

***Westwood Study Area***  
***Small Area Study and Special Focus Area Recommendations***



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# Westwood Small Area Study

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# Westwood Small Area Study

## Introduction

In November 2017, the Planning Department began a small area study to examine a developed and industrial area of the Brookland Magisterial District bordering the Henrico County/Richmond City line. The study, named “The Westwood Study Area”, was prompted by recent developments in the vicinity, and recent inquiries and pressures for new types of development outside the traditional industrial uses.

The study area abuts Scott’s Addition to the east. This area, located in the City of Richmond, has recently experienced a marked increase in the development of new businesses and multi-family developments. As this area grows in popularity, the City has experienced various obstacles for redevelopment, such as conflicts with existing parking requirements. The efforts made to remedy this problem could be useful in examining the potential challenges in the Westwood Study Area. To the west, the Willow Lawn area has seen several new developments, as well as a number of redevelopment projects that have created a center of activity along West Broad Street. Libbie Mill, located across Staples Mill Road to the west, is a new mixed-use community centered around the Henrico County public library that at build-out will add a maximum 2,090 new residential units and businesses.



Figure 1: Vicinity Map

Portions of the study area, along Staples Mill Road, between Bethlehem Road and Thalbro Street are also included in the County’s Enterprise Zone program. The Westwood Study Area is in the middle of these areas experiencing new growth through development and redevelopment efforts. An evaluation of constraints that may deter redevelopment efforts, would be beneficial. This study will review the area’s history, existing uses, built environment, and future land use designations to identify opportunities and challenges specific to the Westwood Study Area. The study is intended to develop recommendations to create an environment that capitalizes on the area’s prime location, prioritizes the County’s redevelopment goals, and ultimately promotes new uses serving the greater community to locate within Westwood.

## Study Area and History

The Westwood Study Area is made up of 530 acres and is bordered by the City of Richmond and West Broad Street to the south, Staples Mill Road to the west, Bethlehem Road and Interstate 64 to the north, and the CSX railroad to the east. The southern border that parallels West Broad Street includes many parcels that are split by the County line with the City of Richmond. The boundaries of the study area were established by

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Figure 2: Study Area Boundary (\*2018 Aerial Photograph)

examining current physical features, such as existing roadways and rail lines, and surrounding commercial versus residential uses and zoning.

According to the 1953 Zoning Map, these physical boundaries were largely already established in the mid-1900s. The rail line and major transportation corridors such as Staples Mill Road and West Broad Street established the edges of Westwood at that time, as they do today. The construction of the interstate highway system later established in

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Figure 3: 1960-1990 Zoning Worksheet

the 1960's formed additional boundaries along the study area's northern and eastern edges (Figure 3).

Although the areas surrounding Westwood are zoned primarily for business and other medium-intensity commercial uses, the Westwood Study Area has a large concentration of industrially zoned parcels, due primarily to its location immediately adjacent to the CSX railroad's Acca Yard. In the past, the location of the railroad in such close proximity to industrial uses was an advantage for those businesses. It is by no coincidence that this concentration of industrial mixes (ranging from light to heavy) and railroad were located

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adjacent to one another. This pattern of development can be seen elsewhere along the rail line in Henrico, as areas to the north along the railway are also lined with large stretches of light industrial uses.

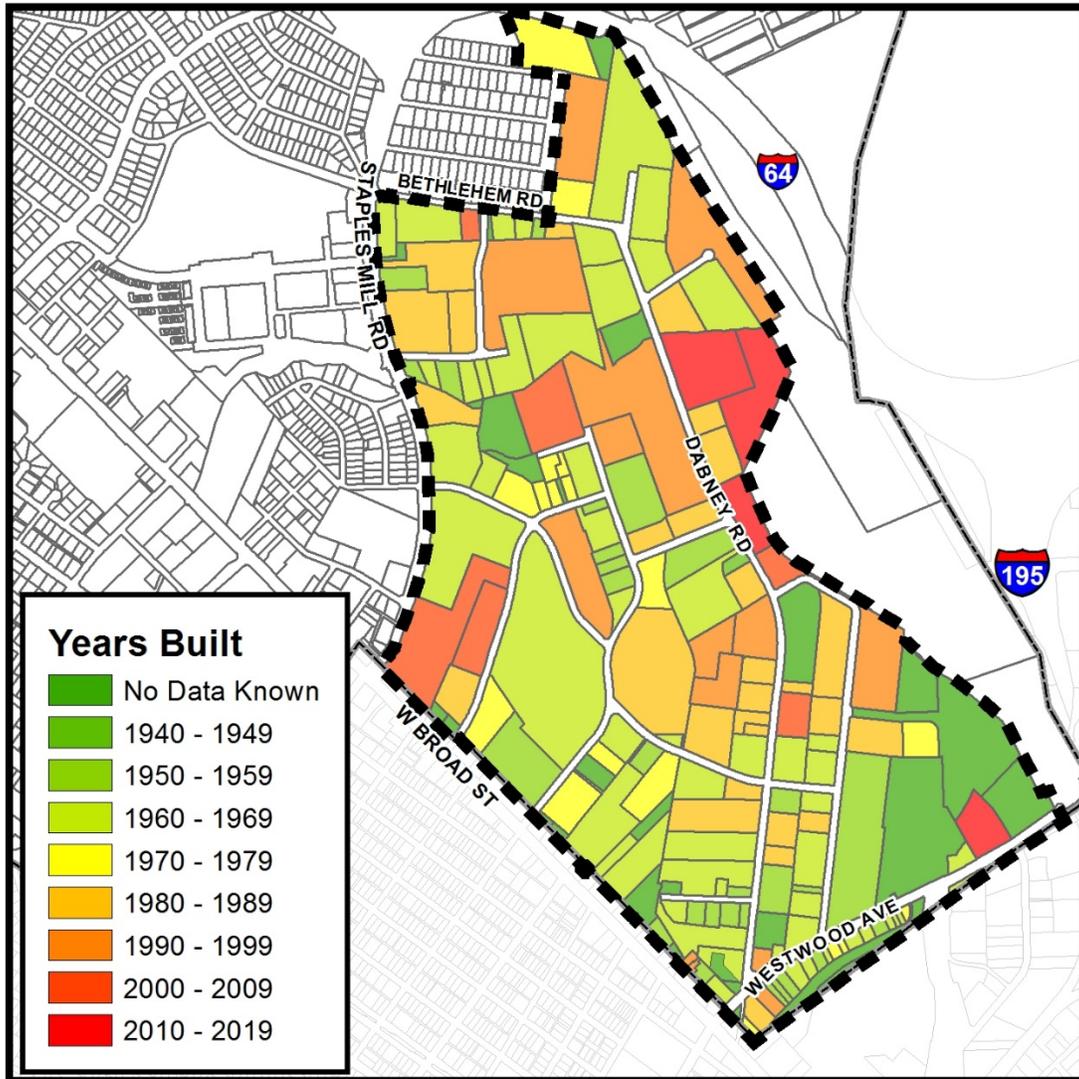


Figure 4: Year Primary Structure was Built

While industries still use railroads to move cargo, trucking companies have also risen in popularity depending on the cost, goods being shipped, and distance to the customer. This is reflected in the Westwood Study Area, which has trucking companies and other wholesale businesses that use trucks to haul their goods. For these reasons, the study area is not as likely to be dependent on the railroad as it has in the past. This is also illustrated by the fact that a rail spur that previously served the area has been removed.

