

2015-2035

**CITY OF EMPORIA, VA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



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INTRODUCTION

FOREWORD

This document is a plan, a framework within which residents and leaders of the City of Emporia can work together to guide the development of the City. It has a long-range perspective, to the year 2034 and beyond. It attempts to identify issues the community may face, and opportunities that it might capitalize on for the common good.



Because certain assumptions have been made with regard to future development, some of the issues or needs that this plan envisions may not come to pass. Predictions about population, housing, transportation needs, and economic conditions may not occur. Technology continues to evolve. As a result, some of the recommended land use policies, goals and objectives, and other actions may not be implemented.

Given this context, decisions concerning the plan’s implementation should be made by Emporia leaders and residents in a timely and orderly manner to preserve the City’s cultural, historic, and physical assets.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Virginia planning legislation requires the City Planning Commission to prepare a Comprehensive Plan indicating the Commission’s long-

range recommendations for general development¹. The plan is general in nature and based on careful and comprehensive studies of existing conditions, trends, growth, and probable future requirements of the community.

The Comprehensive Plan must include:

1. A transportation plan; and
2. Designation of areas and implementation to ensure housing that is affordable for all income levels.

The Comprehensive Plan may include, but need not be limited to:

1. Designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use;
2. Designation of a system of community service facilities
3. Designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;
4. A capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district and natural resource maps;
5. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;
6. The location of military bases, installations and airports;

¹ See Code of Virginia 1950, Title 15.2 as amended, Subsections 15.2-2223 through 15.2-2229 for full text of enabling legislature for the Comprehensive Plan.

- 7. Designation of corridors or routes for electric transmission lines; and
- 8. Designation of urban development areas.

After public notice and hearings, the Planning Commission may recommend, by resolution, the comprehensive plan, or parts of a plan, to the City Council. The Council then considers the plan at the public hearings and adopts, or amends and adopts the plan.

Subsequent amendments to the plan must be adopted according to the public notice and hearing procedure followed for the adoption of the original plan. At least once every five years the Planning Commission is required to conduct a thorough review of the plan to determine whether amendments are warranted.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The update to the comprehensive plan includes public input on the Plans’ five major themes: Land Use & Environment, Community Facilities, Transportation, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Economic Development. Citizens were given an opportunity to address their specific concerns and desires at a public meeting where stations were set up for each of the identified themes. Those in attendance addressed comments through writing or in discussions with members of city staff who were there to field questions and record comments. Each comment has been recorded and included in the Appendix. These comments were used to help the Planning Commission set the goals and objectives as identified for each theme. In addition to this meeting, the final draft of the

comprehensive plan update was presented before City Council and the Planning Commission at a public hearing to solicit comments.



A public input meeting was held on September 25th, 2014.

REGIONAL SETTING

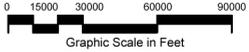
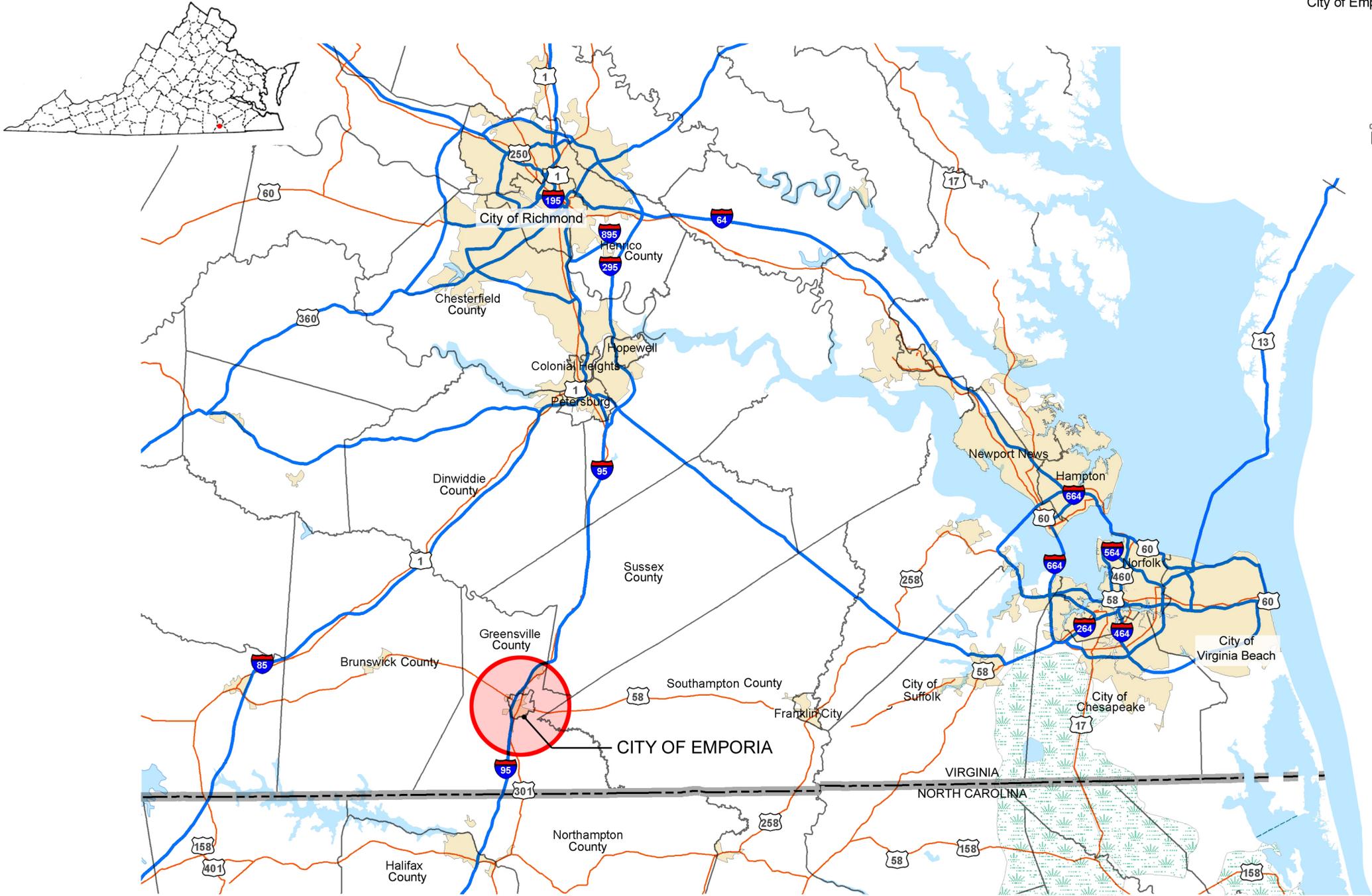


The City of Emporia, which serves as the county seat of Greensville County, is an independent city located along the Meherrin River in the center of the county, approximately 65 miles south of Richmond, 10 miles north of the Virginia-

North Carolina state line, and 75 miles west of Norfolk (see Regional Location Map). The main highways in the City of Emporia are Interstate 95, which runs north-south from Maine along the Atlantic Coast to Florida, and U.S. Route 58, which serves as an east-west corridor within Virginia from Hampton Roads to the southwest corner and into Cumberland Gap, Tennessee.

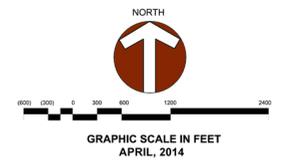
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

City of Emporia Comprehensive Plan
City of Emporia, Virginia



April, 2014

CITY OF EMPORIA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



The City of Emporia (see City of Emporia Map) is included in the Crater Planning District which is comprised of 10 local governments in south central Virginia. These include four cities: Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg, and seven counties: Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Charles City, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex. The purpose of the Crater PDC is to promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the Planning District by planning, and encouraging and assisting governmental subdivisions to plan for the future.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area along the Meherrin River was first explored in 1670. The Hicksford area was settled in 1710 where the Fort Road of eastern Virginia crossed the Meherrin River en route to Fort Christianna. In 1796, the town of Hicksford was founded on the southern bank of the Meherrin River and in 1798 the town of Belfield was established on the opposite bank. Although the two towns constituted a county seat with its courthouse, they remained subsidiary to the county at large for the first half of the nineteenth century.

As the area experienced growth with the creation of new railroads, capital, and industries, the extent of this growth constituted the impetus for Emporia's establishment as it related to Benjamin Tillar's charter for the Atlantic and Danville Railroad. Tillar, president of the Atlantic and Danville Railroad, supposedly took the suggestion of U.S. Senator Preston B. Plumb of Kansas in naming the new town of Emporia, Virginia, after Plumb's hometown of Emporia, Kansas. As a member of the Virginia General Assembly, Tillar was not only thinking of his hometown when he asked the

legislature to reconstitute Hicksford and Belfield but also his newly chartered railroad and the anticipated boom which would benefit both. Soon after, the two Greensville County towns merged in 1887 to form Emporia.

Incorporated for a second time in 1892, Emporia's boundaries were increased and the powers of the town council clarified in order to manage the quickly developing businesses and neighborhoods. In 1900, the General Assembly authorized Emporia to issue bonds to establish the first of modern public facilities such as a water plant, electric service, and street improvements. Commercially the town grew in the 1920s, 30's, and early 40's with many of the same types of stores and services that had already been established: grocery stores, real estate companies, fertilizer companies, dry goods stores, automobile dealers, lumber related businesses, insurance companies, cotton related companies, etc. A statistical retail account from the 1940 census listed 18 grocery stores, 15 restaurants, 14 filling stations, 10 general merchandise stores, 6 furniture stores, 6 automobile businesses, 5 lumber-building businesses, 4 drug stores, 4 hardware stores, 2 general stores, 2 apparel stores, 2 feed and farm stores, and 9 other types of stores.

Emporia showed a boom typical of most communities following World War II. The town annexed additional property in 1947 including about 600 houses. Activity in real estate subdivision increased to a level not equaled since the early part of the century. Development in the 1950s and 60's also followed national trends with outlying neighborhoods further from the town core and with infill brick ranch houses looking ill at ease among their more elderly neighbors in the old parts of town. Emporia and the country at

large had become more independent upon the automobile as the tell-tale signs of drive-in movies, outlying restaurants, motels, and shopping centers appeared. In 1967, Emporia officially became a City, symbolically entering a new era in which so much of its past had, and would, become only a memory.

On January 1, 1988, the City of Emporia was officially awarded approximately 4.3 square miles from Greenville County. The city increased in size from 2.3 square miles to 6.6 square miles. According to official court records, Emporia gained 1,022 new residents, increasing its population from 4,840 people to 5,862 people.

BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

NATURAL FEATURES

Physiography

The physiography of an area is a description of its geography and other natural phenomena. Each physiographic province in Virginia has a unique land form and water supply as well as a common climate, soil, and vegetation, all of which differ from other physiographic regions.

The City of Emporia is located along the fall zone and is in both the Piedmont and Coastal Plain Provinces of Virginia. The fall zone, which is on the east-west boundary between the two provinces, along a north-south line between Petersburg and Emporia, delineates radical changes in river slopes between the Coastal Plain and Piedmont Provinces. The Meherrin River leaving the Piedmont area flowing on an average slope of three feet per mile suddenly increases its slope to as much as ten feet per mile. After leaving this narrow north/south trending area, the Meherrin flows at a much reduced slope of about one foot per mile or less, until it reaches the Chowan River.

The Piedmont Province is a highly-dissected plateau, sloping gently seaward. It is underlain by igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks. The Meherrin River flowing through this area occupies narrow flood plains with only minor meandering. It has channel slopes averaging approximately three feet per mile to the west of Greenville County and flows in a southeasterly directions.

The Coastal Plain Province is often referred to as the “Tidewater Area.” It can be described as a region of step-like Pleistocene marine terraces in various stages of dissection. It is by nature a low, flat plain and is underlain mainly by unconsolidated or partially consolidated sands, clays, and gravels. Most of the marsh land is found in the Coastal Plain Province and the soils of this province present, for the most part, moderate to severe limitations for septic tank development.

Topography



The general topography of the City is characterized by terrain that is level to gently rolling, with elevations varying from 70 to 160 feet above mean sea level. Gently rolling areas are found in the western portion of the City with elevations varying from 150 to over 160 feet above sea level. Most of the City is level land and is found on the Coastal Plain Province, with elevation less than 140 feet above sea level. The areas along the Meherrin River typically range from 70 to 80 feet above sea level.

A relatively small amount of land in Emporia has a slope over 10 percent. Most of the land with these steep slopes is located along the Meherrin River. Most of the land in the City has as slope ranging from 0 to 5 percent. Since slopes over 25 percent (rising 25 feet in 100 feet of horizontal distance) are generally classified as

excessive or steep for most kinds of development, it appears there are no major slope limitations for most of the City of Emporia. Gently sloping land or level land pose few problems for relating buildings and roads to the topography. Such land offers minimal difficulties with grading, drainage, utility installations, foundations, and services.

Drainage

The City is within the Chowan River watershed, which includes the tributaries of the Meherrin River, Nottoway River, and the Blackwater River, an area of about 3,675 square miles. The Chowan watershed is largely rural and covers about



10 percent of Virginia's land area. The major part of the watershed is in Virginia, but the Chowan River itself forms on the Virginia - North Carolina boundary and flows into the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. The Meherrin River, which passes through Emporia, originates on the Lunenburg-Mecklenburg County line and flows southeasterly into Emporia Reservoir. From the base of the Emporia Dam, the waters of the Meherrin flow again southeast into North Carolina where it merges with the Chowan River.

Floodplains

Floodplains are defined as areas that have a one percent probability of being flooded each year. In Emporia, the major floodplains are located along the Meherrin River and its tributaries and are identified on the Environmental Constraints - Floodplains Map.

Approximately 877 acres, or 21% of the City's total land area, is included in the 100-year floodplain. The map illustrates the approximate flood boundaries and is intended for general planning purposes only. For detailed site and engineering purposes, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (effective date 2009) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) should be consulted. While generally accurate, these maps do not necessarily identify all areas subject to flooding, such as along smaller drainageways or in recently urbanized areas where stormwater management is deficient. It may be the case that FEMA boundary maps change as the years progress. If so, it is the responsibility of the City to make its citizens aware of such changes.

Floodplains are valuable resources that provide, in addition to flood passage, agricultural land, recreational land, and wildlife habitat. In addition, they provide groundwater recharge and pollution protection. As such, the Plan recommends protecting currently undeveloped floodplains from incompatible uses.

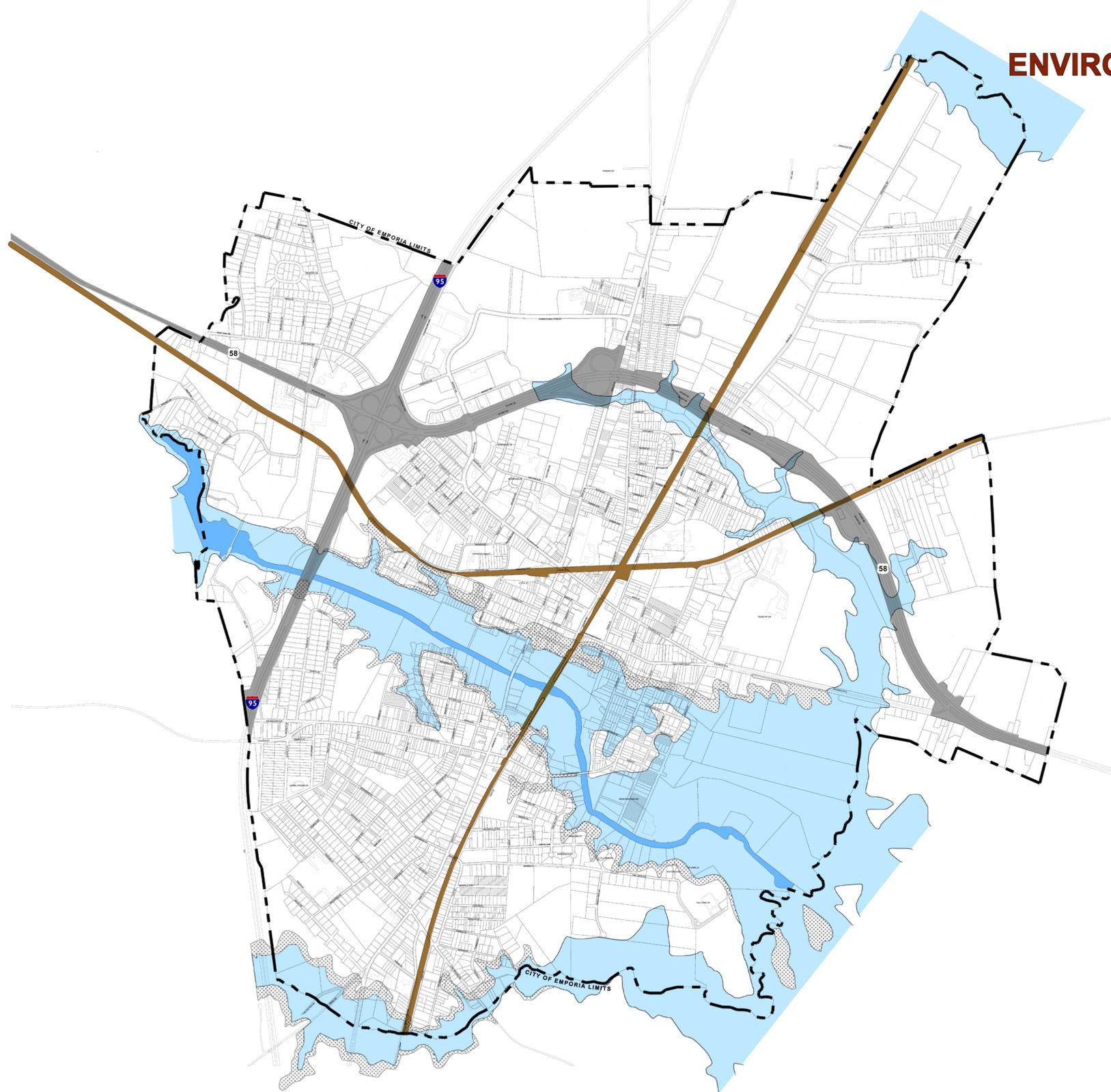
EXISTING LAND USE

Overview

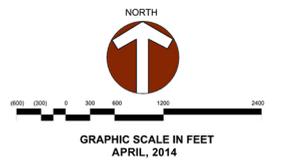
Existing land uses in Emporia will strongly influence the location and type of future development. The existing network of structures, streets, and public utilities represent a substantial investment that should be respected and maintained. However, as time and circumstances permit, non-conforming and poorly sited uses should be phased out or directed to more compatible areas. The Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance should guide these efforts.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS - FLOODPLAINS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



- LEGEND
- FEMA FLOODPLAINS - 100 YEAR ZONE A
 - FEMA FLOODPLAIN - 500 YEAR ZONE X
 - TRANSPORTATION SURFACES - I 95 CORRIDOR & ROUTE 58
 - NORFOLK SOUTHERN AND CSX RAILWAYS



Existing Land Use Survey

The existing land use pattern for Emporia is illustrated on the Existing Land Use Map following this page. The present use of all property was compiled from local tax records with spot checking through aerial photography, field survey and local staff input. All property lines shown are based on City of Emporia and Greensville County tax maps and subdivision plats recorded at the time of the survey.

The major categories of land use are as follows:

1. **Single-Family Residential.** Includes attached and detached single family homes, as well as two-family structures. Examples are single-family residences in older sections of the City and homes in new subdivisions.
2. **Multi-Family Residential.** Includes upper floor apartments, garden apartments, as well as larger apartment complexes and other group housing developments.
3. **Mobile Homes/Trailer Parks.** Includes individual mobile homes and mobile home/trailer parks.
4. **Retail and Service.** Includes all types of retail outlets such as gift shops, convenience stores, clothing shops, restaurants, and fast food services.
5. **General Commercial.** Includes auto repair shops, bulk storage, and other auto-related activities.
6. **Business/Professional Service.** Includes general offices, dentists, doctors, law firms, insurance agencies, optometrists, and other such professional services.
7. **Warehousing.** Includes those locations in which goods or merchandise are stored.
8. **Light Industrial.** Low-intensity industrial uses including light manufacturing or processing of value-added goods.
9. **Heavy Industrial.** Heavy manufacturing of value-added goods including processing, packaging, and treatment of manufactured products and materials.
10. **Community Facilities.** This category includes all City owned buildings and land, pump stations, water storage, and schools.
11. **Places of Worship/Cemeteries.** Those lands which include all types of churches, lodges, and cemeteries.
12. **Parks and Recreation.** Includes large public parks, small neighborhood parks, recreational facilities, and other recreational areas.
13. **Vacant.** All undeveloped land including vacant lots, open space, and forestal lands. This category includes lands potentially suitable for development.

