

Route 177 Gateway Area Plan

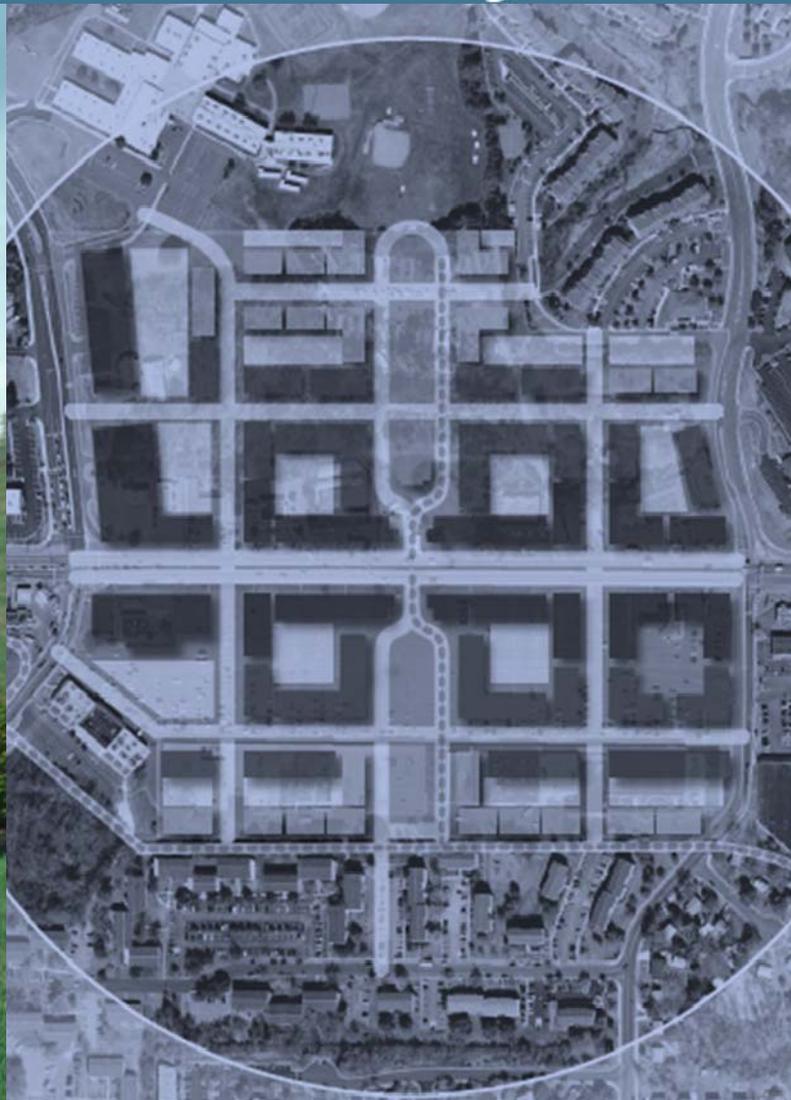


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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Route 177 Corridor has been recognized as an important growth area for Montgomery County, since the early 1990's, when the County and the City of Radford jointly asked the New River Valley Planning District Commission (NRVPDC) to study the VA 177/Tyler Avenue Corridor Area. The Corridor Area Study was completed in June 1992 and since that time the City and County have worked together to ensure that land use and transportation are coordinated in the area.

In 2004, Montgomery County adopted the Joint Comprehensive Plan for the VA 177/ Tyler Avenue Corridor Area as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The plan recognizes the VA 177/Tyler Avenue Corridor Area as a growth area where the extension of public utilities will provide important economic opportunities. The Joint Plan provides a framework for future development and includes both a Future Land Use Plan and Entrance Plan. The Future Land Use Plan allows existing uses to continue and allows the expansion of residential and commercial uses without encroachment on one another. The plan uses the accessibility and prominence of the Corridor to its advantage while preserving key features and ensuring that buffers are established between incompatible uses. It further incorporates an Entrance Plan, which limits vehicular

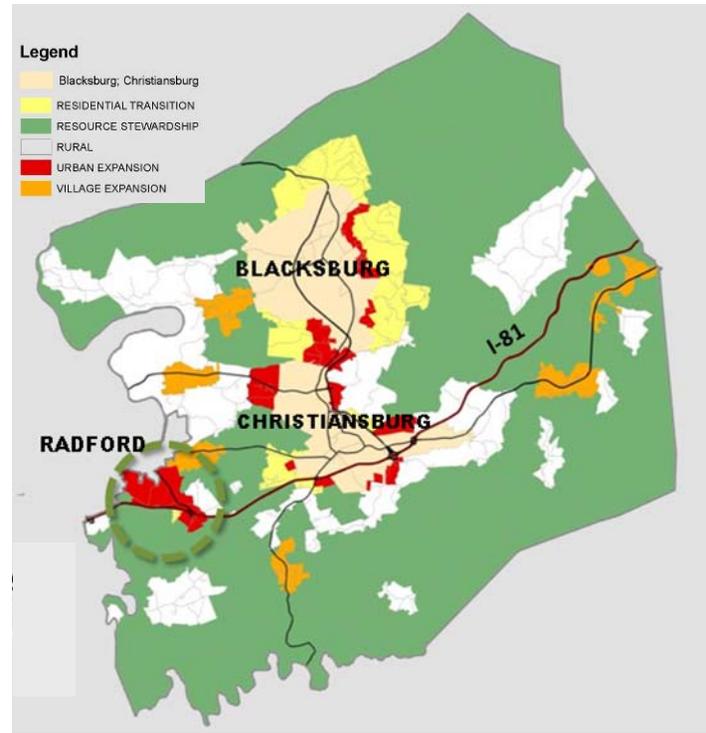


Figure 1. Montgomery County Existing Policy Areas

entrances onto VA 177 to those shown on the plan in order to manage access and preserve safety and throughput on Rt. 177 as parcels develop over time.

Both the Future Land Use Map and the Entrance Plan assume the following:

- Anticipate commercial development at Interchange 109 and along nearby sections of VA 177 and Lovely Mount Drive. This growth should take place through planned developments that

consist of more than stripping of the existing road frontage.

- Recognize three areas that are suitable for high intensity developments. High intensity uses permitted with a special use permit include light industry, residential development over four (4) dwelling unit per acre, hospitals and health care complexes.
- Incorporate an entrance and intersection plan for the corridor frontage parcels.
- Recognize that residential development in this area should be through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) District and Cluster Development rather than conventional subdivisions.

Today, Route 177 / Tyler Avenue is a highway corridor with steadily growing traffic that passes through pastureland, by single-family homes, and individual business. Ready access to Interstate 81, proximity to industries and institutions in the City of Radford and Carillion Hospital, and regional commuting patterns make the Route 177 / Tyler Avenue Corridor Area a desirable business location. These same qualities, plus the area's scenic appeal make it a desirable location for residences. As the City and County grow, there will be considerable pressure from both residential and commercial development in the Corridor.

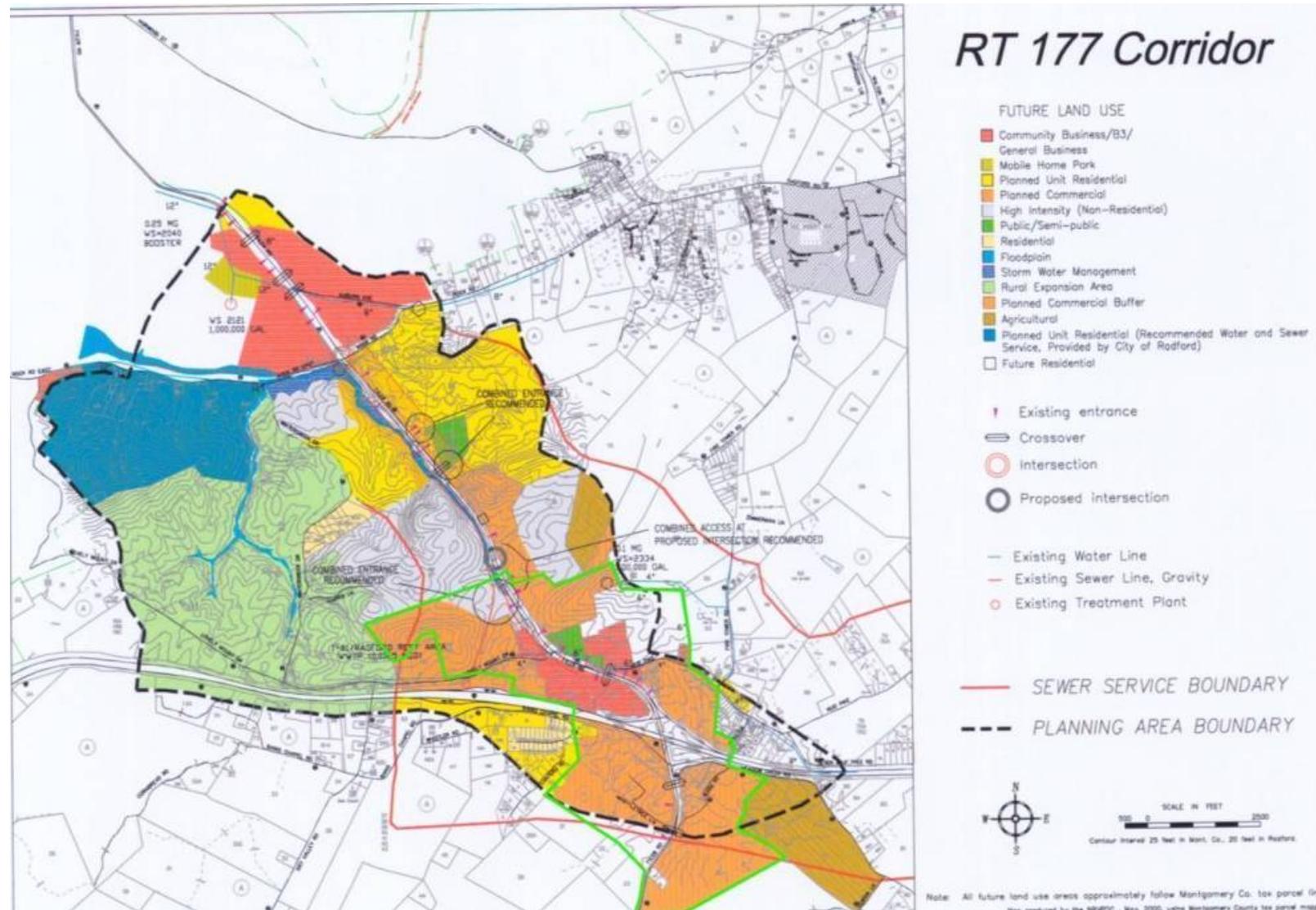


Figure 2. Land Use and Entrance Plan from the Route 177/Tyler Avenue Corridor Area

Planning Context

In 2007, the General Assembly added Section 15.2-2223.1 to the Code of Virginia requiring high growth localities to designate Urban Development Areas in their comprehensive plans by July 1, 2011 (counties) and July 1, 2012 (cities and towns). Designated Urban Development Areas (“UDA”) are to be areas of reasonably compact development that can accommodate 10 to 20 years of projected growth. In 2010, the legislation was amended to establish density and design criteria for UDAs and to improve the coordination between transportation and land use. Based on Montgomery County’s population growth from 2000 to 2010, the County is required to amend their Comprehensive Plan to incorporate at least one Urban Development Area that will allow for development at a density of at least four single-family residences, six townhouses, or 12 apartments, condominium units, or cooperative units per developable acre, and a floor area ratio of at least 0.4 per acre for commercial development, or any proportional combination thereof.

