

Comprehensive Plan for The Town of Rocky Mount:



A Citizen Vision

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Town of Rocky Mount

Municipal Building
345 Donald Avenue
Rocky Mount, Virginia
24151

Adopted: May 14, 2007

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ABSTRACT

- TITLE:** Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Rocky Mount
- ADOPTED:** January 9, 1995
- REVISED:** May 14, 2007
August 12, 2002
- SOURCE:** Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia
Municipal Building
345 Donald Avenue
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
- SUBJECT:** A long-range plan to effectively guide, organize, and maintain the physical, social, and economic development of the town of Rocky Mount.
- PERIOD:** 20-Year Long-Range Plan (2007-2027) to be revised at least every five years.
- UPDATE:** The Plan should be updated at least every five (5) years if not sooner. It must be the duty of Town Council and Planning Commission to monitor the long-range policies and amend the plan when necessary to carry out identified goals.
- PLAN:** A plan is developed to serve as a resource for the local government. The Plan identifies goals to be worked toward and objectives to be achieved. It should not be confused with a “blueprint” that is an exact description in detail of how a project is to be completed. The plan is “flexible and adaptable” giving the Town opportunity to choose the best methods for achieving the stated goals and objectives or to chart a new course when needed.
- AUTHORITY:** Section 15.2-2223 Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

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VISION STATEMENT

As Rocky Mount continues to move into the future many issues must be addressed concerning the town's future growth and development. These concerns primarily are two-fold. First, the town should realize its growth potential and opportunities for enhancing residents' economic and social well-being. Secondly, at the same time the town should preserve its character, cherish its history, and promote conservation of its cultural, historic, and natural resources. This plan describes the existing and potential future conditions of the town and will act as a tool to guide both public and private decision-makers as to policies that will promote the overall benefit to current and future residents of Rocky Mount.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is divided into chapters describing the existing conditions for the chapters' subject matter as well as goals and objectives to act as direction for policy makers. These goals and objectives are a direct result of citizen input sessions. Areas to be addressed include population and land use, natural environment, economic development, community facilities and services, cultural and historic resources, housing, and transportation. Following is a chapter-by-chapter summary of the major highlights, goals, opportunities, and objectives pertaining to the chapters' subject matter. This summary is meant to act an overview as opposed to a detailed description of each subject.

Population and Land Use

GOAL

To achieve a balanced land use pattern that retains Rocky Mount's small town character while accommodating quality growth in a planned manner.

HIGHLIGHTS

During the earliest years of the twentieth century, population increases in the area were primarily the result of natural gains, as population mobility was relatively insignificant.

The 2000 Census data shows that the Town's population decreased .8 percent since the 1990 Census. The 2000 population for the Town of Rocky Mount is 4,066; adjusted for the 2000 annexation the Town's population is 5,100. The Town had a population of

4,098 in 1990. This unadjusted population decline should be noted in light of the population increase sustained by Franklin County during this same period.

Census data for both the Town and County show only moderate gains in age groups most likely to be included in the work force. The Town's largest loss in population was the 18 to 24 year range. This is probably due to area students leaving the area for higher education opportunities. The 18 to 24 year range declined 59.3 percent from 1990 to 2000. It will be interesting to see if the Town will continue to lose its young people after high school, because Rocky Mount's ability to grow economically will be directly related to the growth of its workforce population.

A January 2006 report by the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service showed that between 2000 and 2005, Franklin County and the Town of Rocky Mount were no longer growing at a moderate pace. In fact, the report stated that Franklin County's 5.9 percent growth during this five-year time period made Franklin County the fastest growing community in the Roanoke Region.

While the Smith Mountain Lake area of Franklin County leads in growth, Rocky Mount's strategic location along Route 220 and Route 40, as well as its close proximity to the proposed Interstate 73, make it attractive as a home for commuters to workplaces in larger areas.

Rocky Mount's housing stock has become increasingly diverse. The increased diversity of the housing stock will serve as an additional attractant for new residents looking to relocate to Rocky Mount.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Rocky Mount has available land for industrial and office development.

Recent in-migration and annexation have lead to population gains.

Twenty-four percent of the Town's population is age 65 and older.

The Downtown and Uptown areas were recently the focus of major rehabilitation grants in an effort to revive the commercial district located there.

The Town has a central business district that draws people to Rocky Mount.

Graduating students are leaving the area for higher education opportunities, and most are not returning to the Town or County.

The Town's housing stock is becoming increasingly diverse.

OBJECTIVES

Provide and maintain land for orderly growth and efficient use, especially along Rocky Mount's corridors.

Adopt and enforce land use regulations and ordinances to guide and implement the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

Encourage development to locate in areas where the Town may provide adequate water and sewer facilities and services.

Encourage the location of industry that will practice good corporate citizenship.

Continue to invest in and promote the revitalization of a stable and attractive Central Business District (Uptown and Downtown areas) that reasserts its importance to meeting the needs of the community.

Retain single-family housing in the Town of Rocky Mount while providing a variety of residential uses.

Ensure that adequate services are available to those Rocky Mount residents age 65 and above.

Encourage Rocky Mount and Franklin County residents who have left to return.

Natural Environment

GOAL

Identify, preserve, and protect the natural resources that characterize Rocky Mount and retain the beauty of the natural environment while minimizing the adverse environmental impacts of human activities in order to enhance the quality of life.

HIGHLIGHTS

For the most part, gentle slopes that provide good drainage and minimize flood hazard characterize the terrain in the study area. There are, however, approximately 250 acres where the terrain exceeds a slope gradient of 25 percent (this is land that is normally considered unsuitable for any type of conventional development or cultivation). A majority of the most severe slopes are located on the periphery of the study area.

The Pigg River is recognized as the Rocky Mount Study Area's primary and most significant surface water resource. This river has a drainage area of approximately 68 square miles upstream from the Town of Rocky Mount's wastewater treatment plant. The Blackwater River is significant as it serves as the source for the Town's water supply. The present water plant serving the Town was troubled by the low flow on the Blackwater in 2002 as a result of drought conditions. For the future of both Franklin County and the Town of Rocky Mount, the Blackwater Watershed needs to be protected.

Developed land presently exists in many of these floodplains. However, additional development should be discouraged and additional steps taken so that development does not further exacerbate the flooding problem by impeding and unduly constricting flows.

The future economic, demographic, and industrial growth of the study area will depend directly on the quality and quantity of water. The Town of Rocky Mount's public water supply system services an estimated 2,300 households which includes approximately 26 percent of the study area's population outside the corporate limits of the Town. The water supply system is adequate for current and modest population growth and planned distribution expansions are satisfactory.

The Town's water resources and scenic byways serve as the frame for the Town's green infrastructure. By taking a proactive and holistic approach to land and water conservation, the Town should work with Franklin County, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and conservation groups to identify critical sites and linkages, as well as plan, design and invest in our green infrastructure using the same principles that are used for built infrastructure.

The elements of the Town's green infrastructure network must be protected for future generations. This will require long-range planning and an ongoing commitment by elected officials, staff, and residents. A green infrastructure system will increase recreational opportunities for residents, offer better connections to nature, and create a sense of place. When planned correctly, green space has shown to increase property values, and reduce the cost of public infrastructure and public services.

The design of past subdivisions did little to minimize the environmental impacts of development. Subdivision policies regulating open space preservation can only be implemented as new development or redevelopment occurs. The Town has the responsibility to plan for and approve developments that minimizes pollution and stormwater runoff.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The increase in growth in the Town has placed demands on the natural environment.

The current Zoning Ordinance does not adequately protect the natural features of the Town.

The Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County are known for their natural beauty, including mountainous landscapes, lakes, rivers, and open spaces.

Continued development on Grassy Hill is eminent as land within the Town is becoming scarcer.

The Town incorporated a Wireless Telecommunication Ordinance to aid in the protection of the Town's scenic viewsheds.

Due to the amount of growth occurring within the Town and the increased density, the Town requires additional monitoring and enforcement of erosion and sediment control practices.

The Town recently adopted an Erosion and Sediment Control Enforcement Cycle to assist in the enforcement of the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

The Zoning or Subdivision Ordinances do not require nor effectively encourage open space or greenways in new subdivisions.

The Town should continue to periodically update and modify the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect the policies and guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Town does not have a tree or landscaping ordinance adopted to control or manage the removal or destruction of trees on private properties.

Franklin County Parks and Recreation has created a Trails Master Plan, in which the Town of Rocky Mount is the hub.

OBJECTIVES

Maintain high standards of the natural environment.

Protect the Town's natural habitat by conserving the environment, including vegetation, watercourses, wetlands, mountainsides, etc.

Expand opportunities for the general public to access and utilize the Pigg River and Blackwater River

Promote development that incorporates and respects both the natural and local environments.

Encourage site design that utilizes landscaping and other natural features to minimize and filter runoff.

Protect critical mountainsides, ridge tops, and viewsheds along Grassy Hill and Bald Knob that add to the character of Rocky Mount.

Utilize the Public/Open Space zoning district to locate passive recreational activities in environmentally sensitive areas.

Expand opportunities for the general public to access and utilize the Pigg River and Blackwater River.

Encourage the use of land development techniques such as infill and compact development to efficiently use existing land and to prevent the unnecessary development of open and green space.

Create a balance between the natural environment and growth and development by employing innovative land management techniques.

Prevent development in areas of critical environmental importance.

Reduce flooding and flood damage by protecting floodplains and wetlands.

Protect the Town's water supply by regularly testing the Blackwater River for pollution.

Encourage the use of street trees and consider revising the Zoning Ordinance to require landscaping in parking lots.

Consider the benefits of requiring a percentage of trees or woodland be retained in land development projects. This should be used in conjunction with requirements for new trees or landscaping.

Promote recycling and solid waste management.

Increase the community's understanding of the Town's natural environment by supporting natural resource education.

Economic Development

GOAL

Support existing industry and commerce, promote the expansion of a diversified economy, and create an atmosphere for new job opportunities.

HIGHLIGHTS

As a whole, the Franklin County economy has shown a healthy growth. When compared to other jurisdictions in the region, Franklin County's annual taxable sales have done well. Between 2002 and 2005 the total taxable sales grew by 16.9 percent. This growth was second in Virginia behind only Floyd County.

In 1990, there were 20,091 persons employed within Franklin County. In comparison, there were 22,944 in 2000. 1,500 jobs were lost from the manufacturing sector as a result of plant closings and downsizings. The sector experiencing the largest growth was education, health, and social services. The employment increase in this sector indicates that Franklin County is well prepared to serve the needs of persons of all ages, especially those 50 and older. Both Rocky Mount and Franklin County will be able to market the highly rated public school system and quality health care services to people and companies looking to relocate.

It can be said that the employment fabric of the region is diverse. This is healthy for the study area. It is prudent to encourage and promote new manufacturing expansion in the County and Town.

Although the present number of workers available is adequate, the shortage of qualified skilled labor is, or will become, a major factor hampering existing industries' efforts to increase productivity through plant modernization. Technical facilities designed and geared to training the local labor force are not only a means of attracting new industry but also for retaining existing industry.

The Town is pursuing development of the Cox Property for industrial purposes, which could include both private industrial tenants and a public rail transload facility. A transload facility is conceived as an area where various types of rail freight can be unloaded for short-term storage or directly into a waiting vehicle. Typically, the railroad unloads goods, often raw materials, from a rail car and loads them on another form of transportation, such as a truck or ship.

The transload facility could provide rail access to those commercial and industrial users who do not currently have access, and could be used for farmers and other agricultural users when purchasing bulk items, such as fertilizers or feed. The service area for the transload facility would be the Town of Rocky Mount and parts of Southwest and Southside Virginia, and would help in industrial recruitment and expansion in the general area. Norfolk Southern reported that the property is one of the last sites having potential for development of a transload facility in the Commonwealth.

Presently, shopping areas of Rocky Mount serve the community well. In attracting customers, the Rocky Mount central business district competes with cluster developments on Route 40 East and strip developments on Route 40 West. Both the central business area and the local shopping centers compete against the larger

shopping malls of Roanoke and Martinsville. In recent years the cluster shopping areas have grown more rapidly than the central business district within Rocky Mount. The completed Downtown/Franklin Street Revitalization project has generated more activity and interest in the CBD. This project was the catalyst in what is growing into a vibrant business/shopping district. The Town will build on the success of this project to do another CDBG/TEA-21 funded project to revitalize the Uptown/South Main and Warren Street areas. The increased opportunities in the central business district and of the strip shopping centers is attracting more shoppers to Town that do not live in the Rocky Mount community. Recently, the northern portion of Rocky Mount near Route 220 and Route 40 East has experienced substantial growth in commercial development that includes both hotels and restaurants.

To avoid decay and loss of investment in the central business district the Town must be aware of the need to improve both central business access and parking for this sector.

The Town has also encouraged more upper story housing to locate in the Central Business District (CBD) above existing and proposed businesses. This could help increase the vitality of the CBD.

The Town has several programs to encourage new development in the Central Business District. In 2002, construction was completed on a downtown revitalization project. This project included new infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, sidewalks and underground utilities to businesses located in downtown Rocky Mount. Beautification measures, such as street trees, were also utilized to aid in making the downtown an attractive location for new businesses and reverse the trend of new development locating on the outer edge of Town. In 2005, a similar project for the Uptown received CDBG and TEA-21 grant funds.

The 2005 General Assembly passed legislation designating the Town of Rocky Mount as the easternmost destination on Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, "The Crooked Road." The Crooked Road is a driving route connecting major heritage music venues from the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields of the Appalachian Mountains of far southwestern Virginia. This Road was developed as an economic development and tourism tool for localities to effectively market in order to generate interest, visits, and consequently investment in participating communities. The Town is attempting to take advantage of inclusion on the Crooked Road to create a music and/or history venue.

An analysis of 2000 commuting patterns shows that just over 40 percent of town and county workers commute outside the County to work. Franklin County has almost five times as many out-commuters as in-commuters. Primarily, the outflow is north to the Roanoke Metropolitan Area. In many ways, Franklin County and Rocky Mount have become a "bedroom community" to the City of Roanoke.

The 2000 median household income for Franklin County was \$38,056, whereas, the median household income for a Rocky Mount family was \$26,927. The median household income in Virginia was \$46,677.

In November 2005, the Virginia Employment Commission reported that persons employed in Franklin County earned less per week than four of the six counties that border Franklin County. Only workers employed in Floyd and Patrick Counties earned less per week.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Rocky Mount provides a high quality of life for businesses and residents by providing a high level of services and infrastructure, such as police protection, water, sewer, and cultural infrastructure. Franklin County Public Schools are also located within Rocky Mount.

Rocky Mount has a scenic, natural setting that has the potential to attract many new residents and tourists.

The Town has a housing stock that accommodates all levels of employees. Rocky Mount's commercial base offers services that allow residents to shop locally, instead of having to travel to Roanoke and Martinsville.

Downtown businesses do not operate on extended hours, leaving the area vacant after 6:00 p.m. The creation of upper story residential housing would encourage downtown businesses to operate on extended hours.

There are fewer vacant buildings as a result of revitalization efforts. There are many buildable tracts for large industrial development within the Industrial Park.

The Town of Rocky Mount has been identified as the "Gateway to the Crooked Road Music Trail."

Rocky Mount is a designated Main Street Community.

The YMCA and the Center for Advanced Training and Career Exploration are two strong components of the community providing extensive training and cultural and recreational facilities to the future labor force of Rocky Mount. Both are located in the Office and Technology Park.

Small businesses form the foundation of the economic base.

OBJECTIVES

Provide adequate land and resources for office, commercial, industrial and cultural uses, which do not adversely affect land use patterns or require unacceptable service extension costs.

Continue to develop zoning and land use practices that encourage the best use of valuable and undeveloped land.

Maintain and expand upon existing industry retention efforts and continue to provide assistance to those companies wishing to expand their operations.

Ensure that all existing and future businesses have adequate access to public transit and utility services.

Encourage the installation of high-tech infrastructure, such as broadband, to maintain industrial competitiveness with surrounding areas.

Encourage innovative, clustered commercial development.

Continue and expand upon regional marketing and advertising activities for business and industrial development.

Continue to support the expansion of the Workforce Development Consortium, the Center for Advanced Training and Career Exploration, and other workforce training services to enhance the recruitment of new industry and business.

Market the Central Business District and various small business opportunities as a strength of the town's economy. Continue to encourage the development and growth of small businesses.

Continue to encourage an economic mix in the Central Business District by recruiting a variety of businesses.

Continue to encourage improvements to gateways into the town to enhance Rocky Mount's visual appeal to business, industry, residents and tourists.

Encourage the growth of tourism in Rocky Mount through special events that showcase local cultural heritage.

Support the Franklin County, the Chamber of Commerce, and Community Partnership for Revitalization in developing and maintaining a long-range tourism plan.

Community Facilities and Services

GOAL

Provide community facilities and services consistent with current and future community needs.

HIGHLIGHTS

Population analysis indicates that the Town of Rocky Mount's rate of growth has increased since 2000 and this trend will continue into the immediate future. Demands for new and expanded community facilities and services should continue to persist. As the population increases, the number of community facilities should be reviewed to determine adequacy of services provided.

The Rocky Mount water system is located on the Blackwater River. The system serves approximately 6,675 persons as well as most of the large industries that do not have their own water supply systems.

In May 1994, the Town of Rocky Mount completed construction on a 2.0 million-gallon per day wastewater treatment facility, building, equipment and oxidation ditch. The facility utilizes an activated sludge process, secondary clarifiers, disinfection, aerobic digester, sludge de-watering building, control building and laboratory. Treated effluent is released to the Pigg River.

The Town of Rocky Mount operates the only public wastewater disposal system within the study area. At present, the Town provides sanitary sewer to 1,626 residential customers and to 286 commercial, industrial and institutional users.

Appalachian Power Company (APCO) furnishes electricity in Rocky Mount, as well as the rest of Franklin County.

The expansion of broadband to Southside Virginia is the result of funding of the Regional Backbone Initiative through the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission. The project is centered on the growing need for businesses in the region to embrace technology and remain competitive. The Regional Backbone Initiative is an extensive fiber-optic network connecting five cities, 20 counties and 56 industrial parks between Franklin County and Sussex County. The roughly 700-mile network will extend broadband access to an estimated 700,000 residents and 19,000 businesses in the service area. The backbone will travel through Franklin County along U.S. Route 220.

The Rocky Mount Study Area's law enforcement duties are provided by the Town of Rocky Mount Police Department, with assistance from the Franklin County's Sheriff's

Department, and the Virginia State Police. Each authority, although operating independently, aids each other as needed.

Fire protection for the study area is provided by a volunteer fire department.

Medical facilities available to residents of the Rocky Mount Study Area are considered to be more than adequate due to a major renovation to Franklin Memorial Hospital. Franklin Memorial Hospital is fully accredited, by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the American Hospital Association, the Virginia Hospital Association and the Appalachian blood program.

The Town of Rocky Mount has several active community service organizations that assist residents of both Rocky Mount and Franklin County. Among these organizations are STEP, INC, the American Red Cross, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Helping Hands, and We Care, and the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club.

Residents of the Rocky Mount Study Area utilize both Town and County facilities. Within the study area, there are approximately 26 acres of land set aside for recreation. Of particular significance are those recreational facilities and lands that are owned and operated by the Franklin County School Board.

Franklin County runs a comprehensive parks and recreation program that serves over 20,000 residents per year with special events, athletic programming, art and cultural classes, and general park visitation. Franklin County Parks and Recreation manages 667 acres of public lands, 18 miles of trails, six ball fields, eight youth soccer/football fields, one basketball court, six tennis courts, and five picnic shelters, 30 miles of blueways, a youth skatepark, and partners with the General Services Department in management and scheduling of the Rocky Mount Armory.

The Franklin County Family YMCA opened in 1998. The YMCA is a full-facility recreation program with fitness, aquatic and recreation services. The facility contains two pools, two basketball courts, an indoor track, a fully equipped gym, an exercise room, men and women's lockers with saunas, a nursery, and an outdoor nature trail/cross country track. In September 2001, the YMCA purchased an additional 2.4-acre tract in the Office and Technology Park in order to construct a youth center.

There appears to be sufficient demand for more or improved recreational programs within the Rocky Mount community. More study should be provided for a more efficient use of school and public property for improved and expanded recreational programs.

The 2000 Census reports a total student enrollment of 6,150 for students aged 5-14. Since 1980, the total school population has increased by 5.8 percent from 6,821 to 7,216. Actual enrollment for the 2005-2006 school year was 7,216 students as of September 20, 2005. Actual enrollment for 1991-1992 was 6,280 students and for 2000-2001 it was 7,303.

The school division operates a high school, two middle schools (located on the Benjamin Franklin Middle School campus) and eleven elementary schools, as well as the Gereau Center for Technology and Career Exploration.

Clubs and civic organizations functioning within the study area include Rotary, Lions, Ruritan, Jaycees, American Legion, Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), Eastern Star, Junior Women's Club, Business and Professional Women's Club, Masons, Moose, Odd Fellows, Senior Women's Club and Woodmen of the World.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Town Municipal Building is centrally located to provide access to all citizens.

The Emergency Services building is located to improve fire and police protection to the Office and Technology Park, the Industrial Park, nearby businesses and schools, as well as annexed areas both north and east.

There are multiple social service and non-profit organizations that serve the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County citizens.

A state of the art hospital is located centrally within the Town.

The American Legion Post 6 building on Tanyard Road is home to the Agency on Aging, which is a permanent Senior Citizen's Center.

The Town has increased indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Two elementary schools, the middle schools, and high school are located within the Town.

There is no plan for future school sites in Town.

Schools may be used for multiple activities for the community.

The Town does not have a venue for the Crooked Road (as mentioned in the Cultural and Historic Resources chapter.)

Many of the Town's gateways have community facilities that highlight the Town's commitment to cultural, historic, and community facilities and services.

OBJECTIVES

Commit to a high level and quality of public services.

Continue to provide administrative and maintenance services.

Provide community facilities to meet existing and anticipated needs.

Effectively market existing public services offered through the Town and Franklin County.

Cooperate and coordinate with the County to provide the most effective and cost-efficient services.

Balance growth and development with the provision of public facilities.

Utilize new technologies to enhance services and provide for growth in the Town.

Design Town facilities to set an example for the rest of the community.

Develop a fully functional Geographic Information System to efficiently support all Town departments' information management needs.

Continue to support Franklin County's efforts to provide citizens with state of the art library facilities.

Maintain the existing high caliber of public safety services offered to the town of Rocky Mount.

Maintain a system of properly trained volunteer personnel to provide effective emergency services.

Assure that municipal water services are sufficient to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Provide adequate sewer service, collection, treatment and disposal to the town and its service areas.

Provide an adequate system of stormwater drainage.

Develop a joint Town and County recycling program.

Provide adequate recreational facilities for the enjoyment of all town residents.

Create new and expand existing recreational programs to meet the needs of all town citizens, both young and old.

Seek federal and state grants and loans to fund existing and future recreational facilities and programs.

Encourage the provision of open space and park facilities in new development.

Acquire additional land for new parks or for the expansion of existing parks.

Utilize facilities downtown, such as the Farmer's Market and the Community and Hospitality Center for recreational and festival uses.

Support existing and encourage new festivals and events within the town.

Cultural and Historic Resources

GOAL

To promote and protect the historical and cultural heritage of Rocky Mount and surrounding areas.

HIGHLIGHTS

Tourism is an industry that, while not generating major revenues in the past, is something that will serve to promote and protect Franklin County/Rocky Mount's unique and interesting history and cultural heritage.

The town of Rocky Mount has a high number of historic sites that along with scenic resources and open spaces are major components of its rural character and developing economy. The town's heritage will be enriched and perpetuated through the identification and protection of historic, archaeological and scenic resources. While many of these resources are located on privately owned land, the public's interest in these resources will be preserved through citizen stewardship.

In 2006, the Town of Rocky Mount received a grant from the Department of Historic Resources to assist in a cultural resources study of the Pigg River Heritage Area. The overall goal of the project is to identify and protect architectural and cultural resources along the Pigg River as a linear corridor that would offer interpretive opportunities for a driving or walking tour. Existing historic and cultural resources along this corridor include the Robert Hill Fort, one of the earliest settlements in the county; the Washington Iron Works furnace; the Farm, a two-story frame dwelling that was used as the ironmaster's house for the nearby iron works; the Vernon Lynch Landing, a park on the Pigg River, and Rakes Tavern, an early moonshiners' retreat.

In addition, in 2006 the Town of Rocky Mount has also received a cost-share grant for a survey of the buildings in a proposed Bald Knob Historic District encompassing the Needmore area and the Old Bald Knob Furniture Factory.

Heritage sites have enormous cultural, aesthetic, and economic value to town residents. Increasingly these sites are becoming a larger part of the town's tourism attraction. By partnering with Franklin County, the Community Partnership for Revitalization, the Franklin County Historical Society, the Historic Rocky Mount Foundation, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and Department of Historic Resources, the Town will continue its efforts to preserve its unique heritage and cultural history for the benefit of present and future citizens.

The 2005 General Assembly passed legislation designating the Town of Rocky Mount as the easternmost destination on Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, "The Crooked Road." The Crooked Road is a driving route connecting major heritage music venues from the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields of the Appalachian Mountains of far southwestern Virginia. This Road was developed as an economic development and tourism tool for localities to effectively market in order to generate interest, visits, and consequently investment in participating communities.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The town of Rocky Mount has many historic sites worthy of state and national recognition.

The town of Rocky Mount has a nationally designated Historic District.

Tax benefits may accrue to the property owner in return for preservation commitment.

There are currently no zoning tools in place to protect historic properties located in the Historic District.

The Town is in the process of developing a strategy to publicize and promote its historic past, including promotional material on local parks, craftsmen, and historic sites.

Many historic properties are privately owned and not open to the general public.

Recent private investment has attempted to keep significant attributes of historic buildings within the Central Business District.

Citizens' Square and the Community & Hospitality Center, both located in downtown Rocky Mount, may be utilized for cultural events.

The Town serves as the easternmost gateway to the Crooked Road.

'Round the Mountain will help to identify and bring together local craftspersons.

OBJECTIVES

Continue to identify, recognize, and protect historic properties, sites, and structures both within and outside the Rocky Mount Historic District.

Develop various zoning tools to promote and preserve Rocky Mount's historical areas.

Continue to encourage and sponsor cultural activities in the Rocky Mount area.

Continue to strengthen the Town's strategy to publicize and promote the Town's unique heritage.

Promote public awareness, education, and support for historic preservation.

Promote Rocky Mount's involvement and investment in the Crooked Road and 'Round the Mountain.

Develop a wayfinding system that emphasizes and orients people to Rocky Mount's historic buildings and cultural activity sites.

Housing

GOAL

Encourage an adequate supply of high quality, affordable housing for all residents.

HIGHLIGHTS

The number of occupied housing units decreased from 1,659 in 1990 to 1,650 in 2000 in the Town of Rocky Mount. This represents a .05% percent decline in that decade. Conversely, the number of rental units increased 8.9 percent during the 1990s. A rough analysis would indicate that on average, 6 out of 10 residential units are owner-occupied while 4 out of 10 are rental property.

The annual median household income in the Town in 2000 was \$26,927 the average homebuyer could afford a home priced \$80,781. The median value for single-family homes in 2000 was \$79,700 indicating that housing within town generally falls in line with residents' income.

The 2000 Census showed that Rocky Mount had 1,122 persons aged 65 and older living within the Town limits. Currently, alternative elderly housing options are limited within Rocky Mount. Over the next few years, the Town should review land use and

zoning regulations to encourage and make available alternative approaches to elderly housing.

The 1990 housing census revealed a total of 1,730 housing units in Rocky Mount. Of that total, 4.1 percent, or 70 housing units are considered to be substandard according to the HUD Section 8 Guidelines. Most of these units were centered in the Tank Hill neighborhood.

In June 2006, Town staff conducted a Residential Build-Out Analysis showing how growth could potentially alter the town's rural feel and how much more growth can occur with the Town.

The study predicted that the maximum number of new housing units for the Town is between 4,166 and 4,531. The Town of Rocky Mount has a build-out capacity of between 6,182 and 6,547 units. It can be said that the Town is between 30.8% and 32.6% built-out.

The projected build-out is expected to occur between the years 2050 and 2060. Assuming the average household size of 2.48 remains constant, it is estimated that the Town's population will be between 14,651 and 15,516 at build-out.

In recent years, new subdivisions within the Town limits have shied away from haphazard large lot developments. Instead developers are choosing densities, house sizes, and lot sizes that attempt to appeal more to a small rural town. They have included features such as clustering with innovative common areas, walking trails, and preservation of open space.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The town offers a wide variety of housing options and price ranges.

The town has seen a growth in the number of residential subdivisions in recent years.

The town provides more employment opportunities while the surrounding county provides more housing opportunities. The average sale price of a home in Rocky Mount continues to be considerably lower than in other areas of the county.

Property values have increased steadily since 1980, indicating homeownership within the town is a good investment.

Almost all homes within the town of Rocky Mount are connected and served by public water and sewer.

A majority of the housing stock in 2000 (62.9%) was built prior to 1970. As the age of housing increases, the amount of maintenance problems also increases.

According to the 2000 Census, 33 percent of homeowners are age 65 or older. As the homeowner population ages the ability to maintain their homes becomes more difficult.

The Town currently has no housing maintenance or upkeep provisions to ensure attractive neighborhoods, with the exception of a weed and high grass ordinance. Substandard housing tends to be concentrated in certain neighborhoods within the Town.

OBJECTIVES

Maintain suitable housing and improve substandard housing. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures for residential units. An identified area for adaptive reuse is the unoccupied and vacant spaces above the ground floors in the Central Business District.

Promote a variety of housing types through zoning regulations.

Promote the provision of adequate housing for low-income persons and the elderly population.

Encourage the development of housing that attracts young families or first-time homebuyers.

Increase the availability of moderately priced homes within the Town of Rocky Mount.

Maintain the quality of existing neighborhoods.

Develop public/private programs to provide housing opportunities for special populations, including elderly persons and handicapped/disabled persons.

Identify neighborhoods susceptible to substandard housing and reverse their deterioration by focusing rehabilitation efforts in these areas.

Demolish or retire vacant, substandard dwellings that cannot be cost effectively repaired.

Restrict the encroachment of incompatible activities and uses or other blight influences in residential neighborhoods.

Transportation

GOAL

Provide a safe and adequate multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people, goods, and services within the Town.

HIGHLIGHTS

An adequate transportation system is the most important physical development that a community is required to devise. It provides individual mobility, modifies our behavior, and shapes our activity patterns. Transportation is significant in terms of the type and extent of growth that a particular area can be expected to accommodate.

The Town of Rocky Mount has just over 40 miles of paved local roadways that are town-maintained. The average daily vehicle miles of travel on town roads is 45,558. Pell Avenue, Route 40, between Tanyard Road and the 220 off-ramp is the most heavily traveled road segment in Town, with approximately 16,000 vehicles per day.

Several tracts of residential and commercial land remain available for development within the corporate limits; specifically residential tracts along Scuffling Hill Road and commercial tracts along Route 40 East. As a result, new roads of significant length are likely to be constructed. These new roads have the potential to significantly change transportation patterns.

The two most important future considerations for the town's transportation network are the protection of the town's neighborhoods and ease of accessibility to commercial establishments.

Police enforcement alone is rarely effective enough to keep traffic speeds down at all times. More lasting results are achieved through road design, landscape treatment, and signage. Examples of traffic calming techniques that are used to slow vehicles coming into a community are median islands, dynamic striping, and roundabouts. Unlike traffic calming, which "forces" drivers to slow down, context sensitive design looks at methods such as narrowing of traffic lanes and tree plantings, sometimes known as visual encroachments. Context sensitive design is encouraged in new residential developments.

Parking has been an area of concern within the central business district area due to relatively high residential, commercial, and institutional density. Off-street parking along Franklin Street has taken the form of parking lots, in many cases located behind the buildings they serve. Most local roadways, including Franklin Street and South Main Street, have on-street parallel parking.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The transportation system of the Town is predominantly automobile based. Existing streets are often too narrow to support bicycle lanes or additional sidewalks.

Rocky Mount and Franklin County are working on developing forms of public transportation. Currently, the Ferrum Express serves the Rocky Mount area.

The Cox Property is one of the last sites having potential for development of a trans-load facility in the Commonwealth, which would potentially utilize rail service.

There is currently no bike or walkway network within the Town.

Increased development along Route 40 may affect the safety and efficiency of traffic movement along the corridor and within the Town.

Proposed Interstate 73 is planned to go through Franklin County, near the Town of Rocky Mount, between Redwood and Hodgesville.

Traffic congestion increases at certain times of the day, specifically before school, in the late afternoon when area schools get out, and when industrial plants are in shift change.

The supply of convenient parking spaces within close proximity to shops and services in the Central Business District has increased.

Many residents walk for both necessity and recreation.

Narrow streets without sidewalks generally do not have sufficient right-of-way to construct sidewalks without obtaining easements from adjacent property owners.

OBJECTIVES

Provide and maintain adequate vehicular and pedestrian systems.

Promote alternative forms of transportation.

Support the development of rail and a trans-load facility.

Encourage new development to provide bicycle lanes and hiking trails.

Require new development to provide sidewalks.

Increase public awareness of the benefits of alternative modes of transportation.

Improve the accessibility of Rocky Mount regionally by supporting bus, train and air modes of transportation to locate nearby and serve the town.

Continue to support the implementation of a town-wide bike and walkway system.

Consider alternative modes of transportation when planning new roads or improving existing roads.

Continue to maintain the high quality of the public road system.

Reduce the amount of cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Routinely evaluate traffic accident data in order to identify problem areas.

Maintain a schedule for the installation and maintenance of public safety devices such as traffic lights and signs.

Provide street lighting appropriate to the use of the road and the character of the area.

Improve the supply of public and private parking facilities in Rocky Mount, particularly the Central Business District.

Review current parking requirements and determine if changes are warranted.

Encourage landscape regulations for new development.

Continue to maintain the sidewalk system.

Educate the public on pedestrian safety issues.

Continue to consider the physically handicapped when making transportation related decisions.

Utilize various funding sources for the construction and maintenance of the town's transportation systems.

USE OF THE PLAN

The Town of Rocky Mount is a community with excellent opportunities for growth and development. While every town in Virginia desires such growth, there can be problems associated with it. In a democratic society total control over the development process is not desirable. Some controls must be in place, however, that will protect the public and the environment from problems that are associated with development. Likewise, in periods of no growth or decline, policies can encourage responsible growth.

Plans for the community should be general identifying the desired needs related to environment, economy, population, housing, public facilities and transportation. Details of how these "needs" are arrived at must be left to the free enterprise system. Government's duty is to establish a climate to encourage development along goals identified by the community. The Comprehensive Plan is the local governing body's statement of what the community should become.

The local government may help shape development through careful use of municipal controls such as zoning, land use, floodplain, and subdivision regulations. The local government may also shape development of the town by the location of water, sewer and transportation facilities. Without these controls, development may create health, social, fiscal, environmental, and safety problems. Very often when these problems develop, corrective actions are initiated through local government expenditure of tax dollars.

An alternative to addressing these problems with local expenditures is through use of local legislative authority. Government may determine the types of development it wants, and then use its legislative authority to enact and enforce laws that direct growth. Regulations must not be suppressive to the point of discouraging all development.

The Comprehensive Plan is a device to aid both public and private development. It is through this plan that housing, commercial, industrial, and recreational needs of the community are identified. The Comprehensive Plan combines key economic data and community attitudes into a single document. The approved Plan provides private developers (and government officials) with pertinent information regarding needs and goals of the community.

The identification of goals will help promote harmony within the community. It is natural that not everyone will agree with all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. If properly developed the Plan will reflect the majority opinions of the community.

The Comprehensive Plan uses tangible data to identify a desired development scheme. It identifies assets and deficiencies of the community. It becomes a tool to orchestrate growth and development that the community needs. The Comprehensive Plan is a vision of what the citizens want the community to be. The local government is the organization that uses this vision to carry out the community's convictions.

Purpose

The process and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is identified in the Code of Virginia, (Title 15.2, Chapter 22, Sections 2223 through 2232). The general requirements of the Plan can be found in Section 446.1.

The Code of Virginia provides requirements for Plan review. **"At least once every five (5) years the Comprehensive Plan shall be reviewed by the local commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan."**

These requirements support the need for an ongoing process of Plan Assessment. Without some periodic review, the Plan may become outdated and useless. It is recommended that the plan remain general in scope. The plan should remain simple to be understood and it should encourage planning that offers flexibility for the Town to deal with issues as they develop. Flexibility in the plan is critical if the Town is to be in a position to take advantage of development opportunities as they arise.

The Plan serves as a valuable tool for local officials to assist in their decision-making process. The Plan is intended to be general in nature and to emphasize both the short and long range needs of town residents. The Plan protects citizens from random and haphazard development.

The information and recommendations provided herein are intended to promote the efficient use of Rocky Mount's resources. This Plan will encourage growth in areas where development is compatible with existing or proposed transportation, utility and community facilities. Rocky Mount citizens should benefit from the utilization of this Plan by Town officials.

Planning in Rocky Mount is an on going process. The Comprehensive Plan represents a continuing effort on the part of the Council, Planning Commission and Town staff to identify community needs. These needs are presented in the form of formal policy statements of the Town Council.

This Plan should be re-addressed by the Town of Rocky Mount regularly as new needs are identified. At minimum this Plan should be reviewed for revisions every five years to comply with the provisions of the state law. Nothing should prevent more frequent updating of this Plan if determined necessary by the Council or Planning Commission.