Table 1 provides a summary of Existing Land Use data for the City. Measurements of all land areas were planimetered from the Existing Land Use Map, April 2007 and updated with tax parcel data

and field surveys in May 2014. This information was also compared with land use data from earlier planning documents, including Emporia’s 1990 Comprehensive Plan. This comparative analysis helps reveal past growth trends and probable forms of future development.

Development Trends

Throughout the years, Emporia has developed around its downtown areas which are adjacent to the CSX Railroad and the Norfolk Southern Railroad and along the City’s two major commercial corridors, U.S. Routes 301 and 58. The following sections describe Emporia’s existing land use pattern by the major use categories.

Table 1: EXISTING LAND USE

Land Use Classification	Total Acreage	Percentage of City Area	Percentage of Developed Area
Residential			
Single-Family	749	17.5%	35.1%
Mobile Homes/Parks	23	0.5%	1.1%
Multi-Family	68	1.6%	3.2%
Total	840	19.6%	39.4%
Commercial			
Retail and Service	218	5.1%	10.2%
General Commercial	23	0.5%	1.1%
Business/Professional Services	18	0.4%	0.8%
Warehousing	24	0.6%	1.1%
Total	282	6.6%	13.2%
Industrial			
Light Industrial	119	2.8%	5.6%
Heavy Industrial	94	2.2%	4.4%
Total	212	5.0%	9.9%
Public/Semi-Public			
Community Facilities	133	3.1%	6.2%

Places of Worship/Cemeteries/Lodges	66	1.5%	3.1%
Parks & Recreation	64	1.5%	3.0%
Total	264	6.2%	12.3%
Transportation			
Streets/Roads	414	9.7%	19.4%
Railway Right-Of-Way	79	1.8%	3.7%
Total	493	11.5%	23.1%
River			
Meherrin River	43	1.0%	2.0%
Total	43	1.0%	2.0%
TOTAL DEVELOPED	2135	49.8%	
TOTAL UNDEVELOPED			
Vacant	1519	35.4%	
Large Lot Underdeveloped			
- Single-Family Underdeveloped	259		
- Community Facilities Underdeveloped	88		
- Light Industrial Underdeveloped	20		
- Retail and Service Underdeveloped	12		
Total	1897	44.2%	
TOTAL ACREAGE	4287	100.0%	

Source: Tax Parcel Data and Aerial Photography, Community Planning Partners, 2014

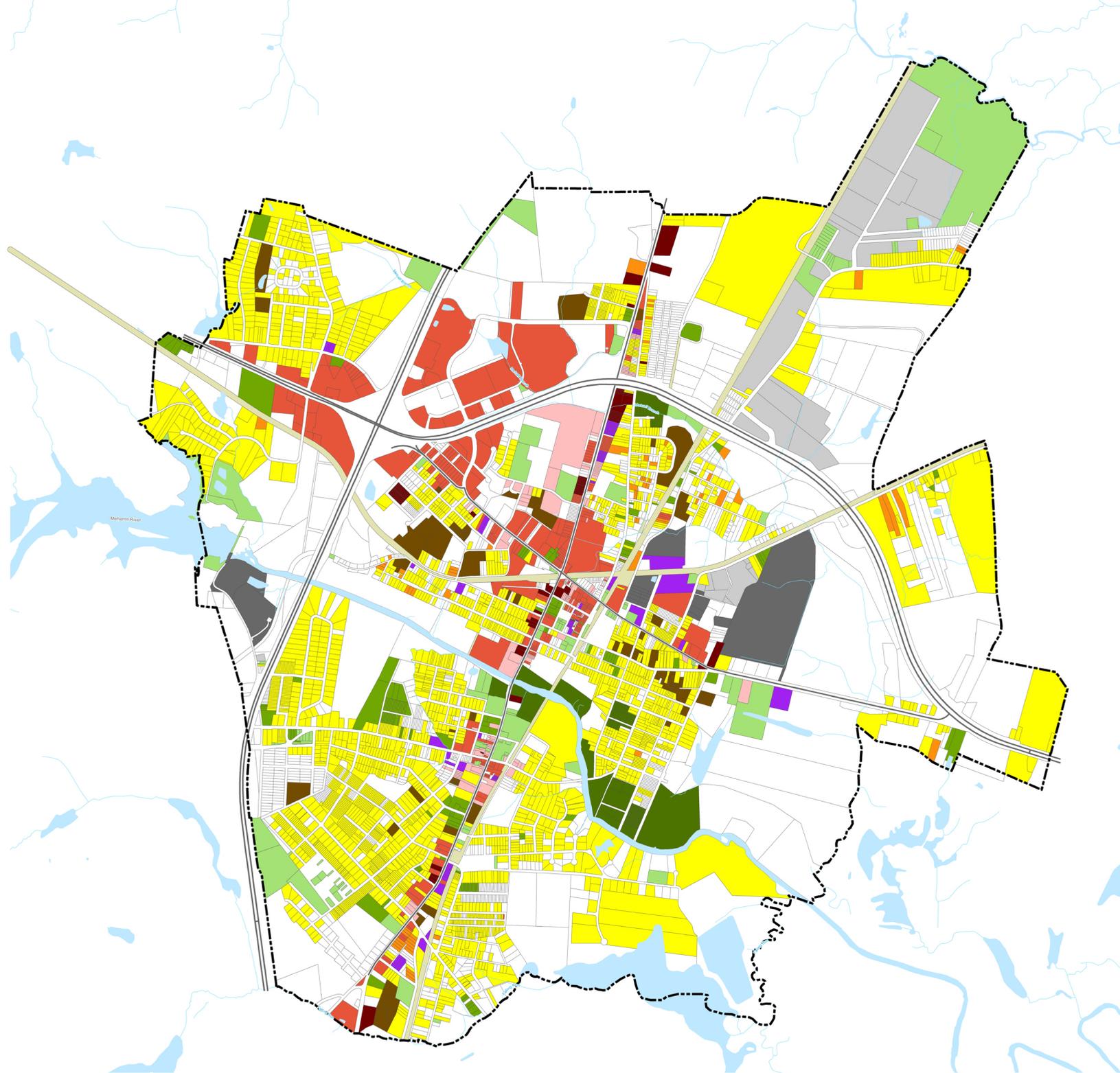
Residential Uses

Of the developed land within the City, the predominant use is residential (39.4%). While single-family development is the most prevalent (749 acres), several multi-family developments (68 acres), along with mobile homes (23 acres) diversify the residential housing stock.



EXISTING LAND USE

Comprehensive Plan Update
City of Emporia, Virginia



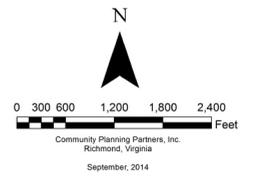
Legend

--- City Boundary

Land Use Classifications

Land Uses

- SINGLE FAMILY
- MULTI-FAMILY
- MOBILE HOMES
- RETAIL & SERVICE
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL
- COMMUNITY FACILITIES
- PLACES OF WORSHIP, CEMETERIES & LODGES
- PARKS & RECREATION
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
- WAREHOUSING
- RR ROW/EASEMENT
- VACANT



Residential land use in Emporia is typical of smaller urban localities. The majority of new single family residences located in the periphery of the City and the older, denser neighborhoods found adjacent to the downtown and two railway rights-of-way. In general, the newer residences are sited on larger lots and are single-family dwellings. The older neighborhoods are situated on smaller lots and contain a greater number of duplexes, mobile homes, and multi-family dwellings.



Since the City’s annexation of approximately 4.3 square miles from Greenville County in 1988, a moderate amount of single-family development has occurred in the southeastern portion of the City and west of I-95. Additional growth has

been in the form of infill single-family dwellings throughout Emporia’s older neighborhoods. The majority of Emporia’s future growth will have to come from the development of large vacant parcels adjacent to the City boundary and from infill development throughout the City.

Commercial Uses

Existing commercial uses are primarily concentrated along five heavily traveled corridors: Main Street, Halifax Street, Atlantic Street, Market Drive, and Route 58. Main Street, Halifax Street, and Atlantic Street all bisect downtown areas that cater to current residents and include furniture stores, professional offices, and various community facilities. The commercial uses along Market

Drive and Route 58 adjacent to the Interstate 95 interchange include “big box” retailers that serve the region and traveler focused businesses like food, gas and lodging. Heavily traveled corridor growth has fueled strip development along Route 58 and Market Drive. These developments have negatively impacted Emporia’s traditional commercial centers in the downtown areas. However, the growth of regional retail and travel services also benefit the city. Many people traveling along I-95 view Emporia as a destination City and one which is able to provide goods and services required by travelers. In order to take advantage of this unique title, the City should emphasize its travel services through rigorous marketing campaigns.



Older commercial buildings are located in the downtown areas along and around Main Street and Halifax Street. Several of these older structures have been adaptively reused through the years to better suit Emporia’s retail, service, and

office needs. High vacancy rates in the downtown area are a concern that needs to be addressed. Stabilizing downtown vacancies and eliminating high turnover levels is critical to improving these districts.

In 2013, certain districts in the city were designated under a Local Enterprise Zone. Under this program, two grant-based



incentives are available: Job Creation Grants and Real Property Investment Grants. These two grants make the City more attractive to outside investors, incentivize expansion for existing firms, and create jobs for its citizens.

Industrial Uses

At present, Emporia has a diverse range of industrial sites including Georgia-Pacific, SteelFab of Virginia, Inc., Creative Playthings, Franklin Braid Manufacturing, and Toll Integrated. Several vacant lots zoned for industrial uses off Reese Street and north of East Atlantic Street are available for industrial development.



While the parcels for industrial uses are limited, Emporia possesses a potential to bring in a few smaller industries to increase its tax base while providing additional avenues of employment for its citizens. The City's economic development department works with the regional economic development authority, Virginia's Growth Alliance, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership



(VEDP) to promote available sites and buildings and target key industrial sectors.

Public and Semi Public Uses

Public land use in Emporia consists of several municipal and community facilities, such as the City Municipal Building, Fire Department, Police Station, and Greenville County High School. There are also many churches and other civic buildings. In addition, Greenville County's Courthouse is located on Main Street in Emporia's downtown. Land devoted to parks and recreation may be found at the high school as well as Meherrin River, Emporia-Greenville County Recreation Association, and Veterans Memorial Park. Also, a community-orientated recreation center is found at the Community Youth Center on Knox Street and a community farmer's market is located on Main Street between Virginia Avenue and Valley Street.



In 2007, the City of Emporia's two downtown areas, the Belfield and Hicksford downtowns, were entered into the state and national historic registers. The Belfield downtown area is centered on Halifax Street and is roughly bounded by Atlantic Street, Halifax Street, Budd Street, and Valley Street. The Hicksford downtown area is approximately four blocks long and two blocks

wide and is located along South Main Street. The two downtowns' historic structures still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming twentieth century city. The areas are characterized with a mixture of one- and two-story commercial and public use structures that front on a traditional grid layout. The majority of the areas have sidewalks, some limited street lighting, benches, and a few street trees.

Vacant Land

Of the City's total land area, 44.2% (1897 acres) remains vacant or undeveloped. This number has dropped from 52.6% as of 2007. There are two main areas of the City in which vacant land dominates the landscape. The first is towards the eastern boundary of the City along Route 58 and East Atlantic Avenue. This area is currently zoned for industrial and single family residential. The second area is the large area extending from Route 58 north to the City boundary. While the western portion of this area is increasingly developing with commercial uses, the entire area is zoned for residential, commercial, and industrial.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

The study of Emporia's population characteristics provides an important foundation for the planning of capital improvements and city services. As future growth demands are evaluated, a reasonably accurate forecast of population size is needed for the community, as well as for specific demographic groups. In addition, growth trends should be analyzed from a regional perspective, since other agencies and authorities may provide local services.

Comparative Population Analysis

Emporia has a 2010 population of approximately 5,927 people and is geographically surrounded by Greensville County.

Table 2: COMPARATIVE POPULATION GROWTH

Locality	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
City of Emporia	5,665	5,927	4.6%
Greensville County	11,560	12,243	5.9%
Crater PDC	427,032	489,699	12.8%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey

The City is located in the eastern portion of the County and is included in the Crater Planning District Commission (PDC). Crater PDC is comprised of eleven local governments in south central Virginia which include: the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, and Petersburg, and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Charles City, Greensville, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex.

As evident in Table 2, Emporia's population increased at a modest pace (4.6%) during the 2000's. Crater PDC experienced strong growth from 2000-2010 with the majority of the PDC's growth rate coming from Chesterfield County, which added 55,341 residents and grew by 21% between 2000 and 2010.

Select Demographic Groups

A detailed breakdown of Emporia's population is shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5. As reflected in Table 3, City residents are predominantly

split into two racial categories: White (31%) and African-American (62%). Other minority residents and those listing two or more races represent a small but growing percentage (2%) of Emporia’s total population. Notably, the population of Hispanic or Latinos represents a small percentage of the total population, but one that has grown considerably in the first decade of the 21st century.

Table 3: POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNIC ORIGIN

Race/Ethnic Origin	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
White	2,342 (41%)	1,848 (31%)	-21%
African-American	3,174 (56%)	3,685 (62%)	16%
Other Race/2+ Races	65 (1%)	132 (2%)	103%
Hispanic or Latino	84 (1%)	262 (4%)	212%
Total	5,665	5,927	5%

Source: U.S. Census

As indicated in Table 4, the greatest shifts in population occurred among those aged 45 and older. The population of elderly residents declined by 17% while those that are between the age of 45-64 increased by 25%. All told, the core workforce population (25-64 years old) increased by 9%. But as the data for the 45-64 age group shows, a large portion of this population is nearing retirement. Emporia’s school age population stayed relatively stable with only a slight increase of 5%.

Table 4: POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

Age Group	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
Under 5 years	351 (6%)	409 (7%)	4%
5 - 19 years	1,226 (22%)	1,284 (22%)	5%
20 - 24 years	305 (5%)	364 (6 %)	16%
25 - 44 years	1,449 (26%)	1,390 (23%)	-4%
45 - 64 years	1,166 (21%)	1,478 (25%)	21%
65 years and over	1,168 (21%)	1,002 (17%)	-17%
Total	5,665	5,927	4.6%

Source: U.S. Census

As shown in Table 5, Emporia is the only locality in the Crater PDC to experience a decrease in the median age during the 2000s. The City has a median age only slightly above the state average and the second lowest, after Hopewell, in the region.

Table 5: COMPARATIVE MEDIAN AGE

Locality	2000	2010
City of Emporia	38.8	37.9
Greensville County	38.1	40.9
Crater PDC		
Chesterfield County	35.7	37.6
Dinwiddie County	38.5	40.7
Prince George County	32.1	38
Surry County	39.4	45
Sussex County	37.6	40.6
City of Colonial	39.9	41.9
Heights		
City of Hopewell	35	36.5
City of Petersburg	36.9	39.8
Virginia	35.7	37.5
Source: U.S. Census		

Overall, these charts show that the City has become younger and more diverse in the 2000s. However, large portions of the working sector will be nearing or entering retirement over the next decade. This sector of 45-64 year-olds represent the Baby Boom generation (born 1946-1964).

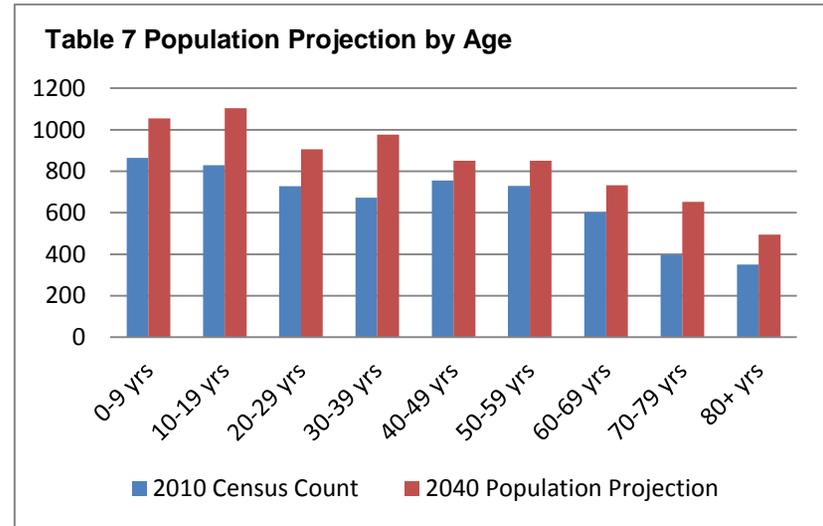
Population Projections

Table 6 : POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	2020	2030	2040	% Change 2020-2040
Emporia	6,490	7,075	7,622	17.4%
Greensville	12,473	12,589	12,672	1.6%
Crater PDC	577,511	669,872	775,257	34.2%

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

The following Virginia Employment Commission population projections attempt to forecast the City’s and surrounding environs’ population over the next twenty-five years. More specific calculations may need to be developed over the years to support changes that may occur in Emporia. The figures in Table 6 constitute a reasonable range of what the City’s future population will be over the indicated ten-year time spans.



Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and U.S. Census

Though the population of Emporia has fluctuated between 5,300 and 6,000 since 1980, current projections show growth beyond 6,000 to 7,622 by 2040. This would represent a 29% increase in population from the 2010 Census count. By comparison, the rate of growth between 1980 and 2010 was -2.5%. Using the existing

average household size (2.25), this growth represents a demand for 775 new housing units by 2040.

According to Table 7, the largest increases in population are projected to occur between the 10-19, 30-39 and 70-79 age brackets. These brackets represent families with children and seniors. Future housing in the city will need be focused on housing with access to quality schools and affordable and diverse forms of elderly housing. These housing types may range from assisted living centers for the more active, independent seniors to full-service retirement homes with nursing and medical facilities. A growing elderly population will create demand for specialized types of health care, social, and human services. In addition, both families and seniors benefit from access to parks and recreational opportunities.

All users of the population data should keep in mind these are projections and should be viewed as such. Economic development initiatives, infrastructure improvements, the health of the national and regional economy, and a wide range of other public and private activities could dramatically alter the City and region's future growth potential. Projections are based on past and current trends and are forecasts of what will probably occur in the absence of major changes.

Housing

The City of Emporia has long recognized the importance of establishing and maintaining sound neighborhoods to provide for the stability of the



community. A variety of neighborhoods exist in and around the City including older and newer single-family areas, multi-family housing, and mobile home parks. Many older city neighborhoods, particularly those adjacent to the downtowns and along the railroads must be preserved and revitalized to maintain the city's existing housing stock, in addition to newer subdivisions have been developed.

Despite these outwardly positive trends, housing-related issues and problems are evident in Emporia, just as they are in other



communities in Southside Virginia. While most residential neighborhoods in the City are reasonably well maintained, several pockets of blight and substandard housing exist throughout the community.

Housing Tenure

Table 7 is a comparison of occupied and vacant housing units within the City of Emporia between 1990 and 2010. Since 1990, a shift has occurred wherein renter-occupied units now make up the majority. The number of vacant units that aren't on the rental market has doubled, although these units still only represent 6% of the citywide total. The growth in rental units is not due only to the conversion of formal owner-occupied units. In fact, between 1990 and 2010, almost twice as many rental units were built than owner-occupied units (403 to 208). The creation of new rental units demonstrates that the renter housing market in Emporia is strong, and not simply a reaction to a decline in demand for owner-occupied housing.

