




WARRENTON SERVICE DISTRICT PLAN

Fauquier County Board of Supervisors
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Introduction

Section 15.2-2223 of the Virginia Code requires jurisdictions to prepare a plan for the physical development of the jurisdiction, and that the Governing Body shall adopt a Comprehensive Plan. This master plan is intended to serve as a guide to future land uses, growth and development within the community. This planning document might also include analysis and recommendations regarding the environment and historic resources, land use, public facilities and transportation. The code also requires the periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan, at a minimum of once every five years. The plan for Warrenton Service District represents the third planning update since the original Comprehensive Plan of 1967. It also represents significant local citizens’ involvement, which included representatives of the Warrenton Town Council in plan preparation.

Warrenton Service District

The Service District surrounds the incorporated Town of Warrenton, which exercises all plan and land-use approval jurisdiction within its boundaries. The district, with some 1,480 houses, has functioned largely as a grouping of ancillary residential neighborhoods, with lower densities than the Town, ranging from 1 unit per 25 acres to 3 units per acre, and reliant on the Town for the sharing of its finite sewer and water services. The County has continued to plan complementary and compatible land uses along its perimeter, while limiting non-residential uses to encourage commercial and service use location within the Town limits.

Both the Service District and Warrenton have experienced significant growth in the last ten years. This growth resulted in the addition of 1,179 houses, or more than 30 percent of the County’s overall growth. In terms of population, the Town of Warrenton’s population grew 38 percent over the 1990 – 2000 period, while Fauquier County’s population increased by 13 percent. The 2000 Census also provides another significant statistic. In 2000, some 62 percent of town residents had lived in the town for less than 5 years. This suggests that continued growth in new housing will expand demands for public facilities and services, including fire and rescue, health care, library, parks and recreation, schools and transportation.

	Fauquier County			Warrenton		
Year/Change	1990	2000	Change	1990	2000	Change
Housing	16,509	19,842	20%	1,949	2,658	36%
Population	48,714	55,139	13%	4,830	6,670	38%

Given recent changes, and pressures to expand public services within the Warrenton community by some, and pressures to limit growth by others, this Plan calls for a period of consolidation and fine-tuning of the overall service district. The overall objective will include:

- The strengthening of neighborhood relationships;
- No net residential gain in rezoning applications;
- Enhanced pedestrian linkages within the Town and Service District;
- Improvement of gateway entry points into Warrenton;
- Limited additional residential, commercial and employment land uses;
- Preservation of environmentally sensitive and other key open space areas; and
- New investments in public and recreational facilities.

The goal of the Plan is to establish a clear greenbelt edge with limited and low density residential development around the perimeter of Warrenton. The County seat will continue as the primary center for employment, business, and residential neighborhoods with the varied densities and characteristics of any functioning town.

Existing Characteristics

Planning History

Fauquier County's 1967 Comprehensive Plan recommended the creation of a major residential community, to the east and northeast of the existing Town of Warrenton. That plan envisioned this perimeter development to be very extensive, with Warrenton playing a much smaller role; the existing Town would have comprised only one-sixth of the proposed community. The 1987 Plan Update reduced the overall scale of proposed Service District development by about half and this policy was pursued with further adjustments in the 1994 Plan.

Planned Growth Patterns

In the 1960's the greater Warrenton Community was envisioned as an automobile dependent spread of largely single-family detached houses, at 2 – 4 dwellings per acre, similar to the tract communities constructed in that period throughout northern Virginia. The 1987 and 1994 Plan Updates did not challenge this suburban model, which contradicts the historic street pattern of Warrenton. The result is that new subdivisions within both the Town and the perimeter environs were built in a characteristic suburban growth pattern – with dendritic street designs of isolated, cul-de-sac subdivision and weak collector road connections. This pattern fosters a comfortable sense of self-contained, homogenous housing developments, but at a price of that resident quality of life and values associated with historic communities – well linked neighborhoods, within easy walking distance of schools, parks, other public facilities and even shopping.

Transportation

Warrenton's importance as the County's employment and business center, and seat of government accrued from the Town's location at the crossroads of numerous local and major regional roads – notably U.S.15/29, Routes 17 and 211. These historic roads, which were laid down in pre-automobile age, connected with each other at the County Courthouse and functioned well for over 200 years. However, in today's economy and automobile age, the growth of long distance regional commuting and interstate travel – U.S. 15 / 29, Routes 17, and 211 have linkages to I-66, I-95, and I-81 – have rendered these traffic patterns obsolete.

In more recent time, the mixing of regional through traffic and local traffic has caused congestion on U.S. 15 / 29, Routes 17, and 211 throughout the Warrenton area. A western, then an eastern and then the Route 17 Spur, the northeastern bypass were completed to address the issue. None of these bypasses can be deemed a complete success. The western bypass, Broadview Avenue – Lee Highway, failed to limit local commercial access along the roadside. Merchants followed the traffic out of Warrenton’s Main Street core to new locations on either side of Broadview Avenue – Lee Highway. Numerous commercial entrances and exits on this bypass, then generated multiple cross-traffic movements which reduced the capacity for through and local traffic and prompted the call for an eastern bypass.

The eastern U.S. 15/29 bypass constructed to remedy traffic capacity problems on Broadview Avenue – Lee Highway, functions adequately, but is being affected by increased signalization, volume and perimeter business development between Comfort Inn Drive and Route 605, Dumfries Road. Commercial development pressure is understandable, since traffic volume on this portion of Route 15/29 now totals 40,000 vehicles per day, and is growing at an annual rate of 3 – 4% per year. But numerous entrances on Route 15/29, and the consequent ‘traffic friction’ generated, are not consistent with the fundamental character of this State Primary and Federal Highway.

The northeastern bypass – between Routes 17 and 29, and known as the Route 17 Spur – works well, but releases its traffic into the signalized portion of U.S. 15/29 noted above.

None of these bypasses have resolved the issue of traffic movement from Route 211 to U.S. 15/29 east. Significant growth in nearby Culpeper and Rappahannock Counties is generating increasing levels of through traffic – estimated by the Town’s traffic consultant to reach 13,440 vehicles per day in 2020. These existing and future motorists have no alternative but to travel on an already congested Broadview Avenue – Lee Highway. As a result, alleviation of congestion on existing Route 29/211 (Broadview Avenue) will continue to require careful analysis, inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, face significant funding constraints and require the staging of selected options. The preferred priority is phased construction improvements along Broadview Avenue (e.g., widening, spaced medians and associated turn lanes) with the goal of enhancing traffic flow. It is also recommended that the County and Town create a joint Task Force, composed of elected officials, residents, businesses, to assist the local governments and VDOT in identifying the practical, cost effective and integrated transportation solutions to alleviate this crossroads of growing regional and local traffic.

Community Facilities

Warrenton and the unincorporated area of the County contained within the Service District have provided a logical place for the concentration of public and private community facilities. Two private schools and the Lord Fairfax Community College join three public elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school, as well as County government offices, DMV, the public library and the Warrenton Horse Show Grounds. A Community Hospital, Emergency Rescue and Fire Stations provide protective services, along with Town, County and Commonwealth Police Stations and a National Guard Armory. The area also includes the Warrenton Fairgrounds, and hosts a wide variety of religious and fraternal institutions.

Parks and open space are limited both in number and size for the residential population. The current recreational inventory includes Rady and Walker Parks (13 acres total) and the Greenway, a one mile long pedestrian/bike-path (part of the former Warrenton Branch Line railroad-bed of the Norfolk & Southern

spur). To expand open space and recreational assets, the County recently acquired some 70 acres of land, near the County Fairgrounds and just off Route 643, for recreational and associated athletic fields. The Town of Warrenton is planning to develop some 50 acres of parkland on the north side of Route 211 for recreation and swimming facilities. Additionally, the County is encouraging preservation of open space in the eastern portion of the Service District. These efforts will more than quadruple the acreage of parks and open space in the Service District.

Water and Sewer Utilities

The Town of Warrenton has historically provided public water and sewer service in portions of the County Service District, such as Warrenton Lakes, Ivy Hill, Silver Cup Estates, White's Mill and Hunting Hills for water; Warrenton Lakes, Silver Cup Estates, White's Mill and Millfield for sewer.

