

Comprehensive Plan 2040



Progress and Preservation on the Dan

South 
Boston
VIRGINIA

Adopted

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Introduction

A comprehensive plan is a public document that serves as a community guide for the future. Comprehensive plans look at a range of existing conditions within the community and make general recommendations for the future, planning for about a 20-year time horizon. The comprehensive plan is developed with input from citizens and guidance from the planning commission, and is ultimately adopted by the Town Council. Thereafter, it provides a framework for important decisions in the community such as where growth should occur, how land should be used and where spending priorities



should be placed for the next ten to twenty years. Comprehensive plans are general in nature but provide the legal basis for key land management tools like zoning and subdivision regulations. At a minimum, comprehensive plans must address land use, community facilities, public services, housing, environmental features and transportation. In Virginia, every locality must adopt a comprehensive plan and review it every five years for necessary updates.

This Comprehensive Plan for South Boston takes a fresh look at the community and brings together the feedback of citizens, civic groups and local officials to provide a long-term view to guide local decision-making. The Plan is organized in six main sections for ease of reference. Following this introduction is an Executive Summary that highlights the main points in the Plan. This is followed by a descriptive vision for the future of South Boston and a summary of overarching goals that are common threads within all of the Plan elements. Next is a snapshot of past planning efforts and accomplishments, followed by a brief history of community development. Section IV offers a visual and statistical snapshot of how South Boston relates to the broader region.

The “meat” of the Comprehensive Plan is found in Section V; it contains key data and analysis of existing conditions and current issues and an elaboration of various policies, strategies and action items for the Town. This Plan ends with a summary roadmap for implementing recommendations and key action projects, identifying important partners and resources involved in each effort.

I. Executive Summary

South Boston's Comprehensive Plan 2040 provides a long-term vision and incorporates recommendations for the Town future from Town staff, local officials, residents and businesses. The Plan also serves as a guide for land management and decision-making. This update is carried out in accordance with the Code of Virginia but will require monitoring and review to ensure the Plan continues to meet the needs and represent the vision of the evolving community.

Several major themes carry through this plan, including:

- Expanding diversity and balance of the local economy and promoting links to education, arts, history and tourism.
- Protecting natural resources and "greening" the community.
- Restoring and maintaining neighborhood vitality through appropriate development, housing diversity and context-sensitive infill.
- Coordinating with local and regional plans and agencies.
- Enhancing the quality of life for residents, workers, visitors and businesses through expanded educational, cultural and recreational offerings.

Several special action projects were identified within the plan as additional potential projects for the Town and its citizens to pursue. Successfully initiating these over the next five years will give forward momentum to other aspects of the comprehensive plan, galvanizing public interest and engagement in Town development and serving as a visible testament to progress. Some of the significant initiatives should include:

- Implementation of various recreational facility plans, including Cotton Mill Park, the Greene's Crossing Trail Plan and the **Wildlife and Recreational Trail**, and development of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Improvement of the North Main Street Historic District in conjunction with the Greene's Crossing Trail Plan.
- Reviewing and strengthening of land use regulations for areas of historical or ecological significance.
- Establishment of development guidelines for key commercial corridors leading into the community.
- Expansion of cultural and artistic offerings and improved coordination among local and regional efforts and marketing.
- Continued downtown revitalization through appropriate infill development, development of housing opportunities, expansion of existing facilities and efforts to attract key businesses and services, particularly those related to the arts.
- Efforts to diversify housing types and price ranges.

In 2007, as stipulated in § 15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia, Urban Development Areas (UDAs) are areas designated by jurisdictions for accommodating projected population growth during the next ten to 20 years. UDAs must comprise compact, mixed-use, walkable development, at urban densities and intensities, and encompass the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND). TND is a development technique that combines several, distinct, design features to improve connectivity, promote pedestrian activities and reduce automobile travel in an effort to create attractive, efficient and livable communities. This is achieved by providing a well-connected, gridded network of streets and blocks that effectively tie together areas of compact mixed-use development. The efficiency of this design is distinguished by the availability of multiple, more direct automobile, pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes between various destinations. As a result, residents of TND communities are provided with diverse opportunities to live, work, and “play” within reasonable walking and/or biking distances, without the need to get into a car, or travel outside of their community in order to satisfy their basic daily requirements.

In 1995, the City of South Boston reverted to Town status and was subsequently incorporated into Halifax County. The Town’s population grew from 6,997 people in 1990 to 8,491 people in 2000, exhibiting an increase in growth of more than 15 percent. This increase in growth over a ten-year period required the Town to comply with the Commonwealth’s UDA legislation, which requires that each designated UDA meet minimum overall density requirements established in the legislation. Jurisdictions with a population less than 130,000, such as the Town of South Boston, must achieve an overall average density of 4 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) for single-family detached units, 6 du/acre for townhouses, 12 du/acre for multifamily housing, and a floor area ratio of at least 0.40 for commercial development, or any “proportional combination” of residential and commercial use that meets the density requirements. While the UDA requirements provide guidance for the types of land uses envisioned by the Town UDAs do not regulate land use. UDAs do not change existing underlying zoning, nor do they prevent a rezoning or development on the grounds that it is located outside of a UDA; however, UDAs do provide the option to develop a property in a manner that meets the Commonwealth’s UDA requirements, if the property owner or developer chooses.

The UDA boundary was established through consultation with Town staff and review of the Town's 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The Town's UDA is framed by the Corporate Boundaries of the Town of South Boston. As part of this UDA process, the conversion of roadways from one-way to two-ways was explored to demonstrate the positive impacts on pedestrian and vehicular access and safety, as well as economic development.

II. Community Vision and Goals

A Vision for the Future

The community of South Boston has a proud history dating to the pre-Revolutionary War era. Known for its rich agricultural, commercial and industrial tradition as well as its location on the bluffs of the Dan River, South Boston is a community whose citizens are engaged and united in their desire to see the Town prosper and maintain its unique identity in the Southern Virginia region.

The Vision below has been developed based on comments received from public work sessions, and serves as a common direction for long-term planning in South Boston.

In 2040 South Boston will be the municipal center of the region's economic, educational and cultural life, a vibrant community with creative leadership whose citizens are united in pride for their town. The Town will visibly celebrate its pivotal role in the American Revolution, affirm its history as a rural commercial and rail center for the tobacco and cotton industries, and revere its natural amenities and location on the Dan River. South Boston will boast a lifestyle that attracts young adults, families and retirees with its balance of small-town historic charm, progressive government and infrastructure, modern medical facilities, superior educational opportunities and diverse arts and culture scene.

Community Goals

During public workshops and meetings with Town citizens and leaders, key themes emerged as goals for the future of South Boston. Those goals (related particularly to community environmental resources, historic and cultural resources and economic development) are relevant to all aspects of the plan and help shape the 2040 Vision.

Environment

South Boston will celebrate its natural heritage with innovative measures aimed at protecting its waterways, forests, farmland and park spaces and by adopting green technologies and practices in its public operations and promoting them among private enterprises and individual citizens. The citizens will be enthusiastic stewards of the environment, motivated by years of direct links to community natural resources via extensive and functional trail systems through community greenways and along waterways.

History and Culture

South Boston will be a community whose full history is preserved and told to newcomers and residents alike in its restored and protected historical neighborhoods and structures and its diverse range of local festivals and other heritage tourism efforts.

Economic Development

By 2040, South Boston will be a prominent economic driver for the region, with a diverse economy that balances the retail, industrial, agricultural and service sectors. Local educational opportunities will be closely linked with industry and business needs. The Town will be attractive to entrepreneurs, fostering home-grown business development and retaining local talent.

These overarching long-term goals are important to all portions of the comprehensive plan. These goals are further detailed in the policy and action strategies within each section of the plan, and are summarized in a user-friendly implementation map and matrix at the end of the plan.

III. Planning History

The last update to the South Boston Comprehensive Plan was in **February of 2010**. The Town effectively used the plan to address a number of development issues including:

- *South Boston Wayfinding Charrette* – this 2005 effort developed plans for designing and locating key tourist and directional signage throughout the town.
- *Downtown Survey and Sales Gap Analysis* –these 2004 reports offer insights into some of the needs and opportunities for South Boston’s economy.
- *Cotton Mill Park Concept Plan* – also a 2005 effort, the plan offers a potential transformation of the site of the former Damask Cotton Mill into a beautiful park with walking trails, picnic areas and playing fields.
- *Washington Coleman Elementary School Study* – this 2008 work was an analysis of how the school facility could be renovated and transformed in three phases to accommodate a pre-K school and associated facilities, a community center and gymnasium. A four-phase streetscape improvement was proposed in the plan. **In 2013 the pre-K and the community center were completed.**



Cotton Mill Park Concept Plan
Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects

- *Bicycle and Trails Plan* – adopted by South Boston in 2004, this plan was prepared jointly with VDOT and the Southside PDC as part of a county-wide effort to identify and prioritize potential alternative transportation and recreational routes throughout the area, linking neighborhoods and bolstering tourism and economic development efforts.
- *Greene’s Crossing Historic Trail and Greenway Plan* –this plan was developed in 2004 as part of a transportation enhancement application to VDOT. The plan proposes a four-phase streetscape improvement to include bicycle routes along Main Street, through downtown to connect to the future rail-trail near the Higher Education Center.
- *Downtown Revitalization Master Plan* – this plan was updated in June of 2016. **The plan continues to actively pursue strategic community development and revitalization initiatives to build on assets and strengthen downtown retail, arts and culture, destination and heritage tourism, and outdoor recreation opportunities along the Dan River.**

The Comprehensive Plan 2040 process was guided by the South Boston Planning Commission and included two public hearings to gather input from residents on their ideas for the future of their community.

IV. South Boston and the Region

A Brief History of South Boston

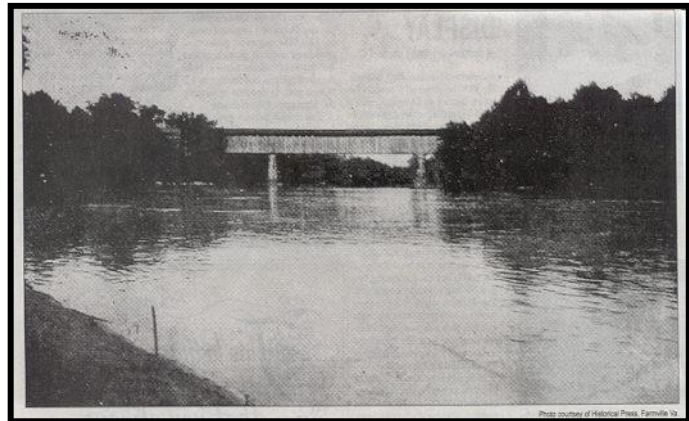
The first inhabitants of the South Boston area were Native Americans, likely related to the Occoneechee centered near Clarksville. These Native Americans hunted throughout the Halifax County area, and archeological work reveals that they had established a long-term settlement along the Dan River, just west of downtown.

The earliest known community of European descendants in the South Boston area was located at Boyd's Ferry, near the Norfolk-Southern Railway bridge over the Dan River. This area played a pivotal role in the American War for Independence, when American General Nathaniel Greene, pursued by British General Cornwallis' army, outmaneuvered the larger force by leading his men across the Dan River at Boyd's Ferry and Irwin's Ferry to the west. General Cornwallis gave up his pursuit and, later weakened by Greene's reorganized army, never managed another successful offensive in the War.

In 1796, the Virginia General Assembly authorized the sale of land on the south side of the river by lottery for the establishment of a town named South Boston. One account indicates that the town's unusual name was coined by General Carrington, a landowner sympathetic with the move for independence in the colonies and inspired by tales of the Boston Tea Party. The community never successfully developed beyond a tiny trading post in this location, likely due to flooding of the low lying area. A new South Boston developed on the northern side of the Dan River, first a stop for river traffic and later a stop along the Richmond and Danville Railroad. A covered toll bridge connected South Boston to the south side of the river, and its stone supports still stand in the river just east of the current Highway 501 bridge.



"Crossing of the Dan Exhibit" at the South Boston Museum



*Early photo of covered toll bridge over the Dan
Source: www.oldhalifax.com*

This Town of South Boston was incorporated by the General Assembly in 1884, a few weeks after the Assembly shortened the community's name from "South Boston Depot."¹

The Town prospered in the late 1800s through the first half of the twentieth century thanks largely to the development of the tobacco and cotton industries and the location on the Richmond and Danville Railroad, which linked South Boston with key markets. By the early 20th century, South Boston had become the second largest bright leaf tobacco market in the United States, and a number of factories, warehouses, and support buildings lined downtown streets. The Town was also home to the Halifax Cotton Mill on Railroad Avenue which, together with the various tobacco processing enterprises, employed large numbers of the Town population. Thriving residential neighborhoods grew up around the downtown, and many of these historic neighborhoods remain architecturally intact and protected as historic districts.² The Great Depression of the 1930's dampened some of the prosperity in the community, but tobacco remained a prominent economic driver, as evidenced by the Tobacco Festival that drew upwards of 115,000 visitors annually.

By the last half of the 20th Century the predominance of tobacco and agriculture in the Town economy had begun to decline, giving way to textiles and manufacturing. The population of South Boston also declined and traditional development patterns shifted, particularly during the 1960s as many downtown businesses moved out of downtown.³

In 1960 South Boston became an independent city, but began facing a number of fiscal, demographic and service challenges in the decades that followed. In 1995, South Boston reverted to Town status and expanded its boundary two years later by annexing various commercial and residential areas from Halifax County.

¹ Halifax County Virtual Tours, "South Boston Historic District," adapted from a publication of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee, <http://www.oldhalifax.com/county/SBWalkingTour.htm>, Accessed 5 May 2009.

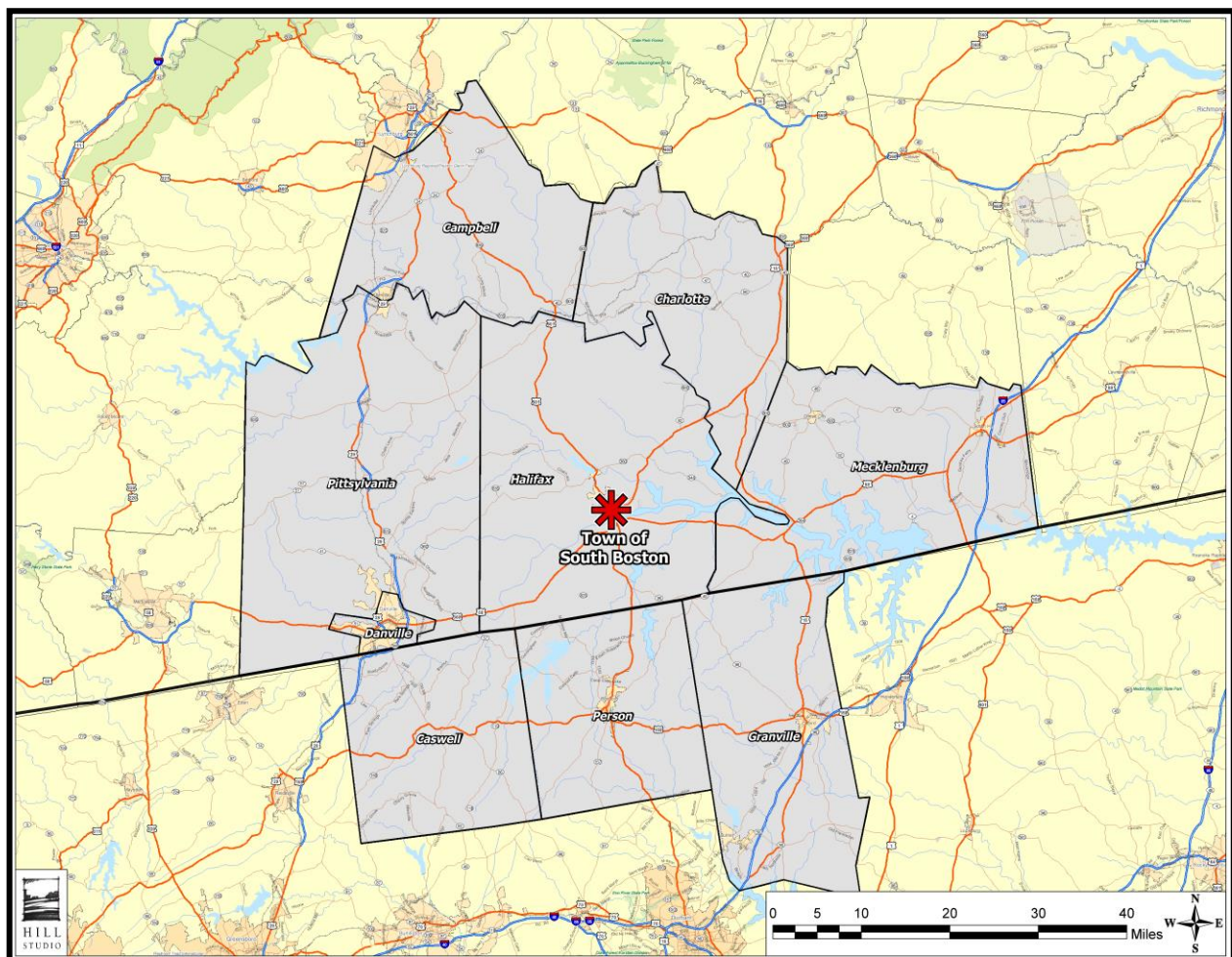
² National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, "South Boston Historic District (DHL File No. 130-6)," Division of Historic Landmarks Staff, June 1986.

³ Martens, Andrea Kowalczyk and Department of Historic Resources Staff, *South Boston Historic District Nomination Update and Boundary Increase*, 26 September 2008.

South Boston and the Southern Virginia Region

South Boston is located in Southern Virginia, in the south-central part of the Commonwealth. This region is part of the Outer Piedmont physiographic region of Virginia and is characterized as a moderately rolling upland. Within Halifax County, the Town is located south of the geographic center of the County and 11 miles north of the Virginia-North Carolina border. Four Virginia counties surround Halifax County: Pittsylvania, Campbell, Charlotte and Mecklenburg. These areas are predominantly rural, and South Boston is the largest community of Halifax County. The independent City of Danville in **Pittsylvania County**, located 33 miles to the west, is much larger.

Just across the North Carolina border, Halifax County shares its boundary primarily with Person County. US Route 501 provides a direct link between South Boston and the Person County seat of Roxboro, North Carolina, a city that is comparable in size to South Boston.



Map of South Boston and Region

Demographics and Socio-Economic Indicators

The table below offers a regional snapshot of population data for South Boston, Halifax County, the surrounding Virginia and North Carolina counties. All localities in the area appear to have grown in population since 1990, though population figures for Halifax County show an artificial spike between 1990 and 2000 due to South Boston’s reversion to Town status in 1995. Census estimates suggest a decline in population since 2000 for South Boston and Halifax County.

Population

	1990	2000	2010	Estimate July 2019	Percent Change 2000-July 2019
South Boston	6,997	8,491	8,142	7,588	-6.8
Halifax County	29,033	37,355	36,241	33,911	-6.5
Campbell County	47,572	51,078	54,842	54,885	0.1
Charlotte County	11,688	12,472	12,586	11,880	-5.7
Mecklenburg County	29,241	32,380	32,727	30,587	-6.5
Pittsylvania County	55,655	61,745	63,506	60,354	-4.9
Person County, NC	30,180	35,623	39,464	39,490	0.0
Virginia	6,187,358	7,078,515	8,001,024	8,535,519	6.7

source: US Census

Population projections to 2030 indicate that Halifax County and Charlotte County are expected to decrease slightly in population, while other adjacent counties can expect a modest increase. Broadly, the region is expected to grow much more slowly in the coming decades than the Commonwealth’s 23% projected population growth rate.

Population Projections

	2020	2030	2040	Percent Change 2020-2040
South Boston*	7,923	7,631	7,241	-8.6
Halifax County	35,276	33,978	32,239	-8.6
Campbell County	57,287	60,257	62,335	8.8
Charlotte County	12,313	12,215	11,951	-2.9
Mecklenburg County	30,572	29,848	28,727	-6.0
Pittsylvania County	62,912	63,473	63,149	0.04
Person County, NC	40,248	41,823	42,649	6.0
Virginia	8,744,273	9,546,958	10,201,530	16.7

source: Virginia Workforce Connection and NC Office of State Budget and Management

*South Boston's population projected as 22.46% of Halifax County population

The general educational level of a population is a key social characteristic due to how closely education is tied to other economic statistics. The table below indicates that as of 2019, South Boston had a slightly lower percentage of the population with a high school diploma than that of the surrounding region, but a somewhat higher percentage with a bachelor's degree than many of the surrounding counties. As a whole, however, the region tends to have a much lower level of educational attainment than Virginia.

Educational Attainment for Population Over 25

	High School Graduate or higher	Bachelor's Degree or higher
South Boston	80.0%	19.3%
Halifax County	81.5%	15.4%
Campbell County	87.6%	22.5%
Charlotte County	83.2%	10.9%
Mecklenburg County	81.9%	20.2%
Pittsylvania County	82.7%	14.5%
Person County, NC	86.5%	15.6%
Virginia	89.7%	38.8%

source: US Census

Median household income data are listed in the table below. The Town of South Boston has historically had a median income level lower than that of most of the counties in the region, and

that the region has typically had a much lower median income level than the broader Commonwealth.

Annual Median Household Income

	2000	2010	2019	Percent Change 2000-2019
South Boston	\$25,964	\$28,692	\$42,311	47.4
Halifax County	\$29,929	\$34,705	\$42,669	22.9
Campbell County	\$37,280	\$43,478	\$49,664	14.2
Charlotte County	\$28,929	\$34,881	\$40,573	16.3
Mecklenburg County	\$31,380	\$36,431	\$43,270	18.8
Pittsylvania County	\$35,153	\$39,224	\$47,690	21.6
Person County, NC	\$37,159	\$44,668	\$51,020	14.2
Virginia	\$46,677	\$61,406	\$74,222	20.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Looking at income by average weekly wage across all industries in the region (below), South Boston and Halifax County have been in the “middle of the pack” regionally, but still lag far behind the average for Virginia as a whole.

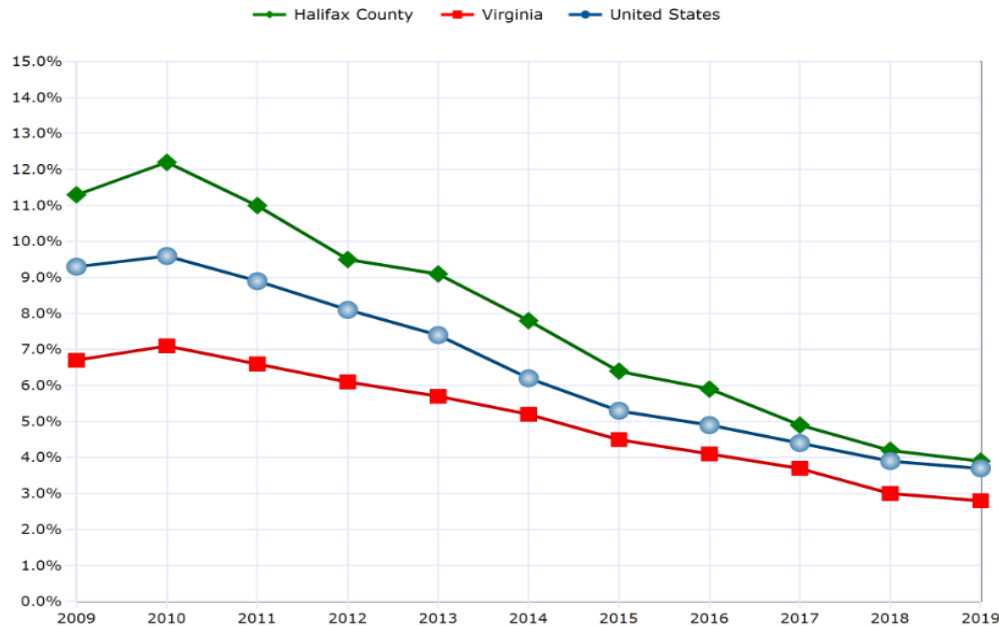
Average Weekly Wage - All Industries

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2020
South Boston	\$295	\$361	n/a	n/a	n/a
Halifax County	\$333	\$390	\$464	\$526	\$757
Campbell County	\$414	\$469	\$530	\$571	\$920
Charlotte County	\$291	\$337	\$420	\$475	\$696
Mecklenburg County	\$287	\$347	\$401	\$472	\$750
Pittsylvania County	\$398	\$481	\$558	\$509	\$721
Person County, NC				\$597	\$804
Virginia	\$438	\$517	\$676	\$813	\$1,217

source: Virginia Employment Commission 2nd Quarter 2020 and North Carolina Dept. of Commerce 4th Quarter 2019

Other data add depth to the picture. The chart below illustrates the unemployment rate from the Virginia Employment Commission Statistics since 2007 for Halifax County, the state of Virginia and for the USA. The data indicate that unemployment numbers have followed a general downward trend in the county and state, with spikes in unemployment in 2010. Halifax County has tended to have a markedly higher unemployment rate than the state and much wider fluctuations in the employment rate over time.

Unemployment Rates Trends



The table below lists the percentage of families below the poverty level for South Boston, Halifax County, and the surrounding counties. Regionally, both South Boston and Halifax County are in the “middle of the pack”, but nearly twice the rate of families in poverty as the Commonwealth.

Percentage of Families Below Poverty Level

	1990	2000	2010	2019
South Boston	13.1	15.3	25.5	17.1
Halifax County	13.7	11.5	20.0	17.1
Campbell County	7.8	7.9	12.2	10.8
Charlotte County	16.9	12.7	15.8	19.3
Mecklenburg County	12.4	11.6	18.8	17.3
Pittsylvania County	9.7	8.6	15.1	15.1
Person County, NC	9.6	9.4	16.0	15.4
Virginia	7.7	7.0	10.3	9.9

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Finally, the tables below list the top 10 industries in both Halifax County and the entire surrounding Workforce Investment Area, a designation of the federal Workforce Investment Act. The data indicate that Halifax County and the larger region have the same industry sectors in the top four rankings, with Government ranking first in both.

Top 10 Industries by Employment - Halifax County

2nd Quarter 2020

Rank	Industry Sector	Percent Halifax County
1	Government (Local, State, Federal)	18.2
2	Health Care and Social Assistance	17.6
3	Manufacturing	16.2
4	Retail Trade	11.4
5	Transportation and Warehousing	9.5
6	Accommodation and Food Services	6.5
7	Construction	4.9
8	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	2.5
9	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2.4
10	Wholesale Trade	1.8

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Top 10 Industries by Employment - WIA Region VIII*

2nd Quarter 2020

Rank	Industry Sector	Percent
1	Government (Local, State, Federal)	25.6
2	Health Care and Social Assistance	16.5
3	Retail Trade	12.3
4	Manufacturing	9.3
5	Accommodation and Food Services	6.0
6	Construction	4.7
7	Transportation and Warehousing	4.1
8	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	4.0
9	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	2.7
10	Other Services (except Public Administration)	2.5

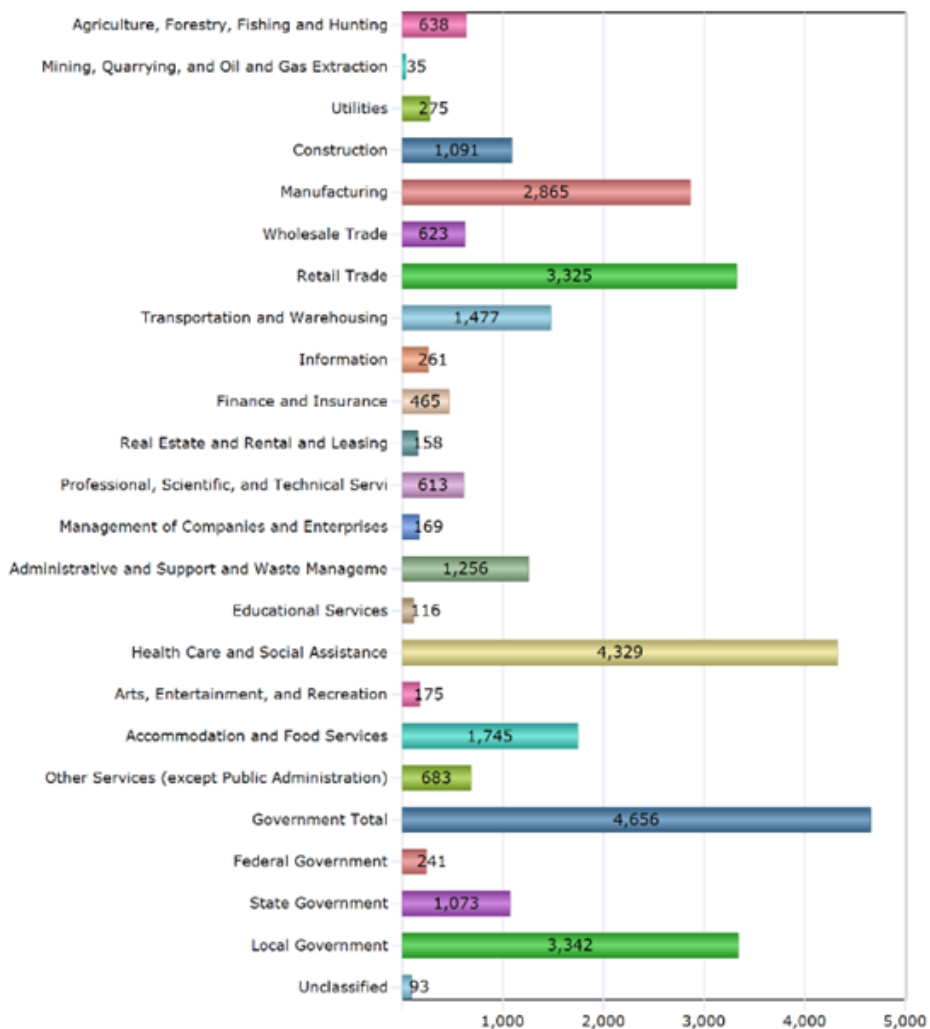
Source: Virginia Employment Commission

*Note: WIA Region VIII includes counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership produces economic profiles for the Virginia planning districts. The Southside Planning District, called the Lake Country region, comprised of Halifax, Mecklenburg and Brunswick Counties, has an economy **predominantly based in the broad categories of government, health care and social Assistance and manufacturing sectors**, as shown in the graphic below.

Top 10 Industries by Employment – Southside PDC

2nd Quarter 2020



Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Summary Trends and Implications

The data and trends above present important considerations for South Boston policymakers and their work both locally and regionally. Several of the area trends, including declining population growth, high unemployment and poverty, and the heavy economic dependence on manufacturing, will be addressed simultaneously by certain policies.

