

## **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 2044 Comprehensive Plan. Without their support and vision, this Plan could not have been achieved.

## Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction and History	3
Chapter 2. Vision, Goals and Objectives	11
Chapter 3. Land Use	15
Chapter 4. Neighborhoods and Housing	22
Chapter 5. Community Character and Design	36
Chapter 6. Economic Development	44
Chapter 7. Environment	59
Chapter 8. Transportation Plan	93
Chapter 9. Public Facilities and Services	108
Chapter 10. Capital Improvements	122

### Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Population Projections (Chart)	6
Exhibit 2: Population Projections (Table)	6
Exhibit 3: Population and Race	7
Exhibit 4: Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity (Chart)	8
Exhibit 5: Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity (Table)	9
Exhibit 6: Age Distribution	9
Exhibit 7: Gender	10
Exhibit 8: Poverty Level	10
Exhibit 9: Housing Units	22
Exhibit 10: Rental vs. Owner	23
Exhibit 11: Households	24
Exhibit 12: Commuting Patterns	44
Exhibit 13: Unemployment Rate	45
Exhibit 14: Unemployment by Age Distribution	46
Exhibit 15: Unemployment by Industry	47
Exhibit 16: Top 20 Employers	47
Exhibit 17: Employers by Number of Employees	48

### Maps

Map 1: Existing Land Use	16
Map 2: Land Use Plan	20
Map 3: Neighborhood and Housing Opportunities	31
Map 4: Gateways and Image Corridors	41
Map 5: Economic Development Opportunities	58
Map 6: Soil Classification	65
Map 7: Wetland Classification	66
Map 8: General Suitability of Development	68
Map 9: Shoreline Erosion Survey	76
Map 10: Public Water Access Sites	79
Map 11: Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area	92
Map 12: Functional Classification	97
Map 13: Transportation Plan	100
Map 14: Multipurpose Trail Plan	105
Map 15: Public Facilities	120

## **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 the Master 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 needed 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, in the summer of the 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, the committee put forth the 2014 Comprehensive Plan.

In March 2014, the City of Colonial Heights hosted three open house workshops for residents to learn about and contribute to the comprehensive plan update process. At each open house, a brief presentation was given, and residents were able to come and go at any time to view the displays and talk to City staff. Comments received at these meetings were recorded as part of the public record and shared with the Planning Commission.

Prior to formal adoption of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan, two public hearings were held one by the City Planning Commission and one by City Council. In addition to meeting the Virginia requirements for a public hearing notice, the City mailed a flyer to each property in the City with the date of the Planning Commission public hearing along with a narrative about what encompasses a comprehensive plan.

The state of Virginia requires a locality's Comprehensive Plan to be reviewed periodically. The review of the Comprehensive Plan is completed every five years in the City of Colonial Heights. This revised plan was reviewed by the Planning Commission from 2019 to 2021, and City Council gave final approval to the plan in July 2021.

## **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 Conjuror'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.

## **Old Brick House**

During the period 1677-1685, one of the area's historic landmarks was constructed with the building of the Old 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**

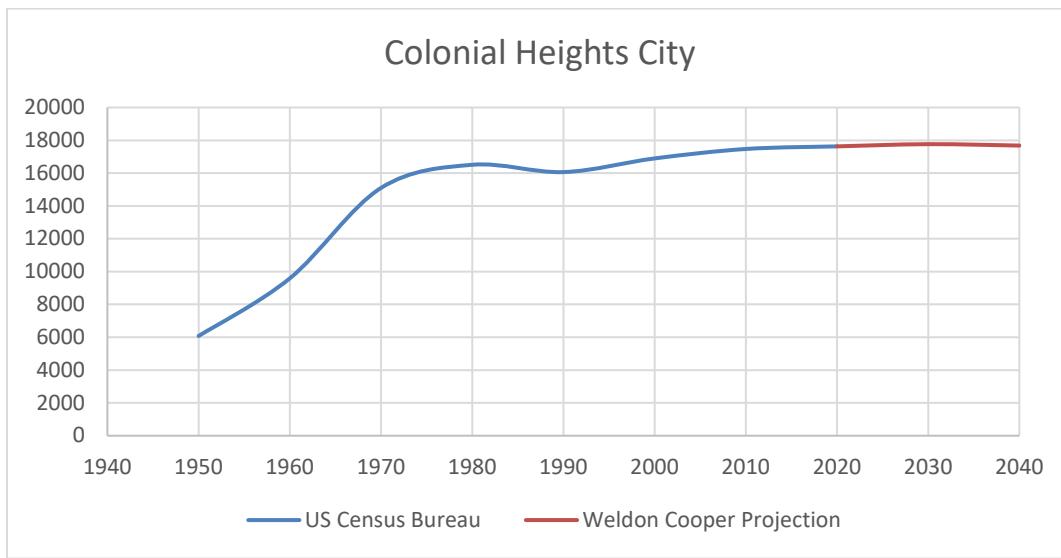
The City of Colonial Heights is located 20 miles south of Richmond, Virginia's state capital, and 120 miles south of the nation's capital. The City of Petersburg lies directly across the Appomattox River. Colonial Heights is located where the Tidewater plain meets the Piedmont plateau. The City is bordered 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 the spring of 1989.

### **Community Profile Demographics**

Colonial Heights is a small, independent city of approximately 17,593 (2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). 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 Fort Lee is an active duty, multi-services training facility that creates significant impact on the local economy.

## Exhibit 1: Population Projection



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018) and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service (2019)

### 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 increase but at a slow pace. It is estimated that the City will stabilize in population growth over the next 20 years.

## Exhibit 2: Population Projection

	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	17,631	1.3%
2030	17,766	.75%
2040	17,680	-0.56%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2018) and Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service (2019)

## Population, Race, and Ethnicity: Today

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 from 6% to 10% of the City's population. The Asian population and the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity population, although increasing in numbers, remained the same percentage of the total population.

The population and race data between 2010 and 2018 showed similar changes to that of the previous decade. In regards to proportion of the City's total population, the white population decreased 3%, the African American population increased 6%, the Asian population increased 1%, and populations categorized as "Other" decreased 1%. The Hispanic/Latino ethnicity population increased from 2% to 6% of the City's total population.

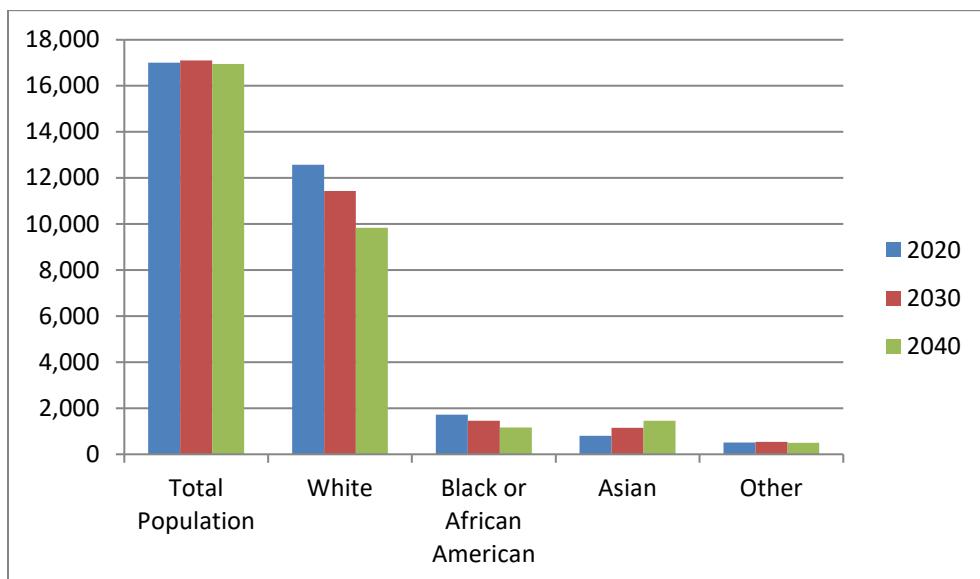
### Exhibit 3: Population and Race

	2000		2010		2018 (ACS Estimates)	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent*
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>16,897</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,411</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>17,593</b>	<b>100%</b>
White	15,052	89%	14,326	82%	13,907	79%
Black or African American	1,059	6%	1,783	10%	2,883	16%
Asian	459	3%	578	3%	806	4%
Other	327	2%	724	4%	560	3%
<b>ETHNICITY</b>						
Total Hispanic or Latino	274	2%	374	2%	1,011	6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Decennial Census 2000 and 2010, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

\*Due to the fact the 2018 data is American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates rather than the decennial census, the margin of error associated with official numbers reported do not add up neatly to the total estimated population.

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



Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service (2019)

#### Population, Race, and Ethnicity: Tomorrow

The City is expected to become more racially diverse over the next twenty years. The white population is expected to decrease from 12,570 people in 2020 to 9,829 people in 2040, or a 22% decrease. The African American population is expected to decrease from 1,717 people in 2020 to 1,162 in 2040, or a 32% decrease. The Asian population is estimated to increase from 809 in 2020 to 1,459 in 2040, or a 45% increase (Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Race and Ethnicity 2019 Projection).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, this is not a trend that is exclusive to Colonial Heights. The non-Hispanic White population is projected to shrink over the coming decades, from 199 million in 2020 to 179 million people in 2060— even as the U.S. population continues to grow. Their decline is driven by falling birth rates and rising number of deaths over time as the non-Hispanic White population ages. In comparison, the White population, regardless of Hispanic origin, is projected to grow from 253 million to 275 million over the same period (U.S. Census, Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060).

According to the US Census Bureau, the population of people who are Two or More Races is projected to be the fastest growing racial or ethnic group over the next several decades, followed by Asians and Hispanics. The causes of their growth are different, however. For Hispanics and people who are Two or More Races, high growth rates are largely the result of high rates of natural increase, given the relatively young age structure of these populations. For Asians, the driving force behind their growth is high net

international migration (U.S. Census, Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060).

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

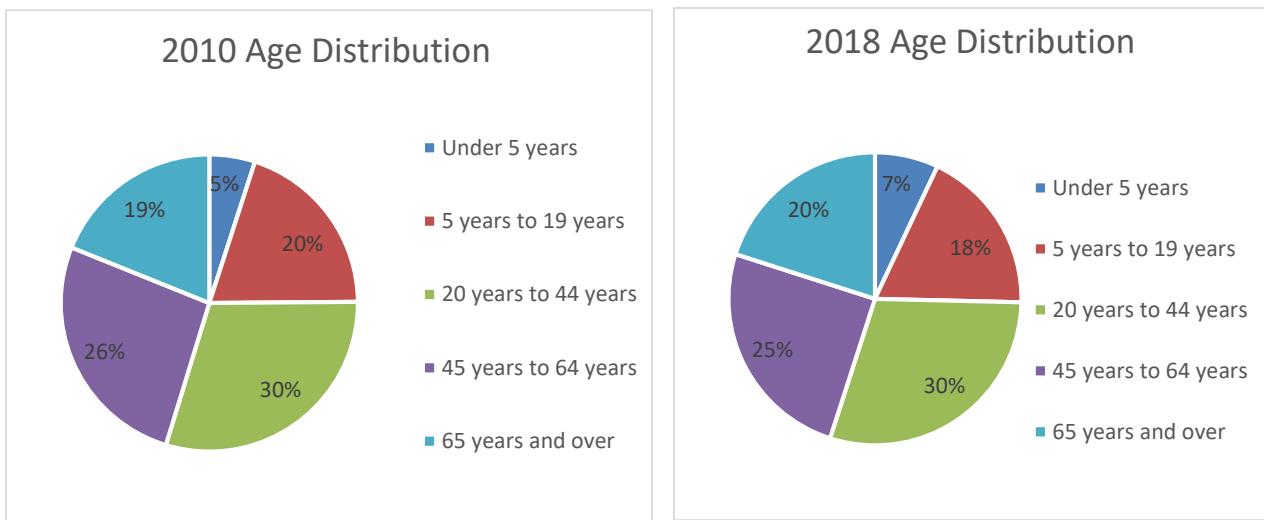
Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity		2020	2030	2040
<b>Race</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	17,007	17,101	16,955
White	12,570	11,436	9,829	
Black or African American	1,717	1,454	1,162	
Asian	809	1,145	1,459	
Other	514	538	502	
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Not Hispanic or Latino of any race	15,610	14,573	12,952	
Hispanic or Latino of any race	1,397	2,528	4,003	

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Population Projections (2019)

### Age Distribution

Between 2010 and 2018, the City's population has gotten younger. The median age of the City's population decreased by 1.6 years from 41.9 years of age to 40.3 years of age. The percentage of residents under 5 years of age increased from 5% to 7%. For 5 to 19 years of age, the percentage of residents decreased from 20% to 18%. The proportion of residents between 20 and 44 years of age remained the same. The percentage of residents older than 45 years old remained the same, with 1% of the population moving to the 65 years of age and older category.

### Exhibit 6: Age Distribution



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (American Community Survey 2010 and 2018 5-Year Estimates)

## 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. There was no percentage change in gender from 2010 to 2018.

### Exhibit 7: Gender

Gender	2000		2010		2018 (ACS Estimates)	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
	16,897	100%	17,411	100%	17,593	100%
Male	7,901	47%	8,062	46%	8,053	46%
Female	8,996	53%	9,349	54%	9,540	54%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000 and 2010 Decennial Census, 2018 American Community Survey)

## Poverty Level

While the population of the City only increased by 1% between 2012 and 2018, the poverty rate increased 6.2%. In 2012, 7.3% of the population was in poverty and in 2018, 13.5% of the population was in poverty. Of all of the age groups, children have the highest rate of poverty with 20.2% of individuals under 18 years of age experiencing poverty. As the poverty levels in the City increase, social services will need to be added to assist this changing population.

### Exhibit 8: Poverty Level

	2012		2018	
	Number	% of Population	Number	% of Population
Individuals in Poverty	1,251	7.3%	2,341	13.5%
Age				
Under 18 years	438	11.6%	785	20.2%
18 to 64 years	664	6.5%	1,326	13.3%
65 years and over	149	4.6%	230	6.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2012 and 2018 American Community Survey "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months"

## **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:

- Provide Quality Housing
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Build Good Jobs
- Maintain Excellent Schools
- Capitalize on Water and Green Space.
- Maintain Quality City Services
- Create a Solid Infrastructure
- Improve Code Enforcement
- Make Neighborhoods and Public areas Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly
- Enhance Quality of Life
- Create and Maintain a Sense of Community
- Build on the City's Good Reputation
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Create a Positive Neighborhood Identity
- Improve Traffic Flow
- Improve Commercial Areas
- Retain Small-town Feel
- Ensure Safety

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
- Create and Maintain a Sense of Community
- Create a Positive Neighborhood Identity
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Retain Small-town Feel
- 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.

- Make Neighborhoods and Public Areas Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Ensure Safety
- Improve Traffic
- Maintain Quality City Services
- Create a 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:

- Build Good Jobs
- Provide Quality Housing
- Maintain Excellent Schools
- Improve Commercial Areas
- Preserve Historic Homes and Architecture
- Create a Solid Infrastructure
- 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
- Create a Solid Infrastructure
- Revitalize Neighborhoods
- Maintain 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**

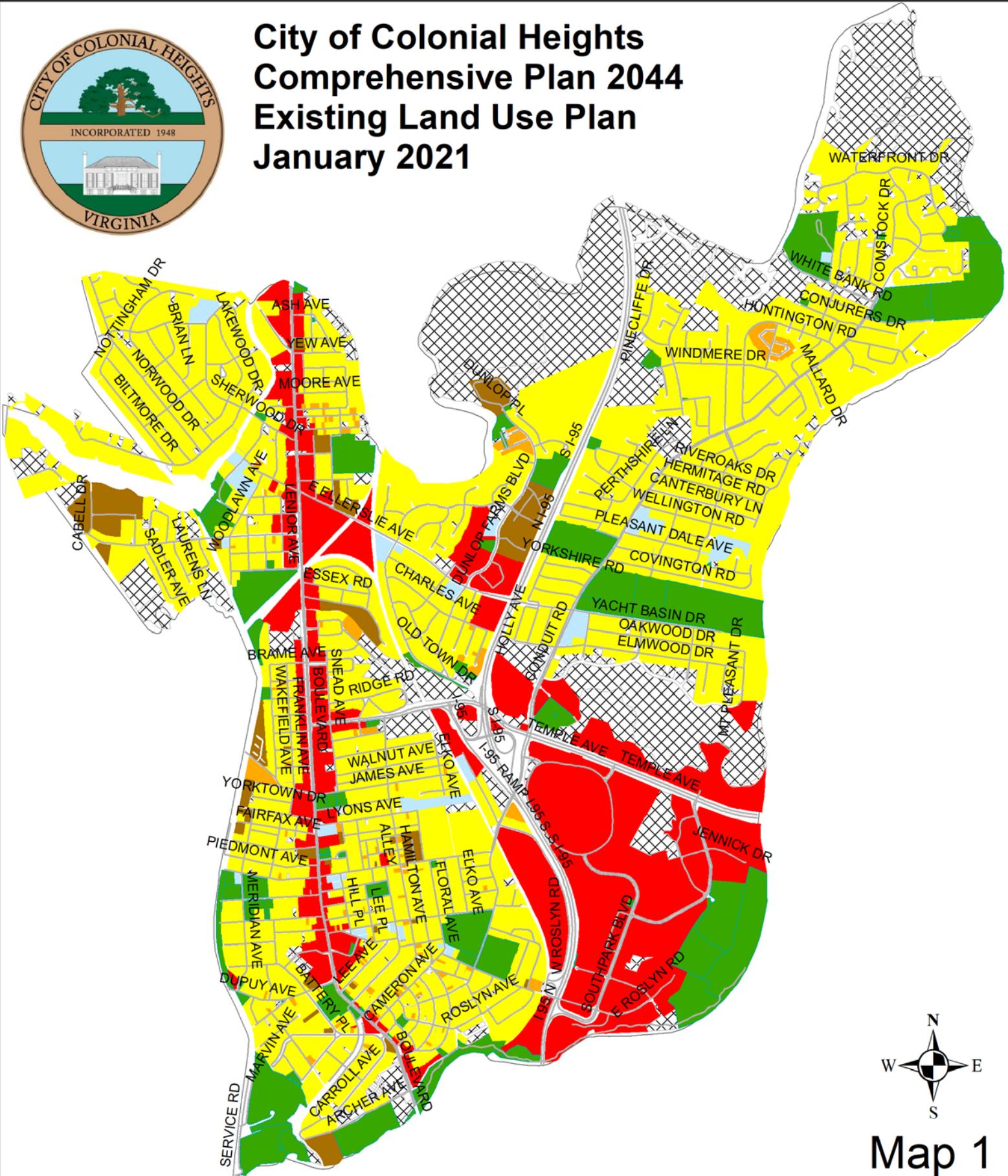
The predominant land use patterns in Colonial Heights are well-established and have been for the most part, in place over the last thirty years. Although some changes have occurred, the basic land use patterns in the City have not changed since adoption of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

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 West Roslyn Road south of Conduit Road, Ellerslie Avenue adjacent to the Seaboard Coastline Right of Way, and on Charles Dimmock Parkway at the intersection of East Roslyn 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 2044 Existing Land Use Plan January 2021



<span style="background-color: red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Commercial	<span style="background-color: brown; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Residential - Multi Family	<span style="background-color: black; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Vacant
<span style="background-color: lightblue; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Institutional/Semi-public	<span style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Residential - Single Family	
<span style="background-color: green; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Public	<span style="background-color: orange; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px;"></span> Residential - Two Family/Attached	

## 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.
- There is a 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 may include a combination of some, or all, of the following uses: office, retail, personal service, general commercial and service uses, and in some cases, multi-family residential and dwelling units above ground floor commercial. All of the uses identified as possible mixed use are not appropriate for all mixed use areas identified in this plan. Each area identified as mixed use in this plan has specific policy recommendations unique to that designation. Densities in this district can be 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 and to be developed as part of an overall plan for the site. 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 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.

