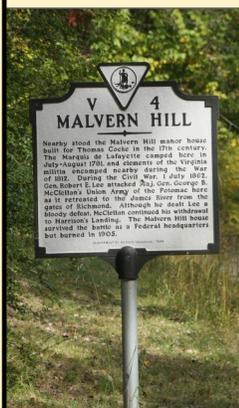




Route 5 Corridor Study



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Henrico County 2026 Comprehensive Plan identifies 30 Special Focus Areas with unique characteristics requiring special planning consideration above and beyond the land use policies contained elsewhere in the Plan. One of those Special Focus Areas is the New Market Road Corridor Existing Character Protection Areas.

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the existing character of the corridor and offer recommended guidelines for use in future review of development proposals, while integrating and respecting the existing agricultural, residential and commercial development already in existence. The 2026 Comprehensive Plan recommended a visual assessment be completed, to include significant views and vistas, as well as identifying elements that maintain and enhance the rural character of the area.

BACKGROUND

Route 5

For the purposes of this study, the Route 5 corridor was defined as the 13.75-mile length from the Richmond city limits to the Charles City County line. It encompasses all segments of the road from Old Osborne Turnpike to Osborne Turnpike to New Market Road, and the land 500-feet from the centerline of the roadway.

Because Route 5 is one of the oldest established roads in the state, connecting the former capital of Williamsburg with Richmond, there have been numerous studies documenting activities and resources in and around the area. Staff reviewed relevant planning documents and summarized specific recommendations.

Zoning, existing land use, future land use recommendations and other relevant background information was analyzed for the corridor. The study also identifies those properties in and along the corridor enrolled in the county's Land Use Program and documents the various historic markers, plaques and signs located throughout the study area.

After completion of an Existing Conditions Assessment, which included reviewing and identifying the corridor's character and preparing a Visual Assessment of the significant views and vistas, staff identified the major land use issues and opportunities in the study area. Based on existing conditions and development patterns, staff identified three (3) distinct sub-areas within the corridor. Land use issues and opportunities were then identified.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Meetings

On March 14, 2017, the Henrico County Board of Supervisors directed the Planning Department (Department) to initiate a study of the Route 5 corridor between the City of Richmond and Charles City County. The Department engaged in a multi-step effort to facilitate public engagement in the planning process. A kick-off meeting was held before the Planning Commission on May 11, 2017 to introduce the project. In addition to advertising the meeting on the county webpage and in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, a notice letter was sent to known stakeholders in the area. Residents who participated in previous planning efforts along the corridor, interest groups and places of worship were encouraged to attend and share their thoughts on Route 5.

A series of meetings were held during the second half of 2017. An open house was held on June 8, 2017 at the Varina Library to introduce the scope of the project, the study boundaries and general background information. The 112 attendees had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with staff to learn about the purpose of the study and review existing conditions. Laptops were available so attendees could view the Route 5 webpage developed specifically for the project. Exit surveys were provided so participants could share feedback.

On August 3, 2017 a community meeting was held at John Rolfe Middle School that was attended by 102 interested citizens. An overview of the background information gathered for the study was presented by a facilitator. Following a presentation on how input is used to formulate goals and objectives, attendees were assigned to work groups and asked to identify the 5 most important issues facing Route 5. Ideas were shared with the larger group and dot voting was used to identify popular topics.

A second community meeting was held at John Rolfe Middle School on October 19, 2017 to present draft goals and objectives. The 114 attendees were provided with hand-held keypad devices and asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements or images in the presentation. Feedback from this exercise was used to revise the goals and objectives and develop specific strategies for the area.

Revised goals, objectives and strategies, as well as design guidelines for the corridor, were introduced at a second open house on June 4, 2018. The 146 attendees reviewed the documentation and discussed issues one-on-one with staff. Following a 3-week public comment period, staff reviewed suggested changes, revised the document and presented their recommendations to the Planning Commission.

Public Hearings

On October 18, 2018, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to receive input on the study. The Commission officially recommended adoption of the Route 5 Corridor Study, including the goals, objectives, strategies and design guidelines, to the Board of Supervisors on November

8, 2018. On December 11, 2018, the Board of Supervisors amended the 2026 Comprehensive Plan to include the recommendations of the Route 5 Corridor Study.

Technology

A webpage devoted to the project was hosted on the county's website. Designed to contain documents and maps produced as part of the study, it also included a public engagement portal created to provide additional opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to participate in the study. A virtual tour allowed visitors to view various locations along the study area, while a historic markers tour identified the 32 federal, state and local markers, signs and plaques found along the corridor. Another element of the portal was a community survey. Participants were asked whether they lived/worked within the study area, how they used Route 5, what things were most important about the corridor, what things they would change and whether they were satisfied with the services in the area. They were also asked whether they used the Capital Trail, and if so, with what frequency. Finally, a public input map was created to allow stakeholders to identify opportunities and challenges and pin their comments along the corridor within the interactive map.

Notifications

All meetings were open to the public. Notifications of the meetings were posted on the county's website, the project webpage, and press releases were sent out through the county's Department of Public Relations and Media Services. Variable messages boards were utilized prior to a community meeting to remind citizens of the event. Interested individuals were encouraged to sign up for email notifications through the webpage, while those who preferred written notices could enroll via meeting sign-up sheets. Approximately 2,000 notifications were sent or emailed prior to the beginning of the public hearing process.

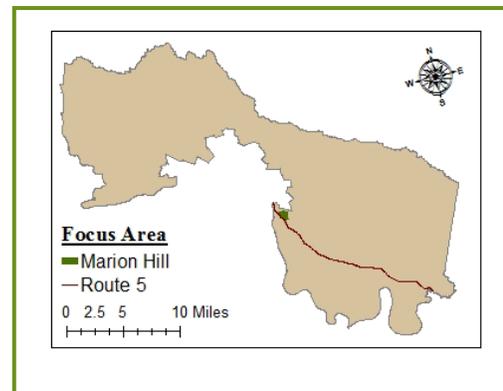
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

On March 14, 2017, the Board of Supervisors directed the Planning Department to initiate a corridor study for Route 5 (New Market Road). The request was prompted by rezonings and plans of development occurring in the area, as well as concerns regarding the preservation of the historic and/or rural nature of the corridor, including agricultural uses. It is also in line with the County's implementation efforts of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan (the Plan). The New Market Road Corridor is a designated Existing Character Protection Area identified for further study in the Plan.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The Route 5 Study Area encompasses properties along either side of Virginia State Route 5 from the Richmond city limits to the Charles City County line, approximately 13.75 miles. Along with the Route 5 Byway Corridor Study¹ undertaken in 1992, this is the longest corridor study completed by county staff. Also part of the study area are any parcels 500 feet from the centerline of the roadway, including the entirety of those touched by the 500-foot boundary. The boundary was chosen because of the numerous individual large-lot, single family residences with a similar depth. In some instances, the



500-foot depth allowed for capture of lots two deep into recorded subdivisions. Finally, extending it beyond such a distance would overlap with the study area proposed for another Existing Character Protection Area – Osborne Turnpike. The Osborne Turnpike special focus area has different characteristics and features and therefore needs to be studied independently.

The total study area contains 748 parcels, as shown on the Study Area Map. (Most subsequent maps of the study area will be displayed in three segments, due to the length of the corridor.)

The project is being defined as a corridor study because it is primarily linear in nature. The focus of the study is the area located 500-feet on either side of the centerline of Route 5. An assessment of the land uses and transportation network and their issues and opportunities are further refined by a thorough review of the character of the corridor. Goals, objectives and strategies are supplemented by potential recommendations, which, because the roadway is maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), will be based on VDOT's ultimate right-of-way.

¹ Proposed Design Guidelines and Strategies for the Protection and Enhancement of the Route 5 Byway Corridor and Adjacent Historic Resources

1.3 HISTORY OF ROUTE 5

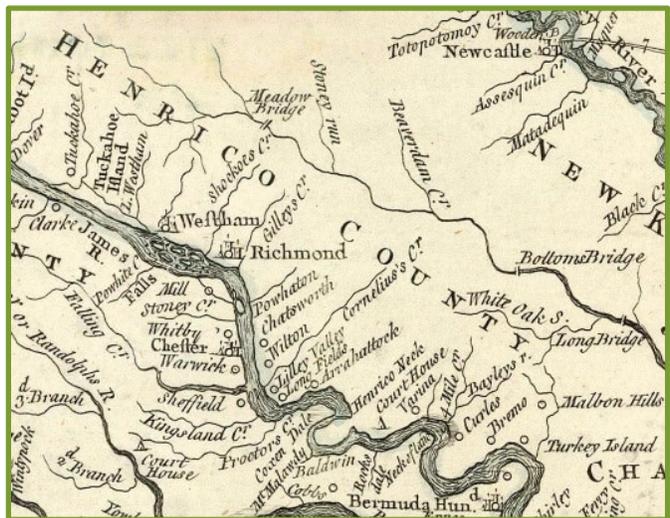
Route 5 has served as a major transportation link for over 300 years although the roadbed has had multiple modifications to its original location. During the early settlement period (1625-1700), the roadway was little more than a dirt track, following the path of an old Native American trail. It ran roughly parallel to the James River, south of what is now the City of Richmond. It was the overland connection between the plantations in the area, the route to Henrico County Courthouse in Varina, and provided access to mills, ordinaries, and ferry landings. The relocation of Virginia's capital city from Williamsburg to Richmond in 1779 ensured further inland settlement and greatly increased the importance of River Road, now State Route 5 (New Market Road).

By 1800, a small community known as New Market developed at the intersection of River Road and Kingsland Road. River Road became known as New Market Road, the name it still bears south of the intersection with Osborne Turnpike.

In the early nineteenth century, Route 5 veered away from the City of Richmond as it headed southeast, arcing around a section of Powhatan plantation, before crossing Almond Creek. It functioned as a spine connecting to other important roads including Kingsland Road, Willis Church Road (also known as Quaker Road) and Osborne Turnpike which was built as a connector in the 18th century to Osborne's ferry landing.

The Route 5 roadbed remained unpaved, in parts simply a treated soil surface, until the 1940s when the Commonwealth of Virginia made improvements and re-designed early intersections to accommodate the needs of automobile traffic. In the process, the Virginia Highway Department (now the Virginia Department of Transportation) moved the roadway closer to the James River by realigning its curving contours along a straighter path to the southeast.

In August 1975, the State Highway and Transportation Commission (precursor to the Commonwealth Transportation Board) designated Route 5 as the state's second Virginia Byway. The first designated state byway was State Route 193 in Fairfax County in June 1974. A Virginia Byway is defined as a road, designated as such by the Commonwealth Transportation Board, having relatively high aesthetic or cultural value, leading to or within areas of historical, natural or recreational significance. The entire Route 5 byway is 54 miles long and runs from the state capital in Richmond to the colonial capital in Williamsburg. Often Route 5 is cited as a scenic byway, but there is a distinction between the two. A Virginia Scenic Highway is a corridor and adjacent lands that are permanently protected by government ownership or easement acquisitions. Examples of Virginia's Scenic



Fry-Jefferson Map of Virginia; 1775

Highway include Skyline Drive, Blue Ridge Parkway and Colonial Parkway – all with adjacent lands owned or controlled by government in fee or with easements. In these examples, it is the National Park Service that owns the land. None-the-less, Route 5 has intrinsic scenic and historic value contributing to the state as a whole and to Henrico County.

1.4 RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS & POLICIES

As one of the oldest established roads in the state, there have been several state and local documents and studies prepared that include the significance of Route 5. This section provides a brief overview.

Conserving Richmond Battlefields – National Parks Service; 1990.

This document highlights significant Civil War activities and battlefields in the Richmond area and provides a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Richmond, Chesterfield County, Hanover County, Henrico County, the Commonwealth of Virginia State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service to identify and help conserve these historic resources. The agencies, along with local landowners and preservation/promotion groups, identified and assessed 32 battlefield locations from the North Anna River to Petersburg. Recommendations included: Establishment of a Heritage Council to coordinate battlefield conservation, interpretation and promotion activities; Creation of a conservation incentive program; Formation of a battlefield trail and heritage interpretive program; Creation of a promotion effort showcasing the area’s Civil War heritage. Staff was unable to determine whether the document was ever adopted or formalized.

Protection Techniques for Scenic Byways – National Trust for Historic Preservation; 1990.

This case study evaluated the efforts to protect four scenic and historic byways. The byways studied were: The National Park Service’s Blue Ridge Parkway, Idaho Route 75 within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area; Virginia’s Route 5 between Richmond and Williamsburg and Route J40 in Van Buren County, Iowa. Regarding Route 5, the study determined state designation did little to protect or promote the road and that protection efforts were left to the local jurisdictions which addressed Route 5 differently. No specific recommendations were made in the document.

Route 5: A Virginia Byway – Lower James River Association; 1990.

This study examined the Virginia Byway program, as well as state and local legislation and regulations. The study determined the Virginia Byway program and designation provides no state restrictions or protections because there are inadequate state criteria and that property owners are unfamiliar with land protection measures. Recommendations from the study included: Requiring localities to address protection of byways in comprehensive plans as well as consistent management of byways by all affected localities; Establish consistent requirements for signs along the byway, as well as specific setbacks, greenbelts and landscape requirements. Adopt incentives to encourage maintenance of scenic quality. As this was a study by a stakeholder group, adoption of specific recommendations was left to the individual localities.

Route 5 Corridor Study – Virginia Department of Transportation; 1991.

A House Joint Resolution directed the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to study various elements relevant to the preservation of Route 5 as a two-lane scenic byway including accommodating existing/future automobile traffic, farm equipment and large trucks; addressing the need to widen to a four-lane divided highway in certain sections; restricting tractor trailer traffic; eliminating billboards; and considering bicycle paths along the corridor. Recommendations included: Future road improvements should preserve the scenic character to the fullest extent possible; Construct a new four-lane divided highway in a separate corridor or add two parallel lanes to minimize disturbance to trees; Changing the byway designation of Route 5 to instead follow Kingsland Road and Osborne Turnpike due to existing and future development; Include a minimum four-foot paved shoulder to accommodate a bicycle lane on either side of Route 5; Encourage trucks to use alternate routes. This study was received by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission; it was never formally adopted by localities.

Proposed Design Guidelines and Strategies for the Protection and Enhancement of the Route 5 Byway Corridor and Adjacent Historic Resources – Henrico County; 1994.

A resolution by the Henrico County Board of Supervisors directed the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to identify historic resources in the Route 5 Byway and suggest design guidelines to protect them. The study examined a corridor extending one-half mile to either side of the roadbed and identified buildings and verification of archeological sites. Recommendations included: Archeological evaluation of future land disturbance; Comprehensive and flexible preservation planning initiatives in the stewardship of above-ground historic resources; A historic resource overlay for the few remaining 18th and early 19th century structures; Preservation of the Flood Marker of 1771 and the Malvern Hill ruins. The document was accepted by the Henrico County Board of Supervisors as a completed work item to be used as a planning tool, but its recommendations were never adopted.

Virginia Route 5 Byway Corridor Study – Virginia Department of Historic Resources; 1992.

A House Joint Resolution directed the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) to further study the need to and ways of preserving the historic, environmental and aesthetic integrity of Route 5. Recommendations included: Creation of a special Virginia Route 5 Byway Advisory Board; Establishment of special design criteria for Route 5 by the Virginia Department of Transportation; Increase easement promotion by state and local agencies; Establishment of a Route 5 Foundation; Granting local governments authority to permit the transfer of development rights to other areas more appropriate for development; Encourages Route 5 jurisdictions to consider adopting an overlay district; Examine the feasibility of placing a four-foot wide bicycle path adjacent to Route 5; Restrict through-truck traffic along the corridor. This study was received by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission; it was never formally adopted by localities.