Table 8: CITY HOUSING TENURE

	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change 1990-2010
Occupied Housing Units	2,031	2,226	2,316	12%
Owner-Occupied Units	1,151	1,162	988	-16%
Renter-Occupied Units	880	1,064	1,328	34%
Vacant Housing Units*	71	93	144	103%
Total	2,178	2,412	2,565	15%

Source: U.S Census *Not for rent

Housing Age and Condition

According to 2012 estimates, approximately 40% of Emporia’s housing stock was built prior to 1960 and is over 50 years in age with an additional 17% of the housing stock being built between 1960 and 1969 (Table 9). The city has experienced two peaks and two troughs in housing construction. The highest decades for housing construction were the 1960s (462 units remaining in 2000) and the 1990s (438 units) with troughs occurring in the years following each.

Table 9: YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

Year Built	Number of Units	Percent of Total
1939 or earlier	399	14%
1940 to 1949	285	10%
1950 to 1959	389	14%
1960 to 1969	462	17%
1970 to 1979	236	9%
1980 to 1989	372	14%

1990 to 1999	438	16%
2000 to 2009	173	6%
Built or 2010 later	0	0%
Total	2,412	100.00%

Source: American Community Survey (2012 5-year Estimates)

Table 10 is a comparison of residential building permits for new construction of residential dwellings. As shown below, Greenville County has more permits for new construction than Emporia. Total permits from Table 10 for each locality represent 8.4% of all Emporia housing units and 10.0% of all units in Greenville.

Table 10: RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT DATA

Year	Emporia	Greenville
2002	51	26
2003	13	39
2004	10	62
2005	16	60
2006	16	47
2007	30	49
2008	29	29
2009	22	24
2010	13	27
2011	19	27
2012	13	19
Total	232	409

Note: Permits are only for new construction
Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

Housing Assessments for Identified Priority Neighborhoods

In early 2015 the City will complete a citywide assessment of housing and neighborhood deficiencies. This assessment process will identify where concentrations of blight and poor housing conditions exist. When necessary, the City should request Planning Grant funds from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) and other neighborhood redevelopment funding resources to address the problems of these neighborhoods and assist in developing an action plan for their revitalization.

ECONOMY, LABOR FORCE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Table 11: EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES, 1st Quarter 2014

Industry Sector	Establishments	2014 1st Quarter Employment	Average Weekly Wage
Health care and social assistance	41	850	\$ 594
Manufacturing	5	556	\$ 721
Retail trade	50	533	\$ 444
Administrative and waste services	4	175	\$ 402
Finance and insurance	18	67	\$ 657
Real estate and rental and leasing	18	63	\$ 463
Construction	7	15	\$ 411
Transportation and warehousing	5	15	\$1,026
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics			

Emporia offers local residents a place to work, live, and acquire various goods and services. In the past, the City's commerce was largely based on the railway and the downtown area, with various industries and small retail businesses. In more recent years, Emporia has benefited from its location near Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 58. The local economy has been expanded because of these two heavily traveled major corridors crossing through Emporia. Today, economic activity highway-oriented businesses such as regional retailers, fast-food franchises, hotels/motels, gas stations, and convenience stores has become a foundation of the local economy. As seen in Table 11 the growth of the retail and health care sectors does not negate the importance of manufacturing as a foundation of the local economy. Because of the small number of manufacturing employers, the loss or addition of one of these businesses can have a large impact on the local economy.

The City of Emporia offers a wide variety of employers for its residents (Table 12). Major employers include those in the manufacturing, health care, retail, and public administration sectors.

Table 12: MAJOR EMPLOYERS - 2013

Employer	Product/Service
Georgia Pacific Wood Products	Wood Product Manufacturing
Southern Virginia Regional Medical Center	General Hospital
Wal Mart	Department Store
City of Emporia	Government
Care Advantage	Home Health Care
Cracker Barrel	Restaurant

Emporia Manor LLC	Nursing Care Facilities
Pro Labor Temps	Employment Agency
Sadler Brothers Oil Company	Kerosene and Heating Oils
Franklin Braid Manufacturing	Braids Manufacturing

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter 2013

According to Table 13, Emporia’s workforce is primarily located within the City or in an adjacent county. Halifax County, NC is the exception. Workers from this county represent about 18% of the total local workforce. The majority of working Emporia residents (60%) work in the City. The other two employment locations are either Greenville County or the Richmond metro area. Emporia is an employment center primarily for Emporia/Greenville and secondarily for the surrounding rural counties located along I-95 and Route 58.

Table 13: 2013 JOB MIGRATION

Where Emporia Employees Live		Where Emporia Residents Work	
Greenville Co.	1284	Emporia	996
Emporia	996	Greenville Co.	351
Brunswick Co.	362	Richmond City	114
Halifax Co., NC	625	Henrico County	105
Sussex Co.	201	Chesterfield Co.	103
Total:	3468		1669

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Employment Trends and Characteristics

From a planning perspective, all local economies are considered to have two distinct segments: basic and non-basic (support services).

Basic economic sectors in Emporia such as manufacturing involve sale of goods to consumers outside the local area. Non-basic sectors involve sale of goods and services within the local community.

Table 14 shows Emporia’s basic industries – those with a location quotient² score of above one. These industries underscore the importance of Emporia’s location at a transportation hub. The manufacturing sector relies on transportation routes to move goods out of the city and sectors like health care, accommodation, food service, and retail rely on transportation routes to bring customers into the city.

Table 14: BASIC INDUSTRIES – 2012

Industry	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change 2002-2012	Percent Change 2007-2012
Manufacturing	0.89	2.16	1.95	119.1%	-9.7%
Health care and social assistance	2.18	2.14	1.86	-14.7%	-13.1%
Accommodation and food services	ND	ND	1.76	ND	ND
Retail trade	1.48	1.2	1.23	-16.9%	2.5%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	ND	ND	1.06	ND	ND
Real estate and rental and leasing	0.67	0.73	1.01	50.8%	38.4%

² The Location Quotient is the ratio between the percentage of the local workforce (x) devoted to an industry compared to the percentage of the national workforce (y) devoted to the same industry. Location Quotient = x/y

ND = Not Disclosable	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing*	43	43	51	19%	19%
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Bureau of Labor Statistics	Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	46	46	48	4%	4%
	Construction	52	54	39	-25%	-28%
	Transportation & Warehousing	400	33	25	-94%	-24%
	Information	58	27	6	-90%	-78%
	Utilities	36	0	b	-	-
	Educational Services	0	-	b	-	-
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	13	b	a	-	-
	Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	a	0	a	-	-
	Mining, Quarrying, & Oil/Gas Extraction	a	a	a	-	-
	Yearly data is an average of Quarter 1 – Quarter 4					
	a = no data available; b = data suppressed to meet U.S. Census publication standards					
	*Basic Industry (2012)					
	Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators (U.S. Census)					

Table 15 shows employment trends from 2002 to 2012. Despite its continued importance as a basic industry, jobs in the manufacturing sector have decreased by a third between 2007 and 2012. During this time, the health care and social assistance sector took over as the largest in the city and accommodation and food services have risen steadily. This suggests that despite the loss of manufacturing jobs, other industries have diversified the local economy. Overall, the number of jobs has shrunk since 2007, though considering the economic crisis of 2007-2009, a 1.9% reduction is modest.

Table 15: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

	2002	2007	2012	Percent Change 2002-2012	Percent Change 2007-2012
All NAICS Sectors	3872	4174	4093	6%	-2%
Health Care and Social Assistance*	794	842	869	9%	3%
Manufacturing*	1107	1181	785	-29%	-34%
Accommodation and Food Services*	342	456	543	59%	19%
Retail Trade*	515	508	480	-7%	-6%
Public Administration	118	173	218	85%	26%
Admin. & Support and Waste Mgmt. and Remediation Services	67	82	99	48%	21%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	81	80	91	12%	14%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation*	b	34	64	-	88%
Wholesale Trade	101	71	61	-40%	-14%
Finance and Insurance	63	68	56	-11%	-18%

Potential Locational Advantages

Emporia has other locational advantages in addition to its location at the intersection between major east-west and north-south road corridors. The location of ports in Richmond and Hampton Roads may have a growing impact on industrial sectors in the City. The expansion of the Panama Canal in 2015 creates new trade opportunities for ports on the East Coast that can take advantage of larger carriers and higher volumes of imports and exports that currently call on West Coast ports. Currently, the in Norfolk is the only port in the Southeast that currently has this capacity. These global changes in trade will increase the City's value as a strategic location for industry and trade, as Emporia is strategically located as

a gateway between Hampton Roads and the greater Southeast region of the US.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is a proposed natural gas pipeline that will run from West Virginia, through south central Virginia, Greensville County, and Hampton Roads. The proposed route would bring the pipeline through Greensville and south of the City. The impact of the pipeline could mean expanded natural gas infrastructure and the potential to bring more manufacturers to the region.

Taxable Sales

Emporia is a major commercial center in Southside Virginia and therefore many of its retail services are used by residents of the surrounding counties. Because of its strategic location on major highway corridors including Interstate 95, Route 301, and Route 58, much of its sales can also be attributed to visitor trade in retail and service establishments. Taxable sales, which include all items covered by the State Sales Tax, are one of the few available economic indicators for the actual size and growth of a region.

Table 16 shows total taxable sales for the City of Emporia as well as six surrounding counties. Taxable sales in Emporia for 2013 were \$122 million compared to \$124 million in 2009. Between the years of 2009 and 2013, the change in the City’s taxable sales was -1.5%, down from a high of 134 million in 2011. While Emporia’s taxable sales have stagnated, the surrounding counties have posted modest growth. Prince George has experienced dynamic growth and surpassed Emporia as the locality with the most taxable sales in the region.

Table 16: TAXABLE SALES 2009-2013 (\$ in Thousands)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percent Change 2009-2013
Emporia	24,366	25,392	34,357	26,286	22,457	-2%
Brunswick Co.	53,670	53,096	55,528	60,345	60,095	12%
Dinwiddie Co.	95,609	92,402	99,916	02,092	07,146	12%
Greensville Co.	35,420	31,998	35,259	37,035	37,784	7%
Prince George Co	65,093	135,818	144,634	152,708	162,555	150%
Southampton Co.	42,834	42,715	45,346	45,294	45,106	5%
Sussex Co.	62,290	61,057	63,962	69,875	70,708	14%

Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

Income and Poverty Status

Income and poverty levels are an important measurement used to determine social and economic conditions. While it is recognized that creating and retaining jobs is vital to the growth and development of the community, equally important is the income that is derived from this employment. Income determines how much people are able to save and spend and the kind of goods and services they are willing or able to buy. In turn, spending as determined by disposable income influences economic activity, particularly that of the local retail/service sectors. Therefore, a community’s capacity to expand and develop is affected by the income and spending patterns of its residents and whether or not they are sufficient to support future economic investment and growth.

Table 17: COMPARATIVE INCOME AND POVERTY STATUS

	2009	2012	Change 2009-2012
Per Capita Income			
Emporia	\$19,990	\$17,840	\$ (2,150)
Greensville County	\$17,824	\$16,322	\$ (1,502)
Virginia	\$31,606	\$33,326	\$ 1,720
Median Household Income			
Emporia	\$33,412	\$29,093	\$ (4,319)
Greensville County	\$40,917	\$38,423	\$ (2,494)
Virginia	\$60,316	\$63,636	\$ 3,320
% Individuals Below Poverty Level			
Emporia	20.5%	33.0%	12.5%
Greensville County	15.0%	21.2%	6.2%
Virginia	10.1%	11.1%	1.0%
Source: American Community Survey			

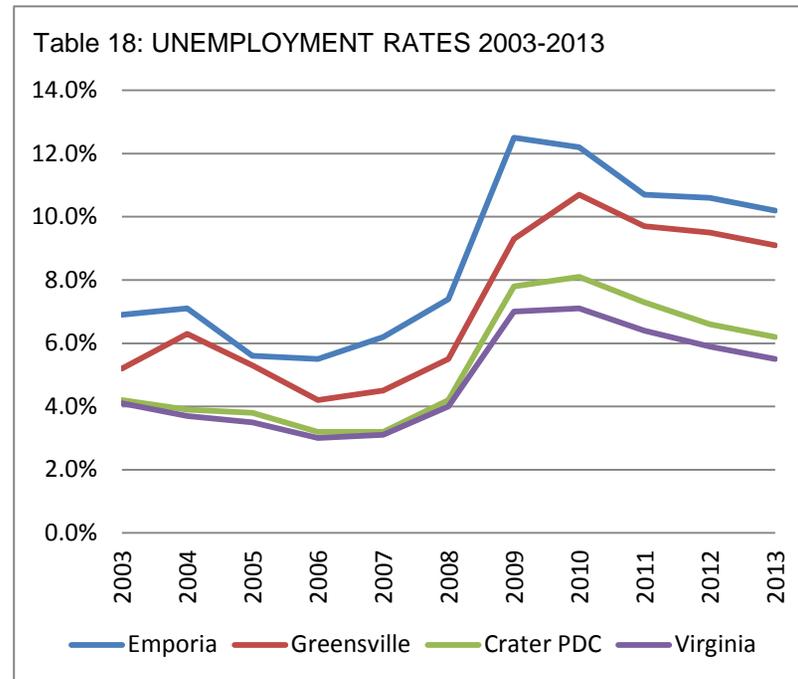
Tables 17 compares several income-related components for Emporia, Greensville County, and the State. The biggest difference is the much higher incomes statewide than in Emporia and Greensville County. Emporia and Greensville have seen incomes decline, while incomes statewide have increased. Shrinking incomes have had a substantial impact on those living at or near the poverty line as is evidenced by the sharp rise of individuals in poverty. In all three cases, the percentage of individuals below the poverty line increased between 2009-2012, regardless of the direction of income change.

Unemployment Status

Table 18 displays unemployment levels which are another important measurement used to determine social and economic

conditions. The unemployment rate can have a ripple effect through a community and influence poverty status, crime, and deferred housing maintenance. The economic crisis of 2007-2009 impacted Emporia and Greensville more severely than the region or state as a whole. Likewise, recovery for the area has been slower and less pronounced. The city’s unemployment rate was two to three percentage points above the state rate before 2009. In 2009 it jumped to 5.5 points higher and has remained about 5 percentage points higher since then.

Table 18: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 2003-2013



Tourism and Visitor Spending

For the City of Emporia, tourism and visitor spending is an importance source of revenue and employment. Attractions such as the Meherrin River Arts Council concerts, Virginia Pork Festival, and the Virginia Peanut Festival have drawn and will continue to draw visitors to the City.

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation, in 2012 the City of Emporia received nearly 25 million in traveler spending, which is a 5.1% increase from 2008. Traveler spending in the City accounts for almost one third of all traveler spending among the surrounding counties of Greensville Dinwiddie, Southampton, and Sussex. This spending generated \$940,273 in local tax receipts and 2.7 million in food and lodging tax collected. In terms of direct travel employment, Emporia had 198 jobs in 2012 that were directly related to the local tourism and traveler industry.

In order to better assist regional tourism, the new Virginia tourism region of Southern Virginia was created in 2007 by the Virginia Tourism Corporation. The counties and cities comprising Southern Virginia include the counties of Brunswick, Charlotte, Greensville, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Pittsylvania, and the cities



of Danville, Emporia and Martinsville. As such, Southern Virginia has been featured separately since 2007 in the Virginia Travel Guide and Virginia Tourism Corporation website. The VTC publishes 800,000 travel guides a year and disseminates

an additional 200,000 electronic guides.

The impact of Virginia Tourism Corporation marketing is difficult to analyze, since the economic crisis of 2007-2009 produced a dip in traveler spending when new marketing was initiated. However, by 2011 visitor spending had exceeded pre-recession levels.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities consist of all public buildings, utilities, and parks serving Emporia area residents. One of the chief functions of local government is to provide an adequate level of public services, within the bounds of that community's legal authority and financial capability. The Community Facilities Map identifies the location of community facilities, places of worship and cemeteries, and parks within the City.

The following section briefly summarizes existing conditions of community facilities in the City. Decisions of a more definitive nature should be made following the review of detailed studies commissioned by the City or the particular service provider.

Public Works and Utilities

The Emporia Public Works Department currently has 25 employees and the Public Utilities Department has approximately 16 employees. The main office and garage for Public Works and Public Utilities are located on Sunnyside Road and Newport Lane in the northeast corner of the City. Both departments regularly upgrade its equipment through the Capital Improvement Program to keep pace with modern technology and operate at an efficient level of service.

Street Maintenance

Emporia's Public Works street maintenance division has the responsibility for the repair and maintenance of all City streets. At present, the City maintains approximately 75 roadway miles, and the associated sidewalk and drainage system. A high degree of mechanization is incorporated in the program which includes a fleet of trucks and heavy construction equipment.

Water Supply

The Emporia Reservoir provides water for the City and portions of Greenville County. The reservoir withdrawal capacity is currently 4 million gallons per day and can be expanded to 6 million gallons per day. In order to address sediment loads in the water, the water intake pipe was extended towards the reservoir center line and the intake structure was replaced. This solution improves the quality of water intake from the reservoir but does not address the long term impact of reduced water capacity in the reservoir due to siltration.

Water Service

The water distribution system for the City of Emporia is owned and operated by the City and currently provides potable water to over 5,600 residents. Based on dialogue with the Director of Public Utilities, approximately 2,800 residential connections are served by the City's public water system.

Water Treatment Plant

The City of Emporia currently owns and operates its own water treatment plant. The plant is operated by a staff of five employees, not including the superintendent. The plant is licensed to treat 4 million gallons per day but currently only has the demand for

790,000 gallons per day. Upgrades to the plant are underway and are scheduled for completion in 2015.

Water Storage

There are four storage tanks within the Emporia service area with a total capacity of 1.5 million gallons. These include three elevated tanks, of which one holds a capacity of 500,000 gallons and two hold a capacity of 250,000 gallons, and one ground level tank which holds a capacity of 500,000 gallons.

Water Distribution System

Emporia's waterlines vary in diameter with 6 inches being the most common size. One of the City's largest waterlines is 12 inches in diameter and loops around the boundary of the City. The age and condition of the City's water system dates back to the early 1920's with some waterlines approaching 100 years of age. Emporia's system constantly undergoes repairs and replacement as necessary to provide an adequate water supply to its residents.