## **Relationship between Surrounding Localities and Plans**

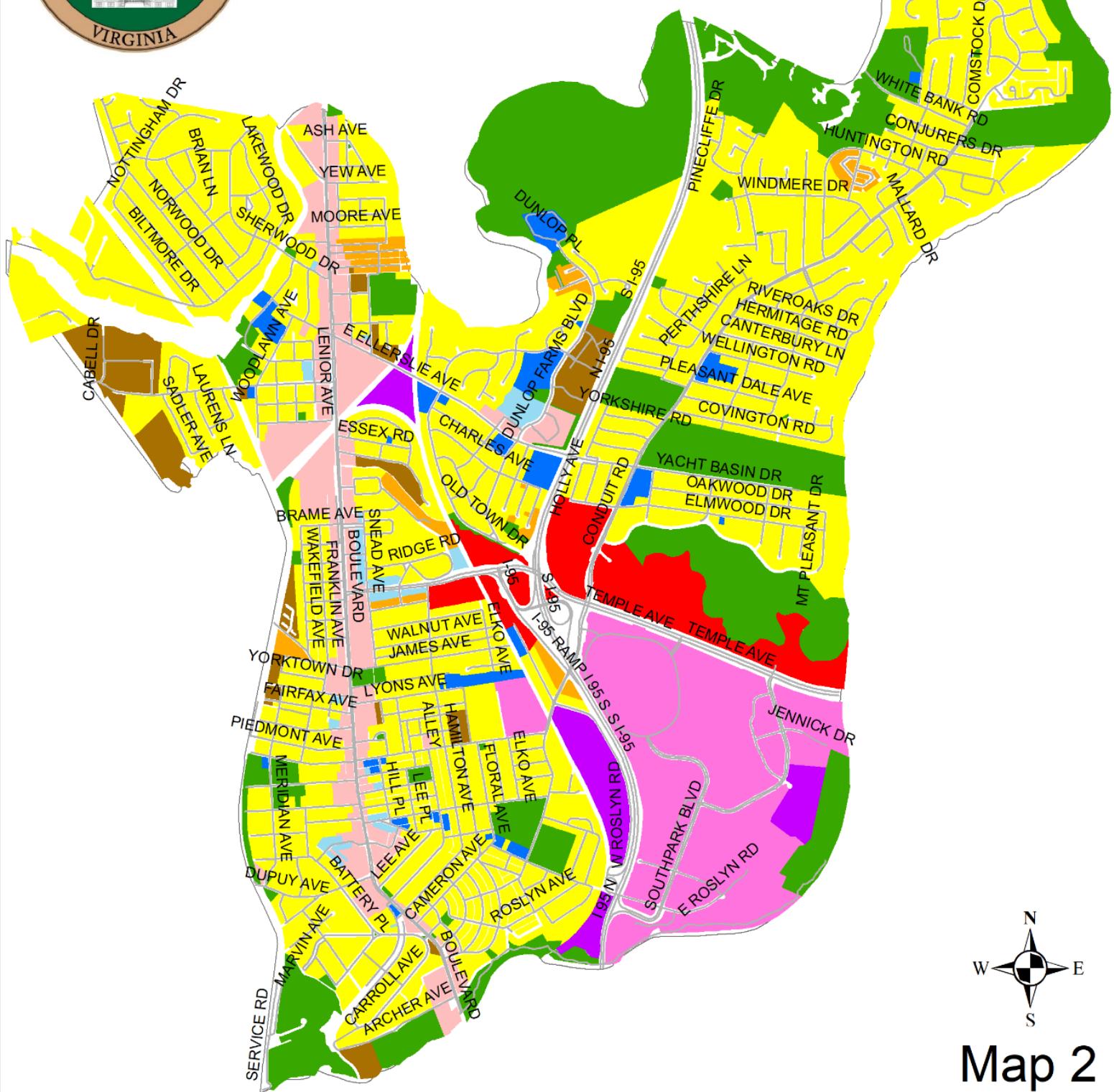
During the planning process, City staff met with representatives from surrounding localities and reviewed area comprehensive and small area plans to ensure consistency with the City's Comprehensive plan and other planning efforts. Coordinated efforts also included Fort Lee, which, simultaneously, was engaged in a Joint Land Use Study. This study identified locations where land use conflicts between the civilian population and the military installation are presently occurring or are likely to take place in the future.

## **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 2044 Land Use Plan January 2021**



## Map 2



Civic/Institutional	Industrial	Mixed Use	Transitional Office
Community Commercial	Low Density Single-Family	Multi-Family	
General Commercial	Medium Density Single-Family	Public and Open Space	

**The following Land Use Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are 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 to minimize conflicts between residential and commercial land 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)
- 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; apartments styled to attract young adults, 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 20+ acre parcel located on the northwest corner of E. Westover and Conduit Road shown on the Land Use Plan (Map 2). Development of this property must be done as part of a plan for the entire property and must complement the adjacent neighborhood. Additionally, the community must play a role in the design and use of the property. (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)
- Support the recommendations and implementation strategies of the 2014 Fort Lee Joint Land Use Study.
- Form a task force of Pickwick Shopping Center area business owners/managers, to identify ways to improve and redevelop the commercial area to mixed use; adding apartments styled to attract young adults, senior housing and offices. This area is identified as a Mixed Use Area on the Land Use Plan (Map 2).

## **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, with most of these being larger-lot, higher end homes.

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

Housing Units	2000		2010		2018 (ACS Estimates)	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	7,340	100%	7,831	100%	7,752	100%
Occupied housing units	7,027	96%	7,275	93%	7,054	91%
Vacant housing units	313	4%	556	7%	698	9%
Owner-occupied	4,871	69%	4,750	65%	4,484	64%
Renter-occupied	2,156	31%	2,525	35%	2,570	36%

Source: U. S. Census Bureau (Decennial Census 2000 and 2010, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates)

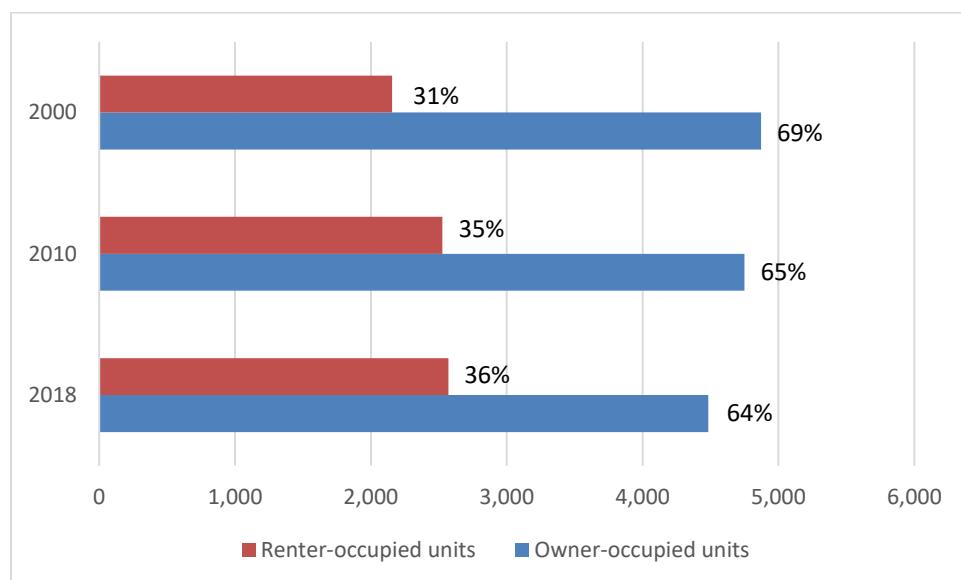
#### **Housing Units**

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 2010 and 2018, there was a 1% increase in renter occupied units.

The gradually increasing number of renters versus homeowners is a national trend. In 2010, 33.4% of housing units were renter-occupied in the country. In 2018, 36.1% of the housing units were renter-occupied. The national current renting level matches the most

recent high of 36.2% last set in 1986 and 1988, and approaches the rate of 37% last seen in 1965 (Pew Charitable Trust, "More U.S. households are renting than any point in 50 years, 2017").

### Exhibit 10: Rental vs. Owner



Source: U. S. Census Bureau (Decennial Census 2000 and 2010, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate)

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. Between 2010 and 2018, the vacancy of housing units increased from 7% to 9%. The City's 2018 vacancy rate is below the national rate of 12.3%.

### 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 two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption residing in the same housing unit. Conversely, a nonfamily household is one that could be a roommate situation or an older individual living alone 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

Household Type	2000		2010		2018 (ACS Estimates)	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	7,027	100%	7,275	100%		100%
Family households	4,720	67%	4,682	64%	4,453	63%
Husband-wife family	3,534	75%	3,282	70%	3,023	68%
Other family	1,186	25%	1,400	30%	1,430	34%
Male household, no wife present	272	23%	342	24%	266	19%
Female household, no husband present	914	77%	1,058	76%	1,164	81%
Nonfamily households	2,307	33%	2,593	36%	2,601	37%
Average Household Size	2.37	N/A	2.37	N/A	2.37	N/A

Source: U. S. Census Bureau (Decennial Census 2000 and 2010, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates)

## Housing

Housing is an important part of maintaining a high quality of life and a powerful economic development tool to attract new residents and jobs. 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.

It is well established that City residents are getting older and there is a need for senior housing in the City. There is also a need to attract younger adults and young families. Housing will play a major role in drawing these populations to the City. The Neighborhoods and Housing Opportunities Map identifies three mixed use areas that provide an opportunity to house seniors and young people. There is also a need to adapt the current housing stock in the City for young families.

### Mall Area Mixed Use Center

As many residents reach retirement age and look for alternative housing, there is little opportunity for them to stay in the City. Providing senior-friendly apartments in the Mall area would provide an opportunity for residents to stay in the City and be close to shopping and services.

Additionally, this mixed-use center is an opportunity to attract young adults. With the marriage age increasing and the impact of the recent recession, young people are putting off buying homes and are choosing to live closer to their jobs and entertainment. Mixed use developments allow them to live, work and play in one area. Attracting this population could benefit the City in the future, because these young people may choose to stay, purchase homes and start families in Colonial Heights.

### **Conduit at Westover Mixed Use Center**

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 Neighborhood and Housing Opportunities Map identifies a smaller mixed-use area at the corner of Conduit Road and Westover Avenue. The intention is to provide alternative housing at this location as well as an opportunity for new neighborhood convenience services. Offices and specialty markets could serve the needs of area residents without requiring a lot of parking or causing an increase of traffic.

Development of this mixed-use center must be done as part of a plan for the entire property and must complement the adjacent neighborhood. Additionally, the community must play a role in the design and use of the property.

### **Housing Pattern Book**

Many local governments are using housing pattern books as a guide for creating, preserving, or reinforcing the distinctive architectural character of an area. These books can also provide guidance for retrofitting a house to accommodate certain needs such as a growing family or universal design that allows people to age in place.

Much of the City's housing stock does not offer the characteristics of a modern home such as family rooms, large kitchens or home office space. At the same time, the City's housing is very affordable; there are great schools and many services. A housing pattern book can offer ideas on how to turn a house in the City into one with modern conveniences without having to move. The housing pattern book may also be used as a tool to attract new homeowners. Unlike zoning and design guidelines, which are regulatory, a housing pattern book can be used as a guide for renovating, remodeling or updating a home.

### **Universal Design**

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.

### **Residential Tax Abatement Program**

Residential tax abatement programs are designed to encourage property owners to make improvements to their property which benefits the overall housing stock and community. Residential tax abatement allows a homeowner to avoid paying taxes on the improved

value of their property for a certain period of time. These programs are regulated by state and local governments and property owners must meet certain criteria to qualify. The City reinstated the residential tax abatement program in 2018.

### **Historic District Designation**

Many of the City's neighborhoods are over or near 50 years old. Once a property or district is 50 years old, it is eligible to be listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Registry.

The National Registry of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of historic properties. This list is administered by the National Park Services of the Department of the Interior. Properties listed in the National Registry include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources is responsible for managing the Virginia Landmarks Registry, the state's official list of properties important to Virginia's history. State and federal tax credits are available for renovations that are done in accordance with these programs. Federal tax credits, however, are only available on revenue generating properties.

Both federal and state registration is considered an honor. It recognizes the historic value of a property or the neighborhood and encourages present and future owners to continue to exercise good stewardship. Residents can purchase placards with the district or property name and the year the property was built to place on their house.

National and state register listings do not place any restrictions on private property owners. Owners have no obligation to open their properties to the public, to restore them, or even to maintain them, if they choose not to do so. Under federal and state laws, private property owners can do anything they wish to their listed property, provided no federal or state license, permit or funding is involved.

### **Home Values**

Home values rose regularly in most metropolitan areas around the country over the last couple of decades; beginning in 2007 housing prices began to slip nationally as a result of the housing market bubble and subsequent "Great Recession". For many, their home represents a large portion of their personal wealth and when it is threatened it has a real impact on future financial stability. In order to attract homebuyers to the City, stable property values are essential.

### **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.

## **Property Maintenance**

The City has recently revamped the property maintenance code enforcement program to be one that is proactive. The City is divided into two inspection districts. Each district is assigned a code enforcement inspector who inspects the district 1-2 times a month. Since its inception, the number of violations has increased significantly. The intent of this program is to improve the appearance of the City and aid in revitalization efforts.

## **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.

### **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. 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.

In 2018, the City of Colonial Heights completed a five-year conservation project on Shepherd Stadium that included improvements to the overall stadium. Shepherd Stadium became home to the Tri-City Chili Peppers Coastal Plains League Team in 2020.

### **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.

### **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, it 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.

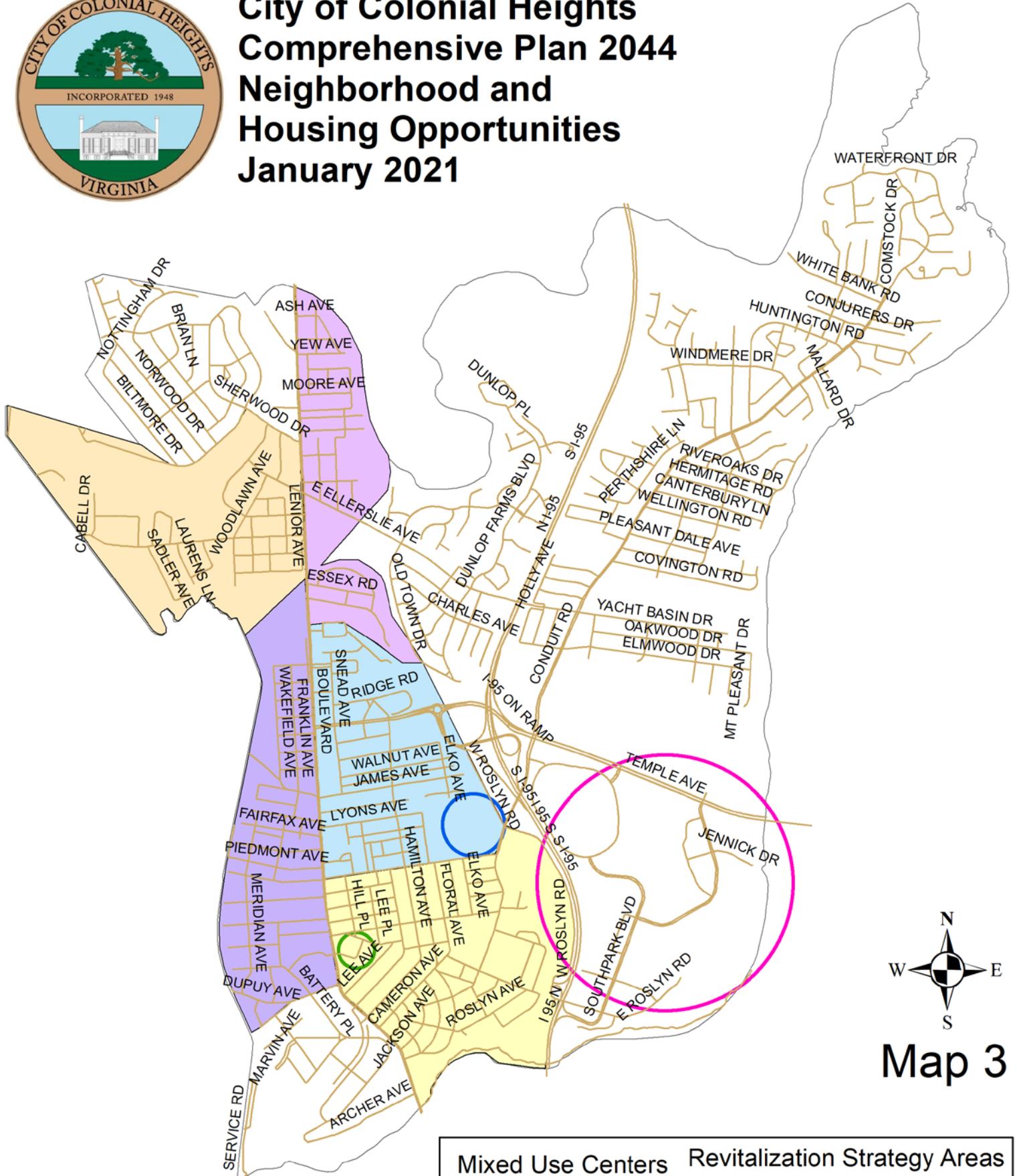
### **Mt. Pleasant –Southpark**

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 2044 Neighborhood and Housing Opportunities January 2021



Map 3

Mixed Use Centers	Revitalization Strategy Areas
Conduit at Westover Mixed Use Center	Lakeview
Pickwick Mixed Use Center	Shepherd Stadium
Southpark Mall Area Mixed Use Center	Toll House
	Violet Bank-Flora Hill
	Westover-Snead

## **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 priorities. A more proactive approach includes regular inspections throughout the City along with educating citizens about the property maintenance ordinances.

### **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. The Public Works and Engineering Department addresses these concerns through the Capital Improvement Plan.

## **Land Use Conflicts**

### **Boulevard/Neighborhood**

The City's zoning ordinance does not allow the placement of commercial uses in a residential neighborhood without a zoning amendment that requires approval by City Council. Additionally, new commercial uses located next to residential zones are required to provide buffers and other development standards to protect the neighborhood. However, this has not always been the case. Over the years, the Boulevard Business District has expanded into the surrounding residential area by either locating businesses or expanding existing businesses into the neighborhoods. As a result, businesses are located adjacent to residential uses without buffering or screening.

### **Home Based Businesses**

The City's zoning ordinance allows certain small-scaled commercial activities within residential dwellings. There are limitations on the amount of floor area used for the business as well as restrictions on altering the building. These types of businesses should not increase the volume of traffic in the neighborhood and, with the exception of limited signage, there should not be any visual indication that there is a business located in the home.

**The following Neighborhood and Housing Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are 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)
- 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)

- Encourage architecturally appropriate renovations and restorations of the City's historic resources and minimize the demolition of historic structures. Expand 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)
- The City should help create neighborhood associations and support existing homeowners' 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)
- Completed in 2018 - Reinstate the Residential Tax Abatement Program, and consider adjusting the threshold of investment so more homeowners can take advantage of this program for minor repairs and renovations. The amount of tax relief should be graduated, meaning the more the investment the larger the tax break.
- Provide other tax incentives to attract and encourage private investment in housing. (QL-3, EP-8)
- Efforts should be made to maintain and increase home values in the City by implementing revitalization efforts. (QL-3, QL-5)
- Strengthen code enforcement efforts on graffiti and litter. (SD-1)

## **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 bicycle 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 while 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 1900's in the southern portion of the city and, more recently, neighborhoods have been established in the Conjurers Neck area. This development over a long period of time results in a variety of housing types and street design throughout the city and contributes to the character of each neighborhood and to the overall City.

### **Historic Districts**

The City has two recognized State and National Historic Districts. 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 has 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.

The Chesterfield Highlands Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on July 13, 2013. Chesterfield Highlands is one of the largest and earliest of the planned suburbs within the City and serves as an important example of early twentieth-century suburban design. The architecture showcases several period kit-houses and numerous examples of catalog-inspired designs the period of significance spans from 1916, when the first plat was recorded, to 1954.

The Violet Bank Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on September 29, 2015. The district includes Violet Bank, which was listed on Virginia Landmarks Register on June 18, 2016. The district has two periods of significance, 1815 and 1908-1956. The neighborhood features a highly intact group of kit houses.