From a built environment perspective, approximately 50% of the buildings in the Westwood Study Area were constructed prior to 1970 as shown in Figure 4; only nine buildings have been built since the year 2000. The newer buildings are mostly located on the outlying parts of the study area, meaning the general road network and building typology have been in place for quite some time.

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Newer and pending developments within the study area, including Lidl, Top Golf, Triangle Rock Club, and Cube Smart, have largely been redevelopment projects or new construction on one of the few areas of vacant land, and have been considerably less industrial in nature. This indicates that although the area is largely developed, there are opportunities to redevelop under-utilized parking areas and older warehouses for new uses that reflect the changing character of the area as a whole. The form of this new development that incorporates a variety of uses, and recent pressure to develop additional service and entertainment options, show the potential for the Westwood Study Area.

### Current Zoning and 2026 Future Land Use

The Westwood Study Area is made up of a mixture of office, business, and industrial uses, which are reflected in the various zoning districts represented in the area. The majority of the study area is zoned industrial, with a high concentration of M-2, General Industrial District. Many of the uses however are businesses that not necessarily require M-1, M-2, or M-3 zoning to operate.

As shown on the current zoning map (Figure 5), the central and eastern portions of the study area are largely zoned M-2, General Industrial. M-1 zoned properties are mostly located to the south and west. A more diverse area of zoning, including various business and office zoned properties can be found on Staples Mill Road along the western boundary line.

M-3, Heavy Industrial, zoned parcels are not common; there are only four locations in the County and only 11 parcels zoned M-3 or M-3C (Conditional). The Westwood Study Area is the only vicinity in the western half of the County where M-3 parcels are located. The central southern portion of the study area contains four M-3 parcels.

There have been four approved rezoning cases within the Westwood Study Area since 1984, and only one case rezoned for a more intense use with no proffers associated. The other three cases were conditional rezoning cases and had proffers associated to regulate the property in addition to underlying zoning ordinance requirements. Proffers accepted with those requests assist in maintaining a standard for the property which range from landscaping, hours of operation, architectural styles, prohibited uses, etc. In general, the rezoning requests granted uses consistent with the development pattern in the study area.

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan recommends Heavy Industry as the future land use designation for most of the study area. Other areas are designated Light Industry, Office, and Environmental Protection Area (Figure 6).

The Light and Heavy Industry land use recommendations correspond to the existing M zoning districts in the zoning ordinance, and the majority of the parcels zoned Heavy Industry are currently zoned M-1, M-2, and M-3. Areas designated Heavy Industry are generally associated with zoning and uses that have more noise, vibrations, truck traffic, and fumes that may be objectionable to adjacent uses.

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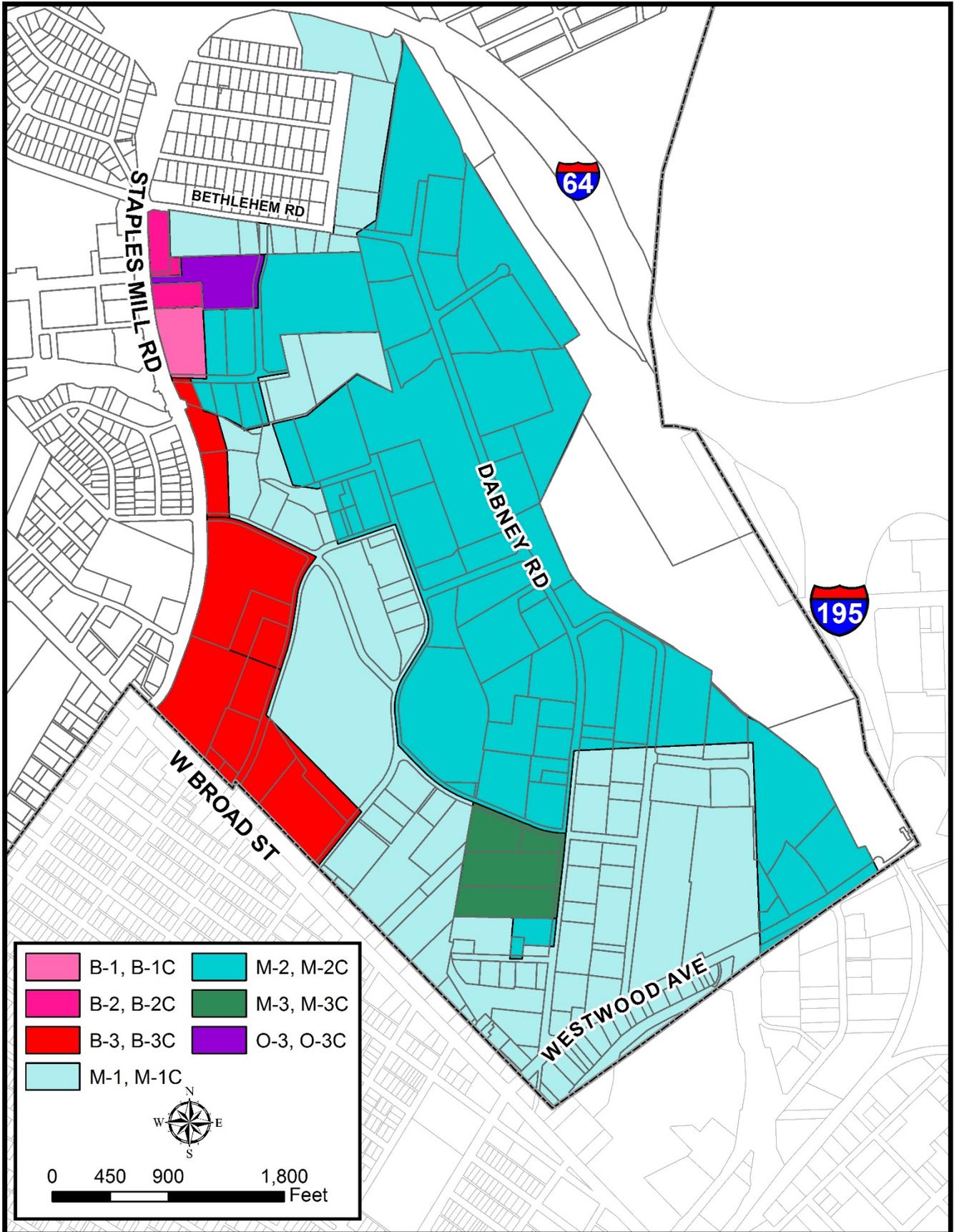