Sanitary Sewer Service

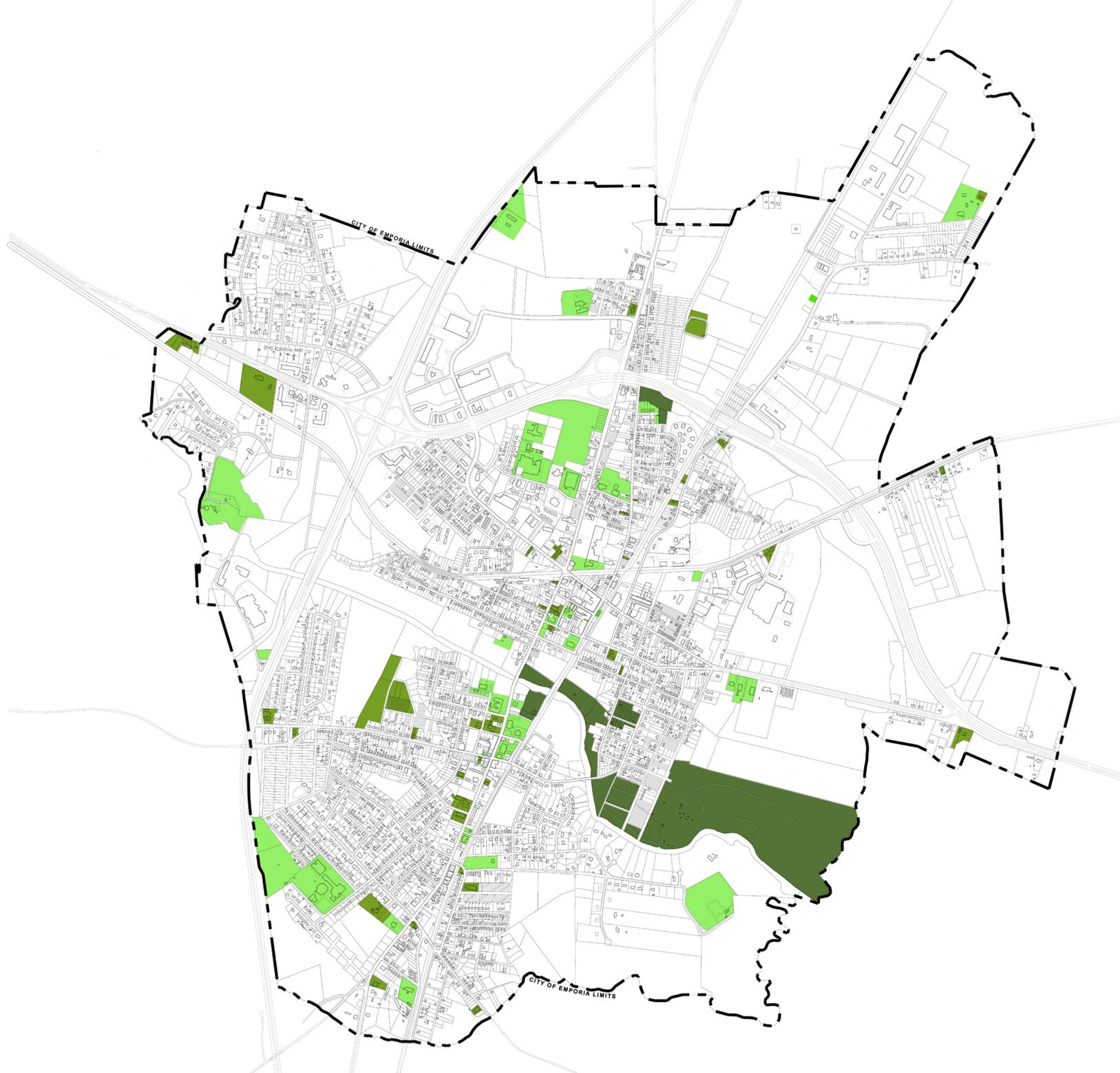
Sanitary sewer service for the City of Emporia is owned and operated by the City and currently provides service to over 5,600 residents. Based on dialogue with the Director of Public Utilities, approximately 2,800 residential connections are served by the City's sanitary sewer system.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

The City of Emporia currently owns and operates its own wastewater treatment plant. The plant is operated by a staff of five employees, including the superintendent. The plant is licensed to treat 1.5 million gallons per day with the capacity to treat 1.5

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

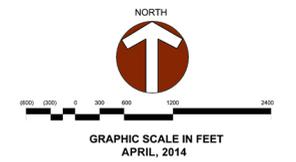
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



LEGEND

Public & Semi-Public

- COMMUNITY FACILITIES
- PLACES OF WORSHIP, CEMETERIES & LODGES
- PARKS & RECREATION



million gallons per day. A daily average of 760,000 gallons per day are treated at the plant.

Wastewater Collection System

Emporia's sewer lines vary in diameter with 6 to 8 inches being the most common length. The age and condition of the City's sewer system dates back to the early 1920's with some sewer lines approaching 100 years of age. Emporia's system constantly undergoes upgrades which include cleaning, relining, and replacement as is necessary to provide adequate service to its residents.

Refuse Collection and Disposal

The City provides curbside solid waste collection to both residential and commercial customers as well as recycling for both customers. The City has six garbage trucks that operate four days out of the week for residential customers and six days out of the week for commercial customers. All of the City refuse is disposed of at the Greenville County Sanitary Landfill which is located four miles west of Emporia north of Route 58 on Maclin's Creek Road. The City's recycling operation operates four days out of the week for residential and bi-weekly for commercial customers and, through a contract, sells its recyclables to Sunoco from South Carolina.

Public Safety and Emergency Services

The City provides a full range of fire, rescue, police, and other public safety programs to



citizens of the planning area. These services and programs include the following:

Fire Protection

The Emporia Volunteer Fire Department is currently staffed by one professionally paid employee and supplemented by approximately fifty-one (51) volunteers, including thirty-eight (38) Group 1 members, five (5) Group 2 members, and eight (8) Cadets. The fire department's responsibilities include fire suppression, fire prevention and education, extrication, and search and rescue. There are eight (8) officers responsible for overseeing daily operations, including a Fire Chief, two assistant Fire Chiefs, two (2) Captains, and three (3) Lieutenants.

The firefighting equipment is housed in a facility built in 1997. The building is located at 209 Halifax Street and is centrally located within the City. In addition to the four truck bays, the building has offices and equipment storage. Current equipment includes four (4) pumper trucks, a 75' ladder truck, a brush truck, air support truck, and carryall truck and one chief vehicle.

Police Protection

The Emporia Police Department, located at 310 Budd Street, is composed of 26 sworn officers including a Chief of Police, Captain, five Sergeants, and 16 Police Officers, 6 communications officers, two animal control officers, an executive secretary, and an information system technician.

In addition to normal patrol functions, the department provided criminal investigative services, houses the City's Emergency

Operation Center (EOC), and the 911 Communication Center, which dispatches City fire, rescue, and police calls. The City Police Department regularly upgrades its equipment through the Capital Improvement Program to keep pace with modern technology and operate at an efficient level of service.

Rescue Squad

The Greenville Volunteer Rescue Squad is located on South Main Street near the intersection of Greenville Avenue. Facilities include a large meeting room and recreation room, board room, executive offices, kitchen, two rest rooms, and a bunk room

The Rescue Squad currently consists of approximately forty-three (43) volunteers and responded to 1,828 calls in 2007 and 2,169 calls in 2013. The Squad is run by a President, which is its Chief Operating Officer, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Board of Directors. The Squad has five (5) vehicles, which consist of four (4) ambulances and one (1) Ford Expedition which serves as a first-response vehicle. The Squad also has dragging equipment, hydraulic cutters, ropes, stretchers, and other necessary tools specified by the Bureau of Emergency Medical Services.

Parks and Recreation

Overview

The Emporia-Greenville Recreation Association, Inc. (EGRA) was established around 1950 as the Civic Recreation Association. Initially, area civic



clubs and individuals helped build the Center Street swimming pool and tennis courts. In the early 1970s, the Association was reorganized. Funding from Emporia and Greenville County was sought to expand programs. A lighted baseball field was built on Center Street and the swimming pool, which had fallen into a state disrepair, was renovated. Programming was expanded to include softball for girls and women, as well as other sports such as basketball, football and soccer. Lighted twin tennis courts, a tot playground, and picnic shelter were also added.

In the early 1980s another major project was conducted by the EGRA which made it the largest provider of public recreation in Emporia and Greenville County. Meherrin River Park was constructed on the site of the former Emporia city dump east of the Lee Street river bridge. Built after the City closed the dump, the Meherrin River Park complex included five lighted athletic fields with facilities for baseball, softball, soccer, and football. Two playgrounds and a large picnic pavilion were added. A state grant of \$100,000 was matched with over \$100,000 in local funds which came from the City of Emporia, Greenville County, and various fund raising projects. When the nearly fifty year old Center Street



pool finally failed and the Association outgrew the Center Street Park, most league activities were moved to Meherrin River Park which provided more space, parking, and a public boat launch area. As of 2000, the EGRA provided recreation in organized leagues to over 1,000 people, with an estimated 30,000 visitors using the Association-operated parks: Meherrin River Park and Center Street Park.

Operation

Since Emporia and Greensville County do not operate their own public recreation program, groups like the EGRA provide a cost-efficient recreation delivery system. The Association is jointly supported and subsidized by the City of Emporia and Greensville County. While partially funded with public money, much of the operating expenses are offset by volunteers, part-time employees, fees, and fundraising. Future projects like capital construction, new facilities, and coordination of programs can be accomplished without the expense and overhead of a central department. The EGRA will continue to play an important role in that future along with other recreation groups who make up the Emporia-Greensville recreation system. EGRA is a non-profit public service corporation which generates approximately forty (40%) percent of its budget through team sport registration fees and concessions.

Facility Evaluation

The City of Emporia has four (4) public parks and one special facility, totaling approximately 49 acres. These parks/facilities generally fall into three categories, as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA): neighborhood parks, a community park,

and a special use area. The NRPA standards generally define facilities as follows:

- **Tot Lot/Pocket Park** – small play areas averaging one acre or less in size, providing passive play activities for small children and generally serving less than ¼ mile radius;
- **Neighborhood Park** – parks typically 3 to 15 acres in size, serving surrounding neighborhoods and emphasizing more informal recreation activities as opposed to organized programs. These parks typically include youth athletic fields, basketball and/or volleyball courts, a picnic pavilion, benches, play equipment, and generally serving a ¼ to ½ mile radius;
- **Community Park** – parks typically 20 to 75 acres in size that include a wide variety of active and passive recreation with emphasis on facilities for organized recreation programs. Community Parks generally serve a 1 to 2 mile radius and include multiple athletic fields, picnic pavilions, tennis courts, basketball courts, volleyball courts, limited passive trails and wooded areas, and play equipment;
- **Conservation Areas** – passive lands that are set aside primarily to preserve important natural areas and not intended for active recreational pursuits. The size of these areas would vary depending on sensitive community resources and regulations. Sensitive resources could include: creek valleys, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, and areas of historic significance.
- **Special Use Area** – areas which serve a specialized or single purpose recreational activity such as campgrounds, golf

courses, boat launching/ access areas, etc. The general service radius is variable and would depend on the specific activity.

Table 19: PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Park	Activities	Type	Acreage	Service Area
Meherrin River Park	Baseball/softball, soccer, & football fields, basketball & tennis courts, bike trails, playground & picnic areas, VDGIF public boat launch	District	17	1-2 miles
Meherrin River Park Trail	Running/walking/biking trail	Conservation Area	16.4	Unidentified
Community Youth Center	Baseball/softball field, basketball courts, playground, community center, and swimming pool	Neighborhood	3	1/4 - 1/2 mile
Center Street Park	Open grass field, soccer field	Neighborhood	4.7	1/4 - 1/2 mile
Veterans Memorial Park	Group picnic shelter, open grassed event areas, and location of the Virginia Peanut Festival	Neighborhood	2.4	1/4 - 1/2 mile
Emporia Reservoir Public Boat Access	Part of 210 ac. Meherrin River Reservoir supporting largemouth bass and small sunfish	Special Use	0.35	5 - 10 miles
Source: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)		Total	43.9	

Table 19 presents a detailed inventory of current facilities and activities along with their NRPA classification type, acreage and projected service radius. The current park system consists of:

- One 17 acre Community Park;
- One 16 acre Conservation Area adjacent to the Community Park;
- Three Neighborhood Park(s) totaling approximately ten (10) acres; and,
- One Special Use area comprised of a .35 acre public boat access area (which is part of the 210 acre Emporia Reservoir).

Meherrin River Park is a Community Park facility providing both active and passive recreational opportunities to the entire City and portions of Greensville County. The official service radius, as defined by the NRPA, is one to two miles. The functional service area of the Meherrin River Park and accompanying park trail is the greater Emporia-Greensville area. This facility provides a broad range of open space and recreational opportunities ranging from passive trails and natural areas to active regulation fields for organized league sports. In addition to passive and active activities the Park has a barrier free public boat launch area which is supported by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Emporia’s three Neighborhood Parks serve a much smaller geographic area, ¼ to ½ mile radius and offer more active oriented recreational pursuits. The Community Youth Center contains approximately three (3) acres and supports a baseball/softball field,

basketball courts, a playground, community center, and swimming pool. While the Center’s estimated service radius is ¼ to ½ mile, being adjacent to the Route 58 Bypass and near the CSX Railroad effectively alters its primary service area, and extending it south toward West Atlantic Street. The Center Street and Veterans Memorial Park facilities are located near each other and therefore, share some

of the same service area population. Veterans Memorial Park, because of its downtown location, use for big events (Virginia Peanut Festival), and proximity to the CSX Railroad, probably functions more like a small, special event community park. This altered function also would extend its service area radius to one or two miles. The Center Street facility functions as community open space with a maintained grass field that can serve multiple functions but has no official recreational designation.

The Emporia Reservoir boat launch area accesses the 210 acre reservoir which is located in Greensville County. This is a single ramp facility and is not barrier free. In 1990, a fish lift (passage) was placed into operation, allowing shad and herring to run up to and over the dam as they continue on to historic spawning grounds.

The application of NRPA standards for existing facilities to 2012 population estimates for the Emporia-Greensville area (17,591) reveals that the region is served by 2.5 acres for every 1,000 residents. NRPA recommends between 6.75 and 10.5 acres.

While the standards illustrate a lack of services, they don’t determine which facilities are needed in order to better serve the

region. Table 20 demonstrates particular facilities the City and County may be lacking by comparing national service trends with the number of local residents that are served by each facility. This data is taken from the 2012 Parks and Recreation National Database Report, which includes a survey of 275 public Parks and Recreation agencies in the U.S.

Discounting those facilities that typically serve larger population centers, Emporia and Greensville may have the population to support the following additional facilities: one rectangular field, one to two playgrounds, two additional outdoor tennis courts and one indoor tennis court.

Table 20: RECREATIONAL FACILITY NEEDS

Facility	Median local population per facility (National)	Facilities in Emporia/Greensville	Facilities required to meet national median**	Difference
Diamond fields (e.g. baseball/softball)	3,139	5	5.6	0.6
Rectangular fields (e.g. football/soccer)	3,523	4	5	1
Playground	3,800	3	4.6	1.6
Tennis court (outdoor)	4,292	2	4.1	2.1
Basketball court (outdoor)	7,362	2	2.4	0.4
Tennis court (indoor)	16,034	0	1.1	1.1
Golf Course (9 holes)*	21,600	0	0.8	0.8
Recreation/community center*	24,431	1	0.7	-0.3

Swimming pool (outdoor)*	30,000	0	0.6	0.6
Community gardens*	31,936	0	0.6	0.6
Swimming pool (indoor)*	42,028	1	0.4	-0.6
Dog Park*	48,260	0	0.4	0.4
* Facility typically located in areas that are larger than Emporia and Greenville				
** Based on US Census Bureau 2012 population estimates for Emporia and Greenville				
Source: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)				

Public Schools

The City is presently served by four (4) public schools within the Greenville County school system. These include two (2) elementary schools, Greenville and Belfield, and two (2) secondary schools, Edward W. Wyatt Middle School and Greenville County High School. Only Greenville County High School is located within the City's corporate limits while the remaining three (3) are located in Greenville County, just outside the City's northern boundary. Table 21 details the enrollment at Greenville County's public schools.

Table 21: PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

School Name	2003	2007	2013
Greenville Elem. (Grades PK-4)	988	1,114	1,145
Belfield Elementary (Grade 5)	396	360	198
Edward W. Wyatt Middle (Grades 6-8)	420	387	571
Greenville County High School (Grades 9-12)	770	781	677
Total	2,574	2,642	2,591
Source: Virginia Department of Education, Fall Membership			

Enrollment has decreased slightly since the 2009-2010 year. The biggest change has come from a reduction in the number of students at Greenville County High School.

Cultural Facilities and Festivals

Meherrin River Arts Council

The Meherrin River Arts Council (MRAC) was founded in 1978 by a group of concerned citizens after perceiving a tremendous need for a performing arts series in the Emporia-Greenville area. The group's goal has been two-fold: create a series that showcase a variety of entertainment styles and genres while keeping tickets affordable to all segments of the population. In fulfilling this mission, an annual concert series of four performances was begun in 1979. The series is developed and administered by an all-volunteer board of directors. Over the past twenty-eight seasons, the MRAC has hosted over one hundred and ten performances ranging from opera to ballet to plays to symphonic concerts. All performances are held at the Emporia Greenville Performing Arts Center located at the Greenville Elementary School. The venue has been designed for optimum visibility from all sections of the theater and the theatre acoustics are exceptional. Seating capacity is 906. Recent performers include Wayne Newton, The Four Tops, Kenny Rogers, Tony Bennett, Dionne Warwick, The Virginia Symphony, The Oak Ridge Boys, The Platters, Lou Rawls, and Lee Greenwood.

Virginia Pork Festival

The City of Emporia has numerous special events throughout the year. The biggest is the Virginia Pork Festival which is a one-day celebration that takes place the second Wednesday in June. The event began in 1974 with the primary purpose of promoting the

pork industry in Virginia and Greensville County. Formed by a group of local citizens, the event quickly gained a significant following and has grown to become one of the East Coast's largest food festivals with continuous live music from multiple stages. The event typically attracts more than 15,000 people annually.

Virginia Peanut Festival

The City also hosts the Virginia Peanut Festival. This festival celebrates the Virginia Peanut, farmers, and the fall harvesting season in southeastern Virginia. In addition to celebrating the Virginia Peanut, the festival includes a carnival with rides, games, food, several marching bands, a car show, bluegrass music, cloggers, arts, crafts, children's games, pony rides, a civil war exhibit, educational exhibits, antique farm equipment, and a fireworks display. This event is typically a three-day event that takes place in September at Veterans Memorial Park.

Library Services

The William E. Richardson, Jr. Memorial Library, a branch of the Meherrin Regional Library, offers a full range of library services, including an on-line catalog, walk-in, telephone and e-mail reference service, photocopy and FAX service, public meeting facilities, notary public, programs for children and adults, and public-access computers with high-speed Internet access and a variety of software programs. Available materials include more than 55,000 print volumes, as well as videotapes, recorded books, and over 75 periodical subscriptions. Operating six days a week, the staff of five includes a professional librarian.

Health and Medical Services

Health and medical services represent one of the largest industries in the local and regional economy. The area is supported by the 35 million, 136,000 square foot Southern Virginia Regional Medical Center that offers eighty (80) licensed beds, twenty two (22) physicians, and more than 285 employees. Clinical and support services include: 24-Hour Emergency Care, Cardiology, Family Practice, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, Neurology, Orthopedic Surgery, Physical Therapy, Podiatry, Radiology, and Urology.



Historic Districts and Structures

The City of Emporia is home to seven (7) sites / districts that are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) as well as on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A description and the significance of each of these properties are detailed as follows:

Greensville County Courthouse Complex (VLR 1982, NRHP 1983)



The Greensville County Courthouse complex on South Main Street consists of the courthouse, county administrator's office, and the clerk's office. The buildings are constructed of brick, painted white, and were erected on the

land that has served as the site of a county courthouse since 1787.

The two-story, porticoed courthouse was built in 1831, the clerk's office in 1894, and the present county administrator's office in 1900 and 1907. The courthouse and the clerk's office show considerable evolution through alterations and enlargements over the years reflecting the growth and need of the county.

The present courthouse, built in 1831 by Daniel Lynch, began as a Jeffersonian school, three-art, Palladian-type structure and has evolved architecturally reflecting the growth and prosperity of the county. In the 1910 remodeling, the Ionic columns were added to the 1907 portico giving the building a somewhat Beaux-Arts appearance. The clerk's office, built by the Southern Fireproof Co. after the plans of Reuben Sherriff, has likewise evolved architecturally, receiving a Georgian façade in 1961. On the north side of the square, the former Greenville Bank Building of 1900, now the county administrator's office contains an extraordinary locally produced interior of decorative stamped sheet metal. The square was the scene of military action in the Civil War when General Wade Hampton undertook to defend the railroad bridge across the Meherrin, which was General Lee's link to Southern supply sources.

Village View (VLR 1980, NRHP 1982)

Village View, also known as the Mansion House, is located at 221 Briggs Street and is a double-pile, two-story, wood-frame house built in



approximately 1815 and subsequently improved in 1826. However, the plantation itself dates to 1726. The plantation grew from its original 200 acres in 1726 to its maximum size of 4,990 acres in the late eighteenth century. From 1735 to 1751 it was the home of Rev. John Betty, the first minister of St. Andrews Parish. The archeological remains of an eighteenth-century house with a 47' by 17' English style basement and plastered walls, located adjacent to the Mansion House, are believed to be those of Betty's residence. During the Civil War, the front parlor of the Mansion House served as the site of a council of war for Generals W. H. F. Lee, Wade Hampton, and Matthew Butler. In the late nineteenth century, rooms in the house, as well as its dependencies, have served as a doctor's office, a dentistry, an apothecary, and an academy for boys. In 1986, the Mansion House and its remaining four acres of land were given to the community by its last private owner, Sidney Briggs. Today the restored house, with its collection of historic furnishings, reflects the rural family life of Southside Virginia in the 1830s.