Upon completion, this Comprehensive Plan must undergo the adoption procedure prescribed by Section 15.2-2226 of the Code of Virginia. The citizens of the Town are afforded the opportunity to review and comment on the Plan. The Virginia Code specifies that at least one public hearing will be held before Planning Commission after which the Commission may recommend the Plan's acceptance by the Town Council.

Prior to holding a public hearing, the Planning Commission must publish a notice specifying the time and place of the hearing. This notice must be published once a

week for two consecutive weeks and not more than twenty-one (21) days or less than seven (7) days prior to the public hearing, in a newspaper having general circulation in the Town.

The Planning Commission and the Town Council may conduct a joint public hearing on the Plan. If a joint public hearing is held, only the Town Council needs to publish a notice of the public meeting.

"Whenever the local commission shall have recommended a comprehensive plan or part thereof for the county or municipality and such plan shall have been approved and adopted by the governing body, it shall control the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan. Thereafter no street, park or other public area, public building or public structure, public utility or public service corporation other than railroads, whether publicly or privately owned, shall be constructed, established or authorized, unless and until the general location or approximate location, character, and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the local commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted comprehensive plan or part hereof. In connection with any such determination the commission may, and at the direction of the governing body shall, hold a public hearing, after notice as required by Section 15.2-2204.

The commission shall communicate its findings to the governing body, indicating its approval or disapproval with written reasons therefore. The governing body may overrule the action of the commission by a vote of a majority of the membership thereof. Failure of the commission to act within sixty days of such submission, unless such time shall be extended by the governing body, shall be deemed approval when the commission notifies the owner or owners or their agents by certified mail. In the case of disapproval the owner or owners or their agents may appeal the decision of the local commission.

The appeal shall be written by petition to the governing body setting forth the reasons for the appeal. A majority vote of the governing body shall overrule the commission.

Widening, narrowing, extension, enlargement, vacation or change of use of streets or public areas shall likewise be submitted for approval, but paving, repair, reconstruction, improvement, drainage or similar work and normal service

extensions of public utilities or public service corporations shall not require approval unless involving a change in location or extent of a street or public area."

The Comprehensive Plan is a statement of policy for future growth. It is intended to provide guidelines for a long-range view of development within the community. The actual Plan has no legal power to control such development. The Plan does not attempt to dictate final designs or rigid area delineations. Plan implementation is the most crucial element of the planning process. Certain ordinances and programs must be prepared, implemented, and enforced if the town is to realize orderly growth.

After the governing body has adopted this Comprehensive Plan, a careful review of the existing land use controls (i.e., Zoning/Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance) should be undertaken. Revisions should be made based on the recommendations set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

Functional Objectives

The Plan is designed to encourage the development of a vibrant, attractive and healthful environment within town. In order to achieve this goal, all facets of life within town and the surrounding study area must be considered. The objectives contained herein relate to the problems and desires of the citizens and this document considers present and projected use of land.

The Rocky Mount Town Council and Planning Commission must plan for the future development of the town in relation to the needs of the citizens. Functional planning objectives to be met by the Plan entail:

Agriculture

To protect active agricultural lands, including cropland, pasture, and land currently fallow or in a stage of rotation, from undue residential, commercial, or industrial development.

Forest Land

To maintain sufficient tree cover, including brush lands, forest lands and plantations, on all areas where steep slopes exist in order to prevent severe erosion and to provide watershed protection.

Public Open Space

- a. To develop and maintain a system of parks to provide a wide range of recreational facilities for use by residents.

- b. To set aside adequate land for parks in areas of expected high density population growth before development eliminates the recreational potential of the land.
- c. To identify and to preserve areas of outstanding historic, cultural, and scenic value.
- d. To encourage the careful development of land for uses which will be beneficial to the town.
- e. To provide identified areas for public use activities that may become necessary to assure the future provisions of needed governmental services.

Water/Wetlands

- a. To protect floodplain areas and wetland areas as permanent conservation resources.
- b. To prohibit the construction of any residential, commercial, or industrial structures in a floodplain or wetland area and to allow construction of structures that are not inhabited and that are adequately flood-proofed in accordance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, and the Flood Plain Zones of the Rocky Mount Zoning and Development Ordinance, and the Subdivision Ordinance.

Environment

- a. To fully and comprehensively evaluate all future actions to minimize the environmental impact upon the air, water, land, and residents of Rocky Mount.
- b. To establish and maintain high standards for public buildings and landscape design for public facilities and streets.
- c. To support and encourage public service organizations (i.e. Garden Clubs, etc.) in their efforts to beautify Rocky Mount.
- d. To assure that new construction will improve community appearance.
- e. To provide transitional areas or buffer strips of landscaping between undesirable or incompatible land uses as provided by the Zoning and Development Ordinance.

Residential

- a. To provide the best possible living environment in the various residential areas as well as maximum compatibility of the residential areas with the natural assets of the surrounding landscapes.
- b. To provide a variety of housing types and cost levels convenient to major work places.
- c. To encourage high-density residential growth only in areas served by adequate transportation networks, public utilities and facilities.

- d. To establish buffer zones between residential areas and areas of conflicting land uses that if left alone reduce the aesthetic qualities of the residential areas.
- e. To direct heavy commercial and industrial traffic flow away from single-family and light residential-business areas.
- f. Establish minimum neighborhood development criteria to provide uniform standards of property enjoyment for all residents of town.
- g. To eliminate slum and blight conditions that may exist within town.

Commercial

- a. To control strip development of commercial establishments adjacent to major transportation routes. To promote and encourage use of service roads to support traffic to any commercial developments along the major transportation routes.
- b. To encourage commercial centers which are served by adequate transportation networks, public utilities and urban services so as to provide convenient service and access to the centers and its guests.
- c. To encourage the location of new commercial activities where they provide a high standard of site and building design, with adequate parking and sufficient egress for facilities.

Industrial

- a. To encourage the location of industry in areas where adequate buffer zones may be maintained between industry and incompatible land uses.
- b. To encourage the location of industry in areas where there are suitable and adequate water, sewerage and treatment facilities and sufficient transportation facilities.
- c. To encourage all industries to provide for the maximum protection of the natural environment.
- d. To encourage the location of industry that will afford decent, permanent job opportunities to all town residents.
- e. To encourage the development of industry that practices and promotes responsible corporate citizenship within the community.

Transportation

- a. To maintain and to develop transportation networks to provide the citizens with roadways that are safe and free from unnecessary congestion.
- b. To construct transportation facilities in such a manner as to prevent adverse effects to the environment.
- c. To identify and promote advanced planning practices that anticipate and regulate growth and development before serious transportation problems occur.

- d. To maintain and develop improved systems of pedestrian traffic (i.e. sidewalks, walking and bicycle trails, tours, etc.).

Public Utilities

- a. To provide water and sewer treatment facilities to keep pace with residential, commercial, and industrial growth, and maintain Rocky Mount's role as the regional center for the provision of water and sewerage service.
- b. To promote and encourage recycling, reuse and reduction programs for solid waste and provide for adequate sanitary disposal of remaining solid wastes.
- c. To discourage the extension of water and sewer service into areas where new development is deemed to be inappropriate due to conflict with one or more of the Town's objectives as stated in this Plan.
- d. To promote and encourage adequate soil erosion control regulations, as well as a storm water management plan.

Format, Data, and Scope

Format of the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is composed of several sections, each of which describes a particular aspect of the Town of Rocky Mount. Each section gives background information, as well as goals, objectives and action strategies to achieve these goals. Finally, there is an implementation section describing various tools the Town might use to accomplish the various action strategies.

Data Limitation

There is some data limitations with this Plan. Some data presented by the Town, Department of Transportation, and various Franklin County Departments may be several years old. The 2000 Census data also does not include data on the annexation population that came into town limits in July of 2000. This data is however the most current information available at the time of the writing of this document. The data generally reflects the conditions found in Rocky Mount and it is sufficient for planning purposes.

Scope of the Plan

The Town of Rocky Mount is located in one of the fastest growing areas of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Much of the growth of Franklin County is the direct result of urban services offered by the Town of Rocky Mount. It must be noted that the Town's population has decreased 2.4 percent. The Town must decide how to deal with the decline in population. It is also important to note that a significant amount of the

population in Rocky Mount is in the Age Group (25 to 44 years) representing almost 27 percent of the town population. This indicates a stable work force available to support new and expanding business and industry.

The "Commission on Populations Growth and Development" for the Commonwealth of Virginia projects an increase in Franklin County's population of 29 percent by 2010. This will raise the county population to 51,000 persons. During this same period of time the Town of Rocky Mount population is projected to decline. This should serve as a warning signal for the Town to evaluate this population decline and its future impact on the Rocky Mount Community.

From the population decline it appears that Rocky Mount is taking a larger role as a center for business and industry. As a town, continued commercial and economic growth benefits the county and the Town of Rocky Mount. To support the growing county population, it is essential that the Town maintain utility capabilities that are needed to support the commercial, industrial, and institutional services.

Growth leads to many challenges that the leadership of Rocky Mount and Franklin County must address. The Rocky Mount Plan is prepared to provide a strategy that will assist Town Government with day-to-day and long-term decisions that contribute to the quality of life for local inhabitants.

A continuous effort will be required to maintain governmental services during the planning period. Planning can greatly increase the efficiency, adequacy, and quality of governmental services if reliable information is available. This Plan contains much of the information essential to making such decisions intelligently thereby preventing duplication of effort and investment.

This Plan focuses on the future, and is based upon present conditions in Rocky Mount. The planning process should be a continuous task of updating economic, demographic, and land use projections. This Plan should be a flexible guide that may be revised at any time should conditions warrant modification.

BRIEF HISTORY OF ROCKY MOUNT

Early pioneers moving southward from the region known as Pennsylvania and westward from Virginia's Tidewater area began settling in Rocky Mount about 1750. As the population of the region increased small settlements began to cluster and become recognizable. Over time these population centers evolved into political units such as towns and villages. The County of Franklin was formed in 1786 from Bedford and Henry Counties and was named in honor of the Governor of Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin. It is one of the few counties in the Commonwealth not named for a person prominent in either British or Virginia history. Rocky Mount derives its name from the predominant rock mount, Bald Knob, which existed when the county became a political entity. Today Bald Knob still towers over the Town.

For clarification, county government in the 1700's was recognized as the regional extension of Virginia State Government. Municipal governments (cities, towns, townships and villages) were created to provide local government services above and beyond those offered by county government. Grants of local authority from the Commonwealth of Virginia in the form of municipal charters became the basis for the conduct of local government. The authority of the new government was declared in its municipal charter that identified local powers, rights and privileges granted by the state. Local government in Virginia is authorized to exercise on those specific powers granted by the state. This is as true today as it was then for the Town of Rocky Mount.

As the population of Franklin County increased, it was determined that a center of government was needed. Rocky Mount situated in the approximate center of the new county was designated as the county seat. Several public buildings, including a log courthouse, served Franklin County from 1786 to 1830.

For a number of years there were two separate and distinct settlements within the present corporate limits of Rocky Mount. A deed was recorded in 1805 conveying a twenty-five acre tract of land adjoining the courthouse/public area to the trustees of the Mt. Pleasant settlement. "Rocky Mount and Mt. Pleasant were then independent villages. Each had its own village government. The two villages were separated in most places by nothing more than a street or alley. Historical accounts indicate there was much antagonism between the residents of the two villages and residents of both villages practiced social discrimination mutually. Tradition has it that the establishment of the two towns in such proximity was the result of personal feelings between two families prominent in the county at the time."¹ Eventually, hostile feelings among the two towns subsided and the two formed the Town of Rocky Mount.

On February 17, 1873, Rocky Mount attained the status of an incorporated town and established corporate boundaries approximately one-half mile north, south, east, and

¹ Marshall Wingfield, Franklin County, Virginia: A History (Berryville, Virginia), 1964, p. 18.

west of the courthouse. A board of trustees was designated and given the authority to implement policies and services to govern the new town's inhabitants.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, the Town's lifestyle began to quicken as railroad and improved roads developed. These transportation systems helped shape the local economy. Rocky Mount's shops, stores, and banks provided many local and county residents with an opportunity for employment and a place for conduct of commerce. The Town's industrial base expanded, aided by the large quantity of "useable land of gentle slope and abundant water" in and around the Town.

Some of the first industries to open in Rocky Mount were Bald Knob Furniture Company and Angle Silk Mill. Today, Rocky Mount is home to many businesses and industries. Some of the larger employers include Fleetwood Homes and MW Manufacturers.

Today Rocky Mount is the center of trade and industry for the entire county. Equally important, it is a center of regional trade for those persons that reside between Roanoke to the north and Martinsville to the south.

POPULATION AND LAND USE

Goal

To achieve a balanced land use pattern that retains Rocky Mount's small town character while accommodating quality growth in a planned manner.

Background

This section of the Comprehensive Plan includes an analysis of the characteristics of Rocky Mount's population. An understanding of the Town's past growth, present characteristics, and projected population serves as the basis for community planning. Population trends affect future land use plans, housing, community facilities, recreational services, and other aspects of community development.

Past Trends

Historically, the character and growth of population in the Rocky Mount Study Area has been attributed largely to its gradual transition from a predominantly agricultural economy and rural lifestyle to a diversified service and industrial center, providing employment opportunities to Rocky Mount and Franklin County residents. During the earliest years of the twentieth century, population increases in the area were primarily the result of natural gains, as population mobility was relatively insignificant.

Table 1: Historic Population Trends – Rocky Mount/ Franklin County

	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Rocky Mount	1,339	1,366	1,432	1,412	4,002	4,198	4,098	4,066
Franklin Co. *	24,337	25,864	24,560	25,925	28,163	35,740	39,549	47,286

- County population includes the Town of Rocky Mount.
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1930-2000

The Town of Rocky Mount grew rather sporadically during the first sixty years of this century. From 1910 to 1930, its population jumped from 967 to 1,339. That represented a steady increase of 37 percent over the two decades. In 1930, Rocky Mount surpassed the percentage change in population for both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States (See Table 1). However, the next thirty years saw the Town's growth rate slow considerably. From 1930 to 1960, the population increased to only 1,412 persons. The decade of the 1950's produced a 1.4 percent decline in population. Between 1910 and 1960, Rocky Mount experienced an average growth rate of less than one percent per year.

On December 31, 1961, the Town annexed 3.868 square miles (2,455.52 acres) of new territory from Franklin County, increasing its total land area to 4.502 square miles (2,881 acres). With this, a phenomenal increase in population occurred, raising the total number of persons residing in the Town to 4,002 by 1970 (See Table 2). This represents a 183.4 percent change during the 1960s. This dramatic increase would indicate that the newly incorporated area thrived with the expanded local services. It also shows that the annexation did not hamper growth for the County as its population increased from 25,925 persons in 1960 to 28,163 persons in 1970 (an 8.6 percent growth). Regardless of the annexation, residents of the Town are Franklin County citizens. The increased urban-type services offered within the Town encourage growth and employment opportunities for both the Town and the County.

Table 2: Historic Population Trends – Town Population Change 1950-2000

Year	Population	Percent Change
1950	1,432	xxx
1960	1,412	-1.4
1970	4,002	183.4
1980	4,198	4.9
1990	4,098	-2.4
2000	4,066	-0.8
2000*	5,100	24.5

- Adjusted for 2000 annexation
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1950-2000

The 2000 Census data shows that the Town's population decreased .8 percent since the 1990 Census. The decrease was identified in the male population (1,868), which declined 12 percent from 1990 to 2000. During the same time period the female population (2,198) decreased 2.4 percent. The 2000 population for the Town of Rocky Mount is 4,066; adjusted for the 2000 annexation the Town's population is 5,100. The Town had a population of 4,098 in 1990. This unadjusted population decline should be noted in light of the population increase sustained by Franklin County during this same period. Again, Rocky Mount is becoming the home of business and industry with the adjoining county areas providing greater housing opportunities (See Table 3).

Table 3: Town Population by Sex, 1980-2000

	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
Male	1,995	1,846	-7.5	1868	1.2
Female	2,203	2,252	2.2	2198	-2.4

- SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000

A concern for any community is its ability to provide employment opportunities. Franklin County has historically played a role as a center for agribusiness. Increased population around Rocky Mount, Boones Mill and Smith Mountain Lake indicate that the current population is less dependent on the agribusiness sector for employment. For the area to remain competitive in attracting new job opportunities, an abundant and trainable work force is essential. The availability of a steady workforce and education and training of that force are critical to job creation. Table 4 shows population by age as a means to assess the educational needs and available workforce.

Table 4: Town Population by Age, 1980-2000

Age	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
Under 5	235	247	5.1	231	-6.5
5 to 17 years	814	604	-25.8	591	-2.2
18 to 20 years	178	185	3.9	135	-27.0
21 to 24 years	275	211	-23.3	228	8.1
25 to 44 years	1,027	1,094	6.5	1,023	-6.5
45 to 54 years	459	405	-11.8	517	27.7
55 to 59 years	276	204	-26.1	199	-2.5
60 to 64 years	239	223	-6.7	182	-18.4
65 to 74 years	370	447	20.8	410	-8.3
75 to 84 years	240	357	56.3	378	5.6
85 and over	85	121	42.4	172	4.2
TOTAL	4,198	4,098	-2.4	4,066	-0.8
Median Age	34.9	39.6	xxx	41.9	xxx
Under 18 years	1,029	851	-17.3	957	12.5

- Census data has been adjusted to fit age groups.
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000

Census data for both the Town and County show only moderate gains in age groups most likely to be included in the work force. The Town's largest loss in population was the 18 to 20 year range. This is probably due to area students leaving the area for higher education opportunities. The 21 to 24 group gained 8.1%, indicating that most of the students leaving are not returning to the Town or County. It will be interesting to see if the Town will continue to lose its young people after high school, because Rocky Mount's ability to grow economically will be directly related to the growth of its workforce population.

Table 5: County Population by Age, 1980-2000

Age	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
Under 5	2,075	2,465	18.8	2,569	4.2
5 to 17 years	6,315	6,551	3.7	7,381	12.7
18 to 20 years	2,731	2,337	-14.4	1,847	-21.0
21 to 24 years	2,174	2,265	4.2	2,539	12.1
25 to 44 years	8,982	12,136	35.1	13,331	9.8
45 to 54 years	3,109	4,687	50.8	7,213	53.9
55 to 59 years	1,480	2,011	35.9	3,127	55.5
60 to 64 years	1,492	1,929	33.5	2,514	30.3
65 to 74 years	2,113	3,061	44.9	3,964	29.5
75 to 84 years	801	1,655	106.6	2,158	30.4
85 and over	270	452	67.4	643	42.3
TOTAL	31,542	39,549	25.4	47,286	19.6
Median Age	30.2	Not Available	xxx	39.7	xxx
Under 18 years	8,390	9,016	7.5	11,797	30.8
65 yrs & older	3,184	5,168	62.3	6,765	30.9

- Census data has been adjusted to fit age ranges.
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000

The trends indicated herein support the hypothesis that the County population has increased to such an extent as to place new burdensome demands (on finances and community facilities) on the County government (See Table 5). This trend may serve to alert both the County and the Town governments of the benefits of additional boundary adjustments that will provide tangible benefits to each.

In March of 1999, the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County entered into a voluntary agreement providing for the annexation of approximately 1.5 square miles. The annexation took effect on July 1, 2000, and the Town corporate limits now roughly include lands to the north of Route 220. Included in the annexation were the Franklin Heights subdivision and development along Route 40 East. The annexation added approximately 690 persons to the Town's population, for a total of 5,100 persons. Due to the effective date, this annexation is not included in the 2000 Census information. The available Census data indicates that the Town was following the general pattern forming in the 1980s and 1990s prior to the annexation.

A January 2006 report by the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service showed that between 2000 and 2005, Franklin County and the Town of Rocky Mount were no longer growing at a moderate pace. In fact, the report stated that Franklin County's 5.9 percent growth during this five-year time period made Franklin County the fastest growing community in the Roanoke Region. At the same time, the Alleghany Highlands and the Martinsville-Henry County areas were among the state's largest population losers.

While the Smith Mountain Lake area of Franklin County leads in growth, Rocky Mount's strategic location along Route 220 and Route 40, as well as its close proximity to the proposed Interstate 73, make it attractive as a home for commuters to workplaces in larger areas. Rocky Mount has seen a growth in the number of new residential units, as well as new commercial establishments to support this growth. In 2000, there were five (5) zoning permits issued for new residential construction. By 2005, the number of zoning permits for residential construction increased to thirty (30). Over this five-year period, Rocky Mount had a 500 percent increase in the number of new homes constructed.

Rocky Mount's housing stock has become increasingly diverse. Today, single-family detached housing remains the dominant type, although with the inception of town homes, patio homes, and duplexes, its proportionate share of the housing stock is declining. The increased diversity of the housing stock will serve as an additional attractant for new residents looking to relocate to Rocky Mount. Map 2 (page 42) shows the town's current land use distribution among eight broad categories including agriculture/ residential, light residential, heavy residential, office/professional, business/commercial, manufacturing, mixed use, and public and open space.

In 2006, the Town of Rocky Mount conducted a residential build-out analysis. The study looked at all vacant residential parcels and their zoning designations, and subtracted out factors such as roads, easements, slopes, wetlands, and odd lot shape and size in order to quantify the amount of residential development possible at build-out. The build-out analysis demonstrated that the maximum housing units will be between 6,182 and 6,547 units and will occur between the years 2050 and 2060. At time of build-out, it is projected that the Town population will be between 14,651 and 15,517. The Town of Rocky Mount can use these future population projections to determine how fast the Town is growing, and to plan for and make adjustments as needed to direct future growth. The build-out analysis is included as Appendix A.

Issues and Opportunities

The Town of Rocky Mount has available land for industrial and office development. Recent in-migration and annexation have lead to population gains.

Twenty-four percent of the town's population is age 65 and older.

The Downtown and Uptown areas were recently the focus of a major rehabilitation grants in an effort to revive the commercial district located there.

The Town has a central business district that draws people to Rocky Mount.

Graduating students are leaving the area for higher education opportunities, and most are not returning to the town or county.

The town's housing stock is becoming increasingly diverse.

Objectives

Provide and maintain land for orderly growth and efficient use, especially along Rocky Mount's corridors.

Adopt and enforce land use regulations and ordinances to guide and implement the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Plan.

Encourage development to locate in areas where the Town may provide adequate water and sewer facilities and services.

Encourage the location of industry that will practice good corporate citizenship.

Continue to invest in and promote the revitalization of a stable and attractive Central Business District (Uptown and Downtown areas) that reasserts its importance to meeting the needs of the community.

Retain single-family housing in the Town of Rocky Mount while providing a variety of residential uses.

Ensure that adequate services are available to those Rocky Mount residents age 65 and above.

Encourage Rocky Mount and Franklin County residents who have left to return.

Action Strategies

Update the future land use plan that designates those areas best suited for residential, commercial, industrial and other uses.

Maintain zoning regulations designed to promote orderly development and that directs the Town toward implementation of the Future Land Use Map.

Consider the intent of the Town Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use map when considering land use decisions.

Promote single-family development in those areas designated as low-density on the Future Land Use Map.

Continue to provide for multi-family uses only in areas designated as medium/heavy density on the Future Land Use Map. Insure that ample access to major streets is available to serve these areas before multi-unit development takes place.

Buffer residential uses from commercial and industrial uses. Buffer single-family uses from multi-family uses.

Promote new investment and commercial development in the Central Business District of town.

Restrict commercial uses outside the Central Business District in areas used for single-family residential uses. Encourage commercial development to locate in areas along the major thoroughfares that can support traffic without disrupting the quality of life enjoyed in the established residential neighborhoods.

Encourage and promote the use of vacant, unused, or unoccupied upper floor areas within the Central Business District for commercial and residential use.

Encourage the expansion of improvements similar to those in the Uptown and Downtown districts in adjoining residential and commercial districts.

Study the feasibility of providing wheelchair access ramps and handrails to the sidewalks within the Central Business District as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Continue to encourage the use of special street name signs, street light poles, street furniture and landscaping in the Central Business District to provide a distinct setting for the area.

Continue to encourage and support organizations and residents in their Central Business District revitalization efforts.

Encourage industries to locate in the Town's Industrial Park or in areas where they are compatible with adjacent uses.

Require industries to minimize and/or eliminate any air, water, dust, odor, or noise pollution that may be detrimental to other nearby land uses.

Organize a concerted marketing program for all industrial and commercial parcels within town.

Promote redevelopment of available industrial and small business properties in town. Direct new manufacturing to the area's professionally planned industrial parks.

Encourage large developments to locate in areas where public services can be provided in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Encourage "in-fill" development to more efficiently utilize existing services.

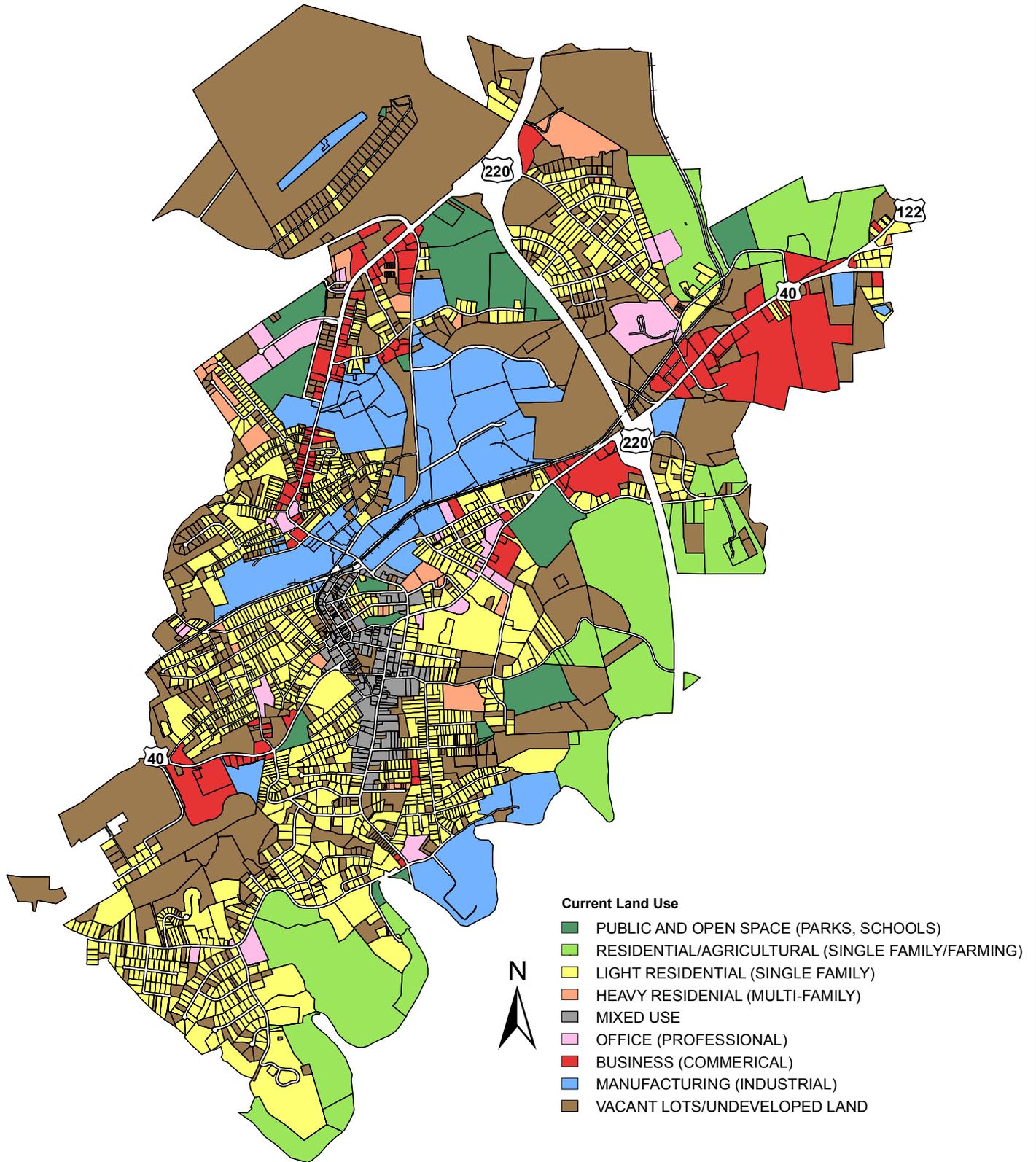
Continue to promote the development and improvement of the Town's Enterprise Zone. Review and update the Town's Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations and other land use control ordinances as needed to assist in implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

Strengthen cooperation between the Town and County in sharing land use information and staff expertise.

Continue to study the feasibility of incorporating areas of the County to permit expanded housing and economic development opportunities for Town residents.

Promote and market vacant buildings and properties.

Town of Rocky Mount Current Land Use Map



0 0.25 0.5 1
Mile

Created by: Thomas Furcron GIS Technician
March 2007



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Goal

Identify, preserve, and protect the natural resources that characterize Rocky Mount and retain the beauty of the natural environment while minimizing the adverse environmental impacts of human activities in order to enhance the quality of life.

Background

Geography and Physical Environment

The Town of Rocky Mount is located in the center of Franklin County along Virginia's southwestern Piedmont Plateau and consists of 4,257 acres or 6.7 square miles. The Town is situated 20 miles south of Roanoke, 25 miles north of Martinsville, and 60 miles southwest of Lynchburg (See Map 1, page 33).

For the most part, gentle slopes that provide good drainage and minimize flood hazard characterize the terrain in the study area. There are, however, approximately 250 acres where the terrain exceeds a slope gradient of 25 percent. This is land that is normally considered unsuitable for any type of conventional development or cultivation. A majority of these steep slopes are located along the periphery of the area, except for Bald Knob, a large hill that consumes an estimated 80 acres within Rocky Mount's corporate limits.

The Pigg River, which originates in western Franklin County, meanders across the southern and eastern portions of the study area. In addition, there are various other minor streams and creeks serving as drainage areas for the town and the surrounding sections of the county. Furnace Creek and Powder Mill Creek are the most notable of these minor tributaries.

Rocky Mount has an average ground elevation of 1,232 feet above mean sea level. Its climate is one of mild winters and warm summers. The nearby Blue Ridge Mountains to the west produce a variety of steering, blocking and modifying effects on storms and air masses. Other major factors controlling the climate are the Atlantic Ocean, the Chesapeake Bay, and Smith Mountain Lake to the east. These large bodies of water serve as slow reactors to atmospheric changes, contributing to warm summers and mild winters. According to the Southeast Regional Climate Center, the average annual precipitation for Rocky Mount is 44.65 inches. Precipitation is well distributed throughout the year with the maximum monthly average occurring in July (4.75 inches) and the minimum in November (3.10 inches). The average amount of precipitation occurring as snow is 16.7 inches a year. Yearly amounts of snowfall are extremely variable, ranging from none in 1955-1956 up to a total of 41 inches in 1965-66. The average January

temperature is 35.7 degrees and the average temperature in July, the hottest month, is 75.2 degrees. Rocky Mount's growing season averages 178 days, with frost-free nights normally occurring between the average dates of April 21 and October 16. The length of this period provides for the proper maturity of a large variety of crops.

Slope

A necessary component of any land use is the determination of the slope, or how steep the land is, of the particular study area. Generally, such a slope analysis provides an understanding of the various physiographic conditions particular to the area's terrain including erosion, drainage, and practicality of construction. In varying degrees, all types of land use are affected by the slope factor and, therefore, the location of specific activities is affected. Areas designated as excessive slopes present severe land use problems.

Should intensive development occur on these slopes, soil erosion and subsequent pollution by siltation could result in damage to adjacent water bodies, such as the Pigg River. In addition, excessive slopes impose high costs on development by increasing both building costs and public utilities construction costs. The slope factor will exclude intensive development and land use patterns within the Rocky Mount Study Area by directing growth into those sections identified as being level, rolling, and hilly. Areas excluded from intensive development for reasons of excessive slope should be used primarily for recreation/open space, forestry, grassland, and scenic purposes.

The map depicting the general location of the various slope classifications was developed as a result of computations based on the U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle sheets encompassing the total study area, such sheets being represented by a scale of one inch equals 2,000 feet. The actual slope was determined by measuring horizontal distance between contour lines (lines connecting points of equal elevation) and is calculated by percentage. Therefore, in estimating the effect of the slope factor, all land within the Rocky Mount Study Area was divided into the following five categories: 0-2% (level), 3-7%, 7-15%, 16-24%, and 25% and over. An identification of 25% slope shall mean that there is a rise or fall of twenty-five feet within a horizontal distance of 100 feet (See Map 3, page 46). The definitions of the above-cited categories are as follows:

0-2% -- Level Land: This is flat land capable of accommodating any type of development. Periodic flooding and poor drainage may be associated with this slope class.

3-7% -- Moderate Slope: This land can typically be developed with little or no grading depending on the type of development.

8-15% -- Rolling Land: This class of land may be developed for small concentrations of residential, commercial, and industrial activities not requiring

extensive amounts of level ground. Development of large tracts of this land for intensive land use may be costly.

16-24% -- Hilly Land: This land is suitable for residential uses if planning of site development includes consideration of the topography. Hilly land generally makes the construction of water and sewer facilities economically unfeasible.

25% and over -- Steep Slopes: This is land that is normally considered unsuitable for any type of intensive development. Conservation practices should be enforced in these areas, and a permanent tree cover should be established if possible. Examples of suitable uses of this slope class would include outdoor recreation, green space, and watershed protection development.

Slope distribution within the Rocky Mount Study Area depicts a general pattern of mostly rolling land considered suitable for residential, commercial, and industrial development purposes. There is, however, a considerable amount of hilly land scattered throughout the study area. Notable concentrations of this slope class occur south of the Pigg River in the vicinity of Virginia Primary Route 40, southeast of the intersection of Routes 40 and 640, south of Furnace Creek along the western corporate limits of the Town of Rocky Mount, and in the vicinity of Bald Knob and Grassy Hill. Severe slope conditions, while also being widely scattered, occur significantly at Bald Knob and along the Pigg River, Furnace Creek, Powder Mill Creek, and their intermittent tributaries. A majority of the most severe slopes are located on the periphery of the study area.

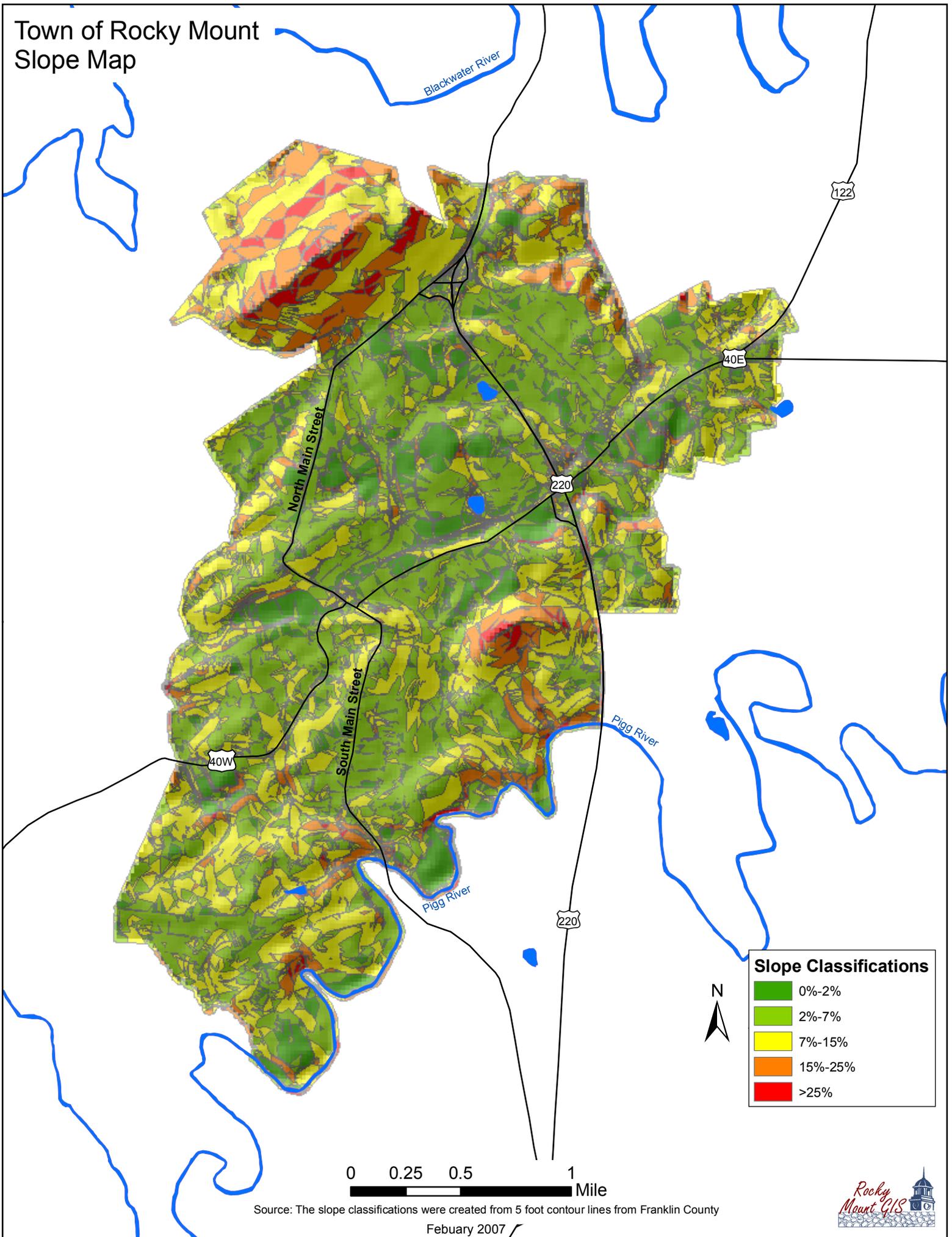
Soil Types

Another essential element in planning the land use of an area is the identification and location of various soil types. Such an analysis determines what limitations soil conditions might impose upon the use of an area for a particular activity, thus facilitating the most appropriate use of soil resources. Soil type will determine building foundation strength, fertility, erosion, drainage, and effectiveness of septic tank disposal. All of these factors are important in planning the nature and extent of development that should occur within the area.