Figure 5: Current Zoning

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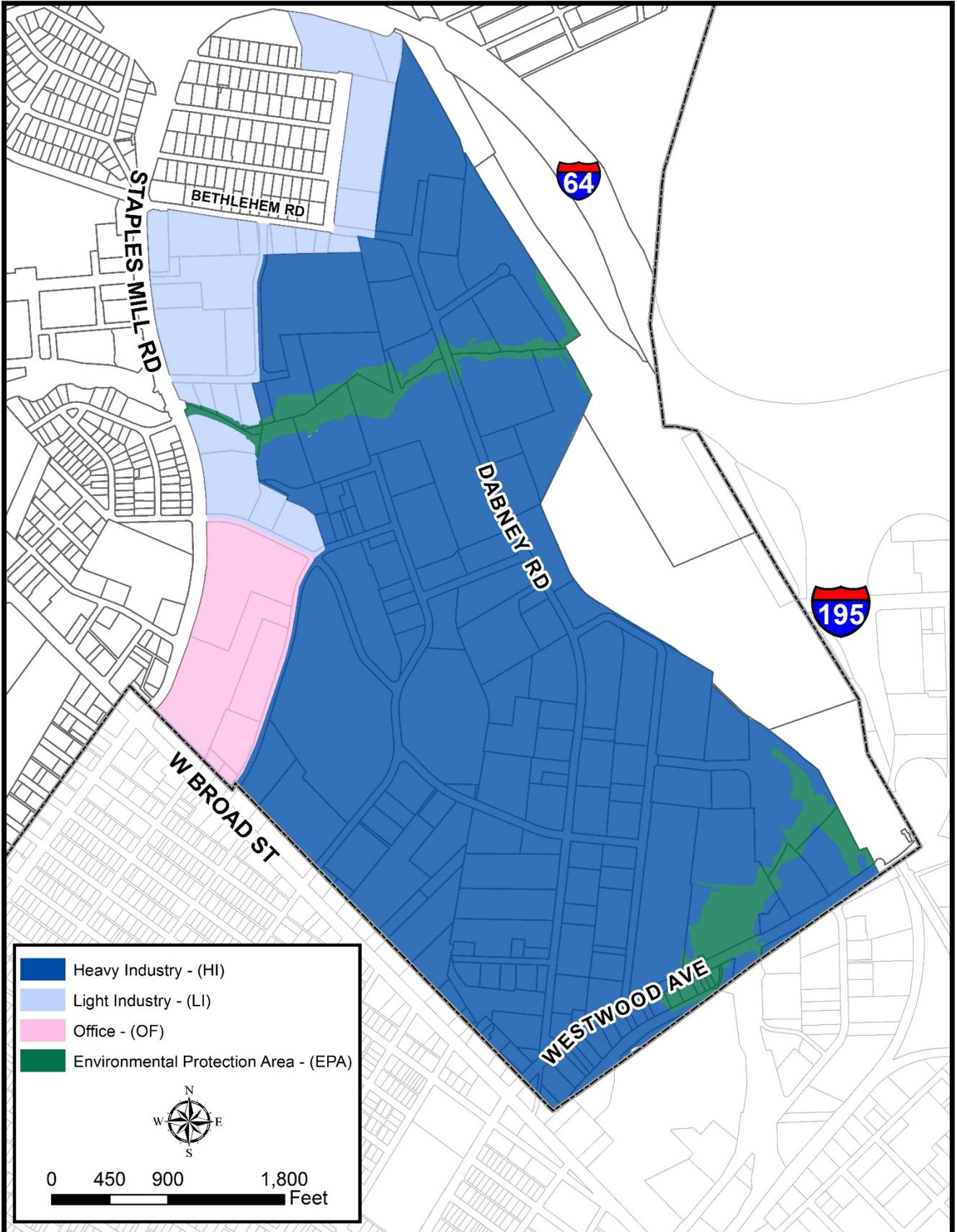


Figure 6: 2026 Comprehensive Plan

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The southwestern portion of the study area designated Office is adjacent to the intersection of Staples Mill Road and West Broad Street. This property is zoned B-3 and B-3C; however, the Office land use designation is consistent with the existing office use on the property, which contains several buildings occupied by Anthem Insurance.

The designated Environmental Protection Area (EPA) correlates to identified floodplain. There are two main areas of EPA, one of which crosses the study area in the north-central portion, and the other closer to Westwood Avenue in the south. These areas constrain the ability to develop on affected parcels, but for most redevelopment can be accommodated.

### Redevelopment Pressures

There are several factors driving redevelopment pressures in the Westwood Study Area. To the east in the City of Richmond, Scott's Addition has seen large amounts of growth in converting warehouses to residential, breweries, as well as new residential. This increase in development in Scott's Addition, coupled with the zoning changes in the City of Richmond that incentivize redevelopment, have created a spillover impact on the Westwood Area. Richmond recently rezoned Scott's Addition into two zoning designations, B-7 and a new TOD-1 District. In creating this new zoning designation, parking was revamped in Scott's Addition as a whole to incentivize new businesses to relocate here and create a more pedestrian-oriented environment. There is no longer a parking requirement for new businesses located in the TOD-1 district, except for dwelling, hotel, and motel uses. For existing uses, their parking requirement was reduced by 50%. There is also a parking maximum of one space per 300 square feet of floor area for those uses located within the B-7 district. Scott's Addition has addressed certain concerns such as parking requirements and promoting a multi-modal environment. The reduced parking requirements and available on-site parking could encourage more pedestrians, cyclists, and the use of public transportation, in particular the Pulse bus rapid transit system that recently opened along West Broad Street.

In addition to recent redevelopment in Scott's Addition in the City of Richmond, new developments are also occurring in adjacent areas within Henrico County. In the eastern portion of the Westwood area, a new entertainment facility, Top Golf, was approved in 2018 and is under construction. To the west of the study area, within and close to Willow Lawn, a number of new developments are occurring. The Shoppes at Willow Lawn is completing their redevelopment plan which began in 2004. In this plan, a pedestrian promenade and new buildings were constructed, and signage was updated. Dick's Sporting Goods was recently constructed, and AC Moore relocated to a new area in the shopping center. Redevelopment has also occurred outside the bounds of the shopping center, such as a new Chick-fil-A located across West Broad Street and the expansion of the nearby Faison Center.