The Town has also agreed to provide sewer remediation service to Fletcherville and provides water remediation service to a residential area adjacent to the Warrenton Training Center located outside the Warrenton Service District.

Seven years ago the United States Environmental Protection Agency sought the Town's assistance to extend public water to six properties in the rural settlement of Frytown, whose wells were contaminated. Ultimately the Environmental Protection Agency withdrew from this project, which was estimated to cost \$3 million, citing the localized and limited character of the environmental threat. As a result, the County has been providing bottled water and filtration systems to mitigate the health hazard generated by an accidental dry-cleaning fluid spill.

While significant progress has been made by the County to protect water supplies in the Frytown neighborhood, this Plan recognizes that a permanent solution requires the opportunity for Frytown residents to gain access to public water supply. Warrenton has advised the County that the Town cannot provide the public water needed. Accordingly, the Plan calls for the installation of Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA) water lines along Frytown Road from Duhollow Road to Old Auburn Road. Future WSA water service to Moriah Farm, Central Sports Complex and Fauquier County Fair Grounds is planned. It is critical to note that these boundary areas comprise an open space 'hard edge' on this portion of the Service District, beyond which no public water or sewer service are contemplated.

The Town obtains its water from two reservoirs and two wells and has created a water plant designed to treat 2 million gallons per day – primarily by sand filtration and chlorinating. Approximately 48% of the water capacity is now being used.

The watershed of the Warrenton reservoirs historically had a rural character with sparse development. Over the last twenty years, the character of the watershed gradually changed with the construction of shopping centers, single family dwellings, townhouses and their associated roads and parking lots, all of which can generate petroleum derived pollution, as well as lawns that are well fertilized with the usual pesticide / fungicide treatments. As growth continues within the watershed supplying the reservoirs, its impact on both surface and ground water becomes an increasing concern.

New zoning and building regulations have attempted to abate erosion on construction sites and dampen erosive storm water 'spikes' of offsite water drainage by means of sediment and storm-water management ponds. Much of this activity was initiated by environmental concerns regarding the movement of eroded

soil into the Chesapeake Bay, and the effort has experienced increasing success in terms of soil erosion management. However, neither the County nor the Town has enacted, to date, legislation to mitigate roadway and parking lot oil and anti-freeze spills and solutions formed from pet wastes, lawn fertilizer / pesticide / fungicide from draining out of the developments and into the reservoirs.

The Town's wastewater plant has a permitted design capacity of 2.5 million gallons per day. Warrenton is located within two watersheds, the Occoquan and the Rappahannock. Effluent from Town customers located in the Occoquan basin is pumped to the Town's sewer plant on Route 211, where it is treated and discharged into Great Run Creek, a tributary of the Rappahannock River. (Note: the Town's DEQ permitted discharge into the Rappahannock Watershed avoids the more costly capital and treatment costs associated with the Occoquan basin, which is subject to far more restrictive Commonwealth standards.) However, increasingly more stringent wastewater outflow regulations in the Rappahannock basin may require significant and costly engineering upgrades if Warrenton decides to expand its wastewater plant to full capacity.

Warrenton's sewer and water facilities are presently operating at an average daily base sewage flow of 0.86 million gallons per day. The Town originally had reserved additional sewer capacity outside its incorporated limits and in the Service District for slightly less than 400 new dwellings. However, the Town Council has removed that commitment. As a result of a technical study, Water & Sewer Utility Master Plan; Part 1-Capacity and Growth Evaluation, the Town of Warrenton learned that its capacities are constrained and the unused sewer and water capacity must be reserved to meet expected residential and business growth within the incorporated limits.

It should be noted that the limited public sewer and water service extension capabilities of the Town, which serve the unincorporated areas of the Warrenton Service District are controlled by agreements reached between the Town and County in the summer of 2001. The two jurisdictions defined certain limited areas where Town water and sewer would be provided, and established that such service should not be expected for the remainder of the Service District. Those limited areas are identified within The Fauquier County/Town of Warrenton/WSA Master Sewer and Water Agreement. Properties that are not specified within this agreement for sewer service or served within a community sewer system owned, operated and maintained by the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA), are located in the designated Non-Sewered Area of the Warrenton Service District. All future development needing public sewer and water in areas not designated for Town of Warrenton or WSA public utilities would require an amendment to the agreement authorizing service to be provided by the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority or the Town of Warrenton without the need for an additional amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Natural Resources

Geology and Soils

Warrenton is underlain by two distinct rock formations; the Catoctin Formation known as Greenstone and the Fauquier Formation known as Mica Schist. These rock formations weather into two distinct soil types which are generally suitable for development.

- Greenstone, a hard epidote-chlorite that presents a significant excavation challenge, originated as a basaltic flow. Greenstone bedrock weathers into Fauquier, Atlanthus and Pignut type soils. These generally loamy to clayey soils are well drained and only moderately erosive if exposed. However their rich red color will cause comment by downhill neighbors of an exposed site. Fauquier, Atlanthus and Pignut type soils may have a depth to bedrock ranging from several to more than fifty feet.

- Mica Schist, a softer, metamorphosed rock, yields Glenelg, Elioak and Brinklow type loam soils. These powdery soils contain large quantities of minute mica flakes that contribute to accelerated runoff when excavated and the potential for severe erosion. A further feature of Glenelg, Elioak and Brinklow type soils is their tendency to remain in suspension when eroded, requiring auxiliary filtration structures to the conventional settlement ponds typically associated with site construction. The high mica content may also interfere with compaction, requiring special design features for road and building foundations – such as a deeper aggregate base. Both these rock and soil materials contribute to the wide topped, well-rounded and rolling topography of the Town and Service District as well as the defined floodplains which cross the area.

Streams

The boundary between the Occoquan and the Rappahannock Watersheds traverses the Warrenton Service District, with Cedar Run and Turkey Run joining the Occoquan and with Great Run joining the Rappahannock.

Extensive development in both the Rappahannock and Occoquan Watersheds has resulted in impaired stream function and has been noted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. This designation in the Occoquan watershed is troubling. The County has, for over a decade, mandated that engineers exercise special erosion abatement in land development design, a technique known as Best Management Practices (B.M.P.s). While much of the poor stream quality can be attributed to agricultural activities, development activity has also played a role. Various governmental agencies and technical institutions initiated new studies concerning the efficacy of erosion abatement techniques, and the Virginia’s manual on Chesapeake Bay Protection has provides an overview of their findings:

“Over the last ten years considerable research on B.M.P.s has proven certain practices to be less effective than originally assumed.” Local Assistance Manual page IV-5, Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department

Greater care and more refined techniques in the future may be needed to keep these watersheds healthy and productive.

Warrenton Service District Vision Statement

Vision Statement

1. In the year 2050, Warrenton and the Service District will have developed as a seamless, balanced, vibrant, attractive, diverse and economically healthy, mixed-use community with an even balance of residences, businesses, and jobs supported by a full range of community and educational facilities.
2. The social and commercial heart of the community will remain Main Street. This continued characteristic will be the result of combined and sustained Town and County efforts. Complementing this effort to enhance the downtown as a place of work and recreation will be the construction of coordinated radial sidewalks and trails reaching into surrounding residential neighborhoods.

3. In the year 2050, the Town of Warrenton and the Service District will be encircled with parks and open space. The parks and open space to the west will extend upwards to the natural ridgelines. The parks and open space to the south and east will encompass existing floodplains. This long-term objective in providing a linked park and open space system, totaling some 770 acres of floodplain and over 850 acres of upland, forming a 5 mile circumference around Warrenton, will include specialized recreational areas – such as equine and team sports – as well as areas for more passive recreation and natural preserves. A beltway network of pedestrian / jogging / biking – [and a limited amount of equine trails where appropriate] – trails will link these recreational opportunities with one another, and with a radial system of sidewalks and trails extending out from the core of Warrenton.

Strengths

Warrenton is the County seat with a unique history. The Town has distinctive character generated by an incomparable collection of residential, institutional and commercial structures, as well as significant historic resources. The community has assembled a basic inventory of public facilities and a critical mass of commercial uses. Warrenton's historical charm and small town scale are both valued and worthy of protection.

