Big box retailers including WalMart and Lowe's have constructed buildings adjacent to Route 11, north of the City. Several new hotels and restaurants have also been built in the vicinity of the Route 11, I-64 interchange north of the City.

Future development in Rockbridge County will ultimately affect the City's economy, transportation network, and land use pattern. To provide a better understanding of the nature of these changes, a portion of the Future Land Use map contained in the Land Use Plan adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in June of 2003 showing the planned land uses for the area surrounding the City is presented in Figure 7.9.

The principal land use designated on this map for these areas is "Suburban Planning Area" which is described as:

> ... areas bordering corporate cities and towns already characterized by existing development, as well as undeveloped properties with access to sound transportation links, public services and relatively strong growth pressures. They may contain commercial corridors that would fall under a corridor overlay district to promote quality development. Mixed residential, commercial and industrial uses would be promoted in these areas. Projects with more intensive uses would be required to buffer their activity from adjoining less intensive uses. Neighborhood development that brings residents closer to employment centers, goods and services is desirable. Walking and biking should be promoted to reduce the dependency on automobiles. It is desirable for new projects within these planning areas to connect to public water and sewer.

The second land use category designated for this area is "Rural Area". According to the Future Land Use Plan the purpose of this category is to:

> ... provide a vehicle by which prime agricultural and forestry lands, mountain areas, natural and scenic resources, critical watersheds, sensitive environmental areas, and other large tracts or land of rural character within the County may be preserved and

FIGURE 7.8
APPROVED SUBDIVISIONS SINCE 2000
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

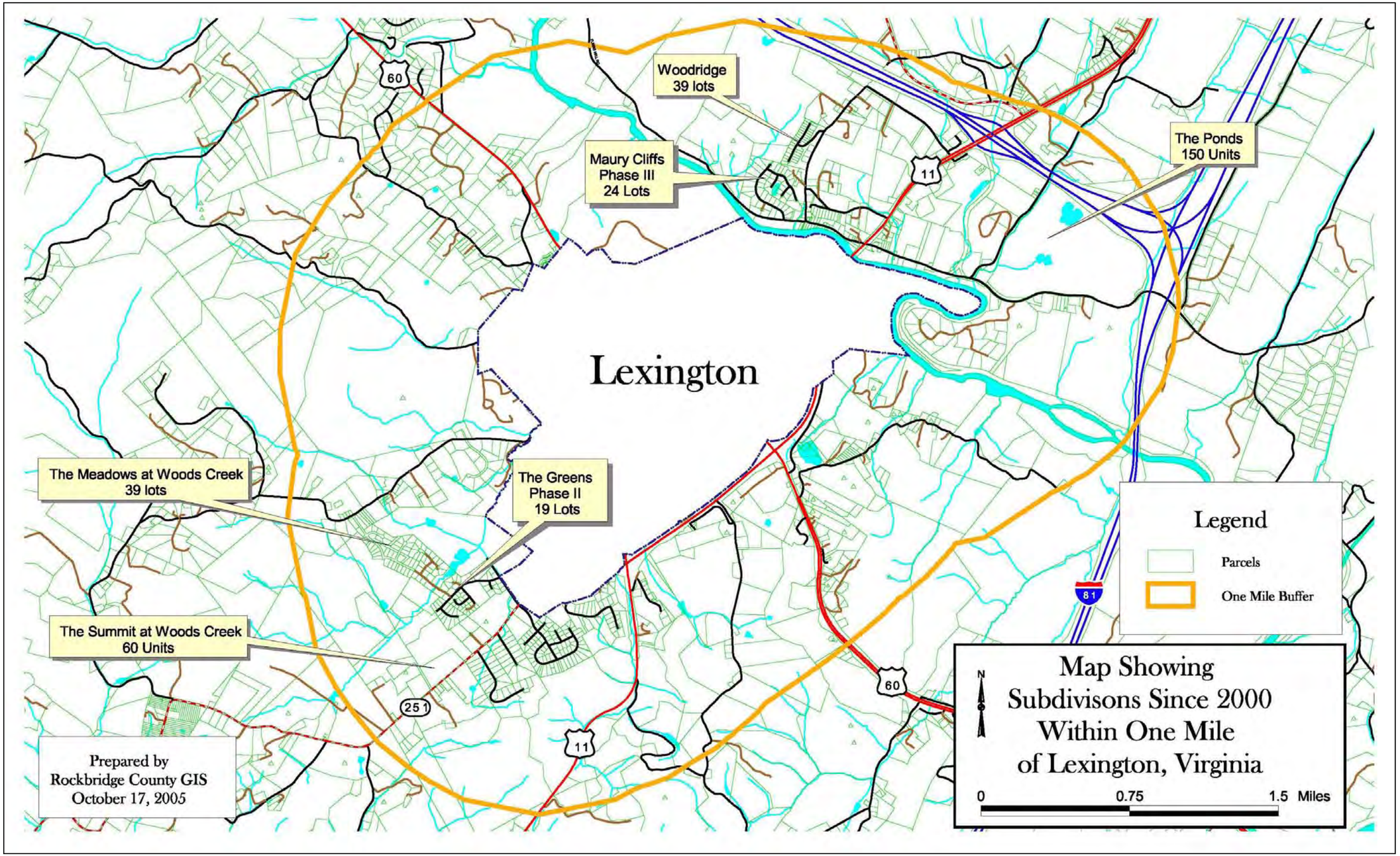
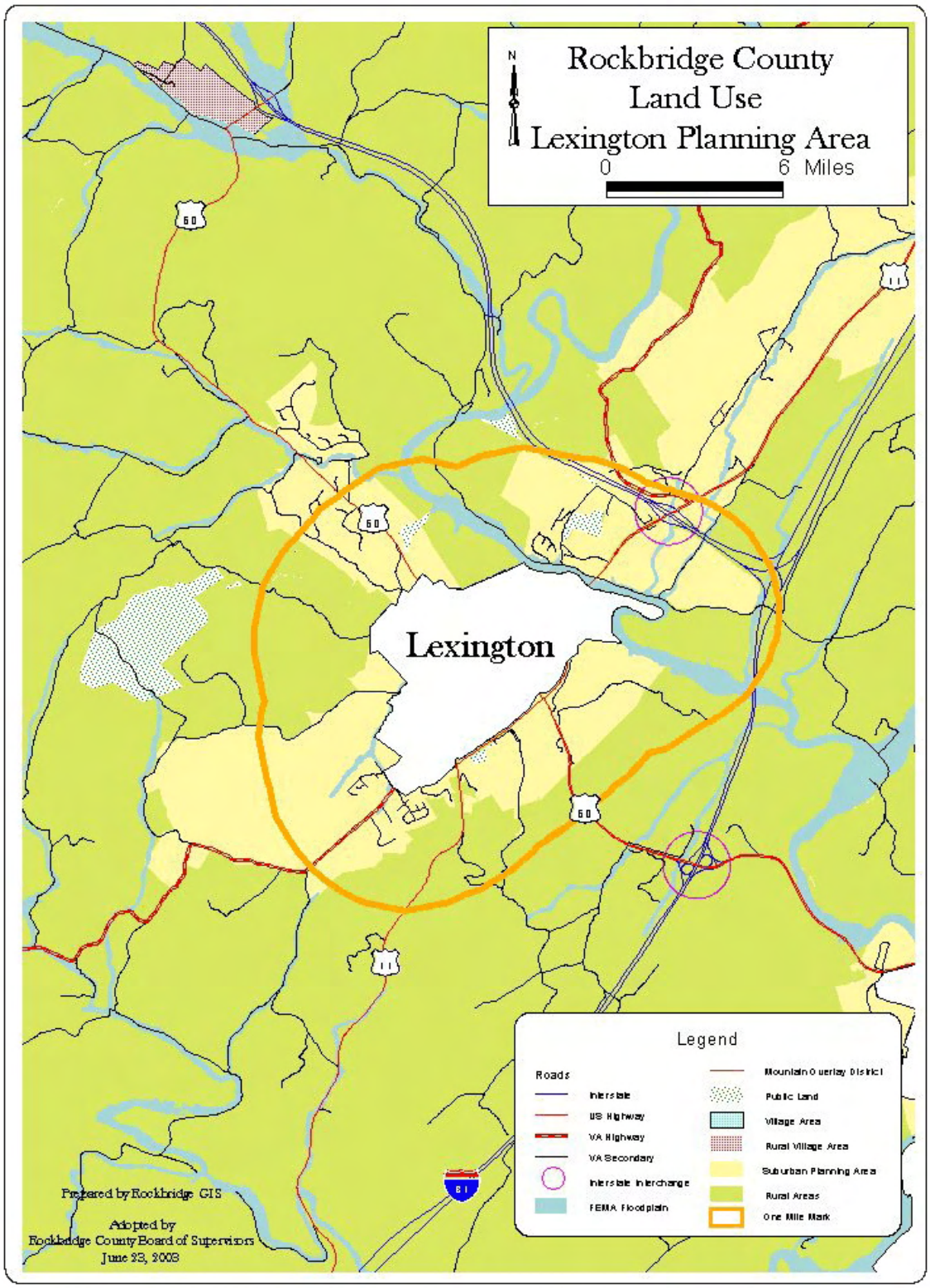


FIGURE 7.9
PORTION OF FUTURE LAND USE MAP
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY



maintained. It is the intent of this district to promulgate existing farm and forestry operations, conserve natural features and vegetation, eliminate scattered residential uses on small lots demanding public services, protect river frontages and water recharge areas, promote new agricultural and forestry production, and encourage the conservation and maintenance of sensitive environmental areas. Residential uses that are not related to and supportive of active agricultural and forestry activities are not encouraged.

Three of the implementation strategies included in that plan are of special relevance to the City:

- Recognizing that a certain amount of future growth and development is inevitable in Rockbridge County, the Future Land Use Plan should direct future development to occur on vacant or in-fill parcels located within or directly adjacent to developed areas (i.e. in and adjacent to the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista).

- Encourage regional cooperation in developing planning goals, strategies, zoning regulations and permitting decisions with Lexington and Buena Vista, especially in the County "growth belt" around the two cities in order to promote land use compatibility.

- Consider the development of a special North Lee Highway overlay district or other zoning technique that will protect this scenic, rural highway from strip development, either residential or commercial, in sections between designated service areas.

Zoning is the primary mechanism for directing land use. Rockbridge County's current Zoning Map for the area surrounding the City is shown in Figure 7.10. The zoning districts and their purposes as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance are:

A-1 Agricultural and Limited Uses District: This District covers the unincorporated portions of the County which are located on mountain soils which present severe limitations to occupancy uses and are currently occupied by various open uses, such as forests, parks, and pasture lands. This District is established for the specific purpose of facilitating existing or future forest or agricultural operations, conservation of water and other natural resources, reducing soil erosion, protecting watersheds, and reducing hazards from flood and fire. Single family residences are permitted in this district with a maximum density of one dwelling unit for each two acres of developable land.

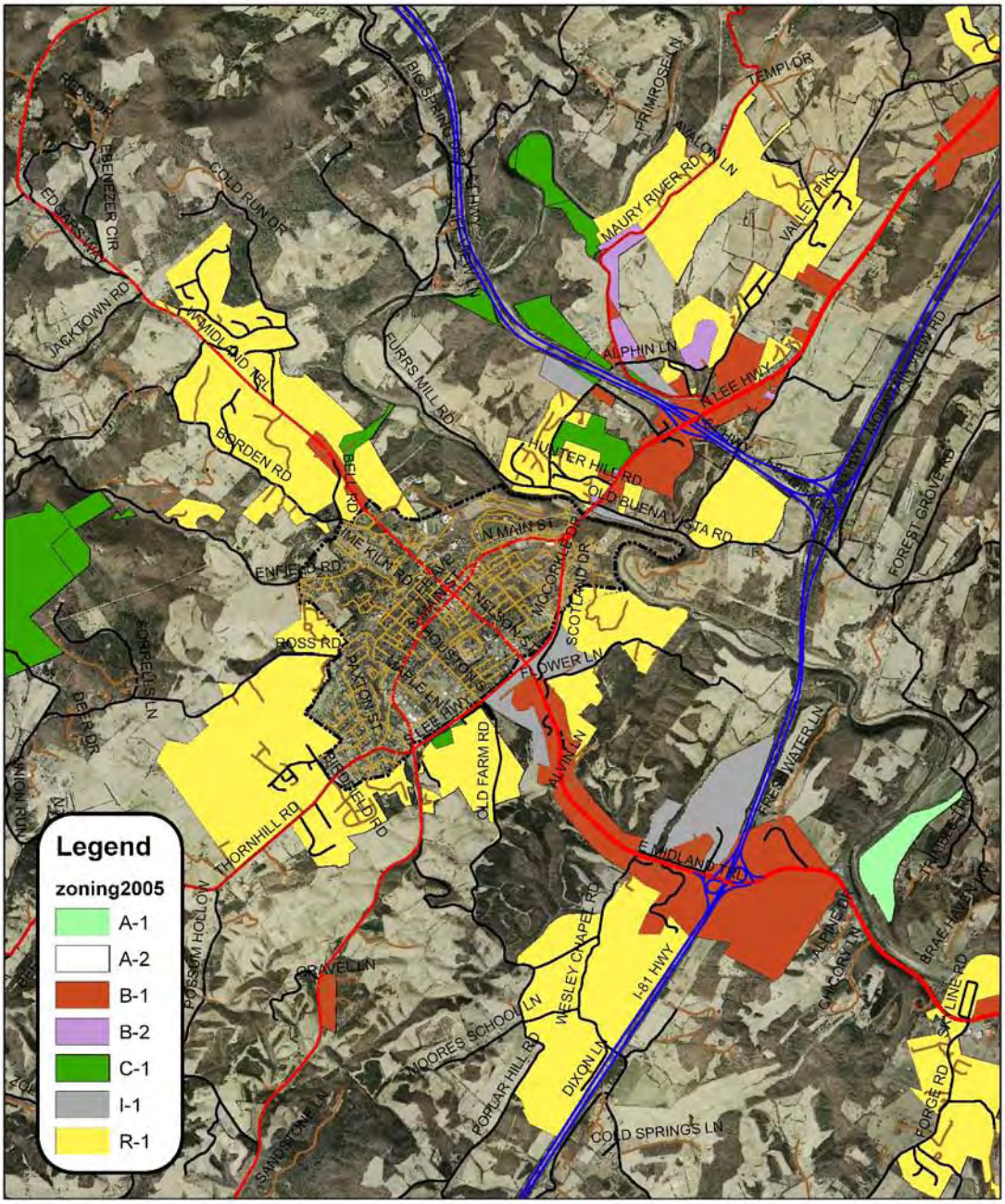
A-2 Agricultural and General Uses District: This District covers the portion of the County which contains the most productive agricultural and forest lands and represents the most valuable agricultural production lands. This District is established to protect existing and future farming operations, to conserve water and other natural resources, to protect watersheds, and provide for the orderly expansion of urban development. Single family residences are also permitted in this district, again, with a maximum density of one dwelling unit for each two acres of developable land.

R-1 Residential General District: This District is composed of certain quiet, low density residential areas plus certain open areas where similar residential development appears likely to occur. The regulations for this District are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the District, to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life where there are children, and to prohibit all activities of a commercial nature. To these ends, development is limited to relatively low concentration and permitted uses are limited basically to dwellings providing homes for the residents plus certain additional uses, such as schools, parks, churches, and certain public facilities that serve the residents of the District.

Single-family dwellings; duplexes, and multi-family dwellings including townhouses and apartments are permitted in this District. The basic authorized densities for single family homes and duplexes are one building (one dwelling unit for single family homes, two for duplexes) for each half acre if public water and sewer are available and one dwelling unit for each acre of land if public utilities are not present. Multiple family housing densities vary from units per acre when water and sewer is available to units per acre when they are not.

B-1 General Business District: This District covers that portion of the County intended for the conduct of general business to which the public requires direct and frequent access. Permitted uses includes retail stores, banks, theaters, business offices, newspaper offices, printing presses, restaurants and taverns, and garages and service stations.

FIGURE 7.10
2005 ZONING MAP
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY



I-1 General Industrial District: The primary purpose of this District is to establish an area where the primary use of land is for industrial operations, which may create some nuisance, and which are not properly associated with, nor particularly compatible with residential, institutional, and commercial service establishments. The specific intent of this District is to encourage the construction of and the continued use of land for industrial purposes and to prohibit new residential and commercial use of the land and to prohibit any other use which would substantially interfere with the development, continuation, or expansion of industrial type uses in the District;

In addition, the County has created **Tourism Corridor Overly Districts** along all of the major entrance corridors into Lexington - Route 11 (Lee Highway) north and south of the City, Route 60 (Midland Trail) east and west of the City, as well as along Route 39. According to the County Zoning Ordinance, the purpose of this District is to maintain, preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character, cultural significance, economic vitality, visual quality and architectural excellence of the County. The application of this district is intended to ensure that the major existing and planned routes of tourist access, as well as other public access to the County's historic areas are developed and maintained in a harmonious and compatible manner.

Within this District, any erection, reconstruction, exterior alteration, restoration, rehabilitation, razing, relocation or demolition of any building, structure, signs, fences, walls, light fixtures, outbuildings, pavements, grading, site improvements, significant landscaping features or other appurtenant element must be reviewed by the Tourism Corridor Review Board and approved by the Board of Supervisors prior to the issuance of a permit.

There has been significant cooperation in joint planning between the City and County since the last Comprehensive Plan was completed. Two joint planning efforts have been especially successful.

The first was the study of the City and County entrance corridors and interstate interchanges, which was commissioned and funded jointly. This project was undertaken to create more workable and attractive roadside development patterns for the Lee Highway and Midland Trail corridors and for the areas around the Interstate 81 Interchanges. The plan which resulted provided an overall vison for these entrance corridors and Interstate interchanges and recommended design principles and planning strategies to achieve them.

Among the constructive steps emanating from this planning effort were the creation of entrance corridor overlay districts establishing design guidelines and design review for development within these corridors and revised sign regulations which dramatically reduced the allowable sizes of roadside signs in both the City and the County.

The second is the recently completed South Lexington joint planning effort conducted by a committee composed of planning commission members, as well as planning staff from both jurisdictions. This committee was charged with studying the impact of increased development in the headwaters of the Woods Creek watershed in the vicinity of Thornhill and Ross Roads. They evaluated issues related to utilities including public water and sewer, transportation, stormwater management, and land use. As a result of the recommendations made by this group, the County Planning Commission recommended and the Board of Supervisors approved the down zoning of approximately 860 acres of land from R-1 to A-2.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE CITY'S PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The previous Comprehensive Plan contained numerous recommendations concerning land use which have been implemented by the City. Those recommendations were developed to achieve the following goals and objectives:

GOAL: Encourage well conceived and planned land uses which recognize and amplify the City's unique small town character and which add to the City's tax base

GOAL: Preserve and enhance the City's residential neighborhoods as attractive, desirable places to live

OBJECTIVE: Ensure the establishment of appropriate transitional areas between commercial uses and lower density residential uses

The City made several significant modifications to its development regulations to implement these regulations including:

- The creation of a second single family housing zoning district more consistent with the characteristics of the more suburban residential neighborhoods in the City to better protect their integrity
- Down zoning several parcels of land which had previously been zoned for multiple family housing in areas of the City considered to be inappropriate for housing of that density because of limited access and incompatibility with adjacent neighborhoods
- Down zoning developed residential areas adjacent to the City's commercial centers from commercial to residential to better focus commercial activity within those centers and to provide more appropriate transitions between commercial uses and nearby residences
- Several amendments were also made to the Zoning Ordinance including increasing the minimum lot size in the R-1, General Residential District and reducing the allowable densities for townhouses and garden apartments.

That plan also identified several remaining large parcels of vacant land and made recommendations concerning their possible development. These recommendations were intended to address the following objective:

OBJECTIVE: Identify vacant land with development possibilities and potential redevelopment areas and encourage development patterns which will be beneficial to the City both economically and aesthetically

Most of those areas have been developed during the past ten years. Most significantly:

- Fairwinds - this 27.5 acre tract has been subdivided for single-family homes
- The Donald tract - 7.15 acres on which Penrith, a single-family home subdivision, is now located
- Sunnyside - This 23.6 acre parcel has been incorporated into the Kendal community. All but a very limited portion has been dedicated for open space. This commitment is assured by a proffer offered by Kendal as part of a conditional rezoning request. Formal action by City Council would be required to allow this land to be developed.

Several areas were also identified as sites for potential redevelopment. These sites included:

- The site of the previous sewage treatment park at Jordan's Point adjacent to the Maury River. This site has been incorporated into Jordan's Point Park as recommended by the plan
- Maury River Middle School - This property was sold to Rockbridge County for continued use as a school. The City has a right of first refusal to purchase the property if the County ceases to use it for educational purposes

LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals and objectives contained in the previous Comprehensive Plan remain valid and are being retained:

OVERALL LAND USE GOAL: Encourage well conceived and planned land uses which recognize and amplify the City's unique small town character and which add to the City's tax base

GOAL: Preserve and enhance the City's residential neighborhoods as attractive, desirable places to live

OBJECTIVE: Review the present Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to ensure that its provisions and boundaries are consistent with the character of existing residential neighborhoods

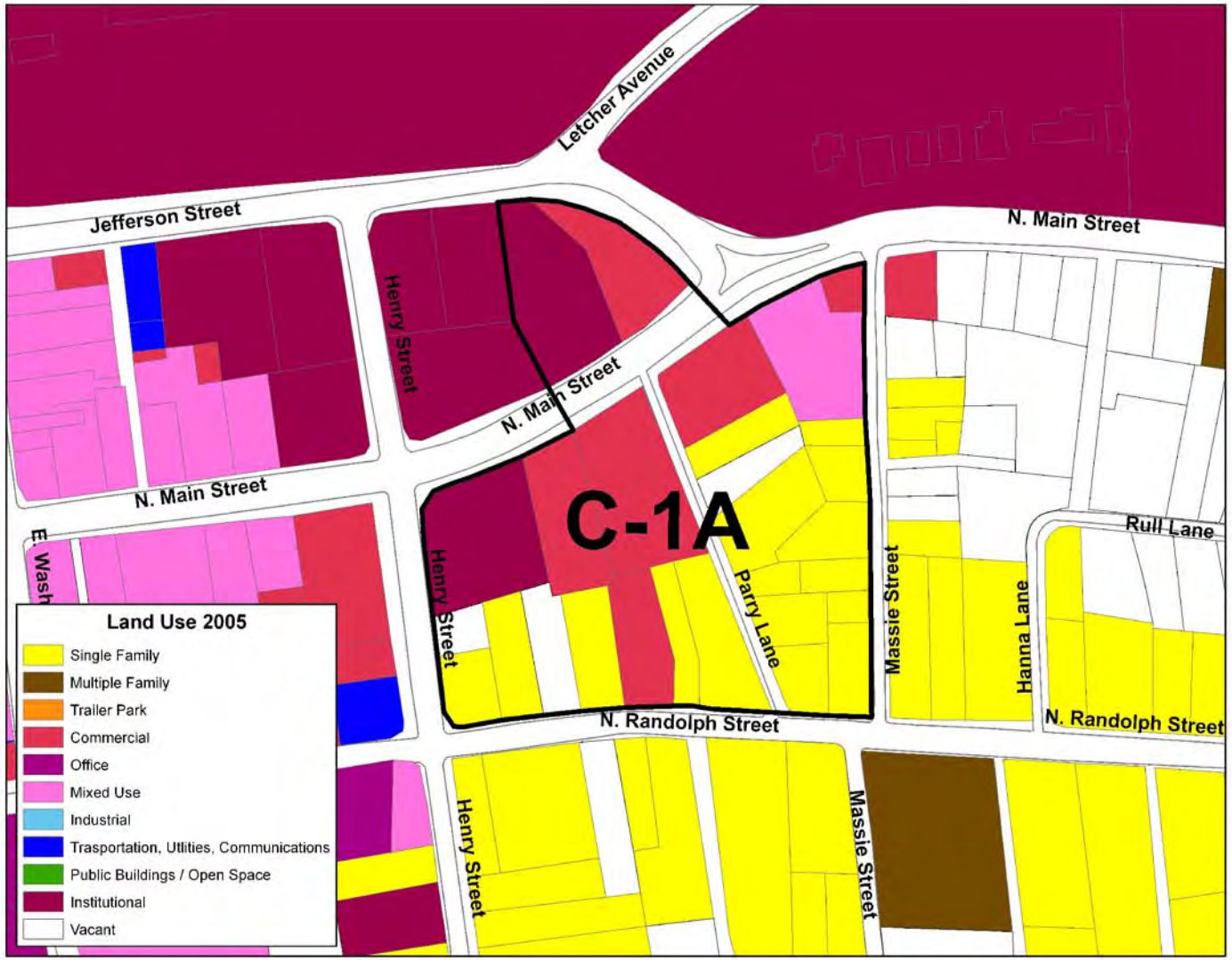
OBJECTIVE: **Ensure the establishment of appropriate transitional areas between commercial uses and lower density residential uses**

Transition Area Between the Downtown Commercial District and the Residential Area along Randolph and Massie Streets

The numerous changes described in the previous section addressed almost all of the areas which were inappropriately zoned and in conflict with the objectives listed above. One area which has not been addressed is along the west side of Randolph Street from Henry Street to Massie Street and down Parry Lane and Massie Street to the rear of the commercial properties fronting on North Main Street. Although all of the buildings in this area, with one exception, are presently used for residential purposes, this area is included in the downtown commercial zoning district, C-1A. See the attached map, Figure 7.11.

Single-family dwellings are not permitted in the C-1A district. As a result, new homes could not be built on the remaining vacant lots within this area and the existing houses in this district are nonconforming uses. As a result, they could not be rebuilt if they were destroyed. The City's economic development policy is to focus downtown commercial activity in those areas where it presently exists rather than to allow businesses to disperse into surrounding residential neighborhoods. Conversion of residences within this area into commercial buildings would be counterproductive to that policy. Finally, zoning a portion of a residential neighborhood for other than residential purposes tends to be a destabilizing force and detracts from the quality of that neighborhood.

FIGURE 7.11
PRESENT ZONING
NORTH RANDOLPH AND MASSIE STREETS



The C-1A district authorizes a wide range of commercial and office activities. No off street parking is required for development in this district. Parking for nonresidential uses introduced into this area would have to be accommodated on the street if business and property owners did not choose to provide off street parking. No yards are required in the C-1A district so new buildings could be built to the property lines. All of these characteristics are unsuited for new development, as well as for the expansion and conversion of existing buildings in this neighborhood.

