



**CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA**  
**MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday February 4, 2014**

**AGENDA**

**I. Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.**

**II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum**

- **Welcome-Carl J. Kohan, Jr.**

**III. Approval of Minutes of January 2014 regular meeting**

**IV. Approval of Agenda**

**V. Hearing of Citizens Generally**

**VI. Public Hearings**

**VII. Site Plan /Subdivision**

**VIII. Old Business**

**IX. New Business**

- **VDOT Traffic Impact Analysis Comments**
- **Comprehensive Plan-public meetings draft**

**X. Reports**

**Chairman –Mr. Townes**

**City Manager – Mr. Mattis**

**Assistant Director of Public Works - Mr. Copple**

**Director of Planning and Community Development–Mr. Schanzenbacher**

**City Attorney – Mr. Fisher**

**XI. Adjournment.**

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CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
of the Planning Commission  
Tuesday, January 7, 2014

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Townes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum**

Mr. Schanzenbacher, Director of Planning and Community Development, called the roll.

Present: Mr. Townes  
Mrs. Hamilton  
Mr. Hartson  
Mrs. Schiff  
Mr. Freeland

Absent: Mr. Kollman

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated there was a quorum.

Also Present: City Manager Thomas A. Mattis, Planning Director George W. Schanzenbacher, Neighborhood Revitalization Planner Jamie Sherry, Assistant Director of Public Works Brian Copple and City Attorney Hugh Fisher.

**III. Approval of Minutes of December 4 and December 12, 2013**

Both sets of minutes were approved on a roll call vote with no changes at the end of the meeting.

**IV. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved with no changes.

**V. Annual Organization Meeting**

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Mr. Townes was reelected Chairman of the Planning Commission and Mr. Freeland was elected Vice-Chairman, both on a roll call vote.

Appointment of Secretary

Mr. Schanzenbacher was elected secretary of the Planning Commission on a roll call vote.

Appointment of member to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Mr. Freeland was appointed to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board on a roll call vote.

Adoption of Rules of Procedure

The Rules of Procedures were adopted as presented with the previous year's revisions to

section 6.1 and 6.2 on a roll call vote.

Annual report

Mr. Schanzenbacher reviewed the items in the Annual Report. The Commission approved the report on a roll call vote.

**VI. Hearing of Citizens Generally**

There were no citizens in the audience that wanted to be heard.

**VII. Public Hearings**

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that the representative for the public hearing was delayed because of the weather. He suggested that item be moved down on the agenda and the Commission agreed.

**VIII. Site Plan /Subdivisions**

S-14-1 Southpark Medical Park subdivision

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated this property is located at 325 Charles Dimmock Parkway, just south of Jennick Drive. He stated that Timmons Group has prepared a plat of the proposed subdivision on behalf of Dominion CH LLC. to subdivide the property into two (2) lots. He continued by saying the property is currently zoned GB General Business District. The existing lot is 8.732 acres, and was a former automobile dealership, which is being converted to a medical condominium. The proposed subdivision would also create an out parcel that would eventually be sold for retail purposes.

Derek Johnson, with the Timmons Group, along with Michael Sweeny, representing the applicant, was asked to address the Commission. Mr. Hartson asked if this is a renovation of the existing structure. Mr. Johnson stated it was all renovation with the exception of a canopy that was being constructed along with some removal of concrete to provide for additional landscaping. Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that the structure is in compliance with all the setback regulations.

Mrs. Hamilton asked if there was going to be landscaping in the parking lot area. Mr. Johnson stated that a majority of that area in front of the old dealership is for the new out parcel. Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that this application meets all the subdivision requirements. The new parcel will then be subject to site plan review.

Mr. Freeland asked if there will be adequate parking for the medical offices with the new parcel subdivided out. Mr. Johnson stated that they worked on the parking prior to developing the new plat and that there would be enough parking for the medical offices (lot 2). The use for the new parcel (lot 1) is unknown at this time.

S-14-1 was approved on a roll call vote.

S-14-2 Resubdivision of Lot 3 & 4 Dominion Southpark

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that this request is for the parcel right next door. He stated that the use is unknown, but any new development would have to meet site requirements

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in the future. He continued by stating Timmons Group has prepared a plat of the proposed subdivision on behalf of SP 445, LC to subdivide the property into three (3) lots. The property is currently zoned GB General Business District. The existing lot is 4.489 acres, and was a former automobile dealership.

Derek Johnson, with the Timmons Group, stated that this was to subdivide the property into three parcels for future development. Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that the existing building will have to meet parking requirements once the use is decided. This may require an adjustment to the subdivision, but that can be dealt with at a late time. Mr. Johnson stated he was aware that they may have to come back for an adjustment.

S-14-2 was approved on a roll call vote.

SP-14-1 Site Plan for Aldi –Charles Dimmock Parkway

Mr. Schanzenbacher reviewed the proposed site plan is for the development of a 17,018 square foot, retail grocery store, on a 2.938 acre site located near the southeast corner of Temple Ave and Charles Dimmock Parkway. He stated that this is currently a vacant lot behind Sonic restaurant.

David Ellington & Mark Boyd with Kimley-Horn and Associates along with Josh Walls Director of Real Estate from Aldi were there to address questions from the Commission. Mr. Townes asked if they had copies of the staff comments and if they would be able to address them. The applicant stated that they would be able to address them.

Mr. Freeland stated he was not familiar with the Aldi grocery stores. Mr. Walsh stated that there were 1200 Aldi stores in the United States. The store plans to expand 650 more stores in the next 5 years. He continued by stating Aldi is owned by Trader Joes and was originally from Germany. They have an exclusive brand which allows a savings on these products up to 20% less than Wal-Mart's prices. They also have fresh produce and meats. In addition to their own name brand items, they sell other popular brands such as Coca Cola that customers prefer. He stated they expect to expand 15 stores in the Richmond market and that the Colonial Heights market is very strong.

Mr. Mattis stated he was familiar with the store from his time in Ohio and Texas. He described the store as similar to Costco, but offering affordable groceries. Mr. Walsh agreed, but stated they are serving all demographics, including those with \$100,000 median income.

Mrs. Hamilton asked if there was an Aldi in Fredericksburg. Mr. Walsh stated there were four in the Fredericksburg area, the most recent off Route 17.

Mr. Mattis stated he learned through meetings with Mr. Walsh that Aldi was not concerned that Kroger is also locating in Colonial Heights, but in fact Kroger is one of the reasons they are coming to Colonial Heights. Mr. Walsh stated they do well in their competitor's markets. Mr. Townes stated he was not surprised by this information

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because when the tornado destroyed the original Wal-Mart, Kmart was planning to close the store until they decided to open across the street from Kmart.

Mr. Freeland had a question about the stormwater basin. He wanted to know if there will be a new one, or will they be using the existing one. Mr. Walsh stated they are looking to see if they have rights to use the existing pond. Their preference is to expand or improve the existing pond.

SP-14-1 was approved on a roll call vote.

### S-14-3 Resubdivision of Block H Gregory Subdivision

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that this is the item added to the agenda this evening. He stated the City of Colonial Heights is the applicant and it is related to the Kroger project. This is to subdivide the out parcel that is at the end of the subdivision along the former railroad right-of-way. The northern portion of the site will be combined with the Kroger site. It is .246 acres. It needed to be subdivided so it could be consolidated as part of the site that is being sold to Kroger.

Mr. Townes asked what would be done with the balance of the property. Mr. Schanzenbacher stated there were no plans for the site at this time. He stated it has been vacant since the subdivision was developed. Mr. Townes mentioned that this area was discussed during one of the public hearings. People were concerned with some nefarious activities there. He asked if there was something the City could do to help prevent this behavior. Mr. Mattis stated the City would look into it.

Mr. Freeland stated the CHARTS committee was looking at future trail sites throughout in the city. The former CSX railroad bed is one of the places they are looking to expand the trail. It could be an opportunity to link to the southern trails in the future.

S-14-3 was approved on a roll call vote.

### **IX. Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **X. New Business**

#### Violet Bank Garden Club-Blue Star Memorial- Martha Harville, President

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that a few months ago the Violet Bank Garden Club has contacted the City about installing a Blue Star Memorial, to honor the Armed Forces, which they would like to locate on Arlington Ave (in the median entrance to Violet Bank). He stated they were just at the beginning of the process. They are here tonight because the City Charter states that the Planning Commission must make a recommendation to the City Council on these matters.

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that in the staff report there are a couple of concerns including the guidelines for public signs Council approved last year. There is a proposed guideline for a historic sign. The proposed sign is not consistent, but it is unique in nature.

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Mrs. Martha Harville, president of the Violet Bank Garden Club stated it is a sign that is to be placed in the median in front of the Garden Club. The club would pay for the marker, which is made of aluminum.

Mrs. Schiff asked if it was going to be pole mounted. Mrs. Harville stated it will be 7 feet 6 inches high. The marker is 2-sided and is 41 x 45 inches.

Mr. Townes stated as a veteran he is in favor. Mrs. Harville stated it a tribute for past, present and future veterans. The program is part of the National Federation of Garden Clubs around the state.

Mr. Copple stated the club would need to get a right-of-way permit to ensure the sign did not cause driving sight hazard and there needs to be a maintenance agreement for the sign. Mrs. Harville stated she would like the City to install the sign.

The motion to recommend approval of the sign based on Engineering's comments to the City Council was passed on a roll call vote.

Mr. Mattis recommended the applicant talk to Mr. Schanzenbacher the next day and this item may be able to get onto City Council meeting in January.

Food Trucks (Mobile Food Vending)

Mr. Schanzenbacher stated that he included a Zoning Practice article on mobile food vending in the Commission's packet in anticipation of this activity being considered in the City. He stated that there have been several inquiries. He continued by saying communities are now beginning to develop rules and guidelines to guide the location and uses and or whether or not to allow these trucks. His goal with this first discussion is to get some feedback on the concept, how it might or might not fit into the City and then if so, how to proceed in developing guidelines, ordinances etc.

One recent example was an inquiry from the Southpark Mall, about bringing a food truck caravan to the mall, perhaps even on a regular basis. Another recent example was an inquiry about converting a former railroad car to an ice cream stand and semi permanently locating it on a parcel on the Boulevard.

Mr. Hartson agreed that there may be some concerns with these types of businesses. He suggested staff talk with other localities who have dealt with this issue. Mrs. Schiff asked if this was addressed with the itinerant merchant fee. Mr. Fisher stated that the way the City deals with itinerant merchant is very strict; perhaps there can be a food vendor exception.

Another concern included the health department regulations. Mr. Mattis stated that this should also be a discussion for City Council. Mr. Townes suggested that City Council address this matter and give the Commission guidance if they wished it to be pursued.

Ordinance No 14-2 To grant a special use permit to CBL and Associates Properties, Inc.  
After Mr. Schanzenbacher read the rules of a public hearing, he stated that the application

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and ordinance numbered 14-2 was to grant a special use permit to CBL and Associates Properties, Inc. for property which is a part of parcel #68034700011 and is zoned GB General Business District, to allow the installation of four (4) additional wall signs totaling approximately 409.30 square feet, on the building formerly occupied by Dillard's department store. The special use permit is needed because the signs' total square footage exceeds the 350 square foot maximum for building frontage.

CBL & Associates Properties Inc. is requesting approval to install 4 wall signs adjacent to Dicks's Sporting Goods. Five Below has proposed 2 signs and IHOP and Firehouse Subs also will install wall signs. The total square footage of all the proposed signage is greater than what is allowed in the zoning ordinance, which would be a maximum of 350 square feet. This property is currently zoned GB General Business District.

James Horsch Architect from Herschman Architects Inc. stated he was delayed because of the weather. He also stated he was representing CBL and he was there to request for additional square feet of signage. He discussed how CBL offered the tenants other options, but the tenants insisted they needed more signs. Most members of the Commission stated that the additional signage was to scale and appropriate.

Mrs. Hamilton stated she thought the extra signage is not necessarily better or desirable. Her preference would be for the signs to be smaller. She believes the goal is to make the mall more attractive and she thinks this request would not enhance the look of the mall.

Mr. Horsch stated the intent was to make improvements at the mall. He mentioned the new materials that will be used on the facade. Mr. Mattis stated that this is the concept that was agreed to when Dicks made the request of the Commission.

Mr. Fisher stated the motion would be to approve Resolution 14-1.

Mr. David Hoopsick of 401 Dupuy Avenue stated he agreed with Mrs. Hamilton. He stated that there is no reason to have an ordinance if the Commission keeps granting the extra signage.

Mrs. Schiff agreed that the sign ordinance is appropriate, but she believes the mall is appropriate for extra square feet of signs.

Resolution 14-1 was approved (4-1) on a roll call vote with Mrs. Hamilton voting no.

**XI. Committee Reports to the Commission**

There were no reports from Mr. Mattis, Mr. Copple, Mr. Schanzenbacher or Mr. Fisher.

Mr. Townes asked the Commission member to get the financial conflict of interest to the City Clerk if they have not done so already.

Mr. Fisher stated that the minutes have not been approved. At that time, the Commission voted unanimously on a roll call vote to approve the December 4 and December 12, 2013 minutes.

**XII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully,

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George W. Schanzenbacher  
Director, Department of Planning and Community Development

APPROVAL:

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Charles E. Townes  
Chairman



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

RICHMOND DISTRICT  
2430 Pine Forest Drive  
COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VA 23834  
[www.VDOT.Virginia.gov](http://www.VDOT.Virginia.gov)

**Gregory A. Whirley**  
COMMISSIONER

January 16, 2014

Brian Copple, Asst. Director of Public Works  
City of Colonial Heights  
201 James Avenue  
PO Box 3401  
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

**(Sent Via E-mail)**

**SUBJECT:** Temple Ave. (Rt 144) Kroger  
Comprehensive Plan Amendment / Tract Rezoning  
VDOT Traffic Impact Analysis Comments

Dear Mr. Schanzenbacher:

The Virginia Department of Transportation (Department) has reviewed the subject Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated December 2013 (hardcopy received at the Chesterfield Office on December 20, 2013) in accordance with the 24VAC30-155 Regulations promulgated through Chapter 527 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly, and offers the following.

Associated with the location of the Kroger is a proposed amendment to the classification of the Kroger tract on the City's Comprehensive Plan's Land Use and Transportation Plan map and a reclassification on the zoning of that tract. Temple Ave. fronting the site is City maintained. However, as the proposed site is located within 3000' of a connection to a state maintained roadway and will generate in excess of 5000 vpd, the threshold for triggering the requirement of a rezoning TIA submittal is met.

It should be noted that our review focuses on impacts to the highway system in which the Department has maintenance responsibility. It is understood that on City maintained facilities, the City of Colonial Heights may have comments in addition to those provided below.

1. **Section 1 Background Information, page 2:** Referenced in the last paragraph is the Department's I-95 Interchange Improvement Project. Please identify the project as follows: 095-106-122, P101, P102, R201, C502, C501 (UPC 85623).

**2. Section 2.3 Existing Traffic Operations, page 5:**

- It is stated that: "LOS C is considered to be acceptable for peak hour traffic operations in urbanized areas such as the future development." Is this based on VDOT or City's policy? Please clarify in the report.
- Please note that in the table in the following page, LOS D movements are not marked in red, as in other tables; if LOS D is considered unacceptable, please list this as red, too.

**3. Section 2.3 Existing Traffic Operations – Table 1, page 6:** This table (and other tables describing traffic operations) does not include available storage and maximum queues. Please review and revise as appropriate to ensure these are also provided in the tables.

**4. Section 2.3 Existing Traffic Operations, page 7:**

- Shouldn't Figure 2 be called "existing traffic volumes"?
- The existing lane configuration figure, the existing operational conditions figure, and the existing land use figures appear to be missing. Please provide these figures.

**5. Section 3.2 Background Traffic Operations, page 11 / Table 3, page 12:**

- Same as comment #3 (with the exception of maximum queue).
- Shown on the table is footnote (1) under the Maximum Queue PM Peak column. However there is no reference as to the meaning of the footnote. Please address.
- Cited under the section is an LOS degradation (PM peak from 2015 to 2021) at the Boulevard/Temple Ave. intersection from 'D' to 'E'. However it does not appear that the same is reflected in Table 3 for that intersection. Please clarify.

**6. Section 3.3 Freeway and Ramp Segment Analysis, page 15:** In table 4, the densities are provided but not the LOS associated with these densities. Please provide the associated LOS.

**7. Section 4.0 Trip Generation, Distribution and Assignment, page 15:**

- Cited in the study (and desired by the Department) is the Temple Ave. access to the site being a right-in/right-out for the 2015 opening, with the anticipation that the crossover be closed with VDOT's interchange improvement project. However, the Figure 9 Build Opening Year traffic volumes identify the intersection as a full access (utilizing the crossover) as does the Figure 7 Conceptual Land Use Plan. Please revise the figures accordingly to reflect the partial access. Also revise the analysis worksheets and adjust the Figure 9 traffic volumes accordingly.
- Noted under the referenced section is the Hamilton Ave. access providing for a full movement. However not addressed/analyzed in the report is the necessity for dedicated right and left turn lanes into the site off of Hamilton Ave. Recommended is

providing a warrant analysis in accordance with VDOT's turn lane warrants. The same applies for a dedicated RTL at the Temple Ave. access.

*Note that in accordance with the Ch. 527 Regulations, pass by trip reductions apply only to volumes on adjacent streets, not to ingress or egress volumes at entrances serving the site. All turn lane analysis shall be evaluated without the reduction applied to the peak hour volumes.*

- The proposed Temple Ave. access location is not in compliance with the Department's Access Management regulation spacing standards from an interchange ramp (within the limited access right-of-way). Required is a 750' spacing; as proposed approximately 595' is available. Note that associated with the Departments Temple Ave./I-95 Interchange

project an Access Management waiver has been granted. Please note as such in the analysis.

**8. Section 4.1 Site Generated Traffic Volumes – Table 5, page 17:** The Table 5 trip generation summary referenced in the section does not identify the applicable ITE code for each proposed land use. Please revise the table accordingly.

**9. Section 4.2 Site Trip Distribution and Site-generated Traffic Volumes, page 20:** A separate figure with trip distribution percentages per movement is not included. Please provide a figure with the trip distribution percentages per movement.

**10. Section 5.2 Network Operations -Table 6, page 25:**

- Same as comment #3 (with the exception of maximum queue).
- Shown on the table is footnote (1) under the Maximum Queue PM Peak column. However there is no reference as to the meaning of the footnote. Please address.

**11. Section 5.3 Arterial Weave Analysis, page 28:**

- How was the WB through queue at Hamilton (with and without improvements) incorporated into the weaving analysis? Please explain in the report.
- An illustration showing the traffic weaving volumes and available distance would be helpful; please provide in the report.

**12. Section 5.4 Freeway and Ramp Segment Analysis, page 28:** Same as comment #5.

**13. Section 5.5 Proposed Mitigation Measures, page 29:** Associated with the recommended Temple Ave./Hamilton Ave. improvements is the addition of a WB LTL along Temple and the provision of a receiving lane along Hamilton Ave. Not addressed is the potential need for additional right-of-way along both roadways to construct the improvements. Please address in

the narrative. Also should additional right-of-way be necessary, identify the proposed limits on the conceptual layout (see comment 16).

14. **Section 5.6 Mitigation Network Operations – Tables 9 and 10, pages 32 and 33:** Same as comment #3 (with the exception of maximum queue).
15. **Section 6.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities, page 36:** How do the pedestrian improvements fit with any existing facilities or any Colonial Heights ped/bike plan? Please explain in the report.
16. **Figure 7, page 18:** Please provide a legible copy of the proposed site layout. Also, indicate the proposed right-of-way improvements (access turn lanes; see comment 7). Include the recommended mitigative measures cited in Section 5.5. Show the existing right-of-way along with the proposed right-of-way to accommodate the improvements.

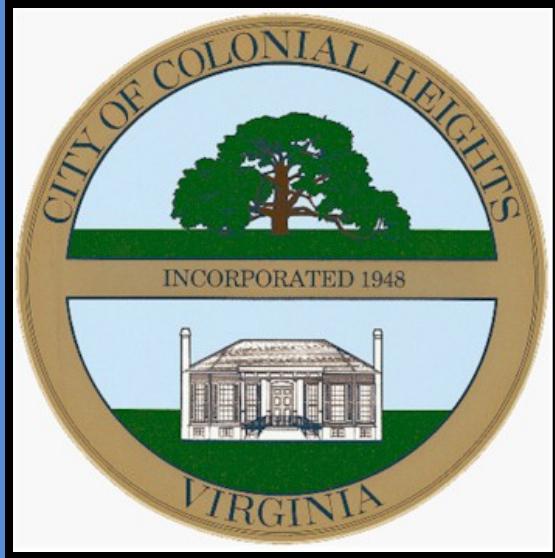
**Please have the applicant revise the study addressing the comments noted above. Upon resubmission to the Department, review will commence. Requested with study resubmission is a narrative response to the comment items noted above.**

In order to expedite revisions to this study, VDOT staff would welcome an opportunity to meet and discuss any and all of the above comments. If you have any questions or require any additional information, I can be reached at 804-863-4012.

Sincerely,

**Brian Lokker, PE**  
**Area Land Use Engineer, Central**

CC (Via E-mail): R. Svejkovsky (VDOT)  
F. Gontaruk (VDOT)  
S. Hayes (VDOT)  
J. Hedrick (VDOT)  
C. Henley (Colonial Hts.)



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan Update 2014-2044

January 30, 2014 Draft



## **Acknowledgements**

### **City Council Members**

C. Scott Davis - Mayor  
Diane H. Yates - Vice-Mayor  
Milton E. Freeland, Jr.  
Kenneth B. Frenier  
W. Joe Green, Jr.  
Gregory Kochuba  
John T. Wood

### **Planning Commission**

Charles E. Townes - Chairman  
Milton E. Freeland, Jr. – Vice-Chairman  
Mary Ann Hamilton  
Mitchell Hartson  
William Kollman  
Rita C. Schiff  
Carl J. Kohan, Jr.

### **Citizen Planning Committee**

Lia Tremblay – Chairman  
Linda Andrews  
R. L. Dunn  
Betty Estes  
Roger M. Green  
Kathi Jo Harris-Temple  
Frank Lundie  
Wilbur "Rusty" Sirles  
Cornelia "Connie" Temple-Thornton  
William "Kirk" Thibault  
Carolyn A Thompson  
Nancy Vance

### **City Administration and Key Staff**

Thomas L. Mattis, City Manager  
George Schanzenbacher, AICP, Director of Planning and Community Development  
Jamie Sherry, AICP, Neighborhood Revitalization Planner

### **Citizens of Colonial Heights**

Thanks to the many citizens of the City of Colonial Heights who participated in this planning process and contributed to the development of this Comprehensive Plan. Without their support and vision, this Plan could not have been achieved.

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction and History**

### **Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan**

Virginia law requires all localities within the Commonwealth to prepare a comprehensive plan setting forth the government's long-range policies for general development.

A comprehensive plan is a long-range, community plan that covers a period of twenty to thirty years; however, many of the strategies contained within this plan may be targeted for implementation much sooner. A comprehensive plan considers a community's existing and future needs for housing, the economy, public facilities, environmental protection and transportation.

### **Planning Process**

The existing comprehensive plan for the City of Colonial Heights is called a "Community Development Plan". It provides a basis for decision making by the City Council and Planning Commission, as well as the City Manager and his administration, in daily operations. This plan was adopted in 1997, and although it has been amended through the years, it was in need of a comprehensive update.

In the spring of 2011, a City-wide Visioning Meeting was held in which attendees worked in groups to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the City. Additionally, the summer of same year, the City conducted a Citizen Survey.

During that summer, City Council, with the recommendation of the City's Planning Commission, appointed a Citizen Planning Committee to help guide the planning process. The committee was made up of neighborhood leaders from around the City, members of the business community, and civic organizations.

The Citizen Planning Committee reviewed the results of both the visioning meeting and the survey and, through a series of exercises, identified areas of community consensus that were ultimately used to articulate a Vision Statement for this plan.