Areas Needing Special Focus

Warrenton is living on a largely inherited inventory of public facilities and utilities. Recent growth within the Town and Service District area is placing strains on this inventory, resulting in school expansion demands, inadequately sized parks, congested roads and discontinuous sidewalks and paths. While the community once had a balance of people and local employment, it no longer does and many of the resident community must commute to work.

Additionally, Warrenton faces the same development pressures operating in the Washington metropolitan area. 'Going with the flow' would generate an anonymous, car dependent 'big-box' and franchise dominated suburban dormitory – with insolvable traffic jams, overcrowded schools and inefficient delivery of public services. Such a scenario would represent a break with Fauquier County's historic character.

Opportunities

The County and the Town have the opportunity to define an urban/county boundary, to complement and improve the available commercial and public services, parks, neighborhood street and pathway linkages and to preserve a historic pedestrian scale. These characteristics are highly valued within Warrenton and Fauquier County.

Land Use Plan

Overall Layout and Definitions

The Plan generally designates land uses for the undeveloped-unincorporated areas immediately surrounding the Town of Warrenton, along with a circumferential open space and park system. This system, called the Warrenton Greenway Linear Park, will be characterized by a mixture of privately owned land held in open space easements, publicly owned or accessed trail and bike-path system, and public parks. To realize this open space network, the Plan proposes to cluster residential neighborhoods and other uses as shown in the accompanying land use maps. Since this clustering sometimes has different objectives the Plan uses a number of ‘special’ terms:

- **Greenway:** Indicates the clustering of residential uses on a tract in order to permit the creation of a county path linkage or open space/park to pass through the tract. The Greenway category represents a residential density ceiling for the tract, such as 1 dwelling per acre.
- **Gateway:** Indicates that a clustering of residential uses is screened or located away from / out of sight of a designated transportation or recreational corridor, in order to protect and maintain open space elements key to entry points into the County seat of Warrenton. These Gateway areas should have design elements – for example open landscape with some combination of traditional fencing and berming, or a 150 feet deep buffer of ‘forest’ – which would provide a green transition to urban development within the core.
- **Gateway Open Space:** Indicates that allowed uses would preferably be transferred to some adjacent designated property to best realize the Gateway objective. Again, the principle of no net density increase applies.
- Lastly, the term Rural applied to any of the above terms indicates that the property would remain subject to the rural sliding scale lot potential instituted by the County in May 1981.

The concept of “no net density” gain is the important principle for any rezoning application. The St. Leonard’s Farm rezoning represents a clear example of the stated objective being met. Here an application resulted in 41 lots being clustered, or approximately 80 percent of the overall property “by right density” in one location, while leaving 800 acres of the remaining property in a recorded conservation easement. The rezoning resulted in no overall net increase in density. Here clustered lots could be effectively served through public water and sewer, while a valued open space gateway into the Town of Warrenton was preserved.

It needs to be noted further that the terms Gateway, Greenway and Gateway Open Space are not mutually exclusive, and may include ingredients of each land use category.

Land Use Designations

The northeast quadrant includes Route 15/29 between the Comfort Inn Access Road and Rt. 605, Dumfries Road. This quadrant has undeveloped tracts zoned for residential and commercial uses on both sides of Route 15/29. Figures 6-WA-1 and 10-WA-1 identify proposed land uses and a service drive extension on the southeast side of Route 15/29. Increasing traffic volume on this rural arterial, which now exceeds 40,000 vehicles per day, creates the need for the service drive.

Also shown on Figure 6-WA-2 is a landscaped pedestrian path, with a paved width of 6 – 8 feet, alongside the service drive which links the proposed Greenway Linear Park with a proposed park at the intersection of U.S. Route 15/29 and Route 605. This Gateway Park would be realized by the clustering of residential density behind a pond and driveway of trees associated with the old farmhouse.

The Plan designates land on the west of Route 15/29 for a Community Business District. The district would access from Airlie and Colonial Roads, and would be shielded from Route 15/29 by a combined 150-foot wide landscaped and bermed buffer. Refer to Item 4 regarding Guidelines for Community Business District.

In the southeast quadrant, the land located between the Woods of Warrenton and the eastern bypass of Route 15/29 would also be set back from the right-of-way and developed as Greenway/Gateway with open space located to the north of the White's Mill tributary of Cedar Run. The challenges in this general location result from significant Town and County residential development which cumulatively place major traffic demands on Academy Hill Road and Walker Drive. There is a need for improving existing public road networks in this eastern area to provide relief to these key streets. It is recommended that Fauquier County, the Town of Warrenton and VDOT work together in developing practical and cost effective improvements to the local road system in this location for inclusion in the VDOT 6-Year Improvement Program.

Immediately to the south is the older community of Frytown, which will be designated high priority in the update of the Comprehensive Plan's section dealing with historic villages and settlements due to its infrastructure needs and a key water supply problem. This village is included as part of the Warrenton Service District Plan to resolve documented well-water contamination issues. Some individual wells have experienced contamination from the accidental spillage of dry cleaning chemicals noted above. As a result, the Village of Frytown is designated in this Plan as a Water Remediation District.

The County will seek to assist the community in mitigating this health hazard through Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA) public water service as residential development occurs and funds that service extension. The water main extension, starting in the vicinity of Atlee Road (near Rt. 605) to a location in the vicinity of the Duhollow Road/Frytown Road intersection, is currently in the planning stages. Design and installation of this waterline needs to preserve neighborhood tree lines, existing fences, stone walls and be aware of existing environmental resources needing special protection during construction.

The southeastern boundary of the service district does not extend to the Village of Frytown, or the Fauquier County Fair Grounds, or the planned regional park (sports complex). Here it is recommended that identified irrigation needs for the regional park be provided through an on-site well, based upon the required hydrogeological study and testing performance standards, and not through public water supplies. Regarding the land zoned I-1 on the west side and the designated Campus Office and Employment uses on the east side of Meetze Road at Warrenton's southern entrance, the County will adopt Gateway Architectural Guidelines comparable to those noted in Section 7. Highway Corridor and Gateway Industrial Districts.

South of Warrenton, the wedge of land between Shirley Avenue and Route 15 / 29 should be kept open as Gateway and Gateway Open Space Residential. Allowed residential uses on the southerly land could be transferred to those properties to the north and be developed as Gateway Residential. The principal objective would be retaining the most prominent summit of these lands as open space, with residential development clustered to the rear with densities up to 1 residence per acre.

In the southwestern quadrant of the Service District, the Alwington Farm area is recommended to be developed in a Greenway-Gateway and Rural Gateway Open Space configuration at 1 dwelling per acre. Certain fields on this farm, which slope away from Shirley Avenue, define a significant urban /

rural boundary. Development should be set back from Shirley Avenue to preserve these fields as open space. Land located in the southernmost portion of the Alwington Farm, which is presently zoned Rural Agriculture (RA) and located outside the Service District, would preferably transfer development potential to the northern body of the farm, pursuant to the principle of no net gain, there to be clustered away from view of Shirley Avenue. This southern entry point into Warrenton needs to be protected and has been in valued farm use, presents a significant and historic viewshed into the community and outside into our rural environs, and offers opportunities to meet open space edges that define Warrenton.

Land on either side of Route 802, Springs Road, at the western boundary of Warrenton, is designated Greenway-Gateway Residential reflecting the association of these parcels with the circumferential trail and the urban / rural boundary at this entry point to the Town.

A similar situation occurs in the northwestern quadrant, at the entry point to the Town on Route 211, Lee Highway. Land to the south of Route 211 is designated Gateway Open Space reflecting the historic St. Leonard's Farm character of the property, while the land to the north is designated Greenway-Gateway. As a result of a rezoning application, 800 acres of the referenced Farm's property, south of Rt. 211, has been placed in a recorded Virginia Outdoor Foundation conservation easement with a reservation for 8 lots, while 48 lots were placed on the north side of Rt. 211 in a proffered R-1 Cluster and adjacent to a planned Town of Warrenton community park. This action resulted overall in no net density gain or increased demands on schools or other public facilities, involved the clustering of by right density from existing zoning from the overall St. Leonard's Farm, and created a clear open space edge of the western boundary of Warrenton. This principle is endorsed highly for future development within the Warrenton Service District Plan.