In general, the use of soil information indicates the land's inherent capability in supporting a variety of land use activities and provides a technique allowing substantial basis for planning decisions. By recognizing the different characteristics of soil and offering guidelines as to their optimum use, a great deal can be done to protect both the natural environment and the residents of the study area.

In analyzing the soil characteristics within the Rocky Mount Study Area, data was obtained from the United States Soil Conservation Service (SCS), which organized the various individual soil units into three general groups, called associations. Each of these associations contains a combination of soil types having generally similar

Town of Rocky Mount Slope Map



Source: The slope classifications were created from 5 foot contour lines from Franklin County
February 2007



characteristics, as they relate to such conditions as depth of soil, surface and subsoil texture, available moisture capacity, and topography. It should be understood, however, that while general area soil conditions have a tendency to impose limitations on different land use activities, there may be located within any soil classification an individual subsoil having greater limitations. Therefore, an individual site considered for possible development will require a much more detailed soil analysis as to structural suitability than is presented herein (See Map 4, page 49).

The component soil types of the study area's three soil associations are defined as follows:

Association 1, identified as the CULLEN-CECIL-ENON-IREDELL ASSOCIATION, is characterized as being predominantly well-drained, clayey soils on upland areas. This association is situated on the north side of the Pigg River and, although gently sloping to sloping in topography, includes moderately steep slopes along the base of Grassy Hill as well as several moderately steep to steep escarpments throughout the remainder of the association.

The Cullen soils comprise approximately 75 percent of this association and the Cecil soils account for about 10 percent. Both of these soil types are deep and well drained, having red and moderately permeable, clayey subsoil. Cullen clays are of mixed mineralogy while the clays of Cecil are predominantly kaolintic. Enon soils represent about 10 percent of the association and are also recognized as being deep and well drained. This soil type is made up of brown, plastic, clayey subsoil having mixed mineralogy and slow permeability. The remaining 5 percent of this grouping are occupied by the deep and moderately well to somewhat poorly drained Iredell soils. This stratum occurs on areas of gentle relief and contains a variety of brown, clay subsoil, which are very plastic, very sticky, and slowly permeable.

Association 2, the CECIL-PACOLET ASSOCIATION, is located on the south side of the Pigg River. It consists of well-drained, clayey soils on upland sections of the study area. The entire association is characterized as being dominantly sloping but includes gentle as well as moderately steep to steep slopes.

Cecil soils make up approximately 75 percent of this association and the Pacolet soils represent the remaining 25 percent. Both soil types are deep over hard bedrock and consist of red, kaolintic clay subsoil. Moderate permeability is also a characteristic of these two soils. The depth to the bottom of the clay subsoil of the Cecil is greater than 40 inches, but is only 20 to 40 inches deep in the Pacolet soils. Below these depths are found softly weathered gneiss and schist deposits. Pacolet soils occur primarily on the steeper slopes of the association.

Association 3 is a well-drained group of soils situated on the flood plains and stream terraces of the Pigg River and is identified as the HIWASSEE-WICKHAM-STATE-TOCCA & CONGAREE ASSOCIATION. The topography of this soil group ranges from

nearly level on floodplains to moderately steep and steep on scattered stream terraces and isolated escarpments.

The Hiwassee soils, making up about 75 percent of this association, occur on high terraces and are gently sloping to moderately steep in relief. They are both deep and well drained and consist of moderately permeable, clay subsoil, which is dark red in color.

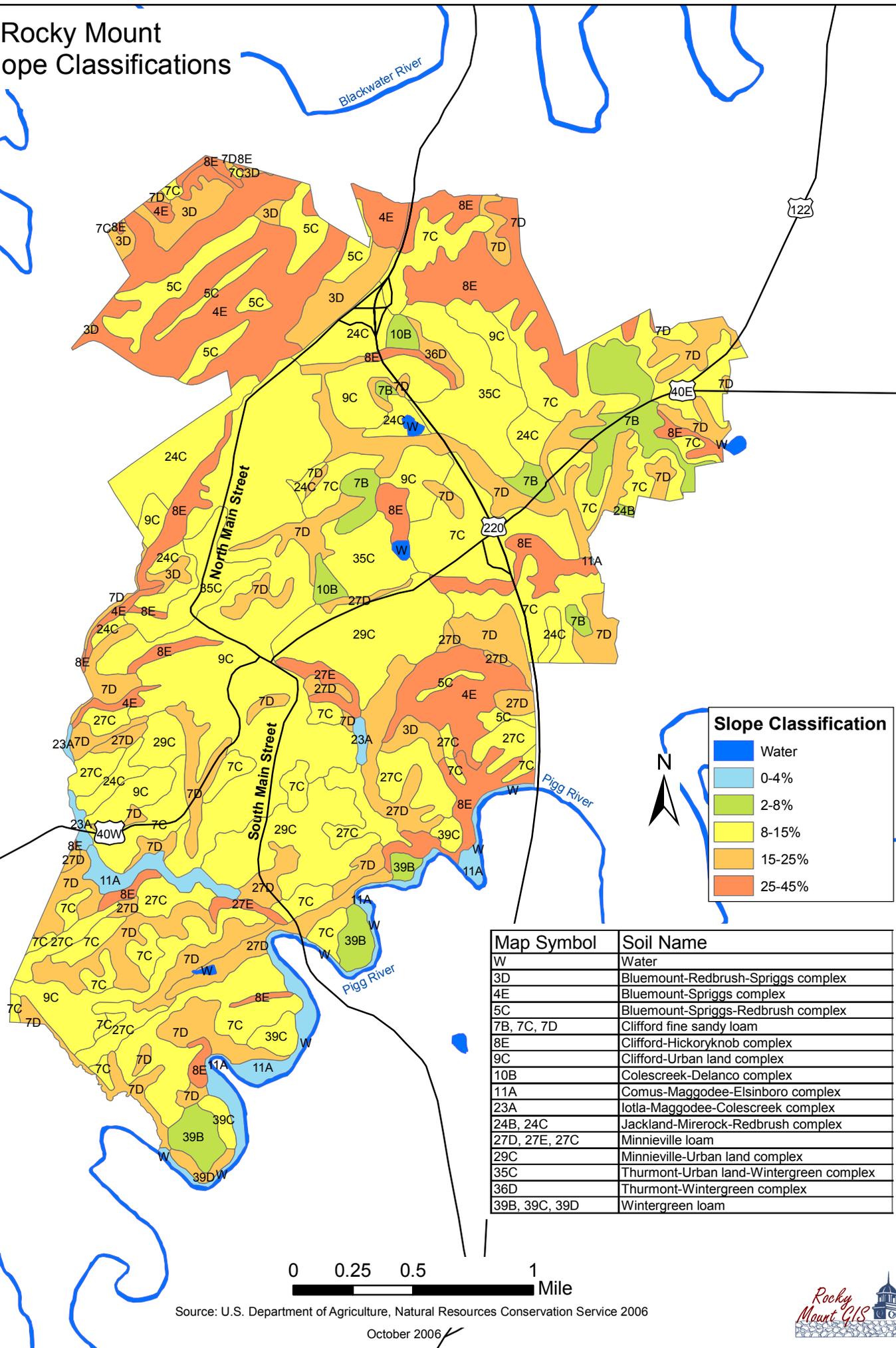
Wickham soils occur primarily on gently sloping to sloping stream terraces above flood level, but are found lower on the landscape than Hiwassee soils. Like almost all other soils of the area, they are deep and well drained and are composed of moderately permeable, yellowish-red subsoils of sandy clay loam. Wickham soils occupy approximately 10 percent of the soil association. State soils are brown with loam surfaces and light, clay loam subsoils. They are exemplified as nearly level soils on low stream terraces subject to occasional inundation by floodwaters.

Other qualities of this soil type include substantial depth, adequate drainage, and moderately rapid permeability. State soils make up 5 percent of the major soil group. Toccoa and Congaree soils also occur on nearly level terrain and represent about 8 percent of the association. Although both are well drained, occasional to frequent flooding is common. The Toccoa class of soils is deep and brown with sandy loam surface textures of moderately rapid permeability. In contrast, the Congaree soils consist of silty loam surface textures and are moderately permeable.

Soils identified primarily as Pacolet, comprise the remaining 2 percent of the association. These occur predominantly on the area's steep escarpments.

Any town and adjoining county development should proceed only after a careful evaluation of the soil conditions is made. Analysis of soils should be considered as part of the site plan review process for new development in the study area. Information on soils is available through the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, and through the local health department. Development within the corporate limits is by and large accessible to sanitary sewer. The Town Council has adopted a mandatory connection policy that requires a developer to connect to sanitary sewer if service is accessible. This policy is prudent in protecting both the environment and maintaining the financial integrity of the Rocky Mount Utility System.

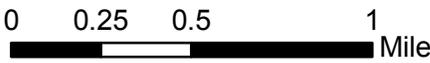
Town of Rocky Mount Soil & Slope Classifications



Slope Classification

- Water
- 0-4%
- 2-8%
- 8-15%
- 15-25%
- 25-45%

Map Symbol	Soil Name
W	Water
3D	Bluement-Redbrush-Spriggs complex
4E	Bluement-Spriggs complex
5C	Bluement-Spriggs-Redbrush complex
7B, 7C, 7D	Clifford fine sandy loam
8E	Clifford-Hickoryknob complex
9C	Clifford-Urban land complex
10B	Colescreek-Delanco complex
11A	Comus-Maggodee-Elsinboro complex
23A	Iotta-Maggodee-Colescreek complex
24B, 24C	Jackland-Mirerock-Redbrush complex
27D, 27E, 27C	Minnieville loam
29C	Minnieville-Urban land complex
35C	Thurmont-Urban land-Wintergreen complex
36D	Thurmont-Wintergreen complex
39B, 39C, 39D	Wintergreen loam



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service 2006

October 2006



Geology and Minerals

A conglomeration of metamorphosis and igneous rocks that are predominantly of the Precambrian Age underlies the Rocky Mount Study Area situated within a dissected upland recognized as the Piedmont Province. The Blue Ridge Province, an arch of complex folded rocks running in a southwesterly direction, lies just to the north and west of the study area. Characteristic landforms and physical features determine general distinctions between any two such physiographic provinces.

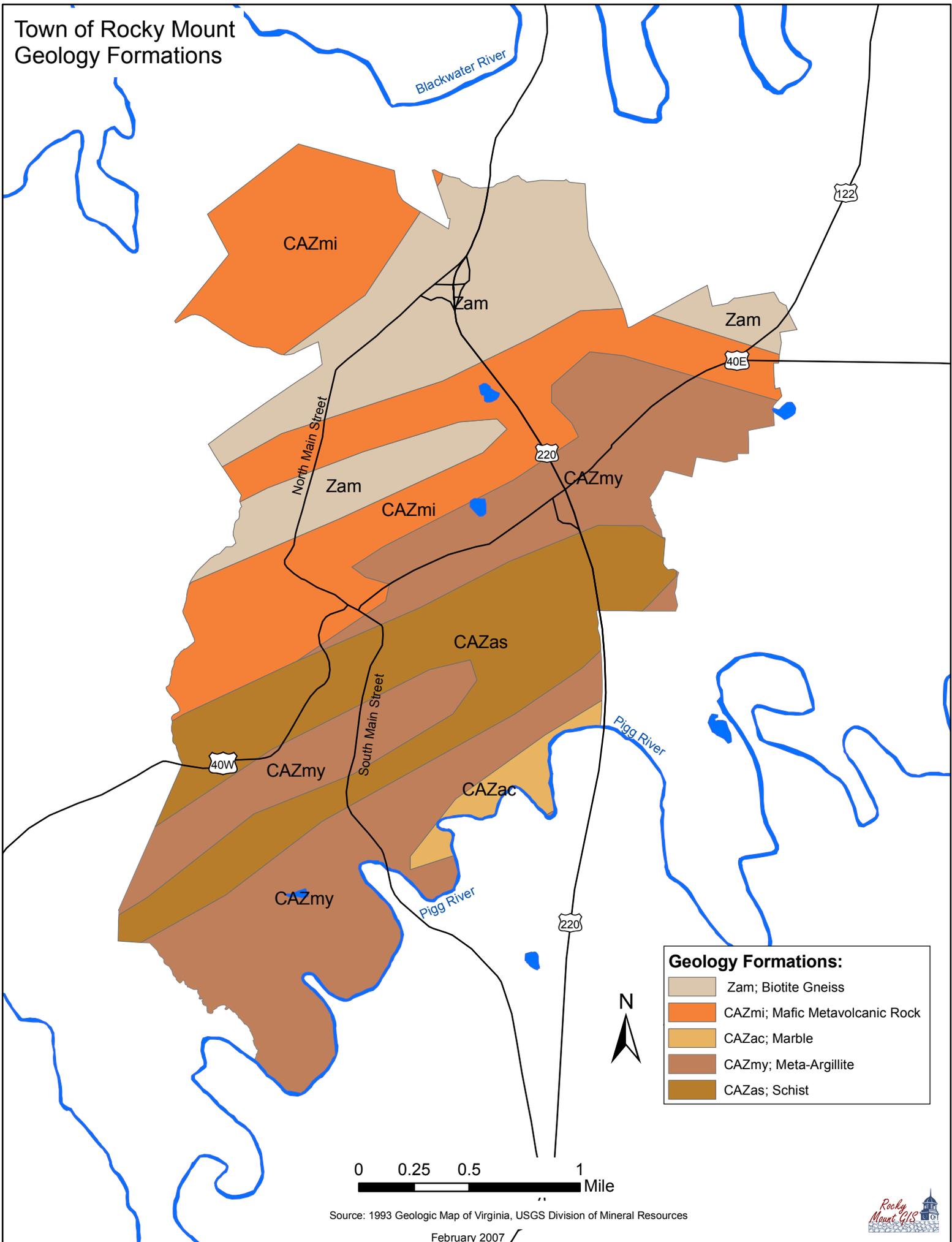
There are two principal geological units located within the boundaries of the study area (See Map 5, page 51). The first, the Lynchburg Formation, consists primarily of gray to greenish-gray gneiss and schist and includes some deposits of phyllite and quartzite. It underlies approximately 60 to 65 percent of the study area and about 50 percent of the entire county. The second unit appears as two narrow strips of hornblende, gabbro, and gneiss intrusions running in a southwest-northeast direction. Specifically, these strips contain sills of chlorotic schist, chlorotic hornblende gneiss, hornblende diorite, kyanitic schist, and kyanitic quartzite. One strip crosses the study area in the vicinity of Franklin Heights, Grassy Hill, North Main and Sycamore Streets while the other runs parallel to and along the Pigg River at the southern corporate limits of Rocky Mount. The Piedmont Province's soil mantle generally obscures a majority of these formations.

Water

The Pigg River is recognized as the Rocky Mount Study Area's primary and most significant surface water resource. This river has a drainage area of approximately 68 square miles upstream from the Town of Rocky Mount's wastewater treatment plant. The study area is situated within the Roanoke River Basin, one of the major drainage basins in Virginia. Locally, there are several recognizable drainage patterns. A very small section of the northern-most tip of the study area lies within the Upper Blackwater Watershed and subsequently drains into the Blackwater River. The Blackwater River is significant as it serves as the source for the Town's water supply. The present water plant serving the Town was troubled by the low flow on the Blackwater in 2002 as a result of drought conditions.

Discussion has periodically surfaced regarding a possible impoundment to act as a secondary raw water source. This impoundment would supply raw water during low flow periods. The impoundment would be kept full during the wet weather cycles and water would be released to maintain the minimum flow requirements of the river during low flow periods. This would assure an abundant supply of water for the Town and it would maintain downstream water quality standards. In addition to the improved water supply, the impoundment would permit the water plant staff to reduce its hours of operation during dry months that require additional shifts to operate the water treatment facility.

Town of Rocky Mount Geology Formations



Source: 1993 Geologic Map of Virginia, USGS Division of Mineral Resources

February 2007



This secondary water source would also insure the Town a dependable water supply and the ability to serve growth areas.

The northeastern section of the Town of Rocky Mount, including the Franklin Heights area, is located in the Powder Mill Creek drainage area. Surface drainage for the remainder of town, a majority of the area of Henry Fork, flows either toward the Pigg River or to its tributary of Furnace Creek.

Powder Mill Creek has a total drainage area of 4.00 square miles and is 5.2 miles in length. Furnace Creek's drainage area is 4.34 square miles, with a length of 3.2 miles. Although there are various other small streams and creeks dissecting the study area, the above-mentioned water routes are among the most notable in their effect on Rocky Mount and vicinity.

Over the years, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) has maintained two regular stream gauging stations along the Pigg River. Although not in the vicinity of the study area, the data collected from this "historical" station indicates a very high daily average discharge slightly above 1.0 cubic feet per second per square mile of drainage area. This equals to a discharge of approximately two-thirds of a million gallons per day (mgd) per square mile of the entire drainage area.

In addition, the Department of Environmental Quality operates three water quality surveillance-monitoring stations along the Pigg River, two of which are located within the Rocky Mount Study Area. These stations, through monthly samples, analyze such properties as temperature and dissolved oxygen and phosphorus content. Depending on specific needs, however, checks may be made for nutrients, solids, alkalinity, settling solids, hardness, chlorides, chromium, zinc, dissolved solids, sulfates, and conductivity. (The quantitative results of the analysis of water at any such sampling station may be greatly influenced by weather conditions, stream flow, season of the year and waste discharge by industry and agriculture).

There are two significant watersheds comprising the study area. The Upper Blackwater Watershed, identified in the West Piedmont Planning District Commission's Metropolitan/Regional Comprehensive Water and Wastewater Disposal Plan as a primary watershed, covers the extreme northern tip of the study area. The remainder of Rocky Mount and environs lie within the watershed of the Pigg River. A watershed is a trough shaped land area in which runoff from rain and other forms of precipitation eventually flow into a single channel. Therefore, the proper management and protection of watersheds are necessary and essential to the provision of an adequate future water supply, effective flood control, enhancement of water quality, and the control of soil erosion and sedimentation.

The Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District, with technical assistance provided by a variety of other state and Federal agencies, maintains a detailed work plan for the Upper Blackwater Watershed. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) has also conducted an extensive work program in the watershed area. Should this watershed be destroyed,

it would be physically and economically difficult for alternative watershed areas to be developed.

For the future of both Franklin County and the Town of Rocky Mount, the Blackwater Watershed needs to be protected. In December 2005, the Virginia Rural Water Association, along with a steering committee composed of Town and County staff, the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Virginia Department of Health completed the *Town of Rocky Mount Source Water Protection Plan*. The plan stressed the use of zoning and land use controls, public education, best management practices, and the creation of a contingency plan to safely retain this resource for future use. Because the entire Blackwater Watershed lies outside of the Town limits within Franklin County, the Town should stay actively aware of County growth policies within the watershed. Should concern arise over the order of growth within this watershed, it may become necessary for the Town to incorporate this area to permit more definitive growth policies to be implemented that will protect this water resource.

The susceptibility of certain areas to frequent flooding during periods of heavy or prolonged precipitation is an important factor in determining the locations of future development within the Rocky Mount Study Area. The construction of permanent, inhabited public and private structures in floodplains presents the potential loss of lives and property and degradation of water resources and the environment. As the floodplain is developed, the normal flow of water is restricted and the area susceptible to flooding and erosion is enlarged. Future construction of residential, commercial, and industrial structures in flood prone areas should be discouraged.

Map 6 (page 55) shows those floodplains within the study area, which have been delineated by the Federal Insurance Administration and Federal Emergency Management Agency. These areas need to be carefully regulated to reduce the threat of flood damage. Although flooding is not a serious hazard, the Pigg River and its several tributaries are subject to flooding.

Developed land presently exists in many of these floodplains. However, additional development should be discouraged and additional steps taken so that development does not further exacerbate the flooding problem by impeding and unduly constricting flows. The Town has enacted supplemental zoning regulations that establish Stormwater Management Regulations for all areas within the incorporated areas. In addition, the Town's Erosion and Sediment Control program has established requirements for the control of erosion and sedimentation and procedures for the administration and enforcement of these requirements.

The Rocky Mount Study Area, like a majority of the surrounding region, is located on a geologic formation that is not conducive to a good subsurface water supply. Although such factors as topography, lithology (character of rock formation), soil vegetation, temperature, and even activities of man may govern the occurrence of ground water, geologic structure is the primary influence in this region of the state. As described previously, this area is underlain by a complex formation of Precambrian crystalline

rocks, such as gneiss, hornblende, and gabbro. This type of rock formation results in some of the poorest water production in the state. The absence of a good ground water supply increases the need of control over the surface source of water.

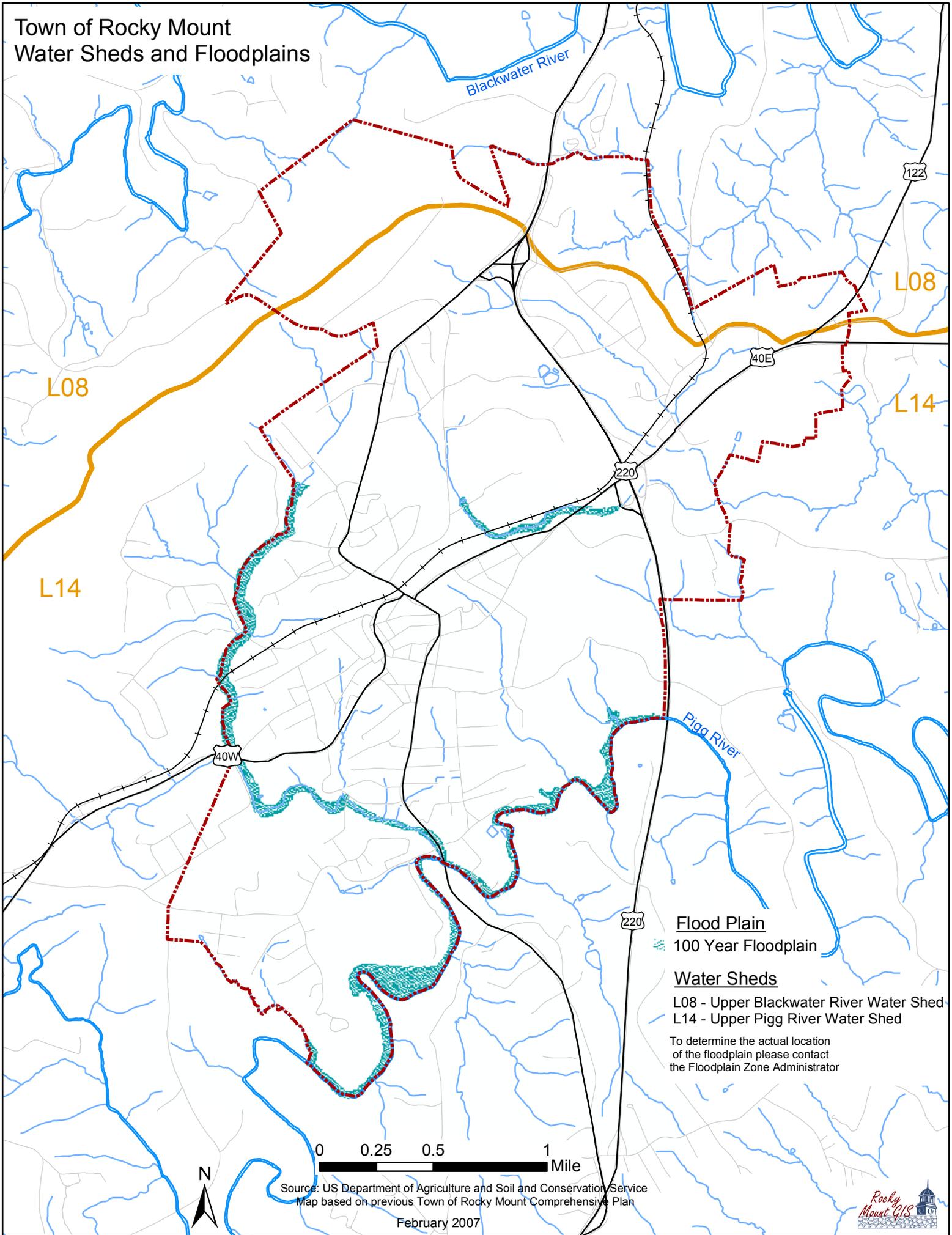
The igneous and metamorphic rocks of the study area are relatively impermeable. Actually, water is found only in fractured zones in the upper levels of the rock, resulting from faults or other subsurface structural movements and in contact zones between the various rock strata. There are fewer such fractures found in the Rocky Mount area than in various other sections of the region. Due to the extremely limited supply of water in the shattered rock formations, heavy pumping often results in dramatically fluctuating water levels. Drilled wells in the study area are usually six inches in diameter and reach water at a depth range of 150-250 feet. Below this depth, reliance is made primarily on contact zones; however, this has proved to be a risky procedure. On the average, area wells produce less than 20 gallons per minute (gpm), with a few wells producing over 50 gpm. As an example, a selected well located in the Franklin Heights area is 180 feet in depth, six inches in diameter, and yields approximately 60 gpm. In 2005, the Town explored groundwater potential on a site adjacent to the Town of Rocky Mount Water Treatment Plant that was deemed favorable to the development of high yielding wells by a consulting hydrologist. However, after drilling four wells to a depth of 1,000 feet, the groundwater resource evaluation yielded flow rates of 5 gallons per minute (gpm). Poor conditions to support ground water would indicate the importance of Rocky Mount's regulated and monitored public water supply.

The future economic, demographic, and industrial growth of the study area will depend directly on the quality and quantity of water. The Town of Rocky Mount's public water supply system services an estimated 2,300 households which includes approximately 26 percent of the study area's population outside the corporate limits of the Town. Water service has been extended to a majority of town residents, including those residents of the most recently annexed portion of town, and to residential development on Grassy Hill. The water supply system is adequate for current and modest population growth and planned distribution expansions are satisfactory. However, the Blackwater River, being the primary source of water for the Town, is limited in supply and subject to pollution that is largely related to upstream agricultural activities and gradual residential development in proximity to the river. Control over growth within the Blackwater Watershed is critical to both the Town and the County. Caution must be exercised to safeguard this resource.

In addition, the growing demands of new industry and the desirability of including suburban communities in the central water system indicate a need to expand existing plant capacity. For these reasons, access to other water sources is a necessary requirement.

The proposed Blackwater impoundment's primary concern for Rocky Mount is contributing an augmented storage of water during low flows in an appropriate tributary to Blackwater River. The general quality of water in this area is soft and therefore excellent for municipal and industrial uses.

Town of Rocky Mount Water Sheds and Floodplains



Flood Plain

100 Year Floodplain

Water Sheds

L08 - Upper Blackwater River Water Shed
L14 - Upper Pigg River Water Shed

To determine the actual location
of the floodplain please contact
the Floodplain Zone Administrator

Source: US Department of Agriculture and Soil and Conservation Service
Map based on previous Town of Rocky Mount Comprehensive Plan

February 2007



Green Infrastructure and Open Space

Green infrastructure is a strategic approach to conservation that addresses the impacts of development and the accelerated consumption and fragmentation of open land. Green infrastructure is made up of those natural resources that are fragile and irreplaceable, that when linked together form an interconnected network benefiting both people and the natural environment. The town's water resources and scenic byways serve as the frame for the town's green infrastructure.

Preservation of water resources and related open space networks does not require public ownership of the entire green infrastructure. However, public ownership is highly desirable for land that is or in the future will be connected to existing parkland or that creates continuous greenways and blueways. The most effective protection of green infrastructure will be achieved through its conservation.

By taking a proactive and holistic approach to land and water conservation, the Town should work with Franklin County, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and conservation groups to identify critical sites and linkages, as well as plan, design and invest in our green infrastructure using the same principles that are used for built infrastructure.

The elements of the Town's green infrastructure network must be protected for future generations. This will require long-range planning and an ongoing commitment by elected officials, staff, and residents. A green infrastructure system will increase recreational opportunities for residents, offer better connections to nature, and create a sense of place. When planned correctly, green space has shown to increase property values, and reduce the cost of public infrastructure and public services.

The design of past subdivisions did little to minimize the environmental impacts of development. Subdivision policies regulating open space preservation can only be implemented as new development or redevelopment occurs. The Town has the responsibility to plan for and approve developments that minimizes pollution and stormwater runoff. Attention to site and building design can reduce the impacts of new development and contribute to more green space. In addition to evaluating soil conditions, focus should be given to water features, steepness, vegetation, and unique natural characteristics that should be preserved for open space. The best tool to minimize the environmental impacts of development is the adoption of low impact development standards and conservation subdivision design techniques within the Zoning and Development Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance.

Timber

Within the geographical domain of Franklin County, including the Rocky Mount Study Area, there are over 266,733 acres of commercial forestland. Commercial forestland is

identified as land that is producing or is capable of producing crops of industrial wood and is not withdrawn from timber utilization by statute or administrative regulation.

Within the Town of Rocky Mount, there is little potential for commercial harvesting of timber. Timber, however, remains one of the larger industries serving Franklin County. As most forest area within the Town limits has been removed, there are few forested areas of notable size within the study region. Still forest products help maintain many jobs in agriculture and industry. The forests also reduce soil and wind erosion, purify the air, and act as a habitat for wildlife. Both the Town and the County should encourage prudent harvesting and replanting programs.

Maintenance of forests and forest management programs are encouraged particularly along the Blackwater Watershed. Forest management processes will reduce erosion and protect the watershed. This protection is important if the Blackwater Watershed is to be developed as a surface impoundment for the Rocky Mount Water System.

Areas within Rocky Mount with forested area are usually found on steep slopes that impede development. Although of limited commercial value, the forests are important to the town and should be guarded. Forests are defined as including brushland, forestlands, and plantations. Forestland, for the purposes of this study, includes both commercial and non-commercial woodland. The ownership of commercial forestland in Franklin County proper is largely private. The forest industry controls approximately 10,400 acres of commercial forest, while farmers own 153,900 acres; and 132,500 acres are held by a multitude of individual private owners. The remaining 2,700 acres are designated as being publicly owned by a variety of federal, state, or local interests.

The study area's major type of forest cover is Oak-Hickory, followed by Oak-Pine and Loblolly-Shortleaf Pine. There is a good potential for an expanding forest industry in Franklin County, if proper forest management techniques are adhered to. This could contribute positively to the Rocky Mount economy by generating employment in both the processing and transportation sectors.

In many areas of the County, land has been permitted to return to forests as it has been taken out of more active agricultural use. The large amount of total land covered with timber has been of major importance in limiting soil erosion and retention of rainfall and providing for more uniform stream flow. Soil conservation practices are extremely important throughout the Rocky Mount Study Area and the remainder of Franklin County due to the highly erodible soil structure and extensive surface drainage system.

Forests protect the watersheds and determine both the quantity and quality of water. All forest landowners should adhere to proper forest management practices. Major forest management needs include the reforestation of areas which are non-stocked, conversion of low-producing hardwood areas to pine stands, improvement of the timber stand to hardwoods, and growth of established seedlings.

Agriculture

Agriculture plays an important role in the economy and lifestyle of Franklin County and Rocky Mount. Emphasis is attributed to a number of factors that include a gently rolling terrain, fertile soils, and an abundance of surface water for irrigation. Since the early 1950's, the role of agriculture in the county's economy has been gradually losing its once unchallenged dominance. The emergence of manufacturing and industry signaled a major turning point in the direction of Franklin County's economy. Because of better paying full-time and part-time jobs, and improved transportation, manufacturing now surpasses agriculture in Franklin County in both employment and total income.

The application of fertilizers and animal waste to farmlands may need to be carefully monitored within every watershed. This monitoring will establish background data and enable officials to initiate special mitigation measures to maintain water quality. Franklin County continues to depend on dairy farming and beef cattle. Other key farm commodities in Franklin County are timber, tobacco, and apples. While, tobacco and apples continue to be important components of the local economy, the dependency on them has decreased. Presently, the more concentrated agricultural activity areas are found in the eastern, central, north-central, and south-central portions of Franklin County.

Issues and Opportunities

The increase in growth in the town has placed demands on the natural environment.

The current Zoning Ordinance does not adequately protect the natural features of the town.

The Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County are known for their natural beauty, including mountainous landscapes, lakes, rivers, and open spaces.

Continued development on Grassy Hill is eminent as land within the town is becoming scarcer.

The Town incorporated a Wireless Telecommunication Ordinance to aid in the protection of the town's scenic viewsheds.

Due to the amount of growth occurring within the town and the increased density, the Town requires additional monitoring and enforcement of erosion and sediment control practices.

The Town recently adopted an Erosion and Sediment Control Enforcement Cycle to assist in the enforcement of the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances do not require nor effectively encourage open space or greenways in new subdivisions.

The Town should continue to periodically update and modify the Subdivision Ordinance to reflect the policies and guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Town does not have a tree or landscaping ordinance adopted to control or manage the removal or destruction of trees on private properties.

Franklin County Parks and Recreation has created a Trails Master Plan, in which the Town of Rocky Mount is the hub.

Objectives

Maintain high standards of the natural environment.

Protect the town's natural habitat by conserving the environment, including vegetation, watercourses, wetlands, mountainsides, etc.

Expand opportunities for the general public to access and utilize the Pigg River and Blackwater River.

Promote development that incorporates and respects both the natural and local environments.

Encourage site design that utilizes landscaping and other natural features to minimize and filter runoff.

Protect critical mountainsides, ridge tops, and viewsheds along Grassy Hill and Bald Knob that add to the character of Rocky Mount.

Utilize the Public/Open Space zoning district to locate passive recreational activities in environmentally sensitive areas.

Encourage the use of land development techniques such as infill and compact development to efficiently use existing land and to prevent the unnecessary development of open and green space.

Create a balance between the natural environment and growth and development by employing innovative land management techniques.

Prevent development in areas of critical environmental importance.

Reduce flooding and flood damage by protecting floodplains and wetlands.

Protect the Town's water supply by regularly testing the Blackwater River for pollution.

Encourage the use of street trees and consider revising the Zoning Ordinance to require landscaping in parking lots.

Consider the benefits of requiring a percentage of trees or woodland be retained in land development projects. This should be used in conjunction with requirements for new trees or landscaping.

Promote recycling and solid waste management.

Increase the community's understanding of the town's natural environment by supporting natural resource education.

Action Strategies

Develop and implement a long-term plan to protect the town's natural environment.

Work with Franklin County to ensure maximum protection of natural resources.

The Town should prepare for adverse impacts of surrounding Franklin County growth and work with the County to prevent damage to the natural environment.

Strengthen cooperation between the Town and County in sharing land use information and staff expertise and in coordinating site plan review of projects and proposals impacting both jurisdictions.

Utilize state agencies, such as the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries or the Department of Conservation and Recreation to aid in the protection of the natural environment.

Consider the adoption of an overlay zone with regulations that would decrease the potential for the contamination of existing and potential drinking water sources.

Work with property owners to conserve their privately owned, environmentally important property. Voluntary techniques, such as conservation easements, should be utilized.

Study the benefits of creating a greenway system along the Pigg River floodplain.

Modify the Zoning Ordinance so that it provides better protection to natural resources. Increase the emphasis in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance on enhancing the natural environment through development.

Consider the adoption of a natural resources overlay zoning district to further protect wetlands, floodplains and scenic viewsheds.

Investigate open spaces along corridors as potential sites for parks and recreational purposes.

Consider the development of conservation easements within wetland, floodplains, and scenic viewsheds as an alternative to public acquisition of private property.

Identify important gateways and develop gateway overlay districts to preserve scenic entrances to and views of our community.

Develop standards for landscaping along important gateways.

Continue to enforce the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities ordinance to control the siting of facilities.

Adopt a tree preservation ordinance for tree and woodland protection and conservation.

Continue to enforce the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.

Restrict development in floodplains, swamps, and drainage ways and in areas with extreme slopes (25% or greater).

Encourage the acquisition of development rights within the floodplains.

Regulate the activities allowed and development design in areas with a slope between 15 and 25%.

Identify environmentally sensitive areas in town and zone as Public/Open Space.

Require developers to prepare plans for reducing water runoff in their developments. Require increased protection by the developer to minimize erosion, and reduce unplanned run off of surface water.

Restrict development on soils that will not adequately support structures and septic systems.

Discourage large amounts of land disturbance during development. Encourage developers to incorporate the natural setting into their design, by incorporating conservation subdivision ideas into the Zoning Ordinance.

Preserve natural water systems by protecting and enhancing all streams, wetlands, and water features.

Promote a master stormwater plan for the Town. Identify all drainage basins and needed stormwater management facilities and structures. Base a stormwater study on full development of study area to assure adequacy to handle future growth.

Identify and protect open spaces with recreation potential, protect environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, etc., and preserve areas that may be necessary for public service to the town. It is suggested that these areas be identified and zoned as Public Open Spaces.

Continue to enforce the Wireless Telecommunications Facilities ordinance to control the location of facilities.

Promote the preservation of trees, shrubs, and other natural foliage that will hold soils, absorb moisture and cleanse the air.

Promote protection of watershed areas by encouraging re-forestation and best forest management practices by property owners.

Encourage a private recycling center to locate in town.

Encourage industrial recycling.

Educate the public on the benefits of tree conservation.

Implement a Geographic Information System to aid in the documentation of the natural environment and evaluate solutions to potential problems.

Consider the creation of a stand alone Parks Master Plan.

Work with Franklin County to develop Bald Knob as a conservation area with hiking trails.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal

Support existing industry and commerce, promote the expansion of a diversified economy, and create an atmosphere for new job opportunities.