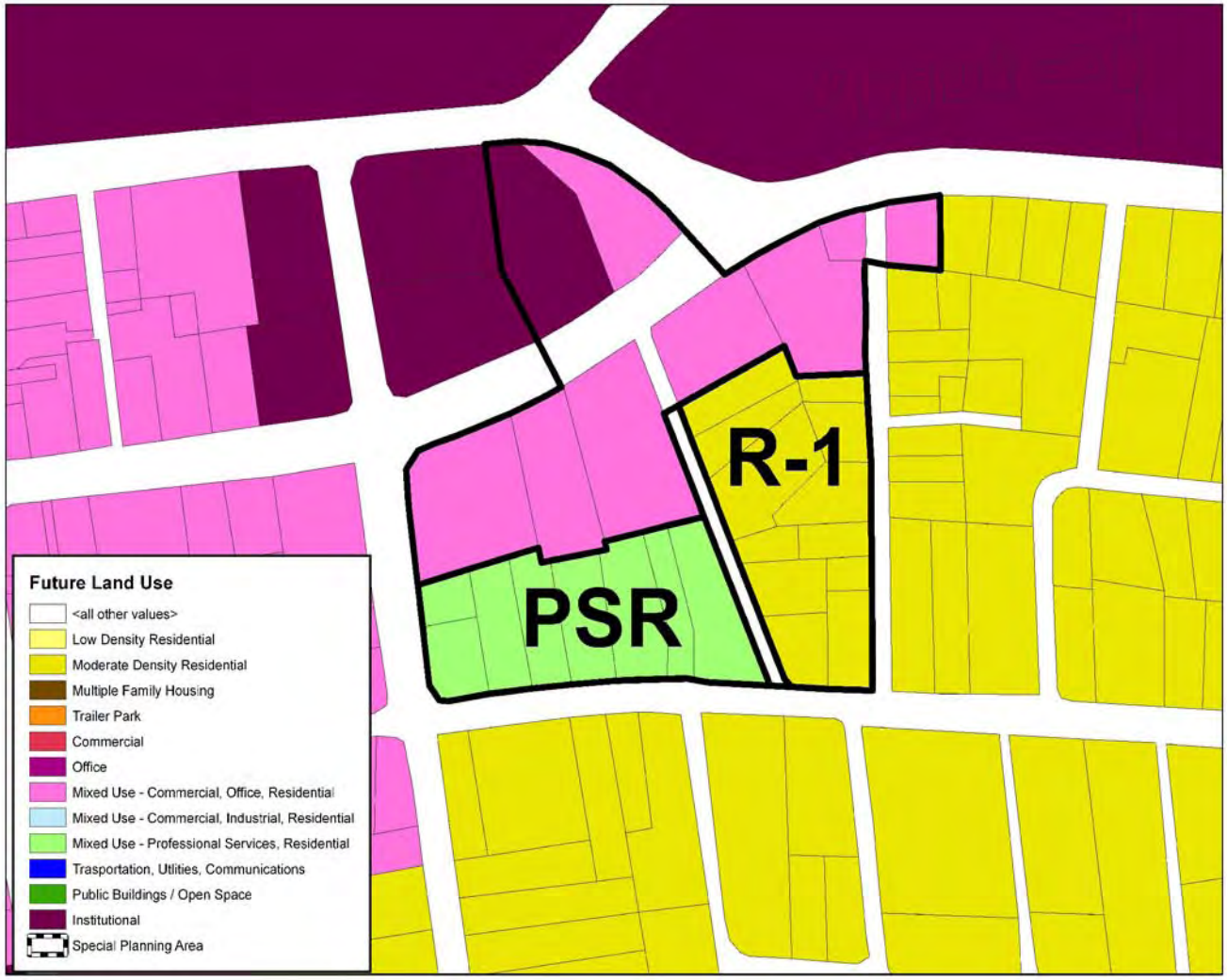
The houses and vacant lots along Massie Street and Parry Lane should be limited to residential use to protect the existing residences along these narrow streets and to preserve their residential character. Offices of an appropriate scale would be a viable option for the properties fronting Randolph Street between Henry Street and Parry Lane provided adequate off street parking is provided, buildings are at a scale consistent with existing buildings, and adequate yards are provided. Commercial businesses are not appropriate for this block.

For all of these reasons, the zoning boundaries in this area should be redrawn to place the properties along Massie Street and Parry Lane in the General Residential District, R-1.

The west side of Randolph Street between Henry Street and Parry Lane should be rezoned to Professional Services-Residential (PSR) to permit professional offices, as well as single-family residences along this block face. The PSR district requires off street parking to be provided. Commercial uses are not authorized in this district. New buildings along this block should be located close to the street, similar to existing buildings. The PSR District requires a 25 foot front yard. Variances should be sought to allow set backs appropriate for this block. Emphasis throughout this area should be on the reuse and expansion of existing buildings rather than on demolition and new construction. The architecture should also be consistent with the existing houses in this neighborhood. To accomplish this, the entire area should be added to Residential Historic Neighborhood Conservation District. This would make new construction and demolition of any building subject to review and approval by the City's architectural board. The area is presently in the Historic Downtown Preservation District which has even more extensive design review.

The proposed zoning changes are shown in Figure 7.12

FIGURE 7.12
PROPOSED ZONING
NORTH RANDOLPH AND MASSIE STREETS



The Block Bounded by Nelson, McLaughlin and Glasgow Streets

A second small area which should addressed is the block bounded by Nelson, McLaughlin and Glasgow Streets. This block is composed of buildings which were initially single-family homes. Most continue to be used for that purpose. The zoning for half of the block was changed from Multiple Family Residential (R-M) to General Residential District (R-1) by the last comprehensive rezoning. The present zoning is illustrated in Figure 7.13. The balance of the block should also be returned to R-1 to protect the integrity of these houses and reflect the true nature of the uses in this block. This proposal is shown in Figure 7.14.

FIGURE 7.13
PRESENT ZONING
BLOCK BOUNDED BY NELSON, McLAUGHLIN AND GLASGOW STREETS

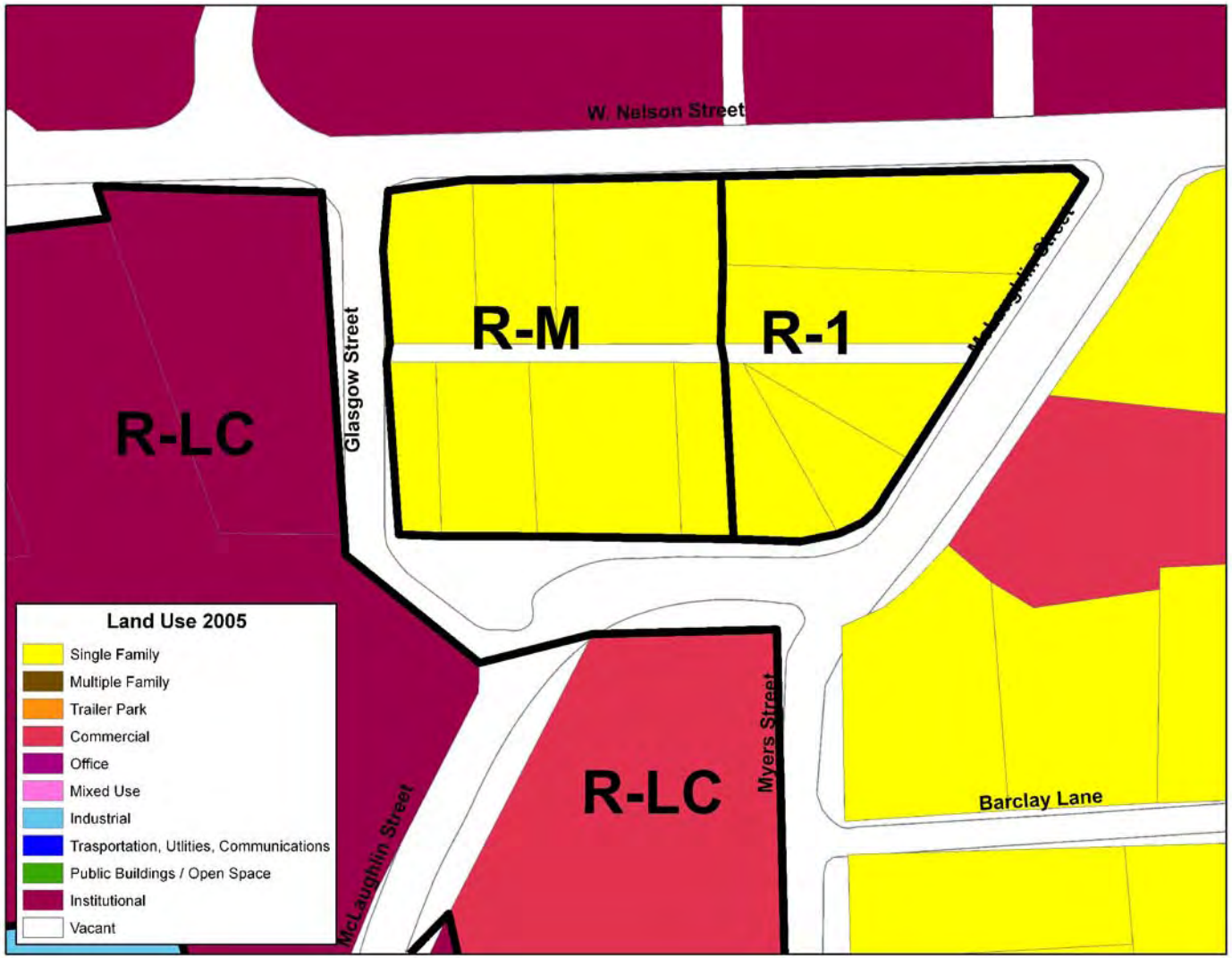
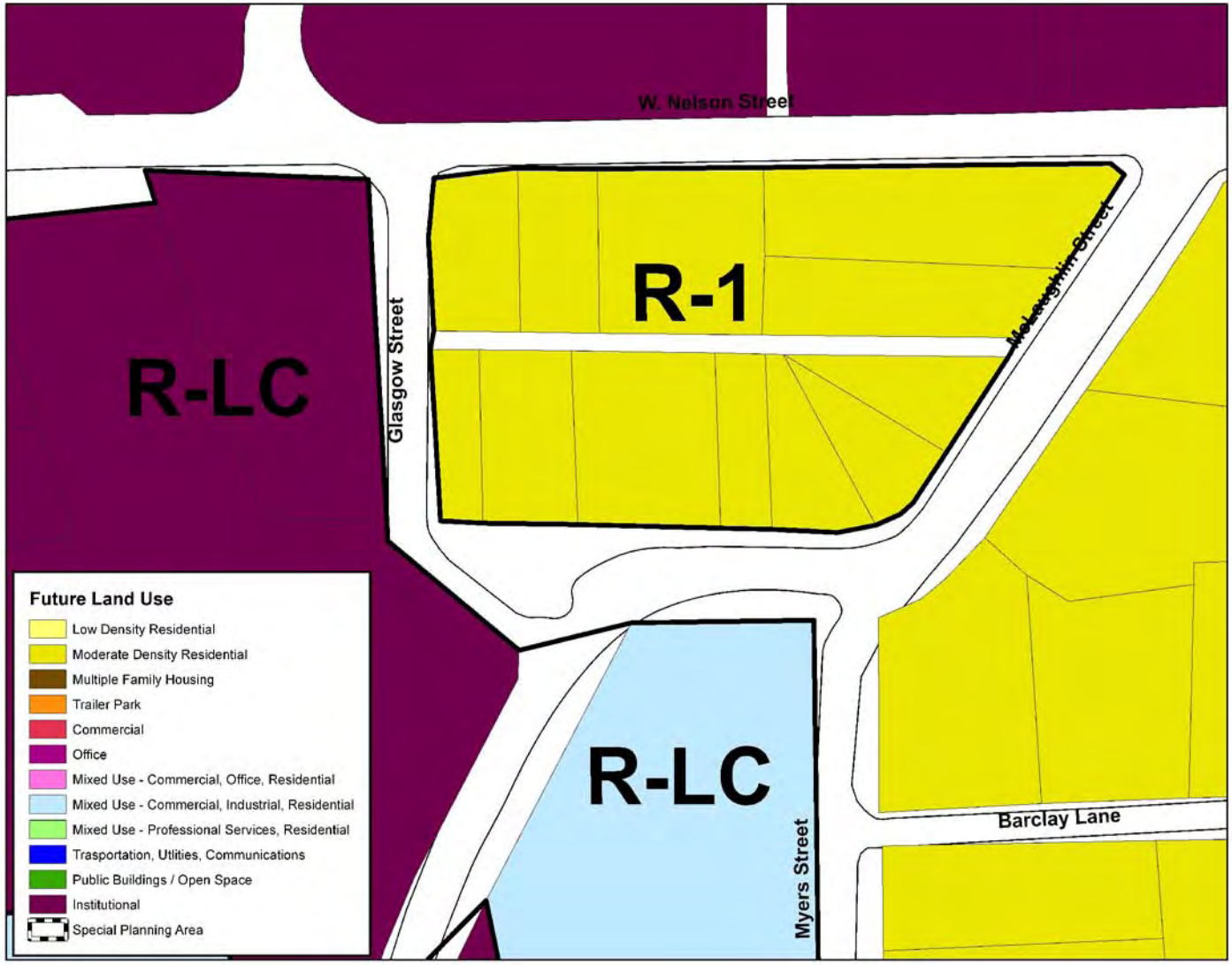


FIGURE 7.14
PROPOSED ZONING
BLOCK BOUNDED BY NELSON, McLAUGHLIN AND GLASGOW STREETS



POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

OBJECTIVE: **Identify vacant land with development possibilities, areas with potential for in-fill development and potential redevelopment areas and encourage development patterns which will be beneficial to the city both economically and aesthetically**

Lexington can anticipate continued development of its remaining vacant land, as well as pressure for redevelopment of underdeveloped sites. It is important that the city have a vision of how this development and redevelopment should look, and implement rules and development guidelines to achieve that vision.

East Lexington Bluffs Area

This area is the easternmost portion of the City. It abuts the Maury River and includes a peninsula bordered by the river on three sides. The river frontage is mostly steep bluffs. This area has much of the remaining vacant land in the city, most of it in fairly large tracts. The majority of this land is zoned for residential use including Suburban Residential (R1-A), General Residential (R-1) and Multiple Family-Mobile Home (R-MH) districts. The City's Public Works Department property yard is zoned Commercial District (General) (C-3). Figure 7.15 shows the present land use pattern and Figure 7.16 reflects the current zoning for this area.

There are several constraints which will influence the ultimate development of this area. There are numerous rock outcroppings and sinkholes which may limit development and significantly increase development costs both for the installation of required utilities and for the construction of buildings. Access to the area is from Campbell Lane which has a limited right of way. In fact, the right of way width to the east of Shop Road is only 30 feet. Water and sewer are both available. The Public Works Department property yard with its industrially related activities is located in the heart of this area as is the City's only mobile home park.

A wide range of development proposals have previously been studied for this area ranging from clustered housing units to mixed use development including housing and offices. None has come to fruition, apparently because of the high development costs associated with this land.

FIGURE 7.15
EXISTING LAND USE
EAST LEXINGTON BLUFFS

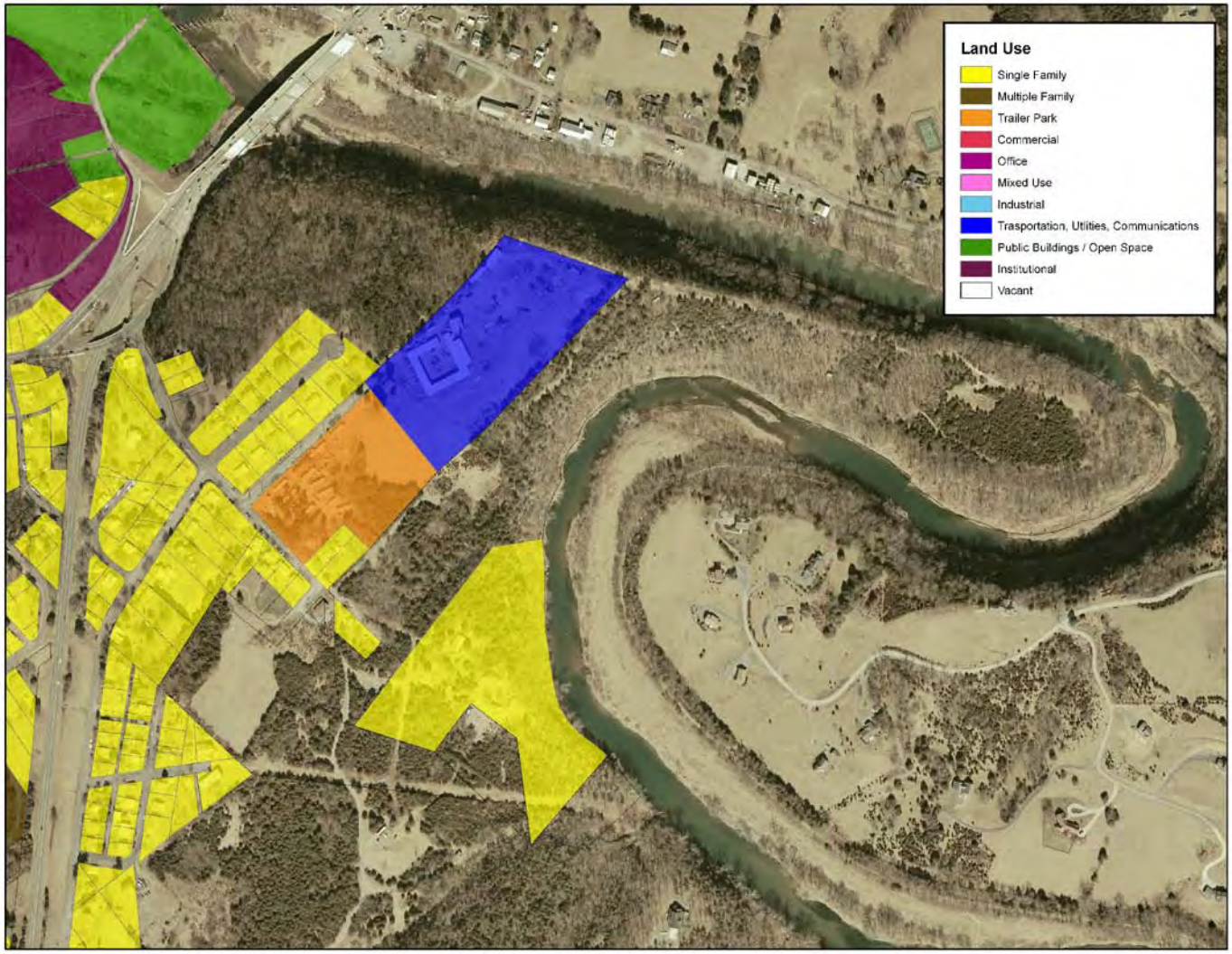


FIGURE 7.16
PRESENT ZONING
EAST LEXINGTON BLUFFS

Although there are significant development constraints, the area remains attractive because of its location overlooking the Maury River and the amount of vacant land it contains.
This area is being designated a "Special Planning Area" on the future land use map. This designation indicates that the City of Lexington encourages and will consider innovative development proposals and evaluate them on their specific merits. Conditional Rezoning, the use of the Planned Unit Development, or Conditional Use provisions of the zoning ordinance may well be utilized to implement an acceptable proposal.

OBJECTIVE: Designate the East Lexington bluffs area as a "Special Planning Area" to encourage innovative development proposals and encourage conditional rezoning, Planned Unit Development, or Conditional Use provisions of the zoning ordinance to encourage quality development

The South Main Street Commercial Area

This area along South Main and Waddell Streets offers great potential for additional commercial development, as well as possible redevelopment. The area is zoned C-3, Commercial District (General Commerce). See Figure 7.17. Portions are currently underutilized. As the greater Lexington area grows and prospers, this area could attract significant development and redevelopment interest, especially if the City facilitates and encourages it.

One site of specific interest is the five acre Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintenance yard located on Waddell Street. VDOT has indicated that they would like to relocate this facility outside of the City. This site has economic development potential for business or industry. The City should be prepared to acquire this land if it becomes available and to work with The Rockbridge Partnership, the area's economic development agency, to identify creative economic development proposals for this potentially valuable property

Redevelopment plans for the VDOT property or other property in this area should anticipate that the uses on nearby properties may also change as the economic potential of the area is realized. An overall urban design concept plan and design standards for new or rehabilitated buildings should be prepared by the City to enable integrated site design throughout this area. The City should also continue to invest in public improvements such as additional sidewalks and streetscape improvements to enhance the area and act as a catalyst for private investment.

OBJECTIVE: Designate the C-3 zoned area in South Lexington as a Special Planning Area to facilitate new construction and redevelopment that reflects the unique character of Lexington and creates a more pedestrian-friendly commercial area

OBJECTIVE: Develop a concept plan and design manual that portrays the intended character of the site design, buildings, landscaping and public improvements for this area

OBJECTIVE: Facilitate improvement in this area by continuing the entrance corridor beautification program, including improved pedestrian access between the commercial area, nearby residential areas, the Brewbaker Field recreation area and Maury River Middle School

FIGURE 7.17
PRESENT ZONING
SOUTH MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL AREA

The East Nelson Street Commercial Area

The City has worked with property owners in the East Nelson Street commercial area over the past several years to upgrade and improve the appearance and functionality of this important commercial area. These improvements were focused on three major components - increased landscaping both along the street and within parking lots, improved traffic and pedestrian flow and safety, and improved signage. The current zoning for this area is presented as Figure 7.18.

Improved traffic safety was achieved by reducing the number of curb cuts, improving their location, and providing interconnections between adjacent commercial areas wherever possible.

Pedestrian safety was enhanced by completing the sidewalk system along the street, installing pedestrian phases on the traffic lights, and creating pedestrian pathways within and between commercial establishments wherever possible. The numerous large pole signs were replaced with much smaller signs on monument type bases. Since this project was initiated, two older underutilized properties have been redeveloped for more intensive commercial activities and several other buildings have been rehabilitated and in some cases expanded. The City has also revised its zoning ordinance to require design review for all new and renovated buildings in order to ensure that new development is compatible with the unique historic and architectural character of this community. This project has involved not only significant new development but also working with business and property owners to undo that which was not appropriate for a City proud of its heritage, its appearance, and its exceptional quality of life.

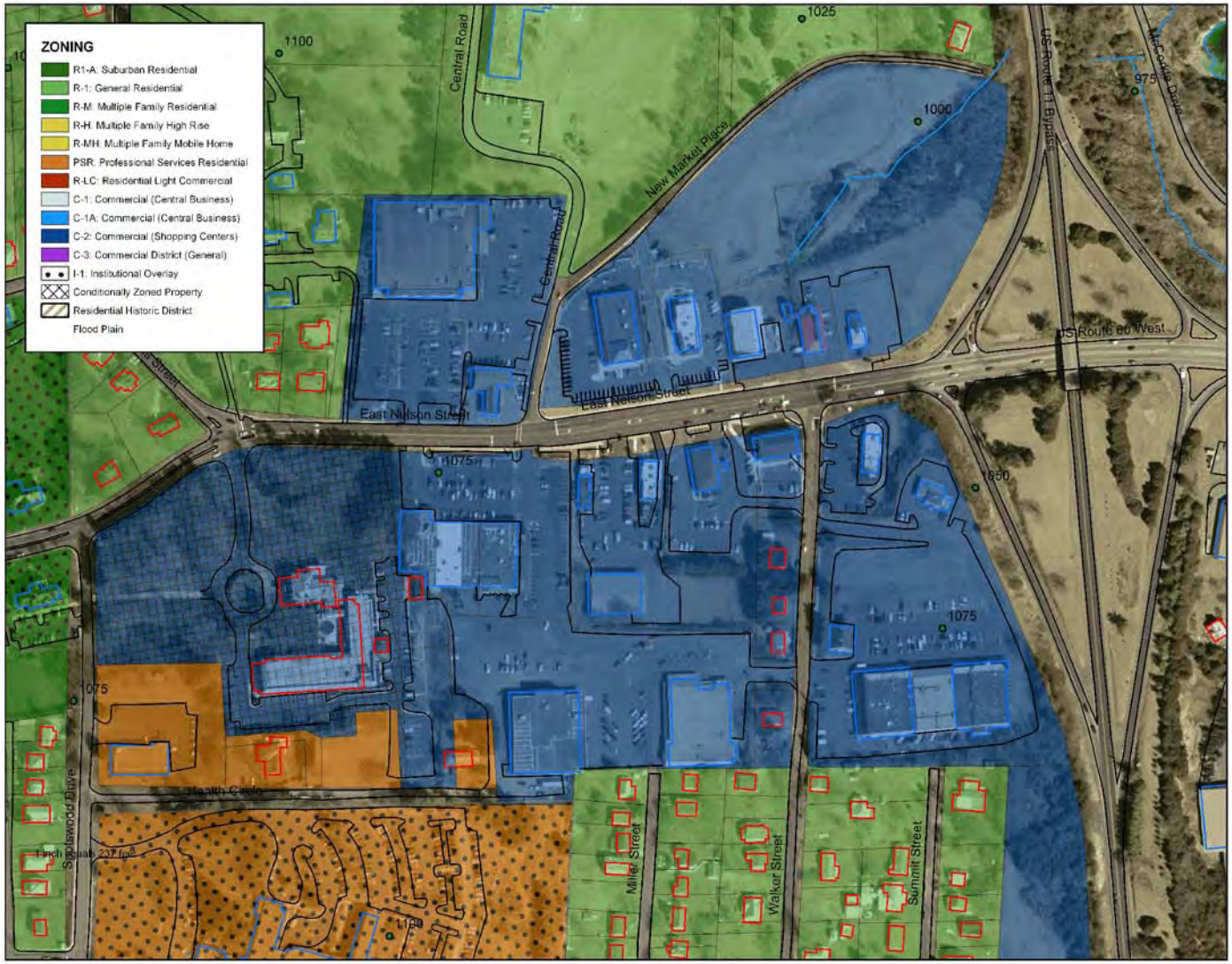
Recognizing that there will likely be additional development, as well as further redevelopment and expansion of underutilized parcels, the City should update its design plan for this area and develop a design manual to guide future development for the area. The focus of this effort would be to make this area an extension of the downtown reflecting a carefully considered 21st Century expression of our evolution as a town.

OBJECTIVE: Designate the C-2 zoned area along East Nelson Street as a Special Planning Area to facilitate new construction and redevelopment that reflects the unique character of Lexington and creates a more pedestrian-friendly commercial area

OBJECTIVE: Develop a concept plan and design manual which describes and illustrates the intended character of the site design, buildings, landscaping and public improvements for this area

Guiding new development and redevelopment in both of these commercial areas will enhance the desirability of adjacent land, facilitate additional positive economic development, and achieve compatible relationships with nearby residential areas. Their designation as Special Planning Areas also enables creative and innovative approaches to redevelopment that increase the opportunities to achieve the desired design objectives, as well as to maximize the economic return to the investor.

FIGURE 7.18
PRESENT ZONING
EAST NELSON STREET COMMERCIAL AREA



City owned property adjacent to the Rescue Squad building on Spotswood Drive

Several uses have been proposed for this property of approximately 2.1 acres shown in Figure 7-19. The Cemetery Advisory Board has recommended that this land be made available for the expansion of Stonewall Jackson Cemetery since it is estimated that the existing cemetery land will be exhausted in about five years. Other uses which have been proposed for this site are moderate density housing and offices, including those that are medically related.

One recommendation is that the site be utilized for a mixed income housing project with a percentage of the units made available to low- and moderate-income persons. Such a project would help the city address its affordable housing needs. A mixed use project to include both housing and offices has also been suggested. These would all seem to be viable alternatives because of the proximity of the property to both the Hospital and the downtown. All of these options would involve selling the property to a private developer who would be contractually obligated to construct a previously agreed upon project.

