

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Submitted via Exit Surveys, the Public Input Map and Correspondence *

General Transportation:

- 1. *Why does Route 5 need to be a 4-lane divided highway? What are the plans for widening Route 5 between S. Laburnum Avenue and Rocketts Landing?***

According to the Henrico County Department of Public Works, the recommendation for widening Route 5 to a four-lane, divided roadway with turn lanes is based on Route 5's designation as a major arterial on the county's 2026 Major Thoroughfare Plan, as well as projections based on anticipated traffic from future development along the corridor. There are currently no plans to widen the road at this time. The county and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will reevaluate recommended road improvements in conjunction with future development plans.

- 2. *Since the train tracks are gone (around Vulcan property), why not fill in the steep grade to reduce wintertime accidents? Raise the road 100 feet, adding a vista into the city.***

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, between 2011 and 2017, there were 66 vehicle accidents along this section of Route 5. Nine (9) of them were weather-related and occurred during the months of December through March. Raising the grade 100 feet would be an expensive project that would not offer significant safety or congestion benefits.

- 3. *What is the status of the unused VDOT buildings off of Bickerstaff Road?***

The Virginia Department of General Services intends to retain the parcels and their respective buildings until they're ready to sell in bulk. Any interest in these properties should be directed to the Virginia Department of Transportation Ashland Residency via the Henrico County's Department of Public Works at (804) 501-4393.

- 4. *I'm wondering why, after the bridge over Almond Creek washed out, was Bickerstaff closed as a connection between Route 5 and New Osborne? To help alleviate traffic congestion, open Bickerstaff back up to connect Route 5 with other parts of Varina.***

Per the Henrico County Department of Public Works (DPW), Bickerstaff Road is a low-volume road. There is currently no funding available to repair the bridge over Almond Creek and re-open the road. Re-opening it will be considered should the need arise for additional connections in the area.

5. Reduce the speed limit on Route 5 from McCoul Street to Laburnum Avenue.

In 2014, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conducted a safety study which resulted in a reduction of the speed limit between Oakland Road and Freeless Street from 55 to 50 mph. VDOT is reviewing whether another study is required at this time.

6. Can a guardrail be installed along Route 5/Capital Trail by Marion Hill/Tree Hill?

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), a guardrail can be a hazard and is only installed as a last resort. There appears to be significant recovery area for vehicles and virtually no fixed objects to avoid, therefore a guardrail isn't required in this section.

7. There needs to be a stop light at the intersection of Midview and New Market Roads.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. VDOT completed its study in November 2017 and found there is not enough traffic along Midview Road to meet the minimum threshold requirements for a traffic signal.

8. There needs to be a stop light at New Market Road and Osborne Turnpike.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. VDOT completed its study in November 2017 and found there is not enough traffic along New Market Road and Osborne Turnpike to meet the minimum threshold requirements for a traffic signal.

9. There needs to be a stop light by Antioch Baptist Church (Route 5 and Freeless).

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. VDOT completed its study in November 2017 and found there is not enough traffic along Freeless Street to meet the minimum threshold requirements for a traffic signal.

10. There needs to be a stop light at Darbytown Road and Doran Road.

Traffic signals are required when traffic volumes are high enough that a signal is warranted. In order to warrant a signal, 150 or more vehicles per hour (over an 8-hour period) would need to travel Doran Road. According to the Henrico County Department of Public Works, the road does not carry that much traffic, so a signal is not warranted.

11. We need traffic control at Oakland Road and Osborne Turnpike and New Osborne and Old Osborne Turnpikes; coordinate the two intersections.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review these intersections. VDOT completed its study in November 2017 and found there is not enough traffic at either intersection (Oakland Road and Osborne Turnpike or Old Osborne and New Osborne Turnpikes) to meet the minimum threshold requirements for traffic signals.

12. There needs to be a traffic light at the intersection of Route 5 and Buffin Road.

The Henrico County Department of Public Works is working with Virginia Department of Transportation to improve the intersection of Route 5 and Buffin/Wood Mill Roads. The project will include the construction of eastbound and westbound left turn lanes on Route 5, as well as a northbound right turn lane on Buffin Road. These improvements should improve the safety and operation of this intersection. This project is currently under design, with an estimated start date of early 2022.