Route 5 Capital to Capital Bikeway Feasibility Study – Virginia Department of Transportation; 1999.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conducted a study to determine the feasibility of locating a multi-use trail along the Route 5 corridor from the City of Richmond to the City of Williamsburg. Primary objectives were to: offer multi-modal transportation options; enhance safety; promote tourism and economic development; provide recreational opportunities; highlight natural and cultural resources; and complement scenic qualities of the byway. A Community Advisory Committee (CAC), comprised of stakeholders in the study area, reached a consensus agreement on the preferred alternative, which was adopted by the Boards of Supervisors in Henrico, Charles City and James City Counties. The bikeway was to consist of a shared-use path from James City County to Long Bridge Road in Henrico, then transition to a widened shoulder to the City of Richmond. The roadway widening in eastern Henrico would enhance safety for all roadway users including farm equipment, mail carriers, other motorists and accommodate advanced bicyclists who may prefer the on-road experience. The separated shared-use path would protect the established tree canopy in Charles City and James City Counties. This study, and its recommendations, was adopted by Henrico, Charles City and James City Counties.

Route 5 Corridor Study – Kimley-Horn and Associates; 2011.

Henrico County, the City of Richmond, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Greater Richmond Transit Company developed a multi-modal corridor study between 7th Street in Richmond and Route 895 in Henrico County. The study was a planning tool to plan for anticipated growth, quantify impacts to the transportation network and identify multi-modal transportation improvements. Recommendations included: Installing continuous sidewalks throughout the study area; Enhanced transit to include Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to Tree Hill, local service southbound to Wilton on the James, and express bus service between proposed park and rides; and capacity improvement to Route 5 or New Osborne Turnpike. Upon completion, the study was accepted as a completed work task but not adopted.

CHAPTER 2: ZONING AND EXISTING LAND USES

The use of land is governed by Henrico County's Zoning Ordinance. The state legislature requires every locality in Virginia to adopt a comprehensive plan to guide its growth and physical development. The county's Zoning Ordinance is an important tool in regulating land use in accordance with the county's goals and objectives of its comprehensive plan. The existing uses along the Route 5 corridor have been fairly consistent with land use recommendations of former comprehensive plans. In examining zoning patterns, it is important to distinguish between traditionally and conditionally zoned properties. After 1978, the General Assembly gave localities the authority to accept proffers with rezoning applications called "conditional rezoning." Properties that were conditionally rezoned are noted by a "C" (i.e. B-2C) and include proffered conditions on the property above and beyond the regulations of the Zoning Ordinance for that zoning district. Many of the rezoned properties have proffered conditions regulating items such as architecture, landscaping, and site design; however, in 2016 the General Assembly enacted new legislation (SB549) prohibiting localities from requesting or accepting proffers as part of a residential rezoning request that are deemed "unreasonable." This means the county can no longer address many of the items previously included in proffered conditions, such as exterior building materials, architectural design, and amenities for residential rezoning applications. Previously accepted conditions should not be impacted, and business and other non-residential rezoning requests are not subject to the new legislation.

2.1 ZONING

In examining the zoning along the Route 5 corridor, 70.11% (Fig.1) of the properties within the study boundaries are zoned Agricultural District (A-1). The Agriculture District allows single-family homes on one-acre lots or more. This is a prevalent land use pattern for areas of the county that are not served by water and sewer. The Agricultural District also allows agriculture uses, group care facilities, summerhouses, cabins, camps, antique shops, places of worship, and schools. Most property in the county was originally zoned A-1 and was later rezoned to accommodate population growth and services (See Zoning Maps.)

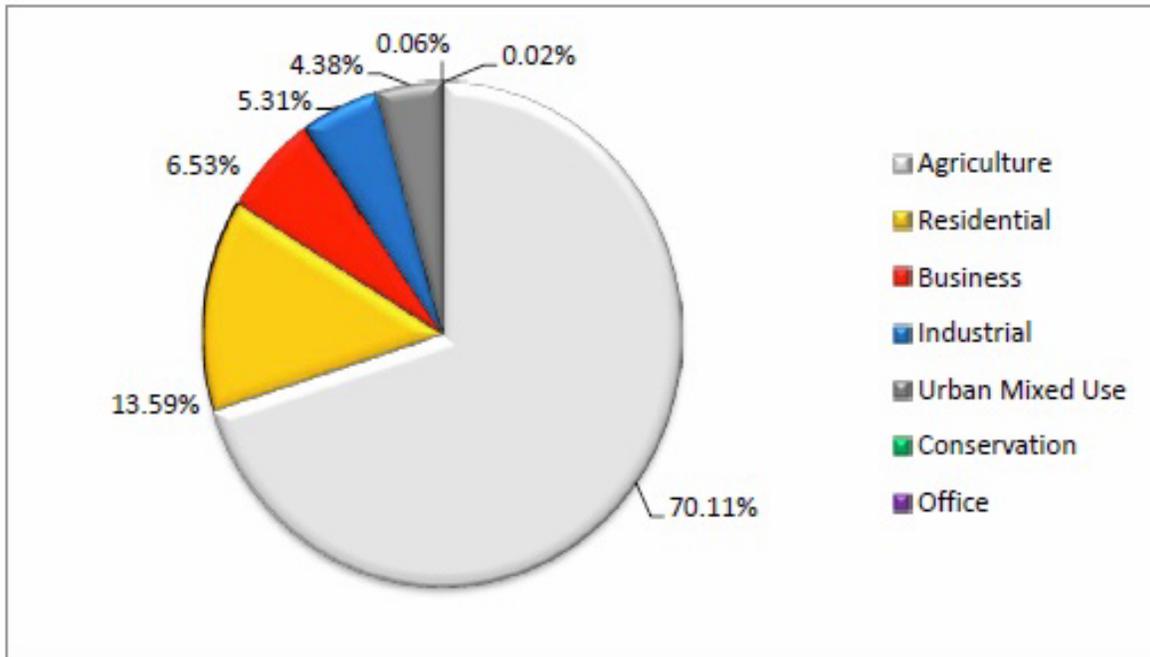


Figure 1: Percentage of Zoning

The second largest zoning category within the study area makes up the single-family subdivisions with lot sizes between 8,000 and 18,000 square feet. This category is represented by the R-2, R-2A, R-3, and R-4 Districts (traditionally and conditionally zoned) as shown on the Zoning Map. Within the districts for one-family residences, the R-3 District accounts for 68%.

Table 1: One-Family Residential Zoning Districts along Route 5

Zoning District	Required Minimum Lot Size	Density Equivalent	Percentage
R-2	18,000 square feet	2.42 units per acre	6%
R-2A	13,500 square feet	3.2 units per acre	15%
R-3	11,000 square feet	3.96 units per acre	68%
R-4	8,000 square feet	5.45 units per acre	10%

With the exception of the Four Mile Run subdivision near I-295, and the Ridings subdivision planned between Turner and Long Bridge Roads, most of the residentially zoned properties are located west of Pocahontas Parkway (State Route 895).



Single-Family Residence



New Market Landing



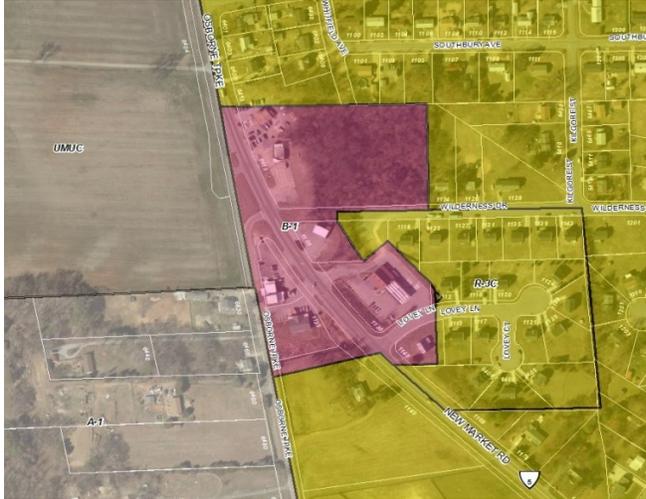
Olde Colony Estates



North James Estates

Properties that are zoned Business comprise 6.53% of the properties within the study area. The Henrico County Zoning Ordinance has three business districts: B-1, B-2, and B-3, and all are present along Route 5 at intermittent intersections. Notably, B-1 zoning, which is the least intensive business zoning district and meant to provide small scale services to nearby neighborhoods, is the most prominent.

There are 40 properties along Route 5 zoned for Business. Thirty-three or 83% of these properties were rezoned to a business district prior to 1959. The remaining properties were rezoned to business or up-zoned from B-1 to B-2, B-2C, B-3 and B-3C at later times. All the zoning districts are shown in the aerial images and descriptions that follow. Those rezoned or up-zoned since 1959 are specifically noted.



New Market Road/Osborne Turnpike/Wilderness Drive

**New Market Road/ Osborne Turnpike/
Wilderness Drive**

Route 5 Auto	3.9 acres
Varina Cleaners	0.4 acre
New Market Convenience & Deli	1.3 acres
Residence (1148 New Market Rd)	0.4 acre
7-11	0.7 acre
Onyx Hair and Nail	0.3 acre



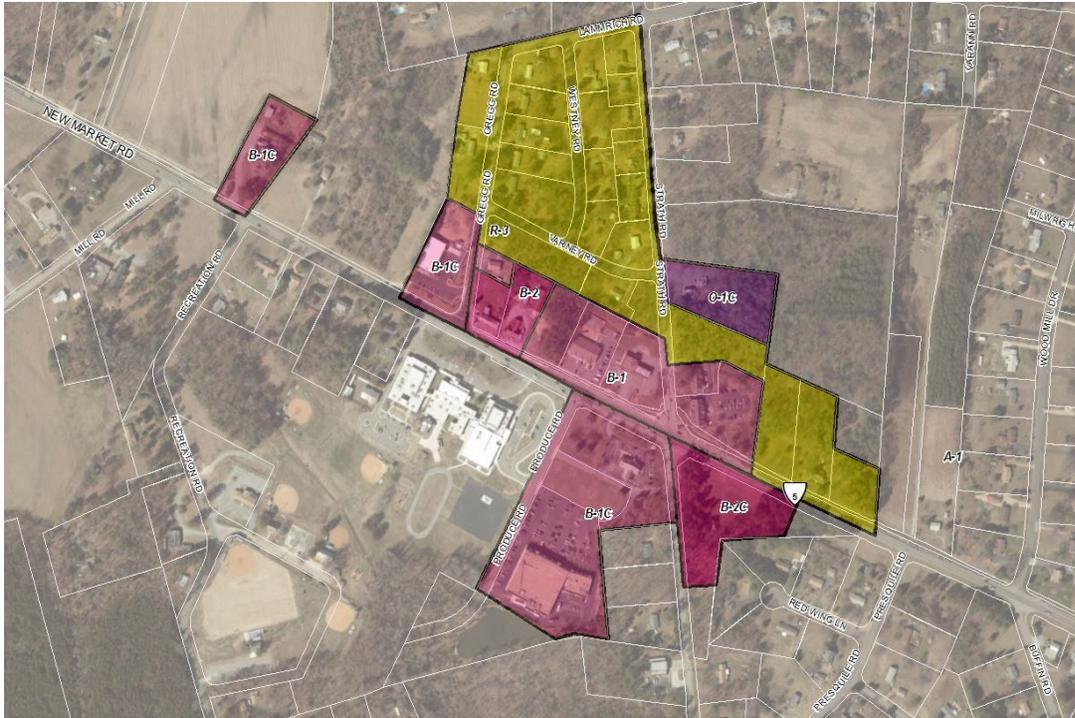
New Market/Midview Roads

New Market /Midview Roads

Future park/convenience center	2.5 acres
Residence (1271 New Market Rd)	0.4 acre
Residence (1283 New Market Rd)	0.9 acre
Hair salon/residence	0.9 acre
Tuckaway Child Dev. Center*	4.9 acres
Varina Veterinary Clinic**	1.8 acres

*In 2003, additional property was conditionally rezoned to B-1C for Tuckaway.

** Rezoned to B-1C in 1988



New Market/Gregg/Strath Roads

New Market Veterinary Clinic*	1.9 acres	New Market Medical	1.9 acres
Dollar General*	1.9 acres	Rite Aid	1.7 acres
Dudley Carpet Service**	0.6 acre	Citizens & Farmers Bank+	2.8 acres
Fin Skin Bait & Tackle**	1.0 acre	Vacant++	
Vacant	1.0 acre	New Market Square ++	7.3 acres
After School Center	1.2 acres	Residence+++	2.9 acres
Valero Gas Station	1.5 acres		

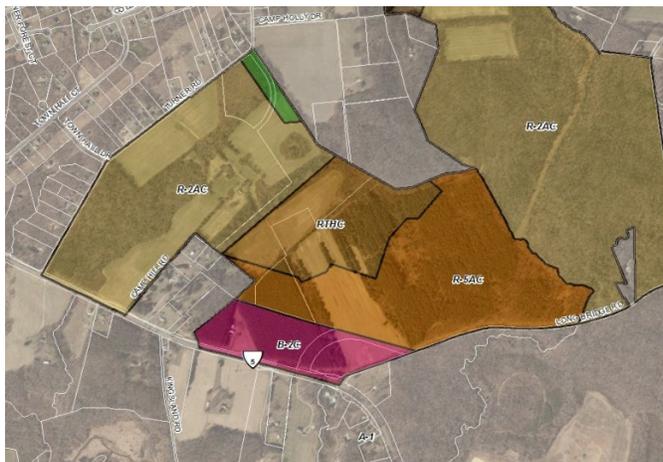
*Rezoned from A-1 to B-1C in 2006 and 2013, respectively

**Rezoned from B-1 to B-2C in 1973 and 1963, respectively

+Rezoned from A-1 to B-1C in 1985, then consolidated rezoning with New Market Square

++Rezoned from A-1 to B-1C in 1993

+++Rezoned from A-1 to B-2C in 2008 for a Rite Aid and office building (undeveloped)



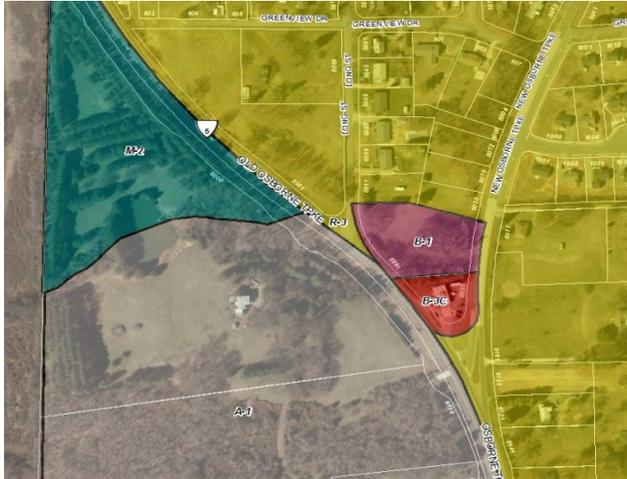
New Market/Long Bridge Roads

New Market/Long Bridge Roads

Residence/Vacant* 23.9 acres

*Rezoned from B-1 to B-2C in 2005. Donated to Henrico County and deeded to be used only for recreational use and open space.

Four areas along the corridor are zoned B-3, which allows the most intensive commercial uses. These areas are located where Route 5 intersects with: New Osborne Turnpike; Varina and Willson Roads; Farmers Circle Drive at the eastern side of the I-295 Interchange; and Willis Church Road.