All of these alternatives would bring additional high value development to the City, add to the City's tax base and bring additional people into the downtown and East Nelson Street commercial areas. The City believes that there is sufficient land remaining on the hospital campus to respond to increased demand for medical offices and that this is the preferred location for such offices.

For these reasons, this Plan endorses the concept of taxable development on this site and recommends that low- and moderate-income housing be a part of the development of this property to help meet this area's increasing demand for affordable housing. The City should actively explore the possibility for creating a public/private partnership to facilitate making affordable housing a part of the development of this land.

OBJECTIVE: Enable private, taxable, residential development on the city-owned property adjacent to the Rescue Squad building on Spotswood Drive

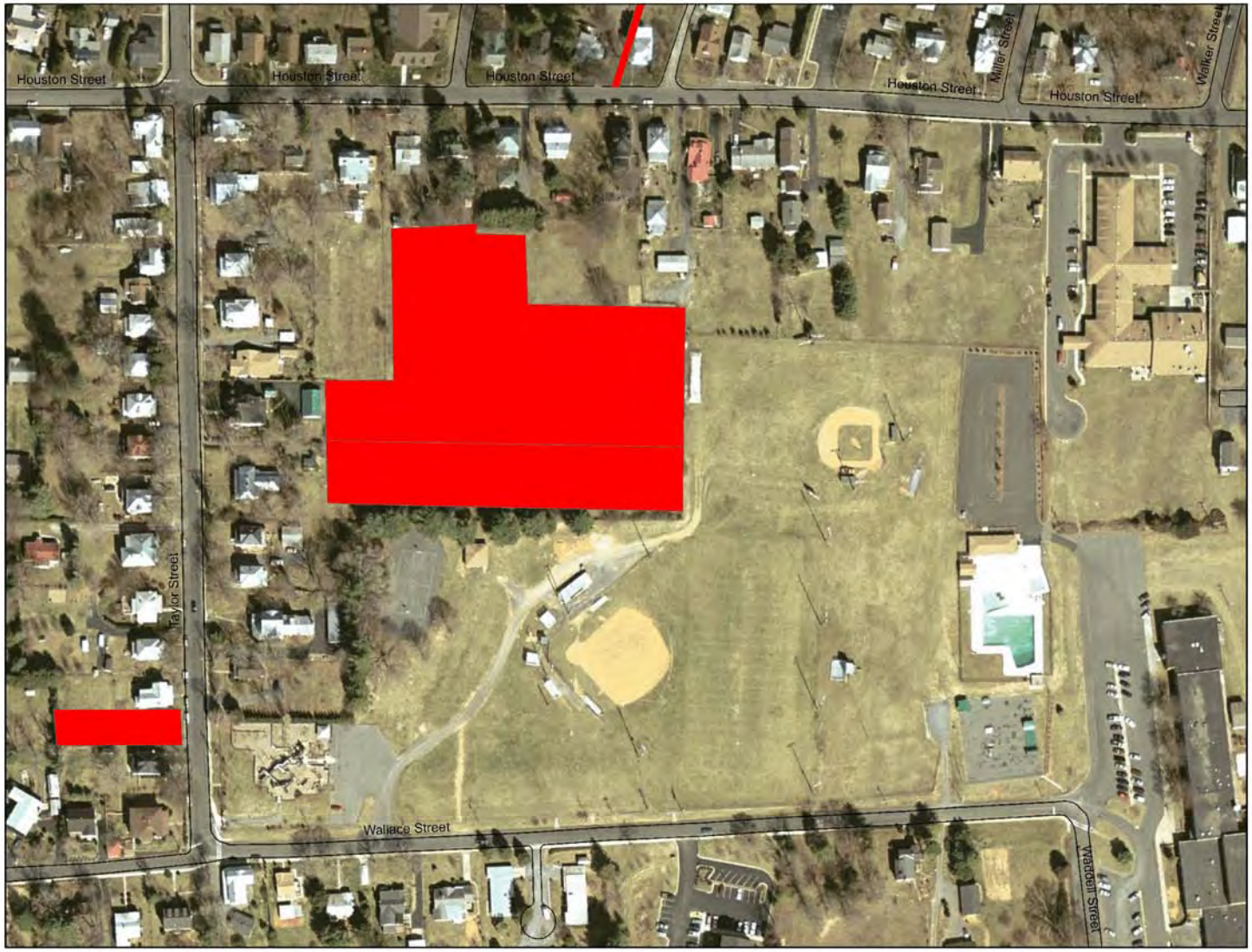
Vacant Land on the Interior of the Block adjacent to Brewbaker Field

There are two large lots on the interior of the block, immediately adjacent to Brewbaker Field, which are undevelopable because of their limited access to surrounding public streets. These lots are shown on Figure 7.20. These parcels would be valuable additions to Brewbaker Field. The City should be prepared to acquire these properties if they come on the market to allow for expansion of the park.

OBJECTIVE: Acquire additional interior parcels for the expansion of Brewbaker field if they become available to expand recreational facilities, as well as green space within the City

FIGURE 7.19
CITY OWNED PROPERTY ON SPOTSWOOD DRIVE

FIGURE 7.20
VACANT PROPERTIES ADJACENT TO BREWBAKER FIELD



VMI AND WASHINGTON AND LEE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The campuses of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute occupy significant portions of the City's total land area. Both are in prominent locations. Their students comprise over forty percent of the City's population. Their presence contributes significantly to the local economy.

Both W&L and VMI have significant plans for the further development of their campuses. It is extremely important for the City to establish and maintain effective communications with the planners and decision makers at both of these institutions to ensure the compatibility of this development with the surrounding residential and commercial areas of the City.

OBJECTIVE: Maintain open communications with the administrations of both Institutions to ensure that their development plans are presented to the City and the community and that the City has an opportunity to participate in and comment on development decisions

Virginia Military Institute

VMI has developed, and is presently working to fund and implement, a Master Plan which will result in dramatic changes along North Main Street and Woods Creek. It may also have continuing impact on the residential communities located around it. As an agency of State government, VMI is exempt from regulation by the City of Lexington; however, the Superintendent and his staff have kept City Council, the Planning Commission, and City staff apprised of these plans. It is important that this dialogue continue.

There are three areas of primary concern about these plans. These are parking, the impact of the present post and its proposed expansion on surrounding residential neighborhoods, and protection for, as well as active restoration of Woods Creek as it flows through the post.

Much of the land along North Main Street now proposed for new construction was initially acquired by VMI to provide parking for the athletic facilities located along the street including Cameron Hall and Alumni Field. VMI has developed small surface parking lots on some of this land, but almost all of the parking for major athletic events, including football and basketball games and other events conducted in Cameron Hall, is provided along North Main Street, the Parade Ground and other parking lots at VMI. Because this parking is inconvenient to the spectators, parking expands along Diamond and Randolph Streets into the residential neighborhoods located there. This makes it difficult for residents to find parking close to their homes and adversely effects the quality of life in these areas.

The City believes that addressing the present parking deficiency and providing parking adequate to support future development is a critical component of the overall development of the North Main Street area of the VMI post. Without it, the present parking pressures in this area will get significantly worse as new buildings are added without adequate parking to

support them. Additional parking along residential streets to the east will occur, further degrading the character of these residential communities. VMI has proposed two new surface parking lots adjacent to North Main Street, as well as parking under the proposed field house and aquatic center to address this problem.

These proposals may well solve the day to day parking needs of the post, but they will not provide adequate parking for peak events. VMI opens up the parade ground for parking at these times, but because of the convenience of the residential streets to the facilities in which these events are held, many people still choose to park there. The City and VMI are beginning to explore ways to cooperatively address this problem. Limiting access to the streets entering the Diamond Hill neighborhood combined with increased publicity and signage directing people to parking provided on post is one possibility. Limiting parking to residents of these streets during peak events combined with publicity and signage is also being considered. VMI has begun the use of parking shuttles from lots outside the City for major events as another means to address this problem.

OBJECTIVE: Work cooperatively with VMI to assure adequate on-post parking is provided so that new development does not negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Work cooperatively with VMI encourage those who attend peak events held at VMI facilities to park in areas provided by the Institute rather than in the adjacent residential neighborhood

It is also critical that VMI maintains reasonable transitions between its post and the residential neighborhoods to the south and east, because the institutional scale of its buildings and the level of activity associated with them is fundamentally different than the scale and residential qualities of these communities. Of specific concern is the proximity between the proposed Aquatic Center and Massie Street, a residential street with houses on both sides of it.

A second area is Dorman Lane which runs parallel to a parking lot associated with Alumni Field. VMI owns two vacant lots on the south side of Dorman Lane across from a parking lot associated with Alumni Field. These lots abut houses on both Carruthers and Randolph Streets. It would be damaging to these houses and their neighbors if these lots were converted to an institutional use or made into a parking lot. The City recommends that these lots be donated to Threshold, the City's affordable housing program, so that they can be converted to private residential use and provide a reasonable transition between the athletic fields and the adjacent neighborhood. Such residential use is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. A second option would be to sell the lots to a private individual.

OBJECTIVE: Assure appropriate transition between post buildings and nearby Neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Encourage VMI to donate the two VMI owned lots on Dorman Lane to the city's Threshold Project for affordable housing

As the Natural Features chapter of this plan describes in some detail, the City has an active multi-faceted strategy to preserve and enhance the health of Woods Creek which runs along the edge of North Post through VMI. The development which VMI has undertaken in this area has seriously impacted the creek. In fact, the creek runs in an underground pipe beneath the existing athletic fields for almost one thousand feet. Much of the remaining length of the creek is significantly degraded with a very limited riparian buffer which contains many alien species and is bounded by concrete on both banks below the barracks. VMI's plans for the Woods Creek area call for the addition of a riparian buffer and removal of alien species. Protection and enhancement of the creek is, and should remain, an active part of the North Post development plan to ensure that it is not further degraded by construction activities and that restoration and enhancements are incorporated into planning for this area.

OBJECTIVE: Urge VMI to make protection and enhancement of Woods Creek an active part of the North Post development plan

The current Master Plan proposes that eight additional properties along North Main Street be acquired by the Institute "to improve the functionality of the Post and the beauty of this approach to the Institute and the City of Lexington." The City has stated its strong objections to these proposed acquisitions. All but one of these properties are private residences. Several have historic value. The remaining property is owned by the City and presently houses the Rockbridge Area Relief Agency's food pantry. They are designated for these uses on both the Zoning Map and the Future Land Use map included in this chapter.

The City can protect this area as well, or better, than VMI. The City has created two Residential Historic Districts which require that the Architectural Review Board approve any demolitions within these districts. Creating a third district to encompass these properties would provide additional assurances to VMI that the existing character of this entrance will not be significantly altered.

The City will continue to oppose any additional land acquisition by VMI. Additional expansion would further erode the City's tax base, remove additional houses from an already limited housing stock, and could lead to the demolition of additional historic structures.

OBJECTIVE: Strongly encourage Virginia Military Institute to remain within its present boundaries to preclude any further loss of its limited housing stock, as well as the loss of limited taxable land

The City of Lexington and the Rockbridge Partnership (the area's economic development arm), have strongly encouraged the development of a high quality technology park in the Lexington area to respond to the changing nature of the state and national economy. Such a facility would be designed to attract the growth sectors of the economy such as service, information, finance and technology. One of the most attractive sites for such a facility would be to incorporate it into the overall development plan for Lackey Park. Discussion with VMI should continue to encourage their endorsement and support for such a facility. More will be said about this recommendation in the Economy chapter of this plan.

The Superintendent of VMI and his staff have expressed their willingness and desire to maintain open communication with the City concerning their development proposals. Although, by State law they are not required to comply with local zoning and building regulations, they have indicated their willingness to seek the City's comments on future development plans. The City should ensure that this dialogue continues. Although VMI has done an excellent job of informing the City of its current Master Plan, as well as its efforts to implement that plan, the City was not contacted nor involved during the development of the plan. The City believes that the earlier it is involved in any such planning process, the more effectively we can articulate our perspective and identify what we believe to be opportunities, as well as challenges. This plan continues to emphasize the importance of the City being given the opportunity to participate as early as possible in the VMI planning process.

Washington and Lee University's Preliminary Master Plan

Washington and Lee University (University) has retained a consulting firm to prepare a new Master Plan for its campus. According to University officials, the focus of this plan will be inward to the existing campus. They do not anticipate any further expansion of the University beyond its present boundaries. The University has identified five critical components to this new plan. Each of these is described below with the planning guidelines and issues which have been developed for each one.

The Academic Core: The capacity of the front campus is limited by the need to preserve its historic character and landscape. The University has focused on creating capacity by moving non-academic activities out of this area. They intend to renovate the buildings in the core to make them more usable. They have retained an architect to study the buildings along the Colonnade and devise strategies for upgrading them without sacrificing their historic integrity. Finally, they will look for opportunities to create more in-fill space, the strategy that was used to connect the two science buildings with an atrium in 1991.

Residential Life: The University is assessing how it might improve, replace, and expand its student residences to improve the residential life experience for its undergraduate and law students.

Athletic Facilities: The University believes that something will have to be done about the oversized and rusting stadium seating, as well as improving the experience for both athletes and spectators there. Doremus gymnasium is also dated and difficult to navigate. In the long term, they believe that a new indoor pool and field house will be needed. The University is interested in working cooperatively with other local institutions to develop a shared acquatics facility to conserve land and minimize operating costs.

The "Back 40": This refers to the entire back campus, which has seen a lot of ad-hoc change in the past. Current uses include the law school, athletics, student housing, parking, natural reserve areas for scientific study and conservation, and preservation of archaeological resources. The University intends to carefully identify areas where change can occur, areas that need to be preserved, and areas that need restoration and improvement. One promising idea is to better explain and display the 18th Century campus that was centered around Liberty Hall. A number of these buildings have been located and excavated in the past, but few people are aware that this was an entire, bustling campus between the 1780's and the 1820's, not just one building. The University is considering an alumni facility, faculty housing, additional parking for sports events, and the relocation of its Physical Plant building into this area.

Strengthening Campus Boundaries Entrances and Circulation: This will include how the University addresses its perimeters and entrances and if new pedestrian or vehicular circulation patterns are needed.

The fact that the University, VMI and the City are all focusing on long term planning creates a unique opportunity for this community. As the University architect stated in a presentation to the City Planning Commission:

> "I think it's exciting that Washington and Lee, VMI, and the City are all advancing new plans and ideas at the same time, and that all are prepared to share and modify those plans and ideas to make a cohesive plan for the entire city. I'd like to see one plan drawn that included us, rather than stand-alone plans that have to have translations made between them. With proper coordination, the University's plans can help the city accomplish its objectives, and represent opportunities rather than threats."

Washington and Lee's present position is that they do not anticipate further expansion of the University beyond its present boundaries. The focus of the Master Plan, now in the initial stages of development, will be inward to the existing campus according to University officials.

The City strongly endorses this perspective. Expansion of the University beyond its present bounds would place additional stress on a small City with over half of the property within its limits already tax exempt. The City will continue to encourage Washington and Lee to look within its present holdings for future growth rather than acquiring additional land. Not only would additional expansion further erode the City's tax base, removal of viable commercial activities from an already limited downtown is harmful to the health and vigor of this vital commercial district.

OBJECTIVE: Strongly encourage Washington and Lee to program new construction within the present University boundaries to preclude any further loss of local business and industry, as well as the loss of limited taxable land

The second issue which remains a source of ongoing dialogue between the City and the University is parking. The construction of the parking garage has alleviated much of the previous unmet need for on campus parking; however, recently W&L planners acknowledged that the use of the garage is nearing capacity. The University continues to explore management strategies to utilize available parking more efficiently and effectively. They have added over 40 additional parking spaces on campus since the completion of the parking garage and continue to seek locations to construct additional surface parking on campus.

They have also been exploring the possibility of jointly constructing a parking structure with Virginia Military Institute at the site of a current surface lot used jointly by the two institutions. Such a garage would serve the north side of the W&L campus, a portion of the campus presently underserved for parking, as well as the new leadership center and the Marshall Foundation at VMI. The City believes that this proposal has significant potential to address the parking problems of both institutions.

Another more limited parking problem is the current W&L policy precluding students who live within one-half mile of the campus from using campus parking between 8 am and 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Students from the Davidson Park area who do not wish to walk or ride a bike drive and then find an on-street parking space as close as possible to the University. Since parking on these streets serves the downtown commercial area, student cars make it more difficult for patrons of these businesses, as well as others living in apartments and houses in or near the downtown, to find convenient parking. It is, therefore, in the City's interest to encourage Washington and Lee University to address the problems created by this parking policy. This can be accomplished either through the provision of additional parking on campus or through the adoption of additional and more restrictive parking regulations for these students.

The City should also ensure that the new University's Master Plan evaluate the current parking situation and make specific proposals for addressing the parking requirements of the campus. In the interim, Planning Commission and City Council should ensure that parking is addressed in all development proposals submitted to the City for review and approval.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to work with W&L to explore ways to address their parking needs including the construction of additional on campus parking facilities and enhanced management strategies

Communication and cooperation between the University and the City are excellent at all levels. This cooperation should serve as the basis for continued dialogue and cooperation as the problems and issues identified above are addressed and resolved.

Cooperation between the Two Institutions

W&L and VMI continue to explore means by which they may jointly address current problems and meet future needs. Areas being discussed include parking, possible joint use of facilities including the proposed VMI aquatic center, and improved interconnections between their campuses. The City believes that these initiatives have the potential to efficiently, effectively and creatively address issues of mutual concern including those which impact the City. The City will continue to encourage and support these cooperative efforts.

CITY INPUT INTO COUNTY LAND USE DECISIONS IN AREAS AFFECTING THE CITY

Much of the future growth in the greater Lexington area is going to be outside the boundaries of the City, in areas for which land use decisions will be made by Rockbridge County. The nature and extent of this growth will inevitably impact the City.

The County's Land Use Plan emphasizes a growth management scheme which discourages random, scattered development in favor of a more compact, coherent, and sustainable pattern. Development is encouraged in the urban fringes of Lexington, Buena Vista and Glasgow "where growth can be accommodated by existing public infrastructure".

While the City supports the concepts incorporated in this strategy, we are becoming increasingly concerned about the impact of development surrounding the City on the quality of life of Lexington residents. This is especially true for those whose houses front on residential streets which provide access to the downtown and to the shopping areas along Route 11 to the north of the City. Houston Street, Ross and Enfield Roads, Jackson Avenue and the streets which run between Jackson Avenue and Main Street are all experiencing increasing through traffic as a result of development in the County. These are narrow streets with limited rights of way and houses set fairly close to the street with limited front yards. There is no ability to widen these streets without severely impacting the character of these residential neighborhoods. In fact, the City is seriously studying the possibility of installing "traffic calming" measures in an effort to reduce both the speed and the number of cars using these streets.

For these reasons, the City strongly requests that the County carefully evaluate the extent of the Suburban Planning Area which surrounds the City of Lexington and more fully evaluate the impact of growth within this area on residential neighborhoods within the City.

As the transportation chapter will describe in more detail, we also request that as they evaluate proposals for new development, consideration be given to ways to redirect traffic from overtaxed streets to those better able to carry increased volumes of traffic, such as Thornhill Road and Nelson Street. An excellent example of this strategy are the plans for constructing a new collector street connecting Ross Road with Route 251 as part of the development of the land which lies between these two roads beyond the Country Club. Protection of possible rights of way for either new roads or the expansion of existing roads should also be made a part of development approvals.

OBJECTIVE: Collaborate with the county on ways to develop road connections for existing and new development that channel traffic onto existing or new County collector roads to minimize increased traffic flow through Lexington's residential neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Urge State Legislators to pass laws which enable regulations which require the timing of development as to be concurrent with road improvements necessary to handle both direct and cumulative impacts

The County Land Use Plan includes a strategy to "encourage regional cooperation in developing planning goals, strategies, zoning regulations and permitting decisions with Lexington and Buena Vista, especially in the County "growth belt" around the two cities, in order to promote land use compatibility." The State enabling legislation requiring the establishment of planning commissions specifically authorizes cooperation between planning commissions "to coordinate planning and development among localities. Planning commissions may appoint committees and may adopt rules to affect such cooperation."

The City also remains concerned about the nature and extent of the development in its entrance corridors. Within the City, significant investment has been made to address both aesthetic and functional concerns including traffic, pedestrian circulation, size and number of signs, architecture, and landscaping. The County has adopted Corridor Overlay Districts for both of these corridors.

The City is concerned that the 60 East corridor is presently zoned for commercial development from the City limits to the I-81 interchange. The County Future Land Use map shows the Suburban Planning Area extending only to the top of the hill to the east of the City. It is important to the economic vitality of the City to maintain attractive entrances from the Interstates into the City's downtown. A commercial strip from the City limits to I-81 along East Midland Trail would seriously degrade the character of this corridor. It also disburses commercial activity out yet another of the major corridors leading into Lexington.

The recommendations contained in the Entrance Corridors and Interstate Interchanges Plan prepared jointly by the City and County envisions clustering commercial activity at more intensive nodes rather than having it extend linearly along these corridors. We urge the County to consider preserving this corridor from intensive commercial development by revising their Zoning Ordinance to reflect the limits shown on the Future Land Use map.

One of the City's significant recent initiatives is the cooperative effort to restore and enhance Woods Creek and its watershed as described in detail in the Natural Features chapter. Much of the watershed, including its headwaters, is in Rockbridge County in one of its significant growth areas around the Country Club. As development continues, Rockbridge County must aggressively enforce measures to address both the quantity and the quality of stormwater runoff associated with new construction. A stormwater management ordinance addressing both of these aspects has been drafted and is proposed for adoption both by the City and the County. Adoption is recommended by the Final Report of the South Lexington Joint Planning Committee.

The City's ability to influence these decisions is limited by its ability to persuade County decision-makers of the validity of the City's concerns and recommendations. The City must continue to make efforts to develop more effective dialogue and cooperation with Rockbridge County. Growth and development in this area are a result of the assets and attributes of both the City and the County. Both benefit when either is protected or enhanced.

FUTURE LAND USE AND SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS

More than any other section of the Comprehensive Plan, the land use plan will have a visible effect on the future of the City. As required by State law, the land use plan must include "the designation of areas for various types of public and private development, business, industrial, agricultural, conservation, recreation, public service, floodplain and drainage, and other areas."

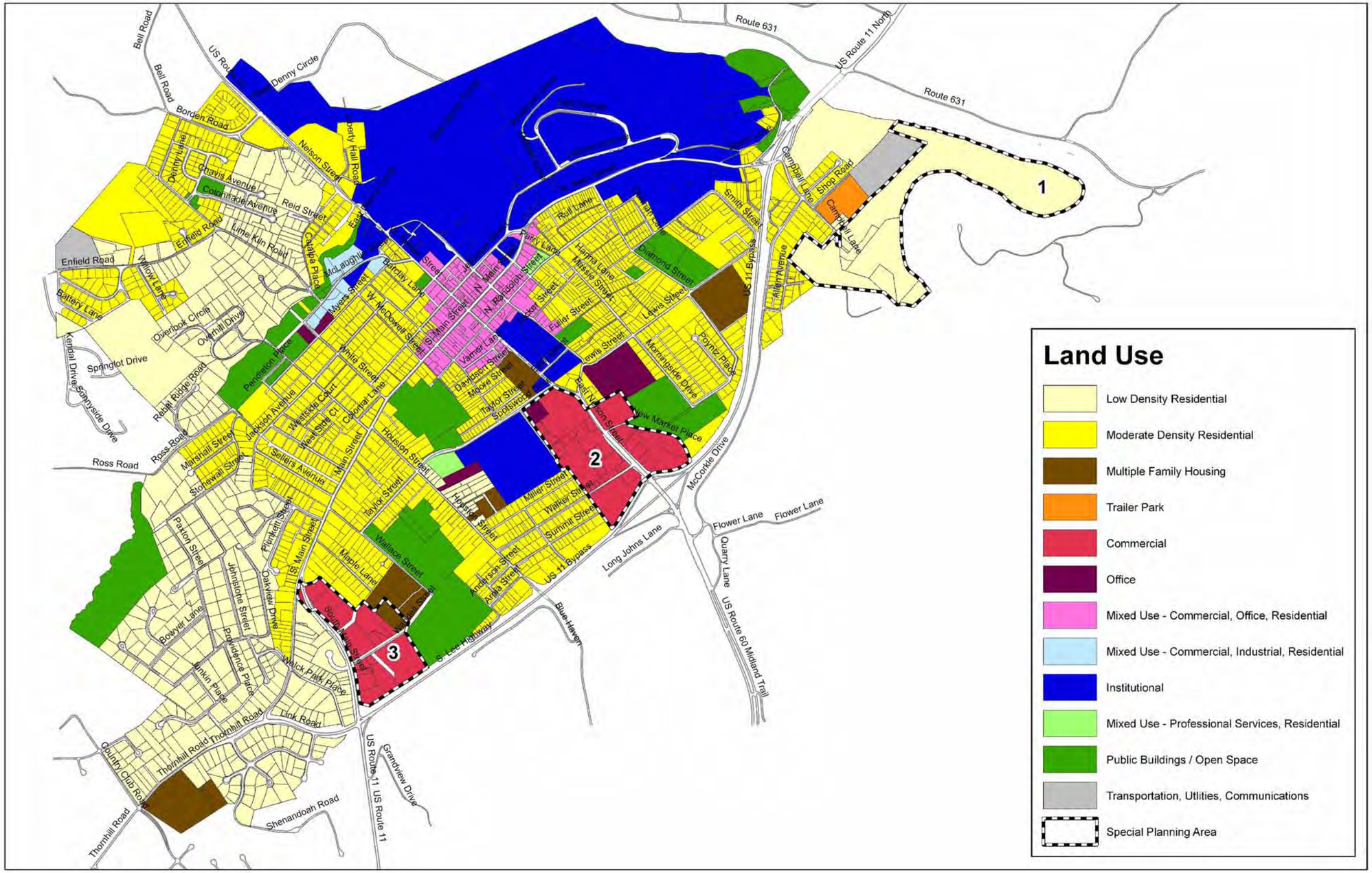
The determination of appropriate future land uses was made only after the physical and location characteristics of tracts of land throughout the City were evaluated. The following elements were considered: existing land use and zoning for the property, as well as surrounding property; accessibility; and physical constraints to development. The application of these criteria to the areas of the City for which changes are recommended have been described throughout this chapter. The Future Land Use map, Figure 7.21, was prepared to graphically reflect these recommendations.

The Planning Commission and City Council will give careful consideration to the land use designations contained in this Plan when making future land use decisions and recommendations. Future land use decisions which are inconsistent with the recommendations will not be supported unless this document is first amended.

In addition to the designations contained on the Future Land Use map, several areas are designated as special planning areas. These are designated with a number which corresponds with the descriptions presented below.

1. **East Lexington Bluffs** - The development opportunities and constraints associated with this area of the City have been discussed previously in this chapter. The areas is mostly vacant or underdeveloped. Because of its location, adjacent to the river on three sides and the steep bluffs, it is a unique and attractive area; however, access is limited and utilities have not been extended into this area. For these reasons, this area has been designated a Special Planning Area to indicate that the City will consider innovative development proposals for this land and evaluate them on their specific merits. Conditional rezoning, planned unit development or conditional use provisions may be used to implement an attractive development proposal.

