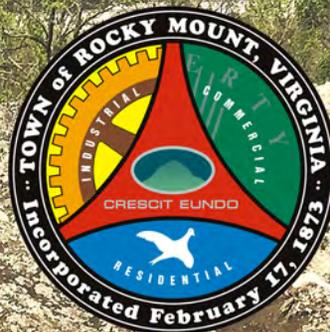


# 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

— TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT, VIRGINIA —



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Thank you to the many community leaders and citizens who participated in the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

**Adopted December 14, 2015**



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## Executive Summary

### PURPOSE AND USE OF PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan provides general guidance and a framework for making important decisions regarding community priorities for public and private investment over the next 10-20 years. In Virginia, every governing body must adopt a comprehensive plan and review it every five years for any needed updates.

The plan forms the basis for community public projects such as transportation and utility improvements and planned lands for residential, industrial or commercial development. In addition, the plan provides a foundation for developing important land management tools like zoning and subdivision.

Governmental officials use the plan when considering zoning changes, capital improvements (water, sewer, roads, schools, etc.), and economic development or housing initiatives. Citizens use the plan to understand the future goals and direction of the community and to understand planned public improvements. Many businesses use the plan when considering business investments and expansion. Federal and state agencies use the plan to ensure consistency with their projects and the local plan.

### COMMUNITY GOALS FOR 2035

Housing and Community – Promote and nurture a healthy, high quality of life for residents that embraces and facilitates excellent educational opportunities, outstanding recreational facilities, supportive health and social services, attractive neighborhoods, and safe, affordable housing.

### 2035 Vision for Rocky Mount

In 2035, Rocky Mount will be a vibrant, attractive, and established center for commerce, industry, education, recreation, and entertainment in the region.

As the official County Seat of Franklin County, Rocky Mount will be a model for other communities serving rural and growing agricultural counties – progressive public facilities, outstanding educational and social institutions, safe and welcoming neighborhoods, healthy living, excellent public services, diverse shopping opportunities, and friendly businesses with quality jobs.

Citizens and visitors appreciate the peaceful, scenic beauty of the historic, charming town, the agricultural landscape, and the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains. There is impressive community camaraderie among citizens and a distinguished respect for town government and leaders, all of whom work together for the growth and prosperity of Rocky Mount.

Economy – Encourage, promote and invest in a diversified economy for residents and businesses that provide quality job opportunities, inviting corridors and development, and a prosperous market for products and services.

Public Facilities and Services – Plan for and provide quality, cost-effective public facilities and services that sufficiently meet community needs and accommodate managed, future growth.

Environment (Natural and Historic Resources) – Conserve, promote, and protect those important natural and historical resources that contribute to the special environmental and cultural community qualities of Rocky Mount and the region.



Land Use and Development – Guide community growth and champion quality land development that complements the unique character of Rocky Mount, preserves community assets, and stimulates a diverse, resilient economy.

**PLANNING POLICIES TO ACHIEVE 2035 VISION**

***Housing and Community***

- Encourage residential development in areas targeted for growth and new development that meets the community needs for diverse housing types and enhances the attractiveness and quality of residential neighborhoods.
- Address substandard housing conditions using methods that encourage cooperative approaches with property owners to improve blighted properties and neighborhoods.
- Encourage and support healthy living initiatives that improve the health and quality of life for residents.
- Support and nurture existing and future educational opportunities and facilities in Rocky Mount.
- Support needs of existing residential neighborhoods.

***Economy***

- Encourage new development initiatives that revitalize downtown and uptown and further the unique sense of place that characterizes the central business district of Rocky Mount.
- Encourage and pursue businesses, industries, employers, and educational institutions in Rocky Mount that complement and diversify the economic base, provide quality jobs, enhance the quality of life, and sustain the environmental quality of the region.

- Facilitate and encourage tourism initiatives as part of the diversified economic development strategy for Rocky Mount.

***Public Facilities and Services***

- Upgrade, provide and plan for efficient public facilities and services to meet the community needs of Rocky Mount and surrounding service areas.
- Plan for and provide safe and efficient transportation systems with multi-modal opportunities to accommodate community needs and projected growth.
- Plan for and invest in park and recreation facilities and programs that contribute to the quality of life for residents, encourage healthy living, and enhance the economic prosperity of Rocky Mount.

***Environment (Natural and Historic Resources)***

- Protect, preserve and conserve important natural and historic resources in Rocky Mount.
- Promote natural and historic resources as community assets that contribute to the high quality of life, recreational opportunities, and economic sustainability of Rocky Mount.

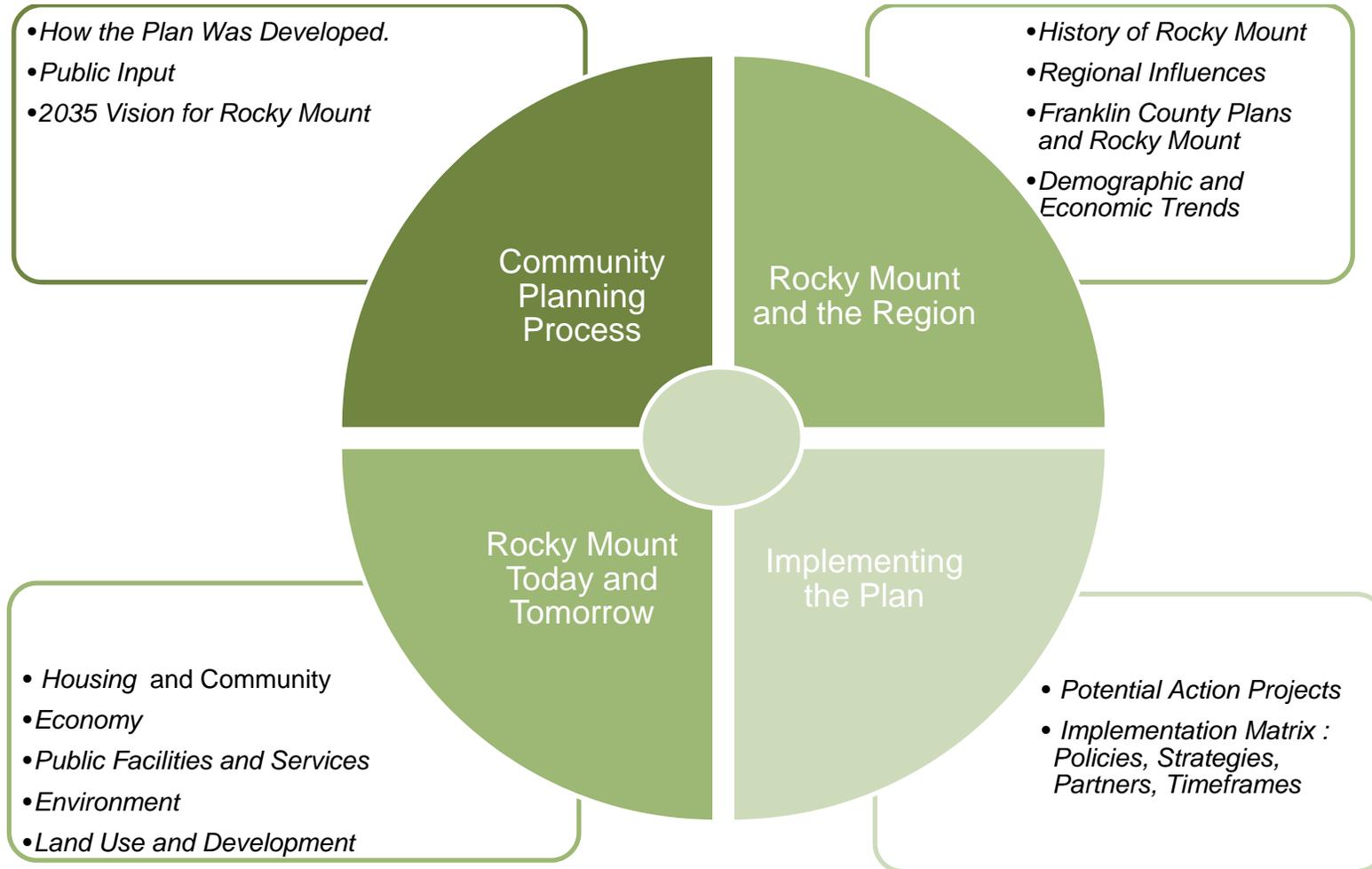
***Land Use and Development***

- Provide responsible governmental leadership that furthers the 2035 Vision for Rocky Mount and promotes best practices for achieving desired outcomes.
- Maintain up to date land development ordinances to ensure effective planning for growth, easy customer use, equitable application, and consistent, defensible administration.



**ORGANIZATION OF THE 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The following sections provide detailed information on the planning process, regional influences, and existing conditions and future opportunities for Rocky Mount. The last section provides recommended community policies and potential action strategies for implementing the plan and achieving the community vision and goals for 2035. The following graphic provides an overview of how the Comprehensive Plan is organized.



## Community Planning Process

Community input from governmental leaders, business representatives, citizens and other stakeholders informed this Comprehensive Plan with guidance of the Town Planning and Zoning Department and Planning Commission.

### 2007 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – A CITIZEN VISION

The Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2007, provided a base foundation for this updated Comprehensive Plan. This plan considered the background information, vision statement, goals, objectives, condition highlights, and issues and opportunities for all planning elements. This update integrates relevant planning recommendations from the 2007 plan and provides an improved visual and organizational format for easy reference by town officials and citizens.

### COMMUNITY TOUR

In July 2014, Town planning staff provided an in-depth overview of various community areas within the Town of Rocky Mount. Following the discussion, they provided a guided tour of the community areas noting outstanding challenges and any pending initiatives.

### COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

In November 2014, the comprehensive planning team met with several small groups of citizens, business representatives, community leaders, and town departmental leaders to discuss community issues and needs, opportunities for growth, and vision for the future. For the purposes of understanding how these discussions influenced the Comprehensive Plan, these are some of the notable points of discussion:

### *People*

- A September 2013 *Franklin County Community Health Needs Assessment* revealed an underserved population in need of reliable transportation, affordable medicine, and access to dental, mental health, and primary and specialty medical care. There is a need for improved coordinated care across the health and human sectors, as well as increased community wellness programs to address obesity and management of chronic disease. There are increased special needs in youth, like autism.
- Youth leave Rocky Mount and Franklin County after graduation because of the lack of quality jobs with sufficient pay and advancement opportunities.
- Young people need more recreational activities to provide them with a reason to connect with positive and constructive activities, resources, and people.
- Transportation and access to facilities and services is a challenge for youth and other residents without cars.

### *Housing*

- Young families, professionals and empty nesters desire different housing options, such as quality townhouses, loft apartments, and alternative styles of single-family homes.
- The neighborhoods along North Main Street need effective improvements to enhance properties, address community challenges, and enhance social well-being.

### *Public Facilities and Services*

- Parks and recreational facilities need upgrades to meet today's recreational interests. Grow Rocky Mount by increasing outdoor recreation activities, especially trail



connectivity for biking and hiking, and increased river access.

- Terracotta and cast iron wastewater and water lines in certain parts of town are aging and eventually, will need replacement.
- Intersection at Floyd Street and Route 40 in downtown needs improvement.
- Community fiber network needs improved distribution options for consumers.
- Police and fire personnel must meet rigorous training and educational requirements. For public employees, these requirements result in considerable financial and time investments. For volunteers, the time requirements are a challenge for recruiting and retaining personnel.
- Community oriented policing using the Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment (SARA) Model can enhance community safety and improve neighborhoods.
- Citizens genuinely appreciate and respect the leadership and work of Town officials and workers. There is a strong camaraderie with citizens to work for what is best in the community.

### **Economy**

- North Main Street offers opportunities for business growth and investment. Need to nurture and recruit planned development that will complement the corridor.
- Enhance gateway corridors and revitalize business development. Implement a coordinated wayfinding system for visitors. Aging strip malls and other commercial

properties can benefit from investment and upgrades to strengthen attractiveness and retail activity of the corridor.

- Continue downtown and uptown revitalization efforts. Investments in uptown and downtown will strengthen the overall economy and businesses.
- Recruit more retail businesses to downtown and uptown and encourage more visitor destinations. Find effective pedestrian connection between uptown and downtown.
- Encourage more festival and arts and culture activities in downtown. Use the Farmers Market to its fullest potential.
- Encourage and promote local products and services – promote a campaign to shop and buy local.
- Promote tourism and work with regional partners to increase visitors coming to Rocky Mount. Use the Harvester Performance Center as a focal point for increasing tourism and business development.
- Celebrate the history of Rocky Mount for residents and visitors.
- Encourage events and festivals to bring in more visitors.

### **Environment**

- Rocky Mount is a beautiful community with outstanding natural resources – mountains and rivers. The scenic views and history of the community are important community assets worth preserving and promoting.



### **PLANNING WORKSHOP FOR SPECIAL ACTION AREAS**

In updating the Comprehensive Plan, Hill Studio studied design improvements for two key areas identified during town and community discussions – North Main Street Corridor and U.S. Route 40 Corridor and Gateway Entrance. Improvements to these areas can effectively influence and facilitate future development patterns. Thus, this Comprehensive Plan includes recommendations developed during this workshop and proposes them as “potential action projects” to help achieve the future community vision. For more details on recommendations for North Main Street and U.S. Route 40, see the *Community and Housing* and the *Economy* sections of this plan.

### **COMMUNITY MEETING**

On November 17, 2015, project planners held an open meeting for public input on the draft Comprehensive Plan at the Rocky Mount Municipal Building. Information provided included an overview of the purpose of a comprehensive plan, vision and goal statements, opportunity action projects, and future land use. Copies of the draft plan and the meeting information were available for public review and as a printed handout. In addition, copies of the plan were available at the County library. Following the community meeting, summary information remained on display in Town Council Chambers for several weeks.



## Rocky Mount and the Region

### HISTORY OF ROCKY MOUNT

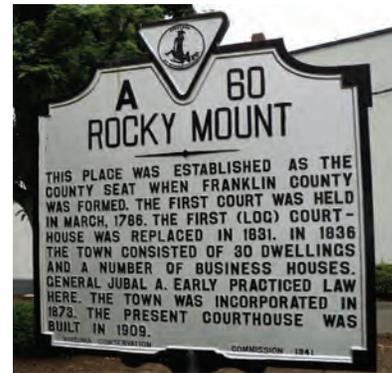
Settled in the mid-1700s, Rocky Mount received its name for the visible rock bluff, also known as Bald Knob, on the mountain just south of what is now Tanyard Road. By the late 1770s, The Washington Iron Furnace near the Pigg River was in full operation in Rocky Mount. Iron production was an important enterprise in the region and attracted suppliers of supporting goods and services to the area. A post office was established in 1785.

In March 1786, Franklin County held the first court in Rocky Mount at the home of James Callaway, the proprietor of the Washington Iron Furnace. Later that year, Franklin County erected a log courthouse near the present day intersection of Court and Main Streets in the neighboring village of Mount Pleasant. The log courthouse was replaced in 1831. By 1836, Rocky Mount had a population of 275 with thirty dwellings and a number of businesses. By 1873, Rocky Mount became incorporated as a town, encompassing a one-half mile radius from the courthouse and combining the two villages of Rocky Mount and Mount Pleasant.

Between 1880 and 1895, the development of the railroad into Rocky Mount brought expanded access to northern and eastern markets for tobacco. Industry and commerce expanded, as did the population and social institutions. By 1898 Rocky Mount had a population of about 600 inhabitants, 100 lots with buildings, two hotels, two factories, a machine shop and 14 stores. Many of the existing houses in Rocky Mount today were built during this peak period of development. They include

factory worker vernacular cottages and architecturally defined homes of professionals and factory managers. By the turn of the century, Rocky Mount was affiliated with tobacco factories and the production of furniture and textiles. The present courthouse was built in 1909 in uptown Rocky Mount.

Today, Rocky Mount still serves as the County Seat and as the regional center for government, commerce, industry, education, and entertainment.



*Historic Marker at Courthouse  
South Main Street*



*The Taliaferro Building, circa 1827  
South Main Street*



*View of Rocky Mount from  
Bald Knob*



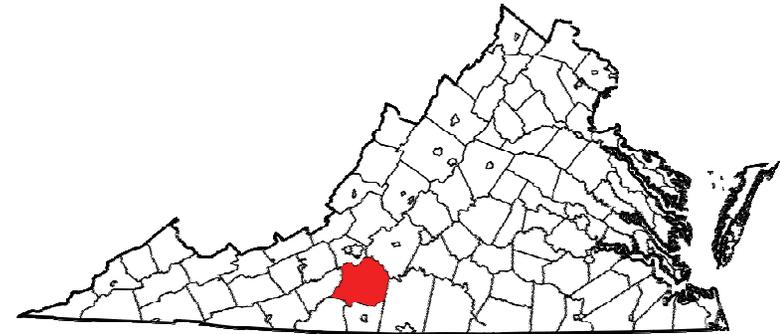
### REGION OVERVIEW AND INFLUENCES

Franklin County lies in western Virginia in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. Franklin County is part of the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area which includes Roanoke County, Roanoke City, Salem City, Botetourt County, and Craig County. Notable points about the MSA are:

- In July 2014, the MSA population was 313,808 and is projected to grow to 318,200 by 2018.
- The available labor force within the MSA was over 150,000 in 2014.
- There are 25 colleges within a 60-mile radius, which provide over 10,000 graduates annually.
- The MSA is an outdoor recreation destination that includes the Blue Ridge Mountains, Blue Ridge, Parkway, Appalachian Trail, Jefferson National Forest, and Smith Mountain Lake.
- Two major transportation corridors, U.S. Route 220 and U.S. Route 40, serve Rocky Mount and Franklin County. Interstates 81 and 64 serve the larger MSA.

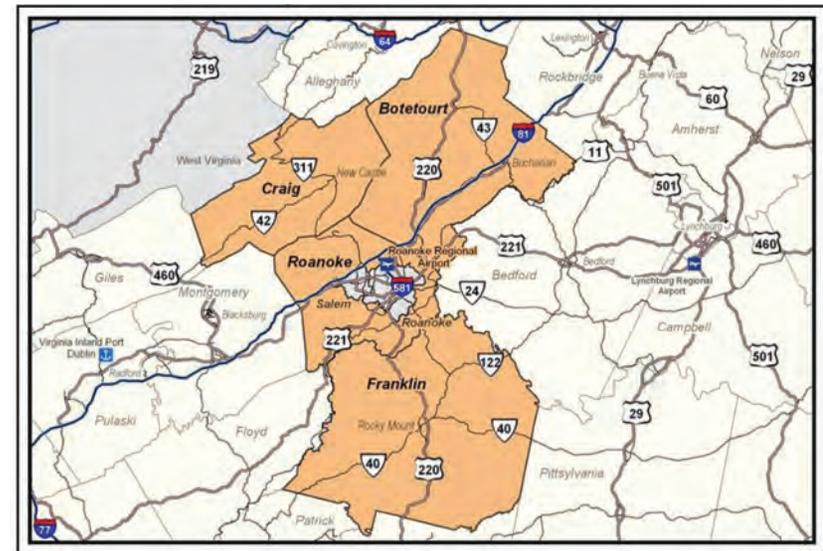
Surrounding Franklin County are the Counties of Roanoke, Henry, Pittsylvania, Bedford, Floyd and Patrick, and the metropolitan Cities of Roanoke, Martinsville, and Danville.

This favorable positioning in the region and proximity to the nearby metropolitan areas offers many opportunities for Rocky Mount in terms of transportation, employment, commerce, and continuing education. Urban areas, open farmland, and recreational destinations are within an easy commute of town limits.



Above - Map of Virginia showing location of Franklin County.

Below - Map of Roanoke MSA showing Franklin County and Rocky Mount.



### FRANKLIN COUNTY AS A COMMUNITY PARTNER

The Town of Rocky Mount lies strategically in the center of Franklin County adjacent to U.S. Route 220, the major north – south County transportation corridor and U.S. 40, the major east-west corridor. Because of its location, the Town has evolved as a center for business services and employment.