In 2010, the Virginia Department of Transportation (“VDOT”) created the Urban Development Area Local Government Assistance Program, to assist communities in revising their planning and policy frameworks to comply with the legislation. Montgomery County was awarded a Tier II grant within this program. As a participant in the program, the County is expected to revise their comprehensive plan to incorporate at least one urban development area and revise their zoning and

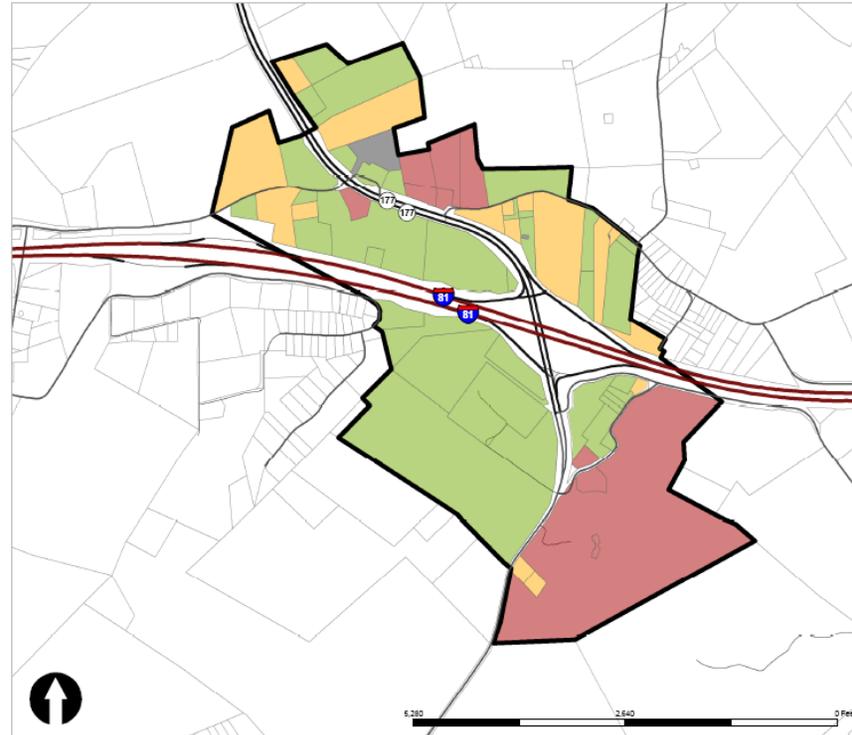


Figure 3. Route 177 Gateway Area Plan Study Area and proposed Urban Development Area.

subdivision ordinances to incorporate the principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood design. In addition, the County must create a small area plan for all or a portion of the UDA and analyze the specific traffic impacts of such plan.

Purpose of the Gateway Area Plan

The County has a long history of planning for compact growth in designated areas and has chosen to designate

one of the County's Urban Development Areas within the existing 177 Corridor Urban Expansion Area as the Rt. 177 Gateway Area Plan.. The overall goal of this Gateway Area Plan is to clarify the preferred **vision for the future** of the Route 177 gateway area and create a **conceptual plan** for its long-term physical development.

Planning Process

On February 9, 2011, Montgomery County hosted a series of kickoff meetings for the 177 Gateway Area Plan. Staffed and facilitated by a team of professional planners and designers led by Renaissance Planning Group, the meetings included a work session with County, City, MPO, PDC and VDOT staff, a work session with invited property owners along the corridor, and a presentation/work session with the Montgomery County Planning Commission. The overall goal of the meetings was to identify issues and opportunities to inform a conceptual vision for the gateway.

Incorporating the perspectives and priorities of the people who live, work and do business along the corridor was a critical component in the development of the 177 Gateway Area Plan. At the property owner's worksession, held at Montgomery County's Government Center, several dozen property owner's provided suggestions on what they would like to see in the 177 Gateway area in the future.

The workshop results helped shape the ideas and aspirations that ultimately went into the vision concepts

embodied in the 177 Gateway Area Plan. The following section includes a brief description of the guiding principles outlined during the first workshop and in discussions with stakeholders and community leaders.

What we heard

During the February 9 work sessions, several ideas emerged as common themes for what property owners and local officials and staff generally like about the gateway area, what they generally don't like, and what they want for the gateway area in the future.

Following are a few key issues derived from these work sessions - more detailed input summaries from each session are in the appendix to these report.

COUNTY/CITY STAFF:

- Future of I-81 and interchange
- Consider 76 Bike Route
- Opportunity for walkability from hospital to new restaurants, services
- Ensure safety for road crossings, access management
- Regional transportation connections to Radford/Christiansburg
- Potential need for future fire station

PROPERTY OWNERS:

- Need for funding for infrastructure
- Need for restaurants, services for 900 hospital workers
- Sign regulations concerns
- Liquor by the drink as barrier to some types of development
- General positive response to developing a unified plan for the area

3. Understanding long term transportation issues
4. Opportunities for funding future infrastructure

Key Issues

Based on the input received on February 9, a set of key issues emerged. These issues were distilled from the multiple comments and suggestions made, and reflect a broad summary of points from the work sessions as a whole. All of these issues were reviewed by participants at the second series of workshops and were acknowledged as being key considerations which need to be balanced.

Key Issues

1. The value of a coordinated Gateway Plan
2. Supporting property owners initiatives to create a coordinated long range vision

Key Issues

1. *The value of a coordinated Gateway Plan - failing to plan = planning to fail*
2. *Supporting property owners initiatives to create a coordinated long range vision*
3. *Understanding long term transportation issues*
4. *Opportunities for funding future infrastructure*

Existing Conditions Analysis

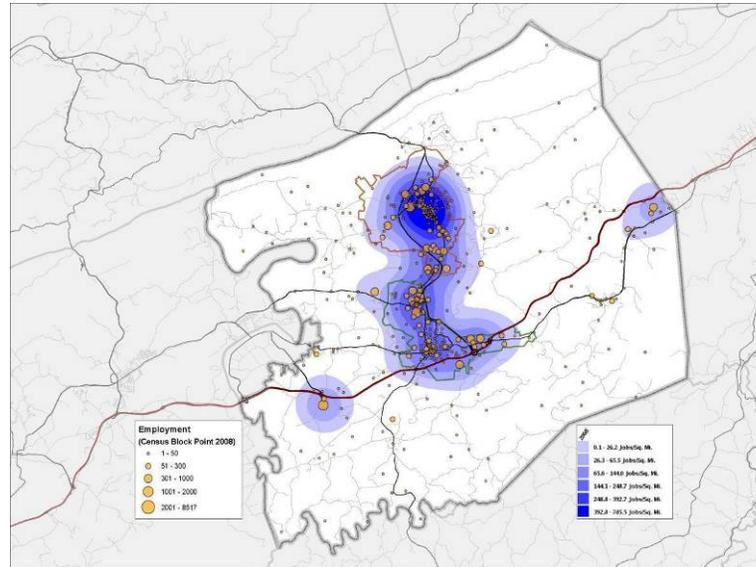
Prior to the February 9 work sessions, the consultant team conducted a brief analysis of regional trends and factors that could influence the future development and evolution of the Route 177 Gateway Area. Some of the results of this analysis are summarized below and in the maps that follow.

Market Analysis

The map at the right shows the existing employment density in Montgomery County according to the US Census (2008). While the vast majority of jobs are concentrated in the Town of Blacksburg and the Town of Christiansburg, the 177 Gateway Area contains the next greatest employment density, which is largely due to the presence of Carillion Hospital.

Existing Transportation Conditions

The Route 177 corridor is classified by VDOT as a rural minor arterial facility north of I-81 and a rural major collector facility south of I-81. Presently, the facility has average daily traffic volumes ranging from 12,500 vehicles per day along the four lane divided section north of Mud Pike to 8,000 vehicles per day along the four lane section south of the interchange, then decreasing to 4,000 vehicles per day south of Barn Road as the road tapers to a two lane undivided roadway. As described in the preceding sections of this document, the abutting uses range from light industrial, commercial, rural residential, and the hospital on the southern end of the corridor.



Employment density within Montgomery County

The Route 177 / I-81 interchange is a standard diamond configuration with single lane ramps leading to the unsignalized ramp intersections. Presently, this configuration provides the necessary capacity for the prevailing traffic volumes. With the exception of the non standard and somewhat awkward geometry for the southbound right turn movement onto Route 177, the interchange appears to be of an appropriate design with satisfactory traffic operational conditions.

There are no dedicated on-street bicycle or adjacent pedestrian facilities within the project study area along Route 177 or the intersecting roadways, however Bike Route 76, a cross country bicycle route, traverses the gateway area along Lovely Mount Drive and Mud Pike and is a signed, shared roadway for cyclists.

Walkability

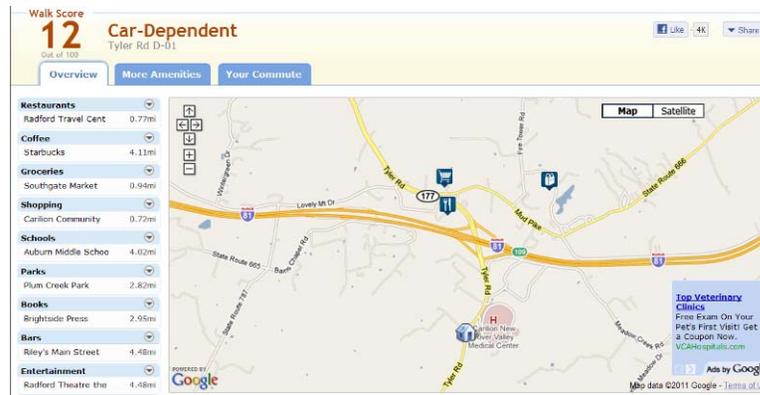
Walkable neighborhoods offer many benefits to the environment, health, finances, and communities including:

Health: Walkable neighborhoods create more freedom of choice for residents and studies have shown that they contribute to overall physical health of residents.