Over a series of three years, this committee worked with City staff to examine existing conditions and demographic trends and met with department representatives. After careful consideration, they put forth this document.

### **Public Participation and Comments**

There will be three open houses held in the spring of 2014. Open houses will be held at varying locations in the City and on different dates to give residents ample opportunity to provide input on the draft plan prior to consideration by City Council. Please check the City's website for dates and locations: [www.colonialheightsva.gov](http://www.colonialheightsva.gov).

Comments on this draft are being recorded for the public record at the Colonial Heights Department of Planning and Community Development. Comments may be emailed to [sherryj@colonialheightsva.gov](mailto:sherryj@colonialheightsva.gov) or faxed to (804) 524-8755. Comments may also be mailed or hand delivered to the Department of Planning and Community Development located at 201 James Avenue, Colonial Heights, VA 23834. Please direct questions about this document to Jamie Sherry at 804-520-9382.

**Public hearings will be held by both the City Planning Commission as well as by City Council prior to consideration for adoption.**

## **History**

Colonial Heights, located in southeastern Virginia and originally a part of Chesterfield County, became a town in 1926 and an incorporated city in 1948. Its current charter as a fully-independent city was granted in 1960. Colonial Heights' history goes back much further, however, as it was the site of significant battles during both the American Revolution and the Civil War.

The name Colonial Heights results from an incident during the American Revolutionary War. In 1781, the French troops of Lafayette, known as the Colonials, set up artillery on the heights overlooking the Appomattox River and Petersburg, where British forces were located. Legend indicates that an English soldier stationed in Petersburg, upon seeing Lafayette's troops across the river, exclaimed, "Look! There are the Colonials, up on the Heights!" Hence, the name Colonial Heights was born. The area came to be known as Colonial Heights and the name was given to a subdivision of the Oak Hill tract in 1906.

The earliest people to inhabit the area were members of the Algonquin Indian tribe, who apparently roamed along the Appomattox River. Several areas in present day Colonial Heights still retain their Indian names.

British colonists first settled in the area in 1620, approximately two weeks prior to the settlement of Plymouth, Massachusetts. A small group sailed up the Appomattox River looking for clear land, and they finally settled in Conjurer's Field, an area named by the Indians after one of their magicians who was thought to have cast spells over the confluences of the waters. Shortly thereafter, Charles Magnor registered the first land patent in the area for 650 acres, which he later developed into a plantation before selling it in 1634.

### **Brick House**

During the period 1677-1685, one of the area's historic landmarks was constructed with the building of the Brick House, now thought to be the oldest permanent structure in Colonial Heights. One wall of the house survived a disastrous fire in 1879.

### **Violet Bank**

The first recorded settlement in Colonial Heights was by Thomas Shore. In 1775, he purchased 144 acres of land along the northern bank of the Appomattox River, across from Petersburg. There he built his mansion and called it Violet Bank.

Later, in 1864, during the Civil War, the mansion and grounds of Violet Bank became headquarters for General Robert E. Lee. Lee was camped at Violet Bank from June through September of 1864 during the siege of Petersburg.

Today, Violet Bank, owned by the City of Colonial Heights, serves as a Civil War museum and is a registered Virginia Historic Landmark

### **Regional Setting**

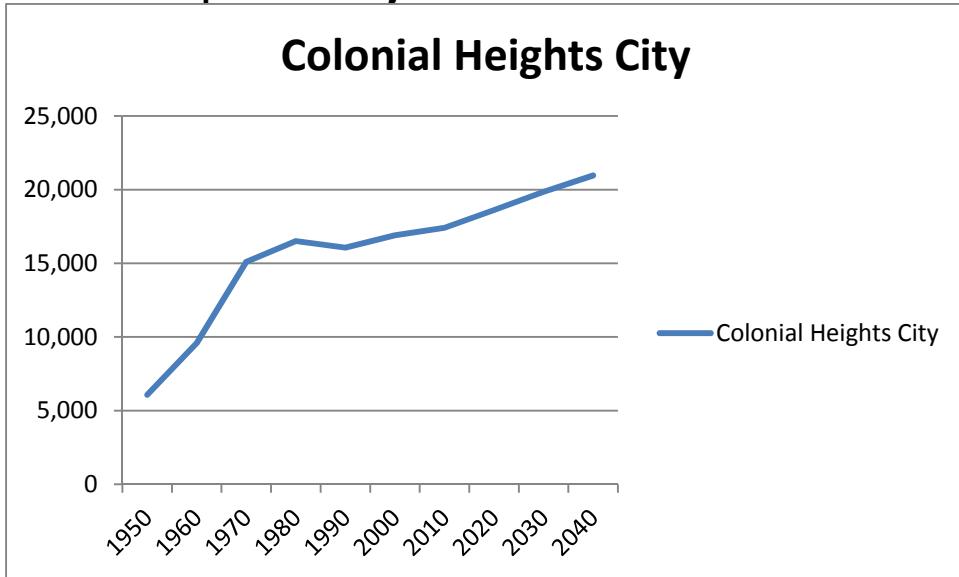
The City of Colonial Heights is located 20 miles south of Richmond, Virginia's state capital, and 120 miles south of the nation's capital. The City of Petersburg lies directly across the Appomattox River. Colonial Heights is located where the Tidewater plain meets the Piedmont plateau. The City is bordered to the south by Petersburg, to the east by the Appomattox River, and by Chesterfield County to the north. Colonial Heights has a land area of 8.15 square miles or 5,216 acres. Altitudes range from sea level to about 95 feet. Mean temperature is about 40 degrees Fahrenheit in January and 78 degrees Fahrenheit in July. The annual precipitation is about 40 inches.

The City's location, as part of the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area, provides the City with access to the area's dynamic business complex. In addition to serving as a manufacturing, distribution, and trade center, Richmond is also the financial center of the Mid-Atlantic region. Government is a major employer in the immediate Tri-Cities area (Colonial Heights, Petersburg, and Hopewell) with its proximity to Fort Lee. The City is also the site of a regional shopping mall, Southpark, which opened in spring of 1989.

### **Community Profile Demographics**

Colonial Heights is a small, independent city of approximately 17,411. Most of the eight square miles of Colonial Heights is developed into a mix of residential and neighborhood level business uses, with the exception of the Southpark Mall, a regional commercial district on the east side of Interstate 95. Colonial Heights is included as part of the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Nearby Ft. Lee is an active duty, multi-services training facility that creates significant impact on the local economy.

### Exhibit 1: Population Projections



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

### Population

The City of Colonial Heights has experienced continued growth for more than 50 years. The most significant growth period for the City was between 1950 and 1960. This was due, in part, to the 1954 and 1957 annexations. The City continued to grow at a relatively fast pace until the 1980s when the population stabilized. With the exception of a slight decrease in population in the 1990s, the City's population has continued to grow, although at a slightly slower pace. It is estimated that the City will continue to grow over the next 30 years.

### Exhibit 2: Population Projections

	Colonial Heights City	% Change
1950	6,077	
1960	9,587	58
1970	15,097	57
1980	16,509	9
1990	16,064	-3
2000	16,897	5
2010	17,411	3
2020	18,620	7
2030	19,855	7
2040	20,960	6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

## Population and Race

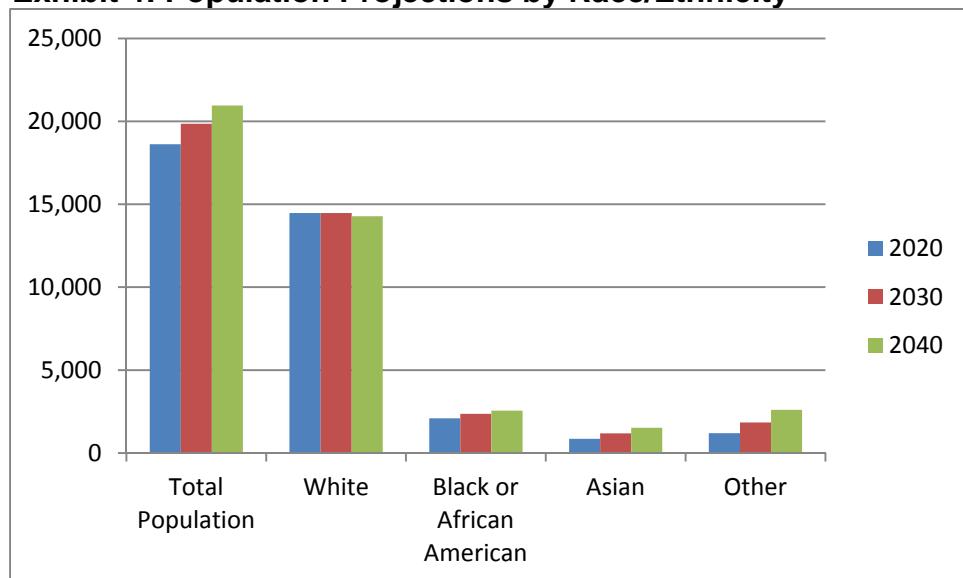
When looking at population and race between 2000 and 2010, the City's population has increased slightly and the racial makeup of the city has become slightly more diverse. The white population experienced a 7% decrease between 2000 and 2010. The African American population increased 6% and the Asian population 2%. The Hispanic population, although increasing in numbers, remained at 2% of the total population.

### Exhibit 3: Population and Race

	2000 Total	2000 Percent	2010 Total	2010 Percent
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>16,897</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17,411</b>	<b>100</b>
White	15,052	89	14,326	82
Black or African American	1,059	6	1,783	10
Asian	459	3	578	3
Other	327	2	724	4
Total Hispanic or Latino	274	2	374	2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Exhibit 4: Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

The City is expected to become more racially diverse over the next thirty years. The African American population is expected to increase from 783 people in 2010 to 2,557 in 2040. This is a 226% change. The Asian population is estimated to increase from 578 in 2010 to 1,523 in 2040, or a 163% change. This is not a trend that is exclusive to

Colonial Heights; according to the U.S. Census Bureau, it is estimated that by 2060 the non-Hispanic white population is projected to peak in 2024, at 199.6 million, up from 197.8 million in 2012. Unlike other race or ethnic groups, however, its population is projected to slowly decrease, falling by nearly 20.6 million from 2024 to 2060.

Meanwhile, the Hispanic population would more than double, from 53.3 million in 2012 to 128.8 million in 2060. Consequently, by the end of the period, nearly one in three U.S. residents would be Hispanic, up from about one in six today.

The black population is expected to increase from 41.2 million to 61.8 million over the same period. Its share of the total population would rise slightly, from 13.1% in 2012 to 14.7% in 2060.

The Asian population is projected to more than double, from 15.9 million in 2012 to 34.4 million in 2060, with its share of the nation's total population climbing from 5.1% to 8.2% in the same period.

#### **Exhibit 5: Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity**

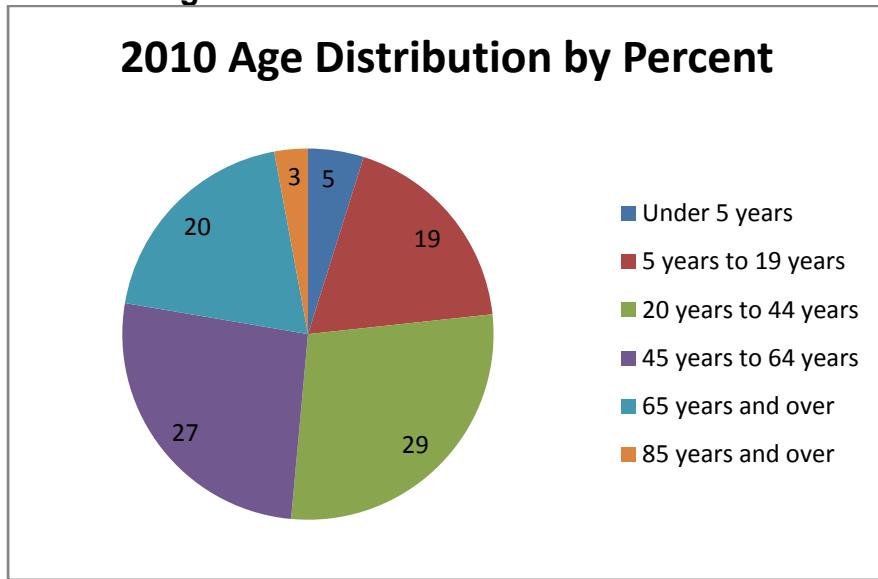
	2020	2030	2040
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>18,620</b>	<b>19,855</b>	<b>20,960</b>
<b>Race</b>			
White	14,473	14,471	14,275
Black or African American	2,093	2,361	2,557
Asian	858	1,184	1,523
Other	1,197	1,839	2,606
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Not Hispanic or Latino of any race	17,349	17,776	17,945
Hispanic or Latino of any race	1,271	2,079	3,015

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

#### **Age Distribution**

As is the trend nationally with baby-boomers reaching retirement age, the City's population is aging. Between 2000 and 2010, there has been an increase in every age group older than 45 years old. Notably, the number of people over 85 increased nearly two-fold between 2000 and 2010. This is perhaps due to the advances in medical sciences. Conversely, there has been a slight decrease in school aged children. The median age for the City has also increased.

### Exhibit 6: Age Distribution



### Gender

Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of the female population has increased slightly. This is a national trend as women, for now, continue to live longer than men.

### Exhibit 7: Gender

	2000 Total	2000 Percent	2010 Total	2010 Percent
	16,897	100	17,411	100
Male	7,901	47	8,062	46
Female	8,996	53	9,349	54

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Poverty Level

According to an estimate done by the US Census Bureau, there was an increase in both families and individuals living below the poverty level. As the poverty levels in the City increase, social services will need to be added to assist this changing population.

### Exhibit 8: Poverty Level

	2000 Total	2000 Percent	2006-2010 Estimated Percent
Families living below poverty level	161	3.4	4.2
Individuals living below poverty level	913	5.5	7.5

Source: U. S. Census Bureau 2000 Decennial Census and the 2006 American Community Survey

## **Chapter 2. Vision, Goals and Objectives**

### **Vision for Colonial Heights' Future:**

The foundation of this Plan is the community's vision for the future.

*The City of Colonial Heights will be recognized as an exceptional place in which to live, work, and visit. Our community will cherish its safe neighborhoods, excellent schools, historic heritage and scenic, natural resources.*

*The economic health of the City will welcome innovation and investment and will create opportunities for all.*

*This Vision will be achieved with the unified actions of the citizens, government, businesses, and other interested organizations, working in partnership to fulfill the City's potential as a small community with big ideals.*

In order to have a vision that was truly representative of the citizens, the visioning process included a number of outreach methods. A City-wide Visioning Meeting was held in the spring of 2011. Attendees worked in groups to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the City. Additionally, in the summer of 2011, the City put out a citizen survey.

The City's 22 member Citizen Planning Committee reviewed the results of both the visioning meeting and the survey and through a series of exercises, identified areas of community consensus. The following emerged as key themes to be articulated in the Vision Statement:

- Quality Housing
- Good Jobs
- Excellent Schools
- Positive Neighborhood Identity
- To Capitalize on Water and Green Space.
- Quality City Services
- Solid Infrastructure
- Improve Code Enforcement
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Safety
- A Sense of Community
- Build on the City's Good Reputation
- Bike and Pedestrian Friendly
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Emphasis on Southern Portion of the City
- Improve Traffic
- Improve Commercial Areas
- Retain Small-town Feel
- Quality of Life

This vision has been formulated in order to target future policies toward four fundamental principles:

- Community Character
- Quality of Life
- Economic Prosperity
- Sustainable Development

## Goals

The following goals support the community's vision:

### **Community Character Goal:**

Maintain and enhance the small-town character of Colonial Heights with strong, vibrant neighborhoods and great schools.

### **Quality of Life Goal:**

Preserve a high degree of enjoyment and satisfaction that is experienced in everyday life.

### **Economic Prosperity Goal:**

Provide for the economic well-being of the citizens and businesses of the City by promoting economic and business development that creates employment opportunities for all income levels.

### **Sustainable Development Goal:**

Utilize the City's land uses, natural resources, public services and facilities to create a sustainable city where residents and businesses prosper now and in the future.

## Plan Objectives

### Community Character

Themes identified under this principle.

- Build on the City's Good Reputation
- A Sense of Community
- Positive Neighborhood Identity
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Retain Small-town Feel
- To Capitalize on Water and Green Space

Community Character Objectives:

1. Preserve Colonial Heights' small-town feel and character.
2. Enhance and preserve the significance of the City's neighborhoods.

3. Promote high-quality curb appeal that is inviting and of human scale.
4. Promote compatible land uses that protect and preserve the City's neighborhoods.
5. Promote and maintain the City's park system and natural environment.

### Quality of Life

Themes identified under this principle.

- Bike and Pedestrian Friendly
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Safety
- Improve Traffic
- Quality City Services
- Solid Infrastructure
- Improve Code Enforcement

### Quality of Life Objectives

1. Provide citizens with a network of safe streets, bikeways and walkways that connect neighborhoods with services.
2. Promote healthy and active lifestyles for City residents.
3. Improve housing and overall living conditions within the City's neighborhoods.
4. Provide for a variety of housing types for residents for all stages of life.
5. Promote homeownership throughout the City.
6. Ensure quality city services for all residents and enhance and maintain all city owned property.
7. Increase public safety throughout the City.

### Economic Prosperity

Themes identified under this principle.

- Good Jobs
- Quality Housing
- Excellent Schools
- Improve Commercial Areas
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Solid Infrastructure
- To Capitalize on Water and Green Space

## Economic Prosperity Objectives

1. Increase employment opportunities in the City.
2. Ensure academic achievement for school-aged children living in the City.
3. Improve the physical appearance and capacity of City businesses.
4. Generate and sustain successful small businesses.
5. Redevelop the mall area to spur economic development.
6. Diversify the economic base.
7. Improve the overall condition of infrastructure in the City.
8. Improve and maintain the City's housing stock.

## Sustainable Development

Themes identified under this principle.

- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Improve Commercial Areas
- Solid Infrastructure
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Quality City Services

## Sustainable Development Objectives

1. Promote the revitalization and sustainability of the City's neighborhoods.
2. Strengthen and promote the City's commercial areas.
3. Promote a high level of quality and efficiency in new construction.
4. Welcome new residents without diminishing the values and lifestyles of its current residents.
5. Recognize the importance of the natural environment and protect it through sound planning practices.
6. Preserve the City's historic character and cultural resources.
7. Promote the effectiveness of public services and facilities.

## **Chapter 3. Land Use**

### **Existing Land Use**

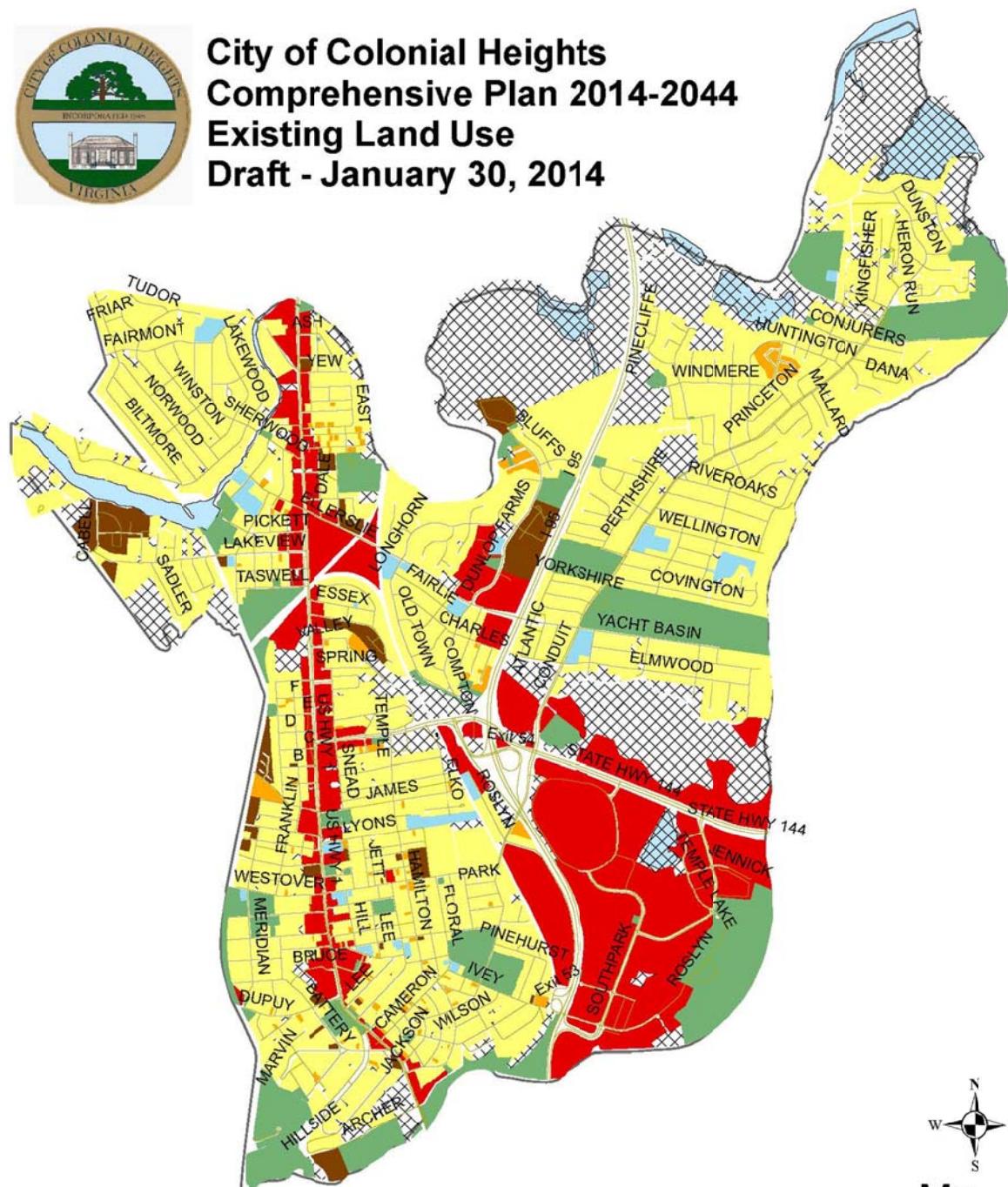
The predominant land use patterns in Colonial Heights are well-established and have been for the most part, in place over the last thirty years. Although some changes have occurred, the basic land use patterns in the City have not changed since adoption of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

The following describe the existing land use patterns in the City:

- The City is almost completely developed, with limited opportunities for new development. Opportunity exists for limited infill development city-wide.
- Most commercial areas are located along transportation corridors. The Boulevard (U.S. Route 1/301) provides goods and services for City residents and surrounding communities. Commercial uses along Temple and Ellerslie Avenues provide convenient goods and services that mostly serve adjacent neighborhoods. The Southpark Mall area provides goods and services to the City as well as the region.
- Residential uses occupy more land area in the City than any other type of use and, for the most part, consist of single-family homes. Duplexes, townhomes and apartment complexes are also located on a limited basis throughout the City.
- Industrial uses are located along Ellerslie Avenue adjacent to the Seaboard Coastline Right of Way and along Interstate 95, south of Conduit Road. Most land in these areas is used for more intense commercial uses rather than traditional industrial uses.
- There are significant public open spaces throughout the City in the form of parks and public school grounds, in addition to large undeveloped land along the Appomattox River and Swift Creek.
- Institutional uses are scattered throughout the City mostly consisting of churches and property owned by civic organizations.