Town residents are also residents of Franklin County and pay both Town and County taxes for certain public services and facilities. As an incorporated jurisdiction within the County, there are authorized powers and governmental services and facilities provided by the Town (e.g., water/wastewater utilities, street maintenance, refuse collection, police, zoning/land planning, etc.) and others provided by the County (e.g., public school system, social services programs, library, building code administration). The Town and the County work cooperatively on many initiatives involving economic development, utilities, transportation and public safety, including a volunteer fire department. Consequently, there is significant coordination required between the two local governments.

#### *Franklin County Vision 2025*

*Franklin County, Virginia-- appreciating its rural, scenic Blue Ridge landscape and rich cultural and agricultural heritage is a uniquely balanced, highly educated, prosperous, and diverse land of families, businesses, and communities of faith who thrive amongst interconnected neighborhoods where personal responsibility and community interdependence are cherished.*

The *Franklin County 2025 Comprehensive Plan* adopted in 2007 identifies specific policies and shared areas of cooperation for managing transportation and future land development for the

Town of Rocky Mount. The goal is to develop high quality services and facilities that will meet the needs of County and Town residents. The County Plan outlines the following cooperative areas:

1. **Growth Areas** - The County will define future growth areas under County jurisdiction, but proximate to the Town, and will coordinate with the Town on rezonings, subdivisions, and site plan reviews for new development within these growth areas to ensure compatibility with Town development plans, comprehensive plan, and the efficient provision of public services and utilities by the County either by purchasing and distributing Town utility services through inter-jurisdictional agreements or independent utility development by the County.
2. **Transportation Planning** - The County will coordinate with the Town on transportation planning issues that affect Town and County residents, including upgrading of the three Route 220 bypass interchanges.
3. **Public Utilities** - The County will seek to develop a partnership by means of inter-jurisdictional agreements with the Town to purchase bulk water and sewage treatment. The County is a public utility provider and shall construct the public utility infrastructure which is required. (Regional agreement was signed 2014 between Town, County and Western Virginia Water Authority.)
4. **Housing** - The County will encourage higher density residential developments and housing projects for populations with special needs close to supporting services and facilities.



In addition to these policies, there are other adopted planning objectives/strategies that may be relevant to future planning for the Town of Rocky Mount:

**Parks and Recreation –**

- Continue to develop satellite park and recreation facilities at each of the elementary school locations in the County (recreational fields).
- Implement the Franklin County Trails Plan as adopted by the Board of Supervisors for greenways and trails that use river corridors, abandoned railways, and other linear routes to link selected County towns, park sites, schools, and other community facilities.

**Community Facilities, Social and Human Services –**

- Provide centers for the delivery of mandated human and social services that are accessible / convenient to residents.

**Community Facilities, Public Safety, Law Enforcement –**

- Develop a strategy to recruit, retain, educate, and motivate quality staff and volunteers while improving utilization of human resources.
- Develop law enforcement services and facilities to meet the needs of the citizens of the County in the year 2025.

**Education –**

- Expand career and technical educational opportunities.
- Encourage expansion of mentoring programs between industry, business, local government and schools.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities for citizens.

**Transportation, Human Services –**

- Improve existing human services transportation system.

**Housing –**

- Identify distressed neighborhoods and seek funding to improve roads, sidewalks, and public utilities.

**Public Utilities -**

- Develop a community facilities plan for public water extensions to include potential service areas to enhance fire flow, potential costs, timing, and funding sources.
- Develop a community facilities plan for public sewer development that incorporates realistic development goals and objectives, timing, funding sources, and appropriate technology in targeted public service areas.
- Investigate establishing a natural gas distribution network in Franklin County.
- Develop broadband internet opportunities.

**Economy –**

- Increase the capacity of the County to attract and retain businesses and create employment opportunities.
- Promote and expand the tourism industry.
- Partner with educational institutions and the workforce development center to provide development assistance and training for small businesses.

**Environment and Cultural Resources -**

- Develop and implement a strategic plan for open space preservation that identifies key wildlife/conservation opportunities, acquisition programs, and preserves appropriate open space areas.
- Identify and protect the County's historic, architectural, and cultural resources.



**DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC TRENDS**

Some of the relevant demographic statistics for Rocky Mount are included in the following summary tables.

Selected Demographics <i>(US Census Bureau – 2000 Census, 2013 American Community Survey)</i>		Rocky Mount		Franklin County		Virginia
		2000 Census	2013 ACS	2000 Census	2013 ACS	2013
<b>Population (Total)</b>		4,066	4,820	47,286	56,195	8,100,653
Percent Change in Population 2000-2013			18.54 %		18.84 %	n/a
Population by Age Group	0-19 yrs	23.50%	18.00%	24.90%	23.20%	25.80%
	20-64 yrs	52.90%	56.80%	60.80%	58.10%	61.60%
	65+ yrs	23.60%	25.20%	14.30%	18.60%	12.60%
Median Age		41.9	47.2	39.7	44.4	37.5
Racial Composition	White	74.50%	83.30%	89.00%	89.80%	5,627,076
	African American	22.30%	16.20%	9.30%	8.40%	1,568,021
	Other	3.20%	0.50%	1.70%	1.60%	830,003
Educational Attainment (population 25 years+)	Less than high school degree	35.80%	24.4%	27.80%	17.30%	12.5%
	High school graduate or higher	64.20%	75.60%	72.20%	82.70%	87.50%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	15.60%	16.10%	14.80%	19.10%	35.20%
<b>Housing Units (total)</b>		1,796	2,608	22,717	29,246	n/a
Occupied		1,698	2,334	18,963	23,358	89.40%
Vacant		98	274	3,754	5,888	10.60%
Owner-Occupied		1,001	1,325	15,386	18,230	67.30%
Renter-Occupied		697	1,009	3,577	5,128	32.70%
Year Householder Moved Into Unit	Within 1 year	14.0%	16.4%	14.1%	13.1%	n/a
	2-5 years	24.4%	36.2%	26.5%	41.30%	n/a
	6-10 years	15.0%	13.8%	17.5%	21.00%	n/a
	11-20 years	20.4%	9.7%	17.8%	10.30%	n/a
	21-30 years	10.5%	10.9%	11.6%	7.10%	n/a
	More than 30 years	15.70%	12.9%	12.4%	7.30%	n/a
Median Home Value (owner-occupied)		\$79,700	\$ 121,900	\$ 105,000	\$ 163,700	\$ 244,600
Median Household Income		\$26,927	\$ 27,250	\$ 38,056	\$ 45,624	\$ 63,907
Individuals Below Poverty Level		14.1%	21.8%	9.7%	14%	11.3%
Commuters Living and Working in Place of Residence			54.1%		22.8%	
Median Earnings for Workers			\$ 23,003		\$ 27,368	\$ 46,677



<b>Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia Employment by Industry and Median Earnings (2013 American Community Survey, US Census)</b>		
<b>Employment by Category</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Median Earnings</b>
Civilian employed population 16 years and over / Median Earnings (Total)	1,956	\$ 26,324
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	31	-
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	31	-
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0	-
Construction	165	\$ 29,529
Manufacturing	337	\$ 34,770
Wholesale trade	0	-
Retail trade	251	\$ 14,821
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	128	\$ 29,375
Transportation and warehousing	97	\$ 40,592
Utilities	31	-
Information	41	\$ 70,481
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing:	49	\$ 25,583
Finance and insurance	49	\$ 25,583
Real estate and rental and leasing	0	-
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services:	170	\$ 30,250
Professional, scientific, and technical services	66	\$ 75,441
Management of companies and enterprises	0	-
Administrative and support and waste management services	104	\$ 10,000
Educational services, and health care and social assistance:	390	\$ 31,333
Educational services	178	\$ 33,409
Health care and social assistance	212	\$ 15,900
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services:	198	\$ 8,382
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	37	\$ 45,469
Accommodation and food services	161	\$ 4,954
Other services, except public administration	165	\$ 9,306
Public administration	31	-



From this demographic information, we see that:

- Although Town population has increased since 2000 (18.5%), much of this increase is most likely due to the annexation of Franklin Heights in July 2000 (approximately 500 persons and 1.5 square miles of land area). Thus, the population over the past decade has remained stable.
- Population is aging. There are fewer persons under 19 and the median age is 47.
- Number of high school graduates continues to increase (10% rise) and the number of college graduates increased (1%).
- Number of housing units is increasing. Approximately 39% of the housing units in Rocky Mount are renter-occupied.
- Approximately 56% of housing occupants have lived in Rocky Mount five years or less. Approximately 28% of housing occupants have lived in Rocky Mount for longer than 10 years.
- Median owner-occupied home value is increasing - \$121,900. This is still lower than that of Franklin County - \$163,700.
- The median household income increased slightly - \$27,250. This is still much lower than that of Franklin County - \$45,624.
- The number of individuals living in poverty increased - 21.8%. This is higher than Franklin County and the State (9%).
- The greatest numbers of people were employed in education/health care, manufacturing, retail trade, and arts/entertainment/food services.



In general these trends show stable, positive growth and investment for the Town of Rocky Mount. However, there are some areas that deserve consideration in planning for the future.

- Rocky Mount is losing young people after high school and college.
- Housing values in Rocky Mount show a lower median home value and an increase in the number of renter-occupied units.
- Household incomes in Rocky Mount are significantly lower than the County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. In 2013, the median household income in Rocky Mount was \$27,250. However, it is noteworthy that approximately one-half of those persons living in Rocky Mount also work in Rocky Mount.



**Rocky Mount Today and Tomorrow  
Housing and Community**

To assist community planning efforts, town planners developed a map of areas/communities with shared interests or common topographic or physical features. This provides a means for organized discussion of various community planning topics. A map of these areas is on the next page for general reference.

**HOUSING**

**Existing Conditions:**

The 2013 American Community Survey Census reported that the Town of Rocky Mount has approximately 2,600 housing units with about 2,300 occupied units. Some characteristics are:

- Approximately one-half of the occupied units were owner occupied and had a median home value of \$121,900 (less than the median County home value of \$163,700).
- About 75% of the existing housing stock is single-family attached or detached homes.
- Approximately 15% of the existing housing was constructed prior to 1939 and approximately 8% was constructed since 2000. Most of the housing in Rocky Mount was built between 1950 and 1980.
- Of those living in the housing units, approximately 50% had moved there within the past five years or less.
- The median housing costs for an owner with a mortgage was \$963 a month; median gross rent was \$687 a month.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Based on 2000-2013 census data, the town has experienced an annual growth rate of approximately 1.45%. While this rate reflects annexed land (containing 500 persons) and is liberal, it provides an established basis for thinking about future housing needs. Using this growth rate, the projected population in 2025 would be 5,729 and in 2035 would be 6,616. This equates to about 450 housing units every ten years (assuming an average of two persons per housing unit).

Population	2013	2025*	2035*
Rocky Mount	4,820	5,729	6,616
Housing Units	2,608	3,058	3,508

*Source: U.S. Census Information; 2025 and 2035 are population projections using an annual growth rate of 1.45%. Projected Housing Units assume two persons per household, using projected population.*

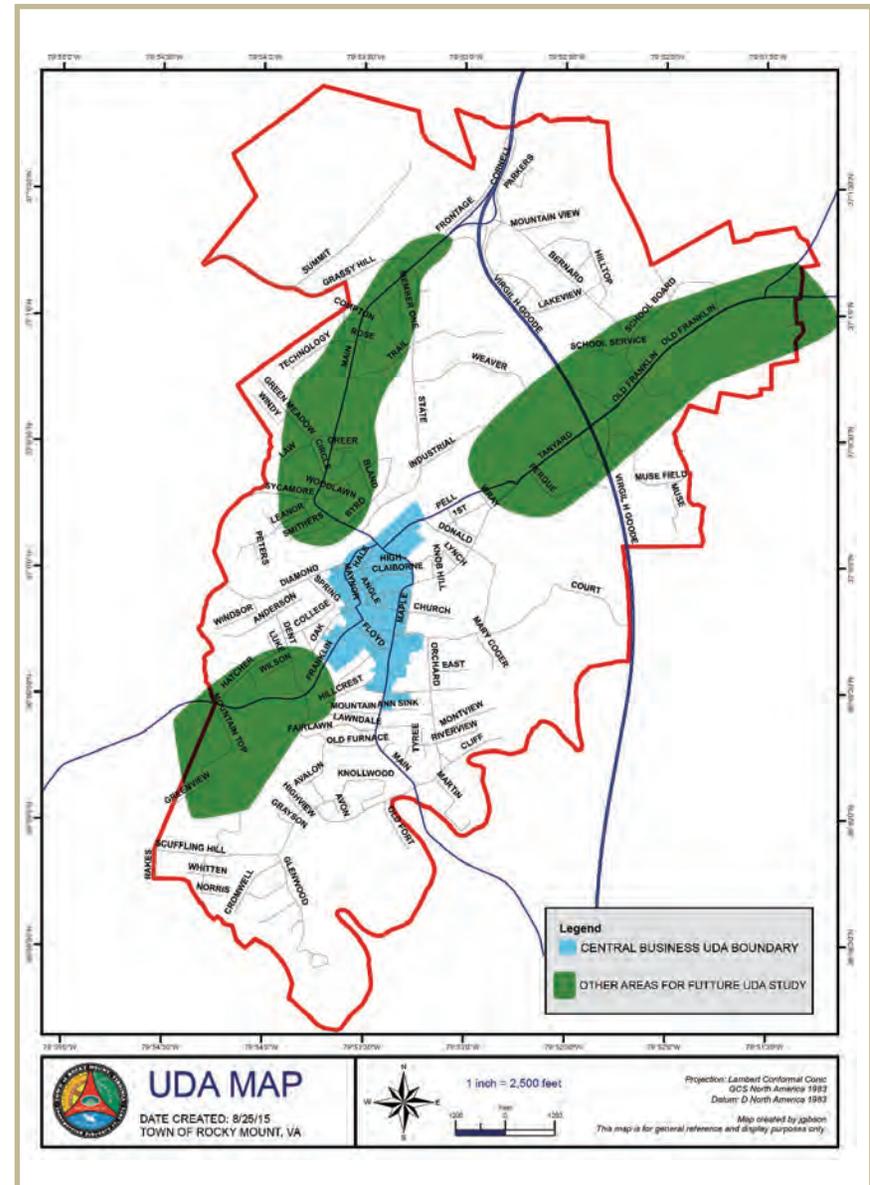
Community housing needs identified during planning meetings include: improvement of substandard housing (particularly in neighborhoods off of North Main Street); development of more centrally located, alternative housing types (townhouses, senior living, downtown lofts); and higher quality single-family homes that meet the desires and needs of modern homebuyers (e.g., \$175,000-\$225,000 with 3 bedrooms/2 baths, basement or storage, and garage or expansion area).

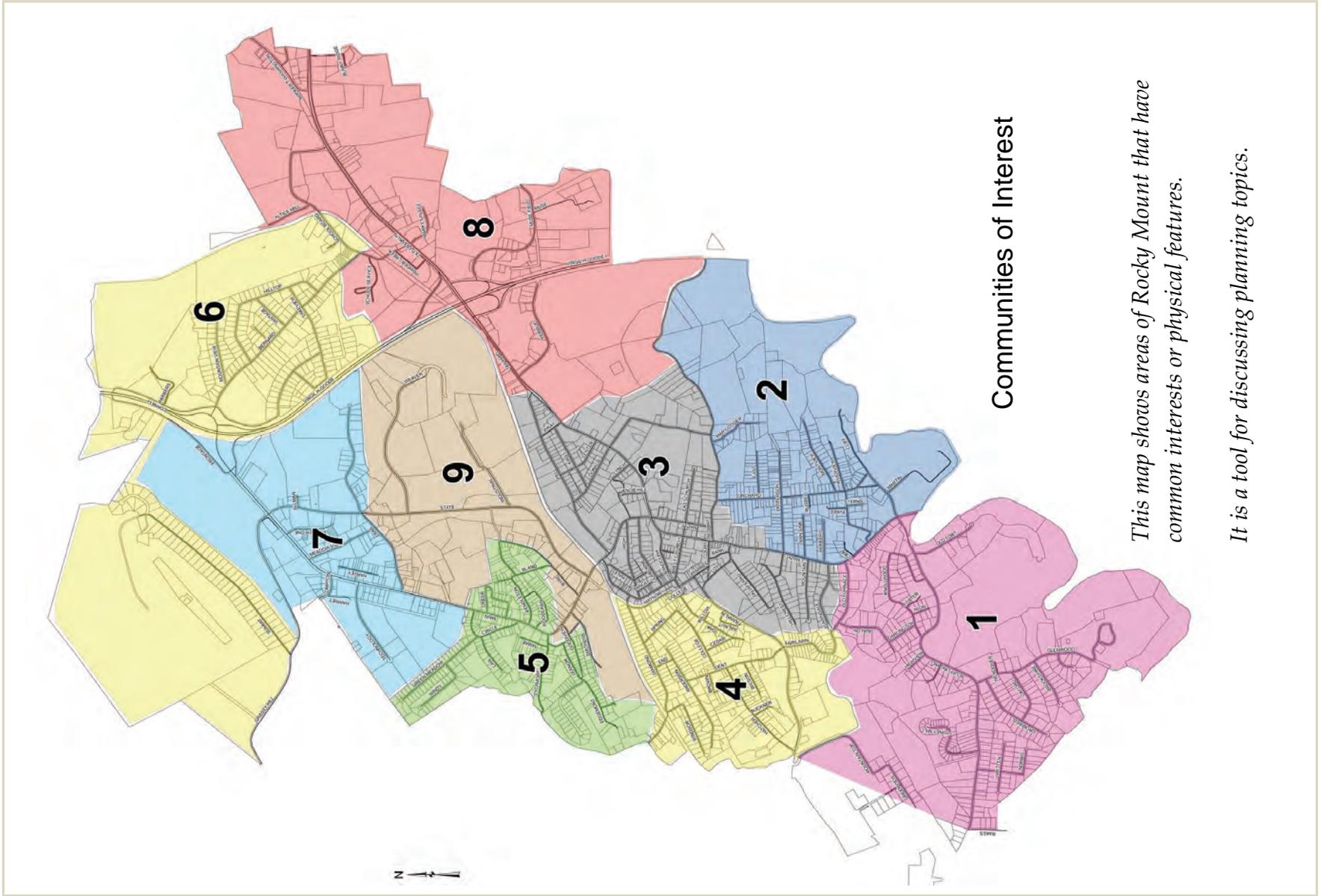
Rocky Mount is an ideal location within Franklin County and the region to expand housing offerings and recruit new residents. Much of the land area in town has access to public



utilities and an existing street network. Encouraging new housing development in existing neighborhoods is one easy way to increase housing stock. In addition, there are suitable undeveloped lands in the southern and northern areas of Rocky Mount that have excellent development potential for housing. For example, the second phase of a Planned Unit Development near Scuffling Hill Road proposes to add up to approximately 250 homes in the future. There are additional housing development opportunities near U.S. Route 220 North where residential development continues to occur on Summitt Drive and in Franklin Heights. Finally, with recent improvements and investments in downtown, there are new opportunities for loft housing in upper stories of downtown buildings. This type of housing is especially attractive to young professionals and will enliven the downtown with people and business activity.

In September 2015, Rocky Mount designated the Central Business District as an Urban Development Area (UDA), and identified two additional areas for future study – North Main Street and US Route 40 East. Designating an UDA is beneficial in that it encourages growth in areas that have sufficient transportation and public infrastructure systems. Identifying these areas in the Comprehensive Plan provides planning support for directing federal and state transportation, housing, utilities, and economic development funds to Rocky Mount and the UDA. Using the growth projections for 2035 and 2045, Rocky Mount should plan for an additional 900 people in 10 years and 1,800 in 20 years, or about 450 housing units per decade, using an average of 2 people per household. Future housing and supporting business development should be directed to these identified areas (see map right).





Residential development outside of town limits can be managed through regional cooperation with Franklin County, as both public utilities and transportation systems will drive any future development of major housing subdivisions.