- Regional demographic trends indicate far slower population growth in South Boston and the surrounding area than in the state as a whole, necessitating policies aimed at retaining the young adults in the community and attracting families and retirees.
- Because education is the foundation for the quality of life and economic development in an area, the low regional education levels relative to state averages demand a focus on a range of policies to address the issue from different angles. Support for increasing educational opportunities in the community, particularly in workforce training, will be crucial. Policies to retain educated locals and attract those who have left to return will also be a part of the mix.
- The historical emphasis on manufacturing in the region leaves it vulnerable as the global economy continues to shift. A reorganization of the regional economy to a more diverse and balanced economic base will be key. Continued emphasis on workforce training and education programs will re-tool locals for jobs in other sectors of the new economy. As noted in a number of studies, the potential for tourism represents one of many industry clusters to be targeted for the region. Support for existing economic clusters and local entrepreneurship will also play a role.

Relevant Regional Plans and Studies

Several studies and plans provide direction and establish a number of goals in key areas that impact South Boston planning efforts.

In 2020, the Town of South Boston adopted the *South Boston Strategic Plan* which identified goals for economic development in the Town of South Boston. The report details goals and objectives which include:

- Reinvent Riverdale as a Gateway Park, install boat ramp, commercial business relocation and development of natural park and trails.
- Remove and redevelop blighted and derelict buildings.
- Revitalize Downtown/Redevelop Randolph Hotel
- Improve Westside/Westend Services, safety related improvements and increase access to public services.
- Create a succession/contingency plan for the Town. Conduct a housing needs study and improve community communication.

In 2019, a County-wide strategic plan called *Phase 2: Community Strategic Plan* was commissioned by the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce to identify a number of short- and long-term goals for economic and workforce development in the County. Outlined in the plan are ways to improve the County workforce, economy, and community opportunities. The report details objectives and benchmarks which include:

Central to the framework is a Core Goal: “Raise levels of prosperity, increase economic opportunity, and improve quality of life for all residents of Halifax County”.

Workforce:

- Develop Modern High School Facilities
- Establish the College and Career Readiness Initiative

Economy:

- Attract Outside Jobs and Investments to Halifax County
- Retain and Support Existing Businesses
- Grow Small Businesses and Startups
- Advance the Motorsports Industry in Halifax County
- Establish Halifax County as an Industrial Hemp Center
- Pursue the Henrietta Lacks Life Science Center

Community:

- Implement Broadband Internet Access County-Wide

- **Promote Resident-Driven Place Improvements**

An active task force continues to press for the realization of the Strategic Plans objectives and notes various accomplishments to date, including:

- Development of the Center for Nursing Excellence at the SVHEC,
- Marketing of motorsports regional cluster, particularly through Virginia Motorsports Alley,
- Creation of a consolidated water and sewer authority, a joint solid waste authority and landfill across jurisdictions,
- Development of the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative and expansion of high-speed internet and wireless phone availability,
- Support for the Route 501 Coalition promoting safety along 501, and the completion of various VDOT improvements,
- Development of a Young Professional Network through the Chamber of Commerce
- An annual Healthy Living Expo and development of an affordable Primary Health Care facility,
- Reactivation of an anti-drug task force and establishment of an office for the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program at Houghton Industrial Park,
- Various recreational improvements,
- Various enhancements in cultural offerings, including a community arts gallery and community arts programs.

The Southside Planning District Commission developed the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* updated in 2019, as a guide for area decision makers promoting regional economic growth.

The plans goals are to achieve a vision centered around the primary drivers for any healthy economy and they are land, people and capital.

- **Land; Build on and improve fixed assets of the region, water, sewer, natural gas, broadband, transportation, downtowns, industrial sites, housing, and natural assets to attract and support business and industry growth and provide for a high quality of life throughout the region.**
- **People; Invest in the population, the youth, the workforce, and the disenfranchised, to affectively provide the education and training needed for a workforce ready for a wide variety of careers such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, modern agriculture and entrepreneurship.**

- Capital; Pursue financing opportunities to improve public school, infrastructure, utilities, transportation, industrial parks, brownfields, housing, recreational amenities, and capital for existing and start-up companies.

The *Halifax County Comprehensive Plan* was updated in 2017, resulting in an overall document guiding growth and development for the full County. A number of the County Comprehensive Plan recommendations may have a direct impact on South Boston, particularly in areas requiring intergovernmental cooperation. **Goals set in the Halifax County Comprehensive Plan:**

- Community and Housing Goals – Promote attractive neighborhoods, safe and affordable housing, excellent educational opportunities, supportive health and social services, and outstanding recreational facilities.
- Economic Goals – Encourage, promote, and invest in a diversified economy that provides quality jobs, inviting corridors and development, and a prosperous market for services and products.
- Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Goals – Plan and provide quality, cost effective public facilities and services to meet community needs and accommodate future growth.
- Environmental (Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources) Goal – Protect, conserve and promote natural and historical resources.
- Land Use and Development Goals – Guide community growth and development that stimulates the economy and preserves community assets.

The Southside Planning District Commission *Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* was prepared in coordination with FEMA and Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) officials and adopted by the Town of South Boston, September 14, 2020.

The Plan identifies the natural hazards most likely to impact the region, includes a risk assessment to determine vulnerabilities to each locality, reviews the capabilities of each locality to address their vulnerabilities and provides a list of action items to be implemented to reduce or eliminate risk to life and property.

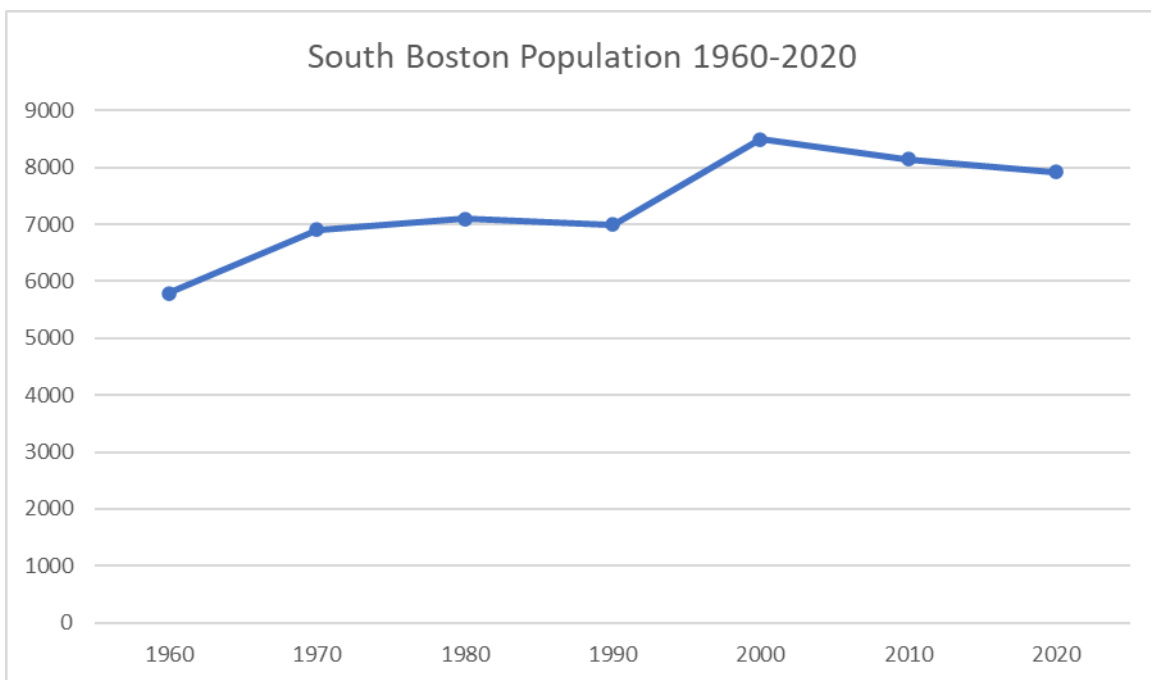
V. Comprehensive Plan Elements

People, Neighborhoods and Housing

South Boston citizens have often cited the friendliness of community residents to be one of the great assets of the Town. Similarly, many of the existing Town neighborhoods possess a strong established quality that reflects the community history and gracious small-town character. It is important to view these characteristics as assets to be enhanced and preserved as South Boston moves forward.

People and Population

Over the last 60 years, the South Boston population appears to have fluctuated somewhat from its 1960 level of 5794 to its **projected 2020 level of 7923**, with a period of relatively little population change in the 1970s and 1980s. The period between 1990 and 2000 shows a spike in population, attributable to an annexation of approximately 2000 people from Halifax County in 1997.



The chart below compares data from South Boston and Halifax County, with both localities registering a decline in population from 2010 to 2019. This trend can be seen in several of the surrounding counties as well. Available data on the population composition is also shown below. Age distribution is comparable. Racial composition of the population, as of the year 2019, appears a little more evenly distributed between white and African-American than in

Halifax County, where whites are a larger proportion of the population. The general education levels are similar between South Boston and Halifax County.

Demographic Snapshot

		South Boston		Halifax County	
		2010	2019	2010	2019
Total Population		8,142	7,588	36,241	33,253
Percent Change in Population 2010-2019		-6.8		-6.5	
Population by Age Group	0-19 yrs	26.3%	31.7%	24.3%	25.5%
	20-64 yrs	53.2%	47.2%	56.2%	49.7%
	65+ yrs	20.3%	21.1%	19.3%	24.8%
Racial Composition	White	47.2%	39.5%	60.7%	61.2%
	African American	51.1%	56.5%	36.7%	36.3%
	Other	3.0%	4.0%	1.8%	2.5%
Educational Attainment (population 25 years and over)					
	Percent high school graduate or higher	54.5%	80.0%	59.8%	81.5%
	Percent bachelor's degree or higher	13.2%	19.3%	13.2%	15.4%

Housing and Neighborhoods

Looking at general housing data from 2019, strong similarities are found in some measures between South Boston and Halifax County, particularly in house values and occupancy rates. A much lower percentage of owner-occupied units existed within South Boston than in the County.

Housing Snapshot

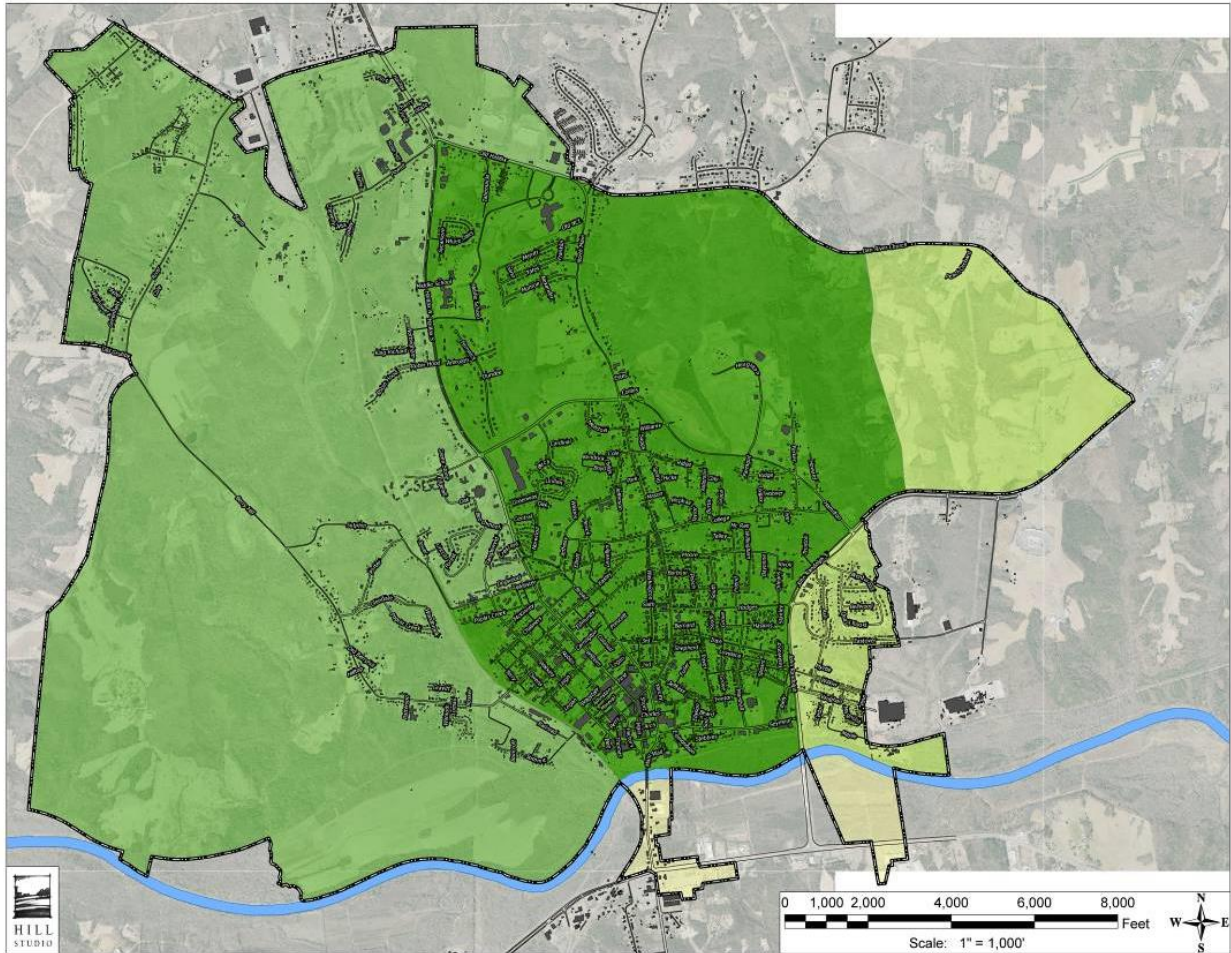
		South Boston		Halifax County	
		2010	2019	2010	2019
Total Housing Units		3,351	3,587	18,004	18,207
Occupied		86.7%	78.1%	83.8%	77.7%
Vacant		13.3%	21.9%	16.2%	22.3%
Owner-Occupied		54.9%	54.8%	73.1%	74.1%
Renter-Occupied		45.1%	45.2%	26.9%	25.9%
Year Householder Moved into Unit	within 1 year		12.2%		6.6%
	2-5 years prior		14.2%		9.0%
	6-10 years prior		20.0%		16.3%
	11-20 years prior		17.3%		23.2%
	21-30 years prior		16.9%		19.8%
	more than 30 years prior		19.5%		25.2%
Median House Value (owner-occupied)		\$99,000	\$132,300	\$96,000	\$116,100

The physical development pattern of South Boston is typical of many small North American towns with a dense, historic downtown commercial and industrial core, historic residential neighborhoods on small lots immediately surrounding the downtown, post-World War II commercial development along major entryways at the community periphery and newer suburban residential neighborhoods on larger parcels along other portions of the community fringe. Also like many small communities, the commercial energy of South Boston, once concentrated in the historic downtown, has expanded to outlying commercial areas like Centerville to the north and Riverdale to the south.

Unlike many other communities, South Boston is blessed with a surrounding green fringe of open space including natural forest land, pastures and farmland, and its downtown core overlooks the Dan River, one of the preeminent natural resources in the region.

Analyzing South Boston by the density of its population, the Town generally had a density of 579 people per square mile in 2019. Taken for the full Town however, this figure is somewhat misleading, as much of the geographic Town area consists of large open spaces characteristic of a rural countryside. The most densely developed and populated areas of the town tend to be those in and surrounding the downtown core, with development density tapering off away from downtown. Population density is indicated by the map below. The South Boston downtown area, South of Webster Street between the railroad and Wilborn Avenue, and south of Hodges Street, from Highway 360 to North Main, is the densest part of town. The center of the Town, roughly from the intersection of North Main and Wilborn to Hamilton Boulevard, is the second densest area. The central area of South Boston is denser and potentially more

walkable than many larger Virginia communities, including Virginia Beach, Salem and Radford, and almost as dense as Blacksburg.



South Boston Density Zones – darkest areas are most densely populated

Challenges and Opportunities

As noted above, the total population of South Boston and much of the region is declining slightly. Furthermore, the median age of both South Boston and Halifax County is higher than the Virginia median, indicating an older population than in many communities. Taken together, these indicate the need for South Boston to consider policies that retain people in the community, particularly young people.

Looking at South Boston neighborhoods, many are well-established and historical, and it is essential to maintain the quality of these neighborhoods and improve those that are stressed. Some neighborhoods face challenges related to general property upkeep and maintenance, as expressed by residents in public workshops, and the Town should continue aggressive code enforcement and consider other measures to improve the overall quality of these areas. Neighborhood groups can be instrumental liaisons between the Town and neighborhood residents in these areas.

Future development should respect and follow the development patterns set by established South Boston neighborhoods, with new development first occurring as compatible infill to strengthen existing neighborhoods before expanding into areas that are logical growth areas surrounding the Town. Policies for residential development should emphasize connections to community facilities, walkability, and efficient use of existing infrastructure where possible.

Housing diversity, both in terms of housing type and cost, was identified as a strong need by many in public workshops. In particular, high-quality apartments and rental units, and housing that is affordable for young professionals and seniors, were cited as key needs in South Boston. The Town should continue work to bring more developments like the successful Imperial Lofts, New Brick Lofts, Taylor Lofts project and Church Hill housing improvements to fruition.

Guiding Policies and Actions

The following policies are recommended to guide decisions impacting people, housing and neighborhoods in South Boston. Each policy is followed by a number of specific actions that will help the Town implement its policies.

People and Neighborhoods 2040 - Policies and Strategies

PN1. South Boston neighborhoods contribute significantly to the community character and the quality of life. They should be maintained and enhanced to provide a safe, healthy environment for residents. New structures in existing neighborhoods or new in-fill residential developments should respect the surrounding building development patterns and complement the architectural qualities of existing buildings. New housing developments outside of the town center should respect and conserve environmental features and include connected streets.

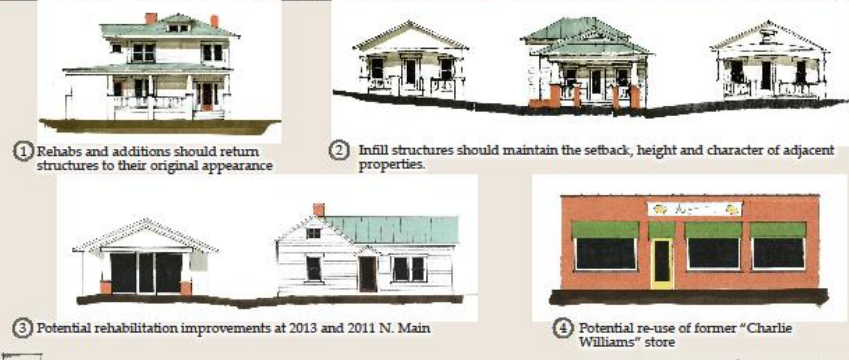
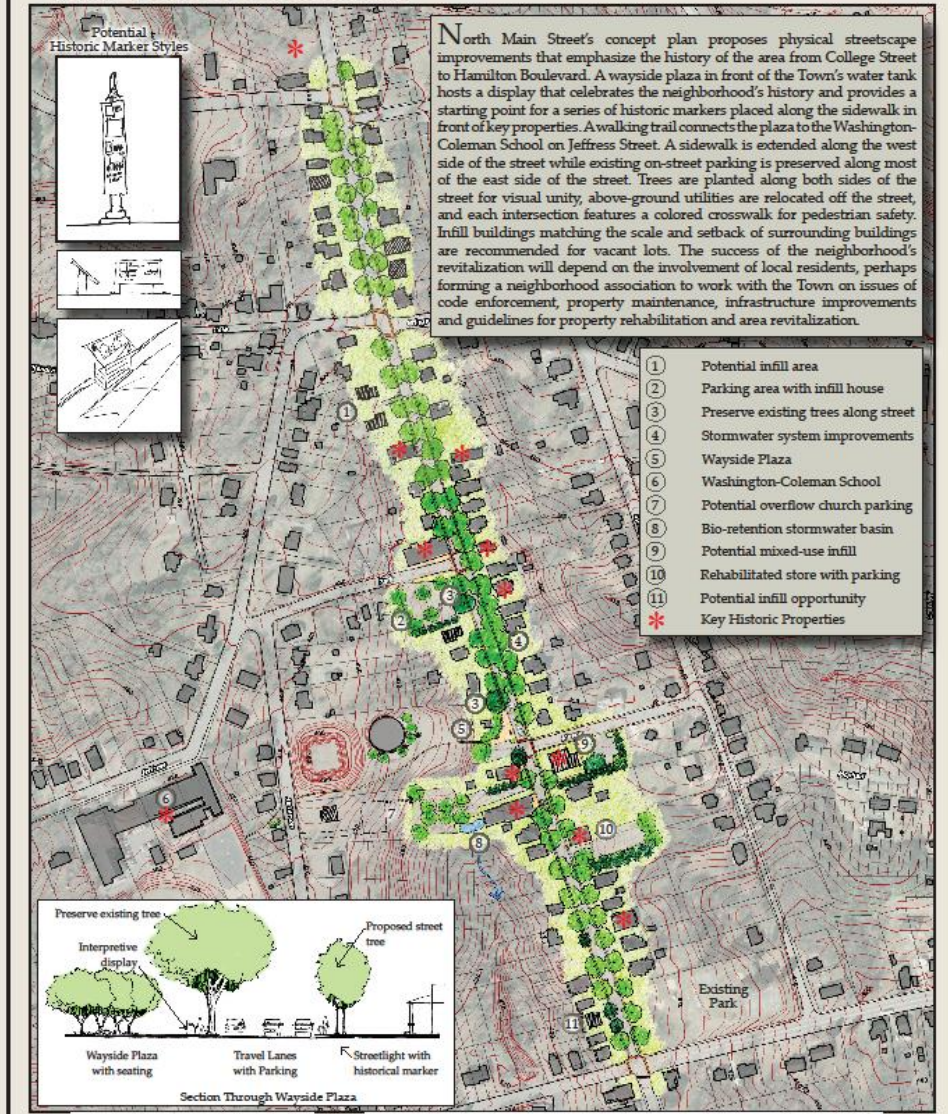
Strategy 1.1:	Promote reinvestment in older South Boston neighborhoods by continuing to prioritize neighborhoods for revitalization. Work with neighborhood groups to develop neighborhood “master” plans for targeted areas and establish housing rehabilitation programs to address blighted properties and promote redevelopment/revitalization opportunities.
Strategy 1.2:	Encourage private neighborhood improvement initiatives to revitalize neighborhoods. Support the work of neighborhood associations, adopt-a-street or adopt-a-spot programs, Christmas in April, community gardens and others. Provide in-kind support where appropriate; consider a future neighborhood grant program to facilitate small projects.
Strategy 1.3:	Work with property owners and neighborhood groups to encourage proactive property maintenance and promote neighborhood pride and investment. Work cooperatively to eliminate blighting influences and address building maintenance and other code enforcement issues. Facilitate and streamline communication between Code Enforcement office and citizens to ensure effective reporting and response to property maintenance issues.
Strategy 1.4:	Revise the zoning ordinance to include a Neighborhood Conservation District to encourage compatible development in existing neighborhoods with significant architectural and historic integrity. Adopt design guidelines that will encourage appropriate new development.
PN2. The long-term success of a community depends on maintaining a broad cross-section of diverse age groups. In particular, young adults and families are important participants in the vitality and future of South Boston. Efforts to attract and retain young adults and families in the community should be expanded.	
Strategy 2.1:	Retain graduating seniors in the region by expanding work opportunities for youth in local government, public institutions, and businesses. Offer youth internships to Town residents. Promote career and training opportunities through community postings and counseling in conjunction with the Halifax County Schools, Virginia Employment Commission and the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center.
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue a Parks and Recreation Master Plan with Halifax County to identify recreational activity needs for children and young adults. Encourage participation of the area’s YMCA, churches and sports organizations. Encourage coordination of programs and promote cooperative efforts.
Strategy 2.3:	Encourage the expansion of quality child care facilities by private organizations. Provide leadership to and work with community groups, organizations and businesses to facilitate increased opportunities for child care.

<p>PN3. The availability of a diversity of housing types and price ranges is important to the overall health and sustainability of South Boston. A variety of quality housing options is needed to sustain desirable residents and attract new ones.</p>	
<p>Strategy 3.1:</p>	<p>Encourage private initiatives to develop quality housing options, particularly in the downtown area in the form of upper floor units above ground floor commercial uses. Consider incentives that may assist development such as façade improvement grants, historic tax credits, new market tax credits, tax service districts, or other programs.</p>
<p>Strategy 3.2:</p>	<p>Encourage the development of affordable live-work facilities for artists and other professionals in or near downtown. Work with downtown and artisan organizations to identify priority projects for underutilized buildings. Facilitate development opportunities through in-kind support, solicitation of funding, and use of other economic assistance tools.</p>
<p>Strategy 3.3:</p>	<p>Continue to pursue housing improvement projects for LMI residents. Utilize programs offered through state and regional agencies, like DHCD, Tri-County Community Action Agency or Southside Outreach Group.</p>

Special Action Projects

In February of 2009, a three-day public design workshop focused on three areas, including the North Main Street area (from College Street to Hamilton Boulevard). With input from local residents and other stakeholders, a range of ideas to improve the neighborhood’s appearance and vitality were proposed that would build from the extension of the Greene’s Crossing Trail Plan along North Main Street. These workshop recommendations, including the description of a wayside plaza area depicted below, are detailed in the Public Workshop Report in the Appendix. The Town should partner with neighborhood residents, community groups and other groups to help implement these ideas.

North Main Street Area





Proposed Wayside Plaza concept – North Main Street at Mason Street

Education and Health

Though not the seat of Halifax County, South Boston is the largest community in the area and has been established as a regional hub of certain activities, particularly health care and education.

Schools

Public schools in South Boston are part of the Halifax County Public School system, and South Boston itself is home to two early learning centers, one elementary school, and the middle school and high school serving the full County. All schools are accredited through the Virginia Department of Education⁴.

A number of highly recognized programs and additional educational opportunities are available to students through the school system, including the first Governor's Career and Technical Academy in Virginia, a Governor's program grant for the only Equine Academy in Virginia, a Motorsports Academy, a Wood-Links USA Academy Site for Renewable Resources and Agricultural Science, programs in robotics, a health and health sciences nursing assistant program with Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital and other local assisted care facilities, plus career and technical opportunities. Through both the Southern Regional Tech-prep Consortium and through dual enrollment courses with Danville Community College and Southside Virginia Community College, over 75% of Halifax County High School students receive at least one college course; almost 10% of the graduating seniors received Community College Associate degrees at high school graduation. Additionally, a number of regional College programs are available to support the faculty and staff members of the public schools.

Historical data on school enrollment for the full public school system indicates a decline in student numbers from a high of 8,154 students in 1979 to 5,248 students in 2017. Enrollment projections indicate that the downward trend will continue with 4,704 students anticipated in 2020. In 2007, the school system restructured its attendance zones in response to enrollment declines, closing six elementary schools across the County, opening two new elementary schools, and moving sixth grade from the elementary schools into the middle school. The district is currently monitoring data to determine how these changes will impact enrollment at the individual schools⁵.

In 2019, Halifax County voted to raise the county's sales tax 1% to fund school capital improvements.

Higher Education

Within the Town of South Boston, many postsecondary educational opportunities are available for regional residents. The regional Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC), located in a refurbished tobacco warehouse in downtown South Boston, has partnerships with

⁴ <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/vdoe/src/accreditation.shtml>.

⁵ Halifax County Public Schools Comprehensive Plan, 2014-2020.

several colleges and universities throughout Virginia for associate's, bachelor's and masters degree programs. In 2008, the SVHEC's Center of Nursing Excellent (CNE) was completed. The SVHEC CNE is a Healthcare Learning Resource Center (LRC) offering classroom and simulated clinical education services. The SVHEC refurbished the former "bag factory" west of the Prizery transforming it into the Innovation Center, in 2010. The Innovation Center houses the Workforce Advancement, Workforce Training Programs, and the SoVA Center of Manufacturing Excellence (SoVA CME). The Research and Development Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Energy Efficiency (R&D CAMEE) was relocated to the Imperial Lofts building in the spring of 2019. The Information Technology Academy (ITA) was established in 2015/2016 in the main building. There will likely be key space needs beyond this initial expansion. The SVHEC has created the Center for Rural Education and Economic Development (CREED) to provide educational outreach to the region's K-12 schools. The SVHEC has also partnered with New College Institute (NCI) in Martinsville and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville to further expand higher educational offerings in the region.



Several other higher education opportunities exist near South Boston. South Boston is situated between two Virginia community colleges, Danville Community College (34 miles to the west) and Southside Virginia Community College (with the closest primary campus in Keysville, 38 miles to the northeast). The SVHEC has brought several course programs to its campus in South Boston. Danville is also home to the main campus of Averett University, which offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a variety of fields. North Carolina's Piedmont Community College, located 24 miles away in Roxboro, NC, offers a range of academic programs, though tuition rates for Virginia residents are significantly higher than the cost of attending Virginia community colleges.

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) in Danville is home to state-of-the-art, high-tech research and academic facilities. The IALR is a collaboration with Virginia Tech, as well as Averett University and Danville Community College, aiming to effect regional economic development through education, research and technology transfer. Danville also hosts a campus of the National College of Business and Technology, offering further associate's and bachelor's degrees, primarily in the business, medical and tourism fields.

The SOVA Innovation Hub opened in February 2021. The SOVA Innovation Hub brings together business and education partners to offer innovative programs designed to inspire people to pursue digital careers and entrepreneurship.

Libraries

The South Boston Library is located on Broad Street that is one of the two libraries comprising the Halifax County – South Boston Regional Library system.

Health Care Facilities

The Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital is a not-for-profit entity in South Boston serving Halifax, Charlotte and Mecklenburg counties. The main campus is at Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital, a Regional Referral Center providing a range of comprehensive health services to the region and a major employer in South Boston. The hospital completed an expansion of its facilities that added two floors atop the existing hospital and enhanced the Emergency Department and Family Birthing Center in 2009. Additional facilities of Sentara Halifax Regional include a network of family practice clinics throughout the region, including Sentara Halifax Primary Care which opened in 2007 and the Sentara Dental Clinic which opened in 2013.



Social Services

The Halifax County Department of Social Services serves the South Boston area, providing a range of programs and services from poverty alleviation and self-sufficiency initiatives to programs for the prevention of abuse and neglect.

Challenges and Opportunities

The availability of quality educational opportunities and health care are vital to maintaining a high quality of life in any community. Fortunately, South Boston is well-positioned in these two areas. Though public school numbers are decreasing, the quality of public school education remains high, and South Boston residents have an increasing array of postsecondary educational and training opportunities available to them through the SVHEC or at other institutions a short distance away.