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Existing Land Use Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 1

Yellow	Residential - Single Family	Red	Commercial	Hatched	Vacant
Orange	Residential - Two Family/Attached	Light Blue	Institutional/Semi-public		
Dark Brown	Residential - Multi Family	Green	Public		

## The Land Use Plan

The following are factors influencing the concepts and strategies contained in the Land Use Plan:

- Land use patterns are generally well established, and there is minimal need for significant land use changes.
- There is limited vacant land available for development within the City.
- There is a need to provide additional opportunities for the development of new housing units; particularly housing that meets the need of the growing elderly population.
- Additional economic development opportunities need to be provided.
- The southern part of the Boulevard (U.S. Route 1/301) can benefit from coordinated revitalization efforts to complement the substantial public investments made along the Boulevard and Dupuy Avenue.
- The need to minimize land use conflicts that exist between residential and non-residential uses.
- There is minimal need for additional public facilities; however, there may be need for additional public parks and open spaces in specific sections of the City that are currently underserved.

### **Land Use Classifications**

The land use classifications shown on the Land Use Plan (Map 2) include the following land use categories and descriptions.

#### Residential

Low Density Single-Family -The primary use in the Low Density Single-Family classification is single-family detached dwellings at densities up to five units per acre. This category includes residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, and limited public and semi-public uses. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is RL (Residential Low).

Medium Density Single-Family - The primary use in the Medium Density Single-Family classification is for single-family, two-family dwellings and townhomes, at densities up to 8 units per acre. This category includes residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, and limited public and semi-public uses. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is RM (Residential Medium).

Multi-Family - The primary use in the Multi-Family classification is for multi-family dwellings at densities of 12 units per acre. This category includes apartments and residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, and limited public and semi-public uses. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is RH (Residential High).

#### Mixed Use

The primary use in the Mixed Use classification includes combinations of office, retail, personal service, general commercial and service uses and, in some cases, multi-family residential and dwelling units above ground floor commercial. Densities in this district can be much higher than allowed in the multi-family category. Generally, such areas consist of a mix of several types of uses, designed and arranged to be compatible with one another. The mix of uses and predominant land use character may vary considerably by location and are to be considered on a case by case basis. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is PUD (Planned Unit Development).

#### Transitional Office

The primary use in the Transitional Office classification are low-to-medium intensity professional, business and administrative offices, and medical and dental clinics that are compatible with adjacent residential uses and serve as separation between residential areas and nearby commercial or other higher intensity land uses or features. The scale and intensity of such office uses may vary depending on the density and type of residential uses they are intended to buffer. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is RO (Residential Office) and PUD (Planned Unit Development).

#### Commercial

Community Commercial - The primary uses in the Community Commercial classification include office, retail, personal service and other commercial and service uses, intended to provide the shopping and service needs of residents of a number of nearby neighborhoods and other City residents. This category includes a range of uses of with vehicular access and orientation, but that are also compatible with nearby residential areas. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is BB (Boulevard Business) and in some instances GB (General Business).

General Commercial - The primary uses in the General Commercial classification include a broad range of office, retail, general commercial, wholesale and service uses, typically located along major transportation corridors and serving large portions of the City, the region or the traveling public. Land uses in this category are typically of larger scale and intensity than Community Commercial uses and may not always be highly compatible with residential areas. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is GB (General Business).

#### Industrial

The primary uses in the Industrial classification include a variety of manufacturing, processing, research and development, warehousing, distribution, office-warehouse and larger commercial service uses. Office, retail and other uses that complement industrial areas are permitted. The zoning district that would accommodate this land use category is I (Industrial).

#### Public and Open Space

The primary uses in the Public and Open Space classification include publicly owned parks and recreation areas, open spaces, schools, libraries, and other government and public service facilities. Also included are environmentally sensitive areas and scenic areas where urban development should not occur. This land use category may be accommodated by any zoning classification.

#### Institutional/Civic

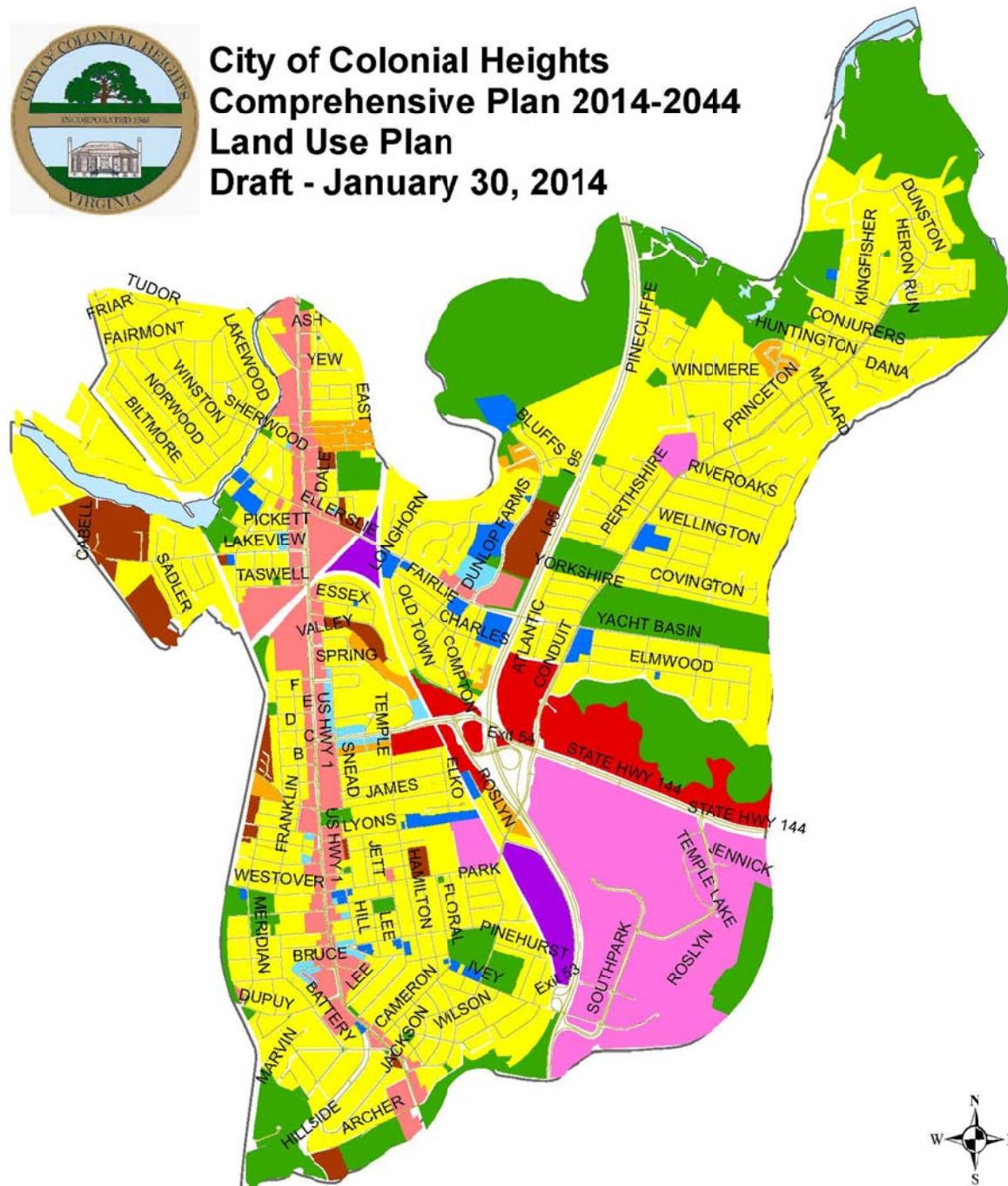
The primary uses in the Institutional/Civic classification include institutional uses, such as places of worship, private schools, hospitals, colleges and universities, and civic buildings. This land use category will be dependent on specific zoning district permitted uses.

### **Relation of Land Use Categories to Zoning Ordinance and Map**

The land use categories in this plan are similar to the zoning classifications contained in the City's zoning ordinance. The land use categories are intended to be more general than zoning classifications. Included in the description of each land use category is the zoning classifications contained in the current zoning ordinance that would typically approximate the land use category. The Land Use Plan map is a general guide for future zoning, but is not intended to coincide exactly with either the current or future zoning classification of properties.



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Land Use Plan Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 2

Blue	Civic/Institutional	Purple	Industrial	Pink	Mixed Use	Light Blue	Transitional Office
Red	Community Commercial	Yellow	Low Density Single-Family	Dark Red	Multi-Family		
Dark Red	General Commercial	Orange	Medium Density Single-Family	Green	Public and Open Space		

**The following Land Use Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- Where possible, incorporate transitional land uses between higher activity uses, such as commercial, to lower activity uses such as single-family neighborhoods with less intense commercial or higher density residential uses. (CC-4)
- Create regulations for existing conflicts between residential and commercial land uses that provide landscaping or fences to separate the two uses. Consider reinstating and expanding the Boulevard grant program to include funding to provide buffer and improve the visibility from the neighborhood. (CC-4)
- Unless assurances are made to limit noise, hours of operation and visual clutter, to protect area residents, limit commercial activity to areas designated for commercial use. (CC-4)
- Consider the impact on historic resources that have been surveyed and documented when reviewing land-use decisions, such as rezoning, site plan review and subdivision requests. (SD-6)
- Create a mixture of recreational, commercial and residential along the river as recommended in the Appomattox River Corridor Plan. (EP-1, SD-5)
- Form a task force of Southpark Mall area business owners/managers, including Mall management and City staff to identify ways to improve and redevelop the commercial area to include new land use options, such as mixed use, senior housing and offices for areas around, and including, Southpark Mall. This area is identified as a Mixed Use Area on the Land Use Plan (Map 2). (EP-5, EP-6)
- Create a mixture of uses, to include higher density residential, such as townhouses and apartments, for seniors with limited office and neighborhood commercial at the 12 acre parcel located on Conduit Road, north of the Edinburgh subdivision shown on the Land Use Plan (Map 2). (QL-4)
- Create a mixture of uses to include higher density residential, such as townhouses and apartments, for seniors with limited office and neighborhood commercial at the 20+ acre parcel located on the northwest corner of E. Westover and Conduit Road shown on the Land Use Plan (Map 2). (QL-4)
- Work with surrounding counties, cities, Fort Lee, and other agencies when considering planning activities to ensure smart, economic land use and transportation actions. (EP-1)

## **Chapter 4. Neighborhoods and Housing**

Housing is a basic need of all citizens. Housing is extremely important to the quality of people's lives, their self-esteem, and socio-economic attitudes. Housing often dictates where people work, shop, attend school, socialize, and worship. Also, the quality of housing in the community mirrors its economic stability and social values.

The following recognize the need for decent and affordable housing, the preservation of residential neighborhoods, and improved opportunities for homeownership.

### **Characteristics of Neighborhoods and Housing**

Single-family residential homes are the prevailing land use in Colonial Heights. The City has a wide variety of architectural styles that would appeal to a population seeking both older homes and newer homes at affordable prices.

#### **Housing Stock**

About 10% of City housing predates 1940; about 80% of housing predates 1978. Only a small percentage of housing has been built in the last decade. Most of the newer development is infill housing, or multifamily. Conjurer's Neck has seen growth. Most of these are larger-lot, higher end homes.

#### **Exhibit 9: Housing Units**

	2000 Total	2000 Percent	2010 Total	2010 Percent
<b>TOTAL HOUSING UNITS</b>	7,340	100	7,831	100
Occupied housing units	7,027	96	7,275	93
Owner occupied	4,871	69	4,750	65
Renter occupied	2,156	31	2,525	35
Vacant housing units	313	4	556	7

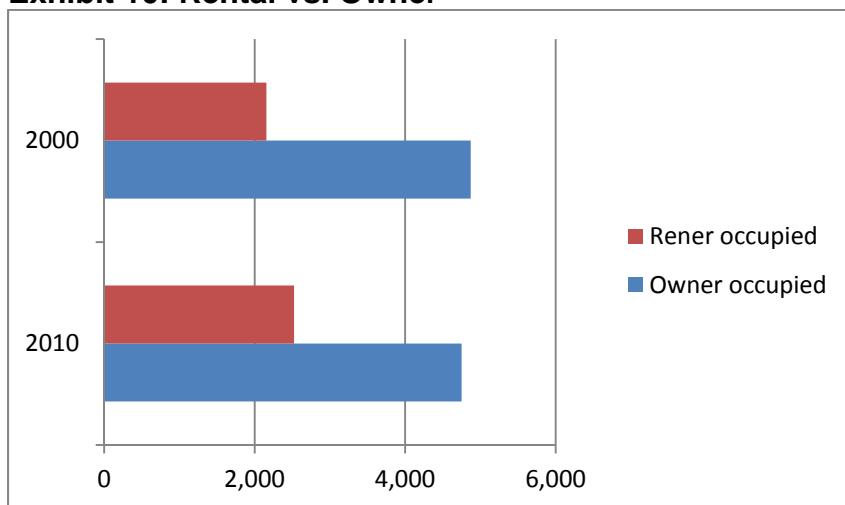
U. S. Census Bureau

#### **Housing Units**

Since the 2000 Census, the City had an increase of nearly 500 units. This is due to some single family development, but mostly because of the construction of a couple of multi-family housing units. Although there has been an increase in rental units, there was only an increase of 4%, from 31% of total occupied units in 2000 being rental to 35% in 2010.

Between 2000 and 2010, there was an increase in vacancy rate. Whereas in 2000, only 4% of the housing units were vacant; this increased to 7% in 2010 or an increase of 246 vacancies.

### Exhibit 10: Rental vs. Owner



U. S. Census Bureau

### Households

As for the change in types of households between 2000 and 2010, there was a decrease in family households. A family household is defined as one with no marriage or related children in the house. This could be a roommate situation or an older individual whose children have reached adulthood and moved out and their spouse has died. There has also been an increase of 144 female-headed households during the same period, which, for the most part, is a single mother household.

### Exhibit 11: Households

	2000 Total	2000 Percent	2010 Total	2010 Percent
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	7,027	100	7,275	100
Household type				
Family households	4,720	67	4,682	64
Husband-wife family	3,534	75	3,282	70
Other family	1,186	25	1,400	30
Male household, no wife present	272	23	342	24
Female household, no husband present	914	77	1,058	76
Nonfamily households	2,307	33	2,593	36
Average Household Size	2.37	N/A	2.37	N/A

U.S. Census Bureau

### Housing Standards

Housing standards in the City are based on the Virginia uniform codes and City ordinances. The basis for housing construction standards in new and renovation projects are from the Virginia uniform building code which is derived from the International building code. The City code gives authority to a designated building official and inspectors to enforce these standards. The main codes used for housing

enforcement by the City are the Virginia Uniform Building Code and the Virginia Uniform Maintenance Code.

Regular inspections are performed on reported or observed infractions by inspectors on a daily basis. Two special enforcement actions are the rental inspection program adopted by City ordinance, and a City-wide inspection program designed to reduce the number of reported infractions.

The Rental Inspection Program was established in 2007 by City Council. Its purpose is to address the compliance by owners to the current Virginia Property Maintenance Code. The intent of the code is to make sure that the housing stock does not become unsafe, a public nuisance, and unfit for human habitation.

Universal Design has not been adopted in the City, but is an important standard that helps to alleviate some of the problems that are being experienced by an aging populace. The concept of universal design is that homes are built in a way that accessibility and aging-in-place are possible in these homes. It means that from the beginning, homes are built with features that allow anyone to use and enjoy the home regardless of mobility.

ADA standards were designed to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and have become the gold standard for handicap accessibility and modifications. These guidelines are used in public and private spaces and should be used not only in buildings, but for sidewalks and parking lots as well as building approaches. These standards are required for public access to buildings of all kinds and should be accounted for in overall accessibility and housing planning.

## **Neighborhoods**

The Citizen Survey, done in accordance with the development of this plan, asked residents which neighborhood they lived in. Answers ranged from names of a subdivision, a planning district and geographic locations such as "near the high school".

For study purposes, the City's land area has been divided into 10 planning districts; Violet Bank-Flora Hill, Shepherd Stadium, Ellerslie, Westover Snead, Mt. Pleasant-Southpark, Ft. Clifton, Sherwood Hills, Toll House, Oak Hill, and Lakeview shown on the Neighborhoods and Housing Map (Map 3). These districts are based on the census geography in the City. The names come from historic and neighborhood characteristics; however, these designations are not necessarily based on strong neighborhood identities. The following are basic descriptions of each of these planning districts.

### **Oak Hill**

The Oak Hill Planning District takes its name from Oak Hill, the most popular name for this area. The area is also widely known as Archer's Hill. Oak Hill is also the name of a private residence (built c. 1825) on Carroll Avenue which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Oak Hill District is bounded on the north by Dupuy and Bradsher Avenues, on the south by the Appomattox River, on the west by the Chesterfield County

Line, and on the east by the Boulevard. The bordering properties with a Bradsher Avenue or Boulevard address, are included in this district. Dupuy Avenue addresses in the 100 and 200 blocks are also included. City assessment records show that aside from the property known as Oak Hill (built c. 1825), this area was developed from 1910 onwards.

Overall, the Oak Hill District has a sound housing stock and relatively low property maintenance violations. Issues identified for this area include aging infrastructure and drainage problems leading to flooding at Dupuy Ave. and Battery Place.

### **Violet Bank-Flora Hill**

The Violet Bank-Flora Hill Planning District takes its name from the Violet Bank Museum (built c. 1800) and the Flora Hill neighborhood. The Violet Bank Museum is on the National Register of Historic Places. The areas are popularly known by both names. The Violet Bank-Flora Hill District is bounded on the north by Westover Avenue, on the south by the Appomattox River, on the west by the Boulevard, and on the east by the Seaboard Rail Road Line. The Violet Bank-Flora Hill planning district also includes the Chesterfield Highlands Historic District which is newly listed on the State and National Historic Registries. City assessment records show that this area was almost fully developed from 1911 to 1940. Approximately 60% of the City's pre-1940 houses are located here.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include deteriorated building conditions, a high incidence of property maintenance violations, aging infrastructure, and concern regarding homeownership decrease in the area.

### **Shepherd Stadium**

The Shepherd Stadium Planning District takes its name from the much beloved nearby Shepherd Stadium. It is popularly known as such. The Shepherd Stadium District is bounded on the north by the CSXT Railroad Right of Way, on the south by Bradsher and Dupuy Avenues, on the west by the Chesterfield County line, and on the east by the Boulevard. City assessment records show that most of this area was developed from 1914 to 1960. Approximately 15% of the City's pre-1940 houses are located here.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include deteriorated building conditions, a high incidence of property maintenance violations, aging infrastructure, and concern regarding homeownership decrease in the area; drainage problems leading to flooding at Wright Ave.

### **Westover-Snead**

The Westover-Snead Planning District does not have a popularly identifiable name. Residents usually refer to their own individual streets and subdivision names when referring to their neighborhood. The name Westover-Snead references Westover Avenue, the district's southern boundary, and Snead Avenue, which runs north to south parallel to the Boulevard from James Avenue to Spring Drive. The Westover-Snead District is bounded on the north by Old Town Creek, on the south by East Westover

Avenue, on the west by the Boulevard, and on the east by the Seaboard Coastline Right of Way. City assessment records show that the majority of this area was developed from 1940 to 1970.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include a high incidence of property maintenance violations, aging infrastructure, a high rate of vacancy and concern regarding homeownership decrease in area.

### **Lakeview**

The Lakeview Planning District takes its name from Lakeview Avenue which runs across it from east to west. The neighborhood is popularly known as Lakeview. The Lakeview District is bounded on the north by Swift Creek Lake and Sherwood Drive, on the south by the CSXT Railroad Right of Way, on the west by the Chesterfield County line, and on the east by the Boulevard. City assessment records show that most of this area was developed between 1950 and 1960. The southeastern section of this district also experienced new residential single-family development from 2000 to 2004.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include a high incidence of property maintenance violations, aging infrastructure, and concern regarding homeownership decrease in area and flooding at Cabel and Lakeview due to storm sewer and Sadler Avenue and Lundy when the creek floods.

### **Sherwood Hills**

The Sherwood Hills Planning District takes its name from the subdivision which makes up most of the area. It is popularly called Sherwood Hills. The Sherwood Hills District is bounded on the north by the Chesterfield County line, on the south by Swift Creek Lake and Sherwood Drive, on the west by the Chesterfield County line, and on the east by Swift Creek and the Boulevard. City assessment records show that the majority of this area was developed in the 1960's.

Overall, the Sherwood Hills District has a sound housing stock, and although there has been a slight increase in property maintenance violations, is stable. Issues identified for this area include aging infrastructure and drainage problems.

### **Toll House**

The Toll House Planning District does not have a popularly identifiable name. Residents usually refer to their own individual streets when referring to their neighborhood. The name Toll House references a toll gate which once stood on the Boulevard when the road was a turnpike. The Toll House District is bounded on the north by Swift Creek, on the south by Old Town Creek, on the west by the Boulevard, and on the east by Swift Creek and the CSXT Rail Road Right of Way.

Various apartment and multi-family dwellings are located between Ellerslie Avenue and the Boulevard. These account for the lower than average homeownership rate. Assessment records show that the majority of the residential properties were built in the 1960's.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include an increase in property maintenance violations, a high vacancy rate, and flooding at Newcastle.

### **Ellerslie**

The Ellerslie Planning District is comprised of the Dunlop Farms area and the neighborhood directly to the south of it. The neighborhoods are divided by Ellerslie Avenue. The Ellerslie mansion (built c. 1856,) which is located within Dunlop Farms, is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Ellerslie District is bounded on the north by Swift Creek, on the south by Old Town Creek, on the east by Interstate 95, and on the west by the CSXT Rail Road Right of Way.

City assessment records show that the northern part of this district (Dunlop Farms PUD) was developed from 1982-2003. The southern portion was developed in sections from 1956 to 1983.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include a lack of neighborhood parks and flooding at Old Town Drive.

### **Fort Clifton**

The Fort Clifton Planning District does not have a popularly identifiable name. Residents usually refer to their own individual streets and subdivision names when referring to their neighborhood. The name Fort Clifton references the Fort Clifton Archeological Site (c.1850) which is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Fort Clifton District is bounded on the north by Swift Creek, on the south by Ellerslie Avenue and Yacht Basin Drive, on the east by the Appomattox River, and on the west by Interstate 95. City assessment records show that with a couple of exceptions, the oldest homes date from 1960.

This district has sound building conditions and low property maintenance violations. Traffic access and noise from Interstate 95 are notable concerns in this district.