## **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 cozier 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**

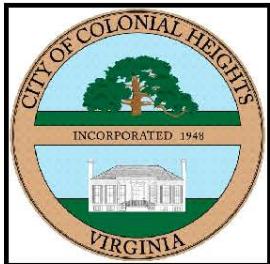
Our image corridors often provide an impression of Colonial Heights on travelers who may be just passing through the City. It may be the only opportunity to entice visitors to stop and invest in the City's businesses and attractions. Enhancement of gateways and image corridors can be done with landscaping,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

#### Interstate Image Corridor

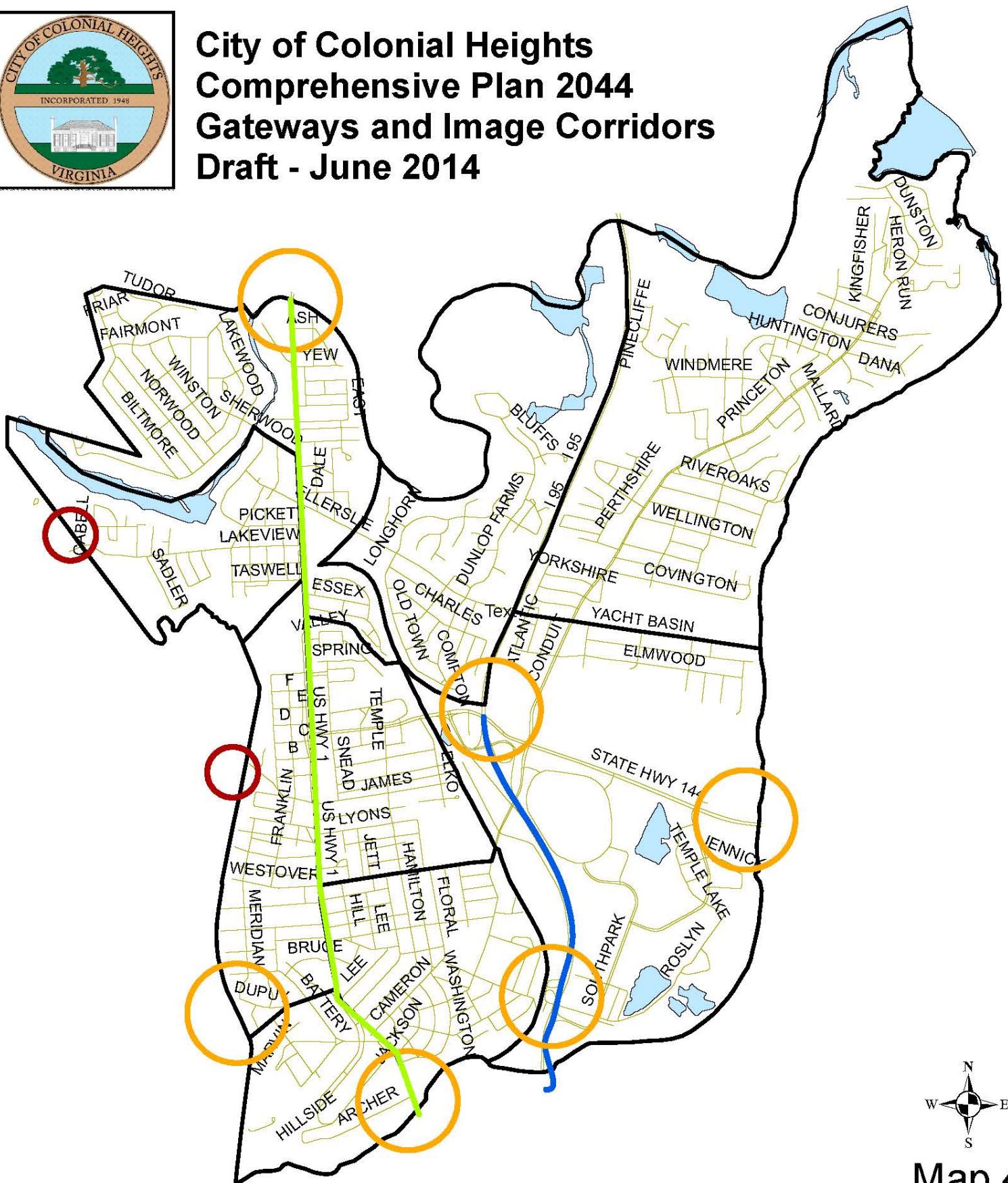
For many visitors, Interstate 95 provides the first and often only view of our City. This view includes many signs inviting people to stop and shop at our retail businesses, service stations and restaurants. Coordinated, attractive signage is important because it is often the only opportunity to grab the attention of the passersby and encourage them to visit the highway-oriented businesses and Southpark Mall.

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 2044 Gateways and Image Corridors Draft - June 2014**



## Map 4



## Primary Gateway



## Secondary Gateway



## Interstate Image Corridor



## 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 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 subarea is intended to match the design improvements to the type of services provided in that area.

### Boulevard Modernization

The Boulevard Modernization Project is intended to provide improved traffic operations on the Boulevard from Westover Avenue to the northern City boundary. 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.

Since the development of the Overlay District, the new sign regulation, the completion of the Boulevard Modernization Project south of Westover Avenue, 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 enhances the pedestrian experience.

**The following Community Character and Design Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are 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 Beautification Committee. (EP-3)
- Work with mall management and 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 street concepts to include street trees, sidewalks, bikeways, landscaping, and lighting with all new development, redevelopment projects and transportation in the City when possible. (QL-2, EP-3, CC-1, SD-3, SD-2, CC-3)
- 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 an implementation schedule. This should apply to gateways, medians, and public rights-of-way throughout the City. (CC-5)
- The City should increase the number of trees and plantings in public parks and in public areas throughout the City. (CC-5, SD-5)

## **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 policies determine where governmental funds will be spent and where development will be encouraged. These policies provide avenues for employment and revenue generation for its residents and a tax base for local government.

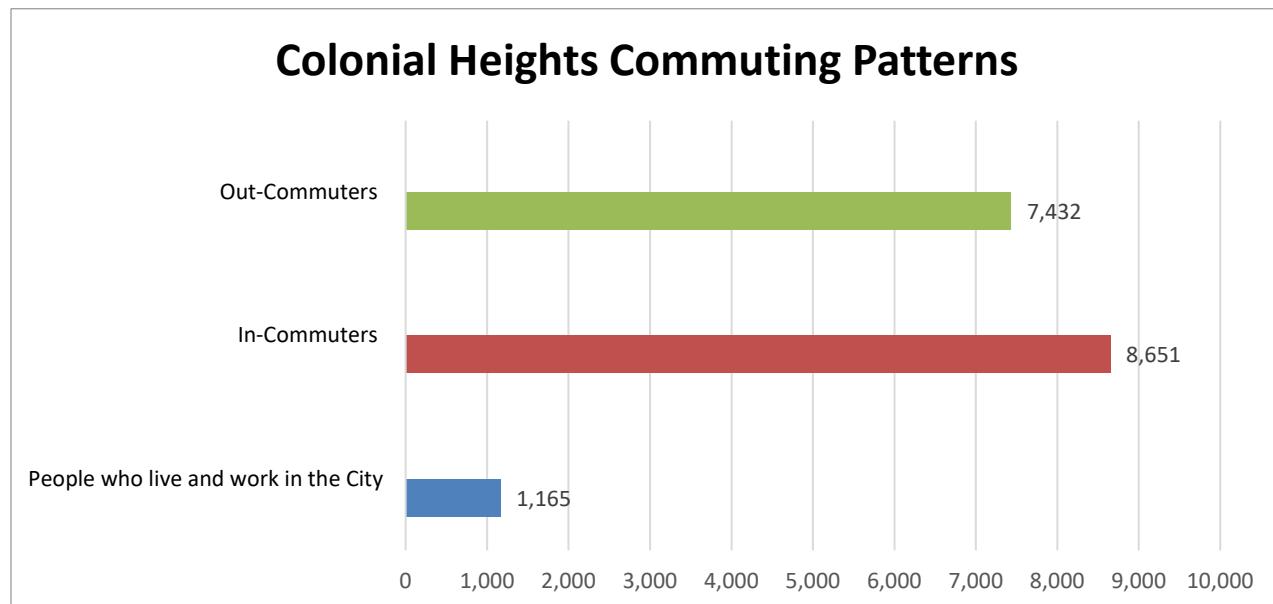
### **Current Economic Conditions**

Currently in 2020, the City, along with the rest of the world, is enduring the economic impacts of COVID-19, as well as preparing for the potential future impacts of the pandemic. Being prepared for 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 in preparing for the future.

#### **Commuting Patterns**

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, 7,432 City residents commute to another locality for work in 2017. Of these residents, a majority commute to Chesterfield County, followed by Henrico County and the City of Richmond. Within the City, 9,816 workers are employed; 1,165 of those workers are City residents and 8,651 workers residing in a different locality and commuting into the City.

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



Source: Virginia Employment Commission via the U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application: Work-Home-Destination Analysis, 2017

## Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed

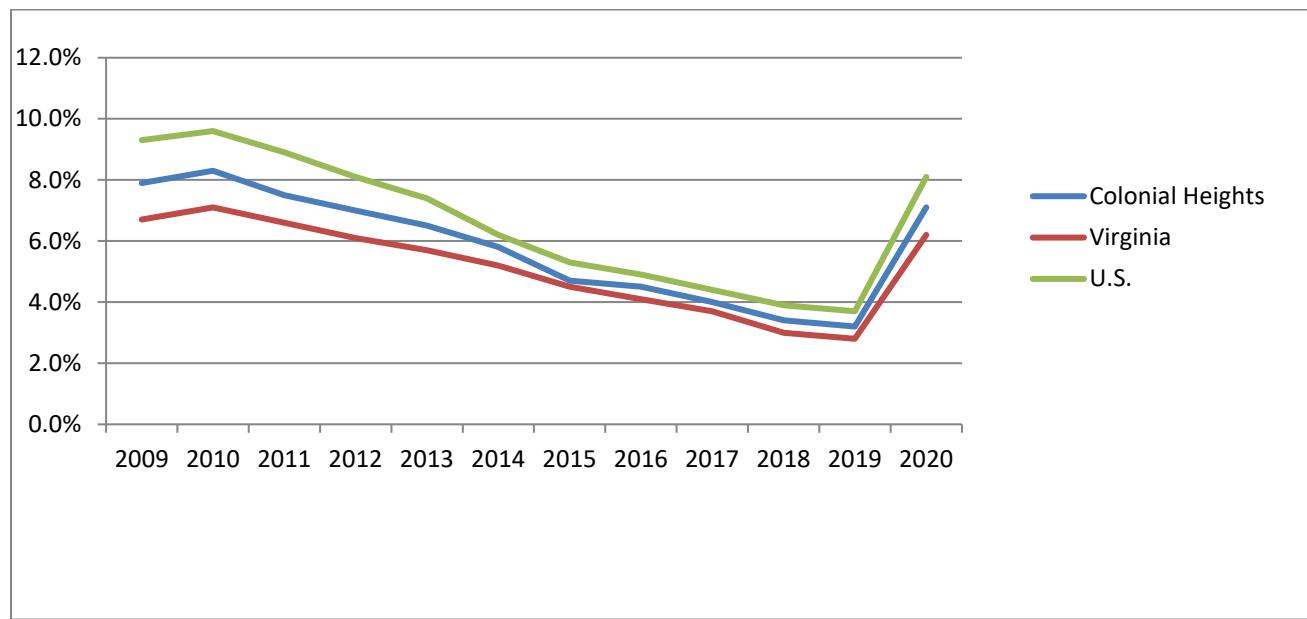
According to the Virginia Employment Commission, unemployment insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers to be used for the payment of unemployment insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond the worker's control. Unemployment insurance replaces a part of the worker's wage 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 2019 the City's unemployment rate was 3.2. %, which is higher than the state average of 2.8%, and lower than the national rate of 3.7%. This is down from its highest in the past decade at 8.3% in 2010.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the unemployment rate locally, state-wide, and nationally. From March to April of 2020, the local unemployment rate jumped 9 percentage points, from 3% to 12%. Nationally during that same time period, the unemployment rate jumped 9.9 percentage points, from 4.5% to 14.4%. Since the spike in April, local, state, and national unemployment rates have slowly declined. Overall in 2020, the local unemployment rate was 7.1%, Virginia's unemployment rate was 6.2%, and the national unemployment rate was 8.1% (Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Local Area Unemployment Statics, April 17, 2021 Report).

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



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. April 17, 2021 Report.

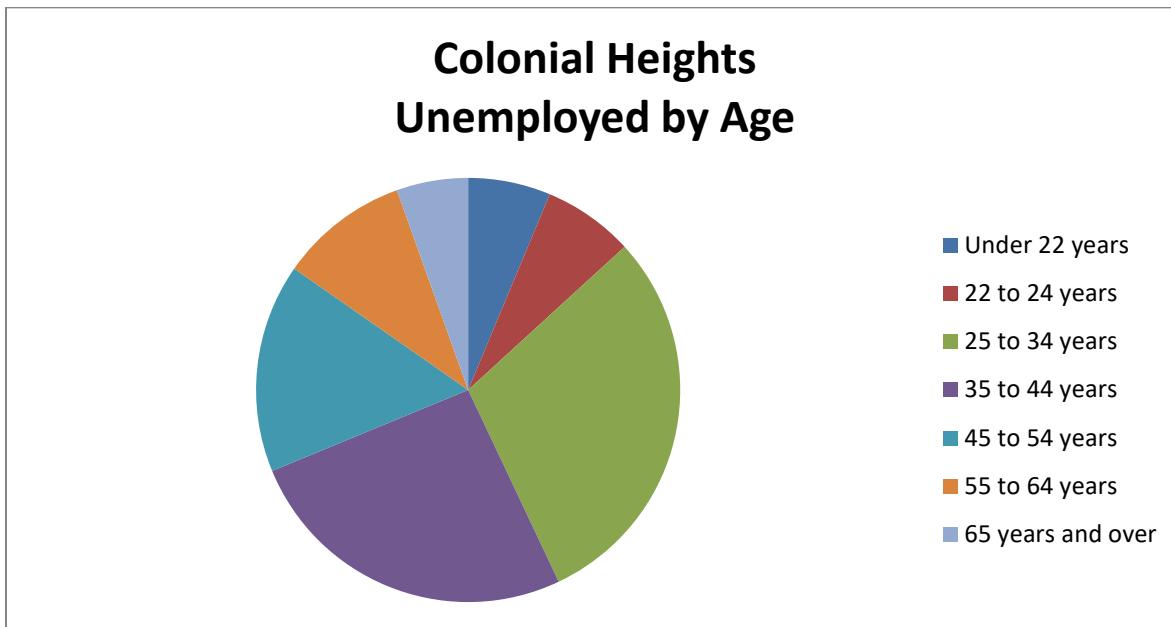
### Unemployed by Gender

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed, October 2020 report, more women (255) than men (222) have collected unemployment insurance; this is consistent with state and national trends.

### 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 45 and 54 years old.

### **Exhibit 14: Unemployment by Age Distribution**

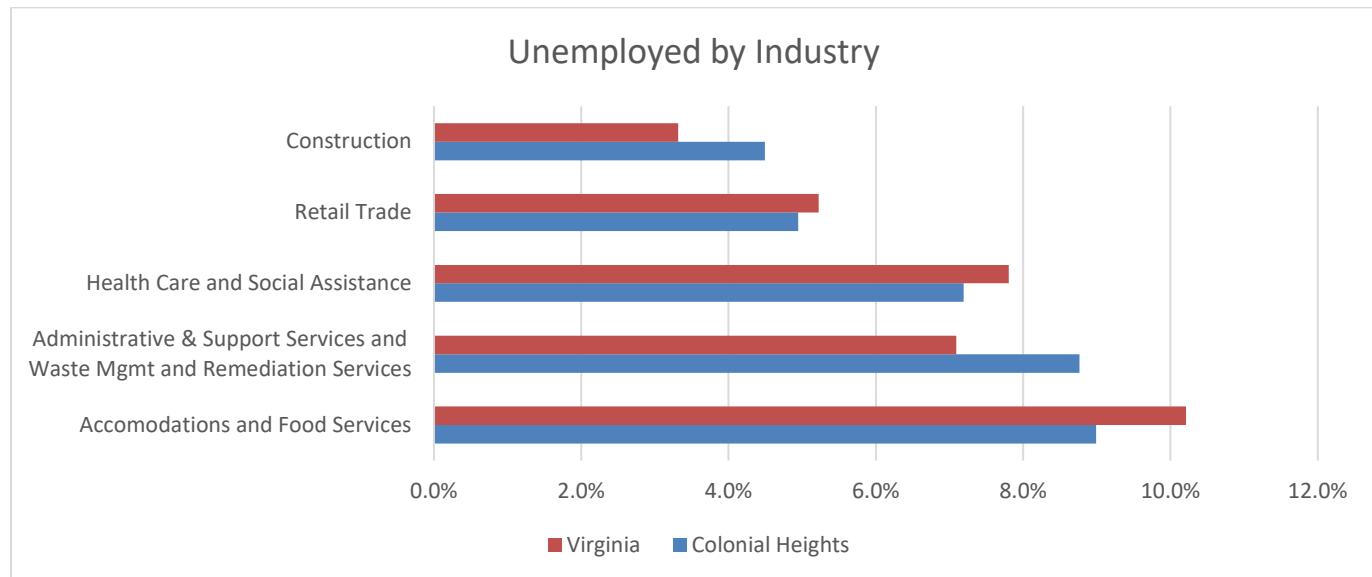


Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, October 2020.

### Unemployment Insurance by Industry

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, Characteristics of the Insured Unemployed October 2020 report, the top industries with the largest number of claimants in Colonial Heights include accommodation and food services, administrative support, health care, retail trade, and construction.

### **Exhibit 15: Unemployment by Industry**



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, October 2020.

### **Industry & Employment**

The top twenty employers within the City are within the industries of retail, government, healthcare, and food service.

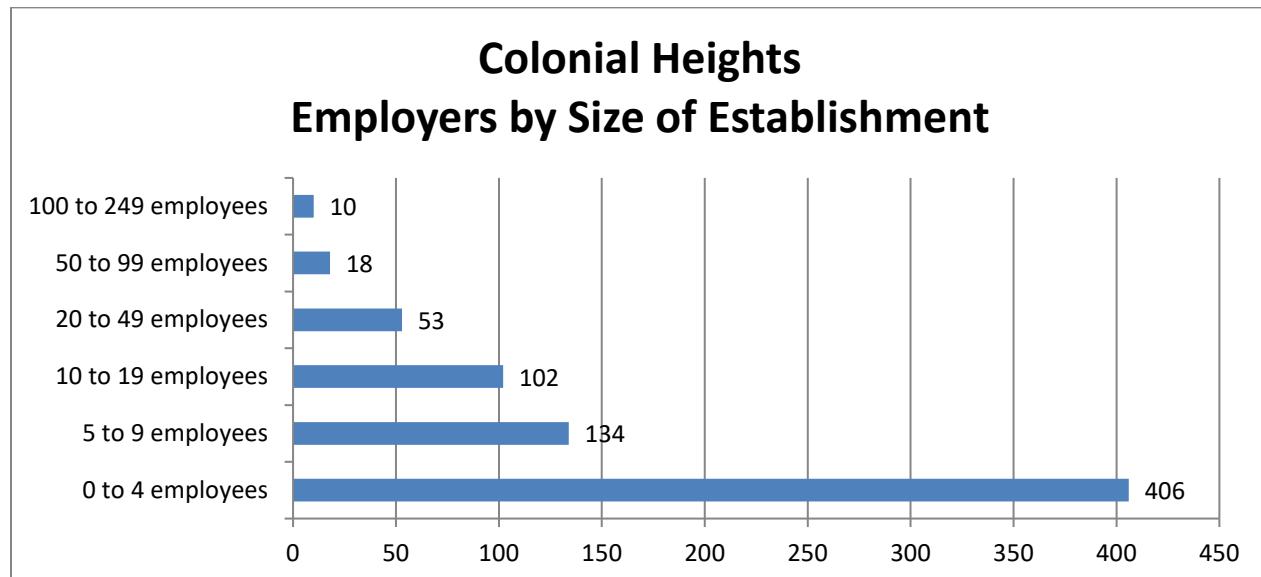
### **Exhibit 16: Top 20 Employers**

1. Wal Mart	11. The Dunlop House
2. Colonial Heights School Board	12. Food Lion
3. City of Colonial Heights	13. McDonald's
4. Care Advantage	14. OS Restaurant Services, Inc.
5. Colonial Heights Rehab & Nursing	15. WaWa
6. Publix NC Employee Services, LLC	16. MCV Physicians
7. The Home Depot	17. Texas Roadhouse
8. Chick-Fil-A at Southpark	18. Best Buy
9. Red Lobster & The Olive Garden	19. Roslyn Converters
10. Target Corp.	20. Prudential Overall Supply

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2nd Quarter (April, May, June) 2020.

According to the Virginia Employment Commission, the top 10 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), 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (April, May, June) 2020.

#### Employment by Industry

As of June 2020, there are 8,363 people employed in the City of Colonial Heights. Retail Trade is the top employment industry with 27% of workers, followed by Health Care and Assistance and Accommodations and Food Service, both with 17% of workers. Local, State, and Federal Government employment combined comprises 15% of the workforce (Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter [April, May June], 2020).