The SVHEC is currently expanding its program offerings and will continue to expand its programs and partnerships with other universities and institutions in Virginia and beyond. Its advanced manufacturing initiatives through the R&D Innovation Center will be a resource for applied research needs for regional manufacturers and will help create a cluster of new industry and jobs in the region. These and other programmatic expansions will increase the space needs of the facility, and the Town should coordinate with the SVHEC to develop a Master Plan for its programmatic and physical growth. An initial exploration of potential expansion strategies is illustrated in the Public Workshop Report in the Appendix.

Similarly, as **Sentara** Halifax Regional continues to expand its services and facilities, the Town will need to work with the institution on issues of land use, transportation patterns and utilities in the hospital area to ensure coordination.

Members of a public input session had praise for the library system; but they felt that additional space was needed at the South Boston library in that the current building is too small to meet library program requirements, and the facility will need to be expanded or relocated to a larger space in the future. Additionally, the library board is considering working with the SVHEC to provide library services. One of several buildings near the current library may be acquired for library expansion, but the library may also consider relocating to a downtown location more proximate to the SVHEC to serve better the institution and the community from a single location.

Guiding Policies and Actions

The following policies and strategies are recommended to guide future decisions impacting education and health sectors in South Boston.

Education and Health 2040 - Policies and Strategies	
EH1. Quality educational opportunities and continuous learning are fundamental to the prosperity and high quality of life in South Boston. Quality education for all ages should be a priority for the community.	
Strategy 1.1:	Participate in long-range planning and programmatic development for the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center to help educate the regional workforce, particularly with respect to targeted sectors of the regional economy.

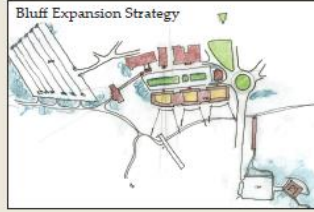
Strategy 1.2:	Sponsor and promote continued learning and training through public school and continuing education programs that meet the needs of local businesses and targeted economic sectors. Encourage the South Boston and Halifax County Industrial Development Authorities to establish a working committee representative of diverse government and private partners to coordinate workforce development issues and needs, and to facilitate development of appropriate educational programs.
Strategy 1.3:	Promote neighborhood community centers in South Boston that can provide accessible opportunities for continued learning activities. Consider joint facilities with partner organizations where possible.
Strategy 1.4:	Work with the SVHEC and County library to identify appropriate space for expanded library facilities that can optimally serve both the SVHEC and South Boston residents.
EH2. Healthy citizens and outstanding healthcare facilities are vital to sustaining a high quality of life in South Boston. The healthcare industry represents an important part of South Boston’s economy in terms of employment and as a provider of services. Using these valuable resources and influential partners should be a priority to further community development, education, and overall prosperity.	
Strategy 2.1:	Build healthy citizens by providing increased outdoor recreational opportunities; assemble partners who can help implement and sustain development plans for Cotton Mill Park, the Tobacco Heritage Trail, Greene’s Crossing Trail, and others.
Strategy 2.2:	Encourage connectivity and linkages between parks and public spaces in South Boston. When considering new development patterns or revitalization strategies, locate buildings and community facilities in areas where there are optimal opportunities for multi-modal access and connectivity.
Strategy 2.3:	Maintain regular communication with the healthcare industry in South Boston and the region to understand long-term goals and needs that may be relevant to overall community improvements and public infrastructure.

Special Action Projects

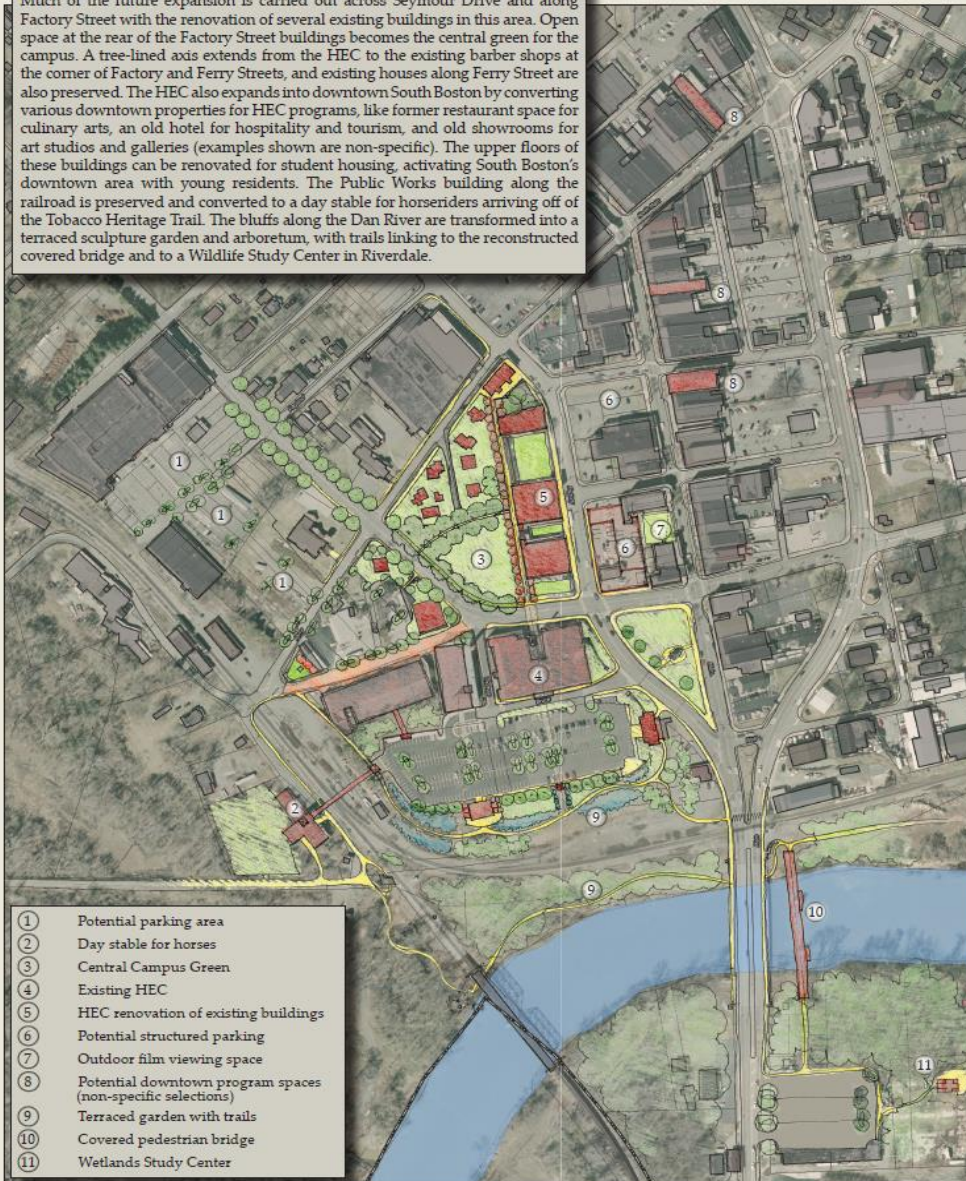
In the February 2009 public design workshop, the area surrounding the SVHEC was studied and, with input from SVHEC staff and other stakeholders, some initial concepts were developed for how the SVHEC may expand and develop its campus in the long term and how this physical expansion may interact with other community development strategies, including housing needs, downtown development, connections to the river and Riverdale, and others. The Town should work with the SVHEC, community groups, surrounding property owners, and other stakeholders to develop a long-term master plan for the area surrounding the SVHEC. This plan would gather the needs and plans for SVHEC expansion, downtown housing

and park areas, outdoor performance venues and special event needs, connections to the river, multi-modal trail connections, and use of currently underutilized or vacant properties, ultimately giving direction and focus to all parties and integrating the range of ideas and needs to achieve an optimal solution for the community.

Higher Education Center Area



The Higher Education Center has grown considerably in recent years, becoming a significant player in South Boston. This concept plan blends three broad expansion strategies (above) to illustrate some long-range opportunities for future growth. Much of the future expansion is carried out across Seymour Drive and along Factory Street with the renovation of several existing buildings in this area. Open space at the rear of the Factory Street buildings becomes the central green for the campus. A tree-lined axis extends from the HEC to the existing barber shops at the corner of Factory and Ferry Streets, and existing houses along Ferry Street are also preserved. The HEC also expands into downtown South Boston by converting various downtown properties for HEC programs, like former restaurant space for culinary arts, an old hotel for hospitality and tourism, and old showrooms for art studios and galleries (examples shown are non-specific). The upper floors of these buildings can be renovated for student housing, activating South Boston's downtown area with young residents. The Public Works building along the railroad is preserved and converted to a day stable for horse riders arriving off of the Tobacco Heritage Trail. The bluffs along the Dan River are transformed into a terraced sculpture garden and arboretum, with trails linking to the reconstructed covered bridge and to a Wildlife Study Center in Riverdale.



- ① Potential parking area
- ② Day stable for horses
- ③ Central Campus Green
- ④ Existing HEC
- ⑤ HEC renovation of existing buildings
- ⑥ Potential structured parking
- ⑦ Outdoor film viewing space
- ⑧ Potential downtown program spaces (non-specific selections)
- ⑨ Terraced garden with trails
- ⑩ Covered pedestrian bridge
- ⑪ Wetlands Study Center





Proposed Campus Green and performance venue near Southern Virginia Higher Education Center

Economic Development

The future economic vitality of South Boston depends upon the ability of the Town to support a diverse mix of businesses and industries, attract and maintain a well-trained workforce, build on existing amenities and foster a high quality of life. The Town is recognized as a regional center for health care and education, and there are strong opportunities to leverage the arts, local heritage, and natural amenities as economic drivers for the local economy.

Employment and Industry

According to data from the last quarter of 2018, 3 of the top ten employers in Halifax County are headquartered within South Boston. **The largest industries in the County by employment numbers are government (18.50), health care and social assistance (13.90%) and manufacturing (16.50%).**

Top Ten Employers in Halifax County

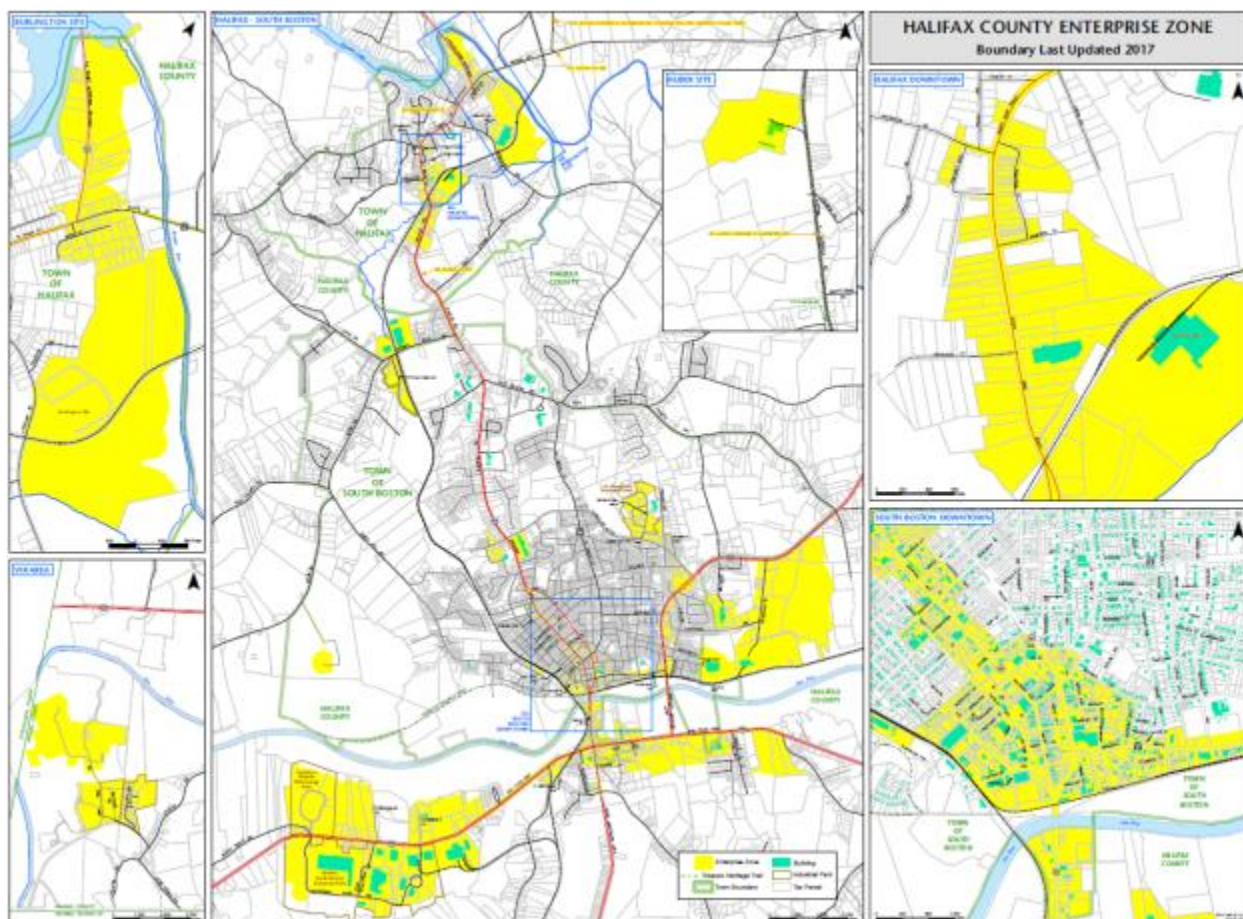
(shaded employers are located within South Boston)

Rank in County	Employer Name	Business/Entity Type	Number of Employees
1	Halifax County School Board	Educational Services	900 - 1000
2	DolgenCorp LLC	General Merchandise Stores	600 - 999
3	Sentara Halifax Regional Hospital	Hospitals	300 - 599
4	Presto Products Company	Plastics & Rubber Products Manufacturing	300 - 599
5	Hitachi ABB Power Grids	Electrical Equipment	300 - 599
6	Wal Mart	General Merchandise Stores	300 - 599
7	The Praxis Companies LLC	Bath Products and Tubs Manufacturing	300 - 599
8	Halifax County	Executive, Legislative, & General Government	100 - 299
9	Sunshine Mills	Product- Pet food	100 - 299
10	Annin and Company	Product- Flags and banners	100 - 299

Source: Halifax County IDA and Virginia Employment Commission, QCEW

The Houghton Industrial Park is located within South Boston’s borders on 70 acres north of Hamilton Boulevard. The Park currently has a mix of office and light industry uses, as well as the South Boston Elementary School. Several parcels remain available within the park.

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly renewed the Enterprise Zone program, wherein localities enter into a ten-year agreement with the state to offer incentives for business expansion and recruitment. The Town of South Boston and Halifax County jointly administer the Enterprise Zone. The zone encompasses much of the Riverdale area along Highways 58 and 501 (including Riverstone Technology Park), the Speedway and Fairgrounds east of the Town and, within the Town limits, much of Downtown, the Houghton Industrial Park, Berry Hill and portions of Highway 360. Incentives for businesses locating or expanding within the Enterprise Zone include lower sale price on certain sites, various funds for supplies or land/infrastructure costs, tax relief and rebates, reduced fees, a loan pool for buying down interest rates, and free Chamber of Commerce membership.



South Boston area Enterprise Zone

Other regional incentives have been created to attract business to the area, including the Lake Country Development Corporation’s revolving loan fund of up to \$400,000. This loan fund can be available as leverage for other public and private funds, at a rate 3% below prime for up to 10 years.

The Halifax County Community Strategic Plan was updated in 2019 and identified several business clusters to be targeted for attraction to and expansion in the community. Among these

are education, health care, tourism, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, and motorsports. Under this plan the area agricultural sector would achieve better leverage in existing markets for traditional products and seek opportunities for refocusing on alternative products **such as hemp** and agro-tourism. Further, the strategic plan makes a number of recommendations to grow existing businesses and promote entrepreneurship in the community.

South Boston has its own Industrial Development Authority (IDA), but also works cooperatively with the Halifax County IDA. The two entities are enabled to merge into a joint Economic Development Authority, but a proposal to merge was ultimately defeated.

Downtown

The South Boston historic downtown area is the traditional center of the community's commercial life, but today faces competition from modern commercial development located along major traffic corridors in the Centerville and Riverdale areas. It is essential that the downtown thrive and prosper because much of the unique character and heritage of South Boston is embodied in the historical buildings and growth patterns of this area. A number of underutilized or vacant buildings and properties currently remain in downtown, though the area has the beginnings of a renaissance in place with key catalysts such as the SVHEC, Taylor Lofts, **New Brick lofts and Imperial Loft** apartments, a successful farmer's market, several retail stores, and plans being finalized for future connections to the region via the Tobacco Heritage Trail and Greene's Crossing Greenway Trail. Additionally, citizen interest in developing a large arts festival and locating performance venues around the downtown will further inject vibrant activity in the downtown.

Since 2004, South Boston has participated in the Virginia Main Street program. Housed in the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, this program provides training, technical and design assistance and marketing to help localities reverse the economic and physical decline of traditional downtown areas. South Boston's Main Street program is managed by Destination Downtown South Boston (DDSB), a non-profit organization whose mission is to



promote the downtown's commercial vitality and centrality to civic life. DDSB has undertaken a number of initiatives to enhance downtown, adopting various strategies including the promotion of arts and culture, marketing to local buyers, encouraging high quality goods and services in downtown, and working to develop downtown housing options. Recent successes include:

- developing a wayfinding signage plan,
- facilitating redevelopment of Taylor Lofts, **New Brick lofts and Imperial lofts** housing near the SVHEC in a historic tobacco facility,
- developing a business recruitment package for downtown,
- establishing a summertime concert series and hosting annual downtown events - **the 4th of July Fireworks Display** and the Harvest Festival.
- helping fund improvements to the Farmer's Market
- **SoBo Start – Up! Grant program for current and new small business Downtown.**



A Sales Gap Analysis was conducted by the Community Land Use and Economics Group for South Boston in 2004, with a close look at downtown retail performance. Many positive attributes were noted for the downtown area, including the downtown anchors of the SVHEC, Taylor Lofts, and various public services. Also noted were significant challenges, including distance from other area attractions and from an interstate, deterioration of several properties, and relatively low incomes in the region. Among the key findings of this study were the following:

- over two-thirds of downtown's businesses were non-retail,
- County-wide sales leakages occur in many areas including groceries, restaurant sales, furnishings, apparel, pharmaceuticals and reading materials,
- downtown capture of County-wide retail sales is low,
- two promising untapped markets include tourists and regional residents who purchase in the middle- to upper-price range,
- the number of older households is increasing faster than younger households, and

- South Boston and the County have about \$39 million and \$176 million respectively in buying power for goods and services typical of downtown areas.

Many of the findings of the Sales Gap Analysis are still relevant for downtown. Combining this with further guidance from the Virginia Main Street program staff provides direction and focus for downtown planning and future marketing efforts.

Entrance Corridors

The South Boston entry corridors are critical to the overall Town character, as their appearance and vitality are the first and last impressions that visitors have of the community. The main highway corridors leading into South Boston are located along Highway 501 at the northern and southern ends of the Town. Highway 360 is also an entryway into the Town limits in the east, but the 501 corridor leads more directly into the center of downtown and is much more commercially developed than Highway 360.

The northern entryway into South Boston is located along Highway 501 and Old Halifax Road in the Centerville area north of town. The boundaries between South Boston, Halifax and Halifax County are not easily discernable in this area because commercial development from Halifax and South Boston has gradually converged over the rural landscape. Centerville's development pattern is very typical of suburban commercial strip development found throughout North America, with fast food restaurants, gas stations, strip malls, big box retailers and various other businesses and services set back from the four-lane road with large parking lots in the front. Continuing south into Town, however, Highway 501 continues through predominantly residential areas with significant tree cover and green space, interspersed with other uses such as churches, the Middle School, the hospital complex, and the Hupps Mill Plaza shopping center. The 501 entry returns to an older, somewhat denser commercial area just south of the intersection with **Webster Street**, with various commercial uses such as retail, car sales, fast food and various services predominating among a handful of vacant properties.

The southern entryway into South Boston begins around the intersection of Highway 501 and Highway 58 in the Riverdale area, where traffic from the east, west and south come into South Boston. While only Highway 501 north of the intersection is within Town limits, much of the area along Highway 58 is visually associated with South Boston and is perceived as the Town's gateway by the casual visitor. Much of this area is also characterized by typical strip commercial development (though somewhat older), including gas stations, fast food restaurants, strip malls, motels and large-lot commercial establishments such as lumberyards, warehousing and, farther outside of town, Riverstone Technology Park. The area is typified by lots of signage, set back buildings and pavement all oriented to facilitating movement of motorists. The highways through this area are also wide four-lane roads designed to carry heavy traffic loads. Much of the area north of Highway 58 is located in the Dan River floodway and/or floodplain which, in some cases, can limit the improvements that can be made to private properties. In particular, several vacant or unkempt properties detract from other viable, thriving establishments along Highway 501. The southern gateway to South Boston culminates at the Dan River, where views

of downtown and the SVHEC draw people into Town, but the river's banks are inaccessible and untidy.

As the main entryways into South Boston, parts of these corridors present a challenge in terms of visual attractiveness, coordinated signage and development, and aesthetic landscaping and land use. To improve the important first impression to visitors to South Boston's, entrance corridors and particularly the river gateway area must be transformed to present a welcoming and appealing image for the community.



Tourism

In 2019, tourism in the State of Virginia supported 237,000 jobs and generated \$1.8 billion in state and local revenues. This represents a 3.9 percent increase from 2018. A visible heritage and long list of tourism destinations keeps South Boston well-positioned to capture a large share of tourist dollars, a fact affirmed by the County's Vision 2020 Plan. Among the tourism amenities noted are the South Boston downtown, the Prizery, the Museum of Fine Arts and History, Bob Cage's Sculpture Farm, The Tobacco Heritage Trail and Berry Hill Plantation and Resort.

The regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy spearheaded by the Southside Planning District Commission discusses development of tourism as a specific strategy for the three-county region. It recommends conducting regional market research to identify new audiences for tourism activities and creating an inventory of available resources in the area. In particular, eco-tourism is mentioned as having strong potential in this region, closely linked with the region's multi-modal trails projects.

Indeed, the wider South Boston area already benefits from its tourists and visitors. Halifax County's tourism economy grew by 6.9 percent in 2018, the sixth highest growth rate in Virginia, as visitors contributed \$52 million in estimated spending for the year.

Sources: pressroomvirginia.org and Halifax County Tourism

Challenges and Opportunities

Because of the historic economic focus on tobacco, textiles and manufacturing, the South Boston economy has been impacted by the decline of these sectors over time. Current regional strategies propose diversifying the economy through policies that expand existing business and industry clusters, assisting businesses to refocus and retraining the workforce for targeted industries, and supporting programs for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

South Boston has great potential to capture a larger economic benefit from tourism. Indeed, it is noted in the Vision 2020 report that Halifax County “has a potentially untapped economic resource in its many tourism-service amenities,” particularly in tourism related to motorsports, heritage and history, and outdoors and recreation. The expansion of community amenities attractive to tourism, including trail and greenway systems, new festivals and events, and restoration and reuse of historic structures combined with focused marketing and partnerships between key players, will have a positive impact on the area’s tourism numbers. It was also noted in Vision 2020 that local tax receipts appeared low relative to surrounding localities. A key part of realizing an expanded tourism benefit, however, includes ensuring that a strong base of supporting businesses and other elements exists, including specialty retail stores, well-developed attractions and connections between them, and hospitality businesses.

Revitalization of the downtown area should build on the appealing historic resources of the downtown, but also focus on improving the mix of uses in downtown. A stronger retail draw is needed downtown, and downtown housing, including above commercial first floor businesses, would bring more people into the downtown area, improve the sense of activity in downtown, and serve to diversify the range of housing options in South Boston. Additional efforts should continue to focus on improving the downtown’s appeal to tourists and locals, with more retail options for people in the middle- to upper-income range. Assistance to struggling downtown businesses may help them to reposition themselves for more buyers, and efforts to develop and expand downtown business clusters should be made. Developing a façade rehabilitation program could also help property owners improve the visual appeal of their buildings. Many have expressed interest in opening a boutique hotel in the downtown, perhaps in the former John Randolph Hotel building. South Boston may want to consider establishing a service district tax for the downtown area to help pay for programs and initiatives aimed at further revitalizing the downtown area.

The Imperial Tobacco Building (also known as the Tultex Building) is an architectural gem located on Watkins Avenue in close proximity to the SVHEC and downtown. **This property, Imperial**



Lofts has been developed into apartments, offices, commercial and educational space, in coordination with a larger master plan effort for the SVHEC and entertainment district plan for the downtown area. A number of buildings and properties either are vacant, underutilized, or otherwise ripe for potential redevelopment to become assets for community economic development.

The Town should also study the possibilities for reworking existing one-way traffic patterns in downtown to increase access to area businesses. One-way streets are suited better to through traffic than to traffic destined for downtown. Studies in other communities have shown that where one-way streets were converted to two-way streets in downtown areas, the area businesses experienced a marked increase in customer traffic. Particularly as South Boston works to increase its appeal to tourists, one-way streets downtown will prove confusing and frustrating for visitors, leaving many with negative impressions of downtown and its businesses. With the professional guidance of a traffic engineer and collaboration with VDOT, the Town should study and develop a plan for opening downtown streets to two-way traffic; this could also expand opportunities for on-street parking and possibly create an exciting new downtown entryway at the convergence of Main, Wall and Broad Streets.

The main entry corridors of South Boston need improvement to reduce visual clutter, coordinate access and signage among properties, and to promote more landscaping and less paved area generally. Corridor development guidelines should be provided to improve the visual approaches to South Boston by guiding the design of new development and recommending modifications to existing facades, landscaping, and parking areas. To be effective, these need to be developed in partnership with property owners.

A number of local and regional entities, including the SVHEC, the high school and the local community colleges, are working to boost job skills and training among the local workforce. The Town should continue to collaborate with these groups to help under skilled and unemployed workers retool to become productive members of the area's workforce. In particular, the Town should help these groups connect with the immediate and anticipated needs of local businesses, as well as businesses that are targeted for the region's new economy. Partnership opportunities exist with Halifax County Public Schools, the SVHEC, and groups like the Dan River Region Collaborative, established in 2008 with an initial focus on skills for the green economy. In particular, the SVHEC is actively fulfilling a role as an economic change agent for the Southern Virginia region by helping the local workforce prepare for the changing economy. Established programs and partnerships exist in a wide variety of fields, and the SVHEC is proceeding with strong new programs advanced technology manufacturing, product design and development, energy and environmental modeling, and hospitality and tourism. The SVHEC's R&D Innovation Center that will directly address the research needs of regional manufacturers and help train area workers in response to the technological needs of regional industry.

Guiding Policies and Actions

2040 Economic Development Policies and Strategies	
ED1. The future economy of South Boston should be diversified and build upon a variety of complimentary sectors, including: health care; motorsports; wood and plastic products; agriculture; tourism and hospitality; and transportation and warehousing.	
Strategy 1.1:	Develop a detailed economic development strategy for South Boston that identifies priority economic development efforts and special initiatives/projects that may require public infrastructure. Coordinate with Halifax County Economic Development Strategic Plan. Update on an annual basis.
ED2. The natural environment, historic resources and cultural assets of South Boston offer unique opportunities for additional economic development. Tourism is a fundamental component of the Town economic development strategy, and efforts to develop the tourism sector should be strengthened.	
Strategy 2.1:	Develop a local and regional tourism plan that effectively sets forth a work strategy for enhancing and improving tourism opportunities and efforts. Designate coordinating champions and establish a working committee that is responsible for assembling partners, implementing projects, and reporting progress.
Strategy 2.2:	Facilitate expansion of existing businesses and attract new businesses that support the tourism industry. Encourage development in downtown that will provide supporting services for tourists (e.g., hotel, retail, restaurants, etc.)
Strategy 2.3:	Continue to implement the recommendations of downtown wayfinding signage plan. In particular, provide landscaping for entry signage and install consolidated wayfinding signage throughout Town to orient tourists.
ED3. Development should protect the historic character of South Boston and enhance the community visual and environmental integrity, as these are key to a high standard of living and are marketable amenities to tourists and employers.	
Strategy 3.1:	Develop commercial corridor guidelines to improve the visual appeal of entrance corridors to South Boston, particularly in Centerville and Riverdale. Coordinate with adjacent localities for areas beyond Town limits.
Strategy 3.2:	Encourage preservation of rural character and protection of viewsheds in areas surrounding South Boston.
ED4. The artistic and cultural amenities of South Boston are important to the quality of life in the community. These sectors should be promoted and strengthened as part of the economic development strategy for the Town.	

Strategy 4.1:	Support efforts of local artisans and cultural groups to develop and expand art, music and culture programs in the Town. Provide direction for private efforts to develop facilities for these programs, particularly in underutilized buildings or properties in the downtown area. Coordinate these efforts with other plans in the community, such as expansion of recreational and educational facilities.
ED5. Downtown South Boston is the historical center of community life and is essential to the unique identity and economic vitality of the Town. Downtown revitalization is the key to South Boston economic development.	
Strategy 5.1	Improve the balance between businesses, services and housing in the downtown. Consider amending the zoning ordinance to require ground floor uses to be restricted to retail. Support the development of retail shops in downtown and encourage development of housing in downtown buildings, including upper floor housing over first-floor commercial shops. Consider financial and incentives and tax cuts for housing. Continue to support existing businesses and support coordination and communication among businesses.
Strategy 5.2:	Support and encourage downtown events that draw visitors into downtown. Encourage collaboration between downtown businesses, event organizers and major downtown institutions (farmer’s market, SVHEC, etc.).
Strategy 5.3:	Encourage sensitive rehabilitation and re-use of vacant or underutilized buildings and properties for businesses and housing. Consider opportunities to serve the facility needs of events programming, SVHEC expansion and other facility needs of community groups.
Strategy 5.4:	Continue utilizing the resources of Virginia Main Street in planning for downtown revitalization.
ED6. Workforce training is a critical tool for redeveloping the community’s economy. The Town should work with local businesses, the school system, the SVHEC and other agencies to facilitate targeted development of these programs.	
Strategy 6.1	Facilitate and lead communication between local businesses and training providers to develop training programs that meet local needs and prepare underutilized workers for the future economy.

Special Action Projects

The entry corridors to South Boston, particularly those leading into the downtown area, are important to the overall Town character. As South Boston prepares to boost its tourism sector, the impression created by these Town entry corridors will be important to future economic development.