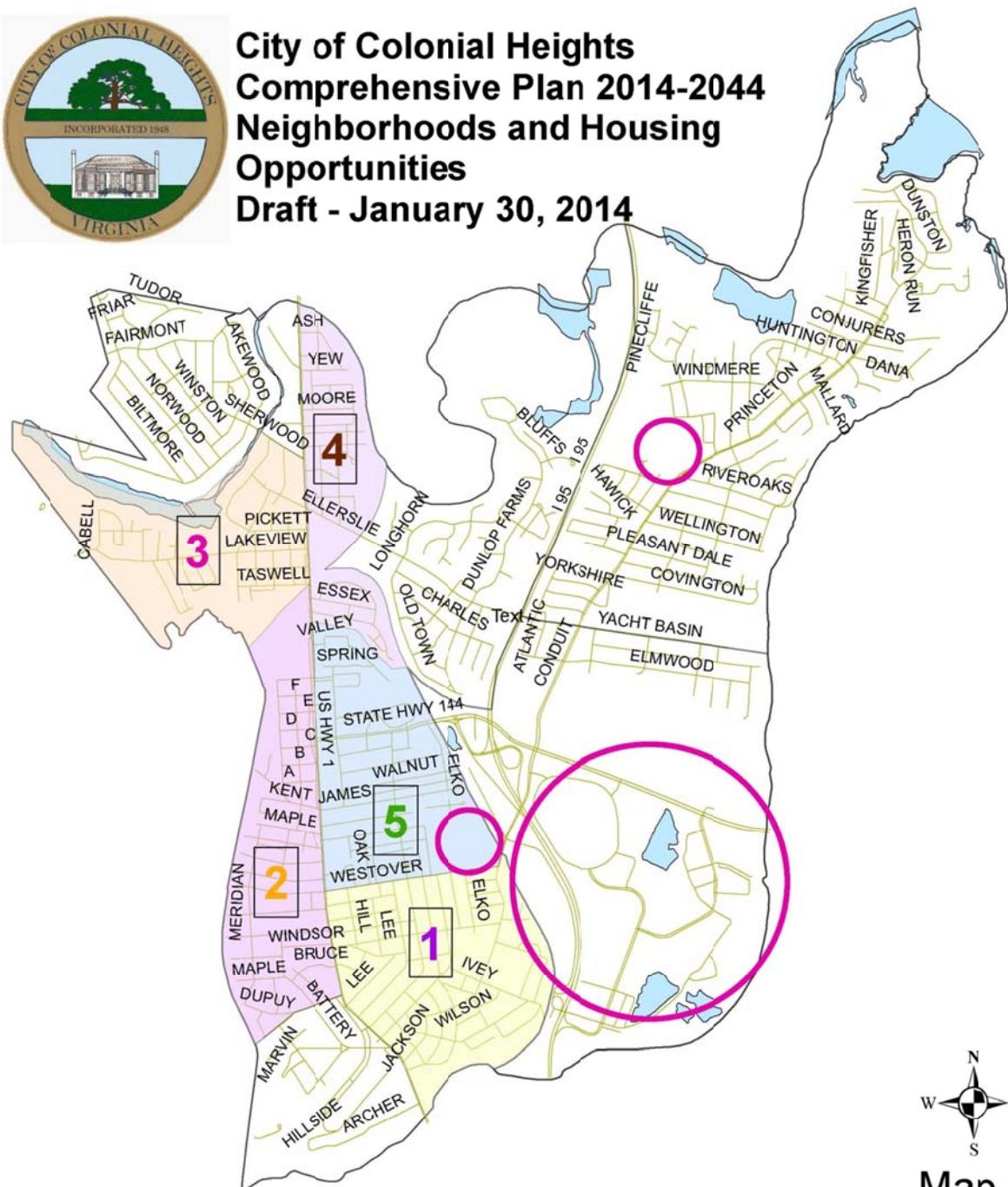
### **Mt. Pleasant –Southpark**

The Mount Pleasant-Southpark Planning District combines the Mount Pleasant and Southpark areas. The areas are popularly referred to by both names. The Mount Pleasant-Southpark District is bounded on the north by Ellerslie Avenue, Yacht Basin Drive, and Old Town Creek, on the south and east by the Appomattox River, and on the west by Interstate 95 and the Seaboard Rail Road Line. City assessment records show that residential development in this area took place from 1960 to 2003.

Issues and concerns identified for this area include traffic, erosion and soil deposits along the Appomattox River, flooding on Conduit at Old Town Creek and a slight increase in property maintenance violations.



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Neighborhoods and Housing Opportunities Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 3

## Revitalization Strategy Areas

- 1- Videt Bank-Flora Hill
- 2 - Shepherd Stadium
- 3 - Lakeview
- 4 - Toll House
- 5 - Westover - Snead

Mixed Use  
Opportunity Area

## **Revitalization Strategy Areas**

This plan prioritizes 5 (five) revitalization strategy areas that have been identified for small area plans that will provide detailed revitalization strategies designed specifically for that strategy area.

The Revitalization Strategy Areas are identified on the Neighborhoods and Housing Map (Map 3) and are in order of priority below:

1. Violet Bank-Flora Hill Planning District
2. Shepherd Stadium Planning District
3. Lakeview Planning District
4. Toll House Planning District
5. Westover - Snead Planning District

Each Revitalization Strategy Area plan should include an analysis of the existing conditions, staff observation and community input and include strategies that focus on the following priorities.

1. Property Maintenance & Housing Rehabilitation
2. Historic Preservation, Urban Design & Neighborhood Identity
3. Homeownership
4. Infrastructure Improvements

### **Property Maintenance & Housing Rehabilitation**

Improving property maintenance is one of the City's most important goals. Years of complaint-based-only response to property maintenance violations and a lack of public awareness as to what the property maintenance ordinances are have led to deteriorating conditions and a concentration of storage and structural violations in the older areas of the city.

### **Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Identity**

Historic preservation is a proven community revitalization tool. The federal government recognizes the importance of preserving our heritage by providing monetary incentives and support for historic preservation purposes. Less tangibly, historic roots and identity help promote a sense of community pride often lacking in aging areas that are experiencing decay and disinvestment.

### **Homeownership**

The Citizen Survey and the City-wide visioning session indicate that homeownership is priority to residents of the City. It encourages personal and financial investment in the community. Homeownership also provides opportunities for wealth-building by way of the accumulation of home equity and mortgage interest tax breaks.

## **Infrastructure Improvements**

One of the most voiced community concerns is the aging infrastructure such as overhead wires, posts, broken streets and sewers. These issues are systematically handled by Public Works and Engineering Department. However, as they so directly affect our neighborhoods and revitalization efforts, a more active partnership with these departments and the Department of Planning and Community Development would aid public perception and be beneficial to all.

Housing is a substantial concern in Colonial Heights. A crucial element to the success of housing programs is an overarching policy and strategy direction to guide program development and implementation. Housing is an important part of maintaining a high quality of life and a powerful economic development tool to attract new residents, jobs, and families to live in Colonial Heights.

**The following Neighborhood and Housing Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- Allow for home based businesses that do not disrupt the normal life of a neighborhood. Such businesses must not allow for out-of-the-ordinary traffic or noise. (CC-4)
- Complete detailed area plans for each of the five (5) revitalization strategy areas in numeric priority identified in the Neighborhoods and Housing Plan (Map 3). (SD-1, QL-3)
- All new and infill housing should be built to blend into the fabric of the existing neighborhood to create a sense of place. (CC-3)
- Do not allow business areas to expand into neighborhoods. When there are conflicting land uses, create buffers to include landscaping and fencing that protect neighborhood uses. Additional protections should include limiting the hours of operation and restricting truck deliveries. (CC-4)
- Create regulations for existing conflicts between residential and commercial land uses that provide landscaping or fences to separate the two uses. Consider reinstating and expanding the Boulevard grant program to include funding to provide buffer and improve the visibility from the neighborhood. (CC-4)
- Allow for mixed use development to provide for a diversity of housing types to meet the needs of the young families as well as the City's aging population, including market rate and low to moderate income housing. (QL-4, SD-4)
- Construct senior apartments in mixed-use areas so residents are close to services and shopping areas. Redevelop older, existing apartment buildings in the City for senior housing. (QL-4)

- Amend the zoning ordinance to allow for additions to be added to smaller houses to provide for growing families. (QL-4, EP-8)
- Create a Housing Pattern Book to encourage redevelopment of the existing housing stock for modern family needs and the aging population while respecting the appearance and function of existing neighborhoods. (QL-4, EP-8)
- The City should support retrofitting existing houses and promoting universal design to allow for options for citizens to age in place. (QL-4, EP-8)
- Create a team of City employees from the Police, Fire, Engineering and Planning and Building Inspections Departments to focus on revitalization areas. (QL-3, EP-8, SD-1)
- Have quarterly neighborhood cleanups and waive fees for trash removal in revitalization areas. (SD-1)
- Consider creating historic districts in all neighborhoods over 50 years old. (CC-2)
- Encourage architecturally appropriate renovations and restorations of the City's historic resources and minimize the demolition of historic structures expanding the City's Historic Resource District to include any Honorary Historic District that has been placed on State or National Register. (SD-6)
- Pursue honorary historic districts in neighborhoods 50 years or older to allow for tax credits and promote pride in neighborhoods. (QL-3, EP-8, SD-6)
- Encourage and assist property owners when renovating their historic structures by educating them about tax credits and developing a pattern book. (SD-6)
- Place historical markers at the entrance of all historic districts placed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. (SD-6)
- Promote strong community relationships by forming neighborhood associations throughout the City. (CC-1)
- The City should help create neighborhood associations in all parts of the City to help foster local identity and promote community activities to create relationships between residents. (SD-4, CC-2)
- Place additional signage at neighborhood entrances to welcome visitors and help create a sense of community for residents. (CC-2)
- The City should partner with local real estate agents to encourage the redevelopment of older houses by promoting a pattern book and residential tax abatement program. (QL-5)

- The City should partner with local real estate agents to promote homeownership by offering homeownership counseling, marketing the neighborhoods for families and promoting the school system. (CC-2)
- The City should provide tax incentives for first-time homebuyers when they purchase foreclosed homes for homeownership. (QL-5)
- Reinstate the Residential Tax Abatement Program to attract and encourage private investment in housing. (QL-3, EP-8)

## **Chapter 5. Community Character and Design**

The City of Colonial Heights prides itself on its small-town character, although the physical appearance of the City is not what you would think of as a typical small-town. It is the sense of community that makes Colonial Heights feel like a traditional small-town.

A recurring theme that came out of the citizen survey and visioning session is the desire to preserve the small-town character of Colonial Heights. The small-town feel comes from having numerous tight-knit neighborhoods where people share common beliefs and experiences in addition to having all the necessary services located close to home.

A community's character can be a strong incentive to retain existing residents, attract new residents and businesses and substantially improve the quality of life. The policies in this chapter seek to preserve Colonial Heights' small-town character while making the most of its location off the interstate and prominence in the Tri-Cities area for providing goods and services.

### **Urban Design**

Urban design can play an important role in making a community viable and the conditions for economic health and a good quality of life. Urban design can create living spaces with distinctive character, safe, walkable neighborhoods and public spaces.

It is important to consider the following urban design elements as the City changes over the next 30 years. This can be done in conjunction with new development or redevelopment, but it can also be implemented in existing areas in the City.

#### **Street Design**

Whether the neighborhood is historic, with homes closely situated to the street, the narrow travel lanes, and the sense of enclosure created by hundred year old trees, or a more spread out, suburban style neighborhood, street design features are an important element to create a residential street that is safe and welcoming. This design can force traffic to move slowly, allowing people to walk and cycle through the neighborhoods and for children to play safely. Being walkable and safe helps give our neighborhoods a small-town feel by encouraging interaction among residents.

#### **Sidewalks**

According to community input, walkability is a priority for the City. Providing pedestrian connections can be achieved by sidewalk construction or via a trail system. Within a built environment like Colonial Heights, it is expected that a combination of both would be necessary to make the most use of the existing infrastructure.

Sidewalks assist people to get around by providing an alternative to walking in the street or driving in a car. Ideally, they link people to work, parks, schools, shopping areas, and home. Sidewalks can provide a safe place for exercise and for children to play which subsequently encourages interaction between community members.

In order to have a walkable community, safe pedestrian crossings at major roadways should be constructed. Crosswalks should be constructed that are visible to both the pedestrian and the driver. This can be achieved by installing pavers to distinguish the crosswalk from the road.

### **Street Lighting**

Proper street lighting is essential for creating a safe environment for both pedestrians and vehicles. Street level lighting, or light with fixtures that are closer to pedestrian height, can play the role of safety and help create an environment that is more welcoming to the pedestrian and can add ornamental design to an area.

### **Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)**

Urban design also plays an important role in public safety. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring crime through environmental design. CPTED strategies are based on preventing crime by creating a built environment that is not conducive for criminal behavior. Making sure landscaping does not provide screening for criminal activity is an example of CPTED strategies. Lighting is important in prevention because a person is less likely to commit a crime if they can be seen.

### **Signage**

Signage, although important for promoting businesses and events, should not overshadow the landscape. Thought must be given to sign placement and size and design of the sign. A sign must be compatible with its surrounding, both the built and natural environment.

#### Citywide Sign Ordinance

In 2007, the City created a sign ordinance to address the concern of sign clutter, both with freestanding signs and signage on buildings. In addition, the ordinance began to regulate temporary signs that were increasing around the City.

A task force of local business leaders, government officials and other interested citizens working with the City's Planning Department developed the new proposed regulations. The task force met monthly for 16 months to develop the new proposal and ensure the new regulations would balance the needs of businesses addressing the sign clutter issue.

#### Wayfinding Sign Plan

In 2011, the City developed a Community Wayfinding Sign Plan to increase City revenue and to enhance the community image. Wayfinding signs are used to direct visitors to local sites of interest including city hall, the library, parks and public attractions in a unified manner.

The idea was to create revenue by promoting the Boulevard business corridor and to guide visitors to various economic activities within the City. In addition, the Wayfinding

signs remove the visual clutter by replacing the existing random placement of various signs with one sign.

The program helps beautify the City by organizing information using a consistent sign design. Additionally, these signs show route numbers, destinations, directions, distances, services, points of interest, or other geographical, recreational, or cultural information.

### **Trees**

Most of the City's neighborhoods are lacking formal street trees, meaning there were no trees planted by the City or developer along the street or sidewalk when the neighborhood was established. However, as the City ages, many of the existing neighborhoods have developed tree canopies. Tree canopies are created when trees mature and their branches spread from house to house or across the street providing a shaded, enclosed environment. Unfortunately, as the neighborhoods age, trees are dying off and private owners are responsible for these trees, therefore they are often not replaced.

### **Public Parks and Open Spaces**

The City contains a number of parks, as well as a lot of undevelopable open space in the form of wetlands. Fort Clifton, Lakeview, Roslyn Landing and White Bank Landing parks serve all City residents and often regional visitors. White Bank Landing, Lakeview and Roslyn Landing offer boat access as well as green space that can be used for walking, jogging or passive sports. The City's neighborhood parks serve the residents who live within walking distance.

### **Publicly Owned Land**

The City is responsible for maintaining many different forms of public land. In addition to maintaining all the landscaping at the City's public buildings and parks, the City maintains numerous pieces of right-of-way that exist throughout the City. Limited public funding often makes maintenance and new investments a challenge.

### **Neighborhoods**

Neighborhood conditions and strategies for improvement are discussed in context to revitalization in the Neighborhood and Housing chapter of this plan. However, it should be noted that they play a major role in defining the character of this community. Neighborhood development in the City spans well over 100 years. The earliest neighborhoods were established in the early 1900s in the southern portion of the city and, more recently, neighborhoods have been established in the Conjures Neck area. This development over a long period of time results in a variety of housing types and street design throughout the city and contribute to the character of each neighborhood and to the overall City.

### **Historic Districts**

The City has one recognized State and National Historic District and, at the time of the writing of this document, was pursuing another. In order to be eligible for listing, a house or district must be at least 50 years old. There are a number of other

neighborhoods within the City that may be eligible for historic designation. Although it had been established that historic designation encourages revitalization and economic growth through the use of tax credits, it should be noted that listing on the State and National Registries is honorary and the designation alone provides little to no architectural preservation protections.

## **Gateways and Image Corridors**

Gateways and image corridors are areas that serve as entrances to or passageways through the City. Gateways and image corridors provide a snapshot of the City that potentially leaves a lasting impression on visitors and a passer-through. Potentially, Gateways should establish a "sense of place" when entering the City and provide a welcoming introduction to the City. Gateways provide an opportunity for well-designed signage to direct visitors around the City and promote local destinations. Gateways can be defined through signage, landscaping, and special design features.

### **Gateways**

Gateways are located at intersections that enter the City. This plan identifies two types of gateways: Primary gateways, which are well traveled and often greet visitors from farther away than our adjacent communities. Secondary gateways, more often serve as an entrance to the City from nearby communities.

For both types of gateways, visitors should immediately be greeted with a welcoming sense of entry to the City because gateways provide the first and often only impressions of the community.

Careful planning for the boundaries between the City and our adjacent neighboring localities is needed. It is important to create an entrance to the city; however, there should be design coordination in street design and streetscape improvement whenever possible. The small-town feel of our community is affected by the design and uses on our boundaries and edges.

In 2011, the City developed a Way Finding Signage Plan. The plan proposed to have way finding signs installed at key entrances into the City where there were currently no welcome signs. The intent was to increase revenue, promoting both the Boulevard Business Corridor and to guide visitors to the City to various economic activities. These consistently designed signs aimed to enhance the community image by removing the visual sign clutter at these intersections.

### **Primary Gateways**

Primary Gateways, in addition to being clean, welcoming and well landscaped, should provide visitors with way finding signs to help guide them easily to their destinations whether it be shopping or attending one of the many City parks or cultural events.

### Secondary Gateways

Secondary gateways should provide a more cozy entrance with more subtle signage. Landscaping and streetscape design should promote the small-town feel that is so important to the citizens of this community.

### **Image Corridor**

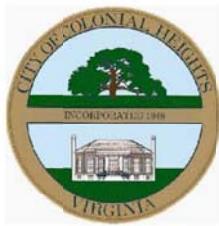
Our image corridors often provide an impression of Colonial Heights on travelers who may be just passing through the City. It may be the only opportunity to entice visitors to stop and invest in the City's businesses and attractions. Enhancement of gateways and image corridors can be done with landscaping, careful control over land use and design, and maintenance of public spaces.

### Interstate Image Corridor

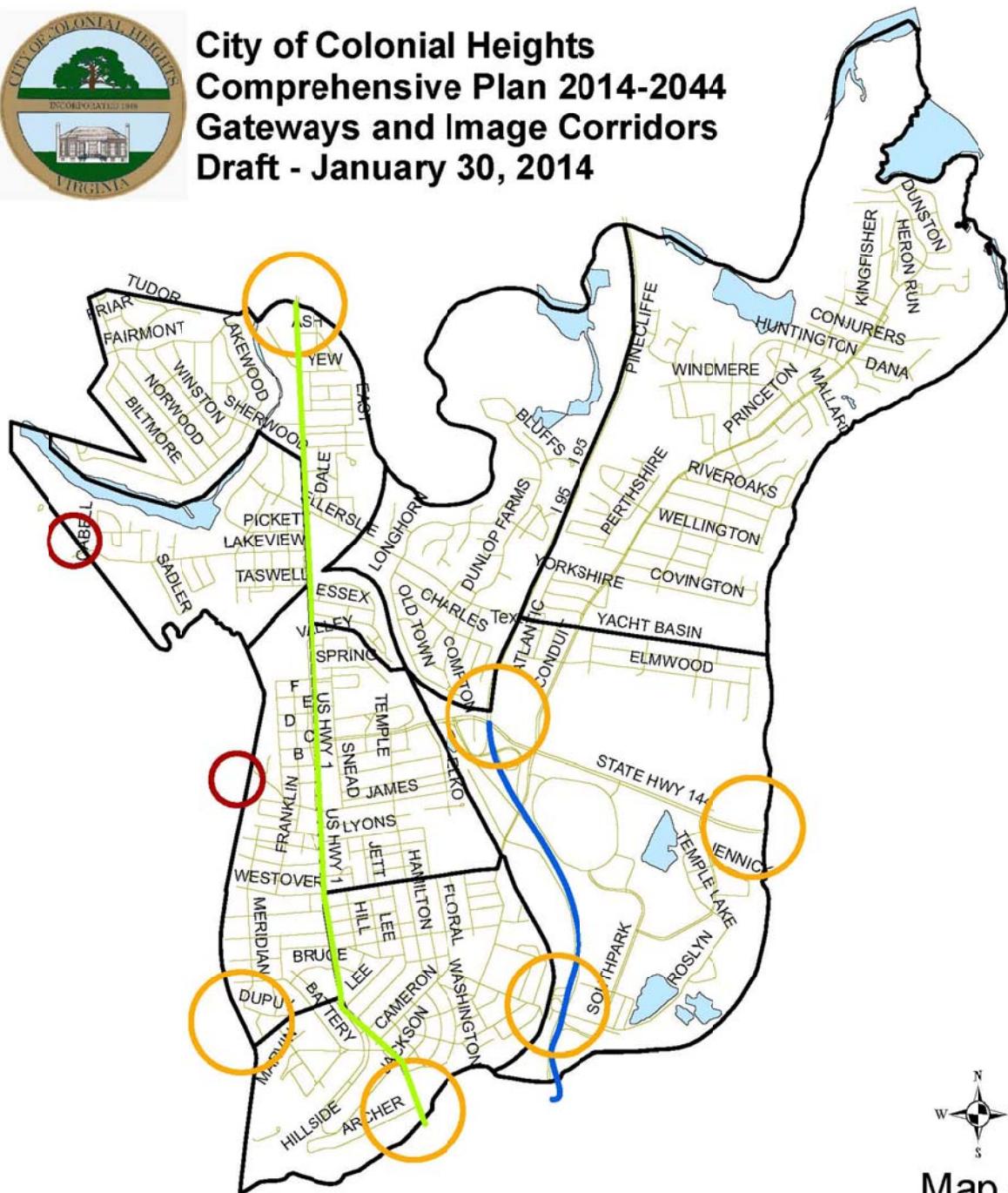
For many visitors, Interstate 95 provides the first and often only view of our City. The view of the City from Interstate 95 includes many signs inviting people to stop and shop at our retail businesses, service stations and restaurants. The signage is important because it is often the only opportunity to grab the attention of the passerby and encourage them to visit the highway oriented businesses and Mall; however, the current signage is uncoordinated, resulting in a cluttered appearance.

The interstate image corridor needs to be visually appealing to maintain its attraction to shoppers who have many regional malls and shopping areas to choose from in the Richmond market.

A City partnership with the business community to provide the landscaping along this corridor and signage directing visitors to shopping destinations should be considered as part of a long-term economic development strategy for the City



## City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Gateways and Image Corridors Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 4

Primary Gateway	Interstate Image Corridor
Secondary Gateway	Image Corridor

### Boulevard Image Area

The Boulevard (Route 1/301) runs north and south through the City. Prior to the construction of Interstate 95, it was the primary north/south road for the entire east coast.

The Boulevard serves many commercial and service functions. Both public and semi-public buildings are located here including the public safety building and the post office. The Boulevard is home to many locally owned restaurants and businesses, with some national fast-food chains and numerous professional offices. The Boulevard plays an important role in the community. One of the reasons the City feels like a small-town is because of the many local services provided on the Boulevard. Residents often know the merchants personally which promotes loyalty from customers and vice versa.

Development of the Boulevard occurred prior to planning and design standards being put in place resulting in a disorderly appearance. The development along the Boulevard is characterized by an array of building types and setbacks, access and parking issues and limited landscaping. There is only intermittent pedestrian access as much of the development in its early years was car oriented serving the north/south traveler.

### Boulevard Overlay District

In 2003 the City's zoning ordinance was amended to include the Boulevard Overlay District and was established to encourage quality, compatible development along the Boulevard. The intent is to achieve a sense of order and unity along the corridor by regulating signage and requiring new businesses to provide streetscape improvements including landscaping, sidewalks and uniform lighting. The overlay district establishes six sub areas of the Boulevard: Chesterfield Approach, Commercial Center, The Valley, Main Street, Government Center, and Petersburg Approach. Each sub area is intended to match the design improvements to the type of services provided in that area creating smaller service areas along the Boulevard.

### Boulevard Modernization

The Boulevard Modernization Project is intended to provide improved traffic operations on the Boulevard from Lafayette Avenue to Westover Avenue. Benefits of the project include enhanced pedestrian movements, increased safety and aesthetic appearance of the corridor. Reconstruction will also provide new auxiliary lanes and a better storm drain system among other improvements. The goal of this project is to improve this section of the Boulevard not only for driving, but also for shopping and walking. The project includes landscaping and ornamental lighting in the improved areas.

### Boulevard Matching Grant Program

The Boulevard Revitalization Committee, made up of Boulevard business owners/managers, was formed in 2003 to help guide the implementation of the newly adopted Boulevard Design Guidelines. A matching grant program was developed to encourage Boulevard Business owners to reinvest in their business by undertaking improvements that would make the business more functional and/or attractive and lead to a stronger business climate.

The program had a return on investment of 4:1. Over a 5 year period, 71 grant funded projects were completed with a total investment of \$1,519,264. The City portion of this investment was \$326,974. There was a wide variety of improvement made as a result of this program. Funds were spent on landscaping, parking, roofing, painting, signage, windows, lighting, demolition, sidewalks and fencing.

Since the development of the Overlay District, the new sign regulation, the Boulevard Modernization and the Boulevard Grant Program, the overall appearance of the Boulevard has begun to transform for the better. There is less sign clutter, more landscaping and façade improvements. Additionally, the installation of sidewalks as part of the Boulevard Modernization Program enhanced the pedestrian experience.