Warrenton Greenway Open Space and Linear Park System

The Plan would create a hard edge at the perimeter of the Service District by means of linking open space, parks and a linear park encircling both the Town of Warrenton and the ancillary – infill development noted above. This system, sometimes just a multi-user path threaded through eased open space, or sometimes a series of connecting floodplains and upland parks, would be connected to schools, public parks and the center of Town by means of radial paths and sidewalks. See Figure 6-WA-2.

Acquisition and furnishing of this linear park system will be by means of donations, purchase, easement, proffers, public and private grants and the amalgamation of existing public lands – such as those Town owned properties forming the Warrenton Reservoirs. The Plan proposes that the Town of Warrenton and Fauquier County should work jointly to coordinate, to organize and to oversee the creation of this park with community groups and the private sector, and would work co-operatively in seeking funding, grants and other outside assistance whenever possible.

While the linear park system would help to establish a clear edge between urbanized areas and the surrounding rural areas, the Plan would reinforce this urban/rural boundary with the establishment of gateway open space and/or parks at U.S. 15/29, Routes 17, 211, 680 (Lower Waterloo Road), 690 (Bear Wallow Road), and 802 (Springs Road). See Figure 6-WA-2.

The Plan also proposes that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) remodel and landscape the internal medians of the grade-separated interchange on northeast Route 15/29, with the objective of screening developments on Walker Drive and Highland Towne Lane from current view in the area of Route 605/29. Primary plantings would be a mix of large deciduous and evergreen trees, with smaller trees providing seasonal interest nearest the roadways.

Transportation

The Plan proposes that the County assist the Town of Warrenton in seeking funds through the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to upgrade and streetscape Broadview Avenue-Business 29 corridor from Route 211 to Route 15/29 to better accommodate traffic flows from the west. The corridor needs introduction of raised medians and cross lanes in selected areas, improved parking lot connections and service lanes.

The Plan confirms the County's position that U.S. Route 15/29 may ultimately require a limited access design, with grade separation at major intersections. In the short term, this Plan recommends that VDOT link and phase the three traffic signals on northeast Route 15/29 to enhance traffic-flow. Existing entrances in this portion of Route 15/29 should be reduced/replaced with service roads, in order to assist through traffic movement on this cross-state arterial highway.

Utilities

The Town of Warrenton has re-evaluated its sewer and water capacities as noted in earlier sections of the Plan. The County needs to determine with the WSA those areas it could serve, especially with public water. Special areas of priority focus would be the Village of Frytown Remediation District to resolve the well contamination issues. Here it is repeated that properties not specified within The Town/County Master Water and Sewer Agreement for sewer service or served within a community sewer system, which is owned, operated and maintained by the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA), are located in the designated Non-Sewered Area of the Warrenton Service District.

Guidelines for Community Business District

The Plan proposes the creation of two new categories of zoning districts: Community Business and Community Office. The purpose of the Community Business District is to provide small scale, local shopping services primarily for residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to or within walking distance of the center. Such community business districts should be designed, landscaped and buffered to be compatible with neighboring development.

Size and Location.

The district shall be no less than five acres in size, located on land consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, within a Service District and only if granted public sewer and water.

Permitted Uses.

Any of the following uses occupying less than 3,000 square feet of building area; otherwise a special exception is required.

- Adult day-care center
- Art gallery
- Bank/financial institution, excluding drive-through facilities

- Place of worship
- Health club
- Nursery school and/or child care center
- Office – administrative, business, medical, professional
- Public Uses

Special Exception Uses

Any one of the permitted uses listed above or below, cannot exceed 10,000 square feet

- Pharmacy
- Restaurant, including carry-out, excluding fast food drive through
- Other retail and personal services (barber and hairdresser shops, shoe repairing and tailoring)
- Veterinary clinic
- Dwellings above ground floor retail.

Design

- The Planned Community Business District should orient towards local and collector roads and be screened from nearby uses and roads
- The Planned Community Business District shall be bordered by a:
 - 50 feet landscaped and bermed buffer at boundaries with residential districts and both local and collector roads; and
 - 150 feet landscaped and bermed buffer at boundaries with arterial roads
- Minimum requirements:
 - Lot area: 6,000 square feet
 - Yards: Front: 0 feet Side: 0 feet Rear: 0 feet
 - Landscaped Open Space – in addition to the landscaped buffers in d. 2 above and yards of individual lots: 15%
- Maximum requirements:
 - Lot area: 30,000 square feet
 - Floor Area Ratio: 25% of overall district, excluding floodplains
 - Building height: 2 story; 25 feet except Church Steeples by Special Exception

Warrenton Reservoir Protection Overlay District

The Town of Warrenton and the surrounding Service District draw potable water from a series of reservoirs located on Cedar Run, to the north of the Town. Figure 6-WA-4 shows the watershed and the reservoirs. This watershed had once a rural character, but development presents potential impacts to the quantity and quality of this critical water resource area. The Town of Warrenton's potable water supply needs long term management and remedial assistance.

The Town and the County need to establish new development coordination and review policies to manage the overall development process for the reservoir's watershed area. As a result, the Plan proposes that the Town and the County create a Warrenton Reservoir Protection Overlay District, and a jointly established Committee that may consider:

- Initiate community outreach and educational programs – for example, regarding automobile and pet wastes, appropriate lawn fertilization and care techniques.
- Create programs to periodically clean streets and parking lots of chemical spills and associated petroleum products.
- Create constructed wetlands and other filtration mechanisms between storm-water discharge points and the reservoirs.
- Establish new development standards, review and testing procedures and practices for the overlay district designed to prevent water degraded by non-point source pollutants including, but not limited to, hydrocarbons, heavy metals and excessive phosphate and other toxins from entering the Warrenton Reservoirs. These new standards would be based on detailed investigation of slopes within the district, subsurface soil conditions, depth of water table and depth of bedrock, actual and potential vegetative cover. The proposed practices should include not only proven Best Management Practices but also newly developed and/or non-structural (i.e. vegetative) methods of water filtration and purification.
- Encourage inter-jurisdictional coordination in land development regulations and management.

Rappahannock and Occoquan Watershed Protection

Buffering is a traditional planning tool used to separate distinct land uses to minimize the impact of one land use on another. The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations require additional buffers, termed Resource Protection Areas (RPAs), in addition to traditional storm-water Best Management Practices, thus providing an additional layer of water quality protection.

These RPAs are credited with achieving a 75% reduction in sediment and a 40% reduction in nutrients otherwise carried by storm-water runoff.

RPAs protect riparian wetlands, which are often regarded as the most valuable of all categories of wetlands due to the pollutant removal and flood control benefits they provide in such close proximity to flowing water. This is achieved by beginning the buffer area along the outer edge of wetlands connected to perennial waters and extending it land-ward.

The County has already become a haven for wetland mitigation projects whereby wetlands are re-established, primarily on agricultural land, to mitigate for impacts permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality in Fauquier and surrounding localities. Such wetland

creation must of necessity be balanced with a preference for wetland preservation. This attribute makes RPAs an effective tool for achieving the delicate balance between wetlands preservation and mitigation within the County's borders.

The Fauquier County Board of Supervisors has acknowledged the advantages that Resource Protection Areas and other Bay Act tools provide in achieving the County's mission to "preserve the physical beauty, historical heritage, and environmental quality of the County." On August 20, 1996, the Board passed a resolution for the "Establishment of multi-faceted program for surface water protection in Fauquier County."

The 1996 resolution set forth several goals, including the recently-adopted Storm-water Management Ordinance, the addition of septic system pump-out requirements, and the establishment of Resource Protection Areas and Resource Management Areas. The latter two tools, originally slated for completion in 1997 and 1998 respectively, are authorized by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. With the adoption of the stormwater ordinance, the Department of Community Development will be focusing its attention on implementing riparian buffers and septic system pump-out requirements in the effort to strengthen water quality protection.