Social: Traditional neighborhoods with walkable access to community facilities and amenities create more opportunity for social interaction for all age groups and can decrease the hours spent commuting to work and activities

Financial: Studies have shown that homes in walkable neighborhoods can be more valuable than those that are not. Controlling for all other values, a study found that in a typical metropolitan area each 1 point increase in Walkscore was associated with a \$700 - \$3,000 increase in home values. Walkscore is an online tool that was developed to help people identify walkable places to live. It computes the “walkability” of any place using distance to destinations such as restaurants, libraries, schools, etc.

As shown in the following maps generated by Walkscore, the 177 Gateway Area has a Walkscore of 12, ranking it as “car-dependent” as compared to a ranking of 91 for a community like the Town of Blacksburg.



Ratings of the 177 Gateway and the Town of Blacksburg illustrated from Walkscore.com

Corridor Growth and Future Traffic

As a growth corridor and as a key arterial corridor for the region, the traffic volumes along Route 177 are expected to increase substantially. Growth in traffic volumes will be the result of continued growth in and around the City of Radford, and new development that will occur adjacent to Route 177 and the I-81 interchange.

South of the I-81 interchange along Route 177 there are three approved development plans, in addition to the potentially growing Carillion Hospital campus. The three development sites, consisting of the S&P, Woody, and Emerald properties may generate another approximately 13,000 new vehicle trips (approximation per prior site traffic studies). This includes cars entering and exiting the sites. Additional growth in traffic volumes will occur as the result of future expansion of the Carillion Hospital campus, and also additional new development in the growth area and other more regional traffic that will utilize Route 177 to access the City of Radford and also points south of the interchange.

Based on the assumption that the area would see significant new growth in the coming 20 to 30 years and beyond, an effort was made to estimate additional new traffic growth that might occur under an estimated scenario where the resulting development occurs at an average gross intensity of approximately 0.1 FAR, over approximately 200 acres, and consisting of a mix of retail, residential, office, and light industrial. Based on this scenario, we might expect another approximately 13,000

vehicle trips to be generated or attracted to the study area. The graphic on the following page illustrates the resulting traffic projections based on the combined “local” growth area traffic coupled with the growth in regional traffic volumes.



Figure 4. Currently approved development projects in the area

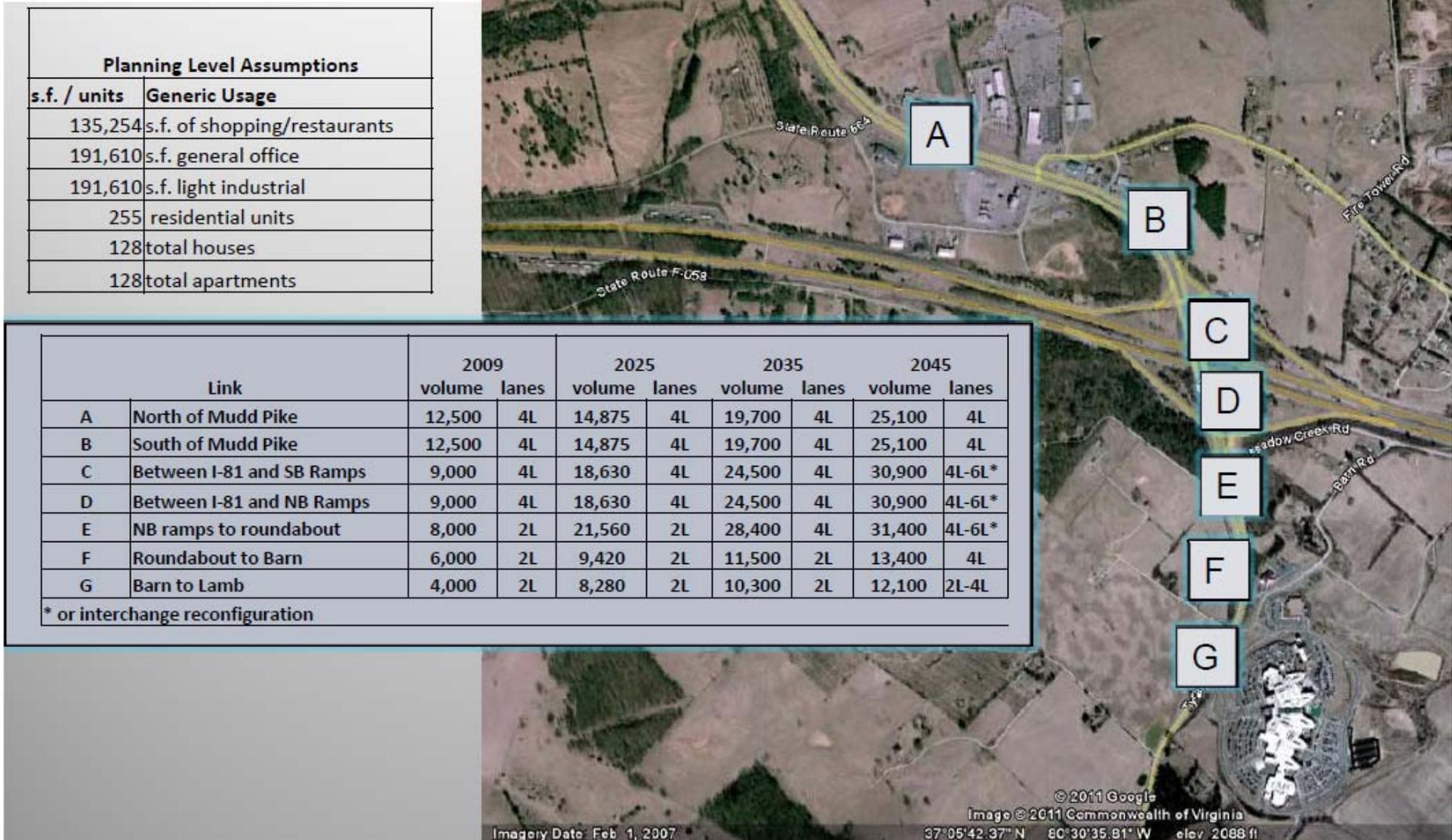


Figure 5. Potential Future Traffic Growth Scenario

VISION PLAN

Overall Concept

The Vision Plan resulting from the work sessions was based on all of the input that was received from various agency staff, property owners and community stakeholders, both in the initial kickoff meetings in February, and in the follow up work sessions and public meeting in March. The graphic to the right shows a diagram of the overall design concept for future land use and development in the Rt. 177 Gateway area.

The overall concept for the vision for the area includes a variety of mixed use districts that are generally connected to one another via parallel roadways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The intent is that these mixed uses develop through a series of planned commercial, light industrial and residential developments. The north end of the corridor maintains a higher speed design character that serves as a landscaped gateway to Radford with mixed use development along both sides of the corridor. The southern portion of the corridor is envisioned as a lower-speed, pedestrian friendly corridor that transitions to a higher speed rural road south of the hospital.

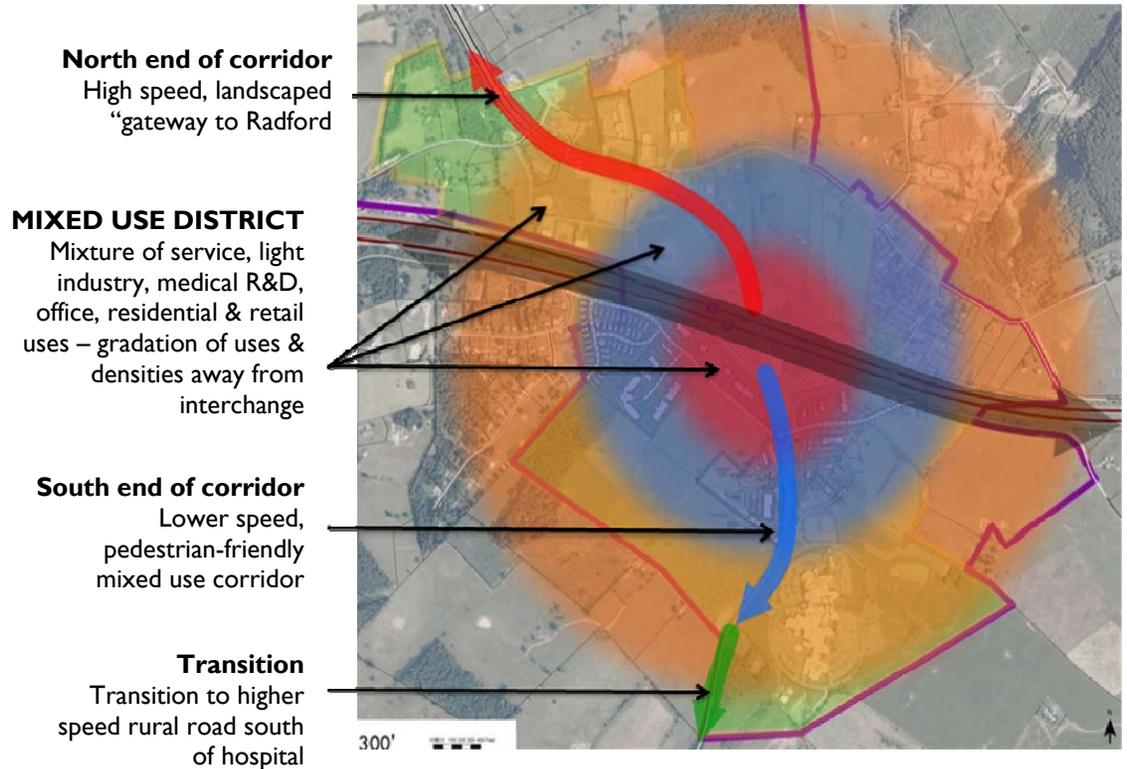
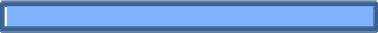


Figure 6. Diagram of vision concept for the Route 177 Gateway Area.