**The following Community Character and Design Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- Create guidelines for the eight (8) gateway entrances to the City identified on the Gateway and Image Corridor Map (Map 4) that emphasize code enforcement, limit commercial sign clutter, add landscaping and add signage welcoming people to the City. (CC-1)
- Where possible, require a connection between adjacent developments, both residential and commercial, to avoid having to get into a car. (SD-2, QL-1)
- Create an overlay district to improve the visual image of the City south of Temple Avenue on Interstate 95 by minimizing sign clutter, adding landscaping and improving the appearance of backdoors of business facing the interstate. (SD-2)
- Support the efforts of the Boulevard Revitalization Steering Committee by reinstating the Boulevard Revitalization Program. (EP-3)
- Work with mall management and other mall area businesses to promote safety by design, to include adequate lighting and sidewalks in all new development and, through education, encourage it in existing development. (EP-5)
- Public spaces should be created within neighborhoods and in commercial areas to encourage people to come together. Incorporate complete streets concepts to include street trees, sidewalks, bikeways, landscaping, and lighting with all new development and redevelopment projects and transportation in the City when possible. (QL-2, EP-3, CC-1, SD-3, SD-2, CC-3)
- Promote safety by design, to include adequate lighting and sidewalks in all new development and, through education, encourage it in existing development. (QL-7, SD-2)

- In parks and in those instances where there are street trees in the public right-of-way, a program should be developed for trees to be replaced when they are removed. (CC-5)
- In environmentally sensitive areas of the City, every effort should be made to ensure that a minimum number of trees be removed when new development takes place. Trees and other natural materials should be encouraged for stormwater management practices.(CC-5, SD-5)
- Create a City landscaping plan to identify priority planting locations and implementation schedule. This should apply to gateways, medians, and public rights-of-way throughout the City. (CC-5)
- An increase in land use regulations, zoning, and code enforcement may be necessary to accompany the historic designation in order to protect the character of these valuable neighborhoods. (CC-2, CC-4, SD-1)

## **Chapter 6. Economic Development**

The City of Colonial Heights' economic prosperity goals, objectives and policies will help shape how the City will perform in the future. Economic prosperity policies determine where governmental funds will be spent and where development will be encouraged, as well as provide avenues for employment and revenue generation for its residents and a tax base for local government.

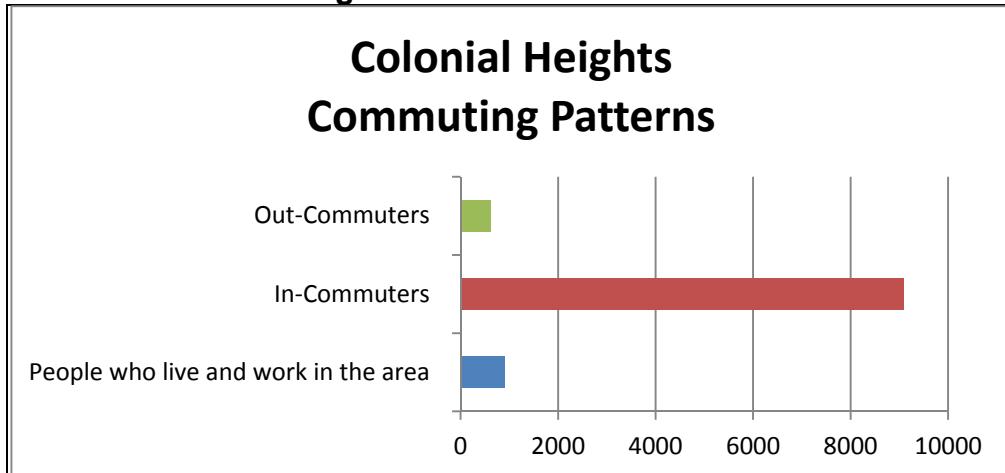
### **Current Economic Conditions**

While the City's economy is strong by national standards, being prepared for the changes in economic markets is vital to long-term prosperity. Integrating community development activities with job training programs will assist in eradicating poverty and ensuring that all residents benefit from the City's strong economy. Understanding the existing economy and future trends is the first step preparing for the future.

#### **Commuting Patterns**

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, a majority of residents commute to another locality to work. Of these residents, a majority commute to Chesterfield County, followed by Henrico County and the City of Richmond.

#### **Exhibit 12: Commuting To Patterns**



Source: Virginia Employment Commission via the U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2011

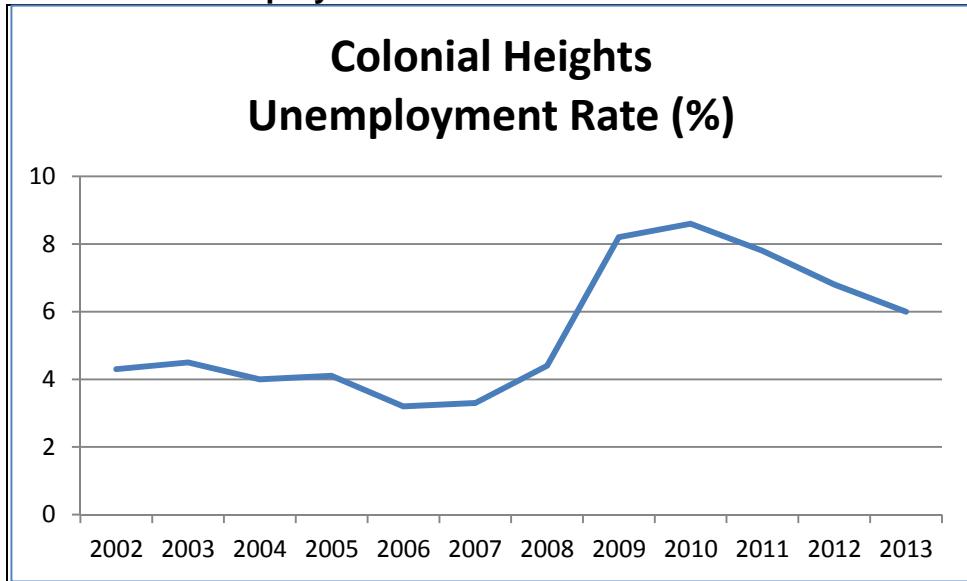
#### **Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed**

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, unemployment insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers to be used for the payment of unemployment insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond the workers control. Unemployment insurance replaces a part of the worker's wage of loss if he becomes eligible for payments. The data collected provides insight to who is most affected by job loss.

### Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labor force. According to the Virginia Employment Commission, in August 2013, the City's unemployment rate was 6.0 %, only slightly higher than the state average of 5.6% and lower than the national rate of 7.3%. This is down from its highest in the past decade at 8.6% in 2010.

#### **Exhibit 13: Unemployment Rate**

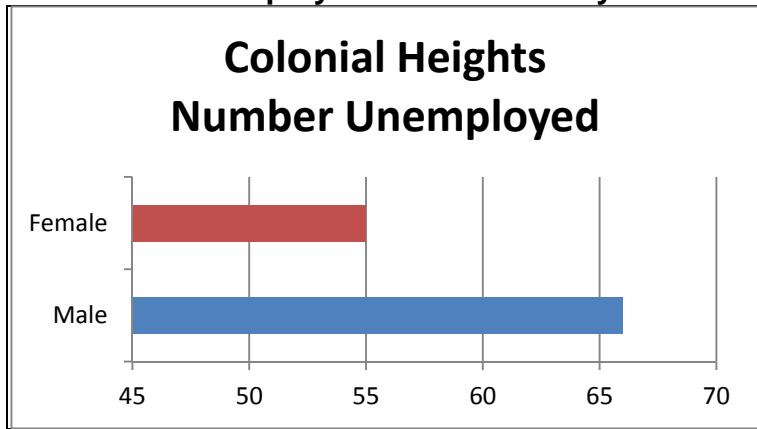


Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

### Unemployed by Gender

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed, January 2014 report, more men (66) than women (55) have collected unemployment insurance; this is consistent with state and national trends.

#### **Exhibit 14: Unemployment Insurance by Gender**

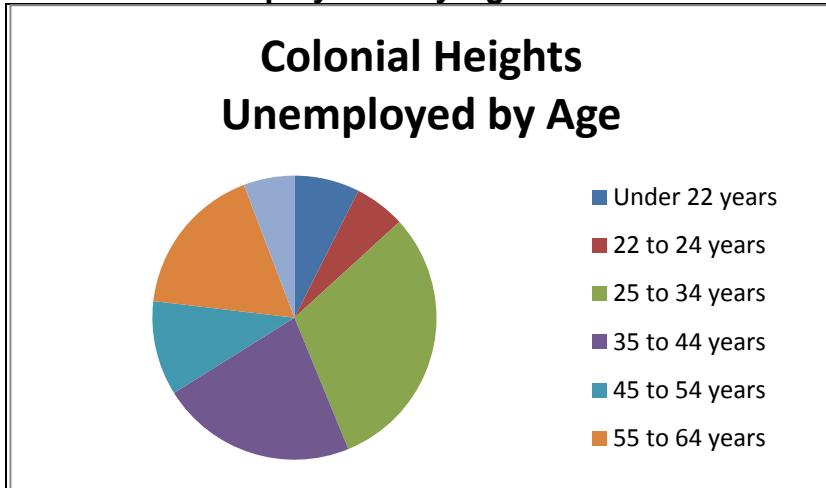


Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

### Unemployed by Age

Of those individuals unemployed, a majority are between the ages of 25 and 34; the next largest age group collecting unemployment insurance are people between the ages of 35 and 44 years old followed by people between the age 55 and 64 years old.

### **Exhibit 15: Unemployment by Age Distribution**



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed January 2014 report, the top industries with the largest amount of claimants in Colonial Heights include construction, administrative support, waste management and retail trade.

### **Profile of Industries**

### **Exhibit 16: Top 20 Employers**

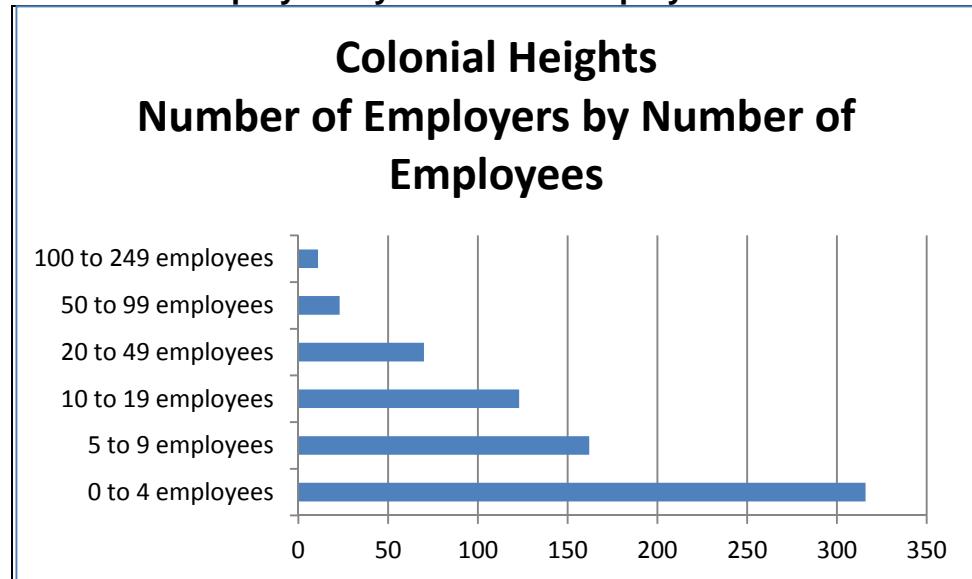
1. Wal Mart	11. Richmond Fitness Inc
2. Colonial Heights School Board	12. The Home Depot
3. Randstad Us L P	13. Target Corp
4. City of Colonial Heights	14. Texas Roadhouse
5. VDOT	15. The Dunlop House
6. Colonial Heights Operations	16. Sears Roebuck & Company, Inc.
7. Red Lobster and the Olive Garden	17. McDonald's
8. Martin's Food Market	18. Colonial Orthopedics
9. J.C. Penney Corporation, Inc.	19. May Department Stores Company
10. Care Advantage	20. Family Care Home Health LLC

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 1st Quarter (January, February, March) 2013.

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, the top 11 of these employers in the City have between 100 to 240 employees, those remaining in the top 20 have between

50 to 99 employees. It should be noted that despite the large number of national companies located in the City, a majority of employers in the city have 19 or fewer employees.

#### **Exhibit 17: Employers by Number of Employees**



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 1st Quarter (January, February, March) 2013.

#### **Employment by Industry**

Of the 11,562 people employed in the City of Colonial Heights, Retail Trade is the top employment industry was 28% of workers, followed by Accommodations and Food Service at 17% with Health Care and Social Assistance coming in third as the highest employment industry with 13 percent of workers.

#### **Regional Occupation Projections**

According to the VEC, between 2010 and 2020, there will be 3,009 new Health Care and Social Assistance jobs in the Crater District (cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex). This industry shows the highest projected growth followed by Retail Trade with 1,146 new jobs for that same time period. Therefore, it is no surprise that of the top 10 occupations expected to grow in the Crater District between 2010 and 2020, eight are related to the medical health field.

#### **Existing Commercial Areas**

##### **Southpark Mall Area**

Over the last 30 years, the business/commercial environment in the City has grown from providing for the basic needs of a small city to providing for the needs of the region. The Southpark Mall area has developed into a regional commercial and business center. Nearly half of the City's top 20 employers are located in the Southpark Mall area.

### **Boulevard (U. S. Route 1/301)**

The Boulevard developed in a linear fashion. Although there are some national chain restaurants along the Boulevard, most of the businesses are locally owned. Services include restaurant, retail and numerous professional services such as doctors and insurance offices.

This type of linear growth along the City's major thoroughfare perpetuates traffic control, an excessive amount of curb cuts, parking limitations, the visual effect of business sign clutter, and the encroachment of residential neighborhoods.

The fear of businesses abandoning the Boulevard because of Southpark Mall has not materialized. Although some businesses have closed along the Boulevard, new businesses have taken their place. The Boulevard is not plagued with numerous vacancies; rather, the evolution of old to new businesses is occurring. A new type of development that is taking place along the Boulevard is the office condominium, a cluster of business offices that share a common building and parking lot.

The Pickwick Avenue commercial area is small collection of neighborhood serving retail shops and services. The commercial area is included in the Chesterfield Highland Historic District and is included in the Boulevard Strategy Area.

### **Ellerslie**

There is a small node of businesses located along Ellerslie Avenue near Dunlop Farms. A strip center was developed in the 1980s that contains a grocery store, restaurants and various business services. There is some opportunity for business growth in the form of outparcels along Ellerslie Avenue.

## **Economic Development Opportunity Areas**

As previously mentioned the City, because of the lack of vacant, buildable land, has limited economic development prospects. The following provide economic development opportunities within the constraints our city. These Economic Development Opportunity Areas are depicted on Map 5.

### **Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area**

The intent of a Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area is to provide the community with convenient commercial uses and services in well-designed, safe, and attractive settings and to create a shopping and service district that makes positive contributions to the City's image and economy.

The intent is to focus and concentrate retail, commercial and service activity within a clearly distinguishable area. It is also intended to prevent negative commercial encroachment into residential neighborhoods.

In developing this district, an emphasis should be put on having a strong pedestrian orientation, buildings that front on the street with minimal setbacks and limited off-street parking. Complete street concepts such as landscaping, sidewalks and pedestrian level lighting should be incorporated to help create a sense of place.

The biggest challenge to enhancing this district is that there are multiple stores and services that are not managed by a single entity and building ownership is held separately. Therefore, there is a need for public regulation and incentives to create a change. The Commercial Strategy Area runs along the Boulevard from Westover to the City limits and includes the Pickwick Avenue shopping area. The location of the Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area is depicted on the Economic Opportunities Map (Map 5).

### **Mall Area**

By most accounts, the South Park Mall and surrounding area is stable. Vacancies and turnover are relatively low considering the recent recession that stifled the economy, impacting the retail and service industries. However, as consumer shopping habits change from buying directly from a store to shopping on line, long-term viability of the Mall should be examined. Cities across the country are revisiting traditional mall land use and adopting mixed use concepts for both new and redeveloped shopping areas.

### **Smaller Mixed Use Centers**

As the needs for housing change, new, higher density residential is recommended by this plan to attract new residents and house the aging population. The Economic Opportunity Map (Map 5) identifies two mixed-use areas that could be an opportunity for new neighborhood convenience services. Restaurants and specialty markets could serve the needs of area residents without requiring a lot of parking or causing an increase of traffic.

### **Appomattox River Corridor Vision Plan**

The Appomattox River Corridor Study area is located in the City of Colonial Heights between the Appomattox River and Charles Dimmock Parkway/East Roslyn Road; from Temple Avenue to Interstate 95. The study area is approximately 175 acres.

The land is composed of a mix of private and City-owned lands. Private land uses include former automobile dealerships, other retail uses and several vacant parcels. City lands include a park, a vacant former landfill site that has been remediated and other public uses.

The goal of the study was to outline development potential of the corridor. In particular, the City of Colonial Heights was interested in determining the highest and best use for the study area considering regional market potential, neighborhood development goals, amenities and land values.

The result of the study was a two alternative development scenarios both containing a mixed-use or multiple-use environment that created access to community amenities,

provided economically-productive land uses and improved transportation and infrastructure.

## **Strategic Plan and Market Analysis**

Specific details of this plan can be developed through a strategic planning process; however, it should concentrate on four elements:

- Business Recruitment
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Revitalization
- The City's Business Image

### **Business Recruitment**

Details of the business recruitment process can be worked out through a strategic planning process, but it should include creating a recruitment team made up of City staff, business owners, local real estate professionals, property owners, lenders, members of the Chamber of Commerce and elected officials. This team should bring a clear and realistic understanding of the current market, have skills in economic development and real estate along with connections to local decision-makers, and have the ability to follow through.

### **Business Retention and Expansion**

Much of a community's job growth and capital investment comes from companies already located there. It is necessary for the City to build relationships with the existing business owners in order to identify companies with plans to expand and companies at risk of leaving or downsizing. Through a strategic planning process find ways to provide assistance to these businesses in order to prevent them from leaving the City and encourage them to continue to invest in their businesses.

### **Commercial Revitalization**

Although there has been an increase in infill development, most of the City's commercial areas are over 30 years old. As these commercial areas age, existing properties are becoming obsolete and less attractive for the current retail store or professional service providers. To prevent new businesses from locating outside the City and existing businesses from moving out, building renovation and modernization must occur.

In addition to utilizing traditional revitalization tools such as property maintenance, code enforcement and crime prevention, redevelopment of underutilized sections of these commercial areas may be necessary to accommodate modern retail needs. An example of where redevelopment may be necessary is along the Boulevard where lot sizes are an issue for new businesses. The smaller lot sizes make it difficult to accommodate new construction and parking. Another example for possible redevelopment is the Mall area, as some big box retailers turn to on line sales, stores may close. As these stores become vacant, it may be necessary to redevelop the property for the modern retail store or possibly change the land use all together. .

Future economic planning should include evaluating each of the existing commercial areas in the city and identify revitalization needs and redevelopment possibilities within each area.

### **City's Business Image**

The City has a bit of a business identity crisis. On one hand, there is a desire for the City to maintain its small town feel. This can be done by fostering small businesses along the City's Boulevard commercial corridor, but at the same time, the City is home to a large regional mall that must stay viable to maintain the City's economic health. It will be important for the City to accommodate the needs of and attract both small and large businesses. In order to create a business friendly image, this can only be achieved by recognizing the different needs of both types of businesses.

### **Market Analysis**

It is hard to predict the City's draw without current market data. A market analysis studies the attractiveness and the dynamics within an industry. These analyses can help identify the strengths, weaknesses; opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the current economic environment. SWOT analysis can help define retention and recruitment strategies. Market data should be updated regularly in order to have the most current data possible.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

An economic development strategy is a five year plan for promoting job creation and economic growth. The following steps should be included in the development of a strategy for the City.

1. Perform a market analysis to address sales-leakage and identify future recruitment targets as a means to diversify short-term and long-term growth sectors
  - Develop and carryout a survey of existing businesses
  - Secure funding and carryout detailed market analysis
2. Develop an existing business retention program that would help maintain, protect, diversify and improve the City's commercial base
  - Create a local business committee to assist in defining and carrying out the program
  - Conduct research and use focus groups to help define community needs and opportunities
3. Raise the profile of the City as a destination for both living and doing business
  - Obtain and research national, regional and local trends to clarify the economic development vision for the City
  - Develop a branding /marketing campaign based on documented research
4. Create a targeted business recruitment program

- Utilize information from other work elements to establish business targets and methodology to carry out the program

5. Define long term economic development implementation program objectives and methodology for achieving them

- Document and define resource needs to carry out recommendations
- Create first year operating budget

**The following Economic Prosperity Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

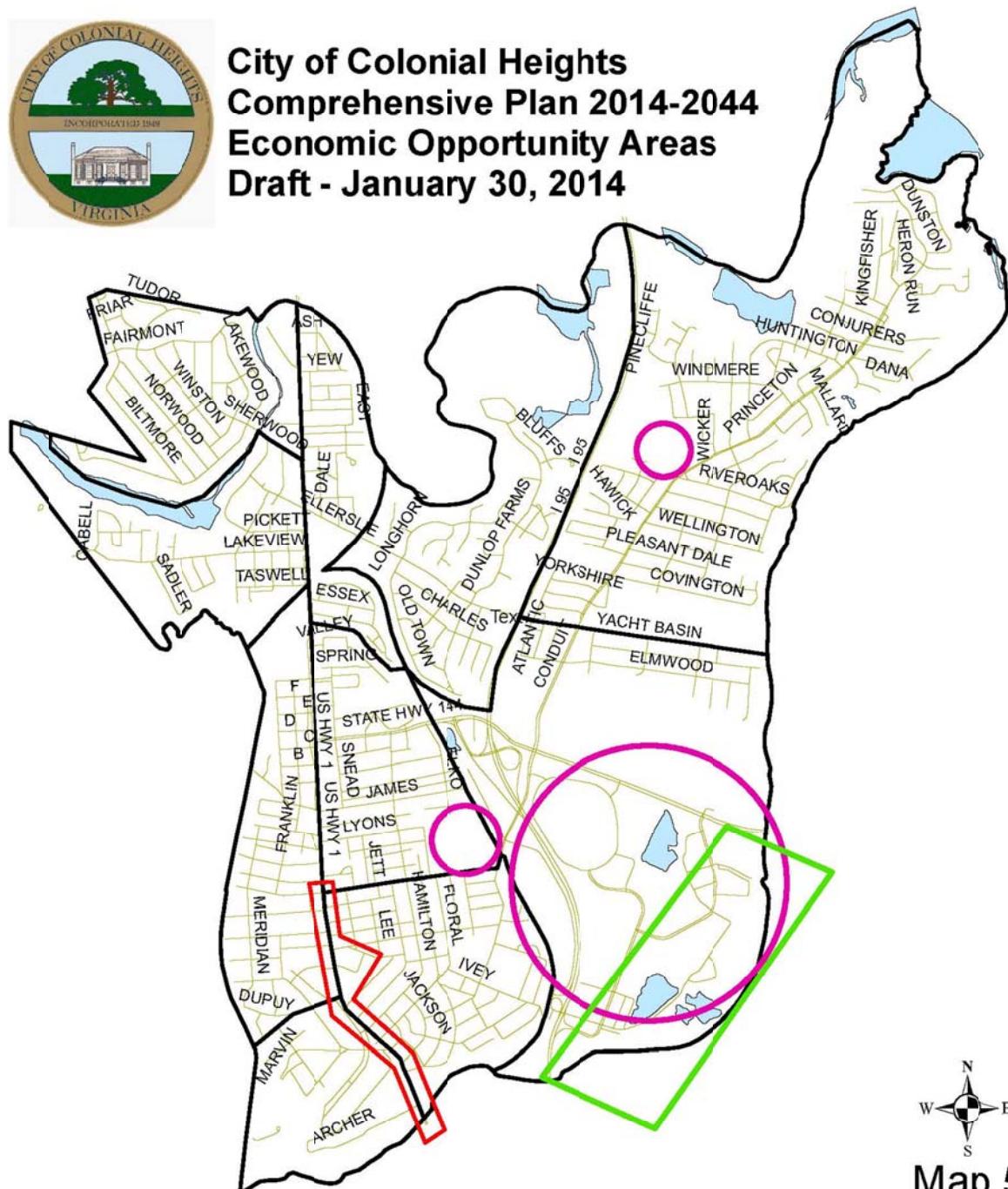
- Create a five year strategy plan to identify the immediate economic needs of the City. Special consideration should be considered for medical complexes or other new and growing industries. (EP-6, EP-1, SD-2)
- Create a one-stop-shop for businesses to get permits and learn about all programs within the City to create a friendly environment to encourage businesses to locate in the City. (QL-6)
- Provide tax credits for locally owned businesses so they can reinvest in their business to modernize or expand. (EP-4)
- Create a City program designed to attract new business and retain existing in the Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area as identified on the Concept Plan (Map 5). (EP-1, SD-2)
- Partnering with Colonial Heights Public Schools, develop a taskforce made up of the private and public sector leadership to work to mentor young people interested in business create new local businesses. (EP-1, EP-2)
- With school leadership, create a working coalition of educators and medical personnel to attract more of the City's students into health care and aging occupations. A well-trained population will attract more medical offices and jobs. (EP-1, EP-2)
- Encourage new local businesses by working with Colonial Heights Chamber of Commerce (or Crater District Planning Commission, Virginia State University or the Small Business Administration) to start a small business incubator. (EP-4)
- Ensure citizen involvement in the policy development and decision-making process on publicly-funded economic development projects and activities. (QL-6)
- Form a task force of Southpark Mall area business owners/managers, including Mall management and City staff to identify ways to improve and redevelop the commercial area to include new land use options, such as mixed use, senior

housing and offices for areas around, and including, Southpark Mall. This area is identified as an Opportunity Area on the Concept Plan (Map 5). (EP-5)

- Study the Boulevard Corridor to identify areas where it may be appropriate to allow expansion into the adjacent neighborhood to make the Boulevard sites more attractive for redevelopment and new businesses. (EP-1)



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Economic Opportunity Areas Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 5

— Boulevard Commercial  
Strategy Area

— Appomattox River Corridor  
Vision Plan

○ Mixed Use  
Opportunity Area

## **Chapter 7. Environment**

The fall line of the Appomattox River is just west of the U. S. Route 1/301 bridge, and the escarpment ridge runs just west of the Interstate 95. The Appomattox River defines the eastern boundary of the City; and Swift Creek forms the northern boundary. The only other tributary, Old Town Creek, essentially bisects Colonial Heights from east to west.