Implementation of these tools will assist the County in meeting its water quality protection goals and in the remediation of the eleven impaired water bodies identified on the 303(d) Impaired Waters List of 2002.

The Plan further proposes that the County:

- Initiate watershed studies within the Warrenton Reservoir Watershed, as well as Cedar Run, to meet the information threshold required by the Virginia Stormwater Management Law (Title 10.1 Chapter 6 Article 1.1) to implement more stringent water quality criteria and preservation techniques in this focused area; and
- Change the calculation for residential development such that the allowable dwelling unit density shall be based on property acreage less that acreage within the 100 year floodplain and within the Chesapeake Bay RPAs.

Highway Corridor and Industrial Gateway Overlay Districts

The County may prepare Highway Corridor and Gateway Industrial Overlay Districts designed to apply enhanced criteria in management of highway access, landscape appearance, building design and structures on U.S. 15/17/29 – business and through – and Routes 17, 211, 802 and 643. See Figure 6-WA-3. This Overlay District, while not changing permitted and permissible land uses of a property's basic zoning, will seek to provide guidance to those contemplating non-residential construction along these major roads, and provide oversight of proposed changes within these corridors. Such a district superimposes certain additional design requirements upon the underlying zoning district with the intent of producing harmony through conformity with massing, fenestration and other building features of structures in the Central Piedmont. Where setback and other standards conflict with those of the Corridor Overlay, the stricter requirement would apply.

Streetscape Landscaping

Streetscape landscaping should seek to blend in with that of the neighbors, and hide wide expanses of parking and pavement. In rural areas landscaping should reinforce the roadside-hedgerows. Plant selection should favor native species.

Parking

Parking should be to the side or rear of the structure, and should not intrude visually on the fronting road or highway.

Warrenton Service District Transportation

Figure 10 – WA – 1 identifies existing and proposed arterial and collector roads in the Warrenton Service District. Prominent among these arterial roads are Routes 15/29 and Routes 17 and 211. Business Route 15/29, Lee Highway, Broadview Avenue and Shirley Avenue, are also shown because they function as important elements in the road network although they lie within the boundaries of the Town of Warrenton.

Lee Highway and Broadview Avenue

Given projected traffic increases from Culpeper and Rappahannock Counties on Route 211, the Plan proposes that the design and performance of U.S. Route 15/29 Business, Lee Highway and Broadview Avenue, be significantly upgraded to provide more efficient through traffic flows for vehicles traveling from Culpeper and Rappahannock Counties to Route 15/29, and other destinations east by means of:

- Streaming arterial, collector and local access traffic;
- Improved road and intersectional engineering;
- Median separations and crossovers; and
- Greater inter-parcel-access between commercial developments alongside the arterial road.

To this end, the County will assist the Town of Warrenton in the effort to find funding through the VDOT 6-Year Improvement Program for the restructuring of this important element of U.S. 15/29 (Business).

East of Academy Hill Bridge

The Town of Warrenton chose to not incorporate the area east of Academy Hill Bridge within the Town Boundary, and in recent years landowners in the area have applied for and received subdivision approval of some 450 – 500 lots, generating some 4,500 – 5,000 vehicle trips per day. At present, the only roads out to jobs and shopping are already overcrowded Academy Hill Road and Bypass Route 29. There are thus immediate and longer term needs for improving existing public road networks in this eastern area of the service district. Figure 10-WA-2.1 represents one possible option in which a new bridge is constructed to link Route 674 and Route 678 and these roads are refurbished as a major collector road. Comfort Inn Drive is brought into the Commonwealth road network and extended to intersect with the newly linked roads just east of the bridge. Figure 10-WA-2.2 represents an alternative option in which the Route 674/678 bridge is not constructed and traffic is directed unto Route 674 rebuilt as a major collector road. These two options achieve progressively less traffic relief for Warrenton, at the price of increasing engineering and construction costs.

Route 15/29 North East of Warrenton.

A legacy of spot commercial zoning on the south side of Route 15/29 to the north-east of Warrenton has permitted the development of a very successful commercial strip. However, poor to dangerous traffic access creates considerable roadside friction for patrons and through travelers. In the long term, the Plan proposes a service road and recreational access path constructed parallel with and to the south of existing Route 15/29 between Comfort Inn Drive and Cedar Run Drives. See 10 – WA – 2.1 / 2 / 3.

In the short term:

- Traffic movement between individual parking lots must be enhanced by inter-parcel access along clearly defined routes for patron comfort and safety;
- Traffic into the southern end of the commercial strip should be funneled through the light at Route 15/29 and Comfort Inn Drive in such a way that the first 100 feet of access from Route 15/29 is clear, predictable and safe;
- The County will work with affected landowners to shield them from the liability associated with the inter-parcel access proposed.

Example 1 illustrates these principles. Given current high land values, and high volumes of traffic flow on Route 15/29 the ultimate solution for safe and effective traffic movement through this commercial strip will require enlightened agreement among all the property owners and solid engineering advice. Example 1, though not the ultimate solution, shows how enhanced safety should be sought.

In the longer term, construction of the service road would permit volume traffic flows to Cedar Run Drive with several short connector roads connecting Comfort Inn Drive with the Route 15/29 Service Road. This service road will require considerable road remodeling at the intersection of Cedar Run Drive. The Plan anticipates that the beneficiaries of enhanced commercial use along the Service Road will contribute funds for construction.

Road Improvements in South Warrenton

Figures 10-WA-2.1/2/3 also include reciprocal improvements to the Town's road network to the west. These improvements, such as the extension of Walker Drive southwards, are entirely within the jurisdictional purview of Warrenton which the County respects, but do represent integral traffic management components of the overall solution. The Plan recommends that Fauquier County, the Town of Warrenton and VDOT work together in developing practical and cost effective improvements to the local road system in this location for inclusion in the VDOT 6-Year Program.