Background

The primary objective of any economic base study is to develop information that will enable leaders and citizens of a community to understand the sources of their livelihood and to recognize and evaluate those factors shaping the local economy. This understanding will affect future decisions that concern employment and economic vitality of the town.

The economic base of a community consists of all those activities that provide the employment and income upon which the people depend for their livelihood. Typical of such activities are manufacturing, retail and services, construction, farming, finance, insurance and real estate. A study of these activities in Rocky Mount and the surrounding study area will detail the study area's economic nature, as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

It must be recognized that in many instances, comparison of Rocky Mount's economic base will be made to that of Franklin County's. This is not uncommon or unique. As is the case with Rocky Mount, a town is the economic as well as political and social hub of a county. What is good for the Town of Rocky Mount is also good for Franklin County. The inverse is true as well.

Major players in the Franklin County/Rocky Mount area economy can be identified by taxable sales. Table 6 identifies the taxable sales for Franklin County, including Rocky Mount, from 2000 – 2005 as recorded by the Virginia Department of Taxation.

Table 6: Taxable Sales for Franklin County 2002-2004

<u>Type of Enterprise</u>	2002	2003	2004	Percent Change 2002-2004
Apparel Group	\$2,228,564	\$2,484,634	\$4,189,538	88.0%
Automotive Group	\$16,622,896	\$15,089,360	\$16,202,634	-2.5%
Food Group	\$89,949,154	\$90,566,124	\$91,573,439	1.8%
Furniture Group	\$15,709,873	\$18,523,795	\$20,760,320	32.1%
General Merchandise Group	\$16,489,075	\$18,778,458	\$17,470,703	6.0%

Lumber, Building Group	\$50,385,465	\$62,647,855	\$69,700,758	38.3%
Machinery, Equipment Group	\$9,652,672	\$10,098,837	\$13,447,207	39.3%
Miscellaneous	\$35,676,962	\$36,461,091	\$44,395,454	24.4%
Hotels, Motels Group	\$4,275,814	\$4,459,241	\$4,353,438	1.8%
Alcoholic Beverage	<u>\$1,268,485</u>	<u>\$3,262,683</u>	<u>\$2,782,683</u>	119.4%
Unidentifiable	<u>\$54,165,614</u>	<u>\$58,966,200</u>	<u>\$61,765,866</u>	14.0%
TOTAL	\$296,424,574	\$321,338,278	\$346,642,040	13.0%

- Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

Table 7: Regional Annual Taxable Sales

	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percent Change 2002-2005
Franklin County	\$296,424,574	\$321,338,278	\$346,642,040	\$334,916,121	12.99%
Bedford County	\$206,097,796	\$213,195,786	\$234,084,611	\$238,698,382	15.82%
Roanoke County	\$678,387,842	\$754,756,598	\$761,127,092	\$755,106,873	11.31%
Roanoke, City of	\$1,588,424,788	\$1,621,479,275	\$1,721,570,484	\$1,599,236,967	0.68%
Floyd County	\$40,217,568	\$42,005,180	\$47,200,252	\$44,507,860	10.67%
Pittsylvania County	\$177,428,452	\$162,386,059	\$183,940,782	\$152,068,773	-14.29%
Henry County	\$353,128,524	\$364,594,262	\$366,453,944	\$329,402,847	-6.72%
Martinsville, City of	\$178,135,142	\$177,497,264	\$167,963,481	\$154,378,250	-13.34%

- Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

According to the Virginia Department of Taxation, the largest increases in Franklin County's taxable sales were in the apparel group and the alcoholic beverage group. The automotive group was the only group that had a decrease in annual taxable sales between 2002 and 2005.

As a whole, the Franklin County economy has shown a healthy growth. When compared to other jurisdictions in the region, Franklin County's annual taxable sales have done well. Between 2002 and 2005 the total taxable sales grew by 16.9 percent. This growth was second only to Floyd County (Table 7).

Existing Labor Force

Labor force refers to the number and type of jobs held by the residents of a given jurisdiction. As a town, Rocky Mount's labor and employment characteristics are reported as part of the County total.

The 2000 Census, Selected Labor Force and Commuting Characteristics provide the following information on the County and Town for persons 16 years of age or older. In 1990, there were 20,091 persons employed within Franklin County. In comparison, there were 22,944 in 2000. A report of each employment sector and its percentage of the total employed population for 1990 and 2000 follows in Table 8 and Table 9:

Table 8: Franklin County Employment by Sectors 1990

Sector	Employment	% of Total
Agriculture and Mining	1,023	5.09%
Construction	1,762	8.77%
Manufacturing	7,088	35.28%
Transportation	1,084	5.40%
Communications	311	1.55%
Wholesale trade	629	3.13%
Retail trade	2,474	12.31%
Finance	903	4.49%
Repair service	591	2.94%
Personal service	359	1.79%
Entertainment	140	0.70%
Health service	1,062	5.29%
Education	1,514	7.54%
Professional	656	3.27%
Public administration	495	2.46%
TOTALS	20,091	100.00%

- Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990

Table 9: Franklin County Employment by Sectors 2000

Sector	Employment	% of Total
Agriculture, forestry, and mining	628	2.74%
Construction	2,414	10.52%
Manufacturing	5,584	24.34%
Wholesale trade	613	2.67%
Retail trade	2,816	12.27%
Transportation	1,202	5.24%
Information	387	1.69%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	1,148	5.00%
Professional	1,173	5.11%
Educational, health, and social services	3,725	16.24%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and food services	1,224	5.33%
Other services	1,135	4.95%
Public administration	895	3.90%
TOTALS	22,944	100.00%

- Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

Between 1990 and 2000 the overall workforce in Franklin County grew by almost 2,900 workers. Based upon the 1990 Census, the employment opportunities in Franklin County are most plentiful in the manufacturing and retail sectors. When compared to the 2000 Census figures, the same holds true; however, 1,500 jobs were lost from the manufacturing sector as a result of plant closings and downsizings.

The sector experiencing the largest growth was education, health, and social services. This is important to note because many communities across the United States are faced with nursing shortages. The employment increase in this sector indicates that Franklin County is well prepared to serve the needs of persons of all ages, especially those 50 and older. Both Rocky Mount and Franklin County will be able to market the highly rated public school system and quality health care services to people and companies looking to relocate.

It can be said that the employment fabric of the region is diverse. This is healthy for the study area. It is prudent to encourage and promote new manufacturing expansion in the County and Town.

Although the present number of workers available is adequate, the shortage of qualified skilled labor is or will become a major factor hampering existing industries' efforts to increase productivity through plant modernization. Technical facilities designed and geared to training the local labor force are not only a means of attracting new industry but also for retaining existing industry. These types of facilities will upgrade the Rocky Mount Study Area's labor force and improve the economy at the same time. This is due to the indirect stimulus of skilled workers producing more, commanding higher salaries, and spending more for local goods and services.

One such technical facility is the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium. The Consortium partners with nearby colleges to provide adult general education courses leading to certificates and degrees in a number of trades. Some of the certificates the Consortium awards are building trades, office management, business management, marketing, nursing, computer technology, truck driving, childcare, electronics, paralegal, medical technician, accounting, and environmental science. The community colleges (Patrick Henry and Virginia Western), as well as Ferrum College, have partnered with the Franklin County School System, the local governments, and community agencies to provide these training programs.

The Town of Rocky Mount is fortunate to have significant industry that manufactures housing, and glass used in the manufacture of windows and mirrors. These trades require a continuous supply of tradesmen. It would be in the interest of the Town and County to encourage the expanded use of existing educational facilities to foster increased training for residents in such fields as carpentry, machinery, welding, metal working, electrical trades, plumbing, and electronic technology. These are employable skills that will provide labor to existing and expanding industry. In addition, the availability of skilled and trained labor will help attract new industry to the Rocky Mount area.

Industrial Development

An economic analysis of an area is an important part of determining land use needs. Such an analysis looks at the various overlapping factors of the local economy most important to land use decisions. As an example, industry itself is a relatively small user of land, but it exerts considerable influence upon other land uses, especially residential uses. Similarly, the location of commercial uses strongly interrelates with the location of residential uses.

A significant factor influencing future industrial location or expansion is site availability. New manufacturing plants usually require large, open sites for modern buildings with related storage, loading, and parking areas. This need for large acreage sites has led to a tendency on the part of new industry to shun central city locations where such sites are generally not available and to locate instead on the city's fringe or in the suburbs, usually in a somewhat less than uniform pattern. The most logical method of accommodating new industrial growth is through planned industrial development or parks. Such developments channel new industry into a rational pattern and away from random locations. They allow for concentration and improvement of services that industry needs to remain competitive. Many of these services are public investments such as water and sewer lines, solid waste disposal and fire protection and can be provided more economically to planned industrial developments than to scattered locations. Accordingly, for the future, the Town of Rocky Mount should endeavor to identify potential industrial sites. If a shortage of potential industrial sites is evident, sites outside the corporate limits should be evaluated either in consultation with or independent of the county.

In November 2004, the Town of Rocky Mount purchased two (2) tracks of land totaling 69 acres adjacent to the Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park. Commonly known as the "Cox Property," the property borders the US 220 Bypass and Virginia Route 40, and provides convenient access to Interstates 81 and 40. Nearly 2,000 linear feet of a main Norfolk Southern rail line border the property, allowing for the development of a rail spur.

The Town is pursuing development of the property for industrial purposes, which could include both private industrial tenants and a public rail transload facility. A transload facility is conceived as an area where various types of rail freight can be unloaded for short-term storage or directly into a waiting vehicle. Typically, the railroad unloads goods, often raw materials, from a rail car and loads them on another form of transportation, such as a truck or ship.

The transload facility could provide rail access to those commercial and industrial users who do not currently have access, and could be used for farmers and other agricultural users when purchasing bulk items, such as fertilizers or feed. The service area for the transload facility would be the Town of Rocky Mount and parts of Southwest and Southside Virginia, and would help in industrial recruitment and expansion in the

general area. Norfolk Southern reported that the property is one of the last sites having potential for development of a transload facility in the Commonwealth.

The Town should consider the development of virtual buildings for vacant industrial parcels. A virtual building is a business location where all of the preliminary planning and site work has been completed in order to start construction immediately. Utilities are brought to the site and a development team is in place. Cost estimates and a construction schedule have been established. In addition, all site plans and necessary permits have been approved.

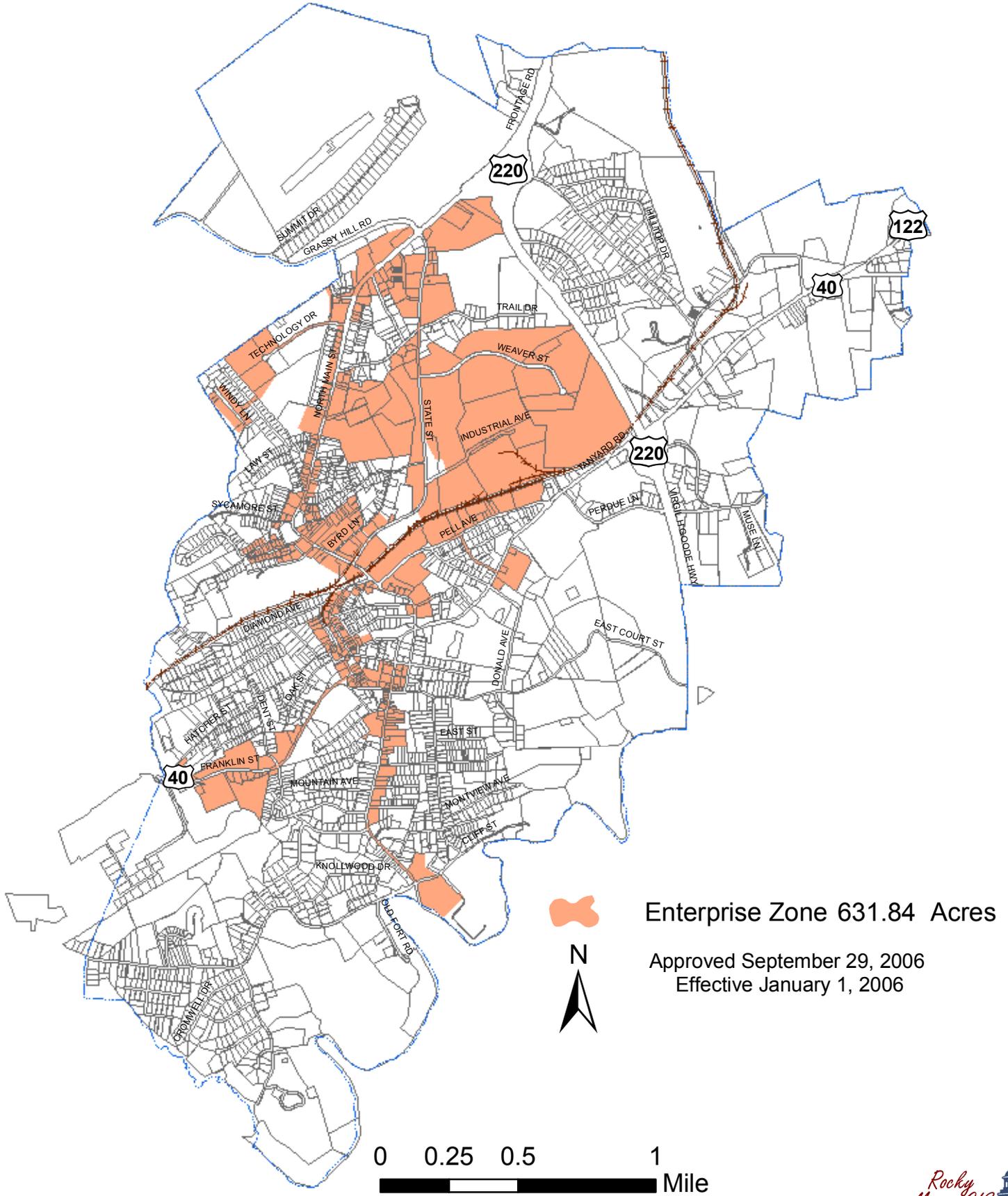
The development of a 50,000 – 60,000 square foot virtual building and a 75,000 to 100,000 square foot virtual building would be an advantage to the Town in marketing its industrial spaces. By developing multiple sized buildings, with a site plan and floor plan, and looking at traffic movement, the Town demonstrates that it has made optimal use of the land, without limiting itself to a prefabricated shell building. The Town may wish to consider the development of a virtual building with any unappropriated funds.

The Town should also apply for a Virtual Building Demonstration Grant Program through the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). This grant offers a match up to a specified dollar amount to aid in the costs associated with design work and graphics. Whether or not the Town is able to use grant money to help in the development of a virtual building, the Town should work with the VEDP to market the virtual building by having it included in the VEDP's searchable database. The database provides a marketing edge for virtual buildings, by showing the site plan, floor plan, and visually showing how the building can be used.

Several other trades that may find the Rocky Mount area attractive are the automotive parts industry and the marine crafts industry. It is prudent for the Town to target particular industries that would complement the region and work with the Governor's Office of Economic Development to promote the Rocky Mount to prospective industries.

The Town should also continue to effectively market its Enterprise Zone that provides state and local incentives for development (See Map 7, Page 69).

Town of Rocky Mount Enterprise Zone



Created by: Thomas Furron GIS Technician
October 2006



Commercial Development

Commercial uses include both retail stores and service establishments. They can range in size from large shopping centers to home beauty shops. For the purposes of discussion, areas of commercial activity may be divided into three general categories depending upon how the individual establishment attracts their customers. The three categories are community commercial areas, general business commercial areas, and cluster development. Although the division is not a precise one, several important distinctions can be made.

Community commercial areas generally include shopping centers and/or a central business district, as is the case with Rocky Mount. Business establishments typically found in central business areas include department stores, clothing stores, beauty and barbershops, and specialty stores. These areas also may include hardware stores, grocery stores, furniture and appliance stores, and the like. Services that may locate in a community commercial area are offices, such as business offices, insurance and real estate offices, legal offices, and governmental offices. In any case, central business areas must be accessible to a large number of nearby people to be functional. Therefore, these locations depend upon a combination of transportation accessibility, sufficient parking, and population concentration.

The second type of commercial area, strip development, does not rely as greatly on merchandising methods that requires a central (in town) shopping location. These business establishments are generally located along major roadways. They can support high traffic volumes of people coming to the commercial area. Large parcels of land provide sufficient storage for materials and parking. Business establishments with such requirements typically include lumber and building materials dealers, mobile home dealers, new and used car dealers, motels, gasoline service stations, and fast-food outlets. These areas also may include hardware stores, grocery stores and the like. Strip business commercial areas provide services and merchandise to both the transient and local populations with the principal factors being traffic volume and large acreage. Strip developments are oriented towards the travel habits of people within the trade area rather than where the people live and work.

The third type of development is cluster development. Much like the strip development, cluster development can support high volumes of people coming to the commercial area. Cluster developments are compact, locating along major roadways or within smaller business and residential areas as mixed-use centers. Cluster development is human scale, with smaller buildings, and uses walkways and bicycle paths to connect developments.

In recent years, many communities have shied away from strip development, and have instead encouraged the growth of cluster development. While both strip development and cluster development provide a high level of convenience, strip development has a greater impact on the existing infrastructure through the use of multiple access points. Strip development creates a lack of continuity between adjacent developments. Unlike

strip development, cluster developments use one point of access through the use of a secondary access system, where interconnectivity is stressed.

Presently, shopping areas of Rocky Mount serves the community well. In attracting customers, the Rocky Mount central business district competes with cluster developments on Route 40 East and strip developments on Route 40 West. Both the central business area and the local shopping centers compete against the larger shopping malls of Roanoke and Martinsville. In recent years the cluster shopping areas have grown more rapidly than the central business district within Rocky Mount. The completed Downtown/Franklin Street Revitalization project has generated more activity and interest in the Central Business District. This project was the catalyst in what is growing into a vibrant business/shopping district. The Town will build on the success of this project to do another CDBG/TEA-21 funded project to revitalize the Uptown/South Main and Warren Street areas. The increased availability of the central business district and the strip shopping centers is attracting more shoppers to town that do not live in the Rocky Mount. Recently, the northern portion of Rocky Mount near Route 220 and Route 40 East has experienced substantial growth in commercial development that includes both hotels and dining restaurants.

Increased development toward Smith Mountain Lake can be expected to generate more shoppers that elect to utilize the easy access that the Rocky Mount's commercial areas offer. This continued growth in Franklin County would place more opportunity for larger, more organized retail outlets in the Rocky Mount vicinity. The reason for the increased retail outlook for Rocky Mount is the rapidly growing population of Franklin County and a preference to shop locally. Consequently, the relative share of retail sales captured by business establishments located within Rocky Mount and Franklin County is expected to grow.

The pace at which new retail outlets elect to locate in Rocky Mount will be in many ways proportional to decisions made on improvements to street and transportation centers. The widening of Main Street and Route 40 west of Rocky Mount will have an impact on commercial growth trends within the Town. Accordingly, in order to stabilize growth, a well-prepared strategy needs to be identified in the Future Land Use Map for the Town. Traditional central business districts depend upon transportation arteries to make them accessible to nearby populations from which to draw customers. In the case of Rocky Mount, future accessibility to the central business district is critical if this area is to remain an economic/commercial asset. Cluster commercial growth should be encouraged in a way that enhances the town's economic strength within the central business district.

Route 40, east of town from North Main Street, serving the Route 220 and 122 corridors, has experienced substantial commercial growth in recent years. It is anticipated that increased growth and development in the Smith Mountain Lake area will continue to influence this area of Rocky Mount. The community should work to capture this lake trade, as it will contribute to sales and meals taxes, as well as business

licenses that provide the Town with revenues. Route 40, west of town, serving the Ferrum community is also recognized as a potential future commercial growth area.

To avoid decay and loss of investment in the central business district the Town must be aware of the need to improve both central business access and parking for this sector. In 2003, Town staff conducted a parking study, which recommended the development of a parking strategy which looked at the CBD as a whole and attempts to modify parking habits/behaviors. It recommended that a wayfinding system be developed and implemented. Wayfinding is defined as how people find their way through an environment. Designed correctly, a wayfinding system can assist people in identifying facilities, districts, and parking, as well improve the identity of downtown with a unified sign design. In addition, the study identified potential future parking areas. It also encouraged Town staff to be mindful of opportunities to participate with private and public landowners to jointly develop parking as identified areas become available.

The Town has also encouraged more upper story housing to locate in the Central Business District (CBD) above existing and proposed businesses. This could help increase the vitality of the CBD.

The Town has several programs to encourage new development in the Central Business District of town. In 2002, construction was completed on a downtown revitalization project. This project included new infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, sidewalks and underground utilities to businesses located in downtown Rocky Mount. Beautification measures such as street trees were also utilized to aid in making the downtown an attractive location for new businesses and reverse the trend of new development locating on the outer edge of town. In 2005, a similar project for the Uptown received CDBG and TEA-21 grant funds.

The future of general business commercial areas in the study area, as well as Franklin County, is directly related to the future flow of high volume traffic along the major highways. The traffic volume for the future, according to the most recent studies is projected to increase.

In the mid-1990s the Town took a bold step in developing property along Route 220 Business on the northern part of town as a commercial office park. This area serves both Town and County residents with business and professional services and rewards the Town and County with increased employment opportunity and an expanded tax base. The commercial office park idea has grown, and now includes the Franklin County Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration, as well as light industry. Accordingly, the location of commercial areas along major highways will continue. Cluster commercial development must be planned or the resultant growth will not serve customers well, will impair the safety and convenience of motorists traveling along the highways, and will adversely impact the land adjacent to the commercial areas. Commercial development is a necessary consequence of today's mobility, and should be provided in a safe and orderly fashion.

In addition to beautification and infrastructure improvements, the Town also has a designated Enterprise Zone. This zone currently runs approximately north to south along Main Street and encompasses the downtown area, as well as parts of the Industrial Park. Businesses and industries that choose to locate within this zone are eligible to receive both local and state tax incentives for locating in that area and bringing a certain amount of jobs to the town.

The 2005 General Assembly passed legislation designating the Town of Rocky Mount as the easternmost destination on Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, "The Crooked Road." The Crooked Road is a driving route connecting major heritage music venues from the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields of the Appalachian Mountains of far southwestern Virginia. This Road was developed as an economic development and tourism tool for localities to effectively market in order to generate interest, visits, and consequently investment in participating communities. The Town of Rocky Mount was chosen as a location for one of the first wayside exhibits along the route, which includes a pullover spot, information kiosk, and an AM frequency radio transmitter that allows travelers to hear prerecorded music, messages detailing the Crooked Road Project, and local history. The Town is attempting to take advantage of inclusion on the Crooked Road to create a music and/or history venue. It hopes to attract locals and tourists to the historic district, showcase local talent, and provide a location of renewed vitality uptown to encourage private interest and economic growth. Rocky Mount and Franklin County should seek to take full advantage of the potential economic impact the Crooked Road may have in our area.

In May 2002, an airport feasibility and preliminary site selection study was completed for the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County. The study suggested that a general aviation airport would provide air transportation access across the region, as well as bring new commerce, business, jobs, and educational opportunities to Franklin County residents. The study evaluated 54 sites in Franklin County, of which three final candidates were selected to determine the site that had the fewest negative impacts on the environment and residents. The County, the Town of Rocky Mount, the Virginia Aviation Board (VAB) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will fund the airport. The total project cost will be just over \$9,600,000, with the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County providing the local share of two percent. Franklin County has presently postponed plans for the construction of the airport.

Commuting Patterns

An analysis of 2000 commuting patterns shows that just over 40 percent of town and county workers commute outside the county to work. Franklin County has almost five times as many out-commuters as in-commuters. Primarily, the outflow is north to the Roanoke Metropolitan Area. In many ways, Franklin County and Rocky Mount have become a "bedroom community" to the City of Roanoke. In addition to commuting to the Roanoke Metropolitan Area, the 1990 commuting patterns showed that there was a high

volume Franklin County residents commuting to the Martinsville-Henry County Area; however, this is no longer true according to 2000 data.

The number of out-commuters indicates that the Town/County have not been able to generate enough employment at skill levels and wage rates above those of the nearby urban areas. This phenomenon is shared by other towns and cities located adjacent to larger metropolitan areas. Having a portion of a locality's population out-commute, however, in many ways can be seen as more beneficial for the community than workers who in-commute. This is the case if the jobs of those who out-commute contribute to residents having a higher disposable income that is spent and invested locally. Whereas, workers who in-commute earn their income in town, but spend a good portion of it closer to where they live. Another advantage that town/county residents have over other towns and cities near large metropolitan areas is that the mean travel time to work is 17 minutes, which is less than both the state and national averages (2000 Census).

Personal Income

Total per capita income in Rocky Mount is \$16,207 (2000 Census Data). Per capita income for the County was \$19,605. Total per capita income is defined as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, proprietors' income, rental income of persons, dividends, personal interest income, and transfer payments divided by the population total for the Town or the County. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's per capita income increased by four percent, while Franklin County's increased by seven percent.

Per capita personal income measures the amount of personal income received per person within a designated area. It is a simple method and gives little consideration to factors such as inflation or actual income levels since even those in the population who do not work are included in the calculation.

When compared to the per capita income figures for other areas at the same point in time, it does give a measure of Rocky Mount/Franklin County's overall wealth and prosperity relatively compared. The per capita income of a Franklin County resident on average is \$3,398 more than the income of a Rocky Mount resident. These compare to the Virginia per capita income of \$23,975.

Viewed from another perspective, the 2000 median household income for Franklin County was \$38,056, whereas, the median household income for a Rocky Mount family was \$26,927. The median household income in Virginia was \$46,677.

In November 2005, the Virginia Employment Commission reported that persons employed in Franklin County earned less per week than four of the six counties that border Franklin County. Only workers employed in Floyd and Patrick Counties earned less per week.

An economic boom at Smith Mountain Lake during the mid-1990s, and the growth in the retiree population can explain why the per capita personal income in Franklin County grew much more than in the Town.

The lower per capita income, added to the commuting pattern data, shows an available and affordable supply of labor. Both are essential if new business and industry is to be successful.

Issues and Opportunities

Rocky Mount provides a high quality of life for businesses and residents by providing high level of services and infrastructure, such as police protection, water, sewer, and cultural infrastructure. Franklin County Public Schools are also located within Rocky Mount.

Rocky Mount has a scenic, natural setting that has the potential to attract many new residents and tourists.

The Town has a housing stock that accommodates all levels of employees.

Rocky Mount's commercial base offers services that allow residents to shop locally, instead of having to travel to Roanoke and Martinsville.

Downtown businesses do not operate on extended hours, leaving the area vacant after 6:00 p.m. The creation of upper story residential housing would encourage downtown businesses to operate on extended hours.

There are fewer vacant buildings as a result of revitalization efforts.

There are many buildable tracts for large industrial development within the Industrial Park.

The Town of Rocky Mount has been identified as the "Eastern Gateway to the Crooked Road Music Trail."

Rocky Mount is a designated Main Street Community.

The YMCA and the Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration are two strong components of the community providing extensive training, cultural, and recreational facilities to the future labor force of Rocky Mount. Both are located in the Office and Technology Park.

Small businesses form the foundation of the economic base.

The Town provides police, fire, and other protection services.

Objectives

Provide adequate land and resources for office, commercial, industrial and cultural uses, which do not adversely affect land use patterns or require unacceptable service extension costs.

Continue to develop zoning and land use practices that encourage the best use of valuable and undeveloped land.

Maintain and expand upon existing industry retention efforts and continue to provide assistance to those companies wishing to expand their operations.

Ensure that all existing and future businesses have adequate access to public transit and utility services.

Encourage the installation of high-tech infrastructure, such as broadband, to maintain industrial competitiveness with surrounding areas.

Encourage innovative, clustered commercial development.

Continue and expand upon regional marketing and advertising activities for business and industrial development.

Continue to support the expansion of the Workforce Development Consortium, the Center for Advanced Training and Career Exploration, and other workforce training services to enhance the recruitment of new industry and business.

Market the Central Business District and small business opportunities as a strength of the town's economy. Continue to encourage the development and growth of small businesses.

Continue to encourage an economic mix in the Central Business District by recruiting a variety of businesses.

Continue to encourage improvements to gateways into the town to enhance Rocky Mount's visual appeal to business, industry, residents and tourists.

Encourage the growth of tourism in Rocky Mount through special events that showcase local cultural heritage.

Support the Chamber of Commerce in developing and maintaining a long-range tourism plan.

Action Strategies

Study the benefits of a "land banking" program to ensure prime industrial land will be used at its highest and best use.

Maintain the Central Business zoning district as mixed use zoning to encourage both business and residential uses.

Continue to identify sites for future industrial or commercial park development, possibly outside the Town boundaries with revenue-sharing provisions.

Continue to work with Franklin County to develop identified industrial sites.

As industrial lots and buildings are sold, the Town should develop new sites to ensure a continual inventory of available land.

Support the establishment of business incubators within Rocky Mount's business districts.

Encourage appropriate public water, sewer, and road expansion projects to accommodate future economic development activities.

Encourage and support Franklin County in the development of a regional airport.

Encourage the use of service roads to access future cluster development in order to minimize the impacts on existing major road systems.

Follow the development of future I-73 and study the potential for economic growth with its construction.

Maintain a close liaison with state and federal agencies that may be able to support new business and industry or existing business and industry wanting to expand. These agencies include, but are not limited to the Economic Development Administration, Small Business Administration, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Community College Training Program, financial institutions, the Department of Transportation Industrial Access Division, the Franklin County Workforce Consortium, and other local governments, groups and agencies.

Continue to encourage job training and education programs geared to creating trained employment skills needed by industry by partnering with area community colleges, the Franklin County School System, and the Workforce Development Consortium.

Maintain and promote the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County Industrial Park and the Town's Office and Technology Park, as well as various other Town-owned properties.

Work with Community Partnership for Revitalization (CPR) office, Chamber of Commerce, Franklin County Retail Merchants Association, Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County's Economic Development offices, Norfolk Southern Railroad Economic Development office and the American Electric Power Company Economic Development Office to promote new business and industry for the Town and other local governments, groups and agencies.

Work with local merchant and business groups to identify strengths and alleviate obstacles to their success and growth potential.

Encourage a variety of small businesses and industries.

Continue to encourage the rehabilitation and use of vacant and/or under utilized structures or land in the town.

Encourage the retention and expansion of existing business and industries, with particular focus upon the Enterprise Zone area of town.

Continue to evaluate existing Enterprise Zone boundaries to determine if program goals and objectives are being met or if a boundary expansion or adjustment is warranted.

Evaluate the creation of a Technology Zone.

Promote the use of Historic District rehabilitation tax credits for qualified structures.

Continue to develop additional festivals for Rocky Mount.

Continue to improve Rocky Mount's gateways in order to enhance their character and attractiveness to visitors.

Encourage retail businesses to extend business hours, especially in conjunction with festivals, concerts, etc.

Develop and maintain a long-range tourism plan.

Review and update the Zoning and Development Ordinance to accommodate cluster development.

Work towards the development of a music venue in conjunction with festivals and The Crooked Road Music Trail.

Encourage local higher educational institutions to add a heritage music program to their curriculum.

Promote the use of broadband, fiber-optic, and other available technologies.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal

Provide community facilities and services consistent with current and future community needs.

Background

The citizens of the Rocky Mount Study Area must be provided with educational, cultural, recreational, sanitary, and safety facilities that are adequate in number and quality to meet the needs and desires of the public and to facilitate future growth. Such public facilities add to the quality of community life and provide for interaction between local government and the public (See Map 11, page 97). Facility and service standards are statements of the expectations residents have for their government services. The Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County currently provide very high quality facilities and it is their intent to maintain and improve that level of service.

In addition to the facilities owned by the public, private enterprises and nonprofit groups may develop a variety of facilities for the benefit of all or part of the community. Although private companies and nonprofit groups augment public facilities operated for the benefit of the community, the greatest part of the burden of meeting the needs of the people rests with each governmental unit and, therefore, with the taxpayers themselves. As communities expand, and population grows, existing facilities must be assessed for their ability to fulfill its public service mission.

Population analysis indicates that the Town of Rocky Mount's rate of growth has increased since 2000 and this trend will continue into the immediate future. Demands for new and expanded community facilities and services should continue to persist. As the population increases, the number of community facilities should be reviewed to determine adequacy of services provided.

The following sections describe the condition and type of public facilities and services available to the residents of the Town of Rocky Mount.

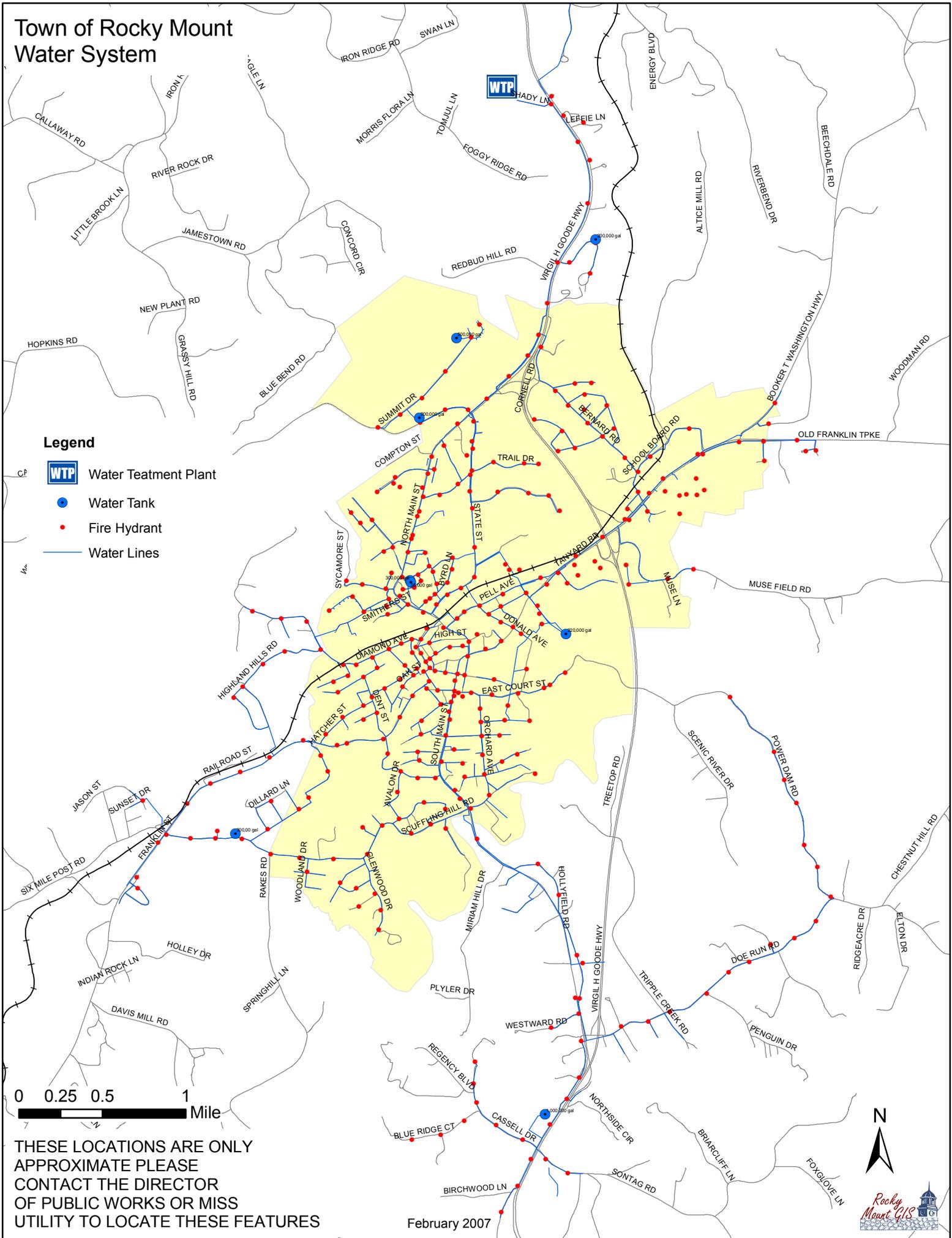
Water Service

The Rocky Mount water system is located on the Blackwater River. The system serves approximately 6,675 persons as well as most of the large industries that do not have their own water supply systems (See Map 8, page 80). The Town's water system was constructed in 1983 for \$4 million and obtains its raw water from the Blackwater River.

Town of Rocky Mount Water System

Legend

-  Water Treatment Plant
-  Water Tank
-  Fire Hydrant
-  Water Lines



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February 2007



The plant is located north of Rocky Mount, just off U.S. Route 220, and has a portable water capacity of 2.0 million gallons per day.

The safe yield of the facility is 1.6 million gallons per day. Safe yield is a Health Department term that implies that the system can produce this quantity on a regular day-to-day basis without straining the facility capabilities. The Virginia Department of Health has provisions that when a facility exceeds its design factor by 80 percent, it must initiate plans and specifications for the expansion of the facility. Construction began in 2001 to extend Town water service to the citizens of the Franklin Heights area. This extension serves an additional 225 households with a peak flow of 135,000 gallons per day, and was completed in fall 2002. Prior to the extension, water production of the plant was around 900,000 gallons per day. After the extension, plant production increased to just over 1 million gallons per day. The plant will continue to have extra capacity as this is well below the safe yield of 1.6 million gallons per day.

There are limitations on the capability of the present water system that merit reporting. The system has experienced difficulty in withdrawing raw water from the Blackwater River. This phenomenon is experienced particularly in dry weather periods when water demand is highest. This problem poses the greatest risk for the system to meet water demands during the period of June through October of any given year. This difficulty is the result of low flow on the Blackwater River. While these limitations exist, the Town only encountered such a problem during a drought in 2001, in which a plate was added to the dam to raise water levels to ensure proper intake.