FIGURE 7.21
FUTURE LAND USE



2. **East Nelson Street commercial area** - The City has worked with property owners in this area over that past several years to upgrade and improve the appearance and functionality of this important commercial area. Recognizing that there will likely be additional development in this area, as well as further redevelopment and expansion on underutilized parcels, the City should update its design plan for this area and develop a design manual to guide future development for the area. The focus of this effort should be to make this area an extension of the downtown, reflecting a carefully considered 21st Century expression of our evolution as a town.

3. **South Main Street commercial area** - This area along South Main and Waddell Streets has great potential for additional commercial development, as well as possible redevelopment especially if the City facilitates and encourages it. The City should continue to invest in public improvements such as additional sidewalks and streetscape improvements to enhance the area and act as a catalyst for private investment. An overall urban design concept plan and design standards for new and rehabilitated buildings should be prepared to facilitate integrated site design throughout the area.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The City's land development regulations which include the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision regulations should be reviewed and updated and the zoning map should be amended to implement the recommendations contained in this chapter.

Three mechanisms have been recommended extensively in this chapter as means to implement its recommendations. These are described in more detail below.

Planned Unit Development

Planned Unit Development, or PUD, permits more flexible development practices than conventional zoning by permitting design flexibility from such traditional siting requirements as setbacks, side yards, and height restrictions. Units may be clustered together to preserve additional open space or important natural features, conserve land, and hold down utility costs. Instead of building houses uniformly over an entire tract, the developer of a PUD project may build at higher densities in certain areas and preserve open space or natural features in others. This technique can provide housing variety and amenities that can only be provided in a project planned as an entity rather than lot by lot. The PUD process is intended to encourage high quality and innovation in development. PUD may benefit both the developer and the City through careful and creative site planning. PUD may also be advantageous for smaller sites, as well as for in-fill sites by allowing efficient and beneficial use of a particular site. The objective of Planned Unit Development is not simply to allow exceptions to otherwise applicable regulations but, rather, to encourage a higher level of design, amenities, or preservation of critical natural features than is likely to be achieved utilizing the requirements of the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

The PUD provisions in many localities also authorize a mix of housing types, both single- and multiple-family within a project. Others encourage a variety of land uses, by permitting certain nonresidential uses to be incorporated into a project. The present City PUD provisions do not permit either of these.

The City’s present Planned Unit Development regulations should be reviewed and improved to more effectively articulate and promote their intended purposes. Specifically, the statement of intent for the PUD provisions should be strengthened and more precise evaluation criteria for proposed projects developed to encourage more effective utilization of this important planning tool.

OBJECTIVE: Review and update the Planned Unit Development regulations to encourage more effective utilization of this important planning tool

Conditional Use Permits

Conditional use permits are required for uses which, because of their character, may or may not be appropriate for a particular location. These uses are specified as conditional uses in the various zoning districts contained in the Zoning Ordinance. They must be authorized by City Council after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission and are evaluated in terms of their impact on the surrounding neighborhood. City Council may deny a request for a Conditional Use Permit if it does not conform to standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance concerning the effects of the proposed use on the community and the surrounding neighborhood. Conditional use permits allow the Planning Commission to recommend and City Council to impose conditions on a development proposal to reduce the effects of the use on adjacent properties or to achieve desired development characteristics.

Conditional Zoning

Conditional zoning is a procedure authorized by the Code of Virginia which allows localities to accept conditions voluntarily offered or "proffered" by an applicant for rezoning. These conditions are commitments not required by the zoning ordinance for the proposed use. Conditions offered by an applicant and accepted by the locality become part of the rezoning and are legally binding on the property unless changed by a later rezoning.

Proffers should be encouraged for any rezoning proposal to assist in the implementation of this plan. Proffers and conditions should be encouraged to preserve existing natural features, encourage planned development, retain stream valleys as open space, provide a variety of housing types, provide housing for the elderly, and include pedestrian accessibility and significant landscaping. In all cases, conditions and guidelines should support the uniqueness of Lexington and its quality of life.

Possible Creation of a Housing and Redevelopment Authority

The Code of Virginia authorizes local governments to create a Housing and Redevelopment Authority when confirmed by a local referendum. Oversight of a local Authority would be by a board appointed by City Council. Funds for its operation would be provided by the City. Powers granted to the Housing and Redevelopment Authority include the ability to assemble land for development or redevelopment purposes, the creation of public/private partnerships to implement development or redevelopment plans, and the ability to acquire funds for this development including, specifically, the construction of affordable housing.

This chapter suggests the possibility of development or redevelopment of some of the significant sites remaining in the City by utilizing partnerships between the public and private sectors. A Housing and Redevelopment Authority may be the best way to implement these recommendations. The Housing chapter describes increasing problems with the private

sector's ability to provide adequate "work force" housing because of rising land and construction costs. Again, partnerships between government and the private sector may be the best means to address this problem, and a Housing and Redevelopment Authority the best way to create and manage these partnerships. Regional Authorities composed of more than one unit of government area also permitted in the Commonwealth. A joint City/County Authority may well be an effective way to address regional housing problems.

It may be in the City's interest to seriously explore the feasibility and advantages of creating a Housing and Redevelopment Authority in the upcoming years to provide an effective tool for addressing these problems and responding to future opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The underlying theme of this Comprehensive Plan is the importance of the unique and special qualities of the City of Lexington and the surrounding area. Land use is one of the most visible means by which the City can ensure these qualities are maintained and enhanced. This chapter is a guide by which the City and the development community can base decisions consistent with achieving these ideals. To be effective, the recommendations must be implemented through a variety of means including policies, regulations, and administrative processes. The implementation of many of these recommendations will require changes in the City's land development regulations. In addition, future actions by the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals and City Council are crucial to the implementation process. This chapter and this plan should provide guidance for future land use related public decisions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: Encourage well conceived and planned land uses which recognize and amplify the City's unique small town character and which add to the City's tax base

GOAL: Preserve and enhance the City's residential neighborhoods as attractive, desirable places to live

OBJECTIVE: Ensure the establishment of appropriate transitional areas between commercial uses and lower density residential uses

OBJECTIVE: Identify vacant land with development possibilities and potential redevelopment areas and encourage development patterns which will be beneficial to the City both economically and aesthetically

OVERALL LAND USE GOAL: Encourage well conceived and planned land uses which recognize and amplify the City's unique small town character and which add to the City's tax base

OBJECTIVE: Review the present Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to ensure that its provisions and boundaries are consistent with the character of existing residential neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Ensure the establishment of appropriate transitional areas between commercial uses and lower density residential uses

OBJECTIVE: Identify vacant land with development possibilities, areas with potential for in-fill development and potential redevelopment areas and encourage development patterns which will be beneficial to the city both economically and aesthetically

OBJECTIVE: Designate the East Lexington bluffs area as a "Special Planning Area" to encourage innovative development proposals and encourage conditional rezoning, Planned Unit Development, or Conditional Use provisions of the zoning ordinance to encourage quality development

OBJECTIVE: Designate the C-3 zoned area in South Lexington as a Special Planning Area to facilitate new construction and redevelopment that reflects the unique character of Lexington and creates a more pedestrian-friendly commercial area

OBJECTIVE: Develop a concept plan and design manual that portrays the intended character of the site design, buildings, landscaping and public improvements for this area

OBJECTIVE: Facilitate improvement in this area by continuing the entrance corridor beautification program, including improved pedestrian access between the commercial area, nearby residential areas, the Brewbaker Field recreation area and Maury River Middle School

OBJECTIVE: Designate the C-2 zoned area along East Nelson Street as a Special Planning Area to facilitate new construction and redevelopment that reflects the unique character of Lexington and creates a more pedestrian-friendly commercial area

OBJECTIVE: Develop a concept plan and design manual which describes and illustrates the intended character of the site design, buildings, landscaping and public improvements for this area

OBJECTIVE: Enable private, taxable development on the city-owned property adjacent to the Rescue Squad building on Spotswood Drive

OBJECTIVE: Acquire additional interior parcels for the expansion of Brewbaker field if they become available to expand recreational facilities, as well as green space within the City

OBJECTIVE: Establish regulations which require that City approval be obtained for the demolition of any building within the City of Lexington

OBJECTIVE: Review and update the Planned Unit Development regulations to encourage more effective utilization of this important planning tool

OBJECTIVE: Maintain open communications with the administrations of both Institutions to ensure that their development plans are presented to the City and the community and that the City has an opportunity to participate in and comment on development decisions

OBJECTIVE: Work cooperatively with VMI to assure adequate on-post parking is provided so that new development does not negatively impact surrounding neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Work cooperatively with VMI to encourage those who attend peak events held at VMI facilities to park in areas provided by the Institute rather than in the adjacent residential neighborhood

OBJECTIVE: Assure appropriate transition between post buildings and nearby neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Encourage VMI to donate the two VMI owned lots on Dorman Lane to the city's Threshold program for affordable housing

OBJECTIVE: Urge VMI to make protection and enhancement of Woods Creek an active part of the North Post development plan

OBJECTIVE: Strongly encourage Virginia Military Institute to remain within its present boundaries to preclude any further loss of the City's limited housing stock, as well as the loss of limited taxable land

OBJECTIVE: Strongly encourage Washington and Lee to program new construction within the present University boundaries to preclude any further loss of local business and industry, as well as the loss of limited taxable land

OBJECTIVE: Continue to work with W&L to explore ways to address their parking needs including the construction of additional on campus parking facilities and enhanced management strategies

OBJECTIVE: Collaborate with the county on how to devise road system connections that channel traffic onto existing or new collector roads and minimize increased traffic flow through Lexington's residential neighborhoods

OBJECTIVE: Urge State Legislators to pass laws which enable regulations which require the timing of development as to be concurrent with road improvements necessary to handle both direct and cumulative impacts

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.

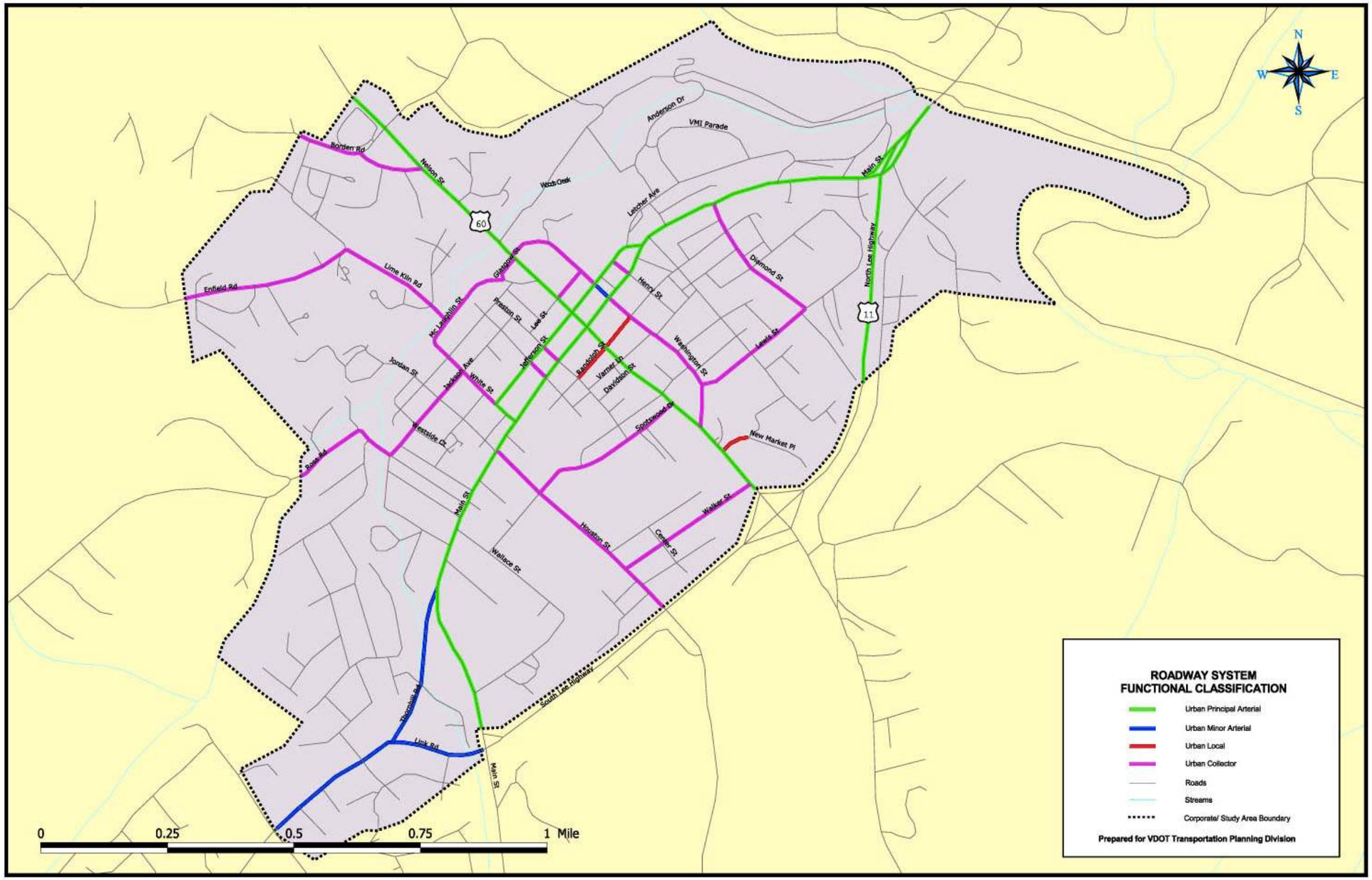
Minor Arterial - These roadways interconnect and supplement the principal arterial system with a greater emphasis on land access and a lower level of traffic mobility. They provide intra-community service as well as connecting rural collectors to the urban street system. Thornhill Road and Link Road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

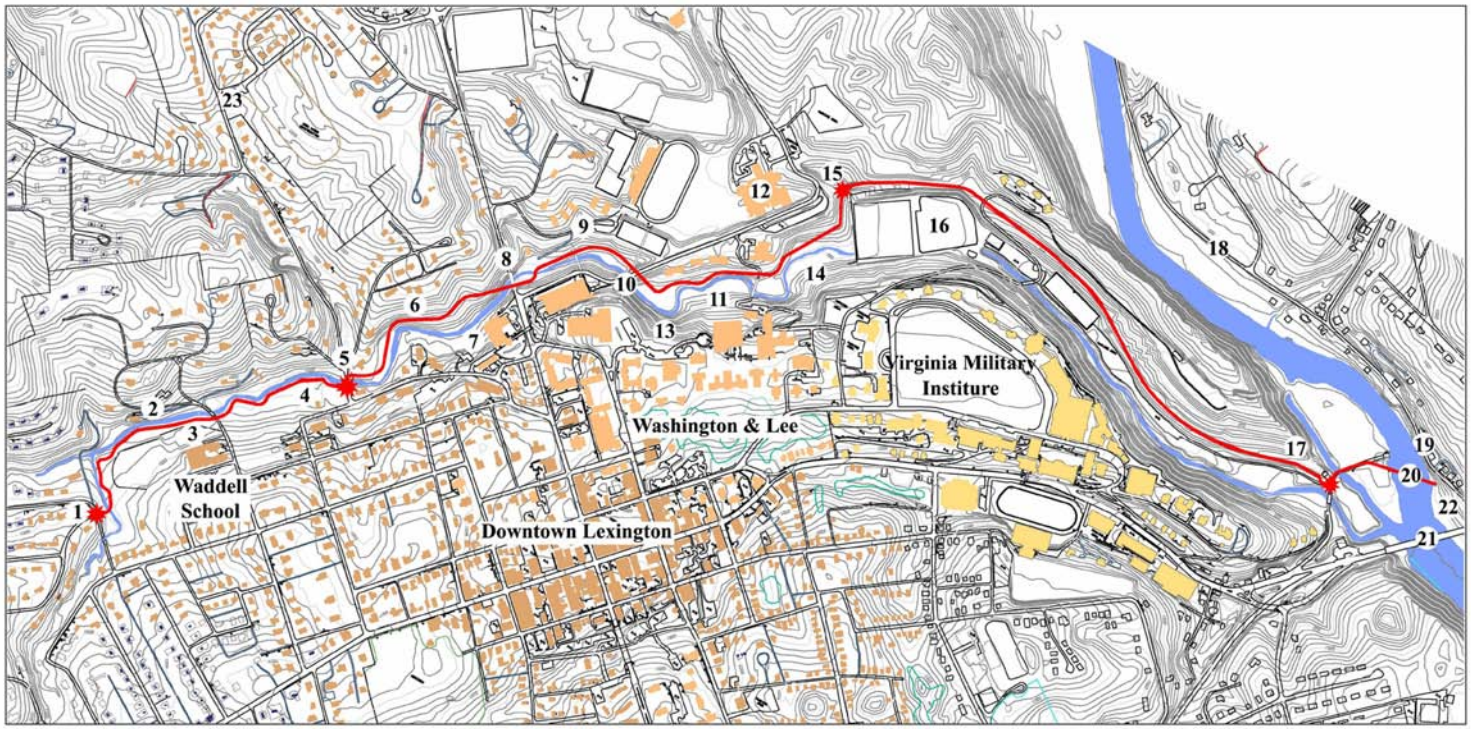
- The Woods Creek trail - a 2.4 mile walking trail along Woods Creek through the heart of Lexington, extends from Waddell Elementary School , through the campuses of Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute to Jordan's Point Park on the banks of the Maury River. A detailed map 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 **Trail Length: 2.1 miles**

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
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

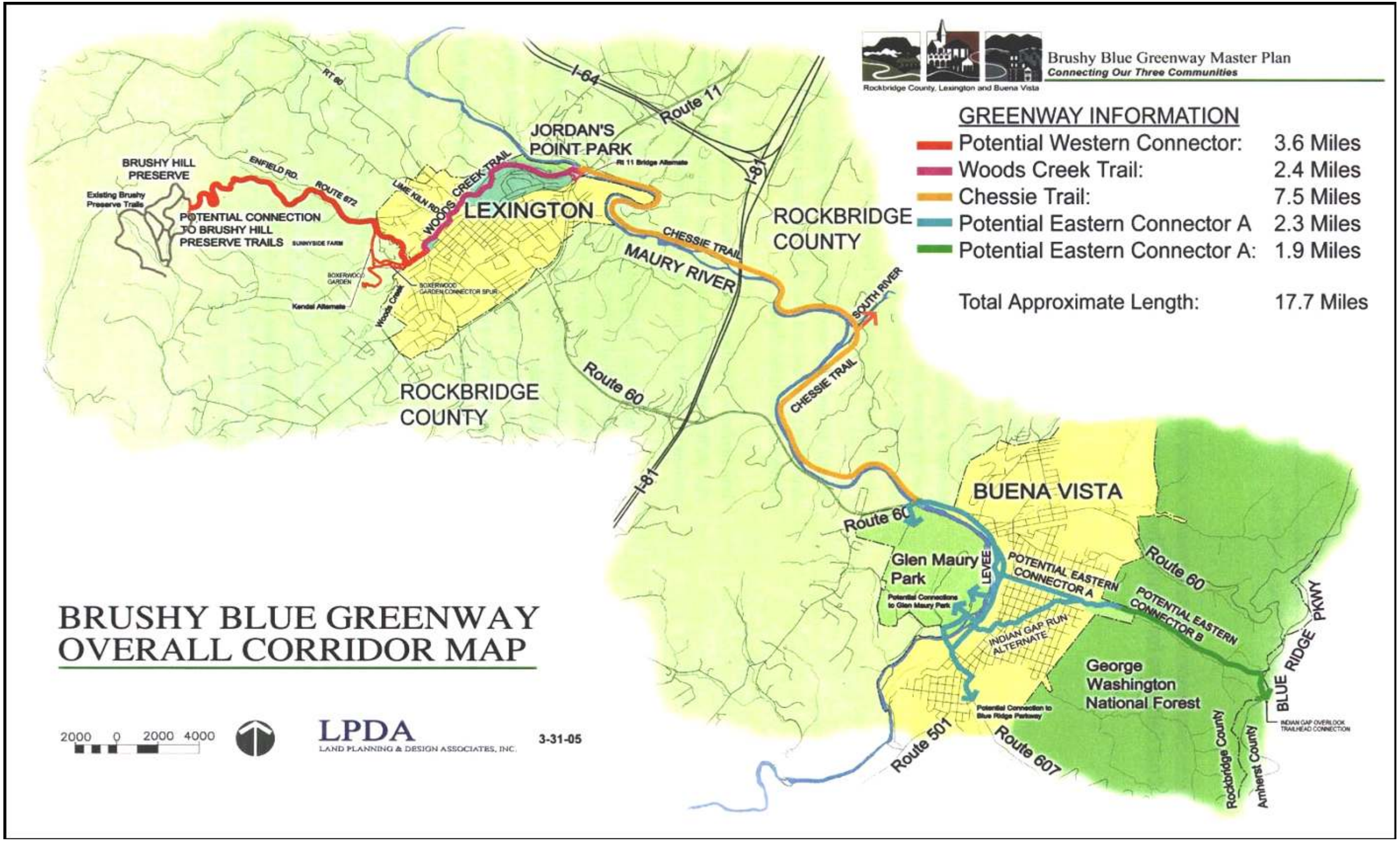
The Brushy Blue Greenway is a vision for interconnecting the existing trail systems located in Rockbridge County, Lexington and Buena Vista - from the Brushy Hills walking trails on the west to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Appalachian Trail to the east. The Brushy Hills trails, the Woods Creek trail, 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 been expanded to create the entire greenway corridor

Other Trails
The 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.