Within the Centerville area, guidelines should be developed that improve the visual quality of the commercial corridors by providing for landscape buffers to soften views of development, establishing guidelines for signage and site design, and minimizing the visual impact of parking, storage areas, and utilities. Several recommendations are listed in the Land Use section below.

The Riverdale entry corridor faces many similar challenges in visual appeal and environmental impact. As in Centerville, guidelines should be developed along Highway 501 and Highway 58. Because much of the Highway 58 area is outside South Boston's Town limits, the Town should work with the County to develop and enforce these guidelines.

The Highway 501 area in Riverdale (north of Highway 58) faces additional challenges due to the area's location within the Dan River floodway. Development in this area is older than in Centerville, and federal floodway regulations limit the improvements that can be made to existing properties. Because the area is in the floodplain and floodway, the Town should adopt a policy to steer the area toward a more compatible land use, but without damaging the viability of existing businesses along the corridor.

The graphics that follow indicate both a short-term and long-term concept for the 501 corridor in Riverdale. The first shows a near term concept, with visual enhancements for the area to be made while businesses in Riverdale are operating and thriving. The concepts indicated can be thought of as a toolbox of ideas, to be implemented as applicable to the individual properties primarily by property owners and the Town to improve the visual appeal of their businesses. The second poster indicates a long-term proposal for the corridor, with open spaces and protected areas within the floodplain. This vision may take decades to implement and can be accomplished as property owners willingly place their property on the market as the natural life cycles of their businesses determine. The Town should establish a fund and solicit grant funding to purchase these properties at fair market value as they come on the market, gradually clearing them for environmental restoration and conversion to a land use that is more appropriate for floodplains. It is intended that any future gateway improvements or median on Highway 501 South would be coordinated closely with area businesses and that appropriate engineering and design studies would be undertaken to minimize the impact on any existing business operations.

Riverdale Area

Short-term strategies

Much of Riverdale's location is in a flood-prone area, which limits the public and private improvements that can be made to existing properties. But a lot can be done by property owners and the area business association to enhance this commercial corridor in keeping with appropriate land uses within the floodway. Reducing pavement, organizing parking and vehicle circulation, adding landscaping, and consolidating signs will improve views of the area. Though the flood risk remains, the area will be transformed into an attractive gateway that reflects a progressive and economically vibrant community.

Key Issues:

- Too many signs
- Numerous curb cuts
- Too much pavement
- Not enough landscaping
- Lack of maintenance (pavement, some buildings) and abandoned properties
- Haphazard parking (cars and trucks)

Because of the speed of traffic passing through the area, a lot of "visual clutter" keeps drivers from seeing businesses and quickly knowing how to get into the property. Often it is hard to know when one business ends and another begins.



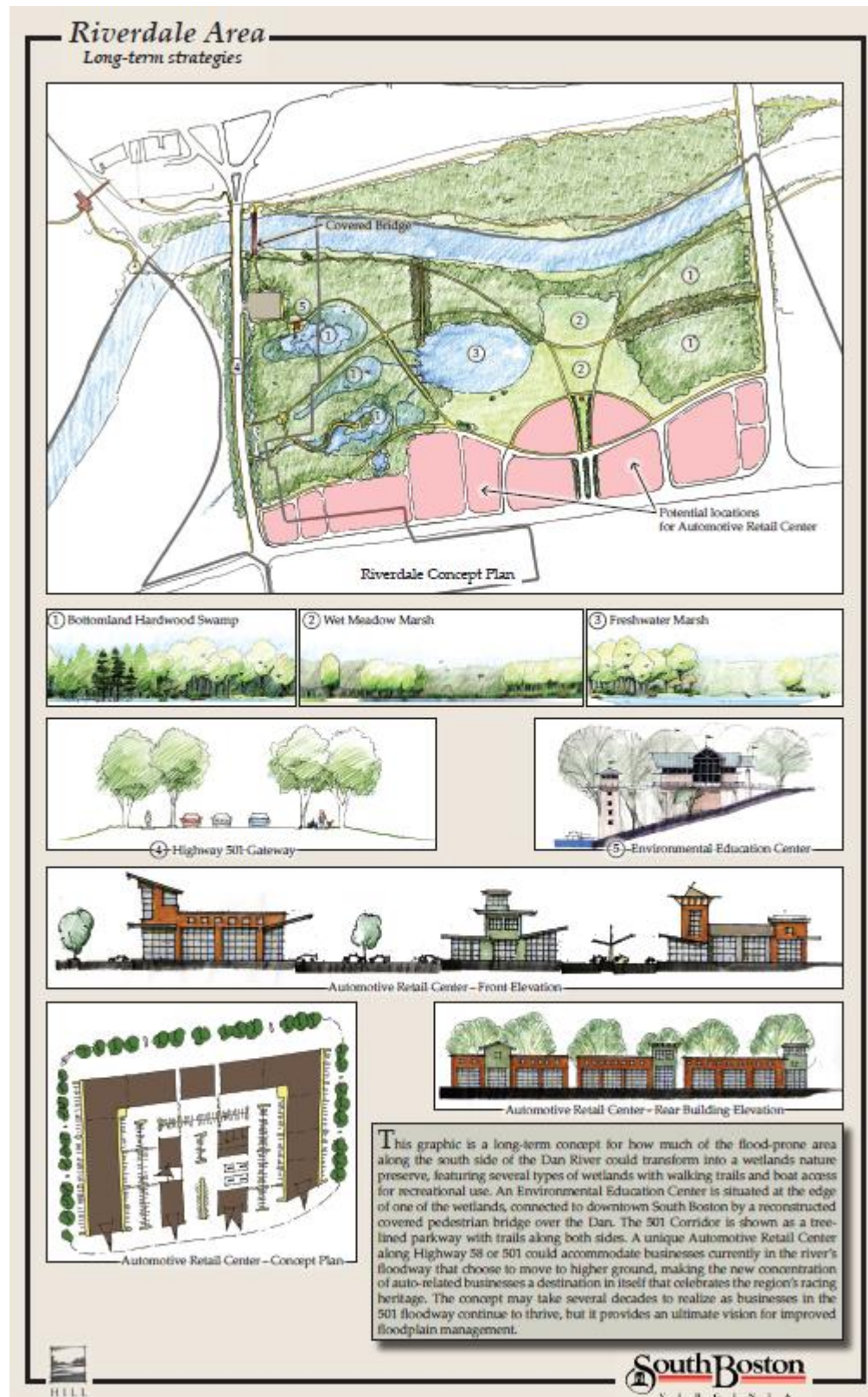
Utilities are located at rear of properties, where possible



Short-term concept for Riverdale, including existing businesses along Highway 501 and Wildlife Preserve along the river.

Other Recommendations:

- No billboards or movable signs
- Landscape between the storefront and street
- Share parking between businesses
- Paint building surfaces uniformly with a coordinated color scheme
- Consider coordinated signage interpreting area's history and previous flood levels

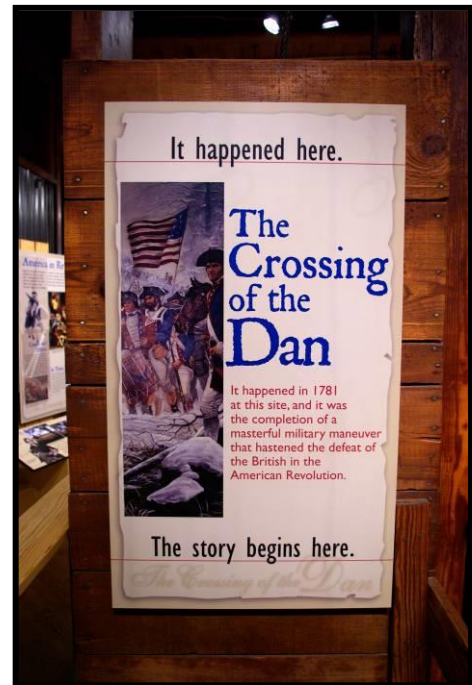


History and Culture

Community history is one of the key assets for South Boston. Indeed, local pride in the community's history is evident in the well-preserved buildings of downtown and surrounding residential neighborhoods and in the world-class interpretive exhibits of the Prizery. In recognition of efforts to preserve and promote the historic downtown, South Boston was designated a Virginia Main Street community in 2004.

Historic District & Resources

South Boston has a historic district listed on both the Virginia and National Historic Registers. The district was established in 1986 to encompass much of the downtown, the area surrounding the former Halifax Cotton Mill, and residential areas surrounding Main Street up to Mount Olive Church. A 2008 expansion brought several adjacent areas into the historic district, including the neighborhoods of Marshall Avenue, the New Brick Warehouse, Mizpah Church and North Main Street to



Hamilton Boulevard. A published and virtual walking tour allows visitors to learn about the historic district and its contributing buildings. However, the national and state historic district designation does not provide any local regulation for modifications, demolitions, or new construction within the district.

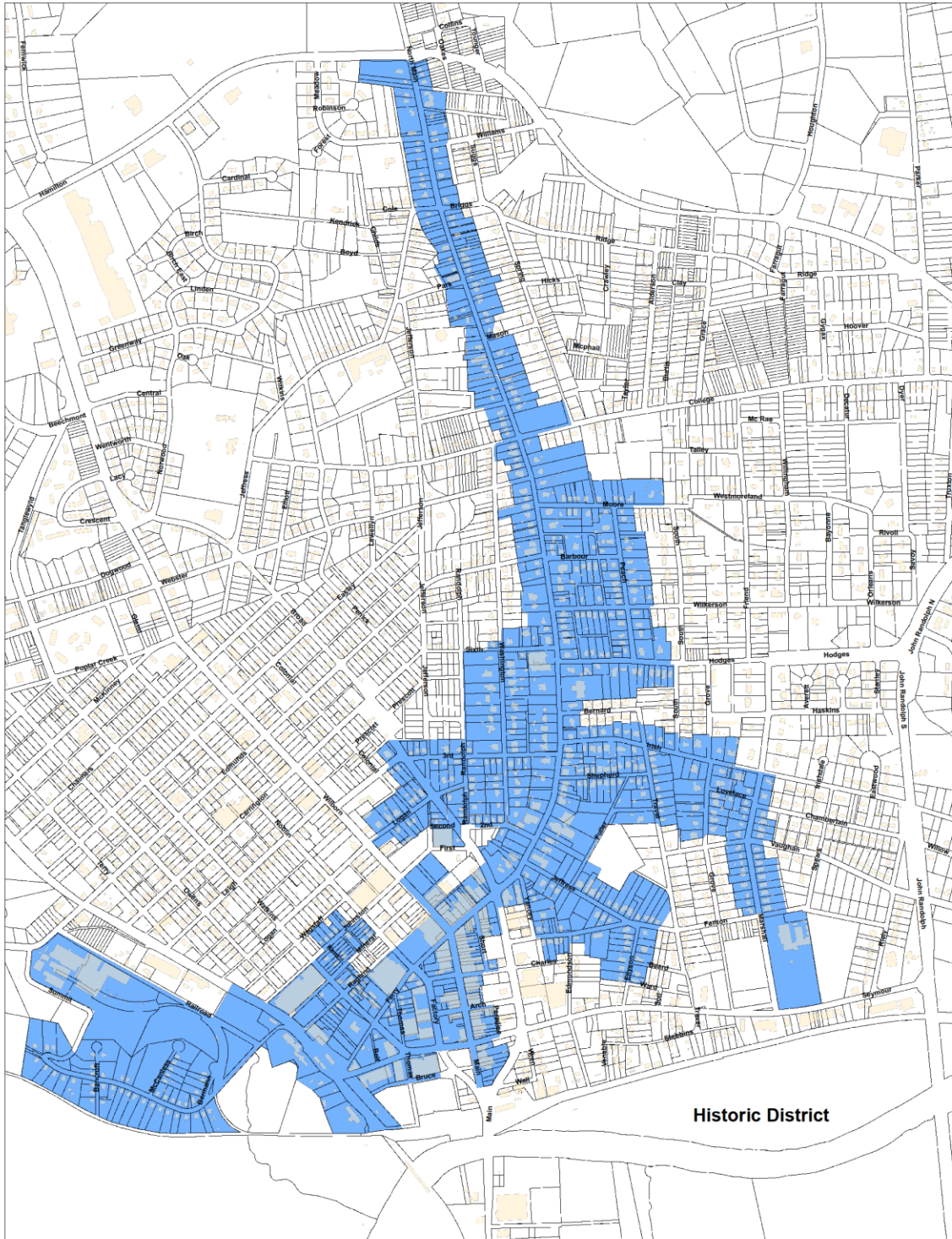
Other key historic resources are noteworthy beyond the established historic district. As a National Historic Landmark, Berry Hill is one of the most significant historic resources in the community. Formerly a large plantation centered on an antebellum Greek Revival mansion, Berry Hill has recently been converted into a luxury resort and conference center. A Native American archaeological site along the Dan River is owned and managed by the Archaeological Conservancy. South Boston is also featured on several regional heritage routes, including the Greene's Crossing Historic Trail, the Tobacco Heritage Trail and the Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail. These are discussed more fully in the Transportation section.

Arts and Culture

South Boston has two museums within its borders. The South Boston – Halifax County Museum of Fine Arts and History emphasizes the history of Halifax County and the region with permanent and temporary exhibits and programs for the public. **The Museum** hosts the award-winning *Crossing of the Dan* historic exhibit. The Prizery is a regional community and fine arts center that promotes the arts and history of the region. The community also has number of civic groups, art associations and guilds that support and promote the arts in the community. The Town frequently partners with these groups and with the SVHEC to develop arts initiatives that will benefit the local culture and economy. A number of private arts organizations, galleries and

venues such as the Bob Cage Sculpture Farm have been established to help make South Boston an arts destination.

Additionally, South Boston hosts a number of annual festivals and public events that draw people from the Town and surrounding region to enjoy fun activities. Among these events are **the Fourth of July Parade and fireworks**, the South Boston Harvest Festival in September, the **Veterans Day Parade in November** and the Christmas Parade during the holiday season. Recently a citizen group has formed around the idea of hosting a multi-day arts festival to attract visitors to South Boston as an arts destination, with multiple venues for exhibitions and performances throughout the Town.



0 300 600 1,200 Feet



Hope Cole
Planning Department

Challenges and Opportunities

The deep history of South Boston is important to Town residents who have noted their desire to see community history preserved and celebrated. Town residents have incorporated historic preservation and celebration in a number of projects already, from the restoration of tobacco warehouses for the Prizery and SVHEC to the designation of a large portion of the downtown as a historic district. The Town should coordinate various stakeholders to develop innovative and creative means to incorporate interpretive displays, use design that recalls earlier forms and development, and rehabilitate historic structures in upcoming projects, as was done with the conceptual design for Cotton Mill Park and recommended for North Main Street in conjunction with the Greene's Crossing Trail plan.

The Town of South Boston has already formed successful partnerships with local organizations and agencies to achieve noteworthy successes in preservation and the promotion of community history. Its designation as a Virginia Main Street Community gives access to the expertise and resources of the Virginia Main Street program to strengthen and improve the historic character of downtown for economic development, and the Town should continue to make use of Main Street resources.

A strong arts movement is underway within South Boston, sparked by a number of groups including the Parsons-Bruce Art Association, the Prizery, the Convergence Art Guild and others who seek to expand the role of the arts in the community. The Town should support the efforts of these groups to host festivals and exhibitions in South Boston that will attract visitors from beyond the region. The Town should also work with these groups to develop an Arts District Master Plan that builds upon existing community resources such as the Prizery, the SVHEC, and new art galleries and retail shops to tie in plans for underutilized properties, performance venues and parks in the vicinity. South Boston should also consider designating the downtown as an Arts and Cultural District, with incentives aimed at attracting arts-related businesses and spurring revitalization.

The Town needs to establish stringent controls to regulate development activity in historic neighborhoods. Currently, South Boston lacks the regulatory authority to ensure that new construction or rehabilitation in the historic district preserves and enhances the historic character of these areas, and the investments made by the Town and private property owners in these areas can be threatened by inappropriate development. A strong historic overlay district or neighborhood conservation district should be established to regulate construction and rehabilitation work in the historic district. Design guidelines for historic residential and commercial areas should also be considered to guide property owners toward appropriate choices in building or modifying structures in historic areas. A citizen panel should be established to review and approve proposed building improvements, with regulations for infill development and an established review process for new development. This citizen panel should focus efforts initially on the downtown area, but may expand to residential portions of the historic district once the process is well-established.

Guiding Policies and Actions

The policies and more detailed strategies below provide a guiding framework for the Town to promote historic preservation, arts and culture in South Boston.

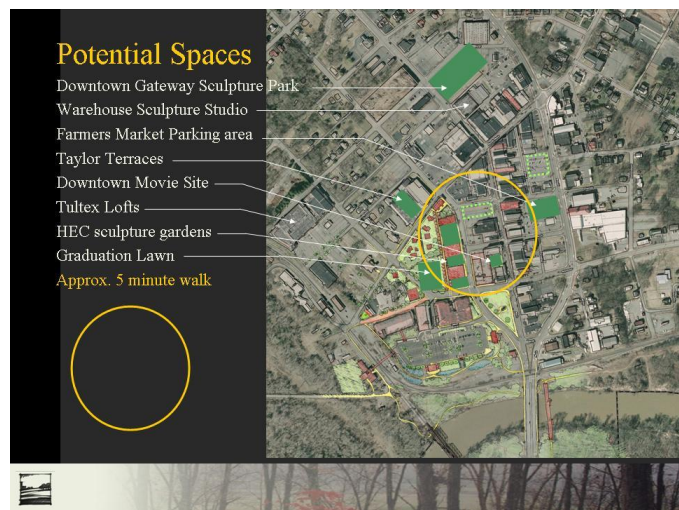
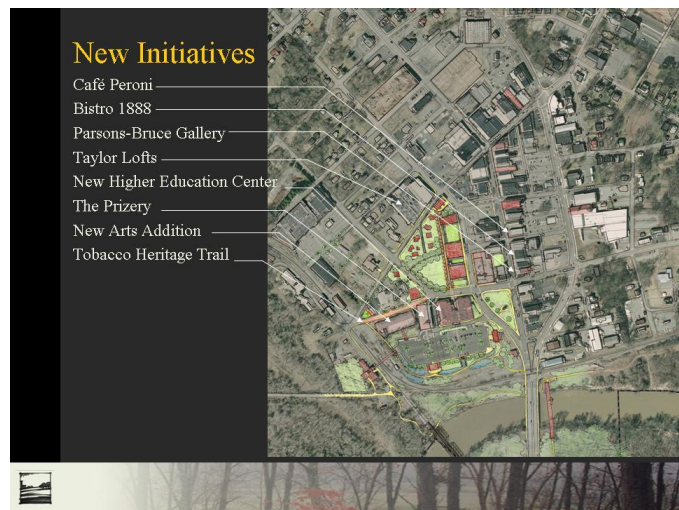
2040 History and Culture Policies and Strategies	
HC1. Community history is key to the rich and unique identity of South Boston. The heritage should be protected, celebrated, and shared with residents and visitors.	
Strategy 1.1:	Strengthen local regulations to protect historic properties and neighborhoods. Consider a historic overlay district or neighborhood conservation district. Establish design review guidelines to encourage appropriate building rehabilitation and infill development. Establish a suitable review and approval process for building improvements.
Strategy 1.2:	Develop information tools and facilities to provide increased public access and interpretive displays at key historic sites in Town, including the Crossing of the Dan site, the archaeological Native American site, the historic district, Boyd’s Ferry (Riverdale) and other historic sites in Town.
HC2. Arts, music and culture boost tourism interests and add richness to life in South Boston. Efforts to expand and promote various forms of cultural activity in South Boston should be supported.	
Strategy 2.1:	Support and encourage private and non-profit efforts to develop arts and cultural events and venues, emphasizing efforts that serve economic development purposes.
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue and facilitate development of an Arts District Master Plan that will evaluate the feasibility of specific market opportunities and display or performance venues that will attract regional residents and tourists to downtown South Boston. Submit for grant funding (e.g., Tobacco Commission, Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, National Endowment for the Arts, etc.)
Strategy 2.3:	Consider designating Downtown as an Arts and Cultural District with incentives to attract arts-related businesses to underutilized properties.

Special Action Projects

Several citizens and private groups joined forces around the goal of making South Boston a regional arts destination. In June of 2008, this group held a conference on the theme of “Building Communities Through the Arts” at the Prizery, followed by a second conference in October of 2009 as a continuation of this theme. Many would like to see South Boston eventually host a multi-day festival celebrating the visual and performing arts in the community. This event would aim to attract thousands of visitors to the Town, and group leaders have cited the Charleston, SC, *Spoletto* festival as a model to adapt to the South Boston context. In addition to programmatic and organizational needs, a range of infrastructure needs must also be met, including venues for public performances in the downtown area.

A number of private and public initiatives already are underway in the downtown area on which to develop a critical mass of artistic efforts, potentially culminating with the creation of an Arts District for the community. South Boston can make use of its existing spaces and facilities, and with relatively little financial investment create some unique studios, sculpture parks, and spaces with multiple purposes. Many small-town precedents may be found within Virginia for creating multi-purpose spaces in downtowns and activating the area with arts and music events, including in Floyd and Tazewell.

Several areas around the downtown present opportunities for arts-related spaces, including an outdoor movie lawn in one of the vacant lots on Main Street, a



-- Energize Downtown South Boston!

Central Green for the SVHEC that could also function as an outdoor performance venue, and easy one-day transformations of downtown parking lots for festival events. Ideally, a range of spaces would be available with varying characteristics (small and large spaces, special acoustical needs, sun and shade, etc.) but in close, accessible proximity to one another in downtown. Linking the various spaces to each other and to other existing community facilities with improved pedestrian routes and even streetscape treatment will be important. Other opportunities for arts-related spaces include a potential sculpture park on the former Planters Warehouse site, **space in the redeveloped Imperial Lofts Building** for arts uses and artist living space, and even development of a performance area at the Crossing of the Dan site along the river. These areas would be additional activity areas to be tied into the performance areas and other existing arts-related venues.

While such a comprehensive effort will be financially driven primarily by the private and non-profit sectors, the Town should support and guide efforts to enhance the economic impact of arts and culture on the community's development. As plans develop for hosting a large arts festival, the Town should work with arts groups and others to help the community develop necessary infrastructure, including performance venues, pedestrian connections, and parking, as well as ancillary tourist infrastructure. The Town should play a coordinating role, ensuring that development of performance venues, parking upgrades, traffic management and vehicular and pedestrian connections are integrated with a larger plan for downtown development, SVHEC expansion, uses for underutilized buildings, regional trails connections and local connections between community resources and the Dan River.



Potential Sculpture Park at entry of downtown

Parks, Open Space and Recreation

South Boston is a Town endowed with numerous natural amenities. The dense downtown area and residential neighborhoods surrounding it are literally encircled by a greenbelt of forests, fields and open spaces. Additionally, the Town has a number of public and private parks and recreation facilities throughout the community, as well as concept plans for several new facilities to be built in the future.

Area Parks and Community Facilities

The South Boston Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide range of recreational programming for all age groups in the community. The department works closely with the Halifax County Parks and Recreation Department, sharing facilities and jointly running some programs for Town and County residents. South Boston's Parks and Recreation Department maintains four parks throughout the community: *North Main Street Park*, *Grove Avenue Park*, *Penick Avenue Park* and *Vaughan Street Park*. These feature ball courts,



picnic areas and playground equipment for the surrounding neighborhood residents. A park has recently been completed in the Church Hill area, between Ragland and Mineral Streets. A 2005 Concept Plan for *Cotton Mill Park* calls for playing fields, walking trails and picnic shelters on the site of the former Damask Cotton Mill, west of downtown. This park is included in the Town's Strategic Goals and the most recent Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Halifax County maintains *Paul C. Edmunds Memorial Park*, a larger facility with several ball courts, walking trails, picnic areas, playing fields, fishing pond and serenity garden on Dan River Church Road in South Boston. Planned expansions for Edmunds Park in the future include a Visitor's Center, amphitheater and water park and a Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

Two public community facilities are located in the Town. The *Vaughan Armory* features a gym and weight facilities and also houses the Recreation Department offices and many group activities and programs. The former *Washington-Coleman School* site on Jeffress Boulevard hosts a community center and the area pre-Kindergarten program, along with a playing field. A planned expansion of this facility will add space for a day care, a gym and weight room. Implementation of this expansion is specifically mentioned in the Town Strategic Goals and is also supported in the current CIP. Though not Town-owned, other key recreation facilities include the Day Complex Dixie Youth fields and the South Boston-Halifax County YMCA. The YMCA offers a range of programs for children and adults, but has additional programming and

facility needs, including added programs for adults and seniors, pool renovations, child day care and a teen center.

The Tobacco Heritage Trail is a regional system of multi-use trails utilizing abandoned railroad routes throughout Halifax, Brunswick and Mecklenburg counties. In South Boston, the Trail follows the former Richmond and Danville Railroad between the downtown area and the Dan River, with a spur trail to connect to the future Cotton Mill Park. **Completion of the Wildlife and Recreational Trail which connects the Tobacco Heritage Trail to the downtown business district within South Boston is a priority.**

The Dan River

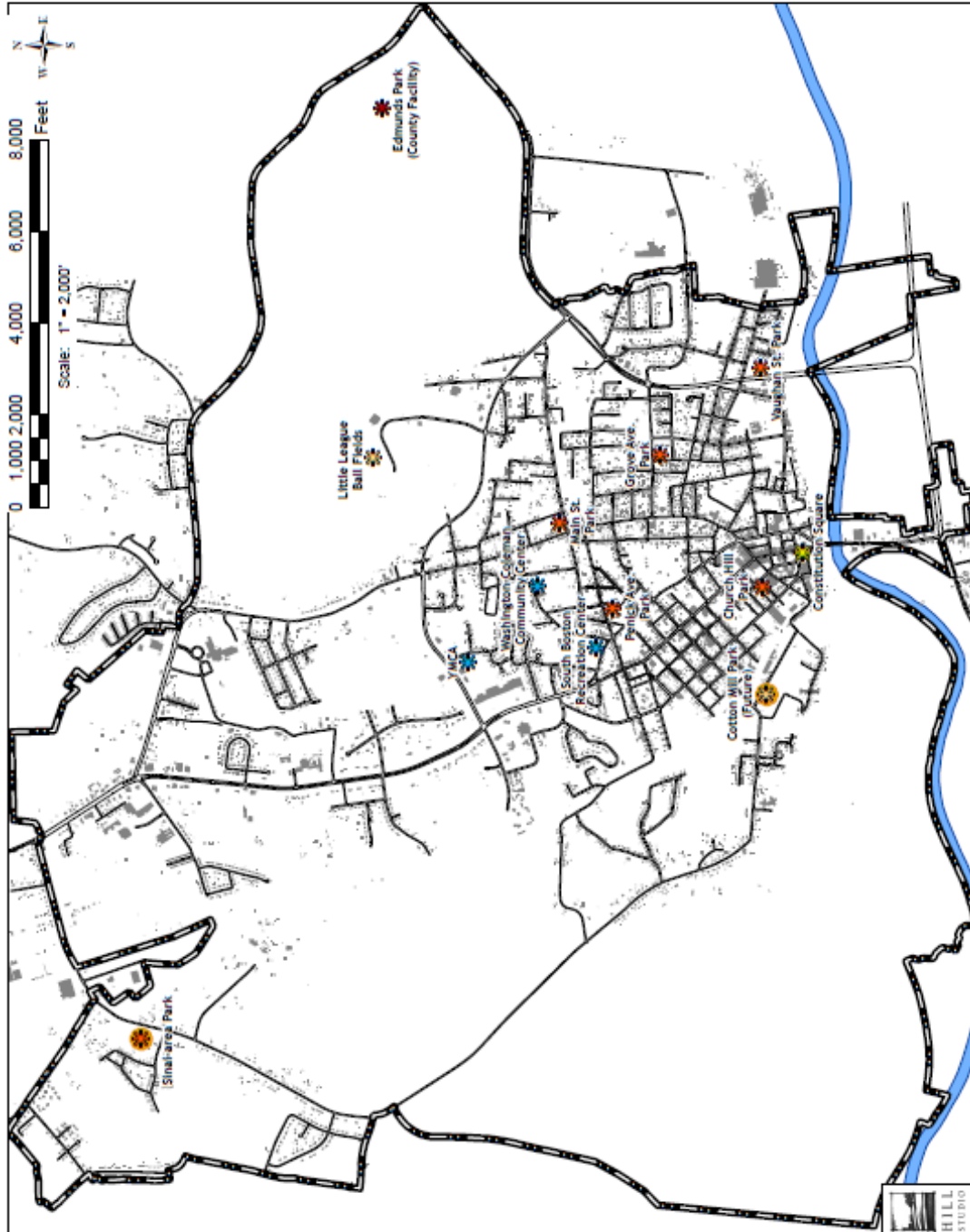
The Dan River is a key potential recreational resource for the Town. Currently, one public boat landing is located on the river in South Boston off of Highway 360. **In 2019, the Town of South Boston received a grant from the Recreational Trails Program of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation for the Greene's Crossing Boat Landing in the Riverdale area.** When completed, the Tobacco Heritage Trail will run alongside the river for several miles, improving connections to the river. A concept plan is also being developed for a marker and access at the historic *Crossing of the Dan* site.

Ducks Unlimited, a national organization dedicated to conserving, restoring and managing wetlands for waterfowl habitat, owns and manages 30 acres of land along the north bank of the Dan River, near Berry Hill. The Archaeological Conservancy, which acquires and preserves archaeological sites throughout the United States, also owns a tract of land along the Dan that is home to a Native American archaeological site. Both of these areas may provide open space opportunities where access can better connect people to the river.

A native son of South Boston, Ward Burton, has acquired property along the river to be used as a wildlife refuge and wetlands protection area. Although the site is located just outside Town limits, there may be opportunities for the Town to collaborate with this effort and establish links from the Town to this area.

A proposal has been made to have the Dan River through much of Halifax County and the South Boston area designated as a blueway by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Like land-based greenway trails, a blueway is a designated trail system via water bodies. Designating the Dan River to be a blueway will require public access and rest stop points, as well support facilities such as parking and restroom facilities, signage and optimally, canoe rentals and picnic areas.

Parks & Recreation Facilities



Challenges and Opportunities

Although no recent Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been developed for South Boston, the current Town Capital Improvement Program from 2006 contains detailed plans for two new park spaces: a park with playground and picnic shelter in the Sinai area and a small wayside near Mount Olive Church on North Main Street. A location has been selected and cleared for the Sinai-area park, and the North Main wayside will be located on Town property and is featured in the Concept Plan for Greene's Crossing Trail and Greenway.