The North Main Street Corridor hosts two established neighborhoods that have received Community Development Block Grant funding for revitalization and rehabilitation in the past (Needmore and Tank Hill Projects). Even with past housing and neighborhood improvement activities, continued community challenges and housing quality issues threaten the vitality of these areas and the North Main business corridor. Much of the housing was constructed prior to 1930 and is occupied by low-to-moderate income persons, both owners and renters. Issues include lack of property maintenance and deterioration. Additional assessment and study of the neighborhoods and the business corridor could help develop effective strategies for addressing housing and social needs, as well as future economic revitalization of this gateway.

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

#### Existing Conditions:

Rocky Mount has several active community service organizations that serve the town and the county. Each year, the Franklin County Resource Center provides a *Community Resource Directory* which summarizes available programs and contact information for a variety of human services. Some of the principal organizations operating in Rocky Mount (and serving Franklin County) include: United Way, American Red Cross, YMCA, Piedmont Community Services (mental health and intellectual disability services), Goodwill Industries

International (job/training support for people with disabilities), STEP Inc. (community action agency), Helping Hands (emergency financial assistance), Stepping Stone Mission (food), and Free Clinic of Franklin County (Bernard Health Care Center). In addition, the numerous churches of Rocky Mount provide supporting community services and assist in helping to connect people and resources.

In discussions with community leaders as part of the update of this comprehensive plan, the community human service needs identified focused on improving community health and wellness and increasing youth activities and outreach. Education and proactive prevention, particularly at an early age, is a preferred direction for a healthier future.

In 2013, Carilion Clinic worked with a forty-member committee of area community service providers and leaders to develop a *Franklin County Community Health Needs Assessment*. The assessment included data collection, survey, and focus group discussions to identify the top community health needs. The findings, published in September 2014, revealed an underserved population in need of more reliable transportation, affordable medicine and access to mental health, dental, primary care and specialty services. The top community needs identified were to (1) improve access to mental health and substance abuse services, primary care, adult dental care, and specialty care, (2) improve coordination of care across the health and human services sector, (3) enhance general wellness of the community (i.e., through programs addressing obesity and chronic disease management) and (4) improve transportation services. Carilion Franklin County Memorial Hospital agreed to provide leadership, work within their existing community coalitions,



and establish a multi-disciplinary team of partnering agencies, to develop an implementation plan to address these community needs. In addition, as of 2015, United Way of Franklin County agreed to lead a community-wide initiative, *Healthy Franklin County*, to address obesity and related chronic diseases through promoting healthy lifestyles. One of their first projects is the development of community gardens to provide healthy foods.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

According to 2013 U.S. Census information, over twenty percent of the individuals living in Rocky Mount were below the poverty level. This percentage was higher than those found in both Franklin County (14%) and the Commonwealth of Virginia (11%). Thus, special efforts and programming may be necessary to meet and proactively address community service needs. The next steps of partnering agencies will be very important in furthering implementation strategies to address the findings of the 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment. Success will require multi-disciplinary partners and inter-agency communication and coordination to obtain funding for programs and to provide outreach to community residents.

Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital is an important asset to the Town and the County not only in terms of medical services, but also employment, community outreach, and as a factor in attracting economic development. In December 2014, an article in the *Roanoke Times* reported that “rural hospitals are struggling ... because of the unique challenges posed by the larger socioeconomic trends in rural Virginia. Over the past 25 years, as the manufacturing, textile and mining industries have declined, rural Virginia has shifted demographically to an older

and often less healthy population ... There is increased chronic disease, increasing numbers of uninsured persons, and declining health care reimbursement formulas ... Of the 37 hospitals classified as rural by the federal government, 20 had negative operating margins last year, and seven had a negative net worth. This financial picture makes it nearly impossible for these hospitals to invest in their people, technology and infrastructure. Over the long-term, if unaddressed, it will lead to the loss of certain services and potentially the closure of facilities.” For Rocky Mount, retention of the hospital is critical. While the facility operated favorably in 2014, they are an essential community partner and close coordination with local government and other health and wellness agencies will be very important in furthering the healthy living vision for the future.



### EDUCATION

#### Existing Conditions:

Franklin County operates six state accredited school facilities in the town limits of Rocky Mount. During school operation, these facilities bring over 4,600 students into Town.

- Franklin County High School (2013-14 enrollment 2,128)
- Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration, Grade 8 (2013-14 enrollment 283)
- Benjamin Franklin Middle School, East - Grade 6 (2013-14 enrollment 538)
- Benjamin Franklin Middle School, West – Grades 7-8 (2013-14 enrollment 895)
- Rocky Mount Elementary (2013-14 enrollment 364), and
- Lee M. Waid Elementary (2013-14 enrollment 394).



*Franklin County High School*

In addition, the Franklin County Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise offers GED and adult education courses. The

County recently purchased acreage adjacent to Perdue Lane for expansion needs of the high school.

#### Challenges and Opportunities:

The educational facilities within Rocky Mount provide significant employment opportunities and an influx of people during school operations. These facilities are an economic and social asset for the community that should be cultivated for a prosperous future. Continuing educational opportunities for both young persons and adults are essential to the health and well-being of a community. There may be additional opportunities for educational classes and activities during non-school hours that can enrich the quality of life for residents. Expansion of these opportunities could be pursued in partnership with the school system and other stakeholders such as local churches, community service agencies, and local community organizations. Think outside the box; be a continuous learning community that truly embraces and values the educational opportunities available in Rocky Mount.

A first step could be emphasizing and beautifying pedestrian connections to school facilities. For example, the Franklin County High School Campus on Tanyard Road could be better connected and enhanced to calm traffic, improve pedestrian safety, and encourage healthy walking activity.

Retaining young adults in Rocky Mount for the long-term will diversify the community and enable it to thrive in the future by adding residents, employees, and entrepreneurs. In addition, the student population can be an excellent market for specialized business opportunities (food, recreation, entertainment, clothing, etc.). At present, youth activities need



to be positively focused and engaging to further leadership development and to nurture young people who want to come to Rocky Mount, and eventually, live or do business in town. Perhaps one option is to focus on redevelopment of an older shopping center for a new youth center and recreational business cluster that gives young people a place to go and gives recreation businesses a venue for operation. It could include supporting services such as youth activities, food, clothing, and entertainment. Outdoor recreation (trails, bikes, kayaks, etc.) is a growing economic field that draws young folks and visitors of all ages.

*Opportunity Action Project for Tanyard Road*

*Enhanced and beautified pedestrian crossings can connect facilities and improve pedestrian safety.*



## Economy

### REGION AS AN ATTRACTION

Rocky Mount and Franklin County are well positioned for economic development between two metropolitan regions (Roanoke and Martinsville) that are within easy access via U.S. Route 220.

#### Existing Conditions:

The Town and the County are included as part of the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area and participate in two regional planning districts – Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Planning Commission and West Piedmont Regional Planning Commission. Thus, Rocky Mount draws from diverse economic outreach efforts/studies and benefits from initiatives undertaken by both regions.

The Roanoke Regional Partnership works with multiple communities in the region to further economic development and draw new employers. In 2014, the partnership announced that it would be the administrator for a new Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facilities Authority that allows local government partners (Counties of Franklin, Botetourt, Roanoke and Cities of Roanoke and Salem) to cooperate on economic development projects and improving industrial sites.

#### Challenges and Opportunities:

Of particular relevance to Rocky Mount is the Regional Partnership's branding of the region for outdoor recreation as a draw for furthering business development and promoting the region's quality of life. As an urban center close to Smith Mountain Lake and rural, natural landscape, there are

opportunities for increased recreational tourism and outdoor recreation business development. This can complement local businesses and offer activities for both residents and visitors.

With the continued regional coordination and cooperation of local governments in future economic development initiatives, there is great value to Rocky Mount and Franklin County. Finding and strengthening unique niche business approaches will be very important in furthering the vitality of the Town economy and maintaining the quality of life for residents.

### DOWNTOWN AND UPTOWN

Like many communities in Piedmont Province of Virginia, early businesses and residences in Rocky Mount settled on the high lands. When the railroad came, development shifted to the low land, in close proximity to the center of town. Thus, many communities like Rocky Mount have "uptowns" and "downtowns." Today, both uptown and downtown comprise the central business district, yet each have a very unique character and specialty businesses that make it distinctive.

#### Existing Conditions:

Uptown Rocky Mount, the early main street for business and commerce, hosts the historic Franklin County Courthouse. As the County seat of Franklin County, uptown has experienced development related to governmental operations and legal services. Over the years, uptown has been populated with professional offices, financial institutions, churches, and other supporting agencies and businesses. In the past decade, both Town and County municipal operations have moved from uptown to nearby properties that can accommodate their



expansion needs. Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital still operates in uptown.

Downtown Rocky Mount has grown over the years to become the retail center of the central business district. Public facilities like the Franklin County Library, Franklin Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise, Rocky Mount Farmers Market, Rocky Mount Post Office, and the Community and Hospitality Center (restored Rocky Mount Train Depot) continue to attract residents, clients, and visitors to the downtown.

An Arts and Culture District, adopted in 2010, includes provisions for encouraging new business development to increase the growth and prosperity of arts and culture and complementary businesses. The district offers various incentives for new and expanding businesses located in downtown and uptown.

The Harvester Performance Center, opened in April 2014, has become an influential economic driver for entertainment, arts, and culture in Rocky Mount, drawing over 50,000 visitors from the region and beyond. As of September 2015, the economic spin-offs of the facility have been substantial for area businesses, pumping over \$3 Million into the local economy. Rocky Mount has become a destination. New businesses, restaurants, and a bed and breakfast have opened. Vacant or neglected properties are seeing investment.

Rocky Mount has an active retail merchants association (Franklin County Retail Merchants Association) which manages the farmers market and hosts several festivals and events. At one time, downtown Rocky Mount was a designated Virginia Main Street Community, a network of communities that use a

national preservation-based economic and community development program to revitalize historic commercial districts.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Even with the close proximity of downtown and uptown, the two areas are disconnected because of the change in topography and the differing business activities. Community improvements in both uptown and downtown over the past twenty years (sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, and decorative streetlights and fixtures) have helped the physical infrastructure of the business district; however the linkage between uptown and downtown (via West Court Street) continues to be a challenge. In addition, much of the land between downtown and uptown remains either vacant or underutilized in pavement and parking. With limited business activity between the two business centers, there is little reason to want to take the elevated walk from downtown to uptown. Some type of mixed-use development destination in this area could be very beneficial to both uptown and downtown (e.g. hotel, retail and market-rate residential). Perhaps a development that recognizes the history of the Warren Street Community and incorporates both business and residential uses in an attractive, well-designed complex could be a good fit. One development option to consider may be a boutique hotel with supporting community amenities and complementary businesses. If planned in conjunction with the revitalization of the small commercial area on Warren Street, this could energize this part of downtown and boost development of uptown for expanded business (and residential) opportunities. The first step of updating the zoning ordinance to permit this type of



development was taken in 2015; considering redevelopment options and recruiting a developer is the next logical step.

In addition to improved pedestrian and business linkage, a creative, consistent wayfinding system through the central business district is essential to successful business development. This can be done using signs, banners, and information kiosks.

Further consideration should be given to working with the Virginia Main Street Program as an affiliate member or for technical reference materials. The program has been very successful in other communities similar to Rocky Mount and offers valuable technical resources and networking for enhancing small, historic downtowns using economic, marketing, and architectural design methods.

Another major opportunity exists in downtown and uptown for upper-story residential development for quality loft apartments and condominiums. Residential options use the full building and provide 24-hour activity in the downtown which supports business development. In addition, potential developers can take advantage of historic tax credits to renovate buildings.

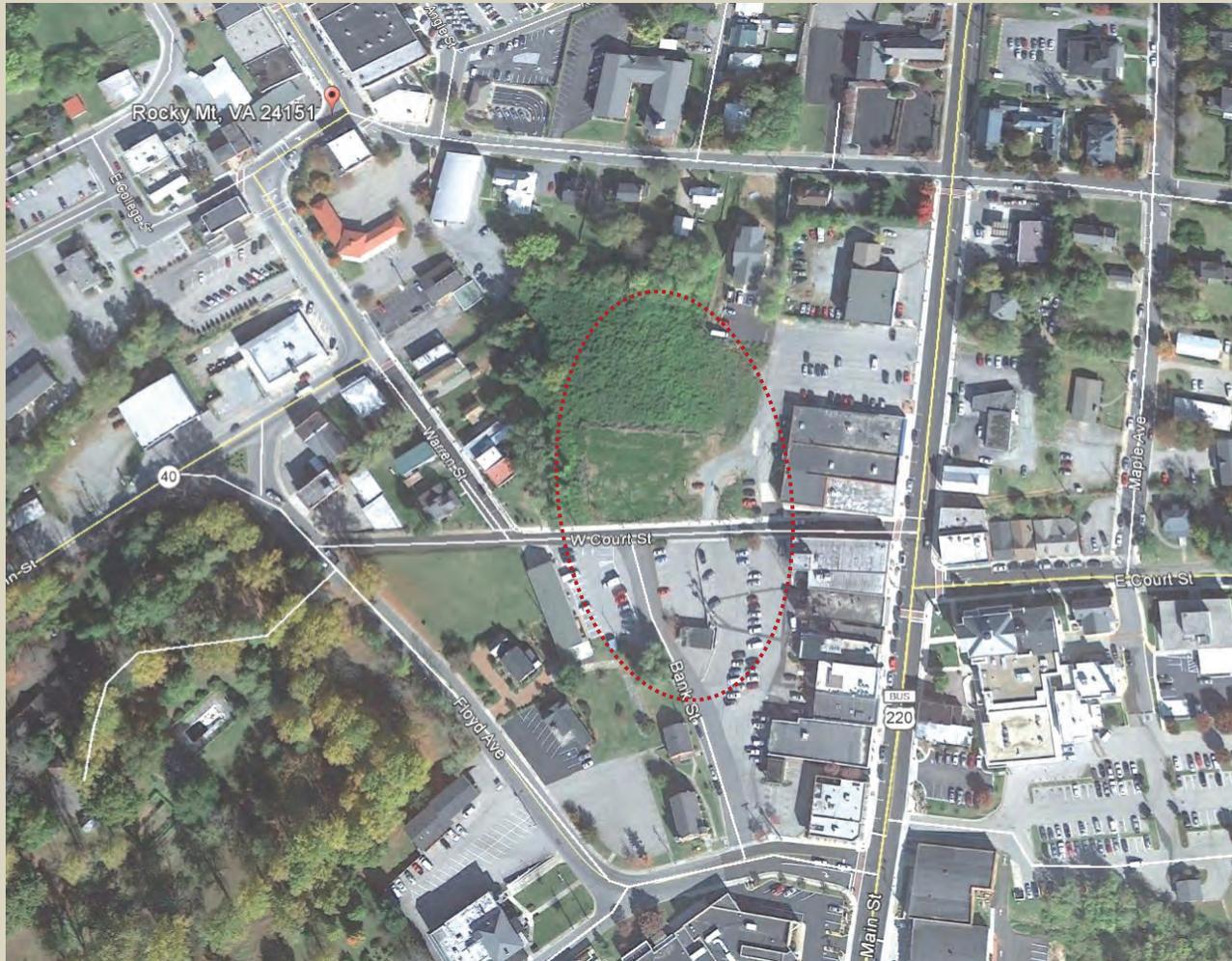
Also, there would be value in undertaking an updated study of the retail market conditions for Rocky Mount in order to better target additional business development opportunities. A 2004 Retail Market Assessment for Rocky Mount by Arnett Muldrow and Associates during downtown revitalization efforts found that there were additional downtown business opportunities for home furnishings, apparel, specialty foods, fine dining, outdoor outfitters and sporting goods, and antiques, gifts and crafts.

Finally, since 2014 the downtown economy has benefited substantially from the investment in the Harvester Performance Center. The community should continue to pursue additional initiatives that build upon the Arts and Culture District, the Harvester, the Farmers Market, and other downtown/uptown attractions. One example to pursue is an extended day music festival similar to others held in Southwest Virginia.

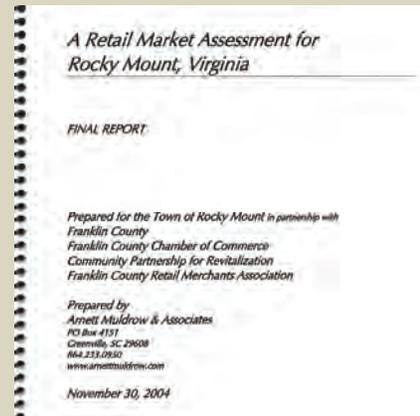


*Opportunity Action Projects for Downtown and Uptown*

*A mixed-use development or boutique hotel on vacant and underutilized land on West Court Street could energize both Downtown and Uptown*



*An updated Retail Market Assessment would be beneficial in understanding business market opportunities and customer trade areas for Rocky Mount*



*Opportunity Action Projects for Downtown and Uptown*



The Virginia Main Street Program offers valuable networking and technical support for energizing small historic downtowns. Even if Rocky Mount is not designated officially as a Main Street Community, the program can strengthen downtown.

A wayfinding system in town can orient visitors and customers



## COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

### Existing Conditions:

North Main Street and U.S. Route 40 East (Tanyard Road) serve as primary gateway and business corridors into Rocky Mount. In the past several years, the U.S. Route 40 East corridor near U.S. Route 220 has been very successful in attracting new businesses. Recent development has included several large stores (Walmart, Kroger, Lowe's) and chain hotels and restaurants, as well as other chain businesses dependent on high traffic volumes. This boost in development to the east has affected businesses in the western portion of the corridor, which is visible in the loss and change of tenants in existing shopping centers on Tanyard Road. In comparison, North Main Street has experienced development for public and community services (police, fire, school, YMCA) and small restaurants, but not for larger business development, like the Route 40 corridor.

### Challenges and Opportunities:

The gateway entrance corridors into Rocky Mount need physical enhancements to retain and attract new development. Both North Main Street and U.S. Route 40 consist of very wide expanses of pavement, multiple curb cuts, multiple signs, limited landscaping and few pedestrian accommodations. As development continues, the corridors can become cluttered and reduce business visibility and vitality. There are two planning approaches to proactively address these corridor development issues. One approach is to consider adopting additional zoning provisions for the commercial corridors that establish development standards for the street frontage (e.g., landscaping of large parking lots and next to the street). Additional

provisions for development along commercial corridors can be helpful in maintaining corridor consistency, attractiveness, and in managing stormwater runoff. Another approach would be to initiate additional public improvements along the entrance corridors to set an example and attract quality investment.

As part of this plan update, the consulting team studied both the North Main Street corridor and the U.S. Route 40 entrance corridors to identify potential opportunities for enhancement and future development. The team noted that the U.S. Route 40 corridor had much higher traffic counts than those in the North Main Street corridor (24,000 ADT and 9,000 ADT respectively in 2013). Thus, the U.S. Route 40 corridor developed with more restaurants, hotels and larger retail stores, while North Main Street catered to smaller businesses, sit-down restaurants, and offices. Although North Main Street does have additional development potential, there are challenges along the corridor that must be addressed for it to be competitive, including multiple residential properties, small lots, aging buildings, and older neighborhoods. However, additional gateway corridor improvements can jump-start development investment and enhance the corridors. These concepts for corridor improvements are shown on the following page.

The two shopping centers on Tanyard Road are important commercial anchors. Special efforts to enhance these two anchor centers could help improve their visibility and attractiveness for business, resulting in less tenant turnover and increased spin-off investment in neighboring properties. While this is a private development initiative, there may be an opportunity to work with property owners and assist them in improvements using a collaborative approach.