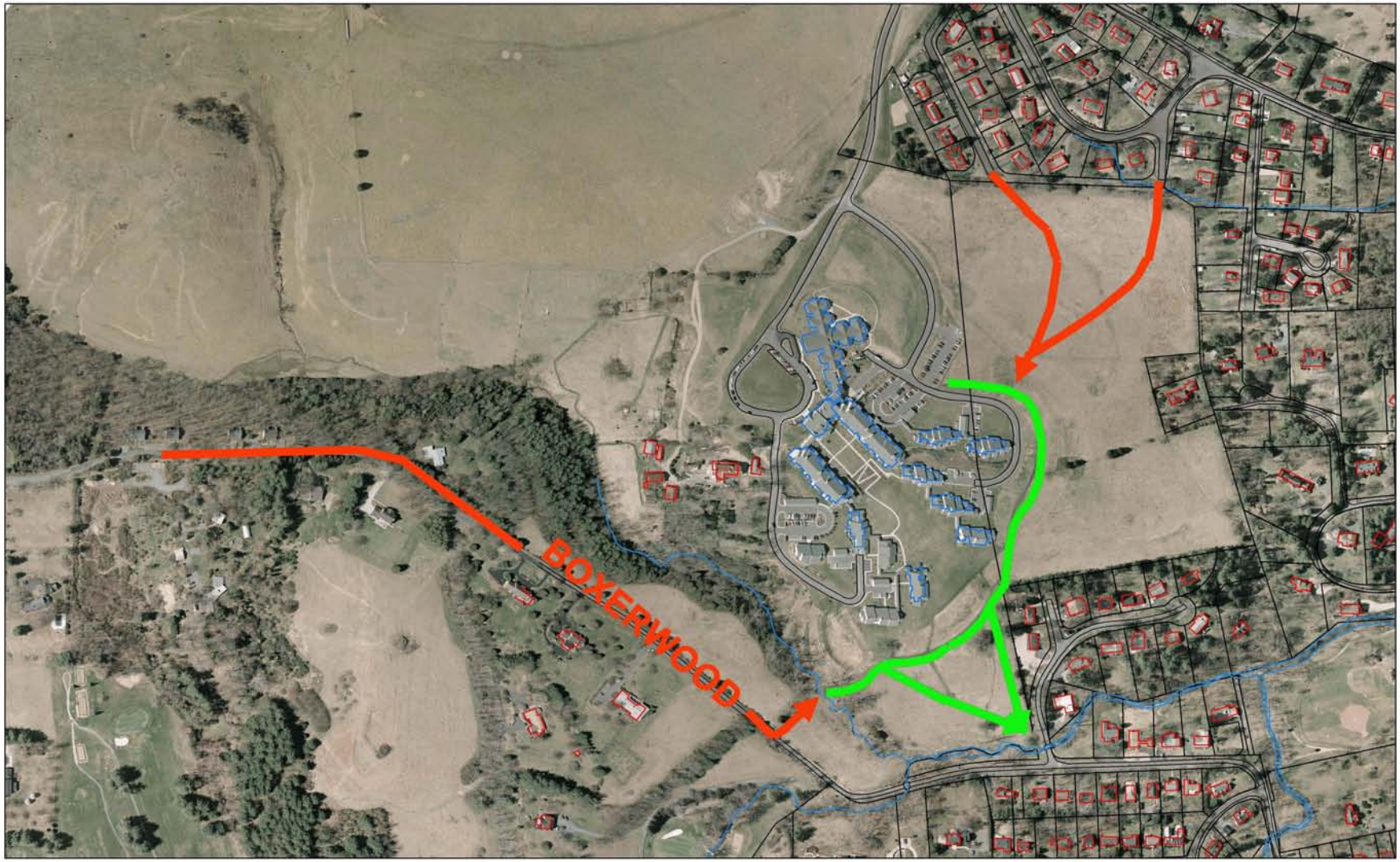
Priority Projects

- 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

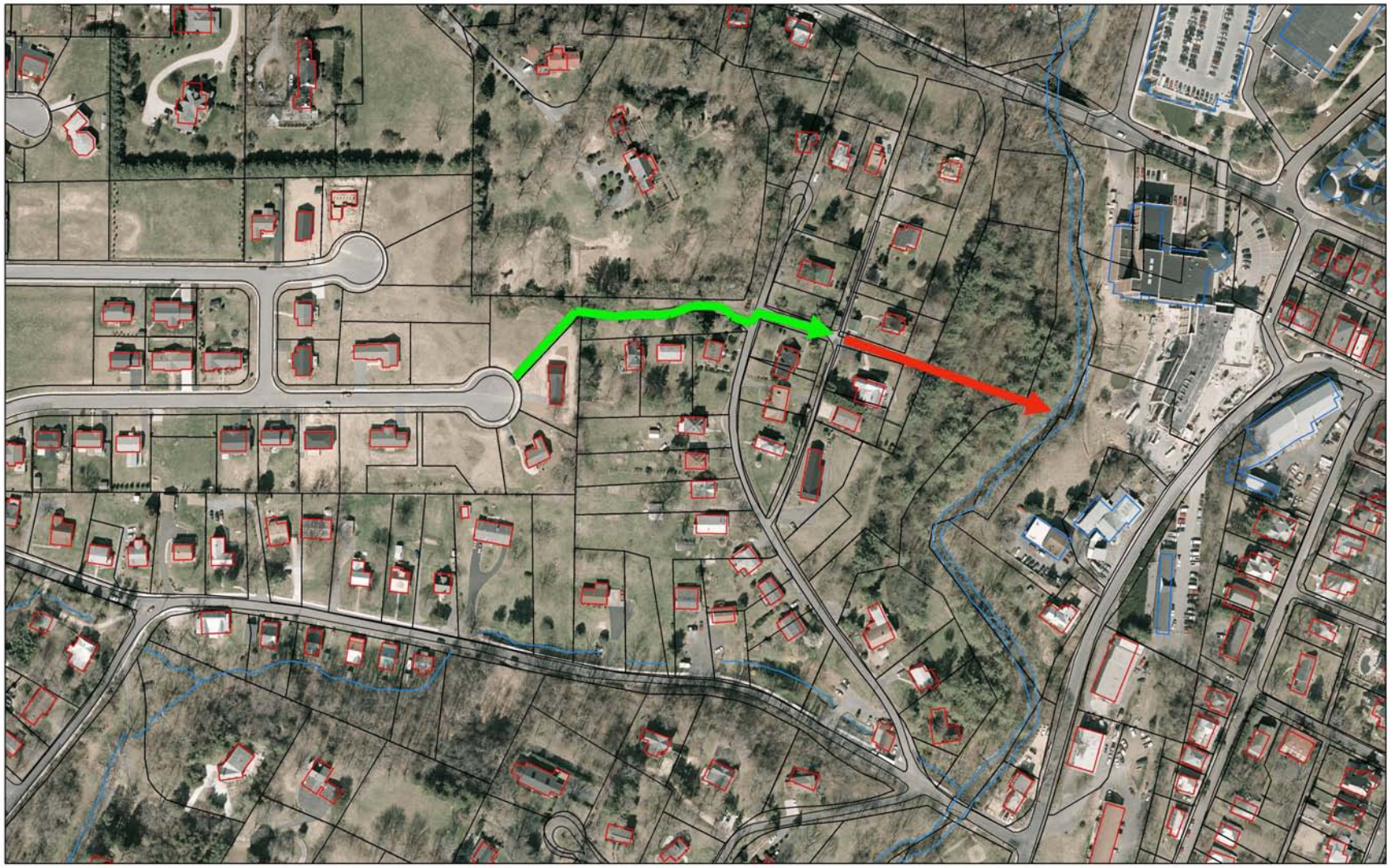
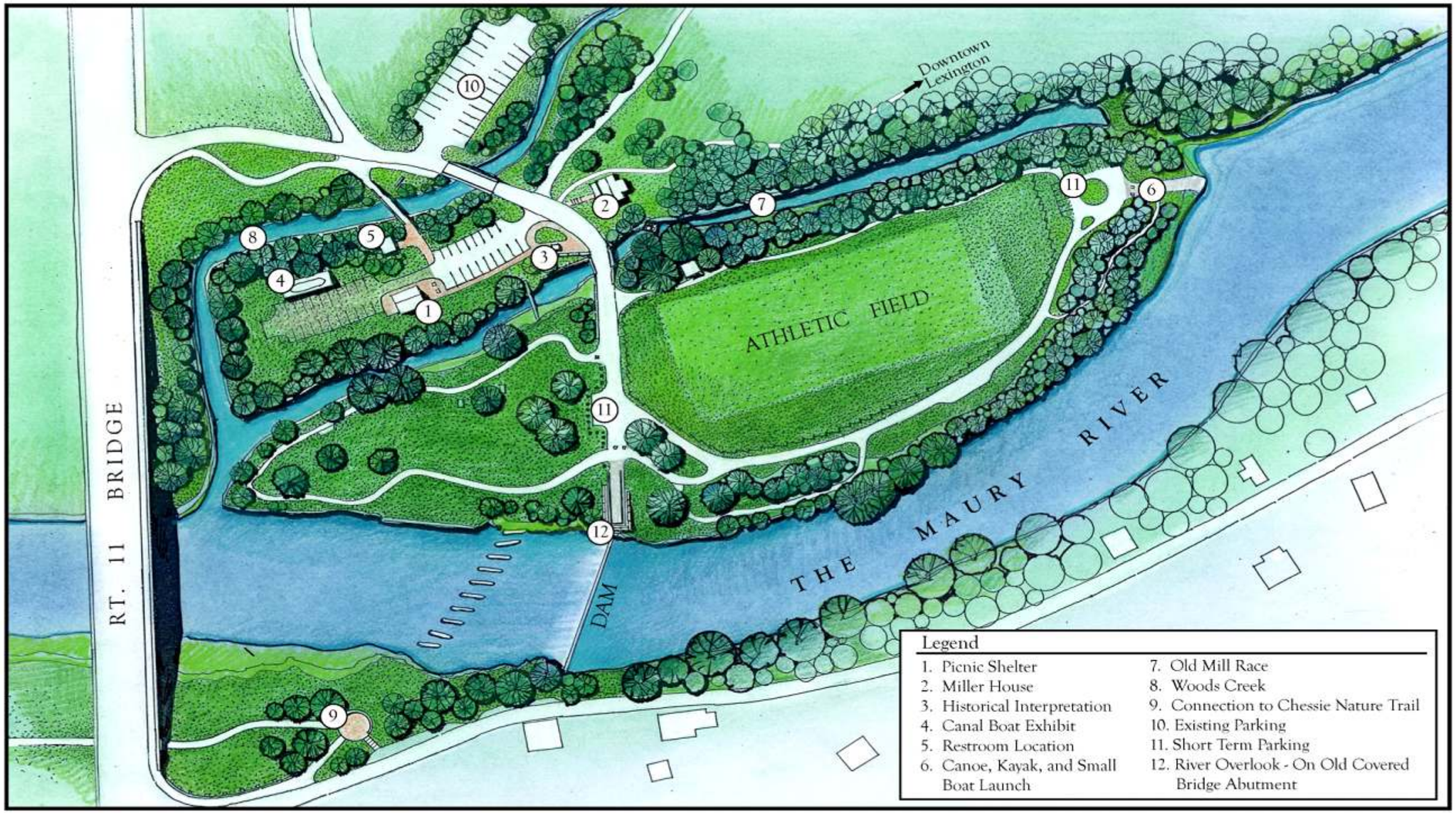


FIGURE 8.8
PATHWAY RECONNECTING THE WOODS CREEK AND CHESSIE TRAILS



Jordan's Point Park - Masterplan October 25, 2006

City of Lexington, Virginia

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.

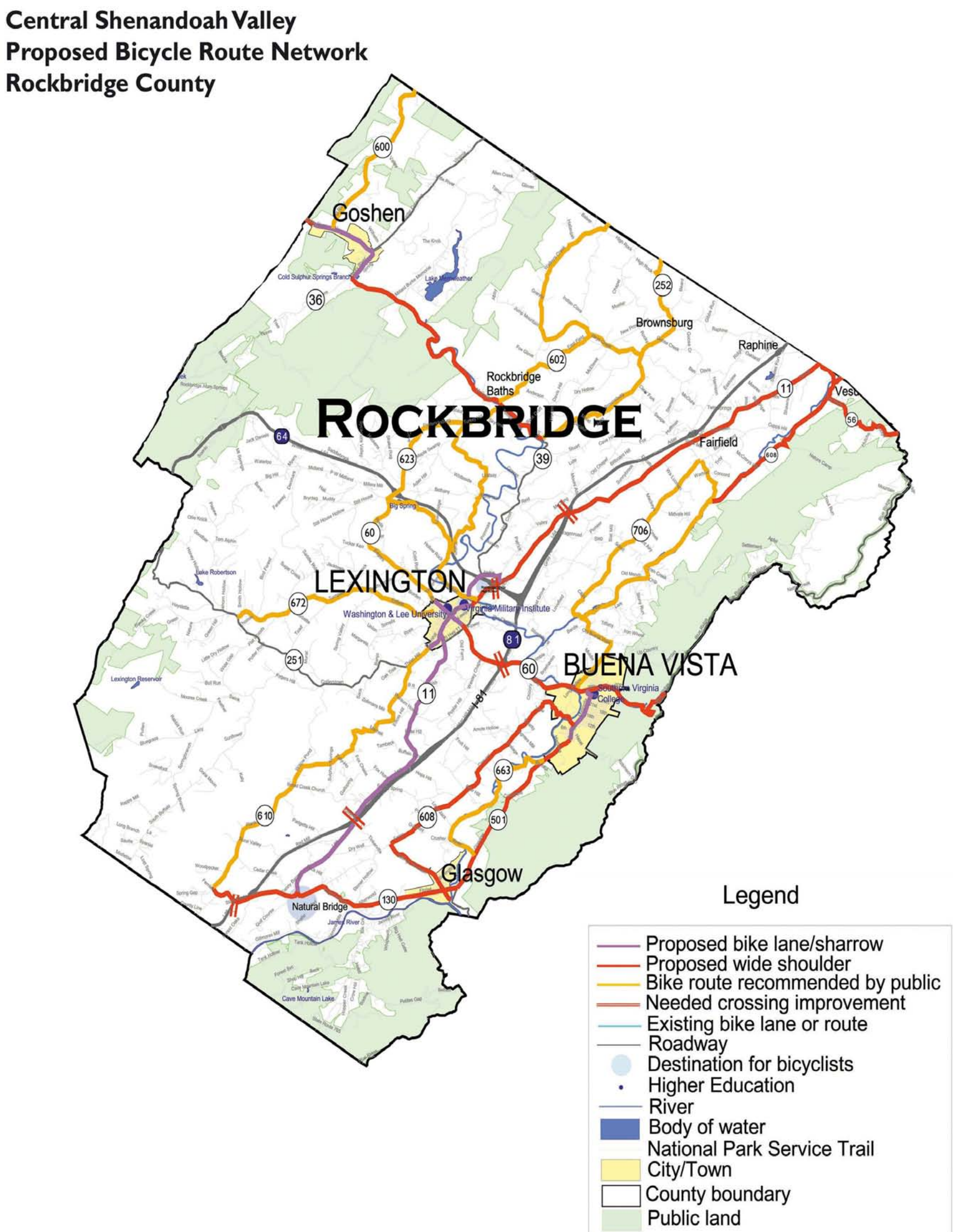
At present, thanks to the age of the City, its many narrow streets and limited rights of way, and extensive use of streets for automobile parking, Lexington lacks safe routes for bicycles within the City and especially within the downtown. The very limitations that make Lexington dangerous for bicyclists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



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.

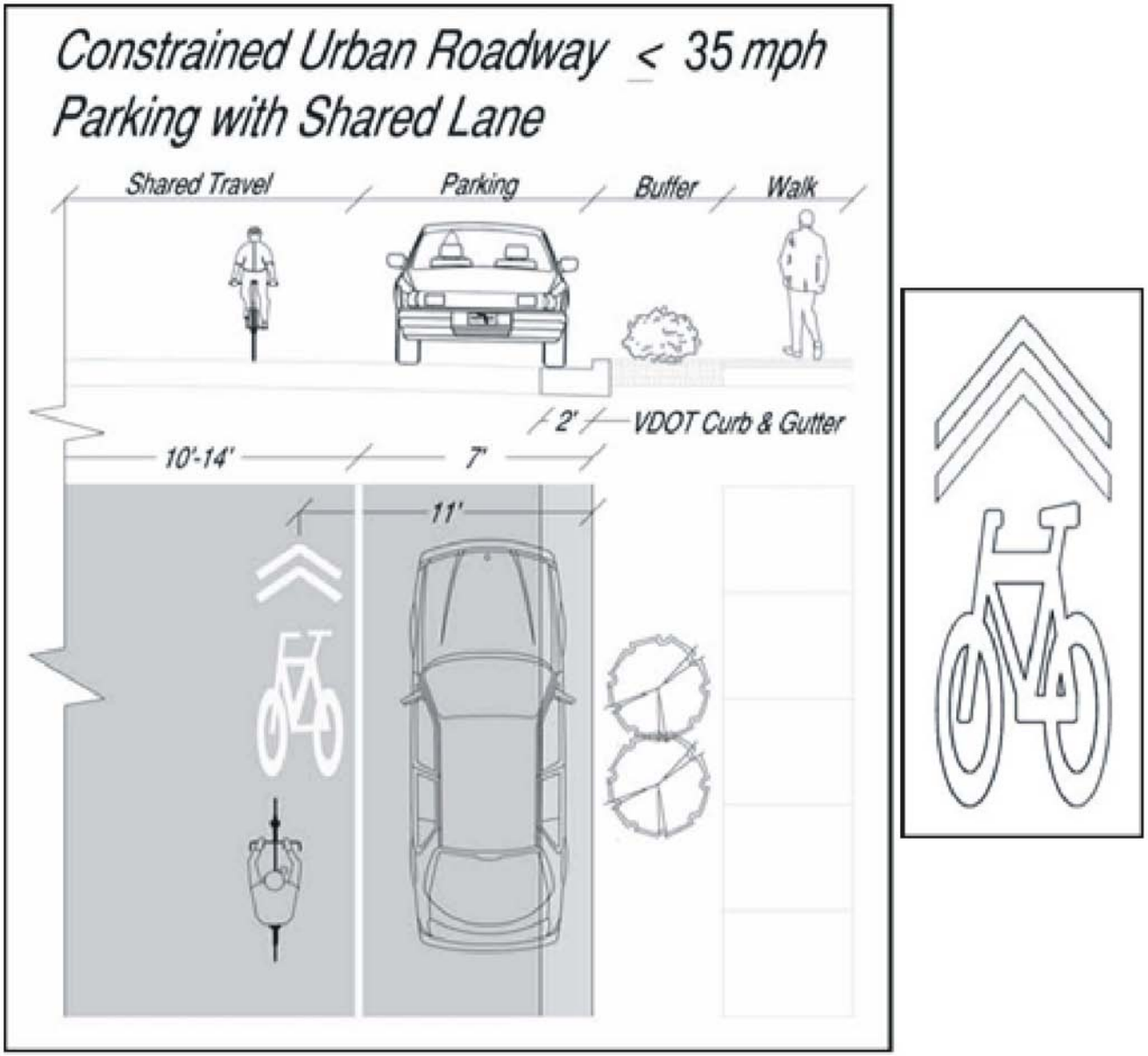
A bicycle route within the city could also connect Lexington with other cities and towns, via Route 11, which runs from Shenandoah County, through Lexington, to Natural Bridge. Route 11 would be a powerful attraction for bicycling tourists, as it connects many of the region's tourist destinations. The 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 disbursal 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 supported 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

TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
8.1	Design Standards for Residential Subdivision Street with Curbs and Gutters Virginia Department of Transportation	8-41
8.2	Design Standards for Residential Subdivision Street with Shoulders and Ditches Virginia Department of Transportation	8-41
8.4	Frequent Accident Locations	8-43

ATTACHMENT	TITLE	PAGE
8.1	Summary: City of Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-42

FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
8.12	2001 Average Daily Traffic Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-47
8.13	2010 Average Daily Traffic Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-48
8.14	2020 Average Daily Traffic Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-49
8.15	Existing and Anticipated Deficiencies Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-50
8.16	Recommendations Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan	8-51

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

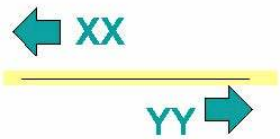
The *Lexington 2020 Transportation Plan* (the 2020 Plan) was completed by the Virginia Department of Transportation in 2003. The 2020 Plan includes a traffic engineering study that evaluated the transportation system in Lexington and recommendations for transportation improvements "to best satisfy existing 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), 11am 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.