#### **Regional Occupation Projections**

According to the VEC, between 2014 and 2024, the Crater Area (cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, and Petersburg, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex) employment is projected to increase 7.76% and gain 5,553 jobs. The industry with the highest projected growth is Health Care and Social Assistance, with a project growth of 23.5%, adding 2,530 new jobs. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services employment is projected to grow by 19.17% and gain 317 new jobs. Retail Trade is projected to gain 698 new jobs, a 7.73% increase. Only two industries are expected to decline between 2014 and 2024, utilities with a 9.41% decrease or 124 jobs, and manufacturing, with a 5.66% decrease or 368 jobs.

## 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 congestion, an excessive amount of curb cuts, parking limitations, the visual effect of business sign clutter, and the encroachment of residential neighborhoods.

When Southpark Mall was built in the late 1980's, there was a fear of businesses abandoning the Boulevard, but that 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.

Small lots along the Boulevard pose a challenge for business owners who want to expand their businesses or provide additional parking for their customers. Small lots also provide a challenge in attracting new businesses. Some areas along the Boulevard may be appropriate for expansion, but in past instances, property was purchased in the adjoining neighborhoods to provide for parking, storage and other business uses. As a result, there is often a conflict of uses having a negative impact on the neighborhood. To avoid this occurring in a piecemeal fashion, a comprehensive approach should be taken when identifying where expansion is appropriate and where it is not.

The Pickwick Avenue commercial area is a small collection of neighborhoods 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.

## **Home Based Businesses**

The City's zoning ordinance allows certain small-scaled commercial activities within residential dwellings. There are limitations on the amount of floor area used for the business as well as restrictions on altering the building. The business should not increase the volume of traffic in the neighborhood and, with the exception of limited signage, there should not be any visual indication that a business located in the home.

## **Commercial Rehabilitation Program**

The City of Colonial Heights allows partial exemption from real estate taxes (tax relief) for qualifying commercial structures that have been rehabilitated, renovated or replaced. For those properties that qualify, the initial increase in real estate taxes caused by rehabilitation, renovation or replacement will be waived for five (5) years.

### **Requirements to Classify a Commercial Structure as Rehabilitated, Renovated or Replaced**

- The property shall be located in one of two (2) designated districts, the Boulevard or Southpark Districts.
- The commercial structure must be at least twenty (20) years old.
- The application and processing fee of fifty dollars (\$50) must be paid before proceeding.
- The Assessor must inspect the property prior to any rehabilitation, renovation or replacement of the structure.
- Any and all delinquent or past due real estate taxes, penalties and interest must be paid prior to the property being accepted into the program. The partial exemption for each tax year shall be conditioned upon payment of the non-exempt amount of real estate taxes on or before May 15 or November 15 of each tax year.
- Failure to pay taxes due on or before the established dates will result in forfeit of the remaining exemption period and cancellation of the credit issued for that year.
- No improvements made upon previously vacant land shall be eligible.
- Rehabilitated, renovated or replaced structures must meet zoning requirements, plans for project must be approved by City of Colonial Heights Engineering Department, and all permits for work must have been acquired prior to applying for this program.

## **Districts and Program Stipulations**

### **Boulevard District**

The "Boulevard District", as depicted on an exhibit maintained by the Assessor, shall consist of all commercial structures fronting on the Boulevard (Route 1) within the Colonial Heights City limits or contained within the Boulevard Overlay District as provided in Chapter 286 of the Colonial Heights City Code.

Any commercial structure at least twenty years old within the Boulevard District whose base assessed value is increased by at least twenty-five percent due to rehabilitation, renovation, or replacement shall be eligible for an exemption from real estate tax equal to the increase in assessed value attributable to the rehabilitation, renovation, or replacement. Such exemption shall commence on January 1 of the year following completion of the rehabilitation, renovation, or replacement, and shall run with the real estate for five years.

### **Southpark District**

The “Southpark District”, shall consist of all commercial structures within the geographic boundaries depicted on an exhibit maintained by the Assessor, entitled “The Southpark Commercial Structure Tax Exemption District”.

Payment of the real estate tax attributable to any structure at least twenty years old within the Southpark District may be exempted by an amount up to fifty percent of the cost of the structure’s rehabilitation, renovation, or replacement as long as such cost is at least \$100,000. Such exemption shall commence on January 1 of the year following completion of the rehabilitation, renovation, or replacement, and shall run with the real estate for five years.

## **Economic Development Opportunity Areas**

As previously mentioned, because of the lack of vacant, buildable land, the City has limited economic development prospects. The following areas provide economic development opportunities within the constraints of 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 incentives to create a change. The Commercial Strategy Area runs along the entire length of the Boulevard within 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 Mixed-Use Center**

The Mall Area Mixed-Use Center is currently anchored by Southpark Mall, retail stores, hotels, and offices. The surrounding area around Southpark Mall continues to show growth, with the development of previously vacant parcels along Charles Dimmock Parkway and the redevelopment of outparcels in former parking areas.

Nationally, shopping malls and retail trades have experienced a decline due to consumer shopping habits transitioning from in-store to online. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Southpark Mall reported stability despite the national trends of shopping mall decline. However, in November 2020, the owners of Southpark Mall, CBL Properties, announced a comprehensive restructuring, to include a voluntary Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The restructuring announcement stated that all CBL Properties will continue to operate as business as usual ([www.cblproperties.com/restructuring](http://www.cblproperties.com/restructuring)).

In response to the decline in retail trade, cities across the country are revisiting traditional mall land use and adopting mixed use concepts for both new and redeveloped shopping areas. This area provides an opportunity for alternative housing for seniors and young adults. As many Colonial Heights' residents reach retirement age and look for alternative housing, there is little opportunity for them to stay in the City. Providing senior-friendly apartments in the Mall area would provide an opportunity for residents to stay in the City and be close to shopping and medical services.

The co-location of services, jobs and nightlife create a type of urban village. The idea of an urban village is attractive for young adults because it allows them to live work and play in one area. Attracting this population could benefit the City in the future because these young people may choose to stay, purchase homes and start families in Colonial Heights.

### **Conduit at Westover Mixed-Use Center**

As the needs for housing change, new, higher density residential housing is recommended by this plan to attract new residents and house the aging population. The intention is to provide alternative housing at the corner of Conduit Road and Westover Avenue; as well as an opportunity for new neighborhood convenience services. Offices and specialty markets could serve the needs of area residents without requiring a lot of parking or causing an increase of traffic.

The mixed-use designation for this area is to ensure that the development is done as part of a plan for the entire property.

### **Pickwick Mixed-Use Center**

The Pickwick Mixed Use Center is a part of the Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area. Pickwick Avenue serves as the “downtown” to Colonial Heights, with tight-knit storefronts lining the sidewalk and on-street parking, creating a defined urban streetscape. Pickwick

Avenue features one of the oldest examples of mixed-use in the City, with apartments on the second floor of commercial building.

The Pickwick Mixed-Use Center includes Pickwick Shopping Center, an L-shaped shopping strip mall consisting of attached single-story buildings and a large shared parking lot in the front. If redevelopment were to occur with Pickwick Shopping Center or any of the buildings along Pickwick Avenue, the mixed-use designation will encourage commercial or office buildings with a residential component on the upper floors.

## **Previous Strategy Study Areas**

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

The Appomattox River Corridor Development Plan was completed by Land Planning & Design Associates in August of 2011. The study area is comprised of approximately 175 acres, located between the Appomattox River and Charles Dimmock Parkway/East Roslyn Road. The main focal point of the plan is the City-owned property adjacent to Roslyn Landing Park and the City Animal Shelter. The result of the study provided two development scenarios; both scenarios propose a residential – commercial mixed-used development.

Due to the significant environmental constraints on the property and the City's renewed focus on diversifying industry sectors, the City proposed for the City-owned property in the Appomattox River Corridor Development Plan to be used for manufacturing and industry. In 2018, the subject property was rezoned from GB-General Business to I-Industrial, and the Future Land Use Plan was changed from Mixed Use to Industrial.

### **Expanded Courthouse Study**

The Expanded Courthouse Study was completed by May 2012 by the Department of Planning and Community Development. The Study Area is over 700 acres and is bounded by the city boundary to the west, East and West Westover Avenues to the north, the former Atlantic Coastline railway to the east, and the Appomattox River to the south. The study is a comprehensive assessment of the area.

### **Southern Gateway Land Use Committee**

The Southern Gateway Land Use Committee was formed and convened in 2016 to study the land use of Dupuy Avenue, Battery Place, and Chesterfield Avenue. The committee discussed the vision and potential of the areas: Battery Place and Chesterfield Avenue for its proximity to the Courthouse and Dupuy Avenue for its proximity to Virginia State University and the redevelopment occurring in Ettrick.

For Battery Place and Chesterfield Avenue, the Southern Gateway Land Use Committee proposed rezoning the area to RO – Residential Office, to accommodate and encourage small offices that would like to co-locate with the Courthouse. A neighborhood meeting was held on August 31, 2016 to pitch the idea of rezoning to Residential Office. The

general consensus of the attendees was against the rezoning of Battery Place and Chesterfield Avenue to RO – Residential Office.

For Dupuy Avenue, staff completed a Buildable Area Analysis to determine what type of development the parcel size could support. The results of the analysis found that, even if parcels were combined, the depth of the parcels are inadequate to support the mid-size development proposed for Ettrick's redevelopment.

## **Economic Development Authority**

The General Assembly of Virginia authorized the creation of Industrial Development Authorities in 1966 through the “Industrial Development and Revenue Bond Act.” The intent of the legislature was to authorize the creation of industrial development authorities by the localities in the Commonwealth. The Colonial Heights Industrial Development Authority (IDA) was created on November 21, 1977 by Ordinance No. 77-51. The purpose of the IDA was to promote industry and develop trade by inducing assets instrumental to business recruiting and growth, and working with various local, regional and state agencies to market and promote the City. Ordinance No 10-16 was approved by City Council to change the name from Industrial Development Authority to Economic Development Authority (EDA) because the Commonwealth of Virginia thought this provided a wider inclusion for economic development projects. The EDA’s mission is to acquire, own, lease, and dispose of properties and make loans that it may promote economic development locally. It is also focused on providing funding for matches to recipients of the Commonwealth’s Opportunity Fund awards and incentives to businesses and industries expanding and relocating here.

## **Economic Development Strategic Plan**

The Office of Economic Development kicked off development of the City’s Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) with the Economic Development Leadership Forum in November of 2014. The completed plan was endorsed by the Economic Development Authority (9/2016), Planning Commission (10/2016), and City Council (1/2017).

The Economic Development Strategic Plan begins with a “SWOT” market analysis. The analysis identified seven strengths, six weaknesses, six opportunities, and six threats. The results of this analysis contributed to the framework of the EDSP, along with background data, a survey, and stakeholder meetings.

### **Vision**

Increase the tax base of Colonial Heights by enhancing the business climate and creating higher-paying jobs.

### **Mission**

Sustain and diversify the economy in order to provide a high quality of life for all residents.

## **Goals**

The Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines four major goals.

### **Goal #1: Expansion of the City's Tax Base**

It is important to the City of Colonial Heights to create an additional quality tax base in order to fund the cost of government services that are used by the City's citizens. Businesses generate real estate, personal property, and machinery and tools tax that adds to the local tax revenues and requires very few government services. Retail businesses contribute sales tax revenue, as well as real estate and personal property tax revenue. Restaurant and Food Service businesses contribute significantly to the local tax revenue through the City's meals tax, real estate, and personal property tax revenue. These tax revenues help pay for public services and schools.

### **Goal #2: Economic Stability**

Another important goal of the City's economic development plan is to achieve economic stability. A diverse economy will help mitigate the effects of economic cycles and will help to maintain local employment and revenue streams during difficult economic times. While the City of Colonial Heights fared well during the most recent recession, the likelihood of this continuing is not optimistic, especially with the closing of many larger big box retailers nationwide. Aggressive marketing and creative thinking will be required to attract vibrant new industry.

### **Goal #3: Job Retention and Expansion**

Job retention and expansion is a vital component of the EDSP. Existing businesses are no less important than new industry the City hopes to attract. Studies have documented that job growth from existing business far exceeds job growth from new industry attraction. They are the lifeblood of the City's economy, and statistically, most new jobs are the result of existing business expansions.

However, the creation of a Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) can prove to be beneficial in monitoring issues that are important to the existing business community. A BREP team/task force comprised of local business leaders and educational institutions can assist in visiting businesses to gather information regarding specific issues a company might be experiencing, such as difficulty recruiting certain skill sets or the possibility of an expansion or reduction in business. The primary goal of a BREP program should be to increase business profitability and productivity, thereby creating longevity, and cultivating strong business networks and a positive business climate. Growth of local business is the best indicator of a healthy and vibrant community.

### **Goal #4: Job Creation and Entrepreneurship**

Job creation is an important objective of the EDSP. Job creation should focus on key occupations and industry that provide quality jobs for citizens. Industry recruitment should match labor skills that are readily available in the community or skills that can be attained through workforce training or the community college system quickly. These new jobs should also provide an increase in household wealth. One of the most important ways of maintaining a diverse industry base and adapting to changing forces in the markets is to

create a culture of innovation and spur entrepreneurial activity. Focus entrepreneurial support and guidance on companies that leverage major community assets.

## **Objectives**

The Economic Development Strategic Plan lays out three objectives that will allow the City to achieve the above goals. A summary of the objectives is provided below.

### Objective #1: New Business Attraction Targets

This objective establishes three target areas for business recruitment: (1) Life Sciences, such as healthcare, pharmaceuticals, medical devices; (2) Creative and Knowledge-Based Services, including advertising, public relations, engineering, and architecture; (3) Tourist, Convention, and Sports Services, specifically individual travel, group tours, and destination retail.

### Objective #2: Business Retention and Expansion

This objective includes the Business Retention and Expansion (BREP). The BREP will foster and encourage participation in the economic development process from the business community and business organizations.

### Objective #3: Tourist, Convention, and Sports Services

This objective will strengthen travel promotion activities through Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), Petersburg Area Regional Tourism (PART), Richmond Region Tourism (RRT). These entities assist the Economic Development Department in marketing and promoting Colonial Heights as a sports tourism destination.

## **Policies**

The Plan establishes policies as tools to achieve the goals and objectives. The policies are organized into five categories: land use, incentives, retail, workforce development, and entrepreneurship. More information on these policies can be found in the EDSP.

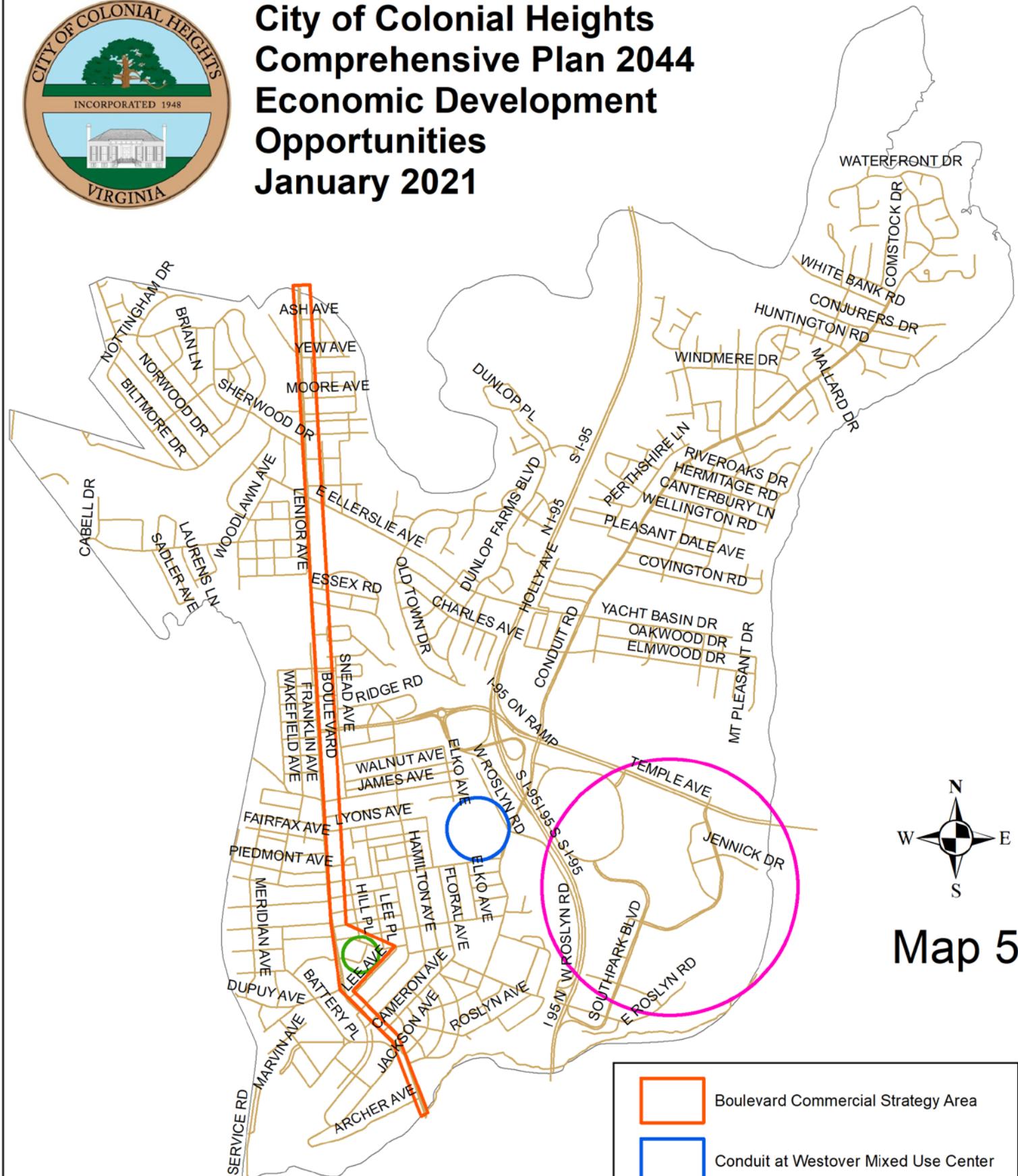
**The following Economic Development Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- Completed in 2017 - 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)
- Implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan. (EP-6, EP-1, SD-2)
- Provide tax credits for businesses so they can reinvest in their business to modernize or expand. (EP-4)
- Support the efforts of the Economic Development Department and the Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) to attract new business targets and retain existing businesses. (EP-1, SD-2)
- The Economic Development Authority provides input 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 on the Economic Opportunity Areas 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. Expansion should be done in accordance with a plan or strategy and not piecemeal. (EP-1)
- Establish an open line of communications between the development and business communities, City administration and elected officials.
- Economic and environmental goals need to be viewed as compatible concepts during development.
- Promote compatibility of development with surrounding neighborhoods. (QL-4, SD-1)





# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Economic Development Opportunities January 2021



Map 5

- Boulevard Commercial Strategy Area
- Conduit at Westover Mixed Use Center
- Pickwick Mixed Use Center
- Southpark Mall Area Mixed Use Center

## **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 identifies 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.

The Soil Map shows the types and locations of soils in the City. Due to the extent of development in the City, multiple soil associations feature an Urban Land Complex classification. Mattaponi soil associations make up a large portion of the Colonial Heights' developed areas; a moderately well drained soil and not likely to flood.

Mattaponi Sandy Loam and Mattaponi-Urban Land Complex have less than six percent slope. Appling soil exists along the river beds and can feature up to a 25 percent slope. Appling Sandy Loam and Appling-Urban Land Complex are well drained soils and are not susceptible to flooding. Roanoke Loam is a soil classification that has nominally very little slope and resides in non-developed areas of the City along Old Town creek as well as the junction of Appomattox River and Swift Creek. This type of soil drains poorly and occasionally floods. The City also features moderately well drained Helena Loam and Emporia Sandy Loam.

### **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.

### **Wetlands**

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present near the surface of the soil, for a significant duration of the year. The saturation of the soil favors the growth of hydrophytes, plants with special adaptation for living submerged in water. The majority of the City's wetlands are located on the northernmost boundary along Swift Creek, especially where the creek meets the Appomattox River. The Wetlands Map located at the end of the chapter illustrates the locations and types of wetlands in the city. Colonial Heights has two types of wetlands:

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland. Emergent wetlands are vegetated by grass-like, perennial plants such as cattails, saw grass, and sedges. Common names for this type of wetland are marsh, meadow, and slough.
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland. The forested/shrub wetland exhibits characteristics of both a forested wetland and a shrub wetland. In shrub wetlands, the woody vegetation is less than 20 feet tall, while in forested wetlands the woody vegetation is greater than 20 feet tall. Shrub wetlands are also known as bogs. Forested wetlands are also known as swamps.