The Libbie Mill development, located to the west of Staples Mill Road, is a major redevelopment of land that previously held post-World War II apartment housing. This mixed-use community includes both commercial uses along Staples Mill Road, a largely residential district to the west closer to Libbie Avenue, as well as the Henrico County

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Public Library and a new mixed-use apartment building. Only portions of the development have been constructed at this time and at build out, the developer will have up to 2093 new residences. As more businesses locate here and more residences are occupied, the vicinity of the Westwood Study Area will see an increase in population and potential demand for goods and services.

These nearby developments indicate a general growth trend in this area of Henrico County and adjacent areas of the City of Richmond. Because the Westwood Study Area has vacant buildings and parcels that could house new development and businesses, it is likely there will be additional development and redevelopment pressures within the study area. Some of these pressures are already evident, such as the new Lidl grocery store on West Broad Street which opened on the site of the former Colonial Downs off-track betting facility in the southwestern portion of the study area. Other new construction for more typically industrial uses, such as self-storage facilities, is also occurring. Additionally, the presence of new or relocated businesses, such as PPD Laboratories and Strangeways Brewing, are further evidence of additional growth in the study area. These growth demands are likely to increase due to the factors described above, as well as the introduction of the new Pulse bus rapid transit service along West Broad Street.

### Transportation Enhancements

The Pulse, a bus rapid transit (BRT) initiative, has been recently implemented in Henrico County and the City of Richmond with service having begun on June 24, 2018. The route spans from Rocketts Landing to Willow Lawn. This bus line has limited stops and dedicated lanes for quicker, more efficient trips. Located along the east and westbound lanes of West Broad Street, to the south of the Westwood Study Area, are two Pulse stations. These stations are in the City of Richmond, however, many parcels located along West Broad Street in this area are partially in the City of Richmond and the County of Henrico. These Pulse stations will serve the Westwood Study Area and provide enhanced transit access for potential visitors and employees.

The goal of the Pulse is to make bus transit more efficient while also creating shorter trips than would usually be experienced on GRTC buses. This is likely to bring more people to the area and redevelopment demand within the study area similar to those in Scott's Addition to the east. Walkability to transit is also key. Using GIS, walk sheds within 0.25 and 0.5 miles of the closest east and westbound Pulse stations (Figures 6 and 7). These distances are reflective of realistic walking areas for frequent transit stops such as BRT stations. Consideration was given to existing buildings, street alignments, and pedestrian facilities, as well as the fact that pedestrians would likely cross parking lots and landscaped areas to shorten walking distances. There was minimal difference in the portion of the study area served by either stop, meaning that both trip directions provide similar access to Westwood. Through this exercise it became apparent the portion of the study area within these walk sheds are not pedestrian friendly due to the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals.

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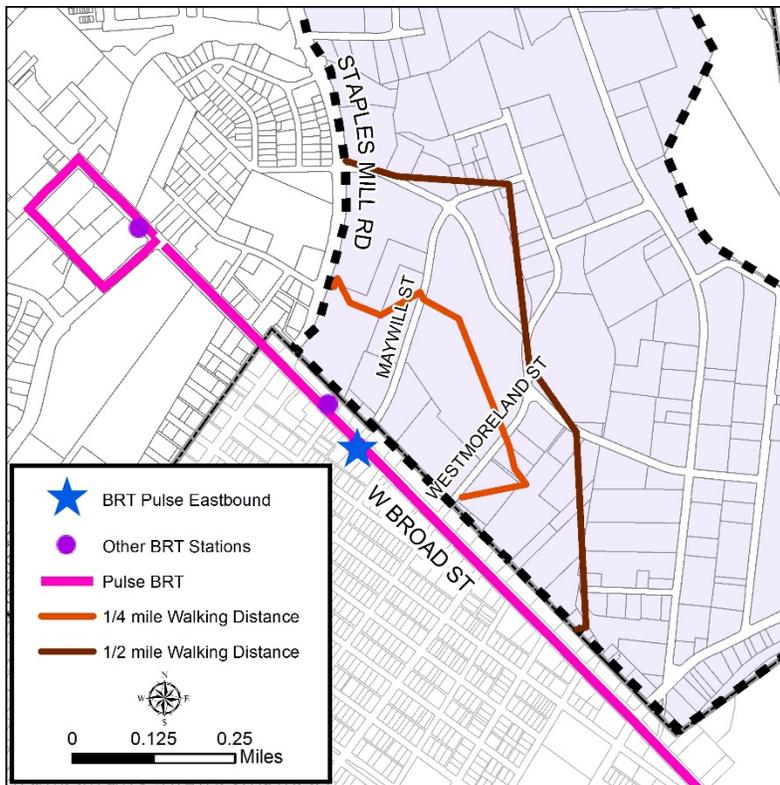


Figure 7: Walk Shed from Eastbound Pulse Station

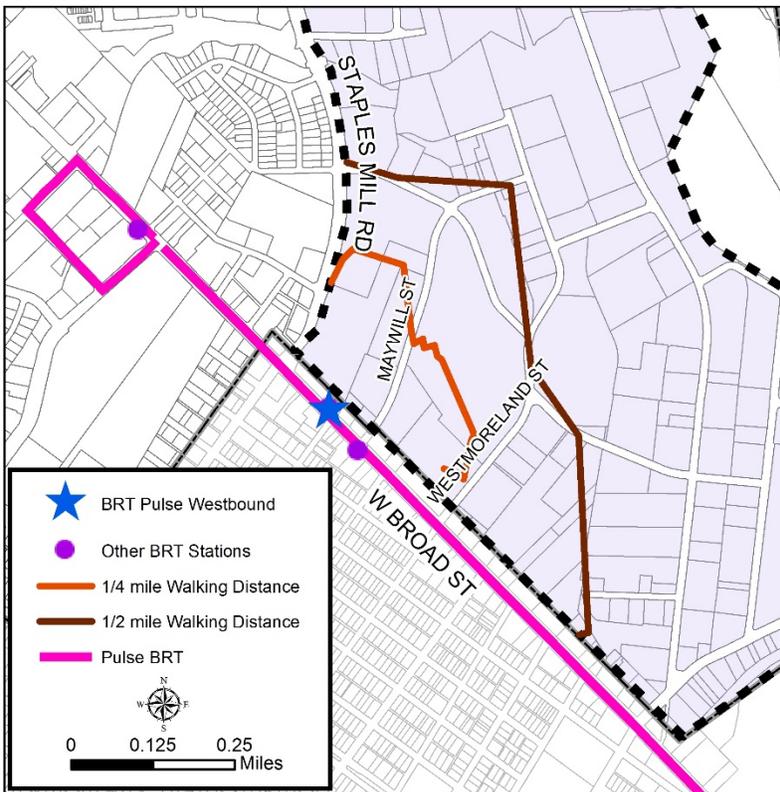


Figure 8: Walk Shed from Westbound Pulse Station

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The incorporation of the Pulse bus line into Henrico County enhances transit access to the surrounding areas and is anticipated to reduce some single-occupancy vehicular trips in areas served by the new system. Additional focus on the areas shown in Figures 7 and 8 are warranted, with consideration towards reducing parking requirements and enhancing pedestrian access consistent with the recent direction for areas such as Scott's Addition.