13. Can anything be done at the Buffin Road intersection with Route 5 because it is extremely dangerous, especially during school "rush hour"?

There is a joint Henrico County/VDOT project to improve this intersection by adding turn lanes (see response to Question 12). This project is currently under design with an estimated start date in early 2022.

14. When coming from I-295 heading west, it is dangerous to make a left turn onto Buffin Road because the cars behind you either don't want to wait for you to get clearance to turn or they illegally pass you.

Please see the response to Question 12.

15. I recommend that the county install a traffic light to monitor the traffic congestion at Four Mile Run and New Market Road. During morning and evening rush hour traffic builds up and getting out an issue.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. VDOT reviewed the volumes and found there is not enough traffic along Four Mile Run to meet the minimum threshold requirements for a traffic signal.

16. Turner Road and Route 5 should be widened; it is very narrow especially when Diamond Springs trucks and school buses are turning.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. The widening of Turner Road would entail a substantial undertaking due to acquisition of right-of-way and relocation of utilities. It has not been determined as necessary at this time.

17. Extend the exit lane from I-295 onto north/westbound Route 5 as traffic exits too fast.

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, yield signs, along with advisory speed (35 MPH) signs, are present on the exit ramp from I-295. Extension of the acceleration lane is not advisable due to the proximity to Sunday Drive's right turn lane.

18. We need sidewalks where the bike trail departs from Route 5, near Four Mile Baptist Church.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) indicates this is a significant safety issue because sidewalks in this location would be too dangerous for pedestrians. Sidewalks would encourage pedestrian traffic to cross over on- and off-ramps on acceleration and deceleration lanes.

19. We are concerned about speeding through residential areas, especially when Route 5 is congested, and drivers want to avoid that congestion.

According to the Henrico County Department of Public Works (DPW), there are a number of roads adjacent to Route 5 (New Osborne, Oakland, Midview, Messer, Willson, Varina, Mill, Strath, Doran, Turner, Long Bridge, Turkey Island and Willis Church) that are designated on the county's Major Thoroughfare Plan as collector roads. These roads are designed to move traffic from local streets to arterial roads and to provide access to residential properties as well. Citizens may contact DPW to discuss potential traffic calming measures on a case by case basis. Further information can be found at: <https://henrico.us/works/traffic/traffic-calming-program/>

20. What if the toll was removed from the 895 Pocahontas Parkway Bridge? Many commuters would then cross the river at the Laburnum entrance rather than traveling into the city via Route 5. This could alleviate huge amounts of congestion on Route 5 as it merges onto Main Street.

Route 895 (Pocahontas Parkway) was built using a combination of public and private funds. It is owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation, who leases the toll road to a private company, Globalvia. The tolls collected are used to cover operation and maintenance costs of the road.

21. There should be shoulders along Kingsland Road.

Kingsland Road is a low-volume traffic road with 30 feet or less of county owned right-of-way. To widen and install shoulders, the county would have to purchase additional land from residents of Kingsland Road. There is no funding available at this time for such a project, nor do the traffic volumes support such a need.

22. There is a great opportunity to have an exit/entrance ramp to 295/895 from Charles City Road. Residents who live in this area would have better access to these highways instead of having to get off at the Route 5 or Route 60 exits.

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, an interchange on an interstate requires a variety of justifications (large scale growth, safety, capacity needs) which must be reviewed and approved by the federal government. An interchange in this area would not be approved, as there are nearby alternatives.

23. There is a turn lane on Laburnum Avenue to go west on Route 5. This turn lane has very little pavement and is more gravel with massive potholes. Would it be possible to actually pave this into a proper turn lane?

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, right turn lanes must meet warrants based on vehicle volume and turning vehicle volume. Analysis determines whether a full right turn lane is needed, whether a taper is required or whether no turn lane is necessary. In the case of this intersection, the presence of the taper indicates it does not meet the warrants for a full turn lane.

24. Heading east, we need a left turn lane to allow traffic to turn off of Route 5 onto Doran Road. We also need a left turn lane out of Doran Road onto Route 5 heading west.