Land forms of the area show some fundamental differences due to the fact that in the City, the coastal plain meets the Piedmont region. The latter area can be characterized as gently rolling hills, generally draining to the east and south. The coastal plains area is generally flat and sandy. Flat areas in the 100 year floodplain are located adjacent to the Appomattox River, in the low basin along Old Town Creek near the River, and at some of the bends along Swift Creek.

Streams, creeks, and erosion have cut into the upper table of high ground, and sandy embankments, marsh areas, wetlands, and non-tidal ponds have formed below. These low areas are water saturated throughout most of the year and are now classified as wetlands areas. Once thought to be undesirable areas, these wetland and marsh areas are now recognized to be vitally significant components of environmental systems providing water filtration and purification, shoreline stabilization, and important breeding grounds for terrestrial and aquatic life.

Over the last several decades, there has been a growing recognition of the crucial need to preserve natural resources and to manage waste, air pollution and other by-products of development. Water quality, environmentally sensitive lands, air quality and open space are elements of the natural environment that are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of development.

### **Existing Natural Resources**

In order to protect these resources, an inventory of what we have is necessary. This plan inventories the existing natural features including: geology, topography, soil types, steep slopes and shoreline and erosion issues.

#### **Geology**

Colonial Heights has characteristics of both the Piedmont and Tidewater. The land is mostly low, but is gently rolling in some places. It is underlain by crystalline rocks. In certain areas, however, the hard crystalline rocks pass beneath softer, unconsolidated sediments.

The section of Colonial Heights which lies in the Coastal Plain Province is underlain largely by unconsolidated sand, gravel, and clay strata which were deposited upon rocks similar to those in the Piedmont. In the late 1960's, sand and gravel, granite, and lightweight aggregate were produced commercially in Chesterfield County. Some

formerly mined areas are also found in Colonial Heights along Interstate 95 and Swift Creek.

Samples of local clay and siltstone have been tested and found potentially suitable for use in face brick, sewer pipe, quarry tile, and other ceramic use. Diatomaceous earth occurs in the Coastal Plain section, but the presence of commercial deposits has not been established.

### **Topography**

Typical of many older Colonial towns, the City of Colonial Heights is located on the high ground of an escarpment adjacent to a once-navigable river. The land is relatively flat; elevations range from 20 to 40 feet above sea level, with the highest elevation occurring in the far western area of the City. The City is mostly surrounded to the east by lower areas: tributaries, creeks, streams, and tidal shores. All of these areas adjacent to the Appomattox River are bordered by wetland and/or marsh areas. The Appomattox drains into the James River at Hopewell; the James then flows into the Chesapeake Bay at Hampton Roads.

### **Soils**

Information on soil types is a valuable aid in local land use planning and decision making, as well as site-specific planning and design. Soil characteristics affect the capacity of land to support structures, roads, foundations, and septic systems. The information found in soil surveys can be used to identify certain areas that may need special attention because of potential soil limitations. Once such areas have been identified, more detailed soil analyses can be performed that will help determine appropriate engineering practices needed to overcome and/or mitigate soil-related limitations.

### **Steep Slopes**

Bluffs and steep slopes of any kind have unusual development problems. Stormwater runoff can cause bluffs to cave in or can easily erode steep slopes, with large quantities of unwanted sediment carried into streams or onto nearby properties. Generally, areas with slopes equal to or greater than 15 percent generate additional construction costs, which in itself has tended to limit development. However, valuable "waterfront" property and new construction techniques will lead to future use of the more buildable slopes. It is therefore important that sensitive steep areas prone to erosion and crucial to the protection of water quality be preserved in their natural state.

In Colonial Heights, steep slopes help protect water quality of both tributaries and intermittent streams. For the most part, steep slopes lie within the Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) and their preservation is critical to water quality and erosion control. In Colonial Heights, steeper grades are generally found adjacent to larger streams (Swift and Old Town) and along most of the Appomattox River. Stream and river embankments include some areas with gentle slopes as well as areas with moderately steep slopes. Elevations along the steeper embankments range from 0 - 5 feet at the waterway's edge to about 60 feet on the adjacent upland terraces. The most visibly

steep areas within the City are found in the vicinity of the U. S. Route 1/301 bridge, along the northern side of Old Town Creek, in the Dunlop Farms area, and along certain sections of the Appomattox River.

### **Water Features**

Within the City, there are four major water features: the Appomattox River, Swift Creek, Swift Creek Lake (Reservoir) and Old Town Creek. (See Map 6).

#### Appomattox River

The Appomattox River bordering Colonial Heights consists of two separate channels, with numerous marsh islands in the midst of the river. The portion of the waterway adjacent to Colonial Heights currently serves as a diversion channel, with the primary navigation channel abutting Prince George County and the City of Petersburg. Due to narrow width and shallow depth, this diversion channel is considered unnavigable for most motorized craft with the exception of small "john boats", canoes and the like.

#### Swift Creek

Forming Colonial Heights' northern perimeter, Swift Creek is a meandering, narrow waterway predominantly fringed by forested swamp and wetlands. These natural areas provide a number of water quality benefits and help protect the creek banks from erosion. In the northwestern portion of the City, Swift Creek flows past several suburban neighborhoods, including Woodlawn, Sherwood Hills and Dunlop Farms. Stream banks adjoining Swift Creek in this urbanized area range from gently graduated to moderately steep. Some residential structures are sited near the creek; other properties are set well-back from the water's edge. Most creek side lands consist of landscaped lawns or overgrown natural areas.

Swift Creek Lake (Dam Reservoir) Swift Creek Lake is found in the northwestern part of Colonial Heights, where Swift Creek initially enters the City. This lake once served as the City's potable water supply prior to establishment of the regional system at Lake Chesdin. Land use adjoining the shores of Swift Creek Lake include single-family and multifamily residences, as well as a Public Works maintenance yard and a small 2.7 acre park (Lakeside Park) offering waterside trails, a fishing dock and a boat launch.

Old Town Creek Old Town Creek generally bisects the City of Colonial Heights, originating a mile south of Swift Creek Lake and flowing just north of the Southpark Mall commercial area. Old Town Creek then empties into the Appomattox River near the Temple Avenue bridge crossing. Within the City, the upland reaches of Old Town Creek include narrow segments that closely abut urban development centered along the Route 301/1 (Boulevard) corridor. Near Southpark Mall, the creek valley widens considerably, and stream bank segments are fairly well-buffered from urban development by a broad floodplain/marsh area and heavily vegetated slopes.

## **Special Flood Hazard Area**

The 100-year floodplain is the land that is predicted to flood during a 100 year storm which has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. Areas within the 100-year floodplain may flood in much smaller storms as well. The 100-year floodplain is used by FEMA to administer the federal flood insurance program and the City to regulate development.

Floodplain management is the operation of a community program of corrective and preventative measures for reducing flood damage. These measures take a variety of forms and generally include requirements for zoning, subdivision or building, and special-purpose floodplain ordinances.

## **Resource Protection Area**

Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) are the corridors of environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the shorelines of streams, rivers, and other waterways. In their natural condition, RPAs protect water quality. RPAs filter pollutants out of stormwater runoff, reduce the volume of stormwater runoff, prevent erosion, and perform other important biological and ecological functions. The components of an RPA include:

- Tidal wetlands
- Tidal shores
- Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and adjacent to tidal wetlands or tributary streams

## **Stormwater**

Stormwater runoff is the water which does not soak into the soil but rather flows off lawns, streets, paved areas, and rooftops during and after a rainstorm. As the water flows across lawns, streets, parking lots, and other surfaces it carries salt, sand, nutrients, pesticides, fertilizers, vegetative debris, oil, grease, litter, and many other pollutants, some possibly toxic, into nearby waterways. Since these pollutants are carried from a wide area by stormwater runoff and cannot be traced to a single pipe, a single point or source, they are called nonpoint source pollutants.

Stormwater runoff affects the water quality of rivers and streams. The runoff carries sediments, nutrients, and toxins. Each of these nonpoint source pollutants will deteriorate water quality.

Sediment washing into a stream settles out and begins to fill in the basin. Before settling out, sediments will make the water appear cloudy or turbid. High turbidity affects the aesthetics of the body of water as well as the survival of fish and various aquatic plants.

When phosphorus, a nutrient, is delivered to a river by runoff, the growth of algae and aquatic plants in the river will increase. Algae and aquatic plants are important in providing habitat for fish and wildlife. However, rapid and excessive growth of algae and aquatic plants can deteriorate water quality and can impair recreational enjoyment.

Toxic chemicals such as lead, from gas and auto exhaust, zinc from roof drains and tires, insecticides, herbicides, and other pesticides are carried by stormwater runoff in both urban and rural areas. These materials can affect the "health" of fish and other forms of aquatic life living in rivers and streams.

Rainfall runoff is a major problem in many developed areas. This is because a large percentage of land surface in developed areas is covered by buildings and pavement which collect and channel pollutant laden stormwater. Newly developed areas are usually provided with storm sewers to handle stormwater runoff. Stormwater control ordinances require that design controls be incorporated into new projects.

Storm Sewers are pipes lay underground, often below streets, which convey surface water runoff into nearby rivers or streams. Intakes or drains located along curbs and in parking areas collect the runoff water into the pipes for quick transport into the receiving water. A common misperception is that all the water running off streets into a surface collector goes into a sewage treatment plant. It does not. Stormwater usually receives no treatment. Whatever runs off lawns, streets, and parking lots flows directly into rivers and streams, carrying pollutants with it

The goals of stormwater management are to: slow down water flow, lessen soil erosion, encourage runoff's infiltration into the ground, reducing the amount of stormwater that reaches rivers and streams and keep pesticides, oil, and other pollutants off the ground where they can be washed away

The good stormwater management practices are designed to slow up the runoff, encourage water to soak into the ground, and reduce the availability of pollutant sources.

Other stormwater management practices that are non-structural include:

- do not dispose of grass clippings, used motor oil, flushings from radiators, pet wastes, household toxic wastes, etc., by placing them into the gutters or storm sewer inlets
- anti-litter ordinances and educational programs
- frequent trash removal and street cleaning
- cleaning of catch basins and sewer pipes
- controls on herbicide and pesticide usage

Poorly managed urban stormwater will cost a community both in dollars and environmental damage. Poorly managed stormwater runoff can cause:

- flooding of rivers, streams, streets, and homes
- erosion of roadbeds, stream banks, and beaches
- pollution affecting the quality of rivers, streams, and drinking water

One way of cleaning up polluted urban runoff is to install stormwater treatment facilities. Another less expensive method is to keep pollutants out of runoff. Keeping pollutants

out of stormwater runoff is less expensive than installing stormwater treatment facilities. Here are some ways that individuals can help prevent stormwater pollution:

Individuals can:

- Recycle oil
- Direct downspouts to lawns
- Sweep paved areas to keep waste out of stormwaters
- Keep your car tuned, repair leaks
- Limit fertilizer and pesticide use, leave grass clippings on lawn
- Clean up pet waste
- Dispose of toxic wastes properly
- Wash your car on your lawn or at a car wash

The potential payoff from better land management practices is high, promising healthier waters, quality water recreation close to home and riverfront development possibilities.

### **Low Impact Development Tools**

Low impact development tools offer alternatives to conventional stormwater management that more closely mimic a sites predevelopment appearance and often look more attractive. Examples include:

- permeable paving,
- green roofs,
- vegetated swales and
- sunken median strips along the roadway.

Sunken median strips or vegetated swales can absorb runoff as it meets the surface, eliminating non-point source pollution and can be a functional and attractive solution to stormwater runoff. Rain gardens and open or green space can reduce pollution and provide passive recreation space. Rain barrels and cisterns allow for the reuse of water.

### **Shoreline/Stream Bank Erosion Issues**

It is now known that shoreline and stream bank erosion can have a significant negative impact on water quality. Natural forces which cause shoreline erosion include wave action, storm events where water or wind damage occurs, and upland runoff. Human-generated sources of erosion can originate from construction and land disturbing activities, boat wakes, over-building (excess impervious cover) or improperly sited development.

Local Shoreline/Stream Bank Features:

In Colonial Heights, the vast majority of river, stream and lake shoreline consists of heavily vegetated, unmanaged shoreline segments. The principal shoreline/ stream

bank types in the City include tidal/non-tidal wetlands, sediment banks, and swamp forests. Each type is discussed generally below:

- 1) Tidal/Non-tidal Wetlands: Tidal and non-tidal wetlands are vegetated marshes located adjacent to or offshore of sediment banks and along creek floodplains. These wetlands are resistant to normal wave activity since their matted root systems are effective at trapping and holding sediment in place. Additionally, their low elevation provides effective protection to sediment banks along the backshore by baffling wave energy.
- 2) Sediment Banks: Sediment banks are composed of various soil types such as gravel, sand, silt, and clay, and can be classified into either high or low bank types. High banks are normally eroded by rain, groundwater seepage, and wave action from storm events or boat wakes. High banks are susceptible to undercutting at the toe (base) of the bank by high energy waves; this process leads to slumping - collapse of material composing the bank due to gravity. Low banks are normally eroded by wave action. These erosion processes may cause the loss of trees and other vegetation, further decreasing shoreline stability.
- 3) Swamp Forests: Swamp forests occur normally in the upper reaches of tributary rivers and creeks and contain a variety of tree specimens. These forests are usually stable due to the large tree root systems. However, their vulnerability to flooding makes them unsuitable for urban forms of development.

### **Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management**

Coastal ecosystems reside at the interface between the land and water, and are naturally very complex. They perform a vast array of functions by way of shoreline stabilization, improved water quality, and habitat for fishes; from which humans derive direct and indirect benefits.

The science behind coastal ecosystem resource management has revealed that traditional resource management practices limit the ability of the coastal ecosystem to perform many of these essential functions. The loss of these services has already been noted throughout coastal communities in Virginia as a result of development in coastal zone areas coupled with common erosion control practices. Beaches and dunes are diminishing due to a reduction in a natural sediment supply. Wetlands are drowning in place as sea level rises and barriers to inland migration have been created by construction of bulkheads and revetments. There is great concern on the part of the Commonwealth that the continued armoring of shorelines and construction within the coastal area will threaten the long-term sustainability of coastal ecosystems under current and projected sea level rise.

In the 1980s, interest arose in the use of planted wetlands to provide natural shoreline erosion control. Today, a full spectrum of living shoreline design options is available to address the various energy settings and erosion problems found. Depending on the

site characteristics, they range from marsh plantings to the use of rock sills in combination with beach nourishment.

Research continues to support that these approaches combat shoreline erosion, minimize impacts to the natural coastal ecosystem and reinforce the principle that an integrated approach for managing tidal shorelines enhances the probability that the resources will be sustained. Therefore, adoption of new guidance and shoreline best management practices for coastal communities is now necessary to insure that functions performed by coastal ecosystems will be preserved and the benefits derived by humans from coastal ecosystems will be maintained into the future.

In 2011, the Virginia Assembly passed legislation to amend §28.2-1100 and §28.2-104.1 of the Code of Virginia and added section §15.2-2223.2, to codify a new directive for shoreline management in Tidewater Virginia. In accordance with section §15.2-2223.2, all local governments shall include in the next revision of their comprehensive plan beginning in 2013, guidance prepared by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) regarding coastal resource management and, more specifically, guidance for the appropriate selection of living shoreline management practices. The legislation establishes the policy that living shorelines are the preferred alternative for stabilizing eroding shorelines.

This guidance, found within the Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal, is being prepared by VIMS for localities within the Tidewater region of Virginia. It explicitly outlines where and what new shoreline best management practices should be considered where coastal modifications are necessary to reduce shoreline erosion and protect our fragile coastal ecosystems. This guidance will include a full spectrum of appropriate management options which can be used by local governments for site-specific application and consideration of cumulative shoreline impacts. The guidance applies a decision-tree method using a based resource mapping database that will be updated from time to time and a digital geographic information system model created by VIMS.

**The following Environment Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

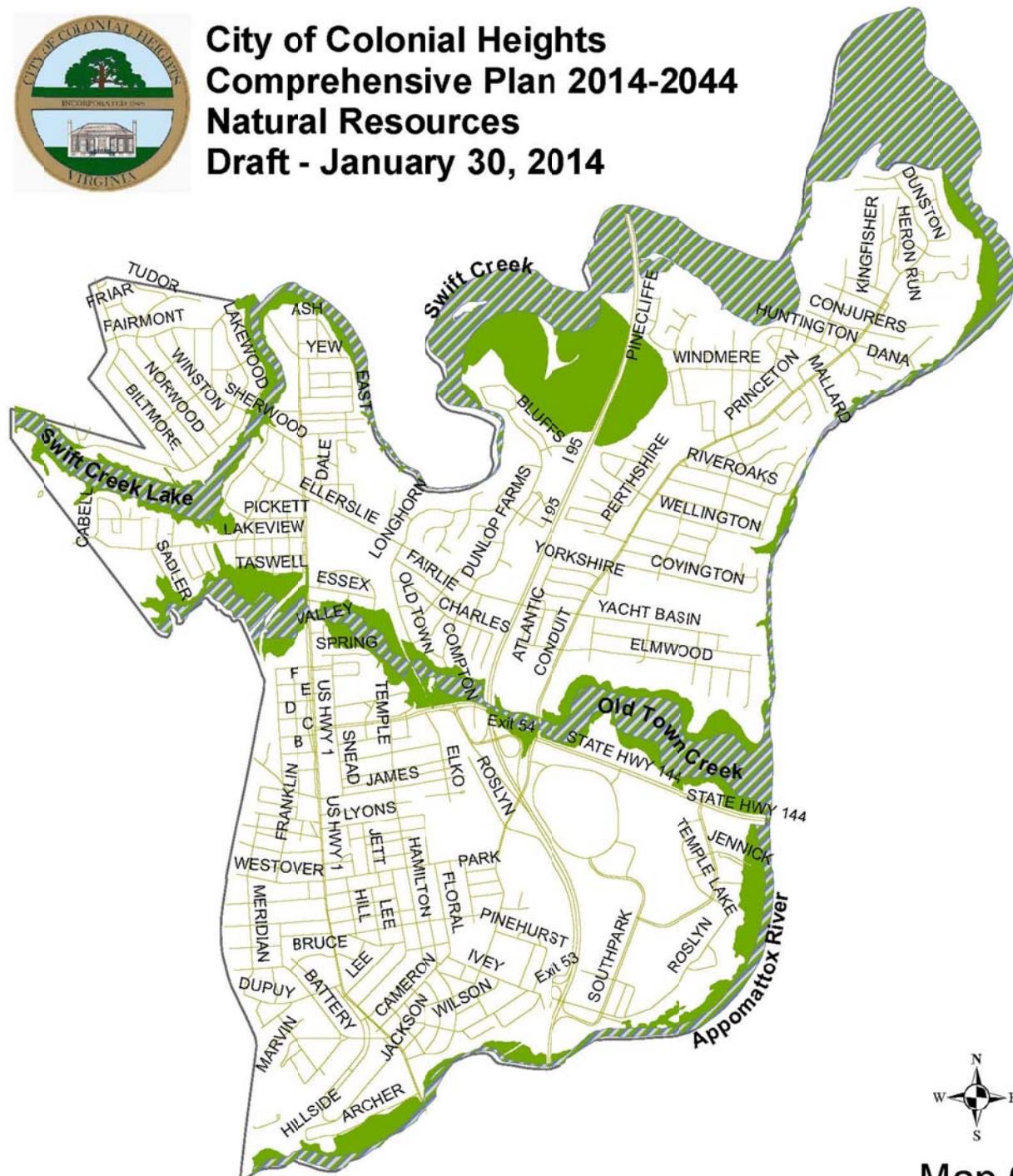
- Enforce floodplain management regulations so that residents continue to be eligible for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program. (SD-5)
- Enforce the Chesapeake Bay Regulations to include riparian buffers for Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection and Resource Management Areas regarding land use and development related activities. (SD-5)
- Protect local and regional water resources through application of the Chesapeake Bay Management Regulations to environmentally sensitive areas such as perennial streams, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, and highly erodible soils. (SD-5)

- Require effective mitigation when impacts occur during development, including removal of vegetation, cutting of trees, altering drainage ways, grading, and filling. (SD-5)
- Support Appomattox River Water Authority efforts to provide safe, clean water to City residents. (SD-5)
- Cooperate and work with the state and federal governments in an effort to maintain federal ambient air quality standards for ozone and carbon monoxide on a long-term basis. (SD-5)
- Encourage a regional reduction in single occupant vehicles (SOVs) through the development of park and ride locations to encourage ridesharing and carpools. (SD-5)
- Ensure that a high level of design and quality construction is maintained on all public and private projects within the City. When possible, follow Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards. (SD-3, SD-7)
- Refer to the guidance presented in the locality's Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal (CCRMP) prepared by VIMS to guide regulation and policy decisions regarding shoreline erosion control. (SD-5)
- Utilize VIMS Decision Trees for onsite review and subsequent selection of appropriate erosion control/shoreline best management practices: <http://ccrm.vims.edu/decisiontree/index.html>. (SD-5)
- Utilize VIMS' CCRMP Shoreline Best Management Practices for management recommendation for all tidal shorelines in the jurisdiction. (SD-5)
- Consider a policy where the above Shoreline Best Management Practices becomes the recommended adaptation strategy for erosion control and where a departure from these recommendations by an applicant wishing to alter the shoreline must be justified at a hearing of the board(s). (SD-5)
- Encourage staff training on decision making tools developed by the Center for Coastal (SD-5)
- Resources Management at VIMS. (SD-5)
- Follow the development of the state-wide General Permit being developed by VMRC. (SD-5)
- Ensure that local policies are consistent with the provisions of the permit. (SD-5)

- Evaluate and consider a locality-wide permit to expedite shoreline applications that request actions consistent with the VIMS recommendation. (SD-5)
- Seek public outreach opportunities to educate citizens and stakeholders on new shoreline management strategies including Living Shorelines. (SD-5)
- Follow the development of integrated shoreline guidance under development by VMRC. (SD-5)
- Evaluate and consider a locality-wide regulatory structure that encourages a more integrated approach to shoreline management. (SD-5)
- Consider preserving available open spaces adjacent to marsh lands to allow for inland retreat of the marshes under rising sea level. (SD-5)
- Evaluate and consider cost share opportunities for construction of living shorelines. (SD-5)
- Developers should be encouraged to integrate low impact stormwater management techniques and reduce impervious surface coverage, in order to minimize the potential for flooding and water pollution. (SD-7, CC-5)



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Natural Resources Draft - January 30, 2014



Flood Hazard Area - 100-Year Floodplain



Resource Protection Area

## **Chapter 8. Transportation**

Transportation planning has a significant impact on issues such as improving public health, preserving and improving the environment, making land use decisions, and enabling economic development.

The Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the regional transportation planning agency which serves portions of residents living in the southern portion of the Richmond, Virginia urbanized area. This area includes the City of Colonial Heights. The 2010 Census estimated the total population of the Richmond urbanized area was 953,556 and the MPO was 129,070. Although the City represents a small portion of the population, the City's roadway plays an important role in the region.

The MPO serves as a liaison between local government and state and federal agencies in matters involving major regional needed transportation improvements. All urban areas in the U.S. with a population over 50K are required by federal regulations stemming from the 1973 Highway Act to have an MPO structure in place to administer transportation planning programs.

The MPO's adopted plan for this area is the *2035 Long Range Transportation Plan*. The plan represents the vision for transportation improvements in the regional transportation system. The intent of the 2035 Plan is to meet future-oriented, multi-modal transportation needs of the region, such as autos, transit, bicycling and pedestrians. The long-range plan is updated on a 4-year cycle. The plan was adopted in June 2012 and is consistent with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) as established under federal law in 2005.

### **Existing Transportation System**

The City's transportation system exists within the larger framework of the Tri-Cities (Petersburg, Hopewell, and Colonial Heights, and portions of Chesterfield, Prince George, and Dinwiddie counties) area. Colonial Heights residents depend a great deal upon the employment industries throughout the metropolitan region and expect a safe and efficient road system to carry them to their destinations. With that in mind, this plan looks at the existing transportation system, not just in the City, but within the region.

When examining the existing transportation system, this plan looks beyond roads within the boundaries of the City. The following must be considered to get an accurate view of how the transportation system works: highways, pedestrian walkways, bikeways, public transit, taxicab services, passenger rail service, waterways and area ports.

#### **Highways**

The principle north-south route through Colonial Heights is Interstate 95, a major highway along the eastern seaboard. Interstate 95 runs through Virginia and has six lanes in most locations. With a speed limit of 60 miles per hour through Colonial Heights, Interstate 95 is a popular road for north-south travel. Currently, there are two

Interstate 95 interchanges that serve the city of Colonial Heights. The interchange at Interstate 95 and Temple Avenue is scheduled to be reconfigured as a roundabout. Construction is expected to begin in 2015 with an estimated completion date of 2017.

The Boulevard (U.S. Route 1/301) is a road that runs through Colonial Heights. Before the construction of Interstate 95, this road served a major thoroughfare extending from Florida to New England.

Access to Interstate 64, east-west, is possible through Richmond, approximately 20 miles north of Colonial Heights, or via Interstate 295, located just south of Petersburg.

### **Pedestrian Walkways**

Pedestrian walkways are an important part of the transportation system. Walkways can provide a link between other modes of transportation in the system. Pedestrian facilities should be considered in both new development and improvements to existing development.

### **Bikeways**

Bike facilities in the City are limited. Most roads are too narrow to have dedicated bicycle lanes and sidewalks are designed for pedestrians. The Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail is large enough to accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle traffic, but it provides only recreational use. Using a bicycle in the City, as a form of transportation, provides a real challenge. There are currently no dedicated bikeways on City roads.

### **Public Transit**

Currently no public transit exists in Colonial Heights; however, the Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) provides fixed-route, public transportation service within the City of Petersburg and portions of Chesterfield County, Dinwiddie; Prince George and Hopewell.

Greyhound Bus Lines offers north/south intercity bus service to the Tri-Cities Area. This near hourly service uses Petersburg Station Transit Center located on Washington Street in downtown Petersburg.

### **Taxicab Services**

Taxicab services are an important part of the area's transportation system. Such services provide a demand-responsive mode of transportation. Future coordination of taxicab services with public transit, rail service and other modes of transportation would enhance the area intermodal system. Several taxicab services operate within the City.

### **Passenger Rail Service**

Located only a couple miles from the City limits, the Ettrick Station, is located in Chesterfield County along the CSX tracks serves, the Tri-Cities portion of the Richmond, VA urbanized area for passenger rail service.

## **Waterways/Ports**

Although there are no ports located within the City, regional water transportation service is located at the City Point Port in Hopewell, just east of Water Street. The City of Hopewell, approximately ten (10) miles northeast of Colonial Heights, is a port to ocean-going vessels. Docks located here are near the confluence of the Appomattox and James Rivers. The Port facility at City Point, with its 25-foot channels, serves ocean-going ships.

## **Airports**

Air service is available to Colonial Heights residents in either Dinwiddie, Chesterfield or in Richmond. The Dinwiddie County Airport, a public facility, is located southwest of Petersburg in Dinwiddie County. Ground access is provided to this facility by Interstate-85, Route 1, or Route 460. The Chesterfield County Airport is located at the interchange of Route 10 and Route 288. In addition to fixed-based operations, both airports offer charter flights, air freight, maintenance, and flight instruction.

Scheduled air carrier services for the Tri-Cities area are generally provided by Richmond International Airport located in Henrico County, approximately 45 minutes northeast of the City via Interstate 95 and Interstate 64. Richmond International Airport is served by several major airlines with numerous flights scheduled daily and world-wide connections through other lines.

## **Urban Functional Classification System**

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide.

Functional classification defines how roadways work together by defining the role that any particular road or street should play in serving the flow of trips through a highway network

Functional classification began with the passage of the Federal Aid Act of 1921. It established a federal aid primary system and, more importantly, the foundation for a system of national defense roads, later known as the national interstate system. This hierarchical system is important because it continues to play a role in roadway funding.

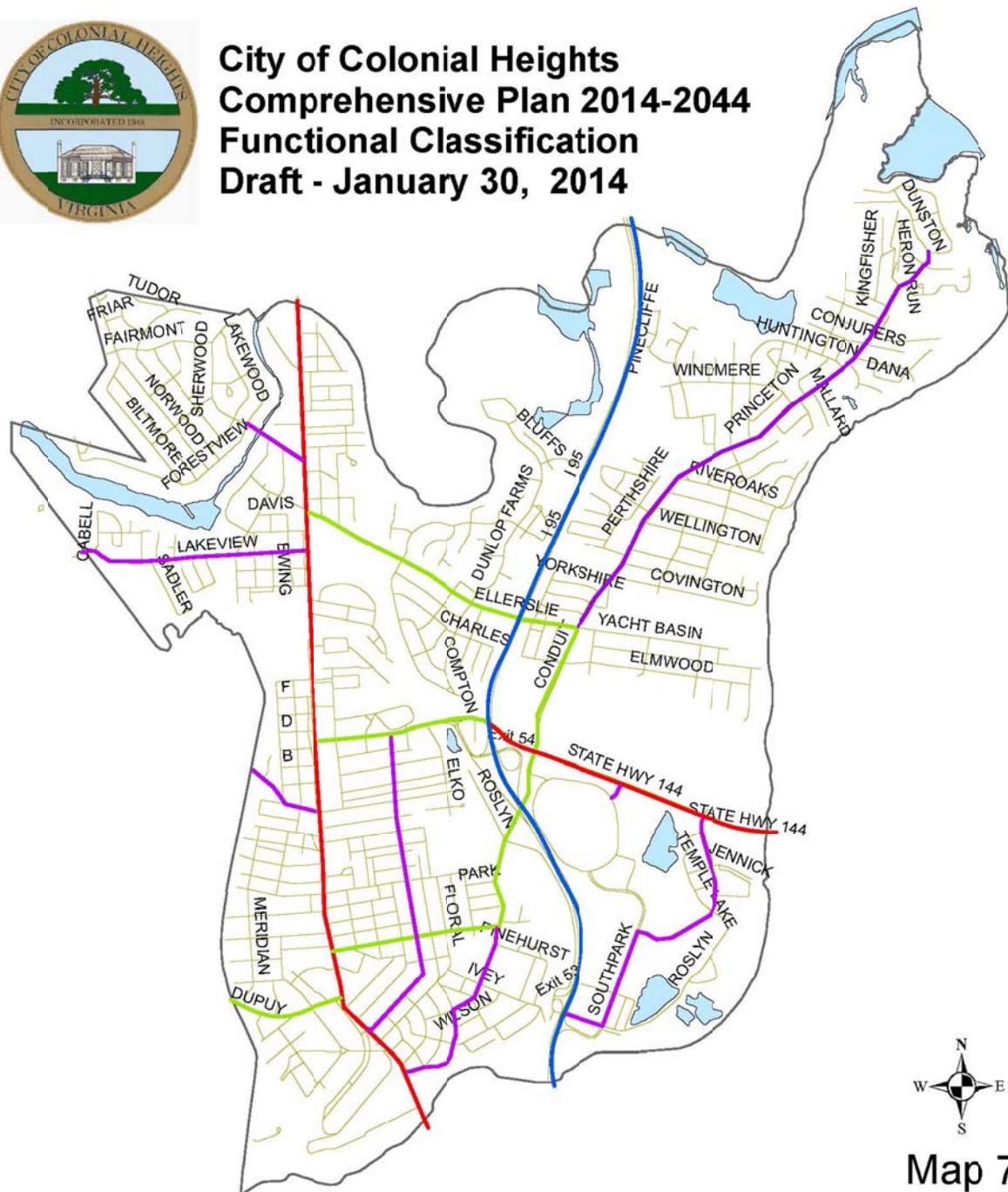
There are five categories of roadways in the City: interstates/freeways, principal arterial road. Map 7 identifies the different hierarchy of streets in the City and their descriptions are as follows:

### **Interstates/Freeways**

- Grade separated intersections and limited access roadways designed to carry major through and commuter traffic.
- Constructed with four to six moving lanes with a median.



## City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Functional Classification Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 7

- Urban Interstate
- Urban Other Principal Arterial
- Urban Minor Arterial

- Urban Collector
- Urban Local

### **Urban principal arterial**

- Serves the major centers of activity of a metropolitan area
- Highest traffic volume corridors
- Roads serving the longest trip desires
- Carry a high proportion of the total urban area travel on a minimum of mileage
- Carry significant amounts of intra-area travel

### **Urban minor arterial**

- Interconnect with and augment the urban principal arterial system and provide service to trips of moderate length at a lower level of travel mobility than principal arterials
- Includes all arterials not classified as a principal and contains facilities that place more emphasis on land access, and offers a lower level of traffic mobility

### **Urban collector**

- Provides land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial, and industrial areas
- Distributes trips from the arterials through these areas to their ultimate destination
- Collects traffic from local streets and channels it to the arterial system

### **Urban local**

- All facilities not on one of the higher systems
- Serves primarily as direct access to abutting land
- Serves as access to the higher order systems
- Through traffic movement is deliberately discouraged

### **Transportation Plan**

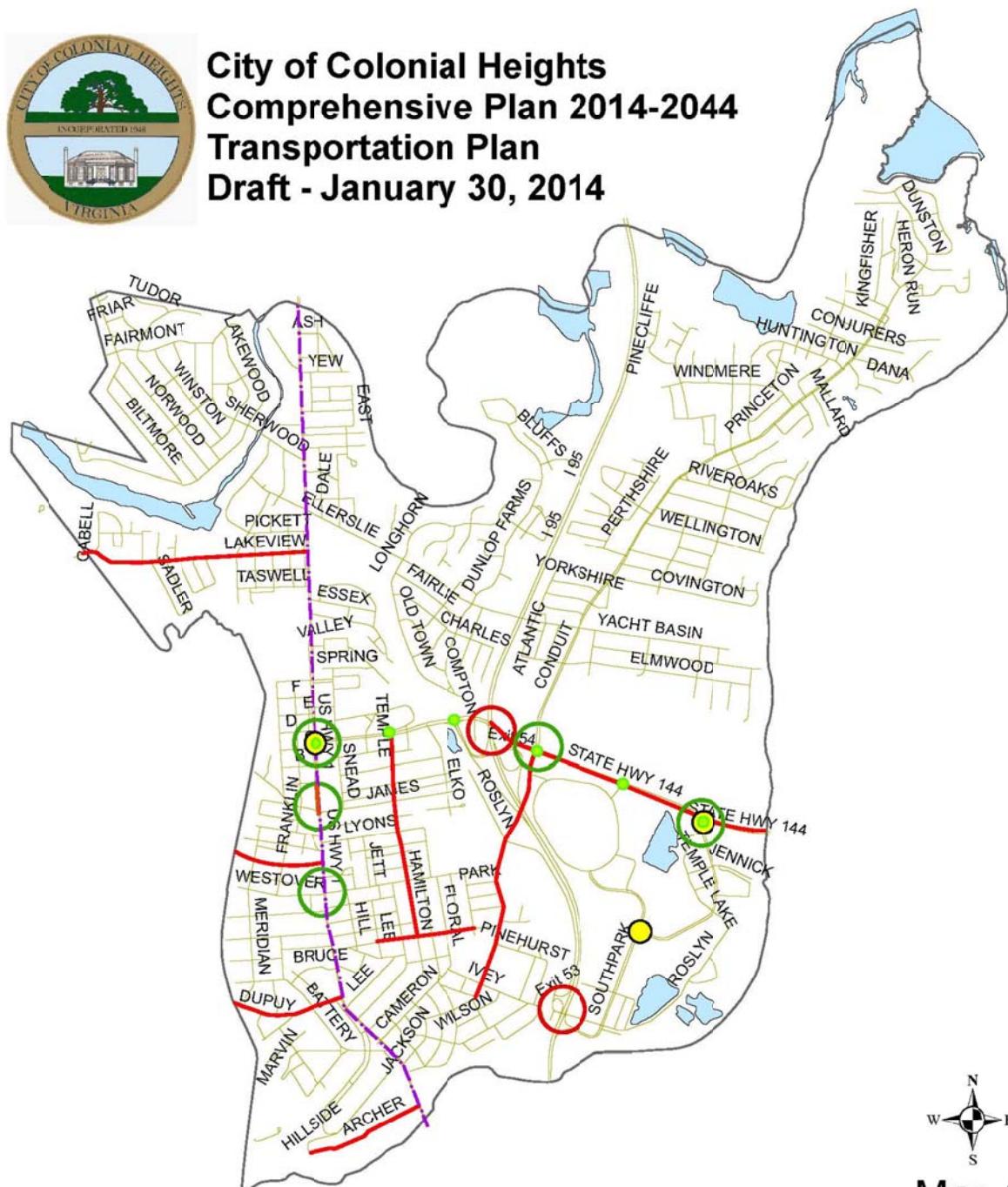
The following represent those projects that have been identified by the Metropolitan Area Organization 2035 *Transportation Plan* as well as those identified locally in the City's Capital Improvement Program. These projects are shown on the Transportation Plan (Map 8).

<b>Id</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Prelim Cost</b>
CH-03	Rt. 144 Temple Ave.	C.H. East Corporate Lim.	I-95	Widen 4 To 6 Lanes	\$ 6,000,000.00
CH-01	Rt. 1/301 At Rt. 144 Temple Avenue			Intersection Improvement	\$ 925,000.00
CH-02	Rt. 1/301 At Branders Bridge Rd.			Intersection Improvement	\$ 250,000.00
CH-06	I-95 Int. @ Southpark	Reconfigure		PE Only	\$ 2,000,000.00
CH-05	Rt. 1/301 Boulevard - Government Center Streetscape Improvements			Enhancement	\$ 583,000.00
CH-10	I-95 & Temple Avenue Interchange			Improvement/Realignment	\$ 6,410,000.00
CH-11	Rt. 144 Temple Avenue &			Intersection Improvement	\$ 500,000.00

	Dimmock Parkway				
CH-12	Rt. 144 Temple & Conduit			Intersection Improvement	\$ 495,000.00
CH-13	Rt. 144 Temple Avenue - CH			Signal Coordination	\$ 495.00
CH-14	Rt. 1 & Rt. 144 Temple Avenue			Additional Southbound Turn Lane	\$ 1,214,000.00
CH-15	Dupuy Ave			Improvements	\$ 4,083,240.00
CH-22	Charlotte Ave			Improvements	\$ 613,000.00
CH-23	Archer Ave			Improvements	\$ 1,939,000.00
CH-24	Lynchburg Ave	School To Lee Place		Improvements	\$ 850,000.00
CH-16	Lakeview Avenue			Improvements	\$ 3,314,000.00
CH-25	Conduit Road	Temple Ave To Bristol Ave		Improvements	\$ 500,500.00
CH-26	Boulevard Streetscape			Improvements	\$ 500,000.00
CH-17	Southpark & Dimmock			Add Northbound Turn Lane	\$ 300,000.00
CH-18	Rt. 1 & Westover Avenue			Intersection Improvement	\$ 696,000.00
CH-19	Hamilton Ave	RT 144 To Westover Ave		Improvements	\$ 5,060,000.00
CH-20	Temple Ave	At Charles Dimmock Pkwy		Right Turn Lane	\$ 475,000.00



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Transportation Plan Draft - January 30, 2014



Map 8

— Roadway Improvements	○ Interchange Improvements	● New Turn Lane
○ Intersection Improvements	— Boulevard Design Guideline Improvements	● Signal Coordination

## Complete Streets

The chapter on Community Character (chapter 5) discusses the importance in urban design to help protect the small-town feel and to aid in fostering the sense of community. Street design and features associated with streets play an important role in this outcome. This is when the importance of a good transportation system goes beyond moving cars.

The concept of complete streets implies street design takes into account pedestrians, bicyclists, as well as all types of motor vehicles. It also implies that street design is more than asphalt and curbs. Complete Streets design enables safe and efficient traveling for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists of all ages and abilities.

In order to make Complete Streets the traditional approach to transportation planning must change. Planners and engineers will need to take into account **the design of the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users**, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that transportation projects can, not only, make our street network better and safer for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists, but potentially play a role in improving the quality of life for the City's residents. For example, a street designed to take into account walkability can create more social interaction among residents and generate an improved sense of community, ultimately fostering a small-town feel.

The state has recently published Multimodal System Design Guidelines. These guidelines not only deal with sidewalks, but outline effective techniques for integrating land use and economic development into street design. As mentioned numerous times throughout this plan, the City is almost completely built out which makes it difficult to implement complete street design on every road improvement. The guideline manual has numerous examples of complete street designs within a built environment. Implementing these concepts, when possible, will improve the overall mobility and potentially promote a more enjoyable environment.

### Multimodal System Design Guidelines

In October 2013 the state, through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, adopted the *Multimodal System Design Guidelines* that deal with design of various modes of transportation. The guidelines are intended as a resource for local planners, engineers, designers, policy and decision makers, and anyone else engaged in multimodal planning throughout Virginia.

Multimodal involves a variety of transportation types that do not pertain to the city's existing transportation system, but does include the connection between people, bikes and cars. The design guidelines have a number of policies for improvement in this relationship through a complete street approach.

## Active Transportation

### Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is the name for the national movement to make it safer for children and their parents to walk and bike to and from school. The SRTS program recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach to make a school and its surrounding community safe for walking and bicycling.

The two goals of the Safe Routes to School program are to:

- Make it safer for children to walk or bike to school, and to
- Encourage more children to walk or bike to school

Safe routes to school is a federal program that is administered through the Virginia Department of Transportation. Although Safe Routes to School has existed, in some form or another since the mid-1990s, it wasn't until 2005 that Congress passed federal legislation that established a National Safe Routes to School program. The Federal Highway Administration runs this program, providing guidance and support to the states for Safe Routes to School. Grant funds are available to help schools make it safer to walk and bike to school. Funding is available for both infrastructure improvements as well as for education programs.

In 2008, the City hired a consultant to work with an advisory committee to help develop a Safe Routes to School Travel Plan. The advisory committee consisted of representatives from City staff, Colonial Heights Public Schools, students and parents.

The Colonial Heights Safe Routes to School Travel Plan addresses the needs of

- the Colonial Heights Middle School,
- Lakeview Elementary,
- North Elementary, and
- Tussing Elementary.

The High School does not qualify for funding because the Safe Routes to School program is only available to elementary and middle schools.

### Bikeways

With the City being almost completely developed, there are many challenges when trying to accommodate bicycles in the existing street system. The Crater Area Planning District Commission created a regional bikeways plan. The plan was originally adopted in 1979 and most recently updated in 2004. The 2004 plan does not identify any existing bike paths, nor does it make any recommendations for any new paths. Since 2004, the City has created the Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail System (CHARTS) which is bike accessible. The City is working with the Planning District Commission to update the plan.

## **Multi-Purpose Trail Plan**

In 2008, the Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail System (CHARTS) Committee was formed. This group envisioned a trail located along the Appomattox River from Roslyn Landing Park to Appamatuck Park, approximately two miles long. At the time of the writing of this document, two of the four phases have been completed with the other two phases well on their way to becoming a reality. The CHARTS Committee, after realizing how well received phases one and two of the CHARTS Trail were, began to think of the importance of continuing the trail concept throughout the City. Although largely conceptual, the committee, along with City staff, identified possible trail linkages throughout the City. Since the City is almost completely built out, a combination of asphalt trails that carry pedestrians and bicyclists as well as sidewalks, will make up the trail system.

### **Trail Plan Objectives**

- Create City- wide system of bike and pedestrian pathways that connect major facilities (schools, parks and recreation, and commercial shopping areas).
- Maximize opportunities for pedestrian/bicycling activities along Colonial Heights' adjacent water bodies
- Utilize abandoned RR beds to maximum extent possible for new trails.
- Utilize existing sidewalks and other pedestrian ways and create infill sidewalks to connect with existing and proposed trails
- Integrate bicycling into system to maximum extent possible

### **Strategies**

- Create strategic plan of proposed facilities and connecting links as part of Comprehensive Plan update.
- Develop costs and establish priorities for implementing Trail Plan
- Secure public input and feedback on draft document by widely circulating drafts and seeking community comments/suggestions

### **Basic Plan Elements**

#### **Abandoned RR Rights of Way**

- Incorporate the two North-South railroad rows located on the western edge and central portions of the City as core North-South trails. Where land is currently not publically owned, secure easements and or acquire, as necessary. These two areas are necessary to create North-South connections as shown on The Trail Plan.

#### **New Trails-Focus on the City's water**

- Create new trail linkages along the Appomattox River both north and west of The Appomattox River Greenway Trail
- Create a new trail along the northern boundary-along Tinsbury Creek from White Bank Park, through Dunlop Farms to Ellerslie Ave.
- Create a new trail from the Appomattox River along Temple Ave or Old Town Creek to west of I-95, with a sidewalk connecting link to the Boulevard.