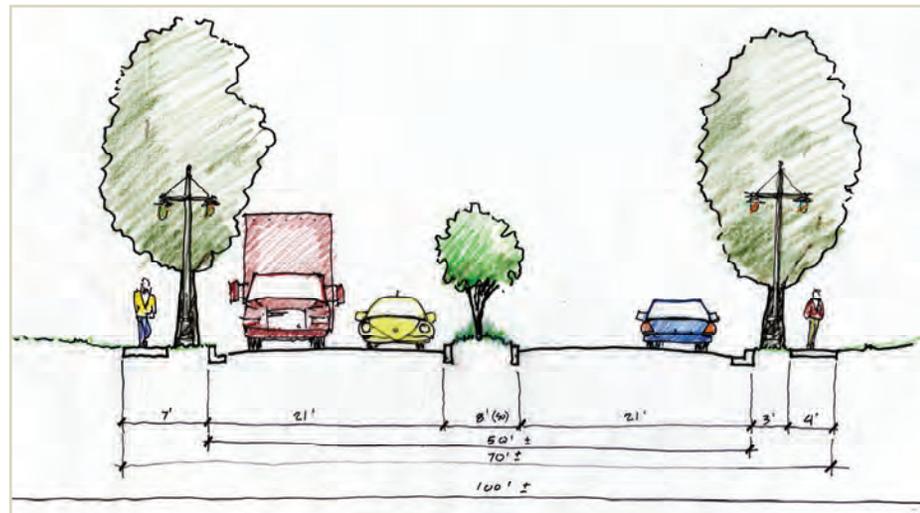




**Opportunity Action Project**  
**Concept for North Main Street with Central Planted Median**

Above: North Main Street has very wide pavement that dominates the views along the corridor. This encourages increased speed of traffic, reduces the visibility of businesses, and deters pedestrian activity. The corridor has existing plantings and sidewalk, but they are lost in the landscape.

Right: A central median with planting can make the corridor more inviting for business, visitors, and pedestrians, while accommodating four lanes for traffic.



*Opportunity Action Project  
Concept for North Main Street with Central Planted Median*



*Above: Additional corridor improvements could include a planted median, coordinated curb cuts, consolidated signage, street frontage and parking lot landscaping, crosswalks, decorative streetlights, and wayfinding.*

*Right: Example of Street with Planted Median and Four Lanes of Traffic*



*Opportunity Action Projects*  
*Gateway Entrance Enhancements to U.S. Route 220 and U.S. Route 40*



*U.S. Route 220 Interchange with Route 40 Looking West to Tanyard Road*

*Left: Existing Conditions, and Below: Potential Improvements.*



*Above: The existing entrance into Rocky Mount from U.S. Route 220 onto U.S. Route 40 lacks consistent and attractive signage and coordinated landscaping and street fixtures that invite visitors into town. The gateway could be enhanced with landscaping, consolidated signage and wayfinding system, and decorative lighting leading to downtown.*

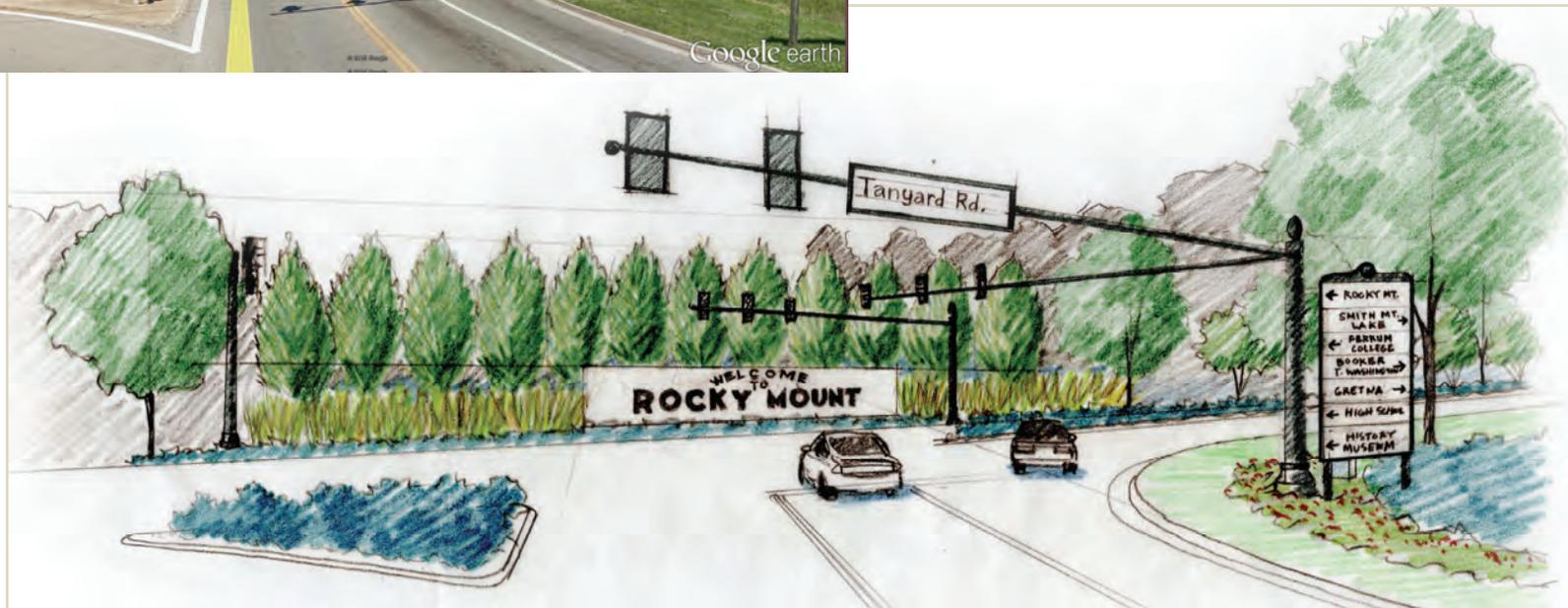


*Opportunity Action Projects  
Gateway Entrance Enhancements to U.S. Route 220 and U.S. Route 40*



*U.S. Route 220 Exit Intersection with Route 40*

*Left: Existing Conditions, and Below: Potential Improvements*



*Above: Visitors entering Rocky Mount from U.S. Route 220 onto Route 40 receive their first impression of Rocky Mount. The existing view is an irregular vacant, graveled lot with multiple signs of varying sizes, colors and information. A new town sign, landscaping and a consolidated, consistent wayfinding system could be very beneficial in welcoming the public and providing information.*



*Shopping centers are corridor commercial anchors. Over time, aging buildings may show deterioration and result in frequently changing tenants. One means of encouraging continued commercial investment is to work with property owners to consider upgrades and alternative business uses. Property owners may need guidance and assistance in upgrading building facades, landscaping, improved signage and lighting.*

*Many older shopping centers have been redeveloped successfully for mixed community and business uses.*

*In Rocky Mount and the region, outdoor recreation is a growing market. Young adults are drawn to specialty businesses and interesting activities. A collaborative approach could be successful in addressing activities for youth and expanding business and recreation opportunities. The example on the right is a revitalized shopping mall in Tennessee that has been refurbished for a hockey arena, community center and other supporting uses. Something similar to this approach – a business recreation cluster – could be an opportunity to explore.*

**Opportunity Action Project**  
**Collaborative Business Redevelopment of Shopping Center**  
**Business Recreation Cluster**



*Example: Revitalized Global Mall at the Crossings, Davidson County, TN for hockey arena, community center, park, and library. Source: Building + Construction Magazine March 2015.*



**INDUSTRY**

**Existing Conditions:**

Rocky Mount has a strong industrial base that is centrally located within town boundaries with excellent access to primary highways and railroad access. Facilities include Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park and adjacent Cox Property, Rocky Mount Office and Technology Park, and large sites (both vacant and with industrial buildings) that could be developed for a large facility. In addition, the Franklin County Commerce Center on U.S. Route 220 provides other opportunities.

In addition to industrial facilities, the Franklin Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise in downtown Rocky Mount assists in providing regional workforce development training and serves as a satellite location for the West Piedmont Small Business Development Center.

Information from the Virginia Employment Commission on employment as of September 2014 is shown on the next two pages. Many of the top fifty employers in Franklin County are in the Town of Rocky Mount. The top five major industry sectors for employment were government, manufacturing, retail trade, health care and construction. Long-term projections by the Virginia Employment Commission for industry and occupation employment in Western Virginia by 2022, show growth in the following industries: construction (26%), health care and social assistance (20%), educational services (14%), and arts, entertainment and recreation (14%). Occupational growth is expected in personal care and service occupations (28%), community and social service occupations (22%), computer and

mathematical occupations (20%), protective service occupations (17%), legal occupations (16%), and education, training and library occupations (15%).

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Until December 2013, the town had a designated Virginia Enterprise Zone which assisted industrial development and job creation efforts in economically distressed areas using state grant incentives. Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) amended the program and the town is no longer eligible for the designation. (The program designates up to thirty zones across the Commonwealth for a twenty-year term on a competitive basis; towns are not individually eligible and must be included as part of a county.) Even though Rocky Mount is not eligible independently, the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program is successful as an economic development tool and it should remain on the community radar screen for any changes and partnering opportunities with Franklin County.

Since 2008, the Town and County have collaborated on expansion of the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park to include 49-acres (Cox property) for future industrial development with premier rail access. Although a tenant has not been recruited, substantial physical infrastructure improvements have been made to the site. Additional site preparation may be needed in the future to meet specific tenant needs. In addition, industrial incentives could be considered to recruit business or improvements using an Industrial Overlay District.



Top 50 Employers in Franklin County 2014

Franklin County

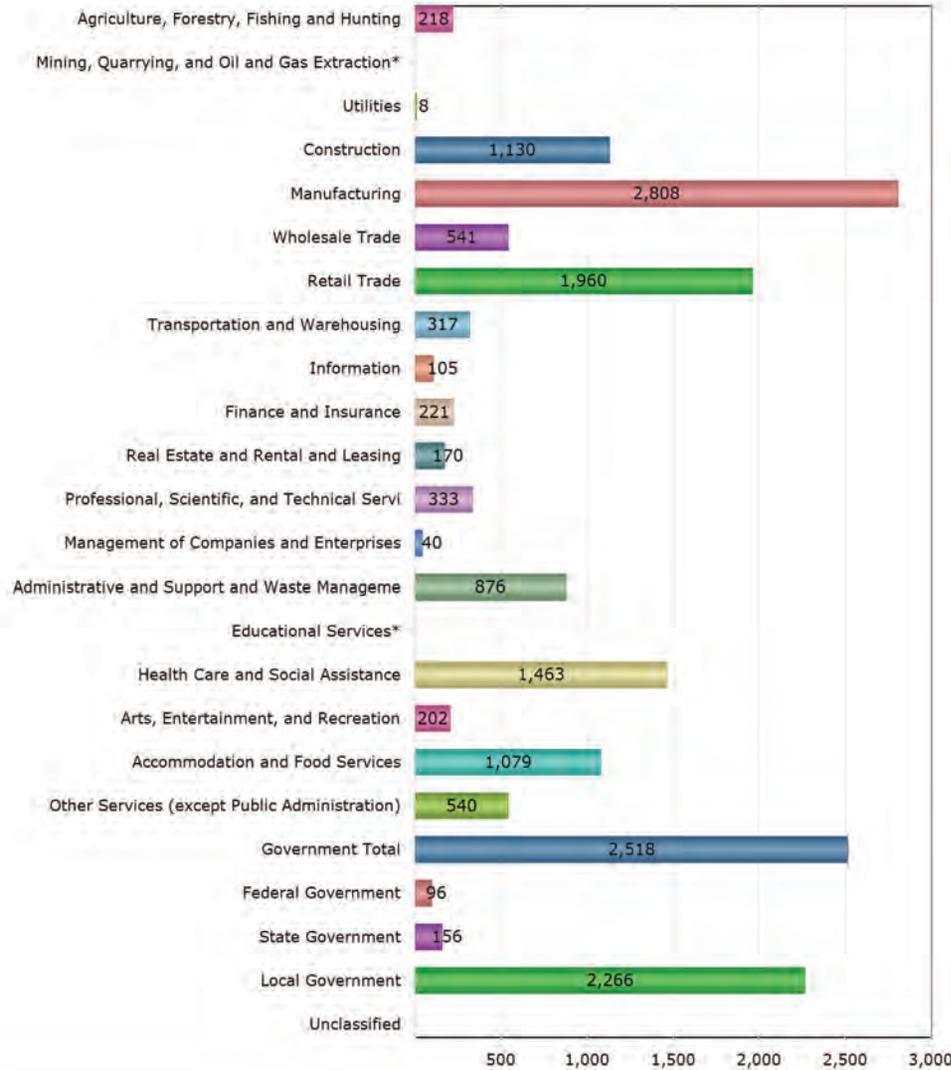
Economic Profile

50 Largest Employers

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Franklin County School Board            | 26. Cundiff Trucking Inc               |
| 2. PlyGem                                  | 27. Newbold Corporation                |
| 3. County of Franklin                      | 28. Redwood Minute Market              |
| 4. Ferrum College                          | 29. American Manpower Technology       |
| 5. Trinity Packaging Corporation           | 30. Procon Inc                         |
| 6. Franklin Memorial Hospital              | 31. Town of Rocky Mount                |
| 7. Kroger                                  | 32. Shively Electrical Compan Inc      |
| 8. Wal Mart                                | 33. Ferfuson Land & Lumber Company     |
| 9. Workforce Unlimited LLC                 | 34. Virginia Home Furnishings Inc      |
| 10. McAirlands Inc                         | 35. Goodwill Industries of the Valleys |
| 11. Empire Food Brokers of Oh Inc          | 36. Ameristaff                         |
| 12. Dairy Queen                            | 37. Step, Inc.                         |
| 13. Willard Construction of Roanoke Valley | 38. Jamison Electric Company           |
| 14. The Uttermost Company                  | 39. 4 Lads LLC                         |
| 15. Warsaw Health Care Center              | 40. Homestead Creamery Inc             |
| 16. Ronile                                 | 41. VDOT                               |
| 17. Innovative Shared Service              | 42. Price Buildings Inc                |
| 18. Trinity Mission of Rocky Mount         | 43. Seven Oaks Landscape & Ha          |
| 19. Lowes' Home Centers, Inc.              | 44. Smith Mountain Lake 4H Center      |
| 20. Fleetwood Homes Inc                    | 45. Carilion Emergency Services Inc    |
| 21. YMCA                                   | 46. Lincoln Harris LLC                 |
| 22. Carilion Healthcare                    | 47. Pinehurst Services LLC             |
| 23. Postal Service                         | 48. PTI                                |
| 24. McDonald's                             | 49. Capps Home Building Ctr Inc        |
| 25. ABH Staffing                           | 50. Food Lion                          |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2014





*Employment by Industry in Franklin County  
2014*

*Source: Virginia Employment Commission,  
September 2014*

**Total: 14,930**



Much of the industry in Rocky Mount has developed in the center of town adjacent to the railroad. Over the years, the industrial core has grown further north, expanding onto undeveloped land. In the future, the Town (and the County) could consider acquisition or improvement of underutilized and vacant properties adjacent to this industrial area to assist in the management and assembly of quality industrial land.

Rocky Mount has been successful in retaining and attracting cluster industries related to building and construction; forestry and wood products; agribusiness, food processing and technology; and advanced manufacturing. All of these sector industries offer opportunities for growth. In addition, tourism, culture and recreation offer potential for the future. A more detailed economic study for the region would be beneficial in planning for and recruiting cluster sector industries that can complement and influence the region's economic vitality. The 2014 *West Piedmont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* and the 2014 *Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy* provide a quality analysis of conditions and outline for priority economic development projects, but do not include an in-depth economic analysis of growing industrial sectors that could benefit the region. These CEDS plans are prepared annually by the Planning District Commissions; future plans should consider including a more informed analysis to help Rocky Mount and Franklin County understand and recruit growing industries in the future.

Rocky Mount does not have access to a natural gas. This has been a deficiency and a significant factor in attracting industrial clients who need a reliable, cost-efficient energy source for operations and production. The Town should continue to work

with natural gas providers in the region and pursue extension of service lines to Rocky Mount.

*Although the Town of Rocky Mount is no longer eligible for the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program as of 2015, there may be a future opportunity to partner with Franklin County for designation.*

**Virginia  
Enterprise  
Zones**

### *Opportunity Action Projects for Industrial Development*

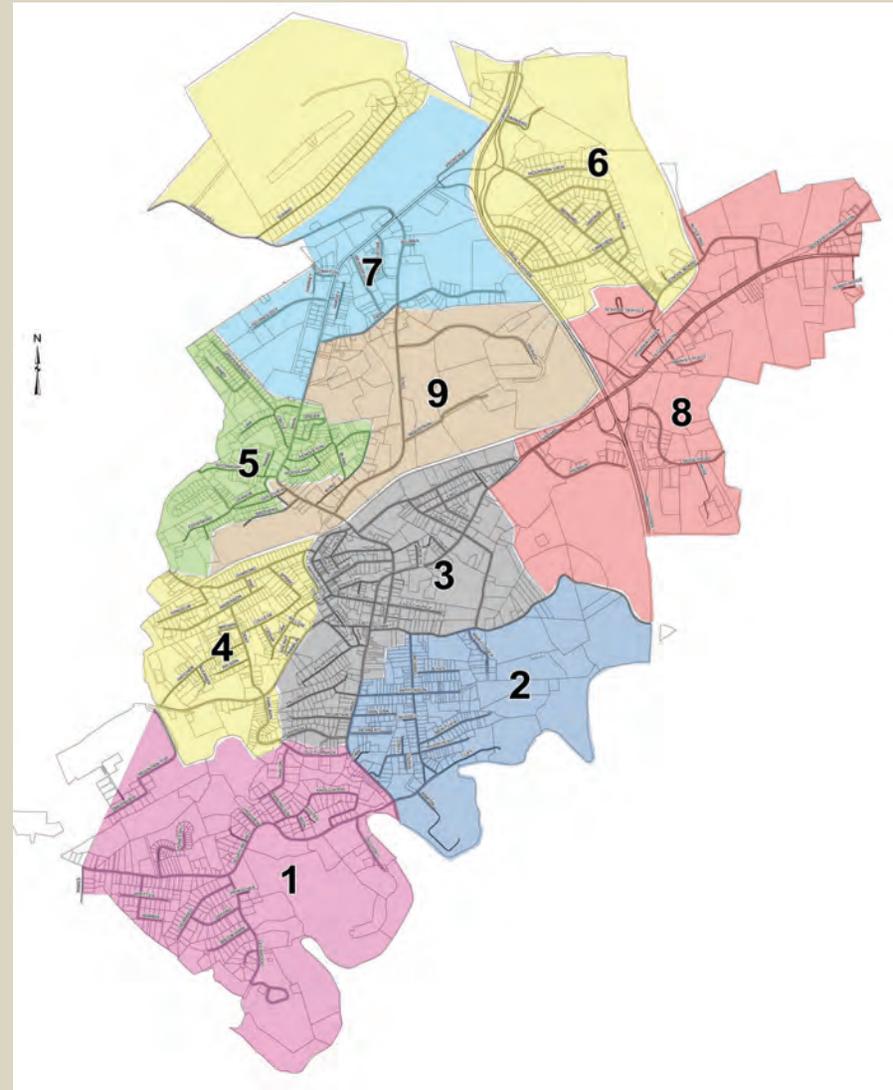
*Future updates to the regional CEDS plan by the Planning District Commission should include study of opportunities for expanded industry clusters.*

**Comprehensive  
Economic  
Development  
Strategy**



*Opportunity Action Projects for Industrial Development*

*Area 9 represents most of the industrial land uses in the Town of Rocky Mount. To provide for continued economic vitality of the industrial base, underutilized and vacant land in this area could be considered for acquisition and improvement. This will assist in redevelopment and in managing and assembling land for quality economic development. An Industrial Overlay District could be considered to provide supplemental incentives for new business or reinvestment by existing business within the district.*



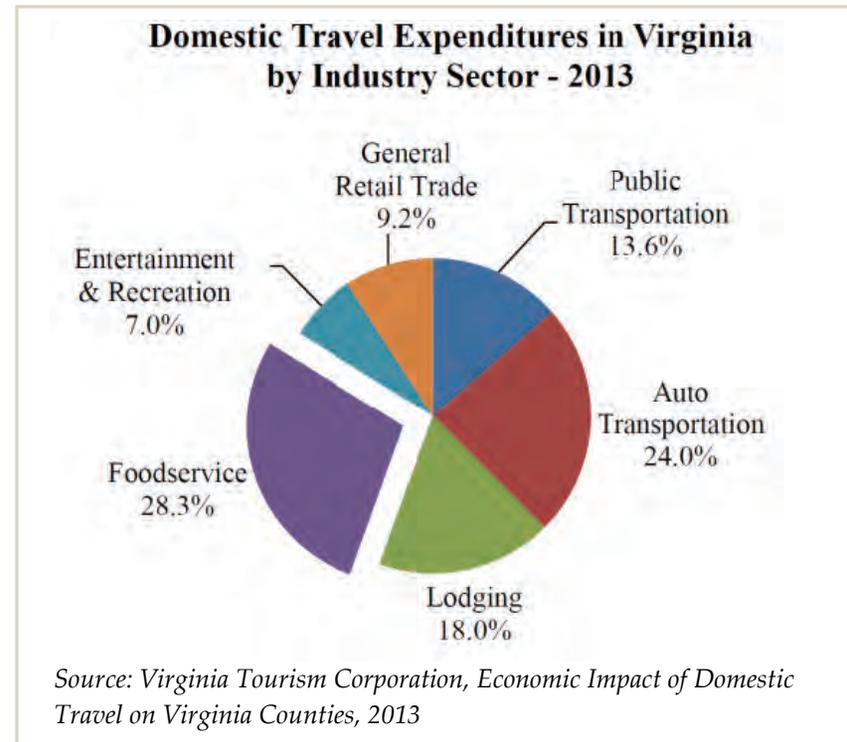
**TOURISM**

**Existing Conditions:**

Some relevant findings of a 2014 study by the U.S. Travel Association for the Virginia Tourism Corporation, *Economic Impact of Domestic Travel on Virginia Counties, 2013* were:

- Domestic travelers spent \$21.5 billion on transportation, lodging, food, amusement and recreation, as well as retail shopping in Virginia in 2013, a 1.4 percent increase from 2012. (Domestic and international travel spending in the U.S. totaled \$887.9 billion.)
- Food services, auto transportation, and lodging were the top three spending categories.
- Travelers spent more than \$1.5 billion on recreation facility user fees, admissions at amusement parks and attractions, attendance at nightclubs, movies, legitimate shows, sports events, and other entertainment and recreation services.
- Domestic travel in Virginia directly supported 213,000 jobs, including full-time and seasonal/part-time positions.
- Specifically in Franklin County, travelers spent \$96.6 Million which was responsible for employment of 1,193 persons, \$3.6 Million in state sales tax receipts and \$2.8 Million in local tax receipts.