Land Use Concept

The Route 177 Gateway Area has great long term potential to grow into a center of economic development for the western portion of Montgomery County. The land use concept, shown on this page, is based on the vision concept diagram and incorporates a combination of mixed uses with gradually decreasing intensity away from the interchange. While each of the districts calls for a mixture of uses, the uses are carefully combined to ensure compatibility with each other and with the distance of each area from the interchange. The following table and corresponding map describe the uses envisioned within the study area:

LAND USE CONCEPT	
	<p>Service-oriented mixed use A combination of service related commercial uses including hospitality, lodging, retail and office uses – some high density residential may be included</p>
	<p>Light industrial/office-oriented mixed use A combination of light industry, warehousing and office uses, screened from adjacent areas</p>
	<p>Residential-oriented mixed use A combination of mixed density residential uses, including elderly or age-specific residential communities that incorporate a walkable community design and limited office/retail</p>
	<p>Medical/Residential –oriented mixed use A combination of hospital, medical office and research/development uses, combined with elderly or age-specific residential communities with mixed densities, unit types and a walkable community design.</p>

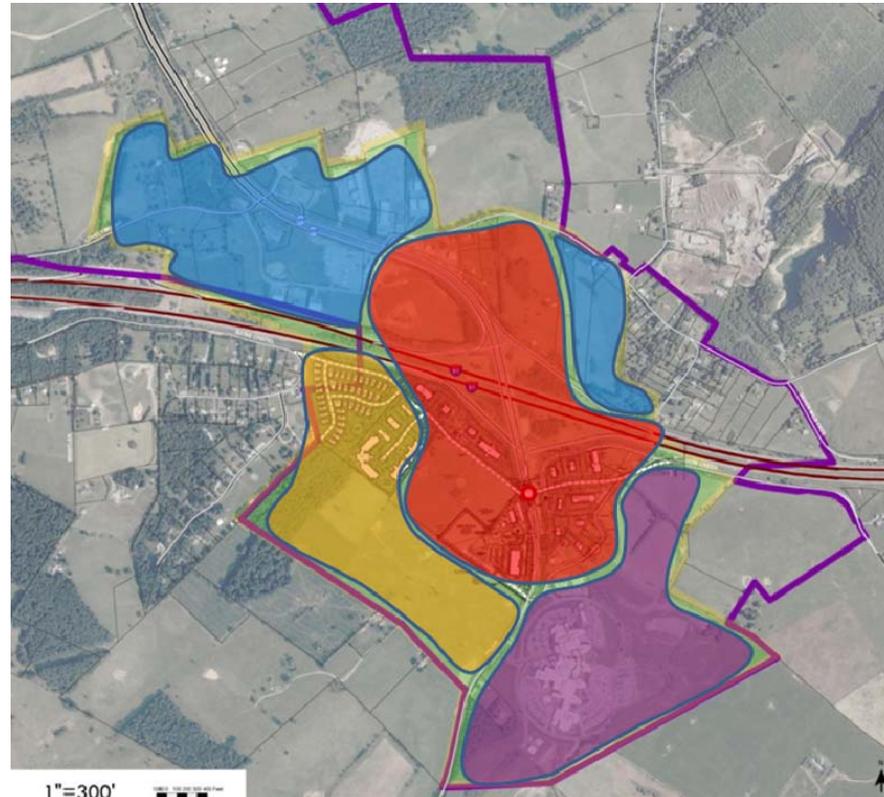


Figure 7. Land Use Concept for the 177 Gateway Area

Design Concepts by Land Use District:

The following diagrams and photographs describe the general development concepts for each land use district in the Gateway area.

Service-Oriented Mixed Use

The preferred uses for the parcels around the I-81 interchange itself are a combination of service related commercial uses including hospitality, lodging, retail and office uses. Some high density residential may be included. These may include compatibly designed hotel, restaurant or service station uses.



Light Industrial/Office-Oriented Mixed Use

The Light Industrial/Office Oriented Mixed Use district is located generally along Tyler Road to the north of the interchange. The preferred uses are a combination of light industry, warehousing and office uses, screened from adjacent areas – especially residential uses – with extensive landscaping and berms or topography. Light industry should be low rise and campus style, generally located to the rear of the properties, with mid rise office uses generally oriented toward the primary road frontages.



Residential-Oriented Mixed Use

The quadrant southwest of the interchange is envisioned as a combination of mixed density residential uses, including elderly or age-specific residential communities that incorporate a walkable community design. Limited retail or office uses that are neighborhood scale may be incorporated to serve the immediate area. Pedestrian accommodations should be provided throughout, with sidewalks and a regular system of connected residential blocks, and trail connections to open space and among each neighborhood.



Medical/Residential-Oriented Mixed Use

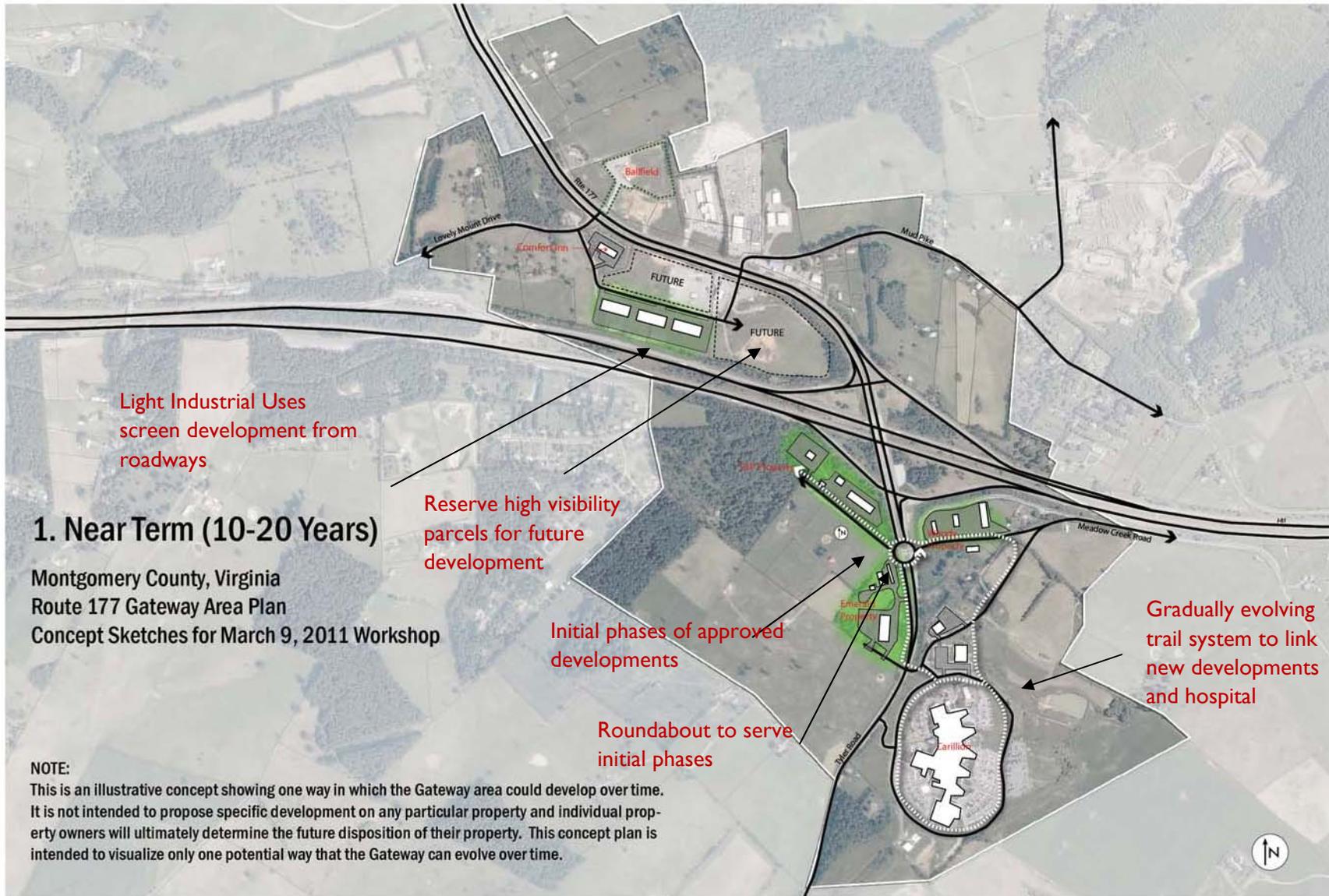
The area around Carillion Hospital is intended to grow as a medical campus with a combination of hospital, medical office and research/development uses. It is also intended that this area have a compatible residential component with elderly or age-specific residential communities with mixed densities, unit types and a walkable community design.