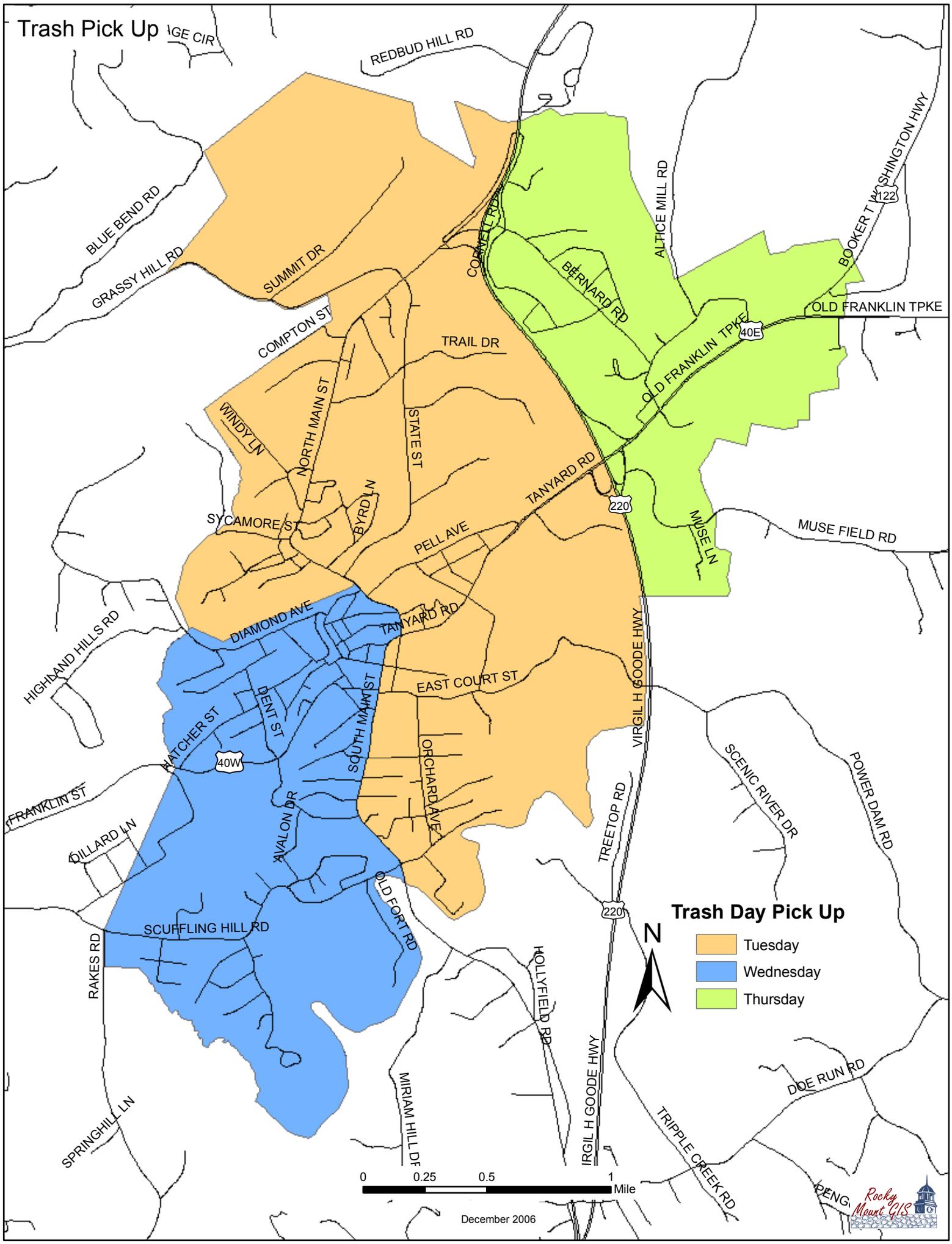
The Town is currently in the process of studying the feasibility of a raw water impoundment that would possibly be added to a tributary of the Blackwater River to provide a year round dependable raw water supply. The impoundment, if constructed, must be designed to meet the minimum down stream low flow requirements as directed by the State Water Control Board. A review is currently in progress to study this problem in more technical detail.

The system is artificially fluoridated and has a reported hardness of 26 milligrams per liter. There are seven storage tanks with a combined capacity of 2.7 million gallons. In 2005, the Town brought on a new 500,000-gallon storage tank on Grassy Hill to replace an older storage tank in the same vicinity.

Solid Waste Disposal

The disposal of solid wastes is an important and costly responsibility for local jurisdictions. Rocky Mount's public trash collection services are provided to all residents in the Town on a weekly basis (See Map 9, page 82). One primary truck, one backup truck, and three men are used in the Rocky Mount operation. Once collected, the garbage is dumped in a sanitary landfill located approximately four miles south of Rocky Mount off U.S. Route 220 on Route 619 East.

Trash Pick Up



Trash Day Pick Up

- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday



December 2006



The sanitary landfill is owned and operated by Franklin County and the Town of Rocky Mount is authorized to use this landfill. The County also provides a recycling drop-off program through sponsorship of dumpsters located at the Franklin County High School and Wal-Mart and is available for town residents to dispose of paper, plastics, and aluminum that is placed within an appropriate bin on the recycling dumpsters. Franklin County has developed a Solid Waste Management Plan to comply with requirements of the Virginia Department of Waste Management. This plan includes the Town of Rocky Mount.

The County is planning to expand their landfill and operate the expansion to comply with Subtitle D, of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1991. It is projected that the cost to dispose each ton of solid waste in the Subtitle D landfill will approach or exceed \$35 per ton. The cost is currently at \$32 per ton.

In light of the increased cost to open each landfill cell, it may prove prudent for the Town and County to discuss establishing some form of mandatory recycling program to require removal of yard wastes, plastics, aluminum, metal, paper and glass. The desired result would be the reduced volume of wastes entering the landfill. This avoided cost would be substantial over the life of the landfill.

Waste Water Treatment

In 1994, the Town of Rocky Mount completed construction of a 2.0 million-gallon per day wastewater treatment facility, building, equipment and oxidation ditch. The facility utilizes an activated sludge process, secondary clarifiers, disinfection, aerobic digester, sludge de-watering building, control building and laboratory. Treated effluent is released to the Pigg River.

The new sewage treatment plant's total cost was \$8.1 million, including significant line and pump station modifications. The project was financed in part through a loan from the State Water Control Board's Revolving Loan Fund that will be repaid over a 20-year loan period with interest of 3 percent per annum. The Town was also awarded a grant through the Economic Development Administration to fund \$1.02 million of the new sewage treatment plant. The willingness of the Economic Development Administration to grant over \$1 million to this project emphasizes the significance of Rocky Mount to the Franklin County economy.

The new facility is designed to be expanded to tertiary treatment and expandable to 4 million gallons to enable the system to grow to meet the Town's projected service area needs with minimum time and capital outlays. With increasing environmental regulations, the sewage treatment plant will prove itself to be a positive economic development agent. New and expanding companies will find locations served by existing public sewer a more sensible choice than private systems.

The Town of Rocky Mount operates the only public wastewater disposal system within the study area (See Map 10, page 85). At present, the Town provides sanitary sewer to 1,626 residential customers and to 286 commercial, industrial and institutional users. The overall disposal facility is designed for a flow capacity of 2 million gallons per day (gpd). Current average wastewater loads run at a rate just over 750,000 gallons per day.

The expansion of Town utilities, including water and sewer service, outside the corporate limits is initiated by a request from citizens outside the corporate limits. A 10-year return on investment (ROI) is calculated based on connection fees, impact fees, and 5,000 gallons of monthly usage. If the ROI is within a 10-year window, the County Administrator is informed of this request and the Town's intention to extend services. Barring objection, the work is scheduled within the work plan of Public Works. If the ROI fails to meet the 10-year criteria, the Town may go back to the requesting party or some other third party to see if they will make up the difference. Currently, there are 648 out of town water connections and 82 out of town sewer connections.

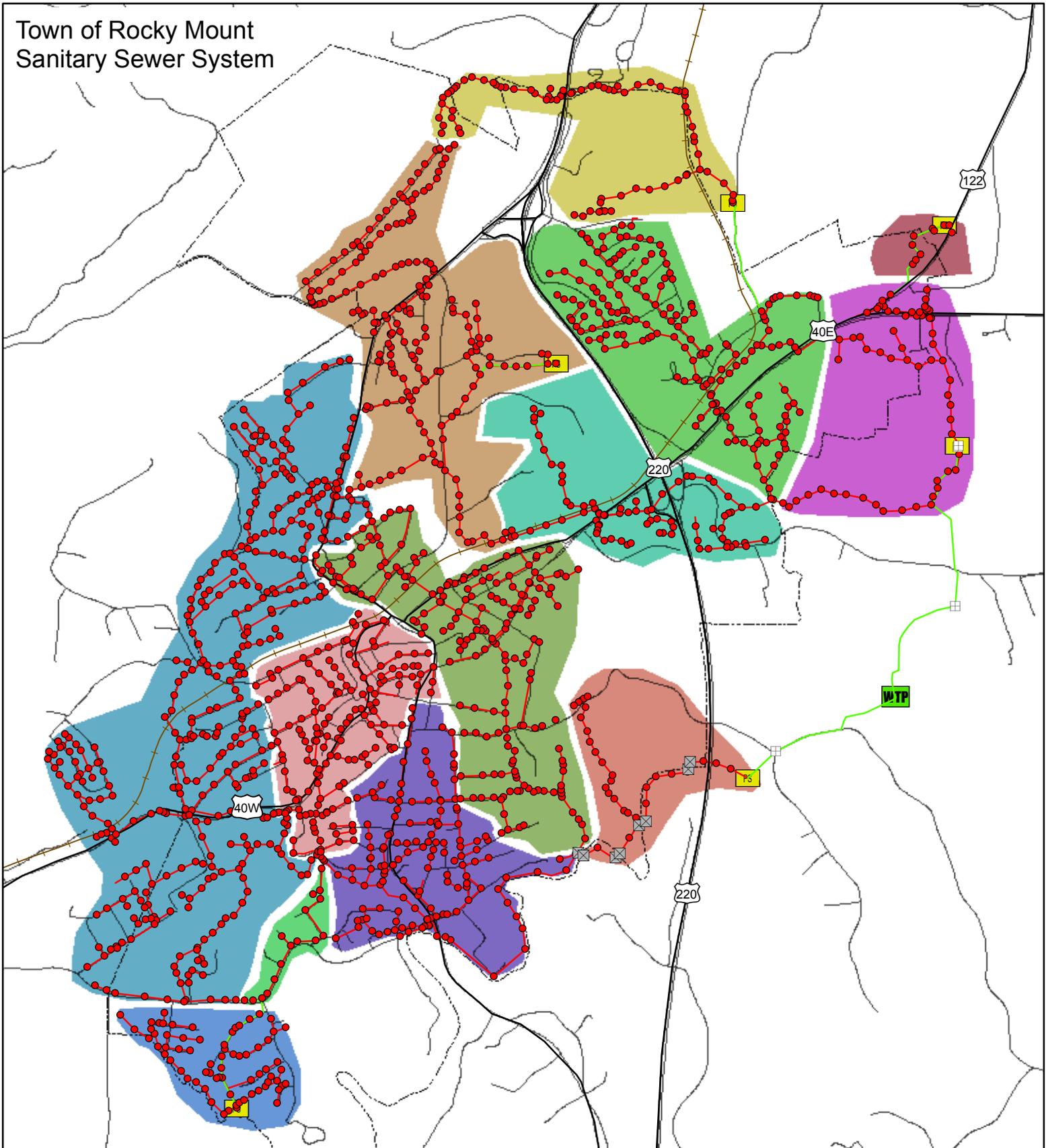
Natural Gas and Electricity

Appalachian Power Company (APCO) furnishes electricity in Rocky Mount as well as the rest of Franklin County. APCO is one of the largest electric utilities serving the state. Rates are favorable compared to areas dependent on oil and nuclear generating facilities. Appalachian Power Company's location near huge coal reserves and use of hydroelectric power have kept costs lower than those in effect outside the APCO service area, and tariffs applicable to individual requirements may be obtained from the company, which has a local office in Rocky Mount.

The Roanoke Gas Company has recently surveyed the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County to see if it would be cost effective to serve them. It will take a tremendous private investment to bring natural gas to Franklin County. In order for that to happen, a substantial gas customer will need to locate in Rocky Mount or Franklin County to justify the private expense to extend a line to the Rocky Mount area. Bottled gas is available in Town. Bottled gas is liquefied that has been compressed and stored in steel or composite bottles. It is typically used for fuel in cooking and heating, especially in remote areas where centralized gas supplies aren't available.

A sufficient supply of electricity and bottled gas is available to support growth and development from these utilities. Abundant and affordable sources of electricity and bottled gas are critical for residential, commercial and industrial development. The supply and cost of energy in Rocky Mount is stable, creating a strong, stable economy that will benefit current and future Rocky Mount residents.

Town of Rocky Mount Sanitary Sewer System



☒ Boxes

☐ AirReleaseValve

• Sewer Manhole

PS Sewer Pump Station

WTP Treatment Plant

Pipes

— Forced Main

— Gravity Flow

— Siphon

Basin

I

II

III

IV

V

VI

VII

VIII

IX

X

XI

XII

XIII

0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile

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February 2007



Broadband

Broadband refers to communications medium that uses wide-bandwidth channels for sending and receiving large amounts of data, video or voice information. The expansion of broadband to Southside Virginia is the result of funding of the Regional Backbone Initiative through the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission. The project is centered on the growing need for businesses in the region to embrace technology and remain competitive. The Regional Backbone Initiative is an extensive fiber-optic network connecting five cities, 20 counties and 56 industrial parks between Franklin County and Sussex County. The roughly 700-mile network will extend broadband access to an estimated 700,000 residents and 19,000 businesses in the service area. The backbone will travel through Franklin County along U.S. Route 220.

Broadband capacity is becoming essential to recruit high-wage jobs and protecting existing businesses. In today's modern business climate broadband is as critical of a utility as water and sewer. The Town will continue to provide conduit space during the creation and maintenance of utility infrastructure.

Police Protection

The Rocky Mount Study Area's law enforcement duties are provided by the Town of Rocky Mount Police Department, with assistance from the Franklin County's Sheriff's Department, and the Virginia State Police. Each authority, although operating independently, aids each other as needed.

The Rocky Mount Police Department operates around the clock, 365 days a year from the department headquarters on North Main Street. The joint police and fire facility with approximately 8,000 square feet of usable space for the police department was constructed in 2001. The Department consists of the Chief of Police, four Sergeants, two Investigators, and ten patrolmen all of whom are Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services certified (mandatory training).

Police training is offered through the Cardinal Criminal Justice Training Center in Salem, Virginia, which serves the Roanoke Region of the State, including Franklin County. The Police Department operates 10 radio-equipped vehicles, operating on a High Band Radio Frequency for intra-departmental communication. In addition, a high band frequency provides interdepartmental communications with the Franklin County's Sheriff's Department. The Franklin County Sheriff's Department operates a 24-hour dispatch center with E-911 capability. The Rocky Mount Police Department is dispatched from the County Emergency Communications Center within the Sheriff's Department. The Emergency Communication Center is the receiving point for all emergency calls within the Town and County. Supplementary equipment of the force includes two remote consoles, four radar sets, one portable speed and traffic monitor, 16 portable radios, and a variety of miscellaneous investigative and crime preventative materials. Each of the marked units are equipped with four video cameras to monitor

traffic stops, collect evidence, and for training purposes. The Police Department also maintains a stock of riot control equipment.

Responsibility for law enforcement on a countywide basis rests with the Franklin County Sheriff, who is assisted by 79 deputies. The County maintains 54 radio-equipped vehicles. The Sheriff's Department may exercise full law enforcement duties within the Town limits. It is common for a Deputy Sheriff and a Rocky Mount Police Officer to assist each other when the need arises. The Sheriff's Department is responsible for court security and carrying out civil process. Civil process includes the delivery of court-mandated orders (warrants, capiases, garnishments, etc.). The Franklin County Jail serves both the County and the Town.

Franklin County Public Safety has three officers who provide Animal Control to all of Franklin County. All three officers also have police powers.

The Virginia State Police maintains a contingent of 12 men in the Rocky Mount/Franklin County area, each man being assigned a radio-equipped vehicle on a 24-hour per day basis. These state troopers are under the direction of Division Headquarters in Salem. In addition, six Alcohol Beverage Control Officers and three Game Wardens are authorized to work in the County, including the Town of Rocky Mount.

Fire Protection

Fire protection for the study area is provided by a volunteer fire department. There are currently 27 active trained volunteers with a total of 35 authorized volunteers. The Department operates four fire engines, one pumper, two utility equipment vehicles and three personnel transport cars, which are all owned by the Town. The engines are designed to utilize fire hydrants located strategically around town.

The Town presently has two custom engines and one commercial engine manufactured by Pierce of Appleton Wisconsin. Two have 1250 gpm pumps and one has a 1500 gpm pump. All three have 1,000-gallon booster tanks on board. The Town obtained an 85-foot platform ladder truck with a 1500 gpm pump in May 2001.

The Town and County support each other when an emergency occurs. In addition to this operation, reciprocal agreements have been entered into with all county fire fighting units to coordinate fire services throughout the county and to lend assistance in the event of a major fire.

The Insurance Services Organization (ISO) classification for Rocky Mount is six, and the National Board of Fire Underwriters has classified Rocky Mount with a class III rating (based on available water supply, building types, number of fire fighters, fire protection capability, etc.). This classification extends within five miles of fire stations. The classification benefits numerous town as well as county residents, decreasing their homeowner's insurance rates. In addition numerous fire hydrants are located outside

Town limits within the county as well. The Rocky Mount Volunteer Fire Department operates two facilities. The downtown station is located on Floyd Avenue. The second station is located in the joint police-fire facility on North Main Street (Emergency Services Building). The addition of the second facility on North Main Street was intended to improve fire protection to the nearby industrial park, businesses, schools and the YMCA, as well as the annexed areas of Grassy Hill and Franklin Heights.

The Town is also planning for the upgrading of the entire water system. The Town has recognized that problems exist concerning low water pressure with various fire hydrants in town and has received a community development block grant to make needed improvements to the water system to improve fire protection.

The Town Utility Department and the Fire Department should coordinate the periodic testing of fire hydrants to determine both the static and residual fire flow characteristics of the water system. Records of these flow tests should be maintained and compared to previous data generated from earlier tests. Problems that are found should be reported to the Town Manager to permit prompt corrective actions.

First Aid and Rescue Protection

Rocky Mount has a competent and well-equipped emergency rescue operation location within its corporate limits. This public safety facility - the Franklin County Rescue Squad, consists of approximately 30 volunteers, all having received emergency training.

This squad provides emergency rescue service throughout Franklin County. Aside from a list of basic items required by the State of Virginia, equipment used in conducting this operation includes two radio-equipped ambulances, a crash vehicle, an Advance Life Support Response Vehicle, and electrical generating units.

Financial support for the Rescue Squad is provided through the Franklin County Board of Supervisors, the Town of Rocky Mount, and through community fund raising and donations to the Rescue Squad. Franklin County Public Safety staffs the Rescue Squad with two paramedics from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Franklin County Public Safety also coordinates all Emergency Medical Services throughout Franklin County.

Health Services

Medical facilities available to residents of the Rocky Mount Study Area are considered to be more than adequate due to a major renovation to Franklin Memorial Hospital. The renovation has added 15,800 square feet to the facility. The renovation cost

approximately \$5 million and has made Franklin Memorial Hospital a state of the art medical facility.

Franklin Memorial Hospital also renovated an additional 40,000 square feet to the existing hospital space in 2001. The \$5 million addition includes two stories of clinic areas, including physician services and one story of offices for hospital departments.

Franklin Memorial Hospital is fully accredited, by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the American Hospital Association, the Virginia Hospital Association and the Appalachian blood program.

Franklin Memorial Hospital, in operation since May 1952, efficiently provides the study area and the remainder of Franklin County with medical care facilities. The Carilion Health Care System owns the hospital located in Rocky Mount. It is the most accessible hospital for the area. It has a 24-hour emergency capability and is fully staffed. Other services offered through Franklin Memorial Hospital are behavioral health services, cardiac care, clinical laboratory services, diabetes management, radiology, general medical/surgical care, rehabilitation, respiratory care, social services, home care services, and nephrology and dialysis care.

The renovations have helped improve both the medical and health services offered to area residents. These facilities are state of the art and serve the entire Rocky Mount area with skilled and professional medical service. Expansion of the health field promises to be a growth industry for the town.

In addition to the above medical services, nine pharmacies provide pharmaceutical supplies and services. There are also seven dentists, 25 physicians and 6 optometry offices practicing within the study area.

Within a fifty-mile radius, there are several hospitals and medical clinics that are frequently used by local residents. These include the Martinsville Memorial Hospital and three hospitals in the Roanoke area.

The Franklin County Health Department provides "Well Baby Clinics", family planning and X-ray services. The Health Department also provides care for women through maternity and for children to the age of five.

Free Clinic of Franklin County, Inc., provides care for those who otherwise would not be able to receive health care due to financial status. The facility is open one day a week and is primarily staffed by volunteers.

Trinity Mission and Franklin Health Care offer skilled and intermediate care in private and semi-private rooms for recuperating and long-term care patients. Both offer rehabilitative services, dietary services, recreational therapy, social services, and physical and speech therapy.

Community Services

The Town of Rocky Mount has several active community service organizations that assist residents of both Rocky Mount and Franklin County. Among these organizations are STEP, INC, the American Red Cross, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Stepping Stone Mission, Helping Hands, and We Care, and the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club.

The Community and Hospitality Center located on Franklin Street and owned by the Town of Rocky Mount, serves both as a welcome center and a building open to the public for private functions on a fee basis. It also serves as a music venue for the *Footlights of the Blue Ridge Music Jam*, which is a bi-monthly bluegrass series.

The Farmer's Market, also located on Franklin Street, serves as a venue for many community events, including outdoor concerts, craft and art sales and displays as well as serving as the starting/ending point for the annual 5K-race.

Recreational Facilities

Recreation is vital to personal development, cultural advancement, social reform and emotional stability. As the population of the country becomes better educated, with more expendable income and more leisure time, more demands for recreation are made. Rocky Mount and Franklin County offer a diverse recreational program that is widely used by residents of both the Town and County.

New forms of recreation are needed to enhance personal freedoms. Essentially, recreation promotes relaxation and offers a release from strain. Recreation provides physical, intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic outlets that help add excitement to life. Recreation may be active (such as competitive team sports) or passive (nature walks, painting, etc.). People at varying times and at all places seek recreational pursuits. Recreation can form the basis for emotional release and instill the spirit of fair play and competition that are essential for good citizenship. In addition, members of all levels of the socio-economic structure can find equality when engaging in the many creative activities recreation offers.

Residents of the Rocky Mount Study Area utilize both Town and County facilities. Within the study area, there are approximately 26 acres of land set aside for recreation. Of particular significance are those recreational facilities and lands that are owned and operated by the Franklin County School Board.

The five schools in the study area offer approximately 16 acres of open space and recreation, including 9 basketball courts, 5 baseball/softball fields, 5 football fields, 8 gymnasiums and a variety of open playground areas.

Four of the remaining acres consists of facilities provided at Mary Elizabeth Par located in proximity to the downtown area, Mary Bethune Park situated at the end of East Street in southeast Rocky Mount, Lynch Park located off of Scuffling Hill Road, Gilley's Pond located on Trail drive, a single baseball field situated on the west side of State Street in the northern section of Town, and a recreational area located adjacent to the National Guard Armory on Tanyard Road.

The Greer Foundation donated Celeste Park to the Town in 2006. Celeste Park consists of over five acres adjacent to Route 40 West. The Town plans to develop the park over the next several years.

The Franklin County Veterans Memorial Park, dedicated in 2005, is a linear riverside park consisting of .9 acres at the intersection of South Main Street and Scuffling Hill Road. The park has a monument paying tribute to Franklin County Veterans who have served in the six branches of the United States Military, as well as the flags for each of the branches.

Franklin County runs a comprehensive parks and recreation program that serves over 20,000 residents per year with special events, athletic programming, art and cultural classes, and general park visitation. Franklin County Parks and Recreation manages 667 acres of public lands, 18 miles of trails, six ball fields, eight youth soccer/football fields, one basketball court, six tennis courts, five picnic shelters, 30 miles of blueways, a youth skate park, and partners with the General Services Department in management and scheduling of the Rocky Mount Armory. Team sports including basketball, baseball, softball, T-ball, and soccer are open to town residents. Adult programs include softball, volleyball and tennis. Special events are conducted periodically to serve runners, hunters, fishermen, gymnasts and the martial arts.

The Franklin County Family YMCA opened in 1998. The YMCA is a full-facility recreation program with fitness, aquatic, and recreation services. The facility contains two pools, two basketball courts, an indoor track, a fully equipped gym, an exercise room, men and women's lockers with saunas, a nursery, and an outdoor nature trail/cross country track. The YMCA currently serves 6,000 members and an additional 5,000 program participants and is the largest non-profit membership organization located in the study area. The YMCA also houses the Carilion Physical Therapy outpatient services. The 47,206 square foot facility is located in the Office and Technology Park on Technology Drive.

In 2001, the YMCA purchased an additional 2.4-acre tract in the Office and Technology Park in order to construct a youth center. The 25,416 square foot, Essig Youth Center was completed in September 2005, and provides a variety of children's activities, pre-school programming and the study area's largest performing arts center. While the center will be primarily for YMCA members, the general public will also be able to use the center on a fee basis.

In Spring 2006, the Franklin County Skate Park was completed, adjacent to the Franklin County YMCA on Technology Drive. The park consists of a 6,000 square foot street style skate pad, a quarter pipe, a fun box, a jump ramp, two ramps, and three grind rails. The features of the park are not permanently fixed to the pad, so as to allow them to be moved around. Over the next few years, Franklin County Parks and Recreation hopes to add new equipment.

In addition, the YMCA signed a 50-year lease with the Town for the 17-acre tract next to the YMCA to construct a public park. This park is used for outdoor recreation and is open to the general public.

Property on Grassy Hill, west of Route 919, was designated a Natural Area Preserve (NAP) in 1999. This preserve is home to populations of both state and federally listed rare and endangered plant species. Public access to the preserve is provided by a 6-mile hiking trail that meanders up and across the hill providing opportunities for physical activity and nature observation.

The trail provides the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County citizens with additional recreational opportunities and will also assist the neighboring YMCA and Gereau Center in accomplishing environmental education and health related goals. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is proposing to create a one-lane trail with a 10-car parking lot at the trailhead. Interpretative signs are placed along the trail to highlight the unique features of the Natural Area, key points of interest and vistas. Maintenance of the trail is the responsibility of the Operations Steward with the Division of Natural Heritage and volunteer organizations, consolidated through the Grassy Hill Volunteer Stewardship Committee.

Two privately owned swimming facilities - Furnace Creek Swim Club and Brookside Swimming Club, Inc. - are also located within the study area.

Outside of the Rocky Mount Study Area, but accessible to local residents, are several large regional recreational areas. Smith Mountain Lake, encompassing the northeastern portion of Franklin County, is the state's largest inland body of water (33,000 acres) completely within Virginia. This resort area's 500-mile shoreline provides numerous water sports and outdoor activities. The Smith Mountain Visitor Center reports visits from 11,000 guests annually.

The Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries periodically stocks the lake with trout, bass, bream, striped bass, crappie, and walleye, muskellunge, and coho salmon. Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries has constructed a number of public access points to the lake.

The Philpott Reservoir Area, located seventeen miles southwest of Rocky Mount, offers similar activities including fishing, hunting, camping, boating, and picnicking. Philpott Lake holds the record for large mouth bass and is considered Virginia's best small

mouth bass and trout reservoir. Due to the location of Smith Mountain Lake and Philpott Reservoir, Franklin County is often referred to as "The Land between the Lakes."

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a world-class linear park running from Central Shenandoah Valley of Virginia southwesterly through Franklin County to Asheville, North Carolina. The park treats over 18 million visitors a year to spectacular views and an opportunity to visit undeveloped areas much as they existed in years past. The Explore Park opened in 1994 and has become one of the largest tourist destinations on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Park presents the frontier culture that existed during the Lewis and Clark Explorations of the Western Territories.

There appears to be sufficient demand for more or improved recreational programs within the Rocky Mount community. More study should be provided to determine more efficient uses of school and public property for improved and expanded recreational programs.

Library Services

Libraries contribute to the continuing education of all individuals who use them. The Town and County provide financial support for the library. The expanding population, the growth and attainment of higher education, the increased production of books, and the availability of more leisure time all have made libraries and the public library system important components of community life.

The study area is served by the Franklin County Public Library. It holds approximately 85,000 books, 294 periodicals and numerous newspapers. The library maintains an annual circulation of over 163,000 volumes. The library is located on Franklin Street in downtown Rocky Mount.

The Stanley Library is located at Ferrum College and is open for public use by Franklin County and Rocky Mount residents. County and Town residents may check out books with a library card from the Franklin County Public Library. The Ferrum facility is approximately 26,000 square feet. The library contains approximately 115,000 print volumes and has access to over 100,000 electronic books. In addition, the library subscribes to 550 periodicals and provides access to over 10,000 electronic subscriptions. The Ferrum Library is a statewide, computerized inter-library search and loan facility.

Education

The Franklin County School Board is assigned the task of conducting public education for Rocky Mount students. Franklin County maintains a student to teacher ratio of 14.2 to 1. The average teacher salary for Franklin County is \$39,487, an increase of \$2,800 over the past five years. This equals a seven percent increase in the average salary.

The 2000 Census reports a total student enrollment of 6,150 for students aged 5-14 (See Table 10). Since 1980, the total school population has increased by 5.8 percent from 6,821 to 7,216. Actual enrollment for the 2005-2006 school year was 7,216 students as of September 2005. Actual enrollment for 1991-1992 was 6,280 students and for 2000-2001 it was 7,303. Pre-school population data can help determine what the future needs and space requirements of the school system in the near future (See Table 11).

Table 10: Franklin County School Age Population (Ages 5 to 14)

	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
Male	2,804	2,527	-9.9	3,045	20.5
Female	2,671	2,450	-8.3	3,105	26.7
Total	5,475	4,977	-9.1	6,150	23.6

- SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000

Table 11: Franklin County Pre-School Population (Under 5 Years)

	1980	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
Male	1,153	1,229	6.6	1,309	6.5
Female	1,131	1,236	9.3	1,260	1.9
Total	2,284	2,465	7.9	2,569	4.2

- SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000

The school division operates a high school, two middle schools (located on the Benjamin Franklin Middle School campus) and eleven elementary schools in addition to the Gereau Center for Technology and Career Exploration.

Franklin County High School is located in Rocky Mount. The high school has an approximate enrollment of 2,000 students in grades 9 through 12. Also in town are Benjamin Franklin East and West middle schools. Both middle schools have grades 6 through 8. Enrollment for the middle school as of June 30, 2005 was 1,435 students. The Gereau Center for Applied Technology and Career Exploration (GCATCE) is also located in Rocky Mount on Technology Drive. Opened in 1996, GCATCE offers all 8th

and some 9th-12th graders 8 modules of study that illustrate real world applications. Enrollment for GCATCE as of June 30, 2005 was 283 students.

Two elementary schools are operated in the Town of Rocky Mount. Lee M. Waid School is located on Court Street, with an enrollment of 312. Also located within the Town limits is Rocky Mount Elementary located on School Board Road with an enrollment of 281. Both schools serve grades K through 5. All enrollment data for all schools is based on the June 30, 2005 school-year data.

In 1999, the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium opened to provide adult education training in professional trades. Members of the Consortium include Franklin County Public Schools, Ferrum College, Patrick Henry Community College, Virginia Western Community College, Franklin County, Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia Employment Commission, Franklin County Department of Social Services, the Southern Agency on Aging, STEP Inc., and the Goodwill Industries of the Valley. The Consortium provides assessment and counseling services, referral services, and educational and job training programs. The Workforce Consortium was located in the renovated MW plant on Wray Street, across from Franklin County High School, and was referred to as the West Campus of Franklin County High School.

The Franklin Center is scheduled to be completed in late 2006 or early 2007. This facility will replace the current Workforce Development Consortium. The Center will continue to offer higher education and job training opportunities through the aforementioned partners.

Franklin County High School offers seventy-six career and technical education programs within sixteen career clusters. Benjamin Franklin Middle School offers four technical classes at each grade level. The school system also provides an Adult Basic Education Program. GED, high school diplomas and ESL programs are also available for adults.

Outside the study area, but readily accessible to local residents, are several educational institutions of higher learning. Ferrum College is Franklin County's only institution of higher learning. Founded in 1913, Ferrum is a privately operated four-year coeducational college and in addition to the traditional college curricula it offers renowned programs for arts, music, and other cultural opportunities for students and visitors alike. Ferrum College had an enrollment of approximately 1,000 students, and approximately 100 faculty members. The student to faculty ratio is 14:1.

Ferrum College awards degrees in over 33 different study disciplines including business, computer science, international studies, recreation and leisure, religion/philosophy, agriculture, education, theater, psychology, public affairs and administration, foreign language, medical technology, fine arts and environmental studies. The Virginia Board of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the University Senate of the United Methodist Church accredit Ferrum.

Other four-year facilities accessible to the study area are: Roanoke College located in Salem, approximately 27 miles northwest of the study area. It is a coeducational institution offering courses in liberal arts, business administration, and science.

Hollins University located in the northern part of Roanoke County is approximately 25 miles north on U.S. Route 11. Hollins is a four-year liberal arts school for women. It also has advanced degree programs for Masters and Doctor of Philosophies.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia's largest and most diverse university) is located in Blacksburg, approximately 55 miles from Rocky Mount on U.S. Route 460. Virginia Tech serves many area students with Bachelor, Master and Doctorate programs.

Radford University is approximately 55 miles from Rocky Mount off of I-81. Radford University serves many area students with Bachelor and Master programs.

Other nearby institutions of higher learning available to local residents includes Virginia Western Community College, and Patrick Henry Community College. Virginia Western Community College is located approximately 22 miles north of Rocky Mount in nearby Roanoke. Patrick Henry Community College is located just north of Martinsville in Henry County.

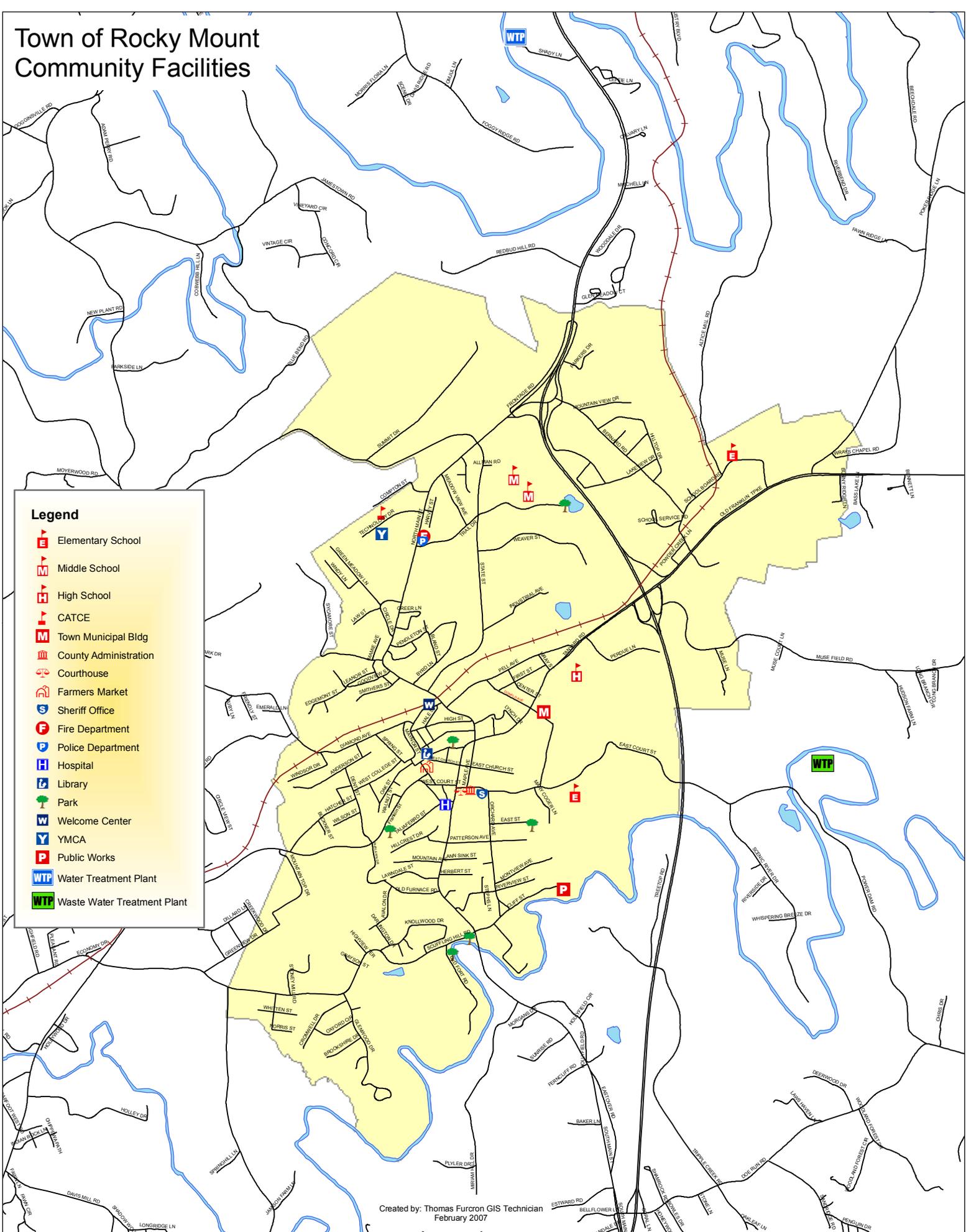
Within convenient commuting distance of Rocky Mount is the University of Virginia's Roanoke Center. The Graduate Center of the Roanoke Valley is a regional graduate center representing various colleges and universities from a central location in Downtown Roanoke.