In Rocky Mount, tourism has increased substantially with the opening of the Harvester Performance Center in April 2014 and there has been increased consumer spending and generated tax revenue. As of September 2015, the fiscal impact was approximately \$3 Million in increased sales and business activity. Of this, about \$1.3 Million was attributed to food sales and \$110,000 was in direct tax revenue.



**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Rocky Mount has a unique opportunity to capitalize on the success of the Harvester and also the moonshine heritage of Franklin County. There are opportunities, too, to increase economic impacts through outdoor recreation (trails, blueways, biking, etc.). Increased events and complementary facilities will attract more visitors and new businesses to Rocky Mount and strengthen existing businesses. Expanded market research can identify additional tourism opportunities. Adoption of Virginia Tourism Zones can provide beneficial business incentives.



## Public Facilities and Services

### PUBLIC SAFETY

#### Existing Conditions:

##### Police

Rocky Mount operates a staffed police department located in the Public Safety Building on North Main Street. The department has approximately twenty sworn officers and a K-9 unit with patrol and enforcement duties within the corporate limits. It operates within standards established by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice, which provides oversight and management of training and regulations for the criminal justice community in public safety and homeland security.

The Rocky Mount Police Department invests in extensive police officer training for new officers (up to twenty weeks of training) and in continued specialized, technical training for existing officers. The department assists other law enforcement agencies with various safety, crime prevention and intervention programs and participates in a regional Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office.

The department places special emphasis on community-oriented policing and encourages officers to become involved in community activities and building relationships with neighborhood residents, businesses, and schools. As part of this community outreach, the police have assigned officers who work regularly at the high school and the middle school.

##### Fire

Since its inception in the early 1900s as a bucket brigade, community volunteers have staffed the Rocky Mount Fire Department. In 1929, Town Council provided the department with its first piece of equipment, a SeaGrave Fire Truck. At present, the department consists of up to 35 volunteer members (25 active volunteers in 2014). The department operates from two stations (North Main Street and Floyd Street in the Old Municipal Building) to provide fire and emergency services within the corporate limits and within a first response, five-mile service area of Franklin County under a mutual aid agreement.

The department responds to approximately 400-450 calls annually and has an ISO rating of 4. (Insurance Service Office ratings are on scale of 1-10 with a rating of 1 being the best. A community's rating is based on emergency communication systems; fire equipment, staffing and response; water supply; and fire prevention and education programs.)

Fire department officers receive monthly stipends for management and operational duties and volunteers receive a stipend for each emergency call answered. All volunteers must live within the service district and maintain state certification and training (during leisure time). Basic training consists of approximately 160 hours of classroom training and 30 hours of hazardous materials training; this does not include continued education for special emergency training.

##### Rescue

The Franklin County Rescue Squad on West Court Street provides emergency medical response services to residents.



**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Police

Future goals for police activities include an expanded K-9 unit and implementation of expanded community-oriented policing using the Scanning Analysis Response and Assessment Model (SARA). This model has been employed successfully regionally and nationwide to engage and revitalize neighborhoods using collaborative action, community watches, partnered stakeholders, and preventive measures to address problems and build community trust and safety. As part of this expanded public safety outreach, the department desires to devote additional personnel time to working in the elementary schools. Expansion of these programs and staffing will need reorganized or additional facility space at the Public Safety Building, and upgrades to the firing range. Increased ability to track data using GIS and more media communication regarding police outreach efforts will be beneficial to operations.

Fire

Training for volunteers requires personal time commitment and is a challenge in retaining members. Many volunteers use the experience as a stepping-stone to paid positions. However, at present volunteer fire operations are working for Rocky Mount. The department continues to find effective ways to retain and recruit volunteers. In 2015, the department pursued a FEMA grant for a new fire engine and expects to replace it in 2016. Additional grants may be solicited to enhance service needs.

In addition, with 2014 improvements to the County public service radio system, police and fire radio systems need upgrades for communication compatibility.



*Opportunity Action Project  
SARA Problem-Oriented Policing Model*

*Nationwide, police departments use the SARA model for effective community policing to solve problems and reduce criminal activity. The process uses “scanning” to identify and prioritize problems; “analysis” to research conditions, inventory best practices, and identify resources; “response” to define activities for intervention; and “assessment” to check and measure the effectiveness of strategies in resolving the problem. Rocky Mount can expand its community oriented policing approaches to include this model to revitalizes neighborhoods and to proactively and effectively address community problems related to criminal activities.*



## **PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES**

### **Existing Conditions:**

The Rocky Mount Public Works Department manages and maintains public utilities (water and wastewater), local streets, sidewalks, streetlights, public buildings and grounds, community parks, and the town cemetery. In addition, the department is responsible for refuse collection.

Rocky Mount has an active Beautification and Urban Design (BUD) Commission that works with the Virginia Department of Transportation on various gateway and town beautification projects. The commission also recruits private sponsors for beautification projects.

### Water

The town operates a Class II, 2.0 MGD water treatment plant (constructed in 1981) that draws water from the Blackwater River approximately two miles north of the Town limits near U.S. Route 220. The safe water yield of the facility is 1.6 MGD. As of 2015, plant production was at approximately 1 MGD. Water service lines extend throughout Rocky Mount (and also, into Franklin County) and range from two to 24 inches in size.

The water department also maintains five water storage tanks that have a storage capacity of up to 2.8 million gallons. These are located on U.S. Route 220 North and South, Scuffling Hill Road, Bald Knob, and Grassy Hill. The most recent tank on Grassy Hill provides the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park with a high-pressure water source and a capacity of 500,000 gallons. Two old tanks on Pendleton Avenue were removed in 2015.

In recent years, the Town and the County have collaborated with the Western Virginia Water Authority to expand regional water service via a line extension along U.S. Route 220 from Wirtz Road. A joint agreement reached in 2014 (and effective for 30 years) enables extension of the water line and will allow water to pass through the town water and wastewater systems in exchange for increased water capacity (up to 500,000 GPD) and expanded service areas.

New “touch-read” radio water meter readers are installed in the northeastern portion of Rocky Mount; other areas are read manually.

A facility study completed in 2004 by Draper Aden & Associates recommended various improvements for the plant to maintain Virginia Department of Health requirements. Over the years, the Town has undertaken various recommended capital improvements to upgrade the plant.

### Wastewater

In addition, the town operates a Class 1, 2.0 MGD wastewater treatment facility located on Power Dam Road with a discharge to the Pigg River, approximately one mile east of the town limits. The plant was constructed in 1995 and can be expanded to 4 MGD. As of 2015, plant treatment was at approximately 1 MGD. Distribution lines extend throughout Rocky Mount and include six pump stations at Green Oaks Drive, Trail Drive, U.S. Route 220, Powder Mill Road, Altice Mill Road and U.S. Route 122. Over the years, the Town has undertaken various capital improvements to upgrade wastewater treatment plant equipment and controls.



There are plans for a new wastewater force main on U.S. Route 220 at Wirtz Road in Franklin County to Rocky Mount in the future in conjunction with the 2014 joint agreement with the Western Virginia Water Authority and Franklin County. In exchange for increased water capacity, the Town has agreed to provide up to 800,000 GPD of wastewater treatment capacity. In addition, the agreement includes extension of gravity wastewater lines into Franklin County.

### Solid Waste

Rocky Mount uses a regional landfill and provides residential trash collection to residents.

Franklin County operates a regional landfill off U.S. Route 220 on a 425-acre parcel (Franklin County Recreational Park). As of 2015, there were two permitted landfill sites occurring on the property. One 50-acre landfill is on the west side of the North Fork of Chestnut Creek and will be at capacity by 2017. The second landfill consists of 45 acres and is on the east side of the North Fork of Chestnut Creek. The first cell of this six-cell landfill has been in operation since August 2013 and has a projected life span of 40-45 years.

Recycling is available to County or Town residents at bulk collection centers or from private recycling operators.

### Other Public Utilities

Appalachian Power Company furnishes electricity to Rocky Mount.

Roanoke Gas furnishes natural gas to the Roanoke Region and has a line along U.S. Route 220 to Wirtz Road in Franklin County, but does not have a service line to Rocky Mount.

Century Link, Shentel, and B2X, as well as others provide internet services to residents and small businesses. As part of the Regional Backbone Initiative for Southern Virginia, a broadband fiber-optic network (Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation) was extended to Rocky Mount and Franklin County along U.S. Route 220 to serve industrial clients, including the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park.

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

Water and wastewater lines in Rocky Mount are aging, particularly in some of the older parts of town with terra cotta lines. An inventory of lines and replacement priorities will be beneficial in managing replacement of the infrastructure and addressing any fire flow issues.

In addition, plant upgrades to both water and wastewater treatment plants will be needed in the future. At present, facilities are operating at approximately fifty percent of capacity. Past engineering studies have identified physical improvements for repair and upgrades that have been undertaken as the capital budget allows. As growth continues and utility lines extended for new development, additional capacity will be required. Proactive planning for facility improvements and upgrades is essential to providing for and managing the continued growth and prosperity of Rocky Mount. A Utility Master Plan may be an important investment.

Stormwater management will need additional attention in the future with increasing regulatory requirements on stormwater management and discharges. As of 2015, the Franklin County Stormwater Management Ordinance guides development within the Town of Rocky Mount. Large paved surfaces from



parking lots (retail, churches, public facilities, etc.) create increased runoff and pollutants. Consideration should be given to implementing green stormwater management options (rain gardens, natural swales, landscaping, permeable pavement, etc.) in new development to minimize impacts and assist in natural control of stormwater. Increasing development in the Franklin Heights community continues to raise stormwater management issues that need a comprehensive approach in resolving runoff and flooding during rain events.

Upgrading additional water meters for digital technology can reduce labor requirements and improve reading accuracy. The Capital Improvement Plan should include provisions for phased upgrades.

Continued expansion of internet and broadband communication technologies in the region can enhance community life and offer new opportunities for business development, especially with expanded access to fiber-optic networks.

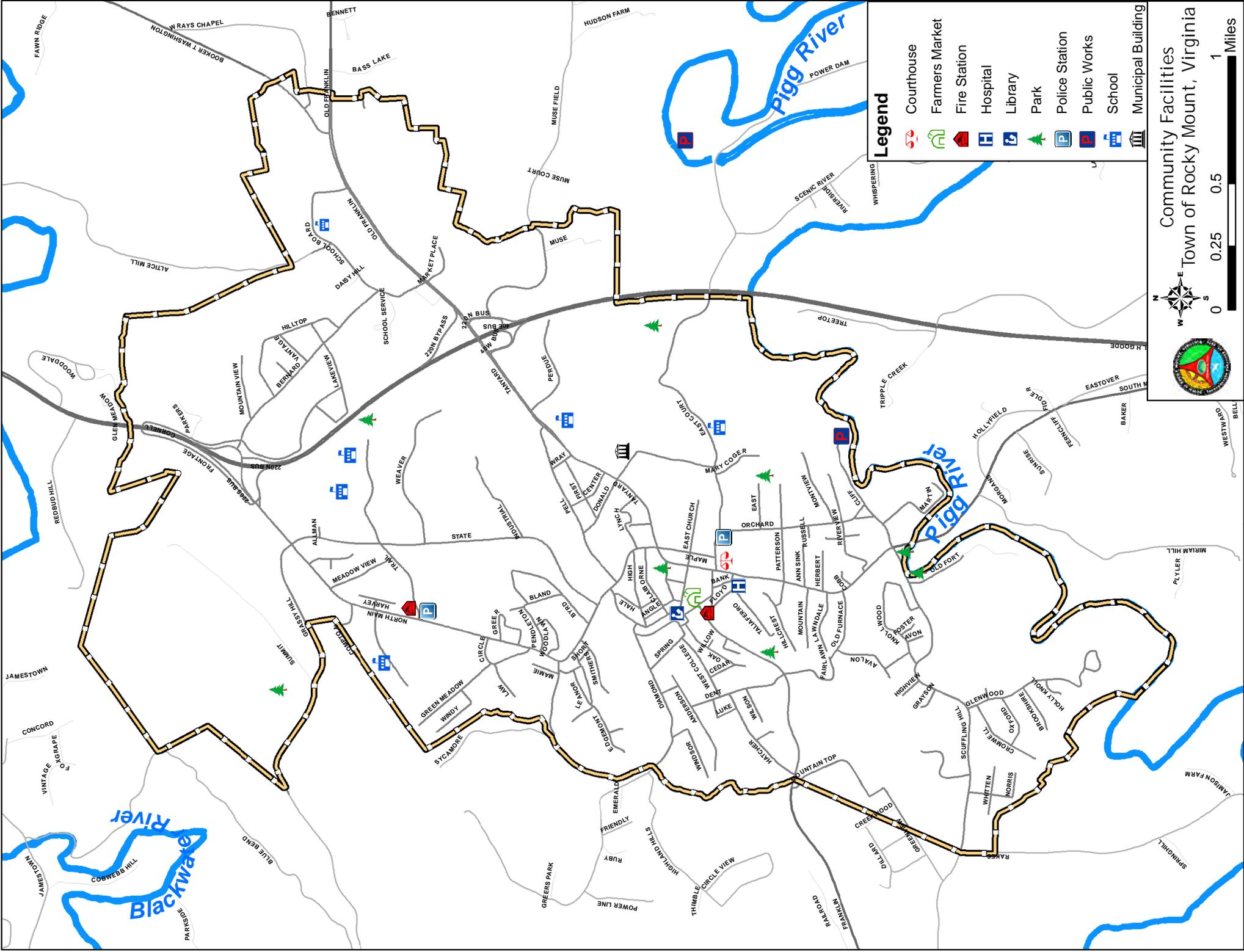
***Opportunity Action Project  
Master Plans for Public Facilities***

*Master Plans can inventory and proactively plan for future needs and upgrades to public facilities. They are used to inform capital improvement programs and ensure capacity to accommodate growth.*

*Rocky Mount can benefit from an updated Master Plan for Water and Wastewater Facilities.*

*A new Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan can provide great insight for existing conditions, and needs for recreational programming and facilities.*





**Legend**

-  Courthouse
-  Farmers Market
-  Fire Station
-  Hospital
-  Library
-  Park
-  Police Station
-  Public Works
-  School
-  Municipal Building

Community Facilities  
Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia







**TRANSPORTATION**

**Existing Conditions:**

Transportation Network and Planning

U.S. Route 220 and U.S. Route 40 are the primary arterial highways serving Rocky Mount and Franklin County.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Six-Year Improvement Program provides short-term recommendations for transportation improvements. One important road improvement project was widening of the bridge and intersection at South Main Street and Scuffling Hill Road. This project was completed in 2014. The 2015-2020 Six-Year Program for the Salem Transportation District includes an additional improvement project for Rocky Mount:

- Realignment of Intersection of U.S. Route 220 and Route 40 at North Main Street, Pell Avenue and Franklin Street. Engineering is underway, with right-of-way acquisition and construction anticipated by 2019.