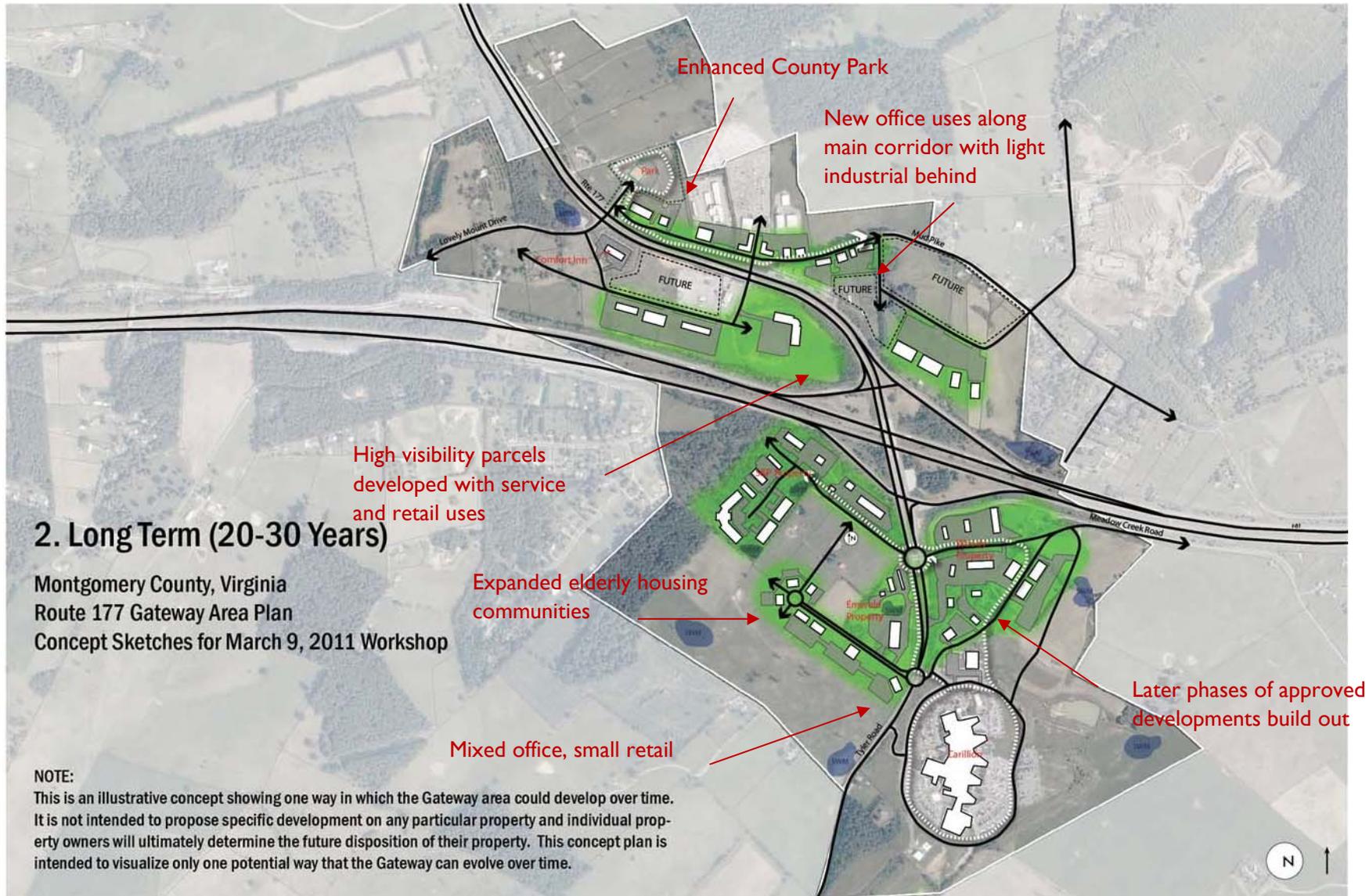


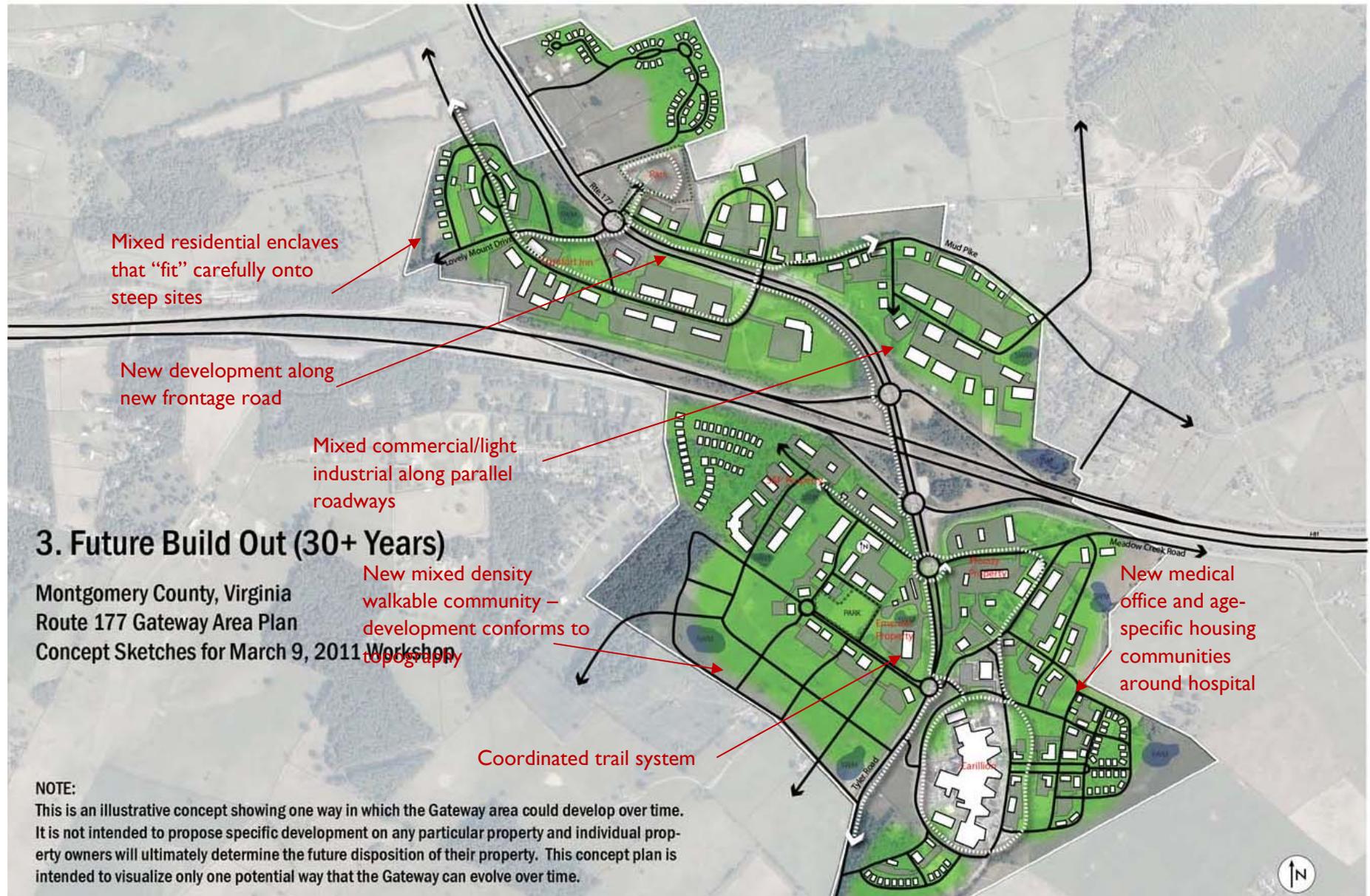
Potential Evolution Over Time

The following pages illustrate a hypothetical build-out of the parcels in the Gateway area over the long term. The Vision Plan shown is the conceptual design expression for the 177 Gateway Area. It is important to note that the Vision Plan is only conceptual in nature and that – while it clearly expresses the policy intent for the 177 Gateway, it is only one possible way that these policies can be expressed in physical design form, and that other expressions are possible as well. Understanding that the complete transformation of the corridor will not happen overnight, the conceptual vision plan for this area is designed to show one potential way that development could occur over a long period of time. It is important to recognize that the concepts on the following pages are guides for potential development, not regulations and should be seen as illustrative concepts only.

Regardless of how long it takes to reach the long term vision for the Gateway area, the conceptual vision plan the ideals and desires of the community for how the corridor should evolve over time should be the primary guide for evaluating future development in the area. The implementation of the vision will ultimately be driven by the initiatives of private property owners, supported by policies and programs that the county adopts over time to encourage the shared vision for the Gateway's future.







Benefits of Mixed Use Development

The mixed use concepts called for in this vision for the Gateway area have distinct benefits in terms of diversifying the market potential for the area, creating a high quality of life and potentially reducing overall automobile trip generation. Mixed use developments have been shown to favor local trips within communities resulting in increased internal trip capture opportunities. This means that some site trips can occur within the community without using external roadways. This reduces overall traffic demand on the adjacent roadways. Industry research typically shows up to a 15% reduction in external trips when multiple use types are collocated within one contiguous site. More recent industry research by the Institute of Transportation Engineers has shown that the trip reductions are sometimes higher than the 15% typical. Also, by collocating residential uses in close proximity to office and/or retail, opportunities for walking or bicycling are maximized, especially when the site design standards require connected sidewalks and an overall walkable environment. Finally, when site design densities are increased, the ability to serve a site or area with transit becomes more feasible. The success of a transit route will often depend on the density and design of the location being served. A walkable environment with sufficient density and intensity of uses helps to maximize the potential for serving that location with transit.

Access Management

Access management programs seek to limit and consolidate access along major roadways, while promoting a supporting street system and unified access and circulation systems to access development. The result can be a roadway that functions more safely and efficiently for its useful life, which ultimately results in a more attractive and economically stronger road corridor.

Access management policies have been evolving nationally over the past 15 years. In 2007, the Virginia General Assembly enacted legislation requiring the Virginia Department of Transportation to develop and enforce a statewide policy that provides standards for regulating driveway intersection spacing and median crossover locations along state maintained roadways. The overall goal of the policy is to maximize safety and mobility along Virginia's roadways.

The tables on the following page are excerpted from the VDOT Access Management Policy and Roadway Design Manual and show the current applicable access standards that would apply to new development or redevelopment in the 177 corridor..

ROUTE 177 GATEWAY AREA PLAN

As the Route 177 corridor continues to evolve in terms of new growth, it will be important to find opportunities to consolidate entrances for parcels fronting the roadway, and also develop a roadway network that effectively provides access while conforming to VDOT's access management policy.

The graphic on the following page illustrates the inventory of existing connections and median crossovers relative to the access management criteria.

Minimum Spacing Standards for Commercial Entrances and Intersections Near Interchange Areas on Multilane Crossroads				
Type of Area	Spacing Dimension			
	X	Y	Z	M
Urban	750'	2640'	990'	990'
Rural	1320'	2640'	1320'	1320'

TABLE 2-3 MINIMUM SPACING STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL ENTRANCES AND INTERSECTIONS NEAR INTERCHANGE AREAS ON MULTILANE CROSSROADS

Source: National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Synthesis 332: Access Management on Crossroads in the Vicinity of Interchanges, 2004. NCHRP Report 420: Impacts of Access Management Techniques, 1999.

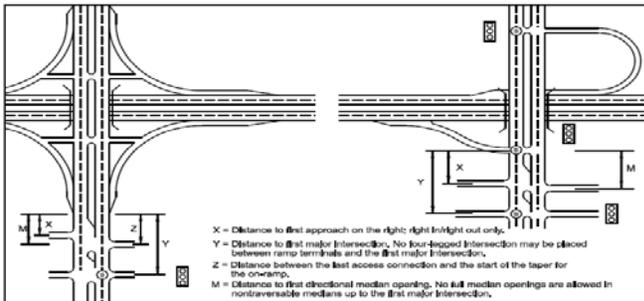
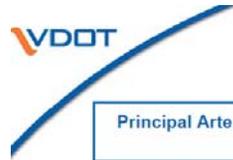


FIGURE 2-9 ACCESS CONTROL ON MULTI LANE HIGHWAYS AT INTERCHANGES

Figure 8. Source: Appendix F. VDOT Roadway Design Manual



Principal Arterial Spacing Standards Appendix F, Table 2-2

Principal Arterial Spacing Standards for Commercial Entrances, Intersections, and Crossovers				
Highway Functional Classification	Legal Speed Limit (mph)	Centerline to Centerline Spacing in Feet		
		Signalized Intersection/Crossover ^①	Unsignalized Intersection/Crossover & Full Access Entrances ^②	Partial Access One or Two Way Entrance ^③
Urban Principal Arterial	≤ 30 mph	1,760	1,050	270
	35 – 45 mph	2,640	1,320	325
	≥ 50 mph	2,640	1,320	510
Rural Principal Arterial	≤ 30 mph	2,640	1,320	270
	35 – 45 mph	2,640	1,320	440
	≥ 50 mph	2,640	1,760	585

① 1/2 mile signal spacing ② Half of signalized ③ Length of right turn lane by speed (AASHTO)



Minor Arterial, Collector, Local Street Spacing Standards Appendix G, Table 2-2

Spacing Standards for Commercial Entrances, Intersections, and Crossovers					
Highway Functional Classification	Legal Speed Limit (mph)	Centerline to Centerline Spacing in Feet			
		Signalized Intersections/Crossovers		Unsignalized Intersection/Crossover & Full Access Entrances	Partial Access One or Two Way Entrances
Urban Minor Arterial	≤ 30 mph	880		660	270
	35 to 45 mph	1,050		660	305
	≥ 50 mph	1,320		1,050	425
Urban Collector	≤ 30 mph	DIVIDED	UNDIVIDED	DIVIDED	UNDIVIDED
	35 to 45 mph	660	425	440	200
	≥ 50 mph	660	425	440	305
Rural Minor Arterial	≤ 30 mph	1,050		880	270
	35 to 45 mph	1,320		1,050	360
	≥ 50 mph	1,760		1,320	495
Rural Collector	≤ 30 mph	DIVIDED	UNDIVIDED	DIVIDED	UNDIVIDED
	35 to 45 mph	880	570	660	305
	≥ 50 mph	1,050	570	660	425
Local Street		1,320	645	1,050	570

Commercial entrance spacing: See Figure 4-11.