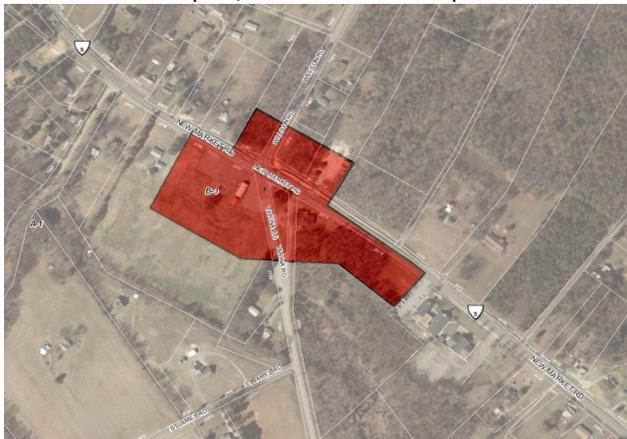


Old Osborne Turnpike/New Osborne Turnpike

Old Osbourne Turnpike/New Osborne Turnpike

Vacant	1.3 acres
Hough's Tire and Auto*	0.5 acre

*Rezoned from B-1 to B-3C in 1992



New Market/Willson/Varina Roads

New Market/Willson/Varina Roads

Vacant (2090-2110 New Market Rd)	8.4 acres
BBQ restaurant	4.0 acres
Vacant retail building	2.9 acres



New Market Road/I-295/Farmers Circle Drive

New Market/I-295/Farmers Circle Drive

Vacant*	22.0 acres
Exxon Pit Stop*	2.4 acres

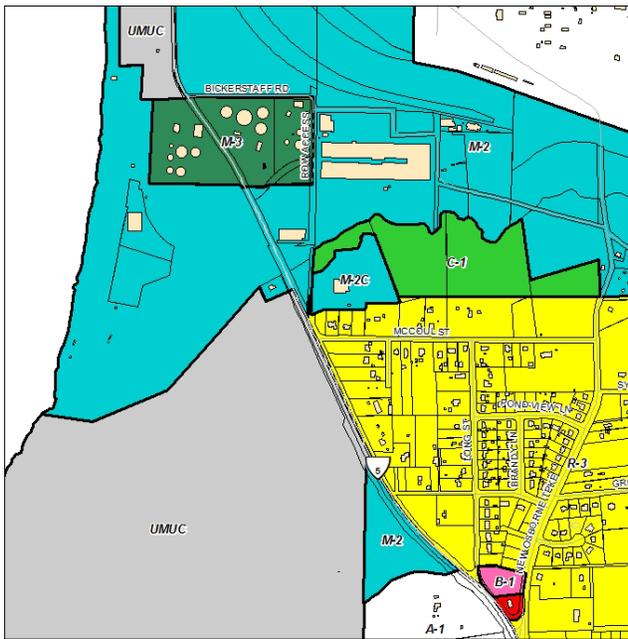
*Rezoned from A-1 to B-3C in 1998 for Four Mile Creek Commercial Center (Exxon, the rest is undeveloped)



New Market/Willis Church Roads	
Vacant	0.2
acre	
Residence	7.0
acres	
Virginia Outdoors Market	2.0
acres	
Residence	4.0
acres	

New Market/Willis Church Roads

The fourth largest zoning category along Route 5 is industrial, which makes up 5.31% of the zoning along the corridor. This is reflected by the General Industrial (M-2) and Heavy Industrial (M-3) Districts primarily located near the county/city border and adjacent to the CSX rail lines. Another area comprised of approximately five and a half acres on the south line of Route 5 between Greenview Drive and Long Street is zoned M-2 and is vacant. Because the Zoning Ordinance requires most industrial uses to be a minimum of 200' from residentially-zoned property, this site cannot be developed for most industrial uses. No other industrial zoned properties are present along Route 5. While outside the study area, there are undeveloped industrially zoned properties along the James River. If these areas develop for industrial uses in the future it could have an impact in terms of industrial traffic entering and exiting from Route 5.



A more recent addition to the Zoning Ordinance, Urban Mixed Use District (UMU) zoning, is located along Route 5 at the county/city boundary (Rocketts Landing) and then again at Tree Hill Farm less than a mile south. The purpose of the Urban Mixed Use District is to allow development which is more dense, pedestrian-oriented and incorporates a balance of residential, retail, and office uses while providing for open space and other public and private uses. Approximately 4.38% of the study corridor is zoned Urban Mixed Use Conditional (UMUC). The developments associated with these districts went through extensive public review and are governed by

additional guidelines beyond the Zoning Ordinance, which address setbacks, open space, building mass and uses.

The zoning districts with the smallest representation within the study area are the Office (O-1C) and Conservation (C-1) Districts, which make up less than 1% of the zoning in the area. The lack of C-1 zoning is not an unusual representation of this district county-wide but there may be more opportunity for some small-scale office uses to serve community.

2.2 EXISTING LAND USES

There are many different land uses along the Route 5 corridor. However, the majority of the uses are single-family subdivisions (42.4%) and large acreage properties (40.9%) that are either vacant or in agricultural production. The next largest category is single-family dwellings on one-acre or less. There are a few small commercial nodes at notable intersections, as well as larger community retail center at the intersection of New Market (Route 5) and Strath Roads. Industrial uses are also present where Route 5 is in closer proximity to the James River, CSX rail lines, and the City of Richmond. The heavy industrial uses are generally mining industries. An older industrial property was recently reclaimed and is being redeveloped as an upscale urban mixed-use community (Rocketts Landing), which accounts for the .1% of the mixed-use category. The existing land uses are largely reflective of the Zoning Map.

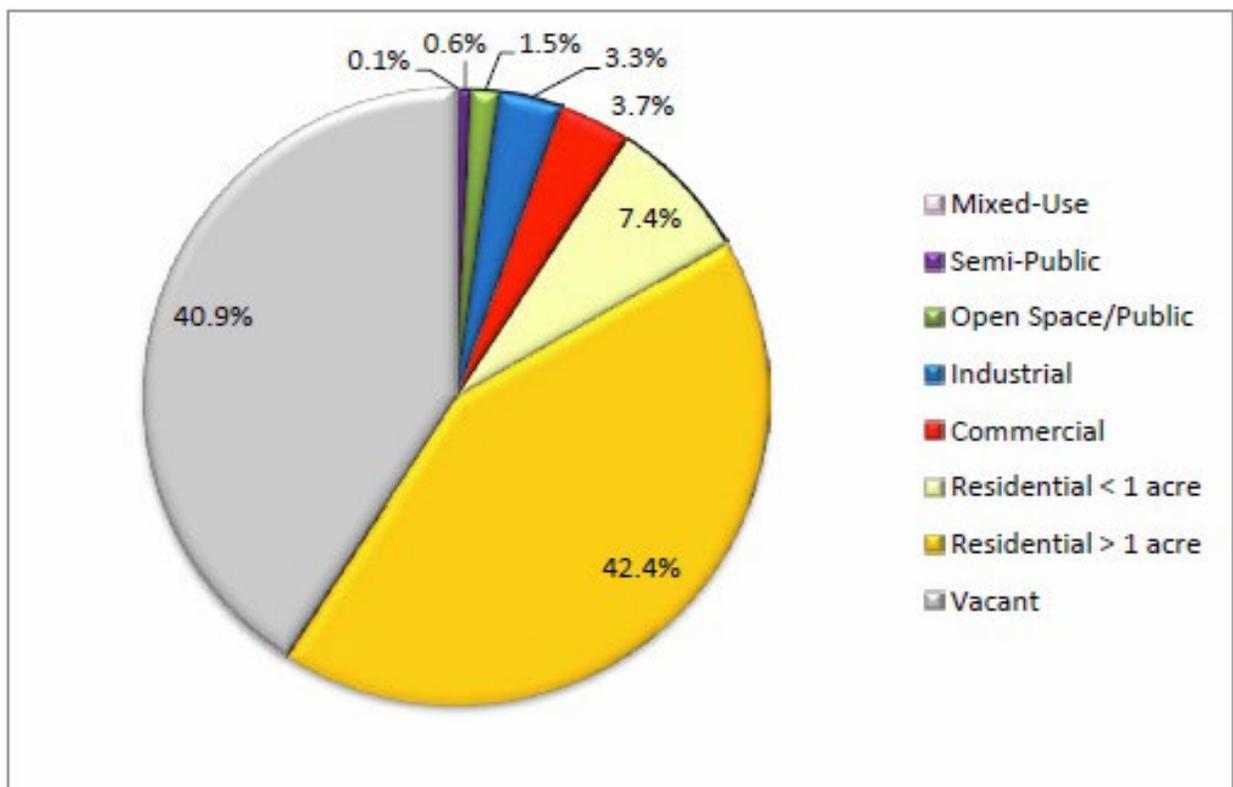


Figure 2: Existing Land Use

There are several properties along the corridor that are used for agricultural production. These parcels add to the area's scenic nature, providing views of fields and forest land. While it is difficult to ascertain exactly which properties are in actual production (as there is no requirement to register), those registered in the county's Land Use Program can provide a fair assessment. The Land Use Program provides for the assessment of land based on use value rather than market value. Use value is the assessment of the land for a specific purpose and is generally lower than market value. A description of the categories can be found in the text box to the right.

The Land Use Program Parcels Map shows parcels in the study area enrolled in the Land Use Program. Of the 748 parcels in the study area, 30 are enrolled in the Land Use Program. Most of the parcels are enrolled under the Agricultural requirements, while the remainder are classified as Forest. Of those enrolled in the program, 20 (66.7%) are under 50 acres. There are 7 parcels that are over 100 acres and they make up 25.9% of those enrolled in the program. The total acreage of land within the 1,000-foot study corridor in the Land Use Program is approximately 515 acres.



2.3 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The corridor has several natural and environmental features, including creeks, tributaries and their associated wetlands and floodplains which feed into the James River. Almond Creek bisects the corridor between Bickerstaff

LAND USE PROGRAM

Agricultural – Minimum of 5 acres; been devoted for at least 5 consecutive years previous to the production for sale of plant or animal products useful to man or devoted to another qualifying use.

Horticultural – Minimum of 5 acres; been devoted for at least 5 consecutive years previous to the production for sale of nursery, greenhouse, cut flowers, plant materials, orchards, vineyards, or small fruit products.

Open Space – Minimum of 5 acres; Conform to local land use plan; preserved for parks or recreational purposes, conservation of land or other natural resources, floodways, historic or scenic areas and assisting in the shaping of the character, direction, and timing of community development, or for the public interest.

Forestry – Minimum of 20 acres; may consist of productive or non-productive forest land; Must grow a commercial forest crop physically accessible for harvesting when mature.

Road and McCoul Street. Cornelius Creek and its tributaries are located south of Hickory Avenue and extends southeasterly past Laburnum Avenue to just beyond Willson and Varina Roads. Roundabout Creek bisects the area between Recreation and Strath Roads while Four Mile Creek crosses New Market Road just east of I-295. Bailey Creek crosses Route 5 east of Long Bridge Road while Crewes Channel bisects the corridor east of Willis Church Road. Turkey Island Creek is located at the far eastern end of the study area and is the boundary between Henrico and Charles City Counties. These are depicted on the Natural Resources Map.

The area in and around the Route 5 corridor has been the location of many notable events throughout the county’s history. Local, state and federal markers dot the right-of-way, recognizing previous events and individuals. Considering there are over 400 years of history in the county, it is not surprising there are numerous historic markers located throughout Henrico. According to records, there are 290 different signs, plaques and markers dispersed throughout the county, 31 of which are located along Route 5. Table 2 summarizes the types of markers, while the Historic Markers and Properties Map identifies their general location.

Table 2: Historic Markers along Route 5

Type of Marker	Number of Markers
Local	7
State	19
Federal	3
Public School	1
Battlefield	1

Most of the markers describe people (Powhatan, Pocahontas, George Thorpe, and Nathaniel Bacon) or places/events (First Successful Tobacco Crop, Henrico Parish Church, Varina, Turkey Island) that occurred in the general vicinity of Route 5. Several identify events commemorating the county’s role in the American Revolution (Wilton, Action at Osborne’s) or the Civil War (Surrender of Richmond, Fort Harrison, Battle of New Market Heights). Very few markers describe places that exist along the study corridor (Four Mile Creek Baptist Church, Chatsworth School). Although there are several properties on the National Register of Historic Places (Tree Hill Farm, The Flood Marker of 1771, and Malvern Hill) none actually fall within the study limits.

Battles associated with the American Revolution were fought nearby in James City and York Counties. However, the Marquis de Lafayette, who served in the Continental Army under George Washington, encamped in the area, at both Malvern Hill and Wilton.

The War of 1812 played out in Northern Virginia (Alexandria & Fairfax) and Hampton Roads (Hampton & Norfolk). However, there were several military encampments established in the general area to guard against a British invasion. None were ever threatened by British forces.

In contrast, between June 1862 and October 1864, the Varina area, especially the area near the Route 5 corridor, was the site of numerous Civil War battles. In 1991, the United States Secretary of the Interior created the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) to promote the

preservation of significant battlefields located on American soil. In 1993, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission issued a report on the country's Civil War battlefields, which was subsequently updated in 2009. The Civil War Battlefield Core Areas Map identifies the core areas (where combat occurred, and casualties were sustained) of six (6) battles fought in the general area of New Market Road (Route 5). Numerous entrenchments have survived and been documented as part of road and development projects.

The Route 5 corridor has several buildings and uses that are noteworthy as cultural landmarks given their civic nature and community use. As part of the study, the 2026 Comprehensive Plan recommended that landmarks and gateways be identified along the corridor. These landmarks and gateways could provide future opportunities for enhanced way-finding along Route 5 to areas of historical interest and landmarks such as churches and civic uses are indicators of the architectural style prevalent along Route 5.

Existing gateways include the decorative column denoting the arrival and departure at the City of Richmond and Henrico County at Rocketts Landing, and the less pronounced roadside signage at the eastern boundary of the study area denoting the arrival and departure from Henrico County at the Charles City County line.

CHAPTER 3: 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors adopted the Vision 2026 Comprehensive Plan (“the Plan”) on August 11, 2009. In preparing the Plan, existing land uses and zoning along the corridor helped identify development trends and where and what density, or intensity, development should occur to accommodate future growth. There were several factors and features that were also considered. They included the emergence of urban mixed use developments planned for two key areas along Route 5, new future land use designations that would allow for a greater range of home types and densities with minimum thresholds for open space, and the desire to protect the rural character of the corridor. Balancing the demand for growth and services within a rural and suburban setting can be challenging and because the New Market Road corridor warranted further study, it was designated as one of four Existing Character Protection Areas in the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning and Economic Focus Areas chapter of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan states the following:

New Market Road (State Route 5) is the earliest roadway connecting the City of Richmond to Williamsburg. The corridor has generally maintained its rural character and contributes to the rural visual identity of the eastern portions of the County. The roadway itself is currently maintained by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Vision

As development pressures increase in the eastern portions of the County, the rural character and the views to and from New Market Road should be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. This should be partly accomplished by concentrating commercial development in specific nodal areas. The corridor should support the development of a bicycle and pedestrian trail that may eventually connect the City of Richmond to Williamsburg.

3.1 FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Most of the land along Route 5 is designated for low-density residential or prime agriculture. This is a significant departure from designations along other major state routes, recognizing that Route 5 is not envisioned to be a commercial corridor. Instead, the commercial designations are clustered at nodes where there are existing businesses. Areas identified for additional commercial and office development include land between S. Laburnum Avenue and Pearces Creek Lane and Four Mile Run Parkway and Interstate 295. This clustering of business uses is recommended to keep Route 5 from being “stripped” with retail and other commercial uses. The future land use designations within the Route 5 study area are depicted on the 2026 Future Land Use Map and shown graphically in Figure 3. Definitions of the future land use categories within the study area include the following:

Prime Agriculture

Prime Agricultural areas are areas especially suitable for agricultural use because of soil conditions and/or land which is currently being used for agricultural purposes. This classification generally corresponds with the A-1 zoning district.