### **Redevelopment Challenges – Block Size and Vehicular and Pedestrian Connectivity**

While various factors have increased development pressure on the Westwood Study Area, there are also many challenges that could hinder development, primarily related to the existing building environment and potential parking concerns. These challenges are easiest to illustrate when comparing the study area to Scott's Addition, which contains a number of similar businesses to Westwood, but a significantly different built environment. Scott's Addition is approximately 250 acres in size, while the area being analyzed for this study is approximately 530 acres. Additionally, the grid configuration of the streets within Scott's Addition facilitates redevelopment by providing additional parking areas, street frontage for new business, and enhanced pedestrian and vehicular connectivity. The Westwood Study Area does not align with a grid system, and therefore does not have as many interconnected roads. As a result, there are a number of long roads traversing the study area creating large blocks and parcels, with limited access to the interior of those blocks.

This lack of connective streets and large block size creates complications for redevelopment when compared to Scott's Addition. To increase the connectivity of this area, existing and potential road connections should be examined. There are several dead-end roads that could be extended to existing roads to increase connectivity; however, when examining any possible new roadways, existing buildings and parking areas must be considered. Figure 9 shows potential new roadways that avoid existing buildings and travel along property lines to minimize impacts on existing uses. By further connecting these roadways, new opportunities open for businesses to front on new streets. Improving street connectivity would reduce block size, creating a more cohesive community and increasing the number of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian travel ways.

This is demonstrated when comparing the existing road network in the Westwood Study Area, the road network in Scott's Addition, and the potential road network with new connections as described above. Because the study area and Scott's Addition contained similar uses and underutilized parcels, there is some basis for comparison, especially given the level of recent redevelopment within the City of Richmond. However, while the character of uses is generally similar, there are numerous differences in the built environment and general physical characteristics of the two areas. One of the major differences is the general size of the industrial areas within the county when compared to Scott's Addition.



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As shown in Figure 10, the general block size gives an indication of the differences in the two areas. While these existing differences provide evidence of current challenges within Westwood, they can also illustrate a path towards addressing the issue with the goal of creating an area better suited to current development trends. For instance, if roads were to be extended as shown in Figure 9, the average block size in the study area would be reduced by 33% and additional vehicular and pedestrian connections would be made, both of which could further redevelopment efforts in the future. This illustrates that one of the main goals for future redevelopment in the study area should be to enhance such connections.

	Scott's Addition	Study Area	Study Area with New Blocks
Number of Blocks	39 (3 excluded due to presence of interstate)	9 (3 excluded due to presence of railway and interstate)	20 (same land excluded)
Average Block Size	2.97 acres	26.87 acres	18.01 acres
Largest Block	10.32 acres	94.96 acres	36.93
Smallest Block	0.809 acres	9.95 acres	5.79

*Figure 10: Comparison chart of the Westwood Study Area, Scott's Addition, and potential configuration of the Westwood Study Area*

The reduction in block size and increased connections are especially important given the lack of existing pedestrian infrastructure in the area, with sidewalk generally limited to the study area's Staples Mill Road and West Broad Street frontages. Limited sidewalk also exists on sections of Maywill and Thalbro Streets; however, outside of these areas pedestrian infrastructure is largely limited to on-site facilities between parking areas and building access points. Because of the county's recent focus on enhancing pedestrian access throughout the county, new pedestrian accommodations would benefit redevelopment efforts within the study area. Consideration could also be given to retrofitting public roads with sidewalk where conditions demonstrate the need through existing "desire paths" or when redevelopment increases the likelihood of use by pedestrians.

### Redevelopment Challenges - Parking

Additional roads could also address one of the other major challenges facing the study area: parking. The current Zoning Ordinance for Henrico County came into effect in 1960, and the minimum parking requirements for the bulk of the study area are therefore based on the standards of that ordinance. In general, minimum parking requirements are based on individual uses. Because so much of the study area is comprised of larger industrial buildings, including numerous warehouses, parking requirements were generally not very high as the required parking was based on the number of employees.

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However, as uses shift towards services and entertainment options, parking requirements will generally increase. For this reason, this study provides an opportunity to examine the current parking requirements more closely and determine if there is excess parking that could be used as properties redevelop, or if there are other methods that could address the disparity between required and provided parking within the study area.

As noted, existing development within the study area is able to meet current parking requirements for existing uses, which are generally industrial in nature. This impacts potential new businesses attempting to locate in the study area, as there may not be enough existing parking to accommodate the new use. This is largely because industrial uses only require one parking space per two employees on a maximum shift, minimizing the number of required parking spaces. Other uses can require as much as one space per 100 square feet of floor area, and because industrial sites/warehouses typically have a large floor area, if a new use occupies the space, then the new tenant will likely be unable to meet parking requirements.

This challenge can be addressed in numerous ways. One way is through the construction of additional off-street parking areas. However, given that most of the subject area is already developed, this option is limited. Consideration could be given to reducing the required parking for areas within a reasonable distance of public transportation, such as areas within a certain distance of the new Pulse bus stations. Finally, enhanced use of shared and on-street parking can assist new businesses in meeting their parking requirements.

Shared parking is an attractive option as the area redevelops, as many of the businesses currently operate on a typical 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday schedule. When these businesses are not open, their parking lots are generally empty and may be available for other users in the vicinity. Based on staff research of available information, 57 businesses within the study area are closed on weekends and 68 businesses close prior to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, as shown in Figure 11. While there were 89 parcels for which no hours of operation could be found, many of those uses are offices and typically operate on a similar schedule. Current zoning ordinance regulations limit shared parking opportunities. The requirement for shared parking spaces to be located on adjacent property and not allocated towards another use is a constraint: parking spaces for a business that closes at 5:00 p.m. cannot be used by anyone else after that time to meet parking requirements. Re-examining these requirements could allow for new businesses, such as restaurants, breweries, or other uses that have peak hours in the evening, to locate within the study area and still provide adequate parking. Additionally, on-street parking typically available on the roads within the study area, could be striped and potentially used towards minimum parking requirements. Any future actions regarding the zoning in the study area should consider legitimizing these parking spaces for future redevelopment efforts.