- Signalized intersection spacing applies to other signals.
- Unsignalized intersection spacing is the minimum distance between such intersections and between unsignalized and signalized intersections.
- Partial entrance spacing separates such entrances from each other and from intersections.

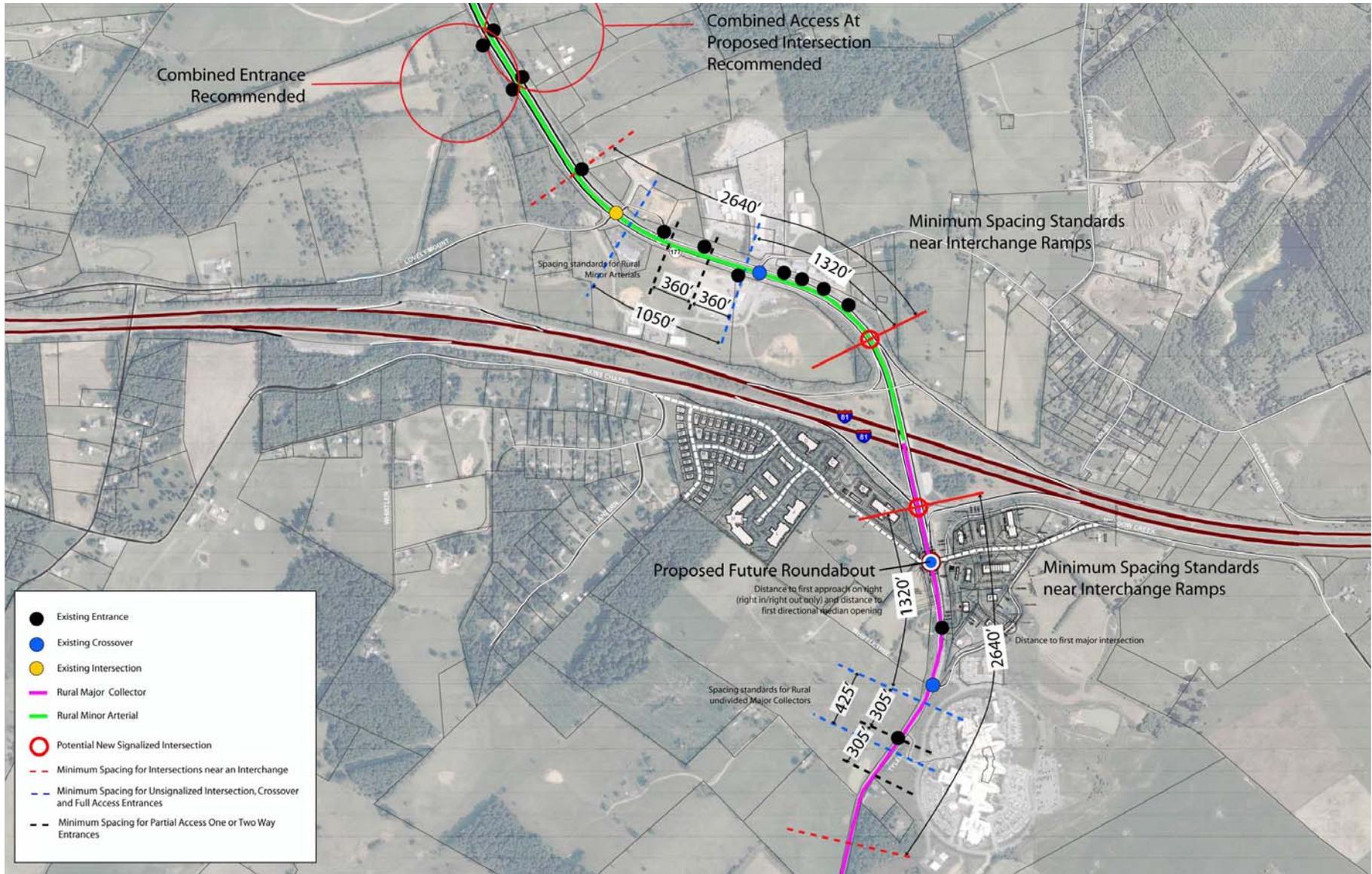


Figure 9. Diagram of current VDOT Access Management Standards Applied to the Gateway Area.

Also shown on this graphic is a representation of how the VDOT criteria applies to the corridor relative to spacing of signalized intersections, median crossovers, and entrances. This graphic should guide the decision making process for modification to existing access features and provision of future access features.

The County adopted a corridor plan in year 2004 that included information regarding regulating access along the corridor. Since that document was adopted, VDOT has developed its full set of access management standards as previously referenced. Hence, the information provided herein supersedes the prior access management description and figures as shown in the 2004 Route 177 Corridor Plan.

Going forward into the future, regulating access in accordance with the VDOT access management policy will be critically important towards preserving the capacity and safety of Route 177 while effectively encouraging shared access and an efficient system of adjacent roadways that will form the basis of the local road system. When possible through the site plan review process, access points (entrances) for parcels that currently front of Route 177 should be reduced, combined, or closed and access through adjacent parcels or via a new road network should be encouraged. In the short term, these opportunities will be limited. However, looking out into the mid to distant time frame (15 years+), as the enhanced local road system begins to grow this will provide greater opportunities for reconfiguring the existing site entrances.

The new and enhanced local road network will need to take into consideration the VDOT access management standards, as illustrated on figure 9, relative to providing connections to Route 177. Signal spacing, intersection spacing and crossover spacing are all governed by the VDOT criteria. This criteria provides the guidance for how new roads will connect to Route 177 and where partial and full crossovers may be located.

Projected Roadway Infrastructure Needs

An assessment of likely roadway infrastructure improvements was conducted based on the projected volumes as shown in the conceptual illustrative plans in each phase of the Gateway's evolution. It is important to note that reductions for internal capture and mode shift (i.e. reduction in trips based on mixed use developments for walk, bike, or transit trips) was not applied. Therefore, the planning numbers shown below are conservatively high and represent a potential worst case scenario in terms of infrastructure needs. The findings of the analysis are presented in the following graphical summaries based on projected time horizons.