## Commercial Connections

- Insure that there is a direct sidewalk linkage system along the entire Boulevard. Select one side of the street and insure that sidewalks are installed, either as part of private redevelopment, remodeling or direct City policy.
- Create connected sidewalk linkage system along Southpark Boulevard and Charles Dimmock Parkway. Insure that sidewalks are installed, either as part of private redevelopment, remodeling or direct City policy. This should create linkages to all commercial areas, including the Southpark Mall and Opportunity Areas identified in this plan.

## Sidewalks

- Strategically insure that sidewalks are installed, rebuilt and/or built to connect trail sections as shown on Map 9. Establish priorities for infill and replacements as time and resources allow. There are sidewalks in almost all the areas shown; however, there may be gaps and new connections that will need to be put in place.

## Appomattox River Greenway Trail

- Use the existing trail as the standard for new trails and insure that it is adequately maintained after its completion. This trail can also be used as the connecting element to Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) Trail Plan for the Appomattox River over time.

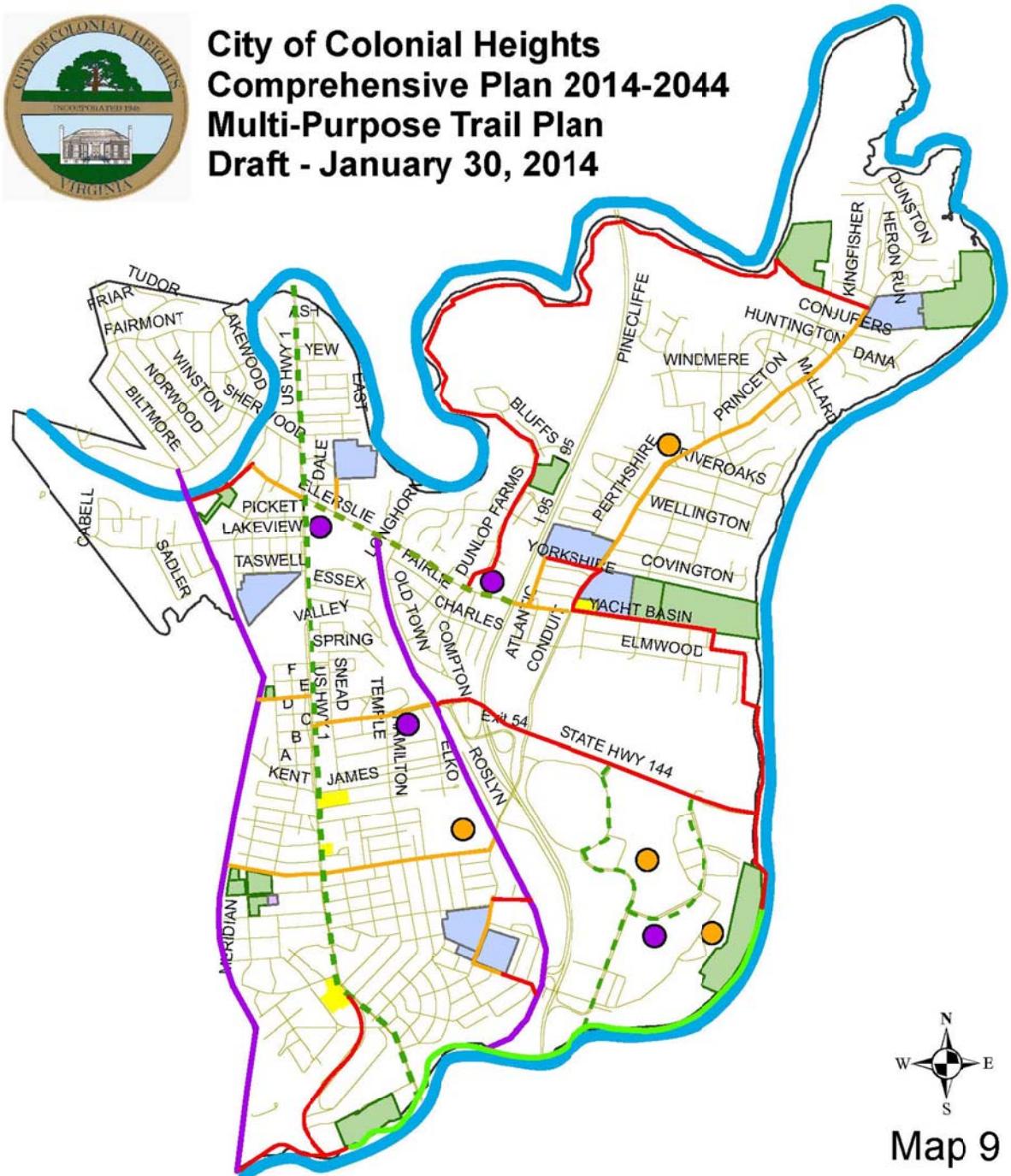
## Multi-Purpose Trail Plan Implementation

The CHARTS committee has reviewed and discussed the proposed plan and fully endorses the concepts. To move into implementation, there will need to be specific corridor studies carried out for each corridor to determine exact alignments, obstacles and opportunities and possible funding sources. The following priority corridors are recommended for detailed study:

1. Eastern RR Corridor and the crossing under Temple Avenue, just west of Interstate-95
2. Appomattox River Trail, north of existing trail
3. Temple Avenue trail



## City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Multi-Purpose Trail Plan Draft - January 30, 2014



Abandoned Railroad Right-of-Way	River Stream	Park/Recreation Area
Existing/Proposed Sidewalks	Opportunity Area	School
Commercial Links	Grocery Store	Community Center
New Trails		Government Service Facility
Appomattox River Greenway Trail		

**The following Transportation Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- Support the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Planning Organization and the recommendations of the Tri-Cities Area Year 2035 Transportation Plan.(EP-7)
- Incorporate Complete Streets concepts to include street trees, sidewalks, bikeways, landscaping, and lighting with all new development and redevelopment projects in the City when possible. (QL-1, QL-2, EP-3, CC-1, SD-3, SD-2, CC-3)
- Support locating bicycle facilities where possible in the form of bike lanes on City streets and accommodate bicycles in future trail construction to promote increased physical activity among residents and reduce automobile use. (EP-7, QL-2)
- Support Safe Routes to School program to not only encourage students to bike and walk safely to school, but to have the added benefit of sidewalks and other infrastructure improvements within neighborhoods. (QL-2, QL-7)

## **Chapter 9. Public Facilities and Services**

Public services are provided through a variety of public agencies and facilities including the Colonial Heights Library, the Health Department, the Police Department, Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Recreation and Parks and the related facilities, Colonial Heights Public Schools and City Hall which houses many of the general functions of City government. The quality of life in the City is directly related to the quality and accessibility of these facilities and the services they provide.

It is important that the citizens of Colonial Heights be served by convenient and accessible educational and recreational facilities. The quality and condition of all public facilities sets the image of our City and sends a message about the values placed upon the services provided. High quality, well designed and maintained facilities are an important factor in communicating the value placed upon the citizens served.

This plan inventories the existing facilities, identifies issues and challenges facing each department as they strive to provide high-quality services to the citizens of Colonial Heights.

### **Library**

The Colonial Heights Public Library provides a wide range of library services to the community. The library's collections include traditional books and magazines, a large audio book and DVD/Blu-Ray collection and an e-Library, along with a public computer center and wireless network. The library also offers meeting rooms and year round children's programs.

The library's public computer center is open during regular library hours and provides the following services:

- Computers may be checked out by a patron using his/her own Colonial Heights Public Library Card
- Internet access (high-speed cable connection)
- Microsoft Office applications
- No appointment necessary
- No time limitations and
- A nominal fee per page charge for printouts

The Library is located at the corner of Conduit Road and Yacht Basin Drive.

### **Health Department**

The Colonial Heights Health Department strives "To protect, preserve and promote optimum health for the community through excellence in public health service." The department provides a variety of services to meet this objective.

Services include:

- Restaurant inspections and food safety training
- Rabies prevention
- Communicable disease investigations
- Lab work, including lead screening
- Services related to women's health
- Immunizations

The Health Department is located on Highland Avenue behind City Hall.

## **Police Department**

The Colonial Heights Police Department provides a safe environment for all citizens by enforcing all laws fairly and impartially, maintaining a high, visible police presence throughout the community and deterring criminal activity. The Department is accredited by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission since 2013.

The Colonial Heights Police Department is organizationally structured into two bureaus Operations and Law Enforcement Services.

The Operations Bureau consists of the following divisions:

- Uniform Patrol
- Canine Units
- Major Accident Investigation Team
- Crime Scene Technicians
- Special Operations
- Sentinel Program
- Auxiliary Police
- Animal Control

Uniform Patrol Officers provide a myriad of services to our community. Some of their responsibilities include; responding to calls for service, enforcing state and local criminal and traffic laws, conducting investigations, processing evidence, testifying in court, proactively identifying and addressing quality of life issues and concerns, and providing general guidance for citizen inquiries.

The Law Enforcement Services has the primary task of providing support to all officers and the command staff of the Colonial Heights Police Department. The bureau is responsible for the criminal investigations division, training, maintenance, crime prevention, public speaking, the Police Citizens Academy, special events and the Sentinel Program and purchasing of equipment, property and evidence and buildings and grounds. The bureau is also responsible for inspections, research and development, grants, records, receptionists and special projects.

The Investigations Division of the Colonial Heights Police Department has the primary responsibility in the investigation of serious or serial crimes. Crimes commonly assigned

to the division include rape, robbery, homicide, burglary, sex offenses, missing persons, and fraud related incidents.

Detectives assigned to the Investigations Division are charged with the task of bringing each assigned incident, or case to closure. This is accomplished through the identification, evaluation, collection and documentation of facts and evidence specific to the incident. It is further accomplished through a variety of interviews with victims, witnesses, suspects, etc. When it has been determined that a crime has been committed, all aspects of the case are compiled and forwarded to the Commonwealth Attorney for prosecution in court.

The Investigations Division routinely works with local, state and federal agencies to investigate crimes occurring in Colonial Heights and the region. Agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Secret Service, ATF, Virginia Lottery and the Virginia State Police provide or receive assistance from the Investigations Division annually.

The Police Department is located in the Public Safety Building on the corner of Highland Avenue and the Boulevard.

## **Fire and EMS**

The City of Colonial Heights Fire and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Department provides fire suppression and prevention services and promotes fire safety and related services. The department also provides emergency medical and rescue services for residents, workers, and visitors to the City.

The Fire Department consists of six divisions:

- Administration
- Operations
- Prevention
- Emergency Communications
- Training
- Emergency Management

Fire Administration is located in the Public Safety Building on the corner of Highland Avenue and the Boulevard. Fire Station #1 is located on James Avenue adjacent to the Public Safety Building and Fire Station #2 is located on Dunlop Boulevard.

## **Sheriff's Department**

The City of Colonial Heights Sheriff is a Constitutional Officer of the Commonwealth elected by City voters every four years.

The primary functions of the Sheriff's Office are:

- Providing courthouse and courtroom security
- Serving court orders from all three courts and subpoenas from outside jurisdictions
- Making arrests at the courthouse on outstanding warrants
- Providing custody, control, and transportation of prisoners or inmates entrusted to the Sheriff's custody or that have been arrested by the Colonial Heights Police Department

The Sheriff and his deputies are sworn law enforcement officers able to enforce state traffic code and effecting criminal arrests. Deputy Sheriffs routinely provide assistance to the Colonial Heights Police Department by providing additional personnel during major incidents, inclement weather, or when additional personnel can help expedite a successful resolution while protecting lives and property.

The Sheriff's Department is located in the Colonial Heights Courthouse located on the 500 block of the Boulevard.

## **Recreation and Parks**

The City of Colonial Heights Department of Recreation and Parks strives to provide, develop, and maintain an array of parks, parks facilities, services, and recreational opportunities for all citizens to improve the overall quality of life for the community. The department provides a wide range of quality recreation and parks services through public awareness, utilization of resources, and being responsive to the community.

The department is organizationally structured into six operational divisions:

- Buildings & Grounds
- Horticulture
- Parks
- Community Center (includes the Senior and Teen Centers)
- Recreation
- Violet Bank Museum

The Parks Division is responsible for managing more than 75 acres of park land within the City's nine parks. They are also responsible for upkeep of all recreation facilities including all eleven ball fields (including Shepherd Stadium), nine tennis courts, the Soccer Complex, as well as the City's buildings and grounds and Horticulture operations.

<u>Parks</u>	<u>Facilities</u>
•White Bank Park	•Shepherd Stadium
•Floral Avenue Park	•Community Center
•Edinborough Park	•Teen Center
•Flora Hill Park	•Senior Center
•Appamatuck Park	•Violet Bank Museum
•Fort Clifton Park	•Soccer Complex
•Lakeview Park	•Skate Park
•Roslyn Landing Park	•Baseball/Softball Fields
•Wakefield Park	•Tennis Courts
	•Outdoor Basketball Courts

These City Parks and Facilities are located throughout the city and are depicted on the Facilities Map (Map 10).

#### Violet Bank Museum

Violet Bank was one of the first houses in the Riverview Subdivision purchased in 1919. In 1948, it was sold to American Legion Post 284. It served as Post 284's Headquarters until 1959, when it was acquired by the City of Colonial Heights. At first, the building served as the Chamber of Commerce, and then as Colonial Heights' first public library. Violet Bank is still owned and operated by the City of Colonial Heights, and is now a historic house museum and part of the Recreation & Parks Department.

### **Colonial Heights Public Schools**

Colonial Heights has three public elementary schools: Tussing Elementary School, Lakeview Elementary School, North Elementary School. Colonial Heights Middle School serves the entire City. The City also has a high school (Colonial Heights High School) and accompanying Vocational Center. All schools are accredited by the Virginia Board of Education and by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The school division achieved District Accreditation under AdvancED.

The School Board for the City of Colonial Heights is a five-member Board elected to serve staggered four-year terms of office. The Colonial Heights City School Board derives its authority from the Constitution of Virginia, the Code of Virginia and the regulations of the State Board of Education. The Colonial Heights City School Board members are officers of the Commonwealth and as a corporate body govern the school division.

#### **Colonial Heights Vocational School**

The technical center, serving grades nine through twelve opened in 1980-81 and contains the following vocational capabilities: Child Care, Culinary Arts, ICT, Marketing Education, Manufacturing Technology, Auto Mechanics, Business, and Building Trades.

Colonial Heights Vocational School Recreation Amenities include:

- Multi-purpose fields (8)
- Skate Park
- Picnic Tables
- Concession
- Restroom

### **Colonial Heights Middle School**

Colonial Heights Middle School, located at 500 Conduit Road, is the sole middle school serving the community. The building serves a sixth, seventh and eighth grade population averaging around 700 students.

Colonial Height Middle School Amenities include:

- Gymnasium
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Tennis Courts
- Basketball Court
- Additional Playing Fields

### **Colonial Heights High School**

Colonial Heights High School was established in 1957 at the site of the present Colonial Heights Middle School. In 1964 upon completion of the current building, it moved to its present location at 3600 Conduit Road. The high school is accredited by the State Board of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is a member in good standing of the Virginia High School League. In 1991, the school received recognition by the State of Virginia as a nominee for the National Secondary School Recognition Program for "Outstanding Secondary Schools". The school is for ninth through twelfth grade students and averages around 850 students.

Colonial Heights High School Recreation Amenities include:

- Football/Track Stadium (Off-Site)
- Gymnasium
- Baseball Fields (2)
- Tennis Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Multi-Purpose Field

### **Lakeview Elementary School**

Lakeview Elementary School, located at 401 Taswell Avenue, serves students kindergarten through fifth grade and averages 375 students. It is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Lakeview was chosen as one of the Top Twelve Schools in Virginia in 1989, and in 1994 was recognized and received the Commonwealth of Virginia Excellence In Education Award. More recently in 2000, Lakeview's Character Education Program, Heroes Everywhere, was identified as one of the best in Virginia.

Lakeview Elementary School Recreation Amenities include:

- Gymnasium
- Playground

### **North Elementary School**

North Elementary, located at 3201 Dale Avenue, serves an average of 325 students in grades K-5. North Elementary has been fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1976.

North Elementary School Recreation Amenities include:

- Court for Basketball or Other Sports
- Playground
- Gymnasium

### **Tussing Elementary School**

Tussing Elementary School, located at 5501 Conduit Road, opened its doors in August of 1975 and has an average enrollment of 600 students.. The school is accredited by the Commonwealth of Virginia and by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1986, Tussing Elementary School was recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia as one of the twelve schools in the state in the United States Department of Education's Elementary School Recognition Program. Tussing Elementary School serves grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

Tussing Elementary School Recreation Amenities include:

- Gymnasium
- Softball Field
- Soccer Field
- Basketball Courts (2)
- Playground

**The following Public Facilities and Service Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

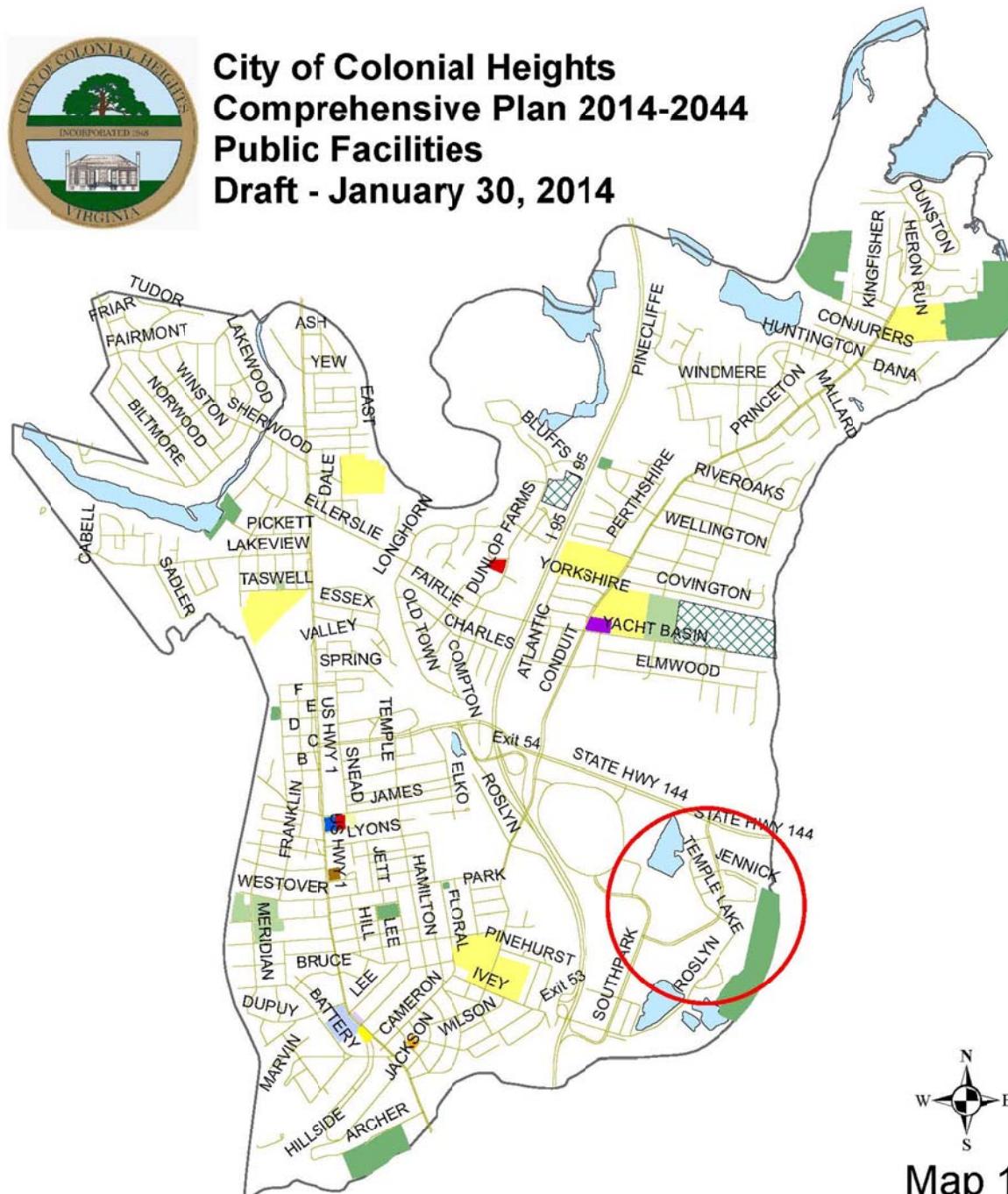
- City should develop a city-wide customer service policy. (SD-7, QL-6)
- Utilize grants and foundations to assist funding of infrastructure maintenance and improvements. (EP-7, SD-7)
- Ensure that a high level of design and quality construction is maintained on all public projects within the City. When possible, follow Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards. (SD-3, SD-7)
- Maintain and fully utilize all existing recreation and parks facilities before creating any new parks, centers or stadiums. (CC-5)

- Construct a new community center or expand the uses within the existing center to include a fitness center. (QL-2)
- Construct a state-of-the-art stadium to accommodate a variety of sports at the Vo-Tech Site as recommended by the joint Comprehensive Recreation, Parks & Schools Athletic Facilities Plan. (CC-5)
- Create a sponsorship program for all park facilities that provides advertisements in exchange for funds to help maintain parks and park facilities. (CC-5)
- Create a sports tourism taskforce to create a program that will attract sports tournaments and other sporting events. (CC-5)
- Create community gardens to promote a sense of community and access to healthy, locally grown food. (QL-2)
- Ensure the existing parks are maintained by planning and including maintenance costs in the capital budget, grant writing and by imposing additional fees or taxes. (CC-5)
- Establish a Multipurpose Trail Plan that encircles the City and link parks and recreational use areas, schools, city services and commercial areas as shown in Multipurpose Trail Plan (Map 9) in Chapter 8 Transportation. (QL-6)
- Create workout or activity areas along the proposed trail system, specifically on the western side of the City, where the streets dead-end into the proposed trail. (CC-5)
- Link the City's trails along the river to the Appomattox Plan developed by the Crater Planning District Commission as shown on the Multipurpose Trail Plan (Map 9) located in Chapter 8 Transportation. (CC-5)
- Provide more summer activities in neighborhood parks, utilizing retirees and teenagers. (CC-5)
- Include all street, park, utility and building maintenance and future new facility needs in the capital budget program. (EP-7)
- Create Public Safety substation in mall area that could house Police and Fire/EMS staff to ensure citywide public safety coverage and low response time. See Map 10. (QL-7)
- Increase community policing efforts and citizen participation throughout the City by ensuring all areas of the City are covered by Neighborhood Watch. (QL-7)

- Increase the City's server capacity to accommodate electronic files that will take the place of using and storing paper. (SD-7)
- Make all public facilities ADA accessible. This includes all buildings and parks. (SD-7)
- The City should help implement the planning efforts of Colonial Heights Public Schools through public support and funding. (EP-2)
- The City should continue to support technology and infrastructure improvements at all CHPS buildings to ensure state of the art educational opportunities. (EP-2)
- Using the capital budget, the City should plan for state-of-the-art school facilities either through new construction or redevelopment. (SD-7)



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2014-2044 Public Facilities Draft - January 30, 2014



City Administration	Park Facility Opportunity	Public Parks	Violet Bank Museum
Colonial Heights War Memorial	Police	Public Schools	
Courthouse	Post Office	Recreation and Parks Facility	
Fire/Rescue	Public Library	School Administration	Public Safety Opportunity

## **Chapter 10. Capital Improvements**

The City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a plan to guide the construction, maintenance or acquisition of capital projects over a five year period. It identifies needed capital projects, estimates their costs, and sorts them by year. The program time schedule may change, depending on new information, availability of funds or unexpected circumstances.

The Capital Improvements Program is a planning tool. Each year, as the CIP is developed, the recommendations of the City's Comprehensive Plan should be incorporated.

## **Chapter 11. Implementation Schedule**

An implementation schedule is a table that identifies each policy in the plan, who is responsible for implementing each policy, how much it will cost and a time frame for it to be implemented.

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1/21/2014