Civic and Religious Organizations

Clubs and civic organizations functioning within the study area include Rotary, Lions, Ruritan, American Legion, Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.), Eastern Star, Junior Women's Club, Franklin County Historical Society, Red Hat Society, Masons, Moose, and Woodmen of the World.

Names and addresses of churches and religious facilities serving the area are available from the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce. At present, Baptist, Episcopal, Christian, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Catholic, Methodist, Assemblies of God, Church of Christ, Church of God in Christ, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Evangelical, Holiness, Presbyterian, Seventh-Day Adventist, non-denominational, and independent churches are present in Rocky Mount. Most churches in town have room for public functions.

Town of Rocky Mount Community Facilities



Legend

-  Elementary School
-  Middle School
-  High School
-  CATCE
-  Town Municipal Bldg
-  County Administration
-  Courthouse
-  Farmers Market
-  Sheriff Office
-  Fire Department
-  Police Department
-  Hospital
-  Library
-  Park
-  Welcome Center
-  YMCA
-  Public Works
-  Water Treatment Plant
-  Waste Water Treatment Plant

Issues and Opportunities

The Town Municipal Building is centrally located to provide access to all citizens.

The Emergency Services building is located to improve fire and police protection to the Office and Technology Park, the Industrial Park, nearby businesses and schools, as well as annexed areas both north and east.

There are multiple social service and non-profit organizations that serve the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County citizens.

A state of the art hospital is located centrally within town.

The American Legion Post 6 building on Tanyard Road is home to the Agency on Aging, which is a permanent Senior Citizen's Center.

The Town has increased indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Two elementary schools, the middle schools, and high school are located within town.

There is no plan for future school sites in town.

Schools may be used for multiple activities for the community.

The town does not have a venue for the Crooked Road (as mentioned in the Cultural and Historic Resources chapter).

Many of the town's gateways have community facilities that highlight the town's commitment to cultural, historic, and community facilities and services.

Objectives

Commit to a high level and quality of public services.

Continue to provide administrative and maintenance services.

Provide community facilities to meet existing and anticipated needs.

Effectively market existing public services offered through the Town and Franklin County.

Cooperate and coordinate with the County to provide the most effective and cost-efficient services.

Balance growth and development with the provision of public facilities.

Utilize new technologies to enhance services and provide for growth in the town.

Design Town facilities to set an example for the rest of the community.

Develop a fully functional Geographic Information System to efficiently support all Town departments' information management needs.

Continue to support Franklin County efforts to provide citizens with state of the art library facilities.

Maintain the existing high caliber of public safety services offered to the Town of Rocky Mount.

Maintain a system of properly trained volunteer personnel to provide effective emergency services.

Insure that municipal water services are sufficient to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Provide adequate sewer service, collection, treatment and disposal to the town and its service areas.

Provide an adequate system of stormwater drainage.

Develop a joint Town and County recycling program.

Provide adequate recreational facilities for the enjoyment of all town residents.

Create new and expand existing recreational programs to meet the needs of all Town citizens, both young and old.

Seek federal and state grants and loans to fund existing and future recreational facilities and programs.

Encourage the provision of open space and park facilities in new development.

Acquire additional land for new parks or for the expansion of existing parks.

Utilize facilities downtown such as the Farmer's Market and the Community and Hospitality Center for recreational and festival uses.

Support existing and encourage new festivals and events within town.

Action Strategies

Encourage representatives of Town government to be accessible to the public and work with civic clubs, community organizations, and neighborhoods to improve the quality of life for town residents.

Perform a staffing inventory analysis to determine if present staff size is sufficient to handle day-to-day workloads.

Work with Franklin County and other jurisdictions to develop joint or multi-jurisdictional facilities.

Work with nongovernmental entities to develop public-private partnerships in conformance with State Code.

Arrange for the Rocky Mount Town Council to meet periodically with the Franklin County Board of Supervisors and the Rocky Mount and Franklin County Planning Commissions to maintain an open and direct dialogue regarding issues of mutual concern.

Determine the need and merit of incorporating new areas into the Town to increase both development potential and Town population. Evaluate the public works and public safety requirements necessary to support an expanded Town. Determine if the Town and County agree to a cooperative or voluntary boundary adjustment creating mutual benefits for both jurisdictions without increasing costs and accessibility to government services.

Require innovative design and high quality construction in Town facilities to serve the long-term needs of the Town and to set an example for the rest of the community.

Design public facilities to accommodate future expansion.

Study future space requirements at the Town Municipal Building and create a long-range plan for additions of offices.

Identify future equipment, storage, and staffing needs of the Public Works Department.

Provide sufficient equipment and vehicles to assure continued service for street, water and sewer department operations.

Encourage increased training and education for all public employees in addition to Town Council, Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals members to enhance professionalism of all Town departments and operations.

Continue to develop an effective Geographic Information System to provide mapping and land-based information to the various Town departments and services.

Continue to develop and maintain the Town's Internet web site to provide information to citizens, tourists, and prospective business and industry.

Develop and maintain an annual capital improvement plan that permits periodic review of the Town's needs.

Develop and maintain the Town ordinances and codes through periodic review.

Develop and maintain the Comprehensive Plan through periodic review of the identified goals and objectives.

Revise the Zoning and Subdivision ordinances to require developers to provide adequate open space for recreational purposes.

Continue to maintain local beautification programs to improve the appearance of Rocky Mount.

Develop a master water works plan identifying existing facilities and identifying future improvements projected to meet future needs.

Make improvements to the water system as recommended in the Capital Improvement Plan (i.e. surface impoundment for raw water and increased storage of treated water).

Consider existing and any future utilities when installing new public utilities easements.

Require all new development to be connected to the Town's public water supply.

Require that private developers pay the full cost of water improvements to serve their developments. This cost should include a proportional share of any attendant system improvements needed to provide water service to the development as identified by the VIRGINIA WATER WORKS REGULATIONS as administered by the State Health Department. Attendant facilities are identified as pumps, booster pumps, regulators, valves, meters and storage facilities.

Promote testing of water system (static and residual pressures) to assure its ability to provide necessary fire protection and domestic flows.

Develop a master sewer works plan identifying existing facilities, and identifying future improvements projected to meet future needs.

Require that all development be connected to the Town's public sewer system.

Reduce water infiltration and inflow by repairing defective manholes and sewer lines, and replacing or repairing defective or undersized sewer lines. Prioritize repair to reduce threats to public health.

Require that private developers pay the full cost of sewer improvements to serve their developments. This cost should include a proportional share of any attendant system improvements needed to provide sewer service to the development as identified by the VIRGINIA WASTE WATER REGULATIONS as administered by the State Health Department. Attendant facilities are identified as pumps, valves, meters, and transportation facilities.

Conduct a study of the drainage basins, and existing stormwater management facilities and determine what systems need upgrading and what additional facilities are needed. Condense the finding into a master stormwater management plan.

Provide a program to maintain and clean storm drainage facilities, drop inlets, and catch basins on a regular basis.

Require that developers implement storm drainage improvements to serve their developments that meet State and local code reducing the impacts of run-off on adjacent properties.

Establish a stormwater management ordinance.

Explore and encourage the spirit of recycling for the Town.

Utilize new technologies to update dispatch and communication systems for fire and police protection.

Continue to provide twenty-four hour police protection to the Town.

Continue to encourage increased training and professional development for police officers.

Continue to maintain police vehicles and replace them on a regular replacement schedule.

Continue to provide and maintain the Rocky Mount Fire Department vehicles, equipment, and fire station.

Encourage the continued training and education of volunteer fire fighters.

Encourage the review of programs and practices that will maintain interest of volunteer fire fighters in the Rocky Mount Fire Department.

Encourage the establishment of an accurate capital equipment sinking fund to accumulate replacement funds for expensive fire department rolling stock such as fire engines.

Encourage community participation in crime control through a variety of crime prevention programs such as Neighborhood Watch.

Encourage and provide opportunities for public participation and training in fire prevention and safety as well as first aid and CPR.

Identify and encourage preservation of all open spaces that have recreational potential for town residents.

Coordinate more use of Franklin County school facilities for year round recreational uses for the general public.

Continue to support the Town's recreational program and park system by allocating sufficient resources for proper orientation.

Encourage development of small neighborhood park/open space in future developments.

Develop and maintain useable public spaces for the citizens to gather for events, entertainment or festivals.

Develop a master plan of recreational facilities and programs.

Develop venue for heritage music and festival activities.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Goal

To promote and protect the cultural and historical heritage of Rocky Mount and surrounding areas.

Background

The easiest recognizable aspect of historic preservation is its link to the past. Previous generations have left not only written history but also various physical remains in the form of structures, artifacts, and the sites of great events. Preservation serves to ensure cultural continuity in that it bridges the past to the present.

Another aspect of preservation is its educative qualities. Preservation supplements the written word and it adds another dimension to learning. Witnessing the actual settings is of invaluable worth not only for the purposes of the classroom but also for the enhancement of the post-school year individual's own self-worth and realization.

A third aspect of preservation is its benefit to the economy. The persons who may disregard preservation aspects for economic gain frequently overlook the potential economic dividends which preservation often brings to an area. In commercial districts, for example, the benefits may be derived from activities housed within the landmark(s), such as museums, theaters, mills, and so on. In residential areas, preservation often sets the style and tone of a particular neighborhood's life especially revitalizing blighted areas. In turn, this revitalization enhances property values, assures a stable tax base, and prevents encroachment or continued urban blight.

In historic districts, preservation generates recreation via tourism. It is of great interest to see how and in what manner the people of an earlier age lived. This has always been a qualifying reason for people choosing such attractions for family vacations. Tourism is an industry that while not generating major revenues in the past is something that will serve to promote and protect Franklin County/Rocky Mount's unique and interesting past, cultural heritage, and historic environments.

Historic preservation also provides aesthetic education. The architecture and landscapes of the past possess beauty and art value and should be preserved. As particular historical or architecturally significant structures come down, a portion of an area's texture, vitality, and diversity is destroyed. It is important that historic treasures be protected for future generations.

Historic Easements

The National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register encourage the preservation of those resources through use of historic easements. A historic easement is a voluntary transfer of some rights associated with land ownership in order to protect the essential character of the property that takes the form of a legal agreement between a landowner and either the Virginia Landmarks Commission, the Virginia Commission of Outdoor Recreation, or the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Historic easements may be in the form of conservation, scenic, open space, exterior, or facade easements.

Historic easements are perpetual and apply to future owners as well. The chief value of the easement is that it allows the landowner to use his land or structure for whatever purpose he sees fit as long as he does not destroy its basic historic character by allowing intensive commercial, industrial, and in some cases, residential development to occur. However, commercial and residential development may be allowed if it is in keeping with the historic character of the land or structure.

The aforementioned agencies accept and administer property according to the agreement and development levels that are established adhering to the agency's standards of preservation. These historic easements are legal instruments that insure that registered properties are not threatened by federal or federally assisted programs or projects in compliance with the National Preservation Act of 1966.

Historic Sites

The Town of Rocky Mount has a high number of historic sites that along with scenic resources and open spaces are major components of its rural character, and its increasing economy. The Town's heritage will be enriched and perpetuated through the identification and protection of historic, archaeological and scenic resources. While many of these resources are located on privately owned land, the public's interest in these resources will be preserved through citizen stewardship.

In 2006, the Town of Rocky Mount received a grant from the Department of Historic Resources to assist in a Cultural Resources Study of the Pigg River Heritage Area. The overall goal of the project is to identify and protect architectural and cultural resources along the Pigg River as a linear corridor that would offer interpretive opportunities for a driving or walking tour. Existing historic and cultural resources along this corridor include the Robert Hill Fort, one of the earliest settlements in the County; the Washington Iron Works furnace; the Farm, a two-story frame dwelling that was used as the ironmaster's house for the nearby iron works; the Vernon Lynch Landing, a park on the Pigg River; and Rakes Tavern, an early moonshiners' retreat.

Heritage sites have enormous cultural, aesthetic, and economic value for town residents. Increasingly these sites are becoming a larger part of the town's tourist

attraction. By partnering with Franklin County, the Community Partnership for Revitalization, the Franklin County Historical Society, the Historic Rocky Mount Foundation, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and Department of Historic Resources, the Town will continue its efforts to preserve its unique heritage and cultural history for the benefit of present and future citizens.

Regional Cultural Marketing

With local governments realizing the potential of marketing their cultural and historic heritage, many in the area have decided to pool their resources in an effort to market the region's unique culture. These organizations provide an opportunity to expand the marketing capabilities of a local jurisdiction in a region-wide system. Marketing independently would result in higher cost and most likely less effectiveness. Two such organizations are "The Crooked Road" and "'Round the Mountain."

The 2005 General Assembly passed legislation designating the Town of Rocky Mount as the easternmost destination on Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, "The Crooked Road." The Crooked Road is a driving route connecting major heritage music venues from the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Coalfields of the Appalachian Mountains of far southwestern Virginia. The Town of Rocky Mount was chosen as a location for one of the first wayside exhibits along the route, which includes a pullover spot, information kiosk, and an AM frequency radio transmitter that allows travelers to hear prerecorded music, messages detailing the Crooked Road Project, and local history.

The Town is attempting to take advantage of inclusion on the Crooked Road to create a music and/or history venue. It hopes to attract locals and tourists to the historic district, showcase local talent, and provide a location of renewed vitality in town to encourage private interest and economic growth. Rocky Mount and Franklin County should seek to take full advantage of the potential economic impact the Crooked Road may have in our area.

'Round the Mountain is a non-profit artisan network that promotes economic development in Southwest Virginia by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational, and entrepreneurial opportunities. Funding partners for 'Round the Mountain include the Appalachian Regional Commission, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission. A network of trails is being created, connecting artisan's studios, shops, museums, unique restaurants, bed and breakfasts, and other venues featuring locally made crafts, foods and products of the earth. The service area for 'Round the Mountain is the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe, and the cities of Bristol, Galax, Norton, and Radford.

Rocky Mount and Franklin County have a large number of talented artisans. In 2006, an informal group of Franklin County artisans began meeting to discuss ways to market themselves. As part of the 'Round the Mountain network, the Town should encourage the establishment of a venue to house artisan studios and local artisan galleries. Booker T. National Monument in Hardy and the Blue Ridge Institute and Farm in Ferrum are two venues currently associated with 'Round the Mountain.

Franklin County Historical Society

The Franklin County Historical Society is a 501 C3 Organization, established in 1968 for the purpose of collecting and preserving the history of Franklin County. The Franklin County Historical Society holds cultural and historic events that aim to educate the existing citizenry and bring people to town. Some of the events are the Ghost and More Tour, the Moonshine Express Tour, and the Veteran's Memorial Day Reenactment.

In addition to holding events, the society maintains a library containing marriage/birth/death records, wills, deeds, other court documents, and family connections. The Historical Society publishes booklets with historical themes for the purpose of education and research assistance.

Issues and Opportunities

The Town of Rocky Mount has many historic sites worthy of state and national recognition.

The Town of Rocky Mount has a nationally designated Historic District.

Tax benefits may accrue to the property owner in return for preservation commitment.

There are currently no zoning tools in place to protect historic properties located in the Historic District.

The Town has implemented a Historic District Tax Abatement Ordinance.

The Town is in the process of developing a strategy to publicize and promote its historic past including promotional material on local parks, craftsmen, and historic sites.

Many historic properties are privately owned and not open to the general public.

Recent private investment has attempted to keep significant attributes of historic buildings within the Central Business District.

Citizens' Square and the Community & Hospitality Center located in downtown Rocky Mount may be utilized for cultural events.

The Town serves as the easternmost gateway to the Crooked Road.

'Round the Mountain will help to identify and bring together local craftspersons.

The Town recently received a cost-share grant from the Department of Historic Resources to survey the Needmore, Tank Hill, and factory areas for potential creation of a Bald Knob Historic District.

Objectives

Continue to identify, recognize, and protect historic properties, sites, and structures both within and outside the Rocky Mount Historic District.

Develop various zoning tools to promote and preserve Rocky Mount's historical areas.

Continue to encourage and sponsor cultural activities in the Rocky Mount area.

Continue to strengthen the Town's strategy to publicize and promote the Town's unique heritage.

Promote public awareness, education, and support for historic preservation.

Promote Rocky Mount's involvement and investment in the Crooked Road and 'Round the Mountain.

Develop a wayfinding system that emphasizes and orients people to Rocky Mount's historic buildings and cultural activity sites.

Action Strategies

Identify sites worthy of historic preservation.

Encourage historical sites worthy of preservation be designated on the National Register for Historical Places to allow tax benefits for owners who seek to preserve these historical assets.

Develop criteria to determine the appropriate use of vacant historic structures.

Continue to promote Rocky Mount's historic cemeteries.

Seek opportunities to open up and build upon the historic past of Rocky Mount. Tourism is recognized as one of Virginia's greatest industries annually contributes billions of dollars into the Commonwealth. Rocky Mount should continue to develop a strategy to publicize its heritage.

Promote preservation by sponsoring events to increase the public's awareness and involvement in Rocky Mount's heritage.

Continue to work with private and non-profit organizations, such as but not limited to the Community Partnership for Revitalization, the Franklin County Historical Society, the Historic Rocky Mount Foundation, and the Department of Historic Resources in the promotion of local history and in preservation efforts.

Develop and implement opportunities to enhance the association with Booker T. Washington National Monument, the Blue Ridge Institute, and Ferrum College. The Institute and Monument have a growing reputation of preserving the history and culture of the Blue Ridge of which Rocky Mount is a part. An association of the Town, Institute and College could prove to be most beneficial to all parties and the history and culture of the Blue Ridge would be preserved and shared. One such association is the Crooked Road.

Encourage voluntary techniques such as conservation easements to protect historic properties.

Continue to provide assistance for a facade renovation program of historic buildings through the main street program.

Consider the implementation of a Rocky Mount Board of Architectural Review for the historic district.

Develop a Parks Master Plan. A master plan will help show how the parks can be better utilized as destination points and venue sites.

Update the list of historic buildings, sites, and structures as they are added to the Register.

Encourage travelers from Blue Ridge Parkway via Shooting Creek Road or Five Mile Road.

Advertise in brochures that market to Blue Ridge Parkway travelers.

HOUSING

Goal

Encourage an adequate supply of high quality, affordable housing for all residents.

Background

The 2000 U.S. Census estimates 1,796 total housing units within the Town of Rocky Mount (See Table 12). This represents a marginal increase from the 1,730 housing units estimated to be present in the 1990 Census. The 2000 Census data, however, does not take into account the recent annexation of residential areas, such as Franklin Heights and Muse Field Road, which took in approximately 220 households. Franklin County, meanwhile, experienced a substantial increase in housing, increasing from 17,526 units in 1990 to 22,717 in 2000 (29.6 percent). A housing unit is identified as a single family home, an apartment unit, a manufactured (mobile) home, a group of homes, or a single room intended for occupancy as separate living quarters by a person or family.

Table 12: Town of Rocky Mount/ Franklin County Total Housing Units

	1990	2000	% Change	2000 *	% Change
Town of Rocky Mount	1,730	1,796	3.8	2016	12.2
Franklin County	17,526	22,717	29.6	x	x

* Adjusted for annexation, July 2000.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

The number of occupied housing units in Rocky Mount has decreased from 1,659 in 1990 to 1,650 in 2000. This represents a .05% percent decline in that decade. The number of owner-occupied housing units decreased from 1,051 in 1990 to 936 in 2000 (11.0 percent). Conversely, the number of rental units increased 8.9 percent during the 1990s. Rental units increased from 608 in 1990 to 662 in 2000. The average breakdown of residential units indicates that in 2000 the percentage of owner-occupied dwellings was 61.5 percent, while the percentage of renter units was 38.5 percent. A rough analysis would indicate that on average, 6 out of 10 residential units are owner-occupied while 4 out of 10 are rental property.

Affordability

Affordability is a key housing issue in any community. The future of a community is profoundly influenced by the availability or lack of affordable housing for the middle-income workforce. A rule of thumb when determining affordability is that homeowners can generally afford a mortgage for approximately 3 times their gross annual income. The annual median household income in the Town in 2000 was \$26,927 the average homebuyer could afford a home priced \$80,781. The median value for single-family homes in 2000 was \$79,700 indicating that housing within town generally falls in line with residents' income (See Table 13).

The reality is that housing is not affordable to many people unless they already own a home. Without home equity, many people are not able to qualify for home mortgages. In many parts of the country, house price inflation has outpaced salary increases, widening the affordability gap.

Table 13: Owner-Occupied Housing Units by House Value

Value Range	1980	% Total	1990	% Total	2000	% Total
Less than \$50,000	762	83.1	503	51.4	132	14.1
\$50,000 to \$99,999	142	15.5	382	39.1	487	52.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10	1.1	76	7.8	145	1.6
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3	0.3	10	1	94	10.0
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0	0	6	0.6	78	8.3
\$300,000 or more	0	0	1	0.1	0	0.0
Total	917	100	978	100	936	100
Median Value	28,400		49,100		79,700	

- Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

The surrounding county has played an increasing role for housing opportunities. Until recent years, with the development of new subdivisions, town residents able to afford higher priced housing opted to move to the county rather than remain in town. This phenomenon is occurring throughout the state and country. In Franklin County, the growth and development of Smith Mountain Lake is one of the biggest factors contributing to this trend locally (See Table 14, page 112).

Table 14: Average Home Sale Prices by School Assignment

School District	2003		2004	
	# Homes Sold	Avg. Sale Price	# Homes Sold	Avg. Sale Price
Boones Mill	59	\$155,907	44	\$171,276
Burnt Chimney	51	\$162,482	99	\$205,208
Callaway	21	\$103,083	22	\$138,957
Dudley	189	\$343,145	196	\$392,716
Ferrum	13	\$96,662	22	\$118,868
Glade Hill	69	\$353,094	101	\$500,210
Henry	6	\$129,150	12	\$88,575
Snow Creek	6	\$125,733	5	\$119,340
Sontag	9	\$116,344	12	\$104,625
Rocky Mount & Lee M. Waid	76	\$110,146	99	\$119,606

- Source: Meadow Spring Realty

Elderly Housing

The 2000 Census showed that Rocky Mount had 1,122 persons aged 65 and older living within the Town limits. Many of these individuals may be equity rich but have little fixed income and are facing many challenges in an era of residential transition.

This segment of the population has to make living adjustments or change the style of living that they were accustomed to in their younger years. The current generation has the responsibility to ensure that the housing needs of the elderly are met, including safe and affordable housing.

Currently, alternative elderly housing options are limited within Rocky Mount. Over the next few years, the Town should review land use and zoning regulations to encourage and make available alternative approaches to elderly housing.

Substandard Housing

For the purpose of this section two housing quality indicators, substandard units and overcrowded conditions, have been employed in order to obtain the condition of housing in Rocky Mount. This evaluation is not meant to imply that the existence of one of these indicators renders a home unsuitable for occupancy. Rather, the existence of one or both of these indicators in a home signals the presence of more serious inadequacies such as structural obsolescence or the potential for health and safety problems.

Substandard housing, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8, is defined as those units lacking one or more plumbing facilities, piped hot and/or cold water, flush toilet, a bathtub or shower, or which have toilet or bathing facilities shared by occupants of another unit. The 1990 housing census revealed a total

of 1,730 housing units in Rocky Mount. Of that total, 4.1 percent, or 70 housing units were considered to be substandard according to the HUD Section 8 Guidelines. Most of these units were centered in the Tank Hill neighborhood. The Town received a Community Development Block Grant through the Department of Housing and Community Development for Housing Rehab Funding, which aimed at rehabilitating 36 units located in the Needmore area. In addition, the Town's Uptown Revitalization includes a housing component to upgrade a total of nine units on Warren Street.

Additional housing rehabilitation is needed in Rocky Mount and the Town should consider applying for grants to study the feasibility and need for further renovation of substandard housing.

Overcrowding, the second housing quality indicator, is determined by the number of people per room in a housing unit (See Table 15). Overcrowding according to the Report of the President's Committee on Urban Housing, Volume I is any housing unit that houses 1.51 or more persons per room. It is commonly felt that the overuse resulting from overcrowding assists in accelerating the depreciation of the unit and increasing the maintenance costs. In addition, living under such conditions of overcrowding, in excess of one person per room, very often can result in increased health problems and even a breakdown in normal behavior patterns. This condition is especially detrimental for children and young people as they form behavior patterns based on their environment. They (children and young people) spend a greater amount of time in their houses than the average adult does.

Table 15: Housing Units by Persons Per Room

	1970	1980	% Change	1990	% Change	2000	% Change
1.0 or less	6,752	11,334	67.9	14,264	25.9	18,963	30.9
1.01 to 1.5	678	437	-35.5	316	-27.7	253	-19.9
1.51 or more	228	85	-62.7	75	-11.8	41	-45.3
Total Units	7,658	11,856	54.8	14,655	23.6	18,963	29.4

- Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

Housing units that are classified as substandard and/or overcrowded have traditionally been referred to as being blighted in nature. Blighted housing can result from one or more of several physical and social environment factors such as conflicting land uses, environmental quality, the age of the neighborhood, and public facilities accessible to the neighborhood, such as the streets, schools, police and fire protection, and the like. An additional factor frequently associated with blighted housing is neighborhood racial composition.

Individual housing rehabilitation efforts are conducted continually by non-profit organizations in the area, included but not limited to STEP, INC., Habitat for Humanity, and WE CARE.

Table 16: Rocky Mount Age of Housing Inventory

Period Structure Built	Units	% of Units
1999-March 2000	24	1.4
1995-1998	59	3.4
1990-1994	52	3.0
1980-1989	170	9.9
1970-1979	333	19.4
1960-1969	184	10.7
1940-1959	615	35.8
1939-Earlier	282	16.4
Total	1719	100

- Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000

The overall condition of housing in Rocky Mount is considered good, although the age of the housing stock is increasing (See Table 16). Land uses can be controlled through zoning that is a police authority granted to the local governing body.

Land Use Analysis

In 2006, Town staff conducted a Residential Build-Out Analysis (Appendix) showing how growth could potentially alter the town's rural feel and how much more growth can occur within town.

The study looked at vacant residential parcels and their current zoning minus factors such as roads, easements, slopes, wetlands, and odd lot shape and size to quantify the amount of development possible at build out.

The study predicted that the maximum number of new housing units for the town is between 4,166 and 4,531. The Town of Rocky Mount has a build-out capacity of between 6,182 and 6,547 units. It can be said that the Town is between 30.8 percent and 32.6 percent built-out.

The projected build-out is expected to occur between the years 2050 and 2060. Assuming the average household size of 2.48 remains constant, it is estimated that the Town's population will be between 14,651 and 15,516 at build-out.

With increasing growth, a greater demand will be placed on Town infrastructure. Not only will the current road system need to be addressed, but also the capability of the water plant and wastewater treatment facility to meet future demand. With an increase in growth also comes a decrease in farmland and wildlife habitats and an increase in the amount of impervious surfaces.

New Subdivisions

In recent years, new subdivisions within the Town limits have shied away from haphazard large lot developments. Instead developers are choosing densities, house sizes, and lot sizes that attempt to appeal more to a small rural town. They have included features such as clustering with innovative common areas, walking trails, and preservation of open space.

To the extent that local government invests quality facilities in areas where it wants to encourage new housing, it provides positive reinforcement for housing investment. Where it lags in providing services, it may discourage housing investment.

When used together, the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance shape all new residential growth and the cost of that growth. Local government housing regulations should strive to achieve a reasonable balance between cost and quality in development.

The Town of Rocky Mount and surrounding Franklin County will continue to be subject to increasing development pressures from the Roanoke Valley area. The Town should continue to review and update the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance as needed to protect Rocky Mount's small town character and charm.

Issues and Opportunities

The Town offers a wide variety of housing options and price ranges.

The Town has seen a growth in the number of residential subdivisions in recent years.

The Town provides more employment opportunities while the surrounding County provides more housing opportunities. The average sale price of a home in Rocky Mount continues to be considerably lower than in other areas of the County.

Property values have increased steadily since 1980, indicating homeownership within town is a good investment.

Almost all homes within the Town of Rocky Mount are connected and served by public water and sewer.

A majority of the housing stock in 2000 (62.9%) was built prior to 1970. As the age of housing increases, the amount of maintenance problems also increases.

According to the 2000 Census, 33 percent of homeowners are age 65 or older. As the population ages the homeowners' ability to maintain their homes becomes more difficult.

The Town currently has no housing maintenance or upkeep provisions to ensure attractive neighborhoods, with the exception of a weed and high grass ordinance.

Substandard housing tends to be concentrated in certain neighborhoods within town.

Objectives

Maintain suitable housing and improve substandard housing. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing structures for residential units. An identified area for adaptive reuse is the unoccupied and vacant spaces above the ground floors in the Central Business District.

Promote a variety of housing types through zoning regulations.

Promote the provision of adequate housing for low-income persons and the elderly population.

Encourage the development of housing that attracts young families or first-time homebuyers.

Encourage Central Business District Housing above retail stores and offices.

Increase the availability of moderately priced homes within the Town of Rocky Mount.

Maintain the quality of existing neighborhoods.

Develop public/private programs to provide housing opportunities for special populations, including the elderly population and handicapped/disabled persons.

Identify neighborhoods susceptible to substandard housing and reverse their deterioration by focusing rehabilitation efforts in these areas.

Demolish or retire vacant, substandard dwellings that cannot be cost effectively repaired.

Restrict the encroachment of incompatible activities and uses or other blight influences in residential neighborhoods.

Action Strategies

Prepare and maintain a detailed inventory of housing types and conditions.

Encourage developers to construct new housing to replace those units found unfit for human habitation.

Encourage more residential development within walking distance of the Central Business District.

Encourage more retirement and continuous care housing, particularly in areas where services are within walking distance.

Periodically review zoning regulations to ensure all housing types are not hindered by unreasonable requirements.

Continue to require that all residential units be served by public water and sewer service, and that all residential units have properly functioning plumbing for kitchens and bathrooms.

Continue to require transitional buffers between residential uses and higher intensity uses.

Prepare an ordinance that requires abandoned housing and accessory buildings be repaired to Building Code Standards or dismantled and properly disposed.

Continue to ensure that building codes are enforced to prevent the proliferation of unsafe or substandard structures from being built.

Continue to provide programs to assist residential owners to repair and restore their home by removal of debris, overgrowth and dilapidated storage buildings that are unsafe. These programs include a bi-annual pick-up of large trash items, such as old refrigerators, brush, etc. provided by a Town truck.

Explore the possibility of greater restrictions on junk and debris in commercial and residential neighborhoods. Possible solutions include junk and green ordinances.

Create incentives for homeowners to rehabilitate and restore substandard homes.

Create and maintain an active Fair Housing Board to insure that all residents of town have access to safe and affordable housing and that all persons are afforded equal housing opportunities.

Encourage ingenuity, imagination, and high quality design in new developments that allow for mixed housing types.

Support Habitat for Humanity and other self-help housing programs.

Establish areas that permit retirement housing through the Zoning Ordinance.

TRANSPORTATION

Goal

Provide a safe and adequate multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people, goods, and services within town.

Background

An adequate transportation system is the most important physical development that a community is required to devise. It provides individual mobility, modifies our behavior, and shapes our activity patterns. Transportation is significant in terms of the type and extent of growth that a particular area can be expected to accommodate. A well-connected highway, rail and air transportation network will lower operating costs for business firms, while making local products more accessible to regional market. A formal transportation system brings people and goods into the study area and provides the means by which they can move freely from one activity to another. The highways and railroad serving the study area form an excellent long-distance transportation network. Each of the three basic components of the transportation network is discussed separately below.

Major Highways/Streets

Within the Rocky Mount Study Area, the highway system and circulatory street pattern are the most heavily used components of the area's overall transportation network and represent the most extensive means for public movement.

U.S. Route 220 serves Rocky Mount. It acts as a major dual-lane highway providing a direct link southward to Martinsville and Greensboro, North Carolina and the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Roanoke Metropolitan Area to the north. The highway enters the northernmost tip of the study area where it divides into business and bypass routes.

Business Route 220 continues south through Town as Main Street intersects Virginia Primary Route 40 at Franklin Street and Pell Avenue and at Henry Fork rejoins U.S. Route 220 Bypass. U.S. 220 Bypass goes through the eastern portion of town. Each of the three Route 220 interchanges should be evaluated for upgrading (See Map 12, page 120).

The Town of Rocky Mount has endorsed a regional proposal for a new interstate that would run along the 220 corridor adjacent to Rocky Mount. The proposed I-73 highway would connect I-81 in Roanoke to I-85 and I-40 in Greensboro, North Carolina. This new highway would be a tremendous asset to Rocky Mount and the entire region.

Virginia Primary Route 40 (Pell Avenue-Franklin Street), a main east-west connector, enters the study area from the northeast and proceeds in a southwesterly direction. Route 40 provides an eastern access to Smith Mountain Lake and Gretna in Pittsylvania County and to Ferrum and Woolwine (Patrick County) to the west. Planned improvements to the facility include the widening and reconstruction of Route 40 west of Rocky Mount and eastward to the intersection with North Main Street.

Several interested parties, including the Franklin County Board of Supervisors, have proposed an alternate route for upgrading the connection between the two communities rather than improving the existing highway. Final plans by the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation have not yet been resolved. Widening and other related improvements have recently been completed for a section of Route 40 to connect with Route 122.

Other significant streets serving the vehicular circulation in the Rocky Mount Study Area include Route 640 (Scuffling Hill Road), Route 919 (Grassy Hill Road), Floyd Avenue, and Tanyard Road. Route 640 enters the study area from western Franklin County and intersects with Route 40 West. At Scuffling Hill Road, the secondary route continues 1.4 miles in an easterly direction to its termination at U.S. Route 220 Business (South Main Street). Route 919 (Grassy Hill Road) enters the northern section of Rocky Mount and immediately curves southeastwardly to its intersection and termination with North Main Street.

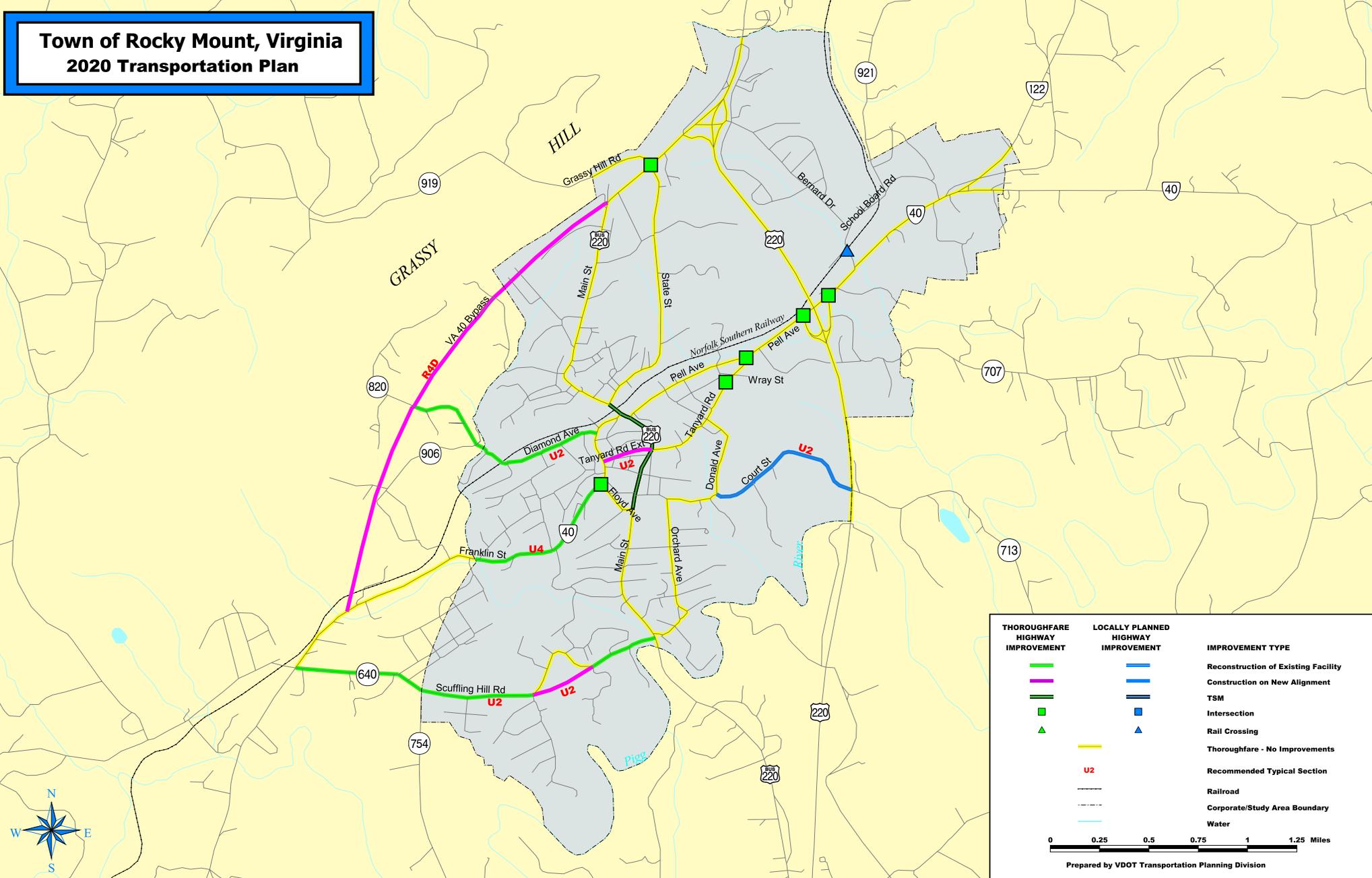
Tanyard Road originates at Route 220 interchange in the northeast portion of town and runs southwesterly for .6 mile to its intersection with North Main Street. In addition, Route 674, entering the study area at Henry Fork, provides access for the east-central portion of the county.