The Henrico County Planning Department requested the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) review this intersection. VDOT analyzed traffic volumes and found an eastbound turn lane could meet warrants. However, there is insufficient right-of-way available for a turn lane. Land would need to be purchased from adjacent property owners and overhead utility lines would need to be relocated, requiring significant expense. There is no funding available at this time for such a project.

Virginia Capital Trail:

25. What are the plans to expand the Virginia Capital Trail?

Henrico County has expanded the bike trail to connect to Dorey Park and has another project in design to expand it through the Park to Darbytown Road. As a recommendation of the Route 5 Corridor Study, county staff is working to identify potential future links to the Capital Trail.

26. I would like a bike trail in the Darbytown Road/Elko Road area due to the high volume of bikers using the area.

Henrico County will consider the request on Darbytown Road; however, there is currently no funding currently available for such a project. Elko Road (State Route 156) is maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation and the county would defer to VDOT improvements to Elko Road.

27. We need flashing lights at the Doran Road/Capital Trail crossing, as cars cannot see users on the western side of Doran Road and there is a blind curve heading north, just prior to the bike path, and trees block bikers' views as they enter the road.

According the Henrico County Department of Public Works, Doran Road has "trail ahead" signs and users of the Capital Trail have a stop sign at Doran Road. There are currently no plans to add flashing lights.

28. How can bike path safety be improved, particularly at Capital Trail crossings? Can there be signs on the bike path indicating cycling rules?

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Capital Trail has pavement message markings and signs at intersections. An upcoming VDOT project to refresh signs/stripping at crossings is underway. Compliance issues could be further addressed by public safety campaigns and enforcement.

29. First change the traffic laws so that if there is a bike path, bikes must be on it and not on the road. Second, bikes should only be on roads 25 mph or less and would be illegal to be on a 55-mph road.

This suggestion is beyond the scope of the Route 5 Corridor Study. Such changes would require action by the Virginia General Assembly or the Department of Motor Vehicles.

30. Cyclists that are on the road surface need to have insurance, be registered with the DMV and tagged so more people can report dangerous bicyclists.

These suggestions are beyond the scope of the Route 5 Corridor Study. Such changes would require action by the Virginia General Assembly or the Department of Motor Vehicles.

31. No cyclist should be allowed on any road that currently is not wide enough for center lines like Long Bridge Road or Yahley Mill Road.

Bicyclists are considered valid users of roads and the police cannot prevent them from using narrower roads.

32. Bicycle traffic along Route 5 is growing. Along with this, I see bicycle riders run stop signs all along this bicycle route. Why don't you increase your revenues by enforcing traffic laws for them also?

The Henrico County Division of Police has been forwarded your suggestion.

33. Wouldn't it be nice to have the entire bike route lined with flowers between the bike path and the highway? Maybe even both sides of the bike route.

Interested individuals or organizations may contact the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to pursue an "adopt a median" landscape permit. VDOT must approve a landscape plan and all work must be performed by qualified local government personnel or agents thereof. The permit holder would be responsible for maintenance in perpetuity.

34. What did we just spend all this money on our bike trail for to have it be torn up and create a larger highway? (Comment made about the road work done along Route 5 and Nicholson Street.)

The roadwork was part of a City of Richmond project and was located outside the study limits. However, temporary surfaces were installed in certain spots to maintain the Capital Trail.

Recreation and Parks:

35. Develop riverfront property near Rocketts.

According to the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks, the cost to purchase sizeable tracts of land useable for parks/recreation along the James River is prohibitive. However, several approved development proposals south of Rocketts include plans for parks, trails and nature areas that will provide public access along the floodway/floodplain.

36. There should be no private control of river access.

In Henrico County, there are over 87 miles of frontage along the James and Chickahominy Rivers, most of it owned by private individuals. It would be cost prohibitive to acquire all river access and maintain it for the public. The Division of Recreation and Parks maintains a kayak launch along the Chickahominy River at the VDOT park-and-ride facility on N. Airport Drive. Located approximately 0.75 miles east of I-295 (Exit 31), this facility provides access to the non-tidal section of the river. The county also provides access to the James River via the Tuckahoe Creek Park, Deep Bottom Park and Osborne Park and Boat Landing. There are also plans to partner with the James River Association on a facility at Turkey Island Creek.