### **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.

### **Protection of Public Water Supply**

Since 1968, the Appomattox River Water Authority (ARWA) has supplied the City and surrounding region with drinking water from Lake Chesdin. Prior to the formation of the ARWA, the City's potable water supply was drawn from Swift Creek Lake (Dam Reservoir), located on the northwestern part of the City.

The City is located downstream of Lake Chesdin and does not share any boundaries with the Lake. Protection of the City's public water supply is through participation and cooperation with ARWA source protection efforts. The ARWA is governed by the Board of Directors, which is comprised of representation from each member locality. The Colonial Heights' City Manager serves on the Board of Directors.

The Authority participates in the Partnership for Safe Water program which is sponsored by the American Water Works Association, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, United States Environmental

Protection Agency, National Association of Water Companies, and the Water Research Foundation. The drinking water quality standards for participation in this program are stricter than the regular standards of either the EPA or the Virginia Department of Health. ARWA is one of only two water plants in Virginia that has received the Directors Award for compliance with these standards for fifteen or more consecutive years. Please visit ARWA's website at [www.arwava.org](http://www.arwava.org) to see up-to-date resources, studies, activities, and announcements.

Although no boundaries are shared with Lake Chesdin, the City of Colonial Heights can still participate in protecting the water supply as a consumer. In 2014, the ARWA adopted and DEQ approved a Drought Management Plan. Since ARWA is a wholesaler of the water, the member jurisdictions are responsible with the implementation and enforcement of the Drought Management Plan. Colonial Heights has adopted a water conversation restriction ordinance.

### **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. The components of an RPA include:

- Tidal wetlands
- Tidal shores
- Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and continuous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow. The Resource Protection Area also includes a vegetated buffer area not less than 100 feet in width located adjacent to and landward of the components listed above and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow. In Colonial Heights, the Resource Protection Area can be found along the Appomattox River, Old Town Creek, and Swift Creek.

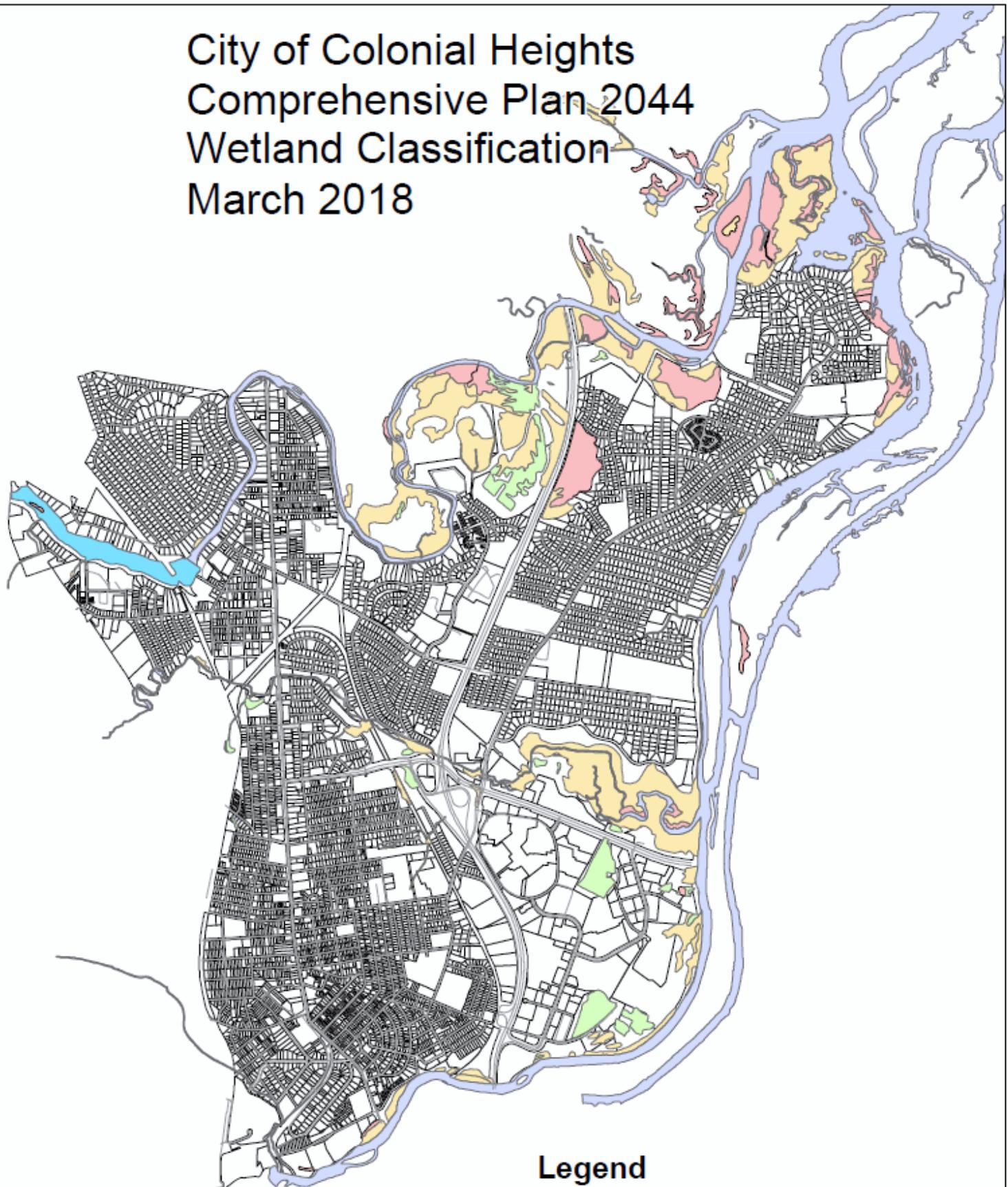
### **Resource Management Areas**

Resource Management Areas (RMAs) are provided contiguous to the entire boundary of the Resource Protection Area. The components of an RMA include: floodplains; highly erodible soils, including steep slopes; highly permeable soils; nontidal wetlands

not included in the Resource Protection Area; and such other lands that have a potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the function value of the RPA.

For Colonial Heights, the width of RMA ranges between 100 and 300 feet from the RPA depending on the types of contributing component in the area. For example, the RMA is narrower along the Appomattox River near Breezy Hill Drive due to the narrow nature of the steep slope along the riverbank and lack of contributing features at the top of the slope. On the other hand, the Resource Management Area is wider north of the Dunlop Farms neighborhood due to the number and size of wetlands adjacent to Swift Creek.

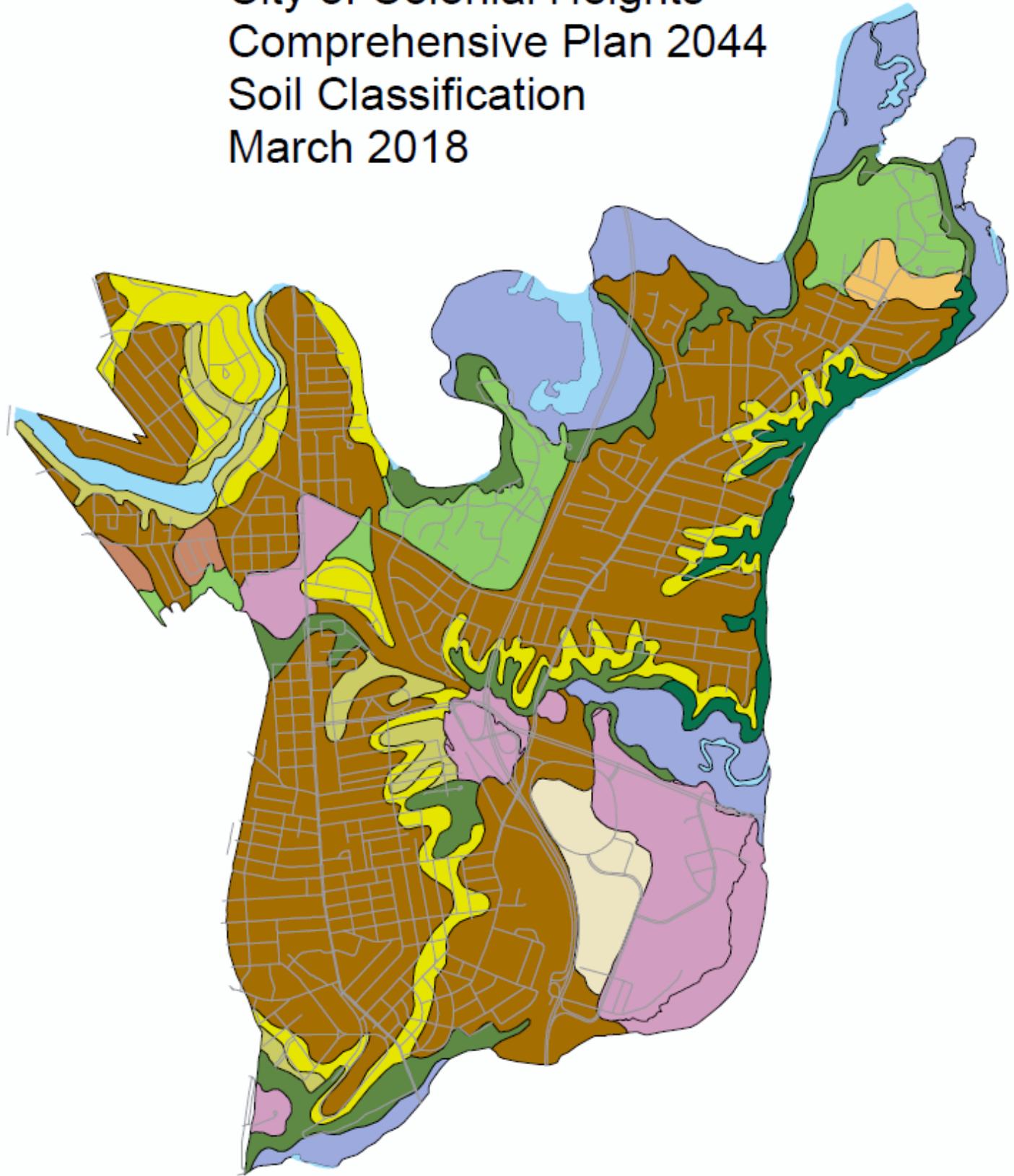
**City of Colonial Heights  
Comprehensive Plan 2044  
Wetland Classification  
March 2018**



**Legend**

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine

# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Soil Classification March 2018



## Legend

- Appling sandy loam, 15 - 25% slopes
- Appling sandy loam, 7 - 15% slopes
- Appling sandy loam, 2 - 7% slopes
- Appling-Urban land complex, 0 - 7% slopes
- Appling-Urban land complex, 7 - 15% slopes

- Emporia sandy loam, 0 - 2% slopes
- Helena loam, 2 - 7% slopes
- Mattaponi sandy loam, 2 - 6% slopes
- Mattaponi-Urban land complex, 0 - 6% slopes
- Roanoke loam, 0 - 2% slopes
- Udorthents, 0 - 25% slopes
- Water

## **Physical Constraints to Development**

The sensitive environmental features noted above are physical conditions which naturally limit development. An assessment of these physical conditions as they exist in Colonial Heights is necessary to avoid potential hazards as well as high corrective costs on the part of developers and property owners. Examples of environmental and economic problems that result from inappropriate development in areas with physical constraints include cracked building foundations, settling, wet basements, chimney separations, eroded roadways, and failing septic systems. Considering both the capacity of the land to accommodate development and the location, intensity, and type of development will result in fiscal and water quality benefits to the City.

The following criteria was used to determine the suitability of development on remaining significant tracts of vacant land in Colonial Heights. All information was derived from the City of Colonial Heights' GIS layers with the exception of soil suitability for development, which was obtained from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Each tract of land rated in the analysis has one or more of the constraints listed below. The Physical Constraints to Development depicts the results of the development suitability analysis. This map is a generalized tool; only site-specific surveys can sufficiently determine the suitability of a site for a proposed development.

### **Poor**

Inside 100-year Flood Zone  
Wetlands  
Soil Suitability for Development - Very Limited  
Resource Protection Areas (RPAs)

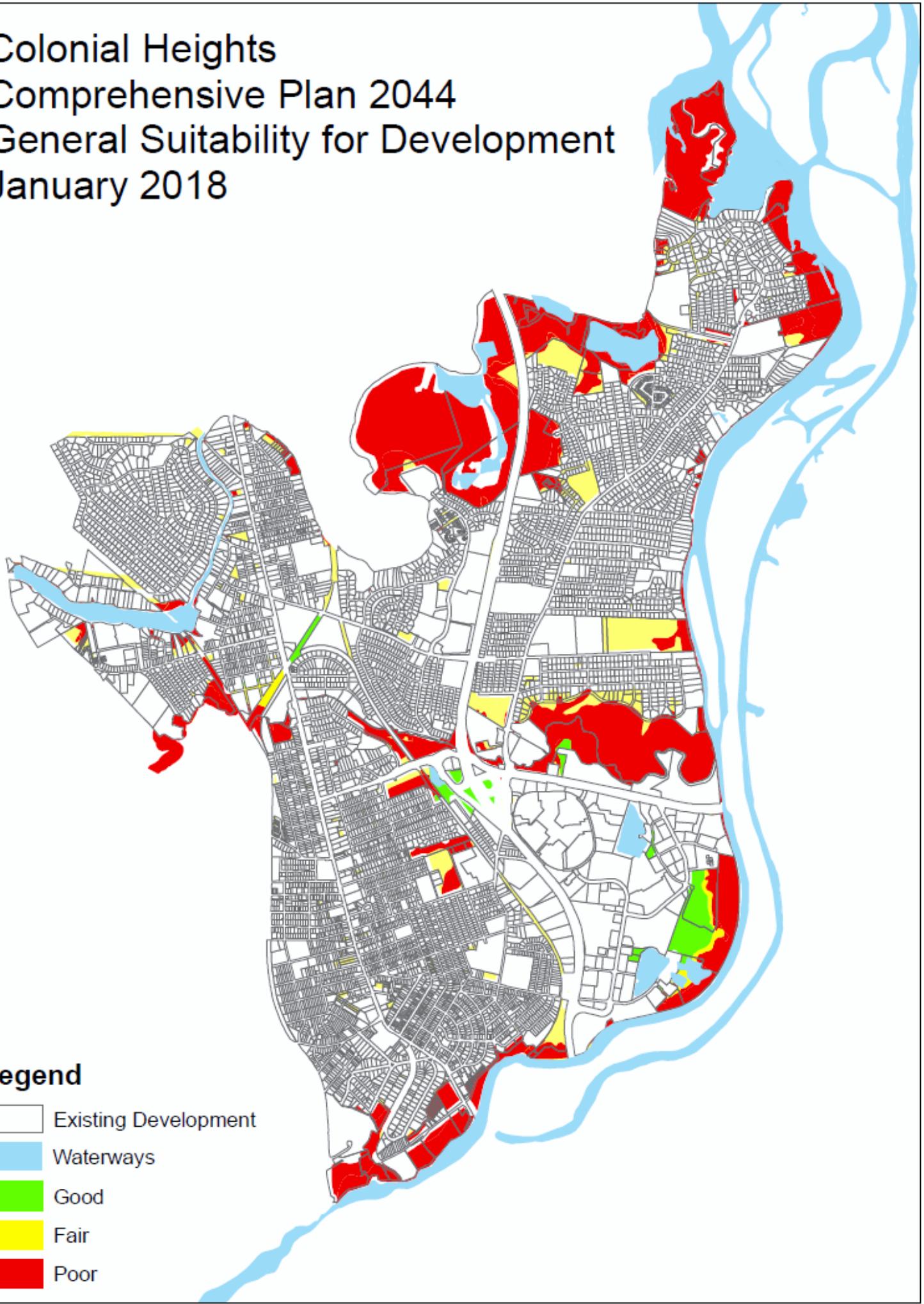
### **Fair**

Outside of 100-Year Flood Zone  
No Wetlands  
Soil Suitability for Development – Somewhat Limited  
Resource Management Areas (RMAs)

### **Good**

Outside of 100-Year Flood Zone  
No Wetlands  
Soil Suitability Development – No limitations  
Outside RPAs & RMAs

# Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 General Suitability for Development January 2018



## 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 laid 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. 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 method 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 site's 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 ensure 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.

## **Shoreline Erosion Study**

Per Virginia State Code, as a locality within the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area, the City must establish and maintain information on shoreline and streambank erosion and problems. Many Virginia localities rely on the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) Shoreline Change Data to fulfill this requirement. Unfortunately, the City is just outside of the study area covered by VIMS; the Prince George shoreline across the Appomattox River from Colonial Heights is the boundary of the study area. Therefore, the City of Colonial Heights conducted a shoreline erosion study to collect, document, and in the future, maintain information on conditions of shorelines to meet the Virginia regulations for the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area.

The Shoreline Erosion Study is divided into two parts: (1) aerial imagery identification, and (2) field observation.

In part one, City Planning staff identified potential areas of concern for shorelines erosion by studying historic and current aerial imagery. The methodology that was used in the identification process included: identifying recession of the shoreline, change in water path and sedimentation, topographic concerns, and construction activity. The goal of this identification process is to determine visitation spots for the field study.

Therefore, all areas that exhibited even just one sign of erosion were added to the list. Documentation of the potential areas of concern, including aerial imagery, was submitted to staff at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for review by a specialist. The specialist provided feedback on which potential areas of concern should be investigated in the field in order to verify if erosion is truly occurring.

Part Two, the field study, was conducted on December 14, 2017 with a joint team of City Planning staff and DEQ staff and specialist, and guided on boat by City Fire Department staff. The study was conducted on both water and on land. The water study was conducted on the Appomattox from just west of the Boulevard Bridge, to the confluence of the Appomattox River and Swift Creek at the northern tip of the City, around to just past White Bank Park but before Highway 95 on Swift Creek. On land, several points along the Swift Creek and Appomattox River were inspected.

During the field study, staff investigated twelve (12) locations previously identified in

Part One and also conducted a generalized visual survey of the shoreline on the journey between the identified areas of concern. The DEQ specialist identified four (4) areas of concern that are exhibiting signs of erosion.

#### North Bank of the Appomattox River (N37.2400589, W-77.3991762)

This is the only area of concern categorized as “active erosion.” The bank of the shoreline is steep at over 10 feet in height, with trees leaning into the water. The vegetated bank is considered failing with swift water flow directed straight into the meandering river edge. The pedestrian trail is within 5-10 feet of the edge.



#### Shelter at Roslyn Park Landing

Identified as an area of moderate concern. The bank shows a slight undercut or crest, which may be the early stages of active erosion. DEQ stated that riprap would remediate the issue.

#### West Bank of Appomattox River

The area along the west side of the Appomattox River adjacent to Breezy Hill Drive and Covington Road were considered of moderate concern. Steep slopes in this area contribute to the potential for erosion issues. The main warning sign of erosion in this area included the newer water dependent facilities, such as piers and boathouses, which did not appear to appropriately revegetate to the standards outlined in the DEQ Riparian Buffers Modification and Mitigation Guidance Manual. Additionally, at least one property appeared to have replaced cleared vegetation within the Resource Protection Area with proper revegetation.



### Clifton Drive on the Appomattox River

This area was identified as a moderate concern. A manmade bulkhead was observed at a property along Clifton Drive that was partially failing and the lot itself has almost no vegetative protection. If the bulkhead fails, the bank will be completely exposed in this area.