Suburban Residential

Suburban Residential applies to existing and new residential neighborhoods that are limited to detached, single-family residential uses. Typical suburban development patterns/styles with curvilinear roadways are present and common in these areas. Emphasis should be placed on interconnection of roadways and sidewalks. There are two (2) categories of Suburban Residential which vary by density: *Suburban Residential 1 (SR1)* - density should not exceed 2.4 units per acre and *Suburban Residential 2 (SR2)* - density should not exceed 3.4 units per acre.

Urban Residential (UR)

Urban Residential applies to existing and new residential neighborhoods that exhibit many characteristics of Traditional Neighborhood Development and are more urban in character than the Suburban Residential classification. Urban Residential is recognizable by an interconnected grid street pattern and small lots with shallow front yards. These areas are limited to residential uses, although a variety of housing types is appropriate in Urban Residential neighborhoods including detached, single-family homes, attached/two-family homes, townhouses, condominiums and zero lot line homes. Existing Urban Residential neighborhoods of exclusively single-family homes should be maintained as such. Residential densities in an Urban Residential neighborhood should range from 3.4 to 6.8 units per acre.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

TNDs are modeled after the pattern of development popular through the mid-1900's. The traditional neighborhood concept reflects human scale, walkable communities with a grid or frequently interconnected street network with alleys. A TND should have a mix of housing types, and small, local-scale retail and service uses that serve the local population and do not create excessive parking needs.

Because TNDs encourage vertically-mixed structures, traditional methods for density calculations are not adequate. Each site will be different, and the overall intensity of development must be addressed in the development review process based on the ability of public facilities and natural conditions of the site to support development. Residential is the primary use for a Traditional Neighborhood Development and, as a general guide, can support a density of twelve (12) units per acre on sixty percent (60%) of the land area. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the TND area should be dedicated to nonresidential uses and should include both office and commercial uses. Multi-story buildings with a vertical mix of uses are encouraged as focal points in TNDs. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the land area in a master-planned TND community should be dedicated to open space/recreation and/or preservation of significant natural resources.

Urban Mixed-Use (UMU)

Urban Mixed-Use areas are characterized by a range of residential, commercial, public, and semi-public uses. They emphasize pedestrian-oriented activity centers which may contain a mix of retail, office, multifamily residential, cultural, educational, open space,

and other public and private uses, with a balance among the various uses. A mix of uses can occur in a single structure, in a group of structures on a parcel, or on a group of parcels; however, multi-story buildings with a vertical mix of uses are encouraged. Greater regulatory flexibility is intended to encourage innovative and creative design and high-quality development and redevelopment.

Because UMUs encourage vertically-mixed structures, traditional methods for density calculations are not adequate. Each site will be different, and the overall intensity of development must be addressed in the development review process based on the ability of public facilities and natural conditions of the site to support development. However, as a general guide, UMU designated land can support residential densities of up to forty (40) units per acre on approximately sixty percent (60%) of the land area of the master-planned site. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the land area of a UMU should be dedicated to open space and protection of significant natural resources. Commercial and office/service uses should be developed in a UMU in a quantity that can balance the residential development.

Office (OF)

Office areas are intended to accommodate office development of individual properties rather than an “office park.” A variety of office uses including professional or administrative offices, medical offices, studios for artists, child care centers, banks, employment agencies, funeral homes, etc., are permitted at varying intensities.

Office/Service (O/S)

Office/Service areas include a wide range of business, light industrial, office, research and development and related ancillary uses, such as restaurants. They generally take on the appearance of an office development, yet with warehousing capabilities. Employment/Office Centers often take the form of a “campus” in the integration and coordination of uses and quality and character of the development. These areas are prime locations in the county with good access to major road networks and an employment base and should therefore be reserved for high-return employment generating uses such as office buildings or light manufacturing and warehousing operations.

Heavy Industry (HI)

Heavy Industry is applied to areas intended to accommodate manufacturing and fabricating establishments which are generally characterized as producing noise, vibration, heavy truck traffic, fumes and other impacts, which may be objectionable to adjacent uses.

Commercial Concentration (CC)

Commercial Concentration is applied to land intended for retail and/or wholesale sales and service establishments with coordinated design for shared parking areas and shared points of access to a roadway.

Government (GV)

Areas designated as Government include a variety of non-recreational public uses and facilities that are government-owned (local, State or Federal).

Semi-Public (SP)

Areas designated as Semi-Public include a variety of quasi-public uses and facilities including but not limited to private schools, churches, nursing and convalescent care facilities and hospitals.

Environmental Protection Area (EPA)

Environmental Protection Areas apply to locations where no future development is planned to occur due to the location of Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas and the one-hundred (100)-year floodplain; however, if development impacts can be mitigated to prevent deterioration of environmental quality, limited development is permitted in these areas. Extra sensitivity during development or use is required to protect the environment, public health, safety and welfare in EPAs.

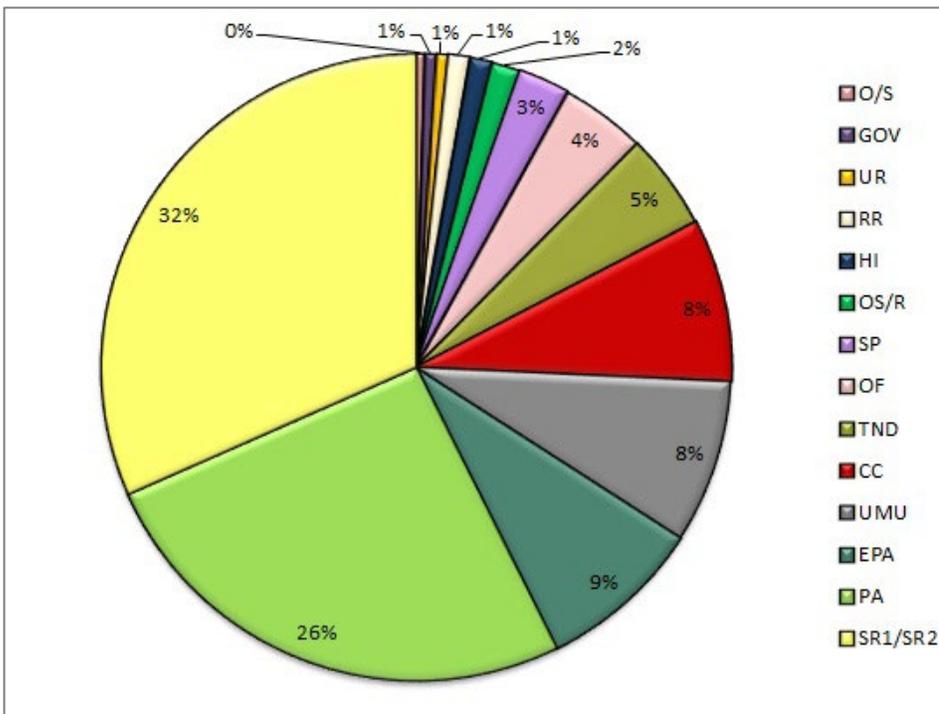


Figure 3: Future Land Use

3.2 PUBLIC UTILITIES AND FACILITIES

Public Utilities

The Department of Public Utilities provides water and sewer service throughout the County. Public water extends down Osborne Turnpike and New Market Road to Midview Road. It picks up along New Market Road just north of First Colonial Parkway to serve Olde Colony Estates and The Village at Olde Colony, as well as residences along Messer Road. Service continues southeast along New Market Road to Four Mile Run Parkway, just northwest of Interstate 295. County sewer is available in most of the subdivisions in the study area including New Market Landing, North James Estates, Olde Colony Estates, and Four Mile Run. Rocketts Landing is served by utilities provided by the City of Richmond. (See Utilities Map.)

Schools

There is one school located within the study area. Varina Elementary provides elementary education to students in the area from Grades 3-5. Originally constructed in 1909, the building has had various additions over the years. Younger children attend Mehfoud Elementary, just south of the study area, for Grades K-2. Upon graduation students attend John Rolfe Middle School to the north of the study area. Students entering high school attend Varina High School on Messer Road. (See Public Facilities Map.)

Recreation

There are a variety of recreational opportunities within the study area. The Clarke-Palmore House, located at 904 McCoul Street, just beyond the study limits, is a National Register Historic Site owned and operated by the County of Henrico. Donated by a relative of the original owner, the museum interprets the story of the Palmore family, who lived on the former farm in the early 20th century.

The Division of Recreation and Parks maintains two (2) existing facilities within the study area. Varina Recreation Area (8099 Recreation Road) is one of the county's original park facilities. The site consists of a small athletic complex with a football field, baseball fields, a restroom, a small shelter, play equipment and a concession building. Four Mile Creek Park is located directly on New Market Road, just east of the Interstate 295 interchange. The site is planned for passive recreation, trails, historic interpretation and could be the future home of a museum or visitors' center. It serves as a trail head for the Virginia Capital Trail as it runs through the park and connects with Dorey Park. A parking lot is available for those who wish to access the parks or Capital Trail.

Directly across New Market Road from Four Mile Creek Park is the future site of New Market Park. The 215+/- acre site is part of a larger area where Union and Confederate troops waged a significant battle (the Battle of New Market Heights) in 1864. The area has been master-planned for a passive park with historic interpretation, trails, a pond and a caretaker's residence. In addition, 80 acres would be dedicated for a new campus of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College. Besides multi-storied administrative and academic buildings, there would be parking and recreational facilities.

In addition to these facilities, the county has recently purchased property along New Market Road between Midview Road and North James Estates Drive. Approximately 2.5 acres, the site could have parking, restrooms, picnic tables and other amenities to accommodate users of the Capital Trail. The county has also acquired a significant portion of the former Malvern Hill Farm, located at the far southeastern end of the study area. The property is the only documented location in the United States to have seen U.S. troop activity during the American Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the American Civil War. While no specific plans have been determined for the 426-acre property, it will be protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement.

The Virginia Capital Trail runs parallel to the study corridor, stretching 52 miles from the City of Richmond to Jamestown. Connecting the current capital with the past capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg by way of the Colonial Parkway, the Trail is a paved bicycle and pedestrian path spanning multiple jurisdictions and over 400 years of history. Built by the Virginia Department of Transportation, the eight to ten-foot, off-road facility is meant to accommodate all modes of non-motorized transportation. Constructed in phases through portions of Henrico, James City, and Charles City counties, the trail officially opened in October 2015. Capitalizing on the proximity to the trail, Henrico County built the Dorey Park Connector Trail, providing users with access to restrooms, picnic shelters and other services. The 0.4-mile Connector opened in May 2016.

The National Park Service manages several historic sites in and around the study area. One of the components of the Richmond National Battlefield Park System is Fort Harrison. Comprised of 285 acres accessed from New Market Road via Battlefield Park Road, Fort Harrison was the strongest fort in the City of Richmond's earthen defenses. Today, short walking trails with exhibits, as well as formidable earthen walls, can be seen by visitors. A small visitors' center is open seasonally for tourists.

Libraries

The Varina Area Library is located at 1875 New Market Road. Opened in June 2016, the 43,885-square foot library includes large areas for general interest, teens and children's collections, a demonstration kitchen, a drive-up book return and pick-up window, a digital media lab and expanded hours and services. The library replaces the Varina Library located at 1000 Library Road, just north of the study area.

Police

The Division of Police is primarily responsible for traditional law enforcement duties and protection of residents and businesses throughout the county. The South Station serves the eastern end of the county and is located in the Fair Oaks Substation at 561 EastPark Court in Sandston.

Fire

The Division of Fire provides emergency response services including fire, medical, hazardous materials and water emergencies. Fire Station #4 is the closest station to the study area, located at 8112 Strath Road. Identified as a fire engine company, the station is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is a full-time complement of five employees assigned to the station to staff the fire engine and ambulance found at this location. A water tanker and brush truck are also sited at the station.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORTATION

4.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The entirety of the Route 5 corridor through Henrico County is maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The road is primarily a 2-lane undivided thoroughfare, although there are turn lanes at several major intersections including Oakland Avenue, S. Laburnum Avenue, Willson Road, Varina Road and Strath Road, and along the frontage of numerous developments including Rocketts Landing, North James Estates, Olde Colony Estates and Old Mill Estates. The roadway does widen to a 4-lane, divided section immediately before the I-295 interchange.

Right-of-way and pavement widths vary throughout the corridor. Generally, the right-of-way is 80 feet, though in some instances (in front of the Reynolds Tract, Curles Neck and Strath Road), the right-of-way is 124-feet, 110-feet and 95-feet respectively. Pavement width, unless at a major intersection, is only 22-feet.

Based on VDOT's 2017 data, traffic counts along the corridor range from a high of 11,000 vehicles per day along the segment of Osborne Turnpike between the City of Richmond and New Market Road to a low of 2,300 vehicles per day along the segment between I-295 and Willis Church Road.

Table 3: 2017 Traffic Counts – Route 5 Corridor

FROM	TO	ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC
Richmond City Limits	New Market Road	11,000
Osborne Turnpike	Laburnum Avenue	9,500
Laburnum Avenue	Interstate 295	9,300
Interstate 295	Willis Church Road	2,300
Willis Church Road	Charles City County Limits	2,400

The speed limit varies along the corridor. Entering Henrico from the City of Richmond, speed is limited to 35 miles per hour along Old Osborne Turnpike. For traffic moving southward along Osborne Turnpike, speed increases to 50 miles per hour. Just north of Cedar Lawn Avenue, the speed limit increases to 55 miles per hour and remains steady until just north of Mill Road, where it decreases to 45 miles per hour. Speed increases to 55 miles per hour again just south of the intersection of Buffin Road and Wood Mill Drive and maintains that limit as Route 5 reaches the Charles City County line.

4.2 MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN (MTP)

Henrico County is one of only of two counties in Virginia that maintains their own road network. This means the county's Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining approximately 80% of the roads in Henrico. The remaining 20% are state designated roads maintained by the VDOT. Route 5 is such a designated roadway. Therefore, the state reviews and regulates proposed improvements and developments that directly access Old Osborne

Turnpike, Osborne Turnpike and New Market Road. Requirements for traffic signalization, right-of-way dedication, road widening, and driveway access are coordinated with VDOT.

As required by the Code of Virginia, the county has a transportation plan that “designates a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations that include the designation of new and expanded transportation facilities and that support the planned development of the territory covered by the plan and shall include, as appropriate, but not be limited to, roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, railways, bridges, waterways, airports, ports, and public transportation facilities.”² In Henrico County, the plan is called the Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) and it recognizes and differentiates among a hierarchy of roads such as expressways, arterials, and collectors. It also contains a map illustrating future road improvements. The 2026 MTP Map, adopted as part of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, illustrates existing and proposed county roadways having a designated functional classification. The depiction of new roadway corridors is intended solely to connect origins and destinations and does not suggest the precise alignments where new roads must be built. Efforts were made to show new roadway corridors in areas likely to develop while avoiding or minimizing the extent of new roadways in areas that are environmentally, historically or culturally sensitive. Where practical, existing corridors are emphasized and, in some cases, used more efficiently by showing extensions and new connections to other major roads. The county intends to promote the implementation of interconnected roads as a means of spreading traffic demand across multiple corridors and shortening trip length for citizens.