The study area's highway system is classified with arterial, major collector, minor collector and local categories. The definitions for these categories are consistent with those of the Virginia Department of Transportation and are as follows:

Arterial: A highway for through traffic on a continuous route, providing for the flow of traffic between areas of major traffic generation and through cities, usually having some access control.

Major Collector: These routes should: (1) provide service to any county seat not on an arterial route, to the larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks, important mining and agricultural areas, etc.; (2) link those places with nearby larger towns or cities, or with routes of higher classification; and (3) serve the more important intra-county travel corridors.

Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia 2020 Transportation Plan



THOROUGHFARE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT	LOCALLY PLANNED HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT TYPE
		Reconstruction of Existing Facility
		Construction on New Alignment
		TSM
		Intersection
		Rail Crossing
		Thoroughfare - No Improvements
		Recommended Typical Section
		Railroad
		Corporate/Study Area Boundary
		Water

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 1.25 Miles

Prepared by VDOT Transportation Planning Division

Minor Collector: These routes should: (1) be at intervals, consistent with population density, to collect traffic from local roads and to bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a major collector road; and (2) provide service to the remaining smaller communities; and (3) link the locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterland.

Local or Minor: A street which provides access to property abutting the public right-of-way, including both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and which distributes this traffic into the collector and/or arterial system.

The Rocky Mount Study Area is located approximately 25 miles from Interstate Highway 81, with connections available at Roanoke (I-581) and Salem (I-81). If the new interstate, I-73, were constructed, the highway would connect to I-81 in Roanoke.

Appendix B contains excerpts from the Rocky Mount Transportation Plan for the Year 2020, as developed by the Virginia Department of Transportation in 2000. Those priorities are the suggested improvements to be implemented for the Town of Rocky Mount. The VDOT data also shows the suggested street construction profiles for typical roadway sections.

Traffic Volumes

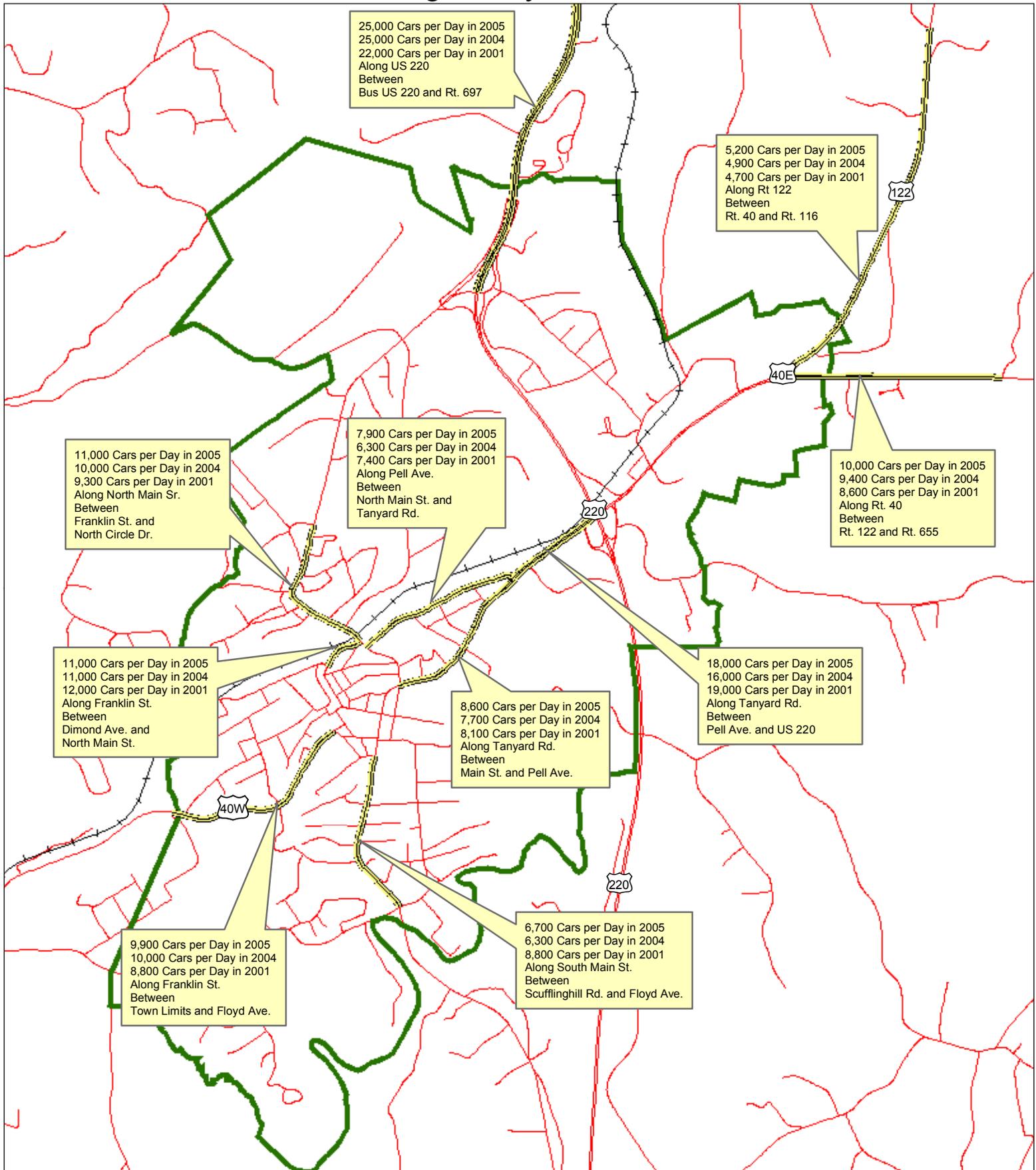
The Town of Rocky Mount has just over 40 miles of paved local roadways that are town-maintained. The average daily vehicle miles traveled on Town roads is 45,558. The following are Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts for 2004. AADT is the total annual traffic estimate divided by the number of days in the year. Pell Avenue, Route 40, between Tanyard Road and the 220 off-ramp is the most heavily traveled road segment in town with approximately 16,000 vehicles per day. The road segment of North Main Street between Pell Avenue and Franklin Street, just south of the Angle Bridge carries 13,000 vehicles per day. Franklin Street carries 10,000 vehicles per day from the west corporate limits to Floyd Avenue, and 11,000 vehicles per day from Diamond Avenue to North Main Street (See Map 13, page 122).

New Local Streets

Several tracts of residential and commercial land remain available for development within the corporate limits; specifically residential tracts along Scuffling Hill Road and within Rocky Mount's commercial hub along Route 40 East. As a result, new roads of significant length are likely to be constructed. These new roads have the potential to significantly change transportation patterns.

The two most important future considerations for the Town's transportation network are the protection of the town's neighborhoods and ease of accessibility to commercial

VDOT Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume Estimates



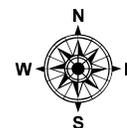
Legend

-  VDOT Traffic Estimates Roads
-  Town Boundary

Data from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Mobility Management Division 2001, 2004, 2005 Annual Average Daily traffic Volume Estimates By Section of Route

January 2007

0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile



establishments. The Town's neighborhoods could be better protected from cut-through traffic by rerouting or controlling commuter traffic. The existing through-traffic congestion along heavily traveled road segments that encourages cut-through traffic could be partially accommodated by well-designed arterials through the Town, as well as the use of traffic calming measures and context sensitive design.

Police enforcement alone is rarely effective enough to keep traffic speeds down at all times. More lasting results are achieved through road design, landscape treatment, and signage. Examples of traffic calming techniques that are used to slow vehicles coming into a community are median islands, dynamic striping, and roundabouts. Roundabouts accommodate a single lane of traffic and reduce speeds to 25 miles per hour. In addition, roundabouts can carry 2,500 vehicles in a peak hour.

Traffic calming is closely related to context sensitive design. Unlike traffic calming, which "forces" drivers to slow down, context sensitive design looks at methods such as narrowing of traffic lanes and tree plantings, sometimes known as visual encroachments. Through the use of right-of-way plantings, the Town's Corridor Enhancement Program has a positive secondary effect of serving as a visual encroachment to drivers entering the Town.

Context sensitive design is encouraged in new residential developments. Traditionally, even in residential neighborhoods, streets were designed to optimize safety for automobiles at designated speeds, usually 25 mph. Today, developers are encouraged to avoid straight, wide, and flat streets, and to incorporate mechanisms to accommodate for pedestrian and bicycle safety. In order to encourage traffic calming measures and context sensitive road design, revisions must be made to current regulations.

Parking

Parking has been an area of concern within the central business district area due to relatively high residential, commercial, and institutional density. Off-street parking along Franklin Street has taken the form of parking lots, in many cases located behind the buildings they serve. Most local roadways, including Franklin Street and South Main Street, have on-street parallel parking (See Map 14, page 124).

The Franklin County Workforce Development constructed in 2006 and located at the intersection of Randolph Street, Angle Street, and Claiborne Avenue, created an additional 72 parking spaces within the Central Business District.

The Town has conducted several wayfinding signage studies in an attempt to help visitors get where they need to be quickly and easily. A complete and well-planned signage system includes directions to public facilities, public parking areas, and a directory of uptown/downtown shops. The Town should continue to explore wayfinding options to provide continuity to the Central Business District.

Proposed Parking for Central Business District



Legend	
	10 Minute Parking
	30 Minute Parking
	1 Hour Parking
	2 Hour Parking
	All day Parking
	Handicap
	Private
	* Special Exception

*All day parking during the winter
2 hour parking during the summer



October 2004

Pavement Widths

Some of the streets in Rocky Mount are less than 18 paved feet wide. Future street improvements should require a minimum street width that accommodates traffic densities and encourages traffic calming measures. It has been Town policy, whenever a street is rebuilt, to expand the width to 30 feet, where feasible. Further, Tanyard, North and South Main Streets are examples of street widths greater than 30 feet. In fact, the respective widths are 40, 44, and 52 feet, including 4 feet of curbing in each instance.

Curbs and Sidewalks

With respect to sidewalk and street curb requirements, there is currently no uniformity. Some residential streets include both curbs and sidewalks while some include curbs only. Most streets in town have curbing, with 20 percent possessing sidewalks as well. It has been suggested that the Town embark on a twenty-year program to add curb to all sections of town. A study was commissioned in September 1999, to identify 40 streets in town for possible improvements to include curb, gutter and sidewalks. The total probable cost, as estimated by Thompson + Litton Engineering firm, in 1999 dollars, was \$10,900,700. Some of the 40 streets chosen for the study would require significant widening and utility relocation to accommodate stormwater infrastructure and/or sidewalks. No study has yet been done to assess pedestrian counts or safety factors to determine a priority of streets to be improved or the economic feasibility of such improvements.

Public Transportation

The Ferrum Express is a free bus service open to the public that runs from Ferrum College to Rocky Mount on Thursday and Friday. It also runs from Ferrum to Rocky Mount and Roanoke on Saturday. The Ferrum Express makes stops in Rocky Mount at the Farmer's Market, Eagle Cinema on Tanyard Road, Wal-Mart on Route 40 East, and the Bowling Alley on North Main Street. At present, the Ferrum Express is the only form of public transportation serving Rocky Mount.

Rail Network

Although passenger service is not directly available to the study area, rail freight services are provided by the Roanoke to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, branch of Norfolk Southern, Virginia Division. Daily schedules provide both north and southbound access to Rocky Mount with several trains each day, providing readily accessible rail transportation service to Rocky Mount's industrial establishments.

Rail connections at Roanoke assure fast east-west freight service to Kansas City, Missouri and points west with other railroads and Lynchburg (direct connection with Norfolk Southern Railway, New York-Atlanta main line), where other Norfolk Southern lines take traffic directly to Atlanta, Florida and New Orleans. Norfolk Southern, through Roanoke, also offers direct service to the export facilities at Norfolk and Lambert's Point. Continuing northward to Hagerstown, Maryland, and Buffalo, New York, Norfolk Southern connects with such other major rail facilities as CSX, a Guilford Industries rail line, which serves New England, and New York Central.

Many planners foresee a stronger emergence of rail for transporting goods. Lower energy costs and less traffic congestion due to fewer over road vehicles transporting goods are associated with rail transport.

The Town has engaged in preliminary discussions with Norfolk Southern about establishing a public rail siding and a trans-load facility to serve any industry or business that wishes to take advantage of rail transport. This property, commonly referred to as the "Cox Property," consists of two (2) tracks of land totaling 69 acres adjacent to the Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park. The property borders the US 220 Bypass and Virginia Route 40, and provides convenient access to Interstates 81 and 40. Nearly 2,000 linear feet of a main Norfolk Southern rail line border the property, allowing for the development of a rail spur.

Trucking Companies

More than 30 major freight carriers are authorized to serve the Franklin County-Rocky Mount area. There are two long-distance trucking firms located within the study area or Franklin County, including Wray Trucking and B.A. Moore Trucking. Approximately 13 interstate carriers serve Rocky Mount's transportation needs on a scheduled basis. Several companies provide intrastate shipments.

In addition to regular freight service, special hauling equipment is available to handle such items as petroleum products, refrigerated foodstuffs, steel products, and machinery. Pick up and delivery service is provided for industrial plants, warehouses and businesses throughout the study area. Other than common carriers, many individual industries and commercial establishments operate their own truck fleets. There are also independent companies with trucks for hire to serve local hauling needs.

Air Service

One of the newest and fastest growing segments of the transportation industry is aviation. In May 2002, an airport feasibility and preliminary site selection study was completed for the Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County. The study suggested that a general aviation airport would provide air transportation access across the region, as well as bring new commerce, business, jobs, and educational opportunities to Franklin

County residents. The study evaluated 54 sites in Franklin County. In February 2006, the Franklin County Board of Supervisors turned down a plan to build a general aviation airport in the Sontag community, just south of Rocky Mount on Highway 220.

Currently, local air transportation needs are served by six licensed public air facilities located in proximity to Rocky Mount. The nearest commercial air facility is the Roanoke Regional Airport--situated near Interstate 81 and U.S. Route 11, three miles northwest of Roanoke or approximately 23 miles from the study area. This airport has 2 hard-surfaced runways over 6,800 feet in length that handle jet transport aircraft. It is operated 24 hours a day and is equipped with hangars, administration building and terminal, instrument landing system for low visibility conditions, and high-intensity runway lighting and rotating beacon operated from dusk to dawn. Services offered by the airport include fuel, surface transportation, charter service, flight instruction, and a restaurant and nearby lodging. U.S. Air and American Airlines serve the airport with 60 flights per day to a variety of cities in Virginia and the nation. Connections are available for all parts of the country. All flights carry airmail, airfreight, and air express cargo.

Other nearby air transport facilities are located in Greensboro and Raleigh, North Carolina. Regional airports are also located in Danville and Lynchburg, Virginia.

A General Aviation Facility is located at Moneta in nearby Bedford County. The light air service is served by a 3,500-foot runway and is attended during daylight hours. Fuel, surface transportation and charter air service is accessible at this facility.

Issues and Opportunities

The transportation system of the town is predominantly automobile based. Existing streets are often too narrow to support bicycle lanes or additional sidewalks.

Rocky Mount and Franklin County are working on developing forms of public transportation. Currently, the Ferrum Express serves the Rocky Mount area.

The Cox Property is one of the last sites having potential for development of a trans-load facility in the Commonwealth, which would potentially utilize rail service.

There is currently no bike or walkway network within town.

Increased development along Route 40 may affect the safety and efficiency of traffic movement along the corridor and within town.

Proposed Interstate 73 is planned to go through Franklin County, near the Town of Rocky Mount, between Redwood and Hodgesville.

Traffic congestion increases at certain times of the day, specifically before school, in the late afternoon when area schools get out, and when industrial plants are in shift change.

The supply of convenient parking spaces within close proximity to shops and services in the Central Business District has increased.

Many residents walk for both necessity and recreation.

Narrow streets without sidewalks generally do not have sufficient right-of-way to construct sidewalks without obtaining easements from adjacent property owners.

Objectives

Provide and maintain adequate vehicular and pedestrian systems.

Promote alternative forms of transportation.

Support the development of rail and a trans-load facility.

Encourage new development to provide bicycle lanes and hiking trails. Require new development to provide sidewalks.

Increase public awareness of the benefits of alternative modes of transportation.

Improve the accessibility of Rocky Mount regionally by supporting bus, train and air modes of transportation to locate nearby and serve town.

Continue to support the implementation of a Town-wide bike and walkway system.

Consider alternative modes of transportation when planning new roads or improving existing roads.

Continue to maintain the high quality of the public road system.

Reduce the amount of cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Routinely evaluate traffic accident data in order to identify problem areas.

Maintain a schedule for the installation and maintenance of public safety devices such as traffic lights and signs.

Provide street lighting appropriate to the use of the road and the character of the area.

Improve the supply of public and private parking facilities in Rocky Mount, particularly the Central Business District.

Review current parking requirements and determine if changes are warranted.

Encourage landscape regulations for new development.

Continue to maintain the sidewalk system.

Educate the public on pedestrian safety issues.

Continue to consider the physically handicapped/disabled when making transportation related decisions.

Utilize various funding sources for the construction and maintenance of the Town's transportation systems.

Action Strategies

Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to seek opportunities to expedite programs and activities identified in the Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan.

Support a feasibility study to construct a Route 40 bypass west of Rocky Mount, from Route 220 North over to Route 40 West at the Route 40 and Route 640 intersection to enhance access to Ferrum College and western Franklin County.

Promote safety education in county schools, as well as to the general public.

Promote pedestrian safety facilities such as crosswalks and signage.

Continue to regularly remove site obstructive vegetation along rights-of-way to ensure adequate sight distance.

Promote the installation and maintenance of traffic lights (incorporate into Town Capital Improvement Plan).

Encourage ride-sharing programs.

Encourage the recruitment of private taxi services.

Encourage local charitable and church groups and social service agencies to provide transportation services to the elderly and the disabled.

Explore the feasibility of creating a small transit system within the Town of Rocky Mount.

Encourage the development and use of bike paths and hiking trails.

Continue to require that all new streets be constructed to Virginia Department of Transportation Standards for various types of planned construction. (Urban Minor Arterial Street System, Urban Collector Street System, and Urban Local Street System Standards).

Encourage all new developments to provide adequate off-street parking.

Work with VDOT and Franklin County to identify needed secondary road improvements, particularly roads near Rocky Mount, as part of the County's Six-Year Improvement Plan.

Continue the maintenance and upkeep of Town streets with funding from VDOT. Check the present street inventory and insure that the Town is being fully compensated for those streets maintained by the Town.

Install traffic calming devices per current VDOT standards to reduce speeding and cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Resurface and seal cracked road pavements as needed to maintain high quality surfaces.

Maintain roadside storm drainage facilities adequate to hold at minimum a 10-year frequency storm.

Promote the construction of sidewalks, curbs and gutters in commercial areas, and curb and gutter in residential areas throughout town.

Maintain and extend sidewalks in business districts to encourage use by pedestrians.

Continue to require the inclusion of sidewalks in all new subdivisions.

Encourage developers to establish comprehensive landscaping plans, including shade trees. (Along with sidewalks, these strategies have shown to improve property values.)

Work with disabled residents when planning new transportation facilities.

Require all sidewalks to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

Require adequate off-street parking for new development.

IMPLEMENTATION

Land Use

The existing land use pattern in a particular area is the product of past growth. The extent to which an area has capitalized on its opportunities is reflected by the character and quality of the land use pattern. Whether the existing pattern encourages or inhibits orderly growth depends upon the growth policies that are incorporated into the Subdivision and Zoning and Development Ordinances. The lack of such controls results in an arrangement of land use that forms no pattern at all. In any event, since existing development influences future development, it is necessary to determine the existing land use pattern prior to formulating plans for future development.

In order to evaluate the manner in which land is presently used, a detailed survey and analysis becomes necessary. The existing land use study assists in evaluating the overall pattern of development. The land use survey pinpoints areas of conflicting uses, such as commercial or industrial uses located indiscriminately within residential environments. Study provides insight as to potential areas for future growth and expansion. The study of present land uses establishes the basis to develop future land use patterns.

Existing Land Use Analysis

Land in the Rocky Mount Study Area is occupied by a multiplicity of land uses, which are divided into eight broad categories. The categories identified are as follows:

Residential/Agriculture (Single-family, Farming) – Involves all land currently used for commercial and non-commercial farming, including cropland, pasture, and land currently fallow or in a stage of rotation. Forests are defined as including brushland, forestlands, and plantations. Forestland includes both commercial and non-commercial woodland. Lands that are prohibited for development due to steep slopes and flood plains should be encouraged for open space, agricultural and light residential development. The availability of water and sanitary sewer will determine the density of development.

Light Residential (Single-family) – Includes all land used for all single-family housing. Within the Town, much of the housing stock is getting older and some blighted areas are being identified. Areas containing larger lots should be allocated for light residential uses. In addition smaller residential lot sizes also are included in this category so long as the housing units are single-family use. This land use category also includes planned unit developments that may have smaller lot sizes but contain a reasonable amount of open space in the development to provide for recreational uses.

Heavy Residential (Multi-family) – Identified as apartments, townhouses, condominiums, and duplexes that have three or more units. This heavy residential development also creates concerns for increased runoff of stormwater, that if not properly handled may create drainage problems for downgrade properties. The Town should continue to promote improved housing through HUD programs and by private developers. Heavy density residential can also impose a burden on parking and traffic if access is not properly planned in advance. The Town should carefully designate those areas that have sufficient utilities and street access to be used for this heavy residential development.

Office (Professional) – This district is intended to encourage the orderly development of the existing land area for professional office development. The uses may include professional and business services and other such uses for which existing structures may be adapted. This district requires direct public access, but is protected from heavy traffic that is found in commercial/retail areas. This district includes numerous professional activities serving the needs of the community, such as medical offices and clinics, libraries, schools, counseling facilities and services, community services as well as financial institutions. In addition, many older neighborhood experience periods of growth that changes the make up of the neighborhood primarily due to transportation patterns. Many older residential areas begin to see the value of property torn between continued use as housing or change to office/ professional. These uses can include general offices (such as law or insurance), medical offices, personal service establishments, catering services, and nonprofit organizations. These uses can be found throughout town in various zoning districts.

Business (Commercial/Retail) – Includes those establishments involved in private activities that function to make a profit by the sale of goods or services. More commercial activities should be promoted for both the Central and General Business Districts. By establishing itself as a regional center of trade, all commercial activities within town will benefit. It is important for the business community to realize that the competition is no longer across town, but across the county in Roanoke and Martinsville. Increased commercial development within town will attract and retain more shoppers. Such development should be encouraged through the Town's Enterprise Zone and Community Development Office.

Mixed Use (Central Business) – This area is the Central Business District area for the Town of Rocky Mount. This area permits for a multiplicity of uses including single and multi-family residential, office, retail, dining, public space, and government services. In addition to commercial development, more emphasis should be placed on housing opportunities in the Central Business District. The CBD needs to become more vital with people, specialty businesses and office activities that will increase traffic into the business district. The Town needs to review its policy for parking. At some point in time, a determination will need to be made as to whether additional public parking in the CBD is necessary. If so, sufficient parking areas need to be identified.

Manufacturing (Industry) – Includes all activities concerned with the production of a commodity or the processing of a raw material into consumer goods or materials. The industrial classification was divided into Light Intensity and Heavy Intensity industrial uses. Light industrial uses are predominantly clean and do not produce odor, noise or hours of operation that might be disruptive to adjoining properties. Heavy Industrial uses are often characterized as generating noise, odor or traffic that may be considered a nuisance to adjoining property. Special attention is given to citing heavy industry in areas that will minimize disruption of adjoining properties not similarly zoned. The Town needs to ensure that suitable land is available to support economic growth and expansion. Existing industries should be approached to determine the potential of attracting supporting industries that complement those existing industries. Once these supporting industries are identified, a coordinated marketing campaign should be implemented to site these new industries in Rocky Mount.

The Town needs to consider the expansion of its corporate limits to areas suitable for industrial/economic development. With the addition of new lands however, the Town must assume the responsibility of providing extended water, sewer and municipal services. In addition, the Town should continue to review and revise the Enterprise Zone boundaries to effectively market available industrial land or buildings.

Public and Open Space – Uses identified are for the preservation of certain areas from private development due to the potential long term need of the community for government or open space and recreational uses. Examples of open space include lakes, farm ponds, rivers, creeks, and reservoirs. Examples of public space include government offices, schools and associated facilities.

By and large the existing land use pattern for Rocky Mount is well established. Zoning has been developed that classifies land into development zones based on the make up of specified areas. Need along with availability of water, drainage, sewer and transportation (streets) facilities are key factors that determine future growth and development for the community.

General Land Use Pattern in the Rocky Mount Study Area

The overall pattern of existing land use within the Rocky Mount Study Area indicates an ordered distinction between the basic use categories. Residential uses dominate the overall pattern of town development. The Central Business District of Rocky Mount no longer forms the hub of commercial activities for the town. Lineal patterns of commercial development along the primary thoroughfares are continuing to be recognized as the most active commercial areas within the overall study area.

The majority of industrial property in the Rocky Mount Study Area borders the Norfolk Southern Railroad that runs in a northeasterly pattern through Rocky Mount just north of the Central Business District.

The public schools and government buildings, along with the hospital and library, dominate the public and semi-public land use within the community.

A land cover data analysis was undertaken by town staff in 2007 to compare the change in land cover categories from 1992 to 2001. Table 17 shows the analysis and the percentage change in categories from 1992 to 2001.

Table 17: Rocky Mount Study Area Land Cover Change (1992-2001)

Classes	Acres		Percentage		Percent Change
	1992	2001	1992	2001	
Year					
Open Water	6.78	0.77	0.16%	0.02%	-0.14%
Developed, Low Intensity	819.94	1368.91	18.77%	31.34%	12.57%
Developed, High Intensity	336.90	612.59	7.71%	14.03%	6.31%
Pasture/Crops	920.61	793.34	21.07%	18.16%	-2.91%
Deciduous Forest	1593.88	1473.47	36.49%	33.74%	-2.75%
Evergreen Forest	234.47	88.03	5.37%	2.02%	-3.35%
Mixed Forest	455.90	30.45	10.44%	0.70%	-9.74%
Total	4368.47	4367.55	100.00%	100.00%	

Note: Classes from both 1992 and 2001 were combined to form new more general categories, which enabled us to make comparisons between the two years. The data is the NLCD sets from 1992 and 2001 put together by the MRLC Consortium. For more information about how the data was derived, please see the USGS or EPA websites.

Map 15 and Map 16 (pages 136 and 137) show the land cover in Rocky Mount for 1992 and 2001, respectively.

The land cover data analyzes the change in particular land cover categories from 1992 to 2001. Following is a list of the land cover categories used in the analysis:

- Open Water – areas with open water generally with less than 25 percent vegetation or soil
- Developed, Low Intensity – generally single family homes
- Developed, High intensity – generally commercial, industrial, and row house areas
- Deciduous Forest – generally trees greater than 15 feet tall and greater than 20 percent of total vegetation cover
- Evergreen Forest – generally trees greater than 15 feet tall and greater than 20 percent of total vegetation cover
- Mixed forest – generally trees greater than 15 feet tall and greater than 20 percent of total vegetation cover; neither evergreen or deciduous trees are more than 75 percent of total vegetation cover
- Pasture/Crops – shrubs and scrubs, grasslands, pastures and hay, and cultivated crop areas

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the land cover categories and percentage of total land area in the study area for 1992 and 2001 respectively. The dominant category for both 1992 and 2001 are deciduous forests where it comprised of 36.5 percent and 33.7 percent of land cover, respectively. The largest category change is the change in low intensity development, which has increased by 12.5 percent over the study period. Both high and low intensity development categories have increased since 1992; whereas, the forest and pasture categories have decreased.

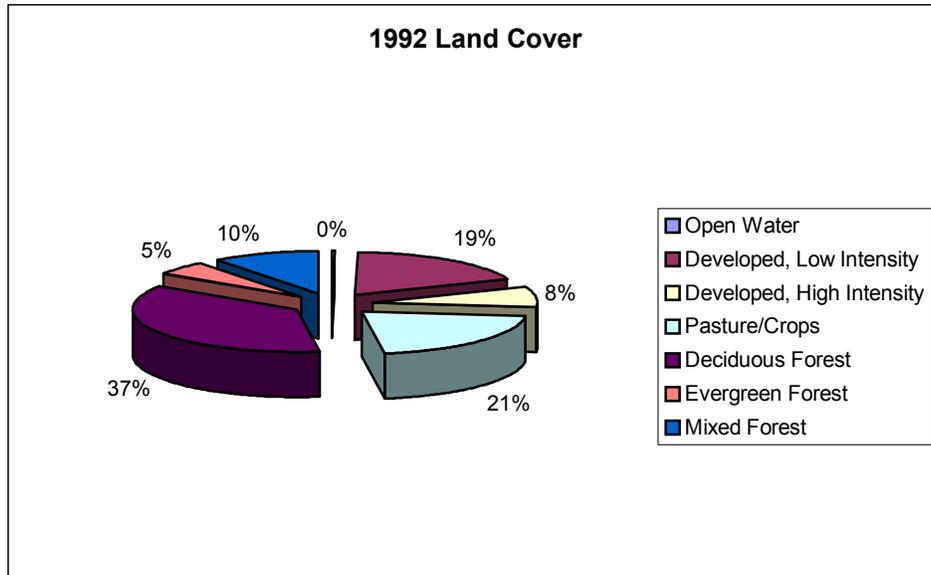


Figure 1: 1992 Rocky Mount Land Cover Categories

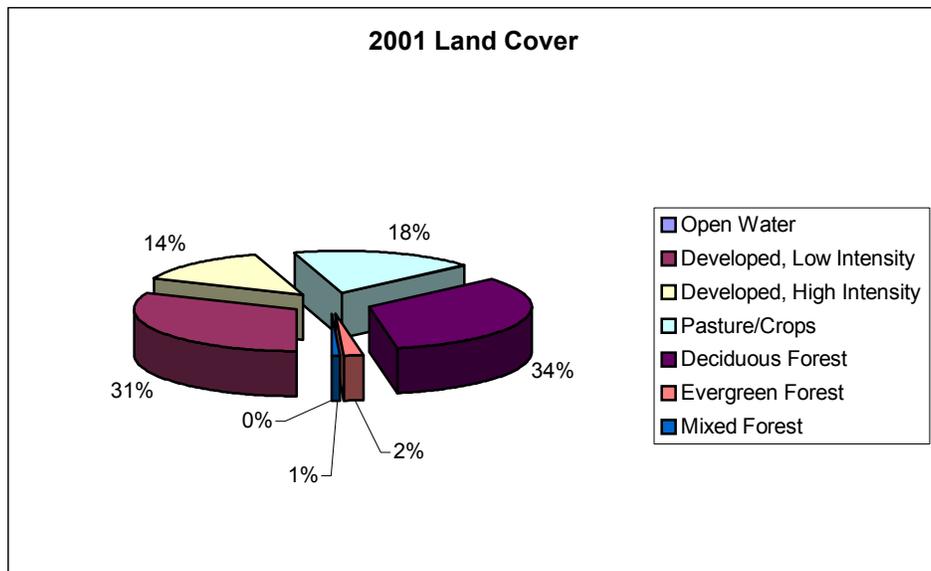
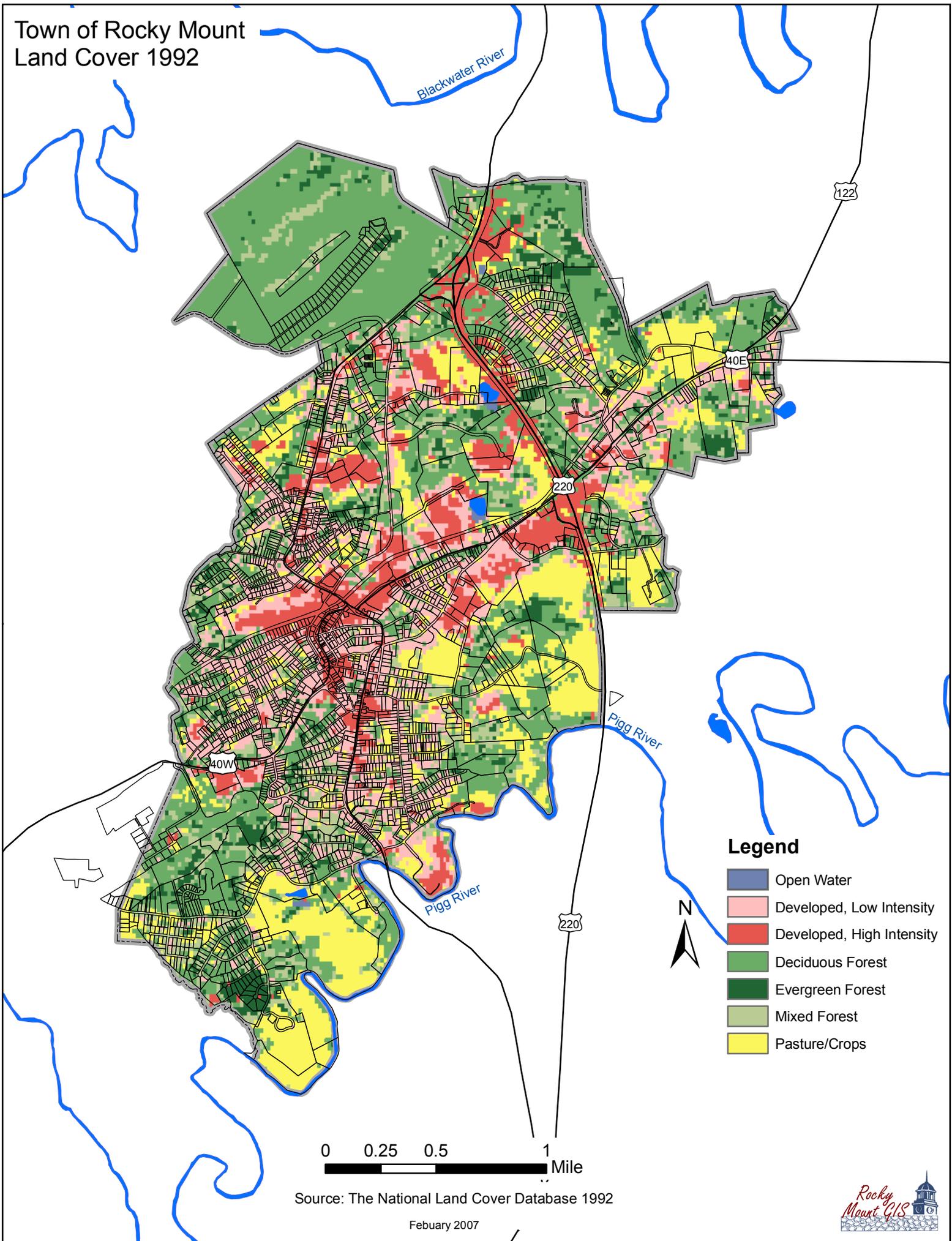


Figure 2: 2001 Rocky Mount Land Cover Categories

Town of Rocky Mount Land Cover 1992

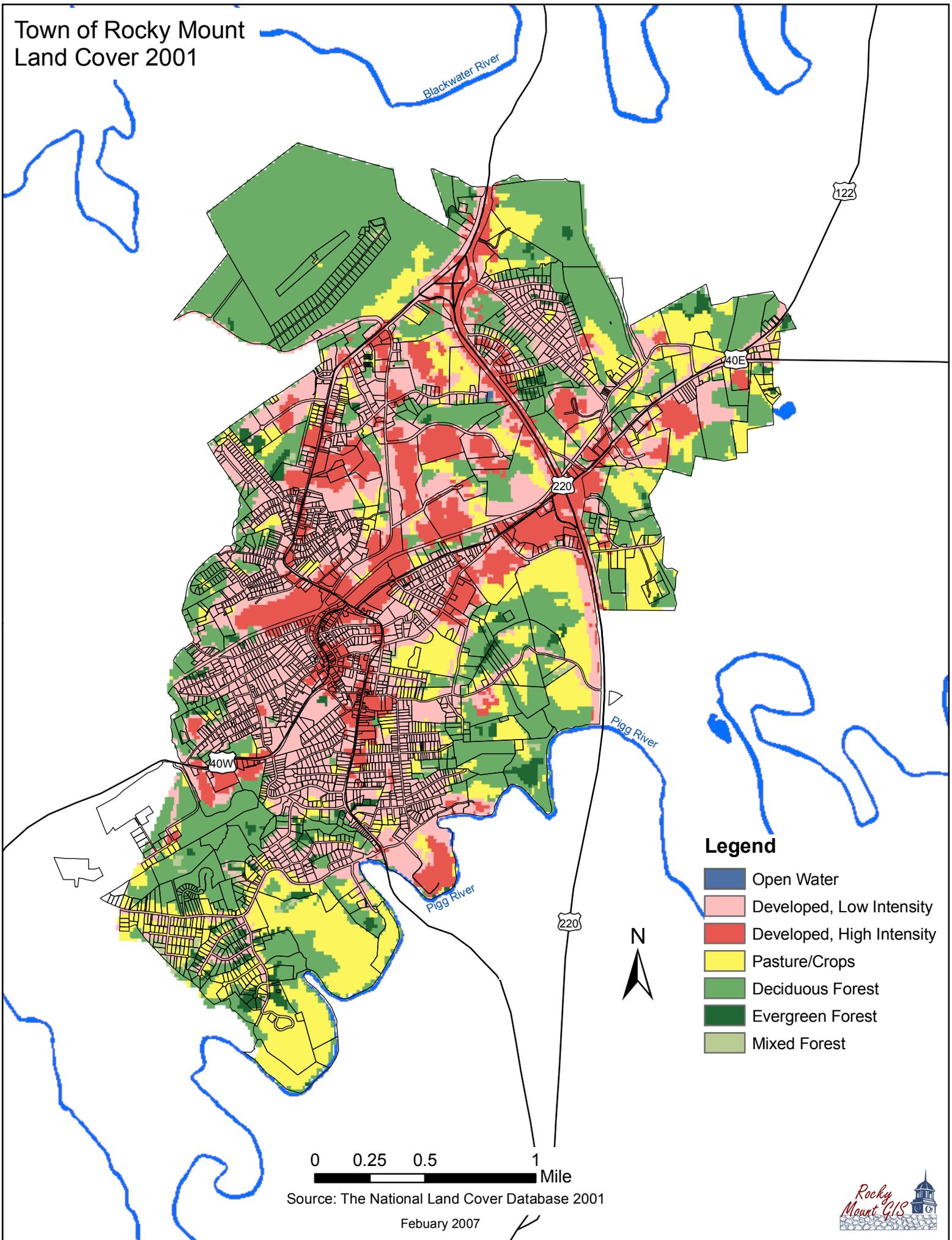


Source: The National Land Cover Database 1992

February 2007



Town of Rocky Mount Land Cover 2001



0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile
Source: The National Land Cover Database 2001
February 2007



One of the most important considerations in comprehensive planning is the evaluation of the growth potential of an area in terms of population it can be expected to sustain. The factors of probable future size, composition, basic characteristics, and spatial distribution of the population are highly significant in their effects on the extent and types of possible future land development (See Map 17, page 139). Of these indices, population size is used as a basic yardstick for the estimation of space needs. However, an analysis of the composition of the population will introduce quantitative considerations to population trends and will assist in determining residential space requirements, recreation, school, and other public facility requirements, and manufacturing, wholesale, and retail requirements.