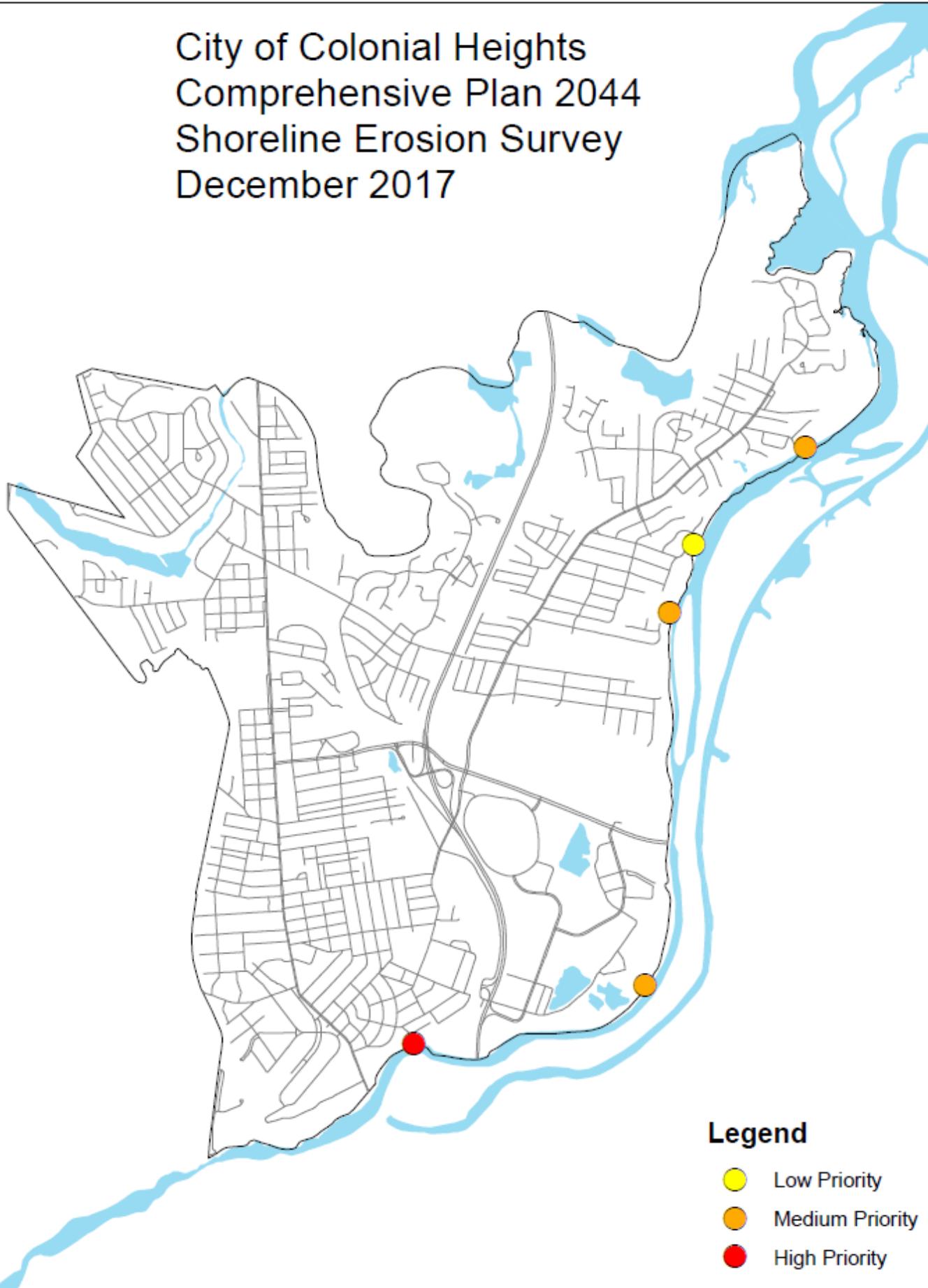


Staff also took note of shoreline quality around White Bank Park on Swift Creek. While the immediate bank was compacted, the slope and bluff itself was noted by DEQ staff as prime example of good strata of vegetation and proper plantings. There were some areas of erosion that settled near the bank that were documented.

Areas identified through aerial photography as potential areas of concern that, upon field investigation, were determined to exhibit no signs of erosion at this time include stormwater outfall pipes, water features with significant grade, natural/wetland areas, and some new piers/docks.



City of Colonial Heights  
Comprehensive Plan 2044  
Shoreline Erosion Survey  
December 2017



## **Public Water Supply**

### **Protection of Public Water Supply**

Since 1968, the Appomattox River Water Authority (ARWA) has supplied the City and surrounding region with drinking water from Lake Chesdin. Prior to the formation of the ARWA, the City's potable water supply was drawn from Swift Creek Lake (Dam Reservoir), located on the northwestern part of the City. The City is located downstream of Lake Chesdin and does not share any boundaries with the Lake. Protection of the City's public water supply is through participation and cooperation with ARWA source protection efforts. The ARWA is governed by the Board of Directors, which is comprised of representation from each member locality. Colonial Heights' City Manager serves on the Board of Directors. The Authority participates in the Partnership for Safe Water program which is sponsored by the American Water Works Association, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, United States Environmental Protection Agency, National Association of Water Companies, and the Water Research Foundation. The drinking water quality standards for participation in this program are stricter than the regular standards of either the EPA or the Virginia Department of Health. ARWA is one of only two water plants in Virginia that has received the Directors Award for compliance with these standards for fifteen or more consecutive years. Please visit ARWA's website at [www.arwawa.org](http://www.arwawa.org) to see up-to-date resources, studies, activities, and announcements. Although no boundaries are shared with Lake Chesdin, the City of Colonial Heights can still participate in protecting the water supply as a consumer. In 2014, the ARWA adopted and DEQ approved a Drought Management Plan. Since ARWA is a wholesaler of the water, the member jurisdictions are responsible with the implementation and enforcement of the Drought Management Plan. Colonial Heights has adopted a water conversation restriction ordinance.

## **Public Access to Waterfront**

### **Public Waterfront Access**

Public Access is one of seven "Priority Commitments" outlined in the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement, the first agreement to itemize goals to guide the Bay Act communities, including the City of Colonial Heights. Commitment to Public Access was reiterated by the Chesapeake 2000 Plan, and more recently, in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement signed in 2014. Increasing public access to local waterways for passive and active recreation fosters a shared sense of responsibility and increased stewardship that supports watershed restoration and goals.

Of the City's nine parks, five of the parks are located adjacent to water and provide for waterfront access. Appamatuck, Fort Clifton, and Roslyn Landing Parks are located on the Appomattox River, a state designated scenic river. Additionally, White Bank Park is located on Swift Creek and Lakeview Park is located on Swift Creek Lake. In addition to the parks, the Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail System (CHARTS) is a

continuous waterfront corridor that connects Appamatuck Park with Roslyn Landing Park, and upon completion will extend north of Roslyn Landing Park along the Appomattox River.

The table below lists the type of waterfront access amenities available at each park.

	Bank Fishing	Fishing Pier	Boat Ramp	Waterview Seating	Trail Access
Appamatuck Park	-			✓	✓
Fort Clifton Park		✓		✓	✓
Lakeview Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Roslyn Landing Park	✓		✓	✓	✓
White Bank Park	✓		✓	✓	
CHARTS	✓			✓	✓

### Future Water Access Sites

As a locality defined by its wealth of water features, the City looks forward to opportunities to increase public water access. Unfortunately, the identification of new locations for water access is constrained by existing development, steep slopes, and environmentally sensitive features.

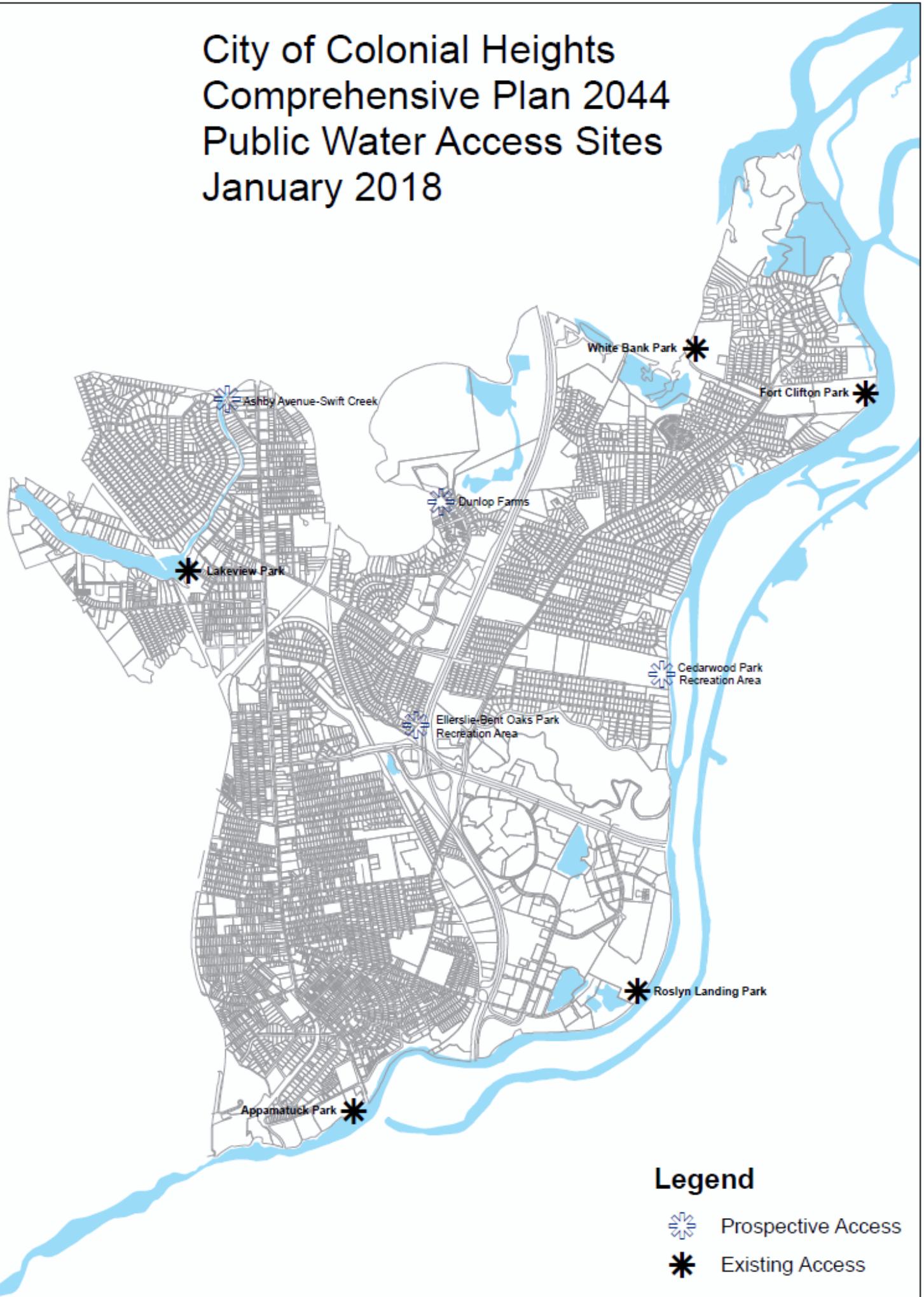
The following are prospective sites for future water access:

- Ashby Avenue – Swift Creek. Ashby Avenue is a small, residential street located off of the Boulevard near the northern city limits. The public right-of-way for Ashby Avenue extends to Swift Creek, but none of the adjacent parcels are publicly owned.
- Cedarwood Park Recreational Area—Located on the publicly owned land bounded by Covington Road, Cedarwood Avenue, Yacht Basin, and Colonial Heights Technical School. The land features approximately 700 linear feet of vegetated waterfront to the Appomattox River. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan provides a site plan for this area
- Dunlop Farm—With the Dunlop Farms Planned Unit Development, the general prospective area is found off of Dunlop Farm Blvd north of Creekridge Place and south of Dunlop Place. The land is privately owned but currently used as open space and contains a BMP. The land abuts Swift Creek.
- Ellerslie-Bent Oaks Park—Located at the terminus of Compton Road and Old Town Drive. Currently the land features one basketball court, but an opportunity exists for access to Old Town Creek. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan provides a site plan for this area.

### Fisheries

The City does not contain or border any commercial fisheries. However, the City does permit recreational fishing at all public water access points.

# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Public Water Access Sites January 2018



## **Land Use Impacts on Water Quality**

All development and land use activities involve land alteration, such as paving, digging, clearing, or grading. Alteration of the land to any degree, whether minor or the entire site, will impact the natural water retention characteristics of the land. Without proper development controls, the land alteration will cause degradation to water resources. Whether for residential, commercial, or public use, development changes the natural vegetation, slope, and water retention characteristics of the land. Three major types of pollutants can result from development: sediments, nutrients, and toxins.

### **Sediments**

Sediments are eroded soils and other solid materials that are transported into waterways or which are subsequently resuspended from river beds or the Bay bottom. The presence of sediments give water an unclear (turbid) appearance. Turbid water blocks sunlight which is critical to many forms of aquatic life and can clog the gills of small fish and invertebrates. Turbidity can also cause water temperature to rise to the point where it is no longer sufficient to support habitats, and species of plant and animal life.

### **Nutrients**

Nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous are essential for plant growth. However, in excess, they can degrade water quality and destroy aquatic habitats. Excessive phosphorous levels present in local packing plant discharges are an example of nutrient overloading. Too many nutrients spur the growth of algae which interfere with light penetration, contributing to low oxygen levels, and altering the food and resources available to other organisms. Disruptions to the food chain in turn impact fish, waterfowl, and other plant and animal life dependent on the Bay's ecological system.

### **Toxins**

Toxic substances, such as chemicals and heavy metals, that are released into the Bay and its tributaries can severely damage life forms, especially in their early stages of growth. Shellfish and finfish are especially susceptible to toxic contamination, which can accumulate in the higher orders of the food chain and can pose a potential health threat with their consumption. Common toxins in everyday use include fertilizers, pesticides, automotive batteries, and other industrial and agricultural products employing the use of chemicals.

## **Point and Non-Point Source Pollution**

Point sources of pollution are those which reach state waters through a single source such as a pipe outlet. The outfall structures of sewage treatment plants, industrial plants, or other facilities are examples of point sources of pollution. All legal point source discharges to surface water are regulated by the State Water Control Board through its Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) permit program. Each permittee is monitored to ensure discharges meet certain quantity and quality parameters. These parameters include flow, BOD (biochemical oxygen demand), suspended solids, settleable solids, chlorine residue, fecal coliform, pH, oil and grease, and temperature.

Point Source Pollution is not a significant problem in the City of Colonial Heights. Historically, regulatory programs have focused on point sources of pollution, such as effluent outfalls from factories and sewage treatment plants. These sources of pollution were easily recognized and regulated with modern engineering methods available to reduce discharge pollutants.

A point source pollutant that concern many localities is the existence of Underground Storage Tanks (UST). State housing law Section 36-99.6 provides for local code officials to permit and inspect UST installations, upgrades, repairs, and closures statewide in support of the program in accordance with Article 9 of the Virginia State Water Control Law. In order to prevent additional point source discharge from entering our waterways, the City records and requires permits for the closure and removal of USTs alongside a report from the contractor that documents any cleanup.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) protects communities and resource conservation using regulations, guidance and policies that ensure the safe management and cleanup of solid and hazardous waste. Per the reported information on EPA's EnviroFacts Mapper, the types of hazardous waste generators reported under RCRA in the City are limited to Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators, Small Quantity Generators, and Large Quantity Generators.

Non-point Sources of Pollution are those sources that cannot be traced to a single point of discharge. Studies show that stormwater runoff from urban and agricultural areas contain a substantial amount of pollutants that exceeds the amounts from regulated point sources. Common non-point pollutants include fertilizers (nitrogen/phosphorous), pesticides, animal wastes, heavy metals, motor oil, sediment, and other organic material. Stormwater runoff is a principle transporter of NPS pollution and probably the only significant source of water pollution in the City of Colonial Heights. Predominant impacts on water quality originate from water running off paved surfaces.

Various activities associated with development have a direct impact on water quality. The principle contributing actions are summarized below:

#### Clearing Land

Improper conversion of land to a more intensive use can cause changes in soil stability and slopes, vegetative cover, and site hydrology. Soil erosion is often experienced on cleared land. Inappropriate soil compaction compounds this problem by leaving the soil too dense for adequate water and oxygen supplies to support the growth of soil-stabilizing plants. Re-contouring or filling land also contributes to poor water quality. Altering wetlands or marshes by filling or restructuring adversely affects vital breeding

grounds and habitats. Since tidal wetlands and marshes also serve as buffers to wave action against the shoreline, the practice of creating a "neat edge" between land and water with bulkheads and retention walls effectively replaces the natural wetlands transition zone and tends to magnify problems associated with shoreline erosion.

Non-contiguous wetlands play an important role when located below areas of upland disturbance by slowing stormwater and permitting sediments and runoff to filter and drain before reaching main water courses. However, wetlands are limited in their capacity to absorb excessive amounts of sedimentation and nutrients from poor land clearing practices, and can become ineffective in their natural cleansing abilities.

The process of erosion and the inadequate filtration of sediments and nutrients is directly related to the removal of vegetation. This is especially true for forested cover, which is of extreme importance in handling the movement of nutrients from the landscape into streams. Furthermore, as natural vegetation is replaced, new vegetation such as lawns, transplanted trees, and shrubs, are treated with fertilizers and pesticides.

#### Construction of Impervious Surfaces

An increase in the number of impervious surfaces is a natural consequence of land development. Surfaces such as roofs, sidewalks, roads, and parking lots collect water and speed its movement instead of allowing the water to filter through vegetated soil. Roads and parking areas, in particular, accumulate nutrients and toxic materials such as lead, copper, zinc, asbestos, de-icing chemicals, oil and grease from motor vehicles, and decaying vegetation and animal wastes.

#### Discharges of Toxic Materials

In addition to automotive-related pollution, development provides many other opportunities for toxic contamination. Toxic materials can originate from pesticide use, detergents, and accidental chemical spills, as well as paints, solvents and fuel which are often disposed of in storm sewers. Construction and maintenance activities associated with lower density land uses are a source of pesticides because of the use of weed and insect controls. Such substances can impact local ground and surface water, ultimately limiting local water supply and recreational water uses.

#### Inadequate Wastewater Treatment

Inadequate treatment of sewage represents a major problem in water quality. On-site systems (septic tanks) can release nutrients into groundwater if improperly installed or maintained. Failing septic systems, which may go unnoticed for extended periods of time, can constitute a serious health problem. While preferable to on-site treatment, off-site sewage treatment facilities may not remove all nutrients prior to discharge. Many

treatment plants require additional techniques to remove certain types of pollutants.

### **Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)**

When state waters are assessed to be impaired for one or more reasons, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or TMDL alternatives are developed by Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to determine the total amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can handle without resulting in the impaired status of that waterbody. The City of Colonial Heights is entirely within the Appomattox River Watershed. The entire Appomattox River Watershed is identified by DEQ to be impaired for the category of bacteria, specifically due to E. Coli from agriculture. In the City, DEQ identified segments of waters that are impaired; this information is provided below in a table.

#### List of Impaired Waters in City of Colonial Heights, Virginia – Updated March 2018

Water Name	Location Description	Impairment	Cycle First Listed	TMDL Schedule
Appomattox River	The Appomattox River from the Rohoic Creek to the fall line at the Route 1/301 bridge.	PCB in Fish Tissue	2006	2018
Appomattox River	The estuarine portion of the Appomattox River from the start of PWS at river mile 6.49 to the confluence of Walthall Channel APPTF.	Aquatic Plants (Macrophytes)	2006	2010
		Escherichia coli	2008	2010
		PCB in Fish Tissue	2002	2024
Lower Appomattox River / Ashton Creek	The estuarine Appomattox River from the fall line to river mile 6.49. APPTF.	Aquatic Plants (Macrophytes)	2006	2010
		Escherichia coli	2016	2028
		PCB in Fish Tissue	2002	2014
Lakeview Reservoir	Backwater to dam	Escherichia coli	2016	2028
Old Town Creek	Oldtown Creek from the confluence with Big Branch to the fall line.	Benthic-Macroinvertebrate Bioassessments	2010	2022

		Fecal Coliform	2006	2018
Swift Creek Estuary	Tidal Swift Creek from the confluence with Timsbury Creek to the mouth at the Appomattox River APPTF.	Aquatic Plants (Macrophytes)	2006	2010
		Escherichia coli	2008	2010

## **Mitigation to Land Use Impacts**

The City of Colonial Heights employs a number of different approaches to eliminate conflicts between water quality protection and land uses, both existing and proposed. General guidance is provided by the City's environmental goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as by the specific land use designations shown on the Future Land Use Plan Map found in Chapter 3 of this Comprehensive Plan. Specific performance criteria and implementation mechanisms for protection of water quality have been adopted in the City's Chesapeake Bay Overlay District, Floodplain Overlay District, Site Plan process, and Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances. The Chesapeake Bay Overlay District is detailed below.

### **Chesapeake Bay Overlay District**

The City adopted the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance on September 4, 1990. As a part of the Zoning Ordinance, the City enacted a Chesapeake Bay Overlay District is enacted to implement the requirements of § 10.1-2100 et seq. of the Code of Virginia (the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act). The intent of City Council and the purpose of the Overlay District are to:

- (1) Protect existing high-quality state waters;
- (2) Restore all other state waters to a condition or quality that will permit all reasonable public uses and will support the propagation and growth of all aquatic life, including game fish, which might reasonably be expected to inhabit them;
- (3) Safeguard the clean waters of the Commonwealth from pollution;
- (4) Prevent any increase in pollution;
- (5) Reduce existing pollution; and
- (6) Promote water resource conservation in order to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the present and future citizens of the City of Colonial Heights.