Descriptions of each of the county’s functional classifications are provided in the following section. Such a classification system communicates the role of each road in the county’s network. Henrico County has an established classification system that defines roads according to jurisdiction, function, and degree to which roadway access is managed. The functional class hierarchy of roads varies. The highest priority is on vehicular mobility and throughput on “controlled access” highways. The lowest priority is vehicular mobility on local streets. Major and minor arterials and major and minor collector streets fall in the middle of the hierarchy. A description of the various roadways within the study area follows. (See Major Thoroughfare Plan Map.)

Controlled Access Roads

Vehicle access is allowed only at designated interchanges. Trip lengths on a controlled access facility are longer. With the exception of certain rush hour periods, these roads primarily are for inter-city travel. The function of controlled access roads is to move large volumes of traffic through the metropolitan area, and to serve major population centers and civil defense activities with full control of access. The two (2) controlled access roads within the study area are Interstate 295 and State Route 895.

² Virginia Code - § 15.2-2223.B.1

Major Arterials

These roads connect major centers of activity within the metropolitan area. Next to controlled access roads, major arterials are the highest traffic volume corridors and are designed to accommodate the longest trips within the area. These roads should carry a large portion of the total area traffic on a minimum of road mileage. Service to abutting land should be secondary to the provision of mobility for major traffic movements. The function of major arterials is to provide high traffic volume and maximum travel service to and between regional centers of activity. The major arterials located in the study area, from west to east are: Old Osborne Turnpike, Osborne Turnpike, New Market Road and S. Laburnum Avenue.

Minor Arterials

These roads augment the higher road classifications and they should not penetrate identifiable neighborhoods. Because of mobility and safety concerns for longer-distance trips, adequate access is provided through the use of turning lanes and signalization. These roads place more emphasis on land access and offer a lower level of traffic mobility than major arterials. The function of minor arterials is to interconnect with and augment the major arterial system. The only minor arterial within the study area is Varina Road.

Major Collectors

Collector roads provide both access and service for local traffic movements within residential neighborhoods, commercial areas and industrial areas. The collector system may penetrate neighborhoods, collecting traffic from the local streets throughout the area and channeling it to higher-level roads. Major collectors provide a slightly higher level of mobility and a slightly lower level of access than minor collectors. The function of major collectors is to collect and distribute traffic between local streets and arterial roads. The major collectors within the study area are: Doran Road, Oakland Road, Midview Road, Herman Street, Willson Road, Strath Road, Turner Road, Long Bridge Road, and Willis Church Road.

Minor Collectors

These roads generally provide the same service as major collector roadways; however, minor collectors provide for a slightly lower level of mobility and a slightly higher level of access than major collectors. The function of minor collectors is to collect and distribute traffic between local streets and arterial roads. The major collectors within the study area are: Bickerstaff Road, New Osborne Turnpike, Lanier Avenue, Northbury Avenue, Hickory Avenue, Messer Road, Mill Road and Turkey Island Road.

In addition to the roads classified above, there are also Residential Collectors and Local Roads. Neither of these types of roads are depicted on the MTP Map. Residential collectors primarily collect and move traffic between local roads in residential neighborhoods to minor and major collectors. Local roads, whether publicly or privately maintained, provide direct access to abutting land and serve short travel needs at low speeds.

The county has also designated future transportation projects envisioned to support the land use designations identified in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. As part of that planning process, a travel demand model was developed to assist in the analysis of the transportation system for the county. The model was used to assess roadway capacity based on population and employment forecasts and future land use designations were included to identify proposed residential and non-residential areas. The location and spacing of new roads are directly related to the anticipated density of new development; that is, closer spacing of new roads is expected in areas of higher development density.

The 2026 Major Thoroughfare Plan Map identifies several new roads, as well as realignments of existing roads and intersection improvements, within the study area.

4.3 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

As most of the study area is agricultural in nature, with few subdivisions and non-residential uses interspersed along the corridor, there are very few pedestrian accommodations. Sidewalks occur along New Market Road at North James Estates Drive, Midview Road, and Produce Road.

U.S. Bike Route 76, also known as the TransAmerica Bike Route, intersects with Route 5. This cross-country bike route runs west to east from Missouri to Virginia, ending in Yorktown. It was established in 1982 and is a partially-signed route across Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky and Virginia that runs for 560 miles. Bike Route 76 enters Henrico County from Hanover County along State Route 156 (North Airport Drive). Though it occasionally is routed to non-state roads, it generally follows along Elko, Charles City and Willis Church Roads. It intersects with New Market Road at Willis Church Road and follows the Capital Trail through Jamestown and Williamsburg and continues to Yorktown where it ends at US 17.

One of the most notable developments in the area has been the construction of the Virginia Capital Trail, which officially opened in October 2015. The Capital Trail is a 52-mile dedicated paved bike and pedestrian trail connecting Virginia's first capital – Jamestown, and Colonial capital – Williamsburg (via the Colonial Parkway), to its present capital in Richmond along Route 5. The Capital Trail is generally located adjacent to New Market Road, though to avoid the busy I-295 interchange, the trail heads north through Four Mile Creek Park, under the interstate and connects to Dorey Park before returning to New Market Road.

The trail provides users the ability to operate non-motorized forms of transportation to access places of employment, education centers, neighborhoods and local recreation facilities. Long distance bicyclists and pedestrians are able to enjoy the safety and serenity of the Trail because it is physically separated from the vehicular traffic on Route 5 throughout most of its length. Several "trail heads" will be strategically placed along the Trail so users can break their journey. Informational kiosks and interpretive signs have been placed along the Trail to educate users about the historical resources and wildlife found along the corridor.

Since the trail opened in the fall of 2015, VDOT, using seven (7) specialized devices, has counted over 1,559,829 users along the 52-mile corridor. There are two count stations located in Henrico County: the northern-most counter (Almond Creek) can be found south of the city limits on property owned by Vulcan Lands, LLC., between Bickerstaff Road and McCoul Street. The other is located along New Market Road, just south of the intersection with Willis Church Road. Based on the type of machinery, VDOT has been able to filter the counts by mode of use, i.e., how many users are pedestrians and how many are aboard bicycles. Table 4 below indicates the modal split of users at the two Henrico count stations.

Table 4: Capital Trail Use (as of September 17, 2018)

	Almond Creek Counter	Willis Church Counter
Bicyclists	312,693	140,481
Pedestrians	101,782	12,565
TOTAL	414,475	153,046

4.4 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Road Widening

As has been noted, Route 5 is primarily a 2-lane, undivided roadway though in some areas where development has occurred, the road has been widened and turn-lanes installed. As early as 1985, the corridor has been planned to be widened to accommodate growth. In a more recent study (See Route 5 Corridor Study – 2011, page 7), it was recommended that the portion of the corridor from the Richmond city limits to S. Laburnum Avenue be widened to a four-lane, median-divided roadway. The area to the southeast would be widened as new building occurs, with right-of-way dedications and appropriate improvements along the frontage of any new development. Though the study was completed, it was not adopted by either the county or the city.

New Thoroughfares and Improved Intersections

In addition to the recommended road widening, the Major Thoroughfare Plan shows new roads and improvements within the study corridor area to support anticipated growth. While most of the new roads proposed in this area are technically outside the study corridor, many intersect with Route 5. When they are built, attention should be given to maintaining the function of Route 5 as a major arterial. Additionally, any new roads and intersection improvements should be designed to enhance the nature and character of the study area. (See 2026 Proposed Roads Map.)

Virginia Capital Trail

The Capital Trail is the one unifying element found throughout the corridor. The off-road trail has already increased the amount of cycling and walking in the area and, along the corridor, attempts are being made to connect with multiple points of interest. Connections to Four Mile Creek Park and Dorey Park will provide users with opportunities to explore several of the county’s recreational facilities. Individuals interested in historic sites can use the Trail to travel between Williamsburg and Richmond, stopping to experience some of Henrico’s unique resources

including the Richmond Battlefield Park, Malvern Hill, and the Clarke-Palmore House. Consistent way-finding signage, parking and other amenities are being pursued to provide convenience to users.

VDOT is currently studying pedestrian safety enhancements to the Trail. There are 23 locations within the county where trail users interact with vehicular traffic at roadway intersections, private drives and commercial entrances. New signage, pavement markings, shoulder improvements and detectable warning surfaces are under consideration to enhance safety and operations along the trail. Potential improvements are anticipated to begin in Fall 2019.

CHAPTER 5: EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

5.1 CORRIDOR CHARACTER

Urban Mixed Use

Beginning at the northernmost end of Route 5, along Old Osborne Turnpike as you leave the City of Richmond, the character of the corridor is heavily influenced by former and existing industrial uses. Rocketts Landing, a brownfield redevelopment project which includes the adaptive reuse of old industrial buildings, begins the Route 5 journey as you travel south. Rocketts Landing has the tallest buildings along Route 5. These residential condominium buildings effectively make use of the old industrial brick facades, while taking advantage of the scenic views of the James River and the recently completed Virginia Capital Trail. Restaurants, a marina and recreational uses are located within the development. The building edges front directly on Route 5 and establish an urban feel along this segment of the corridor.



In order to get a better visual sense of this section of the study area, refer to the exhibit Route 5 Corridor – Existing Conditions (Richmond City/Henrico County Line to S. Laburnum Avenue).

Industrial

Continuing east, development along the corridor begins to transition to uses primarily industrial in nature. The railroad operations and the CSX railroad right-of-way extend along the road frontage of Old Osborne Turnpike. The views at Bickerstaff Road are dominated by large fuel storage tanks, along with glimpses of the state transportation maintenance facilities and the entrance to the Browning office warehouse to the east, with Henrico County's Almond Creek sewer pump station located on the western frontage. To the south, well-hidden by existing vegetation, is the Vulcan quarry site.



Residential Subdivisions

Upon leaving the higher density Rocketts Landing area and nearby industrial uses, the balance of the corridor begins to exhibit a variety of land use characteristics. This is due to the diverse nature of development that has taken place over the years. Smaller lots associated with more recent subdivision development are found throughout the corridor. These developments include the New Market Landing, North James Estates, Olde Colony Estates, Four Mile Creek and New Market Heights subdivisions. These residential lots have setbacks from Route 5 that vary from 35 feet to approximately 360 feet. The variability of house setbacks along Route 5 contributes to the difference in the character of the corridor from east to west.



Commercial/Retail

Commercial and retail uses are located at several nodes along the study area. These nodes establish potential locations for future commercial expansion and have helped set the tone for the architectural style that currently exists along Route 5. Many are older commercial establishments, characteristic of the small roadside retail or service businesses typically found along rural roads. Others are newer developments that exhibit a modern approach to commercial design with varying levels of attention to the historic context of the area.

Seven commercial nodes of different size and scale are seen when traveling along Route 5. One of the first is located at the highly visible intersection of Old Osborne and New Osborne Turnpikes. A small auto service facility, Hough Tire and Auto, is located here. This is an old, one-story, masonry structure with large steel and glass storefront windows, characteristic of service stations from the 1950s and 1960s. To the south, Osborne Turnpike then becomes New Market Road and forms a triangular parcel with a prominently located 7-11 convenience store, an example of trademark commercial building design. True Professionals Barber Shop, a personal service establishment can also be found here.



Across from these sites are Route 5 Auto Service and Rocketts Grooming, a recently reoccupied old brick structure with storefront windows. Located to the south is Varina Cleaners, which appears to be an adaptive reuse of an older building with newer awnings and bay windows, and a BP service station. The BP station is an example of a more modern approach to retail/service design with its gabled barn-like roof and dormer windows which provides hints of the historic context of the area.



Proceeding further east, at the intersection of New Market and Midview Roads, are several other commercial establishments on both sides of the corridor. Two residences on the southwest side of New Market Road are houses used for business. Across the road is the Tuckaway Child Development Center, with its large, modern interpretations of cupolas and its dominant roof line. Adjacent to the child care center is the Varina Veterinary Clinic, which is a brick structure converted from a bank that retains the original Colonial design.

The next commercial node is located at the intersection of New Market and Varina Roads. On one side of the intersection is the former Ronnie's Barbeque. Across the street is a vacant, former convenience store.



The largest of the existing commercial/retail nodes is situated between the intersections of Gregg and Strath Roads, along New Market Road. Several individual retail establishments are located here, including a Dollar General, Dudley's Carpet, Fin and Skin Bait and Tackle, the Valero Fas Mart convenience store, a Rite Aid drugstore, New Market Medical Center, and the Citizens and Farmers (C&F) Bank. The New Market Square Shopping Center, which contains a Food Lion and several other small retail establishments, is also in the area. Several of the buildings, including the Citizens and Farmers Bank, the New Market Square Shopping Center, and the Dollar General are newer structures that exhibit some of the architectural features of colonial design, in keeping with the historic character of the area. These sites can all be found on the Route 5 Corridor Existing Conditions (S. Laburnum Avenue to Turner Road) exhibit.



Further east New Market Road becomes a four-lane divided facility. Located here, the Exxon Pit Stop/Dairy Queen, is characteristic of typical interstate rest stop design, but with a Neo-Colonial architectural style, theme lighting and generous landscaping. The last of the commercial nodes is at the intersection of Willis Church Road where a small commercial retail establishment, Old Dominion Outdoors LLC, is located.



Civic

There are several civic uses along the corridor including a library, churches, and schools. Existing churches with frontage on Route 5 include New Life Baptist Church, Antioch Baptist Church, Laurel Hill United Methodist, St. James Baptist Church, Varina Episcopal Church and Four Mile Creek Baptist Church. Many of these established places of worship contribute to the character of the corridor with a traditional approach to building design including prominent steeples and other architectural features reminiscent of the historic nature of the corridor. (See the Route 5 Corridor Civic Landmarks exhibit.)





The Clarke-Palmore House in Marion Hill, just beyond the study limits, is used by the Henrico County Division of Recreation and Parks as a museum to interpret small farm living in the 1930s. Varina Elementary School, built in 1909, consolidated the four one-room school houses of Osborne, Fort Harrison, Laurel Hill and Town Hall. It currently serves grades 3-5.

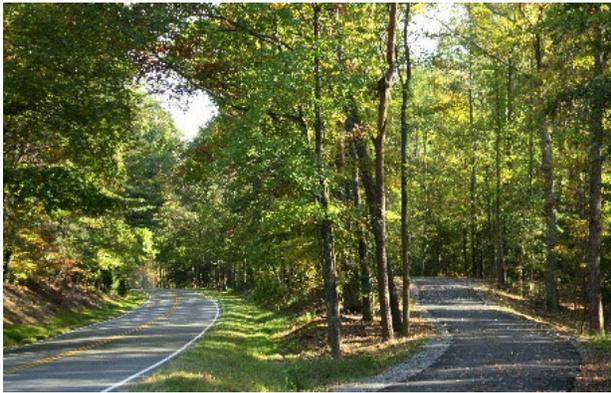
Open Fields and Farm Land

Open fields are first encountered on the southwestern side of Route 5 at Tree Hill Farm, with the established neighborhood of Marion Hill to the east. Views along the corridor include both large farms and rural residential large lot development. Also of note are the large vistas associated with open farmland. The two largest open areas are the Reynolds tract, a large 445-acre tract located between Freeless Street and Messer Road, and the extensive 4,392-acre Curles Neck tract, located on both sides of New Market Road, east of Long Bridge Road. The open farmlands of the Nelson tract near Pocahontas Parkway (State Route 895) and several intermittent views of farm fields east of I-295 are also noteworthy. Many of these tracts were observed to be actively engaged in agricultural activity. Some of the large residential lots were also observed to have privately tilled fields.