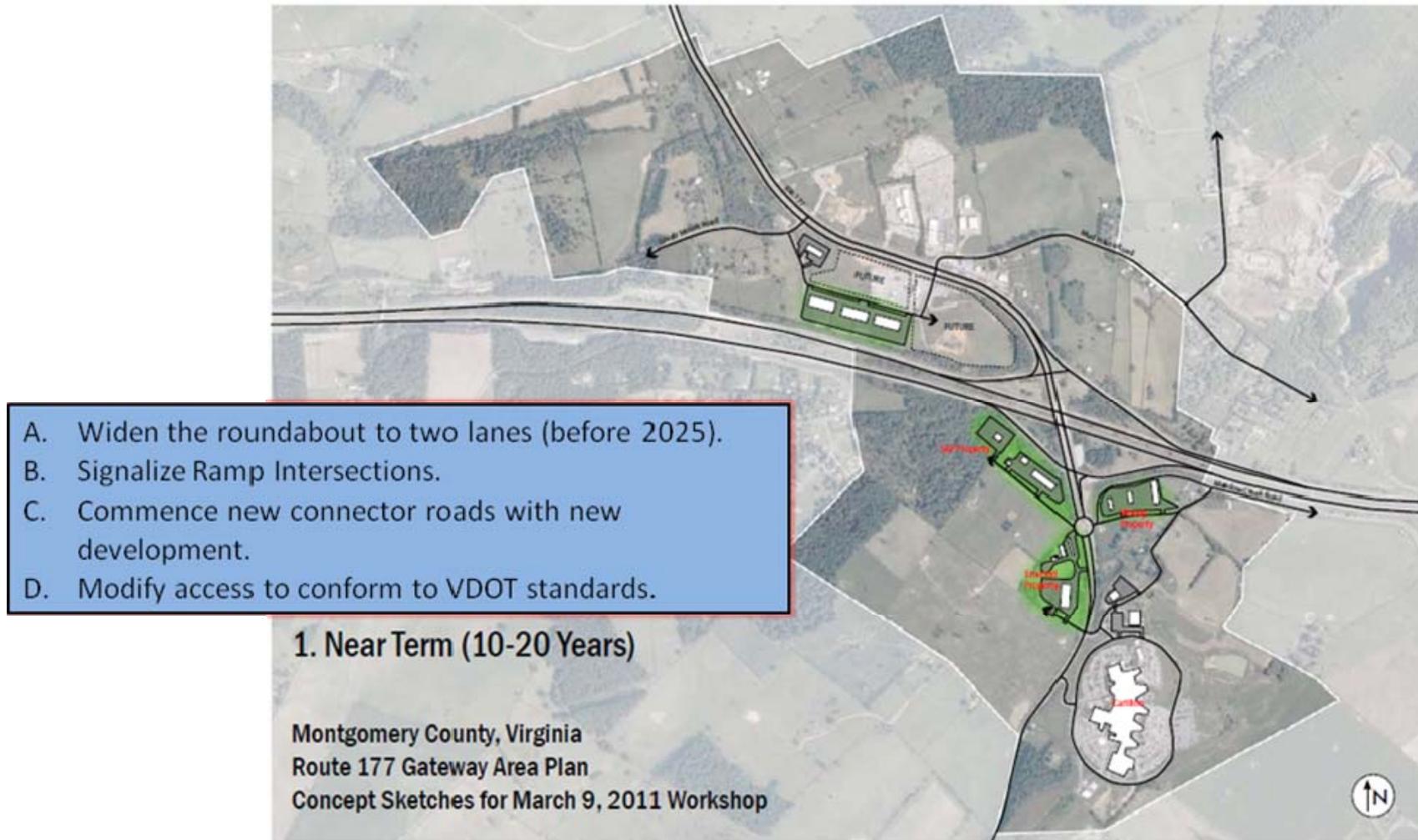


Figure 10. Future Road Improvements by 2025

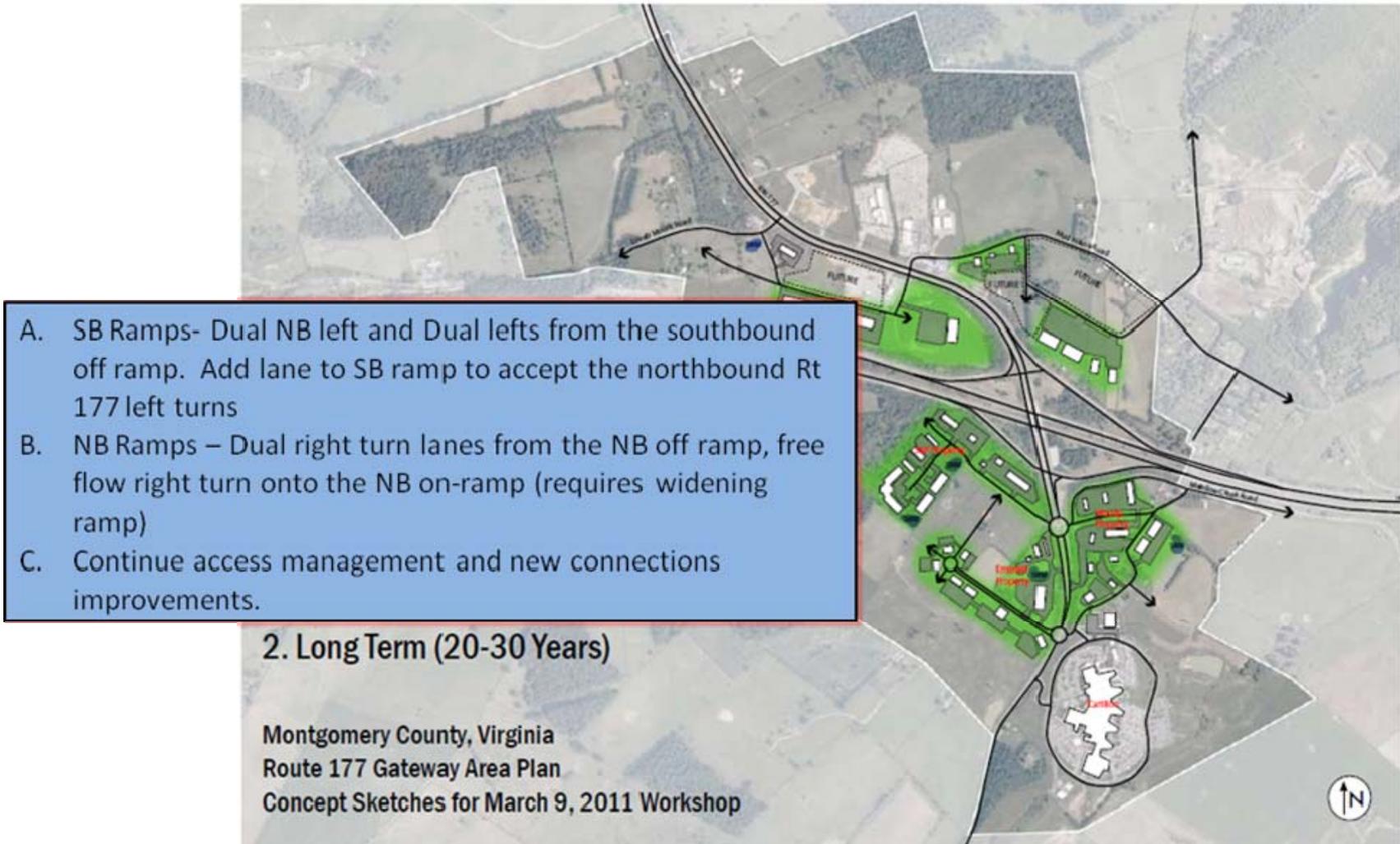


Figure 11. Future Road Improvements by 2035

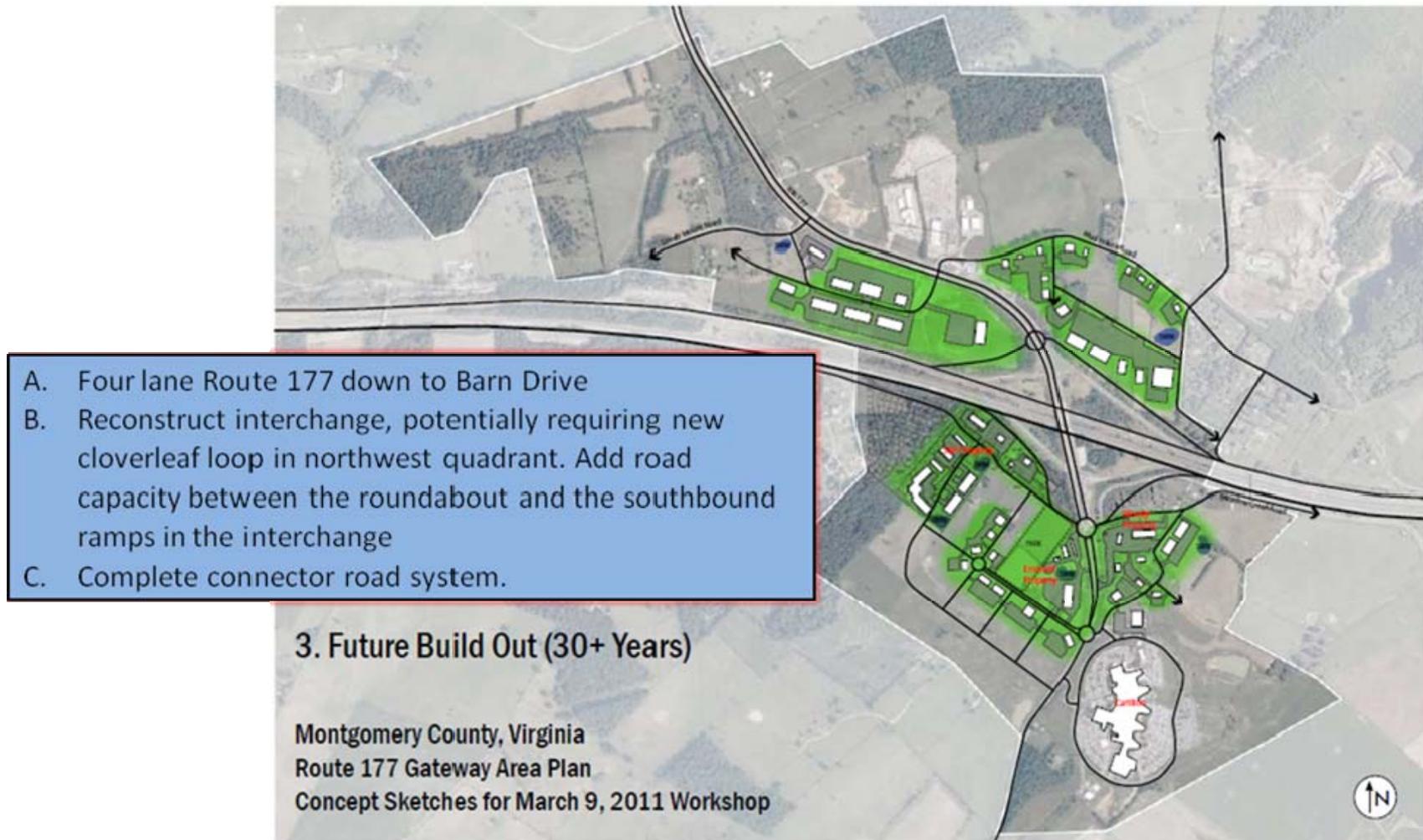


Figure 12. Future Road Improvements after 2035

Roadway Context

The following graphics show how the Tyler Road corridor north of I-81 could evolve with new development, local connector roads, and landscaping to create an attractive mixed use and multimodal gateway into Montgomery County and the City of Radford.



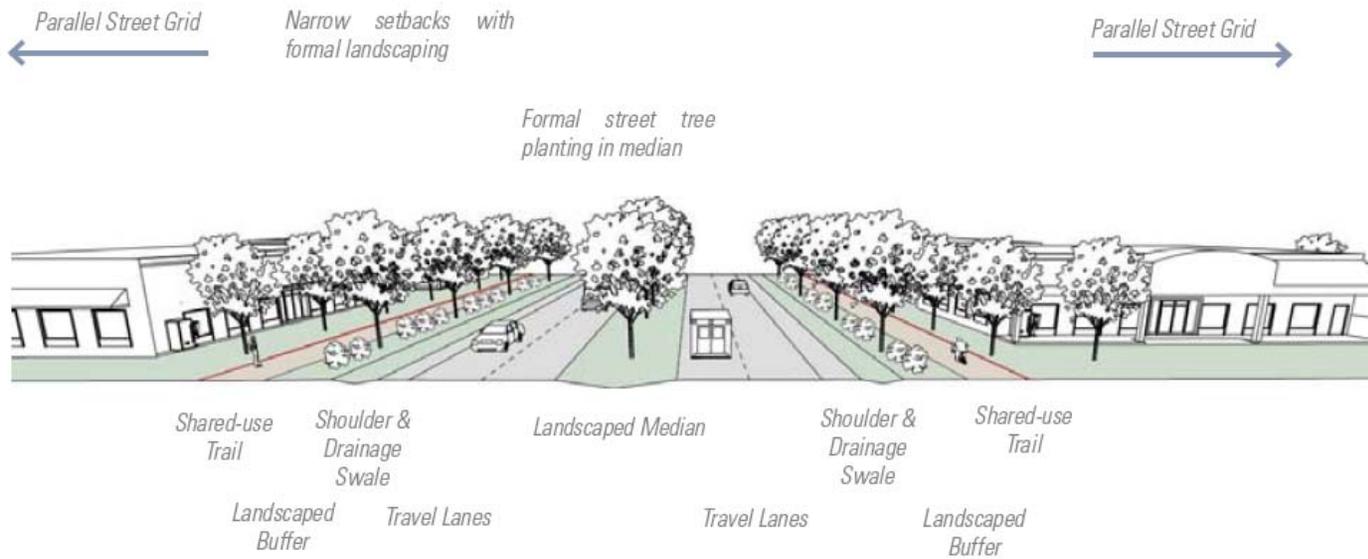
Figure 13. Tyler Road looking north at Comfort Inn - current condition.



Figure 14. Tyler Road looking north at Comfort Inn - potential future condition.