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA) is comprised of the Resource Protection Area and Resource Management Area.

**Resource Protection Area.** Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) consist of lands adjacent to water bodies with perennial flow that have an intrinsic water quality value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform or are sensitive to impacts which may cause significant degradation to the quality of state waters. In their natural condition, these lands provide for the removal, reduction or assimilation of sediments, nutrients and potentially harmful or toxic substances in runoff entering the bay and its tributaries, and minimize the adverse effects of human activities on state waters and aquatic resources. The Resource Protection area is a vegetated buffer area not less than 100 feet in width located adjacent to and landward of the components listed below and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow:

- Tidal wetlands.
- Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and continuous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow.
- Tidal shores
- Such other lands considered by the City to meet the provisions of the intent of Resource Protection Areas and to be necessary to protect the quality of state waters, including highly erodible soils and slopes in excess of 25%.

**Resource Management Area.** Resource Management Areas (RMAs) include land types that, if improperly used or developed, have a potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the functional value of the Resource Protection Area. A Resource Management Area is provided contiguous to the entire boundary of the Resource Protection Area. The RMA is composed of concentrations of the following land categories: floodplains; highly erodible soils, including steep slopes; highly permeable soils; nontidal wetlands not included in the Resource Protection Area; and such other lands that have a potential for causing significant water quality degradation or for diminishing the function value of the RPA.

As a required condition of the Chesapeake Bay Overlay District, all development and redevelopment exceeding 2,500 square feet of land disturbance shall be subject to a site plan process. Development and redevelopment in the Resource Protection Area may be allowed only if it follows the conditions outlined in the City Code. The site-specific boundaries of the resource protection area and the resource management area shall be determined by the applicant through the performance of an environmental site assessment submitted as part of the site plan process, or water quality impact assessment, subject to approval by the Director of Planning and Community Development. The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Map included in this chapter shall be used as a guide to the general location of resource protection areas. A landscape plan shall be submitted in conjunction with site plan approval or as part of subdivision plat approval.

Performance standards establish the means to minimize erosion and sedimentation potential, reduce land application of nutrients and toxins and maximize rainwater infiltration. Natural ground cover, especially woody vegetation, is most effective in holding soil in place and preventing site erosion. Indigenous vegetation, with its adaptability to local conditions without the use of harmful fertilizers or pesticides, filters stormwater runoff. Minimizing impervious cover enhances rainwater infiltration and effectively reduces stormwater runoff potential.

For any development or redevelopment, stormwater runoff shall be controlled by the use of best management practices consistent with the water quality protection provisions of the Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations (4 VAC 3-20-10 et seq.).

A water quality impact assessment shall be required for any proposed land disturbance, development or redevelopment within RPAs and for any development within RMAs when required by the Director of Planning and Community Development because of the unique characteristics of the site or intensity of development. There shall be two levels of water quality impact assessments: a minor assessment and a major assessment.

A minor water quality impact assessment pertains only to land disturbance, development or redevelopment within CBPAs which causes no more than 5,000 square feet of land disturbance and/or requires any encroachment of the landward 50 feet of the one-hundred-foot buffer area. A minor assessment must demonstrate through acceptable calculations that the undisturbed buffer area, enhanced vegetative plantings, and necessary best management practices will result in removal of no less than 75% of sediments and 40% of nutrients from post-development stormwater runoff and will retard runoff, prevent erosion, and filter nonpoint source pollution the equivalent of the full undisturbed one-hundred-foot buffer area.

A major water quality impact assessment shall be required for any land disturbance, development or redevelopment which exceeds 5,000 square feet of land disturbance within CBPAs and requires encroachment into the landward 50 feet of the one-hundred-foot buffer area; disturbs any portion of any other component of an RPA or disturbs any portion of the buffer area within 50 feet of any other component of an RPA; or is located in an RMA and is deemed necessary by the Director of Planning and Community Development.

To minimize the adverse effects of human activities on the other components of resource protection areas, state waters, and aquatic life, the one-hundred-foot buffer area of vegetation that is effective in retarding runoff, preventing erosion, and filtering nonpoint source pollution from runoff shall be retained if present and established where

it does not exist. When permitted and approved land disturbance in the RPA occurs, the Virginia Department of Environmental *Riparian Buffers Modification & Mitigation Guidance Manual* is used for guidance on buffer establishment, replacement, and restoration. The manual provides a list of recommended plants for riparian buffers, a list of invasive species to avoid, and planting details.

## **Waste Management**

The City of Colonial Heights contracts with Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA), for curbside recycling and through CVWMA, participates in a regional solid waste management plan.

The Central Virginia Solid Waste Management Plan (CVSWMP) was prepared for the CVWMA and 13 local governments within the Authority's service area in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Regulations for Solid Waste Management Planning (9 VAC 20-130-10 et seq., Amendment 1).

In meeting this objective, the Central Virginia Solid Waste Management Plan is intended to achieve the following purposes for the region:

- Define specific solid waste management objectives for the CVWMA service area that meet identified management needs and public policy objectives, including State mandated recycling goals;
- Provide an integrated management strategy with supporting financial and implementation strategies to meet solid waste management objectives;
- Provide agreement on specific roles and responsibilities for the CVWMA and its member governments in the implementation of waste programs and services for meeting the region's waste management needs; and,
- Establish specific milestones, responsibilities, and a schedule for meeting solid waste management objectives.

The promulgation of mandated solid waste management planning and recycling goals for local governments by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1990 provided an opportunity for local member governments to meet these mandates through a regional planning approach under the auspices of the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA), in cooperation with the two respective planning district commissions. Each local governing body passed a resolution in 1990 requesting that the Crater and Richmond Regional PDCs prepare a regional solid waste management plan for the CVWMA and its 13-member localities (of which Colonial Heights is a member) to meet the mandated requirements of VR 672-50-01.

Solid waste management and recycling programs within the Region have developed and operated under the auspices of the Solid Waste Management Plan prepared in 1991.

The CVWMA as the agency charged with implementing the components of the plan has developed recycling and waste management programs in concert with and at the request of its member jurisdictions. A menu of services is available to meet the needs of a diverse

geographical region. The original focus of the CVWMA was toward meeting the recycling mandates established by Virginia law. House Bill 1488 adopted by the 1988 Virginia General Assembly required that 25 percent of the region's solid waste be diverted through recycling and reuse programs by 1995. The uncertainty of this requirement was the driving force that resulted in a regional approach to this mandate and the formation of the CVWMA.

The CVWMA has developed customized recycling and solid waste programs that provide either exclusive or complementary support to local initiatives throughout the CVWMA service area. All CVWMA programs are provided through a competitive procurement process with private contractors. Procurements are in compliance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act. Programs are developed that benefit rural and urban communities and are designed to fill the need and, in some cases, provide exclusive waste management services for member jurisdictions.

**The following Environment Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are 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)
- Attract an electric vehicle charging station to the City in order to encourage electric vehicle use.
- 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 Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. (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)
- Encourage developers 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)
- The City should partner with the Virginia Cooperative Extension to provide training for residents to learn sustainable gardening and landscaping techniques that not only help the environment, but beautify neighborhoods. (SD-7)

- The City should be supportive of alternative fuels in order to effectively integrate transportation energy, and air quality policies. (SD-7)

# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Natural Resources January 2018



## **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. The MPO is comprised of portions of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie and Prince George Counties, as well as the cities of Petersburg, Hopewell and Colonial Heights. The 2017 American Community Survey estimated the total population of the Richmond metropolitan area was 1,301,540 and the population for the localities within the MPO was estimated to be 189,701. 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 50,000 are required to have an MPO structure in place to administer transportation planning programs, according to federal regulations created from the 1973 Highway Act.

The MPO's adopted plan for this area is the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. The plan represents the vision for transportation improvements in the regional transportation system. The intent of the 2040 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 5-year cycle. The plan was adopted in August 2017 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. The Virginia Department of Transportation Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) is a document that outlines planned spending for transportation projects proposed for construction development or study for the next six years. The SYIP is updated annually and is the means by which the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) meets its statutory obligation under the Code of Virginia to allocate funds to interstate, primary, secondary and urban highway systems, public transit, ports and airports and other programs for the immediate fiscal year.

## **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 55 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 was reconfigured as a roundabout in 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 accessible via Interstate 95 in 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 is primarily used for 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**

The Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) provides fixed-route, public transportation service within the Cities of Petersburg and Hopewell, and portions of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, and Prince George Counties. PAT also provides a direct route from Petersburg to the Southpark Mall area in Colonial Heights.

Greyhound Bus Lines offer north-south bus service to major cities along Interstate 95. These routes provide daily stops in cities such as Hampton, Atlanta, Philadelphia and West Palm Beach, using the 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 including Uber, Lyft, and Pink Transportation Taxi.

### **Passenger Rail Service**

Located a few miles from the City limits, the Ettrick Train Station is located in Chesterfield County along the CSX tracks. The station serves the Tri-Cities portion of the Richmond Metropolitan 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 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 oceangoing ships.

### **Airports**

Air service is available to Colonial Heights residents in either Dinwiddie, Chesterfield or 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 and freeways, urban principal arterials, urban minor arterials, urban collectors and urban locals. Map 7 identifies the different hierarchy of streets in the City and their descriptions are as follows:

**1. 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

**2. Urban principal arterial**

- Serves the major centers of activity of a metropolitan area
- Highest traffic volume corridors
- Roads serving long trips
- Carries a high proportion of the total urban area travel on a minimum of mileage
- Carries a significant amount of intra-area travel

**3. Urban minor arterial**

- Interconnects with and augments 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, contains facilities that place more emphasis on land access, and offers a lower level of traffic mobility

**4. Urban collector**

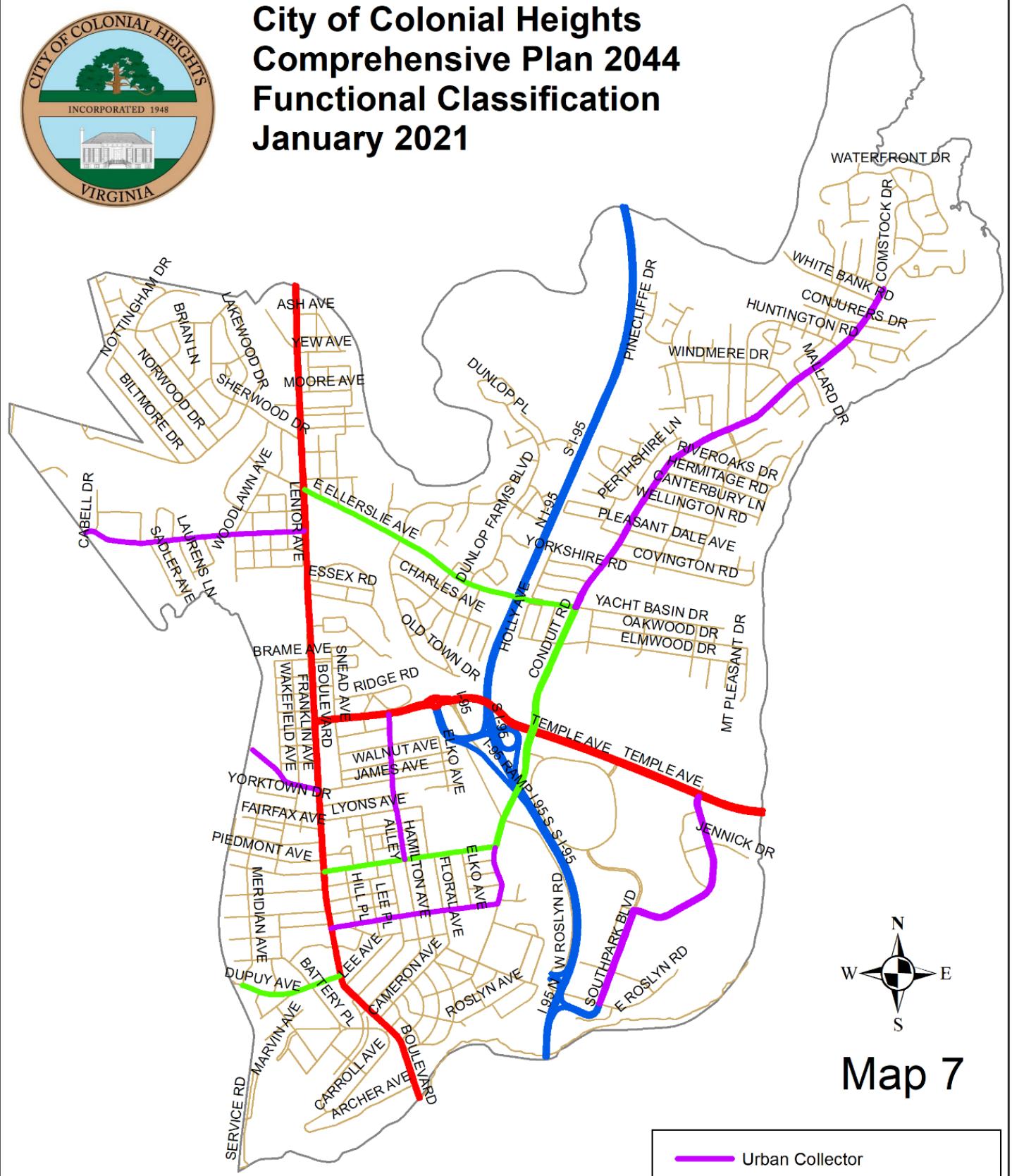
- Provides land access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial areas
- Distributes trips from the arterials through these areas to their ultimate destination
- Collects traffic from local streets and channels to the arterial system

**5. 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



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Functional Classification January 2021



Map 7

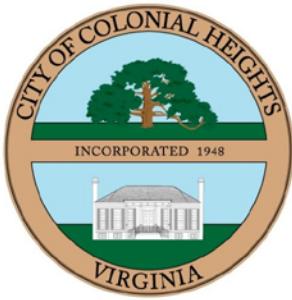
- Urban Collector
- Urban Minor Arterial
- Urban Other Principal Arterial
- Urban Interstate

## Transportation Plan

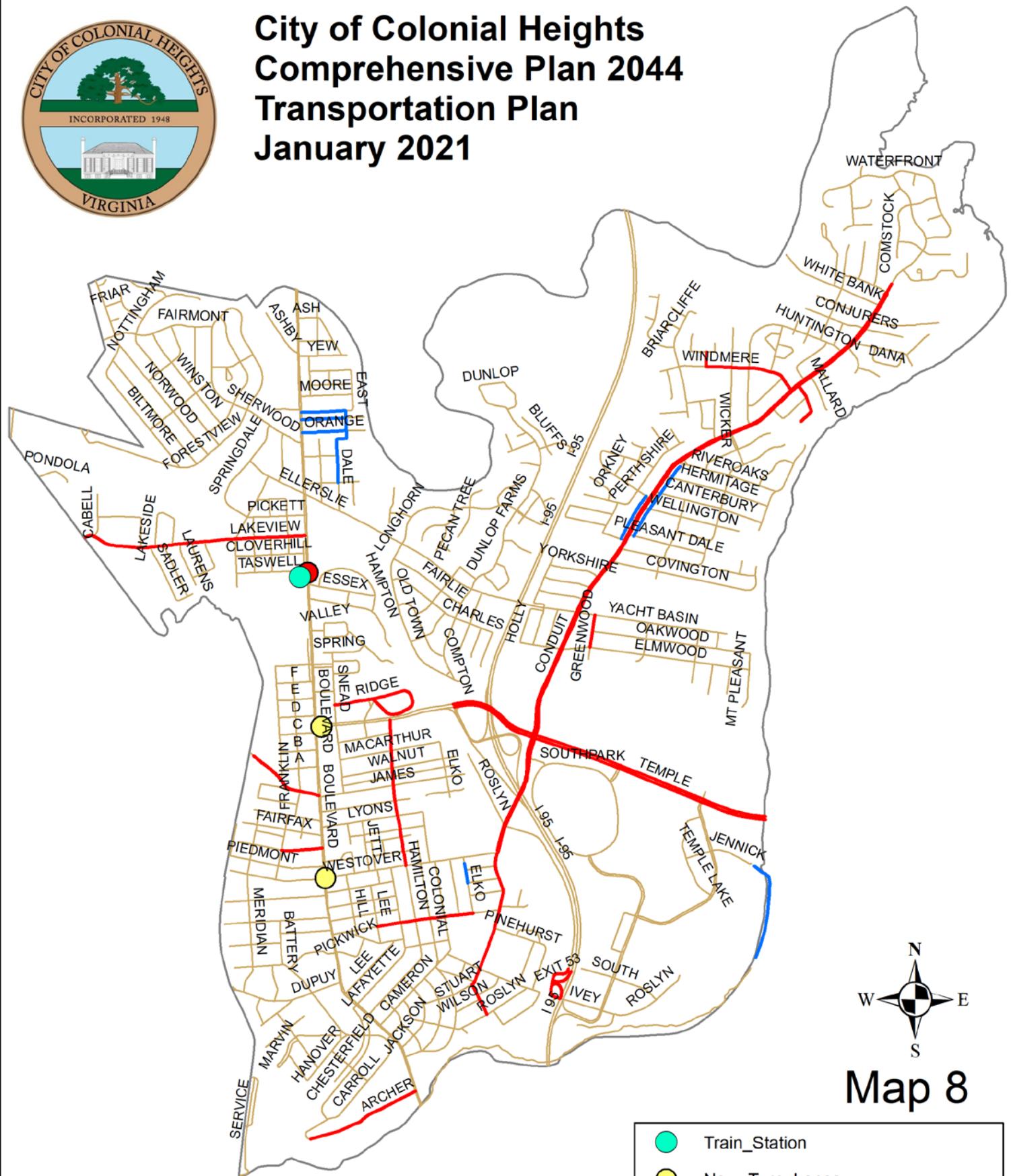
The following represent those projects that have been identified by the Metropolitan Area Organization *2040 Long Range Transportation Plan*, Virginia Department of Transportation Six Year Improvement Plan, as well as those identified locally in the City's Capital Improvement Program. These projects are shown on the Transportation Plan (Map 8).

Description	Project Type	Estimated Cost
Rt. 1/301 At Rt. 144 Temple Avenue	Intersection Improvement	\$ 6,525,000
Rt. 1/301 At Branders Bridge Rd. (UPC 99194)	Improvement	\$ 245,000
I-95 Int. @ Southpark	Improvement	\$ 32,480,000
Rt. 1/301 from James Ave. to City Limits	Reconstruction	\$ 54,098,625
Conduit Rd from Westover Ave to Roslyn Ave	Reconstruction	\$ 1,578,327
Conduit Rd from Temple Ave to Duke of Gloucester	Repair Pavement	\$ 1,045,798
Conduit Rd from Huntington Rd to Duke of Gloucester	Repair Pavement	\$ 922,298
Conduit Rd from Heron Run Dr to Huntington Rd	Repair Pavement	\$ 922,298
Conduit Rd from Temple Ave to Westover Ave	Reconstruction	\$ 3,689,619
Rt. 1 & Rt. 144 Temple Avenue Southbound Turn Lane	Turn Lane	\$ 1,214,000
Appomattox River Greenway Trail Phase 5	Enhancement	\$ 645,500
Charlotte Avenue	Improvements	\$ 613,000
Archer Avenue	Improvements	\$ 1,939,000
Lynchburg Avenue	Improvements	\$ 850,000
Lakeview Avenue Phase 2	Improvements	\$ 14,544,264
Conduit Sidewalks	New Construction	\$ 722,000
Rt. 1 & Westover Avenue (UPC 100501)	Intersection Improvement	\$ 800,000
Hamilton Avenue Modernization	Reconstruction	\$ 4,104,000
Temple Avenue	Right Turn Lane	\$ 475,000
Deerwood, Windmere, & Welesley	Repair Pavement	\$ 457,044
Temple Ave (Two New Travel Lanes)	New Construction	\$ 13,475,700

Boulevard CSX Bridge	Reconstruction	\$ 28,600,000
Greenwood Avenue	Reconstruction	\$ 300,000
Holly Ave Reconstruction	Reconstruction	\$ 742,000
Ridge Rd	Reconstruction	\$ 2,377,505
Branders Bridge Modernization	Reconstruction	\$ 1,720,400



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Transportation Plan January 2021



## Map 8

- Train\_Station
- New\_Turn\_Lanes
- CSX\_Bridge\_Replacement
- Roadway\_Improvements
- Sidewalks\_and\_Recreational\_Trails

## 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 considers pedestrians, bicyclists, as well as all types of motor vehicles. It also implies that street design is more than asphalt and curbs. *Complete Street* 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 consider **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 make the City's street network not only 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 consider 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, bicycles 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.