Example 1

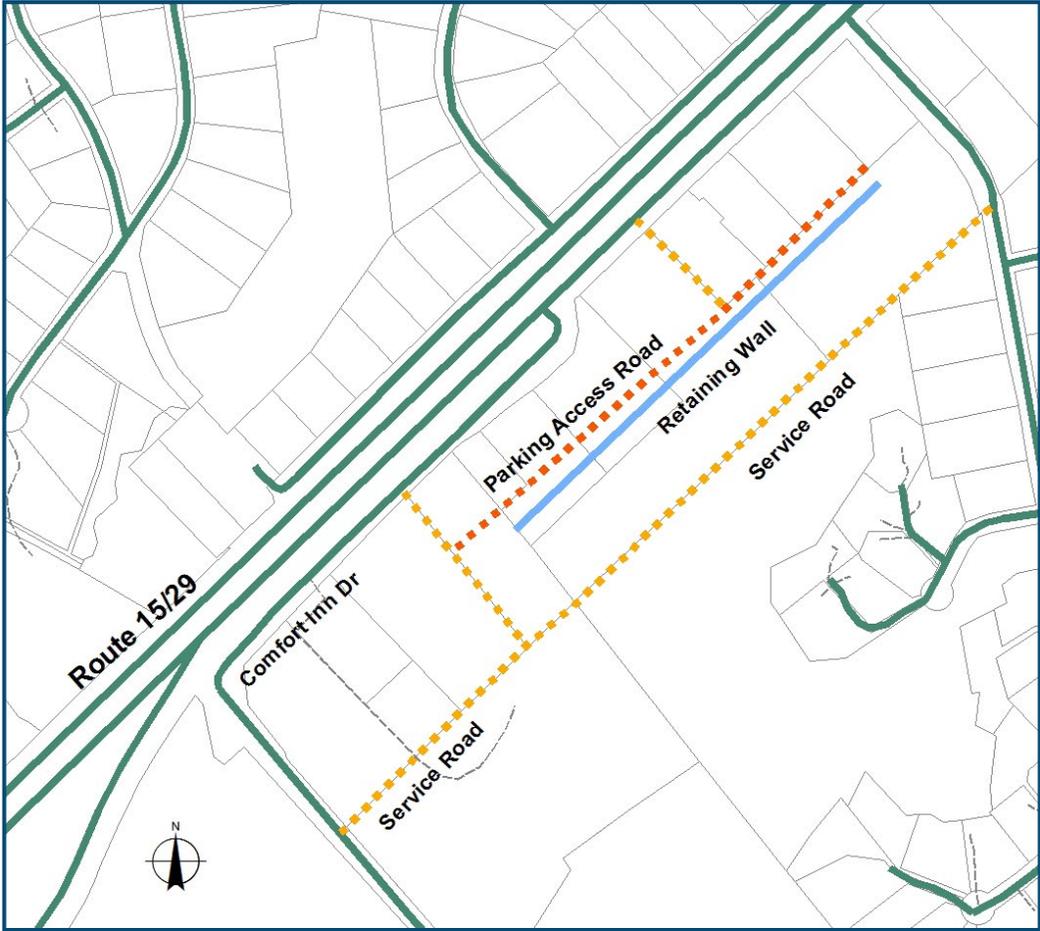


Figure 6-WA-1: Land Use Plan

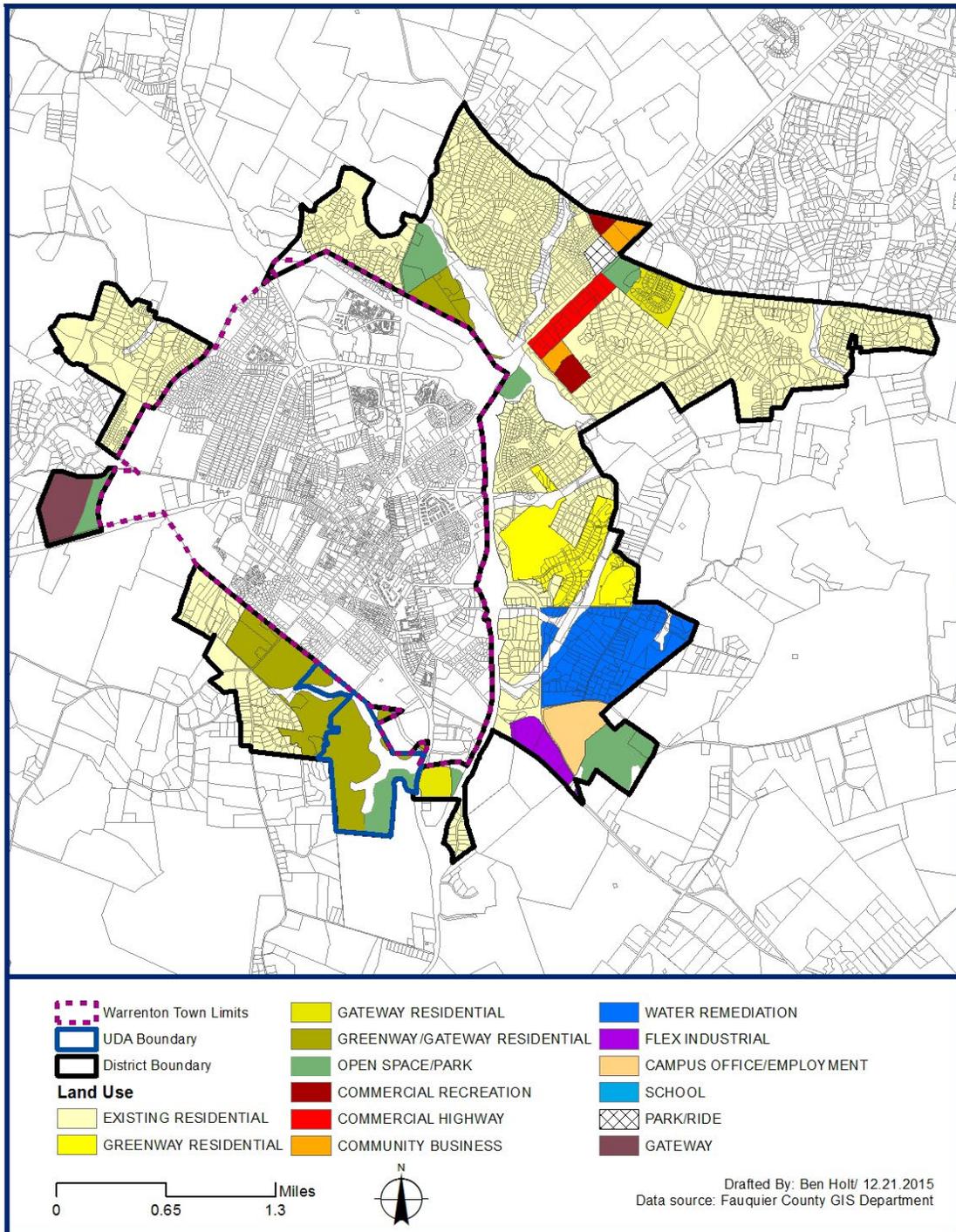


Figure 6-WA-2: Greenway Linear Park

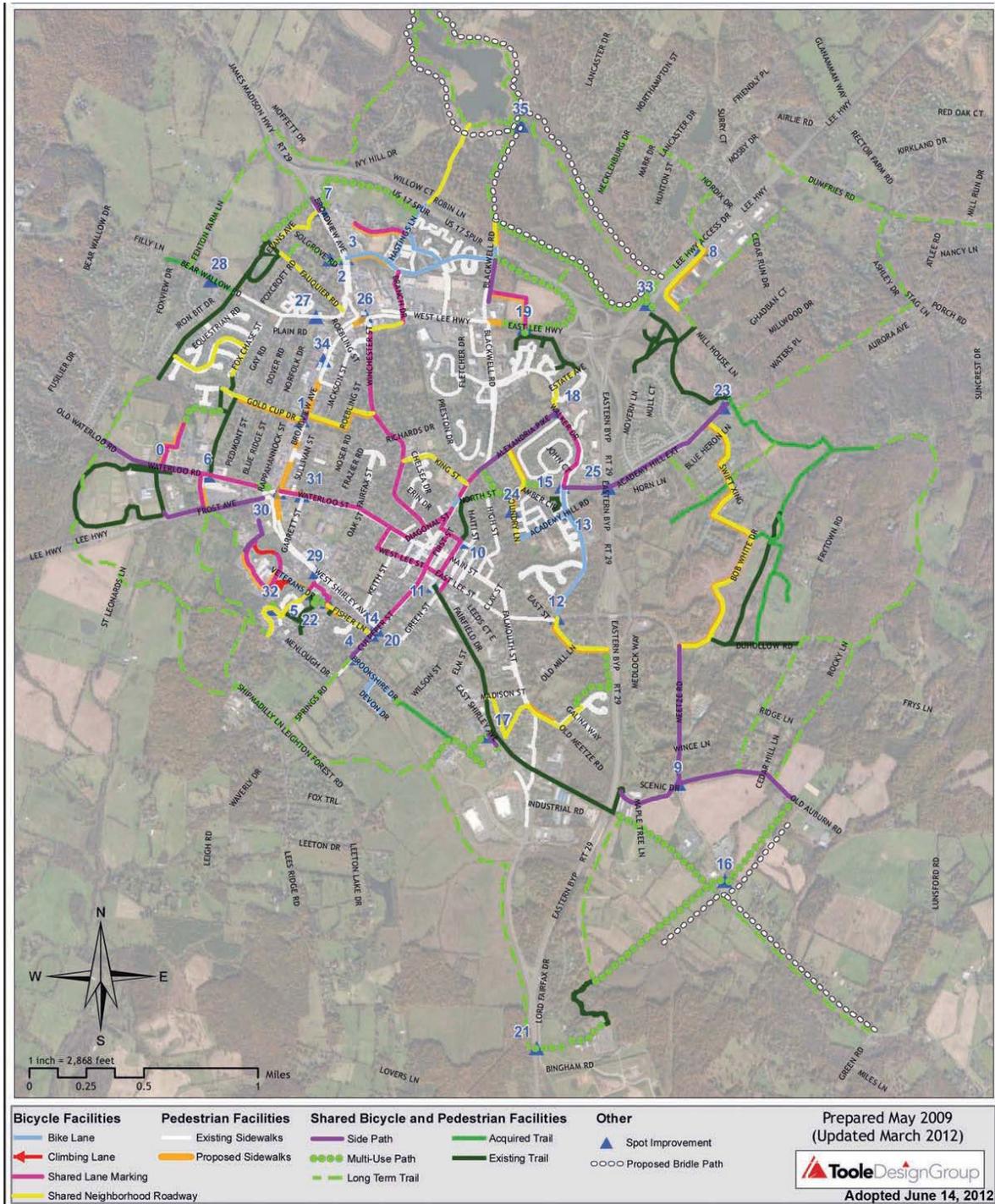