37. Develop a recreation center at Four Mile Creek Park and incorporate trail markers.

Four Mile Creek Park has a master plan that includes a museum/visitor center. It is unlikely a recreation center would be developed on the site as Dorey Park and Recreation Center is located so close. Additional trail markers are probable.

38. The land next to Dairy Queen should not be a community college.

Currently, there is an agreement between Henrico County and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College to provide a facility in this area. However, there is not a current demand for a satellite campus. This may be discussed and revisited in the future.

39. Incorporate more signage and plaques along Route 5.

According to the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks, this is a practical suggestion and will be considered on an on-going basis.

40. Please preserve this historic and beautiful land in perpetuity. (Comment made regarding property on the north side of Route 5, between Kingsland and Long Bridge Roads.)

According to the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks, the 23+ acres located on the northside of New Market Road between Kingsland and Long Bridge Roads was deeded to Henrico County in 2013. The intent is to use it for scenic open space and/or natural resource-based outdoor recreation and education.

41. Can't you spend some money and fix up the Recreation Road sports area?

Per the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks, the Recreation Road/Varina Recreation facility pre-dates the county's park system and there is no room to expand for additional fields or parking. The county has made improvements over the years, the last significant one approximately 5 years ago. The football field was renovated, adding a press box and bleacher system. There are no such facilities in the west end and the only others in the park system are at the Eastern Henrico Recreation Center and at Dorey Park. Recreation Road's press box is the newest of the three.

The baseball program has largely been relocated to the Dorey Park fields, leaving the fields at Recreation Road for practice and back-up. The football program will use the synthetic turf field currently under construction at Varina High School as their main field, with the rec field available for their practices.

It is anticipated that Varina Recreation area will function more as a minor community park than a true athletic complex. The county will continue to maintain the facility to a high standard and it will continue to receive its share of operating funds. The 2016 Bond Referendum will fund more athletic fields at Dorey Park as well as the planning and construction of an entirely new athletic complex (100-acres). Taylor Park will be located close to the Chickahominy YMCA, just east of Sandston. These new facilities will meet or exceed the quality of any previous construction in any part of the county.

42. What happened to the proposed park on Marion Hill?

The Clarke-Palmore House and associated property functions as a park in Marion Hill.

43. Much of the lowland forested areas along Almond Creek between Route 5 and New Osborne Turnpike are currently zoned for conservation. With the removal of broken industrial garbage, this would make an excellent park area.

According to the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks, there is little opportunity to extend a trail to Almond Creek at the Clarke-Palmore House. The terrain is very steep, and the site is a low priority.

Land Use

44. Do not continue to increase population densities. This only creates an unmanageable condition which only gets worse over time. (Comment made on the Tree Hill property.)

The Route 5 Corridor Study was not a land use plan and did not make recommendations to change future land uses or population densities of properties within the corridor. The rezoning of the Tree Hill Farm property in 2007 included a charrette sponsored by the developer to gain input from the community and there were several public hearings for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to receive feedback from interested residents. While no development has occurred at Tree Hill Farm, the zoning remains in place.

45. Increased population in an already congested area is only going to increase civil dangers. Commercial uses along Route 5 should be local; regional commercial uses should be on the other roads like Route 60.

Commercial uses are limited to those intersections with existing business zoning. The 2026 Future Land Use Map calls for limited expansion of these nodes, but it is unlikely big-box retailers or large commercial operators will locate along the corridor because of the lack of available land and low population density.

46. My concerns focus on unfettered development in the form of single-family subdivisions and the widening of Route 5.

All property in the county has a zoning designation which allows certain by-right development privileges. The county cannot prohibit a property owner from developing his/her land if it is zoned for the desired use. Should property need to be rezoned in order to allow certain development, public hearings are required. Citizens and stakeholders of the area are invited to participate in the process and share their concerns. Regarding the widening of Route 5, see Question 1.