Demand from all age groups has grown stronger for programs from the Parks and Recreation Department. Senior users are a particularly fast-growing user group, and facilities and program planning will need to consider the recreational needs of an aging population. Strong pressure is already evident on the existing facilities at the Vaughan Armory, and another gymnasium is needed with dual courts and locker rooms. The South Boston Parks and Recreation Department already works closely with that of Halifax County sharing programs and facilities, and the two should consider a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan to prioritize better the needs for the region's facilities and programming for the coming years.

The Dan River has played an important role in South Boston history. The Crossing of the Dan in the Revolutionary War, the river flooding and subsequent relocation of the first South Boston settlement, and key ferry and bridge connections to points south of the river have all shaped the development of South Boston. Despite this important history, few means exist for citizens to interact with the river, leaving tremendous unmet potential for recreational interactions with the Dan, particularly at the *Crossing of the Dan* site and in establishing the river as a blueway.

A number of other ideas came from the design workshop held in February of 2009. The Riverdale area provides an excellent opportunity in the designated floodway for future improvements to land that will promote open space land uses that are environmentally friendly and consistent with sound floodplain management. Public access through designated open spaces would allow greater access to the river. Much of the area from the Dan River to Highway 58 is located in the floodplain and is less suitable for expanded commercial use. Aside from existing commercial properties along the highways, the area bounded by the river and Highways 58, 501 and 360 is largely undeveloped, low-lying land. One idea that emerged from the February 2009 design workshop was to transform this undeveloped area into a riverside park and protected wetlands area, with walking trails and interpretive/educational signage located throughout. The park could be linked to downtown South Boston via a reconstruction of the historic wooden covered bridge, whose pylons still stand in the river east of the Route 501 Bridge. An elevated and flood-safe Visitor's Center could be constructed near the southern terminus of the reconstructed bridge, serving as a new home for both the tourism office and the *Crossing of the Dan* exhibit (both of which have space needs in their existing locations). Because much of the area is currently located in the County, collaboration between the localities will be important.

Guiding Policies and Actions

The following policies provide guidance for planning, managing and developing recreational facilities and open space in South Boston. The supplemental goals provide additional detail for each policy, while implementation strategies are recommended to achieve them.

2040 Parks, Open Space and Recreation Policies and Strategies	
PR1. Recreational opportunities are important amenities for the South Boston community. Access to programmed and passive recreation opportunities should be supported.	
Strategy 1.1:	Partner with other localities, funding agencies, and local groups and businesses to implement regional trail facilities, including the Tobacco Heritage Trail and the Greene’s Crossing Heritage Greenway Trail.
Strategy 1.2:	Implement plans for recreational facilities, including Cotton Mill Park and Washington-Coleman Elementary School expansion . Work with residents in the Sinai area to locate a site for a neighborhood park in the northwestern part of Town.
Strategy 1.3:	Develop a joint <i>Parks and Recreation Master Plan</i> with Halifax County to determine and prioritize program and facilities needs for the Town and County.
PR2. The Dan River is a key natural and recreational resource for South Boston. Expand physical and visual connections to the River.	
Strategy 2.1:	Work with Halifax County and private property owners to protect natural areas along the Dan River. In developed areas, encourage conservation of the floodplain and carefully manage land uses and site development to reduce property damages and loss of investment.
Strategy 2.2:	Develop more public access and open spaces along the river. Work with Duck’s Unlimited, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Halifax County Historical Society, Norfolk Southern Railroad, and others.
Strategy 2.3:	Champion designation of the Dan River as an official “blueway.” Work to include it as part of a regional recreational waterways network. Include it as a resource in the Virginia Outdoors Plan and other recreational documents. Establish additional public access points to the river.

Special Action Projects

The Cotton Mill Park plan is an excellent concept and will be a prime asset to the surrounding area. Its implementation is already underway with engineering studies being conducted. Implementation should continue to be a priority to serve residents of the surrounding area and help spark other redevelopment initiatives.

Work should also move forward to open up areas of land adjacent to the Dan River for public access and recreational purposes. In particular, plans for the site of the *Crossing of the Dan* should be developed, with interpretive displays and also facilities that tie into the Tobacco Heritage Trail. The Town should also work closely with Halifax County to facilitate plans to protect areas along the south banks of the river, between Highways 501 and 360 and open these areas for public access walking trails and other recreational uses appropriate for sensitive areas.

The Tobacco Heritage Trail and the Greene's Crossing Heritage Trail Greenway are underway, and the Town should continue to push for implementation of these plans to expand multimodal connections and potential for recreational biking and walking routes. The Greene's Crossing Trail also includes a concept for an outdoor plaza space on North Main, which will not only enhance the surrounding neighborhood, but also provide local residents with an inviting outdoor gathering space.

Transportation

Modern communities are largely shaped by historic transportation patterns, and a look at a map of South Boston reveals much of the history of the community. Street names like Ferry and Factory recall important aspects of old South Boston, while names like Hamilton, Jeffress and Bruce recall prominent families in the community. Transportation modes and trends evolve over time, and South Boston will have to respond and anticipate changes to serve citizens and businesses of the community.

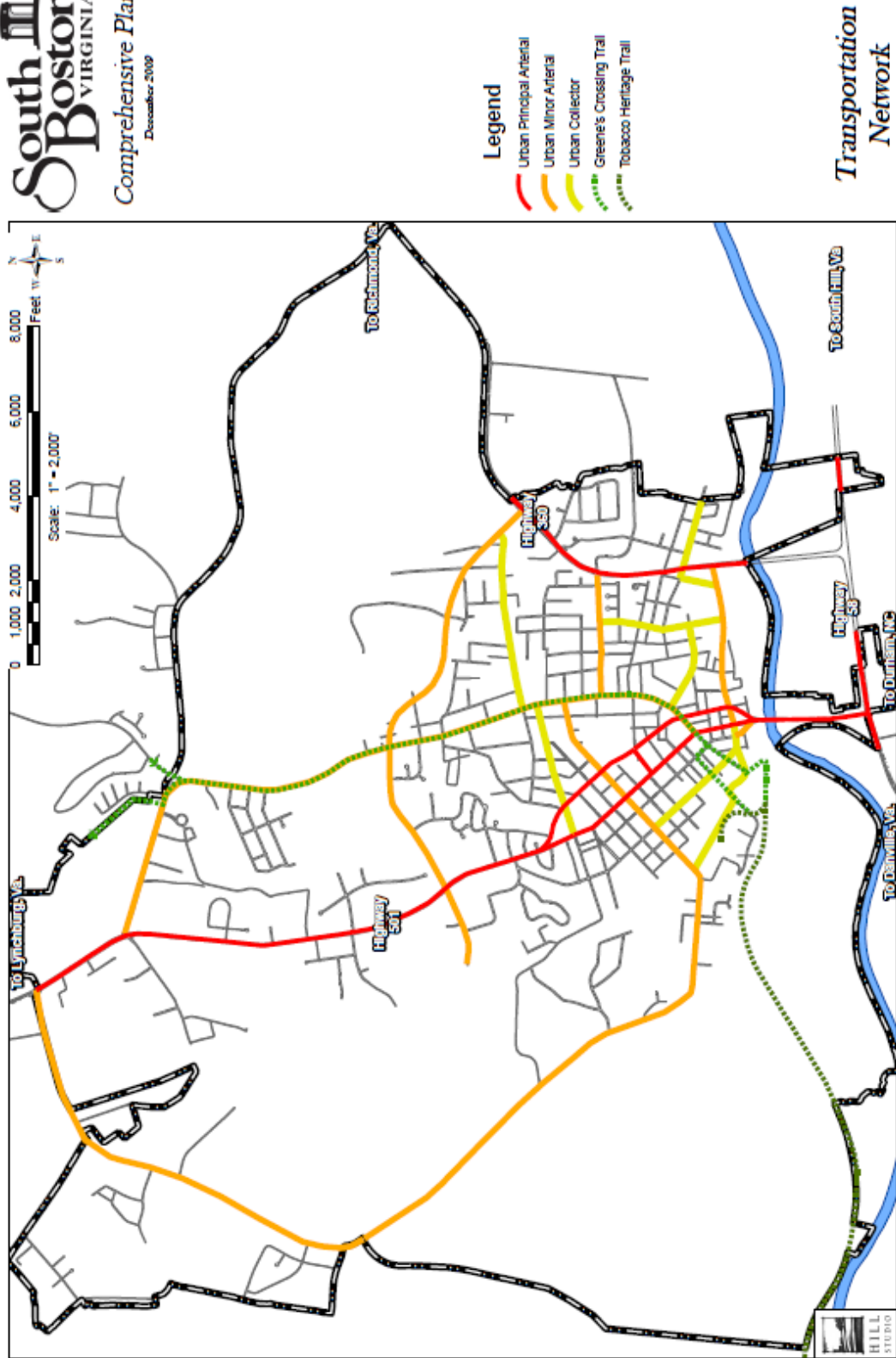
Streets and Multi-modal Systems

The South Boston Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and management of the street network in the Town. The Virginia Department of Transportation provides transportation planning services and financial contributions for transportation improvements. This Comprehensive Plan reflects the recently adopted *South Boston 2035 Transportation Plan*⁶ which is included as an appendix to this plan for additional reference.

A map of the existing transportation system in South Boston is depicted on the following page. Streets are classified as urban arterials, collectors, and local in accordance with the functional classification system adopted by VDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. The following table explains these classifications further.

VDOT Functional Street Classifications	
Urban Principal Arterial	These highways are the most significant roads in the urban area that serve the major centers of activity, constitute the highest traffic volume corridors, serve the longest trip desires, carry the major portion of through traffic, and provide continuity between rural arterials.
Urban Minor Arterial	These highways interconnect and supplement the principal arterial system with a greater emphasis on land access and lower level of traffic mobility. They provide intra-community service and link rural collectors to the urban highway system.
Urban Collector	These highways provide land access service and traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas. They collect local traffic and distribute it to the arterial system.
Local	These streets provide direct access to adjacent land and provide access to the higher systems.

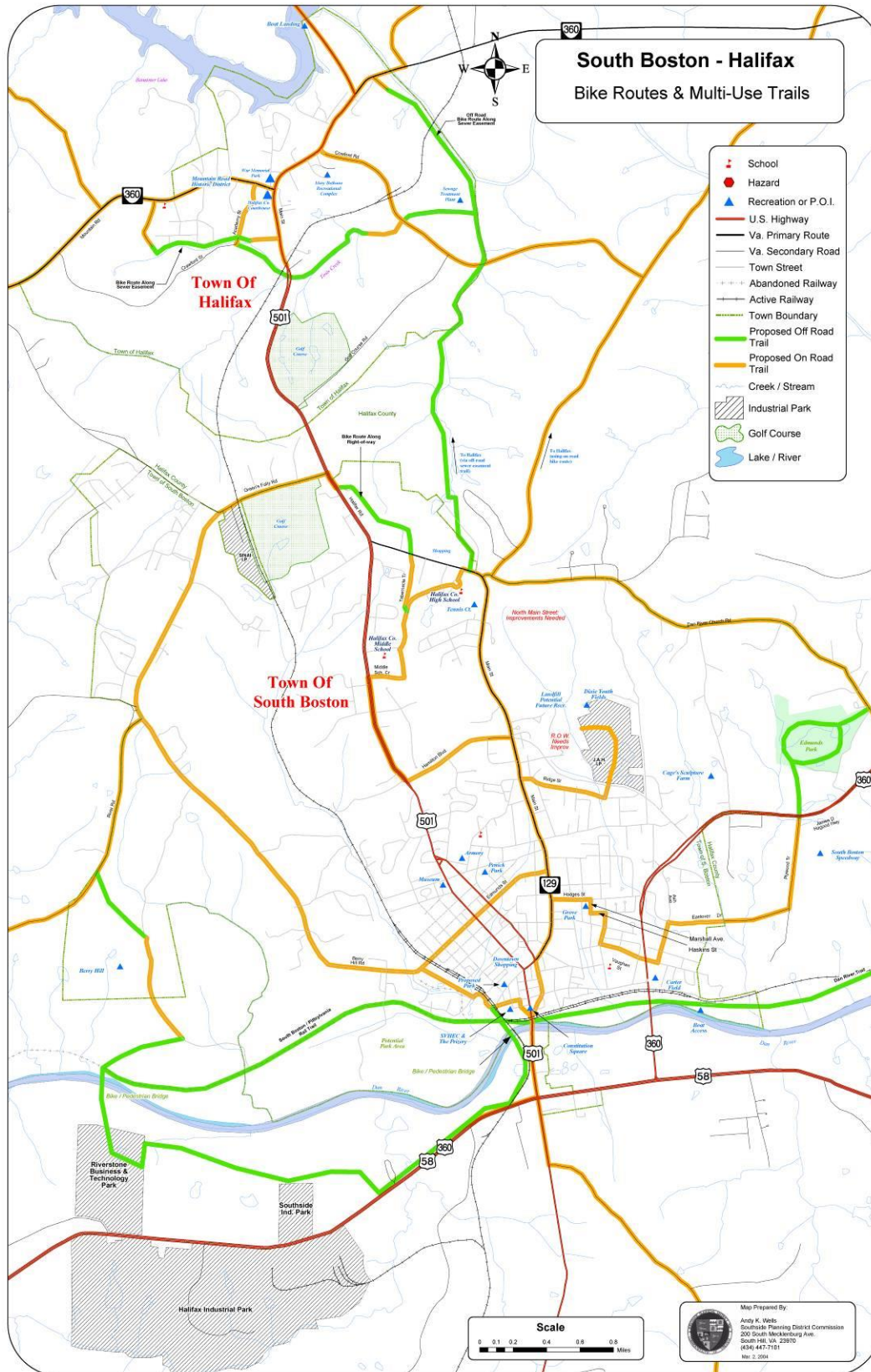
⁶ Virginia Department of Transportation. *Town of South Boston 2035 Transportation Plan, Final Report*. August 2008.



U.S. Highways 58, 501, and 360 are principal arterials that connect South Boston to the nearby cities of Danville, Martinsville, and Richmond (to the west and east); Lynchburg (to the north); and Durham, North Carolina (to the south). Urban minor arterials include Main Street, Old Halifax Road, Seymour Drive, Hamilton Boulevard, Berry Hill Road, and Edmunds Street. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) for these primary transportation corridors vary depending on the network location; in 2010 the average daily traffic (ADT) on these corridors ranged from approximately 2,500 vehicles per day on the smaller corridors (e.g., Berry Hill Road, Edmunds Street) to approximately 20,000 on the larger corridors (e.g., Route 501, Halifax Road). More detailed information of specific traffic volumes is available on an annual basis from VDOT.

With increasing interest in multi-modal transportation and linkages in recent years, Halifax County developed a county-wide *Halifax Trail Plan* in 2004 to expand the trail and bike-lane network. Local interest and the desire to develop tourism in Southside Virginia were the driving forces behind the plan. The trail plan utilizes many safety features common in larger cities throughout the United States, including “share-the-road” techniques and “bicycle turn lanes,” that improve safety and allow bicycle riders to feel more comfortable on the road. A map from the Halifax Trail Plan is included on the following page, and the full Halifax Trail Plan is in the *South Boston 2035 Transportation Plan*, in the Appendix.

Public transportation in the South Boston area is provided to senior residents by the Lake Country Area Agency on Aging. This system is by appointment only and a small fee is charged for the service. The Town of South Boston provides some funding to this system. Medical transportation service is provided by Patient Transport, a for-profit enterprise out of Halifax. Commercial bus service via Greyhound links South Boston to other cities. Although no community public bus system exists, citizen interest is evident in developing a public bus system within the South Boston and Halifax area, and at least one private entrepreneur seeks to start up a bus service. William Tuck airport which is located just outside of South Boston serves corporate, private and nonscheduled air traffic. There is no passenger rail service to South Boston, though freight rail service travels through South Boston along the Norfolk-Southern rail line.



Planned Transportation Improvements

VDOT's draft 2010 *Six-Year Improvement Plan* for South Boston lists the following projects for funding allocations and construction scheduling:

- Route 501/Main Street – Upgrade flashing cantilever lights and add gates (\$150,000 estimate)
- Route 501/Main Street – Install rubber crossing service at Norfolk Southern railroad (\$25,000 estimate);
- Route 129/Old Halifax Road – Install pedestrian control traffic signal heads (\$49,000 estimate);
- Berry Hill Road – Improve approaches and bridge of Poplar Creek (\$1,501,000 estimate);
- Wilburn Avenue & Webster Street – Intersection safety enhancements (\$219,000 estimate);
- Wilburn Avenue & Edmunds Street – Intersection safety enhancements (\$213,000 estimate); and
- Hamilton Boulevard – Widen to four lanes (\$3,335,000 estimate). Note, however, that due to the project's cost and the recent reduction in revenue forecasts for construction, an interim improvement for the 2010-2020 timeframe is recommended by VDOT to address increasing congestion and safety concerns between the intersections of Houghton Avenue and Parker Avenue. This interim improvement project consists of adding turning lanes and traffic signals (\$2 million estimate).

According to the 2035 Transportation Plan, all roadways in South Boston operate at a level of service "C" or better; this indicates that traffic flows on these roads are stable, free-flowing and have no major capacity deficiencies. Future traffic projections indicate no capacity deficiencies through 2020; however, by 2035, two roadways may face level of service challenges and need improvements:

- U.S. Route 501 (Halifax Road) from Broad Street to the northern town limits; and
- Broad Street Extension from Webster Street to Wilborn Avenue.

The 2035 Transportation Plan also cites the Old Halifax Road and Halifax Road area as a location where existing roadway geometry may cause safety and capacity problems for vehicular circulation. More detailed information on the base level of service for specific roads can be found in the 2035 Transportation Plan in the appendix.

Of particular note is that the 2035 Transportation Plan emphasizes the importance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and the need to link "activity centers" in new development and greenways, trails and the Dan River. Specifically, Route 58/360 and South Boston's bridges are identified as barriers to bicycle and pedestrian routes. Thus, any future improvements to these corridors should include provisions for bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Furthermore, the Plan

indicates that there are no ridesharing programs or park-and-ride lots in South Boston; however, there is some carpooling to the Halifax County Industrial Park west of South Boston. Another issue identified in the Transportation Plan is the need for future planning to accommodate truck traffic through, or around, South Boston. At present, truck traffic flows without delays; however, potential increases in truck traffic may require exploration of a truck bypass route in order to move trucks efficiently and prevent traffic on residential streets.

The 2035 Transportation Plan discusses a number of phased recommendations for South Boston. The recommendations were based on several demographic assumptions, including a projected stable population (growth rate of 1%) and steady growth in most economic sectors.

Phase I - 2010 recommendations address immediate transportation needs and include:

- Old Halifax Road at Halifax/Powell Rd - Intersection improvements (\$1,980,000 estimate);
- Wilborn Avenue at Edmunds Street - intersection improvements (\$178,000 estimate);
- Main Street at Seymour Drive - intersection improvements (\$8,000 estimate); and
- Wilburn Avenue at Webster Street - intersection improvements (\$186,000 estimate).

Phase II - 2020 are longer-term recommendations and include:

- Hamilton Blvd from North Main Street (Route 129) to Route 360 – widen to four lanes (\$5,655,000 estimate).

Phase III - 2035 are the longest-term recommendations based on projected growth and facility deterioration estimates. These are included on the radar screen for the future and are the most flexible, as they will be updated as future planning progresses. Phase III recommendations include:

- Main Street from Hamilton Boulevard to Route 716 – Construct new four lane facility on new alignment (\$14,850,000 estimate). Note that this corridor has been identified for improvement in the past, and consideration should be given to short-term remedies addressing safety, congestion, and drainage along this corridor.

In addition to VDOT Phase I, II and III recommendations, local officials have identified additional improvements to the transportation system. These “local projects” are included in the 2035 Transportation Plan, but may not be officially endorsed by VDOT. These improvements include:

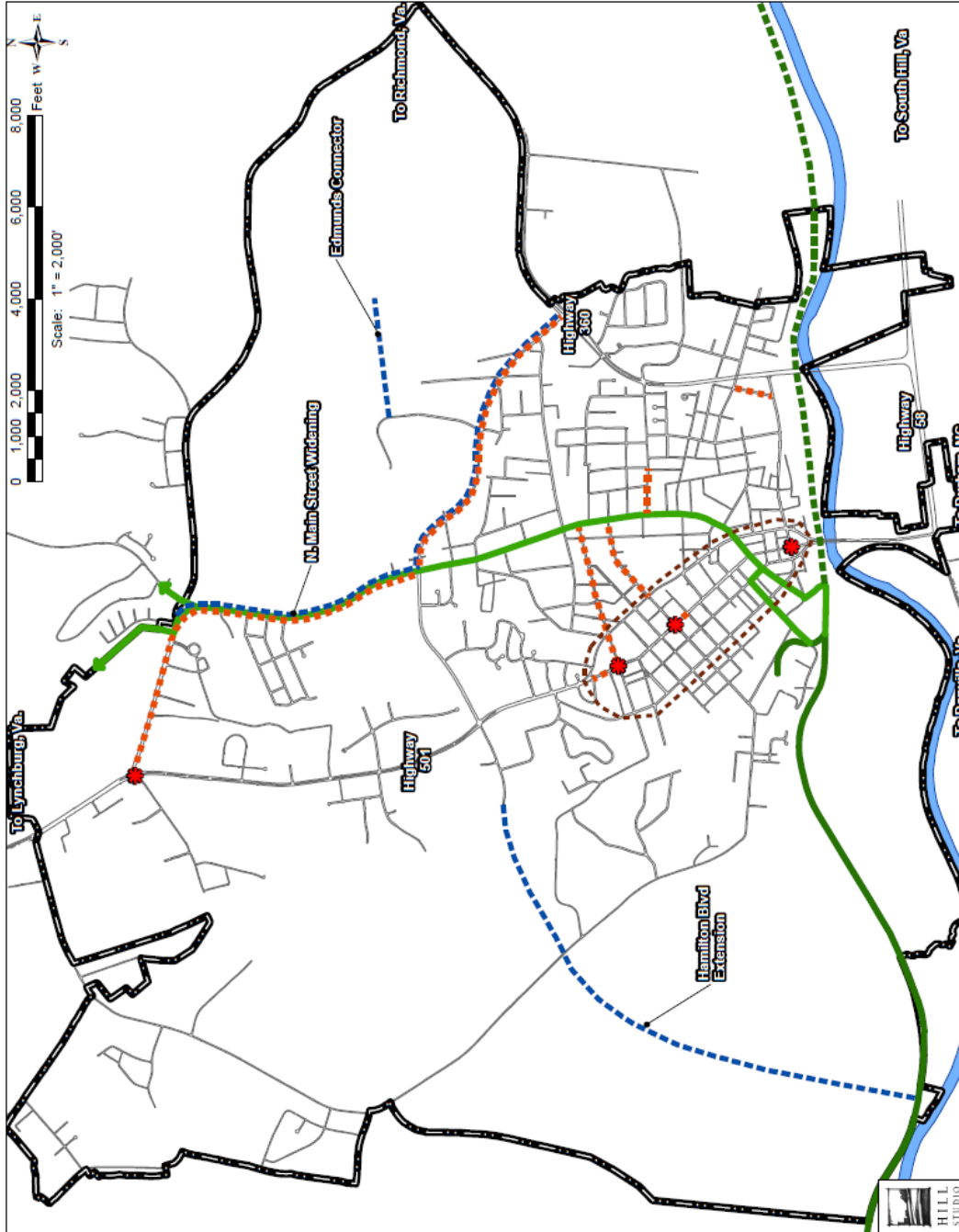
- Hamilton Boulevard Extended – Construct new road from Hamilton Boulevard to Route 58 and Riverstone Technology Park (\$15,225,000 estimate);
- Watkins Avenue/ Tanglewylde Drive - Provide alternate corridor to Wilburn and Main Streets to complement opening Main Street to two-way traffic (\$6,525,000 estimate); and
- Edmunds connector from Houghton Boulevard to Cage Trail (\$2,175,000 estimate).

Since an important element of the UDA's retail and commercial development is focused along Main and Broad Streets, pedestrian activity along these roadways will increase as redevelopment occurs. Converting these one-way streets into two-way streets will help reduce travel speeds through the downtown, encourage commercial vehicles to utilize the designated truck route, increase business visibility and create additional opportunities for through-traffic "pass-by" trips. Additionally, similar to the current treatment of Main Street as it traverses the downtown, traffic calming features that are recommended for Broad Street include reducing the pavement width south of 3rd Street, providing the minimum allowable width for on-street parking, adding bicycle lanes to reduce the width of the travel lanes, and creating curb bump-outs and wider sidewalks.

Finally, this Comprehensive Plan recommends additional transportation planning to improve traffic circulation in the downtown central business district. Specifically, further study is needed for changing one-way traffic patterns to two-way patterns, as mentioned in conjunction with the Watkins Avenue alternate corridor project above. This recommendation is supported by past downtown revitalization studies and is critical to economic development and business vitality in downtown South Boston. Changes should be coordinated with and approved by VDOT.

- Legend**
- Minor Improvements
 - Downtown One-Way Traffic Study
 - Sidewalk Improvements
 - Roadway Improvements
 - Tobacco Heritage Trail - Future
 - Greene's Crossing Trail
 - Tobacco Heritage Trail

*Planned
 Transportation
 Improvements
 2010 - 2035*



Challenges and Opportunities

The 2035 *Transportation Plan* for South Boston provides a good foundation for programming needed future transportation improvements. The growth assumptions of the transportation plan are consistent with the demographic analyses and projections contained in this comprehensive plan (Section IV). The population of South Boston is not expected to increase significantly over the next decade; thus, there are few roadway capacity concerns anticipated in the near future. As residential development expands in South Boston, additional traffic capacity may be needed on U.S. Route 501 from Broad Street north to the town limits. The 2035 Transportation Plan lists roadway improvements to this area as Phase III. Depending on the actual residential growth and land development in the northern part of the town, phasing may need to be adjusted in the future. Recommendations for public service infrastructure and land use in South Boston also directly impact transportation needs, and discussions of these can be found on pages 82 and 100 respectively. Land use recommendations in this plan generally attempt to maintain compact, smart growth in the more urbanized areas of South Boston through: neighborhood and downtown revitalization; redevelopment of underutilized properties; and open space conservation and very low-density development for the northeast and northwestern perimeters of town.

One immediate transportation challenge that should be studied further is the one-way traffic pattern in downtown South Boston. The current traffic pattern has paralleling one-way streets that split traffic in the main urban core. After traffic crosses over the 501 bridge from Riverdale, northbound vehicles are diverted to Broad Street, and only southbound traffic on Wilborn Avenue/Main Street has access to the downtown business district. From an economic perspective, providing two-way access to this area will increase customer access and business trade, thereby enhancing the overall economy and social well-being of South Boston. Any changes to the downtown street patterns should be coordinated with and approved by VDOT.

In the future, land use and development decisions should promote neighborhood walkability, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and connectivity between community facilities. Alternative transportation patterns have numerous community benefits. They help to alleviate road congestion; reduce carbon emissions; offer pleasant, recreational opportunities; promote healthy lifestyles; and provide marketable community amenities for tourists, businesses, and new residents. Also, multi-modal transportation options provide those residents without cars better access to commercial and employment centers. Already, South Boston has identified key opportunities for trail connections and sidewalk improvements. Implementation of the Greene's Crossing Trail through town (for pedestrians and bicyclists) and the Tobacco Heritage Trail (for walkers, bikers and equestrian users) will add desirable alternative transportation options. The town has a unique opportunity to implement additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities in conjunction with revitalization and redevelopment initiatives since many established neighborhoods and business areas can accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians with minor modifications.

With respect to planned road improvements recommended in the 2035 Transportation Plan, it will be important that any roadway widening or extension maintain neighborhood character and complement community context and natural surroundings. In particular, Hamilton Boulevard and the Edmunds Connector should consider limited access along the length of these routes, and include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as sufficient landscaping. Future streets should promote connectivity with the existing transportation network, include pedestrian access, and incorporate low-impact development techniques.

Finally, public transit options for South Boston should be supported as an alternative access opportunity for residents and employees of local businesses. The Town can encourage private or non-profit initiatives to expand transportation options or work with major employers and adjacent localities to address workforce transportation needs. A potential future opportunity may be to establish a trolley between downtown South Boston and Halifax or other major activity node.

Guiding Policies and Actions

Below are policies to guide transportation-related decisions, as well as strategies for soundly implementing these policies.

2040 Transportation Policies and Strategies	
<p>T1. Providing alternative modes of transportation has important environmental and health benefits and helps reduce congestion on roadways. South Boston should facilitate viable alternative transportation modes throughout the community.</p>	
Strategy 1.1:	Partner with funders to implement plans for the Tobacco Heritage Trail and Wildlife and Recreational Trial .
Strategy 1.2:	Partner with funders to implement plans for the Greene’s Crossing Trail.
Strategy 1.3:	Encourage multiple transportation options and connected streets in new development. Work with local employers, citizen groups and other localities to link transportation effectively for workforce residents with employment centers.
Strategy 1.4:	Provide leadership and encourage private and public initiatives that can increase public transportation services in the region.
Strategy 1.5:	Amend the zoning and subdivision codes and development permit regulations to require pedestrian access and street and connectivity criteria for new developments.
Strategy 1.6:	Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the design of new streets, particularly where they can be linked with existing facilities.
<p>T2. The South Boston transportation system provides important linkages to neighborhoods and employment centers. Street and roadway corridors should be safe, attractive, and complement adjacent residential and commercial development. Multiple modes of transportation should be encouraged and transportation systems should be designed to enhance the environment and existing development patterns.</p>	
Strategy 2.1:	Design new road corridors to enhance community settings. Provide sufficient landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and road widths that are in keeping with the character of neighborhoods and commercial corridors. Include traffic calming measures where appropriate.
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue a feasibility study of changing downtown traffic patterns to determine if Main Street can be converted to two-way traffic to improve economic vitality.

Special Action Projects

The Tobacco Heritage Trail and the **Wildlife and Recreational Trail** will be key multimodal amenity for South Boston and will provide valuable regional links to the downtown area. This plan, as well as the Greene's Crossing Trail plan, should continue to be priorities for implementation in the coming years, as they will serve as catalysts for numerous other projects and developments in the Town.

A potential scheme for opening Main Street to two-way traffic is mentioned in the 2035 Transportation Plan in conjunction with the local improvement project to convert Watkins Avenue to an alternative Main Street bypass route. A study should be conducted to determine if potential exists for altering traffic flows to allow two-way traffic on Main Street and whether the benefit of changing the traffic pattern would outweigh any costs. Such a study would need the guidance of a traffic engineer, coordination with VDOT and input from visionary designers and local stakeholders to produce the optimal plan. Because it will be a long-term process if a final recommendation is proposed to change existing traffic patterns, this study should be conducted quickly to make immediate progress.