Undeveloped Woodlands

The easternmost stretch of New Market Road, east of Turner Road, is very heavily wooded along either one or both sides of the corridor. Dominated by deciduous hardwoods, there are also very impressive stands of mature pine along the northeastern frontage of Route 5 near Long Bridge Road where the Virginia Capital Trail crosses from north to south. These wooded areas are quite extensive, making up a total of 48% of the frontage and are located at the eastern limits of the study area. Several large stands of pine were also noted at the Tree Hill tract down slope from McCoull Street and Greenview Drive. The Route 5 Corridor Existing Conditions (Turner Road to Henrico County/Charles City County Line) exhibit identifies many of these areas.



5.2 VISUAL ASSESSMENT

In addition to documenting the development patterns and character of the study area, Planning staff prepared a preliminary Visual Assessment and inventory of significant and uninterrupted scenic views to better understand the visual attributes of the corridor. This assessment was based on a windshield survey of the corridor along with analysis of aerial photography, with special attention given to both existing vegetative cover and topographic analysis using GIS.

An initial analysis of the views and the landscape character of the area was conducted in July and August of 2015 with several driving tours of the corridor. Digital photography was used extensively to document the existing landscape character and the extent of views along the study area. An additional analysis was performed using GIS mapping to determine the kinds of landscape elements or features visible from various areas along the corridor and to determine the extent of those views. The aforementioned views of open farmland and the limited views in the heavily wooded portions of the corridor study area are indicative of the range of scenic character of the Route 5 corridor.

Significant Views and Vistas

Using aerial photography and GIS mapping, along with field observations, staff developed the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vistas exhibit denoting significant viewsheds. These locations offer significant, extensive views or vistas for distances of 1,000 to 6,000 feet, and in the case of Curles Neck, up to four (4) miles and beyond. Some of the more noteworthy views can be found at the following locations:

- Southwest along Route 5 between McCoul Street and Old Osbourne Turnpike (Tree Hill Farm) – A on the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vista exhibit
- Northeast along Route 5 located between Freeless Street and Messer Road (Reynolds Tract) – D on the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vista exhibit
- Northeast along Route 5 located between Messer Road and S. Laburnum Avenue and on either side of State Route 895 (Nelson Estate) – E on the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vista exhibit
- Southwest along Route 5 at Curles Neck from the entrance at Curles Neck Road east to Turkey Island Road – I on the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vista exhibit

There are also several locations along Route 5 with less significant, but still unique, views at multiple locations along the corridor also shown on the Route 5 Corridor Views and Vista exhibit.

Extensive vegetation in the form of mature stands of deciduous hardwoods can be found along either one or both sides of the corridor at the far eastern portion of the study area. Just west of the intersection with Long Bridge Road is a significant stand of mature pines that extends almost a quarter mile along the northern edge of the Route 5 right-of-way. Additionally, the portion of Route 5 from Long Bridge Road east to the Charles County line has mature stands of deciduous trees quite close to the road right-of-way. Though these views were substantially limited to the immediate foreground on either side of the corridor, the newly constructed Capital Trail meanders through the trees, with wooden bridges crossing roadside swales and streams, adding to the scenic value. Seasonal color changes further enhance the driving experience.

While not typical of the scenic value commonly associated with long views and open vistas, the views portrayed by the full or partial tree canopy in the undeveloped area of the corridor merit special attention. This undisturbed environment provides possible approaches to preservation in the form of natural buffers.

Finally, a significant view of the downtown Richmond skyline is visible from northbound Route 5 at McCoul Street. This view has been acknowledged in previous planning efforts including the design charrette for the Tree Hill development. The development's master plan was influenced by the history and topography of the site and includes several visual axes terminating at the skyline of Richmond in the distance. More recently, the view was included in publicity photos of the Virginia Capital Trail bike path.

CHAPTER 6: LAND USE ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES

IDENTIFYING THE CHARACTER OF ROUTE 5

Route 5 is a corridor of varying characteristics. Historically a more rural and agricultural area than the rest of the county, the Varina Magisterial District, and the New Market Road corridor, have begun to see more growth and expansion in recent decades. People have moved to the area within and around the corridor in order to “escape” the suburban development trends more common in the west end of the county. They prefer the more rural attributes of the corridor and wish to preserve those characteristics. The presence of open fields and farmland, small commercial nodes and sections of tree-lined hardwoods, add to the appeal of the corridor. And therein lies the dilemma, as more people are drawn to relocate to the area. Former fields or pastures give way to new subdivisions. New residents bring more traffic and exposure to New Market Road and Old Osborne Turnpike, which currently are two-lane thoroughfares. New residential growth spurs commercial development as residents require access to goods and services.

In reviewing the corridor, it became apparent that there are three (3) fairly well-defined areas of land use and character. Within each area there may be some variation in the development pattern and land use but overall, each one is distinctly different from the others.

Area 1: City of Richmond/County of Henrico boundary to McCoul Street (Urban)

The first area of the corridor, approximately .913 miles in length, begins along the City of Richmond/County of Henrico boundary. The corridor can best be described as urban and industrial, with the urban mixed use development of Rocketts Landing, the CSX railway corridor, the IMTT bulk petroleum fuels storage facilities, the Vulcan Materials Company site and the Browning office/warehouse development.

Area 2: McCoul Street to I-295 (Suburban)

South of McCoul Street the corridor takes on more suburban characteristics, exhibited by numerous subdivisions interspersed between large acreage lots, places of worship and small commercial nodes. This second, and most diverse area, is 6.614 miles in length. While there are multiple uses, this area has a distinct suburban quality to it. There are several farms within the sub-area which could eventually develop into alternative uses but overall, there is an existing development pattern of low-intensity residential and retail already established.

Area 3: I-295 to County of Henrico/Charles City County boundary (Rural)

The third area, approximately 6.222 miles in length, consists primarily of open fields and farmland and undeveloped woodlands, which are prevalent from I-295 to the county line. This area is best described as rural or agricultural in nature. The drive along New Market Road in this area, with its farms and larger acre residential lots imbue thoughts of a natural, pastoral countryside. Wide views and the arching canopy of trees along the far

southern end offer motorists, cyclists and pedestrians a secluded driving experience east to Charles City County.

While the boundaries of the three sub-areas could be debated, each generally defines an area of distinct development pattern. Treating each the same would not be appropriate and opportunities to enhance and protect them will be explored.

BY-RIGHT ZONING

All land in the county has a zoning designation, a classification that determines what may be built on the property “by right.” For each zoning designation, there is a prescribed set of uses that are allowed without the involvement of staff, the Planning Commission or the Board of Supervisors. Development of a permitted use may be limited to the submission of a site plan or subdivision plat but may not require a public hearing or notification of adjacent property owners.

As previously shown in Figure 1 on Page 8, 70% of the land within the study area is zoned A-1 Agricultural District. This means there are a number of permitted uses that land zoned A-1 can be developed without requiring rezoning. If an owner of a tract of land zoned A-1 wishes to sell his/her property, it can be developed into a subdivision of one-acre lots as long as the development standards of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances are met. State legislation requires localities to approve the subdivision of land if the standards are met and no public notice is required. The process highly values the property rights of owners, but it does pose challenges in achieving a unified vision for an area.

There are also properties along the corridor with by-right commercial zoning that can be developed or redeveloped, but not many. These properties may currently be vacant, have existing commercial businesses on them or may have residential structures on parcels that are zoned for business. The most notable are parcels around the intersections of Old Osborne and New Osborne Turnpikes, New Market Road and Wilderness Drive, New Market Road north of Herman Street, New Market Road and Willson and Strath Roads, New Market Road between Gregg and Presquile Roads, and New Market Road and Willis Church Road. These commercially-zoned areas are largely contained and recommendations for future commercial uses are also fairly limited in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. By directing commercial land uses to existing locations, with appropriate room for expansion, the county already has the tools to discourage strip development, which can create an undesirable development pattern and cause traffic and access issues.

AGRITOURISM/HERITAGE TOURISM

The Route 5 corridor contains a limited number of large farms (over 100 acres), and only several examples of small-scale agriculture. Although agriculture has typically been thought of in terms of food production, in more recent years there has been a greater recognition of its tourism potential. Commonly known as agritourism or agricultural tourism, this typically involves bringing the public to agricultural operations for educational or recreational purposes.

There may be opportunities to link agricultural experiences with the area's rich history. The county's own Clarke-Palmore House Museum interprets 1930's small farm living and is open for programs and special events. Agricultural enterprises along the Route 5 corridor could capitalize on the tourist travel between Colonial Williamsburg and Richmond and market pick-your-own activities, hay rides, mazes, and other events.

Over the last several decades, there has been an increase in what has been defined as heritage tourism. This particular type of travel can best be defined as enjoying the discovery of a locality's specific identity derived from its past. Attracting and accommodating individuals traveling (whether by automobile or bicycle) to experience our region's Colonial or Civil War history, culture or landscape should be a consideration. Facilities for overnight accommodations for bike riders of the Capital Trail and tourists visiting the historic plantations, battlefields and museums nearby could be explored.

The limited number of large-scale farming operations in the area may not lend itself to agritourism, although smaller-scale agricultural uses offer potential. The presence of several regional historic sites definitely provides opportunities to attract visitors interested in the area's history, along with the potential for bed and breakfast facilities. The availability of open land and the presence of the James River also lends the area to outdoor recreational uses. Whether agritourism or heritage tourism related, it should be noted that such opportunities should balance the economic benefits to the property owner with the overall impact to the area and protection of the resource.

THE VISUAL EXPERIENCE

The Visual Assessment of the corridor highlights several factors which should be considered. Route 5 is a dynamic roadway corridor with a variety of land uses, landforms, residential and commercial development types, architectural styles, and historic influences. There are significant differences in the visual experience based on these factors throughout the corridor, and therefore there is a need for differing approaches for development in the corridor. There is also potential for creation of a harmonious, visual experience by identification of elements which contribute to the desired overall character of the corridor and addressing the preservation or enhancement of these features with future development.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issues

Identifying issues to preserving the rural character of the corridor can assist stakeholders in developing realistic, achievable goals, objectives and recommendations.

- There is not a consistent development pattern throughout the corridor. While staff has identified 3 areas of land use and character, treating each the same would not be appropriate.

- The architectural character of the corridor is varied and somewhat undefined, as there is no singular accepted style, as shown in the Architectural Styles exhibit. While a variety in architectural styles can add to the interest and charm of the corridor, it can make reaching a consensus of acceptable designs difficult. Additionally, since localities are no longer permitted to accept residential proffers related to exterior building materials, architectural design and amenities, efforts to regulate the character of the corridor could be diminished.
- Though Route 5 through Henrico County has been used as a major transportation link for over 300 years, very few historic buildings or sites remain in existence. Qualification as a historic overlay corridor that would allow for architectural controls is unlikely.
- Large, open fields present a unique challenge. The lack of existing trees will limit the ability to screen future development.
- Several large, vacant tracts along the corridor are vulnerable to development and, due to the existing zoning classification, such changes could occur “by right”. Without proffers or conditions of development on the property, and with few tools in the current Zoning Ordinance to promote a consistent vision for the area, preserving the character may be difficult.
- The unrestricted commercially and industrially zoned parcels visible from Route 5 may need a clear strategy of how best to redevelop while maintaining the more desirable character aspects of the corridor.
- The potential widening of Route 5 with no clear direction for retaining scenic qualities is a concern. Since Route 5 is a state facility, coordination of long term development goals with VDOT will be required.

Opportunities

While there are challenges to preserving and protecting the character of the Route 5 corridor, there are a number of opportunities that can be explored while still allowing future growth and development.

- The recently completed Capital Trail provides both a unifying element for the corridor and a continuous pedestrian and bicycle link future development.
- Large, open fields adjacent to Route 5 create several significant views and vistas along the corridor and the variation between the tree-lined roadways and these open fields contributes to the character of the corridor.

- The existing subdivisions and neighborhoods that are built-out and stable could preserve some of the character of Route 5 as they would not be subject to immediate redevelopment.
- Analysis of existing uses indicates the location of established commercial nodes along Route 5. These nodes, as well as any designated on the 2026 Future Land Use Plan, could provide opportunities to direct future commercial development away from sensitive areas that need to be preserved.
- Substantially wooded areas exist along the road frontage of Route 5, especially east of I-295. If retained, they could be useful for maintaining the existing character of the corridor while providing additional screening and buffering opportunities to meet future preservation objectives.
- The historic context of the Route 5 area, as well as other significant sites in the region, provides a distinct opportunity for all forms of tourism.

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Overlay District

Design standards that promote and encourage development which enhance and preserve the character of Route 5 could be established through the adoption of a Corridor Overlay District added to the Zoning Ordinance. Overlay districts have been used successfully in Virginia to reduce traffic congestion, noise and visual clutter, and to promote public safety and preserve the aesthetic, natural and historic values of an area. An overlay district is a tool used to provide additional control of land use within a specific geographic area, above and beyond the general standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Any potential overlay district should include standards to regulate the development quality of the corridor through building setbacks, building height, buffers/landscaping, signage and parking.

Design Guidelines

As previously discussed, there are three (3) defined areas along the Route 5 corridor that exhibit distinct land uses and development patterns. It is possible to develop general development guidelines to enhance the existing and future character of the area (except where buildings exist for industrial uses). Examples might include:

- Urban area – Encourage placement of buildings close to the right-of-way, promoting an active, urban feeling. Alternative forms of transportation (walking, biking and transit) should be encouraged. Sidewalks with street trees, outdoor furniture and lighting should be provided.

- Suburban area – Preserve to the extent feasible existing trees and hedge rows along and adjacent to Route 5; Supplement existing trees with a planted 25-foot buffer equivalent to a Transitional Buffer 35 or 50 to screen proposed development.
- Rural area – Preserve existing tree line to a minimum depth of at least 75 feet.

Zoning Ordinance

In order to encourage agritourism efforts, consider reviewing the zoning ordinance to identify whether it provides enough flexibility to support entrepreneurial opportunities to increase tourism. Examples to consider include breweries/wineries/cideries/distilleries and bed and breakfast facilities.

Incentivize Cluster Development

An overlay district could incentivize clustered development on larger parcels of land, such as those 20 acres or greater. Combined with a requirement to encourage preservation of environmentally sensitive and/or wooded land within the development, this could help maintain a more rural appearance along the corridor, rather than having typical suburban development with a modest landscape buffer along the adjacent roadway.

CHAPTER 7: ROUTE 5 VISION, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

THE VISION: *The distinct character and views along the Route 5 corridor will continue to be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Commercial development will be concentrated in specific nodal areas and the Virginia Capital Trail will be used as a unifying theme throughout the corridor.*

GOALS:

In order to achieve the right balance between the quantity and quality of new development and redevelopment, clearly stated goals, objectives and strategies are proposed.

Goal 1: Preserve the rural, historic and agricultural character.

Objectives

Objective 1.1: Minimize adverse visual impacts of development.

Objective 1.2: Protect stands of mature trees along the corridor.

Objective 1.3: Encourage agricultural enterprises along the corridor.

Objective 1.4: Protect significant agricultural or historic land from development.

Objective 1.5: Preserve open space.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1: Create and adopt an overlay district requiring the establishment of buffers and setbacks that protect the character of the corridor.

Strategy 1.2: Create design guidelines to encourage building placement that will respect significant views and vistas on and around a property.

Strategy 1.3: Require low-intensity outdoor lighting to prevent light pollution.

Strategy 1.4: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to support agritourism efforts.

Strategy 1.5: Support conservation easements along the corridor.

Strategy 1.6: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to provide incentives for cluster development on residential property.

Strategy 1.7: Review the 2026 Future Land Use Map to change land use designations.

Strategy 1.8: Partner with local and state efforts such as the Virginia Tech “Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition” Program, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), and Virginia Cooperative Extension to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and skills between experienced farmers and beginners.