47. This area could stand some improvement. The gravel entrance is nice but the oil tanks and run down VDOT lot are eyesores. (Comment made around IMTT tanks and VDOT site at Bickerstaff Road.)

The VDOT property at Bickerstaff Road has been cleared and the Virginia Department of General Services is marketing all of the parcels. The tanks, owned by International Martex Tank Terminals (IMTT), have been in existence since the 1950s and store a variety of liquid products. The owners could be encouraged to wrap or paint the tanks with images to make them less obtrusive and spur tourism.

48. How can we improve existing conditions without commercializing the area?

The adopted Route 5 Corridor Study has identified strategies and design guidelines that can be incorporated into redevelopment and future development projects. Current residents and business owners could also consider implementing landscaping, fencing and signage to assist in unifying the area.

49. I don't want this area to look like Short Pump in 20 years; would prefer any development to move at a snail's pace.

The county does not create or build new development; it is driven by private investment. Future growth will only occur if there is a market for new homes or commercial enterprises. It should be noted the county's Future Land Use Map only designates limited expansion of existing commercial nodes.

50. I know change is inevitable but would urge the Planning Department to let these changes occur as naturally and as indirectly as possible.

The Planning Department has not recommended any land use changes to the area in the Route 5 Corridor Study. The purpose of the study was to identify ways to protect the existing character of the corridor.

51. Do not allow housing developments on less than one-acre; this will also add time consideration for traffic and decrease congestion.

Homes on properties zoned A-1 (Agricultural District) require one acre of land and, as noted in Chapter 2 of the Route 5 Corridor Study, approximately 70% of the area within the study corridor is designated in this manner. However, there are multiple vacant properties currently zoned for 8,000 and 11,000 square foot lots (roughly equivalent to 3 to 5 homes per acre). The county cannot stop those lots from being developed should someone wish to build on them.

52. I would like a zoning overlay so that no subdivisions can be built without a public hearing to preserve our farm life and small town feel of Varina.

A zoning overlay cannot supersede the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Property appropriately zoned for a proposed residential development need only go through the subdivision process per the Code of Virginia. Unless the subdivision contains 51 lots or more, it is not reviewed by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors and adjacent property owners are not notified.

53. Section 2 (of the corridor – from McCoul Street to I-295) is currently very congested with single-family home traffic. There are several hundred new homes currently under construction.

Planning staff has reviewed current subdivision and plan of development submissions. While several have been approved in the last few years, there are currently no subdivisions under construction in or around the study area.

54. Limit lower income housing to limit the crime that seems to accompany low income housing.

Henrico County is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all our residents. We value diversity and we promote diverse housing types to meet the needs of our ever-changing community.

55. People who own A-1 land should be allowed to develop their land any way they see fit; it is their land after all, not the county's.

The Code of Virginia allows localities to adopt a zoning ordinance, defining districts and regulations applicable to each. There is no zoning district that allows all uses. The Agricultural District (A-1) permits a variety of uses including farming, forestry, single-family homes, places

of worship, assisted living facilities and group homes. Other uses are permitted with a provisional use or conditional use permit.

56. Commercial development should have a designated style of architecture in keeping with the historic style of the Route 5 corridor.

Based upon windshield surveys and a review of documentation, the Henrico County Planning Department determined there is no single style of architecture prevalent along the corridor. There are several instances of Gothic Revival (Varina Episcopal Church), Dutch Colonial (Ferguson House @ Malvern Hill), Colonial Revival (Midview Farm, Curles Neck), Greek Revival (Tree Hill), American Four Square (Kalamazoo Tile House), Urban Row House/Italianate Vernacular (Stoneman House – 1876 New Market), and Vernacular/Classic Revival (Stuckey House – 1359 New Market).

The design guidelines adopted as part of the study recommend future development be compatible with the existing character of the area.

57. Please add the inventory and planning tools in Henrico's own "1994 Proposed Design Guidelines and Strategies for the Protection and Enhancement of the Route 5 Byway Corridor and Adjacent Historic Resources" to the draft and to the Resources section 1.4.