Public Services and Infrastructure

When basic community utilities and public service personnel are functioning well, they easily may be taken for granted by citizens and businesses. Yet these services are the foundation of high quality of life in South Boston, and their quality is critical to community progress.

Public Safety

The South Boston Police Department is responsible for Town law enforcement, public safety, and animal control, and also conducts a number of programs and activities for the public. With administrative offices located on Hamilton Boulevard, the police department consists of approximately 30 employees (officers, investigators, and administrative staff). South Boston partners with Halifax County to provide jail services at the Blue Ridge Regional Jail in Halifax.

Fire protection services are provided by the South Boston Fire Department, with assistance from the South Boston Volunteer Fire Company. Together they cover the entire South Boston area, as well as adjacent areas in the County to the east and south, a 42 square mile area in total. The main fire station is located on Broad Street, and its career and volunteer firefighters engage in fire suppression, inspections and public education. The Fire Department has twelve employees and approximately forty volunteers with an additional 18 first responders who can provide emergency medical services.



EMS services are provided by the Halifax County Rescue Squad, serving South Boston and the majority of Halifax County from its location on Hamilton Boulevard.

In 2020, the *Hazard Mitigation Plan* was revised for the Southside Planning District, which indicates the greatest natural hazard risks in the region are from a hurricane/tropical storm, dam failure, or major flood. The plan also made a number of high priority mitigation recommendations for the South Boston area, including upgrading emergency warning systems, key stormwater upgrades, and addressing flood risk in flood-prone areas through buyout and clearance of structures and enforcement of zoning and building regulations.

Water and Sewer

In 2005, a *Water and Sewer Master Plan* was completed for Halifax County, followed by the creation of the Halifax County Service Authority. This Service Authority now operates and maintains the Town water and sewer systems, as well as other public systems in the County.

The Service Authority water supply is drawn from the Dan River and treated at a 3.0 MGD capacity water treatment plant west of downtown. Water quality monitoring reports from 2014 to 2017 indicate that Service Authority's water is safe, with no contaminants present at unsafe

levels. Most of the Town commercial and residential areas are served by this system, as are some residential and commercial areas north of South Boston and commercial areas along Highway 58 to the south. Some areas in more rural parts of the town currently are not served, including portions of Dan River Church Road, Highway 360, and the rural southwest part of town. A number of improvements to the water supply system have been completed or are planned, including various water line interconnections, hydrant replacements, ongoing maintenance and equipment upgrades at the Town water treatment plant. An extension of water service to Edmunds Park is also needed.

The Halifax County Service Authority sewer system consists of approximately 70 miles of gravity sewer, 10 pump stations and a 2.0 MGD wastewater treatment plant that discharges to the Dan River. The sewer system's service area is similar to the HCSA water service area. Maintenance and improvement of the distribution system is ongoing, including replacement of aging and deteriorating pipes. Future extensions of the system are needed, particularly to the Edmunds Park area.

Solid Waste

Solid waste is handled by the Southside Regional Public Service Authority, which serves all of South Boston and Halifax County, as well as Charlotte and Mecklenburg Counties. Each locality within the three counties is responsible for waste collection. South Boston Public Works Department offers curbside waste collection for Town residents, but recycling is available only at a convenience center located at the entrance to the former South Boston landfill. A waste transfer station serving South Boston and the County is located to the east of the Town, and solid waste is taken to the regional Authority landfill in Mecklenburg County. The South Boston Public Works department also collects green (yard) waste, which is taken to a 32 acre site behind the Town's former landfill for composting.

Broadband/Communications

South Boston has reliable land-line telephone service and is also served by various cellular service providers. South Boston is a member of the Virginia Rural Broadband Planning Initiative, a statewide telecommunications planning effort operated out of the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Town is served by fiber optic communications infrastructure supplied by the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative, formed in 2003 to boost the Southern Virginia economy by supplying the fiber optic network required for modern commerce.

Challenges and Opportunities

The South Boston Police Department is in need of several upgrades and improvements, as identified in the Town Council Strategic Goals and Objectives, including an upgraded computer system for enhanced information sharing with other jurisdictions, improvements in the evidence room, and upgrades to the department’s communications system. Drug trafficking and use has been cited as a significant issue in the community. For the Fire Department, the CIP identifies a need for a replacement EMS truck and a fire pumper.

The most recent assessment of South Boston’s water source at the Dan River was conducted in 2002 by the Virginia Department of Health and indicated that the Dan River was highly susceptible to contamination. Though the quality of treated water supplied to the Town is high, South Boston should work with other localities on the Dan River to mitigate threats to the river’s water quality.

The Town faces a number of water, sewer and stormwater needs beyond general maintenance of these systems. The Public Works Department maintains a list of priority areas facing stormwater drainage issues, and these should continue to be addressed as quickly as possible to avoid compromising the health and safety of citizens. Similarly the Town should continue to work with the Halifax County Service Authority to upgrade and replace water and sewer treatment and distribution infrastructure as needed, as well as update the water and sewer master plan. Preliminary engineering work is underway for an expansion of the wastewater treatment plant and the water treatment plan, and implementing these projects will be priorities to meet regulatory requirements and accommodate business growth.

One future opportunity for South Boston is to collaborate with the County to collect green waste and combine it with treated sewer sludge to generate a safe and fertile soil amendment that can be sold as a cheaper and potentially safer alternative to fertilizer. Initial setup costs for such an operation may be high, but some waste authorities have seen a quick payback on this investment. Potential markets for such a product include farms, pastures and even gardening homeowners.

Guiding Policies and Actions

2040 Public Services and Infrastructure Policies and Strategies	
<p>PSI 1. Sufficient and reliable public utility infrastructure is important in maintaining the quality of life for residents and attracting economic investment. New development should be planned and coordinated carefully to ensure sufficient capacities or coincide with planned improvements.</p>	
<p>Strategy 1.1:</p>	<p>Identify failing water and wastewater systems in the town and work with Halifax County Service Authority to expand public water and sewer services. Priority should be given to areas of environmental sensitivity or elevated health risk.</p>

Strategy 1.2:	Expand telecommunication infrastructure in South Boston as a tool for economic development and to improve public communication opportunities.
PSI 2. Police, fire and rescue services are important elements of public safety that are fundamental to the community’s quality of life. Services should be efficient and effective in serving all citizens of South Boston.	
Strategy 2.1:	Regularly monitor public safety services to ensure effective response times. Supplement equipment and facilities where necessary to increase response.
Strategy 2.2:	Employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all public projects, and encourage these design principles in other new developments.

Environment

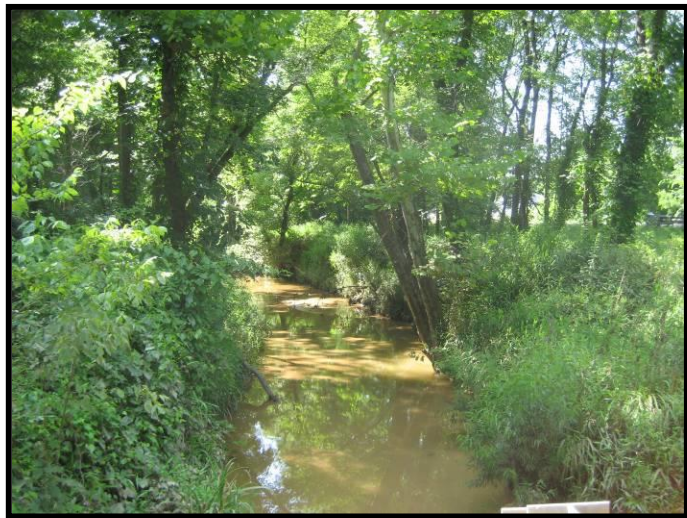
South Boston is a community well-endowed with environmental resources, from the Dan River and its adjacent lowlands to the band of forests and open fields surrounding its neighborhoods. Locals citizens in focus groups have cited the importance of protecting the South Boston environment and open spaces because of their positive impact on Town standard of living.

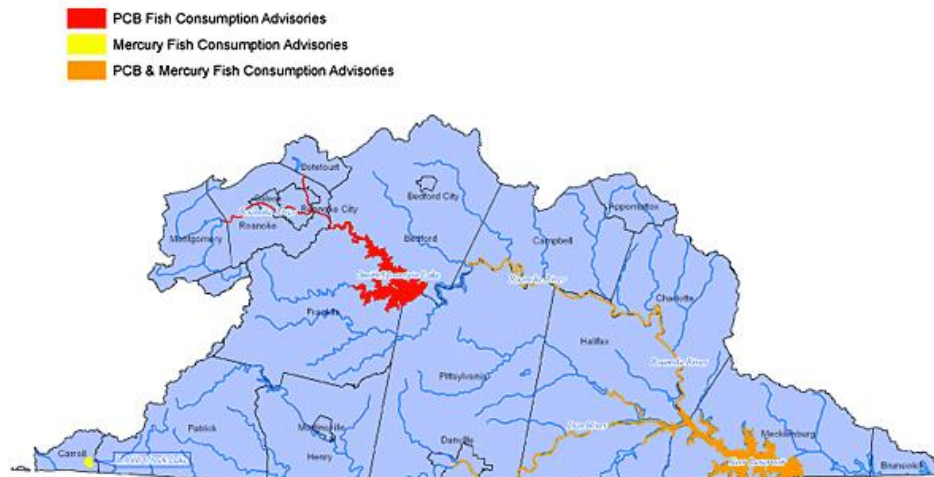
Climate

South Boston and the surrounding Southern Virginia area enjoy a very moderate climate, with four seasons and average highs fluctuating from around 90° in July to around 48° in January. Precipitation is fairly steady through the year, averaging nearly 4 inches per month.

Hydrology: Streams and Floodplains

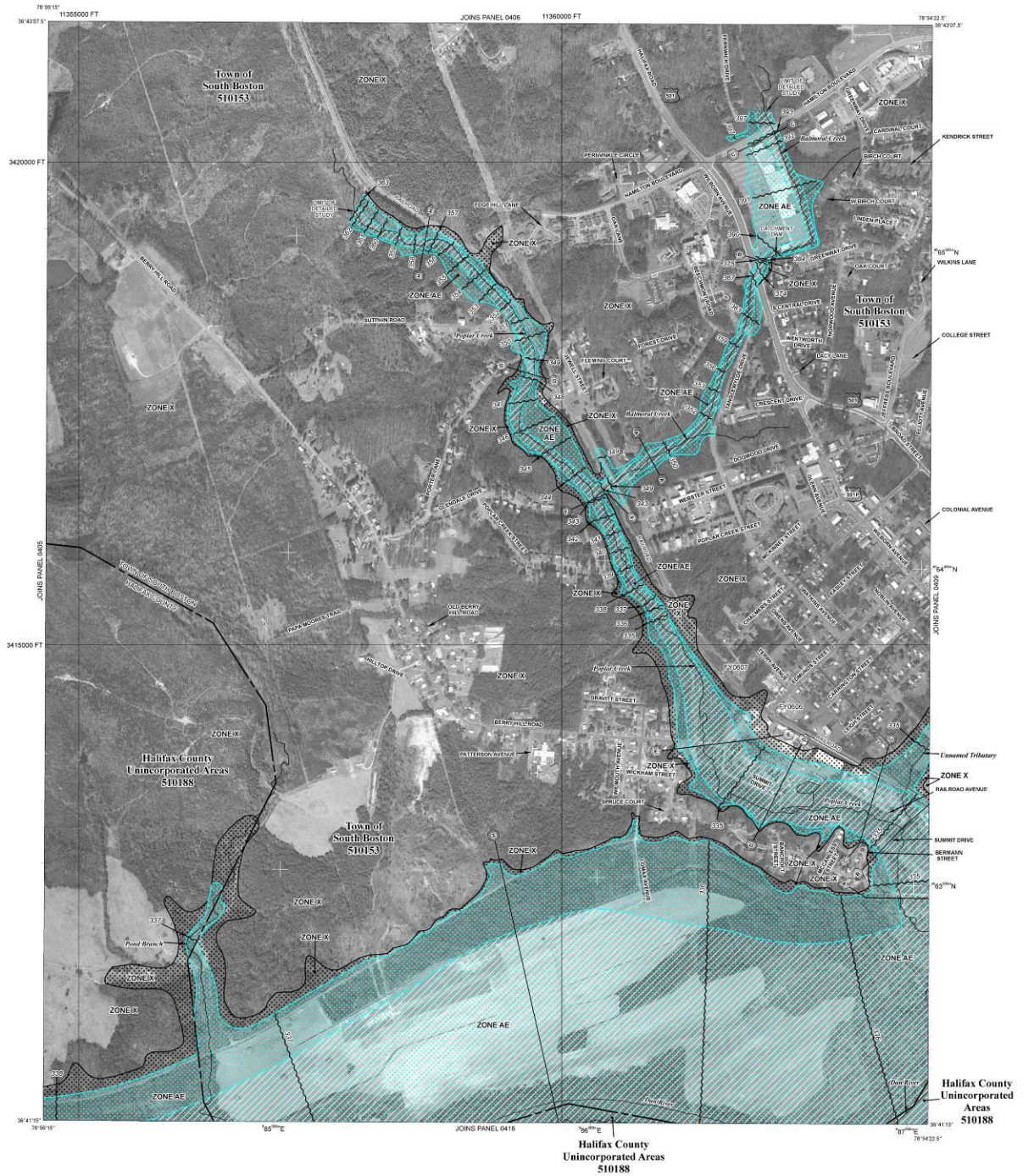
South Boston is located on the Dan River, which is part of the Roanoke River Basin. Five streams drain most of South Boston into the Dan River: Pond Branch, Poplar Creek, Reedy Creek, Rocky Branch, and Woods Creek. A small portion of the northern part of Town drains toward the Banister River. The Dan River is listed by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as a Section 303(d) impaired river, with E. coli and/or fecal coliform levels above regulated levels. While DEQ notes that the Dan River in the South Boston area is suitable for aquatic life, wildlife and public water supply, the waters are not recommended for swimming or fish consumption. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) notes elevated levels of PCB and mercury in fish and has issued advisories recommending limited consumption of fish from the Dan River.



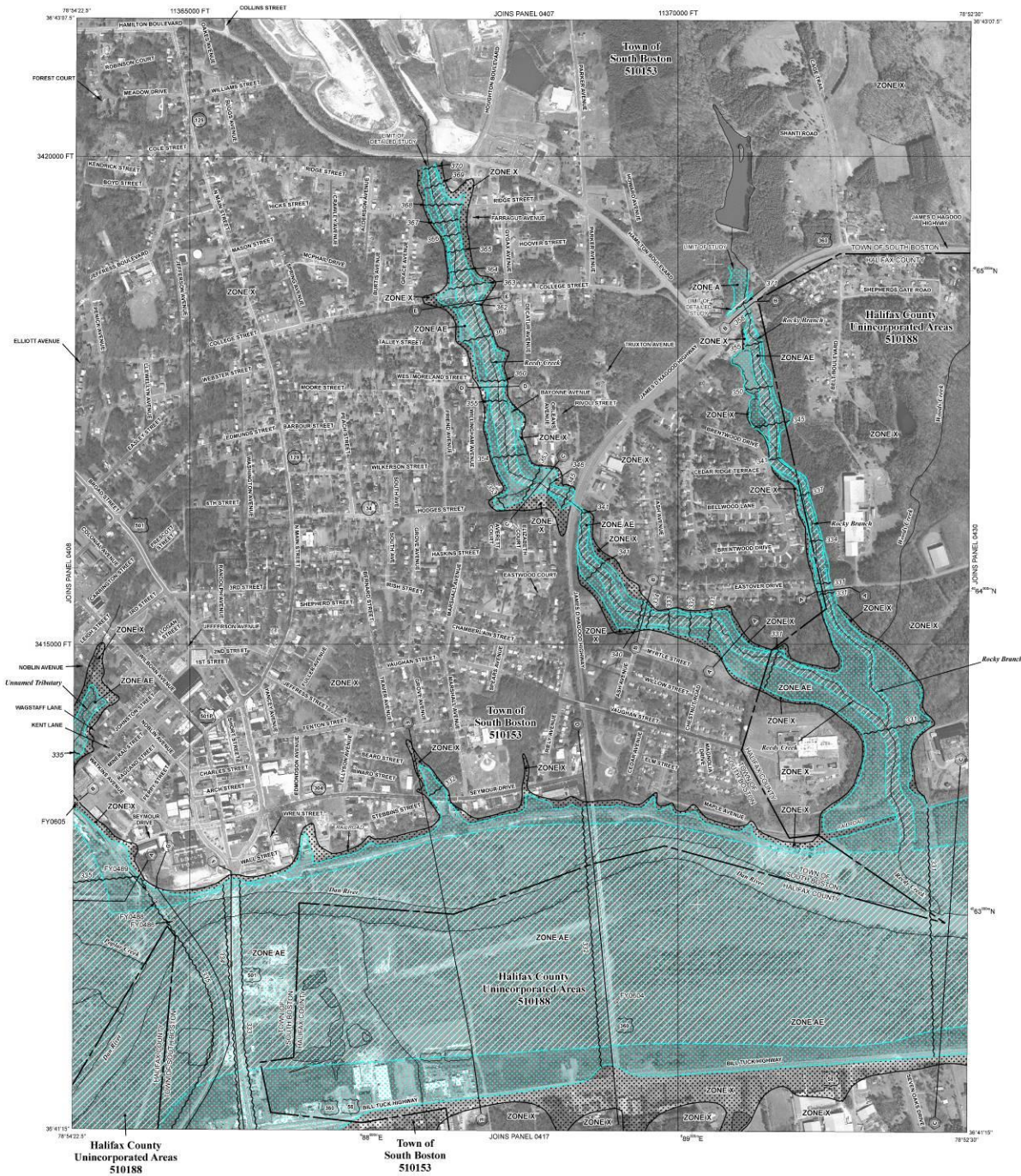


Fish Consumption Advisories: Roanoke and Yadkin River Basins
source: Virginia Department of Health, *Last Updated: October 2013*

The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for Halifax County have recently been updated. These maps indicate that much of the area along the Dan River is below the determined base 100-year flood elevations including all of the Riverdale area to Highway 58, narrow areas along Reedy Creek, Rocky Branch, Poplar Creek, and Balmoral Creek extending to Hupp’s Mill Plaza. The updated FIRM maps also indicate the areas of floodway in the town. The floodway includes the stream or river channel plus adjacent floodplain areas that must remain free of encroachment to allow flood waters to flow without substantially increasing the height of flood waters. The floodway lies within the floodplain areas mentioned above, but covers a much narrower area along the creeks and streams within the Town. In the Riverdale area, the floodway covers between two-thirds and three-fourths of the area from the Dan River to Highway 58. The images below show the floodplain and floodway areas from the draft FIRMs.



South Boston Flood Insurance Rate Map, west central area of Town
source: FEMA



South Boston Flood Insurance Rate Map, central area of Town
 source: FEMA

Forests and Soils

A glance at an aerial photograph of South Boston shows a compact developed area surrounded by acres of forests and fields. Data for Halifax County from the USDA Forest Service indicate that these forests are comprised of five primary forest group types: loblolly/shortleaf pine, oak/pine, oak/hickory, oak/gum/cypress, and elm/ash/cottonwood.

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service released updated soils data for South Boston and Halifax County in January of 2009. Approximately 28 different types of soils may be found throughout the Town of South Boston, shown in the table below and in the map that follows. The Town soils are broadly similar with slight variations, and no soils in the area are deemed unsuitable for development with the exception of soils occurring along steep slopes or in flood plains.

<i>Soil Type</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Clifford Sandy Loam	1193	14.47%
Clifford-Urban Land Complex	1184	14.36%
Nathalie Sandy Loam	1041	12.63%
Fairview Sandy Loam	649	7.87%
Halifax Sandy Loam	516	6.26%
Spriggs-Rasalo Complex	458	5.56%
Clifford Clay Loam	425	5.16%
Bentley Loamy Sand	369	4.48%
Codorus and Hatboro Soils	358	4.34%
Udorthents Loamy	307	3.72%
Urban Land	293	3.55%
Spriggs-Urban Land Complex	252	3.06%
Codorus Loam	215	2.61%
Rasalo-Orange Complex	190	2.30%
Dan River Loam	187	2.27%
Spriggs Sandy Loam	173	2.10%
Comus Fine Sandy Loam	110	1.33%
Toast Sandy Loam	69	0.84%
Yadkin Fine Sandy Loam	59	0.72%

Appomattox Clay Loam	51	0.62%
Lackstown Fine Sandy Loam	51	0.62%
Oak Level Loam	28	0.34%
Jackland-Orange Complex	25	0.30%
Devotion-Rhodhiss Complex	19	0.23%
Minnieville Loam	17	0.21%
Danripple Sandy Loam	4	0.05%
Banister-Kinkora Complex	1	0.01%
Total	8244	100.00%

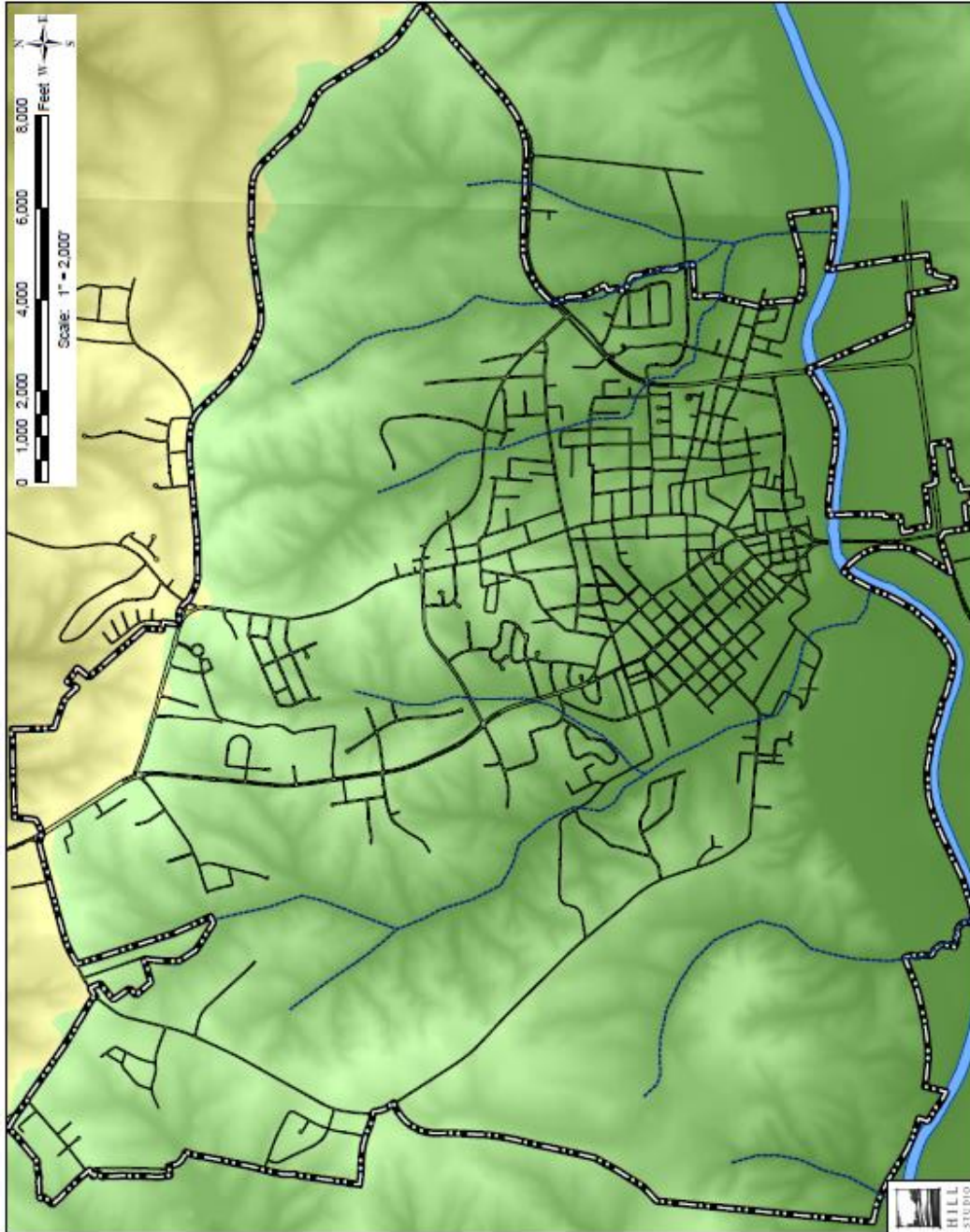
Both the federal and state governments recognize areas that have the soil quality, moisture supply and climate to support high levels of agricultural production. Prime farmland is the designation attributed to these areas by the US Department of Agriculture, and farmland of statewide importance is also highly productive land as determined by criteria specific to the state. As shown in the map that follows, much of the undeveloped area surrounding South Boston’s downtown and built-up areas is classified as either prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.

Endangered Species

Virginia’s Department of Game and Inland Fisheries lists seven species which are considered threatened, including the Upland Sandpiper, the Loggerhead Shrike, Henslow’s Sparrow, the Carolina Darter, the Bald Eagle, the Whitemouth Shiner, and the Migrant Loggerhead Shrike. A number of other species are listed with varying levels of conservation concern. Additionally, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation lists five plants as species of concern: the Smooth Coneflower, the Winter Quillwort, the Virginia Quillwort, Oak Barrens Barbara’s-Buttons and Nestronia. Federally listed species include the Dwarf wedgemussel, the Smooth coneflower, and Michaux’s sumac.



Hydrology



- Soil Type**
- Clifford-Urban Land Complex
 - Codrons Loam
 - Codrons and Heibors Soils
 - Cornus / Fine Sandy Loam
 - Dan River Loam
 - Devonville Sandy Loam
 - Devonville-Rhodhes Complex
 - Appomattox Clay Loam
 - Fairview Sandy Loam
 - Halifax Sandy Loam
 - Jackland-Orange Complex
 - Lockdown Fine Sandy Loam
 - Barlow-Codrons Complex
 - Minneville Loam
 - Nashville Sandy Loam
 - Oak Level Loam
 - Berkeley Loamy Sand
 - Russell-Orange Complex
 - Springe Sandy Loam
 - Springe-Russell Complex
 - Springe-Urban Land Complex
 - Towal Sandy Loam
 - Urbansville Loamy
 - Urban Land
 - Yieldon Fine Sandy Loam
 - Clifford Sandy Loam
 - Clifford Clay Loam
 - Water

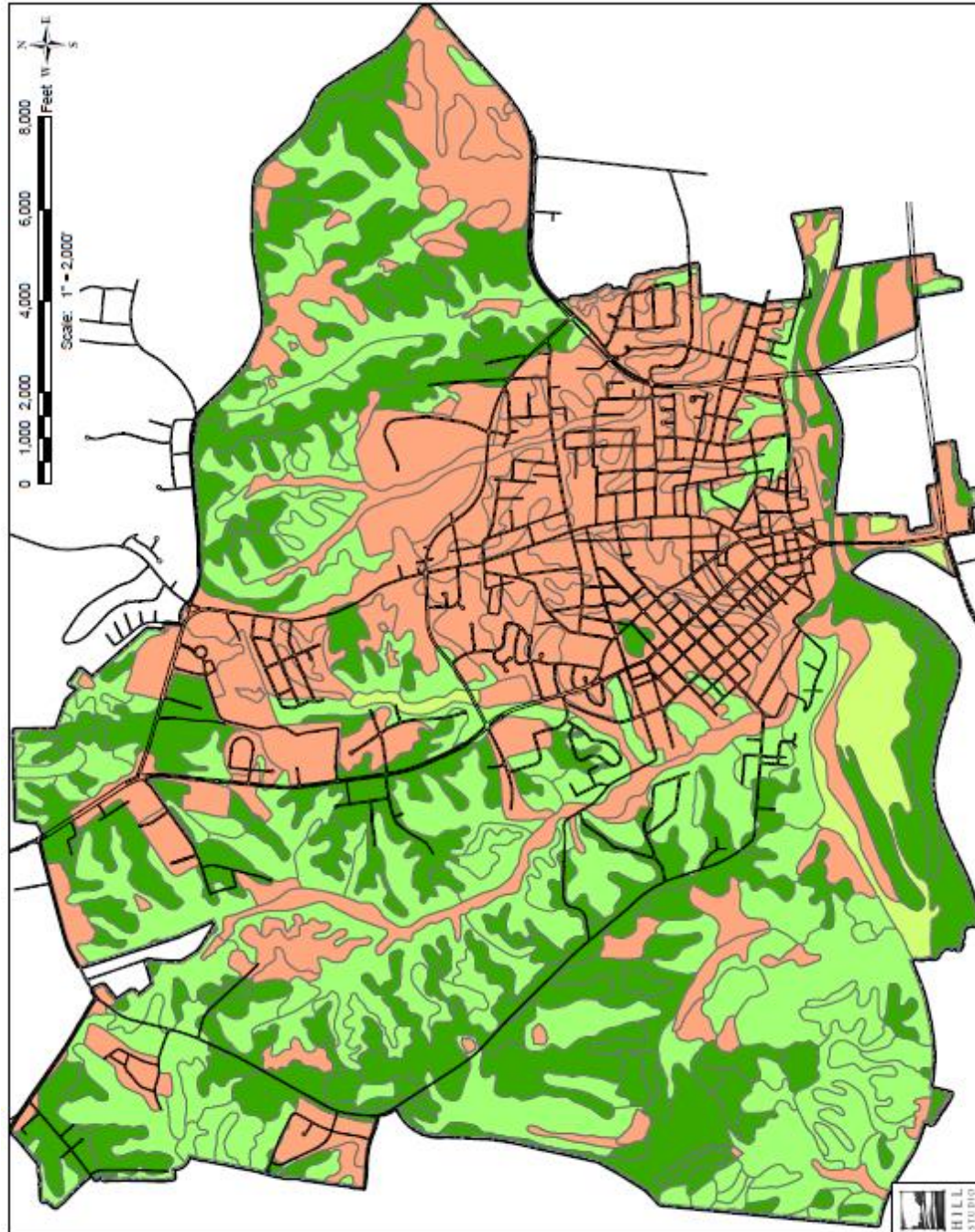
Soils



Soil Type
Farmland Designations

- All areas are prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Prime farmland if drained
- Not prime farmland

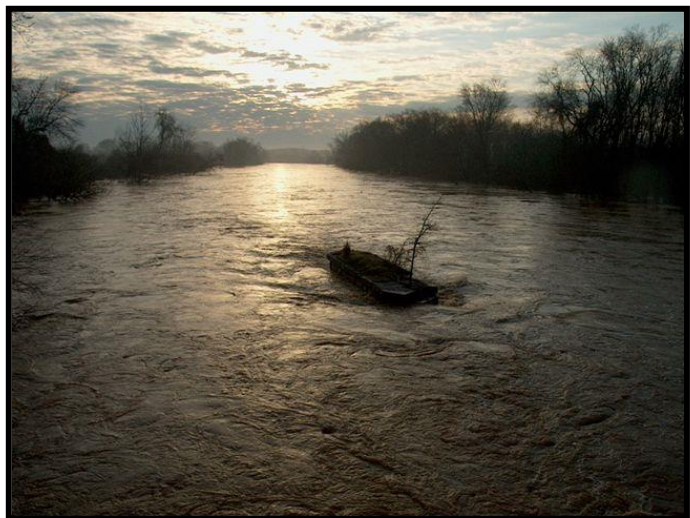
Prime Farmland



Challenges and Opportunities

The natural resources around South Boston are an essential component of the high quality of life of the community, contributing to area social and economic vitality. These resources will require careful management to ensure they are used appropriately and maintained for future needs.