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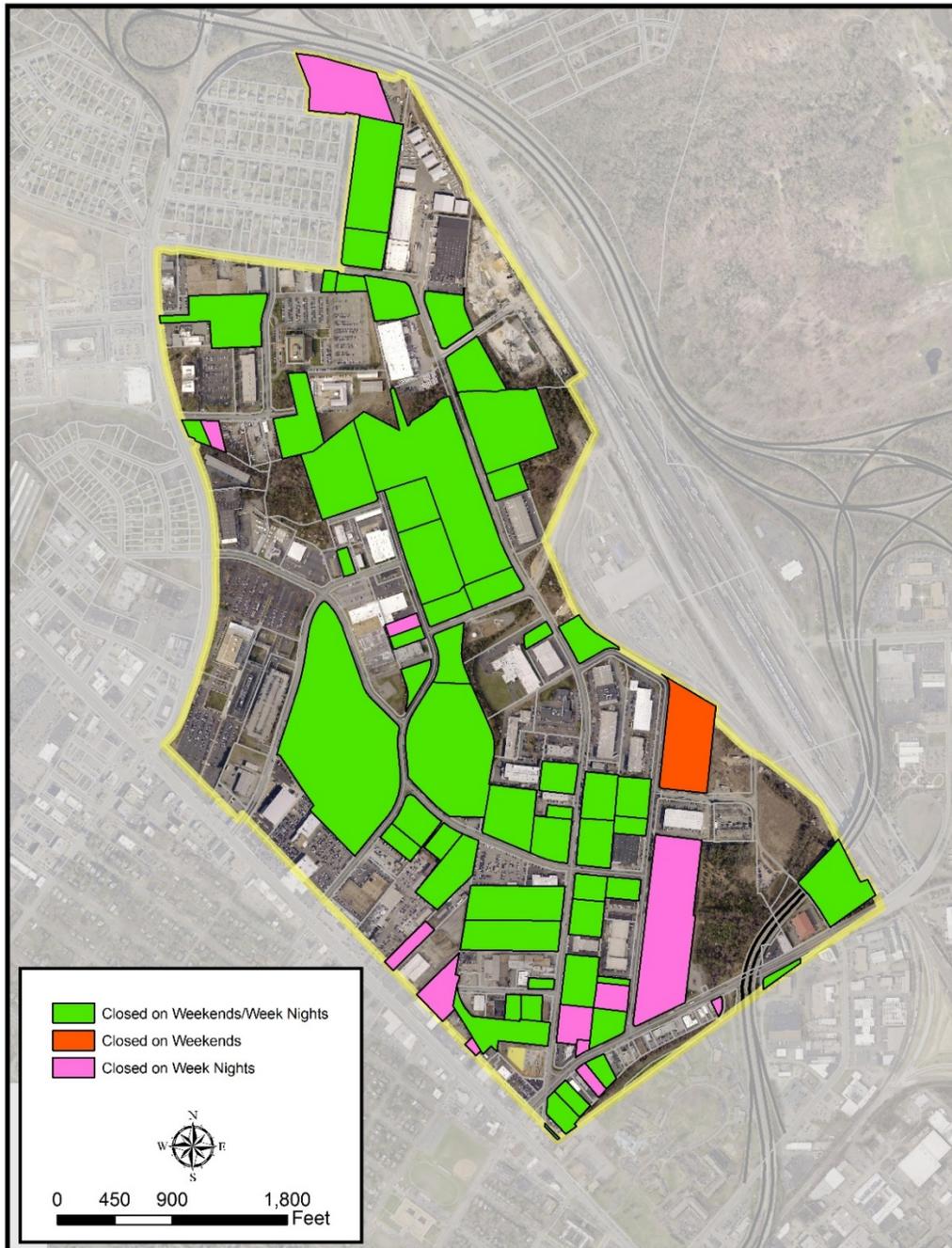


Figure 11: Business Operating Hours and Potential Parking Availability

Staff believes a number of options are available to address how parking is addressed within the study area. These include:

- Enhanced shared parking: This could be done through the relaxing of certain shared parking requirements (such as maximum distance to the subject site or adjacency) or through the consideration of allowing uses that have different peak business hours to share parking that is otherwise allocated to an existing use.
- “Right size” parking: This approach would use actual parking characteristics from the study area to define parking requirements, rather than relying on national averages to set parking requirements. For comparison, shared parking models use

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national average data whereas right size parking models use data specific to the subject area. Typically, right size parking studies involve collecting actual parking occupancy from existing uses at different times of weekdays and weekends.

- Establish a minimum / maximum range of parking: Through this approach, the number of provided parking spots only needs to fall between the minimum and maximum figures specified, creating the ability to provide parking that is flexible for existing and future uses.

Ultimately, parking should be examined in greater detail for the study area and monitored for potential issues as redevelopment occurs. Incremental steps, such as relaxing shared parking standards, could occur and be analyzed as the study area grows.

### Redevelopment Challenge – Enterprise Zone

Although the portions of the study area along Staples Mill Road between Bethlehem Road and Thalbro Street are located within the County’s Enterprise Zone, the majority of the study area is not eligible for the Enterprise Zone program. This program provides various state and local incentives for capital improvements and job creation, and specifically identified by the County to enhance the appearance of existing buildings and stimulate business development. Incentives include grants for property improvements, waived fees for plan reviews and permits, and certain tax exemptions. Expansion of the Enterprise Zone to include more of the study area could be beneficial for revitalization efforts and should be considered when the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone are next evaluated.

### Redevelopment Challenges – Existing Zoning and Use Conflicts

With redevelopment, uses not typically found in the study area may seek to locate within Westwood. Like Scott’s Addition, the introduction of new service and entertainment options is often followed by new residential uses.

While new residential uses may be appropriate given the changing dynamics of development within Westwood, the existing zoning prohibits residential uses. Additionally, current zoning ordinance requirements such as transitional buffering between different uses would severely impact any non-residential development that may occur.

For this reason, consideration should be given to how residential uses could be incorporated into the study area while simultaneously protecting both new residents and existing industrial and business uses whose existing operations may disrupt new uses.