A 1994 study was completed by staff members from the Departments of Planning and Public Works and the Division of Recreation/Parks. It included participation from members of the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Though accepted as a work product to be used as a planning tool, the document and its recommendations were not adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Similarly titled documents were drafts of the 1994 study; the citation in Section 1.4 has been corrected.

58. Everything south of Route 5 -- or at least south of Osborne Turnpike should be zoned Urban Mixed Use. The last thing our area needs are more small, pure residential neighborhoods. We are too close to an urban core to remain undeveloped.

The area south/west of Osborne Turnpike, to just beyond Pocahontas Parkway, includes several mixed-use land use designations including Urban Mixed Use, Suburban Mixed Use and Traditional Neighborhood Development, which all include recommendations for dedicated open space. It was never the intent of the Route 5 Corridor Study to recommend changes in zoning or land use.

Marion Hill (5)

59. A thorough inventory needs to be undertaken of Marion Hill. The current study draft has not included data from architectural and archaeological surveys already existing in the county archives which suggest historic preservation and include options and guidelines. I believe a detailed study, including an inventory of features to be preserved, needs to be done for the entire neighborhood. I think a zoning overlay district will be required to preserve the Hill's unique character.

An inventory of all structures, including architectural and archaeological surveys is not part of a typical land use study or corridor plan. Henrico County Planning staff does not have the technical expertise to complete this work; such an undertaking would require the funding and hiring of private consultants.

Based on a petition signed by a majority of residents from the neighborhood, Marion Hill was removed from the Route 5 Corridor Study and will be studied at a later date.

60. *The history of Marion Hill is wrong.*

There is a lack of published information on the history of Marion Hill. It is not within the study's scope of work or staff's work program to undertake such research. However, should published resources, scholarly articles or other peer reviewed/professionally evaluated material become available, staff would consider it for inclusion in a future report or study. As noted above, in question #59, Marion Hill was removed from the study.

61. *Leave the Marion Hill neighborhood alone; it's fine the way it is.*

Based on a petition signed by a majority of residents from the neighborhood, Marion Hill was removed from Route 5 Corridor Study and will be studied at a later date.

62. *I have been very disappointed in the way Marion Hill has been developed so far; packing as many houses as possible with no regard to country living. The property in front of my house was sold. I have tried for 2 years to find out who purchased the property. I don't think it should be allowed to be a secret.*

When the original plat of Marion Hill was recorded (between Long Street and New Osborne Turnpike) in 1948, the neighborhood was laid out in a traditional grid pattern, with parallel streets and small lots. The neighborhood is zoned R-3 One Family Residence District, which means lots are only required to be 11,000 square feet (approximately ¼ acre). Other lots in the neighborhood may be larger but they are not reflective of the original plan.

Property records are available at the county administration building and online at <https://henrico.us/finance/disclaimer/>.

Miscellaneous

63. *We do not need tall signs. There must be a limit regarding height. A good example is Colonial Williamsburg. They do a good job regarding sign regulations.*

Sign height is regulated based on the zoning of the property. Historically, when a property in or along the Route 5 corridor has undergone a rezoning, Planning staff has made an effort to request developers proffer signage appropriate for the area. The design guidelines adopted as part of the Route 5 Corridor Study offer recommendations regarding style, scale and illumination.

64. We need to limit building height. We do not want large hotels or tall buildings near Interstate 295.

Building height is limited based on the zoning of the property. As most of the undeveloped area around Route 5 and I-295 is zoned (A-1) Agriculture, a hotel or office development would necessitate a rezoning. Staff would work with the applicant to identify the appropriate scale of such a request. It would also require several public hearings where the public is encouraged to attend and share their thoughts and concerns.

65. This area boasts excellent ag soils, watershed, ecological cores. All should be capitalized on thoughtfully and carefully. If we pave and turf everything, we'll unintentionally lose unique native flora and fauna and natural communities. With good planning, we can enjoy wildlife/pollination corridors and lovely viewsheds.

The Route 5 Corridor Study did not recommend any new development; rather, it evaluated the existing character of the area and recommend guidelines for use in review of future development proposals. This will assist in integrating change with the existing rural/agricultural nature of the area.