Village View is significant as Emporia's outstanding example of Federal-style architecture. Built circa 1815 and subsequently improved in 1826, the house is a provincial expression of the Adamesque mode. The outstanding features include the refined main stair, the highly ornamental mantels on both the first and second floors, and the scroll-work decoration in the fanlight and sidelights on the main entry. The house has remained in the family of its second owner with no major alterations. Its large and finely landscaped front lawn preserves many of its late 19th-century tress and shrubs. Village View served as a Confederate headquarters

during the Civil War and was used later by the owners of a boys' academy.

H. T. Klugel Architectural Sheet Metal Work Building (VLR 1972, NRHP 1973)

The Klugel Building is located at 135 East Atlantic Street and is a long, flat-roofed structure with stepped parapets on the sides.



H. T. Klugel came to Emporia in 1902 and established a business in what was then Belfield on the north side of the Meherrin River. He eventually moved the business into the present building in 1914. Klugel did not produce a catalogue of his sheet metal products, but designed each piece to order with the emphasis on style and craftsmanship. The building was originally ell-shaped, however, a cinderblock section has been added to give it a rectangular plan. The original brick walls are laid in American bond. The five-bay front is covered with silver and black painted worked sheet metal. Edwardian classicism is the general style. The windows and doorways have large rounded arches with a fan tracery filling the top of the arch. H. T. Klugel, Jr. took over his father's business in 1946. After his death in 1959, W. L. Slagle, who had been associated with Klugel since 1951, bought the business.

The Klugel Building possesses an excellent and most original example of a galvanized iron or sheet metal decorative building front. Highly eclectic in style and use of ornament, few sheet metal fronts in the Commonwealth can compare in overall richness. The

ornamentation is particularly fine, and noteworthy in that it all was produced in Emporia by the Klugel firm itself. No doubt it was meant to serve as an advertisement displaying the skills of the firm. The front has survived essentially unaltered for nearly one hundred years and has become a familiar and arresting landmark for downtown Emporia.

Old Merchants and Farmers Bank Building (VLR 1978, NRHP 1979)

The Old Merchants and Farmers Bank Building is located in the midst of the downtown commercial district on South Main Street. The



building is a one-story, concave mansard roof brick structure set on a low brick foundation. Eclectic in style, the edifice as erected in 1902. The most noteworthy feature of the façade is a galvanized sheet metal cornice which may have been manufactured by H. T. Klugel, an architectural sheet metal concern located in Emporia. In 1914, the bank had outgrown the space and moved to another location. The building served as a law office until 1948 when it was converted into the City's public library. In November 1977, the building was deeded to the Greenville County Historic Society for use as headquarters, museum, and archives.

The Old Merchants and Farmers Bank exemplifies the architectural elaboration characteristic of even the most diminutive commercial

buildings of the early twentieth century. The building's exterior is essentially unchanged from the construction date of 1902, proudly displayed in the pediment atop the cornice. Although built as a narrow one-story structure, the building achieves a sense of monumentality through the use of a mansard roof and a decorative Klugel-type cornice.

Greenville County Training School (VLR 2005, NRHP 2006)

The Greenville County Training School is located at 105 Ruffin Street in a residential neighborhood within close vicinity of major roads and an overpass. Constructed in 1929, the present school is a single-story brick building with a front gable standing seam metal roof. The U-shaped plan has a front hyphen that connects two wings containing classrooms, while an auditorium, office space, and a library form the interior central space. In 1933, an industrial building with a concrete floor was added to the site at the north end of the main building. In 1934, an 8 by 12 foot addition containing classrooms was built onto the rear west wing. The current school building is in poor condition, windows are boarded up, and the roof has fallen in, partially destroying the rest of the east wing.

The Greenville County Training School is representative of efforts undertaken by Julius Rosenwald, a philanthropist of the early twentieth century who worked towards improving education for African-Americans. The school is located on a site known as the City and County Center for African-American education for over fifty years. An earlier school was constructed on the property in 1912-1913 and subsequently added to as the number of students and grades offered increased. This building was later demolished, and it is said the current building was not built over this site. In the 1960s,

following desegregation, the school closed, but was used by the Greenville County School Board for storage. Since that time the building and grounds have suffered deterioration due to lack of maintenance.

Belfield-Emporia Historic District (VLR 2007, NRHP 2007)

Approximately two blocks long and two blocks wide, the Belfield-Emporia Historic District is centered on Halifax Street and is roughly bounded



by Atlantic Street, Halifax Street, Budd Street, and Valley Street. Although the town of Belfield was established as early as 1799, the extant building stock of Belfield consists generally of late 19th century brick buildings laid out in a linear fashion with lots and blocks. Most of the commercial architecture in Belfield was constructed of brick laid in a six course common bond pattern. Large, plate glass storefront windows generally flank a central entrance which is usually topped with a transom. The Belfield-Emporia Historic District has been recommended eligible for its association with the early 20th century commercial development of Greenville County and for its early 20 century commercial architecture. Although many buildings suffered alterations during the mid-20th century, the district still conveys its late 19th and 20th century commercial roots. Contributing buildings in this district include the H. T. Klugel Building, the Hotel Virginia, and the Emporia train depot.

The Belfield-Emporia Historic District is historically significant as a small town in Southside Virginia in the late 19th and 20th centuries that was transformed by commercial growth and the railroad. Belfield-Emporia serves as a reflection of the experiences of similar towns and regions throughout the south that began as agricultural centers and developed through the commercialism of the 20th century. Although Belfield is no longer the commercial center it once was in the early 20th century, the district's buildings still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming commercial district.

Hicksford-Emporia Historic District (VLR 2007, NRHP 2007)



Approximately four blocks long and two blocks wide, the Hicksford-Emporia Historic District is located along South Main Street. Although the Hicksford district no longer experiences the economic boom of the early 20th century,

the historic structures along South Main Street still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming 20th century commercial city. The Hicksford-Emporia Historic District has been recommended eligible for its association with the early 20th century commercial and governmental development of Greensville County and for its early 20 century commercial architecture. Contributing buildings in this district include the Greensville County Courthouse Complex, the Old Merchants and Farmers Bank Building, the Emporia Armory/Boys and Girls Club of

Greensville/Emporia, the Emporia Post Office, First Presbyterian Church, and Masonic Temple.

The Hicksford-Emporia Historic District is historically significant as a small town in Southside Virginia that transformed itself from an agricultural economy. Hicksford served as the county seat until it merged with neighboring Belfield in 1887 to form the city of Emporia. The small city served as the hub of Greensville County until the mid-20th century, when an economic decline depressed the town. Although Hicksford is no longer experiencing the economic boom of the early 20th century, the district's historic structures along South Main Street still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming twentieth century city.

TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

A safe and efficient transportation system is a key aspect of community development. Not only do transportation facilities serve the needs of existing residents, they also influence the location of future development and economic activity. Emporia's transportation system includes four (4) basic types of facilities: local streets and highways, parking facilities, pedestrian facilities, and other transportation services.

Streets and Highways

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has designated Emporia as a small urban planning area served by a functional classification system with the following categories: interstate, freeway & expressway, principal arterial, minor arterial, and major and minor collector roads. As a crossroads community, Emporia's road network includes all roads of in each of these categories.

Interstate 95 serves the city, the region and entire Eastern Seaboard of the United States. U.S. Route 58 connects southern Virginia and bisects the city. The route is classified as a Freeway/Expressway as it bypasses the center city and classified as a principal arterial at the east and west gateway to the city. Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 58 serve an important role in Emporia's economy and connect the city with major transportation arteries of regional and national significance.



Within the city, minor arterials are designated to interconnect with and augment the principal arterial system, and to provide for trips of moderate length. Emporia's minor arterials include U.S. Route 301 (Main Street), U.S. 58 Business

(Market Drive, East and West Atlantic Street and Low Ground Road.

The collector system provides access and traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas. Collector streets gather local traffic and channel it into the arterial system. Thoroughfares not included in the above categories comprise the local street system. Local streets provide direct access to adjacent land and access to the higher order systems. Service to through traffic on these streets is discouraged. The classification system as described is found on the VDOT Functional Classifications Map.

Average daily traffic counts depict the relative use and importance of local roadways (see Average Annual Daily Traffic Map). The

heavy volume along Interstate 95 is readily evident as this major highway serves as a major gateway for traffic heading north to Richmond and Washington, D.C. and south to Rocky Mount, North Carolina and points south. Heavy traffic volumes along Routes 58 and 301 are also evident as Route 58 serves as an east-west corridor from Hampton Roads to the southwest corner of Virginia and into Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. It is important to note that certain portions of Route 58 within the city limits of Emporia are susceptible to heavy volumes of tractor trailer traffic. Tractor trailer traffic represents 23% of all daily traffic on Route 58 between I-95 and Route 301 and 27% of daily traffic between Route 301 and Reese Street. As such, the maintenance of this highway is critical to the continuing functionality of the City's roadways. The added stress placed on this roadway because of the high volume of tractor trailers must be monitored regularly for any inadequacies. Route 301 (North and South Main Street) serves as a north-south corridor within Virginia that parallels Interstate 95. Most other minor arterials and collectors are carrying moderate amounts of local traffic, averaging between 1,000-5,000 vehicles per day (VPD).

Table 22 outlines transportation improvements as outlined by two transportation planning documents, the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), the Crater PDC Rural Transportation Priority List and all additional projects identified for Emporia in the Crater PDC Rural Long Range Transportation Plan.

In addition the transportation improvements identified in these documents, the City has identified a need for improved access for westbound industrial traffic at the intersection of US 58 and the Davis Street interchange.

The SYIP includes those projects scheduled to begin or conclude within a six year timeframe and outlines planned spending. The Rural Transportation Plan is a long-range planning document developed by the Crater Planning District Commission. Through consultation with all localities located in the Crater PDC, but outside of the tri-cities planning area, a list of priority projects was created and submitted to VDOT for consideration for future SYIPs.

Table 22: TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLANS

	Location	Description	Cost Estimate (\$)
<i>VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program (FY 2016-2021)</i>			
1	South Main Street (US 301) from Brunswick Ave to Spring St	South Main Street Enhancement Project - construction of pedestrian facilities	1,800,000
2	East Atlantic Street at GP Plant entrance	Intersection improvement on East Atlantic St	794,000
3	Halifax Street Bridge	Replace Halifax Street Bridge over Metcalf Branch	934,500
4	I-95 Meherrin River Bridges	Replace Interstate 95 northbound and southbound bridges over the Meherrin River	24,200,000
<i>Crater PDC Rural Transportation Priority List</i>			
5	US 58/I-95	Cloverleaf ramps onto and off I-95 and US 58 should be extended due to safety reasons	920,000
6	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Short Term: Extend turning lanes from US 58 eastbound onto Market Dr and US 58 eastbound onto W Atlantic St	460,000

7	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Mid Term: Possibility of installing crosswalks and pedestrian signals; improve signal timings at intersection	265,000
8	US 58/Purdy Rd	Flooding concern at US 58 and Purdy Road; Install new infrastructure to handle flooding in this area	N/A
9	US 58 from VA 619 (Purdy Rd) to US 301 Ramps	Extend right turn lanes from US 58 westbound onto Market Dr and US 58 westbound onto Purdy Rd	460,000
<i>Crater PDC 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan</i>			
10	US 301 at hospital entrance	Construct signal	Cost est. not available
11	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Provide second dedicated right turn lane on US 58 Bypass eastbound	Cost est. not available
12	US 58 from VA 619 (Purdy Rd) to US 301 Ramps	Widen US 58 to six lanes	Cost est. not available
13	US 58 Bus. (E. Atlantic St.) from US 301 to Southampton Rd	Intersection improvements at US 301; Mid-term	Cost est. not available
14	US 58 Bus. (E. Atlantic St.) from US 301 to Southampton Rd	Reconstruction without added capacity.	Cost est. not available

Emporia 2035 Transportation Plan

In addition the current SYIP and the Rural Long Range Plan, the following improvements are recommended as part of the Emporia 2035 Transportation Plan which was developed as a joint effort between VDOT and the City of Emporia. This plan is part of VDOT’s small area initiative and should be considered as a complementary planning effort alongside of the Crater Rural Transportation Plan. Recommendations for both plans have been developed with local

input and can be considered for implementation through the Six-Year Improvement Plan.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate system and future demand in the City and to recommend a set of transportation improvements that could best meet existing and future transportation infrastructure needs. The following recommendations are divided into three phases. Phase One recommendations are base year (2015) improvements which should be implemented in the short term. Phase Two recommendations are interim study year (2025) improvements which are typically not needed in the immediate future. Phase Three recommendations are long-term (2035) improvements that do not have an immediate or short-term need. However, as traffic grows and existing facilities age, their importance will become more apparent.

Phase One: Base Year (2015) Recommendations

- **Halifax Street at Southampton Street/Knox Street**
Provide roadway striping on Halifax Street between Southampton Street and Knox Street.
- **Southampton Street at CSX Railway Crossing**
Improve the grade of Southampton Street at the crossing of the CSX railway.
- **US 301 (N Main Street) at the Hospital Entrance**
Provide a new signal at the intersection of US 301 (N Main Street) and the hospital entrance.

- **US 58/US 58 Bypass Eastbound at US 58 Business (Market Drive)**
Extend turning lanes from US 58 Eastbound onto Market Drive/W. Atlantic Street and turning lanes from Market Drive onto US 58 Eastbound. Upgrade signal timing and other intersection improvements.
- **US 58/US 58 Bypass at Purdy Road**
Install new stormwater infrastructure to handle flooding in the vicinity.

Phase Two: Interim Year (2025) Recommendations

- **Interstate I-95 at US 58**
Extend Interstate I-95 cloverleaf ramps onto US 58 to improve safety
- **US 58 (E Atlantic Street) at US 301 (Main Street)/Southampton Street**
Reconstruct US 58 Business (E Atlantic Street) from US 301 (Main Street) to Southampton Street.
- **Halifax Street at Knox Street/US 301 (N Main Street)**
Widen Halifax Street between Knox Street and US 301 (N Main Street) to urban 2-lane standards including sidewalks.
- **US 58/US 58 Bypass Westbound at US 58 Business (Market Drive) and Purdy Road**
Extend turning lanes from US 58 Westbound onto Market Drive and US 58 Westbound onto Purdy Road.

- **US 58/US 58 Bypass Eastbound at US 58 Business (Market Drive) and W Atlantic St.**
Extend turning lanes from US 58 Eastbound onto Market Dr and US 58 Eastbound onto W Atlantic Street.
- **Halifax Street Bike Trail**
Construct a new bike trail along Halifax Street to the central business area, training school and community youth center.

Phase Three: Study Year (2035) Recommendations

- **Interstate I-95 at Emporia City Limits**
Widen Interstate 95 to a 6-lane divided highway within the city limits. The total length of this improvement is 1.67 miles.
- **Interstate I-95 at Brunswick Avenue**
Construct a new interchange on Interstate I-95 at Brunswick Avenue.
- **US 58/US 58 Bypass at Purdy Road/US 301 (N Main Street)**
Widen US 58/US 58 Bypass to a 6-lane rural divided roadway from Purdy Road to US 301 (N Main Street). The total length of this improvement is 1.13 miles.
- **US 58/US 58 Bypass at US 58 Business (Market Drive)**
Investigate possibility of installing crosswalks and pedestrian signals and improve signal timings at intersection
- **Walnut Heights Bike Trail**

Expand the existing bike trail system around the Meherrin River to the west toward the Walnut Heights Area.

Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS)

Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS) are transportation corridors identified by VDOT as the primary multimodal connections that connect Virginia’s regions and to regions outside of the state. If local land uses develop improperly along these corridors, they may be inhibited from best serving their purpose for moving people and freight long distances.

Two CoSS’s are located within City boundaries: Interstate 95 and U.S. Route 58. The only point of access within the City to I-95 is at the U.S. Route 58 interchange and the highway maintains uninhibited flow. U.S. Route 58 includes a bypass route through Emporia and is impacted traffic lights at Purdy Road and Market Drive. A series of transportation improvements have been identified in the SYIP, Crater PDC Rural Transportation Plan and Emporia 2035 Transportation Plan to improve traffic flow through this area.

Parking Facilities

Parking lot facilities are generally numerous and in good condition in and around the City. City businesses with limited space for parking or ingress/egress problems should be encouraged to share centrally sited parking lots, which is the case in several areas in the City especially the downtown areas. As such, these shared parking facilities should be clearly marked, advertised, and designated to local patrons through appropriate signage. As needed, merchants

should encourage their employees to park further away from work to leave spaces open for patrons.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Emporia has sidewalks in and around its downtown but many of the older neighborhoods lack sidewalks or are in need of repair. Newly developed areas in Emporia have excluded sidewalks and rely on vehicular modes of travel. To the extent feasible, Emporia should promote a pedestrian-oriented throughout the City.

The existing Meherrin River Trail provides an asphalt path for biking, walking and running. It currently runs along the north bank of the river between North Main Street at Meherrin River Bridge to Meherrin River Park. Expansion opportunities exist to extend the trail west of North Main Street and east of the Meherrin River Park.

There is currently no formalized on-street biking designation in the city. The Emporia 2035 Transportation plan identified two mid- and long-term recommendations to increase bike accessibility in the city: a trail along Halifax Street to connect the central business district and the Community Youth Center (CYC) and an extension of the Meherrin River Trail on the southside to the Walnut Heights area. The creation and extension of bicycle routes should be done in cooperation with the Emporia-Greenville Recreation Association and the Emporia Bike Club.

Rail Service

Rail passenger service is not available in the Emporia planning area. Presently, there are two Amtrak stations available to Emporia within a 60 mile radius. Petersburg, located 40 miles north of Emporia, has

an Amtrak station that is located on the Carolinian/Piedmont route that runs from New York City to Charlotte, North Carolina, and also on the Silver Service/Palmetto route that runs from New York City to Miami. Rocky Mount, North Carolina, located 60 miles to the south of Emporia, also has an Amtrak station that runs on both the Carolinian/Piedmont and Silver Service/Palmetto routes.

Emporia is served by CSX, which runs north to south. CSX is a Class I railroad in the United States and is one of the two Class I railways serving most of the east coast. The presence of CSX railways puts Emporia in a position to capitalize on its strategic location.