Long-range transportation planning for the Town of Rocky Mount is part of the *2035 Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan* developed by the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. This plan provides an overview of roadway system deficiencies (safety, operations/maintenance, and capacity) and recommended improvements for the short and long-term. The highest priority projects in the Transportation Plan are:

- U.S. Route 220 and 40 Business at Pell Avenue and Franklin Street – intersection realignment to improve traffic flow, reduce congestion and improve safety; and

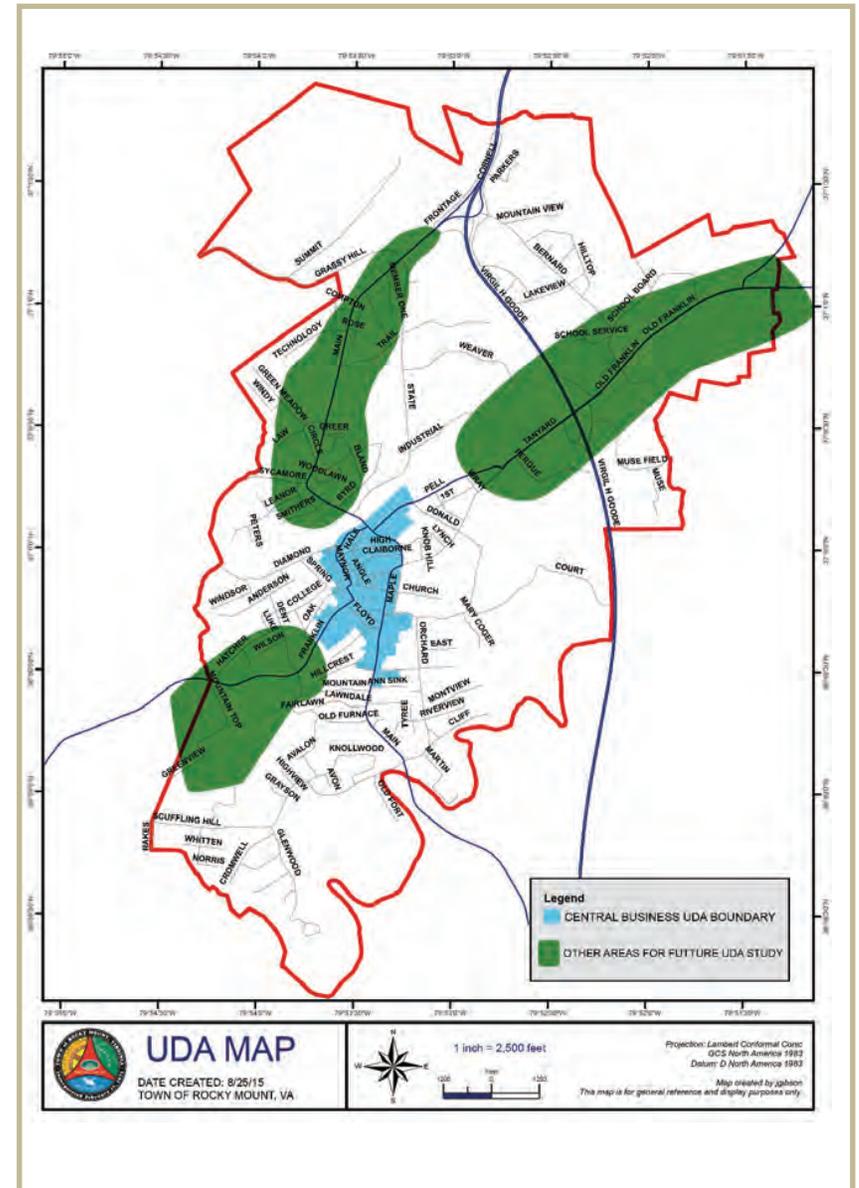
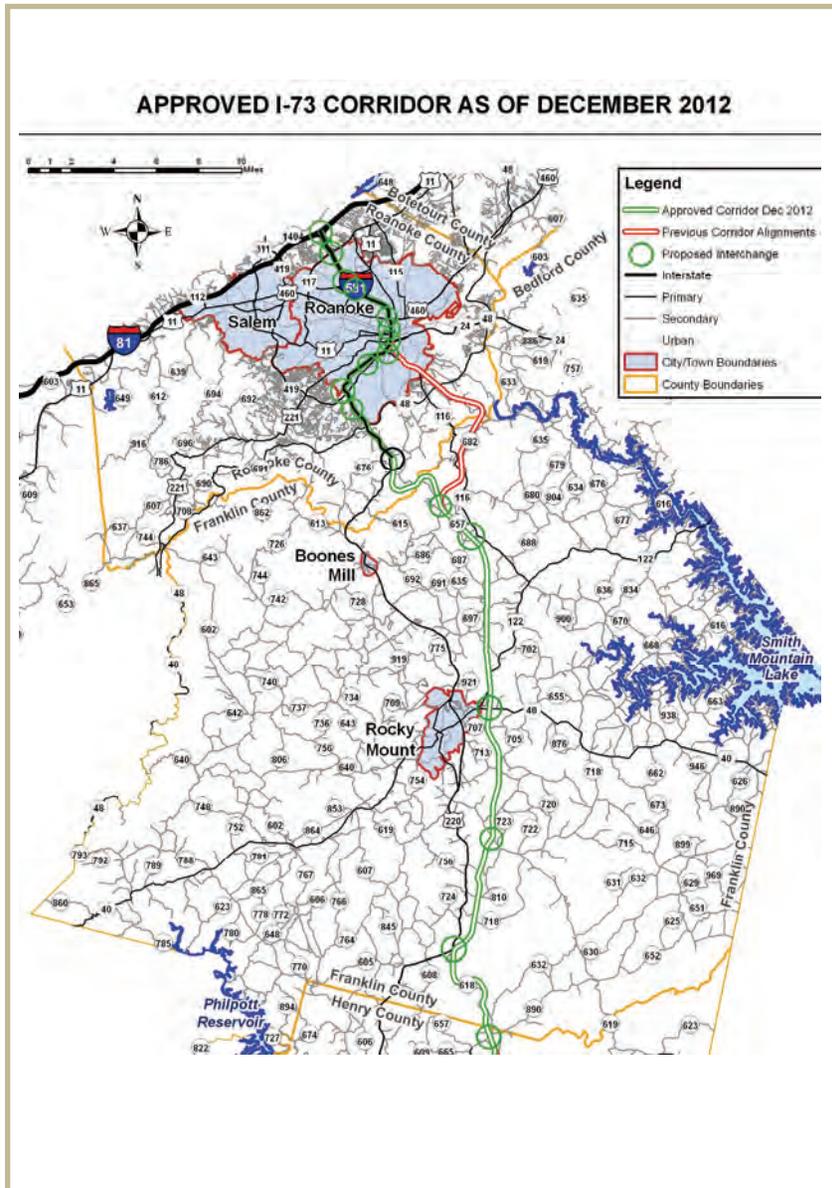
- U.S. Route 40 West at Floyd Avenue – intersection improvements to improve traffic flow.

In addition to these improvements identified in the adopted plan, landscaping and safety enhancements on North Main Street and to the Route 220/Route 40 gateway entrance into Rocky Mount are important to economic growth.

As of 2015, I-73 continues to be pursued as a new transportation corridor in the region. If funded, the proposed alignment is east of Rocky Mount near Route 40 and the Redwood Community. (See Map of Approved Corridor on next page).

In September 2015, the Town adopted an Urban Development Area which encompasses the Central Business District, an area with mixed-use, dense development and available public infrastructure to accommodate new development. This UDA will assist the Town in receiving preferred funding for transportation projects. Two other areas were identified for further study as urban development areas – North Main Street and US Route 40 East.





### Alternative Transportation

Rocky Mount has sidewalks in the central business district and continues to expand sidewalks in other commercial corridors for pedestrian safety.

There are no designated bike lanes or bike routes in Rocky Mount.

In recent years, several off-road trails have been developed, primarily for recreational purposes or linkage to nearby schools. As of 2015 these trails include the Pigg River Heritage Trail near Lynch and Veterans Parks, Oaks at Rakes Tavern Trail near Scuffling Hill Road, Gilley's Park Trail at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, Grassy Hill Trail off of North Main Street, YMCA Loop Trail, and Bald Knob Trail at Franklin County High School.

### Public Transportation

In Rocky Mount, public transportation options are:

- Ferrum Express (operated by Valley Metro in Roanoke) which offers transportation between Ferrum College, Rocky Mount and Roanoke on a Thursday, Friday, and Saturday schedule);
- Southern Area Agency on Aging which provides services to seniors in Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Cities of Martinsville and Danville, Monday through Friday by appointment; and
- Ride Solutions (operated by the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Planning District Commission) which coordinates regional opportunities for commuter ride sharing. Rocky Mount has a park and ride lot at the intersection of U.S. Route 220 and Route 40.

There are no public taxi services operating in Rocky Mount.

### Rail

Norfolk Southern has active rail facilities (Crescent and Coal Corridors) within Rocky Mount that serve local industries. There continues to be discussion regarding expansion of the rail line to serve development in the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park (specifically the former Cox property).



**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Improvements to the transportation system for rural areas continue to be challenges because of limited state funding and competitive community needs. Consequently, every opportunity should be considered to enhance safety and operations using creative and alternative measures such as signage, traffic calming, reduced speeds, etc. With allocated state funding set aside for alternative, multi-modal transportation projects (bicycle, pedestrian, sidewalks to schools, rail, etc.), pursuing these kinds of projects for funding can strengthen public transportation systems and link citizens to community facilities, businesses, services and employers.

Improvements to rail access will be very beneficial to Rocky Mount, especially in terms of future industrial development. In addition, with the increased potential for rail service by Amtrak, there may be an opportunity to link into expanded customer rail service using the restored Rocky Mount Depot on Franklin Street adjacent to the railroad.

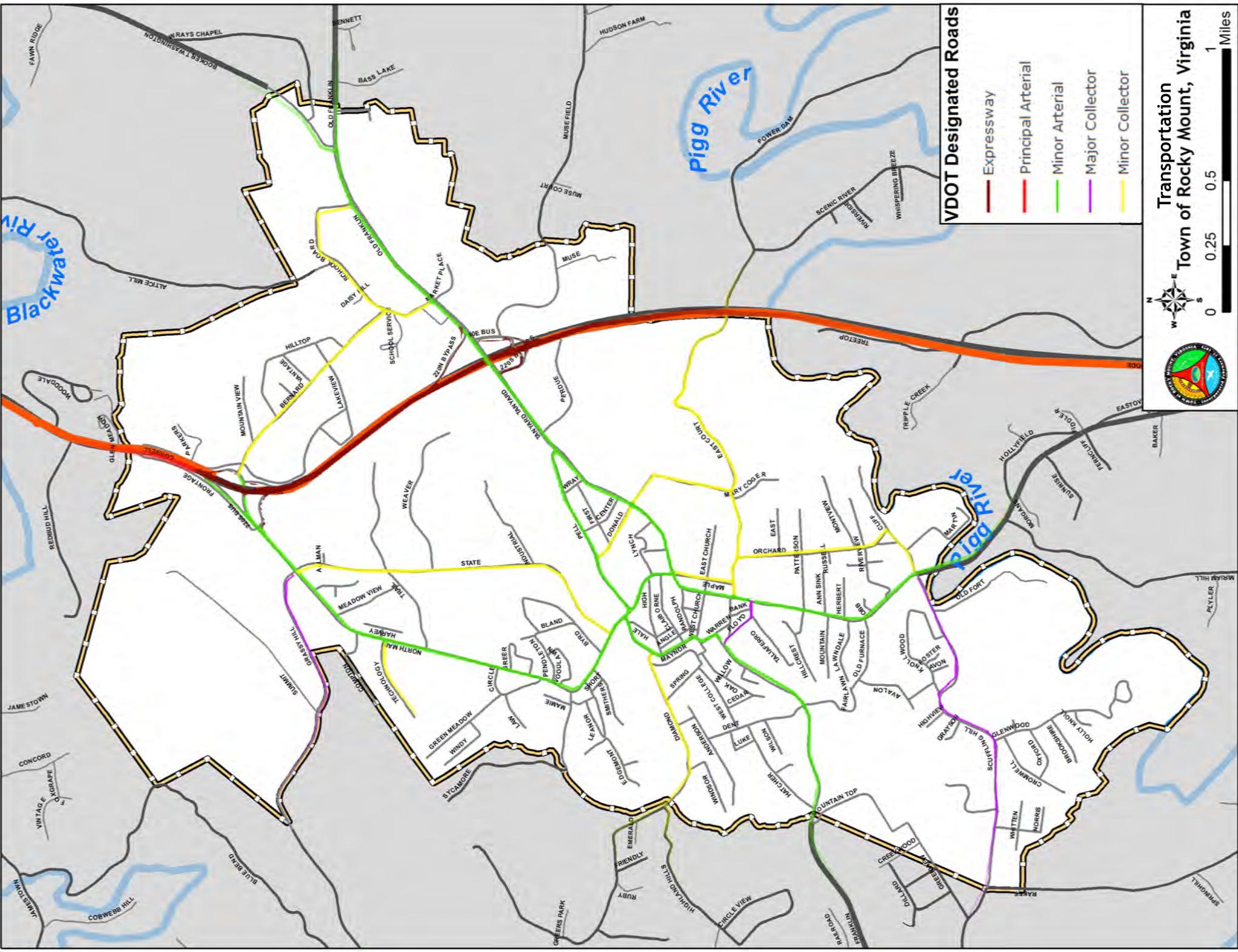
Reliable and convenient transportation options for residents without cars continue to be significant challenges. This is a regional issue and access needs improvement. Collaboration among multiple resource partners will be required. Continued improvements to the sidewalk network in Rocky Mount will be beneficial in improving access.

*Opportunity Action Project  
Transportation Alternatives Options*



*There are many opportunities to enhance transportation in Rocky Mount, energize community activities, and enhance the quality of life for residents. Increased access to sidewalks, trails, and bicycle routes bring health and recreational benefits. In addition, they can link important business and community services, as well as invite tourism.*





**VDOT Designated Roads**

- Expressway
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

**Transportation**  
**Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia**

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

## **RECREATION**

### **Existing Conditions:**

While Rocky Mount has several parks within the town limits, it does not operate a parks and recreation program and does not have a dedicated budget for programmed activities and regular facility upgrades. Existing park facilities include:

- Mary Elizabeth Park (3 acres in central business district) – picnic pavilion and facilities, playground, tennis courts, open space
- Mary Bethune Park (2.5 acres) – picnic pavilion and facilities, playground, open space, interpretive walk
- Veterans Park (0.5 acre) – memorial, trail, benches
- Vernon Lynch Park (6 acres) – playground, fishing, picnic facilities, canoe/kayak put-in on Pigg River
- Gilley's Park (7.5 acres) – fishing, walking, picnic facilities and pavilion
- Celeste Park (6.6 acres) – undeveloped trails and natural areas, improved parking lot
- Bald Knob Natural Area Preserve (75 acres) – natural area under the stewardship of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage.
- Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve (1,440 acres) – natural area under the stewardship of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage. A portion of the preserve lies in the Town; a majority of the acreage lies in Franklin County.

Other private recreational facilities include Lion's Field (1.5 acres), YMCA Community Park (17 acres), and Rocky Mount

Rotary Skate Park (2 acres). In addition, the five schools within the town limits host open space, recreational fields, game courts, gyms, and playground areas.

Franklin County offers a diverse recreational program available to town and county residents (over 650 acres of public land, trails, recreational fields, and a skate park). The County operates a community park at Smith Mountain Lake that offers a beach for swimming and other activities. The Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserve off of North Main Street has 6.6 miles of walking trails and a trailhead parking lot accessed from Technology Drive. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation manages the natural area.

Smith Mountain Lake (33,000 acres and 500 miles of shoreline) and the Philpott Reservoir and Recreation Area (Corps of Engineers) are within thirty minutes of Rocky Mount, offering boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and picnic facilities.

The *2013 Virginia Outdoors Plan* developed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation found that there was a strong public interest in increasing hiking trails and enhancing trail connectivity, including connections to regional water trails. In addition there was a strong interest in preserving scenic natural areas for conservation, especially in Franklin County. Regional priorities identified by the plan included hiking and biking trails, waterway trails, and scenic resource protection to increase the "blue-green infrastructure." Also, the plan noted that there was a need for a quantifiable economic study of the benefits of and opportunities for outdoor recreation and ecotourism in the region.



**Challenges and Opportunities:**

The parks in Rocky Mount are community assets that are worth investing in. They offer open space and recreational amenities to adjacent neighborhoods and to visitors. There is a great opportunity to increase connectivity between parks and promote the outdoors and the natural amenities of Rocky Mount. Outdoor recreation is a growing trend in the region that the Town can capitalize on.

Development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan could provide a beneficial overview of existing facilities, an understanding of community and facility improvement needs, opportunities for growth/expansion or shared collaboration, and potential management options for operating a successful and profitable parks system. Also, increased marketing materials will help.

Information in the 2013 Virginia Outdoors Plan indicated that Rocky Mount spends approximately \$22 per capita on recreation, compared with \$16 per capita in Franklin County, \$63 per capita statewide, \$85 per capita in Martinsville and \$132 per capita in Danville. Trail connections to Franklin County Park Trails (e.g. Waid Park) can enhance recreational experiences. Further study of economic benefits and recreation could be very helpful in helping to understand and justify increased expenditures and economic outcomes.

The Pigg River is eligible as scenic river and offers an opportunity for expanded blueway activities such as canoeing, kayaking, outdoor amphitheatre, playground, picnic facilities, visitor center, and adjacent hiking trails. Previous studies with Franklin County for removing the power dam for a kayak park

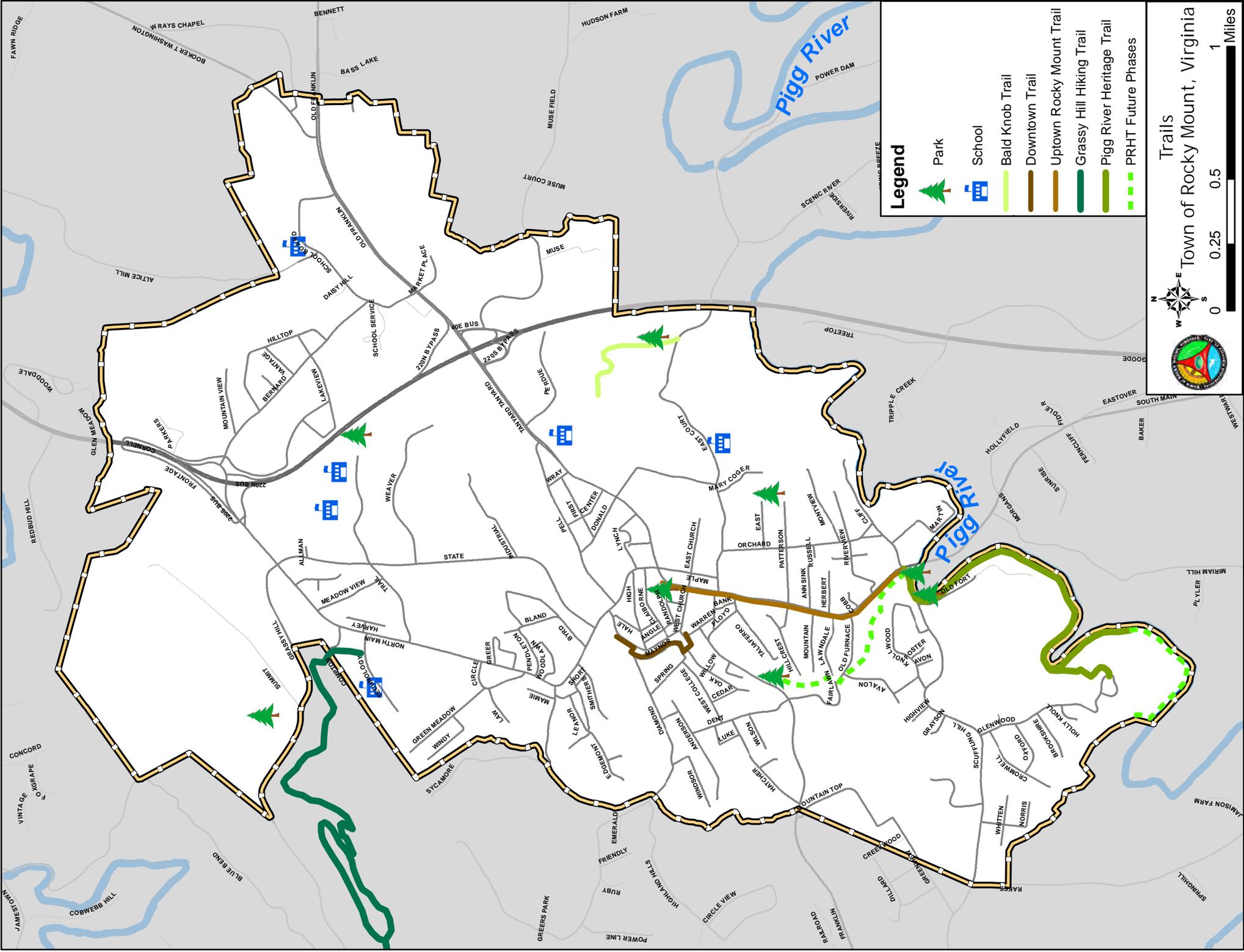
should be revisited and collaboration continued. This initiative could boost the outdoor recreation potential for the region and enhance economic development.

*Opportunity Action Project  
Park and Recreation Master Plan*

*Master Plans can inventory and proactively plan for future needs and upgrades to public facilities. They are used to inform capital improvement programs and ensure capacity to accommodate growth.*

*A new Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan can provide great insight for existing conditions, and needs for recreational programming and facilities.*





**Legend**

-  Park
-  School
-  Bald Knob Trail
-  Downtown Trail
-  Uptown Rocky Mount Trail
-  Grassy Hill Hiking Trail
-  Pigg River Heritage Trail
-  PRHT Future Phases

**Trails**

Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia



**Environment**

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Existing Conditions:**

Natural forested and open lands surround Rocky Mount. Rural agricultural vistas are prominent in both the town and the county, creating a scenic environment. The natural environment is one of the valued qualities of Rocky Mount that contribute significantly to the life of residents.

Water / Rivers

Rocky Mount lies within the Roanoke River Basin Watershed (extends from Roanoke to Danville). The Blackwater River, a tributary to the Roanoke River, serves a primary water supply source with an intake north of Rocky Mount off of Route 122.

The Pigg River, considered worthy of designation as a scenic river, runs through town offering river access points and blueway opportunities.