Strategy 1.9: Partner with Virginia Tourism Corporation to market agritourism opportunities along the corridor.

Strategy 1.10: Identify appropriate agencies to study the significance of the land along the corridor timed with the county’s next soil survey.

Goal 2: Deter strip development and big box stores.

Objective

Objective 2.1: Encourage small-scale retail development at appropriate locations along the corridor, as identified in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

Strategies

Strategy 2.1: Limit non-residential development to appropriate commercial nodes, as identified in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

Strategy 2.2: Identify locations through the overlay district where limited expansion of retail/commercial uses could capitalize on the area’s character.

Goal 3: Enhance and increase recreational opportunities.

Objectives

Objective 3.1: Encourage public access to the James River and all significant tributaries.

Objective 3.2: Identify opportunities to link the Virginia Capital Trail to neighborhoods, parks and other points of interest.

Objective 3.3: Support the provision of additional amenities along the Virginia Capital Trail.

Strategies

Strategy 3.1: Require public access to the river through the rezoning or plan of development process.

Strategy 3.2: Identify county rights-of-way that could accommodate shared use trails.

Strategy 3.3: Add more parking opportunities in proximity to the Trail.

Strategy 3.4: Provide rest areas, to include restrooms and bicycle repair stations.

Goal 4: Encourage a transportation network that promotes safety and connectivity for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.

Objectives

Objective 4.1: Minimize the number of entrances along the corridor.

Objective 4.2: Support recommended enhancements to the Virginia Capital Trail.

Objective 4.3: Coordinate with VDOT to enhance pedestrian, bicycle and motorist safety.

Strategies

Strategy 4.1: Encourage shared access for new development.

Strategy 4.2: Prohibit individual access for out-parcels.

Strategy 4.3: Encourage new developments to design roads with narrow cross-sections widths.

Strategy 4.4: Collaborate with VDOT to promote and install safety features to protect trail users and avoid potential conflicts with motorists.

Strategy 4.5: Coordinate with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and VDOT on additional landscaping, street furniture and “Adopt A Trail” efforts.

Strategy 4.6: Request updates of VDOT review accident data to determine appropriate improvements at identified intersections.

Strategy 4.7: Request periodic updates to VDOT’s speed studies to determine the appropriate speed limits along the corridor.

Strategy 4.8: Identify bicycle and pedestrian linkages to facilities in the vicinity of the Virginia Capital Trail.

CHAPTER 8: DESIGN GUIDELINES

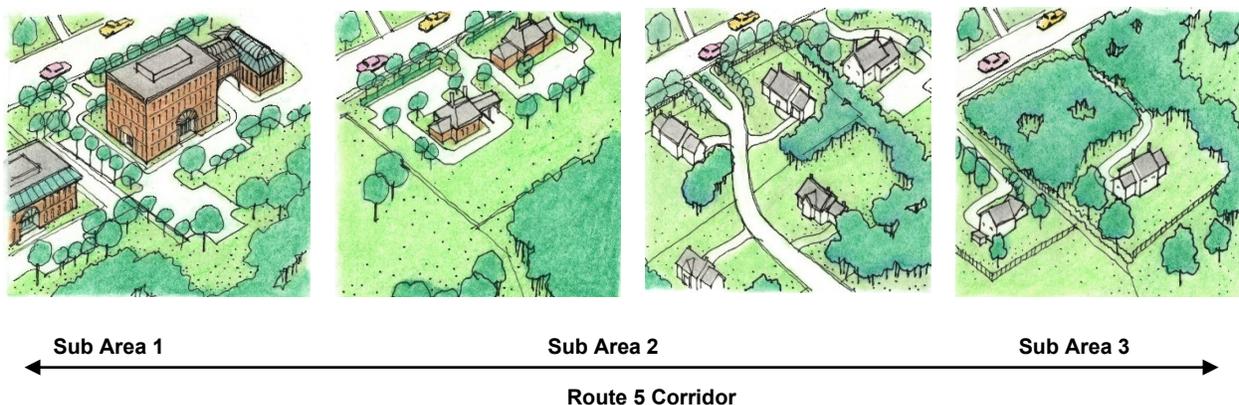
The land adjacent to the Route 5 corridor has various uses and zoning designations, which have been detailed in Chapter 2 of the study. Predominant land uses for much of the corridor are single-family subdivisions and large acreage properties, with either residential or agriculture zoning designations.

Commercial and industrial uses exist at several notable intersections along the corridor, especially at the northwestern boundary with the City of Richmond. Future land use designations recommended in the county's 2026 Comprehensive Plan also vary along the corridor. Most of the land along the corridor is recommended for low-density residential or prime agriculture, recognizing that Route 5 is not envisioned as a commercial corridor. However, as noted in Chapter 6, there is a range of more-intense recommended land uses along the northwestern portion of the corridor, ranging from Commercial Concentration, Urban Mixed-Use, and Light and Heavy Industrial.

The predominant land uses establish the character of Route 5. The study identified three sub-areas based on their distinctive characteristics. The first, adjacent to the City of Richmond, is more urban and industrial. The second more suburban, while the third is more open field and farmland and undeveloped woodlands.

The challenge with the review of future development proposals along the corridor will be to establish design guidelines that both recognize the character of the three sub-areas and effectively address the development concerns inherent in each regarding setbacks, building orientation and height, the protection of views, and preservation of selected natural assets along the corridor.

This study recommends design guidelines applicable to the entire corridor, as well as those tailored to the unique character of each sub-area.



Future development in the three sub areas of the Route 5 corridor would use design guidelines for site layout, building orientation, location of parking, landscaping and lighting.

General – Entire Route 5 Corridor

Site Design

1. Development should preserve open space, existing mature trees and significant vegetation where possible. New development should avoid mass grading.
2. Development should respect existing significant views along the corridor to the extent feasible and should not block an existing view if an alternative to the location and orientation of structures is possible.

Significant Views – Sub Area 1 and 2



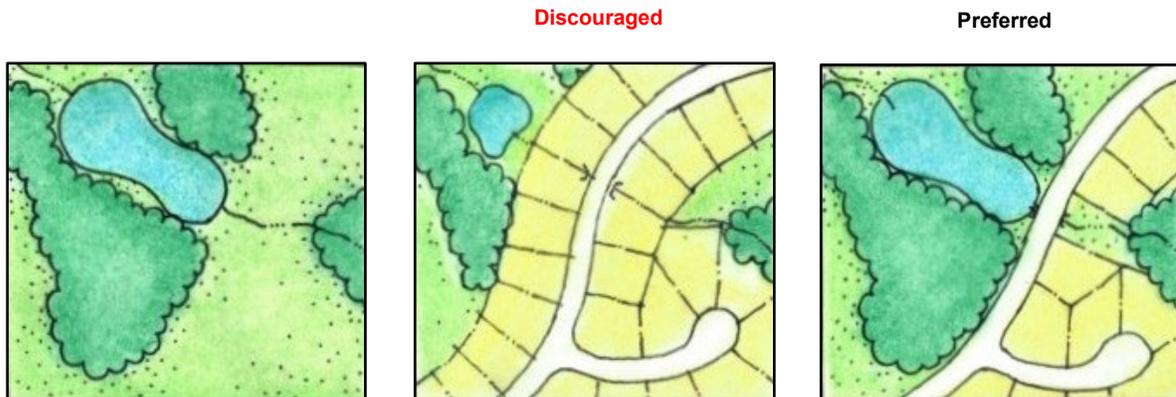
Significant Views – Sub Area 2 and 3



10. Nonresidential buildings should have an architectural design and human scale massing compatible and reflective of the character of the corridor. Details such as the proper scale of windows, doors, and other facade articulation to reduce the overall perception of building mass are encouraged.
11. The visibility of off-street parking should be minimized by placing parking areas to the side or rear of buildings with adequate screening and landscaping.

Streets/Access

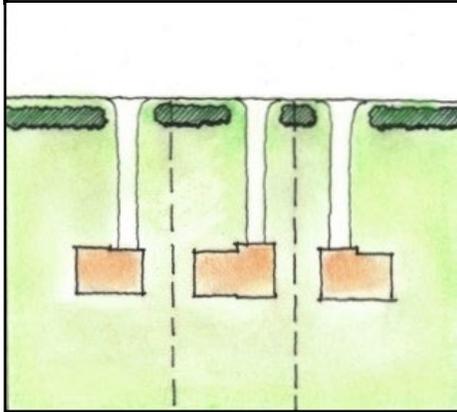
1. New streets should be configured to maximize and preserve existing scenic views. When new streets are adjacent to open areas such as fields and meadows, the view to or across these areas should be preserved and not obstructed by structures, opaque fencing or other buildings.
2. New streets should be configured to avoid natural resources and open space areas. Single-loaded streets with lots on one side and common open space on the other are strongly encouraged.



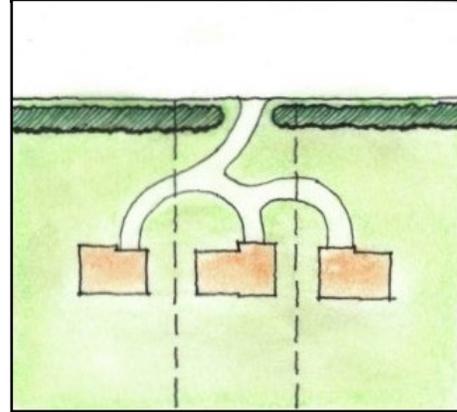
3. New two-way streets in residential developments should use a narrow cross section of 24 feet.
4. Nonresidential entrances should be clearly visible with connection to sidewalk and/or pedestrian trails.
5. The Capital Trail is a unifying element of the Route 5 corridor and future development should promote and/or provide sidewalk and bikeway links to the trail and other amenities such as rest areas, bike racks and additional parking for trail users.
6. Driveways and roads should be designed for safe crossings by bicyclists and pedestrians using the Capital Trail.

7. Restrict the occurrence of numerous entrances along the corridor to retain the spacious open rural character. Shared access is encouraged where feasible.

Discouraged

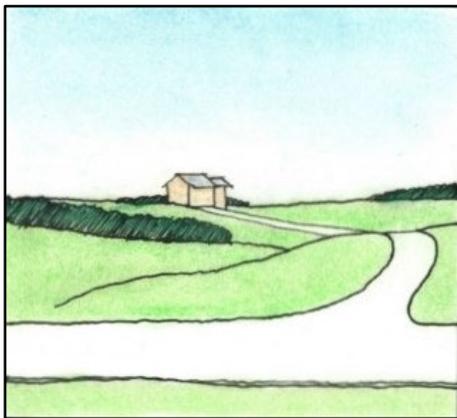


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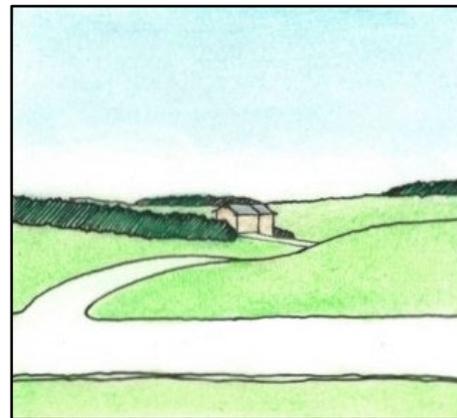


8. The alignment of new residential streets should follow natural contours and avoid placement on prominent hillsides or ridges to ensure development fits well into the rural character.

Discouraged



Preferred

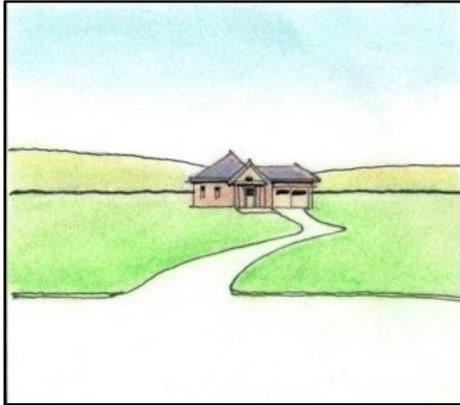


Landscaping

1. When new development requires landscaped buffers and supplemental planting, the use of native species is encouraged, provided they can be reasonably maintained.

- Use existing vegetation and landform to integrate new development with the rural landscape. On visually prominent landforms where natural topography or existing vegetation, hedgerows and windbreaks cannot be used as a vegetated backdrop then use naturalized plantings to visually anchor the development.

Discouraged

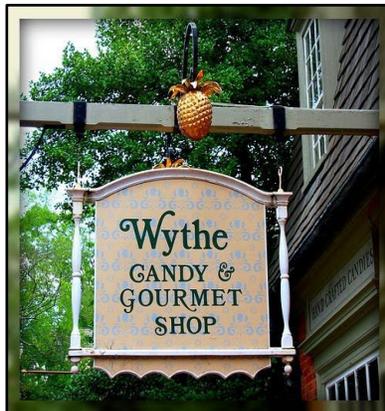


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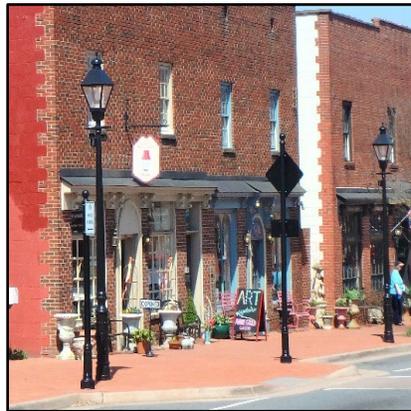


Signage/Lighting

- Signage should complement the character of the corridor. Businesses should employ signage that resembles a traditional storefront style rather than suburban monument style signage.



2. Signage throughout the corridor should be of a scale, size, and materials appropriate for the area. Cabinet signs and the use of attention getting devices or excessive illumination of signs should be prohibited. Sign illumination should avoid objectionable glare and light spill-over on adjacent properties.
3. Consistent ornamental and pedestrian-scale lighting is encouraged along the corridor to create a uniform streetscape.



4. Lighting along the corridor should be designed to avoid light trespass and nuisance glare. Light poles and fixtures should avoid unnecessary or excessive height and use concealed source fixtures.

A. Sub Area 1: Richmond/Henrico Line to McCoul Street (Urban)



Sub Area 1 is predominately industrial and urban in character, with the existing Rockets Landing mixed-use development and the future Tree Hill development. There is limited potential for new industrial development. Design guidelines in this sub area focus primarily on future nonresidential development.

Site Design

1. Orientation and heights of buildings and structures should not block the significant views of the city skyline from Route 5.
2. Development within industrially-zoned areas should be located with a setback adequate to allow for the preservation of existing vegetation and the addition of supplemental plantings, fences or walls to effectively screen loading, storage areas and/or other potential visual impacts to Route 5.
3. Development within areas designated Urban Mixed-Use, which may contain a mixture of commercial, office, residential, and civic uses, should emphasize pedestrian-oriented scale of buildings, street furniture, lighting, hardscape and activity centers. Multi-story buildings should contain a vertical mix of uses (see image below).



4. Encourage the location of buildings close to the street to preserve the urban character within the sub-area.
5. Encourage placemaking and public gathering locations.

6. Future development should provide sidewalks along the corridor to enhance the pedestrian-oriented scale of buildings and activity centers.