Air Service

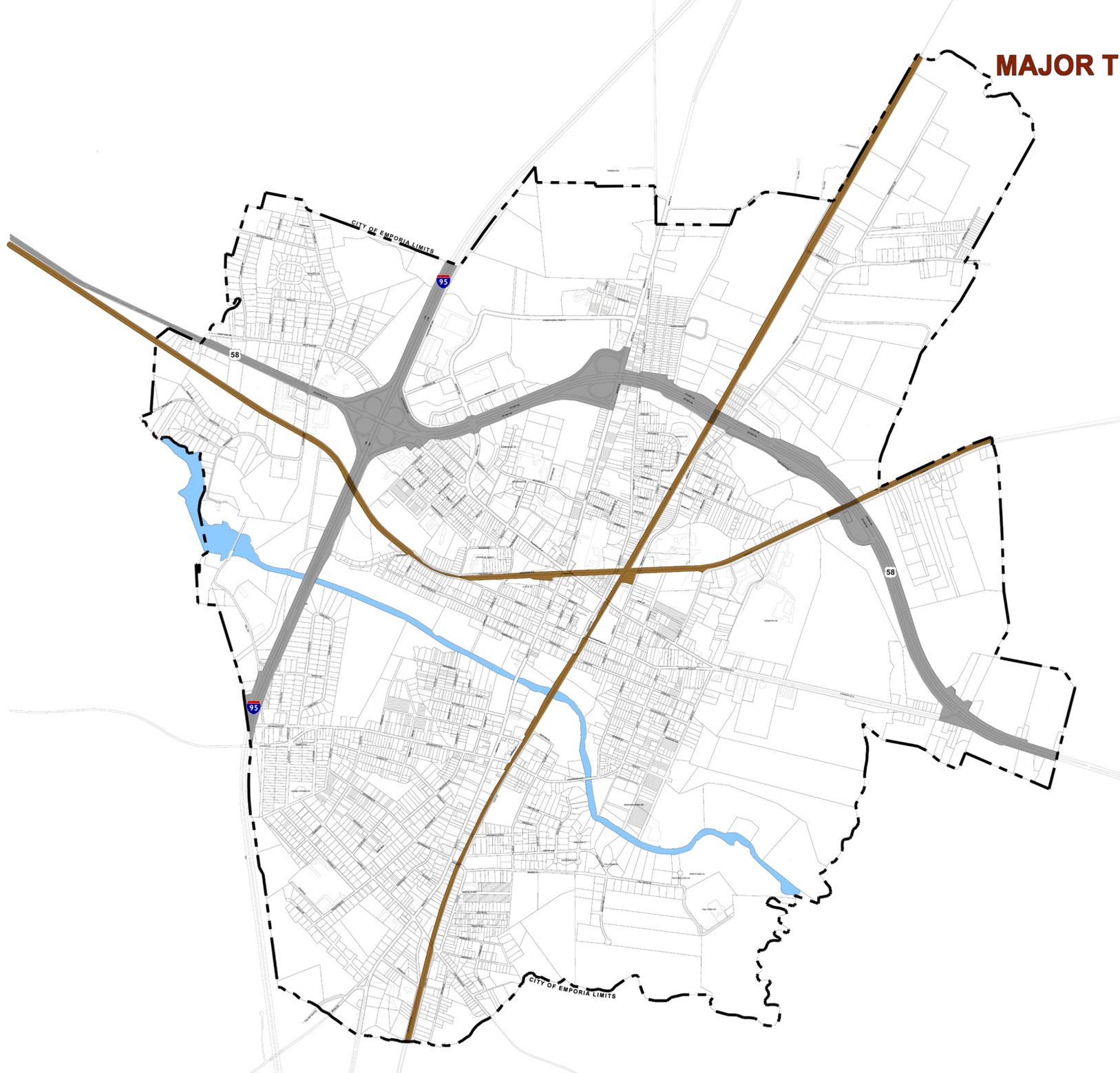
The Emporia-Greenville Regional Airport is located in Greenville County, three miles east of Emporia's corporate limits on US Route 58. This regional airport features nearly \$1 million in recent improvements including improved navigational devices, one lighted, hard surface runway (5,009 feet by long by 100 feet wide), charter service and hangar facilities, accommodations for executive, business, and jet-sized aircrafts, an expanded parking apron, and jet fuel service.

Richmond International Airport serves central Virginia and is located approximately 65 miles north of Emporia. Six air commercial carriers currently serve Richmond International Airport with non-stop flights to 16 destinations and connecting flights to destinations worldwide.

Other Transportation Services

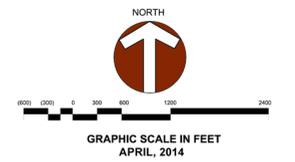
MAJOR THOROUGHFARES & RAILWAYS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



LEGEND

- TRANSPORTATION SURFACES - I 95 CORRIDOR & ROUTH 58
- NORFOLK & WESTERN RAILWAY



GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET
APRIL, 2014

COMMUNITY PLANNING PARTNERS, INC.
Community Development Consultants
Richmond, Virginia

FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA

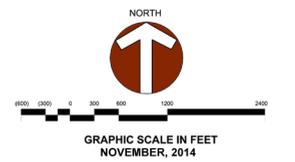


LEGEND

PROPOSED	EXISTING	FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS
		INTERSTATE
		FREEWAY & EXPRESSWAY
		OTHER PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
		MINOR ARTERIAL
		MAJOR COLLECTOR
		MINOR COLLECTOR

	TRANSPORTATION SURFACES - I 95 CORRIDOR & ROUTE 58
	NORFOLK SOUTHERN & CSX RAILWAYS
HIGHWAY ROUTE SIGNS	
	INTERSTATE
	US HIGHWAY
	VA PRIMARY
	VA SECONDARY

NOTE: CLASSIFICATIONS REFLECT OCTOBER 2014 FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

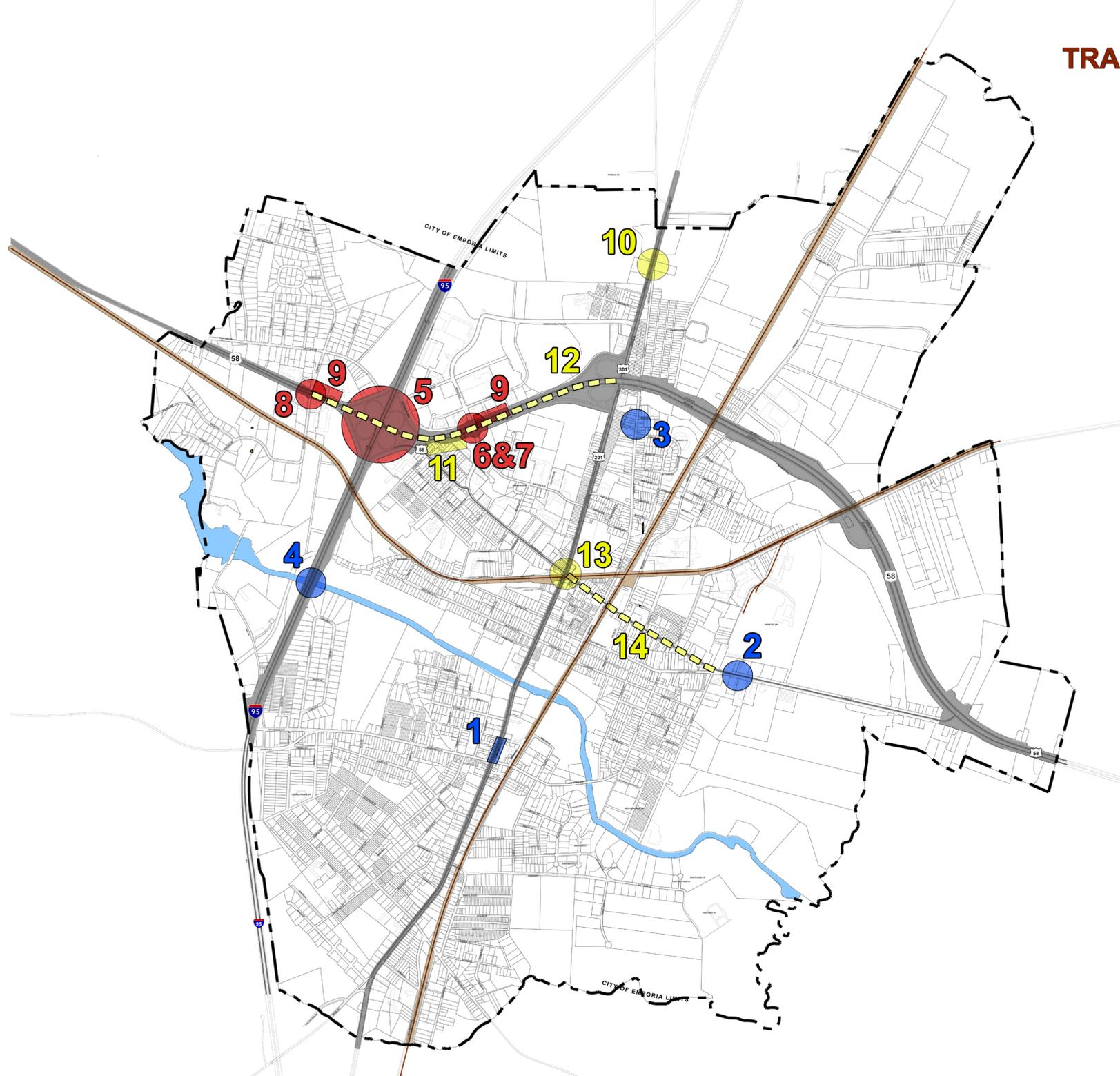


TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLANS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA

LEGEND

- TRANSPORTATION SURFACES - I 95 CORRIDOR & ROUTH 58
- NORFOLK & WESTERN RAILWAY



Location	Description	Cost Est. (\$)	
<i>VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program (FY 2015-2020)</i>			
1	South Main Street (US 301) from Brunswick Ave to Spring St	South Main Street Enhancement Project - construction of pedestrian facilities	1,800,000
2	East Atlantic Street at GP Plant entrance	Intersection improvement on East Atlantic St	794,000
3	Halifax Street Bridge	Replace Halifax Street Bridge over Metcalf Branch	934,500
4	I-95 Meherrin River Bridges	Replace Interstate 95 northbound and southbound bridges over the Meherrin River	24,200,000
<i>Crater PDC Rural Transportation Plan Priority List</i>			
5	US 58/I-95	Cloverleaf ramps onto and off I-95 and U S 58 should be extended due to safety reasons	920,000
6	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Short Term: Extend turning lanes from US 58 eastbound onto Market Dr and US 58 eastbound onto W Atlantic St	460,000
7	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Mid Term: Possibility of installing crosswalks and pedestrian signals; improve signal timings at intersection	265,000
8	US 58/Purdy Rd	Flooding concern at US 58 and Purdy Road; install new infrastructure to handle flooding in this area	N/A
9	US 58 from VA 619 (Purdy Rd) to US 301 Ramps	Extend right turn lanes from US 58 westbound onto Market Dr and US 58 westbound onto Purdy Rd	460,000
<i>Crater PDC 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan</i>			
10	US 301 at hospital entrance	Construct signal	Cost est. not available
11	US 58/US 58 Bus (Market Dr)	Provide second dedicated right turn lane on US 58 Bypass eastbound	Cost est. not available
12	US 58 from VA 619 (Purdy Rd) to US 301 Ramps	Widen US 58 to six lanes	Cost est. not available
13	US 58 Bus. (E. Atlantic St.) from US 301 to Southampton Rd	Intersection improvements at US 301	Cost est. not available
14	US 58 Bus. (E. Atlantic St.) from US 301 to Southampton Rd	Reconstruction without added capacity	Cost est. not available



Emporia residents who do not have access to their own car have limited alternative options. Private inter-city bus service is currently not provided in the city. While there are taxi cab services located in the city, there is a lack of other transportation alternatives. Demand may exist for a regional public transportation system. Any system that is developed must be financially sustainable.

PLANNING FACTORS

The map of planning factors includes long-term considerations for future land use decisions and for new development and revitalization of existing areas.

Future development will most likely occur along the U.S. 58 Bypass Corridor and includes areas identified for industrial and regional commercial uses. Access to these uses should be balanced with high volume traffic flows along the bypass.

The city's natural features should be protected. Land surrounding the Meherin River should be preserved to mitigate flooding impacts to residents and protect water quality. Land preservation can also become an amenity that can attract tourists, businesses, and future residents. A series of greenways and trails should be developed along it in order to provide recreation opportunities as well as pedestrian linkages. Zoning overlays to protect the City's natural resources should be included in the zoning ordinance.

Future development in the 100-year floodplain throughout the City should be discouraged, however, conflicts currently exist between established neighborhoods and the presence of the 100-year floodplain. Residences that have experienced repeated flooding or

are likely to be flooded should be identified for consideration through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program.

In addition to the natural features of the area, the historic character of the City should be preserved. A Historic Overlay District should be identified to protect the structures in and adjoining the two downtown areas. Since they have been placed on both the state and national historic registers, an Architectural Review Board (ARB) should be established to review applications from developers or owners for rehabilitation, construction, and demolition of buildings in the districts. Design guidelines should be developed and adopted to provide a framework which can assist the board in reviewing proposed design changes.

Housing deficiencies can be found scattered throughout the city, however, in some places concentrations of housing blight can impact the entire neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods. Three neighborhoods in particular have been identified through a field survey of city neighborhoods. These neighborhoods may be recommended as priority areas if the City is to proceed with requesting any funds from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) to assist in developing an action plan for the neighborhoods' revitalization.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

If the Comprehensive Plan is to be useful, its stated goals must be known, understood, and supported by the people of Emporia. The design of the Plan and its various tools for implementation should be predicated upon these goals. Should Emporia's goals and objectives substantially change, the Plan and its implementation strategies should also change in response.

Goals are general policy statements of what Emporia as a community would like to achieve over the next twenty years.

Objectives are measurable benchmarks of progress that serve to support a respective goal. These in turn include specific strategies that should be considered if Emporia is to take positive steps toward its desired future.

Land Use and Environment

Goal: Encourage and provide for the intelligent use of the land in a manner that meets the needs of the population, stimulates physical, social, and economic development, and protects the environmental quality of the area.

Objectives:

1. Provide and maintain adequate land areas for orderly, compatible, and efficient land use development.
2. Protect the natural environment from inappropriate development.

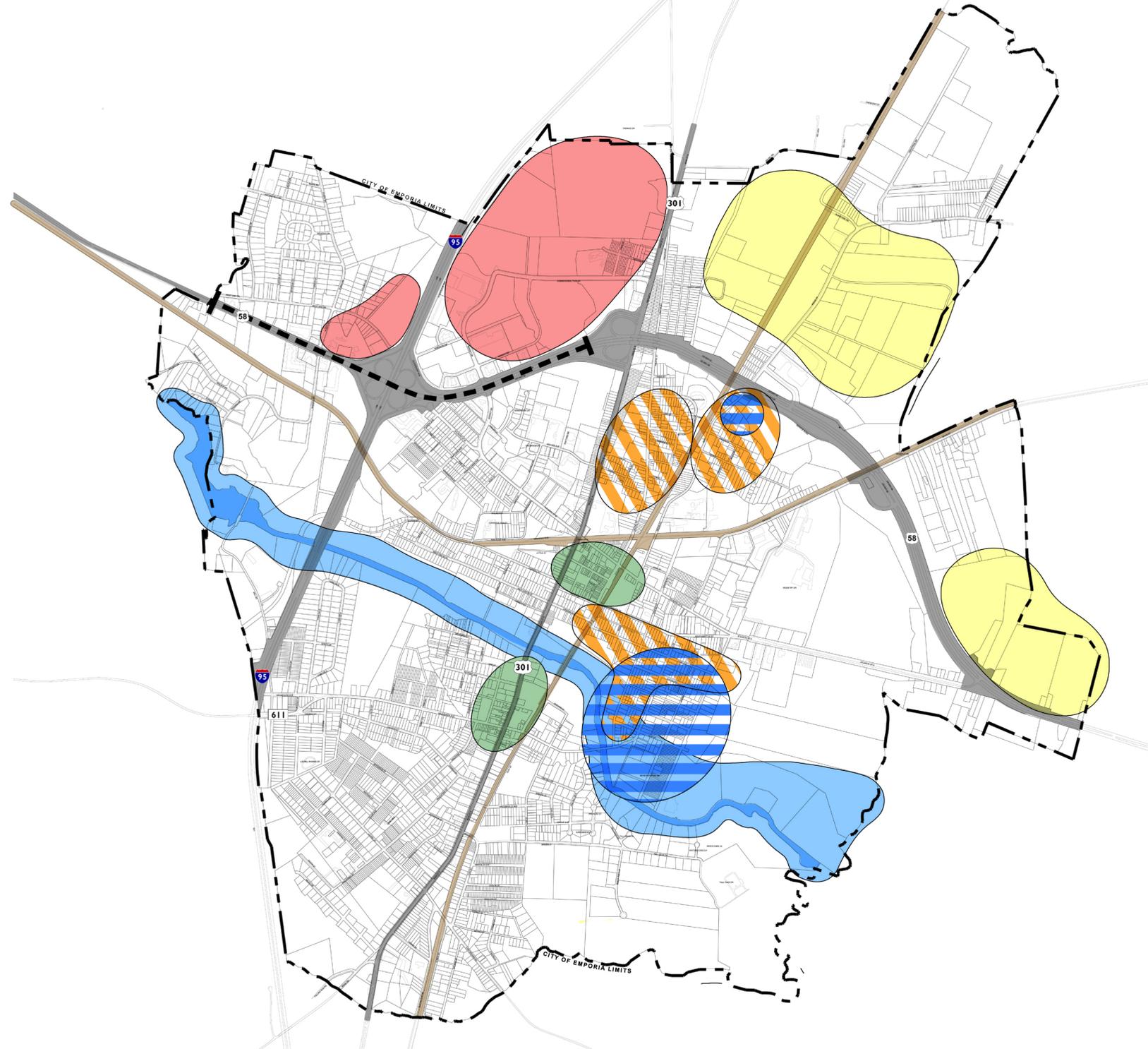
3. Provide a diversity of accessible, competitive sites for businesses.
4. Reduce and avoid conflicting land uses.
5. Coordinate activities with Greensville County in conducting land use planning for the areas adjacent to the City.

Implementation Strategies:

- a) Enforce, review, and update the Zoning Ordinance in conjunction with revisions to the Comprehensive Plan to ensure orderly and complementary development of land within the City.
- b) Concentrate and cluster highway-oriented commercial activities to minimize traffic hazards and adverse visual impacts.
- c) Promote the redevelopment of vacant and/or underutilized sites within the City, while providing for the timely development of new sites.
- d) Preserve the Meherrin River, its tributaries, and drainageways, plus adjacent areas of steep terrain, as an open space network.
- e) Promote the appreciation and use of scenic areas in and around the City through the development of passive recreational uses (trails, greenways) in floodplains and along stream corridors.

PLANNING FACTORS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY
CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



- LEGEND**
- NEED TO BALANCE LOCAL LAND USE ACCESS & REGIONAL TRAFFIC FLOWS
 - MEHERRIN RIVER TRAIN EXTENSION & RIVER PROTECTION
 - POTENTIAL INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AREAS
 - POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL GROWTH AREAS
 - FLOODPLAIN & RESIDENTIAL CONFLICTS
 - NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION NEEDS
 - DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION & PRESERVATION NEEDS
 - TRANSPORTATION SURFACES - I 95 CORRIDOR & ROUTE 58
 - NORFOLK SOUTHERN & CSX RAILWAYS
- HIGHWAY ROUTE SIGNS**
- INTERSTATE
 - US HIGHWAY
 - VA PRIMARY
 - VA SECONDARY



Community Facilities

Goal: Provide an adequate level and variety of community facilities and services to enhance the quality of life for all people in and around the City.

Objectives:

1. Provide and maintain an adequate public water treatment and distribution system for City and service area residents.
 2. Provide and maintain an adequate public sewage collection and treatment system for City and service area residents.
 3. Provide and maintain the quantity and quality of other community services which are appropriate to the current and emerging needs of the Emporia community.
 4. Continue to work cooperatively with Greenville County to provide and improve regional services and facilities which collectively serve City and County residents; such as police, fire, and rescue, schools, and parks and recreation.
- c) Ensure that the size and capacity of water mains and storage tanks are adequate to meet the fire protection requirements of the City.
 - d) Continue to provide citizens with solid waste collection options and work together with Greenville County to continue utilizing the Greenville County Landfill.
 - e) Provide appropriate police, fire, and rescue protection for Emporia's residents corresponding with the needs of the present and future population.
 - f) Provide and expand appropriate, adequate, and diversified recreational facilities for the enjoyment of the Emporia's residents, including the creation of pocket parks throughout the City.
 - g) Upgrade building facilities, particularly the Municipal Building and Police Department.
 - h) Renovation of vacant elementary auditorium on South Main Street for community uses.

Implementation Strategies:

- a) Provide water and sewer service to all existing areas of the City and extend water and sewer service to new areas developed in accordance with this plan.
- b) Continue to renovate the existing water distribution system and sewage collection system.

Transportation

Goal: Provide for a system of streets, sidewalks, parking areas, traffic controls, and other related facilities which will provide for safe, convenient, and reliable movement of people and goods.

Objectives:

1. Provide for an adequate street network which will facilitate the flow of traffic to and from the residential, commercial, and industrial areas while minimizing non-local traffic flow through residential neighborhoods.
2. Require all new streets to be constructed in conformance with VDOT and City standards.
3. Promote the creation of a City-wide or regional public transportation system, if adequate demand exists and is deemed economically feasible.