The Dan River is a significant natural resource for South Boston and the region. It is the source of South Boston drinking water but also has great potential for expanded recreational use. In the 2007 Virginia Outdoors Plan by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Dan River is listed to be a potential candidate for Scenic River designation. This designation would help South Boston and other localities protect the historic, natural and recreational characteristics of the river by requiring closer consideration of project impacts and land uses on the river. Sound management of the river and cleanup of its waters is essential and will require coordination across multiple localities, state and federal agencies, and other interest groups including developers, private landowners, and environmental groups. Watershed protection and proper stormwater and floodplain management are important elements in an overall plan to improve the Dan River water quality.



The Dan River at normal levels (top) and during the 2003 flood (bottom)



2018 flooding – view of Highway501 looking south in Riverdale

Despite figuring so prominently in South Boston history, citizens today have few direct connections to and interactions with the Dan River. Future physical connections to the river should be considered to allow year-round access, and these could include development of the **Wildlife and Recreational Trail, Boat Ramp**, natural preserve and outdoor classroom with interpretive signage in the Riverdale area, reconstruction of the historic covered wooden bridge as a pedestrian connection between downtown South Boston and the natural preserve, develop trail connection between downtown and the Tobacco Heritage Trail, development of an interpretive area at the Crossing of the Dan site, or development of the riverfront bluff near the Prizery to allow path connections, art exhibitions, performance venues and gardens along the riverfront.

The potential for Dan River flooding is well-known and, indeed, forced the relocation of the earliest settlers of South Boston to the higher north bank of the river. **In the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, by the Southside Planning District and adopted by the Town of South Boston September 2020**, it was noted that flooding poses one of the strongest natural disaster threats to the area, with the worst flooding in the district occurring in the Riverdale area, both within South Boston and in the adjacent County areas. **By adopting this plan South Boston became eligible for a grant from FEMA and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management with a goal of buying out existing businesses in the Riverdale area and turning it into green space.** State and federal authorities have been tightening regulations related to floodplain and floodway management. As a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which makes flood insurance available to South Boston property owners, the Town of South Boston is required to adopt and enforce a floodplain management ordinance that meets

evolving minimum criteria. A revised floodplain ordinance was adopted by Town Council in September of 2009 to regulate how new construction and improvements to existing properties can be undertaken within the 100-year floodplain and, particularly, within the designated floodway.

South Boston is endowed with prime soils for both agriculture and development. Agricultural soils contributed to the heritage of South Boston and are valuable for long-term sustainability. Fertile soils contribute to the “green infrastructure” of the town and provide opportunities for open space, pastures, community gardens, and active farmlands. Plans for new development or projects should consider significant areas of prime agricultural soils and those of statewide importance, preserve them where feasible, and minimize impacts on these resources. It is important for the Town of South Boston to establish a long-term strategy for the preservation of these farmlands to protect them for future generations.

Guiding Policies and Actions

2040 Environment Policies and Strategies	
E1. Enhancement of water quality, control of stormwater runoff, and wise management of the floodplain are important community priorities. Proactive solutions and conservation measures should be promoted to improve environmental quality.	
Strategy 1.1:	Stormwater management regulations should emphasize “low-impact” stormwater techniques such (e.g., bio-swales, porous pavement) to improve the quality of stormwater destined for waterways.
Strategy 1.2:	Discourage inappropriate land uses and development within floodplains. Revise floodplain ordinances to address appropriate land uses. Where feasible, acquire and relocate development out of floodplain.
Strategy 1.3:	Adopt a river overlay conservation district and establish riparian buffers along creeks and rivers.
E2. The open spaces and agricultural farms surrounding South Boston are important features of the community’s character that should be preserved.	
Strategy 2.1:	Encourage development first as infill in areas already developed, particularly in the downtown and in neighborhoods immediately surrounding the downtown area.
E3. The natural resources around South Boston add to the community quality of life and should be protected and conserved.	
Strategy 3.1:	Implement multimodal trail plans (Tobacco Heritage Trail, Greene’s Crossing Trail, etc.) and develop plans for other multimodal routes through the community to reduce vehicular use and improve air quality.
Strategy 3.2:	Educate the public on environmentally friendly projects and practices. Establish interpretive signage along trails and in parks explaining environmental measures taken (for example: native wildlife habitats, water quality protection measures, green construction principles, etc.).
Strategy 3.3:	Work with DCR and other localities to pursue Scenic River designation for the Dan River.
Strategy 3.4:	Public building and development projects should follow the principles of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED compliance should be encouraged for private building and development.

Special Action Projects

A *Riparian Buffer Overlay* should be considered along the Dan River to enhance water quality, preserve wetlands and wildlife habitats, and reduce flooding impacts. Use of these buffers enhances water quality through removal of excess sediment, nutrients and toxic substances from surface water prior to entering these water bodies. The riparian overlay should be a minimum of 100 feet in width along the river corridor; the district should include provisions for removing vegetation to improve viewsheds, provide access, implement erosion control or manage woodlands.

Land Use and Built Form

One of the primary functions of the Comprehensive Plan is to establish Town policies and strategies that will guide future land use in South Boston and recommend additions or modifications to local ordinances governing land use. The following discussion addresses existing and proposed land uses and provides recommendations for achieving the vision for the future of South Boston.

Existing Land Use

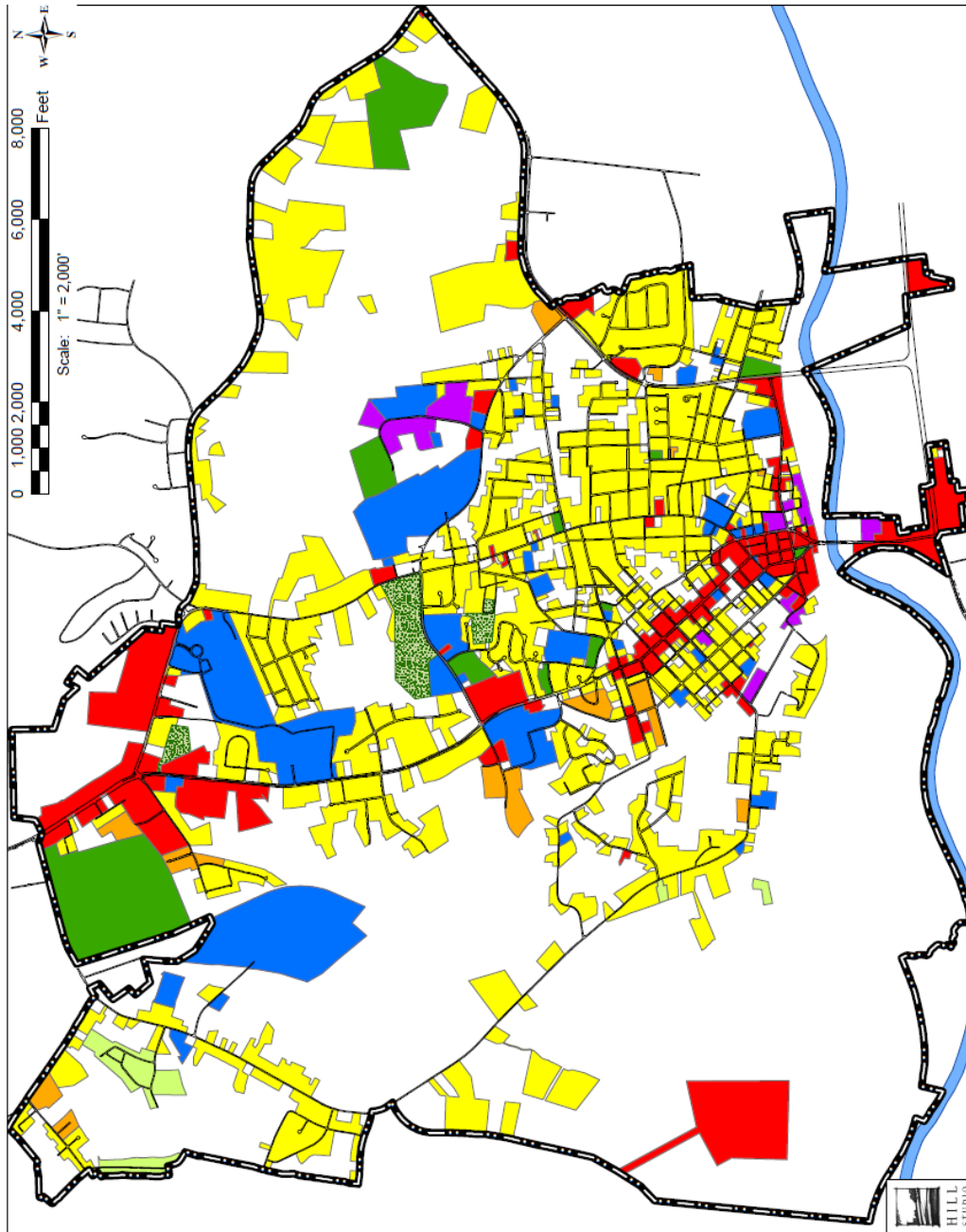
A look at existing South Boston land use reveals that the majority of land area (nearly 59%) is undeveloped open space, held as either forest or farmland, mainly to the north, east and west of downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. Single-family residential comprises almost 23% of the Town land area, while commercial land uses and community facilities each make up around 6% of the land area. Three percent of land is dedicated to park or recreational space, and the remainder is distributed among multi-family and mobile home residential, industrial, and cemeteries. A map of the existing Town land uses follows and is summarized below.

South Boston land use broadly follows logical historical development patterns. Commercial areas are mostly concentrated along major transportation routes and nodes. Areas of the densest development with smallest lot sizes are found in the downtown commercial area. Residential areas encircle the downtown, with smaller lots closer in to downtown, gradually getting larger farther away from downtown. Open spaces and forests surround these residential areas, but are punctuated with occasional residential subdivisions.

Existing Land Use, South Boston		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Approximate Land Area</i>	<i>Percent of Town Area</i>
Commercial	520 acres	6.22%
Community Facilities	507 acres	6.07%
Industrial	63 acres	0.76%
Multi-family Residential	86 acres	1.03%
Single-family Residential	1,905 acres	22.78%
Mobile Home Park	54 acres	0.64%
Parks and Recreation	249 acres	2.98%
Cemeteries	60 acres	0.72%
Undeveloped	4,919 acres	58.81%

- Legend**
- Single-Family
 - Multi-Family
 - Trailer Parks
 - Community Facilities
 - Parks and Recreation
 - General Commercial
 - General Industrial
 - Cemeteries

Existing Land Use



Future Land Use and Growth Management

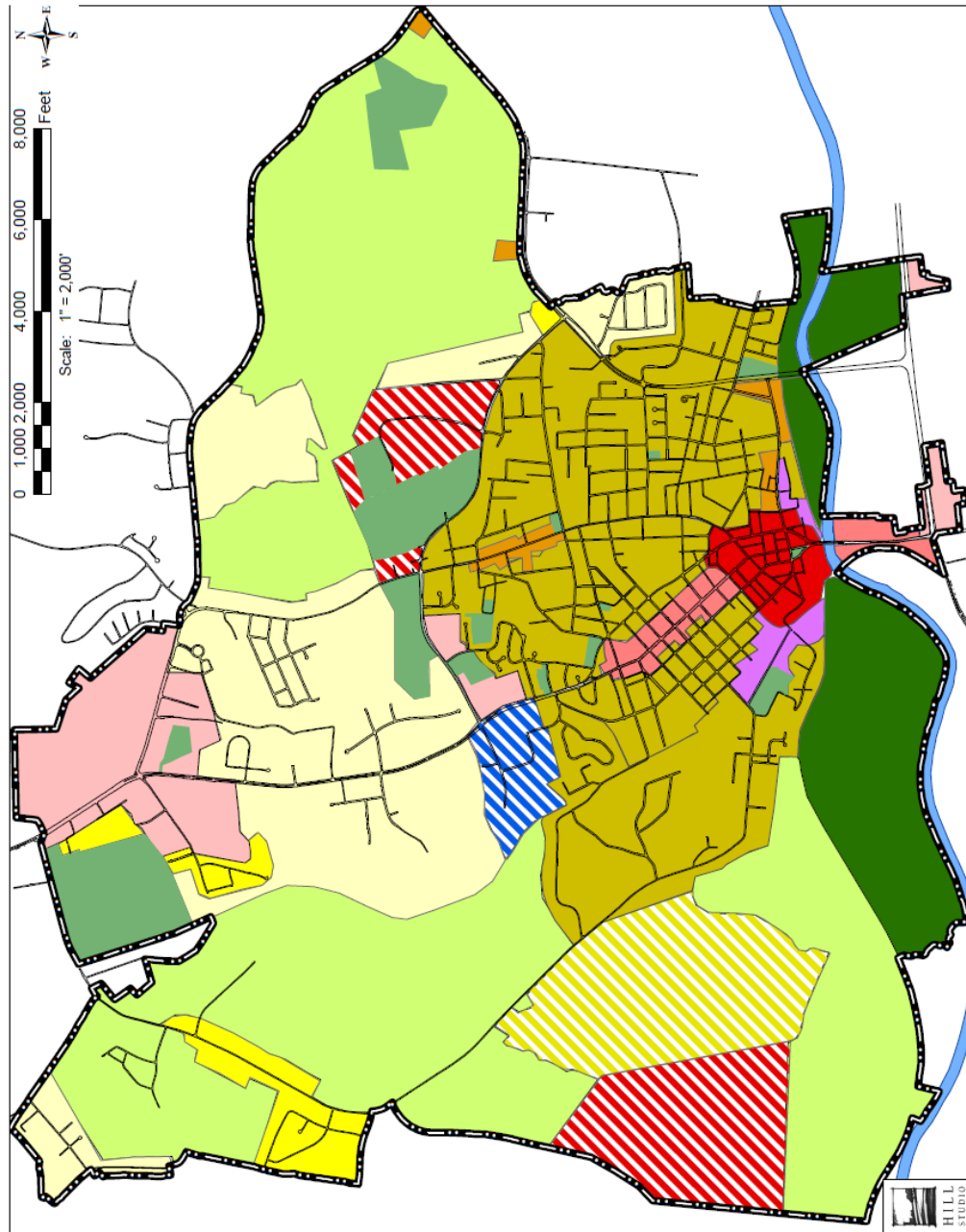
The proposed future land use is developed based on analysis and evaluation of the other elements and information presented earlier in the comprehensive plan. It is based on planned infrastructure improvements, opportunities for development, adjacent County development, and recommended land uses in environmentally or historically sensitive areas.

Many of the existing South Boston neighborhoods and surrounding areas are attractive and solid in character. A key objective of the future land use plan will be to protect much of the existing neighborhood fabric and ensure that future development follows historical patterns and enhances existing land use patterns. In general, higher density and historically sensitive development is recommended for the center of Town, while policies to maintain open space and natural features are recommended for the outskirts of Town.

As mentioned earlier, the UDA boundary was established through consultation with Town staff and review of the Town’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The consensus among these resources was that the existing urban fabric and gridded street network in South Boston lend themselves well to concentrated, mixed-use development, as specified in the UDA legislation.

Fourteen future land use categories are recommended for South Boston and are discussed in greater detail below. A Future Land Use Map is found on the following page. The matrix below shows the total land area associated with each category.

Future Land Use, South Boston 2030		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Approximate Land Area</i>	<i>Percent of Town Area</i>
Downtown Central Business	107 acres	1.28%
Expanded Downtown	61 acres	.73%
Downtown Entrance Corridor	96 acres	1.15%
Commercial Corridor	427 acres	5.10%
Neighborhood Business	58 acres	.69%
Established Neighborhood Residential	1662 acres	19.87%
Medium Density Residential	1184 acres	14.15%
Low Density Residential	138 acres	1.65%
Agricultural and Rural Residential	2636 acres	31.51%
Planned Business	442 acres	5.28%
Planned Institutional	102 acres	1.22%
Planned Residential	430 acres	5.14%
Parks and Open Space	402 acres	4.81%
Conservation	610 acres	7.29%



Future Land Use

Downtown Central Business:

This category is the traditional historic downtown commercial center of the Town, with attached buildings on small lots placed close to the street. Land uses focus on a mix of service and commercial businesses, with residential spaces above the ground floor. Future development should continue existing traditional downtown patterns with buildings close to the sidewalk, pedestrian amenities, coordinated lighting, and parking on street or in landscaped lots at the rear of downtown buildings. Design standards should guide future development, infill and rehabilitation to protect downtown character and historic elements.

Expanded Downtown:

This category applies to areas adjacent to the downtown that were previously dedicated to business and light and heavy industry, but present some opportunities for new uses. Existing light industrial uses should include landscaping and buffers to minimize land use conflicts. New uses compatible with downtown and adjacent residential areas are encouraged, such as development of residential or commercial uses and adaptive reuse of buildings for more compatible uses, such as live/work spaces, mixed business and residential use, offices, or flexible space.

Downtown Entrance Corridor:

These areas encompass older commercial corridors entering downtown, usually with smaller lots and buildings set closer to the street than in Commercial Corridor areas. Land uses focus on commercial business, though there are some areas of mixed residential and commercial uses. Downtown Entrance Corridors present opportunities for redevelopment in a manner that is compact and complements downtown approaches, with expanded emphasis on pedestrian as well as automobile traffic. Landscaping, minimal signage and consolidated parking areas at the sides and rear of buildings also should be encouraged.

Commercial Corridor:

This land use category generally surrounds major highway traffic corridors and accommodates predominantly commercial development on larger lots that is oriented to automobile access. Development in these areas should adhere to guidelines emphasizing trees and landscaping at the street, shaded parking lots, coordinated road entrances, minimized signage and lighting, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other measures to mitigate adverse characteristics common to this type of development. Minimum lot sizes should be approximately 5,000 square feet.

Neighborhood Business:

This category applies to small commercial and mixed residential/commercial uses adjacent to established neighborhoods. Businesses are small-scale operations, generally serving neighborhood residents and others, but large-scale retail and service enterprises are not located in these areas. Development in these areas complements adjacent residential neighborhoods, with buildings generally located close to the street with the same setbacks as adjacent residential patterns, sidewalks, landscaping, directed lighting, minimal signage, parking in the rear or on the street (with minimal parking preferred). Design standards should protect the architectural context and integrity of surrounding neighborhoods, and new infill development should match the existing architectural context and development patterns. Minimum lot sizes will generally be between 2,500 and 5,000 square feet.

Established Neighborhood Residential:

This land use category is a medium to high density area generally applied to older, established residential areas close to the center of South Boston and to high density, multi-family developments. Single family residential uses predominate, but townhomes, condominiums and multi-family developments are also located in these areas. Traditional neighborhood development patterns, such as narrow streets, sidewalks and small lots should be emphasized. Lot sizes are generally one-quarter acre or smaller.

Medium Density Residential:

This land use category applies to residential areas within the Town on medium to large lots that are a minimum of one-half acre in size. Typical land uses include single family residential, duplexes, and small-scale townhouse developments.

Low Density Residential:

This area features large lot single-family residential neighborhoods of town, suburban in character. Residential parts of South Boston typically have a minimum standard of neighborhood amenities, and future development in the low density residential area should include streets, sidewalks, utilities, stormwater and other facilities typical of established residential neighborhoods in the Town of South Boston.

Agricultural and Rural Residential:

These areas are generally large open spaces at the Town periphery with little or no development, but managed for future expansion of development. Land uses include farms,

natural and managed forests, wetlands or environmentally sensitive areas, and large-lot residential areas. A two acre minimum lot size is recommended for these areas.

Planned Business:

This land use category contains large business and light industrial uses in a master-planned campus-like setting. Complementary service and institutional uses may also be accommodated in these areas. A minimum of 10 acres should comprise a planned business area, though individual lots may be smaller in conjunction with an approved plan. Development is coordinated and carefully follows a larger master plan that ensures pedestrian and vehicular linkages, encourages open space, and sets design standards for architecture, site design and signage.

Planned Institutional:

This category is for the development of a planned institutional campus that is master planned to meet current and future expansion needs and emphasize compatibility with surrounding land uses. High-quality architectural and site design character is emphasized. Land uses include institutional uses, with supporting mixed residential, business and service uses. A planned institutional area may be a minimum of 5 acres, but individual lots within the area will vary in size, depending on the approved master plan.

Planned Residential:

This land use category accommodates the development of a master planned residential community, generally of five acres or more and comprised of smaller lots of varying sizes. These areas will be primarily residential in nature, but may include some support commercial or service development (typically less than 5 percent of the land area). Development should emphasize coordinated, high-quality architectural and site design, environmental sensitivity and open space, pedestrian and vehicular connectivity, and landscaping.

Parks and Open Space:

This land use category applies to existing and future publically-owned parks and recreational spaces, as well as public or private cemeteries.

Conservation:

The conservation land use category generally encompasses floodplains and other sensitive environmental areas. New land uses should be limited to those that are not impacted by flooding and do not adversely impact water quality or important environmental features.

Development should follow the land use and development recommendations of the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and other appropriate state and federal agencies.

Design Guidelines for Rehabilitation and New Development

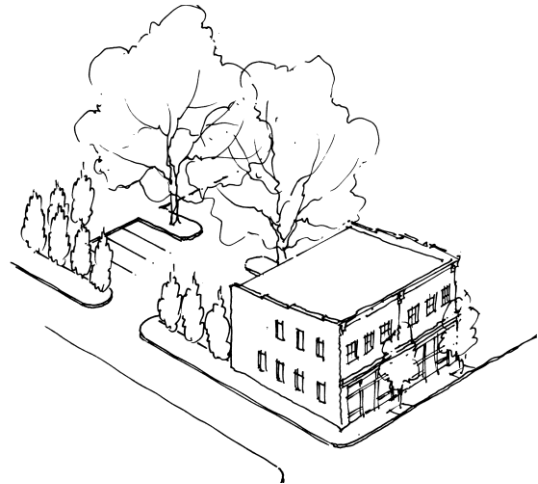
Communities are constantly undergoing physical change with the construction of new homes and businesses and the clearance of underutilized or damaged properties. The South Boston built environment is of remarkably high quality, with a well-preserved downtown and historic residential neighborhoods and a generally well-preserved surrounding belt of rural forests and fields. The Town should maintain its unique sense of place by managing construction so that future development complements the best existing residential and commercial patterns in the community. In general, appropriate infill development in existing neighborhoods should be encouraged over development in outlying undeveloped areas beyond the existing Town built footprint. Infill buildings should generally replicate the scale and setback of surrounding buildings unless previous development patterns have contributed to a deterioration of the area. The principles below offer guidance for future development in South Boston.

- Maintain minimum building setbacks and encourage on-street parking to improve pedestrian activity and accessibility, as well as maximize use of viable, developable land. If on-street parking is not permitted or available, explore opportunities for shared parking in to rear or to the sides of buildings to allow for smaller block sizes in mixed-use areas.
- Encourage the conversion of the Main and Broad Street one-way pair into two-way corridors to reduce travel speeds through the downtown, encourage commercial vehicles to utilize the designated truck route, increase business visibility and create additional opportunities for through-traffic “pass-by” trips.
- Create a connected network of new and existing open spaces that is accessible to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Utilize the existing system of alleys within the UDA, where feasible, to enable access to residential and mixed-use development, and minimize the number of curb cuts and associated conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. Locate service areas on alleys at the rear of buildings.
- Consider the installation of new traffic signals and/or all-way stop-controlled intersections to improve pedestrian safety. Consider using roundabouts at intersections where entering traffic volumes are expected to be relatively equal from all directions, and where pedestrian traffic is expected to be high.
- Emphasize the existing gridded street network for carrying the bulk of traffic generated by redevelopment and new infill development in the UDA.

Downtown-Area Development

As the traditional Town center of commerce and business, the downtown area is particularly important to South Boston's identity and character. Most of downtown is located in a historic district, and it is important for future development to be carefully integrated into the historic fabric so that they enhance the downtown, reinforce its architectural character and contribute to the downtown's revitalization. New downtown development should consider the following:

- Rehabilitation and reuse of existing historic buildings should be encouraged over demolition. Existing buildings should be rehabilitated and carefully maintained, and inappropriate elements that cover or detract from architectural details should be removed from building façades.
- New buildings in downtown should be located close to or on the front property line. New construction should not duplicate existing architecture, but relate to surrounding historic properties. They should be designed to respect the scale, mass, dimensions and general style of adjacent historic buildings and to promote a pedestrian scale along the street.
- Parking in downtown should be primarily accommodated along the street or in existing common areas behind or to the side of buildings. Lots and streets should be shaded by canopy trees and made attractive with landscaped islands.
- Above-ground utilities should be placed underground or at the rear of properties where possible.
- Signage should be strictly controlled in downtown to maintain historic character. Signage placed on a building should relate to the architectural features of the building and not obstruct key architectural features.

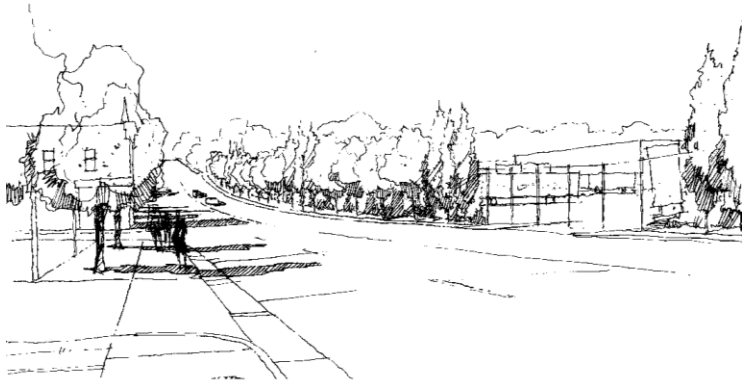


Downtown buildings should be located on the front property line, with parking along the street or at the rear.

Commercial Corridor Development

As mentioned previously, the commercial corridors leading into downtown South Boston give an important first impression of the community to visiting business leaders, potential relocating employees or residents, and tourists. In particular, the Highway 501 corridor north and south of downtown, Highway 58 to the south and Highway 360 to the east set the tone for the community to newcomers. Development along all of these corridors extends beyond Town jurisdiction, so South Boston should work with Halifax County and the Town of Halifax to

coordinate development along these approaches. Traditional corridor development in much of North America is typically associated with urban sprawl, with national chain businesses constructing large buildings on large lots, with maximum signage and vehicular convenience, all bearing little relation to the unique qualities of the host community. The following guidelines should be considered to mitigate this type of development.



Streetfront views should feature attractive landscaping and minimal signage, above ground utilities, and pavement

- Parking areas should be limited to the minimum amount needed for adjacent businesses and should be placed primarily at the side and rear of buildings where possible. Shared parking and connectivity between adjacent properties should be encouraged.
- Parking lots should be shaded by mature canopy trees to minimize absorption of solar heat by asphalt. Use permeable paving where possible to facilitate water infiltration into the ground and use bio-swales to accept and filter stormwater runoff.
- Carefully site new buildings and parking areas to preserve healthy mature trees where possible.
- Use landscaping to minimize the visual impact of paving by creating a landscape buffer along streetfronts and creating islands throughout parking areas.
- Preserve and reuse existing buildings, particularly if they are historic or have distinctive architectural qualities. Locate new buildings as close to the street as possible.
- Views along the streetfront should be attractive and not cluttered. Above-ground utilities should be placed either below ground or at the rear of properties where possible. Signage should be limited to the minimum necessary for businesses and coordinated within the neighborhood or zone. Signs should be easy to read and in scale with the building where the business is located.

Residential Development

Many South Boston residential neighborhoods are old and well-established, with attractive homes and well-maintained yards fronting on quiet residential streets. To protect the

investment residents make in their homes, future renovation and construction in residential areas should adhere to the following guidelines to ensure the work reinforces and enhances the character of these neighborhoods.

- New homes should reflect the mass, proportion, scale, building materials and setback of surrounding properties.



The infill home on the right does not fit in with the size and style of surrounding homes.

- Historic homes should be preserved and rehabilitated where possible, rather than being razed for new construction. Additions to historic homes should complement the existing architecture.
- New homes should consider deep front porches as an extension of living space into the outdoors.
- New residential developments should feature streets that are laid out in patterns that extend and connect to existing patterns of street networks. Street trees should be considered to unify residential areas.
- New residential developments should have pedestrian facilities, stormwater facilities and other features typical of existing South Boston neighborhoods.

Guiding Policies and Actions

The policies and action strategies below provide guidance to South Boston decision makers in implementing the community’s vision for appropriate land use.

2040 Land Use Policies and Strategies	
LU1. Physical growth and future land use in South Boston should be carefully considered and managed to promote sustainable, orderly development patterns and enhance both community character and environmental features.	
Strategy 1.1:	Amend the South Boston zoning ordinance to integrate land use principles and development standards recommended in this comprehensive plan. Revise the Town zoning map to reflect these amendments.
Strategy 1.2:	Amend the South Boston subdivision ordinance to reflect the recommendations and objectives outlined in this comprehensive plan.
LU2. Infill development and redevelopment of underutilized properties should be encouraged and promoted. New development should complement and enhance the character of surrounding development.	
Strategy 2.1:	Target areas that are opportunities for infill and redevelopment, and work with public and private partners to develop and implement plans. Market these opportunities to interested developers, businesses and economic-development agencies.
Strategy 2.2:	Establish development guidelines for priority areas, including the historic district and entry corridors. Work with property owners and neighborhood groups to improve the appearance of these areas. Consider incentives to encourage and assist in making improvements.
LU3. New development along highway entrance corridors and areas outside of the Town core should be carefully considered with respect to development patterns and infrastructure requirements. New construction should be consistent with desired development standards and goals for community growth and expansion.	
Strategy 3.1	Proactively encourage quality development in the outlying regions of the Town through public education and by working with property owners and potential developers in advance of site development or rezoning applications. Provide appropriate information on desired development patterns and standards using a simple brochure or other information media.