<u>Recommendations for immediate action:</u>

- 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

<u>Existing deficiencies:</u>

- 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

<u>Additional deficiencies anticipated by 2010:</u>

- 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

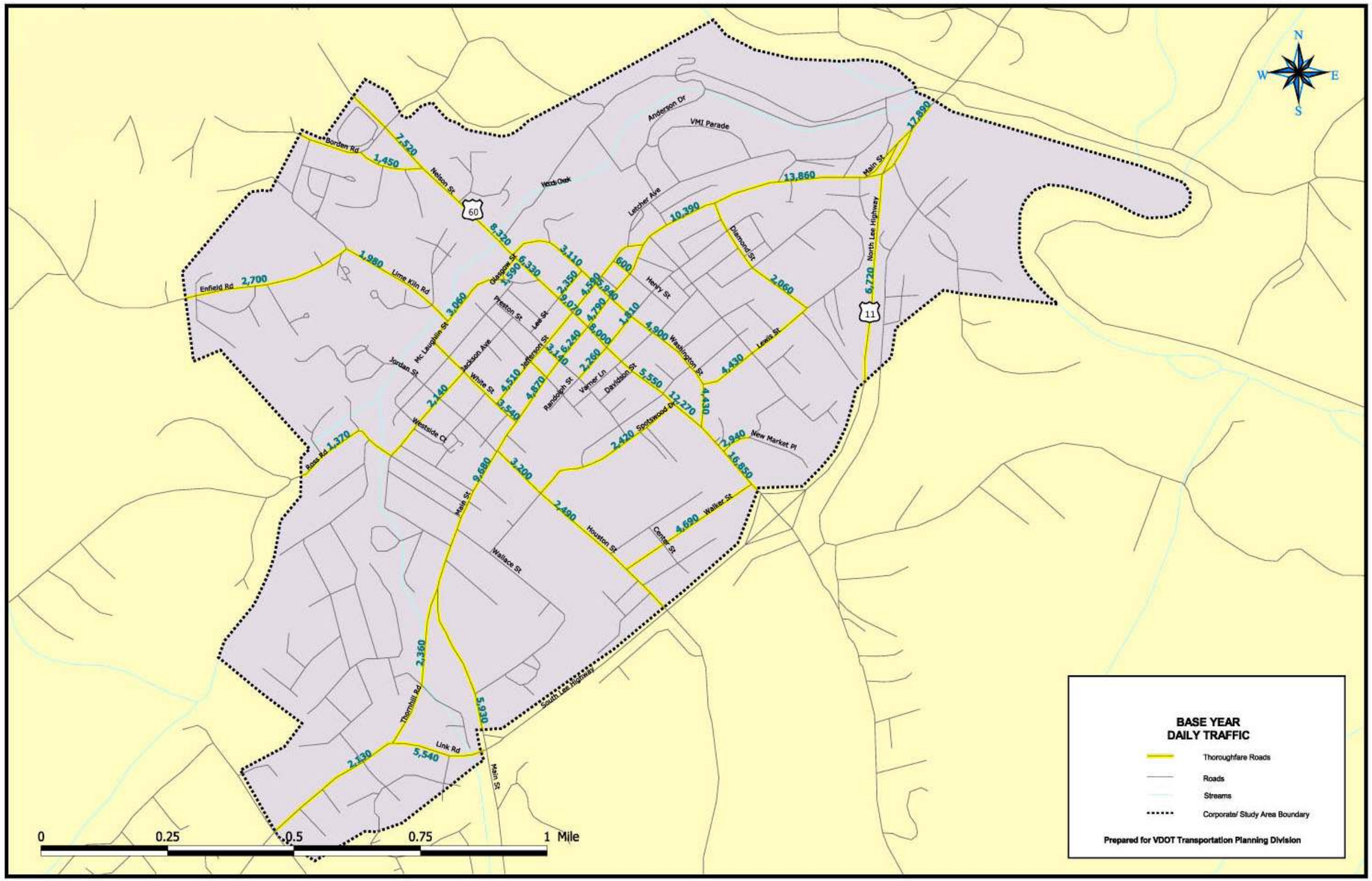


FIGURE 8.13
2010 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

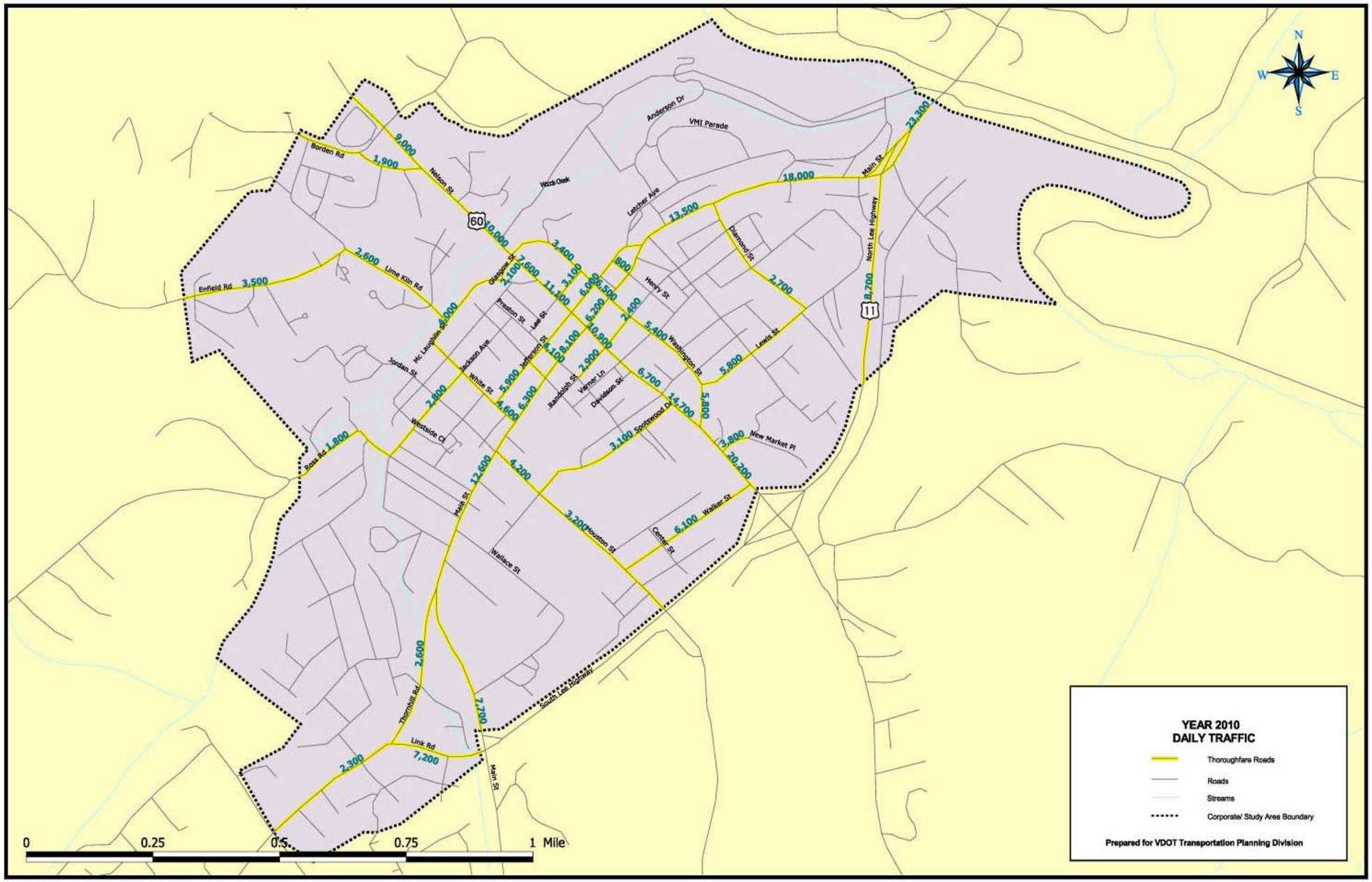


FIGURE 8.14
2020 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

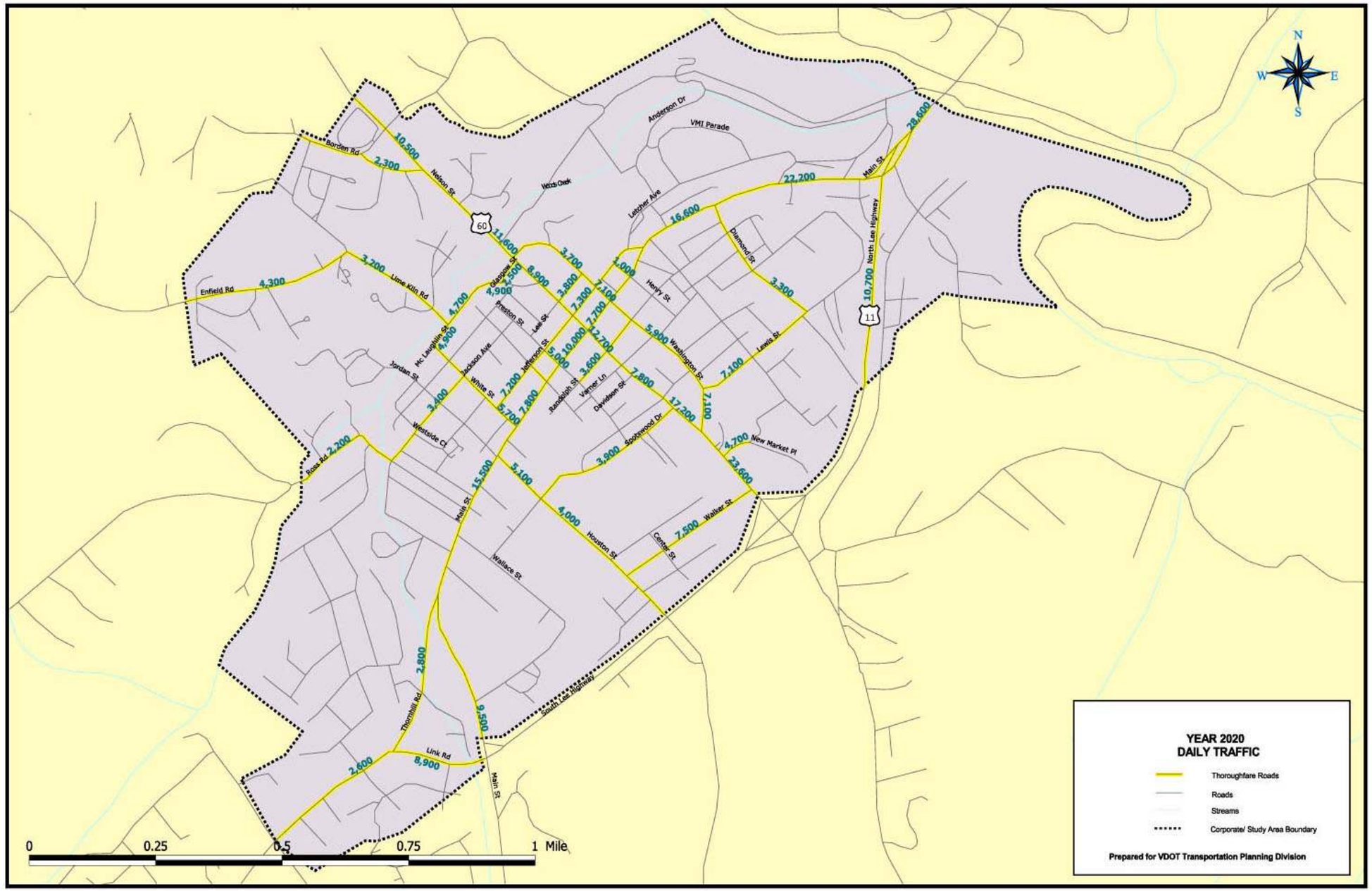


FIGURE 8.15
EXISTING AND ANTICIPATED DEFICIENCIES
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

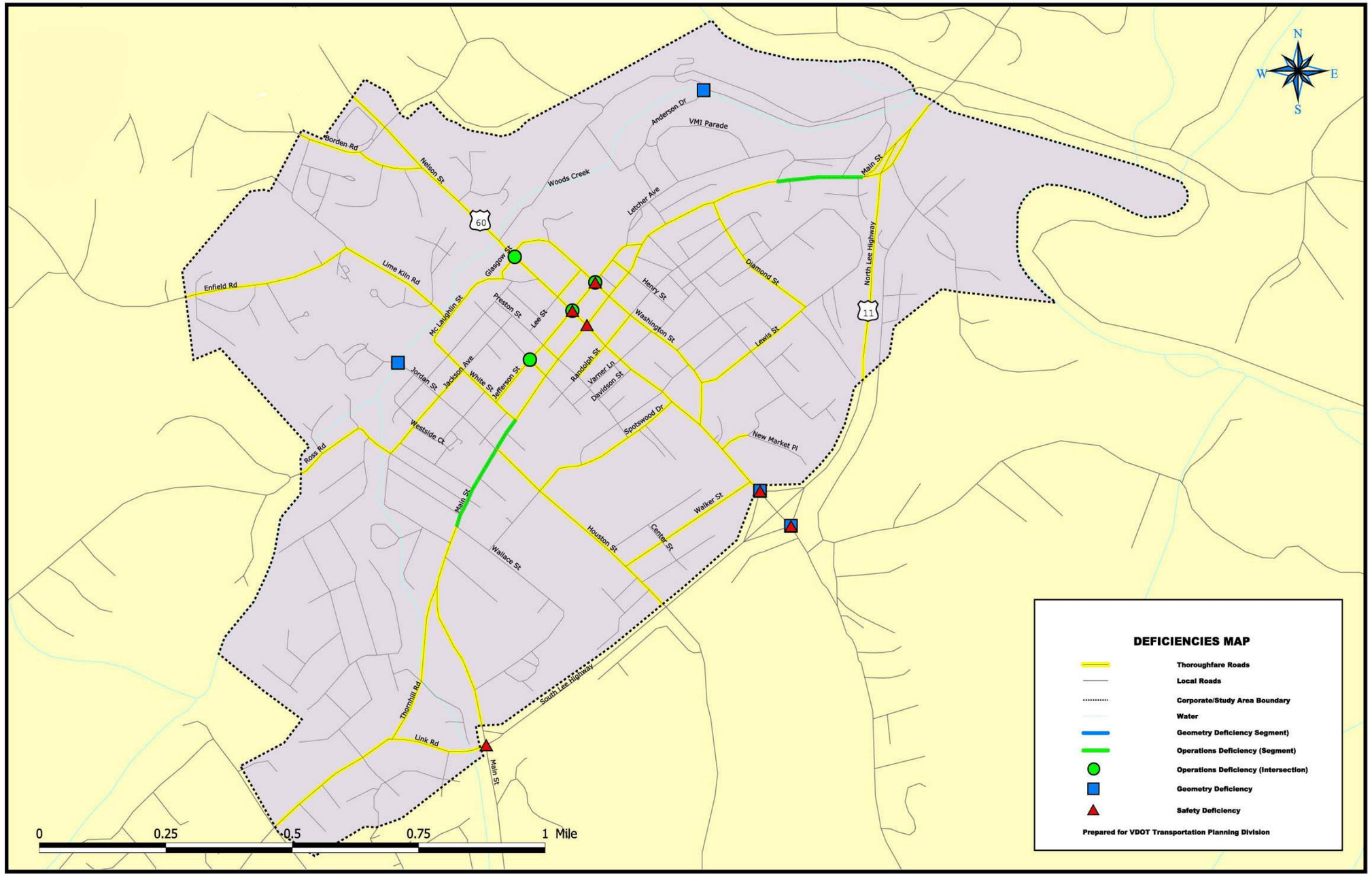
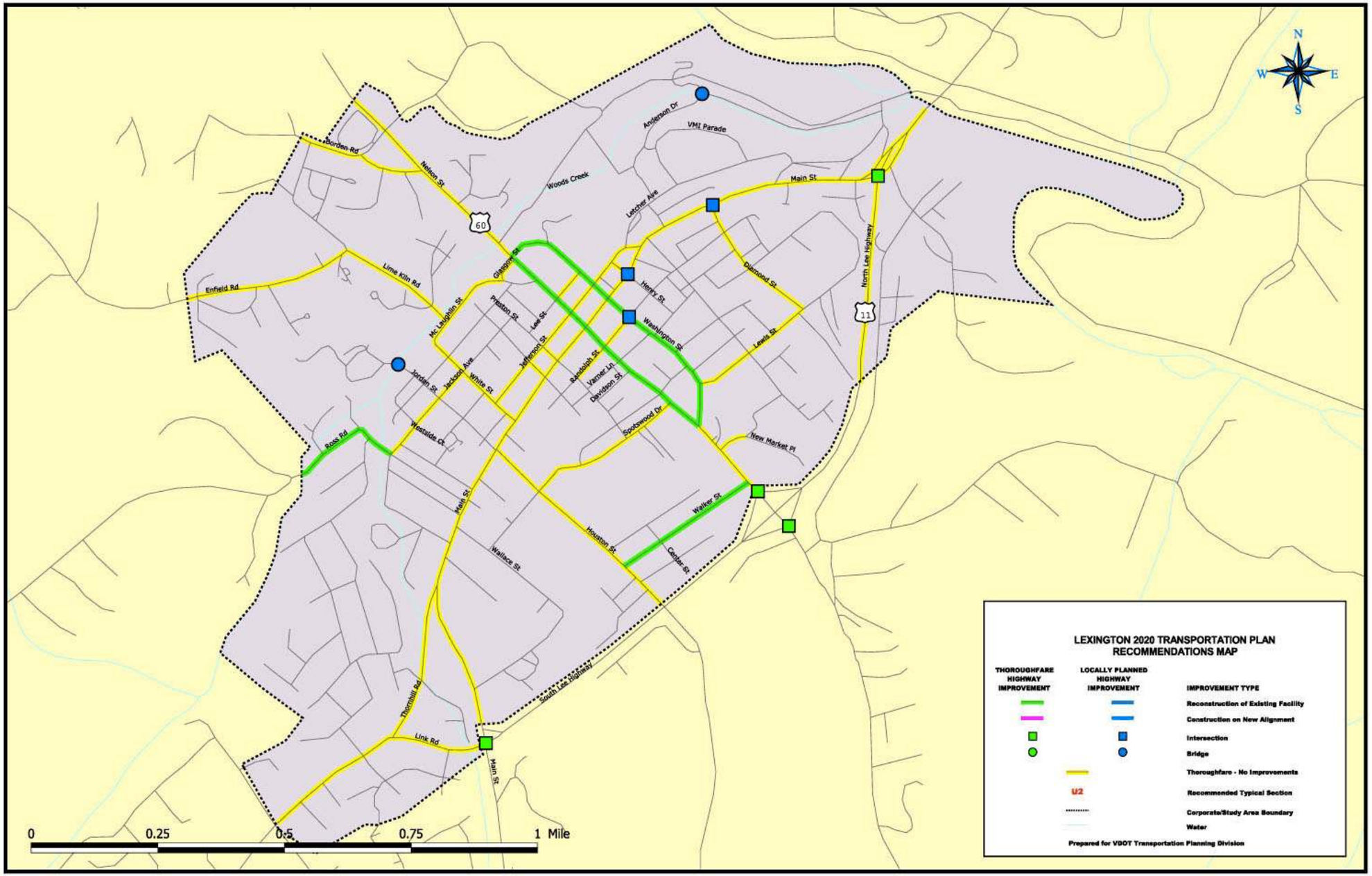


FIGURE 8.16
RECOMMENDATIONS
LEXINGTON 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN



COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The City of Lexington, as an independent municipal corporation in Virginia, is responsible for the provision of its own local public services. While the City provides many of these services directly, it also is involved in the provision of some of them regionally with Rockbridge County and sometimes Buena Vista. In addition, there are a number of nonprofit agencies that provide needed services to local and area residents.

GOAL: Provide high quality services and well-maintained facilities for City residents and businesses while minimizing the impact of such on the environment in which we live.

GOAL: Continue to investigate methods for providing governmental services more efficiently.

GOAL: Continue to improve the methods of communicating governmental services with the citizens.

CITY FACILITIES

City services are provided from several locations in the City and in the surrounding Rockbridge area. Most of the City's administrative offices are located in City Hall, at 300 East Washington Street. They include the City Manager's Office, the Department of Planning and Development, the Finance Department, the Commissioner of the Revenue, the Treasurer, the Electoral Board and Registrar and Offices for Human Resources, Information Technology and the City Arborist. In addition, there is a mid-sized meeting room on the first floor that is available for public use. The building was constructed in 1892-3 and was used for over sixty years as a school. In 1960 it was renovated for use as the town hall. Since then it has undergone numerous upgrades and renovations.

The City's public safety services are housed at three different locations throughout the City. The Police Station, built in 2003, is located just behind City Hall and houses all Police functions. The Fire Station, opened in 2002 and located on South Main Street, houses the Lexington Volunteer Fire Department. The Rescue Squad was consolidated into the Fire Station in 2010. Their previous building on Spotswood Drive, constructed in 1987 is available for other uses.

The City's Public Works Department is located on a 10 acre tract of land at the end of Shop Road. It houses the equipment and supplies for the street maintenance, refuse collection, water

and sewer, equipment maintenance and other services provided by the Public Works Department. An administrative office building was added to the complex in 2008.

The City owns two school buildings, the Lylburn Downing Middle School on Diamond Street and the Harrington Waddell Elementary School on Pendleton Place. Waddell was originally built in 1927 and was used as the City's high school. In the 1960's it was converted to use as an elementary school and has not received any significant renovation since the 1980s. LDMS was originally built in 1949 as an addition to the black school. It was converted to a middle school in the 1960s and has undergone two major renovations and additions since its construction.

The Lylburn Downing Community Center, adjacent to the middle school, houses the School Board offices and the Office on Youth. Originally built in 1927 as the black school, it was used by the school system until the 1980's when it was transferred for City use. In 2003, it was included on the National Register of Historic Places.

The small building on White Street, which housed the School Board offices until 201, now provides administrative and program space for the Rockbridge Area Recreation Organization (RARO), our regional recreation provider

OBJECTIVE: Provide for appropriate maintenance of all City facilities and property.

OBJECTIVE: Provide new or expanded facilities when the existing facilities no longer meet the needs of the community or must be upgraded to meet increased state or federal standards.

The City should ensure through its capital and operating budgeting processes that sufficient resources are provided to ensure a high level of maintenance of City facilities and properties. Proper maintenance extends the useful lives of facilities and improves user satisfaction. When evaluating maintenance projects, special emphasis should be placed on improvements that will reduce the energy consumption of the facility.

OBJECTIVE: Ensure that the operation and maintenance of all facilities are performed with the goal of reducing the impact of these facilities on the environment.

In order to plan and budget for future new and renovated public buildings, the City should develop a replacement schedule for its existing buildings.

WATER SYSTEM

The Maury Service Authority (MSA) was created by Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista to own and operate the water treatment facility, which was constructed in 1973, located just west of Lexington. The Authority is an independent body composed of two members

appointed by Rockbridge County, two by Lexington and one by Buena Vista. The Authority treats and sells water to both the City of Lexington and the Rockbridge County Public Service Authority. The source of the water is the Maury River. The plant has an existing treatment capacity of 2.9 million gallons per day (MGD) with the potential to be ungraded to 4.4 MGD.

Treated water is pumped by the MSA to two water storage tanks owned by the City, a 3 million gallon tank on Enfield Road and a 1 million gallon tank on Houston Street extended just outside the City. They also pump to a County tank north of Lexington along Route 11. The Houston Street tank also serves the residential developments in the County located to the south of the City. Average daily water usage in the City of Lexington is approximately 900,000 gallons a day and has remained steady for the past few years. Although a significant number of new customers have been added, water conservation measures by some of our largest users have offset the usage by new customers.

The principal limitations to the existing water system are the ability of the MSA to transmit water from the plant to our main tank on Houston Street. Usage growth in the County has limited the MSA's ability to fill Houston Street by its main line, requiring the City to pump continuously from a pump station at Enfield Road. This severely limits the City's ability to refill the tank should there be a large loss of water from a line break or a fire. There is also significant concern about supply should the MSA's main transmission line be interrupted. Improvements planned by the County PSA should help with some of the problem, but a loop system with additional storage and redundant method of supply is the long term solution. The City, County and MSA are presently working to develop a project that will meet these long term needs for both customers.

OBJECTIVE: Work with the County and the MSA to develop a water distribution and storage project that meets the long term needs of both customers and allows the MSA to transmit the maximum capacity of the treatment plant.

SEWER SYSTEM

In 1996, the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County expanded the Maury Service Authority's charter to include construction and operation of a wastewater treatment plant. A 3 million gallon per day plant was completed in 1998 with half of the capital cost paid by each jurisdiction. The City operates the plant on a contractual basis for the MSA. The MSA is presently in the midst of a project to upgrade the treatment capabilities of this plant due to new nutrient loading standards imposed by the State. The average daily flow of the plant is slightly less than 1 million gallons per day.

Much of the City's collection system is old and subject to infiltration and inflow (I&I) of storm water into the sewer system after significant rains. When this occurs, the capacity of the collections lines are taxed and treatment of this significantly higher flow becomes more difficult. The City has been investing significant funds into projects for repairing and replacing leaky sewer lines for over 15 years. While this has helped limit total flow being sent to the plant, the sharp peaks still cause

significant operational problems and create additional expenditures. It is anticipated that the City will continue to renovate and upgrade its collections system to reduce this I&I problem.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to upgrade the sewage collection system to reduce the amount of storm and ground water entering the system, thereby minimizing the disruption to the wastewater plant from peak flows.

SOLID WASTE

The City provides weekly refuse collection for residential customers. Pick up of brush, limbs and bulky items such as appliances is accomplished once a week. Commercial collection is six days a week with a special fee imposed for this service. Pick up of bulk trash is by special arrangement. Beginning in October of 2008, the City began a curbside collection program for recyclables such as paper, bottles, cans (both ferrous and aluminum) and plastics. The City also collects leaves during the fall and takes them to Boxerwood where they are composted and returned to the community at no charge.

Refuse is disposed of at the landfill which is owned and operated by the Rockbridge Regional Solid Waste Authority. The City pays a tipping fee per ton of refuse to use that facility. By the end of 2012, the landfill will need to close and be replaced by an alternative form of disposal. The County will need to make a decision on the location of a transfer station by the end of 2008 so that trash from our region can be transported to another permitted landfill. With the implementation of a transfer station, the cost for disposing of trash will rise significantly. This will place greater pressure on all the region's localities to divert refuse from the transfer station to a recycling program and will make collection and disposal of recyclables more cost effective. The City presently recycles about 25 percent of its refuse. By 2013, it is hoped that this can be raised to 40 percent.

OBJECTIVE: Recycle 40% of our solid waste stream by 2013.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Police

The Lexington Police Department is located to the rear of the City Hall property off of Fuller Street and was constructed in 2006. The department is the primary law enforcement agency of the City and consists of 16 sworn officers, a Special Enforcement Officer and two clerical/administrative positions. In addition to normal law enforcement functions, they are responsible for enforcing parking regulations, animal control and various nuisance regulations.

Fire

The Lexington Fire Department is located at 708 S. Main Street in a building that was completed in 2002. It is entirely a volunteer agency with between 20 and 30 active volunteers. In addition to responding to fires, vehicle accidents and hazardous material spills in both Lexington and a large area surrounding the City, the department is a "first responder" agency, providing advanced life support medical assistance when requested by the rescue squad agencies. Approximately 750 to 800 calls per year are handled by the department. They use three engines, a ladder truck, a utility vehicle, a brush truck and a Chief command vehicle to carry out their responsibilities. The City and County (through a Joint Services Agreement) provide the operating funds for the department. Capital expenditures for the vehicles are presently the responsibility of the City.

Recently, the Lexington Fire Department has requested that the city hire a paid chief position to provide administrative and command direction to the department. The Chief is the Emergency Services Coordinator for the City.

The Lexington Fire Department is one of eleven volunteer fire departments providing protection to the Rockbridge region. Services are coordinated through mutual aid agreements and protocols established by a regional Fire Chief's Association. In 2007, Rockbridge County and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista jointly funded a consultants study of emergency services. Numerous recommendations were made to improve fire, rescue and communications services. The County has now established an Emergency Services Committee consisting of representatives from each constituency to review the report and recommend actions to be taken.

Rescue

The Lexington Volunteer Life Saving Department is located on Spotswood Drive in a building constructed in 1986. It consists of from 20 to 30 volunteers as well as a paid component operated by Carilion Patient Transportation Services. Two paid staff are on duty seven days a week from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm., with the volunteers handling the calls in the evenings. The department uses four ambulances, a utility truck and two general purpose vehicles to respond to around 2,000 calls for service per year. In addition to serving the residents of the City, they have primary responsibility for responding to calls in a large portion of Rockbridge County. The City and County (through a Joint Services Agreement) provide the operating funds for the department and, historically, large capital purchases have been made from funds raised by the squad. The cost for the paid service is generally covered by billings to the insurance companies for the service provided.

Emergency Operation

The City is responsible for providing emergency response and recovery services during either natural or man-made disasters. The City Manager is the Director of Emergency Services and the Police

Chief is the Emergency Services Coordinator. The City has developed an Emergency Operations Plan detailing the planning for emergency responses. In the event of an emergency, the City would work closely with other emergency coordinators in our area, the State Department of Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Local emergency planning is coordinated through a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) consisting of numerous agencies and providers. In addition to performing local emergency exercises, this group has developed and distributes a brochure on what to do in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak.

Emergency Communications

The emergency communications for our police, fire and rescue departments is provided by the Rockbridge Regional Communications Center. This regional agency is a partnership between Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County. It is managed by a seven member board, is physically located in Buena Vista next to their Police Department and employs 14 personnel to provide this crucial service.

OBJECTIVE: Improve the regional coordination of fire and rescue services by working through the County's Emergency Services Committee.

OBJECTIVE: Strengthen the ability of volunteers to provide fire and rescue services by hiring a paid Director of Emergency Services to manage both the Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Courts

The City of Lexington participates in a regional court system, along with the County of Rockbridge, composed of the Circuit Court, the General District Court and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations branch of the District Court, along with their respective Clerk's offices. Also included in this regional effort is the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, the Adult Probation Office and the Juvenile Probation Office. All are housed in the new Rockbridge County Courthouse (with the exception of Adult Probation), completed in January of 2009 and located on the corner of Nelson and Randolph Streets. This new facility should meet the Court's needs for space for the next 30 to 40 years.

Incarceration

The City is a partner in the Rockbridge Regional Jail with the City of Buena Vista, the County of Rockbridge and the Towns of Goshen and Glasgow. The existing facility, opened in 1988, is rated at 56 beds, but can realistically hold 100 prisoners. The present average daily jail population is around 90 to 95 prisoners. As a result, the Jail Commission is proposing an expansion of the facility to 184 beds. At the time of this writing, not all the participating jurisdictions have agreed that such an expansion is desired. If an expansion is not approved and the prisoner population continues to

grow at the rate it has over the past ten years, the Jail will have to contract with other local jails to hold our prisoners at a significant cost to the localities.

The City of Lexington also participates, with six other jurisdictions, in a regional juvenile detention facility that is located in Verona. This facility, which can hold up to 38 juveniles was opened in 2003. It presently is holding an average of 15 to 20 juveniles per day. A portion of the facility has been modified to operate a program for evaluating the needs of youth who receive services funded by the Comprehensive Services Act program.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation

The Rockbridge Regional Recreation Association (RARO) was established in 1988 by the Lexington City Council as the regional recreation provider for both the City and County. It is an independent recreation authority governed by a seven member board and funded by both jurisdictions. It operates a wide variety of sports programs, primarily geared to the youth of the community. In 2007, RARO was given the additional responsibility of managing a year round swimming pool located at Brewbaker Field. RARO offers 33 different programs serving over 1,500 individuals per year.

There are also several other private organizations that provide recreational opportunities for local residents in the areas of swimming, soccer, tennis, basketball, baseball and lacrosse. Many additional opportunities are available through the local YMCA and Maury River Senior Center. The YMCA is located in the College Square shopping Center located on Route 11 north of Lexington. The Maury River Senior Center is operated by the Valley Program for Aging Services and is located in a facility in Buena Vista.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City of Lexington owns and operates seven parks, encompassing 33.5 acres, an outdoor swimming pool, an indoor 25 yard, six lane pool, a community center, numerous athletic fields, a nature trail and five playground facilities. In addition, there is active open space at four schools within the City and facilities at the high school just outside the City. In addition, both Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute have facilities that are available for use by the public or RARO. The YMCA also has a fitness facility available on a membership basis. The City owns two tracts of land in Rockbridge County that are available for hiking, bird watching, hunting and the enjoyment of nature. Brushy Hills is a 600 acre hill just to the west of the City that has hiking trails developed and is on the state birding trail. There is a trail head located on Spring Valley Road with a kiosk and trail maps. Moore's Creek is a 140 acre tract of land which contains a 32 acre

reservoir located 12 miles south west of the City. It is available for hiking, and fishing and hunting with a permit.

Table 9-1 summarizes the location, size and type of recreation facilities owned by the City and Table 9-2 describes those facilities not owned by the City but available for use by some or all city residents.

TABLE 9-1
CITY OF LEXINGTON
CITY OWNED
RECREATION FACILITIES

LOCATION	SIZE	FACILITIES
Brewbaker Athletic Complex	13.3 ac.	Outdoor swimming pool, indoor swimming pool, athletic fields, playground (Kidsplayce), skatepark
Richardson Park	4.5 ac.	Playground, pavilion
Downing Middle School	3 ac.	Athletic fields, gymnasium, outdoor basketball court
Waddell Elementary	3 ac.	Athletic fields, playground, multipurpose room
Woods Creek Park	3 ac.	2.8 mile walking trail
Downing Community Center	.75 ac.	Multipurpose room, meeting rooms
Taylor Street Park	.5 ac.	Playground, picnic area
Jordan's Point Park	9.5 ac.	Walking trail, picnic area, pavilion, boat ramp, athletic fields
Fairwinds Park	1.2 ac.	Playground, picnic area, open space
Lime Kiln Bridge Park	.7 ac.	Playground, picnic area

TABLE 9-2
RECREATION FACILITIES OWNED BY OTHERS
IN OR ADJACENT TO THE CITY OF LEXINGTON

LOCATION	SIZE	FACILITIES
Central School	3 ac.	Athletic fields, outdoor basketball court, playground
Maury River Middle School	15 ac.	Running track, practice fields, open play area
Chessie Trail	7 mi.	Walking trail
Lexington Golf Club	100 ac.	Private 18 hole golf course
Washington & Lee campus	362 ac.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, gymnasium, indoor pool, outdoor track
Vista Links	130+ ac.	Public 18 hole golf course
Virginia Military Institute campus	154 ac.	Athletic fields, tennis courts, gymnasium, outdoor track, racquetball courts, indoor pool, indoor track

While the City appears to have adequate recreational facilities for our residents, especially if one takes into account that 3,000 residents are college students whose needs are met by the two schools, there is a need for both indoor court space and outdoor athletic fields for the Rockbridge region. It will be important to include a full-sized gymnasium when Waddell School is rebuilt and the local governments should be aware of the need to provide additional outdoor space. Also, the YMCA is looking to partner with local governments for providing a more comprehensive indoor facility that might also be used by the general public.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to encourage and offer a wide variety of recreational programs and facilities for City residents.

OBJECTIVE: Work with Rockbridge County to increase the number of playing fields in the region.

OBJECTIVE: Include a full-sized gymnasium when rebuilding or renovating Waddell Elementary School.

CEMETERIES

The City owns and operates two cemeteries, the Stonewall Jackson Cemetery and the Evergreen Cemetery.

Stonewall Jackson Cemetery:

Established in 1797 by the Lexington Presbyterian Church, this cemetery has been operated as a public burial ground since 1853. Enlarged over the years and partially supported by public funds, the cemetery was transferred to the City under a deed of trust in 1949. In the 1960's, additional land was purchased for the cemetery but, to date, only a portion has been used for burials. In the 1980's, a portion was used to extend Spotswood Drive through to Houston Street and the Rescue Squad building was constructed on another portion. Today, approximately 2.3 acres remain as vacant land. (See page 7-46 of the Land Use Chapter)

The Stonewall Jackson Cemetery consists of 13.25 acres. Presently, there are about 400 unsold lots. We generally sell around 25 lots each year. One concept to extend the life of each of the cemeteries is the construction of columbariums for the internment of cremation remains. As cremations become more numerous, the installation of a columbarium could be very cost effective.

Evergreen Cemetery:

In 1880, the Town of Lexington acquired the property, now known as the Evergreen Cemetery for the burial of its black citizens. Although the cemetery was municipally owned, a board of trustees from the black community managed and cared for the grounds until 1971 when the City assumed responsibility for care and maintenance.

The Evergreen Cemetery consists of 5.5 acres. Presently there are six unsold plots that are available for sale. There is the potential for 50 additional lots if rock can be removed cost effectively from one area. Usually only three to five lots are sold each year.

Although historically segregated by race, the cemeteries are administered under a completely nondiscriminatory policy.

OBJECTIVE: Explore building a columbarium at each of the cemeteries.

LIBRARY

The Rockbridge Regional Library is headquartered in the City of Lexington. It serves Bath and Rockbridge counties as well as the cities of Buena Vista and Lexington. The Library currently has over 188,000 books, records and tapes with over 3,600 cardholders from Lexington. It also has computers available for internet use. The headquarters facility has been located on South Main Street since 1988. It is presently becoming cramped for space as its' usage grows. It will be important for Lexington to work with the Library to find space for growth in the downtown area.

Each of the colleges in Lexington has its own library facilities which City residents may utilize. The Washington and Lee University library has over 600,000 books and related materials. The Virginia Military Institute library has over 300,000 volumes. In addition, the George C. Marshall Research Library, located on the Virginia Military Institute campus, contains a major collection of materials relating to United States military and diplomatic history covering much of the twentieth century.

OBJECTIVE: Work with the Rockbridge Regional Library to provide adequate space while keeping the facility in downtown Lexington.

EDUCATION

One of the primary reasons that Lexington chose to become a city was to be able to establish and maintain its own school system. The City supports Harrington Waddell Elementary School and Lylburn Downing Middle School. Students who live in the City attend Rockbridge County High School under a joint services agreement with Rockbridge County.

The Lexington City School Board is a five member board that is appointed by the Lexington City Council. The School Board's mission states, "*The mission of Lexington City Schools is to provide progressive educational opportunities and challenging experiences that are responsive to the needs and talents of all students.*"

The school system serves as a source of pride for the City of Lexington. Students at the elementary and middle schools consistently score well above the State average and among the highest in the State on the Standards of Learning Assessments required by the Virginia Department of Education. The School Division was named the only "Highly Distinguished" school system in Virginia in 2010 by the State Board of Education. Please see the charts below for the elementary and middle school scores for the past eight years.