Implementation Strategies:

- a) Coordinate with VDOT in establishing the City's priorities in the annual VDOT 6-Year Plan.
- b) Encourage the City to seek state and federal funds to maintain roads, improve pedestrian facilities, and other traffic and pedestrian-related projects.
- c) Promote the orderly development of the U.S. 58 corridor by encouraging design standards and enhancement strategies.
- d) Maintain adequate off-street parking spaces to meet the emerging needs of Emporia's downtowns.

- e) Support long-range programs designed to provide curb and gutter, and sidewalks on all qualified streets in the City.
- f) Review the Zoning Ordinance parking provisions periodically to ensure that they meet traffic and parking needs. Establish design guidelines that serve to improve the appearance of both existing and newly developing commercial strips, with special attention to landscaping, setbacks, lighting, signage, and parking lot design.
- g) Promote the creation of a comprehensive bicycle circulation plan for the City in collaboration with Greensville County.
- h) Explore the demand for and economic feasibility of creating a City-wide or regional public transportation system.
- i) Work with VDOT to establish a transportation project improving access to U.S. 58 at Davis Street for westbound industrial traffic.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Goal: Improve the quality, quantity, and availability of housing for all socio-economic portions of the population and to preserve the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and improve the physical conditions of the existing housing stock.
2. Promote single-family, owner-occupied housing.
3. Increase the availability of diverse, affordable forms of housing.
4. Expand housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income, elderly, and disabled citizens.

Implementation Strategies:

Promote the rehabilitation and maintenance of older housing units through building code enforcement and the continuing use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

- a) Encourage the development of owner-occupied housing types and densities in a manner compatible with existing neighborhoods.
- b) Preserve and revitalize existing residential neighborhoods and improve opportunities for homeownership.
- c) Provide opportunities for single-family homes and, where appropriate, apartments, townhouses and duplexes.

- d) Encourage private, non-profit organizations to participate in the provision of affordable owner-occupied housing.
- e) Encourage the City to seek state and federal funds to expand housing opportunities for low income, disabled, and elderly residents.
- f) Encourage the construction of retirement housing, assisted living centers, and other housing to meet the needs of a growing elderly population.
- g) Support the efforts to provide home care services for people with a disability as well as their families.

Economic Development

Goal: Encourage and maintain the economic well-being of Emporia and the region.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and expand the City's commercial and industrial base.
2. Promote tourism, cultural, and historic development.
3. Promote the city's natural environment as an economic development tool.
4. Support the goals of the Virginia's Growth Alliance.

Implementation Strategies:

- a) Continue to promote the City as a unique destination for commercial, retail, and industrial activity.
- b) Promote workforce development partnerships between area centers of learning and training and the business community.
- c) Continue to diversify the local economic base by attracting new businesses, while encouraging the continuation of existing businesses.
- d) Encourage the adaptive reuse of vacant structures found in the downtowns and other pertinent areas of the City.

- e) Physically improve the two downtowns and gateways in order to enhance their character and attractiveness to visitors.
- f) Encourage and support tourism trade and activity within the City as well as promote and market the City's notable historic, cultural, and entertainment attractions.
- g) Continue preservation efforts within the City's historic districts and structures.
- h) Capitalize on the City's unique status as a traveler's destination in terms of providing necessary goods and services for the overnight guest.
- i) Create a downtown business association to coordinate with the Emporia-Greenville Chamber of Commerce, implement the principles of the Main Street Four-Point Approach and seek designation as a Virginia Main Street community through the Virginia Main Street Association.

LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

The Future Land Use, Transportation, and Community Facilities Plan, illustrated on the following page, depicts a generalized land use concept for the City of Emporia. The purpose of the plan is to encourage an orderly, harmonious arrangement of land that will meet the present and future needs of the City. The Plan is essentially an expansion of the existing land use pattern that has developed in and around the City for over 100 years. Based on anticipated needs, land is identified for various forms of development.

The Future Land Use Plan has been prepared for a 20-year period (2015-2035), with an emphasis on the immediate decade ahead. The Plan is intended to be flexible, and is to be construed broadly rather than precisely as might be implied by the detailed mapping. Conditions and circumstances will inevitably change, and future land use decisions should adapt accordingly.

RECOMMENDED LAND USE CATEGORIES

The categories prescribed by the Plan are organized under four (4) major land use types. These include the following:

RESIDENTIAL

Low-Density Residential

Medium-Density Residential

High-Density Residential

COMMERCIAL

General Commercial

Downtown/Mixed-use

Retail/Service Commercial

INDUSTRIAL

PUBLIC/OPEN SPACE USES

Community Facilities

Conservation/Open Space

Parks and Recreation

It should be noted that similar land use categories are used in the Land Use Plan as well as the Zoning Ordinance. Categories in the Land Use Plan are more general indications of what the community would like to see in the future. Zoning categories are more detailed and site-specific, and have the power of law. The categories set forth in the Land Use Plan, however, are used as a guide for future rezoning and review of rezoning requests.

RESIDENTIAL USES

Three (3) types of residential areas are proposed based on housing type and density. These include low, medium, and high-density areas.

1. Low-Density Residential (1-5 units per acre)

Neighborhoods or areas intended for detached, single-family development only. A maximum density of four (4) dwelling units per acre is generally permitted. Within this category, the zoning ordinance should specify density requirements associated with the availability of public utilities. Higher density types of residential use are not encouraged.

2. Medium-Density Residential (up to 8 units per acre)

Neighborhoods or areas which allow a greater density and variation of housing types. Permitted uses include one and two-family dwellings and townhouses. A maximum of eight dwelling units per acre is generally permitted. Public water and sewer must be available to serve medium density areas.

3. High-Density Residential (up to 20 units per acre)

Areas set aside for high-density residential uses, including apartment buildings, assisted-living facilities (elderly/nursing homes) and other large-scale forms of group housing or multi-family development. This use permits the development of multi-family housing up to twenty units per acre.

Designated Areas of Residential Use

The general extent and location of the three residential districts are indicated on the Future Land Use Map. The primary goal of the

Land Use Plan is to maintain existing patterns of residential development throughout the City of Emporia while protecting its older neighborhoods and historic districts. A second strategy is to concentrate residential development in compact growth areas where the infrastructure is already in place. This will help minimize costs for public services and preserve valuable open space.

Low-Density Residential Use

Low-density residential use is designated for established single-family areas, as well as nearby vacant areas where similar development is expected to occur. Existing low-density areas are generally situated on larger lots (over ¼ acre) within several distinct neighborhoods. In order to maintain stable homeownership and property values, these low-density areas should be restricted solely to detached, single-family development.

Within the corporate limits, opportunities for new large-lot development are confined primarily to existing subdivisions as well as vacant areas around the southern and northeastern areas of the City. However, several of these areas have slopes in excess of 15% and the development cost to build houses on the land would be expensive as would public infrastructure. The City should also ensure that existing built-up areas are adequately served before major service extensions are approved for subdivisions at the City's borders.

Medium-Density Residential Use

The Plan designates medium-density residential use in some of the older neighborhoods. Smaller lot sizes in these areas generally prevail, as well as a pedestrian-oriented environment. The older

neighborhoods contain a diverse housing stock and include homes of modest size as well as larger homes. Some of these older neighborhoods are in transition and experiencing a slight to moderate decline. Potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods should be carefully weighed before medium-density residential uses are approved.

High-Density Residential Use

The plan directs high-density residential uses to established multi-family areas in and around the City. As a general rule, apartments and other large-scale group housing are best sited on arterial roads near major commercial and healthcare centers. In these locations, high-volume circulation needs can be met without disrupting lower-density neighborhoods.

In an effort to keep these areas active, vacant and underutilized dwellings should be conditionally considered for conversion to other uses such as small offices, group homes, and similar mixed-use development. However, potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood should be carefully considered before such conversions are approved.

COMMERCIAL USES

The Land Use Plan establishes three (3) principal types of commercial designations for the City of Emporia. A detailed description of each designation is found below.

1. General Commercial

Areas intended for general commercial development including large retail stores, services,

lodging/restaurants, offices, and shopping centers. General Commercial uses should be easily accessible via automobile and should be located on collector or arterial roads, have sufficient parking, and be adequately served by public utilities and services.

2. Downtown/Mixed-use

The downtown/mixed-use category includes compact commercial uses that serve both automobile and pedestrian traffic. Commercial uses are similar to those under General Commercial but at a pedestrian scale. Additional appropriate uses include, but are not limited to, legal/financial, real estate, personal services, above ground-floor residential uses and other types of low-impact uses.

3. Retail/Service Commercial

The purpose of this category is to provide for an appropriate dynamic variety of uses adjacent to the downtown for commercial, financial, professional, governmental, and cultural activities. This category is intended to promote an attractive, convenient, and relatively compact arrangement of auto-oriented uses and that retain a pedestrian orientation. Signage and outdoor storage should be adequately controlled to promote an attractive and stable urban environment.

Designated Areas of Commercial Use

The general extent of areas designated for commercial use is indicated on the Future Land Use Map. The patterns of commercial uses within Emporia are well established, with three basic types occurring:

1. The historic downtown areas along South Main Street and Halifax Street
2. Older business corridors and neighborhood centers, principally along East and West Atlantic Street and North Main Street
3. The Interstate-95 and U.S. Route 58 interchange corridor

The Land Use Plan recognizes the different needs of each commercial setting, particularly with regard to parking, setbacks, signage, and land use requirements.

Downtown

The City's Belfield and Hicksford downtown areas have been brought to the forefront throughout the planning process.



Revitalization of these downtown neighborhoods will enable Emporia to best compete with the newer business areas along Route 58 by capitalizing on its own unique attributes. These include historic storefronts,

strong office/professional presence, and an attractive pedestrian environment.

It should be recognized that the downtown area is unlikely to recapture the high traffic, high volume retail activity now centered along the main commercial corridors. New large-scale commercial development should be directed to vacant land and infill sites near the community's existing shopping centers and commercial corridors. With the exception of several small infill sites, there is limited space for commercial expansion along the downtown corridors. Consequently, the City must continue to promote the continued viability of its older commercial centers through emphasis on small business development, historic preservation, and other revitalization activities.

In order to reinforce these qualities, the Plan offers several recommendations. The overall objective for the downtown areas of the City is to encourage a mix of compatible, complementary uses, with less dominance by a single land use type. Ideally, the downtown environments should include more residents living above storefronts and in other suitable spaces that become vacant or underutilized. Of great potential are structures with architectural appeal that can be adapted as affordable apartments, studios, or live-work spaces.

Corridors

Older business corridors in Emporia generally extend along East and West Atlantic Street, North Main Street, and include some of the area's first shopping centers. In general, these corridors have experienced a decline in economic health over the years. Large-

scale growth near the Interstate-95 and Route 58 intersection have taken away much of the business that once flourished in and around these corridors.

Because of this changing economic picture, continued transition along the older corridors should be anticipated and planned for. These corridor merchants, like those of the downtown district, must adapt and identify new market approaches. In the near term, this could include continued emphasis on serving convenience needs of adjoining neighborhoods and thru-traffic, while also exploring new business opportunities and venues. Possible new approaches could include infill office development, home occupations, and specialty service and retail development suited for such a thoroughfare.

INDUSTRIAL USES

Industrial uses are a catalyst for other types of development. The Future Land Use Plan establishes a single category for industrial development. Areas intended for a wide variety of industrial operations, including the production, processing, packaging or treatment of manufactured products and materials, warehousing, wholesaling, light manufacturing, and processing operations, as well as associated office development and support facilities. Sites that are sufficiently separated from existing population centers can accommodate more intense forms of industrial use. It is the intention of this category to preserve these lands for industrial use only and to exclude new residential or commercial development except for certain appropriate adjuncts to industrial operations.

Designated Areas of Industrial Use

Over the next twenty years, industrial growth will continue to play an important role in shaping Emporia's future. This will be particularly true of the City's surrounding environs, where larger, more favorable sites for industry are generally located. Although Emporia enjoys a diverse economy, growth prospects for the surrounding area will hinge on the community's ability to retain and attract industry.

General industrial development is currently located along the east-west running railroad corridor east of Halifax Street and the Reese Street corridor. Existing and future industrial uses are likely to occur in this northeastern quadrant of the City.

PUBLIC AND OPEN SPACE USES

Public and open space uses are classified into the following three (3) categories:

1. Community Facilities

Areas which serve the functional, civic, and institutional needs of the City and surrounding area; including schools, cemeteries, churches, fraternal organizations and clubs, and other municipal buildings and lands. Parks and open space areas dedicated primarily to active or passive recreational use, including both public and private facilities. The community facilities throughout Emporia are well distributed and adequately serve the public, with municipal functions being concentrated in the downtown area.

2. Greenways, Parks and Recreation

Areas that include major parks and surrounding areas dedicated primarily to active recreational use, including both public and privately owned facilities. These facilities will provide Emporia residents with gathering points throughout the City for social and recreational purposes.

3. Conservation/Open Space (floodplains, steep slopes)

Areas deemed generally unsuitable for conventional urban development due to the presence of 100-year floodplains around the Meherrin River, major stream corridors, and steep slopes (over 15% relief). This category includes environmentally sensitive areas where careful site planning and design is needed in order to mitigate potential for flood damage and soil erosion. Recommended uses include recreational activities, and facilities necessary for rendering public utility service. New development within the 100-year floodplain is discouraged.

Designated Areas of Public and Open Space Uses

Community facilities throughout Emporia are well distributed and adequately serve the population. No major changes in the distribution of community facilities are recommended for the purposes of this Plan. Ongoing expansions and improvements to City facilities can generally be accomplished at existing sites.

However, the downtown areas, specifically Hicksford, should continue to be the focal point for most community facilities.

In future years, as Emporia's population changes, there will be a corresponding need for additional "pocket parks" and recreational opportunities. As future sites are evaluated, efforts should be made to preserve and integrate natural



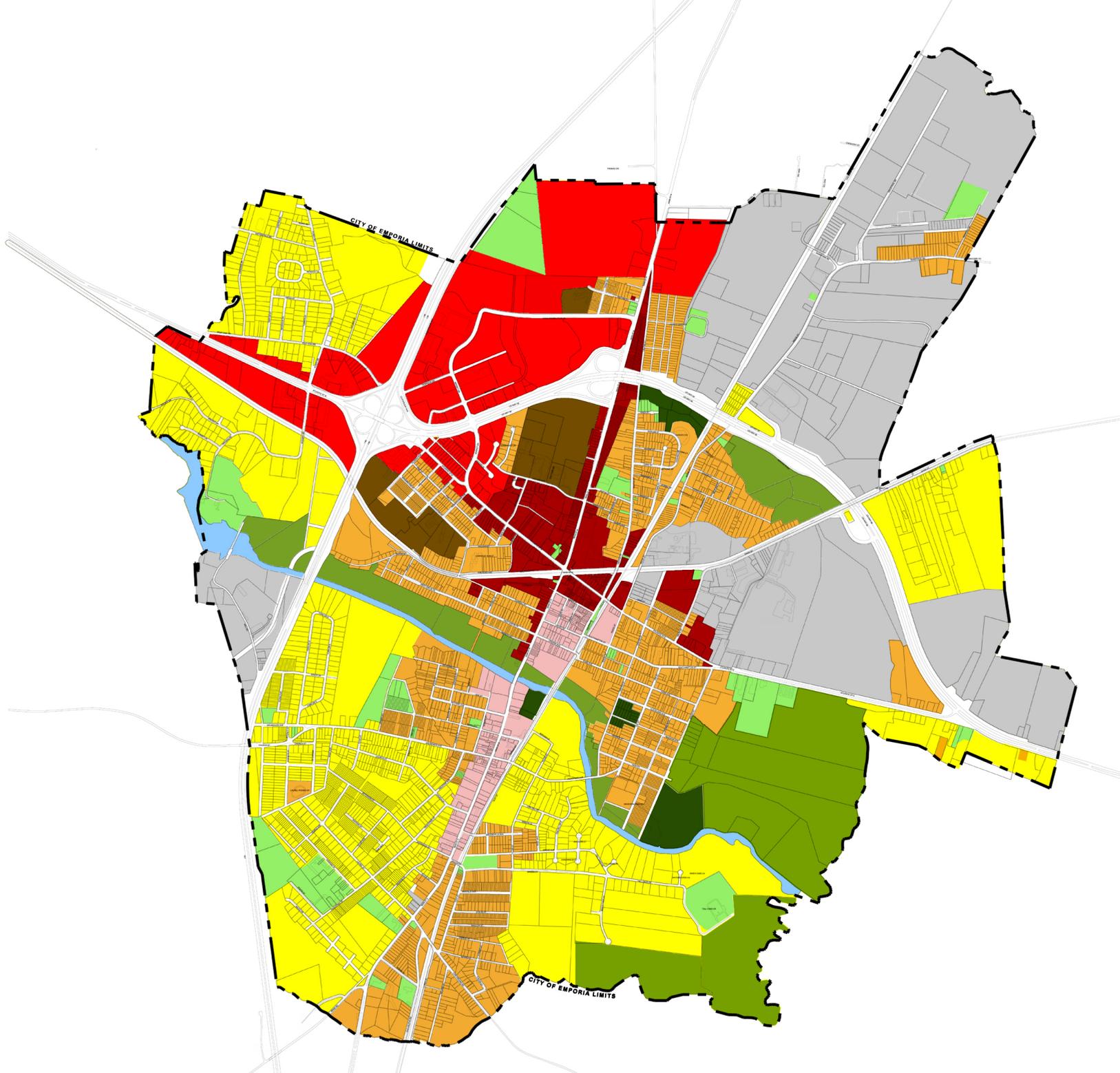
features, especially the Meherrin River. As identified on Table 18 in the Parks and Recreation background section, Emporia and Greenville may have the population to support additional recreation facilities. To an extent, these projects need not be financed wholly by local government. Instead, the City can share in park and open space development costs with a broad range of partners. These may include local civic groups, private developers, individual property owners, Greenville County, and appropriate state and federal agencies.

The expansion and utilization of existing facilities is necessary in order to meet the needs to the City's population. For example, the current civic center located on South Main Street across from the Municipal Building should be refurbished in a way that would be most beneficial to the City. These uses may include a community theatre, elderly or youth community center, or an all-purpose auditorium. The YMCA has transformed the old hospital site on Weaver Avenue into a new facility prepared to meet the needs of the City and County's residents. Any additional opportunities that

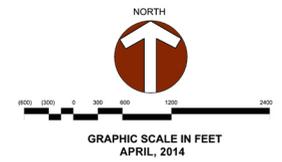
FUTURE LAND USE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STUDY

CITY OF EMPORIA, VIRGINIA



- LEGEND**
- Residential**
 - LOW DENSITY
 - MEDIUM DENSITY
 - HIGH DENSITY
 - Commercial**
 - GENERAL COMMERCIAL
 - RETAIL & SERVICE
 - DOWNTOWN / MIXED-USE
 - Industrial**
 - INDUSTRIAL
 - Public & Open Space**
 - COMMUNITY FACILITIES
 - CONSERVATION / OPEN SPACE
 - PARKS & RECREATION



involve the introduction or renewal of older facilities should be encouraged.

The conservation designation recommended for the Emporia area mainly includes those land features already protected in varying degrees by local, regional, and state codes. These regulations chiefly pertain to 100-year floodplains around the Meherrin River. In addition to this stream corridor, the Plan designates other areas for general conservation. These features include certain steep slopes and environmentally sensitive terrain. The Plan map generalizes all of the conservation/open space areas shown. These designations are for general planning purposes, as needed to encourage voluntary easements, proffers, dedications, and public open space initiatives.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Gateway Entrances/Corridor Improvements

The City's primary entrance gateway occurs around the Route 58 and Interstate-95 interchange, even though this interchange occurs well within city limits. Motorists exiting from Interstate-95 into Emporia will not see a signage welcoming them to the city. Other entrances and exits into and out of the City are solely delineated by a small sign that can be easily overlooked. Making appropriate improvements to key gateways and formal entrance corridors leading into the City can effectively delineate where the City as a distinct location. The objective is to create effective gateways that can provide a sense of arrival, signify an authentic community identity, and portray an inviting, distinctive City image.