If properly integrated, new residential uses could provide a complement to future redevelopment in the study area. Because residential uses would likely require new construction on larger tracts of land, additional pedestrian and vehicular connections consistent with that shown above could be accomplished. Additionally, residential uses are typically a vital component of shared parking because peak demand for residential and nonresidential uses occurs at different times. This means new parking constructed for residential uses could help address existing and potential parking challenges in the area.

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### **Redevelopment Challenge – Utilities**

Redevelopment in Westwood will likely create increased demands on public utility systems in addition to infrastructure impacts noted previously. Because the area is largely developed, and has been developed in an industrial manner, the existing water and sewer systems have been tailored to uses that have been in place for a number of years. This means new uses that create additional demands on those services could be required to upgrade existing water and sewer lines to serve their development. In some areas capacity to serve these new uses exists, but is available on a “first come – first served” basis.

For this reason, additional review of utility impacts are encouraged as redevelopment begins within the study area. As new patterns of development emerge, Department of Public Utilities staff can better determine what upgrades are necessary, and the timing of those upgrades.

### **Redevelopment Challenges – Funding for Public Improvements**

The various public improvements described above, including the construction of new roads and sidewalks and the upgrade to existing public utility systems, could negatively impact the ability to redevelop certain sites within Westwood. Because redevelopment of the study area could benefit existing and future property owners, and the county as a whole, staff believes it is appropriate to discuss potential funding options for necessary public improvements. While many of these improvements can be accomplished incrementally as part of individual plans of development, more comprehensive improvements could benefit from alternative funding.

One option that has been recently been considered by Henrico County to fund improvements such as sidewalks and streetlights is the establishment of a Sanitary District. A Sanitary District is a special district in which public services and improvements are paid for by property owners within the district, minimizing impacts on taxpayers elsewhere in the county. Per the Code of Virginia (Section 21-113), the Board of Supervisors, upon the petition of 50 qualified voters of a proposed district or, if the proposed district contains less than 100 qualified voters, upon petition of 50 percent of the qualified voters of the proposed district, may adopt an ordinance creating a sanitary district.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Westwood Study Area is well-located to take advantage of growth occurring in the vicinity, but certain constraints are likely to limit the ability of the study area to redevelop with the types of new service and entertainment uses that are happening nearby. The streets located within the study area are not well interconnected, which has created large “blocks” limiting vehicular and pedestrian connectivity. Additionally, unless a similar use locates within an existing building, parking requirements are likely not able to be met. Limited access to incentives through the Enterprise Zone, as well as the potential cost of upgraded public facilities, could also create challenges for future redevelopment.

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To address these constraints, this study recommends following the Goals, Objectives and Strategies listed in this report for any new rezoning request within the study area; however, given that much of the redevelopment that may occur within the Westwood Area is unlikely to require rezoning or other legislative action, staff also recommends consideration of the following:

- Designating the Westwood Area a Special Focus Area in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. Creating a Special Focus Area would provide additional guidance for future land use decisions based on the Goals, Objectives and Strategies listed in this report, as well as any additional guidance that may result as part of the creating of the focus area.
- Enacting of an overlay district for the Westwood Area, or portions thereof. Because the existing zoning and development pattern in the study area is largely established, a redevelopment overlay could be used to provide flexibility and additional design standards for future growth.
- Examining existing parking regulations regarding shared parking. This examination and potential zoning ordinance update could focus on the Westwood Area, or other areas where additional flexibility is necessary to meet parking requirements.
- Establishing a method to allow currently prohibited uses, such as residences, in Business and Industrial Districts. This could create incentives for redevelopment by allowing a mixture of uses within the Westwood Area.
- Expansion of the Enterprise Zone to include those portions of the study area deemed appropriate.
- Establishing a Sanitary District as a means for funding public improvements.

Additional review, including possible amendments to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan and Henrico County Zoning Ordinance, is likely warranted given the increasing levels of growth in the vicinity of the Westwood Area and how that growth will impact properties within the study boundaries. Focusing future development and redevelopment into areas served by existing infrastructure and new transportation options would be consistent with the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan and could help achieve the vision established by the Board of Supervisors with that document.

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### Goals, Objectives, and Strategies for the Westwood Study Area

Goal 1: Promote redevelopment within the study area while protecting existing businesses from associated negative impacts.

Objective 1.1: Minimize conflicts between existing businesses and new nonresidential and residential uses through the use of design features such as buffering and sound suppression.

Objective 1.2: Develop resources for existing property owners to allow them to benefit from redevelopment efforts.

Strategy 1.2.1: Consider expansion of Enterprise Zone benefits to Westwood Study Area

Objective 1.3: Examine potential zoning ordinance amendments to allow additional uses such as residences within the study area.

Goal 2: Address Existing and Potential Parking Conflicts

Objective 2.1: Determine method for addressing parking for new uses that require additional parking

Strategy 2.1.1: Examine opportunities to promote shared parking by increasing allowable distance between parking spots and the subject business.

Strategy 2.1.2: Analyze possibilities for shared parking based on hours of operation of existing and planned businesses.

Strategy 2.1.3: Consider removing parking requirements for certain uses in close proximity to high frequency public transit.

Strategy 2.1.4: Use data to analyze potential parking reductions by utilizing a model such as the Urban Land Institute Shared Parking Model or Victoria Transport Policy Institute Online Transportation Demand Management Encyclopedia.

Strategy 2.1.5: Examine the potential to change parking requirements from minimum requirements to maximum requirements or a minimum to maximum range, encouraging parking to be more specific to the business needs.

Objective 2.2: Allow on-street parking credits for new and existing businesses.

Strategy 2.2.1: Collaborate with the Department of Public Works to stripe on-street parking spots to standardize the number of available spots.

Objective 2.3: Create an overlay district with specific parking regulations. Examine options of most beneficial area to identify as an overlay district.

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Goal 3: Encourage a multi-modal transportation network and more connectivity throughout the Study Area.

Objective 3.1: Examine potential for upgrading street connectivity.

Strategy 3.3.1: Examine the age and location of existing structures located within identified potential connectivity areas.

Strategy 3.3.2: Work with the Department of Public Works to include new roads on the 2026 Major Thoroughfare Plan.

Strategy 3.3.3: Encourage new developments to extend public roadways where possible or create new public or private roadways to create additional connectivity.

Objective 3.2: Enhance pedestrian environment.

Strategy 3.2.1: Install sidewalks on both sides of all public roads in the study area as properties redevelop.

Strategy 3.2.2: Consider inclusion of new sidewalks in the County's Capital Improvement Program to serve existing users.

Strategy 3.2.3: Where existing roadway connectivity is lacking, consider the creation of pedestrian-only paths and trails where easements are available or can be obtained.

Strategy 3.2.4: Encourage consistent street lighting throughout the study area to create a well-lit environment and ensure pedestrian safety.