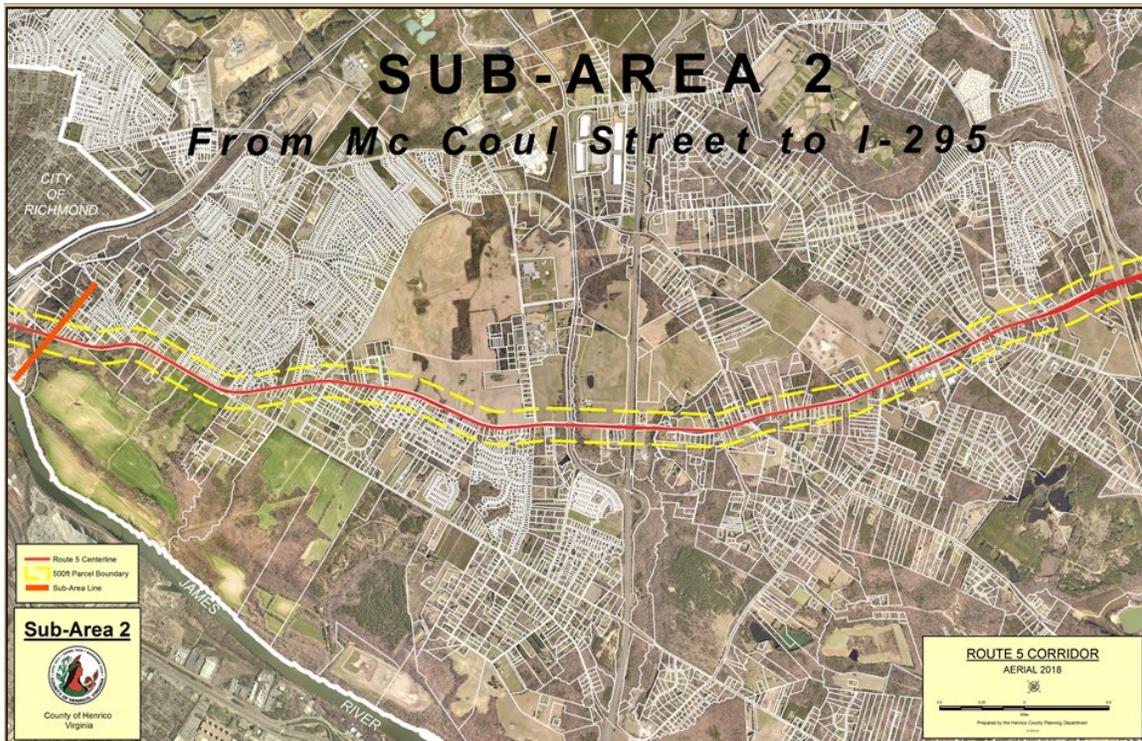
Landscaping

1. The landscaping along this area of Route 5, especially the existing stand of trees along the western side of the corridor between Bickerstaff Road and McCoul Street, should be preserved to the greatest extent possible and use supplemental planting where necessary.

Signage/Lighting

1. Lighting along this area of the corridor should be of a consistent style and pedestrian scale to create a uniform streetscape.

B. Sub Area 2: McCoul Street to I-295 (Suburban)

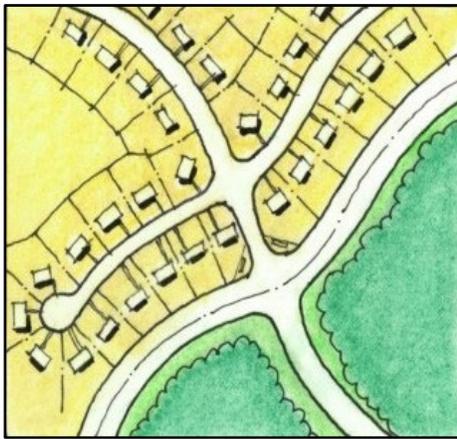


Sub Area 2 is predominately suburban with the open farmlands of the Reynolds Tract and Nelson Farm, and the important commercial node at Strath Road. The design guidelines address the potential for residential with some commercial development following the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) future land use designation on the Reynolds tract and additional commercial development at Strath Road area.

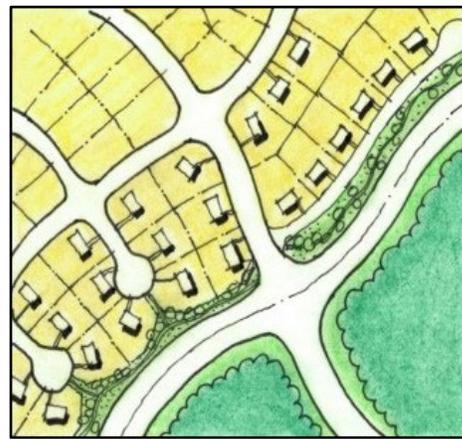
Site Design

1. Orientation and heights of buildings and structures should not block the significant views of the city skyline from Route 5.
2. During subdivision or site plan review, portions of new developments should be reserved as common open space to preserve distinct views or features.
3. New residential uses should be set back from Route 5 to allow for adequate landscaped buffers. Proper building orientation should be used to avoid having the rears of houses facing Route 5.

Discouraged



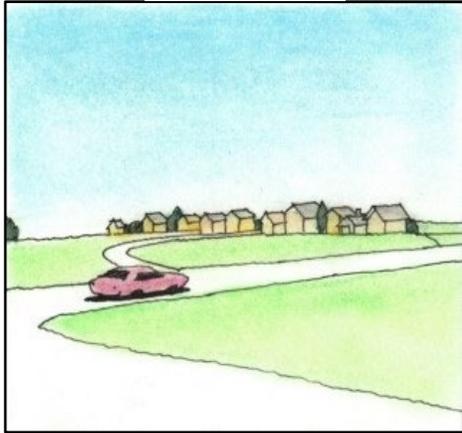
Preferred



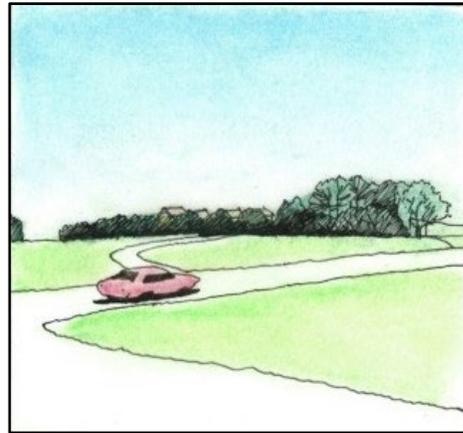
4. Development should provide a natural buffer of 25 feet along the corridor where possible. Any reduction in the width of the buffer, or areas that are open fields should require an alternate buffer/screening plan demonstrating how supplemental landscaping will provide adequate screening of new development.
5. Future development should evaluate areas of significant natural features such as streams, ponds, significant stands of trees and hedgerows and use design techniques to preserve them as part of an open space plan.
6. Commercial uses may be located closer to Route 5 if appropriate building setbacks, off-street parking and landscape screening measures are used. A minimum setback of 35 feet is recommended.

7. Existing hedgerows and windbreaks should be preserved to minimize the visual impact of new development.

Discouraged

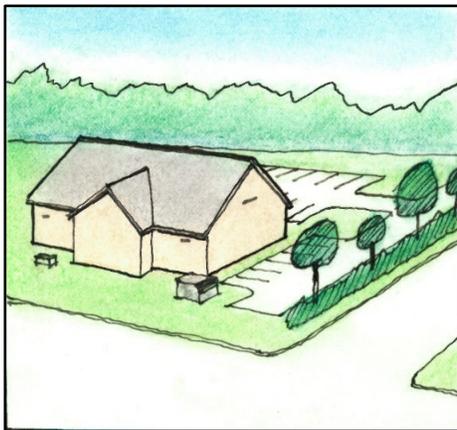


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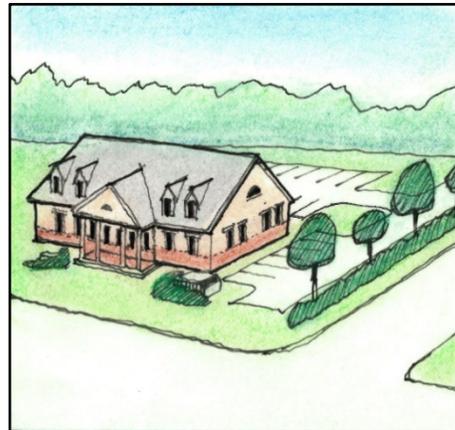


8. Parking for commercial uses should be located to the side or rear of buildings. The rear of a building should not face Route 5 unless appropriate architectural treatment is used to enhance the appearance. Large areas of blank walls should be avoided and loading areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.

Discouraged

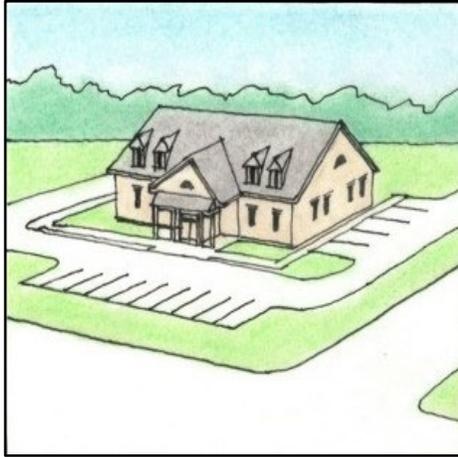


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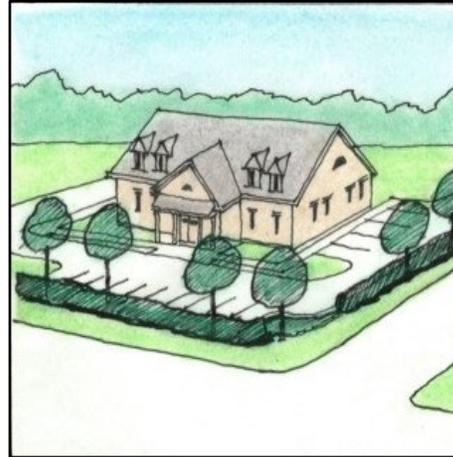


9. Parking may be placed in front of a building only if architectural treatment and the main entrance faces Route 5, and landscape screening measures for the parking are used.

Discouraged



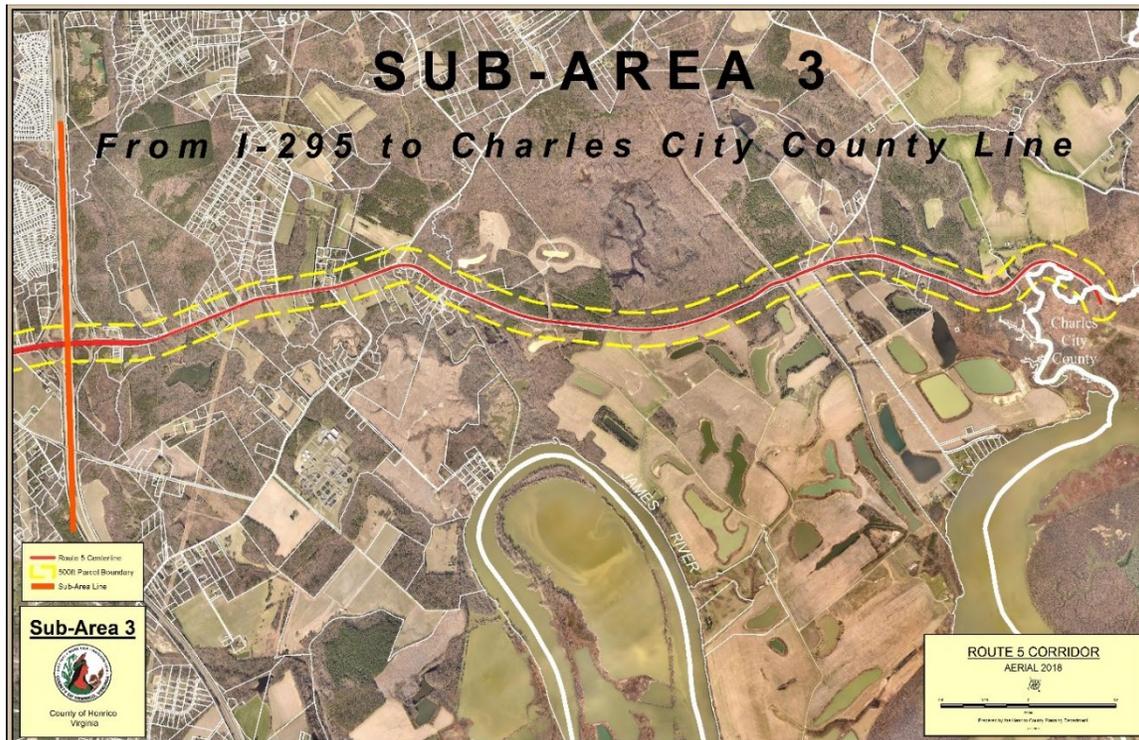
Preferred



Landscaping

1. The landscaping along this area of Route 5, especially the existing stand of trees along the western side of the corridor from McCoul Street to Oakland Road should be preserved to the greatest extent possible. Supplemental planting should be used where necessary.

C. Sub Area 3: I-295 to County of Henrico /Charles City County boundary (Rural)



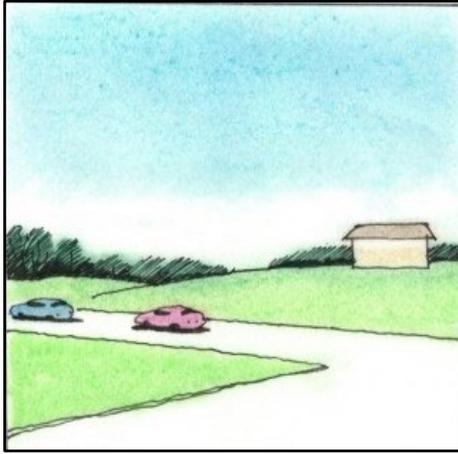
Sub Area 3 is predominately wooded on the north side of the corridor with large tracts of open farmland on the south side, including Curles Neck. Given the recommended land use of Prime Agriculture and the current lack of public water and sewer, future development will likely consist of larger lots on a minimum of one acre or more. Design guidelines should focus on preservation of the wooded edge of the corridor and sensitive siting and orientation of homes. There are a few small commercial nodes in this sub area and future commercial development should use building orientation guidelines as mentioned in the overall corridor design guidelines.

Site Design

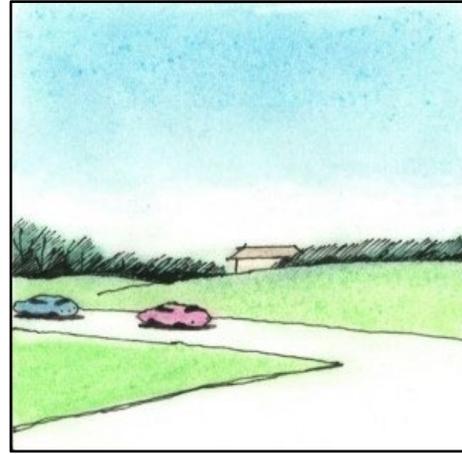
1. Residential development should use conservation subdivision or cluster development principles as part of the site design to preserve open space, existing vegetation and other significant natural features.
2. Future residential development should not dominate the view along the corridor nor compromise views or vistas.

3. Residential development should use existing topography and vegetation to buffer the impact of new structures to the extent possible.

Discouraged



Preferred



4. Residential development in this part of the corridor should provide a natural buffer of no less than 75 feet. Any reduction in the width of the buffer will require an alternate buffer/screening plan demonstrating how supplemental landscaping will provide adequate screening of new development.
5. During subdivision or site plan review, a portion of development sites should be reserved as private common open space to preserve rural character.

Streets/Access

1. New streets should maintain the rural character of this part of the corridor and be configured to avoid natural resources and open space areas. Single-loaded streets with lots on one side and common open space area on the other are strongly encouraged.