Third Grade

Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	74.5	73.3	80	78.2	94	87.5	85	90.38	84
Math	80.3	84.4	86	84.7	96	95.6	94	94.23	89
History & Social Science	80.3	80	85	82.6	98	89.7	100	96.15	88
Science	76.5	77.8	95	82.6	96	91.8	96	94.23	93

Fourth Grade

Area/Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2008 State Average	
Reading		96.2	92	93.88	88	
Math		86.5	92	95.92	84	
Virginia Studies	83	86.7	90	93.88	83	

Fifth Grade

Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	87.7	91.3	87	86.7	86.9	97.5	95	90	89
Writing		94.9	86.6	78.8	91.1	97.5	92	91.84	87
Math	77.6	83.1	76	79.2	83	92.3	95	100	88
Science	93.9	84.5	84	84.9	86.9	90.2	97	90	88
Grade 5 U.S. through 1877					73.9	80.4	87	90	74

Sixth Grade

Area/Year	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008				
Reading	83.9	93	93.65	85				
Math	72.9	67	69.84	68				

Seventh Grade

Area/Year	2006	2007	2008	State Average				
Reading	89.3	85	87.93	86				
Math	69.4	81	81.03	65				

Eighth Grade

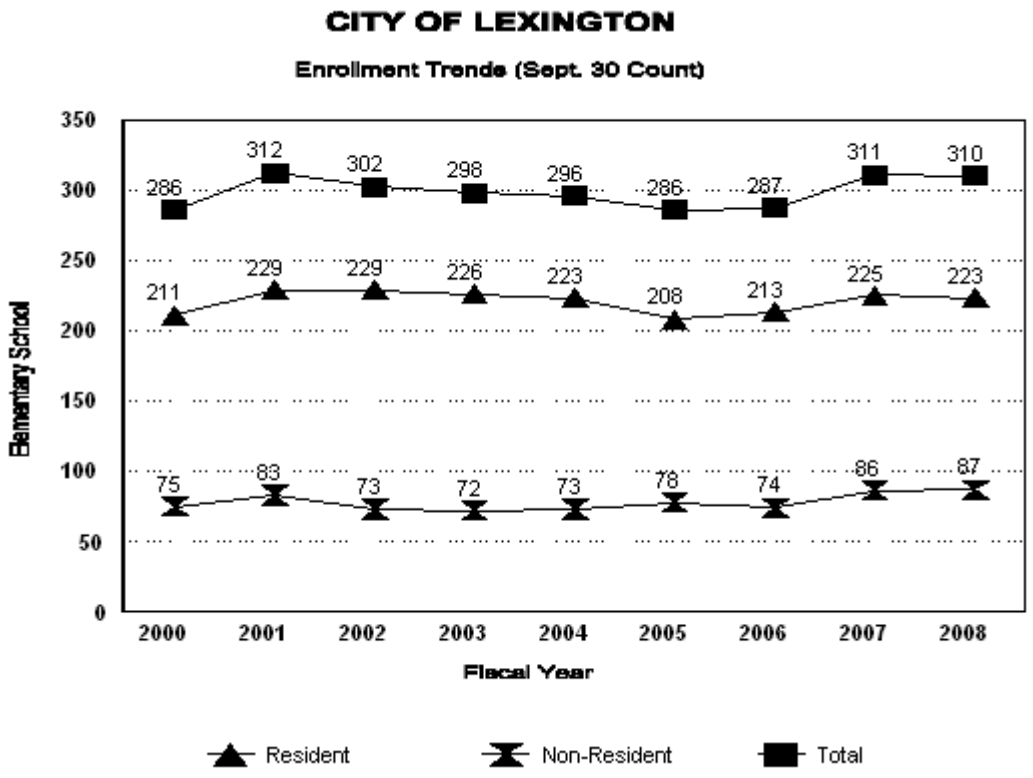
Area/Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Reading	88	87	91	82.1	83.3	85.4	88	90.57	83
Writing		95	84.2	80.3	77.2	89	90	91.23	87
Math	88	88	93	92.7	92.5	90.9	78	95.24	83
Science	93	95	96	92.8	95.3	98.1	95	92.98	90
World Geography		95	96	89.6	81.2	79.3	70	85	84
Algebra	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	93

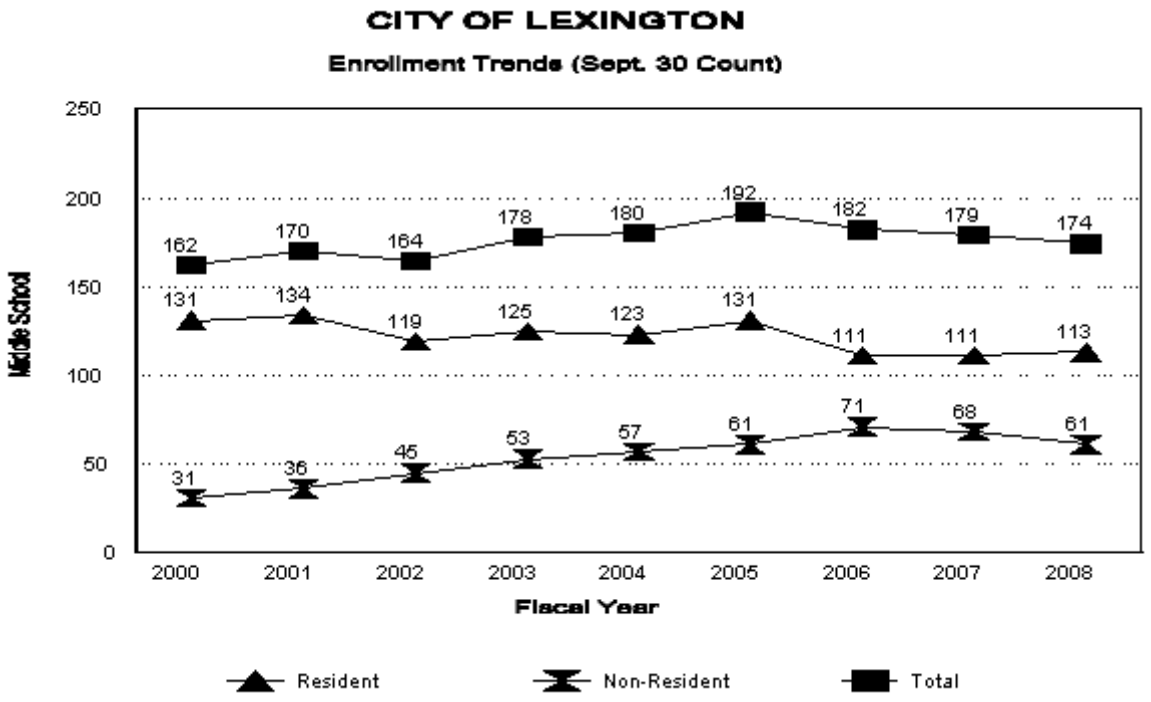
Content Specific History

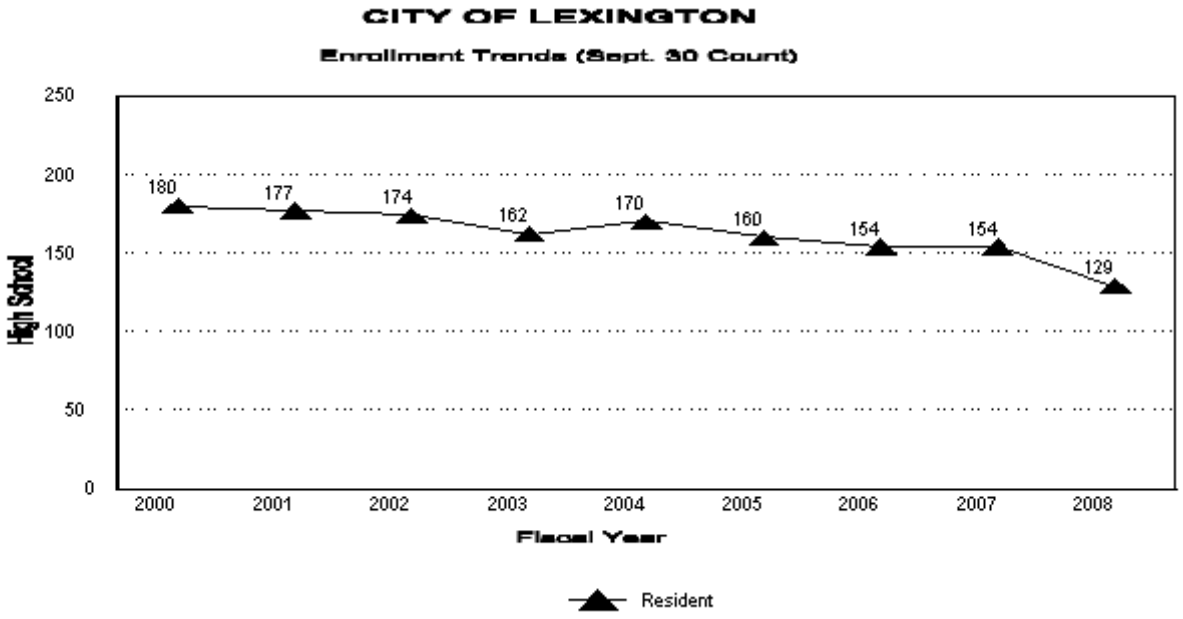
Subject	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	State Average 2008
Grade 6 U.S. 1877 to Present	77.5	73.8	76.7	80	90.48	92
Grade 7 Civics & Economics	80.3	82.1	75.5	80	75.86	84

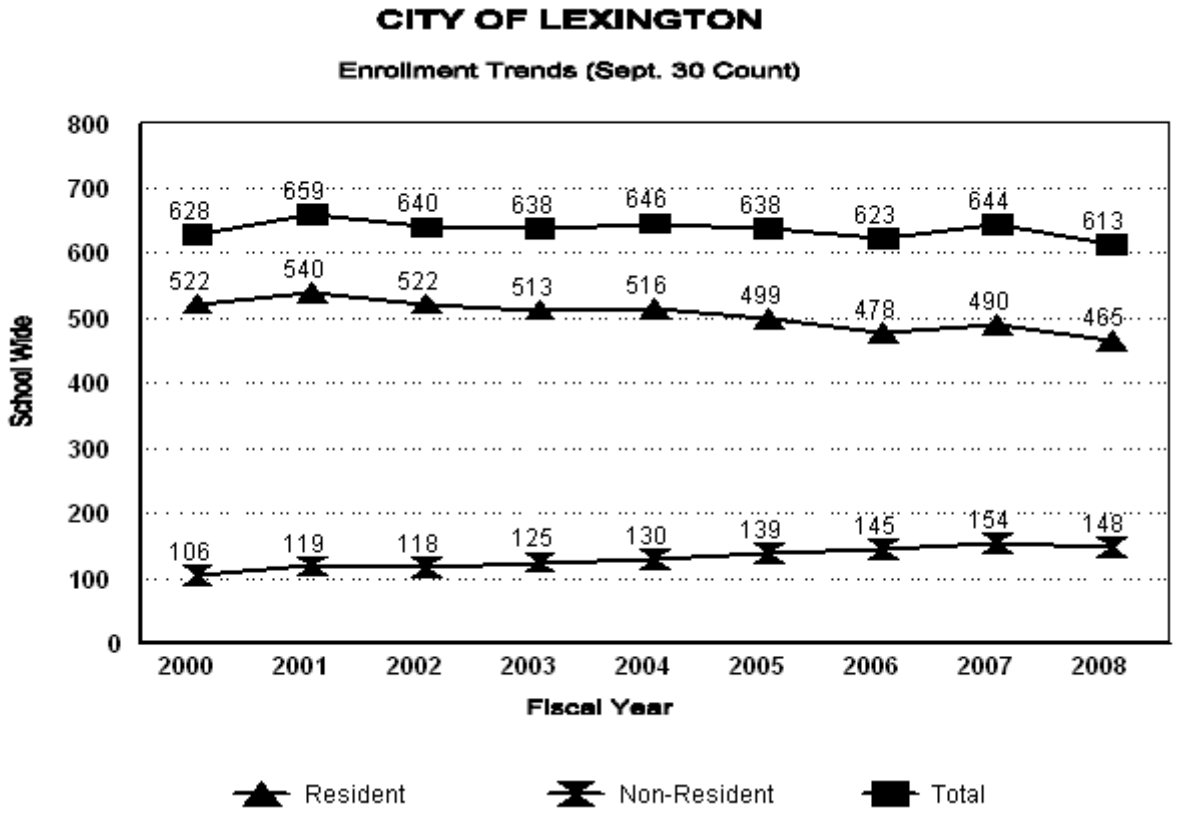
Lexington City Schools continues to be a successful educational organization because the School Board remains committed to providing quality educational programs for the students. Maintaining a low student/teacher ratio, employing only highly qualified teachers, encouraging continuing education for teachers, and providing policies that support the educational community are functions that the school board proudly carries out. The student/teacher ratio for our schools is 12 to 1 while the State average is in the 17 to 1 range.

One of the most significant concerns related to the continued viability of the school system is enrollment. The School Board has stated that it remains committed to the continued operation of a City school system as long as it remains economically viable. Lexington City Schools accept tuition students from surrounding counties and cities as one means to maintain student population. These students and their families are attracted to Lexington City Schools by the demonstrated academic success of the educational program. Presently about 30% of the total enrollment for the elementary and middle schools are county children. Since state education funds come with each child, it is important to the financial viability of the school system to continue attracting these students. Also, without these students, it would be exceptionally difficult to offer the wide variety of programs demanded of our citizens. While the enrollment of city children in our two schools has dropped by about 15% since the 1990s, it appears to have stabilized since 2000. The large decline has occurred in the high school enrollment where it continues to decrease.


CITY OF LEXINGTON
Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)
Elementary School
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
286
312
302
298
296
286
287
311
310
211
229
229
226
223
208
213
225
223
75
83
73
72
73
78
74
86
87
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Fiscal Year
Resident
Non-Resident
Total


CITY OF LEXINGTON
Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)
Middle School
250
200
150
100
50
0
162
170
164
178
180
192
182
179
174
131
134
119
125
123
131
111
111
113
31
36
45
53
57
61
71
68
61
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Fiscal Year
Resident
Non-Resident
Total


CITY OF LEXINGTON
Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)
High School
250
200
150
100
50
0
180
177
174
162
170
160
154
154
129
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Fiscal Year
Resident


CITY OF LEXINGTON
Enrollment Trends (Sept. 30 Count)
School Wide
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
628
659
640
638
646
638
623
644
613
522
540
522
513
516
499
478
490
465
106
119
118
125
130
139
145
154
148
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
Fiscal Year
Resident
Non-Resident
Total

Facilities:

The City's two schools are both over 50 years old. Lylburn Downing Middle School was completely renovated and expanded in 2010 . While major renovations and expansions were performed at Waddell Elementary School in the l980s, it is in need of major renovation or complete new construction to meet the standards for today's educational needs. The School Board is reviewing plans to either renovate or replace Waddell Elementary School; however, this project may need to be postponed until the economy rebounds.

OBJECTIVE: Support the Lexington City School Board's commitment to providing progressive educational opportunities and experiences for students in the City Schools and Rockbridge County High School. This includes needed upgrades to Waddell Elementary School.

HUMAN SERVICES

The City of Lexington is served by a wide variety of both public and private agencies that provide a social safety net to our residents.

Basic public health services are provided by the Lexington-Rockbridge Health Department. These services include the operation of clinics which provides immunizations, maternity services, well child services, family planning services and pregnancy testing, communicable disease control, environmental health services, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS testing, health education, nutrition services and vital records.

The Rockbridge Area Community Services Board provides mental health and mental retardation programs as well as alcohol and drug abuse services and programs. The Board also operates a number of supervised group homes for mentally retarded adults and offers programs to assist families experiencing problems.

The Rockbridge Area Social Services Board administers the Medicaid, Food Stamps, Aid to Dependent Children, Child Welfare Services programs as well as child and adult protective services and foster care.

Rockbridge Area Hospice provides physical, emotional and spiritual support for terminally ill people and their families utilizing a team consisting of doctors, nurses, social workers, clergy and volunteers. Hospice is funded through donations, volunteer efforts as well as by insurance providers.

Project Horizon is a private non-profit organization dedicated to reducing domestic, dating and sexual violence. It operates a shelter, located in Lexington, a 24-hour crisis hotline, provides counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual assault and court advocacy services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc. Provides free legal assistance to low income residents (less than 125% of the federal poverty guidelines) of the City. The most frequent issues confronted include domestic violence and other family disputes, access to affordable health care, homelessness and

housing, eligibility for various governmental assistance programs for the poor, protecting the poor's meager possessions and wages, and issues involving the elderly poor.

The Virginia Employment Commission, a State agency, provides job referral, proficiency testing, labor market information and unemployment insurance services. Unfortunately, the Buena Vista Office of the VEC closed in 2009 due to budget cuts so residents from the City must obtain their services from Augusta County or Roanoke.

The Rockbridge Area Relief Association (RARA) is a private non-profit agency whose mission is to aid local households in times of financial difficulties. RARA helps such people obtain food, shelter, utilities, medication, heating fuel, gasoline and transportation. In addition, RARA operates a local emergency food pantry. Funding is primarily from private donations and the United Way.

The Rockbridge Area Free Clinic is a private non-profit agency whose mission is to provide health care, pharmaceuticals and dental care to low income residents with no health care insurance. The health care is provided by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, dentist, dental hygienists and other citizens volunteering their time to provide these services.

The local office of Total Action Against Poverty (TAP) provides programs for lower income residents of the area. The office conducts housing programs including weatherization and rehabilitation, housing counseling and assists homeless families. TAP also operates a Headstart preschool program in the City, operates a high school drop-out prevention program (Project Pride) and coordinates a summer youth employment program.

The local chapter of the Salvation Army provides many types of services to needy families. Typical assistance includes short term financial assistance for rent, heating, utilities, groceries and furniture. They also purchase Christmas gifts for young children.

Valley Program for Aging Services (VPAS) is a private non-profit organization, established in 1973, to serve the needs of persons 60 years and older, their families and caregivers. Its mission is to help these people live independently in their homes while delaying or avoiding institutionalization. In the Rockbridge Area, VPAS operates many programs at the Maury River Senior Center including Meals on Wheels and personal care in the home.

The Rockbridge Area Occupational Center (RAOC) provides employment and training opportunities for disabled and mentally retarded individuals from our community, thereby providing a sense of accomplishment and self-worth while generating wages for the individual.

The Rockbridge Area Transit System (RATS) is a private non-profit transportation provider whose mission is to provide safe, affordable transportation to residents of the region who are elderly, have disabilities or have no other means of transportation. RATS enables passengers to have access to health care and employment and to participate fully in the life of the community. It is funded from a mixture of grants, donations, fares, Medicaid and government contributions.

GOAL: Encourage the coordination and cooperation of human service agencies in their provision of services to citizens.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The City of Lexington is fortunate to have a wide array of cultural activities available to residents and guests. Those residents inclined to travel frequently take advantage of the museums and performing arts centers in Washington, DC, the museums and arts centers in Richmond and Charlottesville, the Black Friars Playhouse in Staunton, the Jefferson Center and the Taubman museum in Roanoke, as well as the events hosted in both the Salem and Roanoke civic centers. Residents do not, though, have to travel to other cities to enjoy a broad range of cultural activities.

Washington and Lee University is home to the widely admired Lenfest Center for the Performing Arts. Nationally and internationally recognized performers present a broad array of programming. Recent programs have included ballet, theater, musical theater, opera and operetta, choral and bank music, and dance and performance art. Students at the University produce plays, offer musical recitals, and mount art shows of note. The John and Anne Wilson Music and Art Center co-locates all of the arts at W&L in one complex where over one hundred performances are offered each year. In addition to these art forms, the University also hosts frequent presentations and conversations with political leaders, scholars of note, authors, and leaders in a variety of fields. Washington and Lee University is also home to the Lee Chapel Museum and Lee Chapel. The Chapel is the site of concerts and lectures. The University opens these events to area residents and tourists.

The University possesses major art collections, including the Washington-Custis-Lee portraits, the Vincent L. Bradford collection of 19th-century American paintings, the Thomas F. Torrey II collection of landscape paintings, the Stan Kamen collection of Western art, the Sydney and Frances Lewis collection of 20th-century art, and the Jacob and Bernice Weinstein collection of modern art. In 1967, the University received 4,000 ceramic objects from Mr. and Mrs. Euchlin D. Reeves, including an important collection of 17th-, 18th, and 19th-century Chinese Export porcelain. This collection and the paintings of Mrs. Reeves (Louise Herreshoff) are housed in the Reeves Center, a research and exhibition center on campus.

Recent additions to the art collections of the University include Chinese, Japanese, and Korean ceramics, bronzes, and jades on exhibit in the Watson Pavilion for Asian Arts, which opened in 1993. The Watson Pavilion also houses an authentic Japanese tearoom.

Virginia Military Institute frequently hosts cultural activities and opens these to the public. The recently completed Leadership and Ethics Center and Jackson Hall serve as primary venues for programming ranging from Christmas concerts to speakers of note who are nationally and internationally recognized for their expertise. Jackson Hall is also the site of the recently remodeled museum which houses an impressive collection of both VMI and military memorabilia. The highly regarded George C. Marshall Museum is engaged in on-going research into the life of Marshall as well as serving as host to hundreds of visitors annually.

Cadets, faculty and area residents present plays several times each year. The Corps also boasts a band which plays during Institute parades, review events, and often in Inaugural parades in DC.

While the City derives significant benefit from the generosity of Washington and Lee University and Virginia Military Institute, cultural activities abound outside the walls of these academic settings.

Lexington is home to the Museum of Military Memorabilia, a privately owned museum that is open to the public. The home of Stonewall Jackson is open for public tours, where individuals may also tour the working garden.

Our local high school provides additional cultural offerings, ranging from student produced plays to musical offerings.

The Theater at Lime Kiln hosts a broad range of performing arts which have included noted musical acts, plays, musicals, and reviews. Lime Kiln also provides a venue for local dance troupes for dance recitals.

Lexington has two active dance studios with dancers ranging from pre-school to adults. Students from both schools of dance present several recitals each year.

In the world of art, Lexington is home to many internationally recognized artists and authors. There are numerous art galleries operating in the downtown area. Additionally, the Rockbridge Regional Library and several of the downtown restaurants and coffee shops hang rotating galleries of artwork for public view. The Rockbridge Regional library is also sponsor for many cultural events, including readings by local authors. The local book stores also offer readings from featured authors throughout the year.

Local eating establishments frequently host area musicians for the enjoyment of attendees and in support of the musicians.

Beyond these offerings, the City of Lexington sponsors, co-sponsors, or facilitates a broad array of activities that allow citizen participation. During warmer months, Fridays Alive, featuring well-known musical groups, serves as an informal gathering for area residents. Significant occasions are also marked with community events. The Fourth of July parade is an opportunity for young biking enthusiasts to decorate their bikes and wagons and participate in the parade. The annual Christmas parade through our downtown includes Fire and Rescue vehicles as well as Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops on floats. The holiday season also features a candlelight walk from Stonewall Jackson Cemetery to Hopkins Green. The walkers sing carols as they pass down Main, Washington and Jefferson streets.

Fine Arts in Rockbridge (FAIR) kicks off the summer with workshops covering a myriad of artistic pursuing, ranging from photography to calligraphy, often concluding with a performance put on by one or more of the workshop groups. Additionally, there are multiple performances presented by the Rockbridge Choral Society.

While this listing is not inclusive, it does provide a glimpse into the robust and active cultural offerings enjoyed by residents and visitors. Because these events attract visitors, inform and enrich the lives of residents, and serve to heighten our sense of community, we believe they should be recognized and encouraged.

OBJECTIVE: Continue to support and/or facilitate the cultural activities which differentiates Lexington from many other small communities.

OBJECTIVE: Identify and encourage use of alternative, non-downtown spaces within Lexington for community gatherings (e.g.,Richardson Park).

OBJECTIVE: Encourage additional cultural activities in the downtown to further promote the arts, a sense of community, and the economic benefits to our downtown.

OBJECTIVE: Explore the possibility of outdoor art installations to demonstrate to both residents and visitors the City's commitment to the arts.

Government Chapter

City of Lexington Comprehensive Plan

Lexington

GOVERNMENT

THE CITY

Lexington is one of the smallest cities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A city is a permanent, organized community of defined boundaries and has specified and limited authority established by the state in which it is located including taxing and regulatory powers. Legally, the city is an incorporated unit of government with elected leaders; however, the city exists separately and independently from the individuals who head it.

As a city, Lexington has certain governmental responsibilities. Cities must meet the needs of their citizens, providing goods and services such as police and fire protection, water and other utility services, parks, recreation programs, street and other public works improvements, education and human development programs. Funding for these goods and services is by taxes, service charges, special assessments, fees and other sources of municipal revenues. A fundamental purpose of the city as a governmental entity is to help its citizens develop a vibrant, healthy, fiscally sound community.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN VIRGINIA

As a city, Lexington cannot act alone, and its actions are limited. Local governments such as cities and counties are subordinate parts of state government and are not considered to be autonomous within the federal system. In fact local governments are totally subservient to their state constitutions and state governments.

The organization and powers of Virginia local government are almost entirely determined by the state constitution and by state law. The only powers counties, cities and towns can exercise are those specifically granted to them by the Virginia General Assembly: Virginia courts recognize no inherent local government powers. This is the legal doctrine known as “Dillon’s Rule”.

Cities frequently partner with the state in exercising mutual responsibilities. Cities cooperate with state governments in providing such services as law enforcement, health protection, highway construction and maintenance, and pollution abatement.

Virginia local governance is based primarily on the county and the independent city. Unlike other states, Virginia’s cities are not located in counties. Rather, Virginia’s 39 cities and 95 counties are territorially separate; however, towns are legally part of the counties in which they are located. While the idea of independent cities in Virginia dates back almost to its beginnings, cities were made fully independent of counties by the Virginia Constitution of 1902.

THE INDEPENDENT CITY

Like all but one of Virginia's cities, Lexington uses the council-manager form of government and has an elected city council as the governing body. The mayor is elected by the voters. The mayor's principal responsibility is presiding over council meetings and representing the City.

The direction of the City's daily business is the responsibility of the City Manager. The City Manager is generally a professional with a master's degree in an appropriate specialty. In general, the council sets City policies and the administrator sees that they are carried out efficiently and effectively. The manager oversees the daily operations of City government, informs the council and the citizens about City government matters, supervises City personnel, manages City finances, oversees enforcement of local ordinances and sees that City operations are in compliance with relevant state and federal law. Like other Virginia cities, Lexington has elected constitutional officers: a Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, Sheriff, Clerk of Court and Commonwealth's Attorney.

While cities have more power and are responsible for raising more of their own revenue than counties, over the past few years, the differences in powers and finances have been diminished.

THE COUNTY

The first counties were created by the General Assembly in the 1630's as shires. Present-day counties are their direct descendants.

The governing body is the board of supervisors. In most counties, the board of supervisors appoints the county administrator, who is the chief executive of the county government and has the responsibility of overseeing all administrative matters not assigned to one of the constitutional officers. These constitutional officers are the Sheriff, the Treasurer, the Commissioner of Revenue, the Clerk of the Court and the Commonwealth's Attorney.

THE TOWN

Virginia's towns vary widely in size and governmental organization; however, they all have an elected town council that acts as the governing body. Large towns may be larger than many independent cities and have professional managers and an extensive array of services. Small towns may use a mayor-council form of government which relies on the mayor and council to take care of a limited set of municipal concerns.

The distinctive feature of towns is that, unlike independent cities, they are also part of a county. Consequently, some services and governmental functions within the town will be performed by the county, and town residents are citizens of both town and the county, paying taxes and voting in both jurisdictions.