Objective 3.3: Encourage use of public transit.

Strategy 3.3.1: Enhance access to existing public transit stops along West Broad Street and Staples Mill Road.

Strategy 3.3.2: Work with existing businesses to incentivize the use of public transit for employees and customers.

Strategy 3.3.3: Explore possibility of additional transit within the study area.

## **Westwood Small Area Study**

### **Appendix A – Draft 2026 Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

## Westwood Small Area Study

### ***The Vision***

The Westwood Area will be revitalized by utilizing its prime location to create an environment that welcomes a diverse economic base. A wider variety of uses will be located here, which will continue to encourage new development to occur and existing businesses to remain. Upgraded pedestrian-scaled environment, circulation improvements, and encouraged use of public transit will result in a more complete multimodal transportation network.

### ***Study Area Goals***

One of the driving forces behind this Special Focus Area is the need to create an environment that capitalizes on the area's prime location while also responding to the changing development trend to aid in the County's redevelopment goals. This ultimately promotes new uses serving the greater community to locate within the Westwood Area and contributes to the continued growth of the county as a whole.

#### ***The study area will:***

- Goal 1: Promote redevelopment within the study area while protecting existing businesses from associated negative impacts.***
- Goal 2: Address existing and potential parking conflicts***
- Goal 3: Encourage a multi-modal transportation network and more connectivity throughout the Study Area.***

### ***Study Area Objectives***

The following objectives will guide the county in review of development proposals within the study area.

The county will:

1. Minimize conflicts between existing businesses and new nonresidential and residential uses through the use of design features such as buffering and sound suppression.
2. Develop resources for existing property owners to allow them to benefit from redevelopment efforts. Consider expansion of Enterprise Zone benefits to Westwood Study Area.
3. Examine potential zoning ordinance amendments to allow additional uses such as residences within the study area.
4. Determine method for addressing parking for new uses that require additional parking (shared parking based on distance and/or differing hours of operation, utilizing potential parking reduction models, changing the parking requirement for those in close proximity to the BRT, or transitioning to a minimum-maximum parking range to be more specific to the business needs).
5. Allow on-street parking credits for new and existing businesses. Collaborate with the Department of Public Works to stripe on-street parking spots to standardize the number of available spots.
6. Create an overlay district with specific parking regulations.

## Westwood Small Area Study

Examine options of most beneficial area to identify as an overlay district.

7. Examine potential for upgrading street connectivity by examining existing structures for age and location, working with Department of Public Works to include new roads on the 2026 Major Thoroughfare Plan, and encourage new developments to extend public roadways or create new public/private roadways to create additional connectivity.
8. Enhance pedestrian environment by installing sidewalks on both sides of public roads as the properties redevelop, consider inclusion of new sidewalks in the County's Capital Improvement Programs to serve existing users, and consider the creation of pedestrian-only paths where existing roadway connectivity is lacking. Encourage installation of consistent street lighting to ensure pedestrian safety.
9. Encourage use of public transit by enhancing access to existing public transit stops along West Broad Street and Staples Mill Road, to work with existing businesses to incentivize the use of public transit for employees and customers, and to explore possibility of additional transit within the study area.

## **Westwood Small Area Study**

### **Appendix B – Draft Zoning Ordinance Amendment**

**Westwood Small Area Study**

**Blackline**

**ORDINANCE – To Amend and Reordain Section 24-4 Titled “Division into districts” of the Code of the County of Henrico and to Add Section 24-92.5 Titled “Westwood Redevelopment Overlay District” to Create the Westwood Redevelopment Overlay District, Set Rules Applicable to That District, and Update the List of Districts in the Zoning Ordinance**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF HENRICO COUNTY, VIRGINIA:

1. That Section 24-4 of the Code of the County of Henrico be amended and reordained as follows:

**Sec. 24-4. Division into districts.**

• • • •

**IRO            Innsbrook Redevelopment overlay district**

**WRO            Westwood Redevelopment overlay district**

2. That the Code of the County of Henrico be amended by adding Section 24-92.5 as follows:

**Sec. 24-92.5. Westwood Redevelopment overlay district.**

## Westwood Small Area Study

- (a) Purpose. The Westwood Redevelopment overlay district is hereby created to enhance and provide flexibility for redevelopment projects within the overlay district by:
- (1) Providing alternative parking requirements for properties within the overlay district;
  - (2) Protecting landowners from adverse impacts of adjoining development;
  - (3) Ensuring adequate access for existing and future development; and,
  - (4) Encouraging the timing and location of development consistent with available public facilities.
- (b) Boundaries. The boundaries of the district shall be those of the “Westwood Area Study” in the amendment to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan adopted by the board of supervisors on xx.xx.xxxx. This area shall be superimposed over the county’s zoning maps to delineate the district.
- (c) Provisional uses permitted. The following are allowed by provisional use permit:
- (1) Multifamily dwelling units in conjunction with nonresidential development permitted in the district.
  - (2) Uses and structures that would not otherwise comply with the setback and height provisions of Section 24-94.

Each application for a provisional use permit shall include a master plan showing the location and height of all existing and proposed structures, public and private streets, parking spaces, the developer’s architectural design requirements, pedestrian accommodations, open space, landscaping, buffers, and site lighting.

## Westwood Small Area Study

**(d) Alternative parking requirements.** In lieu of compliance with the parking requirements of section 24-96, a development or redevelopment after the establishment of this overlay district may provide parking in compliance with the following requirements:

**(1) Each parking space allocated to the property must be located within 1,000 feet of the main entrance of the building to which it is allocated, measured along an accessible walking path.**

**(2) A parking study submitted with a master plan containing the information for master plans in subsection (c) must show that the parking allocation for the development is not likely to conflict on a regular basis with the parking allocation for other properties within the overlay district, based on the manner and time of parking for other properties. The parking study must be prepared by a licensed engineer and must show the number of parking spaces required and provided for the proposed development. The parking study may consider the use of on-street parking and the use of shared parking under shared parking agreements. Such agreements shall be included with the parking study.**

**(e) Development standards.** All development or redevelopment after the establishment of the overlay district shall meet the following development standards:

**(1) Traffic Circulation.** Vehicular and pedestrian circulation shall be provided between adjacent properties unless otherwise approved by the director of planning due to design considerations such as environmental features,

## Westwood Small Area Study

steep topography, or utility conflicts. Copies of cross-access agreements shall be provided at the request of the director of planning.

**(2) Sidewalks. Sidewalks shall be provided along all public streets abutting a proposed development. Sidewalks on the opposite side of the street shall not satisfy this obligation.**

3. That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect on and after its passage as provided by law.