The City of Emporia has five (5) main entrance points:

1. Route 58 (east)
2. Route 58 (west)
3. South Main Street
4. North Main Street
5. Interstate-95



The City of Emporia also has two (2) key intersections:

1. Interstate-95 / Route 58
2. Atlantic Street / North Main Street

Given the volume of traffic at the Interstate-95 / Route 58 intersection, this should be the highest priority for gateway improvements.

Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

Maintaining the integrity of Emporia's neighborhoods and the quality of housing is an important strategy for the City. Neighborhoods strive to have their own unique identity within the City, an identity that reflects a sense of pride and represents a healthy, attractive, safe place to live. Strong neighborhoods serve as the foundation for a strong



community. Emporia should support and enhance its neighborhoods through new infill housing, application of neighborhood design standards and appropriate signage, improved infrastructure, and the rehabilitation/preservation of any deteriorating housing stock in the City's older areas.

Parks, open space, trails, and greenways are significant community amenities that increase the quality of life for residents by providing natural areas and serving the City's recreational needs. In addition, facilities for the City's youth contribute to the fabric of a healthy community by providing venues for recreation, education, and social interaction.

Priority Neighborhoods In Need of Revitalization

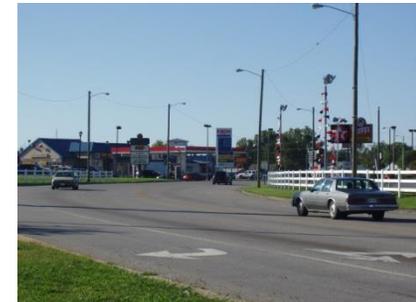
The City will complete a neighborhood prioritization in early 2015 that will identify the highest levels of concentrated housing deficiencies and other neighborhood blighting factors. This study is being performed in partnership with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development with the intent on identifying neighborhoods eligible for construction grants through the Community Development Block Grant program.

Economic / Industrial Development

As Emporia continues to grow and land is consumed and becomes more of a premium, alternative measures of growth must be examined. For Emporia to prosper, future expansion within the community has to involve redevelopment and new investments through the utilization of commercial and industrial infill opportunities in strategic locations.

The City is characterized with strip commercial uses along major arteries, often only partially or poorly utilizing the land. The City seeks economic development, but lacks suitable open tracts of land. The principal commercial corridors are located along Route 58, Halifax Street, and North/South Main Street. They are well-established and handle significant daily traffic volumes that constitute a potential customer base. Future growth depends on redefining the role of Emporia as a commercial and industrial destination. This can only be accomplished through better utilization of infill opportunities.

A significant amount of the City's revenue is derived from the traveler. Whether passing through to stop for fuel or food or staying overnight in one of the City's many hotels, Emporia is strategically and uniquely situated to capitalize on its



location. Many people traveling along I-95 view Emporia as a destination City and one which is able to provide the good and services required by travelers. In order to take advantage of this unique title, the City should emphasize its travel services. One way of accomplishing this is to continue marketing for commercial development around the I-95 and Route 58 interchange and to develop and implement a marketing strategy at other strategic points around the City.

The City must also attract and maintain the younger generation in order to successfully incorporate entrepreneurship development

into local economic development efforts. The local trend in Emporia seems to mirror the national trend in that most of the populace in the late teens and early twenties tend to favor living and working in larger, urban areas. The City should promote classes or seminars in entrepreneurship so that the younger generation of Emporia continue to invest in their own community rather than elsewhere.

Downtown Revitalization

The City of Emporia consists of two downtown areas: the Belfield and Hicksford downtowns. The Belfield downtown area is centered on Halifax Street and is roughly bounded by Atlantic Street, Halifax Street, Budd Street, and Valley Street. The Hicksford downtown area is approximately four blocks long and two blocks wide and is located along South Main Street.

Although the downtowns are no longer experiencing the economic boom of the early 20th century, the two downtowns' historic structures still convey the story of a small agricultural town's development into a booming twentieth century city. The areas are characterized with a mixture of one- and two-story commercial and public use structures that front on a traditional grid layout. The majority of the areas have sidewalks, some limited street lighting, benches, and a few street trees. The Greensville County Courthouse Complex has a significant presence in the Hicksford downtown. Other uses on the periphery include a wide mix of service/retail located in converted residential structures. Several vacant buildings and lots constitute a potential for creative infill development. All necessary action should be taken to assist in preserving and revitalizing each of the two downtown areas. Both

areas, which are so important to the history of the City of Emporia should be revitalized in order to enhance its architectural character and attractiveness to visitors.

Neighborhood Drainage Improvements

There are various areas within the City of Emporia that are prone to poor drainage issues, especially the Lowground Road neighborhood. Funds should continue to be applied for through the Department of Transportation, Department of Housing and Community Development, and other state and regional agencies in order to improve those areas with high levels of either flooding or poor drainage. Additional efforts by the City's Department of Public Works to improve the area's drainage should be encouraged and prioritized within the Department's list of future projects.



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Emporia's Comprehensive Plan represents the continuation of a formal organized planning forum the City has utilized. The recommendations presented thus far are the result of input from the Planning Commission, City Council, City officials and City residents. These activities have resulted in the presentation of what the Planning Commission feels is the most optimal development form for the future.

The Plan now offers an opportunity for City leaders to apply appropriate controls and direct both public and private investments in a logical and orderly manner. However, the Plan will not just happen. A great deal of work lies ahead for public officials who must exert a guiding influence over local development decisions so that the public interest will be best served.

The following sections address the role of the Planning Commission and the various implementation tools available to carry out Plan objectives. The implementation procedure outline below contains no major new concepts, rather it seeks to reinforce and improve upon planning methods previously initiated by the City. To be of continued relevance and value, however, these tools must be updated in a coordinated, comprehensive fashion, and geared toward current objectives of the Plan.

THE ROLE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is responsible for preparing the Comprehensive Plan and advising City Council on related matters. The Planning Commission should maintain knowledge of the facts and interrelationships of a broad range of subjects. Furthermore,

the Commission must be able to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of various possible courses of action.

The state planning and enabling statutes provide for general content of the Plan and procedures for adoption. The Planning Commission is required to give notice and hold a public hearing before recommending the Plan to City Council for adoption. The City Council must also give notice and hold a public hearing before it adopts the Plan. For purposes of expediency, the two bodies may also hold a joint public hearing before the adoption of the Plan.

PLANNING STAFF ASSISTANCE

With growth, the requirements for planning staff assistance will increase. Routine administration and review of zoning and subdivision proposals, periodic revision of the Comprehensive Plan, participation in funding programs, and special studies require full-time staff. Emporia has reached the stage in its development where assistance to the Planning Commission and governing body on planning matters is essential. Since the City lacks a Planning and Community Development Department, staff services of the department can also continue to be supplemented on an as-needed basis by consultants and the Crater Planning District Commission.

MAINTENANCE OF THE PLAN

The Plan has been prepared for a twenty-year time period (2015-2035), with emphasis on the immediate decade ahead. The Plan is intended to serve in broad advisory capacity and like earlier plans it cannot foresee all the changes that will inevitably occur over time. In addition, the Plan is intended to be flexible, and should not be

considered so precise an instrument as might be implied by the rather detailed mapping.

In accordance with state code, the Plan should be re-evaluated at least once every five years by the Planning Commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the Plan. Significant new developments, such as state highway proposals, location of major new industry, shopping center, or residential subdivisions; expansion of corporate boundaries or major public/private uses; and other far-reaching developments should trigger a re-evaluation of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

Private property development and public improvement efforts can be coordinated with the Plan through the use of applicable regulatory measures: zoning ordinance, subdivision ordinance, building, housing, and other applicable codes. An adopted Capital Improvement Program also provides a mechanism for the local governing body to schedule public improvements in accordance with the Plan over both a five-year period and on an annual basis.

The Comprehensive Plan must be used as the reference by which zoning requests, development proposals and the zoning and subdivision regulations are reviewed for approval or disapproval. In relation to the Plan, zoning and subdivision regulations are discussed further below.

THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is the legal means by which land use, lot sizes, building setbacks, height, bulk, and other related matters are controlled.

The zoning ordinance and zoning map are the primary tools for implementing the Land Use Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan. While zoning enables all existing land uses to be continued, it does provide methods for gradually phasing out nonconforming land uses as they become obsolete or discontinued. However, the primary purpose of the zoning ordinance is to regulate new development.

The City's Official Zoning Map defines the boundaries for each district. The Official Zoning Map is maintained at the office of the City Manager. The zoning district map should be generally consistent with the Land Use Plan. Within the overall pattern of land use established by the Plan, there is nevertheless considerable room for variation between the Plan and the zoning map. The timing of zoning changes to implement the Land Use Plan may vary and will require judgment on a case-by-case basis by the Planning Commission and the City Council. In addition, the review and approval of individual projects by special use or special exceptions should be based on guidelines provided by the Plan, as well as the zoning ordinance and site conditions where change is proposed. All individual amendments should be well documented by the City following proper advertisement and publicly posted in accordance with state and local requirements.

The current zoning ordinance and accompanying zoning map have been adopted help implement the Comprehensive Plan. Although a number of zoning text revisions and map changes have been adopted in recent years, more updates will be needed in implementing the goals and objectives of the revised Comprehensive Plan.

THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

The regulations of the subdivision ordinance are primarily concerned with the platting of lots, the layout of streets, the location of public spaces, and building of public improvements associated with the process of subdividing land. In addition, they contribute to the keeping of clear and accurate land records. These are matters deserving serious public concern. Once established, a street is difficult to move, and when the opportunity is missed for improved street locations or lot arrangements, these opportunities are difficult or impossible to retrieve.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMING

A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a 5-year schedule of capital expenditures by the City. The Planning Commission with consideration of the City's financial resources and other potential funding resources develops the program's long-range plans. Section 15.2-2239 of the Code of Virginia permits a Planning Commission to prepare and review annually a Capital Improvement Program based upon the Comprehensive Plan and to do so either on its own initiative or at the direction of the governing body.

While the adoption and implementation of the Capital Improvement Program is the responsibility of the City Manager and City Council, the Planning Commission should provide the advice and direction since it is the body charged with preparing for the City's growth needs in the coming years. Therefore, the Commission should become acquainted with local revenues and expenditures, as well as recently adopted annual budgets. The Commission can then meaningfully assist City staff and Council in

drafting a workable CIP amortized over a five-year period. In accordance with state code, future capital costs are estimated and scheduled over a five-year projection period.

REGIONAL REVIEW AND COORDINATION

Local planning requires coordination with Greensville County, neighboring jurisdictions, regional, federal, and state development proposals and plans. Without coordination among these jurisdictions, the danger of planning efforts being duplicated or conflicting will result in ineffective programs and unnecessarily high development costs. The Crater Planning District Commission is the most appropriate agency to provide regional coordination and review of related plans.

LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE

Statutory mechanisms for plan implementation are critical; however, there are also various funding and technical assistance programs available to local governments. Planning assistance is presently provided to the City of Emporia by the City Manager's office and through the contracted services of private planning consultants for special projects. Special needs which may warrant additional planning assistance in future years include the following:

1. Maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan. Unforeseen changes in development trends, population growth or effects of economic changes resulting from new industrial or commercial development, annexation or consolidation; all would have a major impact on long range community planning which would need to be reflected in the Comprehensive Plan.

2. As determined on a case-by-case basis and evolving from recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan and the Economic and Community Development Plan, there may be a need for special studies, such as a detailed housing assessment, an economic development study or long-range planning of utility and community facilities. If undertaken, such special studies should be used to expand on plan generalities and be treated as amendments to the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
3. The review and administration of housing, building, zoning, and subdivision regulations and development proposals which affect provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Assistance in determining the most appropriate State and Federal assistance programs through which Emporia may participate to aid in implementing proposed community improvements.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The City of Emporia should seek to continually develop public awareness of local planning efforts and issues. The overall intent should be to solicit citizen participation in making planning decisions and to promote public support for existing and future community improvement efforts.

In addition, Planning Commission members should be encouraged to attend Planning Commissioner Institute training sessions offered periodically throughout the year by the Virginia Department of

Housing and Community Development (VDHCD). Educational materials are also available from VDHCD which should be distributed to the Planning Commissioners. The Citizens Planning Education Association of Virginia, Inc. (CPEAV) also holds regularly scheduled workshops and conferences specifically for those serving on a Planning Commission.

PRIORITY ITEMS

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that defines how the City would like to develop and at the same time preserve its unique character over the next two decades. In order to do so, the goals and objectives mentioned in the previous section need to be completed in a timely manner. The action items listed below should be considered the City's highest priorities over the next five years within the context of the Comprehensive Plan. They are not to be considered as an exhaustive list of actions for implementation over the twenty year horizon.

A. Land Use and Environment

- Revise the Zoning District Map to reflect the Future Land Use Map
- Revise the zoning code to ensure compatibility with the vision outlined in the comprehensive plan
- Continue to participate in and seek regional collaborations with bordering localities for projects such as recreational trails.
- Create and enforce ordinances assisting in the

beautification of major City thoroughfares

B. Community Facilities

- Develop plans for the maintenance and creation of park sites, with particular focus on pocket and neighborhood parks
- Maintain and enhance parks and trails running along the Meherrin River in terms of landscaping and asphaltting
- Explore options for renovating the vacant elementary school on South Main Street.
- Support existing recreational providers as they provide amenities for youth and adults.
- Provide for the general maintenance and replacement of municipal vehicle fleets, equipment, and buildings

C. Transportation

- Continue to apply for funding through VDOT to be used towards transportation enhancements and transportation alternatives.
- Utilize beautification techniques for all City entrance and exit corridors to give visitors and residents alike a lasting impression of Emporia
- Implement, where feasible, those transportation

improvements set forth by VDOT's Six-Year Improvement Program and the most current Rural Transportation Plan.

- Promote a pedestrian-oriented environment throughout the City including the creation and improvement of sidewalks.

D. Housing and Neighborhoods

- Partner with the Emporia Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ERHA) in seeking funding sources for the improvement of those neighborhoods most in need of rehabilitation and revitalization
- Revise the subdivision ordinance to ensure development of quality residential areas
- Improve those neighborhoods with drainage and flooding problems
- Promote cross departmental collaboration to enhance quality of life with particular focus on code enforcement, crime deterrence, and aesthetic appearance

E. Economic Development

- Develop an industrial and commercial development strategy with particular focus on acquisition of new parcels for development

- Continue working with MAMaC, the Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and Greenville County on the development of a mega-site and other large scale industrial sites
- Continue to incentivize downtown and commercial redevelopment through federal, state, and local funding programs.
- Continue to collaborate with various local organizations and state agencies in promoting tourism, small business entrepreneurship, and workforce development activities

APPENDIX

Public Comment Summary

September 25, 2014

Public comments were collected around each of the numbered themes below. The text in blue is the stated goal for each theme. The bulleted questions were provided for the public to respond to. Each bulleted statement under the Comments sections is a written comment from a citizen and the Summary/Themes section is a synopsis of those comments.

1. Land Use & Environment

Encourage and provide for the intelligent use of the land in a manner that meets the needs of the population, stimulates physical, social, and economic development, and protects the environmental quality of the area.

- Are there areas that need to be rezoned?
- Are there areas for new development?
- Opportunities to fix up older areas?
- Flooding Issues?
- What are the threats to the local environment?

Comments

- 2412 + 2042 Reese Street need to be rezoned

- Rezone 2412/2042 Reese Street
- There are flooding issues

Summary/Themes

One specific issue related to rezoning a residence located in an industrial zone to residential zone was mentioned by the home owner and others in support. The only other comment was related to flooding, though the area was not specified.

2. Community Facilities

Provide an adequate level and variety of community facilities and services to enhance the quality of life for all people in and around the City.

- What are some strengths and weaknesses of Emporia's parks and natural areas? (ex. Meherrin River)
- Are there any issues with public water and sewer service?
- Do you know of any areas that are underserved by the Police Department, Fire Department or Emergency Medical Services (EMS)?
- A community facility is being considered for the old Greenville High School auditorium. What kinds of uses do you think would best serve the community here? Would you support the use of city tax dollars in this proposed project?

Comments

- I believe the City of Emporia would benefit greatly from more recreational facilities in the area such as a movie theater, bowling alley or some other facility for the children in the area. I would not be in support of the use of city tax dollars in this proposed project.
- Don't know of any areas underserved by Police, Fire or EMS
- Would support a community facility considered for the Old Greensville High School auditorium
- want a movie theater
- Help save the site of the historical training school
- No more sewage dumping in the sunnyside road area
- Please stop price from rising and let the meter be the bill not setting a flat rate
- Old Greensville School, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H,; keep younger people focused on positive things
- Want a park like Maymont in Emporia – not much to do
- Trash pickup twice a week

Summary/Themes

The provision of community facilities to provide entertainment and recreation opportunities was important to many respondents.

3. Transportation

Provide for a system of streets, sidewalks, parking areas, traffic controls, and other

related facilities which will provide for safe, convenient, and reliable movement of people and goods.

- What kind of improvements need to be made for pedestrians? bicyclists? drivers?
- Do you think Emporia needs a bus service? If so, would you use it? Would you be willing to pay for a bus service with city tax dollars?

Comments

- A bus service will be beneficial to the City of Emporia and will probably help citizens get to and from their doctor appointments independently.
- Bus service would be helpful
- Widen Main Street.
- More pedestrian/bike routes to places like wal-mart (i.e. safe route across US 58)
- Greyhound stop needed
- Expand bike travel to the west side
- Expand trail system across the river
- Quiet zone needed south of the river, in the neighborhood surrounding the intersection of Greensville Ave and Tillar St.
- Traffic light needed when making right on Reese Street into Sunnyside Road (at intersection of Reese, Sunnyside and Crescent Rd)
- More streetlights

- I think we need a traffic light on 301, Reigel Rd and Slagles Lake Rd (in Greenville County)
- Shuttle bus service
- Light polls and sidewalks coming from elementary school
- Streetlight at intersection of Purdy Road and West Atlantic Street.
- More street lights

Summary/Themes

Overall, citizens were interested in more connectivity via bike, pedestrian and bus service and interested in better intersection management for vehicles through traffic lights. Interest was for bike/pedestrian accessibility across major roads to retail centers. Another major theme was the desire for more street lights and traffic lights, specifically more lights and sidewalks surrounding the elementary school.

4. Housing and Neighborhoods

Improve the quality, quantity, and availability of housing for all income levels and to preserve the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods.

- o What kinds of housing does Emporia need more of? (Apartments, Condos, Duplexes, Single Family homes, big houses, small houses)
- o Which neighborhoods in the city do you like best? Why?
- o Which neighborhoods in the city do you like least? Why?

Comments

- More affordable single family homes; I like the neighborhood where I live, Sunnyside community, because it is quiet and very low crime area.
- More affordable single family homes
- Need single family homes
- Need single family homes, small houses
- Finance and build homes that people can afford
- Apartments are quiet but no one can afford them according to the wages in Emporia.

Summary/Themes

Almost all respondents expressed desire for single family homes that were affordable to local residents. Affordability was an issue throughout.

5. Economic Development

Encourage and maintain the economic well-being of Emporia and the region.

- What is Emporia missing? What stores or businesses do you think would be financially successful and supported by the community?
- How can the city better promote entrepreneurship?
- What new employment opportunities are needed in Emporia? And, what types of work force training is needed?

Comments

- More competitive grocery store.
- Emporia is missing recreation; jobs for young people, factories; Kroger; Sam's Club
- Emporia needs more jobs for the community
- Jobs, entertainment, stores
- Historic preservation, historic districts should be used
- Movie, Bowling Alley, Skating.. something for family
- More stores
- More community friendly industry in the city, industrial park.
- I would like to see the City of Emporia work to get industry in the City industrial park. Industry that will enhance the community instead of bringing the community down.

Summary/Themes

Respondents stressed the lack of entertainment, recreation and employment opportunities. Industrial uses as job creators were stressed, as was more retail options.