ORGANIZATION OF LEXINGTON CITY GOVERNMENT

The legislative and policy making authority for Lexington reside with the Mayor and City Council. The City has six council persons elected at large and a popularly elected mayor, with all candidates running on a non-partisan basis. The mayor sets the agenda for council meetings, presides over those meetings, casts the deciding vote in the event of a tie, and represents the City in a ceremonial capacity. Powers vested in the City Council include the power to levy taxes, to pass ordinances relating to municipal affairs (subject to the limitations imposed by the constitution and general laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the City Charter), to adopt a City budget, authorize the issuance of bonds by a bond ordinance, appoint and remove the City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney and City Auditor and appoint members to the various city boards and commissions.

The City Manager, appointed by the City Council, serves as the chief executive officer. The manager is responsible for executing the policy decisions of the council under its direct supervision. The manager oversees the municipal departments which provide services to the City. These include public works, planning and development, finance, utilities processing which operates the City's water and sewer plants, police, fire and emergency medical services. The Manager also oversees a number of smaller offices in the City. The manager is responsible for appointing the City's department heads.

The City presently has a number of key staff who have served the community for many years who will be retiring over the next several years. The loss of the institutional knowledge possessed by these individuals will create difficulties for the new employees who will replace them. It is important that the City plan for this transition to provide a continuity of operations within the City's staff organization.

RECOMMENDATION: The City Manager and City Council should develop a plan to provide for an orderly transition for key staff members.

City voters also elect a Treasurer and Commissioner of the Revenue to four year terms. The Treasurer provides for the collection of all City revenues, the disbursement of all City funds, and the investment of City funds based on recommendations from the Finance Director and the City Manager. The Commissioner of the Revenue provides real estate, personal property and business tax assessments and Virginia income tax administration.

The City shares its courts and courts related officers with Rockbridge County. Since it shares the circuit court, it also shares the constitutional offices of Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sheriff, and Commonwealth's Attorney with the county. The City also shares the General District Court, and a Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court with the County by cooperative agreement as well as both adult and juvenile probation offices. The Sheriff of the County is also elected as Sheriff of the City.

The City also supports a number of services provided by regional agreements with other local governments. These include a library system, a regional jail, a central emergency

communications center, a community services board (providing mental health, mental retardation and drug abuse services), a tourism office, the social services department, and a regional water and wastewater plants.

The City Council establishes and appoints members to various boards and commissions and charges them with specific responsibilities. Members of boards and commissions are citizens who voluntarily serve the citizens of Lexington. Some boards are local and some are regional in nature. In certain instances members of City Council serve on these boards to ensure closer liaison. Boards provide policy and operational recommendations to the City Council to assist in its decision making and in limited instances, make final decisions themselves. The City's local boards and commissions are:

- **School Board:** A five-member board, established by the state constitution, to oversee the management and operation of the City's school system. The School Board hires the Superintendent and all other school system employees.

- **Planning Commission:** A seven-member commission that advises the City Council on all land-use and zoning issues facing the City. This body approves all site plans and makes design decisions in certain zones. The Commission develops and recommends the City's Comprehensive Plan to City Council.

- **Architectural Review Board:** A five-member board that reviews and approves new construction, demolition, and proposed design features on all buildings in the historic downtown area as well as demolition and new construction in the City's two residential historic districts.

- **Cemetery Advisory Board:** A six-member board that advises staff and City Council on issues pertaining to the operation and maintenance of the City's two cemeteries.

- **Board of Equalization:** A four-member board that sits following every general real estate re-assessment to hear appeals from property owners.

- **Industrial Development Authority:** A seven-member authority that issues tax-exempt industrial development bonds to enhance economic development opportunities.

- **Threshold:** A seven-member board that provides advice to City Council and staff concerning the need for and ways to address workforce housing as well as overseeing the operation of the City's low-income housing program.

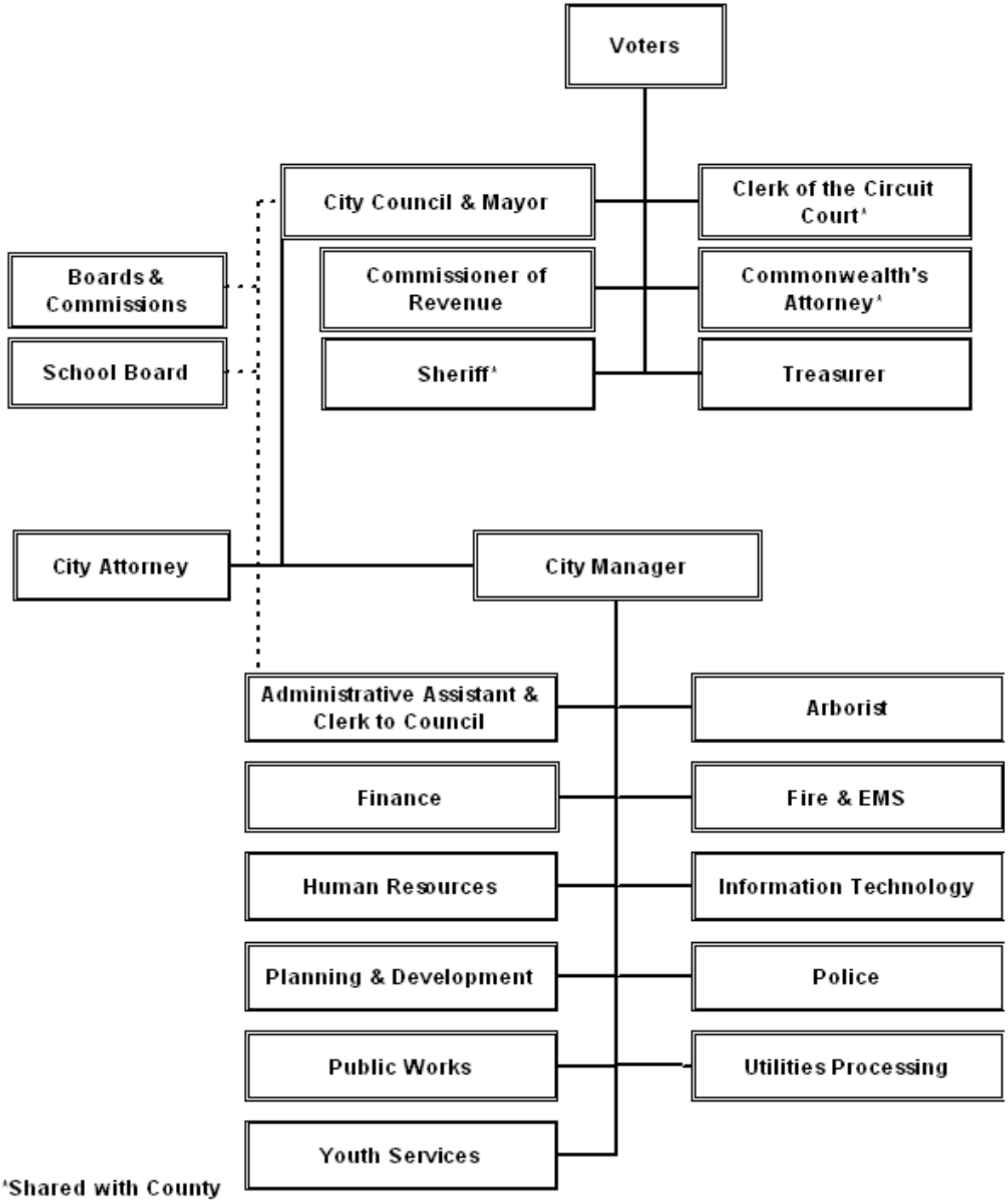
- **Tree Board:** A five-member board that provides advice to the City Council and City Arborist on the management of the City's trees.

- **Board of Zoning Appeals:** A five-member board that hears and acts on requests for variances from the terms of the City's Zoning Ordinance and on appeals of zoning decisions made by the Zoning Administrator.

The City Council also appoints members to a number of regional organizations such as the Rockbridge Area Community Services Board, the Dabney Lancaster Community College Board, the Regional Disabilities Board, the Rockbridge Regional Library Board, the Maury Service Authority, the Regional Tourism Board, the Social Services Board, the Total Action Against Poverty Board, the Regional Jail Board and the Central Dispatch Board.

Table 10-1 shows an organizational chart of the City of Lexington government.

CITY OF LEXINGTON
Organizational Chart



*Shared with County

. . . . Appointing authority only

In 2008, the City conducted a community wide citizens survey to ascertain citizen's attitudes toward quality of the services provided and feedback on additional services that should be considered. This type of citizen feedback is an important tool to monitor the attitudes of our residents and should be performed every 3 to 4 years.

GOAL: The City should continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services provided by City staff and regional entities.

CITY FINANCES

REVENUES

The City's ability to meet the demands and expectations of its citizens is, to a significant extent, dependent on the extent of the community resources which can be made available to support those demands. The City derives its power to tax from the State constitution and statutes. A tax or user fee may not be imposed without specific state authorization.

Table 10-2 reports the amount of revenue collected from the several sources utilized by the City for fiscal years 2007 through 2009.

- **Property Taxes** - made up of real estate and personal property taxes, are the City's largest revenue source comprising 34% of total general fund revenues.

- **Other Local Taxes** - consisting of sales taxes, consumer utility taxes, business license taxes, short term rental taxes, franchise license taxes, motor vehicle taxes, bank stock taxes and food and lodging taxes is the second largest revenue source, making up 23% of total revenue.

- **Revenues from the Use of Money** - consists of revenue generated from interest on excess City funds invested in interest bearing accounts.

- **Charges for Service** - consists of user fees such as refuse fees, swimming pool admissions, billing for EMS services and the operation of the City cemeteries.

- **Miscellaneous Revenue** - includes funds paid to the City by Rockbridge County under the terms of the Revenue Sharing Agreement and voluntary payment in lieu of taxes made by Washington and Lee University.

- **Recovered Costs** - represents payments generated by joint services agreements with Rockbridge County and in some instances with Buena Vista for the provision of City operated services included fire and rescue, dispatch, recreation and tourism.

- **Revenue from the Commonwealth** - includes support for local law enforcement, motor vehicle and mobile home taxes, recordation taxes, state support for the Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue and Electoral Board, the state share of public assistance, street maintenance payments, the state portion of the personal property tax and state grants for such things as fire safety, emergency medical services and funds for the arts. In FY 2009, the State funded 13% of Lexington's general fund revenues.

Table 10-1
General Fund Revenues
by Fiscal Year

General Fund Revenues						
	FY07		FY08		FY09	
Category	**Amount**	**%**	**Amount**	**%**	**Amount**	**%**
Property Taxes	$3,914,166	30%	$4,144,129	31%	$4,438,289	34%
Other Local Taxes	$2,914,381	22%	$3,078,467	23%	$3,060,864	23%
Permits & Licenses	$180,066	1%	$108,095	1%	$79,233	1%
Fine & Forfeitures	$103,998	1%	$106,274	1%	$124,101	1%
Rev. from use of Money[1]	$1,018,006	8%	$724,035	5%	$221,502	2%
Charges for Services	$829,096	6%	$777,319	6%	$847,968	6%
Misc. Revenue	$1,999,223	15%	$2,282,019	17%	$2,381,840	18%
Recovered Costs[2]	$208,387	2%	$254,618	2%	$179,705	1%
State	$1,778,932	14%	$1,922,960	14%	$1,713,063	13%
Federal[3]	$166,870	1%	$41,123	0%	$108,404	1%
Totals	$13,113,125	100%	$13,439,039	100%	$13,154,969	100%

Rev. from use of Money[1] - Money from the Bonds issued for the construction of the courthouse were invested until they were required to pay the City's share of the cost. As this money was drawn down, the interest payments became significantly less. The City also invests its cash reserves including the unappropriated fund balance. Interest rates declined from 5.35% at the beginning of FY 07 to 0.56% at the end of FY 09.

Recovered Costs[2] - The primary source of revenue comes from payments from Rockbridge County for fire and rescue services provided by the City to county residents. Payment rates were renegotiated during the period of time reflected in the table.

Federal[3] - Funds in this category are payments and grants received from the federal government. Each year the City receives approximately $40,000 to support social services programs for City residents. The balance reflects grants from the federal government. Grants have been received from agencies such as the Department of Forestry, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration and Homeland Security

EXPENDITURES

Table 10-2 documents actual expenditures for fiscal years 2007 through 2009. The categories of Public Safety, Public Works and Education (the general fund support for the City school system) are the largest cost centers to the City. The percentage of the overall budget that each category represents fluctuates depending on the amount of money spent each year for equipment and capital projects.

Table 10-2
General Fund Expenditures
by Fiscal Year

General Fund Expenditures						
Category	**FY07**		**FY08**		**FY09**	
	Amount	**%**	**Amount**	**%**	**Amount**	**%**
General Govt.	$1,024,446	8%	$1,296,758	9%	$1,174,738	8%
Judicial Adm.	$162,997	1%	$208,306	1%	$203,424	1%
Public Safety	$2,706,499	23%	$2,420,283	18%	$2,688,801	18%
Public Works	$2,693,693	23%	$2,744,448	21%	$2,755,075	18%
Health & Welfare	$569,253	5%	$628,278	4%	$565,015	4%
Education	$1,892,922	17%	$2,186,670	16%	$2,553,320	17%
Leisure Services[1]	$412,273	3%	$1,023,055	7%	$1,287,543	9%
Community Dev.	$767,822	6%	$756,482	5%	$696,579	5%
Non-Departmental[2]	$404,902	3%	$1,163,392	8%	$1,745,045	12%
Debt Service	$1,429,796	11%	$1,607,612	11%	$1,263,770	8%
Totals	$12,064,603	100%	$14,035,284	100%	$14,933,310	100%

Leisure Services[1] - These expenditures have varied significantly because of unique, one time expenditures. These include the purchase of the Peebles property to provide access to the Moore's Creek tract to enable it to be sold to the state, funds spent on improvements to Jordan's Point, purchase of additional property for Brewbaker field and the construction of the indoor swimming pool.

Non-Departmental[2] - The increases shown for FY08 and FY09 reflect the purchase of a new fire truck in each of these years.

GENERAL FUND BALANCE

A balance exists in the general fund when revenues exceed expenditures for a fiscal year. The balance increases as the excess revenues for more than one fiscal year accrue to the next. A positive fund balance gives the City revenues with which to operate over the course of the fiscal year and allows for short term fluctuations in either projected revenues or expenditures without having to adjust the tax rate. Without a positive fund balance the City might have to borrow money for short periods of time when expenses exceed revenues. A significant positive fund balance may also allow the City to finance small scale capital projects without having to issue bonds to finance their construction.

At the end of FY2009, the General Fund balance was $6,842,571. A portion of this balance is restricted for future specific uses and a portion is unrestricted and available for the above mentioned purposes. Examples of restricted funds are those set aside for future replacement of equipment and donations for specific purposes, such as fire and rescue.

GOAL: Maintain no less than 20% of general fund operating expenses as unrestricted fund balance.

BONDED DEBT

As of FY2011, the City will have just over $20 million in principal remaining on two projects' financing. The first was the $12 million borrowed for the City's share of the new regional courthouse and parking deck, and the second, the $9 million borrowed in two financings to pay for the Lylburn Downing Middle School and Community Center renovations. State statutes limit the amount of general obligation debt a governmental entity may issue to 10% of its total taxable assessed valuation. The debt limitation for the City as of FY09 is just over $60 million, which greatly exceeds its actual debt.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue to fund small scale capital projects with general fund dollars to minimize bonded debt.

The City maintains an "A1" rating from Moody's for general obligation debt, but it has been many years since the City has been rated. The most recent financing has been through either state obligations or a local government pool, where risk is shared. If the City were to issue additional future debt on its own, a re-assessment of this rating would be needed.

The next major investment that the City will need to address is a complete renovation or re-construction of the Waddell Elementary School that could cost between $8 and $12 million. With the existing economic situation and the amount of debt presently obligated, this project will need to be deferred for a number of years.

The City has greater long term debt obligations than a review of the debt service schedule would indicate. The Maury Service Authority has issued a bond that is backed by the water revenues of both the City and County Public Service Authority for improvements to the water plant. The

balance on that bond was approximately $1,525,000 in the fall of 2010. The debt service on these bonds is about $195,000 per year and will not be retired until FY2021. The City's share of this debt payment is about $124,000 a year and is funded through the water rate.

The MSA also has issued two series of bonds for the wastewater plant, with the County paying half of the debt service cost. The balance on this bond was approximately $7,900,000 in the fall of 2010. The City is responsible for $565,619 annually in the series that retires in FY2018, and $163,400 per year in the issue expiring in FY2031. These costs are supported by the sewer rate.

The MSA is also considering the issuance of $7 million in 40 year debt, through the Rural Development Agency for constructing a water loop around the City. The City's exact share of this debt has yet to be determined. Financing's for any of our other regional organizations have been retired and, at this time, no additional debt is anticipated.

FINANCIAL CONDITION

Overall, the City is in a relatively strong financial condition to meet the challenges it is facing. The City leaders have historically been conservative in their management of the City's finances and in taking on additional significant obligations. They have consistently made long-term financial decisions by not deferring costs and by investing the needed capital funds in the City's infrastructure. Except for the Waddell Elementary School, basic facilities (Rescue Squad, Fire Station, Public Works, Police, Courthouse, Community Center and Middle School) have been provided for recently. The challenge now is to provide the needed maintenance investment.

GOAL: The City should create a financial plan that would allow the School Board to either significantly renovate or construct a new Waddell Elementary School.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should budget sufficient funds to properly maintain the existing facilities and infrastructure.

The greatest immediate threat to the City's finances is the national recession and the resulting reduction is state and local revenues. The impacts of economic downturns are not usually felt in local government budgets until a year after the downturn begins. For the past year, Lexington has seen a weakening in its local revenues, but primarily due to the stability of our largest economic drivers (the two universities), our revenues have not decreased as severely as have revenues in most jurisdictions.

Our greatest challenge, immediately and in the near future, is to respond to the reductions being made in state revenues. This is being felt most severely in the school system, but also through many relatively small reductions to the programs that the state has previously supported or mandated. As yet, none of the mandates imposed by the state have been modified to reflect the reductions in financial support. The City needs to seriously evaluate the services it provides to determine whether or not they are still of a high enough priority to continue funding.

GOAL: **The City must respond to reductions in support to localities being made by the Commonwealth.**

RECOMMENDATION: Review State mandates which are no longer being fully funded by the Commonwealth to determine the appropriate level of local support

It is important for the City to continue to look to the long term in managing its finances. Although the City has one of the lowest real estate tax rates of the thirty nine cities in Virginia, we have the highest percentage of tax-exempt real estate in the state, and a penny on the tax rate raises only $55,000 in additional revenues. This emphasizes the need to continue to broaden our revenue stream so that property taxes are not the only source of additional revenue.

Broadening the revenue stream could be accomplished in two principal ways: increasing the tax base, and imposing fees for some of the services rendered by the City for which there are, presently, no charges.

Increasing the tax base is one of the primary goals of the City's economic development program. Growing existing and new businesses is crucial to this effort, as is encouraging the return of existing tax-exempt properties to the tax rolls.

The City presently imposes a number of fees, the largest being billings for EMS services and solid waste collection for businesses. There are innumerable other areas where fees could be imposed for services rendered including garbage fees for residential solid waste collection, private use of park facilities, and fire and residential rental inspections.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to explore possible ways to diversify its revenue sources.

The greatest financial challenges that we are facing, in addition to the recession gripping our country and the reductions in state and local revenues, are: 1) the need to invest in a new or significantly renovated Waddell Elementary School, 2) the need to provide additional space at our regional jail either through new construction or housing prisoners in other jails, 3) the need to provide a transfer station alternative to the closing of our landfill in 2012, and 4) the need to rebuild the East Nelson Street bridge. Each of these issues must be dealt with in the years to come, without compromising the low taxes and high quality of services presently provided.

FINANCIAL GOALS

Based on the analysis and discussion contained in this section, the following goals are recommended:

GOAL: The City should continue its conservative fiscal policies while realistically planning for long term service and facility needs desired by its citizens.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to explore possible ways to diversify its revenue sources.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should include the identification of mechanisms to ensure that all users of City services pay their fair share of the costs of local government.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to identify ways to share the cost of services and to provide services more economically by working with Rockbridge County and Buena Vista.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to invest in its existing economy including the downtown and the other commercial areas to maximize its revenue potential since there is little potential for major new development in the City.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should be conservative in approving new municipal expenditures since there is little potential for significant new revenues.

ANNEXATION IN VIRGINIA

Lexington cannot expand its revenue base by annexing land. Virginia's unique concept of counties and independent cities originally assumed that as land became converted to urban uses, cities would annex such land to provide the services required when large numbers of people live in close proximity.

Annexation began to decline in the 1950's when counties in the Tidewater area became cities themselves to prevent having portions of their territory annexed and as increasingly urban and suburban counties began to exercise their domination of the State legislature. Legislation that became effective in 1987 severely limited annexation by placing a moratorium on annexation by cities. Though this legislation has had numerous sunset provisions, it has been consistently extended and it is unlikely that it will ever be repealed.

Current Virginia law still authorizes cities to annex land from surrounding counties in two ways. The first is a boundary line adjustment by agreement between a city and county. As the name implies, this is an agreement entered into between a city and county that voluntarily adjusts the jurisdiction's boundary lines. This is usually limited to small adjustments moving the lines to account for properties bisected by municipal boundaries or neighborhoods split between jurisdictions. These agreements must be approved by a judge.

The second method is citizen initiated annexations. In this method, the property owner may petition the circuit court to have their property annexed by the neighboring jurisdiction or citizens may submit petitions containing 51% of the qualified voters and 51% of the owners of real estate in the area proposed for annexation. Citizen initiated annexations are subject to review by the state

Commission on Local Government and a special three judge panel. The governing body of the affected jurisdiction may decline the annexation.

THE CITY OF LEXINGTON, ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY REVENUE SHARING AND WAIVER OF ANNEXATION RIGHTS AGREEMENT

In December of 1983 the City of Lexington notified the Commission on Local Government and Rockbridge County of its intent to initiate annexation proceedings for 686 acres of land surrounding the City. Rockbridge County announced its intention to actively challenge the proposed annexation.

The Commission on Local Government appointed a mediator to assist the two governments in negotiating a suitable settlement. In May of 1984 an agreement was reached. After reviewing the agreement, the Commission on Local Government recommended that it be rejected because the commissioners felt that it did not adequately guarantee the long-term economic viability of Lexington. The commission recommended that several amendments be made to the agreement, including a provision for a review of the plan every five years to allow for revisions. Any time after the review, the City should be given the option of reverting to town status, consolidating with the county or ending the agreement.

A revised agreement incorporating the majority of the changes recommended by the Commission was agreed to in March of 1986; however, the suggestion that Lexington be able to cancel the agreement on its own was not included. The agreement was modified to allow the City to revert to town status or consolidate with the County. The annual payment to be made by the county to the City was 5 cents per hundred of assessed county real estate value and 7 percent of the county's non-property local tax revenues.

The result was a written agreement, reviewed by the Commission on Local Government and approved by the court, and signed by representatives of the City and County on November 1, 1986. This document specified that:

1. The City of Lexington renounced its statutory right of annexation in perpetuity unless modified by mutual agreement or by operation of law.

2. Rockbridge County agreed to annually pay to the City five (5) cents per one hundred dollars of all real property taxed in Rockbridge County based on the previous year's assessment.

3. Rockbridge County also agreed to pay annually to the City a sum equal to seven (7) percent of the non-property local tax revenues of the County. These revenues include the local option sales tax, consumer or utility tax, business license tax, motor vehicle decals, franchise tax, recordation and probate fees and meals and lodgings tax.

4. Nothing in the agreement precludes the City from reverting to town status or consolidating with the County; however, the agreement would terminate if either of these actions was accomplished.

CITY VERSUS TOWN STATUS

When a city finds itself in economic difficulty, one of the options available to it is to change its governmental structure and revert to a town. This has the impact of removing some of the most expensive of the mandated services such as schools, courts and social services from the direct responsibility of the locality and places them back on the county. Of course, real estate and other taxes previously paid to the city would then be paid to the county as well as the town. The town would continue to provide many of its basic services such as law enforcement, street and sidewalk maintenance, refuse collection, land use control and building inspection.

One of the primary reasons small to mid-sized cities have investigated the option of reverting to a town is due to the state's moratorium on annexation. This moratorium has been in place since the 1980s and, although originally intended for only a limited period of time, has been extended regularly and, in all likelihood will never be removed.

This constricts the natural growth of a city with most new development occurring outside its borders. This severely restricts revenue growth potential while leaving the cost of core services with the city. Towns are not restricted from annexation and so have greater potential to expand their boundaries to include the surrounding development.

Unlike cities, towns are not precluded from annexation by the Commonwealth. As a result they have greater potential to expand their boundaries to incorporate surrounding development. Over the past 10 years many cities have evaluated the possibility of reverting to town status to mitigate their financial difficulties.

In recent years, both South Boston and Clifton Forge have reverted to town status and Bedford is seriously evaluating the option. Reversion plans must be reviewed by the State and approved by the courts and conditions may be attached. Both South Boston and Clifton Forge have had significant time limitations placed on their ability to annex additional land as a result of this process.

The Lexington City Council has reviewed the implications of reverting to town status and has decided that it is not in our best interest to pursue this option. One reason is that the financial status of the City is sound, with the revenue sharing payment contributing significantly to our financial base. As a town, Lexington would not receive this annual support.

The second principal reason is that Lexington does not want to give up the operation of its school system. Financially, the cost per student is less than the surrounding system that it would consolidate with and second, evaluated by any objective measure, Lexington operates an excellent system that reflects the priority Lexington places on a quality education.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to monitor actions by the State Legislature as well as court decisions related to city reversion to ensure that conclusions concerning Lexington's status as a city remain valid.

GOALS

Based on the analysis and discussion contained in this section, the following goals are recommended:

GOAL: The City should continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services provided by City staff and regional entities

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to identify ways to share the cost of services and to provide services more economically by working cooperatively with Rockbridge County and Buena Vista.

RECOMMENDATION: The City Manager and City Council should develop a plan to provide for an orderly transition for key staff members.

GOAL: Maintain no less than 20% of general fund operating expenses as unrestricted fund balance

GOAL: The City should create a financial plan that would allow the School Board to either significantly renovate or construct a new Waddell Elementary school.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should budget sufficient funds to properly maintain the existing facilities and infrastructure.

GOAL: The City should continue its conservative fiscal policies while realistically planning for long term service and facility needs desired by its citizens.

GOAL: The City must respond to reductions in support to localities being made by the Commonwealth

RECOMMENDATION: Review State mandates which are no longer being fully funded by the Commonwealth to determine the appropriate level of local support

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to explore possible ways to diversify its revenue sources.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should include the identification of mechanisms to ensure that all users of City services pay their fair share of the costs of local government.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should continue to invest in its existing economy including the downtown and the other commercial areas to maximize its revenue potential since there is little potential for major new development in the City.

RECOMMENDATION: The City should be conservative in approving new municipal expenditures since there is little potential for significant new revenues.

GOAL: The City should continue to monitor actions by the State Legislature as well as court decisions related to city reversion to ensure that conclusions concerning Lexington's status as a city remain valid.