Finally, an indication of the population distribution will provide clues as to how the various land uses and facilities should be located. Thus, information on population characteristics is crucial to all functional areas of land use planning including economic development, transportation, law enforcement, and environmental controls.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Rocky Mount Residential Build-Out Analysis

Appendix B: Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan Excerpts

TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT

RESIDENTIAL BUILD-OUT ANALYSIS



Prepared by

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And

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Introduction

In this study, we use vacant residential parcels and their current zoning minus factors such as roads, easements, slopes, wetlands, and odd lot shape and size to quantify the amount of development possible at build-out. This study can help Town Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and citizens understand what our Town will be like if built out to capacity allowed under current zoning.

What this study can do?

- Insure that the comprehensive plan land use goals are consistent with current zoning
- Show how growth will transform the Town of Rocky Mount
- Predict when full development will occur
- Provide population projections

What this study cannot do?

- Forecast future tax revenues and liabilities to finance new infrastructure
- Assess whether the existing resources are sufficient to serve the potential new development

Why Study the Town of Rocky Mount?

Pioneers began settling Rocky Mount about 1750. As population of Franklin County increased, it was determined that a center of government was needed. Rocky Mount situated in the approximate center of the new county was designated as the county seat. For many years, there were two separate settlements within the present corporate limits. Both Rocky Mount and Pleasant Heights had its own government, however, in many places were only separated by a street.

On February 17, 1873, Rocky Mount attained the status of an incorporated town and established corporate boundaries approximately one-half mile north, south, east, and west of the courthouse.

Today Rocky Mount is the center of trade and industry for the entire county. Equally important, it is a center of regional trade for those persons that reside between Roanoke to the north and Martinsville to the South. Rocky Mount and Franklin County are now considered "bedroom communities" for the City of Roanoke.

A build-out analysis indicates how growth could potentially alter the southern part of town's rural feel. Another important reason to conduct a build-out analysis is to determine how much more growth can occur within other parts of Rocky Mount.

The population count for Rocky Mount as of July 2000, following annexation, is 4,756 persons, roughly ten (10) percent of the total Franklin County population. This represents a sixteen percent increase from 1990 when the population was 4,098 persons. The Town of Rocky Mount is by no means the fastest growing town in the Commonwealth of Virginia; however, it has shown significant growth in recent years. In January 2006, the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service concluded that Franklin County has surpassed Bedford County as the fastest-growing community in the Roanoke Region.

Residential Development

It is important to remember that our build-out analysis is only concerned with zoning regulations related to residential construction. The Town of Rocky Mount Zoning and Development Ordinance breaks down residential zoning into the following classifications:

- **Residential Agricultural District (R-A)-**
This district is comprised of certain quiet, low-density areas where each residential unit is located on one acre or more of land. This zone is not considered to be a main district within the zoning ordinance. This area also contains certain open areas where similar residential, agricultural development appears likely to occur. The regulations of this district are designed to stabilize and protect the basic characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life where there are children and to prohibit all intensive commercial activities. To these ends, development is limited to relatively [low] concentration and permitted uses are limited to basically to dwellings providing homes for residents plus certain additional uses related to agricultural uses on larger tracts of land. Certain additional uses such as schools, churches, parks, playgrounds, agricultural businesses, veterinary clinics, kennels, tree nurseries, tree farms and certain public utilities are likely to be present to serve residents of this district.
- **Residential District 1 (R-1)-**
This district is composed of certain quiet, low-density areas where the density of housing may range from one to three units per acre. This district also contains certain open areas where similar residential development appears likely to occur. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life where there are children and to prohibit all intensive commercial activities. To

these ends, development is limited to relatively low concentrations and permitted uses are limited basically to dwellings providing homes for the residents plus certain additional uses such as schools, parks, churches and certain public facilities that serve the residents of the district

- **Residential District 2 (R-2)-**
This district is composed of certain medium density residential uses where housing densities may range from three to eight units per acre. This district also contains certain open areas where similar development appears likely to occur. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage insofar as compatible with the intensity of land use, a suitable environment for family life composed of an adult population with children. To this end, this district is protected against encroachment of general commercial or industrial uses.
- **Residential District 3 (R-3)-**
This district is composed of certain high density residential uses, where housing densities may range from eight or greater units per acre, as well as less intensive commercial operations which do not detract from the general residential character of the area. This district also contains certain open areas where similar development appears likely to occur in the future.
- **Residential Business District (R-B)-**
The purpose of this district is to allow certain types of neighborhood commercial uses to be developed in an area that is generally residential in character. The purpose is to stabilize neighborhood esthetics by enabling light density commercial purposes that will not detract from the residential character of a neighborhood.

This zoning district is characterized by a number of smaller lots of insufficient lot areas to comply with the minimum lot requirements for an R-1 and R-2 district. Consequently, the light density commercial uses add value and flexibility of use to residential property which might otherwise diminish in value.

Traffic and parking congestion is held to a minimum to protect and preserve property values in the surrounding residential area. Commercial uses shall provide off street parking in accordance with this ordinance. The commercial uses permitted should include only activities which will not detract from the normal operation of area households. Business related activities hours of operation shall not be conducted later than 8:00 pm or earlier than 8:00 am such as to maintain the residential harmony of the area. No outside sales, service or storage is permitted. Direct on site retail sales are prohibited in an R-B district.

- **Residential Planned Unit Development (RPUD)**
The purpose of this district is to provide for the development of planned residential communities that incorporate a variety of housing options. The RPUD district is intended to allow greater flexibility than is generally

possible under conventional zoning district regulations by encouraging ingenuity, imagination and high quality design to create a superior living environment for the residents of the planned community. Incorporation of significant areas of open space is a primary component of these provisions as a means to maintain critical natural and cultural resources, balanced with development at densities that compensate for maintenance of these resources. The RPUD district is particularly appropriate for parcels that contain a number of constraints to conventional development. In addition to an improved quality of design, the RPUD district creates an opportunity to reflect changes in technology of land development, provide opportunities for new approaches to home ownership, and provide for an efficient use of land which can result in reduced development costs. The minimum size of an RPUD district shall be 5 contiguous acres.

Methodology

This build-out analysis of the Town of Rocky Mount, Virginia, was conducted using ArcGIS 9.1 and Franklin County, Virginia Real Estate Records.

We conducted the build-out on a parcel level, which means that each parcel was looked at to determine the maximum number of units that could be built on it. The units for all of the parcels in the separate residential zones were subtotaled, and the final build-out number was the sum of these subtotals.

Each parcel had previously been coded one of the six residential zones. The Town of Rocky Mount GIS department provided the parcel and zoning data layers. Within the parcel data, each parcel has an identified building value. It was assumed that if the building value was set at 0, then the parcel was undeveloped. The only exceptions to this assumption were those parcels that were known to have a residential structure, and thus were not considered undeveloped.

In order to address development constraints, 15% of the total units within each zone were removed. Development constraints were identified as roads, easements, slopes, wetlands, and cemeteries. To account for odd lot shape and size an additional 10% of the total units within each zone were removed.

We also assumed that all land zoned residential will be built out, and none of it will be protected open space, other than that which is required within the Residential Plan Unit Developments (RPUD). In this zone, the total useable space cannot be less than 25 percent of the total acreage of the planned unit development.

After these calculations were completed, it was possible to select any undeveloped residential parcel and determine its area, zoning, and the maximum residential units could be built on that parcel. We also did not consider residential compounds, such as apartment buildings, which are less dense than the zoning requirements. They were not included because they do not represent the maximum development that could occur in Town.

Because each residential zone has specific development requirements in regards to area needed, separate equations were used for each zone.

The **final equations** that we used to determine the maximum number of housing units per parcel was:

- RA- Area of lot/ 40,000 sq. feet (minimum lot size) --- then back out 25%
- R1- Area of lot/ 15,000 sq. feet (minimum lot size) --- then back out 25%
- R2- Area of lot – 10,000 sq. feet (for first unit)/ 4,000 sq. feet (for each additional unit) + 1 (add first unit back in) x 2 (assume duplexes)--- then back out 25%
 - o lots between 4,300 sq. feet and 10,000 sq. feet were given the value of 1 duplex (2 units)
- R3- Area of lot/ 3,000 sq. feet (assume build-out of 14 town homes per acre) --- then back out 25%
- RB- Same as R-2, assume duplexes
- RPUD- Assume town homes—Area/ 3,000 sq. feet --- then back out 50% (25% for development constraints and 25% for required open space)

 Assume single-family homes---Area/ 15,000 sq. feet --- then back out 50% (25% for development constraints and 25% for required open space)

The total units per parcel were in the form of an integer. For example, if the calculation yielded 1.7 units for a specific parcel, only 1 unit was counted since 0.7 are not possible.

It is important to note that there were lots in Town that had a single unit on a large tract of land that could potentially be subdivided/rezoned for higher density residential. These properties were not considered because they did not meet the definition of an undeveloped parcel.

Analysis

After conducting a thorough build-out analysis, we predict that given current zoning laws and restrictions, the maximum number of new housing units for the town is between 4,166 and 4,531. The 2000 Census data stated that there were 2,016 units in Town. This figure includes housing units from annexed portions of Franklin County. When this figure is added to the maximum number of new housing units, the Town of Rocky Mount has a build-out capacity of between 6,182 and 6,547 units. When dividing the 2,016 units by the number of units at build-out capacity, it can be said that the Town is between 30.8 % and 32.6 % residentially built-out.

Table 1 compares the total residential acreage to undeveloped residential acreage. Forty-three (43) percent of the total residential acreage is undeveloped. Of the six zoning districts Residential District 3 (R-3) is the most developed, and Residential Planned Unit Development (RPUD) is the least developed, with only 9 percent developed.

TABLE 1

<i>District</i>	<i>All Residential Parcels</i>	<i>Undeveloped Parcels</i>	<i>% Undeveloped</i>
RA	943	505	54%
R1	1,055	354	34%
R2	413	109	26%
R3	69	15	22%
RB	123	59	48%
RPUD	138	126	91%
Total	2,741	1,168	43%

Table 2 compares the total residential parcels to undeveloped residential parcels. Twenty-five (25) percent of all residential parcels are undeveloped. Residential Agricultural (R-A) has the highest percentage of undeveloped parcels at forty-one (41) percent, and Residential District 2 (R-2) has the lowest percentage of undeveloped parcels at twenty (20) percent.

TABLE 2

<i>District</i>	<i>All Parcels</i>	<i>Undeveloped Parcels</i>	<i>% Undeveloped</i>
RA	46	19	41%
R1	1,213	321	26%
R2	533	105	20%
R3	27	7	26%
RB	205	46	22%
RPUD	18	4	22%
Total	2,042	502	25%

Table 3 breaks down the build-out analysis by residential zoning district. As the table illustrates, the most undeveloped residential parcels are zoned Residential District 1 (R-1). The most undeveloped acreage is zoned Residential Agricultural. Residential Planned Unit Development (RPUD) has the potential for the most possible housing units.

TABLE 3

Districts	Undeveloped Parcels	Acreage	Possible Units
RA	19	505.1	405
R1	321	353.9	699
R2	105	108.6	1,522
R3	7	15.0	160
RB	46	58.8	846
RPUD Town homes	4	126.2	913
RPUD Single Family Homes	-		548
Total Build-out parcels w/RPUD Town Homes	502	1,167.6	4,545
Total Build-out parcels w/RPUD Single Family	502	1,167.6	4,180

Using Census data we were able to estimate when the build-out scenario will occur. Between 1990 and 2000, a 12.2% growth occurred in the number of housing units in Rocky Mount (1,730 to 2,016, an increase of 286 units). Assuming that the Town of Rocky Mount reflects the steady growth in surrounding Franklin County, an additional 3% growth per decade has been used to calculate Town build-out. Based upon these calculations, the Town will reach build-out between 2050 and 2060 (See Table 4).

TABLE 4

<i>Projected number of housing units from 2000</i>		
% Growth	Number of Units	Year
15.2	2,322	2010
18.2	2,745	2020
21.2	3,327	2030
24.2	4,132	2040
27.2	5,256	2050
30.2	6,844	2060

Population Projections and Implications

Based on the 2000 Census, there were 4,756 persons living in the Town of Rocky Mount, including those in the recently annexed portion of Franklin County. When the total population is divided by the total number of households, an average of 2.37 persons per household is yielded. Table 5 provides a break down of population by sex and age for 2000 and at time of build-out.

As stated previously, the projected build-out is expected to occur between the years 2050 and 2060. Assuming that the average household size remains constant, it is estimated that the Town's population will be between 14,651 and 15,516 at build-out. Of this, over 3,450 persons, or 24% will be over age 65, while only about 3,400, or 25% will be school aged.

Table 5

SEX AND AGE	Percentage*	Number 2000	Projected Number at Build-Out**	Projected Number at Build-Out***
Male	45.9	2,183	6,725	7,122
Female	54.1	2,573	7,926	8,394
Under 5 years	5.7	271	835	884
5-9 years	6	285	879	931
10-14 years	6.3	300	923	978
15-19 years	5.5	262	806	853
20-24 years	5.6	266	820	869
25-34 years	11.5	547	1,685	1,784
35-44 years	13.7	652	2,007	2,126
45-54 years	12.7	604	1,861	1,971
55-59 years	4.9	233	718	760
60-64 years	4.5	214	659	698
65-74 years	10.1	480	1,480	1,567
75-80 years	9.3	442	1,363	1,443
85 years and over	4.2	200	615	652
Totals		4,756	14,651	15,516

*Based on 2000 General Demographic Characteristics for Town of Rocky Mount provided by US Census
 **Assuming Single Family Units within RPUD
 ***Assuming Town Homes within RPUD

With increasing growth, a greater demand will be placed on Town infrastructure. Not only will the current road system need to be addressed, but also the capability of the water plant and waste water treatment facility. With an increase in growth also comes a decrease in farmland and wildlife habitats, and an increase in the amount of impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces are defined as any surface that water cannot penetrate. These include man-made developments such as roofs, roads, parking lots and sidewalks. The effect of impervious surface on environmental quality is increased runoff through prevention of water discharging into the soil. This causes excessive nutrient loading and increases erosion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the build-out analysis for the Town of Rocky Mount provide a mental picture of what impacts current Town policies will have both on the landscape and quality of life for future generations.

We suggest that a follow-up capacity study be conducted looking specifically at the ability of the current Town water and sewer systems to handle the future growth project in this analysis.

Higher density development should be promoted to conserve more open space which in turn will lessen the impact on Town infrastructure while preserving wildlife habitats and decreasing the amount of erosion due to impervious surfaces. One way to promote higher density zoning is to encourage landowners wanting develop more units to rezone to Residential Planned Unit Development. Within the existing zoning regulations, this is the only district which requires the preservation of open space.

In addition, an open space requirement should be added to the subdivision ordinance. Any new subdivision would be required to set aside a predetermined percentage of the development for open space.

If the current percentage of population over 65 remains constant at 24%, it is estimated at build-out that the Town will have more than 3,450 persons over the age of 65. The Town will need to ensure that adequate and affordable housing, along with reliable transportation, are provided to this group.

CONCLUSIONS

With increasing growth and urban sprawl, build-out analyses are necessary to properly predict future growth and evaluate potential impacts on the surrounding environment. The build out analysis of Rocky Mount, Virginia, demonstrates that the maximum housing units will be between 6,182 and 6,547 units and will occur between the years 2050 and 2060. At time of build-out it is projected that the Town population will be between 14,651 and 15,517. The Town of Rocky Mount can use these projections to plan for and make adjustments as needed to direct future growth.



Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

Developed by the
Transportation Planning Division

of the

Virginia Department of Transportation

in cooperation with the

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

and the

Town of Rocky Mount

August 2002

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

INTRODUCTION

The *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* (the Plan) was developed as a cooperative effort between the Federal Highway Administration, the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Town of Rocky Mount. The Plan is the product of a study that evaluated the transportation system in Rocky Mount and recommended a set of transportation improvements to best satisfy existing and future transportation needs. The study identified needs based on capacity, safety and engineering aspects of the transportation system.

Effective transportation systems are essential to continued economic growth and development in the Rocky Mount region as well as the Commonwealth of Virginia as a whole. Providing for the safe, effective, and efficient movement of people and goods is a basic goal of all transportation programs in Virginia. It is with this basic goal in mind, and with further consideration of environmental issues and local government transportation objectives, that this transportation plan was developed.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will use this Plan when evaluating requests from the Rocky Mount local government for specific transportation projects, and when implementing projects on the VDOT-maintained roadway system. The recommendations in this *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* will also be used as part of the VDOT statewide transportation planning process to ensure that local transportation projects are compatible with and support transportation improvements both statewide and in neighboring localities.

STUDY AREA AND THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM

Rocky Mount is located in the heart of Franklin County. Situated in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the town has a rolling, hilly topography, with impressive mountain views to the north and west. The town sits at the crossroads of a number of primary roadways including, U.S. Route 220, and Virginia Routes 40 and 122. The metropolitan areas of Roanoke to the north and Martinsville to the south are each less than a half-hour drive from the town via Route 220. As a commercial center, the town has historically served the business needs of the surrounding agricultural community. Retail and manufacturing currently comprise the majority of the business conducted. As a government center, the town hosts municipal offices and courthouses for both the town and Franklin County.

The study area for this transportation plan coincides with the corporate limits of the Town of Rocky Mount. As part of the analysis of transportation operations and needs performed for the study, however, connectivity to facilities in surrounding Franklin County and potential extension of improvements into the County were also investigated.

A subset of the town's roadway network is designated as the urban thoroughfare system. The thoroughfare system includes roads that are functionally classified as collectors or arterials. Arterial roads serve as the major traffic-carrying facilities in the area. Collector roads carry a lesser volume of traffic and feed traffic to these arterial roadways. The focus of the Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan is this thoroughfare system, but local streets were analyzed as well. In addition to roadways, improvements to the following aspects of the transportation system have been evaluated as part of this study: parking; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; intercity rail, bus, and air; transit and paratransit; taxi; and the movement of goods.

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The recent 2000 U.S. Census reports the Town of Rocky Mount to have a population of 4,066. According to the 1990 census, the population of the town was 4,098. The Census 2000 count represents effectively no change from the 1990 count. Based on historic trends, as well as input from local officials, the town's population is expected to remain stable over the 20-year horizon of this study.

Industrial activity in Rocky Mount includes furniture, window and modular home manufacturing. Several major industrial companies located in the town include Lane Furniture, Fleetwood Homes, Mod-U-Kraf Homes, and MW Windows. As with population, employment in Rocky Mount is expected to remain constant over the 20-year horizon of this study.

SUMMARY OF APPROACH AND ANALYSIS METHODS

This transportation plan was developed using a process that included:

- Data Collection
- Forecasting of Future Traffic Demands
- Development of Recommendations to Address Existing and Future Transportation Needs
- Coordination with Rocky Mount Government Officials and the Public
- Environmental Overview and Transportation Plan Documentation

Recommendations for the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* are based on a comprehensive review of the capacity, safety, and geometry of the existing roadway system, as well as other issues that affect the area's transportation system (such as parking). In addition, and where applicable, improvements to the following other modes of transportation were evaluated: intercity rail; intercity bus; transit and paratransit; bicycle, pedestrian, and air travel. Goods movement by rail and truck were also considered in the development of transportation recommendations.

The recommendations were divided into three phases. Phase One recommendations address existing deficiencies and the most immediate transportation needs of the area. Phase Two recommendations apply to an interim year of 2010, and Phase Three recommendations are long-term projects (year 2020). Projects in all three phases are intended to accommodate travel demands to the horizon year of 2020.

PHASE ONE: BASE YEAR (1999) RECOMMENDATIONS

This study identified current deficiencies in the Rocky Mount transportation system. Aspects of potential deficiencies in the existing transportation system included traffic flow and safety concerns, parking, and goods movement by truck. Two projects were identified as a short-term, immediate improvement and are described below.

Pell Avenue at Tanyard Road

Over the three-year period analyzed in the preparation of this Plan (1996 to 1998), this intersection experienced more than 10 accidents in each year. Recommended safety improvements to this intersection include consideration of disallowing right-on-red, making adjustments to the signal phasing, and installing warning signage on approaches to the intersection.

Main Street at State Street and Grassy Hill Road

This intersection experienced 16 accidents over the three-year safety analysis period, with close to 50 percent of the accidents being rear-end collisions. Warning signage is recommended to address safety issues at this location.

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

Route 40 at Route 220

Install traffic signal on Route 40 at the Route 220 interchange ramps. This improvement is listed in the development phase of Virginia Transportation Six-Year Program (FY 2003-2008).

PHASE TWO: INTERIM YEAR (2010) RECOMMENDATIONS

The interim year recommendations for the Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan includes three projects that are intended to address existing deficiencies but, based on projected costs, would require a number of years to plan and fund.

Franklin Street at Floyd Avenue

Anticipated traffic volumes at this intersection will result in unacceptable levels of delay. The installation of a traffic signal at this location, pending the results of detailed traffic signal warrant studies, is recommended.

Main Street from Floyd Avenue to State Street

To improve traffic flow through downtown Rocky Mount, upgrade and interconnect traffic signals at the intersections of Main Street and the following six crossing roads: Floyd Avenue, East Court Street, Tanyard Road, Pell Avenue (Route 40 East), Franklin Street (Route 40 West), and State Street.

Franklin Street from Floyd Avenue to the West Corporate Limits

Widen Franklin Street to four lanes. This improvement is listed in the development phase of Virginia Transportation Six-Year Program (FY 2003-2008).

Tanyard Road at Wray Street and Franklin County High School

This intersection experienced a total of 20 accidents over the three-year analysis period, with over 50 percent angle accidents. Because of this accident experience, and due to the fact that this location is at the entrance to a high school, a traffic signal is recommended (pending the results of detailed traffic signal warrant studies).

PHASE THREE: FUTURE YEAR (2020) RECOMMENDATIONS

The Phase Three 2020 recommendations in the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* are intended to support the mobility, economic, and business needs of the community while enhancing both the appeal and traffic operations of Rocky Mount's transportation system.

Diamond Avenue

To support existing and planned land uses along Diamond Avenue and provide alternative access to these areas, the recommendation is to upgrade existing Diamond Avenue to meet current standards and extend it to the Route 40 Bypass described below. This alternative access is needed because the current access crosses railroad tracks that can be blocked by long, slow-moving or stopped trains.

East-West Connector - Scuffling Hill Road

To facilitate east-west traffic flow to and from existing and planned land uses on the west side of Rocky Mount and to relieve traffic on streets in the downtown areas, the recommendation is to improve Scuffling Hill Road between Routes 40 and 220 Business to meet current urban standards with curb, gutter, and sidewalks. The roadway would remain as a 2-lane facility. The roadway would be straightened by constructing approximately 2,000 feet of roadway on new alignment midway between the west corporate limits and Main Street.

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

Route 40 Bypass

To provide for north-south travel through the region and to relieve downtown roadways in Rocky Mount, the construction of a Route 40 Bypass as a four-lane facility on new alignment is recommended.

Tanyard Road Extended

The lack of direct east-west roadway connections in Rocky Mount results in capacity pressures at two intersections on Main Street, at Pell Avenue and at Franklin Street. While these two intersections are anticipated to be over-capacity by the year 2020, options for adding capacity are limited by right-of-way constraints. In addition, the offset nature of these two intersections make efficient operations difficult. To provide an alternative for east-west traffic to divert from these intersections and to address overall east-west roadway capacity concerns through the central portion of Rocky Mount, a two-lane connecting road from Franklin Street to Main Street is recommended. This recommendation includes the intersection improvement of Main Street and Tanyard Road/Tanyard Road Extension.

OTHER MODES AND GOODS MOVEMENT

In developing the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan*, all modes of travel were considered. Either within the town itself or within an area of reasonable accessibility, Rocky Mount residents can make use of transportation by bus, air, and rail, and by bicycling and walking. Options currently not available, however, include taxi service and direct intercity bus service.

While fixed-route transit service is not provided, paratransit service is available for senior citizens and disabled citizens on Medicaid through a program operated by the non-profit Support To Eliminate Poverty (STEP). A formal VDOT ridesharing lot near the intersection of Route 40 and Route 220 is currently used by about 25 people per day. Since ridesharing can lessen traffic congestion and reduce pollution and fuel consumption, this Plan recommends monitoring informal park and ride lots and converting them to formal lots as the need becomes evident.

Pedestrian travel is encouraged in Rocky Mount. In 1999, the Town's five-year plan for sidewalk construction included the following streets: Circle Drive, Tanyard Road, Hatcher Street, Maynor Street, Wray Street, Fairlawn Drive, Donald Avenue, Knollwood Drive, and Dent Street. In June 2000, the Town completed and opened a quarter-mile walking trail in Mary Bethune Park.

The town has no bicycle lanes on its streets or dedicated bicycle paths. Bicycle travel is permitted on local roads, which are generally wide enough and carry sufficiently low traffic volumes to allow for safe bicycle travel.

Rocky Mount's last taxi company ceased operations in 1999, and service has not been re-established. Since taxis provide a means of transportation for people who either cannot afford a vehicle or cannot drive, methods to encourage such service are recommended.

The majority of goods and raw materials shipped into and out of the town is accomplished by truck. Very little use of air and rail freight transport was reported by the major industries in Rocky Mount. Commercial air service is offered at the Roanoke Regional Airport, located 25 miles to the north.

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

LOCAL PROJECTS

Local planning goals and efforts often result in the identification of projects that are either not located on the designated thoroughfare system, or reflect improvements that are intended to support future development or affect the way that a locality is intending to grow. The improvements that result from or support these local planning initiatives are included in the transportation plan as local projects. Two local projects are included in the Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan.

School Board Road at Norfolk Southern Railroad Tracks

School Board Road currently passes under the railroad tracks at a substandard underpass. With increasing traffic, as well as substantial use by large school buses, this underpass requires reconstruction. This recommendation addresses the railroad underpass, the stream crossing, and realignment and widening of the existing road approaches to the underpass. This will improve both sight distance and safety at this location.

Court Street from Donald Avenue to the East Corporate Limits

This local roadway is recommended for improvement to meet current urban 2-lane standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

An environmental overview was conducted for the projects in the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan*. There were no environmental features identified in Rocky Mount that would preclude the implementation of any of the included recommendations.

LOCAL COORDINATION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The development of the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* included coordination meetings with local Town officials and a public meeting with citizens, local officials, and VDOT representatives.

The three coordination meetings held for this study were: (1) a kick-off meeting, (2) an existing conditions meeting, and (3) a draft recommendations meeting. The kick-off meeting, held in April 1999, enabled the project team to discuss the purpose and scope of the study, the schedule for data collection and plan preparation, and the coordination process. At the second meeting (existing conditions), held in October 2000, the project team presented the results of the base year and horizon year traffic analysis and discussed potential projects to address projected transportation needs. In March 2001, a draft set of transportation improvements was sent to Town officials and VDOT representatives for review.

A public meeting was held on January 7, 2002 to present the draft transportation plan to Town officials, citizens and other interested parties. Comments from meeting participants were considered in the development of the final Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan.

PLAN ADOPTION

The Rocky Mount Town Council adopted the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* on July 8, 2002.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Detailed information on the development of the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan* and the study recommendations will be included in the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan Technical Report*. This document will be available for review at the Rocky Mount Town Hall and the local library. The technical report

Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

will also be available in Richmond at the central office of VDOT's Transportation Planning Division, the VDOT Salem District office in Salem, and the VDOT residency office in Rocky Mount.

Projects included in the Virginia Transportation Six-Year Program (FY 2003-2008) are not part of the *Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan*. The Six-Year Program can be reviewed online at <http://www.virginiadot.org>.

Information on Six-Year Program projects for the Town of Rocky Mount can also be found by contacting the VDOT Resident Engineer at the Rocky Mount Residency Office (540-586-7910).

Route	Facility Name	From	To	Road Segment Length	Recommendation	Estimated Cost [1]	Existing Typical Section	Recommended Typical Section	Average Daily Traffic			
									Year 1999	Year 2010	Year 2020	
40	Pell Avenue	at Tanyard Road		N/A	Safety improvements to intersection including prohibition of right-on-red, phasing adjustments, and installation of warning signage	\$80,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
220 BUS	Main Street	at State Street and Grassy Hill Road		N/A	Install warning signs to address safety issues	\$6,000	[2]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
40	Route 40	Route 220		N/A	Install signal at interchange ramps	\$100,000		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
40	Franklin Street	at Floyd Avenue		N/A	Install signal at intersection	\$180,000	[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
220 BUS	Main Street	Floyd Avenue	State Street (south end)	0.4	Upgrade and interconnect traffic signals at six locations on Main Street. Intersections include Floyd Avenue, East Court Street, Tanyard Road, Pell Avenue (Route 40 East), Franklin Street (Route 40 West), and State Street	\$1,200,000		N/A	N/A	10,600	13,100	16,000
1013	Tanyard Road	at Wray Street and high school		N/A	Install signal at intersection	\$180,000	[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
1004	Diamond Avenue	Franklin Street	VA 40 Bypass	1.1	Upgrade existing Diamond Avenue and extend to proposed VA 40 Bypass (0.4 miles of this improvement are located in Franklin County)	\$3,465,000	[4]	N/A	U2	2,200	2,800	3,400
40	Franklin Street	Floyd Avenue	West corporate limits	0.8	Widen existing roadway to four lanes	\$2,717,000		U2	U4	11,830	14,400	16,800
640 and 1011	East-West Connector - Scuffling Hill Road	VA 40 West	South Main Street	2.0	Develop 2-lane urban facility between Routes 40 and 220 Business. Potential corridor for much of this roadway is existing Scuffling Hill Road (includes 0.3 miles of road on new alignment to straighten connection)	\$6,300,000	[4]	N/A	U2	N/A	N/A	5,000
40	VA 40 Bypass	North Main Street	VA 40 West	2.5	Construct four-lane facility on new alignment	\$12,800,000	[5]	N/A	R4D	N/A	N/A	5,900
1013	Tanyard Road Extended	Main Street	Franklin Street	0.3	Construct two-lane connecting road from Franklin Street to Main Street	\$1,260,000	[6]	N/A	U2	N/A	N/A	N/A
649	School Board Road	at Norfolk Southern railroad tracks		N/A	Reconstruct railroad overpass, stream crossing, and realign and widen existing roadway to improve sight distance and safety (local roadway improvement)	\$1,263,000	[7.8]	R2	U2	N/A	N/A	N/A
1002	Court Street	Donald Avenue	East Corporate Limits	0.8	Improve existing alignment to U2 standards (local roadway improvement).	\$2,520,000	[4.8]	R2	U2	N/A	N/A	N/A
ESTIMATED TOTAL THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM COST						\$28,288,000	[8]					

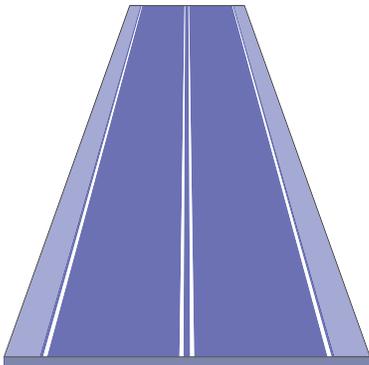
Rocky Mount 2020 Transportation Plan

Notes:

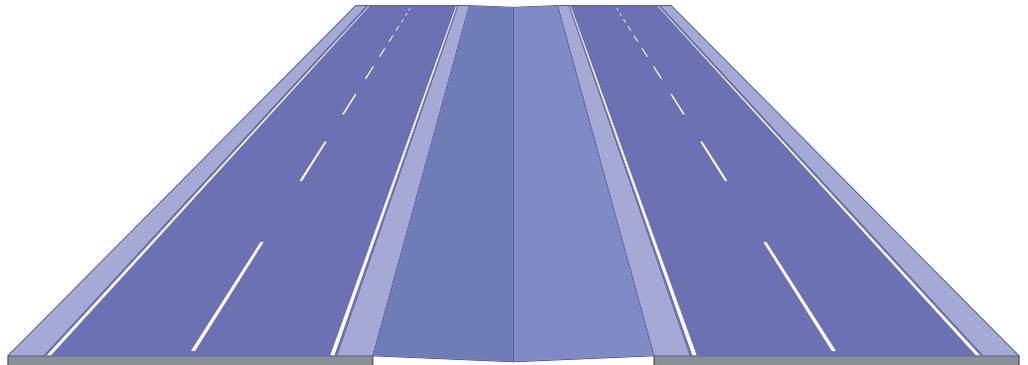
- [1] The cost estimates included in this table are planning level costs in year 2000 dollars. These cost estimates are based on statewide unit cost averages and should be used for planning purposes only. Actual construction and right-of-way costs may vary based on local conditions.
- [2] The unit cost for a warning sign is \$3,000.
- [3] Assumes a total cost of equipment and installation of \$180,000 per signal.
- [4] The unit cost for this urban 2-lane roadway is assumed to be \$2.1 million per mile, with an additional 50 percent for right-of-way and utilities.
- [5] The unit cost for this rural 4-lane divided roadway is assumed to be \$4.1 million per mile, with an additional 25 percent for right-of-way and utilities.
- [6] The unit cost for this urban 2-lane roadway is assumed to be \$2.1 million per mile, with an additional 100 percent for right-of-way and utilities.
- [7] Estimated cost for reconstruction of railroad underpass is \$1.0 million, including provisions for maintaining rail traffic during construction. Realignment of approach roadway is estimated as 0.1 mile of urban 2-lane roadway at \$2.1 million per mile, with an additional 25 percent for right-of-way and utilities.
- [8] Local projects cost estimates are provided for informational purposes only in the table below, and are not included in the total cost.

N/A -- Not applicable

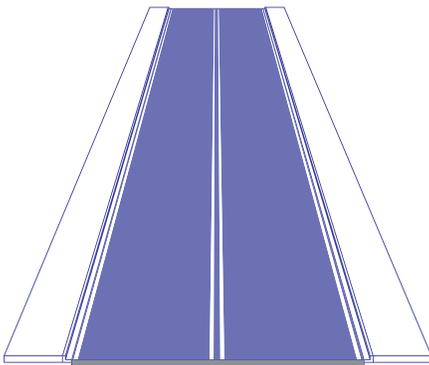
TYPICAL SECTIONS



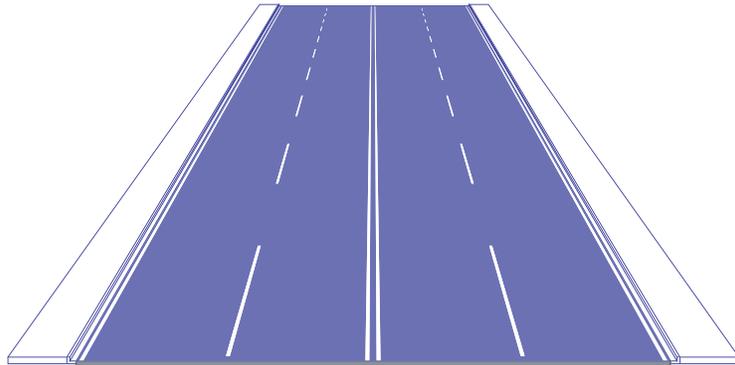
R2
Rural two-lane roadway with standard shoulders



R4D
Rural four-lane divided roadway with standard shoulders



U2
Urban two-lane roadway with curb, gutter, and sidewalk



U4
Urban four-lane roadway with curb, gutter, and sidewalk