Figure 6-WA-3: Highway Corridor Overlay*

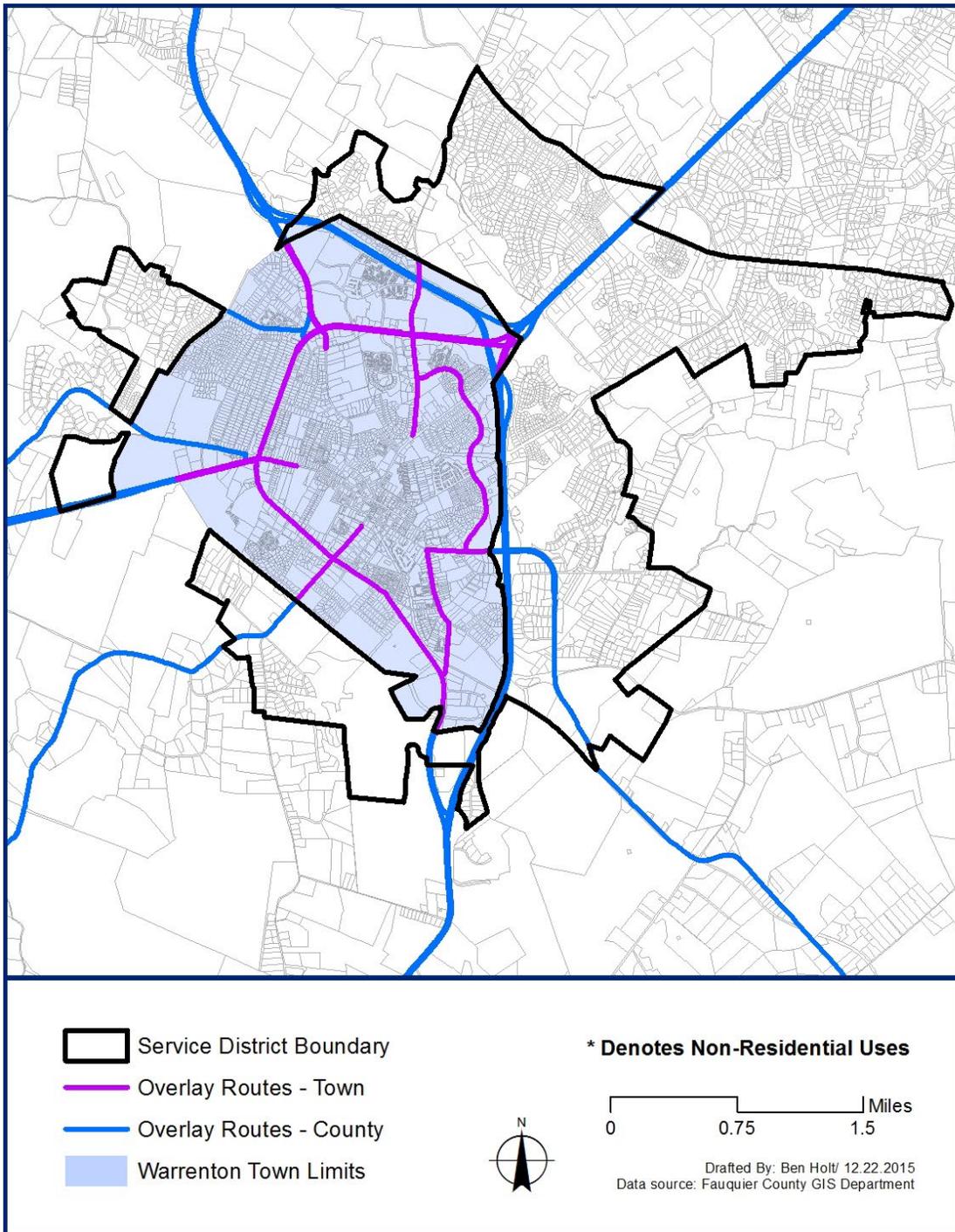


Figure 6-WA-4: Warrenton Reservoir Overlay

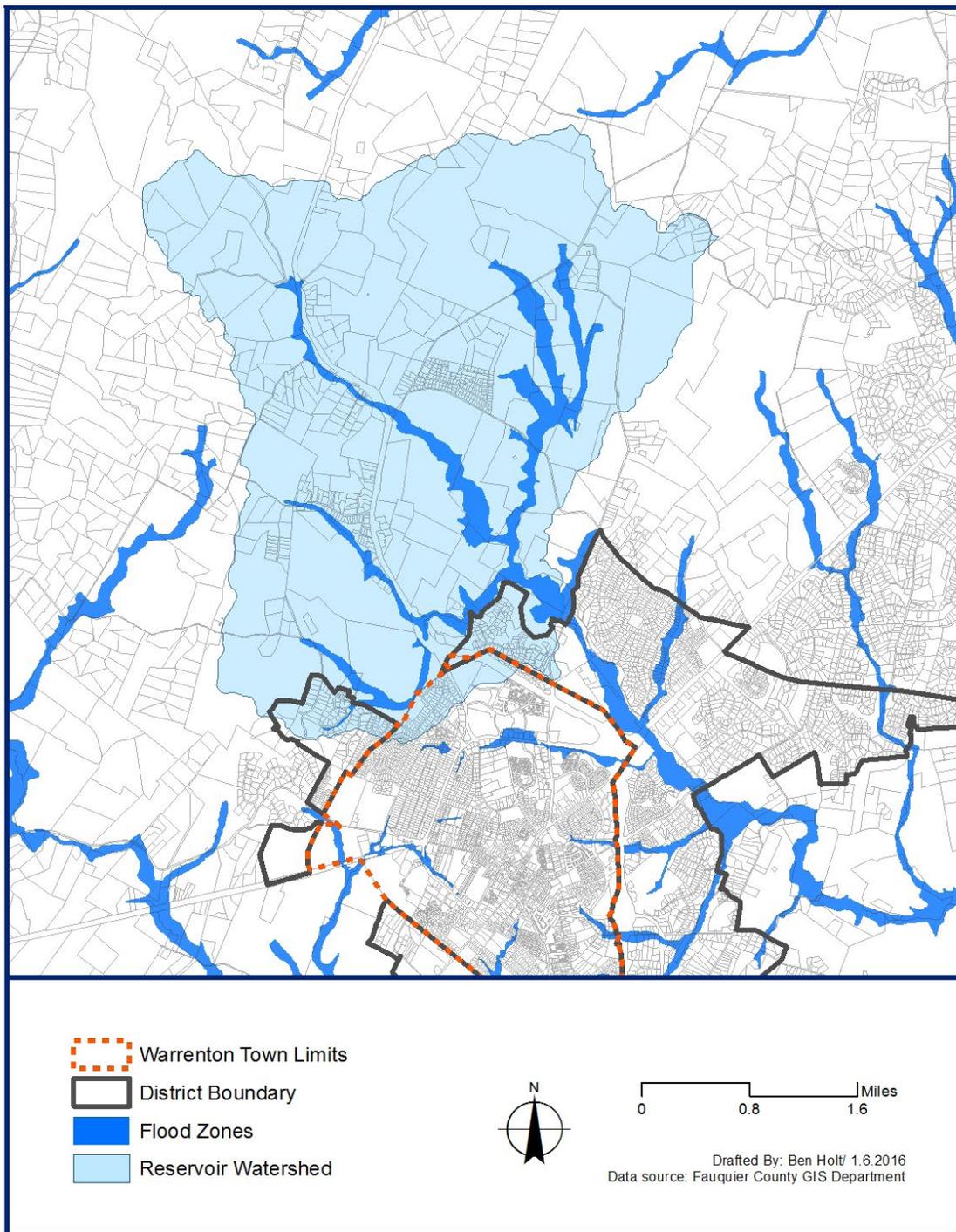


Figure 10-WA-1: Regional Transportation Plan