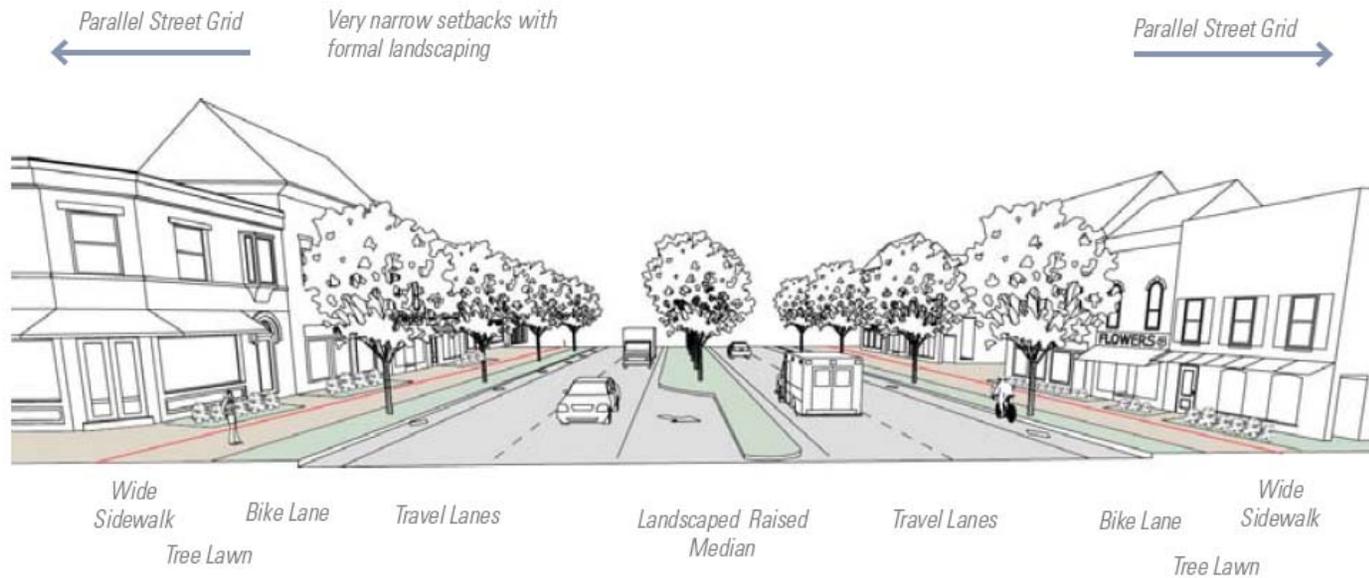
Typical Cross Sections: North of I-81 Mixed Use High Speed Corridor

This section of Route 177 north of I-81 is already a four lane divided facility that operates at high speeds (45-55mph). The Vision Concept for this portion of the corridor is to maintain the pastoral, high speed character with mixed commercial uses along a landscaped corridor. The concept also includes bicycle and pedestrian accommodations within a shared use trail separated from the road. New development should be enhanced by generous landscaping.



Typical Cross Sections: South of I-81, Mixed Use Low Speed Corridor

The section of roadway to the south of I-81 will also be a four-lane divided facility. It is intended to support future multimodal transportation and mixed use development anchored by Carillion Hospital. New commercial and service uses have the potential to generate significant amounts of pedestrian activity in the next 25 years, and should front directly onto the street with parking located to the rear of buildings. In order to maintain safety for anticipated pedestrian traffic and local vehicular access, the corridor should gradually transition to a lower design speed (35 mph or less) for the portion from the interchange to at least Dairy Road. Sidewalks, street trees and pedestrian-scale street lighting should be provided along both sides of the road. The typical section shown below provides for two lanes of travel in each direction separated by a raised median.



Typical Cross Section: Local Road

This cross section shows the design intent for local roads in the 177 Gateway area, with features such as bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the street.



IMPLEMENTATION

During the public input process for this area plan, participants were asked to describe the most important implementation steps needed to achieve the vision. The full results of all public input can be found in the appendix. Two general priorities emerged from this process:

- Funding for major infrastructure improvements
- Coordination of landowners and developers on infrastructure funding opportunities

Funding Options for Infrastructure

The following is a general list of opportunities for funding infrastructure and improvements in the Gateway area, with a description of the requirements and standards for each. Enabling legislation and grant programs are inherently fluid and each legislative session changes the range of opportunities available. Therefore, the county should monitor these opportunities over time and look for those that are most conducive at each phase of evolution of the Gateway area over time.

Grant Programs

Transportation Partnership Opportunity Fund (TPOF) is to be used by the Governor of Virginia through the Design-Build provisions of the Virginia Code (§33.1-12(2)(b)) pursuant to the Public Private

Partnership Act of 1995 (Virginia Code § 56-556 et seq.). The Governor can also use TPOF monies for transportation aspects of economic development projects. Grants can be up to \$5 million, while loans up to \$30 million can be obtained interest free, but require repayment within 7 years. While flexible, TPOF funds are limited to use when the capacity of existing funding mechanisms has been exceeded.

Revenue Leveraging

The Transportation Funding and Reform Act of 2007 (HB 3202) allows counties to raise commercial property taxes as much as \$0.25. For FY 2009, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a tax rate increase of \$0.11, and is expected to generate approximately \$52 million transportation projects. Funds can be spent on roadway, pedestrian and transit projects.

Revenue Sharing

The Virginia Department of Transportation Revenue-Sharing Program is authorized under Virginia Code §33.1-2305. The program allows for Virginia Department of Transportation funds to match locality funds for improvement, construction or reconstruction on any functional class of roadway. A locality can request funds for projects in other localities. The program is currently funded at a level of \$50 million; each locality may request up to \$1 million.

General Obligation Bond Financing

General obligation bonds provide up-front capital financed through a revenue stream backed by local government tax revenues (primarily property tax). For example, in 2004, Fairfax County issued about \$165 million in transportation bonds. Another \$110 million in bonds for transportation was approved by voters in 2007.

However, they are nearly always competing priorities for the use of general obligation bonds, since they are commonly used for many local capital projects, including schools, parks, libraries, etc. Infrastructure improvements in the Rt. 177 corridor area would need to be put in the County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) in conjunction with local funding allocations and financing provisions.

Service Districts

Service districts may be created by any locality, by ordinance (Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2400)). The locality must hold a public hearing prior to the creation of any district. Two localities may jointly act to create such a district located in both localities.

Service districts are created to provide additional, more complete, or more timely services of government than are desired in the locality as a whole. Once an ordinance creating a service district is adopted, the governing body has additional powers pertaining to the district, including:

- to construct, maintain, and operate such facilities and equipment as may be necessary or desirable to provide additional, more complete, or more timely governmental services within a service district.
- to provide construction, maintenance, and general upkeep of streets and roads, public transportation systems serving the district, including the acquisition of real estate necessary to provide such services.
- to levy and collect an annual tax upon any property in the service district subject to local taxation to pay for providing the additional governmental services. Note, however, in contrast with the Community Development Authority provisions, such annual tax shall not be levied for or used to pay for schools, police, or general government services.

In addition to the taxes and assessments provided for by the enabling legislation, a locality may contribute money from its general fund as it deems appropriate to pay for the governmental services authorized within the service district. The proceeds from any annual tax or portion thereof collected for road construction may be accumulated and set aside for such period of time as is necessary to finance such construction.

Community Development Authorities (CDA)

Community Development Authorities may be established by the governing body upon petition from 51% of the land area or assessed value of land in any tract or tracts of land in a proposed district (Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-5152)).

The locality may then adopt a resolution or ordinance creating the authority, after a public hearing. The resolution or ordinance is then recorded in the land records of the circuit court for each parcel included in the district. Two localities may jointly act to create such a district located in both localities.

The main powers of a CDA are to finance, fund, plan, construct, operate, and maintain the infrastructure improvements enumerated in the ordinance establishing the district. These can include acquisition of land; construction or improvement of roads, bridges, parking facilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, traffic signals, storm water management and retention systems, gas and electric lines and street lights, parks, cultural and educational uses; fencing and landscaping; fire stations, water mains and plugs, fire trucks, rescue vehicles and other vehicles and equipment; and school buildings and related structures.

A CDA may issue revenue bonds, subject to terms and conditions as may be established in the ordinance or resolution establishing the district, for

all costs associated with the improvements. Revenue bonds must be payable solely from revenues received by the development authority. The revenue bonds issued by a CDA do not require the consent of the locality, except where consent is specifically required by the provisions of the authorizing resolution, and such bonds are not deemed to constitute a debt or obligation of the local governing body. The CDA may provide that the locality annually collect a special tax on taxable real property within the CDA's jurisdiction to finance the services and facilities provided by the authority.

The CDA may provide that the locality annually collect a special tax on real property within the CDA's jurisdiction to finance the services and facilities provided by the authority. Unless requested by every property owner within the proposed district, the rate of the special tax can not be more than \$0.25 per \$100 of the assessed fair market value of any taxable real estate.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The governing body of any county, city or town may adopt **tax increment financing** by passing an ordinance designating a development project area and providing that real estate taxes in the development project area shall be assessed, collected and allocated such that the future gains in tax revenues created by the improvements are used to finance the improvements (Virginia Code §58.1-3245.2).

When a public project (e.g., sidewalk improvements) is constructed, surrounding property values generally increase and encourage surrounding development or redevelopment. The increased tax revenues are then dedicated to finance the debt created by the original public improvement project.

The local assessing officer records in the land book both the base assessed value and the current assessed value of the real estate in the development project area. Real estate taxes attributable to the increased value between the current assessed value of any parcel of real estate and the base assessed value of such real estate are allocated by the local treasurer and paid into a special fund entitled the "Tax Increment Financing Fund" to pay the principal and interest on obligations issued or development project cost commitments entered into to finance the development project costs.

Tax Increment Financing typically occurs within designated Urban Renewal Areas (URA) that meet certain economic criteria and approved by a local governing body. To be eligible for this financing, a project (or a portion of it) must be located within the URA.

Conditional Zoning

Conditional zoning was enabled by the Virginia General Assembly to address the shortcomings of traditional zoning methods when competing and incompatible land uses conflict (Virginia Code §15.2-

2296-2203). While it is technically a zoning tool, it is also a tool for funding infrastructure and the financial impacts of growth.

Conditional zoning allows reasonable conditions, known as proffers, to be offered by the applicant during a rezoning process as a way of mitigating the impacts of the proposed rezoning. Proffers may include land, infrastructure, cash or other conditions or constraints on the use of the property. These proffers, if accepted by the governing body as part of the rezoning approval, become part of the zoning ordinance as it applies to that property. In theory, conditional zoning allows land to be rezoned that might not otherwise be rezoned because the proffers will protect the community or area affected by the rezoning.

All proffers must be made voluntarily. Therefore a governing body is not authorized to require a specific proffer as a condition to granting a rezoning.

Many of the properties in the Rt. 177 corridor already have the zoning that the owners desire. Thus, no rezoning would be requested and no proffers for infrastructure would be offered to the County. However, there may be times, in the near or longer-term future, where an owner may indeed wish to rezone his property, in which case proffers could come into play.

Land Development Regulation and Coordination

In order to fully implement the policies of the Gateway Area plan, two important coordination processes are expected and needed: coordination of activities between landowners and the County, City, and State; and coordination of activities among the various landowners (particularly those located contiguous or adjacent to each other).

The County and City have an overall desire to foster a coordinated pattern of land development. In the area Typical mechanisms for implementing this objective could include encouraging landowners to seek the appropriate zoning for their property so as

to allow the type of development envisioned by the plan, and working with developers and VDOT to help coordinate on-site transportation infrastructure between neighboring property owners, providing long-term interparcel access and access consolidation. The policies of the Area Plan establish a guiding framework for such coordination.

Further, the County and City can foster coordination among landowners by facilitating discussions, serving as a clearing house for information of common interest, continuing to invite landowners into policy discussions, and hosting forums for dialogue and joint planning by landowners.

APPENDIX

Work Session Summary Materials