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

- Make it safer for children to walk or bike to school
- 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 was not 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 for this program are available to elementary and middle schools. Funding is available for both infrastructure improvements and education programs. Colonial Heights High School is receiving an upgrade for sidewalks using Virginia Transportation Alternative Project (TAP) funds.

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:

- Colonial Heights Middle School
- Lakeview Elementary
- North Elementary
- Tussing Elementary

### Planned Safe Routes to School Projects

Description	Project Type	Estimated Cost
Safe Routes to School – Colonial Heights Middle School (UPC 102836)	Add Sidewalks	\$179,000
Safe Routes to School – North Elementary School (UPC 105233)	New Sidewalks	\$250,000

### 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 bikeway plan that 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 and connect to other regional trails such as the proposed Fall Line Trail.

### **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. After realizing how well received phases one and two of the CHARTS Trail were, the CHARTS Committee began to think of the importance of continuing the trail concept throughout the City. At the time of the writing of this document, four of the five phases have been completed. Although largely conceptual, the committee, along with City staff, identified possible trail linkages throughout the City and to regional trail systems. 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.

### Objectives

- Create City-wide system of bike and pedestrian pathways that connect major facilities (schools, parks, recreational facilities, and commercial shopping areas).
- Maximize opportunities for pedestrian/bicycling activities along Colonial Heights' adjacent water bodies.
- Utilize abandoned railroad 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 the maximum extent possible.

### Strategies

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

### Core Elements

- Incorporate the two North-South railroad rights-of-way located on the western edge and central portions of the City as core North-South trails.
- Secure and acquire land that is currently not publicly-owned, as needed. This is necessary to create North-South connections as shown on The Trail Plan.

### Potential/Opportunity Trails and Linkages

- Potential and opportunity trails and linkages will focus on the City's access to 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

- Ensure that there is a direct sidewalk linkage system along the entire Boulevard.
- Select one side of the Boulevard and ensure 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.
- Ensure that sidewalks are installed, either as part of private redevelopment, remodeling or direct City policy.
- Create linkages to all commercial areas, including the Southpark Mall and Opportunity Areas identified in this plan.

#### Sidewalks

- Strategically ensure 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 ensure that it is adequately maintained after its completion. This trail can also be used as the connecting element to the Fall Line Trail and the Appomattox River Trail, as developed by the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR).

#### 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 Railroad 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 2044 Multi-Purpose Trail Plan January 2021



## Map 9

- Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail
- Potential Trails & Linkages
- Commercial Links
- Proposed Appomattox River Trail
- Proposed Fall Line Trail
- Existing Sidewalks
- Grocery Store
- Opportunity Areas
- Community Center
- Govt. Service Facility
- Parks & Recreation Facilities
- Schools

**The following Transportation Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are 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 the Safe Routes to School program not only to 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)
- Support regional trail plans, specifically the Fall Line Trail Plan and the Appomattox River Trail Master Plan, as developed by the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) and (CC-5, QL-1, QL-2).
- The City should develop a program in which residents can pay to have the sidewalk repaired in the right-of-way adjacent to their property. (CC-3, QL-1)

## **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 and identifies issues and challenges facing each department as it strives 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 that will continue to develop along parallel, traditional print, and rapidly developing digital resources. The library's collection of eBooks and audiobooks will continue to stream from its online Hoopla collection, while being supplemented with the circulation of Amazon Kindle Readers for the remote download of requested and current titles, along with a DVD collection. The library has three meeting rooms, and year-round programming for children and adults. This includes a traditional year-round story time for children and an annual summer reading program.

The Library also has a Digital Resources Center that has an emphasis on providing access to computers and the internet for residents who cannot afford the costs associated with this basic need. The Library's goal through the Digital Resource Center is to close the City's digital divide by providing the following services:

- Computer access with a Colonial Heights library card
- Wireless network for access to the internet
- Access to Microsoft Office
- No time limitations on computer usage
- Nominal printing costs Digital bookmobile newsletter

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:

- Children's Services:
  - Child wellness exams
  - Child Safety Seat Program for low-income expecting parents
  - Newborn Metabolic Screening
  - Childhood Lead Screening
  - Childhood immunizations
- Restaurant inspections and food safety training
- Rabies prevention
- Communicable disease testing
  - Tuberculosis
  - HIV Testing and counseling
  - Sexually Transmitted Disease services
- Influenza 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 has been 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

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, the Sentinel Program, purchasing of equipment, property, and evidence, and buildings and grounds. The bureau is also responsible for inspections, research and development, grants, records, 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. They routinely work with local, state and federal agencies to investigate crimes occurring in Colonial Heights and the region.

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

## **Fire and Emergency Medical Services (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 Office**

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. In 2017, the City of Colonial Heights Sheriff's Office achieved full accreditation status through the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) for its commitment to excellence in the Law Enforcement Community and successful completion of the certification process via the Virginia Law Enforcement Accreditation Program. This accreditation includes meeting goals within organization management and administration, personnel administration, law enforcement operations, training, and court-related services.

The Sheriff's Office participates in several community programs and conducts numerous presentations to the public throughout the year. Examples of these programs include Project Life Saver, Crime Prevention Seminars, Scam & Fraud seminars, Child Safety Seat Inspections, and Identity Theft Education. In addition to these programs, the Sheriff's Office gives back to the community by partnering with local churches and the American Legion Post 284 annually, to donate Thanksgiving Dinner Gift Baskets to deserving families within the City of Colonial Heights.

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, 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 responsiveness to the community.

The department is organizationally structured into seven operational divisions:

- Buildings & Grounds
- Horticulture
- Parks
- Senior Community Center
- Recreation
- Violet Bank Museum
- Office on Youth & Human Services

The Parks Division is responsible for managing more than 75 acres of park land within the City's nine parks. It is also responsible for upkeep of all recreational facilities, including ball fields (including Shepherd Stadium), tennis courts, the Soccer Complex, the Appomattox River Trail, the City's buildings and grounds and horticulture operations. The management of the Appomattox River Trail includes the future installation of fitness points throughout the trail.

#### Parks

- White Bank Park
- Floral Avenue Park
- Edinborough Park
- Flora Hill Park
- Appamatuck Park
- Fort Clifton Park
- Lakeview Park
- Roslyn Landing Park
- Wakefield Park

#### Facilities and Trails

- Shepherd Stadium
- Community & Senior Center
- Scout Lodge
- Violet Bank Museum
- Soccer Complex
- Skate Park
- Baseball/Softball Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Outdoor Basketball Courts
- Pickle Ball Courts
- Appomattox River Trail

The Parks and Recreation Department is located at Shepherd Stadium on Meridian Avenue. The City Parks and Facilities are located throughout the city and are depicted on the Facilities Map (Map 10).

#### Violet Bank Museum

The City has a museum that dates back to 1815. For a brief period of time, Violet Bank served as General Robert E. Lee's Headquarters from June to November of 1864 and is considered one of the first houses in the Riverview Subdivision that was created in 1919. In 1948, it was sold to American Legion Post 284 and 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. In 1974, Violet Bank was added to the National Register of Historic

Places for its original woodwork, doors, fireplaces and floors. The museum features a Federal design architecture and American Interior Decorative Arts for its interior.

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. The museum houses artifacts from the Civil War that includes guns, furniture, glass and ceramics, textiles, accoutrements, books and swords. Violet Bank is currently undergoing a renovation with funding from the City and the Cameron Foundation ([www.colonialheightsva.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/44](http://www.colonialheightsva.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/44)).



Violet Bank Museum ([www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violet\\_Bank\\_Museum](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violet_Bank_Museum))

#### Maddie's Magnificent Playpark

In December 2019, the City opened an all-inclusive, barrier-free playground for all children at White Bank Park. This flagship playground for the Tri-Cities area was built through a partnership with the City, the Maddie Mann Foundation, United Way, and Cunningham Recreation. The playground was built using the 7 Principles of Inclusive Design and features universally accessible pathways and surfacing, swings and bouncers with back support, elevated sand tables, activity tables and other sensory-rich activities ([www.colonialheightsva.gov/960/Maddies-Magnificent-Playpark](http://www.colonialheightsva.gov/960/Maddies-Magnificent-Playpark)).

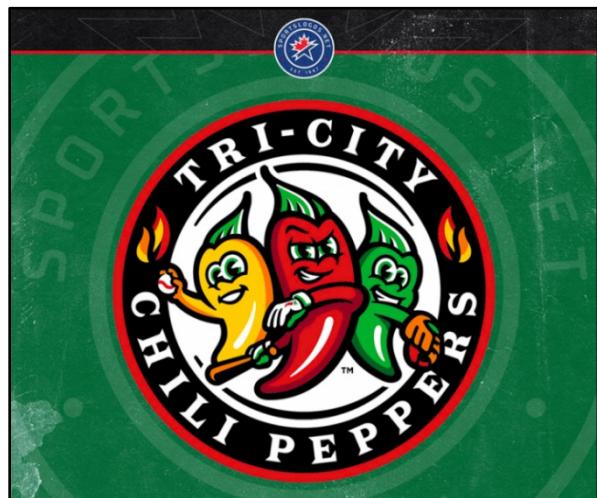


Maddie's Magnificent Playpark at White Bank Park

(Photo: [www.playgroundprofessionals.com/playground/inclusion/maddies-magnificent-play-park](http://www.playgroundprofessionals.com/playground/inclusion/maddies-magnificent-play-park))

### Tri-City Chili Peppers Coastal Plains Baseball League-Collegiate

In 2019, the City finalized a partnership with the Coastal Plains League to host a collegiate baseball team at Shepherd Stadium. Tri-City Peppers was selected as the team name following a community-wide naming event. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the inaugural season for the team has been delayed.

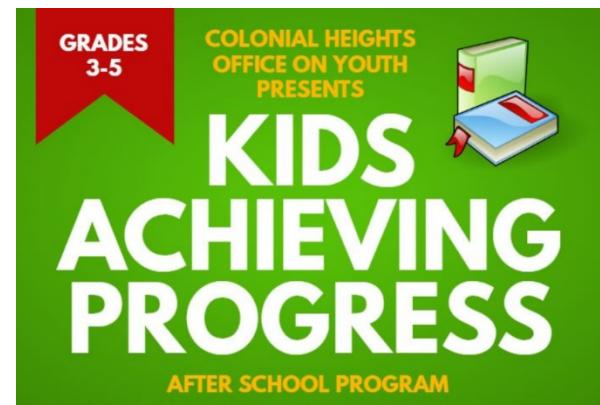


### Office on Youth & Human Services

The City of Colonial Heights Office on Youth and Human Services serves the general citizenry by working to develop and improve the community assets that assist families in raising children who are responsible, law-abiding and self-reliant. This mission is achieved through partnerships with the schools, civic groups, social service providers, and a City-Council appointed Youth Services Commission.

- **Information & Referral** - The Office on Youth & Human Services provides information on youth related issues and services on the City's website within the Resource Directory.

- Planning & Program Development - The Office on Youth & Human Services works with community organizations, groups, and agencies to develop resources and services for youth and families.
- Public Information - Staff are available to speak to community groups and civic organizations on a variety of topics related to youth and family functioning.
- The Office on Youth offers diversion program in partnership with the 12th District Juvenile Court Services Unit utilizing grant funding through the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA).
- The Juvenile Domestic Task Force Coalition (JDVTF), Commonwealth Alliance Drug Rehabilitation Education (CADRE) Coalition and Youth Advisory Council (YAC) are several coalitions which staff facilitate and provide leadership.
- The Kids' Achieving Progress Afterschool Program (KAP) is a referral-based program offering academic and social support to students who reside in Colonial Heights.
- The Children's Services Act (CSA) is a law enacted in 1993 that establishes a pool of funds to support services for eligible youth and their families. These funds are managed by the Office on Youth who plan and oversee services to youth through the Family Assessment Planning Team (FAPT) and Community Policy Management Team (CPMT).



Since 2015, the Office on Youth and Human Services has received several awards and grants. Over the last five years, three grants have been received from Wal-Mart to provide professional training to childcare providers in the Tri-Cities area. In 2016, the Office on Youth received the Gold Stairway to Success Award from the Virginia Municipal League for their efforts in supporting early childhood education. In 2018, the Office on Youth received a grant to promote a Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum within the KAP Program and in 2020, the Office on Youth received a grant to provide literacy kits for the English Language Learners (ELL) community.

The Office on Youth & Human Services is located at City Hall, 201 James Avenue.

## Colonial Heights Public Schools

Colonial Heights has three public elementary schools: Tussing Elementary School, Lakeview Elementary School, and North Elementary School. Colonial Heights Middle School serves the entire City. The City has one high school and accompanying vocational center, Colonial Heights High School, that also serves the entire city. 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 schools range in age from 39 years old to 66 years old. However, significant upgrades have been made to the schools since 2005. The CHPS Five Year Capital Improvement Plan records projects needed to safely and effectively serve students and staff. Current unfunded projects include an \$18,800,000 enhancement to the High School including a security enhanced front entrance and administrative offices, fine arts renovation, student commons, dining & food preparation/service renovation and an auxiliary gym. CHPS and the City utilized federal funding for a district-wide HVAC upgrade.

The School Board for the City of Colonial Heights is a five-member board elected to serve four-year terms of office. The Colonial Heights City School Board derives its authority from the Constitution of Virginia, the Code of Virginia, the City Charter, and the regulations of the State Board of Education.

### **Colonial Heights Vocational School**

The technical center, serving grades nine through twelve, opened in 1980-81 and teaches the following vocational capabilities: Child Care, Culinary Arts, Marketing Education, Manufacturing Technology, Automotive Technology, Business and Information Technology, Nursing Technical Drawing and Design, Engineering Drawing and Design, Architectural Drawing and Design and Building Trades.

Colonial Heights Vocational School Recreation Amenities include:

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

### **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
- Pickle Ball Courts

### **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
- Pickle Ball Courts

### **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
- Two Softball Fields

### **North Elementary School**

North Elementary, located at 3201 Dale Avenue, serves an average of 325 students in grades kindergarten through five. North Elementary has been fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1976. North Elementary School serves grades pre-Kindergarten through grade five. North Elementary received the Commonwealth of Virginia Excellence in Education Award in 2019.

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 five.

Tussing Elementary School Recreation Amenities include:

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

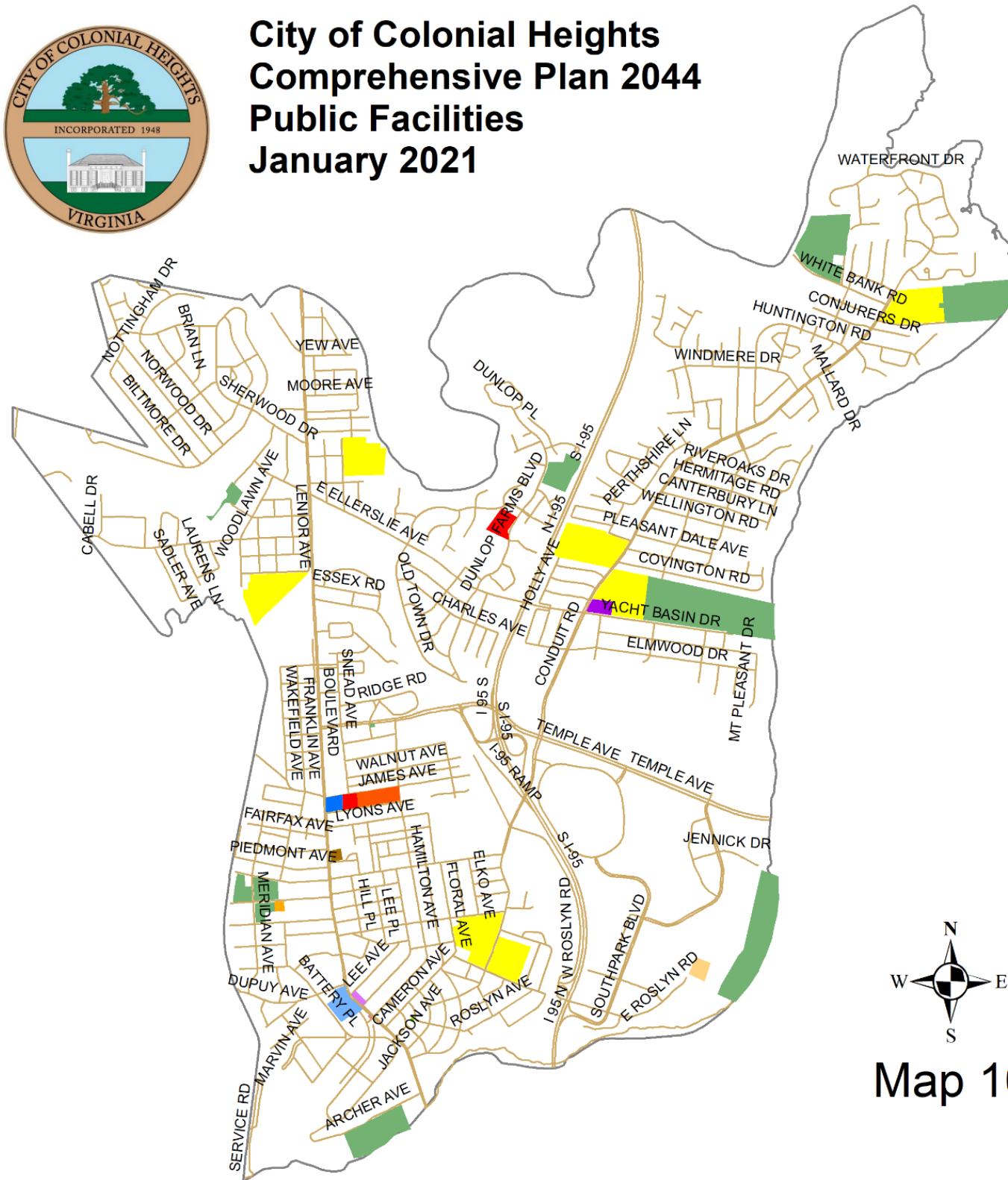
**The following Public Facilities and Service Policies correspond to a specific goal and objective found in Chapter 2. The goal and policy number are abbreviated within the parenthesis.**

- City should develop a city-wide customer training program. (SD-7, QL-6)
- Utilize grants and foundations to assist funding of infrastructure maintenance and improvements. (EP-7, SD-7)
- Recreation and Parks will 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)
- Completed - Recreation and Parks will expand the uses within the community center to include a fitness center. (QL-2)
- Recreation and Parks will create a sponsorship program for all park facilities that provides advertisements in exchange for funds to help maintain parks and park facilities. (CC-5)
- Completed in 2019 - Create a sports tourism taskforce to create a program that will attract sports tournaments and other sporting events. (CC-5)
- Recreation and Parks will 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 including replacement costs in the capital budget, grants, and 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)
- Parks and Recreation will create workout or activity areas along the proposed trail system, specifically on the eastern side of the City along the Appomattox River Trail. (CC-5)
- Completed - Parks and Recreation will provide more summer activities in neighborhood parks, utilizing retirees and teenagers. (CC-5)

- The City should include street, park, utility and building maintenance and future new facility needs in the Capital Improvement Program. (EP-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)
- Completed - Increase the City's server capacity to accommodate electronic files that will take the place of using and storing paper. (SD-7)
- The City should continue to make all public facilities ADA accessible, including all buildings and parks. (SD-7)
- The City should continue to support Colonial Heights Public Schools to help ensure exceptional educational opportunities for City students. (EP-2)
- Colonial Heights Public Schools will continue to upgrade HVAC building infrastructure. (EP-7, SD-7)
- The Library will increase programming that includes augmented, virtual and mixed reality devices, games and eSports, and robotics for all ages including senior residents. (QL-6)
- The Office on Youth and Human Services will provide more services to the adult population by securing grants for this type of programming. (CC-1, SD-7)
- The Office on Youth and Human Services will hold a teen expo in partnership with John Tyler Community College to gather interest in post-secondary education pathways. (EP-1, EP-2)



# City of Colonial Heights Comprehensive Plan 2044 Public Facilities January 2021



Map 10

Animal Shelter	Fire and Rescue	Recreation & Parks Facility	War Memorial
City Hall	Library	Schools	
Community Center	Police Department	School Administration	
Courthouse	Post Office	Violet Bank Museum	

## **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 and cost estimates, that are sorted 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 for the City. Each year, as the CIP is developed, the recommendations of the City's Comprehensive Plan should be considered. The Capital Improvements Program can be found on the City's website at [www.colonialheightsva.gov](http://www.colonialheightsva.gov) in the Archive Center.