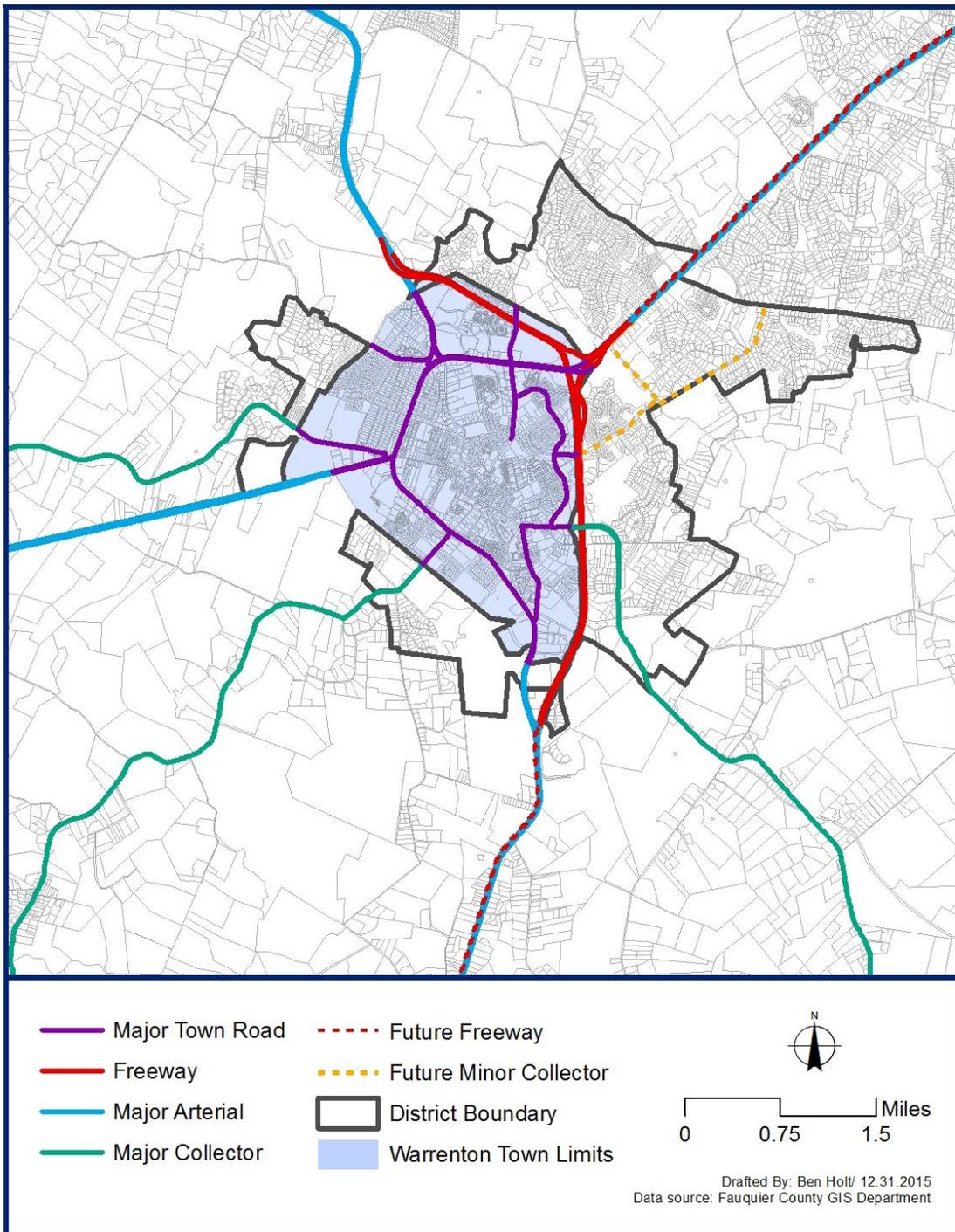


Figure 10-WA-2.1: Extension of Academy Hill Road*

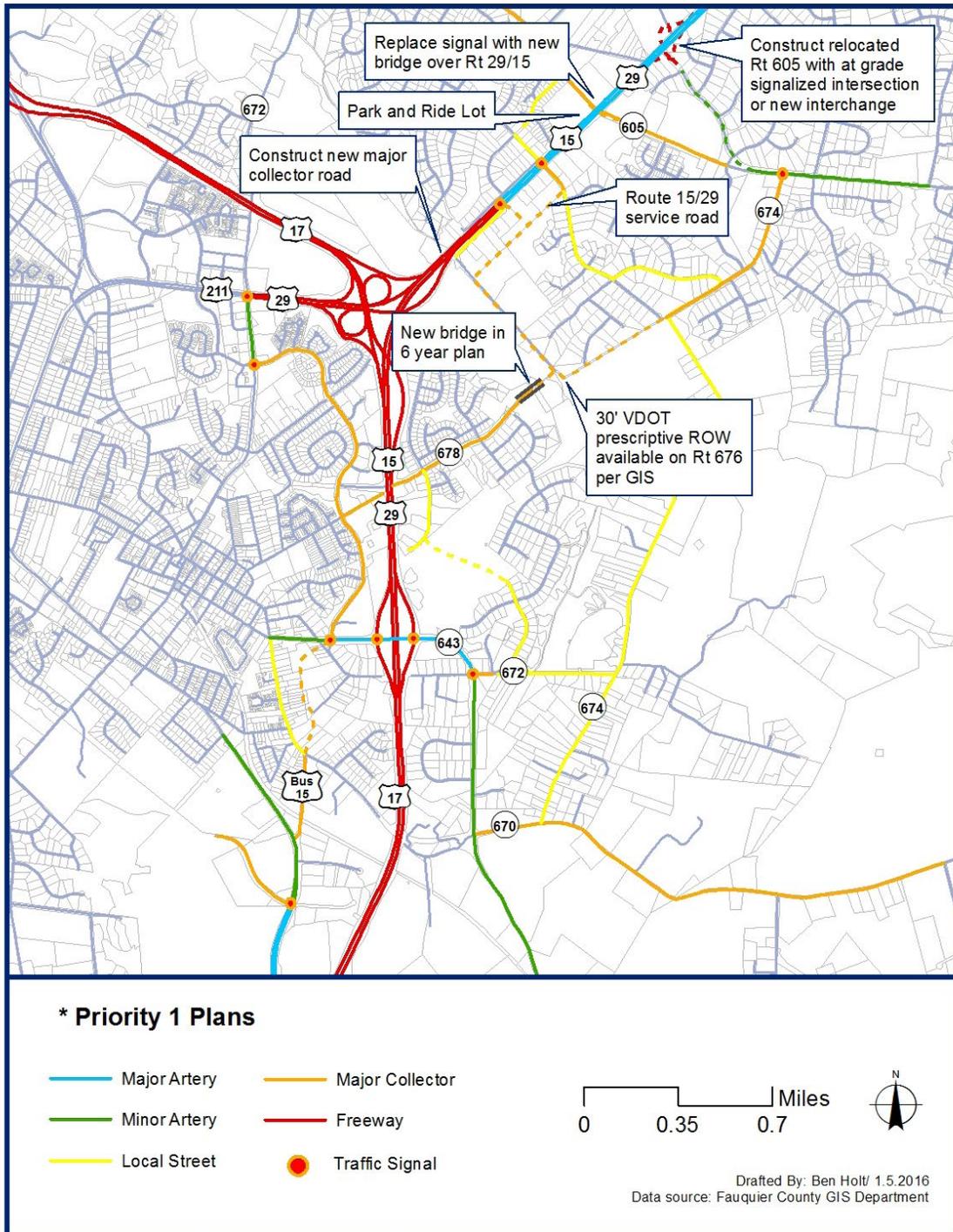


Figure 10-WA-2.2: Upgrade of Frytown Road*