Natural Areas

Two natural areas of special significance inside the limits of the Town of Rocky Mount are Bald Knob and Grassy Hill (which lies mostly in Franklin County). The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation identify both of these areas as Natural Heritage Areas. The agency owns and manages a network of recreational trails on Grassy Hill. Some of Bald Knob, the natural resource where Rocky Mount derived its name, is under private ownership; however, in 2015 the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation purchased some of the special natural land for conservation and the development of the Bald Knob Natural Area Preserve for public recreation.

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

Since the Blackwater River, a part of the Roanoke River Basin, serves as a public water supply source for Rocky Mount, maintenance of good water quality is important for the future. Increased upstream development and non-point source runoff continue to challenge the watershed. Consequently, protection of lands adjacent to river corridors and effective management of land development and discharges using best practices are all important efforts necessary to ensuring a safe and sufficient water supply for the long-term. Local community outreach on regional water quality issues and responsible land planning will assist in maintaining desired water quality standards.

Bald Knob has always been a natural asset for Rocky Mount and should continue to be valued for its natural and scenic features. Designating Bald Knob as a Natural Heritage Area and carefully working with Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation on appropriate recreational uses (i.e. trails, interpretation, etc.) can be an outdoor recreation draw for Rocky Mount. Increased greenway connections here and in other areas will enhance recreation and advocate conservation.

*Opportunity Action Project  
Bald Knob  
Natural Area Preserve*

*Bald Knob is an important landmark and natural asset in Rocky Mount. Preservation and conservation actions can add to outdoor recreation*



## HISTORIC RESOURCES

### Existing Conditions:

Rocky Mount has multiple properties listed on the Virginia and National Register of Historic Places.

Downtown and Uptown are part of the *Rocky Mount National Register Historic District*. The district includes many prominent architectural buildings, including the Franklin County Courthouse (1909), Rocky Mount Municipal Building (1923), several churches, railroad depot, post office, cemetery, park, and multiple commercial buildings and residences. Orchard Avenue was added to the Rocky Mount Historic District in 2008 and includes residential houses built by persons making significant civic contributions to Rocky Mount.

Individual properties listed on the National Register include:

- *The Farm* – 18<sup>th</sup> Century domestic estate affiliated with Washington Iron Works. It is significant because of its association with antebellum charcoal iron industry in Virginia. The house served as the first courthouse in Franklin County.
- *Washington Iron Furnace* – The 1770 furnace is one of the oldest and best-preserved iron furnaces in Virginia. It is a landmark on the Pigg River Heritage Trail.
- *Woods Mead House* – Dating to about 1830, this vernacular and picturesque house is a landmark in Rocky Mount. It is on Mount Pleasant, one of the two main hills in town.
- *Greer House* – 1861 Greek Revival style home of Dr. Thomas Bailey Greer.

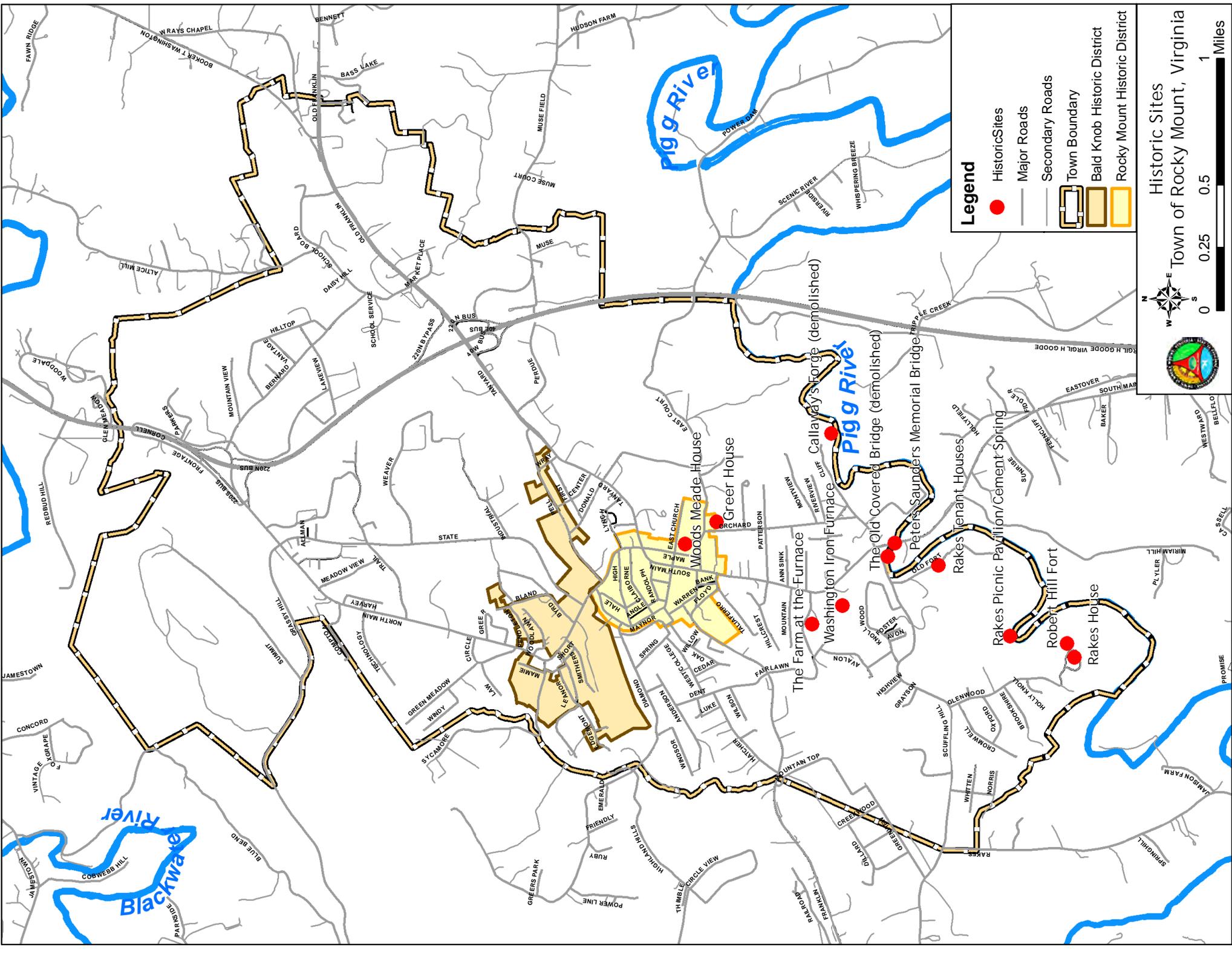
In 2008, a field reconnaissance survey and Preliminary Information Form was completed for a second historic district in Rocky Mount. The *Bald Knob Historic District* located along Pell Avenue and east and west of North Main Street was significant for the early twentieth-century workers housing associated with three factories/mills and later residential and commercial buildings adjacent to the Rocky Mount Historic District. A formal listing of the district was not pursued, but the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission found it to be “eligible for the Virginia and National Register.”

The *Warren Street Community* of Rocky Mount is an additional historic area of importance. It is included within the Rocky Mount National Register District and is significant for contributions as an African-American settlement and business district in Franklin County.

### Challenges and Opportunities:

The historic fabric of the central business district of Rocky Mount and its surrounding older neighborhoods provide a distinct community ambience. These assets draw visitors and reinforce the community as a special place. Expansion of the Pigg River Heritage Trail and other recreational trail connections can raise awareness. Care should be given to encourage sensitive rehabilitation of buildings and compatible building and site development for any new development. Many communities employ local historic districts to maintain architectural character and harmony. As Rocky Mount continues to prosper, consideration should be given to adopting preservation tools that will further recognition and maintenance of the special historic character and landmark features.





**Legend**

- Historic Sites
- Major Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Town Boundary
- Bald Knob Historic District
- Rocky Mount Historic District


  
 0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles


  
 Historic Sites  
 Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia

## Land Use and Development

### LAND USE

#### Existing Conditions:

Rocky Mount has a balanced mixture of land uses that have been very successful in maintaining quality residential neighborhoods and sustaining economic activities for the long-term. Approximately 50% of the existing land is designated for residential or residential/agriculture use; approximately 30% is designated for industry and commercial; 10% is designated for institutional and public facilities; and 10% is designated for parks and open space.

In 2015, the Town designated the Central Business District as an Urban Development Area (UDA). This area meets the criteria established by the Commonwealth of Virginia for housing density, public infrastructure, and mixed residential and commercial land uses.

In updating the Comprehensive Plan in 2007, planners conducted a residential build-out analysis for residentially zoned properties in Rocky Mount. At that time, they estimated that approximately one-third of the residential land in Rocky Mount was developed to capacity and there was potential to develop up to 6,100-6,500 additional residential units (based on zoning provisions). In 2013, the number of housing units in Rocky Mount was approximately 2,600. For the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan update, the project team did not pursue additional analyses; there is sufficient land available to accommodate future residential growth, and housing development has slowed since 2007.

#### Challenges and Opportunities:

The Future Land Use Map on the following page generally reflects continuation of similar land use development patterns recommended by the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. As a built community that is the center of commerce for the County, the direction for Rocky Mount in the future is to strengthen new residential housing opportunities and neighborhoods and to expand industry and commercial development in the center of town and along primary arterial corridors. The most important factor for future development will be guiding how the development occurs, particularly in terms of density and development standards established by zoning and subdivision ordinances.

The recommended Future Land Use Categories are:

- Residential / Agricultural – Low to medium density residential, 1-8 dwelling units per acre, and small to medium-sized lots for single family, two family and other compatible uses.
- Residential – Medium to high density residential, 8 dwelling units or more per acre, with small lots for single family, two family, multifamily development and neighborhood businesses (where appropriate).
- Professional Office / Business – Planned office and business development with associated standards for landscaping, parking, access for a business park appearance.
- General Business – Commercial and mixed-use development along highway corridors.



- Central Business District – Traditional, historic downtown and uptown business district with mixture of residential, business and governmental uses.
- Industrial – Light industry and manufacturing with flexible lot and development requirements and standards for street frontages and buffering of certain objectionable operations.
- Parks and Open Space – Public parks or areas to be preserved in their natural condition.
- Institutional District – Schools, governmental centers, and public properties.

### LAND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

#### Existing Conditions:

The zoning code for Rocky Mount was adopted in 1992 and has been revised over the years to address community needs. Provisions include stormwater management regulations.

The subdivision code was adopted in 1995 and substantially revised in 2002.

Erosion and sediment control provisions are included in the Environment Section of the Town Code.

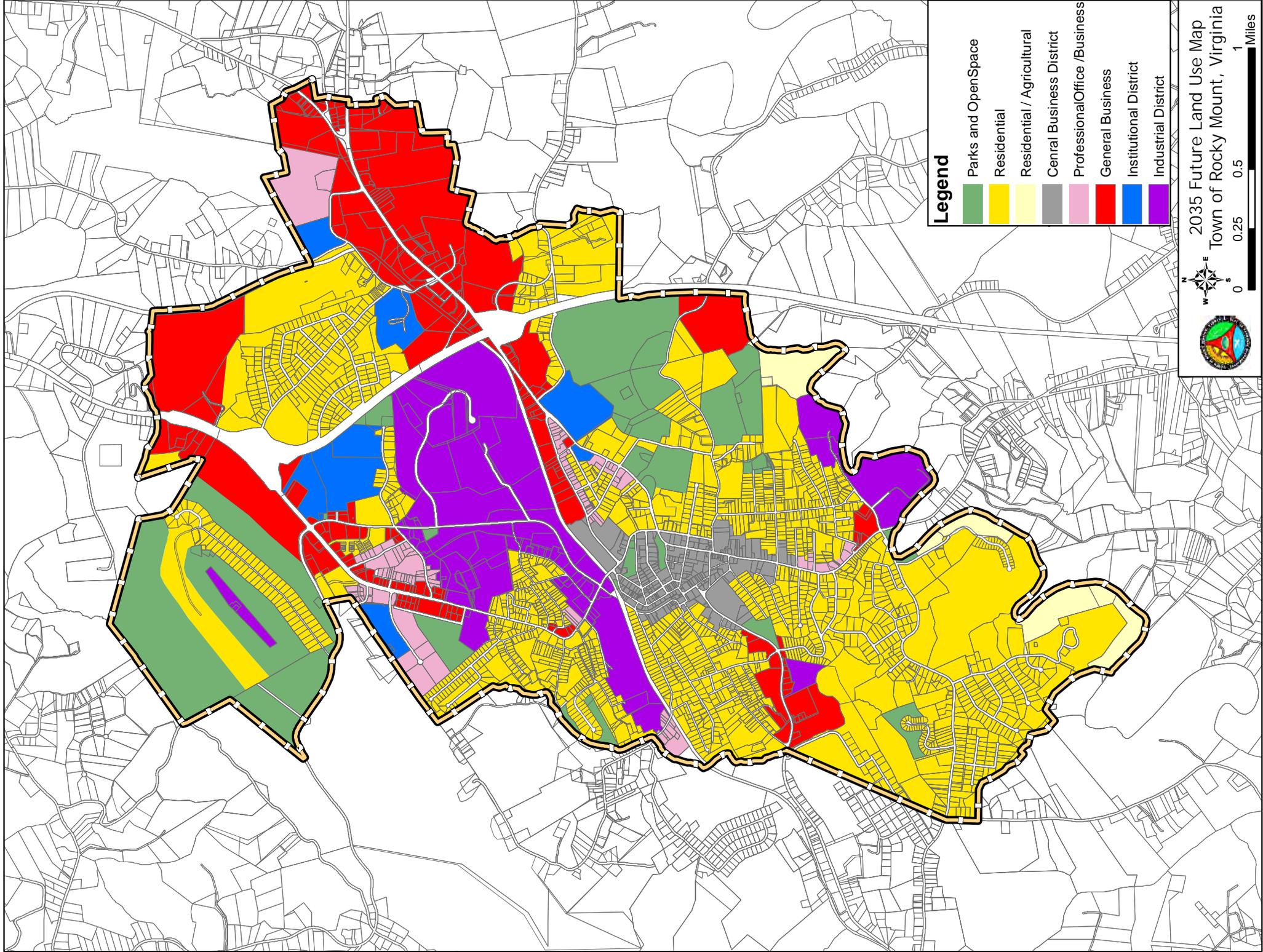
#### Challenges and Opportunities:

Amendments to the zoning code over the years make the existing document hard to navigate. In addition, many of the definitions, uses, and development standards need to be updated. Many codes developed today are simplified and flexible in regulating uses, and employ development standards to achieve the best quality development. Many of the development standards and guidelines in the existing code are

unclear. While this leaves room for flexibility, it also allows room for omission. It is important to have easy customer use, equitable provisions, and consistent, clear administration.

The code needs to be updated with respect to Planned Unit Development Districts. The existing Residential Planned Unit Development District does not have sufficient development design standards and needs to include flexibility so that developers can creatively design a proposed development and be able to use the district as a viable development option. In addition, a new Mixed-Use Planned Development District is under consideration now to promote development of mixed residential and commercial development on a single site. Typically, planned unit developments have minimum acreages to encourage development of a sufficient size to meet community goals for quality design, open space, suitable land uses, etc.





### Implementing the Comprehensive Plan

This section provides an overview of policy recommendations, action strategies, and project initiatives to engage public and private partners and implement the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. There must be many partners committed to working toward future goals. These include both public and private interests. Local government does not have the financial resources or the staffing to take on all of the issues and challenges discussed in this plan; regional partnerships and leadership are essential. Town officials can guide public investment and land development decisions, but developers, citizens, and private interests must assist in furthering the strategies identified herein. Collaboration with Franklin County and state agencies is essential to moving this plan forward.

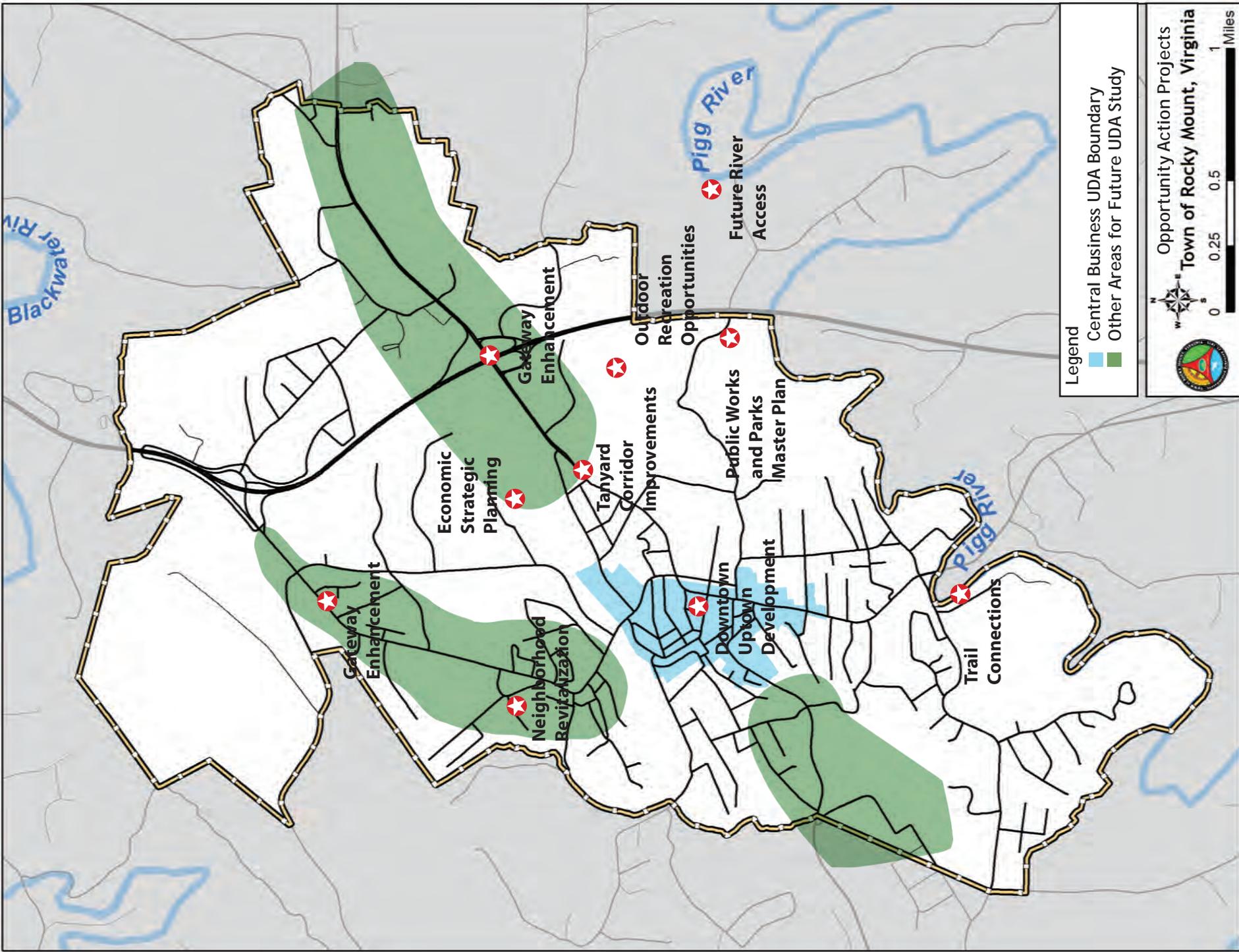
#### OPPORTUNITY ACTION PROJECTS

As a means of implementing this long-range plan, several opportunity action projects discussed throughout this document will further the 2035 Vision for Rocky Mount. These potential projects can jump-start implementation and engage important partners. Some of these key initiatives are described below and shown on the Opportunity Action Projects Implementation Map on the following page.

- Gateway Corridor Improvements – Enhance gateways and wayfinding on North Main Street and Routes 220 and 40.
- Tanyard Road Corridor Improvements – Beautify corridor, expand campus, and improve safety of crosswalk at Franklin County High School Campus; work with shopping center owners for potential reinvestment and perhaps a Business Recreation Cluster using public-private model.