Special Action Project

The South Boston Comprehensive Plan offers direction, vision and a legal basis for updating the Town land development regulations and for planning future public facilities and capital improvements. Existing subdivision and zoning regulations should be reviewed and amended to reflect the recommendations and vision set out by this plan.

Two new overlay zoning districts should be considered to protect and preserve community historic and environmental resources:

- *Downtown Conservation Overlay District* should be considered to encompass all of the downtown and commercial areas of the Town historic district.
- *Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District* should be considered to encompass the residential portions of the historic district. These overlays would provide regulations over and above the regular zoning for these areas to preserve better the unique historical, cultural, and architectural qualities of these areas.

VI. Plan Implementation Matrix and Maps

To be effective, the South Boston Comprehensive Plan should serve as a constant reference for government officials, developers and citizens to guide public decision making and land development. The Town of South Boston will provide leadership and direction to an array of partners including citizens and citizen groups, businesses, non-profits, regional jurisdictions, and various state and federal agencies to achieve the vision established by the plan. The various policies and action strategies recommended throughout the plan are summarized in the Implementation Matrix below for quick reference. The matrix also includes a target timeframe and potential partners for implementing the various action strategies. An Implementation Map is also included as a graphic representation of proposed actions throughout the Town.

The South Boston Vision for 2040

In 2040 South Boston will be the municipal center of the region's economic, educational and cultural life, a vibrant community with creative leadership whose citizens are united in pride for their town. The Town will visibly celebrate its pivotal role in the American Revolution, affirm its history as a rural commercial and rail center for the tobacco and cotton industries, and revere its natural amenities and location on the Dan River. South Boston will boast a lifestyle that attracts young adults, families and retirees with its balance of small-town historic charm, progressive government and infrastructure, modern medical facilities, superior educational opportunities and diverse arts and culture scene.

A number of special action projects are highlighted throughout the plan and in the Implementation Maps as opportunities that can help the Town realize the Vision 2040 elaborated above. These include:

- Enhancing the Town gateway corridors,
- Extending Hamilton Boulevard and the Edwards Park Connector and undertaking improvements to the North Main corridor,
- Seizing opportunities to redevelop various underutilized properties around the Town and revitalize neighborhoods,
- Completing the Tobacco Heritage Trail and the Wildlife and Recreational Trail connection to downtown, Greene's Crossing Trail, Cotton Mill Park and Washington-Coleman Community Center additions,
- Designating Downtown as an Arts and Cultural District, and
- Expanding protections for the historic and ecological Town resources.

Implementation Matrix

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
People and Neighborhoods 2040 - Policies and Strategies					
<p>PN1. South Boston neighborhoods contribute significantly to the community character and the quality of life. They should be maintained and enhanced to provide a safe, healthy environment for residents. New structures in existing neighborhoods or new in-fill residential developments should respect the surrounding building development patterns and complement the architectural qualities of existing buildings. New housing developments outside of the town center should respect and conserve environmental features and include connected streets.</p>					
Strategy 1.1:	Promote reinvestment in older South Boston neighborhoods by continuing to prioritize neighborhoods for revitalization. Work with neighborhood groups to develop neighborhood “master” plans for targeted areas and establish housing rehabilitation programs to address blighted properties and promote redevelopment/revitalization opportunities.			•	Town Manager, Planning Commission, neighborhood groups, citizens, DHCD
Strategy 1.2:	Encourage private neighborhood improvement initiatives to revitalize neighborhoods. Support the work of neighborhood associations, adopt-a-street or adopt-a-spot programs, Christmas in April, community gardens and others. Provide in-kind support where appropriate; consider a future neighborhood grant program to facilitate small projects.		•		Town Manager, Town Council, neighborhood groups, local businesses, citizens
Strategy 1.3:	Work with property owners and neighborhood groups to encourage proactive property maintenance and promote neighborhood pride and investment. Work cooperatively to eliminate blighting influences and address building maintenance and other code enforcement issues. Facilitate and streamline communication between Code Enforcement office and citizens to ensure effective reporting and response to property maintenance issues.	•			Town Code Enforcement, neighborhood groups, property owners, DHCD

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.4:	Revise the zoning ordinance to include a Neighborhood Conservation District to encourage compatible development in existing neighborhoods with significant architectural and historic integrity. Adopt design guidelines that will encourage appropriate new development.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, Town Council, neighborhood groups
<p>PN2. The long-term success of a community depends on maintaining a broad cross-section of diverse age groups. In particular, young adults and families are important participants in the vitality and future of South Boston. Efforts to attract and retain young adults and families in the community should be expanded.</p>					
Strategy 2.1:	Retain graduating seniors in the region by expanding work opportunities for youth in local government, public institutions, and businesses. Offer youth internships to Town residents. Promote career and training opportunities through community postings and counseling in conjunction with the Halifax County Schools, Virginia Employment Commission and the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center.	•			Town Community Development, County School System, SVHEC, Employment Commission
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue a Parks and Recreation Master Plan with Halifax County to identify recreational activity needs for children and young adults. Encourage participation of the area’s YMCA, churches and sports organizations. Encourage coordination of programs and promote cooperative efforts.		•		Town Parks and Recreation, Planning Commission, local churches, YMCA, local civic groups, citizens
Strategy 2.3:	Encourage the expansion of quality child care facilities by private organizations. Provide leadership to and work with community groups, organizations and businesses to facilitate increased opportunities for child care.	•			Town Community Development, private providers
<p>PN3. The availability of a diversity of housing types and price ranges is important to the overall health and sustainability of South Boston. A variety of quality housing options is needed to sustain desirable residents and attract new ones.</p>					

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 3.1:	Encourage private initiatives to develop quality housing options, particularly in the downtown area in the form of upper floor units above ground floor commercial uses. Consider incentives that may assist development such as façade improvement grants, historic tax credits, new market tax credits, tax service districts, or other programs.		•		Town Manager, Planning Commission, Town Council, DHCD, private developers
Strategy 3.2:	Encourage the development of affordable live-work facilities for artists and other professionals in or near downtown. Work with downtown and artisan organizations to identify priority projects for underutilized buildings. Facilitate development opportunities through in-kind support, solicitation of funding, and use of other economic assistance tools.		•		Town Community Development, Planning Commission, private developers, DDSB, local artisan groups, SVHEC
Strategy 3.3:	Continue to pursue housing improvement projects for LMI residents. Utilize programs offered through state and regional agencies, like DHCD or the Tri-County Community Action Agency	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, Town Council, housing authority, DHCD

Education and Health 2040 - Policies and Strategies

EH1. Quality educational opportunities and continuous learning are fundamental to the prosperity and high quality of life in South Boston. Quality education for all ages should be a priority for the community.

Strategy 1.1:	Participate in long-range planning and programmatic development for the Higher Education Center to help educate the regional workforce, particularly with respect to targeted sectors of the regional economy.	•			Town Community Development, SVHEC
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Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.2:	Sponsor and promote continued learning and training through public school and continuing education programs that meet the needs of local businesses and targeted economic sectors. Encourage the South Boston and Halifax County Industrial Development Authorities to establish a working committee representative of diverse government and private partners to coordinate workforce development issues and needs, and to facilitate development of appropriate educational programs.	•			Town Community Development, County School System, Halifax County, PDC, local business leaders
Strategy 1.3:	Promote neighborhood community centers in South Boston that can provide accessible opportunities for continued learning activities. Consider joint facilities with partner organizations where possible.	•			Town Parks and Recreation, Halifax County, YMCA, civic groups, churches, County school system
Strategy 1.4:	Work with the SVHEC and County library to identify appropriate space for expanded library facilities that can optimally serve both the SVHEC and South Boston residents.	•			Planning Commission, SVHEC, County Library system
<p>EH2. Healthy citizens and outstanding healthcare facilities are vital to sustaining a high quality of life in South Boston. The healthcare industry represents an important part of South Boston’s economy in terms of employment and as a provider of services. Using these valuable resources and influential partners should be a priority to further community development, education, and overall prosperity.</p>					
Strategy 2.1:	Build healthy citizens by providing increased outdoor recreational opportunities; assemble partners who can help implement and sustain development plans for Cotton Mill Park, the Tobacco Heritage Trail, Greene’s Crossing Trail, and others.		•		Town Parks and Recreation, DHCD, VDOT, Virginia Tourism Corp, DCR

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 2.2:	Encourage connectivity and linkages between parks and public spaces in South Boston. When considering new development patterns or revitalization strategies, locate buildings and community facilities in areas where there are optimal opportunities for multi-modal access and connectivity.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, VDOT
Strategy 2.3:	Maintain regular communication with the healthcare industry in South Boston and the region to understand long-term goals and needs that may be relevant to overall community improvements and public infrastructure.	•			Town Manager, Town Community Development, hospital system

2040 Economic Development Policies and Strategies

ED1. The future economy of South Boston should be diversified and build upon a variety of complimentary sectors, including: health care; motorsports; wood and plastic products; agriculture; tourism and hospitality; and transportation and warehousing.

Strategy 1.1:	Develop a detailed economic development strategy for South Boston that identifies priority economic development efforts and special initiatives/projects that may require public infrastructure. Coordinate with Halifax County Economic Development Strategic Plan. Update on an annual basis.	•			Town Community Development, Town Council, DDSB, Halifax County, local business leaders
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ED2. The natural environment, historic resources and cultural assets of South Boston offer unique opportunities for additional economic development. Tourism is a fundamental component of the Town economic development strategy, and efforts to develop the tourism sector should be strengthened.

Strategy 2.1:	Develop a local and regional tourism plan that effectively sets forth a work strategy for enhancing and improving tourism opportunities and efforts. Designate coordinating champions and establish a working committee that is responsible for assembling partners, implementing projects, and reporting progress.	•			Town Community Development, DDSB, Halifax County Tourism, Halifax County, local business leaders, local attractions managers
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Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 2.2:	Facilitate expansion of existing businesses and attract new businesses that support the tourism industry. Encourage development in downtown that will provide supporting services for tourists (e.g., hotel, retail, restaurants, etc.)		•		Town Community Development, DDSB, local business leaders
Strategy 2.3:	Continue to implement the recommendations of downtown wayfinding signage plan. In particular, provide landscaping for entry signage and install consolidated wayfinding signage throughout Town to orient tourists.	•			Town Public Works
ED3. Development should protect the historic character of South Boston and enhance the community visual and environmental integrity, as these are key to a high standard of living and are marketable amenities to tourists and employers.					
Strategy 3.1:	Develop commercial corridor guidelines to improve the visual appeal of entrance corridors to South Boston, particularly in Centerville and Riverdale. Coordinate with adjacent localities for areas beyond Town limits.		•		Planning Commission, Halifax County, Town of Halifax
Strategy 3.2:	Encourage preservation of rural character and protection of viewsheds in areas surrounding South Boston.	•			Planning Commission
ED4. The artistic and cultural amenities of South Boston are important to the quality of life in the community. These sectors should be promoted and strengthened as part of the economic development strategy for the Town.					
Strategy 4.1:	Support efforts of local artisans and cultural groups to develop and expand art, music and culture programs in the Town. Provide direction for private efforts to develop facilities for these programs, particularly in underutilized buildings or properties in the downtown area. Coordinate these efforts with other plans in the community, such as expansion of recreational and educational facilities.	•			Town Manager, Town Community Development, SVHEC, local artisan groups

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
<p>ED5. Downtown South Boston is the historical center of community life and is essential to the unique identity and economic vitality of the Town. Downtown revitalization is the key to South Boston economic development.</p>					
Strategy 5.1	<p>Improve the balance between businesses, services and housing in the downtown. Consider amending the zoning ordinance to require ground floor uses to be restricted to retail. Support the development of retail shops in downtown and encourage development of housing in downtown buildings, including upper floor housing over first-floor commercial shops. Consider financial and incentives and tax cuts for housing. Continue to support existing businesses and support coordination and communication among businesses.</p>	•			Town Community Development, Planning Commission, Town Council, DDSB
Strategy 5.2:	<p>Support and encourage downtown events that draw visitors into downtown. Encourage collaboration between downtown businesses, event organizers and major downtown institutions (farmer’s market, SVHEC, etc.).</p>	•			DDSB, SVHEC
Strategy 5.3:	<p>Encourage sensitive rehabilitation and re-use of vacant or underutilized buildings and properties for businesses and housing. Consider opportunities to serve the facility needs of events programming, SVHEC expansion and other facility needs of community groups.</p>	•			Planning Commission, SVHEC, civic groups, private developers
Strategy 5.4:	<p>Continue utilizing the resources of Virginia Main Street in planning for downtown revitalization.</p>	•			DDSB, Virginia Main Street
<p>ED6. Workforce training is a critical tool for redeveloping the economy of the community. The Town should work with local businesses, the school system, the SVHEC and other agencies to facilitate targeted development of these programs.</p>					

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 6.1	Facilitate and lead communication between local businesses and training providers to develop training programs that meet local needs and prepare underutilized workers for the future economy.	•			Town Community Development, SVHEC, Community College, Employment Commission, local businesses

2040 History and Culture Policies and Strategies

HC1. Community history is key to the rich and unique identity of South Boston. The heritage should be protected, celebrated, and shared with residents and visitors.

Strategy 1.1:	Strengthen local regulations to protect historic properties and neighborhoods. Consider a historic overlay district or neighborhood conservation district. Establish design review guidelines to encourage appropriate building rehabilitation and infill development. Establish a suitable review and approval process for building improvements.		•		Planning Commission, Town Council, historic preservation architects
Strategy 1.2:	Develop information tools and facilities to provide increased public access and interpretive displays at key historic sites in Town, including the Crossing of the Dan site, the archaeological Native American site, the historic district, Boyd’s Ferry (Riverdale) and other historic sites in Town.		•		Town Manager, Halifax County Museum, Prizery, Archaeological Society, Historical Society

HC2. Arts, music and culture boost tourism interests and add richness to life in South Boston. Efforts to expand and promote various forms of cultural activity in South Boston should be supported.

Strategy 2.1:	Support and encourage private and non-profit efforts to develop arts and cultural events and venues, emphasizing efforts that serve economic development purposes.	•			Town Community Development, local artisan groups
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Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue and facilitate development of an Arts District Master Plan that will evaluate the feasibility of specific market opportunities and display or performance venues that will attract regional residents and tourists to downtown South Boston. Submit for grant funding (e.g., Tobacco Commission, Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, National Endowment for the Arts, etc.)		•		Town Community Development, Planning Commission, DDSB, DHCD, Tobacco Commission, local artisan groups
Strategy 2.3:	Consider designating Downtown as an Arts and Cultural District with incentives to attract arts-related businesses to underutilized properties.	•			Town Community Development, DDSB, Planning Commission, Town Council

2040 Parks, Open Space and Recreation Policies and Strategies

PR1. Recreational opportunities are important amenities for the South Boston community. Access to programmed and passive recreation opportunities should be supported.

Strategy 1.1:	Partner with other localities, funding agencies, and local groups and businesses to implement regional trail facilities, including the Tobacco Heritage Trail and the Greene’s Crossing Heritage Greenway Trail.	•			Town Manager, Town Council, Halifax County, PDC, DCR
Strategy 1.2:	Implement plans for recreational facilities, including Cotton Mill Park and Washington-Coleman Elementary School addition . Work with residents in the Sinai area to locate a site for a neighborhood park in the northwestern part of Town.	•			Town Manager, Planning Commission, VDOT, neighborhood groups
Strategy 1.3:	Develop a joint <i>Parks and Recreation Master Plan</i> with Halifax County to determine and prioritize program and facilities needs for the Town and County.		•		Planning Commission, Town Parks and Recreation, Halifax County

PR2. The Dan River is a key natural and recreational resource for South Boston. Expand physical and visual connections to the River.

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 2.1:	Work with Halifax County and private property owners to protect natural areas along the Dan River. In developed areas, encourage conservation of the floodplain and carefully manage land uses and site development to reduce property damages and loss of investment.	•			Planning Commission, Halifax County, private property owners
Strategy 2.2:	Develop more public access and open spaces along the river. Work with Duck’s Unlimited, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Halifax County Historical Society, Norfolk Southern Railroad, and others.		•		Planning Commission, property owners
Strategy 2.3:	Champion designation of the Dan River as an official “blueway.” Work to include it as part of a regional recreational waterways network. Include it as a resource in the Virginia Outdoors Plan and other recreational documents. Establish additional public access points to the river.	•			Town Council, DCR, Halifax County

2040 Transportation Policies and Strategies

T1. Providing alternative modes of transportation has important environmental and health benefits and helps reduce congestion on roadways. South Boston should facilitate viable alternative transportation modes throughout the community.

Strategy 1.1:	Partner with funders to implement plans for the Tobacco Heritage Trail and Wildlife and Recreational Trail connection to downtown.	•			Town Council, VDOT, DCR
Strategy 1.2:	Partner with funders to implement plans for the Greene’s Crossing Trail.		•		Town Council, VDOT, DCR
Strategy 1.3:	Encourage multiple transportation options and connected streets in new development. Work with local employers, citizen groups and other localities to link transportation effectively for workforce residents with employment centers.		•		Planning Commission, local businesses, community civic organizations, private developers

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.4:	Provide leadership and encourage private and public initiatives that can increase public transportation services in the region.		•		Town Manager, Planning Commission, PDC, service agencies, private providers, non-profit providers
Strategy 1.5:	Amend the zoning and subdivision codes and development permit regulations to require pedestrian access and street and connectivity criteria for new developments.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, Town Council, VDOT
Strategy 1.6:	Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the design of new streets, particularly where they can be linked with existing facilities.	•			Planning Commission, VDOT
<p>T2. The South Boston transportation system provides important linkages to neighborhoods and employment centers. Street and roadway corridors should be safe, attractive, and complement adjacent residential and commercial development. Multiple modes of transportation should be encouraged and transportation systems should be designed to enhance the environment and existing development patterns.</p>					
Strategy 2.1:	Design new road corridors to enhance community settings. Provide sufficient landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and road widths that are in keeping with the character of neighborhoods and commercial corridors. Include traffic calming measures where appropriate.		•		Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, VDOT
Strategy 2.2:	Pursue a feasibility study of changing downtown traffic patterns to determine if Main Street can be converted to two-way traffic to improve economic vitality.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, DDSB, VDOT

2040 Public Services and Infrastructure Policies and Strategies

PSI 1. Sufficient and reliable public utility infrastructure is important in maintaining the quality of life for residents and attracting economic investment. New development should be planned and coordinated carefully to ensure sufficient capacities or coincide with planned improvements.

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.1:	Identify failing water and wastewater systems in the town and work with Halifax County Service Authority to expand public water and sewer services. Priority should be given to areas of environmental sensitivity or elevated health risk.		•		Town Code Enforcement, Halifax County Service Authority
Strategy 1.2:	Expand telecommunication infrastructure in South Boston as a tool for economic development and to improve public communication opportunities.	•			Town Community Development, DHCD, Mid-Atlantic Broadband Coop
PSI 2. Police, fire and rescue services are important elements of public safety that are fundamental to the community’s quality of life. Services should be efficient and effective in serving all citizens of South Boston.					
Strategy 2.1:	Regularly monitor public safety services to ensure effective response times. Supplement equipment and facilities where necessary to increase response.	•			Town Council, Police, Fire, EMS
Strategy 2.2:	Employ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all public projects, and encourage these design principles in other new developments.	•			Planning Commission, private developers
2040 Environment Policies and Strategies					
E1. Enhancement of water quality, control of stormwater runoff, and wise management of the floodplain are important community priorities. Proactive solutions and conservation measures should be promoted to improve environmental quality.					
Strategy 1.1:	Stormwater management regulations should emphasize “low-impact” stormwater techniques such (e.g., bio-swales, porous pavement) to improve the quality of stormwater destined for waterways.	•			Town Public Works Dept, Town Manager, Town Council
Strategy 1.2:	Discourage inappropriate land uses and development within floodplains. Revise floodplain ordinances to incorporate appropriate land uses. Where feasible, acquire and relocate development out of floodplain.	•			Planning Commission, Town Council

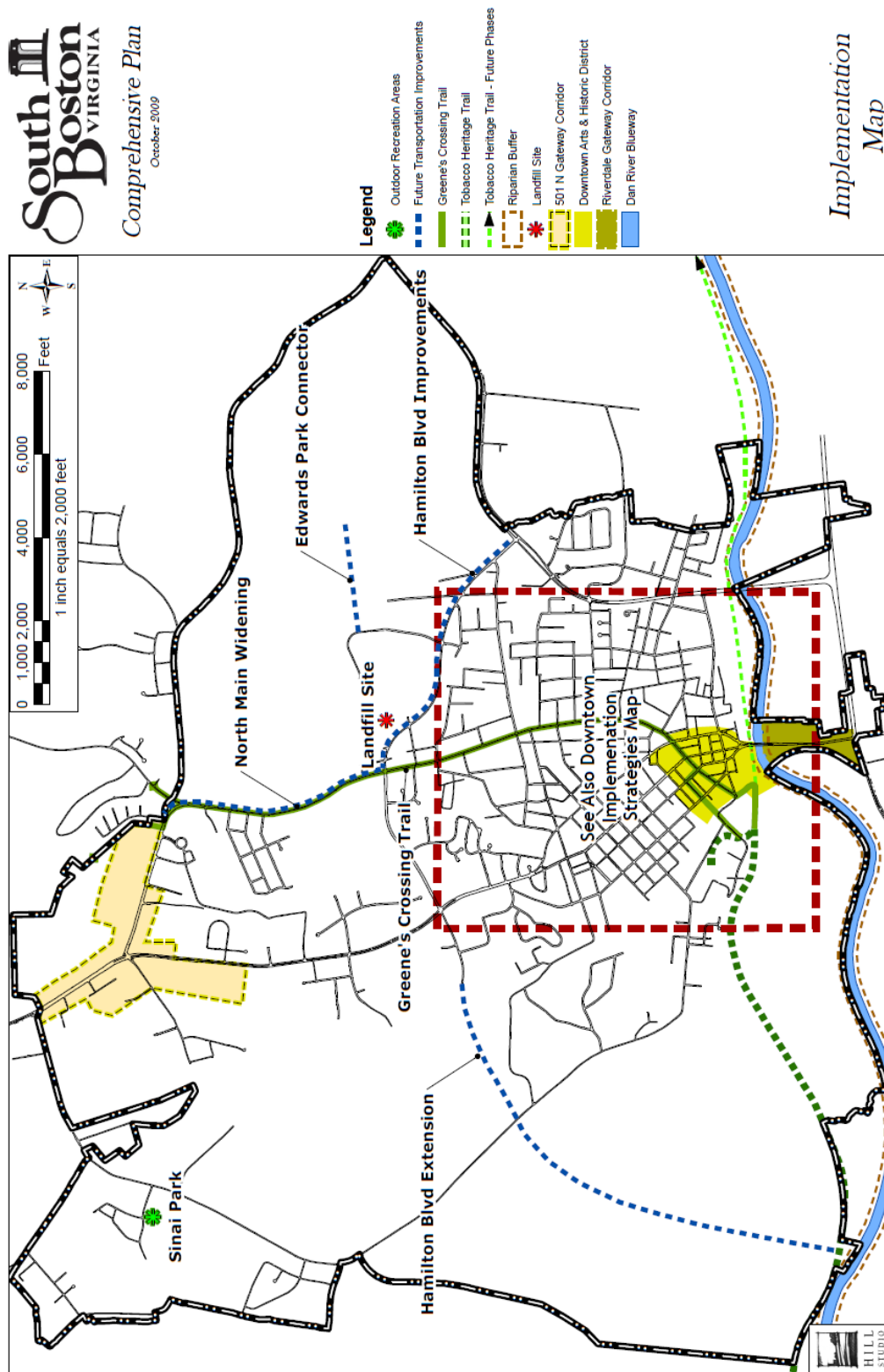
Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.3:	Adopt a river overlay conservation district and establish riparian buffers along creeks and rivers.	•			Planning Commission, Town Council
E2. The open spaces and agricultural farms surrounding South Boston are important features of the community's character that should be preserved.					
Strategy 2.1:	Encourage development first as infill in areas already developed, particularly in the downtown and in neighborhoods immediately surrounding the downtown area.	•			Planning Commission
E3. The natural resources around South Boston add to the community quality of life and should be protected and conserved.					
Strategy 3.1:	Implement multimodal trail plans (Tobacco Heritage Trail, Greene's Crossing Trail, etc.) and develop plans for other multimodal routes through the community to reduce vehicular use and improve air quality.		•		Planning Commission, Town Council, VDOT
Strategy 3.2:	Educate the public on environmentally friendly projects and practices. Establish interpretive signage along trails and in parks explaining environmental measures taken (for example: native wildlife habitats, water quality protection measures, green construction principles, etc.).		•		Town Council, civic groups
Strategy 3.3:	Work with DCR and other localities to pursue Scenic River designation for the Dan River.	•			Town Council, Halifax County, PDC, DCR
Strategy 3.4:	Public building and development projects should follow the principles of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). LEED compliance should be encouraged for private building and development.	•			Town Manager, Town Planning Dept, Town Council, private developers

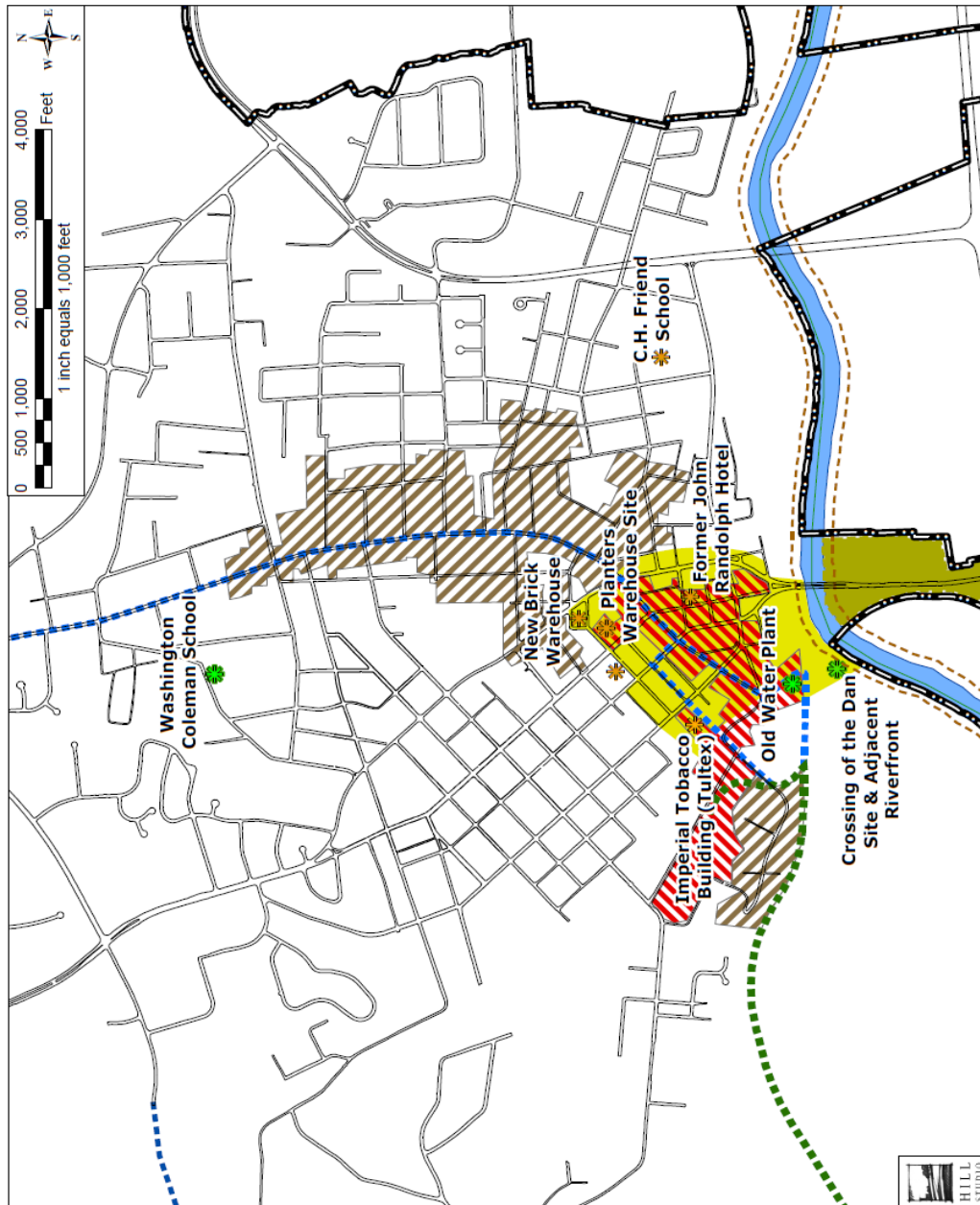
2040 Land Use Policies and Strategies

LU1. Physical growth and future land use in South Boston should be carefully considered and managed to promote sustainable, orderly development patterns and enhance both community character and environmental features.

Policies and Action Strategies		By Year:			Key Partners
		2	5	10	
Strategy 1.1:	Amend the South Boston zoning ordinance to integrate land use principles and development standards recommended in this comprehensive plan. Revise the Town zoning map to reflect these amendments.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, Town Council
Strategy 1.2:	Amend the South Boston subdivision ordinance to reflect the recommendations and objectives outlined in this comprehensive plan.	•			Town Planning Dept, Planning Commission, Town Council
<p>LU2. Infill development and redevelopment of underutilized properties should be encouraged and promoted. New development should complement and enhance the character of surrounding development.</p>					
Strategy 2.1:	Target areas that are opportunities for infill and redevelopment, and work with public and private partners to develop and implement plans. Market these opportunities to interested developers, businesses and economic-development agencies.	•			Town Community Development, Town Manager, DDSB
Strategy 2.2:	Establish development guidelines for priority areas, including the historic district and entry corridors. Work with property owners and neighborhood groups to improve the appearance of these areas. Consider incentives to encourage and assist in making improvements.		•		Planning Commission, neighborhood groups
<p>LU3. New development along highway entrance corridors and areas outside of the Town core should be carefully considered with respect to development patterns and infrastructure requirements. New construction should be consistent with desired development standards and goals for community growth and expansion.</p>					
Strategy 3.1:	Proactively encourage quality development in the outlying regions of the Town through public education and by working with property owners and potential developers in advance of site development or rezoning applications. Provide appropriate information on desired development patterns and standards using a simple brochure or other information media.	•			Planning Commission, Town Planning Dept, private developers, property owners

Implementation
 Map





Implementation
 Map

VII. Appendix

1. *Public Workshop Report - Key Action Areas*

2. *South Boston 2035 Transportation Plan*