66. Tourism and agriculture are Virginia's top 2 revenues. How about some incentives? Give the landowners a good reason to farm instead of selling to developers. Preserve the rural character of Varina and promote its rich agricultural history.

This study focuses only on the Route 5 corridor – 500 feet on either side of the centerline of the roadway. The intent was to identify ways to protect the existing character of the corridor. Though the area is rich in history, very few historic sites remain within the area studied. While there are several farms along the corridor, their crops (soybeans, wheat and corn) have yet to lend themselves to value-added activities that would make them destination spots, such as wineries, cideries, special event venues or pick-your-own berry farms.

Landowners may have their property assessed on use value, rather than market value. Use value is the assessment of the land for a specific purpose (agriculture, horticulture, forestry, open space) and is generally lower than market value. This program has been available in Henrico County since 1976. The development of specific incentives must be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors and was beyond the scope of this study.

67. Create a serious research center in Varina.

A visitor's center/history museum is in the county's Capital Improvement Plan but there is no funding at this time. A research center could be a component of such an endeavor.

68. Consult local residents before development plans are made and/or finalized.

Adjacent and nearby residents are sent notice letters on all rezonings and plans of development. They are encouraged to contact staff with question and/or attend the Planning Commission public hearing. Agendas for the Planning Commission are posted on the Planning Department website at <https://henrico.us/planning/2018-filing-deadlinesagendas/> under

the links for hearing dates. Rezoning requests also receive a public hearing before the Henrico County Board of Supervisors. Agendas for the Board of Supervisors can be found at <https://henrico.us/supervisors/supervisors-agenda-o-gram/>

69. Do not change this area; we need open areas and farm land. The farms make Varina a wonderful place to live. Don't bring more houses, especially cheap ones.

The Route 5 Corridor Study did not recommend any land use changes; rather, it identified ways to protect the rural, agricultural and historic character. However, should a property owner of farmland wish to sell/develop their land, the county cannot prohibit this from occurring.

70. New Market & Strath Roads would be a great area for attractive businesses for the trail like ice cream, gourmet sandwiches, books, or coffee. Not cheap junk from China.

The properties immediately adjacent to the intersection of New Market and Strath Roads are zoned for retail/commercial. There are also several other properties adjacent to those currently developed as retail that the 2026 Comprehensive Plan recommends for expansion of commercial land use. The Planning Department is ready to work with applicants on any rezoning request or plan of development. However, the county cannot favor one type of business (mom & pop stores) over another (chain stores). If the request meets the requirements of the zoning ordinance, it cannot be denied. Currently, there are no active planning cases along the corridor.

71. The one business we don't have in our area is a nice movie theater. This would be a great location with easy access. (Comment made along Laburnum Avenue, south of Michael Robinson Road.)

Much of the area in this location is zoned A-1, Agricultural District, which does not permit theaters. Should there be an interested business inquiry, the Planning Department is prepared to assist in processing a rezoning request or plan of development. However, it should be noted that high intensity uses, such as movie theaters, are generally found in areas with more population.

72. I would like to see appropriate businesses come to this area that keep with the historic charm (Example: Sycamore Square and Merchant's Square).

There are several vacant properties zoned for business along the Route 5 corridor and others that are designated for business on the county's 2026 Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Department is prepared to assist in processing a rezoning request or plan of development. As part of the adopted study, Planning staff developed design guidelines for the corridor that would encourage future development to have appropriate setbacks, signage and landscaping.

73. Encourage mom and pop shops and keep big commercial development around Laburnum.

There are several vacant parcels along the corridor with zoning appropriate for small, commercial establishments. Any interested business owner may contact the Planning Department to determine what is necessary to locate a retail store in the area. Currently, there are no active planning cases along the corridor.

74. We do not need office or business space in our area. Office space and business development should be located in a central area.

The Route 5 Corridor Study, and the county's 2026 Comprehensive Plan, recommend business development be restricted to those area (nodes) where retail establishments already exist. No new office or business development was recommended as part of the Route 5 Corridor Study.

* **Special thanks to the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Henrico County Department of Public Works and the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks for their assistance with these responses.**