- Economic Development Strategic Plan – Develop proactive strategy for redeveloping underutilized and vacant lands to further industrial and commercial development. Develop a “brand” for Rocky Mount and recruit businesses and customers using coordinated marketing and outreach. Strengthen arts and culture activities through events, business development, and advancing public art.
- Community and Neighborhood Revitalization Plans – Encourage additional studies, investment and revitalization of North Main Street, US Route 40 East, and Downtown/Uptown.
- Alternative Transportation Enhancements – Increase connections for trail, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- Outdoor Recreation Initiatives – Pursue greenway connections for Bald Knob Natural Heritage Area and Pigg River access, as well as supporting economic feasibility impact study for outdoor recreation.
- Master Plans for Public Facilities – Develop master plans for public works and park facilities to proactively plan for facility needs and community growth
- Community-Oriented Policing – Implement SARA Model for community partnerships and problem solving.
- Heritage Tourism and Ecotourism - Encourage economic development through promotion of community architecture, history and environment.
- Land Use Management Tools – Update management ordinances to further the plan and guide development.





**Legend**

- Central Business UDA Boundary
- Other Areas for Future UDA Study



Opportunity Action Projects  
 Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia  
 0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

**2035 IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

The following matrix provides recommended public policies and strategies to further the 2035 Vision for Rocky Mount. The matrix is a guide and a management tool to help achieve the desired long-term goals for the community; it is not a public directive. Timeframes are flexible and implementation will depend on community priorities, available funding, and leadership from both the public and private sectors. Successful implementation requires multiple partners, collaborative discussion, and participative resources.

Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Housing and Community		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy HC1	Encourage residential development with water and sewer in areas targeted for growth and new development that meets the community needs for diverse housing types and enhances the attractiveness and quality of residential neighborhoods.				
Strategy 1	Recruit and work with interested developers to invest in attractive, new housing options in the Town of Rocky Mount, in particular - new market rate single-family, attached housing, independent senior living, and loft apartments (in central business district).	■	■	■	Community Development Planning Commission Developers Residents
Strategy 2	Encourage new residential development in existing neighborhoods that is compatible with and fits with the built neighborhood architecture and development patterns.		■	■	Community Development Planning Commission Developers Residents
Strategy 3	Proactively plan for new residential development by undertaking a Housing Strategic Plan to assess market conditions and opportunities, identify best areas for development or redevelopment, and define desired types and characteristics of housing development.	■			Community Development Planning Commission Advisory Committee VHDA



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Housing and Community		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy HC2	Address substandard housing conditions using methods that encourage cooperative approaches with property owners to improve blighted properties and neighborhoods.				
Strategy 1	Undertake a study of housing conditions and community issues in the North Main Street Corridor to identify feasible strategies to address community challenges and revitalize the neighborhoods and the gateway entrance corridor. Consider financial and technical assistance from Virginia Housing and Community Development (Planning Grant Program) and Virginia Housing Development Authority (REACH Virginia Program).	■			Community Development Planning Commission Neighborhood Residents Police Community Service Agencies
Policy HC3	Encourage and support healthy living initiatives that improve the health and quality of life for residents.				
Strategy 1	Support United Way and partnering service agencies in facilitating the <i>Healthy Franklin County Initiative</i> to promote healthy lifestyles and address obesity and related chronic diseases in Rocky Mount and Franklin County.	■			Community Development United Way Other Community Service Partners
Strategy 2	Work cooperatively with Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital and other health care providers to retain and recruit quality health care facilities and programs in Rocky Mount. Assist in encouraging healthy initiatives in facilities (e.g. tree walk within developments).	■	■	■	Community Development Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital Free Clinic United Way
Strategy 3	Recruit a small grocery store to serve the U.S. Route 40 West business corridor and the North Main Corridor.	■			Community Development Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn Franklin County



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Housing and Community		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Strategy 4	Encourage development of new sidewalks in public and private projects, particularly where connections are needed.	■	■		Community Development Planning Commission VDOT
Strategy 5	Expand existing greenways and develop new greenway connections.	■	■	■	Community Development Planning Commission VDOT
<b>Policy HC4</b>	<b>Support and nurture existing and future educational opportunities and facilities in Rocky Mount.</b>				
Strategy 1	Maintain communication and a cooperative relationship with the schools in Rocky Mount, particularly as it relates to youth activities, lifelong education, and overall community health and well-being.	■	■	■	Town Administration Planning Commission Franklin County School Superintendent and Principals
Strategy 2	Pursue pedestrian improvements to Tanyard Road near the high school that will improve safety, beautify the gateway corridor, and enhance the high school campus.		■		Community Development Franklin County School System VDOT
Strategy 3	Work with shopping center owners to consider revitalization options. Identify benchmark projects undertaken in other communities and potential funding options for implementation.	■			Community Development Business Owner(s) Economic Development Authority High School (and Students) VA Dept. Recreation and Conservation



<b>Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix</b>					
<b>Economy</b>		<b>Estimated Timeframe</b>			<b>Implementing Partners</b>
		<b>1-5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10 +</b>	
Policy E1	Encourage new development initiatives that revitalize downtown and uptown and further the unique sense of place that characterizes the central business district of Rocky Mount.				
Strategy 1	Develop and implement a wayfinding system for Rocky Mount that effectively guides residents and visitors to important destinations in uptown and downtown. Use adopted community brand to enhance marketing of the business district.	■			Community Development CBD Businesses Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn
Strategy 2	Encourage and promote development of upper-story residential lofts in downtown and uptown. Recruit private developers by creating an inventory of potential properties for residential use and promoting available incentives for development.	■	■		Community Development Realtors Property Owners
Strategy 3	Revisit the opportunities available under the Virginia Main Street Program; in particular, become familiar with the technical tools and assistance that can further the revitalization of uptown and downtown. Work with businesses and organizations to determine best strategies for implementing appropriate tools and methods.	■			Community Development Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn CBD Businesses
Strategy 4	Undertake additional study of the vacant West Court Street properties to determine potential redevelopment opportunities to benefit downtown, uptown, and historic Warren Street. Look at other small communities who have successfully secured a small boutique hotel in downtown to determine potential options and strategies (e.g. Hotel Floyd, Craddock Terry Hotel in Lynchburg, General Francis Hotel in Marion, etc.). Consider land acquisition/assembly as appropriate.		■		Community Development Property Owners Boutique Hotel Developer Franklin County Historical Society Warren Street Community



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Economy		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Strategy 5	Work with Franklin County Retail Merchants Association and downtown/uptown businesses to increase events and activities that will promote Rocky Mount as the start of the Crooked Road.	■	■		Community Development Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn CBD Businesses
Strategy 6	Facilitate increased programming of the Farmers Market and Hospitality Center for activities and visitor outreach. Develop a new management strategy for the Farmers Market to increase use.	■			Community Development Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn CBD Businesses
Strategy 7	Facilitate expanded arts and cultural activities and facilities in downtown and uptown. Work with art/culture organizations and stakeholders to develop an arts and culture plan to guide public direction and private investment. Consider benchmark communities similar to Rocky Mount and investigate successful approaches. Consider art projects to raise interest (e.g. murals).		■		Community Development Art Organizations and Stakeholders Virginia Commission for the Arts
Strategy 8	Undertake a Retail Market Assessment to determine specific areas of economic growth and opportunity. Develop and implement a strategy for recruiting new business and assisting existing businesses that complement the services and market desired for downtown and uptown.	■			Community Development VA Dept of Housing/Community Dev VA Main Street Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn
Strategy 9	Update and expand the marketing strategy for promoting Rocky Mount as a business and tourism destination. Update the Town Web Page to share wayfinding and attractions. Use updated technology for public outreach (e.g. social media, dynamic video, online multimedia, etc.).	■			Community Development Virginia Tourism Corporation Franklin County Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn



<b>Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix</b>					
<b>Economy</b>		<b>Estimated Timeframe</b>			<b>Implementing Partners</b>
		<b>1-5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10 +</b>	
<b>Policy E2</b>	<b>Encourage and pursue businesses, industries, employers, and educational institutions in Rocky Mount that complement and diversify the economic base, provide quality jobs, enhance the quality of life, and sustain the environmental quality of the region.</b>				
Strategy 1	Monitor the Virginia Enterprise Zone Program and work with Franklin County to develop a competitive joint application for new zone designation. As an alternative, work with other towns to lobby for changes in state legislation.	■			Community Development Franklin County VA Dept. Housing & Community Development
Strategy 2	Recruit industrial tenants for Phase II of the Franklin County – Rocky Mount Industrial Park. Pursue additional funding for improvements from available resources, as applicable.	■	■	■	Community Development Town Council Franklin County EDA
Strategy 3	Work with the West Piedmont and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Planning District Commissions in updating the annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to include an informed industry cluster analysis.	■			Community Development Franklin County West Piedmont PDC Roanoke Valley-Alleghany PDC
Strategy 4	Work with natural gas providers to extend service lines to Rocky Mount (specifically the Franklin County-Rocky Mount Industrial Park).	■	■	■	Community Development Franklin County Natural Gas Providers
Strategy 5	Pursue a market research study to determine opportunities for expanded tourism and business development.	■			Community Development Business Association EDA



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Economy		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Strategy 6	Work with the EDA and other stakeholders to identify underutilized properties within or adjacent to the industrial core that should be acquired or improved to enhance industrial land development opportunities. Pursue acquisition or improvement programs that may be appropriate.	■	■		Community Development EDA VA Dept. Housing & Community Development
Policy E3	<b>Facilitate and encourage tourism initiatives as part of the diversified economic development strategy for Rocky Mount.</b>				
Strategy 1	Monitor the economic impact of tourism related initiatives to provide quantitative measurement of fiscal and business outcomes.	■	■	■	Community Development Virginia Tourism Corporation Local Businesses
Strategy 2	Participate in the development of a regional Master Plan for Outdoor Recreation as a tool for diversifying and expanding the economy of Rocky Mount. Use the <i>Virginia Outdoors Plan</i> as a guide for program and facility needs. Include opportunities for trails, blueways, bike routes, and natural and historic areas. Facilitate opportunities for small business development.	■	■		Community Development Franklin County Roanoke Outdoors VA Dept. Conservation & Recreation VA Dept. Housing/Community Dev Small Business Development Center
Strategy 3	Work with Franklin County to develop a Tourism Plan that provides coordinated strategies for promoting destinations and attracting visitors and new investment. Work collaboratively to maintain and update the Visit Franklin County web page.	■			Community Development Franklin County VA Tourism Corporation
Strategy 4	Pursue Virginia Tourism Corporation funding opportunities for regional marketing efforts that promote tourism in the Town and the County (and the state).	■			Community Development Franklin County Virginia Tourism Corporation



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Economy		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Strategy 5	Pursue gateway and landscape improvements to the U.S. Route 220 and Route 40 Corridor. Develop Master Plan for improvements and phasing and solicit sponsors and funding for implementation.	■	■		Community Development BUD Commission VDOT Virginia Tourism Corporation
Strategy 6	Adopt local provisions for a Tourism Zone(s), as enabled in Virginia, to provide financial incentives for tourism related businesses.	■			Community Development Town Council Virginia Tourism Corporation



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Public Facilities and Services		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy PFS 1	Provide and plan for efficient public facilities and services to meet the community needs of Rocky Mount and surrounding service areas.				
Strategy 1	Expand community-oriented policing in Rocky Mount by implementing and using the SARA model to proactively address community issues and revitalize neighborhoods. Encourage collaborative approaches among law enforcement agencies, neighborhoods, and other resources that will result in successful initiatives. Build community trust and participation through increased outreach.	■			Community Development Police Department Regional Law Enforcement Agencies VA Dept of Criminal Justice Neighborhood and Community Organizations
Strategy 2	Proactively recruit and retain volunteers for the Rocky Mount Volunteer Fire Department. Raise awareness of challenges and pursue solutions that will result in long-term sustainability of the volunteer department.	■	■		Community Development Fire Department/Chief Volunteers
Strategy 3	Develop an inventory of aging water and wastewater lines and a priority strategy for replacement. Undertake engineering/design studies that may be required and develop cost estimates. Incorporate into future CIP.	■			Community Development Public Works
Strategy 4	Develop a Master Plan for Water and Wastewater Facilities. Implement recommended water and wastewater plant upgrades to maintain safe plant operations and meet environmental permit requirements.	■	■	■	Community Development Public Works



<b>Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix</b>					
<b>Public Facilities and Services</b>		<b>Estimated Timeframe</b>			<b>Implementing Partners</b>
		<b>1-5</b>	<b>5-10</b>	<b>10 +</b>	
Strategy 5	Continue to pursue regional approaches to providing and upgrading public water and wastewater services. Collaborate on community growth needs and facility requirements. Pursue revenue and cost sharing agreements that may be appropriate.	■	■	■	Community Development Public Works Franklin County Western Virginia Water Authority
Strategy 6	Revise stormwater management and development regulations to minimize development impacts and improve the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff.	■			Community Development VA Dept of Environmental Quality
Strategy 7	Upgrade water meters to enable digital reading. Identify and phase areas for upgrades and integrate into CIP.	■	■		Community Development Public Works Finance
Strategy 8	Work with regional governments and providers to expand access to broadband fiber-optic networks that can benefit business development. Recruit best practice technologies. Use community partnering and available funding opportunities to extending networks and service areas.	■	■		Community Development Communication Service Providers Businesses VA Dept. Housing & Community Development
Strategy 9	Develop annual management report for public safety services that identifies capital equipment and staffing needs. Integrate into Town capital improvement program, as appropriate.	■	■	■	Community Development Public Safety Departments



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Public Facilities and Services		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
<b>Policy PFS 2</b>	<b>Plan for and provide safe and efficient transportation systems with multi-modal opportunities to accommodate community needs and projected growth.</b>				
Strategy 1	Work with regional and state agencies to develop reasonable transportation improvement plans for the short and long-term that employ realistic improvement options and are consistent with the future vision for Rocky Mount.	■	■	■	Community Development Franklin County PDC VDOT
Strategy 2	Cooperate with regional social service agencies to find options for improving public transportation access to businesses and services.	■			Community Development Franklin County United Way Franklin Co Memorial Hospital VA Dept. Social Services
Strategy 3	Pursue additional community trail and sidewalk connections to enhance pedestrian linkages between neighborhoods, businesses, and community services. Solicit MAP-21 funding for priority projects that promote alternatives for transportation and enhance safety. Link business and industrial areas to neighborhoods.	■	■		Community Development VDOT Schools Franklin County
<b>Policy PFS 3</b>	<b>Plan for and invest in park and recreation facilities and programs that contribute to the quality of life for residents, encourage healthy living, and enhance economic prosperity of Rocky Mount.</b>				
Strategy 1	Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to understand community recreation needs, inventory existing parks and recreation facilities, and identify future improvements and new facilities. Identify funding sources and strategies for implementation.	■	■		Community Development Public Works VA Dept Conservation & Recreation Franklin County



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Public Facilities and Services		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Strategy 2	Work with Franklin County and regional agencies to pursue an economic feasibility and impact study that may support increased investment in trails and outdoor recreational facilities in Rocky Mount and Franklin County.	■			Community Development Franklin County West Piedmont PDC Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional PDC VA Dept Conservation & Recreation
Strategy 3	Work with Franklin County to plan for and pursue outdoor recreation opportunities on the Pigg River. Work with state recreational agencies to determine opportunities and funding.	■	■		Community Development Public Works Franklin County VA Dept Conservation & Recreation AEP Roanoke River Basin Association
Strategy 4	Increase the connectivity and the number of hiking and biking trails in Rocky Mount. Inventory existing trail network and identify potential linkages and new opportunities for trails. Work with property owners and agencies to enhance trail network and implement new trails. Consider both on and off-road trail connections.	■	■	■	Community Development Public Works Private Property Owners VA Dept Conservation & Recreation
Strategy 5	Use Google Maps and online mapping applications to publicize park and trailhead locations, and other recreational amenities.	■			Community Development Public Works VA Dept Conservation & Recreation



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Environment (Natural and Historic Resources)		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy E1	Protect, preserve and conserve important natural and historic resources in Rocky Mount.				
Strategy 1	Support and facilitate DCR acquisition and designation of Bald Knob as a Natural Heritage Area and public recreation resource. Work with property owners and Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation to secure the property for conservation and consider appropriate recreational uses to maintain its integrity.	■			Community Development Property Owners VA Dept of Conservation & Recreation
Strategy 2	Work with Franklin County and regional planning agencies to maintain and enhance the water quality of the Blackwater and Pigg Rivers for the purposes of water supply and recreational assets. Pursue regional strategies that will maintain environmental integrity and manage upstream development and non-point source runoff in the watershed.	■	■		Community Development Public Works Franklin county Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional PDC Property Owners VA Dept of Environmental Quality
Strategy 3	Consider appropriate preservation tools that can be employed to protect and sustain the National Register Historic Properties and Districts in Rocky Mount. These tools may include a local historic preservation ordinance, financial incentives, increased public awareness of resources, or voluntary design guidelines for property rehabilitation and development.	■	■		Community Development Franklin County Historical Society Franklin County Citizens and Businesses

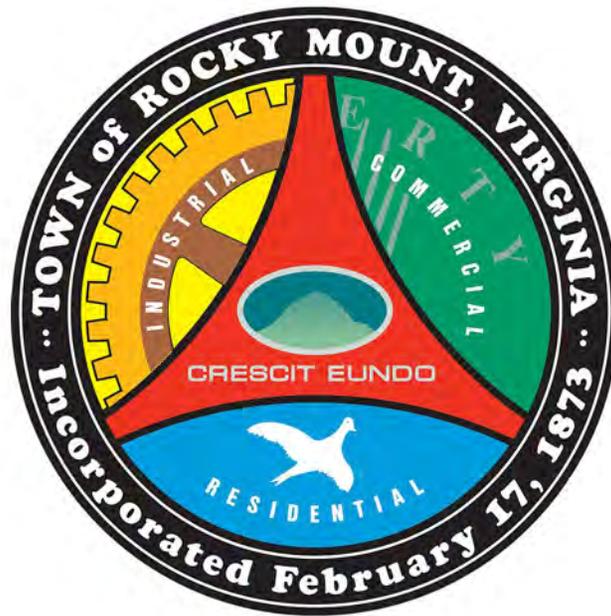


Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Environment (Natural and Historic Resources)		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy E2	<b>Promote natural and historic resources as community assets that contribute to the high quality of life, recreational opportunities, and economic sustainability of Rocky Mount.</b>				
Strategy 1	Promote the architectural and cultural heritage of Rocky Mount for revitalization, business development and tourism using various outreach methods including webpage listings, historic walking tours, and promotional materials for using historic tax credits.	■			Community Development Franklin County Historical Society Franklin Co Retail Merchants Assn Franklin County
Strategy 2	Consider interpretive signs along trails and in public parks or natural areas to raise awareness and educate the public about significant natural resources.	■			Community Development Virginia DCR, Virginia DHR Schools and Colleges



Rocky Mount 2035 Comprehensive Plan Implementation Matrix					
Land Use and Development		Estimated Timeframe			Implementing Partners
		1-5	5-10	10 +	
Policy LU 1	<b>Provide responsible governmental leadership that furthers the 2013 Vision for Rocky Mount and promotes best practices for achieving desired outcomes.</b>				
Strategy 1	Maintain good communication with citizens using a variety of outreach methods regarding public facilities and services, community needs, and alternatives for resolution.	■	■	■	Town Administration Town Council Citizens
Strategy 2	Consider annual review of the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan by using the matrix as an “annual report” tool.	■	■	■	Community Development Planning Commission Town Council
Policy LU 2	<b>Maintain up to date land development ordinances to ensure effective planning for growth, easy customer use, equitable application, and consistent, defensible administration.</b>				
Strategy 1	Update existing zoning code to address modern land uses and development standards. Ensure clear, consistent provisions. Update on a regular basis.	■	■	■	Community Development Planning Commission Town Council Citizens and Businesses
Strategy 2	Improve GIS database and ensure accuracy of data. Enhance accessibility and availability to the public.	■	■	■	Community Development





**2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT, VIRGINIA**